

## Padraig Power (ELC)

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**From:** Darragh Bohan <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday 22 December 2023 11:48  
**To:** ELC Research  
**Cc:** External - DarraghB Bohan  
**Subject:** Draft Research Programme Submission

**Importance:** High

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Subject: Request for Public Consultation Research on Restructuring Ireland's European Constituencies.

Dear Electoral Commission,

Tá súil agam go bhfaighidh an ríomhphost seo go maith thú.

I am writing to make a submission to have the future of the Boundaries for the European Union (hereafter 'EU') Constituencies in Ireland looked at under the Draft Electoral Commission Research Programme, under Strand B: Electoral Law, Electoral Systems and Electoral Infostructure – sub strand 'Constituency Review'.

I want to express my strong belief in the need for a comprehensive review of Ireland's EU constituencies, with a specific focus on optimising representation through the establishment of smaller constituencies.

Smaller EU constituencies in Ireland can significantly enhance democratic representation by fostering a more direct connection between MEPs and constituents. This approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of local concerns, enabling tailored policy solutions that address regional issues effectively. Moreover, the decentralisation of representation through smaller constituencies has the potential to increase voter engagement, as citizens are more likely to feel connected to MEPs closely aligned with their community's needs, (for example, an MEP in the current Midlands-North West Constituency who resides in Offaly will struggle or will unlikely be able to represent the people of Fanad in Co. Donegal to their best due to location etc.). People will likely engage in the work of the EU more with smaller constituencies, as at present there is little or no engagement from a big majority of the Irish citizens towards EU politics. There is a lack of education amongst people regarding the EU and unfortunately very few people know who their MEP is, so we need smaller constituencies. Another benefit is that a proposed restructuring to smaller voting constituencies not only makes canvassing more manageable but also ensures a closer and more effective representation of citizens' interests.

Given the upcoming European Parliament election in June 2024 and the recent addition of an extra seat bringing our MEPs to 14 seats in Ireland, now is an opportune time to conduct a public consultation research project to explore and analyse the potential benefits of such restructuring for the next election in 2028.

I urge your office to consider this request seriously and initiate the necessary steps to undertake the research. This endeavour holds the promise of creating a more inclusive and responsive European democracy, ultimately strengthening the bond between Irish citizens and the EU.

Further to the above, I propose the following view I have to the restructuring of EU constituencies in Ireland and the re-naming of constituencies:

**Dublin Constituency:** Consider either maintaining Dublin as one constituency with a total of 3 seats or splitting it into Dublin North (DN) and Dublin South (DS), each with designated seats (DN – 2 Seats) and (DS – 1 Seat).

**Connaught – Northern Constituency:** Allocate 3 seats - Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, Galway, Cavan, Monaghan.

**Munster Constituency:** Allocate 4 seats - Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Waterford, Tipperary, and Clare.

**Midlands – Leinster North Constituency:** Allocate 2 seats - Longford, Westmeath, Meath, Louth, Offaly, and Kildare North.

**Leinster South Constituency:** Allocate 2 seats - Kildare South, Laois, Wicklow, Wexford, Carlow, and Kilkenny.

Thank you for your attention on this matter.

If you require any further information, do not hesitate to contact me, I can be contacted on either my private contact details or work contact details below. I would welcome further engagement with the Commission on this submission and other areas of interest to me in the research programme.

Táim ag tnúth le do fhereagra ar an ríomhphost seo.

From: Darragh Bohan (Barrister-at-Law Candidate, King's Inns)

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Thank you.

Kind regards,  
*Darragh Bohan*