



# Inclusion Ireland Review of Political Party Manifestos

## General Election 2020



### Introduction

Fianna Fáil were the largest opposition party in the recently dissolved 32<sup>nd</sup> Dáil Éireann with 44 TD's. Since 2016, the party has been facilitating a Fine Gael led Minority Government through a "Confidence and Supply" arrangement. Their party leader Micháel Martin led a number of Departments including as Minister for Health and Children (2000-2004) and Education and Science (1997-2000).

### 2016 Manifesto Commitments

- Recruit 550 additional therapists
- Access to 300 school based therapists
- Reduce class sizes to 23:1
- 300 therapy staff for schools

- Reverse resource hours' cuts
- 100 psychologists for NEPS
- Review disability access
- €10 cost of disability payment added to weekly payments.
- €20m to speed up the move from institutions
- Ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Increase PA hours by 1.3m. Put PA scheme on statutory footing
- Create a Minister of Social Protection, Disability & Equality
- Super Junior Minister for Primary & Social Care

<b>Inclusion Ireland ask 2020</b>	<b>Fianna Fail Commitment 2020</b>
<b>The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</b>	Sign up to the Optional Protocol  Place a Minister of State in Dept. of Taoiseach to lead on UNCRPD  Establish a formal Oireachtas Committee on implementation of the UNCRPD
<b>Assisted Decision-Making</b>	None
<b>Participation of people with disabilities</b>	None
<b>Housing</b>	Increasing Housing Adaptation grants funding by €20m
<b>De-institutionalisation</b>	None
<b>Accessibility</b>	Use an expanded National Treatment Purchase Fund to help cut down assessment waiting lists

	Introduce an Assistive Technology Passport at a cost of €1.5m
<b>Transport</b>	Enhance transport accessibility
<b>Mental Health Services for People with Intellectual Disability</b>	Provide for 29 Adult Mental Health Intellectual Disability teams Put in place 17 teams for Children and Adolescents.
<b>Cost of Disability</b>	Introduce a €10 Cost of Disability payment
<b>Education</b>	Prioritize the construction of special schools on the Department of Education and Skills project list  Recruit 800 therapy staff  Introduce legislation banning the inappropriate use of reduced timetables.  To reform the NCSE so that its primary function is to ensure each child with a special education need has an appropriate school place in line with their constitutional rights.  Develop autism support services
<b>Employment</b>	Remove the restriction on the maximum amount of time that a person with a disability can spend on a Community Employment (CE) scheme  Reform the Wage Subsidy scheme  Reverse cuts to Rehabilitative Training Allowance

	Improve take up of the Reasonable Accommodation Fund

## Other Disability-Related Commitments

**Miscellaneous Commitments**

Increase Personal Assistance Hours

Roll out Disability Awareness Training for all Intreo staff

Extend the Free Travel Scheme to children in receipt of the Domiciliary Care Allowance

Support the Disability Voluntary Sector by providing €20m in additional funding

Enhance Respite services

Provide €20m in funding to boost adult day services

Develop autism support services

Strengthen Adult Safeguarding

Introduce hate crime legislation against people with disabilities

## Commentary

The Fianna Fáil manifesto commitments address many of the core issues facing people with intellectual disabilities in Ireland, and is, overall, a very positive step in the right direction in addressing many of the issues that people with disabilities themselves say are important to them. The party's manifesto is positive on people's rights, education for people with disabilities, employment, mental health and on accessibility.

Inclusion Ireland welcomes the party's commitment to "put disability inclusion at the heart of Government" by placing responsibility for disability issues within the Department of the Taoiseach, and in establishing an Oireachtas Committee to monitor the implementation of the UNCRPD. This shows well needed leadership on promoting the rights of people with disabilities.

The commitment to ratify the optional protocol of the UNCRPD is also welcomed but must be done without delay upon formation of the next Government.

Similarly, the party's commitment to recruit 800 therapy staff over the lifetime of the Government is very welcome and will be necessary to address to significant waiting times in relation to therapy supports.

The party's commitment on mental health for people with intellectual disabilities is very encouraging and goes beyond Inclusion Ireland's manifesto asks. The commitment to recruit 29 Adult Mental Health Intellectual Disability teams is in line with *A Vision for Change*.

There are also other commitments such as increasing personal assistance hours, rolling out disability awareness training, developing autism support services and strengthening adult safeguarding that are all to be welcomed.

However, the lack of commitment regarding the following is concerning:

- De-institutionalisation

- Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act
- Effective participation of people with disabilities

These are core issues that affect the lives of people with disabilities on a daily basis. The absence of any detail on Assisted Decision-Making is worrying as Ireland needs progress on the Act in order to be in line with the UNCRPD ahead of the State's first reporting cycle.

Additionally, the lack of commitment regarding cost of disability and poverty is equally as disappointing. There is currently research being undertaken by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection around cost of disability that will identify the additional costs people with disabilities face. Fianna Fáil's commitment to put in place a €10 "disability payment" falls well short of addressing the costs and poverty faced by people with disabilities.

In summary, Inclusion Ireland welcomes Fianna Fáil's commitments and hopes that these commitments would be reflected in the party's Programme for Government if they are to form the next Government. However, it is also important that the party addresses the issues that are absent from their manifesto and listen to what people with disabilities and their families say, and ensure their voices are heard in the next Dáil.



Rialtas na hÉireann  
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