



**DISABILITY FEDERATION
OF IRELAND**

DFI General Election Manifesto

An Inclusive Future Prioritises Disability

Disability inclusion isn't optional. It's a priority!

For too long, disabled people have been pushed into poverty, left without access to essential services and experienced barriers to full participation in their communities. Better lives for disabled people delivers better communities, inclusive public spaces and social cohesion.

Ireland can no longer languish at the bottom of EU rankings for disability poverty and the disability employment gap. We cannot continue to have thousands of children on waiting lists for Children's Disability Network Teams.

It's time for a programme for government that takes seriously Ireland's obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, UN CRPD and prioritises addressing these unmet needs.

Key Issues

Our manifesto identifies six key issues.

- 1** **Removing barriers** so people can realise equality and inclusion.
- 2** **End poverty for people with disabilities** and ensure an adequate standard of living.
- 3** Reducing the **extra Cost of Disability** and recognising that disabled people face higher expenses.
- 4** **Improving health and wellbeing** for disabled people.
- 5** **Increasing opportunities to participate** in community life. This includes access to education and decent work.
- 6** Access to disability community **supports and services**.

How do we achieve this?

Swift, focused government action can quickly improve people's lives. The next government can take real steps towards a society that values disabled people, their potential and their value to communities.

To achieve this, **we need a cross departmental approach** to streamline services and ensure no disabled person falls through the gaps at any stage of life.

Below are concrete actions that will progress equality and inclusion for all.

Reform the Disability Act (2005)

To align with Ireland's obligations under the UN CRPD, the Act should reflect current values and strengthen our commitment to people with disabilities.



A Disability Ombudsman

People with disabilities often struggle to secure public services and assert their rights. A Disability Ombudsman, modelled after the Ombudsman for Children's Office, would provide a clear, accessible way to address rights violations.



Cost of Disability

Introduce a recurring Cost of Disability payment in Budget 2026.



Housing

Increase the number of universally designed homes, enhance coordination between housing and social care, and centrally fund roles such as the Disability Housing Advisors and Tenancy Sustainment Officers.



Transport

Invest in accessible public and local transport. Establish a Transport Support Scheme and extend disabled parking badge criteria to better support inclusion.



Employment

Ireland has the highest Disability Employment Gap in the EU. Addressing employment barriers requires better support for job transitions, reasonable accommodations, and reforms to benefits and means testing.



Senior oversight of the National Disability Strategy

Oversight by the Department of the Taoiseach, to ensure cross-departmental coordination and secure full government commitment to the rights of people with disabilities.



Local Authorities

Expand and elevate the role of the Disability Access and Equality Officers to full time positions with appropriate seniority and funding. Establish stable, ongoing funding for inclusive communities.



Sustainable community supports

Provide multi annual funding to the community and voluntary sector, ensuring they can continue delivering essential, disability specific services and supports as per the Disability Action Plan (2024-2026).



With 22% of the country living with a disability, it's time to address the urgent needs in communities across Ireland.

That means electing leaders with a vision for a better Ireland and a new social contract that puts values at its core.

Scan here for our full manifesto:





Key facts and figures

98,799

children aged 14 and under live with at least one disability.



22% of the population of Ireland, or **1,109,557** people, have at least one disability.



14.14%

of People with disabilities live in social housing (by household) compared to **9.97%** of the general population.



34.31% of people with disabilities over 15 years of age are at work compared to **47.71%** of the general population.



All statistics based on Census 2022. cso.ie

Candidates take the Disability Pledge today.

“I pledge to prioritise disability in policy and legislation. I will promote inclusion, social cohesion, and ensure the full and equal participation of disabled people in my constituency and in communities across Ireland.”

Scan here to take the disability pledge:

