



## Guidance for Schools in Gaeltacht areas

For schools in Gaeltacht areas that are welcoming and enrolling students from Ukraine, it is recognised that the students are unlikely to have any experience of, or familiarity with, the Irish language. In many cases, the students will speak only Ukrainian and/or Russian and may have some understanding of English.

As the language of the local community is mainly Irish, it may be considered advantageous for the students to learn Irish and to participate in an Irish-medium school environment. This is especially relevant if the students are likely to remain in the community in the medium to long term. However, it is not possible to know this for certain at present.

Decisions about the participation of students in an Irish-medium learning environment are primarily for the parents and the students involved to make, taking account of local circumstances. Material has been produced in Ukrainian and Russian explaining the status of Irish in Gaeltacht and non-Gaeltacht communities for Ukrainian parents and students to familiarise themselves with this aspect of our education system prior to enrolment in any school.

In responding to the needs of these students, schools should be guided by what is best for the students and most appropriate for their needs. It is not unusual for schools in Gaeltacht areas to enrol children whose Irish language skills are not as advanced as those of native speakers, and many teachers in Gaeltacht schools will have developed a particular skillset in relation to teaching students who are not native speakers of Irish.

Gaeltacht schools where students from Ukraine have been enrolled are entitled to additional language support hours to support the development of language skills in addition to the hours available under the Gaeltacht Schools Recognition Scheme. These hours should be used by the school to meet the individual needs of the Ukrainian students.

Additional hours are allocated as follows:

Ukrainian students requiring language support	No. of language support hours per week
1 - 4	5
5 - 8	10
9 - 13	15
14 - 20	20
21 - 30	25
31 - 40	35
>40	50

Schools can apply for these language support hours on form [U-TACAÍOCHT TEANGA 2022](#).



An Roinn Oideachais  
Department of Education

Schools in Gaeltacht areas should also link in with the Irish language planning officers in their areas to ensure that there is a coordinated approach to welcoming Ukrainian arrivals to their communities. Schools are not operating in isolation on this matter and the arrival of people from Ukraine to Gaeltacht areas will create new challenges that are best addressed in a coordinated way between the various services available in the Gaeltacht area.