



Press Release

16 July 2019

9 in 10 people underestimate the value of stay-at-home parents

Average stay-at-home parent's salary valued less than €30,000 – but figures suggest it could be closer to €44,000

9 in 10 people in Ireland underestimate the monetary value of a stay-at-home parent. This is one of the primary findings of a recent survey from protection specialist Royal London, which found the average salary value people would place on the role of a stay-at-home mother or father was €27,500, while wage figure estimates suggest the actual amount could be nearly €44,000.

The 2016 census determined that there were approximately 454,700 people in Ireland whose principal status was looking after the home or family.¹ Of those people, the vast majority were women (98%) although the number of men in this role nearly doubled in the 10 years up to 2016, rising from 4,900 to 9,200.¹

The Royal London commissioned survey, conducted by iReach, asked 1,000 people throughout the country how much, they believe, it would cost to employ someone to perform the duties of a stay-at-home parent. It also sought to ascertain the prevalence of stay-at-home dads among people in Ireland and found that 28% of people either know someone who assumes this role or they are a stay-at-home dad themselves.

Speaking of the findings, Sara Murphy of Royal London said,

“The role of a stay-at-home parent could be described as “priceless”, but we thought it might be a good exercise for people to consider how much it would cost to replace them in a financial sense, and to contrast this with some real-world wage data.”

The survey found that most respondents (61%) believe the potential salary of a stay-at-home parent would range from €10,000 to €30,000, with €27,500 being the average remuneration for someone performing those duties.

The Survey

Q: Studies have estimated the potential “salary” of the stay-at-home parent. How much do you believe it would cost to employ someone to perform the duties of a stay-at-home parent?

| | Total | Male | Female | 18 - 34 | 35 - 54 | 55+ | Dublin | Rest of Leinster | Munster | Connaught / Ulster |
|----------------|-------|------|--------|---------|---------|-----|--------|------------------|---------|--------------------|
| Less than €10k | 6% | 6% | 6% | 8% | 6% | 3% | 5% | 6% | 6% | 7% |
| €10k – €20k | 30% | 33% | 26% | 28% | 30% | 30% | 29% | 34% | 32% | 22% |
| €21k – €30k | 31% | 29% | 31% | 35% | 27% | 31% | 32% | 28% | 30% | 31% |
| €31k – €40k | 17% | 16% | 19% | 15% | 18% | 19% | 18% | 15% | 17% | 20% |
| €41k – €50k | 9% | 10% | 9% | 11% | 9% | 8% | 9% | 10% | 8% | 12% |
| More than €50k | 7% | 6% | 9% | 3% | 10% | 9% | 7% | 7% | 7% | 8% |

Q: Are you, your partner, any of your family members or friends “stay-at-home dads”?

| | Total | Male | Female | 18 - 34 | 35 - 54 | 55+ | Dublin | Rest of Leinster | Munster | Connaught / Ulster |
|------------------------------------|-------|------|--------|---------|---------|-----|--------|------------------|---------|--------------------|
| I am | 5% | 4% | 6% | 4% | 7% | 2% | 4% | 7% | 4% | 4% |
| My partner is | 5% | 5% | 5% | 6% | 5% | 1% | 6% | 5% | 5% | 3% |
| I have family/ friends who are | 18% | 16% | 20% | 15% | 20% | 19% | 16% | 20% | 16% | 23% |
| I don't know any stay-at-home dads | 72% | 75% | 69% | 75% | 68% | 78% | 74% | 68% | 75% | 70% |

In terms of the occurrences of stay-at-home parenting by men in particular the Royal London survey found:

- The majority of respondents, 72%, did not know any stay-at-home dads.
- Only 5% of those surveyed classified themselves as a stay-at-home dad.

The Costs

Royal London considered the duties of a stay-at-home parent and researched the cost of replacing the jobs they do for the family and in the home. They included some of the ‘top jobs’ parents carry out on a weekly basis such as cooking, cleaning, driving children to their various activities and so on, and the average work-place costs associated with these duties. Royal London’s calculations reveal that the cost to employ someone to do the household jobs normally done by a stay-at-home parent would be an estimated €43,934.

Ms. Murphy spoke of the contrast between perception and reality when it comes to remuneration for the myriad of jobs carried out by a stay-at-home parent;

“The average expected salary of €27,500 is significantly lower than the €43,934 we estimate as the economic cost of a stay-at-home parent, and lower again than the €47, 596 reported by the CSO as the average earnings of a person in full time employment during 2018.”

| Job | Average cost per hour (€) | Estimated hours per week | Total € |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Childminder | 10.06 | 30 | 301.80 |
| Cleaner | 10.02 | 8 | 80.16 |
| Cook | 10.00 | 15 | 150.00 |
| Teaching Assistant | 10.81 | 5 | 54.05 |
| Handyman/woman | 13.75 | 4 | 55.00 |
| Gardener | 11.88 | 1 | 11.88 |
| Taxi Driver | (Estimated average fare) €19.20* | (Estimate number of trips) 10 | 192.00 |
| Total cost per week | | | 844.89 |
| Total cost per year (52 weeks) | | | 43,934.28 |

Stats courtesy of www.payscale.com/index/IE as published on 05/07/19 except * which depicts the average 2018 taxi fare in 2018 according to Lynk Taxi: <https://www.lynk.ie/blog-customers/2018-in-numbers/>

Ms. Murphy concluded,

“When thinking about family finances, being either a stay-at-home mam or dad is obviously irrelevant when it comes to putting a value on your worth. Admittedly, most people are unlikely to spend much time guesstimating the costs of running a home, but it’s worth considering. While the main family wage earner might put mechanisms in place to replace their income should they get seriously sick or pass away, stay-at-home parents may be less likely to place the same emphasis on putting the necessary financial precautions in place.

“As our research shows, homemakers do a myriad of jobs on a daily basis. While it’s unpleasant to think of them not being around to continue this important role, their input into family life would be greatly missed, obviously from an emotional standpoint but also on a more practical financial level. Having adequate Life Cover and/or Specified Serious Illness cover in place can help provide families with a financial safety net to meet some of these ongoing needs and costs, should the unthinkable happen. Sometimes it can be difficult to assess the level of financial protection that you may require, but your Financial Broker can help.”

ENDS

Note to the editor

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Royal London’s Irish office is based at 47-49 St Stephen’s Green, Dublin 2.

Sources

¹ CSO, 2016 <http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-wamii/womenandmeninireland2016/socialcohesionandlifestyles/>

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