

SUPPORT LOCAL JOBS AND REVENUE BY REDUCING PUNITATIVE NIGHTCLUB FEE

- **The Irish Nightclub Industry Association (INIA)** is the national representative body for nightclub owners and operators in the Republic of Ireland. The industry comprises approximately 300 venues nationwide, employing 2,400 full time equivalent jobs, and entertains some 500,000 people on average every week.
- Nightclubs are a key element of our night-time economy, tourist offering, and are significant generators of local revenue and employment for communities throughout Ireland.
- Despite this, there is no current legislation covering the definition of a nightclub.
- 130 nightclubs –or one in four of the overall total – have gone out of business in the last three years.
- Alongside the economic downturn, the current €410 Special Exemption Order fee is seriously impacting individual nightclubs' ability to trade
- At present, a large nightclub operating 360 nights every year and trading 18 hours every week pays €148,000 annually for SEOs. This contrasts with the €3,805 annual fee charged to publicans for trading the maximum 90 hours a week, or the €1,500 annual fee for off-licences trading up to 78.5 hours per week.
- A return to the pre-2008 €200 fee (via a straightforward statutory instrument) would just about allow nightclubs to break even on a nightly turnover of €2000. However, the reduced fee would also allow nightclubs to operate additional nights, generating further income and tax flow to the exchequer.
- A reduction in the fee for SEOs to €200 per order would be Exchequer neutral and a win-win by boosting the hospitality industry, saving jobs, and generating further excise and VAT revenue for the State.
- The reduction in the SEO fee is the first step in the wider reform of the licensing system, including the introduction of a Nightclub Permit that will provide a legislative basis for the operation of a nightclub incorporating the highest standards of trading.