

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you regarding the programmes available on the BBC through the Irish language. I feel that the service at present is inadequate and does not meet the Irish language community's needs. Irish speakers, and those with a wider interest in Irish, deserve dedicated programming in Irish to meet local needs.

I believe that it is important that the BBC provide the required programmes as it has a key role in providing for the Celtic languages, as is clearly obvious by the time and money spent on programmes in Welsh and Gaelic. Although this is great for the Welsh and Gaelic speakers, Irish deserves the same treatment in the UK. Far more funding is being spent per capita by the BBC on Welsh in Wales and Gaelic in Scotland than on Irish in Northern Ireland.

Irish language speakers in Northern Ireland are license fee payers. The BBC has a duty to provide them with an acceptable level of service.

The principle of the need to provide adequate public service television provision for Irish speakers has been agreed by the British Government in 1998, repeated in the Government's commitment to the European Charter, restated by the international Committee of Experts appointed by the European Bureau for Lesser-Used Languages, and supported by the Council of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

I hope that in response to this letter, OfCom will recommend that the BBC acknowledge their responsibility for Irish, and that the new Charter should ensure that appropriate funding is committed to expand the current service.

Anonymous.