



Tithe an
Oireachtais
Houses of the
Oireachtas

Education Programme

HOUSES OF THE OIREACHTAS

HOW THE HOUSES OF THE OIREACHTAS WORK

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

Ireland is a parliamentary democracy. The National Parliament or Oireachtas consists of the President and two Houses: Dáil Éireann which is the House of Representatives and Seanad Éireann or the Senate.

The functions and powers of these houses originate from the Constitution of Ireland that was enacted by the People on 1st July, 1937.

The Houses of the Oireachtas are situated at Leinster House, on Kildare Street in Dublin. And I'm now standing here in the main Dáil Chamber.

The Constitution gives each House the power to make its own Standing Orders or Rules and the power to have penalties if they're ever broken.

The Oireachtas has sole and exclusive power to make laws depending on the obligations of our membership in the European Union as provided for in the Constitution.

Dáil Éireann gets priority when it comes to the life of the Parliament, in that a general election to Seanad Éireann must take place no later than 90 days after the dissolution of the Dáil.

When it comes to making laws or legislation, the Constitution says that Seanad Éireann cannot delay indefinitely the process of legislation.

Although Seanad Éireann can make recommendations for Bills to amend the Constitution and Money Bills or financial legislation, they can only start out in Dáil Éireann.

Dáil Éireann is the House where the Government or The Executive is formed. As well as making laws, each House can examine government policy and administration and criticise it where they think it's necessary.

If the Government fails to keep the support of the majority of its members, it could result in either the Dissolution of the Dáil and a General Election being called or the formation of a successor or replacement Government.