

5.3 Dublin area

The population of the Dublin area, at 1,273,069 is equivalent to 44 seats in a 158 member Dáil. As the area currently has an allocation of 47 seats a reduction of 3 seats in the area is necessary.

The overall percentage variance from national average population per TD for the 44 seats is -0.37% . It is not necessary therefore to transfer population in or out of the Dublin area or to breach the Dublin county boundary.

In considering recommendations for Dáil constituencies in the Dublin area the Commission had regard to population changes, to submissions received, to administrative county boundaries in the area and to the natural boundary formed by the river Liffey between the north and south of the area.

Examination of the existing constituencies in the Dublin area in the light of the results of Census 2011 indicated variances in the area in a 158 member Dáil that were not acceptable to the Commission. The Commission also noted that in the period between 2006 and 2011 the Dublin North constituency indicated the highest population increase ($+16.3\%$) in the country and the Dublin North-Central constituency was the only constituency in the country to show a population decrease (-1.0%). It was clear therefore that adjustment of constituency boundaries would be unavoidable both to achieve parity of representation and to provide for a reduction in the number of seats in the area.

Of the 533 submissions received by the Commission the largest number of submissions received on any one issue related to Swords. In all of these submissions it was suggested that Swords and its environs should be in one constituency. The Commission took the concerns expressed in these submissions into account when considering its recommendations for Dublin.

The Commission is not required to avoid the breaching of the boundaries between the local government counties of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin and between these and Dublin city. However given that these county administrative boundaries are in place for over 18 years the Commission recommends adherence to these boundaries where this is feasible and practicable.

In developing its recommendations for the Dublin area the Commission gave consideration to the question of constituency names. It was clear from many of the submissions received in respect of non-urban constituencies that there frequently exists a strong sense of affinity to locality amongst constituents. However, in Dublin in particular, the extensive use of non-descriptive, cardinal-point designations — for example, West, North-West, North-Central — militates against such sense of identity or locality. The Commission therefore recommends name changes in four Dublin constituencies. It recommends the renaming of Dublin North and Dublin South to more closely reflect the local authority names in these areas. It recommends that the new constituency formed by the merger of Dublin North-Central and Dublin North-East be named Dublin Bay North and that in symmetry, Dublin South-East be renamed Dublin Bay South. To avoid potential confusion with the names of remaining or previous constituencies the Commission decided against making more recommendations for name changes in the Dublin area, leaving this possibility to the consideration of a future revision.

The river Liffey has acted as a natural constituency boundary in the Dublin area for many years, except for a small area along Conyngham Road. The Commission recommends that this natural boundary should be maintained.

Having regard to the constitutional requirements and terms of reference and in the light of the above considerations, having examined a number of options for the arrangement of the constituencies, the Commission makes the following recommendations for constituencies in the Dublin area:

The Commission first recommends an arrangement of constituencies that provides for Dáil constituency boundaries outside Dublin city to mirror as far as practicable administrative county boundaries.

Dublin Fingal

The Commission recommends the transfer of five electoral divisions and parts of three others, with a total population of 26,840, into the Dublin North constituency which should become a 5-seat constituency and be renamed Dublin Fingal. The transfer into the Dublin Fingal constituency of population of 17,291 in the electoral divisions of Swords-Forrest and Kilsallaghan and in parts of two other electoral divisions, all currently in the Dublin West constituency, allows for Swords and its environs to be in one constituency. The transfer of three electoral divisions and part of another, with a total population of 9,549, from Dublin North-East into Dublin Fingal reverses a transfer effected in the 2009 revision. With these transfers the population of Dublin Fingal, at 141,162 is equivalent to 5 seats in a 158 member Dáil.

Dublin West

The Dublin West constituency, minus the population of 17,291 transferred to Dublin Fingal, has a population of 99,923 and is not sustainable as a 4-seat constituency. The Commission recommends the transfer of two electoral divisions and part of another, with a total population of 13,256, from Dublin Central into Dublin West to provide for Dublin West to remain as a 4-seat constituency.

This arrangement of constituencies provides for the substantial part of the Fingal County Council area to be contained in two Dáil constituencies.

Dún Laoghaire and Dublin Rathdown

The population of the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown administrative county is 206,261. This is equivalent to 7 seats in a 158 member Dáil. The Commission recommends that this area should form two constituencies, a 4-seat constituency to be called Dún Laoghaire and a 3-seat constituency to be called Dublin Rathdown. The Commission therefore recommends the transfer of population of 13,762 in four electoral divisions from Dublin South to Dún Laoghaire enabling Dún Laoghaire to remain a 4-seat constituency. The Commission recommends the transfer of nine electoral divisions, with a population of 39,311, in the Ballyboden, Firhouse, Edmondstown, Rathfarnham area from Dublin South to Dublin South-West and that Dublin South should become a 3-seat constituency and be renamed Dublin Rathdown.

This arrangement provides for the entire Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council area to be contained in two Dáil constituencies.

Dublin South-West and Dublin Mid-West

The Dublin South-West constituency, with the addition of population of 39,311 from the existing Dublin South constituency, has a total population of 144,908 which is equivalent to 5 seats in a 158 member Dáil. The Commission recommends that Dublin South-West should become a 5-seat constituency. No change is recommended for the Dublin Mid-West constituency.

This arrangement of constituencies provides for the substantial part of the South Dublin County Council area to be contained in two Dáil constituencies.

The Commission recommends that the number of constituencies in Dublin city be reduced from six to five.

Dublin Bay North

The Dublin North-East constituency, minus population of 9,549 transferred to Dublin Fingal, has a population of 72,011 and is not sustainable as a 3-seat constituency. As the population of the Dublin North-Central constituency has decreased since 2006, to 74,501, it is no longer sustainable as a 3-seat constituency. The combined population of the two constituencies, at 146,512, is equivalent to 5 seats in a 158 member Dáil. The Commission recommends that the two constituencies be merged to form a new 5-seat constituency called Dublin Bay North.

Dublin North-West and Dublin Central

These two constituencies between them at present have 7 seats. Dublin North-West, with a population of 79,028, can no longer sustain 3 seats. The Dublin Central constituency minus population of 13,256 transferred to Dublin West has a population of 100,536 and can no longer sustain 4 seats. The combined population of the two constituencies, taking account of the transfer, is 179,564, which is equivalent to 6 seats. The Commission recommends the transfer of four electoral divisions, with a total population of 11,506, from Dublin Central to Dublin North-West to provide for the formation of two 3-seat constituencies in the area.

Dublin South-Central and Dublin Bay South

The constituencies of Dublin South-Central and Dublin South-East between them have at present 9 seats. The combined population of the two constituencies, at 231,056, is equivalent to 8 seats in a 158 member Dáil. The Commission recommends the transfer of population of 12,563, in five electoral divisions, from Dublin South-Central to Dublin South-East to provide for the formation of two 4-seat constituencies in the area and that Dublin South-East should be renamed Dublin Bay South.

Details of the transfers are given in Appendix 3. The following table sets out the relevant statistics for the constituencies in Dublin where change is recommended.

Recommended Constituency	Number of TDs	2011 Population	Population per TD	Variance from National Average Population per TD (29,040)	
				Number	%
Dublin Bay North	5	146,512	29,302	+262	+0.90
Dublin Bay South	4	116,396	29,099	+59	+0.20
Dublin Central	3	89,030	29,677	+637	+2.19
Dublin Fingal	5	141,162	28,232	-808	-2.78
Dublin North-West	3	90,534	30,178	+1,138	+3.92
Dublin Rathdown	3	87,470	29,157	+117	+0.40
Dublin South-Central	4	114,660	28,665	-375	-1.29
Dublin South-West	5	144,908	28,982	-58	-0.20
Dublin West	4	113,179	28,295	-745	-2.57
Dún Laoghaire	4	118,791	29,698	+658	+2.26

Dublin Mid-West provides the remaining 4 seats in the area.

The recommended Dublin area constituencies are shown in the large scale maps in the pouch at the back of the report.