



Growing Up in Ireland

-the National Longitudinal Study of Children

The Economic and Social Research Institute and Trinity College, Dublin

Presentation 01:

Introduction and Background to the Study



Background to *Growing Up in Ireland*

- Study is funded by Department of Children and Youth Affairs, in association with the Department of Social Protection and the Central Statistics Office
- Study is being carried out by a consortium of researchers led by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) and Trinity College – Children’s Research Centre pivotal role.
- Key element in the National Children’s Strategy. Forms part of the Programme for Government and a major Government commitment under Sustaining Progress and Toward 2016
- Very strong policy focus



Objectives of *Growing Up in Ireland*

- to study the lives of children in Ireland
- to establish what is typical and normal as well as what is atypical and problematic
- to identify the key factors that most help or hinder children's development
- to establish the effect of early child experiences on later life
- to identify the persistent adverse effects that lead to social disadvantage and exclusion, educational difficulties, ill health, deprivation etc.
- to obtain children's views and opinions on their lives
- to provide evidence for the creation of effective and responsive policies and services for children and families



Scale of *Growing Up in Ireland*

Two Cohorts for study

Child Cohort

8,500 9-year olds

Families/carers

Children themselves

Infant Cohort

11,000 9-month olds

Families/carers

120 households for in-depth qualitative assessment for both cohorts



Longitudinal design of *Growing Up in Ireland*

- Cross-sectional studies involve independent, representative samples. Different respondents in each sample.
- Longitudinal design involves interviewing same sample of respondents on several occasions.
- Longitudinal study design – tracks the progress of the same child and his/her family over a period of time
- The Child Cohort will be interviewed twice within initial phase of project – at 9 and 13 years.
- The Infant Cohort will be interviewed at 9 months, 3 years and 5 years.



Longitudinal Studies

- Longitudinal design allows us to consider:
 - Why there is a problem
 - How it developed
 - Which factors led to its development
 - What are the policy sensitive factors
 - When and how it is best to intervene
 - How effective was the intervention
 - How durable are the results



International Examples of Child Cohort Studies

- Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC) – started in 2004
- Australian Temperament Project – 1983 – 13 Waves
- Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Study - 1972/73
- Millennium Cohort Study, Britain 2001 - 18,700 children
- British Cohort Study 1970
- National Child Development Study, Britain 1958
- National Survey of Health and Development 1946 - 16,500 children born March 1946. 21 sweeps to date.
- Danish National Birth Cohort - 1997
- Norwegian Mother and Child Cohort Study – 2000
- National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, Canada–1994, 4 sweeps
- US Child Development Supplement to Panel Survey of Income Dynamics
- NICHD Study of Early Childcare



Where are we now?

- 9 year data collection complete and archived
- 9 month data collection complete and archived
- 3 year data collection complete, not yet archived
- 13 year data collection complete, not yet archived
- 5 year data collection ongoing