

ELECTION 2011: LGBT ISSUES







Since the last General Election in 2007, major progress has been made for lesbian, gay, bisexual (LGB) people with the enactment by the Government of the Civil Partnership Act 2010. This legislation was supported by all political parties in both houses of the Dáil. There has also been all party agreement to ensure that the

taxation elements of civil partnership, which were deferred following the dissolution of the Dáil, will be progressed following the 2011 election.

As in their election manifestos for 2007, all of the parties have included commitments to further progress for lesbian and gay people in their

elections manifestos. These cover commitments across a number of areas including legal recognition of relationships, legal recognition and support of same-sex headed families and commitments around anti-discrimination and anti-bullying. The commitments of the parties are outlined below. See www.glen.ie for further details.

ELECTION 2011 PARTY COMMITMENTS ON ISSUES RELATING TO LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER PEOPLE

						
LEGAL RECOGNITION	<p>The Green Party will: In the event of the Supreme court ruling against Zappone and Gilligan, seek to have the Constitution amended to permit civil same-sex marriage (Manifesto 2011)</p>	<p>The legal recognition of civil partners will have an impact on their treatment under income tax, capital gains tax, capital acquisitions tax and stamp duty. It is our belief that the legislation should be passed as soon as the Dáil resumes. (Communication from Fianna Fáil).</p>	<p>Civil Partnership: We will amend tax law in a second Finance Act 2011 to give effect to the rights for civil partners and cohabiting couples introduced in the Civil Partnership Act 2010 (Manifesto 2011)</p>	<p>Labour is committed to holding a referendum to provide for constitutional recognition of same-sex marriage.</p> <p>In the immediate term, Labour will enact provisions to extend the tax benefits of marriage to same sex couples in civil partnerships.</p> <p>Labour will advance equality for transgender people by enacting gender recognition legislation, and by extending to them protections afforded by existing equality legislation.</p> <p>(Manifesto 2011)</p>	<p>Sinn Féin is committed to: Legislation to permit and recognize same-sex marriage. Provide full and equal recognition of all civil partnership in law. (Manifesto 2011)</p>	<p>We support full equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, including the right to marry for same sex couples. (from website)</p>
CHILDREN/PARENTING	<p>The Green Party will: Seek to further reform family law in Ireland to protect the welfare of children in a variety of families, including providing for the extension of legal guardianship to de facto parents.</p> <p>The Green Party will: Implement the recommendations of the Law Reform commission Report on the Legal Aspects of Family Relationships.</p> <p>Legislate for fathers to have automatic guardianship of their child from the birth of their child.</p> <p>Legislate to ensure the registration of father's names on the birth certificates of their child. (Manifesto 2011)</p>		<p>Family Law Reform. We will modernize and reform outdated elements of family law.</p> <p>Regulation of Assisted Human Reproduction. We will legislate to regulate Assisted Human Reproduction Services. (Manifesto 2011)</p>	<p>Labour also supports entitling all parties to a marriage or civil partnership to apply to adopt a child, while ensuring that all adoption decisions must be made in the best long-term interests of the child.</p> <p>Labour will legislate to guarantee that the State respects family life, whether based on marriage or not, by passing our Guardianship of Children Bill (2010).</p> <p>Labour will legislate in accordance with existing constitutional provisions and court judgments' to clarify the law - including the law relating to guardianship responsibilities-surrounding assisted human reproduction. (Manifesto 2011)</p>		
ANTI-BULLYING	<p>The Green Party will Ensure that the Department of Education and Skills develops and implements a strategic action plan to address homophobic bullying and ensure schools and colleges provide a safe environment for LGB students. (Manifesto 2011)</p>	<p>Fianna Fáil will continue to build on the progress of the joint Department of Education and GLEN produced Guidelines for School Principals. These Guidelines support lesbian and gay students and assist the people who work with them in schools and colleges across the country. (Communication from Fianna Fáil).</p>	<p>Anti-Bullying Policy. We will encourage schools to develop anti-bullying policies and in particular, strategies to combat homophobic bullying to support students. (Manifesto 2011)</p>	<p>Labour will amend Section 37 of the Employment Equality Acts (1998) and (2004) to end discrimination against LGBT teachers and trainee teachers, and to ensure that there is no obstacle to schools tackling homophobic bullying.</p> <p>(Manifesto 2011)</p>		
OTHER PROPOSALS	<p>The Green Party will: Develop and national sexual health strategy.</p> <p>Ensure the continuation of the HSE-National Office of Suicide Prevention LGBT Mental Health Programme.</p> <p>(Manifesto 2011)</p>	<p>We will also support raising awareness in national economic policies that support equality and diversity and the role they play in attracting tourists and business to Ireland. (Communication from Fianna Fáil).</p>	<p>Public Bodies: We will encourage all public bodies to take due note to equality and human rights in carrying out their functions. (Manifesto 2011)</p>	<p>Labour is committed to ensuring all publicly funded colleges operate in accordance with the constitutional right to Freedom of Conscience. Labour will ensure the five teaching colleges introduce a Freedom of Conscience clause so that trainee teachers no longer are obliged to undergo compulsory religious education.</p> <p>Labour will continue to fund Gay HIV Strategies.</p> <p>(Manifesto 2011)</p>		