



A STRONGER IRELAND

National Policy Framework • First Edition

Éire Láidir means “Stronger Ireland”

A policy framework for resilience, opportunity and a stronger future for Ireland.

THE VISION

BUILDING A STRONGER, MORE RESILIENT IRELAND

Éire Láidir proposes a programme of national capacity-building built around ten initial priorities. The common principle is to use existing Irish institutions, infrastructure and public assets more strategically, while attracting private capital where that can accelerate delivery and protect the public interest.

1 NATIONAL INSURANCE

Vhi + An Post • lower costs

2 ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

An Irish Plan B

3 ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

Nuclear power & strategic generation

4 DEVELOPMENT BANKING

ICC & ACC functions

5 FOOD SECURITY & DISTRIBUTION

National food network • strategic reserves

6 PUBLIC SAFETY & PUBLIC SPACES

Tackling persistent anti-social behaviour

7 PUBLIC EXPENDITURE REFORM

Reducing waste • protecting frontline services

8 MANAGED MIGRATION, INTEGRATION & CONTRIBUTION

Controlled immigration • strong integration

9 BRINGING IRELAND HOME

Retain young people • bring back skilled Irish talent

10 MANAGED MIGRATION, RESIDENCY & EMPLOYMENT

Employer responsibility • lawful, contribution-based migration

THE PRINCIPLE

Lower costs • build national assets • strengthen resilience • protect the public interest

01 NATIONAL INSURANCE — VHI + AN POST

The proposal is to explore a new State-owned insurance platform built around existing Vhi capability and the nationwide physical network of An Post.

THE PROPOSAL

- Establish a nationally owned insurance group or partnership structure, subject to insurance, competition and State-aid requirements.
- Use Vhi's existing insurance expertise and capital base as a foundation.
- Use An Post's nationwide branch network as an accessible customer and service channel.
- Assess health, travel, life, property, motor and other appropriate insurance products where commercially and legally viable.
- Target a 10–15% reduction in insurance costs for participating households and businesses, where actuarial modelling supports the target.
- Retain and reinvest appropriate surpluses within the State-owned group.

INDICATIVE INVESTMENT

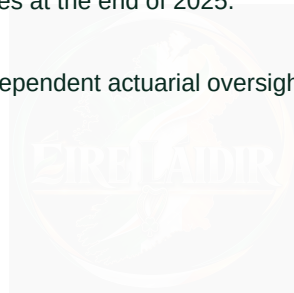
Approximately €1 billion

WHY IT MATTERS

Vhi reported €1.972 billion of gross earned premium and €1.040 billion of capital and reserves for 2025, with a €71.2 million surplus after tax. An Post reported 879 post offices at the end of 2025.

SAFEGUARDS

The model would require robust governance, independent actuarial oversight and compliance with applicable insurance and competition rules.



02 ECONOMIC & MONETARY RESILIENCE — AN IRISH PLAN B

Ireland should maintain a structured contingency programme for economic disruption, including disruption arising from changes within the European economic and monetary environment.

THE PROPOSAL

- Commission an independent legal opinion on the scope for a domestically issued digital payment instrument within Ireland's EU and euro-area obligations.
- Assess possible structures: payment instrument, tokenised deposit, private digital money, State-backed instrument or another legally permitted form.
- Model consumer and business use for bills, groceries and other transactions without destabilising currency fragmentation.
- Establish strict convertibility and consumer safeguards if a model were legally permissible.
- Develop contingency plans for payment-system disruption, banking stress and loss of international payment access.

LEGAL / FEASIBILITY POSITION

The euro is Ireland's currency. A separate Irish sovereign currency cannot be presented as an existing legal loophole.

DIGITAL IRISH POUND

Explore whether an Irish digital monetary instrument could legally and economically operate alongside the euro, with work focused on legal analysis, monetary stability, convertibility, taxation, consumer protection and cybersecurity.

CONTEXT

The ECB is separately developing a potential digital euro. Any Éire Láidir feasibility study should distinguish the Irish concept from that project.



03 ENERGY INDEPENDENCE — NUCLEAR POWER

The proposal is to place firm, reliable generation capacity at the centre of a long-term Irish energy-security strategy, with nuclear power examined as a potential major component alongside renewables, storage and interconnection.

THE PROPOSAL

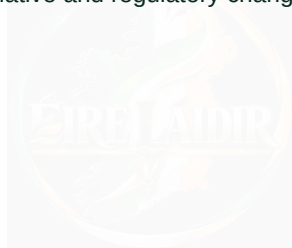
- Commission a national nuclear feasibility programme covering small modular reactors and larger proven reactor technologies.
- Examine potentially suitable Bord na Móna lands and other sites, subject to independent geological, environmental, planning, water, grid and safety assessments.
- Explore a privately financed and operated model in which international energy companies provide capital and technical capability.
- Use long-term power purchase agreements or comparable contracts to provide revenue certainty where appropriate.
- Require independent nuclear safety regulation, transparent consultation and full waste and decommissioning provisions.
- Assess construction, engineering, skilled employment, grid investment, research and long-term electricity impacts.

INDICATIVE INVESTMENT

Approximately €5 billion for the initial programme

LEGAL POSITION

Ireland's current Electricity Regulation Act contains a prohibition on providing for nuclear fission for electricity generation. A nuclear programme would therefore require legislative and regulatory change.



04 NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT BANKING — ICC & ACC

The proposal is to recreate the functions historically associated with the Industrial Credit Company (ICC) and Agricultural Credit Corporation (ACC), focused on productive finance for Irish businesses and agriculture.

THE PROPOSAL

- Establish a modern national development-finance institution or institutions drawing on the historical ICC and ACC models.
- Provide term lending, working-capital facilities, equipment finance and development finance to viable SMEs.
- Create specialist agricultural lending for farmers, farm businesses and agricultural co-operatives.
- Use An Post's national branch network as a customer-access and advisory channel.
- Explore funding partly through State bank-share disposals or other State capital resources, subject to confirmation.
- Operate under strong Central Bank, prudential and governance requirements.

INDICATIVE INVESTMENT

Approximately €2 billion; proposed bank-share sale offset of about €0.9 billion; indicative net requirement €1.1 billion.

HISTORICAL RATIONALE

ICC was established in 1933 as a State-sponsored development finance body; ACC was established in 1927 to provide specialised agricultural credit. A modern institution would need to be designed for today's banking, capital, EU and competition rules.





05 NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY & DISTRIBUTION

SUPPLY • STRATEGIC RESERVES • DISTRIBUTION • NATIONAL FOOD NETWORK

Ireland should build greater national capacity in food procurement, storage, distribution and strategic reserves to reduce vulnerability during international supply disruption while supporting Irish farmers, producers and consumers.

THE CORE PROPOSAL

- Create a national food-security and strategic-reserve strategy covering essential food categories.
- Establish a State-owned national food network, subject to independent feasibility, valuation, competition and regulatory assessment.
- Expand the network from approximately 194 to 300 stores, using a mix of new development, acquisition and conversion of existing supermarkets and smaller-format outlets.
- Centralise food procurement across the retail network and State institutional demand.
- Give Irish farmers and Irish food manufacturers preferred access where competitively available and consistent with procurement rules.
- Maintain a rotating 90-day strategic reserve of essential food categories.
- Develop emergency logistics arrangements for fuel shortages, port disruption, extreme weather and cyber incidents.

1. NATIONAL FOOD NETWORK

The model proposes acquisition of an existing national supermarket operating platform and distribution infrastructure, including appropriate stores, logistics, systems and property or lease interests. The objective is to create national purchasing scale while operating in the public interest.

- Operate with a 1% State profit ceiling, with remaining verified efficiency gains intended to be passed through as lower prices.
- Use long-term Irish supplier contracts where competitive and commercially viable.
- Centralise purchasing and distribution to reduce duplication and improve supply-chain resilience.

2. INITIAL CAPITAL REQUIREMENT

COMPONENT	CENTRAL ESTIMATE
Existing national supermarket network acquisition	€4.0bn
106 additional stores	€1.25bn
Additional distribution infrastructure	€0.50bn
Automation, IT and fleet	€0.25bn
Transaction/integration costs	€0.30bn
90-day strategic food reserve	€2.50bn
INDICATIVE TOTAL	€8.80bn



05 NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY & DISTRIBUTION

NETWORK SCALE • CONSUMER SAVINGS • STRATEGIC RESILIENCE

3. 300-STORE NETWORK

The additional 106 stores could combine new construction with acquisition or conversion of existing supermarkets and smaller-format outlets. A blended planning allowance of approximately €12m per additional store gives roughly €1.27bn before any savings from conversions or property reuse.

4. ANNUAL SALES & EFFICIENCY MODEL

MEASURE	YEAR 1	YEAR 5
Annual sales	€5.70bn	€6.17bn
State profit at 1%	€57m	€62m
Estimated consumer efficiency passed through	~€500m	~€539m

5. POTENTIAL EFFICIENCY SOURCES

Bulk supplier purchasing	~€285m/year
Consolidated procurement	~€114m/year
Distribution/logistics efficiency	~€86m/year
Administrative/digital efficiency	~€43m/year
Reduced waste/shrinkage	~€29m/year

6. STRATEGIC FOOD RESERVE

Maintain a rotating 90-day reserve of essential food categories, with minimum stock targets, rotation systems to minimise waste and regional storage capacity where economically justified. Emergency distribution arrangements should cover major supply disruptions.

7. SAFEGUARDS & COMPETITION

- Use competitive procurement and independent oversight to avoid unnecessary crowding out of private enterprise.
- Subject any acquisition or expansion to independent valuation, competition law, financing, planning and regulatory requirements.
- Treat all sales, savings and capital figures as planning assumptions until independently costed and validated.
- Publish annual performance, consumer-price, supplier, reserve and financial data.

IMPORTANT MODELLING NOTE

The efficiency categories may overlap in practice. The model should therefore be treated as a planning range rather than a guaranteed €557m annual saving.

THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Lower food costs • stronger Irish supply chains • strategic reserves
 National purchasing power • greater resilience during disruption



06 PUBLIC SAFETY & PUBLIC SPACES

TACKLING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Éire Láidir believes that public spaces should be safe, accessible and welcoming to residents, workers, families and visitors. The policy focuses on persistent anti-social behaviour, intimidation, harassment, obstruction and serious nuisance — while protecting the right to use public places peacefully.

THE PROPOSAL

- Introduce a new Public Spaces and Community Safety Act to strengthen the legal framework for persistent anti-social behaviour in designated public areas.
- Give Gardaí a clearer statutory power to issue a Public Space Direction where there are reasonable grounds to believe that persistent conduct is causing intimidation, harassment, serious nuisance, obstruction or significant disruption.
- Allow a direction to require a person to stop the specified behaviour and leave the immediate area peacefully, with defined safeguards and time limits.
- Create a clear escalation route for repeat offenders, moving from warnings and recorded interventions to formal directions and, where necessary, court orders.
- Allow courts to impose proportionate exclusion orders for persistent offending in specified locations, with breach treated as a separate offence.
- Support local safety plans involving Gardaí, local authorities, businesses and communities in areas experiencing repeated problems.

KEY PRINCIPLE

The law should target harmful behaviour — not simply a person's presence in a public place.



A CLEARER LAW • STRONGER ENFORCEMENT

PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION & REPEAT OFFENDING

ESCALATING CONSEQUENCES

01

INITIAL INTERVENTION

Warning, identification of the behaviour and a clear instruction to stop where appropriate.

02

FORMAL DIRECTION

For continued or serious behaviour, a written Public Space Direction with a defined area, duration and reason.

03

COURT ORDER

For persistent offending, Gardaí can seek a proportionate court order restricting entry to a specified area.

04

BREACH

Ignoring a lawful direction or court order without reasonable excuse becomes a separate offence, subject to due process.

SAFEGUARDS

- Peaceful presence, lawful protest, ordinary socialising and legitimate use of public spaces will not in themselves constitute an offence.
- Directions must be based on defined statutory grounds and recorded with the reasons for intervention.
- Any exclusion period must be proportionate, time-limited and capable of challenge through the courts.
- Special consideration must be given to children and vulnerable people, with appropriate diversion and support where necessary.
- Independent oversight and published data should be used to monitor the operation of the new powers and prevent misuse.

THE AIM

Safe streets • accountable enforcement • stronger communities • public spaces for everyone



07 PUBLIC EXPENDITURE REFORM

FIVE-YEAR PROGRAMME • REDUCING WASTE, PROTECTING FRONTLINE SERVICES

A structural programme to reduce the cost of running the State through elimination of duplication, agency consolidation, administrative digitalisation, procurement reform and management efficiencies — while protecting frontline public services.

€18 BILLION OF WASTE AND ADMINISTRATION OUT
NOT €18 BILLION OF FRONTLINE SERVICES OUT

1. FIVE-YEAR SAVINGS FRAMEWORK

YEAR	MINIMUM / TARGET	ANNUAL / TARGET SAVING	CUMULATIVE ANNUALISED
Year 1	€7.0bn	€7.0bn	€7.0bn
Year 2	€9.5bn	€9.5bn	€9.5bn
Year 3	€12.5bn	€12.5bn	€12.5bn
Year 4	€15.5bn	€15.5bn	€15.5bn
Year 5	€18.0bn	€18.0bn	€18.0bn

Five-year cumulative effect: €62.5bn

2. YEAR-5 SAVINGS MODEL

Government departments & civil-service administration	€2.0bn
State-agency mergers and abolitions	€1.5bn
HSE administration and management restructuring	€2.0bn
AI and digitalisation of administration	€1.5bn
Procurement and central purchasing	€2.5bn
Consultants, contractors & outsourced administration	€1.5bn
NGO/grant rationalisation	€0.75bn
Local-authority/shared-service consolidation	€1.0bn
State property, accommodation & operating costs	€0.75bn
Duplication of programmes/services	€1.5bn
State bodies' boards, senior management & governance	€0.5bn
Other expenditure/productivity reforms	€1.0bn
TOTAL	€18.0bn



07 PUBLIC EXPENDITURE REFORM

FRONTLINE PROTECTION • HSE • STATE AGENCIES • AI

3. FRONTLINE PROTECTION

- No reduction in essential frontline healthcare staffing as a consequence of the efficiency programme.
- No reduction in Garda frontline capacity.
- No reduction in teachers/SNAs required for classroom delivery.
- No reduction in essential emergency and social-care provision.
- Administrative reductions should be achieved primarily through AI, shared services, natural attrition, redeployment, agency abolition and procurement reform.

4. HSE REFORM

The HSE should consolidate overlapping administrative functions across health regions and associated public bodies. Priority areas include finance, HR, procurement, IT, payroll, scheduling, reporting, documentation, management layers, consultancy and back-office systems. Administrative employees should be offered redeployment into suitable service-support vacancies where possible.

INDICATIVE YEAR-5 TARGET: €2–€3bn annualised efficiency

5. STATE AGENCY RATIONALISATION

Every State agency should undergo a structured review and be classified as: Keep, Merge, Absorb or Abolish. Corporate functions such as HR, finance, procurement, IT, communications and legal services should increasingly operate through shared national platforms.

INDICATIVE YEAR-5 TARGET: €1.5–€2bn

6. AI AND DIGITAL GOVERNMENT

A national AI administration programme should automate repetitive processes including document processing, form checking, appointment scheduling, correspondence, financial reconciliation, procurement comparison, HR administration, payroll queries, routine reporting, translation, grant administration and data entry. The objective is not mass compulsory dismissal: reductions should principally come through natural turnover, retirement, voluntary exits and redeployment.

INDICATIVE YEAR-5 TARGET: €1.5bn



07 PUBLIC EXPENDITURE REFORM

PROCUREMENT • NGO FUNDING • LOCAL GOVERNMENT • STATE PROPERTY

7. PROCUREMENT REFORM

Government should use its purchasing scale through centralised procurement of medicines, medical equipment, vehicles, IT, software, energy, telecommunications, insurance, professional services and other major categories. A national price-comparison system should identify where public bodies pay materially different prices for equivalent goods or services.

INDICATIVE YEAR-5 TARGET: €2.5bn

8. NGO FUNDING REFORM

Every domestically funded NGO should demonstrate measurable benefit to people in Ireland, the number of people served, outcomes, cost per person, administrative costs and whether the service duplicates an existing public service. Organisations providing essential services can continue to receive substantial funding; organisations without measurable domestic benefit or duplicative activity should have funding reduced or discontinued. A €5,000 maximum transition grant could apply where appropriate.

INDICATIVE DIRECT SAVING: €0.5–€0.75bn annually

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT & SHARED SERVICES

Local authorities should retain democratic and frontline functions while shared national systems handle payroll, procurement, IT, HR, legal services, accounting, fleet and property management where economically advantageous.

INDICATIVE YEAR-5 TARGET: €1bn

10. STATE PROPERTY & GOVERNANCE

Create a comprehensive public-property register covering ownership, leases, occupancy, running costs and utilisation. Consolidate offices and reduce unnecessary accommodation costs. Review State boards, board fees, senior management structures and overlapping advisory bodies.

11. IMPLEMENTATION RULES

- Every Department and State body receives a five-year expenditure-efficiency target.
- Every agency must undergo a Keep/Merge/Absorb/Abolish review.
- No new administrative body should be created without demonstrating why an existing body cannot perform the function.
- All major procurement contracts should be benchmarked against national purchasing data.
- Administrative headcount reductions should prioritise natural attrition, retirement, voluntary exits and redeployment.
- AI systems must be subject to appropriate security, privacy, audit and human oversight requirements.
- Annual savings should be independently audited and published.
- Frontline service indicators should be published alongside savings to ensure efficiency reforms do not conceal deterioration in service delivery.



07 PUBLIC EXPENDITURE REFORM

REALISTIC SAVINGS • TRANSPARENCY • DELIVERY

12. REALISTIC SAVINGS RANGE

SCENARIO	YEAR-5 ANNUAL SAVING
Conservative	€12–€13bn
Central / realistic	€14–€17bn
Full reform programme	€18bn

The €18bn figure should be presented as the full-reform target rather than a guaranteed saving solely from administrative cuts. A central case of approximately €17bn by Year 5 is more conservative, with €18bn achievable if procurement, agency rationalisation, AI adoption and duplication reforms are implemented fully.

13. STRONGER ANNUAL TARGETS

YEAR	MINIMUM	REALISTIC	MAXIMUM
1	€7bn	€7bn	€7bn
2	€9bn	€9.5bn	€10bn
3	€11bn	€12bn	€13bn
4	€14bn	€15bn	€16bn
5	€16bn	€17bn	€18bn

Central five-year cumulative saving under this stronger model: approximately €60.5bn.

CONCLUSION

The programme is designed to reduce the cost of running the State rather than reducing essential services. The central objective is to make every euro of public expenditure demonstrate value, eliminate duplication, consolidate institutions, automate repetitive administration and redirect resources toward frontline services and measurable outcomes.

FIVE-YEAR OBJECTIVE

€60–€62.5bn cumulative expenditure savings
≈ €17bn annually in the central case • €18bn under full reform



08 MANAGED MIGRATION, INTEGRATION & CONTRIBUTION

CONTROLLED IMMIGRATION • STRONG INTEGRATION • FAIR CONTRIBUTION

Éire Láidir believes Ireland can remain an open and welcoming country while having a **controlled, properly managed and fair immigration system**.

We have no issue with people coming to Ireland legally to work, build a life and contribute to our society — provided they are properly vetted, respect our laws, make a genuine effort to integrate and, where they are coming for employment, are willing and able to work.

Immigration policy must also recognise Ireland's capacity in **housing, healthcare, education, infrastructure and employment**.

1. PROPER VETTING BEFORE ENTRY

- Identity and passport verification.
- Appropriate criminal-record and security checks, where legally permitted and proportionate.
- Verification of qualifications and employment history where relevant.
- Verification of genuine employment offers.
- Strong checks against fraudulent documentation and misrepresentation.

No shortcuts when it comes to security.

2. BASIC ENGLISH & INTEGRATION

- For appropriate employment-based migration routes, consider a basic practical English requirement before arrival, with reasonable exemptions.
- This should not mean fluency. It should mean enough English to understand workplace instructions, communicate with colleagues, understand health and safety information and deal with everyday situations.
- Provide opportunities for further English-language development after arrival.

3. WORK SHOULD BE AT THE HEART OF ECONOMIC MIGRATION

- Support genuine employment offers and appropriate salary, skills and qualification requirements.
- Require legal employment and taxation.
- Ensure migration responds to genuine economic and labour-market needs.

**MIGRATION SHOULD RESPOND TO GENUINE ECONOMIC NEEDS — NOT
CREATE PERMANENT DEPENDENCY ON THE STATE.**



08 MANAGED MIGRATION, INTEGRATION & CONTRIBUTION

CONTRIBUTION • INTEGRATION • NATIONAL CAPACITY

4. CONTRIBUTION — NOT EXPLOITATION

- People who come here to work should have the opportunity to earn a decent living.
- Strengthen action against exploitative wages and conditions, illegal deductions, passport confiscation, recruitment-fee abuse and false employment promises.
- Employers must not use migration to undermine Irish wages or employment standards.

Migration must never become a source of cheap labour.

5. AN IRISH INTEGRATION AGREEMENT

- Introduce a clearer Irish Integration Plan covering English-language development, employment, Irish laws, civic responsibilities and community integration.
- Expect reasonable progress while providing practical support where people need it.
- Integration is a two-way responsibility: newcomers make the effort to integrate and Ireland provides the opportunity and support to do so.

6. A FAIR CONTRIBUTION MODEL

- Economic migrants should, where able to work, be economically active and contributing to Irish society.
- Focus on employment, tax contribution, skills, self-sufficiency and long-term integration.
- Do not introduce an unrealistic blanket rule that no newcomer can ever receive legitimate State support; lawful entitlements must continue to operate under Irish and EU law.

7. IMMIGRATION LINKED TO NATIONAL CAPACITY

- Annual migration planning should consider housing availability, healthcare capacity, school places, infrastructure and genuine labour-market requirements.
- Regional development, wage levels and persistent skills shortages should also be considered.
- **Ireland must know what level of migration it can realistically accommodate.**

8. FAST-TRACK FOR CRITICAL SKILLS

- Create efficient routes for appropriately qualified workers in genuine and persistent shortage areas.
- Potential priority areas include healthcare, engineering, construction, technology, science, skilled trades and education.
- Fast-track routes would still require appropriate identity, security and employment checks.

08 MANAGED MIGRATION, INTEGRATION & CONTRIBUTION

LONG-TERM CONTRIBUTION • FAIR & FAST PROTECTION SYSTEM

9. A CLEAR PATH TO LONG-TERM RESIDENCE

- People who work legally, pay their taxes, obey Irish law, integrate and make a positive contribution should have a clear and predictable route to longer-term residence where they meet the relevant legal requirements.
- Contribution and integration should matter.

10. INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION — FAIR, FAST & SEPARATE

- Economic migration and international protection must remain separate systems.
- People seeking international protection must not be required to qualify as economic migrants simply because they do not have a job or speak English.
- Ireland must continue to meet its legal and international obligations while ensuring applications are processed fairly, efficiently and as quickly as possible.
- Where a person has no legal basis to remain, the system should provide for lawful and timely return, subject to individual rights and the law.

IMPLEMENTATION & LEGAL SAFEGUARDS

Any new measures should operate within the Irish Constitution, EU free-movement rules, employment law, equality law and Ireland's international protection obligations. Requirements should be proportionate, evidence-based and non-discriminatory. EEA citizens are subject to different free-movement rules from non-EEA nationals, while international protection remains a separate legal framework.

The policy should be independently reviewed using measurable outcomes including employment rates, tax contribution, English-language participation, processing times, exploitation complaints, housing and infrastructure pressures, and integration outcomes.

OUR PRINCIPLE

“Ireland welcomes people who come legally, contribute positively, respect our laws and make Ireland their home.”

Controlled immigration. • Strong integration. • Fair opportunity. • Shared responsibility.

Policy note: This is a political policy proposal. Existing Irish immigration, employment-permit and international-protection rules would need to be reviewed before implementation.



BRINGING IRELAND HOME

RETAIN OUR YOUNG PEOPLE • BRING BACK OUR SKILLED DIASPORA • BUILD OPPORTUNITY AT HOME

OUR APPROACH

Ireland has a huge resource beyond our shores: Irish people who have left to study, work and build careers abroad. Éire Láidir will make bringing Irish people home — and giving young people a reason to stay — a national priority. We will work to create an Ireland where people can build a career, buy or rent a home, raise a family and build a future without feeling that leaving the country is their only option.

1. A NATIONAL “BRING IRELAND HOME” PROGRAMME

- Establish a dedicated programme to actively encourage Irish citizens and Irish-born skilled workers living overseas to return.
- Create a single point of access for employment opportunities, housing information, qualification recognition, tax and financial information, healthcare and education information, and practical relocation support.

2. TARGET OUR SKILLED IRISH DIASPORA

- Establish a **Global Irish Skills Register** allowing Irish professionals abroad to register their expertise and receive information about opportunities at home.
- Priority recruitment could include healthcare, engineering, construction, technology, science, education, skilled trades, finance and research.
- **Bring Irish skills and experience home.**

3. RETURN HOME EMPLOYMENT INCENTIVES

- Work with Irish employers and State agencies to identify positions where experienced Irish workers abroad can fill genuine skills shortages.
- Create a Return Home Employment Programme providing a national jobs portal, direct employer links, recognition of overseas experience, qualification support and relocation assistance where appropriate.

IRELAND SHOULD NOT SIMPLY WATCH ITS PEOPLE LEAVE — IT SHOULD GIVE THEM REASONS TO STAY AND A REASON TO COME HOME.



50 BRINGING IRELAND HOME

RETURNING HOME SHOULD BE SIMPLE, PRACTICAL AND WORTHWHILE

4. MAKE RETURNING HOME EASIER

- Create a **“Welcome Home Ireland”** service to help returning citizens navigate PPS numbers, driving licences, tax, social protection, healthcare, schools and childcare, housing, banking, employment and professional registration.
- Reduce unnecessary administrative barriers and provide clear information before people return.

5. STOP LOSING OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

- The best long-term response to emigration is to make Ireland a place where young people can realistically build their future.
- Link this policy directly to housing supply, affordable homes, apprenticeships and skills, better employment opportunities, regional development, childcare, family support, transport and infrastructure.
- **Young Irish people should not have to leave Ireland simply to afford a home or build a career.**

6. REGIONAL RETURN & OPPORTUNITY

- Encourage employment and investment across Kerry, Cork, Limerick, Galway, Waterford, the Midlands, Border regions and rural Ireland.
- Support remote and hybrid employment, regional enterprise and high-skilled jobs so returning emigrants can build careers while strengthening communities outside the major cities.

7. RETURNING ENTREPRENEURS

- Create a **Returnee Enterprise Programme** for Irish emigrants seeking to start a business, expand an Irish business, bring international investment home, create employment or establish technology and innovation businesses.
- Connect returning entrepreneurs with enterprise supports, finance, skills networks and local development opportunities.



KEEP OUR TALENT CONNECTED TO IRELAND • MAKE RETURNING HOME WORTHWHILE

8. KEEPING OUR YOUNG TALENT

- Leaving Ireland temporarily to study or work abroad should not mean losing that person permanently.
- Create stronger links between Irish students abroad, Irish graduates, Irish employers, universities and industry.
- **Go abroad. Gain experience. Come home when you are ready.**

9. A GLOBAL IRISH TALENT NETWORK

- Build a permanent international network connecting Irish professionals overseas with opportunities in Ireland.
- Promote Irish employment, investment, research partnerships, entrepreneurship, professional networks and both short-term and permanent return opportunities.
- Maintain the relationship with our diaspora rather than only contacting people when Ireland needs skills.

10. A NATIONAL TARGET

- Government should publish an annual Irish Return & Retention Report.
- Measure Irish citizens leaving Ireland, Irish citizens returning, net movement of Irish citizens, skilled returnees, young people retained in Ireland, regional distribution, employment outcomes and relevant housing and infrastructure pressures.
- **What gets measured can be improved.**

11. RETURN HOME FINANCIAL INCENTIVE

- Introduce a targeted, three-year Return Home Incentive for eligible Irish citizens returning after a defined period living and working abroad.
- Consider reduced income tax, enhanced tax credits and/or reduced USC during the initial return period, subject to independent costing.
- Create a Return Home Accommodation Grant to help with initial rental, temporary accommodation or relocation expenses.
- Provide practical support for relocation, professional registration and recognition of overseas qualifications.
- Offer enhanced incentives for returnees entering identified skills-shortage occupations or creating businesses and employment.

12. A TARGETED — NOT OPEN-ENDED — SCHEME

- Eligibility could require Irish citizenship or qualifying Irish-born status and a minimum period living and working abroad.
- Returnees should take up employment, establish a business or enter another qualifying productive activity in Ireland.
- Benefits should be linked to remaining in Ireland for a defined minimum period and complying with normal tax and legal requirements.
- The scheme should be time-limited, independently costed and reviewed annually.

13. BRINGING PEOPLE HOME SHOULD CREATE VALUE

- The objective is to make returning home worthwhile while ensuring the Exchequer receives a measurable economic return.
- Government should publish the cost of incentives alongside the number returning, employment created, tax generated, skills shortages filled, businesses created and regional impact.

OUR PRINCIPLE

**“If you have gone abroad to build your future, Ireland should make it easier
— and worthwhile — to come home.”**

KEEP OUR YOUNG PEOPLE • BRING OUR SKILLS HOME • CREATE OPPORTUNITY AT HOME

POLICY NOTE: Specific tax rates, grants, eligibility rules and targets should be independently costed and assessed for compatibility with Irish, EU and international law before implementation.



ÉIRE LÁIDIR

Managed Migration, Residency & Employment Policy

Standalone policy draft for review — to be considered for inclusion in the main Éire Láidir policy document.

POLICY PRINCIPLE

Come legally. Contribute. Become self-sufficient. Respect Irish law.

Éire Láidir proposes a managed migration system based on lawful entry, contribution, self-sufficiency, strong employer responsibility and firm enforcement. The objective is not to close Ireland to legitimate migration, but to ensure that migration is controlled, sustainable and aligned with the national interest.

1. Social Housing — Citizens First

- Social housing should prioritise Irish citizens and households with a genuine long-term connection to Ireland, subject to constitutional, EU and international legal obligations.
- Eligibility rules should be tightened so that access is based on lawful residency, habitual residency, contribution and genuine housing need.
- Government should review existing allocations and eligibility arrangements to ensure that the social housing system is primarily serving citizens and long-term qualifying residents.

2. Welfare & State Support — Contribution-Based Access

- Access to social welfare should be linked as far as legally possible to lawful residence, habitual residence, employment contribution and genuine need.
- The State should review welfare eligibility for non-citizens and strengthen contribution and residency requirements while respecting EU free-movement rights and international obligations.
- The objective is to ensure that Ireland's welfare system remains sustainable and is not a primary incentive for migration.



3. International Protection & Return

- Ireland should maintain a firm and efficient international-protection process, with decisions made as quickly as practicable.
- Where a person has no legal basis to remain, the State should pursue lawful return arrangements promptly and effectively.
- Government should expand voluntary-return supports, including practical assistance and, where appropriate, travel arrangements, while maintaining lawful enforcement procedures.
- The policy objective is a functioning system where protection is provided to those entitled to it, while unsuccessful claims do not result in indefinite residence.

4. NGO & State Funding Review

- All State funding provided to organisations working in migration, accommodation, integration or international protection should be subject to transparent contracts, measurable outcomes and independent value-for-money review.
- Funding should not automatically continue simply because an organisation operates in the sector.
- Where services are required, Government should consider direct public provision or competitive procurement where this delivers better value and accountability.

5. Accommodation Support for Temporary Migrants

- For temporary employment migrants, accommodation should be primarily an employer responsibility where the employment arrangement creates a clear housing requirement.
- Where limited State accommodation support is legally available, it should be targeted, time-limited and linked to lawful status and employment.
- Employers recruiting overseas workers should demonstrate that suitable accommodation arrangements are available before workers arrive.

6. Non-EEA Employment Visa — Employer Sponsored

- Non-EEA employment visas should operate on a stronger employer-sponsored model.
- The employer should carry the principal administrative and financial responsibility for the application, including required fees and documentation.
- Employers should provide substantial evidence demonstrating why overseas recruitment is necessary and why suitable candidates cannot reasonably be sourced in Ireland or the wider EEA, where such tests are legally permissible.

7. Employer-Tied Work Visa

- Where legally permissible, employment permission should be tied to the sponsoring employer and approved occupation.
- If employment ends, the worker should have a defined and limited period to secure lawful alternative employment or leave the State, subject to Irish and EU law.
- This would make employers accountable for the workers they recruit and reduce abuse of employment-permit arrangements.

8. Employer-Funded Private Healthcare

- Employers sponsoring temporary non-EEA workers should be required to provide comprehensive private health insurance for the duration of the employment permission, where legally permissible.



- The objective is to reduce avoidable pressure on publicly funded services while ensuring workers have appropriate access to healthcare.

9. Employer-Funded Accommodation Supplement

- Where a low-paid sponsored worker's wages are insufficient to cover reasonable accommodation costs, the sponsoring employer should carry an additional accommodation obligation.
- This could operate through employer-provided accommodation or a regulated accommodation allowance.
- The intention is to prevent low-wage recruitment models from shifting accommodation costs onto the State.

10. Qualification & Credential Verification

- All qualifications relied upon for employment permits should be independently verified where required.
- Verification costs should be borne by the sponsoring employer rather than the Irish taxpayer.
- False qualifications or fraudulent documentation should result in refusal, cancellation of permission and appropriate legal action.

11. Full Criminal-Record Screening

- Employment visa applicants should undergo comprehensive criminal-record and identity checks to the fullest extent legally and practically possible.
- Serious criminal convictions should be assessed as part of the immigration and employment-permission process, subject to Irish law, proportionality and applicable rights.
- Identity verification should be robust and completed before employment begins.

12. Make Recruitment Responsible — Not Closed

- Éire Láidir would not advocate closing Ireland to legitimate overseas workers where there are genuine skills shortages.
- Instead, the system should make recruitment responsible: employers should carry the real financial, administrative and compliance costs associated with overseas recruitment.
- The aim is to encourage employers to recruit and train people already living in Ireland or the EEA where suitable candidates are available.

13. Employer Compliance Penalties

- Employers who breach employment-permit, wage, accommodation, healthcare or immigration rules should face meaningful penalties.
- Repeated or serious breaches should result in loss of sponsorship privileges, financial penalties and prosecution where appropriate.
- Workers should not be punished for an employer's misconduct where they have acted lawfully.

14. A Contribution-Based Immigration Model

- Ireland should move toward an immigration model in which legal migration is sustainable, economically justified and based on clear rules.
- Temporary workers should understand from the outset the conditions attached to their permission, including employment status, accommodation arrangements and the consequences of ending employment.



- People who contribute, work legally and respect Irish law should have a clear and predictable route through the immigration system, consistent with Irish, EU and international law.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Greater employer responsibility for overseas recruitment.
- Less incentive for employers to rely on overseas recruitment where suitable local or EEA workers are available.
- Stronger screening and verification of temporary migrants.
- Reduced pressure on publicly funded accommodation, welfare and healthcare where employer responsibility can lawfully apply.
- A faster, clearer and more enforceable immigration system.
- A migration system designed around contribution, self-sufficiency and the national interest.

LEGAL SAFEGUARD

This is a political policy proposal for review. Any final implementation would need to comply with the Constitution, EU free-movement and employment law, international protection obligations, human-rights law and existing Irish legislation. Where EU or international rules limit national discretion, Éire Láidir would seek lawful reform, negotiated changes or stronger national discretion rather than assuming that existing rules can simply be ignored.



ÉIRE LÁIDIR

POLICY 12 — ELECTORAL HONESTY & POLITICAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Restoring public trust • Transparency in election promises • Accountability for deliberate deception

OUR VISION

Every election, the Irish public is asked to place its trust in political parties and candidates. Voters make decisions based on promises concerning taxation, housing, healthcare, public services, employment and the cost of living. These commitments can influence an election and shape the country for years afterwards.

Yet voters can struggle to establish which promises have been fulfilled, which have been abandoned and why. Éire Láidir proposes a stronger system of electoral transparency and accountability, ensuring commitments are recorded, progress is reported and deliberate deception is subject to appropriate scrutiny.

A promise that cannot be fulfilled is not automatically a lie. But knowingly deceiving voters should never be dismissed as ordinary political campaigning.

1. A National Register of Election Commitments

- Require parties contesting general elections to publish a clear register of their principal election commitments.
- The register should identify the commitment, intended outcome and timeframe, estimated cost where reasonably calculable, proposed funding source, known legal or administrative obstacles, and whether delivery depends on coalition agreements, EU approval or other external decisions.
- Parties should remain free to make ambitious proposals, while voters can understand what is being promised and the conditions attached.

2. An Annual Electoral Accountability Report

- Require the Government to publish an annual report assessing progress against its published election commitments.
- Classify every commitment as delivered, in progress, delayed, modified or abandoned.
- For delayed, modified or abandoned commitments, explain the relevant financial, legal, economic or political reasons and distinguish partial delivery from full implementation.

3. A Duty to Explain Broken Promises

- When a Government abandons a significant election commitment, it should publish a formal explanation to the Oireachtas and the public.
- The explanation should address why the commitment is no longer pursued, what circumstances have changed, whether it was properly costed before the election, what alternatives were considered and what consequences the decision has for the public.
- This would not require delivery regardless of changing circumstances; it would require transparency when commitments that helped secure electoral support are abandoned.

4. Deliberate Electoral Deception



- Independently examine whether Irish law should establish a specific offence relating to knowingly making or publishing materially false factual claims for the purpose of deceiving voters.
- Any offence must be carefully defined and subject to a high evidential threshold.
- The law should distinguish political opinions and predictions; genuine commitments later not fulfilled; inaccurate statements made in error; materially false factual claims made with knowledge they are false; and evidence that a claim was deliberately used to mislead voters.
- Promising to reduce taxes is a political commitment. Claiming that funding has already been secured is a factual assertion that may be verifiable. If the speaker knew the funding had not been secured, that could warrant investigation under appropriately drafted legislation.
- The focus must be deliberate, material deception — not simply a promise that went unfulfilled.

5. An Independent Electoral Accountability Function

- Examine whether An Coimisiún Toghcháin, the Electoral Commission, should receive a defined role monitoring compliance with a new electoral commitments framework.
- Potential responsibilities could include overseeing a public register, publishing independent assessments, receiving complaints, referring matters for investigation where the legal threshold is met, publishing findings where appropriate and reporting annually to the Oireachtas.
- Any expanded powers must be clearly defined in law. The body must remain independent of Government and political parties and must not have unrestricted authority to decide which political opinions are acceptable.

6. A Complaints and Investigation Process

- Allow voters, journalists, candidates and other affected parties to submit evidence of potentially deliberate electoral deception.
- An initial assessment should establish whether a complaint concerns a material factual claim covered by the legislation. Where the threshold is met, evidence may be referred for independent investigation.
- The person concerned must have a fair opportunity to respond. Findings should give reasons and include applicable appeal rights.
- A complaint must not automatically imply wrongdoing. Political disagreement alone should not trigger a formal investigation.

7. Proportionate Penalties

- Penalties should reflect the seriousness of the conduct and the strength of the evidence.
- Measures for consideration include a formal finding or public correction, an obligation to correct a materially false statement, administrative penalties for defined reporting or compliance breaches, and referral for prosecution where a specific criminal offence has been established.
- Criminal penalties should be reserved for clearly defined offences involving serious, deliberate conduct. They should not apply simply because a policy failed, a forecast proved incorrect or a Government changed direction.
- Any enforcement system must include due process, independent decision-making and access to the courts.

8. Protecting Free Speech and Democratic Debate

- Electoral accountability must not become a mechanism for silencing political opposition or allowing those in power to punish critics.
- Protect political opinions and value judgements, reasonable forecasts made in good faith, honest mistakes and corrections, good-faith policy debate, satire, commentary, legitimate journalism and genuine changes in circumstances.
- The standard should apply equally to governing parties, opposition parties, independent candidates and other political actors within the scope of the law.
- No Government should control the process used to determine whether its own election statements were deliberately deceptive.

9. Costing and Feasibility of Election Promises

- Strengthen access to independent costing information before and after elections.
- Parties should be encouraged, and where appropriate required by law, to provide transparent financial assessments for major spending, taxation and economic commitments.
- Independent assessments should identify assumptions, uncertainties and potential funding gaps. An unfavourable costing should not automatically prevent a party presenting its proposal; voters must retain the freedom to assess competing priorities.

10. Public Access and Transparency

- Create a public online portal containing election commitments, Government progress reports, explanations for delayed or abandoned commitments, available independent costings, relevant final findings and annual statistics on compliance and enforcement.
- Information should be presented in plain English, remain accessible and be retained across successive governments.
- Voters should not have to search through years of political speeches to establish what was promised and what happened afterwards.

11. Implementation

- Stage One — Legal review: examine existing Irish electoral law, the Electoral Reform Act 2022, constitutional protections, EU law and relevant international standards.
- Stage Two — Public consultation: consult political parties, legal experts, journalists, civil society, electoral administrators and the public.
- Stage Three — Legislative proposals: prepare legislation establishing the commitments register, reporting requirements, independent oversight and any narrowly defined offence relating to deliberate electoral deception.
- Stage Four — Annual review: publish findings on compliance, investigations, corrections, costs and effectiveness. Review the legislation periodically to prevent misuse and protect democratic debate.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Greater transparency about election promises.
- Clear explanations when significant commitments are abandoned.
- Better information for voters comparing political programmes.
- Stronger incentives for parties to cost and document major proposals.
- A fair process for examining evidence of deliberate electoral deception.
- Greater public access to Government performance records.
- Protection for legitimate political debate and freedom of expression.

OUR PRINCIPLE

“A promise is not a guarantee. But voters deserve honesty about what is promised, transparency about what is delivered and accountability when they are deliberately deceived.”

Political accountability should not end on election day. It should continue throughout the life of a Government.

POLICY NOTE

This is a proposed policy framework. Any new legal duties, offences or penalties would require detailed legal drafting, constitutional review, public consultation and assessment of compatibility with Irish and EU law. Existing statutory provisions and their commencement status should be verified before legislation is prepared.

THE ROAD AHEAD

FROM POLICY IDEA TO DELIVERABLE PROGRAMME

01

INDEPENDENT COSTINGS

Establish the economic, legal, technical and operational case.

02

LEGAL & REGULATORY REVIEW

Identify EU, competition, State-aid, environmental, planning and financial rules.

03

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Hear from households, businesses, farmers, workers and communities.

04

PILOT & TEST

Where practical, test new models before national rollout.

05

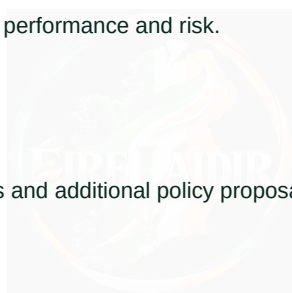
TRANSPARENT OVERSIGHT

Publish annual costs, savings, asset value, performance and risk.

06

SECOND EDITION

Return with detailed evidence, refined costs and additional policy proposals.



STATUS

Éire Láidir Policy Framework — Edition 1

A working document intended to be expanded, independently costed and refined.



ÉIRE LÁIDIR

THE ROAD AHEAD

From policy ideas to a deliverable programme

10 POLICIES • ONE NATIONAL VISION

Independent costings. Legal review. Public consultation.
Pilot programmes. Transparent oversight. Measurable results.

A Stronger Ireland. A Stronger Future.

From ambition to delivery — building an Ireland that works for its people.