

## Sean Kelly

Seán Kelly (Seán Ó Ceallaigh ) is an [Irish](#) politician and [Member of the European Parliament](#) (MEP) for the [South constituency](#). He is a member of [Fine Gael](#), part of the [European People's Party](#). He is a former President of the [Gaelic Athletic Association](#) (2003–06). He was the first [Kerry](#) man to hold that prestigious office being elected at the first attempt by a record margin at the GAA Congress in 2002.

In July 2006 he took up the position of Executive Chairman of the Irish Institute of Sport, a body that was set up in [Ireland](#) to support elite athletes and players, and served as Executive President until he announced his resignation in July 2008.<sup>[4]</sup>

Kelly was born in Knockataggle, Kilcummin, [Killarney](#), County Kerry in 1952. He was born into a family that was deeply involved in the Gaelic Athletic Association. His grandfather had been chairman of the local club and his four uncles had distinguished playing careers, with his uncle, also Sean Kelly, starring at full-forward for [Kerry](#) in their [All-Ireland Championship](#) success over [Armagh](#) in 1953.

Kelly was educated at Kilcummin National School, [Tralee](#) CBS and [St. Brendan's, Killarney](#). He qualified as a primary school teacher in [St Patrick's College of Education, Drumcondra](#) and then attended [University College Dublin](#) where he received a B.A. and Higher Diploma in Education. (first class honours) He worked as a teacher in [Dublin](#) (Cromcastle Green, Kilmore West) and in St. Brendan's, Killarney.

Before being elected president of the GAA he served as Chairman of the East Kerry (1975–87) and County Kerry Boards (1987–97) and [Munster Council](#) (1997–2000). He also was one of the founding members of the [St. Patricks East Kerry](#) hurling team in 1984. As the first Kerryman to hold the position of President of the GAA his presidency is seen as a landmark one in moving forward the Association on so many fronts – the introduction of [Christy Ring Cup](#) and [Nicky Rackard Cup](#), [Tommy Murphy Cup](#), All-Ireland Junior and Intermediate Championships, he also oversaw the completion of the [Croke Park](#) re-development through the completion of [Hill 16](#)/Northern end and the building of the Croke Park Jury's Hotel. He introduced the President's Awards and

developed a great working relationship with the GPA and initiated major improvements in player welfare matters.

He is also credited with the successful conclusion of arrangements for the use of Croke Park, the GAA's 82,500 capacity national stadium, by the [Irish Rugby Football Union](#) and the [Football Association of Ireland](#) while [Lansdowne Road](#) is being re-developed.

He is generally regarded as one of the most successful, innovative and media-friendly president's in the Association's history as is evidenced by the string of awards he has received including Person of the Year 2005, Community Entrepreneur of the Year 2006, Business Person of the month (April 2005) and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by [Dublin Institute of Technology](#) in February 2007.