

BUDGET SUMMARY 2011



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Budget Highlights

- * €10 cut to monthly child benefit for all children
- * €20 cut for 3rd child only
- * No adjustment in State pension in 2011
- * Income tax bands and credits to be cut by 10%
- * No-one on the reduced minimum wage will be brought into the tax net
- * Abolishing the income and health levies and replace both with a universal social charge
- * Employee PRSI ceiling removed, increase in the rate for the self employed, higher earning public servants and office holders
- * Litre of petrol to increase by 4 cent from midnight
- * Litre of diesel to increase by 2 cent from midnight
- * No increase in excise on alcohol but a review of the duty for on and off trade to be conducted in 2011
- * Bets placed on the internet by domestic customers to be subject to same level of betting duty as high street betting shops
- * Car Scrappage Scheme introduced last year will be extended for 6 months to end June 2011
- * Reforming Stamp Duty with immediate effect: New flat rate of 1% on all residential property transactions up to €1 million – 2% rate will then apply to amounts above €1 million
- * All households in receipt of fuel allowance will get an additional €40 in view of the recent harsh weather
- * DIRT increased by 2%

INCOME TAX

The following are details of the Budget Statement of 7 December 2010, as made by the Minister for Finance.

The tables below outline the position for 2011.

Tax Credits

Tax Credit	2010 €	2011 €
Single Person	1,830	1,650
Married Person	3,660	3,300
PAYE Credit	1,830	1,650
Widowed Person (without dependant children)	2,430	2,190
One Parent Family Credit	1,830	1,650
Incapacitated Child Credit Max	3,660	3,300
Blind Tax Credit		
Single Person	1,830	1,650
One Spouse Blind	1,830	1,650
Both Spouses Blind	3,660	3,300
Widowed Parent Bereaved in 2010	-	3,600
2009	4,000	3,150
2008	3,500	2,700
2007	3,000	2,250
2006	2,500	1,800
2005	2,000	-
Age Tax Credit		
Single/Widowed	325	245
Married	650	490
Dependent Relative	80	70
Home Carer	900	810

Marginal Rate Relief

Relief (Allowed at the taxpayer's top rate of tax)	2010 € Max	2011 € Max
Employing a Carer	50,000	No change

Standard Rated Reliefs

(Allowed at 20% rate band)

Trade Union Subscriptions

Relief for trade union subscriptions paid is being abolished for 2011 and subsequent years.

Service Charges

Relief on service charges remains unchanged. A maximum of €400 tax relief is granted (at the 20% rate) in 2011 for service charges paid in the year 2010. The relief is being abolished for tax year 2012 and subsequent years.

Relief at 20% tax rate	Allowed in the year	For service charges paid in the year
€400	2010	2009
€400	2011	2010
Nil	2012	2011

Rent Tax Relief

Relief for rent credit will be withdrawn on a phased basis over the next 7 years by reducing the amount of rent that can be relieved at the standard rate of income tax as indicated in the following table.

Tax Year	Single Under 55	Single Over 55	Widowed/ Married under 55	Widowed/ Married over 55
2010	2,000	4,000	4,000	8,000
2011	1,600	3,200	3,200	6,400
2012	1,200	2,400	2,400	4,800
2013	1,000	2,000	2,000	3,600
2014	800	1,600	1,600	3,200
2015	600	1,200	1,200	2,400
2016	400	800	800	1,600
2017	200	400	400	800
2018	0	0	0	0

Claimants who were not renting at 7 December 2010 and who subsequently enter into a rental agreement will not be able to claim relief.

Tax Rates and Tax Bands.

The tax rates remain unchanged at 20% (standard rate) and 41% (higher rate).

The table below sets out the tax rates and bands.

Personal Circumstances	2010 €	2011 €
Single/Widowed without dependant children	36,400 @ 20% Balance @ 41%	32,800 @ 20% Balance @ 41%
Single/Widowed qualifying for One Parent Family Tax Credit	40,400 @ 20% Balance @ 41%	36,800 @ 20% Balance @ 41%
Married Couple one spouse with Income	45,400 @ 20% Balance @ 41%	41,800 @ 20% Balance @ 41%
Married Couple both spouses with Income	45,400 @ 20% with increase of 27,400 max. Balance @ 41%	41,800 @ 20% with increase of 23,800 max. Balance @ 41%

Exemption Limits

The exemption limits for persons aged 65 years and over have been changed as follows:

Personal Circumstances	2010 €	2011 €
Single/Widowed 65 years of age & over	20,000	18,000
Married Couple 65 years of age & over	40,000	36,000

Marginal Relief will continue to apply where income does not greatly exceed the relevant exemption limit.

The above exemption limits are increased by €575 for each of the first two dependent children and by €830 for the third and subsequent children.

Tax Relief at Source – Mortgage Interest Relief

The measures announced in Budget 2010 are unchanged: Qualifying loans taken out before 1 July 2011 will continue to get relief for 7 years. Transitional measures will be provided for qualifying loans taken out between 1 July 2011 and the end of 2013.

Those whose entitlement to relief would, in the absence of this change, expire in 2010 or after, will continue to qualify for relief at the applicable rate up until the end of 2017.

The relief will be abolished completely by the end of 2017.

INCOME TAX

Patent Royalty Income Exemption

As announced in the National Recovery Plan 2011-2014, the tax exemption for income received by an individual or company from a qualifying patent is abolished as is the tax exemption for distributions made by companies from exempt patent income. In line with established practice, abolition takes effect from the launch of the Plan on 24 November 2010.

With the abolition of the exemption from tax for patent royalties, withholding tax will now have to be deducted from all patent royalty payments as required under section 238 TCA except those covered by the EU Interest and Royalties Directive, certain payments of royalties to companies resident in tax treaty countries as provided for in section 242A TCA and those patent royalties covered by the administrative practice referred to in Revenue's Statement of Practice SP-CT/01/10.

UNIVERSAL SOCIAL CHARGE (USC)

The Universal Social Charge (USC), which comes into effect on 1 January 2011, is a tax payable on gross income, including notional pay, after any relief for certain capital allowances, but before pension contributions. Rates on the charge will be 0% below €4,004.

The rates and thresholds of the Universal Social Charge are as follows:

Individual aged under 70 years

USC Thresholds	
	Rate
Income up to €10,036	2%
Income from €10,037 to €16,016	4%
Income above €16,016	7%

Individual aged under 70 years

USC Thresholds	
	Rate
Income up to €10,036	2%
Income above €10,036	4%

LEVIES

The Income Levy and Health Levy are abolished with effect from 1 January 2011.

EMPLOYMENT-RELATED SHARE SCHEMES

New shares purchased on issue by employers

The scheme (section 479 TCA 1997) that provides for a single lifetime income tax deduction of up to €6,350 for an employee who purchases shares in his or her employer company, where those shares are retained for a period of three years without being sold is terminated where shares are subscribed for on or after 8 December 2010.

Approved Share Option Scheme

Tax relief in respect of share options, granted and/or exercised on or after 24 November 2010 (date of publication of National Recovery Plan) under Approved Share Option Schemes has been terminated, including schemes that have already been approved by Revenue. Such share options are now to be treated in the same manner as unapproved share option schemes.

Approved Profit Sharing Schemes

Shares appropriated to employees on or after 1 January 2011 under Revenue approved profit sharing schemes will continue to be exempt from income tax but will be subject to PRSI and the new Universal Social Charge.

Approved SAYE Share Option Schemes

ANY gain on options that are granted and/or exercised under SAYE Approved Share Option Schemes on or after 1 January 2011 will continue to be exempt from income tax but will be subject to PRSI and the new Universal Social Charge.

Share Awards

The treatment of shares and other securities awarded to employees in their employer company, or its parent company, under unapproved share schemes will be brought into the PAYE collection system from 1 January 2011 and will be chargeable to PRSI and the new Universal Social Charge.

Introduction of lifetime limit on lump sum payments

Ex-gratia payments made on or after 1 January 2011 will be subject to a maximum exemption limit of €200,000 taking into consideration any prior tax-free payments (including SCSB deductions) which have been received.

Tax relief for energy efficiency measures

Relief will be given up to a maximum of €10,000 at standard rate for expenditure to make homes more energy efficient. Credit will be given in 2012.

Property Incentive Changes

Section 23 Relief

Changes to the relief for rented residential accommodation (section 23 type relief) are as follows:

- Relief restricted to set-off only against income from the section 23 property
- Any unused relief carried forward beyond 10 year period will be lost
- Where property is sold within the 10 year period, the purchaser will get no tax relief
- Owner-occupier relief is unaffected by these measures
- Where section 23 properties remain unsold as of 30 June 2011, the 10 year period will commence on that day, shortening the period over which relief may be claimed.

Accelerated Capital Allowances

Restrictions are being placed on the amount, and the use of accelerated capital allowances available under the various area and property based tax incentive schemes. The restrictions are as follows:

- Accelerated allowances given under either Case I or Case V of Schedule D in any year, or carried forward into that year, may only be set off against income from the property which gave rise to the allowance. No sideways setting off of these allowances against income from any other property or any other income will be allowed. These measures apply to passive investors only.
- Where capital allowances were given over a seven or 10-year period, any unused allowances carried forward beyond those respective periods will be lost. This measure applies both where the periods have already ended as well as to those where the periods have yet to end.
- Capital allowances given at the standard rate of 4% per annum over 25 years are unaffected by these measures and these changes apply to passive investors only.
- Where capital allowances are given over a period greater than 10 years, this period is now being revised downwards to seven years from the year the allowance was first claimed. Where this seven-year period has already elapsed, any capital allowances which have yet to be given as well as those carried forward to the current year will be lost.

Where the seven-year period has not elapsed, the aggregate of capital allowances not yet given at that time will be reduced by 20% and given over the balance of the seven-year period. In all cases, any capital allowances carried forward beyond the end of the seven-year period will be lost.

Capital allowances given at the standard rate of 4% per annum over 25 years are unaffected by these measures and these changes apply to passive investors only.

PENSIONS

Employee PRSI on pension contributions

From 1 January 2011, employee contributions to occupational pension schemes and other pension arrangements will no longer be exempt from employee PRSI. Such contributions will also be subject to the Universal Social Charge which comes into effect on 1 January 2011.

Employer PRSI on pension contributions

Employer contributions to occupational pension schemes and other pension arrangements are exempt from employer PRSI which would otherwise apply at a rate of 10.75%. The extent of this relief will be reduced by 50% from 1 January 2011.

Contribution limit

The annual earnings limit which (along with age-related percentage limits) determine maximum tax-relievable

contributions for pension purposes is being reduced from €150,000 to €115,000 for 2011. The annual earnings limit for 2010 will also be deemed to be €115,000 for the purpose of determining how much of a pension contribution paid by an individual in 2011 will be treated as paid in 2010, where the individual elects under existing rules to have it so treated.

Maximum allowable pension funds

The Standard Fund Threshold (SFT) is to be set at €2.3 million as on and from 7 December 2010.

A higher threshold may apply if, on 7 December 2010, the capital value of an individual's pension rights drawn down on or after 7 December 2005 (i.e. crystallised pension rights) when added to any uncrystallised pension rights the individual may have, as valued on 7 December 2010, are greater than €2.3 million and lower than €5,418,085 which is the current value of the SFT.

Approved Retirement Funds

The annual imputed distribution in an Approved Retirement Fund (ARF) at 31 December each year is being increased from 3% to 5% in respect of asset values at 31 December 2010 and future years.

Retirement lump sums

With effect from 1 January 2011, the overall life-time limit on the amount of tax-free retirement lump sums that an individual can draw down from pension arrangements is being reduced to €200,000. The excess of retirement lump sum payments over €200,000 will be taxed at the standard income tax rate (currently 20%) up to an amount equal to 25% of the new Standard Fund Threshold (up to €575,000). The excess of retirement lump sum payments over that amount will be taxed at the taxpayer's marginal rate of income tax. Tax free retirement lump sums taken on or after 7 December 2005 will count towards "using up" the new tax-free amount and towards determining how much of a lump sum is to be charged at the standard or marginal tax rate.

Interest relief (section 248 relief)

Tax relief in respect of interest paid on loans taken out to purchase an interest in, or make a loan to a company are abolished for loans taken out after 7 December 2010. Relief for interest paid on existing loans is being phased out over a four year period so that only 75% of the interest paid in 2011, 50% of interest paid in 2012 and 25% of interest paid in 2013 will qualify for relief. For tax years 2014 and subsequent years, the relief will be abolished.

Restriction of Artists' Exemption

The scheme of income tax exemption, which currently applies to the earnings of artists, is being restricted.

For years up to and including 2010, there was no limit on the amount of income on which exemption could be claimed, although the 'high earners' restriction introduced in 2007 and extended in 2010 may limit the amount of an artist's exemption, in cases where gross income reaches €125,000 per annum.

Section 195 TCA is now being amended to limit, for the tax year 2011 and subsequent tax years, the amount of the exempt income to €40,000 per claimant (i.e. per artist) per annum.

RELEVANT CONTRACTS TAX (RCT)

As announced in the Budget Revenue are streamlining and modernising the RCT system. The new system will involve replacement of the current RCT rate of 35% with a two- rate withholding system. This system will involve

- a 20% rate for subcontractors registered for tax with an established compliance record,
- a 35% rate for subcontractors who do not qualify for the 20% rate e.g. not registered for tax.
- The abolition of the monthly repayment system and replacement with an offset system, and
- a move to an e-based system for RCT Principals which will enhance efficiencies within the system.

Details of the new system will be included in Finance Bill 2011.

VAT

There were no changes announced in the Budget.

CORPORATION TAX

3 Year Tax Exemption for Start-up Companies

The 3 year corporate and capital exemption scheme for start-up companies, introduced in 2009 and extended in 2010 has now been further extended to new start-up companies in 2011. However, the scheme is being modified from 2011 so that the value of the relief will be linked to the amount of employers' PRSI paid by a company in an accounting period subject to a maximum of €5,000 per employee. If the amount of qualifying employers' PRSI is lower than the reduction in corporation tax liability otherwise applicable, relief will be based on the lower amount.

Tax exemption for payment to the National Co-operative Farm Relief Services Limited

The exemption from corporation tax in respect of grants or payments made by the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food to the National Co-operative Farm Relief Services Limited is being discontinued from 2011, in line with the recommendation in the 2009 Report of the Commission on Taxation.

CAPITAL GAINS TAX

There were no changes announced in the Budget.

CAPITAL ACQUISITIONS TAX

The Capital Acquisition Tax tax-free thresholds have been reduced by 20% approximately. The new tax-free thresholds apply to gifts and inheritances taken on or after 8 December 2010.

The new tax-free thresholds (after indexation) are as follows:

Group A €332,084	Applies where the beneficiary is a child (including adopted
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	child, step-child and certain foster children) or minor child of a deceased child of the disponer. In certain circumstances parents also fall within this threshold where they take an inheritance from a child.
Group B €33,208	Applies where the beneficiary is a brother, sister, niece, nephew or lineal ancestor or lineal descendant of the disponer.
Group C €16,604	Applies in all other cases.

EXCISES

Mineral Oil Tax (MOT)

The rates for petrol and auto diesel are increased with effect from midnight on 8 December. These increases, when VAT is included, amount to 4 cent on a litre of petrol and 2 cent on a litre of auto diesel.

The new MOT rates are €576.22 per 1,000 litres for petrol and €465.70 per 1,000 litres for auto-diesel.

The rate for aviation gasoline, which is aligned to the petrol rate, and the rates for heavy oil used for non- commercial navigation and flying, which are aligned to the auto-diesel rate, are increased accordingly.

Air Travel Tax

With effect from 1 March 2011, a single rate of €3 per departing passenger will apply. This new rate replaces the existing distance-related rates of €2 and €10.

CAPITAL ALLOWANCES

Energy-efficient equipment

The scheme of accelerated capital allowances for expenditure by companies on certain energy-efficient equipment bought for the purpose of a trade was introduced by Budget and Finance Act 2008 for a three year trial period which ends in 2011. The scheme is being extended for a further 3 years to the end of 2014 at an estimated cost of €2 million in a full year.

Special allowances for the mining industry

Capital expenditure on new machinery and plant for use in mining qualifies for a 20% investment allowance in addition to normal wear and tear allowances. An allowance of 20% of expenditure incurred on exploration is also available in addition to the 100% exploration allowance for such expenditure. These additional 20% allowances are being abolished in respect of expenditure incurred from 1 January 2011 in line with the recommendation in the 2009 Report of the Commission on Taxation.

VRT

The scrappage scheme is being extended to 30 June 2011. The maximum relief will be reduced from €1,500 to €1,250. The original eligibility criteria remain with one small exception. The extended scheme is available to a spouse or civil partner.

The relief due to flexible fuel and hybrid vehicles is

extended for two years. The maximum relief available under the new scheme is €1,500. As before the relief is on a sliding scale depending on the age of the vehicle in accordance with the following table (i.e. reduces as before by 10% per annum).

Age of vehicle	Maximum amount which may be remitted or repaid
New vehicle, first registration	€1,500
Not a new vehicle but less than 2 years	€1,350
2 years or over but less than 3 years	€1,200
3 years or over but less than 4 years	€1,050
4 years or over but less than 5 years	€900
5 years or over but less than 6 years	€750
6 years or over but less than 7 years	€600
7 years or over but less than 8 years	€450
8 years or over but less than 9 years	€300
9 years or over but less than 10 years	€150
10 years or over	Nil

Light commercial vehicles charged VRT based on the EU classification scheme, which would have previously been charged at the Category C VRT rate of €50 will, from 1 January 2011, be charged the Category B rate of 13.3% of the Open Market Selling Price (OMSP).

STAMP DUTY

Reduction in Rate of Stamp Duty on Residential Property Transactions

Consideration	Rate of duty
*First €1,000,000	1%
Excess over €1,000,000	2%

*The lower rate applies to the entire consideration up to €1,000,000 and the current exempt threshold of €127,000 has been abolished.

The new rates apply to instruments executed on or after 8 December 2010.

Transitional arrangements will apply where, as a result of the new rates, a taxpayer is disadvantaged compared to the stamp duty treatment applicable prior to 8 December 2010. The transitional arrangements will apply where an instrument is executed on or after 8 December 2010 and before 1 July 2011 solely in pursuance of a binding contract which had been entered into prior to 8 December 2010.

Reliefs / Exemptions Abolished

Transfer of site from Parent to Child	All reliefs/exemptions abolished in respect of instruments executed on or after 8 December 2010. Exception: Instruments executed on or after 8 December 2010 but before 8 July 2011 in respect of binding contracts entered into before 8 December 2010, where the effect of the abolition would be that the stamp duty payable would be higher than it would have been under the pre-Budget position.
New Dwellinghouses /Apartments with floor area not exceeding 125 sq.m	
New Dwellinghouses /Apartments with floor area exceeding 125 sq.m	
Residential Property first time purchaser relief	
Consanguinity Relief (transfers between certain relatives) in relation to residential properties only	

Farmer Stock Relief

The existing general 25 per cent stock relief for farmers and the special incentive stock relief of 100 per cent for certain young trained farmers are being extended from 1 January 2011 for a further two years subject to clearance with the European Commission under State aid rules.

Farm Pollution Control Relief

The existing scheme of accelerated capital allowances for farmers who incur capital expenditure, before 1 January 2011, on farm buildings and structures for use in the control of pollution is not being extended.

This gives effect to the recommendation made by the Commission on Taxation that this relief should be discontinued.

Normal capital allowances will apply to expenditure incurred on or after 1 January 2011.

PRSI

The employee PRSI ceiling of €75,036 is abolished.

Class S PRSI is increased from 3% to 4%.

The modified PRSI rate for civil servants increases to 4% on incomes in excess of €75,036.

A 4% PRSI charge will apply to certain Office Holders.

Public Service Pension-Related Deduction (PRD)

From 1 January 2011, employee PRSI will apply to the pension-related deduction which is charged to earnings in the public service. The pension-related deduction will also be subject to the Universal Social Charge.

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