Middle-earners will be better off after the budget

Those earning €70,000 or under will feel the benefit of this year’s budget. Ahead of next week’s Budget 2016, it has come to light that the Government has plans to lower the high rate of tax from 51% to 49.5%.

This will serve to aid middle-income earners, who are “hard-pressed”, according to the Taoiseach. He commented that this budget will focus on tax cuts, particularly for those earning between €30,000 and €70,000 per annum.

This is secondary to the main tax focus of the budget—the USC. The government wish to reduce the Universal Social Charge in the upcoming budget, meaning some 500,000 workers would now be exempt from payment. Further, the 7% rate is expected to be lowered to 5.5%, a reduction of 1.5%.

The Budget will be presented on Tuesday October 13 and will be the last budget announcement before the general election. PAI will be publishing a run-down of the budget on Wednesday, October 14, on our blog.

Metro North to go ahead under capital investment scheme

In 2011, after €170m spending, the Metro North scheme was shelved. Now, following the Government’s new capital investment scheme, announced last week, Metro North is to be revised and implemented.

It will follow a similar route to the last project, however, will feature fewer stops and approximately 1.5km less underground tunnelling. Last week’s outline features eight overground and six underground stops, with the line extending from O’Connell St out to Dublin Airport, and later, further out to Swords. It is expected that this renewed model will cost €1bn less than previously planned; the new figure is €2.64bn. Work will begin in 2021, and is not expected to finish until 2026/2027.

Investors in the last scheme are expected to be repaid the money they invested in the project, as a new railway order will be needed, as well as new planning permission—the permission granted by An Bord Pleanala in 2010 has now expired.

Speaking of the plan to renew Metro North, Labour TD Brendan Ryan said: “We needed to get the public finances in order and get people back to work. We are now delivering on that and now, with this capital investment programme we can now commit to delivering this much needed piece of infrastructure”.
BEPS report aims to close legal loopholes for tax

The OECD’s final set of recommendations on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) was published today, Monday October 5. In it, there is great focus on tightening corporate tax rules globally.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has made recommendations for “country-by-country reporting obligations” by multinational corporations. The project wishes to close legal loopholes and thus taking advantage or abusing, in particular, developing countries, by reducing their taxes significantly.

The works includes the OECD’s thirty-four countries, and the G20 countries. After some criticism that not enough developing countries were included, the work expanded to include developing economies that belong to neither group.

This comes just ahead of a Luxembourg meeting of European Financial Ministers regarding a directive on corporate taxes cross-borders. The IMF will also release its World Economic Outlook tomorrow.

Poor health evident in those who face bullying, says ESRI report

Last Wednesday, October 1, the ESRI released a report that found that workers who face bullying and harassment in work have, in general, higher levels of mental distress, poor health, and injury when compared to those who face lower levels.

The report, entitled Workplace Risks and Worker Outcomes from Ireland from a Comparative Perspective (Watson, Maitre & Russell), uses data collected from the European Working Conditions Survey and assesses how Ireland compares to other European countries, and also how the situation in 2005 compares to the same in 2010. It examines, in the main, four types of risk: physical, chemical/biological, physically-demanding work, and psycho-social.

Psycho-social risk includes physical violence, sexual and verbal harassment. They found that the risk of psycho-social is high in this country; we ranked sixth highest of 34 countries. They also found that workers in lots of different sectors and jobs were exposed to psycho-social risk. However, like in most countries surveyed, exposure to this risk dropped between 2005 and 2010. The report also notes that 50% of those at high risk of exposure to psycho-social risks noticed poor health, compared to 21% at low exposure.

The report was undertaken in collaboration with the HSA.
In our recent survey, 49% of respondents to our survey said that it was important to continue with cost-saving programmes; 54% said attracting and retaining qualified staff was a priority.

Do you agree? What does this mean for Public Sector HR?

You can take our survey [here](#). The results of the survey, and analysis of the data gathered, will be revealed at our annual HR conference.

You can book a place [here](#).

Annual HR Conference
Thursday, October 15th, 2015
9am to 3.30pm
Westin Hotel, Dublin 2
This Week at Public Affairs Ireland

**Training**

**Managing, Motivating and Coaching Staff**
Monday 05 October
9am-1pm
PAI Main Office

**Certificate in Project Management for Public Sector Administration**
Tuesday 06 October
Eight days
9.30am-4pm daily
PAI Main Office

**Certificate in Freedom of Information**
Tuesday 06 October
1.5 days
9.30am-4pm, Tuesday; 9.30am-12.30pm, Wednesday
PAI Main Office

**Leading with Emotional Intelligence**
Wednesday 07 October
9am-4pm
PAI Main Office

**Minute-Taking**
Thursday 08 October
9am-1pm
PAI Main Office

**On the Blog**

Smart Public Procurement: More flexible, more transparent, and more cost effective
PAI Editor Shauna Nimmo
Read [here](#)

Negotiating TIPP: Are the EU and USA getting any closer to a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Agreement?
Tom Ferris
Read [here](#)

Department of Finance’s Consultation on Taxing Expenses of Travel and Subsistence
Tom Ferris
Read [here](#)

SIPTU proposal for new Social Solidarity Contribution to replace USC
Ger Gibbons
Read [here](#)
This week in Dáil Éireann

**Tuesday 06 October**

- 2.00 p.m. Questions (Minister for Education and Skills)
- 3.15 p.m. Leaders Questions
- 3.36 p.m. Questions (Taoiseach)
- 4.36 p.m. Order of Business
- 5.06 p.m. Topical Issues
- 5.54 p.m. Motion re German Battlegroup (back from Committee, to conclude within 20 minutes) (Department of Defence)
- 6.14 p.m. Dublin Docklands Development Authority (Dissolution) Bill 2015 - Order for Second Stage and Second Stage (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)
- 7.30 p.m. Private Members Business - (Technical Group)
- 9.00 p.m. Dáil Adjourns

**Thursday 08 October**

- 9.30 a.m. Questions (Minister for Defence)
- 10.45 a.m. National Cultural Institutions (National Concert Hall) Bill 2015 - Report and Final Stages Resumed (to adjourn at 12 noon if not previously concluded) (Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht)
- 12.00 noon Leaders Questions
- 12.21 p.m. Order of Business
- 12.30 p.m. Motion re Regulations for Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 (Back from Committee) (without debate) (Department of Health)
- 2.00 p.m. Dáil Adjourns

**Wednesday 07 October**

- 9.30 a.m. Questions (Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine)
- 10.45 a.m. Marriage Bill 2015 - Order for Report, Report and Final Stages (Department of Justice and Equality)
- 10.45 a.m. Dublin Docklands Development Authority (Dissolution) Bill 2015 - Second Stage (Resumed if not previously concluded) (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)
- 12.00 noon Leaders Questions
- 12.21 p.m. Order of Business
- 12.21 p.m. Statements re Pre European Council (to conclude within 65 minutes)
- 1.55 p.m. SOS (1 hour)
- 2.55 p.m. Topical Issues
- 3.43 p.m. Morning Business Continued
- 5.30 p.m. Statements re Capital Plan (to conclude within 2 hours) (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform)
- 7.30 p.m. Private Members Business - (Technical Group)
- 9.00 p.m. Dáil Adjourns

**Friday 09 October**

- 10.00 a.m. Public Holidays (Lá na Poblachta) Bill 2013 - (Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh)
- 12.00 noon Employment Equality (Abolition of Mandatory Retirement Age) Bill 2014 (Deputy Anne Ferris)
- 2.00 p.m. Dáil Adjourns
### Tuesday 05 October

- **2.30 p.m.** Commencement Matters
- **3.30 p.m.** Order of Business
  - Motion regarding the proceeds of the sale of Aer Lingus (Referral to Committee – Without Debate)
  - Motion re the Joint Committee of Inquiry into the Banking Crisis – (Without Debate)
- **5.00 p.m.** Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Bill 2015 – Order for Second and Second Stage
  (Department of Justice and Equality)
- **7.00 p.m.** Seanad Adjourns

### Wednesday 06 October

- **10.30 a.m.** Commencement Matters
- **11.30 a.m.** Order of Business
- **1.00 p.m.** Houses of the Oireachtas (Appointments to Certain Offices) Bill 2014 – Report and Final Stages
  (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform)
- **2.00 p.m.** SOS
- **3.00 p.m.** Statements on Broadcasting and Media in Ireland
  (Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources)
- **5.00 p.m.** Private Members Business – Labour Motion
- **7.00 p.m.** Seanad Adjourns

### Thursday 07 October

- **10.30 a.m.** Commencement Matters
- **11.30 a.m.** Order of Business
- **1.00 p.m.** Statements on Ireland’s performance in Horizon 2020 so far
  (Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)
- **3.00 p.m.** Seanad Adjourns
**Tuesday 05 October**

**Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Joint)**
CR2, LH 2000, 1.30 p.m.
AGENDA: Private Meeting

**Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Joint)**
CR3, LH 2000 2 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: Income volatility in the dairy sector and targeted support for the sheep sector [Representatives from the Irish Farmers’ Association (IFA)]

**Environment, Culture and the Gaeltacht (Joint)**
CR4, LH 2000 2.15 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: The Socio-Economic Contributions of Music to the Irish Economy [Mr. Victor Finn, Chief Executive Officer, Irish Music Rights Organisation]

**Health and Children (Joint)**
CR2, LH 2000 4.30 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: Quarterly update on health issues [Minister for Health; Minister of State at the Department of Health with special responsibility for Primary Care, Social Care (Disabilities and Older People) and Mental Health; and Mr. Tony O’Brien, Director General, Health Service Executive]

**Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform (Joint)**
CR4, LH 2000 5 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: Macroeconomic forecast in the context of Budget 2016 [Officials from the Department of Finance]

**Thursday 07 October**

**Health and Children (Joint)**
CR2, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: Session A: 9.30 a.m.
The current work and challenges facing the Dental Council of Ireland [Dr. Eamon Croke, President, Dental Council of Ireland]; and
Session B: 11.15 a.m.
Pre-Legislative Scrutiny on the General Scheme of the Adoption (Information and Tracing) Bill 2015 [Officials from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs]

**Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Joint)**
CR4, LH 2000 10 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: Organic Farming Scheme [Representatives from the Organic Farmers Representative Body]

**Public Accounts**
CR3, LH 2000 10 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: Session A: 10 a.m.
(i) Business of the Committee; and
(ii) 2013 Annual Report and 2014 Appropriation Accounts of the Comptroller and Auditor General:
   a. Vote 38: Health
   b. Chapter 13: Irish Blood Transfusion Pension Funding 2013 Accounts [Officials from the Department of Health and the Irish Blood Transfusion Service]; and
   Session B: 12 noon
   National Paediatric Hospital Development Board Financial Statements 2013 [Officials from the Department of Health and from the National Paediatric Hospital Development Board]

**European Union Affairs (Joint)**
CR2, LH 2000 2 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: (i) The Five Presidents’ report on Completing Europe’s Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) (resumed); and
(ii) The forthcoming General Affairs Council (GAC) meeting [Minister of State at the Department of An Taoiseach with special responsibility for European Affairs]

**Wednesday 06 October**

**Transport and Communications (Joint)**
CR4, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: Mid-Year Review of the 2015 Estimates for Public Services - Vote 29 (Communications, Energy and Natural Resources) [Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources]

**Foreign Affairs and Trade (Joint)**
CR3, LH 2000 10 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: The work of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in South Sudan [Mr. Franz Rauchenstein, ICRC, South Sudan]

**Education and Social Protection (Joint)**
CR4, LH 2000 2 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: (i) Rannpháirtíocht leis an Uasal Dónal Ó hAiniféin, Cathaoirleach Ainmnitheach na Comhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta & Gaelscolaíochta (Engagement with Mr. Dónal Ó hAiniféin, Chairperson Designate, An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta & Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)); and

**Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint)**
CR1, LH 2000 2.30 p.m.
AGENDA: Private Meeting

**Public Service Oversight and Petitions (Joint)**
CR3, LH 2000 4 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: Disease rates linked to central heating systems (Public Petition No P00040/14) [National Standards Authority of Ireland and Department of Environment, Community and Local Government]

**Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform (Joint)**
CR4, LH 2000 4.30 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: Motion re. the transfer of proceeds from the sale of the State’s shareholding in Aer Lingus [Minister of State at the Department of Finance]

**Justice, Defence and Equality (Select)**
CR2, LH 2000 5 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: Garda Síochána (Policing Authority and Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2015 [Minister for Justice and Equality]

**Finance (Select sub)**
CR4, LH 2000 5.15 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: Finance (Tax Appeals) Bill 2015 [Minister of State at the Department of Finance]