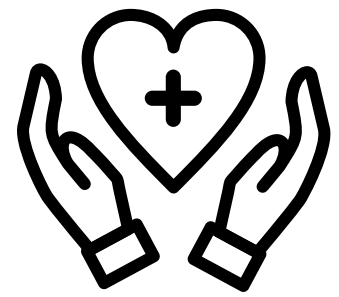




Budget 2023 Key Measures



Disability and Health Services



Disability specific measures

€109m to continue at existing level of service i.e. to ensure that people already in disability services continue to be supported and that staff wages are paid.

€29.25m funding for new developments including:

- €900,000 for two additional **community neurorehabilitation teams** (there will now be teams in 4 CHOs in total)
- €1.7m for 23 additional community **neurological nursing** whole time equivalent posts across the country
- Ongoing development of disability **residential places**
- Supporting school leavers transitioning to adult **day services**
- **Respite** services
- Supporting the **joint working protocol between HSE and Túsla** to support children with disabilities
- A **digital and assistive technology** initiative in partnership with the World Health Organisation

The following once-off funding measures:

- €11.7m to work with section 38 and 39 organisations, HSE and private providers to clear **assessment of need backlogs**
- €27m to fund 143 emergency cases arising from COVID-19
- €65m to address **inflation in disability community and voluntary organisations** (this is the disability portion of the €100m package)

Mainstream measures

- **Public hospital in-patient fees** will be removed for all patients from 1 April 2023.
- Extension of **GP visit card** to children aged 6 and 7 by end 2022 (already announced prior to Budget but not yet implemented).
- Income limit of GP visit card increased to include people on median household income of €46,000 or less from April 2023.
- €3.7m to increase capacity of **Laura Lynn Children's Hospice**.
- €14m funding for new measures in mental health services including:
 - **€750,000 for Counselling and Psychology training places** in a new HSE initiative
 - **Appointment of a youth mental health lead** in the HSE
 - **€9m for new initiatives**
- €8.9m over two years (€0.9m in 2023 and €8.3m in 2024) for dementia services including:
 - **4 additional memory assessment** and support service team
 - **Rollout of level 5 dementia training** for home care staff
 - **Pilot of psychosocial interventions** in day and residential care
 - **Dementia service coordinators** in each CHO
 - **6 additional clinical nurse specialists** in dementia for acute services
 - **6 assistant directors of nursing** for dementia in mental health
- €32.3m funding for women's health including:
 - **Extending free contraception** to include women aged 16-30 from September 2023
 - **€10m funding for IVF treatment** in the public health system from September 2023
 - **Repayments for morning sickness medicines**
 - **Funding to set up a Breast Implant Registry**
 - **Additional Women's Health Hubs** (July 2023)

Social Protection: Cost of Disability and Poverty



Cost of Living One Off Payments

- **Double payment:** One off double week for disabled people and carers - week commencing 17th October.
- **Fuel Allowance:** no increase in rates or number of weeks, **one off lump sum payment of €400** - week commencing 14th November.
- **Living Alone Allowance:** no increase in rates, **one off lump sum payment of €200** - week commencing 14th November.
- **One off €500 lump sum payment/Disability Support Grant for disabled people** (those who receive Disability Allowance, Invalidity Pension and Blind Pension). Referred to as Cost of Disability payment in at least one place - week commencing 14th November.
- **One off €500 lump sum payment/Disability Support Grant for carers** (those who receive Carer's Support Grant). Referred to as Cost of Disability payment in at least one place - week commencing 21 November.

Minister McGrath in his Budget 2023 speech said ***"it is important that we acknowledge that persons living with a disability face additional costs.*** In this regard, a once-off payment of €500 to those who qualify for Disability Allowance, Invalidity Pension and the Blind Pension will be made in November." This acknowledgement is very welcome, even though it is obviously insufficient to address cost of disability with a one off measure.

- **Energy credit: 3 instalments of €200** - one before Christmas

Standard Payments

Disability:

- Core payments (Disability Allowance, Invalidity Pension, Blind Pension, Carers Allowance etc) - **€12 increase (an increase of 5.8%)**, with proportionate increases for people on reduced rate - commencing January 2023.
- **100% Christmas bonus** - will be paid week commencing 5th December.
- Increase in weekly rate of the qualified child increase for children aged 12 and over by €2 per week.
- Improved means assessment for Fuel Allowance - Disablement Benefit will be disregarded in the means test for Fuel Allowance.

Carers:

- **Domiciliary Care Allowance rate increase to €330** - commencing January 2023.
- **Domiciliary Care Allowance** will be available in respect of children with severe illness or disability who remain in hospital for up to six months after birth.
- Improved means assessment for Fuel Allowance - Half-Rate Carer's Allowance will be disregarded in the means assessment from January 2023.

Employment



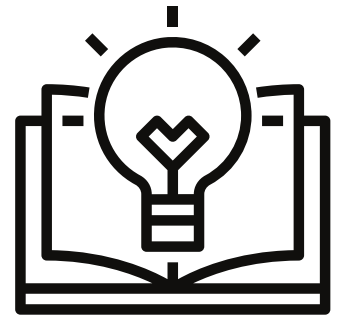
- The **earnings disregard** for Disability Allowance and Blind Pension will be increased from €140 to €165 (from January 2023).
- **Reasonable Accommodation Fund:** “Amalgamate the four Reasonable Accommodation Fund (RAF) grants into a single, flexible grant with increased funding”. €1 million allocated.

Housing



- €2m increased funding for **Housing Adaptation Grants** for Older People and People with a Disability Schemes.
- €1m increase in **Capital Assistance Scheme** funding (to €97m total funding). This scheme is designed for the provision of rented accommodation for those with special needs including disabled people, elderly persons, homeless people etc.
- **€500 tax credit for renters** (per person renting, this year and next year) in private accommodation. Households availing of the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) will not be eligible.
- Delivery of 11,830 **social homes** and 5,500 affordable purchase and cost rental homes in 2023.
- 8,800 new households will be supported by the **Housing Assistance Payment**.
- 800 new **Rental Accommodation Scheme** tenancies.

Education



Primary and Secondary Education

- Additional 370 **special classes**, spread across primary (234) and post-primary (136), covering approximately 2,000 more children.
- 686 additional **Special Education Teachers** working in special classes, special schools, and in mainstream settings to support children with special educational needs (€12m).
- 1,194 more **Special Needs Assistants**, meaning that there will be over 20,000 SNAs for the first time ever. Increased funding for the **National Council for Special Education**, including funding for **Irish Sign Language Tutors**.
- **Free school books** for all pupils in primary school (€43m).
- Continuation of the **Enhanced Summer Programme** for a further year to mitigate against COVID learning losses (€20m).
- Reduction in primary **class sizes** to 23:1 (370 additional primary teachers, €6m).
- Continued investment to allow children access to the **School Transport Scheme**.
- Further **reforms of the Senior Cycle** at post-primary level.

Further and Higher Education

- €30m to fund additional craft **apprenticeships and training programmes**, and Access to Apprenticeship initiatives and apprenticeship bursary for underrepresented groups.
- Families earning up to €62,000 to pay no more than €1,500 in **third level fees** from September 2023 via increase in income limit for SUSI 50% student contribution grant.
- Families earning between €62,000-€100,000 will be eligible for a grant of €500 towards student contribution fees via SUSI from January 2023.
- Increase in **SUSI maintenance grants** from January 2023.
- Once off €1,000 reduction in third level fees.
- Once-off double SUSI maintenance grant payment in December.
- Once-off increase in Postgraduate fee grant by €1,000 (from €3,500 to €4,500), permanent increase of €500 from September 2023.
- Reduced eligibility for **second chance mature students** from 5 to 3 year break in studies returning to pursue an approved course at PLC, undergraduate or postgraduate level for Student Grant scheme.
- Increased **postgraduate allowance**.

Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth



- €346m increased **early learning and school aged childcare** funding, bringing state investment to over €1bn exceeding the First Five target five years earlier than expected. This funding includes:
 - **Continuation of the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme** including €10m additional funding for the continuation of the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) to ensure more children with disabilities can access the ECCE Programme.
 - **National Childcare Scheme subsidy** of €1.40 for all families accessing registered early learning and childcare (additional 90c per hour reduction in cost). This will result in an average of 25% cut in childcare fees (cost: €121m).
- €37m increased funding for **Túsla**, to address increased demand and complexity, support the community and voluntary sector funded by Túsla and other initiatives.
- €6.4m increased funding for implementation of the **White Paper to End Direct Provision and to Establish a New International Protection Support Services**.
- €2.4m increase in funding for **youth services**.

Justice



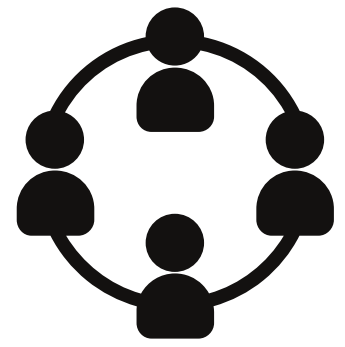
- An additional €3 million for the Legal Aid Board in 2023 to provide legal advice and support around the **Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act**.
- €2.5m investment to support the **Youth Justice Strategy**.
- €9m for further development of the **Domestic and Gender Based Violence** Strategy, including addressing service demands and establishment of a new statutory agency with responsibility for domestic and gender based violence.

Transport



- **20% fare discount** for most public transport to continue until the end of 2023.
- A **Youth Travel Card** will be introduced, offering half-priced fares to those 19-23.

Rural and Community Development



- €10 Million for the Department to provide **supports to community groups** to deal with increased costs.
- €18 Million for a new **Age Friendly network model** to address social connections for older people.