

Directorate-General for the Presidency
Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments

Factsheet: Dáil Éireann (Irish House of Representatives)



Leinster House in Dublin, the seat of the Irish Parliament













1. At a glance

Ireland is a parliamentary democracy. The Irish Parliament (Oireachtas) consists of the President and two Houses: Dáil Éireann (House of Representatives) and Seanad Éireann (the Senate).



The Members of Dáil Éireann are elected at least once every five years by Irish citizens and British citizens resident in the Republic of Ireland aged 18 and over. The current Dáil was elected in February 2016 and consists of 158 deputies. For the 2016 Dáil elections, the Republic of Ireland was divided into 40 constituencies, each of which elected three to five Members using proportional representation and the single transferable vote system.

The constitution confers primacy on Dáil Éireann as the directly elected House in the passage of legislation. Dáil Éireann is also the House from which the government is formed and to which it is responsible. Policy work mostly takes place in joint committees composed of Members of both Houses of Parliament.

2. Composition

Current composition, following the general election on 26 February 2016			
	Party	EP affiliation	Number of seats
	Fine Gael		50
	Fianna Fáil		44
	Sinn Féin		23
	Independents	Not affiliated	19
	Labour Party		7
	Anti-Austerity Alliance People before Profit Alliance	Not affiliated	6
	Independents 4 Change	Not affiliated	4
	Social Democrats	Not affiliated	3
	Green Party		2
			158
The next Dáil elections must take place in spring 2021 at the latest.			

3. Officeholders

Ceann Comhairle (Chairperson) of Dáil Éireann  Mr Seán Ó Fearghaíl, since 10 March 2016	Chairperson of the Joint Committee on EU Affairs (composed of Members of both Chambers)  Michael Healy-Rae (Independent)
Clerk of Dail Éireann and Secretary General of the Houses of the Oireachtas Service: Peter Finnegan	

4. Relations with Members of the European Parliament

Participation rights for Irish MEPs in plenary sittings	No
Participation rights for Irish MEPs in committee meetings	Partially (Irish MEPs may attend meetings of the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and of the Joint Committee on European Union Affairs and may take part in their proceedings without having a right to vote or to move motions and amendments; other MEPs may attend upon invitation.)
Availability of videoconferencing system in Dáil Éireann	Yes

5. Information links

- Official website: <http://www.oireachtas.ie>
- [Standing Orders \(rules of procedure\) of Dáil Éireann](#)
- [List of committees](#)
- [Recent documents submitted by the Irish Parliament to the Interparliamentary EU Information Exchange \(IPEX\)](#)
- [European Parliament Information Office in Dublin](#)

6. Contacts

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