

10 May 2023

An Coimisiún Toghcháin

Dublin Castle

DUBLIN 2

By email: constituencyreview@electoralcommission.ie

Re: Dáil Constituency Review

Dear Sirs

I refer to the Constituency Review currently underway and make the following submission, for your consideration.

The 2022 Census of Population revealed an increase of 361,671, which brings the population of Ireland to 5,123,536 as of April 2022, an increase of 7.6% from the previous census of 2016. This increase in population requires an amendment to the number of seats in Dáil Éireann, which currently stands at 160. The new population equates to 32,022 population per TD and therefore breaches the constitutional requirement of a minimum of one TD per 30,000 population. There has already been a significant increase in population since the last census was completed.

I have noted the Electoral Commission's Terms of Reference, which include a range of between 171-181 seats.

We recommend that the Commission bear in mind the importance of county boundaries in its deliberations. Where such boundaries are deemed necessary to be breached, such breaching should be minimal and confined to the minimum number of EDs to ensure the viability of proposed new constituencies.

Public support for boundaries, and the maximising of civic engagement, can rest on limiting the splitting of natural communities and the development of constituencies over the medium to long-term.

Given the scale of population increase, this review may well involve the most significant boundary changes in many years. This being so, and in summary, we think it is important that the Commission set the boundaries in light of a number of specific concerns:

1. Firstly, the overall number of seats should be set so as to minimise the isolation of parts of counties in constituencies where they will, most likely, be marginal.
2. Secondly, the sustained pattern of population increases in recent years is such that the Commission should take an approach which seeks to make the boundaries less likely to require major revisions in the near future.

Yours sincerely,



Seán Dorgan

General Secretary, Fianna Fáil