



**An
Phríomh-Oifig
Staidrimh**

Central
Statistics
Office

Growing Up in Ireland

TransMonEE meeting

30 years of monitoring child rights and inequities - taking stock and growing stronger towards a comprehensive child rights monitoring framework

01 November 2022

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Statistician, Central Statistics Office

Overview

- Growing Up in Ireland background
- Transition to the CSO
- Cohort 24
- Future Data Collections



Growing Up in Ireland (GUI)

- GUI is the national longitudinal study of children and young adults in Ireland
 - Funded/Managed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY).
 - Carried out by a consortium of researchers led by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) and Trinity College Dublin.
 - Moving to the Central Statistics Office (CSO) in 2023



Purpose of GUI

- Describe the lives of children and young people in Ireland
 - What is typical/normal, what is helpful
 - What is problematic, what hinders
 - How do children describe their lives, what are their views
- Chart the development of children over time
- Establish the impacts of early childhood experience on later life
- Provide evidence for the creation of effective government policies
- Identify any persistent adverse effects that lead to social disadvantage



Who takes part?

- Up to now 2 groups (cohorts) have been surveyed.
 - Cohort '98 – survey started when they were 9 years old
 - Surveyed again at age 13, 17/18 and 20 – next year at 25
 - Cohort '08 – survey started when they were 9 months old
 - Surveyed again at age 3, 5, 7, 9, 13 (currently on-going)
- Multiple informants
 - Children/teenagers/young adults
 - Parents
 - Teachers/Principals
 - Child care providers



Growing Up in Ireland

- Four main Themes
 - Health
 - Education
 - Socio-emotional development
 - Economic and Civic Participation
- Outputs
 - Key Findings - highlighting headline data findings
 - Descriptive Reports - focused thematic analyses
 - Technical reports
- Micro data files
 - Anonymised files for each wave available from ISSDA and the CSO



Growing Up in Ireland Data usage

- More than 80 reports published to date e.g.
 - Mother's return to work and childcare choices for infants
 - Overweight and obesity among 9 year olds
 - The experience of transition from primary to post primary education
 - Take up of early childhood care and education
- Anonymised data files: 1,295 project-based applications 2010-2019
- Growing up in Ireland website; data workshops and an annual GUI research conference



Growing Up in Ireland – Transition to the CSO

- Government decision 2019
 - Transition to CSO
 - Embed GUI in the official statistical system
 - Facilitate increased use of administrative data
- New approach – GUI Survey (CSO), GUI Study (DCEDIY)
- Government decision 2022
 - Establishment of new birth cohort



Growing Up in Ireland Cohort 24

- Household Informants
 - Primary informant (self selected)
 - Self, baby, relationships, household, neighbourhood
 - Other parent in household
 - Self, relationships
- Other informants (pilot)
 - Parent in own household
 - Childcare provider



Cohort 24 – Household Questionnaire content

Parent Questionnaire	Primary Informant Questionnaire
Socio-Demographics	Household composition
Parent child relationship	Baby's temperament
Parent's health	Ages and Stages
Working, work-life balance	Baby Activities
Pre-natal care	Childcare arrangements
Parenting supports	Baby's Health and Development
Baby's Birth and Health	Housing
Self-complete/sensitive items	Cost of Living



Growing Up in Ireland Phase 3 2023-2030

Year	Age at interview		
	Cohort '98	Cohort '08	<i>Cohort '24</i>
2023	25		
2024			1
2025		17 \ 18	
2026			3
2027	29		
2028		20	5
2029			
2030			7



Contact Details

For further information on the CSO and Growing Up in Ireland

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Adaptations to a Cohort Study in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic: Insights from Growing Up in Ireland

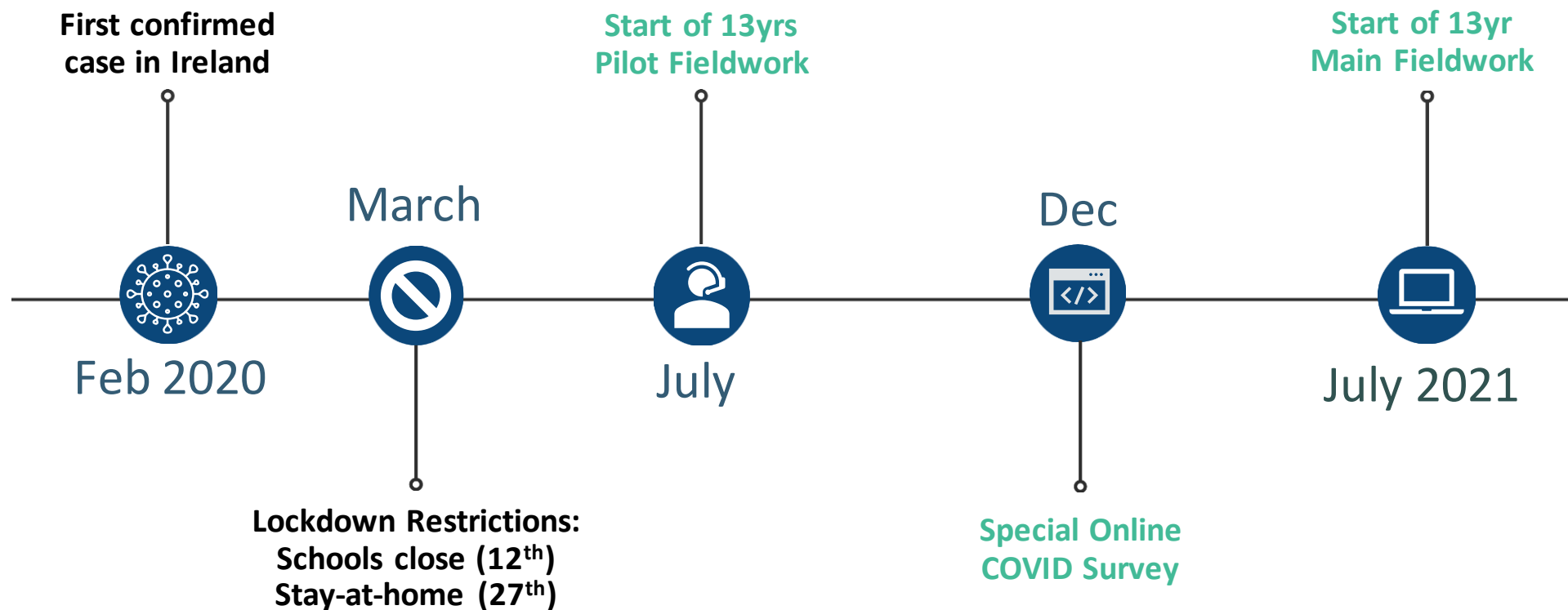
Dr Eoin McNamara

Economic and Social Research Institute

Outline of 'normal' fieldwork

- Family receives **advance letter/info pack**
- Interviewer **visits to family home** to arrange interview
 - First contact **always** face-to-face
- **Interviewer administers a questionnaire** in the home
- Participants **self-complete sensitive questionnaire**
- Interviewer takes **physical measurements**
- Young person completes **cognitive tests**
- Visit takes approximately **2-3 hours**

Timeline of pandemic/fieldwork



Two options: POSTPONE or ADAPT?

Adaptations for Pilot

PILOT: test procedures / content for main fieldwork

- **Interview mode changed:** remote (phone/online)
- **Initial contact by phone / email:** consent by phone
- **Reduced questionnaires:**
 - » Focus on new items
 - » Questions added on **pandemic impact**
 - » Survey hosted by CSO
- **Items removed**
- **Changes to logistical procedures**
 - » Interviewer training
 - » No paperwork

Lessons from Pilot / Adaptations for Main

LESSONS FROM PILOT:

- **Participants** gave positive and negative feedback
- **Interviewers** had mixed experience of new modes
 - **Positive:** convenient, quicker, less driving around
 - **Negative:** less personal, lost rapport, consent process, no paperwork

ADAPTATIONS FOR MAIN:

- Retain **remote modes** of data collection
- Families **sent letter/info pack** beforehand
- **Interviewer training** conducted remotely
- Questionnaires needed to be substantially **shortened**
 - But with added COVID-19 items

Adaptations for Main

Shortening questionnaires – consider if...

- there's an **alternative indicator**?
e.g. ask child about smoking habits / bullying, not parent
- it's too **burdensome**?
e.g. Piers-Harris 60-item vs. Rosenberg 10-item scale
- longitudinal **comparability** compromised?
e.g. attendance at religious services
- **not possible** to measure via phone / online
e.g. physical measures, cognitive test, time-use diary

Special COVID Survey

Aim:

- To capture contemporary data on pandemic experience

Methodological Adaptations:

- Web-based survey
- Participants contacted via email/text
- Informed consent/assent received via our website
- Very short questionnaire

Lessons Learned:

- Response rate lower
- Impact of pandemic warrants long-term exploration

Conclusion

- The pandemic determined that adaptations were required to avoid disrupting schedule
- The GUI study team was successful in....
 - adopting **remote modes** of data collection
 - collecting **contemporary data on pandemic experiences**
- Some adaptations are arguably **preferable**
 - Notable environmental/cost-related benefits e.g. interviewer training
- Consider **data linkage** in future waves of study
- Need to explore the **long-term impact of the pandemic**

Thanks

- GUI Study Team
- Our colleagues at DCEDIY, CSO and Trinity College
- The young people and their families for their continued participation and commitment to the study

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