

Dublin-born presenter Kevin Sharkey says he wants to run in the next general election

The presenter's 'Ireland First' manifesto has been well received in Balbriggan



Ireland's first ever black TV presenter says he wants to run in the next general election – to curb the influx of immigrants arriving here.

Outspoken artist Kevin Sharkey, who presented RTE show Megamix in the 1980s, claims Irish communities are being pushed to the back of the queue because we can't cope with the rising population.

He told the Irish Sunday Mirror: "It is something I've been talking about for a long time but the system is so messed up I don't really know what you can do to sort it out.

"You have people whose great grandparents grew up surviving on spuds and little else and now they can't even get a house.

"Local communities in the likes of [Tallaght](#) and Balbriggan are now bearing the brunt of a social experiment that started in Europe.



"A lot of people – my own friends and family, who are all white, included – feel they can't speak up about it or they will be branded as racist.

"That is wrong. What we now have is political correctness to the point that it shuts down everything. I just want a platform for dialogue so people can have a say.

"This is not about race or religion, it's about numbers. Ireland is seen as a soft touch. We are seen as a wealthy country. You have people coming here who believe homosexuals should be killed, who do not share our ideals."

Kevin, who was born at a mother and baby facility and adopted by a Donegal family, stressed that he was not against controlled immigration but large swells of one nationality in an area "dissipates the culture".

The 54-year-old, who played Fr Shaft in hit TV comedy Fr Ted and had won 37 medals for Irish dancing by the age of 12, says Ireland is at risk because our compassion makes us vulnerable.

He said: "I grew up as the only black person in the village, with a love of Irish culture and Irish dancing. But I don't see the same thing happening with people coming here from different cultures now.

"You only have to look to the UK to see what happens next, you have ghettos. The level of immigration is posing one of the biggest threats to Irish life.

"It's not their fault, it's the system that is letting too many people in that's to blame. We do not have a Government working on behalf of the people, they are working on behalf of big business.

"We are on the edge of a precipice here and once England becomes a closed shop they will come here in huge numbers.

"As it is the rate of influx we have is unsustainable. We can't cope and I feel let down by the Government."



Kevin, who joined Sinn Fein but left a short time later because he felt he was being used as a 'poster boy', said his 'Ireland First' manifesto has been well received in Balbriggan, Co Dublin, where he lives.

He said: "I put out the feelers and the response was very interesting. People have been wanting somebody to at least start the discussion and let them have a say.

"This Government are a shambles. The abortion issue - they should let women vote on it, they're the ones having the babies. And whatever the women of Ireland decide, that is what should be done.

"I also think the time has come for religious orders and State to be separated. The national maternity hospital should be nothing to do with the nuns. I never came across such cruelty in my life as I saw at the hands of the nuns.

"I wouldn't rule anything in or out and if I do stand it will be as an independent. For me it's about a platform for open dialogue rather than power. I feel I could at least wake people up to what we need which is adult politics."

And the renowned artist, whose paintings have been bought by Bob Geldof, Rosie Huntington Whitely, Courtney Love and Whitney Houston, says he's not afraid of the backlash.

He said: "Just because you hold a certain opinion doesn't mean you don't like black people. Bring it on. I've experienced racism all my life. I was called a black b***ard as a child.

"I hate racism so let them call me what they like, that is the one thing I am not."