



## The Irish model

- The Republic of Ireland is a parliamentary republic, with a ceremonial president as its head of state.
- The Republic of Ireland evolved from the Irish Free State, a state established under the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1922. In 1936 the Irish Free State was renamed, and the office of Governor-General of Ireland was abolished, being replaced by a directly elected President. The first President was elected in 1938.
- To be a candidate for President, a citizen of Ireland must be over 35 years of age and must be nominated either by not less than 20 members of the Irish parliament, or not less than 4 administrative counties of Ireland.
- Former or retiring Presidents may become candidates on their own nomination.
- The term in office is 7 years, and a maximum of two terms may be served.
- The President does not have an executive or policy role and exercises their powers on the advice of the Government, like New Zealand's Governor-General.
- The President has all the same powers as our Governor-General. There are some important differences though: the Irish President may refer a Bill to the Supreme Court for a judgment on its constitutionality, or refer a Bill to a referendum.

## Mary McAleese - President of Ireland

- Born June 27th 1951 in Belfast, Northern Ireland. The eldest of nine children, McAleese grew up during 'The Troubles'. She ran as the centre-right Fianna Fail (Republican Party) candidate, and is the second female President of Ireland. She is the first President to come from Northern Ireland.
- Elected the 8<sup>th</sup> President of Ireland in November 1997.
- She graduated in Law from the Queen's University of Belfast in 1973 and was called to the Northern Ireland Bar in 1974.
- In 1975, she was appointed as the Reid Professor of Criminal Law, Criminology and Penology at Trinity College Dublin.
- In 1987, she returned to Queen's to become Director of the Institute of Professional Legal Studies. In 1994, she was appointed as Pro-Vice-Chancellor at the Queen's University of Belfast – the first woman to hold this position.
- She was re-elected as President in October 2004 as the only "validly-nominated" candidate, this is the third time a president has been returned unopposed.
- The theme of McAleese's Presidency is "Building Bridges".

## Is the Irish model right for New Zealand?

- The Irish republic provides a useful example of how a New Zealand republic of the same nature might work.
- Both Ireland and New Zealand are small unitary states of similar population sizes, and have longstanding traditions of parliamentary democracy.
- Because the President has to be nominated by 20 members of the Irish parliament, critics of the office argue that the president is almost always a former member of one of Ireland's two major political parties.

### The Republican Movement

The Republican Movement is a network of New Zealanders who want our Head of state to be chosen by New Zealanders, either indirectly or directly. We are committed to:

- Involving all New Zealanders in the debate;
- Providing relevant and reliable information;
- Focusing on ideas, not personalities;
- Winning a referendum to establish the republic.

Creating a republic does not require any change to the Treaty of Waitangi, flag or our Commonwealth membership.

### Contact

The Republican Movement  
PO Box 24-194  
Wellington  
New Zealand  
Web: [www.republic.org.nz](http://www.republic.org.nz)  
Email: [info@republic.org.nz](mailto:info@republic.org.nz)  
Media contact: Lewis Holden 027 699 1350