

**Democracy disappearing**  
**Housing a national emergency**  
**Water under threat**  
**Waste out of control**  
**Energy a climate crisis**



**MORE  
POWER  
TO YOU**

Make Government Local,  
Improve Your Local Services.

**STRONGER  
LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT  
MEANS  
BETTER  
SERVICES  
FOR ALL**

**The future for local government  
begins with your vote.**



# STRENGTHENING LOCAL GOVERNMENT - IMPROVING LOCAL SERVICES



**WORST** Local Representation: We have the lowest number of local municipalities per head of population. People per council region. Norway – 1,897. Finland – 17,416. Ireland – 148,517

**LOWEST** Local Budgets: Irish local authorities have among the lowest spending power among EU states. European average – 28% of public spending. In Ireland – 8%

**WEAKEST** Local power: Our local authorities have fewer responsibilities and almost no financial autonomy. Ireland now ranks last in the standard European Local Autonomy Index.

## The simple solution to our greatest challenge

Enshrined in our constitution is the simple principle that strong, effective local government is the foundation of a prosperous and progressive society.

But right now, our local government is actively being degraded. Essential public services like housing, water, energy and waste are being undermined and trust in our system of government is being eroded day by day.

## Our services have been stripped away

Austerity, privatisation, executive direction and centralisation have hollowed out our public services and stripped local authorities and local communities of their democratic power. Ireland now has the worst level of local representation and the weakest local government of any country in Europe.

# WE DESERVE BETTER



# MORE POWER TO YOU

Make Government Local,  
Improve Your Local Services.

While every other country in Europe is actively strengthening their local democracies we are slowly dismantling ours. While many countries in Europe are taking public services and amenities back into public ownership, we continue to privatise ours.



## A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

At this moment in time we have the opportunity not only to improve local services, we also have the unique opportunity to reimagine the role of local government, and to create a new, and more representative local government system.

## A NEW MODEL

### **Effective town councils**

The town council system of sub-county government should be restored in a new and more representative form, one which achieves territorial balance.

### **Elected Mayors**

Legislation should be introduced to allow directly elected mayors to play a key role in a new streamlined and integrated local government system.

### **Independent Funding**

Local government should be allowed to fund itself properly through increased revenue and funding powers in clear, accountable and transparent ways.

# FIVE POINT ACTION PLAN

There are five vital areas in which local government intervention is urgently needed to improve services and protect the public interest

## DEMOCRACY



Establishing a new and more representative system of local government, with funding powers, directly elected mayors and a new system of town councils to give real power to you and your community.

## HOUSING



Immediate investment will enable local authorities to effectively maintain, repair and retrofit current housing supply. Long-term, a cost rental model will enable local authorities once again to provide affordable housing where and when it is needed most.

## WATER



A referendum should be held to ensure our water remains in public ownership, and local authorities should be enabled to provide customer service to protect the right to water.

## WASTE



A new regulator for household waste collection should be established to clean up our refuse market, and enable local authorities to once again offer a competitive domestic bin collection service.

## ENERGY



With proper funding, local authorities can play a key role in setting carbon reduction targets, and in the promotion and education of communities in low carbon transition.

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT MEANS LOCAL LIVES

Local Government touches every aspect of our daily lives and impacts upon every citizen – young and old alike. It affects our schools, our homes, our public parks. It's in our work, our play and our recreation.

## **A Road Map for the Future**

The nature of our society is rapidly changing. Technology and social changes mean the way in which we work and live are constantly evolving. Strengthening Ireland's local government offers us the unique opportunity to establish a new and better system of local government – one which truly reflects and represents the changing and diverse nature of our society.

## RECLAIMING TRUST IN OUR GOVERNMENT

Trust in the system of government is the cornerstone of any society and community. But years of austerity and financial crisis have eroded people's trust in central government.

By strengthening and protecting local government, we will be empowering citizens to play a more direct role in shaping communities and tackling the issues that affect them.

Most importantly, truly empowering local government is the only enduring way of renewing trust in our institutions, our system of government and our society as a whole.



# HOW YOU CAN HELP

## Pledge your support for Local Government

Forsa, SIPTU and Connect are now calling on our public representatives to re-establish the primary role of local government in our society, by signing the Local Power Pledge and committing to strengthening and empowering local government across Ireland.

- **Take the Local Power Pledge at [forsa.ie/morepower](https://forsa.ie/morepower) to call for the full implementation of our simple five point action plan on local democracy, housing, waste, water and energy.**
- **Contact your local representative and ask them to take the Local Power Pledge.**
- **Vote for candidates who have taken the Local Power Pledge and demonstrated their full support for local government.**
- **Share your support on Social Media using the #MorePowerToYou campaign hashtag.**
- **Organise a public meeting in your county and invite local election candidates to hear about the More Power To You campaign.**

**[forsa.ie/morepower](https://forsa.ie/morepower)**

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