

Use of the Irish Language in Public Procurement

In accordance with the Official Languages Act 2003 and the Official Languages Act 2021, this section outlines the obligations on South Dublin County Council in relation to Irish Language usage obligations in procurement processes and the delivery of goods and services by third parties. These provisions apply to all procurement activities, including but not limited to public advertisements, tender documentation, supplier engagement, and contract management, where services or communications are directed at the public or delivered on behalf of South Dublin County Council.

Procurement of the following must comply with the Official Languages Act.

- Software, applications, websites or digital platforms.
- Signage (temporary or permanent) and Public Information Displays.
- Logos and Branding.
- Other Public-Facing Materials for and by South Dublin County Council.

Software and Digital Platforms

Where software, applications, websites or digital platforms are being procured, especially those that are intended for use by the public OR used in customer service delivery, the following conditions apply:

- Software and digital platforms must support the full and equal use of the Irish Language alongside English.
- The user interface, menus, notifications, automated messages, and user support (where applicable) must be available in Irish.
- Where feasible, the supplier must provide the Irish version at no additional cost.
- Systems that cannot accommodate Irish language functionality may be excluded unless a justifiable exemption is documented.

Signage and Public Information Displays / Logos and Branding

In accordance with Section 9 of the Act:

- All signage, posters, notices, nameplates, and digital displays that are intended for use in public buildings and customer-facing environments, temporary or permanent, must be provided in Irish, or in Irish and English with the Irish coming first and in equal-sized font.
- Where the text is in both official languages, the Irish text must be first and not be less prominent than the English text in terms of positioning, size, visibility, and legibility.

Supplier Responsibilities

Supplier responsibilities include:

- Tender documentation for software and signage must include explicit technical and language requirements that ensure compliance with the Act.
- Suppliers must be asked to confirm their capacity to deliver bilingual or Irish-only versions where required.
- For existing systems being upgraded, a review should be carried out to ensure they align with current language obligations.
- Where a contract involves the delivery of services to the public on behalf of South Dublin County Council, tender documents shall include a requirement for suppliers to:
 - Provide specified services bilingually or through the medium of Irish, where necessary.
 - Ensure compliance with any Language Standards (Caighdeáin Teanga) applicable under the Act.
 - Deliver public-facing content (e.g., signage, websites, forms, automated messages, customer service interactions) in Irish, or in Irish and English, as required.
 - Maintain quality and accuracy in Irish language content and ensure professional translation services are used where appropriate.

Correct Use of the Irish Language – Including Síneadh Fada

All Irish language text used in software, signage, documentation, and communication, whether by South Dublin County Council or a third-party supplier, must reflect accurate and grammatically correct Irish, including the proper use of the síneadh fada (accent) on vowels. The omission or misrepresentation of the fada (e.g., using “Eire” instead of “Éire” or “Sean” instead of “Seán”) is considered an error and may constitute non-compliance under the Official Languages Act.

Suppliers must ensure that systems and signage:

- Support UTF-8 encoding or other character sets that correctly render fadas.
- Allow for data input and display in Irish with all required diacritical marks.
- Include proper QA checks to ensure the correct spelling of names, addresses, placenames, and general content in Irish.
- This is particularly important when:
- Procuring CRM systems, databases, online forms, or identity-related software.
- Ordering nameplates, directional signage, or public information displays.
- Developing or procuring web-based services or digital communication tools.

Only official translations approved by South Dublin County Council Irish Office (gaeilge@sdublincoco.ie) may be used in communications and signage (e.g., temporary signage at construction sites or for road works).

Use of online tools such as Google Translate is prohibited, as this will not produce accurate translations.