



General Election 2024

Manifesto

Executive summary

Pay

- Negotiate and agree with trade unions a successor pay agreement, with increases in real terms that go beyond inflation, to follow the Public Service Agreement 2024-2026.
- Meaningful engagement on the local bargaining clause to produce outcomes that address the issues affecting grades, groups and categories of public servants.
- Remove the two lowest points, applied in the austerity era, to pay scales for new entrants to the public service.
- Support the reduction in the number of increments on public service pay scales to a maximum of 10 annual increments.
- Remove the FEMPI-era requirement that prohibits new entrants from obtaining incremental credit for relevant prior experience.
- Pay public and civil servants at negotiated overtime rates for every hour worked beyond contracted hours, including where time off in lieu is given, at an amount in line with Article 4.2 of the Revised European Social Charter.
- Replace the minimum wage with a living wage, based on 60% of the median hourly wage, as per the recommendation of the Low Pay Commission and the commitment contained in the 2020 Programme for Government.

A four-day week

- Pilot a four-day working week in parts of the public and civil service, without loss of pay or productivity, to be undertaken in consultation and agreement with the relevant trade unions.

Value for money public services

- Use directly employed public servants to carry out and deliver public services and avoid the outsourcing of duties and services to agency staff, external consultants, and third-party commercial organisations. Negotiation should take place with trade unions in line with the Public Service Agreement where outsourcing is deemed necessary.

Health and social care services

- Fully implement the vision of Sláintecare, including investment in elective-only hospitals for day surgeries and surgical hubs which will ultimately free up beds in general hospitals. Increase investment into community health services, preventative care including health promotion and mental health services.
- Adequately resource the HSE to meet existing and future service demands and the needs of Sláintecare.
- Increase the number of course places in the health and social care professions to increase the supply of Health and Social Care Professionals (HSCPs).
- Establish a structured, fair and sustainable funding model for 'section 39' agencies, to underpin services and ensure fair pay and working conditions for those who are delivering services that would otherwise have to be provided by the State.
- Ensure representation of Health and Social Care Professionals (HSCPs) in the Senior Management Team in the new HSE Health Regions.
- Ensure that all relevant workers who delivered frontline services receive the pandemic special recognition payment (PSRP). In cases where workers are excluded from the PSRP, unions should be allowed to make their case for inclusion (a case-by-case review).
- Commission a third-party review of the implementation of the PRSP to ensure relevant organisations were not excluded from the spirit of the scheme.

Local services and democracy

- Provide adequate investment and independent funding powers for local authorities.
- Fully implement the EU Charter on Local Self-Government, inclusive of the Additional Protocol.
- Support initiatives for directly elected mayors in each local authority.
- Begin the processes required to provide for the return of waste collection services to local authorities, including but not limited to introducing legislative changes to the Waste Management Act 1996.
- Hold an early referendum to ensure that Ireland's water services remain in public ownership and control.
- Negotiate with water workers' trade unions prior to any significant change in arrangements for the delivery of water services.
- Work with unions and other stakeholders to ensure an ongoing role for local authorities in the provision of local services.
- Deliver a large-scale public home-building programme that takes account of accurate existing population and future population projections.
- Support an increase of local-authority-led cost rental public housing.
- Increase local authority direct labour for the delivery and construction of public homes, home energy upgrades, preventative maintenance and effective void management.
- Endorse the holding of a referendum which would establish the constitutional right to housing.

Civil Service

- Amend the industrial relations acts to give civil service workers access to the WRC and Labour Court OR completely overhaul, as a matter of priority, the conciliation and arbitration scheme to modernise the process for dispute resolution, so that civil service workers can have similar recourse to almost all other workers in the state by involving the WRC in the scheme.
- Legislate to modernise the outdated practise of excluding the majority of civil servants from engaging in political activity.
- Engage with unions on issues of serious concern in relation to the Civil Service Regulation (Amendment) Bill 2018.

Education

- Complete the review of the national SNA Contract for the start of the academic year in September 2025.
- Confirm that the new minimum essential qualification for SNAs will be set at QQI Level 6.
- Continue funding the National SNA Training Programme and introduce a funding model for SNAs to access continuing professional development training.
- Provide access to the Single Public Service Pension Scheme for School Secretaries and Caretakers.
- Progressively increase higher and further education funding to OECD average levels over the lifetime of the next government. This includes increased funding for student grants and supports.
- Phase out the student contribution charge over the lifetime of the next government in a move towards the full introduction of publicly funded higher education.

- Confirm a new employment framework for School Completion Programmes, including the introduction of a single employment structure within ETBs and granting of public service status to all those working within School Completion Programmes.
- Implement a job evaluation scheme for Technological Universities and Institutes of Technology, alongside an appropriate funding model to allow this scheme to be fully realised.

Trade union access and recognition

- Introduce legislation that strengthens the legal right to be represented by the relevant union and outlaw the victimisation, harassment or penalisation of staff for joining a union or for organising for better pay and conditions at work.
- Provide workers with the right to access trade union representatives in their workplace so that they can get information on their rights and can talk about workplace issues.
- Provide union representatives with statutory rights which enable them to effectively carry out their duties as representatives during work hours. This includes facilitating meetings during paid work hours.
- Re-introduce tax relief on trade union subscriptions within the first year of government.
- Introduce strengthened legislation to outlaw bogus self-employment arrangements and close loopholes that allow bad employers to exploit staff in this way, while avoiding their duty to contribute through the PRSI and tax system.

Gender equality in the workplace

- Amend Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act and Employment Equality Act to protect employees affected by period or menopause-related symptoms in the workplace.
- Provide free access to hormone replacement therapy (HRT) to alleviate painful and uncomfortable symptoms of menopause.
- Increase the existing statutory provision for paid leave for victims of domestic violence to 10 days.
- Fully implement the Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual & Gender-Based Violence 2022-2026.

Publicly provided childcare

- Deliver publicly provided and publicly funded affordable childcare that is accessible for all families.

Futureproofing society and the workplace

- Deliver increased and sustained investment to create employment in new and emerging green jobs and in training for upskilling in line with current climate and biodiversity plans.
- Increase investment in public transport to ensure workers can access reliable public transport options.
- Negotiate and agree AI policies with trade unions to ensure a smooth and positive adoption of AI.
- Create upskilling programmes designed to boost worker complementarity. These programmes should be targeted at high-risk workers with high exposure and low complementarity.