



ANOTHER IRELAND IS POSSIBLE

PEOPLE BEFORE PROFIT BUDGET 2026

MAKE THE RICH PAY



SUMMARY

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INTRODUCTION

We are living in extraordinary times. Budget 2026 takes place as a massive annual budget surplus is about to be recorded. The richest two billionaires have more wealth than the bottom 50% of the population. We have one of the most right wing governments in the history of the country which refuses to take action on the multiple crises facing the many.

While Ireland is a wealthy country it is also deeply unequal. Poverty, deprivation and homelessness are widespread and huge numbers of working class people struggle with cost of living pressures. Over the past six months four in ten parents said that they skipped meals or reduced their portion size so that their children had enough to eat. Energy and food prices keep increasing while the government is planning to cut cost of living supports.

The housing crisis deepens with many finding it impossible to gain access to affordable housing. The government plans to gut rent pressure zones and continues to rely on the market and developers which will never provide affordable housing. While homelessness grows we have the scandal of widespread dereliction. We need an emergency programme led by a State Construction Company to build and renovate many thousands of social and affordable houses.

Public services are not fit for purpose and working people struggle to gain access to health care. Education is costly when it should be free and childcare costs amount to another mortgage for many households. Those with additional needs are locked out of basic services, waiting for essential assessments and therapies and even school places. 40% of disabled people live on or below the poverty line.

We are also faced with existential climate, biodiversity and environmental crises that are destroying the conditions necessary for our survival. The government refuses to take the radical measures to reduce emissions and reduce energy and transport costs for households.

Unprecedented Resources Available

All of this although the government has unprecedented resources available to it. The government now wants to argue that caution is required in the face of threats from Trump's tariffs. To prepare for a potential economic downturn, the Irish government is preparing to save money by raising student fees, abolish energy credits, and removing other one-off payments provided in 2025. They want a return to austerity. This comes at a time when for the fourth year in the row the government is collecting far more from taxes than they spend on public services and infrastructure.

The government persistently refuses to use these resources or aggressively tax the rich and wealthy to provide a decent living to the majority of the population. We do not agree that corporate welfare should be provided to employers by reducing the VAT rate for hotels and restaurants. Rather there are radical measures that can be taken to extend the tax base and secure more sustainable additional revenues from the corporate sector and the very wealthy.

These revenues could be used to fund permanent increases in incomes especially for those who at risk of poverty. Once off payments are not adequate to address the costs of living pressures on households. We therefore propose significant increases to pensions and social supports to boost incomes and provide greater resources to households with children.

We want to move away from the current economic model of prioritising multinational corporations and wealthy investors to appropriately taxing them to fund public services, infrastructure, and fair redistribution of wealth. We would use additional

funding to establish a State Construction Company to build necessary housing. We would nationalise the energy system to provide low cost, renewable energy to all. We would invest in multi-annual capital expenditure projects like renewable energy transformation, retrofitting, public transport, childcare, healthcare, and education infrastructure projects.

People Before Profit is summarising our Budget here to highlight our key proposals¹:

- To provide a living income for all and transfer wealth from the millionaires
- To address energy and food costs
- To address the housing crisis, address the scandal of dereliction and support renters
- To make public services free
- To invest in a fair and equal future
- To tackle the climate and biodiversity crisis

Our budget identifies the many sources of wealth in our society. We identify almost €52 billion in additional resources that could be raised and added to the over €8 billion predicted government surplus. We propose additional expenditure of almost €54 billion.

We have enough resources to create a better, Ecosocialist society, where high quality, energy-efficient and affordable housing is available to all, where poverty is abolished, where incomes and wealth are redistributed back to the workers and carers who create them, and where free high-quality public services are accessible to all. What's missing is the political will to make this happen.

¹ The complete budget document is also available and covers a more extensive set of proposals

1. Tax the Multi-Millionaires and Give Working People a Break. Give people a Living Income.

Our Budget contains 5 Key measures to boost incomes at a cost of €7.3 billion:

- Abolish the USC for workers earning less than €100,000
- A Living Wage of at least €17 an hour for all
- End poverty rates for Pensions and Social Protection Payments: Raise them to €350 per week with an additional €50 Cost of Disability payment for those on disability payments
- Increase Child Benefit by 20%
- Increase the Child Support Payment by €12 for under 12s and €30 for over 12s

We would also introduce a 4-day week without loss of pay.

Our Budget contains 5 Key measures to Tax the Wealthy and Profits of Large Companies and raise nearly €43 billion:

- Introduce a Millionaires' Tax on wealth to raise at least €9 billion
- Introduce four new tax bands on top earners to raise €4 billion
- Higher PRSI rates for employers to raise over €4 billion
- Raise Corporation Tax to 20% for large corporations and close tax avoidance loopholes to raise €20 billion
- A Financial Transaction Tax to raise €6 billion

2. Take Radical Action to Control Energy and Food Costs

Energy and food prices continue to rise without any action from the government. People Before Profit supports price controls and has introduced legislation control the price of food, electricity, gas and fuel. We want to fully nationalise the energy sector. To do this, a not-for-profit national energy company will provide every household with electricity and gas at a price equal to the cost of supply. We believe that our non-profit model will undercut the rest of the private market and eventually lead to a fully nationalised energy model with a dual focus on cutting costs and reducing our emissions.

In our budget we say:

- **To protect people from rising energy costs we will maintain the energy credit and increase it to €500 in 2026 for every household funded by an energy levy on data centres.** We will ban new data centres
- Increase Fuel Allowance by €20, extend eligibility criteria and extend the payment period to 32 weeks
- Establish a Climate Action Service using direct labour to carry out free retrofits for an extra 30,000 low BER high energy poverty households
- Introduce a minimum B2 BER for the Private Rented Sector

A Radical Proposal on Food Prices

Action is also required to curb profiteering by food retailers. We believe it's time for the state to intervene in providing the essentials of life that people need to survive.

Current policy which relies on the market has led to food deserts with limited access to fresh food; rising rates of diet-related illness; and pressure on small farmers squeezed by big retailers, threatening rural sustainability. Public provision can intervene where the market has failed and deliver healthy food as a public good.

We are proposing a pilot scheme for a publicly owned, non-profit grocery service targeted at areas experiencing food poverty, poor nutrition, and high chronic disease burdens. This service will operate state-run grocery stores, delivering affordable, healthy food while supporting small Irish producers and creating secure, unionised jobs.

This service would be funded a Public Nutrition Levy on the profits of the largest and most profitable food retail and fast-food chains and cost approximately €26 million to establish and operate in year 1.

3. Take Radical Action to end the housing crisis: End the Scandal of Dereliction and Support Renters.

People Before Profit believes we need an emergency programme led by a State Construction Company to build many thousands of social and affordable houses and

address the scandal of dereliction. Our Budget proposals would see, in addition to government targets, over 36,000 additional social and affordable homes through a combination of new builds, Part V acquisitions and the refurbishment of derelict properties.

- Build and acquire 26,000 **additional** social and affordable homes
- Renovate vacant and derelict homes, and convert vacant commercial buildings to provide 10,500 additional social and affordable homes
- Increase funding for tenant-in-situ acquisitions by 150%
- Increase the renter's tax credit to €3,000 and introduce a €3,000 affordability grant for HAP tenants
- Introduce a "use it or lose it" policy on long-term vacant and derelict properties including a punitive €1,000 a month vacant property tax
- Ban no-fault evictions, freeze and cut rents, legislate to ban corporate ownership of rental properties and protect deposits
- Abolish the income limits for social housing, double investment in social housing maintenance and establish a national Social Housing Maintenance Fund

4. Make Public Services Genuinely Free

Public services in Ireland are far from free. Many households are facing significant costs and can be denied access to many services that should be free. Some families go into debt to cover education costs while households with young children are often paying the equivalent of a mortgage to cover childcare. In our budget we propose to:

- Provide free primary care including GP care; eliminate all emergency department and hospital parking charges; reduce the Drug Payment Threshold to €10 per month and scrap prescription charges for medical card holders
- Abolish childcare fees
- Abolish all back-to-school charges, voluntary contributions and fees and provide free uniforms
- Expand the School Transport Scheme to 100,000 more children and abolish fares
- Provide free school meals at all levels
- Abolish third level fees

- Abolish fares on all public transportation services and publicly contracted commercial services and abolish the M50 toll, expand Park and Ride facilities and abolish charges
- Abolish charges for waste collection and take the service back into public ownership

5. Invest in Building a Fair and Equal Future

The resources exist in our society to invest on high quality public services so that they are accessible for all. We would:

Disability and Additional Needs

- Clear Assessment of Needs waiting lists as a matter of urgency; establish a national Case Management System and database; introduce a National Accessibility Fund to provide for appropriate facilities in public spaces
- Increase the number of Special Needs Assistants by 3,000, Special Education Teachers by 1,500, and psychologist in NEPS by 50%
- Double capital spending for primary and post-primary schools to accelerate the school building programme and provide space for additional special classes

Health

- Add 1,000 permanent acute beds with appropriate staffing and an additional 450 level 3 ICU beds
- Bring staffing in public health teams to WHO-recommended levels
- Invest in Mental Health Services to bring spending in line with Mental Health Reform's recommendation of 10% of the overall health budget by 2027

Education

- Double the capitation grant for primary and secondary schools and double funding for the Deis programme, including roll out of Deis+
- Reduce the pupil teacher ratio to 15:1
- Double capital spending for primary and post-primary schools to accelerate the school building programme and provide space for additional special classes

Childcare

- Establish a National Childcare Service – including fully funding enough new public childcare places to clear waiting lists in 2026
- Treble funding for Equal Start (a Deis-type Early Years programme)
- Extend paid parental leave to provide 12 months’ fully paid leave for both parents

6. Invest to Tackle The Climate and Biodiversity Crisis

We also have the resources to invest in a carbon free future. We would:

- Double capital investment in public transport infrastructure, including buying an additional 500 electric buses
- Increase investment by €162 million in current spending on public transport services to hire more drivers, increase frequency and introduce new bus routes
- Use billions currently allocated to the Future Ireland Fund to implement the All-Island Rail Review, build Metro South West, and Luas lines in Cork, Limerick, Galway, Finglas and Lucan
- Invest €5 billion in low-cost public renewable energy as part of a democratic plan to nationalise the energy system and phase out fossil fuels and transition to 100% renewable energy by 2030
- Establish a Climate Action Service using direct labour to carry out free retrofits for an extra 30,000 low BER high energy poverty households with a year one additional investment of €1.08 billion
- Introduce a Dairy Herd Reduction scheme and an additional €20,000 Farming for Biodiversity Payments for small farmers at a cost of €2 billion
- Massively expand the Native Tree Area Scheme

Appendix: The People Before Profit Budget in Figures

Current Budgetary Position	€ million
2025 projected surplus carried forward – Irish Fiscal Advisory Council 2025 ²	8,700
PBP Budget estimates	€ million
Revenue	
Introduce four new tax bands on top earners	4,126
Employer PRSI increases (total)	4,200
Corporate Tax at 20% headline rate	20,000
Corporate Tax – pharmaceuticals & health	1,364
Corporate Tax at – energy companies	1,158
Corporate Tax – large grocery and fast-food retailers	26
Millionaires' Tax	9,000
Tax on vacant homes	480
Tax on vacant land zoned for residential development	178
Net revenue from Non-Principal Private Residence Tax after abolishing LPT at €551 million	172
Increase commercial stamp duty to 10%	195
Increase Capital Gains Tax from 33 to 40%	581
A 2.25% tax social media and largest ICT companies	781
Retrospective 12.5% tax on 20% of profits from Intellectual Property	722
Financial Transaction Tax	5,883

² Irish Fiscal Advisory Council (2025). Fiscal Assessment Report June 2025, <https://www.fiscalcouncil.ie/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Fiscal-Assessment-Report-June-2025.pdf>

Taxing the worst polluters	514
Tax on commercial aviation	944
Additional energy levy on data centres to fund €500 energy credit for households	1,150
Reduction in Pension Relief Threshold	159
Abolish the Special Assignment Relief Programme (SARP)	48
Total	€60,381

Expenditure	€ million
Build and acquire 20,000 additional properties for social housing, above Housing For All targets (30,000 social housing units in total)	6,100
Deliver 6,000 additional affordable homes	600
Build 1,400 additional dedicated social housing units for elderly people with supports	426
Invest in Capital Assistance Scheme to provide appropriate housing supports for people with disabilities	150
Tenant-in-situ acquisitions	488
Increase the renter's tax credit to €3,000	372
€3,000 HAP uplift	163
100% redress for defective block and mica-affected homes	500
Traveller Housing Agency	10
Increase DRHE funding	50
To address fire safety, damp and other structural defects for Celtic Tiger-era apartments and new builds plus retrospective costs	251
National Rental Inspectorate	8
Double investment in social housing maintenance and establish a national Social Housing Maintenance Fund	187
Provide 250 additional emergency accommodation units for people fleeing gender-based violence	140

Establish State Construction Company	500
Acquire additional 10,000 derelict and long-term vacant properties	2,300
Renovation cost for 4,700 acquired long term vacant homes for social housing	136
Renovation cost for 2,800 acquired derelict homes for social housing	196
Cost for 3,000 commercial-to-residential conversions for social housing	551
Increase social protection payment to €350 per week (excluding disability related payments)	2,000
Increase Disability Allowance, Invalidity Pension and Blind Pension to €400 per week	1,500
Reduce the State Pension age to 65	430
Increase Child Benefit by 20% and extend payment to all children aged 18 years or under	530
Increase Child Support Payment by €12 for under 12s & €30 for over 12s	145
Abolish the means test for Carers' Allowance	600
Increase public sector pay by 10% for all those earning below €100,000	2,800
Index link tax credits by 2%	476
Abolish USC for earners under €100,000 and introduce a Higher Income Social Charge of 10% on income over €100,000	3,100
Provide a €500 energy credit to each private household	1,150
Extend eligibility for the Fuel Allowance to all pensioners and to all in receipt of the Working Family Payment and extend the payment period to 32 weeks	648
Abolish the waiting period of a year for Fuel Allowance for those on Job Seekers Allowance	15
Increase Fuel Allowance by €20 per week for current and proposed new recipients	533
Extend Child Benefit to 6,832 children under the age of 18 in the international protection process	13
Cap energy prices and fully nationalise the energy system	1,800
Refundable Tax Credit	1,300
Non-Profit Public Grocery Service	26

Abolish residential waste collection charges and take the service back into public ownership	400
Clear Assessment of Needs waiting list	32
Invest additional €2 billion in 2026 in disability-related services to end poverty and exclusion	2,000
Increase home support services	267
Address pay disparity of Section 39 and Section 28	110
Add 1,000 permanent acute beds with appropriate staffing. Costs: €500 million in running costs and €1.5 billion in capital expenditure	2,000
Additional 450 level 3 ICU beds. Costs: €450 million in running costs and €900 million in capital expenditure	1,350
Additional speech & language therapists, clinical psychologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, and consultants	60.1
Free Primary Care including GP Care	672
Abolish all Emergency Department charges for public patients	24
Reduce Drug Payment Threshold to €10 per month	222.6
Scrap Prescription Charges for Medical Card Holders	69
Reinstate pre-crisis Dental Treatment Services Scheme	34
Abolish car parking charges at HSE Statutory Hospitals	13
Expand free contraception to women over 35	19
Invest in Mental Health Services to bring spending in line with Mental Health Reform recommendation of 10% of overall health budget by 2028	500
Investment in transgender healthcare: including upskilling and reskilling of healthcare professionals, and provision of free transgender healthcare	6
National physiotherapy services for people with Multiple Sclerosis and other neurological conditions at cost of €1.1 million, and additional Sligo-Leitrim Community Worker Posts at €100,000	1.2
Full implementation of the National Stroke Strategy 2022-2027 and other cardiovascular disease health strategies and programmes	40
Abolish childcare fees for parents	349
Free preschool meals for all children in the ECCE scheme	31

Additional 10% pay increase for childcare workers	50
Additional funding for Equal Start	50
Establishing a National Childcare Service - including fully funding new public childcare places to clear waiting lists	1,070
Extending paid Parent's Leave and amalgamating it with Maternity and Paternity Leave to 12 months' paid leave in the first two years of child's life	502
Abolish all back-to-school charges for parents (including voluntary contributions) and provide free uniforms	465
Double the capitation grant for primary and post-primary schools	289
Provide free school meals at secondary level	225
Pilot scheme improve the nutritional content of school meals and prepare them from scratch on school premises.	30
Reduce pupil teacher ratios to 15:1 in primary and post-primary schools in the free education system	444
Increase the number of Special Needs Assistants by 3,000	105
Increase the number of Special Education Teachers by 1,500	85
Increase the number of psychologist posts in NEPS by 50%	15
Double DEIS funding and implement Deis+	180
Pensions parity for school secretaries and caretakers	30
Funding of school patronage transfers	6
Double capital spending	1,300
Close the funding gap identified in 2022 and maintain the existing level of funding	355
Abolish the student contribution charge, including fees paid by non-EU students	289
Abolishing fees for all postgraduate and mature repeating students	100

Fund to ensure all PhD researchers receive a stipend of at least €30,000 per year	225
Double maintenance grants and reduce adjacent rate to 24 kilometres	94
Increase mental health supports on campuses to ensure one counsellor per 1,000 students	18
Provide 30,000 extra affordable student beds by 2029 (€300 million in first year)	300
Expand the School Transport Scheme to an additional 100,000 children and abolish fares	190
Additional investment in the Safe Routes to School Scheme	54
Doubling capital investment in public transport infrastructure, including purchase of 500 additional electric buses	1,100
Increase in current spending on public transport services to fund operational costs of new services and hire new drivers	162
Abolish fares on all public transportation services and publicly contracted commercial services	665
Abolish M50 tolls	170
Abolish parking charges at Park and Ride facilities and invest in additional Park and Ride facilities	25
50% increase in investment in active travel	178
Increased funding for investment in the Gaeltacht and promotion of the Irish language	55
Transform RTE and public media	600
Funding for sports and recreation services	165
Additional funding for arts and culture	420
Basic Income for the Arts	109
Funding Local Authorities	800
Other investments in public services	50
Invest €5 billion in developing renewable energy of which €4 billion from the Future Ireland Fund	1,000

Additional investment in retrofitting for low BER and high energy poverty households for retrofitting	1,000
Dairy Herd Reduction scheme	1,030
New €20,000 Farming for Biodiversity Payment for 50,000 small farmers	1,000
Double funding for the National Parks and Wildlife Service	133
Funding for Native Tree Scheme	11
Increase funding for Marine Protected Areas	7
Total	€53,555

MAKE THE RICH PAY

