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Staidéar Fadaimseartha na hÉireann um Dhul in Aois

The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing

Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

WHO Collaborating Centre for Longitudinal Studies on Ageing and the Life Course

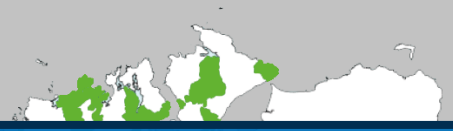
The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA)

Data Availability & Access

HRB SDAP Seminar – March 2025

Dr Siobhan Scarlett – Senior Data Manager

What is TILDA



Baseline (2009-2011)

8,504 participants

8,175 (50+ years)

62% response rate

1 in 156 adults 50+

Repeat interviews every 2 years

Modes of Assessment

Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI)

Face to face interview in the home

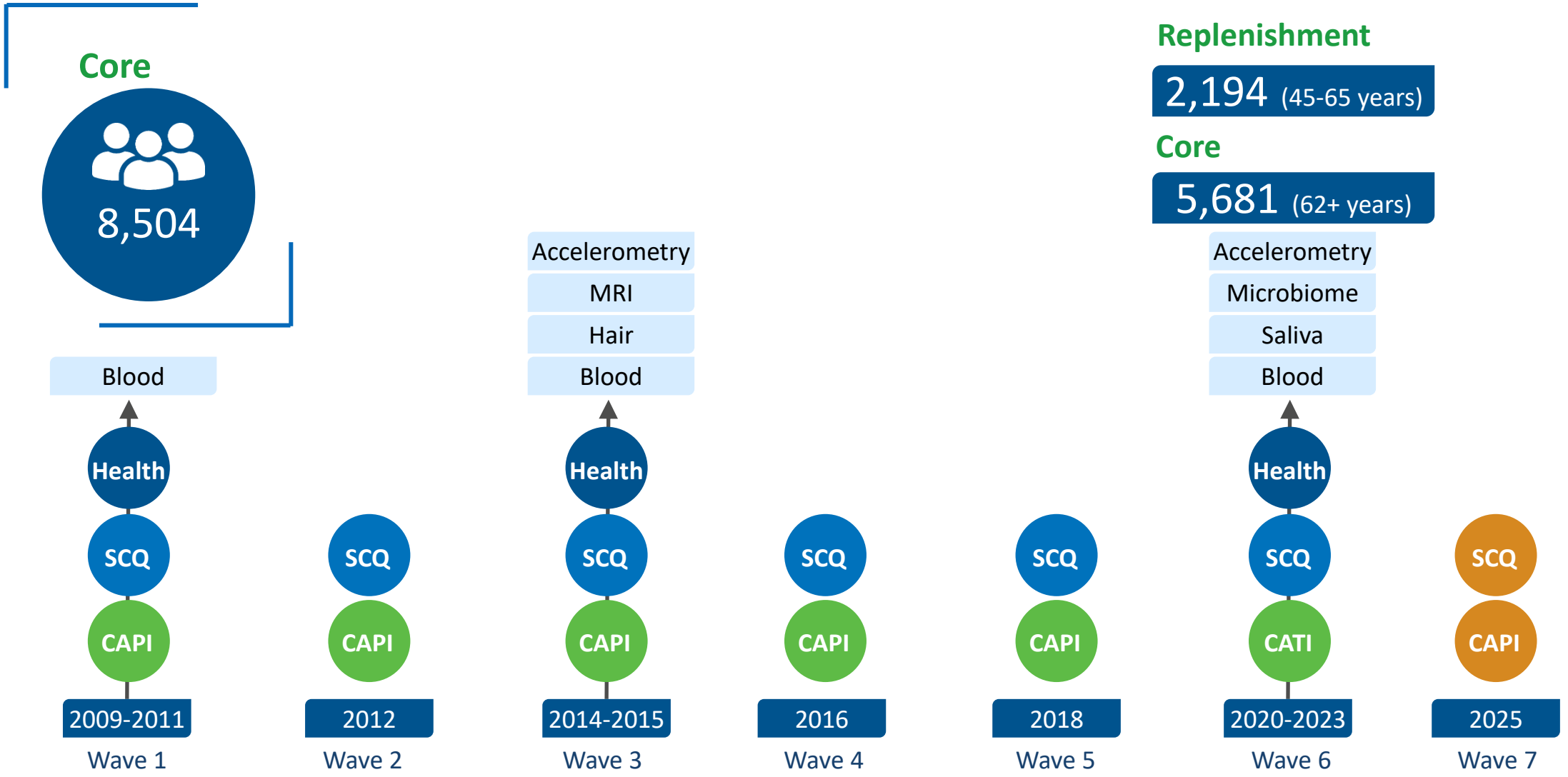
Self Completion Questionnaire (SCQ)

Paper questionnaire completed in own time

Health Assessment

Assessment administered by health practitioner in TILDA Health Assessment Centre

Waves of Data Collection



CAPI: *Computer Aided Personal Interview.* ***CATI:*** *Computer Aided Telephone Interview.* ***SCQ:*** *Self Completion Questionnaire, TILDA Health Assessment.*

TILDA Data

CAPI Content

Social

- Demographics
- Intergenerational Transfers
- Lifelong Learning
- Social Connectedness
- Expectations
- Driving/Travel

Economic

- Employment
- Job History
- Retirement Planning
- Sources of Income
- House Ownership
- Assets

Health

- Physical Health
- Cognitive Health
- Behavioural Health
- Mental Health
- Medications

Self-Completion Questionnaire

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Social Activities	Loneliness	Accommodation Problems	Technology and Internet use
Relationship Quality	Ageing Perceptions	Anxiety	Pet Ownership
Alcohol Use	Quality of Life	Purpose in Life	Sleep Chronotype
Stress	Discrimination	Sexual Activity	Neighbourhood Disorder
Childhood Health Conditions	Creative Activities	Life Satisfaction	Food Frequency

Health Assessment Content

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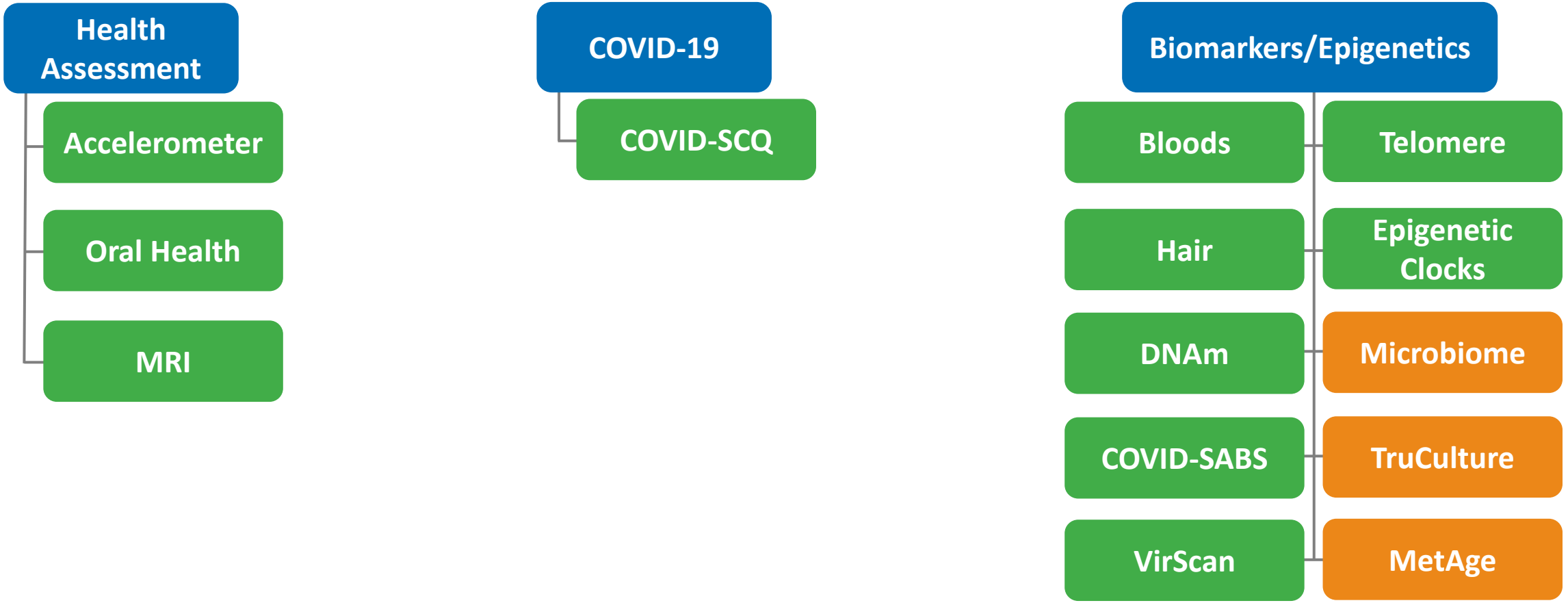
Cognition	Cardiovascular	Physical Function	Anthropometric / Other	Vision
• MMSE • MoCA • SART • Choice Reaction • Colour Trails	• Blood Pressure • Pulse Wave Velocity • Phasic Blood Pressure • Near Infrared Spectroscopy • Heart rate variability	• Timed-Up and Go • Repeated Chair Stands • GAIT Speed • Heel Bone Ultrasound • Grip Strength	• Waist Circumference • Waist-Hip Ratio • Height • Weight • Blood Samples	• Retinal Image • Contrast Sensitivity • Visual Acuity • Macular Pigment Optical Density

Supplementary Datasets

Substudies



Supplementary Datasets

- GMS medical card scheme
- Medicines and food supplements
- Dosage, strength, cost of drug
- Inappropriate prescribing

88% Consent rate
Wave 1-5 linked (1.9million claims)

- RCSI & ICGP
- Health conditions, medications, vaccines, treatments, visits, emergency visits, healthcare utilisation
- No. of GP and nurse visits
- Medical card introduction

92% Consent rate
Ongoing Linkage (<1% complete)

HSE PCRS

GP Pilot

Data Linkages

Environmental exposure

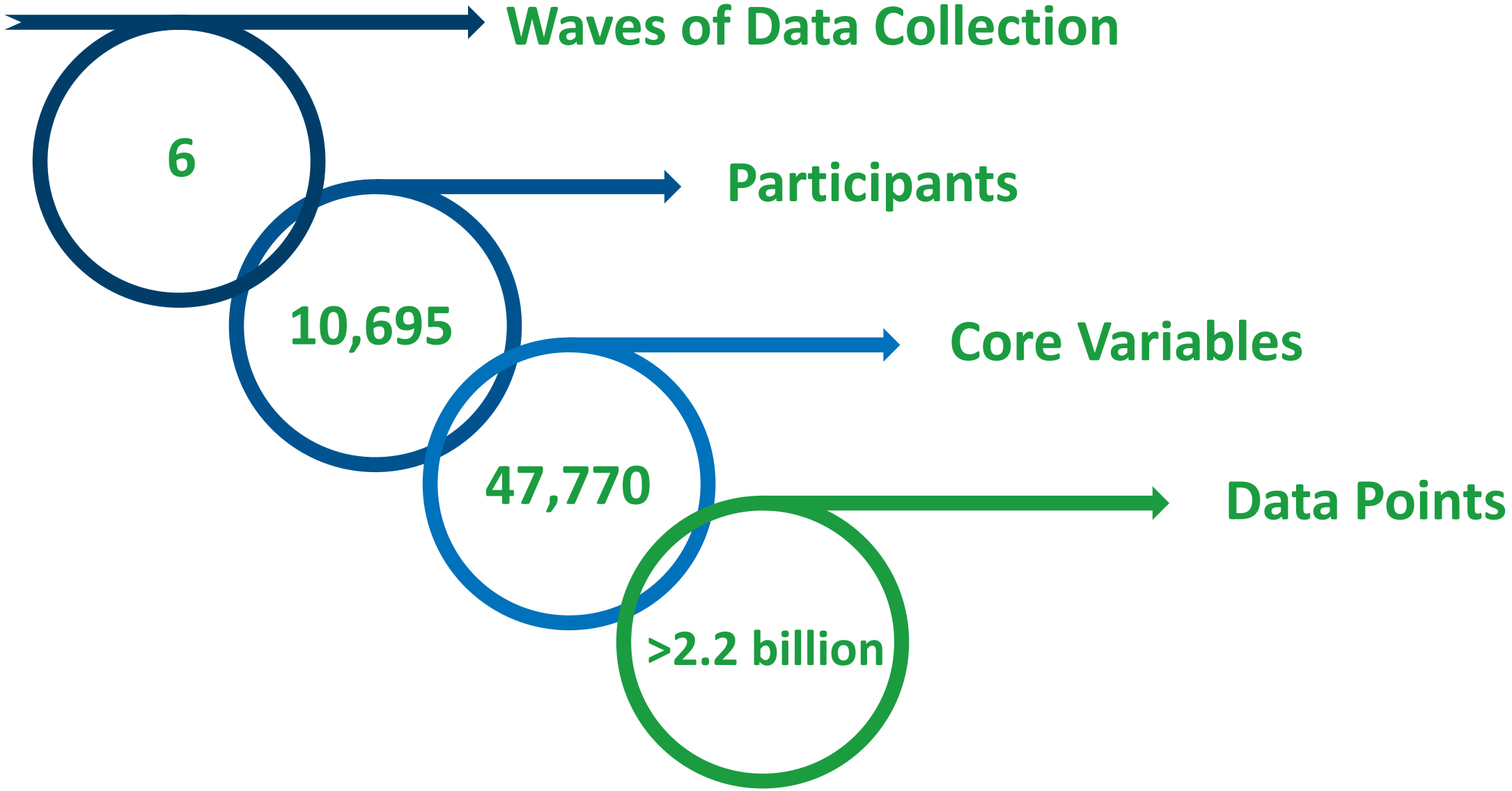
GRO

- GIS, Mapping, CSO, EPA
- Public services
- Environmental: Radon, Air pollution, water fluoridation mapping
- Green & blue space
- Lifetime Exposures

- Cause of death
- Co-morbidities
- Mortality
- End of life care
- Access and costs

89% match rate

TILDA in Numbers



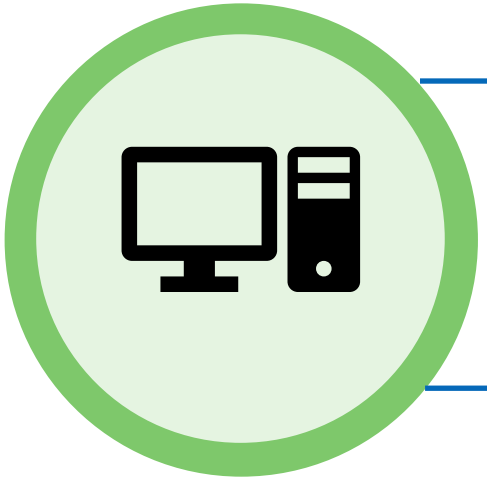
Access & Availability

Public Dataset Access

- TILDA Public Datasets archived with the ISSDA Data Repository.
- Application form available and processed through their website.
- Pseudonymised versions of the TILDA datasets - Waves 1 – 5 + COVID-SCQ. ***Wave 6 (Sep 2025).***
- All variables reviewed for inclusion.
- Datasets updated periodically to include new variables.
- If variable is too identifiable – variable is not included for release, or may undergo anonymisation techniques.
  - Top/bottom coding
  - Categorisation
  - Combination of variables
- Documentation detailing all variables public dataset status available on TILDA website and ISSDA.

Sensitive Dataset Access

https://tilda.tcd.ie/data/accessing-data/hotdesk/



In-Person Hotdesks

Restricted computers in TILDA offices

In-Person Hotdesks

Access sensitive TILDA data

Safe Haven

Restricted use – data cannot be removed

Bespoke datasets

Generate aggregated output

Online booking system

Researchers book in advance.

Access from 10am – 4pm Monday to Friday

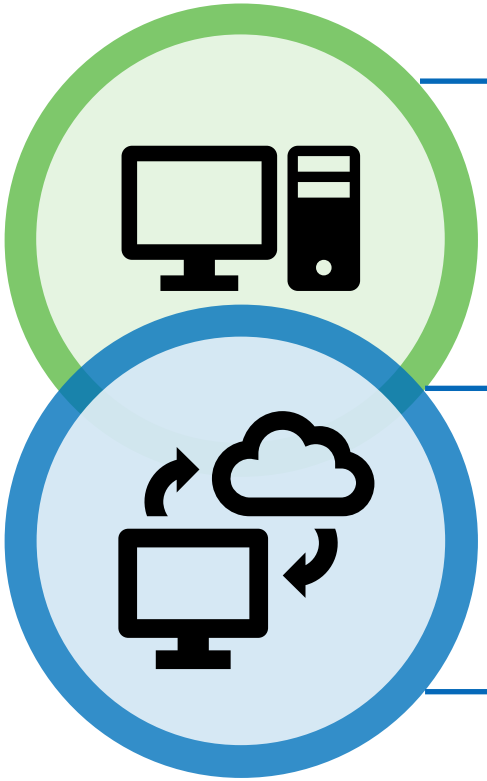
Results sent to users

Generated output reviewed at end of the week

Results emailed to researchers

Sensitive Dataset Access

https://tilda.tcd.ie/data/accessing-data/hotdesk/



In-Person Hotdesks

Restricted computers in TILDA offices

Remote Hotdesks

Cloud Connected Trusted Research Environment
(Available Q2 2025)

Remote Hotdesks: TILDA VISTA

Virtual Infrastructure for Secure TILDA data Access

Cloud Connection

Access from anywhere

Encrypted connections

2-factor authentication logins

Data does not leave host servers

Safe Haven

Restrictions in place

Data cannot be downloaded

Bespoke datasets

Secure analysis of sensitive data

Virtual Environment

Virtual Windows OS machines

Scalable as demand increases

Mixture of standard and high-performance computing power

Wide range of software available

Results Overview

Results must still be reviewed

Only aggregated output

Sensitive Dataset Access

- Hotdesk applications are reviewed every two weeks.

- Researchers are required to provide proof of GDPR training from their own institute, complete TILDA data training, and sign a data use agreement.

Data Availability & Resources

- Datasets must be cleaned and processed before release for analysis.

- New datasets released periodically – check with team re. timelines for access before applications.

- Resources available to help navigate the data-
  - TILDA in-person data workshops (https://tilda.tcd.ie/data-workshop/)
  - TILDA data workshop webinars (https://tilda.tcd.ie/data-workshop/webinar/)
  - TILDA questionnaires & documentation (https://tilda.tcd.ie/data/documentation/)
  - TILDA questions searchable database (https://tilda.tcd.ie/data/questionnaire/QuestionnaireHarmonisation/)

- TILDA team is available to check information such as sub-sample numbers in advance of applications.

Applying for SDAP using TILDA data

Contact TILDA Research & Development Manager first
Dr Ann Hever (hevera@tcd.ie)

Get in touch early in case there are any data queries we need to help with and to confirm availability of the data you are interested in using!

TILDA is supported by

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HRB Health Research Board

The ATLANTIC Philanthropies

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Additional Funding