

NOT HERE
NOT ANYWHERE
CLIMATE
SCORE



Methodology

1. What is the Climate Score?

The Climate Score collates voting records on climate-related Bills of General Election 2020 candidates who have served as TDs between 2005 and 2019. A score is calculated for each candidate with a voting record, who has voted at least 3 times, and a Party Score is calculated for each political party based on the average scores of these candidates.

Candidates have been assigned a green tick for their CLIMATE POSITIVE VOTES, a red “x” for CLIMATE NEGATIVE votes, a black “⊕” for ABSENT and a black “-” if they were not a member of the Dáil for that vote. They have also been assigned an overall score which calculates their % of CLIMATE POSITIVE votes based on how many climate-related votes they were present for during their Dáil term(s). The scorecard also shows if the candidate has or has not signed the Not Here Not Anywhere [Fossil Free Election Pledge](#).

The Climate Score does not attempt or claim to be a comprehensive representation of a candidate or a political party’s position on climate, it is a presentation of one particular dataset, namely TD voting records. Not Here Not Anywhere is a non-partisan group and does not endorse any candidate or party.

2. How was the Climate Scorecard calculated?

The methodology used is largely consistent with that used by Guardian UK for their [2019 MP Climate Score](#), and has been reviewed by independent academic reviewers. Six climate-related Bills were selected (see Appendix A). To identify these Bills, a list was generated of all Bills voted on since 1975 (the year at which the longest-serving current TD, Enda Kenny, entered the Dáil). Next, as the climate score is based on voting records, Bills which had not been voted on were removed. This left a longlist of 870 Bills. Titles and descriptions of these were reviewed for climate-relevance, resulting in a shortlist of 41 Bills. The text of these 41 Bills was reviewed and six Bills finally selected as climate-related Bills. The selection of these Bills was subjective and the number of Bills selected was restricted to six due to time and resource constraints.

A review of Dáil debates identified a total of 22 votes related to these Bills. The nature of these votes was reviewed e.g. the amendment being voted on, and a Tá or Níl vote designated as CLIMATE POSITIVE or CLIMATE NEGATIVE.

One vote was designated as an “ambiguous vote”, and excluded from the climate score. This was the final vote to pass the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Bill in 2015. Analysis of the debate indicated that some TDs voted for the Bill to pass as they believed it was urgent for the legislation to be enacted, although they thought it was weak, while some voted against the passing of the Bill as they believed it to be too weak. It was judged that, as in this case both a Tá vote and a Níl vote could

be argued to be CLIMATE POSITIVE, the vote should be excluded from the analysis. It is also noted that the academic consensus is that the Climate Act is very weak in international terms (Torney, 2019; Jackson, forthcoming).

3. Limitations of the Climate Score

3.1. Other work on climate action:

The Climate Score does not capture a lot of important work on climate action by elected representatives which happens outside the 21 votes detailed in Appendix A, including:

- Seanad votes on these Bills and Seanad work on climate action.
- The work of cross-party committees such as the Joint Committee on Climate Change and Energy Security in 2009 and 2010 and the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Climate Action in 2018 and 2019.
- Bills proposed by representatives which are not voted on.
- Bills proposed by government parties - the Prohibition of Onshore Hydraulic Fracturing Bill and the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Bill were proposed by TDs in Government at the time, but the Climate Score only incorporate votes on proposed amendments to these Bills, which were usually proposed by opposition parties. For this reason the Climate Score could be said to favour opposition parties.
- The valuable work of individual representatives across the Oireachtas on climate action. It is noted that individuals in parties are generally required to vote on party lines and their vote may not always reflect their personal commitment to or work on climate action.

3.2. Double-counting:

it could be argued that some of the 21 votes were on similar points, and that including more than one vote on a point is double-counting, as it would be expected that TDs would vote consistently. For example, regarding Bill 2016_037 Prohibition of Onshore Hydraulic Fracturing, all four amendments voted on relate to essentially the same point - extending the Bill to include a prohibition on offshore drilling. The possibility of including only one of these votes was considered. However, as a number of TDs voted differently on different votes, all four were included. This rationale was applied to all votes to keep the methodology consistent.

3.3. Pairing:

“Pairing” occurs when a member of the government is absent on reasonable grounds and an opposition TD will “pair” them, and does not vote. As information on pairing was not available, this was not taken into account when calculating the score.

References

Torney, D. (2019) ‘Climate laws in small European states: symbolic legislation and limits of diffusion in Ireland and Finland’ (2019) *Environmental Politics* 28:6, 1124-1144

Jackson, A. (forthcoming) ‘Ireland’s Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015: symbolic legislation, Trojan horse, stepping stone?’ In: Muinzer (ed.) *Major National Climate Change Acts: their Emergence, Form and Nature*. London: Hart

Appendix A: Climate Votes

| # | Bill | Vote | Date | Link to vote | Vote analysis |
|---|---|--|-------------|---|--|
| 1 | 2005_32 Climate Change Targets Bill | Bill entitled an Act to safeguard the fulfilment of our obligations to meet climate change targets | 30/Nov/2005 | https://www.oir.eachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2005-11-30/27/ | A Tá vote is a POSITIVE climate vote because it aimed to safeguard the fulfilment of our obligations to meet climate change targets |
| 2 | 2012_045 Energy Security and Climate Change Bill | Bill entitled an Act to make provision for the adoption of a national policy and the making of plans by the Government in order for the State to reduce energy demand [...] | 12/Feb/2013 | https://www.oir.eachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2013-02-12/19/ | A Tá vote is a CLIMATE POSITIVE climate vote because it aimed to set legally binding reductions in GHG emissions for 2030 and beyond |
| 3 | 2016_103 Fossil Fuel Divestment Bill | Bill entitled an Act to amend the National Treasury Management Agency (Amendment) Act 2014 instructing the Agency to divest the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund, currently under the remit of the Agency, of its assets in fossil fuel companies within five years of the commencement of this Act [...] | 26/Jan/2017 | https://www.oir.eachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2017-01-26/13/ | A Níl vote is a CLIMATE POSITIVE climate vote (because it was a vote on an amendment which was an attempt to kill the Bill) |
| 4 | 2018_009 Climate Emergency Measures Bill | Bill entitled an Act to provide for the amendment of the Petroleum and Other Minerals Development Act 1960, to ensure regard is had to national and global environmental considerations [...] | 08/Feb/2018 | https://www.oir.eachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2018-02-08/32/ | A Tá vote is a CLIMATE POSITIVE vote, as the bill would end offshore fossil fuel licencing |
| 5 | | | 28/Mar/2019 | https://www.oir.eachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2019-03-28/43/ | A Níl vote is a CLIMATE POSITIVE vote as it was a vote on an amendment which was an attempt to kill the Bill |
| 6 | 2016_037 Prohibition of Onshore Hydraulic Fracturing | Bill entitled an Act to provide for the prohibition of the exploration and extraction of petroleum from shale rock, tight sands and coal seams in the Irish onshore and Ireland's internal waters. | 31/May/2015 | https://www.oir.eachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2017-05-31/2/ | Amendment 1 a Tá vote is a CLIMATE POSITIVE vote as it was an amendment to add offshore drilling to the Bill |
| 7 | | | | | Amendment 3 a Tá vote is a CLIMATE POSITIVE vote as it was an amendment to add offshore drilling to the Bill |
| 8 | | | | | Amendment 4a a Tá vote is a CLIMATE POSITIVE vote as it was an amendment to reflect the addition of offshore drilling to the Bill |
| 9 | | | | | Amendment 5 a Tá vote is a CLIMATE POSITIVE |

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| | | | | | vote as it was an amendment to add offshore drilling to the Bill |
| 10 | 2015_002 Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Bill | Bill entitled an Act to provide for the approval of plans by the Government in relation to climate change for the purpose of pursuing the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy; to establish a body to be known in the Irish language as An Chomhairle Chomhairleach Shaineolach Náisiúnta um Athrú Aeráide or, in the English language, as the National Expert Advisory Council on Climate Change; and to provide for matters connected therewith | 31/May/2017 | https://www.oir.eachtas.ie/en/d ebates/debate/dail/2015-09-29/25/ | Amendment 5 a Tá vote is a CLIMATE POSITIVE vote as it was an amendment to set baseline years for national emissions reduction targets |
| 11 | | | 29/Sept/2015 | https://www.oir.eachtas.ie/en/d ebates/debate/dail/2015-09-29/25/ | Amendment 19 a Tá vote is a CLIMATE POSITIVE vote as it was an amendment to add the risks posed by climate change to public health and associated costs to the HSE |
| 12 | | | 30/Sept/2015 | https://www.oir.eachtas.ie/en/d ebates/debate/dail/2015-09-30/15/ | Amendment 27 a Níl vote is a CLIMATE POSITIVE vote as it the amendment called for a shortening of the time period for publication of the first national mitigation plan from 24 months after enactment of the Bill to 18 months. TDs who voted against this amendment did so as they believed the 18 month period to be still too long, and argued for it to be shortened to 6 months (as proposed in Amendment 134, below). |
| 13 | | | 30/Sept/2015 | https://www.oir.eachtas.ie/en/d ebates/debate/dail/2015-09-30/31/ | Amendment 31 a Tá vote is a CLIMATE POSITIVE vote as it was an amendment to require the setting of targets of reductions in CO2 emissions through 2050 |
| 14 | | | 30/Sept/2015 | https://www.oir.eachtas.ie/en/d ebates/debate/dail/2015-09-30/36/ | Amendment 34 a Tá vote is a CLIMATE POSITIVE vote as it was an amendment for transparency on the projected total national emissions for the period of a national mitigation plan on the basis of all the policy measures specified in the plan |
| 15 | | | 30/Sept/2015 | https://www.oir.eachtas.ie/en/d ebates/debate/ | Amendment 38 a Tá vote is a CLIMATE POSITIVE vote as it was an amendment for |

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| | | | | dail/2015-09-30/36/ | democracy that would have deleted "Government" and substituted "the Oireachtas", empowering the Oireachtas to approve national mitigation plans |
| 16 | | | 30/Sept/2015 | https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2015-09-30/36/ | Amendment 39 a Tá vote is a CLIMATE POSITIVE vote as it was an amendment to require the government to take account of the principle of climate justice in performing functions relating to national mitigation plans |
| 17 | | | 30/Sept/2015 | https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2015-09-30/36/ | Amendment 40 a Tá vote is a CLIMATE POSITIVE vote as it was an amendment to strengthen the Bill by requiring that Government comply with and take account of certain matters in carrying out its functions (rather than simply "having regard to" them) |
| 18 | | | 30/Sept/2015 | https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2015-09-30/15/ | Amendments Nos. 30, 38, 50 to 52, inclusive, and 56 (which were taken together) a Tá vote is a CLIMATE POSITIVE vote as it was an amendment for democracy in specifying that approval/input was not only the job of the Government, but of the entire Oireachtas (Dáil Éireann and Seanad) |
| 19 | | | 30/Sept/2015 | https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2015-09-30/36/ | Amendment 134 a Tá vote is a CLIMATE POSITIVE vote as it was an amendment to shorten the timeframe for the Expert Advisory Council's first review from 18 months to 6 months after the establishment of the Bill |
| 20 | | | 30/Sept/2015 | https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2015-09-30/36/ | Amendment 146 a Tá vote is a CLIMATE POSITIVE vote as it was an amendment to specify and broaden the terms of reference and guidelines for the |

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| | | | | | periodic review by the Expert Advisory Council |
| 21 | | | 8/Oct/2015 | https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2015-10-08/17/ | Amendment 152 a Tá vote is a CLIMATE POSITIVE vote as it was an amendment to specify guidelines for Reports on annual targets |