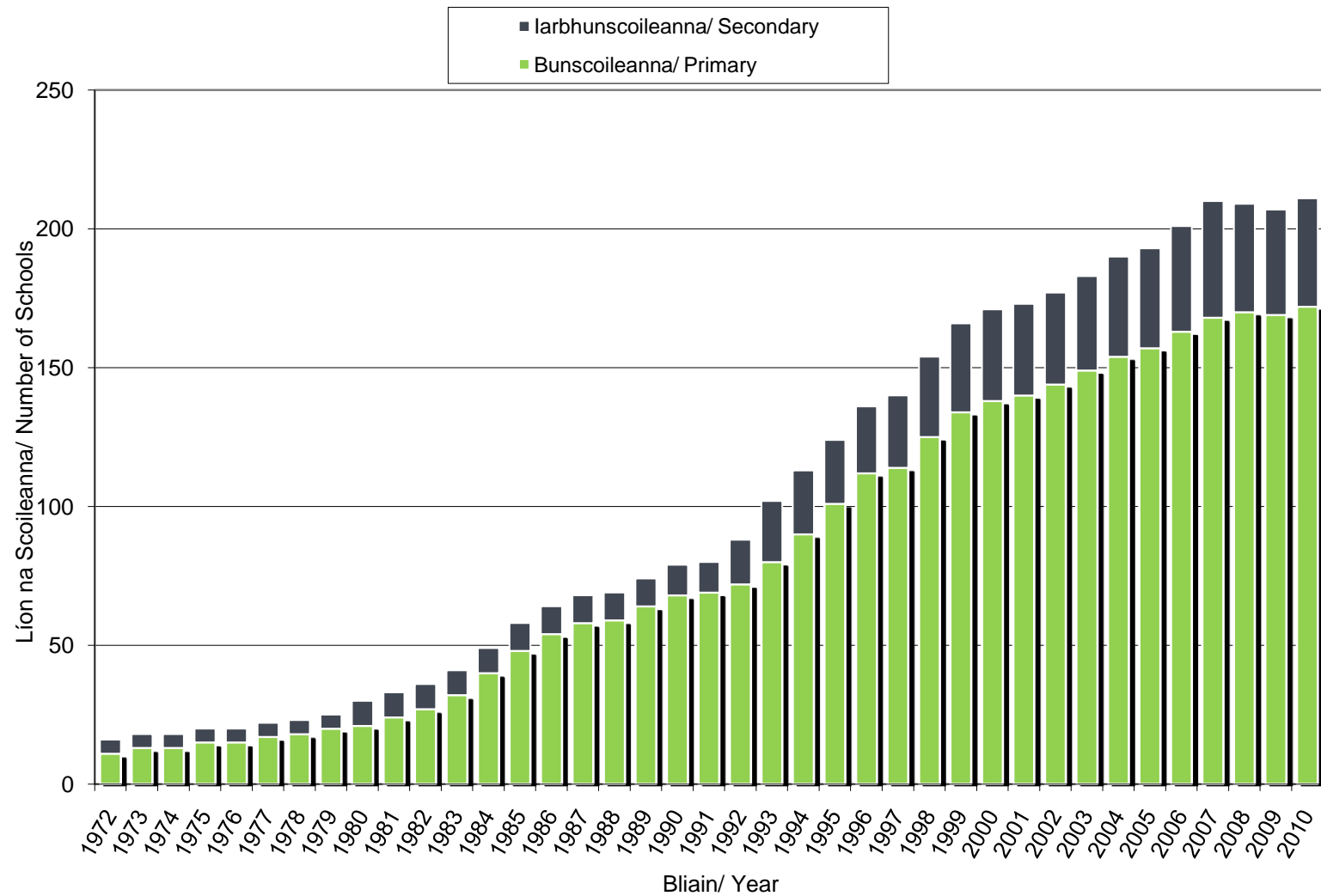


*Challenges to Irish-medium
education in Ireland –
implications for minority
language education in
Europe?*

Nóra Ní Loingsigh
Gaelscoileanna Teo.

Fás ar an nGaelscolaíocht sna 32 Contae lasmuigh den Ghaeltacht / The Growth of Irish Medium Schools in the 32 Counties outside the Gaeltacht : 1972-2010



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION & SKILLS

- Pupil-teacher ratio
 - Increase imminent for September 2011 in all-Irish schools
- Teacher panels & Irish-medium schools
 - Lack of a specific panel for the sector at both levels
 - Schools forced to take teachers without Irish?
- School accommodation
 - 48% all-Irish schools in temporary school accommodation
 - 42% of all-Irish secondary schools in temporary school accommodation



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION & SKILLS

- Resources through Irish
 - Improved due to COGG
- Teacher training
 - 4 of 5 teacher training colleges provide some training for immersion education at primary level
 - One teacher-training diploma is provided through Irish to train second-level teachers
- Recognition for new schools
 - Looking at spaces in schools based on population growth rather than demand for Irish-medium education.
 - All-Irish units at second level?



POLITICIANS!

- Status of the Irish Language
 - in Europe and
 - in Ireland
- 20 Year Strategy for the Irish Language
 - Implementation?
- Irish at Leaving certificate level
 - Irish as a core subject
 - Quality of the challenge of the examination
- Immersion education
 - One complaint from one set of parents to implement anti-immersion policy!



THE PUBLIC

- Positive attitude but passive
 - Spending money on the language
- The English language media
 - ‘elite’ schools
 - ‘league’ tables
- The Catholic Church
 - School chaplencies with Irish
 - Difficulty arranging sacraments through Irish
- Irish in the community
 - Irish outside the classroom
 - Irish language organisations



OPPORTUNITIES

- 20 year strategy for the Irish language
- Number of pupils learning through Irish growing – a young dynamic community!
- An Chomhairle Um Oideachais Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta
- Attitude of the public & the new Irish
- Part-immersion in English-medium schools - untapped



IMPLICATIONS FOR MINORITY LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN EUROPE?

- Learn from each other – the importance of CAER
- Marketing for minority language education?
- Research to illustrate the advantages of minority language education
- Politicians! – the same the world over but an opportunity to influence them as well!
- Your opinions?



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