

Lead topic: Elections	Sub-topic: Election Costs	Contact: Linda Smith Ext: 5840
------------------------------	----------------------------------	---

FAST FACTS

- **The cost of holding General Election 2011 was €29m.**
- **A single poll referendum costs c. €12.8m and a two poll referendum c. €14.4m.**
- **The Seanad Election in 2011 cost €2.4m**
- **The main categories of election costs are postage costs for candidate election material, postage costs for polling cards, Returning Officer staff costs (poll staff and count staff).**
- **The difference in cost between a General Election and a Referendum is mainly postal costs for candidate's election material (€11.607m in GE 2011), refund of candidate expenses (€2.84m in GE 2011) and additional staff costs for the count.**
- **Postal Costs have risen by more than 10% since 2011.**
- **Postal costs have been reduced for the European Elections and Bye-elections as the candidate's election material is now, where possible, only sent to each household rather than to each person on the Register. This required the commencement of a Section 78(c) of the Electoral Act 1997.**
 - **This has yielded savings of €4.3m for the European Election and if the applied to the next General Election an anticipated saving of €3.6m.**

Q&A'S

- **What has been done to reduce the significant cost of elections?**
 - **Cost containment and savings have been achieved in recent years by reducing Returning Officer staff costs by lowering the rates paid in the Elections Charges Order, and in conjunction with the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government reducing postage costs by limiting the sending of candidate election material to each household rather than to each person on the Register of Electors.**
 - **Limiting the entitlement to send election material to each household yielded savings of €4.3m in the European elections and applying 2011 postal costs would yield savings of c. €3.6m in the next General Election.**
 - **The exact saving will not be known until the number of candidates is known.**