



EUROPEAN LANGUAGE EQUALITY

META  NET
META  FORUM 2022



The Irish Language in the Digital Age

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08/09-06-2022 META-FORUM 2022 – Joining the European Language Grid (hybrid conference)
<http://www.european-language-grid.eu> – <http://european-language-equality.eu>

Strengths and highlights 🙌

- **Machine translation**: now “fragmentary support”
 - Involvement in the European Language Resource Coordination (ELRC)
 - CEF-funded data-collection projects (ELRI, PRINCIPLE)
 - Open Data Directive
 - Science Foundation Ireland – funding 2 PhDs in Irish MT at Dublin City University
 - Irish now a working EU language (eTranslation more important than ever)
- **Speech Technologies**
 - Steps towards ASR (data collection) at Trinity College Dublin
 - Integration of TTS into CALL and accessibility aids (e.g. screen-reader)
- New **national corpus** under development (with LT in mind!)
- **GaelTech** project (€765k): data-driven POS-tagging, parsing, treebanks, MWE-processing, gaBERT

Gaps and shortcomings



- Still **no National Digital Plan** or Strategy for Irish
 - Ireland's AI Strategy is focused on English LT R&D
- Still no:
 - **Automatic Speech Recognition**
 - **Automatic Subtitling**
 - **Question-Answering Systems**
 - **Named Entity Recognition**
 - **Information Retrieval**
 - **Information Extraction**
 - **Virtual Agents**
 - **Adaptive Learning (CALL)**
 - **NLG**
 - **Semantic Role Labelling**
 - **Linked Data/ KGs**
- **Skills gap**
 - Only 1 undergraduate level course in computing and linguistics (with few Irish speaking students)
 - Lack of dedicated funding for (postgraduate) Irish LT research
- Minimal support or investment from **industry** (despite global tech EMEA headquarter location!)

Recommendations for the SRIA



- **Change of focus**

- Away from current focus on dictionary development and training translators...

- **Untapped potential**

- Lack of awareness around value of language data
- Poor language data management practices

- **Need dedicated LT programmes**

- Upskilling, 3rd level, vocational training, inter-disciplinary studies

- **Long term strategy**

- Long-awaited National Digital Plan for Irish (2015), forward thinking

- **Open-source culture**

- Many corpora are inaccessible due to licensing restrictions

- **Corporate Social Responsibility** – give back to the public



European Language Grid
European Language Equality



Thank you!



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