

Our Common Sense Immigration Policy

Manifesto 2024



An Imirce

Mar gheall ar bheartais imirce an Rialtais a bheith ar easpa pleanála, comhsheasmhachta, inbhuanaitheachta agus comhairliúchán pobail, tá cúrsaí inimirce ina gcóir thuathail. Ba é Aontú an chéad pháirtí a thug chun solais na fadhbanna ollmhóra i gcur chuige an rialtais. Tá dúshlán an rialtais á thabhairt againn ó shin i leith. Go dtí gur thosaigh pobalbhreitheanna ag léiriú go raibh 70% de mhuintir na hÉireann an-bhuartha le beartas an rialtais, bhí an rialtas go hiomlán dall maidir lena raibh ag tarlú.

Tá léirithe i gCeisteanna Parlaiminte Aontú go bhfuil sé ag tógáil blianta fada leis an gcéad chinneadh tearmainn a dhéanamh i leith na mílte iarratasóir. Bhí sé ag tógáil suas le 10 mbliana ar iarratasóir ar thearmann na hachomhairc go léir a ídiú sula ndéanfaí cinneadh deiridh.

Léiríonn Ceist Pharlaiminte eile de chuid Aontú go ndearnadh **1,792** ordú díbeartha anuraidh. Údar uafáis é nár chuir an rialtas i bhfeidhm ach **98** acu sin. Ciallaíonn sé sin nár ndearnadh ach 5% de na horduithe díbeartha go léir a fhorghníomhú. Rinneadh **648** díbirt dheonach, ach ní féidir leis an rialtas a dhearbú ar fhág na daoine sin an tír.

Cén mhaith córas a bheith ann atá ceaptha chun idirdhealú a dhéanamh idir daoine a bhfuil cabhair ag teastáil uathu agus iad siúd nach bhfuil agus ansin, ag deireadh an phróisis, na torthaí céanna a bheith ag an dá ghrúpa agus go bhfanann siad go léir in Éirinn.

Tá na mílte duine ag teacht go hÉirinn agus iad tar éis a gcáipéisí taistil a scriosadh. Fágann sin go mbíonn sé i bhfad níos deacra iarratais ar thearmann a phróiseáil. Creideann Aontú nár cheart cead isteach sa tír a thabhairt do dhuine a bhfuil a ndoiciméid taistil scriosta d'aonturas acu.

Maidir le 76% de na daoine a dhéanann iarratas ar thearmann in Éirinn, ní dhéanann siad é sna haerfoirt nó sna calafoirt ach san Oifig um Chosaint Idirnáisiúnta. Tháinig a bhformhór ón mBreatain trí thuaisceart Éireann. D'fhiafraigh Aontú den Aire Dlí agus Cirt cé mhéad atá ag teacht tríd an mbealach sin. Dúirt an tAire linn nach raibh a fhios aici. Chuir an tAire in iúl dúinn nach gcuirtear ceist ar iarratasóirí cén chaoi ar tháinig siad isteach sa tír.

Údar náire agus uafáis é nach bhfuil an tAire Dlí agus Cirt ag cur na gceisteanna cuí féin. Tá teorainn farráige na hÉireann á lorg ag Aontú ag na haerfoirt agus ag na calafoirt farantóireachta i dTuaisceart Éireann ionas go gcaifear leis an oileán mar aontacht ó thaobh an phróisis tearmainn de. Tá Aontú ag moladh go ndéanfar Gníomhaireacht Teorann aonair a chruthú a bheidh freagrach as bainistiú a dhéanamh ar iarratais, forghníomhú cinntí, cóiríocht, comhairliúchán pobail agus slándáil cois teorann.

Is páirtí féinchinntiúcháin é Aontú. Cuirimid i gcoinne Chomhshocrú an AE maidir le hImirce a chreimfidh cumas na rialtas intíre a gcórais inimirce a bhainistiú agus oiriúnú d'aon athruithe ar an imirce.

Tá córas dian tapa inimirce á lorg ag Aontú a dhéanann idirdhealú idir iad siúd a bhfuil cabhair ag teastáil uathu, iad siúd atá ag teitheadh ó chogadh agus ó fhoréigean, agus iad siúd nach bhfuil. Tá daoine maithe ina gcónaí in Éirinn a tháinig ó thíortha eile ag déanamh obair thábhachtach luachmhar. Creideann Aontú sa chomhionannas agus gur cheart meas a bheith ar gach duine a chuireann go dlíthiúil le sochaí na hÉireann.

Preface

The lack of planning, consistency, sustainability, and community consultation by the Government on its immigration policies has created chaos.

It was Aontú who first raised the massive problems in the government approach. We have been challenging the government ever since. Until opinion polls started to show that 70% of the Irish people were deeply uncomfortable with the government's policy, the government was oblivious to what was happening.

Aontú Parliamentary Questions have shown that it has been taking years for the first asylum decision to be made for thousands of applicants. It was taking up to **10 years** for an asylum applicant to exhaust all of the appeals before a final decision is made.

Another Aontú Parliamentary Question has shown that last year, there were **1,792** deportation orders made. Shockingly the government only enforced **98** of these. That's 5% of all deportation orders being enforced. There were **648** voluntary deportations, yet the government cannot confirm if these people left the country.

What is the point of having a system that is supposed to differentiate between people who need help and those who don't and then at the end of the process both groups have the same outcomes and stay in Ireland.

Thousands of people are arriving in Ireland who have destroyed their travel documents. This makes it much more difficult to process asylum applications. Aontú believe that a person who has purposefully destroyed their travel documents should not be given leave to land.

76% of people applying for asylum in Ireland don't do it at the airports or the ports but at the International Protection Office. The vast majority have come from Britain through the north of Ireland. Aontú asked the Minister for Justice, how many are coming through this route. The Minister told us she did not know. The Minister told us that applicants are not asked how they came into the country.

It's outrageous that the Minister for Justice is not even asking the relevant questions. Aontú seek an Irish sea border at the airports and ferry ports in the North of Ireland so that the Island is treated as a unit in terms of the asylum process. Aontú are advocating for the creation of a single Border Agency that will be responsible for the management of applications, enforcement of decisions, accommodation, community consultation and border security.

Aontú is a party of self-determination. We oppose the EU Migration Pact which will erode the ability of domestic governments to manage their immigration systems and adapt to any changes in migration.

Aontú seek a strict and speedy immigration system that differentiates between those who need help, those who are fleeing war and violence, and those who don't. There are good people living in Ireland who have come from other countries doing important and valuable work. Aontú believes in equality and respect for all those who are legally contributing to Irish society.



New Irish Border Agency

We will create a new Border Agency. It will take over responsibility for border control, processing of applications and enforcement. Currently only a few hundred people are involved in managing our border systems and they are operating across two different government departments and in four different guises – the Garda National Immigration Bureau, the International Protection Office, The Border Management Unit and the International Protection Procurement Service.

As an example, there are currently only 31 staff in the International Protection Procurement Service which is charged with finding accommodation for what will be 20,000 IPAS applicants by the end of 2024 – that is 1 member of staff for 709 individuals which is clearly not efficient or sustainable.

Aontú have looked extensively at other EU countries of similar size to determine a better way forward. Lithuania, a country of similar population and size, have an integrated border force of over 4,000 staff – our investment in a new Border Agency will be of the same magnitude.



Re-instate Planning Laws

We will re-instate the application of planning laws for asylum accommodation. Currently, no planning is required for IPAS accommodation – we have former industrial complexes, hotels and other buildings being automatically converted to house migrants without any input from the local population.

If the building of homes, business premises or any other community facility must run the gauntlet of planning processes, then not only should this apply to asylum accommodation, but the public must also be able to have their say on those applications.

Aontú will end the exemption for asylum accommodation from planning law.



A Community Dividend

Where communities agree to host migrants, there must be a community dividend. The Government set aside millions of euros for this purpose, yet allocated only a small amount.

If a town or village agree to an increase in their population, the Government must provide immediate, sustainable investment in public services such as schools, healthcare and housing so that not only can local services cope with more demand, but that those who wish to create conflict with others on the basis of pressure on public services will have no fertile ground on which to spread disharmony.



Applications determined in 6 months

We will ensure that every application for asylum is processed within 6 months. This will be achieved through the new Border Agency which will be appropriately staffed. We have had asylum applicants wait up to ten years for their applications to be determined, and this must end.

Aontú will create a new court and properly resource it to decide on asylum applications. Where the new court refuse an appeal, the applicant must be subject to enforced deportation.

For several years and indeed recently, the system overseen by the Government has made no difference in the outcome of applications – those who were granted asylum were able to stay alongside those who had their applications refused because agencies were not forced to act on implementing rules that were already in place.



End the destruction of documents

The situation where some migrants destroy their travel documents to prevent the lawful processing of any asylum application or deportation is in flagrant breach of Irish and European law.

We are clear, where an applicant deliberately destroys or loses travel documents, they will be refused permission to land. There have been instances where people have come to this country, destroyed their travel documents and rather than being held as is mandated in Irish law, they are released from their port of entry and are able to make their way to claim asylum at the IPAS centre in Dublin. There are no checks as to where these people then go.

We know that the vast majority of those entering the country do so having first been in another European country. Their details are recorded by the EU Frontex system and so Irish authorities will know from where someone has come from should they destroy their travel documents.

That information is currently underutilised, and we want to ensure that anyone who comes to this country with intentions to frustrate our lawful processes as their very first act, will not be allowed to remain.



No entry for criminals

The Government are not checking well-established international databases for the criminal background of anyone entering the country – a major scandal uncovered by Aontú.

We will not permit the entry into the country of anyone with a criminal record. Living in Ireland is a privilege, one which will not be extended to those who have not respected the laws either in their home country or in another in which they have lived.



Enforcing deportations

Voluntary deportation is a myth perpetuated by this Government.

After a long asylum process where the State has spent large amounts of public resources, there is no difference to the outcome of an asylum application – if someone is refused the right to remain, they can simply ignore the outcome as the Gardaí will not seek to remove them. This must end.

Under the new Border Agency, appropriate numbers of staff will be dedicated to enforcing deportation orders and seeing those who have been ordered from the State physically leave.



Fairness in allocation of resources

This Government has created a situation whereby some people who have entered the country have been given priority in areas like accommodation, health or transport.

We will ensure that non-citizens will no longer be prioritised over Irish citizens for any public service. The idea that modular homes can be provided for some coming to the country whilst refused to Irish people and their families who are homeless is not reconcilable. The government's policy is creating deep anger and division.

There should be no circumstances whereby resources are prioritised for those entering the country for any reason, over those who have lived here their whole lives and have paid the taxes that sustain such services. Aontú will demand this be enshrined in law.



An Irish Sea Border

We will create an Irish Sea Border for people. The Government has failed in its most basic border protection duty – to know where people are entering the State from.

By establishing a border in the Irish Sea for the movement of people, we can manage the flow of people either through ports or through the land border with the north of Ireland.

Through Aontú's research, we forced the Minister to admit the vast majority of those entering the State were coming from the north of Ireland. It should also be noted that the benefits of the Common Travel Area are for British and Irish citizens only.

If we can implement a system for goods in line with international law, we believe this can be implemented in line with the Common Travel Area, the mechanics of which already allow for measures such as inspections and related migration action.

It has been argued that this measure would affect the Common Travel Area, however, there are already preventative, and intelligence led checks on the land border as well as a specific Irish-British operations called Operation Gull which aims to intercept and remove migrants who use this route to enter illegally. In Ireland, relevant activities are sometimes called Operation Sonnet.

In theory, the CTA allows British and Irish travellers to enter both jurisdictions without immigration control or a passport, however, it is increasingly common practice to require some form of government-issued ID or a passport to travel by air or sea between the two.

Indeed, the High Court has outlined in *Pachero & Anor v MJE & Ors* [2011] IEHC 491, 29 December 2011, para 18:

“While in theory both Irish and British citizens are entitled to arrive here free from immigration control by virtue of the common travel area, increasingly in practice such passengers who arrive by air from the United Kingdom are required to produce their passports (or, at least, some other form of acceptable identity document) in order to prove to immigration officers that they are either Irish or British citizens who can avail of the common travel area.”



Oversight of State resources

Aontú has fought extensively to bring information about our migration system to the public. This is in stark contrast to the actions of the Government parties who have sought to limit the amount of information the public had access to in order to conceal their scandalous failures.

Going forward, Aontú will seek the relevant Minister to lay before the Dáil a report that will comprehensively outline the resources and finance being used in the system each year so that Irish taxpayers can hold their elected representatives to account.

Whilst this may seem an uncontroversial demand, up until now the Dáil has only voted on Departmental Accounts which cover spending that may be accrued, whereas there have been numerous instances of several tens of millions of euro being spent on the IPAS system in particular without the Oireachtas having been advised or support sought.

Vótáil **AONTÚ** **1**
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