



Ageing Better

Putting Older People at the Heart of the Next Government: Priorities for Election 2020

What do the Manifestos Tell Us?

The last Government has failed to adequately plan for our changing population. As a result many older people are in precarious and vulnerable situations, with groups living on an inadequate income and without access to the healthcare, housing or supports that they need.

As the population demographic in Ireland is changing, the next government has both the opportunity and responsibility to create a society where everyone in Ireland has the potential to age well.

During Election 2020, Age Action and Active Retirement Ireland are calling on the next Government to plan sufficiently for an ageing population to ensure that people remain active, engaged, and valued in their communities for as long as feasible, with choice and control over their lives, regardless of their age.

Age Action has reviewed the manifestos published by 31 January of the political parties who had sittings TDs in the last Government, for policy positions most directly relevant to older people. You can read the full manifestos of the political parties by clicking on the name of the party in the top of each column. While the summary is not exhaustive, we hope it helps to inform your vote but we are not promoting one political party over another; how you vote is for you to decide.

If you want to know more about the Ageing Better Campaign by Age Action and Active Retirement Ireland visit <https://www.ageaction.ie/election-2020-campaign-ageing-better-putting-older-people-heart-next-government-joint-initiative-age>

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Benefits & Pension

PENSION	<u>Fianna Fáil</u>	<u>Fine Gael</u>	<u>Sinn Féin</u>	<u>Green Party</u>	<u>Labour</u>	<u>People before Profit</u>	<u>Social Democrats</u>	<u>Aontú</u>
State Pension age	Age increases deferred pending examination by a Pensions Commission (cost €217m)	Age increase to 67 in 2021 and then to 68 in 2028	Return the state pension age to 65 (cost €368m per year)		Maintain the state pension age at 66	Return the pension age to 65	Maintain the state pension age at 66. Consider funding proposals to return the pension age to 65	Maintain the pension age at 66
State Pension payments	Increase the pension by €5 per week every year (cost €710.4m) (total of €25 per week increase by 2025)	Increase the pension by €25 per week over 5 years (by 2025)	Increase the pension by €20 over 5 years (cost, combined with maintaining the free travel scheme: €700m) Establish a Social Welfare Adequacy Commission to provide objective evidence based annual recommendations on adjustments to social welfare rates, to secure a minimum essential standard of living	Set up a new Commission on Tax and Welfare to advise on the reforms needed to prepare Ireland for future macroeconomic, demographic and environmental challenges	Link pension (and all social protection payments) to the cost of living, based on a new national cost of living index, linked to the real cost of living on a modest but sufficient income. Level of increase to be recommend to the Minister by an independent group. Address anomalies faced by pensioners who worked in commercial semi-states. Pass a Principles of Social Welfare Act along lines recently enacted in Scotland, that adopts a rights-based approach and requires officers to maximise the income of recipients and simplify the range of forms. All forms and welfare information must pass a strict standard for Plain English	Increase the state pension to €260/week (currently €248.30, an increase of €11.30/wk)	A commitment to end the auction politics on pensions and to link the State Pension either to 35% of the average wage or to increases in public service pensions	
Transition pension	Pay a transition pension for 65 and 66 year olds (cost €150m)	State Transition Pension for those retiring at 66, paid at the higher State Contributory Pension rate (cost €166m) - No labour market activation requirement, no conditionality - Income disregard				Restore the transitional pension scheme from the age of 65		

PENSION	Fianna Fáil	Fine Gael	Sinn Féin	Green Party	Labour	People before Profit	Social Democrats	Aontú
		<p>of €5000 per week (same as last Transition Pension)</p> <p>State Pathway Pension for those retiring at 65, paid at jobseekers allowance rates but with no requirement to seek work or sign on</p>						
State pension system		<p>Introduce the planned Total Contributions Approach (TCA)</p> <p>Introduce autoenrolment (all workers aged 23-60 that earn over €20,000pa automatically enrolled in a pension scheme at the start of their employment. Principles include capped pension scheme charges, matching contributions from the state, rollout over 10 years, opt-out provisions, a choice of products)</p>	<p>Would like to see the rollout of a universal pension for every person based on age and residence, set at a level that proofs against poverty</p>	<p>Support the move to a Total Contributions Approach for calculating eligibility. The allowance for home caring to be at least 20 years over the recipient's lifetime.</p> <p>Merge the contributory and non-contributory State pensions into a universal pension</p> <p>Trial Universal Basic Income (UBI). Work towards the adoption of a universal State pension as part of the UBI proposal</p>			<p>The introduction of a system whereby individuals should be given the flexibility to receive the State Pension earlier or later than 65. The actual pension they receive would be reduced or increased on a cost neutral basis</p>	
Pension schemes: Employer responsibility	<p>Legislate to ensure no solvent company can wind up their pension without permission from the pension authority</p>		<p>Legislate to make it illegal for profitable companies to walk away from their pension commitments</p>			<p>Make legal changes to stop companies closing pension schemes</p>	<p>Legislate to prevent profitable companies from walking away from their pension commitments</p>	
Pension schemes: Other				<p>Progressively limit tax reliefs on pension contributions where a pension fund has already accumulated enough funds to provide a pension of €48,000 per annum</p>		<p>Create a National Pension Scheme to reduce excessive pension industry charges and guarantee pension security</p>		
Free travel	<p>Retain funding to the free travel scheme</p>	<p>Maintain the free travel scheme for all those over 66. Work with operators and NTA so it is available on all publicly licensed bus routes</p>	<p>Maintain the free travel scheme</p>	<p>Retain the Free Travel Scheme for those over-66 and implement measures to counteract the negative impact on the availability of this scheme caused by the privatisation of routes. Particular focus will be</p>		<p>Defend free travel</p> <p>Move to a policy of free public transport for all</p>		

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				placed on increasing access to rural areas				
Other pension benefits						Restore fuel allowance, telephone allowance and Household Benefit package Increase the winter fuel allowance by two weeks	Improve Living Alone Allowance above the CPI rate	
Disability: Payments	Top up payments to people with disabilities by €10 (cost €167.8m)	Increase payments to the disabled by €25 per week over 5 years (€5 per week every year)	Increase the Disability Allowance payment rate to €265/wk				Recognise the extra costs of living for people with disabilities through a specific cost of disability payment Improve financial supports for disabled transport users, reintroduction of a mobility grant scheme	
Carers	Deliver a 'Carer's Guarantee' to provide a core basket of services to carers across Ireland (cost €3.4m)	Increase payments to carers by €25 per week over 5 years (€5 per week every year)	Increase the Carer's Allowance and Benefit rate from €219 to €255 Develop and publish a National Carer's Strategy with a dedicated budget Increase the annual Carer's Support Grant to €2000 (cost €40m) End the 15 hour rule restricting work and study outside the home for carers		Increase the Carer's Allowance income disregard and increase the Carer's Support Grant by €100 Start the process of introducing paid Carer's Leave, in line with the new Work-Life Balance Directive		Modernise the means testing and financial compensation to family carers of people with long term incapacitating disabilities	
Carers		Develop a pension solution for carers that recognises the value of their work					Examine extending the Home Carers' Scheme to pensioners born before 1 September 1946	

Income & Work

WORK	Fianna Fáil	Fine Gael	Sinn Féin	Greens	Labour	PBP	Social Democrats	Aontú
Flexible work	Introduce a right to request flexible working arrangements in legislation	Work with employees and employers to bring in flexible working guidance across the work-force Publish a national strategy on remote working	Legislate to promote greater access to remote working. Ensure employers consider requests to work remotely, with legal protections for workers Establish digital hubs in rural towns, including providing high speed broadband work spaces for local businesses.	Implement the National Broadband Plan and support the development of working from home initiatives in the public and other State services	Introduce a right to flexible working hours where an employer only has to make a reasonable adjustment to allow for them. Implement a National Flexible Working Strategy, including best practice standards for working from home. Give full effect to the new Work-Life Balance Directive (an EU law adopted June 2019) Instruct all public bodies to offer flexible working times within 6 months to employees where feasible, to improve work-life balance and reduce peak traffic congestion. Review the evidence for a shorter working week without loss of pay e.g. 6 hour day, 4 day week.		Establish a Commission to research, trial and set out a pathway to the introduction of a right to flexible work	
Mandatory retirement	Outlaw contracts that require retirement at age 65		Legislate to end mandatory retirement and allow workers to work beyond 65 if they choose	Eliminate outdated mandatory retirement laws and push for a flexible approach to retirement options.	Provide an incentive for employers to end compulsory retirement at 65 in employment contracts, and allow people to work to the pension age or longer		Align the retirement age with the pension age and adjust employment contracts accordingly	
Working past 65/66	Encourage employers to facilitate employees who wish to work beyond the age of 65	Engage with employers to allow people to stay in work longer should they wish to do so Enable people to defer receipt of the state contributory pension on an annual basis to include			Employers will not have to pay employers PRSI for workers aged over 65, for the lifetime of the next government			

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		<p>actuarial increases on payment.</p> <p>Facilitate those without a full social insurance record to continue making PRSI payments beyond pensionable age</p>						
Lifelong Learning		<p>Ingrain a culture of lifelong learning within the workforce. Focus on increasing the lifelong learning rate from 9% currently to 18% by 2025. Examine the feasibility of using the National Training Fund to help workers fund lifelong learning</p>			<p>Implement a right to lifelong learning. Give employers incentives to ensure all employees have access to in-work training and opportunities</p> <p>Create a Future Work Commission and implement a Future Jobs Strategy. The Future Jobs Strategy will include upskilling and retraining</p>		<p>Investment in lifelong education so that employees can up-skill and re-skill to enrich the workforce and drive their own careers</p>	
Unemployed					<p>Implement the employment strategy for people with disabilities, and develop incentives so employers take on workers with disabilities</p> <p>Align the tax and welfare systems to make it easier for people to return to work while relying on some welfare payments. This will also assist those returning to work who have a disability</p>			
Community Employment Scheme		<p>Ensure people over 62 years of age will be able to remain on a CE scheme until they reach pension age</p>						
							<p>Minimum target of 6% employment rate for people with disabilities for public bodies is fully implemented, and</p>	

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							extended to public sector contractors	

Health/ Medical

HEALTH	Fianna Fáil	Fine Gael	Sinn Féin	Greens	Labour	PBP	SD	Aontú
Medical card	Implement the Budget2020 increase in the income threshold for over 70's	Incrementally increase the threshold for medical cards for people over 70 back to 2012 levels Increase the income limits for medical cards and GP visit cards to take account of wage inflation	Automatic medical card to cancer patients, and any defence forces member who has to leave the force due to a medical condition Increase income thresholds for the medical card Secure medical cards for people with disabilities, immune to changes in household finances or employment status		Free GP care to everyone with a long-term illness or serious disability, if not a Medical Card		Raise the medical card income disregard for people with disabilities who are at work	
Prescription charges	Abolish prescription charges (cost €68m)	Further reduce prescription charges	Abolish prescription charges				Reduce prescription charges for patients	
Sláintecare	Implement the new regional structures proposed under Sláintecare Expand free GP care on the basis of means in line with Sláintecare's goal	Long term financial commitment to deliver Sláintecare.	Fully implement Sláintecare over 10 years (create and Irish National Health Service) Ensure fair, transparent and regionally balanced healthcare planning	Support the Sláintecare plan and commit to adequately funding healthcare reform through that framework, as healthcare demands continue to increase with an ageing population	Redirect health funding so it is aligned to population medical need Redirect funding to local primary care centres to bring health services closer to communities	Provide a universal health service free at the point of delivery, funded by tax and planned by health workers and service users, emphasising prevention and social support Create a network of community primary care centres and provide free GP care for all	Deliver the Sláintecare reform programme. Fully-funded implementation would be an absolute red line for any potential discussions on coalition after the election. Expand diagnostic services, such as x-rays, in local Primary Care Centres to make services more accessible	
Free GP care	Expand free GP care on the basis of means in line with Sláintecare's goals and in alignment with an expansion in capacity	Extend free GP care to carers in receipt of Carer's Support Grant	Roll out free GP care over 5 years. In the first year, 2 free GP visits for all without medical cards/GP visit cards. Expand the threshold for GP visit cards year on year.		Free GP care to everyone with a long-term illness or serious disability, if not a Medical Card	Free GP care for all. Publicly funded online GP service for after hours	Phased extension of free GP Care	
Drug	Reduce the Drug Payment	Reduce the Drug Payment						

HEALTH	Fianna Fáil	Fine Gael	Sinn Féin	Greens	Labour	PBP	SD	Aontú
Payment Scheme: Threshold	Scheme threshold to €100 per month (cost €14.3m)	Scheme threshold to €75 per month Increasing the threshold for medical cards for people over 70 back to 2012 levels						
Drug Payment Scheme: Singles threshold	Reduce the Drug Payment Scheme threshold for single households to €72 per month (cost €8.3m)							
Cost of Medicine		Establish a National Medicines Agency to reduce the cost of medicines and set a fair price for drug reimbursement Implement a National Biosimilars Policy to help patients to access cheaper medicines	Free prescription medicines for all (and abolish prescription charges) (Total combined cost €330m)	Review drug procurement policies to ensure that the Irish taxpayer is getting value for money by switching to generic medicine procurement or 'biosimilars' when practicable	Implement the National Biosimilar Policy Modernise the National Medicines Supply and Pricing Agreement		Reduce the cost of medication to the health service through reform measures	
Safeguarding	Legislate for mandatory reporting by certain professionals where an adult has suffered abuse or harm, or is at risk of doing so							
Advocacy			Legislate for a statutory right to advocacy Legislate for Advanced Care Directives to allow patients to have input into their future care Ratify the optional protocol of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UCRPD)				Fully commence the Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015 Pass legislation including the Disability (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2016 and new legislation on the Deprivation of Liberty Ratify the optional protocol of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	

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							(UCRPD) Full monitoring of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities	
Loneliness	Encourage book clubs for older people to tackle loneliness. Increase funding to libraries and community groups to expand the network of book clubs			Increase funding to address mental health/ isolation issues in rural communities	Review the benefits of social prescribing (linking patients to non-medical sources of support within the community via primary care) and implement the findings			
Physical Activity				Nationwide roll out of successful initiatives run by or in conjunction with Local Sports Partnerships. These include the 'Go for Life Games' which promote physical activity among older people			Expand the number of playgrounds, pools, gyms, parks and green spaces and venues that are universally designed.	
Palliative care		Publish a new Palliative Care Policy for Adults by mid-2021		Palliative care be further expanded, with training in the process of dying and universal palliative care to be required for all clinical, care and ancillary staff				
Other Health	Psychiatry of Later Life teams are running at less than two-thirds of the level recommended: make it a priority to reach a full complement of staff within five years		Abolish the €100 charge for use of Emergency Departments and the €75 per day charge for inpatient care (cost €48m) Explore rolling out a reablement programme Implement a National Dementia Strategy Ensure timely dementia diagnosis, post-diagnosis support and access to a dementia advisor for follow-up support Training throughout health and social care services for		Extend Breastcheck to women aged 65-69 (currently free to women aged 50-64 only) Extend bowel screening to 55-74 (currently for those aged 60-69, offered every 2 years) Increase investment in services that help prevent blindness or loss of hearing		Additional funding for dementia and Alzheimer's services and for palliative care. Roll-out of chronic care programmes such as for asthma and arthritis Remove hospital inpatient charges Implement the National Dementia Strategy (NDS), improving homecare and community supports for people	

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			<p>staff dealing with people with dementia</p> <p>Integrate dementia into the Chronic Disease Management Programme</p>				<p>with dementia, and integrating dementia into the Chronic Disease Management Programme</p> <p>Expand Old Age Psychiatry</p>	

Home help and care

HOME CARE	Fianna Fáil	Fine Gael	Sinn Féin	Greens	Labour	PBP	Social Democrats	Aontú
Home help	5 million additional home help hours (cost €260m)	1 million additional hours of home care this year, and an additional 1 million every year after that (total 5 million in the term of government)	<p>12 million additional home help hours over 5 years to meet growing and unmet need (cost €59m) (2.4m additional hours per year)</p> <p>Increase step down facilities</p>		<p>Provide a home care package to every identified case</p> <p>Further develop individualised budgeting for care services to give recipients autonomy and choice. Increase the funding for personal assistance services</p> <p>Increase funding for home help and respite care.</p> <p>Increase the number of step-down beds</p>	Return to a home-help system organised on a community co-operative basis (not a stop-watch system where carers tag in for each minute)	<p>Abolition of Home Care waiting lists through investment in providing home care packages and step down facilities.</p> <p>Improve homecare and community supports for people with dementia</p>	
Statutory home care	Develop a statutory system of home care	Make home care a statutory right	Introduce a statutory home care scheme	Guarantee a right to 'age in place'. This is comprised of a right to housing and a right to home care.			Introduce a statutory right to Home Care and Personal Assistance	
Home care: Dementia	Ensure that anyone diagnosed with dementia should be allowed to apply for home helps or home care packages, including intensive packages within allocated resources.		Ensure access to dementia-specific home care		Increase funding for dementia home care supports			
Outsourcing	Review the outsourcing of home care so that a wider range of supports become available		Increase the role of the public and not-for-profit sector in the provision of home supports	An urgent review of the private provision of Home Care to people with additional needs				

HOME CARE	Fianna Fáil	Fine Gael	Sinn Féin	Greens	Labour	PBP	Social Democrats	Aontú
Long term care	Develop a national strategy for long term care that includes funding and financing the statutory system of home care	Implement the integrated Care Programme for Older People			Develop an Elder Care Strategy, including new technology and medical devices, and remote access to medical consultation			
GP care in nursing homes	Negotiate a new contract to underpin General Practice for the next 30 years to include issues such as Women's Health Programmes, Out of Hours Services and Services to patients in Nursing Homes							
Fair Deal: Funding & Charges	Increase Fair Deal funding by €225m Ensure no Fair Deal resident is charged for services they do not use			Urgent review of Nursing Home Support (Fair Deal) Scheme and the upgrading, renovation and retrofitting of existing facilities ahead of bed closures Review the Fair Deal Scheme to incentivise people to rent out empty properties			Introduce new legislation to remove the barriers to letting a vacant home under the Fair Deal scheme	
Fair deal: Farmers	Implement the proposed Fair Deal changes for farming families	Implement the Fair deal arrangements for farmers and business owners						
Residential care	Introduce independent appeals process for nursing home providers under the Nursing Home Support Scheme.		Increase the number of nursing home beds by 1,250 over the term of government Ban unfair charges for nursing home residents i.e. medical care that they would get for free if they were in the community					Activate and extend the Financial Contribution Scheme for Older Persons so that older people who want step-down housing in a sheltered housing setting can do so Improve investment in residential care
Disability: Personal assistance/ Rehab/ Independence	Increase personal assistance hours by 1.5m (cost €36.6m)		Increase personal assistant hours by 1.5m (cost€37.5m) Reinstate the Rehabilitative Training			Provide people with disabilities with the right to choose the services which best meet their needs	Extra personal assistant hours and an assistive technology passport. Promote the uptake	

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			<p>Allowance</p> <p>Legislate to require the removal of barriers to independent living e.g. accessible polling stations</p>			Ensure the right of people with disabilities to live as autonomous adults	<p>of adaptation and mobility aids grants to enable independent living for persons with disabilities as too many Councils don't spend their full allocation</p> <p>Fully commence the Disability Act 2005</p> <p>Restore the Rehabilitative Training Allowance</p>	
Home care: Psychiatry	Psychiatry of Later Life teams are running at less than two-thirds of the level recommended: make it a priority to reach a full complement of staff within five years and endeavour to ensure that older people can receive care in their own home							
National Treatment Purchase Fund	Will use the expanded €200m National Treatment Purchase Fund to help cut down on waiting lists that are hampering early assessment and treatment							
Care Services: Other			Increase respite care services by 20%	The continued development of an independent advocacy service for participants in daycare and residential services		Protect wages and conditions for social-care workers and full support for home carers, including proper provision for respite	Provide an adequate amount and adequate quality of respite care	
Medical care at home				Increased numbers of advanced paramedics who could treat patients in their own homes, so that they would not need to come to hospital	Examine introducing a 24-hour phonenumber for minor health queries	Open a mobile doctor's service to ensure that rural people can be seen in an emergency		

Housing

HOUSING	Fianna Fáil	Fine Gael	Sinn Féin	Greens	Labour	PBP	Social Democrats	Aontú
Housing Adaptation grants (HAG)	Increase Housing Adaptation grants by €20m		<p>Double funding for, and improve access to, housing adaptation grants for people with disabilities (cost €57m)</p> <p>Create flexibility in assessment and payment of the grant to allow local authorities to pay a grant above the current grant cap of €30,000, where the need is great.</p> <p>Make the HAG payable to voluntary housing agencies and private landlords who are willing to adapt to the requirements of a long-term tenant with disabilities</p>		Increase funding for housing adaptation grants		<p>Improved funding for housing adaptation grants</p> <p>Put in place a planning infrastructure and a stream of additional supports for People with Disabilities to deal with housing, transport, poverty, health access, and several other areas of concern</p>	
Social Housing	Directly build 50,000 social homes by 2025	Add 60,000 social homes over 5 years	<p>Referendum to enshrine the right to housing in the constitution</p> <p>100,000 public homes over 5 years – note it is unclear how many will be social housing</p> <p>Prioritise the use of public land for delivery of public housing</p>	Prioritise constitutional reform to guarantee a right to housing, starting by calling for a referendum on the issue	<p>Constitutional reform including recognition of the right to housing.</p> <p>Fund the building of 80,000 homes</p> <p>Require local councils to achieve evidence-based targets for specialised forms of housing including accessible social housing for people with a disability</p>	<p>Referendum to enshrine the right to housing in the constitution</p> <p>Build 100,000 council houses over 5 years (cost €14b)</p>	<p>Referendum to enshrine the right to housing in the constitution</p> <p>Build 100,000 homes over 5 years (one third social housing, one third affordable rent, one third affordable purchase)</p>	
Diverse housing		Work to ensure our ageing population has a range of options for living independently, in line with the policy 'Housing Options for Our Ageing Population'	<p>Ensure that a minimum of 7% of all public houses are designed for people with disabilities and fully wheelchair accessible</p> <p>Develop universal design and lifetime adaptability guidelines and regulations so that all new buildings meet the needs of people</p>		Develop and implement a national strategy for age-friendly villages and bespoke retirement villages in larger towns and suburbs so that older people can live independently near shops and services	Implement regulations that ensure all homes and public buildings are accessible and built in accordance with the needs of people throughout their lifespan	<p>Designate developments for older people to be built on small infill sites in cities/ towns, and new estates include a mix of older people's homes</p> <p>Reform planning law</p>	

HOUSING	Fianna Fáil	Fine Gael	Sinn Féin	Greens	Labour	PBP	Social Democrats	Aontú
			with disabilities				to ensure that older persons housing is provided as part of every new development. Designated, purpose built homes would address mobility challenges and safety concerns. Ensure a minimum of 7% of social housing to meet universal design standards, with higher percentages applying for areas of higher need.	

Other

OTHER	Fianna Fáil	Fine Gael	Sinn Féin	Greens	Labour	PBP	Social Democrats	Aontú
National Positive Ageing Strategy			Implement the National Positive Ageing Strategy	Implement the National Positive Ageing Strategy on a whole-of-government basis				
Climate/ Fuel poverty	Ringfence the proceeds of the carbon tax to create a Just Transition fund that will be spent on areas including protecting those on low incomes and tackling fuel poverty	Focus on workers - Just Transition mentioned in relation to workers and communities which may be negatively affected. Carbon tax funds ringfenced for 'climate action, Just Transition and reducing energy poverty' New retrofitting plan to be published in 2020	Focus on peat workers - Establish a Just Transition task force and provide an additional €4m to the Just Transition fund annual budget. No carbon tax increases until there are viable alternatives e.g. public transport and renewable energy	Ensure that the climate action necessary for a bright future does not disproportionately affect vulnerable older people Introduce a mechanism to return all the carbon tax revenues raised to citizens by increasing social welfare payments and tax credits Implement a strategic plan for deep retrofitting of Irish building stock, including financial supports for deep retrofit of private and rented homes based on assessment of the full	Ringfence all receipts from the carbon tax to fund warmer homes, public transport, new sustainable jobs and other measures to reduce hardship caused by the transition to a low carbon economy Focus is on workers - Support the campaign for a Just Transition, including setting up a Just Transition fund and Task Force to invest in businesses that are helping workers and communities to make the transition Provide funding for local government to deliver a	Put a carbon tax on the big polluters, not on ordinary people Create a just transition for workers and farmers Set up a national construction agency to retrofit homes to the highest energy efficiency standards	Establish a Just Transition Task Force Ringfence the income from carbon taxes to fund the retrofitting homes	

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				range of benefits it can unlock. e.g. lower energy bills, increased comfort, avoiding repair costs from damp, reduced health costs, increased property value, the creation of skilled jobs and locking-in reduced carbon emissions for the lifespan of the building.	home insulation scheme to reach 100,000 homes per year			
Digital Skills		Publish a new 10-year governmental strategy on literacy within the first year, and place the support for adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills at the centre of our education policy	A cross-departmental approach to literacy and development of a government strategy to increase literacy and numeracy (does not specifically mention digital, although reading and writing are mentioned)	Develop and implement a strategy for adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills Support digital literacy education for all ages across the country, to allow people of all ages and backgrounds to benefit from IT	Develop a cross-departmental Literacy Ireland Strategy, combining diverse budgets across multiple departments into a single fund		Support national digital literacy programmes targeting children, marginalised groups and older people.	
Broadband	Deliver high speed broadband as currently planned	Rollout the current National Broadband Plan		Implement the National Broadband Plan while exercising all available options to minimise the cost and maximise the use of the new service		Complete the Rural Broadband Rollout through a state-led investment programme. Scrap the existing expensive privatised deal	Explore legal action to retain public ownership of the broadband network, and ensure that quality internet provision is available throughout rural Ireland	
Futureproofing/ Intergenerational			Run a budgetary surplus every year to protect against shocks to the tax base or declining revenue Reduce public debt as a proportion of national income every year	Set up a new Commission on Tax and Welfare to advise on the reforms needed to prepare Ireland for future macroeconomic, demographic and environmental challenges	Develop and implement a road map to ensure the long-term sustainability of the social insurance fund, ensuring the fund remains solvent as the population ages			
Post Offices	Support post office plans to offer a broader range of services including state services. Include a Public Service Obligation to maintain core standards for the post office network	Examine the feasibility of setting up a shared service for the delivery of offline government services		Expand the role of existing post offices and promote the reopening of post offices where they have been closed by increasing the delivery of public services through the network	Expand the role of Post Offices to increase their viability by offering other public services and trialling offering services from community and voluntary bodies	Stop the closure of local post offices and other state facilities Create a local social hub in every town with citizen's advice, a post office, library, tourist information etc		

OTHER	Fianna Fáil	Fine Gael	Sinn Féin	Greens	Labour	PBP	Social Democrats	Aontú
Public Transport	Introduce specific public transport police to ensure a safe experience for public transport users		<p>Make all public transport services fully wheelchair accessible (“Access Ireland Transport”), including replacing non-wheelchair-accessible vehicles and accessibility works to bus stops, bus and train stations and train fleet</p> <p>Use public procurement to promote accessibility in taxi fleets by giving extra weighting to accessibility in taxi contract processes</p>	<p>Provide secure and sheltered waiting spaces in public transport hubs</p> <p>Ensure that all train stations are fully accessible by ringfencing funding for lift repairs and station maintenance and by ending the practice of leaving stations unmanned</p>		<p>Make public transport accessible for all. Equip all stations, stops and vehicles to be genuinely accessible. Train and employ staff to assist access.</p> <p>Move to a policy of free public transport</p>	<p>Make our public and private transport system fully accessible</p> <p>Improve regulations and funding conditions so that access to buses, trains, and taxis is improved for people with disabilities</p> <p>Examine no/low-fare model for public transport</p> <p>Create a new policing unit specifically for Public Transport</p>	
Rural Transport			<p>Double funding for Local Link/ Rural Transport Programme to expand it to more areas and provide more evening transport for socialising</p> <p>Increase capital and PSO funding for Bus Éireann and Iarnród Éireann to increase transport services in rural areas</p>	Expand the Rural Transport Programme and supplement it with more scheduled bus services		<p>Establish a rural bus company that would act as a taxi service for rural people without cars. Make all current buses wheelchair-friendly</p> <p>Provide a high-speed rail service joining cities and towns from Cork to Donegal</p>	Increase funding for Local Link to €100m and seek to improve this over time	
Crime against the elderly	Increase penalties for crimes committed against the elderly							
Funeral poverty		Research into the cost of bereavement and funeral poverty in Ireland (partnership with Irish Hospice Foundation)						
Pedestrians				<p>Provide more zebra crossing to prioritise walking as a way of getting around</p> <p>Introduce new regulations to reduce the waiting time</p>				

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				to a maximum of 30 seconds for pedestrian signal times and ensure that all pedestrians have adequate time to cross the road				
Mobile	Ensure all parts of the country have quality mobile phone coverage							
Arts Access				Develop multipurpose accessible venues nationwide to accommodate both daytime and night-time cultural and creative activities				
Veterans					Create a National Veterans Policy. Support the implementation of the Veterans' Strategy (Dept of Defence Dec 2018), and the establishment of an Office for Veterans Affairs			
Poverty					Restore the Combat Poverty Agency. The agency will help government develop economic and social policies that reduce poverty and economic inequality			
Property tax	No increase in property taxes		Abolish the local property tax					
Car Insurance						Create a public not-for-profit car insurance company	End discrimination against drivers of older cars	