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Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna Chorcaí
Cork Education and Training Board

ME

OK

Maybe

Vote

Work

Your Voice Counts

Active Citizenship
TUTOR HANDBOOK

Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Arna chomhchistiú ag an Aontas Eorpach
Co-Funded by the European Union

QQI
Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáiliochtaí Éireann

SOLAS
learning works

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www.adultliteracyforlife.ie

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1. About THIS HANDBOOK

1. About this Handbook

Every age, after all, must have its own aisling and dream of a better, kinder, happier, shared world.

- ***President Michael D. Higgins***

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1.1 Introduction to the Cork ETB Active Citizenship Project

This Cork ETB teaching resource aims to make information about voting and active citizenship more accessible to FET students and the general public.

Why?

- Encouraging adults to register to vote in elections and referendums can empower more adults to have their say on important issues affecting everyday life and more
- This resource aligns with the Adult Literacy for Life Strategy (ALL) which seeks to empower people to participate more fully in their lives and communities
- Many adults have lost faith in the system: constructive dialogue on the how and why of civic engagement is vital if more adults are to become engaged
- Disenfranchised citizens are not fully engaging with society

1.2 Aims of the Cork ETB Active Citizenship Project

The Cork ETB Active Citizenship Project aims to:

- **Develop a collaborative, interagency, holistic support for those who are disenfranchised through literacy difficulties or lack of education**
- **Raise critical awareness and understanding about decision-making in the hopes of eliciting greater participation in the democratic process at election times**
- **Help towards an increase in the numbers registered to vote, an increase in participation in local democratic and community processes and a decrease in political and societal apathy**

1.3 Rationale of the handbook

This handbook is designed to:

- Build tutors' confidence and capacity to engage learners in using their voice.
- Make the democratic process more accessible to adults who may have been disenfranchised for a variety of reasons.
- Develop greater awareness of why every vote counts and every person's voice matters.
- Build learners' critical understanding of the democratic process at local, national and European level
- Facilitate adult learners to have their say and take part: it is crucial that adults experiencing social/ economic or educational disadvantage can engage with the democratic process and take empowered, informed decisions.
- Provide tutors with a resource which does not assume high literacy levels and which is suitable for those with literacy difficulties or those learning English as an additional language.

1.4 Handbook design

- Each chapter can be used as a stand-alone module for groups or 1:1 and can be integrated into a variety of classes and contexts. Tutors might like to start with the Use your Voice section to create interest in the democratic process from a general perspective.
- The content can be varied to suit different geographical areas.
- It is not necessary to have any expertise in citizenship, politics or the electoral system in Ireland to use this handbook.
- The aim throughout is to draw on learners' own experiences and knowledge and to build together from that base.
- Links to audio-visual material are generally not included. Tutors can choose material most relevant to their contexts. External websites and resources are suggested for further information.
- If you do put this handbook into practice in any context, please send feedback on this handbook to activecitizenship@corketb.ie

This handbook can be used in conjunction with an online Active Citizenship online programme called Your Voice Counts: www.corketb.ie/fet

Learners can be supported to complete the online programme in class and get a certificate of completion.

1.5 Teaching and learning approach

- The starting point is what adults already know and then build on it
- Use local and learners' own real life materials and experiences to suit your context
- Use participatory and learner-centred activities, discussions and role plays
- Include opportunities to build literacy and digital literacy
- Encourage adults to find out how to get involved
- Empower and inspire adults to take action
- Facilitate finding answers to questions like
  - what is the point? – politicians are all the same!

What is the point? – Politicians are all the same!

1.6 What do tutors need to do?

- Create a welcoming, supportive, respectful, teaching and learning environment with a collaborative learning process.
- Agree Ground Rules for the group (*to limit personal issues becoming too dominant or divisive*) – ask the group to suggest Ground Rules and see suggested Ground Rules on page 12.
- Use materials which are learner centred, creative, interactive, participatory, most appropriate to your local context.
- Accept that the tutor is not the expert – but knows how to find information.
- Encourage learners to ask questions and explore – words which may sound familiar may not be well understood.
- Use a range of resources and approaches based on your learners' lived experiences.
- A good place to start is to watch the video Active Citizenship/Voter Education Course (youtube.com) on YouTube made by the Dublin Adult Learning Centre vote.ie/ - this video can also be shown to learners to encourage them to get started as it includes the voices of learners.

1.7 Agreeing Ground Rules

- Discussing issues like the government, voting and politics can be challenging. Learners might express very different views.
- As a facilitator, it is essential that you agree ground rules with the group before you start.
- Encourage the group to suggest ground rules which might help. Use the suggested ground rules set out on page 12 to check if there are any other rules which might be suitable.
- Keep the ground rules to hand so that you can refer the group back to them from time to time as needed.
- Ensure that you discuss the ground rules with anyone who joins the group after it has started.

1.8 Suggested Ground Rules

- **Confidentiality:** agree that personal details and disclosures are not discussed outside the group. You can talk about yourself, your learning and the class content.
- **Respect difference:** you have the right to have different views and ideas as do all the members of the group.
- **No interrupting**: give each other time to clarify thoughts and speak. Wait until the other is finished before speaking.
- **Listen:** pay close attention to what each person is actually saying, rather than what you want to hear said.
- **Equal time, equal space:** take responsibility for how often you speak in the group and for allowing others equal time and space.
- **Come to your own decisions/conclusions** about what is right and appropriate for you. Do not give advice to others e.g. *If I were you I would… You should…*
- **Speak in the first person**: speak directly out of your own experience and use, *I feel* rather than *everybody says* or *most people feel*.
- **Responsibility:** take responsibility for what you think, do, say and feel in each session. Equally take responsibility for what you do not say in each session.
- **Disclosure:** only say what you are comfortable with, no matter what others disclose.

From ***The Personal to the Political***

1.9 Methods for building understanding

- Group discussion
- Gathering the knowledge in the room
- Visual aids and video links
- Sight word recognition and concept checking
- Information sheets
- Worksheets/ quizzes/ wordsearches
- Moving debate, role play
- Creative/ visual project
- Critical reading of relevant texts
- Trips to local councils/ Dublin to meet with representatives
- Reflection

1.10 Moving to action

- 1. After working through the **Take Action** section, tutors could facilitate voter registration/ update of details on the Register of Electors - see checktheregister.ie checktheregister.ie/en-IE/
- 2. After working through the **Use your Voice** section, tutors could facilitate a group/ personal active citizenship project - practical experience of democratic action.
  - Choose your issue
  - Find out what action you can take
  - Choose the action
  - Decide on the result you hope to get
  - Plan and get ready
  - Put the idea into action
  - Reflect, evaluate and report

2. What It All MEANS – Democracy in Ireland?

2. What it All means – Democracy in Ireland?

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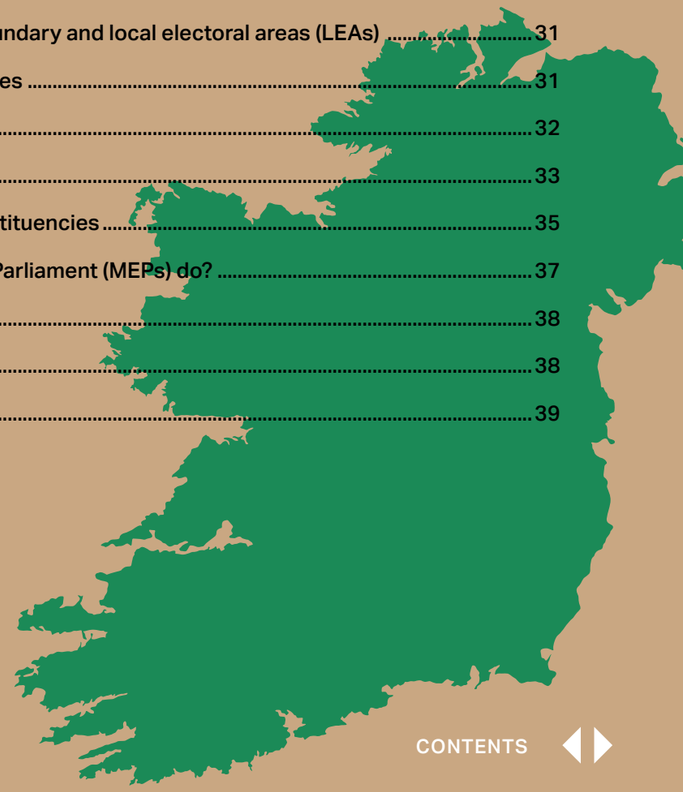


2.1 Aims and objectives

- **Aim** – to explore terminology and key concepts about the democratic process in Ireland starting from learners' own understanding
- **Objective** – learners will understand and be able to explain a range of terminology related to the democratic process in Ireland

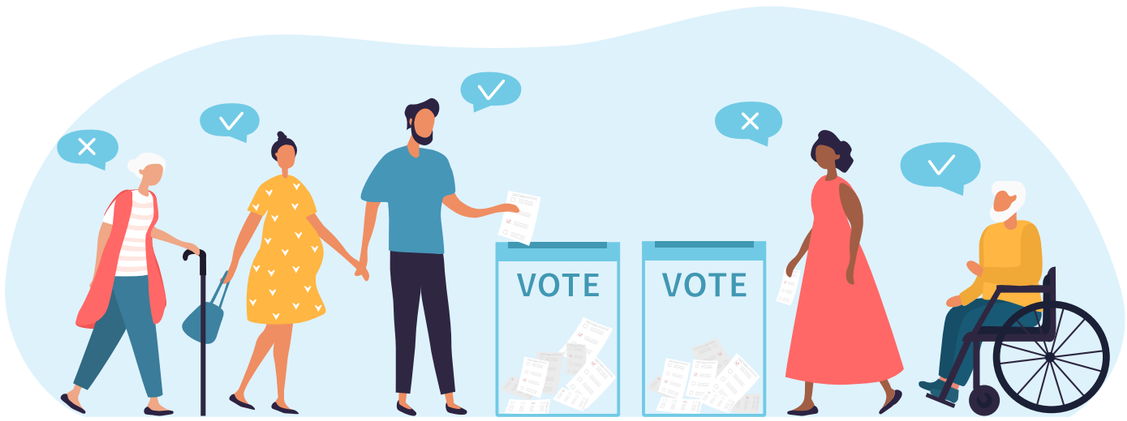
Activities

- **Explore key words about**
  - Voting
  - Representatives
- **Introduce and explore key concepts about**
  - Local elections and councils
  - Dáil elections and TDs
  - European elections and MEPS
  - Presidential elections and the President
  - Referendums and the Constitution of Ireland

2.2 Tutor resources

- **Downloadable resources**
  - A Plain English Guide to Citizenship Terms (NALA) www.nala.ie/publications/a-plain-english-guide-to-citizenship-terms/
  - A Plain English Guide to Political Terms (NALA) www.nala.ie/publications/a-plain-english-guide-to-political-terms-second-edition-2015/

- **Online resources – useful websites**
  - Citizens Information www.citizensinformation.ie/en/
  - Check the Register www.checktheregister.ie/en-IE/
  - Electoral Commission www.electoralcommission.ie/ (Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage (for information on disability access)
  - Cork City Council Voting Information www.corkcity.ie/en/council-services/services/voting/
  - Cork County Council Voting Information www.corkcoco.ie/en/council/how-can-i-vote
  - Oireachtas www.oireachtas.ie/ the Irish national parliament
  - Inclusion Ireland inclusionireland.ie/ (with downloadable *Guide to Voting Easy to Read*)
  - Immigrant Council of Ireland www.immigrantcouncil.ie/
  - See Her Elected (SHE) www.seeherelected.ie/
  - Local interactive maps on your city or county council website.



2.3 Overview of what it all means

ACTIVITY

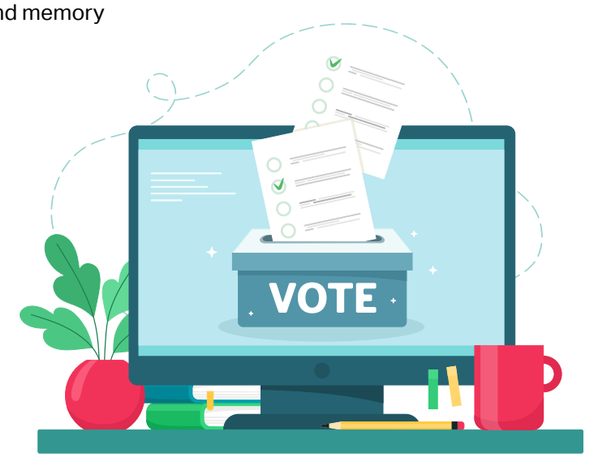
- Use photographs (e.g. voting image/ polling station) to start a discussion on what learners already know
- In small groups ask learners to think about words they think of when they hear the word 'government'
- Who, what and where is government in Ireland?
- Make a list of the words
- Key words are explained below

2.4 Note to tutors about terminology

GUIDE TO TUTORS

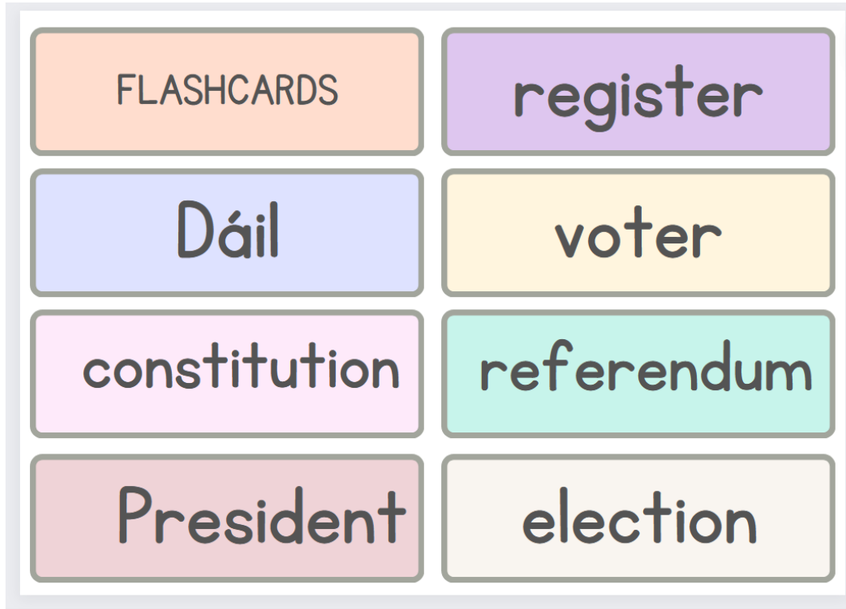
The terminology about voting, elections etc can be overwhelming for learners.

- Learners may have heard of certain words, but not be sure about their meaning or relevance to their own lives. Definitions and flashcards are provided in this handbook for some of the terminology. Tutors could note down other words which arise in discussion and add them to the list and the flashcards as the need arises.
- You can use the flashcards in this handbook to explore learners' understanding of the terminology. Print and lay out the flashcards on the table and ask members of the group to choose a card which they would like to talk about.
- You can also use the flashcards with literacy or language learners:
  - To aid sight word recognition
  - To work on syllable breakdown and spelling
  - For dictionary work, understanding and memory



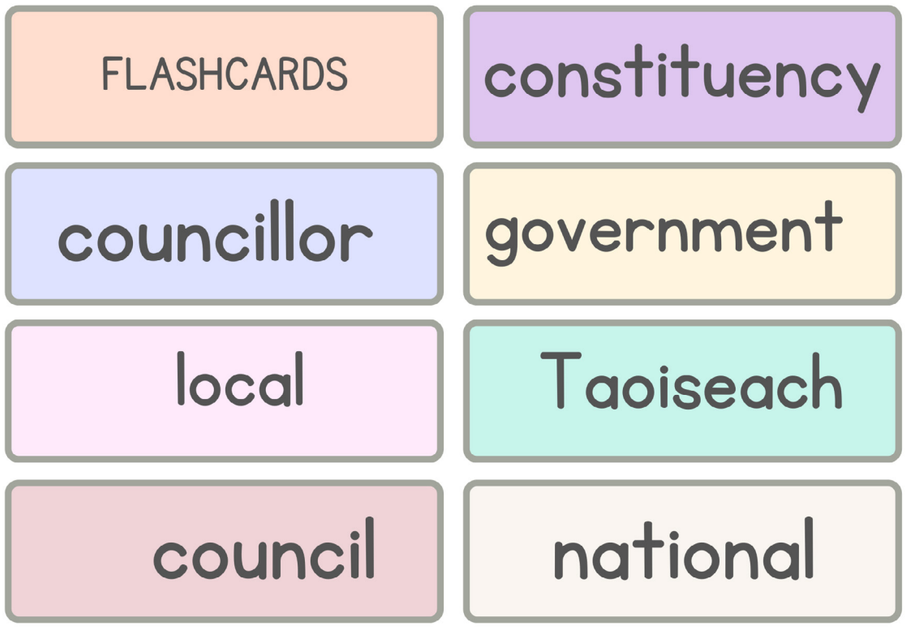
2.5 Key Words – Voting

- **Election** – when people living in a country, city or county choose a person or government by voting.
- **Referendum** – a vote by Irish citizens on one political question. In Ireland this will usually be for or against a proposed change to the constitution.
- **The Constitution of Ireland** – sets out the rights, values and system of government in Ireland since 1937. It is a legal document and can only be changed by the people's vote.
- **A voter** – a person who is entitled to vote and exercises their right to do so. A voter must be over 18 years and be on the Register of Electors.
- **Register of Electors** – A public list of people who have the right to vote in referendums and elections in Ireland. This list is put together by local authorities (city and county councils).
- **Dáil Éireann** – the Irish parliament. There must be an election at least every 5 years. The Dáil is one part of the Irish government. The Seanad is the other part and different election rules apply.
- **The President** – is the head of state in Ireland. There are elections every 7 years. You can be the President for no more than 14 years. The President lives in Áras an Uachtaráin and represents Ireland internationally.



2.6 Key Words – Representation

- **T.Ds** – Teachtaí Dála represent people from constituencies all over Ireland at **national** level. They are members of Dáil Éireann, the Irish parliament.
- **Taoiseach** – the leader of the **government** in Ireland.
- **MEPs** – Members of the European Parliament who work in the European Union with representatives from 26 other countries in the EU like Poland, France and Germany.
- **Councillors** – work in your community on city and county **councils** – your **local** authority.
- **Candidates** – people who want to be elected at local, general or European elections.
- **Constituency** – an area of Ireland where the political representatives are elected by the voters who live there.



Voting in Ireland

Read the words in the box. Fill the gap with one word from the box.

The first one is done for you.

register election constitution ~~voter~~ referendum Dáil President

1. *Everyone over 18 has the right to be a voter.*
2. The government must have an _____ every 5 years.
3. The rights of everyone in Ireland are set out in the _____.
4. You must be on the _____ if you want to vote in Ireland.
5. The _____ of Ireland is elected every 7 years.
6. The constitution can only be changed by a _____
7. We elect TDs to the _____ .

Representatives in Ireland

Read the words in the box. Fill the gap with one word from the box.

The first one is done for you.

constituency	***local***	***government***	***Taoiseach***	***council***
national	***~~representatives~~***			

1. *TDs and local councillors are your representatives.*
2. If you have a problem in your local area, you can contact your local _____ .
3. Your _____ is the area where you can vote.
4. The _____ is the leader of the government in Ireland.
5. The _____ government is in Dublin.
6. Your _____ council takes care of social housing in your area.
7. The _____ in Dublin takes care of national issues.

What is it all about?

T	M	I	I	R	O	R	T	E	D	G	N	N	E
T	U	C	O	N	S	T	I	T	U	E	N	C	Y
Y	D	N	O	I	T	U	T	I	T	S	N	O	C
U	N	O	R	O	L	I	E	T	T	N	O	O	T
I	E	I	D	E	I	S	R	E	N	E	C	T	L
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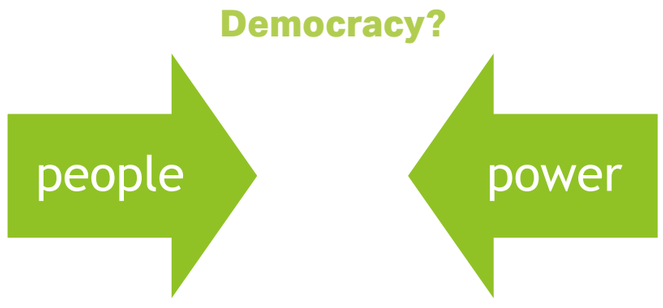
L	E	C	N	R	D	M	E	E	I	T	U	E	E
D	F	E	C	V	O	T	E	R	E	P	N	M	I
R	E	L	F	N	L	O	O	D	O	N	C	N	Y
M	R	E	R	D	Y	I	C	T	S	P	I	R	L
O	R	E	G	I	S	T	E	R	D	P	L	E	N
I	R	I	R	O	N	R	R	T	E	T	L	V	N
N	E	E	E	E	A	E	R	E	S	O	O	O	V
T	U	T	N	E	D	I	S	E	R	P	R	G	M

ELECTION
COUNCILLOR
PRESIDENT
CONSTITUTION
VOTER
REFERENDUM
CONSTITUENCY
REGISTER
DAIL
GOVERNMENT



2.7 Democracy means rule by the people

- ✓ A government which favours equal rights, fair trials and freedom of speech and
- ✓ Power is held by representatives of the people and
- ✓ The representatives have been freely elected by the people.

Democracy is often contrasted with a dictatorship.

Adapted from the NALA Plain English Guide to Political Terms

nala.ie/publications/a-plain-english-guide-to-political-terms-second-edition-2015/

2.8 About local government

GUIDE NOTES FOR TUTORS

- Ireland has 31 local authorities (city or county councils)
- They look after local services including;
  - Housing – they are the main providers of social housing
  - Roads – keeping them in good repair, parking, lighting, cutting trees and hedges, gritting
  - Parks, recreation, libraries and tourism
  - Planning – who can build what and how land is used
  - Protecting the environment – water, drainage, waste, noise, air quality, dog and horse licences
  - Some fire services
  - The register of electors

- Councillors are elected by local people
- The Mayor is elected by the Councillors and represents the Council in public
  - (note - the City of Limerick will move to a directly elected mayor in 2024)
- They make decisions at council meetings
- There is a chief executive who runs the council day to day

2.9 What does your local council do?

ACTIVITIES – Group discussion – what do learners know about local councils?

- Use photos of the Mayor/ City/ County Hall from local paper and/or articles to prompt discussion
- Use photos of local council signs – see pages 26-27 in this handbook.
- Prepare flashcards (words and/or pictures) to show activities which your local council deals with e.g. social housing, roads, drains, parks, playgrounds, libraries, planning, environment, tourism, fire safety, noise control, dog and horse licensing, waste, school crossing, gritting roads, hedge cutting and more. Place the cards down as the group calls them out.
- Go for a walk with your group around your neighbourhood and see how many council signs there are – take photos to discuss with the group.

2.10 What can your local council do for you?

ACTIVITY – Group discussion – what can your local council do for you?

- Use pictures and articles from the local paper/ radio interviews to prompt discussion about issues in the local area
- Discuss ways in which the area could improve
- What good things have been done in the area?
- What problems are there?
- Ask *'If your local councillor came to see the group, what would you ask your local councillor to do?'*

Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council
Halla An Chontae
County Hall
Leabharlann An Chontae
County Library
Rialú Seirbhís Doiteán
Fire & Building Control
Mol Fáis Gnó
Business Growth Hub
22/10/2023 13:4

Cork County Council
CAUTION
INCREASED RISK OF ICE WHEN LIGHTS FLASH

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Fabulous Fiction
CURRENT BESTSELLERS
Internet Access
CORK LOCAL HISTORY
Drama Collection
CHORAL MUSIC
Newspapers on Microfilm
DVDS
National & Local Newspapers
Travel Books
ONLINE SERVICES
Childrens Books
REFERENCE BOOKS
Teenage Books
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Exhibitions
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SPORTS BOOKS
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An initiative of the Government of Ireland
www.gov.ie/housingforall
Housing for All
Providing high-quality homes & supporting communities in partnership with Cork City Council
Hartland's Square
43 New Quality Homes

WELCOME TO CORK PUBLIC MUSEUM
No food or beverages
No flash photography
No dogs allowed except for guide dogs
No running / horse play
Please accompany children at all times
Please refrain from using your mobile
Please respect others and keep noise to a minimum
Thank you for your co-operation and enjoy your visit.
FREE ADMISSION
Email: museum@corkcity.ie Tel: 021-4270679
OPENING HOURS
Monday: Closed
Tuesday-Friday: 10am-4pm
Saturday: 11am-4pm
Sunday CLOSED
Closed every Bank Holiday weekend
FREE ADMISSION
22/10/2023 16:00
Email: museum@corkcity.ie
Telephone: 021-4270679

CORK CITY COUNCIL
SITE NOTICE

PHÁIRC MHIC GEARAILT
FITZGERALD'S PARK
PARK OPENING HOURS
DOGS MUST BE KEPT ON A LEAD AT ALL TIMES OWNERS MUST CLEAN UP DOG LITTER
IT IS AN OFFENCE TO DRINK ALCOHOL IN PUBLIC PLACES
ON THE SPOT FINE €75.00

Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council

LITTER
Cork City Council

PRESS SCREEN TO BEGIN

P
CRIOS ÍOC AGUS PÁIRCEÁIL
PAY PARKING AREA
2 UAIR / 2 HOUR
LUAN - SATH / MON - SAT
08.30 - 18.30
Roghanna Íocaíochta / Payment Options:
1. "CORK CITY PARK BY PHONE"
Fón / Phone: (021) 492 4030
Sráid / Street: 1176
2. Diosca Páirceála / Parking Disc
www.corkparking.ie

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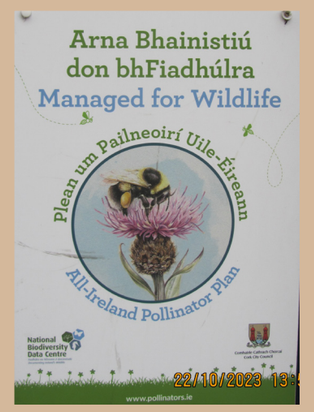
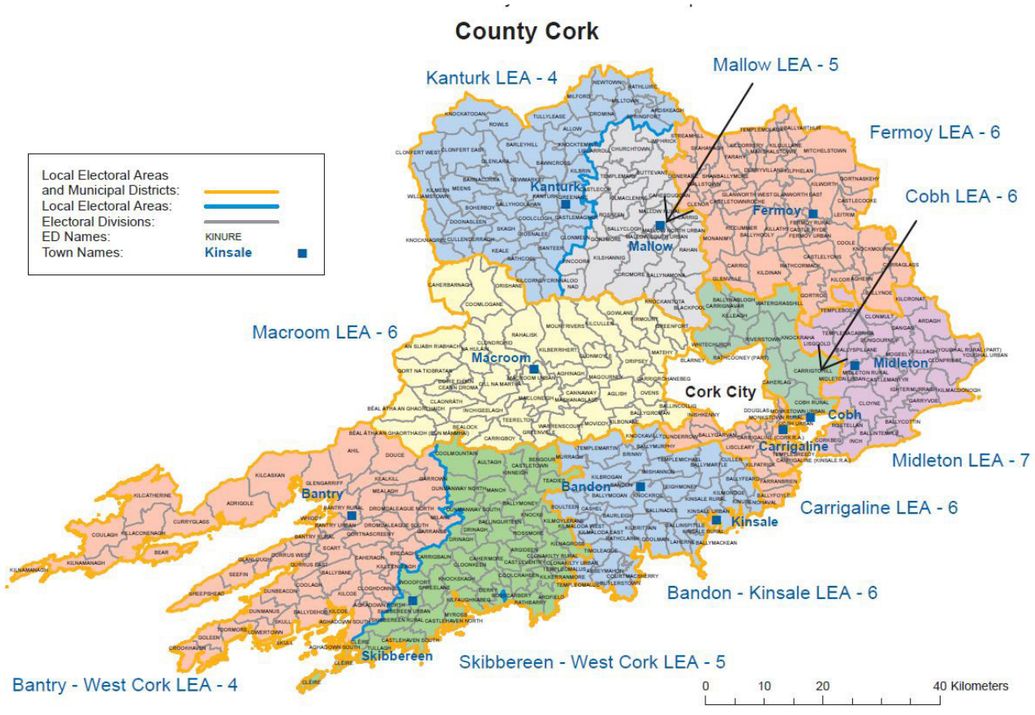

Arna Bhainistiú don bhFiadhúlra
Managed for Wildlife
Plean um Pailneoirí Uile-Éireann
All-Ireland Pollinator Plan
National Biodiversity Data Centre
www.pollinators.ie

CORK CITY COUNCIL
PARKS DEPARTMENT
WALKWAY OPENING HOURS
NOVEMBER to FEBRUARY 8.30a.m. - 4.00p.m.
OCTOBER & MARCH 8.30a.m. - 5.00p.m.
APRIL & SEPTEMBER 8.30a.m. - 7.00p.m.
MAY & AUGUST 8.30a.m. - 8.00p.m.
JUNE & JULY 8.30a.m. - 9.00p.m.
SAT SUN / BANK HOLIDAYS OPEN 8.30 a.m.
VISITORS TO THE WALKWAY MUST LEAVE AT CLOSING TIMES
WALKWAY CLOSED ONE HOUR BEFORE

2.11 Local elections: Cork County Council

- The council has **55** elected members
- Elections take place every five years
- Local Councillors are elected by the people in the community. They represent the public interest as well as people living within their area.
- There are 10 Local Electoral Areas in County Cork (see map)
- The head of the council is the Mayor



Credit: Cork County Franchise Office www.corkcoco.ie/en/council/how-can-i-vote

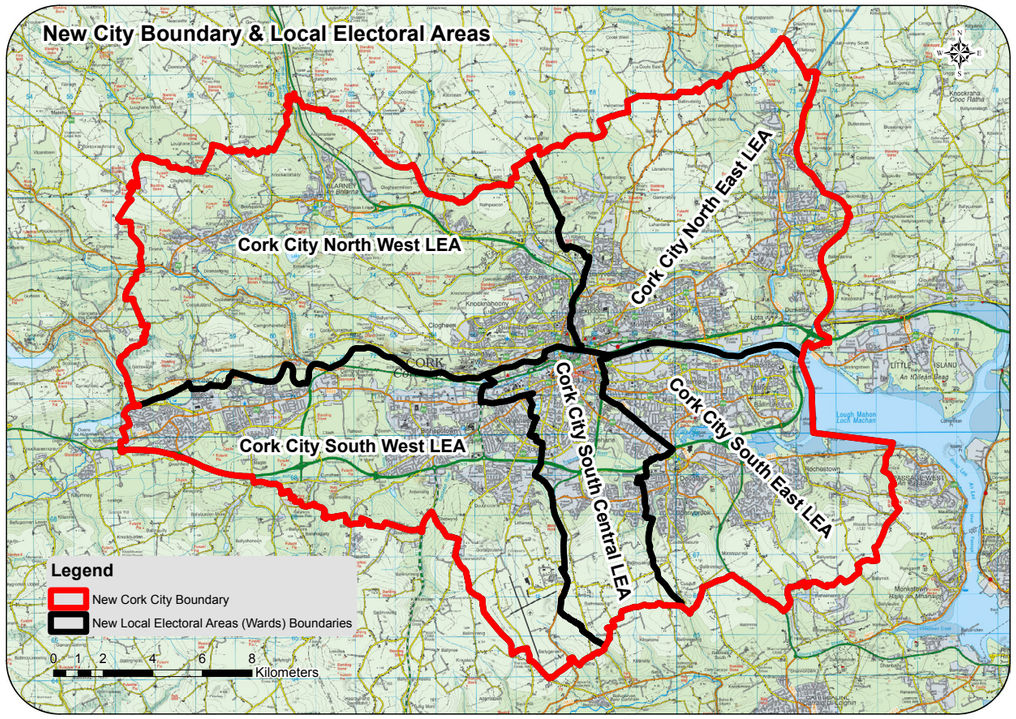
2.12 Local elections: Cork County Council map of Local Electoral Areas (LEAs)

ACTIVITY

- Show the map of Local Electoral Areas in County Cork (or your area)
- Let learners look at the map for a few minutes
- Then give the learners the same map with no names shown
- Then see how many areas the learners can name
- Then show the named map again
- Learners can write or copy in the names of the areas
- You can also make a jigsaw of the map for learners to put back together
- For more detailed work on individual addresses, go to the 'How Can I Vote? section corkcoco.ie/en/council/how-can-i-vote on the Cork County Council website and click on the 'Cork County Polling Scheme' – you can then search for any townland in the County Cork Local Electoral Areas.
- You can also search Check the Register by Eircode, address or townland in the county checktheregister.ie/en-IE/

2.13 Local elections: Cork City Council

- Cork City Council has 31 councillors from 5 Local Electoral Areas (LEAs)
- Elections take place every five years
- Local Councillors are elected by the people in the community. They represent the public interest as well as people living within their area.
- The head of Cork City Council is the Lord Mayor



Credit:Cork City Council New City Boundary and Local Electoral Areas

2.14 Local elections: Cork City Council map of new City boundary and local electoral areas (LEAs)

ACTIVITY

- Show the map of Cork City (this is downloadable from corkcity.ie *'Map of Cork City Council New City Boundary and Local Electoral Areas')*.
- Find out what learners know about the 'new' Cork City boundaries.
- See if learners can find the general area where they live on the map. This is useful for practising directions (North, South, East and West).
- For further detail, you can work with learners to identify whether their address is located within the new city boundary.
- Use the interactive map on Voting FAQs on corkcity.ie www.corkcity.ie/en/council-services/councillors-and-democracy/voting/voting-boundary-faqs.html
- Enter the Eircode - if the address is in the new Cork City boundary it will be shown on the map. If you do not know the Eircode, you can go to finder.eircode.ie/#/
- You can show learners how to Check the Register www.checktheregister.ie to find out if they are registered on the Register of Electors.

2.15 General elections - Dáil constituencies

GUIDING NOTES FOR TUTORS

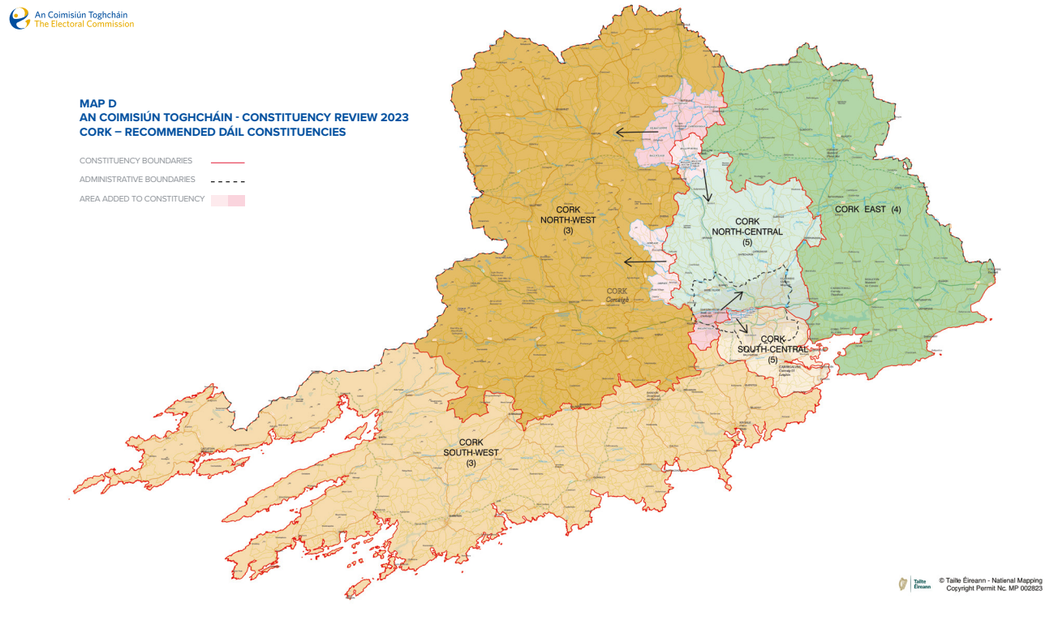
- **Constituency** – an area of Ireland where the political representatives are elected by the voters who live there.
- 174 TDs will represent 43 Dáil Constituencies
- Many people do not know which constituency they are in
- Explore what learners know and use the maps and interactive guides to show who lives where in your local constituency/ies
- You can find out who the TDs are for any constituency on oireachtas.ie www.oireachtas.ie/ - see TDs and Senators
- Check for up-to-date information on your Dáil constituency map on the Electoral Commission website www.electoralcommission.ie/maps-of-the-recommended-constituencies/

2.16 Which Dáil constituency are you in?

ACTIVITY

- Check for the up-to-date constituency map from the Electoral Commission downloadable from www.electoralcommission.ie/
- For individual constituency maps see www.electoralcommission.ie/maps-of-the-recommended-constituencies/
- Tutors and learners can use the interactive maps on the Electoral Commission website to zoom in on particular areas of Cork City and County
- Use a map of your county (available from www.failteireland.ie the National Tourism Development Authority) to see which towns are in which constituency
- For further information, there is a profile of each constituency on the Oireachtas website www.oireachtas.ie/

Credit: www.electoralcommission.ie/maps-of-the-recommended-constituencies/



Credit: The Electoral Commission – (NOTE: check for uptodate map on www.electoralcommission.ie/maps-of-the-recommended-constituencies/

2.17 What do TDs do?

ACTIVITY - Group discussion – What do learners say?

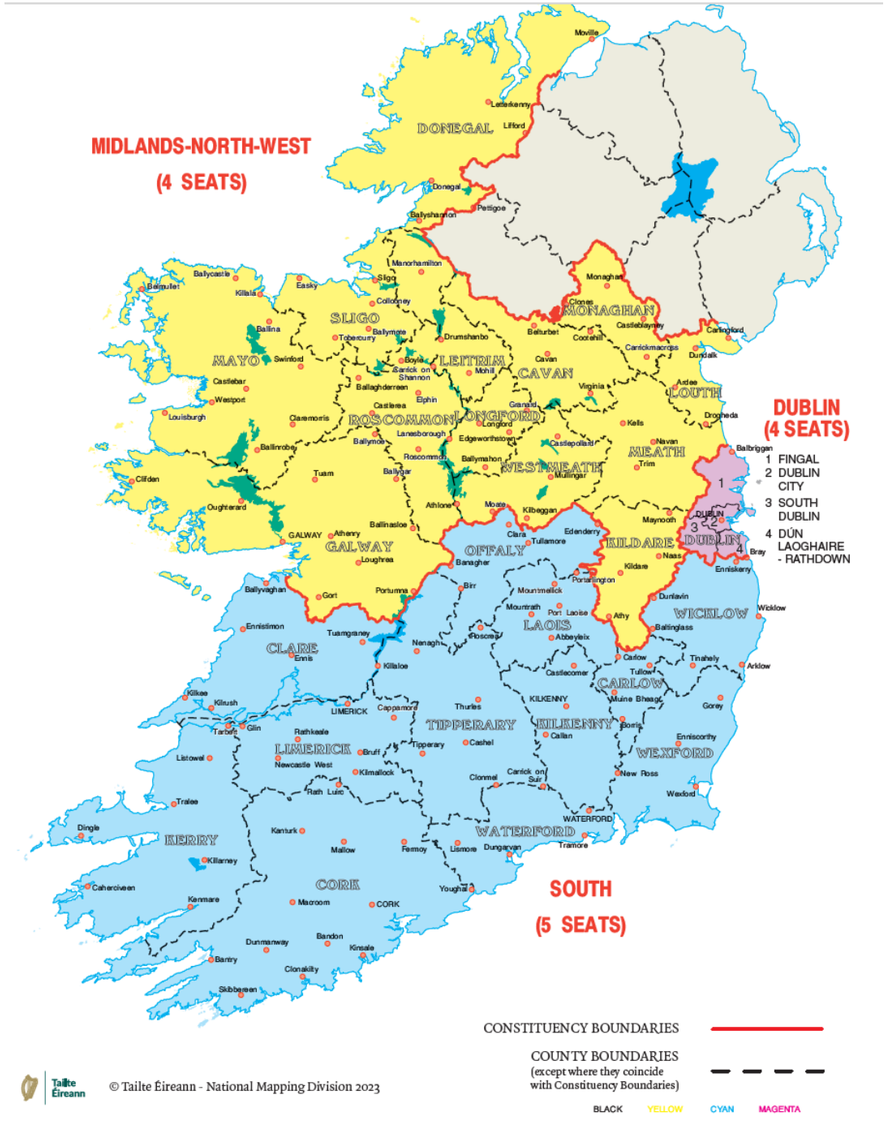
- Use photos to prompt discussion
- Prepare flashcards (words and/or pictures) with a list of activities which the government deals with - eg housing, health, education, law and crime, gardaí, social welfare, jobs, tourism, planning, taxes, the army, and more. Place the cards down as the group calls them out. Can the group think of any more?
- What can the government do for you?
- Discuss ways in which Ireland could improve
- What good things have been done in Ireland by the government?
- What problems are there?
- Ask *'If you were the Taoiseach, what is the number one action you would take?'*

2.18 European elections - European constituencies

GUIDE NOTES FOR TUTORS

- Ireland will have 14 Members of the European Parliament representing Ireland's three constituencies (Dublin, South and Midlands-North-West).
  (see the Electoral Commission website www.electoralcommission.ie*)*

Credit: creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0



www.electoralcommission.ie/maps-of-the-recommended-constituencies/

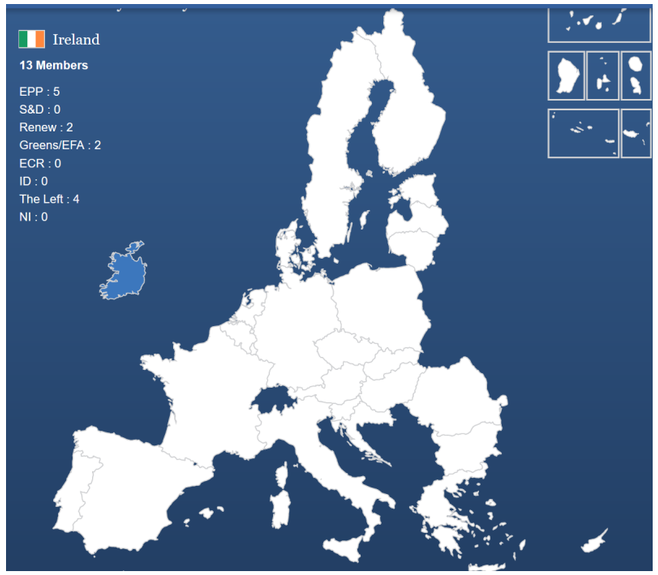
2.19 What do Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) do?

- Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) represent Ireland in the European Union.
- They can help to make laws and set a budget for the European Union.

Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Arna chomhchistiú ag an Aontas Eorpach

Co-funded by the European Union



Credit: www.europarl.europa.eu/portal/en

2.20 The President

The President is the head of State in Ireland and represents all of the people at home and abroad. The President is elected directly by the people of Ireland and serves a 7 year term in office. No President can serve more than 2 terms.

The President signs bills into law, once they have been passed by the Dáil and the Seanad. The role of the president is outlined in the constitution.

Credit: president.ie/en

2.21 Referendums

- Referendums in Ireland give Irish citizens who are on the Register of Electors the chance to vote on changes to the Irish Constitution.
- Referendums deal with important issues. There have been referendums in the past on divorce, citizenship, termination of pregnancy, marriage, children's rights, the death penalty and European Union treaties.
- The position of women in the home and gender equality are likely to be the next issues for a referendum.

2.22 About you?

ACTIVITY

After discussion of the four layers of democracy (local, national, Presidential and European), tutors can encourage learners to create a personal profile. This gives great practice in writing, spelling and recognising names (see worksheet) and can be used to practise digital skills by finding out the names from the relevant websites.

WORKSHEET Please write in the information about you

1. My local council is _____
2. The Councillors for my area are
   _____
   _____
   _____
3. My constituency is _____
4. The TDs for my constituency are
   _____
   _____
   _____
5. My European constituency is _____
6. My MEPs are
   _____
   _____
   _____
7. The President of Ireland is _____

3. TAKE ACTION – Voting

Every election is determined by the people who show up. - *Larry Sabato*

Someone struggled for your right to vote. Use it. - *Susan B. Anthony*

3. Take Action - Voting

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3.1 Aims and objectives

Aim

- Explore the terminology and process of voting in Ireland starting with what learners know

Outcome

- Learners to understand and be able to explain
  - some of the terminology
  - how to register to vote in Ireland
  - the practical process of voting in Ireland

3.2 Tutor resources

- Tutors can use some readily available websites to find out any further information.
- You can show learners how to Check the Register www.checktheregister.ie/en-IE/ to find out if they are registered on the Register of Electors
- For more information about voting in particular circumstances see the section on Voting on the Citizens Information website www.citizensinformation.ie/en/
- Inclusion Ireland have a very useful Easy to Read guide which you could download and/or print for learners on their website inclusionireland.ie/
- The Dept of Housing Local Government and Heritage produces an information leaflet for voters with disability www.gov.ie/en/collection/8c47d-information-for-voters-with-disabilities-in-a-range-of-different-languages/
- The Immigrant Council of Ireland has videos about registering to vote in Ireland in different languages www.immigrantcouncil.ie/vote
- DALC Active Citizenship/ Voter Education has information and videos on www.vote.ie/
- NASC nascireland.org/campaigns/registering-vote-ireland
- For information about the Dáil and Seanad see www.oireachtas.ie/
- For information about elections and referendums see www.electoralcommission.ie/

3.3 Voting overview

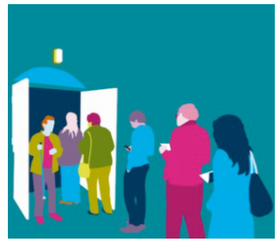
ACTIVITY: **Group discussion**

- Has anyone voted?
- What did they do? (NOT who did they vote for!)
- What did they get in the post?
- Who sent it to them?
- How did the government know the address to send it to?
- Get personal stories of the experience of going to vote – what kind of election did they vote in?
- Draw out key words (see below)

Voting - Key words

- Elector
- Register
- Citizen
- Resident
- Election
- Referendum
- Polling card
- Polling station
- Photo ID
- Ballot paper
- Political party
- Independent
- Postal vote
- Local election
- General election
- Presidential election
- Counting the votes
- Spoilt ballot
- Proportional representation
- Single transferable vote
- Result

Match the pictures to the words



ballot paper

voting booth

polling card

polling station

inclusionireland.ie/

3.4 Who has the right to vote?

GUIDE FOR TUTORS

The basic form ERF1 (Register to Vote or Update Details) covers residents in Ireland who have an address. There are other forms for people who are homeless (ERF2), in prison, sick or who have a disability etc.

- All residents in Ireland can register – but not everyone can vote in all elections (see below for more information).
- People who have come to live in Ireland from another country can register immediately – this includes all EU and non-EU citizens and asylum seekers.
- There is a general guide below, but tutors can find out all the answers to who can register for what and how on Citizen's Information 'Right to Vote' Section.
- Individual situations can vary and the rights regarding e.g. EU citizens are quite detailed.
- If you have any questions the franchise department in your local council can help. Email addresses for all the franchise officers are on the Check the Register website checktheregister.ie/en-IE/

3.5 What do I do if I want to vote?

- If you want to vote, you MUST be 18 and over on the day of the election
- You MUST be ON the electoral register at least 15 days before an election – you cannot wait until the day of the election
- You MUST be resident in Ireland (with some exceptions)
- Some people can vote in all elections and referendums, but not everyone

If you are	You are eligible to vote in
An Irish citizen	**All elections and referendums**
An EU citizen	**European and local elections**
A UK citizen	**Dáil and local elections**
All other residents	**Local elections**

3.6 How do I register to vote – paper form?

Do you want to register for the first time?

- Get a paper form ERF1 from your centre or from your local city or county hall or you can ask someone to print it for you. If you do not have an address because of homelessness, use ERF2
- If you **have** a PPSN, you can just sign it
- If you **don't have** a PPSN, you must take it to the gardaí or your local authority for signing
- If you can't get to the garda station or the local authority, your GP has to sign it

Are you already registered?

- If you are already registered, you must be sure your address is correct – go to checktheregister.ie
- If you have moved, you can update your address on form ERF1
- You can add your PPSN, date of birth and Eircode on form ERF1, but you do not have to

Where do I send the form?

- You can take or send the form to your local city or county hall – write ' Electoral Register' and the address of your local authority on the envelope. If you post it, you need to put a stamp on it.

NOTE : YOUR PPSN AND YOUR DATE OF BIRTH WILL NEVER APPEAR ON THE PUBLIC REGISTER

3.7 How do I register to vote - online?

Do you want to register for the first time?

- Online go to checktheregister.ie
- You need your address, your full name and date of birth
- You need your PPSN if you have one

You CANNOT register online if

- You do not have a PPSN
- You want to update your citizenship
- You want to apply for a special or postal vote
- You want to apply to be an anonymous elector

In all these cases you need to download the correct form from checkthregister.ie

Are you already registered?

- Check the register – you need to type in your Eircode or address to find out if you are registered at the right address
- If you are already registered, but you have changed your address, you must update it online
- You can add your PPSN, date of birth and Eircode online if you want to, but you do not have to

NOTE : YOUR PPSN AND YOUR DATE OF BIRTH WILL NEVER APPEAR ON THE PUBLIC REGISTER

ACTIVITY

Sample case studies for discussion.

3.8 Students

GUIDE FOR TUTORS

- If a student is studying away from home, they can register at EITHER their home address OR their student residential address.
- They can only be registered at ONE address.
- Students can use form PV4 if they are registered to vote but they cannot go to their polling station because they are studying away from home.
- To register to vote by post, they need to complete PV4 and send it to the local authority in the area where they are registered and where they want to vote.
- All forms are available at www.voter.ie/general/downloads or at your local county or city hall.

Can you register to vote if…? ACTIVITY Case studies for discussion

My sister is in prison in Dublin. Before she went to prison, she was living in Cork. Can she vote in Cork?

As she is in prison, she can register to vote by post in the area she would be living in, if she were not in prison – so she can register to vote in Cork – use form PV6.

My friend does not have anywhere to live at the moment. She lived in Mallow with her partner but they broke up. Can she register to vote?

Yes – she can register using form ERF2 which is for people who have no address.

We moved from Cork to Midleton last year. Can I vote in Midleton?

You need to update your address using form EFR1 and you will be sent a polling card for the polling station nearest your new address in Cork.

I am caring for my mother who has moved in with me. She would like to vote but she cannot get to the polling station. Can she vote?

Yes, but she needs to apply for a postal vote if her illness prevents her from going to the polling station on election day – use form PV2.

I have been in an abusive relationship. I do not want my ex-partner to know where I am. Will my address be on the register?

You can apply using form PV7 if publishing your name and address would be harmful to your personal safety or to that of a member of your household. You will then be an anonymous elector.

Sara is an asylum seeker from Syria. She is living in Direct Provision. Can she register to vote?

Yes – Sara can register as she is eligible to vote in local elections.

Worksheet

Can you register to vote if?

Put a circle around YES or NO

1. You don't have an address YES/NO
2. You are too sick to get out of the house YES/NO
3. You are in prison YES/NO
4. You are seeking asylum YES/NO
5. You don't have an Irish passport YES/NO
6. You don't have a PPSN YES/NO
7. You don't know your Eircode YES/NO
8. You don't want your name to be published on the register for personal safety reasons YES/NO
9. You can't use a computer or smartphone YES/NO
10. You have changed your name YES/NO

NOTE FOR TUTORS: There are forms to fill in to suit these cases – all information can be found at your local authority. Registering to vote does NOT give you the right to vote in all elections and referendums.

Answers to worksheet 'Can you register to vote if?'

1. You don't have an address YES – use form ERF2
2. You are too sick to get out of the house YES -use PV2 for a postal vote
3. You are in prison YES – since 2006
4. You are seeking asylum YES – since 2004 in local elections (with identity card)
5. You don't have an Irish passport YES, but not in all elections
6. You don't have a PPSN YES – but a garda must sign your voter registration form
7. You don't know your Eircode YES
8. You don't want your name to be published on the register for personal safety reasons

   YES you can use form PV7 if publishing your name and address would be harmful to your personal safety or to that of a member of your household.
9. You can't use a computer or smartphone YES – you can register using a paper form
10. You have changed your name YES you can update your name

NOTE FOR TUTORS: There are forms to fill in to suit these cases – all information can be found at your local authority. Registering to vote does NOT give you the right to vote in all elections and referendums. Any changes to the Register must be made 15 days before an election or referendum

Worksheet gap fill

Discuss the rules about voting in Ireland.

Then fill in the missing words

online	update	register	not	homelessness
elections	post	local	European	all

1. If you want to vote, you must be on the electoral _____ .
2. You can register to vote using a paper form or _____ .
3. If you have moved, you must _____ your address on the Register.
4. If you do not have an address because of _____, you can register to vote.
5. Your date of birth and PPSN will _____ be public on the Register.
6. Irish citizens can vote in _____ elections and referendums.
7. EU citizens living in Ireland can vote in _____ and local elections.
8. UK citizens living in Ireland can vote in Dáil and local _____ .
9. Everyone else can vote only in _____ elections.
10. Some people can vote by _____ if they cannot get to the polling station due to illness or disability.

Worksheet 1: Filling in a form – Register of Electors – Guide for Tutors

What you need: Download and print the accessible 'Register to vote or update details' form EFR1 and the accessible 'Register to vote or update details for people who have no address ' form EFR2 from Check the Register https://checktheregister.ie/en-IE/

Guide for tutors

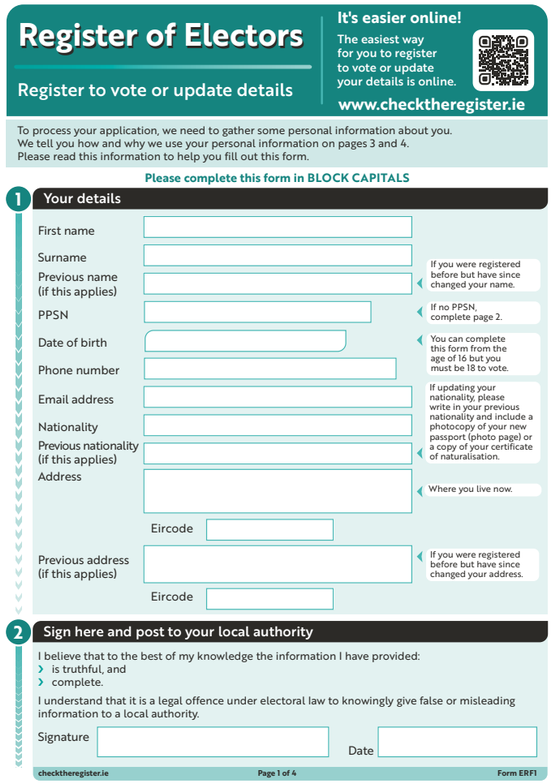
- Ask learners to bring their PPSN (if they have one) and their address to the class before filling in the form.
- See page 2 of the form for the procedure if the learner does not have a PPSN.
- Ask learners to practice on a copy of the form so that if they make a mistake they can start again.
- Where there are boxes (PPSN, DOB, Phone number) encourage learners to write one digit in each box
- Note the format for date of birth DD/MM/YYYY and practise this with learners
- Learners do not have to put in an email address – the email address is for purely transactional purposes –if an email address is given, it will just be used to confirm that the details have been registered.
- Nationality is important because a person's nationality determines which elections a person can vote in – see page 3 of the form. If the learner's nationality has changed, then a copy of the passport/ naturalisation must be sent in with the form (this cannot be done online).
- If learners are concerned about how the information might be used, the explanation is on page 3 of the form.
- You can access the paper forms from your local authority or you can download and print them. The forms are the same for all local authorities in Ireland.
- It is a good idea to read the forms thoroughly before using them with a group so that you can answer questions which might arise. If you have any further questions, you can contact the Franchise Officer in your local authority.

Worksheet 1: Filling in a form – Register of Electors

- Fill out the Register of Electors form with YOUR details. The form looks like the picture on this page.
- Write all words in CAPITAL LETTERS, but sign your name in the usual way. This is to make the information very clear and easy for a person or a computer to read.
- Here are all the capital letters to remind you.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

- For your date of birth and the date of the form, use numbers only. Write one number in each box.
  - 21st May 1982 will be 21/05/1982
- If you do not know your Eircode, ask for help. It is important to know your Eircode.
- Ask for help if you have any questions.



Register of Electors

Register to vote or update details

It's easier online!

The easiest way for you to register to vote or update your details is online.

www.checktheregister.ie

To process your application, we need to gather some personal information about you.
We tell you how and why we use your personal information on pages 3 and 4.
Please read this information to help you fill out this form.

Please complete this form in BLOCK CAPITALS

1 Your details

First name
Surname
Previous name (if this applies) — If you were registered before but have since changed your name.
PPSN — If no PPSN, complete page 2.
Date of birth — You can complete this form from the age of 16 but you must be 18 to vote.
Phone number
Email address
Nationality — If updating your nationality, please write in your previous nationality and include a photocopy of your new passport (photo page) or a copy of your certificate of naturalisation.
Previous nationality (if this applies)
Address — Where you live now.
Eircode
Previous address (if this applies) — If you were registered before but have since changed your address.
Eircode

2 Sign here and post to your local authority

I believe that to the best of my knowledge the information I have provided:
› is truthful, and
› complete.

I understand that it is a legal offence under electoral law to knowingly give false or misleading information to a local authority.

Signature
Date

checktheregister.ie Page 1 of 4 Form ERF1

3.9 What happens before an election?

- You will see posters of candidates and you will get leaflets
- Candidates call to peoples' houses to look for votes and listen to what people have to say. This is called canvassing
- Political parties list what they would like to do if they are elected – this is called a manifesto
- Independents are people who want to be elected, but they are not part of any political party
- A polling card will be sent to the address that is on the Register of Electors for you. If you change your address, you need to update the Register with your new address at least 15 days BEFORE an election

3.10 Where can I vote in person?

- You can **vote in person** at your local polling station
- EVERYONE who has registered their correct address will receive a card in the post
- The polling card will tell you where to go to vote
- Usually it is in a local school or GAA hall near where you live

3.11 What if the polling station might not be accessible to me?

- If you are a wheelchair user or if you have other challenges when voting, you must make your needs known in writing to your local authority - at least a week before polling. Email contacts are on checktheregister.ie

- Explain why you cannot gain access to the local polling station shown on your polling card. Your local authority will help you to choose a suitable alternative station. If possible, you should suggest an alternative polling station which is both accessible and convenient for you.
- You will then receive written authorization enabling you to vote at another polling station in the same constituency, normally the polling station suggested by you.
- You take this authorization with you when you go to vote at that station (remember to bring evidence of identity as well).
- For full details see the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage www.gov.ie/en/publication/1b3dc-information-for-voters-with-disabilities/

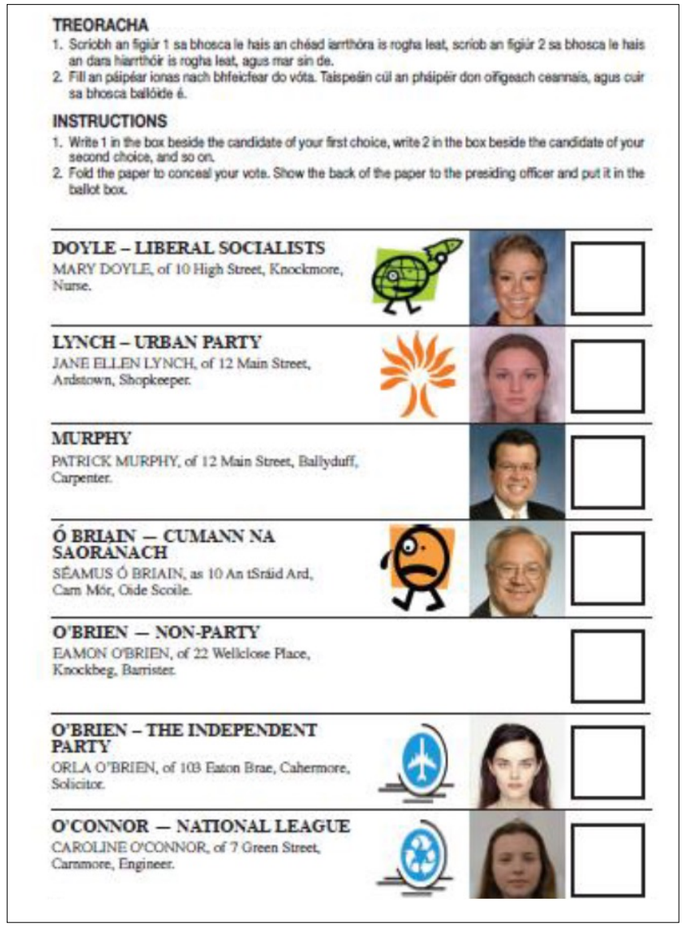
3.12 Can I vote by post?

- You can register to **vote by post** if:
  - You are not able to get to the polling station because you have a disability
  - You are not able to get to the polling station because you are long term sick
  - You are working or studying in a different part of Ireland from where you have registered to vote

3.13 Sample ballot paper

ACTIVITY

- Talk about the layout of a ballot paper.
- What can you see on the ballot paper?
- What helps you to understand who you are voting for?
- Discuss and show emblems for all political parties.
- What about independents?
- Use this sample ballot paper to practise putting numbers against the candidates.



TREORACHA

1. Scríobh an figiúr 1 sa bhosca le hais an chéad iarrthóra is rogha leat, scríob an figiúr 2 sa bhosca le hais an dara hiarrthóir is rogha leat, agus mar sin de.
2. Fill an páipéar ionas nach bhfeicfear do vóta. Taispeáin cúl an pháipéir don oifigeach ceannais, agus cuir sa bhosca ballóide é.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Write 1 in the box beside the candidate of your first choice, write 2 in the box beside the candidate of your second choice, and so on.
2. Fold the paper to conceal your vote. Show the back of the paper to the presiding officer and put it in the ballot box.

DOYLE – LIBERAL SOCIALISTS
MARY DOYLE, of 10 High Street, Knockmore, Nurse.

LYNCH – URBAN PARTY
JANE ELLEN LYNCH, of 12 Main Street, Ardstown, Shopkeeper.

MURPHY
PATRICK MURPHY, of 12 Main Street, Ballyduff, Carpenter.

Ó BRIAIN — CUMANN NA SAORANACH
SÉAMUS Ó BRIAIN, as 10 An tSráid Ard, Carn Mór, Oide Scoile.

O'BRIEN — NON-PARTY
EAMON O'BRIEN, of 22 Wellclose Place, Knockbeg, Barrister.

O'BRIEN – THE INDEPENDENT PARTY
ORLA O'BRIEN, of 103 Eaton Brae, Cahermore, Solicitor.

O'CONNOR — NATIONAL LEAGUE
CAROLINE O'CONNOR, of 7 Green Street, Carnmore, Engineer.

Credit: inclusionireland.ie/

3.14 What do I need to take to the polling station with me?

- Take your polling card with you. Your polling card will tell you where your polling station is and what time it is open.
- You **must** bring photo identification with you **even if** you have a polling card. Your ID must match the name you have put on the register. You can use any ONE of these:
  - A Public Services Card/ A travel document (it must have a photograph)
  - A passport or passport card/ A driving licence
  - A workplace identity card or a student identity card (it must have a photograph)

- If you do not have any of the documents listed above, you can use any ONE of these, along with evidence of your address in the constituency:
  - A bank or credit union account book with your name and address in the constituency
  - A cheque book or debit card; A credit card: A birth or marriage certificate

3.15 Where do I vote?

- When you get to the polling station, you will get a ballot paper
- You then go to vote in a special voting booth
- Polling stations must make available a table and/or chair at which people can vote if that is more convenient
- If you have sight problems or difficulty reading, you can get a companion to help mark the ballot paper. Your companion cannot tell you who to vote for – they can only help you read your ballot and write down your choice
- If you are visually impaired and want to vote by yourself, a tactile ballot paper template is available in each polling station

3.16 What do I put on the ballot paper in an election?

- The names of the candidates will be listed (in alphabetical order) on the ballot paper next to their picture, the name of their party (if they belong to a political party) and their party emblem (in some cases)
- You put number 1 for your first choice. You can vote for only one candidate if you want to
- If you want to vote for more than one candidate, you put the numbers 1,2,3,4 etc. in the boxes beside their names
- **You should not tick or mark the box with an X.**
- You fold your ballot paper and put it into the ballot box
- If you make a mistake on your ballot paper, you can ask for another ballot paper. This is at the discretion of the Returning Officer. If you have already posted your ballot in the ballot box, the Returning Officer cannot give you another ballot paper.
- *From Citizen's Information and Inclusion Ireland*

Take care! spoilt ballot papers cannot be counted

DO NOT	DO
Leave the ballot paper blank	**Write the numbers clearly so they can be understood**
Use a tick or a cross – you must only use numbers in any election (NOTE: you use an X only in a referendum)	**Use the ballot paper you are given by the people in the polling station**
Write your name on the ballot paper	**Use numbers in order 1,2,3, etc. (do not write the same number next to 2 different candidates)**

IF YOU deliberately spoiled your paper as a protest, it will not be counted

Adapted from Citizen's Information and Inclusion Ireland

3.17 Proportional representation in practice

GUIDE FOR TUTORS

- The names of candidates appear in alphabetical order on the ballot paper, along with their photographs and their party emblem (if they wish).
- You vote by writing 1 opposite your first choice candidate, 2 opposite your second choice, 3 opposite your third choice and so on. You can stop after 1 or you can continue to give a preferential vote to as many candidates on the ballot paper as you wish. You cannot give the same number to more than one candidate.
- When you vote with more than one preference, you are instructing the *Returning Officer* (the person responsible for the counting of votes) that if your preferred candidate is eliminated, or elected with a surplus of votes, you want your vote to be transferred to your second choice candidate.
- Proportional Representation is used in all elections in Ireland – local, general, European and Presidential elections. See below for video explainers.
- See the Citizen's Information website for more information www.citizensinformation.ie/en/

3.18 How are votes counted in elections?

- When you vote in any election in Ireland, you are asked to give your vote in order of preference. This is because Ireland uses an electoral system called *proportional representation with a single transferrable vote* (PR–STV, or PR for short).
- This means that **EVERY VOTE COUNTS**.
- The PR-STV system is very clearly explained on the Citizens Information website www.citizensinformation.ie/en/
- Tutors can use a video explainer for PR-STV. *There is a three minute visual explainer using children made by RTÉ: it clearly explains PR-STV*
- *There is a visual explainer made on See Her Elected* www.seeherelected.ie/videos/ how the Proportional Representation Single Transferable Voting system works in Ireland.

3.19 Voting in a referendum

- In a referendum, you do not vote for people, but you vote 'YES' or 'NO' to a change in the constitution
- When you vote in a referendum you do NOT use numbers
  - **You put an X in the box by the word 'YES' if you agree with the change**
  - **You put an X in the box by the word 'NO' if you don't agree with the change**
- You vote in a polling booth in a polling station
- A tactile ballot paper template is available in each polling station for people who are visually impaired
- The referendum will only change the constitution if more than half (50%) of the people voting say 'YES'

3.20 Sample referendum ballot paper - activity

An bhfuil tú ag toiliú leis an togra chun an Bunreacht a leasú atá sa Bhille thíosluaite?
Do you approve of the proposal to amend the Constitution contained in the undermentioned Bill

[Details will be here]

Ná cuir marc **ach san aon chearnóg amháin**
Place a mark in **one square only**

Má thoilíonn tú, cuir X sa cheamóg seo ..... If you **approve**, mark X in this square		**Tá** **Yes**
Mura dtoilíonn tú, cuir X sa cheamóg seo ..... If you do **not approve**, mark X in this square		**Níl** **No**

From inclusionireland.ie

ACTIVITY

- Discuss the kind of issues which are voted on in referendums
- Discuss the current issue if there is a referendum soon
- The Electoral Commission has to explain the referendum to everyone in an independent and impartial way. There will be information on TV, radio and other electronic media see www.electoralcommission.ie
- Talk about the layout of a ballot paper for a referendum
- What can you see on the ballot paper?
- How is it different from a ballot paper for an election?
- Use this sample ballot paper to practise putting an X for YES or NO

4. Use YOUR VOICE

Why vote? What's the point?

4. Use your voice

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4.1 Aims and objectives

Aim

- To empower more adults to have their say on important issues affecting everyday life and more

Objectives

- Learners will discuss actual problems and possible solutions
- Learners will discuss and decide on actions that could be taken in relation to local or national issues and reflect upon the reasons why they might take part in the democratic process
- Learners will take part in an active citizenship project by choosing an issue and taking action as a group

4.2 Tutor resources

Useful starting points could be

- Watch the video on Why Vote on vote.ie Dublin Adult Learning Centre.
- These videos give a useful history of how people got the vote in Ireland and elsewhere https://www.vote.ie/why/history-of-voting-rights.html
- Watch the video made by She Her Elected (SHE) *'The Streetlamp'* on YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_W3DsKnhieg
- See the videos on the Immigrant Council of Ireland website or on YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWsytT9tmNs in English and a number of different languages
- Tutors can ask learners if they are aware of a local issue which is being discussed in the local area which can focus discussion – local newspapers (online or in print) or phone-in shows can provide content for this- see the *What Matters Locally* activity
- Tutors can use the exit poll from the 2020 general election and subsequent elections to stimulate discussion on what might be important to learners from a national perspective https://www.rte.ie/news/election-2020/2020/0209/1114111-election-exit-poll/ - see *What Matters to You in Ireland Generally* activity
- Be aware that any UK or Irish citizen who registers to vote will automatically be on the jury list. Some people do not want to register/ or they apply to de-register, if they do not want to serve on a jury.

4.3 Why vote?

ACTIVITY - Group discussion of reasons why people vote

- Ask learners to reflect for a minute about voting. What images come to mind? What emotions do they feel? Then facilitate a discussion. The following questions might be helpful to guide the discussion.
- Why do people vote?
- Why do people not vote?
- What are the obstacles?
- What could encourage more people to vote?

4.4 Why vote – some answers?

- ✓ It is your RIGHT to vote
- ✓ Voting gives you a say on important issues that affect YOU
- ✓ Voting gives you an opportunity to be part of decision-making that affects your life
- ✓ Voting gives you the choice to vote for your local and national representatives
- ✓ If YOU don't vote, others will make the decisions for YOU!
- ✓ If YOU don't vote, you won't have a say in healthcare, education, housing and local issues
- ✓ IF YOU don't vote then you won't have a say in global issues like defence and the environment
- ✓ If you want better housing, hospitals, childcare, transport links, better local amenities such as parks and playgrounds, then you can use your vote to make a difference – your local and national governments run all these services

4.5 What matters most to you locally? Are you always complaining about something? Talk to your local councillors and vote!

ACTIVITY – Group discussion about local government

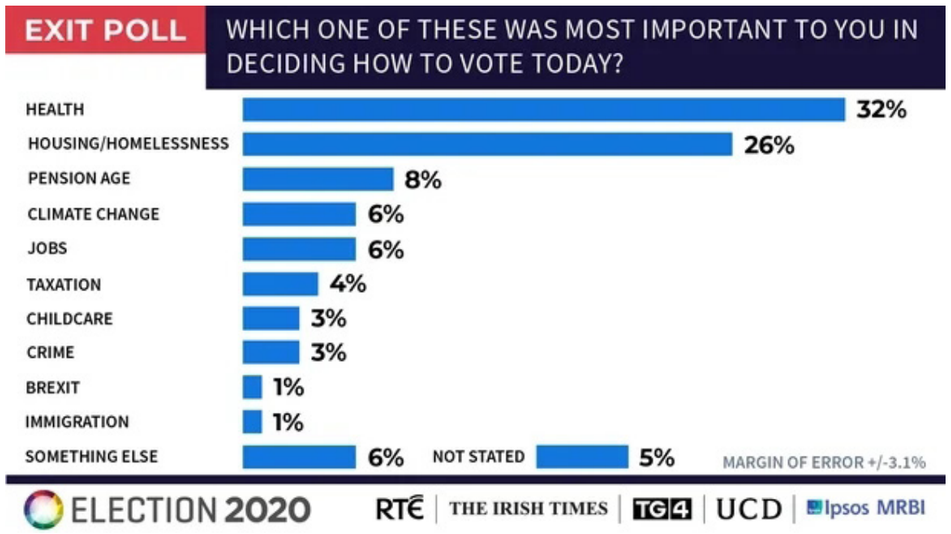
- How can you make your neighbourhood better/ more accessible/ more inclusive?
- What green spaces are there?
- What about housing?
- Is there a playground for children near your house?
- Is there a safe place to cross the road near the schools?
- What is the local bus service like?
- Do you have a local library?
- Are the footpaths in good shape?

4.6 What matters most to you in Ireland generally?

ACTIVITY - Group discussion to find out which issues are most important to the members of the group

- Walking debate – use Post-its or pin cards around the room with issues on them e.g. health, jobs, education, climate change and ask the group to go to stand by the one they think is the most important issue nationally - see list of issues on exit poll for 2020 for ideas www.rte.ie/news/election-2020/2020/0209/1114111-election-exit-poll/
- You could do something similar with local issues. You can ask anyone who wants to explain why they have chosen that issue
- Use flashcards with the issues (and blank ones for other issues which arise in the discussion) and put them in order of importance to the group/ individuals in the group
- Show the list of issues on the exit poll for 2020 – does the group agree?

4.7 Reasons why people vote?



www.rte.ie/news/election-2020/2020/0209/1114111-election-exit-poll/

4.8 What difference can this make to my life?

ACTIVITY - Group discussion

- Use a local issue to show how voting/ action can make a difference

MON, 10 JUL, 2023 - 21:05

'Protect your tenants': Noonan's Rd residents protest at City Hall over living conditions

Members of the recently formed Noonan's Road Residents Committee gathered outside City Hall ahead of tonight's Cork City Council meeting to protest what they say is unsafe accommodation in the area.

Noonan's Road Residents Committee and supporters, Cork, outside Cork City Hall during a protest about sub standard living conditions in their local authority homes, photographed with Councillors and TDs. Picture Denis Minihane.

Credit: www.echolive.ie/corknews/arid-41180767.html

4.9 Active Citizenship Project Tutor reflection – before you start

GUIDE FOR TUTORS

You may want to do an active citizenship project with your group.

- Issues may arise in discussion which would give the group some ideas about what they feel strongly about. It need not be about political change: something which will increase involvement in the local community will work as well.
- Before starting think about:
- How do you feel about facilitating an active citizenship project with your learners?
- What will help you?
- Where can you go for help if you need it?
- Where can you go for information if you need it?

4.10 Taking action?

ACTIVITY
A group/ personal active citizenship project - practical experience of democratic action. Ideas for group activity

- Is there a local issue you would like to take action about – see *Choosing an Issue* for discussion ideas? Has anyone taken action before? Would they like to talk about it?
- Contact local councillors, write letters/ emails and make phone calls
- How to spread the word in your local community
- Go on local radio/ phone in
- Create leaflets
- Talk to your local councillors
- Go to your local TDs' clinics
- Public participation networks

4.11 Choosing an issue

www.vote.ie

Credit: ACTive Citizenship Toolkit CPD pdf 2023 www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk

4.12 Other ways to get involved

- **Citizens' Assembly** citizensassembly.ie
  - This is a group made up of members of the general public, who have been randomly selected and are broadly representative of Irish society
  - They discuss an issue or issues of national importance and make suggestions for change
- **Public participation networks (PPN)** – these help local authorities connect with:
  - Community voluntary groups like sports clubs, cultural societies, Meals on Wheels or Tidy Towns
  - local organisations formed to protect the environment, like An Taisce or Bird Watch Ireland
  - groups representing people who are socially excluded and whose voices are not heard in our society, such as people with disabilities, migrants or Travellers
  - Check on your local city or council website or various organizations' websites for further information
- **See other opportunities for public participation including**
  - Climate Action and Biodiversity plans
  - Local development plans
  - New transport plans such as Bus Connect

5. How Do I CHOOSE who to VOTE For

5. How do I choose who to vote for

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5.1 Aims and objectives

- **Aim: to empower learners to think critically about information**
- **Objective:**
  - **That learners will know where to find out information and be able to evaluate information more critically**
  - **That learners will be able to express their own opinions, consider the opinions of others and be open to different perspectives**

5.2 Tutor resources

- If there is an election soon, then ask learners to bring in any election leaflets which they get at home and collect any you have yourself. Aim to ensure a balance of representation of the different candidates. Check the Electoral Commission website for up to date information videos www.electoralcommission.ie
- You can use these and other local resources such as local print and electronic media to see the issues being raised locally or nationally. Short videos can be used to stimulate discussion
- For referendums, clear explanations of the issues will be available from the Electoral Commission
- On critical literacy, see National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) workbooks *Facts Matter* and *Digital Matters* for ideas and activities – freely available to download or order www.nala.ie/order-resources/
- See also ideas in the Training the Trainer handbook produced by SAOLTA saolta.com/2023/03/24/training-of-trainers/

5.3 How to encourage critical thinking

GUIDE FOR TUTORS

- Refer back to the ground rules in this handbook and review them with the group
- Use discussion to explore issues and ideas. Facilitate learners to express their opinions confidently but respectfully
- Encourage learners to get information from different places and people
- Encourage them to question their own views on different issues, consider other people's perspectives and to be open to changing their mind and learn from others
- Suggest they ask other people what they think and talk about the issues
- Work towards helping learners to distinguish fact from opinion and to recognise information that they can rely on as opposed to information which might be manipulative or incorrect – see free NALA workbooks *Facts Matter* and *Digital Matters* www.nala.ie/order-resources/

5.4 How do I choose who to vote for?

ACTIVITY

- Discuss with the group how they can get information about the election and draw out the following:
  - What do candidates stand for? Some candidates stand for their political party and others are independent.
  - What will candidates do to get votes? Candidates will campaign before an election – they knock on people's doors and give out leaflets.
  - What can you do to find out more? You can go and talk to the candidates: if you contact them, they will meet with you. You can ask them questions about things that are important to you.
  - Where else can you find information? Candidates will also use social media to let you know why they want you to vote for them. Listen to local and national radio and TV and hear their plans.

5.5 Do you agree with their plans?

ACTIVITY

- Learners can look at the leaflets that come in through the door and the information they see on TV, radio and social media.
- All candidates have their plans in a manifesto.
- This says what they intend to do if people vote for them.
- Learners can look at different leaflets, information sources and manifestos and see if they agree with what they say
- Talk about the things that matter to them with people around them. They may not always agree, but it is good to talk.
- Voting is their way to make a difference to the community or country – to housing, health, education, the environment and more. If they want to have a voice, they must use it.

5.6 References

Check the Register checktheregister.ie/en-IE/

Citizens Information www.citizensinformation.ie/en/

The Electoral Commission www.electoralcommission.ie/

Cork City Council Voting Information www.corkcity.ie/en/council-services/services/voting/

Cork County Council Voting Information www.corkcoco.ie/en/council/how-can-i-vote

Inclusion Ireland inclusionireland.ie

Dublin Adult Learning Centre www.vote.ie

Immigrant Council of Ireland www.immigrantcouncil.ie

NASC nascireland.org/campaigns/registering-vote-ireland

Association for Citizenship Teaching Active Citizenship | Association for Citizenship Teaching_ teachingcitizenship.org.uk

Spun Out spunout.ie

See Her Elected (SHE) www.seeherelected.ie

Information for Voters with Disabilities downloadable from the Dept of Housing, Local Government and Heritage www.gov.ie/en/publication/1b3dc-information-for-voters-with-disabilities/

City of Dublin ETB Climate Justice Education in Practice – Tutor Handbook adulteducationcityofdublinetb.ie/climate-justice-education/

National Adult Literacy Workbooks The Big Picture; A Plain English Guide to Citizenship Terms; A Plain English Guide to Political Terms; Facts Matter; Digital Matters www.nala.ie/publications/

SAOLTA Training the Trainer saolta.com/2023/03/24/training-of-trainers/

cetb
Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna Chorcaí
Cork Education and Training Board

For further information visit **www.corketb.ie** and **www.corketb.ie/fet**

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