



About the ESRI

The Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) advances evidence-based policymaking that supports economic sustainability and social progress in Ireland. ESRI researchers apply the highest standards of academic excellence to challenges facing policymakers, focusing on 12 areas of critical importance to 21st century Ireland.

The Institute was founded in 1960 by a group of senior civil servants led by Dr T.K. Whitaker, who identified the need for independent and in-depth research analysis. Since then, the Institute has remained committed to independent research and its work is free of any expressed ideology or political position. The Institute publishes all research reaching the appropriate academic standard, irrespective of its findings or who funds the research.

The ESRI is a company limited by guarantee, answerable to its members and governed by a Council, comprising up to 14 representatives drawn from a cross-section of ESRI members from academia, civil services, state agencies, businesses and civil society. Funding for the ESRI comes from research programmes supported by government departments and agencies, public bodies, competitive research programmes, membership fees, and an annual grant-in-aid from the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform.

Further information is available at www.esri.ie.

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Introduction

The ESRI's annual *Review of Research* is an opportunity for us to describe the work of the Institute as we strive to achieve our mission 'to provide evidence to inform policymaking and public debate'.

I often reflect on the importance of bringing the economic, sociological and psychological perspectives together under one roof. Not only do we crunch the numbers and examine the macroeconomic trends, but we also delve deep into the societal forces at play. By integrating these disciplines, we gain a more complete picture of the public policy challenges facing Ireland. I hope you gain a sense of that throughout the pages of this Review.

The need for high-quality, independent research to help solve complex challenges was clear throughout 2024. Housing supply remained well below demand resulting in the widely discussed shortages. In 2024, our housing-related research covered the structural demand for housing, the sustainability of housing prices, monitoring rental trends, and the energy efficiency of rented properties. Researchers also examined the impact of poor housing on family well-being.

Immigration continued to generate debate in Ireland in 2024, often heated and often ill-informed. ESRI research showed that support for immigration and refugees was largely positive among the public, both compared to other EU countries and previous years in Ireland. A study on access to housing for beneficiaries of international protection highlighted that barriers to moving out of direct provision included severe shortages in the supply of social and rental housing and inadequacies in supports.

Our research on all-island issues continued to gain momentum in 2024 with our joint research programme with the Shared Island Unit in the Department of the Taoiseach. We produced important work on all-island issues such as income inequality, gender disparities in the labour market and housing supply.

Over the years, the Institute has specialised in developing statistical models that are estimated, validated and maintained to answer questions on economic and social processes. Through 2024, we continued to draw on our macroeconomic

model (COSMO) and our tax-welfare model (SWITCH) in analysing a range of policy challenges. We also continued to develop our I3E model, which jointly models climate and economic variables, and our Hippocrates model of the healthcare system. These models are key pieces of Ireland's national research infrastructure.

Undoubtedly, solving policy problems is challenging. I believe the ESRI is among the best-placed organisations to help policymakers for two reasons. First, we have a rigorous peer review process that guarantees the quality of the Institute's research output and we publish work only when it meets the highest standards. Our researchers also publish in international peer-reviewed journals, thereby demonstrating that our work measures up to top international standards. Second, the Institute remains independent, with our work free of any expressed ideology or political position. We publish all research that reaches the appropriate academic standard, irrespective of its findings or who funds the research.

On a personal note, after nearly a decade as CEO of the ESRI, my tenure will conclude this summer. Although I will miss this unique role, I look forward to returning to research within the Institute. I would like to thank all those who have supported me during my term, including the staff and Council members, in particular our Chair Sean O'Driscoll.

I want to thank our funders, our Whitaker Patrons, our corporate members and our research partners for their valuable support. I would like to acknowledge in particular the grant provided by the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform. Together, this support allows us to continue to pursue the goals of 'informed policy for a better Ireland'.



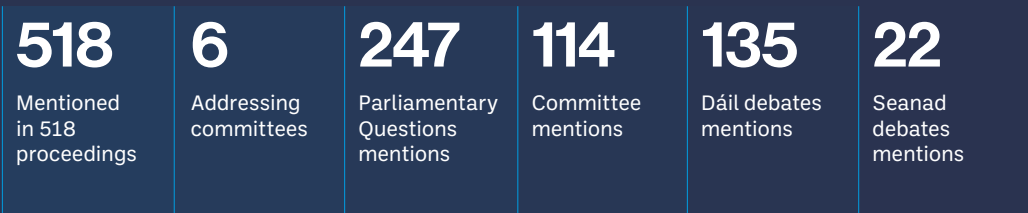
Professor Alan Barrett
Director of the ESRI

The year in numbers

Publications



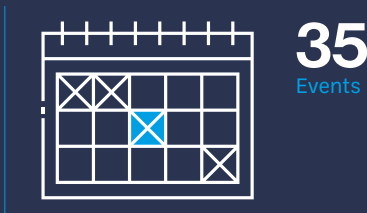
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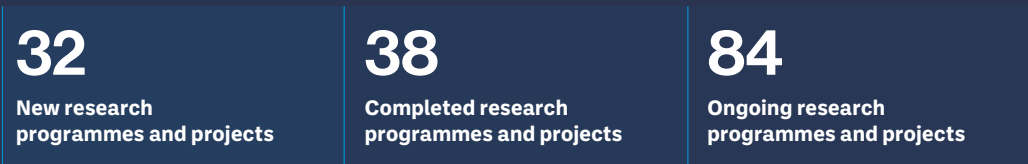
Media



Events



Research programmes and projects





(L-R) Prof Alan Barrett (ESRI Director), Anna Shakespeare (Pobal CEO), Dr Anne Devlin (ESRI) at the launch of *COVID-19 infection rates and social disadvantage in Ireland: An area-level analysis*, funded by Pobal.

Events

Conferences and events enable the ESRI to connect with a broader audience and strengthen relationships with policymakers, funders, researchers, the media, and civil society.

In 2024, most of our events focused on report launches and the dissemination of both ongoing and past research.

Recordings of select events are available on the [ESRI YouTube channel](#), and presentation slides can be accessed [on our website](#).

January

UCD-ESRI Energy Policy Research Conference

Caregiving among young adults in Ireland

Contrasting housing supply in Ireland, Northern Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom

Changing inequality at educational transitions, David Reimer, University of Iceland, ESRI Research Seminar

February

Financial incentives and doctor labour supply: Evidence from a pension tax reform in England, George Stoye, Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS), ESRI Research Seminar



(L-R) Dr Anousheh Alamir (ESRI), Evan Carron-Kee (ESRI), Lynsey Kavanagh (Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre), Mary Brigid Collins (Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre), Dr Frances McGinnity (ESRI), Gabi Muntean (Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre), Sinead Lucey (Free Legal Advice Centre), Carol Baxter (DCEDIY), Conor McGinn (DCEDIY) at the launch of the report *Understanding attitudes to Travellers and Roma in Ireland*.

March

Use of pornography among young adults in Ireland

Attitudes towards immigration and refugees in Ireland: Understanding recent trends and drivers

Food policy through the behavioural lens, Lucia Reisch, University of Cambridge, ESRI Research Seminar

April

Gender and labour market inclusion on the island of Ireland

Low-income families, maternal labour supply, and welfare reform, Nawid Siassi, TU Vienna, ESRI Research Seminar

May:

Markets, tariffs and affordability: salient issues in energy policy

Everyday climate action: What's preventing behaviour change?

The changing social worlds of 13-year-olds

Shaping our environment to promote health for all

Housing, health and happiness: How inadequate housing shapes child and parental wellbeing

Non-take-up of in-work benefits: determinants, benefit erosion and indexing, Stephan Koepepe, UCD, ESRI Research Seminar



(L-R) Prof Alan Barrett (ESRI, Director), Denise Charlton (CEO, Community Foundation Ireland), Prof Helen Russell (ESRI), Josephine Henry (Dublin City Community Cooperative), Dr Barra Roantree (TCD), Bertrand Maitre (ESRI) at the launch of the fourth annual report from the Community Foundation Ireland-funded ESRI research programme on poverty, income inequality and living standards in Ireland.

June

12th MaREI Climate & Energy Research Seminar

Budget Perspectives 2025

How accurate are teachers' perceptions of students' enjoyment, effort and misbehaviour in school, and do students' social background and ethnicity play a part? Evidence from England and Scotland, Katherin Barg and Valentina Casoni, University of Bristol, ESRI Research Seminar

July

COVID-19 infection rates and social disadvantage in Ireland: An area-level analysis

September

Poverty, income inequality and living standards in Ireland

Skill requirements for emerging technologies in Ireland

Fiscal policy, financial sector policy and economic growth

Separating needs and entitlement: A mixed methods study of the impact of the UK's two-child limit and benefit cap, Kitty Stewart, LSE, ESRI Research Seminar

Making jobs out of the energy transition: Evidence from the French energy efficiency obligations scheme, Francois Cohen, University of Barcelona, ESRI Research Seminar



Prof. Alan Barrett (ESRI Director) and UK Ambassador to Ireland Paul Johnston at an ESRI Membership event.

October

Post-Budget briefing

Drivers of income inequality in Ireland and Northern Ireland

Trends in disability prevalence among young people: Insights from the Growing Up in Ireland Study

Providing research-based evidence for digital and green transitions in Ireland

Innovation under dual policies: The impact of R&D subsidies and emissions trading on green patenting in Sweden, Jurate Jaraite-Kazukauske, University of Vilnius, ESRI Research Seminar

November

Energy Poverty Conference 2024

December

Understanding attitudes to Travellers and Roma in Ireland

Demographics, higher investment, and the potential growth rate of the Irish economy

Are pro-productivity policies fit for purpose? Bart Van Ark, ESRI Research Seminar



Behavioural Science

Research Area Coordinator: Pete Lunn

Researchers working in the area in 2024:

Ylva Andersson, Celine Fox, Adam Joachim Shier, Lucie Martin, Maria Lee, Olga Poluektova, Deirdre Robertson, Shane Timmons, Diarmaid Ó Ceallaigh

Research highlights and findings

- Public understanding of how everyday behaviours generate greenhouse gas emissions was tested, showing the impact of diet is underestimated.
- An experiment tested the impact of, and improvements to, cervical screening information.
- The trial of a behaviourally informed app increased switching of financial products.

The **Behavioural Research Unit (BRU)** uses controlled laboratory, online and field experiments to investigate decisions and behaviours across multiple policy areas. Most of the BRU's work centres on environmental, health and financial outcomes.

In work commissioned by the **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**, published in May, the BRU used a day reconstruction method to measure people's understanding of how their everyday behaviours generate greenhouse-gas emissions that cause climate change. One in five who travelled by car did not identify driving as a source of carbon emissions. Almost half did not list home energy use. Just one in 25 mentioned their diet as contributing to their carbon footprint.

“One in five who travelled by car did not identify driving as a source of carbon emissions. Almost half did not list home energy use. Just one in 25 mentioned their diet as contributing to their carbon footprint.”

“An analysis of survey data for the new Gambling Regulatory Authority of Ireland found that exposure to gambling as a child increases the likelihood of experiencing harm from gambling as an adult.”

Also in May, the BRU published a paper describing an experimental test of cervical screening materials, in research funded by the **National Screening Service**. Information materials improved trust in the service and reduced blame. Subsequent experiments have tested behaviourally informed changes to the materials.

In June, the BRU posted a paper describing the results of a randomised controlled trial of a behaviourally informed app designed to help people to switch to better-value mortgages, loans, credit cards and bank accounts. This research, funded by the **Department of Finance**, found that the app increased the likelihood that users switched financial products.

Also during 2024, the BRU published several other studies commissioned by the EPA, including a measure of the public perceptions of risk from electromagnetic fields, a review of how to promote collective climate action, and a study showing how communicating climate change as a generational issue can hinder climate action.

An analysis of survey data for the new Gambling Regulatory Authority of Ireland found that exposure to gambling as a child increases the likelihood of experiencing harm from gambling as an adult. A study for the Department of Health tested the role of fairness and effectiveness in public support for policies designed to reduce obesity. In 2024, the BRU continued a research programme with the National Transport Authority on promoting active travel, and began new research programmes in collaboration with the National Immunisation Office and the Department of Transport.

Journal Articles

[An experimental test of a greenwashing inoculation intervention in Ireland: Effects of ‘pre-bunking’ on identification, consumer trust and purchase intentions](#), *Sustainable Production and Consumption*, Vol. 47, 2024, p. 318–328, Elsevier, Shane Timmons, Ava Whelan, Clare Kelly

[Behavioural evidence to inform the COVID-19 pandemic response: Ireland’s Social Activity Measure \(SAM\)](#), *Behavioural Public Policy*, Vol. 8, Issue 4, pp. 670–684, Cambridge University Press, Pete Lunn, Shane Timmons, Deirdre Robertson, Hannah Julienne, Ciarán Lavin, Martina Barjaková, Olga Poluektova, Kieran Mohr, Ylva Andersson, Féidhlim McGowan, Alexandros Papadopoulos

[Communicating climate change as a generational issue: experimental effects on youth worry, motivation and belief in collective action](#), *Climate Policy*, Vol. 24, Issue 10, 2024, pp. 1457–1473, Taylor & Francis Group, Shane Timmons, Ylva Andersson, Pete Lunn

[Effective communication of time-of-use electricity tariffs: Plain and simple](#), *Utilities Policy*, Vol. 90, October 2024, 101798, Elsevier, Martina Barjaková, Cameron Belton, Karl Purcell, Pete Lunn

[Improving the management of hospital waiting lists by using nudges in letters: A randomised controlled trial](#), *Social Science & Medicine*, Vol. 361, November 2024, 117343, Elsevier, Robert Murphy, Carol Taaffe, Molly Byrne, Liam Delaney, Pete Lunn, Deirdre Robertson, Helen Ryan, Alex Wood

[Survey instructions bias perceptions of environmental health risks](#), *Journal of Risk Research*, Vol. 27, Issue 8, 2024, pp. 932-950, Taylor & Francis, Shane Timmons, Alexandros Papadopoulos, Pete Lunn

[The impact of generative artificial intelligence on socioeconomic inequalities and policy making](#), *PNAS Nexus*, Vol. 3, Issue 6, June 2024, Oxford University Press, Valerio Capraro, Austin Lentsch, Daron Acemoglu, Selin Akgun, Aisel Akhmedova, Ennio Bilancini, Jean-François Bonnefon, Pablo Brañas-Garza, Luigi Butera, Karen M Douglas, Jim A C Everett, Gerd Gigerenzer, Christine Greenhow, Daniel A Hashimoto, Julianne Holt-Lunstad, Jolanda Jetten, Simon Johnson, Werner H Kunz, Chiara Longoni, Pete Lunn, Simone Natale, Stefanie Paluch, Iyad Rahwan, Neil Selwyn, Vivek Singh, Siddharth Suri, Jennifer Sutcliffe, Joe Tomlinson, Sander van der Linden, Paul A M Van Lange, Friederike Wall, Jay J Van Bavel, Riccardo Viale

[Trust in cervical screening and attributions of blame for interval cancers following a national controversy](#), *British Journal of Health Psychology*, Vol. 29, No. 3, September 2024, Wiley, Olga Poluektova, Deirdre Robertson, Alexandros Papadopoulos, Pete Lunn

[Primacy effects in the formation of environmental attitudes: The case of mineral exploration](#), *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, Vol. 94, March 2024, 102248, Elsevier, Olga Poluektova, Hannah Julienne, Deirdre Robertson, Aoife Braiden, Pete Lunn

[Active travel infrastructure design and implementation: Insights from behavioral science](#), *Wires Climate Change*, 2024, Wiley, Shane Timmons, Ylva Andersson, Féidhlim McGowan, Pete Lunn

Reports

[Encouraging cooperation in climate collective action problems](#), EPA Behavioural Insights Series No. 3, Dublin: EPA, Lucie Martin, Shane Timmons, Pete Lunn

[Public perceptions of electromagnetic fields and environmental health risks](#), ESRI Survey and Statistical Report Series No. 126, Shane Timmons, Alexandros Papadopoulos, Pete Lunn

[What is preventing individual climate action? Impact awareness and perceived difficulties in changing transport and food behaviour](#), ESRI Research Series No. 186, Shane Timmons, Ylva Andersson, Maria Lee, Pete Lunn

ESRI Research Bulletins

Active travel infrastructure has more positive effects than people expect, Shane Timmons, Ylva Andersson, Féidhlim McGowan, Pete Lunn

Consumers struggle to distinguish genuine and ‘greenwashed’ environmental claims in advertisements, Shane Timmons, Ava Whelan, Clare Kelly

Degree of ableism depends on disability, gender and the social context, Shane Timmons, Frances McGinnity, Eamonn Carroll

Generational narratives about climate change worry but do not motivate young people, Shane Timmons, Ylva Andersson, Pete Lunn

How to encourage collective climate action, Lucie Martin, Shane Timmons, Pete Lunn

Survey instructions influence reported perceptions of environmental risks, Shane Timmons, Alexandros Papadopoulos, Pete Lunn

The impact of CervicalCheck controversy on public trust and blame for interval cancers, Olga Poluektova, Deirdre Robertson, Alexandros Papadopoulos, Pete Lunn

Primacy effects in the formation of environmental attitudes: The case of mineral exploration, Olga Poluektova, Hannah Julianne, Deirdre Robertson, Aoife Braiden, Pete Lunn

Members of the ESRI's Behavioural Research Unit. (L-R) Prof Pete Lunn, Dr Shane Timmons, Dr Lucie Martin, Dr Diarmaid Ó Ceallaigh, Adam Joachim Shier, Celine Fox, Marie Lee and Dr Deirdre Robertson.



ESRI Working Papers

A behaviourally-informed app can encourage switching of financial products, Deirdre Robertson, Olga Poluektova, Ciarán Lavin, Shane Timmons, Pete Lunn

Childhood gambling experiences and adult problem gambling, Diarmaid Ó Ceallaigh, Shane Timmons, Deirdre Robertson, Pete Lunn

Fashion, fast or slow? Effects of binary and graded eco-labels on sustainable clothing purchases, Shane Timmons, Adam Joachim Shier, Olga Poluektova, Pete Lunn

Going green in stages: Psychological processes behind intention formation and action for climate mitigation, Ylva Andersson, Shane Timmons, Maria Lee, Pete Lunn

Survey instructions bias perceptions of environmental health risks, Shane Timmons, Alexandros Papadopoulos, Pete Lunn

Trust in cervical screening and attributions of blame for interval cancers following a national controversy, Olga Poluektova, Deirdre Robertson, Alexandros Papadopoulos, Pete Lunn



Climate

Research Area Coordinator: Kelly de Bruin

Researchers working in this area in 2024: Simachew Alemu, Daniel Cassidy, Çağaçan Değer, Kirsten Everett, Niall Farrell, Clement Kweku Kyei, Samuel McArdle, Akhila Rajesh, Shane Timmons, Anita Vollmer, Aykut Mert Yakut

The climate research area provides evidence on the macro-economic and equality impacts of climate policies. Climate research is funded by the **Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC)**, **Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform (DPENDR)**, **Department of Finance (DFIN)**, **Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE)**, **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** and **Research Ireland**.

In 2024, the climate team focused on enhancing their analytical Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) model, known as Ireland Environment, Energy and Economy (I3E). This updated version facilitates more in-depth analysis of the transition to a low-carbon economy. With funding from DECC, DFIN and DPENDR, the model now includes detailed renewable energy sources and decarbonisation options for different producers. Estimates underpinning the economic and energy emission projections were submitted to the EPA to support its projections, which it reports to both the EU and the UN.

Members of the ESRI's Climate team.(L-R) Dr Daniel Cassidy, Anita Vollmer, Dr Kelly de Bruin, Dr Aykut Mert Yakut, Dr Clement Kweku Kyei, Samuel McArdle, Kirsten Everett, Simachew Alemu and Dr Çağaçan Değer.



Research highlights and findings

“costs of not transitioning to low-carbon alternatives in the current energy climate are high.”

“using carbon revenues wisely can improve the negative impacts of carbon taxation and even reverse them.”

- The impacts on energy prices and the Irish economy of carbon taxation, the EU emissions trading scheme (ETS) permit price increases and the Ukraine crisis were modelled. This research, funded by **DETE** and published in April, found that the costs of not transitioning to low-carbon alternatives in the current energy climate are high.
- Further research investigated how climate taxation can be combined with other compensating policies to ensure decreased emissions, increased economic output and equity. A journal article published in June based on work funded by **DECC** and **DFIN** shows that using carbon revenues wisely can improve the negative impacts of carbon taxation and even reverse them.
- New estimates show that Irish consumption-based emissions are larger than production-based emissions, making Ireland a net importer of emissions. This **EPA**-funded work, published in August, examined a novel approach to calculating consumption-based emissions. Further work compared Ireland’s emissions with those of similar countries. Work creating a yearly estimate of consumption-based emissions for Ireland will continue in the coming years.
- Economic modelling of climate change shows that the economic impacts of a changing climate could be considerable for Ireland. Work undertaken for the **Climate Change Advisory Council (CCAC)** funded by the **EPA** examined several climate-change impacts for Ireland. Implementing these impacts into the I3E model allowed for an analysis of total impacts. The results, published in September, show that secondary impacts are large, and Ireland can reduce impacts through adaptation. Continued work on this topic includes estimating climate impacts related to extreme weather impacts.

Researchers in this area continue to engage closely with policymakers and other stakeholders, forming part of the CCAC working group on the Carbon Budgets and the Department of the Taoiseach climate modelling group. Strong partnerships with the DECC, DFIN and DPENDR have allowed the climate research area to significantly develop their modelling infrastructure over the past year. In 2024, Dr Kelly de Bruin participated in presentations to the Oireachtas Committee on Budgetary Oversight on the priorities for the National Development Plan.

Reports

[The implications of high energy and carbon prices on firms](#), ESRI Research Series No. 179, Aykut Mert Yakut, Samuel McArdle, Kelly C de Bruin

Chapters in Books and Reports

[Cross-cutting themes](#), chapter 8 in A. Barrett & J. Curtis (eds.), *The National Development Plan in 2023: priorities and capacity*, Dublin: ESRI, Kelly C de Bruin, John Curtis, Conor O'Toole, Alan Barrett

ESRI Research Bulletins

[Efficiency-equity trade-off in the Irish carbon tax: A CGE investigation of mixed revenue recycling schemes](#), Kelly C de Bruin, Aykut Mert Yakut

ESRI Working Papers

[An overview of climate change impacts, adaptation strategies, and future climate in Ireland](#), Kelly C de Bruin, Clement Kweku Kyei, Loïc Henry

[Climate change adaptation options and their associated costs and benefits in Ireland](#), Kelly C de Bruin, Clement Kweku Kyei

[Climate change impacts and associated economic costs in Ireland](#), Kelly C de Bruin, Clement Kweku Kyei, Loïc Henry

[Ensuring just resilience to climate impacts: a framework for policy implementation](#), Stefano Ceolotto, Pranav Kakkar, Niall Farrell

[Interactions between climate change mitigation, damages, and adaptation: An intertemporal Computable General Equilibrium analysis for Ireland](#), Kelly C de Bruin, Loïc Henry, Clement Kweku Kyei, Aykut Mert Yakut

[Macroeconomic impacts of climate-induced damages in Ireland: a CGE analysis of secondary impacts](#), Kelly C de Bruin, Loïc Henry, Clement Kweku Kyei, Aykut Mert Yakut

[Nature-based solutions for climate adaptation: Review of barriers to adoption and guidelines for policymakers](#), Anita Vollmer, Stefano Ceolotto, Niall Farrell

[Production and Consumption-based Accounts of Ireland's emissions](#), Kelly C de Bruin, Çağaçan Değer, Aykut Mert Yakut

Competitiveness, Trade, and Foreign Direct Investment



Research Area Coordinator: Iulia Siedschlag

Researchers working in this area in 2024: Eamonn Carroll, Mattia Di Ubaldo, Caoimhe Dempsey, Seraphim Dempsey, Juan Durán Vanegas, Janez Kren, Martina Lawless, Selina McCoy, Gretta Mohan, Keyu Ye

ESRI research in this area focuses primarily on structural and microeconomic factors and policies underlying competitiveness and economic growth in Ireland and other European countries in the context of international economic integration. In 2024, research in this area addressed the following overarching themes: foreign direct investment (FDI) and associated economic, social and spatial effects; artificial intelligence, digital technologies and productivity; artificial intelligence and digital skills; digitalisation and sustainability across enterprises.

Research highlights and findings

Research funded from the **European Commission's Horizon Europe Programme part of the ESSPIN project** found that large multinational firms with dominant market shares – international superstar firms – contributed, over and above other factors, to increased wage and productivity inequality between firms across European regions. Another research strand of this project examined individual, school and spatial variation in digital learning of secondary school students in Ireland, and highlighted the persistent influence of social and school contexts on students' access to digital technologies, contributing to social inequality in digital technology experiences.

“large multinational firms with dominant market shares – international superstar firms – contributed, over and above other factors, to increased wage and productivity inequality between firms across European regions.”



Members of the ESRI's Competitiveness, Trade and FDI team. (L-R) Dr Selina McCoy, Dr Caoimhe Dempsey, Dr Juan Duran Vanegas, Dr Iulia Siedschlag and Dr Janez Kren.

Research funded from the **European Commission's Horizon Europe Programme part of the EFFect project** examined the effectiveness of investment in employee training on productivity growth in EU countries. Research results indicated that labour productivity growth over the period 2008–2020 was mainly explained by the accumulation of physical and intangible capital. The impact of intangible capital accumulation on labour productivity growth was stronger in more training-intensive industries.

Research on linkages between digitalisation and sustainability funded by the **Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg)** and the **Department of Environment, Climate and Communications** published in November found that digitalisation and sustainability were complementary business objectives across enterprises in Ireland. Results indicated an uneven adoption of information and communication technologies (ICT)-related sustainability measures across enterprises, sectors and regions. Another research strand found that firms using ultra-fast broadband in Ireland had better output, employment and productivity performance compared to the rest of the firms. Results indicated that higher firm-level usage of ultra-fast broadband was associated with higher between-firm labour productivity inequality.

Research on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and firm-level productivity found that firms using AI generated substantially more value-added than firms that did not use AI. Estimates obtained with a production function model indicated that firms using AI more intensively across business

“firms using ultra-fast broadband in Ireland had better output, employment and productivity performance”

areas were significantly more productive. This research was presented in August at **the 2024 Econometric Society Interdisciplinary Frontiers Conference on Economics, Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning**, hosted by Cornell University, Ithaca, USA.

Research on the availability and development of digital skills in the context of an increasing diffusion of AI and other digital technologies within the economy and the wider society identified important digital skills gaps among the younger population in Ireland relative to other EU countries. Drawing on in-depth data across secondary schools in Ireland, the results highlighted that teacher skills, a culture of student democracy and a holistic, inclusive school ethos were associated with better digital skills development. This research was presented in September at the **10th International Workshop on Efficiency in Education, Health and other Public Services**, Milan, Italy.

Journal Articles

How has Brexit changed EU–UK trade flows? *European Economic Review*, Vol. 161, January 2024, 104634, Elsevier, Janez Kren, Martina Lawless

Twin transitions across enterprises: Do digital technologies and sustainability go together? *Journal of Cleaner Production*, Vol. 481, November 2024, 144025, Elsevier, Iulia Siedschlag, Gretta Mohan, Weijie Yan

Chapters in Books and Reports

Innovation and training needs to support Ireland’s transition to a low-carbon economy, Box 4.2, Róisín Moriarty et al., *Ireland’s climate change assessment: Vol. 4, Realising the benefits of transition and transformation*, Dublin: EPA, Iulia Siedschlag



Education

Research Area Co-ordinators: Selina McCoy and Emer Smyth

Researchers working in this area in 2024: Merike Darmody, Caoimhe Dempsey, Juan Durán Vanegas, Gretta Mohan, Iulia Siedschlag, Keyu Ye

The ESRI education research area covers all levels of the Irish educational system, including early childhood education, primary, second-level, and further and higher education. Research in 2024 focused on policy and provision for students with additional needs, student wellbeing policies, school gender and social mix, educational inequality, digital technologies in education, the impact of COVID-19 and comparative analyses. The work spanned cross-national research and studies focusing on education in Ireland.

Research highlights and findings

“New research on access to private tuition among students in preparation for the Leaving Certificate exam shows that it is socially stratified and accessible to those with greater family resources.”

Education researchers are centrally involved in a number of comparative European studies, and one researcher is the Irish National Expert at the **European Commission** Independent Experts on Education and Training. As part of this framework, research explored wellbeing and mental health difficulties among young people in Ireland and the Department of Education *Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice in 2018*, which aims to improve wellbeing initiatives in Irish schools. Results indicate that stakeholders were positive about the benefits of having a framework for future directions and decisions. However, several stakeholders reiterated the same challenge in translating the policy into effective school practices, often underpinned by a lack of teacher professional development and competing demands on resources.

New research on access to private tuition among students in preparation for the Leaving Certificate exam shows that it is socially stratified, accessible to those with greater family resources, and those attending schools with higher socio-economic student intakes. Such tuition is viewed as an investment, particularly among students with average and above-average levels of prior attainment, while high-achieving students and those scoring higher on conscientiousness measures are less likely to participate. Other comparative analyses of such tuition in the PIONEERED project showed how it plays a different

(L-R) ESRI authors Dr Selina McCoy, Dr Eamonn Carroll and Keyu Ye at the launch of “Embracing diversity in all its forms”: The voluntary secondary sector in Irish education’, funded by the Joint Managerial Body.



“Results show a growing trend of students missing school post-COVID-19 – posing far-reaching consequences for academic engagement, school completion and future prospects”

role across countries and at primary and secondary level. Taking private tuition was linked to higher Leaving Certificate grades for lower-achieving students but not for other groups.

Work was published on a large-scale mixed-method study for the **Joint Managerial Body** looking at what voluntary secondary schools provide to students and the community across different contexts and settings. Results show a growing trend of students missing school post-COVID-19 – posing far-reaching consequences for academic engagement, school completion and future prospects. The findings also show that students, regardless of attending single-sex or coeducational schools, favoured coeducational settings, while staff and parents expressed diverse preferences. Gender differences persist in the subjects available to students and in terms of their actual subject choices, as well as in the extent to which different subjects are seen as interesting or difficult. Only a small minority of students find learning Irish interesting, raising implications for the national language.

Research published in May, for the **Department of Children, Equality, Disability and Youth**, showed an increase in subject engagement in the wake of junior cycle reform. However, girls have become less positive about school due to greater emotional difficulties since the pandemic.

Using data from the nationally representative Growing Up in Ireland study, research published in October as part of a programme of research with **DCEDIY** showed an increase in the prevalence of disability over time and a gap between those with disabilities and others in their engagement with school and school subjects. Other research shows disparities between disabled and non-disabled students, as well as among disabled students in school support for self-determination in post-school decision-making, with gender,

socioeconomic background, cultural capital and early educational experiences also important in perceived support. Positive school engagement and student-teacher relationships, as well as high self-expectations, emerge as protective factors, indicating that fostering supportive environments and self-concept may enhance students' self-determination skills.

Other research

Work was completed for the **National Council for Special Education** on a large-scale study looking at the post-school pathways among young people with special educational needs. The results will be important in shaping provision for students with additional needs in special and mainstream schools and across the post-school landscape.

A study was also completed for **Tusla Education Support Service** reviewing the School Completion Programme, which provides supports for children and young people at risk of school disengagement.

Work continued on the **ESSPIN** study, a **Horizon Europe**-funded study on social, economic and spatial inequalities in the European Union in the context of increased global challenges. In addition, the **EFFEct** study, a four-year Horizon Europe-funded study, focused on enhancing the quality of education across the EU. ESRI researchers are focusing on addressing inequality in educational achievement and the role of digital technologies in education.

Journal Articles

[Inequality in participation in shadow education in mathematics in Europe: An intersectional perspective](#), *European Educational Research Journal*, 2024, Sage, İrem Karaçay, Audrey Bousselin, Robin Benz, Merike Darmody, Emer Smyth

[Participation in shadow education and academic performance: A comparison of upper secondary school students in Ireland and Germany](#), *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 2024, Sage, Robin Benz, Merike Darmody, Emer Smyth

[Examining the post-school decision-making and self-determination of disabled young adults in Ireland](#), *Disabilities*, 2024, Vol. 4 No. 3, pp. 459-476, MDPI, Keyu Ye, Selina McCoy

[Higher education retention in Ireland and Scotland: the role of admissions policies](#), *Higher Education*, 2024, Springer Nature, Cristina Iannelli, Patricia McMullin, Emer Smyth

ESRI author Dr Selina McCoy at the launch of 'Embracing diversity in all its forms': The voluntary secondary sector in Irish education funded by the Joint Managerial Body



Interacting adult-child relationships and school adjustment: Findings from Growing Up in Ireland, *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, Vol. 92, May-June 2024, 101653, Elsevier, Caoimhe Dempsey, Rory Devine, Jennifer Symonds, Seaneen Sloan, Claire Hughes

School transition difficulty in Scotland and Ireland: a longitudinal perspective, *Educational Review*, 2024, Taylor & Francis, Emer Smyth, Ivan Privalko

Shadow education uptake in Ireland: Inequalities and wellbeing in a high-stakes context, *British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol. 72, Issue 6, 2024, pp. 693-719, Taylor & Francis, Selina McCoy, Delma Byrne

The creation of culturally responsive school environments in Ireland: Factors that assist in reducing the gap between policy and practice, *Policy Futures in Education*, Vol. 23, No. 1, 2024, pp. 155-168, Sage Publications, Aron Foley, Daniel Faas, Merike Darmody

Reports

['Embracing diversity in all its forms': The voluntary secondary sector in Irish education](#), ESRI Research Series No. 182, Eamonn Carroll, Selina McCoy, Keyu Ye

[The changing social worlds of 13-year-olds](#), ESRI Research Series No. 178, Emer Smyth

[The psychology of starting school: An evidence-based guide for parents and teachers](#), London: Routledge, Claire Hughes, Caoimhe Dempsey, Elian Fink

Chapters in Books and Reports

[Education](#), chapter 7 in A. Barrett & J. Curtis (eds.), *The National Development Plan in 2023: priorities and capacity*, Dublin: ESRI, Emer Smyth

[The representation of Traveller students across different school contexts in Ireland](#), R. Rose & M. Shevlin (eds.), *Including Voices – International Perspectives on Inclusive Education*, Vol. 23, pp. 217-229, Leeds: Emerald Publishing, Emer Smyth, Joanne Banks

ESRI Research Bulletins

[Inequality in participation in shadow education in mathematics in Europe: An intersectional perspective](#), İrem Karaçay, Audrey Bousselein, Robin Benz, Merike Darmody, Emer Smyth

[Participation in shadow education and academic performance in Ireland and Germany](#), Robin Benz, Merike Darmody, Emer Smyth

[School transition difficulties in Scotland and Ireland](#), Emer Smyth, Ivan Privalko

[The distribution of Traveller students across education settings in Ireland](#), Emer Smyth, Joanne Banks

[Perceptions of migrant parental engagement in primary schools in Ireland](#), Dymphna Devine, Merike Darmody, Emer Smyth

ESRI Working Papers

[Qualitative Assessment of the Irish 2018 Wellbeing Framework in Education](#), Caoimhe Dempsey, Selina McCoy



Energy and Environment

Research Area Co-ordinators: Anne Nolan, Niall Farrell and Muireann Lynch

Researchers working in this area in 2024: Andrés Estevez, Aislinn Hoy, Pranav Kakkar, Tensay Hadush Meles, Gretta Mohan, Rafael Nunes, Miguel Tovar Reaños, Shiwani Varal, Anita Vollmer, Brendan Wade, Frank Wolfe

Core funding for energy research at the ESRI comes from the ESRI's Energy Policy Research Centre, whose members comprise the **Commission for Regulation of Utilities; the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC); EirGrid; Energia; ESB; Gas Networks Ireland; and SSE Ireland**. Additional projects are funded by the **European Commission (EU Horizon), Taighde Éireann/ Research Ireland (formerly, Science Foundation Ireland) and the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI)**. Research related to the environment is funded by the **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**, while research on electronic communications networks and services is funded by **DECC** and the **Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg)**.

Research in the area spans topics such as residential energy efficiency, energy poverty, electricity market design, and the interface between the environment and human health.

Research highlights and findings

- In January, EPRC colleagues contributed to the ESRI's report on priorities for the National Development Plan, finding that, within energy infrastructure, there are likely to be considerable capacity constraints to meet stated targets, and that the number of personnel likely to be required will be large relative to the size of the construction sector.
- Analyses using smart thermostat data quantified the extent to which a Building Energy Rating (BER) captures energy performance, finding that the difference in energy use attributable to the BER scales is modest and not substantially different in magnitude to what is attributable to minor behavioural interventions.



Members of the ESRI's Energy and Environment team. (L-R) Prof John Curtis, Anita Vollmer, Dr Philip Carthy, Brendan Wade, Dr Kelly de Bruin, Dr Muireann Lynch, Dr Niall Farrell, Kirsten Everett, Dr Aykut Mert Yakut, Dr Shiwani Varal, Dr Rafael Nunes, Samuel McArdle, Simachew Alemu, Dr Clement Kweku, Dr Daniel Cassidy and Dr Çağaçan Değer

- In October, research analysing the impact of planning and regulatory delays for energy infrastructure found that regulatory delays associated with the delivery of energy infrastructure have substantial impacts on electricity prices, system emissions and system costs. Many of the policy recommendations arising from this work aligned with those implemented by the Commission for Regulation of Utilities in Q4 2024.

The **EPa** research programme, which was extended for a further two-year period at the end of 2024, has ongoing research covering topics related to health, behavioural science, regulatory policy and climate change. New energy research projects commencing in 2024 include the **SEAI**-funded FLEXECON and SOCERGY projects, which will involve collaboration with ESRI's Behavioural Research Unit, the University of Galway, the Euro-Mediterranean Center on Climate Change, and EPRC partners **Energia**. These projects will explore the use of behavioural interventions to guide more efficient energy investment and consumption decisions.

“regulatory delays associated with the delivery of energy infrastructure have substantial impacts on electricity prices, system emissions and system costs”

Presentations to Oireachtas committees during 2024 covered research on energy poverty, presented to the Joint Committee on Social Protection, Community and Rural Development and the Islands in February, as well as discussing priorities for the National Development Plan with the Oireachtas Committee on Budgetary Oversight.

Journal Articles

[A model of strategic electrolysis firms in energy, ancillary services and hydrogen markets](#), *International Journal of Hydrogen Energy*, Vol. 72, June 2024, pp. 110-123, Elsevier, Genaro Longoria, Muireann Á. Lynch, Mel Devine, John Curtis

[Agriculture and water quality in Ireland: New ideas for policy](#), *Biology and Environment: Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. 124, No. 1, 2024, p. 1-15, Royal Irish Academy, Wellington Osawe, John Curtis, Cathal O'Donoghue

[An assessment of farmers' knowledge, attitudes and intentions towards water quality and pollution risk mitigation actions](#), *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, Vol. 9, 2024, 100858, Elsevier, Wellington Osawe, John Curtis

[Are energy performance certificates a strong predictor of actual energy use? Evidence from high-frequency thermostat panel data](#), *Economics of Energy and Environmental Policy*, Vol. 13, No. 2, International Association for Energy Economics (IAEE), Tensay Hadush Meles, Niall Farrell, John Curtis

[Dispersed settlement patterns can hinder the net-zero transition: Evidence from Ireland](#), *Energy Strategy Reviews*, Vol. 51, January 2024, 101296, Elsevier, Ankita Gaur, Jason McGuire, Vera O'Riordan, John Curtis, Hannah Daly

[Efficiency–equity trade-off in the Irish carbon tax: A CGE investigation of mixed revenue recycling schemes](#), *Economic Modelling*, Vol. 134, May 2024, 106705, Elsevier, Kelly C de Bruin, Aykut Mert Yakut

[How public acceptance affects power system development—A cross-country analysis for wind power](#), *Applied Energy*, Vol. 359, April 2024, 122745, Elsevier, John Curtis, Leonie Sara Plaga, Muireann Á. Lynch, Valentin Bertsch

[Looking beyond energy efficiency and the role of financial literacy in experiencing fuel poverty: Evidence from Irish homeowners](#), *Energy Research & Social Science*, Vol. 112, June 2024, 103515, Elsevier, Miguel Tovar Reaños, John Curtis, David Meier, Arya Pillai

[Public finance options for recycling carbon tax revenue in Germany](#), *FinanzArchiv*, Vol. 80, Issue 1, 2024, pp. 39-69, Mohr Siebeck, Frederick van der Ploeg, Armon Rezai, Miguel Tovar Reaños

[Residential renovations: Understanding cost-disruption trade-offs](#), *Energy Policy*, Vol. 192, September 2024, 114207, Elsevier, John Curtis, Gianluca Grilli, Muireann Á. Lynch

Shocks and stability of risk and time preferences among poor rural households in Ethiopia, *Journal of African Economies*, 2024, Oxford University Press, Tensay Hadush Meles, Mehari Hiluf Abay, Guush Berhane, Alemayehu Seyoum Taffesse

The greenest of green: Preferences for homegrown renewables in Ireland, *Energy Research & Social Science*, Vol. 114, August 2024, 103577, Elsevier, Kate Laffan, Tensay Hadush Meles, Lisa Ryan

The impact of extended decision times in planning and regulatory processes for energy infrastructure, *Utilities Policy*, Vol. 91, December 2024, 101824, Elsevier, Genaro Longoria, Muireann Á. Lynch, Niall Farrell, John Curtis

Third-best carbon taxation: Trading off emission cuts, equity, and efficiency, *Journal of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists*, University of Chicago Press, Frederick van der Ploeg, Armon Rezai, Miguel Tovar Reaños

Exacerbating the divide? Investigating rural inequalities in high speed broadband availability, *Telecommunications Policy*, Vol. 48, Issue 9, October 2024, 102819, Elsevier, Seraphim Dempsey, Aislinn Hoy

Reports

Drinking water and domestic wastewater treatment: maintenance, perceptions, and priorities, ESRI Research Series No. 195, John Curtis

Chapters in Books and Reports

Drawing conclusions and providing prioritisation principles, chapter 9 in A. Barrett & J. Curtis (eds.), *The National Development Plan in 2023: priorities and capacity*, Dublin: ESRI, Alan Barrett, Sheelah Connolly, John Curtis, Niall Farrell, Kelly C de Bruin, Eoin Kenny, Muireann Á. Lynch, Kieran McQuinn, Emer Smyth

Energy, chapter 4 in A. Barrett & J. Curtis (eds.), *The National Development Plan in 2023: priorities and capacity*, Dublin: ESRI, Pranav Kakkar, Niall Farrell, Muireann Á. Lynch

Transport, chapter 5 in A. Barrett & J. Curtis (eds.), *The National Development Plan in 2023: priorities and capacity*, Dublin: ESRI, John Curtis

ESRI Research Bulletins

[Agriculture and water quality in Ireland: new ideas for policy](#), Wellington Osawe, John Curtis, Cathal O'Donoghue

[Farmers' knowledge, attitudes and intentions towards water quality and pollution risk mitigation actions](#), Wellington Osawe, John Curtis

[How public acceptance affects power system development in Ireland and Germany](#), Leonie Sara Plaga, Muireann Á. Lynch, John Curtis, Valentin Bertsch

[Residential energy retrofits: how disruption impacts homeowner decisions](#), John Curtis, Gianluca Grilli, Muireann Á. Lynch

[The impact of planning and regulatory delays for energy infrastructure](#), Genaro Longoria, Muireann Á. Lynch, Niall Farrell, John Curtis

ESRI Working Papers

[Empowering homes? Unravelling the connection between energy efficiency and well-being](#), Andrés Estévez, Miguel Tovar Reaños

[Keeping our heads above water: Spatially heterogeneous social vulnerabilities and climate adaptation](#), Niall Farrell, Stefano Ceolotto

[Residential renovations: understanding cost-disruption trade-offs](#), John Curtis, Gianluca Grilli, Muireann Á. Lynch

[Small Area Poverty Estimation by Conditional Monte Carlo](#), Niall Farrell

ESRI Submissions

[Response to ESB Networks Investment Plan Approach for Price Review 6 \(PR6\)](#), Niall Farrell

[Response to the CRU National Energy Demand Strategy Consultation](#), Niall Farrell, Muireann Á. Lynch



Health and Quality of Life

Research Area Coordinators: Anne Nolan, Sheelah Connolly

Researchers working in this area in 2024: Maryam Afzal, Aoife Brick, Aislinn Hoy, Harry Humes, Helen Russell, Pete Lunn, Selina McCoy, Ellen McHugh, Theano Kakoulidou, Gretta Mohan, Deirdre Robertson, Emer Smyth, Brendan Walsh, Michael Vallely

In 2024, health and quality of life research focused on the areas of health service reform and public health. Health service reform research focused on capacity requirements in the healthcare system and population-based resource allocation. Public health research examined the impact of environmental conditions on health and wellbeing; pornography use in young adults; and sexual violence.

Research highlights and findings

“Between February 2020 and December 2022, almost one in five smaller private long-term residential care homes closed”

- A report published in January highlighted significant changes in the long-term residential care sector since the COVID-19 pandemic. Funded through the **Research Collaborative in Quality and Patient Safety initiative**, the research found that, between February 2020 and December 2022, almost one in five smaller private long-term residential care (LTRC) homes closed, while there has been a consolidation of private (for-profit) LTRC home operators driven by recent entrants into the Irish market.
- In March, a report on pornography use in young people was launched. This research, funded by the **HSE Sexual Health Programme**, used data from *Growing Up in Ireland* and found that those who used online pornography were significantly less likely to use condoms when having sex.
- In July, two papers from the **EPA** research programme were published. The first, using data from the Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing linked to long-term air pollution measurements, found that air pollution is associated with poorer mental health. A second paper, using data on Census small areas linked to air pollution



Members of the ESRI's Health and Quality of Life team. (L-R) Prof Anne Nolan, Dr Aoife Brick, Dr Sheelah Connolly, Dr Michael Valley, Dr Theano Kakoulidou, Dr Brendan Walsh, Dr Elish Kelly, Dr Selina McCoy, Dr Gretta Mohan, Ellen McHugh and Maryam Afzal.

measurements, found that those living in more disadvantaged rural areas of Ireland had higher levels of air pollution than those living in more advantaged rural areas.

- Funded through the **Department of Health Research Programme on Healthcare Reform**, a paper published in December examined the determinants of acute psychiatric inpatient length of stay in Ireland. It found that longer length of stay is associated with older age, being female, and having an involuntary admission. Clinical diagnosis was also found to affect the length of stay, with diagnoses such as schizophrenia being associated with significantly longer stays than, for example, depressive episodes.

Other research outputs

In 2024, work continued on the capacity review of the Irish healthcare system; associated reports are to be published in 2025. A number of new programmes and projects commenced in 2024, including a programme funded by **Cuan** to examine patterns of victimisation and service use among those who have experienced adult sexual violence in Ireland, and a **Health Research Board**-funded project, in collaboration with colleagues from Trinity College Dublin, to write a Health Systems in Transition profile for Ireland.

Throughout the year, presentations were made to a wide range of academic conferences, stakeholders and policymakers, including the European Health Economics Association conference, the Dublin Economics Workshop, the Business Post Health Summit, and Minister Mary Butler.



Prof. Anne Nolan addressing the Women's Parliamentary Caucus at Leinster House on our research exploring young adults' sexual health.

Journal Articles

An evaluation of the impact of a national Minimum Unit Price on alcohol policy on alcohol behaviours, *Journal of Public Health*, 2024, Oxford University Press, Gretta Mohan

An investigation of inequalities in exposure to PM2.5 air pollution across small areas in Ireland, *International Journal of Health Geographics*, Vol. 23, No. 17, 2024, BMC (Springer Nature), Aislinn Hoy, Gretta Mohan, Anne Nolan

Determinants of acute psychiatric inpatient length of stay in Ireland, *Irish Journal of Medical Sciences*, Vol. 193, Issue 5, Springer, Aoife Brick, Brendan Walsh, Leonie Hill, Caragh Behan, Antoinette Daly, Sarah Craig

Mental health, caring, and COVID-19: Examining the gendered effects of working from home on carers' mental health, *Economic and Social Review*, Vol. 55, No. 3, Autumn, 2024, pp. 457-489, Economic and Social Studies, Brendan Walsh, Ellen McHugh

Place of death for adults receiving specialist palliative care in their last 3 months of life: Factors associated with preferred place, actual place, and place of death congruence, *Journal of Palliative Care*, Vol. 39, Issue 3, 2024, pp. 184-193, Sage Publications, Samantha Smith, Aoife Brick, Bridget Johnson, Karen Ryan, Regina McQuillan, Sinéad O'Hara, Peter May, Elsa Droog, Barbara Daveson, R. Sean Morrison, Irene J. Higginson, Charles Normand

[Remote consultations in General Practice in Ireland: Who is missing out?](#) *Telemedicine and e-Health*, 2025, New York, Mary Ann Liebert Inc., Ellen McHugh, Sheelah Connolly

[Variation in day surgery rates across Irish public hospitals](#), *Health Policy*, Vol. 152, February 2025, 105215, Elsevier, Aoife Brick, Brendan Walsh, Theano Kakoulidou, Harry Humes

[‘Doing old folks’ lungs a solid?’ Who burns solid fuels among older Irish adults and its links to health](#), *Energy Research & Social Science*, Vol. 110, April 2024, 103454, Elsevier, Aidan Sloyan, Bertrand Maître

[Long-term exposure to PM2.5 air pollution and mental health: a retrospective cohort study in Ireland](#), *Environmental Health*, Vol. 23, No. 54, 2024, Springer Nature, Seán Lyons, Anne Nolan, Philip Carthy, Míde Griffin, Brian O’Connell

Reports

[Health impacts of climate change and mitigation policies in Ireland](#), ESRI Research Series No. 188, Katie Duffy, Kelly C de Bruin, Loïc Henry, Clement Kweku Kyei, Anne Nolan, Brendan Walsh

[An analysis of Population-Based Resource Allocation for health and social care in Ireland](#), ESRI Research Series No. 194, Brendan Walsh, Leonie Hill

[Current and projected demand for nurses working in general practice in Ireland](#), ESRI Research Series No. 180, Sheelah Connolly, Ellen Flanagan

[Effects of new residential developments on local healthcare demand and workforce: evidence from primary and acute public hospital care in Ireland](#), ESRI Research Series No. 181, Harry Humes, Michelle Barrett, Brendan Walsh

[Long-term residential care in Ireland: Developments since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic](#), ESRI Research Series No. 174, Brendan Walsh, Sheelah Connolly

[Use of pornography by young adults in Ireland](#), ESRI Research Series No. 177, Anne Nolan, Emer Smyth

Chapters in Books and Reports

[Health](#), chapter 6 in *The National Development Plan in 2023: priorities and capacity*, A. Barrett & J. Curtis (eds.), Dublin: ESRI, Sheelah Connolly

ESRI Research Bulletins

[Are there inequalities in exposure to PM2.5 air pollution across Ireland?](#)
Aislinn Hoy, Gretta Mohan, Anne Nolan

[Determinants of acute psychiatric inpatient length of stay in Ireland](#),
Aoife Brick, Brendan Walsh, Leonie Hill, Caragh Behan, Antoinette Daly,
Sarah Craig

[Long-term exposure to air pollution and mental health](#), Seán Lyons,
Anne Nolan, Philip Carthy, Míde Griffin, Brian O’Connell

Other Papers

[Long-term care system profile: Ireland](#), Global Observatory of Long-Term Care, London: LSE, Brendan Walsh, Sheelah Connolly



Housing

Research Area Coordinator: Conor O'Toole

Researchers working in this area in 2024: Maryam Afzal, Adele Bergin, Kate Devane, Paul Egan, Harry Humes, Janez Kren, Akhilesh Kumar Verma, Bertrand Maitre, Kieran McQuinn, Helen Russell, Rachel Slaymaker, Chi Tran, Brendan Walsh

Access to and affordability of housing is one of the most critical current social and economic issues in Ireland and across the globe. The ESRI's Housing Research Area focuses on a range of topics to provide evidence to support housing policy decisions. Our research topics include house price modelling, measuring housing affordability, analysing the rental sector, supply-side and land market analysis, and social aspects of housing. In 2024, our overarching research themes included measuring the structural demand for housing and analysing household size, exploring the sustainability of housing prices, improving the monitoring of rental trends, and exploring energy efficiency for rented properties.

Research highlights and findings

- Analysis of new rental data showed that most sitting tenants did not face rent hikes in 2023 and provides insights for policymakers understanding the impact of rent controls.

“New rental data showed that most sitting tenants did not face rent hikes in 2023”

- Research highlighted strong underlying demand for housing on the back of demographic pressures and inward migration.
- Household size in Ireland, driven by population age structures, other demographic factors and housing supply constraints, is high in an international context.
- Research covering Ireland, Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK highlighted the importance of government investment to expand social and affordable housing.
- Analysis exploring the link between credit and house prices identified the re-emergence of credit effects in putting upward pressure on prices.

Conor O'Toole

Associate Research Pro

ICSH Biennial Finance & De



Dr Conor O'Toole speaking at the Irish Council for Social Housing (ICSH) biennial conference.

New insights on rental inflation

Research funded by the **Residential Tenancies Board** in 2024 focused on conducting Ireland's first comprehensive analysis of property-level rental inflation. This provides greater understanding of how individual households experience rent changes and the impacts of and adherence to Ireland's Rent Pressure Zone legislation. Work found rental growth to be low on average for properties tracked from one year to the next, with the majority seeing no change. This work also identified some high inflation rates, including properties above the caps; for the first time, the regulator has now been able to contact these landlords regarding compliance.

Strong underlying demand for housing identified

Supported under the long-standing research programme with the **Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage**, research in 2024 exploring the underlying structural demand for housing was undertaken. This research produced demographic scenarios based on natural increases in the population and net migration flows. Combining these data with assumptions on headship rates (number of persons per household) and obsolescence rates of the existing housing stock, researchers produced a range of estimates for the flow of new households in Ireland. Taking the average over all scenarios, structural housing demand is projected to be around 44,000 per annum (p.a.) from 2023 to 2030, and around 39,700 p.a. over the 2030–2040 period. This research was informed by further research on household size which explored the size of Irish households relative to other European countries. This research found that household size in Ireland was high due to the population age structure, other socio-demographic factors and housing supply trends.



Dr Rachel Slaymaker presenting findings from the ESRI report 'Individual Property Level Analysis' at the RTB's 20th anniversary conference.

Testing the credit-house price link suggests the re-emergence of upward pressure

A period of 17 years has passed since the financial crisis first affected the Irish housing market. Given the persistent increase in Irish house prices since 2012, a re-examination of the interrelationship between credit availability and house price movements was conducted in 2024. It aimed to explore how the residential and financial markets are evolving, and developed a model of the Irish housing and credit sector. More specifically, the research assesses the contribution of changing credit standards to recent house price developments. The developments in the Irish market offer lessons for other EU member states. The research finds the re-emergence of credit effects in driving house prices.

Government investment key to delivering social and affordable housing

Given the difficulties experienced by the supply side of the domestic housing market, it is informative to contrast housing supply in the Irish market with that of Ireland's nearest housing markets; in particular, the Northern Irish, English, Scottish and Welsh markets. These markets share many of the characteristics of the Irish market in terms of planning and regulatory regimes as well as cultural preferences for certain property types compared with continental housing markets. This research, funded by the Department of the Taoiseach's **Shared Island Unit** builds on ESRI research to assess the dynamics of housing supply across the different Irish and UK markets. This serves as an important benchmark to evaluate the performance of the supply side of the Irish residential market.

Other research outputs

In 2024, activity in the housing research area also covered numerous other topics. Funded under the research programme with the **Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage**, studies focused on linking residential housing developments and healthcare demand, an examination of land prices and their determinants, an exploration of the energy efficiency investment requirements for rental properties, and an ongoing examination of the impact of short-term letting activity on the rental sector. Our ongoing rental monitoring funded by the **Residential Tenancies Board** produced four Rent Index publications, reports which provide underlying data to inform the rent control policy of Rent Pressure Zones in Ireland.

Furthermore, as part of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Real Estate Market Advisory Group, the ESRI took part in a large cross-country study of housing affordability across UNECE member countries. The results were presented to the UNECE annual conference in Geneva in September. Collaborations with Trinity College Dublin and NUIG produced research on rent controls and housing supply.

Regarding external engagements, ESRI housing researchers presented to a range of stakeholders including the Irish Council for Social Housing, the Oireachtas Budgetary Oversight Committee, and a range of other public sector bodies. The impact of the ESRI's housing research can be seen in the recent Housing Commission report, published May 2024, which cites seven ESRI housing publications.

Journal Articles

[Comparing housing market dynamics in the Irish and UK residential markets](#), *Economic and Social Review*, Vol. 55, No. 4, Winter 2024, pp. 569-591, Economic and Social Studies, Dublin, Wendy Disch, Paul Egan, Kieran McQuinn, Eoin Kenny

[Credit and house prices in the Irish residential market](#), *Intereconomics*, Vol. 59, No. 5, September/October 2024, pp. 293-300, ZBW – Leibniz Information Centre for Economics and CEPS, Paul Egan, Kieran McQuinn, Conor O'Toole

[How supply and demand affect national house prices: The case of Ireland](#), *Journal of Housing Economics*, Vol. 65, September 2024, 102006, Elsevier, Paul Egan, Kieran McQuinn, Conor O'Toole

Reports

[An assessment of property level rental price growth in Ireland](#), ESRI and RTB, Dublin, Rachel Slaymaker, Janez Kren, Katie Devane

[Population projections, the flow of new households and structural housing demand](#), ESRI Research Series No. 190, Adele Bergin, Paul Egan

[Contrasting housing supply in Ireland, Northern Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom](#), ESRI Research Series No. 175, Wendy Disch, Paul Egan, Eoin Kenny, Kieran McQuinn

QEC Special Articles and Research Notes

[Assessing expectations of European house prices](#), QEC Special Article, Akhilesh Kumar Verma, Kieran McQuinn

[Household size in Ireland: Stylised facts and cross country trends](#), QEC Special Article, Conor O'Toole, Rachel Slaymaker

ESRI Working Papers

[Assessing expectations of European house prices](#), Akhilesh Kumar Verma, Kieran McQuinn

[Residential land prices for the Irish property market: An initial examination](#), Kieran McQuinn

Chapters in Books and Reports

[Health](#), chapter 6 in *The National Development Plan in 2023: priorities and capacity*, A. Barrett & J. Curtis (eds.), Dublin: ESRI, Sheelah Connolly

[Housing](#), chapter 3 in A. Barrett & J. Curtis (eds.), *The National Development Plan in 2023: priorities and capacity*, Dublin: ESRI, Eoin Kenny, Kieran McQuinn



Labour Market and Skills

Research Area Coordinator: Seamus McGuinness

Researchers working in this area in 2024: Conor Banahan, Adele Bergin, Luke Brosnan, Klavs Caprikis, Anne Devlin, Lorcan Kelly, Elish Kelly, Selina McCoy, Paul Redmond, Elisa Staffa, Adele Whelan

In 2024, research was undertaken covering a diverse range of topics, resulting in several newly released or finalised publications. The team launched the first report under a new research programme with the **Department for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science** examining the skill requirements for emerging technologies in Ireland. A study, funded by **Pobal**, was published examining the link between the health impacts of COVID-19, specifically infection rates and intensive care unit (ICU) admission rates, and social disadvantage.

Researchers published a study, funded by the **Department of Rural and Community Development**, and an accompanying implementation guide, on the identification of key indicators for monitoring welfare levels in rural areas and the effectiveness of policy interventions. The team continued to research North-South issues; a paper was published on cross-border workers, funded under the ESRI's joint research programmes with the **Department of Finance**; work progressed on differences in cross-border inactivity rates, funded under the ESRI's joint research programmes with **Ibec**, and a study providing a high-level comparison of the economies of Ireland and Northern Ireland commenced, funded under the ESRI's joint research programme with the **Shared Island Unit**.

Work began on a **Department of Finance**-funded study on the incidence and characteristics of Green and Brown jobs in Ireland. Finally, research was completed, under the research programme with the **Low Pay Commission**, on two papers examining the implications of different measurement approaches to minimum wages and estimating regional variations in the incidence of minimum wage. In 2024, a paper funded by the **Low Pay Commission** was accepted for the journal *Economica*.

In 2024, researchers began working on two **Horizon 2023** projects on the topics of skills mismatches – **TRAILS** and **SkillsPULSE**. In December



Members of the ESRI's Labour Markets and Skills team. (L-R) Prof Seamus McGuinness, Dr Adele Bergin, Dr Anne Devlin, Dr Elish Kelly, Dr Paul Redmond, Dr Adele Whelan, Luke Brosnan, Elisa Staffa and Dr Selina McCoy.

2024, researchers completed the first major deliverable for the **TRAILS** project, which included three papers examining issues relating to skills mismatch in Europe, the impact and incidence of vocational education and training, and the changing skill requirements within occupations. For the **SkillsPULSE** project, a new indicator of potential skills shortages was created. This involves an innovative approach that merges information from different datasets to create a measure that can be adopted at EU member state level.

Research highlights and findings

“COVID-19 infection rates were more than a third higher in the most deprived areas relative to more affluent areas.”

- Research carried out for the **Department for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science** was the first of its kind in Ireland. The research investigated labour market demand, supply and skills for artificial intelligence (AI), automation and blockchain-related jobs in Ireland. The study uses data from a range of sources, including online job vacancies and a workshop conducted with employers for this research, and aims to inform policymakers in the education and skill development fields so that they can act proactively to ensure that provision meets future labour market needs gaps.
- A study on the health impacts of COVID-19 and social disadvantage indicated that COVID-19 infection rates were more than a third higher in the most deprived areas (as measured by the HP Deprivation Index) relative to more affluent areas. Infection rates were also higher in non-deprived areas located in border counties. This latter finding has particularly significant policy ramifications given the porous border between Ireland and Northern Ireland. In terms of ICU admission, deprivation is not correlated directly with high ICU admission rates due to COVID-19; however, it appears to be having an indirect impact through other area-level characteristics.



Dr Paul Redmond speaking before the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Enterprise, Trade, and Employment regarding our research on sub-minimum wages.

Journal Articles

[The impact of a minimum wage increase on hours worked: Heterogeneous effects by gender and sector](#), *Economica*, Vol. 92, Issue 365, January 2025, pp. 84-106, Wiley, Paul Redmond, Seamus McGuinness

Reports

[A study into the current conditions of the island of Ireland labour market, and challenges and opportunities for effective operation for workers and businesses across the island](#), Armagh: The Centre for Cross Border Cooperation, Maureen O'Reilly, Annmarie O'Kane, Rose Tierney, Anne Devlin

[Practical guide to monitoring rural development policy in Ireland: Opportunities and challenges](#), ESRI Research Series No. 173, Elish Kelly, Seamus McGuinness, Anne Devlin

[Annual blockchain skills forecasts 2024](#), Europe: CHAISE, Seamus McGuinness, Adele Whelan, Paul Redmond, Klavs Ciprikis, Elisa Staffa, Lorcan Kelly

[COVID-19 infection rates and social disadvantage in Ireland: An area-level analysis](#), ESRI Research Series No. 187, Anne Devlin, Adele Whelan, Seamus McGuinness

[Developing a framework to monitor rural development policy in Ireland: Opportunities and challenges](#), ESRI Research Series No. 172, Elish Kelly, Seamus McGuinness, Anne Devlin

[Skill requirements for emerging technologies in Ireland](#), ESRI Research Series No. 191, Adele Whelan, Seamus McGuinness, Elisa Staffa, Paul Redmond

ESRI Working Papers

[A study of cross-border working on the island of Ireland](#), Seamus McGuinness, Adele Bergin, Anne Devlin

Chapters in Books and Reportss

[Is there a skills problem in Europe?](#), Chapter 4 in Līga Baltina and Terence Hogarth (Eds), Re-thinking Europe's Skill Needs: Reflections following the European Year of Skills, pp. 52-69., Rome: Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini, Seamus McGuinness, Elisa Staffa, Paul Redmond.



Macroeconomics

Research Area Coordinators: Adele Bergin, Martina Lawless and Kieran McQuinn

Researchers working in this area in 2024: Seraphim Dempsey, Katie Devane, Luke Doyle, Paul Egan, Lea Hauser, Elish Kelly, Janez Kren, Akhilesh Kumar Verma, Dónal O'Shea, Conor O'Toole, Iulia Siedschlag, Rachel Slaymaker

The ESRI's Macroeconomics team researches key issues in the Irish economy including short-term economic fluctuations, the long-term drivers of economic growth, and the relationship between the macroeconomy and the financial sector. Key themes in macroeconomic research in 2024 included assessing long-term economic growth, investment among Irish small and medium-sized enterprises, and the relationship between the general economy and the housing market.

Research highlights and findings

- Long-term growth forecasts anticipate moderate growth in the medium term and emphasise the need for greater investment in the next decade.
- *Quarterly Economic Commentary* discusses recent developments in the Irish economy, including the continuing themes of the dual economy and a strong labour market.
- Modelling of economic activity was refined and applied to better understand the Irish economy and the potential impact of deglobalisation and population ageing.

Detailed research on Ireland's long-run growth path applied a traditional growth accounting methodology using ESRI population projections. It concluded that growth is likely to moderate in the medium term, largely driven by demographic changes. However, long-term growth rates could be increased by boosting investment rates in the next decade. In addition, three migration scenarios were developed to evaluate the effect on output growth.

The ***Quarterly Economic Commentary (QEC)*** has three primary goals. First, it provides analysis of recent developments in output, inflation,

the public finances and the labour market. Second, it contains a short-term forecast of key economic variables. Third, it facilitates more technical analysis through the accompanying Special Articles and Research Notes.

“growth is likely to moderate in the medium term, largely driven by demographic changes. However, long-term growth rates could be increased by boosting investment rates in the next decade”

In 2024, work conducted for the QEC included the development of a new short-term forecasting model, an analysis of the sustainability of public spending increases, and consideration of the potential effects of deglobalisation in 2025 on the Irish economy. Special Articles and Research Notes accompanying the QEC included an analysis of expectations of house prices, household size in Ireland, and the labour share of income in Ireland.

The short-term forecasts in the QEC are informed by the ESRI’s monthly Nowcast model. The ESRI’s nowcast uses an econometric model with a series of real-time indicators to estimate Modified Domestic Demand before the official CSO numbers are available. In addition, in November 2024, the MDD Nowcast was incorporated into the Nowcasting Lab. This is an automated code-database-website environment that forecasts economic activity in 14 European countries, the euro zone, and the US. It is hosted by a team of researchers and developers at KOF Swiss Economic Institute, ETH Zurich.

Research conducted under the joint programme with the **Irish Business and Employers Confederation** continued to focus on interlinkages between the Irish and Northern Irish economies. An all-island macroeconomic model is being developed in collaboration with the National Institute for Economic and Social Research in the United Kingdom.

Work conducted under a programme of research with the **Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment** studied investment in Irish businesses, focusing on investment in digitalisation.

The joint research programme between the Department of Finance and the ESRI on *The Macroeconomy, Taxation and Banking* continued throughout 2024. Research projects completed or in progress over the year included:

- **A study of cross-border working:** This project estimates the number of cross-border workers in Ireland, to describe their socio-demographic characteristics as well as to provide information on the motives, opportunities and barriers to cross-border employment.

- **Assessing the potential impact of population ageing on the public finances:** This project uses both the ESRI's macroeconometric model COSMO and demographic model to generate alternative macro scenarios from which the implications of ageing for the evolution of the public finances can be analysed.
- **The role of firm dynamism in aggregate productivity growth:** This project uses CSO micro-data on services and manufacturing firms to examine the patterns of growth of newly entered firms and the pre-exit patterns for declining firms to give a deeper understanding of the dynamics of growth and exit at the firm level.
- **Monitoring SME investment in Ireland:** This research project proposes to examine how these combined external shocks are affecting SME investment activity and how it is financed.
- **Assessing the labour market impact of the green transition in Ireland:** The project aims to assess Ireland's employment trends in green and brown jobs, comparing them with the EU average and member states. It will use the Irish Labour Force Survey (LFS) to map job distribution by worker and other characteristics and use the 2022 European Jobs and Skills Survey to identify key tasks and competencies involved in both green and brown jobs in Ireland.
- **COSMO research module:** This research module began in 2024 and involves two main work strands:
 - **Strand I:** Maintaining and developing COSMO
 - **Strand II:** A focused research project
- **The impact of deglobalisation on a small open economy – the case of Ireland:** This project, part of the COSMO research module (see Strand II above), examines the impact on the Irish economy of a slowdown in world trade due to developments such as increased protectionism.

In addition to these structured research projects, *ad hoc* macroeconometric work using COSMO has been carried out for the Department of Finance throughout 2024. This has included:

- Consulting on macroeconomic scenarios for the risk analysis section of various Budget documents as well for background risk analysis in the Summer Economic Statement
- Consulting on simulations applied in COSMO to estimate the impact on inflation of government transfers to households
- Providing simulations and analysis on the impact on the Irish economy of an escalation in global protectionism in the wake of the US election

Prof. Keiran McQuinn presenting at Budget Perspectives 2025, an annual conference focused on policy issues related to the national Budget.



Journal Articles

[A cross country perspective on Irish enterprise investment: Do fundamentals or constraints matter?](#) *Economic and Social Review*, Vol. 55, No. 2, Summer 2024, pp. 173-205, Economic and Social Studies, Eric Gargan, Eoin Kenny, Cynthia O'Regan, Conor O'Toole

[Firm-level attitudes and actions to the Twin Transition challenges of digitalisation and climate change](#), *Economic and Social Review*, Vol. 55, No. 1, Spring, 2024, pp. 9-39, Economic and Social Studies, Janez Kren, Martina Lawless

[Flows in and out of self-employment](#), *Economic and Social Review*, Vol. 55, No. 4, Winter 2024, pp. 515-543, Economic and Social Studies, Martina Lawless, Luke Rehill, Patrick O'Brien

Reports

[Quarterly Economic Commentary](#), Spring 2024, Kieran McQuinn, Conor O'Toole, Lea Hauser

[Quarterly Economic Commentary](#), Summer 2024, Kieran McQuinn, Conor O'Toole, Lea Hauser

[Quarterly Economic Commentary](#), Autumn 2024, Kieran McQuinn, Conor O'Toole, Lea Hauser, Dónal O'Shea

[Quarterly Economic Commentary](#), Winter 2024, Kieran McQuinn, Conor O'Toole, Dónal O'Shea

[The National Development Plan in 2023: priorities and capacity](#), ESRI Survey and Statistical Report Series No. 123, Alan Barrett, John Curtis (eds.)

Chapters in Books and Reports

[Capacity constraints](#), chapter 2 in A. Barrett & J. Curtis (eds.), *The National Development Plan in 2023: priorities and capacity*, Dublin: ESRI, Alan Barrett

QEC Special Articles and Research Notes

[Irish enterprise digitalisation: A cross-country exploration](#), QEC Research Note, Karen Hogan, Janez Kren, Conor O'Toole

[Estimating Ireland's labour share](#), QEC Research Note, Dónal O'Shea

ESRI Working Papers

[17 years after the start of the global financial crisis \(GFC\), where are we now with credit and house prices in the Irish residential market?](#) Paul Egan, Kieran McQuinn, Conor O'Toole

[Demographics, higher investment and the future potential growth rate of the Irish economy](#), Paul Egan, Kieran McQuinn

[Entrepreneur characteristics and determinants of self-employment across Europe](#), Martina Lawless, Dermot Coates

[What drives SME investment in digitalisation? Micro-data evidence for Ireland](#), Janez Kren, Conor O'Toole



Migration, Integration and Demography

Research Area Coordinators: Frances McGinnity and Emma Quinn

Researchers working in this area in 2024: Evan Carron-Kee, Merike Darmody, James Laurence, Anousheh Alamir, Garance Hingre, Emer Smyth, Ada Sophia Hahn, Anne Sheridan, Amy Stapleton, Keire Murphy, Ciára Dalton, Aislin Lavin, Dervla Potter, Yazmin de Barra

Research in this area focuses on the integration of migrants as well as migration trends and policy. In 2024, research examined attitudes to immigration and immigrant groups, irregular employment of non-EU nationals, and the situation of both protection applicants and beneficiaries and arrivals from Ukraine. The Irish National Contact Point of the European Migration Network (EMN Ireland) is located in the ESRI and, in July 2024, a sub-unit was also set up in the Department of Justice. EMN Ireland is funded by the **European Commission** and the **Department of Justice**.

Research highlights and findings

In the context of increasing debates on immigration in Ireland, a report investigating attitudes to immigration was published in March. The report found that, while the salience (or importance) of immigration in Ireland had increased sharply, population support for immigration and refugees was largely positive, compared to both other EU countries and previous years in Ireland. There was some decline in support for immigration towards the end of 2023 and variation in attitudes to particular migrant groups was found. The report was funded by the **Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth** under the research programme and launched at an event in March.

A report published in December 2024 found that Travellers and Roma face the highest levels of prejudice of any ethnic group in Ireland. Notably, people living in affluent areas were less comfortable with having Travellers as neighbours or in a



Members of the ESRI's Migration, Integration and Demography team. (L-R) Dr Elish Kelly, Dervla Potter, Emma Quinn, Aislin Lavin, Evan Carron-Kee, Keire Murphy, Dr Frances McGinnity, Dr Merike Darmody and Ciára Dalton.

relationship with their child than those living in disadvantaged areas. Attitudes to Travellers were particularly negative in the West, Southwest and the Midlands regions of the country.

“Travellers and Roma face the highest levels of prejudice of any ethnic group in Ireland. Notably, people living in affluent areas were less comfortable with having Travellers as neighbours or in a relationship with their child than those living in disadvantaged areas.”

In June, EMN Ireland published a study on access to autonomous housing for beneficiaries of international protection which highlighted that over 6,000 people with status remained in accommodation for applicants. Barriers to moving out included severe shortages in the supply of social and rental housing, inadequacies in supports such as the Housing Assistance Payment, constraints among frontline workers in public services, and a lack of coordination between agencies or departments. At its annual conference in June, EMN Ireland brought together national policy and local government representatives to discuss access to housing pre- and post-status determination, as well as presenting international good practices from EMN research.

Research on the application of the Temporary Protection Directive by EMN Ireland found that, by end-2023, almost 75,000 beneficiaries were in state-provided accommodation. However, the report, published in April, noted that many faced challenges in finding employment, mostly due to inadequate language skills, and accessing supports such as healthcare and language classes.

Other research outputs

A working paper, published in September, investigated community-level drivers of immigration attitudes for the first time in Ireland. It found that those living in disadvantaged areas, particularly those that had seen a recent increase in immigrants, were less supportive of immigration. Higher levels of residential segregation of immigrants were also associated with more negative attitudes. Researchers presented this study to the International Migration Research Network (IMISCOE) annual conference in Lisbon in July.

“those living in disadvantaged areas, particularly those that had seen a recent increase in immigrants, were less supportive of immigration. Higher levels of residential segregation of immigrants were also associated with more negative attitudes”

In December, EMN Ireland published a report on non-EU nationals in irregular employment, which showed that irregular employment occurs across a variety of sectors, particularly in food service activities, potentially exposing workers to poor conditions and exploitation. However, the number of employment inspectors was found to be low, with just 63 operating nationally.

In a new initiative, EMN Ireland launched a series of ‘EMN Ireland Migration Memos’, which are short accessible summaries of EMN EU-level information and ESRI research, designed to provide up-to-date information on migration and asylum policy. Four were published in 2024, covering topics such as housing for protection applicants, family reunification for refugees, and reasons for the increase in protection applicants.

Following a successful six-year research programme on integration, a new research programme was agreed with the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth in July. This programme, Research on Migration, Integration and Equality (RIME), includes an expanded focus on migration, with the Department of Justice joining as co-funders from January 2025. Projects that commenced in 2024 were a Monitoring Report on Integration 2024, and a project investigating attitudes to immigration using behavioural experiments.

Journal Articles

[Immigration, segregation, and attitudes toward immigrants: a longitudinal multiscalar analysis across egohoods](#), *European Sociological Review*, Oxford University Press, James Laurence, Jan Goebel

The role of ethnic diversity and residential segregation in shaping anti-immigrant sentiment and support for Brexit, *Political Studies*, Sage, Magda Borkowska, James Laurence

Reports

Access to autonomous housing for beneficiaries of International Protection in Ireland, ESRI Research Series No. 184, Dublin: ESRI/EMN, Keire Murphy, Amy Stapleton

Attitudes towards immigration and refugees in Ireland: Understanding recent trends and drivers, Dublin: ESRI and Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, James Laurence, Frances McGinnity, Keire Murphy

Non-EU nationals in irregular employment in Ireland, ESRI Research Series No. 189, Dublin: ESRI/EMN, Amy Stapleton, Emily Cuniffe, Emma Quinn

The application of the Temporary Protection Directive: Challenges and good practices for Ireland, ESRI Research Series No. 185, Dublin: ESRI/EMN, Amy Stapleton, Ciára Dalton

ESRI Working Papers

Community-level drivers of attitudes towards immigration in Ireland, James Laurence, Frances McGinnity, Keire Murphy

EMN Ireland Migration Memorandums

How do EMN Countries monitor the integration of non-EU nationals? EMN Ireland Migration Memo No. 3, Dublin: ESRI/EMN, Dervla Potter, Keire Murphy

How do EMN Member States ensure systems for housing International Protection Applicants are ‘flexible’? EMN Ireland Migration Memo No. 1, Dublin: ESRI/EMN, Emily Cuniffe, Keire Murphy, Dervla Potter

How do European countries manage family reunification for recognised refugees? EMN Ireland Migration Memo No. 4, Dublin: ESRI/EMN, Dervla Potter, Yazmin de Barra, Keire Murphy

What caused the large increase in International Protection applications in Ireland in 2022? EMN Ireland Migration Memo No. 2, Dublin: ESRI/EMN, Dervla Potter, Keire Murphy



Social Inclusion and Equality

Research Area Coordinators: Bertrand Maitre and Frances McGinnity

Researchers working in this area in 2024: Anousheh Alamir, Adele Bergin, Evan Carron-Kee, Caoimhe Dempsey, Anne Devlin, Karina Doorley, Garance Hingre, Theano Kakoulidou, Claire Keane, Elish Kelly, James Laurence, Selina McCoy, Seamus McGuinness, Barra Roantree, Helen Russell, Eva Slevin, Emer Smyth, Michael Valley, Adele Whelan

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 for adults and children. In 2024, researchers investigated a diverse range of topics, including poverty, social exclusion and living standards, gender equality, disability prevalence among children, and the impact of inadequate housing on children's wellbeing.

Research highlights and findings

“the gendered nature of care and its consequences for access to employment, especially high-quality jobs, remains a common feature of both settings.”

A collaborative study with the **Shared Island unit at the Department of the Taoiseach**, published in April, investigated gender and social inclusion across the island of Ireland. The report found that the gendered nature of care and its consequences for access to employment, especially high-quality jobs, remains a common feature of both settings. Labour market participation was lower for women than men in both jurisdictions, especially among lone mothers; women were more likely to work part-time and in low-paid jobs across the island.

In April, a report funded by the **Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission** explored the equality impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the labour market, comparing the situation pre- and post-pandemic. While employment recovered post-pandemic for all groups, the pattern of inequalities that existed before the pandemic remained. The study argues that the rapid recovery was likely facilitated by large-scale state intervention during the pandemic in terms of employment and social welfare supports.



Members of the ESRI's Social Inclusion and Equality team. (L-R) Dr Michael Vallely, Dr Elish Kelly, Dr Anne Devlin, Dr Selina McCoy, Evan Carron-Kee, Dr Anousheh Alamir, Dr Frances McGinnity, Eva Slevin, Bertrand Maitre, Prof Helen Russell and Dr Caoimhe Dempsey

A study published in May, funded by the **Housing Agency Research Support Programme**, examined the impact of poor housing on family wellbeing. Using data from the *Growing Up in Ireland* (GUI) study, it found that mothers in inadequate housing and poorer neighbourhoods report more depression, higher parenting stress, and greater conflict with their children. Their children also face more social and emotional difficulties at age nine.

An October study by the ESRI and the **Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY)** examined family trajectories, economic vulnerability and employment among lone-parent households, using data from the *Growing Up in Ireland* 08 Cohort. It found that lone-parent families faced higher economic vulnerability than two-parent families, with the risk more than doubling when moving from a two-parent to a one-parent family. Factors that help lone parents exit economic vulnerability include employment, re-partnering, and higher education.

“lone-parent families faced higher economic vulnerability than two-parent families, with the risk more than doubling when moving from a two-parent to a one-parent family.”



(L-R) Fiona Gallagher (Women in Finance Charter), Garance Hingre (ESRI), Minister Neale Richmond TD and Prof Helen Russell (ESRI) at the launch of *Ireland's Women in Finance Charter Annual Report 2024*.

Other research outputs

In May 2024, Prof Selina McCoy took part in a panel discussion at the **University of Galway** that focused on fostering and supporting effective public policy in Ireland, and the best ways to use data and research evidence for key policy decisions throughout the life course.

In July the second annual report on the Women in Finance Charter, funded by **Banking & Payments Federation Ireland, Financial Services Ireland/Ibec, Insurance Ireland, and Irish Funds**, was published and presented at an event in Dublin Castle. The charter is an initiative that seeks to improve female representation in financial services firms operating in Ireland.

In October 2024, researchers presented work on gender and labour market inclusion on the island of Ireland, funded by the **Shared Island unit** in the Department of the Taoiseach, to a joint informal meeting of the Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for the Economy and the Oireachtas Committee on Social Protection, Community and Rural Development and the Islands at Parliament Buildings, Stormont.

Work also continued on a research programme for the **Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission**. One project is on adjusting estimates of poverty for the cost of disability and a second investigates the uptake of child-related leave in Ireland. Both reports are due to be published in early 2025.

In February 2024, a renewed research programme on Poverty, Inequality and Living Standards began in collaboration with Dr Barra Roantree from Trinity College Dublin, with funding provided by **Community Foundation Ireland**.

Journal Articles

[Is the social origin pay gap bigger than we thought? Identifying and acknowledging workers with undefined social origins in survey data](#), *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, Vol. 92, August 2024, 100952, Elsevier, Michael Vallely, Jeanette Findlay, Kristinn Hermannsson

[The experience of housing discrimination and housing deprivation across social groups in Ireland](#), *Social Indicators Research*, Vol. 175, 2024, pp. 195-215, Springer Nature, Raffaele Grotti, Helen Russell, Bertrand Maitre, Davide Gritti

[The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the wellbeing of migrant young people in Ireland](#), *Educational Review*, Vol. 77, Issue 1, 2025, pp. 174-191, Taylor & Francis, Emer Smyth, Merike Darmody, Dymphna Devine

[The intra-household distribution of administrative burdens](#), *Economic and Social Review*, Vol. 55, No. 3, Autumn, 2024, pp.387-456, Economic and Social Studies, Lucie Martin

Reports

[The equality impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Irish labour market](#), Dublin: ESRI and Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC), Anousheh Alamir, Frances McGinnity, Helen Russell

[Caregiving among young adults in Ireland](#), ESRI Research Series No. 168, Helen Russell, Emer Smyth

[Gender and labour market inclusion on the island of Ireland](#), ESRI Research Series No. 176, Garance Hingre, Helen Russell, Frances McGinnity, Emer Smyth

[Housing, health and happiness: How inadequate housing shapes child and parental wellbeing](#), ESRI Research Series No. 183, James Laurence, Helen Russell, Emer Smyth

[Ireland's Women in Finance Charter: Annual Report 2024](#), ESRI Survey and Statistical Report Series No. 125, Garance Hingre, Helen Russell

[Lone parent transitions, employment transitions and poverty outcomes](#), ESRI Research Series No. 193, Helen Russell, Bertrand Maitre

[Poverty, income inequality and living standards in Ireland: Fourth annual report](#), Dublin: ESRI and Community Foundation Ireland, Barra Roantree, Bertrand Maitre, Helen Russell

Dr Frances McGinnity (ESRI) and Prof Helen Russell (ESRI) presented their findings from the ESRI/Shared Island report *Gender and labour market inclusion on the island of Ireland* at an informal meeting of the NI Assembly Committee for the Economy in Stormont.



Technical paper on minimum essential standards of living, poverty and deprivation in Ireland, Social Inclusion Technical Paper No. 12, Dublin: Department of Social Protection, Bertrand Maitre, Anousheh Alamir

Trends in disability prevalence among young people: Insights from the Growing Up in Ireland Study, ESRI Research Series No. 192, Emer Smyth, Helen Russell

Understanding attitudes to Travellers and Roma in Ireland, Dublin: ESRI and DCEDIY, Evan Carron-Kee, Frances McGinnity, Anousheh Alamir

ESRI Research Bulletins

Is the social origin pay gap bigger than we thought? Identifying and acknowledging workers with undefined social origins in survey data, Michael Valley, Jeanette Findlay, Kristinn Hermannsson

How did migrant-origin young people in Ireland fare during the COVID-19 pandemic? Emer Smyth, Merike Darmody, Dymrna Devine



Tax, Welfare and Pensions

Research Area Coordinator: Karina Doorley and Claire Keane

Researchers working in this area in 2024: Luke Duggan, Shane Dunne, Michele Gubello, Theano Kakoulidou, Richard O'Shea, Simona Sándorová, Agathe Simon, Dora Tuda, Iris Wohnsiedler

This research area examines the design of the tax, welfare and pensions system, with a focus on the effect it has on redistribution, poverty, inequality and incentives to work. Much of this work uses SWITCH, the ESRI tax and benefit model, to simulate the impact of reforms on households. Many of the outputs mentioned below are part of the Tax, Welfare and Pensions (TWP) work programme, supported by funding from the **Departments of Social Protection; Health; Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; and Finance**, as well as through the grant-in aid provided by the **Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform**.

Research highlights and findings

- Further reform to Pay Related Social Insurance (PRSI) is likely to be needed beyond 2028 to combat the rising state pension bill.
- The new Total Contributions Approach (TCA) to pension calculations will see more women qualifying for the maximum rate.
- Measures announced as part of Budget 2025 will result in small income gains, on average, next year, compared to a budget indexed to forecast income growth.

“measures announced as part of Budget 2025 will result in small income gains on average next year, compared to a budget indexed to forecast income growth”



(L-R) Simona Sándorová (ESRI), Dr Claire Keane (ESRI), Minister Paschal Donohoe, Sean O'Driscoll (ESRI Chair) and Dr Karina Doorley (ESRI) at Budget Perspectives 2025, an annual conference focused on policy issues related to the national Budget.

June saw the annual Budget Perspectives conference, which has been organised by the TWP team for nearly three decades. A report on the winners and losers of the move to a Total Contributions Approach in the Irish pensions system was launched at the event. The report concluded that this would result in a large increase in the proportion of women qualifying for the maximum pension rate but that a relatively small proportion of men and women would be worse off as a result.

A second report launched at the Budget Perspectives conference examined the incidence and effectiveness of increasing PRSI to fund the state pension. This report found that the reforms proposed by the Government will result in revenue gains, of €1.6bn per annum by 2028. The reforms are progressive, affecting high-income more than low-income households. However, further reform to PRSI is likely to be needed beyond 2028 to combat the rising state pension bill.

In October, the team held their annual post-Budget briefing. This work showed that measures announced as part of Budget 2025 will result in small income gains on average next year, compared to a budget indexed to forecast income growth. However, variation was found by household income level, with smaller gains for middle-income households. This work was published in more detail as a special article in the ESRI's *Quarterly Economic Commentary* in December.

The team also published a variety of articles throughout the year in peer-reviewed journals. These related to the effect of unemployment benefits on labour supply and income distribution, the take-up of in-work benefits in Ireland, gender differences in household expenditure, and unemployment benefits for atypical workers. Other research published during the year covered the topics of equivalence scales in poverty measurement, the gender dimension of the cost-of-living crisis, and the drivers of income inequality in Ireland and Northern Ireland.



Members of the ESRI's Tax, Welfare and Pensions team. (L-R) Simona Sándorová, Dr Karina Doorley, Dr Agathe Simon, Dr Iris Wohnsiedler, Dr Michele Gubello and Dr Dora Tuda.

The work of the TWP team continued its strong policy focus. The SWITCH model continued to be used in a range of government departments to feed into policy decisions. Members of the team gave evidence to the Budgetary Oversight Committee and delivered presentations at important international policy-relevant events such as the European Commission's Mutual Learning Event on Distributional Impact Analysis, and the World Bank Conference on Pensions and Social Insurance. Finally, in May, it was announced that a publication by team members in the *Economic and Social Review*, '[Childcare in Ireland: usage, affordability and incentives to work](#)', had won the Brendan Walsh Prize.

Journal Articles

[A European unemployment benefit to protect atypical workers?](#) *Social Indicators Research*, Vol. 171, 2024, pp. 967-986, Springer Nature, H. Xavier Jara, Agathe Simon

[Gender difference in household consumption: Some convergence over three decades](#), *Economic and Social Review*, Vol. 55, No. 3, Autumn, 2024, pp. 357-386, *Economic and Social Studies*, Cathal O'Donoghue, Karina Doorley, Denisa M. Sologon

[The effect of earnings-related benefits on financial work incentives](#), *International Journal of Microsimulation*, Vol. 17, No. 3, 2024, pp. 21-43, Theano Kakoulidou, Michael Doolan, Barra Roantree

The impact of a European unemployment benefit scheme on labour supply and income distribution, *International Tax and Public Finance*, 2024, Springer, Agathe Simon, Mathieu Lefebvre

The trouble with take-up, *The B.E. Journal of Economic Analysis & Policy*, Vol. 24, No. 2, 2024, pp. 673-682, De Gruyter, Karina Doorley, Theano Kakoulidou

Reports

Drivers of income inequality in Ireland and Northern Ireland, ESRI Research Series No. 196, Karina Doorley, Michele Gubello, Dora Tuda

QEC Special Articles and Research Notes

Distributional impact of tax and welfare policies: Budget 2025, QEC Special Article, Karina Doorley, Shane Dunne, Claire Keane, Simona Sándorová, Agathe Simon

Budget Perspectives Papers

Increasing Pay Related Social Insurance to fund the State Pension: Incidence and effectiveness, Karina Doorley, Dora Tuda

State Contributory Pension reform: Winners and losers. Evidence from the Irish Longitudinal Study of Ageing, Theano Kakoulidou, Claire Keane, Simona Sándorová

The distributional impact of carbon pricing and energy related taxation in Ireland, Cathal O'Donoghue, Herwig Immervoll, Zeynep Gizem Can, Jules Linden, Denisa Sologon

External Commitments of Research Staff

Alan Barrett

Research Fellow, Institute of Labour Economics (IZA), Bonn

Honorary Fellow, Society of Actuaries in Ireland

Member, Royal Irish Academy

Member, Northern Ireland Fiscal Council

Member, UK Productivity Commission

Member, External Advisory Board, Parliamentary Budget Office

Chair, Commission on Care for Older People

Adele Bergin

Council Member, Irish Fiscal Advisory Council

Policy Section Editor, Economic and Social Review

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Research Fellow, Institute of Labour Economics (IZA), Bonn

Member, Advisory Board, Department of Economics, Maynooth University

Member, Central Statistics Office Expert Group on Population and Labour Force Projections

Member, Central Statistics Office Census Advisory Group

Member, Steering Group, ESRI/Department of Finance Research Programme

Aoife Brick

Member, Public Sector Modelling Group

Sheelah Connolly

Member, Health Research Consent Declaration Committee

Member, Modelling Infectious Disease Ireland group

Member, Expert Advisory Group for the Review of urgent and emergency healthcare services in the HSE Mid-West region

John Curtis

Climate Action Fund – Advisory Board

Member, Gas Innovation Advisory Group, Gas Networks Ireland

Cíara Dalton

Chair/Board Member, Hygiene Hub

Member, Legal Services Regulatory Authority's Roll of Practising Barristers

Merike Darmody

Member, Advisory Committee, Children's Research Network

Co-chair, CRN-SIG 'Child and Youth Migration'

Editorial Board member, Estonian Journal of Education

Associate Editor, Economic and Social Review

Co-supervisor, PhD, TCD

Member, SIRIUS network

Member, ESAI

Kelly De Bruin

Associate Editor, Climatic Change

Çağaçan Değer

Associate Editor, World Journal of Applied Economics

Anne Devlin

Visiting Researcher, Queen's University Belfast

Steering Group Member, Centre for Economics, Policy and History, Trinity College Dublin and Queen's University Belfast

Member, All-Island Social Security Network

Karina Doorley

Research Fellow, Institute of Labour Economics (IZA), Bonn

Board Member, International

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Scientific Reviewer, The Anniversary
Fund, Austrian Central Bank

Scientific Reviewer, International Forum for
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Scientific Reviewer, Academy of
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Scientific Reviewer, Irish Economic
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