

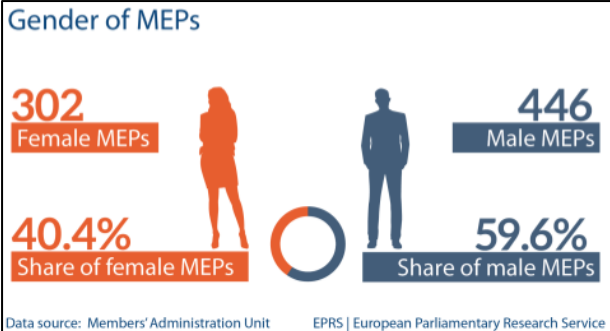
Female Representation in Politics, local & European Election results, May 2019.

Document A



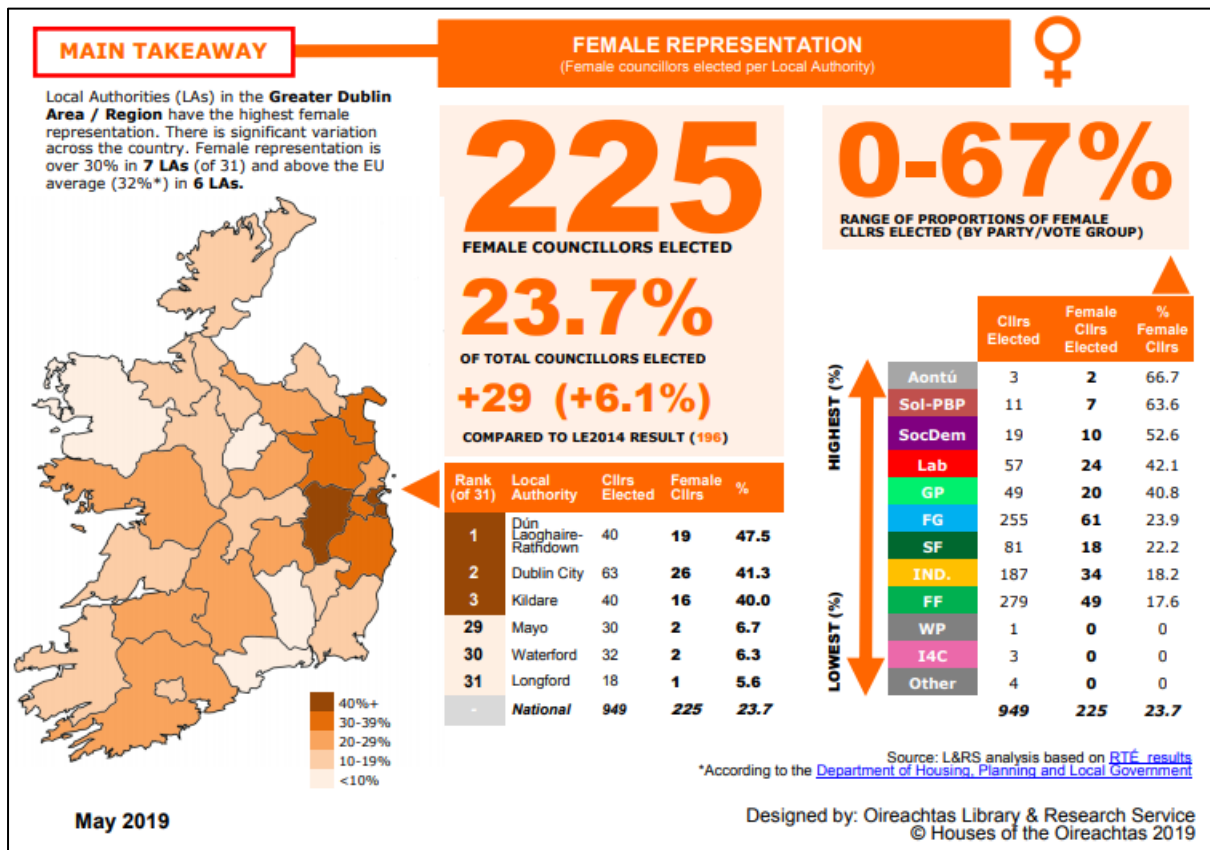
In May 2019, European citizens voted on their representatives in the European Parliament for the next five years, to defend their interests in the EU. This year's election had a turnout of 51%, an increase of 8.3 percentage points from the previous election in 2014. It is also the first time since 1999 that more than half of adult citizens voted. The 751 MEPs elected have an average age of 50 years (with the youngest being 21 and the oldest 82).

Women represent 40.4% of all MEPs. Ireland returned 5 women out of 11 seats (45.4%), though this will improve slightly after Brexit when it will be 6 out of 13 seats (46.2%). Historically, these 6 women represent just over 25% of all Irish women ever elected to the European Parliament (23) since 1979. Between 1973-79 none of the 30 delegates sent by Ireland the European Parliament were women.



Source: <https://epthinktank.eu/2019/07/11/members-of-the-european-parliament-2019-2024/>

Document B – Female Representation in Ireland’s Local Elections.



23% of councillors recently elected into local government were women. According to the National Women's Council of Ireland, that is a slight increase from 21% in the last elections, but is well short of the 30% mark they were hoping for.

Director of the group Orla O'Connor says it is disappointing given that half of the election candidates in many parties were women. Ms O'Connor says it's vital that the gender gap is addressed.

"It's important for women's equality, because women represent over 50% of the population, but also this is really important for focusing on women's issues at local level," she said. "Things like refuge spaces, building proper housing in terms of sustainable communities that we know women and families need. It's also about supporting women, for example, who are trying to access abortion services so that they can do it without fear and intimidation

She says Fianna Fail and Fine Gael, in particular, have a lot to answer for when it comes to gender equality in local government. "For many parties, it was the first time where they fielded 50% of candidates, so particularly for the smaller parties, for the parties on the left, they absolutely reached the quota," she said. "But the two largest parties, Fianna Fail and Fine Gael, did not and that's where we think a lot of work needs to be done."

Sources: https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/libraryResearch/2019/2019-05-31_l-rs-infographic-local-elections-2019-a-statistical-profile_en.pdf and <https://www.breakingnews.ie/ireland/23-of-councillors-elected-into-local-government-were-women-929078.html> ***Adapted for Exam purposes

Question 2 Answer all questions

(40 Marks)

(a) According to **Document A**, name two countries in which more than 50% of the MEPs are women. (5)

(i) _____ (ii) _____

(b) According to **Document A**, how has the representation of Irish women MEPs changed since 1979?(5)

(c) According to **Document B**, which two Local Authorities have the highest and lowest number of female councillors? (5)

a. Highest representation: _____

b. Lowest representation: _____

(d) How many Local Authorities have a higher rate of female councillors than the EU average? (5)

(e) According to **Document A**, are there any geographic trends in the levels of women's representation throughout the country? If so identify which regions are closest and furthest from achieving equality. Give one reason why you think that this might be the case. (10)

(f) According to **Document B**, give 2 specific policy reasons why the National Women's Council of Ireland feel it is important to have a gender balance in Local Authority councillors? (10)

(i) _____

(ii) _____

Question 3 Answer all questions

(50 Marks)

- (a) Is it important for the Irish Government and the EU to provide reliable data like these sources in the form of an infographic? Justify your answer. (10)

- (b) Why is it important to view the data in **Document B** in a critical context, by seeing what the National Women's Council of Ireland's criticisms are? Give **two** reasons to support your answer. (10)

- (c) Do **Documents A and B** broadly **agree** or broadly **disagree** with each other? Referring to both sources, explain your answer by citing **two** examples to support your position. (10)

- (d) **Doc B** provides a list of political parties and their number of female representatives. *Aontú* and *Sol-PBP* are the highest on that list with 67.6% & 63.6% respectively. Bearing in mind Orla O'Connor's criticisms are these the most significant percentages in this table? Explain your reasons. (10)

- (e) Referring to both **Documents A and B**, how might a government or supranational organization use these data to help shape their future policies on the running of elections? Give two pieces of evidence to support your answer. (10)
