

FAMILY CARING IN IRELAND 2026

WHO IS A FAMILY CARER?

Someone who provides regular unpaid personal help or support to a family member, neighbour or friend with a long-term illness, health issue or an issue related to old age or disability
(CSO, 2022)



Family carers provide vital, unpaid care and support to loved ones every single day

WHO CARES?



61%

of family carers are women
(CSO, 2022)



39%

of family carers are men
(CSO, 2022)



11%

of family carers report an ethnicity other than White Irish
(CSO Request, 2024)



67,000

children aged 10–17 provide regular unpaid care
(FCI, 2020)

WHO DO THEY CARE FOR?



69%

care for a person aged 65+

(Healthy Ireland, 2025)



16%

care for a child

THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF FAMILY CARERS

€20 BILLION PER YEAR

(Family Carers Ireland (FCI), 2021)

€244 per week

is the **additional cost** of caring for an adolescent with a 'profound intellectual disability'
(MacMahon, Boylan & Thornton, 2022)

71%

find it hard to make ends meet

(FCI, 2026)

35%

live in households with a total income less than €30,000

THE IMPACT OF CARING



48%

of family carers report severe loneliness
(FCI, 2026)



32%

report bad or very bad mental health
(FCI, 2026)

STATE SUPPORT PROVIDED EACH YEAR



26.7m

home support hours provided in 2025

(HSE, 2026 National Service Plan)



175,000

overnight respite stays provided for people with a disability



106,430

carers receive the Carer's Allowance

DSP (2026, 2026a)



147,000

carers receive the Carer's Support Grant

Men are **3 times** more likely than women to say they are **never able to cope** with their caring responsibilities.
(Healthy Ireland, 2025)

624,190

FAMILY CARERS IN IRELAND



of the population aged 15 and over are providing family care

(Healthy Ireland, 2025. CSO, 2025)

Sources of Information

Central Statistics Office (CSO) (2023) Census 2022 Summary Results

CSO Request (2024) Private request through CSO using 2022 Census Data

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Healthy Ireland (2025) Healthy Ireland Survey 2025. Summary Report

Family Carers Ireland (FCI) (2021) 2022 Pre-Budget Submission

MacMahon, B., Boylan, H. & Thornton, R. (2022) Care at Home: Costs of Care Arising from Disability. The additional costs of a Minimum Essential Standard of Living for a household caring for an adolescent with a profound intellectual disability

Family Carers Ireland (FCI) (2026) The State of Caring 2026

Health Service Executive (HSE) (2026) HSE National Service Plan 2026

DSP (2026) <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-social-protection/press-releases/over-147000-carers-will-receive-2000-carerssupportgrant-payment-this-week/>

DSP (2026a) Personal Communication with DSP Official, April 21st 2026

Central Statistics Office (2025) Population and migration estimates, April 2025. <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-pme/populationandmigrationestimatesapril2025/>



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