



# BUDGET 2016

## BETTER FOR YOU, BETTER FOR ALL

### Dear Resident,

Budget 2016 is about making life better for our people. Having persevered and done the right thing in restoring the public finances to health, we now have the room to continue the process of raising living standards and investing in essential services.

This Budget delivers for low and middle-income workers, families, retired people and vulnerable groups – because we want a strong economy and a decent society. Labour in government has ensured:

- Reduced USC for middle and low income earners
- Increased Child Benefit for all families
- Reduced pupil-teacher ratio across our schools
- An effective free second pre-school year of education
- €3 pension increase and a Christmas Bonus for many vulnerable people



### Social Welfare Changes 2016

- Christmas Bonus 75% restoration
- Weekly pension increases €3 for those aged 66 or over
- New paternity benefit to be launched in 2016
- Carer's Support Grant restored to €1,700
- Fuel Allowance increased to €22.50 per week
- Family Income Supplement threshold to increase by €5 per week

### Better Living Standards and Fairer Taxes

Better living standards require fairer taxes for low and middle income workers. In Budget 2016 we are reducing the USC for low and middle income workers, and providing increases in vital supports for older people and vulnerable groups.

- USC rates to fall from 1.5% to 1%; 3.5% to 3%; 7% to 5.5%
- Low and middle-income earners will also do well, particularly working families, and gains will be capped in monetary terms for anybody earning over €70,000
- The marginal tax rate will fall below 50% for PAYE workers
- €3 pension increase, Christmas Bonus increased and Respite Care Grant fully restored in 2016

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**Labour**



## Better Jobs and Opportunities

The recovery is built on jobs and creating employment and this remains Labour's number one priority. In Budget 2016 we are continuing to support small businesses, directly recruiting more Gardai, and increasing the minimum wage.

- A jobs-focused Budget aimed at reducing unemployment further from 9.4% rate
- A new tax credit to help self-employed people
- Minimum Wage to increase by 50 cent an hour
- 600 new Garda recruits

## Smaller Classes and More Funding For Schools



As Minister for Education and Skills I was pleased to announce that there will be 2260 more teachers recruited in 2016, including 600 resource teachers for children with special learning needs. This will mean smaller classes in primary schools and improved guidance counselling in post-primary. I have also secured funding for the minor and summer works grants so that schools will be able to carry out necessary repair and maintenance work. There will be extra money for additional apprenticeships in the construction area and also for the 25 new types of apprenticeships that will be coming on stream next year. I will be announcing capital funding for new schools and extensions in the near future.

## Better Start for Families and Children

Labour has ensured that families are at the heart of this Budget, with measures including:

- Child Benefit increase of €5
- Extension of Early Childhood Care and Education scheme. Starting age for eligibility will now be 3 years of age - an effective second free year.
- Introduction of two weeks' paid paternity leave to take effect from autumn 2016
- Extension of free primary care for children aged 6 to 11
- Reduction in the pupil-teacher ratio at primary and post-primary levels

## Working with your local Labour Team



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