

What is the cost of a healthy food basket in the Republic of Ireland in 2018?

Low-income households:

Eat less well



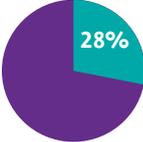
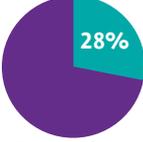
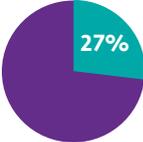
Higher level of diet-related disease



Research to find out the cost of a food basket that is:

Realistic and acceptable

Nutritionally adequate

Household type	Total basket cost ¹	% of take home income	
 <p>Two-parent two-child Pre-school and primary school</p>	 <p>€128 Per week</p>	 <p>28%</p> <p>Dependent on State Benefits</p>	 <p>22%</p> <p>One adult employed (earning the National Minimum Wage)</p>
 <p>Two-parent two-child Primary and secondary school</p>	 <p>€153 Per week</p>	 <p>33%</p> <p>Dependent on State Benefits</p>	 <p>26%</p> <p>One adult employed (earning the National Minimum Wage)</p>
 <p>One-parent two-child Pre-school and primary school</p>	 <p>€97 Per week</p>	 <p>28%</p> <p>Dependent on State Benefits</p>	 <p>15%</p> <p>Adult employed (earning the National Minimum Wage)</p>
 <p>Single adult</p>	 <p>€53 Per week</p>	 <p>27%</p> <p>Dependent on State Benefits</p>	 <p>15%</p> <p>Adult employed (earning the National Minimum Wage)</p>
 <p>Female pensioner living alone</p>	 <p>€53 Per week</p>	 <p>23%</p> <p>Dependent on State Pension</p>	
 <p>Pensioner couple</p>	 <p>€83 Per week</p>	 <p>19%</p> <p>Dependent on State Pension</p>	

¹Costs were determined for both rural and urban households. The costs presented here are the costs for the household that needed to spend the most. Full details are available at www.safefood.eu

Cost of healthy food basket



Objectives

To estimate the cost of a Minimum Essential Standard of Living (MESL) Healthy Food Basket for 2018 and to present the cost as a proportion of take-home income for six household types in the Republic of Ireland.

Methodology

Focus groups conducted in 2014 for each household type determine the contents of the food basket. The food basket is part of a minimum essential standard of living and identifies a food basket that everyone should be able to afford. It represents a socially acceptable and nutritious food basket. The 2014 food basket costs were updated for 2018 by applying the Republic of Ireland Consumer Price Index (CPI).

Results

Household type	Food basket cost per week		Income scenarios	Proportion of take home income	
	Urban	Rural		Urban	Rural
Two-parent, Two-child (Pre-school and primary school)	€116	€128	Social welfare	25%	28%
			One adult earning national minimum wage	20%	22%
Two-parent, Two-child (Primary and secondary school)	€139	€153	Social welfare	30%	33%
			One adult earning national minimum wage	24%	26%
One-parent, Two-child (Pre-school and primary school)	€89	€97	Social welfare	26%	28%
			Adult earning national minimum wage	14%	15%
Single adult	€53	€49	Social welfare	27%	25%
			Adult earning national minimum wage	15%	14%
Female pensioner living alone	€58	€61	Contributory pension	21%	22%
			Non-contributory pension	22%	23%
Pensioner Couple	€76	€83	Contributory pension, qualified adult payment	18%	19%
			Non-contributory pension, contributory pension	15%	17%
			Both non-contributory pension	16%	17%

Key conclusions

- The average weekly cost of a minimum healthy food basket in 2018 has fallen by 4.4% since 2016.
- Low income households need to spend between 14% and 33% of their take-home income to buy a healthy minimum essential food basket. This is dependant of household composition and location
 - Food costs rise as children grow older, food is a significant cost for households with an adolescent. The cost of food for a teenager was almost double the cost of food for a pre-school child.
 - Food costs are more expensive for rural households with the exception of the single adult
- Households receiving state benefits only spend a larger percentage of take home income on the food basket than households with an employed adult.
- This research highlights the challenges when trying to balance buying a healthy food basket with other weekly household expenses.
- Meat, breads and cereals, dairy products, fruit, and vegetables account for the largest share of the food basket.
- Spending on restaurants, cafes, fast food, takeaways and visitors are an important part of the food basket highlighting the social and cultural aspects of food. It ensures that households can participate in activities that are considered to be part of everyday life.



To download a copy of the full report and infographic visit www.safefood.eu