



## Budget 2026 will decide the future of Ireland's Post Office Network

**€15 million annual investment will protect access to essential community services nationwide.**

This matters because we are the last in-person link between the state and citizens. We provide not only existing services but are the basis for a range of new ones. Government investment of €15 million, is urgently required to keep Post Offices open. This is an essential investment in access to public services for communities.

For over 100 years, Post Offices have been trusted anchors in communities, evolving with people's needs while continuing to deliver essential services. We are more than service providers. We are local economic engines. By supporting small businesses, sustaining footfall in towns and villages, and enabling financial transactions, Post Offices drive economic activity and community vitality.

Grant Thornton estimates the network delivers up to €776 million in social and economic value every year. Without investment, that value is at risk. The closure of Post Offices will not only deprive communities of vital services. The greater loss is to the State, which risks losing one of its most effective and trusted channels for reaching people. Continued support will allow the network to grow its role in delivering the services that citizens want and government needs.

We already know this approach works. When the Government stepped in with €10 million a year in 2022, it was a lifeline. In Budget 2026, we are asking for a fair and realistic investment of €15 million a year from 2026 to 2030. This moves us from 'life support' to development and renewal. A future with the ability to deliver even more: in-person public services, Peace Commissioner duties, identity verification, fraud prevention, government payments, digital access, form generation, and community supports.

**€15 million is the minimum required to develop the network, protect jobs, and allow Post Offices to expand their role in delivering public services on behalf of the State.**

Anything less and we are facing a cliff edge. The reality is stark: 40 per cent of Post Offices are at risk of closure, and already nine have shut their doors. We have absorbed a 30 per cent rise in the minimum wage and 15 per cent inflation since 2022. Yet unlike retailers, Postmasters cannot raise prices or access the supports that other small businesses rely on.

**Nine in ten people say their Post Office is essential. That is not just public sentiment; it is a call to action. Communities want their Post Offices, and they want Government to act now to save them.**

The future of Ireland's Post Office Network will be decided in Budget 2026. A modest investment of €15 million annually will safeguard a vital national service for decades to come. It will ensure that Post Offices remain the backbone of community infrastructure, the last visible presence of the State in many rural areas, and a trusted, local access point for services in every town and city.

**We urge every TD and Senator to recognise the urgency of this moment. Stand with your local Post Office. Back the call for €15 million in Budget 2026.**

Make your voice heard with your party colleagues and leaders.

**Seán Martin**

*President, Irish Postmasters' Union*

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**Nine in ten**

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**Budget 2026 is decisive**

to the future of Post Offices in Ireland



## What's at Stake

Over the past decade, 266 Post Offices have closed nationwide, stripping communities of a trusted local service. The latest to shut their doors include **Austin Friar Street** (Westmeath), **Upper Baggot Street** (Dublin), **Breaghwy** (Mayo), **Barrack Street** (Waterford), **Leenane** (Galway), and **Crosshaven, Glounthaune, Doneraile** and **Kilmichael** (all Cork). **Carrigaholt** is now among the latest closures, with three further offices in Cork also understood to be at risk. Each closure weakens the fabric of local life, leaving towns and villages without access to essential services.

“The closure of Ballylar Post Office this autumn, the last of eight on Donegal’s Fanad Peninsula, is a stark reminder of what’s at stake. For 152 years, it served as a hub for social welfare payments, bill pay, banking, and, most importantly, a place where people living alone or older neighbours could meet and feel connected. Its loss is not just about the end of a family business, but about the erosion of rural community life. Without proper support, more towns and villages will face the same fate. The decline of local Post Offices is a symptom of rural Ireland being left behind and a clear signal of why €15m in annual investment is urgently needed to safeguard this essential network.”

*Wendy, and Ronan McElwaine,  
Postmaster, Ballylar, Co. Donegal.*

### Post Offices Closed form Jan 2015 – Sept 2025

County	Rural	Urban	Total
Cork	24	14	38
Dublin		22	22
Galway	22		22
Donegal	16	3	19
Mayo	17	2	19
Kerry	14	1	15
Wexford	13	2	15
Limerick	9	3	12
Tipperary	9	2	11
Clare	8	1	9
Roscommon	9		9
Meath	8		8
Sligo	7	1	8
Waterford	3	6	9
Cavan	7		7
Offaly	7		7
Westmeath	4	3	7
Kildare	4		4
Kilkenny	3	1	4
Leitrim	4		4
Longford	4		4
Monaghan	4		4
Wicklow	3	1	4
Laois	3		3
Carlow	1		1
Louth	1		1
<b>Total</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>266</b>

## Chambers Ireland support the Postmasters in its pre-Budget submission

“Post Offices act as a fulcrum for local businesses with 98% of the population within 10km of a Post Office. Post Offices support local economies and ensure access to cash and communications, while the Post Office network currently stands at 886 offices nationwide, employing approximately 3,500 people. In recent years Postmasters who run the majority of Post Offices have received direct Government funding. This support should be established on a permanent basis to ensure that Post Offices can continue contributing to social cohesion, supporting local businesses, facilitating community banking and maintaining access to cash”.

## Thank You for Your Support

The Irish Postmasters’ Union sincerely thanks all TDs, Senators and Councillors who have consistently called for €15 million in annual investment in the Post Office network.

This growing cross-party support underlines the strong connection people have with their local Post Offices and the essential services they provide.

With Budget 2026 fast approaching, your support is vital to securing the investment needed to keep Post Offices at the heart of community and economic life.