

Feedback from the CSO Ireland final judging panel hopefully will lead to even more and better posters in years to come, as will the results of the ISLP international poster competition.



Census 2011 schools resources

The latest Irish National Census took place on Sunday April 10, 2011. As part of the Census 2011 programme a schools resources package of educational resources was prepared for both primary and secondary school students and teachers.

An extract from the CSO Ireland Census 2011 School Resources web page reads:

The information that we get from the census pervades our daily lives. It provides us with:

- *the data we need to understand who we are and what we do, and*
- *the ability to use the information to create knowledge about what we need and how to best go about acting on the information to achieve the best outcome for everyone.*

It describes the society in which we live and helps us to understand that society better, whether in the make up of our ages, origins, activities or any of the other key attributes for which data is collected in the census.

Learning about the census and about how to effectively use census and other statistical data is a key part of our education. It helps us to understand our society and our role as responsible citizens in participating in that society.

The primary school resources were divided into 3 distinct class groups with different levels of complexity. Lesson plans, teacher's notes and a whole host of resources and materials were created to enhance the learning process. Census Charlie the census enumerator character was created to further enhance the learning experience and the story "Charlie and Census 2011" helped to simply explain Census 2011.



The secondary school resources provided History, Geography and Civil, Social and Political Education (CSPE) subject lesson plans for all years (Junior Cycle, Transition Year and Leaving Certificate). Again efforts were made to make the lesson plans interesting and thought provoking for students and to encourage them to become aware of Census 2011, understand the Census process and understand the usefulness of Census 2011 data.

The Census 2011 school resources page had almost 35,000 hits throughout the three month period around census time and it was the second most popular web page after "Your Questions" in the Census 2011 suite of web pages. The Census team got very positive feedback from teachers on their use of the resources in class.

Access to further information:

CensusAtSchool
www.censusatschool.ie

John Hooper Medal for Statistics
http://www.cso.ie/newsevents/int_stat_lit_poster_results.htm

Census 2011 Schools resources
<http://www.census.ie/-and-Communities/Census-in-Schools.138.1.aspx>

Contact person:
 Eoin McCuirc
 Phone: 00 353 21 453 5504
 e-mail: eoin.mccuirc@cso.ie



An Phríomh-Oifig Staidrimh
 Central Statistics Office
 Ireland

Investing in the future



Young people and statistics

CSO Ireland Mission

Developing an Educational Outreach Programme is underpinned by the CSO Ireland mission statement. The CSO Ireland mission statement commits the Office to meeting the information requirements of all its customers in a changing economic and social environment. The CSO Ireland has a core value of 'excellent service to customers' and two of its high level goals are 'increased awareness and effective use of statistics' and 'progressing the development of the Irish statistical system'. The CSO Ireland Educational Outreach Programme is a fundamental building block to the Office achieving this mission.

Aim of the Educational Outreach Programme

To create online educational resources in collaboration with the Dept. of Education and other relevant national and international organisations in order to allow students to:

- develop statistical literacy in an increasingly complex knowledge-based Irish society;
- understand and interpret statistical data
- critically evaluate statistical information and data-related arguments;
- use the statistical information in the context of daily life
- discuss or communicate one's reactions to statistical information

and to maximise the use of the statistical outputs of the Office.

This is being done by creating real life projects which enhance the learning process and nurture the life skills needed in our knowledge based society, while supporting the Irish education system in developing its students as future policy makers, entrepreneurs and statisticians.

CensusAtSchool Project

CensusAtSchool is an International Children's Census project. The Royal Statistical Society Centre for Statistical Education (RSSCSE) started the CensusAtSchool project in 2000 in conjunction with the National Statistics Office in the UK.

The project, originally a one-off, was linked to the UK population census of 2001. It has now developed into a dynamic, ongoing and exciting initiative running in a number of countries.

It aims to:

- Involve students in collecting data about themselves and improve understanding of a data gathering process, its purpose and benefits to society;
- Foster a positive attitude to statistics through using real data that is of interest to students;

- Enhance the process of statistical enquiry across the curriculum;
- Encourage effective Information and Communication Technology (ICT) teaching and learning, including the use of the Internet;
- Provide access to large and meaningful data sets;
- Make comparisons between the student responses in different countries.

Since 2000 several other countries have embraced the project with necessary adjustments to reflect local culture and traditions. These countries include; Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, Canada and in 2009, Ireland.

Ireland became involved in CensusAtSchool in 2009 when the CSO Ireland, the NCTE (National Centre for Technology in Education), the NCCA (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment) and Project Maths (the Project to introduce a new Irish mathematics curriculum) collaborated to set-up the Irish website, www.censusatschool.ie. The CensusAtSchool website was rolled out to schools nationally. Project Maths involved the introduction of revised syllabuses for both Junior and Leaving Certificate Mathematics. It involved changes to what students learn in mathematics, how they learn it and how they will be assessed. The CensusAtSchool website was used by the Project Maths team to teach Strand 1 of the new curriculum course in "Statistics and Probability".



The website was adopted as part of the pilot project to roll out the new mathematics curriculum to 24 schools in the academic year 2009/2010. The website proved to be a great success and yet again in 2010/2011 the first year the new mathematics curriculum was fully rolled out into all schools.

The latest questionnaire on the website for 2010/2011 had over 17,000 hits, the website itself having over 1,250,000 hits in the first six months of 2011 and thousands of questionnaires were fully completed by students. Statisticians in CSO Ireland analyse the data and publish the results on the CensusAtSchool website. A new questionnaire is developed every year. The 2011/2012 questionnaire will have a sports theme to coincide with the Olympics in London in 2012.

John Hooper Medal for Statistics

In 1923 John Hooper was appointed the first Director of Statistics for Saorstát Éireann, the new Irish Free State. John Hooper shaped the development of official statistics for the new State until his death in December 1930, and he was largely responsible for the framing of the 1926 Statistics Act. John Hooper was elected as a member of the International Statistical Institute (ISI) just before his untimely death in 1930.



On 20 October 2010, on the initiative of the United Nations, the first World Statistics Day was celebrated. To mark the day the CSO Ireland announced the launch of a new annual award, the John Hooper Medal for Statistics, a poster competition to support the improvement and appreciation of mathematics and statistics in schools. The winners of the poster competition go forward to represent Ireland in the International Statistical Literacy Project (ISLP) poster competition. The winning team members are presented with a specially commissioned silver medal. There are prizes for the best three posters and both the students and their schools get awarded prizes for the winning entries.

The first year was a great success with hundreds of teams registering for the competition. By the deadline over a hundred posters had been entered in the competition. The judging was done in two phases. All the posters were assessed by a team of 20 people in CSO Ireland and 12 posters were given an Order of Merit and shortlisted for the final judging phase. A highly qualified team of educators and statisticians judged the 12 posters and the winners were announced. The winners' posters are on display at the 58th World Statistics Congress of the International Statistical Institute in Dublin in August 2011 and the winners will be presented their prizes in October 2011, by the Irish Minister for Education.