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Irish

The Irish language in education in Northern Ireland

2nd edition



* numerically small language communities

This document was published by Mercator-Education with financial support from the Fryske Akademy and the European Commission (DG XXII: Education, Training and Youth)

ISSN: 1570-1239

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This regional dossier was originally compiled by Aodán Mac Póilin from Ultach Trust/Iontaobhas Ultach and Mercator Education in 1997. It has been updated by Róise Ní Bhaoill from Ultach Trust/Iontaobhas Ultach in 2004. Very helpful comments have been supplied by Dr. Lelia Murtagh, Department of Psycholinguistics, Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann (ITE), Dublin. Unless stated otherwise the data reflect the situation in 2003.

Acknowledgment:

Mo bhuíochas do mo chomhghleacaithe in Iontaobhas ULTACH, do Liz Curtis, agus do Sheán Ó Coinn, Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta as a dtacaíocht agus a gcuidiú agus mé i mbun na hoibre seo, agus don Roinn Oideachas agus an Roinn Fostaíochta agus Foghlama as an eolas a cuireadh ar fáil.

Tsjerk Bottema has been responsible for the publication of the Mercator regional dossiers series from January 2004 onwards.

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Glossary

CCEA:	The Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment
CCMS:	Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
DEL:	Department for Employment and Learning
DENI:	Department of Education for Northern Ireland
DHSSPS:	Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
ELBs:	Education and Library Boards
GCE AS:	General Certificate of Education Advanced Standard
GCE:	General Certificate of Education
GCE -A-level:	General Certificate of Education at Advanced Level
GCSE:	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GNVQ:	General National Vocational Qualification
NICIE:	Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
PEEP:	Pre-school Education Expansion Programme
PGCE:	Postgraduate Certificate in Education

Foreword

background

For several years now, Mercator-Education has made efforts to achieve one of its principal goals: to gather, store and distribute information on minority language education in European regions. Regional or minority languages are languages which differ from the official language of the state where they are spoken and which are traditionally used within a given territory by nationals of that state forming a group numerically smaller than the rest of the state's population.

The success of this series of regional dossiers has shown a need for documents stating briefly the most essential features of the educational system of regions with an autochthonous lesser used language. With the establishment of regional dossiers we intend to meet this need.

aim

Regional dossiers aim at providing concise descriptive information and basic educational statistics about minority language education in a specific region of the European Union. This kind of information, such as features of the educational system, recent educational policies, division of responsibilities, main actors, legal arrangements, support structures, and also quantitative information on the number of schools, teachers, pupils and financial investments, can serve several purposes.

target group

Policy makers, researchers, teachers, students and journalists may use the information provided to assess developments in European minority language schooling. They can also use a regional dossier as a first orientation towards further research or as a source of ideas for improving educational provision in their own region.

link with EURYDICE

In order to link these regional descriptions with those of national educational systems, it was decided to follow the format used by EURYDICE, the European education inform-

ation network in the European Union. EURYDICE provides information on the administration and structure of education in member states of the European Union. The information provided in the regional dossiers is focussed on language use at the various levels of education.

contents

The remainder of this dossier consists firstly of an introduction to the region under study, followed by six sections each dealing with a specific level of the educational system. These brief descriptions contain factual information presented in a readily accessible way. Sections eight to ten cover research, prospects and summary statistics. For detailed information and political discussions about language use at the various levels of education, the reader is referred to other sources with a list of publications.

1

Introduction

language

Irish, or Gaeilge, is an autochthonous language spoken in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland. It is a Celtic language closely related to Scottish Gaelic and Manx, and more distantly related to Welsh, Breton and Cornish. Speakers of Irish in Northern Ireland are predominantly second language learners and most people learn the language through the education system or at informal language classes held throughout Northern Ireland. Three major dialects of Irish are spoken in Ireland, Ulster, Connacht and Munster. The Ulster dialect is spoken and taught in Northern Ireland.

population

Irish was used by a number of residual communities of native speakers in Northern Ireland when the state was founded in 1921. These communities are no longer extant; the last native speaker of Tyrone Irish survived until 1970. At present the Irish-speaking community in Northern Ireland consists of those who have learned Irish as a second language at secondary school, university, or at night classes;

children who have been brought up with Irish as their first language (often by parents who themselves learned or are learning it as a second language); and an increasing number of children from English-speaking homes who are being educated through the medium of Irish in Irish-medium schools. While this community extends throughout Northern Ireland it is largely an urban phenomenon with the highest concentration of speakers in Belfast, particularly the west, Derry, and in the Newry and Mourne districts.

According to the 2001 Census, 167,490, or 10.4%, of the total population in Northern Ireland aged three and over reported some knowledge of Irish.¹ The Census does not provide information on the fluency or ability of speakers but it has been estimated by scholars that between 13-15000 speakers are 'fluent speakers' and that a further 40-45000 are 'functional speakers of Irish' who claim better than average ability to speak Irish.² The following table illustrates the results of the Irish language question in the 2001 Census.

Knowledge of Irish of all persons aged 3 years and over Northern Ireland Census 2001	
All persons	1,617,957
Understands spoken Irish but cannot read, write or speak Irish	36,479
Speaks but does not read or write Irish	24,536
Speaks and reads but does not write Irish	7,183
Speaks, reads, writes and understands Irish	75,125
Speaks, reads, writes and understands Irish	24,167
Has some knowledge of Irish	167,490
Has no knowledge of Irish	1,450,467

language status

Prior to the establishment of the Northern Ireland state in 1921, Irish was recognised as a school subject and as "Celtic" in some third level institutions. This policy continued in spite of attempts in the 1930s to restrict it further in the curriculum. Between 1921 and 1972, Northern Ireland had a measure of devolved government. During

those years one party, the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), which was hostile to the Irish language, was in power in the Northern Ireland Parliament. Northern Ireland was ruled directly from Westminster, London, from 1972 until 1998. During this period the government's attitude to the Irish language changed somewhat. The first Irish-medium schools were funded in the early 1980s and later that decade a number of Irish language projects received funding from the public purse. However, significant change was to occur only after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998.

Irish is not recognised as an official language in Northern Ireland, but the British Government has committed itself to various measures in support of the language, as specified in the Good Friday Agreement of 10 April 1998³ (also known as the Belfast Agreement). The Agreement states that: "All participants recognise the importance of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to linguistic diversity, including in Northern Ireland, the Irish language, Ulster-Scots and the languages of the various ethnic communities, all of which are part of the cultural wealth of the island of Ireland." Furthermore, the British Government committed itself to taking "resolute action" to promote the Irish language and promised measures to encourage its use in public and private life, in the media and in education. It also provided for the establishment of a North/South Ministerial Council, whose duties include setting up six cross-border implementation bodies funded by the two administrations. One of the bodies is the North/South Language Body which contains two associated agencies, *Foras na Gaeilge*⁴ (dealing with Irish) and *Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch* (dealing with Ulster-Scots). *Foras na Gaeilge* has a role in advising administrations, north and south, as well as public bodies and other groups in the private and voluntary sectors in all matters relating to the Irish language.

The British Government ratified the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages on 27 March 2001. Welsh, Scots-Gaelic and Irish were given protection under Part 3 of

the Charter, the highest level of protection, while Scots and Ulster Scots were given more limited protection under Part 2. The Government thus committed itself and the Northern Ireland Assembly (suspended at the time of writing) to a wide range of measures to promote the Irish language in public life. Measures relating to education include facilitating Irish-medium education or the opportunity to study Irish at all school levels where requested and where numbers are sufficient; facilitating Irish-medium education or the teaching of the language at universities and in adult education; ensuring the teaching of the history and culture associated with the language; and providing the necessary teacher-training.

The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, a body created by the Good Friday Agreement, has drawn up preliminary proposals for inclusion in a Northern Ireland Bill of Rights. Its provisional view is “that rather than make provision for ‘official’ or ‘national’ languages and ‘second’ or ‘other’ languages, it is better to guarantee rights for all language users and make the extent of those rights dependent on the extent to which each language is used and understood in the community.” The Commission wishes “to guarantee a measure of recognition and respect to the users of all languages, dialects and other forms of communication because they all contribute to the cultural wealth of the community.” Irish and Ulster Scots already enjoy a measure of protection under the Good Friday Agreement but other minority languages in Northern Ireland do not. The commission recommends the inclusion of users of sign language, Travellers, and speakers of Chinese and Urdu as well as speakers of Irish and Ulster Scots in the proposed Bill of Rights. The Commission’s proposals guarantee the right to use any language or dialect for private and public purposes, where necessary through an interpreter. They endorse the commitments made under the Good Friday Agreement and the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages. They call for legislation to ensure that, where there is sufficient demand, members of all linguistic

communities should have certain rights in respect of their language or dialect, including “the right to learn in it and to be educated in and through it.”

status of language education

The Department of Education has a statutory duty to encourage and facilitate Irish-medium education arising out of the Belfast Agreement and the subsequent Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998. In 2000, the Department established two new voluntary bodies to deal with Irish-medium education. *Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta* promotes, facilitates and encourages the development of Irish-medium education and schools. It has eleven full-time staff and in 2002/3 had a budget of £326,000. *Iontaobhas na Gaelscolaíochta* is a trust fund for Irish-medium education which received an initial payment of £1.25m from Government. This funding was later supplemented by a further grant of half a million pounds. It is administered by a small voluntary board of Trustees appointed by the Department of Education and *Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta*. Most of its funding is directed at non-funded schools and pre-schools.

education system

The education system in Northern Ireland differs from those of England, Wales and Scotland in some respects, although it shares a few basic principles, including that of compulsory education for all children between the ages of 5 (year 1) and 16 (year 12). In principle, educational provision should be free, but some schools which do not fit the educational or numerical criteria laid down by government are not funded. All state-funded schools in Northern Ireland, including Irish-medium schools, are expected to follow the statutory Northern Ireland Curriculum. It is currently under review and phased change is expected to start in September 2004.⁵

The 12 years of compulsory schooling are divided into primary level and secondary level. The curriculum is defined in terms of four key stages, two at each level. The key stages are as follows:

Key stage 1, covers school years 1–4 for pupils aged 4–8;
Key stage 2, covers school years 5–7 for pupils aged 9–11;
Key stage 3, covers school years 8–10 for pupils aged 12–14;
Key stage 4, covers school years 11–12 for pupils aged 15–16.

Pupils are assessed at the end of each key stage in core curriculum subjects, and also have to study a number of other compulsory subjects. Six cross-curricular educational themes must be provided, two of which are Education for Mutual Understanding and Cultural Heritage.

The education system in Northern Ireland has in addition a number of distinctive features. Although early attempts were made to create a non-denominational system of education in Northern Ireland, it developed along denominational lines. In the 1930s an agreement was reached with the three main Protestant churches – the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian and Methodist Churches – under which they eventually transferred their schools to the ownership of the state and in return they received key roles in the management of the education system; these schools are referred to as either “state” or “controlled” schools and educate mainly Protestant children. The Catholic Church retained ownership of their schools but, as a result of a series of negotiations over school management arrangements, Catholic schools now have both their full recurrent and capital costs met from public funds in the same way as state schools. These schools are referred to as Catholic Maintained schools and educate mainly Catholic children. Voluntary Grammar schools have either Catholic or non-denominational management and educate either Catholic or Protestant children. There are also Independent schools which are not in receipt of government funding and Integrated schools which essentially aim to educate Catholic and Protestant children together; the first integrated school was established in 1981. Secondary education in Northern

Ireland retains largely a selective system with pupils going to grammar schools or secondary schools according to academic ability. With the exception of grammar schools, half of which are single-sex, most other secondary schools in Northern Ireland are coeducational.

The Irish-medium education sector also includes a number of different types of school. The term 'free-standing' refers to an Irish-medium primary or secondary school which is not attached to, or part of, an English-medium school. An Irish-medium 'unit' operates as a self-contained provision under the management of a host English-medium school. Independent Irish-medium schools are schools which are not funded by the state: they normally develop into free-standing schools on receipt of funding. Both Irish-medium schools and units adopt a total immersion approach whereby all teaching is delivered through the medium of Irish. Irish-medium schools are managed by boards of governors which are appointed mainly by the parent bodies, with Educational Library Board (ELB) representation. Irish-medium units are under the management of the host English-medium school. At present, all Irish-medium units are in Catholic schools under the management of CCMS.

In the following sections the use and position of Irish in the educational system of Northern Ireland are discussed in more detail.

private and public

The vast majority of schools are state-funded, and managed by Boards of Governors, all of which have teacher and parent representatives. These schools, which reflect the history of denominational education in Northern Ireland, fall into a wide range of sub-sections, depending on their background, management structure and funding mechanism. Independent, or private, schools receive no direct aid from public funds.

administration

Overall responsibility for all aspects of state-funded (also

called grant-aided) education in Northern Ireland lies with the Department of Education for Northern Ireland (DENI). Since the Northern Ireland Assembly was suspended in 2002, DENI is the responsibility of a Minister of State in the Northern Ireland Office who is directly appointed by the UK government in London. DENI formulates educational policy in Northern Ireland, and all major funding decisions lie with the Department. At local level, educational provision, involving both capital and running costs, is administered by five Education and Library Boards (ELBs), which are funded by DENI. ELBs manage some schools, and are the channel for the funding of others. They also provide a curriculum advisory and support service to schools under their management, and advise government departments (and other agencies) both on the needs of their own areas and on the formulation of policy. The language of administration is English.

inspection

Within DENI, the Education and Training Inspectorate is responsible for monitoring, inspecting and reporting on the standard of education and training provided by schools. It administers a programme of inspections which result in reports for publication. It provides relevant advice to the Department of Education, the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, and the Department for Employment and Learning.

support structure

The Department of Education Northern Ireland (DENI) is responsible for all resource issues relating to schools and the Youth Service; the latter advises DENI and the ELBs on the personal and social development of children, young people and young adults. DENI funds the expenditure incurred by the five Education and Library Boards, which have statutory responsibility for the provision of services. All grant-aided schools have their recurrent costs fully funded by DENI, either directly or through the ELBs. DENI also provides 100% grant-aid for capital costs for most schools, although a small number of maintained schools and

voluntary grammar schools receive up to 85%. Capital funding is paid directly by DENI to all categories of school except controlled or “state” schools. The Department also provides specific grants to many schools, in particular, under the School Improvement Programme, to meet government priorities. These grants are either paid directly, or, for some categories of school, through the Education and Library Boards.⁶

In addition to the Department of Education, several other organisations operate within the sector. The Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), established in 1994, provides advice to the Minister of Education on curriculum, assessment and examination matters, conducts key stage assessments, GCSE and GCE examinations, and administers the Transfer Procedure Tests (commonly called “11 plus”). It has a regulatory role in relation to standards in GCSE, GCE and General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) examinations offered in Northern Ireland, and provides information and produces teaching materials relating to the implementation of curriculum requirements and assessment arrangements in schools.

As has been stated, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) is the advocate for the Catholic Maintained schools sector in Northern Ireland. CCMS represents trustees, schools and governors on issues such as raising and maintaining standards, the school estate and teacher employment. It also supports trustees in the provision of school buildings, and governors and principals in the effective management and control of schools.⁷ All the Irish-medium units in Northern Ireland are within the Catholic maintained schools sector.

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) co-ordinates efforts to develop Integrated Education and to assist parent groups in opening new integrated schools. These schools provide for religious balance (Catholic and Protestant) in pupil enrolments, teaching staff and governors. New schools agree to these

principles as a pre-requisite of NICIE support and assistance. Irish-as-a-subject is an option for some children at secondary level in the integrated sector.

There are also a number of support organisations, which are specific to the Irish-medium sector. *Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta* (The Council for Irish-medium education) was established by the Department of Education in 2000 to promote Irish-medium education. It plans for new schools, promotes good practice; represents the sector; and provides advice, and assistance and information to groups setting up schools and units. It does not have a funding role.

Iontaobhas na Gaelscolaíochta (the Trust Fund for Irish medium education) was established in 2001 with an initial fund of £1.75m from the government. The trust provides financial support to schools at primary and secondary level, which are not yet in receipt of government funding, and to those setting up and developing new pre-school, primary or secondary provision. It also provides loans and grants for the development and enhancement of existing educational provision.

Until *Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta* and *Iontaobhas na Gaelscolaíochta* were established, *Gaeilíúint*, had responsibility for the establishment and development of new Irish-medium primary schools. However, it is now focusing on the development of Irish-medium education at tertiary level.

Altram is a regional training and advisory organisation for the Irish-medium early years sector. Founded in 1996, this voluntary organisation supports and advises staff, committees and parents, and develops guidelines, curriculum resources and teaching aids for the sector. It is the only Irish-medium centre in Northern Ireland providing training for the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ). It provides training courses on a regional and outreach basis. NVQ qualifications are a requirement at pre-school level: at least one member of staff should have NVQ Level 3 or equivalent; all other qualified staff should have NVQ Level 2 or equivalent; and 50% of the staff group should be

qualified. Institutions of Further and Higher Education provide qualifying training for the English-medium pre-school sector. A range of voluntary providers, educational institutions, and health trusts and boards provide in-service training. Stranmillis University College offers a BA Honours degree in Early Childhood Studies and a Post-graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Early Years.

The cross-border Irish language agency, *Foras na Gaeilge*, was established in 1999. It is charged with promotion of Irish on an all-island basis. One of its functions is to support Irish-medium education and the teaching of Irish. It has offices in Dublin and Belfast.

An tÁisaonad Lán-Ghaeilge (the Irish-medium resource centre) has responsibility for the provision of teaching materials for the Irish-medium sector. The resource is based in St. Mary's University College, Belfast⁸ and is funded by *Foras na Gaeilge*. It has a small team of editors and translators, who create, adapt and translate texts for use in Irish-medium primary and secondary sectors. At present, due to lack of resources and staff, it is unable to meet the demands of the sector; so many teachers enhance current provision with in-house adaptations of suitable English-medium texts, or with texts which have been produced for the Irish-medium sector in the Republic of Ireland. However, because the curriculum in the Republic of Ireland is different from that in Northern Ireland, texts cannot readily be used or adapted for use in northern schools: both jurisdictions have their own separate educational curriculum. There are plans to create a central bank of in-house resources produced by teachers in Northern Ireland.

2

Pre-school education

target group

Pre-school education is provided for a child after he/she has attained the age of 2 years and before he/she has attained compulsory school age which is 5 years old. Irish-medium

pre-school education is in the main directed at children from English-speaking homes, whose parents are considering primary education through the medium of Irish for their children. Children as young as two years may enrol in statutory nursery schools, or units, but a starting age of three is preferred for Irish-medium pre-schools.

structure

There are five types of pre-school provision in Northern Ireland:

- voluntary pre-school playgroups, which are outside the state system and not directly funded by the state;
- grant-aided, free-standing, statutory nursery schools, which are independent nurseries in receipt of state funding;
- grant-aided, statutory nursery units, which are part of an existing primary school, and are funded by the state;
- private day nurseries, which are not in receipt of state funding but are paid for primarily by parents, and
- reception classes and groups in primary schools which are part of the statutory primary education provided by a number of schools (currently being phased out by Government).

Pre-school playgroups, which include the majority of Irish-medium pre-school provision, are entirely voluntary and fall outside mainstream educational provision. They are funded by the Department of Education through the Pre-school Education Expansion Programme (PEEP). Playgroups may supplement this funding through fees, fundraising and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSPSS) grants. Voluntary pre-school playgroups do not receive capital funding.

State-funded nursery schools and nursery classes in primary schools are financed on a not strictly regulated basis by DENI. They are staffed by qualified teachers who have the ongoing support of the local ELBs and may use their in-service facilities. The Irish language community has argued

for state-funded nursery provision in the Irish-medium sector on the basis that it would enable children from English-speaking homes to deal with the statutory curriculum needs of Irish-medium primary schools. However, no specific provision has yet been made for Irish-medium nursery education.

legislation

There is no statutory right to pre-school education. However, under the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998⁹, the Government seeks to provide a childcare place for every child whose parents wish it. It provides free pre-school education for children in their pre-school year through the PEEP. Funding is administered according to Local Management of Schools funding formulae and is allocated to grant-aided nursery schools, units, reception classes and groups, and direct grants are made to voluntary pre-school playgroups and private nurseries. All places available under PEEP are part-time. Discretionary Government funding can also be provided for capital projects for statutory nursery school or units and grants are delivered through the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety. Pre-schools must have a single year enrolment of 26 to qualify for nursery-school or unit status.

statistics

The first Irish-medium pre-school playgroup was established in Belfast in 1978 with 7 children. In 2002–3, 34 Irish-medium playgroups and two nursery units were attended by a total of 847 children. There are 12 in Belfast and 8 in Derry, the two largest cities, and an increasing number in smaller urban and rural areas. With the exception of two nursery-units, all Irish-medium pre-school provision is provided by pre-school playgroups. In 2002–3, the English-medium sector catered for 21,079 children in all forms of funded pre-school education (see table below).

PRE-SCHOOL PROVISION 2002-2003

**No. of
Children**

Irish-medium pre-schools		847
English-medium pre-school education in schools		
Nursery schools	Full-time	3,644
	Part-time	2,625
Nursery classes	Full-time	3,683
	Part-time	4,140
English-medium reception classes		1,183
English-medium pre-school education in other centres (funded places only)		
Playgroups	Part-time	5,535
Day nurseries	Part-time	261
Other provision	Part-time	8

Source: Department of Education for figures on English-medium pre-school provision;
Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta for Irish-medium pre-schools

language use

The language used by the teachers in Irish-medium pre-school playgroups is Irish. Through a structured second-language immersion programme they enable children to acquire a level of Irish, which is sufficient to prepare them for entry to Irish-medium primary education. Pre-schools also provide a wide range of relevant learning experiences for the child, through the provision of carefully selected play materials and activities. The majority of pre-school staff are not native speakers of Irish and will have learnt it as a second language. However, some staff begin working in pre-schools with quite low levels of ability in Irish. Due to a lack of financial support from government, Irish-medium pre-schools are not in a position to offer all staff a range of childcare, or Irish language development courses. As a result, many do not have the preferred competencies, such as specialist skills in childcare or in the development of a second language in an immersion education setting.

3

Primary education

<i>target group</i>	Compulsory primary education is provided for children between the ages of 5 and 11 years of age, from Primary 1 to Primary 7.
<i>structure</i>	<p>Irish-medium primary education is delivered in two ways in Northern Ireland. Provision is through immersion programmes in Irish-medium primary schools and in Irish-medium units in English-medium primary schools.</p> <p>Although the immersion primary school is the most common form of provision, Irish-medium units in English-speaking schools are becoming increasingly common, especially in rural areas where numbers are insufficient to support a free-standing school. All of the units are, at present, being developed within existing English-medium schools in the Catholic-maintained sector. The CCMS has not, however, developed a policy on units within this sector. Historically, the Irish language community has had reservations concerning Irish-medium units, as they frequently do not have autonomy within an English-speaking school to develop their own policy, and the linguistic environment of English-medium schools can undermine attempts to make Irish the language of communication between the children. However the community now recognises the advantages of setting up such units in order to obtain government funding at an early stage, before numbers are sufficient to establish a separate school.</p> <p>The compulsory Core Curriculum subjects in English-medium primary schools are English, mathematics, and science and technology. Irish-medium primary schools and units have one more, namely Irish. All state-funded schools have a statutory requirement to offer religion as a non-compulsory subject. Other subjects, such as history and geography, along with a number of cross-curricular themes, are compulsory but are not examined at primary level. Irish does not fall within the common curriculum in English-medium primary schools; it may be taught only as an option if a competent teacher is available in the time that remains</p>

after the other subjects have been covered. Independent (non-state-funded) schools are not required to follow the core curriculum. The Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment has provided Irish-language assessment for Irish-medium schools in Irish, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. An Irish-language Transfer Test from primary to secondary education has been available since 1984 for those children who wish to apply for places in selective grammar schools – previously children from Irish-medium primary schools had to take the transfer test in English.

There are 48 special schools in Northern Ireland, which cater for children with physical, learning or behavioural disabilities. Funding to address each school's special educational needs is provided by the ELBs. The Department of Education has also established special educational needs units, but dedicated staff is not available to address the specific needs of special education in the Irish-medium sector. Irish-medium teachers have responded to this deficit by establishing the voluntary organisation *Gaeleagras Um Shainriachtainis Oideachais* (The Irish-language Organisation for Special Needs Education) which seeks to address the special needs of children in Irish-medium education. In 1999, the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) produced a report on special needs in the Irish-medium sector entitled *A Survey of Provision for Special Needs in Irish Medium Primary Schools*.¹⁰

legislation

The responsibility for Irish-medium education lies with the Department of Education. It introduced new criteria for the funding of Irish-medium education in 1999. To attain recurrent (non-capital) funding, an Irish-medium primary school in Belfast or Derry must have an initial intake of 15 children. Primary schools outside these cities must have an initial intake of 12 children. To attain fully-funded status, primary schools must have an intake of 20 children in Belfast and Derry and 15 children outside these cities. In

addition, schools are required to demonstrate a sustainable pattern of enrolment.

language use

The language of instruction in Irish-medium primary schools and units is Irish. All subjects are taught through Irish. The language of instruction for all subjects in English-medium schools is English. However, some teachers may use Irish while teaching Irish-as-a-subject.

statistics

The first Irish-medium primary school was established in Belfast in 1971 with an intake of nine pupils. In 2002–3, there were 18 Irish-medium primary schools and seven Irish-medium units. The enrolment at Irish-medium primary level was 1,954. Five of the free-standing schools and seven of the units are fully-funded (revenue and capital costs). Seven schools have interim funding (revenue costs only) and six are not funded. In 2002-3, the total enrolment for English-medium primary and preparatory schools (schools which prepare children to proceed to grammar schools) was 167,799.

Primary Provision 2002-2003	No. of children
Irish-medium primary schools and units	1,954
English-medium primary schools	165,179
English-medium preparatory schools	2,620

Source: Department of Education for figures on English-medium primary provision; Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta for Irish-medium primary school figures

teaching materials

An tÁisaonad Lán-Ghaeilge (the Irish-medium resource centre) in St. Mary's University College, Belfast, is charged with providing resources for Irish-medium education but due to its small staff and resources it cannot meet the demand from schools. Therefore, teachers in Irish-medium primary schools usually produce additional resources for use in their own schools. Resources provided by *An tÁisaonad Lán-Ghaeilge* include maths exercise books,

reading books in Irish, history, geography and science books.

4 Secondary education

target group:

Compulsory secondary education is provided for children aged between 11 and 16 years of age. Most children attend a further two years of post-compulsory education.

structure

Irish-medium secondary provision is delivered in three ways: through Irish-medium immersion education in Irish-medium secondary schools; through Irish-medium immersion units in English-medium schools; and Irish is taught as a subject in some English-medium schools, mostly within the Catholic and integrated sectors.

As already mentioned, secondary education in Northern Ireland is selective. Grammar schools use the results of the Transfer Test, or the 11 Plus as it is commonly known, to decide whom to admit. Children must pass the 11 Plus to gain a place in a grammar school. However, this transfer procedure from primary to grammar school will be abolished in 2008 on the basis that children should not be segregated into 'academic' and 'non-academic' pathways at the age of 11. From 2008, the transfer of children from primary to secondary schools will be based on parental choice informed by a Pupil Profile which will be developed for each child during his/her primary school years. New admissions criteria will be developed by grammar schools, and distance from school may become a feature of selection which has not been the case to date in Northern Ireland. A new curriculum is also proposed which will include a wider range of vocational subjects. The Transfer Test, or academic selection, is not used to select pupils for the Irish-medium secondary sector.

State-funded secondary schools are required to follow the Northern Ireland Curriculum. Among the compulsory core curriculum subjects at secondary level is a requirement to

study at least one modern language. Irish is accepted as a modern language for this purpose, along with French, German, Spanish and Italian. An attempt by Government in 1988-1989 to exclude Irish from the list of admissible core curriculum modern languages at secondary level did not succeed. Irish is the most commonly taught language after French, and is taught exclusively in Catholic and Integrated English-medium schools secondary schools.

A public examination, the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), is usually taken in year 12 of compulsory education at the age of 16, at the end of Key stage 4. The GCE Advanced Subsidiary qualification (GCE AS) is taken in the first year of post-compulsory education, and GCE Advanced Level (A-Level) is taken in the second year. A special GCSE examination in Irish, or Gaeilge as it is called, was provided for pupils in Irish-medium schools and units in 1993 by the CCEA. In addition, GCSE examinations through the medium of Irish for all subjects in Irish-medium schools were first provided for Irish-medium post-primary schools in 1996. The CCEA is now developing assessment materials in Irish for the Northern Ireland Curriculum at secondary level (Key Stages 3 and 4).

A government-funded initiative organised by *Gael-Linn*, a non-governmental Irish language promotional organisation, to offer an introduction to Irish-language and culture for pupils in Forms 6 and 7 (17 to 18 year olds) at secondary level in a number of non-Catholic grammar schools has been in operation since 1994, and over 500 pupils have availed of this course.

To supplement Irish at school, summer courses in the Irish language are provided by *Comhaltas Uladh*, also a non-governmental Irish language promotional organisation, for secondary school children from both Irish and English-medium schools. These three-week courses are held in Irish-speaking areas in Donegal, in the Republic of Ireland, and cater for a range of language abilities.

legislation

The responsibility for Irish-medium secondary education lies with the Department of Education. To qualify for

Government funding an Irish-medium secondary school requires a minimum intake of 50 pupils in a single-year intake for a free-standing post-primary school. This enrolment entitles schools to capital and recurrent funding. Less stringent criteria are applied to Irish-medium units in English-medium schools.

statistics

Meánscoil Feirste, an Irish-medium secondary school, located in West Belfast, was established in 1991. It received government funding in 1996. There are also two Irish-medium secondary units, one in Derry and one in Armagh City, each under the management of an English-medium school in the Catholic sector. In 2002-3, *Meánscoil Feirste* had 363 pupils, while the Derry unit had 54 pupils, and Armagh had 10, making a total of 427. The same year, there were 235 English-medium post-primary schools with an enrolment of 155,747.

Secondary Provision 2002-2003

Irish-medium secondary schools and units	No. of Children
Irish-medium secondary schools	363
Irish-medium secondary units	64
English-medium secondary schools	No. of Children
Non-grammar schools	92,645
Grammar schools	63,102

Source: Department of Education for figures on English-medium primary provision;
Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta for Irish-medium primary school figures

The latest figures available for the number of children studying Irish are from 1988-89, when it was calculated that 26,210 children were being taught Irish as a subject in English-medium Catholic schools. According to DENI figures, 2,670 sat the Irish GCSE examination in 2001-02. These figures include a small percentage of adult learners of Irish.

<i>language use</i>	The medium of instruction in Irish-medium secondary schools for all subjects except English is Irish. The medium of instruction in English-medium schools is English for all subjects except where teachers may use the target language as a means of communication to varying degrees /at least some of the time.
<i>teaching materials</i>	The situation in Irish-medium secondary schools is similar to that in primary schools. <i>An tÁisaonad Lán-Ghaeilge</i> (the Irish-medium resource centre) produces material for both sectors but cannot meet the demand, and therefore teachers have to produce much of the teaching material themselves. Teaching materials in Irish produced in the Republic of Ireland are often irrelevant to Irish-medium schools in Northern Ireland due to significant differences in the curriculum and the different dialects of Irish used. Although, some material produced in the Republic of Ireland is used in English-medium schools, teaching material for these schools has/is also been published by the ELBs. Other publishers, particularly <i>Preas Ultach</i> , have produced a range of textbooks for English-medium secondary schools which include Irish language workbooks and grammar exercises.

5 Further education

<i>target group</i>	Further state-funded education courses are provided for 16 year old school leavers and those over 16 years of age.
<i>structure</i>	On 1 April 1998, the Further Education colleges became free-standing incorporated bodies. Management responsibility now lies with each individual college's Governing Body. The Association of Northern Ireland Colleges (ANIC) acts as the representation body for the Further Education Colleges in Northern Ireland. At present, there are 16 colleges. These vary in size with Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education being the largest. The range

of courses provided by colleges span essential skills, and a wide range of vocational and academic programmes at levels 2 and 3 and Higher Education programmes. The Department of Education's Education and Training Inspectorate provides for inspections of FE colleges in relation to the quality of teaching and learning.

Forbairt Feirste, a Belfast-based Irish language economic development group, was established in 1994 to 'promote their cultural heritage through economic regeneration'. It co-ordinates courses through the medium of Irish for clerical assistants, computer skills, business development, media training and child-care workers. Training to National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level for Irish-medium pre-school education is made available by *Altram* (see section on pre-school education for further information on *Altram*).

legislation

Further Education is defined in legislation as full-time and part-time education (other than Higher Education) for persons over compulsory school age, and is the responsibility of the Department for Employment and Learning. One of the Department's core aims is to support regional economic development and, in particular, to provide the skills necessary for the knowledge-based economy by making available appropriate training courses and schemes.

language use

The language of instruction for vocational education is normally English. *Forbairt Feirste* and *Altram* provide their courses through the medium of Irish and English.

statistics

Forbairt Feirste provides training each year – GSCE qualifications, computer courses, work experience etc – for between 20 and 30 school-leavers from *Meánscoil Feirste*, the Irish-medium immersion education secondary school in Belfast.

Forty people attended *Altram's* National Vocational Qualification course for Irish-medium pre-schools in 2003-4: there is a waiting list of six. Cluster Training is

provided once each term (three terms altogether) with an attendance of 150: training meets the needs of the pre-school and includes matter such as Child Protection training. Local Flexible Training is also provided, where up to three nurseries in a single area are brought together to discuss, for example, issues such as curriculum development, the planning of craft activities etc. One hundred people attended this type of training during 2003–4.

In Northern Ireland there are 16 Institutes of Further and Higher Education and a Hotel and Catering College. The table below illustrates enrolment on Further Education courses in 2000-01: a breakdown for individual courses is not available.

Enrolment at Further Education Colleges 2000-01 (English-medium only)	
Vocational Students on Further Education Courses	79,289
Vocational Students on Higher Education Courses	12,020
Students on non-vocational courses	72,415
Total	163,724

Source: Department for Employment and Learning

6 Higher education

structure

Higher education is the provision of programmes of study at a higher standard than the Advanced Level of the General Certificate of Education (GCE A-levels) or National Vocational Qualification Level 3. It includes courses at universities and university colleges, and also post-A-Level courses at Institutes of Further and Higher Education.

Within Northern Ireland there are four higher education institutions: Queen's University Belfast (QUB); the University of Ulster (UU); St. Mary's University College, Belfast; and Stranmillis University College. A number of students are also enrolled on Open University Courses.

<i>legislation</i>	<p>The Higher Education Branch of Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) is responsible for the formulation, development and oversight of the implementation of higher education policy and for the funding of the two universities and the two university colleges.</p>
<i>language use</i>	<p>The language of instruction at the four institutions is English, although some of them use Irish as a medium of instruction for some, or all, of their courses in Irish and Celtic Studies. Irish as a subject is offered at QUB (Irish and Celtic Studies) and at UU, which offers two pathways (Irish Studies, and Irish Language and Literature). There is no information available as to the extent of use of Irish in informal situations in higher education.</p>
<i>teacher training</i>	<p>Teaching qualifications for both primary and secondary level can be gained through the degrees of Bachelor of Education (B. Ed.), provided by St Mary's and Stranmillis university colleges, or through a Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) provided by QUB and UU. Graduates of these courses can, and do, teach in Irish-medium primary and secondary schools, even though they have not received specific training for teaching in an immersion situation.</p> <p>As well as providing a Bachelor of Education qualification for mainstream students, St. Mary's University College, Belfast, provides the only dedicated training for the Irish-medium sector. It offers two options. Postgraduate students intending to teach in Irish-medium primary schools may take a one-year full-time course, taught substantially through the medium of Irish, to gain a Post-Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE). Alternatively undergraduates may take a four year full-time Bachelor of Education course. Taught bilingually, this course equips students to teach in both Irish-medium and English-medium schools. They obtain a B Ed Honours Degree with a Teaching Certificate in Bilingual Education.</p>

The Department of Education for Northern Ireland is currently considering a *Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta* (Council for Irish-medium Education) report recommending specific measures to address teacher shortages in Irish-medium education; proposals include an increase in intake of pupils and teaching staff in St. Mary's University College.

statistics

Enrolment at Higher Education in Northern Ireland is illustrated in the table below. These figures do not include students from Northern Ireland who are enrolled on courses in Great Britain or in the Republic of Ireland; a breakdown of figures for the different courses is not available.

Enrolment at Higher Education in Northern Ireland 2000-01	
Full-time undergraduate	30,602
Part-time undergraduate	15,883
Full-time postgraduate	3,590
Part-time postgraduate	4,378
Total	54,453

Source: Department of Education for Northern Ireland

7

Adult education

In the past, most adult Irish-language education was provided informally by the voluntary sector, but from about the mid-1990s the statutory sector began to expand its activity in this area. No accurate statistics are available, but a list of classes in Belfast, compiled by Liz Curtis for 1996-7, shows that over 60 classes were delivered in 37 venues in the city each week. The main statutory bodies running courses are the Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education, Queen's University, and the University of Ulster, while voluntary organisations include *Conradh na Gaeilge* (The Gaelic League), *Cumann Chluain Ard* (an Irish-only social club in Belfast) and *Glór na nGael* (an organisation which runs an annual competition to assess the

most advanced community in terms of language use and cultural development).

The Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education offers GCSE and A-Level Programmes as well as Beginner Level courses. The “Graded Levels Language Progression Route Programme”, with a specified curriculum and validated examination, takes a beginner through four levels and then on to the General Certificate of Education (GCE), to the General Certificate of Education at Advanced Standard (GCE AS) and finally to the General Certificate of Education at Advanced Level (GCE-A-level) if the learner so wishes. In September 2003, over thirty classes, at varying levels, were offered by the Institute in Belfast.

Queen’s University Belfast offers a BA in Irish and Celtic Studies. The Institute of Lifelong Learning at the university offers Irish language courses as part of its Extra-Mural Programme. The University of Ulster offers a Diploma in Irish Language and a BA Hons Modern Irish degree.

Gaeilóilúint – a voluntary grant-aided body involved in the development of Irish-medium education since the 1990s – is involved in the development of Irish-medium tertiary education. It ultimately proposes to deliver, in partnership with other institutions, new Gaelic-medium academic and vocational courses. The proposed courses include a Post-graduate Certificate in Education; a Diploma in Irish; an Intensive Irish language course; an Advanced Grammar and Language Proficiency course and a number of intensive Irish language summer courses.

Courses for adults are run by several organisations in the Donegal *Gaeltacht* in the Republic of Ireland during Easter and summer school holidays. Courses cater for a range of levels, from total beginners to advanced. The following organisations run courses: *An Chrannóg*, *Comhaltas Uladh*, *Dáil Uladh*, *Gael-Linn*, *Oideas Gael* and *Taisce Árann*. A weeklong summer school, *Scoil Mhic Reachtain*, is run in North Belfast.

There are four self-teaching courses available in the Ulster dialect of Irish. *Now You're Talking*, published by Gill &

Macmillan, is a multimedia Irish-language package for beginners, which includes a 250-page book, five 90-minute audiocassettes, and a weekly television programme which was broadcast on BBC Northern Ireland. *Tús Maith*, by Risteard Mac Gabhann includes a coursebook and CDs and is aimed at adults. Art Hughes, *Cló Bheann Mhadagáin* (Benmadigan Publishing), has produced a further two books: *Trialacha Tuigbheála* (Comprehension Tests) for intermediate and advanced learners and *Bunchomhrá Gaeilge* (Conversational Irish) which is aimed at beginners. BBC Northern Ireland also published *An Béal Beo*, but it is now out of print. *Turas Teanga*, produced by RTÉ – the national television channel in the Republic of Ireland – is also available. It is a multimedia language course comprising 20 television programmes, a radio series, book, audio CDs, DVDs and website. This course reflects all dialects of Irish.

A two-part guide for teachers of adult night classes is also available. *Abair Leat!* includes a comprehensive guide for teachers, material for a ten-week course (language games, group work, flash cards, role-play, etc), detailed class plans, and simple explanations of the most central points of grammar. *Abair Leat!* is aimed at teachers of beginners, and is published by the ULTACH Trust and Údarás na Gaeltachta.

8

Educational research

As Irish-medium education was, for many years, outside the formal education system, very little pedagogic or linguistic research has been carried out relating to course planning, teaching materials, or the socio-linguistic issues relevant to the Irish language in Northern Ireland. However, since 2000, the Department of Education for Northern Ireland has commissioned a number of research projects, three of which are described below.

Immersion Education: A literature review, September 2000. This review focused on how children from an English-speaking background in a predominantly English-speaking country, who are immersed in another language, perform at school relative to other children educated in English. Attainment at both primary and secondary levels is evaluated

Developing Linguistic Accuracy in Irish-Medium Primary Schools, October 2002. The project sought to contribute to good practice in the development of competence in Irish in Irish-medium schools. It identifies norms in relation to grammatical accuracy in speech and writing; identifies recurring errors, and determines which of these persist in the later primary years; and devises and evaluates strategies for improving linguistic accuracy where appropriate.

Outcomes for pupils who receive Irish medium education in Northern Ireland, April 2002. This research analysed the qualifications gained by pupils who have experienced Irish-medium secondary education, their destinations on leaving school, and their career choices. It collected attitudinal information from those who have had an Irish-medium education on the advantages and constraints which they feel have resulted. The research also considered the reasons why pupils who attend an Irish-medium primary school or unit do not opt for English-medium secondary education.¹¹

9

Prospects

The Irish-medium sector is now on a much firmer footing as a result of the various measures taken under the Belfast Agreement. It is expected to continue to grow and the priority is to adopt a strategic approach to its growth and development. *Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta* has been charged with co-ordinating the efforts of all involved, and is proposing an approach which includes careful advance

planning when founding new schools, to ensure that there will be sufficient primary pupils in one area to supply a secondary school, and that new schools meet the criteria for government recognition from day one, and consequently are properly resourced from the outset. It aims to provide continuity of education from pre-school through to secondary school.

The number of Irish-medium units in English-medium primary schools continues to increase, particularly outside the large urban population centres. It is likely that units will continue to develop only within the Catholic maintained sector, and it is desirable that the CCMS develop a policy to facilitate their development. Resources and instructional material in this area are at present under-funded and units continue to face problems associated with creating a suitable linguistic environment for children during playtime when they become the minority in a majority English-speaking situation.

A number of English-medium secondary schools now offer Irish as a subject, and some non-Catholic secondary schools are making plans to have the language taught. A further increase in those taking examinations in Irish may be expected, although this may also reflect an increase in adult learners of the language.

Vocational training related to the Irish language is a recent phenomenon. An increase in the number and range of courses available will depend on the level of demand. *Forbairt Feirste* continues to develop the range of courses they offer to school leavers from Irish-medium schools in Belfast. In 2004, it will offer courses in Childcare, Business studies, Motor mechanics and Beauty Therapy through the medium of Irish.

With respect to higher education, St Mary's University College provides two courses for teaching in Irish-medium schools, but places are very limited.

Gaeloiliúint are seeking to establish 3rd level education through the medium of Irish. They propose to offer Irish language courses and in-service training courses for

teachers and nursery staff in the Irish-medium sector and hope to deliver these through three venues across Northern Ireland.

Over the next ten years, *Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta*, in cooperation with other agencies, intends to develop a comprehensive network of high-quality educational provision throughout Northern Ireland. It will concentrate on the provision of Irish-medium education in targeted areas at three levels: pre-school, primary and secondary. It expects to develop up to 65 new schools over that period. The question of resources in terms of funding for pre-school, primary and secondary education remains an issue, as does the provision of adequate teaching resources for the sector. However, one of the profound challenges faces the sector at the moment is a shortage of teachers. *Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta* has presented a range of measures which will address this shortage to the Department of Education¹².

10 Summary statistics

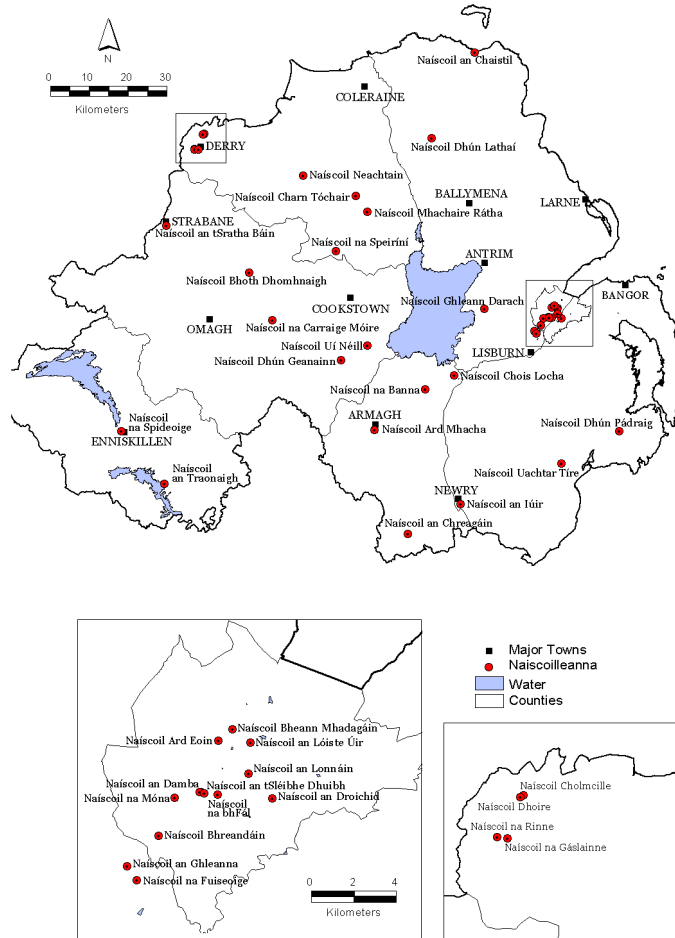
Type of Education	Number		Enrolment	
	Irish	English	Irish	English
Pre-schools	34	899	847	21,079
Primary schools and units	25	917	1,954	167,799
Secondary schools and units	3	235	427	155,747
Further education		17		92,416
University Colleges (teacher training)		2		2,291
Universities		2		42,138

Number of schools and enrolment in Northern Ireland divided over Irish and English medium education.

Figures: pre-school, primary & post-primary for 2002-3; further education, university colleges & universities for 2001-2

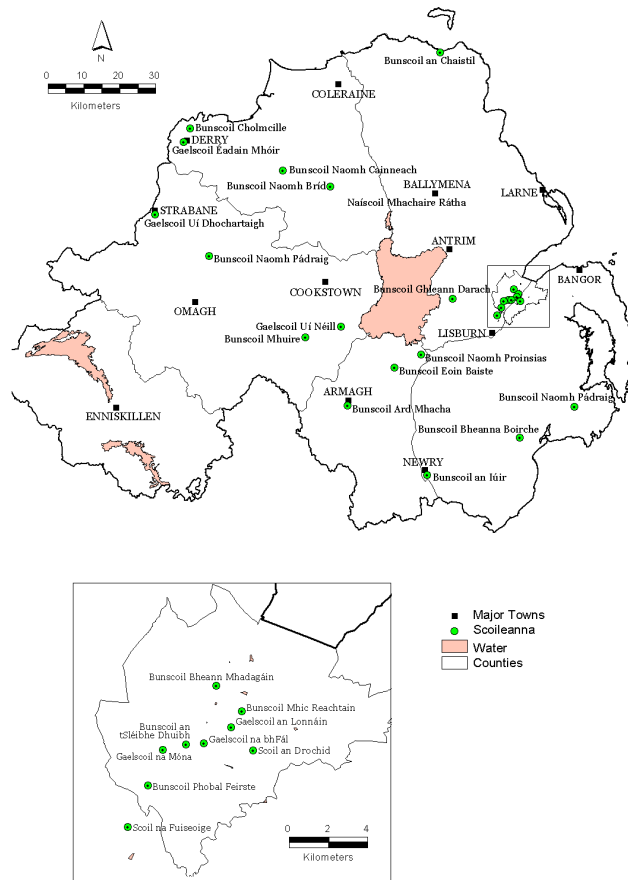
Source: DENI and DEL for English-medium figures; *Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta* for Irish-medium figures.

Map1: Irish-medium pre-school provision in Northern Ireland 2002-03



Note: the large inset above refers to the city of Belfast, the smaller inset to Derry city.

Map 2: Irish-medium primary provision in Northern Ireland 2002-03



Note: the large inset above refers to the city of Belfast.
Maps reproduced with the kind permission of *Iomairt Cholm Cille*.¹³

Endnotes

1. Source: Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency (NISRA), Department of Finance and Personnel (2002) *Northern Ireland Census 2001, Key Statistics*, Belfast: NISRA. p. 72.
2. See <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/language/magiollachriost00.htm> for a discussion of fluency levels.
3. See <http://www.nio.gov.uk/issues/agreemain.htm> for the full text of the Belfast Agreement
4. See <http://www.forasnagaílge.ie> for further information on the Cross-Border Irish language Body.
5. See <http://www.ccea.org.uk/nicurriculum.htm> for further information.
6. See http://www.nfer.ac.uk/eurydice/factfiles/factfileuk_school_financing.asp.) for more information
7. Information on CCMS courtesy of the organisations website <http://www.onlineccms.com/>
8. See <http://www.stmarys-belfast.ac.uk>.
9. See <http://www.hmso.gov.uk/si/si1998/19981759.htm> for the full text of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998.
10. It is available online at http://www.nics.gov.uk/deni/inspection_services/publications/
11. A summary of these reports may be downloaded from: http://www.nics.gov.uk/deni/facts_figures.
12. A copy of the Report on teacher provision in Irish-medium education is available at: www.comhairle.org/publications/finance/teacher_provision.htm
13. Iomairt Cholm Cille explores and develops links between Gaelic Scotland and Ireland. See www.colmcille.net for further information.

Structure of the Education System in Northern Ireland	
Age	Higher Education
from 18 yrs	This sector includes universities and university colleges where a primary degree is obtained usually after three years. Further study may lead to a Master's Degree (usually one/two years) or a Doctoral Degree (a minimum of three years).
	Vocational and Further Education
from 16 yrs	This sector includes Colleges and Institutes of Higher and Further Education, and Lifelong Learning, focusing largely on vocational qualifications below degree level
	Secondary Education
11–16 (18) yrs	This sector includes a wide range of categories: State, Catholic, Grammar, Irish-medium, Integrated and Independent (private or non-funded) secondary schools. Secondary education is divided into two Key Stages: Key Stage 3 for pupils aged 11 to 14 years; : Key Stage 3 for pupils aged 14 to 16 years. Most secondary school cater for pupils beyond the compulsory school age of 16. Children may attend until the age of eighteen
	Primary Education
5–11 yrs	This sector includes a wide range of categories: State, Catholic, Irish-medium, Integrated and Independent (private or non-funded) primary schools. Primary education is divided into two Key Stages : Key Stage 1 for pupils aged four to eight years; : Key Stage 2 for pupils aged eight to 11 years.

Pre-school Education	
3–5 yrs	Nursery School and Nursery Classes within primary schools.
2–5 yrs	Pre-school provision in Day nurseries, Nursery Centres, Pre-school Groups or Playgroups <i>(the above may or may not be associated with a particular school and include most Irish-medium pre-school provision)</i>

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An Chrannóg
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www.crannog.ie

Other websites on minority languages

- Mercator* **www.mercator-central.org**
General site of the Mercator-project. It will lead you to the three specialized centres:
- Mercator-Education* **www.mercator-education.org**
Homepage of Mercator-Education; European Network for regional or minority languages and education. The site contains the series of regional dossiers, a database with organisations and bibliography and many rated links to minority languages.
- Mercator-Media* **www.aber.ac.uk/~merc/**
Homepage of Mercator-Media. It provides information on media and minority languages in the EU.
- Mercator-Legislation* **www.ciemen.org/mercator**
Homepage of Mercator-Legislation. It provides information on minority languages and legislation in the EU.
- European Union* **<http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/langmin.html>**
At the website of the European Union an explanation is given of its support for regional or minority languages.
- Council of Europe* **<http://conventions.coe.int/>**
European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. (1992) and *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* (1995) European Treaty Series/Série des traités européens ETS 148 and 157, Strasbourg.
- Eurydice* **www.eurydice.org**
Eurydice is the information network on education in Europe. The site provides information on all European education systems and education policies.
- EBLUL* **www.eblul.org/**
Homepage of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages. This site provides general information on lesser used languages as well as on projects, publications and events.
- Eurolang* **www.eurolang.net**
Eurolang provides coverage of the concerns felt in the minority language regions in the European Union. Eurolang is EBLUL's news service

