

## Report "Precarious Work, Precarious Lives: how policy can create more security" published by FEPS and TASC Irish think tank

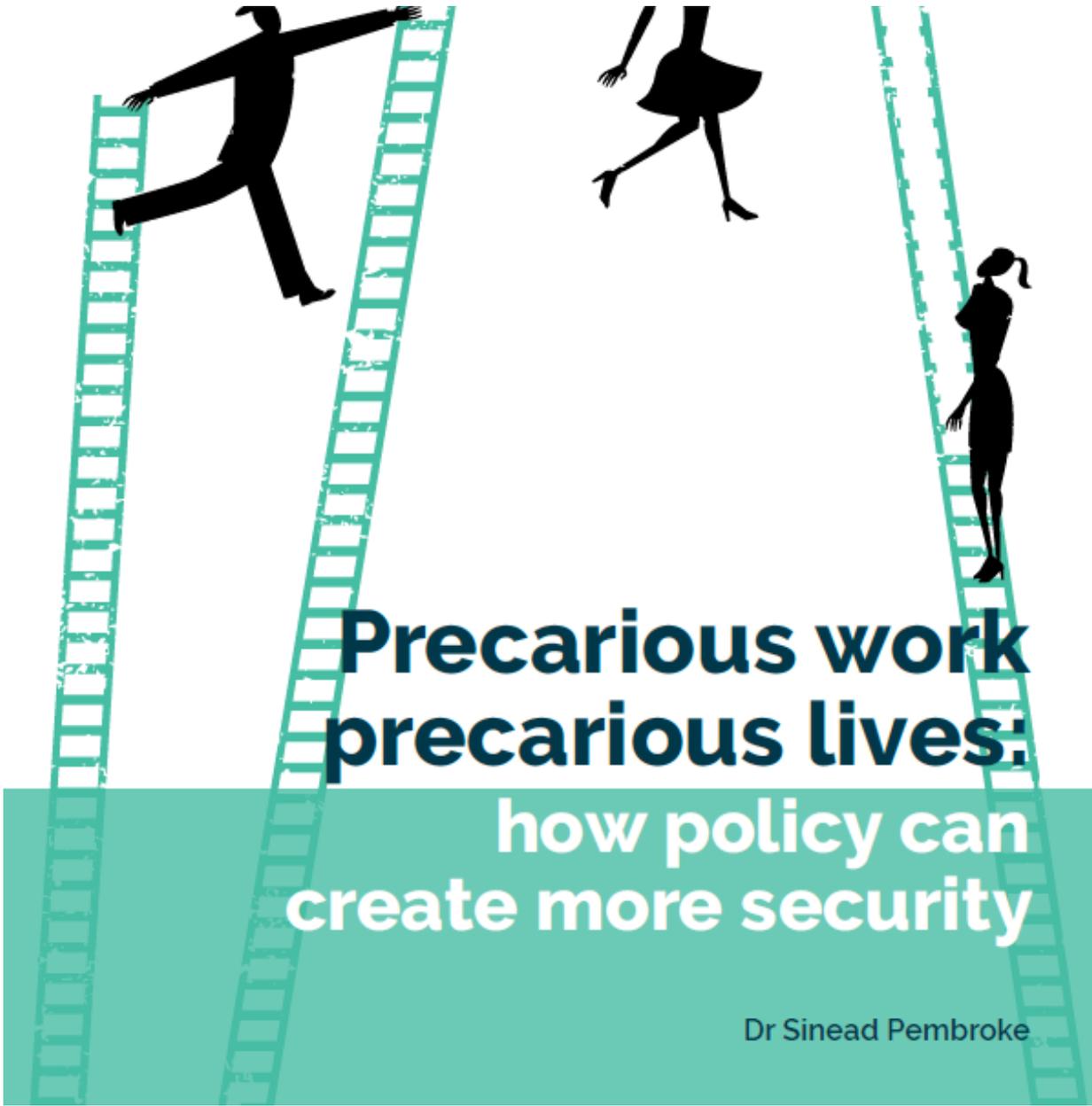
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In Ireland the absence of universal health and childcare makes the insecurity of precarious work even greater. Often, policymaker narratives focus on the unemployment figures declining, yet we are seeing more and more workers experiencing or being at risk of in-work poverty, especially through precarious work. *Precarious Work, Precarious Lives: how policy can create more security*—a report recently published by FEPS and the Irish think tank TASC—describes how precarious work is not just a labour-market matter, as it has far reaching consequences beyond the workplace. The report, based on the evidence of precarious workers living in Ireland, reveals that, although such insecurity is prevalent throughout Europe, Ireland differs because of the lack of universal access to state services, such as healthcare and childcare.

Ireland has a 'two-tier' system of social supports: there are those who meet the means-tested eligibility criteria to be subsidised by the state and those who do not. Those who do not are assumed to be able to afford healthcare services. Ireland's lack of housing security —such as a social housing programme and an affordable rental model would provide —exacerbates the experience of precarious workers.

The report finds that, when it comes to access to healthcare, precarious work has a negative impact because of the triple financial burden of ill-health: unpaid sick leave, the General Practitioner (GP) fee and the cost of medication or follow-up appointments. This often results in making difficult choices, such as cutting down on food to be able to pay the fee. Most precarious workers cannot afford private health insurance, unless a family member pays. Therefore, in Ireland many are covered by neither public nor private healthcare services, because they are just above the threshold for a medical or GP card providing free access.





# **Precarious work precarious lives:** how policy can create more security

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