An Coimisinéir Teanga

Overview of Results for 2024

Section 10A

(Advertising by Public Bodies)

The Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021

OIFIG AN CHOIMISINÉARA TEANGA
November 2025

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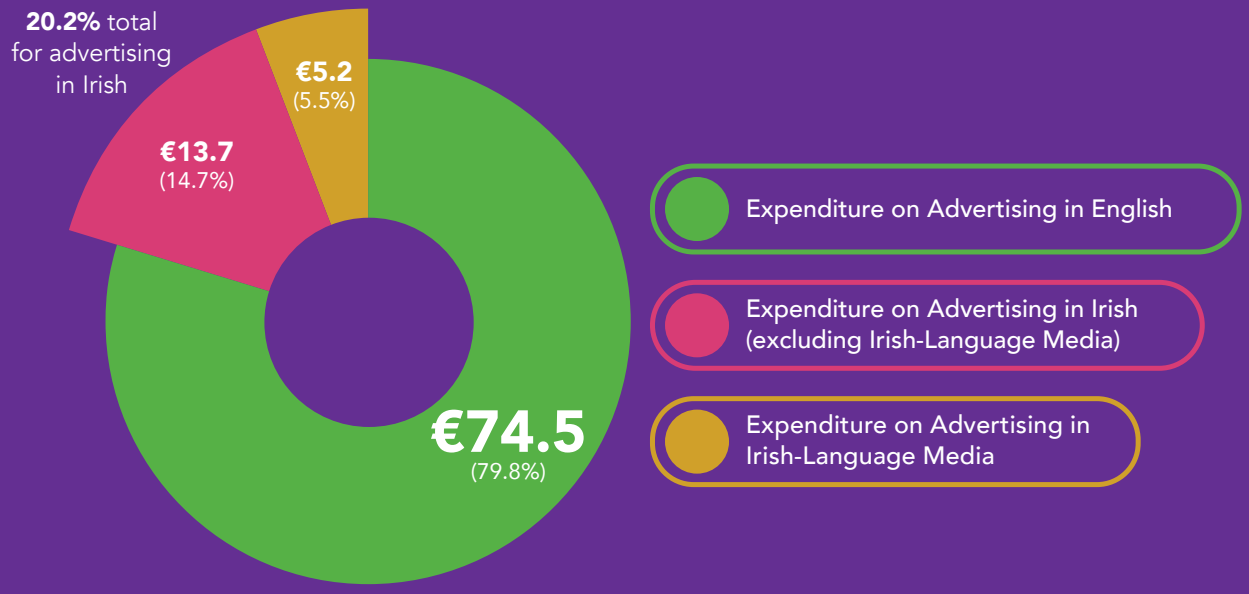
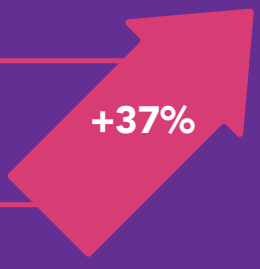
KEY TAKEAWAYS 2024

Increase from €10.4m to €13.7m in spending on advertising in Irish with English-Language media

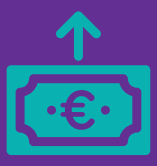
€19m in total was spent on advertising in Irish in 2024



€5.2m spent in total on Irish-Language Media in 2024, an increase of €1.4m from 2023



€4.7m increase in total spending on Irish-language advertising in 2024 compared to 2023



KEY FINDINGS FOR 2024

397

Submissions from 397 prescribed public bodies concerning their advertising activities for 2024 are included in this report.

From a sectoral perspective, advertising in the Irish language by the aggregate of 397 audited public bodies in 2024 reached the statutory thresholds set out in section 10A.

34%

The €19m spent on Irish-language advertising across all media also equates to a 34% increase on the total sum of €14.2m spent for 2023.

37%

The €5.2m spent by public bodies on Irish-language media in 2024 equates to a 37% increase in spending viz-a-viz the 2023 figure of €3.8m.

€93.4m

The public bodies that come under the scope of this report spent a total of €93.4m on advertising (in English and in Irish) in 2024.

98%

The report captures more than 98% of the total expenditure by all prescribed public bodies under the Official Languages Act with respect to advertising in 2024.

20.2%

Public bodies spent €19m on Irish-language advertising equating to a compliance level of 20.2%, which is a marked increase on 15% in 2023.

€5.2m

Public bodies spent €5.2m on Irish-language advertising on Irish-language media in 2024, equating to a compliance level of 5.5% for the respective 5% statutory threshold regarding spending on Irish-language media.

+€3.3m

Of the total €19m spent on Irish-language advertising on all media, €13.7m was spent on Irish-language advertising on English-language media in 2024, representing a €3.3m, or 31%, increase from 2023 for this segment.

Individual public bodies continue to undergo compliance checks to guarantee that they will fulfil the obligations outlined in section 10A.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Context

The Official Languages Act 2003, as amended in 2021, aims to strengthen the language rights of the Irish-speaking community by improving the provision of public services in Irish. This legislation underscores the state's commitment to promoting the use of Irish in public life, in particular in the day-to-day interactions that the Irish-speaking community has with public bodies.

In addition to enhancing the direct provision of public services in Irish, the language rights legislation aims to increase the use of Irish in the wider public sphere. Section 10A (Advertising by Public Bodies) is a significant legislative provision to this end. Advertising is a prominent element of all media, shaping our ideas and perceptions through channels such as television, radio, social media, and newspapers. Advertising serves as a valuable source of information and entertainment, enriching the diverse experiences of our daily lives. The placement of advertising in Irish across various media plays a vital role in increasing the language's visibility within the public sphere. This heightened visibility can significantly contribute to the ongoing promotion of Irish, supporting its vibrancy and encouraging more frequent use in daily life.

This Report

This report highlights the key findings of the audit conducted by Oifig an Choimisinéara Teanga (OCT) on the compliance of 397 public bodies with Section 10A for 2024. The results for 2024 reveal a significant rise in Irish-language advertising compared to 2023, demonstrating our commitment to preserving and promoting our heritage. The audit captured 98% of all advertising conducted by public bodies in Ireland for 2024.

The Legislative Obligation

Section 10A. (Advertising by Public Bodies) of the Official Languages Act 2003, as amended, imposes a statutory obligation on public bodies to place a significant share of their advertising in Irish.

Section 10A. prescribes that public bodies must ensure that:

- at least 20% of all their advertising annually is done through the medium of Irish and
- at least 5% of their annual advertising budget is spent on advertising on the Irish language media

More than 500 public bodies come under the scope of the Official Language Act 2003 as amended.

2. COMPLIANCE MONITORING PROCESS

The Universe

Over 500 public bodies are prescribed under the Official Languages Act 2003, as amended. The monitoring of prescribed public bodies is an ongoing, long-term process that consumes considerable resources. The prescribed public bodies include large organisations that provide extensive public services, such as government departments, local authorities, and educational institutions. Many public bodies use advertising to inform the public of the services they are mandated to deliver on behalf of the state. A smaller cohort of public bodies has a noteworthy commercial portfolio, as a result of the national utility or financial services that they provide to the public. As a result, these public bodies have the highest proportional spend on advertising to inform and attract the public to their services. Some public bodies have no public-facing functions; therefore, they do not need to advertise in the public sphere.

Compliance Measurement Model

The media and measurement criteria outlined in Table 2 below constitute the compliance measurement model implemented by OCT for section 10A. This model was developed following extensive consultations with various sector stakeholders, including public bodies and advertising representation organisations. As such, the compliance measurement model is designed to resonate with the current practices of both public bodies and the advertising sector. In 2024, we undertook careful amendments to the model to strengthen the compliance measurement process, thereby supporting public bodies in the effective collection of compliance data in alignment with their organisational practices.

Table 1

Measurement of 20%	Measurement	Description
Media	**Definition**	**Details**
Video on Demand (VOD)	1 in 5 copy rotation OR % of impressions created	Impressions are created when ads or other forms of digital media render on a user's screen
Out Of Home (OOH)	% of sites used in a year	% of total number of poster sites booked for a campaign
Audio	1 in 5 copy rotation OR % of impressions created	Digital audio by percentage of total impressions created
Print – press/ magazine	1 in 5 copy rotation OR % of circulation (Where ABC not available)	Audit Bureau Circulation tracks circulation of major titles.
Social media	1 in 5 copy rotation OR % of impressions created	Impressions are created when ads or other forms of digital media render on a user's screen
Cinema	1 in 5 copy rotation OR % of admissions	% of admissions into the cinema or cinema visits
Radio	1 in 5 copy rotation OR % listenership OR % of Total annual Ratings	% of total average listenership (the number of people who listen to a given radio station)
Digital Display advertising	1 in 5 copy rotation OR % of impressions created	Impressions are created when ads or other forms of digital media render on a user's screen
Television	1 in 5 copy rotation OR % of total TVRs	TV Rating Points (Nielsen Ad Intel)

Public bodies were required to provide information about their spending, media used, and specific advertising campaigns conducted during 2024. This information enabled OCT to compare the advertising activities of these public bodies with reliable data on expenditures and media usage. Additionally, OCT requested creative materials, such as promotional content from campaigns across various media, from public bodies with higher advertising expenditures.

Public bodies were required to submit data on their advertising activities for the 2024 calendar year, using the metrics outlined in the compliance measurement model.

Audit Scope

This report presents the findings of an audit conducted on the advertising activities conducted by 397 public bodies for the year 2024. Public bodies self-reported on their advertising activities through an online portal that incorporated the aforementioned compliance measurement model. OCT has cross-checked the data provided by the public bodies with advertising data from Nielsen Ad Intel to ensure data quality accuracy. This audit has captured 98% of the advertising activities undertaken by public bodies throughout 2024.

Categorisation of Public Bodies

Public bodies were categorised into three distinct groups based on their advertising expenditure thresholds, as detailed in Table 2 below. This classification serves two primary purposes: first, it allows comparisons between public bodies with similar advertising budgets, and second, it facilitates the exploration of compliance trends. Table 2 also indicates the number of public bodies that fall within the spending thresholds set out for each category.

Table 2

Category	Expenditure on Advertising	Number of Public Bodies
Category A	≥ €750,000	25
Category B	€250,000 - €749,000	46
Category C	< €250,000	326
Total		**397**

3. TRENDS AND INSIGHTS

The Advertising Sector in Ireland

In 2024, the total estimated expenditure on advertising across both private and public sectors in Ireland is set to reach €1.5 billion. Public sector advertising reported to OCT for this year amounts to €93.4m, which constitutes a solid 6.2% of all advertising spend. Despite growth in the advertising sector overall, public bodies' spending on advertising decreased by 4% in 2024 compared to 2023, from €97.3 to €93.4. This decrease can be attributed to the end of COVID-19-related advertising campaigns by some public bodies.

Core, the marketing communication company, reported that the media market in Ireland experienced a notable growth of 7.7%, reaching €1,590.0 million in 2024. Core primarily attributes this trend to advancements in online media, particularly in the areas of video, social media, and digital audio. Additionally, Out-of-Home (OOH) media has successfully exceeded pre-pandemic levels, while live sports have played a significant role in boosting TV revenue. Radio has shown consistent growth in line with previous years, although print media continues to face challenges.

Key Findings and Trends

A. Overall Ad-Spend by Public Bodies

Chart A illustrates the expenditure carried out by public bodies on advertising through the medium of English and Irish for 2024.

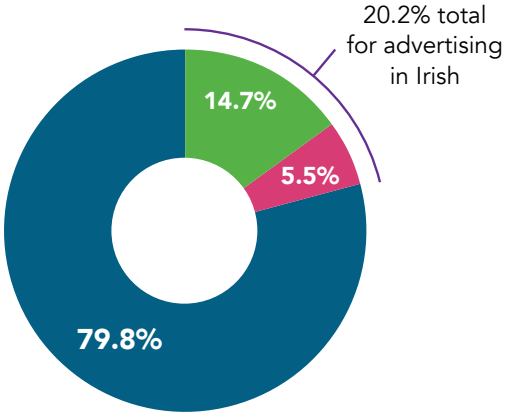
The results reported by public bodies indicate that:

- public bodies spent a total of almost €93.4m on advertising in 2024
- public bodies reported spending €19m on advertising in Irish on all media (English & Irish)
  - of which €5.2m was spent on advertising on Irish-language media
  - and €13.7m was spent on Irish-language advertising on English-language media
- public bodies spent €74.5 million on English-language advertising on various media in 2024.

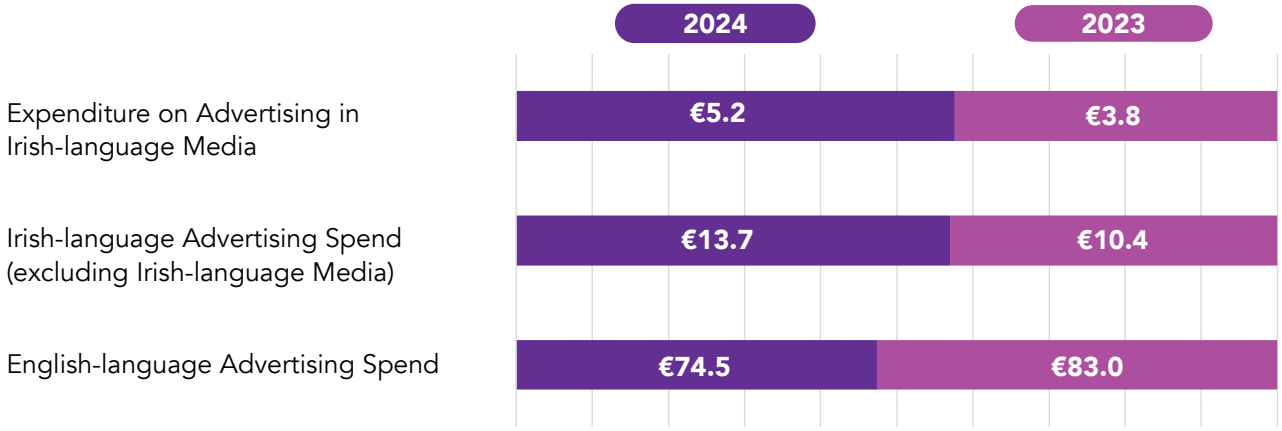
Chart A

Expenditure by Public Bodies on Advertising through the Medium of English and Irish for 2024

	Expenditure	Percentage
Expenditure on Advertising in English	€74.5m	79.8%
Expenditure on Advertising in Irish (excluding Irish-Language Media)	€13.7m	14.7%
Expenditure on Advertising in Irish-Language Media	€5.2m	5.5%



Overall Ad-Spend by Public Bodies 2024 vs 2023



Despite this, total public body spending on advertising has decreased (5%) from €97m to €93.4m.

Accordingly, OCT views the increase in expenditure on Irish-language advertising very positively.

The new legislative provision came into effect after a short lead-in time, making 2023 results very positive. It is important to acknowledge the efforts made by many public bodies in their commitment to complying with the legislation. It is significant that almost €19m was spent on Irish-language advertising in 2024, which accounted for more than 20% of the total advertising output from public bodies.

B. Compliance to Statutory Thresholds

Section 10A. (Advertising by Public Bodies) of the Official Languages Act 2003, as amended, imposes a statutory obligation on public bodies to place a significant share of their advertising in Irish.

Section 10A. prescribes that public bodies must ensure that:

- at least 20% of all their advertising annually is done through the medium of Irish and
- at least 5% of their annual advertising budget is spent on advertising on the Irish-language media

The compliance levels observed across the 397 audited public bodies in meeting both of the statutory thresholds set out in section 10A reflect progress.

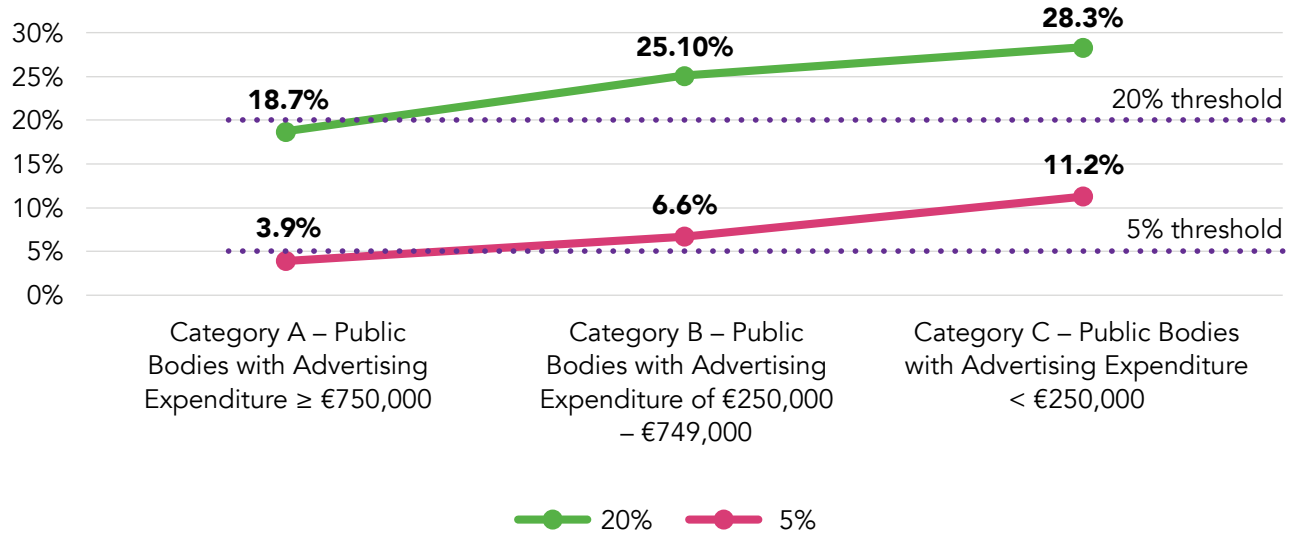
The results reported by public bodies for 2024 reflect overall compliance of 20.4% and 5.4% for the respective 20% and 5% statutory thresholds set out in section 10A. These results represent a significant uptick compared with 2023 data, which indicated that public bodies achieved 11% of the 20% of advertising output in the Irish language and 4% of the 5% of spend on Irish-language media for 2024 compared to 3% of the 5% for 2023.

Chart B shows the compliance levels reached across public bodies according to category (A, B, C – levels of expenditure) with respect to the 5% and 20% thresholds. Chart C also shows how compliance levels for 2024 and 2023 compare according to public body category.

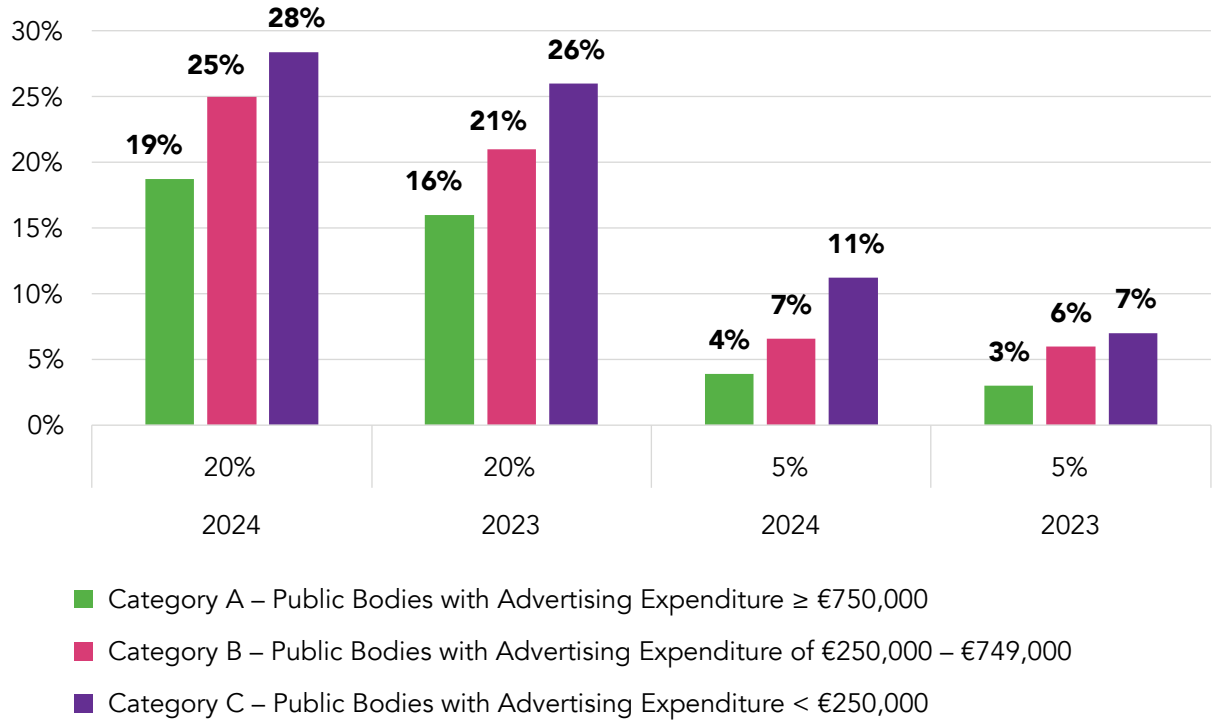
Chart B

Compliance Levels by Public Body Categories (5% and 20% Irish-language advertising provision thresholds)

Compliance Levels by Public Body Category



2024 vs 2023



Key Observations

- The results achieved in 2024 are a vast improvement on 2023 figures, namely: 18.6% was achieved in the 20% provision compared to 16% in 2023.
- The data in Chart B above indicates that **Category A public bodies** (with advertising spending ≥ €750,000), on average, did not meet the required statutory threshold for either the 5% (advertising on Irish-language media) or 20% (Irish-language advertising on all media) provisions.
- 4% was achieved by Public Bodies in 2024 for the 5% statutory threshold as against 3% in 2023.
- **Category B public bodies** (advertising expenditure €250,000 - €749,000) performed better than Category A public bodies, as they were compliant with both thresholds; the average advertising percentage among public bodies in this category is as follows:
  - 25% against the 20% statutory threshold,
  - 6.6% against the 5% statutory threshold.
  - This represents an increased spend of €0.34m on Irish-language media in 2024.
- The overall average results for **Category C public bodies** (with advertising spend < €250,000) were the most positive, however, with results indicating:
  - 29% against the 20% statutory threshold,
  - 11% against the 5% statutory threshold.
- This represents an increased spend of €0.74m on Irish-language media in 2024.

C. Breakdown of Ad-Spend by Public Body Category

Chart C

Total Advertising Spend by Public Bodies (2024) (English & Irish-language Advertising)

Expenditure on Advertising in Irish and English in the Public Sector (2024)

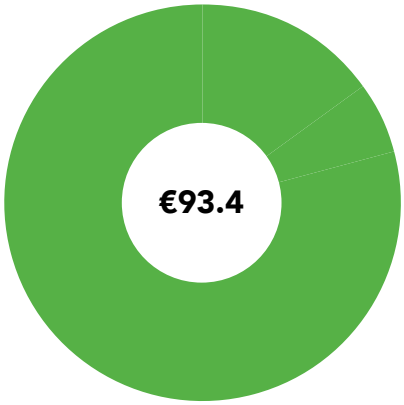


Chart D

Expenditure by Public Bodies on Advertising through the Medium of English and Irish for 2024

	Expenditure	Percentage
English-Language Advertising Spend	€74.5m	79.8%
Irish-Language Advertising Spend (excluding Irish-Language Media)	€13.7m	14.7%
Advertising Spend on Irish-Language Media	€5.2m	5.5%

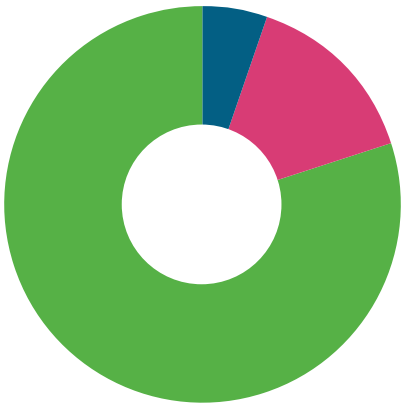
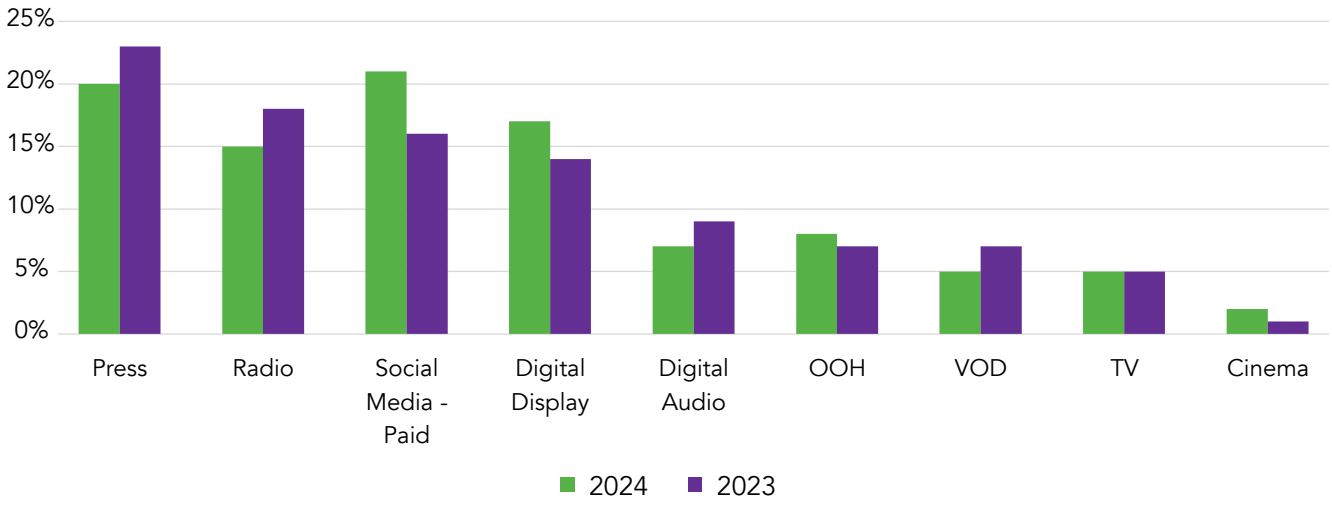


Chart E

Media used by Public Bodies (Irish-Language Advertising for 20% & 5% Provisions)

	2024
Social Media	21%
Press	20%
Digital Display	17%
Radio	15%
Outdoor Advertising	8%
Digital Audio	7%
Video on Demand	5%
Television	5%
Cinema	2%

2024 vs 2023

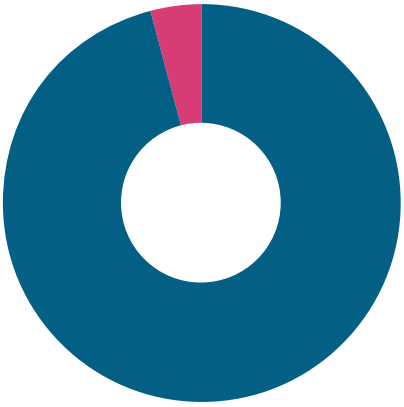


Notably, the comparison between media use in 2024 and 2023 reflects the trend of advertising migrating to digital platforms, e.g., a 5% increase in the use of social media.

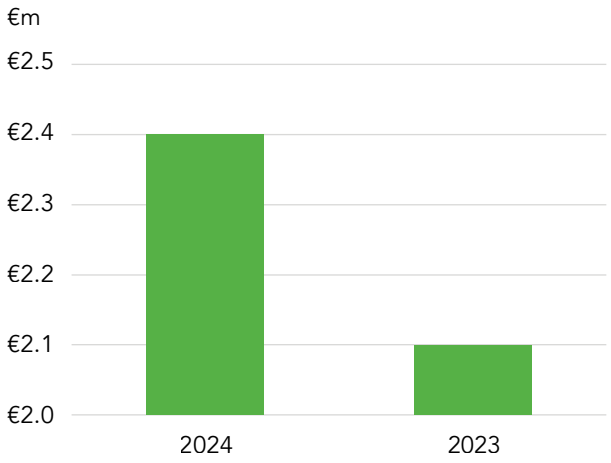
Chart F

Advertising Spend by Category A Public Bodies (5% Provision) (Proportion of Advertising Spend on Irish-Language Media)

	2024	2023
Total Expenditure	€61m	€71.60m
Expenditure: Advertising in English Media	**€59m**	€69.50m
Expenditure: Advertising in Irish-Language Media	**€2.4m**	€2.10m
% Expenditure on Irish-Language Media	4%	3%



Expenditure: Advertising in Irish-Language Media (Category A)



% Expenditure on Irish-Language Media (Category A)

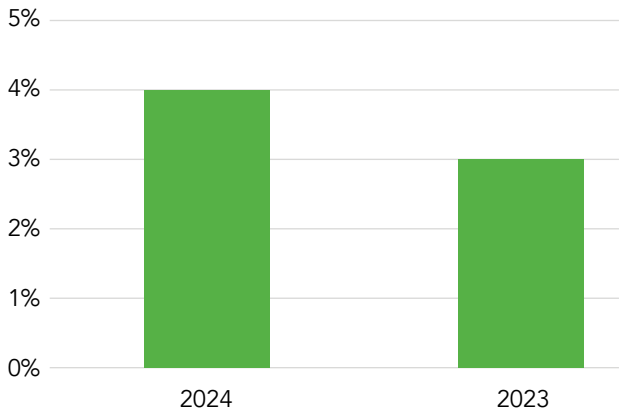
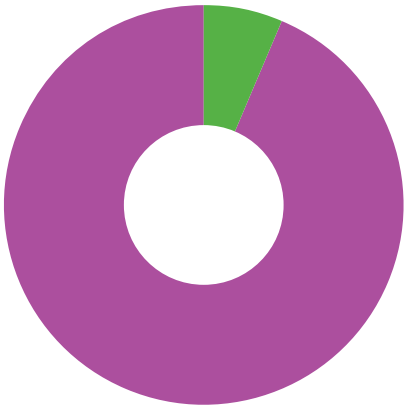


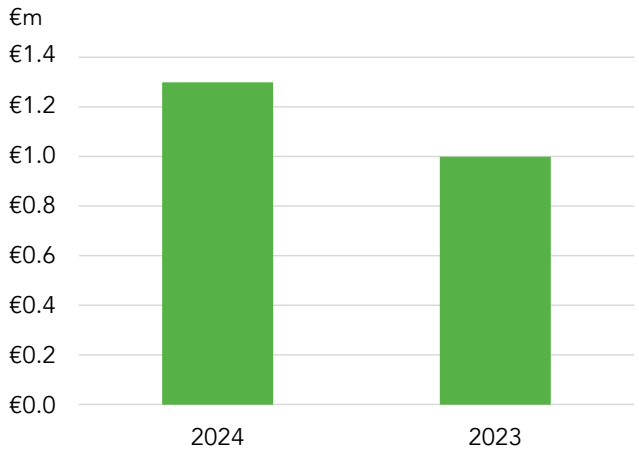
Chart G

Advertising Spend by Category B Public Bodies (5% Provision) (Proportion of Advertising Spend on Irish-Language Media)

	2024	2023
Total Expenditure	€20m	€14.90m
Expenditure: Expenditure on Advertising in Irish-Language Media	**€18.7m**	€13.90m
Expenditure: Expenditure on Advertising in Irish-Language Media	**€1.3m**	€1.00m
% Expenditure on Irish-Language Media	6.6%	6%



Expenditure: Advertising in Irish-Language Media (Category B)



% Expenditure on Irish-Language Media (Category B)

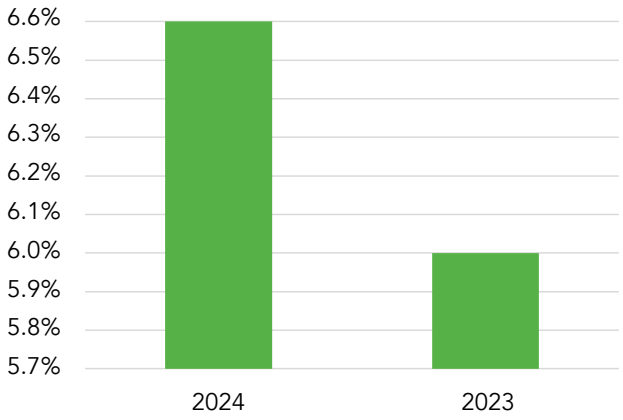
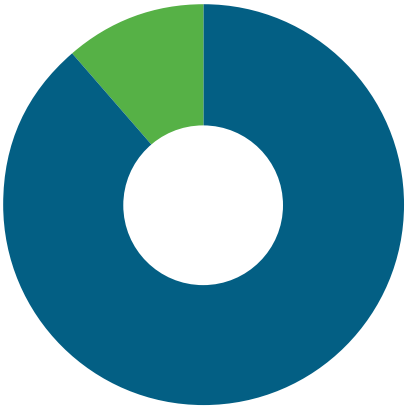


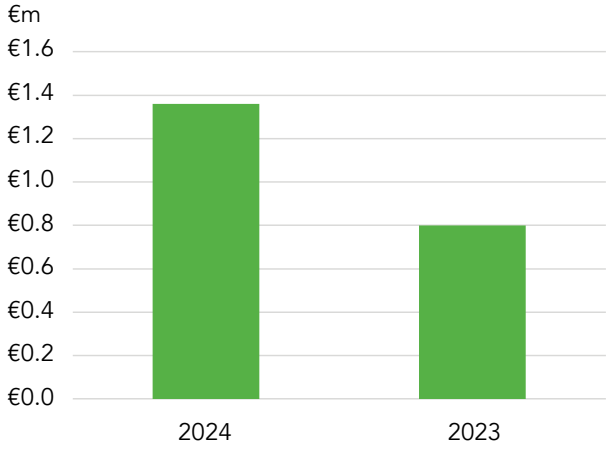
Chart H

Advertising Spend by Category C Public Bodies

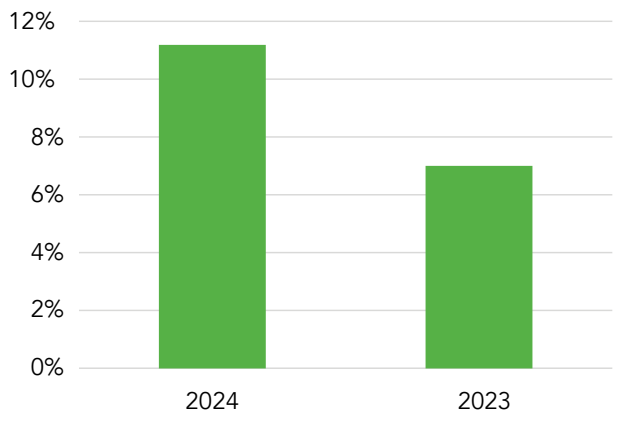
	2024	2023
Total Expenditure	€12.2m	€10.70m
Expenditure: Advertising in English Media	**€10.8m**	€9.90m
Expenditure: Advertising in Irish-Language Media	**€1.51m**	€0.80m
% Expenditure on Irish-Language Media	11.2%	7%



Expenditure: Advertising in Irish-Language Media (Category C)



% Expenditure on Irish-Language Media (Category C)



4. FURTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

Section 10A. Broader implications for promoting Irish-language rights and usage

The media profoundly shapes our everyday lives, influencing our thoughts, emotions, and perceptions of the world around us. The media, a rich tapestry of platforms and channels, shares information with the public, including newspapers, magazines, social media, radio, television, and the internet. It influences every facet of our lives, serving as an essential source of news, information, entertainment, education, and social connection. Advertising thrives across all the diverse media we encounter daily, guiding our choices and imagination.

In a relatively short timeframe, Section 10A has significantly increased the visibility of Irish across the various media platforms, which is instrumental in promoting the language's vibrancy and everyday use. The growth of advertising in the Irish language strengthens the language rights of the Irish-speaking community. Strengthening language rights must also reflect the diverse needs and interests of the Irish-speaking community, and the increase in advertising in Irish across various media platforms is an important step to that end.

Language Standards in Irish-Language Advertising

In preparation for Section 10A coming into force, OCT issued advisory notes to all public bodies on its implementation, emphasising the importance of giving both official languages equal esteem by using them to a high standard. Considering the frequency of advertising under section 10A and the volume of advertisements involved, it is worth noting that the number of complaints received by OCT in relation to this remains relatively low.

Nevertheless, OCT continuously monitors the extent to which public bodies comply with Section 10A, including ensuring that advertisements use accurate written and spoken Irish. There have been instances where the poor standard of Irish in some ads, whether in writing or pronunciation, is worrying. The various stakeholders involved in the creation and release of Irish-language advertising must take responsibility for their roles in the quality assurance process, ensuring that Irish-language advertising is of a high standard. Submitting inaccurate advertising material to a broadcaster for broadcast is a waste of resources.

Accuracy in Irish-language advertising content is essential, reflecting a commitment to linguistic excellence and being free from syntactic, grammatical, and spelling errors, while embracing the pronunciation, cadence, and rhythm of the Irish language in both video and audio formats. This commitment is crucial, mainly since Irish-language advertisements can often stem from translations of original English messages. By prioritising accuracy, we safeguard the integrity of the Irish language, ensuring that syntax and pronunciation inspire native speakers and learners alike. Native speakers, representing a vital link in our culture, are more likely to engage with content that respects our language. Therefore, in our pursuit of excellence, we not only honour the Irish language but also inspire future generations to celebrate and cherish it.

Irish-language media Inventory

Developments in the Irish-Language Media Sector

Section 10A obliges public bodies to spend at least 5% of their annual advertising budget on Irish-language media. Section 10A.(2)(b) prescribes that for a medium to qualify as 'Irish-language media' for the provision of the Act, 50% or more of the eligible Irish media content must be in Irish.

To assist public bodies in their preparations for the implementation, the Office published a non-exhaustive list that came under the scope of the definition prescribed in section 10A.(2)(b). Several other criteria were considered necessary by OCT for considering eligibility for the 'Irish medium' inventory:

- Editorial structure of the media/service
- Corporate structure of the media/service
- Content/genres of the media/service, for example: News/Current Affairs, Entertainment, Sport, Travel, etc.
- Circulation information, user data, media/service audience research list
- Topical nature of content – e.g., overdependence on static content

The following non-exhaustive list in Table 3, which is subject to change, for the purpose of Section 10A.(2)(b) has been provided by OCT to public bodies.

Table 3

Media	Provider(s)
Television Services:	TG4
Radio Services:	RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta, Raidió na Life, Raidió Rí Rá
Press	Comhar; Feasta; Seachtain; An Timire; An Páipéar*; ExtraG Gach Seachtain*; Scéal*
Out of Home	OOH Gaeilge*
Video on Demand	TG4, i.e., Bloc.ie & Molscéal.ie Meoneile.ie; Tuairisc.ie, i.e., "Ar Fhaitíos Gur Chaill Tú É"
Audio on Demand	Seachtain, i.e., Podchraoladh Seachtain*; How To Gael*; Tuairisc.ie, i.e., "An Pod Gaeilge"*, "An Pod Spórt"* & "Paiste Cainte le Helen"*
Digital Platforms/ Displays	Tuairisc.ie; Nós.ie; Liathroidi.ie*; Lasair.ie*, ExtraG.ie*, An Páipéar.ie*,
Social Media	N/A
Cinemas	N/A

*Media platforms established since commencement of Section 10A in October 2022

Among the challenges communicated to OCT by some public bodies in achieving compliance in the first year of the 2023 audit was the lack of Irish-language media inventory. This lack, in effect, equated to available shelf space from which public bodies could purchase advertising space. However, new media platforms have emerged since the enactment of Section 10A, primarily operating online. This development has resulted in a significant increase in visibility for the Irish language across diverse media channels and has significantly enhanced the availability of Irish-language advertising inventory. The positive impact of this provision shines through in its vital role in promoting the Irish language and uplifting public service delivery for the Irish-speaking community. Notably, RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta's decision in early 2024 to accept commercial advertising has significantly expanded the Irish-language media inventory available to public bodies.

Compliance Monitoring

OCT is actively monitoring compliance by public bodies with section 10A. The increase in compliance levels in 2024 compared to 2023 regarding Section 10A. is both significant and encouraging. OCT remains committed to ensuring that all public bodies fully understand and meet their obligations under this regulation. OCT reported a 55% increase in cases (593) for public bodies in 2024, up from 381 cases in 2023, in which advice was given to public bodies on their obligations under the Official Languages Act, 2003, as amended—a significant proportion of those advisory cases related to section 10A. The advice provided has undoubtedly been instrumental in driving improvements in Section 10A compliance for 2024.

OCT will continue its consultation campaign to assist public bodies in their compliance with Section 10A.

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