

Submission to the Constituency Commission

**Submitted by Cllr. Éilis Ryan (Workers' Party Dublin Central)
& Dr. Eoin O'Mahony (Workers' Party Dublin Northwest)**

Relevant constituencies: Dublin Northwest, Dublin Central

To whom it concerns,

Please find below a number of considerations that the Workers' Party would like to submit for consideration by the Constituency Commission established under section 5 of the Electoral Act (1997). The considerations below are based on the work and knowledge of the Workers' Party at a local level in the existing constituencies of Dublin Central and Dublin Northwest.

A: Constituencies should avoid dividing existing 'villages' and neighbourhoods, by wherever possible ensuring entire local electoral wards, and the communities within them, are kept within single constituencies. In particular, the entire ward of Cabra-Finglas should be moved into the constituency of Dublin Northwest.

There are a number of reasons why keeping existing 'villages' within the city within individual constituencies makes sense.

Firstly, decent democratic governance relies on ordinary people organising and standing up for their needs. This cannot be done when communities are fragmented in a way that means neighbours, school children in the same class, or members of the same community groups, sports clubs and local workplaces, are split across multiple constituencies.

In order for working class people to engage effectively, and collectively, with their elected representatives, it is essential that, wherever possible, neighbourhoods should be represented within a single Dáil constituency.

In addition to this, the current situation means that candidates for Dáil elections from local electoral wards that are contained within a single Dáil constituency have a distinct advantage over candidates from local electoral wards that are split across more than one Dáil constituency. This in turn disadvantages the populations of those villages affected.

Reccomendation

Move the entirety of the current Cabra-Finglas local electoral ward excluding Ashtown A, Ashtown B and Cabra-West D into Dublin Northwest constituency, and increase Dublin Northwest to a four seat constituency as compensation for both the

additional population, and the current under representation of citizens in Dublin Northwest

B: Representation of TDs per capita should not disadvantage areas of traditionally low turnout

In constituencies with a profile such as Dublin Central, a number of factors mean that there is a very low turnout. These include the high transitory population (students, young workers etc.) in city centre areas, the high numbers of migrants, both documented and undocumented, who live in city centre areas, and the lower voter turnout often associated with

The combination found in inner city areas, including in Dublin, of very dense population with very low turnout, can mean that TDs appear to be elected with less votes than in other areas.

It is important that the Constituency Commission does *not* attempt to use low turnout as a justification for leaving such areas with below average electoral representation per capita.

Indeed, if anything, we can assume that the population as reflected in the census underestimates population in Dublin Central, given the evidence that populations such as undocumented migrants, or those facing homelessness or housing difficulties, tend to not be ‘counted’ in census collection. This should be borne in mind when deciding the appropriate representation of TDs / capita in Dublin Central.

This would mean raising the number of TDs in Dublin Central to 4. To enable this, move the local electoral areas of Ashtown A, Ashtown B and Cabra-West D into Dublin Central.

Reccomendation

Ensure the electoral representation of TDs / capita in Dublin Central remains at, if not above, the national average, by increasing representation within the constituency to 4 TDs.

CONCLUSION

For the above reasons, the Workers’ Party wish to submit the following recommendations

- A.** Move the entire electoral ward of Cabra-Finglas excluding Ashtown A, Ashtown B and Cabra West D into Dublin Northwest.
- B.** Move the local electoral areas of Ashtown A, Ashtown B and Cabra West D into Dublin Central.
- C.** Increase representation of the revised Dublin Northwest constituency to 4 TDs.

D. Increase representation of the revised Dublin Central constituency to 4 TDs.