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# Fulfilling work in Ireland

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# Contents

1	Introduction	2
	Concepts and themes	2
	Methods and data	3
	Report structure	3
2	Jobs in Ireland and the Great Recession	4
3	Availability of work	5
	Unemployment	5
	Under-employment	6
	Job seeking behaviour	7
	Discrimination	7
4	Quality of work	8
	Income and pay	8
	Terms and conditions of employment	9
	Job design/flexibility	10
	Opportunities for progression and training/skills	12
5	Work and well-being	13
	Personal agency and engagement at work	13
	Work-life balance	14
	Job satisfaction and sense of 'meaning'	15
	Social connections through work	15
6	Conclusions	16
	References	17
	Annex A – additional tables	18

# 1 Introduction

'Fulfilling work' is a key thematic priority in the Carnegie UK Trust's 2016-2020 Strategic plan.<sup>1</sup> The Trust believes that, while there is no doubt that work has a major influence on wellbeing, simply being in work is not a guarantee of greater wellbeing, given rates of in-work poverty and job insecurity. They are therefore committed to exploring "*the links between work and wellbeing and mechanisms for ensuring that work enhances, rather than harms wellbeing*". This report is intended to inform this exploration. It forms a companion piece to a 2016 report by Ipsos MORI for the Trust on access to fulfilling work in the UK.<sup>2</sup> It also links with the Trust's ongoing work around citizenship ('Citizens Rising') in Ireland.

As with its UK companion report, this report is intended as a short, accessible summary of key quantitative data across key themes identified as of particular interest to the Trust. It is not intended to be a comprehensive account of all available data on every aspect of 'fulfilling work', but rather to highlight key findings across relevant topics in order to stimulate debate about what 'fulfilling work' means and how access to it is distributed in Ireland, as it emerges from the shadow of the Great Recession.

## Concepts and themes

As discussed in our earlier report for the Trust on this theme, the relationship between employment and a wide range of economic, social and health outcomes is widely documented. In comparison with those who are unemployed, those in employment tend to enjoy not only better economic prospects and standards of living, but also better physical and mental health.<sup>3</sup> However, as the Trust have recognised, the precise impact of work on an individual's health

and wellbeing also depends on the nature and quality of that work. Is it secure? Does it pay well enough to enable them to access a decent standard of living? Does it allow them to have a decent work-life balance? Do they find their work 'meaningful'?

It is this broader understanding that is reflected in the Trust's 'fulfilling work' theme. Within this overall theme, the Trust has identified three key sub-themes of particular interest:

- 1) **Availability of work** – Being able to access work is of course a pre-requisite for being able to access fulfilling work. This theme encompasses not only **unemployment** but also **underemployment** (wanting to work more than at present, or in a role which better matches one's skills and experience), **job-seeking behaviour**, and **discrimination**, which can act as a barrier to finding fulfilling work (or indeed any work).
- 2) **Quality of work** – This encompasses many of the so-called 'hygiene factors' commonly referred to in employment research (see Herzberg et al, 1959, for the original exposition of 'hygiene factors versus 'motivators'<sup>4</sup>). Hygiene factors are objective factors relating to the extrinsic conditions of people's work, including **pay, terms and conditions, job security** and so on. Where basic hygiene factors, like decent pay, are not met, this has been shown to have a strong influence on people's dissatisfaction with their employment.
- 3) **Work and wellbeing** – The Trust's final sub-theme relates more closely to those factors identified by Herzberg as 'motivators' – that is, factors relating to the intrinsic nature of the work itself and how this is experienced by workers, including feelings of **job satisfaction**,

1 Carnegie UK Trust (2016) *Strategic Plan 2016-2020*  
 2 Ormston, R and Hope, S (2016) *Work and Wellbeing: Exploring data on inequalities*, Ipsos MORI for Carnegie UK, available at: <https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/carnegieuktrust/wp-content/uploads/sites/64/2016/11/Work-and-Wellbeing-Exploring-Data-on-Inequalities-1.pdf>  
 3 Waddell, G and Burton, A.K. (2006) *Is work good for your health and wellbeing?* TSO, London

4 Herzberg, F, Mausner, B, Snyderman, B (1959) *The Motivation to Work* (2nd ed.), New York: John Wiley

perceived **agency at work, work-life balance**, and related themes. While hygiene factors impact on *dissatisfaction* with work, motivators have been shown to be closely linked with *satisfaction*. Both are arguably required for people to have access to work that is ‘fulfilling’ in the broad sense intended by the Trust.

## Methods and data

Ipsos MORI was commissioned to undertake this work in two stages. First, a brief scoping phase identified key existing literature and analysis relating to the Trust’s key themes. This stage was informed by recommendations from the Trust’s ‘Citizen’s Rising’ steering group and our own searches. Second, further analysis was conducted to supplement these initial findings, primarily using the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS). The EWCS is a European wide survey with a sample of around 1000 people in Ireland. It has been conducted on 6 occasions since 1991, most recently in 2015. As such, it enables both comparisons with previous waves (including those conducted prior to the Great Recession) and with the EU as a whole and with other EU countries. Given the Carnegie Trust’s remit for both the UK and Ireland, we have included comparisons with both EU as a whole and with the UK in particular in this report. The combined EWCS datafile was downloaded from the UK Data Archive for additional analysis by Ipsos MORI researchers using SPSS. The report also includes some limited additional analysis of a number of surveys conducted by the Ireland Central Statistics Office (CSO).<sup>5</sup>

Across both stages of the research, we focused primarily on recent data, in order to provide a picture of fulfilling work in Ireland since

<sup>5</sup> This was more limited in part because our focus was on data which had not already been extensively analysed, and we identified more existing analysis and reporting of CSO data, and in part because we were not able to access the ‘raw’ data for key CSO surveys of interest within the timeframe for this report. However, we have included some additional figures constructed using the table function on CSO’s own website and other websites that use this data (e.g. Eurostat). <http://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/labourmarket/>. It is also important to note that the key sources of data generated by CSO have recently changed significantly – the Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) was discontinued in Q2 2017 and a new Labour Force Survey (LFS) introduced in Q3 2017. Work on finalising the LFS survey data for Q3 2017 is still underway and as a result, there were no published Q3 benchmark figures available at the time of writing.

the country began to recover from the Great Recession. However, the report also makes reference to findings on the impact of the Great Recession on access to fulfilling work, as this is clearly relevant to understanding the current jobs situation in Ireland.

The report focuses in particular on identifying *inequalities* in access to the various components of fulfilling work discussed above, examining inequalities between:

- Demographic groups – specifically by gender, age, disability and income;
- Employment sectors; and
- Regions.

Analysis for this report was undertaken between December 2017 and January 2018, and is based on data available at that point in time.

## Report structure

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 briefly summarises the impact of the Great Recession on work in Ireland – essential context for understanding the current picture with respect to access to ‘fulfilling work’.
- Sections 3 to 5 summarise findings on the three strands of ‘fulfilling work’ discussed above: availability of work, quality of work, and work and wellbeing.
- Finally, section 6 presents some brief conclusions and reflections on our findings.

## 2 Jobs in Ireland and the Great Recession

The impact of the global credit crunch which took hold in 2007/08 was particularly devastating for the Irish economy. Having experienced high rates of growth in GDP from 1996 to 2007, GDP began to contract from 2007. The reasons for this have been widely documented<sup>6</sup> – rapidly rising property prices, a surge in credit, and high levels of house building, all of which left the Irish economy exposed. There was a cumulative fall in GDP from 2008 to 2010 of over 10%. This, in combination with the Irish Government's commitment to guaranteeing the liabilities of the Irish banks, who were faced with huge losses following their lending during the 'boom' years, led to a large fiscal deficit and eventually required a rescue package from the IMF, the EU and the ECB in 2010.

The impact of the Great Recession on the labour market in Ireland was profound. As summarised in Barrett and McGuinness<sup>7</sup>:

- The number in employment fell from 2.114 million in 2007 to 1.821 million by 2011 Quarter 2.
- The unemployment rate rose from 4.6% in 2007 to 14.3% in 2011 Quarter 2. Young people in general, and young men in particular, were badly hit by the increase in unemployment – in Q2 of 2011, 46.1% of men aged 15-19 and 33.7% of men aged 20-24 were unemployed. In part, this reflected the sectors most badly hit by the recession – agriculture, manufacturing, and particularly construction were all sectors in which men were over-represented (in 2007, construction accounted for almost one-third of employment for men under 25<sup>8</sup>).
- Long-term unemployment (unemployment lasting more than a year) also rose, from 1.3% in 2007 to 7.7% in 2011.
- The Irish Government embarked on a series of initiatives aimed at curbing public

6 See Barrett, A and McGuinness, S (2012) *The Irish Labour Market and the Great Recession*, CESifo DICE report for a summary

7 Ibid

8 Kelly, E, Kingston, G, Russell, H and McGinnity, F (2015) 'The Equality Impact of the Unemployment Crisis', *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland*, Vol XLIV

sector wages in order to attempt to boost competitiveness (since a currency devaluation was not possible for a country using the Euro), including a pension levy from March 2009, pay cuts from January 2010, and finally in March 2010 a pay freeze. Collins<sup>9</sup> notes that the fall in average weekly earnings from 2008 to 2014 (when earnings finally began to recover) was greater in the public sector (4.8% compared with 0.4% in the private sector).

In more recent years, this overall picture has slowly but surely improved – unemployment decreased from 187,800 (8.6%) in 2016 Q2 to 141,500 (6.4%) in 2017 Q2, the 20<sup>th</sup> quarter in a row where unemployment had declined on an annual basis.<sup>10</sup> However, employment remains below its pre-recession peak – in 2017 Q2, 2,063,000 were in employment, still some 106,600 behind the 'peak' figure recorded in 2007 (2,169,600 in Q3<sup>11</sup>). In addition, the impact of the recession and the subsequent recovery have not been evenly shared across regions or socio-economic groups. For example, Social Justice Ireland<sup>12</sup> note that while all areas suffered during the recession, job creation in and around Dublin has accelerated in recent years while other areas continue to experience higher unemployment. Meanwhile, although long-term unemployment appears to be falling overall, it continues to account for a bigger share of unemployment than was the case pre-recession, with older workers (aged over 45) accounting for an increasing share of long-term unemployed since 2009.<sup>13</sup>

In the remainder of this report, we focus on recent or current inequalities in access to various aspects of fulfilling work. However, the Great Recession and the subsequent recovery form the essential backdrop against which these findings must be understood.

9 Collins, M (2016) *Employees on the Minimum Wage in the Republic of Ireland*, NERI

10 CSO (2017) *Quarterly National Household Survey Quarter 2 2017*, statistical release, available at: <http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/qnhs/quarterlynationalhouseholdsurveyquarter22017/>

11 Figures taken from tables available on the CSO website, <http://www.cso.ie/multiquicktables/quickTables.aspx?id=qnq37>

12 Social Justice Ireland (2017) *Employment Monitor 4*

13 Social Justice Ireland (2017), Op cit

## 3 Availability of work

As discussed in the introduction to this report, ‘fulfilling work’ is about much more than simply having a job. However, the availability of work is obviously a necessary precursor to being able to access ‘fulfilling’ work. If there are insufficient jobs available for everyone who wants one, in addition to the impact on those who cannot find work at all, it is also likely to constrain the choices available to those in work – they may not be able to find a job that meets their preferences in terms of hours, content, flexibility, etc. In this chapter, we examine patterns in the availability of work, looking not only at unemployment, but also under-employment (when the hours people work or the roles they take do not match their preferences), job seeking behaviour, and discrimination (which can prevent people from being able to access work, as well as having a negative impact on experiences of work itself).

### Unemployment

As noted above, unemployment overall has been falling in Ireland in recent years. In Q1 of 2017, the overall unemployment rate in Ireland was 6.7%, compared with a rate of 8.3% across the EU28 countries (but still somewhat above the rate of 4.5% in the UK).<sup>14</sup> This is a considerable reduction from the rate of 15.5% recorded in 2012, at which point unemployment in Ireland was almost 5 percentage points higher than the EU average (10.5%) and almost double that in the UK (7.9%).<sup>15</sup> Long-term unemployment has also been falling (from 4.4% to 3.1% over the year to Q2 2017, when it also accounted for less than 50% of total unemployment for the first time since 2010).<sup>16</sup> However, these positive headline trends conceal a number of ongoing, and in some cases widening, inequalities:

- As noted above, youth unemployment was a particular feature of the Great Recession. It has subsequently fallen – from 20.3% in October 2015, to 16.7% in October 2016, and 14.0% in October 2017.<sup>17</sup> However, the youth unemployment rate remains substantially higher than the overall rate (6.0% in October 2017). And Ireland still has a higher than average level of 15-24 year-olds who are NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) – 13% in 2016, compared with an EU28 average of 11.6%.<sup>18</sup> Young men remain more likely to be unemployed than young women (15.8% compared with 12.2% in October 2017).<sup>19</sup>
- If young people were particularly badly impacted initially by the Great Recession, Social Justice Ireland have argued that long-term unemployment among older workers is also now a very significant problem. They report that in 2016, among older unemployed workers, 67% had been without a job for more than a year (compared with 29% in 2009).<sup>20</sup>
- Migrants to Ireland were more likely to be affected by the downturn – Kelly et al<sup>21</sup> report that migrants from Africa were particularly more likely (relative to Irish nationals) to become unemployed post-downturn. The most recent figures on employment by migrant status indicate that the unemployment rate among migrants in the labour force remains slightly above that for Irish nationals (7.1% compared with 6.3%).<sup>22</sup>
- The rate of ‘employment exit’ (those at work moving out of employment) was found to be much higher among disabled people compared with non-disabled people between

14 CSO (2017) *Quarterly National Household Survey Quarter 2 2017*, statistical release, available at: <http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/qnhs/quarterlynationalhouseholdsurveyquarter22017/>

15 Figures taken from Eurostat, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tps00203&plugin=1>

16 CSO (2017) *Quarterly National Household Survey Quarter 2 2017*, statistical release, available at: <http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/qnhs/quarterlynationalhouseholdsurveyquarter22017/>

17 CSO, 2017, <http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/mue/monthlyunemploymentoctober2017/>

18 Eurostat (2017) *Statistics on Young people neither in Employment nor in Education or Training*

19 CSO, 2017, <http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/mue/monthlyunemploymentoctober2017/>

20 Social Justice Ireland (2017) *Employment Monitor 3*

21 2015, Op cit

22 Calculated from figures in Table A1 of CSO (2017) *Quarterly National Household Survey Quarter 2 2017*, statistical release, available at: <http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/qnhs/quarterlynationalhouseholdsurveyquarter22017/>

2013 and 2015 (5% compared with 2% among those without a disability). Meanwhile, their odds of entering employment were substantially lower, even after controlling for age, education level and living in a workless household.<sup>23</sup>

- There are regional disparities in unemployment. Social Justice Ireland<sup>24</sup> argue that the Border region was particularly strongly affected by the Great Recession – employment fell by 11% in 10 years from 2007, and unemployment in 2016 was a third higher than in Dublin. It was also slower to recover – employment grew just 1.3% in the year to Q3 2016, compared with the national rate of 3.3%. However, more recent figures indicate that unemployment levels in Border are now more comparable with national rates – 6.6% in Q2 2017, compared with 6.4% overall.<sup>25</sup> The most recent available figures (2017 Q2) indicate that unemployment is now highest in Midland (8.3%) and South East (8.1%), while it is lowest in the South West (4.8%). The figure for Dublin (6.3%) is close to the national average (6.4%).
- The Construction industry was particularly badly hit by the Great Recession – Kelly et al<sup>26</sup> report that “from peak to trough, construction sector employment fell by 65 per cent between 2007 and 2013”. Nugent<sup>27</sup> reports that by Q3 2016, employment in Construction was still almost 50% less than the 270,000 recorded in 2007. Job numbers have been growing in the sector – it saw an increase of 7.7% (10,600 jobs) in the year to Q2 2017<sup>28</sup> – but remain 46.2% below the peak level seen in 2007. Eurofound argue that much of the job loss in construction in countries including Ireland which had seen substantial growth in the years prior to the Great Recession was “reversion to

the mean” and may therefore be unlikely to recover to pre-2008 levels.<sup>29</sup> Wholesale/Retail and Industry, key sectors in terms of size and economic growth, are also both still recovering in terms of job numbers, in spite of growth in recent years (See Annex A, Table A1, and Nugent 2016). On the other hand, there has been net growth in job numbers since 2007 in information and communication (up 29.9% from Q2 2007 to Q2 2017), human health and social work (up 22.7%), accommodation and food services (up 14.1%), and education (up 10.4% – see Annex A, Table A1).

## Under-employment

Under-employment is most commonly used to refer to people who are working fewer hours than they would ideally choose. Nugent<sup>30</sup> notes that in 2004 (pre-recession), the **incidence of involuntary under employment was quite rare**, even for those on temporary contracts. However, analysis for the European Parliament<sup>31</sup> found a **significant increase (26.6%) in involuntary part-time work in Ireland from 2007-2011**. The most recent CSO figures indicate that in Q2 2017, 88,400 people were working part-time when they would prefer to work full-time. This **figure has been declining since 2012** (in Q2 2012, an estimated 156,600 part-time workers wanted full-time employment), though it remains somewhat higher than the figure of 81,400 recorded in 2008 Q3. In 2016, the rate of ‘under-employment’ on this basis was 4.8% in Ireland, compared with 3.9% across EU 28 countries as a whole (the UK rate was similar to Ireland, at 4.9%).<sup>32</sup> It is worth noting, however, that the number of part-time workers seeking full-time work provides only a partial picture of under-employment – for example, it does not include those who are not looking for work, but who might do so if the employment market were more attractive, or those who may be employed in jobs for which they are “over-qualified”.

23 Watson, D, Lawless, M and Maitre, B (2017) *Employment Transitions among people with disabilities in Ireland*, ESRI

24 Social Justice Ireland (2017) *Employment Monitor 4*

25 CSO (2017) *Quarterly National Household Survey Quarter 2 2017*, statistical release, available at: <http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/qnhs/quarterlynationalhouseholdsurveyquarter22017/>

26 2015, Op cit

27 Nugent, C. (2016) *Employment Trends in the Republic of Ireland: a sectoral perspective*, NERI

28 CSO (2017), Ibid

29 Eurofound (2017) *Occupational change and wage inequality: European Jobs Monitor 2017*

30 2017, Op cit

31 Directorate General for Internal Policies, Policy Department A: Economic and Scientific Policy (2016) *Precarious Employment in Europe: Patterns, Trends and Policy Strategies*, European Parliament

32 Figures from Eurostat, available at: <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do>



The incidence of involuntary part-time work in Ireland is particularly concentrated among those in the **elementary professions, women** (11% compared with 6%), and **young people** (20% of all workers under 30 are under-employed, compared with 9% of over-30s).<sup>33</sup> Analysis of CSO (National Household Survey) data by Watson et al<sup>34</sup> showed that between 2010 and 2013, just 31% of disabled people aged 20-59 in Ireland were in work, but most (82%) had at least some work experience and half were interested in working, suggesting that there is also **significant under-employment among disabled people**. There are high rates of under-employment in the **hospitality sector** – analysis of the 2014 QNHS indicated that 20% of bar staff, 20% of sales and retail assistants, and 19% of cleaners and domestic staff are either working part-time when they would prefer full-time, or are willing or available to work additional hours.<sup>35</sup>

## Job seeking behaviour

Eurostat compile figures on the numbers of unemployed people in each country seeking full-time, part-time and self-employment. In 2016, in comparison with the EU as a whole, **people in Ireland were less likely to say they were only looking for full-time employment** (3%, compared with 20% for the EU as a whole and 7% for the UK), and **more likely to say they would consider either full or part-time employment** (81%, compared with an average of 63% across EU 28 countries and 72% for the UK).<sup>36</sup>

## Discrimination

The QNHS included a module on Equality in 2014.<sup>37</sup> This indicated that **6% of people in Ireland had experienced work-related discrimination** in the previous two years, with bullying or harassment (32%) and working conditions (22%) the most common issues identified. The highest rates of work-related discrimination were reported by those who were unemployed (17%) and from non-white ethnic backgrounds (14%).

Among those who were in work, people most commonly reported being discriminated against on grounds of their **race** (28%) and **gender** (17%), while those who reported experiencing discrimination when seeking work were most likely to believe this was based on their **age** (46%) or their **race/ethnicity/nationality** (20%).

The European Working Conditions Survey 2015 identified very similar rates of reported discrimination – 7% of employees in Ireland reported having experienced discrimination at work in the previous 12 months (the same proportion as in the UK and the EU28 average). **Migrants to Ireland** were particularly likely to report experiencing discrimination at work (16% compared with 5% of Irish nationals). Those in **Dublin** (11%) and the rest of Leinster (9%) were also relatively more likely to report work-related discrimination compared with those in Connacht (5%) and Munster (2%).<sup>38</sup>

33 Nugent, C. (2017) *A time-series analysis of precarious work in the elementary professions in the Republic of Ireland*, Nevin Economic Research Institute

34 Watson, D, Lawless, M and Maitre, B (2017) *Employment Transitions among people with disabilities in Ireland*, ESRI

35 EGFSN (2015) *Assessment of Future Skills Requirements in the Hospitality Sector in Ireland, 2015-2020*, available at: <http://www.skillsireland.ie/Publications/2015/Hospitality-Skills-Full-Report-for-Web.pdf>

36 Ipsos MORI analysis of figures available at: <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/>

37 CSO (August 2015) *QNHS Equality*, CSO Statistical release

38 Ipsos MORI analysis of EWCS data

## 4 Quality of work

The themes the Trust has grouped under 'Quality of work' largely relate to so-called 'hygiene factors' – those objective aspects of employment which must be adequately met to avoid workers becoming dissatisfied with their work. It includes decent pay, acceptable terms and conditions, a sense of job security and reasonable hours.

### Income and pay

As discussed in Chapter 2, earnings in Ireland did not finally begin to recover following the Great Recession until 2014. Average weekly earnings increased 2.2% in the year to Q2 2017, to €722.65. However, Eurofound report that although Ireland has amongst the highest median hourly earnings in the EU, it also has a **higher than average percentage of low-paid workers** – in 2014, 21.6% of workers in Ireland earned two thirds or less of national median gross hourly earnings, similar to the figure for the UK (21.3%) but higher than the mean proportion across all EU28 countries (17.2%).<sup>39</sup> Moreover, analysis of job losses and gains across EU countries indicates that **much of the net new employment in Ireland since the Great Recession has occurred in lower-paid jobs**.<sup>40</sup>

There are also significant inequalities in earnings between different socio-economic groups:

- As in many other countries, there is a significant gender pay gap in Ireland – Eurostat report a difference between male and female hourly earnings as a percentage of male hourly earnings of 13.9% in 2014, compared with 16.7% across EU28 countries, and 20.9% in the UK.<sup>41</sup> Collins (2015) reports that 1 in 3 women in Ireland are at risk of low pay.<sup>42</sup> Women under 30 have fared

particularly badly in the wage market in recent years – the mean weekly earnings of women aged 15-24 fell 3.3% 2011 to 2014, while the mean weekly wages of women aged 25-29 fell 3.0% (compared with equivalent figures of -0.2% and +0.5% for men in the same age groups). Among the over 40s, women's mean wages appear to have increased relatively more than men's since 2011 (Ipsos MORI analysis of CSO data).

- Both total weekly earnings and recent trends in weekly earnings vary significantly by sector. Highest weekly earnings are found in the Information and Communication Sector (estimated at €1,084.53 as of 2017 Q2) and Financial, insurance and real estate (€1,029.88), and lowest in Accommodation and food services (€339.38) and Entertainment, recreation and other services (€468.70).<sup>43</sup> Collins (2015) reports that more than 50% of workers in the Wholesale and Retail sector and almost 70% of workers in Accommodation and food services are low paid. Average weekly earnings increased in the year to Q2 2017 in 12 out of 13 sectors. However, wages in the Construction sector still appear to be struggling, showing an annual decrease of 3.6%<sup>44</sup>.
- Wages are much lower among self-employed people than among employees in Ireland. Analysis of CSO data by Collins (2015) shows that, in 2013, the median income among self-employed people was €15,968, compared with €27,619 among employees.
- Post-Recession, there was initially greater recovery of wages in the private sector compared with the public sector. Median and mean weekly earnings for both men and women increased (albeit very modestly) in

39 [http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=earn\\_ses\\_pub1s&lang=en](http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=earn_ses_pub1s&lang=en)

40 Eurofound (2017) *Occupational change and wage inequality: European Jobs Monitor 2017*

41 [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=sdg\\_05\\_20&plugin=1](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=sdg_05_20&plugin=1)

42 Collins, M (2015) *Low pay: some insights*, NERI

43 CSO (August 2017) *Earnings and Labour Costs Quarterly*, <http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/elcq/earningsandlabourcostsq12017finalq22017preliminaryestimates/>

44 CSO (August 2017) *Earnings and Labour Costs Quarterly*, <http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/elcq/earningsandlabourcostsq12017finalq22017preliminaryestimates/>

the private sector 2011-2014, while in the public sector men's wages fell over the same period and women's flat-lined (based on Central Statistics Office data). However, more recent figures show that public sector earnings (excluding census field staff) increased by 2.4% from Q2 2016 to Q2 2017, partly as a result of government policies of wage restoration and Garda overtime payments. Private sector wages rose 1.9% over the same period.<sup>45</sup>

Ireland has had a **minimum wage** since 2000, although there are a number of exceptions and lower rates for groups including young workers under 18, persons employed by a close relative, and apprentices. Collins (2016) estimated that overall, 5% of employees in 2014 (c. 70,000 people) were on the minimum wage (€8.65 at the time), while 5% had an income below that level (including members of the exempted groups, noted above).<sup>46</sup> Analysis by Collins (2016) of CSO Survey on Income and Living Conditions data shows that:

- Women are more likely to be on the minimum wage – they account for 73% of the estimated 70,000 workers on the minimum wage. 7% of all female employees compared with 3% of male employees are on the minimum wage.
- Younger people are also over-represented among the minimum wage group – more than half (52%) of the minimum wage group are in their 20s, while 1 in 5 (22%) are in their 30s. The risk of being on the minimum wage declines with age, from 14% among under 30s to 2.5% among those in their 40s. Collins (2015) also estimates that 60% of 18-29 year-old employees are low paid.
- Large proportions of minimum wage employees work in accommodation and food (23%), and wholesale and resale (26%) sectors. Relative to the size of these sectors the prevalence of their workers on the

minimum wage is high. Social Justice Ireland (2017) also report that agricultural employees are significantly more likely than those in the services sector or industrial workers to earn NMW or less (24% compared with 8% and 10%).

- Part-time workers are much more likely to be on minimum wage – 12% of those working less than 20 hours were on minimum wage, compared with 3% of those working 35 or more hours.

Collins also reports that in 2014, **over a quarter (26%) of employees had an hourly wage below the living wage** (€11.45 at the time, as calculated by the Living Wage Technical Group.<sup>47</sup> Eurofound have also estimated that, **along with Greece, Ireland saw the largest increases in the rate of material deprivation among workers** from 2007 to 2014.<sup>48</sup> The 2016 Survey of Income and Living Conditions showed that **12.6% of Irish workers experienced two or more types of 'enforced deprivation',<sup>49</sup> while 5.6% were at risk of poverty<sup>50</sup> and 1.9% were in consistent poverty.<sup>51</sup>**

## Terms and conditions of employment

A recent study for the European Parliament found that atypical contracting, including involuntary temporary contracts, has **increased job insecurity in Ireland** in recent years.<sup>52</sup> They report a **28% increase in involuntary temporary working in Ireland during the Great Recession** (2007-2011). Temporary agency working was already increasing in Ireland prior to the recession, up 40% between 2004 and 2007.<sup>53</sup> Ireland has been assessed by the OECD as

47 <https://www.livingwage.ie/>

48 Eurofound (2017) *In work poverty in the EU*

49 Including being without heating, being unable to afford a trip out, being unable to afford two pairs of strong shoes, etc. (see CSO (2017) *Statistical Release: Survey of Income and Living Conditions 2016* – <http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/silc/surveyonincomeandlivingconditions2016/> – for full list).

50 Had an equivalised income below 60% of median income

51 Are at risk of poverty AND are experiencing enforced deprivation.

52 Directorate General for Internal Policies, Policy Department A: Economic and Scientific Policy (2016) *Precarious Employment in Europe: Patterns, Trends and Policy Strategies*, European Parliament

53 Eurofound (2009) *Temporary agency work and collective bargaining in the EU*

45 CSO (August 2017) *Earnings and Labour Costs Quarterly*, <http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/elcq/earningsandlabourcostsq12017finalq22017preliminaryestimates/>

46 Collins, M (2016) *Employees on the Minimum Wage in the Republic of Ireland*, NERI

offering relatively weak protection for workers on fixed term and temporary contracts.<sup>54</sup> However, figures from CSO indicate that overall the **share of employment accounted for by temporary contracts has been decreasing since 2012**, from 10% in Q1 2012 to 7% in Q1 2017.<sup>55</sup>

Nugent (2017) notes that the share of **temporary contracts in the elementary professions** is almost double the rate for the economy as a whole (13% compared with 7%).<sup>56</sup> **Women are also more likely to be on temporary contracts** when they would prefer a permanent position (6% compared with 4.5% of male workers), **as are young people** (13% of 15-30 years-olds compared with 3% of over-30s).

Data from the 2015 EWCS data indicates that, compared with the EU average, people in Ireland are **less likely to be on an indefinite (permanent) contract** (71%, compared with an EU average of 79% and 86% in the UK – see Table A2), and more likely to have been **affected by restructuring or reorganisation at work** in the last 3 years (31% vs. EU average of 23%, though similar to the UK figure of 30%). However, subjectively, they **do not appear to be more concerned about job security**. For example, 76% (compared with EU average of 69%, and similar to 74% in the UK) *disagreed* that they might lose their job in the next 6 months, while 43% *agreed* that it would be easy to find another job if they lost their current job (higher than the EU average of 37%, though slightly lower than 49% in the UK).

**Self-employment levels in Ireland increased** by 6.1% between Q1 2011 and Q1 2017.<sup>57</sup> In 2016, self-employment levels for Ireland were similar to that for the EU as a whole (17% compared with 16%).<sup>58</sup> While most (68%) say being self-employed is their preference, the EWCS

2015 shows that **20% of self-employed workers in Ireland said they were self-employed because there were no alternatives for work** (identical to the level who said this across the EU as a whole, but higher than the 14% in the UK who said the same).<sup>59</sup>

In terms of working conditions, the 2015 EWCS shows that workers in Ireland have **no more or less exposure to physical discomfort or risks** (high temperatures, smoke, dust, repetitive tasks) associated with their working environment than the European average. Only low temperatures (24% compared with European Average of 21%), lifting or moving people (13% vs. 10%), exposure to infectious materials (17% vs. 13%) were slightly higher than the European average.

## Job design/flexibility

Recent years have seen increasing discussion about how job design and flexibility can impact on working life. Flexibility – in terms of hours and location of work, for example – has the potential to have a positive impact on work-life balance and employees' sense of control over their work. However, it has also been argued, particularly in relation to zero-hours contracts, that some companies have been implementing flexible arrangements to their own advantage while undermining reliability of earnings, workers' rights, and job security.

Eurostat provide estimates of the proportion of the population working atypical hours (e.g. shifts, evenings/nights, weekends). The proportion of workers in Ireland working **atypical hours increased from 37% in 2011 to 44% in 2016**.<sup>60</sup> In contrast, this figure fell of the same period across both the EU as a whole (from 37% to 35%) and in the UK (from 42% to 38%). The increase in Ireland seems to have been driven particularly by increases in weekend working – Saturday working increased from 22% to 32% from 2011 to 2016 in Ireland, while remaining largely flat in the EU as a whole over the same

54 Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation (2017) *Employment Protection Legislation: Strictness of employment protection legislation: temporary employment*

55 Based on Table 15, CSO (2017) *QNHS Detailed Employment Series Quarter 1 2011 – Quarter 1 2017*

56 Nugent, C. (2017) *A time-series analysis of precarious work in the elementary professions in the Republic of Ireland*, Nevin Economic Research Institute

57 CSO (2017) *QNHS Detailed Employment Series Quarter 1 2011 – Quarter 1 2017*

58 <https://data.oecd.org/emp/self-employment-rate.htm>

59 Eurofound (2017) *Exploring self-employment in the European Union*

60 [http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=lfsa\\_esegatyp&lang=en](http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=lfsa_esegatyp&lang=en)

period. Evening working has actually decreased slightly in recent years (from 16% in 2012 to 12% in 2016).

The **mean weekly hours worked in Ireland are slightly below the EU average** (35.9 compared with 37.1 for EU28 countries as a whole and 36.6 in the UK in 2016).<sup>61</sup> However, the 2015 EWCS estimated that similar proportions of workers in Ireland (26%), the EU28 as a whole (23%), and the UK (27%) worked 40 or more hours of paid or unpaid work each week.<sup>62</sup>

In 2010, 34% of employees in Ireland had a flexible work schedule (meaning that they can decide on their work schedule, at least to a certain extent, like determining the start and end of a working day). This was a substantial increase on the 20% that had a flexible schedule in 2004.<sup>63</sup> More recently, figures from the 2015 EWCS indicate that although only 15% of workers have complete flexibility about their working time arrangements, **42% have some degree of choice over their working-time arrangements** (see Annex A, Table A.3). This was slightly lower than the figures for the EU as a whole (44%) and the UK (48%). However, workers in Ireland were if anything **slightly more likely than average across the EU to report not having fixed start and finish times** (45% compared with 39% across the EU as a whole – see Annex A, Table A.4), indicating that although they do not appear to have greater choice over their hours, their hours may nonetheless be more likely to vary.

Analysis of which groups are more or less likely to have some degree of choice over their working-time arrangements shows that:

- Women are less likely than men to report having any choice over working-time arrangements (34% vs. 49%).
- Those under 35 are less likely to have any choice over their working time arrangements.
- Although low sample sizes for some categories means caution is required in interpreting findings by sector, those working in agriculture and construction appear more likely to have some degree of choice over working-time arrangements, while those in education are least likely to have such choice. Private sector staff are more likely to report having some degree of choice (46% compared with 32% of public sector workers).
- The highest earners are more likely than the rest of the income spectrum to have some degree of choice over working-time arrangements – 60% of those in the top quintile reported some degree of choice, compared with between 35% and 39% across the four quintiles below this. (see Annex A, Table A.5 for detail).

The 2013 European Company Survey indicated that 28% of companies in Ireland allowed most (80% or more) of their employees to adapt their daily start and finish times (compared with 32% across the EU as a whole and 35% in the UK).<sup>64</sup> 61% of companies in Ireland reported that it was possible for all (47%) or some (14%) employees to accumulate overtime for days off (compared with 69% across the EU as a whole and 58% in the UK).

61 [http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=lfsa\\_ewhun2&lang=en](http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=lfsa_ewhun2&lang=en)

62 <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/data/european-working-conditions-survey>

63 <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tqoe3b4&plugin=1>

64 <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/data/european-company-survey>

## Opportunities for progression and training/skills

Levels of access to job-related training and perceptions of the value of this training appear **higher in Ireland compared with the EU average** (and similar to those reported in the UK). EWCS data shows that the proportion of employed people who had participated in job-related non-formal education and training in the past year increased from 38% in 2005 to 51% in 2015 (Annex A, Table A.6). In 2015, 89% of Irish workers (compared with EU average of 84%) felt the training they'd received had improved the way they work. However, **access to training is not evenly shared**, with patterns of access varying between on-the-job and off-the-job training:

- Women are less likely than men to have had training paid for or organised by their employer in the last 12 months, but more likely to have received on-the-job training.
- Middle-aged employees (aged 35-44) are more likely than either younger or older

employees to receive off-the-job training, paid for or organised by their employer, while the likelihood of receiving on-the-job training decreases with age.

- Those in commerce and hospitality are relatively unlikely to receive any off-the-job training.
- The lower your income, the less likely you are to receive off-the-job training. Higher earners are also relatively more likely to receive on-the-job training.
- People in the private sector are less likely than public sector workers to have received either type of training in the last 12 months. (See Annex A, Table A.7).

Irish workers also appear to **feel more positive than average about their career prospects** – 47% felt their job offered good prospects for career advancement, compared with 39% on average across the EU (49% in the UK – see Annex A, Table A.6).

## 5 Work and well-being

A key tenet of the Trust's focus on 'fulfilling work' is that work can and should do more than just meet basic 'hygiene factors' – it should also be capable of giving people a sense of agency, engagement and satisfaction. Their sub-theme around work and wellbeing focuses on these more subjective aspects of 'fulfilling work'. Do people feel a sense of personal agency at work? Are they satisfied with their work, and do they feel it is meaningful or worthwhile in some broader sense than simply paying the bills? They are also interested in the perennial question of work-life balance – are people able to balance their working and non-working lives in a way that promotes their wellbeing?

### Personal agency and engagement at work

The EWCS includes a number of questions relating to agency at work, covering both 'subjective' aspects (for example, the extent to which people feel they can influence decisions that are important for their work) as well as aspects that are arguably more objective (for example, whether people are able to change or choose their order, speed or method of work). Across all of these measures, **workers in Ireland appear to experience levels of agency at work either at or above the EU average**, and often above levels reported by workers in the UK (see Annex A, Table A.8). For example:

- 68% of workers in Ireland reported they were able to apply their own ideas at work 'always' or 'most of the time', compared with 54% on average across the EU (62% in the UK)
- 61% felt they could influence decisions that were important for their work 'always' or 'most of the time', compared with 47% on average across the EU (54% in the UK)
- 59% said they were involved in improving the organisation of processes 'always' or 'most of the time', compared with 49% across the EU (51% in the UK).

Again, however, a sense of agency and engagement with work or employers is not evenly distributed (Annex A, Table A.8). Particular groups who are less likely to feel they have agency at work across these various measures include:

- Women – as well as being less likely to say they can influence decisions that are important for their work (56% compared with 65% of men), they were substantially less likely to report being able to take a break when they wish (42% compared with 64%)
- Young people – although the sample size for the youngest age group in EWCS 2015 is relatively small (n = 79), there are nonetheless clear statistically significant differences in the proportion of workers aged under 25 who report, for example, being able to apply their own ideas at work (52% compared with 65-72% of other age groups) or being involved in improving the organisation or work processes (38% compared with 57-65% of other age groups).
- Migrants to Ireland – for example, migrants to Ireland are less likely to feel they can influence decisions important to their work (49% compared with 63% of Irish natives), or to report that they work for a company where there are regular meetings where employees can express their views (47% compared with 62%).
- Lower earners – lower earners are less likely to feel they can influence their work, and less likely to report having any objective agency in terms of being able to choose or change the order, speed or method of tasks at work.

There is also wide variation in reported levels of agency and engagement by industry sector – overall, those working in **Commerce and hospitality, Transport and Industry** fare particularly badly across multiple measures (Annex A, Table A.9).

Interestingly, while those in the **private sector** were more likely to say they had a choice of work colleagues (33% compared with 17% of public sector workers), that they can influence decisions important to their work (62% compared with 54%) and that they can take a break when they wish (58% compared with 43%), they were slightly less likely to say they could choose the order, speed or method of their work, and significantly less likely to report regular meetings at which employees can express their views (55% compared with 69%), suggesting that the experience of agency at work may be qualitatively different in the public and private sector.

Comparison of EWCS from 2005 (pre-Great Recession) with 2010 (mid-Recession) and 2015 (post-Recession) indicates that on a number of the more 'objective' measures (being able to choose or change order, speed or method of work, for example), Irish workers' **level of agency and control over their jobs dipped slightly in 2010, before recovering by 2015** (Annex A, Table A.10).

Workers in Ireland are also **more positive than average about the support they receive from their manager** – 80% said their manager helps and support them 'always or most of the time', compared with an EU average of 58% (72% in the UK).

## Work-life balance

In response to the Great Recession, many employers sought to reduce the hours their employees worked.<sup>65</sup> As such, average paid working hours have been lower in recent years. However, more recent data shows that **paid hours have increased since 2011/2012**, from a low of 31.4 hours per week (seasonally adjusted, 2011 Q1/Q2 figure) to 32.3 hours (estimate for Q3 2017).<sup>66</sup>

And of course, this average conceals considerable

variation in actual hours. For example, **self-employed people work much longer hours on average** (45.1 hours a week compared with 34.7 hours among employees). Those working in managerial roles work an average of 42.5 hours, compared with 30.2 hours among sales and customer services workers. Those working in the **Agriculture, forestry and fishing sector** had the highest average at 48.2 hours per week in Q1 2017 and the Education sector the lowest at 29.5 hours per week.<sup>67</sup>

The 2015 EWCS includes a number of objective and subjective measures of work-life balance. **Across several objective measures, Ireland appears to perform worse than the EU average** – for example, 45% of workers in Ireland worked more than 10 hours a day at least once a month in 2015, compared with 32% across the EU as a whole (44% in the UK); 59% worked the weekend more than once a month compared with 54% across the EU (59% in the UK); and 21% have a commute of more than an hour to work compared with 16% across the EU (24% in the UK). However, **subjectively people in Ireland appear more likely to feel that their work hours fit 'very well' with their family and social commitments** – 43% of people in Ireland said this, compared with 28% across the EU, and 38% in the UK (see Annex A, Table A.11).

That said, objective and subjective assessments of work-life balance are still closely related – those groups of workers who are more likely to report regularly working long hours are also less likely to report feeling that their work hours fit 'very well' with their family and social commitments. These groups include:

- Men – 56% of men compared with 33% of women said they worked more than 10 hours a day at least once a month. Just 37% of men compared with 49% of women said their working hours fit 'very well' with family and social commitments.
- Migrants – 51% of those born outside Ireland worked 10 hour days at least once a month, and 68% worked weekends, compared with

65 Collins, M (2016) *Employees on the Minimum Wage in the Republic of Ireland*, NERI

66 CSO (November 2017) *Earnings and Labour Costs Quarterly: Q2 2017 (final) and Q3 (preliminary) estimates*

67 Figures from CSO (July 2017) *QNHS Detailed Employment Series Quarter 1 2011 – Quarter 1 2017*



figures of 44% and 57% respectively for those born in Ireland. 38% of migrants compared with 44% of those born in Ireland felt their working hours fit 'very well' with non-work commitments.

- People working in agriculture, industry, construction and transport were all relatively more likely to regularly work very long hours, and relatively less likely to feel their hours fit around other commitments.
- Those on high incomes are most likely to regularly work long hours (69% of the top income quintile compared with 23% of the bottom) and much less likely to feel their hours fit with other commitments (35% compared with 61%).
- People in the private sector – 48% vs. 37% in the public sector regularly worked long hours, and 40% vs. 49% in the public sector felt their hours fit 'very well' with their non-work commitments (see Tables A.13a to A13h).

From 2005 to 2010, there was a dip in the proportion of Irish workers reporting working more than 10 hours a day at least once a month, or working the weekend more than once a month – presumably reflecting cuts to hours imposed during the Great Recession. However, these figures have since increased and the 2015 figures for each were slightly above those recorded in 2010, indicating that more Irish workers are working long hours/weekends than was the case prior to the Great Recession (Annex A, Table A.12).

### Job satisfaction and sense of 'meaning'

The 2015 EWCS indicates that **levels of subjective job satisfaction and perceptions that work has 'meaning' are high in Ireland** – in line with the EU average, and above that recorded in the UK:

- 82% of workers in Ireland say their job gives them have a feeling of work well done 'always' or 'most of the time' (82% EU, 73% in the UK).

- 87% feel they are doing 'useful work' always or most of the time (85% EU, 80% UK).

With such high overall levels of satisfaction and sense of meaning, levels across sub-groups also tend to be high. However, there are nonetheless some significant variations:

- The proportion reporting feeling they are doing useful work always or most of the time increases with age, from 74% of 15-24 year-olds to 94% of those aged 55-64. There is a similar, though less pronounced pattern with respect to saying your job gives you the feeling of work well done.
- Migrants are less likely to feel they are doing useful work always or most of the time (79% compared with 89% of those born in Ireland).
- Those working in transport are least likely (74%) and those in education most likely (97%) to feel they are doing useful work (although given small samples sizes for sector sub-groups, some caution is required in extrapolating from these findings).

There was little variation in feeling of doing useful work or sense of a job well done by income – 88% of those in the lowest income quintile and 87% of those in the highest feel they are doing useful work always or most of the time. Similarly, those in the public and private sectors are equally likely to feel their work is useful, and to feel it gave them a sense of a work well done.

### Social connections through work

The Trust is also interested in developing an understanding of the role that work plays in supporting social connectedness. As in the UK report, we found relatively little data on this topic for Ireland. However, the EWCS does include a question on feeling supported by your colleagues at work, which suggests perceptions of peer support have increased over the past ten years (from 83% in 2005 to 87% in 2015). The 2015 figure for Ireland is also higher than the EU average in 2015 – (87% compared with 71%, and 82% for the UK).

## 6 Conclusions

Ireland's recovery from the Great Recession was a long-time coming, following years of rising unemployment and painful wage freezes. However, while employment levels are not yet back to their pre-recession peak, the recovery is now well-established. But it has not been equally felt across sectors or demographic groups. The construction industry remains well below its pre-recession peak in terms of job numbers and wages, while the Wholesale and Retail sector has also taken longer to recover. Young people were particularly hard hit by the recession, and the share of young people aged 15-24 who are Not in Employment, Education or Training remains higher in Ireland than the EU average. Long-term unemployment among older workers also appears to be a greater problem than it was pre-recession, and age discrimination is the most commonly reported type of discrimination among those who believe they have been discriminated against when seeking work.

During a recession, the focus is often, understandably, almost exclusively on job creation. It is important not to lose focus on the proven benefits of having a job – which, as noted at the start of this report, extend not only to people's economic circumstances but to their wider physical and mental health and well-being. However, as unemployment in Ireland hopefully continues to fall, it is timely to examine the nature of available jobs, and the distribution of key factors that contribute to that work being 'fulfilling'. This report highlights a number of issues with respect to the nature of jobs created since the recession – that they appear to have been primarily lower-paid jobs; that self-employment levels have increased, but 1 in 5 self-employed say they are self-employed because of a lack of alternatives; and that the proportion working atypical hours appears to have increased in recent years. The findings also highlight ongoing and significant inequalities in access to work that is good quality in terms of both basic 'hygiene factors', such as pay and terms and conditions, and to the 'motivators' that contribute to work being fulfilling in a more

holistic sense. Several groups stand out as being particularly disadvantaged in terms of access to a range of aspects of 'fulfilling work':

- Young people – as noted above, rates of unemployment remain higher among young people in Ireland, while those young people who are in employment are more likely to be underemployed, low paid, on atypical contracts, to have less choice over their working time arrangements, and to have a lower sense of agency and engagement with their work.
- Women – although younger men continue to have the highest rates of unemployment, women in Ireland appear to fare worse with respect to: likelihood of being underemployed; pay; likelihood of being on a temporary contract; lack of choice over working-time arrangements; lower access to off-the-job training; and lower sense of agency and engagement with their work. However, women score higher than men across various measure of work-life balance.
- Low earners – low pay is an important policy issue in itself. Ireland has a higher than average percentage of low paid workers compared with EU28 countries as a whole, and saw one of the largest increases in material deprivation among workers from 2007 to 2014. In addition, low earners are also more likely to be disadvantaged with respect to other aspects of fulfilling work, like access to training and sense of agency and engagement at work.

Now the recovery is well-established, it is arguably time for a renewed conversation about how to increase access to better work, both at an overall level, and particularly for those groups who currently appear to be left behind across multiple aspects of 'fulfilling work'.

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## Annex A – additional tables

**Table A.1: Change in numbers employed by sector, Q2 2007 to Q2 2017 (source: CSO QNHS statistics from CSO website)**

	Number employed (1000s) Q2 2007	Number employed (1000s) Q2 2017	Change (1000s)	Change (%)
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	108.7	110.1	1.4	1.3%
Industry	301.7	260.1	-41.6	-13.8%
Construction	273.9	147.4	-126.5	-46.2%
Wholesale and retail & repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	301.8	278.4	-23.4	-7.8%
Transportation and services	94.2	95.9	1.7	1.8%
Accommodation and food services	133.1	151.9	18.8	14.1%
Information and communication	71.2	92.5	21.3	29.9%
Financial, insurance and real estate	102.1	100.2	-1.9	-1.9%
Professional, scientific and technical	110.9	119.6	8.7	7.8%
Administrative and support service activities	79.2	74.0	-5.2	-6.6%
Public administration and defence	102.7	105.1	2.4	2.3%
Education	142.1	156.9	14.8	10.4%
Human health and social work	211.7	259.8	48.1	22.7%
Other	98.2	104.6	6.4	6.5%
Not stated	4.5	6.4	1.9	42.2%
Total persons 15+ in employment	2,136.1	2,063.0	-73.1	-3.4%

**Table A.2: Contract type – Ireland, EU, UK (EWCS 2015)**

	Ireland	EU	UK
	%	%	%
Indefinite (permanent contract)	71	79	86
Fixed term	8	12	5
Temporary	3	2	2
Apprenticeship/training scheme	1	1	*
Other/no contract	17	7	7

**Table A.3: Working-time arrangements, EU, UK (EWCS 2015)**

	Ireland	EU	UK
	%	%	%
Set by the company with no flexibility	58	56	52
Can adapt within certain limits	20	19	24
Can choose between several fixed schedules	7	9	10
Entirely determined by yourself	15	16	14

**Table A.4: Flexible working-time arrangements, EU, UK (EWCS 2015)**

	Ireland	EU	UK
	%	%	%
Do not have fixed start and finish times	45	39	42
Do not work the same number of hours each week	38	37	36
Do not work the same number of hours each day	45	44	43
Some degree of flexibility over working-time arrangements	42	44	48

**Table A.5: Working time arrangements Ireland, by subgroup (EWCS 2015)**

	Set by the company with no flexibility	Some degree of flexibility <sup>68</sup>	Base
<b>Gender</b>			
Men	51	49	562
Women	66	34	491
<b>Age</b>			
15-24	70	31	79
25-34	65	35	175
35-44	55	45	286
45-54	60	40	269
55-64	52	48	181
<b>Migrant status</b>			
Born in Ireland	58	42	904
Not born in Ireland	59	41	150
<b>Disability</b>			
Long-standing illness/health problem	53	48	165
No long-standing illness/health problem	59	41	887

68 Can adapt within limits, choose between different schedules, or entirely determined by self

Table A.5 cont: Working time arrangements Ireland, by subgroup (EWCS 2015)

<b>Sector</b>			
Agriculture	21	79	88
Industry	66	34	127
Construction	41	59	55
Commerce and hospitality	60	40	191
Transport	64	36	57
Financial services	62	38	50
Public administration and defence	52	48	53
Education	85	15	97
Health	66	34	138
Other services	48	52	195
<b>Net monthly earnings from main paid job</b>			
1000 euro or less	65	35	205
1000.01-1600 euros	65	35	189
1600.01-2000.40 euros	61	39	149
2000.41-2884 euros	64	36	193
2884.01 or more	40	60	174
<b>Region</b>			
DUBLIN	53	47	209
REST OF LEINSTER	63	37	280
MUNSTER	63	37	286
CONN/ULSTER	52	48	279
<b>Private/public sector</b>			
Private	54	46	730
Public	68	32	271

**Table A.6: Training and progression prospects – change over time – Ireland, EU, UK (EWCS/Eurostat<sup>69</sup>)**

	2005	2010	2015
% Employed persons participating in job-related non-formal education and training in the past 12 months			
Ireland	38	42	51
EU	26	34	39
UK	39	46	51
% perceive job-related non-formal education helped improve way they work			
Ireland	91	92	89
EU	84	83	84
UK	85	84	85
% perceive job involves improving their skills			
Ireland	77	78	80
EU	70	68	72
UK	69	74	82
% think job offers good prospects for career advancement			
Ireland	-	45	47
EU	-	32	39
UK	-	47	49

**Table A.7: Access to training in Ireland, by subgroup (EWCS 2015)**

	Had training in last 12 months paid for/provided by employer	Base	On-the-job training in last 12 months	Base
<b>Gender</b>				
Men	58	382	46	562
Women	50	449	55	492
<b>Age</b>				
15-24	49	74	67	79
25-34	59	160	57	176
35-44	61	236	54	286
45-54	48	197	44	269
55-64	44	134	45	181

69 All figures from the Eurostat website (<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/labour-market/quality-of-employment/database>), except % thinking offers good prospects for Career Advancement, taken from Eurofound EWCS data analysis tool

Table A.7 cont: Access to training in Ireland, by subgroup (EWCS 2015)

	Had training in last 12 months paid for/ provided by employer	Base	On-the-job training in last 12 months	Base
<b>Migrant status</b>				
Born in Ireland	53	701	50	904
Not born in Ireland	55	131	53	151
<b>Disability</b>				
Long-standing illness/health problem	54	120	44	166
No long-standing illness/health problem	53	712	52	888
<b>Sector (those with unweighted sample size of 50+ only)</b>				
Industry	59	119	49	128
Commerce and hospitality	35	157	53	192
Education	54	95	55	97
Health	64	129	62	138
Other services	45	142	42	194
<b>Net monthly earnings from main paid job</b>				
1000 euro or less	37	170	43	205
1000.01-1600 euros	44	154	49	189
1600.01-2000.40 euros	61	120	45	149
2000.41-2884 euros	64	169	65	193
2884.01 or more	75	128	59	174
<b>Region</b>				
DUBLIN	57	175	54	209
REST OF LEINSTER	50	215	48	280
MUNSTER	57	235	52	286
CONN/ULSTER	46	207	45	280
<b>Private/public sector</b>				
Private	52	519	47	730
Public	57	266	56	271



**Table A.8: Agreement with various statements about agency and engagement at work (EWCS 2015)**

% Always/ most of the time	You are able to apply your own ideas in your work?	You have a say in the choice of your work colleagues?	You are involved in improving the organisation or processes?	You can influence decisions that are important for your work?	You can take a break when you wish?
Ireland	68%	28%	59%	61%	54%
EU	54%	29%	49%	47%	48%
UK	62%	29%	51%	54%	54%

% Yes	Are you able to choose or change – Your order of tasks	Are you able to choose or change – Your speed or rate of work	Are you able to choose or change – Your methods of work	Generally, does your main paid job involve – Assessing yourself the quality of your own work?	At your company or organisation – A regular meeting in which employees can express their views
Ireland	69%	73%	69%	77%	59%
EU	68%	71%	69%	75%	55%
UK	72%	74%	70%	84%	65%

**Table A.9a: Personal agency at work and employee engagement (EWCS 2015)**

% Always/ most of the time	You are able to apply your own ideas in your work?	You have a say in the choice of your work colleagues?	You are involved in improving the organisation or processes?	You can influence decisions that are important for your work?	You can take a break when you wish?	Bases
Men	71%	35%	64%	65%	64%	558
Women	65%	20%	53%	56%	42%	484
15-24	52%	17%	38%	46%	44%	79
25-24	70%	22%	57%	60%	43%	174
35-44	65%	23%	57%	56%	56%	285
45-54	72%	35%	65%	67%	57%	266
55-64	71%	35%	64%	63%	60%	178
Born in Ireland	72%	30%	60%	63%	56%	896
Not born in Ireland	51%	21%	53%	49%	43%	147
Disability	70%	26%	61%	63%	59%	165
No disability	68%	28%	58%	60%	53%	876

Table A.9a cont: Personal agency at work and employee engagement

% Always/most of the time	You are able to apply your own ideas in your work?	You have a say in the choice of your work colleagues?	You are involved in improving the organisation or processes?	You can influence decisions that are important for your work?	You can take a break when you wish?	Bases
Agriculture	90%	67%	80%	87%	84%	86
Industry	52%	20%	51%	46%	58%	128
Construction	86%	61%	83%	73%	76%	55
Commerce and hospitality	65%	29%	52%	54%	49%	190
Transport	50%	13%	48%	52%	44%	56
Financial services	74%	19%	75%	74%	63%	50
Public administration and defence	59%	13%	50%	43%	65%	52
Education	83%	26%	69%	70%	33%	97
Health	61%	17%	51%	61%	26%	134
Other services	74%	34%	60%	64%	66%	192
<b>Income</b>						
1000 euro or less	63%	23%	44%	47%	47%	202
1000.01-1600 euros	62%	23%	50%	52%	49%	186
1600.01-2000.40 euros	63%	20%	58%	62%	48%	149
2000.41-2884 euros	71%	26%	65%	67%	53%	190
2884.01 or more	78%	32%	69%	69%	69%	174
<b>Employment sector</b>						
The private sector	69%	33%	59%	62%	58%	721
The public sector	67%	17%	55%	54%	43%	268
<b>Location</b>						
Urban	66%	22%	57%	60%	49%	271
Intermediate	65%	25%	60%	60%	57%	199
Rural	72%	35%	59%	61%	56%	573
<b>Region</b>						
DUBLIN	66%	21%	58%	59%	49%	208
REST OF LEINSTER	66%	29%	56%	58%	53%	277
MUNSTER	74%	30%	63%	65%	56%	283
CONN/ULSTER	66%	35%	58%	62%	60%	275

Table A.9b: Personal agency at work and employee engagement (EWCS 2015)

% Yes	Are you able to choose or change – Your order of tasks	Are you able to choose or change – Your speed or rate of work	Are you able to choose or change – Your methods of work	Generally, does your main paid job involve – Assessing yourself the quality of your own work?	At your company or organisation – A regular meeting in which employees can express their views	Bases
Men	75%	76%	75%	80%	58%	563
Women	63%	69%	62%	74%	60%	490
Age						
15-24	54%	63%	49%	72%	58%	79
25-24	65%	75%	65%	78%	55%	176
35-44	70%	71%	70%	83%	61%	287
45-54	75%	76%	73%	75%	60%	268
55-64	70%	69%	68%	73%	58%	180
Born in Ireland						
Born in Ireland	72%	75%	70%	76%	62%	903
Not born in Ireland	58%	65%	61%	81%	47%	151
Disability						
Disability	71%	72%	68%	80%	48%	164
No disability	69%	73%	69%	77%	61%	888
Sector						
Agriculture	86%	86%	83%	76%	50%	88
Industry	68%	68%	59%	77%	68%	128
Construction	81%	87%	85%	97%	35%	55
Commerce and hospitality	59%	68%	62%	69%	47%	192
Transport	52%	68%	58%	63%	45%	57
Financial services	74%	59%	72%	86%	80%	50
Public administration and defence	73%	80%	80%	82%	60%	53
Education	82%	80%	82%	70%	73%	96
Health	59%	60%	57%	81%	63%	137
Other services	78%	83%	74%	82%	55%	195

% Yes	Are you able to choose or change – Your order of tasks	Are you able to choose or change – Your speed or rate of work	Are you able to choose or change – Your methods of work	Generally, does your main paid job involve – Assessing yourself the quality of your own work?	At your company or organisation – A regular meeting in which employees can express their views	Bases
1000 euro or less	62%	69%	59%	65%	44%	204
1000.01-1600 euros	61%	72%	59%	79%	46%	189
1600.01-2000.40 euros	64%	67%	64%	80%	63%	149
2000.41-2884 euros	74%	77%	75%	78%	70%	193
2884.01 or more	83%	81%	82%	83%	70%	174
The private sector	68%	72%	68%	77%	55%	730
The public sector	73%	76%	72%	78%	69%	271
Urban	64%	70%	66%	80%	62%	274
Intermediate	75%	76%	69%	79%	61%	200
Rural	71%	74%	70%	74%	54%	580
DUBLIN	64%	69%	67%	81%	63%	210
REST OF LEINSTER	75%	78%	71%	73%	59%	279
MUNSTER	69%	69%	66%	78%	59%	285
CONN/ULSTER	71%	78%	72%	76%	50%	280

**Table A.10 Personal Agency and employee engagement in Ireland 2005, 2010, 2015 (EWCS)**

% Always/ most of the time	You are able to apply your own ideas in your work?	You have a say in the choice of your work colleagues?	You are involved in improving the organisation or processes?	You can influence decisions that are important for your work?	You can take a break when you wish?	Bases
<b>2005</b>	68%	29%	n/a	n/a	57%	998
<b>2010</b>	64%	33%	64%	49%	50%	976
<b>2015</b>	68%	28%	59%	61%	54%	1043

% Yes	Your order of tasks	Your speed or rate of work	Your methods of work	Assessing yourself the quality of your own work?	Bases
<b>2005</b>	71%	76%	70%	74%	996
<b>2010</b>	67%	69%	61%	81%	969
<b>2015</b>	69%	73%	69%	77%	1054

N.B No times series data is available for whether your company or organisation has a regular meeting in which employees can express their views.

**Table A.11 Work life balance Ireland, EU, UK (EWCS 2015)**

	Ireland	EU	UK
Worked more than ten hours a day at least once a month	45%	32%	44%
Worked the weekend more than once a month	59%	54%	59%
Have a commute of more than 60 minutes	21%	16%	24%
Work hours fit very well with family and social commitments	43%	28%	38%

**Table A.12 Work life balance over time (EWCS)**

	2005	2010	2015
Worked more than ten hours a day at least once a month	42%	37%	45%
Worked the weekend more than once a month	55%	52%	59%
Have a commute of more than 60 minutes	26%	28%	29%
Work hours fit very well with family and social commitments	42%	44%	43%

**Table A.13a Work life balance by sex (EWCS 2015)**

	Male	Female
Worked more than ten hours a day at least once a month	56%	33%
Worked the weekend more than once a month	66%	51%
Have a commute of more than 60 minutes	37%	20%
Worked 2 days in a row with less than 11 hours between them in the last month	27%	17%
Work hours fit very well with family and social commitments	37%	49%
<i>Bases</i>	550	490

**Table A.13b Work life balance by age (EWCS 2015)**

	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64
Worked more than ten hours a day at least once a month	35%	51%	51%	44%	39%
Worked the weekend more than once a month	72%	66%	59%	55%	49%
Have a commute of more than 60 minutes	25%	23%	34%	22%	36%
Worked 2 days in a row with less than 11 hours between them in the last month	23%	28%	27%	17%	15%
Work hours fit very well with family and social commitments	41%	36%	36%	48%	51%
<i>Bases</i>	75	173	287	267	181

**Table A.13c Work life balance by migrant status (EWCS 2015)**

	Born in Ireland	Not born in Ireland
Worked more than ten hours a day at least once a month	44%	51%
Worked the weekend more than once a month	57%	68%
Have a commute of more than 60 minutes	33%	13%
Worked 2 days in a row with less than 11 hours between them in the last month	22%	22%
Work hours fit very well with family and social commitments	44%	38%
<i>Bases</i>	890	151

Table A.13d Work life balance by disability (EWCS 2015)

	Long-term illness/ health problem	No long-term illness/ health problem
Worked more than ten hours a day at least once a month	43 %	46 %
Worked the weekend more than once a month	56 %	59 %
Have a commute of more than 60 minutes	39 %	27 %
Worked 2 days in a row with less than 11 hours between them in the last month	20 %	22 %
Work hours fit very well with family and social commitments	44 %	43 %
<i>Bases</i>	163	875

Table A.13e Work life balance by sector (EWCS 2015)

	Agriculture	Industry	Construction	Commerce and hospitality	Transport	Financial services	Public administration and defence	Education	Health	Other services
Worked more than ten hours a day at least once a month	75 %	52 %	58 %	40 %	53 %	44 %	24 %	26 %	57 %	36 %
Worked the weekend more than once a month	95 %	53 %	61 %	81 %	67 %	47 %	33 %	29 %	65 %	43 %
Have a commute of more than 60 minutes	65 %	18 %	37 %	19 %	20 %	47 %	30 %	18 %	22 %	41 %
Worked 2 days in a row with less than 11 hours between them in the last month	39 %	16 %	19 %	22 %	27 %	26 %	14 %	8 %	30 %	23 %
Work hours fit very well with family and social commitments	35 %	35 %	36 %	41 %	27 %	52 %	45 %	66 %	41 %	46 %
<i>Bases</i>	83	124	54	189	57	50	53	96	137	195

**Table A.13f Work life balance by income (EWCS 2015)**

	1000 euro or less	1000.01- 1600 euros	1600.01- 2000.40 euros	2000.41- 2884 euros	2884.01 or more
Worked more than ten hours a day at least once a month	23%	35%	47%	52%	69%
Worked the weekend more than once a month	59%	59%	64%	52%	59%
Have a commute of more than 60 minutes	21%	26%	22%	29%	39%
Worked 2 days in a row with less than 11 hours between them in the last month	16%	17%	14%	28%	35%
Work hours fit very well with family and social commitments	61%	44%	38%	40%	35%
<i>Bases</i>	205	187	147	192	173

**Table A.13g Work life balance by public/private sector (EWCS 2015)**

	The private sector	The public sector
Worked more than ten hours a day at least once a month	48%	37%
Worked the weekend more than once a month	64%	43%
Have a commute of more than 60 minutes	30%	27%
Worked 2 days in a row with less than 11 hours between them in the last month	24%	17%
Work hours fit very well with family and social commitments	40%	49%
<i>Bases</i>	721	268



**Table A.13h Work life balance by region (EWCS 2015)**

	DUBLIN	REST OF LEINSTER	MUNSTER	CONN/ULSTER
Worked more than ten hours a day at least once a month	48%	59%	57%	58%
Worked the weekend more than once a month	60%	61%	57%	57%
Have a commute of more than 60 minutes	29%	31%	27%	28%
Worked 2 days in a row with less than 11 hours between them in the last month	25%	20%	20%	25%
Work hours fit very well with family and social commitments	37%	45%	53%	33%
<i>Bases</i>	209	273	286	273

**Table A.14 Job satisfaction and meaningful work, EU, UK (EWCS 2015)**

	Ireland	EU	UK
Feeling of work well done always/most of the time	82%	82%	73%
Feel doing useful work always/most of the time	87%	85%	80%





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