

A New State of Mind

(A road map for Ireland in the 21st Century)



Daniel Gillen

Dedicated to the men and women who have served and died working for Ireland's future.

About the author

Daniel Gillen was born in Dublin in June 1981 and was placed in the care of the state. Over the course of his life he overcame many obstacles. He is now a highly multifaceted problem solver. He holds degrees in Industrial Design, Product design and Innovation and also a diploma in business management.

Helping to understand future trends and especially global shifts will be paramount in sustaining Ireland's growth and security in this century. Daniel feels strongly that his foresight and ability to organise quickly and effectively would be a great asset to any Irish Government.

Over the next decade and beyond Ireland will face problems that right now seem unimaginable. We are going to need our best and most creative minds if we are to safely navigate conditions both at home and abroad. The ability to foresee problems before they arise is now more essential than ever if we are to survive and thrive in such unprecedented times.

Daniel has lived in America, Spain, Sweden and Cambridge in the UK. In all of these places he observed first hand Government actions and social policy. He also spent some time in China in 2016. He is now an active member of Fianna Fáil in Carlow and is now working as an independent Government adviser offering ideas and solutions to the problems we face as a Nation. He is also a former Irish athlete.



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Introduction

This mission statement is a shortened version of a larger manifesto currently being written for publishing in 2022. The ideas contained were written with the sole purpose of helping future Irish Governments going forward in the 21st century. It should be noted that all the ideas and proposals explored are just that. However it is my hope that some of these ideas might be seriously considered.

I feel the most challenging problems facing modern Ireland are organisational in nature. I examined many different sectors operating within and outside Ireland and have attempted to lay out a simplified platform as a starting point to a better more focused future. I felt it was very important from the outset to try and look ahead to predict/pinpoint possible areas that could be advantageous to Ireland financially whilst also designing some procedures and policy that would help limit unknown problems that may damage our Island's integrity and freedoms.

All too often the country seems to be playing catch up with domestic and world problems. It is my aim to introduce a culture of foresight that would allow us to have systems and policy in place that could help us deal with major problems quickly and decisively if and when they occur. This situation of constant catch up and crisis management majorly impedes our progress as a Nation.

I feel strongly that Ireland needs procedures and strategies in place to safeguard against problems and threats. Preparation and thought makes solving any problem much easier and quicker. The time has come for the Government of Ireland to really utilize the home grown creative talent we have in abundance in this country and find tailor made solutions for Ireland going forward in the 21st century.

While I fully acknowledge the great work that has been done since the formation of the state I feels strongly that there is very little in place in terms of road map and direction for Ireland's future and security. I welcome the opportunity to have a say in the Nation Framework Plan (NFP).

A 'New State of Mind' will hopefully help future Governments to limit the problems we all face but most importantly enable Ireland to take its rightful place on the world stage as peace keepers and leaders for positive change in a world.

I will start by addressing the questions put forward by the National Framework plan and then add more detail in areas in which it is needed. I will take this opportunity to thank you for reading my submission and I hope that together we can realise Ireland's immense potential.

What should Ireland look like in 20 years?

I know what I'd like Ireland to look like in twenty years' time but this will take a concerted National plan unlike anything this county has ever seen before.

When I think of the enormity of the task at hand I think of NASA of the 1960's in America. There are some many problems it is hard to know where to begin. I find with massive and daunting project such as this the best way to approach it is step by step, day by day. I will present my ideas in that fashion and make it as simplified as possible to get the basic points across succinctly and generously. I apologize for any grammar or spelling errors. I only had a day to get this document together before the deadline of March 31st 2017.

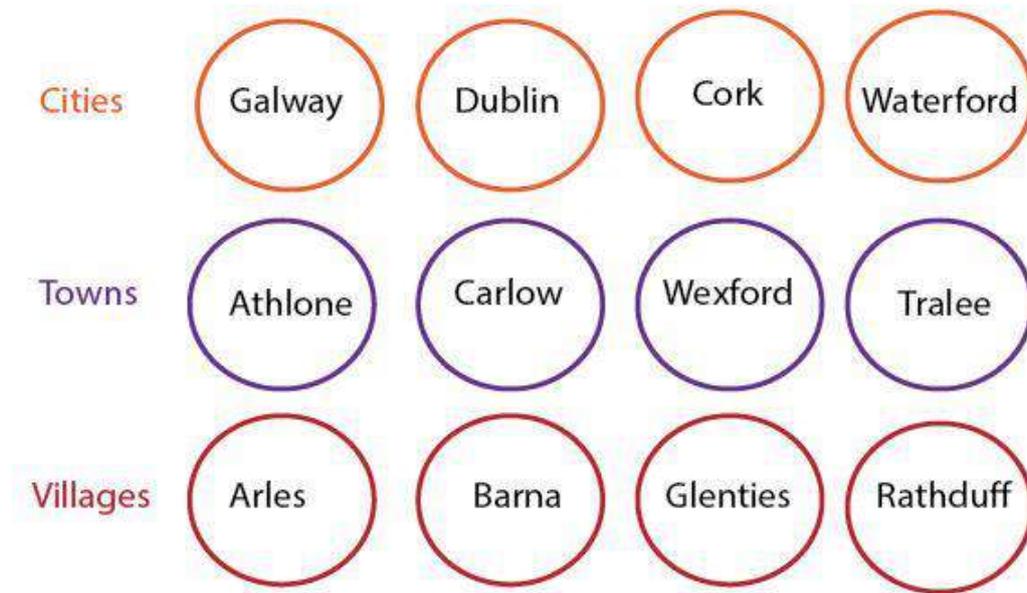
How do we ensure that every place can realise its potential?

For every city and town in Ireland to realise its full potential we need to know what exactly is in these places so that we (Government) can properly utilise these assets for the Nation. For instance in Ballinsloe we have a massive building that is currently being unused. It was a former mental institution. It's not right that we let building such as these fall into disrepair. More on this in section C.

I believe to realise this countries true potential we need to grade our cities, towns and villages. This will help when deciding the types of finance needed, the urgency of that finance and infrastructure etc.

It might seem quite basic at first but it will be effective. These could be colour coded based on population and other factors. This is how we can really see where the money is and should be going.

Figure 1: New graded system to help organise Ireland properly.



This list should be done county by county including the north of Ireland. In all of these places we should look at education, government investment and many other key areas of growth and employment. If we don't examine every single thing from the smallest village up then we don't know what we're dealing with and if we don't know what we're dealing with then we're not in control and certainly not running the country effectively.

Where will the jobs be located and what will those jobs be?

The jobs should be as evenly spread all over the county if possible. It is impossible to say with any certainty where the jobs will be in 2040. However looking at the geography of the county I feel Athlone as a central area could really be developed by Government into a central hub for Ireland. I believe the Government should be making a profit, not giving more of our assets away in more private sell offs the likes of which have taken place over the last three decades. The more we lose to the private sector the less control of the country we surrender. I will expand on this later.

Where will we live and what sort of housing will be needed?

We will primarily be living where we are living now, however we need to really look at towns and villages that are at risk from potential flooding. We should be seriously looking at relocating some people on the west coast to homes on higher ground and also implementing new drainage systems for farmers all over the Island. Ireland also needs an emergency disaster relief fund. We can't be caught off guard when suddenly we need one billion because of a sudden tsunami or worse hits these shores.

What are the key services people will need?

The key services people need now and will in the future are services that actually work. These include Health, Transport, Social welfare and more.

I strongly believe we need visible national mental health centres in every city and town. Whilst there are many independent agencies trying they're very best this should not be the case. The Government should be taking the lead on this and they certainly aren't. There should be 24/7 services available in every single town and city in Ireland.

Where will Ireland fit into the wider geographical spectrum?

When John F. Kennedy spoke in the Dail in 1963 he said that the Irish had the potential to be the peace keepers of the world. I believe this is true for two main reasons; Firstly we are an intelligent people who are capable of thinking for themselves in high pressure situations, and secondly because we have a great reputation in every corner of the world for being fair and trust worthy.

I believe we should keep our neutrality indefinitely but increase of military and navy with a sole purpose of protecting and saving civilians that can't protect themselves (including Irish citizens at home – natural disasters). Ireland in essence could serve a global peacekeeping force in parts of the world where a steady hand is needed.

We have a historic and proud history as part of the UN peace keeping force. Why not see if we can expand on that in the promise of those words by JFK whilst also making money for the country.

What are the planning responses to key environmental challenges?

Rapid response is the answer to this question. We need a billion euro/pounds response fund in reserve in case of natural disaster. We as an Island in the Atlantic will sadly be the victim of flooding, tsunamis, tornados and other unpredictable events in this century. We need to be ready financial. We can't rely on Europe or any other nation in times of crisis. Not to mention the embarrassment of looking for financial handouts and foreign military aid.

I mentioned above that I believe we need to increase the Irish military force. This is not only to help other Nations citizens but also the great people of this nation when the time comes – and it will. Our air force is practically inexistent. This is unacceptable for a modern nation. Where would we get the helicopters and pilots needed in the case of a hurricane Catriona event here?

To start to remedy this situation we need to zone large areas of land high above sea level in each county on the western coast where the military can stage their rescues from when needed. Not to have these areas in place and stocked full of equipment for military use in case of natural emergency would be folly in my opinion. Area's high above sea level but as close to the Ocean as safely possible. We cannot afford to be caught out on this. Renmore barracks in Galway might seem at first like a great area but this is right on the coast and would be completely decimated in the event of a massive natural disaster. We need to be smarter and have more foresight all round.

What infrastructure is required – what are the nation priorities?

This is a good question. It's difficult to understand what exactly you mean but I'll do my best to answer it as well as I can.

I believe Water is a top priority and a right. Any person, in any nation should be provided with clean running water free of charge. If a Government cannot at the very least provide clean running water and fix or replace infrastructure that makes that possible then there is something very seriously wrong with the financial books of that Nation.

To next paragraph should be omitted in the event of publication:

After water the top priority has to be the Government of the Nation. Do we have a contingency plan of action should anything happen leaving Dublin off limits to the running of the state? I very much doubt it. We need to have a secret and safe secure location for the Government of this country to function in the event of an attack or natural disaster. I suggest something that would be accessible by private Government train out of Dublin running south of west. This location would have to be underground and the train could leave the standard track at some point to get there.

Apart from the above mentioned which I feel are paramount. We also need to connect Donegal with the long promised motorway to Dublin. Along with a diagonal corridor connecting the south east to Athlone. I have a more detailed ideas in regards to our rail service and using the old lines as roads or bringing back some of those train lines. They will be included in my 2022 publication.

How should the national framework be implemented?

As quickly as possible starting with a complete look at every single penny this country takes in and spends. I suggest a detailed list be drawn up in order of importance. Examine every sector and Government department in this country. What needs money, what doesn't for now. What projects can we bin and which do we really need to reform right now. As I've mentioned before and it's impossible to argue with – we as a nation are badly managed and hemorrhaging money. This really needs to stop. We are constantly looking to make a quick buck with very little foresight. The rent cap – No foresight – complete disaster. There should be standardised rent like UCD. No person in this great nation should pay more than 100 euros a week for a single room and so on.

Next, the out of control and unaudited insurance companies operating in this country. I proposed a national car insurance act in March 2017, whereby the Government would provide the average person with car insurance;

Age	Years with full licence	Penalty points	Extra for points	Yearly cost
17 - 21				€1000
21 - 25				€800
25 - 30				€700
30 - 35	9	0	€0	€600
35 - 40				€600
40 - 50				€400
50 - 60				€400
60 - 70				€500
70 - 75				€700
75 - 80				€800

From the age of 75 onwards a free annual competency test should be taken.

Penalty points add €100 each to a person's yearly insurance.

Male car insurance should only increase by 10%. The above chart is designed for males.

Having a full licence with no claims for over ten years puts you in the gold category.

I'm aware that insurance companies pay the Government a levy but this isn't good enough. The Government in this country needs to be in complete control of companies operating here such as insurance and energy companies. The days of the Irish Government acting like they're doing us a favour needs to stop. They are taking us complete advantage of us and laughing behind our backs while doing it. We are making headway I'll admit but we really do need to do a lot better.

What should success look like?

Well we've never seen success in this country of any kind really except the sporting kind of course. But I'll tell you what it looks like. When people think of Government and politics today in 2017 they think; corruption, mismanagement and ineptitude. With a complete turnaround that I can easily imagine these words would be replaced with; trust, intelligence and competence.

To accomplish this we need to be smarter, hire smarter and completely cut down on un-necessary spending and people within the civil service that don't serve a viable purpose. Act with vision and purpose with an eye on the long game not just the next few years.

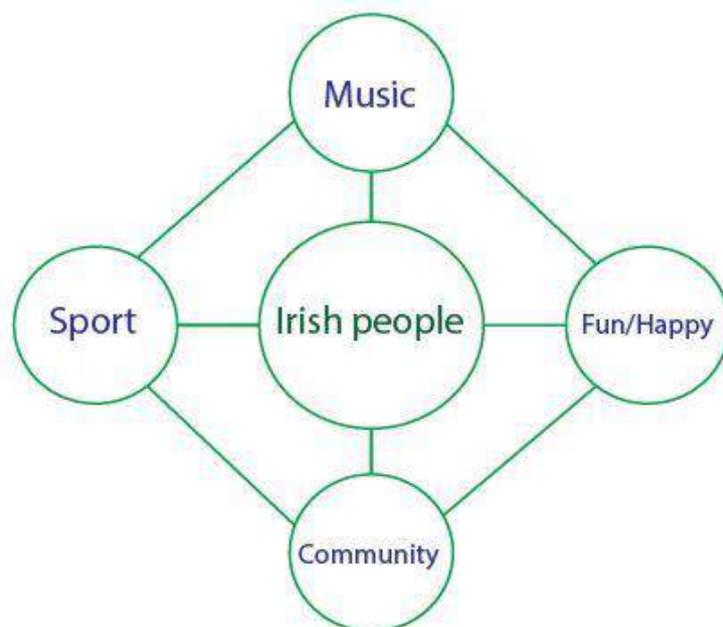
I ran competitively for twenty seasons. I understand that the race is long and takes time. This commitment to Ireland will be long and the journey of one's life. But without belief in success then one can never achieve it.

I also feel strongly that we are losing sight of our traditional Irish core values and replacing them with material things. So much emphasis is now placed on money and gain rather than quality time with family and friends. I see us becoming more like America and the United Kingdom with each passing year. In those countries people just live to work with very little community time.

To remedy these problems we need to look at some very basic things here in Ireland. For instance I feel retail shops should never open on St. Stephen's day. Some many people can't enjoy their Christmas dinner because of the thought of work the next day. I personally know people who had to travel home on Christmas Eve and just about enjoy Christmas day before having to leave at 7am on St. Stephen's day for work. This is a travesty and I feel a strong hand in this seemingly small matter could really show compassion. Surely the retailer can wait just one more day?

I'd even go one step further and close retail shops at 3pm on Sundays. This would force people to actually spend time with their families and thus build a better Irish society for the future. Stronger and closer rather than tired and divided.

The result and success in any endeavour is happiness. When everybody is happy then you know you've done well. Not until then. Together let's build a better nation for everybody – including our animals and wildlife



Section B

Introduction

The Irish Governments constant willingness to let sectors fall into the hands of the private sector is indeed a worrying aspect in Irish society. I believe this is happening because of a total lack of management ability at the top. The Irish government should be in complete control of health, transport, education and other vital aspects of Irish society. If they are not or are trying to pass this responsibility onto to private investment there is something very wrong.

It's all very well getting outside investment in Ireland but at what cost to Ireland and its future? Is our plan to give everything away because we can't manage it properly ourselves? As I write this in March 2017 the country is an absolute disgrace; Our health care is falling apart, our post offices are closing, our buses are on strike, our education system is complete mess. Some county boarders even run straight through towns making any sort of proper administration next to impossible.

Housing

We need a detailed national housing list that works effectively. People take advantage of the lack of organisation in this country.

Jobs

I believe we need to introduce something similar to the Lemass program of 1959. Getting Ireland back to work again. A massive investment nationally by the Government to manufacture electric buses, farming machinery and electronics. We shouldn't be paying 250,000euros for a foreign bus when we could be making our own and exporting them. We need to look at everything aspect of Ireland and how it's run. We need to stop haemorrhaging money and start looking at ways in which we can start making a profit.

Artificial intelligence in the work place

I strongly suggest that we start work on a law limiting the use of artificial intelligence (computerised automation) in the work place. We really need to start this now. In the future there will be more people looking for work but less jobs for people. It's not hard to see a huge employment disaster here. Artificial intelligence only exasperates this problem. We really need to start limiting its use here in Ireland today. This is for the good of the people. Just because it's the modern way doesn't mean it's the right path. Look at the smart phone. I believe it's the greatest mistake humanity ever made. Millions of people looking at a screen. Distracted constantly from everyday life. Karl Marks once said the introduction of too many useful things would lead to too many useless people and we can really see that happening today.

Getting back to the point at hand, we don't want a situation where the government has to pay millions of people to stay at home because there's no jobs to be had. We have a suicide epidemic here in Ireland at the moment. Money, future and job prospects are all factors leading these peoples demise. We need to create more jobs, not let greedy companies like supermarkets and banks bring in computer automation to take those precious jobs away. If we can do anything to limit this now we should.

Transport

All transport, rail and bus etc needs to be under complete Government control like CIE was. It needs to run well and so efficiently that inner city travel is free and that travelling by train of Luas is half the cost it is now. If we keep privatising our resources we'll have nothing left. This is obviously a massive challenge but it can and should be done.

Education

The government Minister in charge of education should pair up with a person or team that come from the education system and know it and its problems well. Let them come up with a five year plan, what it will cost and then give them the funding. No arguing, not delay, no questions. This is our most important area/sector in Ireland and without a strong education system going forward we will lose ground on other nations. Look at other successful nations like Japan, Scandinavia and Cuba but don't just copy their systems. Take parts/ideas and try them to see if they might help us. Each country is completely different. Trying to copy another Nation's policy will never work but good parts of it are certainly worth investigating.

Health

Similar to what I've suggested above. Also studying the same countries. Again, Ministers should pair up with someone or a team from the Health sector. I do believe Simon Harris is making good headway but much needs to be done. The private hospitals for instance should only be allowed to close for one week – not two. This caused a disaster at Christmas and should not be allowed to happen again.

We all know the consultants have too much power. They should be made sign a contract that divides their time evenly 50/50 between public and private patients. If they don't like it revoke their licence in this county and Europe.

We've also lost a lot of our nurses due to lack of placements and available positions. Although it is a good thing that it is now more college based, I believe placements and even jobs should be guaranteed.

Environment

Serous changes are needed here. We need to start abiding by European law and standard practice immediately. We are not a 'special case' as was suggested in Europe a few ago. Get the European standards and start adhering to them.

We need more wardens for litter and to inforce fines for dog litter etc. This will in turn create more jobs and help Ireland become a better cleaner society.

This is a small and beautiful Island. It was here long before us and will be here long after we are gone. Let our generation be the one to insure is continued survival and with that let Ireland's policies then go one to influence the world at large.

Energy

We have given far too much of our future away due to corruption in the 1980's and 1990's and beyond. We need to take back more of our natural resources and energy. Our oceans are fished constantly without much protection. To protect ourselves against this we need ten new top of the line navy boats.

Our oil was given away to shell. An absolute disgrace. We need to take control of this situation. We need a 50/50 deal with any energy company operating in this country or they don't operate here anymore.

Communications

We have elected Ministers with often very little knowledge of the department they have been given. They try to take charge of that for a few years before it's handed off to someone else to try and improve. I believe we need to find the best talent in this country or outside to help us run this country properly as it's obvious to me that we are far from manging it properly. Frankly it's gone passed embarrassing.

I also feel the party chief whip situation needs to be assessed also. Is it right that an elected official can't vote on a law the way his consciousness tells him/her to do so? Surely that's limiting our democracy? Either way, it seems to me that this is how real progress is severely hampered. I'd like to see us working for the Nation and people of Ireland not just the few political parties that operate here. People are sick of the lack of unity and progress in Ireland. Perhaps this might be a way to at the very least speed things up.

Private sector investment

We are currently being taken over by foreign investment. Very powerful people like George Soros, private hedge funds and vulture funds are all growing with power and seeking influence within Ireland. Mr. Soros, I might add was deported from Macedonia for seeking influence. We need to be very careful of the unwarranted acquisition of power in this country from abroad. People like Stephan Ganley from Libertas and others seek to profit off our resource rich nation. I believe we need to set up an expert team to examine all of their and many others actions and operations here. More in section C.

Section C

Section C contains wider reaching areas of interest for Ireland. It is laid out in point form to make it easier to read. At the end is a list of current departments followed by much needed new departments.

I believe the nation and its national building such as Leinster House (currently being renovated for the first time) needs a garden at the front entrance (previously the rear of the building). I have designed a wonderful garden with one hundred lights to represent our hundred years of independence. I believe Leinster house and all other treasured buildings should be looked at in this fashion. Optics are so important. If we are to be a new modern nation than there should be visible signs of this. RTE could do with some young blood on the news at nine that's for sure. It might seem inconsequential but it's all part of a wider vision. All documents/envelopes/press release released by the Irish Government should be dealt with by an in house graphic design team, again creating more jobs. The level of detail needs to really be up there with the top nations of the world. How we are perceived among the other nations will be paramount if we are to influence them in a positive way.

Prostitution should be legalised to help insure the safety of the woman. This would also making trafficking women and children much more difficult.

Drugs are as we know out of control in Ireland. I believe we need to copy Portugal's drug policy of full legalisation and then start treating the real problems behind drug use. Drug use is a medical problem not a legal one.

Crime and gangland violence is out of control in this country also. The sentences for rape and murder are far too lenient. I propose the re-opening of Spike Island in Cork as a maximum security prison for murders. I also propose a twenty year minimum sentence for murder in this country. We'll see how rapidly the murder rate falls then.

Obesity, without sounding cruel I believe the state should start mandatory week long camps for overweight children. This is for their own good. They are too young to understand or take proper control of their diet. Any ten year old over ten stone for example should be put forward onto the program. The parents will also have to complete a diet/cooking and nutrition course. The weight of our young people should be monitored in primary schools. Do not weigh all of the children, but if they are a few that might reach the criteria then privately weigh them. One must be cruel to be kind. The consequences of inaction will be dire.

Terrorism will be a serious issue for Ireland in this century. I believe strongly terrorist attackers should never be named on national media. This makes them matters to their cause. At the same time I do believe we can mention which terror cell they were operating from without giving away their nationality. Giving their nationality in papers and T.V comes across as racist and feeds racism. A terror suspect convicted in this country should be deported or given a fifty year minimum sentence – Spike Island.

Racism in Ireland. Although we do well to welcome many nationalities to Ireland we should also be aware that things can change quickly. We should foster community spirit in schools and out in our communities. Education is key to this. However, I do believe foreign nationals should adhere to our rules. There are strong laws we abide by in other countries and we need to be firm when deciding what's acceptable and what's not in Ireland. Ghettoised areas held by particular nationalities like we see today in the UK and America are certainly to be avoided here in Ireland at all costs going forward. They will if allowed to happen rip the very fabric of our society apart.

Departments

Department of Health

Department of defence

Department of education and skills

Department of finance

Department of justice and equality

Department of agriculture and food (**Marine removed**)

Department of housing and planning

Department of social protection

Department of foreign affairs and trade

Department of Public expenditure and reform

Department of Arts and Heritage

Department of climate action and environment (**communication removed**)

Department of Jobs, enterprise and innovation

Department of children and young affairs

Department of transport, tourism and sport (**Separated into three**)

New Departments

Department of international communications

Department of immigration

Department of sport and recreation

Department of tourism

Department of the Marine

Department of intelligence and security (**Very important**)

Department of transport and shipping

Department of preservation and conservation

Department for future infrastructure

Conclusion

It is my greatest hope that this 2017 mission statement will be read, studied and acted upon by others in positions of power in Ireland. The reason I released part of it now (unfinished) rather than waiting is because I do not feel we have even a day to loose in the journey to vastly improve this Nation and how it operates. Not only for now, but for all time.

With help from many great individuals in Ireland and outside I believe we can free ourselves from debt and be a shining example of progressive policy reform around the world. We need properly discussed and researched tailor made solutions for the island of Ireland if we are to truly progress and thrive in the challenging times ahead.

Let's make Ireland better for all of us

(Including our animals and wildlife)