

SAORSTÁT ÉIREANN.

CENSUS OF POPULATION, 1926.

VOLUME V. PART I.

AGES, ORPHANHOOD AND CONJUGAL CONDITIONS.

CLASSIFICATION BY AREAS ONLY.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

Classification by ages is so fundamental that some age statistics will be found in every volume of the 1926 Census. For instance, in some of the Tables in Volume III. (Religions and Birthplaces) persons were classified according to both religion and ages, in other Tables of the same volume persons were classified according to both birthplaces and ages. Again, in some of the Tables in Volume IV. (Housing) the population was classified not only by housing conditions but also by ages, and in others by conjugal conditions. Volume II. (Occupations) did not include any detailed age classifications as the volume without them ran to considerable length. Similarly, the volume on industries will contain no detailed age classifications owing to the amount of other material that will have to be included in it. Part II. of the present Volume will accordingly contain detailed statistics of ages and conjugal conditions in each occupation and in each industry.

Statements of age at the Censuses in this country have always been much less accurate than, for instance, in Great Britain. Previous to 1926 only one column appeared on the Census Schedules for the question "Age last Birthday"; in 1926 in order to suggest that a statement as accurate as possible was required, two columns were provided asking for the ages correct to months. While a considerable improvement was shown in 1926 in the answers to this question still the replies were much too inaccurate, unreasonably large numbers of persons stating their ages in round numbers, especially as 50, 60, 70, etc., years of age. This defect will be seen in Table 11, which shows the number of persons at each individual year of age.

Notwithstanding the inaccuracies referred to, it will be found that when appropriate groups of ages are taken the numbers are sufficiently true

* Part II. will follow as a separate publication.

for practical purposes; for instance, for the life tables shown on pages 216-219. These life tables were calculated by Mr. R. C. Geary, M.Sc., of this Department, on much the same lines as those devised by Mr. George King, F.I.A., F.A.A. (see Part I. of the 75th Annual Report of the Registrar-General of England and Wales, Cd. 7512/1914), as modified by Sir Alfred Watson, K.C.B. (see Part I. of the Registrar-General's Decennial Supplement, England and Wales, 1921). Necessary departures from these methods are explained in the memorandum on page 220.

In the Census publications up to and including 1891 the numbers of persons whose ages were not stated on the schedules were shown separately. The numbers decreased from 4,919 (or 7 per 10,000) in 1841 to 1,460 (or 4 per 10,000) in 1891. As the numbers were very small in 1926 each case was considered separately and given an age suggested by other particulars on the schedule.

The Old Age Pensions Act, 1908, disturbs the comparability of the numbers of persons in the older age groups as recorded at previous and subsequent Censuses. The numbers were:—

Year	Population at Ages				
	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75 and over
1901	107,096	152,952	70,584	69,106	69,582
1911	104,634	98,264	108,639	126,899	94,410
1926	125,713	105,146	101,212	82,246	88,222

The causes influencing the magnitudes of these figures must be borne in mind—the tendency to state the age at 60 and 70, the changes in the numbers born at different periods during the last century (a number increasing at the commencement and decreasing at the end of the century), the somewhat similar changes in the numbers of emigrants, the usual age at which the emigrants left the country, the decreasing death rates. The influences of these causes on age statistics are too intricate to be dealt with in detail here.

Each person 15 years of age or over was required to be described on the Census Schedule as “married,” “widowed,” or “single.” The very few persons in respect of whom such statements were omitted were given the descriptions suggested by other particulars on the forms. From the numbers “married,” “widowed” and “single” classified by age groups as shown in the tables in this publication further tables were compiled, and are included in this volume, showing the number of “single” persons in each age group expressed as a percentage of the total in that age group. A comparison of such results for this and other countries (see page 215) indicates the unique position of this country with regard to the low proportion of persons married, especially in the younger age groups. An international comparison of ages will be found on page 214.

The 1926 Census was the first at which particulars of orphanhood conditions were collected. Children under 15 years of age were required to be described in the Schedules according to the following classifications: (1) "both parents alive"; (2) "having father alive, mother dead"; (3) "having mother alive, father dead"; (4) "having both parents dead." Tables showing the numbers thus recorded will be found in the present Volume. Later on tables will be published showing the numbers of married men, widowers, and widows classified according to the number of their dependent children—*i.e.*, children and step-children under 16—and further classified according to areas, industries, occupations, ages, etc.

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