

# **BUDGET 2021: Ministers Martin and Chambers announce strong suite of support measures for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media**

From [Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media](#)

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- New €55m support fund for strategic tourism businesses
- VAT on the sector reduced to 9%, will improve competitiveness and viability of businesses
- Hospitality, accommodation and arts businesses impacted by pandemic can get rebates of up to €5,000 a week under new Covid Restrictions Support Scheme (CRSS)
- New €50m support for live entertainment - a range of supports for live entertainment events to take place in 2021 in venues across the country, other measures to support music, and a new grant scheme for equipment
- €130m for the Arts Council – a record level
- Over €78m funding allocation for Gaeltacht and Irish language sector – up €14.8m on initial 2020 allocation
- Funding for TG4 up to €40.733m
- Sport Ireland allocated €104.5m – up €36m

The Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Catherine Martin TD, and Minister of State, Jack Chambers TD, today (October 14) announced details of €1,081,818 gross funding allocated to the Department in Budget 2021, covering a range of robust new funding streams and measures to ensure the survival and recovery of businesses and operations in sectors overseen by the Department.

Minister Catherine Martin said: “The diverse range of sectors served by this Department have been amongst those most severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Employing many hundreds of thousands of our fellow-citizens, right across the country, these are the sectors that thrive when people congregate to enjoy their leisure time together. They were the first to close as a result of the pandemic, and they are likely to be amongst the last to return to full operations in the future. Our Cultural Institutions and theatres, our tourism destinations, pubs and restaurants, our sporting occasions and our Gaeltacht communities have all been severely

hit since March. Many are shut, or are hugely curtailed, yet these activities are the very ones which bring us all joy, and which are crucial for all our physical and mental health.

“This Budget has now put in place a number of substantial measures to support and strengthen these sectors through 2021.

“Of course, we have been in constant dialogue with stakeholders and sectoral representatives throughout the crisis. Together with my officials, I have set up a number of different engagement channels, to ensure that we, as policy-makers, are listening closely to the voice of the cultural practitioner, the hospitality business-owner, the sporting bodies and our Gaeltacht communities. A wide range of targeted and imaginative government supports put in place since March have drawn on this interaction, and have helped sustain activity and employment in these sectors. (Full details are in Appendix.)

“Budget 2021 has been informed by this ongoing strong engagement between my Department and the sectoral representatives. The strong suite of significant measures detailed below is a robust and targeted response to this crisis; it will support resilience and recovery, and will ensure that Ireland will thrive once more on the global stage in the fields of tourism, culture, sport and linguistic heritage, of which we are so proud.

“These are sector-specific measures, and are of course augmented and supplemented by the economy-wide business support and social welfare measures which were announced in the budget, and which my Cabinet colleagues, including Finance Minister Paschal Donohoe, have already gone into further detail.”

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF BUDGET 2021

### Tourism

Objective: To support the tourism industry to grow in a sustainable way

Budget 2021 –Tourism:

- Record level of funding for Tourism overall, increase of €59 million over 2020 allocation
- New €55m business continuity support for strategic tourism businesses. This will see Fáilte Ireland supporting strategic tourism businesses that are key to the recovery of tourism. Combined with the Covid Restrictions Support Scheme introduced by the Minister for Finance this will help sustain many tourism businesses through the pandemic
- VAT on the sector reduced to 9%, will improve competitiveness and viability of businesses
- €5m in focused training for the sector and investment in digitalisation in the sector to start to prepare for post-Covid economy
- Across Government, other supports for Tourism include
  - o Covid Restrictions Support Scheme

- o Rates Waiver Extension
- o A successor to the EWSS beyond March
- o Extension of tax debt warehousing provisions

The total funding for the tourism sector will increase in 2021 by over €59 million over the initial 2020 allocation in Budget 2020 to €220.9 million. The funding will comprise €179.9m in current expenditure and €41m in capital investment.

The Minister is providing for a new business support of €55m for strategic tourism businesses to help them survive through the pandemic and be there to help drive the recovery. Maintaining capacity in strategic sectors of tourism will be vital to our recovery. Combined with the COVID Resilience Support Scheme (CRSS), the VAT cut, the extension of the EWSS, the tax debt warehousing extension, and the rates waiver the Government is helping to sustain businesses who have been most severely affected by the necessary public health restrictions.

She has also provided funding for focused upskilling training for to support business survival and recovery in the sector. In addition, the Budget will fund the improvement of the digital presence and ecommerce capability of tourism businesses. Both of these measures were called for by the Tourism Recovery Taskforce.

Investment in the Tourism Marketing Fund has been maintained to ensure that Ireland is in a position to recover quickly when it is safe for tourists from our key markets.

Minister Martin said “I recently received the Tourism Recovery Plan 2020-2023 which pointed to the need for urgent measures to ensure the survival of tourism businesses while at the same time sowing the seeds of recovery. Budget 2021 delivers on the immediate priorities identified by the Tourism Recovery Taskforce. I am pleased to have secured record additional funding for the tourism budget. This funding will help address the immediate concern of business survival while also looking to the future with focused training and digitalisation supports. Combined with the reduction of the VAT rate, the Covid Restrictions Support Scheme for businesses that have been very severely restricted by the public health measures, and the continued waiver of commercial rates the package of supports for tourism is a significant response to the existential impact of COVID-19.”

Minister Martin added “While tourism is struggling now, it was a driver of recovery in the past and we need to sustain core capacity in the industry to enable it to recover again.”

## Culture and Arts

Objective: To promote and develop Ireland's world-class artistic and creative strengths at home and abroad, maximising their societal, economic and reputational value for the country

Budget 2021 – Culture and Arts Highlights:

- New €50m support for live entertainment. This will see a range of supports for live entertainment events to take place in 2021 in venues across the country, other measures to support music, as well as a new grant scheme for equipment
- Record level of funding for the Arts Council of €130m
- A €9m increase in funding for Screen Ireland from its initial 2020 allocation to over €30m
- €8m to provide for the transfer of the National Symphony Orchestra to the National Concert Hall

Minister Martin reported that total funding for the culture sector will increase in 2021 by 70% compared with the initial 2020 allocation in Budget 2020. The funding will comprise €270m in current expenditure and €60.7m in capital investment, and reflects an acknowledgement by Government of the devastating impact that COVID-19 restrictions have had on the sector.

For the first time, the Government provides support for live entertainment in the amount of €50m. This will include measures for the commercial entertainment sector for the first time, and will support live entertainment in venues across the country, building on the Stimulus scheme announced in July. It will also see support for activities at community level leading to greater work opportunities for crew and venue workers nationwide. There will be further supports for music, building on the phenomenal demand for support under the July stimulus Music Scheme operated by First Music Contact. A scheme of capital grants for equipment will also operate in 2021. Combined with measures announced by the Minister for Finance, this will provide additional supports to a sector severely impacted by COVID-19.

Arts Council funding is up €50m from its initial 2020 allocation to €130m. This additional investment empowers the Arts Council to help artists, arts workers and arts organisations come through this crisis and play their part in the national recovery. It will ensure that events of the highest quality across all art forms can still reach the public in new and blended ways. This support will protect jobs and it will see thousands of artists enabled to create new work. This year, the Arts Council is providing support to a wider range of stakeholders impacted by the Pandemic. This increase in funding will allow the Arts Council to broaden its reach further and in particular to reach out to workers in the sector, especially those who would not previously have been beneficiaries of support from the Arts Council.

An allocation of €8m is made to the National Concert Hall to allow for the transfer of the National Symphony Orchestra from RTÉ. This will be a significant step towards the objective of enabling the orchestra to be established as a world class orchestra which will, with the NCH, provide a creative and imaginative programme strategy that will greatly enhance the offering of the combined organisation to the public.

Screen Ireland's funding will increase by €9m to €30.1m in 2021. The audiovisual industry has been one of the success stories of 2020, with on-screen success in the form of Normal People, but also its track record in maintaining output in the face of COVID-19. This record allocation will further support Screen Ireland at this critical time. In addition, the extension of the Section 481 regional uplift for an additional year is an important support and will further assist growth in the industry.

Additional capital funding will see progress in the ongoing programme of investment in our capital institutions including at the National Library of Ireland, the National Archives of Ireland and the Crawford Art Gallery.

Decade of Centenaries increased funding to €5m to allow for the appropriate commemoration of the centenary of events leading to the foundation of the State.

Minister Martin said: “100 years on from those events, I am pleased the Government has, in difficult circumstances, kept faith with our artists and creative communities upon whom we rely so much to sustain us through the greatest challenge of our generation.

I am confident that these measures will mean enhanced opportunities for everyone to experience the benefits of our artistic and cultural offerings in the widest sense in 2021.”

## Gaeltacht

Objective: To support the Irish language and to strengthen its use as the principal community language of the Gaeltacht.

### Budget 2021 - Gaeltacht Highlights:

- Over €78m funding allocation for Gaeltacht and Irish language sector – an increase of €14.8m on the initial 2020 allocation
- Total funding of €31.8m for Údarás na Gaeltachta – to help protect client companies from full impacts of Brexit and COVID-19
- First programme funding increase since 2016 for An Foras Teanga
- Funding for TG4 up €3.5m to €40.733m

In line with Programme for Government commitments, Minister Martin and Minister of State Chambers together welcomed the announcement that additional funding of €14.8m will be provided for the Gaeltacht and Irish language sector next year, bringing its funding allocation to over €78m. This represents a year on year increase of 23% on the initial 2020 allocation and includes an increase in Údarás na Gaeltachta’s capital allocation for job creation, taking it to just under €14.5m, thus going beyond a commitment made in Project Ireland 2040. This increase of 45% in Údarás na Gaeltachta’s capital allocation on the 2020 allocation will assist An tÚdarás in protecting its client-companies from the full impact of Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic. The Gaeltacht will also benefit from increased allocations for the statutory language planning process and for community and language supports, in line with the Government’s 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language. Additional funding of over €1.779m will also be provided for cross-border co-operation in the languages sector, thus ensuring that An Foras Teanga will see its first funding increase since 2016 and allowing the southern Government fulfil its financial commitments to the Irish language under the New Decade, New Approach agreement.

And, under the Department's Media vote, funding to TG4 is being increased by €3.5m (including €1m capital) to bring it up to its recommended level of funding of €40.733m.

Details of the increased allocations are provided below:

#### Irish Language Support Schemes (Outside the Gaeltacht)

- An additional allocation of €1m in current funding for the Department's Language Support Schemes outside the Gaeltacht.
- An additional capital allocation of €1.368m for the development of Irish Language Centres across the country, bring to €2m the allocation for this purpose in 2021.

Minister of State Chambers said: "I am delighted to be able to provide an additional allocation of €1m for the Department's Language Support Schemes outside the Gaeltacht. These schemes have contributed greatly to innovative Irish language technology projects in recent years and I look forward to seeing further progress in this area over the coming year, in particular with regard to the popular music radio station targeted at teenage Irish speakers, Raidió Rí-Rá.

"The Government, through Project Ireland 2040, has committed to the development of Irish language centres across the country and the increased capital allocation of €1.368m will drive progress in this area in 2021."

#### Údarás na Gaeltachta

Additional funding totalling €8.132m is being provided to Údarás na Gaeltachta. This includes an extra €2.978m towards administration costs, the indirect result of which will be increased funding from the organisation's own resource income, which is usually diverted towards administration costs, being available in 2021 for job creation, community and language development purposes. An additional €700,000 is also being provided for community development in 2021, building on increases provided in the previous two Budgets. An additional €4.454m in capital funding will leave the organisation with a total capital allocation of €14.45m at its disposal.

#### Community and Language Support Programme

In relation to the Department's Community and Language Supports Programme, - an additional allocation of €507,000 compared to the initial 2020 allocation is being provided. This increased allocation – €329,000 of which is current funding and €178,000 of capital funding - ultimately means an overall allocation of 10.199m under the subhead in 2021.

#### Language Planning Process

In relation to the language planning process, an additional €1.3m is being provided for 2021 over and above the initial 2020 allocation in order to further underpin the development and implementation of language plans both within Gaeltacht regions and nationally. This ultimately means an overall allocation of €5m under the subhead in 2021.

#### Cross Border Co-operation

Additional funding of over €1.779m will also be provided for cross-border co-operation in the languages sector, thus ensuring that An Foras Teanga will see its first funding increase since 2016 and allowing the southern Government fulfil its financial commitments to the Irish language under the New Decade, New Approach agreement. This indicative funding allocation, which is subject to further discussion with the Department for Communities in the north will allow Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster Scots Agency expand their language and cultural programmes to new areas and increase funding, where appropriate, for existing language groups.

## Sport

Objective: To contribute to a healthier and more active society by promoting sports participation and by supporting high performance and the provision of sport

Budget 2021 – Sport Highlights:

- Sport Ireland allocated €104.5m – up €36m
- Dormant Accounts funding for Sport allocation of €10m – up €2m
- Funding for a new round of the Sports Capital Programme

Current funding support for Sport Ireland programmes has been increased by €26.29 million. This funding will enable Sport Ireland to continue to support the sport sector in 2021, including measures such as:

- Increased funding for high performance sport to ensure our athletes are supported to achieve their potential at the postponed Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games
- Increased core grant funding for our sporting bodies to sustain them through the challenging months to come
- Increased funding for Sport Ireland participation programmes including the innovative online resources which have proved so successful this year

The Government also agreed an increase in Dormant Accounts funding for sport of €2 million bringing the total allocation up to €10 million. This funding will target hard-to-reach communities with innovative projects to promote and sustain participation in sport and physical activity for all.

The Government reaffirmed its commitment to developing the Sport Ireland Campus at Blanchardstown with an increased capital allocation of €9.7 million for 2021.

In relation to capital investment in sports projects, the 2021 provision will allow for a new round of the Sports Capital Programme to open for applications shortly with allocations to be made next year. In addition, resources have been provided in 2021 to progress the first projects allocated funding earlier this year under the new Large Scale Sport Infrastructure Fund.

Funding of almost €6m has been allocated in Budget 2021 to meet existing commitments pertaining to Ireland's hosting of the Ryder Cup in 2027 and to fund potential future bids for major events. Such events not only have benefits for sport, they can also contribute to economic growth and have the potential to help in Ireland's recovery from the effects of the COVID19 pandemic.

Minister Chambers said: "This is a very considerable investment in sport and builds on the extensive support package provided to address the Covid challenges to NGBs and clubs in 2020. The funding will increase core grant funding for our sporting bodies to sustain them through the challenging months to come. I know clubs across the country will be looking forward to a new Sports capital programme which will open in near future and the increase in Dormant Accounts funding will promote and sustain participation in sport and physical activity, particularly in hard to reach communities."

"The Government recognises that it is currently difficult to forecast the impact the COVID-19 pandemic will have on Irish sport in 2021. The Government has shown this year that it is prepared to step in to sustain key landmarks in Irish sporting life and the Government and Sport Ireland will continue to engage closely with the sporting bodies to ensure all necessary support is available in 2021."

## Broadcasting and Media

Objective: Setting a Strategic Direction for Public Service Broadcasting and other Media

Budget 2021 - Broadcasting and Media Highlights:

- Funding for TG4 up €3.5m to €40.733m
- Transfer of National Symphony Orchestra from RTE to National Concert Hall

Minister Martin reported that Funding to TG4 is being increased by €3.5m (including €1m capital) to bring it up to its recommended level of funding of €40.733m.

She said: "With both the culture and broadcasting and media sectors now part of my brief, I am pleased that my announcement of the transfer of the National Symphony Orchestra to the National Concert Hall will greatly benefit RTE.

"I recently established the Future of Media Commission jointly with the Taoiseach, which will report to Government on the vision for public service media, and how to ensure a vibrant, sustainable, independent, public service media in the future."

Funding is also being provided to meet the Government's North South commitments under New Decade New Approach. €1m will be available for the Irish language Broadcasting Fund in Northern Ireland for content creation. The provision also includes €100k for RTE and €100K for TG4 for promotion of Irish language broadcasting.

And €839K will be available to the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland in respect of the waiver of the broadcasting levy for the independent radio sector earlier in the year.



Minister Martin concluded by saying: “We are indeed living through what is the worst pandemic in a century. But we must build a stronger country, be resilient and stand by our very sectors that have produced success, talent and given us inspiration in previous recessions. I hope that my department’s measures across sectors will build a bridge into 2021 and beyond, as part of a recovery, as part of a future that overcomes the impacts of the virus.

“I have worked hard with my department for this budget, and secured funds to keep people performing, to keep tourism services alive, to maintain clubs and sports and to further support our Irish language. Now is the time to get those supports working, now is the time to work together. And I look forward to implementing these wide-ranging funds and supports with my Cabinet colleagues in the days and weeks ahead.”

Minister Chambers said: “Sport and Gaeltacht communities are among the sectors worst affected by COVID-19. I am confident the measures and initiatives announced yesterday will enable these sectors to bounce back from the impacts of the pandemic and enable them to grow and develop in 2021. On the Sport side, I am very pleased Budget 2021 underlines this government’s commitment to growing participation in sport through a further round of the Sports Capital Programme as well as the €9.7m increase in funding for the National Sports Campus in Blanchardstown, Dublin 15. We have also committed to supporting our top athletes as they prepare for the rescheduled Olympics next summer. I believe the increased budget secured for the Gaeltacht will be hugely important to help businesses in Gaeltacht communities and to grow the language across the country, while the €3.5m increase for TG4 will ensure the highest quality public service journalism in an era when it is needed most.”