

23. Ireland

This country profile benchmarks self-employment and entrepreneurship data for women, youth, seniors and immigrants in Ireland against the European Union average. It also highlights current inclusive entrepreneurship policy issues and recent policy developments.

Key trends

Overall, the self-employment rate was approximately equal to the European Union (EU) average in 2018 (12.9% vs. 13.5%). Women were slightly less likely to be self-employed than the EU average in 2018 (6.8% vs. 9.6%), while youth were much less likely (2.9% vs. 6.5%) and seniors much more likely (23.0% vs. 17.7%). Women, youth and seniors were more likely to be involved in starting and managing new businesses between 2014 and 2018, and were much more likely to expect to create at least 19 jobs over the next five years. This proportion was the highest among youth entrepreneurs as nearly one in five expected this level of job creation.

Hot issue

Entrepreneurship continues to be a policy priority for the national government. The main entrepreneurship policy was renewed in 2018 with the release of “Enterprise 2025 Renewed: Resilient – Innovative – Globally Connected.” The strategic document note that the fundamentals of Ireland’s enterprise policy remain sound but that further actions are needed to use entrepreneurship as a way to increase labour force participation rates for the unemployed, youth, women, older people and people with disabilities. The overall objective is to promote growth and innovation, but also create sustainable employment and higher living standards for all.

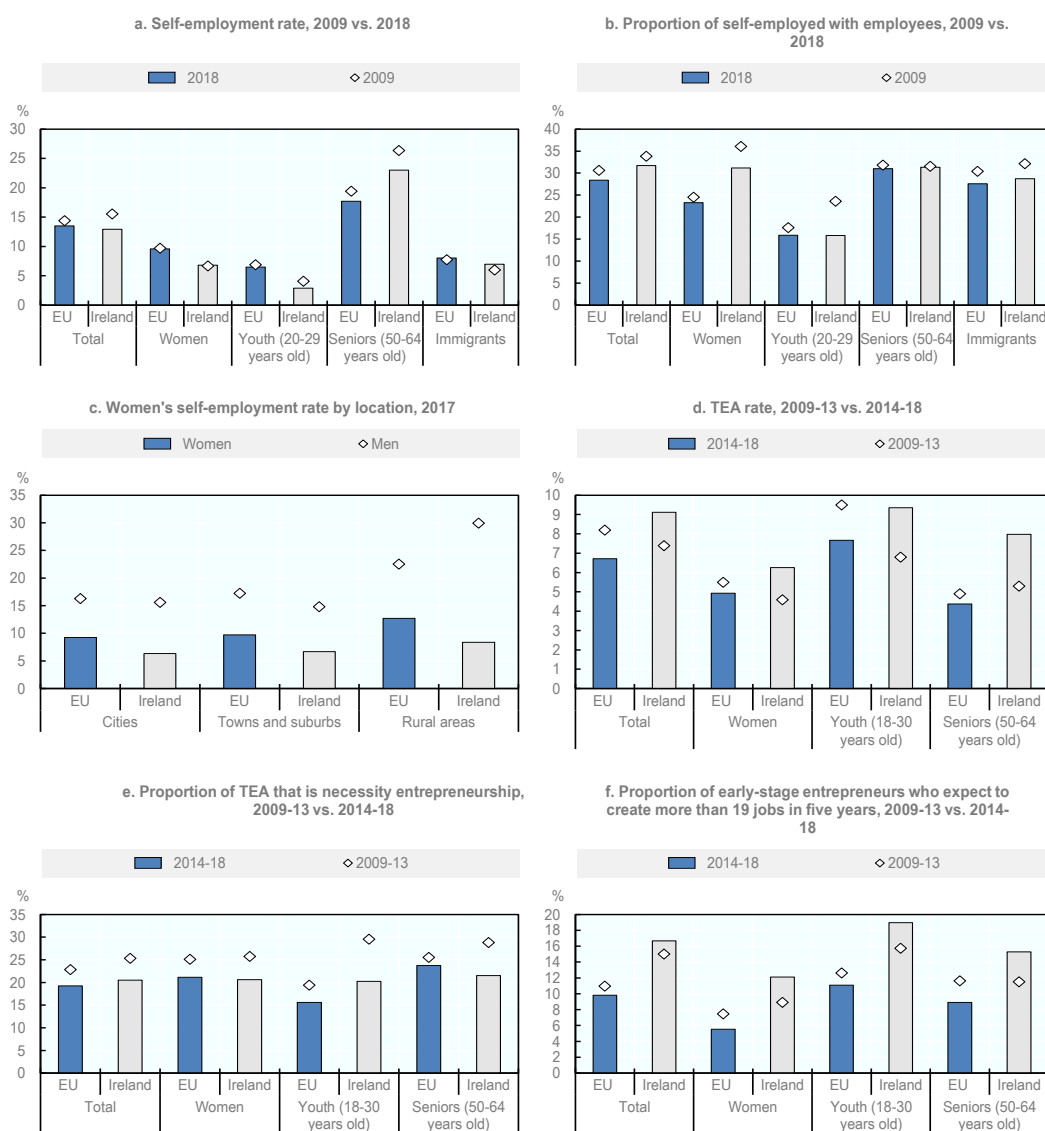
Recent policy developments

Policy actions to boost women’s entrepreneurship continue. Enterprise Ireland launched the 2019 women-only call for applications to the Competitive Start Fund in June 2019. The Fund provides up to EUR 50 000 to a maximum of 15 applicants. Successful applicants will also be provided a place in the 12-week Innovate accelerator programme that is delivered by the Dublin Business Innovation Centre. Eligible entrepreneurs must have not started selling products or services, or have generated less than EUR 60 000 in revenue. Business should be capable of realising at least EUR 1 million within three years and create at least ten jobs during this period.

This profile is based on a recent country assessment report, which can be found at: www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/inclusive-entrepreneurship.htm.

Key inclusive entrepreneurship data

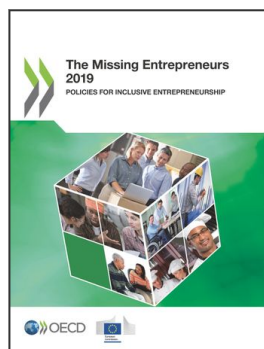
Figure 23.1. Entrepreneurship and self-employment data for Ireland



Notes: The self-employment rate is defined as the number of self-employed people (15-64 years old) divided by the number of people in employment. The TEA rate is the proportion of adults (18-64 years old) involved in setting up a business or managing a business that is less than 42 months old. Necessity entrepreneurship is defined as entrepreneurship activities that were launched because there were no other options in the labour market. Early-stage entrepreneurs are those who are in the process of setting up a business or managing a business that is less than 42 months old. The EU average in Panels D-F excludes Czech Republic and Malta for the period 2014-18 and Malta for the period 2009-13.

Sources: Panels A and B: Eurostat (2019), Labour Force Survey, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/lfs/data/database>; Panel C: Eurostat (2018), Self-employment, Labour Force Survey ad-hoc module, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/lfs/data/database>; Panels D-F: Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2019), *Special tabulations of the GEM survey 2014-18*.

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