**Foras na Gaeilge**



***Consultation Document***

***October 2019***

**A Strategic Direction for Foras na Gaeilge**

**2020 - 2025**

**Foras na GaeilgeForas na Gaeilge**

[www.forasnagaeilge.ie](http://www.forasnagaeilge.ie)

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**Part 1 Introduction**

**Objective of the Consultation**

The aim of this consultation document is to seek opinions on the draft of ***A Strategic Direction for Foras na Gaeilge 2020 – 2025*** which includes the organisations major objectives for that period.

It should be noted that this consultation document is available to read as a draft document on the Foras na Gaeilge website: www.forasnagaeilge.ie.

This consultation document provides a background for people whose opinions are sought on the document and the use to be made of it.+

Foras na Gaeilge would like to receive views from as many people as possible during this consultation. To help with this consultation process, the following gives a short account of material included in the ***Strategic Direction***. It also contains questions below which Foras na Gaeilge would like to be answered.

**Responding to the consultation**

Completed questionnaires can be sent by e-mail or in the post to the Responses Coordinator below. We must receive your response by 24 December 2019. Your response will be acknowledged within 2 working days (by e-mail or 5 days in the case of hard copy) to certify that your questionnaire was received. If you are answering as an agreed representative of an organisation or group, this can be mentioned.

Please give the following details:

**Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Responding on behalf of (if relevant): Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Contact details: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Response Co-ordinator Response Co-ordinator**

**Foras na Gaeilge Foras na Gaeilge**

**2-4 Sráid na Banríona 63-66 Sráid Amiens**

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**Confidentiality and Freedom of Information**

Foras na Gaeilge will publish a summary of the responses after the close of the consultation process and may publish them in their entirety. If you prefer your responses to be treated in confidence, please tell us, detailing your reasons. However, even if you ask that your responses to be treated confidentially, Foras na Gaeilge may decide to publish your response, or the Information Commissioner may request that your response be published in its entirety or a part thereof. It will be assumed that any automatic disclaimer generated by your computing system does not apply to your answer, except for information for which confidentiality was specifically requested.

If we are requested to disclose responses under the Code of Practice for Freedom of Information to the North/South Implementation Bodies and Tourism Ireland, we will consider any requests for confidentiality. We cannot, however, give any guarantees regarding confidentiality under freedom of information.

We will deal appropriately with personal details you provide in accordance with legislation on data protection.

To get more information on the confidentiality of responses, please contact the Information Commissioner’s Office or visit the website at: nó www.oic.ie nó ico.org.uk.

**Timetable**

**24 December 2019** is the deadline for receiving submissions.

**Equality of Opportunity**

This section gives the background to the creation and the objective of this document.

In accordance with Article 75 of the *Northern Ireland Act* 1998, Foras na Gaeilge must, in the discharge of its functions, pay due regard to equality of opportunity:

* between people of different religious belief, political opinion, race, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
* between men and women generally;
* between those who have a disability and those who do not;
* between those who have dependents and those who do not.

In addition, without prejudice to the above obligations, Foras na Gaeilge must give regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between people of differing religious belief, political opinion, or racial group.

Foras na Gaeilge is fully committed to complying with the legislative requirements of article 75 of the *Northern Ireland* Act 1998.

Under article 49A of the *Disability Discrimination Act* 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by the *Disability Discrimination* *(Northern Ireland) Order 2006),* Foras na Gaeilge is required, in carrying out its functions, to pay due regard to the need to:

* promote positive attitudes regarding people with disabilities; and
* encourage people with disabilities to participate in public life (‘the disability duties').

**Current Situation**

Foras na Gaeilge does not currently have any document relating to a period longer than three years. Even with the consultation process in place with input from the public included, an official role is not recognized under the Financial Memorandum, as previously stated.

**Pre-consultation with stakeholders**

Prior to this consultation process, Foras na Gaeilge consulted with a limited range of stakeholders involved in the partnership approach to obtain their views on some of the key objectives developed in this draft of ***A Strategic Direction for Foras na Gaeilge 2020 – 2025.***

**Part 2. Policy Explanation**

In accordance with the legislation and arrangements under which Foras na Gaeilge was established certain planning requirements have been identified. The Language Body's Financial Memorandum sets out the need for an annual business plan and a corporate plan covering a three year period. In addition to specific objectives and actions, budgets are quoted for the period to which both documents relate and both plans must be approved by the North / South Ministerial Council to be applicable.

More long-term planning was undertaken initially to lead Foras na Gaeilge's strategic development, with particular emphasis on corporate and internal affairs (staffing increase, divisional departments and so on) but the period of that plan came to an end in 2011. Due to uncertainty about various external factors in both jurisdictions, planning for a period of longer than three years has not yet been undertaken.

The Board of Foras na Gaeilge recognized that there would be particular value in developing a Strategic Direction for the organization which would reflect the organisation's ambition and commitment to the language. It was understood that it would not possible to determine a budget for longer than three years but at the same time it was understood that it was not worth choosing a long period for the ***Strategic Direction*** as it would not reflect the sense of urgency of some of the actions to be undertaken. A five year period was chosen as the term for the plan, **from 2020 to 2025**.

While it is a Strategic Direction for Foras na Gaeilge as an organization, the organization needs to be responsive to the needs of the language itself and therefore internal issues are not primarily discussed in the document. For over a year, an internal consultation process has taken place in Foras na Gaeilge at staff and Board level, under the direction of the Development Committee, a Board committee. It was recognized from the outset that it was important to obtain views from a wider range of people who would have opinions on the needs of the language in the years ahead. A high level consultation on the major objectives has already been explored with a number of the Foras stakeholders but this is now a public consultation on a broader basis.

The aforementioned planning considerations will not change after this process but feedback will be systematically received from the public on Foras na Gaeilge's priorities and major objectives in a way that will help us to plan in a better and more open way.

Foras na Gaeilge are also hopeful that a cycle of feedback and communication will be created with the public as a result.

**3. Examining Details and Research available**

The material here in ***A Strategic Direction for Foras na Gaeilge 2020 – 2025*** is based on an internal consultation process at staff and Board level undertaken within Foras na Gaeilge for over a year.

It should be noted that this consultation document is available to read as a draft document on the Foras na Gaeilge website: www.forasnagaeilge.ie.

3 major areas of work have been identified**: Language Ability; Language Use**; and **Support**.

Under each of these more specific areas of work are detailed:

**Language Ability**

Education

Lexicography & terminology

The family

**Language Use**

Development at community level & language planning

Integration of Irish into daily life

Publications

**Support**

Awareness

Broad initiatives

Of course this is a wide consultation not directed on a particular Foras na Gaeilge funding scheme and for this reason one should look at the draft copy of ***A Strategic Direction for Foras na Gaeilge 2020 – 2025*** where the research and planning background is laid out and additional details are displayed regarding the priorities recognised by Foras na Gaeilge for the time ahead. The draft is available on Foras na Gaeilge’s website: [www.forasnagaeilge.ie](http://www.forasnagaeilge.ie).

**4. Impact Assessment**

**Category Section 75: Religious Belief**

No known issues included.

**Category Section 75: Political Opinion**

No known issues included.

**Category Section 75: Race Group**

No known issues included.

**Category Section 75: Age**

No known issues included.

**Category Section 75: Marital Status**

No known issues included.

**Category Section 75: Sexual Orientation**

No known issues included.

**Category Section 75: Men & Women in General**

No known issues included.

**Category Section 75: Disability**

No known issues included.

**Category Section 75: Dependents**

No known issues included.

**Summary**

It is not expected that there will be any negative effect included in the draft for ***A Strategic Direction for Foras na Gaeilge 2020 – 2025*** on any of the groups under Alt 75 which would require mitigating or other policies. Of course if detailed recommendations emerge as a result of this consultation process, they will be dealt with as required.

**5. Other Options, Mitigation & Policy Decision**

As aforementioned this is a consultation process on ***A Strategic Direction for Foras na Gaeilge 2020 – 2025*** a conscious decision was made by the organisation to address context and timetable planning which made it difficult for the organisation to attract input from the public into the organisation's planning process in its broadest sense.

The draft of ***A Strategic Direction for Foras na Gaeilge 2020 – 2025*** and the consultation process itself is an attempt to listen to the public and to take their suggestions on board accordingly and to create an eventful conversation with the public in a way that has not taken place previously.

This will of course be taking place without affecting the organisations requirements in relation to any amendment or significant suggestion in a particular area of work that may arise later and the appropriate process regarding any amendment or suggestion of its sort will always be ahered to.

**6.** **Seeking Your Views**

We are seeking your views on the draft ***A Strategic Direction for Foras na Gaeilge 2020 –* 2025** and on the consultation process surrounding it. It is recommended that the draft document itself be viewed when creating responses (in PDF format on [www.forasnagaeilge.ie/nuacht/comhairliuchan](http://www.forasnagaeilge.ie/nuacht/comhairliuchan))

C 1. Are you in favour of / opposed to such a document? Explain your reason please:

C 2. Do you have suggestions for improvements that you would make to the new approach mentioned or any aspect of it? List below please:

C 3. Regarding the major area **Language Ability** and the titles below – *Education*; *Lexicography & terminology*; and *The family* – do you have suggestions regarding the allocation of material or about specific aspects of it? Explain your recommendations please:

C 4. Regarding the major area **Language Use** and the titles below – Development at community level &language planning – do you have other suggestions regarding how the subject matter is allocated or about specific aspects of it? Explain your recommendations please :

C 5. Regarding the major area **Support** and the titles below – *Awareness;* and *Broad initiatives* – do you have other suggestions regarding how the subject matter is allocated or about specific aspects of it? Explain your recommendations please :

We welcome any additional information and statements that you feel may facilitate us. Please send completed copies of the Consultation Document if possible or other responses before **24 December 2019** to:

**Response Co-ordinator Response Co-ordinator**

**Foras na Gaeilge Foras na Gaeilge**

**2-4 Sráid na Banríona 63-66 Sráid Amiens**

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**N.B. Please provide contact details.**

**7.** **Formal Consultation, Decision and Publishing Results**

This formal consultation process will begin in **October 2019**. A summary of the responses will be published on the Foras na Gaeilge website early in 2020, when the Board of Foras na Gaeilge will assess the feedback and their impact on the draft document.