

Main Social Welfare Changes and Rates of Payments

Budget 2014

Joan Burton T.D., Minister for Social Protection

€19.6 billion to be spent on Social Protection in 2014

New spending reductions limited to €226 million rather than €440 million

Additional €30 million from fraud and control initiatives

No reductions in weekly social welfare payments for all 1.45 million current beneficiaries

No new changes to Child Benefit

No changes in the Fuel Allowance, Free Travel, Free TV Licence, Electricity/Gas Allowance and Over 80 Allowance

Older people, carers and people with disabilities

- ◆ The State Pension for older people is maintained at current levels.
- ◆ The Free Travel, Free TV Licence, Electricity Allowance/Gas Allowance and Fuel Allowance are unchanged.
- ◆ The Telephone Allowance (€9.50 per month per household) will be discontinued from January for all recipients.
- ◆ The half rate Carer's Allowance is maintained for full-time carers who are getting another weekly welfare payment.
- ◆ Extra weekly payment for caring for more than one person is retained.
- ◆ The annual Respite Care Grant of €1,375 for each care recipient remains unchanged.

Children

- ◆ No new changes to Child Benefit in this Budget
- ◆ Child Benefit will be €130 per month for each child from January 2014, as announced in Budget 2013.

Activation - helping people back to education, training and work

- ◆ €1.08 billion will be spent in 2014 on supports to help jobseekers become job-ready – almost €85 million more than the projected spend this year.
- ◆ Funding secured for initial rollout of Youth Guarantee in 2014.

For more information check www.welfare.ie and www.citizensinformation.ie.

Telephone the **Department of Social Protection** on 1890 66 22 44 (LoCall) 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday and the **Citizens Information Phone Service** on 0761 07 4000, 9am - 9pm Monday to Friday

Contact your nearest Social Welfare Local Office or Citizens Information Centre

Note: The rates for 1890 (LoCall) numbers may vary among different service providers. This Fact Sheet is intended as a guide only and does not purport to be a legal interpretation.

NEW REFORMS

- ◆ *Recovery of social welfare payments* – The value of certain social welfare payments will be recovered by the Department from insurance companies in respect of compensation awards arising from an accident or injury. Savings of €21 million will be made from this reform measure.
- ◆ *Supports to help people to get back to work*
 - Spending on schemes such as Community Employment, Tús and JobBridge, will increase by almost €85 million on projected expenditure this year. Spending in this area in 2014 is estimated to be €1.08 billion.
 - In order to tackle youth unemployment, the Department of Social Protection will enhance the opportunities on offer to young people as part of the implementation of the EU Youth Guarantee which is to be finalised and submitted to the EU by the end of the year, including:
 - Reduce the threshold for JobsPlus eligibility to 6 months or less for people aged under 25 years.
 - Provide for an additional intake of 1,500 young people on to the very successful JobBridge scheme.
 - Ensure that 1,000 places on the Department’s Tús scheme are targeted at young people.
 - Develop a pilot programme to support young unemployed people to take up opportunities under schemes such as Your First EURES Job.
 - A minimum of 2,000 additional training places on Momentum will be ring-fenced for under-25s by the Department of Education and Skills.
- ◆ *Breakfast Clubs* – provision of extra Breakfast Clubs to support school-going children in disadvantaged areas.
- ◆ *Intreo, the Department’s one stop shop for employment services and supports for jobseekers and employers* – The Department has received an increased capital allocation of €15 million which will ensure the full roll-out of Intreo Centres in 2014.
- ◆ *Fraud and control* – additional savings of €30 million will be realised in fraud and control measures during 2014.

OTHER MEASURES

Children and Families

- ◆ The rate of Child Benefit will be €130 per month for each child. This was announced in December 2012 as part of Budget 2013.
- ◆ The Qualified Child Increase which is paid to people getting weekly social welfare payments is fully maintained.
- ◆ Family Income Supplement (FIS) is also fully maintained. FIS expenditure will be almost €282 million in 2014, with close to 43,000 families benefitting.
- ◆ The Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance is unchanged for all children under 18. In 2014 it will continue to be paid for those aged 18 years and over who are in second-level education only, not in third level education. **(2014)**

Jobseekers

- ◆ People without children aged 18-24 years in receipt of Jobseeker’s Allowance or Supplementary Welfare Allowance will receive €100 per week unless they are an existing claimant on a higher rate, in which case their rate will not change. **(January 2014)**
- ◆ People aged 25 years without children in receipt of Jobseeker’s Allowance or Supplementary Welfare Allowance will receive €144 a week unless they are an existing claimant on a higher rate, in which case their rate will not change. This weekly €144 rate will increase to €188 for people getting Jobseeker’s Allowance and to €186 for people who are getting Supplementary Welfare Allowance when they reach 26 years of age.
- ◆ The reduced rates of Jobseeker’s Allowance will apply to people aged 25 years and under who have exhausted their entitlement to Jobseeker’s Benefit. **(January 2014)**
- ◆ All jobseekers aged 18-25 years who participate in the Back to Education Allowance scheme will receive €160 per week. **(January 2014)**

Household Benefits Package, Fuel Allowance and Free Travel

- ◆ There are no changes to the Free Travel, Free TV Licence, Electricity Allowance/Gas Allowance and Fuel Allowance. Their values are being maintained.
- ◆ The annual payment to RTÉ for the Free TV Licence will reduce by €5 million to €54.17 million. This will not affect recipients who will continue to get a free licence. **(2014)**
- ◆ The Telephone Allowance will be discontinued for existing and new recipients. The value of the allowance is €9.50 per month per household. **(January 2014)**

Carers

- ◆ The half rate Carer's Allowance for full-time carers who are getting another welfare payment has not changed.
- ◆ The extra weekly payment for caring for more than one person is retained.
- ◆ The value of the Respite Care Grant remains at €1,375 in respect of each care recipient.

Maternity and Adoptive Benefit

- ◆ The minimum and maximum rates of Maternity Benefit and Adoptive Benefit will be standardised at €230 per week for new applicants. This will result in an increase of up to €12.20 for those receiving less than €230 per week and a reduction of up to €32 per week for all other claimants. The change will apply to new claimants. Existing claimants will not be affected. **(January 2014)**

Illness Benefit

- ◆ A person will not be entitled to Illness Benefit or Injury Benefit for the first 6 days of any claim, up from 3 days. **(January 2014)**

Invalidity Pension

- ◆ In line with the abolition of the State Pension Transition from January 2014, the weekly rate of €230.30 for Invalidity Pension at age 65 years will be discontinued and the rate payable will be €193.50 per week. This measure will apply to Invalidity Pensioners who reach their 65th birthday from January. Existing 65 year olds are unaffected. **(January 2014)**
- ◆ People who are getting Invalidity Pension (existing and new recipients) will continue to be automatically transferred to State Pension (Contributory) at age 66 years and they will receive a weekly rate of €230.30. **(January 2014)**
- ◆ The weekly rate payable to all qualified adults of Invalidity Pensioners will be standardised at €138.10 per week. This measure will apply to spouses and partners aged 66 or over who reach their 66th birthday from **January 2014**. Existing spouses and partners aged 66 and over are unaffected.

Rent and Mortgage

- ◆ The minimum contribution towards Rent Supplement and Mortgage Interest Supplement for couples will be increased by €5 per week, from €35 to €40, thereby further aligning Rent and Mortgage Interest Supplement contributions with the Local Authority rents structure, for new and existing recipients. **(January 2014)**
- ◆ The minimum contribution for single people, including single people with children, will not change.
- ◆ The Mortgage Interest Supplement scheme will be closed to new entrants and will be wound down for existing recipients over a four year period from **January 2014**.

Other Measures

- ◆ Savings of €2.1 million will be achieved in Exceptional Needs Payments arising from the standardisation of these payments. **(2014)**
- ◆ The Bereavement Grant of €850 will be discontinued. **(January 2014)**
- ◆ The six weeks payment after death (where the deceased person's payment continues for 6 weeks to their spouse or partner who is also getting a weekly welfare payment), the Widowed or Surviving Civil Partner's Grant of €6,000 and assistance with funeral costs under the Exceptional Needs Payments are unaffected.

PRSI

- ◆ There are no new PRSI changes.

Social Welfare Rates for 2014

Maximum Weekly Rates

Social Insurance Payments

State Pension (Contributory) (Transition)

	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013/2014
- Under Age 80	€ 230.30	€ 230.30	€ 153.50 *	€ 153.50 *	€ 29.80
- Aged 80 and over	240.30	240.30	206.30**	206.30**	29.80

Widow's/Widower's/Surviving Civil Partner's (Contributory)

Pension/Deserted Wife's Benefit

- Under Age 66	193.50	193.50			29.80
- Aged 66 and under Age 80	230.30	230.30			29.80
- Aged 80 and over	240.30	240.30			29.80

Invalidity Pension

	193.50	193.50	138.10	138.10	29.80
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Carer's Benefit/Constant Attendance Allowance

	205.00	205.00			29.80
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Disablement Benefit

	219.00	219.00			29.80
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Jobseeker's/Illness/Health & Safety/Injury Benefit

	188.00	188.00	124.80	124.80	29.80
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Death Benefit

- Under Age 66	218.50	218.50			29.80
- Aged 66 and under Age 80	234.70	234.70			29.80
- Aged 80 and over	244.70	244.70			29.80

Social Assistance Payments

State Pension (Non-Contributory)

- Aged 66 and under Age 80	219.00	219.00	144.70	144.70	29.80
- Aged 80 and over	229.00	229.00			29.80

Carer's Allowance

- Under Age 66	204.00	204.00			29.80
- Aged 66 and over	239.00	239.00			29.80

Blind Pension

	188.00	188.00	124.80	124.80	29.80
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Widow's/Widower's/Surviving Civil Partner's (Non-Contributory)

	188.00	188.00			29.80
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Deserted Wife's Allowance

	188.00	188.00			29.80
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One-Parent Family Payment

	188.00	188.00	124.80	124.80	29.80
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Pre-Retirement/Disability Allowance

	186.00	186.00	124.80	124.80	29.80
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Supplementary Welfare Allowance

	188.00	188.00	124.80	124.80	29.80
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Jobseeker's Allowance

	188.00	188.00	124.80	124.80	29.80
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Farm Assist

	188.00	188.00	124.80	124.80	29.80
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Other Social Welfare Allowances

Maternity/Adoptive Benefit (maximum rate)	262.00	230.00	<i>* for those under age 66 years</i>		
Maternity/Adoptive Benefit (minimum rate)	217.80	230.00	<i>** for those aged 66 or over</i>		
Guardian's Payment (Contributory)/(Non-Contributory)	161.00	161.00			

Qualified Child Increase

Child Benefit

Number of Children	2013	2014	2014
	Monthly Rate	Monthly Rate	Annual Rate
	€	€	€
1 child	130	130	1,560
2 children	260	260	3,120
3 children	390	390	4,680
4 children	530	520	6,240
5 children	670	650	7,800
6 children	810	780	9,360
7 children	950	910	10,920
8 children	1,090	1,040	12,480

Family Income Supplement (FIS)

Family Size	Current	2014
	Income Limit	Income Limit
	€	€
1 child	506	506
2 children	602	602
3 children	703	703
4 children	824	824
5 children	950	950
6 children	1,066	1,066
7 children	1,202	1,202
8 children	1,298	1,298
or more		

Level of FIS payment will continue to be based on 60% of the shortfall between net weekly family income and the applicable weekly family threshold.