

GOVERNMENT

Background

The Irish Government is a parliament democracy. The head of the government is known as the Taoiseach. The Tánaiste is the Deputy Prime Minister. There are 15 Government Departments. The Taoiseach and the Ministers collectively form the Government under the Irish constitution, and they hold executive power.

Parliament

The Parliament is called the Oireachtas. There are two Houses of Parliament: Dáil Éireann (House of Representatives) and Seanad Éireann (Senate). The Dáil has 166 members known as Teachtaí Dála (TD), who are elected using proportional representation with a single transferrable vote (PR-STV). Elections take place at least every five years.

Court System

The courts of Ireland consist of five major courts, The Supreme Court, The Court of Appeal, The High Court, Circuit Court, and District Court.



President of Ireland

The President of Ireland (Uachtarán na hÉireann) serves as head of state and is directly elected by the people. The current President, elected in 2011, is Michael

D Higgins. Presidents are elected for seven years, and can serve no more than two terms. The President has a largely ceremonial role.

Local Government

There are 114 local authorities in Ireland. They provide a wide range of services, including housing, transport, water supply, waste management, education, health and welfare.

