



Inclusion Ireland Review of Political Party Manifestos

General Election 2020



Introduction

Fine Gael have been the party in government since 2016 with 50 TD's. They were supported in government by various Independent TD's and a "Confidence and Supply" agreement with Fianna Fáil.

2016 Manifesto Commitments

- Establishment of an independent patient advocacy service
- Significantly increasing investment in primary and community care, which will include additional doctors, nurses, and therapists, keeping care in the community
- Work with stakeholders on the further development the ECCE scheme for children with disabilities. Continue to increase SNA & RT numbers. Consult with stakeholders to see how best to progress sections of the EPSEN Act that were introduced on a non statutory basis. Reduce the pupil-teacher ratio for junior and senior infants to 18:1

- The introduction of personalised budgets
- A new mobility scheme to assist those with a disability in meeting their increased mobility costs
- Fully implement arrangements in the Assisted Decision-Making Act, including advanced healthcare directives and the establishment of a Decision Support Service to replace the Wards of Court Office and manage capacity matters.
- We will ensure there is greater involvement of family carers in the preparation of care plans and provision of care, together with more accessible training and respite to facilitate full support
- Reduce the 2,725 people who live in congregated settings by at least one-third by 2021.
- Remain committed to ratification of the UNCRPD

Inclusion Ireland ask	Fine Gael Commitment
United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities	Implementation plan for the UNCRPD
Assisted Decision – Making	None
Participation of people with disabilities	Implement a consultation and participation model in line with the UNCRPD
Housing	Investment in disability projects in the community
De-institutionalisation	Investment in disability projects in the community
Accessibility	None
Transport	None
Mental Health services for people with intellectual disabilities	Fully implement a ‘Vision for Change’
Cost of Disability	Complete the Cost of Disability research already started.

	Increase the Disability Allowance by €25 per week over the life of the government at a minimum.
Education	<p>Further reduce the 26:1 pupil teacher ratio.</p> <p>No comment on EPSEN Act</p> <p>Roll out the school inclusion model, so a diagnosis is not needed for supports.</p> <p>Develop a SNA training program.</p> <p>Deliver training to schools with Autism Classes</p> <p>Review the July provision to make it more inclusive</p>
Employment	<p>Fine tune and expand the 'wage subsidy scheme'</p> <p>Fine tune and expand the 'Ability' work programs</p> <p>Increase the employment rate for people with disabilities to 25% by 2021 and 33% by 2026.</p> <p>Awareness programs for employers on disability.</p>

Other Disability-Related Commitments
<p>More Autism pre-school places</p> <p>Awareness programs for the general public on disability to raise awareness</p>

Support participation in cultural activities

Continue the personal budgets program

Carer's who qualify for the Carer Support Grant will get a free GP card

Carer payments will increase by €25 per week over the life of the next government.

Will work with the Inclusive National Higher Education Forum who support people with intellectual disabilities in 10 higher education institutions

In year one of the next government produce a 10 year national literacy and numeracy strategy

Remain committed to the social farming model

Increase participation levels in sports

Commentary

There are many welcome commitments in the Fine Gael manifesto such as completing the much awaited 'cost of disability' research and increasing the Disability Allowance in the interim. It is also heartening to see a commitment to implement the UNCRPD and to develop a participation model for people with disabilities in line with the convention. It would have been nice to see a commitment to drive the UNCRPD by the Department of the Taoiseach.

Fine Gael do not mention the Assisted Decision Making Act and the full financing of the Decision Support Service. Until this occurs people with disabilities will continue to be denied their right to make their own decisions.

Commitments on housing and de-insitutionalisation are lacking in any detailed targets only to say investment in disability projects in the community. Given the slow rate of de-

institutionalisation during the last government this is a poor commitment.

Fine Gael make a number of encouraging commitments to support people with disabilities to get jobs including expanding the wage subsidy scheme and the Ability scheme. There are also targets to increase the employment rates for people with disabilities, part of which is an awareness program for employers on disability issues.

It is disappointing to see no commitment on transport and accessibility for people with disabilities.

Fine Gael make several commitments on education including on staff training, reducing the pupil teacher ratio, working on getting people with intellectual disability into higher education. However, there is no commitment to ensure no child is in a super-sized class or a commitment to commence the now 16-year-old EPSEN Act which is very disappointing.

Commitments on increasing participation in sport and culture are welcome but lack any great detail.

Overall, the Fine Gael manifesto does touch on many important issues for people with disabilities in their commitments while failing to adequately address the detail in others. It is important that Fine Gael listen to people with disabilities and ensure their voices are heard during the next Dáil term.



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

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