



Our reference: F 49/72/15

24 September 2015

Mr Pearse Doherty, TD  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

Dear Deputy,

I refer to Sinn Féin's recent request to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform for Budget costings (from your Mr Liam O'Duibhir). I am pleased to attach the response to the single query from that costing request which was redirected to this Department for response at Mr O'Duibhir's behest.

Please note that the costing exercise did not examine the interaction of individual measures with other tax and/or expenditure measures.

No account has been taken of the second round impact of measures proposed, such as their positive or negative impact on economic growth, job creation, inflation or their impact on tax buoyancy.

It should be borne in mind that that under the preventive arm of the Stability and Growth Pact, until Ireland has reached its objective of a balanced budget in structural terms, we may not introduce discretionary revenue reductions, over and above the available fiscal space permitted under the expenditure benchmark, unless they are matched by other revenue increases or expenditure reductions. Accordingly, tax reductions may have to be offset elsewhere.

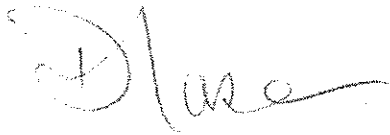
The costings, including those provided by or in conjunction with other Departments, are provided on the basis that at no time will the Department be represented as endorsing the proposals costed. Equally, the Department will not comment on the merits or otherwise of those proposals. Where caveats or assumptions have been made in this response, the Departments' positions on such issues must be accurately, fully and fairly represented.

The Freedom of Information Act 2014 does not provide for an exemption for the costings of political parties proposals. Costings prepared by the Department in the context of the Budget will be treated in the same manner as all other pre-Budget submissions/requests. As is normal practice, the Department will publish all of these submissions and the responses on its website, redacting on the basis of the Freedom of Information exemptions as appropriate. Costings prepared in the context of general

elections or Programmes for Government will also be dealt with in accordance with relevant provisions of the Act.

If you have any queries on any of the above matters or costings, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Moran', written in a cursive style.

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Derek Moran

Secretary General

**Query:** The initial cost of establishing a 10 member Equality and Budgetary Advisory statutory body and the full year cost of fees and associated costs based on those paid to the Fiscal Advisory Council and its establishment costs

**Reply:** Based on the costs incurred for 2014 by the Irish Fiscal Advisory Council (IFAC), the estimated cost of establishing a 10-member Equality and Budgetary Advisory Board is €1.1m.

This estimate is based on the following costs incurred in 2014 for the IFAC, which has 5 part-time Council Members and a Secretariat staff of 5:

Salaries	€360,827
Council Member Fees and Expenses	€65,317*
Administration	<u>€147,850**</u>
Total	€573,994

\*Expenses incurred by Council Members amounted to €28,120, mainly reflecting travel and subsistence costs incurred by international and non-Dublin based members attending Council meetings in Dublin.

\*\*The Administration Expenses include a charge for accommodation and building services on a pro rate basis and support services relating primarily to accounts, IT and other corporate services.