

EMPOWERING DUBLIN WEST — A VOICE FOR YOU —



INDEPENDENT

VOTE
No. 1

UMAR AL-QADRI

Building a fairer society with affordable homes, lower living costs, community integration, strong family support, accessible healthcare, quality childcare, education for all, and unwavering solidarity with Palestine.

VOTE NO. 1

UMAR

AL-QADRI

FOR DUBLIN WEST

INDEPENDENT

CANDIDATE FOR

GENERAL

ELECTIONS

2024

YOUR VOTE FOR REAL CHANGE!

Salary Donation Commitment

If elected as your representative for Dublin West, I pledge to donate most of my TD salary back to the community, keeping only a minimum wage for my personal living expenses. This ensures I stay connected with the challenges of ordinary workers while directing funds to benefit our community.

I commit to full transparency about my retained earnings to prioritise public service over personal profit.

**TOGETHER, WE CAN BUILD A
FAIRER FUTURE**

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Summary

Dr Umar Al-Qadri is standing for election in Dublin West to tackle the urgent issues facing the community, from the need for affordable housing and rising living costs, to improving public services and addressing safety concerns. With 21 years of living in Dublin West, he intimately understands these struggles.

As an immigrant from the Netherlands with South Asian roots, and a respected businessman and community activist, he has a personal connection to the issues that matter most to residents. His decade-long experience advising EU institutions, representing faith and minority communities on national and international platforms, and his strong academic background equip him to effectively address the complex needs of the constituency.

Umar is committed to restoring confidence in government by addressing the unacceptable waste and mismanagement of public funds. With taxpayer money being squandered on projects like a €336,000 bike shed, €1.2 million security hut, €400,000 modular homes, and a staggering €9 million on plastic phone pouches, as well as the spiralling cost in Billions of the National Children's Hospital, he believes it is time for change. Umar will demand transparency and accountability for every euro spent by pushing for independent spending audits, enforcing mandatory cost-benefit analyses, and introducing a Public Spending Dashboard for real-time transparency. His focus will also include advocating for a cap on administrative costs and establishing a Public Spending Oversight Committee to scrutinise major expenditures.

Driven by his deep commitment to peace, integration, and social cohesion, Umar's vision is to deliver real change for Dublin West. He will fight for a more transparent, efficient government that ensures public funds are used responsibly to benefit the people, while making sure all voices in the community are heard and represented.

Introduction

Dr Umar Al-Qadri, originally from the Netherlands and of South Asian heritage, has been a proud resident of Dublin West for over 21 years. As a new Irish citizen, he feels as Irish as anyone else and is proud to call Ireland his home. Umar is actively learning Irish, a language his children have already embraced through their schooling, further deepening his connection to Irish culture. Ireland's history of struggling for independence and standing in solidarity with the oppressed and the weak deeply resonates with Umar, whose ancestors fought for freedom in the Indian subcontinent.

As a family man with three children, Umar has a deep understanding of the challenges and aspirations faced by local families. In the European Elections of June 2024, he made history as the first Irish MEP candidate of immigrant background, winning the second-highest number of first-preference votes among all independent candidates. This achievement reflects his ability to connect with a diverse electorate and his commitment to representing every community.

Umar is a passionate advocate for pragmatic and compassionate immigration policies. Having journeyed from immigrant to entrepreneur, he brings firsthand experience in addressing issues like homelessness and housing insecurity. His successful business in Dublin West has given him valuable insight into the needs of local enterprises and the significance of supporting consumer rights.

As a prominent Muslim faith leader, Umar is deeply committed to intercultural and interfaith dialogue and works tirelessly to foster mutual respect among Ireland's diverse communities. He has represented Ireland on critical issues such as racism, Islamophobia, countering violent extremism (CVE), and religious freedom at EU institutions for over 8 years.

Umar is committed to building a future where Dublin West stands as a beacon of unity and prosperity, ensuring that every voice, especially those of immigrants and the underrepresented, is heard in the Dáil.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR ALL



Umar Al-Qadri's top priority is to address the housing crisis in Dublin West by ensuring affordable and accessible homes for all. He will push for increased investment in social and affordable housing, bring vacant properties back into use, and support government-backed schemes to reduce deposit requirements for first-time buyers.

His plan includes declaring a housing emergency to fast-track solutions, making rents below €1,000 tax-free, reducing VAT on building materials, and simplifying planning regulations to speed up construction. Umar will also advocate for State support to ensure households spend no more than 35% of their income on rent, making housing more affordable for families across Dublin West.

Umar also calls for urgent legislation to clamp down on predators exploiting vulnerable tenants by seeking sex in lieu of rent, while also advocating for dedicated funding to universities and technological institutions to build affordable Purpose-Built Student Accommodation, ensuring safe and accessible housing for all students.

With his unique background as an immigrant from the Netherlands, Umar brings valuable experience from a country known for its innovative and effective housing policies. Inspired by Dutch models of social housing and sustainable urban development, he will champion increased investment in affordable housing, fair resource allocation, and immediate relief for renters and new homeowners. Umar is committed to streamlining planning and building processes, supporting sustainable housing solutions, and driving the construction of social and affordable homes throughout Dublin West.

TACKLING THE COST OF LIVING

Umar Al-Qadri, having lived in Dublin West for over 21 years, understands how rising costs are impacting the lives of local residents. He is committed to advocating for a fairer tax system that eases the burden on ordinary Dubliners. His plan includes abolishing USC and PRSI for pension-aged workers, reducing taxes for middle-income earners, freezing ineffective “green taxes,” and lowering VAT for tourism and hospitality to support local businesses.

Umar will also fight against excessive pricing in housing, utilities, and essential services, introduce a real Living Wage, and eliminate M50 toll charges to alleviate financial pressure on commuters. Additionally, he is determined to hold multinational corporations accountable for price hikes, ensuring they contribute fairly to society instead of prioritizing profits at the expense of everyday people. His goal is to enhance economic justice, support communities, and improve the quality of life for all in Dublin West.

For Umar, fostering true community cohesion starts with economic justice, and as a candidate for the Irish general elections, he is dedicated to creating a fairer and more affordable Dublin for all.



SAFER COMMUNITIES IN DUBLIN WEST

Dublin West deserves safe streets, secure homes, and a community where everyone feels protected. Umar Al-Qadri is dedicated to tackling rising crime, including house burglaries, vandalism, and drug-related issues, by advocating for increased Garda presence and stronger community policing.

Addressing crime effectively means going beyond a surface-level response. Umar's plan focuses on tackling both the symptoms and root causes of crime. He is committed to investing in youth services, education, and social supports for disadvantaged young people to break the cycle of crime before it begins. This includes using the National Development Plan to create essential amenities, facilities, and career opportunities for young people in disadvantaged areas.

While Umar believes in strong preventative measures, he also supports a zero-tolerance policy for criminal behaviour. Light penalties and a revolving door system have only weakened public trust in the justice system. Umar emphasises the importance of fair yet firm sentencing to deter repeat offenses and ensure community safety.

Parental responsibility is also a critical part of his approach. Umar believes it is unfair for taxpayers to bear the burden of parental negligence and calls for greater accountability in tackling youth crime.

By combining tough measures against crime with targeted investment in community development and parental responsibility, Umar aims to build safer, stronger communities across Dublin West, where every resident can feel secure and empowered.



IMPROVING HEALTHCARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES

Healthcare in Dublin is at a breaking point. Like many families, Umar Al-Qadri has experienced the frustration of long waiting times firsthand. When his child's surgery was cancelled on the day due to a lack of beds, he had to seek costly private care—an option that isn't available to everyone. This is not just an isolated incident; it's a reflection of a deeply flawed system.

The staggering €2.2 billion being spent on the new children's hospital is a disgraceful example of mismanagement. While this project has been mired in delays and controversy, ordinary citizens are left struggling with extensive waiting lists and inadequate care. The two main government parties have been in power for decades, yet they have failed to bring about meaningful change in our healthcare system. With such a poor track record, we cannot expect them to improve healthcare or ensure timely access to services.

Umar advocates for a fundamental shift in healthcare priorities. He will push for increased investment to cut waiting times and improve access, as well as better resources for HSE needs assessments, especially for children with disabilities. Recruitment and retention of healthcare professionals are critical, and Umar supports competitive salaries, benefits, and training programs to build a robust healthcare workforce.

Furthermore, Umar firmly believes that individuals with disabilities should have the same rights as everyone else. Every child suspected of having a disability or illness deserves an Assessment of Needs, and the State must be mandated to provide the necessary support within a specified timeframe. Additionally, people with disabilities should have the right to live independently from their families if they choose to do so.

Together, we can demand a healthcare system that prioritises the well-being of all Dubliners, ensuring timely, equitable access to services and support.



BETTER PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Umar is dedicated to transforming the public transport system in Dublin West to better connect communities and enhance the quality of life for all residents. Having moved from the Netherlands 21 years ago, Umar was initially shocked by the state of Dublin's public transport and infrastructure. Sadly, after two decades, little has changed.

Umar believes in prioritising the efficiency and accessibility of our public transportation systems. We must strive to emulate the standards set by mainland Europe, where public transport services are reliable, punctual, and user-friendly.

In addition to ensuring reliability and punctuality, we must also modernise our public transportation systems to meet the needs of today's society. This includes implementing convenient payment methods such as debit card payments, which streamline the commuting experience for passengers.

Moreover, investing in sustainable and environmentally friendly modes of transportation, such as electric buses and trains, can further reduce our carbon footprint while improving the overall quality of public transportation services.

By prioritising investment in public transport, Umar envisions a Dublin West that is not only more connected but also greener and more commuter-friendly. With a commitment to modernisation and community-focused solutions, Umar Al-Qadri is prepared to lead Dublin West into a brighter, more efficient future.



ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Umar Al-Qadri is committed to ensuring that every child in Ireland has access to a high-quality education, regardless of their background or needs. The current state of school placements in Dublin West and beyond is shocking, with some Irish children left at home because they couldn't secure a place in a local school. This situation is unacceptable and reflects a systemic failure that needs immediate attention. Every child deserves the right to an education, and Umar is determined to address this issue by advocating for increased school placements and better planning to accommodate growing communities.

Moreover, the lack of resources and support for children with additional needs is appalling. It is simply not acceptable that the government is prepared to spend €9 million on plastic mobile phones while ignoring the hundreds of children waiting for a Needs Assessment. Schools are struggling without access to essential services such as Occupational Therapists (OTs), leaving children with disabilities and learning difficulties without the support they need to thrive. Umar will fight to ensure that government priorities are realigned to focus providing immediate and adequate resources for children's educational and developmental needs, rather than wasting funds on unnecessary expenditures.

In addition to securing better school placements and support services, Umar believes that education should be a lifelong journey. For adults, particularly those working or seeking to upskill, returning to education should be a viable and supported option. Umar will advocate for government assistance programs that make it easier for individuals to re-enter education, through financial support, flexible learning options, and childcare assistance. This will empower people to gain new skills, advance in their careers, and contribute more effectively to society.



ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Umar Al-Qadri strongly supports an immediate halt and thorough review of the current SPHE (Social, Personal and Health Education) curriculum, which has raised deep concerns among parents and teachers alike. Many feel that certain aspects of the curriculum are inappropriate and not aligned with the values of families. Umar believes that education should always reflect the needs and values of the community, and that any changes must be made with full consultation from parents, educators, and experts to ensure a balanced, respectful approach to sensitive topics.

Inclusivity and diversity are also central pillars of Umar's vision for Ireland's education system. He believes that every child should have the opportunity to learn about the richness of humanity's tapestry—celebrating our differences while recognizing our shared humanity. Integrating lessons on diversity, empathy, and respect into the curriculum from a young age will help cultivate a generation of compassionate and open-minded individuals who are equipped to navigate an increasingly interconnected world.

Education should be a tool for building bridges, fostering unity, and empowering young minds to embrace and celebrate the beautiful diversity of our world. Umar is dedicated to ensuring that our education system reflects these values, creating a foundation for a more inclusive and harmonious society.

Umar also advocates for increasing the permitted working hours for non-EEA international students on a Stamp 2 visa from 20 to 30 hours per week, ensuring greater financial support and work-life balance for students during their studies.



SOLIDARITY WITH PALESTINE

Umar Al-Qadri proudly supports Ireland's recognition of Palestine and its commitment to justice. The ongoing human rights violations and state terrorism by Israel pose a grave threat to humanity and global peace. As a representative for Dublin West, Umar is dedicated to advocating for a comprehensive approach to addressing these injustices.

One of his key priorities is to advocate for the implementation of sanctions against Israel to hold it accountable for its violations of international law in Gaza and Lebanon. Umar will push for a ban on products produced in Israeli settlements, as these settlements violate international law and contribute to the ongoing oppression of the Palestinian people.

Umar is particularly concerned about the government's delay in signing the **Occupied Territories Bill** into law. This bill is essential for ensuring that Ireland takes a clear stance against the illegal activities in the occupied territories. Umar pledges to fight for the swift passage of this important legislation to reinforce Ireland's commitment to human rights and justice.



SOLIDARITY WITH PALESTINE

Ireland has a unique history of conflict and reconciliation, particularly with the peace process in Northern Ireland. This experience gives Ireland a distinct perspective and capability to lead efforts towards peace in the Middle East. Umar believes that we can draw on our own journey to foster dialogue and cooperation, helping to bridge divides and facilitate a peaceful resolution in the region.

Additionally, he will call for the closure of the Israeli embassy in Ireland until Israel addresses its violations of international law and human rights. This demonstrates Ireland's commitment to standing up for justice and human rights on the global stage.

Umar will also work to support and promote grassroots peace initiatives that facilitate dialogue between Israeli and Palestinian communities. Fostering understanding and cooperation is vital for achieving a peaceful resolution to this longstanding conflict.

By standing in solidarity with Palestine, Umar aims to ensure that Ireland remains a beacon of hope and justice in the international community. Together, we can advocate for human rights, champion the cause of the oppressed, and work towards a just and lasting peace in the region.



SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESSES

Umar Al-Qadri understands the vital role that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) play in the Irish economy. As an entrepreneur himself, he empathises with the pressures faced by business owners and the self-employed. The challenges are daunting, from high taxes and rising operational costs to navigating complex regulations. It is clear that Irish businesses require a more supportive and conducive environment for success.

Umar is committed to championing policies that will directly address these challenges. He believes it is essential to support SMEs by exempting businesses with a turnover of under €1 million from PRSI contributions. This measure will provide immediate financial relief and allow entrepreneurs to reinvest in their businesses, driving growth and job creation.

Umar also advocates for reducing the administrative burdens that often hinder small businesses. Streamlining regulations and simplifying paperwork will enable business owners to focus on what they do best—serving their customers and growing their enterprises. He will work towards improving access to affordable credit, ensuring that small business owners have the financial resources necessary to thrive.

Furthermore, Umar will advocate for targeted tax reliefs and council rate reductions, enabling small businesses to remain competitive while also ensuring that consumers benefit from more affordable goods and services. By creating a robust business compensation program, he aims to ease the economic burdens faced by small businesses, allowing them to focus on growth and job creation.

Together, we can drive economic growth, create jobs, and strengthen our communities. By supporting small businesses, we are investing in the backbone of our economy and ensuring a prosperous future for all in Ireland. Umar is dedicated to championing these initiatives to create a vibrant and thriving environment for entrepreneurs across Ireland.



CHILDCARE & SINGLE PARENT SUPPORT

If we are committed to equity for all types of families, then we must allocate resources accordingly. This is particularly evident in the realm of childcare, where we must enhance subsidies to ensure access to free or low-cost childcare at a provider of their choice. Additionally, it's crucial to acknowledge that many, if not a majority, of women prefer to care for their young children in the family home.

Umar believes that supporting parents who choose to care for their children at home not only contributes to the well-being of the family unit but also affirms the value of caregiving as a vital aspect of our society. Our tax system and cultural norms should respect and provide equal treatment to this choice, rather than disparaging it.

Furthermore, we must recognise and address the systemic barriers that hinder women's full participation in the workforce, such as the lack of affordable childcare options. By investing in comprehensive childcare subsidies and promoting a culture that values caregiving, Umar wants to empower women to pursue their career aspirations while also ensuring that children receive the care and support they deserve during their formative years.



FAMILY AND PARENT'S RIGHTS



Umar firmly believes that the Irish Government must do more to respect and support various family dynamics. Additionally, Umar emphasises the importance of parents having the right to educate their children according to their own beliefs, a fundamental aspect of family autonomy.

We must avoid discriminating against traditional family structures, recognising the inherent right of families to raise their children in their own beliefs, particularly concerning topics like sex education.

As a dedicated advocate for human rights and equality, Umar brings a unique perspective to the table. As a parent of three children and with extensive leadership experience in business, faith-based organisations, and NGOs, he understands the pressing need for a fresh approach. Umar is committed to encouraging the State to genuinely serve its people, promoting integrity in politics, and ensuring that policies are crafted to benefit every citizen.

BUILDING A FAIR IMMIGRATION & ASYLUM SYSTEM

We must recognise Ireland's commendable generosity in hosting one of Europe's highest rates of immigration. By establishing safe platforms to genuinely listen to these concerns and rectifying the inadequacies within our immigration and asylum system, we can uphold the human rights of immigrants who significantly contribute to Ireland's economy.

Simultaneously, we can ensure a rational, equitable, and compassionate approach to addressing the challenges faced by individuals seeking international protection in Ireland.

As an immigrant himself, Umar acknowledges the rapid pace of immigration in Ireland. Rather than stoking animosity or turning a blind eye to genuine concerns, we must engage in constructive dialogue to overhaul our immigration policies.

Sensible immigration policies are imperative, given the invaluable contributions of legal immigrants to our economy, healthcare, and social welfare systems. The lengthy process of family reunification for tax-paying immigrants must be streamlined to uphold their rights and dignity.

Our asylum system is in urgent need of reform to safeguard legitimate asylum seekers and prevent abuse of the system through fraudulent claims. Deportation of failed asylum seekers is necessary to maintain the integrity of the process.

Additionally, it is unjust to disproportionately burden small rural and underprivileged urban communities with the challenges of housing and supporting asylum seekers.

Consultations with affected communities should be conducted in a manner that is both fair and respectful of their interests. Let us collaborate to establish an immigration system that not only heeds the concerns of voters but also reflects Ireland's core values of fairness, compassion, and inclusivity.



CLIMATE ACTION

Ensuring a sustainable planet for future generations is not just a choice; it's our responsibility. Pollution and carbon emissions transcend borders, highlighting the imperative for strong European cooperation in climate action.

Umar staunchly supports investment in green energy initiatives, understanding their crucial role in shaping Ireland's sustainable future. He advocates for harnessing Ireland's potential to attract foreign investment, fostering partnerships aimed at accelerating the transition towards renewable energy sources.

By highlighting the economic opportunities inherent in green technology and renewable energy sectors, Umar emphasizes the potential for job creation, technological innovation, and the economic growth that can stem from such investments.

Through strategic investment in green energy and collaboration with international partners, Umar envisions a future where Ireland leads the charge in sustainable development, reaping economic rewards while safeguarding the planet for generations to come



SOCIAL MEDIA AND TECH ACCOUNTABILITY



Umar emphasises the urgent need for social media and tech companies to be held accountable for the content on their platforms. It's unacceptable that these companies continue to generate revenue while turning a blind eye to the rampant spread of hate speech and harmful content online. We cannot afford to ignore the fact that social media has become a breeding ground for division, misinformation, and hatred, with real-world consequences for our communities.

As a society, we must demand greater responsibility from these tech giants. They must implement more robust measures to swiftly identify and remove hate speech, incitement to violence, and other harmful content from their platforms. It's not enough for them to simply pay lip service to the idea of responsible content moderation; they must take concrete actions to protect their users from the harmful effects of online hate and extremism.

Furthermore, Umar believes that social media companies should be compelled to cooperate with law enforcement agencies to track down and hold accountable those individuals who spread hatred and incite violence online. People should not be allowed to hide behind the anonymity of the internet while engaging in criminal behaviour that has real-world consequences.

By working together with law enforcement, social media companies can help ensure that those who perpetrate hate speech and incitement to violence are brought to justice and held accountable for their actions.

COMMUNITY INTEGRATION INITIATIVES

Umar believes it is imperative to foster a sense of belonging and understanding among diverse communities in Dublin. By investing in government-funded bridge-building initiatives, we can create opportunities for people from different backgrounds to come together.

Drawing inspiration from successful models in countries like the Netherlands, he envisions organising social, cultural, and recreational activities where residents of all backgrounds can participate. From picnics in the park to cultural festivals, these initiatives will not only break down barriers but also combat stereotypes and promote integration. Let's create a vibrant tapestry of unity where every voice is heard and valued.



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