



Cost of Disability

**Submission to the Department
of Social Protection**

April 2026

Contents

- A. Introduction and key approaches..... 1
 - 1. Introduction 1
 - 2. The starting point: UN CRPD2
 - Values4
 - Intersectionality4
 - 3. Key approaches to make progress on Cost of Disability5
 - Co-Design – process and timeline5
 - Co-production with disabled people6
 - Cross-Departmental whole-of-government approach essential8
 - Evidence-based discussion and policy making.....9
 - Robust, transparent, measurable action plan and impact tracking 10
- B. Department of Social Protection Consultation 11
 - Consultation questions: Cost of Disability payment..... 13
 - 1. Are there specific additional costs that should be covered by a cost of disability payment?..... 13
 - Purpose of the payment 13
 - Costs 14
 - Cost of Disability Payment 16
 - Some costs not fully covered by existing services and supports..... 18
 - 2: How would we decide which people qualify for a Cost of Disability payment? 19
 - Eligibility and assessment: international guidelines 19
 - Trust and minimal bureaucratic burden20
 - An inclusive fair process that acknowledges unique needs21
 - Significant variety of costs and need21
 - Means-testing and people not currently receiving support22
 - 3: How should the payment amount be decided?23

Resources and public mandate.....	23
Universal versus targeted – both are possible	23
Highly varied needs and costs	23
Significant evidence available – payment based on need	24
Reliable predictable payment, with review to factor in inflation.....	25
Means-testing.....	25
Mirror positive means-testing changes for carers.....	26
4: How should the payment work?.....	27
Not a top-up for inadequate basic Disability Allowance	27
Weekly or monthly payment, modelled on Child Benefit.....	27
Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities Recommendations (1996).....	28
Support for people in employment	29
International recommendations	29
How the payment should work.....	30
Review mechanism and impact assessment.....	31
Consultation questions: Strategic focus summit.....	31
1: What issues would you like to see discussed at the Summit?.....	31
2: What format do you think the Summit should take?.....	33
Relevant previous DFI submissions and publications.....	36
C. The context	37
1. High disability poverty and deprivation, and low employment.....	37
2. The mandate for change: Significant public and political support	39

A. Introduction and key approaches

1. Introduction

DFI welcomes the opportunity to provide input and feedback on policy reforms that we believe have the positive potential to address disability poverty, the extra Cost of Disability, and low employment rates. The approach taken on Cost of Disability can and must deliver on Ireland's obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, UN CRPD and government commitments in the Programme for Government and the National Human Rights Strategy for Disabled People.

As a national federation and civil society organisation we have called for reform of social protection and disability policy for many years. Ireland's current social protection provision for disabled people is failing to reduce poverty or to significantly increase the disability employment rate. This continues to have devastating impacts on people with disabilities in communities across Ireland, many of whom live in ongoing deprivation. We have also been calling for the introduction of a Cost of Disability payment for over two decades, and we strongly welcome the government's stated commitment to finally deliver such a payment.

DFI is a federation of over 100 disability organisations across Ireland. This submission has been informed by consultation meetings and discussions with our member organisations, collectively and individual, along with significant feedback from members, the people they work to support and disabled members of the public. It is also informed by DFI's previous policy work, positions and submissions, and on research and international best practice.

The timeline for this consultation did not offer sufficient time to thoroughly consult, discuss, analyse and feedback, as we outline further below. This has limited capacity to fully engage with and deliberate on the complex questions being posed in the consultation, or to have cross-organisational discussions to arrive at common sectoral lines. The timeline allocated for this process does not seem to equate with the ambition for this important area of work. The seeming rush has also caused some frustration, given that Cost of Disability has been discussed in policy circles for over two decades.

Currently Ireland is failing to meet its obligations under the UN CRPD in this area. Our submission thus highlights areas of focus where positive progress can be made in the future on Cost of Disability. Ireland, and the Department of Social Protection, led the way internationally by commissioning and publishing the comprehensive Indecon report (2021) on the Cost of

Disability. This is considered ground-breaking, and a significant piece of international evidence and research. There is now a positive opportunity for government to follow through on the findings of its research and become a global leader on Cost of Disability. By following international best practice, and working with people with disabilities and disability organisations to develop solutions to the Cost of Disability, Ireland can work towards a social protection system that protects disabled people from poverty and actively tackles and compensates for financial, and other barriers, to equal participation in society - ensuring that no disabled person has to go without due to their disability. This will be good for everyone in Ireland. DFI and its members look forward to playing their part in this process as it continues.

In this submission we outline what we think should be the starting point of any Cost of Disability policy process, ie the UN CRPD, and a set of joint values reflecting a social model of disability. We also offer some key approaches that will be essential to tackling Cost of Disability comprehensively and effectively. We then answer the Department's consultation questions, also including reference to relevant evidence, research and guidelines which may be of use to the Department and the government as it works on this process. Finally we outline again important contextual information and evidence of both the current status of people with disabilities, and the significant public and political mandate to change and improve the system of supports for disabled people in Ireland.

2. The starting point: UN CRPD

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities UN CRPD¹ (ratified by Ireland in 2018) is a guide for policy makers. All disability-related policies developed should take the values, principles, rights and entitlements laid out in the UN CRPD as their starting point.

All principles of the Convention are important, however in the context of Cost of Disability, two articles are particularly relevant, namely:

- Article 28 – which outlines the right to an adequate standard of living and social protection, including the continuous improvement of living conditions, poverty reduction programmes and to state assistance with the extra Cost of Disability.
- Article 27 – which outlines the right to work on an equal basis with others, the right to training, return to work, and reasonable accommodation.²

¹ UN, [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)

² UN, UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. [Article 28](#), [Article 27](#).

Any policy on Cost of Disability should deliver on the above rights, and others enshrined in the UN CRPD (including the right to independent living, choice equal to others and to community participation), and should explicitly articulate how it will do so. The UN CRPD should be the foundation stone of any Cost of Disability policy or Action Plan.

At present the lack of action on Cost of Disability, despite it being raised for decades, means Ireland is failing to fully deliver these rights. Notably, the UN Committee on the CRPD issued its List of Issues to Ireland last year, and under Article 28 it called on the government to provide information about:

(a) The outcomes of commitments under Goal 5 of the Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025 (CRPD/C/IRL/1, para 411) and whether further poverty alleviation commitments have been made for persons with disabilities, including specific commitments for women and girls with disabilities.

(b) Measures to ensure the Disability Allowance provides an adequate standard of living and to introduce a permanent Annual Cost of Disability Support Payment as outlined in the 2025 Programme of Government.

(c) Measures to remove disincentives in the social protection system that prevent or limit access to employment for persons with disabilities, and to implement recommendations from the 2017 'Make Work Pay' report.

(d) Measures to remove the spousal/family income means test which impacts economic independence and risks control and violence for women with disability.

(e) Measures to ensure older persons with disabilities are not disadvantaged in the social protection system by age cut-offs for Disability Allowance and shifts to 'older person' social protection categories.³

All the above issues are obviously highly relevant and of concern in the context of Cost of Disability, and will be covered further in our submission.

In addition, the Department of Social Protection, and the State in general, has a responsibility under Public Sector Duty, to have regard to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and protect the human rights

³ UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2025), [List of issues in relation to the initial report of Ireland*](#).

of service users. A rights-based approach to poverty reduction and increasing employment, informed by the UN CRPD, is more likely to deliver improved outcomes for disabled people.

Values

As we previously outlined in our Green Paper submission in 2024,⁴ policy approaches into the future must be built on a set of shared, progressive and understood values or principles, which have been discussed and agreed upon by disabled people and disability organisations. In this regard, we outline some core values below, for consideration:

- A **rights-based approach** to disability social protection, based on Ireland’s commitment to the UN CRPD, Public Sector Duty, the International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights and other human rights frameworks and conventions. This should include vindicating the **right of disabled people to live equally to others** in all aspects of life.
- A **social model of disability** framework – acknowledging the multiple societal barriers that disabled people face on a daily basis.
- Active and meaningful **participation, consultation and voice for all people who will be affected by this reform** – centring **co-design** and co-production approaches.
- A focus on **supporting independent living**.
- Any reform must respect and uphold disabled people’s **dignity, their agency and autonomy, and their inclusion** – by ensuring all people with disabilities have an income sufficient to live a dignified life, to support their needs and choices, and to be included and able to participate in their community.
- The approach should recognise that each person’s disability affects them differently, and allow for **individualised and tailored supports**, rather than a one size fits all model.
- The approach should also remember the government’s commitment to a “**mainstream-first**” approach, a central aspect of the National Human Rights Strategy for Disabled People (2025).

Intersectionality

Alongside this, it will be important, as the National Human Rights Strategy itself acknowledges, to consider the important question of intersectionality. Disabled people do not hold just one identity, but rather in some cases may

⁴ DFI (2024), [Submission to Department of Social Protection on Green Paper on Disability Reform](#).

have multiple identities and experiences. These intersecting identities can compound and result in intersectional discrimination. For instance, a deaf woman is at risk of experiencing discrimination at least three levels, based on her gender, belonging to the disability community, and to a cultural and linguistic minority group. Considering intersectionality throughout this process is important.

3. Key approaches to make progress on Cost of Disability

There is a long way to go to improve things, and the current system of supports is not working. As we outline later in the submission, the current situation, with extremely high levels of disability poverty and deprivation, is deeply worrying.

Excluding cost of living measures (which we know were dropped in the most recent Budget), the most recent at risk of poverty rate of people unable to work due to disability is 36.3%⁵, more than three times that of the national average. And ESRI research indicates that if we factor in Cost of Disability, the disability At Risk Of Poverty (AROP) rate of disabled people increases to a staggering 65%-76%.⁶

This cannot be allowed to continue, especially given Ireland is one of the wealthier countries in the world. Change and reform is urgently needed. And there is a very strong public and political mandate to support making progress on Cost of Disability.

To successfully deliver positive change on Cost of Disability, some key approaches will be essential. We outline some key areas below.

Co-Design – process and timeline

Based on previous unsuccessful reform initiatives, it is extremely important that people with disabilities, and the organisations that work to support them, are actively and meaningfully involved in a co-design approach to policy reform and change.

The 2023 International Labour Organisation guidance note “Towards inclusive social protection systems enabling participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities” makes several recommendations on how to develop social protection approaches and systems in an inclusive way. It recommends that “in the development and reform of social protection programs and systems, stakeholders should ensure meaningful participation

⁵ CSO (2026), [Survey on Income and Living Conditions \(SILC\) 2025](#).

⁶ ESRI, 2025, [Adjusting estimates of poverty for the cost of disability](#).

of persons with disabilities and their representatives' organisations (OPDs)."⁷ The National Disability Authority published good practice guidelines on consultation in 2022, with a stress on consultation early in the process of policy development.⁸

A policy development approach that centres and prioritises co-design and co-production with disabled people will be more likely to address the needs of the disability community. This must be more than a one-off consultation process or event, and cannot be rushed according to limited timelines. Such a process must allow time for reflection, discussion and prioritisation based on deliberation, towards collective agreement on how to proceed.

Co-production with disabled people

Co-production is a relationship where professionals and citizens share power to plan and deliver support together, recognising that both have vital contributions to make in order to improve quality of life for people and communities. Co-production is a key concept in the development of public services.⁹ It is also recognised as crucial in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's *Designing our Public Services: Design principles for Government in Ireland*.¹⁰ An important new resource available to policymakers in Ireland is the *Blueprint for Co-Creation Position Paper* of the Disabled Persons' Organisations Network.¹¹

Co-production has the potential to make an important contribution to all of the big challenges that face public services in Ireland. Co-production starts from the idea that everyone has skills, abilities and contributions to offer. Disabled people have assets and value. Lived experience brings richness and diversity to organisations, but it is also crucial because people with lived experience often hold the keys to solutions to make things better for all. These individuals become experts in the systems they encounter regularly, they see the gaps, they see the difficulties, and they know the solutions and things that need to change to make the systems work better for everyone.

Implementing co-production can support:

- cost-effective services which make the best use of resources

⁷ UNICEF and ILO (2023), [Towards Inclusive Social Protection Systems Enabling Participation and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities: Guidance Note V1.0, Unedited Draft for Consultation](#), p. 111.

⁸ NDA (2022), ['Participation Matters: Guidelines on implementing the obligation to meaningfully engage with disabled people in public decision making'](#).

⁹ For more on co-production see Think Local Act Personal (no date) [What is co-production?](#), and New Economics Foundation (2010) [Public services inside out](#).

¹⁰ Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (2022), [Designing our Public Services: Design principles for Government in Ireland](#).

¹¹ DPO Network (2025), [Blueprint for Co-Creation Position Paper](#).

- improved user and carer experience of services
- delivery of better outcomes
- improved quality of life for people and communities
- more equal partnerships between people who use services, carers and professionals
- greater equality, diversity and access for disabled people
- the reform and transformation of services, including better integration of services
- increased community capacity through building stronger communities and active citizenship.

While co-production is not yet mainstream in Ireland, there are good practice examples of co-production and partnership working in health and social care services in Northern Ireland¹² and elsewhere, and some positive examples in the health policy space in Ireland.

One notable positive example in the disability space has been the recent study *Breaking down barriers: an assessment of the needs of disabled people in accessing population-based screening services in Ireland*.¹³ This first of its kind study captures the lived experience of disabled people (including documenting evidence of various extra costs), and was supported by an advisory group which included numerous disability organisations and Disabled People's Organisations.

Another positive example, which DFI was proud to be involved in, was the co-design partnership and work of patients and service users, partner agencies and the HSE Patient and Service User Experience Office together with the HSE Health Region Programme team to support the co-design of the HSE Health Regions Integrated Service Delivery model, including Health Region management structures. During 2024 and 2025, five Health Regions Integrated Service Delivery/Integrated Healthcare Area Model Workshops were co-designed with patient and service users, partner agencies and the HSE Health Regions team, and presented to the HSE Senior Leadership team.¹⁴ The principle of partnership between those who use health and social care services and those who provide services was a key aspect of the workshops. This project won joint first place (out of 450

¹² Engage Health and Social Care Northern Ireland (no date), [Involvement, Co-Production and Partnership Working](#).

¹³ HSE (2023), [Breaking down barriers: an assessment of the needs of disabled people in accessing population-based screening services in Ireland](#)

¹⁴ HSE (2025), [Patient and service user partnership co-designing Integrated Service Delivery Model](#)

applicants) in the “Improving Patient/Service User Experience” category at the HSE Health Excellence Awards 2025.

Cross-Departmental whole-of-government approach essential

Delivering an ambitious Cost of Disability programme and package effectively and meaningfully will clearly require co-ordination and joint working across multiple Departments and state bodies.

The Department of Social Protection’s brief and mandate is clear, under the UN CRPD and in the context of public and political support (detailed in Section C of this submission). It must also be guided by its Statement of Strategy and existing policy commitments to poverty reduction, such as in the Roadmap for Social Inclusion.

Previous reform efforts such as the Green Paper proposed specific reforms in isolation from the other relevant policy areas, and didn’t acknowledge the many structural barriers, gaps in services etc that disabled people have to contend with. Cost of Disability is an issue that occurs across multiple expenditure areas governed by numerous Departments. If these issues are not also considered and addressed, alongside bringing in a Cost of Disability payment, then it will not be possible to make progress and reduce poverty. Moving away from a siloed response to a holistic approach that addresses structural barriers is essential to deliver positive change.

The question of co-ordination across different government Departments remains increasingly urgent, notwithstanding some positive developments like the publication of the National Human Rights Strategy for Disabled People, and the creation of a Disability Unit in the Department of An Taoiseach. Disability poverty, the extra Cost of Disability and low employment do not exist or occur in isolation, nor can these issues be tackled by one Department only - they require cross-Departmental coordination, planning and implementation.

Indeed, even the connection and links between different policy initiatives (mostly led by the Department of Social Protection), such as the second Roadmap for Social Inclusion, the new Pathways to Work strategy, the National Human Rights Strategy for Disabled People, and this Cost of Disability process, remain unclear.

To really make progress on Cost of Disability issues it will also be important to consider how this process connects with and is integrated into other key national disability strategies, such as, for example the HSE Action Plan on Disability Services, New Directions, and the National Housing Strategy for Disabled People, amongst many others.

No reform can succeed unless cross-cutting issues are addressed consistently and systematically. In this context we welcome the Minister for Social Protection's recent comments in Oireachtas discussions on Cost of Disability where he has emphasised repeatedly that the work he is leading will adopt a 'whole of government approach' and involve multiple Departments.¹⁵ In another discussion, the Minister observed that:

One of my frustrations in public life is the way we silo people. That day needs to go in terms of the Department of Health doing one job, the Department of Social Protection doing another and the Department of disability doing another. That is why we are taking a whole-of-government approach to the summit on the cost of disability on 13 May. I am working with the Minister, Deputy Carroll MacNeill, and other colleagues to identify silos that are making people's difficult journey even more difficult.¹⁶

To deliver meaningful reform on Cost of Disability, a strong and holistic cross-Department effort will be required.

Evidence-based discussion and policy making

The government has committed significant resources recently, through the Indecon report, and previously through the earlier Indecon report and the Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities, to considering the extra Cost of Disability. There is rich evidence available in the Indecon report, in numerous ESRI publications in recent years, in reports from the OECD and other international bodies, as well as statistical information from the CSO such as annual SILC data, amongst other sources. Equally many disability organisations have also developed their own evidence in recent years, assessing the costs of various conditions and disabilities.¹⁷

There is also substantial evidence and analysis available through the policy submissions and recommendations made by many disability organisations (including DFI) in recent years to numerous policy processes – these include submissions on the annual Budget (overall and to the Department of Social

¹⁵ See for example Kildare Street (2026), [Written answers: Tuesday, 27 January 2026](#), [Dáil debates: Thursday, 26 February 2026](#) and [Written answers: Tuesday, 3 March 2026](#).

¹⁶ Kildare Street (2026), [Dáil debates: Thursday, 26 February 2026](#), [Ceisteanna ar Sonraíodh Uain Dóibh - Priority Questions: Social Welfare Payments](#).

¹⁷ See for example MS Ireland (2022) [Societal cost of Multiple Sclerosis in Ireland 2022](#) and Arthritis Ireland (2024) [Counting the cost of arthritis: A report on the financial and personal burden of living with arthritis](#) and Irish Wheelchair Association (2025) [Pre Budget Submission 2026](#) p. 3.

Protection), Roadmap for Social Inclusion, Pathways to Work, and submissions to the Green Paper consultation.

Although the Indecon report was published at the end of 2021, the Strategic Focus Summit will mark the first, somewhat overdue policy-focused discussion convened by the government and Department of Social Protection with disability organisations to examine and consider the findings of the report, and what should be done to address them.

To support an effective policy development process on Cost of Disability, it will be essential that the key themes, findings, issues and recommendations raised in the responses to this public consultation, and the Department's analysis of same, is shared with the disability movement and sector, ideally in advance of the Strategic Focus Summit. It will also be important to see reflections on the themes and recommendations of previous disability policy submissions in the past number of years, including to the Green Paper consultation process, and the Department's analysis and synthesis of them.

This evidence and analysis can help avoid the need to again repeat concerns that have already been well-documented previously, and inform the selection of strategic areas of focus and discussion at the Summit.

Robust, transparent, measurable action plan and impact tracking

It is often at the implementation stage that problems arise with the delivery of positive and innovative new policies. Implementation, both of existing and new commitments and policies, is essential, and in many cases existing commitments are lagging behind. In this context, whatever improved Cost of Disability supports are agreed upon and committed to, must be robustly monitored as they are delivered. Implementation and delivery timelines must be effectively, rigorously, and carefully monitored and transparently reported, to ensure positive change is delivered.

In particular we recommend that:

- The government should develop a three-year cross-Departmental Action Plan on Cost of Disability, co-designed with disabled people and disability organisations.
- This plan should include actions, timelines and measurable targets and outcomes which are reported annually. The actions should relate to delivering the Cost of Disability payment, and to tackling other Cost of Disability issues across relevant Departments.

- The Action Plan can potentially be integrated into the next Programme Plan of Action for the National Human Rights Strategy.
- Clear, transparent, regular and timely annual reporting against actions, targets and outcomes should be published.
- The annual report on progress should be reviewed by the Disability Matters Committee and an independent monitoring/oversight committee (which should include people with disabilities and disability organisations).
- Key indicators should be actively tracked and reported as part of this monitoring process to assess impact, including data on poverty and deprivation rates, and employment and employment gap rates.
- A mechanism for review and further refinement of actions will be necessary, perhaps at a mid-term point.

The above text is intended to provide important overall context, evidence and recommendations as we move into a new phase of proactively assessing and planning improved supports on Cost of Disability. We will now answer the specific questions posed in the public consultation.

B. Department of Social Protection Consultation

Note: We would like to emphasise that this submission outlines our initial thoughts on how to deliver a Cost of Disability payment, and this position has been developed during the relatively short timeline of the six-week consultation period. It should be noted that there hasn't been sufficient time available, or scope and space for discussion, to enable organisations to adequately consult their communities and arrive at a fully informed position, or to develop common sectoral positions on these complex issues.

We hope that the Strategic Focus Summit is the first step and beginning of the essential process of evidence-based policy discussion of the findings of the Indecon report and other research, and of a co-design approach to the development and delivery of a Cost of Disability Payment, and Action Plan. This will be hugely important in supporting and facilitating agreement over time on the correct policy approach to the questions posed by the consultation. Arriving at an agreed approach to tackling Cost of Disability will take time and will require a thoughtful, informed and deliberative process. Thus, we would stress that these are very much our initial thoughts, which we would need to discuss and deliberate on further and in detail with many other people and organisations in order to arrive at a final position.

After decades of advocacy by the disability movement on Cost of Disability, we are pleased to see the positive development of a serious commitment from government to tackle this issue, and a consultation on how to develop and deliver a Cost of Disability payment. This issue is too important to be rushed. For this payment to be an effective and rights-based support to the disability community, meaningful consultation is required in addition to a co-design approach with disabled people and their representative organisations. Sufficient time must be given to this process.

But equally the support gaps created by recent budgetary decisions to take away the Disability Support Grant after three years must be urgently addressed while the co-design process takes place. Budget 2027 must contain a package of Cost of Disability supports, and be the first step to delivering a Cost of Disability payment that strengthens Ireland's commitment to the UN CRPD. We look forward to being an active part of collective efforts to work together to devise the best and most effective ways to tackle Cost of Disability.

As regards the overall process and how it should proceed, we reiterate the recommendations we made in 2024 to the Green Paper consultation, towards making progress on Cost of Disability. We recommend the following key steps:

- Convene a series of detailed policy discussions, considering in detail the findings of the Indecon Cost of Disability report, with disability organisations and disabled people, to inform the Cost of Disability actions and the Disability Poverty Reduction Strategy (this step is already underway, positively)
- Commence work on developing a graduated Cost of Disability Payment scheme based on differential need and best practice internationally, in consultation with people with disabilities.
- Develop a three-year cross-Departmental Action Plan on Cost of Disability, co-designed with disabled people and disability organisations. This plan should include actions, timelines and measurable targets which are reported annually.

Consultation questions: Cost of Disability payment

1. Are there specific additional costs that should be covered by a cost of disability payment?

Purpose of the payment

The fundamental purpose of the payment should be to support and protect the participation, equality and dignity of disabled people in Ireland, and to deliver on Ireland's obligations under the UN CRPD. At present the Cost of Disability creates and locks in permanent economic vulnerability, poverty and social exclusion for many people with disabilities and their families. This in turn can lead to deprivation, going without, stress and worry, and the resultant significant health and mental health impacts, which can again cyclically create even more costs. This is clearly highlighted in section C.1 (pages 37-39) below.

At present, for many people, it feels like government fundamentally accepts as an inevitability the ongoing reality that disabled people are much more likely to live in poverty. But this is not inevitable, and different policy choices and approaches can improve and change this situation.

A Cost of Disability payment will thus be an important symbolic and practical acknowledgement by the state of the many extra costs disabled people live with. It will be a commitment to disabled people (and their families) that they should not have to bear this financial burden and structural inequality.

The purpose of the payment is thus:

- To acknowledge and begin to address this economic inequality.
- To positively impact the standard of living of people with disabilities and their households.
- To ensure disabled people are not financially penalised and out of pocket due to their many extra costs.
- To work to address this fundamental financial inequality and the structural barriers to inclusion it creates and reflects.
- To reduce poverty and deprivation of disabled people, and to support employment where possible.
- To deliver on Irish people's wish for a fairer society that supports people with disabilities and tackles barriers to equality.

- To deliver Ireland’s obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Over time the impact and outcome of the payment can and should be assessed and tracked against these objectives.

Costs

As regards specific additional costs, these are well-documented and evidenced in the 2021 Indecon ‘The Cost of Disability in Ireland’ report. The report concluded that “there are significant additional costs faced by individuals with a disability *which are currently not met by existing programmes or by social welfare payments*” (our emphasis).¹⁸

As the report acknowledged, the extra costs created by disability are diverse and unique to each person’s specific case and circumstances. This is obviously a significant policy challenge for a system which tends to operate with a one-size fits all approach. It also creates substantial challenges and structural inequality for the disabled people involved, if measures aren’t put in place to address these costs.

Clearly, policy measures will need to address both income, and services, to effectively mitigate the Cost of Disability. Indecon themselves had recommended, a “multi-faceted approach” to addressing these extra costs, including “increased cash payment, enhanced access to services and targeted grant programmes”.¹⁹

To develop a meaningful Cost of Disability Action Plan- something we have advocated for for many years - any policy process should draw on the rich evidence in the Indecon report, and the many policy submissions made disability organisations in recent years, along with the lived experience highlighted by individuals previously and through this consultation process.

There is ample, and in some cases quite detailed and somewhat disaggregated, evidence available regarding the many extra costs established by and in the Indecon report. DFI members in their submissions to this consultation have also provided more detail on costs specific to the disabled communities they serve.

Another relevant resource is the report we cited earlier, Breaking down barriers: an assessment of the needs of disabled people in accessing

¹⁸ Indecon (2021), [The Cost of Disability in Ireland](#).

¹⁹ Op cit, p.135.

population-based screening services in Ireland. This report captures the lived experiences of disabled people and documents the barriers to disabled people having equal access to health screening services, including the cost of disability.²⁰ It reaches the important and concerning conclusion that the uptake and utilisation of cancer screening services is impacted by affordability, and the extent to which disabled people can pay direct and indirect costs such as transport and associated costs.²¹ It establishes that disabled people incur higher costs to access health and social care services, including travel costs of taxi and longer journeys where no screening service available locally, support costs (family/friend or PA accompaniment) and cost of sign language interpreters.²² These costs constitute a barrier to disabled people having equal access to health screening services, and the findings suggest the reimbursement of expenses 'as part of reasonable accommodation'.²³

As is well known, areas of extra cost established in the Indecon report include:

- mobility
- transport
- communications
- care and assistance services
- equipment, aids and appliances
- medicine.

To support the development of an effective policy approach to Cost of Disability, a clear and detailed mapping is required of all state measures, across Departments and agencies etc, that provide some level of support for Cost of Disability (for example medical card, housing adaptation grant, Assistive Technology support, Motorised Transport Grant etc), including supports that were previously available but were withdrawn or suspended.

This mapping should also include and acknowledge areas where costs are significant but supports are not provided/are limited. Addressing the gaps in services and supports by other Departments can help to address significant aspects of the extra costs, potentially reducing somewhat the extra financial supports required. The ongoing gaps in provision of public services are

²⁰ HSE (2023), [Breaking down barriers: an assessment of the needs of disabled people in accessing population-based screening services in Ireland](#). P. 28, 38 and viii.

²¹ Op cit, p. 28, 69, 29.

²² Op cit, see p. 42 for lived experience quotes.

²³ Op cit, p. 69.

highlighted and tabulated in the Indecon report on pages 121-126.²⁴ Moreover it is important to consider and assess the services and supports available to those in receipt of social protection, but also to examine the situation of those who do not currently receive social protection support due to means-testing, being in employment, or having 'aged out' of disability payments, and whether they currently get any Cost of Disability supports.

For example, the Department of Transport and Department of Finance would need to consider transport, in the context of road, rail, bus and air travel, whether by public transport or private (adapted vehicle) where required. Equally while there are supports for housing adaptation through a grant, these are insufficient to cover current construction costs and adaptation needs, and means-tested without consideration of the impact of Cost of Disability on the household income. There are issues with access to suitable housing and affordability privately or publicly – all of which the Department of Housing would need to consider and assess. The HSE, Department of Health and Department of Children, Disability and Equality would need to assess the various health and other costs incurred by disabled people (for social care and assistance services, equipment, aids and appliances etc) and standardise and improve state supports in these areas. Looking at medical card and illness scheme criteria and medicine costs would be important too. It will be important also to very specifically look at employment-related costs, including the availability of personal assistance services for those who are working or wish to. These are just a few illustrative examples.

Another area to consider will be energy costs, which are highly relevant currently with prices increasing once again. The Indecon report (whose data significantly predates the recent energy price hikes since 2022) showed disabled people spend 10% more on energy costs, are more likely to be in arrears on utility bills, and are more likely to be unable to afford to keep their home adequately warm. Many disabled households use substantially more energy than average households, to power equipment throughout the year, and/or due to the need to stay warm for medical reasons.

Cost of Disability Payment

For decades DFI has recommended that the first step towards addressing Cost of Disability should be a weekly payment. As long back as 2005, we recommended a €40 weekly Cost of Disability payment in our Pre Budget submission.²⁵

²⁴ Indecon (2021), [The Cost of Disability in Ireland](#). pages 121-126.

²⁵ DFI (2005), [Pre Budget Submission 2005](#).

As regards the question about regarding a cash Cost of Disability payment, this is absolutely essential. It was clearly the favoured response of the 4,000 social protection recipients who were surveyed to inform the Indecon report. As the table below shows, a significant majority favoured extra income, when asked what would be most useful in addressing the extra Cost of Disability. 89% said that extra income would be most helpful or helpful, an almost unanimous endorsement of a Cost of Disability payment.

Table 1

Table 10.1: Preference for Different Supports			
	Extra Income	Extra Grants	Better services or supports free of charge
Most Helpful	58%	16%	31%
Helpful	30%	29%	38%
Least Helpful	13%	56%	31%
	100%	100%	100%

Source: Indecon survey of those living with disabilities in Ireland

Source: Indecon report, page 118

Moreover, the call for a Cost of Disability payment is a long-standing one from the disability movement, going back decades. Bringing in such a measure was originally recommended by the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities in its final report in 1996.²⁶ As the Commission stated “the Costs of Disability payment is designed to facilitate participation. It is not meant to replace all existing free schemes but rather to bring a unified philosophy to such payments as they apply to persons with disability [...] the principle must be accepted and reasonable and appropriate budgeting be made on this basis.”²⁷

This recommendation, made almost three decades ago, has continuously remained a core ask and a key principle of agreement for disability organisations and disabled individuals. We strongly welcome the positive development of this government’s commitment, and this consultation, as

²⁶ Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities (1996), A strategy for equality: report of the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities, [A Strategy for Equality Commission on Status of People with Disabilities](#), 53 page 21.

²⁷ Op cit, 5.24, page 115.

important step in the direction of finally delivering this common demand of the disability movement.

Importantly, we would like to emphasise that the cash payment should not be tied to specific costs, in as much as there should not be paternalistic interference in people's lives requiring them to 'prove' that they spent it on a specific cost. The system should take it on trust that the individual will spend the payment to address the needs they have identified and documented.

Some costs not fully covered by existing services and supports

- prescription medicines, GP appointments, and blood tests (for those ineligible for the medical card).
- dental treatment where dentist are not taking on new medical card patients, and someone has to get urgent treatment privately.
- Over the counter medical supplements to address specialist nutritional requirements/support suppressed immunity; over the counter pain killers and remedies; over the counter vitamins and probiotics.
- Private specialist therapy and consultant appointment fees if waiting lists are too long and support is urgent – which it so often is.
- Mobility aids such as walking sticks, walking frame, cushions, body braces, and other supports including tens machines, procurement and repair of specialist orthoses, compression socks, heat/cold therapy supports etc.
- Transport e.g. taxis if you don't drive/cannot afford to drive but public transport is too inaccessible/far from home, or vehicle adaptation, transport to medical appointments and parking fees.
- Housing – cost of adaptation and lack of available Universally Designed homes on private rental/sale market and in social housing stock. Cost of assistive and smart technology, costs billed to those living in nursing homes.
- Assistive technology – for home, work, study etc, and maintenance of same.
- Higher insurance premiums - health, specialist equipment protection, travel or mortgage protection/life insurance.
- Fuel and electricity - electricity costs can be higher due to spending more time at home, increased sensitivity to the cold, need to charge assistive equipment and mobility aids, or having heat pads on for long periods for pain relief.
- Private assessments of need due to extremely long public waiting lists.
- Servies and support such as Personal Assistance, home support, respite etc.

- Education participation costs – including transport, assistive technology, adaptive equipment, specialist materials and personal assistance services.
- Cost of social participation and engagement. Many disabled people have to forego basic social interactions, such as a coffee with a friend, a trip to the cinema, or a small gift for a family member, due to the extra costs they have and insufficient income. Equally there can be participation costs involved in being active in local, community and civil participation spaces and arenas, meaning Cost of Disability can prevent people from being an active part of their community too.

2: How would we decide which people qualify for a Cost of Disability payment?

This issue will need to be a key focus of collective discussion, through the Strategic Focus Network and Summit.

Fundamentally there would need to be clarity and a common understanding of the definition of disability as a starting point. The UN CRPD’s definition can provide guidance here.

Eligibility and assessment: international guidelines

DFI has previously provided detailed feedback on the question of best practice in assessment in our Green Paper submission in 2024 (see pages 33-36),²⁸ including providing examples of good practice and international guidelines.

As we highlighted in our previous submission, the International Labour Organisation has made useful recommendations on how to build inclusive assessment processes. Those guidelines emphasise the following:

The CRPD implies a shift of paradigm for disability assessment, moving from answering “What is wrong with the person? or “What the person can or cannot do due to the impairment?” to “What is required for the person to be in position to live independently and be included in their community?” Therefore, the assessment should consider not only the impairment and/or functional limitation but the barriers to be removed

²⁸ DFI (2024), [Submission to Department of Social Protection on Green Paper on Disability Reform](#).

and support required to achieve equal participation as stated repeatedly by the CRPD committee.²⁹

The question of eligibility and assessment has traditionally been a fraught and stressful one for many disabled people, who are often required to 'prove' their disability repeatedly to different state bodies, in duplicative but separate processes. For example, the applications for a medical card or health supports, to be added to the local authority housing list, or for Disability Allowance are all separate bureaucratic processes, involving long forms, much paperwork and medical "evidence" etc. And this is far from a comprehensive list of all the applications a person may have to fill in across different areas of their life to secure their support entitlements.

Any disabled person who can demonstrate extra costs linked to their disability should be eligible. They can potentially be identified by coming forward themselves and filling out an application form, outlining their disability(ies), listing their approximate additional costs, and making an application for support.

Trust and minimal bureaucratic burden

The process of 'proving' these extra costs, if required, must not be overly burdensome. It should be simple and easy to navigate, without being unnecessarily scrutinous, lengthy or intrusive. For example it could be as simple as a box in the application form where the applicant lists the additional costs they have and the approximate cost for each item/area. It will also be important to remember that in several cases the costs may relate to a disabled child, and in this situation it is likely to be the parents who document the extra costs – this must be supported and understood.

The narrative disabled people have received for so long has been that they must continuously prove that they have a disability and prove their entitlement to basic supports. It is important to start to move away from the implied bureaucratic suspicion of disabled people's status. Instead of requiring the provision of "evidence and proof" of disability-related additional costs, the system can ask people to provide information about these. There is an opportunity here for a change in narrative and bureaucratic approach, to move the administrative framing from a medical to a social model of disability, and a basic principle of trust. If 'evidence' is absolutely necessary, then a letter or certificate from a medical professional or support worker

²⁹ UNICEF and ILO (2023), "[Towards Inclusive Social Protection Systems Enabling Participation and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities: Guidance Note V1.0, Unedited Draft for Consultation](#)".

about their disability should be sufficient, along with the information provided by the individual outlining the additional costs they face.

It will be important not to add even more administrative and cognitive burden to disabled people's lives. This must include ensuring that unnecessary reviews do not take place regularly. Where it is clear that a disability is permanent or life-long, this should be acknowledged in the approach to payment eligibility, and re-assessment should not be required.

An inclusive fair process that acknowledges unique needs

Moreover, these questions also relate to need, and a person's unique circumstances. As previously highlighted the International Labour Organisation has offered rich advice on how to build inclusive assessment processes, where they are needed.³⁰ The European Disability Forum has also recommended that the best approach is "a holistic assessment" which "combines assessments related to impairment, functional capacity and environmental factors, which more closely aligns with the CRPD and will aid in its successful implementation."³¹

Any assessment process would need to be fair, accessible, transparent and low on administrative requirements. It should actively involve the disabled person being assessed, including ensuring they have an opportunity to outline their own needs, and the system being guided by the individual's assessment of their own needs.

Significant variety of costs and need

It is clear and well-acknowledged that a significant variation and range of costs are experienced by people with disabilities, from relatively low costs to extremely high costs. In that context a system or process needs to be developed that acknowledges and addresses these differential needs, and is fair. The system can consider and account for temporary disability (short term), lifelong and emergency/crisis support.

A stepped system of payment rates could be developed and trialled to accommodate the significant diversity of need, and therefore spectrum of related costs, within the disability community. An assessment of the supports available, and the gaps in supports for those with extremely high

³⁰ UNICEF and ILO (2023), "[Towards Inclusive Social Protection Systems Enabling Participation and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities: Guidance Note V1.0, Unedited Draft for Consultation](#)". See also pages 33-36 in DFI's [Green Paper submission](#).

³¹ European Disability Forum (2020), [Poverty and Social Exclusion of Persons with Disabilities: European Human Rights Report](#), p. 28.

costs (Indecon indicated, for example, that people reporting 10 disabilities or chronic illnesses had costs of €23,610), would be important to develop.

There is perhaps the potential to have a baseline floor rate of support, and then stepped increases as per need, as well as scope to apply for specific costs as they occur. The baseline criteria would have to be flexible, not static, and consider the needs of the full span of disabled people in Ireland.

Means-testing and people not currently receiving support

Equally, the extra costs of disabled people who are currently deemed ineligible for disability-related social protection supports (due to means-testing, working and earning above the income threshold, age or other reasons) must be acknowledged, and should be supported in some way. People with disabilities who work and earn above the weekly income threshold of €527.60 (ie people who earn more than the weekly full-time minimum wage) live with many of the extra costs, and many struggle to make ends meet despite their income.

The tied nature of secondary supports also creates risks associated with taking up employment, and as we have previously recommended supports such as medical card and free transport should be provided based on disability need, not income.³² The base payment rate can be provided to all disabled people. Or this support could perhaps alternatively be provided to people in employment by means of a tax credit – there are examples already in Ireland (eg the Blind Person’s Tax Credit) and in Canada where there is a Disability Tax Credit.³³

Means-testing of household income should not occur in assessing eligibility for Cost of Disability supports – this is unfair, creates and locks in financial dependence and undermines the right to independent living of disabled people.

As these are complex issues, it will be important to have a number of focused, practical and detailed discussions on this and other issues, starting at the Strategic Focus Summit and continuing through a co-design process.

³² DFI (2025), [Pre Budget Submission to Department of Social Protection on Budget 2026](#),

³³ See Citizens Information (no date), [Tax credits and reliefs for people with disabilities](#) and Government of Canada (no date), [Disability tax credit \(DTC\)](#).

3: How should the payment amount be decided?

Resources and public mandate

As regards the question of limited resources being available to the government, while acknowledging the issue being articulated, we would also emphasise the ongoing strong health of the Irish economy, full employment levels (notwithstanding clear low levels of disability employment) and the budgetary surplus in recent years.

Moreover, there is also significant public, and political support for a more socially just, fair and redistributive Ireland (as we outline in further detail on pages 40-43). The Irish population have indicated that they are willing to pay more tax (95.6% of those who participated in the Citizens Assembly discussions, based on the principle of ability to pay) to support greater action to reduce poverty.³⁴ There is a clear mandate to allocate state resources generously to fund a social justice measure like the Cost of Disability payment.

Universal versus targeted – both are possible

We feel that this question wrongly implies that there is only one binary choice between targeted supports for those most in need, or a 'universal' payment. However it is possible to develop and design a system that delivers both – providing basic support for all disabled people who live with additional costs, and also extra support for those with higher costs. This is not an either/or situation, and to truly deliver equality it will be necessary to address both sets of needs in the community.

DFI cannot make a specific recommendation on payment rates, determination or assessment in advance of the collective discussions that we hope will take place with disability organisations and disabled individuals at the Strategic Focus Summit, and during the co-design process that we believe should follow it. We do not believe it is realistic that important decisions like this be made at a one-day event, especially without any advance indication of resource or budgetary possibilities.

Highly varied needs and costs

Amongst DFI's membership (approximately 100 organisations, many of which are condition-specific or niche organisations) the financial costs and needs of the community are hugely varied, and in some cases costs vary significantly even amongst people with one specific condition or disability. So, a one-size fits all approach will not be possible, and the system needs to

³⁴ Citizens Assembly (2021), [Report of the Citizens Assembly on Gender Equality](#), Question 49, p. 138.

be able to allow for, acknowledge and address variety, and changing needs over time.

The answer and approach on the issue of payment amount is deeply linked to the previous question, around eligibility and assessment. One approach could be to have a needs-based system, where people outline their ongoing needs, and/or specific one-off needs and get a payment (and supports and services) that reflect this. Or, through co-design with the community, a set of phased levels of payments could be agreed, according to need and the rich evidence available that has established clear high-cost estimates. Equally there may be a need for some kind of disability-specific form of Additional Needs Payment for example, which would address specific one-off or emergency needs.

Significant evidence available – payment based on need

When considering the amounts to be paid, there is as already ample evidence available of the range of costs people experience – both research (by, for example, Indecon,³⁵ the ESRI³⁶ and the Minimum Essential Standard of Living (MESL) Research Centre,³⁷ amongst others³⁸), and lived experience/case studies, as well as the work undertaken by many organisations (including numerous DFI members) to provide further data to support this consultation and policy-development process. The amount/s of the payment should be based on a person’s indicated additional costs. As previously indicated, an application could be made which provides information outlining these extra costs.

But, as previously discussed, it is important that the deciding process is not:

- Excessively demanding in terms of “proof” requested
- Intrusive, seeking information about other spending habits
- Requiring frequent reassessment (see also answer to next question).

³⁵ Indecon (2021), [The Cost of Disability in Ireland](#).

³⁶ ESRI (2025), [Adjusting estimates of poverty for the cost of disability](#).

³⁷ Family Carers Ireland and Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice MESL Research Centre (2022), [Care at Home - Costs of Care Arising from Disability](#).

³⁸ See for example: Roddy, Á (2022), [Income and conversion handicaps: estimating the impact of child chronic illness/disability on family income and the extra cost of child chronic illness/child disability in Ireland using a standard of living approach](#). *Eur J Health Econ* **23**, 467–483. The paper finds that families who have a child with a chronic illness/disability experience a €96.35 reduction in weekly household income. It also highlights the financial challenges faced by families of children with disabilities who do not qualify for Domiciliary Care Allowance – with statistically significant reductions in income of €116.68 and €78.11 per week for households who have a disabled child hampered somewhat or those whose child has no limitations in daily activities, respectively.

This approach will also need to be sensitive to the fluctuating and sometimes unpredictable needs of people with episodic or progressive disabilities.

Reliable predictable payment, with review to factor in inflation

Indeed, the issue of reassessment brings up the essential question of a review mechanism, in the context of cost of living and inflation. The rate of payment and support would need to be regularly reassessed to ensure that the amount of support a person is receiving has not been eroded by price increases and inflation. Equally while the system should have a way of allowing for flexibility of supports to address fluctuating need, any review process must not serve as a constant threat that a person's need will be called into question. The payment should be reliable and predictable, enabling people to meet their financial needs without stress or having to go without essentials. While some people may draw on Cost of Disability supports for a more temporary period in their life, for many it will be a life-long need. Equally, over time people may find they need an increased level (or, less likely, decreased level) of support, and the system should be able to address that change simply.

Means-testing

As regards means-testing and income thresholds, it is difficult to understand or respond to this question without being given further contextual information, in particular any indication of the likely state resourcing that would be made available to support the introduction of a payment. Evidence from the ESRI and others shows the significant pressure that disability related costs put on an individual, and their household, whether or not they are in employment/their family member is. The ESRI's 2025 report established that disabled households require between 52% and 59% extra disposable income (in some cases reaching as high as 93%) to achieve the same standard of living as a similar household with no disabled members.³⁹ This shows the extent to which Cost of Disability impacts the whole family and household – children, parents, partners etc. Disabled people also have higher in-work poverty rates, due to these extra costs not being supported.

DFI and the disability movement has long argued that where means testing does have to take place, it should be only of the disabled individual's income - not their family member, partner, or anyone else they live with. The OECD also stated that the fairest approach to social protection reform would be through a Cost of Disability payment that is also available to those in

³⁹ ESRI (2025), [Adjusting estimates of poverty for the cost of disability](#).

employment. Christopher Prinz's presentation at the 2023 Green Paper consultation event offered five key 'Lessons' for Ireland, one of which was titled "Cost-of-disability payments are essential".⁴⁰ His presentation also stated that "Cost-of-disability payments are much fairer, not hindering employment and thus much more likely to help people out of poverty". Prinz argued that Ireland could be a global leader in this area by bringing in a Cost of Disability payment. The European Disability Forum, of which we are the Irish member, is of the same opinion – that employment should not disqualify people from receiving disability supports.⁴¹

The government has also indicated previously that a comprehensive review of means-testing across all social protection schemes is underway. We hope and expect that this must be considering means-testing of disability supports also, and that the positions on means-testing outlined in submissions to this consultation can be considered in the context of that ongoing policy process too.

Mirror positive means-testing changes for carers

We have seen significant welcome positive movement in means-testing for carers in recent years, with a huge increase in income limits in the most recent Budget. From 2021 until last year's budget, means-testing income limits for Carers Allowance were increased from €332.50 to €625 for single person, and from €665 to €1,250 for a couple. In Budget 2026 the weekly income disregard increased by almost €400, from €625 to €1,000 for a single person, and by €750, from €1,250 to €2,000 for a couple. This means the income disregard for carers has tripled over a period of five years. The government has also made a commitment to phase out means testing of Carers Allowance over the duration of its term of office.

Compared to this, the movement in means-testing of Disability Allowance shows a significant difference in treatment. Since 2021, the weekly income limit has increased over the same five-year period by just €45 - from €120 to €165. The Disability Allowance income disregard has not increased in the past three years, despite significant inflation. If it were to have tripled like it did for carers, it would have reached €360 at this stage.

In looking at means testing, both for any new Cost of Disability payment and supports, but also for existing disability payments and supports, the government should provide at minimum equivalent changes in means-

⁴⁰ Christopher Prinz OECD (2023), Presentation to Green Paper on Disability Reform Public Consultation Event, "DO'S AND DON'TS IN DISABILITY POLICY Key lessons from OECD's work – and how they are followed by member countries".

⁴¹ European Disability Forum (2022), [Social Protection and the Welfare State](#).

testing income limits to disabled people, based on the recent positive changes for Carers Allowance.

It is interesting and perhaps relevant to note that the CSO has recently shown that Ireland has the second largest proportion of means-tested benefits in the EU (25%). The European average for means-testing of benefits is just 11%.⁴²

4: How should the payment work?

As with the other questions above, this is something that needs to be discussed collectively to arrive at an agreed position and approach. We hope the Strategic Focus Summit and Network can support the development of a co-design approach to this.

Not a top-up for inadequate basic Disability Allowance

It is important that any Cost of Disability payment is not seen as a top-up to bridge the inadequate core level of social protection overall. Disability Allowance, like other social protection payments, is fundamentally inadequate and significantly below the poverty line - the basic annual income from Disability Allowance in 2026 now €13,208, while the 2025 at risk of poverty threshold was €19,060, almost €6,000 more.⁴³ Social Justice Ireland indicate that the poverty line in 2025 was €366.30 for a single person, meaning that Disability Allowance was €122 below the poverty line last year,⁴⁴ even before Cost of Disability is considered. This issue of income adequacy is independent of the extra costs associated with having a disability, and our longstanding position is that social protection rates should at minimum be set at the level recommended by the Minimum Essential Standard of Living Research Centre.⁴⁵

We also re-assert that any benchmarking or indexation of social protection that takes place in the future must consider and factor in the Cost of Disability, and that any Cost of Disability payment should be regularly reviewed and increased in line with inflation, wage growth etc.

Weekly or monthly payment, modelled on Child Benefit

As regards the payment itself, our members and the community indicate that a weekly or monthly payment will be more helpful in tackling ongoing expenses than a one-time annual grant or payment. Of course it does not

⁴² CSO (2025), [Social Protection Expenditure in Ireland 2024](#).

⁴³ CSO (2026), [Survey on Income and Living Conditions \(SILC\) 2025](#).

⁴⁴ Social Justice Ireland (2025), [2025 Poverty Focus](#).

⁴⁵ Vincentian MESL Research Centre at SVP (2025), [Minimum Essential Standard of Living 2025](#).

necessarily have to be an either/or – it could be that some people receive a set weekly or monthly payment, some people receive that plus an annual grant (for annual or one-off costs), while others with lower costs just receive the annual grant if it is sufficient to meet their needs.

It is important to emphasise that there are existing positive publicly supported examples of universal payments, notably the Child Benefit, which is paid for all children and is not means-tested. This can be considered as a model when designing Cost of Disability supports.

Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities Recommendations (1996)

Back in 1996, the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities recommended that:

Two types of [Cost of Disability] payments should be established:

- a payment to compensate for loss of income due to an incapacity for full-time work, or work to full potential, to be called a Disability Pension
- a graduated payment to meet the additional everyday costs associated with disability. This payment, which would be made irrespective of whether the person is at work or not, would be called the 'Costs of Disability Payment'⁴⁶

Later in its report the Commission added further detail:

The Costs of Disability payment is designed to facilitate participation. It is not meant to replace all existing free schemes but rather to bring a unified philosophy to such payments as they apply to persons with disability. There is no way that a specific cost can be assigned to such a payment at this stage since it involves individual assessments. Instead the principle must be accepted and reasonable and appropriate budgeting be made on this basis.⁴⁷

The Commission further recommended, nearly three decades ago:

That the Department of Health and Social Services introduce a variable Costs of Disability Payment where services are not or cannot be provided. This payment should be available to all people with

⁴⁶ Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities (1996), [A Strategy for Equality Commission on Status of People with Disabilities](#), 53, page 21.

⁴⁷ Op cit, 5.24, page 115.

disabilities irrespective of their age and employment status. This payment should not be taxable.⁴⁸

Support for people in employment

Building on the above point, people who are working may fall just above income thresholds for supports, and still have significant extra costs - which means that their actual income is lower than it appears due to their higher expenditure. As we have previously emphasised, the ESRI report shows that disabled households require between 42 and 93% more income to achieve the same standard of living as non-disabled households. So Cost of Disability supports would need to support people who are working also. As we have indicated above, one positive way to provide support to those who are working could be to institute a disability tax credit, as exists in Canada.

Other international examples of non-means tested Cost of Disability financial supports exist, such as the Personal Independence Payment in Britain, and supports under the National Disability Insurance Scheme in Australia. The work in Ireland on personalised budgets is also highly relevant in the context of this consultation.

International recommendations

There is significant international guidance available regarding effective approaches to delivering Cost of Disability supports which the Department can refer to, as we have previously highlighted in our Green Paper submission.⁴⁹ The International Labour Organisation has developed a comprehensive guidance note and statement on inclusive social protection systems to support participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities. The statement calls for a paradigm shift towards “an approach that acknowledge barriers to participation and promotes social and economic inclusion across the lifecycle.”⁵⁰ It also recommends that: “To cover basic disability-related costs, countries should seek to introduce (quasi) universal disability-specific cash benefit which are compatible with work and with other benefits providing income security.”⁵¹

The OECD has also made similar recommendations – as far back as 2008 a report on sickness, disability and work recommended that Ireland “address the low level of income of people with disability.” To do this Ireland should:

⁴⁸ Op cit, 6.26, page 129.

⁴⁹ DFI (2024), [Submission to Department of Social Protection on Green Paper on Disability Reform](#), pages 25-26, 34-36, 43-44 and 55-57.

⁵⁰ UNICEF and ILO, 2023, [Towards Inclusive Social Protection Systems Enabling Participation and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities: Guidance Note V1.0, Unedited Draft for Consultation](#).

⁵¹ Op cit, p. 46.

Evaluate the range of assistance currently available to mitigate the additional costs incurred by people with a disability. Consider introducing more adequate payments to compensate these costs so as to reduce the high level of income poverty of this population group. *Any such payments should be independent of the work status and separate from income support payments* [our emphasis]. The results of the ongoing needs assessment process underway in the DHC [Department of Health and Children] should be used to determine the appropriate level of such cost-of-disability payments.⁵²

DFI is a signatory to the Global Standards for Self-Directed Support, which highlight the importance of an individualised personal budget, and “transparent, sufficient, fair resource allocation based on a person’s priorities and needs.”⁵³

Our counterpart the European Disability Forum has developed a Position Paper on “Social Protection and the Welfare State”, which may also offer further useful guidance on how to proceed.⁵⁴

How the payment should work

Practically speaking, the Cost of Disability payment should be:

- an independent payment rather than a top-up on a core social protection payment.
- paid weekly or monthly, perhaps modelled on how the Child Benefit is delivered.

It should be as simple, predictable and easy to apply for as possible. After a person has made an application outlining their extra costs, a regular and consistent payment should be made from then on as a form of personal budget to cover these costs.

The payment should be paid regularly, rather than requiring continuous claims and demonstration of costs towards subsequent reimbursement, which would be far too onerous, and impose undue burden on disabled people. Where a tax credit is brought in for people with disabilities in

⁵² OECD (2008) *Sickness, Disability and Work: Breaking the Barriers*, vol. 3: Denmark, Finland, Ireland and the Netherlands, p34.

⁵³ Citizen Network (no date), [Global Standards for Self-Directed Support](#).

⁵⁴ European Disability Forum (2022), [Social Protection and the Welfare State](#).

employment, this should be very simple to avail of when filing annual tax returns, and self-assessed and declared like so many other tax provisions.

Review mechanism and impact assessment

It will also be important to build in review mechanisms (of the scheme, not reviews of individuals), to support assessing the impact, and the efficient and effective delivery, of any new measures. This can support an outcome focused approach. It will also assist in potential refining of Cost of Disability approaches over time, informed by learning from the roll-out of the new payment. We provided some more detail of our recommendations in this area previously on pages 10-11.

Consultation questions: Strategic focus summit

1: What issues would you like to see discussed at the Summit?

Several key issues will need to be discussed at the Summit. We are concerned that a one-day event (with, presumably, a large attendance) will not allow sufficient time to air views, discuss and consider evidence seriously and rigorously, and develop and agree collectively on actions and recommendations.

This will be the first open policy-focused discussion on Cost of Disability convened by government since the Indecon report was published just before Christmas 2021. As we have previously highlighted, this time gap has perhaps contributed to the different interpretations of some aspects of the report's findings and conclusions. We had previously recommended that the Department "convene a series of policy discussions, considering in detail the findings of the Indecon Cost of Disability report, with disability organisations and disabled people, to inform the Cost of Disability Action Plan and Disability Poverty Reduction Strategy". In this context we welcome the plan to run a one-day summit event. However, there is a lot to discuss, and it will take more than one discussion to develop a considered plan of action on Cost of Disability.

Thus, we respectfully suggest that the Summit should be the start of a co-design process, that will need to be given sufficient time to work through the various issues raised in this consultation.

The summit could meanwhile make immediate recommendations for urgent action to bridge Cost of Disability gaps that have arisen due to the ending of supports in the most recent Budget. It could map out a tentative timeline for

a co-design process towards both securing agreement on what the Cost of Disability payment should look like and developing a broader comprehensive whole-of-government Cost of Disability Action Plan. And finally it could also support a process of developing collective prioritisation of areas to tackle, and of the relative urgency of different Cost of Disability issues, across multiple Departments.

To support efficient and thoughtful engagement on the day, we suggest that it may be useful for the Department to develop and share a short briefing paper in advance of the summit. This could contain some or all the following information, to inform and support discussion:

- A mapping of current Cost of Disability supports, across all Departments.
- A summary of the key themes and recommendations raised by disability organisations in their previous submissions in recent years (see next answer also).
- Illustrative case studies, based on actual lived experience or emblematic examples, to show different needs and circumstances.
- If possible, a summary of the key issues raised, and positions taken, in submissions to this consultation.

We appreciate that some of the above may be challenging to deliver in the timeline available, so alternatively some of this information could be built into and provided during the summit's programme.

Some key issues to discuss at the summit would include the following.

- How to co-create and co-design this process?
- What is a realistic timeline in light of the above? If a clearly and collectively agreed Cost of Disability payment approach seems unrealistic for Budget 2027 then what supports should be provided in the interim, while the co-design process continues?
- What resources are available to support this process – financial and human etc?
- What areas of Cost of Disability are considered most urgent and/or impactful to tackle by the disabled community?
- What is a fair way of assessing need and entitlement?
- What can be provided in years 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5? As we have previously indicated, we believe a three-year (or possibly even five-year) timeline and Action Plan is needed to really make continued progress on Cost of Disability.
- What are the responsibilities of which Departments?

- How can action on Cost of Disability be coordinated, and who is responsible for the cross-Departmental delivery and action?

2: What format do you think the Summit should take?

DFI offers the following key recommendations for the format of the Summit, and more generally for the process of developing and agreeing on an Action Plan on Cost of Disability.

Absolutely essential is to:

- Establish a space for everyone to participate and be heard, and a fully accessible event in every way.
- Utilise participatory methodologies and creative facilitation approaches.
- Acknowledge and respond to the diversity of needs across the population, and the fact that people with disabilities are not a homogeneous group.
- Be open to the suggestions of organisations and individuals attending.
- Have a focus on positive solutions that can be delivered.
- A commitment to giving the process the time it needs in order to deliver a co-designed Cost of Disability payment.

In addition, the values as set out on page four of our submission should be incorporated into the event.

As agreeing on a permanent payment approach may not be possible within the timeframe of this consultation and summit, we do recommend that the government re-instate and improve one-off Cost of Disability supports immediately, and provide a package of Cost of Disability supports in the forthcoming Budget, while simultaneously working to develop a co-designed Cost of Disability payment.

In its planning for the Summit, and for the co-design process to support work on Cost of Disability, the Department of Social Protection, other Departments, and the government itself could reflect on and be informed by the *Designing our Public Services: Design principles for Government in Ireland* resource.⁵⁵ These principles offer useful insights on design approaches, particularly for issues that require cross-Departmental and agency work and collaboration, like Cost of Disability. Particularly relevant

⁵⁵ Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (2022), [Designing our Public Services: Design principles for Government in Ireland](#).

will be principles one, two, three, four, six and ten, although all principles will be of some relevance to this process.

We also recommend that the following be central approaches to designing the summit:

1. Accessible, creative and positive methodologies and ways of hosting conversations

- Use creative facilitation methods (and potentially facilitators) that can support everyone to participate and build common analysis and ideas together – World Café, systems-thinking, Appreciative Inquiry and others.
- Acknowledge and honour all of the expertise in the room.
- Have a multiplicity of ways that people can engage with the event – with awareness of neurodiversity, diversity of access needs etc.
- Consider multiple ways of recording the conversations that take place at the Summit – traditional narrative reporting, but also graphic harvesting, video and vox pop clips, post-it boards etc.

2. Co-creation and lived experience

- Follow principles of co-creation, and be informed by positive examples of co-design in Ireland or elsewhere, including those previously outlined on pages five to seven. Another positive example is the collaborative approach adopted to develop the National Housing Strategy for Disabled People in 2021. Some excellent videos were developed to support the strategy.⁵⁶
- Build-in meaningful lived experience input – this was done quite positively at the 2023 Energy Poverty Action Plan Stakeholder Event (organised by the Department of Energy, Climate and Communication) for example. This could be done through panel or keynote speeches, videos, or direct quotes from different people about their Cost of Disability needs, dreams, fears and hopes.

3. Focus on evidence and analysis

Reflection and discussion at the Summit should be based on the very significant amount of policy evidence and data available.

General evidence and research

⁵⁶ Housing Agency (no date), [National housing Strategy for Disabled People](#) and [Journey to Independent Living](#)

At least one input, or potentially a full panel, at the summit can provide some policy perspectives and evidence including potentially:

- CSO SILC data and trends
- Indecon (updated for inflation) and ESRI 2025 Cost of Disability report conclusions
- International evidence, recommendations or comparisons (OECD, EU, UN CRPD list of issues questions etc)

Perhaps it might be interesting to request reflections from someone who was involved in the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities, which made significant recommendations on Cost of Disability back in 1996.

Analysis of previous recommendations

An essential input into the Summit will be for the Department of Social Protection to share its own analysis of the Cost of Disability content and recommendations it has already received in recent years from many people and organisations in submissions to the following consultations, policy processes and focus groups:

- Submissions to this consultation
- Green Paper 2024
- Cost of Disability Focus Group for National Human Rights Strategy (this was undertaken by the NDA on 29 November 2023)
- Recent submissions on the Budget, Roadmap for Social Inclusion and Pathways to Work strategies.

An input that outlines the Department's analysis and reflections on key themes and concerns, areas of agreement or debate, and common recommendations in the above-named previous submissions and policy processes would assist in moving the discussion on and giving it focus. It would also help to avoid the need to repeat issues already highlighted in previous consultations, and make clear which issues and recommendations are common and/or recurrent.

Follow up with participants

As previously mentioned, we believe this must be a first step in a co-design process that will take time. It will be important that there is a feedback loop and follow-up with participants after the event.

Relevant previous DFI submissions and publications

Many of the recommendations made by DFI in our previous submissions and publications over the past number of years remain highly relevant to Cost of Disability issues, and contain further detail on our concerns and recommendations to tackle this issue.

(submissions made to Department of Social Protection are starred)

- [Factsheet: Cost of Disability \(2025\)](#)
- [Child Poverty and Disability: Submission to the Oireachtas Committee on Children and Equality \(2025\)](#)
- *[Submission to Department of Social Protection on Budget 2026 \(2025\)](#)
- *[Submission to Department of Social Protection on the Roadmap for Social Inclusion successor strategy consultation \(2025\)](#)
- *[Submission to Department of Social Protection on new Statement of Strategy \(2025\)](#)
- [Factsheet: Disability, Income and Poverty \(2024\)](#)
- *[Submission to Department of Social Protection on Budget 2025 \(2024\)](#)
- [Submission to Department of Energy, Climate and Communications on Energy Poverty Action Plan Consultation \(2024\)](#)
- *[Submission to Department of Social Protection on Green Paper consultation \(2024\)](#)
- [Submission to the NDA on the National Disability Strategy \(2024\)](#)
- [Submission to International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights \(2024\)](#)
- *[Submission to Department of Social Protection on Budget 2024 \(2023\)](#)
- *[Submission to the Department of Social Protection on the mid-term review of the Roadmap for Social Inclusion \(2022\)](#)
- *[Submission to Department of Social Protection on Budget 2023 \(2022\)](#)
- *[Submission to the Department of Social Protection on the Public Consultation on the Reasonable Accommodation Fund grants \(2022\)](#)

C. The context

1. High disability poverty and deprivation, and low employment

It is essential to understand the current context, and the impact that the extra Cost of Disability has on disabled people's lives and economic status, when considering what actions should be taken now.

National context

As the National Human Rights Strategy for Disabled People acknowledges, Ireland's current social protection provision is not keeping people who are unable to work due to disability out of poverty. Annual poverty statistics show that disabled people consistently have amongst the highest rates of poverty and deprivation. While the exact percentages change slightly annually, year-on-year the data shows that disabled people who are unable to work frequently cannot afford basic essentials.

For instance, the 2025 CSO SILC data shows⁵⁷, for people unable to work due to disability:

- Three in ten people (28.4%) live at risk of poverty.
- Two in five people (39.2%) live in deprivation.
- One in seven people (13.9%) live in consistent poverty.
- The above rates are 2-3 times the national average.
- The 2025 at risk of poverty threshold was €19,060 – this is significantly lower than the basic annual income provided by Disability Allowance that year (€12,688).
- The at risk of poverty rate increased by 16.4%, from 28.4% to 44.8%, after rent or mortgage interest was factored in. This was the highest at risk of poverty after rent rate of all economic and demographic groups.
- This group had the lowest equivalised disposable income (€22,661) across all economic groups in 2025. The comparable figure for employed people was €36,424.
- Almost half of people unable to work due to disability were in the lowest income quintile, while only 3.5% were in the top income quintile.
- The data shows the extent to which improvements in poverty rates last year depended on one-off measures, which were removed in the most recent budget without any replacement. Excluding cost of

⁵⁷ CSO (2026), [Survey on Income and Living Conditions \(SILC\) 2025](#).

living measures, the at risk of poverty rate would actually be 36.3%, almost 8% higher than the ostensible rate of 28.4%.

DFI remains gravely concerned about the impact of the removal of Cost of Disability and other one-off supports in the most recent Budget (with loss of supports of up to €1,400 some people), and the likely increase in poverty and deprivation that will occur this year as a result.

Continuing to underestimate disability poverty

Moreover, it is important to also reflect, as we have emphasised in our annual Budget submissions,⁵⁸ that numerous ESRI research publications in recent years have consistently concluded that we are significantly underestimating the poverty experienced by disabled households, due to not adjusting for Cost of Disability. Standard poverty measurement is based on income, but does not factor in expenditure by the individual or household, which as we have already seen is much higher for disabled households.⁵⁹ This is deeply alarming, given that existing poverty statistics are already very concerning. As the recent ESRI report found, if we factor in the extra Cost of Disability, the disability At Risk Of Poverty (AROP) rate increases to a staggering 65%-76%.⁶⁰

EU concerns

The EU has expressed significant concern about employment and poverty rates in Ireland. 2024 EU SILC data shows Ireland's employment gap increased to 38.2%, compared to the EU average of 24%.⁶¹ This places Ireland fourth from the bottom, just ahead of Lithuania, Croatia and Romania. OECD studies confirm this - highlighting that we have one of the lowest disability employment rates, the largest employment gaps, and worst poverty statistics in the OECD.⁶²

The 2025 EU Commission's Country Specific Recommendations for Ireland included a social recommendation among its six key recommendations. The preamble text highlighted disability poverty and low employment rates, and

⁵⁸ See for example DFI (2023), [Pre Budget Submission to Department of Social Protection on Budget 2024](#), p.17.

⁵⁹ DFI (2024), [Pre Budget Submission to Department of Social Protection on Budget 2025](#), pages 9, 11. See also page 17-19 of DFI (2024), [Submission to Department of Social Protection on Green Paper on Disability Reform](#).

⁶⁰ ESRI (2025), [Adjusting estimates of poverty for the cost of disability](#).

⁶¹ Eurostat (2024), [Disability employment gap by level of activity limitation and sex](#).

⁶² OECD(2022), [Disability, Work and Inclusion](#) and (2021), [Disability, Work and Inclusion in Ireland](#).

the Commission recommended that Ireland “strengthen the labour market and social inclusion of disadvantaged groups, in particular persons with disabilities and single parents, by putting in place better targeted outreach and upskilling.”⁶³ This was one of only four disability recommendations across all 27 EU member states.

The Commission’s accompanying 2025 Country Specific Report emphasises the very low disability employment rates, with this being once again the only indicator (out of a total of 17) on Ireland’s social scoreboard marked red (critical situation) - for the third year in a row. It also highlights Ireland’s disability employment gap, noting that disabled people face “financial and non-financial barriers”. The Commission observes that the low employment rate in Ireland has been a “longstanding challenge, showing limited improvements.” It noted that people with disabilities in Ireland “encounter bigger obstacles when seeking work” compared to other member states.⁶⁴

The report outlined how “the Irish social protection system cannot adequately compensate for the additional costs of disability.” The Commission acknowledged loss of social protection supports as a concern - without these supports, the already significant Cost of Disability becomes even greater if a disabled person takes up employment. The report advised that “permanent in-work payments could help compensate for the additional costs of living with a disability.” It also echoed a key concern which DFI has raised for years, stating that “adjusting the eligibility income thresholds of existing welfare schemes (e.g. medical cards or the disability allowance) could help better include persons with disabilities in the labour market.”⁶⁵

The Commission further highlighted the fact that the 2024 at risk of poverty or social exclusion rate for people with disabilities was 30.1% - twice that of the general population (16.7%).

2. The mandate for change: Significant public and political support

As we have already indicated, there is significant public and political support for increased social protection action to support disabled people.

⁶³ European Commission (2025), [Recommendation for a COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION on the economic, social, employment, structural and budgetary policies of Ireland.](#)

⁶⁴ European Commission (2025), [2025 Country Report – Ireland](#), p. 23, 91 and 90.

⁶⁵ Op cit, p. 97, 91.

Public support for change

At a public level, the 2021 Citizen's Assembly undertook a comprehensive reflection and consultation on gender, care and disability. It called for an improved system of supports for disabled people, their families and carers.⁶⁶ The report recommends that disabled people should:

- Be actively supported and resourced to live independently.
- Have access to person-centred financial supports to serve their individual needs.⁶⁷

It also recommends that:

Social protection services should:

- Set social protection payments and/or supports at a level that lifts people above the poverty line, prevents deprivation and supports an adequate standard of living.
- Regularly train staff to prioritise dignity and respect in all contact with clients, including giving a choice in how they receive payment.⁶⁸

Crucially, on the question of state resources, a resounding 95.6% of citizens said "if necessary, we are also prepared to support and pay higher taxes based on the principle of ability to pay, to make a reality of our recommendations".⁶⁹ While often a focus is put by the State on its limited resources, there is in fact a popular mandate to increase Ireland's tax take from those who can afford it in order to work to eradicate poverty.

An April 2023 ESRI paper also provides useful data showing very high public support for action to specifically tackle disability poverty. The results show that "most people in Ireland acknowledge the financial challenges of living with a disability and are supportive of stronger government assistance... 77% of people agree that welfare payments for disabled people should be increased and most (91 per cent) agree that more should be done to support disabled people to meet their extra cost of living."⁷⁰

More recently, ESRI research has shown that about 76% of the adult population agree that the government should reduce differences in income, a

⁶⁶ Citizens Assembly (2021), [Report of the Citizens Assembly on Gender Equality](#), Recommendation 4-7, p 60.

⁶⁷ Op cit, Recommendation 10, pages 61-62.

⁶⁸ Op cit, Recommendation 14, p. 66.

⁶⁹ Op cit, Question 49, p. 138.

⁷⁰ ESRI (2023), [Experimental tests of public support for disability policy](#), p. 24.

rate higher than the EU average.⁷¹ Also, echoing the above findings of the Citizens Assembly, many people in Ireland are willing to pay to support more effective redistribution of wealth and social protection. 34 per cent of people indicated they would agree with higher taxes if it meant more or better public services (the sixth-highest percentage among the 27 EU countries), while 25 per cent said taxes should stay at the same level.⁷²

It is thus clear that there is broad and comprehensive public support to take action to address disability poverty and the extra Cost of Disability in a significant way, and a mandate to allocate state resources to do this.

Political support for change

There is also significant political support for reform. The Joint Oireachtas Committees on Gender Equality, Disability Matters and Social Protection have all called for social protection rates that are above the poverty line,⁷³ while several Dáil motions were unanimously passed in recent years calling for a Cost of Disability payment and other supports.⁷⁴ There is cross-party agreement that this issue should be tackled, as we previously outlined in Appendix 2 of our Green Paper submission.⁷⁵ The issue of Cost of Disability has more recently been discussed at length and in numerous exchanges in the Oireachtas, including private members motions, and parliamentary questions, since Budget 2026, to the extent that there are too many examples to cite.⁷⁶

Government commitments

Programme for Government

Recognising public concern on this issue, the January 2025 Programme for Government explicitly acknowledges the Cost of Disability, in a thematic section. The government said: “We recognise that people with a disability face significant additional costs in their daily lives. We are committed to improving supports and ensuring that the social welfare system is

⁷¹ ESRI (2026), [Public support for welfare and redistributive policies in Ireland](#), p.6.

⁷² Op cit., pages 21-22.

⁷³ See DFI (2024), [Submission to Department of Social Protection on Green Paper on Disability Reform](#), pages 51-52.

⁷⁴ Oireachtas.ie (6 July 2022), [Cost of Disability: Motion \[Private Members\]](#), Oireachtas.ie (17 April 2024), [Disability Justice: Motion \[Private Members\]](#).

⁷⁵ DFI (2024), [Submission to Department of Social Protection on Green Paper on Disability Reform](#), Annex 2 pages 51-52.

⁷⁶ But see for example Oireachtas.ie (14 October 2025), [Cost of Disability: Motion \[Private Members\]](#), Oireachtas.ie (14 January 2026), [Leader’s Questions](#) (Cian O’Callaghan), Oireachtas.ie (28 January 2026), [Emergency Winter Payment for Disabled People: Motion \[Private Members\]](#).

progressive and empowers people with a disability to live full and independent lives”.

Among the commitments in the Programme for Government were to:

- Introduce a permanent Annual Cost of Disability Support Payment with a view to incrementally increasing this payment.
- Reform the Disability Allowance Payment and remove anomalies in the current means test for the payment.
- Progressively increase weekly Disability Payments and the Domiciliary Care Allowance.
- Examine the ‘ability to work’ criteria for certain payments and ensure that ongoing medical assessments are not carried out in respect of people with lifelong conditions that are not going to change.
- Protect the Free Travel Pass and examine extending it to children in receipt of Domiciliary Care Allowance.

National Human Rights Strategy for Disabled People

The National Human Rights Strategy for Disabled People, published in September 2025, further acknowledged this important issue. It included the following text:

Addressing the cost of disability is a whole-of-Government issue. As well as income supports, the delivery of and access to services are also key. The Indecon report on the cost of disability found that the extra costs of disability are due to a number of factors, including higher costs of healthcare, transport, education and other services, that arise because of a greater need for services and additional barriers experienced by disabled people in accessing these services.

All Government Departments will develop and implement whole-of-Government solutions that will address the cost of disability experienced by disabled people. These solutions will acknowledge the disproportionate financial burden experienced by disabled people and their households in daily living.

The strategy commits to creating a Strategic Focus Network, and delivering a one-day Strategic Focus Summit to discuss the issue and make recommendations for change. The government also committed that:

We will use information from the latest research to help us develop these solutions. This research includes:

- the Indecon Report on the Cost of Disability in Ireland, and
- the ESRI report on Adjusting Estimates of Poverty for the Cost of Disability (2025).

Solutions will include the Annual Cost of Disability Payment outlined in the Programme for Government as well as the enhancement of services and other measures under the five Pillars that will reduce the cost of disability.



DFI's vision

An Ireland where people with disabilities are participating fully in all aspects of society.



DFI's mission

DFI is a federation of member organisations working with people with disabilities to implement the UN CRPD and ensure their equal participation in society.



Four-year goal

Member organisations are actively involved in DFI, working to implement the UN CRPD and to achieve the equal participation of people with disabilities in society.

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