European Centre of Expertise (ECE) in the field of labour law, employment and labour market policy

Labour Market Policy Thematic Review 2018: An analysis of Personal and Household Services to support work life balance for working parents and carers

Ireland

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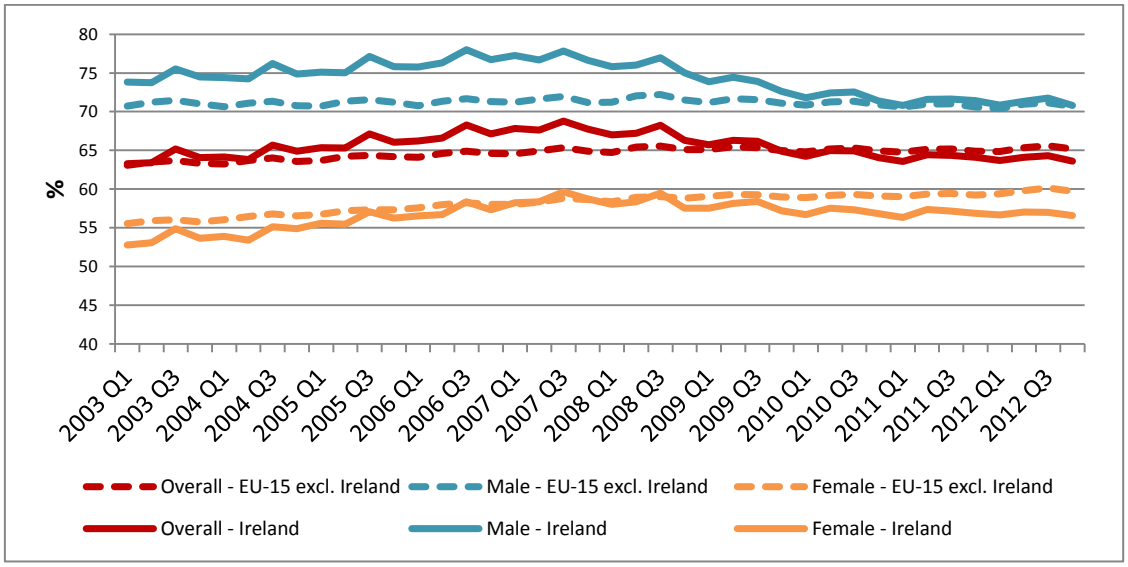
1 Introduction

The principal drivers of the rise in the demand for personal and household services in Ireland appear to have been the increase in female labour force participation, an ageing population, and the increase in one parent families. In addition, the increase in migration from eastern European countries has offered a supply of affordable household services such as cleaning, gardening, etc. which is likely to have also stimulated demand.

In terms of participation rates, which are particularly relevant for childcare services, female participation increased substantially in the decade before the economic crisis and, following a decline at the onset of the crisis in 2008, has since stabilised (Redmond and Whelan, 2017). This can be seen in Figure 1 showing the participation rates for males and females aged 15-74 years. While the female participation rate in Ireland is below the EU average, the male participation rate is slightly higher and, consequently, the overall participation rate for Ireland is quite similar to the EU average, at approximately 6 %. Bercholz and Fitzgerald (2016) find that the recent economic crisis had a particularly significant impact on women under the age of 30, who remained in education in their 20s for a longer period than before the crisis. Furthermore, the authors suggest that the educational attainment among women aged 30 and over will continue to increase in Ireland over the next decade corresponding with a further increase in female labour force participation among this cohort.

Figure 1. Participation rates, 2001-2016, %



Source: EU Labour Force Survey.

Note: Expressed as a % of the population aged 15-74

Despite the upward trend in participation rates, females in Ireland still face substantial barriers to full labour market integration. McGinnity, Russell and Murray (2015) using 2012 OECD data show that the net childcare costs amount to just over 27 % of the family's net income in Ireland, for a dual-earner family earning 150 % of the average wage and using full-time childcare arrangements. This compares to an OECD average of just over 12 % and an EU average of 11 %. For a single-parent family, the net costs of childcare are shown to be even higher in Ireland, representing 40 % of the family's net income, for a single-parent family in 2012 where the parent is earning 50 % of the average wage.

In order to examine personal and household services, given the very limited nature of the research available currently for Ireland, our methodological approach focusses on data from the Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) for Quarter 2 in 2017 and additional special modules on Childcare in 2016 and Caring in 2009. In addition to this, we undertook three qualitative interviews with one public service representative from the Workplace Relations Commission and two researchers based at the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) who have conducted research in this area.[1] It should also be noted that on 28 August 2014 Ireland ratified the ILO convention 189 (Domestic Workers Convention, 2011) which outlines specific proposals for the rights of domestic workers.

2 Description of main measures put in place to support Personal Household Services in Ireland

With respect to government interventions and policies in the area of personal and caring services, that potentially support working parents and work-life balance, the principal focus has been on efforts designed to help alleviate the high cost of childcare. Consequently, recent years have seen governments implement a number of childcare schemes including; the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE), Community Childcare Subvention, Affordable Childcare Scheme, Training and Employment Childcare. In addition to the introduction of these schemes, since September 2016 new fathers are entitled to paternity leave of two weeks from employment and self-employment. More detailed descriptions of these policy initiatives are listed below:

- *Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme* (ECCE) – this was introduced by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) in January 2010 and represents the most substantive policy initiative in the area. The scheme provides the parents of children aged between 3 and 5 and a half years with one year free childcare. This scheme is available to all parents and does not depend on employment status. This covers 3 hours per day five days a week. For the academic year 2017/18, 4 248 childcare facilities were offering the scheme with 120 601 children participating. Just over three quarters of the providers were private. The total value of the contracts was EUR 263 014 209 representing an increase of 48 % on the previous year (Pobal, 2017). Beginning in September 2018, all children between 2 years and 8 months and 5 years and 6 months will be entitled to a total of 76 weeks on the scheme.
- *Community Childcare Subvention (CCS)* – This scheme offers childcare at reduced rates to disadvantaged parents in training, education or low paid employment. In terms of eligibility, this scheme covers children up to age 15 and a child is only eligible if they are not enrolled on any other Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) childcare programme. The CCS is only available through participating non-for-profit childcare services and covers the full academic year from September to August (52 weeks). In 2016/17, 19 609 parents benefitted from this scheme and 24 715 children. There were a total of 1 728 service providers of which 47 % were private. In 2016/17, the total value of the CCS scheme was EUR 39 760 909 (Pobal, 2017).
- *Training and Employment Childcare (TEC)* – This scheme provides childcare places at reduced rates for applicants to community employment and training programmes who require childcare in order to take up a place on the scheme In

[1] Contact details are provided in Section 2.7.

2016/17, 4 006 parents/guardians benefited from the scheme and 5 931 children (Pobal, 2017). The scheme is composed of the following 3 programmes:

- *Childcare Education and Training Support Programme* - provides childcare for children of eligible parents taking part in community training courses.
- *After School Childcare Scheme* – This is specifically targeted at low income unemployed individuals in order to encourage a return to work. It provides subsidised after school childcare for individuals who have children in primary school, if they find employment, increase their number of days in work or take up a place on an employment support scheme (Citizens Information, 2017).
- *Community Employment Childcare Programme* – This provides childcare for children of eligible parents taking part in community employment schemes.

- *Affordable Childcare Scheme* - This scheme is composed of both a universal subsidy of up to EUR 1 040 per year for children up to the age of 3 and support for low income families of up to EUR 145 per week for children up to 15 years of age. For low income families, the subsidy also depends on both parents working (and one parent in the case of lone parents), eligible for up to a maximum of 40 hours of childcare per week. In the case, where one or both parents are not working, the state will pay the subsidy for up to a maximum of 15 hours of childcare per week. This scheme was originally announced in the 2017 budget with the aim of combining targeted subsidies such as CSS and TEC into one scheme. However, this has yet to be fully streamlined to date but this new scheme will replace the existing targeted childcare programmes (CSS and TEC) with a single, streamlined scheme and will include care for pre-school and school-age children.[2]
- *Paternity leave* – Since September 2016, new fathers are entitled to paternity leave from employment or self-employment. The Paternity Leave and Benefit Act 2016 provides for statutory paternity leave of 2 weeks. There is no obligation for employers to pay employees who are on paternity leave unless stipulated in the employment contract. However, paternity benefit is available from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection for those with sufficient pay relation social insurance (PRSI) contributions.

In 2017, the Minister for Children and Youth affairs announced that EUR 4 million worth of funding would be provided to increase the quality and quantity of childcare services. The bulk of this (EUR 3 million) would go towards additional childcare places with the rest spent on building improvements and maintenance, and outdoor play areas (Pobal, 2017).

In relation to long-term care, the government put into operation two main schemes: The Home Help Scheme and the Nursing Home Support Scheme. More detailed descriptions of these schemes are listed below:

- *The Home Help Scheme* – This service offers assistance to vulnerable people in the community who require assistance with day-to-day tasks as a result of illness or disability. The Health Service Executive (HSE) either provides the service directly or contracts non-profit or private providers to supply the service

[2] For more information see http://affordablechildcare.ie/

on its behalf. This is a measure to help support people in their homes without the need for entering long-term care. In 2015, there were 10 437 million home help hours provided to 15 450 people (Daly, 2016). Individuals who receive care through this scheme do not have to pay and there is no means test for eligibility. The supports provided depend on the needs that are identified for the individual when an assessment is undertaken by a HSE health professional, usually a public health nurse. The service is typically provided for a set number of hours of assistance every day or every week. The scheme generally offers assistance with essential personal care and domestic duties for example, help with personal hygiene, showering, lighting a fire, bringing in fuel, and essential cleaning within the home. The service is not to provide nursing or medical care.

- *Nursing Home Support Scheme (Fair Deal)* - This scheme is administered by the HSE and offers financial support to people who need long-term nursing home care[3]. This is decided on the basis of a "Care Needs Assessment" which determines if an individual is in need of long term nursing home care. Then an application for state support is made which results in a financial assessment to determine the individual's contribution to care and the corresponding level of financial assistance that will be provided from the state. The level of financial aid provided depends on the individual's financial situation. An individual is allowed EUR 36 000 and a couple are allowed EUR 72 000 in savings, which is not assessed[4]. In 2015 the budget set aside for this scheme was EUR 900 million. Should the individual qualify, the HSE provides a list of nursing homes including public, voluntary and approved private nursing homes. The person is free to choose a nursing home once the home has a place and once the home can cater for the individual's particular needs.

In addition, the government offers tax relief for nursing home fees under the general scheme for tax relief on medical expenses, and, tax relief for employment of a carer. Health expenses (allowances, credits, exemptions and relief) on nursing homes in 2015 cost the exchequer EUR 30.4 million and aided 6 400 individuals. An individual can claim tax relief if they employ a carer for themselves or for another family member. The carer can be employed directly or through an agency. In addition, tax relief can be claimed on the cost of employing a qualified nurse. The maximum amount of relief for employing a carer was EUR 50 000 in 2014 but increased to EUR 75 000 in 2015 and has remained the same since then. Also, individuals can benefit from tax credits if they employ a person to take care of themselves or of a relative who is incapacitated. The maximum amount of tax relief that can be claimed is EUR 75 000 and is dependent on the individual's marginal tax rate. The total cost of this tax credit was EUR 8.2 million in 2015 benefitting 1 800 individuals. On the other hand, individuals caring for *dependent* persons can apply for tax credits. The Home Carer tax credit is available to those who care for either their child, a person over 65 years of age or a person who is permanently incapacitated. In order to qualify for this tax credit the dependent person must live in the same property as the carer or within 2 kilometres of their home. The credit amount was EUR 1 200 in 2018 but if the

[3] According to irishnursinghomes.eu, nursing homes provide long-term care in a residential setting to older people who require professional or personal care, and who need assistance with daily living.
Internet: http://www.irishnursinghomes.eu/INH/YourHealthGuide/2416)

[4] For more information, see https://www.ageaction.ie/how-we-can-help/information/questions-about-nursing-homes/fair-deal-nursing-home-support-scheme

individual's income is above EUR 9 600 then they are not entitled to the credit. In 2015, 80 900 individuals benefited from this tax credit at a cost to the exchequer of EUR 60.9 million. The Single Person Child Carer Credit can be claimed by an individual who is neither married (unless separated) nor cohabitating and cares for their own child. The value in 2018 was EUR 1 650 per year. In 2015, 66 800 individuals benefitted from this credit at a cost to the exchequer of almost EUR 90 million.

Table 1. Cost of Tax Allowances, Credits, Exemptions and Reliefs in 2015

	Total Cost (€ million)	Individuals
Health Expenses (Nursing Homes)	30.4	6 400
Homecarer Credit	60.9	80 900
Employed Person Taking Care of Incapacitated Individual	8.2	1 880
Single Person Child Carer Tax Credit	89.9	66 800

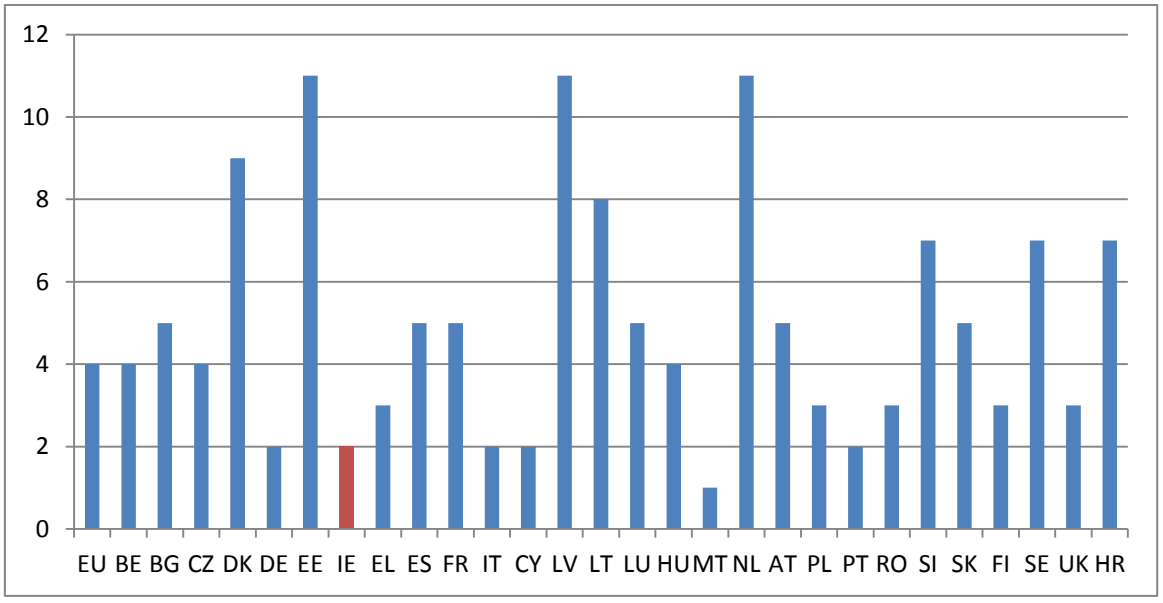
Source: Office of the Revenue Commissioners[5]

We could find no evidence or literature that formally evaluates any of the principal initiatives either in childcare or long-term care.

3 Importance of the undeclared economy for these activities

There is very little evidence available on the undeclared economy in Ireland. However, in 2013 the European Commission conducted a special Eurobarometer survey on undeclared work in the European Union (European Commission, 2014). Just 2 % of Irish respondents reported having undertaken undeclared paid activities apart from regular employment in the past year (Figure 2). This compares with 11 % in Netherlands and 7 % in Sweden.

Figure 2. Percentage of individuals carrying out undeclared paid activities

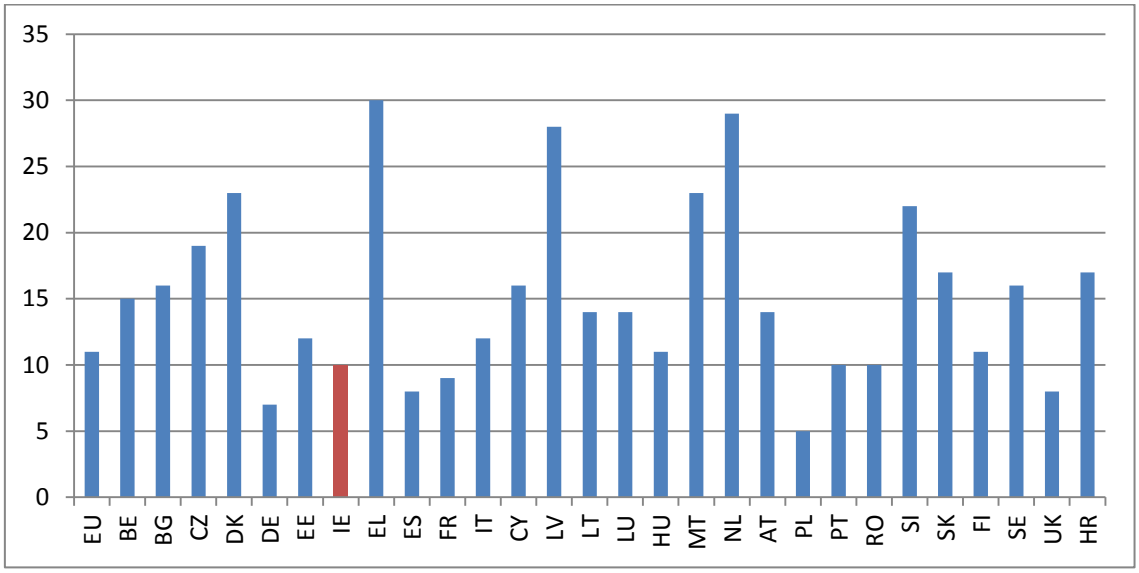


[5]Internet:https://www.revenue.ie/en/corporate/information-about-revenue/statistics/tax-expenditures/costs-expenditures.aspx

Source: European Commission, 2014.

On the other hand, 10 % of Irish respondents reported purchasing undeclared goods and services (Figure 3). This is slightly below the EU27 average of 11 %. It also appears that the proportion purchasing undeclared goods and services has fallen over time as compared to 2007, when a similar survey was undertaken and the number of Irish individuals reported that they have not purchased undeclared goods and services increased by 11 percentage points.

Figure 3. Percentage of individuals who paid for undeclared goods and Services



Source: European Commission, 2014.

Irish respondents were likely to make undeclared purchases of personal and household services, such as home repair or renovations (37 %), gardening products and services (21 %), car repairs (20 %), home babysitting (20 %) and domestic cleaning (13 %).

While across all EU Member States the main reason for making undeclared purchases of goods and services is being able to pay a lower price, only 50 % of Irish individuals report this as the main reason which suggests that implementing tax changes may not solve this problem. Other reasons mentioned by Irish respondents were as a favour to a relative, friend, or colleague (22 %), faster service (20 %), in order to help someone in need of money (23 %), better quality (14 %) and because the good or service was not available on the regular market (9 %).

On the supply side, tax or social security contributions being too high is less likely to be provided as a reason for doing undeclared work in Ireland with just 11 % of respondents reporting this compared with 40 % in Belgium. The most commonly reported reason in Ireland was the lack of jobs on the regular market with 36 % reporting this as the reason.

No recent data exists for Ireland regarding hourly rates or wages in the undeclared economy. However, responses to questions concerning the hourly cost of undeclared services and the amount earned from undeclared activities are reported in the 2013 Eurobarometer Survey. In Ireland, 22 % of undeclared services cost between EUR 6 and EUR 10 per hour (European Commission, 2014) and during this period the minimum wage stood at EUR 8.65 per hour. However, 41 % cost more than EUR 11 per hour with 20 % costing more than EUR 20 per hour, above the minimum wage during this time. Although the answers are banded and the upper band is uncensored

(being above EUR 20), using this banded information, we estimated the average hourly undeclared wage to be roughly EUR 15 per hour in 2013. This was 68.5 % of the average wage in the declared economy which was EUR 21.90 in 2013 (CSO, 2017). In addition, there is another question which asks how much an individual earned from undeclared work in the previous 12 months which may also be informative. Sixtynine per cent of individuals stated that they earned less than EUR 1 000 in the year in undeclared work, 18 % earned more than EUR 1 000 while 13 % did not answer. This indicates that the overall annual income earned from undeclared work for individuals is relatively small. Furthermore, the tax wedge in Ireland was estimated at 27.1 % in 2016 (OECD, 2017) which was relatively low compared to the OECD average (36 %) thus helping to minimise the disincentive to employ low-skilled workers which include those employed in personal and household services.

Therefore, the incidence of undeclared work in Ireland is relatively low by international standards and while activities in the area are concentrated in the purchase and supply of personal services, the primary motivation for engaging in such transactions are not tax related.

4 Statistical information

In order to provide an overview of the shares of employment in care and non-care activities, we analyse the Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) for Quarter 2 in 2017. In our approach workers are identified on the basis of the ISCO codes that are most relevant within the Irish context. In total 4 % of workers in Ireland are employed in a caring capacity categorised under NACE88 which corresponds to social work activities. However, while social work activities incorporates those employed in personal and household services, it also contains social workers not directly related to households. We also, as suggested, examined NACE code 97 which corresponds to private households with employed persons and found that only 0.3 % of individuals in employment were employed in this way in Ireland.

To get a more refined breakdown in terms of the different jobs within care and non-care industries, we use the more refined ISCO based approach using the SOC2010 classification. Due to the small sample sizes, we combine the following occupations into "care activities": nursery nurses and assistants and play workers; childminders and related occupations; care workers and home carers; senior care workers. For non-care activities, we combine: gardeners and landscape gardeners; housekeepers and related occupations; house caretakers; cleaners and domestics. Taking this approach the estimated employment share of carers is 4.2 %, the bulk of whom are engaged as care workers, home carers, and childminders (Table 2). The estimated employment share in non-care activities using our classification above is 2.6 %, where the majority are engaged as cleaners and domestics.

Table 2. Employed individuals in care and non-care occupations in 2017, %

Care	
6121 Nursery nurses and assistants and play workers	0.2
6122 Childminders and related occupations	1.0
6145 Care workers and home carers	2.9
Total	4.2
Non-Care	
5113 Gardeners and landscape gardeners	0.4
6231 Housekeepers and related occupations	0.2
6232 Caretakers	0.3
9233 Cleaners and domestics	1.6
Total	2.6
Sample size	36 529

Source: QNHS 2017, Quarter 2.

Persons employed in care and non-care jobs in Ireland are predominately employees, with the share of self-employed workers slightly higher at 8 % in non-care (Table 3). This implies, along with the small proportion of private households reporting having employed persons (0.3 %), that the share of direct employment in personal household services is relatively small in Ireland. In terms of the gender composition of workers, relative to the population, females are more heavily concentrated in care and non-care professions. However, the difference is more substantial for those employed in care jobs where there are 91 % females as opposed to 59 % female workers in the non-care category (Table 4). This is not surprising given the classification of the categories, "care activities" including mainly child and elder care and "non-care activities" including mainly gardening and household occupations.

Table 5 shows that relative to the total population, employees in care and non-care activities are older (aged 50+), especially in non-care activities. In terms of job quality, the indicators that we have available within the QNHS are educational attainment of employees and job status in terms of temporary versus permanent and full-time versus part-time. Those employed in non-care jobs have relatively low levels of education with 72 % of workers with secondary education or less. Workers in care activities are more likely to hold a post-secondary level qualification, relative to non-care workers and the working population in general (Table 6). Persons employed in care and non-care jobs are more likely to be in positions that are part-time or have temporary employment status compared to other employees (Tables 7 and 8). In 2017, 22 % of all employees were employed part-time, for care and non-care workers the share of part-time workers was 43 % and 59 %, respectively. A total of 7 % of all employees were employed on temporary contracts, for care and non-care workers the share of workers on temporary contacts was 10 % and 13 %, respectively.

The total share of non-Irish migrant workers in Ireland in 2017 was 12 % and while the compositional share was similar for care workers, non-care workers had a much

greater share of non-Irish workers at 30 % (Table 9). In addition, in terms of care activities, the average wage for staff working with children was EUR 11.93 per hour, with this figure varying depending on level, with managers earning EUR 14.75 per hour while it was EUR 10.88 per hour for assistants. For the year 2016/2017 there was a staff turnover rate of around 28 % (Pobal, 2017).

Table 3. Percentage of employed individuals in care and non-care jobs by employment status in 2017, %

	Employee	Self-Employed without Employee	Other	Total	N
Care	97	[2]	[1]	100	1 531
Non-Care	90	8	[2]	100	945
Total	84	11	5	100	36 529

Source: QNHS 2017 Quarter 2. Estimates for number of persons where there are less than 30 persons in a cell are too small to be considered reliable. These estimates are presented with an asterisk (*) in the relevant tables. Where there are 30-49 persons in a cell, estimates are considered to have a wider margin of error and should be treated with caution. These cells are presented with parentheses [ ].

Table 4. Percentage of employed individuals in care and non-care jobs by gender in 2017, %

	Female	Male	Total	N
Care	91	9	100	1 531
Non-Care	59	41	100	945
Total	47	53	100	36 529

Source: QNHS 2017, quarter 2.

Table 5. Percentage of individuals in care and non-care jobs by age group in 2017, %

	Age 15-29	Age 30-50	Age 50 +	Total	N
Care	19	49	32	100	1 531
Non-Care	13	41	46	100	945
Total	19	51	30	100	36 529

Source: QNHS 2017, quarter 2.

Table 6. Percentage of individuals by care versus non-care jobs and education in 2017, %

	Secondary education	Post	Bachelor's Degree or	Total	N

	or less	Secondary	more		
Care	31	49	20	100	1 491
Non-Care	72	19	9	100	889
Total	39	26	35	100	35 286

Source: QNHS 2017, quarter 2. The sample size is slightly reduced here from complete sample (36,529) due to missing observations.

Table 7. Percentage of individuals in care and non-care jobs by part-time/full-time in 2017, %

	Part-Time	Full-Time	Total	N
Care	43	57	100	1 531
Non-Care	59	41	100	945
Total	22	78	100	36 529

Source: QNHS 2017, quarter 2.

Table 8. Percentage of individuals in care and non-care jobs by temporary/permanent job in 2017, %

	Temporary	Permanent	Total	N
Care	10	90	100	1 445
Non-Care	13	87	100	804
Total	7	93	100	30 320

Source: QNHS 2017, quarter 2. The sample size is slightly reduced here from complete sample (36,529) due to missing observations.

Table 9. Percentage of individuals by care versus non-care jobs and nationality in 2017, %

	Irish	Non-Irish	Total	N
Care	90	10	100	1 531
Non-Care	70	30	100	945
Total	88	12	100	36 529

Source: QNHS 2017, quarter 2.

In 2016, the QNHS included a special module on childcare in Quarter 3 incorporating questions for parents on childcare usage and childcare costs. Table 10 shows the types of childcare used for children aged between 0 and 12 years as being provided by a parent or partner (70 %), followed by unpaid relative or family friend (16 %), crèche

or Montessori (13 %), childminder, au pair or nanny (10 %) and other (4 %).[6] On average for all children between the ages of 0-12 years, the number of hours per week spent in non-parental care is 20 hours. For younger children at pre-school level, 27 hours is the average reported and 14 hours for primary school children (Table 11).

Table 12 shows that 62 % of families only use parental childcare, with 38 % using non-parental childcare. Not surprisingly, family types where couples are both working and lone parents working full-time are more likely to use non-parental childcare (70 %). In terms of educational attainment of mothers, those with post leaving certificate or lower are more likely to solely use parental care, while there is no strong difference for those with third level education (53 % using non-parental childcare).

Table 10. Type of childcare used in 2016, %

Types of Childcare Used	%
Parent / partner	70
Unpaid relative or family friend	16
Paid relative or family friend	3
Childminder / au pair / nanny	10
Crèche / Montessori / playgroup / after-school facility	13
Other	1
Sample size	5 922

Source: CSO, QNHS, Special Module on Childcare, 2016 Q3

Table 11. Average number of hours per week spent in non-parental childcare, by school-going status in 2016, %

	Pre-school children	Primary school children	All children aged 0-12
Average number of hours per week spent in non-parental childcare	27	14	20
Type of childcare			
Unpaid relative or family friend	21	13	16
Paid relative or family friend	24	14	17
Childminder / au pair / nanny	27	16	21
Crèche / Montessori / playgroup / after-school facility	25	12	20
Other type of childcare	19	19	19

[6] Parents can report more than one type of childcare used; therefore the percentages sum to more than 100.

Sample size	1 061	1 341	2 402

Source: CSO, QNHS, Special Module on Childcare, 2016 Q3

Table 12. Use of non-parental childcare by family type and educational attainment of mother, 2016

	Use non-parental childcare	Do not use non-parental childcare	Sample size
State Total	38	62	5 787
Family Type			
Couple – All	39	61	4 854
Couple - Both working full-time	69	31	1 801
Couple - Both work, one full-time, one part-time	44	56	1 088
Couple - One full-time, one unemployed	28	72	139
Other couple type	7	93	1 826
Lone parent - All	36	64	933
Lone parent - working full-time	70	30	200
Lone parent - working part-time	54	46	254
Lone parent - unemployed	12	88	60
Lone parent - economically inactive	11	89	407
Other	*	*	12
Educational attainment of mother			
Primary or below	7	93	169
Lower secondary	17	83	397
Higher secondary	28	72	1 219
Post leaving certificate	36	64	1 835
Third level	53	47	2 100
Not stated	37	63	67

[1]Figures in parentheses [ ] indicate percentages based on small numbers, and are, therefore, subject to a wide margin of error.

Source: CSO, QNHS, Special Module on Childcare, 2016 Q3.

In 2016, the cost of childcare was shown to differ depending on the type of childcare used. For pre-school children, a paid relative cost an average of EUR 3.60 per hour compared to EUR 4.50 for a childminder/nanny and EUR 4.70 for a crèche/Montessori. For primary school children the average cost was slightly higher with a paid relative

costing an average of EUR 4.50 per hour, a childminder/nanny costing EUR 5.70 per hour on average and a crèche/Montessori EUR 5.90 per hour (QNHS, 2017).

In the QNHS special childcare module in 2016, additionally parents were asked whether they had access to high quality childcare. Just over half (52 %) said that they strongly agreed/agreed with the statement, 25 % neither agreed nor disagreed while 20 % strongly disagreed and 3 % did not respond. While there are many schemes in place in Ireland to help support the cost of childcare (see Section 2.1), 43 % of individuals were found to 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree' with the statement "I have access to affordable childcare in my community" while 28 % 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' with the remainder neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

Another data source that we use is a special module on carers from 2009, Quarter 3, which is part of the QNHS. It should be noted that the data is now quite old and we cannot be sure that it remains representative of the situation in Ireland. However, the focus of this module was on those providing unpaid informal care. Of all individuals aged 15 years and over, 8 % reported providing unpaid help or assistance to another person (Table 13). Females were significantly more likely to be carers at 10 % as opposed to males at 6 % of the population. Carers were predominately aged between 45 and 64 and more likely to work part-time. There were no strong differences across education levels of carers. Table 14 shows the type of carer, hours caring per week and the duration of caring in years by living arrangements (same household or not). Carers living in the same household as the person cared for were more likely to be the sole carer than those caring for people in other households (CSO, 2010). Furthermore, 53 % of carers who resided in the same household as the person cared for were the person's only carer, so they had no one sharing the responsibility with them. Among those caring for someone living in another household 32 % of persons were the only care giver for the person receiving their support and a further 28 % were the persons main carers solely (15 %) or jointly (13 %). On average the time spent caring was less than 15 hours. However, the hours of caring varied according to living arrangements with 50 % of those caring for someone in the same household working more than 57 hours per week. Twenty per cent of carers had been caring for their main dependent for more than 10 years.

Table 15 shows the relationship with the person cared for and the living arrangements (same household or not) with the number of hours per week. The most common relationship to the carer is a parent or parent-in-law (43 %), followed by a child (19 %), spouse/partner (11 %), other relative (11 %) and other (16 %). In terms of financial assistance or supports, 87 % of carers reported that they were not in receipt of any financial support. However, the most common type of allowance was the carer's allowance.

Table 13. Percentage of persons aged 15 years and over who were carers, 2009

	Male	Female	Total
Carers	6	10	8
Age			
15 - 29 years	2	4	3
20 - 44 years	5	10	7
45 - 64 years	10	16	13
65+	7	8	8
Education			
Primary or below	7	10	9
Lower secondary	7	10	8
Higher secondary	5	11	8
Post leaving certificate	5	11	8
Third level non degree	6	10	8
Third level degree or above	6	8	7
Economic Activity			
Full-time work	5	8	6
Part-time work	7	12	10
Unemployed	6	10	7
Economically inactive (15-64)	6	11	9
Economically inactive (65+)	7	8	8
Sample size	8 757	12 784	21 541

Source: QNHS, 2009, Quarter 3, special module

Table 14. Type of carer, hours caring per week and duration of caring by whether caring for someone in the same household or not, 2009 %

	Caring for someone in the same household	Caring for someone in another household	Total
Type of Carer			
Only carer	53	32	40
Sole main carer	30	15	21
Joint main carer	5	13	10
Not main carer	12	39	29
Hours per week			

<15	19	72	52
15-56	22	23	22
57+	50	3	21
Varies – 15 hours+	10	3	5
Time spent caring for main dependent			
Less than 6 months	3	7	6
6 months, <1 year	4	10	8
1 <3 years	21	32	28
3 < 5 years	21	20	20
5 < 10 years	18	18	18
10 < 15 years	12	7	9
15 < 20 years	6	2	3
20 + years	14	4	8
Sample size	744	171	1 971

Source: QNHS, 2009, quarter 3, special caring module

Table 15. Relationship of person cared for to carer by whether caring for someone in the same household or not, hours per week caring %

	Caring for someone in same HOUSEHOLD	Caring for someone in another household	>15 hours per week	All Carers
Relationship to Carer				
Spouse/partner	30	0	21	11
Child	34	10	28	19
Parent or parent-in-law	26	54	40	43
Brother / sister	5	6	4	6
Other relative	5	14	5	11
Other relationship	1	15	3	10
Sample size	744	1 227	991	1 971

Source: QNHS, 2009, quarter 3, special caring module

Table 16. Carers by whether they receive financial support and what type by whether caring for someone in the same household or not %

	Caring for someone in the same household	Caring for someone in another household	Total
Financial support			
Yes	28	3	13
No	72	97	87
Type of allowance			
Carers allowance (full rate)	15	2	7
Carers allowance (half rate)	6	1	3
Carers benefit	2	0	1
Respite care grant	2	0	1
Domiciliary care allowance	3	0	1
Other financial support	2	0	1
Sample size	*744*	1 227	1 971

Source: QNHS, 2009, quarter 3, special caring module

5 Collection of information concerning the difficulties faced by families on work-life balance

There is relatively little information on the difficulties facing individuals with caring responsibilities, however, some insights can be drawn again from the special module on carers from 2009, Q3, in the QNHS focussing on those providing unpaid informal care. Table 17 shows how carers' health/lifestyle has been affected by caring. In this we see that 66 % of carers say that their health/lifestyle has been affected by caring. Most commonly, they report that caring has been confining, led to family adjustments and changes to personal plans. More specifically, 23 % reported making work adjustments, 19 % report financial strain, while 23 % reported feeling completely overwhelmed.

Table 17. How carers' health/lifestyle has been affected by caring %

	Total
Sleep is disturbed	28
Is inconvenient	31
Is a physical strain	24
Is confining	44
Has been family adjustments	43

Changes to personal plans	40
Emotional adjustments	27
Some behaviour is upsetting	25
Upsetting to find change in carer	32
Work adjustments	23
Financial strain	19
Feeling completely overwhelmed	23
Other effects on lifestyle	26
No effect on health or lifestyle	34
Has effect on health or lifestyle	66
Sample size	1 971

Source: QNHS 2009, Q3 special module on elderly care

In terms of work-life balance, the QNHS in 2005 contained information that allows us to gain some insights, albeit somewhat dated, on the extent to which carers would like to change their work caring balance and whether they wanted a job or not (Tables 18 and 19). Of the individuals with caring responsibilities, 83 % stated that they would not like to change their current balance while 9 % stated that they would like to increase care and work less and 6 % would like to reduce care and work more. For female carers 9 % reported that they would like to reduce care and increase work compared to 2 % of males. Furthermore, those carers aged less than 25, unemployed or economically inactive and lone parents were more likely to want to reduce care and work more. Table 19 shows that 14 % of carers want a job. Males, those under 25 and lone parents are more likely to want a job which is somewhat consistent with the findings from Table 18.

Table 18. Persons aged 15 to 64 with caring responsibilities[1], by whether or not they would change the balance between work & caring, 2005

	Want to change work caring balance				%
	No would not change	Yes reduce care to work more	Yes increase care to work less	Not Stated	Total
State	82.8	5.8	9.0	2.4	100.0
Sex					
Male	88.6	2.0	7.7	1.7	100.0
Female	78.3	8.8	10.0	3.0	100.0
Age group					
Under 25	77.2	11.3	6.3	5.1	100.0
25-44	80.6	6.4	10.7	2.3	100.0
45-64	88.9	3.4	5.3	2.3	100.0
ILO Economic status					
In employment	84.1	2.5	12.4	1.0	100.0
Unemployed	67.7	22.3	*	7.6	100.0
Not economically active	80.9	12.7	0.7	5.6	100.0
Family status					
Couple no children	87.4	4.1	6.0	*	100.0

Couple with children	83.8	4.5	9.7	2.0	100.0
Lone parent	72.4	15.8	6.7	5.1	100.0
Not in a family unit	89.5	3.4	4.3	2.8	100.0
Type of care					
Children of household	82.5	5.6	9.8	2.2	100.0
Other children	85.2	6.0	3.7	5.1	100.0
Adults	83.4	7.3	7.0	2.3	100.0

Source: CSO Note: Caring responsibilities include having children aged less than 15 living in the household, providing unpaid childcare for children 'other than your own or those of your spouse/partner' providing unpaid care for ill, disabled or elderly relatives/friends aged 15 or over.

Table 19. Persons aged 15 to 64 with caring responsibilities who are not economically active by whether or not they want a job, 2005 %

	Wants a job	Does not want a job	Total
State	14	86	100.0
Sex			
Male	28	72	100.0
Female	12	88	100.0
Age group			
Under 25	25	75	100.0
25-44	15	85	100.0
45-64	8	92	100.0
Family status			
Couple no children	8	92	100.0
Couple with children	13	87	100.0
Lone parent	23	77	100.0
Not in a family unit	18	82	100.0

Note: Caring responsibilities include having children aged less than 15 living in the household, providing unpaid childcare for children 'other than your own or those of your spouse/partner' providing unpaid care for ill, disabled or elderly relatives/friends aged 15 or over.

Russell and McGinnity (2011) use the National Workplace Survey in 2009 to examine the prevalence of work life balance for all workers in Ireland. They found that the average worker experienced some work pressure and work life conflict. In particular, in 2009 they found that 60 % of respondents felt that they were always `too tired to enjoy things at home', almost half reported that the `job takes family time' while 37 % reported that their `family was fed up with job pressures'. On the other hand, flexible working arrangements can help to increase work life balance. In 2009, almost one third of employees were able to access flexitime in their work, 26 % worked part-time (mainly females), 12.4 % worked from home and 9 % job shared.

6 Involvement of employers in helping their workers financially to obtain PHS

There is no evidence in Ireland of employers helping their workers financially to obtain personal and household services.

7 Emergence of new actors

There has been a large increase in sites and platforms offering personal and household services. These platforms typically sell their products and services on the basis that it allows individuals to allocate their time to other activities that they would rather be doing. The following are examples of some sites which are prominent in Ireland:

Care:

- *Home Care Direct* – This platform helps to match carers with those in need of care. The carers are self-employed and choose their hours independently. The platform provides insurance for the carers and assures that the carers are tax compliant. The platform was set up to provide low cost care and better quality.

  Website: www.homecaredirect.ie

- *Mindme* – This platform provides care for elderly people, childcare, pet care and household help. Those requiring a service can post a job and similarly those willing to supply the service can post their profile on the website.

  Website: www.mindme.ie

- *Dream Team Nannies* - This platform provides night babysitting for new born babies. This service can be used regularly or as a one-off. This allows parents to get a good night's sleep and also can be used by parents who tend to work night duty.

  Website: *www.dreamteamnannies.ie*

Non-care:

- *Helping* – This site provides cleaning services to households on a one-off, weekly or fortnightly basis. The site contains the cleaner's profile as well as online reviews from customers. All the cleaners are self-employed and independent and so can choose the jobs that suit them. In addition, the platform provides insurance to all cleaners.

  Website: *www.homecaredirect.ie*

- *laundr* – This site was launched in June 2015 and offers a same-day pick-up laundry and dry cleaning delivery service in Dublin. The team has five members and is still growing.

  Website: *www.laundr.ie*

- *Pristine* - This platform provides residential cleaning and gardening services.

  Website: *www.pristine.ie*

8 Conclusion

This report summarises the situation in Ireland regarding the demand for, and supply of, personal services that support work-life balance and caring. Despite marked increases in the female participation rate over recent years, families in Ireland face some of the highest childcare costs in Europe and, consequently, the bulk of policy initiatives have been focused on tackling this problem. Relatively speaking, and perhaps related to Ireland's relatively young demographic structure, much less emphasis has been focused on long-term care initiatives.

The most substantial intervention in the area has been the establishment of the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE) which guarantees one year free childcare to children aged between 3 and 5 and a half years. To date, neither the ECCE nor any of the smaller childcare and long-term care initiatives have been the subject of formal evaluations. Nevertheless, despite the introduction of some large scale childcare initiatives over recent years, there remains high levels of concern regarding the appropriateness of childcare provision in Ireland. In 2016, 43 % of parents in Ireland felt that they did not have access to affordable childcare in their community. With respect to the informal economy, the purchase and supply of

undeclared services is relatively low in Ireland and, where such transactions do exist, are not primarily driven by tax considerations.

Finally, the evidence base with respect to the work-life balance issues faced by carers in Ireland is very limited. Data from 2009 revealed that of all individuals aged 15 years and over, 8 % reported providing unpaid help or assistance to another person. With regard to work-life balance, data from 2005 indicated that 83 % of individuals in Ireland with caring responsibilities reported that they were happy with their current caring/work life balance.

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Annex 1 Main representative organisations active in this field

Public Services:

Workplace Relations Commission

Suite 2A, Level 200 Building

4000 Atlantic Avenue

Westpark Business Campus Shannon

Co Clare

E-mail: customerservice@workplacerelations.ie

Web: www.workplacerelations.ie

Children's Rights Alliance

7 Red Cow Ln

Arran Quay

Dublin

Phone: +353 1662 9400

E-mail: info@childrensrights.ie

Web: www.childrensrights.ie

Pobal

Holbrook House

Holles Street

Dublin

Phone: +353 1511 7000

E-mail: enquiries@pobal.ie

Web:www.pobal.ie/fundingprogrammes/earlyeducationandchildcare/Pages/Home.aspx

Health Service Executive

Phone: +353 416850 300

E-mail: hselive@hse.ie

Web: www.hse.ie

Research institutes active in PHS:

Economic and Social Research Institute

Whitaker Square

Sir John Rogerson Quay

Dublin 2

Ireland

Web: www.esri.ie

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