



Inclusion Ireland Review of Political Party Manifestos

General Election 2020



Introduction

The Labour Party was founded in 1912. It currently has seven TD's in the 32nd Dáil Éireann. The party was in government as the minority party in a coalition with Fine Gael from 2011 until the previous election in 2016.

2016 Manifesto Commitments

- Improve the integration of therapy supports into school settings
- Providing supports to children with special needs in pre-school
- Mainstream the pilot model of allocating resource teachers bringing under-resourced schools up to the level of support they need

- Expand the number of educational psychologists (no specific targets or numbers)
- Increase the percentage of college students with a disability to 8% of all new entrants
- Training for students with special needs who require assistive technologies
- Immediate 10% of disability budget towards independent living initiatives. Increase each year.
- Explore new innovative fiscal models that are beyond the social welfare system but that can help to financially support people with disabilities
- National Strategy tackling hate crime
- €430m in Community Nursing Units for older people and accommodation for those with a disability
- Immediately allocate 10% of funding of disability service providers to independent living initiatives, and we will increase this funding by 10% each year as capacity in the sector develops over time
- Sign the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities into law within the first year of Government
- Increased Personal Assistance Services
- Continue to cut class sizes to a historic low, reaching an average class size of 20
- Putting an end to class sizes of over 30

Inclusion Ireland Ask 2020	Labour Party Commitment 2020
The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	None

Assisted Decision-Making	None
Participation of people with disabilities	None
Housing	<p>Further develop individualised budgeting for care services to give recipients more autonomy and choice.</p> <p>Increase funding for personal assistance services (including in educational settings)</p> <p>Increase funding for housing adaptation grants.</p>
De-institutionalisation	None
Accessibility	None
Transport	None
Mental Health Services for People with Intellectual Disability	None
Cost of Disability	None
Education	Redirect resources towards early intervention with young children who have a disability and special needs, including neurodiversity, to reduce waiting times and to improve outcomes.
Employment	Fully implement the employment strategy for people with disabilities, and will develop

incentives and supports so that more employers take on workers with disabilities.

Initiate the process of aligning the tax and welfare systems, to allow innovative policies that will make it easier for people (such as those with a disability) to return to work while still relying on some welfare payments.

Improve Community Employment (CE) schemes, including allowing for long-term CE schemes in non-profit organisations for people who have disabilities or who have been distant from the labour market for a long time.

Other Disability-Related Commitments

- Local primary care health centres are fully staffed and equipped to provide a wide range of health and disability services at local level, cutting out the overcrowding and long waits in the health system.
- Labour will redirect funding to local primary care centres, which will bring health services closer to communities including medical tests, early intervention/prevention of illness, disability supports, eldercare and mental health services
- Labour will extend free-of-charge GP care to all under-18s, and to everyone with a long-term illness or disability.
- Labour will target electric vehicle grants to those who need them, especially in rural Ireland, where people may be car dependent. People with a disability who are also car dependent will be given an electric vehicle grant.

- Labour will extend State Claims Agency cover to Section 38 and 39 bodies

Commentary

Labour's vision "to build an Ireland where people with disabilities are empowered to live independent lives with control, choice and options" is to be welcomed and is reflected in some of their commitments in their party manifesto. The manifesto touches on some important issues facing people with disabilities, while omitting others.

Labour's commitments regarding housing for people with disabilities is encouraging. The manifesto identifies the importance of individualised funding to choice and autonomy for the individual. There are also commitments to increase funding for housing adaptation grants and more personal assistance hours, all to be welcomed.

The manifesto also has some clear commitments in relation to employment for people with disabilities, with their commitment to fully implement the employment strategy (Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities), as well as improving CE schemes for people with disabilities.

There are also other health related commitments identifying the importance of staffing local primary care health centres in order to cut waiting times, and the importance of early intervention and mental health services – these are all to be welcomed.

Labour are also the first party to produce an easy to read version of their manifesto, making their commitments accessible to people with intellectual disabilities.

However, the manifesto does not make reference to the following:

- 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 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.

Overall, the Labour Party's manifesto is strong on some disability-related issues, while failing to address others. It is welcome to see Labour showing leadership in producing an easy to read version of their manifesto, and we hope other parties follow suit in the future. However, it is 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
Government of Ireland

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