



Framework for Promoting Inclusion, Equality and Integrity in our Party

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Living our Values

We in Fine Gael work at all levels of our organisation to support an environment in which all members behave in a manner that demonstrates inclusion, equality and integrity.

We value the diversity of our society. We believe we, as a political party, have a distinctive role to play in promoting inclusion, equality and integrity in public life. We want to support all members to have a fulfilling experience of participation in our party, so that our diversity contributes to the party's success. The Fine Gael Inclusion, Equality and Integrity Framework sets the measures we undertake and offers a guide to the behaviour we expect of each other in our party.

We have two core party values that support our approach.

Equality of Opportunity

“ We want to create a fair and caring society where everybody is engaged in democracy, and where there are no barriers to equal opportunity.

Integrity

“ Fine Gael believes in being truthful and courageous in what we do, and in promoting and upholding both the rights and the responsibilities of people. This means ensuring all of us live up to our responsibilities while enjoying our democratic rights and freedoms.

We live these values through the implementation of the measures in this framework that support a greater understanding of what each of us can do to uphold rights and responsibilities across the party.

We as party members commit to promoting inclusion, equality and integrity.

We, as political activists - volunteers, candidates and elected representatives - are committed to promoting equality, inclusion and integrity in all our interactions, through our communications and in the way we run our party. We know that promoting equality and valuing diversity helps us all to collaborate to the best of our ability and achieve our aims as a political party.

We do this by:

Demonstrating respect, which means accepting somebody for who they are. We demonstrate respect by using inclusive language, letting each other speak and listening to different views and opinions. Treating other people with dignity is as simple as treating them the way we'd like to be treated ourselves. Respect and dignity create a culture that makes each of us feel safe to express ourselves, our opinions and share our different experiences. We have different abilities and qualities, and we act in a way that shows appreciation of all contributions. We use inclusive language by avoiding words, phrases or tones that reflect prejudiced, stereotyped or discriminatory views of people or groups of people. It is our responsibility, to choose to act so that all our fellow political activists are included, all can participate, and we foster an inclusive culture in the party.

Promoting equality and valuing our diversity, our membership is diverse, in terms of age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion, race, ethnicity, educational attainment, background for example. We have members who live in rural and urban settings, members who have a job, members who seeking employment, members that are retired and we have members who have been involved for many years and those who have recently joined the party. We promote equality and value diversity because it helps us all to collaborate to the best of our ability and achieve our aims as a political party.

Upholding integrity, as this quality, having strong ethical or moral principles and following them ensures that we act with honesty, honour and truthfulness, demonstrating the standards of behaviour that we expect of each other.

We in Fine Gael are committed to treating people equally and preventing discrimination.

- ✘ **Bullying, harassment or sexual harassment are not tolerated in Fine Gael.**
- ✘ **We in Fine Gael do not tolerate stereotyping or prejudice.**
- ✘ **We in Fine Gael do not tolerate ageism, sexism, racism, homophobia, transphobia or xenophobia.**
- ✘ **Hate speech is not tolerated in the party.**

Integrity is a core value of Fine Gael, our members abide by the guidance provided in this framework, and our elected members abide by the codes of conduct and dignity and respect statements, principles and policies that are provided for councillors and Oireachtas members.

In Fine Gael we welcome diversity in our party, we welcome a diversity of perspectives and experiences and we value and respect the contribution that our diversity brings to our success as an organisation.



A Proud Record of Delivery But More to be Done

We in Fine Gael are proud of our record of delivery in relation to the promotion of female and diverse candidates and our strong policy agenda and achievements in related areas.

When Garrett FitzGerald became Party Leader, he brought an emphasis on women and women's issues to Irish politics which had never been seen before. The 1981 General Election was a significant moment with the election of female politicians like Gemma Hussey, Nuala Fennell, Madeleine Taylor-Quinn, Nora Owen and Mary Flaherty commencing an era when women's voices became heard to a greater extent on the national stage.

Over the next forty years, Fine Gael has been to the fore in building on that, while acknowledging much more needed to be done. In 2012 it was a Fine Gael Minister Phil Hogan, who brought in the legislation to require that political parties run at least 30% female candidate otherwise they would be financially penalised. This resulted in the most ever female candidates presented and elected at the 2016 General Election with further increases in 2020. But more needs to be done. That is why that legislation sets out that at the next General Election political parties will be required to run 40% female candidates. Fine Gael ministers have also overseen the introduction of financial incentives to encourage parties to run more female candidates at local elections.

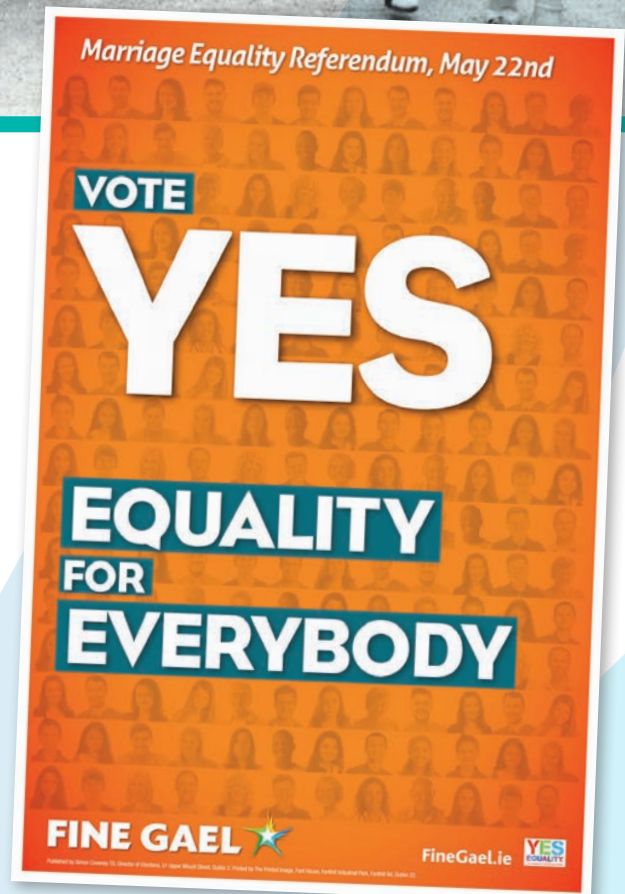
As a Party, of the seven Fine Gael ministers at Cabinet, three are women. We have more female councillors than any other party with 63 and at the last European elections, four women won five seats for Fine Gael. Since then, we have had our first female European Commissioner. We are committed as a Party to running more female candidates at the next local elections, building to 40% at the next General Election.

The Fine Gael Women's Network (FGWN) encourages, empowers and supports women to become active at all levels in the party. Members in this network are committed to gender equality and to motivating, supporting and inspiring women to take leadership roles, i.e., stand for election within party structures and to run as candidates in elections. Across 2022, Fine Gael will be rolling out a series of initiatives across the country this year to encourage women to get more involved in the Party, and in campaigns and to put themselves forward for election.

We have also championed an increasing diversity in candidates with Fine Gael Intercultural and the Fine Gael LGBT networks playing a crucial role in our Party. These networks reflect the Party's emphasis on breaking down barriers. It was under a Fine Gael-led Government that the Irish people voted for Marriage Equality Referendum in 2015. More recently, the regularisation process that Minister McEntee has brought through for undocumented people living in Ireland will allow those individuals to play a full part in Irish community life.



Fine Gael women TDs elected in 1982.
Gemma Hussey, Alice Glenn, Nuala Fennell, Mary Flaherty,
Nora Owen, Avril Doyle, Madeleine Taylor-Quinn, Monica
Barnes and Myra Barry. Image courtesy of Sarah Barnes





Supporting an Inclusive Culture in our Party

Respect means that you accept somebody for who they are. This can be more challenging when people are different from you, have perspectives that are different to yours, opinions you don't agree with and life experiences or circumstances you don't understand. We demonstrate respect by using inclusive language, letting each other speak and listening to different views and opinions.

Treating other people with dignity is as simple as treating them the way we'd like to be treated ourselves. We all want to know and feel that we are accepted for who we are, and that our dignity as human beings is respected. Respect and dignity are vital because they help to create a culture that makes each of us feel safe to express ourselves, our opinions and share our different experiences.

Inclusive language avoids the use of words, phrases or tones that reflect prejudiced, stereotyped or discriminatory views of people or groups of people. We choose what words or expressions to use, what tone to use, and when we choose, we can show others respect and uphold their dignity. Or we can use language that excludes people from being seen as or feeling part of the group. We have different abilities and qualities, and we can act in a way that shows appreciation of all contributions. It is our responsibility, to choose to act so that all our fellow political activists are included, all can participate, and we foster an inclusive culture in the party.

We commit to using words that show that we welcome all contributions, a tone of voice that shows respect for all, and avoiding words, phrases or tones that reflect prejudiced, stereotyped or discriminatory views of particular people or groups.

Promoting Equality and Valuing Diversity

Our membership is diverse, in terms of age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion, race, ethnicity, educational attainment, background for example.

We know that promoting equality and valuing diversity helps us all to collaborate to the best of our ability and achieve our aims as a political party.

Preventing Discrimination

We all want to be treated equally. Unfortunately, this does not always happen, hence we have laws that are designed to prevent discrimination and promote equality. Discrimination is legally defined in Ireland in the Equality Acts 1998 – 2015, as being less favourable treatment and is not tolerated in Fine Gael.

A person is discriminated against if they are treated less favourably than another person is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation, on any of the nine protected grounds, that is age, civil status, disability, family status, gender, membership of the Traveller

Community, race, religion or sexual orientation. Indirect discrimination can occur where a provision, practice or requirement impacts negatively on a particular group, or is more difficult for one of the groups to satisfy.

We in Fine Gael are committed to treating people equally and preventing discrimination.

Preventing Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Bullying Behaviour

Harassment is a form of discrimination that facilitates a hostile environment. It is any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the nine grounds, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for a person.

It includes unwanted conduct and may include acts, requests, spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, emails, text messages, pictures or other material. Harassment is conduct that damages a person's dignity and self-esteem.

Examples of harassment could include:

- Demeaning behaviour towards others;
- Deliberate isolation or non-co-operation;
- Racist, ageist, sexist jokes or so called 'banter';

- Display of offensive material;
- Insulting behaviour, threats or physical assault;
- Offensive or insulting communications, e-mails, text messages, social media posts etc. whether they are sent directly, or to a third party.'

Sexual harassment is any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment is conduct that damages a person's dignity and self-esteem.

Examples of sexual harassment could include:

- Derogatory or degrading abuse or insults that are gender-related;
- Leering, offensive gestures;
- Unwelcome sexual advances or suggestions;
- Unwelcome pressure for dates, social contacts;
- Display of sexually suggestive or pornographic materials;
- Sexual jokes, jibes, remarks, slagging or innuendo and so called 'banter';
- Uninvited or unwelcome physical touching or contacts such as petting, kissing, touching, brushing against someone, groping;
- Assault or coercive sexual intercourse.

Bullying is defined as inappropriate behaviour that could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity. An isolated incident may be an affront to dignity, but as a once-off incident, is not considered to be bullying. Bullying is any form of regular and persistent inappropriate behaviour, unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct. Bullying is conduct that can damage a person's dignity and self-esteem and places people in a hostile environment.

Examples of bullying behaviour could include:

- Personal insults, demeaning remarks, regular humiliation, sometimes in front of others, nicknames, threats;
- Exclusion with negative consequences, hostile attitude, spreading malicious rumours;
- Regular, excessive and inappropriate criticism, deliberately maliciously holding information in order to undermine, abuse of power;
- Aggressive physical behaviour, intimidating and unwelcome physical conduct; and
- Insulting texts, emails and derogatory comments on social media, etc... whether they are sent directly, or to third party.

Bullying, harassment and sexual harassment are defined by the impact of the behaviour on the person who feels that they are being bullied, harassed or sexually harassed, not the intention of the person or persons who may be

consciously or unconsciously acting in an inappropriate manner. Any member who is being harassed or bullied may feel stressed, anxious and may have difficulties contributing effectively.

Bullying, harassment or sexual harassment are not tolerated in Fine Gael.

Understanding Unconscious Bias, Stereotyping and Prejudice

Bias is a preference for an idea that may prevent us from giving an equal chance to a different idea, often resulting in groupthink.

Bias can also be seen in favouritism towards a person, or a group of people. An implicit bias is an unconscious association, belief, or attitude toward a group, or a person associated with a group, whether the group is real or not. Unconscious bias may result in attributing certain qualities or





characteristics to all members of a group, known as stereotyping.

A stereotype can be an over-generalised or a mistaken idea or belief, about a particular category of people based on assumptions and expectations, for example, an expectation about the group's preferences or ability. Stereotyping can cause prejudice, which is an attitude, usually negative, toward a person or a group of people because of their group membership or a perception of belonging to a group.

We in Fine Gael do not tolerate stereotyping or prejudice.

Preventing Ageism, Sexism and Racism

Ageism is unfair treatment of people because of their age. Ageism can lead to bias against persons or groups based on their age. Ageist attitudes can portray older people as frail, unable to work, physically weak, mentally slow or helpless. Ageist attitudes can portray young people as inexperienced, non-committal, naïve, impressionable, and their views or opinions negated.

Sexism is unfair treatment of people because of their sex, based on the belief that one sex is superior to another. Sexism is behaviour, conditions, or attitudes that foster stereotypes of

social roles based on sex. One extreme form of sexism is misogyny, the hatred of women.

Racism is the belief in the superiority of one race over another and actions that can arise from those beliefs. It may also mean prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against other people because they are of a different race or ethnicity. It includes the inability or refusal to recognise the rights, needs, dignity, or value of people of particular races or geographical origins and the devaluation of various traits of character or intelligence as 'typical' of particular peoples. Xenophobia is the fear and hatred of strangers or foreigners or of anything that is strange or foreign.

We in Fine Gael do not tolerate ageism, sexism, racism or xenophobia.

Preventing Homophobia

Homophobia is sometimes defined as an aversion to gay or homosexual people or their lifestyle or culture and behaviour or an act based on this aversion. Some define homophobia as an 'irrational fear' of homosexuality and of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI+) persons.

The acronym LGBTI+ describes a diverse group of persons. A lesbian is a woman whose enduring physical,

romantic and/or emotional attraction is to other women. Gay is often used to describe a man whose enduring physical, romantic and/or emotional attraction is to other men, although the term can be used to describe both gay men and lesbians. Bisexual describes an individual who is physically, romantically and/or emotionally attracted to both men and women. Transgender describes people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. Intersex people are individuals born with any of several variations in sex characteristics including chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones or genitals. It is the decision of the LGBTI+ person, to describe their identity and it is their decision to share or not to share this with others.

Sexual orientation refers to each person's capacity for emotional, affective and sexual attraction to, and intimate and sexual relations with, individuals of a different or the same gender or more than one gender. Gender identity refers to each person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth.

Hostile attitudes and behaviour to LGBTI+ people can make their lives a misery, create hostile environments and has contributed to making the streets unsafe for them. Homophobic speech also falls into what can be considered as hate speech.

Homophobia is unacceptable and not tolerated in the party.

Preventing Hate Speech

Hate speech undermines the dignity and value of a human being belonging to a particular social group. Hate speech refers to public expressions which spread, incite, promote or justify hatred, discrimination or hostility towards people, because of their actual or perceived belonging to a particular group. Hate speech can be generated through the publication or distribution of written materials, the distribution, showing or playing of a recording of sounds or visual images, and using words likely to stir up hatred against a person, or group of persons based on certain characteristics.





Hate speech is not tolerated in the party.

Members should treat each other in a respectful and safe manner at all times, in their volunteering, individual and group interactions and on social media.

- We encourage all of our members to enjoy their participation in the party, so if a joke has the potential to offend, do not tell it or if a comment has the potential to offend do not say it;
- The way a person looks, acts or dresses is never an excuse for harassment or sexual harassment. Comments about a person's appearance, physical or mental characteristics, body shape, or any other personal matter that may cause annoyance, embarrassment or offence to another person is unacceptable;
- Comments about sex or gender stereotypes can be offensive to many people and are therefore not acceptable;
- Remember that because somebody does not react in a negative fashion to a joke or comment does not mean that they do not find it offensive;
- Remember to respect each other's personal space. Physical contact such as putting your arm around somebody, patting or touching somebody can be inappropriate and make persons and others around them feel uncomfortable;
- Staring or leering at a person, standing too close to somebody or purposely making contact or brushing against people as you walk past is not appropriate behaviour and can be very intimidating;
- Remember, you do not have to intend to offend somebody for your actions to cause offence. Harassment and sexual harassment are any form of unwanted conduct, no matter what your intent or level of awareness of the impact of your behaviour. If someone tells you your behaviour is inappropriate, offensive, intimidating etc, then stop.
- Remember this applies to meetings, social events and other events associated with the work of the party.
- Social media, including messaging services like WhatsApp, are critical to communications today and is increasingly being experienced as a space where intolerance, prejudice,

stereotyping and hatred are evident. Just as in face-to-face conversations there is no place for abusive language, expressions of intolerance, sexism, racism, ageism, xenophobia, homophobia or incitement to hatred on social media.

Upholding Integrity

Integrity is the quality of having strong ethical or moral principles and following them. A person with integrity acts with honesty, honour and truthfulness, and demonstrates the standards of behaviour that we expect of each other.

Integrity is a core value of Fine Gael, our members abide by the guidance provided in this framework, and our elected members abide by the codes of conduct and dignity and respect statements, principles and policies that are provided for councillors and Oireachtas members.

In Fine Gael we welcome diversity in our party, we welcome a diversity of perspectives and experiences and we value and respect the contribution that our diversity brings to our success as an organisation.



Measures in our Party

Members are the core of the organisation. Through their voluntary work in the party, members bring knowledge, ideas and support to ensure that the organisation achieves its aims and objectives. Members contribute by running local constituency organisations, gathering information so that we can respond to local and national issues, organising local meetings, fundraising, providing practical support to elected representatives, and demonstrating active citizenship, through door-to-door canvassing as well as outreach through digital communications and social media to communicate our activities and policies.

Our Members

We expect the highest standards of behaviour of our members in performing their functions and in their relationship with each other, and with the public. Our participation in the democratic process is founded on our commitment to acting for the common good. All members are expected to treat people with courtesy, politeness, and kindness, to encourage each other to express opinions and ideas and actively listen to different points of view.

Members are directed to the full text of this framework, which is provided on the Party website when they join and are required to tick a box which indicates their agreement to adhere to the provisions of this framework as part of the terms and conditions of membership of the party.

Our Constituency Organisations

Members join branches and constituencies, each of which individually informs the members about

the contents of the Fine Gael Inclusion, Equality and Integrity Framework, and formally adopts a Constituency Declaration at the Constituency AGM. Officers in the Party have a particular responsibility to uphold this framework. The Constituency Declaration, as laid out (pictured right), is adopted by members and signed for the constituency by the Chair and Equality Officer, who by so doing fulfil their obligation to inform members of the contents of this framework.

Our Officer Boards

The Equality Officers in each Constituency, along with the Chair, is responsible for raising the Framework at the AGM and helping members to implement it. In this way the Equality Officers support the party to maintain a culture of inclusion.

We are committed to striving for a diverse and inclusive balance of persons, particularly in relation to gender, on our constituency officer boards.

Constituency and Branch meetings will be conducted in a professional and business-like manner. Members will treat their fellow members, and guests with courtesy and respect and obey the rulings of the chair and standing orders.

If the Chair considers a member's behaviour to be in contravention of this framework, they will speak privately to the member concerned and ask them to desist from inappropriate behaviour.

Members commit to acting at all times with integrity and fairness in internal elections. Members who are running for office in internal elections will treat their



fellow candidates with courtesy, adhere to the provisions of this framework and follow the standing orders of the party.

Our Election Candidates

Members who are selected to run as candidates sign the Party Pledge, which contains the following commitment:

I am familiar with, understand and am committed to upholding the provisions of the Party's Inclusion, Equality and Integrity Framework. I will ensure that my behaviour and communications demonstrate inclusion, promote equality and that I act with integrity at all times, using language that avoids words, phrases or tones that reflect prejudiced, stereotyped or discriminatory views of particular people or groups. This applies to the publication or distribution of written materials and the distribution, showing or playing of any recordings of sounds or visual images.

Our Elected Councillors

All Fine Gael councillors will familiarise themselves with the provisions contained in each of the following codes and policies:

1. The Fine Gael Inclusion, Equality and Integrity that guides how we behave and treat each other. A copy of this framework will be signed and lodged with Party Headquarters.
2. The "Local Government Act 2011 Ethical Framework for the Local Government Service Code of Conduct for Councillors". (Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government). Councillors will sign a form to confirm that

Constituency Declaration

Members of the Party are committed to affording equality, dignity and respect to all. We value the diversity of our society and believe that we, as political activists have a distinctive role to play in promoting inclusion, equality and integrity in public life.

We in THIS NAMED BRANCH/CONSTITUENCY commit to acting to ensure that all people irrespective of their diversity or membership of the "protected grounds" have a genuine and equal opportunity to participate in and contribute to Fine Gael in this BRANCH/CONSTITUENCY. We commit to treating people equally, with dignity and respect, acting with integrity and behaving in a way that promotes inclusion in all our work. We will ensure that our behaviour and communications demonstrate inclusion and promote equality. This applies to the conduct of our meetings, the publication or distribution of written materials, the distribution, showing or playing of any recordings of sounds or visual images. We commit to using words that show that we welcome all contributions, a tone of voice that shows respect for all, and avoiding words, phrases or tones that reflect prejudiced, stereotyped or discriminatory views of particular people or groups.

Responsibility

The party expects all members to adhere to this framework. The Chair and Equality Officer have advised the members of the contents of this framework, signed for the constituency and the members formally adopt it in this declaration at our meeting of the XXth of MONTH, YEAR.

Signed for the Constituency _____

Equality Officer

Signed for the Constituency _____

Chair



they have read and understand the provisions of the "Local Government Act 2011 Ethical Framework for the Local Government Service Code of Conduct for Councillors" and confirm their agreement to adhere to this Code. A copy of this signed form must be lodged with Party Headquarters. Members should post this signed form and the Code on their website.

3. Equality policies, employment equality, equal status, dignity at work and statutory duty provisions of their Local Authority and commit to conduct themselves in accordance with the principles and measures of these policies.

Our Oireachtas Members

All Fine Gael Oireachtas members will familiarise themselves with the provisions contained in each of the following codes and policies:

1. The Fine Gael Inclusion, Equality and Integrity Framework that guides how we behave and treat each other. A copy of this framework will be signed and lodged with Party Headquarters.
2. Members will familiarise themselves with the Oireachtas "Dignity and Respect Statement of Principles and Policy". This requires all Members and Political Parties, as employers, to sign a form to confirm receipt of "Dignity and Respect Statement of Principles and Policy" and to "confirm their agreement to:
 - adopt the policy;
 - assign a Complaint Recipient to handle any complaint received;
 - implement any recommended actions or sanctions arising from any stage of the resolution procedures". (Houses of the Oireachtas, March 2019, p. 4)



3. Oireachtas members will lodge a signed copy with Party Headquarters.

We in Fine Gael have signed the form, confirm our adoption of the policy, in this Framework, assign XX as our Complaint Recipient and commit to implementing any recommended actions or sanctions arising from any stage of the resolution procedures.

The Chair of the Parliamentary Party will ask members to formally adopt the Fine Gael Inclusion, Equality and Integrity Framework, and inform members of their rights and responsibilities under the 2019 Oireachtas "Dignity and Respect Statement of Principles and Policy".

Our European Parliament Members

Members of the European parliament sign a declaration confirming their commitment to the «Code of Appropriate Behaviour for Members of the European Parliament in Exercising Their Duties». All declarations are published on the members pages on the website of the European Parliament. The first line of the declaration states that «In exercising their duties, Members of the European Parliament will behave towards everyone working

in the European Parliament with dignity, courtesy and respect and without prejudice or discrimination.»

Communications

The Fine Gael Inclusion, Equality and Integrity Framework will be made available on the Members Hub, with links to it provided in the Councillors daily brief and on our website.

All members are committed to ensuring that our communications are free of language, imagery and misinformation that can lead to stereotyping or prejudice.

We will position and direct our communications to ensure a pro-active and creative approach to our advertising that affirms our stance on diversity and attracts the widest pool of membership, candidates and staff.

We will use plain English and non-discriminatory language in all documents, both sexes will be portrayed in a non-sexist way in pictures and diversity will be reflected in pictures used. We are committed to keeping our public relations and communications under regular review to ensure that they are aligned with this framework.

Our Training

We will include the provisions of this Framework in our training which is organised in a manner that is accessible to all.

Positive Action

We recognise that certain groups in society are underrepresented and are committed to the promotion of positive action. The Fine Gael Women's Network, the Fine Gael Intercultural Network and the Fine Gael LGBTI+ network.

Reasonable Accommodation and Accessibility

We will take appropriate measures to enable a person who has a disability to have access to and participate in the work of the party unless the measures

would impose a disproportionate burden. Appropriate measures are effective and practical measures including the adaptation of premises, information material and equipment, meetings times etc.

Managing Disagreements

We urge all members to resolve issues that give rise to disagreements locally, if possible. Should that prove unsuccessful, the options to resolve disagreements as per the Party's Constitution and Rules, are available to members.

Our Executive Council – Implementation and Monitoring of the Framework

The Executive Council are responsible for the implementation of this

Framework. Members have been assigned to monitor implementation and have received training covering this Framework.

The Executive Council will monitor the impact and operation of this Framework and ensure the learning generated through review and monitoring is utilised to improve the Framework, build good practice and enhance training.

Young Fine Gael

Young Fine Gael (YFG) is the autonomous youth section of the party with members aged from 15-35 years of age who aim to advance the political representation and objectives of the youth of Ireland through the vehicle of the Fine Gael Party. YFG has its own President and National Executive. The President, Vice President and the first candidate elected on the National Panel sit on the Executive Council of Fine Gael. YFG have a "Diversity Policy", and their chair and equality officers will communicate the provision of this framework through their branches, and sign it at their AGM as a demonstration of their commitment to implement measures accordingly.

This was approved by the Fine Gael Executive Council on the 22nd of February 2022 to be implemented from the 1st of May 2022 onwards.





Fine Gael Framework for Inclusion, Equality and Integrity

✓ Checklist

Responsibility	Action	Date
Our Branch and Constituency Organisations		
Constituency Chair and Equality Officer	The Constituency Declaration, adopted by members and signed for the constituency by the Chair and Equality Officer at the AGM is read out at a Branch meeting	
Constituency Chair and Equality Officer	The Constituency Declaration, adopted by members and signed for the constituency by the Chair and Equality Officer at the AGM	
Constituency Chair and Equality Officer	Members are aware of the commitment to ensure gender balance and diversity on our constituency boards.	
Young Fine Gael		
	The YFG Officer Board has communicated the provisions of this framework through their branches, and signed it at their AGM.	
Our Membership		
Party Headquarters	Members are directed to the full text of this framework, on the Party website when they join.	
Party Headquarters	Members are asked to tick a box which indicates their agreement to adhere to the provisions of this framework as part of the terms and conditions of membership of the party.	
Our Communications		
Party Headquarters	Our communications are designed to affirm our stance on diversity and attract the widest pool of membership, candidates and staff.	
Our Training		
Party Headquarters	We include the provisions of this framework in our training which is organised in a manner that is accessible to all.	
Party Headquarters	We support diversity networks in the party, including Fine Gael Intercultural Network, the Fine Gael Women's Network and the Fine Gael LGBTI+ Network.	

Party Headquarters	We take appropriate measures to enable a person who has a disability to have access to and participate in the work of the party.	
Party Headquarters	We in Fine Gael comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018.	
Party Headquarters	We urge all members to attempt to resolve issues that give rise to disagreements themselves, and if that proves unsuccessful, the options to get help to resolve disagreements as per the party's constitution and rules is an option that is available to members.	
Elections		
Constituency Chair and Equality Officer	Members who are running for office in internal elections understand they are expected to treat their fellow candidates with courtesy, adhere to the provisions of this framework and follow the standing orders of the party.	
Election Candidates	Members who are selected to run as candidates sign the Party Pledge, which contains a commitment related to this framework.	
Elected Representatives		
Elected Councillors	<p>Fine Gael councillors will familiarise themselves with the provisions contained in each of the following codes and policies and lodge copies with the Part and on their website.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Fine Gael inclusion, equality and integrity framework that guides how we behave and treat each other. 2. The "Local Government Act 2011 Ethical Framework for the Local Government Service Code of Conduct for Councillors". 3. Equality policies, employment equality, equal status, dignity at work and statutory duty provisions of their Local Authority. 	
Oireachtas Members	<p>Fine Gael Oireachtas Members will familiarise themselves with the provisions contained in each of the following codes and policies and lodge copies with the Party and on their website.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Fine Gael inclusion, equality and integrity framework that guides how we behave and treat each other. 2. The Oireachtas "Dignity and Respect Statement of Principles and Policy". This requires all Members and Political Parties, as employers, to sign a form to confirm receipt of "Dignity and Respect Statement of Principles and Policy" and to "confirm their agreement to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adopt the policy; • assign a Complaint Recipient to handle any complaint received. • implement any recommended actions or sanctions arising from any stage of the resolution procedures". 	



Parliamentary Party Chair	The Chair of the Parliamentary Party has secured adoption of the Fine Gael Inclusion, Equality and Integrity Framework, and informed members of their rights and responsibilities under the 2019 Oireachtas <i>"Dignity and Respect Statement of Principles and Policy"</i> .	
Members of the European Parliament	Our members of the European parliament have signed the declaration confirming their commitment to the <i>"Code of Appropriate Behaviour for Members of the European Parliament in Exercising Their Duties"</i> and published them members pages on the website of the European Parliament	
Leadership		
General Secretary	The Executive Council are responsible for the implementation of this framework. Members have been assigned to monitor implementation and have received training covering this framework.	
Chair of the Executive Council	The Executive Council monitors the impact and operation of this framework and ensures the learning generated through review and monitoring is utilised to improve the framework, build good practice and enhance training.	
Party Leader	The party leader has signed this framework.	

Appendix

Equality Legislation in Ireland

Equality Legislation

The Equality Acts 1998 and 2015 aim to, promote equality, prohibit discrimination (with some exemptions) across nine grounds, prohibit sexual harassment and harassment, prohibit victimisation, require appropriate measures for people with disabilities; and allow positive action measures to ensure full equality in practice across the nine grounds.

For more information on the Equality Acts 1998 – 2015 go to <https://www.ihrec.ie/>

Equal Status Acts 1998 – 2015

A club will be regarded as discriminating if it has rules which discriminate against a member or applicant or membership or if a person in the club's management discriminates against a member or applicant in relation to any aspect of club business.

Discrimination

This is defined as being less favourable treatment. A person is discriminated against if they are treated less favourably than another person is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation, on any of the nine protected grounds.

Indirect Discrimination

This happens where an individual of a group of people are placed at a disadvantage as a result of conditions or rules which they might find hard to satisfy and which cannot be reasonably justified.

Discrimination by Association

This happens when a person is treated less favourably simply because they are associated with or connected to another person.

Discrimination by Imputation

This happens where a person is treated less favourably because it is thought that they belong to one of the categories covered by the nine grounds, whether or not that is the case.

Protected Grounds

The "Protected Grounds" of the Equality Acts 1998-2015:

- Age; applies to all ages above 18 years of age and under 18 if you hold a drivers licence and are buying car insurance;
- Civil Status; single, married, separated, divorced, widowed, in a civil partnership or previously in a civil partnership;
- Disability; a person with physical, intellectual or learning disability. Mental health issues and medical conditions that are potentially chronic, debilitating or that get worse over time may also be a form of disability;
- Family Status; being pregnant, a parent or a person responsible for a person under 18 years or, the main carer or a parent of a person with a disability who is 18 years or over where their disability requires care on an ongoing basis;



- Gender; a woman, a man or a transgender person;
- Sexual Orientation; gay, lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual;
- Race ground; race, skin colour, nationality, national or ethnic origin;
- Religion; religious beliefs or having no religious beliefs;
- Traveller community; member of the Traveller community. People who are commonly called Travellers and who are identified both by Travellers and others, as people with a shared history, culture and traditions, including historically a nomadic way of life on the island of Ireland.

Reasonable Accommodation

This means providing specific treatment or facilities to make sure that people with a disability can participate, if it would not cost more than a 'nominal' cost, depending on size of the organisation and budget.

Positive Action

Means doing something to promote equality of opportunity for disadvantaged categories under the nine grounds and meet the special needs of people who may need extra help.

Advertising

It is illegal under the Acts to publish or display an advertisement that indicates that certain people or groups would be less favourably treated.

Victimisation

Victimisation, where a person is badly treated or penalised by others because they have made a complaint about discrimination under the Acts or have been involved in some way in a complaint under the Equality Acts.

Citations

Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government. (n.d.). Local Government Act 2011 Ethical Framework for the Local Government Service Code of Conduct for Councillors. Dublin: Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

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