

# **Study: Adults over 70 are the fabric of their communities**

March 26 2020

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**tilda**

Staidéar Fadaimseartha na hÉireann um Dhul in Aois

The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing

**ADULTS OVER 70 ARE THE FABRIC OF THEIR COMMUNITIES**



**CAREGIVING**

**132,200**  
adults over 70 provided help and care for their spouses, relatives (apart from grandchildren), friends and neighbours

**131,700**  
parents over 70 take care of their grandchildren

**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

**128,600**  
parents over 70 provide financial assistance to their children

**800**  
adults over 70 provide financial assistance to their parents

**ENGAGING IN THE COMMUNITY**

**206,800**  
volunteered in the last year

**75,200**  
volunteer every week

**330,400**  
enjoy regular social and leisure activities

**SOCIAL INTEGRATION**

**1,200**  
adults over 70 were in contact with their own parents several times each week

**117,600**  
adults over 70 had four or more regular contacts

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Source: The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing 2020



Credit: Trinity College Dublin

The findings of a new study released underscores the vibrant and important contribution that the over 70s make to society in Ireland. The findings come at a time when many discussions are taking place nationally about the effects of the COVID-19 crisis on our older population, with progressive restrictions on social engagements and the possibility of the advancement of social isolation for this group.

Professor Rose Anne Kenny, Head of Medical Gerontology at Trinity College Dublin and St James Hospital and TILDA's Principal Investigator said: "These data highlight the enormous contribution that [older persons](#) make to society in Ireland and to the economic fabric of Ireland, including enabling others to take part in the work force through their volunteering and caring. The Irish people and [policy makers](#) should have a huge appreciation and greatly value this role which assists the Irish people and the Irish economy."

"Many recent discussions taking place publicly are forming a narrative which describes our older population as being somewhat dependent on others, living closeted lives. Others suggest that the majority are unwell and therefore require much care and confinement indoors. On the contrary, the findings of today's report from the TILDA study underscores the vibrant and important contribution that over 70s make to society in Ireland."

The findings highlight a number of key areas.

## **Providing help and care for spouses, relatives (apart from grandchildren), neighbors and friends**

31% of adults (132,200 people) aged over 70 provide help and care for their spouses, relatives, apart from grandchildren, neighbors and friends. This help takes two forms. The majority provide help with household

chores for their relatives, friends and neighbors. Others provide vital care with basic activities of daily living. These include help with bathing, dressing, eating and toileting.

- 5% (21100) are caregivers who provide care for a median of 25 hours (range 5 to 16 hours/month). However, there are a small number of people giving very high numbers of hours of care, with an average of 64 hours per month.
- The majority (65%; 13,700) of those aged over 70 who report being a caregiver have become a caregiver in the last 5 years. 2 in 5 (38%) are caring for a spouse, 55% for another relative and the remainder for friends and neighbors.
- For those who provide help with ADLs, a very small number provide it to their parents (

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