

A Plain English Guide to Political Terms



National Adult Literacy Agency
An Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearachta do Aosaigh

76 Lower Gardiner Street
Dublin 1

Tel: (01) 855 4332

Email: literacy@nala.ie

Web: www.nala.ie

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This glossary is intended only as a guide for members of the public. The descriptions are not legal definitions and are not statements of National Adult Literacy Agency policy.

Our plain English guide focuses on political terms this year as part of our campaign on literacy and political participation. We have chosen this theme in light of an expected general election by mid-2007.

Literacy difficulties can be a barrier to accessing, understanding and using information. As a result, adults with literacy difficulties may be excluded from:

- voting in elections and referenda;
- getting involved in political parties or local lobby groups; and
- understanding government and how it works for them.

This guide, along with other elements of our campaign on literacy and political participation, aims to help the public become more familiar with some of the most common political terms. We also hope it will remove some of the barriers that may currently prevent people from getting involved in political activity - whether that means voting, lobbying their local representative or joining a political party.

The guide and the campaign also aim to encourage Government departments, local authorities, political parties, statutory organisations and community and voluntary groups to become more aware of the issues faced by the estimated 500,000 adults with literacy difficulties (OECD, 1997) and to develop more effective and sensitive responses to encourage them to become more politically active.

A list of references and websites of the main political parties is included on page 55.

We aim to update this guide to make sure that it stays relevant. We invite your suggestions for additions, so please e-mail any suggestions to literacy@nala.ie.

Absentee ballot

A ballot paper that is filled in and posted to the Board of Elections before an election if a registered voter cannot get to a polling station on election day

Absolute monarchy

A government where a monarch (a king, queen or emperor) holds total power and can make laws without having to consult a parliament or the people

Act

A law that has been passed by the parliament (or legislature) and approved by the President

See also [Bill and Legislature](#).

Absolute poverty

A level of poverty that leaves people without the necessities of life such as food, housing or clothing; usually relates to developing countries but can also apply to certain people in Ireland

Activist

A person who takes up and campaigns for a social or political cause, for example affordable housing or migrant rights

Ad hoc committee

A group of people that comes together to carry out a particular task and then breaks up when the task is over

Aegis

A form of power that offers protection, for example the power of a Government department over a state agency

Agenda

A list of things to be done

Agriculture and Food, Department of

The Government department responsible for regulating and supporting agriculture and food industries and monitoring and controlling animal and plant health, animal welfare and some aspects of food safety

Alliance Party of Northern Ireland

A political party without nationalist or unionist roots that aims to achieve and promote justice, diversity, prosperity and peace and is opposed to any form of violence

Amendment

A change to the detail of a law or contract

Anarchy

A society with political and social disorder caused by lack of laws and government control

Annexe

Taking over an area under the control of a ruler or a state and adding it to a larger state

Anthem

A song of praise; called a national anthem when it is about a country

Anti-social behaviour

Any behaviour likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress

Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO)

A court order against a child aged 10 to 18 to prevent anti-social behaviour; currently used in Britain but not yet introduced in Ireland

Áras an Uachtaráin

Official home of the President of Ireland

See also [President of Ireland](#).

Ard Fheis

An Irish term for the official gathering of a political party each year to discuss policies and how the party is organised and to vote on any changes to the party's policies or rules

Aristocracy

A ruling system based on social class, wealth and noble birth

Arts, Sports and Tourism, Department of

The Government department responsible for promoting and fostering the arts, including the Irish film industry, promoting and developing sports, through programmes and major sports projects, and promoting and developing the tourism industry

Assembly

A group of people gathered together for a special purpose, sometimes as a law-making body, as in the Northern Ireland Assembly

Attorney General

The main legal advisor to the Irish Government, who is appointed by the Taoiseach

Bb

Backbench

The seats occupied in Dáil Éireann by any member of the

Irish Government who is not a minister or junior minister

See also [Dáil Éireann, Minister and Junior Minister](#).

Balanced budget

A government's annual budget in which income (for example from taxes) is equal to spending

Balance of power

Power held by a small party or group of independent representatives when a major political party needs their support to form a government

See also [Coalition government](#).

Ballot

A way of voting, usually using a ballot paper and ballot box

See also [Ballot paper and Ballot box](#).

Ballot box

A container for storing completed ballot papers during an election and only opened when votes are ready to be counted

Ballot box stuffing

An illegal action that involves voting many times to affect the result of an election

Ballot paper

A slip of paper, usually with representatives' names and photos, that registered voters use to record their preferences in an election or referendum

Bandwagon effect

The tendency for a candidate or proposal that seems to be winning to gather extra support simply because of being ahead; also called the 'snowball effect'

Bias

Favouring one argument or person over others, usually unfairly; prejudice

Bi-cameral legislature

A law-making body, known in Ireland as the Oireachtas, that is divided into an upper and a lower house

See also [Dáil Éireann](#), [Legislature](#), [Oireachtas](#) and [Seanad Éireann](#).

'Big Brother'

A type of state, envisaged by George Orwell in his novel *Nineteen Eighty Four*, in which the government monitors each person's movements and knows everything about all citizens

Bill (law)

A draft of a new law or change to a current law that has yet to be passed by the Oireachtas

See also [Act](#) and [Oireachtas](#).

Bill, Private Member's

A proposal for a law that comes from an individual TD or senator

Bi-partisanship

Co-operation on an issue or issues by two people or groups

Borough council

A local authority, usually in larger towns; found in Ireland in Clonmel, Drogheda, Kilkenny, Sligo and Wexford

'Brown envelope'

A term referring to the practice of politicians receiving illegal payments (in brown envelopes) in exchange for favours

Branch

A section of a political party that draws members from a local area

Bunreacht na hÉireann

Irish Constitution - see Constitution of Ireland

Bureaucracy

A system involving many rules and procedures and several levels of management and relying on written communication

By-election

An election for a seat in the Dáil that becomes vacant if a TD dies or resigns their seat

Cc

Cabinet

The group of Government ministers, the Taoiseach and the Attorney General, which decides policy and is responsible for all the Government departments

Campaign

An organised competition for votes by people who are seeking a particular result from an election or referendum or who are seeking to change the behaviour of government, business, other large institutions and the general population through the media, protests, written proposals, public meetings and so on

Campaign spending limits

Limits on the amount of money that political candidates can spend in an election campaign

Candidate

Someone who stands for election to a representative office

Canvassing

Trying to win votes by contacting voters directly, for example by going door to door

Capitalism

An economic system in which private individuals and corporations own goods, aim to make a profit and have freedom to set prices for goods and services

Cathaoirleach

The Irish word for chairperson

Caucus

A group or a meeting of people, especially members of a political party with power to decide on policy

Cause

A goal or aim of a group of people, normally for social or political change

Ceann Comhairle

The chairperson of Dáil Éireann, who chairs its proceedings and must make sure that all parties and independent members are treated fairly

See also [Dáil Éireann](#).

Census

A detailed count by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) of every person in Ireland, including people who don't usually live here, on a particular date roughly every five years

Centre

The middle point of the political spectrum, ranging from 'far left' (communism) to 'far right' (fascism)

See also [Conservative](#), [Fascism](#), [Left-wing](#), [Neo-conservative](#), [Right-wing](#) and [Socialism](#).

Centrist

A person with moderate political opinions and policies

Chancellor

The holder of a high office of state, for example the head of government, as in Germany, or the finance minister (Chancellor of the Exchequer) in the UK

Charter

A formal statement of purpose or of legal, civil or political rights, for example the English Magna Carta (the Great Charter of 1215) or the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union

Checks and balances

A term describing the actions of the three branches of government - the legislature, executive and judiciary - to monitor (check) each other's work and limit (balance) each other's powers so no branch becomes too powerful

See also [Executive](#), [Legislature](#), [Judiciary](#) and [Separation of powers](#).

Chief Justice

The head of the Supreme Court

Chief State Solicitor's Office

The office that represents that State, the Attorney General, Government departments and certain State agencies in legal cases

Chief Whip

The member of Irish Government who organises and co-ordinates government business in Dáil Éireann

Citizen

A member of a city, state or nation who enjoys its legal, social and political rights and of whom loyalty and responsibility is expected

Citizenship (Irish)

A legal status granted to:

- anyone born in Ireland if one of their parents was an Irish citizen at the time of their birth; or
- anyone born abroad if one of their parents was born in Ireland; or
- a child born in Ireland after 1 January 2005 to non-citizen parents if one of the parents was lawfully living in Ireland for at least three of the four years before the child's birth

Citizenship rights

Rights that are enjoyed by a citizen, such as the right to vote and to live permanently in a particular country

See also [Citizen](#).

City councils

Local authorities responsible for services such as housing, planning, roads, water supply and recreation facilities in particular cities

City or county manager

The person who manages a city or county council

City state

A small state consisting only of a city and its surrounding land, for example Singapore or the Vatican

Civic participation or engagement

A process in which people use the freedoms of democracy to do things such as sign a petition, contact their local councillor, vote, stand for election and become informed on issues

Civil and political rights

Freedoms and entitlements given by a nation to its people, including the right to a fair trial, the right to privacy, the right to marry, the right to take part in public life and the right to freedom of movement

Civil law

The law that regulates relations between individuals, or between individuals and corporations, and deals with property rights, personal injury and personal dignity and freedom

See also [Criminal law](#).

Civil law system

A system in which most of the laws are decided by legislation

See also [Common law system](#).

Civil liberty

The freedom to act, assemble, think or speak as you wish, regulated only as much as is needed for the good of other people

Civil service

The body of Government workers and officials who advise ministers and carry out the day-to-day work of Government departments

Coalition

A collection of two or more groups or parties, usually to

form a government or opposition

Coalition government

A government made up of more than one political party because no party obtained enough votes to form a government on its own

See also [Balance of power](#).

Code of conduct for office holders

Rules for TDs to help them make sure they behave ethically, fairly and responsibly and act in the best interests of the public

Committee on Procedures and Privileges

A committee in Dáil Éireann and in Seanad Éireann that works to make sure that members of each house do not act in a way that abuses the power that comes with their position and may recommend that members be disciplined if any abuse takes place

Common law system

A system in which the rules of a country are based on custom or court decisions instead of only legislation

See also [Civil law system](#).

Communications, Marine and Natural Resources, Department of

The Government department responsible for regulating and overseeing the broadcasting, telecommunications (post, Internet and telephone services) and energy sectors and protecting and developing marine and natural resources, such as minerals and oil

Communism

An economic and political system put into place after the Bolshevik revolution in Russia in 1917 in which people share the ownership of all goods and property; also, a system, such as in the former Soviet Union, where the government controls every aspect of a citizen's life and denies political freedoms

Communist

A person who supports communism

Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Department of

The Government department responsible for advancing the use of the Irish language and for promoting and supporting the growth of urban and rural communities, including Gaeltacht and island communities, to reduce disadvantage

Consensus

Agreement that is generally acceptable

Conservation

Using natural resources carefully (for example minerals, gas water or plants) and maintaining places of environmental or cultural importance to make sure they are available to future generations

Conservative

A person or political party who wishes to keep things the way they are, supports traditional values and opposes government interference; known as 'right', 'right wing' or 'right of centre' in politics

See also [Right-wing and Neo-conservative](#).

Constituency

The area of voters that a politician represents

Constituency boundary

A border between one constituency and another

Constitution

A set of principles used by an organisation, including a country or a state, to govern, or the document setting out those principles

See also [Constitution of Ireland](#).

Constitution of Ireland

Known in Irish as Bunreacht na hÉireann, the document in force

since 29 December 1937 that outlines the values and structures of the State, must be obeyed by new laws or practices and can only be changed with the agreement of the people

Convention

An agreement between nations or sides, for example the European Convention on Human Rights; also, a formal meeting of members or representatives of groups such as political parties, professional associations or industry groups

Council of State

The group of current and past Taoisigh (Prime Ministers), Presidents, Chief Justices, the Ceann Comhairle, the Cathaoirleach of the Seanad and the Attorney General, which advises the President of Ireland and must be consulted before the President calls a meeting of Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann or signs new bills into law

Councillor

A person elected to a county, city or urban district council to represent the interests of those living in the area covered by the council

County council

A type of local authority, covering a county that is responsible for services including housing, planning, roads, water supply and recreation facilities

County Development Boards

Boards set up in Ireland to bring together local development bodies, State agencies and other social partners to take part in long-term planning for counties over 10 years

See also [Social partnership](#).

County Registrar

A person appointed to make sure that an election or referendum and the return of its results are carried out properly

See also [Returning Officer](#).

Criminal law

The body of laws that ban certain behaviour - for example drunken driving, drug dealing, assault, murder and theft – that would otherwise cause social order to break down

Dd

Dáil Committee

A committee of members of the Dáil, broadly divided according to the division of Dáil seats among the political parties and independent TDs to consider matters relating to how TDs and certain public bodies carry out their functions

Dáil Éireann

Known as 'the Dáil' for short, the lower house of the Oireachtas, in which members carry out a number of functions, such as debating and voting on issues and passing bills

See also [Oireachtas](#), [Seanad Éireann](#) and [TD](#).

Dark horse candidate

An almost unknown contestant in an election, regarded by few people as a likely winner

Data Protection Commissioner

An independent person appointed by the Government to make sure that people can keep their right to privacy when information about them is held on computers or on paper and to deal with complaints from anyone who feels their rights have been infringed

Defamation

Saying or writing something false about a living person that is proven to damage their reputation in the eyes of right-minded people

See also [Libel and Slander](#).

Defence, Department of

The Government department responsible for managing, training, organising and equipping the defence forces

and co-ordinating and overseeing emergency planning in response to threats

Deficit

A situation that occurs when the Government is spending more money than it is taking in

See also [Surplus \(economic\)](#).

Delegate

A representative at a political or other conference who has been given the power to make decisions for others at that conference

Democracy

A society that favours equal rights, fair trials and freedom of speech and in which people govern themselves (direct democracy) or are governed by elected officials (representative democracy)

Democratic Party

One of the two major political parties in the United States; established under its current name in the 1820s and typically associated with civil liberties, workers' rights, social freedoms and favouring government measures to tackle social injustice

See also [Republican Party](#).

Democratic rights

Rights to political or social equality for all

Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)

Unionist party in Northern Ireland founded by Reverend Ian Paisley

Demonstration

In political terms, a public show of protest against or sympathy with a particular cause

Deputy

In Ireland, the short name for someone elected to Dáil

Éireann to represent their constituency

See also [Constituency](#) and [TD \(Teachta Dála\)](#).

Despot

A ruler who exercises total power, especially in a cruel or harsh way

Devolution

A system in which the central government of a state passes a law granting certain powers to local, national or regional authorities while still keeping the central government's authority

Dictator

A ruler who has total power over a country or state, regardless of the laws of the state or any opposition

Dictatorship

A state in which one person or group has total power to govern

Diplomat

A person appointed to represent Ireland in other countries and to manage our relations with those countries

Director of Consumer Affairs

An independent person appointed by Government who is responsible for defending, enforcing and providing advice and information on consumer rights

Dirty politics

Unethical and illegal methods to gain political advantage

See also [Mudslinging](#).

Dissolution

An action by the President of Ireland (with the support of the Taoiseach) to end the current term of the Dáil so a general election can be held

Ee

Economic and social rights

Rights that help people develop and enjoy an adequate standard of living, such as the right to work, the right to education and the right to free time, as outlined in the Covenant on Economic and Social Rights adopted by the United Nations 1966

Economic policy

A Government plan on how to manage money and taxes

Education and Science, Department of

The Government department responsible for devising education policy and overseeing programmes and services that help promote lifelong learning and provide education that meets personal, social, cultural and economic needs

Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC)

A project organised by the Council of Europe to inform people about their rights and responsibilities in society and how they can use them

Election

Choosing a person or a government by voting

Election day

The day when the election takes place

Election expenses

Amounts that political parties and independent candidates spend on advertising, canvassing and opposing other candidates during election campaigns, which, since 1997, must be accounted for and within certain limits

Elector

A person who votes or has the right to vote

Electoral Register (also known as Register of Electors)

A list of those who have the right to vote in national, local or European elections in Ireland, put together by city and county councils

Electorate

All those who have a right to vote in an election

Electronic voting

Using electronic equipment and computers to vote and count votes

Emblem

An object or picture that represents an event, a group or a cause, often in the form of a badge or shield

Empowerment

Making it possible for people to understand and exercise their powers and responsibilities as citizens

Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Department of

The Government department responsible for regulating employment, health and safety at work, consumer issues, trade, competition and company matters and overseeing state bodies that provide training and promote trade and employment, such as FAS, Enterprise Ireland and the Industrial Development Agency (IDA)

Entitlement

A right or other benefit held by someone if they meet certain conditions

Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Department of

The Government department responsible for protecting the environment, preserving and promoting heritage buildings, collecting motor tax, co-ordinating elections, devising

housing policy and overseeing county, city and urban district councils

Ethics

Studying what is right or wrong

Executive

One of the branches of government, which puts the laws into practice

[See also Legislature and Judiciary.](#)

Exit poll

A survey of a small percentage of people leaving the place where they have just voted to ask them who or what they voted for

Ff

Fat cat

A slang term for a wealthy, influential person who contributes a lot of money to a political party or campaign

Federal

Relating to national policies or rules rather than those for the nation's individual states, as in the United States

Federal system

A system of states that act as one unit but keep their internal affairs independent, as in the United States

Federation

A union of states into one nation, which involves giving up some powers and responsibilities to a national government

Fianna Fáil

National political party founded in 1926 with democratic Republican values

See also [Republican](#).

Finance, Department of

The Government department responsible for implementing Government policy and advising the Minister for Finance on the finances of the State, drafting and reviewing finance and other

laws and managing and developing the public sector

See also [Public sector](#).

Fine Gael

National independent political party founded in 1933

Flag

A piece of cloth, often of various colours or decorated with emblems, that represents a country or a social group

Foreign Affairs, Department of

The Government department responsible for advancing Ireland's political and economic interests in the European Union and elsewhere, promoting Ireland's contribution to international peace, security and development through the European Union and international organisations, especially the United Nations, protecting Irish citizens abroad and dealing with political issues concerning Northern Ireland

Franchise

In political terms, a citizen's right to vote at elections

See also [Suffrage](#).

Free market

An economic system where prices are set not by government but by competition between businesses

See also [Capitalism](#).

Freedom of Information Act

A law giving a person the right to access certain records held by public bodies and Government departments, have any incomplete or false personal information corrected and obtain reasons for any public body's decisions that affect them

Freedom of speech

A right to speak freely on social and political matters without fear of forced silence

Front bench

Members of the Dáil who are ministers or spokespeople.

See also [Junior minister](#), [Minister](#), [Shadow minister](#) and [Spokesperson](#).

Front runner

A candidate who is likely to win an election or be nominated by their party to take part in an election

Gg

Gaisce

See [President's Award](#).

Gender gap

The difference between men and women in types and levels of employment, earnings, educational qualifications, voting and general health, among other areas

General election

A national election for all seats in the Dáil and Seanad, which must be held within 30 days of the dissolution of the Dáil.

See also [Dissolution](#), [Dáil Éireann](#) and [Seanad Éireann](#).

Gerrymander

Dividing a constituency deliberately to give an advantage to one political party or to particular voters, for example according to racial or ethnic background

Government

A system, involving a group of senior ministers, that runs a state and gives effect to its laws

See also *Executive*.

Government Chief Whip

The person responsible for organising and co-ordinating Government business in Dáil Éireann

Government department

A group of civil servants, headed by a minister, which is responsible for a specific area of work within a government, for example health or the environment

Government revenue

Income that a government gets from tax, excise duties, customs and other sources

Grass roots

A basic source of support for a cause or a group, usually developed naturally without prompting or organisation from traditional holders of power

Grassroots movement

The action of groups of like-minded people who lobby for change on a particular issue, usually through door-to-door canvassing, letter writing, local meetings and so on

Green Paper

A document that sets out ideas about a proposed new law and invites comments from individuals and relevant groups

Green Party

Irish political party formed in 1981 that is part of a worldwide movement that believes in open government, protecting the environment and military neutrality

Head of state

A formal leader of a country or a group of people organised under one government, for example the President in Ireland and the Queen in the United Kingdom

Health and Children, Department of

The Government department responsible for managing, regulating and developing the health services, ensuring the safety and welfare of children and developing policies, programmes and information campaigns to protect and promote public health

House of Commons

The lower house of parliament in the United Kingdom and Canada; similar to the Dáil in Ireland

House of Lords

The upper House of Parliament in the United Kingdom

House of parliament

A gathering of representatives to debate issues and make laws, for example Dáil Éireann or Seanad Éireann

See also Bi-cameral, Dáil Éireann, Legislature, Oireachtas and Seanad Éireann.

House of Representatives

The lower house of parliament in Australia and the United States



Ideology

A set of connected ideas, usually about a political system, or a way of looking at something

Implement

Do things to make something happen

Inaugural

First

Incumbent

A person who currently holds a post or office

Independence

Freedom from the influence or rule of another person, group or country

Independent

A TD, Senator or Councillor who does not belong to a political party

Indicator

A sign that something is happening; used by public bodies and other organisations to show the progress of a country in meeting a range of economic, social and environmental goals

Influence

The power to change the behaviour of someone or something

Inter-culturalism

An ideology that favours different cultures mixing with

each other and learning about each other's music, art, literature, customs and so on to help prevent misunderstandings and fight racism

Interest group

A group of people organised to take action about a cause or interest

Jj

Joint Oireachtas Committee

A committee made up of members of the Dáil and Seanad to discuss and vote on particular matters, for example the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Science and Joint Oireachtas Committee on Foreign Affairs

See also [Dáil Committee and Seanad Committee](#).

Judicial review

The power of judges to review whether laws and official acts by the Government violate the Constitution or basic rules of justice and, if they do, strike them down or overturn them

See also [Checks and balances](#), [Constitution of Ireland](#), [Legislature and Separation of powers](#).

Judiciary

The branch of government that is concerned with interpreting laws and upholding justice through the courts

See also [Executive and Legislature](#).

Junior Minister

A member of government appointed by the Taoiseach to assist a senior minister for a Government department; officially called Minister of State

Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Department of

The Government department responsible for protecting the security of the State, implementing Government policy on crime, advising criminal justice institutions (prisons, courts, Gardaí and Probation and Welfare Services) and developing and implementing policies on immigration and asylum, equality, anti-discrimination, human rights and childcare, among others

LI

Labour Court

A place that hears employment disputes when all other methods to resolve them have failed and gives non-binding opinions and recommendations on how to settle them

Labour movement

A broad group of workers that includes trade unions and the Labour Party

Labour Party

Political party formed nationally in 1912 with a focus on equality, freedom, community and democracy

Laissez-faire

An ideology that opposes Government interference in economic affairs, other than the minimum necessary to maintain property rights and peace, and individual interference in another's freedom of choice and action

Lame duck

An elected representative, usually a leader, who is regarded as less powerful or effective than they were because they are near the end of their time in office either because they cannot or do not want to be re-elected or they are waiting for another elected official to formally take over their post

Law Reform Commission

An independent body set up by Government to review laws and advise the Government on necessary reforms, often after seeking the views of interest groups and the public

Leader of the opposition

The leader of the largest political party that is not in government and the opposition's main spokesperson

Leas Cathaoirleach

The Irish for vice chairperson, the person who chairs local authority or Seanad Éireann meetings when the Cathaoirleach is not present

[See also Cathaoirleach.](#)

Leas Ceann Comhairle

The person who chairs Dáil Eireann meetings when the Ceann Comhairle is not present

Left, the

Organisations or political parties that favour social justice and freedom, aim to share a country's wealth between all people equally and focus on workers' rights; originally comes from the French Revolution, when politicians representing the people's interests sat to the left of the president's chair

See also [Centre and Right](#).

Left-wing

The section of a political system or party that favours social justice over the free market

See also [Free market and Right wing](#).

Leftie

A slang, usually critical, term for a person who believes in the values of liberalism and socialism

See also [Liberal and Socialism](#).

Legal rights

Rights of all individuals in a

society as outlined in the laws of the State

Legislation

A law or a set of laws or the act of making laws

Legislature

The branch of government that makes laws, known in Ireland as the Oireachtas

See also [Executive](#), [Judiciary](#), [Oireachtas](#) and [Separation of powers](#).

Legislative power

The power to make and change laws

Legislative process

A series of actions that result in a law being made

Libel

A written or recorded (on radio or TV) statement about a person that is proven to be false and damaging to their reputation

See also [Defamation and Slander](#).

Liberalism

A broad political ideology that generally favours individual freedom, open government and the free market, but contains different views on whether the government should interfere in the market, for example through anti-discrimination laws or social welfare for those who are unable to work

See also [Ideology and Free market](#).

Libertarian

A person who supports individual personal and property rights and minimal government involvement in people's lives

See also [Liberalism](#).

Liberty

Freedom from control by a person or group

Lobby

Trying to influence public opinion to change laws or certain actions, for example by

writing letters, making proposals or meeting decision makers; originally comes from the UK, where people waited in the lobby (entrance hall) or corridors of parliament to talk to Members of Parliament

Lobby group

A group that tries to get support for a particular cause to change laws or certain actions

Lobbyist

A person who lobbies

Local authority

A local form of government, consisting of elected officials and full-time staff, which is responsible for providing a range of public services, for example libraries, swimming pools and refuse collection

Local authority meetings

Gatherings of elected members, open to the public and the media, to decide on the direction and work of the local authority

Local elections

Elections held in Ireland every five years, usually in May or June, to elect councillors to represent the community in local authorities around the country

Local government

A term to refer to the system of county and city councils whose members are elected by the people

See also [Local authority](#), [Councillor](#) and [County council](#).

Mm

Majority

The difference between the largest number of votes for or against something and the number of remaining votes

Majority party

The political party that wins more votes in an election than other political parties

Mandate

The authority to represent people's interests and take action for them, given by voters to elected officials or sometimes by members of an organisation to its leaders

Manifesto

A document stating a political party's values, goals and intended actions

See also [Platform](#).

Marginal seat

A seat held by a political party by a very narrow margin and so at risk of being lost

Matching funds

The amount of money that a group must be able to access if it seeks a grant, for example from the Government, and that must match the amount of grant sought

Mayor

An elected or appointed head of a city or town

Member

A person who belongs to an organisation or body

Member of Parliament (MP)

A member of the British House of Commons

Member of the European Parliament (MEP)

An elected politician who represents a region of their own country in the European Parliament

Military rule

A system of government where army officers form the government

Minister

A member of the Irish Government who runs and manages a department and may propose new or amended laws

Ministerial

Relating to a minister

Monarch

A king or queen

Monarchy

A system of government in which a king or queen is the head of state and has unlimited powers (absolute monarchy) or powers that are limited by the state's constitution (constitutional monarchy)

Motion of no confidence

A vote on the performance of a leader or a government, usually proposed by the opposition, that, if passed, may require the person to resign or the government to stand down and request a general election

See also [Dáil Éireann, Dissolution and Opposition](#).

Mudslinging

The practice of saying negative things about an opponent during a political campaign; also known as 'dirty politics'

See also [Dirty politics](#).

Multi-culturalism

An ideology that favours the presence of many cultures in society, each with equal rights

See also Ideology and Inter-culturalism.

Nn

NAPS - National Anti-Poverty Strategy

A Government medium-term plan (three to five years) to tackle poverty

Nation

A group of people, often with the same language or culture, who think of themselves as a community and have, or want to have, their own government

National

Belonging to or relating to a nation

National debt

The total amount of money owed by a government

Nationalise

Bringing an industry under the control or ownership of a government

Nationalism

A belief that a large group of people are or should be a nation with its own government and a policy of asserting the interests of a nation against other nations or the common interests of all nations

NDP - National Development Plan

A Government plan to improve the economy and living standards by investing money in education and training, regional development, social services, roads and so on

Neo-conservatives ('neo-cons')

A term used usually to refer to right-wing members of the US Republican Party who promote traditional family values, the free market and action by the United States against other countries to improve its standing and promote its values and interests

See also Conservative, Free market and Right-wing.

Nominee

A person who is nominated, or proposed by others, as a candidate for public office

Non-partisan

Neutral or not involving or influenced by a political party

Non-party candidate

An independent candidate, one who is not a member of a political party

NRA - National Roads Authority

The Government body responsible for planning, improving and managing the road network in Ireland

NTMA - National Treasury Management Agency

The Government body responsible for managing the Government's assets and national debt as well as certain funds such as the National Pensions Fund and the Dormant Accounts Fund

Oireachtas

The national parliament of Ireland, which consists of the President, Dáil Éireann (the lower house) and Seanad Éireann (the Senate or upper house), and whose powers and functions are outlined by the Constitution

See also [Dáil Éireann, Legislature, President, Seanad Éireann and Separation of powers](#).

Oligarchy

A form of government where power is held by a small number of people belonging to a dominant class or group

Ombudsman

A public official who is responsible for investigating complaints against the Irish Government or the public service

One-person rule

A system of government in which one person holds all power over a country or state

See also [Despot](#) and [Dictator](#).

OASIS - Online Access to Services, Information and Support

An information system on the Internet that gives details on public services and people's rights and is set up and managed by the state information and advice body, Comhairle

Opposition

The second largest political party or group of parties in the Dáil that opposes what it believes to be wrong with Government policies and actions

'Opt out'

The option open to certain Member States of the European Union (EU) not to be governed by certain EU decisions, for example on ending cross-border controls

OPW - Office of Public Works

The Government engineering agency responsible for restoring and preserving state buildings, buying and fitting office accommodation for Government departments, building and maintaining Garda stations and prisons and managing flood relief and drainage programmes

Pp

PPPs - Public-Private Partnerships

Partnerships between public bodies and private businesses to fund, develop and sometimes operate services for the public, for example roads, hospitals and transport services such as the Luas

Pacifism

A belief that violence, especially war, must be avoided when resolving disputes

Parliament

An assembly of elected representatives that forms the legislature of a state or a nation and may have both an upper and a lower house

See also [Dáil Éireann](#), [Oireachtas](#), [Legislature](#) and [Seanad Éireann](#).

Parliamentarian

An elected member of the upper or lower houses of parliament

Parliamentary

Relating to the parliament

Parliamentary questions (PQs)

Questions that TDs ask the Government – orally or in writing – about any issue for which the Government is responsible and that are recorded in the Official Report of Parliamentary Debates in Dáil Éireann and on the web site of the Houses of the Oireachtas

Parliamentary privileges

Certain rights granted to TDs and Senators in Ireland that are not enjoyed by the general public, for example the right not to be sued for defamation because of anything they say in a speech in the Dáil or Seanad

See also [Defamation](#).

Parliamentary wing (of a political party)

The people from a political party who have been elected to parliament

Partisan

A person who strongly supports a political party or cause

Party discipline

The control used by a political party, in particular its leader, to encourage its members in parliament to vote in the same way

Party policy

The rules, values and

approaches that a political party obeys and follows

Party political

Relating to the business or interests of a political party

Petition

A document, usually containing signatures from many people, that is presented to a person or group in power by those asking for action on a matter

Philanthropy

The action, usually by wealthy people, of funding or giving other forms of practical support to organisations, without wanting anything in return, based on the desire to do good for society

Philosophy

A general view or a set of beliefs or attitudes, usually based on reason

See also [Ideology](#).

Platform

A political party's written statement of its principles and policies on a number of topics, which is published during an election campaign

See also [Manifesto](#).

Plebiscite

A vote by all voters on a topic, for example in a referendum, or by members of a party to decide on a candidate

Pledge

A solemn promise to do something, usually made when somebody takes a high-level official role

Policy

A statement of a person's or group's intended action on a matter

Political

Relating to how decisions are made within groups, for example political parties

See also [Politics](#).

Political agenda

A set of issues that are dealt with in politics at a particular time and can sometimes be influenced by the media

Political freedom

A person's right to express their political beliefs freely and to vote as they want

See also [Political rights](#).

Political ideology

A range of beliefs on which the aims and activities of a political party are based

Political literacy

An awareness of political values, attitudes, arguments and institutions that allows a person to make an informed vote and take action on issues

Political participation

Voting in a referendum or election and, or, taking part in political activities

Political rights

Rights that allow a person to take part in political life, including the right to vote, hold particular political views and join a political party and influence public life

See also [Political freedom](#).

Political spectrum

The range of political thoughts, policies and approaches from the right to the left

See also [Centre](#), [Left-wing](#) and [Right-wing](#).

Political values

Beliefs and rules that are important to a political party or person, such as equality, liberty and tolerance of diversity

Politician

A person who is active in politics and holds a political office to which they have been elected

Politics

Activities involved in making decisions and using power, for example governing a country

Poll

Asking and recording the opinion of people, for example in a survey or at an election

See also [Exit poll](#) and [Straw poll](#).

Polling card

A card sent to a person's home before an election to tell the date and time of voting and where to vote

Polling station

A place where people vote

Populist

A person whose public views reflect the interests and concerns of the average person

Precedent

Something that has been done before and is a guide to what should be done again, for example a decision in a legal case that is followed when similar cases come before the courts

Preferential voting

A voting system in which people vote for candidates in order of preference, putting 1 on the ballot paper beside their favourite candidate, 2 for their second favourite, 3 for their third favourite and so on

See also [Candidate](#), [Proportional representation](#) and [Single Transferable Vote](#).

President of Ireland

Irish head of state who is elected to serve a seven-year term (at most two terms), forms part of the Oireachtas, represents the people of Ireland when carrying out official engagements at home and has powers and functions that are set down in the Constitution

See also [Bunreacht na hÉireann](#), [Oireachtas](#) and [Legislature](#).

Presidential Commission

A group that carries out the functions of the President of Ireland if they die, resign,

permanently lose their health, fail to perform their functions or are out of the country or removed from office

President's Award (Gaisce)

An award programme for people aged 15 to 25 years to reward them for setting and achieving demanding challenges for themselves in the four areas of community involvement, personal skill, physical recreation and adventure activity

Press gallery

A gallery in a house of parliament set aside for reporters from newspapers, radio and television (the media)

Prime Minister

The head of the national government

See also [Taoiseach](#).

Private Member's Bill

See [Bill](#), [Private Member's](#).

Proclamation

An official public announcement, for example the 1916 Proclamation – a public announcement of independence from British rule

Progressive

Something or someone that is concerned with reform, improvements and making progress

Progressive Democrats

Political party founded mainly by former members of the Fianna Fáil party in 1985 that favours reduced taxes, careful use of public funds and an increased role for the individual in all areas of life

Progressive Unionist Party

The political wing of the Ulster Volunteer Force, which promotes union with Britain

See also [Unionism](#).

Propaganda

Ideas or information, not always true, that help or injure an institution, cause or person

Proportional representation (PR)

An election system in which the number of seats won by a party are broadly in proportion to (a percentage of) the number of total votes its candidates receive

See also [Candidate](#), [Constituency](#), [Preferential voting](#), [Quota](#), [Seat and Single Transferable Vote](#).

Protest

A public statement or demonstration against a situation or the actions of others

See also [Demonstration](#).

Protest vote

A vote for a candidate not out of support for them but to show disapproval of another political party and its candidate

Public

A term to describe the people as a whole of a community, state or nation or something that is open to or concerns them

Public funds

Money generated from taxes and other sources that is spent by a government

Public gallery

An area in a house of parliament, for example Dáil Éireann, that is set aside for the public

Public interest

The common well-being of a society, often considered when debating policies and interpreting and implementing laws

Public policy

A body of laws, regulations and government action on matters concerning the public

Public sector

The part of a country's economy that involves

representing the public and providing and managing services for them, for example through schools, state bodies or hospitals

Public servant

A person who works with the civil service, a local authority or other state body

Public services

Services that are wholly or partly funded through taxes, including national, regional and local government and state agencies

Private sector

The part of a country's economy that is involved in making profit, for example corporations, firms and banks

Question time

A period of time, currently from 2.30 pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, during which TDs can ask questions of the Government (although the Taoiseach answers questions on Tuesdays and Wednesdays only)

See also [Parliamentary questions \(PQs\)](#).

Question election results

The right of a registered Dáil elector (or someone entitled to be registered) to question the results of a Dáil election in their constituency, provided they present a petition to the High Court no more than 28 days after the declaration of the result by the Returning Officer

See also [Returning Officer](#).

Quota

The number of votes that a candidate needs to win a seat under the proportional representation (PR) system

See also [Proportional representation and Single Transferable Vote](#).

Rr

Radical

Something very different from the usual or traditional or a person who favours major political or social change

Radical reform

Major and dramatic changes, usually to an organisation and its activities

Reading (of a bill)

A formal stage in the passage of a bill, which involves considering what the bill covers and anything that should be removed or included

Rebellion

Open, organised and often armed opposition to a country's government or ruler

Referendum

A vote on a topic or question

See also [Referendum](#), [constitutional](#) and [Constitution of Ireland](#).

Referendum Commission

A group established before each referendum to tell the public what the referendum is about and to give the arguments for and against the proposal on which people will vote

Referendum, constitutional

A referendum that takes place to let voters decide whether the Government can make a proposed change to the Constitution and to give them a chance to say they are for or against the proposed change

See also [Constitution of Ireland](#).

Reformer

Someone who seeks to bring about change, especially political change

Regional Assembly (BMW - Border, Midland and West - and S & E - South and East)

A public body that handles EU Structural Funds and co-ordinates how public services are delivered in the region it covers

Regional authorities

State-funded bodies that co-ordinate and review public services at regional level

Register of Political Parties

A list of legally registered political parties, which is entered on a ballot paper at elections

Regulation

A law made by an Act or sometimes a Government minister

Religious right

A movement of people that follow Old Testament Christian teachings, support traditional values on gender, reproduction and homosexuality and oppose certain forms of medical research, based on their religious beliefs

Representative

A person who acts on behalf of others or someone elected to a law-making body

Representative democracy

A system of government where voters elect representatives to make decisions for them

Republic

A state that is ruled by elected representatives rather than by a monarch

See also [Monarchy](#).

Republican

A person or group that campaigns for a republic in their country instead of a monarch; also, a member of the Republican

Party, one of the two main political parties in the United States

Republican Party

One of the two major political parties in the United States; established in 1854 and typically associated with conservative values, lower taxes and less government spending

See also [Democratic Party](#).

Republicanism

A political philosophy in favour of setting up a republic before any other political system

See also [Philosophy and Republic](#).

Resolution

A plan to do something or encourage others to do it

Responsible government

A system in which a government answers for its actions to elected representatives of the people

Returning Officer

A person who supervises the counting of votes during an election or referendum and who certifies and officially announces the results

See also [County Registrar](#).

Revenue

Money coming in; usually associated with the money a government collects from the people through taxes and other sources

Revolution

A complete overthrow of a government or political system

Right, the

A term used to describe political parties and other groups that favour the free market and support the way things are now or want to return to past ways of doing things

See also [Conservative](#), [Free market](#) and [Left](#), the.

Right-wing

A section of a political party,

organisation or a system that tends to be conservative

See also [Conservative](#), [Free market](#) and [Left-wing](#).

Rights

Claims that society recognises as fair, such as legal rights, political rights, social rights and human rights

See also [Civil rights](#) and [Political rights](#).

Rule of law

A system in which the law applies to and must be obeyed by everyone, including a head of state or a government

Ruling party

The political party that controls the government

Running mate

A person who runs for election in the same constituency as another candidate from the same party and is expected to get fewer votes; often used to describe the vice-presidential candidate in the United States during national elections

Single Transferable Vote - STV

A system of preferential voting where several seats are available in a constituency that gives a person's vote to their favourite candidate and transfers unneeded or unused votes for that candidate (for example if they already have enough to be elected) to other candidates in the constituency until all seats are filled

See also [Constituency](#), [Preferential voting](#), [Proportional representation](#), [Quota](#) and [Seat](#).

Safe seat

A seat in a constituency that is likely to go to a particular candidate because of the amount of support given to them or the political party they represent

Seanad Éireann

Known as 'the Seanad' for short, the upper house of the Irish parliament (Oireachtas), which currently has 60 members, known as Senators, who debate

issues, revise laws passed in Dáil Éireann and sometimes begin the process of introducing new laws

See also [Dáil Éireann](#), [Legislature](#) and [Oireachtas](#).

Seat

A place in an elected political assembly, such as a parliament or county council

Secession

The act of pulling out from a political alliance or association, especially from a federation of states

See also [Federation](#).

Secret ballot

A system of voting that allows people to vote in private and anonymously (without giving their name) so they cannot be pressured to vote in a certain way

Select Committee

A committee in the Oireachtas, which consists of members of the Dáil or the Seanad, that is usually set up to review the work of a Government department

See also [Joint Oireachtas Committee](#).

Self-government

Also known as self-rule, the political independence of a country, people or region

Senator

A member of the Senate, or Seanad Éireann in Ireland

Separation of powers

A system in which each of the three branches of government - legislature, executive and judiciary - have separate functions and powers and the right to check the activities of the other branches to make sure that none of them becomes too powerful

See also [Checks and balances](#), [Executive](#), [Legislature](#) and [Judiciary](#).

Shadow minister

A term, usually used in the UK, to describe each member of the opposition that 'shadows', or follows closely, the area of responsibility of a minister in a government

Sinn Féin

A republican political party seeking to end British rule in Northern Ireland

See also [Republican](#).

Slander

Something said about a person (for example at a public meeting) that is proven to be false and damaging to their reputation

See also [Defamation](#) and [Libel](#).

Social and civil services

The range of services available to the public, for example social welfare, education, health services, family supports and services that help people assert their rights on consumer issues, employment, equality and refugee status, among others

Social and Family Affairs, Department of

The Government department responsible for devising and managing social welfare payments and benefits and developing and implementing policies to tackle poverty and long-term unemployment

Social capital

A general term for the networks and common values that allow members of a community to co-operate with and support each other

Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP)

A Northern Ireland political

party founded in 1960 to represent the interests of nationalists and secure a united Ireland

Social partnership

A system in which the Government, employers, voluntary and community organisations and trade unions work out a plan that covers wages, industrial action, housing, transport, education and other issues that affect the country's social and economic development

Social welfare

State support for people when they are unemployed, ill, retired, widowed or caring full-time for others through payments or other benefits each week or month; known in other countries as social security

Socialism

A system and form of political thought that favours distributing wealth and assets equally so that all people, either directly or through their governments, have a say in how they are used

See also [Communism](#), [Left-wing and Liberalism](#).

Socialist

A person who believes in and promotes the values of socialism

Society

A large gathering of many communities under generally accepted rules and values

Solidarity

Recognising the rights of others and joining with others to defend them

Sound bite

A brief, quotable remark repeated on radio and TV news programmes to reflect the position of a political candidate

or other spokesperson on a topic and regarded by some as superficial

Special Committee

An Oireachtas committee set up only as needed so it can review a particular bill

See also [Dáil Éireann](#), [Oireachtas](#) and [Seanad Éireann](#).

Spin

Public relations (PR) activity, for example press releases or interviews, or a way of interpreting information that aims to enhance the public image of a person or group, such as a politician or their party, at the expense of a political opponent or the opposition party

Spoiled vote

A vote that is ignored when counting all votes in an election because the voter has filled in their ballot paper incorrectly or has written their name on it

State

A territory controlled by a government or ruler with the aid of institutions such as the police, armed forces, the civil service and the courts

See also [Territory](#).

Status quo

A situation that is unchanged or is as it was before a recent change

Statute law

A law passed by parliament, as opposed to common law, which is set by decisions made in court

See also [Civil law system and Common law system](#).

Statutory

Something that is decided, set up or controlled by statute law

Straw poll

An unofficial vote or poll taken to see the general opinion among a group on a given issue

See also [Exit poll](#) and [Poll](#).

Subject

In political terms, a person who lives under the rule of a monarch

See also [Monarch](#) and [Monarchy](#).

Submission

A set of suggestions or arguments made orally or in writing to a decision-making authority such as a Government department, a committee or a court

Suffrage

The right to vote

See also [Franchise](#).

Supreme Court

The highest court in Ireland, which hears appeals of decisions from the High Court

Surplus (votes)

The amount of votes that exceed the quota needed for a candidate to be elected

See also [Proportional representation](#), [Quota](#) and [Single Transferable Vote](#).

Surplus (economic)

A situation in which the Government is taking in more money than it is spending

See also [Deficit](#).

Swing voter

A person who votes but whose support can switch from one political party to another, depending on the issue at stake

Tt

Tactical voting

Voting that does not express a voter's true preferences but may get a more favourable result, for example helping to

elect a candidate with wide public support instead of voting for a favourite candidate who may have little real chance of winning

Tally men

Members of a political party who carry out an unofficial count of the ballot papers while the election or referendum is still taking place

Tánaiste

Irish Deputy Prime Minister, who takes the place of the Taoiseach if the Taoiseach dies, permanently loses health or is temporarily absent or if a successor has not yet been appointed; usually the leader of the smaller party in a two-party coalition government

See also [Taoiseach](#) and [Coalition government](#).

Taoiseach

The head of the Irish Government, nominated by the Dáil, who speaks for the Government on major policy issues, chairs Cabinet meetings and has powers to reorganise the Cabinet

See also [Prime Minister and Cabinet](#).

Taoiseach, Department of the

The Government department responsible for supporting and advising the Taoiseach in carrying out their duties, linking the Taoiseach and the President to other Government departments, developing and co-ordinating policy on economic and social matters, Northern Ireland and the EU, among others, and arranging and co-ordinating state functions

Taxation

Money charged on incomes, property, goods and services that must be paid to a government

TD -Teachta Dála

One of 166 members of Dáil Éireann, who represents their constituency, takes part in debates and question time, votes on bills, runs an office in their constituency and usually also provides a clinic - a service where the public can meet the TD at certain times during the week to discuss local issues

See also [Dáil Éireann](#), [Oireachtas](#) and [Seanad Éireann](#).

Term limit

The maximum number of times that a person may hold a particular political office

Territory

The land and waters under the control of a state or ruler

Terrorism

A co-ordinated movement involving planned acts of terror, for example bombings or poisonings, to frighten people into do something they don't want to do

Think tank

A non-profit institute, corporation or group set up to research a range of areas and make recommendations to a government on public policy

See also [Public policy](#).

Third way

A political thought, promoted by British Prime Minister Tony Blair, that borrows from the right and the left but is different to both

See also [Left](#), [Centre and Right](#).

Ticket

The list of candidates nominated by a political party in an election

Transport, Department of

The Government department responsible for devising and implementing policies on road building, road safety and driver licensing and testing, among others, providing safe and efficient public transport and supporting high quality, safe and competitive air travel

Treason

A betrayal by a citizen of their loyalty to the state or its ruler, for example by spying on the government or handing over secret government documents to an enemy, particularly in wartime

Treaty

A formal agreement between states on trade, peace or other issues

Tribunal of inquiry

A body set up by the Oireachtas and headed by a judge to investigate matters of urgent public importance, such as corrupt practices by public representatives or poor management of public services, and communicate its findings and recommendations to the Oireachtas

Two-party system

A political system, such as in the United States, that encourages power to be shared primarily by two political parties and works to exclude other political parties from power

Tyranny

Uncontrolled exercise of power, often by an oppressive or unjustly severe government or a ruler

See also [Despot](#) and [Dictator](#).

Tyrant

An absolute ruler who uses his or her power unjustly or oppressively

See also [Despot](#) and [Dictator](#).

Uu

Ulster Unionist Party

A Northern Ireland political party, founded in 1905, that wants to maintain British rule in Northern Ireland

See also [Unionism](#).

Unionism

A political philosophy that favours union between Northern Ireland and Britain under the British government

Upper house

The second house in a two-chamber parliament

See also [Bi-cameral](#), [Legislature](#) and [Seanad Éireann](#).

Vv

Values

Beliefs and rules on which a person or organisation bases their behaviour

Veto

Blocking or rejecting a proposed law or change to the constitution; sometimes exercised by the President of Ireland if they refuse to sign into law a bill passed by the Dáil and the Seanad

See also [Council of State](#), [Legislature](#), [President of Ireland](#) and [Oireachtas](#).

Vote

A formal expression of a choice, such as putting one's hand up or marking a ballot paper

See also [Ballot paper and Election](#).

Voter turnout

The number or percentage of all voters who cast a vote in a given election

Voter

A person who is entitled to vote and does so - limited to citizens of Ireland over 18 years whose names appear on the Register of Electors

See also [Register of Electors](#).

Ww

War chest

A fund for running a political campaign, consisting of money given to a candidate by other people and through various fundraising events

Ward

A district or division of a city or town, for purposes of management, voting and so on

Welfare

The well-being of all; also the money provided by the government to those who cannot earn it themselves

See also [Social welfare](#).

Whip

The manager of a political party, who is responsible for organising members of their party to take part in debates and vote in a way that that the party's leader desires

See also [Chief Whip](#).

Whistleblower

An employee or a former employee of a business or public body who reports wrongdoing, for example fraud, underpaying staff or breaking safety regulations, to a person who can take corrective action directly or embarrass others into doing so

White paper

A document that outlines a government's plans for particular areas and sometimes forms the basis of later laws

Winner-Take-All

A simple system of voting, in which the person with the most votes wins or 'takes all', in contrast to the system of proportional representation and the Single Transferable Vote.

See also [Proportional representation](#) and [Single Transferable Vote](#).

Please note: These links were accurate at time of going to print, but we are not responsible for any updated information or altered links since then.

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For more information on political parties in the Republic of Ireland, please see their websites, which are listed below in alphabetical order.

Fianna Fáil - www.fiannafail.ie

Fine Gael - www.finegael.ie

Green Party - www.greenparty.ie

Labour Party - www.labour.ie

Progressive Democrats - www.progressivedemocrats.ie

Sinn Féin - www.sinnfein.ie

Socialist Workers Party - www.swp.ie

What is NALA?

The National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) is a non-profit membership organisation, concerned with national coordination, training and policy development in adult literacy work in Ireland. NALA was established in 1980 and has campaigned since then for the recognition of, and response to, the adult literacy issue in Ireland.



National Adult Literacy Agency

An Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearachta do Aosaigh

National Adult Literacy Agency
76 Lower Gardiner Street
Dublin 1

Telephone: (01) 855 4332

Fax: (01) 855 5475

Freephone support line: 1800 20 20 65

Email: literacy@nala.ie

Websites:

NALA website: www.nala.ie

Literacy learning and tuition website: www.literacytools.ie

Really Useful Guide to Words and Numbers website: www.rug.ie

NALA Cork

Telephone: (021) 427 8655

Fax: (021) 427 8665

Email: mmurray@nala.ie

NALA Mullingar

Telephone: (044) 934 0374

Fax: (044) 934 5834

Email: pkiernan@nala.ie



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