

2018

PEOPLE BEFORE PROFIT


VISION FOR A
SOCIALIST IRELAND

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AN ALTERNATIVE VISION

Ireland has enormous potential. North and South, the people who live here are generous, dynamic and full of creativity. Our generosity is evident in the fact that, every year, nearly €1 billion is gifted to protect the world's most vulnerable people. In addition, nearly 50% of the population volunteer in sports clubs, charities and old people's homes and in giving blood.

Ireland is also blessed with tremendous creativity. This island has produced some of the world's best known scientists and writers, with eight Nobel Laureates and countless others making their mark in their chosen fields. Thanks to its climate and location, Ireland is also packed full of natural resources, including the wind and wave energy needed to fight the threat of global warming.

If these resources were properly harnessed, Ireland could become an inspiration to millions of people currently living with the effects of climate change, warfare and deep inequality.

People Before Profit want to make this vision a reality. We want every person who lives here to feel welcome, secure and confident enough to pursue their own talents. Ireland should become an island of equals – and not just in the economic sense.

We want an Ireland that gives everyone an equal chance to reach and exceed their current potential. That version of Ireland would be richer in wealth, diversity and opportunity than anything that the current system can hope to offer.

People Before Profit is a 32-county organisation rooted in the values of international solidarity, economic equality and personal liberty.

Above everything, we put our faith in people's ability to move their own lives in a positive direction. Unlike other political parties, we favour direct forms of participatory democracy that bring masses of people into politics - not just the tiny minority elected to the Dáil or Stormont.

Over the last number of years, this power has burst onto the political stage with amazing movements emerging around water, LGBTQ and women's rights. The Right2Water campaign was truly inspirational. Standing against the injustice of water charges, hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets in a show of solidarity that shook the foundations of the political elites.

People Before Profit were involved in this movement from the very outset. We believed in the vision of a right to water and we helped to secure important victories that must now be repeated. The Yes Equality campaign was similarly inspirational. People Before Profit was very proud to play its part in the fight for an equal right to marriage. This validation of our LGBTQ community was amazing, but we still have much to do to establish a genuine society of equals. That's why our Northern branches recently spearheaded a campaign for equal marriage that collected 20,000 signatures which were presented to Stormont. The dinosaurs in the DUP believe in scapegoating the LGBTQ community, but we will not rest until all forms of bigotry are eradicated.

People Before Profit is a growing movement; we have over 2,000 members and 50 branches across the country.

People Before Profit members have also spearheaded an important campaign for universal healthcare. Our activists have worked tirelessly to build a Still Waiting campaign that aims to deliver health care for everyone living on the island, paid for through progressive taxation.

The fight for women’s rights is equally central to our project. Last year, the #MeToo campaign was the strongest signal yet that the lid on sexual violence and harassment is finally being lifted. North and South, People Before Profit makes women’s rights an absolute priority with all of our branches involved in the campaign to Repeal the 8th Amendment to the Constitution and to gain full reproductive rights on both sides of the border. After 100 years of repeated failure, it is time to deliver the Ireland of Equals promised in the Proclamation. But to make this a reality, we will need to clear out the oppressive and corrupt establishment that has dominated both parts of the island for nearly a century.



People Before Profit MLA Gerry Carroll delivering 20,000 signatures for marriage equality to Stormont.

A CORRUPTED REPUBLIC

The Republic of Ireland is a failed State. The level of corruption in the Southern State is revealed by the fact that the Gardaí are currently subject to no less than seven different official enquiries.

In addition, there are official enquires into the National Assets Management Agency, the Health Services Executive, Tusla (the Child and Family Agency) and a host of religious institutions.

The Mahon Tribunal found ‘corruption existed at every level of Irish planning’, and the Moriarty Tribunal found a culture of corrupt payments to politicians in the higher echelons of both Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael. This is simply not acceptable.

The Republic is also characterised by deep inequality. The top 1% currently holds more wealth than the bottom 50% of the population, with the richest 300 individuals amassing €77 billion in post-crash Ireland. This level of economic disparity is not compatible with a modern, progressive, secular society. People Before Profit roots these outcomes in two major structural problems: decades of social/religious control and a tax-haven economy.

To tackle these problems, we would separate the Church and State and build an economy that works for everyone.

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Corruption affected every level of Irish political life; those with the power to stop it were frequently implicated in it.

- Tribunal of Inquiry into Certain Planning Matters and Payments
(Mahon Tribunal)

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SEPARATE CHURCH & STATE

The Catholic Church has controlled Irish people for far too long. From the 1930s until the 1970s, thousands of women were locked up in Magdalene laundries and so-called 'Mother and Baby Homes'. Decades of deference to the bishops also allowed the widespread abuse detailed in the Ryan Report (2009). Priests and nuns routinely beat and sexually abused children, whilst the Catholic hierarchy systematically covered this up in a bid to maintain their power and control. We will no longer accept this regime. Instead, we make the following demands:

REPEAL THE 8TH AMENDMENT & LEGISLATE FOR FULL CHOICE

The Catholic bishops have consistently opposed women's liberation. Historically, they fought against contraception, divorce and any liberalisation of Ireland's archaic abortion laws. The United Nations has rightly condemned Ireland for its current stance on abortion. People Before Profit demands the Repeal of the 8th Amendment to the Constitution, which denies women the right to reproductive choice, and we will fight hard for free, safe and legal abortion access without restrictions.



People Before Profit is a pro-choice party. In 2017, we brought a Bill to the Dáil to decriminalise women taking the abortion pill. Instead of a 14-year jail term, we wanted full decriminalisation, but this was deemed unconstitutional – so we proposed the penalty be reduced to a €1 fine.

This would have undermined the draconian Protection of Life During Pregnancy Act, but it was voted down.

CREATE SECULAR & INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS

We need secular schools that are inclusive of all beliefs and none. Currently, over 90% of the national schools in the Republic are either run by the Catholic Church or maintain a religious ethos even though they are largely taxpayer funded. This has allowed the Church to put up a baptism barrier that stops some children from accessing education. Equality of access means divesting the Church of its control over schools without delay.

ESTABLISH SECULAR HEALTHCARE FOR ALL

The recent controversy over the National Maternity Hospital shows just how far the State will go to uphold its links with the Catholic hierarchy. Catholic controlled hospitals routinely forbid the provision of modern contraceptive services, IVF, sterilisation operations and gender reassignment operations. They will also try to stop women accessing abortions, even if this becomes possible under the law. These archaic arrangements are no longer acceptable. Medical care should be based on the best scientific evidence and the individual needs of the given patient.

END THE RULE OF THE 1%

The Southern economy is a tax haven. At 12.5%, the corporation tax rate is the lowest in the OECD, but even this overstates how much corporations actually pay. Most years, they reduce their bill to around 4% thanks to an array of special deals and exemptions.

The starkest example of this came in 2016, when the European Commission charged Ireland with helping Apple Inc. to minimise their global taxes. Apple are supposed to pay back €13 billion plus interest, but, incredibly, the government is spending taxpayers' money to ensure they will NOT receive the back tax.

The Irish State has also set up a special forum, known as the Clearing House Group, in the Department of the Taoiseach. This forum brings together corporations, tax accountancy firms and Government officials in a bid to manage and market tax-haven Ireland.

The Irish Financial Services Centre (IFSC) is the jewel in the crown of the tax haven strategy. From humble beginnings, the IFSC currently houses around €3.6 trillion in total assets. This is more than 12 times the size of the real economy, making Ireland an extreme outlier in terms of its facilitation of financial activity. By servicing international finance, the Irish rich have secured their own wealth and privilege, but the costs for the rest of us have been extreme.

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Ireland, Luxembourg and the Netherlands are some of the most powerful tax havens in the world, enabling some of the biggest corporations in the world to pay minimal tax.

*- Oxfam report **Blacklist or Whitewash? What a Real EU Blacklist of Tax Havens Should Look Like**, November 2017*

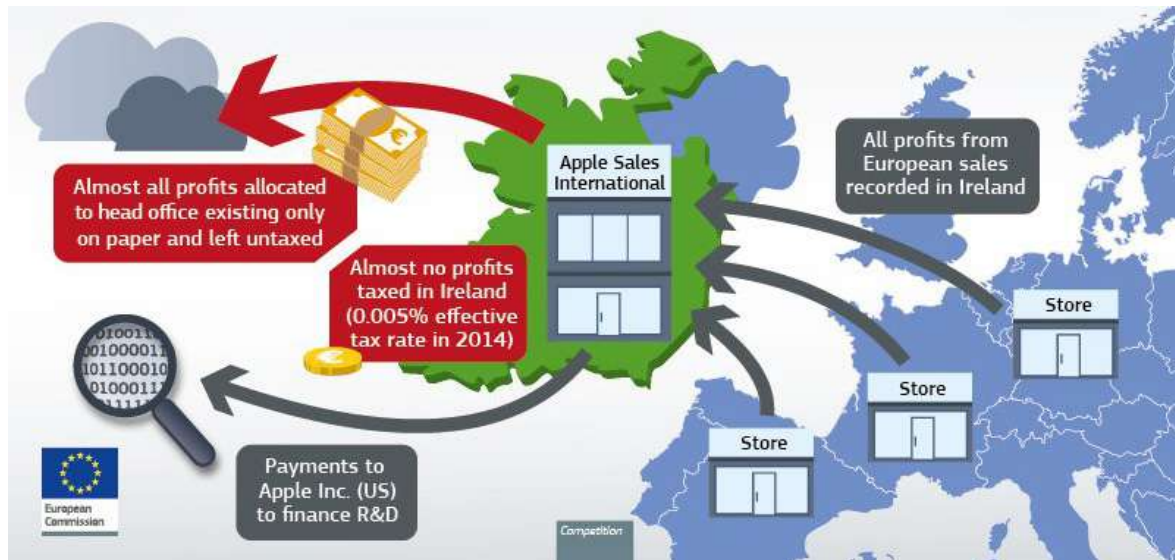
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All tax havens deny being tax havens, but Ireland seems to have taken it to extremes of huffing and puffing: A veritable industry of tax haven deniers has grown up there. I guess it is the sheer scale of the dishonesty that riles me.

- Nicholas Shaxson, author of *Treasure Islands: Tax Havens and the Men Who Stole the World*

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The European Commission found Ireland guilty of breaking state aid rules and giving preferential treatment to Apple Inc. This graphic shows how it occurred.

Source: European Commission

DEEP INEQUALITY

The levels of inequality in tax-haven Ireland are staggering. These figures from the Central Statistics Office show that the wealth disparity here is astronomical ([‘Household Finance and Consumption Survey’](#), 2013).

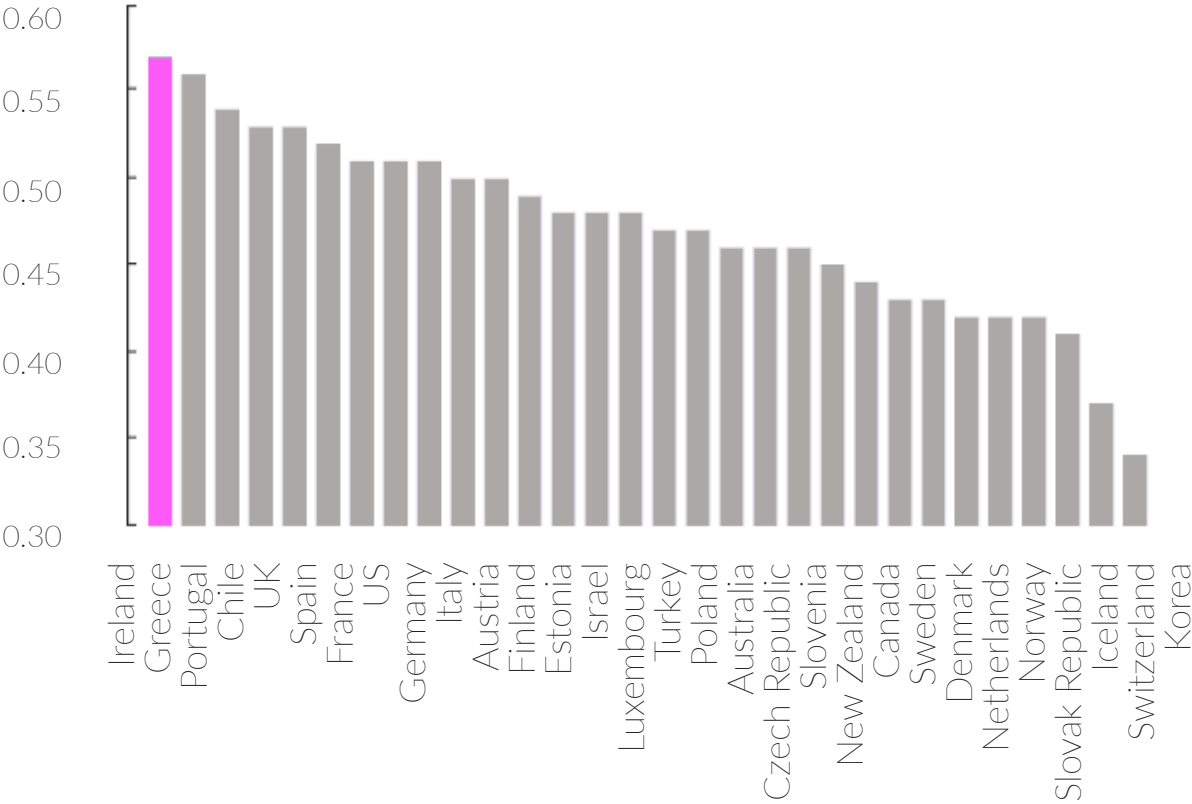
PROPORTION OF POPULATION	PROPORTION OF TOTAL WEALTH HELD
1%	15%
5%	37%
10%	54%
20%	73%
Top 50%	95%
Bottom 50%	5%

These figures reveal that the richest 1% have 150 times the wealth of those in the bottom 50%. Tax-haven Ireland has clearly supported the needs of the few on the backs of the many.

MEASURING INEQUALITY

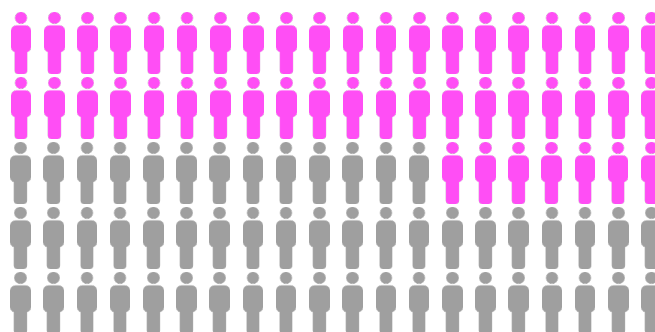
The Gini Coefficient uses income or wealth distribution to measure inequality within a country. A Gini Coefficient of zero expresses perfect equality. The further from zero a country is, the greater the level of inequality in that country. Ireland is currently last in a list of 30 countries in terms of the direct effects of market inequality. (Source: Irish Times)

GINI COEFFICIENT BEFORE TAXES & TRANSFERS



DEPRIVATION

The Republic of Ireland is currently the 14th richest country in the world on a per capita basis, but 750,000 people are living in poverty. The figures for deprivation are even higher, with 1.3 million people experiencing two or more forms of daily deprivation. These numbers have almost doubled since the onset of the crisis, with 615,000 new cases of deprivation since 2008. Child deprivation is double the 2007 rate, with nearly 60% of the children of lone parents deprived. Tax-haven Ireland has clearly supported the needs of the few on the backs of the many.



Since the 2008 crash, inequality in Ireland has almost doubled (Social Justice Ireland, 'Number of people in deprivation up more than 200,000 since Government took office' 2015).

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Without the social welfare system 46.3% of the Irish population would have been living in poverty in 2015. Such an underlying poverty rate suggests a deeply unequal distribution of direct income.

- Social Justice Ireland, 'Budget 2018: Analysis & Critique', 2017

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TAX INJUSTICE — POOR SERVICES

Tax-haven Ireland also means high taxes on workers and low taxes on the rich. It also provides a very poor level of services to the general population. We pay more in income tax than the UK, for example, but we don't have a national health service or the same levels of local government support. On the other hand, the corporate sector gets very good services and pays very little. Since the economic crash, vulture funds have used specially designed 'loopholes' known as Section 110s to write off virtually all of their taxes. They have the full use of the Irish courts and the national police to uphold their property rights, but they pay virtually no taxes here.



People Before Profit TD Gino Kenny proudly supporting striking Luas workers in 2017.
The workers went on to win an important increase in pay.

HOUSING: A HUMAN RIGHT

Perhaps the most obvious crisis is around public housing. Tax-haven Ireland has denied nearly 10,000 people the right to a decent home, 3,000 of whom are children. There are also almost 100,000 people on social housing lists and many more being forced to pay over the odds in the private rental market. To make sure everyone has a right to a home, People Before Profit is part of the National Homeless and Housing Coalition that is bringing the fight to the government.

To shift the balance away from profit, we also brought the following Bill to the Dáil in 2017:

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The State, in particular, recognises the common good as including the right to secure, affordable, dignified housing, appropriate to need, for all the residents of Ireland and shall guarantee this right through its laws, policies and the prioritisation of resources. [...]

The State, accordingly, shall delimit the right to private property where it is necessary to ensure the common good and to vindicate the said right to housing for all residents of Ireland.

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As with all of our progressive Bills, this was voted down by the conservative parties.

ENDING TAX-HAVEN IRELAND

To end the scourge of tax-haven Ireland, People Before Profit are committed to:

TAX JUSTICE

In our latest budget in the South, People Before Profit have fully costed how an extra €16 billion in taxes can be taken from the top 10% of the population. This would still be a balanced budget, with more taxes on those who can afford it and more resources for those who really need them. The key measures include closing the current corporate tax loop holes, a millionaire's tax of 2% on assets above €1 million and the introduction of graduated tax increases on those earning more than €100,000.

A NEW VISION FOR DEVELOPMENT

Fine Gael, Fianna Fáil, Labour and Sinn Féin all agree that the role of the State should be restricted to creating the conditions for private profit making. We disagree. The State needs to take responsibility for creating employment and economic activity. There is roughly €9 billion in NAMA and the Irish Strategic Investment Fund. Using this capital for social investment, the State could begin to alleviate the crises in housing, healthcare, water infrastructure, childcare provision and education.

BREAKING WITH THE LOGIC OF AUSTERITY & THE EU RULES

The current EU rules lock in austerity for workers and the poor. These rules hinder investment in proper public services. The bigger countries in Europe often ignore these rules. We cannot be constrained by them either if we want to begin any form of democratic transformation.

NORTHERN IRELAND IS A FAILED STATE

The Northern State has utterly failed. Historically, this State was built to support the interests of a Unionist propertied elite by fostering sectarian division. The Good Friday Agreement allowed for the entry of a section of the Nationalist establishment into the State, but this ultimately copper fastened sectarianism. These structures support the rich on both sides of the traditional communal divide. Since 2010, there has been a 40% increase in millionaires, with 14,000 in a population of 1.8 million people. On the other hand, the North remains one of the poorest regions in the whole of Europe. Currently, 39% of the North's population is living in consistent poverty – much higher than the rest of the UK. The economy clearly continues to serve a propertied elite.

Meanwhile there has been no let-up in sectarianism. The main parties at Stormont are committed to the same neoliberal economic policies of cutting taxes for the rich and attacking the vulnerable. These policies are deeply unpopular, but they get pushed through with the help of sectarianism. Whenever the DUP or Sinn Féin make cuts to social services, they immediately point the finger at the other community. Economic resources always get framed in terms of a sectarian carve up, meaning that people on both sides of the community get divided and, ultimately, conquered. In addition, communal forces whip up sectarianism around issues such as flags, protests and commemorations.

People Before Profit rejects all of this completely. From our perspective, cross-community working class unity is the only solution to decades of capitalist power and sectarianism.

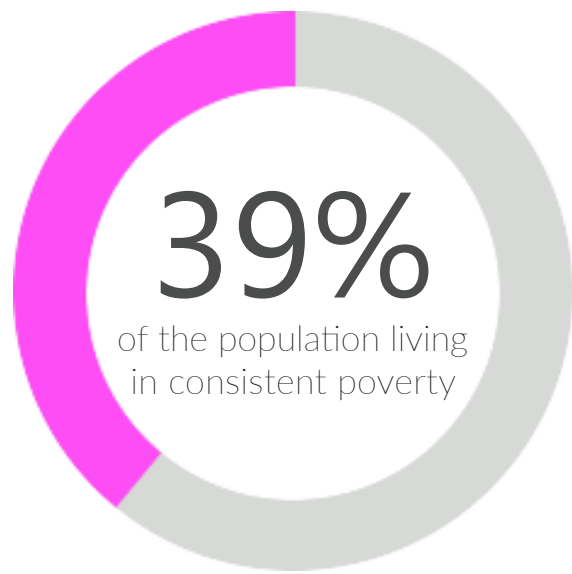
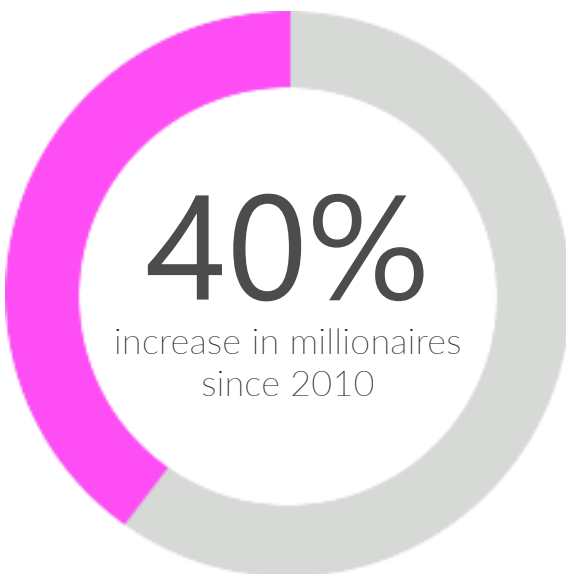
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Persistent poverty in Northern Ireland (21 per cent before housing costs) is double that in Great Britain (9 per cent). More families there experience poverty at some point than in Britain.

- Goretti Horgan, University of Ulster, and Marina Monteith, Save the Children (Northern Ireland) for Joseph Rowntree Foundation

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INEQUALITY IN TWO STATISTICS



END THE SECTARIANISM OF THE NORTHERN STATE

As long as workers in the North are divided along communal and religious lines, they will never secure real equality or social justice. Our solution involves the following:

PRESS FOR A UNITED SOCIALIST IRELAND

The Tories and the DUP want to use Brexit as an excuse for further attacks on wages and conditions. Their dream is for a bargain basement economy that attracts foreign investors due to low costs and low regulations. We reject this completely. We believe in a socialist Ireland that prioritises work-

ers' rights and social services. We want to go beyond the two failed States on this island and the economic model that underpins them. In the immediate term, we are also opposed to the re-appearance of any hard border with customs and security checks.

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The key division is not between Catholics and Protestants but between the haves and have-nots. There is no solution to problems of poverty in one community which would not also be a solution to problems of poverty in the other community. We will rise up together or not at all.

- Eamonn McCann, civil rights activist and member of People Before Profit in Derry

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Here is how we want to tackle Brexit:

USE PEOPLE POWER TO HALT ANY HARD BORDER

1. We will agitate on the streets and in both Stormont and the Dáil to make sure the Irish State actively opposes a hard border. In practice, this means declaring now that no Irish Gardaí or customs officials will co-operate in any way with such a border.
2. We call on the Dáil to declare now that they will veto any settlement with Britain that involves a hard border and back this up with a referendum to win popular support.
3. We will commit to building a mass mobilisation of people power in border communities and beyond to dismantle as many customs posts as possible.

People Before Profit oppose the border. Like James Connolly, we see it as **'a carnival of reaction both North and South, set[ting] back the wheels of progress [and] destroy[ing] the ... unity of the Irish labour movement ... whilst it endures'**.

- from *James Connolly Labour and the Proposed Partition of Ireland*

IMPLEMENT PAY INCREASES TO TACKLE BREXIT-RELATED INFLATION

'Brexit' has reduced the value of sterling and has been blamed for a rise in inflation. Workers are entitled to defend their living standards. People Before Profit will back trade unions who put in pay claims to maintain real wages.

MAINTAIN GRANTS & COMMUNITY FUNDING

The British government has pledged to maintain grants and community funding coming from the EU until 2020/21. But it will take major pressure from below to hold them to their pledge. People Before Profit will play a full part in generating this pressure.

RESIST RACISM

The Tories are trying to re-connect with a conservative popular base by increasing their anti-migrant rhetoric. We should stand firm against this racist poison. We should insist that the Southern Irish government makes no move to tighten immigration controls to appease British Tories. We should insist that migrant workers in Northern Ireland maintain their full rights to work and travel.

DEFEND THE DEMOCRATIC RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTH & SCOTLAND TO A REFERENDUM

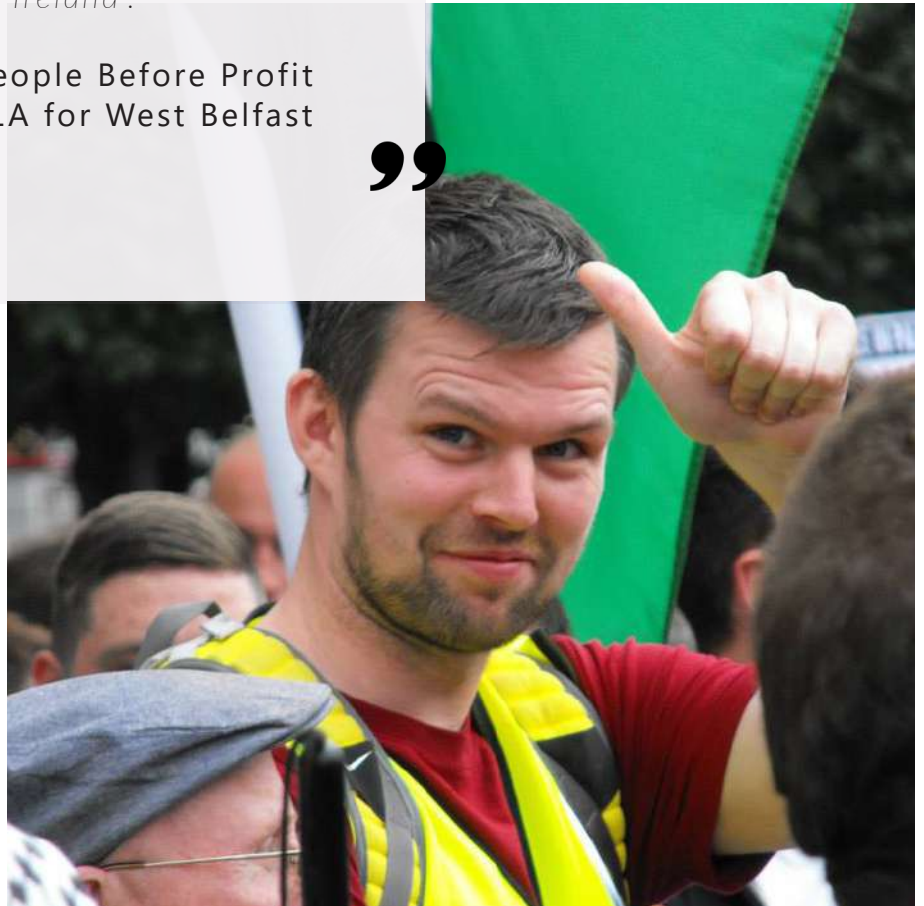
A majority of people in the North and Scotland voted to remain in the EU. The British Government must be told that the Assembly and Scottish parliament have a right to direct representation in negotiations and that the people of the North and of Scotland must have a veto on the outcomes.

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Brexit has descended to a tug of war between two imperialist blocks - Tory Britain on one hand, and the bureaucratic PESCO pushers of Brussels on the other. It should be clear by now that neither the Tories nor the EU have any interest in protecting people in Ireland. The only consistent position for progressives is the People Before Profit position: 'We serve neither London nor Brussels but a Socialist Ireland'.

- Gerry Carroll, People Before Profit
MLA for West Belfast

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END THE ECONOMIC PRIVILEGES OF THE 1%

The top 1% is made up of 14,000 millionaires controlling vast amounts of the Northern economy. On the other hand, hundreds of thousands of people can barely make ends meet. This economic injustice blights lives and creates untold social and personal suffering. To end this, People Before Profit would:

OPPOSE THE CUT TO CORPORATION TAXES

It is obscene in a time of general austerity to give more handouts to corporations. We should stop the run down in public services and job cuts proposed in the Fresh Start Agreement and tax the rich to create resources for State-led investment programmes.

OPPOSE PRIVATISATION & CORPORATE WELFARE

The Northern executive is addicted to privatisation. Currently, nearly half a billion from the northern Block Grant goes to line the pockets of the corporate sector. People Before Profit oppose this corporate welfare. We propose using all this money to invest in publicly-run not-for-profit services.

RAISE REVENUE THROUGH A PROGRESSIVE LOCAL INCOME TAX SYSTEM

Currently, the top 25% of earners in the North pay between £5,000 and £7,000 less in tax than their counterparts in the rest of the UK. We would equalise these payments to increase equality and to raise much needed finance.

INTEGRATION, RIGHTS & SERVICES

To guarantee integration, rights and services, we would:

END SELECTIVE & SEGREGATED EDUCATION

The gap between the educational attainment of children living in poverty and those from better-off families is one of the most blatant inequalities in the North. People Before Profit wants to end the class gap in educational attainment and break down the barriers that stop children from different religious backgrounds learning together. We oppose the sham 'shared education' programme which simply reinforces segregation. Children thrive in integrated, all-ability education, so this is what we would pursue.

HOLD A FULL INQUIRY INTO STATE-SPONSORED TERROR NETWORKS

There is major evidence that the Northern State played a key role in both fomenting the conflict and in sustaining the activities of paramilitaries on both sides. A full public inquiry is not only important for the historical record, it has important ramifications today. In 2016, funding from the Social Investment Fund went to organisations with links to paramilitaries. This demonstrates that the Northern State, with the complicity of the Executive, not only acquiesces in the face of paramilitarism, but also works to normalise paramilitaries today. People Before Profit utterly reject this policy and will work to end it.

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Young people in the North are fed up of sectarianism, scandals and squabbles. They are ready for a different kind of politics that actually represents them. And the last year of protest for abortion rights, language rights and against cuts proves they are willing to fight for it. It is so important that we stand with them in this fight so that they can have the future they deserve - free of child poverty and austerity, free of precarious jobs and overpriced education, and with every opportunity for a happy, comfortable life.

- Fiona Ferguson, member of
People Before Profit in Belfast

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ESTABLISH A NEW DEAL FOR THE YOUTH

People Before Profit believe that young people are engaged and want to make Ireland a better society. To help achieve this, we would outlaw all discrimination against younger people in terms of State payments, reduce the voting age to 16 across the island and put investment into training and social facilities for younger people.



People Before Profit contingent on the Rally for Choice, Belfast, 2017

A SOCIALIST TRANSFORMATION

We have said enough about the many problems we currently face. Below are some of the key changes that People Before Profit are dedicated to delivering.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

ENACT A RADICAL REDISTRIBUTION OF ECONOMIC RESOURCES

There are currently more than 80,000 millionaires on this island, living alongside more than 1 million people in consistent poverty. This is not acceptable. To allow everyone to live with dignity, we need a radical redistribution of resources. This can begin through a wealth tax on the top 5% and a new rate of income tax for those earning more than £80,000 or €90,000.

MAKE CORPORATIONS PAY THE LEVEL OF TAX WORKERS DO

Why should a cleaner who gets up at 5am pay a higher rate of tax on their wages than a big corporation pays on its profits? We reject the idea of reducing corporation taxes in the North; instead, we want to increase them in the South. It is not acceptable that the corporate classes get to use our services but refuse to pay for them. The elites get most from society. They have the most, and they should be asked to pay at least as much as workers do.

IMPLEMENT A LIVING WAGE

In Britain, Jeremy Corbyn has argued for a £10 living wage. In the Republic of Ireland, this would be roughly €12. Neither of these figures are enough to live comfortably, but they would be a marked improvement on current pay rates. To make sure work really pays, People Before Profit would establish a living wage, as opposed to a minimum wage, and we would index it to the cost of living.

Workers need a pay rise

25% of workers in the South (345,000 workers) earn less than the Living Wage of €11.50 per hour. 30% of workers (400,000) earn below the low pay threshold of €12.20 per hour set by the EU agency Eurostat. This means one in four workers is affected by low pay (ICTU, 'A Living Wage', 2016).

In the North, almost one quarter (23%) of workers were paid below the Living Wage in 2012 (NICVA, 'An Economic Analysis of the Living Wage in Northern Ireland, 2014).

We would also ban zero-hour contracts and tackle the casualisation of employment.

FULL SOCIAL RIGHTS FOR ALL

For too long, Ireland has denied rights to women and minorities. A Socialist Ireland can only be achieved when all bigotry and oppression is overcome. We want:

FULL EQUALITY FOR WOMEN

People Before Profit believe that women must have control of their own bodies in all circumstances. We do not think women need to be victims to access an abortion. We are for a woman's right to choose free, safe and legal abortion services. This marks us out from the establishment parties and Sinn Féin, who want to restrict a woman's right to choose.

FULL EQUALITY FOR THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY

Marriage equality was an important step towards full equality for the LGBTQ community in the South. However, People Before Profit is a 32-county party dedicated to securing marriage equality in the North as well. This means

tackling the dinosaurs in the DUP, but we need to go further. LGBTQ people are still more likely to suffer abuse and/or mental health problems than the rest of the population. This is completely unacceptable. To combat homophobia, People Before Profit would pump extra resources into education programmes and mental health services working with LGBTQ people. We would also make sure that transgender people get immediate access to the healthcare they require.

People Before Profit stand for hope, not hate. Like Jeremy Corbyn and Bernie Sanders, we reject racism and look to people power to build a more caring and equal society.



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We campaigned very hard to stop the 8th Amendment coming into the Constitution, but we lost. And all these years later, we're getting an opportunity to vote on it. People power won on Yes Equality, and, with enough people mobilised, we can do it again.

- People Before Profit TD Bríd Smith

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FULL EQUALITY FOR MIGRANTS, MINORITIES & THOSE IN DIRECT PROVISION

We believe in one race – the human race. To make sure full equality becomes a reality on this island, we would give full social and economic rights to all those who live here. We would also end the scourge of Direct Provision – a system that punishes people for the crime of being from a foreign country.



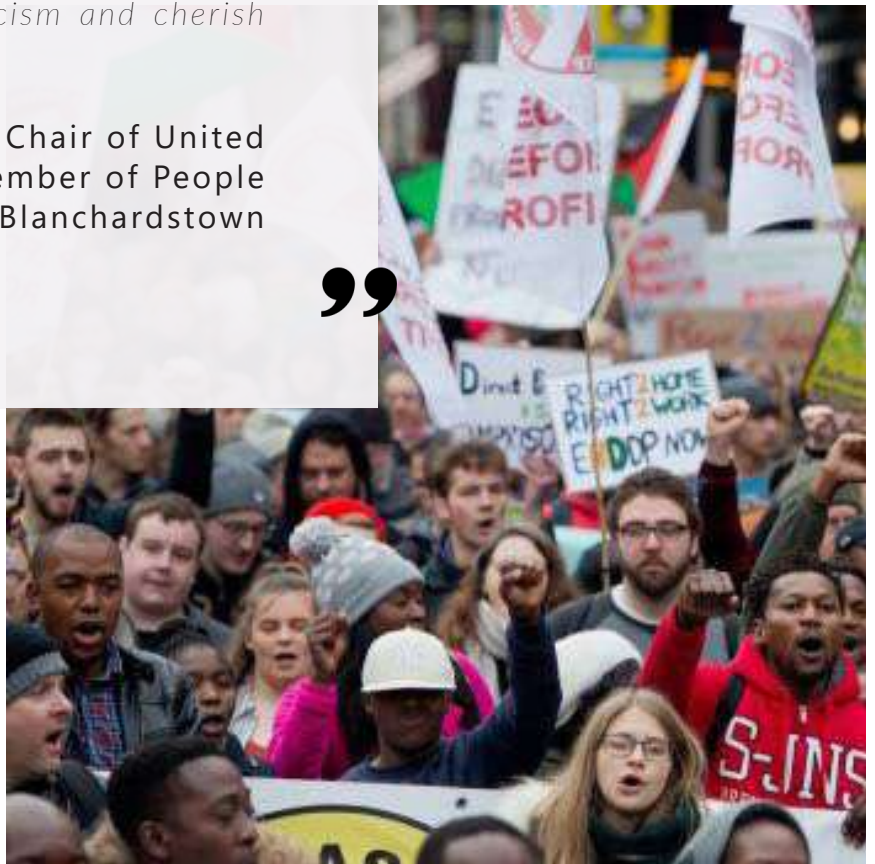
United Against Racism picnic, 2017

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Those who say ‘we need to look after our own first’ in order to divide our society along lines of ethnicity, religion or immigration status need to understand: Our society is not divided along these lines but between the ‘haves’ and ‘have nots’, the super rich and the poor; that is the class division. We reject all forms of racism and cherish solidarity.

- Memet Uludag, Chair of United Against Racism and member of People Before Profit in Blanchardstown

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A NEW DEAL ON SOCIAL SERVICES

A New Ireland must enshrine the right to a decent life for all.

We want to see:

HOUSING AS A HUMAN RIGHT

Over the last thirty years, governments on both sides of the border have seen housing as a commodity rather than a social right. This has created mass insecurity, with hundreds of thousands of people unable to access a proper home. People Before Profit would enshrine housing as a human right in the Constitution of a New Ireland and put the resources into making sure this right is vindicated. This would mean a massive house-building programme carried out by a nationalised construction company.

FREE EDUCATION FOR ALL

People Before Profit believe in the transformative potential of education. We do not see education as a servant to the capitalist economy; we see it as the path to personal development and a confident population. To make sure education is truly open to all, People Before Profit would abolish all fees for third level education and provide the necessary resources to ensure that every person can access lifelong learning.

A NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE

People Before Profit believe in a one-tiered healthcare system paid for through progressive taxation and based on people's medical needs rather than their ability to pay. We oppose the idea of richer people jumping the queue. We all need decent health care to allow us to live without fear and long-term pain.

PEOPLE BEFORE PROFIT CANNABIS BILL

People Before Profit do politics differently. We understand the need for radical changes in policy to meet people's needs. The Cannabis for Medicinal Use Regulation Bill 2016, tabled by People Before Profit TD Gino Kenny, is currently in the third stage.

Gino says 'The government's "Compassionate Access Programme" cannot in any way address the medical needs of the huge number of people that could benefit from access to medicinal cannabis. The only way to guarantee broad-based access is via primary legislation in the form of the Cannabis for Medicinal Use Regulation Bill 2016'.

A GREEN NEW DEAL

A socialist Ireland needs a sustainable and environmentally-friendly economic model. We want to:

PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

Capitalism is not compatible with a stewardship model for the environment. The incessant need for greedy corporations to increase their profits is choking rivers and destroying the eco-system.

People Before Profit is a green left party. We would put massive resources into renewable energy and house insulation in order to make this island carbon neutral by 2035.

This has to happen soon as climate change is causing chaos.

BAN FRACKING FOREVER

People Before Profit will not put the needs of a corporate elite ahead of farmers, fishermen and the general public. Fracking is dangerous and should never be allowed on this island.

Our Alternative Budget calls for the halving of public transport fares. To fight climate change, Ireland must target zero-net emissions by 2035. Instead of cutting and privatising public transport, we need to invest in convenient, accessible and quality public transport services.

INVEST IN AFFORDABLE, HIGH-QUALITY PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Ireland is one of the most car dependent societies in the world. We drive to work; we drive children to school; rural Ireland is almost totally dependent on the car. Over-reliance on cars damages the environment and human health. Each year, for example, 800 people die from poor air quality – often caused by car emissions. We would invest in public transport to make it more frequent and cheaper. We would also build cycle ways to encourage people to travel in more environmentally-friendly ways.

PEOPLE BEFORE PROFIT CLIMATE BILL

The best science insists that 350 parts per million of carbon in the atmosphere is the highest level permissible for human civilisation. The Mauna Loa Observatory in Hawaii now suggests the earth is beyond this point.

To treat climate change with the seriousness it deserves People Before Profit would amend the Petroleum and Other Minerals Development Act 1960 to '[p]rohibit the issuing of licences for the exploration and extraction of petroleum, natural gas and coal. In response to the climate emergency, the Minister shall not issue, renew, or extend any license for the exploration, extraction or production of petroleum, natural gas or coal onshore or offshore'.

A SECULAR 32-COUNTY SOCIALIST IRELAND

END PARTITION

Partition has created a carnival of reaction. It has divided working people in the North and allowed both governments to push a race to the bottom in terms of wages and corporation taxes. We believe in a totally new Ireland – one that serves the interests of the majority and puts people before profit. This means uprooting the two current States and building a new society on the basis of socialist principles.

GENUINE INTEGRATION OF NORTHERN COMMUNITIES

In the North, the Good Friday Agreement has led to the institutionalisation of sectarianism. Instead of a lasting peace with real integration, it has meant that every hospital cut, every investment in housing brings with it the same question: Who will benefit or lose most, Catholic or Protestant? We oppose this sectarian carve up in favour of real integration based on promoting the common class interests of workers.

SEPARATE CHURCH & STATE

In the South, the Catholic Church has had a virtual monopoly on the schools and hospitals. This has led to wholesale negative effects such as the 8th Amendment to the Constitution and the Baptism Barrier. People Before Profit believe in services that are guaranteed to citizens as a right. We want a secular State that guarantees services to people through progressive taxation. This is the only firm basis upon which to integrate Protestants, Catholics and non-believers, north and south.

A RACE FOR THE FUTURE

After three decades of neoliberalism and a decade of austerity, the political centre is weakening.

Since the 1980s, the political establishment has attacked living standards, welfare systems and environmental standards in the interests of profit. Over the last ten years, these attacks have only intensified, with tens of millions pushed into poverty and vulnerability.

Across the world, more and more people are looking for radical alternatives. The extreme centre, represented by Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and the DUP has nothing to offer working people except more of the same.

This explains why, right across the world, there is a polarisation taking place, with a new left being constituted at the same time as darker forces to the right. There are real challenges in the fight against oppression and exploitation, and it is no exaggeration to suggest that we are now in a race for the future.

Our vision for Irish society would make life better for the clear majority. We passionately believe in the ability of working people to fight for social justice and economic equality, and we root People Before Profit in the international struggle against racism, inequality, climate change and foreign military interventionism.

Our demands, rooted in the needs of the vast majority, would lead to environmental protection, international peace, economic justice and genuine rights for all. Against us are those who want to blame migrants, whip up racism and put the interests of global corporations above all other considerations. Increasingly, the political choices are becoming defined around those who defend the needs of profit versus those who defend the needs of people. We know where we stand; will you stand with us?



GET INVOLVED

JOIN PEOPLE BEFORE PROFIT TODAY, AND HELP US BUILD A GENUINE SOCIALIST SOCIETY FIT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY.

TEXT 'JOIN' TO 087 283 9964