

Taoiseach Simon Harris, Leader, Fine Gael  
Tánaiste Micheál Martin, Leader, Fianna Fáil  
Minister Roderic O’Gorman, Leader, Green Party  
Deputy Mary Lou McDonald, Leader, Sinn Féin  
Deputy Ivana Bacik, Leader, Labour Party  
Deputy Holly Cairns, Leader, Social Democrats  
Deputy Michael Collins, Leader, Independent Ireland  
Deputy Peadar Toibín, Leader, Aontú

20 December 2024

Dear Taoiseach, Tánaiste, Minister and Deputies,

I write to you on behalf of Transparency International (TI) Ireland – the Irish chapter of the worldwide movement against corruption – to ask that the promotion of ethics in public office, as well as measures aimed at promoting transparency and stopping corruption are placed at the heart of the next Programme for Government.

It is nearly 13 years since Judge Alan Mahon [recommended](#) reforms to Ireland’s public ethics framework in light of the Planning Tribunal’s findings. The [Public Sector Standards Bill 2015](#) was allowed to lapse with the dissolution of the 32<sup>rd</sup> Dáil in 2020, and a government [review](#) recommended an updated regime for standards in public life. The previous [Programme for Government](#) included a commitment to ‘reform and consolidate’ such legislation. Yet, it was never introduced during the lifetime of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Dáil.

In the meantime, Ireland has continued to attract attention and criticism from various international bodies, including the [European Commission](#) and the [Council of Europe](#), for the Oireachtas’ and successive Governments’ failures to fulfil their own commitments in the area of ethics and standards in public life.

As the 34<sup>th</sup> Dáil convenes, we hope that the new Government and Oireachtas will reassert and deliver on previous commitments to implement the recommendations of the Planning Tribunal and enact the Public Sector Standards Bill.

As the world enters a more volatile era plagued by distrust in politics and government, it is imperative that political leaders act now to shore up the integrity and legitimacy of our democratic processes and institutions. Continued neglect of these issues is no longer an option: as we can see from other countries, popular support for democracy is easily eroded through even the most minor of ethical lapses and the perception of a conflict of interest. And if safeguards are not in place, such perceptions – whether well-founded or not – can be exploited by those seeking to further undermine trust in our democracy.

TI Ireland has worked closely with government, civil society, business and citizens since 2004, and our expert team is happy to assist with any efforts to rebuild and maintain trust in our democratic institutions – including through drawing on the global expertise and experience of our colleagues in over 100 countries. Please reach out if there is any way in which we can assist you in your work.

In the meantime, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your parliamentary colleagues the very best as you take your seats in the new Dáil, and a restful Christmas season.

Yours sincerely,

John Devitt  
Chief Executive