

Leadership Across Ireland



Sinn Féin

Assembly Election **Manifesto 2011**

Gerry Adams

Four years ago Sinn Féin offered you a choice. We asked you to vote for real change, to vote for positive leadership and to vote for the party that delivers, to vote for Sinn Féin.

Sinn Féin promised to promote equality, to deliver stable and inclusive power-sharing government in the north and to advance towards Irish unity and national reconciliation.

To continue to be bold and decisive, to stand up for ourselves by standing up to the governments and to those opposed to change.

We said we would deliver for all citizens in a continuous process of change.

Sinn Féin delivered.

We asked for your vote as an endorsement of our peace strategy.

We asked for your vote to build a dynamic for change throughout Ireland.

We asked for your vote to help us shape the future in the way that you want, in the way that benefits all and in a way that builds the Ireland of Equals to which we aspire.

In May 2010 we presented you with the same choice.

With your vote, in that election, we faced down a combined Unionist and Orange Order attempt to reverse the political and democratic process in Fermanagh South Tyrone. Five Sinn Féin MPs were elected in the North of Ireland.

In February this year, on the same platform of republican values of citizenship and equality, we presented the electorate in the 26 Counties with an opportunity for them to make a stand.

Fourteen Sinn Féin TDs were elected to Leinster House, the largest number since partition 90 years ago.

Sinn Féin is an all-Ireland party. We are the only all-Ireland party. We are now in a position to effect significant change north and south and we are committed to doing so.

We have much work to do. Our country faces enormous challenges.

But we can guarantee that there will be no going back and that there will only be movement forward.

Sinn Féin have a strategy to bring about the end of partition and to build a new Ireland – one which you can help shape.

Vote for change across Ireland, vote for leadership across Ireland, vote for Sinn Féin.



Martin McGuinness

Much has changed in the last four years. We have now completed the first ever, full term of inclusive, power sharing, institutions in the history of this state. The locally elected Executive, Assembly and All Ireland bodies are working for the benefit of the people across this island.

Our goal of Irish Unity is closer now than ever. Republicans and Sinn Féin have made this possible.

For the first 50 years of this state we had single party rule. We had 30 years of direct rule. These were fundamentally undemocratic and ultimately failed all in our society.

Our democratic, inclusive, institutions represent a new politics. It represents the interdependent strands of the Executive, Assembly and All Ireland bodies working together.

Over the past four years we have sought to operate them on the basis of partnership, equality, and inclusion.

Together we have demonstrated that we can make agreements and that we can work together and deliver for all sections of our society. We have demonstrated that politics can and does work for all in our society.

Reaching agreements does not undermine our core beliefs but does strengthen our relationships.

As a society we cannot allow those within and those outside the political process attempt to drag us back. They cannot and will not be allowed to succeed. Those days are gone and will not return.

While we all retain our differences, we can all be proud of the role we have played in promoting the peace process, by stabilising these institutions and demonstrating the primacy of politics. I am

proud to be a leader of an Executive that prioritises growing the economy and promoting equality across our community.

In our May 2007 manifesto, we promised to block household water charges. That's exactly what Regional Development Minister, Conor Murphy, did.

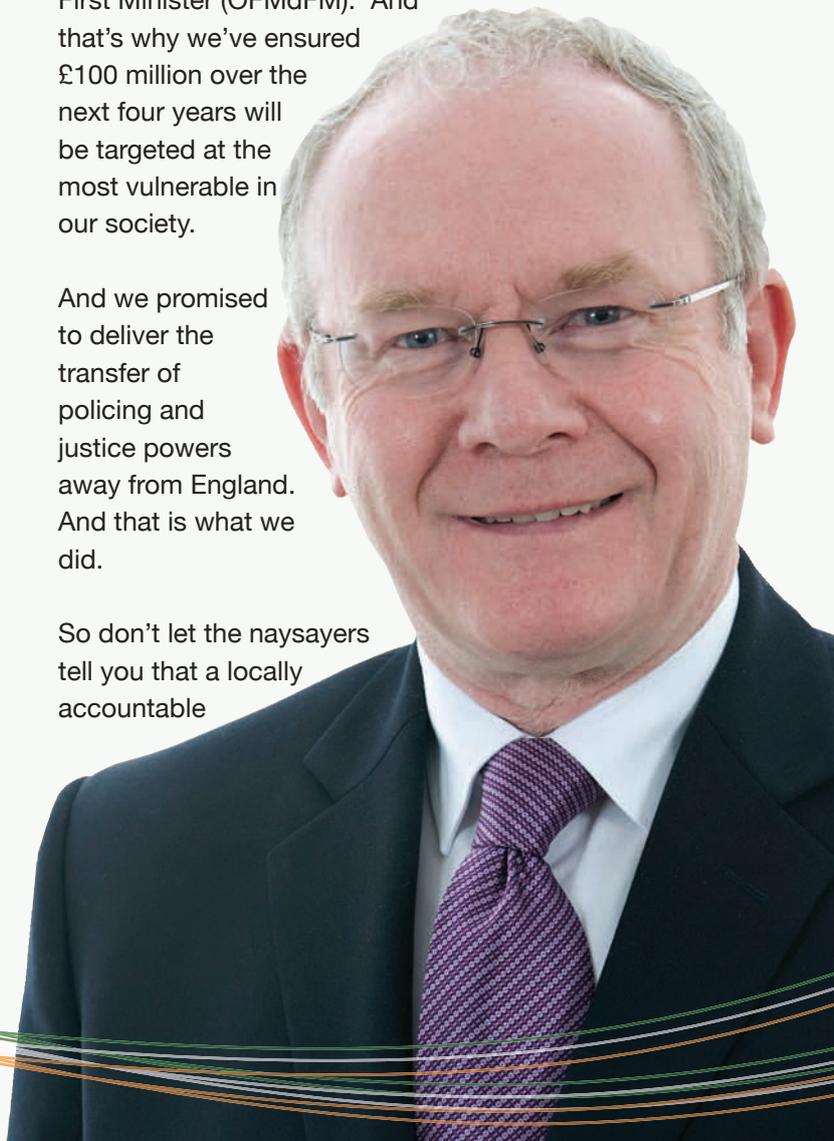
Sinn Féin promised to end academic selection and replace it with a new post-primary transfer system grounded in equality. That's exactly what Education Minister, Caitriona Ruane, did.

Sinn Féin promised to start redressing decades of under-investment and inequalities faced by rural dwellers. That's exactly what Agriculture Minister, Michelle Gildernew, did.

Sinn Féin promised to prioritise equality to tackle the structural inequalities faced by many groups across this society. That's exactly what Gerry Kelly and I have done in the Office of First and deputy First Minister (OFMdfM). And that's why we've ensured £100 million over the next four years will be targeted at the most vulnerable in our society.

And we promised to deliver the transfer of policing and justice powers away from England. And that is what we did.

So don't let the naysayers tell you that a locally accountable



Executive and Assembly hasn't made a difference.
It has. And it will continue to.

In the coming Assembly term we need to build on this work. We need to have greater control over our economy and seek additional powers to deliver increased economic growth. The All Ireland economy is a reality and we need to plan an economic recovery on an all Ireland basis.

With our growing mandate across Ireland, Sinn Féin will continue to show leadership in the pursuit of an Ireland that is equal and prosperous, that delivers for all citizens.

The next term of the assembly should be about delivery and bringing about the changes that will be needed to best serve all our people.

Sinn Féin will deliver for all our people and bring about that change.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

In recent months, Sinn Féin in the Executive and Assembly has led the challenge to the imposition of £4 billion cuts to the North's Budget by the British Government.

Sinn Féin identified an additional £1.6 billion of new revenue-raising schemes which we brought to the Executive table. These innovative proposals will assist us fighting the worst impacts of the Westminster agenda.

In addition, at the Executive table we have:

- » consolidated the peace process
- » kept the spotlight on the British government's failure, thus far, to fulfill its financial commitments to the north

- » opposed the privatisation of public services
- » prevented separate household water charges
- » secured the transfer of powers over policing and justice
- » kept manufacturing rates at 30% supporting 50,000 people employed in manufacturing and small businesses
- » supported the Small Business Rate Relief for 16,000 small businesses
- » delivered the Project Kelvin transatlantic telecoms cable to the North West via Derry
- » delivered free travel for everyone aged 60-plus
- » supported the introduction of free prescriptions for all



WE PROMISED. WE DELIVERED.

In our May 2007 Assembly election manifesto, we promised to pursue the following commitments. In the interim four years of government we delivered.

IN GOVERNMENT

- » Established dedicated All-Ireland Units in the 3 government departments – Education, Agriculture and Regional Development - to cooperate with their corresponding departments in the 26 Counties

- » Ringfenced a meaningful proportion of the annual budget for programmes aimed at tackling economic inequality and poverty and £100 million will now go to OFMdFM and Department of Social Development over the next four years
- » Secured a substantial contribution from the Irish government to the peace dividend for infrastructural development in the North
- » Resourced the Irish language film and television production fund with a new pot of £20 million.
- » Secured the transfer of powers over policing and justice
- » Secured £60 million for the redevelopment of Casement Park Gaelic Games Stadium
- » Increased funding for libraries



IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

- » Developed an island-wide animal health strategy
- » Radically reformed the planning service to protect the right of rural people to live within their own community
- » Established a Rural White Paper, which will improve the rights of rural citizens
- » Initiated the decentralisation of Department of Agriculture headquarters outside of Belfast to move towards a more balanced distribution of public sector jobs.

IN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

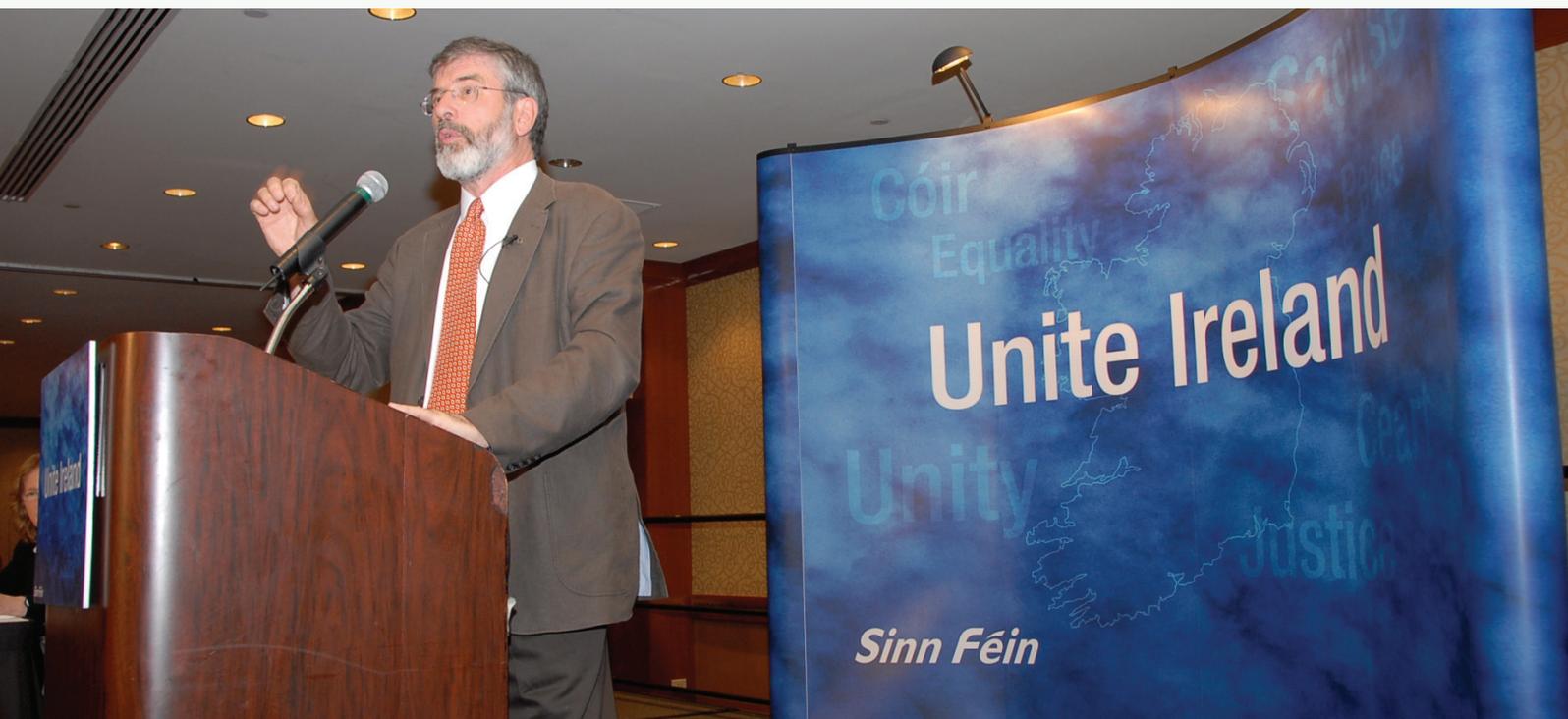
- » Blocked the imposition of separate household water charges and the privatisation of the water service
- » Used public procurement contracts to deliver equality and socio-economic inclusion
- » Used the peace dividend to enable economic recovery whilst starting to address regional inequalities in infrastructure – particularly through the A5 Aughnacloy to Derry major road scheme



IN EDUCATION

- » Finally ended the 11-plus academic selection test, and now using parental preference and a Pupil Profile to inform parents of children transferring to all ability (11-18) post-primary education
- » Opposed cuts in vital front-line education services, and ensured additional investment in schools and children with high socio-economic needs
- » Provided appropriate supports within mainstream classrooms for children with additional needs
- » Significantly increased resources for Irish Medium education.





THERE IS A BETTER WAY IRISH UNITY

Sinn Féin is an Irish republican party. We are a United Ireland party. We believe in the sovereignty, independence and freedom of the Irish people and the right of our people to build our own society. A 32-county independent, democratic, socialist Irish republic founded on the principles of the 1916 Proclamation to 'cherish all the children of the nation equally'

Sinn Féin is committed to delivering for citizens. Sinn Féin offers more than just hope in this election – Sinn Féin offers real leadership.

Sinn Féin elected representatives will continue to put the Equality and All-Ireland Agendas centre-stage in all our activities.

We will work to achieve the objectives outlined below.

- » A new all-Ireland Constitution. Establishing an all-Ireland Constitutional Forum drawn from representatives of both legislatures on this island, civic society, business and trade unions to discuss and bring forward a Draft Constitution that would be put to the people in a referendum
- » Northern representation for the existing 18 Northern MPs in the Dáil.
- » The extension of Voting rights in Irish Presidential elections to citizens in the six counties
- » A referendum on Irish unity
- » The integration of public services and infrastructure on an all-Ireland basis, enabling people to access services such as health and education nearest to them
- » Implementing the outstanding elements of the Good Friday Agreement, including the establishment of a North-South Parliamentary Forum and the All-Ireland Consultative Civic Forum.

ECONOMY

Sinn Féin believes economic recovery requires a radical reshaping of how government, the private and the public sectors have traditionally operated, in order to best serve the needs of citizens.

We face important challenges as a society emerging from conflict. The local and all-Ireland political institutions need to deliver social and economic change. It is critical that we continue to ensure frontline public services and address social needs.

The economic crisis has led to greater inequality within our society. Inequality not only creates serious social problems and instability, but is also an economic threat. Inequality across society must be addressed.

The Partition of Ireland does not make sense politically nor economically. Two distinct economic systems have failed the citizens of Ireland. We need an All Ireland economic recovery plan, which serves the people of Ireland.

Sinn Fein will work to:

- » Deliver increased economic and fiscal powers away from London and into the locally accountable Executive and Assembly
- » Develop an all-Ireland economic recovery plan as the basis for growing a sustainable, long-term economy alongside sustained improvements in equality
- » Harmonise all-Ireland taxation and regulation policies
- » Strengthen the public, private, voluntary/ community sectors and trade union movement, to fight British Government cuts and protect frontline public services



- » Make the British government face up to its obligations at St Andrews to inject £18 billion investment over 10 years
- » Fundamentally review Invest NI to ensure that regional investment inequalities are substantively addressed in the context of promoting enhanced all-Ireland economic activity
- » End the competition between Invest NI in the north and the IDA in the south
- » Maximise the potential of Intertrade Ireland for economic cooperation across the island
- » Establish an all-Ireland export strategy and an all-Ireland innovation strategy.
- » Establish an all-Ireland job creation plan under the auspices of the North South Ministerial Council, chaired by both Enterprise Ministers, focused on areas of high unemployment across the island
- » Maximising access to other EU funds, such as the Joint European Support for Micro to Medium Enterprises (JEREMIE) and Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas (JESSICA) and the PROGRESS Microfinance fund of €500 million
- » Seeking agreement from the four main banks to establish a Sustainable Economic Development Bond of £400 million over the next four years, (£25 million per bank annually) as their contribution to the recovery from the economic crisis
- » Seeking agreement with the Credit Union Movement to create a £100 million Social Fund targeted at growing indigenous business with social outcomes based on objective need

Sinn Féin's revenue-raising and revenue-saving proposals for the north include:

- » The Introduction of tax varying and borrowing powers to enable the Executive to generate income and stimulate development
- » The Implementation of the Review of Public Administration (RPA), delivering savings of £400 million
- » The establishment of the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) saving £80 million over the next four years
- » Introduction of a phone mast levy to generate £160 million over the next four years
- » Enabling the Housing Executive to borrow £250 million per year from, amongst others, the European Investment Bank to fund social housing needs
- » Drawing down an additional 100 million from the EU 'Seventh Framework Programme' over the next two years to fund Research and Development and promote innovation
- » Abolishing additional remuneration for Chairs /Vice-Chairs of Assembly committees
- » Promoting public sector service provision on an all-island basis, reducing administrative duplication and costs
- » Delivering changes to the current Ports legislation to allow the Executive to introduce an additional capital funding stream of up to £125 million over an initial four year budget. This would also allow for an ongoing dividend from the Ports.
- » Establishing an investment fund through the Executive to revive and grow the economy, with a major focus on investing in SMEs, social enterprises, new technologies, the tourism industry and manufacturing designed for export
- » Implementing the 'Green New Deal' proposals, with the potential to create thousands of green collar jobs
- » Delivering an environmental levy on plastic bags, to promote the "reduce, reuse, recycle" policy
- » Abolishing unnecessary quangos and government arms-length bodies, while reducing remuneration levels
- » Ending the use of external consultants for

work which can be carried out by the Civil Service

- » Promoting a joint approach with trade unions to safeguard public sector services and grow the economy
- » Introducing a pay freeze for public sector workers in the higher rate income tax bracket
- » Independently review excessively high earnings across the public sector
- » Campaigning for more support for small and medium business sectors, and for the social economy sector, including tax breaks/incentives and consideration of enterprise zones
- » Improving all-Ireland tourism through enhanced powers for Tourism Ireland
- » Ensuring more resources towards cultural tourism and locally-based tourist projects which will help create jobs, particularly in disadvantaged communities.

EQUALITY AND RIGHTS

- » Delivery of the Bill of Rights specific to the circumstances of the six counties in line with the Good Friday Agreement
- » Challenging and reversing the patterns of discrimination and structural inequalities across our society
- » Building and strengthening the Section 75 equality legislation, to address regional investment inequalities
- » Making the north's civil service fully representative, accountable and effective, particularly at senior levels.
- » Transferring control to the local Executive and Assembly of all outstanding equality powers which are still held by Westminster
- » Introduction of a strong and comprehensive local Single Equality Bill
- » Building an Ireland of Equals where everyone's rights are guaranteed, free of divisions caused by partition, sectarianism, racism and other forms of discrimination and economic inequality
- » Implementation of the all-Ireland Charter of Rights as provided for under the Good Friday Agreement
- » Introduction of an all-Ireland 'Strategy for Women's Equality'
- » Delivering an Executive-led Sexual Orientation Strategy and work for the formal recognition that s.75(2) 'good relations duty' of the NI Act 1998 applies to all s.75(1) 'equality duty' groups
- » Ensuring that people with disabilities attain their full rights as citizens
- » Full Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities



IRISH LANGUAGE, CULTURE, ARTS AND LEISURE

- » Achievement of Acht na Ghaeilge in the north to promote and protect the rights of Irish Language speakers
- » Implementation of a comprehensive all-Ireland strategy to create new Gaeltacht areas, particularly in urban centres, across the island.
- » The reinstatement of the Places for Sport Programme which allows sports clubs at community level to develop facilities such

as second training pitch, flood lights, club rooms

- » Increased quality sporting provision for all minority groups, not least those with learning disabilities
- » Increasing the number of adults who participate in sport and physical activity as part of the preventative health agenda
- » Increasing public awareness about the contribution of culture and arts to the economy
- » Increased library provision, particularly in rural areas
- » Improved DCAL funding strategy for the all-Ireland bodies, Foras na Gaeilge and Waterways Ireland
- » Increased funding for the Arts, particularly community based Arts projects, both rural and urban



TRUTH

- » Requiring the British Government to comply with the unanimous request of the Oireachtas in 2008 to allow independent, international access to all original documents held by the British Government relating to fatal attacks in the 26 Counties involving collusion between crown forces and unionist paramilitaries
- » An independent, international truth-recovery process convened under the auspices of a credible, international third-party like the United Nations, which is victim-centred and which involves all participants to the conflict

HEALTH

- » A new universal public health system for Ireland that provides care to all, free at the point of delivery, on the basis of need alone, and funded from general, fair and progressive taxation
- » Updating the Investing for Health Strategy, with an emphasis on the root causes of ill-health, particularly in the most disadvantaged areas
- » Greater investment in mental health, in line with the Bamford Review
- » Dedicated perinatal mental health services on an all-Ireland basis, ensuring that pre-natal and post-natal patients can be cared for with their new-borns, when this is required



- » Prioritising the importance of domiciliary care packages, and reverse the perception that these are 'soft services' which can continually be cut
- » Reviewing the distribution of care services across trusts to ensure that the most vulnerable are not the victims of any cuts
- » Ending inefficiencies within the health department, while giving strong practical and moral support to frontline health workers
- » Campaigning for equality in cancer care facilities across the island
- » A new satellite and radiotherapy unit at Altnagelvin
- » Implementation of the service framework for cancer prevention, treatment and care, including onsite financial and welfare advice to those with cancer
- » A comprehensive service to treat infertility, including three full cycles of IVF or ICSI for NHS patients in the north, as appropriate and according to need, in line with clinical guidelines
- » Continuing to oppose privatisation of healthcare services and staff, whilst supporting health workers in relation to all aspects of their jobs – including voicing concerns
- » Securing access to a specialist nurse for all patients with long term conditions
- » Closely monitor the implementation of the new safeguarding legislation for children and vulnerable adults
- » Introduction of a mental capacity bill in the next Assembly term
- » Equality of access to Health Services for rural areas



AGRICULTURE

- » Fundamental improvements to the payments and inspection regime for Single Farm Payments
- » Review Less Favoured Areas policy to ensure proper payments and support in disadvantaged areas
- » Additional support for the beef and sheep sectors
- » The introduction of a supermarket ombudsman with real power
- » Work for a fund to help to protect rural post offices
- » Work to ensure rural complete broadband coverage, including assisting farmers with on-line management and diversification
- » Introduce all Ireland marketing measures for our agri-food products
- » Implement a £16-million anti-poverty and rural exclusion programme
- » Examine measures to rebalance the size of the fishing fleet while ensuring sustainable fishing opportunities, eg. a vessel decommissioning scheme
- » Campaign for a hardship fund to assist the fishing industry with rising fuel prices





REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- » Block the introduction of separate household water charges
- » Support continued investment in infrastructure renewal of our water and sewerage services.
- » Further strengthen accountability and fairness in the public procurement of contracts
- » Continued reform of the governance of our water and sewerage utility and keep it within full public ownership, directly accountable to the Assembly.
- » Additional investment delivered to sustainable public transportation in both bus and railway services
- » Implementation of the new All-Island

collaborative spatial plan and revised Regional Development Strategy ensuring maximum benefit to our economy on an All-Ireland basis and which can deliver joined-up coherent public services, infrastructure and development.

EDUCATION

- » Support and promote Sinn Féin's education reform programme
- » Ensure the education system is grounded in the twin aims of excellence and equality, and address structural inequalities wherever they persist
- » Cut back on bureaucracy and ensure that more resources are put into frontline services
- » Build more new schools on the basis on area needs
- » Promote the collaborative schools framework

- » Harmonisation of the two education systems on the island
- » Raise standards and ensure that all children are given an equal chance in our system
- » Promote and facilitate Irish medium education

STUDENT FEES

- » Sinn Féin opposed the introduction of student fees and continues to oppose student fees – including any increases
- » We will block any attempt to raise the level of cap on student fees when it comes before the Executive

OFMDFM

- » Regeneration of Long Kesh site, including the prison buildings and establishment of a Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre
- » Ensure former military sites handed over to Executive are used for public benefit, for

example Lisanelly becoming an educational campus in Omagh, and housing on part of St Patrick's, Ballymena, used for social housing need. Public profits may be realized from other sites through their responsible disposal as going assets.

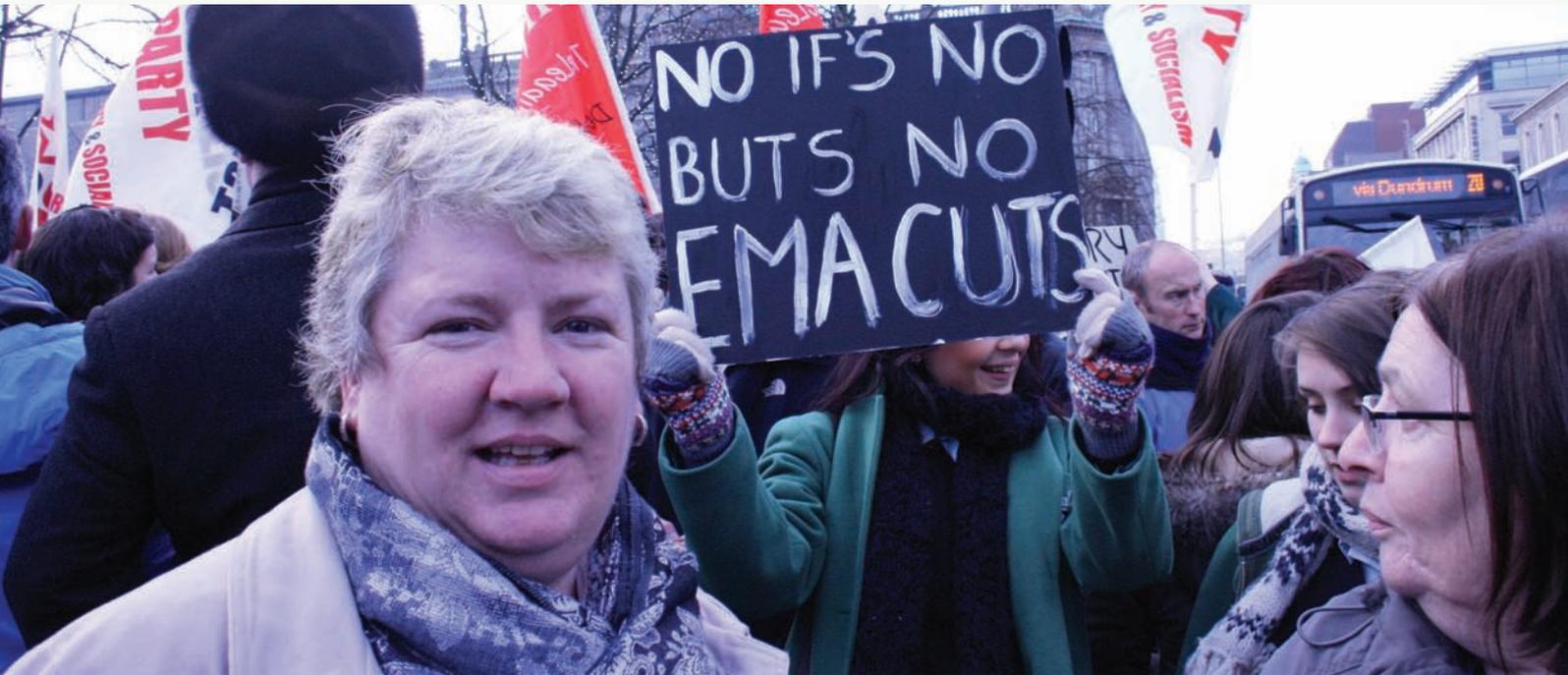
- » Delivery of £20 million annually to a new Social Investment Fund (SIF) for the most disadvantaged communities, additional to funding of other Departments
- » Ensuring £20 million to a new Social Protection Fund (SPF) in 2011/12 for those most affected by British-government central welfare cuts, while supporting at least £20m in each of the following years
- » Implement the newly-developed childcare strategy to assist parents accessing employment and to address poverty
- » In advance of Welfare Reform changes, seek to introduce an Earnings Disregard Pilot Scheme to allow those in part-time work to retain an additional £50 of earnings, whilst exploring additional difficulties faced by those returning to work





POLICING AND JUSTICE

- » Promote a civic, accountable all-Ireland policing and criminal justice agenda in full compliance with best human rights, equality and professional standards
- » Continue to hold the PSNI and justice system fully to account in both their general duties and delivery of targets
- » Ensure the civilianization and modernization of all police stations as necessary
- » Full implementation of the Policing With the Community Strategy by the PSNI
- » Provide public safety in partnership with local communities
- » Support the work of the Police Ombudsman in holding police accountable
- » Promote adequate provision of assistance to victims including material, psychological, voluntary and community-based means at all stages of the criminal justice process
- » Ensure that legal aid reforms do not restrict access to justice, particularly the most disadvantaged.
- » Seek to end the detention of male children at Hydebank Wood YOC, and ensure they are placed in age-appropriate secure accommodation at Woodlands Juvenile Justice centre
- » Appropriate facilities for women offenders, in keeping with international standards
- » Ensure there is a duty on the Public Prosecution Service to provide victims/relatives with substantive reasons for any decision not to prosecute an offender – especially in state-killings
- » Reinstate the 50/50 recruitment policy within the PSNI to ensure that Patten target of 40% nationalist/republican personnel is attained, and set appropriate targets for PSNI representativeness regarding gender (50/50), ethnic minorities and sexual orientation



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- » Ensure appropriate resources and targeted support, for the development of the community and voluntary sector, particularly through targeting public resources on the basis of greatest objective need
- » Support the delivery of frontline services that meet the identified needs of people living in deprived areas
- » Establish targets and timetables for the reduction of fuel poverty
- » Ensure that social employment and training clauses for the long-term unemployed and apprentices are built into all regeneration contracts
- » Cut down on the bureaucracy faced by community projects and use of consultants by ensuring that publicly-funded audits and reporting are not repeatedly duplicated for different funders
- » Oppose “welfare reform” agenda of cuts introduced by Tory Government

HOUSING

- » Decent accessible housing with reasonable rent and rates should be available to everyone
- »
- » A mandatory registration scheme for the private rented sector
- » A deposit retention scheme to protect tenants from landlords who withhold deposits
- » Maintenance schemes to be protected from cuts
- » Changes to the housing selection scheme to end discrimination against people in areas of high demand
- » Effective mortgage relief scheme
- » A review of the points systems within social housing so that disabled people, with a requirement for accessible housing, are prioritised in the system.
- »
- » Review status of housing associations
- » Tackle the issue of void properties in the private sector
- » Tackle dereliction in our town and city centres



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- » Implement the “RPA” 11-council structure, with the principles of democracy and equality at its core
- » Block efforts to gerrymander local government boundaries
- » Require that the new council model services both representative and participative democratic needs, ensuring maximum involvement of the public alongside councilors
- » Make efficiency, effectiveness and equality the basis of future local government work
- » In the interim, require that the existing 26-council model is prepared for the transition through new legislation which enshrines stringent mandatory equality checks and balances, d’Hondt power-sharing safeguards, and an equality-based Code of Conduct before additional functions are transferred
- » Ensure flexibility in the preparation for new Community Planning functions to include cross-border arrangements between councils and other agreeable stakeholders

- » Support a third-party right of appeal against planning decisions under new planning reform measures

ENVIRONMENT

- » Develop a long-term renewable energy strategy, while also reducing emissions and use of fossil fuels
- » Support implementation of a Marine Act that ensures the adoption of Marine Spatial Planning and the related designation of Marine Conservation Zones
- » Promote a ‘growing-your-own-food’ culture by supporting allotments and community farms
- » Provide adequate resources for the Green New Deal
- » Continue the policy to double the amount of forestry in the six counties



JOB CREATION

As we deal with the consequences of the economic crisis on this island, an immediate coordinated approach is required to deliver jobs for those that are suffering as a result of the failed economic policies of successive Irish and British Governments.

Sinn Féin believes that the development of an all-Ireland economic recovery plan is essential. This must be the basis for growing a sustainable, long-term economy alongside sustained improvements in equality.

Sinn Féin has implemented and supported measures that have helped business to create jobs. In the Executive we have

- » Kept manufacturing rates at 30% supporting 50,000 people employed in manufacturing and small businesses
- » Supported the Small Business Rate Relief for 16,000 small businesses
- » Delivered “Project Kelvin” transatlantic

telecoms cable to the North West via Derry, which will attract inward investment.

- » Delivered the Irish language film and television production fund with a new pot of £20 million, to include capital build projects agreed at Hillsborough in January 2010.
- » Secured £60 million for the redevelopment of Casement Park Gaelic Games Stadium
- » Delivered almost £4 billion in infrastructure investment.

All these initiatives will help create and retain jobs over the coming years, but we need to deliver a job creation strategy that creates thousands of jobs across all our communities.

It is also essential that the British government face up to its obligations from St Andrews to inject £18 billion investment over 10 years which will help grown the economy and create thousands of jobs.

Sinn Féin believes that we need to

- » Establish an all-Ireland job creation plan under the auspices of the North South Ministerial Council, chaired by both Enterprise Ministers, focused on areas of high unemployment across the island
- » Harmonise all-Ireland taxation and regulation policies
- » Launch a specific job creation strategy refocusing the activities of Invest NI and its work towards innovation and R&D.
- » Establish an all-Ireland export strategy and an all-Ireland innovation strategy.
- » Maximise the potential of Intertrade Ireland for economic cooperation across the island
- » Establish an all-Ireland export strategy and an all-Ireland innovation strategy.
- » Draw down an additional 100 million from the EU 'Seventh Framework Programme' over the next two years to fund Research and Development and promote innovation
- » Maximise access to other EU funds, such as the Joint European Support for Micro to Medium Enterprises (JEREMIE) and Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas (JESSICA) and the PROGRESS Microfinance fund of €500 million
- » Seek agreement from the four main banks to establish a Sustainable Economic Development Bond of £400 million over the next four years, (£25 million per bank annually) as their contribution to the recovery from the economic crisis which should be used to fund job creation strategies.
- » Seek agreement with the Credit Union Movement to create a £100 million Social Fund targeted at growing indigenous business with social outcomes based on objective need
- » Establish an investment fund through the Executive to revive and grow the economy, with a major focus on investing in SMEs, social enterprises, new technologies, the tourism industry and manufacturing designed for export
- » Implement the 'Green New Deal' proposals, with the potential to create thousands of green collar jobs
- » Provide more support for small and medium business sectors, and for the social economy sector, including tax breaks/ incentives and consideration of enterprise zones
- » Improve potential for jobs in the tourism sector by enhancing the power of Tourism Ireland
- » Ensure more resources are directed towards cultural tourism and locally-based tourist projects which will help create jobs, particularly in disadvantaged communities.
- » Direct more resources into the Arts, helping to create jobs in the creative industries
- » Further develop the potential of the All Ireland Agri-Food sector
- » Make greater use of procurement to tackle long term unemployment
- » Ensure that social employment and training clauses for the long-term unemployed and apprentices are built into all regeneration contracts

Growing Indigenous Business, R&D investment and Promoting Innovation

The long-term strategy for recovery must build indigenous business, focus on exporting and support constant innovation to maintain competitiveness.

A low-wage, low-tech, low-value economy competing for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is not sustainable. Both INI and IDA compete for aspects of FDI and support competing clients. Such competition drives down the value of jobs and given the size of the island, such duplication looks bizarre to foreign investors.

There is a need to promote Research and Development (R&D) in business, develop all-Ireland networks to promote best practice and share research.

We should adopt the EU target of 3% of GDP invested in R&D by 2020. There are major opportunities within the EU's 7th Framework Programme worth 50 billion euro over the period 2007-2013 to develop R&D projects. There should also be immediate application to EU programmes to help the North with its investment needs.

In order to promote innovation and R&D, we propose.

- » Adoption of the EU target of 3% of GDP investment in R & D by 2020.
- » Tax incentives for R&D
- » Developing all-Ireland networks to promote best practice and shared research.
- » Promoting all-Ireland networks of universities and centres of R&D expertise in specific sectors.
- » Increasing access to the 7th Framework with measurable targets for support for R&D.
- » Replacement of INI and IDA with an all-Ireland job creation body.
- » Development of a single body to promote innovation and high-tech industry across Ireland and to promote access to the global market place and capital.

