



Press Release

42% of People Place More Value on the Role of Stay-at-home Parents Following Covid-19 Lockdowns

However, 85% still grossly underestimate the monetary value of the stay-at-home mam or dad by approximately €20,000

Most Irish people would expect the average salary of a stay-at-home parent to come in at around €28,000, if they were to be paid. However, this is a gross undervaluation of the estimated €49,000 it would cost to replace the “duties” these mothers and fathers perform on a daily basis. These are the primary findings of a survey from leading protection specialist Royal London, which sought to understand the perceptions of adults across the country toward the value of the stay-at-home parent and how these perceptions may have changed over the course of the pandemic.

The survey of 1,000 people throughout the country, conducted by iReach earlier this year, revealed how multiple lockdowns since the pandemic began have changed people’s opinions on the role of parents who stay at home, with 42% of people saying that they believe the role is even more valuable than they had previously thought.

Royal London also compared the financial value perceived by the survey respondents (€28,000 average) with their own calculations drawn from pay-scale data on the monetary value of the homemaker - calculations which suggest that in reality the figure could be closer to €49,000.

The Royal London Stay-at-home Parent Survey

Respondents were asked the following question: **Has the experience of the past year – lockdown and perhaps staying at home to mind children, or seeing others do this – changed your perception of the value of the role of the stay-at-home parent?**

	What gender are you?		Age Breakdowns					
	All Adults	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
Yes – I think the role is more valuable now	42 %	40 %	44 %	59 %	36 %	41 %	46 %	38 %
No – my perception hasn't changed	57 %	59 %	55 %	41 %	64 %	58 %	53 %	61 %
Yes – I think the role is less valuable now	1 %	1 %	1 %	0 %	1 %	1 %	1 %	1 %

Speaking of the findings, Karen Gallagher, Interim Head of Proposition at Royal London said,

“Multiple lockdowns and the widespread shift to working from home have meant that thousands of people throughout the country have experienced a new way of day-to-day living. For people with children in particular, the new Monday to Friday daily routine has been a whole new world, particularly during the periods when no outside childcare was permitted. These people may well have developed a deeper understanding of the range of jobs involved in being a stay-at-home mam or dad. So, it is perhaps unsurprising that more than 4 in 10 people appreciate the role of the stay-at-home parent to a greater degree. Virtually no-one thinks less of the role now – it looks like nobody walked away from this year thinking “stay-at-home parents have it easy.”

Census 2016 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 Royal London says however that when it comes to placing a monetary value on the work done by the stay-at-home parent, the majority of respondents have once again underestimated the cost.

Respondents were asked: **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?**

	All Adults	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
Less than €10k	6 %	6 %	6 %	16 %	4 %	5 %	5 %	5 %
€10 – €20k	26 %	29 %	22 %	23 %	29 %	29 %	22 %	25 %
€20 – €30k	33 %	31 %	34 %	37 %	31 %	35 %	29 %	32 %
€30 – €40k	20 %	21 %	19 %	20 %	18 %	17 %	27 %	19 %
€40 – €50k	9 %	8 %	11 %	4 %	12 %	8 %	10 %	10 %
More than €50k	6 %	4 %	8 %	0 %	5 %	6 %	7 %	9 %

Karen continued by commenting,

“We revisit this question yearly and it seems people continue to underestimate how much it would cost to employ someone to do all the jobs a stay-at-home parent does. This year is no different – with the most popular valuation being between €20,000 and €30,000, whereas, based on our own calculations from real-world wage data, the figure would be closer to €49,000. Interestingly, while 19% of women believed the cost to be more than €40,000, just 12% of men and 4% of 18–24-year-olds felt the same. That said, the youngest cohort (18-24), many of whom spent more time at home during Covid-19, had the highest proportion of respondents (59%) placing more value on the role of the stay-at-home parent.”

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. Included in the calculations were 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 annual cost to employ someone to do the household jobs normally done by a stay-at-home parent would be an estimated €48,904.

Karen spoke of the disparity between people’s perception and the financial reality in terms of placing a cost on typical parenting duties,

“Despite the focus on parenting and family life that has resulted from the pandemic over the last year, we are still a long way off from placing an accurate monetary valuation on the jobs and tasks carried out by stay-at-home parents. The average expected salary of €28,000 is significantly lower than the close to €49,000 we estimate as the economic cost in 2021, and lower again than the €48,946 reported by the CSO² as the average earnings of a person in full time employment during 2019.”

Job	Average cost per hour (€)	Estimated hours per week	Total €
Childcare Provider	11.74	30	352.20
Cleaner	10.57	8	84.56
General Cook	10.48	15	157.20
Teaching Assistant	12.00	5	60.00
Handyman/woman	15.58	4	62.32
Gardener	14.19	1	14.19
Taxi Driver	(Estimated average fare) €21*	(Estimate number of trips) 10	210.00
Total cost per week			940.47
Total cost per year (52 weeks)			48,904.44

Statistics courtesy of <https://www.payscale.com/research/IE/Job> as of 01/07/2021 except *, which provides current average taxi fare courtesy of Lynk Taxi: <https://www.lynk.ie/taxi-drivers/>

Karen concluded,

“It has been a demanding year, particularly for parents with children of school age - there’s been a lot to juggle between work and home schooling, not to mention coping with the effects of lockdown and a lack of social outlets. Everyone’s experience of the lockdowns has been different. For some parents the increase in home schooling and caring duties has been offset by the decrease in other duties, such as ferrying children and teens to sports clubs, lessons, classes, friend’s houses, etc. While other parents have understandably struggled with juggling work and other responsibilities with the often-endless list of tasks that have to be performed on a regular basis to keep a home running smoothly and all its occupants healthy and happy!”

“This survey highlights that while theoretically people might have developed a greater understanding and appreciation of the role of stay-at-home parents, somewhat understandably, most have not fully reflected on the financial costs of this “job”. From a financial planning perspective however, it is an important figure to consider, particularly in terms how a family might cope financially if something were to happen to whomever does this important role. While money can never replace a parent, having adequate Life Cover and Income Protection and/or Specified Serious Illness cover in place can help provide families with a financial safety net to meet some of these parenting costs, should the unthinkable happen. A Financial Broker can help you understand how much financial protection you might need.”

ENDS

Notes 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 Women and Men in Ireland 2016, CSO, 2016 - <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-wamii/womenandmeninireland2016/socialcohesionandlifestyles/>

² Earnings and Labour Costs Annual, CSO, 2019.
<https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/elca/earningsandlabourcostsannualdata2019/>

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