ELECTION ‘16
Democracy &
the General Election

A module of work for use in Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE)
Conor Harrison
In the course of producing this resource I have drawn on some previously produced CSPE Resources which I was involved in developing, as follows:

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ELECTION 2016

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Election 2016: Democracy and the General Election! As you are aware general elections in Ireland normally come around only every four or five years as determined by Article 16.5 of Bunreacht na hÉireann and the Electoral (Amendment) Act, 1927 and re-confirmed by Section 33 of the Electoral Act, 1992:

**Article 16.5. of Bunreacht na hÉireann, 1937**
The same Dáil Éireann shall not continue for a longer period than seven years from the date of its first meeting: a shorter period may be fixed by law.

**Section 7 of the Electoral (Amendment) Act, 1927**
The maximum duration of the Oireachtas without a dissolution shall be five years reckoned from the date of the first meeting of Dáil Éireann after the last previous dissolution.

The acceptance of five years as the maximum term for any single Dáil was reconfirmed by

**Section 33 of the Electoral Act, 1992**
The same Dáil shall not continue for a longer period than five years from the date of its first meeting.

Consequently, the maximum term for the Dáil is five years from the date it first met following the last general election.

This resource is a compilation of Activities which will help you and your CSPE students to explore different aspects of Democracy in Ireland. Elections provide unique opportunities to explore real democracy in action. Why not seize the opportunity and dip into this resource to utilise some of the activities!

You’ll also find some guidance for organising a Mock General Election Action Project. The final activity is there to help with understanding Proportional Representation (PR) and organising an Election Count, which can be the scary bit of carrying out an election as an Action Project!

Enjoy!

Conor Harrison
Teacher’s Notes
This activity introduces students to the concept of democracy. Through discussion and the use of images related to different aspects of democracy, students will gain a broad understanding of this concept. It is hoped that students will realise that everybody has a part to play in democracy. Every individual has a voice, but in a democracy it is your choice whether or not you use it and how you use it. Students need to become aware that democracy is all around us and not just sitting in Dáil Éireann. Show students some of the images from Election Campaign 2016 and invite them to gather their own!

Activity
For this activity the class will be split in half, so make enough copies of the Democracy Photographs (pages 8 - 13, including Election ‘16 Campaign Photos) so that each group of two or three students in the first half of the class gets a sheet. Stick the cartoon Images of Democracy Poster on the wall for the other half of the class who will be looking at these pictures.

Ask the groups to look at their sheets and to think about how these pictures or photos relate to the concept of democracy. Give them up to 10 minutes for discussion among themselves.

You could pose some questions, such as:
• What do you see in the pictures?
• What is the story of each picture?
• What word(s) do you think of when you look at the pictures?
• Pick a picture that you particularly like and explain to the class what it is about and why you like it.

After the 10 minutes, ask each of the groups to put together what they have talked about — i.e. their definition of democracy. Ask a spokesperson from each group to present the definition.

Now that the class has a general idea that democracy means choosing your leadership/representatives and that you have access to the democratic structures that surround you, you can, for example, visit and speak with your local elected representative. You are given information everyday in the media about decision-making. You can let people know if you are not happy with something. You have a right to a voice, but also a choice as to whether or not you use it. These are all aspects of democracy.

Have a discussion with the students posing the following questions:
• Is everything democratic in a democratic country?
• Should everything be democratic?
• Is there ever a good reason why things should not be democratic?
• Is your home - school - leisure club - sports club - youth club democratic?
• Could they be made more democratic? How?
Election Campaign 2016
IMAGES OF DEMOCRACY

- What about us? We made no contribution to the rainforest.
- Vote.
- Who hears me?
- Vote.
- Voting day.
- News.
- Ryan-Prez.
- Speak out.
- Ballot box.
- Information.
- President.
- I will listen to you.
- It's my dream...
How Politics Affects... Activity

Ask students to think about how politics/government affects them. What about on a daily, weekly, monthly, yearly basis? Some of the students may not see a connection between politics/government and them.

Example:
Think about how politics affects the FOOD you eat

♦ It controls the ‘Sell By’ and ‘Best Before’ dating systems
♦ It sets farming and fishing quotas, which also affect prices
♦ It determines which artificial additives, colourings and preservatives can/can’t be used
♦ It decides how much tax must be paid on imported produce, which affects prices
♦ It sets hygiene standards for food and takeaways

To aid understanding photocopy the four cards on pages 16 and 17 and give a card to a group of 3/4 students. Ask each group of students to think about the issues raised on their particular card. Ask them to consider what other areas of their lives are affected by politics/government not mentioned on these cards.

Ask students to make a poster showing how politics impacts on the lives of young people on a daily basis. They can use the ideas presented in the cards and some more of their own!

This activity has been adapted from educational materials available from the Northern Ireland Assembly Education Service at http://education.niassembly.gov.uk/
How Politics affects ... **where YOU live**

- Keeps the streets clean and free of graffiti
- Ensures that rubbish gets collected and how much of it then gets recycled
- Sets safety standards for your boiler and ensures that the person who fits and repairs it is properly qualified
- Opens and maintains public parks
- Maintains roads and footpaths in your area

How Politics affects ... **YOUR sport**

- Decides what sports facilities are provided
- Legislates to stop hooligans travelling to sports events abroad
- Decides how much support goes to elite athletes competing in international games
- Decides what sports received government funding
- Decides how much National Lottery funding can be spent on sport
How Politics affects ... **how You get about**

- Sets speed limits
- Sets safety standards for public transport
- Sets the amount of tax to be paid on petrol and diesel
- Decides what roads should have bus lanes and cycle tracks
- Decides how much money is put into public transport which affects the times and frequency of buses and trains

How Politics affects ... **YOUR music**

- Licenses music festivals
- Limits how loudly music is played in nightclubs
- Protects the rights of musicians through copyright laws
- Says whether it is legal to download music from the internet
- Prevents illegal raves from happening, and closes them if they do happen
Teacher’s Notes
This activity is about getting students familiar with the leaders of the main political parties in Ireland as well as Government Ministers and their Departments.

The group of Ministers, led by An Taoiseach, is known as the Cabinet. The Irish Constitution (Bunreacht na hÉireann) determines that there can only be 15 Government Ministers, including the Taoiseach.

Ministers change depending on which political party/parties is/are in power. They are appointed by the Taoiseach and are sometimes changed in a cabinet reshuffle.

These activities focus on the 31st Dáil and upon the new Dáil. Very often the names of some Government Departments change to reflect government priorities.

Activity
Photocopy the Photo Quiz of Government Ministers and Political Party Leaders on page 20. Ask students in pairs to do the following:

A) Name the politician
B) Name his/her Political Party
C) Name his/her Government Department, if relevant
D) Name his/her Constituency

The Photo Quiz Answers are provided on page 21.

Photocopy the Government Departments Name Plates on page 22. These Name Plates have the names of the various Departments of the 31st Dáil. In fact one of the Name Places has the name of two Government Departments on it. Can you spot it?

Agriculture, Food and Marine is one Department and Defence is a separate Department. Why are they together? They are together because there are 16 Government Departments and only 15 Government Ministers!

Page 23 is almost blank for students to add in the names of the Government Departments of the 32nd Dáil and the names of the Ministers with responsibility for these Departments.
Brendan Howlin (LAB), Minister for Public Expenditure & Reform [Wexford]

Frances Fitzgerald (FG), Minister for Justice & Equality [Dublin Mid-West]

Michael Noonan (FG), Minister for Finance [Limerick City]

Lucinda Creighton (RENUA), Party Leader [Dublin Bay South]

Enda Kenny (FG), An Taoiseach and Party Leader [Mayo]

Leo Varadkar (FG), Minister for Health [Dublin West]

Alan Kelly (LAB), Minister for the Environment, Community & Local Government [Tipperary]

Jan O’Sullivan (LAB), Minister for the Education and Skills [Limerick City]

Gerry Adams (SF), Party Leader [Louth]

Catherine Murphy [Kildare North], Stephen Donnelly [Wicklow] & Róisín Shortall [Dublin North-West] Party Leaders (SD)

Michéal Martin (FF), Party Leader [Cork South-Central]

Joan Burton (LAB), An Tánaiste & Minister for Social Protection & Party Leader [Dublin West]
Government Departments, 2011 to 2016 - Who is the Minister?

- An Taoiseach
- An Tánaiste & Minister for Social Protection
- Minister for Finance
- Minister for Public Expenditure & Reform
- Minister for Health
- Minister for Foreign Affairs & Trade
- Minister for Justice & Equality
- Minister for Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation
- Minister for Agriculture, Food & Marine & Defence
- Minister for Children & Youth Affairs
- Minister for Environment, Community & Local Government
- Minister for Education & Skills
- Minister for Communications, Energy & Natural Resources
- Minister for Arts, Heritage & Gaeltacht
- Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport
An Taoiseach
The Learner Driver Permit Activity

Photocopy the Learner Driver Permit Vote Cards on pages 26 - 28 and cut them into individual role cards. Distribute these role cards making sure that there are enough Yes votes to pass the motion on the first ballot. This activity is based on a class of 30 students, but can be adapted for any number of students as long as the motion gets passed initially.

The Motion is as follows:

“The age at which a person can apply for a Learner Driver Permit is to be raised from 17 to 21 years of age”.

Ask the students to vote for/against the motion according to their voting role card and then count the votes. The motion is passed.

Ask the students to declare their identity and if and why they voted or not. Once this has been done ask the students to vote again, as themselves, based on their own opinions and see what happens. The chances are that the motion will be rejected if everybody votes!

Reflections: Discuss with the students their thoughts and opinions of both ballots and what they have learned about voting.

Vote Cards: YES 7  NO 5  DON’T VOTE 18

Teacher’s Notes
The aim of this activity is for students to realise just how important it is for them to use their vote at the time of an election/referendum. This activity demonstrates what can happen if a large number of people do not vote. It shows the difference in the result if everybody was to cast their vote.
You vote YES
You vote Yes because you have a lot of friends that you believe are too immature to be driving at 18 years of age

You vote YES
You vote Yes because an 18 year old driver who was speeding injured a friend of yours

You vote YES
You vote Yes because you think a lot of young people are careless drivers

You vote YES
You vote Yes because you think it will reduce the number of deaths on Irish roads

You vote YES
You vote Yes because insurance costs would be cheaper for young people aged 21

You vote YES
You vote Yes because a young driver knocked down and killed a member of your family

You vote YES
You vote Yes because you have a brother aged 16 and he is too mad to be driving for a long time yet!

You vote NO
You vote No because you believe that at 18 people are adults and should have the same rights as other adults

You vote NO
You vote No because it is a denial of your rights not to be allowed to drive at 18 years of age

You vote NO
You vote No because you couldn’t apply for jobs needing a car until the age of 21 years
You vote NO
You vote No because it means that you will have less independence until you reach 21 years of age

You vote NO
You vote No because if this law is passed what’s next?

You do not vote
You don’t vote because you do not think that your one vote will make any difference

You do not vote
You don’t vote because you do not know what the vote is about and you have no interest in finding out about it

You do not vote
You don’t vote because you are too busy on the day of the vote

You do not vote
You don’t vote because you are too tired to go out to vote

You do not vote
You don’t vote because you are meeting up with your friends after class/work

You do not vote
You don’t vote because you have training for the match at the weekend

You do not vote
You don’t vote because your favourite TV programmes are on tonight

You do not vote
You don’t vote because your friend needs help doing a job
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You do not vote</th>
<th>You do not vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You don’t vote because everybody else will vote and they do not need your vote</td>
<td>You don’t vote because you have a job interview the next day and you need to get ready</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You do not vote</td>
<td>You do not vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You don’t vote because it’s lashing rain and you’d rather stay in and not get your hair wet</td>
<td>You don’t vote because you are sick in bed with a dose of the ‘flu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You do not vote</td>
<td>You do not vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You don’t vote because you have an exam tomorrow and have to study</td>
<td>You don’t vote because you had to work overtime and couldn’t get there on time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You do not vote</td>
<td>You do not vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You don’t vote because your car broke down on the way</td>
<td>You don’t vote because your mother is sick and you cannot leave her alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You do not vote</td>
<td>You do not vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You don’t vote because you lost your polling card</td>
<td>You don’t vote because you cannot read and do not want anyone to find out</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACTIVITY 5: ELECTIONS - KEY WORDS

Teacher’s Notes
Through this activity, students are led through the democratic process, step by step, using the story of one girl and her journey to becoming a member of the school’s Student Council. Key words are highlighted in the text, and students will become familiar with how a person can become an elected representative, whether it be on the Student Council or in the national parliament, Dáil Éireann.

Activity

Note: This activity can be done individually, in pairs or in groups.

Photocopy Student Council Elections: Lena’s Story on pages 30 - 31 and Election Steps on page 32.

Give a copy of Student Council Elections: Lena’s Story to each student.

Either read the story aloud with students or allow them to read it themselves or in their groups.

When the students have finished reading and you are happy that they have understood it, distribute the Election Steps handout.

Explain the instructions on the bottom of the page and ask the students to work individually, in pairs or in groups.

When the activity is completed, ask a selection of the students or groups to identify the steps to election.

Follow-Up Activity
Ask the students to pick one of the following characters who has been involved in Lena’s election process and then to write a paragraph about the process from that character’s perspective:
• Ms. Casey
• Mr. Dunne
• Principal
• Lena’s friend
• Another student
Hi, my name is Lena. I am in 2nd year and I want to tell you all about our Student Council Elections.

First of all, we did some work in CSPE about student councils and we learned what they are for and how important they can be in the school.

Two weeks ago, the Principal told us that the teachers would be taking names of people, or NOMINATIONS, for candidates for the student council.

I talked it over with my friends and decided that I would like to be a member of the student council. On the nomination day, one of my friends suggested my name and then my other friend backed this up. The teacher accepted the nomination and gave me a nomination form with my name and the names of my two friends — the first who PROPOSED me and the other who SECONDED me. In our school, you have to go to the Year Head to get the nomination form signed. If he didn’t sign it, then I couldn’t go forward as a candidate.

When I went to Mr. Dunne (my Year Head) to ask him to sign the form, he was quite happy to do it. He asked me why I wanted to be on the student council and I told him it was because students had lots of ideas and suggestions to make and this was a way that these could be heard. When I was finished talking to him, I handed in my completed nomination form to the Student Council Liaison teacher, Ms. Casey.

The following day, a list of candidates was put up on the noticeboard. There were eight people looking to be elected in my year, but only three could get a place on the student council.

I now had to think about how I was going to get the students to vote for me. The ELECTION was only a week away. My friends helped me to make some election posters, saying Vote for Me Lena. YOUR Voice is MY Voice on the Student Council. I had to put together a MANIFESTO saying what I would do for my class on the student council if I got elected. In the manifesto, I promised to work hard for the students and that I would keep them informed of everything I was doing. I also told them I would be looking
for their ideas to bring to the meetings.

I **CANVASSED** as many people as I could from my year to try and get them to vote for me (this just means I talked to people and tried to persuade them that I was the best person for the job). Some people said they would and others were honest and said they were supporting one of the other candidates.

On the day of the election, one of the 2nd-year classrooms was being used as a **POLLING STATION**. They had set up three **POLLING BOOTHS** in the station so that people could vote in private — a **SECRET BALLOT**. Ms. Casey had asked a friend of hers to come in for the day to act as the **PRESIDING OFFICER**, to make sure that the election was run fairly and properly.

My class queued up at the **REGISTRATION DESK**. The students there had a list of names and as you went up, they crossed off your name and handed you a **BALLOT PAPER**. This is to make sure that you don’t vote more than once.

This was the first time I had seen the ballot papers and there was my name on it. I went behind one of the screens that made the polling booth and I put a number 1 in the box beside my name. I was going to fold it up and put it in the **BALLOT BOX** when I started thinking about who would I like to get elected if I didn’t. I looked down through the list of candidates and decided who I would like (after me, of course) and I gave them a number 2, and then, just in case that didn’t work out, I put a number 3 beside another person I thought would be good. This type of voting is called **PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION**, or **PR**, and means that you have some chance of having voted for the people who get elected.

When all of the classes had voted, the ballot boxes were opened and the **VOTES** counted. The counters had found out first how many people had voted so that a **QUOTA** could be worked out — this is the smallest number of votes that you need to get elected. Once the quota was set, they could now count how many votes each candidate got.

As I was a candidate, I was allowed to watch the count. It was very exciting and I didn’t know right up to the last count whether I had been elected or not.

I was very lucky — I was the second candidate elected, which means that I will now be a member of the Student Council.
In the boxes above, place Key Words or symbols to show Lena’s step-by-step journey to being elected to the Student Council. All of the words in the cloud are key words to help us talk about democracy. Lena being elected to the Student Council was democracy in action.

1. For all of the words in the cloud above, write into your copy what each word means. You can use Lena’s story on pages 30 - 31 to help you.

   or

2. Draw a symbol or a picture into your copy to match each of the words in the cloud.
Activity

1. As a group decide on an issue. You have five minutes to make your decision. Your issue can be:

- Something that makes you very angry
- Something that you think is unfair
- Something you want to change
- Something that should be changed
- Something you feel strongly about

This issue could be something you have experienced yourself, it could be something to do with school, it could be something in your community or town where you live, an issue surrounding fairness and equality or an issue that has been raised in the previous classes, it can be anything you want...

2. Once you have decided on your issue you are going to start a political party with people who also feel strongly about this issue. You have ten minutes in your group to decide the name of your political party and come up with a logo. Fill it in on the Party Symbols/Logos Worksheet. Nominate a party leader within your group. You also need to come up with some party principles and a slogan. Your party principles will say who can join, have you a policy on equality, how do you make decisions? Make up a slogan that suits your policy principles.
These are the names and logos/symbols of some of the main political parties in Ireland. There are other parties too, such as The Anti-Austerity Alliance - People Before Profit, The Christian Solidarity Party, The Communist Party of Ireland, Direct Democracy Ireland/National Citizens’ Movement, The People’s Convention, United Ireland, Fís Nua, Irish Democratic Party, The Catholic Democrats, Republican Sinn Féin, The Socialist Worker Party, The Workers Party, Workers and Unemployed Action Group, etc. See what others you can find!

Use the box below to write the name of your party with the symbol you would use. Explain what your symbol means.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party Logo/Symbol</th>
<th>We chose this logo/symbol because:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>
Activity continued

3. On the Party Manifesto Worksheet you now must write down three points about your issue and why you have chosen it. Why should people support your party?

4. Now that you have a party name and logo and an issue that your party feels strongly about how do you campaign to get publicity for your issue and to try and get people to vote for you so that you will be able to do something about your issue once elected? What are your campaign strategies?

5. How would you present yourself during this campaign remembering that people will be voting for YOU and your ISSUE? What do you want people to see when they look at you? What is your image?

When students have completed the exercise ask the party leaders to stick their work up on the wall, present it to the class and talk through what they have done.

Homework / Follow-up Activities

1. Ask the students to find out the names of the leaders and deputy leaders of the parties named.

2. Ask the students to collect photographs of the party leaders.

3. Ask the students to collect election literature coming through their letterboxes.

4. Ask students to collect newspaper/social media articles about the election campaign.
Party Manifesto Worksheet

Name of Party

__________________________

Party Slogan

______________________________

Issue

__________________________

Three Points about this Issue

1. ________________________________________________________________

2. ________________________________________________________________

3. ________________________________________________________________

Campaign Strategies

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

Presentation as a Candidate

__________________________

__________________________
Activity

This activity can be done in pairs or in larger groups. Photocopy The Steps in the Voting Process Cards on page 38 enough for each group and cut into the individual sections. Give each group a set of mixed up Steps Cards and ask them to sort them into the right order. When students have completed the task correct and discuss. The correct order is D, F, E, G, H, A, B and C.

Teacher’s Notes
This activity introduces students to many of the terms used to describe the different items they need to be familiar with in order to vote:

- Register of Electors
- Polling Station
- Polling Card
- Presiding Officer
- Ballot Paper
- Secret Ballot
- Ballot Box
- Candidates
- Returning Officer

You may wish to show your students what a Polling Card looks like!

**POLLOING INFORMATION CARD - CÁRTA VÓTAÍOCHTA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YOU VOTE AT:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLLING DAY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THIS CARD IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY: IT IS NOT AN IDENTITY CARD. BE SURE TO BRING EVIDENCE OF IDENTITY WHEN YOU GO TO VOTE - SEE BACK OF THIS CARD.
When you get to the Polling Station, before you can vote you must check in with the Presiding Officer and show your Polling Card. This person will cross your name off a list taken from the Register of Electors and give you a ticket. This is to make sure everybody only votes once!

You take your Ballot Paper to a desk behind a screen so that you can vote in private. This is called a Secret Ballot because nobody knows whom you have chosen to vote for.

On the ballot paper will be a list of all the Candidates with a photograph of each. You pick the person you like best write the number 1 in the boxed space beside their name and details. Then you pick the person you like second and give your number 2 vote to him/her and continue like that until you have voted for all of the candidates that you wanted, in order of preference.

When you have finished picking the people you want to vote for, fold your ballot paper and put it into the Ballot Box, which will be beside the Presiding Officer.

Your name must be on the Register of Electors if you want to have a vote in an Election or Referendum. Every year people from the local authority call to houses to check the names and addresses of people over 18 years living in a house. The list of all of these names and addresses is called the Register of Electors – in other words the people who are entitled to vote. You can check this out at www.checktheregister.ie.

On the day of the election or referendum you will go to a Polling Station to cast your vote. Usually these are primary schools or local halls, which have been set up for the day of the elections.

People with their names on the Register of Electors will receive a Polling Card in the post a short time before the day of the election/referendum. This card will have your name and address and the name of the place where you must go to cast your vote.

At the end of Polling Day all the ballot boxes will be brought to a Central Count Centre in your area. The boxes will be opened, the ballot papers unfolded and counted one by one. Results will be known later that night or the following day. The results will be announced by the Returning Officer.
Activity

Give the students the following parties and figures (on the board or call it out) and ask them to answer the questions. Explain to students that this is an example of a Simple Majority or First Past the Post voting system. Using this system the White Party won this election by a small margin. (This system is used in the U.K. and U.S.A.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White Party</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Party</td>
<td>999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow Party</td>
<td>998</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What proportion of the votes did the White Party get?
What proportion of the votes did the losing parties combined get?
Does the winning party represent the voters?

Teacher’s Notes

In Ireland we use a system called Proportional Representation with a Single Transferable Vote. For the voter this means choosing candidates from 1 to whatever number of candidates there are. It is the voter’s choice as to how this vote is used.

For counting purposes, however, this is slightly more complicated. Each candidate has to reach a certain amount of votes before being elected – this is called the Quota. If someone reaches the quota on the first count then that person is elected and those votes are recounted and the second preferences redistributed to the other candidates as a percentage of the surplus (votes over the quota.) When the people with the lowest votes are eliminated their second preference votes are counted and redistributed as well. After the first count each subsequent count looks at second preference votes, then third preference votes and so on until elected candidates have filled all of the available number of seats.

How to work out the Quota

Quota = (Valid Poll ÷ {Number of Seats + 1}) + 1

Total Poll = 33,333
Invalid Ballot Papers = 8
Total Valid Poll = 33,325
Number of Seats = 4

Quota = (33,325 ÷ {4 + 1}) + 1
Quota = 6,666
Activity

Divide the students into groups of three or four. Photocopy The Ballot Papers.

- Ask the students to examine the way each person has voted and ask them to suggest reasons why they have voted in this manner. Take feedback from students.

- Ask students to think of other combinations of voting patterns based on these cards, which would suggest that people are voting in a particular manner for a particular reason.

The point of the exercise is to show students that every vote counts and that by doing voting in this way Louise, Liam and Linda are using and making their Single Transferable Vote work for them. In Ireland the majority of people who vote succeed in electing their first or second choice candidate – your vote means your choice of representative.

Teacher’s Notes

**Louise’s** preference is voting for a Fine Gael/Labour Party government. She also likes the Independent Candidates! She definitely does not want The Fianna Fáil, The Green Party, or Sinn Féin in government, as she gives no vote to them at all!

**Liam’s** preference is for the new parties - Social Democrats and Renua Ireland followed by Independents. He does not wish his vote to transfer to any other party or individual, which might help someone from another party to get elected.

**Linda** does not vote for any particular party. In fact she would appear to have no party preference at all. It seems from her selection that her first choice candidates were all women stating that her desire was to see at least one of them elected and involved in decision-making processes. She possibly feels that women would better represent her, so she voted for individual women that she liked and did not care about their party.
### Louise’s Ballot Paper

1. **BUTLER - SOCIAL DEMOCRATS**  
   (Mary Butler of The Meadows, Bandon, Co. Cork; Company Director)
2. **DELANEY - LABOUR**  
   (Ned Delaney of Wheatfield House, Mallow, Co. Cork; Farmer)
3. **FLEMING - FIANNA FÁIL**  
   (John Fleming of Riverside Estate, Fermoy, Co. Cork; Public Representative)
4. **GORDON - NON-PARTY**  
   (Katie Gordon of The Rise, Blackrock, Co. Cork; Shopkeeper)
5. **GRACE - FINE GAEL**  
   (Miriam Grace of Muskerry Estate, Ballincollig, Co. Cork; Accountant)
6. **KEATING - FINE GAEL**  
   (Pamela Keating of Oak Road, Curraheen, Co. Cork; Doctor)
7. **MAUGHAN - SÍN FÉIN**  
   (Charlie Maughan of Patrick Street, Cork; Bank Official)
8. **PHELAN - RENUA**  
   (Joe Phelan of Chestnut Park, Bandon, Co. Cork; Company Director)
9. **O’KELLY - NON-PARTY**  
   (Ross O’Kelly of Seaview, Kinsale, Co. Cork; Construction Worker)
10. **SAVAGE - GREEN PARTY**  
    (Diane Savage of Model Farm Road, Bishopstown, Co. Cork; Interior Designer)

### Liam’s Ballot Paper

1. **BUTLER - SOCIAL DEMOCRATS**  
   (Mary Butler of The Meadows, Bandon, Co. Cork; Company Director)
2. **DELANEY - LABOUR**  
   (Ned Delaney of Wheatfield House, Mallow, Co. Cork; Farmer)
3. **FLEMING - FIANNA FÁIL**  
   (John Fleming of Riverside Estate, Fermoy, Co. Cork; Public Representative)
4. **GORDON - NON-PARTY**  
   (Katie Gordon of The Rise, Blackrock, Co. Cork; Shopkeeper)
5. **GRACE - FINE GAEL**  
   (Miriam Grace of Muskerry Estate, Ballincollig, Co. Cork; Accountant)
6. **KEATING - FINE GAEL**  
   (Pamela Keating of Oak Road, Curraheen, Co. Cork; Doctor)
7. **MAUGHAN - SÍN FÉIN**  
   (Charlie Maughan of Patrick Street, Cork; Bank Official)
8. **PHELAN - RENUA**  
   (Joe Phelan of Chestnut Park, Bandon, Co. Cork; Company Director)
9. **O’KELLY - NON-PARTY**  
   (Ross O’Kelly of Seaview, Kinsale, Co. Cork; Construction Worker)
10. **SAVAGE - GREEN PARTY**  
    (Diane Savage of Model Farm Road, Bishopstown, Co. Cork; Interior Designer)

### Linda’s Ballot Paper

1. **BUTLER - SOCIAL DEMOCRATS**  
   (Mary Butler of The Meadows, Bandon, Co. Cork; Company Director)
2. **DELANEY - LABOUR**  
   (Ned Delaney of Wheatfield House, Mallow, Co. Cork; Farmer)
3. **FLEMING - FIANNA FÁIL**  
   (John Fleming of Riverside Estate, Fermoy, Co. Cork; Public Representative)
4. **GORDON - NON-PARTY**  
   (Katie Gordon of The Rise, Blackrock, Co. Cork; Shopkeeper)
5. **GRACE - FINE GAEL**  
   (Miriam Grace of Muskerry Estate, Ballincollig, Co. Cork; Accountant)
6. **KEATING - FINE GAEL**  
   (Pamela Keating of Oak Road, Curraheen, Co. Cork; Doctor)
7. **MAUGHAN - SÍN FÉIN**  
   (Charlie Maughan of Patrick Street, Cork; Bank Official)
8. **PHELAN - RENUA**  
   (Joe Phelan of Chestnut Park, Bandon, Co. Cork; Company Director)
9. **O’KELLY - NON-PARTY**  
   (Ross O’Kelly of Seaview, Kinsale, Co. Cork; Construction Worker)
10. **SAVAGE - GREEN PARTY**  
    (Diane Savage of Model Farm Road, Bishopstown, Co. Cork; Interior Designer)
Teacher’s Notes
This activity explores the whole notion of representation. Most students will be familiar with Abraham Lincoln’s definition of Democracy, which is

‘Government of the people, by the people, for the people’

But, what does this mean in terms of representation? Our government makes decisions, which affect everybody in the country, but what if there was a large group of ‘Green Martians’ living here and there were no ‘Green Martians’ in the Dáil? Who speaks for them, says what their needs are, disagrees with something which is not good for them, or in other words - Who represents them, if there are no ‘Green Martians’ in the Dáil?

Our country and society is made up of many groups who are entitled to representation in decision-making. The following activity highlights the current situation in Ireland regarding representation. The activity aims to make students aware of, and thinking about, what representation means to them.

Who Represents Who? Activity

Photocopy the Who Represents Who? Cards and cut them into individual cards. Divide the students into five groups and give each group a different card. Ask the students to work out the percentages and figures for their particular case study. They may need a calculator for this exercise - one per group. This is a real numeracy opportunity! Please note that in order to get accurate figures students should use the % button on the calculator when working out the figures.

Formula:

\[
\text{Group Number } \div \text{ Total Population % button } = \text{ Percentage of Population}
\]

\[
166 \times \text{ Figure for Percentage of Population % button } = \text{ Ideal number of TDs to represent the particular group}
\]

Example:

(a) To find out what percentage of the Population are men

\[
2,272,699 \div 4,588,252 = 49.5\%
\]

(b) To find out how many male TDs would reflect true representation in the Dáil

\[
166 \times 49.5\% = 82
\]

When all the figures have been worked out discuss these questions with students Who is over represented? Who is under represented? Who is not represented at all?
Who Represents Who? - Student Cards

Card 1: Women in Ireland
The population of Ireland, according to Census 2011, is 4,588,252.

There are 2,315,553 women living in Ireland. At present 27 of the 166 TDs in Dáil Éireann are women.

(a) What percentage of the population in Ireland is made up of women?
(b) How many female TDs should we have to represent them?

Card 1: Men in Ireland
The population of Ireland, according to Census 2011, is 4,588,252.

There are 2,272,699 men living in Ireland. At present 139 of the 166 TDs in Dáil Éireann are men.

(a) What percentage of the population in Ireland is made up of men?
(b) How many male TDs should we have to represent them?

Card 1: The Travelling Community
The population of Ireland, according to Census 2011, is 4,588,252.

There are 29,573 members of the Travelling Community living in Ireland (14,625 men and 14,948 women). At present none of the 166 TDs in Dáil Éireann are from the Travelling Community.

(a) What percentage of the population in Ireland is made up of Travellers?
(b) How many TDs should we have to represent them?

Card 4: Young People (Under 19 Years)
The population of Ireland, according to Census 2011, is 4,588,252.

There are 1,251,855 Under 19s living in Ireland (641,094 males and 610,761 females). At present none of the 166 TDs in Dáil Éireann are Under 19. You have to be over 21 years of age to become a TD!

(a) What percentage of the population in Ireland is Under 19?
(b) How many TDs aged Under 19 should we have to represent them?

Card 5: Older People (Over 65 Years)
The population of Ireland, according to Census 2011, is 4,588,252.

There are 524,134 Over 65s living in Ireland (236,574 males and 287,560 females). At present 32 of the 166 TDs in Dáil Éireann are Over 65 (as of Feb 2016).

(a) What percentage of the population in Ireland is Over 65?
(b) How many TDs aged Over 65 should we have to represent them?
Who Represents Who? - Answers

Card 1: Women in Ireland
(a) What percentage of the population in Ireland is made up of women?
   \[ \frac{2,315,553}{4,588,252} = 50.5\% \]
(b) How many female TDs should we have to represent them?
   \[ 166 \times 50.5\% = 84 \]

There are 27 female TDs in the 31st Dáil!
What are the figures like for the 32nd Dáil?

Remember there will only be 158 TDs in the new parliament.

Card 1: Men in Ireland
(a) What percentage of the population in Ireland is made up of men?
   \[ \frac{2,272,699}{4,588,252} = 49.5\% \]
(b) How many male TDs should we have to represent them?
   \[ 166 \times 49.5\% = 82 \]

There are 139 male TDs in the 31st Dáil!
What are the figures like for the 32nd Dáil?

Remember there will only be 158 TDs in the new parliament.

Card 1: The Travelling Community
(a) What percentage of the population in Ireland is made up of Travellers?
   \[ \frac{29,573}{4,588,252} = 0.6\% \]
(b) How many TDs should we have to represent them?
   \[ 166 \times 0.6\% = 1 \]

There are no Traveller TDs in the 31st Dáil!
What are the figures like for the 32nd Dáil?

Remember there will only be 158 TDs in the new parliament.

Card 4: Young People (Under 19 Years)
(a) What percentage of the population in Ireland is Under 19?
   \[ \frac{1,251,855}{4,588,252} = 27.3\% \]
(b) How many TDs aged Under 19 should we have to represent them?
   \[ 166 \times 27.3\% = 45 \]

There are no Under 19 TDs in the 31st Dáil!
How many males & females should there be?
What are the figures like for the 32nd Dáil?

Remember there will only be 158 TDs in the new parliament.

Card 5: Older People (Over 65 Years)
(a) What percentage of the population in Ireland is Over 65?
   \[ \frac{524,134}{4,588,252} = 11\% \]
(b) How many TDs aged Over 65 should we have to represent them?
   \[ 166 \times 11\% = 18 \]

There are 32 TDs Over 65 in the 31st Dáil!
How many males and females should there be?
What are the figures like for the 32nd Dáil?

Remember there will only be 158 TDs in the new parliament.
Teacher’s Notes
Having completed the previous activity students may be somewhat concerned that they have no representation in the Dáil and are never likely to have due to the age restriction on elected members of the Dáil having to be over 21 years of age. However, in recent years there have been more opportunities for students/young people to voice their opinions regarding any matters that affect them.

Student Councils in schools provide opportunities for students to have a say in school life. Other opportunities arise through Comhairle na nÓg and Dáil na nÓg.

There is now a Minister with responsibility for Children and Young People who champions the issues relating to young people at the Cabinet table. Who is the Minister with responsibility for Children and Young People?

For Card 4 and Card 5 you could encourage your students to do some further calculations/analysis, as follows:

Card 4
(i) What percentage of the Irish population is male Under 19 years of age?
   Answer: \( \frac{641,094}{4,588,252} = 14\% \)
(ii) How many male TDs Under 19 years of age would reflect true representation in the Dáil?
    Answer: \( 166 \times 14\% = 23 \)
(iii) What percentage of the Irish population is female Under 19 years of age?
     Answer: \( \frac{610,761}{4,588,252} = 13\% \)
(iv) How many female TDs Under 19 years of age would reflect true representation in the Dáil?
    Answer: \( 166 \times 13\% = 22 \)

Card 5
(i) What percentage of the Irish population is male Over 65 years of age?
   Answer: \( \frac{236,754}{4,588,252} = 5.2\% \)
(ii) How many male TDs Over 65 years of age would reflect true representation in the Dáil?
    Answer: \( 166 \times 5.2\% = 9 \)
(iii) What percentage of the Irish population is female Over 65 years of age?
     Answer: \( \frac{287,560}{4,588,252} = 6.1\% \)
(iv) How many female TDs Under 19 years of age would reflect true representation in the Dáil?
    Answer: \( 166 \times 6.1\% = 10 \)
The ‘Gender’ Election Activities

Photocopy the Women in National Parliaments table on page 49 and the newspaper articles about Gender Quotas on pages 50 to 57 and ask your students to read them and to think about what these sources tell us about Gender Equality and Representation.

Ask you students to answer the following questions:

1) Why do you think so few women have put themselves forward for election?
2) Is there anything that could be changed that might make it more attractive for women to become politicians in Ireland?
3) What do you think of the 30% quota of female candidates rule? Why might someone be in favour of it? Why might someone be against it?
4) Do you think voters should vote according to gender? Why?

Teacher’s Notes

There will be more female candidates standing for election on Friday, 26th February than in any previous General Election. A record number of women will contest the election and when the 32nd Dáil meets on Thursday, 10th March the brown benches of the Dáil Chamber may well have less of the grey and navy suited males sitting upon them.

163 of the 551 declared candidates for Election 2016 are women. So, the number of female candidates has doubled since the last general election. Now, on average, there are 4 women running per constituency. Half of the constituencies (20 of the 40) have 30% or above of female candidates. In Dublin South West there are 8 women running, the highest number in one constituency. Only one constituency in the country, Limerick City, has no female candidates!

In Election 2011 only 15% of candidates (86 of the 566 candidates) were women, and in the end women took 15% of the Dáil seats, rising to 16% and 27 seats after the 2014 by-elections. As a result, according to the Table on page 49 Ireland is ranked 88th of 190 nations in terms of the representation of women in national parliaments.

If true representation, in terms of gender, were to happen, as seen in the previous activity, there should be 80 female TDs and 78 male TDs in Dáil Éireann! We will know on the weekend of 27th - 28th February just how many women and men will be representing us on those brown benches.
Female members of the Oireachtas, past and present, in Leinster House under a portrait of Countess Constance Markievicz in December 2008 marking the 90th Anniversary of the 1918 election, the first time women were entitled to vote.
## Women in National Parliaments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Seats in Parliament</th>
<th>Number of Women</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01. Rwanda</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>63.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02. Bolivia</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>53.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03. Cuba</td>
<td>612</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>48.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04. Seychelles</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05. Sweden</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>43.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Finland</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>41.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Iceland</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>41.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Spain</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>41.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Germany</td>
<td>631</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. New Zealand</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. United Kingdom</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. Australia</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. Canada</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67. Albania</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75. USA</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85. Morocco</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>88. IRELAND</strong></td>
<td><strong>166</strong></td>
<td><strong>27</strong></td>
<td><strong>16.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>109. India</td>
<td>543</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>134. Nigeria</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>144. Yemen</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data in the table above has been compiled by the [Inter-Parliamentary Union](https://www.ipu.org) on the basis of information provided by National Parliaments by 1st December 2015. 190 countries have been classified in descending order of the percentage of women in the lower or single House of Parliament.
We must seize chance to change the gender balance in parliament

Niamh Gallagher

On February 29 the 83,884 people of Limerick County will have a different experience to their fellow citizens nationwide. This time around, unless we have an inspired late entrant to the race – theirs will be the only ballot paper in the country without a female candidate on it. In previous elections this might not have made Limerick such an outlier, but this time it certainly does because if there’s one thing that’s different about this election it’s the number of female candidates in the field. This is all the more remarkable given where we’ve come from. In 2011 just 86 women contested the election. Of more than 500 candidates, they made up 15pc. This time there are 156 women selected and counting, that’s just over 30pc and almost double the number that ran in 2011. This change is even more striking given the trend since 1997 of an ever-falling proportion of women contesting. In 1997 female candidates made up 20pc of those on the ballot, in 2002 it fell to 15pc, then to 17pc in 2007 and down to the doldrums of 2011 at 15pc.

This time, driven by the gender quota legislation introduced in 2012 and the energy and motivation around the issue of women’s political participation, the figure has doubled, and doubled in style. We have leaders emerging, the three ‘best representatives of Waterford, Dún Laoghaire and Dublin Rathdown, which boast more than 50pc female candidates, closely tailed by another 25 constituencies with 30pc female candidates or higher. This is a sea-change from 2013, when 30 of the 43 constituencies had two or fewer women on the ballot, and 19 constituencies elected no women at all.

This performance puts paid to the traditional party mantra that “we just can’t find the women”. This time they went looking and – surprise! – they found them in numbers. The larger parties didn’t have to look too far: the majority of their female candidates came from within their established ranks: 86pc of them are either currently elected as TDs or councillors, or have run for election before. Add to that the Independents and smaller parties, many formed for the first time, and that number falls to 75pc, still a significant proportion. These figures demonstrate that the women on our ballot papers are for the most part experienced political operators, vote-getters and winners, ready and prepared for the job ahead.

But that’s all very well – the women are on the ballot paper – but why should we care? And, more importantly, why should we vote for them? What difference can they make? Well, plenty. We know from international research that parliaments with a balance of women and men make decisions differently, and make different decisions. Women tend to take an open and collaborative approach to making policy, engaging many voices and sharing information as plans progress. They view decisions with a broad lens, viewing both the economic elements of, say, a city transport policy, and the social impacts: how will families get around, what is the impact on people with disabilities, with beggars, people making money stops? This is a simple example, but it demonstrates the importance of having a variety of perspectives and experiences around the tables where decisions are made. And of course, there’s the simple point about representation. When we look at our parliament we want it to reflect us, the people. Right now, it’s far from that. Improving the gender balance would be a first and necessary step, though there are more to go.

In less than three weeks now we have a chance to make a change and we should grab it. The groundwork over the past five years has ensured that we have a healthy proportion of female candidates on the ballot paper. Now it’s about making sure that translates into a strand of women walking through the gates of Leinster House as newly elected TDs in March. Between now and February 26, if you believe this matters, get active. Find a woman who aligns with your views and support her with your time, your skills and your networks; join a canvass team, drop leaflets, advocate on her behalf, promote her with friends, family and on social media, and, most importantly, get out there on election day and give her your number one vote.

We have talked about this problem for long enough. We have a Government that took strong measures to address it through the gender quota legislation, and women who have been ready and willing to stand up and put themselves forward for election. Now it’s over to us, the voters. Let’s see what change would look like. Get out there and elect a woman with a number one. Unless you’re one of the 80,000-plus in Limerick County, you should have a fine number to choose from.
Gender quotas and public funding of main parties distort democracy

David Quinn

POLITICS to a certain extent in most countries, there are long-established parties and it is extremely hard for new parties to break into the system. This is especially true in countries that don’t have proportional representation.

In Britain, the likes of UKIP or the Liberal Democrats never get the number of seats their share of the vote would warrant.

Today, it is harder than ever to break into the cartel. That is because of public funding of political parties.

Since the last General Election, Fine Gael has received something like €330m from the State, Labour €3m or so; Fianna Fail around €10m; Sinn Fein around €6m. There are very big figures.

State money is allocated in accordance with a given party’s share of the first preference vote in the previous General Election.

If your party didn’t exist in the last election, then obviously you receive nothing.

Fair enough, you might say. The trouble is that no new party could possibly hope to raise anything like those sums and that was before very strict fund-raising restrictions were introduced, and made even stricter by this Government almost as soon as it took power.

The established parties therefore have two big advantages over new ones. The first is the huge sums of money they receive from the State, while the second is the severe restrictions on money that can be raised from members of the public or from other organisations.

The maximum that can be accepted by a political party in a given year from a member of the public or from an organisation is €5,000.

The maximum a candidate can receive is €1,000.

The purpose of the restrictions is to ensure that no one individual or organisation can use money to unduly influence the political process. But how much influence does €5,000 going to get you with a political party, or €1,000 with a candidate?

These limits completely suit the established parties, in view of the huge amounts of money they receive from the taxpayer.

There are various reasons why Renais and the Social Democrats are struggling to make a breakthrough in this election, but the main one in which the parties are funded is a big one.

The new parties have no State money but it should not have been made so hard to raise large sums from the general public or private organisations. How do you run a proper election campaign with very little money? How is that democratic? It isn’t.

The amount of money the established parties receive from the public purse is doubt Indeferable given that it is highly unlikely they ever received anything like the above-mentioned sums from corporations or trade unions.

If State funding of political parties is in any way defendable, they ought to be receiving no more than they used to receive in corporate donations.

The established parties are not supposed to spend public funds directly on election campaigns. But given that they can fund their party structures out of public money, it means anything else they raise can be spent on elections.

So public money is indirectly subsidising their election campaigns. In other words, public money is being used, in effect, to overwhelm the new parties.

Other countries have seen new parties break through. It happens regularly in Italy, where faith in the main parties broke down long ago, and it is happening in Spain and Greece.

In Ireland, we’re instead seeing disaffected voters gravitating towards Independent candidates.

And seeing as the new parties are finding it hard to establish a real national profile, many disaffected voters are gravitating towards Independent candidates with strong local profiles.

If the strengthening of the cartel is the problem, then the system of Irish politics is one undemocratic effect of public funding of established parties, there is another one, and it is the way public funding can be used to blackmail those parties into adopting certain policies.

In this election, all parties in receipt of public funding must ensure at least 70% of their candidates are women or else lose half of that funding.

It should really be entirely up to each party to decide how many candidates of each sex to field.

The public can then decide who to vote for. If a given party has a good balance of male and female candidates, then they can vote for that party if that is what they want.

If they prefer to vote on the basis of a party’s policies - or the ability of a given candidate - instead of on the basis of the sex of the candidate, then they can do that instead. That is the democratic way.

Writing in this newspaper on Monday, Nianda Gallagher, of "Women for Election", said that Ireland would benefit from having more women politicians. She said: "Women tend to take an open and collaborative approach to making policy, engaging many voices and sharing knowledge and experience in the process."

She went on in this vein. Note, by the way, how women and men are supposed to bring different qualities to politics whereas in the marriage referendum we were told they don’t bring different qualities to parenting and therefore the sex of a child’s parents doesn’t matter a bit. Love is all you need.

On that basis, the quality...
Quotas see more women on the ballot, but it is up to voters to now decide their fate

Geraldine Kennedy  
and Claire McGing

The new rule ensures at least 30% of candidates must be female, with all parties complying by date

This time, voters have a real choice to ary the gender imbalance, if they want to do so. Under the new electoral Act, women candidates were in line to stand as candidates.

The opponents of the law argue it is counterproductive, as women candidates are facing an uphill battle against the status quo. They argue the law is not addressing the underlying issue of gender inequality in politics.

The new rule has been hailed as a major step forward for women's representation in Irish politics. The law has been implemented in stages over the past five years, starting with legislation in 2013 and 2014.

The law requires political parties to ensure at least 30% of candidates are women, with a goal of 40% by 2020. The law was introduced in response to the low number of women in politics, with only 25% of Dáil Éireann seats held by women in 2016.

The law has been controversial, with some parties arguing it is a infringement of their freedom of association and free speech. However, the majority of parties have complied with the law, with only one party failing to meet the target.

The law has also been praised for its potential to increase women's representation in politics. It has been shown that countries with quotas have seen an increase in the number of women in parliament.

The law has also been hailed as a step towards increasing women's participation in political decision-making. It is hoped that by increasing the number of women in politics, they will be better able to represent the interests of women and girls.

The law has been implemented in stages, with the first stage coming into effect in 2016. The second stage, which requires parties to ensure 40% of candidates are women, will come into effect in 2020.

The law has been met with mixed reaction from the public. Some have welcomed the law, while others have been critical of it. However, the law has been praised for its potential to increase women's representation in politics and to make the political landscape more diverse.

The new rule ensures at least 30% of candidates must be female, with all parties complying by date.
There are more female candidates standing in this month’s poll than ever before. But will they really make an impact and will other women vote for them? KIM BIELENBERG reports
Poll position: will women make the big breakthrough?

There will be more females standing on February 26 than in any previous election and they’ll be expected to deliver the votes. Kim Bielenberg reports.

Candidates for gender equality in politics hope that this will be the election when women make the great leap forward. Could it be the first poll where female politicians move towards parity with men when it comes to running the country?

A record number of women will contest the General Election on February 26, and if a good proportion of them succeed, the face of Irish politics has the potential to be transformed.

The brown boughs of the Bill may no longer be the preserve of row upon row of grey and nancy suits when the house reconvenes on March 10. Largely as a result of the gender quota, 36 per cent of those running in the election on February 26 will be women. The measure to increase the number of women may be one of the most radical of the ongoing Government. But it has not come without bitterness and acrimony; and questions have been asked about whether some “gender quota candidates” were added to tickets without any fighting chance of success.

Although the final figure will not be available until nominations close next week, the number of female candidates is expected to have doubled since the last General Election. In that 2011 poll, only 10 per cent of the candidates were female, and women took just 14 per cent of the seats.

That placed us way down the international league table for representation of women in the national parliament, at number 88. As Senator眼界 Power, the Fine Gael senator who is standing as an Independent in Dublin Bay North, puts it: “If you look at the figures for female representation in parliament, we are among the worst — we are way behind parts of Sub-Saharan Africa.

“I would have liked if we could have changed Irish politics and made it more representative without quotas, but that hasn’t happened. I believe they are a necessary evil.”

Caitriona McGloughlin, home affairs and political geography at NUI Maynooth, says quotas were necessary because the big parties have traditionally been slow to put women on the ballot paper.

“This will be a huge election for women,” says McGloughlin. “This is the first time that women will have a significant number of women on most ballot papers.”

Some party political outfits of male domination have firmly held on against the gender-neutral tide. By the middle of this week, there were no women standing in the constituencies of County Limerick — and only one woman standing in Meath West.

On the other hand, women in South Dublin are much more likely to put their hats in the ring, or have their names put forward by parties. The majority of the candidates in Dún Laoghaire and Dublin Rathdown are women, while Dublin South West has the highest number of female candidates on the ticket with seven.

The implementation of gender quotas has forced the parties to push up their female numbers, or face the loss of half of their state funding. All the main parties have compiled with the rules, and Sinn Féin and Labour have the highest proportion of women, running with 36 per cent. “While other parties were struggling to even find women to put forward, our female candidates are there to contest winnable seats — not as token add-ons,” says Sinn Féin spokeswoman Aoife Darmody.

If it secures a seat in Government, Sinn Féin wants to move towards 50-50 gender quotas.

Susan Collins of the non-party campaign group Women for Election says the introduction of the quota in parties has also had a ripple effect among independents.

“More women are standing as independents, even though they are obviously not covered by the gender Quota rules,” says Collins, whose group has held regular bootcamps for female candidates.

“Some women are standing as independents, even though they are obviously not covered by the gender Quota rules,” says Collins, whose group has held regular bootcamps for female candidates.

“They are more women on air and in local newspapers talking about the election, and that changes the tone of the campaign.”

Optimistic advocates of gender quotas will hope that if 36 per cent of the candidates are women, women will smash all previous records — and win 36 per cent of the seats. But it is unlikely to work out that way, according to political geographer McGloughlin, because more of the female candidates are standing for the first time, they are likely to be at a disadvantage.

“Voters do not discriminate on the grounds of gender, but they do discriminate on the basis of who they know,” says McGloughlin.

“Incumbents are at an advantage. That’s why I wouldn’t be optimistic that women will win 36 per cent of the seats. Research internationally would suggest that it takes two or three electoral cycles before you see...”

If you look at the figures for female representation in parliament... we are way behind parts of Sub-Saharan Africa.
a significant shift in the make-up of parliament. The incumbency factor is huge.”

Purdy selection conventions by their nature have always caused ran-
cour, but in some cases this has been heightened by the necessity to put
women on the ticket, with inevitable accusations of “gender-marketing”.
There was uproar in Fianna Fáil late
last year when the party head office
nudged that the candidate for Longford
would have to be a woman, Connie
Gerrity Quinn.

One of the candidates, who quit
out, Pat O’Keeffe, said after the
selection convention that he’d never
seen anger like it, with members
shouting, stamping, and people
roaring, “We want our say.”

In court this week, aspiring male
candidate Brian Molan failed in his
case against the State after Fi-
nána Fáil directed its sole General
Elective candidate in the Dublin
Central constituency had to be a
woman, and Mary Fitzpatrick was
selected.

Anecdotally, there are some re-
ports of women being asked on the
doorstep whether they are a
“real candidate” or a “token woman
candidate.”

But McGlinchay doubts whether vot-
ers really know or care how candi-
dates are selected by the parties.
“I don’t think there will be any
type of anti-quota women factor,
but we will only see on February 26.

"When you look at the profiles of
the women who have been added,
most, if not all of them, are strong
candidates in their own right. A list
of them are candidates or past Dáil
election candidates.”

Former minister Mary O’Rourke
steadily opposes gender quotas, re-
garding them as an instrument
but she is keen for more women
in Fianna Fáil to succeed and has
recently been touring the country
advise candidates on how to run
their campaigns.

“Women are running in a
constituency, the other candidate
be quite territorial.

“I won’t call them bullies, but
you have to lay down the law, and
make sure you are not browbeaten,”
she says.

O’Rourke says many of the young
candidates are of a high calibre,
and full of bright ideas about what
they want to do in the Dáil.

“A lot of them have been successful
in local elections and that can be
benevolent. So, they have been
benevolent.

On the Fine Gael side, there are
several ambitious young female
candidates with hopes of winning
such as Maura Hopkins in Roscom-
man Gauley. The faculty placed in her

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Taken from Irish Independent Review, Saturday, 6th February 2016
The widow vote: when women candidates ran for family seats

JOHN DOWNING looks back at a time when female candidates continued party dynasties

Believe it or not, under quotas were on Ruma de Valera’s mind as far back as the early 1940s. In fact, one of his famous Fianna Fáil was over-quota when it came to a particular category of women, specifically widows. So, in 1944 he denigrated his most loyal lieutenant, Dr Jim Ryan, to chair the party selection convention for the constituency of Tipperary. Dr Ryan had acted as medical officer to the IGP personnel at Ruster Barracks and was a co-founder of Fianna Fáil in 1926 with Dr de Valera and others. His instructions from Fianna Fáil headquarters were very explicit: ‘Don’t pick the widow.’

By stage 20 years on from the Stormont conference, a number of the old IRA men turned politicians had died and had been replaced by their widows. The political realities of name recognition were buried by the brutal reality that TDs’ widows, like many another widow, often had large young families and most money to provide for them.

However, in an era of near invisibility for women in Irish public life, Fianna Fáil leadership feared they would be decisively defeated if they allowed the ‘widow’ trend to continue. And yet the trend with continued to defy the party’s wishes.

The Tipperary widow was Mary Bridget Ryan, whose husband Martin Ryan had died at the age of 43 in 1943, leaving her with three children aged three to 16. Penguins for TDs’ wives and children were not introduced until 1950. At the convention, it was because clear that Dr Ryan was in considerable difficulty. The delegates, many from the south of the old IRA, wanted nobody but the widow — and outright mutiny was the only other option available to him.

One young delegate, Bill Smith, is credited with summing up the mood. ‘You can nominate who you like — but we’re not going to be bought out from Dublin, you know. We’re not going to be bought out from Dublin, you know. We’re fighting for the seat. We’re fighting for Mary Bridget!’

His view, Michael Smith, a future TD and government minister, recalled this week.

Dr Ryan assuaged the mood and reluctantly report back to headquarters. The Tipperary seat, Ryan went on to become TD for Tipperary and later Tipperary North, serving from 1944 until 1965. His own marriage to a party president, deemed to be on a par with that of her late husband, had engendered a sense of local loyalty.

On the 50th anniversary of the founding of Fianna Fáil in 1932, Mary Bridget gave a rear interview to The Irish Times in which she recalled the patterns of her life as a politician, parent and farmer. Each Monday she took a plow and tractor or horse and carriage from her home in Roscrea to Brindill railway station, on the Limerick border, and caught the Dublin train. Raising a family, she worked at Dálail business dealing with correspondence and taking questions on constituency matters. Her one brief was being able to buy the children school clothes in Dublin. On Tuesday or Friday she traveled back to resume her family duties and on Sundays she received all constituency letters seeking help.

Dáil widows were to be found across all the parties. Fine Gael’s Bridget Mary Redmond, a TD from 1933 until 1952, was the widow of Captain William Redmond who died (1952). She continued over half a century of continuous parliamentary representation for Waterford, begun by Irish Parliamentary leader, John Redmond, in the British House of Commons in 1903.

A marvellous woman, Bridget Redmond, published in 2002, and edited by Macdhubh McNamara and Pearse Meehan, tells these widow’s stories and an update of this is long overdue. What comes across is the demand from day-to-day life and the frequent harassment and disregard they encountered. The last TD’s widow to be elected to the Dáil was Eileen Lillis, wife of Noel Lillis and daughter of Earl of Inch, back in 1927. Family dynasties continued but less then, so it was mainly politicians’ daughters who succeeded, again buying up the previously small proportion of women. The high personalism forced to his life by a Fianna Fáil, Mary Bridget Ryan lost her Dáil seat in the 1951 election but continued as a county councillor until 1953. She refused a presentation from the constituency party telling them she should make a presentation to them in honour of their support for her.

John Downing is Political Correspondent

FACES ON THE POSTERS: SIX TO WATCH

MAURA HOPKINS (PP NORTHWEST)
The 32-year-old occupational therapist, from Galway, is a conservative who believes in the importance of the community and the role it plays in society. She is also a Member of the Galway City Council and has been a vocal supporter of the local hospital. She is known for her work with children and young people. If elected, she plans to focus on education, health, and social issues.

KATE O’CONNELL (FD DUBLIN EAST AND SOUTH)
The 35-year-old lawyer and environmentalist from Dublin, is a member of the Green Party. She is a strong supporter of renewable energy and has been involved in the fight against climate change. She is also a former member of the European Parliament and has been a vocal critic of the EU’s policies towards Brexit. If elected, she plans to focus on environmental issues and the need for sustainable development.

MARY BUTLER (PP WATERFORD)
The 40-year-old former bank employee, from Waterford, is a member of the Fine Gael party. She is known for her work in community development and has been involved in a number of local initiatives. She is also a former member of the Waterford City Council and has been a vocal critic of the council’s policies towards tourism. If elected, she plans to focus on economic development and the need for better public services.

LISA CHAMBERS (PP MALLOW)
The 34-year-old former restaurant owner, from Cork, is a member of the Labour Party. She is known for her work in the hospitality industry and has been involved in a number of local campaigns. She is also a former member of the Cork City Council and has been a vocal critic of the council’s policies towards housing. If elected, she plans to focus on social issues and the need for better public services.

DENISE MITCHELL (SF DUBLIN BAY NORTH)
The 50-year-old former nurse, from Dublin, is a member of Sinn Féin. She is known for her work in the health sector and has been involved in a number of local campaigns. She is also a former member of the Dublin City Council and has been a vocal critic of the council’s policies towards housing. If elected, she plans to focus on social issues and the need for better public services.

BRID SMITH (AAP—ABS DUBLIN)
The 45-year-old former journalist, from Dublin, is a member of the Socialist Party. She is known for her work in the media industry and has been involved in a number of local campaigns. She is also a former member of the Dublin City Council and has been a vocal critic of the council’s policies towards housing. If elected, she plans to focus on social issues and the need for better public services.

Taken from Irish Independent Review, Saturday, 6th February 2016
Teacher’s Notes

Listed here are some questions which may be useful to pose when looking at the election campaign literature:

- How many female candidates are running for election?
- How many male candidates are running for election?
- How many people have been elected previously and are running again?
- What are the ages of the candidates?
- What political parties are represented in the literature?
- What other parties/candidates are contesting the election in your constituency?

When students have finished this activity why not display the leaflets and the profiles which students have completed on the walls of the classroom.

**Homework:** Ask students to find out about their elected representatives from the last election and get them to complete one of the ‘My Constituency for a General Election’ sheets. Lists of Constituencies are on pages 64 and 65 and Maps are available on pages 66 - 67 to see where they are.

**Note:** Be sure to give them the right sheet, depending on whether it is a 3, 4 or 5 seats Constituency! Give them the Kildare North Sheet as an Exemplar.
GENERAL ELECTION CANDIDATE PROFILE SHEET

NAME: ________________________________

CONSTITUENCY: _______________________

POLITICAL PARTY: ______________________

JOB/PROFESSION: ___________________________________________________

NAME TWO ISSUES THAT THIS CANDIDATE FEELS STRONGLY ABOUT:

1. ________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________

2. ________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________

OTHER INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THIS CANDIDATE:

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
## Kildare North

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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Name of Constituency</strong></th>
<th><strong>Number of Seats</strong></th>
<th><strong>Electorate</strong></th>
<th><strong>Total Poll</strong></th>
<th><strong>Turnout (%)</strong></th>
<th><strong>Spoiled Votes</strong></th>
<th><strong>Total Valid Poll</strong></th>
<th><strong>Quota</strong></th>
<th><strong>Number of Candidates contesting the Election</strong></th>
<th><strong>Main Towns in this Constituency</strong></th>
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<td>77,959</td>
<td>51,610</td>
<td>66.2%</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>51,222</td>
<td>10,245</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Carbury, Celbridge, Clane, Kilcock, Kill, Maynooth, Moyvally, Naas, Prosperous, Sallins and Timahoe</td>
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### TD 1 Biography
Bernard Durkan (FG) was elected to the Dáil on the 2nd Count.

He lives in Maynooth. He was first elected to the Dáil in 1981.

He previously worked as an agricultural contractor.

### TD 2 Biography
Emmet Stagg (LAB) was elected to the Dáil on the 3rd Count.

He lives in Straffan. He was first elected to the Dáil in 1987.

He previously worked as a medical laboratory technologist.

### TD 3 Biography
Catherine Murphy (Independent) was elected to the Dáil on the 5th Count.

She lives in Leixlip. She was first elected to the Dáil in a by-election in 2005.

She previously worked as a Town Commissioner and County Councillor.

### TD 4 Biography
Anthony Lawlor (FG) was elected to the Dáil on the 5th Count without reaching the quota.

He lives in Kill. He was first elected to the Dáil in 2011.

He previously worked as a farmer and teacher.
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<th>Name of Constituency</th>
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<th>Turnout (%)</th>
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**TD 1 Biography**

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**TD 2 Biography**

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**TD 3 Biography**

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## General Election Constituencies, 2016 & 2011

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</table>

**Teacher’s Notes**

These tables and the maps on pages 66 and 67 will help you to work out what constituency your school is in and how many seats are available in Election ‘16.

Remember that there are 8 less seats available in this election. 158 TDs will be elected to the 32nd Dáil instead of 166!
Mock General Election Action Project
Teacher’s Notes
Here you will find some tips to organising a mock general election action project, should you decide to carry out one with your students.

You can carry out a mock general election with your own CSPE class but for the purposes of voting you might consider including some of the following combinations of classes in your mock general election:

Class Group/s
Year Group/s
The Whole School

Democracy is not a spectator sport and an Action Project such as this encourages students not only to be participative in their learning but will empower them with the knowledge and skills necessary to access the procedures and structures of their democratic system in the future.

What follows is a suggestion for some of the groupings/committees/tasks you might consider having in order to run the mock general election. Within these groups or committees students should have their own individual task, which is their responsibility.

Students learn many different skills participating in any Action Project. Following the list of possible committees is an example of some of the skills that students may be using while engaging in this Action Project. This list is by no means exhaustive and there are many other skills that students may use throughout the process.

NOTE: If you and/or your students are unfamiliar with the PR Voting System you might like to work through the activity on pages 73 - 79 together before organizing your Mock Election.

See Possible Committees on pages 70 - 71

Teacher’s Notes

The following committees/groups/tasks may prove useful in carrying out your Mock General Election:

1. REGISTER OF ELECTORS COMMITTEE
Collect names and details from everyone intending to vote.
Put together a Register of Electors.
Produce in alphabetical order.

2. ADVERTISING COMMITTEE
Make colourful eye catching posters to advertise the upcoming mock general election.
Make posters or stick up fliers for the candidates.
Inform participating classes of the time and date of the mock election.

3. POLLING CARD COMMITTEE
Using the template of a polling card given with this section, photocopy enough for all voters.
Using the data from the Register of Electors fill out a polling card for every name.
Issue the polling cards in time for the mock election.

4. BALLOT PAPER COMMITTEE
Using the example of the ballot paper given in this resource, design your own ballot paper for your election.
Photocopy and have enough ready for the day of the mock election.

5. BALLOT BOX COMMITTEE
Get a cardboard box e.g. a banana box.
Put the box into a black refuse sack and cut and fold to fit.
Cut out an opening in the sack and or box for ballot papers to be placed inside.
6. PRESIDING OFFICERS COMMITTEE
This committee will have overall responsibility for running the election on the day. Tasks may include:
- setting up the tables in the polling station (classroom or hall)
- setting up a screen so that students can make a secret ballot
- checking names off the register as students vote and making sure that nobody votes twice.
- watching over the ballot box to make sure that nobody interferes with it or puts anything other than a ballot paper into the box!

7. THE COUNT COMMITTEE
It is this committee’s job to work out who has been elected. They will need to:
- Count the votes.
- Subtract any invalid or spoiled votes and work out the quota.
- Count and recount.
- Declare the winner/s.

Some templates for Polling Cards and Ballot Papers are included on page 78.
POLLING INFORMATION CARD - CÁRTA VÓTAÍOCHTA

THIS CARD IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY: IT IS NOT AN IDENTITY CARD.

BE SURE TO BRING EVIDENCE OF IDENTITY WHEN YOU GO TO VOTE - SEE BACK OF THIS CARD.

POLLING DAY
NUMBER
YOU VOTE AT:

BUTLER - SOCIAL DEMOCRATS
(Mary Butler of The Meadows, Bandon, Co. Cork; Company Director)

DELANEY - LABOUR
(Ned Delaney of Wheatfield House, Mallow, Co. Cork; Farmer)

FLEMING - FIANNA FÁIL
(John Fleming of Riverside Estate, Fermoy, Co. Cork; Public Representative)

GORDON - NON-PARTY
(Katie Gordon of The Rise, Blackrock, Co. Cork; Shopkeeper)

GRACE - FINE GAEL
(Miriam Grace of Muskerry Estate, Ballincollig, Co. Cork; Accountant)

KEATING - FINE GAEL
(Pamela Keating of Oak Road, Curraheen, Co. Cork; Doctor)

MAUGHAN - SIND FÉIN
(Charlie Maughan of Patrick Street, Cork; Bank Official)

PHELAN - RENUA
(Joe Phelan of Chestnut Park, Bandon, Co. Cork; Company Director)

O’KELLY - NON-PARTY
(Ross O’Kelly of Seaview, Kinsale, Co. Cork; Construction Worker)

SAVAGE - GREEN PARTY
(Diane Savage of Model Farm Road, Bishopstown, Co. Cork; Interior Designer)
Using PR

Photocopy a set of the 4 pages of Ballot Papers (A-D), the page called Election Results Grid for Students and the Instructions for the Count, enough for each group of students. Cut out the individual ballot papers so that each group will have their own set.

Give an Instructions for the Count page to each group. Read through each individual instruction with the students so that all the groups are at the same stage at the same time. As each instruction has been followed, students fill in the appropriate space on their Election Results Grid. Make sure that each group has the right answer.

When the count has finished, allow the students to discuss the results. Explain to them that if a majority, or first-past-the-post, system was being used, then the result would have been very different. In fact, Barney would have won in this case.

Ask the students to consider whether this would, in fact, have been representative of what they wanted. Barney received 12 first preference votes, which is 37% of the total. If he had been elected, how would the other 63% have been represented?

Note: In this application of the PR system, votes have been transferred using the elimination system. In a situation where there is more than one position available and there are many candidates, some candidates may achieve over the quota on the 1st or 2nd count. In this case, the surplus votes are transferred on a percentage of the amount over the quota. However, in a student council election in a school, whether it is on a class group or a year group basis, this is unlikely to happen (though not impossible). The elimination system has been demonstrated here to give students a very basic idea of how to apply PR to a class election.
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Ballot Papers - Sheet D

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</table>

Instructions for the Count

1. Count all the votes.
2. Separate the spoiled votes and count how many of them there are.
3. Subtract the number of spoiled votes from the total number of votes. This is your total valid poll.
4. Work out the quota on the sheet. You can’t start counting until you know how many votes a person needs to be elected.

COUNT 1
- Count all the votes.
- Make a pile for each candidate with their number 1 preferences.
- Fill in the grid with the totals for each person.

COUNT 2
- Eliminate the person with the lowest number of votes.
- Now look at that person’s votes and find out who was the number 2 preference
- on these ballot papers.
- Add these number 2 votes to the candidates’ piles and fill in the grid.

COUNT 3
- If nobody has reached the quota, eliminate the next person with the lowest number of votes.
- Find out who the number 2 1st preferences were for and add those to the candidates’ piles and fill in the grid.

COUNT 4
- If nobody has reached the quota, eliminate the next person with the lowest number of votes.
- Find out who the number 2 preferences were for and add those to the candidates’ piles.
- If this person (that you are currently eliminating) received transfers from an already eliminated person, check the number 3 preferences and add them on to the candidates’ piles.
- Fill in the grid.
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Election Results Grid for Students

\[
\text{Quota} = \left\lceil \frac{\text{Valid Poll}}{\text{Number of Seats} + 1} \right\rceil + 1
\]

\[
\text{Quota} = \left\lceil \frac{1 + 1}{30} \right\rceil + 1
\]
Election Results Grid for the Teacher

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<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clancy, Clara</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>+4</td>
<td>+5</td>
<td>16 Elected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniels, Denise</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Eliminated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evans, Eddie</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Eliminated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Election Result

Having reached the quota of 16 Clara Clancy is deemed to have been elected as a member of the Student Council.

Your class is now ready to organise a Mock General Election for your Constituency. Good luck!
Democracy, Elections and Voting:
www.gov.ie - The Irish Government (Dáil and Seanad Éireann)
www.oireachtas.ie - The Houses of the Oireachtas
www.taoiseach.ie - Department of An Taoiseach
www.merrionstreet.ie - Irish Government News Service
www_president.ie - The President of Ireland
www.environ.ie - Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government (Elections, Proportional Representation)

Political Parties:
Anti-Austerity Alliance/People Before Profit
www.fiannafail.ie - Fianna Fail
www.finegael.ie - Fine Gael
www.labour.ie - The Labour Party
www.greenparty.ie - The Green Party
www.renuaireland.com - Renua Ireland
www.sinnfein.ie - Sinn Féin
www.socialdemocrats.ie - Social Democrats
www.socialistparty.ie - The Socialist Party
www.workersparty.ie - The Workers Party

Other smaller parties also exist. Find out what other political parties are active in your Constituency!