

Donations to TDs, Senators and MEPs in 2022



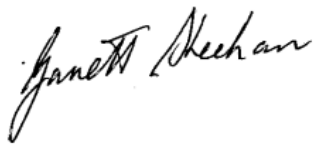
Coimisiún um Chaighdeán in Oifigí Poiblí
Standards in Public Office Commission

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Foreword

On behalf of the Standards in Public Office Commission, I am pleased to furnish this report to the Ceann Comhairle in accordance with the provisions of section 4(1) of the Electoral Act 1997, as amended (the Act). The donation statements/statutory declarations described in the report were furnished to the Standards in Public Office Commission pursuant to section 24 of the Act. The certificates of monetary donations/statutory declarations and statements from financial institutions were furnished pursuant to section 23B of the Act.



Garrett Sheehan
Chairperson
Standards in Public Office Commission
December 2023

Chapter 1: Introduction

Each person who, during a calendar year, is a member of Dáil Éireann (TD), a member of Seanad Éireann (Senator) or a member of the European Parliament (MEP) is required, by 31 January of the following year, to furnish to the Standards in Public Office Commission (the Commission) a donation statement, a certificate of monetary donations, a statutory declaration and, where appropriate, a bank statement in respect of the previous year.

It is an offence to fail to make the necessary returns by the statutory deadline. Where a person is guilty of an offence under this section, he/she is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding €2,500 and to an ongoing fine not exceeding €500 per day for each day, after a conviction, on which the statutory returns are still outstanding.

This report concerns the statutory returns furnished by TDs, Senators and MEPs in respect of 2022.

Details of donations disclosed are provided in the appendices to this report.

Chapter 2: General information

The Commission has published guidelines for TDs, Senators and MEPs (collectively referred to herein as “members”) on donations setting out the requirements relating to various matters such as the acceptance and disclosure of donations, prohibited donations and political donation accounts. The guidelines (summarised in the following table) are available on the Commission's website, www.sipo.ie.

Summary donation table for TDs, Senators and MEPs

Political donations account	On receipt of a donation of in excess of €100 a political donations account must be opened (if one has not already been opened) by a TD, Senator or MEP.
Cash donations	€200 is the maximum cash donation that may be accepted by a TD, Senator or MEP in any calendar year from a donor.
Corporate donors	€200 is the maximum donation that may be accepted by a TD, Senator or MEP in any calendar year from a corporate donor unless the corporate donor is registered in the Register of Corporate Donors maintained by the Commission. A political party that wishes to make a donation for political purposes in excess of €200 in a calendar year must register as a corporate donor with the Commission before making such a donation.
Individual donors	All donations received by a TD, Senator or MEP exceeding €600 must be disclosed on the donation statement.
Maximum donation	€1,000 is the maximum donation that may be accepted by a TD, Senator or MEP in a particular year from an individual or corporate donor
Multiple donations	Where a donor makes a donation to two or more recipients (multiple members of the same party or to one or more party members and the party itself), the aggregate value of which exceeds €1,500 , he/she is required to submit a donation form to the Commission under Section 24 (1A)
Prohibited donations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any donation that exceeds the above noted limits • An anonymous donation exceeding €100 cannot be accepted • Foreign donations, of any value, cannot be accepted from outside the island of Ireland, other than from an Irish citizen

Note: additional donation rules apply for political parties and third parties. Please see www.sipo.ie for further information.

Chapter 3: Donations disclosed

The table in Appendix 1 provides a summary of donations disclosed. Individual donation statements can be viewed on the Commission's website.

A total of 233 members and former members were required to furnish donation statements in respect of 2022, as follows:

- 160 TDs
- 60 Senators
- 13 MEPs

Returns received

All members were obliged to furnish their donation statements by 31 January 2022. Where the Commission finds a minor error or omission in a donation statement, it will furnish details of the error or omission to the member and will notify the member that he/she has 14 days from the date of the notice in which to correct the error or make good the omission.

All members have substantively complied with some minor queries still outstanding. These queries are being pursued. As all are in substantive compliance, no files were referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

The table in Appendix 1 shows that donations with a total value of €6,033 were disclosed by members in respect of 2022. This is an increase from the 2021 equivalent figure, which was €3,800.

Chapter 4: Donations disclosed by donors under section 24 (1A)

Section 24 (1A) of the Act provides that an individual must furnish a donation statement and a statutory declaration to the Commission if he/she, in a particular year, makes donations exceeding €1,500 in aggregate value to two or more persons who were members of the same political party when the donations were made, or to a political party and to one or more of its members. The donation statement must give details of the donations and the persons to whom they were made, and must be furnished by 31 January of the following year.

If a donor does not intend to comply with this requirement and a member or a party is aware of this, the member/party is prohibited from accepting a donation from that individual.

No donation statements from individual donors were received in respect of 2022.

Donations with a total value of €3,570 were disclosed by two donors in respect of 2021.

Chapter 5: Publication of donation statements

The Commission has today laid the donation statements referred to in this report before each House of the Oireachtas, pursuant to section 24 (7) (a) of the Act, and the documents are available on the Oireachtas website, www.oireachtas.ie.

The donation statements received are now available on the Commission's website. A copy of this report and accompanying press release are also available on the Commission's website, www.sipo.ie.

Certificates of monetary donations, statutory declarations and accompanying bank statements are not required to be laid before the Houses and are not available for public inspection as per Section 23B(8) of the Electoral Act 1997.

Appendix 1 - Donations disclosed by members

Member	Party	Number of donations	Value of donations €
Senator Shane Cassells	Fianna Fáil	1	1,000
Senator John McGahon	Fine Gael	1	1,000
Paul Murphy TD	People before Profit/ Solidarity	3	3,000
Leo Varadkar TD*	Fine Gael	1	1,033
Total			6,033

* €33.20 excess returned to donor