



Inclusion Ireland Review of Political Party Manifestos

General Election 2020



Introduction

Sinn Féin are the second largest party in opposition and have 21 sitting TDs in Dáil Éireann at present

2016 Manifesto Commitments

- Establish a Patient Advocacy service
- Additional 1,000 SNAs to the Early Childhood programme.
- Reduce class sizes, firstly to 27:1 then 20:1
- Increase resource teaching hours by 15%
- Increase education psychologists by 10%

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- Extend the supports available at full time education to part time education.
- Increase Disability Allowance by €20 to offset the Cost of Disability.
- Enact the ICCL Criminal Law (Hate Crime) Amendment Bill 2015
- Increase funding for respite
- Increase funding for Personal Assistance
- Tackle further barriers to employment for people with disabilities. An Taoiseach will have specific responsibility Disability inclusion
- Establish an Oireachtas Committee on Disability Inclusion
- Extension of medical card to all children for who Domiciliary Care Allowance is paid
- Deliver further on the EPSEN, prioritising access to an Individual Education Plan with associated resources
- Allow a person 'suspend' their Disability Allowance for a period if they enter employment
- 500 additional places on the Momentum scheme for jobseekers with disabilities.
- Make the Housing Adaptation Grant for People with Disabilities payable to voluntary housing agencies and private landlords
- Make all public transport wheelchair accessible

Inclusion Ireland ask 2020	Sinn Fein Commitment 2020
UNCRPD	<p>Immediate ratification of the Optional Protocol of the UNCRPD</p> <p>Department of the Taoiseach to drive the</p>

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	National Disability Inclusion Strategy
Assisted Decision Making	Legislating for Advanced Care Directives
Participation in decisions	None
Housing	<p>A right to housing in the Constitution</p> <p>Ensure that a minimum of 7% of all public houses are designed for people with disabilities and are fully wheelchair accessible</p> <p>Double funding to the home adaptation grant</p> <p>Universal design of future homes</p>
De-institutionalisation	None
Accessibility	Plain Language Act for public service information.
Transport	€120m to replace inaccessible busses and make bus stops accessible.
Mental Health	Fully implement a 'Vision for Change' at a cost of €1.2b (min. 2000 staff)
Cost of disability	None, except to increase Disability Allowance rates to €265pw
Education	<p>A new Education (Overcoming the barriers) Bill containing education rights such as IEPs.</p> <p>Recruiting additional educational psychologists</p> <p>Recruitment of 500 additional SNAs and 450 additional resource teachers</p> <p>Establishing an initial panel of 200 speech and language therapists for schools. A skill mix of 600 therapists in disability services</p>

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	<p>Reducing waiting times for assessments and resourcing supports for students with special educational needs, including proper access to therapies.</p> <p>Reducing the student/teacher ratio to 20:1</p> <p>Greater powers to the NCSE to place children in schools</p> <p>Parent appeal mechanism on resource allocations</p>
Employment	<p>Invest €5 million in rolling out the successful Walk Peer Programme nationwide, which supports young people to successfully transition into the world of work</p> <p>Training Intreo staff to better support people with disabilities into jobs</p> <p>Access to apprenticeships for people with disabilities</p> <p>Assistance to entrepreneurs with disabilities</p>

Other Disability-Related Commitments

- Increase AIM funding by €6.5m to ensure more SNAs are available at preschool level.
- 750 Tusla social workers
- Literacy and numeracy strategy. Plain Language Act for public service information. A minister for State to drive this.
- Increase the Fund for Students with Disabilities (FSD) accessing higher and further education by 20%.

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- Rolling out free GP care
- Ensure primary care encompasses social care
- Deliver an additional 12 million home help hours over five years (includes disability)
- Implementing the National Rare Disease Plan
- Establish an independent Patient Advocacy Agency; Legislating for a statutory right to advocacy for all patients; funding to advocacy services to meet demand; dedicated service for children in the services
- Enacting robust hate crime legislation
- Develop an autism empowerment strategy
- 1.5m personal assistance hours
- Restore the RT Allowance
- Home support on a statutory footing and 20% more investment in respite
- Medical card for all people with disabilities
- Increase Carer rates to €255pw and the Carer Support Grant to €2000
- Abolish the 15 hour work rule
- €1.2b extra for current disability spending (across a number of Departments)

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Commentary

The Sinn Fein manifesto is very strong on commitments that will make a difference in the lives of people with disabilities. It is welcome that the UNCRPD is being taken seriously and being driven from the Department of the Taoiseach with the Optional Protocol to be ratified immediately. It is a disappointment that there is no specific mention on the full commencement of the Assisted Decision-Making Act.

Sinn Fein make strong commitments on housing including having a vote on putting a right to housing into the constitution, the universal design of housing, having 7% of housing for people with disabilities and an increase on the home adaptation grant. There are also some commitments on home supports and PA supports to allow people to live independently. However, it is disappointing that moving people out of institutions is not mentioned.

On cost of disability and employment, Sinn Fein have a host of welcome measures that will support people with disabilities into work and also a rise in the weekly Disability Allowance payment to €265. There is no commitment to tackle the cost of disability on a wider scale, so this is disappointing. There is commitment to a secure medical card for disabled people removing a barrier to work.

Inclusion Ireland welcomes the Sinn Fein commitment to fully resource 'A Vision for Change' which is beyond our election ask.

Sinn Fein also commit strongly to accessibility in transport housing and the written word.

Sinn Fein does not commit to the EPSEN Act, instead opting to bring forward a new Bill that includes educational rights which is puzzling. However, there are very strong commitments on more SNA and teaching staff, 800 therapy staff, more educational psychologists and reducing the pupil teacher ratio to 20:1. There is also a promise to introduce an appeal mechanism in relation to resource hours.

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Overall, the Sinn Fein manifesto touches on almost every Inclusion Ireland disability ask. There is also a host of commitments made that go way beyond the asks of Inclusion Ireland. The greatest disappointment is the absence of any commitment to move people from institutions and funding for Assisted Decision-Making. This manifesto will make a difference in the lives of people with disabilities if it translates into a program for government. There is a lack of focus on involving people with disabilities in decisions that affect their lives so we would ask that Sinn Fein consult people with disabilities during the next Dáil.

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