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Institut politologických studií, katedra politologie

Diplomová práce

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**Irish Party System and its changes in
last 25 years (the role of Sinn Féin)**

Diplomová práce

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Abstrakt

Tématem této diplomové práce je Irský stranický systém a jeho změny v posledních 25 letech s důrazem na roli Sinn Féin. Zatímco Sinn Féin byla v prvním voleném irském parlamentu na počátku 20. století nejsilnější politickou stranou, po zbytek minulého století hrála jen velmi malou roli. Její silné vazby na Irskou republikánskou armádu bránily oficiálnímu uznání politické strany ze strany Irské republiky i Spojeného království Velké Británie a Severního Irska, vzhledem k tomu, že strana se účastní voleb v obou politických celcích ležících na irském ostrově. Spojení s IRA společně s politikou abstencionismu, kterou strana praktikovala do roku 1986 v Irské republice a do roku 1998 ve Shromáždění Severního Irska, odsunulo Sinn Féin na pokraj zájmu akademiků i voličů. Po mírovém procesu v Severním Irsku se však situace znatelně změnila, alespoň z pohledu zájmu voličů. Dnes, pouhých dvacet let po konci mírových vyjednávání, je Sinn Féin druhou nejsilnější stranou ve Shromáždění Severního Irska (a největší nacionalistickou stranou) a třetí největší stranou v Dáilu (dolní komoře Irského parlamentu), kde nahradila Labour party. A zatímco voličská podpora strany roste, většina odborníků stále považuje Sinn Féin za pouhé politické křídlo IRA nebo za takzvanou malou politickou stranu.

Deskriptivní část této práce představuje historii Sinn Féin a IRA (respektive PIRA) a jejich propojení. Zároveň představuje relevantní politické strany irského stranického systému za posledních 25 let. Teoretická část interpretuje typologie stranických systémů vytvořené Mauricem Duvergerem, Jeanem Blondelem, Giovannim Sartorim a Peterem Maierem, teorii pravo-levé osy a Manifesto Project Database – databázi obsahující volební programy politických stran kódované za pomoci přísně daných kódovacích pravidel a kódovacího seznamu. Analytická část zkoumá vývoj irského stranického systému v průběhu posledních 25 let s důrazem na vývoj Sinn Féin prostřednictvím kódovaných volebních programů této strany. Tato kapitola dále

pokračuje analýzou celkových změn stranického systému optikou výše zmíněných typologií a určením pozice irského stranického systému na pravo-levé ose použitím faktoru ríle, který byl definován Laverem a Budgem.

Abstract

This thesis' topic is The Irish party system and its changes in the last 25 years with a focus on the role of Sinn Féin. While Sinn Féin was the largest party in the first Irish parliament at the beginning of the 20th century, the rest of the century the party remained minor. Its strong ties to the Irish Republican Army kept the party from gaining official recognition both from the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom, since the party contests in both parts of the island of Ireland. The connection to IRA together with the policy of abstentionism, which the party practiced until 1986 in the Republic and until 1998 to the Northern Ireland Assembly, put the party on the edge of the interest of both scholars and voters. However, after the peace process in Northern Ireland, the situation changed rapidly, at least in the case of voters. Today, only twenty years after the process ended, Sinn Féin is the second largest (and the largest nationalist) party in the Northern Ireland assembly and the third biggest in the Dáil (the lower house of the Irish parliament), succeeding the Labour party at this position. And while the voters support for the party grows, most of the scholars still consider to be only a political wing of the IRA or a minor party.

The descriptive part of this thesis narrates the history of Sinn Féin and IRA (PIRA respectively) and their connection and also introduces the relevant political parties in the Irish party system during the last 25 years. The theoretical part interprets the typologies of party system by Maurice Duverger, Jean Blondel, Giovanni Sartori and Peter Mair; the theory of the left-right scale and the Manifesto Project Database – a database containing party election manifestos coded using a strict codebook and coding rules. The analytical part examines the evolution of the Irish party during the last 25 years with an emphasis on the progression of Sinn Féin analyzed through its coded manifestos. The chapter proceeds with an investigation into the overall changes of the system through the lenses of the above mentioned typologies and analyzes the positions of Irish political parties on the left-right scale using the ríle factor as introduced by Laver and Budge.

Klíčová slova

Irský politický systém, Giovanni Sartori, Maurice Duverger, Jean Blondel, Peter Mair, Sinn Féin, IRA, typologie stranických systémů, ríle, levice, Manifesto Project Database, Michael Laver, Ian Budge

Keywords

Irish party system, Giovanni Sartori, Maurice Duverger, Jean Blondel, Peter Mair, Sinn Féin, IRA, party system typology, ríle, Left, Manifesto Project Database, Michael Laver, Ian Budge

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Prohlášení

1. Prohlašuji, že jsem předkládanou práci zpracovala samostatně a použila jen uvedené prameny a literaturu.
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3. Souhlasím s tím, aby práce byla zpřístupněna pro studijní a výzkumné účely.

V Praze dne 25.4.2019

Bc. Hana Lukášová

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Teze závěrečné diplomové práce

Katedra politologie IPS FSV UK

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jméno: **Hana Lukášová**

Název práce: **Irský stranický systém a jeho změny v posledních 25 letech se zaměřením na Sinn Féin**

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Zdůvodnění výběru práce (max 2000 znaků):

The topic of this thesis has two parts. First is the Irish party system itself. Usually described as an anomaly, the Irish party system does not fit into common party system rules and is unique in Western Europe. There are several reasons for this. First of all, the Irish system with its electoral system of proportional representation in the form of single transferable vote but historically the two (and a half) party system does not fit the Duverger's laws. Scholars claim, that there is no left party in Ireland, since both Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael are center-right parties and the Labor party used to play a minor role in Irish politics.

This thesis will demonstrate how the Irish party system changed throughout its existence, with a focus on the case of Sinn Féin, which is one of the oldest parties on the island, with its roots back in 1905. Almost all parties in Ireland have its roots connected to Sinn Féin - Fianna Fáil was founded by former Sinn Féin member Eamon de Valera, Fine Gael was formed from Cumann na nGaedheal in 1922 in connection to Anglo-Irish treaty and the Workers party was created after the split within Sinn Féin in 1970. During the period when Ireland was fighting for its independence, Sinn Féin was the largest and the most influential party (winning 46,9% in the 1918 Dáil election, which at that time was not recognized by the British authorities). However, after the split in the party in response to the Anglo-Irish Treaty, followed by the departure of de Valera and creation of Fianna Fáil, the party became minor. During the rest of the 20th century, Sinn Féin played a minor role in the official political bodies both in the Republic of Ireland as well as in Northern Ireland. The elections of 2007 profoundly changed this century long phenomenon and in the last elections, Sinn Féin gained the third highest number of votes.

Předpokládaný cíl (max 1500 znaků):

This thesis will describe the Irish party system and its changes in the last 25 years with a focus on Sinn Féin. The thesis will introduce relevant political parties throughout the history of Ireland, their history and programmatical evolution in the last 25 years together with an analysis of electoral results from 1992 until today. On this basis, it will proceed to the evaluation of the party system itself, using the Blondel's and Sartori's typologies. The thesis aims to answer following research questions:

- 1) What were the most significant changes in the Irish party system in the last 25 years?
- 2) How can the Irish party system in the last 25 years be characterized using Blondel's and Sartori's typologies?
- 3) How does the party system look on the Left - Right scale?
- 4) Is there really no left in Ireland?
- 5) How did Sinn Féin evolve in the last 25 years?
- 6) Where does the unexpected electoral support for Sinn Féin come from?
- 7) What are the prospects of the Irish party system for next years?

Metodologie práce (max 1500 znaků):

The thesis will present a one-case study of the party system with in depth analysis of its features and main actors. It will delineate changes of the system with a focus on Sinn Féin.

The thesis will be written using qualitative methods, mainly archival research and content analysis of party programmes. The author will also attempt to provide a quantitative analyses of the parties' programmes using a word-scoring analyzing programme.

The main sources for this thesis will be publications concerning the main political parties in Ireland, articles from academic journals, election programmes of parties and biographies of main party leaders (Garret Fitzgerald and Gerry Adams).

Základní charakteristika tématu (max 1500 znaků):

The topic of Sinn Féin is widely discussed in the literature, however with severe limitations. Sinn Féin is still mostly portrayed just as a political wing of the PIRA. A party, that really is not a party and is being manipulated by a terrorist organization. And even though, it is almost 20 years since the end of the peace negotiations the literature about Sinn Féin as a real party is insufficient and mostly connected to Northern Ireland. In the Republic, Sinn Féin was long in the shadow of the IRA and events in Northern Ireland. It had not gained any important electoral support until 2007, but since then on, it is still growing, currently being the third strongest party in the Dáil. Scholar, however seem not to reflect this sudden rise as much as could be expected. The only source about the change of Sinn Féin from minor party to a major one is a chapter in "Radical or Redundant? Minor parties in Irish politics" by Dawn Walsh and Eoin O'Malley.

The Irish party system itself, on the other hand, is a source for many books and articles. Especially Peter Mair spend most of his career focusing on the Irish party system from a qualitative point of view. More recently Sean McGrawn published several articles about ideological flexibility and party competition in Ireland. A more quantitative approach can be found in the articles from Michael Laver, Kenneth Benoit and John Garry, who analyse political texts and TDs' speeches to extract policy positions using words as data in a computer word-scoring programme.

Předpokládaná struktura práce (max 1400 znaků):

1. Introduction
2. Descriptive part
 - Basic characteristics of the Irish party system
 - Political parties (Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael, Labor party, Sinn Féin, minor parties)
 - Electoral system
 - Results of the elections to the Dáil
3. Theoretical part
 - Blondel's typology of party systems
 - Sartori's typology of party systems
 - Left - Right scale
 - New parties
4. Analytical part
 - Changes in the party system (Comparison of election results, Emerging new parties?)
 - Definition of the party system (According to Blondel and Sartori)
 - The Irish party system on the Left - Right scale (Is there no left in Ireland?)
 - Sinn Féin and its changes in the last 25 years (Structural changes, Programmatic changes, Election results since 2007)
5. Findings
6. Conclusion

Základní literatura (10 nejdůležitějších titulů):

- BEAN, Kevin. The new politics of Sinn Féin. Oxford University Press, 2007. ISBN 978-184-6311-444.
- BENOIT, Kenneth a Michael LAVER, 2003. Estimating Irish party policy positions using computer wordscoring: the 2002 election - a research note. Irish Political Studies. 18(1), 97-107. DOI: 10.1080/07907180312331293249. ISBN 10.1080/07907180312331293249. Dostupné také z: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/07907180312331293249>
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- GALLAGHER, Michael a Michael MARSH, 2011. *How Ireland voted 2011: the full story of Ireland's earthquake election*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN 978-023-0354-005.
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List of terms in Irish Gaelic

Terms in Irish Gaelic	English translation
ARD FHÉIS	Annual party conference
CUMMAN NA NGAEDHEAL	Society of Gaels
DÁIL	The lower house of the Irish Parliament
FIANNA FÁIL	Soldiers of Destiny, Warriors of Fál
FINE GAEL	Family/Tribe of Irish
GARDA SÍOCHÁNA	The Irish police
SINN FÉIN	We Ourselves
TAOISEACH	The Irish Prime Minister
TEACHTAÍ DÁILA	Members of the parliament of the Republic of Ireland

List of used abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
A VERSION OF 1997	The 1997 Sinn Féin’s manifesto coded by the author
A VERSION OF 2002	The 2002 Sinn Féin’s manifesto coded by the author
AAA	Anti-Austerity Alliance
APSA	American Political Science Association

DL	Democratic Left
EU	The European Union
FF	Fianna Fáil
FG	Fine Gael
I4C	Independents 4 Change
IRA	Irish Republican Army
MARPOR	Manifesto Research on Political Representation
MI5	Military Intelligence, Section 5
MPD	Manifesto project database
NATO	The North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NI	Northern Ireland
O VERSION OF 1997	The 1997 Sinn Féin's manifesto coded in the MPD
O VERSION OF 2002	The 2002 Sinn Féin's manifesto coded in the MPD
PBP	People Before Profit
PBPA	People Before Profit Alliance
PD	Progressive Democrats
PIRA	Provisional Irish Republican Army
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
RI	Renua Ireland
RILE	The left-right position of the party
RIRA	Real Irish Republican Army
SD	Social Democrats
SDLP	Social Democratic and Labour Party
SF	Sinn Féin
SP	Socialist Party
STORMONT	The Northern Ireland Assembly
TD	Teachtaí Dála - members of the parliament of the Republic of Ireland
THE GREENS	Green party
THE LABOUR	Labour party
THE PROVOS	Member of the Provisional Irish Republican Army
UK	The United Kingdom
ULA	United Left Alliance
UN	The United Nations
US	The United States of America
UVF	Ulster Volunteer Force
WESTMINSTER	Parliament of the United Kingdom
WUA	Workers and Unemployed Action

1. Introduction

It is hard to imagine the current Irish political scene without such a big player as Sinn Féin. The party is one of the oldest on the island, founded in 1905. During the period when Ireland was fighting for its independence, Sinn Féin was the largest and the most influential party (winning 46,9% in the 1918 Dáil election, which at that time was not recognized by the British authorities) (Mair, 1987).

However, after the split in the party following the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty, as well as the departure of de Valera and creation of Fianna Fáil, the party became minor. During the rest of the 20th century, Sinn Féin played little to no role in the official political bodies both in the Republic of Ireland as well as in Northern Ireland. Its strong, for a long time, denied but nowadays proven, connections to the IRA kept the party from the official recognition by the Republic of Ireland, UK or the U.S. until 1998 (Richards, 2001: 72). Moreover, for a long time, the party promoted a policy of abstentionism from both the Dáil (the Irish parliament) and Northern Ireland institutions. It first joined the Dáil session in 1986, Northern Ireland assembly in 1998 and is still on abstention from the Westminster parliament until today (Moloney, 2005).

After it joined these institutions, it gained enormous electoral support and is currently the third largest party in the Republic of Ireland. Moreover, it has the second biggest number of seats in the Northern Ireland Assembly (Stormont) and is the only party on the island gaining significant electoral results in both the Republic and Northern Ireland. Contradictory to this electoral success, some scholars still see Sinn Féin as only a political front of the Provisional Republican Army (PIRA, in this thesis, referred to as the IRA), especially because of the continuing personal connections, which diminished only in 2018 with Gerry Adams stepping down as the party leader (Gallagher, 2016).

The aim of this diploma thesis is to describe the Irish party system and its changes in the last 25 years with a focus on Sinn Féin. The thesis presents a one-case study of the party system and delineates changes of the system with a focus on Sinn Féin. The thesis uses mostly qualitative methods, mainly archival research and content analysis of party programs. The author originally wanted to provide a quantitative analysis of the parties' programs using a word-scoring analyzing program as well, however, was not able to obtain a copy of the program from its authors Kenneth Benoit and Michael Laver.

The first part of the thesis introduces relevant political parties which gained seats to the Dáil (the Irish parliament) through elections in the last 25 years. It extensively

focuses on the history of Sinn Féin and the IRA (PIRA respectively). The second part of this dissertation proceeds to the description of its theoretical basis – firstly the theory of party systems and four different typologies of party systems according to Maurice Duverger, Jean Blondel, Giovanni Sartori, and Peter Mair; secondly the theory of the left-right scale and its origins. Lastly, it introduces the Manifesto Project Database which allows public access to party manifestos of more than 1000 political parties from more than 50 countries. These manifestos are coded by certified coders using a special MPD codebook with their programmatic dimensions (such as the rile, i. e. the left-right position of the party as defined by Laver and Budge in 1992) counted.

The Manifesto project database is used in the third part of this dissertation, the analytical one. The thesis analyzes the evolution of the Irish party system in periods between every general elections from 1992 until now and proceeds to an in-depth analysis of the evolution of Sinn Féin through its manifestos from 1997 to 2016 and compares their content over time. The author of this thesis also uses the manifestos to count the rile to determine the position of Sinn Féin on the left-right scale based on its manifestos for general elections. The following part offers a comprehensive analysis of the Irish party system and its changes in the last 25 years based on the positions of the parties on the left-right scale and the number of parties which gained seats to a parliament. For the analysis, four different typologies by Maurice Duverger, Jean Blondel, Giovanni Sartori, and Peter Mair are used. The analytical part aims to answer the following research questions:

- What were the most significant changes in the Irish party system in the last 25 years?
- How can the Irish party system in the last 25 years be characterized using different typologies?
- How does the party system look on the Left-Right scale?
- Is there really no Left in Ireland?
- How did Sinn Féin evolve in the last 25 years?
- What are the prospects of the Irish party system for next years?

To answer the above-mentioned questions a number of sources are used in this dissertation. The topic of Sinn Féin is widely discussed in the literature, however with severe limitations. Sinn Féin is still mostly portrayed just as a political wing of the PIRA. A party, that really is not a party and is being manipulated by a terrorist organization. And

even though, it is more than 20 years since the end of the peace negotiations the literature about Sinn Féin as a real political party is insufficient and mostly connected to Northern Ireland. The position of Sinn Féin in Northern Ireland is described and analyzed in a number of articles for example by Jonathan Tonge (Tonge, 2006; Tonge and Evans, 2013) or Stephen Hopkins (Hopkins, 2015).

In the Republic, Sinn Féin was long in the shadow of the IRA and events in Northern Ireland. It had not gained any important electoral support until 2007, but since then, it is still growing, currently being the third strongest party in the Dáil. Scholars, however, seem not to reflect this sudden rise as much as could be expected. The literature focusing on Sinn Féin solely in the Republic of Ireland is not extensive with several paragraphs in every issue of *How Ireland voted* published after every general election in Ireland, a chapter in *Radical or Redundant? Minor parties in Irish politics* by Dawn Walsh and Eoin O'Malley (Walsh and O'Malley, 2012) and an article on minor parties by Joan Coakley (Coakley, 2010).

Comprehensive works about Sinn Féin analyzing its position in both parts of the island are scarce. The historical approach represents Eoin Ó Broin's *Sinn Féin and the Politics of Left Republicanism* (Ó Broin, 2009). An in-depth analysis of the party and its behavior since the 1990s offers Agnès Maillot in *New Sinn Féin: Irish Republicanism in the twenty-first century* (Maillot, 2004).

The Irish party system itself, on the other hand, is a source for many books and articles with many authors pointing to its differences from other western-European party systems, especially the missing Left. Peter Mair spend most of his career focusing on the Irish party system from a qualitative point of view. Other authors also analyzed the recent changes in the party system (Mair, 2007; Murphy, 2016; Barrett, 2016; Gilland Lutz, 2003).

More recently Sean McGraw published several articles about the ideological flexibility and party competition in Ireland (McGraw, 2008; McGraw, 2016). A more quantitative approach can be found in the articles by Michael Laver, Kenneth Benoit and John Garry, who analyze political texts and TDs' speeches to extract policy positions using words as data in a computer word-scoring programme.

The Manifesto Project Database is another source for this thesis, being it the data itself or the parts of the project addressing the theory of the left-right scale and the role. However, the author of this thesis had to overcome several issues while using the database. The MPD usually allows access to scholars to all of its data i.e. not just the

results of manifesto coding or the count of categories, but the coded manifesto itself so that the scholar can see how were certain parts of it coded. However, the coded manifestos from the Irish general elections of 1997 and 2002 are missing in the system. Even though their results are in the system, the author of this thesis decided to code them by herself, especially since there is a number of questionable aspects about them, on which more is written in the corresponding part of this dissertation. The author of this thesis addressed the missing data on the Manifesto Project Conference in Berlin in April 2019 during the panel with the leaders of the MARPOR project. The answer given by Pola Lehman of MARPOR was, that copied results are rare in the database and used only in cases where original data are either missing or on old media. The author also asked whether the copied results might not cause bias to the party results over time. Lehman answered, that the results of the party between two elections usually don't change extremely and therefore one missing result should not cause bias. In the case of Sinn Féin, however, the author of this thesis needs to point out, that there are two results missing and considering that it is the case during a period when the party under came major changes, the missing data in her opinion cause bias.

The author realizes, that one of the basic rules of MPD coders is they must come from the country of the party manifesto origin. However, the author believes, that her specialization on Irish politics during both her bachelor and MA studies in Political science together with several study stays in Ireland (Erasmus in 2015-2016 and research stay in October 2018) qualify her to code the manifestos with the same accuracy.

The manifestos coded by the author were coded using the Codebook, version 2016b from December 15, 2016, and the 5th revised edition of the Manifesto Coding Instructions from February 2015. Both coded manifestos can be found in the annex (Annex 1, Annex 2) of this thesis in an open document version and the .xls format for easier sorting. They are compatible with the MPD and therefore can be used by other scholars. The texts were coded during summer 2017, that is why a newer version of the coding book could not be used.

The author of this thesis also discusses several improvements to the system of MPD coding in the theoretical section of this thesis, addressing the missing data and the nationality of coders.

To summarize, this one case study attempts to offer a coherent insight into the changes of Sinn Féin during and after the Belfast agreement in both parts of the island

and changes which the evolution of the party caused in the party system in the Republic of Ireland.

2. Descriptive part

2.1 Irish political parties

Since the topic of this master thesis is the Irish party system and its changes, the political parties in the system need to be introduced. However, since the main focus is on the changes in the system itself and not its parts, the parties will be introduced only in short. With one exception – Sinn Féin, which is the second main focus of this thesis. Therefore, the following parts introduce the political parties, which gained seats to the Dáil (the Irish parliament) through elections in the last 25 years. The following chapter then introduces Sinn Féin, its history, connection to the IRA and evolution into a political party in details.

2.1.1 Fianna Fáil

The third oldest political party in the nowadays Republic of Ireland was founded in 1926 when it split from Sinn Féin after a vote on the policy of abstentionism at the party's Ard Fheis (annual meeting). More on the abstentionism policy is discussed in the part on the history of Sinn Féin. Its first leader was Éamon de Valera, the 2nd Irish Taoiseach (prime minister) and the 3rd Irish president.¹ The party represents Irish republicanism and since its first election has been one of the two major parties along with Fine Gael (FG) in Ireland. Interestingly both of these parties can be identified as center-right parties and are not on the different side of the left-right spectrum as one would expect since these two parties alternated in the leading position of the government for the whole 20th century. This is probably caused by the universalism of Fianna Fáil, which can be characterized as a typical catch-all party, republic (as even its logo states), nationalistic and conservative.

The main points promoted by the party are Irish unity, protection of Irish Gaelic, the remaining Irish independence. Murphy and Hayward characterize the party as more populist and nationalist than FG (Murphy & Hayward, 2013).

¹ De Valera was a Taoiseach between 1937 – 1948, 1951 – 1954 and 1957 – 1959. He was a president for 14 years between 1959 and 1973.

The party gained a periodic maximum of seats in the Dáil in 2002 (81 seats) and currently is in opposition (however has an arrangement with the leading FG). Europe-wisely, Fianna Fáil (FF) is a member of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe. It is also a member of the Liberal International.

Since 2009 the party is registered in Northern Ireland, however, did not compete in any elections there, which was announced to change in the upcoming 2019 election. At the end of January 2019, FF created a partnership with the Northern Irish Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) (Walsh, 1986; Murphy, 2005; Strmiska, 2005).

2.1.2 Fine Gael

While Fianna Fáil split from its original party, Fine Gael was created by a merge of two parties and one political movement – Cumman na nGaedheal, the National Centre Party and the National Guard in 1933. The main difference between the FG and FF at the time of the creation of both of them was in the area of the Irish position in the Commonwealth. While FF opposed the Anglo-Irish treaty and wanted independent Ireland, FG was a pro-treaty party, which wanted to remain in the Commonwealth and improve the Irish position within it. FF took power in 1933 and remained in it until 1948 when FG created the first coalition government in Ireland.

The party can be described as a center-right, pro-market liberalism or even neoliberalist, conservative. As its core values: “...equality of opportunity, free enterprise, and reward, security, integrity, and hope...” can be listed (FG, 2016). FG is one of the founding members of the European People’s Party and it usually cooperates with Christian-democratic parties in the European parliament.

Currently, it is a leading party in the minority coalition with independents and is led by Leo Varadkar (Fine Gael, 2019; Strmiska, 2005).

2.1.3 Labour party

The oldest political party in Ireland was founded in 1912 and is a social-democratic party strongly connected to the trade union in Ireland. Unlike in the two previous parties, its foundation and origins are not connected to the War of independence or the Civil war. Quite the contrary, the party did not compete in the 1918 and the 1921 elections to give people space to decide on Ireland’s constitutional status.

During most of the 20th century, it was the third biggest party, usually entering government in the coalition with FG (and once with FF). The party was always smaller

compared to the FF and FG since FF's broad program and catch-all strategy attracted a lot of people, who would otherwise be connected to the Labour party (Puirseil, 2007). It also contested in Northern Ireland in the second half of the 20th century, lastly in 1973. In 1999, the party merged with the Democratic left and continued under the Labour party name.

Currently, the party is the fourth biggest in the Dáil (after FG, FF, and SF), however, it lost an enormous 30 seats between the 2011 and 2016 election and is currently has the lowest number of seats (7) since 1933. On a European level, the Labour party is a member of the Progressive Alliance, Socialist International, and Party of European Socialists.

2.1.4 Small parties

The following part of this thesis refers to small parties in the Irish party system. It does not refer to the minor parties (under any definition) only to small ones since it would be extremely complicated to differentiate what parties would be minor in Ireland. If one would use Mair's definition of the minor party, characterizing it as a party which won between 1,5 and 15 percent of the national vote on average at more than three elections it would only complicate the matters. According to this parameters, for example, Sinn Féin would have never been a minority party in Ireland even though it didn't win a single seat between 1961 and 1997 (on average for the three elections, the party always gained more than 1,5percent of the vote). Sinn Féin is a case for itself and the main focus of this thesis, is analyzed in a separate, however, if the author would categorize it, it would be one of the main parties in the country.

2.1.4.1 Green party

As a part of the wave across Europe on the edge of the 1970s an ecologist Green party was founded in Ireland. On the center-left position of the left-right spectrum, the party was slowly building its support base, entering the Dáil in 1989 and becoming part of the government after 2007. The party effective broke the coalition in 2011 when it withdraw from it. The party, however, lost all of its seats in 2011 but returned to the Dáil once again with two seats after the 2016 election. It is the first party in Irish history to lose all seats in the Dáil and return to it in the next election. The party also contests in Northern Ireland, where it gained its first seat in 2007 as a partner of the Green Party in Northern Ireland.

Except for environmental policies, the party also advocates for a directly elected Seanad, universal healthcare and protection of Irish Gaelic. The party is a member of the Greens-European Free Alliance in the European Parliament (Green party, 2019; Coakley, 2010).

2.1.4.1 Progressive Democrats

The Progressive Democrats were founded in 1985 by politicians who left both FF and FG. The party was liberal, supporting divorce, contraception and economic liberalization. It entered the Dáil two years after its foundation with enormous 14 seats replacing the Labour party as the third biggest party in the Dáil. The party was a member of four different government with Fianna Fáil (1989 – 1992, 1997 – 2002, 2002 – 2007, 2007 – 2009) with an influence far bigger than the size of the party. Its influence on economic liberalization contributed to some extent to the Celtic Tiger period as well as the economic crisis later on, which caused the effective end of the party, formally dissolved in 2009. The party was a member of the European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party (Coakley, 2010).

2.1.4.2 Democratic Left

In 1992 the party called Democratic Left was established after a split in the Workers' party. The program of the party was defined as democratic socialism, it strongly supported feminism, the unemployed and focus on environmental issues. It was a part of the European Left and gained four seats in the Dáil in the 1992 election (adding two more in the upcoming years), entering into coalition government with FF and the Labour party in 1994 and merging with the later in 1997 after losing four seats in the election (Coakley, 2010).

2.1.4.3 Social Democrats

Three independent TDs elected in 2011 decided to establish a political party under the name Social Democrats in 2015. All three of them were reelected in 2016 and other members of the party were also quite successful in the election (only 1/5 of its candidates failed to qualify for reimbursement of expenses). The party campaigns for a Nordic-style social democratic state, universal health service, and better social services. It supported the repeal of the Eighth Amendment (Social Democrats, 2019).

2.1.4.4 Solidarity - People Before Profit

Alliance of two formerly existing small left-wing parties was founded in 2015 as the Anti-Austerity Alliance – People Before Profit. In the 2016 election, it won 6 seats. As the name indicates, the party wanted to end austerity measures such as water charges or universal social charge. Both part of the alliance, however, are free to have different policy opinions (Solidarity, 2019; People Before Profit, 2019).

2.1.4.5 Renua Ireland

Established in 2015 by four originally FG members (voting against the governmental legislation on abortion). None of its outgoing TDs was reelected and only 7 of its 26 candidates qualified for reimbursements. The party is against deeper European integration and claims its policy will always be evidence-based rather than ideologically motivated (Renua, 2016).

2.2 An overview of the history of Sinn Féin and the IRA

2.2.1 Sinn Féin as an organization

The history of Sinn Féin is severely complicated and since it is not the main focus of this master thesis, it will be introduced only shortly, with the main focus on its change into a political party.

Throughout the last century, several different organizations with different policies operated under the same name “Sinn Féin”. The groups widely differed in their worldviews, policies, and goals. Most authors cannot even agree on the origin of the name itself. Michael Gallagher claims that the term was first used by Máire Butler in 1904, while Eoin Ó Broin² marks Arthur Griffith as the author of the name. One way or the other, the roots of Sinn Féin as a politically active group can be traced back to 1905, when Griffith published a set of theories names *The Sinn Féin Policy* (Griffith, 1905). In his book, Ó Broin differs Sinn Féin groups based on the period they operated in. The following summary of the evolution of Sinn Féin loosely reflects his division. This periodization was chosen since it uses the most important events, Sinn Féin was a part of, as its milestones and therefore is very logical. However, another periodization created by historian Peter Pyne is also introduced, since it more closely introduces the changes in Sinn Féin during the 1920s which were fundamental for its following evolution.

² Eoin Ó Broin is a member of Sinn Féin.

The term “Sinn Féin” started to be used broadly during the last two decades of the 19th century, meaning mostly “ourselves.” It was a slogan used by different nationalist groups calling for the revival of the Irish language, culture, music, sports, and literature. The political group under this name, however, did not appear until 1905 after the publication of Griffith’s pamphlet. His pamphlet followed-up on his previous work on the topic of the Austria-Hungary dual monarchy. Both were broadly read and highly accepted and appreciated. Therefore, up until 1905 the term “Sinn Féin” was used as a description of an attitude of mind, behavior as well as ideology. It was a movement in politics, sport, education, culture and other spheres of social life. A political programme of those who preferred sovereignty over the connection with England (Ó Broin, 2009: 186).

As it was said earlier, at this stage, Sinn Féin was not more than a social movement. Griffith himself had no ambitions to create a political party. Despite his wish, the National Council (a new political organization) started to use “Sinn Féin” as its main slogan and was advocating for dual-monarchy. Being a real threat to the British grip on Ireland soon after its foundation, its influence slowly declined. At the time of the Easter Rising (1916), which brought it to its strong and powerful resurrection, it was only a small intellectual group in Dublin.

The Eastern Rising changed everything for the movement. It is still a common and widespread mistake to label the Rising as a Sinn Féin’s rising. The movement or Griffith himself had nothing to do with it. However, after the Rising, people formerly associated with the pro-home-rule movement shifted towards now-republican Sinn Féin. The party experienced an immense increase of members, as the people, imprisoned after the Rising was released and joined it. During the first year after the Rising, the party gained almost 1,240 new members (Ó Broin, 2009: 192).

„Sinn Féin continued to grow, unequivocally demonstrating its hegemony within nationalist Ireland in the general election of 1918, the first to be fought following extensive franchise reforms. These reforms increased the size of the electorate from 700,000 to 1.9 million, the overwhelming majority of which – women, the young and the working class – were more in tune with the radical message of Sinn Féin ... Sinn Féin took 474,859...” (Ó Broin, 2009: 192)

During the years following the Easter Rising, the group significantly changed its’ policy from monarchist to nationalist. Historian Peter Pyne divides the existence of Sinn Féin into four different periods according to the ideology it stands for: monarchial (1907-17), nationalist (1917-22), Republican (1922-6) and fundamentalist/extremist from 1926 onwards (Pyne, 1974).

The period of rise and empowerment after the Rising and during the Civil war was followed by the split in the party and the foundation of Fianna Fáil by Eamon de Valera in 1926 and a long and deep fall of the party electorally and politically. In the first elections competing with Fianna Fáil, Sinn Féin won only five seats, while Fianna Fáil forty-four. Over time, the party established a strong connection with the IRA, giving the authority over the party to the Army Council, and became merely its political front rather than independent political party. More about the connection to the IRA can be found in the next chapter of this thesis.

Over the following decades, the only electoral accomplishment occurred in 1957, when four candidates were elected to the Dáil. In the next election, however, only half of them was re-elected. It started to be clear, that the party needs to change its policy to pursue better electoral results. Therefore, during the sixties, the party slowly moved to the left. The following part of a proclamation made by Seamus Costello (one of the most important members of the party at that time) shows the change of position of the party and shift to the left:

“...history shows us that in the final analysis the robber baron must be disestablished by the same methods he used to enrich himself and retain his ill-gotten gains, namely, by force of arms. To this end, we must organize, train and maintain a disciplined armed force which will always be able to strike at the opportune moment...” (Costello’s proclamation in Bodenstown, 1966)

Moreover, in 1969 the IRA split into two different groups – the “original” IRA and the new Provisional Irish Republican Army (the PIRA also called the Provos). The reason for the division was easy - the old Army Council passed a vote on taking the seats in the Dáil and in Stormont (the Northern Ireland Assembly), which part of the IRA members denied and therefore established the PIRA. After this division, the PIRA quickly became the stronger of the two groups. The split in Sinn Féin reflected the split in the IRA and what is nowadays (and in this thesis) referred to as Sinn Féin is, in fact, the Provisional Sinn Féin. The original Sinn Féin merger in the Republic of Ireland with the Labour party. The Provisional Sinn Féin resisted taking any Dáil seats until 1986 (Walsh and O’Malley, 2012).

The reason for this was very logical, at least for the party members. Sinn Féin was not willing to recognize the Second Dáil (and therefore any other Dáil following this one) as a legitimate government since, in their opinion, it was not democratically and freely elected by the citizens. They recognized only the Teachtaí Dála (TDs, i.e. the members of the Dáil) who had voted against the Treaty, as legitimate. But these TDs were dying off, so the group of survivors passed in 1938 their authority to the IRA’s Army Council.

“To the outside world, it may have looked absurd, but it was in this basis that the IRA leadership framed its claim to be the sovereign government of Ireland. Because of this, one of the most hallowed principles of traditional republicanism was the refusal to recognize or take seats in either Stormont or the Dáil.” (Moloney, 2005: 56)

Throughout the seventies, the focus of the party moved to Northern Ireland, where the PIRA was highly active. Gaining around 40percent of nationalist votes in the Stormont elections, the party would have been influential, if it would take the seats, which it did not.

The change of the leadership in the mid-eighties led the party back to the Republic, where, however, the party remained in the shadow of the IRA and its attacks and killings, not gaining any important electoral support. The party gained its first seat in the Dáil in 1997. More about the evolution of the party since the mid-eighties follows after the next chapter about the history of the IRA.

2.2.2 History of the IRA, the PIRA respectively

Just like the history of the Sinn Féin, the history of the IRA (PIRA respectively) is not the main focus of this thesis. The following chapter is therefore only a short outline of the history of this greatly complicated organization and its evolution.

The history of the Irish Republican Army (often referred to as the IRA; after the split in 1969 referred to as the Provos, also the Provisional Irish Republican Army or the PIRA) is almost as complicated as the history of Sinn Féin. And it is to some extent very similar. The original IRA was founded in 1913 as a successor of the organization called Irish Volunteers.

The Irish Volunteers were responsible for the preparation of the Easter Rising after which many of its leaders were imprisoned and executed. However, three years later, in 1919, the Irish Volunteers were recognized by the first Dáil as its official army, changing the name to the IRA and launching a guerrilla campaign against the British occupation during the War of Independence between 1919 and 1921. When the Anglo-Irish treaty, creating independent Ireland and Northern Ireland as a part of the United Kingdom, was signed in 1921, the IRA split. The part supporting the treaty became the Irish National Army and fought under the leadership of Michael Collins in the Civil war against the IRA under the leadership of Eamon de Valera.

After almost two years of killing, the Civil war ended on May 24th, 1923. The Republican Government together with the IRA Army Executive, both exhausted by the

constant fighting and seeing the unwavering support from the British for the Pro-treaty forces, instructed the Anti-Treaty IRA Commander Frank Aiken to end the war.

After the Civil war, the relationship between the IRA and the officials was very tensed. Since the IRA recognized only the first official Dáil (elected in 1921), it was holding up to the legacy or the 1916 proclamation of the Republic and considered the Irish Free State to be illegal. Constant preparedness to take over the country culminated in November 1926, when the IRA shot dead two members of Garda Síochána (the Irish police) while seizing eleven of its barracks. The retaliation from the state was immediate and hard. One hundred and ten IRA members were interned the next day.

However, the IRA did not give up and the circle of killing the officials and the IRA leaders as a reprisal started and continued until 1932 when de Valera's Fianna Fáil won the elections. Slowly, the party and the government established a somewhat friendly relationship with the IRA, legalizing the organization and setting free all their prisoners, who had been interned by the previous government. However, in 1935 this short period of friendliness ended. The IRA was once again banned in 1936 by de Valera after they have murdered a man and shot at the police during a strike of Dublin tramway workers. Though this ban put the IRA into illegality, the main reasons for their fight were soon resolved. De Valera's government prepared and introduced a new constitution in 1937 including a claim for the whole territory of the island or Ireland and abolishing the Oath of Allegiance to the British monarchy de facto proclaiming an independent republic.³ By the adoption of the Constitution, the main fight in the South was de facto over and the main fighting moved into Northern Ireland.

The fight officially moved to the North at the beginning of the 1950s' when the IRA's Army Council issued General Army Order no. 8 forbidding military action against Garda Síochána or other military forces of the Republic of Ireland.

"From then on the south was to be the IRA's logistical base, while the North would be the war zone." (Moloney, 2005: 53)

During the 1960s' the organization leadership under Cathal Goulding became to realize, that the potential for an armed fight against the British is small. Therefore, they rather moved their efforts into a more social-political area, getting to a closer connection with Sinn Féin, moving itself and the party more to the left. The organization became

³ Between 1922 and 1937 the official name of the state was The Irish Free State and it had a status of a dominion of the UK. With the 1937 Constitution, the name changed to „Ireland“ and it effectively became an independent republic. Officially, the republic was declared in 1949 by the Republic of Ireland Act 1948.

more engaged with agitation for equal conditions for the nationalists. Almost to the position, where they have accepted that the nationalists have to live under the British rule, but if that is the case, they should have the same rights as the British. The old hard core of the organization, however, did not take long to stand against this move and the organization split in 1969 as it was mentioned above. There were five issues, that the new PIRA official stated as a reason for the separation:

“Goulding’s recognition of the Irish and British parliaments; the move to embrace extreme socialism; illegal internal disciplinary methods⁴; the failure to defend Belfast⁵; and the policy of defending the Northern parliament at Stormont⁶.” (Moloney, 2005: 79)

The original IRA shrank to a very limited size because the growing tension in Belfast and other cities in Northern Ireland led masses of people to join the PIRA looking for protection.

“The IRA before August 1969 was an organization kept going by family tradition. Membership was passed from father to son, mother to daughter, but the recruits who flocked to the ranks of the Provisionals were a new breed, motivated by an atavistic fear of loyalist violence and an overwhelming need to strike back.” (Moloney, 2005: 80)

The provisional and the official IRA collided several times in the future, killing each other's officials and competing over sources from abroad, however, officials never gained as much power and support as the Provos.

“By 1971 there were unmistakable signs that the Provisional IRA was getting bigger and more dangerous than Goulding’s Officials. In June 1970, some five thousand people had attended the Provisionals’ Bodenstown ceremonies; within twelve months the crowd had nearly tripled to fourteen thousand.” (Moloney, 2005: 96)

Throughout all this time a young determined man named Gerry Adams, later to be the leader of Sinn Féin, was making his way up through the IRA’s and later the PIRA’s hierarchy (even though he still denies his membership in the organization). However, at that time, Sinn Féin was just a subordinate organization despised by many PIRA members.

“Each previous generation of freedom fighters had been betrayed, they believed, by leaders seduced by the sirens call of parliamentary politics. They would be the exception. For this reason, they defined the relationship between Sinn Féin and the IRA in simple and traditional terms. The military wing, the PIRA, was in charge, and Sinn Féin would obey and be subservient to the Army Council.” (Moloney, 2005: 79)

⁴ Goulding had appointed as a member of the Army Council Roy Johnston, who was formerly a member of the Communist party, which was forbidden under the IRA’s rule book.

⁵ During the beginning of the Troubles in August 1969, when for example Bombay street was burned down and 1.6 percent of Catholics in Belfast were forced to move into different neighbourhoods.

⁶ He wanted to cancel the policy of abstention.

The seventies were sort of a rollercoaster for the PIRA. For some years, its violent tactic was a huge success, forcing the British to negotiate; later the organization was paralyzed, when British imprisoned almost all its leading figures. Periods of rough fighting with several bomb attacks and killings each day took turns to days of a cease-fire. The British rule prepared the Sunningdale agreement in 1973 introducing power sharing between the unionists and the nationalists in the newly established Stormont beginning its term in 1975. However, the agreement never really entered into force after a series of strikes by the unionists.

The seventies were also the time of the first intimation of the changing party's attitude towards Sinn Féin. When Gerry Adams (imprisoned at the time) came with the so-called "long-war" doctrine (precipitating that the struggle against the British will last not for a few years, but at least for a decade, personally guessing around twenty five more years) he also knew, that the struggle can no longer be only on the violent level. At the Bodinstown commemoration of June 1977 IRA senior member Jimmy Drumm gave a speech (prepared by Adams) stating that:

"We find that a successful war of liberation cannot be fought exclusively on the backs of the physical presence of the British Army. Hatred resentment of the army cannot sustain the war..." (Drumm, 1977, published in Republican News, June 15, 1977)

In other words, the IRA was to continue the armed struggle while becoming politically active. Abandoning the policy of abstentionism was still unrealistic, but Gerry Adams at least put his idea of active abstentionism on other people's minds. At the same speech, an idea of political activity and support gaining in the South was introduced, although with not much of a success in the upcoming years (Moloney, 2005: 142).

The turn of the 70s and 80s brought upon a fundamental change in the PIRA organization. While incarcerated, Adams crafted a plan for the abandonment of the old PIRA's battalion structure and his supporters at large brought it to action. The new PIRA was organized into small closed cells, had a uniform training system and a special unit searching for British informers within their own ranks. Brigadier James Glover wrote a report on the PIRA for British intelligence in 1979 noting, that:

"The Provisionals cannot attract a large number of active terrorist hey they had in 1972-73. But they no longer need them. PIRA's organization is now such that a small number of activists can maintain a disproportionate level of violence...PIRA now trains and uses its members with some care...They are constantly learning from mistakes and developing their expertise..." (Ministry of Defence "Northern Ireland Future Terrorist Trends," NO. 2, 1978)

2.2.3 Sinn Féin turning into a political actor

While Sinn Féin was founded in 1905, the party as we know it today was established in 1970. Running in elections has always been a pragmatic tactic of the Republicans, often used to justify the violence which was justified by the votes of people the party gained. As early as 1870 the Irish Republican Brotherhood authorized its members to compete in elections. In 1918 the Sinn Féin's victory was a start of the war of independence. In 1955 Sinn Féin contested in several counties in Northern Ireland, winning two seats, but continued its policy of abstentionism. During the IRA split in 1969, one of the reasons for it was, that Cathal Goulding wanted to compete in elections but was opposed.

“The split between the factions that came to be known as Officials and Provisionals had its origins in this antagonism: whether the way forward was a collaboration with the institutions or continues rejection and, ultimately, whether the state should be reformed or overthrown.” (Maillot, 2004)

After the split, Sinn Féin became less visible on the national level, however, it started its grass root organization, getting closer to the people founding small offices in rural areas. During the 1975 ceasefire, it opened several so-called incident centers to monitor the ceasefire under the British permission. After the end of the ceasefire, the centers transformed into advice centers, since SF realized their potential and worked closely with local communities through them (Maillot, 2004).

However, in 1981 the situation changed dramatically. After the hunger strike, Adams not only wanted to compete in elections but persisted on having a long-term strategy for electoral competition and the so-called Armalite and ballot box strategy came to action. As Adams said in an annual Ard Fheis of 1981:

“Who here really believes we can win the war through the ballot box? But will anyone here object if with a ballot paper in this hand an Armalite in this hand, we take power in Ireland? (Bishop and Mallie, 1987: 301)

The step of the IRA to give Sinn Féin more space and to compete in elections was a logical one. Nothing in the IRA history forbid its members (or SF members) to compete in the elections, although it was forbidden to take the seat if elected. And the elections to the European Parliament in 1979 showed how strong the support base for Sinn Féin could be. While Sinn Féin did not compete in the elections, a former student civil rights leader Bernadette Devlin did and at the top of her program was the improvement of the situation in the H Blocks of Long Kesh prison, where the IRA members have been incarcerated. Devlin, running under her married name, won over 34 000 votes far exceeding

expectations, especially if we take into account that the IRA in Northern Ireland led a campaign against her. But a lesson was learned from her success - if she could get this number without the support of the IRA and its grass-roots member, how much could Sinn Féin get with full IRAs' support?

The aftermath of the Hunger strike also brought broadening of the SF's view of the conflict in Northern Ireland. Until 1981, SF claimed that unionism is a result of the British presence in Northern Ireland. However, after the hunger strike more complex and pragmatic approach appeared.

"...The most notable introduction to this discourse was the working-class element, which had been cast aside since the early years of the conflict for fear that it would prove too divisive, after the split with the Officials at the end of the 1960s...Gradually, the movement started liberating itself from some of the ideological rigidity that it had always viewed as essential to the unity of its ranks...Sinn Féin started to work with other groups not necessarily affiliated with its own organization in order to broaden its political agenda and its appeal." (Maillot, 2004: 23-24)

The 1979 local election changed dramatically the way, how SF viewed electoralism. From the opposed preposterous remedy to a mean of bringing the responsibility for the struggle closer to the activists, giving them the responsibility of being involved within their communities. The people running for SF were local men and women, often young and progressive, known to the community, but overall just ordinary people. Most of them were incarcerated during the Troubles and had a working-class background (Maillot, 2004: 25). With the above-mentioned strategies, SF was able to gain new voters, not those who previously voted for SDLP, but people not previously casting votes for any party (the same success repeated Sinn Féin in the Republic at the beginning of the 2000s as will be mentioned later in this thesis).

When in 1982 the British announced an Assembly will be created in Northern Ireland as a part of the process of devolution, SF took part in the election, polling over 10 percent of votes, even though it declared that it will boycott the new body. The party continued to show its strength in the following year with Gerry Adams being elected an MP in Westminster in 1983 and Danny Morrison being elected a member of the European Parliament in 1984. By the half of the 1980s, Sinn Féin was a relevant party in Northern Ireland.

The situation in the Republic, however, was more complicated. The politics of abstentionism did not make sense for the voter in the South and it took SF until 1986 to accept and vote during the Ard Fheis for dropping of the policy of abstentionism. Not gaining any seats in 1989 and 1992 elections, the party remained outside the Dáil until

the peace process begun to move to its end. Sinn Féin won its first seat to the Dáil in the 1997 election, polling 16 percent of votes and two seats to Stormont in Northern Ireland the same year.

“Undoubtedly, Sinn Féin’s increasing credibility was the fruit not only of a process of modernization of the party’s image but also of the new political landscape that was emerging in Northern Ireland. While its political presence in the north in terms of electoral support was stable from the mid-1980s onward, and increased substantially at the end of the century, this was far from case in the Republic, where, at the end of the 1990s, Sinn Féin still had some way to go before it became a relevant force in political life. Although the decision to play part in national politics came about with the dropping of the abstentionist rule for Dáil Éireann in 1986, the strategies put in place by the party only came to fruition in the general election of 2002, with the first tangible electoral success for more than four decades. (Maillot, 2004: 79)

The main problem for Sinn Féin in the Republic, as opposed to the North, was its connection with the IRA and the negative connotations of this viewed by the people. The light in which the party was seen changed slowly during the peace process and the following years. As Maillot puts it:

“...the Irish public opinion, while not entirely trusting that Sinn Féin as a party was truly independent of the IRA, accorded its leaders an important role, seeing them as the leaders of a political force who could contribute to delivering peace and who could keep the IRA in check.” (Maillot, 2004: 81)

On the other hand, the high media profile put to the SF leaders during the negotiations helped to make SF more visible in the Republic and also portrayed its leaders as capable, having close relationship with some of the most important politicians on the international level (the president of the United States, the British prime minister and the Irish Taoiseach).

Together with the presence of SF in the government in Northern Ireland, one would say the mistrust of the Irish voter towards SF will slowly disappear. And according to the growing number of votes Sinn Féin polls in the election, it is the case. The mistrust on the side of other political parties in the Republic, however, remains. And while Sinn Féin became a relevant political party in the South during the 2000s, it is still not a potential coalition partner for most of the parties there due to the continuing existence of the IRA (which on this is discussed in the following parts of this thesis) (Maillot, 2004).

3. Theoretical part

3.1 Party systems - definition and typologies

Since the aim of this master thesis is to show the evolution of the Irish party system in the last 25 years, it is necessary, firstly, to define what the author of this thesis means by a party system. Since it is not easy to define what a party system is without

closer focus on its type, for the purpose of this thesis, the author understands the party system in term of Giovanni Sartori's definition from 1976 as being defined by the interactions of the parties resulting from the interparty competition (their interaction and primarily competitive relationship) in the system of free party competition which consist of at least two parties.

Secondly, the different typologies of party systems need to be introduced. Since there is a countless number of them, the author decided the explain four of them:

- the typology by Maurice Duverger based on the number of parties, whether they are rigid or flexible and whether or not are they interconnected
- the typology by Jean Blondel based on the number of parties and their size
- the typology by Giovanni Sartori base on the format (the number) of relevant parties and the polarization (fragmentation) of the system
- the typology by Peter Mair based on structures of competition (closed or open), the patterns of alternation in government, the degree of innovation or persistence in processes of government formation, and the range of parties gaining access to government.

These four typologies are important for several reasons - Duverger's typology serves as the starting point for most other typologies. Blondel's typology is especially relevant in the Irish case. Sartori's typology is, until today, considered by most political scientists as the most relevant one. It strictly defines what a relevant party means and therefore removes the question of electoral returns. Peter Mair is an Irish political scientist, therefore it is interesting to use his typology in his own country (Novák, 2015). The following part of this thesis will, in short, introduce the different typologies mentioned above.

3.1.1 Duverger's typology

Duverger's typology is based on a number of criteria: the number of parties (which is however, not decisive), their rigidity or flexibility (whether the party members vote together), their mutual (in)dependence (whether they create a pre-election coalitions), whether the parties are focused on practical-technical issues or theoretical-doctrinal issues and as a last criterion, whether the parties work dualistically or not. Dualism is a big part of Duverger's typology since he almost always differentiates between two different types connected to the same number of parties. Also, a closer definition of monopartism is

missing in Duverger's work. The following summarization introduces Duverger's typology:

- monopartism - this type is connected only with totalitarian or authoritarian regimes and it excludes the existence of other political subjects than the one ruling party
- bipartism
 - real bipartism - the parties are rigid, independent, focus on practical-technical issues and the system is bipolar, as an example of this system Duverger states the UK
 - pseudo-bipartism - the system reflex the previous type, however, parties in this type are flexible, as an example of this system Duverger states the US
- multipartism
 - para dualism - two major political parties take turns at the power and dominate the system, however, they are not able to gain the majority alone and therefore need an alliance with smaller actors
 - pseudo-multipartism - the system has 3 and more parties, which are flexible and dependent and focus of practical-technical issues, the system is bipolar - the parties create two alliances each on one side of the ideological spectrum and therefore the system according to Duverger:

“nearly approaches the two-party system” (Duverger, 1969:318)
 - real multipartism - the system has 3 and more parties, which are rigid and dependent, focus on practical-technical issues, however, unlike in the previous type the system is multipolar (Duverger, 1969; Novák, 2015)

3.1.2 Blondel's typology

Jean Blondel proposed a typology based on the number of parties in the system and their relative size. He also differentiates between competitive and uncompetitive systems. Although this might seem as simple criteria, Blondel states that he is aware of other factors influencing the party system as the ideology and social structure.

- competitive systems
 - the two-party system - two parties of the approximately same size compete for power and alternate in the government; there might be a third party existent, however, it is politically unimportant
 - the two-and-a-half party system - the two parties compete for power with the need of a third party to become their partner and form a majority; the third party is much smaller than the first two, but it usually represents the ideological pivot and can cooperate with the other two parties, both on each side of the spectrum
 - the multiparty system with a dominant party - a very unbalanced system of four and more parties, where one of the parties is substantially larger than the others and usually gets more than 40percent of votes; however, it usually does not gain a majority of seats, therefore need to enter a coalition with another party
 - the multiparty system without a dominant party - a system of more than two parties of approximately the same size
- uncompetitive systems (Blondel, 1968)

3.1.3 Sartori's typology

Sartori's typology is innovative since it is based on the number of strictly defined relevant parties. A relevant party must have either a coalition or an extortionate potential.

"A Typology of Party Systems," (1976) "...A minor party can be *discounted as irrelevant* whenever it remains over time superfluous, in the sense that it is never needed or put to use for any feasible coalition majority....A party *qualifies for relevance* whenever its existence, or appearance, affects the tactics of party competition and particularly when it alters the *direction* of the competition. (Sartori, 1976: 108)"

The number of these relevant parties needs to be taken into consideration together with the mechanism (i.e. the polarization) of the system and whether the system is competitive or not.

Based on this we can draw a typology as follows:

- systems with only one relevant party
 - One-party system - only one party exists and has all the power; it passes through the daily life of people in the country; it is extra active and intolerant
 - totalitarian one-party system - it is highly ideological and is in all spheres of life of citizens

- authoritarian one-party system - opponents of the system exist, however, are suppressed to the edges of the spectrum and therefore the system is “weaker” than the totalitarian type
 - pragmatic one-party system - the ideology is not in the center of the system in this type
 - the system of one hegemonic party - unlike in the previous type, the existence of other parties are allowed in this system, however, these other parties are secondary and not allowed to compete under equal rules with the hegemonic party
 - predominant party system - even though there is more than one relevant in the system, one party repeatedly gains more than 50percent of mandates in the legislative body from the elections
- systems with two relevant parties
 - a two-party system - the system has centripetal tendencies and results in either one party majoritarian governments or an alternation of the two parties in government
- systems with 3 to 5 parties i. e. limited pluralism
 - moderate pluralism - the ideological distance between the parties is small; the system is centripetal and the parties compete to win middle voters; the polarisation is low; the parties associate themselves into two blocks one on each side of the ideological spectrum; the governments are mostly majoritarian
- systems with 5 and more parties i. e. extreme pluralism
 - polarised pluralism - the fragmentation of the system is high, as well as the ideological distance between parties, anti-system parties are relevant in the system, the governmental opposition is bilateral and irresponsible, the character of the competition is centrifugal
 - atomized pluralism - reflects the previous type, where the number of parties exceeded eight, this type is only temporary as a part of a crisis of the system or its transition (Sartori, 1976)

3.1.4 Mair's typology

An Irish researcher Peter Mair has a somewhat different point of view when it comes to typologies of the party systems. He does not consider the number of parties or even their ideological distance to be of the first importance. Rather he believes, that to understand the party system (and its changes) one needs to understand the nature of party competition for governmental power. The party system changes only when the competition structure does. Since one is observing change, there has to be an earlier version of the system with which the current one can be compared, therefore Mair notes, that his typology is more applicable on longer-existing systems. Changes in structure can include the following: 1) a change of prevailing alternation patterns - when there used to be no alternation and suddenly there is one or when the usual alternation stops or is entered by a new party; 2) a change in the extent of stability of alternatives in the system - when after a period of consistent government making, there is a change in the pattern or an innovative alternative; 3) a change in the openness or closeness of the system to a wide range of parties - can be seen with a new party entering the office. Based on this, Mair differentiates between:

- closed competition structure systems - in these systems there is either none or absolute alternation, the system is stable with a traditional formula and the system is closed
- open competition structure systems - there is partial alternation, the formula of government creation is innovative and there is open access to the government (Mair, 2007)

3.2 Left-right scale

3.2.1 Origins of the left-right scale

The placement of parties on the left-right scale is a widely used indicator of the parties' policy position and its overall standing in the system. Almost everyone is possible to put political parties in their own country on the left-right spectrum; however, few people can identify, what does the concept of the left or right exactly mean.

“If you ask passers-by at random what the difference is between right and left, most say they do not really know, but this does not stop them from positioning themselves to the political left or right.” (Gauchet and Rémond, 2002: 5 translated in Bienfait, 2014)

Even though this exact reason is often used (together with other ones on which the author will focus on later) as a justification for dismissing the use of the left-right scale, this indicator is still close to the people and the author of this thesis believes it is a useful factor for describing changes in the party system. Therefore, it is important to know where the origins of the concept are and what do the people connect with the concept of the left and right respectively.

The very first time, one can talk about the division between the “left” and “right” in politics is in 1789. At the beginning of May, during the preparations for important voting in the Salle des Menus-Plaisirs, the representatives have been divided for easier counting (there was more than 500 of them) based on whose side they took in the voting. The group standing left from the President supported ideals of the Revolution and the one on the right from him supported the *Ancien Régim*. The division felt so natural for the representatives, that even though in the following months, several attempts were made to end this physical representation of ideological affiliation and the number of representatives doubled, it remained in place. Bienfait and van Beek explain this by a natural dichotomy, which is embedded in humans and their dualistic thinking (Bienfait and Beek, 2014). Anthropologist Robert Herz identified that the main concepts understood by people as belonging to the right side are tradition, order, stability, security, and hierarchy. On the opposite side, the left is connected with revolution and reformation, the poor and the weak.

“A typical manifesto of a right-wing party, then, will contain ideas and policies that guarantee the continuity of the existing social order...and support industry and commerce in order to provide economic growth and food security, as well as distrusting all things foreign or alien which could threaten or disrupt the existing order...A typical left-wing party manifesto will contain proposals and policies that seek to improve the existing social order or replace it with an alternative that has not yet been able to emerge because of the course of history, but which promises to liberate s from the straitjacket of the current regime and benefit those in the world who have not been able to fulfil their potential.” (Bienfait and van Beek, 2014: 342)

Of course, the concepts of left and right are not stable – they have changed over time. Also, the central position of the left-right scale is on different places in each country depending on its political system. The insecurity of most respondents on what do the concepts of left and right specifically mean adds a question on which format of opinion research to choose. The following part of this thesis introduces the two mainly used tools to scale people’s political preferences.

3.2.1.1 Expert surveys

Once the concept of the left-right ideological scale is introduced, the important question remains - how to establish where on the scale a political party is? A seemingly easy answer to this is expert surveys. Scholars started to use them in the second half of the 20th century, first asking only a couple of experts to place different parties on the scale, later on developing a more sophisticated strategy - asking a high number of scholars from the same country to put parties on the scale in different categories and counting the overall mean, decisive for the position of the party on the spectrum. The advantages of this type of survey are, that it is reasonably easy to conduct and does not cost much.

However, expert surveys still have a number of problematic aspects. First of them is the question of where and when do the evaluation takes place. Is the scholar able to evaluate the party in that one instance or even year? Wouldn't there be bias based on the history of the party? And based on what positions do the experts decided? On the positions presented by the party in the parliament, in its manifesto or in public? And presented by the party leaders or normal members or even voters? The second problem is, that not every expert does not have to understand the concepts of the left and rights identically. This can be avoided by including a section containing the left-rights distinction on different policies in the survey, as most authors using the expert surveys for research nowadays do. However, this brings us to a third problem - that these policies, important for the distinction between the left and the right, change over time.

To conclude, an expert survey has many advantages - they bring immediate results of party positions at a certain point of the time. On the other hand, they also have many disadvantages, as mentioned above. There is no doubt, that scholars try to make the surveys as flawless and comparable as possible by including more experts into it, dividing them into different policy areas and including an explanation of how to understand the left-right scale. However, one still needs to be cautious using them (Budge, 2000).

3.2.1.2 Coding of political texts

The second possibility of determination of the party position on the left-right scale is researching its political texts. A political text, whether it is a speech, submission, bill proposal, debate or party manifesto is by no question the most widely used sources for estimating party policy position. Texts can be compared cross-sectionally, over time and among different countries, if using the same coding book. From all types of different text listed above, the most commonly used is the party manifesto. The manifesto represents

policy positions and policies which the party will try to accomplish and enact once elected to office and can, therefore, serve as a basis for many models of party competition (Lowe et al., 2011: 124).

Texts can be coded in several ways - automatically using computer programs based on statistical analysis of word counts or speech pattern, semi-automatically using computer programs modified for certain countries using the same methods as the automated method; or manually by trained human coders. The manual method was used to create the Manifesto Project Database (MPD) also known as the Manifesto Research on Political Representation (MARPOR)⁷. The author of this thesis has decided to use the coding of party manifestos to establish parties' policy position on the left right-scale using the MPD codebook. More about the MPD and the codebook in the next chapter of this thesis.

3.3 Manifesto Project Database

The manifesto project dataset is a combination of the two previously introduced methods - expert surveys and coding of political texts. It continues the work of the Comparative Manifesto Project and the Manifesto Research Group that go back until 1979. In 2003 the project was awarded by the American Political Science Association (APSA) for the best dataset in comparative politics. Since 2009 it is financed by a grant from the German Science Foundation under the name Manifesto Research on Political Representation (MARPOR).

The project allows public access to party manifestos of more than 1000 political parties from more than 50 countries. It does not cover only current countries but goes back until 1945. The dataset is updated twice a year and researchers can find in it not only the result of coding but also the coded and original versions of party manifestos. The web page on which the data are available also allows for visualizations of parties' positions as well as only certain parts of data cross-nationally and in a certain country over time.

“The MARPOR project aims to substantively analyze the role of parties at different stages of the political process and it specifically examines the quality of programmatic representation. It studies the programmatic supply of parties, the relationship between parties and voters, the role of parties in parliament, and the translation of party programmes into policy output.” (MPD, 2018a)

⁷ Previously called the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP).

3.3.1 Codebook and coding rules

The project has strict rules for coding. The coding can be conducted only by trained country experts - native speakers of the country, most political scientists or students in this field. The training of experts takes place online, in English, and consists of two training texts. The level of coding accuracy in these text has to surpass a certain level before the coder is allowed to officially code the document from his or her own country.

The whole text of the party manifestos, with an exception of preambles, headlines, pictures, and tables, is coded using the current version of the coding book. The text has to be unitized first (i.e. split into quasi-sentences, where one single statement is one quasi-sentence); then the quasi-sentences have to be put in a table, one per each row and allocated the codes according to the codebook. Only one code can be assigned to one row. Even though the coders have to be from a country from which the party manifesto is, they should use as less outside knowledge and contextual knowledge as possible while coding. Lastly, the overall results of the coding are put into the main dataset, with the calculated left-right policy position.

The left-right policy position can be calculated based on defined categories of codes separate for left and right, as shown in Table 1.

“The categories were theoretically derived and empirically confirmed by factor analysis. Twelve categories from the coding scheme are defined as right-wing and another twelve categories are defined as left-wing categories.” (MPD, 2018b)

Left	Right
103 Anti-Imperialism	104 Military: Positive
105 Military: Negative	201 Freedom and Human Rights
106 Peace	203 Constitutionalism: Positive
107 Internationalism: Positive	305 Political Authority
202 Democracy	401 Free Market Economy
403 Market Regulation	402 Incentives: Positive
404 Economic Planning	407 Protectionism: Negative
406 Protectionism: Positive	414 Economic Orthodoxy
412 Controlled Economy	505 Welfare State Limitation
413 Nationalisation	601 National Way of Life: Positive
504 Welfare State Expansion	603 Traditional Morality: Positive
506 Education Expansion	605 Law and Order: Positive
701 Labour Groups: Positive	606 Civic Mindedness: Positive

Table 1: The categories defined as left and right according to the rile index (MPD, 2018b).

Assuming that left parties address left-wing issues and right parties address right-wing issues, one can measure the numbers of these remarks and therefore measure how left or right the party is. To measure the left-right position, the MPD uses the rile index developed by Laver and Budge in 1992. The rile index can be counted as follows:

$$rile = R - L$$

The R is the sum of the per-variable for all right-wing categories and the L is the sum of the per-variables for all left-wing categories. The rile takes values from -100 (only left-wing issues in the program) to 100 (only right-wing issues in the program). Of course, the method of counting rile is not flawless and has been criticized multiple times, mostly for having low external validity or low construct validity. The low external validity has been suggested because of low correlation with expert survey data, while the low construct validity because of a large number of neutral sentences causing bias by moving the number towards the center (MPD, 2018b).

This bias could be avoided by using the formula proposed by Kim and Fording (1998):

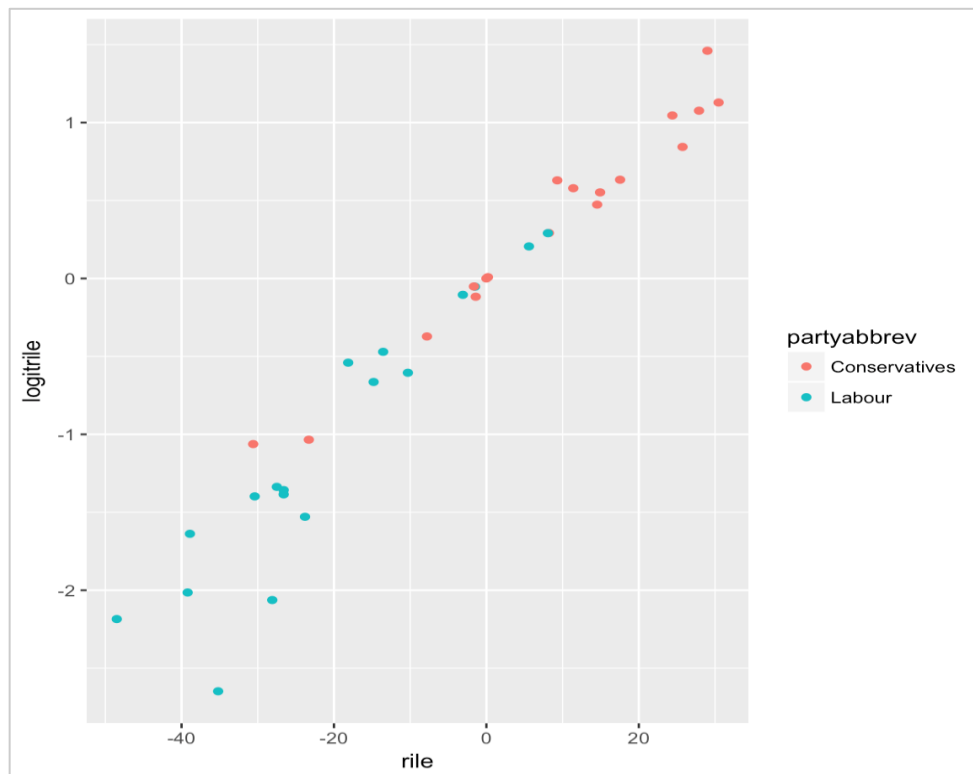
$$position = \frac{R + L}{R - L}$$

This formula creates results further from the political center, however, even in the case that the manifesto consists of only a few left-wing issues and even lesser right-wing issues. The manifesto looking like this will end, according to this formula, on the left side of the spectrum, showing a leftist position of the party. The rile formula would put the party toward the political center. Another version of counting the left-right position was introduced by Lowe et al. (2011) using the log of the ratio of left and right positions.

$$position = \log \frac{R}{L}$$

“...the marginal effect of one more sentence is decreasing in the amount that has already been said on the topic.” (Lowe et al. 2011)

Even though the ideas behind the different counting methods are valid, the overall results when using them does not differ much from the rile results. Visualization 1 shows the comparison of log-ration and rile index measure:



Visualization 1: The comparison of log-ratio and rile index measure using the rile categories (MPD, 2018b).

Another critique of the rile index can be raised in connection with its lower validity in Central and Eastern European countries since it was originally calculated for Western European countries (Mölder, 2016; Laver and Budge, 1992).

As authors of the MPD notice themselves:

“The rile measure is a good starting point for many analyses, but depending on the research question and the sample of countries, there might be better ways to measure left-right positions.” (MPD, 2018b)

3.3.2 The use of the MPD in this thesis

The Manifesto project database is in this thesis used in two different way. Firstly, it is used to analyze the content of Sinn Féin manifestos from 1997 to 2016 and compare their content over time. Secondly, the author of this thesis uses the manifestos to count the rile (as explained above) to determine the position of Sinn Féin on the left-right scale based on its manifestos for general elections.

3.3.2.1 1997 and 2002 manifestos coded by the author

The MPD project usually allows access to scholars to all of its data i.e. not just the results of manifesto coding or the count of categories, but the coded manifesto itself so that the scholar can see how were certain parts of it coded. However, the coded manifestos from the Irish general elections of 1997 and 2002 are missing in the system. Even though their results are in the system, the author of this thesis decided to code them by herself, especially since there is a number of questionable aspects about them, on which more is written in the following part of this dissertation. The author realizes, that one of the basic rules of MPD coders is they must come from the country of the party manifesto origin. However, the author believes, that her specialization on Irish politics during both her bachelor and MA studies in Political science together with several study stays in Ireland (Erasmus in 2015-2016 and research stay in October 2018) qualify her to code the manifestos with the same accuracy.

The manifestos coded by the author were coded using the Codebook, version 2016b from December 15, 2016, and the 5th revised edition of the Manifesto Coding Instructions from February 2015. Both coded manifestos can be found in the annex (Annex 1, Annex 2) of this thesis in an open document version and the .xls format for easier sorting. They are compatible with the MPD and therefore can be used by other scholars. The texts were coded during summer 2017, that is why a newer version of the coding book could not be used.

3.3.2.2 The 1997 - 2016 coded manifestos analyzed

To begin with, it is important to say a number of things about the coded 1997 and 2002 manifestos of Sinn Féin in the MPDs' database. First of all, the three digit code identifying the coder ("coderid") in 1997 is stated as "not applicable" (coded as 998), while in 2002 it names a hired coder under number (215), which is odd since a hired coder would certainly need to provide the coded manifesto itself and it would have been uploaded to the system. However, even more, striking is that the results of the coding for 1997 and 2002 manifestos are exactly the same. This is simply not possible since the manifestos of Sinn Féin for those two years would have to be word-to-word the same. Which they are not. The MPD database also states, that for the 2002 manifesto they have "no information whether a handbook was used or not", which is another peculiarity. How are they uncertain, whether the handbook was used, when the manifesto is claimed to be coded by a certified and hired coder? Taking this into consideration, the author of this

thesis concludes, that the 1997 manifesto was not coded using the MPD codebook and its results in the database are simply just copies of the 2002 manifesto results. Moreover, it is uncertain that the 2002 manifesto itself was coded using the MPD handbook and codebook and therefore its result is not reliable as well.

All of these are the reasons why the author decided to code the manifestos herself. The following manifestos from 2007 - 2016 elections were coded by the same hired coder under number 280, therefore a different one than that in 2002, and the author assumes that coding of them is reliable, since she read the coded manifestos themselves. For the reliability of the coding also speaks the high systematic agreement of code allocation as ordinal data of coder's entry test in comparison to the master copy ("testresult" category). Considering the differences in the coding manifestos, for the purpose of clarity, the author will discuss the categories according to their order in the codebook dividing this chapter according to the category scheme in the MPD codebook. Together with the comparison of the MPD of 1997 and 2002 manifestos' results and the results coded by the author, the results of all coded manifestos from 1997, 2002, 2007, 2011 and 2016 are analyzed.

3.3.2.2.1 Domain 1: External Relations

A first difference between the MPD version (from now on labeled as O version) and the author's version (from now on labeled as A version) is in the number of uncoded text in the manifestos. While the O version claims to code the whole manifestos, the A version did not code 1,69 percent of the text in the 1997 manifesto and 0,18 percent of the text in the 2002 manifesto - these parts of the text were written in Gaelic, and even though the author knows the language to a degree sufficient for basic communication, she decided her knowledge is not on a sufficient level to code them with certainty. A number of uncoded (quasi)sentences occurred also in the following manifestos with the exception of 2011 - all manifesto parts in this year which were in Gaelic were also included in the manifesto in English.

While categories 101 and 102 (foreign special relationship) were not found in the text in O version, the author in A version identified a number of mentions about the relationship with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (the UK), which she considers for multiple historical reasons to be a special one. For the correctness of this finding in A version speaks the number of likewise mentions in 2007 and 2016 manifestos coded by a certified coder. On the other hand O version states a small number of mentions about anti-imperialism (category 103) in both manifestos (since their results

equal), while the author in A version did not find any mention of them in the 1997 manifesto, which can potentially be caused by the signing of the Downing Street Declaration which says that Britain has “no selfish strategic or economic interest“ in Northern Ireland and Sinn Féin’s trust in it (or at least publicly declared trust). The mentions of anti-imperialism were found in all following years by the author, as well as the professional coder and most of them, were connected to the interests of the UK in Northern Ireland.

Interestingly, no positive mentions on the military were found in any Sinn Féin’s manifestos neither by the author or the professional coder, considering the connection between SF and the IRA (which even has “army” in its name), this can suggest how much the Sinn Féin tried not to be connected with the IRA and their armed struggle in the eyes of the public in the Republic. On the other hand, negative mentions about the military occurred in the texts, mostly in connection to the British army in Northern Ireland. However, the author in A version did not identify any of those remarks in the 1997 manifesto, potentially showing, how careful Sinn Féin was about the Northern Ireland topic and its rendering. Also, only a small percentage of all of the following texts were remarks on this topic (from 1 percent in 2002 to 0,35 percent in 2016).

Especially in the A version of 1997 manifesto, a high number of remarks connected to peace was found (5,36 percent) with this number declining over time after the Good Friday agreement was signed in Northern Ireland (only 0,12 percent in 2016 manifesto). Internationalization can also be found in the manifestos from 2002 (both in A and O versions of 2002 manifesto) onwards with both positive and negative remarks on the NATO, the UN, and international cooperation. While the O version has three times the higher number in this category, it is probably caused by not taking the relationship with the UK as a special one as the A version does. Positive mentions on the EU are also traceable in the manifestos, except for the 2011 one after the financial crisis. The A version found a lower number of remarks on this, however, the reason for it is not explainable with only the result of the O version and not the coded text itself. The number of negative remarks on the EU grew sharply in 2016 from 0,16 percent in 2007 to over 3 percent. This is caused by the opposition of Sinn Féin to the Austerity Treaty, the growing power of the European Commission and the EU’s military power.

3.3.2.2.2 Domain 2: Freedom and Democracy

While the O version finds around 3 percent of remarks on Freedom and human rights in the 1997 and 2002 manifestos, the A version found only around half of them in both years. On the other hand, it has a much higher number of remarks on democracy in 1997 (3,94 percent compared to 1,32 percent), with a much lower number in 2002 (0,27 percent in A version and 1,32 percent in O version). The numbers in the following years are similar to a peak in 2011 connected to the financial crisis and Sinn Féin proposing greater citizen's involvement in politics through increased voters participation and lower voting age.

An interesting category is constitutionalism - Sinn Féin in its manifestos either had positive remarks on it (in 1997 both in A and O version, in 2002 according to O version and in 2007 according to the professional coder) or negative remarks on it (in 2002 A version and in 2011 and 2016), never a combination of both. The deflection to positive remarks in 2007 seems not correct in the version from the professional coder, since the following remark talk about the change of constitution and should, therefore, be coded as negative:

“We plan to enshrine the right to healthcare in the 1937 Constitution,” “We published and debated legislation to introduce a constitutional right to housing/ (the Twenty-Seventh Amendment of the Constitution (No. 2) Bill 2003, which sought to amend Article 40 of the 1937 Constitution),” “We are committed to legislative and constitutional change,” and “We propose to enshrine neutrality in the Constitution.”

3.3.2.2.3 Domain 3: Political system

Remarks on decentralization on one hand and stronger centralization on other hand are not common in Sinn Féin's manifestos. There were none in both A and O versions of 1997 and 2002 and none in 2011 version. Both in 2007 and 2016 requirements on decentralization were strong, consisting of around 3 percent of the manifestos and were connected to Northern Ireland and its assembly. Positive remarks on centralization were scarce both in 2007 (3 quasi-sentences) and in 2016 (only one quasi-sentence).

Sinn Féin advocates for better government and administrative efficiency in all of its manifestos with culminating numbers around 1,8 percent of the text. The difference between the O version and the A version occurred both in 1997 and in 2002 (2,07 percent in O version for both years and only 0,56 percent in A version for 1997 and 1,71 percent in 2002). Again, it is hard to say why without the O version of the coded manifesto.

The number of remarks on political corruption grows steadily from 0 percent in A version of 1997 manifesto (0,25 percent in O version) to 2,2 percent in 2016 manifesto. The growth of remarks corresponds with a growing number of political scandals which occurred in Ireland in the past fifteen years. More about them is written in the next chapter of this thesis.

The last code in this domain refers to the party's competence to govern and/or lack of it together with a need for strong and stable government. The difference between the O and A versions of 1997 and 2002 manifestos considering this are striking. While the O version found states only 0,165 percent both for 1997 and 2002, the author in A version found a considerably higher number of a remark of this type - 6,76 percent in 1997 and 5,52 percent in 2002. Considering how high the numbers are in the following years coded by a certified coder (8,36 percent in 2007, 4,75 percent in 2011 and 14,71 percent in 2016) together with an obvious necessity of expressing that Sinn Féin is able to represent people and be a viable part of the government, the author of this thesis is certain about a proper coding of this section. Again, the differences in coding cannot be explained due to the missing O version of the coded manifesto.

3.3.2.2.4 Domain 4: Economy

Considering the free market economy, the difference between the O and the A version is small, especially since the O versions did not find any remarks on this topic. The A version found two in 1997 manifesto and just one in 2002 manifesto. Overall the mentions of free market economy peaked in 2007, possibly in connection to Sinn Féin's social economic strategy. Otherwise, the numbers were not significant, with no mention in the last manifesto from 2016.

Taking in consideration the Sinn Féin's focus on small farmers rather than enterprises, the remarks on Positive Incentives were not high at the beginning of the century, however the situation changed after the economic crisis in 2007 - 2011 (0 percent in A version of 1997, 0,09 percent in A version of 2002, 0,3 percent in 2007, 1,3 percent in 2011 and 1,97 percent in 2016). The O version states 2,81 percent for 1997 and 2002 manifestos, however a number this high seems improbable, looking on the results of following manifestos.

Sinn Féin does not focus only on small farmers but also on small businesses, at least since 2002, which can be seen in remarks on market regulation. While the O version states 0,25 percent for 1997 and 2002 manifesto, the author in A version found zero

remarks on market regulation in 1997 on one hand, on the other hand, in 2002 there was 2,26 percent of remarks on it in 2002. The number dropped in the following years due to restrictions put on the market by the government after the economic crisis (the EU interference did not give Sinn Féin any space to propose different solutions) and grew remarkably again in 2016 to 5,91 percent. Sinn Féin focused a lot in its last manifesto on rent prices, mortgages, and banks, mostly introducing regulations which should prevent another economic crisis.

Economic planning, on the other hand, fell to zero remarks in the 2016 manifesto. However, it was never discussed extensively in the manifestos (0 percent in 1997 A version, 0,63 percent in 2002 A version, 0,53 percent in 2007, 0,49 percent in 2011). The O version, surprisingly, states a high number of remarks on this topic in 1997 and 2002 manifestos (4,3 percent), which once again, can not be explained without the originally coded manifesto.

The number of remarks on corporatism and the mixed economy is steady with zero in all manifestos, except for that in 2011 with two quasi-sentences about co-operatives.

The results in categories on protectionism (406 and 407) are interesting. One would expect a positive and negative category balancing themselves, which does not occur in Sinn Féin manifestos. The results from both A and O version of 1997 are zero for both categories (O version states zero also for 2002). The author found a medium-high number of remark in 2002 manifesto on positive protectionism (1,36 percent), possibly connected with the prediction of the upcoming crisis. The number dropped by half in the next year (to 0,66 percent, still with zero negative remarks). Surprisingly, the results turned over in the following manifesto (0 percent positive, 0,66 percent negative). The last manifesto contains one sentence about protectionism in a positive way.

Category 408 stands for general economic goals and only non-specific policy positions are part of it, therefore the number of quasi-sentences in it changes (2,54 percent in 1997 A version, 0,27 percent in 2002 A version, 0,77 percent in 2007, 2,95 percent in 2011, 0 percent in 2016). The O version did not put any quasi-sentences into this category, which can be due to putting all economic related quasi-sentences into specific categories. Keynesian Demand Management was not included in Sinn Féin's manifestos, except the one from 2011 after the economic crisis, when SF called for stabilization in 3,77 percent of the manifesto. The same manifesto also contained almost a five-time higher number of remarks on economic growth (1,47 percent) than the previous one (0,36 percent). The A

and O versions differ just slightly on economic growth (0,83 percent in O and 0,56 percent in 1997 A version and 0,54 percent in 2002 A version).

The growing importance of modernization of infrastructure and technology is visible in Sinn Féin's manifestos. The author of this thesis found no remarks on that in the 1997 manifesto (opposed to 6,78 percent in the O version), however, this can be explained by the duplicity of 1997 and 2002 results. The author in the 2002 A version also found a high number quasi-sentences on modernization (6,06 percent).

The author's results of the category on the controlled economy again correspond with the later manifestos' results (1,69 percent in A version of 1997; 0,99 percent in A version of 2002; 1,2 percent in 2007). The peak in 2011 (4,26 percent) is obviously caused by the economic crisis and Sinn Féin's calls for more control over economics.

The connection with the crisis is also visible in the number of remarks on nationalization, which peaked in 2007 manifesto (4,71 percent) foreseeing the crisis and highlighting the enormous number of businesses which had been privatized. The author found a very small number of remarks on this topic in the 1997 and 2002 manifestos (0,85 percent; 0,09 percent respectively). The rapid difference between the author's findings and the results from the following manifestos can be explained by the crisis since the number declined again (to 1,16 percent) in 2016 manifesto.

The economic orthodoxy is also visible in the manifestos only with the connection to the crisis (0 percent in both A and O versions of 1997, 0,09 percent in 2002 A version; 0,06 percent in 2007; 1,97 percent in 2011 and 0 percent again in 2016). Positive references to Marxist-Leninist ideology are even more striking example of this - with 0 percent in all manifestos except for the 2011 one (5,08 percent). Considering the socialistic positions the party stood for in the past, it is quite remarkable, that the manifestos do not contain more remarks on this in general.

The last category in economics section also indicates the foreseen crisis with 4,54 percent in 2007 manifesto and practically 0 remarks in all others (0,24 percent in O version of 1997 and 2002; 0 percent in A versions of 1997 and 2002; 0 percent in 2011 and 0,23 percent in 2016).

3.3.2.2.5 Domain 5: Welfare and Quality of life

The environmental protection seems to be moderately important in Sinn Féin's manifestos except for years 2007 and 2011 when numbers declined (0,89 percent in 2007 and 0,66 percent in 2011), probably since the party focused more on economic issues.

Otherwise, the numbers were stable (1,82 percent in O version of 1998 and 2002; 2,81 percent in 1997 A version; 1,44 percent in 2002 A version) with a peak in the last manifesto (3,48 percent).

Until 2007 remarks on culture included mostly those on Irish Gaelic and its use with a peak in the named year (2,69 percent). Otherwise, the numbers are not high with the only a couple of remarks in each manifesto on sport and so on. Striking is, once again, an unexplainable difference between the A and O versions (4,96 percent in 1997 and 2002 O version and only 0,85 percent, 0 percent respectively in A version).

The even bigger difference can be found in the following category of positive equality with a very high number in O version (15,22 percent) while the author found only a small number of 1,69 percent in 1997 manifesto and 2,53 percent in 2002 manifesto. The numbers in the following years are consistent, with an average of 7,5 percent.

A big portion of the Sinn Féin's manifestos consists of remarks on the expansion of the welfare state, with an average of 11,06 percent for all examined years. The numbers are especially high in the last three manifestos (13,62 percent in 2007, 16,56 percent in 2011 and 14,48 percent in 2016). The results of the A and O version are once again quite high (O version states 14,39 percent for 1997 and 2002 while the A version only 2,25 percent for 1997 and 8,77 percent for 2002). The party is obviously focused on the expansion of the welfare state since there are absolutely no remarks in all manifestos about its limitations.

Sinn Féin also stands for the expansion of education with 0 percent in all manifestos about its limitations. The numbers on expansion are stable around 5 percent with no big difference between the A and O versions.

3.3.2.2.6 Domain 6: Fabric of Society

The national way of life is important for Sinn Féin in connection to the unification of the island of Ireland. The numbers were moderately high in the last three manifestos (around 5 percent) and considerably small in 1997 and 2002 both the A and O versions. Negative remarks on the national way of life did not occur in the manifestos until the last one with one negative remark.

The party does not usually include in its manifestos remarks on the traditional morality both in positive (in no manifesto) and negative way (one remark in 2007 and three remarks concerning the eighth amendment on abortion in 2016).

Law and order is also not a significant topic in the manifestos (slightly only 1 percent in 1997 - 2007 in both A and O versions) with an exception of a peak in 2011 (4,75 percent) when the party called for higher visibility of Gardaí (the Irish police) and anti-corruption laws.

Calling for civic-mindedness is also insignificant in the manifestos with the highest number of 1,4 percent in the 1997 A version and other numbers circulating around 0 percent. The O version, on the other hand, found 4,71 percent of remarks on this topic, however, it is unknown where exactly in the manifesto. Possibly, it could have been some of the remarks connected to the situation in Northern Ireland, which author of this thesis put in a different category.

Multiculturalism did not, according to the author of this thesis, occur in both 1997 and 2002 manifestos (while the O version claims 1,24 percent of remarks on this topic in both years). The number was also under 0,5 percent in 2007, however, rose to 3,6 percent in 2011, when a high number of remarks concerning Irish Gaelic was put into this category (and not the cultural one). The number declined again in 2016 to 2,31 percent. The party supports multiculturalism and different ethnic groups, therefore no negative remarks on this topic are in their manifestos from 1997 to 2016.

3.3.2.2.7 Domain 7: Social groups

The last domain of the manifesto project database covers mentions and remark on social groups. The first section of this is labor groups. Sinn Féin focuses on positive remark on this topic, including calls for more jobs and fair wages, with culminating numbers of them (0,58 percent in O version for 1997 and 2002; in comparison to 2,25 percent in 1997 A version and 1,36 percent in 2002 A version; 4,71 percent in 2007; 2,46 percent in 2011 and 4,52 percent in 2016). There are zero negative remarks on this topic in all manifestos.

Sinn Féin is supported by small farmers and focuses its program on them as well. The number of mentions on agriculture and farmers culminates with an average of 4,16 percent (counting the A version for 1997 and 2002). There is once again the unexplainable difference between the A and O version (2,82 percent and 4,53 percent against 7,2 percent). On the other hand, there are no references to middle class and professional groups in Sinn Féin manifestos with the exception of the 2007 manifesto and a small number of references towards professional development and education in this sector.

As was written above, Sinn Féin supports minorities and different ethnic groups, therefore the party focuses on them in their manifestos as well. The highest number of remarks was in the 2002 manifesto (2,8 percent) with a drop to 1,16 percent in the last manifesto.

Sinn Féin also focuses on non-economic demographic groups. The numbers vary throughout manifestos and therefore its interpretation is complicated. There are two visible peaks in number (5,07 percent in 1997 and 3,6 percent in 2011), however, both include a number of general remarks on improving the position of women, childcare, and education.

3.3.2.2.8 The results of the analysis

As the measurement of the position of the party on the left-right scale, the Manifesto Project Database uses the variable called *rile*. As was written above, the index was developed by Laver and Budge in 1992. The rile index can be counted as follows:

$$rile = R - L$$

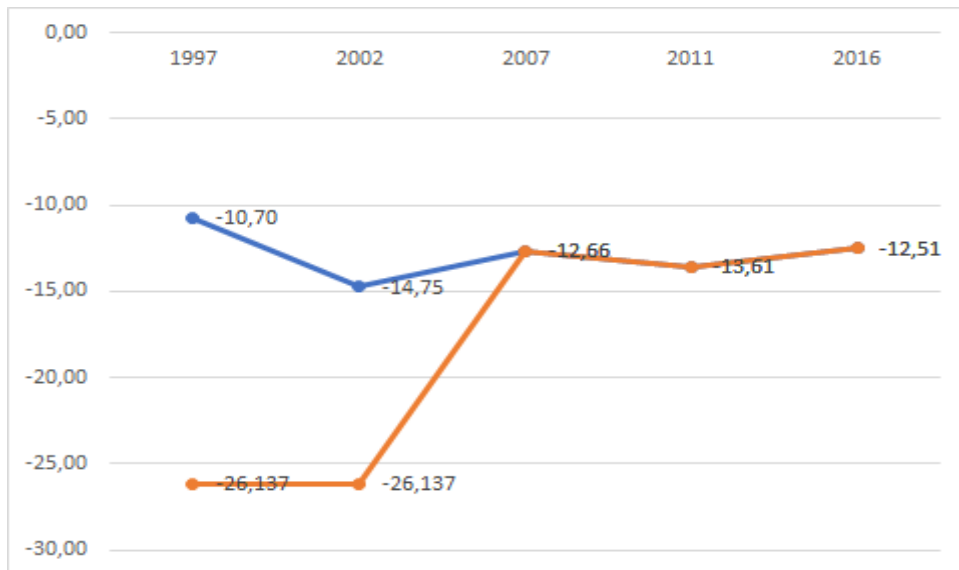
The R is the sum of the per-variable for all right-wing categories and the L is the sum of the per-variables for all left-wing categories. The rile takes values from -100 (only left-wing issues in the program) to 100 (only right-wing issues in the program).

The results of rile for the coded manifestos uses in this thesis are as follows:

year of the manifesto (and its coded version)	Rile
1997 O version	-26,137
1997 A version	-10,70
2002 O version	-26,137
2002 A version	-14,75
2007	-12,66
2011	-13,61
2016	-12,51

Table 2: The comparison of the rile of Sinn Féin's coded manifesto for the Irish general elections between different years and version of the coded manifestos (MPD, 2018c; the author)

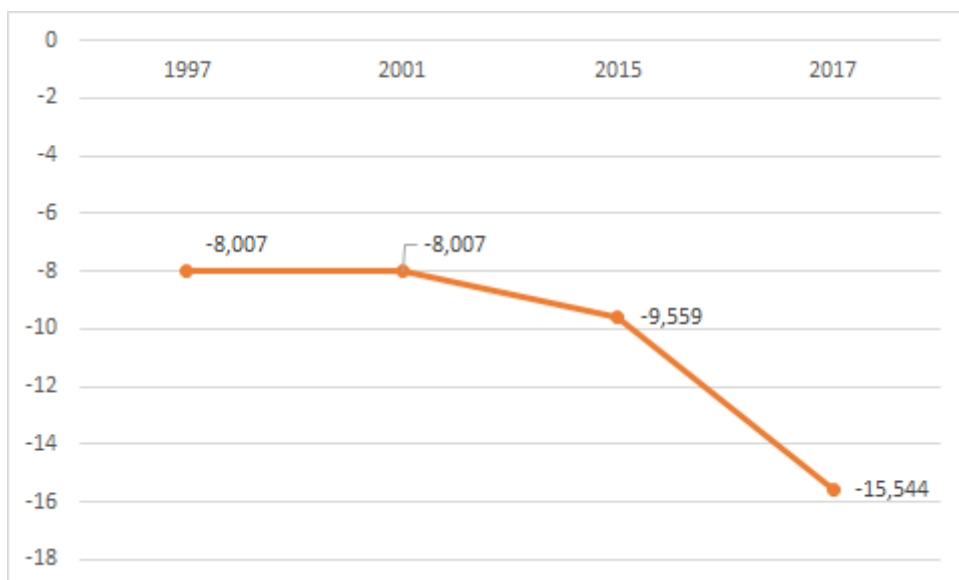
Visualization of results follows:



Visualization 2: The comparison of the rile of Sinn Féin's coded manifesto for the Irish general elections between different years and version of the coded manifestos (MPD, 2018c; the author)

The orange line shows the result of rile as stated in the Manifesto Project Database. The blue line shows the results of rile from the A version of the 1997 and 2002 manifestos coded by the author of this thesis. It is clearly visible, that the author's results correspond more with the party's position in the following years.

The results also correspond more with a position of the party in the Manifesto Project Database considering its manifestos for the Westminster parliament into which the party runs in Northern Ireland. The rile of Sinn Féin's manifestos for Westminster varies from -8 to -15,5 as the following graph shows:



Visualization 3: The rile of Sinn Féin's coded manifesto for Westminster elections (MPD, 2018c).

Considering, that Sinn Féin is one party, only running into two different parliaments in two different countries (if we do not count the Stormont, which was only established as a part of the process of devolution and is not a sovereign parliament), its policy and manifestos clearly need to be coherent for both elections. Therefore the counted rile of its manifestos should be similar for the same years in both countries. The 1997 manifesto for the Westminster election has the value of -8, which is clearly more consistent with the rile value the author of this thesis counted from her coded version of the 1997 manifesto for the Republic of Ireland and which is -10,7. Contrary to this, the original value stated in the Manifesto Project Database is over -26. A disproportion of such range in two manifestos of the same party for the same election year is at best suspicious.

Even if we take into consideration, that the results of the 1997 manifesto for the Republic of Ireland are merely copied results of the 2002 manifesto (since they are identical in the Manifesto Project Database), there is still a wide difference between the manifestos' rile in the two countries. The rile for the Republic stays at -26,137 considering the originally coded 2002 manifesto, while for the 2001 manifesto for the Westminster election, the Manifesto Project Database states rile of only -8. Here, again, it is important to say that the data for the 1997 and 2001 manifestos for Westminster elections are identical. Nevertheless, the author's results again correspond more with the Westminster manifesto rile for 2001 than the original version (the rile of A version for 2002 Irish manifesto is -14,75).

3.4 MPD as a reliable source?

The manifesto project is a widely used source of information among researchers and contains an enormous number of coded manifestos from over 50 countries. The data are updated regularly and the number of manifestos still rises. However, there are certain flaws in the database. As it was mentioned above, some manifestos are coded in the system, but their coded version is not accessible, therefore the researcher has only the results and not their source. This, for example, is the case of the 1997 and 2002 Sinn Féin's manifestos for the Irish general election and the 1997 manifesto for the Westminster election.

Even more problematic is the fact, that the data are identical for some years, which is once again the case for the 1997 and 2002 manifestos for the Irish general election and 1997 and 2001 British general election. The author of this thesis understands, that the

project authors copied the data since they believe that the party position did not change much in between the two elections, and it makes sense, when they have a properly coded manifesto for one of the elections (as in the case of Sinn Féin manifestos for Westminster election, where the 2001 manifesto is available in the annotated version in the manifesto project dataset). However, the author of this thesis believes, it is not proper to copy results of a coded text, which is not available in the system, as it happened with the 1997 and 2002 Sinn Féin manifestos for the Dáil election. Considering, that the 1997 one is the very first coded Sinn Féin manifesto in the system, the results (which are exactly the same as those for the next manifesto) highly distort the position of the party as shown in the manifesto project. For the purposes of accurate use of the project's dataset, the author of this thesis believes, that none rather than unverifiable result should be in the system.

The author of this thesis has one more proposal for the authors of the manifesto project dataset. The coding instructions state, that:

“All coders are expected to be citizens of the country they code. We use citizen coders because they benefit from their background knowledge of their country. However, background knowledge should not be confused with a coder’s personal characteristics, beliefs, and attitudes—all of which are potentially harmful to the comparability of coding.

Background knowledge is a unique knowledge that only citizens of the country can have. It includes knowledge of the country’s history, social problems and cleavages, electoral issues, party system, and party ideology. Personal biases, on the other hand, are coders’ individual beliefs and attitudes concerning social and political issues, party ideologies, politicians and generally concerning what is ‘right’ and ‘wrong.’” (Werner, 2015: 13)

While the author of this thesis does not question the logic of this statement, she believes it is extremely hard to avoid personal bias if one is coding manifestos from his/her own country. Therefore the author of this thesis proposes to use experts on the countries as a coder. Scholars focusing on a certain country(ies) for most of their career have the same knowledge of history, social problems, cleavages, and political system as citizens of the country do. In most cases, they have spent a prolonged period of time living in the country. And, unlike citizens, can avoid bias caused by being raised and living in the environment most of their life. The author is aware, that it would certainly be hard to find such experts on every single one of more than 50 countries included in the dataset, however, she believes that a certain number of them can be found and they should be favored from “citizen coders.”

4. Analytical part

4.1 The Irish party system between 1994 and 2019

4.1.1 Before the 1997 elections

After the 1992 election, a coalition of Fianna Fáil (FF) and the Labour was created, effectively ending the era when a coalition government excluded FF. Although FF has been in the coalition before, however, it was always seen as a temporary fix, not as a necessary condition for governing. Therefore this was the first time FF actually shared the power with its coalition partner. The partnership was not flawless and the partners had disagreements especially about the legislation on abortion, divorce, and privatization. But they remained dedicated to the coalition and the weak opposition from Fine Gael (FG) allowed them to continue.

Fine Gael had a chance to create a coalition, however, did not do the decisive move in time and together with bad election results, faced an internal division. The position of Sinn Féin in the system at that time was seen mostly in connection to Northern Ireland and the conflict there since SF had no seats in the Dáil. In December 1993, the Downing street declaration was signed by the British prime minister John Major and the Irish TD Ryan Reynolds. The declaration guaranteed that the United Kingdom has no economic, political or other interests in Northern Ireland. It proposed the involvement of SF in the peace talks if the IRA stops all of its violent activities. The pressure from the Irish government, the British government, from the initiatives in the US and especially from SF led the IRA to declare a cease-fire in August 1994.

The coalition and its division, however, became more apparent during 1994. First, it seemed, the Labour will stay under certain circumstances, but it pulled out of the government after all. The only option for a new government was FG-Labour-Democratic left (DL) and/or Progressive Democrats (PD). The Progressive Democrats stayed outside of the coalition when the agreement was reached and FG leader John Bruton was elected as a Taoiseach.

The three parties worked together surprisingly well, the degree of agreement among them was greater than between the previous coalition partners. While the policy towards Northern Ireland was not much of a success, the coalition prepared the legislation on divorce, which merely passed. Since this almost to be the success, the coalition started to prepare legislation concerning the ambiguous legal status of abortion.

The pre-election situation seemed clear, with the second coalition in power and with the voters' support. The FF has connected with the PD and they were planning to be in a potential coalition together, but the “rainbow coalition” had higher public support. However, an unexpected event occurred just a couple of months before elections. Both FG and FF were accused of being financed by a private business and it shook the starting positions for both parties (Marsh, 1999).

4.1.2 Between 1997 and 2002

Even though the FF did not gain more votes than in previous elections, in 1997 it gained more seats than before. Partially due to losing votes in constituencies where it did not matter, partially due to a pact with the PD. It formed a coalition government with the PD and was supported by a number of independents. Bertie Ahern became the Taoiseach and the first months of his rule were focused on Northern Ireland and the finishing of the peace process. Sinn Féin itself won one seat in the Dáil, the first one after forty years.⁸

The manifestos for the 1997 election show a curious similarity – most of the parties put an emphasis on equality (average of 8,83 percent), environmental protection (average of 6,58 percent) and expansion of the welfare state (average of 6,5 percent). The highest number of remarks was made by the Democratic Left on positive equality (23 percent of all remarks in its manifesto). The Labour party also focused the most on this area (16,41 percent of the manifesto). Not surprisingly, the Green party focused the most on environmental protection (14,2 percent of the manifesto). FG focused the most on the welfare state expansion (8,94 percent). Somewhat surprisingly, FF on environmental protection (7,43 percent) (MPD, 2018c).

When the Belfast agreement was signed on April 10, 1998, the change in the constitution of the Republic was necessary - Articles 2 and 3 stating a claim of the Republic on the whole island of Ireland (including Northern Ireland) needed to be amended, which happened with a comfortable majority but a low turnout in the referendum.

In November 1998 the two left parties, which have been in the coalition in the previous term merged and the Democratic left became a part of the Labour Party.

The smaller parties showed their strength during the 2001 campaign an on ratification of the Treaty of Nice. Sinn Féin and the Greens being the only two parties

⁸ Sinn Féin won the last seats to the Dáil in 1957. However, all four seats remained vacant due to the politics of abstentionism.

souging the NO vote, have taken over the referenda with the slogan “You will lose! Power, Money, Freedom” and the Treaty was rejected by 54 percent of votes.

Overall, the 28th Dáil was a stable one, with the second longest period in power since the 10th Dáil (1 764 days) (Marsh, 1999; Murphy, 2003).

4.1.3 Between 2002 and 2007

The election of 2002 meant a change in the Irish party system. While all previous elections, with the exception of the 1992 election, were more or less about the Fianna Fáil VS Fine Gael question, in 2002 Fine Gael plummeted rapidly in the number of seats (from 54 to 31), despite a relatively small decline in the number of votes. The Progressive Democrats rose to eight seats (from four), the Green party rose by four seats to six in total. Sinn Féin gained more than twice the number of votes in 1997 and moved from one seat to five of it. However, it could have been much more not being for the Irish electoral system. SF got more votes than PD and the Green party but received fewer seats. The disproportionality between seats and votes was 6.6 percent. However, the Irish electoral system is not in the focus of this thesis and therefore will not be explained more.⁹

The content of the manifestos for this election is consistent with the previous ones. The parties focused the most on welfare state expansion (total average of 10,41 percent). The Green party put most focus equally on the welfare state expansion as well as the anti-growth restrictions in the economic sphere, emphasizing that not every growth is positive and could cause environmental and societal harm. The Labour party focused the most on welfare state expansion together with equality. Progressive Democrats emphasized technology and infrastructure the most (14 percent of its manifesto). FG emphasized the welfare state expansion twice as much as in its previous manifesto (15,53 percent), while FF focused on the evolution of technology and infrastructure (10,88 percent) (MPD, 2018c).

After the election, the coalition of FF and PD had a comfortable majority of 89 seats in the Dáil and remained in office for the whole 5 years as the Taoiseach Bertie Ahern promised at the beginning of his term. The coalition was stable until the controversy on Bertie Ahern finances arose. It was also for the first time in over 30 years that a coalition was returned to the office.

⁹ For more information see Gallagher, 2005, p. 511 - 532 or Bowler and Farrell, 1991, p. 303 - 320.

After the defeat in the general election, Fine Gael surprisingly won over Fianna Fáil in the European elections and the local elections. The PD, on the other hand, performed poorly and as early as 2004 declared, that it would be willing to join a coalition with FG after the next election. It also almost withdraw from the coalition in September 2006 following the inspection of Bertie Ahern's income, but finally decided to stay until the end of the term (Gallagher, 2003; Murphy, 2008).

4.1.4 Between 2007 and 2011

The election of 2007 was a victorious one for Fianna Fáil once again, which made Bertie Ahern the first party leader since Eamon de Valera in 1944, to lead his party into three consecutive victories in general elections. Fine Gael gained 20 seats after the debacle of 2002 and reassessed its status as the second biggest party.

The parties' manifestos once again were very similar to each other for the 2007 election. The most addressed issue was the expansion of the welfare state with an overall average of 12,5 percent of the manifesto content and the highest percentage of the content of the Green party's, the Labour party's, PD's, FF's and SF's manifestos. Fine Gael was an exception on this account, with the most remarks on governmental and administrative efficiency (16,22 percent of the manifesto). Once again, technology and infrastructure proved to be an important topic, especially for PD (10,07 percent), FG (9,88 percent), FF (10 percent) (MPD, 2018c).

The small parties on the left again gained quite a big share of votes, paradoxically not turning them into seats. Sinn Féin, for example, gained more than two-thirds as many votes as the Labour party, however, got only four seats compared to twenty for the Labour. Would the seats be allocated on the basis of its national support, SF would gain 12 seats on a proportional base (Gallagher, 2008;). The government formed by Bertie Ahern was a coalition one, together with PD and the Greens, having 86 seats in the Dáil. However, the upcoming years changed the face of the government profoundly. The election itself was a disastrous one for PD and the party ceased from existence in the following year, when its members voted it is no longer politically viable. It is a question to what degree the party dissolved itself because of the financial crisis. For certain though, the financial crisis played a crucial role in party politics and the overall life of the country between 2007 - 2011. Irish economy grew rapidly during the Celtic Tiger years (1995 - 2007), however after a property bubble petered out in 2007 and the global financial crisis hit Ireland, the country entered recession and later economic depression. The government

deficit plummeted to -32 percent of GDP in 2010, while unemployment rose to 14,8 percent in 2012 (CSO, 2018). The governmental parties were very disfavored by people - only 10 percent of voters were satisfied by the government in February 2009. It was also visible in the local election in June with Fianna Fáil gaining only 25 percent of votes and losing 135 councilors.

Fianna Fáil, however, was in trouble even before the recession hit. Bertie Ahern stepped down on May 6th, 2008 following a scandal surrounding his finances. He was replaced by Brian Cowen. The party support started to decline slowly after he took his position as the new Taoiseach, though we cannot be certain if it was due to the crisis or the new party leader (Gallagher & Marsh, 2011).

4.1.5 Between 2011 and 2016

The election of 2011 rapidly changed the face of the Irish party system. After three coalition government led by Fianna Fáil and the financial crisis, the voter decided it is time for a change. One would expect during such a shaken political time, as it was before the 2011 election, that some new parties will emerge and take the power, advocating for change after the crisis hit Ireland hard. Although there were some attempts of this, none of them were successful. On the contrary, the two small parties in the previous coalition with Fianna Fáil both met an unfavorable faith – the PD ceased from existence and the Green party won no seats in 2011.

The content and layout of the manifestos before the 2011 election changed profoundly due to the financial crisis. Accordance on the same issue by most parties disappeared. The biggest proportion of manifestos in all examined years appeared in the manifesto of the United Left Alliance (ULA) in this year – 29,9 percent of the manifesto consisted of Marxist analysis. The Green party focused the most on the need for state funding in cultural area and sport (15,79 percent). Fianna Fáil put an emphasis on the technology and infrastructure area (15,49 percent). This is also true for the Labor party (with 8,64 percent), which, however, had a very balanced manifesto dealing with all areas. Fine Gael had the same approach, with the highest number of remark on governmental and administrative efficiency (11,4 percent), which made sense for the biggest opposition party during the previous government. Sinn Féin called for an expansion of the welfare state expansion (16,56 percent of the manifesto), which was also the second most important is for the Green party and the ULA (MPD, 2018c).

What changes in the election was the enormous success of independent candidates during the 2011 election – their combined vote was the highest since June 1927 (12percent). While Ireland always has been an exception when it came to the strength of independent candidates (due to a localized form of politics), this was still rather unexpected – one in every three candidates in 2011 was an independent. In total, independents gained 19 seats (only one fewer than the previously governing FF). This indicates that the voters wanted a change, however, since no new party was able to establish itself before the election, bet on independent candidates (Weeks, 2012).

Fine Gael took the election by storm. The party gained 76 seats a historical maximum. Fianna Fáil, on the other hand, lost 51 seats, ending with a historical low of only twenty. Sinn Féin was able to gain 14 seats, making it the fourth party in the number of seats. The Green party is a part of the outgoing coalition, on the other hand, lost all of its six seats.

4.1.6 From 2016 onwards

While in all previous election either Fianna Fáil or Fine Gael gained a clear majority (alone or in coalition with someone), the 2016 election in the Republic of Ireland resulted in a hung parliament. Neither FF or FG were able to form even a coalition government with a majority - the Labour party, previously in coalition with FG, gained only seven seats (FG gained 50 and for the majority, a total of 79 seats was needed) and therefore was not a viable partner for FG. Other parties on the left side of the spectrum (the People Before Profit Alliance (PBPA), Independents 4 Change (I4C), Sinn Féin, some other independents) united under the Right2Change campaign also did not reach the majority (SF with 23 seats, I4C with 4 seats and PBPA with 3 seats).

Even though the number of competing parties was higher, the composition of their manifestos' content was more consistent than before the previous election. Most of the parties had big portions of manifestos devoted to welfare state expansion (overall average of 16,93 percent), with the Green party (17,98 percent), People Before Profit Alliance (24,4 percent), the Labour party (20,64 percent), Social democrats (19,78 percent), Fine Gael (17,36 percent) and Fianna Fáil (28,03 percent) considering it as the main issue, unsurprisingly after years of austerity following the financial crisis. The Anti-Austerity Alliance addressed the most a need for equality and social justice (20,7 percent of its manifesto) and a high percentage of its manifesto also contained a Marxist analysis (19,82 percent). Workers and Unemployed Action devoted most of its manifesto to equality and

social justice (16,53 percent). Sinn Féin, unlike any other party, addressed the most political corruption and a need to eliminate it (26,03 percent of its manifesto). Independent Alliance commented the most on its ability to govern and political authority (19,18 percent).

The success of small and newly created parties in the elections was once again striking. Independents 4 Change were founded in 2014, before the local elections and the gain of four seats in the very first general election it contested, was a success. Especially in comparison to People before profit alliance, founded in 2005, which contested in the general election since 2007 and had only two members elected to the Dáil in 2011. Sinn Féin gained nine more seats to the total of twenty-three. A party, which no one would expect to take seats in the Dáil, even more having $\frac{1}{6}$ of the total number of them, twenty years ago, became the 3rd biggest party in the parliament.

On one hand, the election of 2016 meant a return to the pre-2011 pattern with the two traditional parties Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael, being the two biggest and strongest in the system. On the other hand, 2016 meant the lowest voters support for these two parties ever - both parties combined gained less than 50 percent of voters support, combined with the third traditional party, the Labour, the percentage grew to only 56 (Gallagher, 2016).

“This greater scatter of votes and seats among parties is captured by the concept of fragmentation, and specifically by the measure of ‘the effective number of parties’ devised by Laakso and Taagepera.” (Gallagher, 2016: 126)

After a prolonged period of negotiations, a first minority government since 1989 was formed by Fine Gael, Independents and one member of the Labour party under the leadership of Enda Kenny. The government had a formal agreement with Fianna Fáil, which promised to abstain on matters of confidence and supply. However, the government lasted only for a year, since Enda Kenny resigned as a leader of FG as well as the Taoiseach after the Garda whistleblower scandal. In June 2017 a new minority government was formed consisting of Fine Gael and Independents with Leo Varadkar being a Taoiseach, the youngest person elected for the position and the first one openly being a gay.

4.2 Evolution of Sinn Féin since 1997

4.2.1 Sinn Féin's changes during and after the peace process in Northern Ireland

After the Declaration of Downing Street was published in 1993, Sinn Féin became involved in the peace process. This document proposed the involvement of the party in peace negotiations if the IRA declared a ceasefire. This happened in August 1994, however, when the negotiations (later leading towards the Good Friday (Belfast) agreement) started on June 10th. 1996, Sinn Féin was not allowed to enter, since the ceasefire had been broken in February earlier that year. The IRA renewed the cease-fire a year later, on July 19th. 1997, effectively joining the negotiations in September (Mitchell, 1999). During this time, Sinn Féin became the leading force in the IRA-Sinn Féin relationship. It pressured the Army Council to join the negotiations, declared the ceasefire in order to be able to join, and maintained the cease-fire. Credit for this can be mostly given to Gerry Adams (Moloney, 2005).

During the negotiations, Sinn Féin moved from an anti-system minor party to a major government party. Since the Good Friday agreement adopted the principle of power-sharing between the nationalists and the unionists, Sinn Féin is now an integral part of the government coalition. The party became increasingly important considering the number of its supporters, and gained the second most seats in the 2007 elections to Stormont and continues to gain high support ever since.

Véronique Dudouet from Berghof Foundation published an article concerning the Intra-Party Dynamics and the Political Transformation of Non-State Armed Groups. Through a number of case studies (the case of the PIRA – Sinn Féin was one of them), she came to the conclusion, that there are three main changes, after which previously non-state armed groups struggle for power non-violently through democratic politics. First of these changes is:

“the rational decision-making process whereby strategic and pragmatist military/political leaders constantly (re-)assess and adjust their methods of action according to the evolving strategic environment.” (Dudouet, 2012: 107)

This obviously happened in the case of Sinn Féin, where moreover, the military and the political leadership at that time were one and the same. However, they were able to react to the proposal to join the negotiations and, as a result, eventually declared the cease-fire. According to Duodouet, the second factor is:

“The vertical and horizontal relations and communication between members (as well as their constituencies) enabling collective ownership of conflict transformation processes and preventing the occurrence of intra-party splits and disaffection during peace negotiations.” (Dudouet, 2012: 107)

Sinn Féin managed to do this to some extent. In 1997, a group later called Real Irish Republican Army (RIRA) split from the IRA and committed a huge bombing in Omagh in 1998 killing 29 people. Sinn Féin was, however, able to politically survive this split and neutralize it to the extent that other participants in the peace talks could not doubt Sinn Féin’s intentions to reach peace. The party itself and its leadership remained untouched since all party members joined the party with a prospect of peace negotiations as a tool to end the violence. The third point Dudouet makes is about disarmament. Even though some other scholars emphasize that disarmament happens soon and fast after the negotiations end, Dudouet notices, that in all case studies she conducted, the dismantling of arms happens quite late in the process. This usually happens after that the political representation of the armed group is taken seriously and is an unremovable part of the governing system (Dudouet, 2012: 107). This was also true in the case of Northern Ireland. The IRA’s arms were decommissioned in 2005 and discussions, to what extent was the IRA really disarmed, continue until today. The Ulster Volunteer Force (the opposite unionist paramilitary organization) was decommissioned as late as 2009 (Melaugh, 2016).

After considering Dudouet’s points, we can conclude, that Sinn Féin or the IRA (since it officially ended its armed campaign on July 28, 2005, before the decommissioning) are no longer non-state armed groups, but rather that Sinn Féin is a real political party.

After almost a century of struggle, the party was focused on the equalization of the Catholics and their proper representation in Northern Ireland bodies. This had to change after the Good Friday agreement was signed and the party’s program has been broadened. The author is aware that the changes of Sinn Féin in Northern Ireland are not the main focus of this thesis, however she believes that the changes of Sinn Féin in Northern Ireland and in the Republic cannot be seen separated and at least a short citation from Jonathan Tonge is needed to summarize changes in the North.

“The post-conflict agenda of Sinn Féin has indeed tried to articulate a broader set of rights and identities beyond the binary Irish Nationalist versus British Unionist polarization. Health, gender and Travellers’ rights issues have become much more prominent, as the party has broadened its agenda and participated to a far greater extent in ‘rainbow coalition’ governments. The party also highlighted the new pluralism of this approach...The growth of community centers, catering for the social needs of local residents, provided a vehicle for the expansion of co-operative Republicanism...Other work...has included the attraction of inward investments, job creation via the creation of an Employment Service Board, the development of

local infrastructure...The agenda offered by Sinn Féin is reformist and social democratic.” (Tonge, 2006: 140)

Questions about the current form of the relationship between the IRA and Sinn Féin (especially in Northern Ireland) remains unanswered. Some authors claim that Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness (party leaders during the negotiations) were members of the Army Council up until 2005 when the decommissioning process put them, as well as other members of the party with dual membership, under pressure to resign (Clarke, 2005). On the other hand, Martin McGuinness (who was verifiably the chief of staff of the IRA in the past) stated, that he left the organization in 1974. Moreover, Adams still claims, that he was never a member of the IRA. One way or the other, a good summary of the relationships between the party and the IRA can be found in the Assessment of Paramilitary Groups in Northern Ireland by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland based on the information from MI5 and PSNI (Police Service of Northern Ireland):

“IRA members believe that the PAC (Provisional Army Council) oversees both IRA and Sinn Féin with an overarching strategy. We judge this strategy has a wholly political focus. IRA members have been directed to actively support Sinn Féin within the community including activity like electioneering and leafleting.” (Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, 2015)

The prospects for the party in Northern Ireland are also questionable. Even though the party has gained high electoral support and the Catholic population is growing, the voting turnout is falling sharply in nationalist seats.

“Only 2 percent of Catholics see the prospect of there never being a united Ireland as impossible to accept and more Catholics prefer to remain part of the UK than desire Irish unity.” (Evans and Tonge, 2013: 55)

It is clear, that what once used to be the base of the party’s politics is no longer a breeding ground. However, the results stated above are from a survey conducted in 2010, when Brexit was not around the corner and no one could have imagined something like it happening. With Northern Ireland voting against Brexit since a lot of its financial sources come from the EU, the question is what will happen now? However, it does not seem that a referendum will happen about the unification of Ireland will happen any time soon.

In the 2016 election, Sinn Féin gained 28 seats in Stormont, having the second highest number of seats in the body. The party had almost the same results in the next years’ election, which happened after Martin Guinness’ es resignation as the deputy First Minister. The 2017 election was the first one since 1921 in Northern Ireland in which the unionists' parties did not win a majority of seats which resulted in a hung parliament. The DUP and Sinn Féin were not able to reach an agreement after the election causing pressure

from both the British Prime Minister and the Taoiseach, however several rounds of negotiations failed anyways. Even after two years from the elections, Northern Ireland remains government-less.

4.2.2 Sinn Féin and its changes in the Republic

The politics of abstentionism was abandoned in the Republic in 1986 and since then, Sinn Féin contested in every local as well as parliamentary elections. The party gained its first seats in the local election in 1991 and the first seat in the Dáil in 1997. It had merely the size as the Labour party in the 1997, 2002 and 2007 elections, exceeding it three times in 2016 (23 seats for SF and only 7 for the Labour). What mostly helped the party to extend its support base and ensure its growth was addressing issues such as housing shortages, bin charges and anti-social behavior by which the party was able to persuade traditional non-voters. Other supporters of Sinn Féin came from the disappointed FF voters, however, SF even today focuses more on targeting the non-voters and building its own support base and not dragging another party's voters.

Unlike other parties, SF is widely active during the period between elections (not just right before and after it) cooperating with local communities in deprived areas building its image as a thing-changer and not a typical political party wanting just power. In middle-class areas, the party builds on the representatives' personalities and their popularity. Overall, the party is trying to address younger voters who don't have a strong alignment to other parties and also do not connect SF as much with the IRA and the conflict in Northern Ireland.

As mentioned above, the year 2008 was a breaking point in Irish history. The country, previously called "The Celtic Tiger" when it sustained enormous economic growth beginning in the 1980s', went "from cows to chips" as the Irish say, and was suddenly hit by the world economic crash. The insufficient regulations of the banking system, the openness of the Irish economy and the policy of public spending of the Fianna Fáil government at that time led the country to a deep crisis. The country was saved by the bailout from the EU and currently is in a period of economic growth again. However, what happened in 2008 and 2010 (further financial shock on the financial scene) profoundly changed the appearance of the party system in Ireland (McGraw, 2016).

It is not surprising, that some voters finally abandoned the "Civil war" division in Irish politics and instead of voting for Fianna Fáil, voted for Fine Gael, which is also a center-right party with a program only slightly different from Fianna Fáil. The reasons

why the voters in 2011 also crossed to the Labour party and Sinn Féin mostly come from the nature of Fianna Fáil as a catch-all party, that was gaining votes from all social classes (Kavanagh, 2015). Moreover, one can clearly see this confirmed by the downfall of the Labour party in the 2016 election, since the party itself does not have much to offer. Sinn Féin, on the other hand, grew even stronger in the 2016 elections, getting almost 15 percent of the seats in the Dáil. What are the reasons for the rise of Sinn Féin?

Before getting to the reasons, there is one very important thing to realize about Sinn Féin. Since the party contests in both parts of the island, its policy has to be consistent enough (it is still one party with one leadership after all), however, it also has to reflect the differing needs of people in both parts. Striking differences, therefore, take place in the party's positions. While it is the main party representing the Irish nationalists in Northern Ireland, its policies in the Republic are not nationalistic at all. As a matter of fact, it is the most openly pro-immigrant party in the Republic. Together with an opposition towards the EU agreements and the regard of the single currency as a diminution of the Irish sovereignty, we could easily mark Sinn Féin as a populist nationalist party (Walsh and O'Malley, 2012).

However, unlike most similarly marked parties that are now all over Europe, Sinn Féin is not a right-wing party (Hansen, 2009). According to Kenneth Benoit and Michael Laver, who conducted an expert survey on the position of parties in Ireland in 2005, Sinn Féin is a left party with especially leftist policies on taxes and public spending, Northern Ireland, environment, and decentralization, which is consistent with the results of the MPD's coding.

Dawn Walsh and Eoin O'Malley from Dublin City University also conclude that Sinn Féin best fits into a category of left-liberal-populist parties.

"Its main policy proposals focus on support for small business and local brands, though it calls for maintenance of the low rate of corporation tax...Unusually for an avowed left-wing party, the document focuses heavily on crime...Sinn Féin also gives attention to human rights. This may be interpreted as being a post-material concern, consistent with its radically liberal-left self-description...." (Walsh and O'Malley, 2012)

More on the position of Sinn Féin on the left-right political spectrum can be found in the analytical part of this thesis.

Since 2012 the party moved even slightly more to the liberal positions, not only allowing its members to support the same-sex marriages (even though the party has the same-sex marriage proposal in its 2007 manifesto, its members still participated in a parade from which gays were banned), but the whole party supported the new policy

before the referendum in 2015. The party is also fighting for the legalization of the same-sex marriages in Northern Ireland prioritizing it in the current election period. This clearly shows how much has the party's focus has deepened since the 1990s from a shallow narrowly-focused nationalistic (and very Catholic) to a very liberal one addressing a whole range of topics (Walsh and O'Malley, 2012).

The enlargement of the ideological base together with a presentation of younger representatives (and a significant number of women running for Sinn Féin) was followed by the extension of the party's support bases as it was mentioned above. While it started with a small number of working-class supporters in the poorest parts of Dublin, in 2011 it gained a not insignificant number of votes from middle-class parts of Dublin and also spread its influence into new constituencies nationwide (Walsh and O'Malley, 2012). Even though the party has in 2016 gained seats in areas where it previously didn't, its results were expected to be better, especially with the Labour vote share falling by 13 percent (Gallagher, 2016).

Organizationally the party presents itself as a grassroots organization, however, it is clear, that the figures in the leadership exerted a large amount of control. After all, Adams has been the party president since 1983; and he was the one who lead the party out of the IRA's arms and established it as a real political power both in Northern Ireland and in the Republic. Another prominent figure of the party was Martin McGuinness, who died in March 2017. McGuinness a leader of the party in Northern Ireland and also a former member of the PIRA enjoyed large control over the party's local organizations. He resigned as a party leader in Northern Ireland in January of 2017 and was replaced by Michelle O'Neill, who issued a statement calling for a referendum on Irish unity as soon as possible in response to Brexit.

The change in the leadership which happened in February 2018 is by far the most significant indicator of how much the party changed in the last 25 years. Gerry Adams stepped down as the party leader after almost thirty-five years to be succeeded by Mary Louise McDonald. First ever women to be a president of Sinn Féin and born in and resident of Dublin of only 48 years old when she took the office, she clearly represent the new face of Sinn Féin as a modern party representing the young, women and minority groups with the same extent on the both sides of the border in Ireland. She was also the sole candidate for the position of the president.

4.3 The Irish party system and its changes

This part of the thesis aims to establish the changes in the Irish party system since 1994 based on the typologies of party systems. Four typologies were introduced at the beginning of this dissertation. Each of them is now used on the Irish party system in the specified time period. Where applicable, the ideological distance of the parties and their positions on the left-right scale are analyzed.

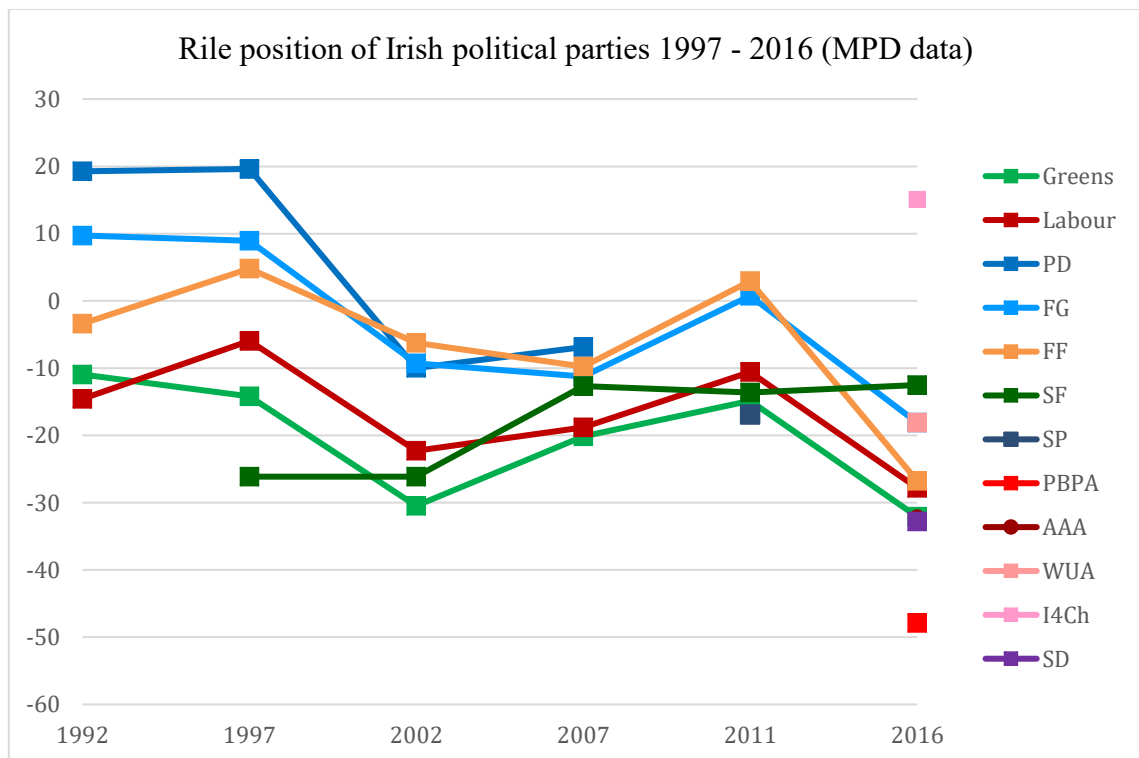
The following table shows the results of the Dáil elections during the examined period (a dash means the party did not run in the election, highlighted cells mark the formed coalition):

	FF	FG	Labour	PD	DL	Green party	SF	SP	PBPA	WUA	SD	I4Ch	Ind.
1992	68	45	33	33	10	4	1	0	-	-	-	-	5
1997	77	54	17	4	4	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	6
2002	81	31	20	8	-	6	5	1	-	-	-	-	13
2007	77	51	20	2	-	6	4	0	0	-	-	-	5
2011	20	76	37	-	-	0	14	2	2	1	-	-	15
2016	44	50	7	-	-	2	23	0*	6**	0	3	4	19

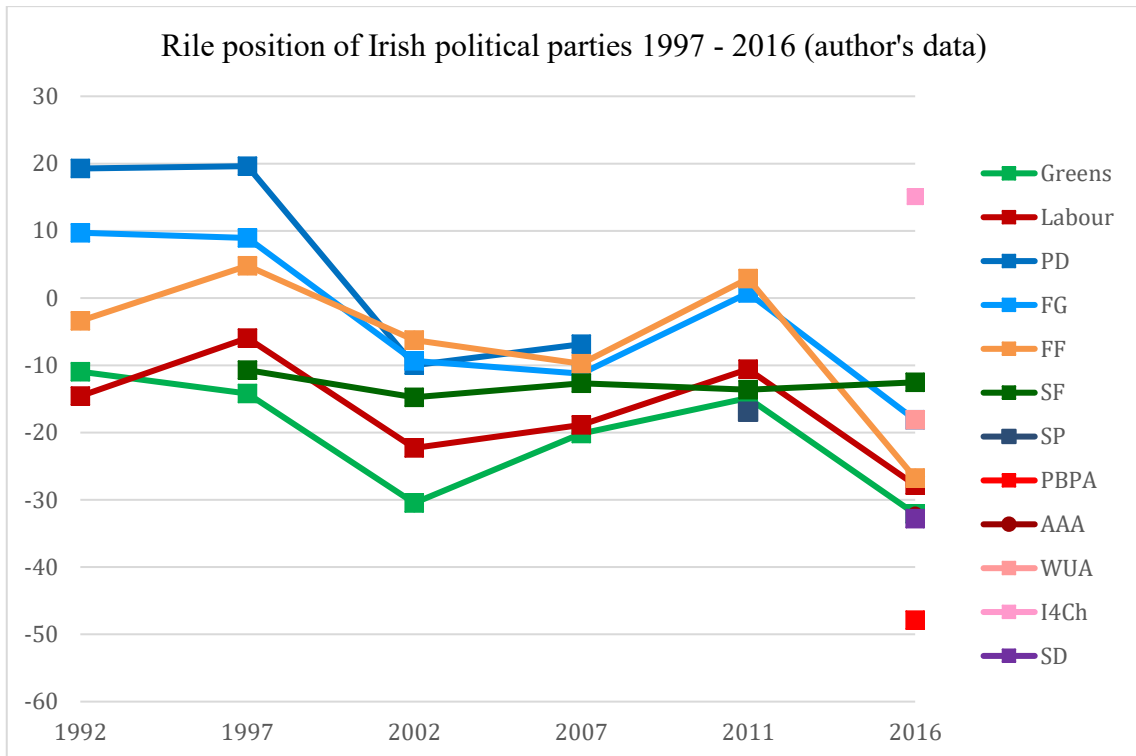
*members running under the AAA-PBP

**running as AAA-PBP

Table 3: The results of the Irish general elections 1997 – 2016 (Elections Ireland, 2018)



Visualization 4: The positions of Irish political parties on the Left-right scale according to the Manifesto project database (MPD, 2018c)



Visualization 5: The positions of Irish political parties on the Left-right scale according to the Manifesto project database combined with the manifestos coded by the author (MPD, 2018c)

The following part of this thesis will apply different typologies introduced in the descriptive part of this dissertation on the period defined above.

4.3.1 Duverger's typology

It is clear that in no part of the defined period, the Irish party system was a bipartism as defined by Duverger. There were always more than two political parties relevant in the parliament as Table 3 shows. Therefore the system might be labeled as multipartism in the form of para-dualism, where two major political parties (FF and FG) take turns at the power and dominate the system, however, they are not able to gain the majority alone and therefore need an alliance with smaller actors (the Labour, PD and/or others). Since Duverger does not stand as a criterium that the parties need to be on the opposite side of the spectrum or the system needs to be bipolar, the para-dual type seems to fit the most on the Irish case. The Irish system is not bipolar, therefore does not suit the definition of pseudo-multipartism. Although it might seem so, the system is not the real multipartism either. Even though there are more parties in the system, only two of them were able to form a government with support from a smaller party(ies). More importantly, those two parties do not lie on a different side of the spectrum, quite the opposite – their

manifestos and policy position are very similar and the main difference is their side in the civil war. It might seem that the party system moves towards the multiparty model with the rise of Sinn Féin, however, SF only replaced the Labour party as the thirds biggest in the parliament. The rise and relative success of the new small parties in the last elections might mark such shift, however, the next election will have to confirm this development (Duverger, 1966).

4.3.2 Blondel's typology

Just like according to Duverger, the Blondel's typology has a two-and-half party system type which fits the Irish system - the two parties (FF and FG) compete for power with the need of a third party to become their partner and form a majority. This third party was the Labour party, the PD and the DL or the Green party, all of them much smaller than the first two. However, these two parties did not really represent the ideological pivot (As Blondel states for the third party), since both FF and FG are in the middle of the ideological spectrum.

However, from 1992 to 2007 the system might have been labeled as the multiparty system with a dominant party - a very unbalanced system of four and more parties, where one of the parties is substantially larger than the others, in the Irish case Fianna Fáil. In all examined elections, FF gained around 40 percent of votes, which is another characteristics of the dominant party by Blondel. Even though it did not gain a majority of seats, therefore needed to enter a coalition with another party. And while FG might seem as approximately the same size as FF in the percentage of votes, the disproportionality of the Irish electoral system allocated the party a much lower number of seats.

Looking at the number of parties gaining seats to the Dáil in the last election (eight parties) one could consider the party system to be a multiparty one. However, in the multiparty system, according to Blondel, the parties have approximately the same size, which parties in the Irish system do not with Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael still gaining around 50 percent of votes together (the third biggest Sinn Féin gained 13,8 percent).

4.3.3 Sartori's typology

Sartori's typology presents another challenge in the Irish case since Sartori strictly defines which parties are and are not relevant. A relevant party must have either a coalition or an extortionate potential – its existence must affect the tactics of party

competition and its direction. A party can be discounted as irrelevant when it remains superfluous over time and does not become a part of any coalition (Sartori, 1976). Based on this differentiation, Sinn Féin could have been counted as irrelevant up until 2011 when it gained 14 seats since other parties did not take it as a potential coalition partner. Moreover, they do not consider it to be a possible coalition partner even today (FF members voted to block coalition with Sinn Féin, Fine Gael also rejects this idea). Only the Labour party accepted this possibility.

Based on the relevancy criteria, the composition of the Irish party system is as follows:

- 1992 – 2002 – 5 relevant parties (FF, FG, Labour, PD, DL)
- 2002 – 2011 – 5 relevant parties (FF, FG, Labour, PD, Greens)
- 2011 – 2016 – 4 relevant parties (FF, FG, Labour, SF)
- 2016 – today – 5 relevant parties (FF, FG, Labour, SF, AAA-PBP)

Therefore, even though the relevant parties change, the system during the whole period can be labeled as moderate (and limited) pluralism – there are three to five parties with a small ideological distance between them. The system is centripetal and the parties compete to win middle voters. The polarization is low (as visualization 4 shows). The parties used to associate themselves into two blocks one on each side of the ideological spectrum, however, all parties moved to the left side of it after the 2011 election (Sartori, 1976).

4.3.4 Mair's typology

Considering Peter Mair's typology, Ireland can be labeled as the closed competition structure system – the alternation of FF and FG led governments did not change and it was not entered by a new party (and as mentioned above, it will probably not see the entrance of Sinn Féin unless the major players FF and FG change their stand). The rejection of possible coalition with Sinn Féin also addresses the second type of structural change mentioned by Mair - a change in the extent of stability of alternatives in the system. Without Sinn Féin there seems to be no other viable coalition than those previously formed by FF and FG with the Labour and the Green party. The third structural change - a change in the openness or closeness of the system to a wide range of parties, which can be seen with a new party entering the office might occur after the next election, since the Labour party did not deny the possibility of a coalition with SF and some journalists and scholar have already noticed the difference in rhetoric of FG about the

possible coalition. While FF strongly expressed its opposition towards a coalition with SF, FG does not stand so strong in this matter. Therefore, there is no change in the system, according to Mair's conditions yet. The next election, however, might (and if the rise of SF continues, must) change it – either FF or FG will have to enter the coalition with SF or the two biggest parties will have to make a coalition together, both unthinkable so far (Mair, 2008).

4.3.5 Parties' position changes

While the type of the system remains the same during the examined period throughout the typologies (except for Blondel's), looking into the MPD results of party positions is more fruitful. And there are several issues needed addressing.

Looking at the position of Irish parties in 1992, the spectrum seems much alike in other European countries – Progressive democrats being a right-centrist party together with Fine Gael, Greens occupying the center and Fianna Fáil together with the Labour on the left-center. The election of 1997 portrait almost the same picture, with Sinn Féin entering the picture and squeezing between the Labour (slightly more centrist than before) and FF (now slightly more leftist). The rise of the Celtic tiger caused a move on the spectrum of Irish parties – all of them moved to the left side of the spectrum with the Greens suddenly being the most centrist party, followed by FG, PD, SF, the Labour, and FF, being the most leftist party of all. The most rapid change were the positions of PD and FG, previously being center-right parties and both suddenly being center-left parties. The unforeseen financial crisis meant that in 2007 parties almost did not change their position, all only slightly moving more to the center. The aftermath of the crisis, however, once again changed the layout of the parties' position – the Greens together with FG moved back to the center, while other parties assembled on the left-center position. The last election saw a rapid move of the parties once again. The only one holding its position was Sinn Féin, staying on the left-center position. Both FG and the Greens, previous slightly to the right from the center, moved to the left with the Green's difference of rile being almost 30 points. Approximately the same position as FG held also WUA. FF and the Labour also moved more to the left, where they ended up together with the Social Democrats. The left side of the spectrum was closed by PBP. The right side of the spectrum was empty, except for the right-center Independents for Change.

The first visible thing is, that the entrance of Sinn Féin and even its rise did not make other parties to move their position or vacate the position of SF on the left-right

spectrum. And conversely, the position of Sinn Féin on the spectrum did not change even during turbulent times of the financial crisis when all other parties re-valued its positions. Claims that Sinn Féin needs to change some of its radical position in accordance to win more votes, therefore seem unsubstantiated.

For years, scholars have argued that there is no left in Ireland. From a simple look at the visualization, this is not the truth. Quite the contrary. Since before the 2002 elections, all parties are, according to their riles, on the left side of the spectrum. It even looks like the whole Irish politics moved to the left – previously centrist parties are now far on the left side of the spectrum. It is the truth that the Irish party system does not mirror the usual left-right division based on social cleavages – Ireland has been a mostly rural country with very little working class until the 1990s and then it was not an industry, but rather big technological companies, who entered the market and created a new social class.

Third of all, the results of the party position from the previous years confirm, that even almost a hundred years after the civil war, the two resulting parties (FF and FG) still compete for the power even though their position on the left-right scale differs only slightly (the riles for 1997, 2002, 2007 and 2011 manifestos for FF and FG does not have variance higher than 4,2 points) (MPD, 2018c).

To conclude, not much has changed since David Farrell wrote in 1999, that:

“..It is common in the comparative literature to refer to the Irish party system as unique, reflected in the weakness of the Left, the absence of class politics, and the inherent similarity between the parties in terms of their policies and standpoints...” (Farrell, 1999: 32-33)

As shown above, the only visible change from this is the higher relevance of the Left.

5. Conclusion

To summarize, this one-case study attempts to offer a coherent insight into the changes of Sinn Féin during and after the Belfast agreement in both parts of the island and changes which the evolution of the party caused in the party system in the Republic of Ireland.

One of the research questions of this master thesis was: How did Sinn Féin evolve in the last 25 years? Even though the history of Sinn Féin is unchangeably connected to the history of the IRA and the PIRA, it can be concluded that, at least since the peace process in Northern Ireland, Sinn Féin is a real political party. In Northern Ireland, it slowly became the biggest nationalist party, putting the SDLP in the second place. Also,

immediately after the Good Friday agreement, it became a government coalition party, since it was the part of the agreement. Although it has a secure place in the government, Sinn Féin deepened and widened its policies in Northern Ireland. The election of 2017 was the first since 1921 in which the unionist's parties did not win a majority of seats. Even though this might be seen as a success for Sinn Féin and the nationalists, the election resulted in a hung parliament and even now, two years after the election, Northern Ireland still does not have a functioning government.

In the Republic, the party is becoming more and more important, gaining votes in previously both Fianna Fáil's and Labour party's constituencies, and having support mostly among young voters and those who had not come to the election in the past. The party in the Republic is left-liberal, being very liberal and society-centered in its nature. As was mentioned, it is also the most active party during the period between elections. The economic crash in 2008 helped the party to its rise since a number of voters finally abandoned the "civil war division" in Irish politics. Moreover, the party was able to keep the voters and offer them a strong and wide program. Its position on the left, clearly distinct from both Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael, combined with a strong appeal to young voters, non-voters and women give the party a solid base of support. And as the polls show, the younger voters that party won in the 2011 elections are staying with it (Barrett, 2016).

The policies of Sinn Féin in both parts of the island are similar enough as they should be for one party and yet distinctive, based on the issues in separate parts of the island. While in the North the party is the biggest representant of nationalists' interests, in the Republic it is the most openly pro-immigrant party. What connects the party in both parts are the environmental concerns and policies towards taxes and public spending and the support for same-sex marriages. More importantly, the wide range of topics Sinn Féin is concerned with in both parts of the island shows how much has the party's focus deepened since the 1990s. The point which finalized the conversion of the party was the change in its leadership in spring 2018 when Gerry Adams stepped down as a party leader to be succeeded by Mary Louise McDonald. A young representative (48 years old at that time), women and a Dubliner, who was the only candidate for the position.

This thesis refutes a common claim about the Irish party system – that there is no Left, which answers another research question of this dissertation. The in-depth analysis of the Sinn Féin manifestos using the Manifesto Project Database's codebook and coding rules together with the counted rule (the position on the left-right scale) of the party shows

that Sinn Féin is a center-left party with minimal deviations in its positions. Moreover, the MPD's data show, that practically all relevant parties in the Irish system moved during the last 25 years to the left. The previous center-right Fine Gael is now even more on the left of the scale than Sinn Féin. Fianna Fáil (previously center party) has its position now as far on the left as the Labour party does. The movements of the parties as shown in the MPD mark one other important thing – that Sinn Féin is the most consistent party when it comes to the content of its manifestos. The difference between the positions of its two farthest manifestos is only 4,05 point.

On the other hand, even though the MPD shows a great change in the positions of the parties, this thesis concluded that the structure of the party system did not change significantly during the last 25 years when being analyzed through typologies by Maurice Duverger, Jean Blondel, Giovanni Sartori, and Peter Mair. So how can a research question about the characterization of the system using different typologies be answered? According to Duverger, the party system remains para-dualist with Sinn Féin replacing Labour party as the third biggest player. The Blondel's typology ranks the Republic of Ireland between two-and-half party systems, where once again Sinn Féin replaced the Labour party as the third member. The period between 1992 and 2007, however, can be also labeled as a multiparty system with a dominant party, in this case, Fianna Fáil gaining around 40 percent of votes during the period. While the relevant parties in the Irish party system, as defined by Sartori, changed during the examined period, their number remained constant (five, dropping to four in the 2011 – 2016 period) and therefore the system can be marked as moderate and limited pluralism during the whole examined period (1992 – today). Lastly, Mair's typology focusing on the party system from the angle of the closeness or openness of the competition structure, while also identifying the same type of system during the examined time period (the closed structure of competition), offers the most plausible change of type in the near future. The parties historically refusing to cooperate and form a government with Sinn Féin might be forced to do so if the rise of Sinn Féin continues, which will open the system for the entrance of a new member. Another possibility is, that Sinn Féin will be able to form a government with its current opposition partners, opening the system to even more new subjects.

This thesis would not be complete without the Manifesto Project Database which provided the author with the coded manifestos of Sinn Féin, or at least most of them, and other Irish parties. Since the results of Sinn Féin's manifestos from 1997 and 2002 elections were not complete in the system (coded by an unknown coder with only the

results available and not the coded texts themselves), the author of this thesis coded the texts herself using the MPD codebook and coding instructions. When analyzing the author's results and comparing them with the results of the Sinn Féin's manifestos for the following elections coded by a professional coder, the author's results were more consistent than the results provided by the MPD. When analyzing Sinn Féin's manifestos over time the author of this thesis discovered a high level of consistency in practically all categories, causing the very low difference in the role of Sinn Féin during the examined period. Small differences in the numbers of remarks were found in categories concerning peace (steadily dropping since the Belfast agreement was signed), nationalization of businesses (peaking in 2007 foreseeing the economic crisis), Marxist-Leninist ideology (with zero remarks in all years except for 2011), positive equality, expansion of welfare state (minor in the 1997 and 2002 manifestos, but major issue since 2007) and law and order (with very low number, however, peaking in 2011 after the crisis).

As was mentioned the role (the position of the party on the left-right scale) counted as the difference between the number of rightist remark and leftist quasi-sentences (as divided by the MPD codebook) in the manifesto, was very consistent during the examined period for Sinn Féin as the Visualization 2 at page 44 shows. The difference between the results of manifestos coded by the author (the blue line) and the results of the MPD (the orange line) are also depicted at the same visualization.

The author of this thesis addressed several issues which occurred during the use of the MPD - the missing and copied data in this thesis and also highlighted these issues during the Manifesto Project Database users conference in Berlin in March 2019. And while the explanations were given by the employee and author of the MPD Pola Lehman about the sources not being on digital sources and MPD not having enough resources to digitalize them are reasonable and understandable, the author of this thesis believes that the MPD users should be advised to use the data more cautiously or that the data should at least not be replicated from one election into other.

To answer the last research question – what are the future predictions for the Irish party system in connection with the growth of Sinn Féin? The party, while until now considered “uncoalitionable” might be a necessary coalition partner for Fine Gael or Fianna Fáil, which SF realizes and Mary Lou McDonald proclaimed, she would seek such a coalition, while both FF and FG reject the idea of a coalition with SF (Clarke, 2018). However, if the situation arose, the possible coalition partner for SF is the Labour party close with its program and not rejecting the idea of the coalition. Supported by a number

of independents and other small parties with which SF tried to reach a coalition after the 2016 election (I4C and PBPA) a coalition set up like this would have been viable after the next election. An alternation in power which would change the face of the Irish party system profoundly.

6. Shrnutí

Tato jedno-případová studie se snaží nabídnout koherentní vhled do změn Sinn Féin v průběhu a po uzavření Belfastské dohody v obou částech irského ostrova a změn, které vývoj této strany způsobil ve stranickém systému Irské republiky.

Jedna z výzkumných otázek této diplomové práce byla, jak se Sinn Féin v posledních 25 letech vyvinula? Přestože je historie Sinn Féin úzce propojená s IRA a PIRA, od konce mírového procesu v Severním Irsku může být Sinn Féin označována za skutečnou politickou stranu. V Severním Irsku se stala největší nacionalistickou stranou a SDLP odsunula na druhé místo. Zároveň se ihned po uzavření Belfastské dohody stala součástí vládní koalice, což bylo jednou z podmínek dohody samotné. A přestože pozici koaličního partnera má Sinn Féin touto smlouvou zajištěnou, rozšířila strana i v Severním Irsku záběr své politiky. Volby v roce 2017 byly první od roku 1921, ve kterých unionistické strany nevyhrály většinu křesel ve Stormontu. A přestože to může být viděno jako nevídaný úspěch Sinn Féin a nacionalistického hnutí celkově, volby vyústily v patovou situaci v parlamentu a i dnes, dva roky po volbách, nemá Severní Irsko fungující vládu.

V Irské republice strana také nabírá na důležitosti, získává hlasy voličů v okrscích dříve hlasujících pro Fianna Fáil nebo Labour party a má podporu především mezi mladými voliči a těmi, kdo dříve k volbám vůbec nechodili. V Irské republice se strana profiluje jako levicově-liberální, se společností ve středu jejího zájmu. Jak bylo zmíněno, je to zároveň nejaktivnější politická strana v období mezi volbami. Ekonomická krize v roce 2008 zajisté pomohla straně při jejím vzestupu, protože velké množství voličů konečně opustilo rozdělení irské politiky vzniknuvší na základě irské občanské války. Strana si od té doby je schopna voliče udržet a nabídnout jim silný a široký volební program. Její pozice na levé straně politického spektra, jasně odlišná od Fianna Fáil I Fine Gael, dohromady se silnou podporou mladých voličů, (ne)voličů a žen, dává straně silnou voličskou základnu. A jak ukazují průzkumy, strana je schopná si udržet i mladé voliče,

kteře získala ve volbách v roce 2011, zatím nejpřevratnějších v novodobé irské historii (Berrett, 2016).

Politika Sinn Féin v obou částech ostrova je koherentní, ale zároveň neopomíjí témata specifická pro tyto dvě oddělené části, ve kterých soutěží ve volbách. Zatímco v Severním Irsku je největším reprezentantem nacionalistických zájmů, v Republice je stranou, která nejvíce podporuje imigraci. Naopak, v obou částech ostrova ji spojuje zájem o životní prostředí, daňová politika a politika veřejných zakázek a především podpora pro manželství osob stejného pohlaví. Rozmanitost těchto témat ukazuje, jak moc se rozšířil záběr strany v obou částech ostrova od konce 90. let. Bodem, který finalizoval přeměnu strany, byla změna jejího vedení na jaře 2018, kdy Gerry Adams odstoupil z pozice stranického leadera a byl nahrazen Mary Louise McDonalovou. Mladou ženou (v době zvolení jí bylo 48 let) z Dublinu, která byla jedinou kandidátkou na danou pozici.

Tato diplomová práce vyvrací rozšířené tvrzení o irském stranickém systému – že v něm není žádná levice (což je i odpovědí na další z výzkumných otázek této práce). Hlubková analýza volebních programů Sinn Féin za použití kódovacího schématu Manifesto Project Database spolu s vypočítaným rílem strany (pozice na pravo-levé ose) jasně ukazuje, že Sinn Féin je stranou levého středu s minimálními odchylkami ve své pozici. Data z MPD navíc ukazují, že prakticky všechny relevantní strany v irském stranickém systému se v průběhu posledních 25 let posunuly na levou stranu spektra. Fine Gael, dříve strana pravého středu, je nyní na škále ještě levicovější než Sinn Féin. Fianna Fáil, dříve středová strana, má nyní srovnatelnou pozici s Labour party na levé straně spektra. Pohyb stran na pravo-levé ose vyplývající z dat MPD ukazuje ještě jednu zásadní věc – Sinn Féin je nejkonzistentnější stranou v obsahu svých předvolebních programů. Odchylka mezi dvěma jejími “nejvzdálenějšími” programy byla pouhých 4,05 bodu.

Na druhou stranu, přestože MPD ukazuje velkou změnu v rozložení stran na pravo-levé ose, tato diplomová práce ukazuje, že struktura stranického systému jako taková se za posledních 25 let nijak výrazně nezměnila, ať analyzována skrze jakoukoli z použitých typologií (použity byly typologie Maurice Duvergera, Jeana Blondela, Giovanniho Sartoriho a Petera Maira). Jak může být irský stranický systém tedy charakterizován za použití těchto typologií, aby byla zodpovězena další výzkumná otázka této práce? Podle Duvergera by irský stranický systém mohl být charakterizován jako para-dualistický po celé zkoumané období, Sinn Féin pouze nahradila Labour v pozici třetího největšího hráče. Blondelova typologie by irský stranický systém zařadila mezi

systemy dvou a půl strany, kde opět Sinn Féin nahradila na třetí příčce Labour. Výjimkou dle této typologie je období mezi lety 1992 a 2007, které by mohlo být označeno i jako multi-stranický systém s jednou dominantní stranou, protože Fianna Fáil v tomto období stabilně získávala kolem 40 procent hlasů. Zatímco relevantní strany, dle Sartoriho definice, se v průběhu zkoumaného období v irském stranickém systému obměnily, jejich počet zůstal konstantní (pět po celou zkoumanou dobu s výjimkou let 2011 – 2016, kdy klesl jejich počet na čtyři). Tudíž po celou zkoumanou dobu lze systém označit za limitovaný pluralismus. Poslední použitá typologie Petera Maira, která se na stranické systémy zaměřuje z úhlu otevřenosti či uzavřenosti struktury soutěže v nich, také identifikuje po celé zkoumané období totožnou strukturu soutěže – uzavřenou. Nicméně tato typologie nabízí nejpravděpodobnější změnu typu v blízké budoucnosti. Přestože většina irských politických stran historicky odmítá vstup do koalice s Sinn Féin, po příštích volbách k tomu možná budou nuceny, pokud bude vzestup Sinn Féin pokračovat. To by způsobilo změnu ve struktuře systému směrem k jeho otevřenosti při vstupu nového člena. Druhou možností pak je, že Sinn Féin bude schopna vytvořit po příštích volbách vládu spolu se svými nynějšími partner v opozici, což by strukturu systému otevřelo pro celou řadu nových členů.

Tato diplomová práce by nebyla úplná bez použití Manifesto Project Database, která autorce poskytla kódované volební programy Sinn Féin, či alespoň část z nich, a dalších irských politických stran. Vzhledem k tomu, že výsledky program Sinn Féin z let 1997 a 2002 nejsou v databázi kompletní (jsou kódovaný neznámým autorem a dostupné jsou pouze jejich výsledky, nikoli kódované texty samotné), autorka této diplomové práce se rozhodla zakódovat tyto programy sama za použití kódovacích pravidel MPD. Analýza srovnání výsledků kódovaných autorkou a program Sinn Féin od roku 2007 dále kódovaných certifikovaným kódérem MPD ukázala, že autorčiny výsledky jsou konzistentní s výsledky MPD. Při porovnání program Sinn Féin napříč zkoumaným obdobím zjistila autorka této práce vysokou konzistentnost v prakticky všech kategoriích, což způsobilo velmi malý rozdíl v ríle strany v průběhu zkoumaného období. Malé rozdíly byly nalezeny v kategoriích o míru (soustavně klesající podíl od uzavření Belfastské dohody), znárodnění podniků (dosahující maxima v roce 2007 v předpovědi ekonomické krize), Marxisticko-Leninistické ideologii (s nulovým počtem zmínek kromě roku 2011), pozitivní rovnosti, rozšiřování sociálního státu (s malým počtem zmínek v letech 1997 a 2002, ale s velkým množstvím od roku 2007) a právu a pořádku (s velmi malým množstvím zmínek, které razantně vzrostlo v roce 2011 po ekonomické krizi).

Jak už bylo zmíněno, *rile* (pozice strany na pravo-levé ose) vypočítané jako rozdíl mezi počtem pravicových a levicových vět a jejich částí (dle určité MPD) v programech, bylo velmi konzistentní po celé zkoumané období, jak ukazuje Vizualizace 2 na straně 44 této práce. Rozdíl mezi výsledky programů kódovaných autorkou této práce (modrá přímka) a kódovaných MPD (oranžová přímka) je také zobrazen v rámci této vizualizace.

Autorka v této práci vyzdvihla několik problematických aspektů ohledně MPD – chybějící či duplicitní data, a ty samé problémy zdůraznila i v průběhu konference uživatelů Manifesto Project Database, která se konala v březnu 2019 v Berlíně. A zatímco vysvětlení podané autorkou MPD Polou Lehmanovou, že zdroje chybějících a duplicitních dat nejsou na digitálních nosičích a MPD nemá zdroje je digitalizovat, jsou pochopitelné, autorka této práce věří, že uživatelé MPD by měli být upozorněni, že se taková data v systému vyskytují a mělo by se s nimi pracovat opatrně. A to především s těmi, které používají duplicitní výsledky pro dvojce různé volby.

Poslední výzkumná otázka této práce byla: Jaká je budoucnost irského stranického systému v souvislosti s růstem Sinn Féin? Strana, ačkoli považována za subjekt, který nemůže být součástí koalice jejími ostatními členy, může být jediným možným partnerem pro Fine Gael nebo Fianna Fáil po příštích volbách. Sinn Féin si je toho dobře vědoma a její předsedkyně Mary Louise McDonald prohlásila, že by koalici s jednou z těchto stran byla SF nakloněna. FF a stejně tak FG však takovéto spojení odmítají (Clarke, 2018). Nicméně, pokud taková situace nastane, potenciálním partnerem pro SF je Labour – strany jsou si blízké programově a Labour neodmítá možnou koalici s SF. Spolu s podporou nezávislých kandidátů a malých stran (se kterými se SF pokoušela vytvořit koalici už po volbách v roce 2016, jmenovitě s I4C a PBPA) by taková koalice mohla být po příštích volbách jednou z možností. Možností, která by naprosto změnila podobu irského stranického systému.

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8. List of annexes

- Annex 1 – The 1997 Sinn Féin’s manifesto coded by the author
- Annex 2 – The 2002 Sinn Féin’s manifesto coded by the author
- Annex 3 – results of Sinn Féin’s coded manifestos from 1997 with O version and A version (depicted in green), 2002 with O version and A version (depicted in green), 2007, 2011 and 2016

9. Annexes

Annex 1 – The 1997 Sinn Féin’s manifesto coded by the author

Text	cmp_code
A NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR PEACE	H
This election is being held at a defining moment in Irish history.	0
The promise still remains of a lasting peace	0
negotiated in a spirit of equality and inclusiveness.	0
The result of the election can determine if that promise will be fulfilled.	0
By voting for Sinn Féin you can tip the balance towards real peace; a lasting peace based on democracy; justice; freedom and equality.	0
Your vote carries a new opportunity for the people of Ireland.	0
By voting for Sinn Féin you can help break the cycle of domination; repression and resistance.	305
The election of Sinn Féin MPs will transform the political landscape.	305
A new British government; faced with Sinn Féin MPs holding an increased Sinn Féin mandate; will have to hold talks with the chosen representatives of the nationalist electorate.	0
By voting for Sinn Féin you can ensure that after this election a new British government will have to recognise that inclusive talks are the only democratic mechanism for change.	305
A strong vote for Sinn Féin sends the message that no settlement is possible unless all parties to the conflict are involved in shaping it.	305
A New Era	NA
A vote for Sinn Féin is a vote for a renewed Irish peace process.	106
It is also a vote for a new vision of the future for a new Ireland in which all of us can shape that future.	305
It is a vision for which Sinn Féin activists throughout Ireland are working tirelessly.	305
Sinn Féin looks forward to this new era.	0
The people of this island have the right to develop an economic democracy which tackles unemployment; bad housing and which provides a proper health service and an open education system for all citizens.	504
We deserve a nonsexist; pluralist; democratic socialist Ireland.	0
An Ireland which cherishes all the children of the nation equally.	0
Sinn Féin stands for a society in which Irish people can live together in mutual respect and work together in mutual regard.	503
It will be a society in which peace is not a mere interlude between wars but an incentive to the collective creative energies of all the people who live on this island.	0

Sinn Féin is committed to the transformation of Irish society and to a negotiated and democratic settlement.	202
A vote for Sinn Féin is a vote for a new Ireland.	601
An Ireland beyond the present conflict and beyond the present phase of our history.	0
This represents a vision of unity.	0
East and west; north and south; urban with rural; catholic with protestant and dissenter.	0
A vision of the redistribution of wealth; the wellbeing of the aged; the advancement of youth; the liberation of women and the protection of our children.	0
It is a vision that rejects forced emigration and unemployment;	0
the destruction of the environment;	0
cultural oppression; sexism and inequality.	0
It is economic as well as political.	0
Sinn Féin's vision is for a free Ireland and a free people.	201
It sees the relationship between Britain and Ireland resting upon our mutual independence.	101
It demands that we take risks.	0
It demands that we persevere in our efforts to reach agreement and a new accommodation between all the people of Ireland.	0
Now is the time for change	0 NA
Sinn Féin is an Irish Republican party.	413
It is an activist; campaigning party.	305
Our objective is to end British rule in Ireland.	102
We seek national selfdetermination; the unity and independence of Ireland as a sovereign state.	413
Many people now accept the need for fundamental constitutional and political change if we are to bring the peace process to a democratic conclusion.	0
New relationships will have to be forged between all the people of our country.	0
It will be difficult.	0
It demands honest dialogue and a process of inclusive negotiations without preconditions or a predetermined outcome.	0
These are extraordinary times.	0
We face extraordinary challenges.	0
There is no single; simple policy which can meet these challenges.	0
Real peace must be dynamic; changing to meet the many challenges confronting it.	106
A peace process must be a way of solving problems democratically and on the basis of equality and understanding.	202
The six county statelet is not a democratic entity.	202
It is a failed political and economic unit.	102
One of the most significant advances of recent times is the widespread acceptance that there can be no internal settlement.	101
Many have come to this position because they recognise the failure of partition; and the reality that it is not only the governance of the six counties which has been the problem.	102
The existence of the statelet is a denial of democracy.	202
That is why the unionist leadership; supported by John Major's government; do not want change.	0
They want to maintain a status quo which perpetuates supremacy; inequality and repression.	0
It is a status quo exemplified by the triumphalism of Drumcree and the British government support for Orange domination last summer.	102
It is a status quo which must be changed.	0

John Major; David Trimble and Ian Paisley know that change can only be in the direction of democracy; of equality; justice and freedom.	0
They know that at the end of a process of inclusive dialogue; the union with Britain will not be strengthened; but weakened;	101
that equality and justice are inevitable.	503
A new British government can continue to turn its face against democratic change.	102
Or it can grasp a new opportunity for peace.	101
A vote for Sinn Féin will send a clear signal that the time for change is now.	305
Sinn Féin is not the IRA	0 NA
Sinn Féin can only speak for itself and on behalf of its electorate.	305
Sinn Féin is not the IRA.	0
But we recognise and acknowledge the IRA's stated intention of enhancing the democratic peace process and the IRA's definitive commitment to its success.	0
Sinn Féin Peace Strategy	H
The Irish peace process grew out of the Sinn Féin peace strategy.	305
Sinn Féin broke the old political mould by gaining the support of John Hume; the Irish government and Irish America for a peace initiative.	305
Sinn Féin worked consistently during the cessation to overcome obstacles manufactured by the British government and the main unionist parties which denied progress towards a negotiated settlement.	305
Sinn Féin's committed and experienced leadership secured the active support for the peace process of world leaders such as Bill Clinton and Nelson Mandela.	305
Sinn Féin has also shown strong and creative leadership on the streets when it has been most needed over the last two years; particularly when the Orange Order; aided by a silent mutiny in the RUC; held the state to unionist ransom.	305
Sinn Féin continues to work tirelessly on its peace project.	305
Only last November Gerry Adams and John Hume but proposals to John Major which could have restarted the peace process.	0
Major; working to a unionist agenda; rejected those proposals.	0
Sinn Féin's peace strategy has required flexibility; imagination and a willingness to take risks.	106
Peace can only be built with inclusive dialogue leading to agreement.	106
And; as the last 30 months has shown; peace in Ireland cannot be built without the positive participation of the British government.	106
If confidence in the peace process is to be rebuilt;	106
the new British government needs to demonstrate its commitment to the search for a just and lasting peace.	101
It needs to give clear assurances that there will be no preconditions to talks; that they will be inclusive and there will be a set timeframe in order to focus participants on reaching a settlement.	101
A new British government should accept that we are entering a new era.	0
Negotiations must be an agenda for change.	106
The British government must move away from their psychology of war; a mindset which demands victory over republicans rather than agreement and compromise; a pursuit of victory by other means which sidelined the pursuit of peace during the historic IRA cessation.	101
The new British government must develop an agenda of peace peacemaking; peace building; peace talks.	101
Last May 116;000 people voted for Sinn Féin.	0
This record mandate reflected people's desire for a lasting peace and their support for Sinn Féin's involvement in the peace process.	106

Those 116;000 votes kept the peace process centre stage.	106
In this election nationalist voters can send a clear message to the new British government that genuine peace talks must be allinclusive and without preconditions.	0
Sinn Féin has highlighted the importance of maximising the nationalist vote and were willing to discuss an electoral pact; but this was refused by the SDLP.	0
Sinn Féin is therefore going forward with its strongest team of candidates with the message that its analysis has been proved correct.	305
A vote for Sinn Féin is the only way to move the peace process forward towards an inclusive settlement.	106
Sinn Féin MPs will give strong leadership.	305
They have proved that they are most suitable to put forward the arguments for change in our society.	0
Vote Sinn Féin	NA
When you vote for Sinn Féin on 1st May you will be voting for a party dedicated to rebuilding the peace process.	305
and which has a track record of providing strong leadership and effective representation.	305
Sinn Féin has the democratic right to be involved in negotiations and to represent our electorate on the basis of our established electoral mandate.	305
We reject any preconditions to our involvement in dialogue and negotiations.	202
We accept that inclusive democratic negotiations are best conducted in a wholly peaceful environment.	202
Sinn Féin's peace strategy was central in bringing about the IRA's cessation of August 1994.	305
Sinn Féin helped create the framework which most people now identify as being necessary for peace.	305
This means inclusive talks taking place within a set period of time; both governments playing their part and substantive issues being on the agenda.	106
Our peace strategy and our commitment to peaceful and democratic methods is the cornerstone of our party policy.	305
A strong vote for Sinn Féin will transform the political landscape.	305
It is a vote which will make a real difference.	0
UNIONISTS	H
Sinn Féin recognises that there cannot be a lasting peace on this island without the active participation of the northern unionist/protestant population in the shaping of that peace.	202
Sinn Féin is committed to reaching an accommodation with the unionist/protestant community.	106
We recognise that for any political settlement to work; it is desirable that all in this society must be able to claim ownership of that settlement.	202
Sinn Féin is aware that a deep seated mistrust presently exists between the republican and the northern unionist/protestant communities.	0
That mistrust finds the space to exist in a range of stereotypes.	0
Old prejudices have been reinforced and new ones have been created.	0
Sinn Féin recognises that dialogue is an important way of dealing with that mistrust.	606
Dialogue which is often frank; honest and sometimes painful can begin to dismantle these stereotypes.	0
We believe such a dialogue can become the bedrock of a peaceful settlement to our age old conflict.	106
The route to an accommodation with the unionist/protestant population may be a long and difficult one.	0
For our part the foundations of that route will be our honesty; our frankness and our integrity.	606

We ask only of the unionists that they bring their honesty; their frankness; their integrity into a dialogue which surely has the potential to liberate all of us.	606
For too long we have fought with each other and talked past each other.	106
We seek to establish a relationship free from the violence that has characterised this island for too long.	106
We recognise that all sides have suffered and that much patience will be required in the process of reconciliation.	606
We commit ourselves to:	
reaching an accommodation with the unionist/protestant people of this island;	106
overcoming the mistrust which exists between republicans and the northern unionist/protestant people;	606
a process of national reconciliation.	413
Contentious Parades	H
Sinn Féin acknowledges the right to march as a valid expression of political and cultural identity.	202
Equally; Sinn Féin recognises the rights of local communities to live free from sectarian harassment; intimidation and triumphalism.	202
In essence; Sinn Féin believes that where there are objections to a parade on whatever grounds it is incumbent on the organisers to enter into dialogue with local residents in an effort to resolve the issue.	202
It is unacceptable for march organisers to refuse to speak to people democratically mandated by their respective communities.	202
Similarly; it is unacceptable to force a parade through an area where it is clearly not wanted.	0
The disgraceful scenes witnessed last year make it even more urgent to find a resolution of this issue.	0
Recognition by the Loyal Orders of the rights of others will assist this process.	0
A willingness on their part to negotiate and not intimidate is crucial.	106
Above all; an end to sectarian coat trailing is a necessity.	106
ECONOMY	H
Sinn Féin seeks the creation of an allIreland economic system which aims to provide sustainable and dignified livelihoods for all its citizens; an economy which develops to the full;	401
economic resources both human and material; and which reflects the social and cultural values of the people and fulfils their material needs and aspirations.	410
Sinn Féin's vision is of a society that grants economic justice to all people.	503
Everyone should be able to gain meaningful; wellpaid; long term employment that provides genuine security and fair conditions.	408
These objectives will be achieved only by:	
eliminating unemployment and poverty;	504
developing more fully the industrial base;	408
generating higher levels of income and wealth for the benefit of all the people of Ireland.	408
Sinn Féin's overall strategic approach to the economy encompasses:	
the transformation of the war economy of the north into a productive and equitably developed peacetime economy;	408
the elimination of the economic distortions created by partition;	408
the social and economic harmonisation of regions and social groups in Ireland;	408
the introduction and promotion of genuine; deep and meaningful economic democracy.	401
The Six County Economy and the Social Europe	H
Sinn Féin is deeply concerned at the economic and industrial development policies currently practised by the British government.	102

There are two core factors here.	
One is the promotion of the Six Counties as a low wage; low cost economy.	102
Social insurance provisions in Britain and the Six Counties are the lowest in the EU.	102
This might mean cheaper costs for inward investors siting here.	0
However it also means that these costs are borne by workers in the Six Counties.	701
Sinn Féin believes that everyone has the right to a living wage.	412
Employment created through subsistence wages is not a solution to the economic problems of the statelet.	0
The British are actively using their opt out clause from the commitments of the Maastricht Treaty Social Chapter as a means to gain competitive advantage on other EU member states.	102
The Social Chapter commits EU states to a 48 hour working week and to a range of other positive directives which offer a rare endorsement of workers rights in the EU.	108
Sinn Féin deplores the use by the British government of its derogation from the Social Chapter as a means to further erode the rights of workers particularly in the Six Counties.	701
Cross Border Economic Development	H
Divided between two jurisdictions; the border region experiences grave distortions to its economic; political and social life.	0
Border communities have had to contend for 25 years with extensive British army fortifications on confiscated land and the impact of closed roads.	102
Sinn Féin calls for the development of the food processing; tourism and information technology industries	408
and proposes the creation of a Cross Border Development Commission:	408
to reverse the peripheralisation of the region and emphasise its distinctive characteristics;	0
to create democratic participation in the development of the region;	202
to give strategic direction to crossborder economic and social initiatives.	0
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY	H
Discrimination	H
For generations Catholics in the Six Counties have been discriminated against by successive Unionist and British governments.	0
Almost 30 years after the Civil Rights Movement campaigned for an end to discrimination in employment; and after 23 years of fair employment legislation; Catholics males are still 2.2 times more likely to be unemployed than Protestants.	0
The British government which has been directly responsible for administering the Six County state since 1972 clearly lacks the political will to tackle such discrimination.	102
Discrimination can be eradicated by adopting the following measures:	
clear and comprehensive legal powers to end sectarian discrimination within a defined time;	201
affirmative action with timetables for removing the imbalance in employment rates given the fact that catholic males are still 2.2 times and women 1.7 times more likely to be unemployed than protestants;	503
periodic reviews to assess the effect of fair employment legislation;	0
support for the Mac Bride Principles;	106
immediate repeal of sections 42 and 57 of the 1989 Fair Employment Act which institutes legalised political discrimination against members of the nationalist community.	503
Social Exclusion Social Crisis	H
High unemployment; the prospect of emigration; the lack of proper recreational facilities; state harassment; lack of representation in decisionmaking structures and a poor environment have all contributed to a climate of hopelessness from which antisocial behaviour; joyriding; drugs and alcohol abuse results.	0
It is no coincidence that areas which have been worst affected by antisocial behaviour are those who suffer the highest degree of social exclusion.	0

Sinn Féin advocates:	
public debate and dialogue with young people involved in such activity;	605
the involvement of the community in all attempts to tackle antisocial behaviour;	605
an immediate and ongoing drug awareness and drug prevention education programme initiated and aimed specifically at those in most danger from the drugs menace;	605
a greater investment of time; resources and finance by statutory and voluntary agencies to help tackle these problems;	605
a comprehensive review of existing youth provisions to ensure they meet the needs of young people in urban and rural areas.	706
Six County Economy	H
In the Six Counties the aim of economic policy under the Stormont and British administrations has been one of discrimination and distorted economic planning aimed at maintenance of the inequitable status quo rather than planning for economic democracy or unity.	102
The prime current examples of this are the cuts in spending on social services; health and education as funds are diverted to already substantial spending on maintaining Britain's military control of the Six Counties.	102
Total British government spending in 1997 is to be cut by 1.6% with a further 120 million being deducted from funds for training; education and welfare to meet increased spending on the RUC.	102
Existing structures have failed to provide economic justice in terms of economic security; freedom from discrimination; equality of treatment; access to employment; social services and quality of life for a substantial number of people in the Six Counties.	102
Examples of this economic injustice include:	
one in five of the workforce 175;000 people are unemployed; 50% of the unemployed have been without work for over a year;	701
unemployment amongst Catholic males is more than twice as high as that among Protestant males;	705
Catholic women are more disadvantaged in employment than Protestant women with higher proportions working for lower wages.	706
Less than one in five of the workforce is employed in the manufacturing industry.	701
The industrial base itself is small; lacking in competitiveness; concentrated in declining sectors and heavily dependent on public subsidy.	0
One third of all households have weekly incomes below 125 and 40% of the population live on subsistence incomes and are effectively living in poverty.	0
One consequence is the high level of emigration with 7;000 people leaving the Six Counties annually.	0
Local Economic Development	H
Sinn Féin supports an increased role for communityled and communitybased economic development within the overall process of transforming economic policies and structures.	410
There must be the implementation of areabased; integrated regeneration plans linked to local needs in both urban and rural areas.	408
Such programmes should be coordinated to strengthen the Targeting Social Need (TSN) policy.	504
The recent cutback in Action for Community Employment (ACE) schemes will further undermine many underresourced community groups.	0
The Community Work Programme (CWP) is not an acceptable alternative to ACE.	701
Funding from the EU's Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation and the URBAN package should be used to construct and assist projects aimed at improving the quality of local community life.	504

Disbursement of the money must therefore be governed by democratic consultation; transparency; accountability and additionality.	202
Efforts to make agencies such as LEDU and the International Fund for Ireland more accessible for disadvantaged communities have been made.	0
Greater visibility; flexibility and support is however still required.	0
Sinn Féin proposes:	
comprehensive preparation of disadvantaged areas for inward investment through increased cooperation between communities; government and the private sector;	303
promotion of communityled economic development and enterprise;	0
greater support for Irish language economic development;	705
establishment of multiagency/communitybased jobs task forces.	701
Privatisation and Low Pay	H
The British government's policy of privatisation; with its emphasis on maximising profits; has resulted in poorer services for the consumer; increased prices; lower wages and reduced protection from exploitation for workers.	102
Almost 23% of the population in the Six Counties have incomes under 50 per week.	0
20% of the workforce is made up of part time workers of which eight out of ten are women.	701
Sinn Féin believes there should be a minimum statutory wage.	412
They suffer discrimination in terms of pay; status; working conditions; job security and welfare entitlements.	701
Sinn Féin believes:	
there should be a statutory minimum wage;	412
part time workers are entitled to the same employment rights as full time workers;	412
all workers should be paid a fair wage.	412
YOUNG PEOPLE'S RIGHTS	H
Children are given very few rights and little protection in this society.	706
Sinn Féin believes there should be legislative adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child leading to its immediate implementation; with procedures put in place to monitor its development.	706
Sinn Féin also believes that a Childrens Commissioner should be appointed to ensure the protection of children and to guarantee their rights under the terms of the U.N. Convention.	706
People under 25 make up a sizable proportion of the population of the Six Counties.	0
They bear the brunt of the worst social and economic conditions as well as harassment by British Crown Forces.	102
The level of youth unemployment and emigration is an indictment of the political system.	0
A quarter of those receiving unemployment benefit are under 25 but even this does not reflect the true extent of joblessness due to manipulation by the British government of the unemployment figures through various training schemes.	706
Sinn Féin calls for:	
an improvement in facilities and conditions in training schemes;	506
an adequate allowance for young people whilst in training and the right of trainees to join trade unions;	706
greater investment in leisure and sports facilities for young people and staffed play areas for children.	706
management by the community of youth facilities.	706
Sex Education for young people	H
Sinn Féin has long supported a comprehensive sex education programme for young people.	506
This should include mature discussion of and adequate information on sex; sexuality; relationships; contraception; pregnancy; sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS.	506

Sinn Féin welcomes the work of the Brook Clinic in Belfast.	506
EDUCATION AND TRAINING	H
Sinn Féin believes that access to education and training opportunities is a fundamental right for all people.	506
Sinn Féin supports the proposals contained in the NUS and USI document which deals comprehensively with the consequences of education cuts by successive Conservative governments.	506
The British government has not viewed education in the same way and the system has been subjected to a brutal series of cutbacks at every level and enforced changes in the curriculum.	102
Sinn Féin is opposed to any cutbacks in education and training provision such as:	
redundancy of teachers and classroom assistants;	506
increased class sizes;	506
falling value of student grants and the implementation of loans systems which leads to greater student poverty and denies access to third level education for mature and working class students;	506
cuts in teachers wage levels.	506
Sinn Féin also opposes the latest attacks on training budgets resulting in dramatic losses in the ACE schemes and training allocations to local training providers as a result of cutbacks to the T & EA budget.	506
Sinn Féin therefore calls for:	
access to affordable childcare and nursery education for those who wish to avail of it.	506
student grants for those in further education should be raised to an acceptable level;	506
access to further and higher education should be increased to meet demand;	506
local community education schemes should be made to allow local people to identify and meet their training and education needs;	506
an immediate reversal of the proposed cuts in Jobskills and ACE.	506
FARMING AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT	H
30% of farms in the Six Counties account for 70% of production.	0
Employment in the agricultural sector has plummeted by 17;000 or 30% during the last 20 years and farming incomes are well below the average industrial earnings.	0
Farming does not provide full time employment for the majority.	0
Changes to the Common Agricultural Policy is accelerating the exodus from the land.	0
A solution to rural poverty; disadvantage and unemployment can only be effectively tackled through an integrated development programme.	703
Job creation agencies have failed to direct potential employment towards disadvantaged rural areas.	0
The increasing concentration of services such as post offices; schools and health centres in the district towns has further led to a rundown of remote rural areas.	504
Sinn Féin believes that a number of policies should be pursued:	
an integrated strategy for rural development;	703
agricultural diversification;	703
an improved transport infrastructure;	703
sustainable tourism;	703
the development of a rural investment bank;	703
an increase in EU structural funds; independent of any quotas;	703
no dismantling of CAP supports until an improved alternative structure has been put in place;	703
regional spending should be targeted at areas of greatest need;	703

job creation outside farming in the rural areas should be prioritised.	703
BSE	H
BSE is the worst crisis facing the farming industry since 1974 and the fallout has repercussions for all sections of the economy; be it in farm services; machinery production; haulage; packaging; manufacturing of byproducts and banking.	0
All beef produced in Ireland is of the highest quality and cattle are monitored and identified through the tagging system from birth to slaughter.	0
Meat plants are the most modern in Europe yet Northern beef cannot be sold because it is classified as British.	0
Farmers in the six counties are being penalised because of British government incompetence.	0
Sinn Féin calls for:	
the Irish government to market all Irish beef in order to restore confidence in the Irish Beef Industry.	412
THE ENVIRONMENT	H
Environmental issues which affect both parts of Ireland include pollution and the gradual destruction of the Irish Sea by nuclear; industrial and domestic waste.	0
Sinn Féin welcomes the decision to refuse planning permission to Nirex to build an underground nuclear dump at Sellafield and will continue to support local communities in the campaign against nuclear dumping in the Irish sea.	501
Sinn Féin supports the closure of Sellafield;	501
supports the setting up of an international conference to tackle the threat posed to the Irish Sea by pollutants and overfishing;	501
calls on the British and US governments to stop all submarine traffic in the Irish Sea to protect those working on fishing fleets in the area;	501
opposes the building of a national toxic waste incinerator in Ireland since insufficient level of waste are produced to economically justify such a proposal.	501
Working closely with local communities; Sinn Féin has been involved in a range of environmental projects including the protection of the Black Mountain and Cave Hill in Belfast and the raising of public awareness about the environmental impact of gold mining in Tyrone and lignite mining around Lough Neagh.	501
Sinn Féin believes there is a need to:	
develop environmental awareness and action amongst the general public;	501
minimise the production of waste and encourage recycling;	501
minimise energy waste and develop renewable energy resources;	501
maintain the quality of the natural and cultural heritage.	501
The achievement of the above requires changes in people's attitudes and behaviour; along with changes in political priorities.	0
It will also require changes in legislation and policy and the use of financial incentives or disincentives.	0
CULTURE	H
Sinn Féin calls for the Irish language to have equal status with English.	502
The Irish language has no official status in the Six Counties. Neglect of the language pervades every aspect of the system here.	0
The language cannot be used in any dealing with public bodies or civil services departments; is banned completely in Belfast City Council and is marginalised in the school curriculum.	0
Ní féidir an teanga a úsáid i gcumarsáid le comhlachtaí poiblí na le roinn ar bith den státseirbhís agus tá cosc iomlán uirthi i gComhairle na Cathrach i mBéal Feirste.	0 NA

Sinn Féin has spearheaded the Gaelicisation of street names in Belfast; Derry and Armagh and we welcome the abolition of Section 19(4) of the Public Health Act 1949 which prohibits councils from erecting signs 'other than in the English language'.	506
While Sinn Féin welcomes the belated decision by the NIO to provide financial backing for some Irish language schemes; we consider their response to date to be totally inadequate.	0
We also deplore the totally unjustified way in which funds have been withdrawn or withheld from some Irish groups without any explanation.	0
Sinn Féin calls on the Department of Education to remove all obstacles to Irish medium education and to place it on a par with integrated schools.	506
Schools with 25 pupils and teaching in the indigenous language should qualify for government aid.	506
We will continue to challenge the denial of civil rights inherent in the barring of Irish from the courts and all levels of public administration.	506
Sinn Féin supports the efforts of the prisoners to end cultural discrimination within the prisons.	502
We call for prisoners to be able to speak Irish during visits and to correspond in the language and for an end to the undue delays in the censoring of Irish language material.	502
WOMEN	H
Women in Ireland suffer from systematic and institutionalised sexual discrimination.	706
British government cuts in health care; education and social services have added to women's social and economic burden while systematic attacks on lone parents have left many feeling isolated and marginalised.	504
Sinn Féin calls for:	
legislation which guarantees women equality of citizenship and protects them from violence both inside and outside the home;	706
an education system which recognises women's contribution to society and combats sexism and sex stereotyping.	706
Despite legislation women are still at a considerable disadvantage in the workplace and continue to be paid less than men for work of equal value.	0
Equal pay legislation must be made more effective and greater resources allocated in the fight against inequality.	503
Adequate health services for women must be provided as a matter of urgency; particularly during pregnancy.	504
Screening for breast cancer and smear testing for cervical cancer should be freely available to all women.	706
Sinn Féin believes there is a need for:	
legislation incorporating affirmative action programmes with builtin goals and timetables;	303
a comprehensive training programme for meaningful jobs; with flexible hours and childcare facilities;	504
permanent funding for women's organisations and communitybased women only courses.	706
Violence against Women	H
Women have the right to live their lives free from physical; sexual or mental assault; harassment and intimidation.	706
Sexual violence against women stems from societal attitudes and nowhere is this violence more obviously displayed than in rape.	0
Sinn Féin welcomes the recent changes which mean that rape within marriage is now recognised as a crime.	706
Sinn Féin calls for:	
a multifaceted approach to eradicate violence against women including specialised counselling services; education projects; selfhelp groups and community initiatives;	706

the legal definition of rape extended to include oral and anal rape;	203
training for legal and medical personnel on the effects of rape;	506
Rape Crisis Centres to be guaranteed adequate statutory funding.	706
IRISH POLITICAL PRISONERS	H
380 Irish Republican political prisoners are currently held in jails in Ireland; Britain and the United States.	0
73 of these are serving life sentences while 80 are serving sentences of 20 years or over.	0
International experience shows that it is imperative for the issue of political prisoners to be addressed during the process of conflict resolution.	0
In contrast; following the IRA cessation in August 1994 the British government's attitude to prison issues hardened; demonstrating a clear lack of commitment to building peace:	0
harassment of prisoners in English jails was stepped up;	0
in May 1995 five prisoners were placed in solitary confinement where they remained to January 1997;	0
in June 1995 the British government released British paratrooper Lee Clegg after serving two years of a life sentence for murder at the same time they refused to review the cases of republican prisoners who had served over 20 years;	0
in November 1995 three republican lifers in Maghaberry prison were informed that they can expect to serve 50 years.	0
Prisoners in England	H
Of the 32 Irish political prisoners in England; five are into their 22nd year of imprisonment.	0
Thirteen are held in solitary confinement in Special Security Units condemned by a wide range of human rights bodies and medical experts.	0
While British government policy is ostensibly that prisoners should serve their sentences in jails as close to their homes as possible; this policy has never been freely applied to Irish prisoners.	102
Under a Council of Europe Treaty provision now exists for the repatriation of Irish prisoners in the 26 Counties; since the treaty came into effect in November '95 only 5 prisoners have been repatriated.	0
Women Prisoners	H
The NIO operates a policy of discrimination against women prisoners.	0
Restrictive conditions in the women's prison which male prisoners are no longer subjected to include lockups; limited association and exercise periods; confined exercise space and restrictive access to telephones.	0
Sinn Féin demands; pending the release of all political prisoners:	NA
the introduction of a humane regime for Irish political prisoners in English jails;	201
the transfer of Irish political prisoners to jails in Ireland; equality of treatment for all political prisoners.	201
POLICING THE FUTURE	H
At last year's Ard Fheis Sinn Féin adopted a document; 'Policing in Transition A Legacy of Repression; an Opportunity for Justice'	0
The document put forward a number of radical proposals to replace the RUC.	0
These proposals reflect the reality that the RUC are not an acceptable police force to the nationalist people yet the nationalist people require a police service which they can have confidence in and support until such times as the constitutional question is resolved.	0
The RUC at Drumcree last year faced one of its greatest challenges and it clearly failed to provide impartial policing. Their actions on that day and the strong speculation that the forced mutinied confirm what nationalists have believed about the force since it was established that it is sectarian and incapable of reforming itself to the point of acceptability.	0

Recent suggestions of changes in relation to the use of plastic bullets; the policing of parades and the complaints system are superficial and an attempt by the British government to limit the political damage caused by the RUC's actions.	0
This "charm offensive" will not overcome the deepseated opposition to this force from the nationalist people.	0
Sinn Féin calls for:	
the replacement of the RUC by an acceptable interim police service;	0
the immediate disarmament of the RUC pending their agreed and orderly disbandment.	0
the immediate withdrawal of the RUC from nationalist areas;	0
the immediate disbandment of the RUC Special Branch;	0
the establishment; through the medium of inclusive peace talks involving all parties and both governments; of an agreed; fullyindependent; monitoring agency which would oversee the above.	0

Annex 2 – The 2002 Sinn Féin’s manifesto coded by the author

Text	Cmp_code
Sinn Féin Manifesto 2002	H
Building an Ireland of Equals	H
Introduction	H
There is a real choice in General Election 2002.	0
It is a choice between those who are working to create an Ireland of Equals and those who have created an unequal and divided Ireland.	503
It is a choice between the only all-Ireland party and the partitionist parties.	601
It is a choice between the only growing force in Irish politics and the stagnant array of parties who have failed to inspire the electorate.	305
It is a choice between political commitment and political careerism.	305
It is a choice between real change and more of the same.	305
It is a choice between Sinn Féin and all the rest.	305
In this Sinn Féin Manifesto we present our vision of an Ireland of Equals and our political, social and economic programme for the building of a better society on this island.	503
No government since 1922 had a better opportunity to share wealth and create equality than the outgoing Fianna Fáil/Progressive Democrats administration.	305
But it has squandered that opportunity.	305
It has failed to cultivate equity and share prosperity.	305
Instead the outgoing government, like its predecessors, has widened the gap between rich and poor.	305
After a period of unprecedented economic prosperity the majority of our people do not have access to adequate public services.	504
Creidimid i Sinn Féin go bhfuil dúil ar fhorhór na ndaoine in Éirinn, páirt suntasach a ghlacadh i sochaí ina bhfuil an comhionannas agus an cothrom mar bhonn lárnach ann.	0
Tá daoine ag iarraidh go gcaithfear a gcuid cánach le haghaidh seirbhísí poiblí níos fearr a sholáthar, agus le haghaidh feabhas a chur ar ghnáth-shaol an duine.	0
Tá an beart seo de dhíth, ach tá an toil pholaitiúil riachtanach le haghaidh é seo a dhéanamh go ceart - toil atá go mór in easnamh leis na páirtithe caomhnacha le fada an lá anois.	0
Tá sé de dhualgas ar gach feisire atá tofa, agus ar an Stát i gcoitinne na rudaí seo a leanas a chur i bhfeidhm:	0

We in Sinn Féin believe that the vast majority of our citizens want to participate actively in a society that cherishes all the children of the nation equally.	503
They want to see their taxes used to provide better public services and a better quality of life for all.	504
That is a democratic imperative,	202
requiring the real political will which has been lacking in the conservative parties.	305
It is the duty of elected representatives and the function of the State to ensure that:	
• Our two-tier health system is replaced with an equitable and efficient health service	504
• Deireadh a chur leis an gcóras sláinte éagórach, agus córas cothrom a chur i bhfeidhm sa tír	0
• Housing is provided as a right	504
• Ceart na tithíochta a dhaingniú	0
• Education at every level is open to all	506
• An t-Oideachas a bheith mar bhuncheart	0
• Childcare is accessible for those who need it	504
• Cúram leanaí a sholáthar go forleathan	0
• Rural Ireland is regenerated.	703
• Forbairt tuaithe a bhrú chun cinn.	0
These are among Sinn Féin's priorities in this Manifesto.	0
A key democratic test of the next government will be whether or not it implements the decision of the electorate on the Treaty of Nice.	305
A referendum replay of the same Treaty rejected by the people would be a travesty of democracy.	108
As republicans we are totally committed to Irish unity and sovereignty.	601
We want to build upon the peace process and the Good Friday Agreement.	106
We want to prepare for the unification of all the people who share this island in a 32-County Republic.	601
Mar Phoblachtánaigh, tá athaontú na tíre mar bhunspríoc againn.	0
Táimid ag iarraidh Phróiseas na Síochána agus Chomhaontú Aoine an Chéasta a dhaingniú, agus chun dul ar aghaidh le tógáil orthu.	0
Táimid ag ullmhú le haghaidh athaontú mhuintir na tíre seo i bPoblacht aontaithe Uile-Éireannach.	0
It took political will, courage and determination to build the peace process.	305
Sinn Féin will apply those qualities equally to the building of real social and economic change in our country.	305
The only promises we make are the promise of hard work on behalf of the citizens we represent	305
and the promise of our total commitment to social equality,	503
economic justice	504
and political freedom.	201
PEACE PROCESS	H
The Peace Process grew out of Sinn Féin's peace strategy.	106
It has delivered the IRA cessations and the Good Friday Agreement and offered us a route map out of conflict	305
and into a new Ireland based on equality and justice.	503
The Good Friday Agreement is an all-Ireland agreement.	601

It transcends partition and it offers a new opportunity for people throughout our island.	601
This potential, this opportunity, has still to be fully delivered. Yet despite all of the obstacles Sinn Féin is committed to and is determined to see the potential of the Good Friday Agreement realised.	305
Republicans have taken many risks for peace over the past ten years.	106
This imaginative and flexible approach to peace making has been a consistent element of this entire process.	106
Sinn Féin remains convinced that the changes which are clearly necessary - and indeed promised - under the Good Friday Agreement must be delivered.	305
We have been consistent in our demand that the Good Friday Agreement be implemented in full.	305
Since the signing of the Agreement we have been involved in a series of public and private negotiations with the Irish and British governments, with other political parties and with the US administration. On the policing issue we will continue to demand the accountable policing service promised in the Agreement.	305
We have been to the forefront in demanding not just an accountable policing service, but on issues of demilitarisation, an acceptable system of criminal justice, equality and human rights.	201
We have honoured every commitment made under the Good Friday Agreement and we now demand that others do likewise.	305
Throughout the entire peace process, throughout the highs and the lows, Sinn Féin has been the engine for change.	305
We have given real leadership.	305
We have been dynamic and have met all of the challenges placed in before us.	305
We will continue to do this.	305
We will not be diverted from demanding equality and justice.	503
We will continue to be a source of confidence and strength, replacing conflict and division with peace and opportunity.	106
Our vision of a new agreed Ireland has been the driving force behind our peace strategy.	106
The strategy and the Peace Process that it delivered is about creating change.	305
Change in ordinary people's lives up and down this island. In Derry or Kerry, West Belfast or Dublin South-West.	NA
At this election you can join with Sinn Féin in ensuring that these changes and future changes become irreversible.	305
By supporting Sinn Féin you are strengthening the search for peace and becoming part of the process of delivering change.	305
Sinn Féin believes that the new Dáil and the incoming government, whatever its composition, must prioritise the peace process.	106
It must put renewed impetus into the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement.	NA
Sinn Féin proposes:	
• Building upon the progress of the all-Ireland Ministerial Council and the Implementation Bodies	0
• Integrating public policies and services on an all-Ireland basis	303
• Rapid progress on:	H
• Demilitarisation	105
• A truly new policing for the six counties	305
• human rights	201
and equality	503
• Inquiries into killings involving suspected collusion between British forces and loyalists	605
• The repeal of the Offences Against the State Act	0

• The release of all remaining prisoners qualifying for release under the Good Friday Agreement	605
• A full public inquiry into the Dublin and Monaghan bombings and other killings in the 26 counties involving British forces in collusion with loyalists	605
IRISH UNITY	H
Building an Alliance for Irish Unity	0
Sinn Féin is a republican party.	601
We are the only all-Ireland party. We are the only party with a strategy and policies for achieving Irish unity and independence.	305
We are the only party that people can vote for whether they live in Derry, Kerry, Wexford or Antrim.	0
We are the only party bringing a distinctly republican and socialist analysis into the heart of Irish politics.	305
Successive Irish Governments have not had a strategy for advancing Irish Unity. Sinn Féin will address the issue as a matter of urgency.	305
The primary objective at this time has to be to sustain the peace process and to build the political progress and the Good Friday Agreement.	106
But Sinn Féin continues to work for an end to the union and to ensuring that Irish unity becomes a reality.	601
In recent years we have seen the repeal of the Government of Ireland Act, the creation of all Ireland institutions, some progress on the issue of northern representation in the Oireachtas and the removal of the unionist veto.	0
Good Friday Agreement	H
The Good Friday Agreement is an all Ireland Agreement. Our priority is to see that Agreement bedded down, implemented fully, and the peace process stabilised.	303
Sinn Féin will continue to actively develop and advance the potential of the All-Ireland institutions and Implementation Bodies.	601
We will work to ensure that the necessary financial and other resources are available so that substantial progress can take place.	305
Sinn Féin proposes:	
• In the next Dáil we will seek to work with others to begin the process of drawing up a Green Paper on Irish unity.	601
• To work alongside other political parties, community groups, trade unions and other interested sections of our society in creating an 'Alliance for Irish Unity'.	0
• The appointment of a Minister of State with specific responsibility for driving forward and coordinating the work of the All-Ireland institutions and implementation bodies.	0
• To amend Dail procedures to facilitate direct reporting of the progress of the North South Ministerial Council.	0
Northern Representation	H
It is the entitlement and birthright of every person born on the island of Ireland, which includes its island and seas, to be part of the Irish nation. That is also the entitlement of all persons otherwise qualified in accordance with law to be citizens of Ireland ...	0
For many years now Sinn Féin has been lobbying intensively for Northern participation in the political life of the nation.	0
It is a logical extension of the outworking of the Good Friday Agreement and is something that will bring considerable benefits to all of us living on the island.	0
We welcome the publication of the report from the All-Party Oireachtas Committee on the Constitution and will continue to work to see this issue developed.	0
A new Relationship between Ireland and Britain	H
The process that we are involved in is about creating the conditions for a new democratic, pluralist dispensation on the island	202

and a new relationship between Ireland and Britain.	101
We want to end British jurisdiction in Ireland.	102
We want to initiate a process for discussing, negotiating and agreeing the future form of all Ireland government structures.	0
Engaging with Unionists	H
Republicans do not underestimate the challenge that the changing nature of politics on the island poses to unionists.	0
But neither should unionists ignore the fact that they represent 20% of the population of this island.	0
Their potential is greater in an Irish state which wants their vital and essential contribution than it is as 2% of a British state which has consistently demonstrated no real interest in them except when it serves British establishment interests.	0
Our goal as Irish republicans therefore is an Irish unity that is inclusive, that unionists will feel welcome in, that they are part of.	0
So we have to quietly, persuasively, and as friends and neighbours persuade unionists that they should consider positively the advantages of a united Ireland.	0
Unionists should be prepared to put forward their vision for the future and to consider, discuss and engage with nationalists and republicans about the nature and form a new united Ireland will take.	0
While nationalists, republicans and unionists are engaging in a process of change so too must society change to accommodate all of us who live on the island.	601
A United Ireland must be inclusive for all and must guarantee the rights and entitlements of unionists so that they have their own place, their own stake in and a sense of security and ownership.	0
HEALTH	H
Introduction	H
Health care is the big casualty of the Fianna Fáil/Progressive Democrats tax-cutting strategy favouring the rich.	305
The effects of cutbacks in health since the 1980s, and subsequent chronic under-funding, have pushed the State to the bottom of the European health league.	0
Thirty years ago Irish men and women lived longer than the average European, Today they will be the first to die.	0
The poorer you are in Ireland, the more likely you are to become ill and to die prematurely.	0
Unskilled manual workers have a mortality rate 250 per cent higher than in the professions.	0
The inequalities in health mirror the inequalities in wealth, created by the current Government.	305
Access to quality health care is increasingly dependent on ability to pay and not on need.	0
Public patients wait years for treatment that is available to private patients within weeks.	0
The result is that more and more people are turning to private health care as they are afraid to depend on public health care, others are abandoned on waiting lists.	0
Fifty-eight per cent of people rely on the public system for health care, including 18 per cent who are ineligible for a Medical Card but cannot afford insurance cover.	0
Sinn Féin is proposing the establishment of an all-party cabinet committee to bring forward a focused and integrated plan for the strategic transformation of the health system.	504
This must include widespread public consultation.	0
The 26 Counties has:	H
• The worst life expectancy in Europe for men and women aged 65.	0
• Four times more women likely to die from cancer than the European average.	0
• The highest rate of premature death from coronary heart disease in Europe.	0

• 15 per cent of acute beds closed due to staff shortages.	0
• 28,000 on public hospital waiting lists	0
• A five-year waiting list for orthodontic treatment for children.	0
Waiting Lists	H
There are almost 28,000 people awaiting hospital treatment, more than 10,000 adult public patients and over 2,000 children have been on hospital waiting lists for 12 months or more.	0
The Fianna Fáil/Progressive Democrats last-gasp strategy presents a plan to reduce waiting lists, but their targets are little more than wishful thinking as they have failed to guarantee long-term funding and have not dealt with the inequality in the system itself.	305
The current year's matching of European per capita spending masks years of under funding - from a low of 60 per cent in 1989.	0
Sinn Féin proposes:	
Establishing a single waiting list that ensures universal access to acute services on the basis of need.	504
This process should be fair and transparent.	504
Two-Tier Health Care	H
Health care in this state is still a two-tier system and the private sector is subsidised by taxpayers.	504
The private sector is allocated 20 per cent of the beds in public hospitals but only contributes 11 per cent of the costs of running these hospitals.	0
The two-tier system gives consultants an incentive to occupy as many hospital beds as possible with private patients.	0
A study by Margaret Wylie of the Economic and Social Research Institute on Private Practice in Irish Public Hospitals found private patients accounted for 30 per cent of hospital admissions, despite the 20 per cent rule.	0
Taxpayers are spending "165 million annually to subsidise the hospital stays of private patients.	0
Proposals to establish a Treatment Purchase Fund to allow public patients to be treated in private hospitals, while offering a short-term method of cutting waiting lists, perpetuates inequality in the system.	504
Sinn Féin proposes:	
As a central demand a health care system free at the point of delivery for all.	504
This would include GP care, hospital care and medication.	504
Obviously this cannot be achieved overnight. But with political and administrative will it is an achievable objective.	305
A serious, pragmatic and credible commitment to public services and equality within those services would win huge public support from all sections of society, and could be the basis for civic and social regeneration.	504
That in the short-term health funding should be increased to 9 per cent of GDP with a sustained period of additional funding to help redress years of under-funding and cutbacks in the public health care system.	504
That tax incentives for private medical care should be removed and all privileges in waiting times, appointment decisions and medical vested interests be ended.	503
In the short-term there should also be an extension of Medical Card eligibility to all those on or below the minimum wage and everyone under the age of 18 and people still in full-time education.	504
Health Insurance Over 1.5 million citizens subscribe to the VHI while BUPA has nearly 200,000 customers.	0

Consumers have seen their subscription costs rise and rise over the past decade (15 per cent in the last year alone for VHI subscribers).	0
The VHI exists as a stop-gap measure between a fully market driven health system and a public national health service.	0
The 2000 Economic and Social Research Institute study of the health insurance market found that 77 per cent of people surveyed said that the reason they had bought health insurance was as a means of ensuring they got 'good treatment in hospital'.	0
At the same time, with the entry of BUPA into the health market, there has been an erosion of the principle of community rating where all subscribers on the same insurance plan paid the same fee regardless of age.	0
Sinn Féin believes that there should not be a market for health care.	504
There should be one public system, free at the point of use.	504
Sinn Féin proposes:	
A ten-year strategy to convert the private health insurance system into a single-tier public system that really is world class for everybody,	504
regardless of how much they earn or where they live or how old they are.	503
To oppose any attempt to further privatise VHI or to undermine community rating in health.	413
Staffing the Health Service	H
The proposed increase in consultants and other hospital staff is welcome, albeit overdue.	0
A shortage of medical specialists is severely hampering the provision of public health care.	0
From 1980 to 1999, the number of medical, dental and nursing staff in the health services fell from 33,700 to 32,500.	0
And then there are huge inequities in wages and working conditions in the health service.	701
There are over 15,000 registered non-practising nurses in the State who have chosen not to work in the health service.	701
In our hospitals, consultants are being paid from the public purse for treating public patients while at the same time they profit from the thriving private health business.	0
They are allowed to work unlimited private hours in public hospitals, using public medical resources and public offices funded by the taxpayer for their business for personal private profit.	0
Their skills can be bought and public waiting lists by-passed at the right price.	0
No system built on that basis can be either fair or efficient.	0
Sinn Féin recognises that if transforming the health system and creating equality means taking on the vested interests of the most powerful minority in the health services - the consultants who benefit from both private and public practices.	701
We need to address the shortage in health care workers, especially in specialist consultancies, and ensure that they are distributed throughout the State.	701
Sinn Féin proposes:	
Additional consultants to work solely in the public sector for the first years of their contracts.	504
A special location allowance for nurses and junior doctors working in the Greater Dublin area.	701
Ending the existing system of long working hours for junior doctors and to see the recommendations of the Commission on Nursing implemented.	701
More public health nurses employed and carers in the home.	504
More consultants, especially in Accident and Emergency.	504
Women and Health According to the National Cancer Registry, one in 13 women in Ireland will develop breast cancer in their lifetime.	0

A woman living in Ireland is four times more likely to die from cancer than her European counterpart.	0
Sinn Féin proposes	
The establishment of a free and prompt national breast and cervical screening programme for all women over 40 and for teenage girls.	504
Funding for an outreach programme under the auspices of the Women's Health Council to empower women in determining their own health needs.	504
All Ireland Co-operation on Health	H
It is clearly inefficient that on a small island of less than six million people we have two distinct health systems.	0
The skills of service providers in the health systems, North and South, can be better utilised, and hospitals and other resources more efficiently deployed if we have enhanced all-island co-operation in the short-term leading to a single all-Ireland health service.	504
Ending the Accident and Emergency nightmare Hours spent queuing to see a triage nurse, then a wait for a consultation with a doctor and yet more hours delay in receiving actual medical treatment are the norm for patients presenting at Accident and Emergency departments.	0
This creates an intolerable situation for medical staff, patients and their families.	0
Sinn Féin proposes:	
That decentralisation of services and, building on that adequate capacity in community and hospital services, and the funding of emergency rooms on a proper regional basis, would have the greatest immediate impact on providing a better health service.	0
Health Promotion	H
Promoting a healthy lifestyle should be a central element in a good health strategy.	0
Information is key to this and should be available to the public at every opportunity.	0
Health promotion should involve the health proofing of all public policies and creating environments that promote health and healthy lifestyles.	0
Tackling Poverty	H
Poverty, poor housing and other social and environmental factors still determine our health status.	504
In Ireland today, one in four children and one in five adults live in households existing on less than half the average income.	504
And one in four women raising children or managing households on their own experience poverty.	504
Many students and young workers work excessive hours and are living in sub-standard accommodation that can seriously affect their health.	504
Sinn Féin supports the development of a comprehensive all-Ireland strategy to eradicate poverty and deprivation in Ireland.	504
This must be properly resourced and carried out within a specified time frame.	0
Reform of the taxation and social welfare systems must be part of the process to redress health inequalities.	504
Pharmaceutical Costs	H
Little attention has been paid to date to the pharmacy costs borne by both the public hospital service and the GMS scheme.	0
Pharmaceutical companies are among the most profitable businesses internationally and there are huge discrepancies in the prices these companies charge across markets.	0
This is an issue that needs to be immediately addressed as there is huge potential for health cost savings from instigating a policy of generic drug prescribing and securing bulk discounts.	0

Because of economies of scale, those discounts could be significantly increased if purchasing was organised on an all-Ireland basis.	0
Regionalisation Round trips of hundreds of miles and then long delays for a ten-minute consultation are the norm for many people in need of medical care living outside of Dublin City and Cork City.	0
Even within the Dublin region there are huge discrepancies in the provision of health care services.	0
Sinn Féin proposes:	
The establishment of new primary care centres in areas of greatest need as soon as possible.	504
The strategic development of a regional health care strategy that provides targets and guarantees to ensure delivery.	504
EDUCATION	H
Equal Access to Education	H
Sinn Féin will promote an education policy based on the recognition that the people are the richest resource of the nation.	506
We believe education is a fundamental right of all people and can be an essential instrument for the building of an Ireland of equals.	506
Recent studies have shown over 1.1 million Irish adults without formal educational qualifications and up to 25 per cent of all adults have some level of literacy problems.	0
This is one of the lowest levels of literacy in the industrialised world.	0
The Higher Education Authority reported in 2000 that there had been no significant improvement in the number of school-leavers from disadvantaged backgrounds reaching university over the past five years.	0
The figures show that of 14,000 students graduating from universities in this State, only 2.2% come from households headed by an unskilled or semi-skilled worker.	506
From the first rung of the education ladder at pre-school, children of low-income families carry a burden which means that they never reach the top rung at third level.	506
The Problem	H
Education can fundamentally and positively transform society.	506
At its best, it is child- and student-centred, focusing on the needs, aspirations and talents of each individual learner.	506
Decades of under-funding, however, have prevented children and adults from reaching their full potential through the education system.	506
The education system continues to mirror and maintain social division and exclusion.	503
Free education is a myth.	506
Participation in education is, to a great extent, still determined by class.	506
Children from disadvantaged backgrounds are still extremely unlikely to reach university and are more likely to leave school early.	503
Many school buildings around the country are in a disgraceful state of disrepair.	0
Secondary teachers do not receive adequate levels of pay.	701
The community is the background against which education takes place.	0
This inter-connectedness must spread through the system at all levels, from pre-school through to further education, working to remove barriers to education for the most disadvantaged and groups with specific needs and to promote an ethos of inter-culturalism to serve a diverse population.	506
The social value of teachers at all levels needs to be recognised	701
Sinn Féin will support and work for the development of an ethos of 'learning organisation' within the education system.	506

This will be alongside the building of Learning Neighbourhoods ñ meaningful partnerships between local education providers and the community they work with and within, where life-long learning is available to all and where a range of educational services are provided to meet individual, community and economic needs.	506
Towards an Education System for All of Ireland	H
Sinn Féin will support and work for an all-Ireland education system.	506
Sinn Féin will campaign for the all-Ireland implementation of the right to education,	506
for increased sharing of resources and expertise,	506
easier contact and mobility, and a harmonisation of the two systems based on equality and inclusion.	503
The Irish Language	H
Sinn Féin believes that the Irish language should have a central place in the education system at all levels.	0
Emphasis should be on Irish as a spoken, living language.	0
Improvements in the teaching of Irish at primary and second level should be made with appropriate support and resources for teachers and pupils.	506
We recognise that, in the past, the responsibility for saving and reviving the Irish language was placed almost solely upon the education system.	506
What is needed now is for Irish in the education system to be integrated with a multi-faceted approach to the promotion of Irish led by the State and the Irish-speaking community and involving all sectors of society.	601
Early Years	H
The primary weakness is the lack of any entitlement of children to early childhood education and the high costs to parents of private early childhood education.	506
A system of universally available, publicly funded early childhood education is essential.	506
Sinn Féin will work for:	H
• Appropriate resources to enable nursery schools and other early childhood services to work with parents and offer them support and on-site facilities.	506
• Early detection of special educational needs and dyslexia and providing direct support to the child.	506
• Extend the Early Start programme.	506
• A maximum child to adult ratio of 12 to 1.	506
• Measures to recruit and retain suitably qualified staff, including proper remuneration.	506
• Provision of naoiscoilleana where there is demand and with proper resources.	506
Primary Level	H
The primary education sector is characterised by unacceptably large class sizes, low levels of investment in school building and accommodation, staff shortages and inadequate levels of funding.	506
Investment in primary schools should be increased and additional funding made available to schools in marginalised and disadvantaged communities.	506
Sinn Féin will work for:	H
• Primary schools centred in and reflective of the community.	0
• Co-educational schools in terms of gender where there is local demand.	506
• Resources to enable detection of special educational needs with a reduction of waiting time for assessment to less than six months.	506
• Reduction of the pupil-teacher ratio to accord with European norms.	506
• Extension of the Early Start programme to all schools with pupils from disadvantaged areas.	506
• Increase in capitation grants to at least 200 per pupil per year	506
• The provision of gaelscoilleana where there is demand.	506

• Facilitate cross-Border access to the school that is geographically closer.	506
• All-Ireland curriculum initiatives.	506
• Continuing overall priority and increased budgetary provision for primary education.	506
• Radical action on remedial teaching with increased numbers of teachers and real access to remediation for all schools.	506
• More flexibility in determining staffing needs of schools to ensure that schools are not left understaffed.	506
• Fair and just pay and pensions levels for teachers in line with the requirements of the Irish National Teachers' Organisation.	701
Post-Primary	H
Level Sinn Féin advocates a system of comprehensive, all-ability, 11 to 18 years education, with a broad and balanced curriculum including academic, technical and vocational subjects.	506
Sinn Féin will work for:	H
• Substantially increased support for pupils with social and educational needs, and for extra teachers in such schools.	506
• Adequate numbers of education support personnel.	506
• Progressive reduction in class sizes.	506
• Investment in the infrastructure for science education in schools.	506
• All-Ireland curriculum initiatives and production of teaching resources on development education.	506
• Creation of Irish-medium post-primary schools where there is demand.	506
• Facilitate cross-Border access to the school that is geographically closer.	506
• Fair levels of pay for post-primary teachers.	701
Third Level, Further Education and Higher Education	H
For too long, third-level institutions have been seen as bastions of privilege.	503
The abolition of university fees has done nothing to help the children of the least-well-off to get into college.	506
They still cannot get to the starting line because of the prohibitive costs of going to college.	506
They cannot live on the totally inadequate grants now available.	506
Students from outside the university cities face the additional disincentive of the acute shortage of accommodation and the high cost of that accommodation if they are lucky enough to obtain it.	506
The Government must act to allow access to university to all on the basis of educational merit.	506
Adult Education	H
More support is needed for Adult Education aimed at the 500,000 adults in the 26 counties who have basic literacy problems.	506
Funding is required to open the Back to Education programme to people in employment.	506
Only those unemployed for six months or more can currently access the programme, thus excluding most adults with basic literacy problems.	506
Free access to second-level education should be recognised as a right for all.	506
An all-Ireland adult literacy campaign with a clear objective of reducing adult illiteracy to under 5 per cent within four years	506
Sinn Féin will work for:	H
• Access programmes that create meaningful links between colleges and universities and schools that have a low uptake of university places.	506
• An increased student maintenance grant to social welfare levels, with additional allowances for children and dependants, and greater uniformity of funding and student grants.	506

• Co-ordinated and common entrance procedures for all the universities in Ireland.	506
• The development of policies outside the CAO to facilitate access by mature students and students from disadvantaged groups.	506
• Greater harmonisation of approaches, accreditation and qualifications throughout the island (for example, mutual acceptability of medical qualifications).	506
• A good childcare infrastructure to support adult education.	506
• The development of joint curriculum projects in the Irish language and a more extensive national provision of third-level courses in that medium.	506
• The establishment of an Irish-language university.	506
• Provision of facilities in every third-level institution where students can pursue their studies through the medium of Irish.	506
• Special measures to provide student accommodation in the context of addressing the overall housing crisis.	506
HOUSING	H
The Housing Problem	H
The last decade has seen a crisis across all parts of the housing sector.	0
Rising house prices have made the option of owning their own home unaffordable for most people on average incomes.	0
Waiting lists for local authority housing are at an all time high, up 18 per cent in 2001 alone to 54,000.	0
Homelessness has doubled in our cities while rents in private rented accommodation and evictions have quadrupled.	0
There is an illusion that the housing crisis is being solved. It isn't.	305
Despite three expert consultants' reports and a Commission on the Private Rented Sector, there is still a housing crisis in Ireland.	305
The Housing Crisis	H
The housing crisis is caused by three factors: Uncontrolled vested interests in the private house building sector.	403
Under-funding of local authority house-building programmes by central government.	403
Failure to plan for the long-term housing needs of a growing population.	404
Corruption and Exploitation	H
The realisation of the scale of corruption uncovered in local government planning shows how vested interests were able to control the supply of private housing.	304
In Dublin, developers were allowed to drip-feed houses onto the market, driving up prices and reaping huge profits.	304
Even now the attempts to control developers and builders in the Planning and Development Act are floundering.	304
The 20 per cent target for social housing in new developments is not being met, nor are the two-year planning deadlines.	305
Demographic Change and Social Planning Even at times of population decline, successive governments have failed to house all of our citizens.	305
There has been a sustained population growth in Ireland for the past 30 years.	0
The failure of governments to recognise this level of change or to develop strategies house the tens of thousands of new households being formed is shameful.	305
For years the Government ignored the need to plan long-term to house its own citizens.	404
Emigration hid the worst excesses of this social planning failure and then, in the 1990s, when migration flows reversed, we suddenly had a housing crisis.	305
Government ministers and TDs should have seen the housing problem coming from a long way off if they really are the efficient and competent economic managers they claim to be.	305
Under-funding	H

There were unmet housing needs at the start of the 1990s and each year they grew because of government cutbacks.	305
We need now at least a decade of substantially increased spending to redress the problem.	504
The State is spending over euro140 million this year subsidising private rented accommodation. This is an unrecoverable investment.	305
It shows the short-term view of governments who have wasted hundreds of millions of euros rather than develop a long-term housing strategy.	305
The Government's Record of Shame	H
House Prices	H
Average house prices have risen by 90 per cent during the lifetime of this government.	305
The average price for a house in Dublin in January 2002 was c234,079, for a house outside Dublin, the average cost was c158,730.	0
Waiting Lists	H
140,000 people waiting 53,955 households 35 per cent rise between 1999 and 2000	0
Focus Ireland has estimated that 140,000 people are waiting for housing.	0
Up to November 2001, the number of households on local authority waiting lists stood at 53,955.	0
Between 1999 and the end of 2001, there was a 35 per cent rise in the number of households on the local authority lists.	0
Housing lists more than doubled in counties such as Waterford, Westmeath, Monaghan and in south Cork between November 2000 and November 2001.	0
Waterford County Council had a 118 per cent increase on its waiting list between 2000 and 2001.	0
Westmeath recorded a 104 per cent increase.	0
The number of households on Monaghan's waiting list increased by 102 per cent.	0
Cork City's waiting list stood at 4,129 households - a 44 per cent increase on 2000 - while 1,301 households were waiting for housing in Galway City, an increase of 76 per cent.	0
Some 7,477 households were waiting for housing in the Dublin Corporation area.	0
Rents	H
The Institute of Auctioneers and Valuers of Ireland predicted rent rises of 18 per cent for 2001.	0
There was a 250 per cent increase in the numbers facing illegal evictions from private rented accommodation in 2000.	0
There was a 50 per cent increase in the number of people facing rent increases.	0
Homelessness	H
It is estimated that there are 6,000 people homeless in the State, 75 per cent of whom live in Dublin.	0
The Government announced a c228 million strategy to tackle homelessness last year. The plan does not envisage successfully tackling homelessness until 2010.	305
As with housing waiting lists, a much shorter time frame is needed to tackle the problem.	0
Planning and Development Act 2000	H
The Planning and Development Act 2000 proposed two key measures:	H
• 20 per cent of land zoned for housing development to be earmarked for social housing schemes.	504
• A two-year limit on planning permission to stop developers maintaining artificially high houses prices.	404
The reality in the current housing market is that neither of these two measures is being implemented.	305

Proposals for the withdrawal of tax breaks for owners of multiple dwellings were never brought forward, and last year's Budget brought back mortgage relief for owners of second homes.	412
In 2001, despite claims to the contrary by the Irish Home Builders Association, the number of new house completions rose to nearly 52,000, a 4 per cent increase on 2000.	0
Peter Bacon, author of the three Government-commissioned housing reports, has said that these figures raise 'a political issue'. Bacon adds: 'If the Government claims credit for having delivered in excess of the magic figure of 50,000 completions for the second year in succession, somebody will ask why Charlie McCreevy reintroduced mortgage relief. Bacon concluded: 'Aggressive lobbying may have panicked the Government.	305
What the figures and the Government's u-turn on taking away special incentives for property developers and investors show is that vested interests still have the power to dictate government housing policy.	0
Despite the exposure of planning corruption and undue political influence on government by developers, nothing has changed.	304
Private Rented Sector	H
Despite establishing a Commission on the Private Rented Sector, the Government has been unwilling to offer more protection for tenants through rent control, minimum accommodation standards or requiring landlords to offer longer leases to tenants.	305
Infrastructure and Planning	H
There is also a need to recognise that housing provision does not happen in a vacuum.	0
Substantial investment in infrastructure such as roads, sewerage, public transport, local health and education facilities is needed.	504
Serious consideration needs to be given to the issue of where new housing stock should be located.	0
The first step is recognising the planning blight caused by the never-ending suburban sprawls outside our larger towns and cities.	0
There is a danger that measures used to speed up planning applications could also create the environment where in haste bad planning decisions are taken with serious long-term consequences.	0
This need for extreme care is all the more important as the scale of housing projects needed over the next ten years could easily lead governments back to the short-term quick fixes of the past which end up as huge planning blunders.	305
Planning should be holistic and include provision for community facilities and public utilities.	504
In other words for the development of urban villages.	0
Sinn Féin's Plan of Action on Housing	H
Housing is a Basic Right	H
Sinn Féin believes that proper accommodation is a basic inalienable right and we support enshrining the right to housing in the Constitution.	504
Tax Incentives and State Support	H
While many home owners benefit from mortgage interest rate relief, first-time buyer's grants, shared ownership schemes and other tax provisions, there is a pressing need to re-evaluate the role of government in subsidising or defraying housing costs.	0
At the core of this re-evaluation should be the need to ensure equality of treatment in how the State disburses tax incentives and other supports into the housing market.	0
Sinn Féin believes that the present system is riven with inequality	0
The present state support system inflates the profits of financial institutions rather than targeting State support at lower income householders.	0
Capital Gains Tax should be restored to its 1997 level of 40 per cent.	0

There should be an increase in Capital Gains Tax on speculative owners of multiple dwellings.	0
Such a tax would be introduced on a phased basis over two years.	0
There should be a review of the Seaside Resort Tax Incentive Scheme.	0
Land Issues & Developers	H
The hoarding of land to inflate house prices is a deplorable and anti-social act.	414
Sinn Féin supports the control of land prices, with a statutory ceiling on the price of land zoned for housing to stop speculation and reduce soaring house prices.	412
Sinn Féin also supports the use of Compulsory Purchase Orders against speculators sitting on land banks and derelict property.	412
The indirect benefit conferred on developers by State investment in infrastructure needs to be established and a code of practice implemented to ensure that private developers are not profiting from the development of infrastructure by local and/or central government.	412
Time Scales	H
In every decade of the last century there has been a housing shortage which successive administrations have failed to resolve.	0
Sinn Féin believes that housing policy throughout the island should be directed towards an elimination of local authority waiting lists.	0
There should be an immediate target of supplying suitable accommodation within two years for 70 per cent of applicants.	504
State Funding	H
While not being the sole barrier to private home ownership, high purchase prices and mortgage costs are undoubtedly a serious obstacle.	0
A State-run financial institution or partnership between the Government and the more progressive financial institutions such as local credit unions could provide an effective means for lower income households to purchase their own homes.	504
A Housing Strategy and a Housing Agency	H
While provision of housing should be planned and organised at a local level, there is a strong need for a State Housing Strategy to be co-ordinated by a Housing Agency.	504
The Housing Agency would maximise the efforts of local authorities throughout the island by focussing funding and expertise where housing need is greatest.	504
Such a body must not be a top-down organisation but would instead constitute the shared knowledge and experience in Ireland and use it for dealing equitably, effectively and efficiently with the housing problems that afflict communities throughout the island.	504
A Housing Agency would co-ordinate public, private, co-operative and shared ownership housing schemes.	504
Planning	H
Bad planning and bad housing provision in the past have meant that governments have had to demolish and rebuild housing projects.	0
The Ballymun and Divis Flats complexes provide a stark reminder of the scale of these planning failures.	0
Community involvement in the planning process must be a basic starting point of any development plan, whether local government or private developers lead it.	0
Sinn Féin believes there should be much more focus on developing brown field sites and that housing projects should not be built independent of the necessary social amenities such as schools, health facilities, retail outlets and an adequate, accessible and affordable local public transport infrastructure.	504
This integrated approach should be enshrined in planning legislation.	403

There is a need to establish best practice on issues such as housing mix in new developments, as well as dwelling size, size of green and common areas, and overall environmental impact.	403
Voluntary and Community Housing	H
The full potential of the voluntary and community sector's contribution to resolving the supply of housing in Ireland has never been established.	0
Sinn Féin believes there is a need to provide resources for developing the best possible models of voluntary and community housing schemes.	504
We believe there should be one streamlined funding scheme with simple procedures for running these schemes.	0
Private Rented Sector	H
While private home ownership is the most common form of housing provision in Ireland today, a significant part of the population is, often unwillingly, living in private rented accommodation.	0
Sinn Féin deplores the lack of protection under law offered to tenants, particularly in quality of accommodation, length of leases and rent increases.	303
Sinn Féin supports a system of rent control linked to year of purchase and investment in a dwelling.	0
Tax-evading landlords must be pursued.	605
There must be minimum standards of accommodation and inspection units accountable to local government to ensure implementation of quality control.	504
The achievement of proper targets for the reduction of housing waiting lists would reduce the wasteful expenditure of hundreds of millions of pounds on subsidising private rented accommodation through the Rent Supplement Scheme.	0
Homelessness	H
Sinn Féin supports the demand for the full implementation of an integrated strategy on homelessness.	305
Local Authority Homeless Action Plans should be placed on a statutory basis.	504
We support the call for specific targets for the reduction of the absolute numbers of homeless people based on 2002 figures.	504
On the basis of equity, this should aim at 70 per cent reduction within two years.	504
There should be an immediate process of consultation with all the relevant voluntary and statutory agencies to target youth homelessness and to develop and implement an Action Plan on Mental Health among homeless people.	504
Housing Commission	H
Sinn Féin supports the establishment of a Housing Commissioner's Office.	504
Its function would be to:	H
• Protect the rights of home owners.	605
• Support new home owners to enforce snag lists.	504
• Monitor the implementation of housing and planning legislation.	605
• Ensure an end to gazzumping.	504
• Monitor house price changes.	504
• Monitor the hidden cost of auctioneers' and solicitors' fees.	504
• Establish a legally enforceable code of practice for house builders and vendors.	701
Special Needs	H
The supply of housing is often portrayed in simplistic terms, where all that is needed are more dwellings built as quickly as possible.	0
However, for a wide range of groups the provision of housing is a much more complex problem.	0

Groups such as Travellers, refugees, asylum seekers, women at risk, the elderly, and the homeless all need and have a right to suitably tailored housing provisions.	705
Sinn Féin calls for the repeal of the sections of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2002 which criminalise trespass, gives sweeping new powers to the Gardaí and is aimed principally at Travellers.	705
Given the failure of the majority of local authorities to provide the Traveller accommodation to which they are committed, this legislation can only be seen as a draconian response which also has wider implications for civil liberties.	705
There should be full provision of good quality and appropriate accommodation for Travellers as recommended in the Task Force Report of 1995.	705
We need Government action to ensure that all local authorities fulfil their obligations in this regard.	0
We also call for an independent review of the operation of Traveller Accommodation Act of 1998.	705
Sinn Féin proposes:	
Enshrining the Right to Housing in the Constitution.	204
A National Housing Strategy and a National Housing Agency to co-ordinate all aspects of housing provision.	504
State-led initiatives in partnership with progressive financial institutions such as credit unions to allow lower-income earners to purchase their own homes.	504
Increased and sustained funding of local authorities to provide housing with a target of supplying suitable accommodation within two years for 70 per cent of applicants on the waiting lists.	504
An increase in Capital Gains Tax on speculative owners of multiple dwellings, introduced on a phased basis over two years.	0
A statutory ceiling on the price of land zoned for housing to stop speculation and reduce soaring house prices.	403
Compulsory Purchase Orders on landowners sitting on land banks and derelict property.	0
Direct community involvement in planning for housing.	0
Legislation to ensure that social needs are incorporated in all housing schemes from the earliest stage.	0
A single streamlined funding scheme for voluntary and community housing.	0
Rent control in the private rented sector and enforcement of enhanced legislative protection for tenants.	504
The establishment of a Housing Ombudsman's Office.	504
Full implementation of an integrated strategy for homelessness with a target of 70 per cent reduction within two years.	504
A Government fund to provide capital loans for universities and third-level institutions to facilitate the development of purpose-built student accommodation.	504
Suitably tailored housing provision for those with special needs such as people with disabilities, women at risk, asylum seekers, Travellers, elderly people and the homeless.	705
SOCIAL INCLUSION	H
A Socially Inclusive Ireland	H
Sinn Féin advocates the right to social, economic, gender and cultural equality.	503
This encompasses equality for all, irrespective of race, age, marital or family status, sexual orientation, physical or mental capacities, ethnicity, social origin, political or religious affiliations, or membership of the Travelling Community.	503
Creating the conditions for establishing an equal society means recognising that many diverse groups and sections of Irish society need enhanced protection from the State.	705
We must tackle the trend to blame a person or group for their exclusion from society.	705

It is the same mentality that leads to the isolation of people who are old, handicapped and disabled.	705
We need to recognise that Ireland and Irish society is the sum of its parts and there is no rationale for excluding any group.	705
Human Rights	H
Sinn Féin calls for the full implementation and continuous monitoring of the effectiveness of equal status and employment equality legislation.	503
We call for the establishment on a proper working basis of the Human Rights Commission in the 26 Counties as provided for in the Good Friday Agreement.	201
Racism In Ireland today, where the gap between rich and poor is ever greater and the provision of social services is clearly inadequate,	201
there are those who complain about asylum seekers and immigrants as being partially responsible for the housing problem and for hospital waiting lists.	705
This is wrong.	0
We had a housing problem and a health service in crisis long before we had immigrants,	504
and we will still have these problems unless the basis on which we allocate resources is fundamentally changed.	504
Sinn Féin believes that the response to racism must be built at a community level.	201
Whether racism exists institutionally or attitudinally, it afflicts human beings and represents a violation of fundamental rights.	201
The challenge to racism needs to have local communities to the forefront in actively campaigning to advance the equality agenda.	503
Sinn Féin proposes:	
•The inclusion of anti-racist education as a component part of the curriculum in primary and secondary schools throughout Ireland.	201
• That the Irish Government signs and ratifies the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.	201
• The establishment of a multi-agency task force that will aid the positive integration of immigrants into Irish society.	705
• The work permit scheme for immigrants to be reformed so that permits are granted to employees and not to employers	705
• Provision of resources to ensure speedier processing of claims for asylum.	705
• The right to work or study for asylum seekers while their claims are being processed.	705
Supporting People with Disabilities	H
Sinn Féin believes that the rights and needs of people with disabilities must be a Government priority.	705
People who suffer disability need more resources invested in them and their families to ensure equality of access to education, health, transport services and to the workplace.	705
The State must recognise that everybody has the right to a dignified standard of living and general life experience.	503
Sinn Féin Proposes:	
• An Independent Living Fund for people with disabilities.	705
• Direct payments to people with disabilities and their personal assistants.	705
• Increased and secured financial support for those providing services including day resource centres and personal assistance services.	705
• Introduction of a cost of disability living allowance as recommended by the Commission for Status of People with Disabilities.	504
• Increase in the Mobility Allowance.	504
• Financial support for full-time carers through the increase of the Carer's Allowance and an end to the means test.	504

• Funding to continue progress in cutting waiting lists for people with mental handicaps or intellectual disabilities.	705
Rights of Children	H
The experience of abuse and exploitation suffered by generations of our children is entirely unacceptable.	705
These abuses were possible because some of the most powerful and unaccountable institutions in our society were given control over vulnerable children, the least powerful in our society.	705
All those involved in such abuse must be charged, prosecuted. Those who were involved in the covering up of or deliberate neglect of children in their care must also be made accountable for this fundamental denial of an individual's right to safety and well-being, both physical and mental.	705
The necessary steps to ensure that such systematic abuse can never happen again must be implemented by the newly elected Dáil.	204
There is a clear need to enshrine in the Constitution and in legislation the rights of children to grow	204
and live in a safe secure environment with equal access to health education and other vital services.	504
Sinn Féin proposes:	
• The appointment of a Minister and Department of Children.	204
• The Department of Children to have responsibility for childcare and all aspects of children's rights.	705
• Full disclosure by the State, the churches, and all other relevant institutions of information in relation to abuse cases.	705
Older People	H
The desire for independence, respect and involvement in the decision-making process are important factors for older people.	705
Sinn Féin commends the efforts of the Senior Citizens' Parliament in pursuing the interests of its members.	705
Sinn Féin proposes:	
• A rights-based culture where old age pensioners' social insurance contributions during their working lives are linked to inflation.	504
The insurance-related pension should be at a level to give a sufficient standard of living.	705
• Retrospective pension credits for those who spent their working lives caring for others.	504
• Statutory funding for voluntary agencies such as Meals on Wheels.	504
• Support for local services at a community level, including day centres and day care centres, with transport available.	504
• Well resourced health care for older people.	504
JUSTICE AND THE COMMUNITY	H
Introduction	H
It is the State's responsibility to ensure that every citizen feels safe in their own homes and in their own communities.	605
It is also the right of every citizen to expect that public servants and elected representatives carry out their obligations in an impartial and objective manner.	303
At present,, the Irish legal system focuses on some examples of socially harmful behaviour and ignores others.	0
It is aided and abetted by an enforcement system that devotes more resources to the pursuit of some types of law breaking - such as public order offences, for example - than to others, such as tax evasion or corruption.	303

The inevitable result of this system is a criminal population which contains a disproportionate number of those who are poor, less educated and unskilled.	705
Crime Statistics	H
To facilitate an informed debate on how the criminal justice system may be reformed, and how resources can be most effectively targeted, we need to look at how crime statistics are compiled.	605
There is also a pressing need for accurate empirical data on the courts' sentencing practices and for detailed analysis of the rate of recidivism of the Irish prison system.	605
Sinn Féin proposes:	
To initiate a review of how crime statistics are gathered, involving representatives of the An Garda Síochána, criminologists, communities, agencies working with victims (e.g. the Rape Crisis Centre, etc.) and other interested parties.	605
Criminal Justice	H
Our criminal justice legislation is in need of radical reform.	605
The continued use of the non-jury Special Criminal Court and the emergency legislation are ongoing concerns.	605
It is unacceptable that citizens can be denied the right to a trial by jury without the prosecution having to so much as give a reason, much less establish prima facie grounds for the transfer.	605
Sinn Féin Proposes:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The abolition of the Special Criminal Court and the restoration of the right to a trial by jury of one's peers. 	605
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A system of proper recording of court proceedings and judicial decisions at District Court level. 	605
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase, in accordance with the principle of equality of impact, in the maximum fine for corporations to take account of the fact that a corporation, unlike a human person, cannot be imprisoned. 	605
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The appointment of district court judges to be taken out of the hands of the Minister for Justice. 	605
District court judges should be appointed on the recommendation of the Judicial Appointments Advisory Board, as is currently the practice with Circuit Court, High Court and Supreme Court judges.	605
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment of a Legal Ombudsman's Office to ensure that citizens receive a proper service from solicitors and barristers. 	605
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of the Family Law Courts, including practices, resources, customer care and facilities for adults and children attending courts and associated services. 	605
People (primarily women) compelled to use the Family Law Courts should not feel intimidated or be caused added stress by an ill-equipped service nominally dedicated to family welfare.	705
The Prison System	H
There needs to be a re-evaluation of the use of imprisonment in the system.	0
Many of those in prison may not need to be there, while there is a shortage of places for hardened criminals.	605
We need to ensure that imprisonment is used to protect the community not only by removing offenders but by seeking to ensure they do not reoffend in the future.	605
The recent announcement that the Central Mental Hospital in Dundrum is refusing admissions due to staff shortages is a disgrace.	0
It means that people with serious psychiatric problems will remain housed in outdated and totally unsuitable prison conditions.	0
Furthermore, it is a source of considerable concern that young persons who are being held in custody pending trial are housed in an adult prison.	0

This situation presents the courts with an invidious choice: to let them go or to house them in conditions which are totally inappropriate.	0
Sinn Féin proposes:	
• The provision of proper facilities to detain young people who are on remand.	0
• The extension of provision of detoxification programmes to all prisoners seeking to deal with their drug addiction.	0
• The allocation of resources to ensure that proper medical treatment for those within the prison system is available.	0
• A review of the law on insanity and the introduction of an appropriate statutory definition of insanity on foot of such a review.	0
• A review of the practice of imprisonment to ensure that fines and forms of sanction other than imprisonment are used where they are appropriate.	0
• The effective incorporation of the European Convention of Human Rights into Irish law.	201
An Ghaeilge sa chóras dlí choiriúil	0
Article 8 (1) of the Constitution states: 'is í an Ghaeilge an teanga náisiúnta is í an phríomhtheanga oifigiúil í.'	0
In the English version: 'The Irish language as the national language is the first official language.'	0
The Courts Service and the Department of Justice have consistently acted in deliberate breach of this provision.	0
Sinn Féin proposes:	
• The provision of simultaneous translation facilities in the courts.	0
• The introduction of facilities to produce accurate transcripts of proceedings conducted through Irish.	0
• The bilingual publication of Bills and bilingual enactment of Acts of the Oireachtas and Statutory Instruments.	0
• The publication of authoritative Irish versions of the Rules of the Superior Courts, Circuit Court Rule and District Court Rules.	0
• The provision of Irish-language training facilities for judges, registrars and district court clerks.	0
• The treatment of the Gaeltachtaí as a distinct circuit and as a distinct district for the purposes of court administration, in both criminal and civil matters.	0
Delays in the court system	H
Sinn Féin is concerned at the backlogs in the court system.	0
Delays in the hearing of criminal trials can result in increased anxiety for victims or witnesses (who may live near the accused person) or the accused persons who have charges hanging over them.	0
It can also result in longer periods in detention for accused persons who are refused bail and who may subsequently be acquitted.	0
The increasing number of judges who are involved in tribunals of inquiry into corruption, the Hepatitis C and child abuse scandals has added to delays in the system.	0
Sinn Féin proposes:	
• The compilation of up-to-date and accurate statistics on delays in the court system.	0
• A review of the administrative needs of the court system with a view to identifying and dealing with bottlenecks that cause backlogs and delays.	0
• The appointment of additional judges at District Court, Circuit Court and High Court level.	0
• A major refurbishment programme for the State's courts to bring them up to safe standards for people to work in and for the public attending court.	0
• A complete review of the Children's Court.	706
Community Dealing with criminal and anti-social behaviour is a complex matter.	0

It involves co-ordinating the work of the Gardaí and local communities.	0
It involves identifying areas of need and directing resources to these areas.	0
There is no simple solution.	0
The confidence of local communities in the criminal justice system depends, to a large degree, on the willingness of An Garda Síochána to co-operate with those communities and to respond to their heartfelt concern about the issues which affect their areas.	0
Sinn Féin will continue to work to foster greater co-operation between An Garda Síochána and the communities we represent.	0
There is no alternative to such an approach. There is a direct correlation between social disadvantage and certain forms of anti-social behaviour just as there is a direct correlation between social advantage and other forms of anti-social behaviour.	0
However, the vast majority of people in disadvantaged areas are decent, hard working people who want a civic accountable policing service.	0
Sinn Féin Proposes:	
• Working with disadvantaged communities to identify their needs and provide the resources required to meet these needs.	706
• The institution of restorative justice schemes which give the victim, the offender and the community a say in the treatment of offenders.	0
• The provision, through the Judicial Studies Institute, of social awareness training for newly appointed judges who feel they may not have been exposed to the problems associated with social deprivation, during their practice as lawyers.	0
• The extension of the community policing resources in all areas.	0
• The formation of Community Policing Boards with representation from An Garda Síochána and from the communities they serve to formulate policies suited to both.	0
Victims Under the adversarial system used in our courts, victims are simply witnesses and have no right to legal or other support.	0
A crime, especially a violent crime, can have a lasting impact on the victim.	0
One area where this inhibits people reporting crime is in the area of sexual assault or abuse.	0
The trial in such cases can be a greater ordeal for the victim than for the accused.	0
The state should support those agencies with victims and provide counselling and other support services where needed.	0
Often this can best be co-ordinated through the working with local communities.	0
Community Restorative Justice programmes have a role to play in this.	0
Sinn Féin proposes:	
The creation of a victim support unit working within the Department of Justice to co-ordinate the provision of services to victims of crime.	0
For serious crimes involving violence, and especially in sexual assault cases, victims should be entitled to legal representation at a trial.	0
Drugs / Substance misuse	H
The scourge of substance abuse - alcohol, solvent abuse, the misuse of prescription drugs and illegal drugs - continues to change and reach all parts of this island.	0
In many communities alcohol has been identified as the major drug of misuse.	0
No city or town has escaped the clutches of drug abuse and its associated problems.	0
Many communities continue to be devastated with third generations of families now on drugs.	0
Sinn Féin has been to the forefront in dealing with the causes and consequences of drug abuse for over 20 years.	305
We understand that nowhere has drug addiction been totally defeated but many communities, especially in the larger cities, have gained much experience.	0

This experience needs to be shared with other parts of the country that are facing up to the nightmare of drug addiction.	0
This experience also needs to be reflected in Government policy.	303
Substance abuse is a multi-faceted problem and requires a multi-faceted approach.	303
This means that community, statutory, voluntary and Government agencies must operate as equals in putting together plans to reduce the demand for drugs in our communities.	303
Therefore a truly wide-ranging response is required, with the same priority and resources that were set aside to deal with the foot and mouth crisis.	0
The extension of the Local Drugs Task Force model across Ireland would allow all those with the experience and expertise to work together in dealing with drug abuse.	303
One addiction that has been clearly identified and responded to is that of benzodiazepine addiction.	0
This is a serious problem and needs addressing as a matter of urgency.	0
Sinn Féin proposes:	
• The setting up of Local Drug Task Forces where the community has identified a need.	303
These must be responsive to local requirements.	0
• Extending of the all-Ireland co-operation in tackling drug abuse.	0
• Adequate support and resources for community involvement in compiling and implementing any future Drugs Strategy.	303
• Extending funding to projects from one to five years and a clear commitment to fully fund a drug/alcohol strategy	303
- The promotion of community-based treatment and rehabilitation projects.	0
• A total review of methadone-based approaches to dealing with opiate addiction.	0
• The inclusion of benzodiazepine dependency in any future Drugs Strategy.	0
• Community involvement in drafting any future Government drugs policy.	0
• Greatly improved community policing to combat both drug pushing and anti-social crime associated with the drugs problem.	0
• Integration of the alcohol and drug strategies into one integrated, comprehensive plan.	303
An Garda Síochána	H
Every society needs a police service and every police service needs the support of the communities they serve.	303
For that reason it is imperative that there is total transparency and trust between the police service and the communities.	0
In many parts of the country this transparency and trust is not there.	0
In recent times a number of issues have arisen which can damage public confidence in the Garda Síochána.	0
The Abbeylara shooting, the McBrearty case in Donegal, revelations of fraud in relation to contracts, and criticism by judges in relation to the giving of false evidence in court all damage the relationship between the Gardaí and communities they are meant to serve.	0
It is imperative that all of these issues are thoroughly investigated and any disciplinary actions required are taken.	0
It is also imperative that the investigations are seen to be independent and fair to all involved.	0
Sinn Féin proposes:	
• The setting up of a Policing Board	303
• The setting up of an office of a Garda Ombudsman, independent of the Gardaí, and with power to initiate independent investigations.	303
• The independent investigation, as matter of urgent priority, of allegations that conversations between detained persons and their legal advisers were routinely taped in Garda Stations.	0

• Mandatory use of video taping of interviews with suspects.	0
• Appointments to senior Garda positions to be dealt with by an independent board and not by political appointment.	303
• Human rights training for all Gardaí.	201
• A review of Garda equipment and procedures to ensure efficient policing in a modern environment.	303
• Decentralisation of Garda Síochána structures to ensure that the Gardaí are more accountable and responsive to local policing needs.	303
The Economy	H
Introduction	H
The last ten years have been a time of unprecedented economic growth.	410
There is greater prosperity in Ireland and more people are working, but successive governments have failed to use economic growth to create equality.	503
Not only did the Fianna Fáil/Progressive Democrats coalition fail to tackle the structural inequalities that warp our economy and damage our society,	305
they actually worsened those inequalities and widened the gap between rich and poor and between men and women in every single budget over the last five years.	503
A United Nations report (July 2001) has found that we have the most unequal distribution of wealth of any industrialised state outside the USA.	503
A quarter of our children and a fifth of our adults are in households with less than half the average income.	410
Women are over represented among those on the minimum wage and in the area of part-time work, which is economically undervalued.	706
There is a crisis in our health care system and a housing nightmare for the 54,000 housing units, representing 140,000 people in need of accommodation.	504
One in four women raising children, or managing households on their own experience poverty.	504
Sinn Féin's Vision of a Just Economy	H
Sinn Féin seeks to build an all-Ireland economy where everyone can have a dignified, productive and well-paid job and all can have a fair income and better quality of life.	410
We want an economy where everyone's contribution -whether in the workplace, the home, the school or hospital - is valued.	410
We need an economy growing not just in an environmentally sustainable way but in a manner that reverses the erosion of our environment in past decades and develops a better quality of life for us now and generations to come.	404
Managing the Economy	H
Thousands of new jobs have been created over the last decade and considerable wealth has been generated.	410
However, the economic experience of the last year has shown that the current coalition government and the larger opposition parties are unwilling to ensure that the wealth is shared and invested for the benefit of everyone in society.	504
They have left us in this new century with a nightmare health service and a road, rail and public transport network that is in crisis and verging on collapse.	305
They have also left us with an under-funded energy system with no real long-term development strategy.	404
The telecommunications network, one of the keys to our future prosperity, has been sold off to the highest bidders without any guarantees that the new owners are prepared to maintain the level of investment needed to ensure that Ireland can thrive in the emerging knowledge economy.	305
There are serious economic issues beyond the simple figure of how many jobs were created.	404

Sinn Féin seeks an economy where those who work to generate wealth do so in the knowledge that they can afford housing and an economy where they don't have to be worried about the cost implications of being ill.	504
Sinn Féin seeks an economy where parents can be assured that their children are getting the best possible education, no matter where they live or how much wealth their parents have.	504
The issues that need to be addressed include:	H
• Low pay	701
• Working conditions	701
• The role of the government in the economy	401
• Regional and rural under-development	703
• Developing the economy without creating more inequalities and divisions in society	503
• Lack of affordable childcare	504
Sustainable Economic Development	H
Inward Investment	H
Over the past number of years inward investment has contributed the economic growth in the Irish economy.	410
However current government policy is over-dependent on inward investors.	403
The last year has shown, once again, the impact that the closure of transnational companies can have on local economies.	406
For example, the closure of General Semi in Macroom, County Cork, and the loss of 670 jobs has the knock on effect of tearing d38 million (£30 million) out of the local economy.	406
This experience has been repeated again and again over the past 18 months.	406
Communities in Donegal, Sligo, Mayo, Dublin, Louth, Offaly and Wexford have all had to come to terms with the downsides of economic dependency on international investors.	406
Nearly ten thousand fewer new Industrial Development Authority (IDA) jobs were created in 2001 compared to 2000.	406
Indigenous Enterprise	H
The same quantity and quality of resources made available to inward investors should be made available to indigenous enterprises.	406
The internationalisation of many industries, particularly food processing, has led to the shutting down of many smaller plants, often with dire consequences for the small towns and villages they are sited in.	406
Local communities have found themselves powerless to prevent this.	406
We need an indigenous economic development strategy that focuses on overcoming this asset stripping of local and regional economies.	406
Ireland needs a balance between inward and indigenous investment.	406
We need to encourage both small and large-scale indigenous companies, with a research and development anchor.	406
Although large-scale industries can drive the economy and will often develop and fund infrastructure.	0
We need to recognise that the bulk of employment in Ireland stems from small and medium-sized business and to support those niche industries that have been created.	403
The State Sector	H
State investment and State companies built the infrastructure on which recent economic growth has been based.	412
Sinn Féin deplores the moves in recent years to downgrade the State involvement in the economy.	412
Sinn Féin is opposed to the privatisation of State enterprises.	412
There is huge underdevelopment of State sector companies.	412

Although we still have Aer Rianta, ESB, the CIE companies, Bord na Mona and Aer Lingus, employment in this sector has declined as a result of Government policy.	412
In a small economy like Ireland's we need to provide a sound economic base and infrastructure that is not dependent on the whims of international investors.	406
Social Economy and Small Businesses	H
As a society we need to move away from the notion that profit is the only reason for engaging in enterprise.	0
Social economy enterprises that fulfill a social need help make other businesses more profitable.	504
We need to unblock institutional resistance in terms of funding and taxation in the social economy.	412
Funding should be made available for the establishment of community-based co-operative enterprises.	409
Rewarding Research and Investment	H
We need to support and reward indigenous industry when it engages in research and development strategies leading to long-term, sustainable employment.	411
Targeted and carefully monitored tax incentives have a role in developing business, safeguarding existing jobs and creating new ones.	403
A creative corporate tax regime has an important part to play in funding and encouraging research and development by Irish businesses.	403
We need more financial support for research in universities and colleges and greater attention to building links between these institutions and industry.	411
Training	H
Training is an essential element of any regional development strategy.	404
We need to target training in line with strategy, whether it is based on technology, agricultural, tourist, or other industrial sector.	4110
There is also a need to redefine what makes up the skills pool.	411
People bring different life-skills to the economy.	411
We need to ensure that all contributions are recognised whether from the long-term unemployed, over-65s, lone parents, or mothers returning to work.	411
These groups need to have the same access to training as those sectors of the workforce at whom most skills and educational investment is targeted.	411
A Knowledge-Based Economy	H
Creating new businesses and helping existing ones grow does not happen in a vacuum.	411
It comes about in the context of the supply of skilled workers with access to transport and telecommunications infrastructures.	411
The absence of any of these elements is a serious impediment to economic development.	411
In the modern international economy location is not a determinant to inward investment or employment opportunity.	411
What matters is access to resources and infrastructure, especially in terms of the new information and communication technologies (ICT), as well as education, transport and energy.	411
Access to ICT technology is a powerful force in creating a level playing field for future development and job-creation strategies.	411
The Western Development Commission has identified poor infrastructure as the main barrier to development in that region.	411
But this infrastructural poverty is felt in varying degrees throughout the economy and must be tackled on an all-island basis.	411
In the last decade, governments have addressed the need for a greatly improved infrastructure in a piecemeal and poorly planned manner.	411

While the Fianna Fáil/Progressive Democrats 'National' Development Plan provides for many major projects, it continues the piecemeal and poorly planned approach.	411
Already the delivery of projects is behind schedule.	411
Serious deficiencies in infrastructure exist that will impede future economic progress.	411
We need an urgent reevaluation of our strategies in telecommunications, road, rail, energy, childcare, health and education.	411
These strategies also need to be developed on an all-island basis. It makes no sense to develop strategies on a partitionist basis.	411
Secure Employment Strategies	H
In the field of new technologies, international companies lead much of the pace of development.	411
However, a growing number of Irish companies have shown that they too can develop and successfully launch new products.	406
The greater number of indigenous companies we create in the Irish economy, the better we can support the economy as a whole.	406
The downturn in the economy over the last year emphasises the need for a balanced approach in investment in indigenous and international companies.	406
Thousands of workers entered mortgage and other major life commitments in the belief that their jobs were secure in the long-term.	504
With many of these workers losing their jobs there is a need at Government level to shoulder some of the financial responsibility now falling on families where key household members are now jobless.	504
We support the Irish Congress of Trade Unions demand for an increase in statutory redundancy from half a week per year of service to three weeks per year of service.	504
Sinn Féin Proposes:	
• More support for Small Businesses.	403
Many people have small business ideas that are in the embryonic stage and need funding as well as expert guidance.	403
These businesses can often generate small profits but a lot of local employment.	403
They are often overlooked by the industrial development agencies.	403
• Developing New Local Brands.	403
Many small businesses are not, in themselves, large enough to enter export markets.	403
With the right guidance and support from Enterprise Ireland they could begin joint ventures to develop, produce and market products outside of Ireland.	403
Tourism is marketed outside of Ireland as one common brand - surely this idea can apply to other goods.	403
• Matching Funds for Local Business.	403
The industrial development bodies should provide the same level of support and funding for indigenous business as is currently provided to inward investment projects.	403
• Long-term stability	403
The IDA currently considers ten years to be the shelf-life of the companies it brings to Ireland.	403
New local Irish companies should be given at least the same level of time to develop themselves.	403
We need to take the view that long-term stability is more desirable than short-term erratic 'boom and bust' episodes.	403
• The inclusion of penalty clauses in all agreements with companies receiving government grants, in the event of the company pulling out.	403
• Support for enterprises in the Social Economy.	504
Many communities have ideas and plans for socially valuable local businesses.	403

• Trade Union Recognition.	701
Sinn Féin will make grants to business conditional on acceptance of the right of employees to join and to be represented by a trade union of their choice.	701
• Funding a Return to Education.	506
In some cases of job losses there is a need for retraining of workers who will then be better placed to find other employment or perhaps start their own businesses.	504
There needs to be a commitment to investing in education for all sectors of society now more than ever.	506
• Support for Agricultural Diversification.	703
Funding should be made available to those farmers who wish to diversify their farm business.	703
This will help to keep younger farmers on the land as well as create jobs in rural areas.	703
Infrastructure	H
The Digital Divide	H
We need to ensure that existing telecommunications networks, not just in this state but throughout the island, are developed and improved and that the new high-speed fibre optic networks are constructed under the principle of universal provision.	411
It is vital that all of the island's towns and regions, whether in isolated rural areas or neglected urban communities, have access to this new technology that is the basic building block of the knowledge economy.	411
The reticence of the private sector to invest in these services without state support or 'partnership' shows clearly how vital it is to have public ownership of these utilities.	411
There is widespread recognition throughout Irish society of the need to invest in the new communications and computer technologies that have become the cornerstone of modern economies.	411
What has not been recognised is the need for State involvement to ensure equity in how these communications resources are developed and accessed.	411
Sinn Féin proposes	
• All telephone exchanges should be ADSL (Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line) enabled.	411
• An enhanced cable infrastructure throughout the State, enabling the deployment of new technologies to all communities and especially to schools.	411
• To guarantee that all schools are adequately funded and maintained so that they are in a position to actively tackle the literacy problems of nearly one quarter of Irish adults that effectively bars them from having any skills in the new technologies demanded in the modern workplace.	411
Energy	H
We need an environmentally sustainable and long-term strategy.	501
There is a pressing need for an all-island energy supply that is affordable, environmentally sustainable and nuclear free.	501
This industry should be in public hands to ensure efficient utilisation, distribution and equity.	412
Ireland enjoys a massive natural resource off our west coast.	501
The government has failed to obtain the best negotiating terms from the multinational oil and gas companies.	411
Just like Norway, we could have a thriving state-owned gas and oil exploration industry, creating thousands of jobs and generating significant growth in the Irish economy.	411
Instead we find that the existing government's negotiation position collapsed in the face of the multi-national oil and gas companies.	411
The people of Ireland have been short-changed yet again. The abandonment of Ireland's 50% stake in discovery projects, of royalties and the introduction of massive write-offs for	411

oil companies alongside the introduction of long-term Frontier Licences all mean that what the present government once described as the 'most significant development ever in the west of Ireland' may turn out to be the greatest lost opportunity in Irish economic history.	
We must learn lessons from all of this. It is vital that we exploit the wealth that exists in Irish natural resources for the benefit of the people	411
Sinn Féin proposes:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment of an all-Ireland state-owned gas and oil exploration industry to keep benefits and profits in Ireland. 	411
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That gas is made available to as many people as possible by continuing to support an all-Ireland gas distribution network. 	411
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That full environmental impact assessments are carried out and that their findings are at the core of all major oil and gas exploration, extraction and distribution plans. 	501
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that major infra-structural developments reflect a combined strategy between the Assembly and the Dublin Government to develop all-Ireland electricity generation plans along with gas distribution proposals. 	411
Roads	H
The planned development and proper maintenance of our road network is essential as part of an integrated transport strategy.	411
A balance must be struck between development of new and improved roads and the development of a more extensive public transport network.	411
More efficient and effective public transport is the solution to urban traffic congestion.	411
In the regions outside the Greater Dublin Area and the larger cities it is inevitable that there will be much greater reliance on private motor transport.	411
It is essential for social and economic development that the national roads infrastructure is upgraded and that planned projects are commenced and completed on time.	411
The non-national roads are the responsibility of local authorities and are the lifelines of rural communities and small towns.	411
They must continue to receive improved resources for upgrading and maintenance to make up for decades of under-funding.	411
Public Transport	H
Sinn Féin proposes to reverse the attempt by successive governments to fill as much road space with private cars as possible.	411
Public transport can be the most efficient means of getting people and goods safely from A to B.	411
This State is suffering from decades of public transport infrastructure under-funding.	411
Dublin remains one of the very few capital cities not to have a rail link to its airport.	411
Public transport is no longer the poor relation in our society.	411
Support for public transport is dependent on adequate levels of support from Government.	411
Only then will current motorists abandon their cars and take to bus and rail in significant enough numbers to improve everyone's quality of life, to cut road accident rates, to reduce commuting times, and to benefit business and the economy.	411
Sinn Féin proposes:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That public transport is funded to at least the level of its counterparts in Europe. 	411
Without proper subsidy, an efficient public transport system will not emerge.	411
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A joint Roads and Public Transport Authority, with an all-island strategy. 	411
Ireland requires an integrated transportation plan that puts the overall needs of the economy and society before sectional interests and profiteering.	411
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A School Bus Authority, co-ordinated at local government level in both urban and rural areas. 	411

• That an integrated ticketing policy be implemented as part of the public transport strategy.	411
Childcare	H
The emotional, physical and educational needs of children must be the guiding principles in all childcare provision.	706
The opportunities for women to work in paid employment outside the home has never been greater, however, due to a lack of affordable and properly regulated childcare many women are denied the opportunity to participate in paid employment.	706
The cost of childcare has more than doubled to about '190 per week in the period covered by the last five budgets.	706
While the increase in Child Benefit is welcome, it does not address the issue of childcare.	706
The State has obligations and it is not enough to rely on the private sector to provide childcare.	504
We support quality, affordable community childcare for all those who need it, Government-funded childcare facilities, the introduction of training schemes for child-minders in the informal sector, and after-school care funding.	504
We also support paid parental leave for employees who pay PRSI.	540
Sinn Féin proposes the establishment of a Childcare Agency, under public control, which will regulate the provision of funding and standards in this sector.	504
TAXATION	
An equitable taxation policy A fair taxation system is essential to the building of 'An Ireland of Equals'.	503
Sinn Féin views equitable taxation as an essential tool with which government can help to create a better society.	503
Ensuring that the tax system is fair and effective is a difficult task.	0
Taxes have to be collectable, transparent, fair and levied equitably.	0
In the debate on taxation, most of the focus is on two separate tax codes, the rates of income tax and corporation tax.	0
Both of these tax rates have been lowered substantially in the last decade but Sinn Féin believes that this has happened in an inequitable way.	0
Sinn Féin believes that as a society we should:-	
• Redistribute resources in a positive way, to invest in those parts of society suffering economic marginalisation and social exclusion, to redress inequality.	503
• Invest in social provision such as health, education, pensions and child welfare.	504
• Invest in economic development and facilitate business to grow sustainably, develop and make a positive contribution to host communities through increased employment and their input into a vibrant local and national economy.	402
• Build infrastructure that benefits all and is grounded in the guarantee of universal provision and access whether it is energy, roads, public transport, information and telecommunications, social, health or educational resources and facilities.	411
This is not an exhaustive list and in a democratic society we need to debate and discuss what role the tax regime and the spending of tax revenue should have in society.	504
Ending inequality in tax	H
Sinn Féin does not accept the mantra that universal tax cuts lead inevitably to a richer economy and a fairer society.	0
The outgoing Fianna Fáil/Progressive Democrats Government has implemented tax cuts that have disproportionately benefited the wealthy.	503
They have added to inequality within the existing flawed taxation code.	503
They have failed to bring about much needed reform of that tax code.	305

Data from the Combat Poverty Agency has shown that, over the lifetime of the present government, 25 per cent of the value of Budget 'give-aways' went to the richest 10 per cent.	305
At the same time, the poorest 20 per cent received 5 per cent.	0
The proportion of households suffering severe poverty and deprivation remained unchanged throughout the lifetime of the present government.	504
Twenty per cent of households live on half the average income.	0
Sinn Féin believes that the majority of citizens need and deserve better public services and want to see the tax they contribute used to provide an equitable and efficient health system, improved education, accessible childcare and viable public transport.	504
Better public services mean a better quality of life for all.	504
This just demand for better services, rather than the demand for tax cuts, must form the basis for the reform of taxation.	0
We have a taxation system riven with systematic inequality, where vested interests are pampered and protected.	503
We have a system where a framework of tax avoidance has fed an unchecked culture of illegal tax evasion and fraud.	0
Amnesties for defrauders, Ansbacher accounts for tax evaders, active bank involvement in DIRT deception schemes - these are just some of the examples of the inequalities and inconsistencies of the tax system.	0
It is also a system where business enjoys one of the lowest tax burdens in the EU, but where workers are levied at a proportionately higher rate than most other European states.	0
It is a system where tax bands and rates are muddled by a battery of tax reliefs and loopholes, many of which help the already wealthy while offering nothing to the poorest in our society.	0
A Comprehensive Review	H
Sinn Féin believes that there is a need for a comprehensive review of the tax regime and that this review should be time limited to be finished within the first year of a new government taking office.	408
The purpose of the review should be to seek to establish a fairer and more equitable tax system.	408
During this review period, Sinn Féin believes that income and Corporation Tax rates should remain unchanged, with the exception that those on the minimum wage should be taken out of the tax net.	408
Tax exiles	H
This is a complicated issue and needs to be addressed vigorously by the next government if we are to ensure that high-income tax cheats contribute proportionately to the public purse.	0
Sinn Féin believes that all income generated in the State should be liable to general taxation irrespective of the residency of the individuals or companies concerned.	0
There needs to be an immediate end to the status of 'Tax Exile'.	0
The enactment of this policy will require amendments to be made to the current double taxation agreements.	0
An example of the grey areas which allow high-income individuals and companies to escape taxation, is the 'roll-over relief' where the relief is offered in the country where profit is made even in the case where funds are invested in another country.	0
Sinn Féin would also require companies and individuals to keep profits and income from domestic and international sources distinct to ensure that tax is paid at the correct rate.	0
An Equitable Contribution for All	H

Many individuals and companies have been able to avail of a number of reliefs on income/profits eligible for taxation.	0
In many cases this has been a positive factor in economic development.	0
It has also been abused by those who wish to avoid paying their fair share.	0
It is to the continuing shame of recent governments that a large section of our high-income individuals have been able to pay tax at rates which are effectively below those of even the (lower) standard rate.	0
This situation has come about due to the existence of a variety of exemptions, reliefs and residency policies which have been exploited in order to avoid making an equitable contribution to the public finances.	0
An example of this was produced by the Revenue Commissioners in December 1997. Their survey of the top 400 earners in the State found that some were paying little or no tax through the use of avoidance measures under tax legislation.	0
One in five was paying tax at an effective rate of 20 per cent a year and one in ten was paying an effective tax rate of less than 5 per cent.	0
These tax 'loopholes' are indicative of the dominant culture of tax avoidance in which wealthy individuals and companies have grown accustomed to paying less than their fair share.	0
Sinn Féin proposes to address both legal avoidance and illegal tax evasion as a high priority, confident in the knowledge that closing these gaps and effectively policing tax compliance will result in a dramatic increase in receipts taken.	0
In particular, Sinn Féin will ensure that the Revenue Commissioners are given whatever resources they need to carry out their work.	0
Corporation Tax and PRSI	H
Business in Ireland enjoys one of the lowest tax burdens in the EU.	0
For example, an OECD report released earlier this year showed that employers' payroll taxes are the lowest in the EU and even below states such as Turkey and Mexico.	0
At the same time, business has seen continual cuts in Corporation Tax on their profits.	0
Sinn Féin proposes to hold Corporation Taxes at their current rates pending a proposed review.	0
We believe also that there is a pressing need to recognise the all-Ireland dimension in the tax system and propose that the incoming government must have tax harmonisation on the island for business and workers on the top of its tax reform agenda.	0
In the short term, Sinn Féin proposes returning the rate of employers PRSI to 12 per cent, the level at which it was before last December's budget.	0
This could increase tax revenue by €347 million.	0
Capital Gains Tax	H
Capital Gains Tax was reduced by the outgoing government from 40 per cent to 20 per cent, a move impacting disproportionately in favour of the wealthy.	0
In addition, this reduction created a 'grey area' between the identification of income as either Trading and Capital Gains - a situation where tax avoidance can occur.	0
This is particularly the case in the area of development land transferrals, where a beneficiary can avoid paying Income Tax of 42 per cent and opt for Capital Gains Tax of 20 per cent.	0
We propose that, in order to close this loophole and to ensure a more equitable fiscal system, Capital Gains Tax should be returned to its original rate.	0
Sinn Féin's Seven-Point Plan for Fair Taxation:	
1. A major review of the taxation system with the aim of restructuring and reforming to achieve equity and that revenues are harnessed for social benefit. This review to be completed within a year.	0

2. Removal of those on minimum wage from the tax net.	0
3. No further reduction in Corporation Tax.	0
4. Capital Gains Tax to return to 40 per cent.	0
5. Return employer's PRSI to 12 per cent.	0
6. Immediate closure of identifiable loopholes for tax avoidance.	0
7. Continued support for culture and sport through tax relief measures.	0
AGRICULTURE	H
'Sinn Féin will work to protect jobs, animal health and the environment as part of our commitment to keep people on the land.'	703
The Problem	H
The agriculture industry and the fabric of rural life in Ireland have been damaged by government, the EU and world economic policies to such an extent that it is a national disaster.	703
While governments have worked to maximise the gross amount of EU grant aid funding for farming, there has been little thought given to the inequities of how these funds are distributed or of their long-term impact on Irish farming and on rural communities.	703
It is estimated that well in excess of 100,000 people left farming between 1976 and 1998, contributing to rural depopulation and the damaging migration to the cities that has been the hallmark of the last 20 years.	703
A further 20,000 farmers are expected to leave the land in the next ten years.	703
A Government-commissioned report (Agrifood 2010) predicts that the number in farming will drop to just 100,000 in 2010 when, the authors of the report reckon, only 20,000 will be viable full-time farmers, 60,000 part-time farmers and 20,000 transitional.	703
This steady draining has had negative knock-on social and economic effects in rural communities.	703
Primary producers are now receiving less for their produce in real terms than they were when we joined the EEC in 1973.	703
Draconian regulations from EU directives, unquestioningly rubber stamped into the country's domestic laws by current and previous governments, are grievously undermining whatever confidence farmers still in business might have.	703
Concerns over falling incomes and wholesale uncertainty over the direction and future of the industry are also discouraging young people - sons or daughters of existing farmers - from embracing farming as a career or even taking over farm holdings to be worked on a part-time basis.	703
Sinn Féin is utterly opposed to the 'cheap food from whatever source' approach to agriculture imposed by the EU.	703
Imported foodstuffs are often produced cheaply without high standards with regard to quality and health.	703
This confers an unfair advantage and has grave implications for consumer safety.	0
The effective control of the industry by the retail sector has played a major role in the diminishing returns farmers receive as they are continually forced to sell their produce at uneconomic prices.	703
Sinn Féin proposes:-	
A return to a sustainable practice of local quality produce for local markets combined with support mechanisms to keep people on the land, create ancillary employment and prevent rural depopulation.	703
At the moment, big business is running the show and farmers are at the mercy of, for example, the large beef processors and the big supermarket chains.	703
A simplification of the EU red tape that has Irish farmers plagued with over-complicated forms and regulations.	703

Farmers are being asked to be vets, accountants, experts on soil nutrition, etc. There needs to be an Irish examination of EU laws relating to Irish farmers to curb and control Brussels bureaucracy.	703
A massive '3.17 billion has been spent on the Bovine TB and Brucellosis Eradication Scheme in the effort to wipe out these diseases.	703
Eradication of Bovine TB has been a 'priority' of the Department of Agriculture since the 1950s, nearly 50 years on, it is still rampant.	703
This is a national scandal and Sinn Féin is demanding an independent public inquiry into the management of animal disease control in Ireland, to include TB, brucellosis, foot and mouth disease, BSE and E-Coeli 0157.	703
An all-Ireland strategy to promote animal health and consumer confidence in Irish products.	703
There is an urgent need to protect the agricultural industry from future scares and restore confidence to what is a vital national industry	703
For example, many in the industry believe that BSE could have been prevented if the government had acted as it later did on the foot and mouth disease.	703
That local facilities should be used for animal slaughter.	703
The policy of the processors to source goods where they are cheapest is detrimental to food safety.	703
Local facilities will protect jobs, animal health and the environment as well as working to sustain local farming communities.	703
Future in farming	H
The principle of a fair economic return for a quality product is paramount.	703
Not only must we assist those who are currently engaged in farming but also those who want to enter the industry.	703
There is a serious shortfall in the number of younger farmers.	703
Sinn Féin proposes:-	703
• Monitoring processor/retailer profit margins,	703
• Monitoring imported produce and labelling so consumers can be guaranteed that it is to EU standards.	703
• The maintenance of direct payments to farmers.	703
• Farmers be compensated for the EU, Department of Agriculture and Teagasc policy of encouraging destocking after decades of encouraging farmers to intensify.	703
• Smallholders who are currently excluded from all EU/state agricultural grants or payments for farm developments restored to eligibility for the full range of grants available to all other sectors of the farming industry.	703
• Partnerships and long-term land leasing initiatives (e.g 10-year leases).	703
• Access to long-term finance at reduced interest rates (e.g. 20-30 year loans).	703
The Environment	H
One of the side-effects of intensive food production is the negative impact it has had on the environment.	501
Many farmers have dealt with these issues by investing heavily in pollution control, but farmers cannot be expected to carry the financial burden of protecting the environment by themselves.	703
Sinn Féin proposes:-	703
• Consultation with farmers on all aspects of new directives.	703
• There should be an improved partnership approach in relation to protecting the environment - the current REPS scheme is inadequate and ridden with red tape, farmers are being exploited because of their love for the land.	501
• Adequate grants for pollution control with long-term finance support.	501? NA
EU Schemes and Framework	H

As farmers currently derive 56 per cent of their income from various EU schemes, it is vital to them that this income is received on time and with a minimum of red tape involved.	703
Presently, the Department of Agriculture treats farmers as fraudsters for basic errors made in applying for monies to which they are legally entitled.	703
All schemes must be streamlined and simplified.	703
Organic Food	H
The demand for organic food has been increasing to such an extent that supply cannot meet demand. Policies should encourage the development of organic farming and halfway measures towards it.	703
Specialist advisory support should be provided by the State to help farmers in this regard.	703
RURAL REGENERATION	H
'It is vital that measures are taken to reverse rural depopulation and ensure that we have sustainable rural communities into the future.'	703
The Problem	H
The perilous condition of the farming industry has consequences for the future economic shape of towns and villages, where business enterprises and the job they provide are dependent for survival on the rural hinterland.	411
As well as this, rural infrastructure and various rural services obviously will be much the poorer where the farming population is hit or farm families are left with no choice other than to move out.	411
Already there is ample evidence of government and/or local authority neglect of countryside areas.	411
It is vital that all organisations and government bodies come together to firstly assess rural decline and then bring forward structures with proper financial assistance to reverse this trend.	411 NA
The Solution	H
Sinn Féin believes that the core objectives of a rural development programme should be:- Creating a co-ordinated programme linking agriculture, enterprise, environment, culture, health and education and social services strategies into a comprehensive integrated plan.	504
Keeping the maximum number of people on the land and preserving the fabric of rural life.	0
Creating the conditions where rural communities can rebuild their local economies.	0
Sinn Féin believes that the Government should bring about a national process to address the crisis in rural Ireland and promote rural development.	0
Such a process must be organised on a truly participatory and representative basis so as to ensure the development of people centred strategies and rural policies.	0
Sinn Féin proposes:-	411
• An increase in LEADER funds for rural development projects.	504
• A rural housing strategy including a renovation grant for those who wish to refurbish or rebuild derelict dwellings.	504
• Reviewing planning laws with a view to encouraging more people into rural areas.	0
• The promotion of a return to co-operative projects should be vigorously promoted and supported.	0
• Greater support for local development projects - Enterprise Ireland, which is responsible for developing indigenous business, currently favours businesses with export potential, overlooking the vital community and social enterprise sector.	0
• The development of a services infrastructure and improved access to the Government-supported Rural Transport Initiative which is vital for the survival of rural communities.	411
• Life-long learning for rural-based people.	506
• Start-up enterprises suitable to rural areas in food and tourism.	0
• On-farm alternative enterprises.	703
WASTE MANAGEMENT	H

Towards Zero Waste	H
There is a real waste management crisis.	501
Landfill sites are overflowing, illegal dumping is widespread, and litter is out of control.	501
The Fianna Fáil/Progressive Democrats Government has failed to implement a comprehensive and effective waste management system.	501
Instead it has imposed plans for a network of waste incinerators around the State as the primary response to the crisis.	305
Although the FF/PD Government saw that there was widespread opposition to plans for waste incinerators it still forced the Waste Management (Amendment) Bill 2000 through the Dáil to take powers over waste management away from the elected representatives of the people on local councils.	305
It thus made a nonsense of the supposed public consultation and local authority approval process for regional waste management plans.	305
The Government's policy has been driven by its unwillingness to make the main producers of waste pay their fair share and by the incinerator business lobby which stands to make huge profits from the establishment and running of a waste industry in Ireland.	501
Sinn Féin proposes:-	501
• A new Zero Waste Strategy that prioritises the reduction, reuse and recycling of waste.	501
• Halting plans for a network of waste incinerators.	501
These will endanger human health and the environment and will require a constant stream of waste in order to operate, thus working against real waste reduction.	501
• Legally requiring the main industrial and commercial producers of waste to reduce waste production in a planned and targeted manner.	501
• A comprehensive strategy for agricultural waste, concentrating on biological treatment of waste in an environmentally friendly and sustainable manner.	501
• Establishing 'recycling and reuse' enterprises on a community and commercial basis locally and regionally, providing employment and efficient waste management.	0
• Abolishing local authority refuse charges which penalise the householder. (Household waste accounts only for less than 10 per cent of all solid waste.)	0
• Reversing the privatisation of local authority refuse services.	0
The EUROPEAN UNION	H
Democratic Vote on Treaty of Nice Must Be Accepted	H
In June 2001, the electorate in this State rejected the Treaty of Nice. When that democratic decision was made, the Government was under a clear obligation to act.	110
But they have not respected the democratically expressed will of the people.	110
They have not asked the other EU states to halt the process of ratification of the Treaty of Nice.	110
Nor have they notified them officially that the legislative process to implement Nice has effectively halted.	110
The Government is continuing to move towards ratification of Nice as if nothing has happened	110
It is worth noting that while the Government is ignoring the concerns of the people, the EU Convention on the future of Europe has already taken on board many of the issues raised by the 'No' side during the referendum campaign.	110
These have become part of a new debate about where the EU is going.	110
Indeed, the Laeken Declaration said: 'Citizens believe that the EU is behaving too bureaucratically. What they expect is more results, better responses to practical issues and not a European superstate. Citizens are calling for a clear, open, effective and democratically controlled [European] Community.'	110
Neutrality, NATO and the EU Army	H

The Government's u-turn on NATO's 'Partnership for Peace' was followed by its commitment of troops to the Rapid Reaction Force, the core of an EU Army.	107
The Treaty of Nice militarises the EU by giving it direct responsibility for the Rapid Reaction Force.	105
It also allows for the setting up of the Political and Security Committee, the EU Military Committee and the EU Military Staff Organisation to run this force.	105
This is an army designed for war, an army to impose by force the interests of the EU or an elite within it.	105
It will have 80,000 combat ready troops and 250,000 personnel in total ready to enforce EU foreign and security policy not just within the EU or on its borders but up to 2,500 miles outside of the EU.	105
EU military interventions do not and will not require a UN mandate either under the Treaty of Nice or the Amsterdam Treaty.	105
The Government's proposal at the recent EU summit in Barcelona to produce a declaration on Irish neutrality in advance of a re-run of the referendum is something which has no legal effect whatsoever.	105
It does not change the Treaty of Nice one iota.	105
Sinn Féin proposes:-	204
• That Irish neutrality be enshrined in the Constitution	106
• That peace-keeping should be the sole responsibility of the United Nations.	105
• Withdrawing from the Rapid Reaction Force following the Treaty of Nice referendum result.	H
Applicant States	108
Sinn Féin welcomes the enlargement of the EU to include new member states if that is the wish of their peoples.	108
But we want the applicant states to have the right to at least join the EU on the same terms as we joined.	108
The ongoing centralisation of economic and political power is a process independent of EU enlargement. When this state joined the then EEC, the process of economic integration was in reality only beginning and we joined on the same terms as the existing states.	110
There was a power of veto and every member had at least one commissioner.	110
There was no majority voting, no enhanced co-operation, and no economic and monetary union, even though the 1971 Werner Report had mapped out the principles of the single currency.	110
Yes, there were the growing tentacles of the unelected EU bureaucracy, but not on the scale experienced today.	H
A Partnership of Equals, Not a Two-Tier EU	110
Since the formation of the European Monetary System in 1979 and the Single European Act in 1987, the clear direction of EU development has been towards the creation of a two-tier European state.	110
The EU Commission and the EU Council of Ministers have become more powerful and more unaccountable.	110
More and more democratic control has been taken away from people in this part of Ireland in relation to both domestic and international affairs.	110
The Treaty of Nice attempted to accelerate this process and remove yet more democratic control from the hands of elected representatives in this state.	110
Under the Treaty of Nice we will:-	110
Lose our right to a permanent Irish Commissioner.	110
Lose the right of veto of individual states in more than 30 areas of EU policy, moving away from the requirement for unanimity based on consensus.	110
See the voting weight on the Council of Ministers favouring the larger states with Ireland's strength decreasing.	110

Sinn Féin proposes:- • Retaining the EU as a partnership of equals with everyone proceeding together on the basis of agreement.	108
• That each state continues to have an EU Commissioner	110
• That the right of veto should be retained.	110
• That no further powers be taken away from democratically elected parliaments in the member states.	110
• That member states be able to relate to the rest of the world on their own terms and not as part of a giant EU state.	110
• The ending of the democratic deficit.	202
International Affairs	H
Sinn Féin believes that the Irish Government should pursue an independent course in international affairs.	107
Irish military neutrality and independent foreign policy have been undermined by involvement in EU common foreign and security policy.	105
But the Irish Government still has freedom of action and Sinn Féin urges it to pursue vigorously a policy based on international justice and peace.	107
Sinn Féin wants Irish governments to work in the interests of the majority of the world's people who are exploited by the large economic and military power blocs controlled by the wealthy minority on our planet.	107
Sinn Féin proposes:- • The strengthening of the United Nations and its democratisation with the removal of the veto of the five permanent members of the Security Council.	107
The Council should be replaced with a democratic executive.	109
• The cancellation of Third World debt.	103
• Freedom and justice for the Palestinian people as the essential foundation for lasting peace in the Middle East.	0
Israel must implement UN Resolution 242, ending its occupation of all the Palestinian territories and allowing a real peace process to begin.	0
• No carte-blanche facilitation of NATO forces at Irish airports.	107
• The ending of sanctions against the people of Iraq which are responsible for the deaths of thousands of children through deprivation of medicines, and no extension of war to that country by the US, Britain and their allies.	0
• An end to the United States' embargo of Cuba.	0
• That the 'Tobin Tax' - a proposed tax on international financial speculation with revenue - to be used to promote development in the poorer regions of the world.	103
• The Irish Government promote human rights	201
and disarmament worldwide.	105
• An increase in Irish Government aid to the Third World	103
• An international alliance for the closure of Sellafield.	0
MEDIA	H
Sinn Féin believes that the operation of the media should be as much in the public domain and under as much public scrutiny as the media itself demands of other bodies and institutions.	0
Public access to information is a fundamental right.	201
Public Service Broadcasting	H
Sinn Féin supports public service broadcasting and views publicly owned and democratically accountable media, free from state or government control, as a mainstay of democracy.	201
In particular the legal obligation on RTÉ to provide a varied programme output, to promote the Irish language and to present news and current affairs in an objective, impartial and fair manner is a positive factor in Irish society.	0

Despite our criticism of the effect of state censorship directed against Sinn Féin and its lingering effects on some RTÉ personnel, Sinn Féin is committed to support for public service broadcasting.	0
We are for more public accountability and freedom and less state control over broadcasters.	0
It is clear that the amount of home produced programmes, employment levels and the development of a broadcasting skills base in this state is primarily a consequence of the existence of a publicly owned RTÉ.	0
Highly successful innovations represented by Radio na Gaeltachta and TG4 would not have had any hope of existing in a market driven broadcasting environment.	0
The institution of Radio na Gaeltachta helped to give confidence to Gaeltacht communities as a rich and viable linguistic community.	0
In addition music and culture in the Irish language was revitalised by Radio na Gaeltachta.	0
This would not have happened, had the task been left to the market.	0
The advent of Telefís na Gaeilge, now TG4, has reinvigorated programme quality and brought new talent to Irish television, as well as bringing the language to a new generation.	0
The democratic rights of an important linguistic community are safeguarded by this recognition of their informational and cultural rights and is supported by the vast majority of Irish people.	0
New technology	H
It is clear that there are new technological developments in broadcasting which will have little indigenous involvement if the market is allowed to dictate who will and will not be involved in the digital revolution in television.	411
The winners will be multinational communications companies with their headquarters outside Ireland.	0
The vast majority of programming will be sourced outside this country, with consequent knock on effects on employment and downstream broadcasting activity.	0
There have been massive private sector failures in Britain and Germany recently, to the advantage of already dominant players such as News International.	0
Sinn Féin considers it essential that the origination of news & current affairs and the depiction and encouragement of elements of Irish culture in all their diversity, including the Irish language, are safeguarded by the continuation of public provision for broadcasting.	0
If this provision is not forthcoming RTE will lose significant parts of its audience to broadcasters with greater programming and marketing budgets.	0
This vicious circle could in turn undermine public support for RTE.	0
Sinn Féin will vigorously oppose such moves and will support new innovations within the public service model and state provision for such innovations.	0
The Challenge of Change: Independent Productions	H
RTE must change, there is no doubt about that.	0
It must be responsive to its statutory responsibilities, but it must also be flexible in its approach to innovation in programme making: For example, Sinn Féin proposes that RTE's commissioning process for independent productions be financially and organisationally independent of the station itself.	0
This will aid diversity in programming and will aid transparency in the commissioning of programmes.	0
License Fee	H
In the past ministers have used the license fee as a means of punishing RTE for being too 'independent'.	0

We believe that RTE has made an adequate case for the level of financing required for preparation for digital television services and we believe that the Minister is withholding that increase for political reasons.	0
Sinn Féin supports an adequate level of financing for RTE and believes that the decision on license fee levels should be taken out of the political domain.	0
The level of the license fee should be set on an objective basis.	0
Sinn Féin proposes: • That License fee renewal be agreed on a five yearly basis by an independent panel comprised of representatives of the social partners, the Film Board, the Arts Council and Conradh na Gaeilge.	0
• That such a group also be empanelled to evaluate the future of television and to propose a level of capital funding required to prepare RTE for the digital age.	411
The Minister's current forum on broadcasting is a delaying mechanism instituted by a Minister who is hostile to RTE.	0
Public Service Independent Broadcasters	H
Sinn Féin proposes that such broadcasters make a biennial public report to the Broadcasting Commission at public hearings on their adherence to public service requirements in their licence and that the Commission make two yearly legally binding proposals to such broadcasters on the carrying out of their public service remit.	0
This proposal is in line with our view that those who run the media should run it in public, and not behind closed doors.	0
No more Privatisation of Culture	H
Satellite broadcasting has bought access to major national and other sporting events, which were previously, free to terrestrial television viewers of public service television.	0
This has distorted the market in sport, has raised the price for the consumer, and has enriched a few individuals.	0
Despite an early commitment from the previous minister on this issue, nothing has been done to ensure universality of access to these events.	0
Sinn Féin proposes the immediate designation of certain sporting events as having a statutory entitlement to universal audience access.	0
Print Media	H
There is increasing concern about the dominance of a small number of individuals and companies in the print media.	0
Sinn Féin proposes: • A statutory 'right to reply' law for persons subject to serious allegations in print media.	0
• Severe curtailment of the current libel laws.	0
• That all privately owned media with an average yearly circulation above 20,000 audited sales per issue be governed by legally binding trusts that safeguards media professionals from pressure or interference from media owners.	0
Editorial staff at senior level and representatives elected by journalists would have representation on the board of such trusts.	0
• A review of monopoly legislation to prevent any one media company having a monopoly position in any given media sector.	0
Sinn Féin believes that such a regulation will lead to a more independent, robust and vigorous press.	0
Under-regulated market driven print media leads to monopoly control and the stifling of real diversity.	0

Annex 3 – results of Sinn Féin’s coded manifestos from 1997 with O version and A version (depicted in green), 2002 with O version and A version (depicted in green), 2007, 2011 and 2016

edate	date	partyname	partyabbrev	codetid	manual	coderyear	testresult	testedsim	pervote	voteest	absseat	totseats	progtype	datasetorigin	corpversion	total	peruncod
06.06.1997	199706	Sinn Féin	SF	998	998				2,55	0	1	166	3	20		1209	0
06.06.1997	199706	Sinn Féin	SF	998	5	2017	NA	NA	2,55	0	1	166	1	NA	2017-1	355	1,690141
17.05.2002	200205	Sinn Féin	SF	215	999	2003	0,7		6,514	0	5	166	1	20		1209	0
17.05.2002	200205	Sinn Féin	SF	998	5	2017	NA	NA	6,514	0	5	166	1	NA	2017-1	1105	0,180995
17.05.2007	200705	Sinn Féin	SF	280	3	2010	0,741		6,942	0	4	166	1	40	2017-1	1674	2,808
25.02.2011	201102	Sinn Féin	SF	280	4	2012	0,736	0,598	9,94	0	14	166	1	61	2017-1	610	0
26.02.2016	201602	Sinn Féin	SF	280	5	2016	0,8	0,704	13,846	0	23	158	1	120	2017-1	863	0,695
06.06.1997	per101	per102	per103	per104	per105	per106	per107	per108	per109	per110	per201	per202	per302	per303	per304	per305	per401
06.06.1997	2,53521	5,3521127	0,331	0	1,323	3,474	1,489	0,91	0	2,73	3,06	1,323	0	2,068	0,248	0,165	0
06.06.1997	2,53521	5,3521127	0	0	0	5,352113	0	0,2816901	0	1,126761	3,943662	0	0	0,56338028	0	6,760563	0,56338
17.05.2002	0,090498	0,0904977	0,27149321	0	0,995475	0,81448	0,542986	0,4524887	0,090498	1,99095	1,266968	0,271493	0	1,71945701	0,36199095	5,520362	0,090498
24.05.2007	0,538	0	0,119	0	0,657	0,179	1,792	0,06	0	1,374	3,704	0,657	0,179	1,673	0,717	8,363	1,613
25.02.2011	0	0,328	0	0	0	0,164	0	0	0,164	0,164	0,492	2,295	0	2,295	1,475	4,754	0,984
26.02.2016	0,463	0,232	0,232	0	0,348	0,116	1,738	0,463	0,232	3,013	0	1,043	0,116	1,39	2,202	14,716	0
06.06.1997	per402	per403	per404	per405	per406	per407	per408	per409	per410	per411	per412	per413	per414	per415	per416	per501	per502
06.06.1997	2,812	0,248	4,301	0	0	0	0	0	0,827	6,782	4,136	1,737	0	0	0,248	1,82	4,963
06.06.1997	0	0	0	0	0	2,535211	0	0,56338	0	1,690141	0,84507	0	0	0	0	2,816901	0,84507
17.05.2002	2,812	0,248	4,301	0	0	0	0	0	0,827	6,782	4,136	1,737	0	0	0,248	1,82	4,963
17.05.2002	0,090498	2,2624434	0,63348416	0	1,357466	0	0,271493	0,0904977	0,542986	6,063348	0,995475	0,090498	0,090498	0	0	1,447964	0
24.05.2007	0,299	0,597	0,538	0	0,657	0	0,777	0	0,358	5,257	1,195	4,719	0,06	0	4,54	0,896	2,688
25.02.2011	1,311	0,164	0,492	0,328	0	0,656	2,951	3,77	1,475	2,623	4,262	3,607	1,967	5,082	0	0,656	0,82
26.02.2016	1,97	5,91	0	0	0,116	0	0	0	0,348	1,97	2,086	1,159	0	0	0,232	3,476	1,275
06.06.1997	per503	per504	per505	per506	per507	per601	per602	per603	per604	per605	per606	per607	per608	per701	per702	per703	per704
06.06.1997	15,219	14,392	0	6,617	0	1,323	0	0	0	1,406	4,715	1,241	0	0	0,579	0	7,196
06.06.1997	1,690141	2,2535211	0	5,915493	0	0,28169	0	0	0	1,126761	1,408451	0	0	2,25352113	0	2,816901	0
17.05.2002	15,219	14,392	0	6,617	0	1,323	0	0	0	1,406	4,715	1,241	0	0	0,579	0	7,196
17.05.2002	2,533937	8,7782805	0	6,334842	0	0,995475	0	0	0	1,99095	0	0	0	1,35746606	0	4,524887	0
24.05.2007	8,124	13,62	0	5,496	0	6,033	0	0	0,06	1,434	0,538	0,418	0	4,719	0	3,943	0,478
25.02.2011	7,049	16,557	0	4,262	0	5,41	0	0	0	4,754	0,328	3,607	0	2,459	0	2,459	0
26.02.2016	7,879	14,484	0	4,519	0	4,751	0,579	0	0,348	2,317	0	2,317	0	4,519	0	7,068	0

	per705	per706	per103_1	per103_2	per201_1	per201_2	per202_1	per202_2	per202_3	per202_4	per305_1	per305_2	per305_3	per305_4	per305_5	per305_6	per416_1
06.06.1997	0	1,985															
06.06.1997	0,56338	5,0704225															
17.05.2002	0	1,985															
17.05.2002	2,80543	0,6334842	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
24.05.2007	2,628	2,031															
25.02.2011	2,131	3,607															
26.02.2016	1,159	0,348	0,232					1,043									
	per416_2	per601_1	per601_2	per602_1	per602_2	per605_1	per605_2	per606_1	per606_2	per607_1	per607_2	per607_3	per608_1	per608_2	per608_3	per703_1	per703_2
06.06.1997																	
06.06.1997																	
17.05.2002																	
17.05.2002	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
24.05.2007																	
25.02.2011																	
26.02.2016	0,232	4,751	0	0	0,579	2,317	0,579	0	0	2,317	0	0	0	0	0	0	7,068

rile	planeco	markeco	welfare	intpeace	datasetversion
06.06.1997	-26,137	8,685	0	29,611	4,797 2017a
06.06.1997	-10,7042	1,6901408	0,56338028	3,943662	10,70423 2017a
17.05.2002	-26,137	8,685	0	29,611	4,797 2017a
17.05.2002	-14,7511	3,8914027	0,18099548	11,31222	1,900452 2017a
24.05.2007	-12,664	2,33	1,673	21,744	0,836 2017a
25.02.2011	-13,607	4,918	2,951	23,607	0,492 2017a
26.02.2016	-12,514	7,995	0	22,364	0,695 2017a