

A bit of Background

Ireland is a democracy. It has a constitution that outlines how the government will operate, who has power, how decisions are made and the basic rights of a citizen. *The National Parliament (Oireachtas)* has the power to make laws and is made up of The President (an tUachtarán) and two 'houses'—The Senate (Seanad Éireann) & The Dáil Éireann. (see below)

General Election Explained

A General Election is called every five years. The upcoming General Election will take place on **Thursday 24th May**.

In a General Election, voters are asked to vote for local representatives who best represent their views on various political issues. A successful candidate becomes a TD (Teachta Dála) and thus a Member of Dáil Éireann.

Dáil Éireann (ie House of Representatives) introduces new laws and debate topical issues as well as proposing a yearly budget on how our taxes are spent.

The Taoiseach (Prime Minister) is the head of the Irish Government. After the election, the Dáil picks the Taoiseach who then picks his cabinet of ministers (no less than 7 and no more than 15) and gives each of them a Department of State e.g. Education or Health.

Good to Know! As well as working in the Dáil and on committees, TDs offer advice and assistance on family/ personal problems relating to a government department through their local clinics.

Constituency is the local electoral area. **Dun Laoghaire** is a five seat constituency and so after the election will have 5 TDs representing the people of Dun Laoghaire in Dáil Éireann.

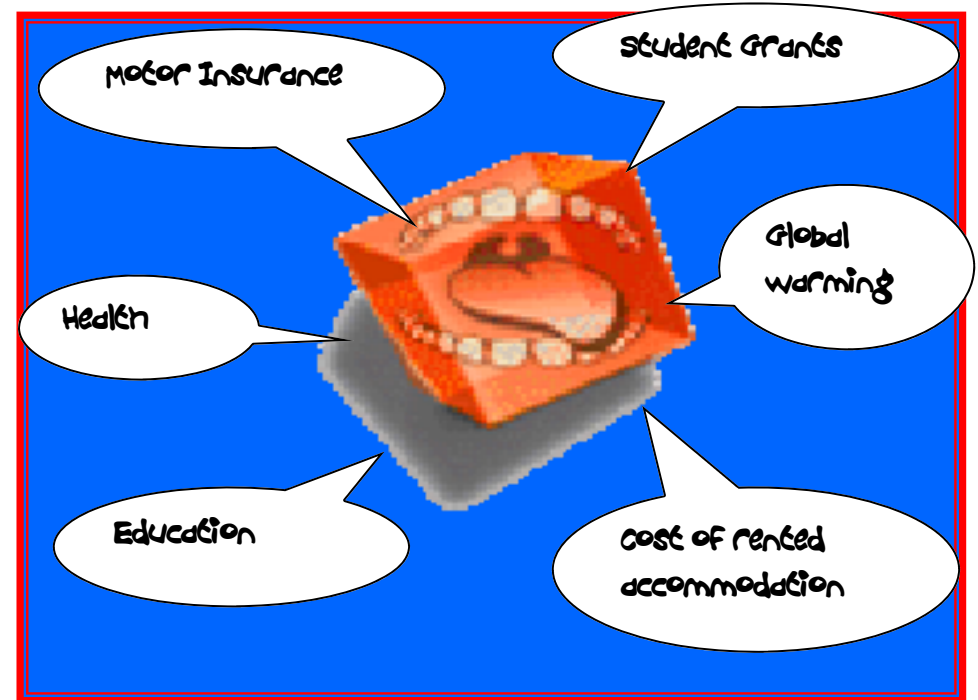
Who We Are

We are a one-stop-shop of information on a wide range of subjects from sports & leisure, education, careers, rights & entitlements, travel and accommodation. The service is free! So if you are aged 15–25, check us out.

Dun Laoghaire Youth Information Centre,

137 Lower Georges St., Dun Laoghaire.

Ph: 01 2809363, www.youthquest.ie



Vote & be counted

on Thursday 24th May

Why bother?

- 👉 Your Vote, Your Voice, so Use It
- 👉 If you want to influence how the country is run, you need to take part
- 👉 Power of Young People — Over 300,000 young votes are 'up for grabs' - make them count
- 👉 If you don't, someone else will make the decision for you

Everyones talking about it—what's it all about?

For many of you this will be your first time to vote - you don't have a clue. Well you're not alone! We have done this quick guide to answer some of your questions and shed a bit of light on the great mystery that is the General Election.....

Can I Vote in the General Election?

- ☑ You must be at least 18 on or before polling day
- ☑ You must be living in Ireland
- ☑ You must be an Irish or British Citizen
- ☑ You must be registered (See below ↓)

Am I registered ?

Simply click on www.checktheregsiter.ie to check if your name is on it. If it's not, contact your local authority (e.g. Dun Laoghaire/ Rathdown Co. Council) and ask to register. You need to do this at least 14 working days before polling day.


Students living away from home while attending college have the choice of being registered at either their home address or their student residential address. (See also Postal Votes)

Postal Voters List— you may be able to vote by post if you cannot get to the polling station, for example because:


- ☑ of physical illness or disability
- ☑ studying full time in college away from home
- ☑ you are in prison

How to choose who to vote for !

With so many candidates up for election it is sometimes difficult to choose. The only thing for it is to get as informed as possible.

 Check out their websites or blogs

 Read the newspapers or watch the TV

 When they call to your door, ask them about the things that concern you most and see where they stand on those issues.

Its Polling Day—What do I do!



- Your polling card will come to your home before the date of the election. If it hasn't arrived, contact your local county council.
- It will tell you where you should go to vote (normally a local school or public building).
- When you arrive at the polling station, you will be asked to state your name & address.
- - bring some ID e.g. driver's licence or passport, student card as you maybe asked to prove your identity.
- Your ballot paper will be stamped and handed to you and then you go to the voting compartment.....

Don't FORGET!



Time to make your mark

Step 1

On your ballot paper, the names of the candidates in your constituency will be listed alphabetically with an indication of the political party, if any. You may also see a photo of the candidate and/or a party emblem.

Step 2

You write "1" in the box beside the name of your first choice
You write "2" in the box beside the name of your second choice and so on

Step 3

You may stop marking your paper after 1 or any subsequent preference or you may go right down the ballot paper.



Fold your ballot paper to hide your vote and place it in the sealed ballot box.

When you vote this way, you are choosing to transfer your vote to your 2nd choice candidate when the 1st choice is either elected or eliminated. If your 2nd choice candidate is either elected or eliminated, your vote will be transferred to your 3rd choice and so on. This is known as a Single Transferable Vote

It is a secret ballot so no-one has to know who you vote for!
You may only vote once at the election.