

# ANNUAL REPORT 2015

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The Council is the Institute’s overall governing body and acts as its board of directors. In association with the director and staff, the Council is responsible for the development of the Institute’s research strategy. The Council meets quarterly and is supported by its three sub-committees: Audit and Risk, Business and Operations, and Governance and Nominations. Section 7 provides a short biography of Council Members.

## The Council

### MEMBERS AT 31 DECEMBER 2015



***Mr P. McManus,  
Chair***



***Prof. A. Barrett,  
Director***

MR P. MCMANUS, Chair

PROFESSOR A. BARRETT, Director

MR J. BUCKLEY, former Comptroller and Auditor General

MR P. DALTON, Director General, Central Statistics Office

MS E. GILVARRY, Partner, Mason Hayes Curran

PROFESSOR P. LANE, Governor, Central Bank of Ireland

MR J. MARTIN, former OECD Director

PROFESSOR H. MCGEE, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland

MR D. MOLONEY, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

MS B. O'BRIEN, Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed

PROFESSOR S. SHORTALL, Queen’s University Belfast

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) is to provide evidence to inform policymaking, in order to contribute to the realisation of its vision of “informed policy for a better Ireland”. The Council of the ESRI supports this work by overseeing the Institute’s strategic objectives, establishing the required quality standards and ensuring that the independent analysis provided by the Institute is relevant to the economic and social issues facing policymakers in Ireland today. While the Council is responsible for internal governance, Council members play no role in preparing or commenting on specific research.

This Introduction sets out the Council’s views on how the Institute maintains its reputation as a centre for excellence in independent policy-focused research, particularly in the face of funding challenges. It also includes a brief overview of the Institute’s governance and its research output in 2015, the second year of its 2014–2018 research strategy.

### Independence and Funding

The Institute’s research strategy has reaffirmed the importance of the ESRI’s commitment to producing research that is independent, objective and of high quality. Independence is assured through the contractual relationships between the Institute and its clients and underpinned by a policy of publishing research, regardless of the findings or source of funding. Quality, objectivity and independence are further supported by a rigorous peer review system, which is examined regularly by the Council and by peer reviews of the Institute itself. This takes place approximately every five years.

In recent years, the Institute has focused on building financial sustainability through multi-annual programmes of research funded by a number of government departments and agencies. These programmes are discussed in Section 2. The Council acknowledges the importance of the continued support from government in the form of grant-in-aid, which comes from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. It recognises the significant contribution of many government departments and agencies that funded research programmes in 2015. The other major sources of research funding for the Institute come from competitive funding processes, both in Ireland and in the EU.

The Council also recognises the contributions of individuals and companies that are subscribing ESRI members. These membership subscriptions support the work of the Institute and contribute to ensuring its independence.

### Council Governance

The Council of the ESRI continues to ensure that its standards of corporate governance operate to the highest level. There is a high level of awareness regarding where potential conflicts of interest can arise and a strong commitment to ensuring that Council membership is appropriately balanced. The Council’s Governance and Nominations sub-committee monitors the membership to ensure that the Council has the requisite skills, broad sectoral coverage and gender balance.

Normally, Council membership is for a three-year period, with a renewal being common for a further three years. Council members are not paid any fees for their membership of the Council. Members are nominated through a formal process and elected at the Institute’s AGM.

In 2015, Mr Laurence Crowley, then Chair of the Institute, came to the end of his term. Mr Pádraig McManus, who has been a member of the Council since 2012, became Chair. The Council wishes to commend Mr Crowley for his tremendous dedication and contribution to the work of the Institute throughout his time on the Council. Three new members joined the Council in 2015: Mr Pádraig Dalton, Director-General of the Central Statistics Office, Mr John Martin, formerly of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and Professor Sally Shortall, Queen’s University Belfast. In addition, following his appointment as Director, Professor Alan Barrett joined the Council in his *ex officio* capacity.

The membership of the Audit and Risk sub-committee was renewed at the end of 2015, and the members for 2016 are Mr John Buckley (Chair), Professor Philip Lane and Mr John Martin. The members of the Business and Operations sub-committee, which provides inputs to the Council on the implementation of strategy, are Professor Hannah McGee (Chair), Ms Brid O'Brien and Professor Alan Barrett. Finally, following its intensive work in the recruitment of the new director, the membership of the Governance and Nominations sub-committee is to be renewed in 2016.

### **Financial Outturn for 2015**

Funding challenges have been intense in recent years. In response, the Institute adopted a new funding strategy, focusing on attracting sustainable funding from broader sources, primarily through multi-annual research programmes supported by a number of government departments and agencies. The year 2015 saw the commencement of a number of new programmes and the extension of some existing programmes, thereby providing a stronger funding base for the work of the Institute.

### **Research Outputs in 2015**

In 2015, the Institute advanced its research strategy through significant output across its 12 research areas. Its research was disseminated in 45 journal articles, 31 reports and 16 book chapters, in addition to eight Research Notes and three Special Articles published with the *Quarterly Economic Commentaries*. Summaries of journal-published research studies were published in 20 Research Bulletins. Work-in-progress was disseminated in 27 working papers.

### ***Growing Up in Ireland***

In 2015, researchers from the ESRI and Trinity College Dublin commenced work on the second phase of the *Growing Up in Ireland* study. The data produced by this study since it began in 2006 has already been deployed extensively by researchers at national and international level. Similarly, the research produced in Phase 2 will enable policymakers in the area of children and young people to approach decision-making equipped with a valuable repository of data. In October 2015, the ESRI hosted the international conference of the Society for Longitudinal and Life-Course Studies (SLLS), sharing its expertise from the *Growing Up in Ireland* study with over 300 representatives of longitudinal studies around the world.

### **People**

Professor Frances Ruane reached the end of her term as Director in 2015 and was succeeded by Professor Alan Barrett following an international search and competition. The Council would like to express their profound gratitude to Professor Ruane for her professionalism and dedication during her term. The Council would also like to commend the Institute's staff whose vision, dedication and energy resulted in the quality and scope of research outlined in this report. Their commitment ensures that the Institute continues to rise to the challenge of providing a valued, independent voice in policy debates and in so doing, advancing evidence-based policy in Ireland.

**Pádraig McManus**

*Chairman*

**Alan Barrett**

*Director*

***June 2016***

## 2. SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC ACHIEVEMENTS 2015

Implementation of the Institute’s research strategy ensures that the Institute contributes evidence to inform policy debate and decision-making at this critical time for Ireland.<sup>1</sup> The Strategy outlines the Institute’s priority actions for the next five years in the context of the Institute’s mission, vision, goals and values. These were developed by the Council in agreement with the research staff, following a comprehensive strategic process in 2014. Our goals of *research excellence* and *policy impact* are being pursued through three sets of strategic actions related to research programmes, collaborations and dissemination. They are being supported by a further three sets of actions relating to funding, human resources and business processes. Summarised in Figure 1, these goals and actions help to ensure that the Institute stays focused on its key role as a centre for excellence in policy-focused research in Ireland in the economic and social domains.

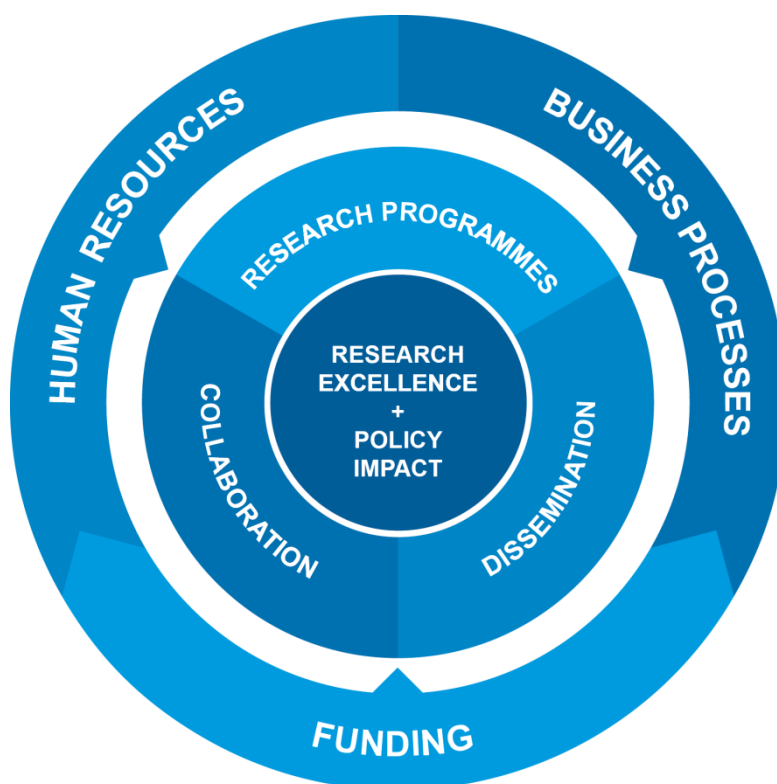


Figure 1: Research Excellence and Policy Impact

The Council oversees the implementation of the research strategy, through twice-yearly reports to the Business and Operations sub-committee. The reports cover the research agenda across the 12 research areas, as well as the implementation of the strategic actions.

This section briefly sets out the progress made in 2015 in delivering on the actions designed to meet our goals of research excellence and policy impact. It looks at progress in relation to research activity, followed by research supports – generating funding, developing human resources and improving business processes.

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<sup>1</sup> A copy of the ESRI’s *Research Strategy 2014–2018* (2014) can be downloaded at: <https://www.esri.ie/about/esri-research-strategy-2014-2018/>.

## 2.1 Research Activity

These strategic actions relate to developing research areas, building collaborations and improving dissemination. In each case we provide illustrations of developments that took place in 2015 in relation to these strategic actions.

### 2.1.1 Developing Research Areas

There has been progress on several of the strategic actions under this heading. For example, since 2013, the Institute's macro-modelling team has been working to develop a replacement for the ESRI **macro-model**, HERMES. In part, this followed a recommendation from a peer review process conducted in 2010 on the need to move to a new generation of economic models. In December 2015, the new macro-economic model – COSMO – was completed. The new model will be central to the production of medium-term scenarios later in 2016, amongst other uses such as scenario analyses as part of the Budget.

### 2.1.2 Collaborations

Progress has been made on several of the strategic actions under this heading. For example, two highly successful **joint conferences** were organised in 2015. In collaboration with the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, a half-day conference was held on the question of how labour migration can be used to ease labour market shortages. In collaboration with the European Commission's Dublin office, the ESRI hosted a conference on housing supply, possibly the most pressing policy issue of late 2015–2016.

### 2.1.3 Dissemination

There has been progress on several of the strategic actions under this heading. For example, the re-designed **website** went live in October. This represented a major achievement for the team involved and an important achievement under the 2014–2018 strategy. The website now has a more modern look and feel and complements other initiatives in this area such as the redesign of our monthly newsletter.

## 2.2 Research Supports

These strategic actions relate to generating funding, developing human resources and improving business processes. In each case we provide some illustrations of developments that took place in 2015 in relation to these strategic actions.

### 2.2.1 Generating Funding

The generation and maintenance of multi-annual research programmes are key to sustainable funding and ultimately to good quality, policy-relevant research. In 2015, our programme with the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) was renewed and new programmes were agreed with the Low Pay Commission, the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation/Enterprise Ireland and the Department of Justice and Equality. Work continued on existing programmes such as those with the Department of Finance/Revenue and the Department of Health.

### 2.2.2 Human Resources

Under the current strategy, the Institute has increasingly hired post-doctoral researchers in an effort to broaden our base of junior researchers and to ensure an inflow of recently trained researchers. This continued in 2015 and is contributing to a re-energising of the research environment. While this represents a partial departure from our traditional approach of hiring research assistants, we remain committed to hiring an annual cohort of research assistants as well.

### 2.2.3 Business Processes

The processes for tendering for research contracts and the subsequent reporting requirements once contracts have been awarded are becoming increasingly complex. This situation has been recognised by the universities and they have typically expanded their "research offices" and supports to

researchers in the areas of tendering and project management. In 2015, the Institute reviewed its needs in this area and decided to expand its projects office.

### 3. RESEARCH IN 2015

This section provides an overview of our research activities and findings for 2015. Those that involved publication have been made available on the ESRI website. In some cases, Research Bulletins were also issued.

Following these highlights, we provide a brief summary of research across the 12 research areas in 2015. Further details on the research and the researchers involved are available on the website.

<b>1. Macroeconomics</b>	<b>7. Education</b>
Macro modelling; Housing markets; SMEs; Household behaviour; Consumer sentiment.	Educational pathways; Schools and learning; Special education needs; Higher education.
<b>2. Internationalisation and Competitiveness</b>	<b>8. Taxation, Welfare and Pensions</b>
Trade; Foreign direct investment; Innovation; Productivity.	Tax and welfare policy; Tax modelling.
<b>3. Energy and Environment</b>	<b>9. Social Inclusion and Equality</b>
Energy markets; Regulation; Renewable power; Environmental valuation; Climate policy.	Inequality; Discrimination; Social disadvantage; Poverty.
<b>4. Communications and Transport</b>	<b>10. Health and Quality of Life</b>
E-commerce; Broadband; Infrastructure.	Access to healthcare; Healthcare quality; Health inequalities; Health systems; Wellbeing; Working conditions.
<b>5. Labour Markets and Skills</b>	<b>11. Children and Young People</b>
Unemployment; Skills and training; Further education.	Childhood; Adolescence; Family.
<b>6. Migration, Integration and Demography</b>	<b>12. Behavioural Economics</b>
Immigration; Integration monitoring; Ageing.	Consumer decision-making.

Figure 2: Research Areas and Topics

#### 3.1 Research Highlights

##### Macroeconomics

- Research on new macro-prudential measures introduced by the Central Bank of Ireland found that they may have a contractionary impact on a housing market that is still recovering.
- Researchers found that if the UK exits the European Union (Brexit), the Irish economy would suffer an adverse trade outcome.

##### Internationalisation and Competitiveness

- Research highlighted the importance of maintaining a competitive corporation tax in Ireland in order to attract continued foreign direct investment in the context of increased global competition.
- A study on the extent and determinants of European firms' engagement in outward international activities found that a large number of firms are exporters only, while only a small number engage either in international sourcing or in foreign direct investment.



### Energy and Environment

- Research on redesigning the Irish Single Electricity Market to comply with the EU target model for electricity markets found that in order to minimise costs for consumers, the proposed redesign will increase both the need for and the difficulty of regulation of the energy market.
- Research on the Public Service Obligation (PSO) levy found that the existing levy places a greater burden on low-income households, whereas a PSO that is proportional to electricity use would increase the cost faced by heavy electricity users, who are more likely to be in higher-income groups.

### Communications and Transport

- Research on broadband services for 2007–2013 found that the quality-adjusted price of broadband fell because nominal prices remained static, while quality of service rose substantially, particularly in relation to download speed.
- Research on the link between public subsidies for internet access in primary schools, classroom use of the internet and educational performance found that internet use in class was associated with significantly higher average mathematics and reading scores on standardised tests.

### Migration, Integration and Demography

- Research in conjunction with The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA) showed how ill-informed people are about their pension scheme and raised important questions about people's capacities to make good decisions on pension planning.
- A study analysing microdata on the lives of immigrants in Ireland found that while higher rates of discrimination were reported by immigrants compared to natives, the gap did not increase throughout the recession.

### Education

- New analyses based on the *Growing Up in Ireland* study found that the quality of teacher–student relationships is a key influence on student wellbeing and student outcomes.
- A study funded by the National Disability Authority (NDA) found that children and young people with disabilities, particularly emotional, psychological and mental difficulties, were more likely to be absent from school and at greater risk of social isolation.

### Social Inclusion and Equality

- A study on the lives of children with disabilities found a greater use of special education settings for children from disadvantaged backgrounds and highlighted the importance of a transparent approach in the placement of children and young people in special classes and schools.
- Research on household joblessness showed the rate of employment entry for a non-employed person in a jobless household was considerably lower than for a non-employed person living in a household where someone else is working. The findings point to the need for employment policy to take account of the household context as well as individual skills, experience and attributes.

### Health and Quality of Life

- Research funded by the Department of Health found that a proposed model of universal health insurance would increase healthcare expenditure by up to 11 per cent, owing largely to increased costs arising from multiple, competing insurers.

- A study of sports participation in school found that it had a positive impact on post-school pathways because it increased the likelihood of young people continuing in education.

#### **Children and Young People**

- A report on the impact of early childcare on cognitive development found that there are only modest associations between non-parental childcare and cognitive outcomes at age five. The report indicated that there is some evidence to indicate that participating in the free pre-school year with a graduate leader is associated with some small cognitive gains at five years.
- Research examined the impact of prenatal and early life experiences on physical and mental development of a child, considering factors such as birth weight, breastfeeding and maternal smoking and alcohol consumption in pregnancy.

#### **Behavioural Economics**

- Laboratory experiments designed to test how well consumers cope with complex products documented severe constraints in the volume and type of information they can process accurately.
- Further experiments on how consumers choose personal loans, electricity packages and mobile handsets found that choices could be strongly influenced by specific marketing practices.

#### **Taxation, Welfare and Pensions**

- Research found that medical card entitlements have only a modest effect on individuals' in-work and out-of-work resources for most people on jobseeker payments, who tend to be young, single and childless. This research also found that the Back to Work Family Dividend has a significant positive influence on the net reward from work for the families concerned.
- Key findings from research into tax and welfare options for Budget 2016 indicated that, with a resumption of modest wage growth, a significant proportion of the overall "fiscal space" identified in the government's Spring Economic Statement would be needed to avoid a rise in average tax rates through "fiscal drag" or "bracket creep".

#### **Labour Markets and Skills**

- An evaluation of the Back to Education Allowance (BTEA), which was funded by the Department of Social Protection, found no evidence that jobseekers who commenced an education programme under the BTEA scheme in 2008 benefitted from improved employment outcomes in the period up to 2014.
- Research on the role of higher education institutions in reducing labour market mismatch amongst new graduates found that increasing the practical aspects of degree programmes, strengthening links with employers and investing more heavily in career-support functions reduces the incidence of graduate mismatch in first employment.

### **3.2 Macroeconomics**

The macroeconomic research programme in the ESRI covers a wide range of issues that impact on the overall performance of the Irish economy. The programme simultaneously assesses the domestic macroeconomic outlook on a regular basis while also conducting in-depth research on related issues such as the housing market, economic growth, and the interaction of the real economy and the financial sector.

A new suite of macro-econometric models was successfully completed in 2015. These models will support ESRI forecasts and policy analysis and, in particular, will underpin the medium-term assessment of the growth potential of the Irish economy. An important development in these new macro-econometric models is the addition of a financial sector component.

A large amount of work in 2015 focused on the sources of growth in both the Irish and European economies. This provided both a better understanding of the recent recovery in the Irish case, while also documenting difficulties that are likely to challenge future European growth prospects. The significant forecast accuracy observed for the nowcasting approach in 2015 resulted in the model becoming an increasingly integral part of the quarterly assessments of the macroeconomic outlook.

The housing market was the source of a considerable amount of research in 2015. Developments in the housing market are examined under a research programme funded by the **National Asset Management Agency** and the **Banking and Payments Federation of Ireland**. Building on the greater understanding of the financial sector in the macro-econometric modelling work, research examined the likely implications of the new macro-prudential measures introduced by the Central Bank of Ireland on the Irish housing and mortgage market; the general conclusion being that the measures may have a contractionary impact on a housing market that is still recovering. A significant amount of research in this area also examined the supply side of the Irish housing market, with other studies examining the implications of certain housing policy interventions. Research illustrated that house price increases have significantly reduced the degree of negative equity in the Irish market, while other analysis illustrated the relatively high standard variable rates charged in the domestic mortgage market.

A number of research projects were undertaken as part of the joint research programme with the **Department of Finance**, which commenced in 2015. The possible implications for the Irish economy of a UK exit from the European Union (Brexit) were published, with an adverse trade outcome for Ireland noted, were this to take place. Another workstream in this programme is an examination of the sensitivity of major Irish taxation aggregates to underlying economic activity. Research examined the relationship between housing market activity and associated tax revenues. Analysis has commenced in examining both corporation and income taxes.

### 3.3 Internationalisation and Competitiveness

ESRI research in this area focuses primarily on the key factors and policies underlying Ireland's competitiveness and economic growth in the context of increased European and international integration. Specifically, researchers analyse the links between economic internationalisation, technological change, financial markets, innovation, productivity and employment growth using micro-, industry- and macro-data sets.

During 2015 the research in this area addressed three themes:

(i) *Firms' engagement in global value chains*. This study was undertaken as part of an international research network on European competitiveness, led by the **European Central Bank**. This research provided novel empirical evidence about the extent and determinants of European firms' engagement in exporting, foreign direct investment, international sourcing, as well as combinations of these outward international activities associated with global value chains. The results highlighted that, among the group of firms with outward international activities, a large number are exporters only, while a small number engage either in international sourcing or in foreign direct investment. Only a few firms engage simultaneously in more than one type of outward international activity. These firms are more mature, larger, more productive and have higher product innovation rates.

(ii) *Trade and foreign direct investment links between Ireland and the United Kingdom in the context of joint EU membership*. This study, funded as part of a joint research programme with the **Department of Finance**, identified patterns and trends in trade and foreign direct investment between Ireland and the United Kingdom in the context of joint EU membership. The study also examined possible economic implications for Ireland in alternative cases of a changed relationship between the United Kingdom and the EU. The evidence highlighted the importance of the United Kingdom for Ireland as a main trading partner and location of multinational activity. The key message

based on this evidence is that the best option for Ireland is if the United Kingdom remains a member of the EU.

(iii) *Corporate taxation and foreign direct investment in Ireland and the European Union*. This research, funded as part of a joint research programme with the **Department of Finance**, analysed the impact of corporate taxation as well as other demand and supply-driven factors on the location choice as well as the size of foreign direct investment in Ireland and other EU countries over the past decade. This empirical analysis identified implications regarding Ireland's attractiveness to foreign direct investment following changes in corporate tax policy in Ireland and in other EU countries. The results of this research highlighted the importance of maintaining a competitive corporate taxation for Ireland's attractiveness to foreign direct investment in the context of increased global competition.

### 3.4 Energy and Environment

Research in this area is financed by multi-annual research programmes, as well as specific purpose research projects. The Energy Policy Research Centre (EPRC) is funded by the **Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, ESB, Ervia, Eirgrid, SSE Ireland, Viridian** and the **Commission for Energy Regulation**. The Research Programme on Socio-Economics of Inland Fisheries, which commenced in 2015, is funded by **Inland Fisheries Ireland**. Other funding bodies include **Science Foundation Ireland, the Programme for Research in Third-Level Institutions, Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland, Environmental Protection Agency, Gas Innovation Group** and the **Department of Environment, Community and Local Government**. There are ongoing collaborations with researchers from National University of Ireland (NUI) Galway, Trinity College Dublin (TCD), University College Cork (UCC), University College Dublin (UCD), University of Limerick (UL), Budapesti Corvinus Egyetem, Cranfield University, Durham University, European University Institute, Imperial College London, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Queen's University Belfast (QUB), Universität Kassel, Kühne Logistics University Hamburg, North Carolina State University, Royal Military Academy (Thailand), Universität Klagenfurt, University of Maryland and Vienna University of Economics and Business.

Energy research is focused on a number of areas. Several papers were published in the area of market design and regulation; one of these focuses on the challenges of redesigning the Irish Single Electricity Market to comply with the EU's target model for electricity markets. The paper argues that in order to minimise costs for consumers, the proposed redesign will increase both the need for, and the difficulty of, regulation of the energy market compared to the current market design. In the area of energy infrastructure, research focused, for instance, on the optimal design of auctions for connecting wind generation to the power grid. A paper was published providing evidence that integrating external cost minimisation strategies with pay-as-bid auctions can lead to less rent-seeking by investors, and thus minimise the social cost of renewables deployment.

The interface between society and the environment, including distributional issues and climate change mitigation, also continues to be an important area. Focusing on the Public Service Obligation (PSO) levy, a paper was published, which found that the existing levy places a greater burden on low-income households, whereas a PSO that is proportional to electricity use would increase the cost faced by heavy electricity users, who are more likely to be in higher-income groups. In June, Minister Alex White (DCENR) opened an energy policy conference co-hosted by the ESRI and UCC. Presentations covered a broad range of topics in the above areas.

Initial research within the fisheries research programme examined the impact of water quality on recreational angling demand, while ongoing research is examining angling preferences of resident non-Irish nationals. Other environment-related research has assessed the scale of potential economic losses in Ireland that might be associated with a nuclear accident in Europe; and research has just commenced examining the effect of water quality on water-based leisure activity.

### 3.5 Communications and Transport

The programme of research in communications is supported by the **Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources** and the **Commission for Communications Regulation**. A study was completed on how the price–quality relationship for broadband services in Ireland varied over the 2007–2013 period. While average nominal prices remained static, quality of service rose substantially, particularly with respect to download speed. Thus the quality-adjusted price of broadband service fell. The marginal price of additional download speed and the price premium on bundled plans declined during this period. In addition, the retail price premium enjoyed by the incumbent operator fell significantly.

Another study underway during this period examined how local infrastructure affects the location of inward investment in Ireland. The local area characteristics covered by this study include electronic communications networks, transport and electricity networks, local labour markets and clustering of economic activity.

In collaboration with colleagues engaged in education research, research is being conducted on the effects of the Schools 100 Mbps Project, an initiative to provide post-primary schools with 100Mbps high speed broadband, on teaching and learning. (See the section below on education.)

Research was published on the links between public subsidies for internet access in primary schools, classroom use of the internet and educational performance. Using data from *Growing Up in Ireland*, we found that provision of broadband to primary schools was associated with more than a doubling of teachers' use of the internet in class after about a two-year lag. Internet use in class was also associated with significantly higher average mathematics and reading scores on standardised tests. Other research found no statistically significant effect of broadband adoption on Irish manufacturing firms' productivity levels or growth.

Two new projects commenced in 2015, examining if the bundling of retail ICT services affects consumer switching and how use of broadband affects productivity of firms in the services sector.

### 3.6 Labour Markets and Skills

During 2015, research focused on the evaluation of the Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) programme, commissioned by **Solas**. Under the programme of research funded by **Pobal**, work also commenced on a study assessing the nature of social inclusion and community development programmes in Ireland. Two major studies of skill and education mismatch, funded under the **European Commission's 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme**, were completed and published, as was an evaluation of the Back to Education Allowance, which was funded by the **Department for Social Protection**. Towards the end of the year, work commenced on a new research programme, funded by the **Low Pay Commission**.

The above-mentioned evaluation of the PLC programme was conducted in cooperation with researchers from the education research area. This study, commissioned by **Solas**, has a number of components, including a comprehensive survey of school and PLC leavers, a survey of colleges and schools providing PLC courses and the matching of administrative data on enrolments with data on labour market indicators from the Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS). The study will provide a counterfactual estimate of the impact of the PLC programme on a range of outcome variables such as employment, earnings, job satisfaction and job quality. The research will also examine the profile of PLC participants, their experiences of these programmes, levels of course completion and accreditation and the educational and labour market outcomes of PLC participants relative to other groups. The structure and composition of PLC course provision, and regional distribution, will also be examined. The final report is due for completion in mid-2016.

The study of social inclusion and community development programmes in Ireland, funded by **Pobal**, examines the level and nature of course provision funded under their Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP). The research provides an analysis of a range of issues including:

- the extent to which provision differs across programme areas and accreditation;
- how expenditure and duration of interventions are distributed across programme areas;
- the extent to which provision relates to SICAP goals;
- geographical variation in the distribution of provision by population, deprivation index, programme objectives and costs; and
- the degree to which course areas funded under SICAP could and should be subject to formal evaluation.

This research will be published in 2016.

Researchers have continued to provide regular reports on Ireland's labour market progress to the European Commission's **European and Employment Policy Observatory (EEPO)**. Researchers have provided assessments to the EEPO on a range of policy issues including skills governance, policy compliance, skills mismatch and the Youth Guarantee, along with an annual policy update.

### **3.7 Migration, Integration and Demography**

Research in the area of Migration, Integration and Demography is conducted under a number of strands. The first strand relates to the ESRI being Ireland's national contact point for the European Migration Network (EMN) and the related funding provided by the **European Commission** and the **Department of Justice and Equality**.

The EMN team covered a range of topics in their reports during 2015. One study provided an overview of policies and administrative practices used to support return policy in Ireland, focusing on policies and practices regarding entry bans and readmission agreements. A second study looked at migration for business purposes, such as facilitating the entry of investors. One important lesson from this study was the observation of increased levels of cooperation and coordination between various government departments with responsibilities in this area. A third study looked at Ireland's system for determining skill needs and how that system informs migration policy, in particular the work permits system. It involved significant interaction with **Solas** and the **Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation**, given their key respective roles in this area. The study documented the Solas system for identifying skill needs and welcomed the fact that the evidence base fed into migration policy.

In addition to the topic reports, the EMN also produced two reviews of asylum and migration policy, covering the years 2013 and 2014.

Another strand of work in this area concerns population ageing and is related to our ongoing collaboration with **The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA)** at Trinity College Dublin. One paper used TILDA data to show how ill-informed people are about the pension schemes of which they are members and raised important questions about people's capacities to make good decisions on pension planning. Researchers in this area also wrote a book chapter that reviewed the emerging body of work on ageing and the labour market – among the themes explored was the fact that the often assumed decline in productivity as a result of population ageing is somewhat exaggerated.

The third strand is, like the EMN work, concerned with immigrants in Ireland but is focused more on analysing individual microdata to develop a better sense of the lives of immigrants in Ireland. One study looked at the experience of discrimination among immigrants. While higher rates of discrimination were reported by immigrants compared to natives, the gap did not seem to widen over the recession.

Late in 2015, a new programme of research was agreed with the **Department of Justice and Equality**. This will see work being undertaken in 2016 to analyse further the experience of immigrants in Ireland, with a particular focus on integration.

### 3.8 Education

The ESRI education research area covers all levels of the Irish educational system, including early childhood education, primary, second-level, further and higher education. Research in 2015 focused on children with disabilities, educational disadvantage, attitudes to the Irish language, the use of ICT in education, children's wellbeing, and teacher education.

Educational inequality has been an important theme in ESRI research. Two studies, published in 2015, provided new insights into the impact of educational disadvantage. Research on the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) programme, commissioned by the **Department of Education and Skills**, highlighted the complexity of need among students in urban DEIS schools and pointed to a number of practices that could further enhance outcomes in these school settings. **Tusla** commissioned a large-scale study of the School Completion Programme. The study findings highlighted the value of providing comprehensive school-based supports for disadvantaged children and young people and the need to put such supports on a sustainable footing.

The *Growing Up in Ireland* study has provided an invaluable resource for educational research. New analyses, commissioned by the **National Council for Curriculum and Assessment**, pointed to the impact of schools on children's wellbeing, with the quality of teacher–student relationships emerging as a key influence on student outcomes.

Funded by the **National Disability Authority**, researchers found that children and young people with disabilities, particularly those with emotional, psychological and mental difficulties, were more likely to be absent from school and at greater risk of social isolation. This study complemented ongoing work on special class provision in mainstream schools.

The year 2015 saw the publication of a new study, funded by **Foras na Gaeilge**, on attitudes to the Irish language among adults. The study findings highlighted the relatively high levels of support for the language, which contrasted with low levels of usage of Irish on a day-to-day basis. Usage of Irish was related to experiences within the educational system and social networks.

In collaboration with researchers in the communications area, work continued on a study on school broadband provision, funded by the **Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources**, which assesses the role of ICT and the internet in influencing teaching and learning across schools and classrooms.

The topic of teacher education is the subject of two ongoing studies funded by the **Teaching Council**: an analysis of the criteria for entry to initial teacher education and a large-scale study on the Droichead pilot programme, a new programme for teacher induction in primary and second-level schools.

Education researchers continued to be involved in international networks, including the Advanced Quantitative Methods Network (AQMeN), funded by the UK-based **Economic and Social Research Council**, the Network of Experts on the Social Dimension of Education and Training (NESET 2) and the EU Network of Independent Networks in Education and Training.

### 3.9 Taxation, Welfare and Pensions

ESRI research on **taxation, welfare and pensions** focused on the impact of the recession on household incomes, financial incentives to work and on options for tax and welfare policy. In addition, the ESRI microsimulation model, SWITCH, was expanded to analyse issues relating to income-related entitlements to health services, such as medical and GP visit cards, and potential designs for an income-related subsidy to premia under a universal health insurance (UHI) scheme.

The research programme was supported by funding from the **Department of Social Protection** and the **Department of Health**.

A working paper based on analysis of the CSO's Survey of Income and Living Conditions data for the years 2004 to 2013 provided new evidence on the impact of the recession and austerity policies on the overall distribution of income. In a new development, research was able to move beyond "snapshots" of the income distribution to provide new insights into changes in the income of individual households from one year to the next.

The SWITCH team produced two papers for this year's Budget Perspectives Conference. The first paper explored tax and welfare options for Budget 2016, in the light of the government's Spring Economic Statement (2015). Key findings included the fact that, with a resumption of modest wage growth, a significant proportion of the overall "fiscal space" identified in the Spring Economic Statement would be needed to avoid a rise in average tax rates through "fiscal drag" or "bracket creep".

The second paper provided further information on the structure of work incentives facing unemployed individuals. It examined the extent to which medical card entitlements, if valued on the basis of average cost of provision, would affect the balance between individuals' in-work and out-of-work resources. For most of those on jobseeker payments – who tend to be young, single and childless – the effects were found to be modest. The recently introduced Back to Work Family Dividend was found to have a significant positive influence on the net reward from work for the families concerned.

In the field of health, groundwork was laid for new analysis relating to medical cards and GP visit cards; for example, extension by age and/or income criteria. The first requirement for such analysis is the ability to model or "simulate" the means test applying to such cards to the households in the CSO Survey of Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC). This has now been done, building on the wide range of relevant information contained in that survey. A range of policy options in relation to income-related schemes can therefore be examined in future.

The SWITCH model was also used, with support from the SWITCH team, for policy analyses within the **Department of Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform** and the **Department of Social Protection**. This included social impact assessments of Budget 2015 and Budget 2016 by the Department of Social Protection and an OECD technical paper co-authored by Department of Finance officials and OECD staff.

### **3.10 Social Inclusion and Equality**

ESRI research on social inclusion and equality investigates factors influencing access to the material and other resources required to participate in economic and social life and the processes that lead to inequalities in opportunities and outcomes.

During 2015, research projects funded by the **Department of Social Protection** drew on data from the annual CSO Survey on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) to examine the measurement of quality of life and its links to poverty and social exclusion. These will be published in early 2016 and will form the basis for an analysis of the influence of social class on quality of life and poverty for different social risk groups (including people with disabilities, lone parents and young adults).

Research on community-based social inclusion programmes was undertaken as part of the research programme on community development and social inclusion, funded by **Pobal**. The study includes a review of international best practice in the measurement and evaluation of social inclusion programmes, including methodologies for investigating the community impact of such measures, and a mapping of current provision. A second study in the programme for 2015 looked at the influence of childcare on children's socio-emotional outcomes.



The **National Disability Authority** funded a number of research projects in 2015. One study focusing on employment highlighted the different kinds of challenges faced by people with disabilities in this regard, depending on whether their disability emerged in childhood or during their working years. A study on the lives of children with disabilities found a greater use of special education settings for children from disadvantaged backgrounds and highlights the importance of a transparent approach in the placement of children and young people to special classes and schools. A study of the impact of child disability on parents' expectations and the consequences for children's academic and socio-emotional development, which draws on the *Growing Up in Ireland* survey, will be published in early 2016. A new research project will draw on the Quarterly National Household Survey to examine the impact of disability on employment-related transitions as Ireland moved from recession to recovery.

A new **research programme on equality and integration**, in partnership with the **Department of Justice and Equality**, commenced with two projects in 2015: a social portrait of the Traveller community (part of the A Social Portrait of Communities in Ireland programme) and the Annual Monitoring Report on Integration. Research on the equality impact of the recession, looking at gender, age and nationality, was also conducted during 2015. Another of topic of research was discrimination in the labour market experienced by those of different nationality and/or ethnic backgrounds.

### 3.11 Health and Quality of Life

In 2015, health research focused on the themes of: economic assessment of proposals for universal health insurance; geographic profiling of health need, supply and utilisation; economic evaluation of palliative care; determinants of maternal health behaviours and outcomes; trends in socio-economic mortality differentials; and inequities in access to GP care.

Quality of life research in 2015 focused on: occupational injury and illness; workplace risks; the relationship between working conditions and health and wellbeing outcomes; the effects of unemployment on quality of life; issues of work-life balance; and participation in sports/physical activity.

Under a major programme of research funded by the **Department of Health**, the ESRI conducted an examination of the potential costs associated with financing universal healthcare by universal health insurance. This study found that the proposed universal health insurance model would increase healthcare expenditure by up to 11 per cent, with a major driver of the increase arising from multiple, competing insurers.

The **Health Research Board** continued to fund research on trends in socio-economic mortality differentials and determinants of caesarean section rates. In the first year of a project with the aim of informing policy about the transfer of care from hospitals to other settings, researchers examined the relationship of supply to need, by geographic area. A new project on access to GP care, using data from *Growing Up in Ireland* and The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA), examined inequities in utilisation and health outcomes.

**The Atlantic Philanthropies** funded an economic evaluation of palliative care, conducted with researchers at TCD. This study, which examined the costs and effectiveness of alternative models of care in three regions in Ireland, found wide variability in the availability of palliative care services.

Continued collaborations with colleagues in *Growing Up in Ireland* and TILDA examined issues such as the determinants of breastfeeding behaviour; patterns of healthcare utilisation; the impact of childhood adversity on disease risk in later life; and the impact of the recession on mental health.

During 2015, the research programme with the **Health and Safety Authority (HSA)** investigated the determinants of occupational accidents and illness in Ireland and trends over a period of intense labour market change. Europe-wide research compared the types of risks faced by Irish workers,

(such as physical, psycho-social, chemical), to other workers across Europe, and considered the link between such risks and workers' mental and physical health.

Research based on the **European Social Survey** investigated satisfaction with work–life balance across Europe, and the effects of unemployment and insecurity on the wellbeing of young people. Both of these comparative studies highlighted the role of the welfare state and employment policies in shaping national differences.

A study of sports participation in school found that it had a positive impact on post-school pathways, increasing the likelihood of young people continuing in education. Research was also undertaken on participation in rugby – funded by the Irish Football Rugby Union (**IRFU**) – and on participation in golf – funded by the Confederation of Golf in Ireland (**CGI**). This body of research will inform policies to increase sports participation and physical activity.

### 3.12 Children and Young People

Research on children and young people spans a range of areas within the Institute's research agenda including, in particular: education; health and quality of life; and social inclusion and equality. Other sections of this annual report outline research based on *Growing Up in Ireland* data, on issues such as the determinants of breastfeeding; sleeping patterns among infants; healthcare utilisation; and the association between disabilities and education. In addition, a number of major reports were published in the course of the year. For example, one study on the topic of maternal health behaviours and child growth in infancy considered the impact of prenatal and early life experiences on subsequent patterns of a child's physical and mental development. Factors such as maternal smoking and alcohol consumption in pregnancy, breastfeeding and child's birth-weight were considered.

In December, a report was published on non-parental childcare and child cognitive outcomes. This study focused on the influence of childcare at three years on cognitive outcomes at five years. The report also considered the Free Pre-school Year (FPSY) and the impact on the child's cognitive outcomes of attending a FPSY service with a graduate leader. Broadly, the study found that there are only modest associations between cognitive outcomes at five and incidence or duration of non-parental childcare at three, while there is some evidence to indicate that attending a FPSY service with a graduate leader is associated with small cognitive gains at five years.

The annual conference of the Society for Longitudinal and Life Course Studies (SLLS) was hosted by the ESRI (with Trinity College) in Dublin Castle in October 2015. The SLLS is an international society that promotes interdisciplinary collaboration in life course and longitudinal research, much of it around processes relating to childhood and adolescence. The society's annual conference is the most significant international scientific meeting in this field and the Institute was very pleased to have been invited to host it in Dublin this year. The invitation was largely prompted by the increasingly high international profile of the *Growing Up in Ireland* project. The conference was attended by over 330 experts from 22 countries, with almost 300 papers and posters being presented.

The annual *Growing Up in Ireland* conference was held in December. This included a keynote address by Professor Alice Sullivan from the Institute of Education in London, followed by 24 papers based on data from the *Growing Up in Ireland* project, ranging across all aspects of children's development. It was attended by approximately 200 participants.

Work continued on the implementation of the *Growing Up in Ireland* study. An intensive fieldwork phase with 17-year-olds and their parents/guardians began in November and is scheduled to run until July 2016. Anonymised microdata from interviews with five year olds and their parents/guardians were deposited in the Irish Social Science Data Archive (ISSDA) for general use by relevant stakeholders. Five data workshops on *Growing Up in Ireland* data were held in the course of 2015.

### 3.13 Behavioural Economics

Behavioural economics is an international growth area that is producing new research findings and applications to policy. Research questions are addressed through repeated observation of economic behaviour, mostly through controlled experiments, in order to uncover the underlying principles of economic decision-making and behaviour. The method has applications across many policy areas. In 2015, the ESRI again expanded its research in this area.

The largest research programme in this area is the Programme of Research Investigating Consumer Evaluations (PRICE Lab), co-funded by the **Central Bank of Ireland, Competition and Consumer Protection Commission, Commission for Energy Regulation** and **ComReg**. In 2013 and 2014, PRICE Lab had established a series of experimental techniques, findings and principles in relation to consumer capability when dealing with complex products. In 2015, these were applied to consumer protection issues in specific markets in Ireland, including financial services, energy and telecommunications.

PRICE Lab conducted a series of experiments on discount pricing in residential electricity, the price framing of personal loans and the bundling of handsets in mobile contracts. Each of these experiments identified limitations and inconsistencies in the way consumers in the specific market make decisions, with implications for consumer protection.

Beyond PRICE Lab, work in behavioural economics in 2015 expanded into other policy areas. Research projects were undertaken for the **OECD**, the **Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine**, the **Department of Social Protection** and the **Pensions Authority**. Most of these projects examined the effectiveness of different forms of regulatory disclosure and government communication, in terms of their impact on behaviour. Some involved the instigation of randomised controlled trials of behaviourally-informed interventions.

There was further demand in 2015 from government departments, state agencies and international organisations for workshops and presentations on behavioural economics and its potential lessons for policy. These included presentations for the **European Commission Joint Research Centre**, the **OECD**, the **Department of Public Expenditure and Reform**, the **Department of Environment, Community and Local Government**, the **Department of Agriculture**, the **Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland**, the cross-departmental **Reform and Innovation Network** and the **Food Safety Authority of Ireland**.

Behavioural economics is continuing its international expansion as an alternative method of economic analysis with strong policy applications. In November, the ESRI hosted the well-attended Eighth Irish Economics and Psychology Conference, at which invited international speakers described how behavioural economics is being applied to policy in their countries and areas. The ESRI is now a significant contributor to domestic and international efforts to raise awareness and to realise the potential of this relatively new scientific sub-discipline.

#### 4. NATIONAL STUDY OF CHILDREN (*GROWING UP IN IRELAND*)

The year 2015 was a very exciting one for *Growing Up in Ireland* – the national study of children in Ireland. It saw the extension of the study into its second phase, which will run from 2015 to 2019. Phase 2 of the study will see intensive face-to-face interviews with the infant cohort, at nine years of age, as well as interviews with the young people in the older child cohort, at 17 years, and, subsequently, 20 years of age. In addition, an inter-wave postal survey will also be carried out with the primary caregiver (mostly the mother) of the children in the younger infant cohort, when the children are seven years old. Development work began in January on the instrumentation and protocols used in the interviews with 17 year olds, with pilot work taking place in May and main fieldwork commencing in November. Phase 2 of the study was officially launched by Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Dr James Reilly T.D. in June.

A major report on **maternal health behaviours in pregnancy** was published in January 2015. It showed that the prenatal and early life environment that a child experiences has a profound influence on health in infancy and subsequent patterns of physical and mental development. A further report was published in December on the **effects of childcare on cognitive development**. It found no difference overall in cognitive outcomes at age five between those who had been cared for at home at age three, and those who had been cared for outside the home at three (before their participation in the Free Pre-School Year). Numerous other reports and papers based on *Growing Up in Ireland* data were published in the course of the year.

The *Growing Up in Ireland* annual research conference was held in December in Dublin Castle. The conference, opened by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Mr James Reilly T.D., included 22 papers based on *Growing Up in Ireland's* child and infant cohorts. These covered a range of topics on the growth, development, behaviours and wellbeing of children and young people, including: peer relationships; sleep patterns; parental expectations of educational outcomes; use of technology by children; transitions to second level; and issues around childhood obesity and antibiotic use among children. The keynote address was delivered by Professor Alice Sullivan from the Institute of Education in London.

*Growing Up in Ireland* featured very strongly at the annual conference of the Society for Longitudinal and Life Course Studies (SLLS), which was hosted by the ESRI and TCD in Dublin Castle from 18 to 21 October. The SLLS is an international society that promotes interdisciplinary collaboration in life course and longitudinal research and provides a forum for discussion and publication of new ideas about all aspects of cohort and panel studies across a wide range of different disciplines. It is the most significant international scientific meeting in this field. The invitation to host the conference in Dublin was largely prompted by the increasingly high international profile of the *Growing Up in Ireland* study.

## 5. RESEARCH AREA COORDINATORS AT 31 DECEMBER 2015

- **Macroeconomics** (Professor Kieran McQuinn)



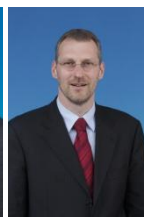
- **Internationalisation and Competitiveness** (Professor Iulia Siedschlag)



- **Energy and Environment** (Professor John Curtis and Professor Seán Lyons)



- **Communications and Transport** (Professor Seán Lyons and Professor Edgar Morgenroth)



- **Labour Markets and Skills** (Professor Seamus McGuinness)



- **Migration, Integration and Demography** (Professor Alan Barrett and Dr Frances McGinnity)



- **Education** (Professor Emer Smyth and Professor Selina McCoy)



- **Taxation, Welfare and Pensions** (Professor Tim Callan)



- **Social Inclusion and Equality** (Dr Frances McGinnity and Professor Dorothy Watson)



- **Health and Quality of Life** (Dr Anne Nolan, Dr Maev-Ann Wren and Professor Helen Russell)



- **Children and Young People** (Professor James Williams)



- **Behavioural Economics** (Dr Pete Lunn)



## 6. STAFF AT 31 DECEMBER 2015

### Directorate

**Alan Barrett (Director and Head of Division,  
Economic Analysis)**

**Claire Buckley (HR Manager)**

### Economic Analysis

Adele Bergin  
Valentin Bertsch  
Elaine Byrne  
Matthew Collins  
Bryan Coyne  
John Curtis  
Yota Deli  
Mel Devine  
Valeria di Cosmo  
David Duffy  
Daniel Foley  
Abian Garcia Rodriguez  
Egle Gusciute  
Marie Hyland  
Elish Kelly  
Derek Lambert  
Martina Lawless  
Muireann Lynch  
Seán Lyons  
Daire McCoy  
Seamus McGuinness  
Niall McInerney  
Kieran McQuinn\*  
Edgar Morgenroth  
Ciara Morley  
Adele Whelan  
Susan Whelan  
Emma Quinn  
Iulia Siedschlag  
Zuzanna Studnicka

### Growing Up in Ireland

Caroline Goodwin  
Dubheasa Kennedy  
Ciaran McCarthy  
Aisling Murray  
Aoife Murphy  
Pauline Needham  
Joanna Niec  
Conall O' Duibhir  
Barry Price  
Elizabeth Ryan  
Maeve Thornton  
Amanda Quail  
**James Williams (Head of Division)**

### Corporate Resources

**Eleanor Bannerton (Operations and Strategy  
Manager)**

Sarah Burns  
Patricia Byrne  
Martina Clarke  
Bernice Clancy  
Liz Coyle  
Maria Fitzgerald  
Tina Gao  
David Gorman  
Elaine Goode  
Adrienne Jinks  
Richard Jones  
Rachel Joyce  
Ingrida Maguire  
Francis McEvoy  
Clare O' Neill  
**Charles O' Regan (Head of Finance)**  
Donnacha Ó'Súilleabháin  
John Queally  
Jackie Turner  
Paula White

### Social Research

Joanne Banks  
Marek Bohacek  
Steve Barron  
Aoife Brick  
Brian Colgan  
Tim Callan  
Caitriona Cahir  
Sheelah Connolly  
Áine Ní Choisdealbha  
Merike Darmody  
Christopher Fawsitt\*\*  
Oona Kenny  
Claire Keane  
Richard Layte  
Caitriona Logue  
Pete Lunn  
Bertrand Maître  
Selina McCoy  
Frances McGinnity  
Anne Nolan  
Helen Russell  
Bernadette Ryan  
Michael Savage  
Samantha Smith  
**Emer Smyth (Head of Division)**  
John Walsh  
Dorothy Watson  
Maev-Ann Wren

## 7. ESRI COUNCIL – BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

### **Padraig McManus, Chairman**

Padraig McManus became Chair of the Economic and Social Research Institute in January 2016. Mr McManus has been a member of the ESRI Council since July 2012 and was Chair of the Audit and Risk sub-committee in 2014. He is also Chairman of the Eircom Group and the Foundation for the National Maternity Hospital in Holles Street, in addition to serving on the boards of Mincon, the Photonomi Group and others. Previously, he was appointed Chief Executive and member of the Board of the ESB in July 2002, where he served until 2012. He joined the ESB in 1973 and spent 15 years in the company's international businesses, later becoming Managing Director of ESB International and Commercial Director of ESB. He is a Global Counsellor of the Conference Board of the United States.

### **Alan Barrett, Director**

Alan Barrett first joined the ESRI in 1994 and became Director of the Institute in July 2015, at which point he joined the Council. During his time with the Institute he was seconded to the Department of Finance (2001–2003) and to The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA) at Trinity College Dublin (2011–2013). He was a member of the Irish Fiscal Advisory Council from 2011 to 2015. He is a Research Fellow with IZA (Institute for the Study of Labor) in Bonn, Germany and is Co-editor of the IZA Journal of European Labor Studies. He is an Honorary Fellow of the Society of Actuaries in Ireland. He is also a member of the Climate Change Advisory Council.

### **John Buckley, former Comptroller and Auditor General**

John Buckley joined the Council in February 2013. He also serves on its Audit and Risk committee. He is an accountant (ACCA) and a barrister. He has a degree in psychology and an MSc in strategic management. He previously served as Comptroller and Auditor General.

### **Pádraig Dalton, Director General, Central Statistics Office**

Pádraig Dalton joined the Council in July 2012. He is a career statistician who joined the Central Statistics Office in November 1991, taking up the position of Director General in May 2012. He is a member of the European Statistical System Committee (ESSC), which provides professional guidance to the European Statistical System (ESS) for developing, producing and disseminating European statistics. He is also Chair of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) High Level Group on the Modernisation of Official Statistics and is an ex-officio member of the National Statistics Board (NSB).

### **Emer Gilvarry, Chairperson, Mason Hayes & Curran**

Emer Gilvarry joined the Council in February 2014. She is the chairperson of Mason Hayes & Curran and a partner in the dispute resolution team. Emer is experienced in a broad range of commercial and financial services litigation. Emer specialises in project management and investigatory work and acts as a legal advisor to corporates and boards on corporate safeguards and compliance procedures.

Emer is a member of the advisory board at UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School and a member of the Ireland Funds Board.

In 2014, Emer was ranked in the Financial Services 50 and the Global 100 by *Business & Finance*. Emer is also a qualified mediator.

### **Philip Lane, Governor, Central Bank of Ireland**

Philip Lane joined the Council in September 2010. He was appointed to the position of Governor of the Central Bank of Ireland in November 2015. Prior to his appointment, he was on the academic



staff at Trinity College Dublin and he remains affiliated with the university as Whately Professor of Political Economy. Philip has chaired the Advisory Scientific Committee of the European Systemic Risk Board and was Director of the International Macroeconomics and Finance Programme at the Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR). He has also acted as an academic consultant for the European Central Bank, European Commission, International Monetary Fund, World Bank, OECD, Asian Development Bank and a number of national central banks.

A graduate of Trinity College Dublin, he received his PhD in economics from Harvard University in 1995 and was Assistant Professor of Economics and International Affairs at Columbia University (1995–1997) before returning to Dublin. His research interests include financial globalisation, macroeconomics of exchange rates and capital flows, macroeconomic policy design and European monetary integration.

**John Martin**, former Director for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs, OECD

John Martin joined the Council in February 2015. He was Director for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs at the OECD from 2000 to early 2013. From late 2013 to early 2016, he worked as a consultant for the German Bertelsmann Foundation on a major cross-country project on the political economy of reforming European labour markets. He is a part-time Professor at the Institute of Political Studies (Sciences Po) in Paris. His other professional roles include the following: Policy Associate of the Leverhulme Centre for Research on Globalisation and Economic Policy at the University of Nottingham; Research Fellow of the Institute for the Study of Labour (IZA) in Bonn; member of the French Prime Minister's *le Conseil d'orientation pour l'emploi*; member of the strategic board of the Laboratoire Interdisciplinaire d'Evaluation des Politiques Publiques (LIEPP) at Sciences Po, Paris; member of the Irish government's Labour Market Advisory Council. In 2013, he was awarded the Presidential Distinguished Service Award for the Irish Abroad by the President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins.

**Hannah McGee**, Professor of Psychology and Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland

Hannah McGee joined the Council in November 2010. She chaired the Governance and Nominations sub-committee in 2014–2015 and currently chairs the Business and Operations sub-committee. She is a health psychologist whose research interests are in quality of life assessment and epidemiological and psychosocial aspects of ageing, cardiovascular disease and sexual health. She was awarded a DSc (NUI) for her research portfolio in 2015. Her current brief is as chief academic officer for RCSI's degree awarding programmes – incorporating Dublin, Bahrain, Dubai and Malaysia. She has served as president of the Psychological Society of Ireland and the European Health Psychology Society and as Chair of the Rehabilitation Committee of the European Association for Cardiovascular Prevention and Rehabilitation. She chaired the Department of Health's expert group to develop Changing Cardiovascular Health: National Policy on Cardiovascular Health (2010–2019). Currently she serves on the oversight board of The Irish Longitudinal Ageing Study (TILDA) and on the council of the National Children's Research Centre.

**David Moloney**, Assistant Secretary, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

David Moloney joined the Council in November 2010. He is Assistant Secretary at the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and Head of its labour market and enterprise division. His responsibilities include the Irish Government Economic and Evaluation Service (IGEES).

**Bríd O'Brien**, Head of Policy and Media, Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed

Bríd O'Brien joined the Council in May 2012. She is Head of Policy and Media with the Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed. Bríd is one of the Community and Voluntary Pillar representatives on the National Economic and Social Council, and she has been a member of the Labour Market Council since it was established in September 2013. Bríd works with colleagues in the community

and voluntary sector and other civil society organisations on issues of social inclusion, economic justice and equality.

**Sally Shortall**, Professor, School of Sociology, Queen's University Belfast

Sally Shortall joined the Council in May 2015. She is a Professor in the School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work in Queen's University Belfast. She has served as an expert advisor to the UK Food Standard Agency, the European Parliament, the European Commission and the OECD. She is the President of the Executive Committee of the European Society for Rural Sociology. Her research interests include rural women, rural development theory and practice, community and stakeholder engagement in policy practice and how evidence is used to inform policy. She teaches on the topics of rural sociology, industrial sociology, sociology of organisations, sociology of community and sociology of work.



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