



Election Manifesto

2020

PEOPLE BEFORE PROFIT



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About People Before Profit

People Before Profit was created to fight for a fairer, more equal society. We value the welfare of communities above wealth creation for the few.

People Before Profit see the mobilisation of people in workplaces and communities as the key to bringing about change. We believe change can be won by fighting for our interests collectively.

Join us to help build a society that works for all.

Our TDs



Bríd Smith



Richard Boyd Barrett



Gino Kenny

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A United Ireland

People Before Profit have also made it our business to be a thorn in the establishment's side.

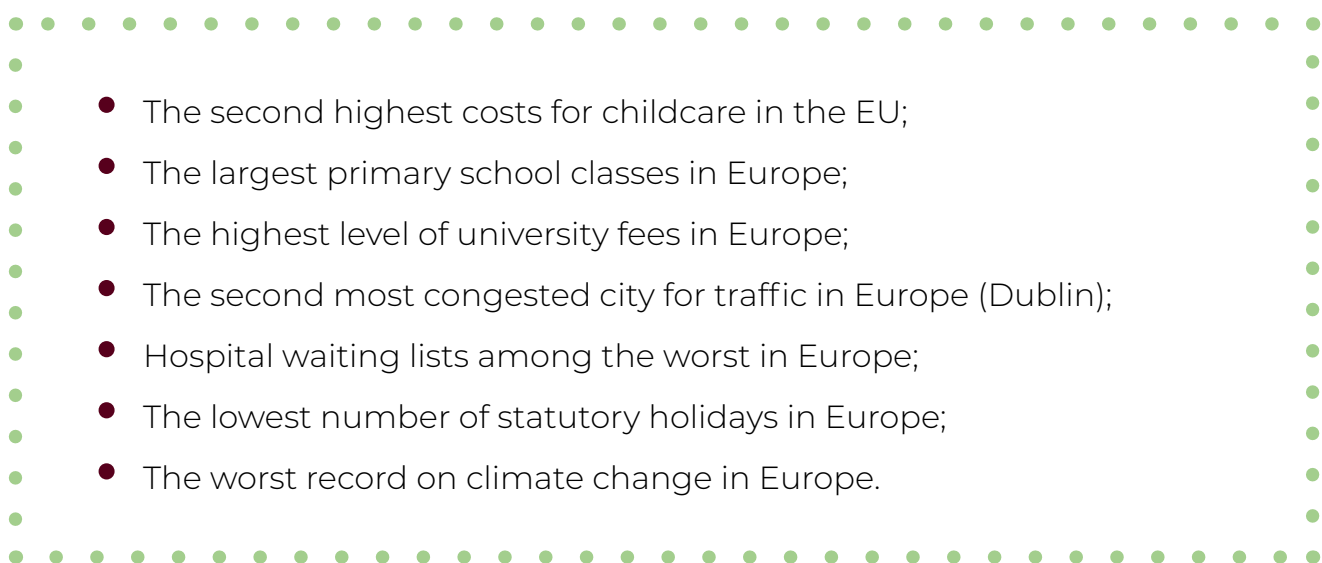
Our TDs have relentlessly pursued justice for women affected by Cervical Check, for workers denied decent pay and conditions and for people squeezed out of the housing market or left on hospital waiting lists for months or years.

This is why the establishment despise us. Leo Varadkar and Michael Martin want to narrow the election to a two-horse race between Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael. They want to make it seem like your only choice is a right-wing party, when the truth is that growing numbers want neither of these establishment options. And with good reason.

Fianna Fáil would like you to forget the damage they caused in 2008 and the damage they continue to cause by propping up their right-wing partners.

Fine Gael want you to focus on the fastest growing economy in Europe, when the fact that Ireland has never been richer makes it all the more scandalous that hundreds of thousands can't get a hospital bed and that half the population can't get the house they need at a cost they can afford.

In the fifth richest country in the world, Ireland still has:

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- The second highest costs for childcare in the EU;
 - The largest primary school classes in Europe;
 - The highest level of university fees in Europe;
 - The second most congested city for traffic in Europe (Dublin);
 - Hospital waiting lists among the worst in Europe;
 - The lowest number of statutory holidays in Europe;
 - The worst record on climate change in Europe.

People Before Profit insists that we can, and must, do better.

Our Election Manifesto 2020 is inspired by hope for a fairer economy and a better society. The proposals laid out below have been fully costed and rely on wealth and income distribution that targets the top 7% of the population.

Fairer taxation: share the wealth



We want taxes to be fair and proportionate to incomes and assets

Those who have the most should pay the most. People Before Profit will not increase the tax burden on anyone who earns under €90,000 annually.

This means **93 percent of the population will be protected from any increases in PAYE, VAT or social security contributions.**

We will instead reduce the amount of indirect taxes or hidden charges imposed on the majority.

If we want a fairer society, we cannot allow companies like Apple to escape a tax bill of €14 billion. That money could be used to re-boot the Irish economy.

Nor can we allow vulture funds who have bought up vast swathes of Irish property to use loopholes that cut their tax bill to a mere €250 per annum.

Here is what we propose:

- **Make all companies pay a minimum rate of corporation tax of 12.5 percent on their profits.** This means closing off loopholes. Over time, this should increase according to the needs of our society.
- **Stop wasting public money on fighting for Apple.** Why are we paying out millions in lawyers' fees to support Apple? Take the €14 billion tax award and use it for the benefit of the majority.
- **Introduce a special solidarity tax on commercial property.** Raise stamp duty on sales of commercial property. Increase Capital Gains Tax and close the loopholes.
- **End the tax exile status of Irish millionaires.** If you hold an Irish passport, you pay taxes here. Simple.
- **Bring in a 'Robin Hood' tax on financial speculation.** Every time you use an ATM card, you are slapped with a 12 cent charge. Every time finance houses carry out a transaction, they should also face a charge.
- **Create a millionaires' tax.** Assets valued at more than one million euros should be taxed at a two-percent rate each year. This would then be used to abolish property tax on family homes.
- **Create a progressive income tax system.** Retain USC on incomes over €90,000 and scrap it for those below. Introduce new tax bands for those single tax cases earning over €100,000.
- **Increase employers' PRSI, particularly on higher earners.** Irish employers make one of the lowest social security contributions in Europe. They need to start catching up.

These combined measures will create a powerful fund for investment and public services. They form the backdrop to the rest of our manifesto. For details on costings, see our fully costed Alternative Budget at www.pbp.ie/people-before-profit-pre-budget-submission-2020/.

Re-boot our economy



Brexit will create huge insecurity in the Irish economy. Britain under the Tories will follow Trump's example and cut taxes on global corporations. The economic model of turning Ireland into a tax haven could run aground.

We need a new job-creation strategy. We can have efficient, high-quality public enterprises, provided that workers, rather than bureaucrats, have more control.

In addition to the extra funds raised by the redistribution of wealth, there are three other key funds available for investment:

- **The Irish Strategic Investment Fund:** There is currently more than a billion euro in this fund, but so far it has been mainly used to offer cheap credit to private companies. Its record on job creation is poor. This fund should be transformed into a Public Investment and Job Creation Fund. It should lead the way into new areas that redirect the Irish economy through public investment.
- **NAMA:** This is projected to produce a surplus of another €3 billion by 2020. But it has sold off property at bargain basement prices and is paying out significant sums to developers who helped bankrupt the country. NAMA land and property must be used to spearhead a major public house-building programme that will give jobs to thousands of building workers.
- **The Apple billions:** Instead of paying expensive lawyers to fight for Apple, we should take the €14 billion that Apple owes and use it for strategic investment.

To target public investment, People Before Profit advocate the establishment of key, strategic, state-run companies in the following areas.

- **Banking:** Private ownership of Irish banks has failed. With public banking, credit would be more accessible for projects that better society. Public banking would stop bankers running away with tax-free profits.
- **Construction:** We could build 20,000 new units next year via a state-run construction company. This would increase supply by 100,000 houses over five years. New construction projects are also needed to retrofit homes, to build up our water infrastructure and to develop healthcare, educational and childcare facilities.
- **Oil and gas exploration:** People Before Profit want to make Ireland carbon neutral by 2030. No further licences should be issued for oil and gas. We want to follow the Norwegian model and take our natural resources into public ownership. These would then be used to develop a world-leading green energy sector.
- **Pharmaceuticals:** The Irish state currently gives around €700 million to companies in order to do research and development (R&D). People Before Profit would begin to redirect that money into a state-run pharmaceutical industry dedicated to producing generic drugs that could be sold below the cost of branded alternatives.
- **Agriculture:** People Before Profit want a new deal for the agricultural sector. Farmers should not be ripped off by big processors and supermarket chains. We would impose a levy on the major supermarkets to be redistributed to small and medium-sized enterprises who prioritise nutritious food and environmental protection. We should also take the major agri-business food processors into public ownership to help change the direction of agriculture for an era of climate change.

A fair deal at work

Whether you are a traditional manual worker or a white-collar worker, you need greater protection. Yet low pay is on the rise, particularly for the young. Many are in precarious, insecure employment. Instead of a government that looks after corporations, we need one that ensures workers have more rights. People Before Profit support strong unions that stand up for workers' rights. Today, many union leaders have become too close to employers and the government. They need to become more democratic and fight for their members. Workers should also have a right to freedom of association – to join a union of their choice. We will support the following legislative changes:

- **Ban discrimination: pay parity and restoration now.** Public sector workers hired after 2011 are paid less than those who joined before. Additionally, some public sector workers are paid less than similarly qualified workers. Nurses and teachers were right to strike for pay parity and restoration. We would repeal FEMPI terms and support public sector workers in their call for pay parity and restoration.
- **End the gender pay gap.** It is completely unacceptable that women are paid less than men for doing the same work. This in-built sexism needs to be weeded out through legislation, union action and cultural changes.
- **Give all workers equal rights from day one.** Whether you are part-time or full-time, temporary or permanent, you should have the same legal rights so that work conditions are not driven down.
- **Guarantee unions the right to access all workplaces.** Unions should have the right to enter a workplace at least once a year to put the case for why people should join. They should also be able to inspect for adherence to labour legislation.
- **Recognise unions for bargaining.** When at least 20 percent of the workers join a union, they should have a right to collectively bargain with their employer through their chosen union.
- **Ban zero-hour contracts.** Workers have a right to a guaranteed number of hours per week.
- **Legislate for four extra holidays a year.** With an annual right to 29 days holidays, workers in Ireland have one of the lowest entitlements in Europe. Give workers a statutory right to bereavement leave.
- **Raise the minimum wage to the living wage.** A living wage is calculated on what one needs for a socially acceptable standard of living.

- **Control the price of building land to create affordable housing.** You can build a three-bedroomed house for less than €200,000. If speculation in land were stopped, we could have cheaper housing.
- **Force NAMA to hand over land for public housing.** This is public land – it should be used to build council houses cheaply.
- **Stop the sell-off of public land to private developers.** Fine Gael wants to sell off as much public land as cheaply as possible to their developer friends. This must be stopped. Public land should be used for council and affordable housing and community amenities.
- **Implement rent controls and provide security of tenure.** Rents are too high and this is leading to social cleansing. The poor are being forced out of their communities. Freeze the rents immediately. Create a system whereby tenants can seek a cut in rents. Introduce efficient rent controls that link future rent increases to the Consumer Price Index. Give tenants security of tenure.
- **Create an independent review board for council tenants.** At present, tenants cannot appeal decisions of their landlord – the local authorities.
- Establish an Independent National Housing Agency to oversee **the delivery of safe and culturally appropriate Traveller Accommodation.**
- **Ban economic evictions.** Vulture funds are trying to increase the rate of evictions because property prices have risen. Landlords use loopholes such as renovations to evict tenants. If passed in the Dáil, the Solidarity-People Before Profit Anti-Eviction Bill would have closed these loopholes and banned evictions in cases of demonstrable economic distress. We will continue to fight to stem the tide of evictions.
- **Impose a vacant dwelling levy.** There are over 200,000 vacant properties in Ireland – even though thousands have no home. We need a ‘use it or lose it’ policy whereby private property owners will pay a special levy if their property is left empty for more than six months. We would impose a vacant land levy of 25 percent to be charged on land that is being held back for speculative reasons.
- **Use Compulsory Purchase Orders.** In some cases a levy will not be enough. If the public good demands it, the state should be able to use a CPO to attain appropriate accommodation.
- **Reverse the scandal of self-certification of building works.** Conduct immediate audits for fire and safety. Create a redress fund for the 90,000 houses built during the Celtic Tiger era that have serious defects. Levy the construction industry for this fund.

- **Guarantee access to healthcare within 18 weeks.** Guarantee treatment in A+E within four hours. These are standards a modern 21st-century healthcare system should have.
- **Create a publicly-funded online GP service.** The state should provide an online service for people out of hours. This could also be used for follow-up advice when procedures are over.
- **Develop the ambulance service and create more local on-call health services.** Patients sometimes have to travel from Donegal to Galway to access chemotherapy. We need more local services where possible and an up-to-the-minute ambulance service where necessary.
- **Establish a Public Pharmacy Agency and save money by breaking up the Big Pharma cartel.** The State spends €2 billion a year on drugs, but the prices are higher than elsewhere. We should purchase drugs on the global market and shift towards more generic drugs.
- **Abolish car parking charges in hospitals.** It is stressful enough visiting the sick – we don't need to impose an extra burden.
- **Ban unsafe shifts for health workers.** Doctors, nurses and other health workers are forced to work excessively long hours due to the crises in staffing. This puts patient safety at risk. We would ensure safe staffing levels and ban dangerous shift hours.
- **End discrimination against foreign and non-EU doctors.** Provide standardised medical training for all doctors, including those not trained in Ireland.
- **Train consultants for public-only work.** Establish alternative consultant training schemes in association with third-level institutions, to stem the shortage of certain specialties. Take control over the number of specialists trained.
- **Provide extra support for transgender people.**
- **Provide proper supports for those with autism and those with dementia.**
- **Take mental health and loneliness seriously.** Implement the progressive proposals from Vision for Change 2020. Increase the mental health budget. Move away from the reliance on drug treatment and towards the use of other therapies. Open 24-hour psychiatric care facilities. Help develop strong communities and a culture of volunteering.



Sport and wellbeing

- **Tackle growing levels of childhood obesity.** Put a 'sugar tax' on the profits of carbonated soda companies. Ban vending machines from schools and provide water fountains.
- **Start Fruit and Veg Clubs in all schools** to make sure children get their five portions a day and build healthy eating habits for the future.
- **Increase physical activity in the school curriculum.**
- **Invest in local facilities and create affordable public gyms.** In an urban environment, we need more access to exercise facilities. Publicly-owned gyms and swimming pools can keep prices down and help create greater community spirit.
- **Provide outdoor recreational facilities,** such skate parks and dirt tracks.
- Ensure **all urban and rural areas have sporting facilities** available to the local population, including pitches and equipment.
- **Create a country-wide network of cycle lanes.** A nationwide cycle-lane programme would reduce pollution and make the nation healthier.
- Legislate to **give registered fans control over the running of clubs:** Sport should be run by its participants and supporters – not by big business or executives on super-salaries; sports grounds should not be sold off by cliques that gain control of clubs.
- Keep the **broadcasting rights to major sporting events** open.

Improving community life

We need to rebuild communities and reduce dependency on a money economy.

- **Increase support to local community centres.** Community centres should have state-of-the-art equipment to enable people to do fitness classes or hold discussions.
- **Provide free Wi-Fi in city centres.** With limited investment, we can help turn Ireland into a hot spot of the digital age.
- **Revitalise our libraries.** With the right technology and staffing levels, these could be a store house for all sorts of media.
- **Bring back council control of waste collection.** Bin charges and the privatisation of waste collection have been a disaster.
- **Develop proper recycling facilities** at the local level. In many EU countries, there are free recycling facilities in many estates.
- **Focus planning on revitalising communities.** We will give local people greater democratic input into planning. We will not allow green spaces to be sold off for huge profits.
- **Cut the rates for small businesses** and increase them for the big chains: Business rates should be related to turnover. Smaller shops in city centres would pay less while the big supermarkets pay more.
- **Stop the closure of local post offices** and other state facilities.



Lifelong education

Education should be about helping individuals to develop their full potential. An educated society is not just more productive – it is also balanced and more critically aware. There are many positive points about Irish education. There is a high level of participation in third-level institutions and proficiency in reading and maths is quite high. However, there are also significant weaknesses. There is a lower number of adults who return to some form of education after their formal schooling ends. Rote learning and preparation for exams dominates, rather than a focus on critical thinking.

More investment in schools and the hiring of more teachers is required if we are to meet our growing needs. Enrolment in primary education is at an all-time high and there will be a peak in secondary education in 2025.



Pre-school education

Ireland has the highest rate of children attending creches in private non-governmental institutions in OECD countries. The result is some of the most expensive childcare costs in Europe. We support the following initiatives:

- **Develop a National Childcare Service.** This will represent a transition to a publicly-owned and funded childcare system. The current, privately-owned system should be integrated into this new structure. This would also mean hiring thousands of extra childcare professionals.
- **Guarantee public access to childcare,** initially, at an affordable cost.
- **Guarantee decent wages and full access to training** and retraining for childcare workers.
- **Increase maternity leave** from six months to one year.
- Legislate for **maternity leave to be paid at the full wage rate by private employers.**
- Provide **fully-paid paternity leave** for one month.

Higher education

People Before Profit believe that university education should be free and nobody should be put off going to college for lack of money. We will, therefore:

- **Abolish all fees.** Currently, the ‘registration fee’ has been steadily increased so that, in reality, it has become a new fee.
- **Restore proper maintenance grants** to guarantee access to students from low-income backgrounds.
- Redirect money from R&D tax credits to the university sector to **fund blue-sky research.**
- **Restore funding for third-level education.** State funding for third level was relentlessly cut during the crash. Third-level institutions are in crisis and increasingly rely on private philanthropy. Students and staff are paying the price in an underfunded sector, capitation should be restored.
- **Ensure living wages and security for college workers.** Academic and non-academic staff suffer increasingly precarious working conditions – from lack of permanence and progression to outsourcing and low pay. Non-academic staff in public colleges should be employed in-house on decent wages. Teaching and research staff from PhD students to Post-Docs deserve living wages and secure employment.
- **Provide state-funded student accommodation.** Lack of affordable student accommodation is now a major barrier to students accessing education. The only solution is state-funded, affordable student accommodation.



System change, not climate change



Climate change is the biggest issue facing the human race. Simply put, if we do not drastically reduce our carbon emissions, we are facing extinction. More than 99 percent of climate scientists now recognise climate change as a man-made problem. People Before Profit advocate a radical series of measures to reduce our Co2 emissions:

- Act now to **achieve an agreed Paris target level of Co2 mitigation to limit warming below two degrees centigrade** in unison with other European countries. The Climate Change Low Carbon Development 11 Bill 2015 showed Ireland is way off track and will have major challenges post-2020 in decarbonising its economy.
- **Decarbonise our economy.** Ireland is heavily dependent on importing fossil fuel. We must move away from this by creating a strategy that is openly and democratically debated. For our part, People Before Profit commit to a carbon-neutral economy by 2030.
- **Provide proper investment in affordable and frequent public transport.** Move to free public transport to get people out of cars.
- **Retrofit buildings.** Set up a national construction agency to retrofit homes to the highest energy efficiency standards. Provide accredited training to retrofitting workers.
- Provide **substantial investment in renewable energies.**
- **Divest from fossil fuels:** keep it in the ground.
- Continue to **make Hydraulic Fracturing (fracking) illegal.**
- **Keep our forestry in public ownership** and **increase the afforestation** of the country.
- Develop and expand programmes to **cultivate native hard-woods.**

For a more comprehensive look at our environmental policies, see our fully-costed Ecosocialist Manifesto at www.eco.pbp.ie.

A New Deal for farming communities



Big business dominates the agricultural sector. In meat processing, for example, three companies – ABP, Dawn Meats and Kepak – dominate the industry. This means ordinary farmers get roughly 15 to 20 percent less than their counterparts in Britain. People Before Profit want to rebalance the sector in favour of small and medium-sized ventures. To do this we would:

- **Take the big agri-producers into public ownership.**
- **Promote cooperative models** of farm ownership.
- **Reform Common Agricultural Policy payments** to make payments more equal. Seek to put a ceiling on direct payments at €30,000 annually.
- Incentivise the development of **organic farming for local consumption** and direct farmer markets.
- Incentivise an **increase in tillage farming** from 10 percent to 40 percent.
- Examine the viability of creating **a domestic hemp industry**. This would reduce our carbon footprint and tackle the corporate power of companies like Cement Roadstone.
- **Prioritise organic fertilisers**; turn slurry into biofuel.
- **Ban industrial-mechanical algae production** in favour of more environmentally-friendly methods.
- **Support farmers affected by Brexit.**
- **Fully oppose Mercosur** and other forms of neoliberal free-trade agreements.

Arts and culture for all

Artistic practice should be available to the whole of society regardless of income, location or social background. We call for the following measures:

- Create a **National Cultural Fund** to increase state funding of the arts to the European average of 0.6 percent of GDP.
- **Fund access to arts participation in disadvantaged areas** for adults and children and those with disabilities.
- **Open schools and colleges for after-school artistic activities** for children and teenagers.
- **Open public spaces for use by local arts organisations.**
- **Support live music.** Live music venues are a vital part of our cultural life. We will cut rates on pubs that have regular live music.
- **Support performances and exhibitions** in public spaces.
- **Create arts participation programmes** in prisons, schools, care homes and hospitals.
- **Remove the requirement of 'availability for work' for artists** on Jobseeker's Allowance.
- **Create a 'new deal' programme for artists in the public sector.** This would create well-paid jobs and increase access to the arts throughout society.

Media

- **Support public broadcasting** as a vital part of a creative and critical society.
- Cut the salaries of top RTÉ performers and **use a tax on digital media companies, such as Facebook, to fund public broadcasting.**
- **End Independent News Media's existing monopoly** over many media outlets.

A more equal society

The political establishment use PR spin to project an image of care and respect. But they put thousands of people into Direct Provision, voted against extra protection for migrants in the Mediterranean and failed to make sure every woman has local access to abortion services. People Before Profit want a society built on equality and respect.



Women's rights

Increased public attention on domestic violence and sexual assault has highlighted how the state continues to fail women. In the courts, the burden of proof is too often on survivors and justice is rarely served. Most reported sexual assaults end in no conviction and a majority of sexual assaults go unreported.

Refuges and shelters for victims of abuse and violence are underfunded and entire regions of the country have no shelter whatsoever. The lack of secure shelters for women and children, combined with the housing crisis mean women are often trapped in dangerous, abusive situations. People Before Profit will continue to fight for real justice alongside survivors of assault and abuse.

Deciding whether or not and when to have children are very personal matters. We believe that these decisions should be made by women themselves, in consultation with their doctor and with the support of their partner and family if that is appropriate. People Before Profit support a woman's right to make her own decisions regarding reproduction, including the right to free, safe and legal abortion.

We are committed to:

- **Free contraception** through the health service. Contraceptive methods such as the bar can cost over €300, leaving those who cannot afford to pay without protection from pregnancy.
- **Free sanitary products** through the health service.
- **Separation of sex education in schools from religion and moralism.** Education should include a cultural critique of everyday sexism.
- **Gender audits at work** to highlight structural discrimination. Forcing employers to publish plans on how significant imbalances will be addressed.
- **Accessible state-funded childcare** in communities and workplaces.
- **Increasing the Maternity Period to 12 months**, providing full maternity pay and one month's paternity pay.
- **Adequate provision of services** for lone parents and their families, for people with disabilities and for children with special needs.
- **Full financial support for women's refuge and rape-crisis centres** dealing with domestic violence.

Social protection

- **Reverse the cuts to social welfare payments.**
- **Extend child benefit** to 18-year-olds in second-level education.
- **Increase the winter fuel allowance** by two weeks.
- **Increase the age of the youngest child receiving One Parent Family Payment** to 14.
- **Abolish discriminatory rates of Job Seekers Allowance** to those under 26 years old.
- **Increase the back to school and footwear allowances** by €50.
- **Increase basic rates of welfare** by €10 per week.

Anti-racism

People Before Profit are opposed to racism in all its forms, including Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and anti-Traveller racism. We regard the ordinary people of every nation, ethnic group and creed as our sisters and brothers.

We will seek to overcome all instances and causes of racism.

- **End Direct Provision** and give asylum seekers the right to work.
- Welcome refugees and asylum seekers. **Stop deportations.**
- Establish an Independent National Housing Agency to oversee the **delivery of safe and culturally appropriate Traveller Accommodation.**
- Give **proper recognition to the qualifications of non-EU migrants.** This will help to integrate communities.
- **Establish a right to family reunification** for immigrants who have spent time in Ireland.
- Implement **full legal protection for au pairs** as employees.
- Establish **cross-cultural community forums**, particularly in areas with high levels of immigration.
- **Hold a referendum to repeal the 27th Amendment.** Give all children born here the right to citizenship.



LGBTQ rights

There have been huge advances in LGBTQ rights in Ireland. But there is still a culture of prejudice that must be undone. People Before Profit advocate:

- **Full equality for gay or bisexual men donating blood.** This means ending the 12-month celibacy rule that currently exists.
- **Hate crime legislation** to deal with homophobic and transphobic attacks and proper recording of data on such attacks.
- **Extension of the Gender Recognition Act to those aged from 16 to 18;** a third gender option for non-binary people on all official forms.
- Legislation to make **anti-retroviral drugs**, such as pre-exposure prophylaxis, free.
- Legislation to **allow all LGBTQ people fleeing persecution to live in Ireland.**
- **Free gender care through an Irish NHS**, including services like psychotherapy, counselling, speech and language therapy, hormone therapy, hair removal and gender reassignment surgery.
- Restoration and improvement of **funding for mental health and addiction treatment services.**
- Proper **funding for LGBTQ organisations and resource centres.**
- **Compulsory, age-appropriate sex education** which deals with issues around gender, sexuality, safe sex, consent and contraception.
- Schools must have an **anti-bullying module dealing with LGBTQ young people.**

Irish language

The current government has shown little interest or enthusiasm in promoting the Irish Language. People Before Profit will:

- Support measures to **revive the economic base of Gaeltacht areas**.
- Insist that **all public officials dealing with the Gaeltacht have full proficiency** in the language.
- **Increase the use of the Irish language** on the national broadcaster. Expand and develop TG4.
- **Provide free Irish language classes** in areas where there is local demand.



Law and justice

Ireland has been rocked by a series of scandals in the police. Many of the supposed 'independent' judges have been political appointees or have served their time actively supporting right-wing parties.

People Before Profit will seek to end the class bias in the current justice system.

- **Create locally-elected bodies to oversee An Garda**, including powers of inspection. The Gardaí cannot be a law unto themselves. There must be local, democratic oversight and an elected national police authority to have rights of inquiry into all matters, bar ongoing investigations.
- **End the practice whereby up to one third of judges are political appointees.** There is a tight class system whereby aspiring lawyers and barristers join Fine Gael, Fianna Fáil and the Labour Party to gain prestigious office.
- **End the practice of the state paying out €500 million a year to private law firms.** Develop the state's own legal service.
- **Cut the costs of law for the ordinary citizen.** Introduce legislation to give the public direct access to barristers.
- **Cut the cost of house sales** by establishing directly-employed licensed conveyancers in the public sector.
- **Abolish the monopoly that the Law Society and the King's Inn have on training barristers and solicitors.** License third-level institutions to engage in training programmes.
- **Protect whistle-blowers in the Gardaí and legal system** by criminalising all attempts to ostracise them.
- **End the practice whereby access to the higher courts is determined by wealth.**
- **Require judges to provide written explanations for judgements** in lower courts where there are conflicts of evidence.
- **Give voting rights to migrants** living and working in Ireland.

More genuine democracy

We are supposed to live in a democracy. But we end up with governments who break election promises and do the opposite of what they promised.

Even when well-intentioned politicians try to act in the interests of the majority, large corporations often work behind the scenes to obstruct and limit change.

Real democracy can only develop when there is a tradition of 'people power' – when people empower themselves by mobilising to achieve what they want. People Before Profit will seek to extend democratic decision-making by:

- Strengthening local democracy by **abolishing control by unelected CEOs of local councils**. In Dublin City Council, for example, 50 of the 52 councillors voted against an incinerator. But the unelected management ignored them and commissioned one. We will change the laws to take away this power from unelected management.
- **Cutting the salaries of TDs**. TDs who are paid the average industrial wage would have a better understanding of what austerity means. Their pensions should also be based on length of service, including their Dáil service and the rest of their working lives. People Before Profit's TDs take the average industrial wage, donating the remaining pay to fund our campaigns.
- **Introducing a re-call procedure** for TDs who vote against items in their manifestos. Where it can be shown that a TD voted in the opposite way to their election literature, there must be a mechanism to put down motions to trigger a re-call.
- **Ensure Ministers are limited to one special adviser**, paid at the same rate as TDs. Politics should not be about awarding cronies with super-salaries.
- **End the practice of commissioning consultancy reports from private accountancy/consultancy firms** with a corporate bias.
- **Extend the Freedom of Information Act to cover private firms that receive contracts to run public services**. Abolish fees for Freedom of Information requests.
- **Ban lobbying by PR agencies** working on behalf of corporations. Ensure there is no preferential access for corporations.
- **Ban Ministers and senior public officials from joining boards of corporations** operating in areas relevant to their competence for a period of five years after leaving office.

- **Introduce citizens' assemblies**, based on town hall meetings, which can choose delegates for national assemblies on a rotating basis.
- **End the patronage system.** All appointments should be advertised. The power to appoint to state boards should be removed from Ministers and vested in a Board that is ratified by a citizens' assembly.
- **Give citizens a right to referenda** on receipt of 50,000 signatories.
- **Reduce the voting age to 16.**

A United Ireland

People Before Profit are a 32 county party with a vision for a Socialist Ireland. The threat of a hard border brought about by a Tory Brexit has reanimated the question of the border and partition. We believe that people, North and South, have a right to decide the future of the border and of Ireland as a whole.

A Border Poll by simultaneous votes North and South of the border should be held to determine the future of this island.

But a border poll is not enough. Historically, partition cemented the domination of the Catholic Church in the South and a repressive sectarian state in the North – giving rise to what James Connolly correctly predicted would be a “carnival of reaction”. Today, partition remains as a barrier to progress, with an institutionalised sectarianism embodied in the post-conflict Northern state.

Successive governments in the North and South have been corrupt, cruel servants of the rich and powerful. The fight for equal marriage for LGBT people and a woman's right to choose has been fought across the border. The 32 county struggle for human rights provides a very different vision of Ireland than that cast by the political establishment – these struggles provide a vision for what a United Ireland could be.

A vote for Irish Unity is not just a vote to join the existing Northern and Southern states – it would be a vote cast in the hope of a new and better Ireland. **People should play an active role in creating their destiny in a United Ireland through a series of citizens assemblies and a constituent assembly to draw up a new constitution enshrining rights and dignity for all.**

