



An Bille Toghcháin (Leasú) (Dáilcheantair), 2017
Electoral (Amendment) (Dáil Constituencies) Bill 2017

Meabhrán Mínitheach
Explanatory Memorandum



**AN BILLE TOGHCHÁIN (LEASÚ) (DÁILCHEANTAIR), 2017
ELECTORAL (AMENDMENT) (DÁIL CONSTITUENCIES) BILL
2017**

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

Overview

The purpose of the Electoral (Amendment) (Dáil Constituencies) Bill 2017 is to provide for the number of members of Dáil Éireann, for the revision of constituencies and for the number of members to be elected for such constituencies, and for the amendment of the Electoral Act 1997. The Bill implements the recommendations in the Constituency Commission Report 2017 - Dáil and European Parliament Constituencies (June 2017). The Commission was established under the Electoral Act 1997 (No. 25 of 1997) to report on the constituencies for the election of members to Dáil Éireann and the European Parliament in light of the results of Census 2016.

Section 1 defines “Minister” as the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government for the purposes of the Bill and provides for the interpretation of certain references in the Schedule to the Bill.

Section 2 provides that the number of members of Dáil Éireann will be 160 after the dissolution of the Dáil next following the enactment of this Bill. This is the number recommended by the Constituency Commission within the range of 153 to 160 provided for in the Electoral Act 1997 (as amended in 2011 by the Electoral (Amendment) Act 2011 (No. 14 of 2011)). At present there are 158 members.

Section 3 provides that after the dissolution of the Dáil next following the enactment of this Bill the members of Dáil Éireann will represent the 39 constituencies specified in the Schedule. At present, there are 40 constituencies.

Section 4 provides that the number of members to be returned by each constituency will be as set out in the third column of the Schedule.

Section 5 amends section 6(2)(a) of the Electoral Act 1997 (as amended by section 3 of the Electoral (Amendment) Act 2011) to provide for a revision to the terms of reference of a Constituency Commission established to review Dáil constituencies. Under the revised terms of reference, a Constituency Commission will be required to recommend Dáil constituencies based on a total number of members in Dáil Éireann of not less than 166 and not more than 172. This would apply to the review to be done after the next census which is expected in 2021.

Section 6 provides for the repeal of the Electoral (Amendment) (Dáil Constituencies) Act 2013 (No. 7 of 2013). This Act specifies the existing Dáil constituencies. The repeal will come into operation on the dissolution of Dáil Éireann next following enactment of this Bill.

Section 7 contains standard provisions dealing with title, collective citation and construction.

The Schedule to the Bill contains the formal definition of the 39 Dáil constituencies. The Table below sets out, for each constituency, the number of TDs, the 2016 population, the population per TD and the percentage variance from national average representation.

Overall, thirteen 5-seat constituencies, seventeen 4-seat constituencies and nine 3-seat are provided for. Further details on the constituencies are in the Constituency Commission Report 2017 - Dáil and European Parliament Constituencies which can be viewed at www.constituency-commission.ie.

TABLE
Constituencies

Constituency	Number of TDs	2016 Population	Population per TD	% variance from National Average Population per TD
Carlow-Kilkenny	5	156,164	31,233	+4.94
Cavan-Monaghan	5	141,535	28,307	-4.89
Clare	4	118,817	29,704	-0.19
Cork East	4	121,429	30,357	+2.00
Cork North-Central	4	124,836	31,209	+4.86
Cork North-West	3	89,080	29,693	-0.23
Cork South-Central	4	122,221	30,555	+2.66
Cork South-West	3	85,302	28,434	-4.46
Donegal	5	150,657	30,131	+1.24
Dublin Bay North	5	147,879	29,576	-0.62
Dublin Bay South	4	121,176	30,294	+1.79
Dublin Central	4	113,765	28,441	-4.44
Dublin Fingal	5	152,086	30,417	+2.20
Dublin Mid-West	4	117,976	29,494	-0.90
Dublin North-West	3	84,598	28,199	-5.25
Dublin Rathdown	3	92,937	30,979	+4.09
Dublin South-Central	4	119,469	29,867	+0.35
Dublin South-West	5	150,495	30,099	+1.13
Dublin West	4	121,897	30,474	+2.39
Dún Laoghaire	4	125,081	31,270	+5.07
Galway East	3	89,548	29,849	+0.29
Galway West	5	144,914	28,983	-2.62
Kerry	5	147,707	29,541	-0.74
Kildare North	4	119,548	29,887	+0.42
Kildare South	4	114,810	28,703	-3.56
Laois-Offaly	5	150,804	30,161	+1.34
Limerick City	4	113,421	28,355	-4.73
Limerick County	3	85,853	28,618	-3.84
Longford-Westmeath	4	120,962	30,241	+1.61
Louth	5	150,924	30,185	+1.42
Mayo	4	124,975	31,244	+4.98
Meath East	3	87,169	29,056	-2.37

Constituency	Number of TDs	2016 Population	Population per TD	% variance from National Average Population per TD
Meath West	3	90,543	30,181	+1.41
Roscommon-Galway	3	85,866	28,622	-3.83
Sligo-Leitrim	4	113,920	28,480	-4.31
Tipperary	5	155,178	31,036	+4.28
Waterford	4	116,176	29,044	-2.41
Wexford	5	149,722	29,944	+0.61
Wicklow	5	142,425	28,485	-4.29
Total	160	4,761,865	29,762	

*Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government
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