

Electoral Commission review of European Constituency Boundaries

Submission from the Fine Gael Party

We welcome the opportunity to make a submission, and take this opportunity to wish the new Electoral Commission well in their work.

In considering the basis for our submission, we are mindful of the Commission's Terms of Reference, in particular:

- the total number of members to be elected in the State to the European Parliament shall be such as may be specified pursuant to the Treaties governing the European Communities (the number stands at 13 at present)
- each constituency shall return 3, 4 or 5 members
- the breaching of county boundaries should be avoided as far as practicable
- each constituency shall be composed of contiguous areas
- there shall be regard to geographic considerations
- maintaining continuity in relation to the arrangement of constituencies

Population growth

According to the preliminary figures from Census 2022, the national population has grown by 7.6%, since Census 2016. This rate of growth is reflected evenly across the existing European Constituencies:

Constituency	2016	2022	Change	% change
Dublin	1,347,359	1,450,701	103,342	7.7%
Midlands/NW	1,523,517	1,649,784	126,267	8.3%
South	1,890,989	2,023,051	132,062	7.0%
	4,761,865	5,123,536	361,671	7.6%

That being the case, the Electoral Commission is faced with conditions similar to those considered by the last Constituency Commission, when boundaries were reviewed in 2018.

Existing representation - 13 seats

Notwithstanding the possibility of an additional seat being allocated to Ireland, we suggest that the existing boundaries satisfy all the criteria, and recommend no change – in the context of 13 seats.

Constituency	2022	Seats	Pop/MEP	Variance
Dublin	1,450,701	4	362,675	-7.98%
Midlands/NW	1,649,784	4	412,446	4.65%
South	2,023,051	5	404,610	2.66%
	5,123,536	13	394,118	