

CENSUS OF POPULATION, 1981

INTRODUCTION

A Census of Population was taken on the night of the 5th April, 1981 in accordance with the Statistics (Census of Population) Order 1981 (S.I. No. 60 of 1981) made by the Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach in pursuance of powers conferred on him by sub-section 1 of section 16 of the Statistics Act 1926 and the Statistics Acts 1926 and 1946 (Transfer of Ministerial Functions) Order 1949 (S.I. No. 142 of 1949), and the Statistics (Delegation of Powers and Duties) Order 1980 (S.I. No. 36 of 1980).

The following particulars were collected in respect of each individual:- (i) name, (ii) sex, (iii) relationship to head of household, (iv) date of birth, (v) marital status, (vi) place of birth, (vii) religion, (viii) ability to speak Irish, (ix) date of marriage and number of children (for married women only), (x) usual residence, (xi) usual residence one year prior to Census date, (xii) means of travel and distance travelled to work or school; and for persons aged 15 years or over, (xiii) present economic status, (xiv) principal occupation, (xv) employment status, (xvi) name of employer and nature of employer's business, (xvii) address of place of work or school, (xviii) area and rateable valuation of agricultural holdings, (xix) age at which full-time education ended and number of years' attendance at school or college (for persons who had ceased their full-time education), (xx) scientific or technological qualifications held and fields of science concerned. In addition the following information was collected in respect of each private household:- (i) nature of occupancy of the dwelling (rented, owner occupied etc.), (ii) rent of dwelling, (iii) rooms occupied, (iv) year dwelling was built, (v) type of water supply, (vi) availability of bath or shower, (vii) type of sanitary facilities and (viii) principal fuel used to heat the dwelling and availability of central heating.

COVERAGE OF THE CENSUS

The Census figures relate to the de facto population, that is to say the population recorded for each area represents the total of all persons present within its boundaries on the night of Sunday, 5 April, 1981, together with all persons who arrived in that area on the morning of Monday, 6 April, 1981, not having been enumerated elsewhere; persons on board ships in port are included with the population of adjacent areas. The figures, therefore, include visitors present on Census night as well as those in residence, while usual residents temporarily absent from the State are excluded. The date of the Census was, however, chosen to coincide with a period when passenger movements were at a minimum and consequently the figures closely approximate to those for the normally resident population. Members of the Defence Forces who, on Census night, were serving abroad with the United Nations were excluded from the enumeration.

PUBLICATION AND AVAILABILITY OF RESULTS

Volume 1 - Population of District Electoral Divisions, Towns and larger units of Area (Pl. 985); Volume 2 - Ages and Marital Status classified by Areas (Pl. 2561); Volume 3 - Household Composition and Family Units (Pl. 3084); Volume 4 - Principal Economic Status and Industries (Pl. 3274) have already been published. Two reports based on the processing of a five per cent sample of the Census returns have also been published; the first in March, 1983 (Pl. 1446) related to Age, Marital Status and Labour Force; the second in December, 1983 (Pl. 1933) related to characteristics of Housing and Households. A series of Bulletins has been published giving provisional results for the State and for each Planning Region, County and County Borough of classifications by Age, Marital Status, Principal Economic Status, Labour Force, Travel to Work, Religion, Size and Type of Dwelling, Nature of Occupancy, Water Supply, Sanitary Facilities and Fuel used to heat the dwelling. A final State Bulletin published in July, 1984 (Pl. 2526) contains classifications by Place of Birth, Usual Residence, Irish Language, Travel to Work and School, Education and Household Facilities separately distinguishing between Aggregate Town and Aggregate Rural Areas.

Tabulations containing frequency counts of the population in each Urban and Rural District, each District Electoral Division or Ward, each town of 1,000 population and over and each Gaeltacht Area classified by the main variables collected in the Census (e.g. Occupation, Industry, Economic Status, Socio-Economic Group, Education, Age, Marital Status) as well as counts of Private Households classified by Housing characteristics (Number of Rooms, Age of Building, Availability of Bath, etc.) are available on computer print-out sheets and on tape. These data will be supplied, at a charge, by the Central Statistics Office.

CENSUS OF POPULATION, 1981

VOLUME 5

EXPLANATORY NOTES

CLASSIFICATION BY RELIGION

This Volume contains detailed results involving classifications of the population by religious denomination. The column on the Census schedule in which information on this topic was furnished was headed "Religion - State the Particular Denomination", If None write "None". No further notes or instructions were given. The Census enumerators were instructed not to insist on the completion of this section of the form in cases where householders were reluctant to give the required information. This was similar to the instruction given at the 1971 Census of Population, the most recent previous Census at which a question on Religion was included on the Census schedule. The number of persons for whom no information was supplied was 70,976 as compared with 46,648 in 1971 and 5,625 in 1961. Classifications are given in respect of the following denominations: Catholic, Church of Ireland (including Anglican and Church of England), Presbyterian, Methodist and Jewish.

CLASSIFICATION BY OCCUPATION

All persons aged 15 years and over, including those out of work and those who are temporarily confined to hospitals, are classified to their usual principal occupation.

The occupation is determined by the kind of work performed in earning a living irrespective of the place in which, and the purpose for which, it is performed. Classification of the population by Occupation thus brings together the number of persons engaged in the same type of work regardless of the purpose for which such work is undertaken.

The most detailed classification by occupation used in the 1981 Census of Population is that shown in Appendix A (page 80).

CLASSIFICATION BY ADMINISTRATIVE AND CENSUS AREAS

The various administrative and Census areas for which figures are shown in this Volume were described in detail in the explanatory notes to "Census of Population of Ireland 1981, Volume I" (Pl. 985). In particular the basis for defining towns and their environs and the suburban areas of Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Waterford were detailed.

CLASSIFICATIONS BY MARITAL STATUS

In the 1981 Census of Population, returns on marital status were sought on the basis of "present legal status" with provision for four categories - "single", "married", "widowed" and "other status". The latter category was intended to relate only to "persons who had obtained a divorce in another country". Some 14,117 persons (5,116 males and 9,001 females) returned themselves as "other status". In this Volume, these persons are included in the "married" category in the tabulations involving classification by marital status.

LABOUR FORCE

The Labour Force comprises persons aged 15 years and over who are "at work", "seeking regular work for the first time" or "unemployed". This is an extension of the Labour Force definition used in previous Censuses which did not include first job seekers.

The labour force figures shown in Tables 9A and 9B of this Volume are directly based on the Census and differ slightly therefore from the official mid-April 1981 Labour Force estimates. For derivation of these latter estimates see pages 8 and 9 of "Labour Force Survey 1983 - First Results" (Pl. 2660).

CONTENT OF THE TABLES

The content and layout of the present Volume is similar to that of the corresponding Volume of the 1971 Census. Table 1A shows the number of persons of each religious denomination at each Census of Population since 1881 at which a question on this topic was included while Table 1B shows the percentage changes in these numbers in the intercensal periods. Table 2 provides similar information to Table 1A for each Province and County while Table 3, for Provinces only, gives a classification for males and females in 1981. Table 4 shows the number of persons in the various religious denominations in the Aggregate Town and Aggregate Rural Areas, of each Province and in the different types of district, that is County Boroughs, Towns of 10,000 population and over, Towns of 5,000-10,000 in population, Towns of 1,500-5,000 in population, Towns of 1,000-1,500 in population and the remainder of the country.

Table 5A gives the number of persons of each religion in each Province, County and County Borough in 1981 while Table 5B shows the percentage changes (Provinces and Counties) between 1971 and 1981. In Table 6 males and females are classified by religion, distinguishing Catholic and Church of Ireland only, for Urban and Rural Districts and towns with legally defined boundaries. Other areas for which information is provided in this table are environs of towns with legally defined boundaries and towns without legally defined boundaries having a population of 1,500 or over in 1981.

Table 7 classifies persons of each religion by age group and marital status while Table 8 provides a similar classification for males and females in each Province, County and County Borough, distinguishing Catholic and Church of Ireland only. Tables 9A and 9B provide information on males and females who are at work or unemployed classified by occupational group and by religion.

Note: In interpreting the percentage changes shown in Tables 1B and 5B respectively, the relatively small proportions of the total population covered by some categories should be borne in mind. It should also be noted that in Table 5B percentage changes are not shown where the number returned was 10 or less in 1971 or 1981.

COMMENTARY

CHANGES, 1971 - 1981

Table A below summarises the numbers of persons of different religious denominations in the State in 1971 and 1981. Persons returned as Catholics accounted for 3,204,476 or 95 per cent of persons for whom the question on Religion was answered in the 1981 Census, an increase of 408,810 on the corresponding 1971 figure. The number of persons returned under all other stated religions totalled 128,381 in 1981, a marginal rise on the 1971 level. Within this group the number of persons returned as belonging to the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian and Methodist Churches declined by about 4,000 persons, from 119,437 in 1971 to 115,411 in 1981. This decrease took place over a period in which the total population increased by more than 465,000 persons. Consequently the proportion of the population accounted for by these religions declined from 4.0 per cent in 1971 to 3.4 per cent in 1981. However, it should be noted that information on religion was not returned in respect of over 2 per cent of the population and this may have significantly affected the trends for these individual denominations. In fact this qualification should always be borne in mind when making comparisons between 1971 and 1981 as the numbers for whom no information was supplied has increased significantly, from 46,648 to 70,976, between the two Censuses.

The most significant relative change shown in Table A is the increase in the number of persons who indicated that they had no religion. The number of such persons was almost 40,000 in 1981, more than five times the corresponding number in 1971. The total number of persons for whom "no religion" or no information was returned came to more than 110,000 persons or 3 per cent of the total population.

**TABLE A:- PERSONS CLASSIFIED BY RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION IN 1971 AND 1981
SHOWING PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN THAT PERIOD.**

Religious Denomination	1971		1981		Percentage change 1971-1981
	Number	Percentage*	Number	Percentage*	
		%		%	%
Catholic	2,795,666	95.4	3,204,476	95.0	+ 14.6
Church of Ireland	97,739	3.3	95,366	2.8	- 2.4
Presbyterian	16,052	0.5	14,255	0.4	- 11.2
Methodist	5,646	0.2	5,790	0.2	+ 2.6
Jewish	2,633	0.1	2,127	0.1	- 19.2
Other Stated Religions	6,248	0.2	10,843	0.3	+ 73.5
"No Religion"	7,616	0.3	39,572	1.2	+ 419.6
No Information Supplied	46,648	-	70,976	-	+ 52.2
TOTAL	2,978,248	100.0	3,443,405	100.0	+ 15.6

*Calculated excluding the "No Information Supplied" group.

REGIONAL CHANGES

TABLE B below shows the changes which took place between 1971 and 1981 in each County in the numbers of Catholics, numbers of persons with specified religions other than Catholic, which are grouped together in the Table, and numbers of persons returned as having no religion or for whom no information was supplied.

TABLE B:- CHANGE BETWEEN 1971 AND 1981 IN THE NUMBERS OF CATHOLICS, PERSONS OF OTHER STATED RELIGIONS, AND PERSONS OF NO RELIGION OR FOR WHOM NO INFORMATION WAS SUPPLIED IN EACH COUNTY.

Province or County	Religious Denomination			Province or County	Religious Denomination		
	Catholic	Other Stated Religions	"No Religion" or No Information Supplied		Catholic	Other Stated Religions	"No Religion" or No Information Supplied
Change 1971-1981				Change 1971-1981			
Total	+ 408,810	+ 63	+ 56,284	Munster	+ 100,556	+ 1,465	+ 14,292
Leinster	+ 257,845	- 208	+ 34,744	Clare	+ 10,777	+ 140	+ 1,642
Carlow	+ 4,995	+ 79	+ 509	Cork	+ 43,043	+ 305	+ 6,234
Dublin	+ 131,914	- 2,681	+ 21,712	Kerry	+ 8,295	+ 100	+ 1,603
Kildare	+ 28,794	+ 883	+ 2,468	Limerick	+ 17,905	+ 621	+ 2,676
Kilkenny	+ 8,162	+ 389	+ 782	Tipperary	+ 10,590	+ 74	+ 1,032
Laoighis	+ 5,684	- 51	+ 279	Waterford	+ 9,946	+ 225	+ 1,105
Longford	+ 2,754	- 19	+ 155	Connacht	+ 28,198	+ 444	+ 4,866
Louth	+ 12,003	- 90	+ 1,650	Galway	+ 19,197	+ 425	+ 3,173
Meath	+ 21,185	+ 443	+ 2,062	Leitrim	- 633	- 180	+ 62
Offaly	+ 6,375	- 101	+ 209	Mayo	+ 4,111	+ 159	+ 971
Westmeath	+ 6,923	+ 140	+ 890	Roscommon	+ 983	- 45	+ 86
Wexford	+ 11,020	+ 112	+ 1,598	Sligo	+ 4,540	+ 85	+ 574
Wicklow	+ 18,036	+ 688	+ 2,430	Ulster (part of)	+ 22,211	- 1,638	+ 2,382
				Cavan	+ 1,463	- 490	+ 264
				Donegal	+ 15,658	- 580	+ 1,690
				Monaghan	+ 5,090	- 568	+ 428

With the exception of County Leitrim, the numbers of Catholics increased in every County. The decrease in the number of Catholics in Leitrim followed a decline in the total population of that County which was the only County to suffer a fall in population in the ten year period 1971-1981. The changes which took place in the numbers of persons of specified religions other than Catholic were much more diverse.

Large declines were registered in Dublin and in the Ulster Counties of Cavan, Donegal and Monaghan. On the other hand significant increases took place in the Counties of Kildare, Kilkenny, Meath, Wicklow, Limerick and Galway. Increases occurred in every County in the numbers of persons of "No Religion" or for whom no information was supplied in the Census.

TABLE C shows the distribution of the population by religious denomination in the Planning Regions (the composition of each Planning Region is shown in Appendix B, page 82).

**TABLE C:- PERSONS IN EACH RELIGION AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL POPULATION
IN EACH PLANNING REGION.**

Planning Region	Total	Religious Denomination						"No Religion"	No information supplied
		Catholic	Church of Ireland	Presbyterian	Methodist	Jewish	Other Stated Religions		
East	100.-	90.9	3.4	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.5	1.9	2.7
South West	100.-	94.6	2.2	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.2	1.0	1.7
South East	100.-	95.0	2.4	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.6	1.6
North East	100.-	91.7	3.9	1.8	0.1	-	0.2	0.5	1.8
Mid-West	100.-	95.6	1.3	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.8	1.8
Donegal	100.-	87.1	5.2	4.6	0.5	0.0	0.2	0.6	1.8
Midlands	100.-	95.3	2.7	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.4	1.2
West	100.-	96.2	0.8	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.7	2.0
North West	100.-	93.6	3.9	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.2	0.7	1.2
TOTAL	100.-	93.1	2.8	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.3	1.1	2.1

The highest proportions of Catholics, with 95.0 per cent or more, were in the West, Mid-West, Midlands and South East regions. The lowest proportion, 87.1 per cent, was in Donegal with the East and North East, at 90.9 and 91.7 per cent respectively, being the next lowest. These regions together with the North West had the highest proportions of members of the Church of Ireland, at 3.4 per cent or higher. There were two regions where Presbyterians formed more than 1 per cent of the total, these being Donegal (4.6 per cent) and North East (1.8 per cent). No other religion in any region formed more than 1 per cent of the total. No information was returned for 2.1 per cent of the total population; this proportion was highest in the East region at 2.7 per cent.

AGE GROUPS

The changes between 1971 and 1981 in the religious denominations in various age groups are shown in TABLE D where specified religions other than Catholic are grouped together.

**TABLE D:- PERSONS CLASSIFIED BY RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION AND AGE GROUP
SHOWING PERCENTAGE CHANGE 1971-1981.**

Religious Denomination		Total	Age Group						
			Under 15	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 and over
Total	1971	2,978,248	931,152	482,978	324,344	301,836	319,206	288,913	329,819
	1981	3,443,405	1,043,729	602,556	478,011	359,753	301,530	288,872	368,954
	% change	+ 15.6	+ 12.1	+ 24.8	+ 47.4	+ 19.2	- 5.5	- 0.0	+ 11.9
Catholic	1971	2,795,666	887,439	456,131	302,677	282,604	298,232	266,861	301,722
	1981	3,204,476	985,464	564,827	434,118	330,746	280,717	268,872	339,732
	% change	+ 14.6	+ 11.0	+ 23.8	+ 43.4	+ 17.0	- 5.9	+ 0.8	+ 12.6
Other Stated Religions	1971	128,318	27,150	17,536	14,499	13,459	15,701	17,483	22,490
	1981	128,381	27,875	17,932	18,441	15,383	12,663	13,715	22,372
	% change	+ 0.0	+ 2.7	+ 2.3	+ 27.2	+ 14.3	- 19.3	- 21.6	- 0.5
"No Religion"	1971	7,616	1,454	1,604	1,964	972	684	503	435
	1981	39,572	7,690	7,572	13,071	5,628	2,433	1,608	1,570
	% change	+ 419.6	+ 428.9	+ 372.1	+ 565.5	+ 479.0	+ 255.7	+ 219.7	+ 260.9
No Information Supplied	1971	46,648	15,109	7,707	5,204	4,801	4,589	4,066	5,172
	1981	70,976	22,700	12,225	12,381	7,996	5,717	4,677	5,280
	% change	+ 52.2	+ 50.2	+ 58.6	+ 137.9	+ 66.5	+ 24.6	+ 15.0	+ 2.1

The changes in the age structure of the Catholic population closely follow the changes in the age structure of the population as a whole. This is to be expected since just over 93 per cent of the population were returned as Catholic. Thus, there has been a very significant increase, some 21 per cent, in the number of Catholics under 35 years of age in the ten years 1971-1981 with the 25-34 year age group increasing by 43.4 per cent. There was an increase of 17 per cent in the number of Catholics aged 35-44, a decline of 5.9 per cent in the 45-54 age group and a rise of 7 per cent in those aged 55 and over.

In contrast, the changes in the age structure of the population of the "Other Stated Religions" differed very much from those of the total population. There were only increases of 2.7 per cent and 2.3 per cent, respectively, in the numbers under 15 years of age and in the 15-24 year age group.

The numbers in the 25-34 year age group increased by 27.2 per cent but this was considerably lower than the 47.4 per cent rise in the overall population in this age group. There were significant declines, of the order of 20 per cent, in the population with "Other Stated Religions" in the age groups 45-54 and 55-64. The age pattern of the "Other Stated Religions" category in 1971 has, of course, a direct impact on these changes since there were not sufficient numbers in the 35-44 and 45-54 age groups ten years ago to replace the numbers who were, at that time, aged 45-54 and 55-64 years, respectively.

The 25-34 age group contained the greatest number of persons for whom "No Religion" was returned in 1981 and the total of all age groups under 45 years accounted for almost 86 per cent of such persons.

The number of persons for whom no information was supplied increased by over 50 per cent. The bulk of this increase was in the younger age groups with a smaller relative change shown for persons over 45 years of age.

TABLE E shows the numbers of persons in each age group as a percentage of the total population of each religious denomination in 1971 and 1981; specified religions other than Catholic are again grouped together in this Table.

**TABLE E:- PERSONS IN EACH AGE GROUP AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL POPULATION
IN EACH RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION.**

Religious Denomination		Total	Age Group						
			Under 15	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 and over
Total	1971	100.-	31.3	16.2	10.9	10.1	10.7	9.7	11.1
	1981	100.-	30.3	17.5	13.9	10.4	8.8	8.4	10.7
Catholic	1971	100.-	31.7	16.3	10.8	10.1	10.7	9.5	10.8
	1981	100.-	30.8	17.6	13.5	10.3	8.8	8.4	10.6
Other Stated Religions	1971	100.-	21.2	13.7	11.3	10.5	12.2	13.6	17.5
	1981	100.-	21.7	14.0	14.4	12.0	9.9	10.7	17.4
"No Religion"	1971	100.-	19.1	21.1	25.8	12.8	9.0	6.6	5.7
	1981	100.-	19.4	19.1	33.0	14.2	6.1	4.1	4.0
No Information Supplied	1971	100.-	32.4	16.5	11.2	10.3	9.8	8.7	11.1
	1981	100.-	32.0	17.2	17.4	11.3	8.1	6.6	7.4

One of the most striking features of TABLE E is the large proportion of Catholics in the age groups under 25. Almost one half of the Catholic population is concentrated in these age groups compared to 35.7 per cent of persons with "Other Stated Religions" and 38.5 per cent of persons of "No Religion". There is a corresponding contrast in the older age groups where only 19 per cent of Catholics are aged 55 and over compared to some 28 per cent of persons with "Other Stated Religions". In the case of persons of "No Religion" the age group 25-34 clearly predominates and contains one-third of all such persons. The age distribution of persons for whom no information was supplied in 1981 shows that the younger age groups under 35 years accounted for 66.6 per cent of all such persons. The corresponding proportion in 1971 was 60.1 per cent.