



Info

Irish language arrives in European Parliament / Tagann an Ghaeilge go Parlaimint na hEorpa

On 1st January 2007, the Irish language became an official working language of the European Union for the first time. Provided that they give prior notice, Irish-speaking MEPs can now make their interventions in Irish during the Plenary Sessions of the European Parliament and the final texts of EU regulations, which are approved jointly by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union (from 1st January 2007 onwards), will be translated to Irish. (Irish version below)

After a period of five years, this situation will be reviewed and a decision will be taken on whether Irish language services can be further extended.

It is worth noting that since the Amsterdam Treaty entered into force, Irish-speakers have had the right to write to any of the EU institutions in Irish and to expect a response in their own language. All EU Treaties have also been translated into Irish. The new status, however, will ensure that the Irish language will take its place among the multi-lingual family of the European Union.

Among the EU institutions, it is in the European Parliament that this new status will have the strongest impact. The European Parliament has always worked towards the promotion of multilingualism and it is already the most multilingual parliament in the world.

Commenting on the impact of this new status at a reception held by the European Parliament Office in Ireland to commemorate this new status, Irish-speaking MEP Seán Ó Neachtain (FF/UEN) stated that "In the European Parliament, it is about more than communication. The majority of the MEPs speak in their native languages and when they do that, they are making a statement of identity as well as a political statement." He pointed out that, from a practical point of view, MEPs "are more fluent when they are speaking their own language than when they are speaking a second or a third language."

The Irish-speaking MEP for Northern Ireland, Bairbre De Brún (SF/GUE-NGL) congratulated "everyone who took part in the STÁDAS campaign" - the campaign to ensure that the Irish language achieved the status of a working language within the EU. She went on to say that "the first step has been taken now, but that there is work still ahead."

The Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Éamon Ó Cuív TD, who was the keynote speaker at the reception thanked all those who had worked towards the new status and emphasised that "the most important thing now is that people are en-

couraged to make use of the new rights which have been granted to them."

Tagann an Ghaeilge go Parlaimint na hEorpa

Ar an 1ú Eanáir 2007, déanadh teanga oifigiúil oibre den Ghaeilge san Aontas Eorpach den chéad uair. Má thugann siad fógra roimh ré, tá sé anois de cheart ag na Feisirí Eorpacha (MEPs) idirghabháil a dhéanamh as Gaeilge i rith Lánseisiúin Pharlaimint na hEorpa. Aistreofar téacsanna deiridh de rialacha an AE, má's rialacha iad ar a dtáinig Parlaimint na hEorpa agus Comhairle an Aontais Eorpaigh ar shocrú le chéile (ón 1ú Eanáir i leith). Nuair atá cúig bliana imithe thart, déanfar athbhreithniú ar na socruithe seo agus socrófar an mbeadh sé indéanta na seirbhísí atá ar fáil trí Ghaeilge a leathnú.

Is fiú cuimhneamh, ó tháinig Conradh Amsterdam i bhfeidhm, go raibh sé de cheart ag gaeilgeoirí scríobh chuig aon cheann de institiúid an AE as Gaeilge agus freagra a fháil ina dteanga féin. Aistríodh na Conarthaí ar fad ag an AE go Gaeilge. Cinnteoidh an stádas nua áfach go nglacfaidh an Ghaeilge a háit i gclann illteangach an Aontais Eorpaigh.

I measc institiúid an AE, is sa Pharlaimint go mbeidh an tionchar is láidre ag an stádas nua seo le sonrú. Dhein Parlaimint na hEorpa iarracht i gcónaí illteangachas a chur chun cinn agus cheana féin is í an Pharlaimint is mó teangacha ar domhain í.

Agus é ag labhairt faoin tionchar ag an stádas nua seo ag Fáiltiú in Oifig Pharlaimint na hEorpa in Éirinn chun an stádas nua a chomóradh, dúirt an Feisire Eorpach Seán Ó Neachtain (FF/UEN) "I bParlaimint na hEorpa, tá níos mó ná cumarsáid i gceist. Labhairteann an chuid is mó de na Feisirí ina dteangacha dúchais agus nuair a dhéanann siad é sin, is ráiteas féiniúlachta a bhíonn ar siúl acu chomh maith le ráiteas polaitiúil." Dúirt sé, ó thaobh na practiciúlachta de, go bhfuil na Feisirí "níos líofa ina dteanga féin, ná nuair a bhíonn siad ag labhairt an dara nó an tríú teanga."

Dúirt an Feisire Eorpach, Bairbre De Brún, gur thréaslaigh sí "le gach éinne [a bhí] bainte leis an fheachtas STÁDAS" - an feachtas chun a chinntiú go bhfaighfeadh an Ghaeilge stádas theanga oibre san AE. Dúirt sí chomh maith go bhfuil "an céad céim glactha anois ach [go bhfuil] obair mhór romhainn go fóill."

Ghabh an t-Aire Éamon Ó Cuív TD, a bhí mar phríomhchainteoir ag an bhFáiltiú, buíochas le gach duine a d'oibrigh chun an stádas nua a bhaint amach agus chur sé béim ar an chéad chéim eile a bhí le déanamh agus sin "go spreagfaí daoine chun úsáid a bhaint as na cearta nua atá bronnta orthu."

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