

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The ConsEnSus (Consumption, Environment and Sustainability) Project is a four-year research project involving collaboration between TCD and NUI, Galway. The ConsEnSus Project is funded by the EPA under the STRIVE programme. This project focuses on four key areas of household consumption: transport, energy, water and food.

As part of the ConsEnSus Project, the Lifestyle Survey was conducted over a ten-month period between June 2010 and April 2011. The aim of this Lifestyle Survey was to gain an understanding of people's attitudes and behaviours towards sustainable household consumption and sustainable lifestyles. A total of 1,500 households (750 urban based/750 rural based) were surveyed in 30 EDs across Galway City and County Council areas, Derry City Council area, Limavady District Council area, Dublin City Council area and Fingal County Council area.

Further information is available at: www.consensus.ie

Conclusion

These factsheets comprise some of the highlights and key findings from the first national dataset on attitudes and behaviours towards sustainable household consumption and sustainable lifestyles across the island of Ireland. However, the research findings presented here in these factsheets constitute just one output of the ConsEnSus Project.

The ConsEnSus Project

In addition to producing a national baseline dataset for the island of Ireland in the areas of transport, energy, water and food, the ConsEnSus Project investigates key issues of measurement, evaluation, behavioural analysis, quality of life and governance within the field of sustainable consumption. This project also aims to respond to national and international research objectives on sustainable consumption through the employment of seven integrated research packages that address, in greater detail, the key themes explored in these factsheets. Examples of other tasks and outputs that are currently ongoing as part of the ConsEnSus Project include:

- Reviewing of existing international sustainable consumption and production policy.
- Cataloguing good governance practice for more sustainable consumption and tools for governing sustainable living.
- Developing policy recommendations and action plans for (local and national) government to encourage more sustainable lifestyles.
- Establishing tools for assessment and modification of mobility patterns and sustainable consumption of distance in Ireland.
- Developing measures for the effective use of virtual mobility tools and the preparing of a Mobility Management Plan for a large Irish company.
- Developing and testing scenarios for sustainable households in the areas of shelter, washing, eating, and cooking through the organisation of visioning workshops to develop sustainable household scenarios for 2050.
- Facilitating cooperation between stakeholders involved in consumption practices (e.g., regulators, businesses, consumers, civil society organisations).
- Establishing an international Sustainable Consumption Research Network.

Who will benefit from the research?

This research will inform policy makers, producers and citizens alike about current practices and sustainable futures.

ConsEnSus website

For a comprehensive list of the ConsEnSus Project's reports, journal publications, policy documents, past conference presentations and press releases, please see the project website: www.consensus.ie.

A number of useful links for further information on sustainable consumption and sustainable lifestyles in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland can also be found on this website.

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Citations

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These Factsheets are also available to download on the ConsEnSus website: <http://www.consensus.ie/publications/factsheets2012.pdf>.

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