



National Federation of
Voluntary Service Providers
Supporting people with intellectual disability (CLG)



Oireachtas Disability Group Pre-Budget Submission 2021

Budget 2021 is the first opportunity for this government to take practical steps to realise the rights in the UN CRPD and provide the necessary investment to progress the commitments in the Programme for Government. COVID-19 has brought into sharp focus some of the issues already facing people with disabilities as these facts illustrate:

- There are 643, 131 people with disabilities in Ireland. By 2026, this number is estimated to increase by 20%.¹
- Poverty rates for people with disabilities in Ireland are 10% higher than the EU average. Ireland ranks amongst the worst five countries in Europe.²
- Ireland has the lowest employment rate for people with disabilities in the EU. It is almost 20% lower than the EU average of 50.8%.³
- 27% of the homeless population have a disability- double the rate of the general population.⁴
- 2,914 people with disabilities remain living in congregated settings.⁵
- Over 1,400 people with disabilities under the age of 65 are inappropriately placed in nursing homes.⁶
- Only 0.3% of all people with disabilities get a Personal Assistance Service.⁷ There is no legal right to personal assistance in Ireland.
- 13% of those on Carers' Allowance are over 70.⁸
- Services are carrying €40m+ deficits.⁹

¹ Census 2016 and NDA (2018), Disability Statistics.

² CSO, SILC (2018) op cit, EDF (2020) p.18-19.

³ EDF (2020), Poverty and Social Exclusion of People with Disabilities: European Human Rights Report p. 48.

⁴ Census 2016.

⁵ <https://www.higanews.com/the-experiences-of-people-with-disabilities-in-congregated-settings/>

⁶ DCU and DFI (2018), The situation of younger people in nursing homes in Ireland- phase 1.

⁷ HSE (2017), Service Plan 2018.

⁸ Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (2020). Statistical Information on Social Welfare Services: Annual Report 2019.

⁹ Joint Oireachtas Committee on Health (2019).

To address this crisis, commit to:

Fund services and supports

- Publish the capacity review without delay and provide funding to implement its recommendations. Pending this, fund a multi-annual investment programme of €211m per annum for 5 years to services that allow people with disabilities to live independently in their community.¹⁰
- Invest €120m to cover the full costs of COVID-19 expenditure in disability services in 2021.
- Resolve the growing deficits of €40m + across disability services.¹¹
- Provide €6m in funding for the Decision Support Service to become operational in 2021.

End disability poverty and unemployment

- Introduce a cost of disability payment in 2020. As an interim measure, increase Disability Allowance by €20 per week pending Indecon's 'Cost of Disability' research.
- Introduce assistive technology passports, at a cost of €1.5m.¹²

End the housing crisis facing people with disabilities

- Commit 7.5% of social housing for people on social housing waiting lists because of disability.¹³
- Increase funding for Housing Adaptation Grants by €25.9m and expand eligibility criteria.¹⁴
- Provide a minimum of €100m funding for the Capital Assistance Scheme.
- Increase funding for the de-institutionalisation and complete full transition to community living within 5 years.
- Target funding for community support and housing adaptation packages to move people under-65 out of nursing homes.

¹⁰ Based on HSE (2018), Transforming Lives: Report on the Future Needs for Disability Services, Working Group 1 estimates.

¹¹ Joint Oireachtas Committee on Health (2019).

¹² See DFI and Enable Ireland (2016). Assistive Technology for People with Disabilities and Older People: A Discussion Paper.

¹³ Based on Rebuilding Ireland and Housing Agency, Summary of Social Housing Assessments (2018). <https://bit.ly/2Zvpbxo>

¹⁴ To restore the funding to 2010 levels per Minister Eoghan Murphy, 11th June 2019, response to PQs [23645/19] and [23646/19]