



Rising cost of living tops financial worries list for 70% of people

25–34 year-olds report the most financial worry

Two-thirds of young adults cite ability to pay rent or mortgage as their biggest financial fear

Men more concerned about job security than women

Seven in ten adults in Ireland (70%) say the rising cost of living is their biggest financial worry, according to new research from Royal London Ireland¹, a leading provider of life insurance and pensions in Ireland.

The findings also show that 25–34-year-olds are under the greatest pressure, reporting the highest number of people from any age group who are financially concerned.

Highlights from the Royal London Ireland survey include:

- One third (32%) of people nationwide are most concerned about covering their rent or mortgage, a figure that doubles among young adults aged 25–34: 64% say that this is their biggest financial concern.
- Three in ten (30%) are most worried about building retirement savings.
- 29% say that being unable to work due to illness or injury is a primary concern.
- Just over one in five (21%) worry mostly about job security.

Commenting on the findings, Barry McCutcheon, Protection Proposition Lead, Royal London Ireland, said,

¹ Carried out by iReach

“The cost-of-living crisis is still weighing heavily on households across the country. While many people are focused on meeting immediate expenses like rent or mortgage payments, longer-term concerns such as retirement savings and income protection also cause financial stress”.

1. Cost of Living

- Those aged 55+ are most likely to put the cost of living at the top of their financial worries list (77%).
- The cost-of-living pressure is strongest among lower-income groups, with 76% of C2DE adults worried compared with 66% of ABC1s.
- Regionally, concern peaks in Ulster (82%), followed by Dublin (71%) and Munster (71%).

Mr McCutcheon added,

“It’s not at all surprising that rising living costs are the dominant financial concern nationally. The latest CSO’s Consumer Price Index² shows that prices for everyday essentials have continued to rise”.

2. Paying Rent or Mortgage

- Paying rent or a mortgage is a much lower priority for most people aged 55 and over, with only 11% citing it as their main concern, compared with 64% of 25–34-year-olds.
- Regionally, concern is greatest in Dublin, where 36% of respondents cited rent or mortgage payments as their main worry, followed by Munster at 34%.
- Higher-income earners (ABC1) were more likely to be concerned about paying rent or a mortgage than those in the C2DE group (37% vs 25%).

Mr McCutcheon added,

“The data shows that housing affordability is a major concern for younger adults, with 48% of those aged under 35 citing it as a top concern. For many, rent or mortgage payments shape decisions about daily spending, career choices and long-term financial planning. This can mean difficult trade-offs each month between covering essentials and saving for the future”.

² CSO- Consumer Price Index February 2026

³32% of 18-24 year olds cite paying mortgage/rent as biggest financial worry. 64% of 25-34 year olds said the same. Taken together, the average is 48%.

3. Retirement Planning

- Savings and retirement planning is a particular concern for younger adults aged 25–34, with 38% citing it as a key worry, above the national average of 30%. Those approaching retirement age (45–54) also feel the pressure, with 34% concerned.
- Adults aged 55 and over worry about retirement planning less (26%).
- Regionally, the concern is highest in Connacht, where 43% of respondents identified retirement savings as a significant worry.
- Higher-income households are more likely to be focused on retirement planning than those on lower incomes (34% vs 23%).

Mr McCutcheon continued,

“Concerns around the ability to save or plan for retirement is felt strongly by young adults who are often juggling the demands of establishing a career, getting on the property ladder, and starting a family. For many, long-term financial priorities can feel distant when day-to-day costs are rising. By contrast, lower levels of concern among those aged 55 and over may reflect that many are closer to retirement and may already have made some of the key financial preparations needed for later life. The data also suggests that for higher-income households, having the means to save allows for a greater focus on long-term goals like retirement”.

4. Being Unable to Work

- Younger adults are considerably concerned about being unable to work due to illness or injury, with almost half (47%) of those aged 25–34 citing it as a top worry, well above the national average of 29%.
- Concern drops with age, with 26% of 35–44-year-olds and just 21% of those aged 55 and over identifying it as a key concern.
- Higher-income earners (ABC1) are more likely to be worried about being unable to work than lower-income groups, with only 17% of C2DE respondents flagging it as a concern.

Mr McCutcheon said,

“Younger adults often feel more exposed to the financial impact of being unable to work, as they may have fewer savings compared with older adults who are likely to have more financial cushioning”.

5. Job Security

- Overall, concerns about job security are relatively low, but they are more pronounced among younger adults. One in three (33%) of those aged 25–34 cited job security as a top concern, followed by one in four (26%) of 35–44-year-olds.
- Men are noticeably more worried than women, with 26% of men expressing concern compared to 17% of women.
- Regionally, the highest levels of concern are in Munster, where one in three adults (32%) flagged job security as a worry, well above the national average of 21%.

Mr McCutcheon concluded,

“Job security may not be the leading concern for everyone, but it is more pronounced among younger workers. Early in a career, uncertainty can make it harder to manage spending, saving and longer-term financial planning. Speaking to a Financial Broker can help people build financial resilience and plan for their long-term goals”.

ENDS

Notes to editors

About Royal London Ireland:

Royal London Ireland has a history of protecting its policyholders and their families, and it is committed to continue to do so for a long time to come. Our heritage in Ireland is 190 years starting when the Caledonian Insurance Company's first office opened on York Street, Dublin 2 in 1834. Today, Royal London Ireland is owned by The Royal London Mutual Insurance Society Limited – the UK's largest mutual life insurance, pensions and investment company, and in the top 30 mutuals globally*, with assets under management of €228 billion, 8.5 million policies in force, and over 5,000 employees. Figures quoted are as at 31 December 2025.

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

*Based on total 2022 premium income. ICMIF Global 500, 2024

Appendix



Worrying about Finances

When thinking about your finances, which of the following do you worry about most?

	What gender are you?			Age					Region				SES		
	Total	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Dublin	Rest of Leinster	Munster	Connacht	Ulster	ABC1	C2DE
Sample Size	1000	489	511	110	185	209	175	321	297	236	287	122	58	563	437
Rising cost of living	70%	73%	68%	61%	70%	68%	67%	77%	71%	68%	71%	66%	82%	66%	76%
Building savings/ retirement planning	30%	26%	33%	17%	38%	30%	34%	26%	24%	33%	31%	43%	12%	34%	23%
Being unable to work due to illness or injury	29%	26%	32%	18%	47%	26%	35%	21%	26%	31%	32%	29%	20%	38%	17%
Job security	21%	26%	17%	26%	33%	26%	24%	9%	20%	12%	32%	23%	9%	25%	17%
Paying rent or mortgage	32%	32%	31%	32%	64%	33%	35%	11%	36%	30%	34%	26%	15%	37%	25%

Q: When thinking about your finances, which of the following do you worry about most? (Multiple Select, n=1000).

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