

## Older People in Ireland

Results from EU-SILC 2004

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## Overview

- Introduction
- Methodology
- Some characteristics of older people
- Income poverty
- Deprivation
- Consistent poverty
- Health
- Conclusions

## Introduction

- Population is growing older. 11% of population (452,000) in 2004 to 15% (approx. 700,000)
- NAPS 2003-05 states 'special focus on needs of elderly, especially older people living alone'
- Falling value of pensions relative to wages – e.g. contributory pension fell from 38% in 1987 to 31% in 2005
- Layte et al (1999) 'Income, Deprivation and Well-Being Among Older Irish People'
- National Council on Ageing and Older People/Combat Poverty current qualitative study on older people
- Towards 2016 – lifecycle approach, priority areas identified for older people.

## Methodology

- EU-SILC – official source of statistics on poverty since 2003. Administered to representative sample of private households.
- First independent work by Combat Poverty Agency on this data source.
- Secondary data analysis
- Sample size
- National equivalence scale use to 'share' household income among residents of a household (1<sup>st</sup> adult = 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> adult = .66, children = .33).
- Bi-variate (crosstabs) used to examine sub-groups
- Multi-variate (logistic regression) used to model poverty and health.

## Some characteristics of older people in Ireland

- Total 452,874 in 2004
- 56.2% women, 43.8% men
- 51.8% urban, 48.2% rural
- 89.7% home-owners, 10.3% renters/rent-free
- 36.3% live alone, 47.4% live with 1 other adult
- 16.6% are single, 46.7% are married, 34.7% are widowed.
- 66.8% have limited formal education.
- 58% say health is good or very good.
- 50.7% have a chronic illness.

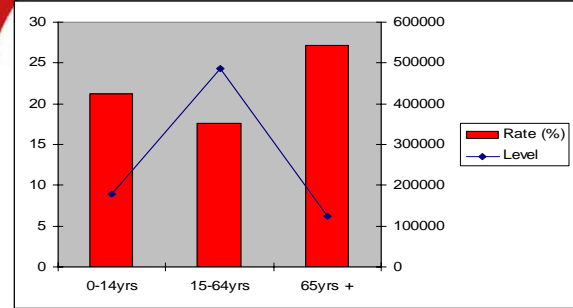
## Income Poverty

- Having an income which is less than 60% of the median income.
- Poverty threshold = €185/week or €9,680/year.
- 2004 non-contributory pension value was €154/week
- Official EU indicator of financial poverty.
- 27.1% (122,860) income poor in 2004

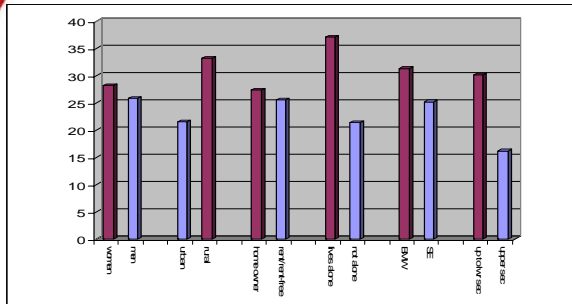
### EU comparative situation

- Cyprus, Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Greece and the U.K. have the highest poverty risks for older people.
- EU25 average is 18%, Ireland is 40%.
- EU calculation of income poverty different to CSO (EU doesn't include income from private pensions)
- Ireland, Spain, Finland, Austria the only countries that had significant rise in poverty risk between 1995-6 and 2001.

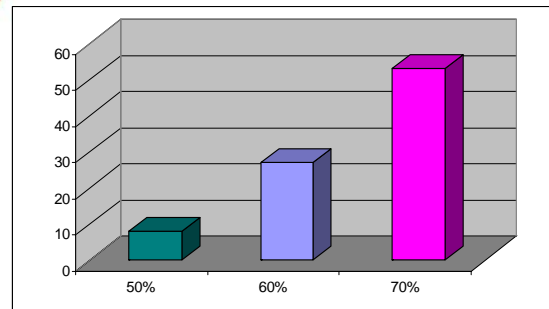
### Income Poverty rates by age group



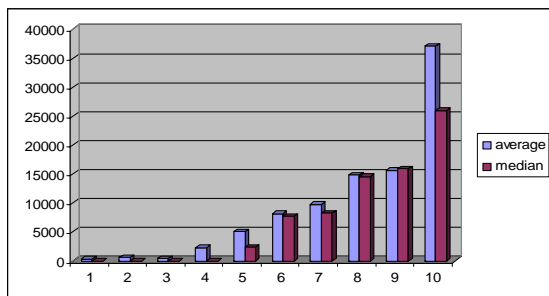
### Income Poverty rates among older people (sub-groups)



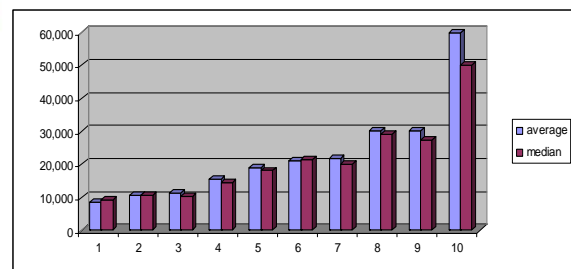
### Depth of poverty



### Average and median equivalised income pre social transfers according to income decile (Euro)



### Average and median equivalised income post social transfers according to income decile (Euro)

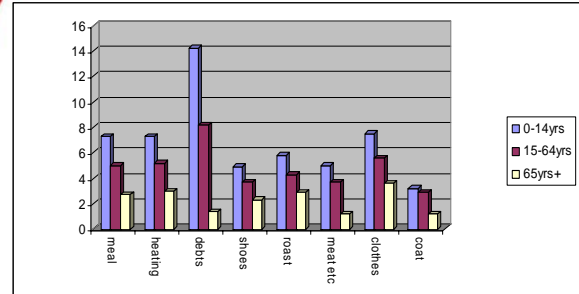


### Basic deprivation indicators

- Unable to afford –
  - a substantial meal on one day in past 2 weeks
  - heating at some stage in past 12 months
  - 2 pairs strong shoes
  - A roast once a week
  - Meat, chicken, fish or equivalent every second day
  - New, rather than second-hand clothes
  - A warm, waterproof coat

Getting into debt to pay ordinary living expenses

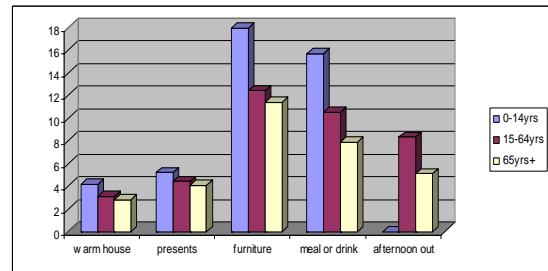
### Basic deprivation indicators by age groups



### 'New' deprivation indicators

- Unable to afford
  - To keep the house adequately warm
  - To buy presents for friends or family once a year
  - To replace worn-out furniture
  - To have family or friends for a meal or a drink once a month
  - To have an afternoon/evening out for entertainment in the past 2 weeks

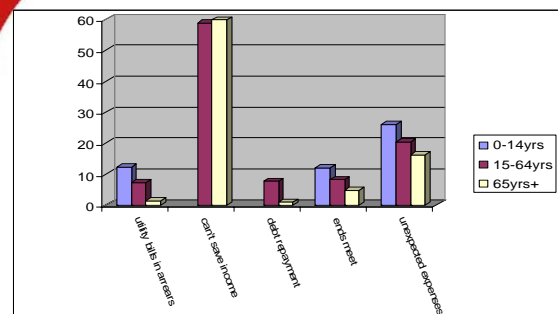
### 'New' deprivation indicators by age group



### Other deprivation indicators

- Utility bills have been in arrears at some stage in last 12 months
- Can't save some income regularly
- Debt repayment is a heavy burden
- Great difficulty in making ends meet
- Can't afford to pay unexpected expenses

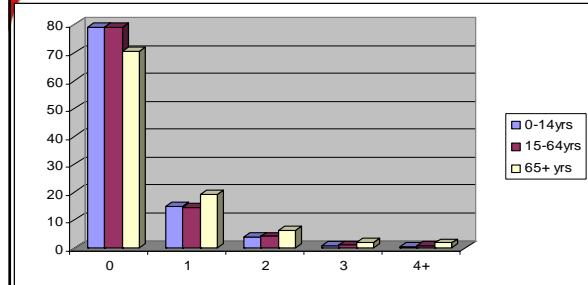
### Other deprivation indicators by age group



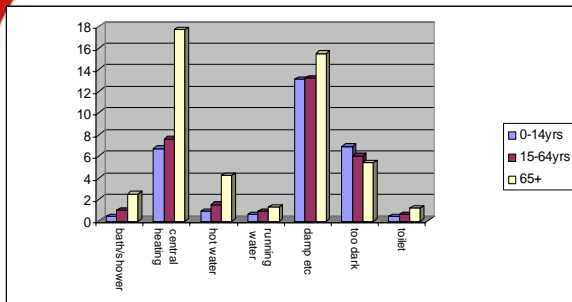
## Housing deprivation indicators

- Don't have
  - Bath/shower
  - Central heating
  - Hot water
  - Running water
  - Toilet
- Have
  - Damp walls/leaking roof/rotting windows or doors
  - Rooms that are too dark

## Housing deprivation according to age group



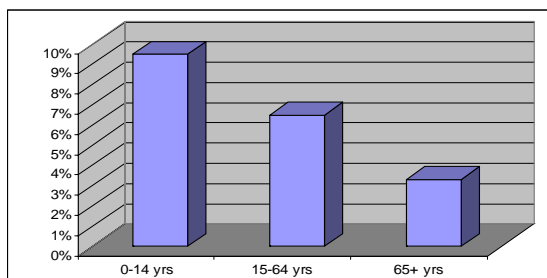
## Individual housing items by age group



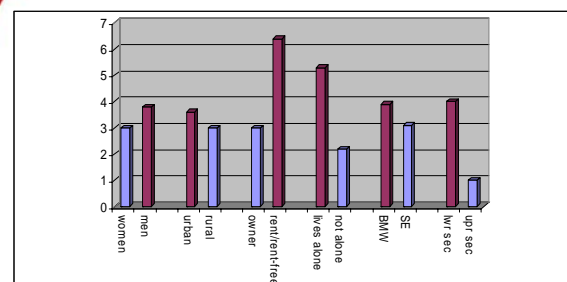
## Consistent Poverty

- Combines income poverty with enforced deprivation.
- Official Irish measure of poverty.
- Seen as a more robust measure of poverty than income poverty alone.
- 3.3% (15,170) of older people in 2004.

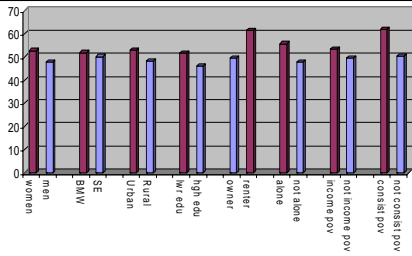
## Consistent Poverty according to age groups



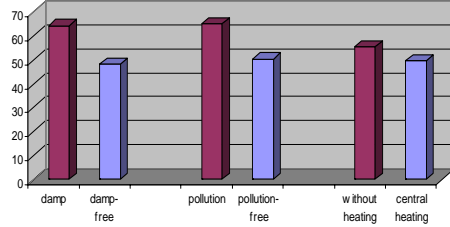
## Consistent Poverty among older people



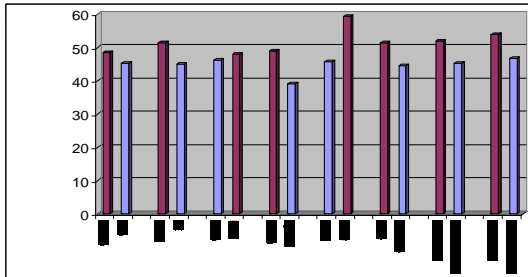
### Chronic illness by socio-demographic group



### Chronic illness by living conditions



### Daily activities are limited or strongly limited by a health problem



### Consistent Poverty model

Variable	Significance
Education	p<.001
Tenure Status	p<.001
BMW/SE	p<.001
Gender	p<.001
Urban/Rural	p<.001
Household comp.	p<.001

### Chronic illness Model

Variable	Significance
Education	p<.001
Tenure Status	p<.001
Gender	p<.001
Urban/Rural	p<.001
Household Comp	p<.001
Consistent Pov.	p<.001

### Conclusions

- Older people have highest rate of income poverty (27.1%). Rural dwellers, those living alone, BMW higher levels.
- But have the lowest rate of consistent poverty (3.3%). Those living alone and renters higher levels.
- Older people have the highest rates of deprivation on housing-related items.
- Deprivation is associated with adverse health outcomes.
- Data about access to services would be very useful.
- Results will be published as a research working paper on website (combatpoverty.ie)