

## Ofcom's Public Service Broadcasting Review Phase 2: Preparing for the Digital Future

### Summary Points from ULTACH Trust submission

- ↪ Access to Irish language programming is an essential element of public service broadcasting in Northern Ireland;
- ↪ Ofcom should make a clear and unequivocal statement of support for Irish language programme production;
- ↪ Ofcom confirms the important place of indigenous languages in the UK's broadcasting ecology: "Indigenous language broadcasting forms an important part of the public service broadcasting ecology of the nations of the UK, reflecting aspects of our cultural heritage unique to these islands.";
- ↪ Ofcom also demonstrates the concern over the lack of secure funding for Irish language broadcasting and a lack of equity with other languages;
- ↪ Yet Ofcom's response to the obvious concern of the Northern Ireland viewers is not adequate "there is perceived [*sic*] concern at the lack of consistency and equity, and sometimes certainty, in the current arrangements for funding delivery which are in place in different parts of the UK";
- ↪ The evidence demands that Ofcom includes proposals to safeguard and encourage Irish language programme production and broadcasting within the UK structures.
- ↪ Ofcom should take a position on the Westminster Government's statutory and legal imperative, through the Good Friday Agreement, to fund Irish language television. The UK Government has entered into a treaty obligation which needs to be honoured in full.
- ↪ Ofcom should urge Government support the strengthening of the Irish Language Broadcasting Fund as the most effective means of creating and supporting programming in the Irish language. It should be the central to Ofcom's recommendations for ensuring quality Irish language programming.
- ↪ The ILBF needs to secure long-term guarantees of sufficient continuing funding to fill a serious gap in the public television service in Northern Ireland.
- ↪ Ofcom should address the funding imbalance for programme production within the indigenous languages of the UK;
- ↪ Ofcom should establish clear principles on which the broadcasting of Irish language programmes can be incorporated into the UK's broadcasting system and not provided mainly by external channels, such as TG4 or RTÉ;
- ↪ The BBC has made a commitment to 'an incremental increase' in Irish language television provision'. If longterm funding is not secured for the ILBF, the BBC will be unable to proceed with the proposed increase or may not even be able to maintain the current levels of programming;