



Statement of Performance Commitments 2020

March 2020

Summary

Executive Summary

Introduction to the 2020 ASPC

As the national Irish language public service broadcaster (PSB), TG4 is required by legislation to prepare an Annual Statement of Performance Commitments (ASPC) in accordance with its objects, strategy and public service statement.

The ASPC framework for PSBs continues to evolve based on the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI) Annual Review of Performance & Public Funding for PSBs. The latest BAI review is for 2018, undertaken by Mediatique.

Mediatique noted that TG4 set demanding stretch targets and strong and meaningful commitments, largely consistent with best practice. It recommended that TG4 continue to prioritise targets to focus on the most important goals for the organisation. TG4 has adopted this recommendation. While the commitments continue to align with TG4's 2018-2022 strategy, the number of commitments and targets have been reduced to focus on strategic priorities for 2020.

As set-out in Appendix 1, TG4 will continue to track operational targets and other metrics previously contained in our ASPC. We will report on them in other formats as appropriate. For example, sub-titling and financial / efficiency targets and performance will continue to be monitored and reported to the BAI and other stakeholders as appropriate.

The Strategic Context for 2020

TG4's priorities for 2020 are framed by not just our 5-year strategy, but also by the key challenges facing the organisation:

1. Changing Audiences.
2. Differentiation.
3. Funding & Sustainability.
4. Findability.
5. Impact.

Changing Audiences

Audiences are at the heart of public service media in Ireland. Holding a strong position with Irish audiences is of crucial importance to TG4 and we must ensure that we continue to deepen our audience connection and provide access to strong Irish content on all devices of choice.

Audience behaviour is evolving. The move from traditional linear television is ongoing, driven particularly by younger audiences as they are more connected, mobile and disposed towards non-linear content and social media from multiple national and international sources. While linear TV still holds the majority share of audio-visual content in Ireland, there is a move to streaming video-on-demand (SVOD), online, short-form and social media content. This trend will continue as technology, devices and broadband develop further.

Putting our audiences first; maintaining a significant position in the Irish linear television market; strengthening younger audience engagement; creating lifetime relationships with audiences; and ensuring our content is discoverable in a myriad of international content choices, are the most

critical audience priorities for TG4 in the year ahead. It is also essential that we deepen TG4's reach with international audiences and have a strategic focus on the Diaspora, especially through Irish music and culture.

Differentiation

With so much international content available, Irish people must feel ownership of, and engagement with, TG4 as their Irish public service media (PSM) provider.

Our mandate is more important than ever before. TG4 must be distinctively Irish and celebrate Irish culture. We must continue to create more audience-driven content which connects Irish people to their communities and to Ireland, as well as to the rest of the world.

We must continue to strengthen our engagement with Irish communities and the Gaeltacht and to strengthen our brand as Ireland's Irish language PSM.

We must ensure that unique, creative Irish content continues to be made, that it stands apart in a multitude of international content choices, and that the very best of this content holds its own place on the international stage, bringing Irish culture and creativity to the world.

Funding & Sustainability

2020 is the third year in a row in which TG4's strategy funding requirements have not been met. The service continues to experience significant financial pressures, including (*as noted by Mediatique in the Annual Review of Performance & Public Funding for PSBs 2018*) "chronic public under-funding and a challenging commercial market environment".

With a total funding requirement of €40.6m for 2020 to deliver our strategy, we have a **strategy funding gap of €3.4m** for the year. With a **cumulative funding gap of €9.5m** to date¹, TG4's strategy delivery has fallen seriously behind.

The most serious shortfall is in TG4's target growth in investment in original Irish content². This content is commissioned from independent production companies in Gaeltacht and rural areas. Continued under-funding will not only impact delivery of TG4's strategy and in turn, our longer-term sustainability, it will also impact many Gaeltacht and rural communities in regions of the country where TG4 has had such an impact on jobs, skills development, capital formation and incomes. If TG4 had invested an additional €3m every year in content and services from the independent production sector, this would have increased TG4's contribution to national output and employment. ***It is estimated that up to an additional 50 jobs could have been created in the regional economy through the direct, indirect and induced impact of this additional €3m spend per annum*** (excluding additional catalytic (spill over) impacts)³.

The impact of a funding shortage on TG4's content and service investment also unavoidably effects audience levels, particularly in the global, highly competitive media landscape where quality content is premium.

TG4 will continue to deliver the most value possible from our funding and investment in content and services, and to innovate in order to grow audiences. However, there is an urgent need to address public funding levels which requires a broader review of Ireland's PSB funding model.

As highlighted in the Mediatique review, there is consensus that PSB remains a critical part of the Irish media market and "needs protection

¹ Excluding one-off €990k supplementary TG4 received in 2018 for Bliain na Gaeilge.

² See Appendix 2 for detail on Strategy Vs ASPC variance.

³ See Appendix 2.

and adequate funding”, particularly in the face of such extensive competition from international players who do not invest in indigenous Irish content.

Findability

The growth of on-demand and online content combined with new services and technologies mean that finding and watching audio-visual content is no longer solely via traditional linear TV channels.

TG4 must continue to invest in technology, platform development and data analytics to reach audiences, improve audience experience and develop content to match audience preferences. We must invest in creative content which attracts audiences and in marketing to support content discoverability.

From a policy perspective, there is also a requirement for the discoverability of PSB content to be safeguarded. The transposition of the Audiovisual Media Services (AVMS) Directive into Irish legislation in 2020 requires appropriate regulatory protection to ensure PSB linear and on-demand services remain easy to find.

Impact

TG4’s content and services deliver value to our audiences and also add value to Irish society as a whole. This value includes our impact on Ireland’s regional creative economy, on Irish & Gaeltacht communities, on education and on other areas which deliver public and social value.

TG4’s investment in Ireland’s regional creative economy supports the development of industry and production talent, regional jobs and incomes. The role TG4 plays in supporting the growth of regional creative industries is fully aligned with Government economic and creative development policies including the Creative Ireland Programme 2017-2022, the 20-Year Strategy for the Irish language (2010-2030) and Project Ireland 2040.

As a PSB, we impact education and specifically for TG4, Irish language learning. TG4 is an important means by which we ensure a future for the Irish language and support it to be a living, working language.

The many other areas in which TG4 delivers public and social value include supporting:

- cultural citizenship (Irish language, Irish culture, music and the arts, traditional and modern cultures);
- social citizenship (Ireland’s minorities and regional communities);
- audio-visual innovation in the Irish language; and,
- Irish regional and community sports. In particular, TG4 is recognised for supporting women’s sports and we have been pioneering the broadcast, and helping to increase the profile of, women’s sport since our establishment in 1996.

For 2020, we will endeavour to deepen TG4’s impact - adding even more value to Ireland’s regional creative economy, to regional and Gaeltacht communities and to Irish society overall. We must also enhance public understanding of the value TG4 delivers.

TG4's Priorities for 2020

Underpinned by these challenges, TG4 has identified 11 priorities for 2020:

1. Linear audiences.
2. Digital audiences.
3. Young audiences.
4. Irish speaking communities & Gaeltacht.
5. Regional creative economy.
6. Internationalisation of the independent audio-visual (AV) sector.
7. Internationalisation of TG4's creative cultural footprint.
8. Safeguarding our cultural & linguistic assets.
9. Findability.
10. Funding.
11. Diversity.

These priorities provide the basis for TG4's **11 commitments** for the year as listed in Table 1 opposite and described thereafter. In 2020, TG4's content commitments will incur an expenditure of €28.9m⁴. We ensure that the maximum amount possible is spent on Irish language content and in 2020, 77% of TG4's public funding⁵ will be spent on Irish language content.

TG4 continues to endeavor to address the shortfall in funding for the strategy we agreed with the BAI - a strategy noted by Mediatique as being "suitably targeted and ambitious and deserving of additional funds". We try to stay true to our mission and 5-year vision but reduce spend when we must, in line with our funding levels. However, to ensure public service broadcasting is working efficiently in Ireland, a strong, adequately funded TG4 is needed. As noted by Mediatique, PSB remains a critical part of the Irish media market and "needs protection and adequate funding".

⁴ Including €2.1m of production staff costs.

Table 1: 2020 Performance Commitments	
Priorities	Commitments
Linear Audiences	1. Grow our audience share and resonance with national linear audiences.
Digital Audiences	2. Continue to grow TG4's digital reach and engagement.
Young Audiences	3. Bring the best, most innovative, entertaining and educational Irish language content to young audiences, growing reach and engagement.
Irish Speaking Communities & Gaeltacht	4. Strengthen TG4's ties with Irish speaking communities, especially the Gaeltacht.
Regional Creative Economy	5. Support growth and jobs in regional creative industries, helping to sustain and build Ireland's regional creative economy
Internationalisation of Independent AV Sector	6. Continue to provide a platform for the external growth and internationalisation of the Irish independent audio-visual production sector.
Internationalisation of Creative Cultural Footprint	7. Deepen TG4's global cultural and linguistic footprint.
Safeguarding our Cultural & Linguistic Assets	8. As a custodian of Irish language broadcasting legacy, TG4 will continue to build its Digital Archive.
Findability	9. Ensure TG4's content is discoverable through marketing, technology and prominence rules.
Funding	10. Secure an increase in core funding and deliver value-for-money from public funding.
Diversity	11. Continue to bring linguistic diversity into the mainstream and to be recognised for diversity both on and off-screen.

⁵ Current public funding plus €1m capital for programming.