




Buntáistí na Gaeilge – eolas do thuismitheoirí

*The Advantages of
Irish – information for
parents*



Údarás na
Gaeltachta



"Not to learn Irish is to miss the opportunity of understanding what life in this country has meant and could mean in a better future. It is to cut oneself off from ways of being at home. If we regard self-understanding, mutual understanding, imaginative enhancement, cultural diversity and a tolerant political atmosphere as desirable attainments, we should remember that knowledge of the Irish language is an essential element in their realisation."

Seamus Heaney

Réamhrá

Saibhríonn teangacha ár saol. Saibhríonn teangacha ár n-intinn, ár modh smaointeoireachta agus ár gcumas le muid féin a chur in iúl. Tugann cumas labhartha teangacha deis iontach dúinn cumarsáid a dhéanamh le cainteoirí teangacha eile in Éirinn agus thar lear chomh maith le tuiscint a fháil ar a gcultúr.

Má théimid ar saoire go Mór-Roinn na hEorpa is féidir linn sásamh agus sult faoi leith a bhaint as an eispéireas cultúrtha sin má tá teanga na tíre sin ar eolas againn agus muid in ann cumarsáid a dhéanamh le saoránaigh na tíre sin. A luaithe is a dhéanann turasóir iarracht cumarsáid a dhéanamh i dteanga tír eile fosclaítear doirse dó nach mbeadh foscailte muna mbeadh teanga na tíre sin ar eolas aige.

Foreword

Languages enrich our life. Languages also enrich our mind, expand our way of thinking and improve our ability to express ourselves. The ability to speak different languages, whether it be in Ireland or abroad, allows for a more effective and rewarding communication with people who speak languages that are different from our own. By immersing ourselves in another language, we gain a deeper understanding and a more enjoyable experience of other people's cultures.

If you go on holiday to Continental Europe, your experiences are greatly enhanced if you communicate with the citizens of that country in their native language. New avenues of experience are opened; avenues that would have previously been closed. Your holiday experience becomes far more enjoyable and rewarding as you get to experience another culture that is unique. You also derive great personal pleasure and satisfaction from speaking with people in their own language.

Tá sé mar aidhm ag an leabhrán dátheangach seo, atá curtha le chéile ag Údarás na Gaeltachta, cuidiú le tuismitheoirí sa Ghaeltacht atá idir dhá chomhairle faoi Ghaeilge a labhairt lena gcuid páistí mar theanga teaghlaigh. Tá mionleabhrán i bhfoirm clóite dar teideal '10 gCúis mhaithe le Gaeilge a labhairt le do pháiste' 10 Good reasons to speak Irish to your child' curtha le chéile ag Údarás na Gaeltachta lefeasacht tuismitheoirí páistí a ardú i dtaca le buntáistí na Gaeilge mar theanga bheo teaghlaigh agus pobail ina saol laethúil a léiriú. Tugann an leabhrán seo breis eolais faoi na buntáistí sin.

Ní gá do thuismitheoirí a bheith imníoch faoin Bhéarla, ceann de mórtheangacha idirnáisiúnta an domhain, mar go sealbhóidh a bpáistí é sa phobal, sa chóras oideachais agus ó na meáin chraolta agus ardáin shóisialta chomhaimseartha.

The aim of this bilingual booklet, which was produced by Údarás na Gaeltachta, is to give guidance to parents in the Gaeltacht who are undecided about raising their children through Irish, or who may be unaware of the benefits that this brings. Údarás na Gaeltachta produced a mini-booklet entitled '10 gCúis mhaithe le Gaeilge a labhairt le do pháiste/10 Good reasons to speak Irish to your child,' to outline the benefits of speaking Irish to your children in the home and within the community as part of normal daily life. This booklet gives additional information on the subject.

Speaking Irish as a first language will have no effect on your children's ability to master English. English is one of the major international languages of the world and the English language culture reaches into every area of our lives.



Nuair a thagraítear sa leabhrán seo do bhuntáistí an dátheangachais táthar ag tagairt go sonrach do chainteoirí dhátheangacha Gaeilge agus Béarla agus na buntáistí go léir atá acusan thar chainteoirí aonteangacha Béarla sa Ghaeltacht agus go náisiúnta. Má shocraíonn tú do pháiste a thógáil le Gaeilge is fiú go mór a thuiscint gur cinneadh tábhachtach é seo a mbeidh tionchar dearfach aige ar do pháiste ar feadh a shaoil. Má shocraíonn tú do pháiste a thógáil le Gaeilge tá sé tábhachtach, dá bhrí sin, go mbeidh tuiscint agat ar na buntáistí go léir a bhaineann leis an chinneadh sin.



Children are, therefore, exposed to English from an early age, and they acquire it very easily and quickly. Children learn English through the education system, in the community and through a constant exposure to broadcast, print and social media; in effect children become fluent in English from an early age, even if there is a different language spoken in the home.

Whenever the advantages of bilingualism are referred to in this booklet, it refers primarily to bilingual speakers of Irish and English, and to the advantages they have over monolingual English speakers, at both a Gaeltacht and national level. If you decide to raise your child through the medium of Irish, it is worth noting that you have made an important decision that will have a positive and lasting influence on your child's future. Therefore, as a tool of motivation, it is important for you to fully understand all the advantages relating to your decision.



Cad chuige ar chóir dom Gaeilge a labhairt le mo pháiste? Seo a leanas roinnt de na cúiseanna sin.

Tá an Ghaeilge mar theanga teaghlaigh agus pobail sa Ghaeltacht faoi bhrú ag fórsaí mórtheanga uilíoch an Bhéarla. Ionas go mairfidh an Ghaeilge mar phríomh- mheán cumarsáide sa Ghaeltacht tá sé riachtanach go ndéanfaidh tuismitheoirí óga cinneadh coinsiasach Gaeilge a labhairt mar theanga teaghlaigh agus go gcuirfear achan tacaíocht ar fáil dóibh lena gclann a thógáil le Gaeilge. Aithníonn na sochtheangeolaithe go léir gurb é an baile an áit is nádúrthaí agus is tábhachtaí a shealbhaíonn páiste teanga óna thuismitheoirí. Más mian linn go mairfidh an Ghaeilge mar phríomh theanga cumarsáide sa Ghaeltacht beidh ar thuismitheoirí óga Gaeilge a labhairt mar ghnáth- theanga laethúil lena bpáiste ón lá a saolaítear é.

Why should I speak Irish to my child? Here are a few reasons.

Irish as a family and community language in the Gaeltacht is under severe threat. The dominance of English is threatening Irish as a daily spoken language. In order for Irish to remain as the main living language of the Gaeltacht, it is vital that young parents make a conscious decision to speak Irish as the family's first language. It is also important that every support and encouragement is provided to the parents so that they can successfully raise their children through Irish. Every sociolinguistic expert recognises the family unit as the natural and most important place in which to acquire a language. A child is unlikely to master a language, if he or she does not acquire it within the home. Therefore, if we want Irish to remain as the main language of communication in the Gaeltacht, it is vital that young parents choose Irish as the language of the family unit, and speak Irish to their children from birth.





Comhthéacs na Gaeilge sa saol comhaimseartha: tá cuid mhór i gcoitinne ag cainteoirí Gaeilge le tromlach daonra an domhain.

Is teanga ársa í an Ghaeilge agus tá sí ar cheann de na 6,500 teanga atá á labhairt sa domhan. Tá ról fíor-thábhachtach ag an Ghaeilge le saol, cultúr, luacha agus féiniúlacht an phobail Ghaelaigh a léiriú, a chaomhnú, a neartú agus a chosaint.

Meastar go labhraíonn dhá dtrian de dhaonra na cruinne ar a laghad dhá theanga ina saol laethúil. Glacann siadsan leis gur gnáth nós atá ann a bheith cumasach i dhá theanga nó níos mó agus iad in ann cumarsáid mhaith a dhéanamh le cainteoirí teangacha eile. Ach i roinnt tíortha macasamhail Stáit Aontaithe Mheiriceá, Sasain agus An Astráil, tíortha ina bhfuil tromlach an daonra ina gcainteoirí aonteangacha Béarla agus gur acusan atá an chumhacht pholaitiúil, breathnaítear de ghnáth ar an dátheangachas mar iompar neamhchoitianta.



6,500

TEANGA ATÁ Á LABHAIRT SA DOMHAN
LANGUAGES THAT ARE SPOKEN IN THE WORLD

Irish in the contemporary world: Irish speakers have a lot in common with the majority of the world's population.

Irish is an ancient language and is one of the 6,500 languages that are spoken in the world. Irish plays an important role in the preservation and strengthening of the life, culture, values and identity of the Irish speaking community.

It is estimated that two thirds of the world's population use at least two languages in their daily lives. For these people, competence in two or more languages is a natural development and they recognise the importance and advantages of being able to communicate with people in different languages. However, in countries where the majority of the population speak only one language, bilingualism is considered to be unusual and unnecessary. This is particularly true for English speaking countries (United States of America, England, Australia, etc.); countries where English is the language associated with prestige, politics and economic progress.

In Éirinn mar gheall ar ár gcúinsí staire agus go háirithe lorg síceolaíoch an choilíneachais ar ár n-aighe thiontaigh mórán daoine ó bheith ina gcainteoirí Gaeilge ó dhúchas go cainteoirí aontangacha Béarla. Is é an rud aisteach faoi seo ná gur roghnaigh mórán Éireannaigh teanga uilíoch an Bhéarla a labhairt in áit na Gaeilge seachas Béarla a labhairt mar theanga bhreise chomh maith leis an Ghaeilge.

Le linn Ré an Tíogair Cheiltigh meastar go raibh thart fá 110 teanga á labhairt in Éirinn. Tháinig saoránaigh ó mhórán tíortha de chuid na hAifrice, ó Oirthear na hEorpa, ón Áis agus ó Mheiriceá Theas go hÉirinn ag lorg oibre nó tearmainn. In achar ghairid ama bhí mórán teangacha iasachta le cluintint fiú i mbailte beaga tuaithe na tíre. Tá sé an-choiteanta i measc na gcainteoirí seo go bhfuil ar a laghad dhá theanga ar a dtail acu agus tá siad breá toilteanach teangacha eile a labhairt de bhrí go raibh na teangacha seo acu ó aois an-óg agus dá bhrí sin is féidir leo tiontú go héasca ó theanga go teanga nuair a bhíonn gá leis. Ina chuideachta sin bíonn sé níos fusa acusan teangacha breise a fhoghlaim de bhrí go bhfuil taithí acu cheana féin ar láimhseáil struchtúir éagsúla a dteangacha sealbhaithe agus na slite difriúla inar féidir cur síos a dhéanamh ina dteangacha ar an rud céanna.

Ireland's turbulent history and the psychological footprint of colonialism have left an indelible mark on our mind-set, and on our attitude to our native language. Because of this, many people shifted from being native Irish speakers to being monolingual English speakers. Many native Irish speakers chose to speak only in English, instead of viewing Irish as an additional language that could complement their English.

During the Celtic Tiger, citizens of many countries in Africa, Eastern Europe, Asia and South America came to Ireland seeking work or asylum. These people brought with them an array of different languages and in a very short time many new languages were being spoken in Ireland, even in small rural towns. It is estimated that there are approximately 110 languages spoken in Ireland today. Most of our immigrant population speak at least two languages fluently. Because they had the ability to speak different languages from a very early age, and are able to change from one language to another when necessary; they are, therefore, more open and willing to learn and speak other languages. Furthermore, being bilingual or multi-lingual means they have an understanding of the different mechanics and structures of each separate language and they are also able to describe the same things in different languages. Having these skills makes it easier for them to learn new languages.

Tá sé nádúrtha go dtógfadh tuismitheoirí a bpáistí le Gaeilge, teanga ata á labhairt in Éirinn le breis is dhá mhíle bliain. Úsáideann daoine teanga mar mheán chumarsáide le hiad féin a chur in iúl ach chomh maith le feidhm cumarsáide a bheith ag teanga is feithicil í le cultúr a pobail a iompar, a chosaint agus a chaomhnú. Is taisce luachmhar í teanga a chuireann in iúl mothúcháin, cuimhní cinn, saíocht, saibhreas agus smaointe a pobail. Tugann an Ghaeilge féiniúlacht faoi leith do phobal na hÉireann. Nuair a roghnaíonn tuismitheoirí a bpáistí a thógáil le Gaeilge tá siad ag aistriú ó ghlúin go glúin modh smaointeoireachta agus cumarsáide Ghaelaí nach bhfuil ag aon tír eile sa domhan. Nuair a shocraíonn tuismitheoirí a gclann a thógáil le Gaeilge aithníonn siad go mbeidh buntáiste an dátheangachais ag a gclann mar go sealbhóidh siad an Béarla chomh maith.

It should not be considered unusual or abnormal for parents to raise their children as Gaeilge, a language that has being widely spoken in Ireland for over two thousand years. People use language as a means of communication; as a way to express themselves, their thoughts and their feelings. However, if a language is to have a communication function, then it also needs to be able to express, protect and preserve the culture of its people. Language is important in that it expresses the feelings, memories, wisdom, richness and the thoughts of a whole people. Irish gives a specific uniqueness to the people of Ireland. When a parent chooses to raise their children through Irish, they are transferring a uniquely Irish way of thinking and communicating to the next generation. It is a way of thinking and communicating, that draws from the past but looks to the future; one that is positive and forward thinking. Furthermore, by bringing the children up with more than one language, the parents are also recognising the advantages their child will gain from being bilingual.





Goidé na Buntáistí Oideachasúla, Sóisialta agus Sláinte a bheidh ag mo pháiste má labhraífm Gaeilge leis?

Tá mórán buntáistí ag cainteoir dátheangach thar chainteoir aonteangach. Ar dtús tá foclóir i bhfad níos fairsinge aige agus tá ar a chumas cur síos a dhéanamh ar an rud céanna i dhá theanga. Aithnítear go mbíonn cuid de na daltaí scoile a fhoghlaimíonn dhá theanga chun tosaigh sa léitheoireacht, ag cuntas agus ag smaoineamh go cruthaitheach. Is minic go bhfaigheann siad torthaí scrúduithe níos fearr. Tá sé léirithe ag taighde nua atá déanta go mbíonn daltaí scoile dhátheangacha níos fearr ná a gcomhdhaltaí aonteangacha agus gur fearr a éiríonn leo fadhbanna a réiteach agus a bheith ag smaoineamh go cruthaitheach. Má labhraíonn dalta an dara teanga is mór a chuidíonn an dátheangachas leis an tríú agus an ceathrú teanga a fhoghlaim. Tugann an dátheangachas muinín agus misneach dó de bhrí go bhfuil sé in ann é féin a chur in iúl i gcúpla teanga. Rinneadh an taighde seo i réigiúin ina bhfuil mionteanga á labhairt agus fuarthas amach go mbíonn cumas níos fearr ag daltaí dhátheangacha iad féin a chur in iúl níos cruinne ná mar a dhéanann daltaí aonteangacha.



What are the Educational, Social and Health Advantages for my child if I speak Irish to him or her?

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The bilingual speaker has many advantages over the monolingual speaker. First, he or she has a much broader vocabulary and is able to describe the same thing in two languages. Studies show that most bilingual schoolchildren progress quicker than monolingual schoolchildren in the areas of reading, counting and critical thinking. Quite often, bilingual schoolchildren achieve better exam results. New research has shown that bilingual school pupils perform better than their fellow monolingual pupils and are more adept at problem solving and creative thinking. If a student already speaks two languages, then it is much easier for him or her to learn a third or fourth language. Being able to express themselves in two or more languages builds a child's confidence, courage and communication skills. Research carried out in regions where a minority language is spoken, found that bilingual pupils were capable of expressing themselves more precisely than monolingual students. The bilingual mind can process two languages, and is able to distinguish between the sentence structure and vocabulary of the different languages. The bilingual mind is, thus, more active and more adaptable than that of a monolingual.



De bhrí go mbíonn intinn dhátheangach ag próiseáil dhá theanga lena struchtúir abairtí agus a stór focal bíonn an intinn dhátheangach níos gníomhaí agus níos solúbtha ná an intinn aonteangach. Baineann buntáistí praiticiúla leis an dátheangachas sa saol comhaimseartha ina bhfuil tionchar ollmhór an domhandaithe agus brú an chultúir Angla-Mheiriceánaigh le tabhairt faoi ndeara níos mo agus níos mó i saol laethúil phobal na Gaeltachta. Cuireann an Ghaeilge luacha an chultúir Ghaelaigh in iúl, cultúr ina bhfuil béim ar leas an duine agus a rannpháirtíocht ina phobal seachas tábhacht an duine aonair mar atá a léiriú ag cultúr tomhaltachais Angla-Mheiriceánach atá á iompar ag an aonteanga Bhéarla.

Scientists have proved that there are far more advantages to bilingualism than just having the ability to speak a number of different languages. They believe that bilingual speakers are more developed in terms of speech, ability and mental agility than a person who speaks only one language. Bilingualism has positive effects on the mind as well – it helps develop cognitive skills and can help prevent the onslaught of Alzheimer's disease and other mental illnesses. A bilingual or multi-lingual speaker shows more understanding when dealing with people than a monolingual speaker does, and the processes involved with bilingualism greatly increases a person's social skills.

Tá sé léirithe ag eolaithe go mbaineann níos mó buntáistí leis an dátheangachas ná a bheith díreach in ann labhairt le líon níos mó daoine. Deirtear go mbíonn an cainteoir dátheangach níos forbartha ó thaobh urlabhra, éirime agus aclú inchinne ná mar atá cainteoir aonteangach. Bíonn toradh an-dearfach ag an dátheangachas ar intinn an chainteora dátheangach ó thaobh cuidiú lena scileanna cognaíoch agus fiú cuidiú leis cur in éadan galar Alzheimer agus cineálacha eile galair intinne. De bhrí go mbíonn ar chainteoir dátheangach cinneadh a dhéanamh go minic cé acu teanga is fearr chun labhairt le daoine áirithe meastar go mbíonn sé níos tuisceanaí agus é ag plé le daoine ná mar a bhíonn an cainteoir aonteangach, agus cuireann an próiseas seo go mór le forbairt a scileanna sóisialta.

There are practical advantages to bilingualism as well. The global influence of Anglo-American culture is becoming more dominant in the daily life of Gaeltacht communities. This consumerist, mono-lingual English culture is centred around the importance of the individual and is based on material gain. The Irish languages expresses the values of an alternative culture; a culture in which emphasis is placed on the well-being of the individual and on his or her participation in the community. Thus, Irish can act as a healthy, positive counterpoint to the dominant consumerist culture.



An bhfuil an dátheangachas ina bhad ar fhorbairt oideachasúil mo pháiste?

Tá difear mór idir an tuairim atá ann faoi láthair ar an dátheangachas agus an tuairim a bhíodh faoi ar feadh mórán den fichiú haois. Ba é an tuairim láidir a bhíodh faoi go dtí na 1960í i measc taighdeoirí agus lucht ceannais, gan mórán fianaise ann chun tacú léi mar thuairim, go raibh an dátheangachas ina mhíbhuntáiste agus gur chuir sé cosc ar fhorbairt oideachasúil agus intleachtúil an dalta. D'fhág an tuairim sin a rian ar an phobal ach léirigh neart taighde ó shin gurb é a mhalairt a bhí fíor agus gur buntáiste ollmhór atá sa dátheangachas agus san ilteangachas, buntáiste atá i bhfad níos fairsinge ná scileanna sna teangacha féin. Ó thorthaí taighde atá déanta ar an dátheangachas fuarthas amach go gcuidíonn eispéireas an dátheangachas le feidhm feidhmeach na hintinne; le cuimhne a choinneáil; le planáil a dhéanamh agus le deacrachtaí a réiteach.

Is bilingualism a hindrance for the educational development of my child?

There is a huge difference between the present day opinion of bilingualism and the opinion that existed during most of the twentieth century. Up until the 1960s, social scientists and those in a position of power viewed bilingualism negatively. They felt it was a disadvantage to be bi-lingual and that it hindered the educational and intellectual development of the child. This view prevailed for many years even though there was not much evidence to support it. These reactionary views nurtured a negative attitude amongst minority language communities towards bilingualism and language diversity. However, much research in the intervening years has shown that the reverse is true – bilingualism and multilingualism reap huge benefits – research now shows that bilingualism helps the function of the brain. It helps a person to retain memory and improves the brain's ability to plan and solve problems.



20%

Léiríonn torthaí taighde go bhfuil intinn dhátheangach níos gaiste agus níos fearr ag déileáil le débhríocht chomh maith le bheith ag réiteach fadhbanna. Tá torthaí an taighde seo ag spreagadh scoltacha i Stáit Aontaithe Mheiriceá tumchláracha teanga a chur i bhfeidhm do pháistí chomh hóg le haois réamhscoile. I Stát Utah tá 20 % de na scoltacha poiblí ag cur teagasc dátheangach ar fáil dá dhaltaí le leath na ranganna achan lá á múineadh trí Bhéarla agus an leath eile á múineadh trí Spáinnis, Fraincis, Sínis nó Portaingéilis.

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Schools in the United States of America have introduced language immersion programmes for children, beginning at preschool age. In the State of Utah, 20% of public schools are providing bilingual teaching to pupils. Half of the classes are taught through English and the other half are taught through Spanish, French, Chinese or Portuguese. When school pupils in Utah go to school each morning, they are not thinking much about the effect of bilingualism on their brain, but they most certainly are receiving the benefits of learning in a bilingual environment. The programme has been such a success that delegations from 22 other states in America have gone on fact finding missions to Utah to gain more knowledge about the benefits of the programme. It is ironic that an important, powerful country like the United States of America, a country that is effectively a monolingual country, is now beginning to recognise the importance and the advantages of bilingualism. The result of bilingual education has indirect benefits as well; the richness and cultural diversity that comes with another language has a positive influence on the pupils, and on their understanding of diversity, community and life.



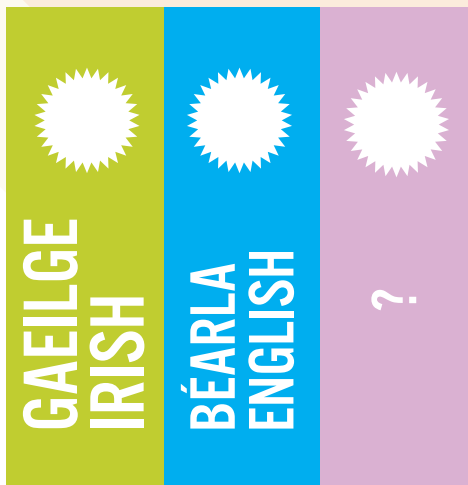


Cén dóigh a gcuideoidh an Ghaeilge le mo pháiste saol iomlán a bheith aige ina phobal?

Má tá cumas maith Gaeilge aige beidh sé in ann a bheith rannpháirteach go huile agus go hiomlán i saol phobal na Gaeltachta agus na Gaeilge idir imeachtaí spóirt, cultúrtha, pobail, siamsaíochta agus caitheamh aimsire. I ndiaidh do pháiste an dara teanga a shealbhú tá sé níos fusa aige a dhul agus an tríú teanga a fhoghlaim. Tugann sealbhú na Gaeilge deis iontach do do pháiste a bheith dátheangach nó fiú ilteangach.

How will Irish help my child to lead a fulfilled life in his community?

If your child has a good command of the Irish language he or she will be able to participate fully in the community life of the Gaeltacht and in Irish language activities; including sport, culture, community, entertainment and pastimes. After a child acquires the second language, it will be easier for him or her to learn a third language. Having Irish gives your child a better chance to become bilingual or even multilingual.





Goidé na Buntáistí Fostaíochta agus Cultúrtha a bheidh ag mo pháiste má labhraífm Gaeilge leis?

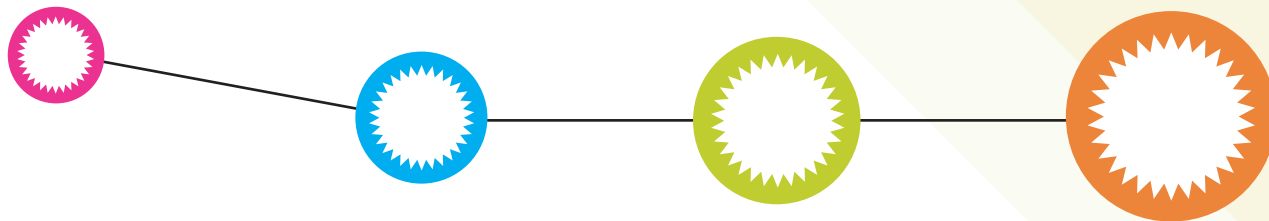
Is scil atá i bhfoghlaím teanga agus le barr feabhais a chur air is gá é a chleachtadh go maith agus go rialta. Tá buntáistí fostaíochta faoi leith ag daoine óga a bhfuil cumas maith i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla acu agus le blianta beaga anuas tá méadú suntasach ar líon na bhfostóirí atá ag lorg oibrithe le Gaeilge. Tá deiseanna fostaíochta le fáil mar mhúinteoirí agus i mórán réimsí eile den státchóras mar atá Raidió na Gaeltachta, TG4, An Roinn Ealaíon Oidhreachta & Gaeltachta, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Foras na Gaeilge agus na húdaráis áitiúla.

San earnáil dheonach in Éirinn ar nós na comharchumainn agus struchtúir phobail eile sa Ghaeltacht tá a lán postanna a shonraíonn mar bhunriachtanas don phost gur gá cumas maith i nGaeilge a bheith ag na hiarrthóirí. Tá tús á chur le feidhmiú An Straitéis 20 Bliain don Ghaeilge agus, dá bhrí sin, beidh béim níos mó ná riamh á chur ar chumas agus ar cháilíochtaí i nGaeilge agus sa phleanáil teanga agus aon fholúntais á líonadh ag eagraíochtaí forbartha pobail.

What are the Employment and Cultural Benefits for my child if I speak Irish to him?

Learning a language is a skill, and to perfect it one must frequently practise it. Many employment opportunities exist for young people who have a good command of both Irish and English. In the past few years there has been a remarkable increase in the amount of employers seeking employees with Irish. Employment opportunities for Irish speakers include jobs in teaching and education as well as in many other areas, such as Raidió na Gaeltachta, TG4, the Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Foras na Gaeilge and the local authorities.

Many of the employment opportunities within the voluntary sector specify Irish as a primary requirement. For example, Irish language skills are necessary for employment within the Gaeltacht co-operative societies and the community and development organisations. As the strategy for the implementation of An Straitéis 20 Bliain don Ghaeilge takes hold, many more opportunities for Irish speakers will emerge. Job opportunities are also emerging in the area of language planning.

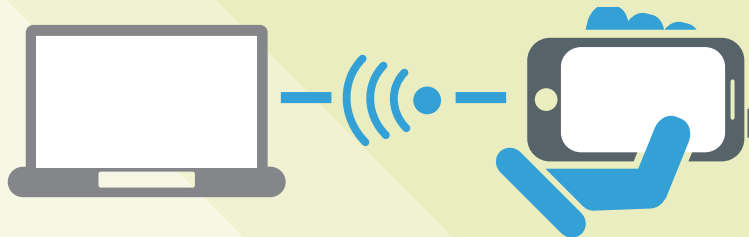


De bhrí go bhfuil an Ghaeilge aitheanta mar theanga oibre de chuid an Aontais Eorpaigh ó 2007, tá deiseanna breise fostaíochta mar aistritheoirí agus ateangairí ar fáil in oifigí Pharlaimint agus Choimisiúin na hEorpa, dóibh siúd a bhfuil cáilíochtaí i nGaeilge acu.

Inár saol comhaimseartha tá tionchar agus lorg an domhandaithe le brath go mór ar ár saol. Mar gheall ar an teicneolaíocht tá muid ar an eolas faoi imeachtaí atá ag tarlú na mílte míle ar shiúl uainn. Is minic go mbíonn níos mó eolais againn faoi cad atá ar siúl i dtíortha i bhfad i gcéin ná mar atá ag tarlú inár gceantar agus inár bpobal féin. Tá ár modh smaointeoireachta, eiticí agus ár luachanna traidisiúnta ag athrú go gasta agus tá baol ann go gcaillfidh muid mórán de na luachanna sin a níonn uathúil muid mar phobal Gaeltachta. Tá clú is cáil riamh anall ar an Ghaeltacht mar cheantar faoi leith a bhfuil cultúr láidir Gaelach aige agus iomrá leitheadach ar a cheol, amhránaíocht, féilte, damhsa, litríocht, saibhreas teanga, nósanna, béaloideas agus slí maireachtála. Ní féidir iomlán sásaimh a bhaint as an saibhreas cultúrtha seo muna bhfuil Gaeilge ar do thoil agat: cinnte is féidir gnéithe dár litríocht Ghaeilge nó

Most community development organisations in the Gaeltacht and other such organisations will require language planners. Irish has been recognised as a working language of the European Union since 2007. As a result, there are plenty of opportunities for translators and interpreters in the offices of the European Parliament and Commission.

The influence and reach of globalisation is to be felt greatly in all our lives. Technology has allowed us to have instant access to events happening thousands of miles away in every part of the world. Quite often we know more about what is happening in faraway places than we do about our own communities. Our thinking process, our ethics and our traditional values are changing rapidly and there is a danger that we will lose many of the values that make us unique as a Gaeltacht community. For many, many years the Gaeltacht has been renowned as a region with a strong and unique Gaelic culture and is recognised for the richness of its music, songs, festivals, dance, literature, language, customs, folklore and for a distinctive way of life. One cannot experience or draw from this rich culture unless one speaks Irish fluently: certainly, aspects of our Irish literature or songs can be translated to other languages but the same pleasure and



amhráin a aistriú go teangacha eile ach ní hionann é sin agus a bheith in ann é a léamh agus sásamh a bhaint as ins an teanga inár scríobhadh é. Tá sé mar chúram orainne, pobal na Gaeltachta, a bheith inar gcaomhnóirí ar ár n-oidhreacht luachmhar.

Is taisce luachmhar iad ár logainmneacha ina bhfuil saibhreas iontach eolais iontu faoi saol ár muintire san am a chuaigh thart. Sa chás nach bhfuil aon chuntas scríofa ar fáil faoi shaol laethúil oibre na ngnáth dhaoine tá mórán eolais gur féidir a aimsiú ó na logainmneacha mar atá ainmneacha bailte fearainn, sráidbhailte, cnoic, sléibhte, sráideanna, páirceanna, aibhneacha, locha agus mórán gnéithe aiceanta eile den tírdhreach. Tugann logainmneacha léargas iontach dúinn ar ár saol sóisialta agus ar ár stair áitiúil, mórán de nár scríobhadh síos. Ba iad na gnáth dhaoine a chum na logainmneacha sin le cur síos a dhéanamh ar a saol laethúil, ar a gcleachtais oibre nó le cur síos a dhéanamh ar ghnéithe aiceanta dá dtimpeallacht. Le himeacht na mblianta cumadh leagan Béarla de na logainmneacha seo ach i ndáiríre níl iontu ach fuaimeanna atá cosúil le fuaimniú na logainmneacha Gaeilge ach níl aon bhrí ná ciall leo. Tá an cainteoir Gaeilge faoi bhuntáiste mór mar go dtuigeann sé

experience cannot be derived from them as can be derived from experiencing it in the language in which it was written. It is our responsibility, the people of the Gaeltacht, to be the protectors of our valuable heritage.

Our logainmneacha or placenames are a valuable resource. We can decipher a wonderful richness of knowledge from placenames; knowledge about the lives of our ancestors. In certain areas of the Gaeltacht no written account exists about the daily lives of the ordinary people. However, placenames offer us a wealth of knowledge on this subject; the names of townlands, villages, hills, mountains, fields, rivers, lakes and many more natural and man-made features of the landscape offer us a glimpse into our ancestors' way of life. Placenames give us a marvellous insight into our social and local history. It was the ordinary people who conceived those placenames to describe their daily life, their way of working or to describe the natural appearance of their environment. With the passage of time, English versions of these placenames were created, but in reality they are just a set of sounds that resemble the pronunciation of the Irish placenames, but they have no meaning or sense. The Irish



brí an leagan Gaeilge de na logainmneacha agus ar an ábhar sin tá tuiscint faoi leith aige ar a thimpeallacht chultúrtha agus ar a dhúiche féin: d'fhéadfá a rá go bhfuil ceangal faoi leith aige lena cheantar mar go bhfuil sé fréamhaithe ann agus ar an ábhar sin tá deis aige suim faoi leith a chur ina thimpeallacht. Is fiú a thabhairt san áireamh an méid seo a leanas a dúirt an file iomráiteach Seamus Heaney faoin dlúthbhaint atá ag an Ghaeilge le gach gné dár saol:

"Not to learn Irish is to miss the opportunity of understanding what life in this country has meant and could mean in a better future. It is to cut oneself off from ways of being at home. If we regard self-understanding, mutual understanding, imaginative enhancement, cultural diversity and a tolerant political atmosphere as desirable attainments, we should remember that knowledge of the Irish language is an essential element in their realisation."

speaker has a great advantage because he understands the meaning of the Irish place names and accordingly he has a distinct understanding of his cultural environment and of his own district: one could say that he has a unique connection with his area because he is rooted in it and therefore he has the opportunity to take a special interest in his environment. It is worthwhile to take into consideration what the famous poet, the late Seamus Heaney, had to say about the connection that Irish has with every aspect of our life:

"Not to learn Irish is to miss the opportunity of understanding what life in this country has meant and could mean in a better future. It is to cut oneself off from ways of being at home. If we regard self-understanding, mutual understanding, imaginative enhancement, cultural diversity and a tolerant political atmosphere as desirable attainments, we should remember that knowledge of the Irish language is an essential element in their realisation."





Cén ról a dtig liomsa a imirt sa Phróiseas Pleanála Teanga i mo cheantar féin?

Tá tús á chur le plean teanga a ullmhú i do cheantarsa. Is cinnte gur fiú go mór duit an deis cultúrtha seo a thapú agus páirt ghníomhach a ghlacadh sa phróiseas pleanála teanga a bheidh ar siúl i do Limistéar Pleanála Teanga ó seo go ceann blianta fada. Tá deis agatsa ionchur a bheith agat sa phlean teanga a ullmhófar do do cheantar. Thig leatsa do chuid féin a dhéanamh le cinntiú go mairfidh an Ghaeilge mar theanga bheo teaghlaigh agus pobail i do cheantar. Ansin beidh tú buíoch agus bródúil as an taise luachmhar atá aistrithe chugainn ó ghlúin go glúin lenár saol laethúil a chothú, a neartú agus a shaibhriú.

What role can I play in the language planning process in my own area?

Preliminary steps are currently being taken to prepare a language plan in your area. This is, therefore, a great opportunity for you to play an active role and have an input into the language planning process that will have a huge impact on your community for many years to come. You can do your part to ensure that the Irish language will survive as a living language among your people and your community. You can be proud that you played your part in the transfer of a rich and important culture from one generation to the next, and you can say that you helped to sustain, strengthen and enrich the daily life of your community.





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