



STATEMENT OF STRATEGY  
2010 – 2014



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### Broadcasting Act 2009

The Broadcasting Act 2009 (the Act) introduced three new reporting requirements on RTÉ, they are as follows:

## Public Service Statement 2010

RTÉ, following a public consultation, shall prepare, not later than 12 months after the passing of the Act and every 5 years thereafter, or as required by the Minister (of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources), a public service statement setting out the principles to be observed and activities to be undertaken by RTÉ in order to fulfil its public service objects.

The *RTÉ Public Service Statement* was submitted to the Minister on 12 July 2010.

## Statement of Strategy 2010-2014

Not later than 6 months after the passing of the Act and every 5 years thereafter, RTÉ shall prepare and present to the Minister a statement of strategy. The statement of strategy shall set out the strategy of the RTÉ Board for achieving its objects under the Act during the period to which the statement relates, having regard to resources available to RTÉ.

The *RTÉ Statement of Strategy 2010-2014* was submitted to the Minister on 12 January 2010.

## Annual Statement of Performance Commitments

RTÉ shall, by 31 January in each year, prepare an annual statement of performance commitments, in accordance with (a) its objects, (b) the *Statement of Strategy*, (c) the *Public Service Statement* and including the activities to which the corporation intends to commit in that financial year and associated performance indicators.

RTÉ will report each year in its Annual Report on the fulfilment or otherwise of the commitments made in its *Annual Statement of Performance Commitments*.

The first *RTÉ Annual Statement of Performance Commitments 2010* was submitted to the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI) on the 3rd February 2010.

# Introduction

## **Planning in Uncertain Times**

This strategy looks ahead to the five years 2010-2014. It assumes that RTÉ will continue to be a dual-funded broadcaster and that its licence fee revenue will be adequate to fulfil its public objectives.

Although this strategy has been considered during a deep recession, the Board must look beyond the immediate economic difficulties to a recovery within the five years ahead. It recognises that transformative changes in technology and in people's use of media continue despite the financial crisis. And it does so with the conviction that independent and accountable public service broadcasting will remain essential in building our community, serving its diversity and maintaining our democracy.

The purposes of RTÉ are expressed over three pages of the Broadcasting Act 2009 and they are ambitious in scope and aspiration. The Board must seek to fulfil the objects set down in legislation against the uncertain times in which we live.

To keep its balance in the testing times ahead, the Board has adopted a set of core values as touchstones for the strategic direction and the day-to-day activities of the organisation. These values are to be the reference points when inescapably tough decisions are required. By the measure of the values, choices will be made and priorities set. They will underpin the high level objectives, the local targets and the measures of performance for RTÉ, as expressed later in this statement.

# Introduction

In stating its four primary values, the Board is seeking to clarify the core of meaning and purpose that holds together the diverse activities of RTÉ. For the period 2010-2014, those values will be:

- That RTÉ has unique obligations to Irish cultural experience
- That RTÉ must be independent
- That RTÉ must contribute to community building and the fostering of common purpose
- That RTÉ must reflect the diversity of Ireland.

The precise expression of what the new Board aims to achieve and how that work is to be done begins with this statement of strategy. As this strategy is implemented, it must also be adjusted and improved to retain currency and relevance to the organisation. Rolling business plans and statements of output commitments will continue to be produced as standard practice. However the values expressed here are to be taken as guiding principles. Committed to these values and having regard to the resources available, the Board will give the lead in seeking the demonstrably highest standards for programmes, personnel and organisational performance.

## Strategic Vision 2010 – 2014

**RTÉ's vision is to grow the trust of the people of Ireland as it informs, inspires, reflects and enriches their lives.**

The pursuit of highest standards must imbue all that we do, editorially, creatively and technologically, as well as in terms of accountability, quality and value for money. RTÉ must embrace change in order to remain relevant to the evolving needs of the audience. It must also continue to deliver on its strong commitment to Irish arts, culture and language, by giving the lead as a cultural producer and creative partner.

As the organisation strives to fulfil its remit, keeping its aspirations in view and facing invidious choices, it must contend with a number of tensions:

- securing public service goals while remaining dependent on a high level of commercial funding
- achieving quality in media that rightly pursue mass popularity
- serving minority cultures and interests as part of mainstream media offerings
- anticipating technological change prudently, without wasting resources and/or energy
- renewing and re-engineering an organisation that needs a continuity of expertise in diverse fields (editorial, technical, financial, commercial, administrative, among others) and
- strengthening creative partnerships with independent producers while maintaining in-house skills and resources.

RTÉ has identified six high level strategic objectives which are intended to guide the business in achieving its vision over the coming five years:

- 1. Excellence in Public Service:** Fulfil all our Public Service Objects and strive for the highest standards in ethics and accountability, on and off-air
- 2. High quality, distinctively Irish content:** Be the leading creator of the best quality, distinctively Irish content and the premier and most trusted source of Irish news and current affairs
- 3. Technology:** Harness technologies to ensure delivery of and access to our content across the widest range of platforms and devices to meet the needs of the audience
- 4. Finances:** Effectively manage RTÉ's finances into the future through optimising funding sources and controlling costs
- 5. Organisation, structures and staff:** Ensure that RTÉ has a high quality workforce and is optimally organised to deliver the best value for money service to the Irish public
- 6. Partnerships:** Establish and maintain collaborative partnerships and take a leadership role in the creative and digital economies in Ireland.

# Objectives and Actions

The following pages set out each of RTÉ's strategic objectives with a brief rationale for these. Within each rationale, **key priorities have been highlighted** which have corresponding actions and targets in the tables below.

The tables lay out in detail the strategic priorities and actions that RTÉ will undertake over the life of the plan to deliver on these objectives. These actions are not exhaustive but are indicative of the range of RTÉ's remit.

Specific targets will be published annually in *RTÉ's Annual Statement of Performance Commitments*, achievement or otherwise of these targets will be reported in RTÉ's Annual Report, together, these will demonstrate RTÉ's progress in achieving its objectives over the life of this Statement.

## Strategic Objective 1: Excellence in Public Service

Fulfil all our Public Service Objects and strive for the highest standards in ethics and accountability, on and off-air

This objective will be achieved through the provision of a **comprehensive range of services** to the Irish people in line with the organisation's public service objects. RTÉ has a responsibility as the national public service broadcaster to place itself at the **centre of Irish life** and to **promote dialogue, debate and inclusion** through all of our media. In an increasingly fragmented media landscape, a central point of community becomes ever more important. RTÉ will continue to showcase the celebration of our sport, music, language and diversity and be an ambassador for Irish culture at home and internationally.

In order to remain relevant to Irish society, RTÉ needs to continue to **reach and connect with our audiences** and to grow audiences that may currently be under-served. Finally RTÉ needs to demonstrate **honesty, accountability and the highest standards** as befits an organisation with a direct relationship with the public in the form of the licence fee.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY

## ACTIONS & TARGETS

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### **Deliver a wide range of programming and services as per Broadcasting Act 2009 (s114)**

- Operate a range of national media services in the public interest
- Broadcast a range of programming, including programmes that are entertaining, informative, educational and inclusive
- Deliver a range of music performances to entertain and educate
- Deliver programming and services relevant to the social and cultural needs of young people living in Ireland
- Engage with the public on the subject of Public Service Broadcasting.

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### **Place ourselves at the centre of Irish life and society and be a forum for debate**

- Deliver a comprehensive news and current affairs service
- Ensure appropriate coverage of key national and international events, including sporting events where Irish teams/individuals are involved
- Guarantee a space where national conversation, reflection and debate can take place, covering public affairs, democratic values, culture and religious beliefs and practices
- Maintain commitment to Irish cultural and language programming
- Undertake education and outreach initiatives
- Participate fully in transition to digital broadcasting.

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### **Promote inclusiveness and diversity**

- Reflect the daily lives, concerns and the cultural and regional diversity of the people of the whole island of Ireland
- Review the delivery of services for young people
- Provide coverage of religious, community and cultural activities, including minority cultures and interests.

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### **Retain existing and attract new audiences through the provision of relevant services**

- Fulfil universal service obligation (transmission coverage of 98%) for analogue TV & radio and digital TV during the life of this plan
  - Increase / maintain reach for RTÉ services
  - Maintain reach among key audience cohorts and increase where possible
  - Facilitate access for those with special needs by signing, sub-titles, etc
  - Provide service to Irish diaspora via International RTÉ player
  - Increase audience perceptions of relevance
  - Maintain audience connection with services
  - Develop and sustain content and services to meet evolving social needs and habits.
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## STRATEGIC PRIORITY

## ACTIONS & TARGETS

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### **Be accountable, honest and responsible in all of our activities**

- Maintain best practice governance and reporting systems
  - Fulfil all legislative and regulatory requirements
  - Ensure compliance with all relevant codes
  - Ensure best practice policies used for new technologies and social media tools
  - Develop new communications strategy to ensure transparency and pro-active communications
  - Review management PDS system and align with performance measurement systems where practicable.
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### **Exceed minimum standards**

- Demonstrate leadership in access services by exceeding minimum standards and providing new / innovative services where possible
  - Publish Corporate Social Responsibility Report annually
  - Answer calls and email communications promptly
  - Ensure highest business and accounting standards through voluntary compliance with international codes & IFRS.
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## Strategic Objective 2:

### Content

Be the leading provider of the best quality, distinctively Irish content and the premier and most trusted source of Irish news and current affairs

RTÉ has committed itself to the pursuit of excellence and intends to be **the premier provider in Ireland of high quality, distinctively Irish multi-media content**. "Irishness" is the key factor which differentiates us and our content and the emphasis on quality Irish content is integral to RTÉ's future success and relevance.

RTÉ will continue to be **the premier and most trusted source of independent news and current affairs in Ireland**. Our energies will be concentrated on providing the very best quality programmes and services and **strengthen our bond with the audience** by meeting their needs. In order to deliver excellence, RTÉ must place ideas and creativity at the centre of all that we do; **continually innovating, refreshing and challenging**.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY

## ACTIONS & TARGETS

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### Be the primary source of independent News and Current Affairs in Ireland

- Maintain significant audience for flagship news and current affairs programmes
- Deliver impartial and objective news and current affairs
- Build audience appreciation for and increase relevance of RTÉ news and current affairs programmes
- Maintain and enhance foreign coverage where possible to deliver an Irish perspective on international events.

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### Be the primary source of Irish / home produced content, nationally and from the regions

- Ensure a high proportion of home-production during peak on RTÉ One
- Ensure regional coverage
- Performing groups to be the leading provider of live music of quality and diversity in their field.

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### Deliver the best quality programmes and services

- Be the leader in Irish TV and radio programming across all key genres
- Continue strong RTÉ performance on annual top 20 programme lists
- Maintain highest production standards
- Participate in international and national competitions.

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### Meet the needs of Irish audiences and build affinity with RTÉ

- Provide state of the art audience research data for programme makers
- Embed research in decision-making processes
- Build affinity with RTÉ and increase satisfaction with and loyalty to RTÉ.

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### Implement highest editorial standards

- Conduct internal review of editorial guidelines during 2010 in context of new Broadcasting and Defamation / Privacy Legislation
- Minimise legal / regulatory corrective actions
- Minimise BAI complaints
- Deal with BAI complaints promptly.

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### Deliver innovative programming and services

- Optimise technology usage to facilitate innovation in programming
  - Bring new formats, initiatives and programmes to all media
  - Deliver cross-platform and cross-media initiatives
  - Create new encounters for musicians and audiences.
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### Strategic Objective 3: Technology – Delivery of our Content

Harness technologies to ensure delivery of and access to our content across the widest range of platforms and devices to meet the needs of the audience

RTÉ needs to make best use of current and emerging technologies to **ensure that the audience can reach, enjoy and use our content whenever, however and wherever they wish**. For younger audiences, this is their expectation, their reality and their key demand.

The **transition to digital technologies** must progress as a matter of priority; RTÉ must deliver Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) by 2012, as well as making significant progress on the delivery of high-definition television (HD-TV) over the coming years. It must also embrace innovations in information and communications technology, digital radio and Internet TV and continue to use these changes to expand our offering. All of these initiatives require capital investment and careful planning. The delivery of **Project 2025** will greatly enhance RTÉ's ability to exploit and harness developments in digital technology.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY

## ACTIONS & TARGETS

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### Facilitate access to content through digital media and increase connection points with RTÉ

- Increase accessibility to content through RTÉ.ie
- Increase availability of archive content via online services
- Grow Digital Radio Services, on digital radio and online
- Deliver mobile applications for relevant products
- Develop new avenues to connect with audiences across the whole island of Ireland and facilitate interaction with RTÉ.

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### Implement technology change programme

- Develop new multimedia production models
- Efficient use of technology for appropriate programme making and transmission of services
- Implement organisation-wide technology change programme and re-structure accordingly.

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### Implement end-to-end Digitisation Programme

- Build end-to-end digital content production network over next 5 years
- Integrate media asset management across enterprise
- Migrate to HDTV
- Pilot new delivery formats.

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### Ensure content distribution / delivery across all platforms

- Use end-to-end digital content production network to populate all platforms and devices
- Ensure delivery on digital terrestrial, cable, satellite as well as (mobile) Internet and across IP networks
- Achieve total population coverage for digital broadcasting.

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### Project 2025

- Achieve phase 1 targets.
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## Strategic Objective 4:

### Finances

Effectively manage RTÉ's finances into the future through optimising funding sources and controlling costs

This statement places significant emphasis on financial efficiencies and on securing RTÉ's future, as this focus is imperative to the fulfilment of our public purpose. RTÉ has set itself the ambitious **target of an Operating breakeven result for 2010** before restructuring charges and is working towards returning to surplus by the end of the period covered by this plan. With a view to supplementing its public funding, RTÉ will work to **expand its funding base** by exploring and exploiting new commercial revenue streams and maximising appropriate additional revenues. RTÉ will continue to make the case for adequate public funding. It will use licence fee revenues as efficiently as possible and **seek to generate further efficiencies** where appropriate.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY

## ACTIONS & TARGETS

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### Manage finances prudently

- Short-term goal of operating breakeven result
- Rolling Average Net Annual Surplus of 2.5% over five years
- Solvency: Target availability of cash / facilities to meet commitments as they fall due
- Review ERP systems and implement new integrated system by 2014.

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### Optimise funding sources

- Diversify and increase funding sources
- Explore new financing partnerships to maximise revenue or reduce costs
- Maximise the exploitation of all revenue streams both traditional and new.

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### Optimise Market Share

- Endeavour to maintain audience share and/or reach on television in the face of significant national and international competition
- Optimise audience share for key radio services.

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### Deliver a value for money service

- Ensure best value for money achieved in all areas of the business
- Continue to make best use of Licence Fee income
- Enhance audience perception of "value for money" of Licence Fee.

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### Control People Costs

- Set Personnel Related Operating Costs (PROCs) at not more than 50% of Total Costs
- Ensure contractor costs reflect market rates and best value for money.

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### Efficient resource management

- Monitor cost per transmitted hour (first-run)
  - Efficient usage of facilities (TV & Radio centres)
  - Resource management procedures for programme personnel.
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## Strategic Objective 5:

### Organisation, structures and staff

Ensure that RTÉ has a high quality workforce and is optimally organised to deliver the best value for money service to the Irish public

RTÉ needs to harness the strengths and talents of its staff in order to operate with efficiency and flexibility in a changing environment. **Staff must be developed and up-skilled** so the organisation is adequately resourced to deliver our digital ambitions. The skills of staff must be aligned within the structure of the organisation so that RTÉ is best organised to deliver an efficient, value for money service for the public. This will require a **review of structures and work practices** in order to deliver more effective and efficient usage of our resources.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY

## ACTIONS & TARGETS

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### **Develop people and skills**

- Optimise work force
  - Identify skills required to deliver digital ambitions and augment and up-skill work-force as required
  - Review staff development and succession planning processes to ensure renewal of key on-air talent / performers, management roles and positions.
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### **Optimise organisational structure**

- Review organisational structure to fulfil public purpose in best manner
  - Restructure where necessary
  - Deliver annual manpower plan in each IBD.
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### **Optimise Market Share**

- Review work practices
  - Adopt changes where necessary to facilitate movement to digital production and delivery.
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## Strategic Objective 6: Partnerships

Establish and maintain collaborative partnerships and take a leadership role in the creative and digital economies in Ireland

RTÉ plays a significant **role in the creative economy** in Ireland, particularly in the regions and enjoys a strong relationship with the independent sector which must be nurtured. Furthermore, RTÉ needs to engage all its creative capacities in the search for **new avenues of creative expression and new services** and will harness external strengths through **national and international partnerships**.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY

## ACTIONS & TARGETS

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### Maintain and grow collaborative relationships

- Support the development of the independent production sector
- Ensure Radio and Television independent commissioning meet statutory spending requirements
- Develop training initiatives with independent producers, the BAI and other organisations
- Nurture productive relations with local authorities and others to enable meaningful engagement at local level
- Explore opportunities to host media industry events
- Maintain strong membership of EBU and contribute to other European and international projects as appropriate
- Maintain close relationships with key sporting bodies
- Continue to forge close relationships with regulatory and trade bodies.

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### Foster creativity, new ideas and cultural expression

- Support cultural events, including minority interests
- Develop new talent (presenters, musicians, artists, programme makers and content creators)
- Show leadership within the creative industries
- Commission and première new work.

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### Explore new creative and cultural partnerships

- Explore opportunities for partnerships, including those to foster R&D in the digital society
  - Engage other agencies in evolving a policy regarding National Audio-Visual holdings
  - Contribute to international "Gateway Ireland" portal (Global Irish Economic Forum).
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# Capital Investment and Project 2025

RTÉ's long-term intention is to remain a key provider of multi-media services to Irish audiences. Project 2025 is a manifestation of this intention, the project envisages the gradual replacement over a 10-15 year period of most of the current 1960 and 1970s buildings on the Donnybrook site with a bespoke, modern complex of studios, production areas, staff offices, rehearsal and performance spaces designed for the digital age.

This project will advance RTÉ's delivery on each of its key strategic themes. New digital production and transmission facilities will ensure that Irish audiences continue to receive the best quality media services from RTÉ into the future. The project guarantees uninterrupted continuity of RTÉ's services to the Irish public during the construction period.

# RTÉ Services

## Television

RTÉ broadcasts two free-to-air television channels, RTÉ One and RTÉ Two which together broadcast a comprehensive range of home produced and acquired programming across a wide range of genres, catering to mass and niche audiences. RTÉ also operates a teletext service, RTÉ Aertel and provides one hour of Irish language programming per day to TG4.

## Radio

RTÉ broadcasts four FM radio stations; RTÉ Radio 1, RTÉ 2fm, RTÉ lyric fm and RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta which together cater for a broad range of interests in the areas of news, current affairs and sport, entertainment, music and arts. RTÉ also operates seven digital radio services on Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) which span speech, children's radio, dance, alternative, pop and ambient music. All RTÉ Radio services are accessible online to a global audience and RTÉ Radio 1 is available on Long Wave in Britain and parts of Western Europe.

## News and Current Affairs

RTÉ News and Current Affairs provides comprehensive, independent and impartial news and current affairs programming on television, on radio and online.

## Online Services and Publishing

RTÉ maintains a website, RTÉ.ie; an online TV catch-up service, the RTÉ player and a 24-hour online news service, RTÉ News Now. A wide variety of RTÉ programming is available to viewers and listeners outside Ireland through the RTÉ player (International) and the RTÉ website. RTÉ also publishes the RTÉ Guide, an entertainment and broadcast listings magazine.

## Performing Groups

RTÉ supports five performing groups: two orchestras, the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra and the RTÉ Concert Orchestra; two choirs, the RTÉ Philharmonic Choir and RTÉ Cór na nÓg; and a string quartet, the RTÉ Vanbrugh Quartet. The RTÉ Performing Groups deliver a wide range of quality performances and participate in a range of complementary community and educational activities. In conjunction with this, RTÉ Performing Groups contribute, commission and première new works by emerging as well as more established composers.

## Transmission

RTÉNL provides a national analogue transmission network for RTÉ Radio and Television, as well as other national and local broadcasters and hosts equipment for telecommunications and other service providers. RTÉNL is currently building a national Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) transmission infrastructure in preparation for the introduction of the new DTT service and has a trial DAB transmission infrastructure in place.

## Libraries and Archive

RTÉ maintains and preserves the largest archive of Irish audio-visual material in the world. This comprehensive archive comprises not only radio and television programmes, but also still images, production files, scripts, music scores and manuscripts. In fulfilment of the requirements of the Act, RTÉ has submitted a scheme to the Minister which will facilitate access to this archive.

## Future RTÉ Services

During the lifetime of this strategy, RTÉ will make best use of current and emerging technologies to ensure that our audiences can access and enjoy RTÉ content, such as news and current affairs or children's programming, whenever, however and wherever they wish.

**RTE**

[www.rte.ie](http://www.rte.ie)