

The Older Carer

*Maev-Ann Wren
Becoming Visible
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Iris



Iris Murdoch first showed symptoms of Alzheimer's disease at the age of 75, four years before her death in 1999.

Her husband, John Bayley, wrote about their lives together, including the last years, in a memoir.

Iris



“Iris remains her old self in many ways.

The power of concentration has gone along with the ability to form coherent sentences, and to remember where she is, or has been.

She does not know she has written 27 remarkable novels as well as her books on philosophy...

The old gentleness remains.”

Iris



“Iris’s fear of other people if I am not there is so piteous that I cannot bring myself to arrange for carers...All that will have to come.”

“After 40 years of taking marriage for granted ... this new marriage needs us absolutely, just as we need it.”

Who cares?

- 174 men aged 85 and over:

provided 43 or more hours care each week

to relatives or friends with illness or disability in Ireland in 2006
- Over 4,500 men aged 70 and over provided some caring
- Nearly 3,000 men aged 70 and over provided 15 or more hours care weekly



Who cares?

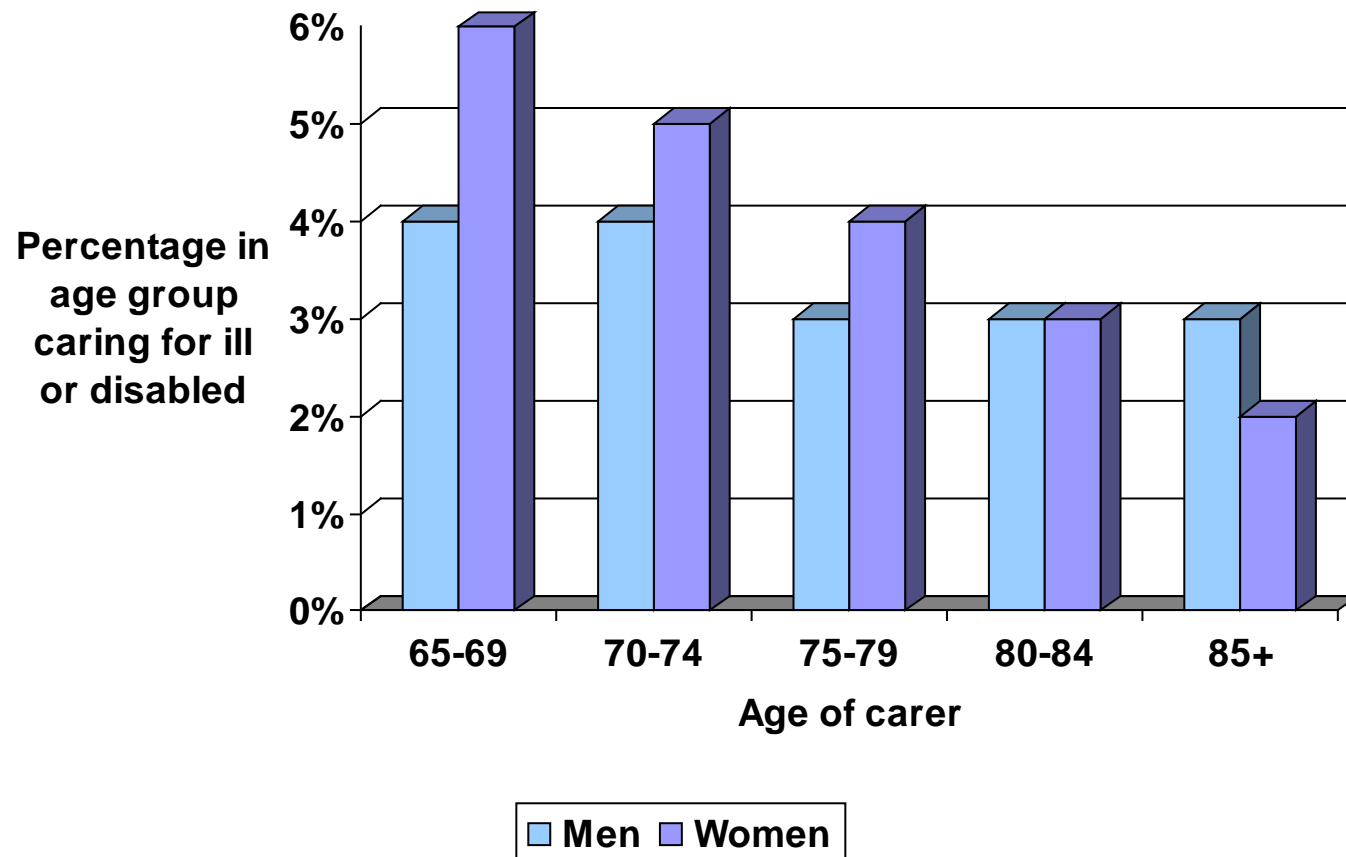
- 246 women aged 85 and over provided 43 or more hours care each week to relatives or friends with illness or disability in Ireland in 2006
- 6,700 women aged 70 and over provided some caring
- 4,400 women aged 70 and over provided 15 or more hours care weekly



The contribution of carers aged 80 and over

- 1,600 men and women aged 80 and over provided 29 or more hours care a week in 2006
- They probably kept 1,600 people out of nursing home care
- Without them there could have been a 7% increase in people aged 65 and over receiving residential care

Census 2006 count of older carers



Who cares?

In late 2009, the quarterly national household survey asked 21,500 people:

“May I just check, is there anyone living with you /not living with you who is sick, disabled or elderly whom you look after or give special help to, other than in a professional or paid capacity?”

“For example, a sick or disabled or elderly relative/husband/wife/child/friend/parent?”

Who cares?

- Expanded definition of caring so counted more carers
- Census “unpaid personal help”, Survey “look after/give special help to”
- 10% of women, 6% of men
- 8% overall compared to under 5% in Census
- Peak: 13% of people aged 45-64
- Next biggest percentage was over-65s

Who cares?

Survey found 8% of people aged 65 and over were carers compared to under 4% in Census

People aged 65 and over were 1 in 7 of all those who said:

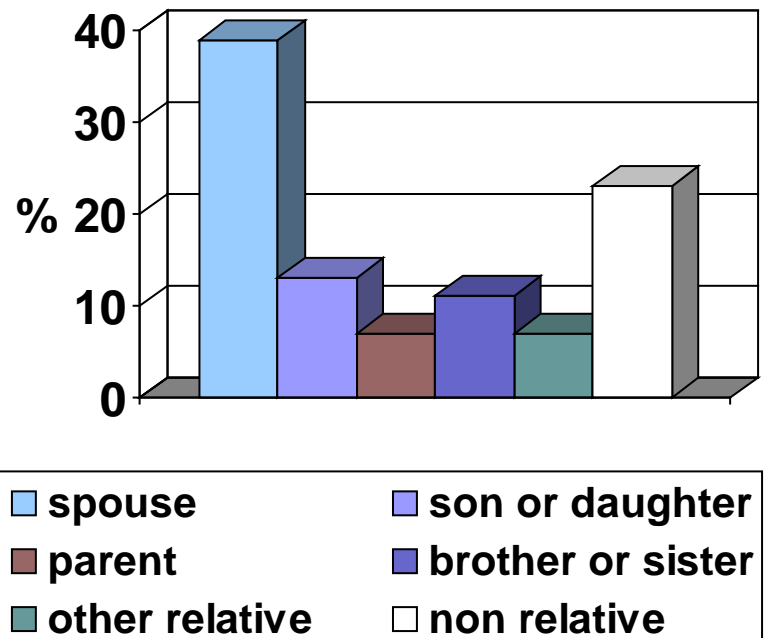
*“Yes, I look after
or give special help
to some one who is sick,
disabled or elderly”*

Who receives care from older carers?

Of 38,000 carers aged 65 and over:

- 2 out of 5 care for a spouse
- Just over 1 in 10 care for a brother or sister
- 1 in 8 care for a son or daughter

Who receives care from older carers?



How do older carers care?

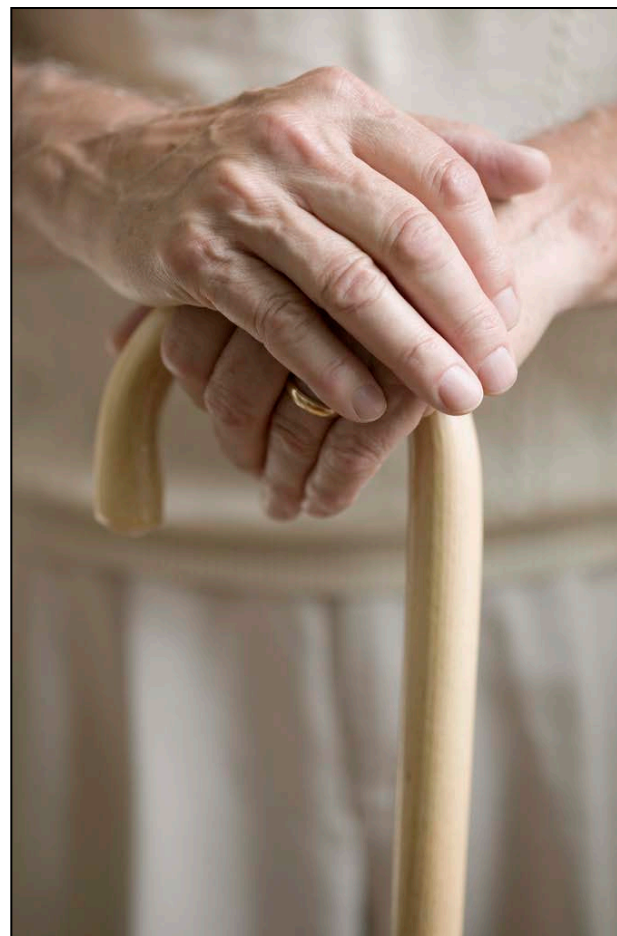
- 21,000 people aged 65 and over care for some one in the same household
- 17,000 care for some one in another household
- Care in the same household more intense than care for someone living elsewhere

How do carers sharing a home care?

- Half of all carers in the same household care for 57 or more hours a week
- Over half are the person's only carer
- Carers in the same household more likely to help with:
 - medication (72%)
 - physical care (55%)
 - personal care (56%)

How are the older carers?

- Two-thirds say their health is good or very good
- But 1 in 20 says it is bad or very bad
- Nearly three-quarters have no disabilities
- But 1 in 6 has difficulty with basic physical activities
- 2% have impaired vision, 2% impaired hearing, 2% difficulty with learning, remembering, concentrating



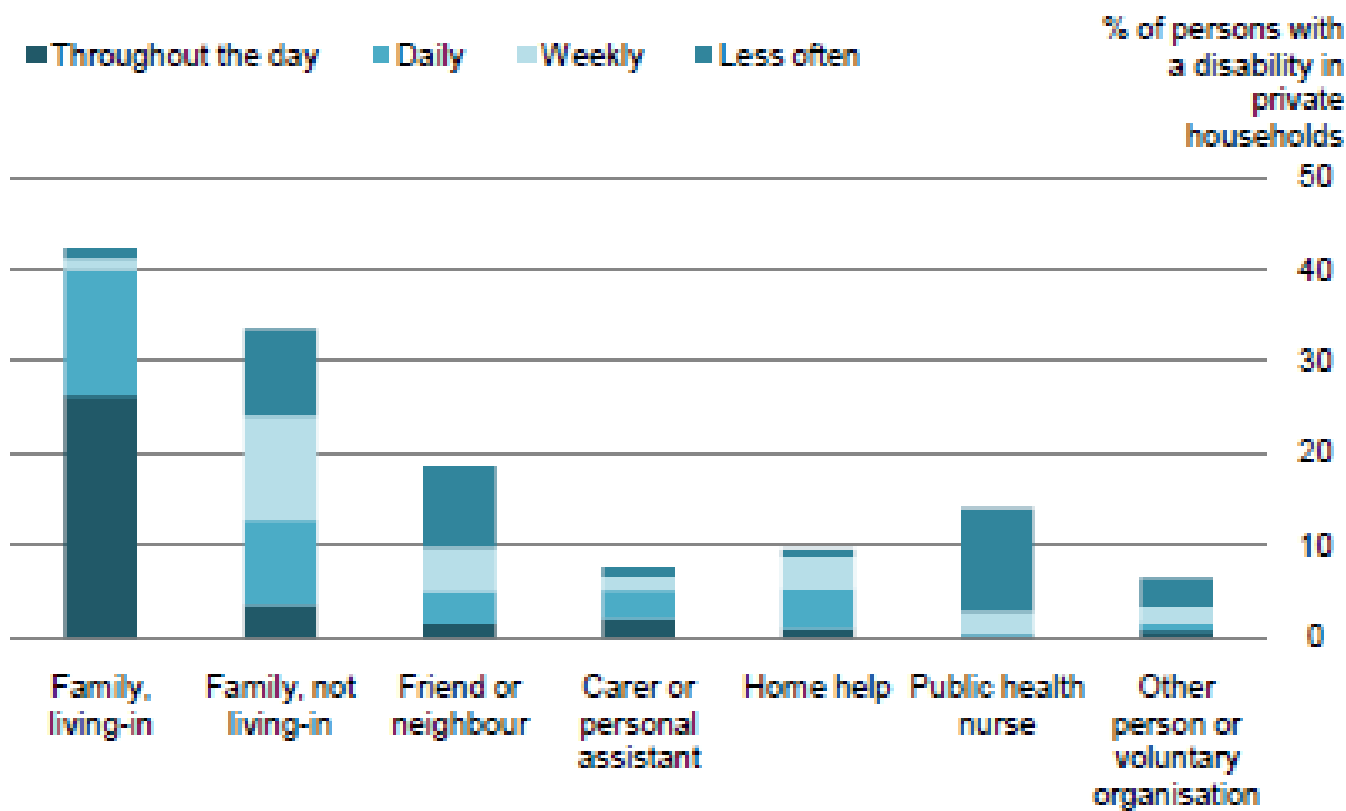
How does caring affect carers?

When caring for someone in the same household:

- 2 out of 5 feel “completely overwhelmed”
- Half have disturbed sleep
- 2 out of 5 go through an emotional adjustment
- One third find some of their loved one’s behaviour upsetting
- 2 out of 5 upset to see changes in the person for whom they care

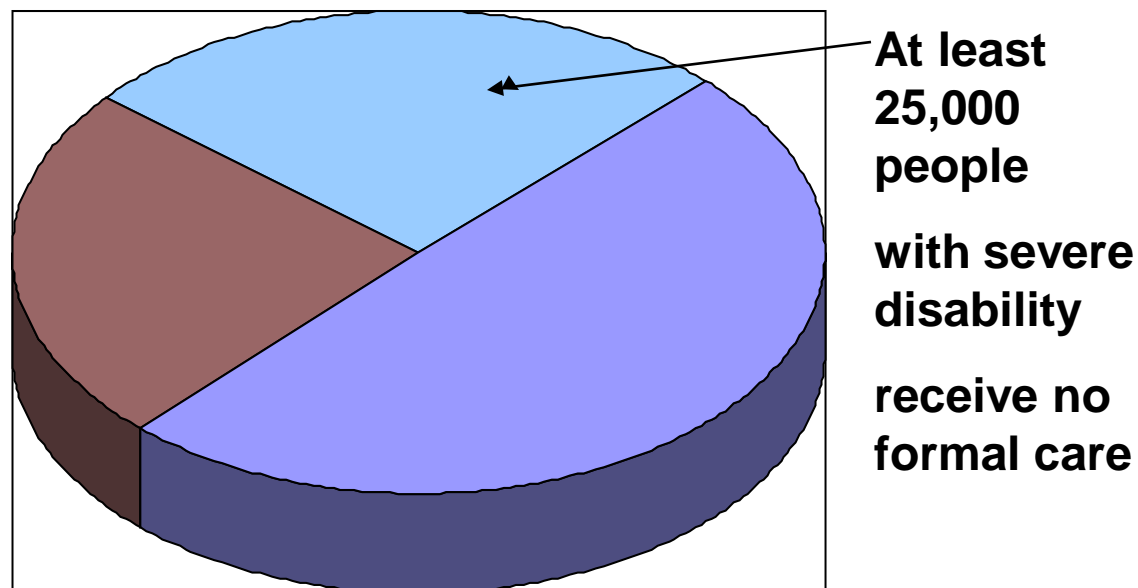
How much care is unpaid?

People with disabilities in private households: sources & frequency of help



How much care is unpaid?

Sources of care for people aged 65+ with severe disability?

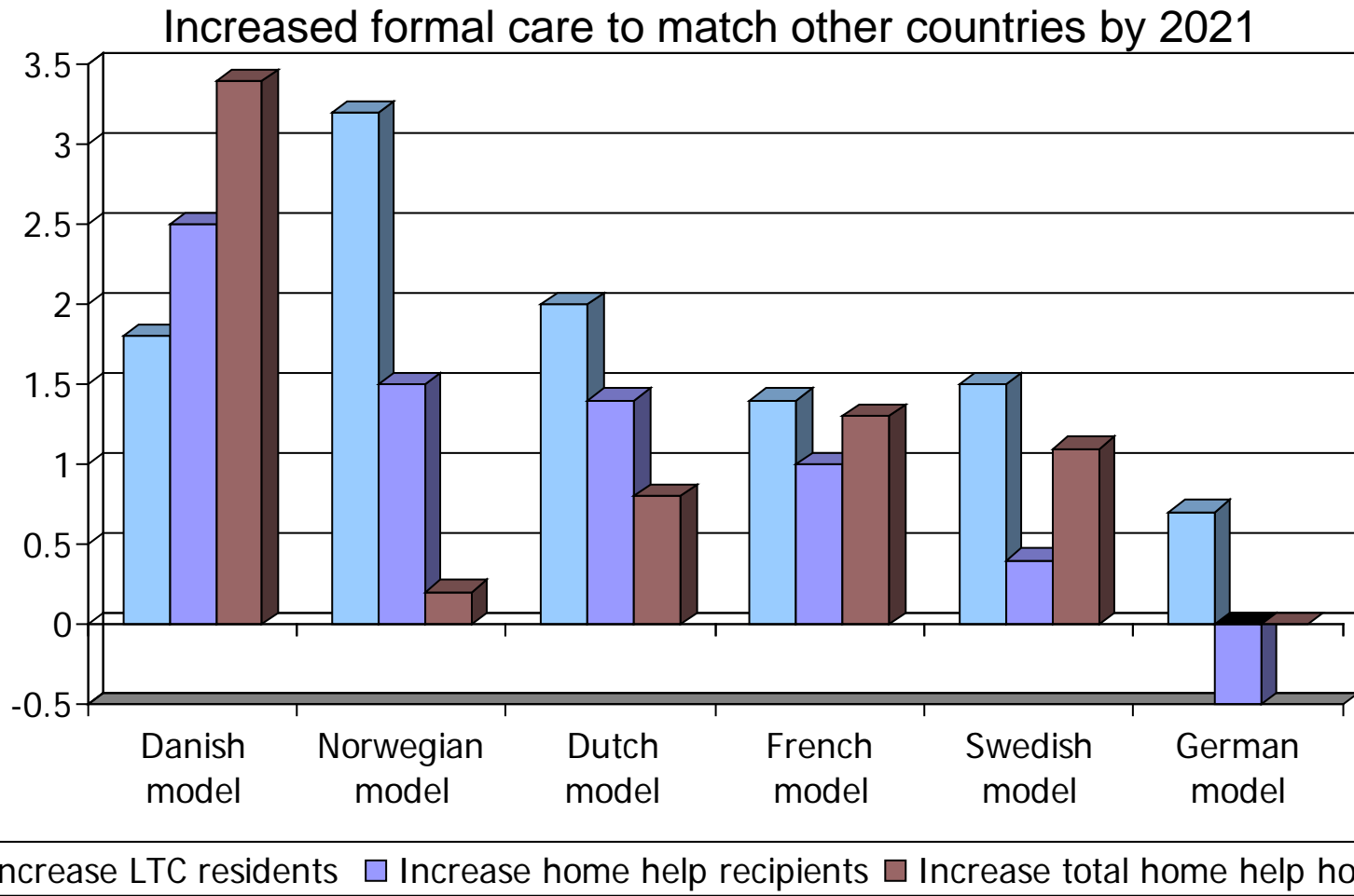


- No formal care**
- Receiving home help services? Average 4.7 hours weekly**
- In residential long-term care**

How many people need care and cannot get care?

- 56,700 people aged 75 and over living at home have a disability
- 13,200 receive some service
- 6,400 need services that they cannot get – respite the greatest need
- 1,500 cannot afford the service
- 1,250 are on a waiting list
- 1,500 service not available in the area
- 2,040 do not know who to contact

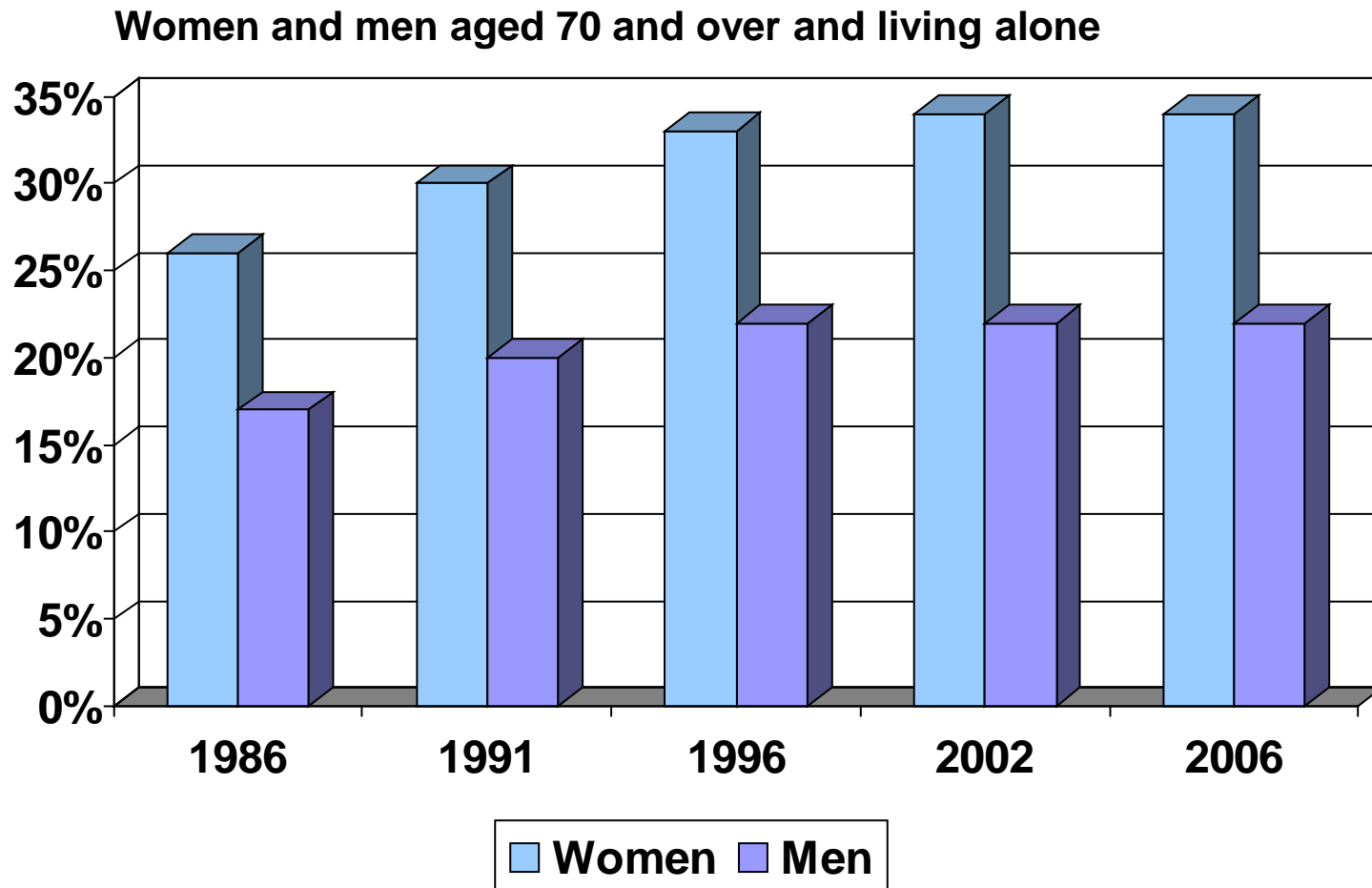
How much formal care to match other countries?



How many of us will be older carers or in need of care?

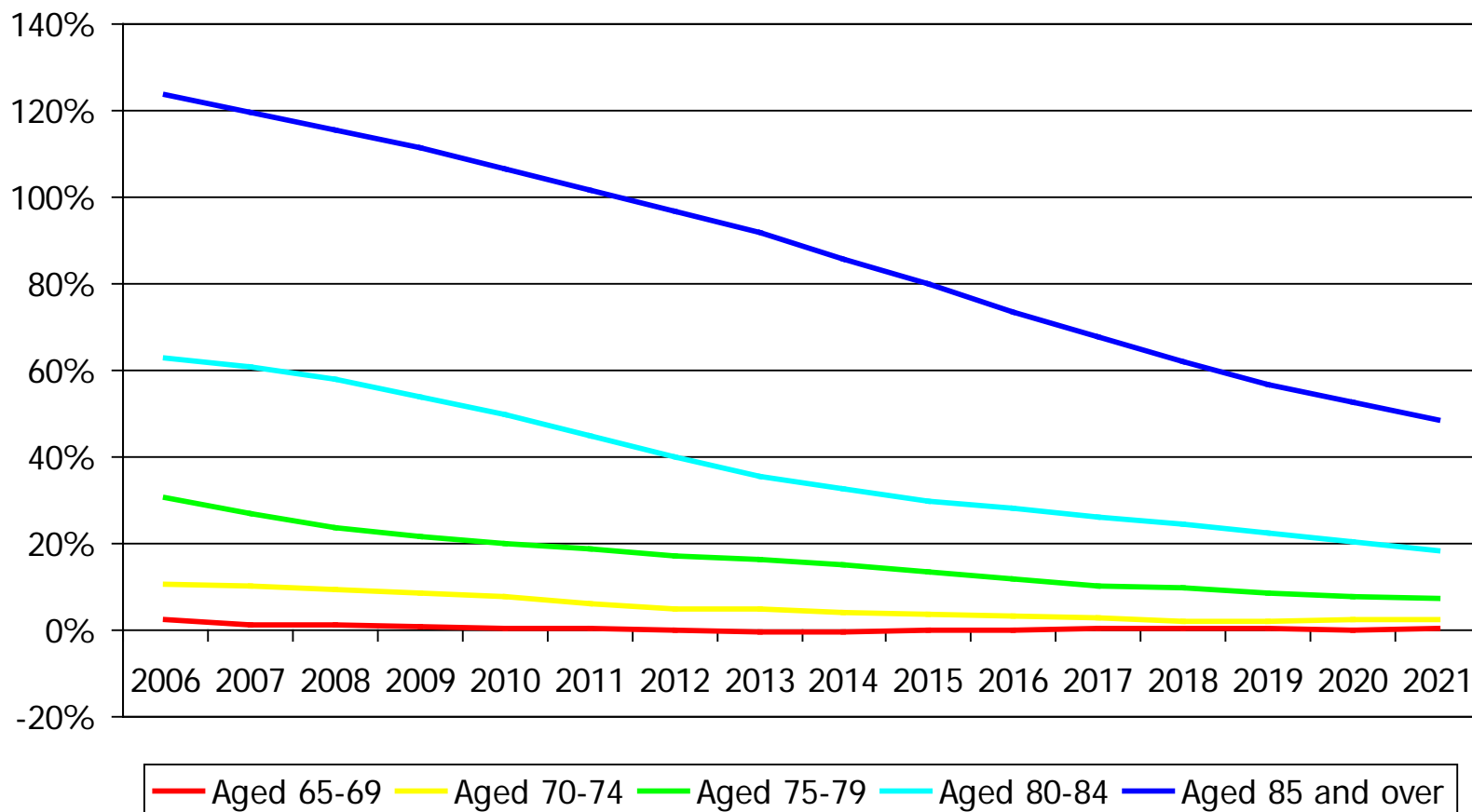
- Men are living longer now
- Couples will have longer lives together
- Gender gap now 4.8 years, 5.2 years in 2002, 5.7 years in 1986.
- 2005-2007 life expectancy 76.8 years for men, 81.6 years for women
- In 2006, the highest life expectancy in EU for men in Sweden and Cyprus (78.8 years), for women in Spain and France (84.4 years)

Fewer of us will age alone



Couples will live longer together

Percentage by which numbers of women exceed numbers of men

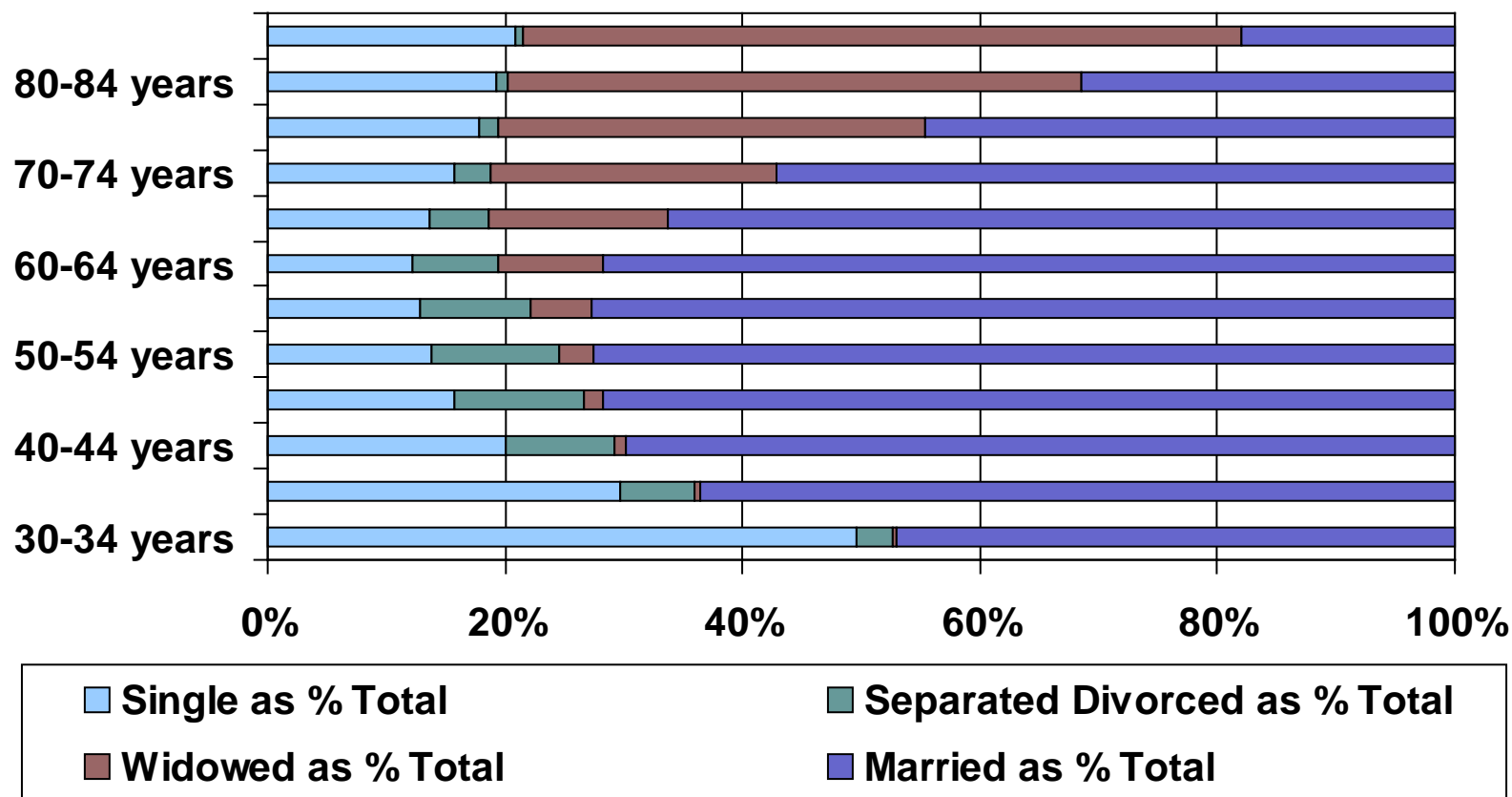


Families are the key to caring...

Evidence from Germany:

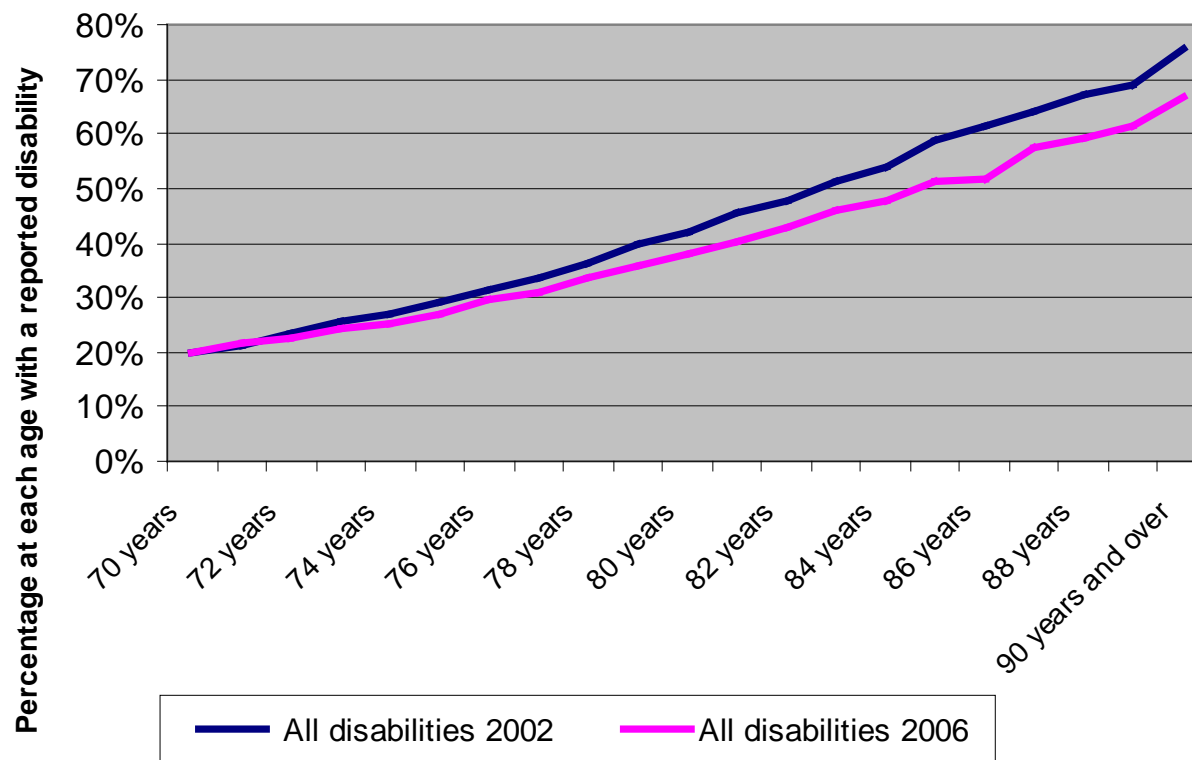
- Single people 6 times more likely to go into residential long-term care than the married
- Widowed people not quite twice as likely as the married
- Divorced people five times more likely than the married

More marriages, more divorces...



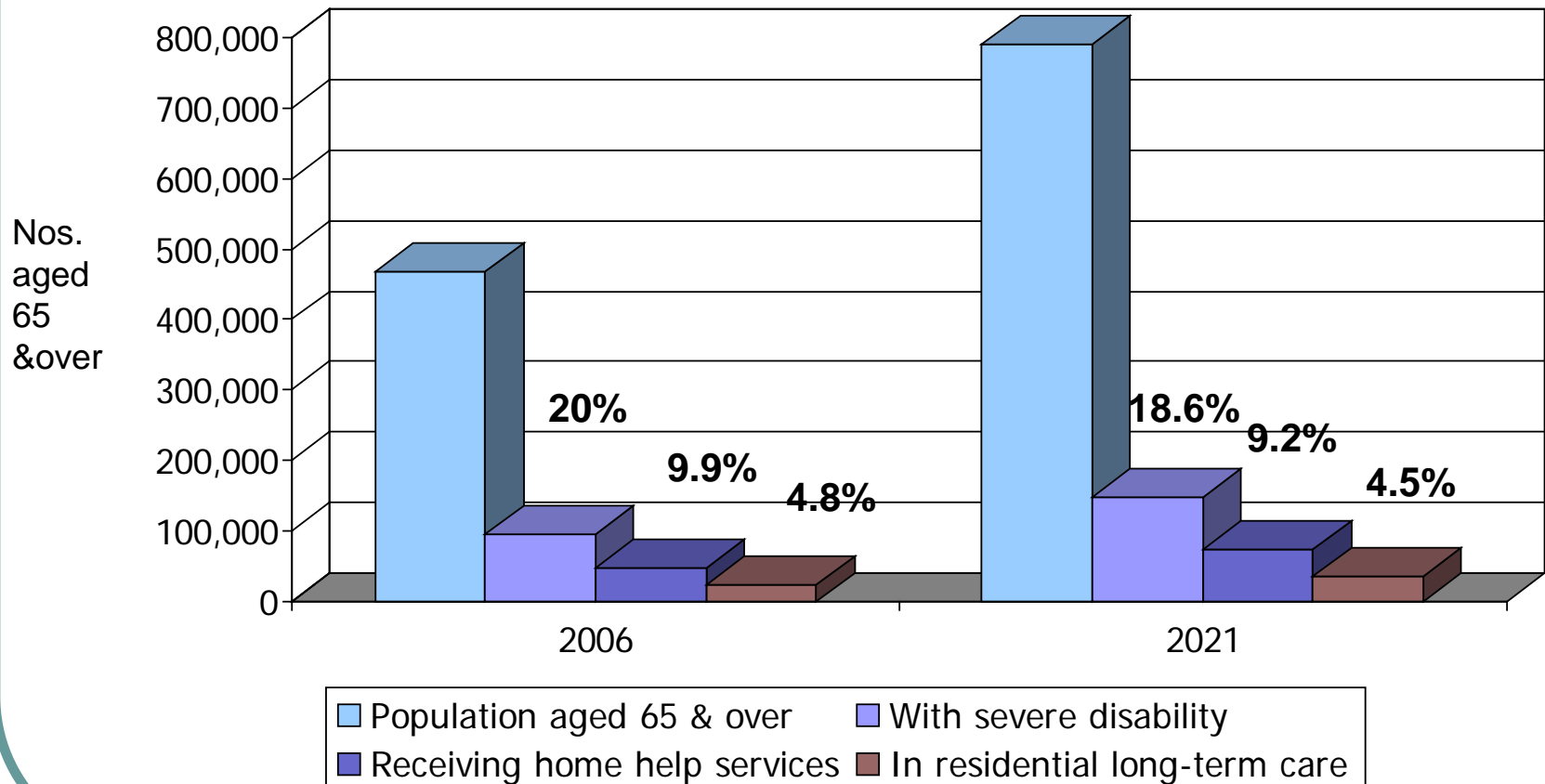
How many of us will be older carers or in need of care?

- Disability rates are falling



How many of us will be older carers or in need of care?

Maybe most of us will be both...



When there are no carers...

The Irish Times - October 8th, 2010

Number needing help up one-third

ALZHEIMER CARERS are facing a crisis with the number of people with dementia awaiting access to community services up by one-third in the last year, the Alzheimer Society of Ireland said.

The society said more than 1,000 people across the country were now unable to access home care, day care and residential care services, and that it expects this number to increase over the coming years.

The older carer and the balance of care

International evidence on the balance of care:

- As more younger women work, demand for formal, paid long-term care increases
- As life expectancies of men and women converge,

demand for formal long-term care
and acute hospital care decreases

Conclusion: the older carer plays a central role

The older carer plays an
enormously important,
unrecognised
and
inadequately supported
role

