

SAORSTÁT ÉIREANN.

CENSUS OF POPULATION, 1926.

VOLUME IV.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
EXPLANATORY NOTES	vi

TABLES.

HOUSING CONDITIONS OF PERSONS LIVING IN PRIVATE FAMILIES CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO AREAS.

1	Counties, County Boroughs, Aggregate Town Areas, Aggregate Rural Areas in each County.	Summary Table of housing conditions.	1
2A	Counties and County Boroughs ...	Detailed classification of persons according to Size of Dwelling.	2
2B	Aggregate Town Areas in each County.	do. ...	4
2C	Aggregate Rural Areas in each County.	do. ...	6
3A	Counties and County Boroughs ...	Detailed classification according to Housing Densities (persons per room).	8
3B	Aggregate Town Areas in each County.	do. ...	10
3C	Aggregate Rural Areas in each County.	do. ...	12
4A	Counties and County Boroughs ...	Persons in Private Families, classified according to Size of Family —Actual Numbers	14
4 (a)	Do. ...	do. —Percentages ...	15
4B	Aggregate Town Areas in each County.	Persons in Private Families, classified according to Size of Family —Actual Numbers	16
4 (b)	Do. ...	do. —Percentages ...	17
4C	Aggregate Rural Areas ...	Persons in Private Families, classified according to Size of Family —Actual Numbers	18
4 (c)	Do. ...	do. —Percentages ...	19
5A	Counties and County Boroughs ...	Number of Private Families, classified according to the number of persons in each.	20
5B	Aggregate Town Areas in each County.	do. ...	21
5C	Aggregate Rural Areas in each County.	do. ...	22

Tables.			Page.
6	Each City and each Town of 500 or more inhabitants.	Summary Table of Housing Conditions.	23
7	Each City and each Town of 500 or more inhabitants.	Detailed classification according to Size of Dwelling.	26
8	Each City and each Town of 500 or more inhabitants.	Detailed classification according to Housing Densities (Persons per Room).	34
9	Each Ward (or District Electoral Division) in the County Borough of Dublin.	Detailed classification of persons according to Size of Dwelling.	42
10	Each Ward (or District Electoral Division) in the County Borough of Dublin.	Detailed classification of persons according to Housing Densities (Persons per Room).	44
11A	Each Dispensary District and each Registrar's District in the County Borough of Dublin.	Detailed classification according to Size of Dwelling.	46
11B	Each Dispensary District and each Registrar's District in the County Borough of Dublin.	Detailed classification according to Housing Densities (Persons per Room).	46
12A	Counties and County Boroughs ...	Number of Private Families occupying Dwellings of less than Five Rooms, classified according to Number of Rooms occupied, 1911 and 1926.	48
12B	Each Town possessing Local Government.	do. ...	49
13A	Counties and County Boroughs ...	Number of Private Families, classified according to Size of Family, in occupation of Tenements of One Room, with comparative figures for the years 1911 and 1901.	51
13B	Each Town possessing Local Government.	Number of Private Families classified according to Size of Family, in occupation of Tenements of One Room with comparative figures for 1911.	54
14	Counties and County Boroughs ...	Persons not living in Private Families :—Numbers of Persons in the Principal Types of Institutions and in Hotels, Boarding-houses, Business Establishments, etc.	58
15	Saorstát Eireann, Provinces, Counties, Town and Rural Areas.	Persons in each Size of Family classified according to Number of Rooms occupied.	60
16	Each Town of 1,500 or more inhabitants (and smaller towns possessing Local Government).	do. ...	93
17	Each Ward (or District Electoral Division) in Dublin County Borough.	do. ...	131
18	Each Dispensary District and each Registrar's District in the County Borough of Dublin.	do. ...	138

Tables.	PARTICULARS OF NUMBER OF HOUSES.		Page.
19	Counties and County Boroughs ...	Comparison of numbers of houses in 1926 and 1911, Valuation, Average Number of Persons per Inhabited House, etc.	143
20	Each Urban and Rural District ...	Comparison of numbers of houses in 1926 and 1911, Valuation, Area, etc.	144
21A	Saorstát Eireann and Provinces	Number of Inhabited Houses at each Census 1821-1926.	151
21 (a)	Do. ...	Percentage change in the number of Inhabited Houses during each Intercensal Period 1821-1926.	151
22	Saorstát Eireann and Provinces	Number of Inhabited Houses in 1926 classified according to the Number of Families in each.	151

HOUSING CONDITIONS OF POPULATION CLASSIFIED BY OCCUPATIONS.

23A	Saorstát Eireann ...	Married, Widowed and Single Males in the Principal Groups of Occupations in 1926 classified according to Housing Conditions.	152
23B	Saorstát Eireann ...	do. for Females	156
24A	Counties and County Boroughs ...	Males in the Principal Groups of Occupations in 1926 classified according to Housing Conditions.	160
24B	Counties and County Boroughs ...	do. for Females	197
25A	Saorstát Eireann and Provinces	Housing Conditions in 1926 of Farmers on each Size of Farm.	216
25B	Counties ...	do. ...	217
26	Saorstát Eireann ...	Married Males in the Principal Occupations in 1926, classified according to Housing Conditions.	221
27	Saorstát Eireann ...	Married, Widowed and Single Females in the Principal Occupations in 1926, classified according to Housing Conditions.	227

HOUSING CONDITIONS OF PERSONS OF DIFFERENT AGES.

28	Saorstát Eireann. County Boroughs and Aggregate Rural Areas.	Housing Densities by Sex and Age Groups.	233
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APPENDIX.

Alphabetical List of Towns having a Population of 500 or more Inhabitants in 1926.	247
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SAORSTAT ÉIREANN.

CENSUS OF POPULATION, 1926.

VOLUME IV.—HOUSING.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

The head of each household was required to state on his Census Schedule the total number of persons in the household and the number of rooms occupied; the statistics in the present volume are primarily based on these particulars.

The housing conditions of only those persons who live in private families are dealt with in the volume, but such persons included 94 per cent. of the total population. The persons excluded are those who were living in boarding-houses with three or more boarders, in business establishments with three or more resident assistants, and in Hotels, Hospitals, Asylums, and other Institutions on the night of 18th April, 1926.

* * *

The term “dwelling” as used in the present volume means the rooms occupied by the family. Thus a house which includes three separate families living apart, is considered as three “dwellings” or “tenements” whether the “dwellings” or “tenements” are structurally separated or not. Amongst the number of “rooms” in “dwellings” or “tenements” are included for statistical purposes the sitting-rooms, bedrooms and kitchens, but bathrooms, pantries, sculleries, etc., are not included as “rooms.”

In housing statistics the number of “persons” in a private family includes *all* persons residing in the family dwelling; *i.e.*, resident relatives, servants, etc., as well as the members of the family. Contrasts between sizes of families (as thus defined) in the several areas may, of course, be different to the corresponding contrasts between the sizes of families born to married couples—a subject which will be dealt with in a volume on Fertility of Marriage and Dependency to be published later.

* * *

The greatest contrast between Counties as regards size of “family” (including resident servants, etc.) in 1926 is that between Counties Meath,

Westmeath; Cavan and Monaghan in each of which the average "family" consisted of 4·2 persons, and County Kerry in which the average was 5·1 persons. As the difference in the size of family is usually not very great from district to district it will often be found convenient to compare the housing conditions of one area with those of another by contrasting the total numbers of persons living in different sizes of dwellings in the two areas, irrespective of the sizes of families in these dwellings. Such contrasts, it is thought, give more realistic impressions than the more accurate comparisons of the numbers of persons living in different housing densities, *i.e.*, the numbers of persons living in families having less than one person per room, 1 to 1½ persons per room and so on. For this reason a considerable amount of attention has been paid in this volume to the former type of comparisons as well as to the latter.

It was not considered necessary for practical purposes to compile particulars according to the exact number of rooms for dwellings with more than 10 rooms or to compile particulars according to the exact number of persons for families of more than 11 persons. It will accordingly be noticed in the second last column of Table 3A, p. 9, and in many other tables, that a small percentage (1·5 per cent.) of the persons in private families were not classified by housing densities, *i.e.*, showing the number of persons per room. These consisted of persons in families of 11 living in dwellings of 11 rooms or more and of persons in families of 12 or over living in dwellings of 4 rooms or more.

* * *

In the statistics of Other Countries persons living in families with more than two persons per room are regarded as "overcrowded." If this definition is accepted the percentages of persons in "overcrowded" housing in the Saorstat in 1926 were :—75·2 per cent. of the persons in one room dwellings, 59·3 per cent. of those in two rooms, 36·9 per cent. of those in three rooms, 17·2 per cent. of those in four rooms, 5·3 per cent. of those in five rooms ; while in dwellings of six or more rooms the percentages were still smaller. Accordingly, when considering the question of overcrowding it may be convenient to concentrate attention on the one to four room dwellings as there is very little "overcrowding" in the larger dwellings.

* * *

In Tables 12A and 12B the numbers of one, two, three and four room dwellings are shown for each of the years 1911 and 1926 for each County and for each Town possessing Local Government, but no comparison of the overcrowding in these two years is available except as regards the one room tenements for which comparisons are given in Tables 13A and 13B. The 1911 Census treated the one room tenements in great detail in both Rural and Urban Districts. Considerable improvement was effected in rural housing after 1911, and the smallest Rural Area for which figures are given in the present volume, Table 15, is the aggregate Rural Area of each County, that is, the area of each County exclusive of towns with Local Government and other towns with over 1,500 inhabitants. For these Aggregate Rural Areas tables are presented in this Volume showing the numbers of private families living in each size of dwelling, not only for those living in one-room tenements as was done in the Report on the 1911 Census, but also for dwellings or tenements of 2, 3, 4, 5, etc., up to 11 and more rooms.