

The biggest cultural risk now clearly faced by the Irish people is the imminent death of the Irish language as a living community language. This will make State education policy where Irish is taught as a second language impossible to implement because in effect pupils will see the Irish language as on a par with Latin; important historically but not a living vibrant contemporary tongue.

The next ten years will see the final extinction of Irish as a community language in the few predominantly Irish speaking Category A Gaeltachts left without thorough interdepartmental State intervention. The current State sponsored voluntary language planning by community organisations is not sufficient to stop the monolingual English tide.

In Most official Gaeltacht areas Irish is no longer the community language and these Category B and C Official Gaeltacht areas are now predominantly or completely de facto English speaking areas. The Government must heed the warnings in the *Staidéar Chuimsitheach Teangeolaíoch ar Úsáid na Gaeilge sa Ghaeltacht* (2007) that the terminal decline of the Irish language in the strongest Gaeltacht areas would be irreversible by 2022. The Follow on report *Nuashonrú* was even more worrying and its recommendations while important and research-based were not taken on board.

The government should implement the full list of recommended actions as failure to do so will leave the Irish language without a community base and lead to its ultimate demise even just solely as a family language in what were once thriving Irish-speaking communities.