



PEOPLE  
BEFORE  
PROFIT

PEOPLE BEFORE PROFIT

# ELECTION MANIFESTO 2024

100 YEARS OF FF/FG  
IS ENOUGH

**ANOTHER IRELAND  
IS POSSIBLE**

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# A VISION FOR REAL CHANGE

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In one form or another Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael (FFFG) have been in power for 100 years. They have been good for corporations, landlords, vulture funds, big farmers and developers. But the majority have not benefited. They have failed to:

- **Provide affordable housing;**
- **Stop rising inequality and protect the many from the Cost of Living Crisis;**
- **Provide public services free at the point of delivery;**
- **Provide care for those who need it;**
- **Cut carbon emissions and protect our biodiversity;**
- **Defend our neutrality and protect refugees; and**
- **Stand with Palestine.**

This election takes place at a time when Ireland has unprecedented wealth. But we also have high levels of homelessness, inequality and deprivation. One in five children are experiencing deprivation. Many households are struggling with cost-of-living increases. Many young people are forced to emigrate. Affordable housing is out of the reach of the many, education is costly when it should be free and childcare costs amount to another mortgage for many households. Those with additional needs are locked out of basic services waiting for essential assessments and therapies and even school places. Many disabled people live on or below the poverty line. Hundreds of thousands are on waiting lists for essential medical care.

All of this in spite of the fact that the government has unprecedented resources available to it. The government refuses to go after the wealth which could be used to provide a decent living to the majority of the population. Indeed, it has worked flat out to try and give over €13 billion that is owed to the Irish people to Apple's shareholders. This shows whose side they are on.

The government has also failed in relation to the Climate and Biodiversity crisis and has not taken the measures which would lead to the cuts in emissions we need to avoid warming in excess of 1.5 degrees and protect our environment. It faces large penalties, which could be over €8 billion up to 2030, through fines and buying carbon credits. These resources could be more usefully spent on taking the action we need to expand renewables, retrofit homes, expand public transport and make it free and to cut the national herd.

Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael want to end our neutrality and drag us towards NATO. People Before Profit opposes any efforts to end our neutrality and involve us in military operations through the EU.

The government has talked a rhetoric of concern for Palestine. But they refuse to isolate Israel, stand up to the US support for Israel and give real solidarity with Palestinians. People Before Profit wants to expel the ambassador, boycott events in Washington, ban the sale of Israeli war bonds which is facilitated by the Central Bank and isolate Israel though cutting all diplomatic and economic ties. We have also called for the end of the use of Shannon to aid the murderous Israeli war machine.

This government has tried to blame our housing crisis on migrants and refugees and has leaned into the narratives of the Far Right. Unlike other parties People Before Profit has taken a clear stance against the Far Right and racism. The Far Right have nothing to offer working people and only help the establishment deflect attention from the real causes of the problems in our society

It's time to end the rule of FFFG and radically change Irish society. **People Before Profit is the only party that has ruled out going into government with FFFG.** Other parties dither and flip flop. They move to the centre and do not rule out going into government with FFFG. It will be to the same old story where nothing really changes. Many others are running as Independents when in fact they, save for a few honorable exceptions, are no different to the establishment parties and will support FFFG at the first opportunity.

We need a left government with a radical agenda for change. While other parties dither we set out the radical action that is needed for fundamental system change. **Another Ireland is possible.** The resources are there to make it happen. What is missing is the political will. We propose to begin a rapid transformation of Irish society on a scale and at an unprecedented pace that reflects the serious crises we face. People Before Profit wants a 32-county eco- socialist republic where working people control the wealth and the needs of people and the planet come before the profits of the few.

But this requires a different type of politics. People Before Profit does not believe that a few TDs or even a majority of TDs in the Dail can themselves bring that change. It will require massive people power from below. This is why we encourage working people to organise, to feel their own strength and to push through the changes that are needed. We know that every major reform in Irish society whether it was ending water charges or Repeal, came from mass movement from below. **People Before Profit TDs are not conventional politicians but voices of resistance inside the corridors of the Dail. They raise the issues others ignore. They make a difference.**

The first step in bringing about fundamental change will be the formation of a Left Government - one that excludes FF and FG. We know, however, from the experience of other countries that such a government must be willing to take the fight to the rich and privileged. Ireland needs a party that fights for workers, the poor and oppressed with all the energy and enthusiasm that FFFG defend the rich. **Voting People Before Profit Number 1 will give a strong indication that people want real change. The kind of radical change set out in this manifesto.**

## The People Before Profit Pledge

TDs are paid too much. They earn a basic salary of €113,679 but in reality many earn more than this by getting allowances and expenses. This is nearly three times what the average worker earns. No wonder they are out of touch. They have no idea of what it's like to live on or below average earnings.

If elected People Before Profit candidates will only take the average wage and devote the rest of their salary to campaigning and community organisations. They will use their money to build the people powered campaigns we need to truly change Ireland.

## ***People Before Profit Will:***

1. Never support a government involving Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael.
2. Set up a State Construction Company to build social and affordable housing, renovate vacant homes and retrofit low BER-high energy poverty households. Use the Apple money to finance it.
3. Abolish the USC for those earning less than €100,000.
4. Introduce a multi-millionaires tax.
5. Introduce a Living Wage of at least €15 an hour.
6. Introduce mandatory union recognition.
7. Introduce price controls on energy and food.
8. Raise pension and benefits to €300 immediately. Raise all disability payments to €350.
9. Abolish the means test for carers allowance and give carers a Living Wage.
10. Introduce rent controls and reinstate the eviction ban.
11. Introduce free GP care and abolish health related charges. Lift the recruitment embargo and invest in capacity to reduce waiting lists.
12. Take private hospitals into public control.
13. Establish a fully publicly owned and funded National Childcare Service to provide free childcare for all.
14. Introduce 12 months' paid leave for each parent in the first two years of a child's life. Increase annual leave for all.
15. Abolish all education related charges, reduce the pupil/teacher ratio and double the capitation grant at primary level.
16. Immediately increase the number of SNAs and SETs by 2,000 and 1,000 respectively and employ 375 clinicians to clear assessment of need waiting lists.
17. Start a major programme to reduce emission by at least 10% per year: introduce free public transport, ramp up investment in renewables and retrofitting and reduce the national herd.
18. Give refugees the right to work. End Direct Provision. Stand up to all forms of racism and the Far Right.
19. Expel the Israeli ambassador. Cut all diplomatic and economic ties with Israel. Ban imports of goods and services from Israel. End the use of Shannon by the US military.
20. Campaign for a Border Poll.

Our Manifesto summarises our policies and our recent alternative budgets. Detailed costings for 2025 are in our [Budget 2025](#).

# HOUSING FOR EVERYONE

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*This government has failed to provide affordable housing to all who need it.*

## **The Housing Crisis**

- Over 58,000 are on waiting lists;
- Another 68,000 households are on Housing Assistance Payments (HAP);
- Over 14,000 people are homeless, over 4,000 of these are children;
- There are over 160,000 vacant homes in Ireland, of which 48,000 have been empty since 2016;
- The state hands over nearly €1 billion a year to landlords to subsidise rents;
- Average rents are through the roof being over €1,800, and €2,300 in Dublin;
- House prices are out of control and rose by over 10% in the last year;
- Mortgage interest repayments have gone up by 11% in the last year;
- Over 440,000 young adults are living with their parents. 59% of those between 20 and 34 do so;
- In 2023 the government failed to meet their targets for social and affordable housing targets by 2,680;
- The Housing Commission Report identified an historical deficit of up 256,000 homes;
- Based on the report the Central Bank estimates we need to build 68,000 homes a year for the next 10 years to meet housing needs. The new government targets are not ambitious enough.

The failure to provide affordable housing based on need has resulted from an overreliance on the market. Two thirds of expenditure on homelessness goes to for-profit providers of emergency accommodation.

The housing crisis can only be resolved by resetting policy so that we don't rely on the market. We need actions to control the costs of building homes and the costs of renting and buying a home. But most of all we need more homes and for the state to take a lead in ramping up the provision of social and affordable housing.

We need an emergency housing programme led by a State Construction Company to build many thousands of social and affordable houses. We would allocate the Apple money to finance a State Construction Company and build social housing.

## ***A State Construction Company***

If we want a massive expansion of house building, retrofitting of older houses, and a refurbishment of vacant homes, we need a new state construction company. The Housing Commission called for “exceptional and radical measures to deliver a substantial amount of housing in the shortest time practicable”.

**The establishment of a state construction company is one such exceptional and radical measure.**

- Financed by the Apple Money;
- Cuts costs by removing the profit motive from building social and affordable housing;
- Builds at scale to increase public housing to 30% of housing stock and to clear waiting lists;
- Allows the State, not developers, to decide what kind of homes to build and allows us to meet real housing needs;
- Use direct labour units to attract workers by offering them the best working conditions and security of employment;

**Our Full Briefing on a State Construction Company is [here](#)**

We will introduce strict rent controls, allow tenants to apply for rent reductions and give security of tenure. We would cap mortgage interest payments at 3%.

### ***We will:***

- Declare a Housing Emergency;
- Use the State Construction Company to build 30,000 social and 5,000 affordable houses per year;
- Provide for Universal Public Housing: remove the income limits for public housing;
- Eliminate homelessness with immediate actions to scale up social housing & expand and resource Housing First;
- Use vacant public buildings to accommodate homeless Irish people and asylum seekers;
- Introduce more punitive “use it or lose it” taxes on vacant and derelict buildings and sites;
- Use Compulsory Purchase Order powers to bring vacant homes back into use;
- Increase the renter’s tax credit to €3,000 in 2025;
- Introduce a rent freeze, real rent controls and reinstate the eviction ban;
- Introduce an NCT-style system of certification to ensure minimum standards in the private rental sector are met;
- Ban vulture funds and short term letting;
- Cap mortgage interest rates and extend the mortgage to rent scheme;
- Establish an Independent National Traveller Housing Agency to oversee the delivery of culturally appropriate Traveller accommodation, suited to the specific needs of the community;
- Ensure that all public housing developments are of an accessible design and are fully disability proofed so disabled people can live independently;
- Expand the Housing Adaptation grant schemes and increase funding to clear waiting lists and ensure access for all;

- Provide 100% redress including retrospection for apartment and duplex defects, 100% redress for all homes with defective blocks;
- Build new houses to Passive House Standards;
- Introduce minimum B2 BER standards for the Private Rented Sector;
- Hold a referendum on the right to housing.

### ***End the Rent Hell - Hope for a Locked-Out Generation***

We would declare a housing emergency. As a first step we would impose a rent freeze where landlords are banned from increasing rents during this emergency.

We would establish a no-fault eviction ban. Tenants could not be evicted if they were not wrecking a flat. This way there would be no incentive on landlords to use the many loopholes FG and FG have created to get rid of some tenants and charge higher rents to others.

We would reduce rents if the rent consumes more than 25% of their income.

See our Rent Reduction Bill 2023 here <https://www.pbp.ie/cut-the-rents-support-the-people-before-profit-bill/>



# TACKLE THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS

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*Prices here are 42% above the EU average and we are only second to Denmark. Ireland has the most expensive electricity in the EU and electricity prices have almost tripled in the last 12 years. One estimate says households could be worse off by €8000 a year now compared to 2021.*

In 2024, a shocking 41% of parents have said they had to skip meals or reduce portion sizes so that their children would have enough to eat. A quarter of parents say they have to borrow money to feed their children and 12% are using food banks. Many households struggle due to low pay or poverty.

In 2023, the Minimum Disposable Income Required to Avoid Poverty was €318 for an adult. Most benefits were €232 a week. The €12 provided for in Budget 2025 will not lift people out of poverty.

The government's response is once off payments but this will not tackle the cost of living crisis. To really tackle the cost of living crisis, we need to boost the incomes of the many and control prices. Despite Simon Harris's message that you never had it so good, many are living on poverty wages.

## ***Poverty and Low Pay***

- **One in five workers are low paid;**
- **The current minimum wage provides for only 77% of weekly expenditure needs for a single worker;**
- **Almost 600,000 people are living in poverty: 11% of the population;**
- **19% are in poverty when housing costs are accounted for;**
- **Nearly 1 million people are suffering enforced deprivation;**
- **Over 250,000 children in Ireland are living in enforced deprivation;**
- **Almost half of those with a disability are living in enforced deprivation and have the highest risk of poverty.**
- **20% of older people are living in enforced deprivation;**
- **Almost a third of household are in energy poverty.**

## ***Here is how we will boost the incomes of the many:***

1. Abolish the USC for workers earning less than €100,000. Use the Multi-Millionaires' Tax to pay for it;
2. Introduce a Living Wage of at least €15 an hour for all;
3. Introduce refundable tax credits for the lower paid;
4. End poverty rates for Pensions and Social Protection Payments: Raise them immediately to €300 per week with an additional €50 Cost of Disability payment for those on disability payments;
5. End discriminatory rates of Jobseekers Allowance for those under 24;
6. Link pensions and benefits to average earnings in Budget 2026;
7. Immediately increase the Qualified Child Allowance by €12 for under 12s & €30 for over 12s;
8. Extend eligibility for the Fuel Allowance to all pensioners and to all in receipt of the Working Family Payment and Carers Allowance. Abolish the waiting period of a year for Fuel Allowance for those on Job Seekers Allowance and immediately increase Fuel Allowance by €20 per week for current and proposed new recipients;
9. Legislate for mandatory union recognition and reform of the 1990 Industrial Relations Act to allow workers to advance wage claims effectively.

## ***Here is how we can Control Prices and Costs***

1. Cap essential food prices & cut electricity bills by returning ESB to a not for profit mandate and cap energy prices;
2. Cap mortgage interest rates to 3%;
3. Abolish the Household Property Tax: replace it with a Non-Principal Private Residence Tax;
4. Abolish the Carbon Tax: Put a levy on the big polluters instead;
5. Abolish charges for Waste Collection and bring it back under Council control;

## **Making a Difference: Fighting for Price Controls**

In the last Dáil People Before Profit introduced a number of bills to control the price of food and energy. Existing powers available to the Government under the Consumer Protection Act 2007 allow it to introduce price controls. We sought:

1. To establish a Grocery Price Commission to set maximum prices for essential foodstuffs.
2. To cap petrol and diesel prices including scrapping the carbon tax and reversing excise duty hikes.
3. To cap gas and electricity prices to pre-crisis levels; Electricity at 25c per kilowatt hour and Natural Gas at 8c per kilowatt hour; kerosene or home heating oil at €1 a litre.

We also sought to cap mortgage interest rates at 3% - using the existing power of the government to direct the Central Bank to direct banks to do this.

*The government opposes these measures.*

# TAX JUSTICE: SHIFT THE BURDEN TO THE WEALTHY

*The resources exist in our country to address the Cost of Living Crisis, fund public services and give working people a break. The problem is FFFG have no interest in using the wealth to benefit the many. Indeed they spent millions trying to give over €13 billion that is owed to the Irish people to Apple's shareholders. This shows whose side they're on. We need to ensure the wealth in society is redistributed to benefit the many.*

## **The Rich Get Richer**

- **Oxfam has shown that two people in Ireland have more wealth than the bottom 50% of the population. The richest 1% own 35.4% of Irish financial wealth;**
- **There are 10 billionaires, over 1,400 individuals with wealth over €47 million, and over 20,000 individuals with wealth over €4.7 million;**
- **Between 2013 and 2022 profits increased by 294%;**
- **The share of wages in the economy has decreased every year since 2011 reaching a low point of 29% in 2021;**
- **While there has been a surge in the corporate tax, corporations have not paid the corporate tax headline rate of 12.5%. The effective tax rate in 2022 was 7.1%;**
- **The richest 10% of people have as much disposable income as the poorest 40%;**
- **Over 160,000 individuals earn more than €100,000 per year: about 5% of all taxpayers. They are collecting 23% of total pay.**

We would tax the wealth and use the resources to make poverty history. As a priority we need a multi-millionaires tax. We want to make the rich pay their fair share.

### **We will**

- Introduce a Multi-Millionaires' Tax on individual wealth over €4.7 m to raise at least €8 billion in 2025.
- Introduce four new tax bands on top earners to raise €4 billion in 2025.
- Introduce higher PRSI rates for employers to raise over €3 billion in 2025.

- Raise Corporation Tax to 20% for large corporations and close tax avoidance loopholes to raise €20 billion in 2025.

***We will also:***

- Introduce a levy on the profits of pharmaceutical and private health companies;
- Introduce a 50% windfall tax on profits of energy companies;
- Introduce Taxes on vacant homes and on vacant land zoned for residential development;
- Introduce a 2.25% tax on social media and largest ICT companies to fund public broadcasting;
- Introduce a Financial Transaction Tax & a Tax on commercial aviation;
- Reduce Pension Relief Threshold & Abolish the Special Assignment Relief Programme (SARP).

# GIVE WORKERS A BREAK

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*There has been a massive transfer of wealth to the rich, employers and shareholders.*

This is partially as a result of falling levels of unionisation. Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael in government have failed again and again to provide workers with a statutory right to organise and bargain. Irish workers can only protect their living standards if they are organised and can take effective action against their employer.

We will introduce a Charter for Workers Rights. Workers' rights in Ireland are below those across Europe. Workers here work two weeks a year longer than the EU average. Crucially workers do not have the right to organise and bargain.

## **We need:**

1. Mandatory union recognition and repeal of the 1990 Industrial Relations Act to allow workers to take effective strike action. We will enact the EU Directive on Minimum Wages and provide legislative avenues to facilitate greater unionisation. We will legislate for mandatory union recognition and reform of the 1990 Industrial Relations Act to allow workers to advance wage claims effectively;
2. A Living Wage of at least €15 an hour for all;
3. Equal pay for all;
4. Increase holidays to 30 days & 2 extra Bank Holidays;
5. Full employment rights for migrant works, including undocumented workers;
6. Protection of the standard employment contract to ensure workers on these contracts remain at low risk from precariousness. A financial penalty for companies over-reliant on temporary contracts. Bogus self-employment should end;
7. Protection from dismissal from day 1 in the job;
8. The state pension to be paid at 65. Mandatory provision for pension schemes in all jobs;
9. A four day week without loss of pay;
10. Mandatory sick pay from day one of sickness: Expand sick pay entitlements;
11. Mandatory maternity and paternity pay;
12. Double redundancy pay and give preferential creditor status to workers in collective redundancy situations.

# UNIVERSAL FREE HEALTHCARE

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## *Public services in Ireland are not fit for purpose.*

The establishment parties have chronically underfunded public services. While historically Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael outsourced the provision of key services to the Catholic Church they increasingly rely on the market to deliver public services. This has been disastrous for working people who can't access health care as they need it.

The Health Services suffer from historic underspending, capacity constraints, a lack of universal primary care entitlements, and long waiting times. Despite government spin there is an effective recruitment embargo under the guise of the "Pay and Numbers Strategy" which is leading to unsafe staffing levels.

We have one of the lowest acute bed densities in the EU and the sixth lowest number of specialist doctors in the OECD. We are suffering from a shortage of GPs and other healthcare staff. Over 700,000 are on a waiting list of some kind and more than two thirds have been waiting for longer than the target time.

Unlike other countries we do not provide universal health coverage for all residents. Many households are forced to take out private health insurance to fund access to basic care with almost half the population having private insurance compared to 18% in the North. Over 20% of hospitals are private. In the last year alone the cost of health insurance rose by 12% and the average cost of health insurance is now €1,685. Private health care is a lucrative business.

In our two tier system those who can afford it get guaranteed access to care while those who can't struggle to have their needs met. If the current government stay in power private healthcare will be part of the Irish health system for the foreseeable future.

**People Before Profit want a single tier system where patients are treated on the basis of need and services, including GP care, are provided free at the point of delivery.** Private hospitals should be taken into public ownership to expand the capacity of the public system and raising bed and staff levels to address waiting lists.

The estimated prevalence of **mental health** disorders is relatively high yet spending on mental health is relatively low. The mental health budget for 2024 is just 6% of the overall health budget. The World Health Organisation recommends that national mental health budgets should equate to 12% of overall national health budgets. Spending on mental health services needs to be doubled as quickly as possible.

## ***A National Health Service is possible. People Before Profit will:***

- End the two tier health system: treat people on the basis of need;
- Introduce Free Primary Care for all including GP Care;
- Reverse centralisation of A and E services in the Mid-West and elsewhere;
- Establish a network of 500 public primary health care centres;
- Abolish charges and fees, including prescription charges for medical card holders & car parking fees, across the health sector;
- Eliminate the Drug Payment Threshold: make prescription drugs free;
- Immediately add 1,000 permanent acute beds with appropriate staffing and an additional 50 level 3 ICU beds: end the recruitment embargo and the Pay and Number Strategy of the HSE;
- Take private hospitals into public ownership to expand capacity;
- Make the free contraception scheme universal & introduce free HRT for all women who need it including consultation and prescription charges;
- Bring staffing in public health teams to WHO recommended levels.
- Invest €500 million in Mental Health Services in 2025 to bring spending towards 12% of overall health budget by 2027.
- Ensure that transgender and non-binary people have publicly available, accessible, and high-quality healthcare services in line with best international standards. Introduce a progressive gender-affirming care based on an informed consent model of healthcare;
- Make transgender healthcare free;
- Ban conversion practices which violate the rights of LGBTQI+ people;
- A sustainable funding model for funding Childrens' Hospice care;
- The development and implementation of a new policy on children's palliative care;
- Pay student nurses.

# QUALITY EDUCATION THAT'S GENUINELY FREE

*Education in Ireland is meant to be free but at every stage the system requires students or their parents to pay in some form or another. The system is underfunded with high pupil/ teacher ratios and many schools can only function due to the so called “voluntary contributions” paid by parents.*

## ***Education: High Cost, Low Investment***

- The cost of primary education for parents was estimated at over €1500 per child in 2024. It was over €3000 for secondary;
- Half of primary and 70% of secondary school parents were worried about meeting costs this year. One fifth of secondary school parents said they had to take a loan out or borrow to meet school costs;
- 80% of parents said that their schools requested a voluntary contribution;
- Ireland has the highest third level fees in the EU: A student living at home will have costs of over €6,000 per year. If renting it will be over €16,000;
- Ireland invests less in education than any other OECD country: About 10% less per student than the OECD average;
- Funding at third level is just half the OECD average;
- Class sizes are amongst the worst in the EU: 10% of primary pupils are in classes over 30;
- Staff/students ratios at third level are amongst the worst in the OECD.

Free education from preschool to third level should be a universal right. People Before Profit is committed to abolishing all fees, ramping up investment, banning voluntary contributions and providing additional supports to students with additional needs and those in disadvantaged areas. We will end all subsidies to private schools.

Further we will accelerate the removal of the Catholic Church from control of our education system. In 2023 88% of primary school had a Catholic ethos. A fall of only 2% since 2013. There is a lack of political will to remove church control from our schools despite the



evidence of neglect and abuse in church controlled schools.

## ***Genuinely free education is possible. People Before Profit will:***

### **Primary and secondary:**

- Abolish all charges and provide free school books and uniforms;
- Provide free school meals at secondary level;
- Outlaw “voluntary contributions”;
- Double the capitation grant for primary schools;
- Allocate teachers to primary and post primary based on a ratio of 15:1;
- Immediately increase the number of Special Needs Assistants by 2,000 and Special Education Teachers by 1,000;
- Ensure that every school in the State has an autism class and every school offers a summer programme;
- Reinstate school management posts removed by austerity cuts;
- Double funding for DEIS schools and implement enhanced DEIS+ funding for the most disadvantaged schools;
- Increase the number of psychologist posts in NEPS by 50%;
- End subsidies to private schools;
- End church control of education.

### **Higher Education:**

- Abolish all college fees, including apprentice fees, and double maintenance grants;
- Provide a fund to ensure PhD researches receive at least €30,000 a year;
- Increase mental health supports on campuses to ensure one counsellor per 1,000 students;
- Provide 30,000 extra affordable student beds by 2029;
- Double the number of places available in universities for therapeutic courses;
- Expand apprenticeship provision; Double the number of apprenticeships, raise the wage level to living wage for all years of training; encourage more women to join apprenticeships and increase travel and accommodation expenses;
- Expand state funding for higher education to immediately fill the funding gap identified as over €300 million in 2022;
- Pay student nurses.

# CARE FOR ALL WHO NEED IT

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*From the cradle to the grave the state has failed to support those who need care, whether they be young children, children with disabilities or additional needs or elderly parents, who need care.*

On the contrary the state ignored the abuse of many inflicted by the Catholic Church on those who were entrusted to its care. Despite the many revelations of abuse the state has failed to remove Church control of care services or forced the Church to pay the compensation it agreed to pay.

The resources exist within our society to provide care for all who need it especially our children, older people and those with special needs and disabilities. A Caring Ireland is possible.

## **1. Free Public Childcare**

**Childcare** provision compares poorly with other countries. The percentage of four-year-olds in early childhood and primary education in Ireland is one of the lowest in the OECD. Government investment in childcare is only half the EU average. Governments have chosen to outsource early learning and childcare to the private sector.

Three-quarters of childcare services are provided for profit and large childcare chains like Giraffe and Safari are making millions. Quality childcare remains unaffordable and inaccessible for many families. Fees are among the highest in the EU with many parents shelling out the equivalent of a second mortgage. According to SIPTU childcare workers are overworked and struggle to get by on as little as €13.65 an hour. Low pay is the single biggest factor in the childcare recruitment and retention crisis.

People Before Profit would transition rapidly to a fully publicly owned and funded National Childcare Service, available to all parents for free. A National Childcare Service is the best model to guarantee universal, free quality childcare for all children - including children with disabilities who are so often excluded by the current market-based model - as well as excellent pay and conditions for workers.

We would also extend entitlements to Maternity, Paternity and Parental leave so that both parents have 12 months paid leave in the first two years of a child's life.

### **People Before Profit will:**

- Immediately abolish childcare fees for parents;
- Establish a fully publicly owned and funded National Childcare Service to provide free childcare for all;
- As part of a programme to transition to a publicly owned and funded childcare system we would immediately invest €1.5 billion to expand the number of childcare places including by making better use of suitable state owned buildings and

through compulsory purchase of suitable privately owned buildings;

- Provide free preschool meals for all children in the ECCE scheme;
- An immediate €2 per hour wage increase for all childcare workers;
- Extend paid Parent's Leave and amalgamate it with Maternity and Paternity Leave to provide 12 months' paid leave for each parent in the first two years of a child's life.

## **2. Caring for The Disabled and those with Additional Needs**

Services for those with additional needs and disabilities are completely inadequate. The lived experience of many people with disabilities and their carers is of poverty and exclusion.

Disabled people are twice as likely to be homeless and more likely to be unemployed or underemployed, with Ireland having the highest level of unemployment among disabled people in the EU. In addition, due to lack of supports, disabled people are twice as likely to leave school early. They are also more likely to suffer ill health and a quarter have unmet health needs. The State has utterly failed people with disabilities and special education needs.

- **Over 10,000 children are waiting for an Assessment of Need (AON); 110,000 are awaiting essential therapies;**
- **An additional 375 clinicians are needed to clear AON waiting lists for children with autism;**
- **Over 120 children were without a school place at the beginning of September 2024;**
- **Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNT's) census for 2023 showed a 36% vacancy rate;**
- **Speech and Language and Occupational Therapist vacancy rates were over 40%;**
- **The high and increasing level of staff vacancies in CDNTs is a key factor that has led to extremely high waiting lists for assessments and follow-up services for children;**
- **A third of all primary schools were allocated less Special Education Teacher (SET) and Special Needs Assistant (SNA) resources in 2024 than 2023;**
- **SNA allocations in mainstream education have been frozen for a number of years.**

According to Inclusion Ireland 45% of children with support needs are being failed by the educational system as they face multiple barriers to access their right to school. They either contend with a lack of appropriate supports at school, a reduced timetable, emotionally based school avoidance, other distressing experiences, or they are not attending school at all.

## ***People Before Profit will:***

- Massively expand investment in disability services and supports including increasing all disability related social welfare payments to €350 per week to take account of the additional costs of being disabled;
- Abolish the means test for Carers Allowance & pay carers a Living Wage of €15 an hour;
- Immediately increase the number of Special Needs Assistants by 2,000, Special Education Teachers by 1,000;
- Invest in education to ensure that every school in the State has an autism class and every school offers a summer programme;
- Increase the number of psychologist posts in NEPS by 50%;
- Immediately hire 375 additional clinicians to clear waiting list for assessments of those with autism;
- Implement a comprehensive plan for staff retention across the relevant services addressing, in particular, pay and conditions: end the discrimination against Section 39 workers;
- Establish a centralised database from the moment a child is diagnosed to provide better data tracking and forward planning for a child's needs and a seamless transition to adult services and supports;
- Implement a comprehensive plan for staff retention across the relevant services addressing, in particular, pay and conditions: end the discrimination against Section 39 workers;
- Introduce emergency measures to ensure full staffing of Children's Disability Network Teams and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, including speeding up the recruitment and recognition of the qualifications of international candidates for therapists;
- Develop a plan to address the shortage of Irish Sign Language translators;
- Double the number of places available in universities for therapeutic courses.

## **The Carers Allowance**

**In the main people prefer to be cared for at home but the State of Caring 2024 report shows that the situation for family carers in Ireland continues to be marked by financial hardships, and the absence of critical support services. 70% of carers are struggling to make ends meet, over 70% have never had respite care and almost half experience extreme loneliness.**

**The Carer's Allowance scheme undervalues care. Prior to Budget 2025 approximately half of all recipients of Carer's Allowance received a reduced rate due to means and thousands of genuine full-time family carers are excluded from the scheme due to means. Income disregards bear no resemblance to the actual disposable income of a caring household because the assessment is applied to gross rather than net income. It does not reflect the reality faced by families who are struggling to make ends meet. We would abolish the means test and increase Carers Allowance.**

### **3. Protecting Pensioners and the Elderly**

The State relies mainly on the private sector for care of the elderly. 80% of those in nursing homes are in private homes. The average cost of nursing home care is approximately €1,564 per week. The crisis in elder care is a direct result of relying on the profit motive to provide care.

#### **More generally many older people are struggling to cope with the cost of living crisis.**

Deprivation rates are rising for those over 65 and living alone. One fifth live in enforced deprivation. Households composed of one adult aged 65 or over had the lowest disposable income in 2023. Older people are more likely to live in homes with low BER ratings and increasingly say they cannot afford to keep their home warm. Ireland is the only country in the Eurozone with a state pension not indexed against wages or inflation despite the Government promising to do so.

#### **People Before Profit will:**

- Expand the provision of public nursing homes;
- Abolish the means test for Carers Allowance & pay carers a Living Wage of €15 an hour;
- Immediately increase pensions to €300 and benchmark pensions to average earnings from 2026;
- Double the Living Alone Allowance;
- Extend Fuel Allowance to all pensioners;
- Restore the pension age to 65;
- Make sure Free Travel is genuinely free; get rid of booking charges for pensioners;
- Establish a Commissioner for Ageing and Older People;
- Prioritise retrofitting for those living alone and in homes with a low BER.

## **Making a Difference: Fighting for Pensioners**

In 2021 Brid Smith introduced a Bill in the Dáil that aims to give retired workers greater rights of representation and a say in any changes proposed to their pension schemes.

The Bill would give retired workers' associations greater rights to take cases to the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) when changes are proposed to existing occupational pensions schemes. It would also ensure retired workers could have greater representation on trustee boards of schemes.

Currently pensioners have no right to representation and often changes are made to their pensions without any consultation with them.

Our Bill is still making its way through the Dáil. The Government has opposed it. Many pensioner groups are fully behind it.

# FOR REAL GENDER EQUALITY

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***The Irish state has been built on the sexist assumption that a women's place was in the home.***

It was assumed that all care work would be done by women in the home and for free. Women do the majority of care work in society but it is undervalued and underpaid. Women are more likely to work part-time, be low paid or in precarious employment and face much greater challenges in balancing work and home life. Women need reproductive justice and real choices if they are to play an equal role in society.

Women's Aid say one in four women in Ireland who have been in a relationship have been abused by a current or former partner. More than half (52%) of women report experiencing sexual violence in their lifetime. Contrary to what the Far Right claim most gender based violence is inflicted by men who women live with or know. The Istanbul Convention, which Ireland has signed, requires 476 family refuge places. Yet the government is only committed to 280 units nationwide by the end of 2026.

The fight against sexism is also about ending the rigid gender binary that prescribes certain sexual behaviour and desires, as well as relationships as "normal". Trans and non-binary people continue to face extremely high levels of stigmatisation and marginalisation with the state's lack of recognition for non-traditional identities a major contributing factor.

People Before Profit fights for real Gender Equality and for a radical improvement in the lives of women, men, trans and nonbinary people.

## ***We will:***

- Fight for equal pay: end the gender pay gap: increase pay rates for traditionally females jobs;
- Establish a fully publicly owned and funded National Childcare Service to provide free childcare for all;
- Reduce the working week to 4 days: this will encourage a more equal sharing of caring responsibilities;
- Introduce paid care leave so workers can look after sick children or elderly relatives without loss of income and increase annual leave for all workers;
- Reform abortion laws to
  - Decriminalise Abortion;
  - Abolish the mandatory 3-day wait period;
  - Increase the 12-week limit to allow for abortion on request;

- o Ensure all women with a diagnosis of severe or fatal foetal anomaly should be guaranteed compassionate care in their own country;
  - o Ensure abortion services are accessible on a 32-county basis;
- Rapidly expand provision of refuge places for those affected by gender based violence to ensure all counties have a refuge;
- Invest in sexual assault treatment units;
- Make the free contraception scheme universal; introducing free HRT for all women who need it.
- Provide period products free;
- Implement objective Sex and Relationship Education to empower young people to make informed choices;
- Separate Church and State: Get the church out of public schools and health care services:
- Ensure that transgender and non-binary people have publicly available, accessible, and high-quality healthcare services in line with best international standards.
- Introduce a progressive gender-affirming care based on an informed consent model of healthcare;
- Make transgender healthcare free.

# RADICAL ACTION ON CLIMATE & BIODIVERSITY

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*The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has highlighted that there is now a rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all. But the pace of emissions reductions is completely inadequate. Despite the spin the Green Party has failed.*

## ***Ireland: Climate Change Laggard***

- **Despite having a Green Minister, in 2023 Ireland dropped six places on the Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI), dropping to 43rd among 59 countries;**
- **3rd highest emissions per head in the EU;**
- **Emissions in 2023 were only 7.8% lower than in 2018, well off the national target of a 51% reduction by 2030. We are on target for a cut of only 29%;**
- **We are only 10% below 2005 levels, well short of our EU commitment of 42% by 2030;**
- **83% of energy came from fossil fuels in 2023: the lowest share of renewable energy in the EU;**
- **Data centres consume over 20% of electricity and could reach 30% by 2030.**

Having missed the 2020 emission reductions targets, Ireland is now on course to substantially miss the 2030 targets in almost all sectors. We will also miss our EU commitments and will end up spending billions in fines and buying carbon credits. We need to rapidly decarbonise our energy system. Current policy is market driven, and relies on the private sector and on giving subsidies to the better off to buy electric cars, heat pumps or retrofit their homes. This policy has failed as it does not challenge the large corporations and big farmers driving our emissions up. Many households do not have the resources to access government schemes.

Given the importance of electricity generation in the transition to a carbon free future it cannot be left in private hands. People Before Profit would ban fossil fuel exploration, new data centres and begin nationalising major generators of renewable and non-renewable power and integrating them into a reformed and reintegrated ESB Group. We would give the ESB a new not-for-profit mandate to deliver low-cost electricity for all households.



We would also use the State Construction Company to directly retrofit all housing in the state to a BER of B2 or above. This will enable rational prioritisation of retrofitting to homes with the worst BER ratings cutting emissions and energy costs for those in energy poverty. We would also introduce free and frequent public transport and invest massively in public transport infrastructure.

**Agriculture** accounts for the highest portion of Ireland's emission but has been given the lowest targets. Most farmers struggle to make a living but 14% of farmers, mainly dairy farmers, earned in excess of €100,000 in 2022. Just one single measure of reducing the size of the dairy herd back to what it was ten years ago would achieve more than 54% of the current 2030 target. Therefore we would cap the size of herds to 200, introduce a voluntary scheme for those with less than 200.

As well as a climate crisis we are facing a more general environmental and biodiversity crisis. The EPA have recently reported that Biodiversity is in serious trouble with almost a third of our EU-protected species and 85 per cent of EU-protected habitats in unfavourable status. Water quality is not meeting the requirements of the Water Framework Directive: nitrate concentrations remain too high in rivers, groundwater, and estuaries. The EPA's recent Urban Wastewater Treatment report highlights that 16 towns and villages discharge raw sewage daily because their public sewers are not connected to treatment plants. Ireland is off track to meet mandatory EU recycling targets set to apply from 2025.

The Citizens Assembly highlighted the State's failure to adequately fund, implement and enforce existing laws and policies. There is an urgent need to implement existing laws and directives which are routinely ignored by government and scale up investment in implementation and enforcement. This has the potential to improve general wellbeing and health by reducing air and water pollution.

### ***To cut emissions, protect our environment and improve public health People Before Profit will:***

- Abolish the carbon tax and instead impose a levy on big polluters;

### **Electricity and Energy**

- Nationalise the energy sector by returning ESB to a not-for-profit status and stop all subsidies to private energy providers;
- Develop a democratic plan to phase out fossil fuels and transition to 100% renewable energy, beginning with a €5 billion public investment in renewable energy;
- Ban fossil fuel exploration and the construction of new fossil fuel infrastructure such as LNG;
- Ensure that the state plays a leading role in pushing for an international Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty to phase out fossil fuels;
- Ban any new data centres and monitor and restrict energy usage by existing data centres;

### **Transport**

- Abolish fares on all public transportation services and publicly contracted commercial services;
- Double capital investment in public transport infrastructure and allocate €500 million towards rapid expansion of bus services;
- Provide free school transport for all who need it;
- Invest in cycling and active travel including in accessible infrastructure such as

- step-free crossings at all junctions and longer pedestrian crossing times;
- Involve disabled people's organisations and disability rights advocates in consultation at all levels;
- Fast track all rail and infrastructure projects. Double capital investment in public transport to reignite and expedite important light rail projects in Dublin; Use billions of euros currently allocated to the Future Ireland Fund for capital investment in implementing the recommendations of the All-Island Rail Review and to build LUAS lines in Cork, Limerick and Galway;
- Support a new feasibility study being carried out into continuing the MetroLink from the city to South West Dublin;
- Abolish charges at Park & Ride facilities and abolish M50 and East Link tolls;

## **Buildings**

- Immediately invest €1 billion in low BER and high energy poverty households for retrofitting;
- Introduce minimum B2 BER standards for the Private Rented Sector.

## **Agriculture**

- Cap dairy herds at 200 cows and introduce a Dairy Herd Reduction scheme for farmers;
- Introduce a Farming for Biodiversity payment for small farmers: promote the transition to regenerative organic tillage and horticulture through providing grants to small farmers and subsidising homegrown plant-based foods at low cost for households;
- End the nitrates derogation: improve water quality.

## **Biodiversity and Environmental Protection**

- Change Coillte's mandate to be solely about promoting biodiversity: ban monocultural Sitka spruce forests, allow only mixed forest or native broadleaf to be planted or rewilded;
- Fund the National Parks and Wildlife Service to ensure the organisations requirements and legal obligations to coordinate the national response to the biodiversity crisis can be fulfilled;
- Develop an ambitious National Nature Restoration Plan;
- Hold a referendum on inserting the rights of nature and the right to a healthy environment into the Constitution;
- Hold a referendum on keeping water in public ownership;
- Invest in water and sewage infrastructure: All wastewater plants and systems, identified as significant sewage pollution sources must be urgently upgraded
- Re-nationalise waste management and collection to allow proper planning of the system, reduce waste and increase recycling; ban single use plastic packaging and excessive packaging at source.

## **Animal Rights**

- Ban hare coursing, greyhound racing, fox hunting and animal testing for botox; ban cruel practices in the pig farming industry & live exports.

People Before Profit has a comprehensive animal welfare policy which can be viewed here <https://www.pbp.ie/policies/animal-welfare-policy-2024/>

## **Making a Difference: Climate Action**

People Before Profit has proposed a number of Bills in the Dail to address the Climate Crisis and stop the use of fossil fuels:

The Petroleum and Other Minerals Development (Amendment) (Climate Emergency Measures) Bill 2018 aimed to prohibit the issuing of licences for exploration of fossil fuels and keep fossil fuels in the ground;

Ban Private Jet Aircraft from Irish Airspace Bill 2023 aimed at banning private jets from Irish airspace and tackle a major source of carbon emissions due to the behaviour of the very rich;

Planning and Development (Climate Emergency Measures) (Amendment) Bill 2023 which aimed to ban any further data centres and the location of LNG facilities in the state;

Prohibition of Fossil Fuel Advertising Bill 2024 which aimed to ban advertising of fossil fuels and fossil fuelled vehicles;

We recently launched a private members' bill to enforce a minimum energy rating for buildings in the private rental sector;

In 2022, a ban on Data Centres in South Country Dublin was proposed by People Before Profit Councillor Madeleine Johansson. The Council agreed to her proposal but the Minister for Housing and Local Government overturned the ban;

Our TDs will continue to fight for the actions we need to radically reduce emissions.

# NO TO WAR, NO TO NATO - DEFEND NEUTRALITY

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***The vast majority of the Irish people support neutrality. But the Irish establishment want to ditch it.***

When our politicians trot off to Washington every St Patrick's Day, they dread being questioned about why they have not joined NATO. The latest move is to try to remove the triple lock so that they are free to send more than 12 Irish troops to fight wars at the beck and call of the US or EU.

This is increasingly dangerous in a world where many Western political leaders are preparing for war. Global military spending is increasing rapidly - according to NATO, its members increased military spending sharply in 2023 to \$1.34 trillion. This military spending means vast numbers of badly needed homes, schools and hospitals are foregone.

We do not want to support any empire. We know that behind all the sweet talk of defending small nations, lies a brutal reality. There is a hierarchy in this world, based on military and economic power. That hierarchy is called imperialism. FF and FG want or remove the triple lock because they want to move from a side line substitute to US imperialism to becoming a full player.

## ***People Before Profit will:***

- Defend Irish neutrality fully and make Ireland a voice for peace and against war;
- End the use of Shannon by the US military;
- Reject any moves to end the triple lock and expose efforts to send Irish troops to fight foreign wars;
- Withdraw from PESCO- This is a commitment to raise defense spending in preparation for joining NATO;
- Withdraw from Partnership for Peace which aligns Ireland with NATO;
- Condemn Russian invasion of Ukraine - call for peace talks rather than supporting EU efforts to intensify war.

# REAL SOLIDARITY WITH PALESTINE

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*Israel is a rogue state, acting like a bloodhound that has been unleashed. It has launched a murderous campaign of genocide against the people of Gaza. It has colonised the West Bank and holds its land in defiance of a UN resolution. It has launched a war on Lebanon, brazenly bombing its people and invading the country. It bombs Iran, Yemen and Syria.*

People Before Profit are totally opposed to the complicity of Western imperialism. The US has supplied Israel with bunker buster bombs, artillery and intelligence co-operation. It is estimated that it has given Israel \$18 billion in military aid since the war in Gaza began. The EU is the second-largest arms supplier to Israel after the US. Ursula Van Der Leyen has openly supported Israel's war. And while it piles on sanctions against Russia over its illegitimate invasion of Ukraine, it refuses to impose any sanction on Israel.

The FF-FG-Green government have no intention of taking any real action. To do so would put them at odds with the Western imperialist alliance to which they aspire to become full members of. It has refused to expel the Israeli ambassador. It supports growing trade links between Ireland and Israel. It has allowed planes to enter Irish airspace carrying weapons for Israel. It pretends to investigate how this occurred but is doing nothing to stop the companies using Irish airspace. One of its Ministers, Pascal Donoghue, even made phone call to re-assure the Israeli government that Ireland would not pass the Occupied Territories Bill.

People Before Profit will be a strong voice for Palestine in the Dáil and on the streets.

## **We will:**

- Expel the Israeli Ambassador & withdraw our diplomatic mission from Israel;
- Push for the Irish government to officially adopt a Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions position on Israel. This would mean that all agencies of the Irish state refuse to have anything to do with Israel;
- Close Shannon airport to US troops. Stop the use of Irish air space to facilitate genocide;
- Pass the Occupied Territories Bill immediately;
- Stop the Central Bank facilitating the sale of Israeli war bonds

# OPPOSE RACISM AND THE FAR RIGHT

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*While they cosy up to the most powerful in the world the political establishment take quite a different attitude when it comes to dealing with the victims of imperialist war, climate change and oppression.*

Asylum seekers have been refused accommodation and forced to live in tents on the streets open to attacks from racists. The government is leaning into the rhetoric of the Far Right to distract attention from their failure to address the housing crisis. It wants to blame asylum seekers for the rise in homelessness. Ministers talk increasingly of tougher border controls, designating more countries as safe so that refugees can be turned back and have signed up to the EU Migration Pact whose sole aim is to make it more difficult for those fleeing persecution and war to enter the EU.

Despite commitments in February 2021, the government has not abolished Direct Provision. DP was designed as a short-term emergency measure but has lasted more than 24 years.

The crises in Irish society were not created by refugees, asylum seekers or migrants. Migrants make a huge contribution to Irish society and without them our hospitals would not function and our buses would not run. Many vital care services would collapse without them.

The Far Right have sought to exploit the continuous neglect of working class communities. They have nothing to offer working people. Indeed they serve the government by deflecting attention from its disastrous policies and aim their attacks at LGBTQI+ people, women, trade unionists and people fighting for democratic rights.

People Before Profit are opposed to racism in all its forms, including Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and anti-Traveller racism. **Travellers** are Ireland's indigenous minority who have lived as a distinct ethnic group but long been subject to massive racist discrimination and bigotry. We are committed to diversity in all its forms. Unlike other parties we have not pandered to the racists. We are completely opposed to the politics of scapegoating minorities and are committed to building movements to oppose racism, the causes of racism and to stand up to the Far Right.

## ***People Before Profit will:***

- Oppose all attacks on refugees and asylum seekers: stop deportations;
- Oppose all forms of racism including anti-traveller racism;
- Ensure International Protection Applicants are not homeless: Use empty public buildings to accommodate all homeless people;
- End Direct Provision;
- Give asylum seekers the right to work;
- Establish an Independent National Housing Agency to oversee the delivery of

safe and culturally appropriate Traveller Accommodation;

- Recognise Travellers ethnic minority status in law;
- Give proper recognition to the qualifications of non-EU migrants;
- Establish a right to family reunification for immigrants who have spent time in Ireland;
- Hold a referendum to repeal the 27th Amendment. Give all children born here the right to citizenship.

# MAKE DRUGS A HEALTH ISSUE: DECRIMINALISE NOW

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*Drug use is one of the most complex issues we face today.*

Drugs have ravaged some of Ireland's poorest communities and led to pain and suffering across society. However, certain drugs – particularly crack cocaine and heroin – are strongly correlated with poverty and social disadvantage. Any effective drugs policy needs to tackle the material causes of these forms of drug taking instead of targeting vulnerable drug users with criminalisation.

People Before Profit favours a radical and harm reduction approach to drug consumption and education rather than criminalisation. That said, we do not favour large corporations taking control of the newly legal drugs market in the way that tobacco and alcohol companies have done. Our policy would involve careful regulation, banning promotion of drug use by commercial bodies and ensuring good quality information is available for users and good quality health services are available for those who have health problems related to drug use, including prescription drugs.

People Before Profit has been to the fore in fighting for a health led approach to drugs. Gino Kenny TD led the campaign to establish a medicinal cannabis access programme. He has introduced a bill in the Dail to decriminalise the possession of 7 grams of cannabis for personal use.

The Citizens Assembly voted overwhelmingly to decriminalise drug use for personal possession and implement a health led approach. Our Bill is a first step in doing this. Anti-drugs laws are anti-people and they have failed.

People Before Profit has taken a principled stand on the drugs issue. We want drug decriminalisation but we acknowledge that decriminalisation alone has limitations. These limitations leave the sale and supply of drugs to the black market. We want more education on drugs and we want support for communities affected by drugs. While the government pays lip service to a health-led approach to drugs, they completely fail to put their money where their mouth is. This is seen in the scandalous underfunding of our Local Drug and Alcohol Task Forces which involve many of those on the frontline assisting people with drug abuse.

We want to stop profiteering from drugs and a state led system for distributing and regulating drug use.



**We will:**

- Immediately legalise cannabis. Promote Not for Profit Cannabis Social Clubs.
- Improve the funding for services and facilities, including Local Drug and Alcohol Task Forces, for drug users and their families, including counselling, occupational therapy, social support and psychotherapy to reduce the reliance on multiple drug prescriptions and illegal drugs;
- Increase funding for a public health educational campaign on drugs;
- Expand the Medicinal Cannabis Access Programme;
- Establish a State run distribution services with high levels of regulation and supervision including proper funding for needle exchange;
- Move towards a strategy of de-criminalisation of drugs. This will allow for drug dependence to be treated as a medical issue rather than as a policing issue.

# AN GHAeilGE

**Léirigh Daonáireamh 2022 go bhfuil laghad mall ag teacht ar an gcéatadán daoine a labhrann Gaeilge sna Gaeltachtaí. Ag an am céanna tá suim forleathan sa teanga ag fás ar fud na tíre. Tá faillí á dhéanamh ag an rialtas ar an nGaeltacht agus níl siad ag cur a ndóthain acmhainní ar fáil do dhaoine ar fud na tíre atá ag iarraidh Gaeilge a fhoghlaim nó atá ag iarraidh an teanga a úsáid go laethúil.**

Tacóimid leis an maoiniú breise atá á éileamh mar chuid de ‘Plean Fáis - Plean Infheistíochta don Ghaeilge agus don Ghaeltacht 2024-29’

**Chuirfeadh an Pobal Seachas Brabús chun cinn na polasaithe seo a leanas:**

## Oideachas:

- Cinnteoigh muid go mbeidh oideachas lán Ghaelach réamhscoil, bunscoile agus meánscoile ar fáil do gach páiste;
- Tuilleadh dreasachtaí a chur ar fáil do mhúinteoirí lena gcaighdeán teanga féin a fheabhsú;
- Tuilleadh tacaíochta do dhaltaí a bhfuil riachtanais bhreise acu
- Maoiniú a chur ar fáil le haghaidh freastal ar Cholaistí Samhraidh saor in aisce ar feadh trí bliana scoile;
- Ranganna trí Ghaeilge amháin a chur chun cinn i mbunscoileanna.

## An Ghaeltacht

- Acmhainní breise a chur ar fáil d’Údarás na Gaeltachta agus do Roinn na Gaeltachta le haghaidh infheistíochta agus tacaíochta sa Ghaeltacht. Cuirfear an maoiniú seo ar fáil le haghaidh postanna glasa le huasghrádú agus athchóiriú a dhéanamh ar fhoirgnimh, tacú le pleanáil teanga agus le tuarastal chóir a thabhairt d’oifigigh.
- Tacú le soláthar tithíochta sa Ghaeltacht. D’oibreodh an Chomhlacht Tógála Stát in éineacht leis an Údaras, le maoiniú ó cháin Apple.
- Acmhainní breise a chur ar fáil d’Fhoras na Gaeilge agus do Roinn na Gaeltachta le haghaidh infheistíochta agus tacaíochta taobh amuigh den Ghaeltacht.
- €26 breise a chur ar fáil i 2025 do TG4 le cláracha Gaeilge a fhorbairt agus le TG4 a thabhairt i dtreo an leibhéal céanna maoinithe le S4C sa Bhreatain Bheag.

## Foghlaim na Teanga

- Fóirdheontais a chur ar fáil le haghaidh ranganna Gaeilge to dhaoine fásta ar ardchaighdeán;
- Infheistiú a dhéanamh le haghaidh an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn i measc na ndaoine nach bhfuil Gaeilge acu sna Gaeltachtaí agus sna breac-Ghaeltachtaí. Maoiniú breise a chur ar fáil le rangannaí saor in aisce a chur ar fáil do dhaoine sna ceantracha seo;
- Acmhainní bhreise a chur ar fáil i nGaeltachtaí ina bhfuil teifigh nó lucht iarrtha tearmainn le deis a thabhairt dóibh Gaeilge a fhoghlaim;

## Lipéadú

- Molfar do chomhlachtaí bia agus dí a bheas le díol in Éirinn lipéadú détheangach a úsáid agus cuirfear rialúcháin i bhfeidhm (go háirithe do chomhlachtaí a bhfuil tarmchasaídh ard acu) mura bhfuil sé seo déanta ar bhealach substantúil taobh istigh den chéad dá bhliain den rialtas nua.

# PROMOTING THE IRISH LANGUAGE

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*The 2022 census shows there is a slow decline in the percentage of people who speak Irish daily in the Gaeltacht. At the same time there is a general widespread, rising interest across the country in speaking Irish. The Gaeltacht is being neglected by this Government and they are not providing enough opportunities for those who wish to learn the language or use it on a daily basis.*

We will support the provision of the additional funding requested in the 'Plean Fáis - Investment Plan for Irish language and the Gaeltacht 2024-2029'

**People Before Profit would implement the following policies:**

## **In Education**

- Ensure every child should have access to Irish language education at pre-school, primary school, secondary school;
- Provide more incentives for teachers to improve their own level of Irish;
- Provide additional support to help students with additional needs;
- Fund free access to Coláistí Samhraidh for 3 school years;
- Encourage exclusively Irish only lessons at primary level.

## **In the Gaeltacht**

- Allocate additional resources for Údarás na Gaeltachta and Roinn na Gaeltachta for investment and support in the Gaeltacht. This funding will go specifically to create new green jobs and to upgrade and refurbish existing buildings, support language planning, and to pay officers a fair wage.
- Support the supply of housing in the Gaeltacht. The State Construction Company, using the Apple Tax money, to work in liaison with Údarás.
- Allocate additional resources to Foras na Gaeilge and Roinn na Gaeltachta for investment and support outside of the Gaeltacht.
- Allocate an additional €26 million in 2025 for TG4 to develop Irish language programmes and to move TG4 towards the same funding levels as S4C in Wales.

## **Language Learning**

- Subsidise high quality Irish language classes for adults;
- Invest in promoting the Irish language among those who do not speak the language in the Gaeltachtaí and in particular, in the breac-Ghaeltachtaí (mixed English and Irish speaking areas). There should be extra funding provided so that people can attend Irish language classes for free.
- Allocate resources in Gaeltacht areas with a high number of refugees or asylum seekers to allow them to learn Irish.

## **Labelling**

- Companies producing food and drink goods for sale in Ireland will be encouraged to use bilingual labelling and that regulations will be applied (especially to companies with high turnover) if this is not done in a substantial way within the first two years of the new Government.

# ARTS, CULTURE, SPORTS AND YOUTH SERVICES

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*To flourish people and communities need access the arts, culture and sports and leisure facilities. In order to address the neglect of working class communities we need, amongst other things, investment in youth and community services.*

## **We will**

- Bring the funding for cultural services, broadcasting, and publishing services closer to the EU average of 0.9% of GDP;
- Provide additional funding to the Arts Council to increase the support for the arts and in particular new media art forms such as for computer animation, digital art, and video games, and expand allocation of funding to more artists;
- Make the Basic Income for the Arts pilot scheme permanent & expand the definition of artists to be eligible for funding to include most forms of creative arts;
- Allocate funding to local councils specifically for cultural relevant art-related projects in local communities;
- Open schools and colleges for after-school artistic activities for children and teenagers;
- Open public spaces for use by local arts organisations;
- Increase funding by 50% for sports and recreation projects and services: We will actively work with the key public sports programme providers, such as Sport Ireland and Sport Capital & Equipment Programme, to distribute additional funding to sporting areas that need it the most;
- In particular, we will ensure that the Football Association of Ireland is appropriately funded to support grassroots clubs;
- Provide a basic income scheme for elite amateur athletes, especially those representing Ireland at national level;
- Increase core funding for Youth Work with a substantial increase in 2025 to meet baselines costs;
- Increase support to local community centres;
- Restore Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme funding to at least 2008 levels.

## **Funding public broadcasting**

The TV licence fee is a regressive tax and should be abolished immediately. All advertising and sponsorships should cease to restore and safeguard the integrity of public service media.

The licence fee revenue and advertising and sponsorships income should be replaced with 100% public funding based on new corporate tax levies on the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector and a Big Tech Tax on the profits of the largest ICT companies. These levies should be set at a level to raise at least €1bn, with €500m for RTÉ and €500m going to other public service media e.g. print, local radio, production companies, digital media etc.

We would cap pay to end excessive salaries for the few at the top in RTE, and end bogus self-employment and poverty pay and conditions, underpinned by mandatory trade union recognition. We would democratise RTE and radically reform the current Board to make it representative of RTE's workers and civil society, with Board members subject to recall.

# AGAINST PARTITION - FOR A UNITED IRELAND

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*People Before Profit is a 32 county party with a vision for an Eco-Socialist Ireland.*

We believe that people, North and South, have a right to decide the future of the border and of Ireland as a whole. A Border Poll by simultaneous votes North and South of the border should be held to determine the future of this island.

But a border poll is not enough. Historically, partition cemented the domination of the Catholic Church in the South and a repressive sectarian state in the North – giving rise to what James Connolly correctly predicted would be a “carnival of reaction”. Today, partition remains as a barrier to progress, with an institutionalised sectarianism embodied in the post-conflict Northern state. Successive governments in the North and South have been corrupt, cruel servants of the rich and powerful.

The 32 county struggle for human rights provides a very different vision of Ireland than that cast by the political establishment – these struggles provide a vision for what a United Ireland could be. A vote for Irish Unity is not just a vote to join the existing Northern and Southern states – it would be a vote cast in the hope of a new and better Ireland. People should play an active role in creating their destiny in a United Ireland through a series of citizens assemblies and a constituent assembly to draw up a new constitution enshrining rights and dignity for all.

# EXPAND DEMOCRACY: CUT WASTE AND CORRUPTION

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*The Irish political system has a limited form of democracy.*

Local government has little power. A rotating door operates between the state elite and the private elite, with former politicians becoming lobbyists with access to the inside track of power. Corporations enjoy a 'frictionless relationship' with the top state officials and politicians. The IDA functions as the voice for multi-national corporations within the state apparatus.

One result is a huge squandering of state money as 'risk free' contracts are given out to private businesses. This is the real source of the scandalous waste we have witnessed during the rule of FF and FG. People Before Profit proposes to change all that.

## **We will:**

- Give locally elected councilors more power to make real decisions by reducing the role of CEOs and unelected officials;
- Ban the use of outside consultants, particularly those from accountancy and legal firms that facilitate tax avoidance;
- Remove the veil of commercial secrecy over state contracts and make their terms transparent;
- End the subsidisation of legal corporations by using the state's own legal experts to prosecute cases;
- Ends the revolving door. Ban former Ministers taking up posts as lobbyists.
- Cut the salaries of TDs to the average industrial wage;
- No more waste as in the National Children's Hospital. Impose strict penalties for any cost overruns in state tenders.

*An expanded democracy requires expanded civil liberties.*

## **We will:**

- Repeal the Public Order Act to stop the victimisation of protesters;
- Abolish the Special Criminal Court and defend the right to a jury trial.

# A COUNTRY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE?

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The cost of living crisis, especially the cost of housing, is driving many young people to emigrate. The numbers emigrating this year was the highest since 2015. Nearly 35,000 Irish citizens left. 10,600 people left to live in Australia, up from 4,700 in 2023. This at a time when we need more workers to build homes and staff our schools and hospitals.

Many young people have concluded that this is no country for them. We need radical change to address the Cost of Living and Housing Crisis and encourage our young people to stay.

## ***People Before Profit is committed to:***

- Real rent controls and reductions. We introduced a bill in the Dáil to restrict rent to 25% of income;
- An eviction ban;
- Tougher enforcement of standards in rented accommodation and their retrofitting to save on energy costs;
- A Living Wage of €15 an hour for all;
- Equal pay;
- Ending pay discrimination against those aged under 20;
- Ending low pay for 1st and 2nd year apprentices;
- Paying student nurses;
- Ending discriminatory rates of Jobseekers Allowance for those under 25;
- Ending the scourge of precarious employment: workers should be protected from dismissal from day one in the job;
- A financial penalty for companies over-reliant on temporary contracts;
- Increased enforcement of employment rights including Employment Regulation Orders and Sectoral Employment Agreements: end bogus self-employment;
- Abolishing student fees;
- Controls on the cost of student accommodation;
- Free public transport;

We also want to see increased investment in the Arts, Sport and Youth Services.

- Bring the funding for cultural services, broadcasting, and publishing services closer to the EU average of 0.9% of GDP;
- Increase funding by 50% for sports and recreation projects and services;
- Provide additional funding to the Arts Council to increase the support for the arts and in particular new media art forms such as for computer animation, digital art, and video games, and expand allocation of funding to more artists;
- Make the Basic Income for the Arts pilot scheme permanent;
- Support the Irish Language.

People Before Profit is committed to diversity in all its forms and has and will stand with all those suffering discrimination or who come under attack due to their age, race, sexuality, gender identity or nationality. We have been to the fore in countering the influence of the Far Right and want to build people powered movements to combat