

COMMENTARY

The total number of persons at work in the State at the date of the 1971 Census of Population was 1,054,839 of which 776,507 were males and 278,332 were females. This represents a reduction of just over 1 percent in comparison with total number of persons at work in 1966, the decline being at an approximately similar rate for males and females. The primary reason for the slight decrease was the continuing decline in the number of persons working in the agricultural sector which was almost offset by a corresponding rise in employment in other sectors.

TRENDS OVER THE PERIOD 1951 TO 1971

While the basic comparison over time in this commentary relates to the period 1966-71 (using data for the previous most recent Census taken in 1966) it is useful to consider the trends in the more important aggregates for a longer period. This is done in Table I which gives figures for the numbers of persons at work according to broad industrial groups for the Census years 1951, 1961, 1966 and 1971.

While total employment declined from 1,217,000 to 1,055,000 over the entire 20 year period concerned, it fluctuated considerably during the period mainly due to diverse trends in different economic sectors. There has been a constant decline in the number of persons working in Agriculture throughout the whole of this period, the total figure decreasing from 498,000 in 1951 to 273,000 in 1971, i.e. a reduction of 45 percent. The data indicate that the rate of decrease accelerated somewhat during the most recent period 1966-71, the number of persons at work going down by 18 percent as against a reduction of 12 percent between 1961 and 1966. This downturn was offset mainly by substantial increases in employment in Production Industries (other than Building and Construction) and Professional Services; while the increase in employment in the former sector was only marginal between 1951 and 1961 (rising from 195,000 to 198,000) a very rapid increase took place thereafter and by 1971 the number of persons working in this sector had reached 238,000 — an increase of 20 percent over the 1961 level. The number of persons at work in Professional Services increased by nearly 30 percent during the same period, rising from 85,000 persons in 1961 to 109,000 in 1971. In general during the period 1951 to 1971, where increases in the number of persons at work did occur they tended to take place during the most recent ten year period 1961-71; the period 1951-61 was one which was mainly characterised by decreases or little change in the number of persons at work in the various economic sectors.

REGIONAL PATTERNS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR BROAD INDUSTRIAL GROUPS IN 1971

This aspect is analysed in Table II which gives figures for the number of persons at work in different Planning Regions, distinguishing three broad industrial groups relating to the agricultural, industrial and services sectors of the economy. Tables 3 and 4 of this Volume give data on industries and industrial groups for Provinces, Counties and County Boroughs. The composition of the Planning Regions is shown in Appendix C.

Nearly 26 percent of the total number of persons at work at the time of the Census in 1971 were in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector with a further 31 percent in Industry (including Building and Construction) and nearly 44 percent in the Services sector. This pattern varied widely of course for the different regions. In the East region (which contains the greater Dublin area) only 6 percent of the total number of persons were working in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing while as many as 56 percent were recorded for the Services sector (by far the highest such proportion for any region in the State) reflecting the high concentration of persons working in State and semi-State employment and in other occupations of an administrative or clerical nature; this region also had the highest number of persons working in Industry, 38 percent. Generally, for regions in the western part of the country persons working in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector predominated, the proportion of such persons varying between 42 percent and 52 percent while employment in the industrial sector was of the order of 17 to 24 percent of the total for the same regions. In general for regions on the eastern seaboard, with the exception of the "East" region, the total number of persons at work was roughly evenly distributed between the three economic sectors distinguished.

TABLE 1 : - PERSONS, MALES AND FEMALES AT WORK CLASSIFIED BY BROAD INDUSTRIAL GROUPS FOR THE YEARS 1951, 1961, 1966 AND 1971.

| Industrial group | Persons | | | | Males | | | | Females | | | |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | 1951 | 1961 | 1966 | 1971 | 1951 | 1961 | 1966 | 1971 | 1951 | 1961 | 1966 | 1971 |
| Agriculture, forestry and fishing | 497,802 | 379,919 | 333,527 | 273,079 | 430,211 | 337,816 | 300,348 | 247,585 | 67,591 | 42,103 | 33,179 | 25,494 |
| Building and construction | 85,790 | 59,587 | 74,140 | 84,533 | 84,905 | 58,634 | 72,839 | 82,856 | 885 | 953 | 1,301 | 1,677 |
| Other production industries | 194,768 | 197,585 | 219,593 | 238,216 | 133,966 | 136,930 | 155,549 | 171,799 | 60,802 | 60,655 | 64,044 | 66,417 |
| Commerce, insurance, finance and business services | 162,958 | 159,086 | 166,144 | 172,278 | 110,316 | 105,877 | 110,839 | 116,247 | 52,642 | 53,209 | 55,305 | 56,031 |
| Transport, communication and storage | 59,744 | 54,167 | 57,246 | 60,122 | 53,447 | 47,287 | 48,919 | 50,589 | 6,297 | 6,880 | 8,327 | 9,533 |
| Public administration and defence | 39,745 | 40,543 | 43,189 | 48,869 | 32,839 | 32,680 | 33,763 | 37,322 | 6,906 | 7,863 | 9,426 | 11,547 |
| Professional services | 75,316 | 84,821 | 93,774 | 109,078 | 30,610 | 33,832 | 37,580 | 44,558 | 44,706 | 50,989 | 56,194 | 64,520 |
| Other | 100,983 | 76,831 | 78,374 | 68,664 | 25,954 | 21,484 | 25,359 | 25,551 | 75,029 | 55,347 | 53,015 | 43,113 |
| Total at work | 1,217,106 | 1,052,539 | 1,065,987 | 1,054,839 | 902,248 | 774,540 | 785,196 | 776,507 | 314,858 | 277,999 | 280,791 | 278,332 |

TABLE II : - NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONS AT WORK IN EACH PLANNING REGION CLASSIFIED BY BROAD INDUSTRIAL GROUP.

| Region | Numbers (Thousands*) | | | | Percentage Distribution | | | |
|--------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| | Total at work | Agriculture, forestry and fishing | Other production industries | Service type industries | Agriculture, forestry and fishing | Other production industries | Service type industries | Total |
| East | 388.6 | 24.2 | 147.9 | 216.6 | 6.2 | 38.1 | 55.7 | 100.0 |
| South West | 160.9 | 47.0 | 48.6 | 65.3 | 29.2 | 30.2 | 40.6 | 100.0 |
| South East | 111.6 | 37.3 | 31.3 | 43.0 | 33.4 | 28.1 | 38.5 | 100.0 |
| North East | 64.7 | 21.2 | 21.6 | 21.9 | 32.8 | 33.3 | 33.9 | 100.0 |
| Mid West | 93.1 | 32.1 | 25.6 | 35.4 | 34.5 | 27.4 | 38.1 | 100.0 |
| Donegal | 35.7 | 15.1 | 8.6 | 12.0 | 42.3 | 24.2 | 33.5 | 100.0 |
| Midlands | 80.7 | 34.9 | 18.9 | 26.9 | 43.3 | 23.4 | 33.3 | 100.0 |
| West | 90.7 | 46.8 | 15.1 | 28.8 | 51.6 | 16.7 | 31.7 | 100.0 |
| North West | 28.8 | 14.4 | 5.2 | 9.2 | 50.1 | 17.9 | 32.0 | 100.0 |
| TOTAL | 1,054.8 | 273.1 | 322.7 | 459.0 | 25.9 | 30.6 | 43.5 | 100.0 |

*Apparent small discrepancies in this and other tables are due to the effect of rounding-off.

CHANGES OVER THE PERIOD 1966-71 IN THE NUMBER OF PERSONS AT WORK IN THE PRINCIPAL INDUSTRIAL GROUPS

Information on changes in the number of persons at work between 1966 and 1971 in twenty-one different industrial and economic sub-sectors is given in Table III. Table 2 of the main tables gives comparative figures for individual industries for these years.

The largest change in absolute terms took place in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector, a decrease of over 60,000 persons, representing (as mentioned already) a relative decline of over 18 percent over the five year period concerned. On the positive side there was an increase of over 15,000 persons working in Professional Services (a rise of 16 percent) and of more than 10,000 in Building and Construction (an increase of 14 percent). An increase of 8 percent took place in the Manufacturing Industries Sector (over 15,000 persons) and in this sector the largest relative increase over the period 1966-71 was for the category "Other Manufacturing Industries" which recorded an increase of 46 percent in the number of persons at work; this industrial sub-group contains a diverse range of recently developed and developing industries. The next largest percentage increase in the manufacturing sector was for Glass, Pottery and Cement where the number of persons at work increased by 2,300, or 25 percent, over the period concerned. There were only slight increases, of the order of 2 to 3 percent, in the number of persons at work in traditional or long established industries such as Food, Beverages, Tobacco, Textiles and Clothing, etc. There was a very substantial rise (both in absolute and relative terms) in the Insurance, Finance and Business Services sector of the economy where employment increased by 5,500, or nearly 30 percent, between 1966 and 1971.

**TABLE III : - ACTUAL AND PERCENTAGE CHANGE 1966-1971, IN THE NUMBERS AT WORK IN
THE PRINCIPAL INDUSTRIAL GROUPS.**

| Industrial group | Actual change (Thousands) | | | Percentage change | | |
|---|------------------------------|--------|---------|-------------------|--------|---------|
| | Persons | Males | Females | Persons | Males | Females |
| AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHING | - 60.4 | - 52.8 | - 7.7 | - 18.1 | - 17.6 | - 23.2 |
| MINING, QUARRYING AND TURF PRODUCTION | + 1.1 | + 1.0 | + 0.1 | + 12.0 | + 11.4 | + 34.1 |
| MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES | + 15.3 | + 13.3 | + 2.0 | + 7.7 | + 9.8 | + 3.1 |
| Food, beverages and tobacco | + 1.1 | + 0.8 | + 0.3 | + 2.2 | + 2.2 | + 2.4 |
| Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather | + 1.2 | + 1.1 | + 0.1 | + 2.3 | + 4.9 | + 0.4 |
| Wood and wood products | + 0.4 | + 0.4 | + 0.0 | + 3.1 | + 3.3 | + 0.1 |
| Paper, paper products, printing and publishing | + 0.6 | + 1.1 | - 0.5 | + 3.5 | + 10.1 | - 9.5 |
| Chemical, rubber and plastic products | + 1.5 | + 1.5 | + 0.0 | + 11.0 | + 15.1 | + 0.5 |
| Glass, pottery and cement | + 2.3 | + 2.1 | + 0.2 | + 25.1 | + 25.9 | + 19.2 |
| Metals, metal products and machinery | + 4.8 | + 3.7 | + 1.1 | + 17.6 | + 16.9 | + 20.8 |
| Transport equipment | + 1.0 | + 1.0 | - 0.0 | + 8.4 | + 9.1 | - 3.0 |
| Other manufacturing industries | + 2.4 | + 1.6 | + 0.8 | + 46.3 | + 47.1 | + 44.5 |
| BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION | + 10.4 | + 10.0 | + 0.4 | + 14.0 | + 13.8 | + 28.9 |
| ELECTRICITY, GAS AND WATER SUPPLY | + 2.3 | + 1.9 | + 0.3 | + 18.9 | + 17.3 | + 43.2 |
| COMMERCE | + 0.6 | + 3.1 | - 2.5 | + 0.4 | + 3.2 | - 5.1 |
| INSURANCE, FINANCE AND BUSINESS SERVICES | + 5.5 | + 2.3 | + 3.2 | + 29.9 | + 18.9 | + 51.0 |
| TRANSPORT, COMMUNICATION AND STORAGE | + 2.9 | + 1.7 | + 1.2 | + 5.0 | + 3.4 | + 14.5 |
| PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND DEFENCE | + 5.7 | + 3.6 | + 2.1 | + 13.2 | + 10.5 | + 22.5 |
| PROFESSIONAL SERVICES | + 15.3 | + 7.0 | + 8.3 | + 16.3 | + 18.6 | + 14.8 |
| PERSONAL SERVICES | - 8.7 | + 1.0 | - 9.6 | - 13.7 | + 6.1 | - 20.3 |
| RECREATIONAL SERVICES | - 0.3 | + 0.2 | - 0.5 | - 2.7 | + 2.6 | - 10.1 |
| OTHER INDUSTRIES OR INDUSTRY NOT STATED | - 0.8 | - 0.9 | + 0.2 | - 18.2 | - 30.2 | + 18.3 |
| TOTAL ALL INDUSTRIES | - 11.1 | - 8.7 | - 2.5 | - 1.0 | - 1.1 | - 0.9 |

**TABLE IV : - ACTUAL AND PERCENTAGE CHANGE, 1966-1971 IN THE PERSONS AT WORK
CLASSIFIED BY INDUSTRIAL GROUP AND PLANNING REGION.**

| Region | Change in actual numbers (Thousands) | | | | Percentage change | | | |
|--------------|---|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | Total at work | Agriculture, forestry and fishing | Other production industries | Service- type industries | Total at work | Agriculture, forestry and fishing | Other production industries | Service- type industries |
| East | + 16.7 | - 4.5 | + 8.5 | + 12.7 | + 4.5 | - 15.7 | + 6.1 | + 6.2 |
| South West | - 2.3 | - 9.5 | + 4.4 | + 2.8 | - 1.4 | - 16.8 | + 10.0 | + 4.4 |
| South East | - 2.2 | - 7.4 | + 4.5 | + 0.8 | - 1.9 | - 16.6 | + 16.7 | + 1.8 |
| North East | - 0.6 | - 4.9 | + 3.5 | + 0.8 | - 0.9 | - 18.6 | + 19.4 | + 3.6 |
| Mid West | - 2.8 | - 6.7 | + 2.5 | + 1.4 | - 3.0 | - 17.2 | + 10.7 | + 4.0 |
| Donegal | - 3.7 | - 4.6 | + 0.8 | - 0.0 | - 9.5 | - 23.2 | + 10.8 | - 0.1 |
| Midlands | - 5.2 | - 7.4 | + 1.5 | + 0.8 | - 6.1 | - 17.6 | + 8.5 | + 2.9 |
| West | - 8.6 | - 11.6 | + 2.3 | + 0.7 | - 8.7 | - 19.9 | + 17.7 | + 2.6 |
| North West | - 2.3 | - 3.8 | + 1.0 | + 0.5 | - 7.4 | - 20.9 | + 25.5 | + 5.2 |
| TOTAL | - 11.1 | - 60.4 | + 29.0 | + 20.3 | - 1.0 | - 18.1 | + 9.9 | + 4.6 |

Table IV above gives data showing changes in the number of persons at work over the period 1966-71 for the different planning regions, distinguishing the same three broad economic sectors as in Table II. Looking first at the total figures they show that the East Region alone recorded an increase in the total number of persons at work (4½ percent) even though the other planning regions in the eastern and southern parts of the country recorded only marginal decreases, of between 1 and 2 percent. The total number of persons working declined by 3 percent in the Mid West planning region but in the Midlands Region and in all of the remaining regions on the west coast decreases of the order of 6 to 10 percent took place. These decreases reflect the continuing fall in the total number of persons working in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector where the reductions in all regions were very substantial, ranging from 16 percent in the East Region to as high as 23 percent in Donegal. There were substantial increases in the number of persons at work in the industrial sector for all regions, the most notable increases taking place in the North East and North West planning regions which experienced rises of 19 and 26 percent respectively. For service type industries the number of persons working in all regions increased between 1966 and 1971, except in Donegal where the level was almost identical in both years. The highest increase for this sector was that of some 6 percent in the East region.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

No less than 70 percent of the total number of persons at work at the time of the Census in 1971 were employees, accounting for 737,000 out of the total of 1,055,000 persons. About one quarter of the total (259,000 persons) were employers and own account workers, the remaining persons, who constitute only 5 percent of the total number of persons at work were recorded as "assisting relatives". Table V following gives information on the trends evident over the period 1966-71 for each of these status categories.

**TABLE V : - ACTUAL AND PERCENTAGE CHANGE 1966-1971 OF GAINFULLY OCCUPIED PERSONS
IN EACH EMPLOYMENT STATUS.**

| Employment status | Change in actual numbers (Thousands) | | | Percentage change | | |
|--------------------------|---|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| | Total all industries | Agriculture, forestry and fishing | All other industries | Total all industries | Agriculture, forestry and fishing | All other industries |
| Employer and own account | - 13.9 | - 18.4 | + 4.5 | - 5.1 | - 9.1 | + 6.4 |
| Assisting relatives | - 32.3 | - 30.2 | - 2.1 | - 35.4 | - 36.3 | - 26.4 |
| Employees | + 35.0 | - 11.8 | + 46.9 | + 5.0 | - 25.0 | + 7.2 |
| Total at work | - 11.1 | - 60.4 | + 49.3 | - 1.0 | - 18.1 | + 6.7 |
| Out of work | + 12.5 | + 1.5 | + 11.0 | + 23.9 | + 14.7 | + 26.1 |
| Total gainfully occupied | + 1.3 | - 59.0 | + 60.3 | + 0.1 | - 17.2 | + 7.8 |

The figures show that the decline in the number of employers and own account workers and in the numbers of assisting relatives, evident in previous Censuses, is continuing. The number of employers and own account workers fell by nearly 14,000 persons between 1966 and 1971, representing a relative decrease of 5 percent which is very similar to the rate of decline over the 1961-66 period; however the number of assisting relatives declined at a much faster rate over the same period, decreasing by 32,000 or 35 percent compared with a reduction of 22 percent between 1961 and 1966. The bulk of the decreases described above took place in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector. Despite the decline between 1966 and 1971 in the total number of persons at work, the total number of employees in all sectors increased by 35,000 (or 5 percent) over the period concerned, this overall figure however being the result of diverse trends in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing and other sectors — the number of employees in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing fell by 25 percent between 1966 and 1971 but a rise of over 7 percent took place in all other sectors combined.