

Joint Crisis Committee: The Irish Question of 1919



Handbook
Dáil Éireann

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JOINT CRISIS COMMITTEE: THE IRISH QUESTION OF 1919

HANDBOOK FOR DÁIL ÉIREANN

The session begins in January 21st 1919 with the formation of the new Irish Parliament, the Dáil

This Handbook is intended to assist the Teachtaí Dála (TDs) of Dáil Éireann in understanding and applying the Rules of Procedure adopted by the assembly of the Irish Republic, as declared on 21 January 1919.

Each procedural matter concerning the operation of the Dáil is governed by established rules of procedure. This Handbook does not supersede such rules; rather, it aims to provide practical clarification on matters of significance to the conduct of sessions and parliamentary responsibility.

Members are encouraged to retain a copy of this Handbook or the adopted rules of procedure when attending sittings of the Dáil. This will ensure the smooth conduct of deliberations and minimize the risk of procedural misunderstandings during debates, legislative sessions, or Cabinet meetings.

In instances where a discrepancy arises between this Handbook and the official Standing Orders of Dáil Éireann, or where this Handbook is silent on a specific matter, the rules passed by the Rules of Procedure shall take precedence. Where uncertainty is perceived in the language or structure of those official rules, Members are advised to refer directly to the Dáil Secretariat for clarification.

A.Members of the Dáil

1. Teachta Dála

TD of Dáil Éireann (Teachta Dála) are entrusted with the governance of national affairs on behalf of the People of Ireland. They are responsible for the execution of government policy, the administration of their departments, and the upholding of the principles of Irish sovereignty.

2. Aireacht

Aireacht are the cabinet of the ministers of Dáil Éireann, which are expected to be appointed by the President of the Republic at the end of the First Dáil's second session. Though operating under British rule and without formal international recognition, these ministers are expected to be tasked with establishing institutions of governance in Ireland.

Members of the government and their jurisdictions are as follows:

President of Dáil Éireann:

The President of Dáil Éireann acts as the head of the government. Tasked with

directing the general policy of the Republic they may appoint or dismiss ministers and form a new government if they wish without the need of a Vote of No Confidence.

Minister for Finance:

Responsible for national finances, including the collection of funds, budgeting for civil and military expenditures, and managing economic affairs.

Minister for Defence:

Oversees the defence operations responsible for coordinating the military defence of the Republic and supervising security measures.

Minister for Foreign Affairs:

Charged with representing the Irish Republic to foreign powers, seeking diplomatic recognition, and managing international correspondence.

Minister for Home Affairs:

Responsible for civil administration, public order and internal security.

B. Key Concepts

1. National Resistance

Irish Volunteers

Irish Volunteers serve as the primary armed force of the Irish Independence movement. Their main tasks include conducting operations on Royal Irish Constabulary barracks, seizing arms, protesting patrols, enforcing Republican decrees, and providing protection for Dáil Éireann representatives. They act with de facto military authority in areas with strained British presence, though their chain of command is still in progress. While not recognized formally, they operate as the unofficial army of the Irish Republic, coordinating loosely under regional brigade staff.

Irish Republican Brotherhood

IRB's Military Council functions as a covert organ directing the strategic development of the armed struggle outside the formal command structure of the Dáil Éireann . Only known by their name and their actions, IRB has no affiliation with Dáil Éireann and there

is no direct way to commute with them as they are a covert organization with no confirmed identities of its members.

Cumann na mBan

Cumann na mBan functions as a women's auxiliary to the Irish Volunteers.

Fianna Éireann

Fianna Éireann functions as a youth auxiliary to the Irish Volunteers.

2. Finance

All financial matters within the United Kingdom are under the control of the British government including the ones stationed in Ireland such as the Bank of Ireland, thus there are no formal banks or financial institutions present in Ireland. However, there exists a Ministry of Finance to carry out future economic events in the newly formed parliament.

3. Industry and Available Infrastructure

Factories and industries in Ireland are owned and under the direct command of the British government. The privately Irish owned industries are listed below as follows,

Agriculture

Agriculture defines the Irish living conditions, employing the majority of the population and accounting for the largest share of national output. The sector is largely under the control of Irish tenant and smallholding farmers, despite the island being under British rule. The midlands and southeast, such as Meath, Carlow, and Kilkenny produce grains like oats and barley, as well as root crops like potatoes and turnips.

Livestock

The southern and western counties such as Cork, Kerry, Limerick, and Tipperary are devoted to carrying out the country's strongest dairy and beef cattle operations.

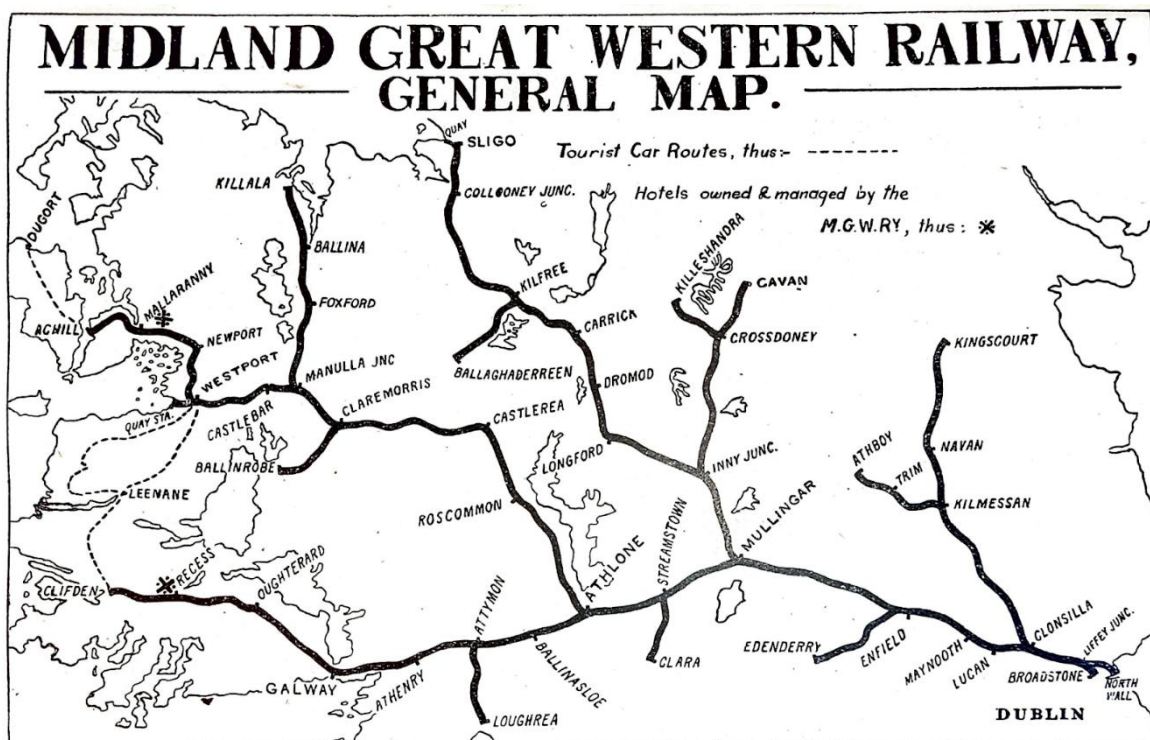
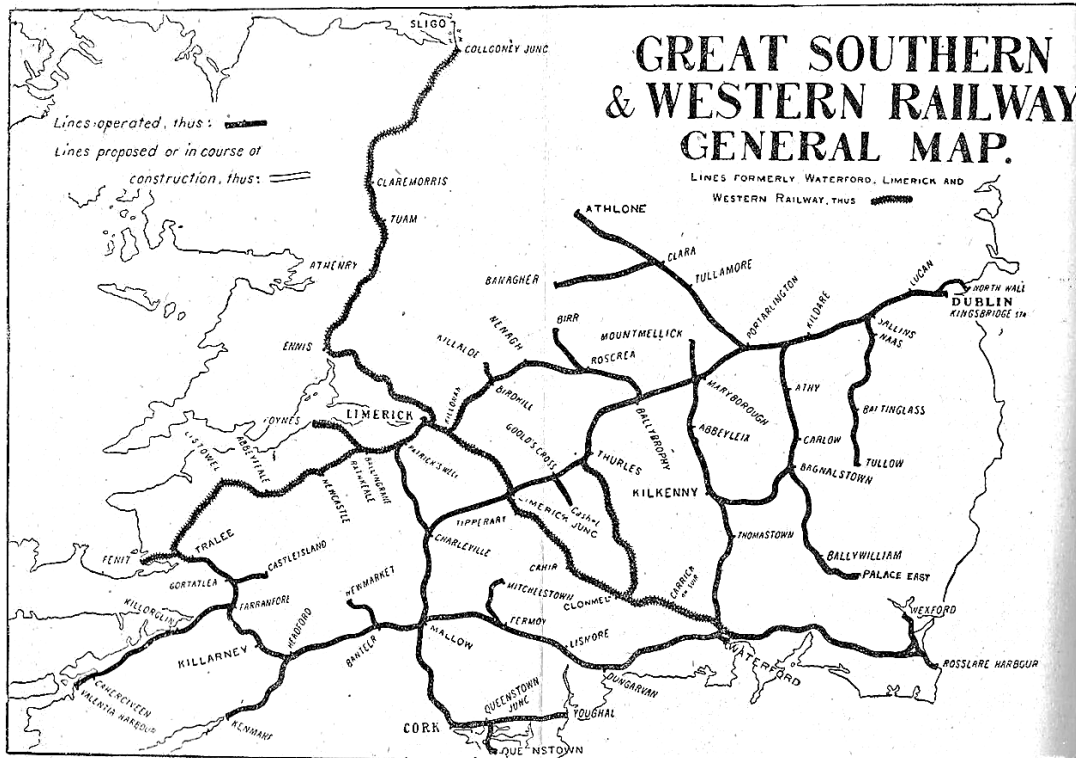
Linen

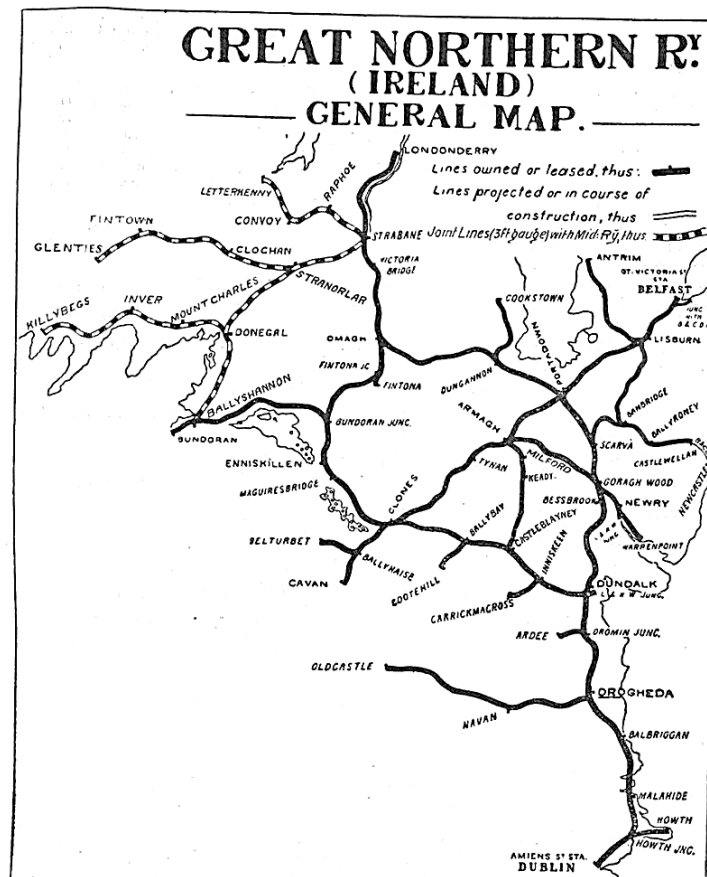
Linen production represents one of Ireland's most established and export-oriented industries in 1919, particularly dominant in Ulster. The northeastern counties, especially Belfast, Londonderry (Derry), and Armagh, are home to the largest concentrations of linen mills and finishing factories.

Transport

The major Irish railway companies are private companies registered in Ireland, with mostly Irish shareholders and Irish directors. Major lines of Great Southern & Western

Railway, Great Northern Railway and Midland Great Western Railway are privately owned by the Irish but controlled by the British government, specifically the Board of Trade.





4. Simple Majority

The concept of simple majority in Dáil Éireann refers to the standard method by which decisions, motions, and legislative proposals are adopted during sessions. A simple majority is achieved when more members vote in favor of a measure than vote against it, regardless of the total number of members present.

C. Caucuses and Other Motions

1. Semi-moderated caucus

A Semi-Moderated Caucus is quite similar to a Moderated Caucus, with the sole exception being the absence of “total time” and “individual speaking time”. The chairman is the only authority with the means of deciding the “total time” of the caucus and may interrupt or cut off the speech of any committee member. Nevertheless, the Chairman must explain his/her reasons to the committee member if she/he decides to cut off their speech.

In Semi-Moderated Caucus, the right to speak is granted by the Chairman and TDs have to rise in their seats while delivering a speech. The maximum speech length is limited to 2 minutes, though the chairman may use discretion to allow longer speeches if he/she deems it necessary. An extension to a Semi-Moderated Caucus cannot be proposed.

A Motion for a Semi-Moderated Caucus requires a simple majority to pass.

2. Unmoderated caucus

The Unmoderated Caucus procedure is the same as that of the EUROsimA 2025 Standard Rules of Parliamentary Procedure, but total time can be restricted according to the decisions of the Chairman. An extension to an Unmoderated Caucus can be proposed, but only the the chairman has the authority to decide on whether the motion shall be entertained.

A Motion for an Unmoderated Caucus requires a simple majority to pass.

3. Motion to initiate a substantive voting procedure

Decrees, mandates and press releases are subject to substantive voting procedure. In order to put these documents to vote, the Dáil has to initiate a substantive voting procedure.

A substantive voting procedure lasts until the Board terminates it, the proposals to be voted are exhausted or the time allocated for the session elapses. In these cases, no motion is required to terminate the voting procedure.

Substantive voting procedure is consisted of stages that would be followed for each proposal:

- a. Presentation of the proposal: The submitter of the proposal reads the proposal in exact wording.
- b. Speeches: If the Board wishes , they may entertain for or against speakers.
- c. Amendments: Until the end of the previous step, TDs may submit amendments only for decrees. No amendments may be submitted for mandates or for press releases. If an amendment was submitted, the Board calls for a motion to introduce the amendment. If the motion passes, the amendments will be presented to the Dáil. If the motion does not pass, the Dáil will directly proceed to voting.
- d. Voting: The Board will ask for those in favour and against the proposal. If the proposal meets the simple majority, it will pass and will be delivered to its concerning body.

4. Motion to introduce an amendment

If the Board receives an amendment to the proposal currently as the Dáil is discussing, it will be announced, and the Board will call for a motion to introduce the amendment. This motion does not have to be raised for every individual amendment if there is more than one for a single decree. If the motion passes, the Board will read the amendment to the Dáil and the amendment will be voted. Whether there would be any discussion on the amendment is on the Board's discretion.

5. Motion for a vote of no confidence

Unlike other motions, this motion has to be raised in written form. If a TD believes that the Cabinet is unable to fulfil its duties, he can raise this motion. When the Board receives the motion, it will terminate the discussion in the Dáil and announce that there is a motion for a vote of no confidence and ask for sponsors. If three TDs sponsor the motion the motion will be considered in order and will be voted on. If the motion passes, the Aireacht will be dissolved by the President of the Dáil and a new list of ministers will be decided by him.

Reasons do not have to be too elaborate, or even real, if the TD who submits the motion is able to secure enough votes by convincing his fellow TDs for his motion.

Example motion for a vote of no confidence:

From: Constance Markievicz, Minister for Labour

To: President of Dáil Éireann

Subject: Motion for a Vote of No Confidence

I hereby submit a motion of no confidence in the Aireacht for failing to act against the rising harassment and arrests of Dáil-aligned local authorities by Crown forces in Clare.

6. Motion to suspend the Dáil

7. Motion to adjourn the Dáil

D. Official Documents of the Dáil

1. Dáil Decrees

Dáil Decrees are formal legislative acts issued by Dáil Éireann to establish, regulate, or amend the legal and administrative framework of the Irish Republic. These decrees serve as the highest form of law passed by the revolutionary assembly. Dáil Decrees may create state institutions, define the powers of government departments, authorize public expenditure, and implement Irish republican alternatives in place of British provisions.

For example, if a deputy proposes allocating funds to the potato farms, they must submit a decree outlining the amount and legal authority for such spending as well as the specific articles for how, why, when, and where it is implemented. If the treasury lacks the necessary funds, a separate decree or a directive must authorize the related Ministry to raise loans or seek alternative revenue.

Additionally, the Dáil has the creative option use decrees to introduce constitutional changes or procedural alterations affecting the structure and operations of the Aireacht or Dáil Éireann as a whole.

Such decrees may alter ministerial responsibilities, official procedures, or institutional authorities within the framework of the Dáil. All the rules of Dáil Decrees apply to Constitutional Dáil Decrees. TDs need to state that it's a Constitutional Dáil Decree by starting their subject title with "Constitutional Dáil Bill for..."

Example of a Dáil Éireann Decree:

Title: Bill for Authorization of Public Loan for the Provisional Treasury of the Irish Republic

1. In recognition of the urgent financial needs of the Republic in maintaining civil administration and supporting national defence, the Irish government shall be authorized to raise funds through a public loan not exceeding £500,000.
2. This loan shall be raised through public subscription from individuals and institutions, both domestic and abroad, particularly from those of Irish descent.
3. Through this loan the Irish government is empowered to issue loan bonds in denominations.
4. The interest on said bonds shall not exceed 5% annually, and repayment terms shall be guaranteed by the authority of Dáil Éireann.
5. All proceeds from the loan shall be managed and recorded in the official financial accounts of the Republic.

Submitted by:

Michael Collins

Signatories:

W. T. Cosgrave , Austin Stack ,

Robert Childers Barton , Ernest Blythe

Example of a Constitutional Dáil Decree:

Title: Constitutional Dáil Bill for the Reassignment of Ministerial Positions

This decree proposes a structural change in the Aireacht by reassigning the responsibilities of the Minister for Home Affairs to a Ministry of Irish Language which will be established. The new ministry shall assume oversight of internal policing, civil registry, and municipal governance, while the original ministry will retain its jurisdiction over electoral affairs and emergency administration.

Submitted by: Richard Mulcahy

Signatories: Laurence Ginnell, Seán MacEntee, Kevin O'Higgins

2. Dáil Mandates

Dáil Mandates are official plan of orders issued by Dáil Éireann concerning strategic, military, or operational matters. Unlike decrees, which legislate general legal frameworks, mandates are specific ,detailed orders with time constraints intended to coordinate actions among executive organs, military units, or republican institutions. These may include the authorisation of armed operations, surveillance operations, mobilisation of local forces, or the seizure of supplies under republican jurisdiction.

For example, if a TD proposes an armed action against Crown forces in a particular county, a mandate must be submitted detailing the objective, location, forces involved, timeline, and how it is conveyed. Once submitted, mandates must be forwarded to the relevant Minister which is usually Defence or Home Affairs for oversight before proceeding to a vote.

Example of a Dáil Mandate:

Title: Dáil Mandate for Ambush Operation in County Tipperary

Dáil Éireann hereby authorizes a coordinated armed operation against a British military convoy scheduled to pass along the Clonmel Cahir road near Soloheadbeg, County Tipperary, on 17 October. Based on intelligence received from Irish Volunteers, the convoy will consist of two motor lorries carrying British soldiers, two officers, three captured Republican Volunteers, and a cargo of rifles, 1,000 rounds of ammunition, and field medical supplies. This convoy represents a critical target of opportunity, as it poses a direct threat to Volunteer operations and local Republican administration in South Tipperary.

The ambush is to be carried out by a strike unit of 8 to 10 Volunteers drawn from the 3rd Tipperary Brigade. The unit will be commanded on the ground by high-ranking liutenants, with strategic oversight and coordination provided by local Volunteer units in County Tiperary. 10 rifles and 20 grenades from secured Volunteer armament storage located in the Munster district will be provided to support the mission as well.

The ambush will be executed at a narrow road at night. The unit will disable the vehicle using grenades, then open fire to neutralize the escort. Once the convoy is secured, the captured Republican Volunteers will be freed, and arms and supplies will be seized.

Sponsor: Ernest Blythe

Signatories: Harry Boland, Eoin MacNeill, Patrick McCartan

3. Press Release

Press releases are substantive documents which state the official opinion of the the First Dáil and the Cabinet of the United Kingdom to the public. In the Dáil, press releases may be issued individually by members and jointly on behalf of the entire assembly.

4. Ministerial Directives

Ministerial Directives are issued by individual ministers within their jurisdiction and serve to implement internal executive actions according to their ministerial responsibilities. Ministerial Directives are confined strictly to the Minister's area of jurisdiction.

E. Battle Sessions

Battle sessions are sessions in which instant battle occurs. A battle session, if needed, will be called into action by the Under-Secretary-General. During a battle session the combat will operate in a back and forth manner with the Academic Team ordered such that an action will be taken by both sides simultaneously, evaluated by the academic team, and announced at the same time to both sides.

If the need for high intensity combat ever arises the procedure of the battle session will be as the following:

1. Both sides will be given 5 minutes to prepare a document with no format to explain in detail what the respective side will do. The given time can be altered at the discretion of the under-secretary-general.
2. When the given time elapses, the documents will be taken and evaluated by the academic team during which both sides are free to strategize their next step.
3. After evaluations are done, both sides will be informed at the same time and if there is a need to continue the battle session a new turn will begin.
4. When the battle session reaches an end, the academic team will inform both sides.