

Original survey information, Ireland 2000

Generic information	
Name of survey	Living in Ireland Survey / European Community Household Panel (ECHP)
Responsible institution	National level: Economic and Social Research Institute [Community level: Eurostat]
Main objective	The European Household Panel Survey (ECHP) is a standardised survey conducted in the Member States of the European Union under auspices of the Statistical Office of the European Communities (EUROSTAT). The survey involves annual interviewing of a representative panel of households and individuals in each country, covering a wide range of topics on living conditions. It was launched in response to the increasing demand in the EU for comparable information across the Member States on income, work and employment, poverty and social exclusion, housing, health and many other diverse social indicators concerning living conditions of private households and persons. A main objective of the survey is to provide an up-to-date and comparable data source on personal incomes.
Structure of data source	Panel household survey data.
Frequency	Annual.
Survey year / Wave	2001 (ECHP Wave 8)
Coverage	All private households in all the national territory (including boarding or lodging houses and army barracks, but excluding hospitals, nursing homes, convents, monasteries or prisons). Additionally, excluded from the target population are a number of small groups known to face a high risk of poverty – such as the homeless and travellers not living in private households – as well as those living in institutions, whose poverty risk is harder to assess a priori.
Sampling	
Sampling procedure	The survey is based on two stage sampling with 2 or more PSUs selected systematically within each stratum: - the selection of Irish District Electoral Divisions (PSU) in the first stage; - the selection of a small number of households at the second stage within each selected PSU; the selection of the ultimate sampling units was made in Ireland in a slightly different manner than in other ECHP countries: first, a sample of electors was selected, and then the household of each elector selected taken into the sample; this meant that the selection probability of any household varied in direct proportion to the number of electors in it. The criteria for explicit stratification comprised the unemployment rate, urban/rural environment and the region. The sampling frame was the Register of Electors (all adults age 18 and over who are registered to vote in the Dáil, Local Government or European Parliament elections).
Sample size	2,865 households completed interviews out of 3,662 households that were in the initial sample.
Collection	
Collection period	June-December 2001.
Collection mode	A face-to-face personal interviewing was the main mode of data collection; the conventional 'paper and pencil' interviewing was used together with computer-assisted data entry (CAD).
Description of instruments	Eurostat has sought harmonisation of the questionnaires employed in each country in terms of their structure, content and interpretation. The Community ECHP questionnaire is composed of three parts: - <i>Household Register</i> : it has the functions of: controlling and tracing evolution of the sample over time, collecting information on non-responding cases, maintaining records of interviewers' performance, providing critical information for the linkage of households and persons over time and also collecting a few basic items of substantive information; definition and control of the sample is the basic function of the Household Register; it keeps a record of all addresses, households and individuals in the sample for each wave, and as they are carried over from one wave to the next and linked across waves; records are kept of changes in household addresses, of the outcome of all interviewing, and of reasons for non-response where the interviewing has not been completed; in the manner the HR is a basic instrument of operational control in the ECHP. - <i>Household Questionnaire</i> : it collects information on: changes in household location, housing conditions, amenities, problems and possession of durable, housing tenure, mortgage and rent amounts paid, financial situation of the household (debt burden, etc.), sources of household income and the approximate total net monthly amount, and housing allowance, social assistance, and rental, property and other income received by the household as a whole. - <i>Personal Questionnaire</i> : through personal interview with each member aged 16 or over the 31st December of the preceding year, it collects detailed information on each person's economic activity and income, and on a large number of other variables. The ESRI adapted the Community ECHP questionnaire to the national conditions; moreover, a substantial part of the questionnaire was devoted to supplementary questions of national interest: the principal domains covered by the extended questionnaire relate to income from agriculture, housing, the link between health and employment, biographic information on the work and level of education of the respondent's parents, and some additional information on the general situation of the household.
Definitions	
Household	<i>Community definition</i> for the purposes of the ECHP, a household is defined at the Community level in terms of two criteria: (1) the sharing of the same dwelling and (2) the common living arrangements. All the individuals considered by the household to form part of the household are taken into account, even if they are temporarily absent for reasons of work, study or sickness. <i>National definition</i> : Ireland followed the proposed definition of household in terms of both common accommodation and common arrangements.
Household head	From Wave 2 onwards, the concept of head of household was dropped, relationships between household members are recorded using a matrix in the household register and the reference person has been defined for the sake of simplicity and comparability as the member who owns or is responsible for the accommodation. The respondent to the household questionnaire is chosen according to the following list of priorities: - the first preference is for the person who responded to the household interview of the preceding round; - otherwise, an eligible 'panel' member, with priority in the following order: the RP; the RP's spouse or partner, another eligible 'panel' member (member of the initial sample); - at the last resort, any eligible interviewee even though not a panel member.
Data quality aspects	
Non-response error	Household response rate was 78%.
Item non-response / imputation	Imputations are confined to missing income components and are done centrally by Eurostat, hence are not included in this survey.
Weighting	Household level weights that take into account: (1) adjustment for sample attrition (from Wave 2 onwards); (2) external checks on population structure (demographic/socio-economic/social welfare); (3) inflating to the population size.
Labour market information	
Eligibility	Individuals aged 16 and older.
Employment	<i>Current activity status</i> : status during the reference week, i.e the 7 (full) days preceding the interview (a moving reference period rather than a fixed period in terms of specific calendar dates is used because of the extended data collection period of the ECHP). <i>Main activity status</i> : according to the main activity concept, persons are classified as being in job or self-employment if they presently work for at least 15 hours per week; for the remaining, the main status (including the status of being unemployed) is determined according to self-declaration, in principle on the basis of the most time spent.
Income	
Reference period	Calendar year 2000.
Unit of time	Mostly monthly income together with number of months received during reference year; some yearly income.
Unit of collection	Mostly individual, excluding housing allowances, social assistance, rental income and inheritance/lottery winning.
Taxes and contributions	Most variables are collected net of taxes and contributions (with the exception of self-employment earnings, and wages, which are also collected gross).
Restrictions	--
Additional remarks	--

Source: Data provider.