



Main Social Welfare Changes and Rates of Payments

Budget 2016 – Department of Social Protection

Over €250 million increase in Welfare Support Package for 2016

**Christmas Bonus increases to 75% this December
for long-term welfare recipients – up from 25% in 2014**

**Weekly Pension to increase by €3 for Pensioners and Carers
aged 66 and over from January 2016**

623,000 families to get €5 extra per child per month in Child Benefit

New Paternity Benefit to be launched in 2016

Carer's Support Grant of €1,700 – to benefit 86,000 Carers

**Fuel Allowance to be increased by €2.50 to €22.50 per week
from January 2016**

**Family Income Supplement threshold to increase by €5 per week for
each of the first two children**

Pensioners

- €3 increase per week for Pensioners and Carers aged 66 and over – 583,000 people to benefit.

Christmas Bonus

€197 million to be paid to long-term welfare recipients in December

- A 75% Christmas Bonus will be paid this December to recipients of a long-term Social Welfare payment (minimum payment of €20) – 1.23 million people to benefit.

People in receipt of the following payments will receive the Bonus:

- State Pensions and Widow/Widower's/Surviving Civil Partner's Pensions
- Invalidity Pension, Blind Pension, Disability Allowance, Carer's Allowance Domiciliary Care Allowance and Guardian's payments.
- Long-term Jobseeker's Allowance including Jobseeker's Transition Payment, Pre-Retirement Allowance, One Parent Family Payment, Deserted Wife's Benefit and Allowance and Farm Assist
- Back to Work Allowance, Community Employment, Rural Social Scheme, Tús, Gateway and Job Initiative.

Families with Children

€98 million extra to support Families with Children in 2016

- A new 2 week Paternity Benefit will be launched in respect of births from September 2016.
- Child Benefit will increase by €5 to €140 for each child per month from January.

Child Benefit

Family Size	2015 Monthly Rate	2016 Monthly Rate	2016 Annual Rate	Yearly Increase From 2016
	€	€	€	€
1 child	135	140	1,680	60
2 children	270	280	3,360	120
3 children	405	420	5,040	180
4 children	540	560	6,720	240
5 children	675	700	8,400	300
6 children	810	840	10,080	360

- Families with twins receive one and a half times the normal monthly rate for each child. Families with multiple births receive Child Benefit at double the normal monthly rate for each child.

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- An extra €3 million is being provided towards the School Meals Programme, increasing the funding to €42 million in 2016.

Family Income Supplement

- €18 million extra being provided to increase all Family Income Supplement (FIS) income thresholds by €5 for each of the first two children from January 2016.

Family Size	Current weekly limit €	January 2016 Weekly limit €
1 child	€506	€511
2 children	€602	€612
3 children	€703	€713
4 children	€824	€834
5 children	€950	€960
6 children	€1,066	€1,076

The 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.

Fuel Allowance increase during the current Fuel Season

An extra €2.50 per week on the Fuel Allowance for long-term welfare recipients, increasing the payment to €22.50 per week from January 2016, with 381,000 households to benefit including pensioners, people with disabilities, lone parents and jobseekers.

Older People and People with Disabilities

- €3 increase per week for Pensioners and Carers aged 66 and over.
- €2 increase for qualified adults aged under 66 years and an increase of €2.70 for qualified adults aged 66 years or over – 93,500 to benefit.
- €30 million for Carer's Support Grant (formerly Respite Care Grant) to increase by €325 to €1,700 per year paid to carers for each person being cared for.
- Carer's Allowance to be paid for 12 weeks (currently 6 weeks) from January, after the death of the person being cared for.
- €3 million additional funding to fund Free Travel scheme, increasing the funding to €80 million in 2016.

PRSI – January 2016

- A new tapered PRSI Credit is being introduced for employees insured at Class A whose earnings are between €352.01 and €424 in a week. This Credit will reduce the weekly PRSI bill for over 88,000 employees.
- The lower 8.5% Class A rate of employer PRSI will now apply to weekly earnings up to €376 (up from €356) - 26,000 employers to benefit.

In-Work Supports

- The earnings disregard for Jobseeker's Transitional Payment will increase from €60 to €90 per week from January 2016 for existing and new recipients. All earnings above €90 will be assessed at 50% (currently assessed at 60%).
- Family Income Supplement thresholds to be increased by €5 for each of the first two children per week from January. The threshold for the third and all other children will be €10.
- Increase in top-up payments for Community Employment (CE), Rural Social Scheme (RSS), Gateway, Job Initiative, Tús and JobBridge participants of €2.50 per week from January.

For more information check www.welfare.ie and www.citizensinformation.ie. Telephone the Department of Social Protection on 071-9193302 or 1890 66 22 44 (LoCall) from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. Telephone the Citizens Information Phone Service on 0761 07 4000, 9am - 8pm Monday to Friday. Contact your local Intreo Centre, Social Welfare Office or Citizens Information Centre. The rates charged 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.

<u>Maximum Weekly Rates</u>		Personal Rate		Increase for a Qualified Adult		Qualified Child Increase	
		2015	2016	2015	2016	2015/2016	
		€	€	€	€	€	
<u>Social Insurance Payments</u>							
State Pension (Contributory)							
- Under Age 80		230.30	233.30	153.50 *	155.50 *	29.80	
- Aged 80 and over		240.30	243.30	206.30**	209.00**	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	233.30			29.80	
- Aged 80 and over		240.30	243.30			29.80	
Invalidity Pension							
		193.50	193.50	138.10	138.10	29.80	
Carer's Benefit/Constant Attendance Allowance							
		205.00	205.00			29.80	
		219.00	219.00			29.80	
Jobseeker's Illness/Health & Safety/Injury Benefit							
		188.00	188.00	124.80	124.80	29.80	
Maternity/Adoptive Benefit/Paternity							
		230.00	230.00			29.80	
Death Benefit							
- Under Age 66		218.50	218.50			29.80	
- Aged 66 and under Age 80		234.70	237.70			29.80	
- Aged 80 and over		244.70	247.70			29.80	
<u>Social Assistance Payments</u>							
State Pension (Non-Contributory)							
- Aged 66 and under Age 80		219.00	222.00	144.70	146.70	29.80	
- Aged 80 and over		229.00	232.00			29.80	
Carer's Allowance							
- Under Age 66		204.00	204.00			29.80	
- Aged 66 and over		239.00	242.00			29.80	
Disability Allowance/Blind Pension							
		188.00	188.00	124.80	124.80	29.80	
Widow's/Widower's/Surviving Civil Partner's (Non-Contributory) Pension							
		188.00	188.00			29.80	
One-Parent Family Payment							
		188.00	188.00			29.80	
Pre-Retirement/Deserted Wife's Allowance							
		188.00	188.00	124.80	124.80	29.80	
Jobseeker's Allowance - Aged 26 or over							
- Aged 25		144.00	144.00	124.80	124.80	29.80	
- Aged 18 - 24		100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	29.80	
Supplementary Welfare Allowance - Aged 26 or over							
- Aged 25		186.00	186.00	124.80	124.80	29.80	
- Aged 18 - 24		144.00	144.00	124.80	124.80	29.80	
Farm Assist							
		100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	29.80	
		188.00	188.00	124.80	124.80	29.80	
Living Alone Allowance							
		9.00	9.00			29.80	

<u>Family Income Supplement (FIS)</u>		
Family Size	2015 Income Limit	2016 Income Limit
1 child	€506	€511
2 children	€602	€612
3 children	€703	€713
4 children	€824	€834
5 children	€950	€960
6 children	€1,066	€1,076
7 children	€1,202	€1,212
8 children or more	€1,298	€1,308

The 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.

Other Social Welfare Payments

Guardian's Payment (Contributory)	2015 weekly	€161.00	2016 weekly	€161.00
Guardian's Payment (Non-Contributory)	2015 weekly	€161.00	2016 weekly	€161.00
Domiciliary Care Allowance	2015 monthly	€309.50	2016 monthly	€309.50
Carer's Support Grant	2015 annually	€1,375	2016 annually	€1,700
Widowed or Surviving Civil Partner Grant	2015 - once off payment	€6,000	2016 - once off payment	€6,000
Fuel Allowance	2015 weekly	€20.00	2016 weekly	€22.50

* for those under age 66 years
 ** for those aged 66 or over