



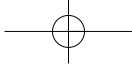
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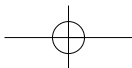
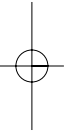
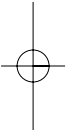
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Ageing and Social Policy in Ireland





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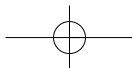
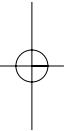
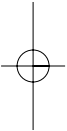
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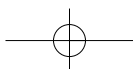
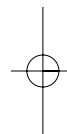
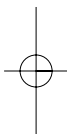
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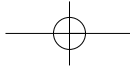
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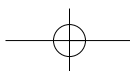
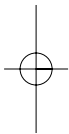
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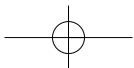
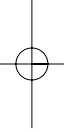
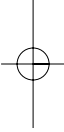




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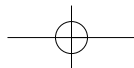
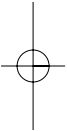
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Contributors to this volume

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Abbreviations

A & E	Accident and Emergency
AD	Alzheimer's Disease
AGIY	Action Group for Irish Youth
BUPA	British United Provident Association
BURDIS	Burden of Disease in Old Age Network Project
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CHD	Coronary Heart Disease
CoE	Council of Europe
CPA	Combat Poverty Agency
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DoEHLG	Department of the Environment, Housing and Local Government
DoSFA	Department of Social and Family Affairs
EANIG	Elder Abuse National Implementation Group
EEC	European Economic Community
EMEA	European Medicine Agency
ENHR	European Network for Housing Research
ESFEU	European Social Fund Evaluation Unit
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
EU	European Union
FÁS	Foras Áiseanna Saothair (Irish National Training and Employment Agency)
GAIE	Gross Average Industrial Earnings
GHQ	General Health Questionnaire
HEN	Home Education Network
HeSSOP	Health and Social Services for Older People
HIQA	Health Information and Quality Authority
HRB	Health Research Board
HSE	Health Service Executive
IADL	Instrumental Activities of Daily Living
IAG	Independent Advisory Group
IAU	Irish Abroad Unit
ICCR	Interdisciplinary Centre for Comparative Research in the Social Sciences
ICSH	Irish Council for Social Housing
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INO	Irish Nurses Organisation

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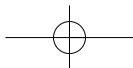
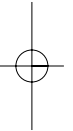
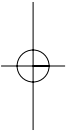
INSHQ	Irish National Survey of Housing Quality
INPEA	International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse
IPA	Institute of Public Administration
ISSDA	Irish Social Sciences Data Archive
LAA	Living Alone Allowance
LIS	Living in Ireland Survey
LRC	Labour Relations Commission
MCI	Mild Cognitive Impairment
MHSOP	Mental Health Services for Older People
MMSE	Mini Mental State Examination
NACPC	National Advisory Committee on Palliative Care
NAPS	National Anti-Poverty Strategy
NCAOP	National Council on Ageing and Older People
NCD	Non-Communicable Disease
NCO	National Children's Office
NDA	National Disability Authority
NESC	National Economic and Social Council
NESF	National Economic and Social Forum
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NHS	National Health Service
NICE	National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence
OACP	Old Age Contributory Pension
ODPM	Office of Deputy Prime Minister (UK)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ORAC	Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner
PADL	Physical Activities of Daily Living
PES	Principal Economic Status
PHN	Public Health Nurse
PRIAE	Policy Research Institute on Ageing and Ethnicity
PRSI	Pay Related Social Insurance
QNHS	Quarterly National Household Survey
RIA	Royal Irish Academy
RP	Retirement Pension
SILC/EU SILC	Survey on Income and Living Conditions
SLAN	Survey of Lifestyle, Attitudes and Nutrition
SONAS	Healthcare and Childcare across Ireland
TCD	Trinity College, Dublin
UCD	University College Dublin
UN	United Nations
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNHCHR	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights



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Abbreviations

VHI	Voluntary Health Insurance
WGEA	Working Group on Elder Abuse
WHO	World Health Organisation



Chapter 1

Introduction

Suzanne Quin
Patricia Kennedy

Ageing and Social Policy in Ireland brings together the writings of specialists in a range of areas relevant to the situation of older people in Ireland. The overall subject of ageing and social policy is of current relevance and will remain so in the coming decades. This is because Ireland, like other European countries, is facing demographic changes and parallel policy challenges. The average life expectancy has increased quite dramatically in recent decades. The average life expectancy for a man in Ireland at age 66 is now 80.6 years while, on average, a woman at the same age will have a further 17.9 years to live. *Social Inclusion: Building an Inclusive Society*, the National Plan for Social Inclusion (Government of Ireland, 2002), outlines a vision for older people in which they are enabled to maintain their health and well-being, live active and full lives, independently and in their own homes and communities for as long as possible. It envisions older people participating in social and civic life, having sufficient income to support an acceptable standard of living, and having access to good quality services in the community, including: health, education, transport, housing and security.

As Pierce reminds us in chapter 2, there is a longstanding history and a close connection between ageing and social policy. She outlines how the origins of social policy towards older people in Ireland may date back to the Poor Relief (Ireland) Act of 1838, which was the first statutory provision for the poor in Ireland. This formed the foundation stones of Ireland's social welfare system. Pierce argues that, as recipients of social security benefits and users of health and social care services, issues relating to older people and the problems of ageing and old age have moved on to the front line of policy debates in Ireland as in many other countries. Yet social policy as it relates to older people is not simply a response to the issues and problems of ageing and old age. The idea that the lives of older people and the problems of ageing and old age have been and continue to be constructed and reconstructed through social policies has been developed from a political economy of ageing which suggests that the experience of ageing is determined to a large extent by

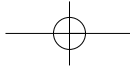
socio-economic structures and policies. It has, however, been criticised for excluding the role of older people themselves, a theme which Pierce explores in detail. She suggests that older people are agentic – always actively constructing their social world.

In modern societies, Ireland being no exception, agency is often, though not exclusively, viewed in terms of participation in the labour market. Fahey, in chapter 3, utilises data from a nationally based research study (and) examines labour market participation of older people in Ireland and how this might be influenced by public policy. He concludes that older people are now being encouraged to remain in the workforce. This policy requires greater flexibility in pension arrangements and the development of options such as a phased approach to retirement, an approach favoured by the majority of older people in employment.

Labour market participation is very closely related to income security, a theme taken up by Prunty, in chapter 4 on poverty and ageing. Drawing on data from the EU Survey on Income and Living Conditions, she emphasises the importance for older people of the role of social transfers in preventing poverty. She presents data on poverty levels for older people compared to younger age groups in four areas – income and income poverty, deprivation, housing conditions and consistent poverty. She focuses on some particularly vulnerable groups of older people before presenting a short section on the relationship between living conditions and health. Some of these issues are taken up in later chapters.

In chapter 5 Norris and Winston focus on housing and accommodation for older people, poignantly indicating that: 'Housing is not simply a "roof over the head" but it is also a location in which the person can foster social networks, family bonds and access services. So housing can have an immense impact on the well-being of older people.'

Brennan, in chapter 11, highlights the needs of older people who require help with activities of daily living. Today, the vast majority of older people in Ireland live independent lives at home. However, for the minority who require care, the reality of service delivery is such that funding for care services is below the European average (NESF, 2005: 5). As a consequence, personal social services in the community remain patchy, inconsistent and inequitable. There has been little attempt to underpin service provision with legislation. Brennan suggests that policy appears to be developed in a reactionary way and this ad hoc approach can be seen in the current Health Service Executive (HSE) moves to engage with the private sector via the new home care packages in providing community-based care services. The traditional mix of public, private and voluntary provision is thus further complicated because the roles and responsibilities of these sectoral providers as well as entitlement issues have not been fully clarified.



In chapter 9 Quin argues that good health is of crucial importance in old age as it is at any other stage of the life span, but for older people it is 'the key determinant of their ability to remain independent and autonomous' (Feldman, 1999: 272). She points out that many can now expect to spend between one fifth and one quarter of their lifespan within the category of 'older person'. She highlights ageism in health care and the particular challenges of providing for the mental health needs of the older population. The fact that personal social services are subsumed under the health budget means that the provision of these services (of critical importance to many of the older old population) may lose out in multiple demands made on health care provision. There are many issues which need to be addressed by policy makers in this sphere.

Orla O'Donovan addresses the important role of the pharmaceutical industry in healthcare for the elderly in chapter 8 and she focuses on the importance of advocacy groups, using the treatment of Alzheimer's Disease as a case study. The particular needs of other specific groups are addressed by several contributors to this volume. In chapter 12 O'Loughlin, for example, focuses on the emergence of elder abuse policy in Ireland. Looking at Ireland in an international context, she examines significant events and developments that have had an impact on the emergence of elder abuse as a social issue. She discusses the adequacy of responses to it as well as the challenges of developing preventative strategies in this area. Anne O'Connor draws our attention to the needs of another particularly vulnerable group of older people in chapter 10. With increased life expectancy, people are at risk of acquiring disabilities as they age. O'Connor examines the issue of older people who experience the late onset of disability, specifically people who acquire a disability owing to the ageing process. She also examines the needs of people who have had a disability since childhood, a group that are now experiencing longevity in much greater numbers. As with the general population, people with a lifelong disability are benefiting from improvements in medical and social advances, resulting in increased life expectancy (WHO, 2000). For some living with a lifelong disability, the onset of the ageing process can happen prematurely and bring with it the possibility additional complications.

Older people are not a homogeneous group. Many of the issues addressed in this book are intensified for older people from ethnic minorities and new communities, a theme taken up by Moran in chapter 7. He highlights the invisibility of older immigrants in terms of public perceptions, policy and service provision. Older immigrants, he argues, face problems in common with all older people in the population in relation to health and personal social services, poverty and housing, but their situation can be further complicated by language and cultural differences, lack of understanding and fear. He finds a lack of basic statistical data on older people among immigrant

populations in Ireland. Moreover, in his review of policy documents on older people, only one (NESF, 2005) refers to the needs of ethnic minority groups.

In a similar vein, in chapter 6 Joan O'Flynn focuses on the particular needs of returned emigrants, who though constituting a small number require specific supports and services. O'Flynn indicates that return elder migration has attracted less 'scholarly attention' than elder migration and there is limited research and policy focus on the nature, extent and experiences of older Irish return migrants. To address this lacuna, O'Flynn presents a short overview of the current data trends relating to inward migration and older return migrants. This is followed by an exploration of some theoretical explanations for return migration before outlining key legislative and policy contexts and an overview of the range of supports available to potential older return migrants.

This book explores many factors affecting ageing in Ireland today. It serves as an appraisal of policy developments to date and as a point of departure for future challenges. It is ideal for undergraduate and postgraduate students eager to familiarise themselves with the challenges for older people, their families, service providers, and policy makers. It introduces conceptual and theoretical writings on ageing, thus will serve as a good resource for those approaching gerontology for the first time. The book will be pertinent to a range of training courses for social workers, psychologists, doctors, nurses, care workers and any other groups employed in working with older people. It will also be relevant to the vast array of agencies engaged in policy creation and implementation in this area. Each chapter addresses a specific area of social policy, forming a complete unit in itself. Taken together, the chapters provide the reader with a readily accessible and wide-ranging overview of ageing and social policy in Ireland.

The active participation and integration of older people in society are important goals in contemporary Ireland. This book conveys the key role that policy planning and service provision play in this area. The chapter contents indicate that there are many issues in the areas of income support, housing, health, and personal social services related to ageing in Ireland that must be addressed in order to ensure that the aim of maximising opportunities for older people to actively engage in civic and social life is achieved.