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44 to seek 13 Euro seats as nominations close

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FORTY-FOUR candidates have declared for the European elections on June 11.

Ireland loses two seats - from 15 to 13 - and three of the four constituencies have also been renamed, with the three-seater Connacht-Ulster now becoming the North West where Dana Rosemary Scanlon (NP) is the only outgoing candidate seeking re-election. Fianna Fail's Sean O Neachtain replaced Pat the Cope Gallagher in Europe under the list system, but this is his first time contesting the poll.

Fine Gael's Joe McCartin is retiring and the party is fielding two candidates, Sen Jim Higgins and Madeleine Taylor Quinn, in a bid to hold on to the seat.

Former Sports Minister Jim McDaid (FF) is the other government party candidate, and will be battling it out with non-party candidates Dana and Marian Harkin.

Labour's Hughie Baxter and Sinn Fein's Pearse Doherty are also running, together with non-party candidate Marie Hainsworth.

In Dublin, two outgoing MEPs, Proinsias De Rossa (Lab) and Patricia McKenna (Greens), are running again.

Fianna Fail is fielding two candidates - Lord Mayor Royston Brady, and former Junior Minister Eoin Ryan - while FG hopes to retain its seat with Gay Mitchell.

Law professor Ivana Bacik is the running-mate of Proinsias De Rossa while Sinn Fein's Mary Lou McDonald is also running.

Socialist Party Dail deputy Joe Higgins is contesting again.

Three non-party candidates are also contesting in Dublin - Tom Prendeville, Brendan Price and Paul Doonan; Barry Despard is running for the Christian Solidarity Party.

The new East constituency was formerly Leinster and a four-seater but is now reduced to three seats.

In East, formerly Leinster, both sitting FF MEPs - Jim Fitzsimmons and Liam Hyland - are retiring and the party is running party chairman Seamus Kirk and Liam Aylward instead.

Sitting FG MEP Avril Doyle has been joined by political newcomer Mairead McGuinness.

Labour is running former ICTU chief Peter Cassells. Cllr Mary White is contesting for the Greens. SF's candidate is John Dwyer and there are six non-party candidates - Justin Barrett,

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Joe Neal, Senan O Coistin, **Liam O Gogain**, Eoin Dubsy and Clifford T Reid.

The South constituency, formerly Munster, has been reduced from a four-seater to three. FF hopes to retain its two seats held by Gerard Collins and Brian Crowley.

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John Cushnahan is retiring and Simon Coveney hopes to retain the seat for FG. Senator Brendan Ryan is contesting for Labour.

Kathy Sinnott is running as a non-party candidate, while Chris O'Leary is running for the Greens and David Cullinane for SF.

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Three other non-party candidates are housewife Lily Moynihan, farmer Anthony O'Connor and broadcaster/author Gerard Hannan.

Lorna Reid

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