



THE ECONOMIC & SOCIAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

ANNUAL REPORT 2009

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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ISBN 978 0 7070 0307 8

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

The Economic and Social Research Institute was founded in 1960, as The Economic Research Institute, with the assistance of a grant from the Ford Foundation of New York. In 1966 the Institute assumed responsibility for social research and extended its title to The Economic and Social Research Institute.

The mission of the ESRI is to produce high-quality research that contributes to understanding economic and social change and that informs public policymaking and civil society in Ireland and throughout the European Union. The Institute's research has been a vital constituent in national debates on economic and social issues for nearly 50 years. Its primary research goal is to develop and implement a sustainable research agenda that matches closely the key long-term economic and social challenges facing Ireland in the changing international context over the next decade.

The Institute is a not-for-profit organisation with charitable status, registered as a company limited by guarantee. The ESRI is governed by a Council consisting of up to 12 members, in addition to the President and the Director. Members of the Council are appointed from amongst the general members of the Institute, broadly representing the social partners, Government Departments, State Agencies, universities and other research institutes. The Institute receives an annual grant-in-aid from the Irish Government, which covers approximately 27 per cent of total expenditure (average over 3 years). The remainder of the Institute's income comes from funded research programmes, commissioned research projects, EU and Irish research grants, sponsorship of Institute activities by Irish business, and membership subscriptions.

The ESRI's most important resource is its research staff, whose high levels of expertise allow them to work to international standards of excellence. The results of the Institute's research have been included in hundreds of reports published by the ESRI, including the *Quarterly Economic Commentary* and the *Medium-Term Review of the Irish Economy*, as well as in numerous books and articles in academic journals, published in Ireland and abroad.

Further information is available at www.esri.ie

THE COUNCIL

MEMBERS AT 31 DECEMBER 2009



*Prof. B.M. Walsh
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*Ms M. Finan
Chairman*



*Prof. F. Ruane
Director*

THE ECONOMIC & SOCIAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

The Council is the Institute's overall governing body and acts as its Board of Directors. In association with the Director and staff, it develops the Institute's programme of research. It meets quarterly.

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THE ECONOMIC & SOCIAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE



ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2009

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ANNUAL REPORT 2009 - REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

1. General Overview

The impact of the global recession and the massive downturn in the Irish economy were felt to the full in 2009. At this time of crisis there was increased demand from the public and the media for regular commentary from the ESRI on emerging issues. A new webpage, titled *Irish Economy Today*, was created on the ESRI website to bring together relevant publications, presentations and papers on the current situations. In addition, Institute researchers provided regular briefings for foreign media and participated in national media discussions.

The ESRI research paper *Recovery Scenarios for Ireland* published in May analysed the economic crisis and explored the implications for the potential growth rate of the Irish economy in the medium term. Every three months the *Quarterly Economic Commentary* provided an update on short-term forecasts, drawing on international and national evidence. Other Institute research contributed to identifying the need for adjustments in public-sector pay to help secure competitiveness and restore stability to the public finances, and to explaining how the international synchronisation of business cycles has contributed to the depth of the global recession. The Institute also contributed to the work of the Commission on Taxation in a variety of areas, drawing particularly on its tax benefit model (*SWITCH*) and on previous research on environmental taxation.

The difficult decisions that have been required to re-stabilise the economy have led to increased recognition of the importance of empirical evidence for policymaking. ESRI research in 2009 contributed to providing evidence to inform policy in the medium term across many research domains, including labour market interventions, education, health, equality, social inclusion and sectoral restructuring.

As well as addressing the immediate challenges of reversing economic decline, the Institute has continued to explore issues of a longer term nature. Major examples of this work in 2009 were the study exploring the impact of demographic change on the demand for, and delivery of, health care in Ireland and the modelling of pension reforms. While immediate issues are of great importance in the current situation, the Institute's role in research on longer term issues remains a priority.

Research based on longitudinal data will increasingly feature in the Institute's research agenda. The *Growing up in Ireland* team, which is responsible for the children's longitudinal study funded by the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, interviewed the families of nine-month-olds and published the results of the first study of nine-year-olds during 2009. The data from this study, which represent a major investment by the State in survey data, will become available to the Irish research community during 2010, providing opportunities for major new research projects in this area. The Institute is actively engaged in drawing up a research agenda based on the data and in seeking funds to support this research. Such research will provide evidence for policy-making in relation to children across many areas. The Institute is also committed to engaging in research on ageing, linked to *TILDA*, the longitudinal study on ageing being led by Trinity College Dublin (TCD).

As part of its Strategy (published in 2008), the ESRI has sought to strengthen its relationships with the higher education sector. During 2009, it participated for the first time as a partner in applications for funding under the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTL). This was done in joint consortia with TCD and with University College Dublin (UCD) in respect of both PhD training in economics and energy research. In addition, the Institute began exploring the development of a more formal alliance with TCD, to promote greater synergies in relation to longitudinal studies and policy research. A further new development within the Institute during the year was the establishment of a research group on competition and regulation with a particular emphasis on energy and the environment. Future research will look at how competition and regulation operate alongside taxation and public expenditure as instruments of economic and social policy.

During 2009 ESRI researchers published 67 journal articles, 42 reports and other publications, 17 book chapters and 65 working papers. The 2009 Geary Lecture, delivered by Professor James Poterba [Director of the National Bureau of Economic Research and Professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology] on 28 May, was entitled: *The Challenge of Tax Reform and Expanding the Tax Base*. It provided a timely contribution to the discussion of taxation as the Commission on Taxation was completing its report.

In addition to the regular Thursday seminars, which are open to researchers and policymakers, the Institute hosted several conferences and workshops in 2009. In April the policy conference on *The Labour Market in Recession* drew attention to the major employment challenges facing Ireland. The annual *Pre-Budget Conference* (held jointly with the Foundation for Fiscal Studies) on 13 October provided a forum for discussion of the fiscal policy challenges facing the government. Later that month a major policy conference on *The Impact of Demographic Change on the Demand for and Delivery of Healthcare in Ireland to 2021* was addressed by the Minister for Health and Children.

The direction and focus of ESRI research in any year reflect both the current economic and social issues that face Ireland and the resources that are available to the Institute to support its research programmes. In the current economic climate accessing adequate resources is increasingly challenging, despite the wider recognition of the need for evidence to

inform policy. This is particularly the case in relation to social research, where the pressure on funding sources has been greatest. The Institute is committed to ensuring value for money to those who provide financial support for its research, and during 2009 it has taken further steps to reduce its cost base. Irrespective of the source of financial support for its research, the Institute retains its independence through its approach to that research and to the public dissemination of results to the wider community.

As Ireland embraces the knowledge society, and the Institute enters its fiftieth year, the Council wishes to recognise the valuable contribution of those individuals and organisations who support the Institute's research programmes. The Council also extends its thanks to the management and staff at the Institute for their full engagement in pursuing the object of the Institute, namely the provision of independent research to inform economic and social policy in Ireland.

In the remainder of this report, we provide an overview of the work of each research programme during 2009.

Mary Finan
Chairman

Frances Ruane
Director

2. Economic Growth

There are three programmes of research in this area: Macroeconomics; International Economics; and Technology, Innovation and Productivity.

Macroeconomics

A major feature of the work of the ESRI on macroeconomics has been the development of key research infrastructure in the form of economic models. The *HERMES* macroeconomic model is a key tool for understanding how the Irish economy behaves. It is used in the ESRI's *Medium-Term Reviews*, in the analyses underlying the *Quarterly Economic Commentary* and in exploring how macroeconomic developments may affect other aspects of the economy such as energy demand, environmental impact, skills needs and housing demand.

The *Recovery Scenarios for Ireland* published in May 2009 suggested that three problems needed to be tackled to restore the economy to a sustainable growth path: the major structural deficit in the public finances must be closed; competitiveness must be restored; and the banking system must be transformed so that it can profitably and effectively fund a future recovery.

In December 2009 a report was published by the ESRI as part of the EUROFRAME Network of European economic research institutes considering the impact of the world recession on the EU economy (*Economic Assessment of the Euro Area: Autumn Report 2009*). This report also fed into the ongoing research underpinning the ESRI's *Quarterly Economic Commentary*.

Other research topics in 2009 included studies of the macroeconomic effects of taxation, especially of carbon taxes, the misperception of inflation by Irish consumers, the factors driving the market services sector, and the macroeconomic impact of changing the rate of corporation tax.

International Economics

In 2009, this research programme covered three themes:

(a) *International Transmission of Business Cycles*: Research in this area is part of a project funded under the **Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences** (IRCHSS). It analyses patterns and determinants of the international transmission of business cycles between Ireland and its trading partners over the past three decades.

(b) *Internationalisation of Production and Services*: Research in this area is part of an international research consortium led by the ESRI in co-operation with nine leading universities and research institutes in Europe, funded under the **EU 6th RTD Framework Programme**. It analyses determinants of the location choice of multinational firms in the ICT sector.

(c) *International Trade*: Research on international trade and firm heterogeneity is funded under a grant from the IRCHSS. The research shows that economic activity is heavily concentrated among firms that

engage in intra-firm trade and firms that export and import. Further research in this area, funded by **InterTrade Ireland**, considered the degree to which the *trade intensity* between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland is above, at, or below the trade potential.

Technology, Innovation and Productivity

This research programme focused on three themes in 2009:

(a) *The Economic Impact of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)*: Research in this area has taken place as part of an international research project funded by the **European Commission's Institute for Prospective Technological Studies**. Research in 2009 focused on an in-depth analysis of the consequences of ICT use and globalisation on regional economies.

(b) *International Technology Spillovers and Productivity*. Research in this area is funded by the Directorate General Research of the **European Commission**. The research shows that international technology spillovers can take place through international trade with goods and services, capital flows, and mobility of scientists, or through international trade of technology. Empirical evidence suggests that international technology spillovers are conditioned by domestic R&D expenditure, human capital and the quality of institutions. Further research funded under the **EU 6th RTD Framework Programme** explores the effects of foreign acquisitions on firm productivity.

(c) *Internationalisation of Firms and Productivity*. Research in this area, funded under the IRCHSS, focused on decomposing the sources of labour productivity growth. It confirms the huge dependence of Irish manufacturing on foreign direct investment and the continuing poor productivity performance of indigenous firms.

3. Social Progress

There are three programmes of research under Social Progress: Equality, Social Inclusion and Health.

Equality

The main body of research in this area is carried out as part of the *Research Programme on Equality and Discrimination*, funded by the **Equality Authority**. Studies published in 2009 covered discrimination in recruitment, the gender wage gap in Ireland and female participation in the Irish labour market. These studies highlight both emergent and long-standing challenges to achieving equality of opportunity in Ireland. The results from the research programme are to be showcased at an EU-funded conference on *Measuring Discrimination*, planned for 2010.

A study of pregnancy-related discrimination in the workplace was commissioned by the **Crisis Pregnancy Agency** at the end of 2008. During 2009 two reports were completed as part of the project. The first was a review of the literature relating to employment during pregnancy and

the second contained an analysis of the legal cases relating to Pregnancy Discrimination based on the caseloads of the Equality Tribunal, Labour Court and Employment Appeals Tribunal over the last ten years.

Work on gender differentials in the labour market and in the division of labour within households was also carried out as part of the EQUALSOC network.

Social Inclusion

As part of the rural programme for the **Office for Social Inclusion** (OSI), ESRI researchers were involved in two main studies:

(a) A comparative study *Poverty and Deprivation in Ireland in Comparative Perspective* involving an analysis of data from the EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC).

(b) A study on *Monitoring Poverty: Analysis of the EU SILC 2004 to 2007*, which tracked the level and distribution of poverty in Ireland over the period of labour market expansion and increased welfare spending. This study is to be published in 2010.

Two EQUALSOC conferences on the theme of social inclusion and income inequality were held in the ESRI during 2009. During these conferences, researchers from seven international institutes presented work on income inequality, deprivation, poverty measurement and intergenerational mobility.

Health

Major research projects in 2009 included: *Comparisons of Class Differentials in Perinatal Mortality Between the 1980s and 2000s*, *The Public/Private Mix in Irish Acute Public Hospitals*, *How Local is Hospital Treatment?*, *Trends in Caesarean Section in Ireland 1999-2006*, *Explaining Structural Change in Cardiovascular Mortality in Ireland 1995-2005*, *Consultation Charges and General Practitioner Use Among Older Irish People* and *Eligibility for Free Primary Care and Avoidable Hospitalisations in Ireland*.

In October 2009, Ms Mary Harney, TD, Minister for Health and Children launched the ESRI/TCD study on *The Impact of Demographic Change on the Demand for and Delivery of Health Care in Ireland*, which was funded by the **Health Research Board** and the **Health Service Executive** (HSE).

A project estimating the Cost of Stroke in Ireland, funded by the **Irish Heart Foundation**, commenced in collaboration with the RCSI. As part of the European Observatory's series on Health Systems in Transition, a report on Ireland (Ireland: Health System Review) was published in December 2009.

A team of four health economists undertook research on the Irish healthcare system to contribute to the work of the expert group on resource allocation and financing established by the Minister for Health in

2009. The research findings will be published during 2010 jointly by the **Department of Health and Children** (DoHC) and the ESRI.

4. Economic Growth and Social Progress

Given the integrated approach to economic and social policy in Ireland and the growing awareness of their interrelatedness in the EU, it is not surprising that quite a large amount of ESRI research takes place in the interface between these two domains. Five research programme areas fall under this category of research: Education; Labour Market; Migration; Social Cohesion and Quality of Life; and Taxation, Welfare and Pensions.

Education

Analyses based on the ESRI's Post-Primary Longitudinal Study (PPLS), funded by the **National Council for Curriculum and Assessment** (NCCA) and the **Department of Education and Science** (DES) explored the experiences of fifth and sixth year students; parental perceptions of the schooling system and early school leaving among the student cohort.

Research projects completed in 2009 included: a large-scale study of newcomer (immigrant) students in primary and post-primary schools, funded by the DES; and a study funded by **Barnardos** on the costs to individuals and society of early school leaving in terms of employment chances, welfare dependency, lone parenthood and crime.

ESRI research has focused also on the pathways taken by young people after leaving school, using the 2007 School Leavers' Survey, on the reasons for low participation in higher education among the children of non-manual workers, and on the costs of participating in higher education for previously under-represented groups. These latter projects, which were funded by the **Higher Education Authority**, are contributing to the current debates on the funding of higher education.

During 2009, work continued on a large-scale **European FP7**-funded project on the relationship between religion and schooling. The study explores the communication of religious and secular beliefs and values through the education system and the family.

Labour Market

Researchers on the labour market used the micro-data from the *National Employment Surveys* to explore: (i) the gender wage gap, on behalf of the **Equality Authority**, (ii) the public-private sector wage gap and (iii) the impact of labour market institutions on firm labour costs and within-firm wage dispersion.

A report, carried out in partnership with the **Department of Social and Family Affairs** (DSFA), on *National Profiling of the Unemployed in Ireland* was published in 2009. This project helps to identify those unemployed people most likely to experience difficulty gaining employment and at greatest risk of entering long-term unemployment. Related research involves combining the profiling data with administrative records of the National Employment Action Programme to evaluate the impact of the range of activation measures currently being implemented to assist

unemployed individuals re-enter the workforce. These research projects offer policymakers essential information to inform the allocation and targeting of effective and appropriate programmes for the unemployed.

ESRI researchers undertook a major study on matching skills and jobs, in collaboration with researchers from Swansea University and Flinders University, Adelaide, on behalf of **Cedefop**, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. The report analyses economic and social costs of mismatching.

Field-work was completed on two major surveys of the workplace in Ireland, one of employers, the other of employees, on behalf of the **National Centre for Partnership and Performance**. The surveys capture employers' experiences and strategies and employees' experiences and attitudes in the midst of the recession. The results of the survey will provide the basis for analysis of changes in the workplace, and the extent of development of workplace strategies in pursuit of enhanced organisational effectiveness and improved competitiveness.

Migration

Part of the Institute's programme of research on immigration is funded by the IRCHSS. Research in 2009 explored the impact of immigration on wages in Ireland, the experiences of immigrants in accessing employer-provided training and the relative earnings of returned migrants (compared to comparable stayers). Other research looking at the economic impacts of immigration into Ireland showed how the migratory inflow in the middle of this decade was positive for Ireland's economy.

During 2009, four published reports were prepared for the **European Commission Directorate General for Justice, Freedom and Security** as part of the activities of the Irish National Contact Point of the European Migration Network (EMN).¹ Recent published reports included commentary on migration and asylum flows into Ireland; a mapping of non-EU immigration and asylum-related policies in Ireland in 2008; and a report detailing policies concerning unaccompanied minors in Ireland. The ESRI also continues to be responsible for the Irish reports to SOPEMI, the OECD Continuous Reporting System on Migration. These reports have been produced on an annual basis since 1994.

Social Cohesion and Quality of Life

The research programme on sport and exercise funded by the **Irish Sports Council** published two Sports Monitor reports during 2009. These studies

¹ The EMN was established on a permanent legal base (Council Decision 2008/328/EC) in May 2008, and the ESRI has acted as Irish National Contact Point since 2003.

track the participation of adults in sport and physical activity based on annual surveys of the population which are published in *The Irish Sports Monitor*. They also allow consideration of the impact of the recession on active participation in sports by adults and on the patterns of sporting activities followed by children.

During 2009, researchers at the ESRI were members of a European team that won the contract to design a module for the 2010 *European Social Survey*. This survey, which is conducted in up to 30 European countries, will examine the implications of economic recession for family, work and well-being, including issues such as changes in the quality of work and their impact on work-family conflict, work pressure, and social integration.

In conjunction with the School of Applied Social Sciences in UCD, the ESRI undertook a new analysis of changing family structures and fertility patterns in Ireland, funded by the **Family Support Agency** using the 2006 Census Research Microdata File. A final report on the research will be published in 2010.

Finally, two research studies on quality of life were undertaken for the **European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions**. The first monitored quality of life across the EU using subjective well-being indicators. The second report focuses on social exclusion.

Taxation, Welfare and Pensions

The programme of research undertaken during 2009 helped to provide evidence both on the key short-term policy issues addressed in budgetary policy, and on longer term issues addressed by the **Commission on Taxation** and in the government's White Paper on pensions. Research outputs included a report on property taxation and its potential role in the Irish context, and a report on pension policy dealing with issues such as the tax treatment of pensions and the impact of rising coverage of both State and private pensions in the context of the "greying" of the Irish population.

On several occasions during 2009, research based on the *SWITCH* tax-benefit model was used to inform policy formation and public debate in these areas, and training was provided for the Department of Finance and the Department of Social and Family Affairs in the use of *SWITCH* for analysing tax and welfare policy options.

A major project on the modelling of pension policies began late in 2009, co-funded by the **European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities**. The work is being undertaken in collaboration with the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR) in London. The work will also facilitate comparisons between policy options adopted in Ireland and the UK. A new project aimed at learning from Ireland's experience with the Special Savings and Investment Accounts was also begun, with support from the **Foundation for Fiscal Studies**. This project will also feed into the research on the choice of policy instruments in relation to pensions.

5. Economic Growth and Environmental Sustainability

The increasing importance of environmental issues is reflected in the four programmes of research that look at issues where economic and environmental factors interact strongly. These programmes are Energy; Environment and Natural Resources; Transport and Infrastructure; and Competition and Regulation.

Energy

A major feature of the work of the Energy Policy Research Centre (EPRC) has been the development of key research infrastructure in the form of economic models for research. These models include: *IDEM*, a model of the all-island electricity sector; *ISUs*, the satellite model of *HERMES* used to forecast emissions and resource use, and *FUND*, an integrated assessment model of climate change for analysis of international climate policy.

Using these models the research programme in 2009 examined the following topics:

- The competition effects of different levels of interconnection between the Irish and the British electricity markets.
- The costs and benefits of investment in Ireland in renewable electricity.
- The factors affecting final electricity prices in Ireland.
- Forecasts for energy use out to 2025 were prepared with and published by **Sustainable Energy Ireland** (SEI) in December 2009. These forecasts are used by government departments and official bodies as part of their ongoing work on energy and the environment.
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of the *Power of One* campaign.
- The costs and benefits of smart meters (in conjunction with the **Commission for Energy Regulation** (CER) and SEI).

Environment and Natural Resources

Current research in environmental economics and resource economics is focused on:

- Forecasting a range of emissions to air, water and solid waste (*ISUs*);
- Valuation of environmental (dis)amenities;
- Waste policy;
- Climate policy in Ireland (carbon tax) and abroad (*FUND*).

This year saw completion of the initial development of the *ISUs* sustainable development model and an extended set of environmental accounts for Ireland, funded by the **Environmental Protection Agency** (EPA). The model and related datasets will be taken further in a follow-on project that aims to work towards Green Net National Accounts for Ireland. This will require additional research into valuation of

environmental goods and coverage of a wider range of emissions and resources.

Also during 2009 a study on European climate policy was completed. It was supported financially by the EPA. This research shows that it is feasible to reduce the economic costs of the 20/20/20 package without violating its environmental integrity. Research also provided the first estimates of the number of vegetarians in the world, which is of relevance to future methane emissions from agriculture. Other research examined the options for replacing base-load electricity capacity in Ireland and how firms react to energy taxes using a European panel dataset.

Transport and Infrastructure

In 2009 research on transport and infrastructure covered a range of topics.

- The characteristics of the working population of larger towns and cities in Ireland, in collaboration with staff from the **Central Statistics Office** (utilising data from the Place of Work Census of Anonymised Records (POWCAR)).
- An analysis of the factors (e.g., travel time, public transport availability, age and household composition) impacting on the joint decision about car ownership and mode of transport to work.
- The impact of deregulation of international trucking in the European Union on the growth of international trucking.
- A review of options for capital spending in the more fiscally-constrained environment. This research concluded that public capital projects should be undertaken on the basis that they have a long-run return to the whole economy.

Competition and Regulation

Competition and regulation research was first established as a distinct programme area at the ESRI in the Research Strategy 2008-2013. Previously, competition and regulation topics were addressed in other programmes. The identification of competition and regulation as a separate area reflects the increasing importance of regulation in the Irish economy, on the one hand, combined with a strengthened role for competition policy. Initially, competition and regulation will concentrate primarily on energy, electronic communications and the environment.

Research projects in 2009 included

- a study on the economics of waste management services (funded by **Dublin City Council**), to be published in 2010.
- analysis of the appropriateness of the State providing bespoke protection in a recession.
- analysis of the proposed code of practice for grocery retailers.

In relation to the environmental area, research considered appropriate mechanisms for ensuring competitive trading of emission permits and likely market outcomes. Work continued on a series of studies on efficient investment and regulatory choices in electricity generation, particularly in light of substantial planned increases in wind power capacity.

6. Survey and Data Analyses

In addition to its research programmes, the Institute is engaged in undertaking some economic and social surveys and in the generation and analyses of data from administrative records.

During 2009, survey work continued on the major seven-year research programme involving a national longitudinal study of children – the *Growing Up in Ireland* study. This programme, which is funded by DoHC through the **Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs** in association with the **Department of Social and Family Affairs** and the **Central Statistics Office (CSO)**, is being led jointly by the ESRI and TCD in collaboration with a consortium of researchers from other national and international universities and research institutions. During the first quarter of 2009 interviewing was completed with the families of 11,100 nine-month-olds. These data are being prepared for analysis with the first results due in 2010.

The ESRI, in partnership with an external fieldwork agency, completed the National Workplace Survey of Employers and the National Workplace Survey of Employees (for the **National Centre for Partnership and Performance**), which replicates surveys conducted by the ESRI in 2003. The surveys address the important issue of workplace innovation, which will be crucial to a restoration of Ireland's competitiveness and the development of the 'Smart Economy'. Also in partnership with an external fieldwork agency, the ESRI commissioned a survey of women's experiences in the workplace during pregnancy (for the **Crisis Pregnancy Agency and Equality Authority**) to examine the impact of pregnancy and maternity leave on women's careers.

During 2009, the ESRI also conducted surveys on sports participation and consumer sentiment, which feed directly into ongoing research at the Institute. The ESRI also designed and selected a national sample for the main survey of TILDA (the national survey on health, retirement and ageing) and for the European Social Survey for UCD. These surveys and survey design exercises drew on the ESRI expertise in designing surveys to the best international standards.

ESRI researchers are now intensive users of the CSO micro data sets across a range of areas. Access to these data sets, facilitated by the CSO, is providing new research opportunities that can contribute significantly to policymaking. The key data sets that were used during 2009 were the Census of Population, Quarterly National Household Survey, EU-SILC, National Employment Survey, and the Census of Industrial Production.

The Institute has responsibility for developing two national data bases from administrative records, under funding from the HSE. During 2009 reports on the Hospital In-Patient Enquiry (HIPE) and the National Perinatal Information System (NPRS) were published. These annual reports provide easily accessible and timely data for individuals or

organisations with an interest in perinatal statistics and hospital discharge data. The HIPE Data Reporter facilitates direct access to HIPE data via the internet.

In 2009, the ESRI received funding from the **Irish Social Science Data Archive** (UCD) to prepare and document historic survey databases so that they will be widely available to researchers in Ireland and abroad.

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