



ACT FOR AMNESTY

ACTIVIST'S TOOLKIT



WHAT IS ACT FOR AMNESTY?

Act for Amnesty is an exciting tool that will increase the activism contribution to all major campaigns that Amnesty International Ireland works on. **It is a network of people ready to take action** online and offline nationwide, whether a local group is present in the locality or not.

Act for Amnesty is a unique opportunity for you to be involved in Amnesty International Ireland's work. You can be part of our work no matter where you are and how much time you have on your hands.

I'm an activist. Now what?

Here's what you get once you become an activist:

- **Bi-monthly e-bulletins** with updates on all our campaigns and actions. You will be asked to **take urgent actions** with a local group if there is one nearby, or with your peers if there isn't any.
- **Annual e-zines** - an online magazine that will show you all the actions taken by the other activists around the country. It will also give you some feedback on campaigns and activism achievements.
- Invitations to participate in our **major events** and to go to our **annual activists' gatherings** where everyone can share their experience while learning more about human rights and Amnesty International Ireland's campaigns.
- On top of that, we send you to **awesome music festivals** such as Forbidden Fruit, Longitude, Body & Soul, and Electric Picnic - where you will be collecting signatures and enjoying Ireland's greatest festivals for free!

This toolkit is all you need to join our exciting human rights activists' network. This is a step-by-step guide on how to become an Amnesty activist, so have a look and feel free to contact us if you have any questions. We'd love to hear from you!



How much time should I invest?

One of your first questions might be: how much time should you invest in Amnesty once you become an activist?

It's up to you to decide how much time you want to invest in activism and you should know that every action you take is very much appreciated! We will keep you updated with actions, invitations as well as information on our campaigns, and it's up to you how much you want to get involved.

So go on, give it a try and here's how!

"Becoming part of the human rights activists' network will have its ups and downs but overall it is an extraordinary experience that **empowers activists** to fight for their rights, rewards them in participating in unique events that change lives and in meeting other like-minded activists".

Step 1: Fill in the application form: 2 minutes!

Get involved in Amnesty's major campaigns and be part of our increasing activists' network by filling the application form that you can find on the Act for Amnesty page.

Step 2: Join our social media networks: less than one minute!

Stay connected with other activists and with the entire Amnesty International team by following our **Facebook** and **Twitter** pages for constant updates on exciting campaigns and events that you can take part in!



www.facebook.com/amnestyinternationalireland



www.twitter.com/AmnestyIreland

No matter how much time you have on your hands, you can always be an Amnesty online activist by sharing campaigns and urgent actions with your friends and family. Online activists play a huge role in promoting human rights actions on social media networks and we are thankful for their invaluable support!



UA 26/14

Date: 7 February 2014

URGENT ACTION

JOURNALIST CHARGED UNDER RUSSIA'S 'PROPAGANDA' LAW

Elena Klimova, a journalist in the Urals city of Nizhniy Taghil needs our help

Step 3: Take action online: 2 minutes!

Nowadays online action is developing rapidly and makes change effectively.

First visit our online action centre at www.amnesty.ie/our-work/all-actions and take action on all issues that you feel strongly about.

And then why not **share the action with your friends** by email, on Facebook or Twitter? If every one of us shares the action with a few friends we will increase our impact rapidly.

Step 4: Write a personal letter: 10 minutes!

While one letter might be easily ignored, **thousands of letters can create change!** Normally, letters are already written and all you have to do is sign them. However, if you are really passionate about a cause, you can feel free to write your own letter.

We encourage activists to write letters of support and solidarity to victims of human rights violations across the world. Campaigns like the Letter Writing Marathon have successfully contributed to releasing prisoners of conscience and had a great impact in creating positive political change in countries where human rights were at risk. All you need is a pen, a sheet of paper and 10 minutes of your time to change someone's life. If you have any questions, we are here for you.

Tips on writing a letter

When writing a letter, please remember to always:

1. Mind the guidelines in the case files
2. Write clearly
3. Add the date
4. Add your name and address to show that you are a real person. If you are worried about giving your full name and address, you can give your initials and the name of your city or country.

Solidarity action to the person at risk

Suggestions:

- It's usually better not to mention politics or religion in your letter.
- Avoid mentioning Amnesty International in your card/letter, as it may put the recipient at risk if the authorities associate him with Amnesty's human rights work.
- Let the people at risk know that you are thinking of them.
- Let the people know you have heard about the details of their case and how you feel about it.
- By referring to the situation as a violation of the law, you are letting the people at risk know there is a chance at justice and that a solution does exist.

- If you are also writing to the authorities, let them know.
- Assure them you won't give up and that they're not alone: you will fight with them to ensure they receive justice.

Target action to the authorities

Suggestions:

- You should always be polite.
- Build your appeals on international human rights standards, not political opinions. Human rights are based on international laws, agreements and obligations. Effective letters cite these obligations.
- Repeat the individual's name throughout the letter. This helps to ensure that the official will recognize the name and remember the letters sent on their behalf.
- Be brief. Letters are more likely to be read when kept short.

Possible structure:

- Salutation (as given in the case sheet).
- Start by saying on whose behalf you're writing and what you understand to be the situation.
- Say why you disapprove of the situation.
- Ask for a reply.
- End with "Yours sincerely, (your name)"

Step 5: Print out the action: 15 minutes!

Printed petitions or letters have a great impact! It is well worth the try. All you have to do is download an action or contact Pina and the Campaigns and Activism Team at act@amnesty.ie for more details.

Don't forget to **share the action** and get the petition signed by your family and friends, so that you have a greater impact! Send it back to the above address and we will make sure the petition gets where it's supposed to.

Step 6: Start learning about Amnesty International and human rights: 1 hour!

See our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for an overview of our work in context. If you have questions that are not yet answered in this section, we'd be happy to hear from you!

Then, do keep yourself informed on human rights news by visiting our website regularly: www.amnesty.ie and by following us on Facebook and Twitter.

Step 7: Attend local events: 1-2 hours!

Amnesty International organises events regularly nationwide. Check our Facebook and Twitter for updates on all the events taking place so you don't miss any!

If you have signed up to Act for Amnesty you will be part of the group of **privileged activists who are the first ones to know about upcoming events** and actions.



Step 8: Take part in events: 2-4 hours!

If you have signed up to Act for Amnesty, you will also receive opportunities not only to attend events, but also be part of the organising team by helping out! This is a great commitment but equally rewarding, as you will meet very enthusiastic activists with the same passion for human rights. Events are a rewarding way to develop knowledge and skills!

So go on, join us! And here's what we are up to:

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



AMNESTY
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Collecting signatures: 2 - 4 hours

Activists often meet in the Dublin City Centre (usually on Grafton or O'Connell Street) to collect signatures from passers-by, which is a great opportunity to connect with other activists. Activists usually spend around 2 to 4 hours collecting signatures, but the amount of time you want to commit is completely up to you! We are so proud of our activists, who overcome tough challenges like spending a few hours collecting signatures in bad weather to protect and develop human rights. In the end **it's always worth it!**

Demos outside the embassies: 2 - 4 hours

Demos have great impact in creating positive change in human rights across the Globe! That's why we believe that **organising demos** in front of embassies, for particular human rights causes that activists feel strongly about, contributes to Amnesty's work worldwide. Usually, when attending demos, activists are giving out informative materials and sometimes even create impressive banners for more impact. So, stay tuned, find out about our next demo, create a banner if you feel inspired, or simply show up!

Awesome Festivals: 4-5 hours

Become an activist and we can send you to Forbidden Fruit, Longitude, Body & Soul, and Electric Picnic to collect signatures! One of the best parts of being an Amnesty activist is that you get to attend **Ireland's top music festivals FOR FREE!** All you need to do is sign up, get your activist gear and collect signatures in fun-filled ambiance!

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Step 9: Organise your own events: 4 – 8 hours!

You can organise your own exciting events with friends, family or other activists. From a fun table quiz to a great gig, there are endless opportunities for you to raise money for Amnesty and meet people who are as passionate about human rights as you are!

THANKS FOR READING!

All the Amnesty International team is looking forward to working with you on achieving great human rights impact!

