



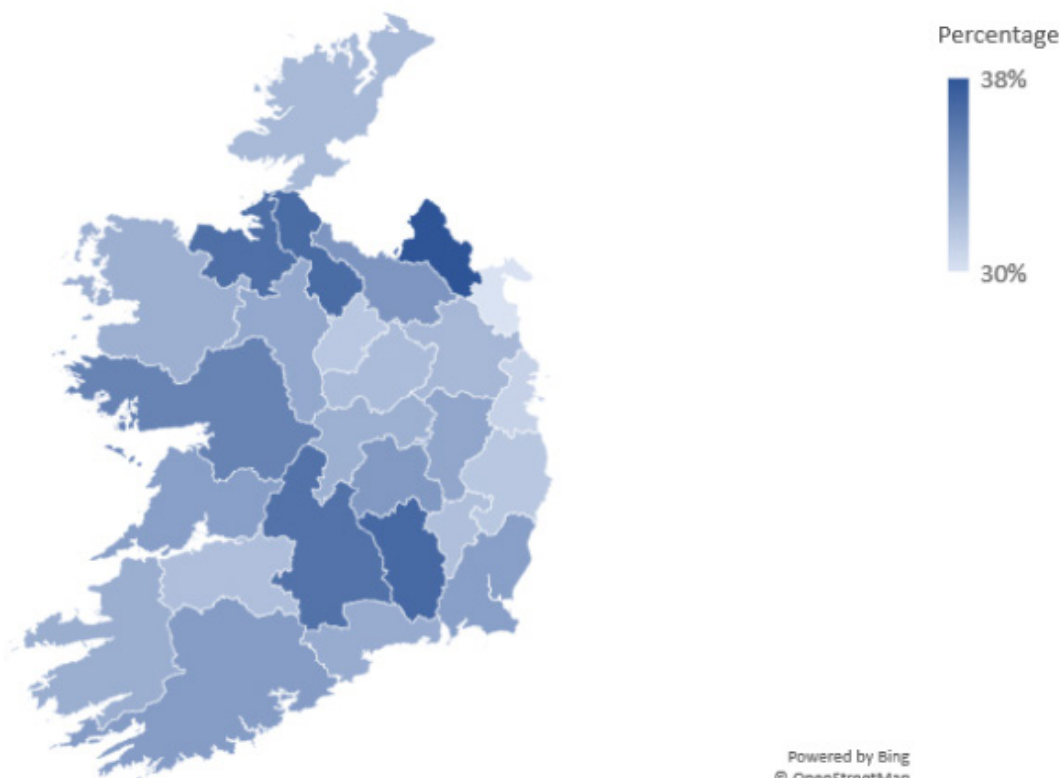
Early
Childhood
Ireland

Children in Settings

Early Childhood Ireland Explainers

Census 2022, for the first time, included questions on the type of what the Central Statistics Office (CSO) describes as “non-parental care” for children in Ireland. From this question, along with others, the CSO was able to provide data regarding the number of children in each type of setting, how long they spent in their setting, the number of children with a disability in non-parental care, as well as breakdowns by age and the socio-economic status of their parents/guardians. The CSO uses the descriptor “Creche/Montessori/playgroup/after school” but in this Explainer we use the term Early Years & School Age Care.

Percentage of children under the age of 15 in Non-Parental Care by county



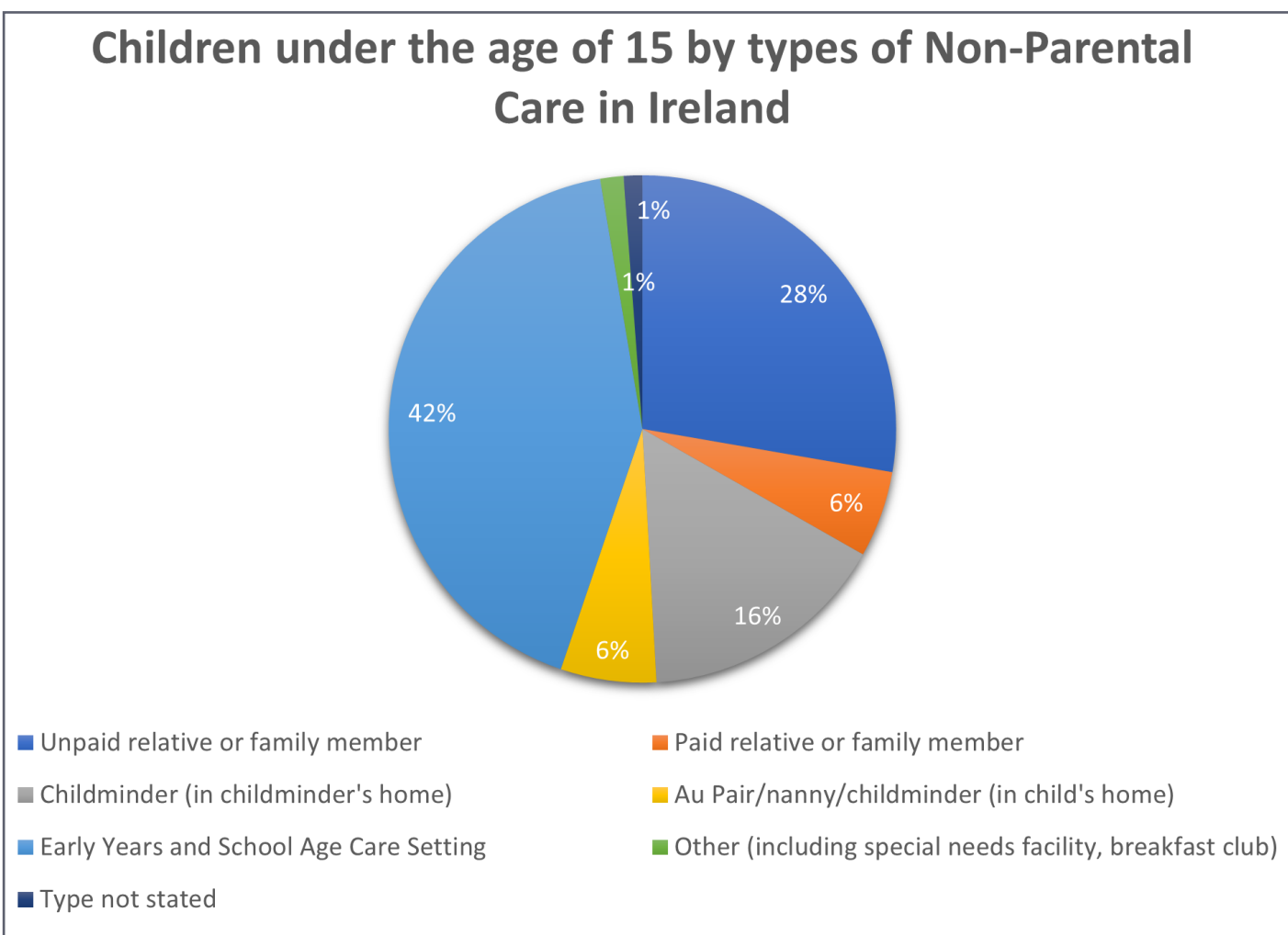
Source: Census 2022

As Dublin, Galway, and Cork are the only counties with more than one local authority, the statistics have been broken down into their respective local authorities below.

331,783 children under the age of 15 in Ireland were in some form of non-parental care. This amounts to 33% of children in Ireland. This ranges from 38% in Monaghan to 30% in Louth. Overall, 31% of children in Dublin attend non-parental care. This can be broken down to 29% in Dublin City, 38% in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, 30% in Fingal, and 29% in South Dublin.

Galway and Cork can similarly be broken down. Overall, 36% of children in Galway attend non-parental care, but 31% in Galway City attend with 37% from the rest of the county taking part. In Cork, 34% of children attend non-parental care but 32% of children in Cork City take part with 35% from the rest of the county attending.

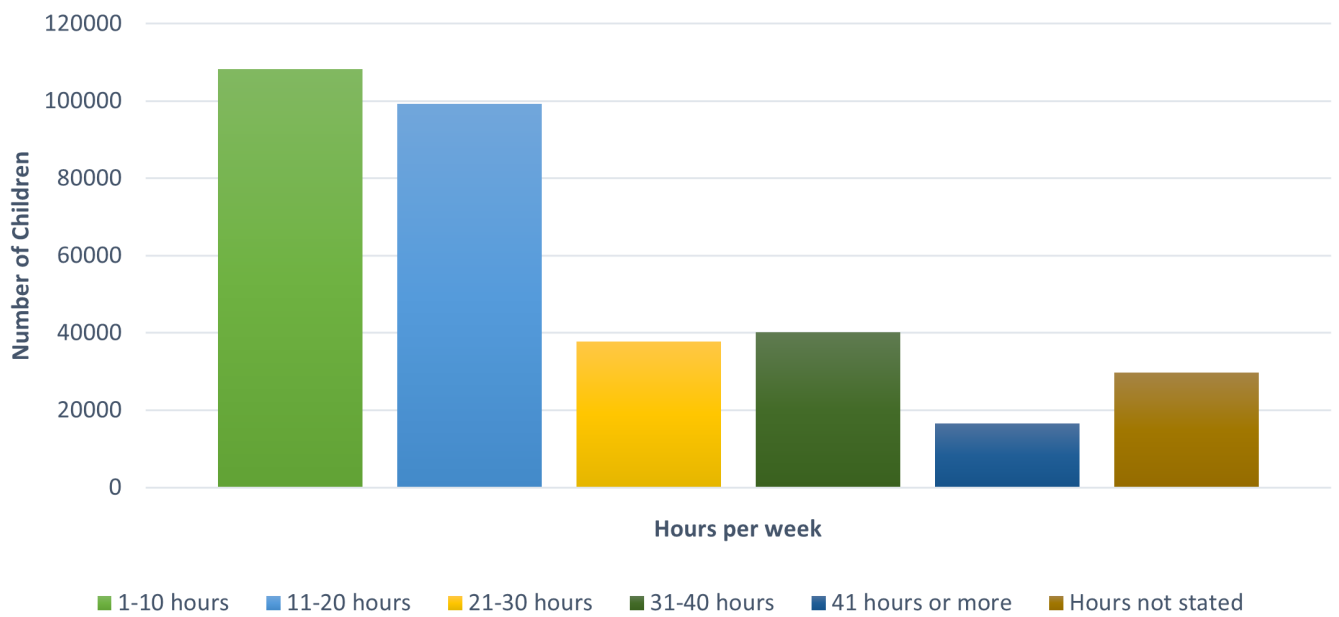
Types and Hours



Source: Census 2022

As is clear from the graph, the most popular form of non-parental care is Early Years & School Age Care, followed by being cared for by an unpaid relative or family member.

Number of Children by hours per week spent in Non-Parental Care

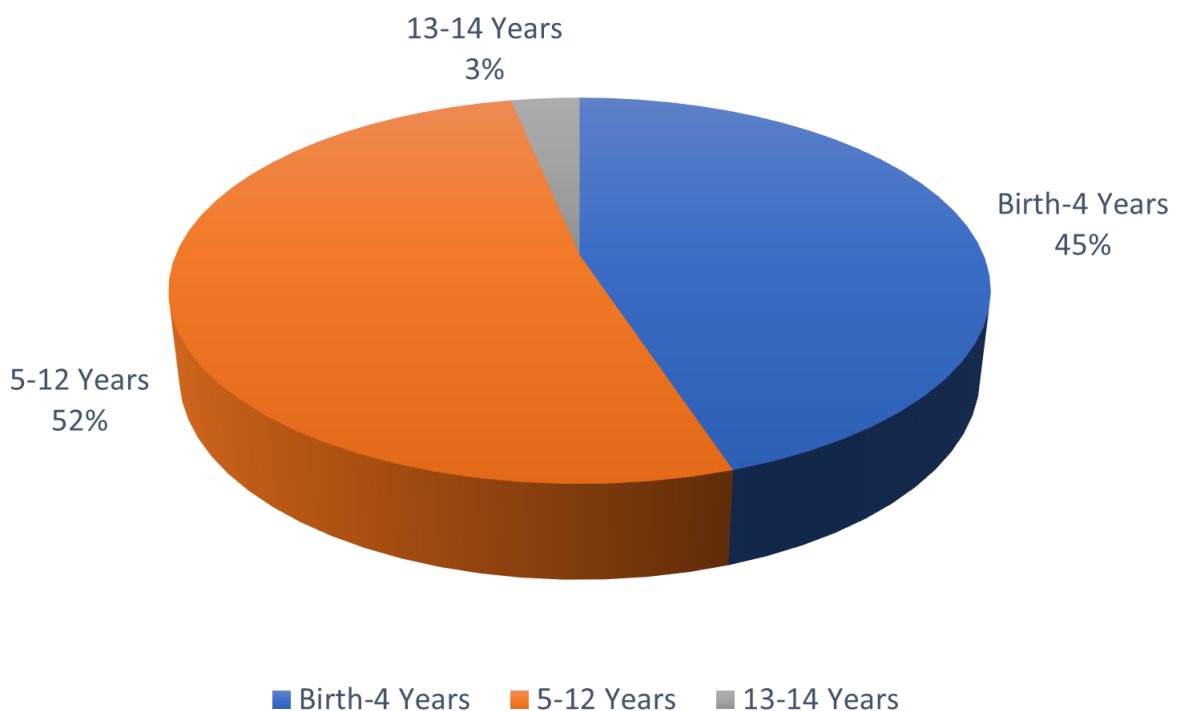


Source: Census 2022

Nearly 63% of children spent up to 20 hours per week in Non-Parental Care. Around 12% of children spent between 31 and 40 hours in non-parental care. Only five percent of children spent 41 hours or more being cared for.

Age Groups

Children under 15 years of age in Non-Parental Care by age group

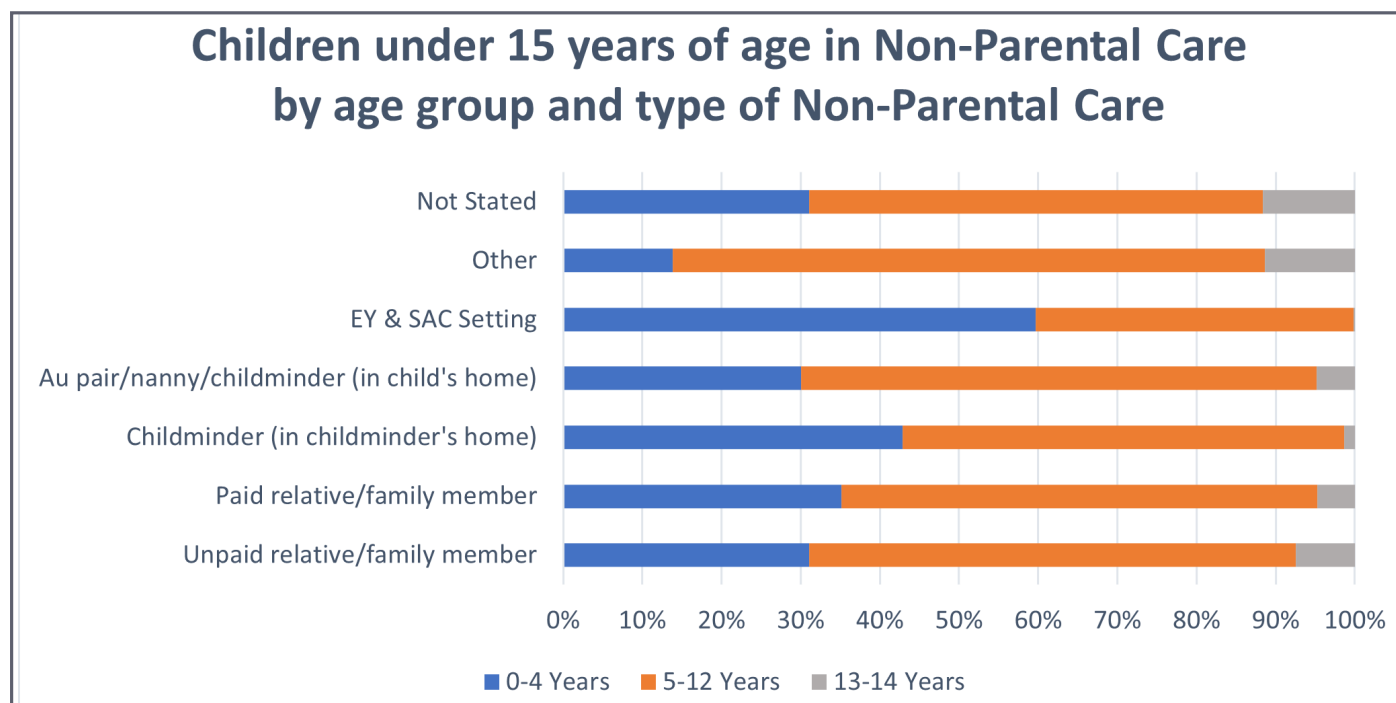


Source: Census 2022

Census 2022 breaks up the data into three age groups: Preschool (Birth-4 Years), Primary School (5-12 Years), and Secondary School (13-14 Years). As can be seen in the graph, Primary School children are the most likely to take part in non-parental care.

Just under 150,000 children of Preschool age were in non-parental care. 44,260 Preschool age children spent between 11 and 20 hours in non-parental care and 56% were cared for in an Early Years and School Age Care setting. Just under 172,000 children of primary school age were in non-parental care. 51% of this age group spent between one and ten hours being cared for by someone other than their parents or guardians. In this age group, the joint most popular type of non-parental care was unpaid relative or family member and Early Years and School Age Care setting, accounting for 33% each.

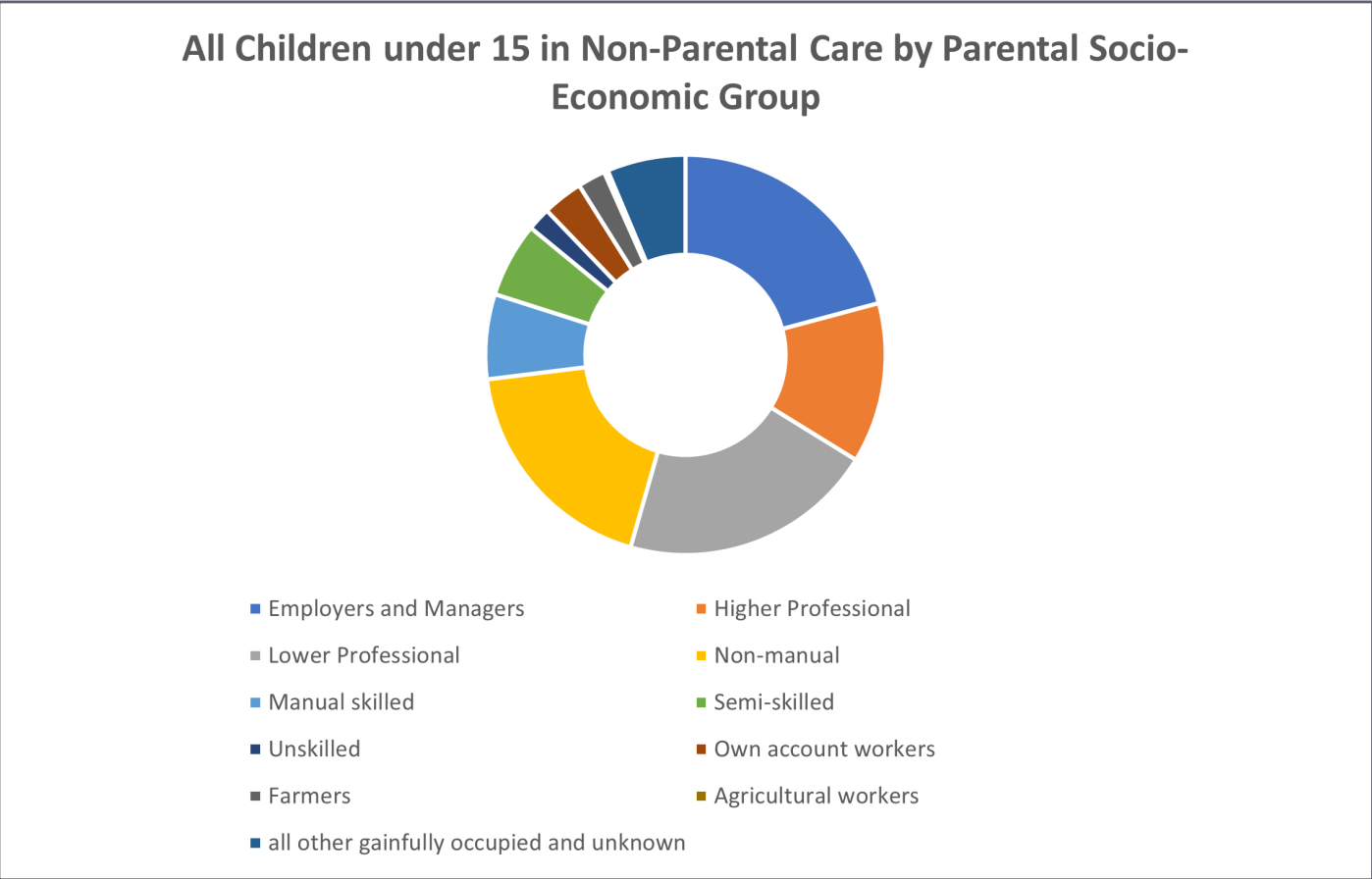
10,690 children of Secondary school age were in non-parental care. 46% of this group spent between one and ten hours in non-parental care. Most children in this age group were cared for by unpaid relatives or family members.



Source: Census 2022

Parental Socio-Economic Group

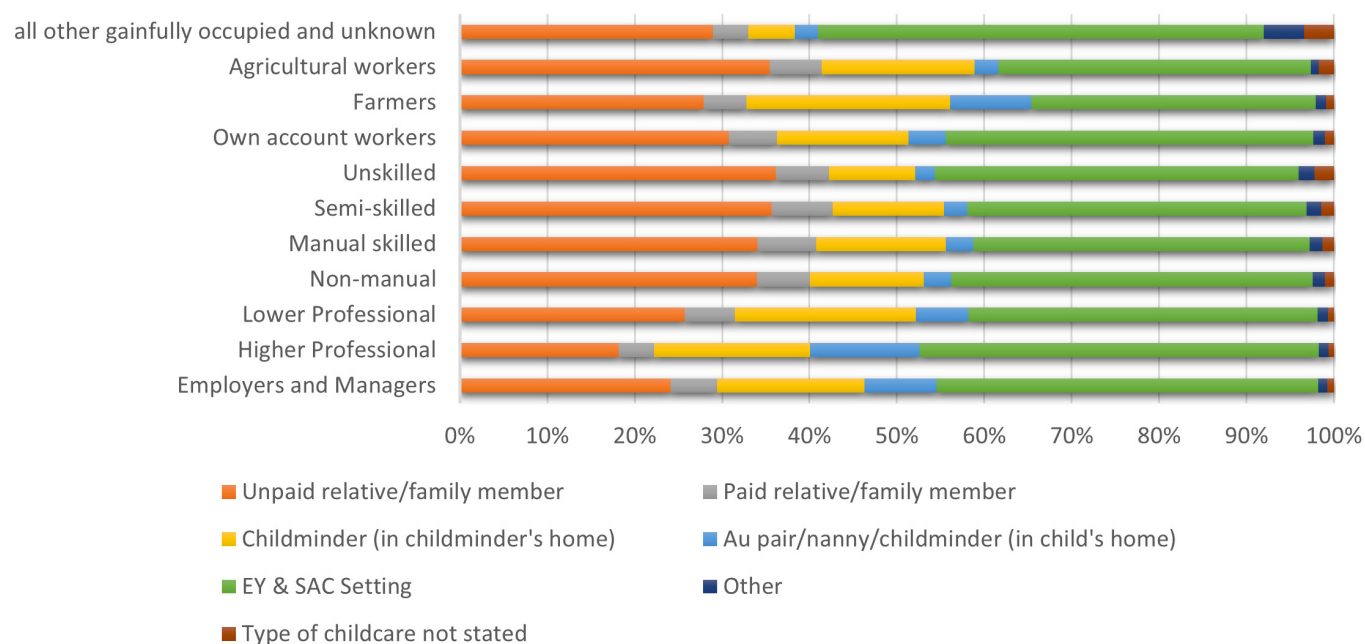
Census 2022 also looks at non-parental care through the socio-economic status of parents. The group with the largest number of children in non-parental care was Employers and Managers, followed closely by Lower Professionals. The group with the smallest number of children in non-parental care was Agricultural workers.



Source: Census 2022

The most prevalent form of non-parental care in each parental socio-economic group was Early Years and School Age Care setting. Parents in the Farmers and Lower Professional groups were most likely to use a childminder (in the childminder’s home). The Semi-Skilled group had the highest proportion of children being cared for by a paid relative or family member. The Higher Professional had the biggest proportion of children being cared for by an au pair, nanny, or childminder (in the child’s home).

Children under 15 years of age in Non-Parental Care by parental socio-economic group and type of Non-Parental Care



Source: Census 2022

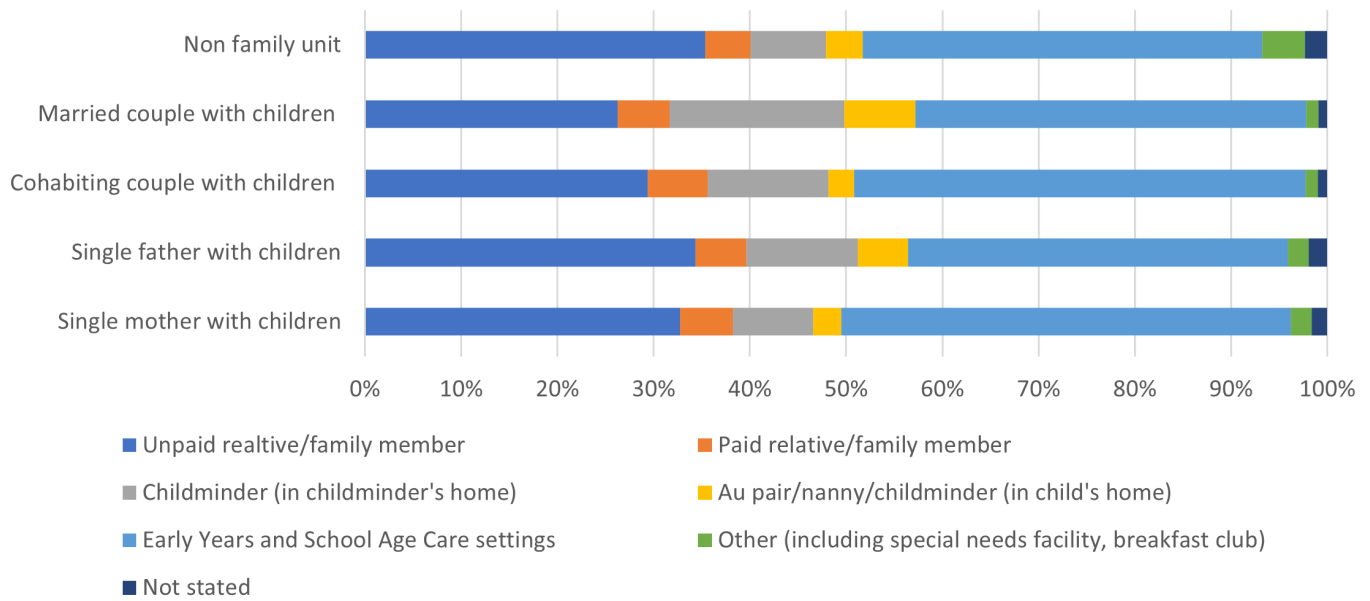
Family Type

The Census defines a family as a couple with or without children, or a lone parent with one or more children. Family members must also be usual residents of the relevant household. The family types most likely to use an Early Years and School Age Care setting were a cohabiting couple with children and lone mothers. Married couples were less likely to avail of unpaid relatives or family members to care for their children. The choice of employing an au pair, nanny, or childminder (in the child's home) was more than twice as common among married couples than among cohabiting couples. Lone fathers with children were the least likely to use an Early Years and School Age Care setting and were more likely to use an unpaid relative or family member.

Cohabiting couples were most likely to have Preschool age children in non-parental care compared to other couples. All family types had a small percentage of children of Secondary school age. Single fathers had the highest proportion with Secondary school aged children accounting for 7.7%.

Married couples were the most likely to have their children in non-parental care for up to 10 hours. Single mothers had the highest proportion of children in non-parental care for up to 20 hours, accounting for 65%. Over 20% of cohabiting couples used non-parental care for over 31 hours compared to 17% of married couples.

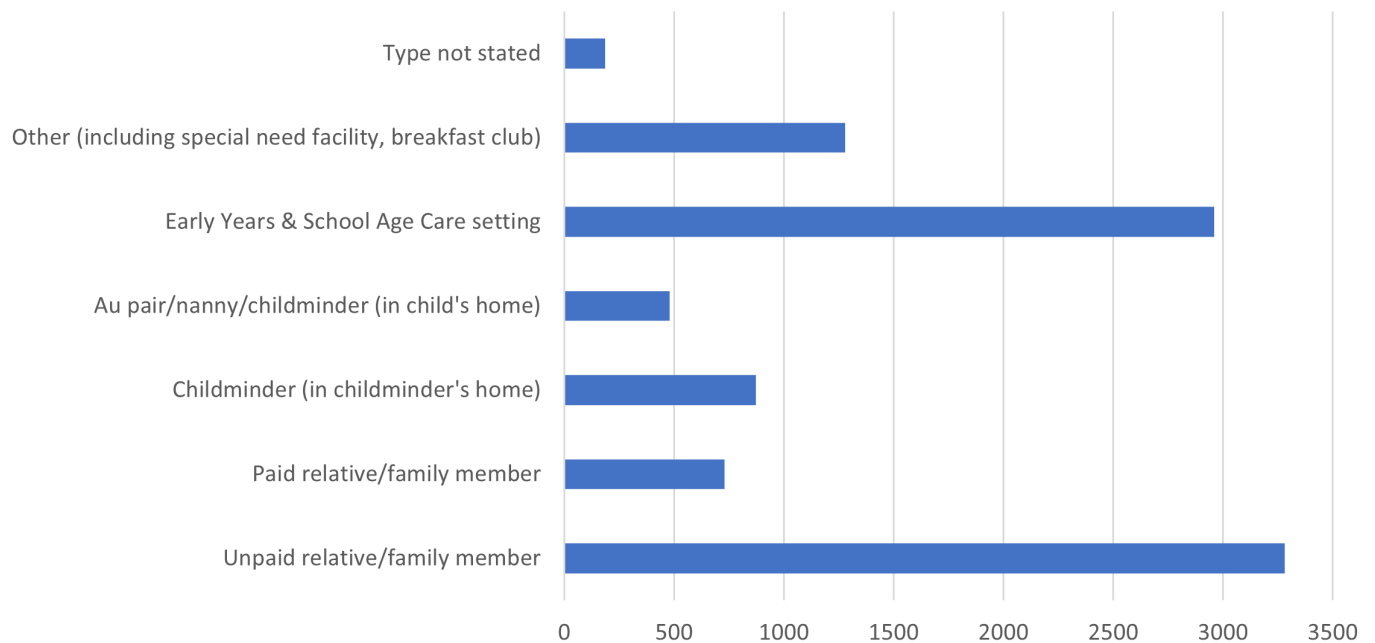
Children under 15 years in Non-Parental Care by family type and type of Non-Parental Care



Source: Census 2022

Children with Disabilities

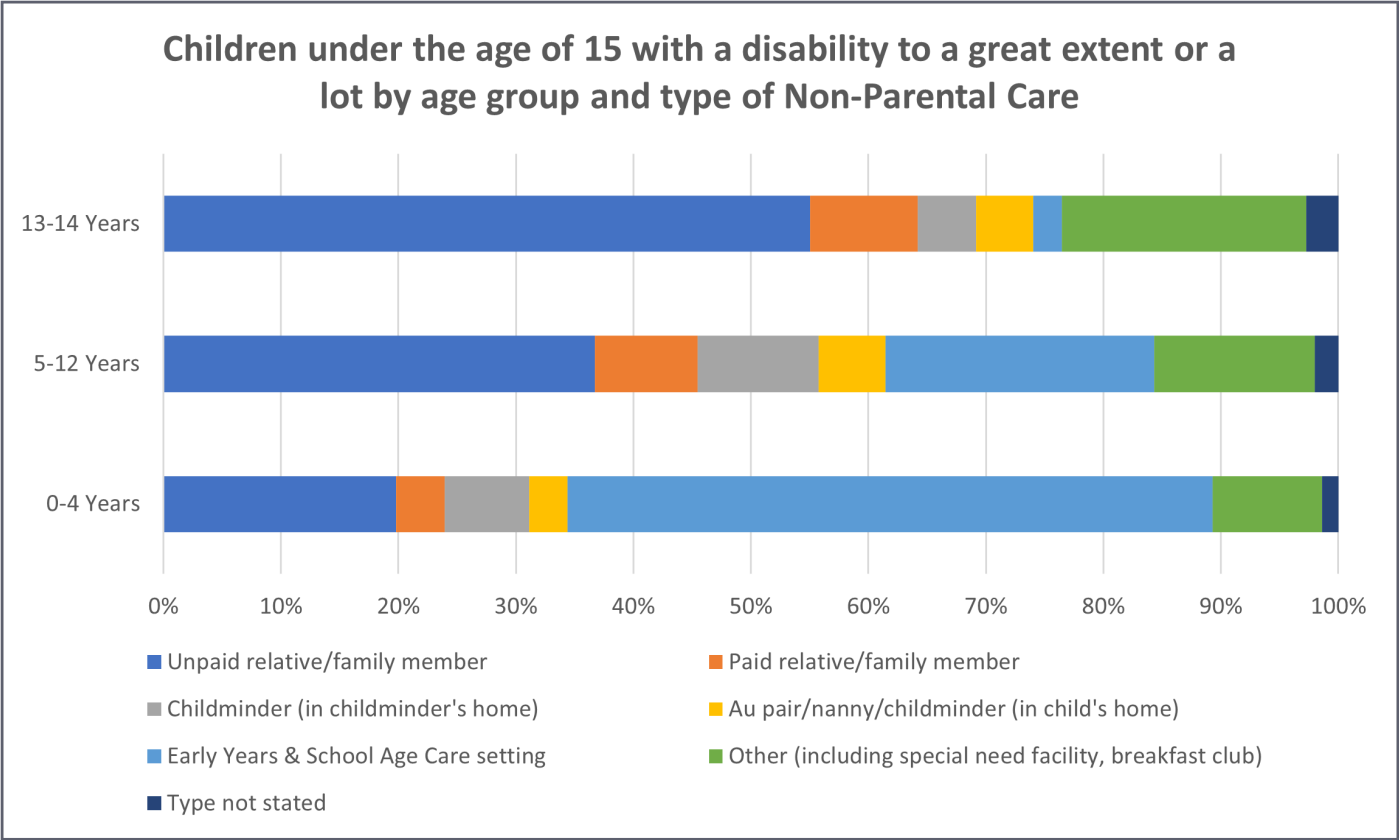
Children under the age of 15 with a disability to a great extent or a lot by type of Non-Parental Care



Source: Census 2022

Census 2022 includes questions on long-lasting conditions and difficulties. The information was compiled from a range of categories in the questions and the extent to which they were experienced.

Census 2022 found that 9,789 children in non-parental care reported experiencing at least one long-lasting condition or difficulty. One third of these children were cared for by an unpaid relative or family member and another 30% were cared for in an Early Years and School Age Care setting.



Source: Census 2022

As can be seen above, there are significant variation in the non-parental care choice between the age groups. For example, almost 50% of Preschool age children experiencing at least one long-lasting condition or difficulty availed of Early Years and School Age Care settings compared to almost 23% of Primary school children and 2.4% of Secondary school children.

