Findings: ELE Report on the Irish Language

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08-11-2022 STOA Workshop Towards full digital language equality in a multilingual European Union
http://european-language-equality.eu
Irish

- First Official Language
- National Language
- Official Minority Language – Northern Ireland
- Official EU Language
- Census (2016): pop. 4,761,865
  - Ability to speak: 1,761,420
  - Daily Usage: 73,803
- 1 standard written form
- 3 spoken dialects
Irish Language Technology

- National Digital Plan for Irish – 7 years in the making
- Ireland’s AI Strategy is focused on English LT R&D

- Still no:
  - Automatic Speech Recognition
  - Automatic Subtitling
  - Question-Answering Systems
  - Named Entity Recognition
  - Natural Language Generation
  - Semantic Role labelling
  - Information Retrieval
  - Information Extraction
  - Virtual Agents/Chatbots
  - Adaptive Learning (CALL)
  - Knowledge Graphs

- Skills Gap
  - Only 1 undergraduate 3rd level course in computing and linguistics (with few Irish speaking students)

- Minimal support or investment from industry (despite global tech EMEA headquarter location)
Recommendations

- **Change of focus**
  - Away from current focus on dictionary development and training translators

- **Untapped potential for machine learning/ data-driven technologies**
  - Increase awareness: value of language data
  - Improve: language data management practices
  - Increase awareness: importance of open-data (sharing)

- **Need dedicated Irish LT programmes**
  - Upskilling, 3rd level, vocational training, inter-disciplinary studies

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

- **Long term strategy**
  - Long-awaited National Digital Plan for Irish, we need forward thinking
  - EU and National cooperation
European Language Equality

Go raibh maith agaibh
Thank you

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