UPLIFT PEOPLE POWERED CHANGE

Public Perspectives on a just Tax and Social Welfare System

Submission to the Public Consultation on Tax and Social Welfare

About Uplift

Uplift is a people-powered campaigning community of more than 340,000 people who take coordinated action together for a more progressive, equal, socially just and democratic Ireland. Uplift members come from all over Ireland and have many different experiences and backgrounds.

Uplift members seek to bridge the gap between members of the public and decision makers through powerful technology, events and consultation through surveys for submission such as this one.

Read more at https://www.uplift.ie

About this submission

Uplift members have taken action on issues of gender equality and workers' rights for many years. One of the key defining values of Uplift is deep democracy, and members engage in deep listening and engagement at times of public consultation.

As a community, we welcome the opportunity to share our views and input into this consultation. In this regard, we sent a survey based on the review of the tax and welfare legislation as commissioned by the Tax and Welfare Commission as outlined in the Programme for Government.

We sent the survey to approx 213,374 members with 1,185 taking part - which is more than a representative sample of the Irish population. People from across Ireland shared their experiences of the tax and social welfare system and how this intersects with public services. **This is an above average action rate for a digital action of this kind from Uplift.**

Uplift's overall vision for tax and welfare system

In Ireland, everyone should be able to put food on the table and return to a secure home they can afford in time to enjoy it with their family. But today, the pandemic has brought into sharp focus the scale of inequalities across communities - from our healthcare system, our employment system, to housing and to education. [1]

The sectors most severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic are those where young, migrant, or women workers (including lone parents) make up the majority of the working population. Further to this, nearly 40% of those who lost income are

renters. [2] Not only did the pandemic expose structural inequality present among us, it reinforced and deepened gendered, racialised and class-based inequalities. [3]

We all deserve a fair share of the wealth our work creates. Everyone in Ireland contributes taxes so we can have the country we want. Great healthcare, education, public transport and clean air for everyone are priorities for most people in Ireland. It's so important that we have caring and responsible governments that deliver for us.

When asked what sort of public services they would supportive of to make our tax system fairer, Uplift members responded with:

- **81% [965] o**f respondents want **access to mental health** services when we need it most.
- **80% [957]** of respondents want **accessing public healthcare** without worrying about the cost.
- **79% [944]** of respondents want **a public education system** which allows us all to reach our potential.

No one in Ireland should be forced to live in poverty. In good times and in hard times, we should all have the dignity and security of a roof over our head, food on the table and the essential things we need. Most people believe that when someone needs a bit of help,

- *"We need a national health service based on need, not on ability to pay for private health insurance. We need a fully public education service and private education should be just that - every penny of it privately paid for. Income tax needs to be more progressive and the more you earn the higher tax you should pay. This goes for corporations too - the Googles and Apples etc need to contribute their fair share. I favour the Scandinavian model of high taxes but high quality public services. And housing should be a human right and enshrined in the constitution. Nobody, not Travellers or immigrants or people on low income should have to live in overcrowded substandard accommodation or fear homelessness. We're a rich country. We can afford a decent standard of living for all - it requires political will."* - Isobel
- *"I believe that first and foremost everyone should have access to the basic necessities in life - clean air, fresh water, nutritious food, safe shelter, healthy healthcare and free education. These needs of the people, all people need to be met before the powers that be throw millions at building new roads. Near where I live a huge project to expand and build a new road, flyover and who knows what else is being constructed while people live homeless on our streets. It is just not good enough. They want us to cut down on our car usage and avail of public transport yet they are spending billions on new roads to facilitate all these cars, makes no sense whatsoever".* - Ann-Marie

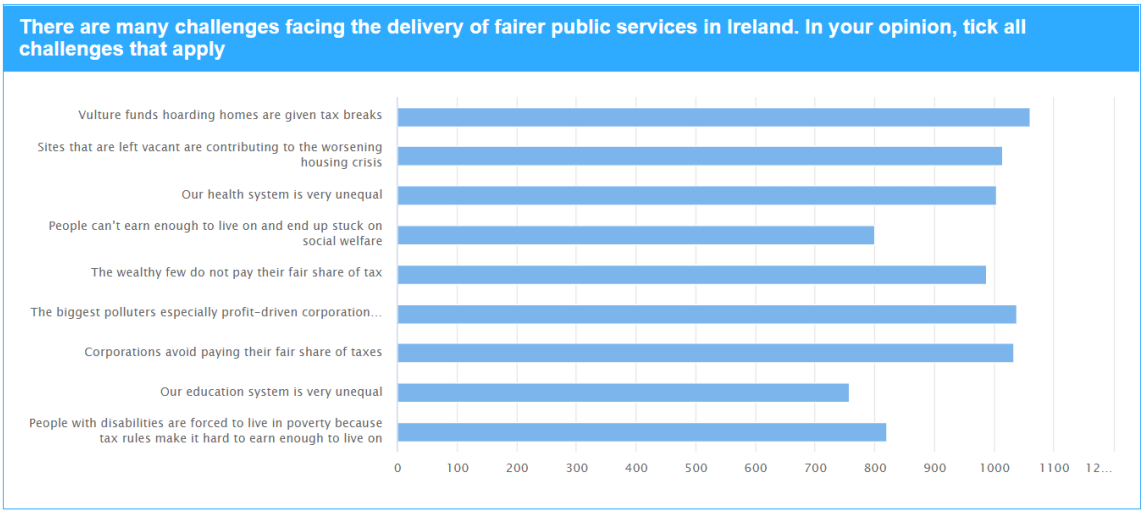
- *"It is a sign of the health of our country how every person in it is treated, fair access to all facets of society & community, environment is a key part also, that the air, water & food is of high quality & that multi nationals would face taxing particularly that the population is protected from the for profit damage multinationals do in this country… mining, selling junk food, using slave labour in developing countries. Ireland can be a leading light in the world for clean organic food, local markets supported & thriving, keeping money in the local economy with government supports".* - Mairead

The public good, including public services and resources, are under increasing pressure from corporate power to privatise and individualise the essential services and supports needed by all to have a safe and secure life - including a healthy environment and planet. Uplift community believes that the state should prioritise quality public healthcare, secure homes, climate adapted public transport and clean air/water.

Challenges facing the delivery of public services

When asked what were the biggest challenges facing the delivery of public services in Ireland,

- 89% [1061] of respondents felt that tax breaks are given to vulture funds on homes rather than ordinary people.
- 88% [1038] of respondents feel wealthy corporations do not shoulder the burden of their climate-polluting emissions.
- 87% [1034] of respondents feel that corporations based in Ireland do not pay their fair share in taxes.



As well as quantitatively polling them, members were asked to provide some context for their answers. Below is a representative selection of the responses of the wide-ranging experiences on some of the failures of the delivery of public services.

What's clear from some of the answers is that there is a mistrust of the government and how tax expenditure is balanced, likely caused by a lack of transparency. **Uplift members feel positively towards paying more tax so long as there is reliable, trustworthy and safe access to a range of public services. For most, there is a discrepancy between the high amount of tax provided by people, and the safe delivery of public services.**

- *"I have no issue paying higher taxes to pay for the options I chose and want to see realised in Ireland - but I have to say that I would find it hard to trust the government on using all of this higher tax for all of those targeted public services"* - Collette
- *"High taxes are a good thing, particularly high rates of corporation tax - but also high rates of income tax for the wealthier among us."* - Barbara
- *"I also fully support using tax to improve local amenities which I feel the government has fallen short on doing time and time again. I think money should be spread throughout Ireland equally. Aka rural areas and small towns."* - Orla
- *"I, and many others like me, are forced to live in poverty, without hope, because we rely on disability benefits which are set below the 'minimum/living wage".* - Kate
- *"There is no model of childcare for people who work outside of office hours, we rely on the goodness of our families to provide care for our child so we can work. And the mode of childcare that does exist is extortionate in its pricing."* - Emma
- *"When I was raising my child as a single parent in rural Ireland there were few supports. No transport or funding to keep a car on the road. Now as a pensioner I do not get sufficient funds to heat my home. SEAI Grants are slow to get and then there's long waiting times to carry out retro-fitting".* - Irene
- *"Strongly support taxation that promotes climate justice so that people at the lower end of the economic scale can continue to have accessible public transport, warm homes and electricity. Public health servants and teachers should be recruited and paid appropriately. Businesses/projects that support climate goals should be supported and we should invest in our biodiversity, green energy and national parks."* - Karen
- *"In terms of my own family situation, I still live with my mother who is a carer for my sister who has learning disabilities. We live in rural Ireland. I work full time yet I still cannot afford to get on the road due to increasing tax and insurance. I also do not have the public transport available to me to get public transport to work. I cannot find accommodation to rent as there is none in my area. My sister is locked out of the labour market; as she has a disability and also does not have sufficient transport to get to a work position that would accommodate her. My mother has health issues and is disproportionately impacted by all of these issues. She is a carer for my sister but also has*

health difficulties which lead to major mental health impacts. As a whole myself and my whole family suffer from "postcode lottery" as we do not have access to basic services to our basic health and social needs. This has been the way in rural Ireland for many families. I also have a mental illness whereby I cannot get access to proper support due to lack of transport and high waiting lists and costs for private services. Taxation in this county has been a problem for a long time; despite obtaining a masters degree it still leaves me in a position whereby my family are living in poverty and have to support them with my wages. Social welfare in this country does not stretch far enough and there are no affirmative actions taking place to help those most excluded from society and the labour market- it doesn't need to be this way. Yet I am just another in this generation who will be locked out of building any sort of security for myself or build wealth or own any assets. I am 25 years old!" - Amy

- *"The Nordic nations are the moral compass of the world. All of the essential support services in place there for the public are designed in accordance with the people's needs. The key term for the Scandinavians is fairness. In Ireland the ever-widening gap between the wealthy and the ordinary worker is a result of successive governments failing to address the needs of our welfare, and essential services and support in place there are designed on the basis of fairness. In the country, successive governments have embraced the opposite mindset"* - Thomas

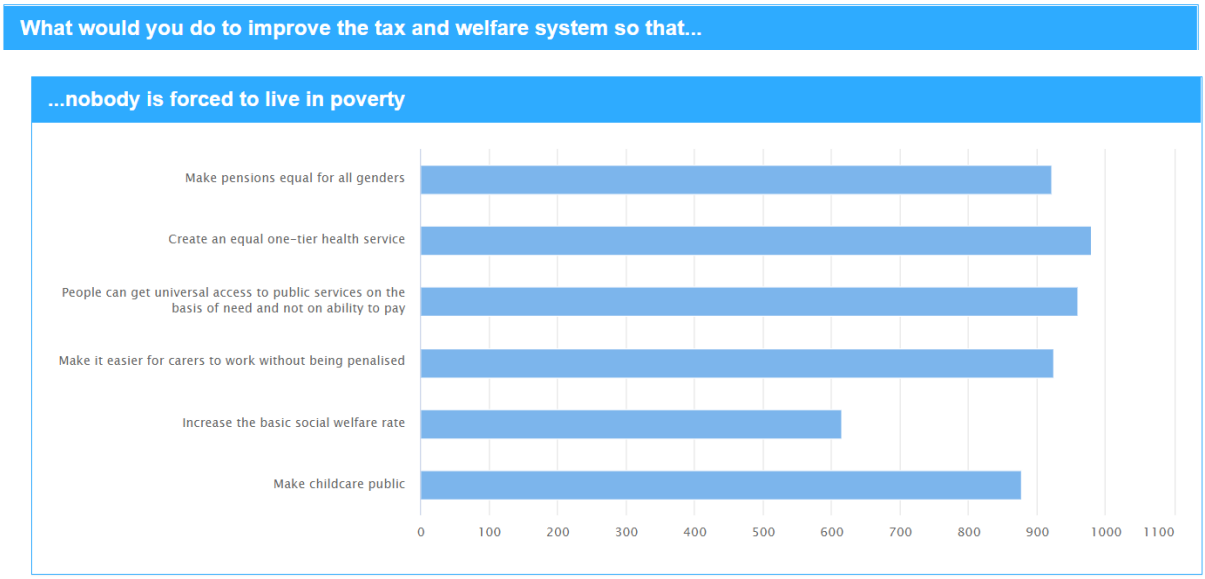
Public view on making our welfare system

A majority of Uplift members believe that nobody should be forced to live in poverty by poor government policies. When the times are good and when the times are tough, we should all have the dignity and security of a roof over our head, food on the table and the essential things we need.

The current tax and social welfare system in Ireland is one that can be characterised as 'gendered.' [4] The system values the 'male breadwinner' antiquated structure of social protection. It is thought there are up to 100,000 "invisible women" in our system, women who are dependent on the family welfare system and their spouse. The stereotype of women as the traditional unpaid caregiver is reinforced, where unpaid care work is often viewed as "an infinite elastic resource" that women provide. [5]

We need an economy/society that benefits everyone, not just the already wealthy. We need reliable jobs that pay enough to keep up with the cost of living and sustain a family. And we need a social safety net strong enough to keep families out of poverty when they're struggling to make ends meet.

We need government intervention to correct existing policies that have created poverty traps and ensure that when people fall on hard times they still have enough to meet their basic needs and the tools they need to thrive in life.



When asked what would you do to improve our welfare system so that nobody is forced to live in poverty

- 82% [980] of people would create a single-tier, equitable, accessible healthcare system for all
- 80% [959] of people would establish universal access to public services based on need and not on ability to pay
- 78% [925] of people would make it easier for carers to work without being unfairly penalised

As well as quantitatively polling them, we also asked members to provide some context for their answers. Here's a representative selection of the responses.

- *"The most difficult thing is when a person wants to change from receiving welfare to going to work. The welfare and tax system requires most changers to make a sudden change. This puts off people who have less than full confidence that they will be able to change to work from welfare."* - Peter
- *"On the welfare side, unfortunately, I had reason to access it a few years ago when I was a full time carer to a family member. The experience was frustrating in the extreme. We are told all these services are there but, when you try to access them, you find that is not the case. It is an experience I earnestly hope I will never have to endure again." - Bridie*
- *" My partner and I applied together for the job seeker's allowance (before covid) and the payment for the 2 of us was made to his bank account which*

made me incredibly dependent on him. Then he found a job but I didn't, and because he was earning something like 1600-1700 euros/month my allowance was set at 60 euros a week which was absolutely unlivable I just barely had enough to pay either for my share of the rent, or the bills and shopping one or the other and forget about anything else". - Johanna

- *"Yes, as a cohabiting person who has two children and a partner out of work for mental health reasons it is extremely frustrating that I do not enjoy the tax benefits of a married couple while simultaneously having to fully support my partner financially since the social welfare system does treat us as a married couple." - Catherine*
- *"This country is a disaster for people trying to live becoming disabled you have to fight for everything."* - Isobel
- *"As a disabled person, the Disability Allowance is not enough for me to live with any independence; I am reliant on family housing or poverty."* - Caroline
- *"People on disability allowance should be given a fair non means tested amount to live on as at this point it is a disgrace how little they get. Bring in basic income for them"* - Douglas
- *"When I did not have a permanent job the signing on and off was very difficult and then when I was on maternity leave getting the allowance was again a mission."* - Eileen
- *"If I had to pick one it would be that I have been on disability allowance (which I had to go through a lot of hassle to get) since I was 20 and there is little to no chance of me ever getting a mortgage and if my partner works my income is dropped to half the job seekers payment and because I was never able to work as I was in full time education when I was diagnosed I have no tax paid so I am not entitled to go on invalidity pension even though I could at least ensure I get jobseekers amount if I could get on that. Being on this little for this many years feels like a punishment and seeing people getting Pandemic Unemployed Payment for 350 a week and complaining makes me feel I'm not not worth wasting the money on and will always drag my partner down because I cannot work."* - Douglas
- *"Social welfare poverty traps. You are in constant danger of losing your main payment, or associated support payments if you dare to try to improve your life for you and your family. It's a complex system and too often families are not even claiming all they are entitled to. But most stay stuck, reliant on SW as they're too afraid of risking further, greater poverty or homelessness if they attempt to make changes."* - Carly
- *"As a lone parent, social welfare is not enough to fully support my children. This widens the gap of what is possible to reach their potential."* - Annette
- *"I have been minding my children for the last few years, as I lost my job and my salary wasn't covering childcare costs for 3 children. I would like to retrain and go back to work, but couldn't afford the childcare I would need to do a training course. Like many people, I'd love to retrain as a teacher, and being more mature with experience of children, would be an ideal candidate for it,*

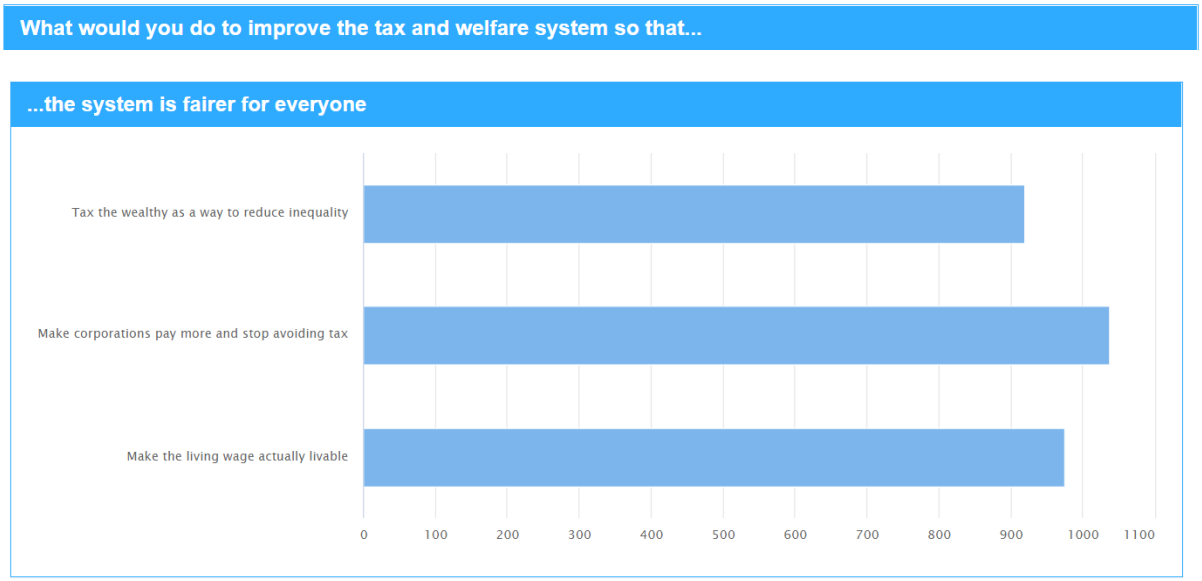
but even the online course is 2 years and €12,000 - who can possibly afford this? So despite the apparent teaching crisis, a huge amount of willing people cannot train to become teachers and instead are stuck at home or doing other jobs and trying to juggle family life, bills, some part time work and mental health."

Public view on making the tax system fairer

A strong social safety net and great public services are the bedrock of equality and opportunity for all. The provision of public services in a universal manner, rather than based on pay, is the strong social safety net we collectively need. Great public healthcare, homes and schools are exactly what taxes are supposed to pay for, and what budgets should prioritise over tax cuts to wealthy corporations privatisation of public services.

Our current system has consistently encouraged profit-makers to take up the supply of public services. Decades of privatisation and cuts to public services were unfortunately highlighted during the pandemic. [6] Ireland's pivot over the last few decades towards a more profit-oriented supply of basic public services such as housing, childcare, and healthcare. Our economy is highly dependent on Foreign Direct Investment, which puts us at risk of regulatory capture, at a time when we need public-led solutions to the problems in front of us. [7]

According to a recent report published by Oxfam, job precarity, poverty and inequality soared during the pandemic, but so did the profits of billionaires. In Ireland alone, It is estimated that the wealth of billionaires increased by 58% to €49.7 billion.[8] Wealth inequality, and public policies that support the hoarding of wealth and resources by the wealthy few, is further fracturing universal access to basic public services. [9]



When asked would you do to improve our welfare system so that the system is fairer for everyone

- 85% [1037] of respondents said making corporations pay more and stop avoiding paying corporate tax would improve our system so that it is fairer for everyone.

As well as quantitatively polling them, we also asked members to provide some context for their answers. Here's a representative selection of the responses.

Allowing multinational corporations based in Ireland to circumnavigate tax regimes and disproportionately less tax is taking public money from where it's truly needed.

Huge corporations based in Ireland shouldn't have a different set of rules to play by. They should contribute as much to communities as people who work for a living.

- *"A wealth tax should be introduced, all corporate tax breaks should be phased out. Governments should change their mindset and follow the Nordic nations model which is based on fairness. For too long the ever - widening gap between the wealthy and the rest is a direct result of them pandering to the needs of the rich, the corporations, large multinationals at the expense of the common person"* - Thomas

- *"Corporations and the wealthy need to be paying their fair share. They benefit immensely from all of the services that are underwritten by the taxes of ordinary people. There must be tax justice and tax equity in this country if we are to ever progress beyond the very divided society we currently live in."* - *Kieran*

Public views on a just transition:

Most of us care deeply about the environment we live in. After all, without fresh air, flowers, trees, rivers, and beaches - life would be pretty grim. Whether it's a walk in our local park with a friend, or a fresh sea swim washing away our worries - most of us have felt the power of our natural environment to renew our wellbeing, and help us to thrive.

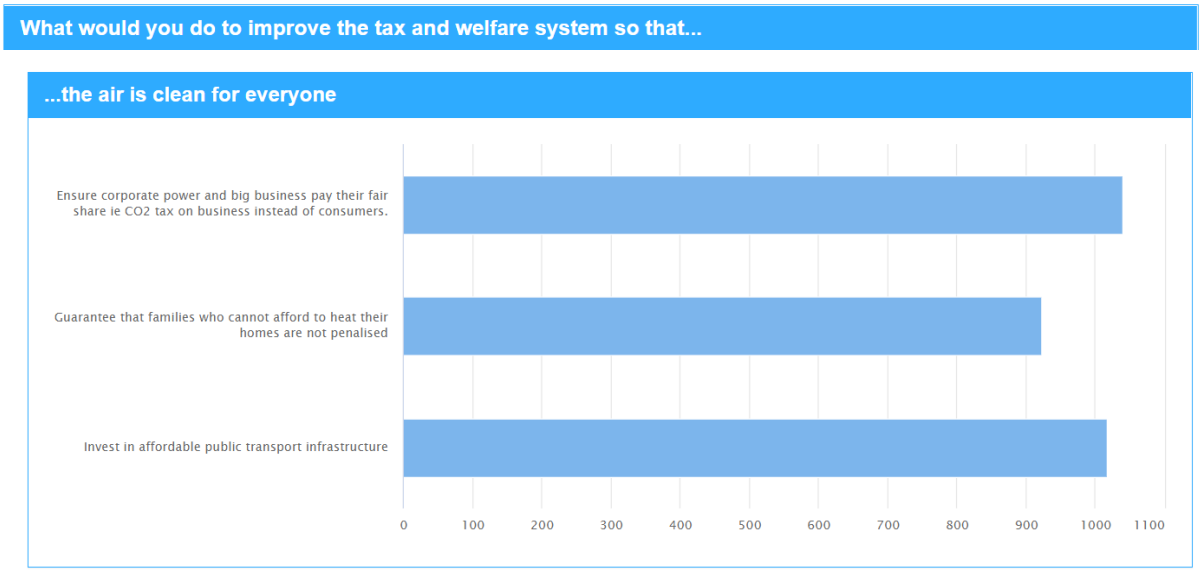
Most communities want to protect our planet from harm, for ourselves and future generations. And most of us do what we can - we recycle, hop on the bus or train when we can, and those of us who can afford it add solar and wind energy to our household energy supplies.

But, this government is putting the blame for climate change on us, when we have done the least to cause it. What's worse is that they're planning to push a 'carbon tax' on families and communities. All the while, letting those most responsible off the

hook.

Not only is this unfair, it won't fix the problem. The climate crisis threatens to deepen existing inequalities. The rising cost of fuel has placed a disproportionate economic burden on those who are the least advantaged in our communities. As the impact of the climate crisis is only set to worsen, the government response must be one that centres communities who are already experiencing energy poverty and inequality. [10]

Simply put, our government's policy should make the biggest polluters contribute the most towards the future we need to build.



When asked what would you do to improve our welfare system so that we can protect the planet we live on,

- 88% [1040] want corporate power and big business pay their fair share of tax on business instead of consumers
- 85% [1018] want investment in affording public transport infrastructure

As well as quantitatively polling them, we also asked members to provide some context for their answers. Here's a representative selection of the responses.

- *"Raising the prices of fuel and electricity has made life difficult and it's unfair and unjust to put the burden on the middle to low income people when corporations are the root of the problem. Our government is not fit for purpose as it has allowed this to happen and has no intention of ending it."*- Oli
- *"In the last year under the guise of Brexit and Covid costs of basis food, heating and lighting essentials have skyrocketed and yet again the Govt has sanctioned another increase in the cost of energy and fuel - we should be a*

net exporter of energy instead we give our resources over to corporates with licensing that never seems to benefit us" - Paul

- *"The biggest problem with the tax system in this state, is the stealth tax and paying tax on things like road tax and carbon tax, and too many loopholes that wealthy corporations and individuals can exploit."* - Stephen
- *"As I am working part time in a just above minimum wage job, the recent increase in carbon tax and fuel increases has cost my family an additional €40 that I don't have. This has led to us having to cut back on essentials such as heating, food and clothing."* - Jimmy

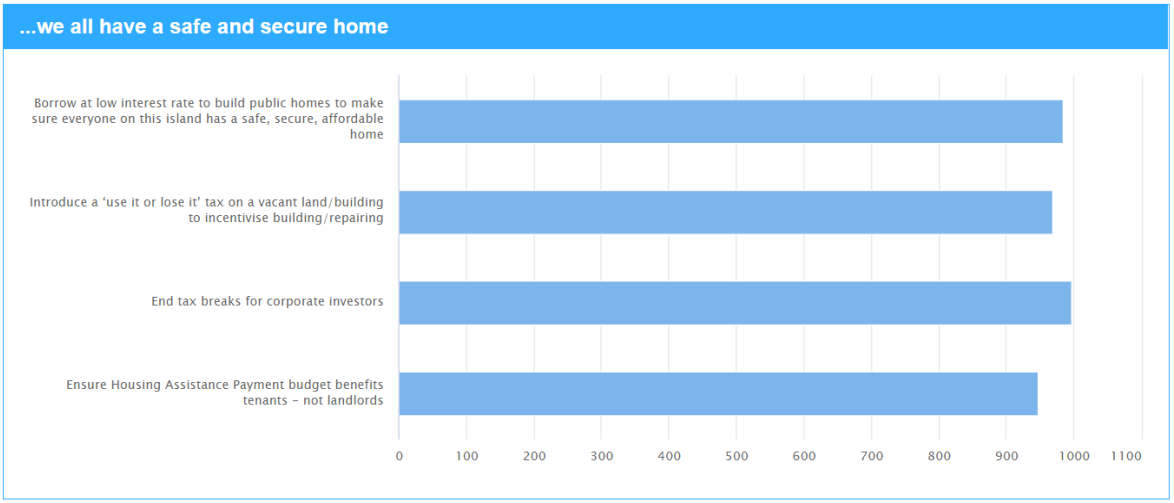
Public view on making sure we all have a home

Most of us agree that everyone deserves to have a solid foundation from which we build our lives. Public housing built or bought by the public provides people and families with secure and affordable homes, and it also creates a public asset that will contribute to a more secure and flourishing society well into the future.

While the reality of homelessness figures officially registered is totally unacceptable, so too is the reality that hundreds and thousands are facing instability in our housing situations. It's clear that the poor housing situation affects individuals and families, but what's even more worrying is the knock-on effect this has on our communities as a collective. [11]

The private rental market and those who profit off it have done little to nothing to resolve the housing crisis and provide safety and security for families through decent housing. This system is held up through the likes of the rent supplement (HAP) scheme. Public housing, built and retained for the public can deliver on safe and affordable homes, and this can be achieved through well resourced local authorities.

Further to this, we can stabilise supply for public homes through the introduction of a 'use it or lose it' tax on vacant properties - potential homes that are left to dereliction and create bottlenecks - and put an end to the tax breaks for investor vulture funds buying up our homes. [12]



No matter who we are or where we come from,

- **84% [997]** of us would end tax breaks for investor funds to make sure everyone has a safe, affordable home
- **83% [984]** of us would borrow at low interest rate so public homes can be build by public bodies
- **81% [970]** of us would introduce a tax on vacant land or buildings to incentivise reparation and building.

Other concerns that respondents had in relation to the public supply of housing:

- *"I work part time and my husband is self-employed. Some weeks he cannot afford to pay himself a wage, if the work doesn't come in. We are not eligible for HAP because my husband would work more than 30 hours per week. Imagine working for 30 hours and maybe making 150e? HAP would just give us the help for us to ensure full security with the rented roof over our heads."* - Karen
- *"Absolutely totally shafted by the government on an ongoing basis through high taxes, no corresponding benefits and a wholly unfair system of support for private landlords who inconvenience themselves massively by being bullied and unfairly penalised through trying to do the decent thing for HAP tenants. It's an absolute joke... None of them care in the slightest for the immeasurable stress and financial losses we have incurred as a result of being trapped in their fundamentally flawed system. The RTB also doesn't care about us or our feelings, and blatantly disregards and dismiss any and all concerns."* - Miriam
- *"Rents are so high, that as a renting family we could face homelessness next . We can't afford this market. The way rent is another man's income, and at such a high level of reward, comes at the expense of this very basic human need. All the tax benefits that landlords get has made my life more difficult."* - Catherine

- *“HAP doesn't cover enough of current rent prices. I'm on back to education allowance and struggling to meet the top-up to my landlord, let alone cover winter heating bills.”* - Ciara
- *“Deemed to earn too much for social housing and not enough for mortgage. Childcare is high as is our rent,”* - James
- *“I am a low to middle income earner and I’m stuck with no access to state housing, cannot even get on the housing list and there is nothing available to rent within my pocket. I am just about to become homeless and I have nowhere to turn because I have bothered to work all my life. My taxes do NOT benefit me in ANY way. It’s a disgrace what rolling governments have created through their own greed.”* - Josephine
- *“My sister is a lone parent and is very limited in her available working hours due to caring for her son; she does work mornings while he is at school. She has to top up her rent allowance a good bit to pay her rent in an area which is safe and central for a lone parent and she lives in constant anxiety that her landlord will want to rent to someone else for a higher rent. She has been on the housing list for 10 years. Her son is on the autistic spectrum.”* - Collette

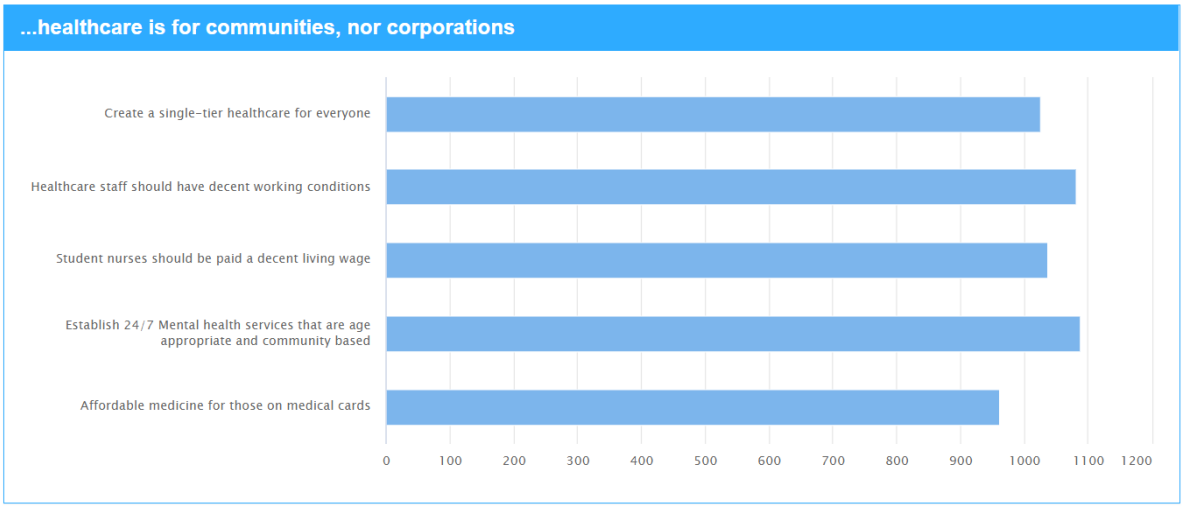
Public view on a healthcare system that works for us all

Even prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, our healthcare system was creaking following years of chronic underfunding and a privatisation agenda by successive governments. The pandemic has placed the hospital system, and those who work in hospital settings, under ferocious pressure - often creating unsafe environments for both staff and patients. What’s emerged clearly is that safe access to healthcare remains a huge obstacle. [9] When governments take into account the needs of everyone in society in order to deliver quality public services like healthcare, education, transport, childcare with full and equal access for all.

Our current two-tier health system favours the patients who can afford to pay privately for healthcare, and further marginalises those in the public system seeking timely access to quality services. It’s a cruel system that deliberately favours those who can pay over those who are sick and in need of help. This inequality gap was dire long before the Covid-19 pandemic overran our hospitals.

When private corporations take over, they run our services to extract the most profit possible - that is what for-profit companies have to do in order to increase shareholder value. They do that by charging us more, providing with us less, and often treating the people who work there badly, if they get to keep their jobs at all.

When healthcare is owned and run to serve everyone in our community, we get to ensure it delivers for the public good and for everyone, not a handful of wealthy shareholders.



We asked people what they would do to improve access and affordability of healthcare for our communities:

- 91% [1088] of respondents were clear that establishing 24/7 mental health services that are community-based and age appropriate was the top priority.
- 81% [1082] also agreed that valuing our healthcare staff with dignity, improving the working conditions of healthcare staff, including student nurses would aid the delivery of public healthcare
- 86% [1026] of respondents would like to see the creation of a single-tier healthcare system

We respondents to share some of their experiences

- *"I suffer from bad health and have had to give up my profession as a result. I had to fight very hard to get a medical card as under Social Welfare Policy I was assessed on my partner's income and not as an autonomous person. I had to go as far as the Ombudsman's Office before the HSE agreed to sanction the Medical Card. That ordeal really traumatised me for a long time. It went on for nearly a year."* - Joan
- *"Single mum lived on social welfare for 10+ years so effectively lived in poverty. Had to go to St. Vincent de Paul every winter to help heat my home and afford Xmas. Struggled with stress and anxiety and social isolation. could rarely afford holidays, nights out, mental health support" - Kathryn*
- *"I came from a country with free and quickly accessible public healthcare, and facing a serious health issue had to wait for a year to have an appointment with a consultant in Ireland because I was not able to afford private healthcare."* - Indre
- *"Speech Therapy for children delays up to 3 years, either go private or suffer!"* - Stephen
- *"I am an employed person who does not qualify for a medical card, but yet cannot afford medical expenses, even though I pay tax. Healthcare should be free to everyone and its cost should be covered by taxes we pay. Alternatively*

the cost of healthcare should be compromised so everyone pays symbolic fee incl. employed or unemployed." - Joanna

- *"I have a severe and chronic disease. The two tier health care system means that in the past I couldn't get preventative care because waiting lists on public health system are very long. So I would get very sick and be put into an emergency room before I received treatment. Now I have insurance. However, for profit insurers won't cover pre existing conditions, because that's not profitable, so I can't access private health care. But even if I could, it's disgraceful that because I'm fortunate enough to have a job that provides health insurance, or if I was rich enough to buy it myself, that I get access to better health care. Wealth shouldn't dictate access to health care - needs should."* - Eoin
- *"I hurt my back in 2018 and needed urgent surgery. At the time I was commuting 100 miles per day, earning 26k before tax and paying over €2k per year for tolls. I was told if I waited on the public system I would have irreversible damage. So I borrowed €10k to pay for the surgery privately. I had it in the summer of 2019. I am still waiting to be called for the initial appointment with the consultant on the public system. I was told my case was urgent and it had been made a priority!"* - Lisa

Conclusion

From the 1176 survey responses provided by Uplift members, it's clear that many of the problems with our tax and social welfare system are intersectional. Our welfare system has a tangible impact on the day-to-day of our lives. The way in which we interact with this system can be shaped by experiences of relative inequality, whether that's gender, ethnicity, ability, geography, and how these intersect with levels of poverty, unemployment, and income. [13] Although these segments may seem unrelated, they can each have a knock-on effect on one another, meaning the different segments of the system are interrelated, and in many cases have a knock-on effect. This has been well documented from sample responses, especially people who may rely on, for example, disability and housing services at the same time.

What's also clear is the level of frustration with the current system. People locked out of ever having a safe and secure home, people routinely unable to access healthcare when they need it, the biggest polluters of our communities and environments are not the ones who pay the price, and profits of large corporations who availed of welfare support during the pandemic fall out of scope.

However, while the problems are intersectional, so too are the solutions. People who have safe and secure homes, a community and government who values and supports them, nutritious food and great education - are more likely to live happy, thriving lives, which in turn create happy, thriving communities.

Uplift members would like to see a more just and equal delivery of healthcare, housing, childcare, education and transport. At the moment, there is a disproportionate disconnect between the high levels of tax people contribute, and their ability to access these services when needed.

People have a clear idea of who is responsible, and what sort of action needs to be taken. In summary, they want:

1. A quality public **healthcare system that works for everyone** when they need it
2. **Round-the-clock mental health services** that are age-appropriate and community-based
3. Corporate power and **big business pay significantly higher tax.**
4. **Corporate and big business to be heavily penalised as the main contributors to** climate pollution
5. Ensure access to **safe public housing** by **ending tax breaks** for investor funds, **public borrowing at low interest rate** and introducing a **tax on vacant land** or buildings to incentivise reparation and building.
6. Climate adapted free **public transport**
7. **Universal publicly funded childcare** - new forms of social welfare that value socially useful work, particularly care – for example the Participation Income (see NESC2020). http://files.nesc.ie/nesc_reports/en/151_Future_Social_Welfare.pdf
8. **Universal basic services t**hat enable people to life with dignity and a degree of security
9. **Distribution of income through progresive taxation** - directed towards equality and u**niversal public services and reducing income inequality**

NOTES:

[1]
https://impact.nuigalway.ie/news/pandemic-exposes-income-inequalities-in-irish-society/ &

https://www.esri.ie/publications/all-in-this-together-new-and-enduring-forms-of-inequality-post-pandemic

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[3] https://nccwn.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/covid-19-ngo-group-joint-submission.pdf

[4] https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/spol.12548

[5] https://politicalreform.ie/2021/03/12/irish-feminists-need-to-mobilise-for-a-post-pandemic-future-built-on-an-ethic-of-public-care/

[6] https://socialeurope.eu/renewing-welfare-through-universal-entitlement-lessons-from-covid-19

[7] https://publicpolicy.ie/perspectives/build-forward-public-the-case-for-a-post-pandemic-housing-imaginary/

[8] https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/inequality-kills

[9] https://www.nerinstitute.net/blog/some-thoughts-wealth-tax

[10] https://www.irishtimes.com/news/science/climate-crisis-threatens-to-deepen-inequality-in-ireland-1.4612077

[11] https://www.uplift.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/14930_Uplift_housing_report_WEB-1.pdf

[12] https://www.irishexaminer.com/opinion/commentanalysis/arid-40781061.html & https://my.uplift.ie/petitions/stop-investors-buying-our-homes & https://www.thejournal.ie/vulture-funds-petition-ireland-government-5566059-Oct2021/

[13]
https://www.socialjustice.ie/article/healthcare-inequalities-persist-and-undermine-treatment-and-care

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