



Central Statistics Office
An Phríomh-Oifig Staidrimh

Press Statement
Preas Ráiteas

2006 Census of Population – Principal Socio-Economic Results

Major societal change

Irish society continues to experience major change according to the most recent report of the 2006 census released today by the Central Statistics Office. The report: *2006 Census of Population – Principal Socio-Economic Results* gives the final results of the census conducted on 23 April 2006.

The report provides information on the labour market, educational attainment, travel patterns, persons with disabilities, carers, voluntary activities as well as car ownership and access to the internet.

Labour force up 17.1 per cent in four years

The number of persons in the labour force grew by 308,500 or 17.1 per cent between 2002 and 2006 with employment growth (+288,400) providing the main stimulus. The employment gains in absolute terms were evenly divided between males and females – the former increasing by 15 per cent and the latter by 21.3 per cent over the four-year period.

1 in 8 workers non-Irish national

Non-Irish nationals represented almost half (49%) of the increase in employment between 2002 and 2006 with the result that they accounted for one in eight workers in the State at the time of the 2006 census. The hotels and restaurants sector had the highest proportion (31.9%) of non-Irish national workers in 2006 followed by business activities (mainly computers and related activities and industrial cleaning, 16.2%), manufacturing (15.2%) and construction (14.2%).

Highest unemployment in Limerick City

The overall unemployment rate* as measured by the responses to the question on principal economic status in the 2006 Census was 8.5 per cent nationally. At county level Limerick City (14.6%) had the highest unemployment rate in 2006. Donegal (12.9%) and Waterford City (12.6%) were next in line. Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown (5.4%), Cork County (5.9%) and Roscommon (6.3%) had the lowest rates.

There were 62 Electoral Divisions (EDs) with a labour force in excess of 200 persons which had unemployment rates of over 20 per cent at the time of the census. These 62 EDs had a combined unemployment rate of 24 per cent compared with a national average figure of 8.5 per cent based on the responses to the census. Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Waterford Cities contained 35 of these 62 unemployment blackspots.

* The official unemployment rate in the second quarter of 2002 as measured by the Quarterly National Household Survey using the ILO criterion was 4.3 per cent.

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Proportionately more females in education

The proportion of females in education in 2006 exceeded that of males for all single years of age in the range 15 to 23 years. The differential between males and females was widest for 19 year olds at 15.7 percentage points, i.e. 60.4 per cent of 19 year old females were in education compared with 44.8 per cent of males.

A consequence of the increasing education participation rates, especially among 20 to 24 year olds, is a general increase in the age at which full-time education ceases. Nearly 50 per cent of the population aged 15 years and over in 1981, whose full-time education had ceased, left the educational system before reaching the age of 16. By 2006, the corresponding figure had fallen to 21.1 per cent.

A higher proportion of non-Irish nationals aged 25-44 years had a third level qualification compared with the corresponding Irish cohort, 43.8 per cent and 41.3 per cent, respectively. At the other end of the scale 10.8 per cent of non-Irish nationals in the relevant cohort were only educated to primary level in 2006 compared with 7.2 per cent for Irish nationals.

One in five have third level qualifications

Nearly 821,000 persons aged 15 years and over in April 2006 held third level qualifications, which they attained after completing two or more years of study. Over four out of ten persons aged 25 to 34 years at the time of the census were graduates and these persons accounted for over a third of all graduates.

More cars and car users

Four out of every five households had at least one car in April 2006, with car ownership higher in rural areas (88.6%) than in urban areas (75.2%). Meath (89.8%) had the highest proportion of households with at least one car while Dublin City (59.5%) had the lowest.

The private car remains the main means of transport for Irish workers. Just over 57 per cent of all workers drove to work by car in 2006, up from 55 per cent four years earlier. Taken in combination with workers who drove vans or lorries to work, almost 65 per cent of Irish workers drove to work in 2006, representing an additional 225,000 work related car users compared with 2002.

Majority of primary schoolchildren driven to school

55 per cent of primary schoolchildren were driven to school by car in 2006 compared with 27.7 per cent fifteen years earlier. During the same period the proportion of primary schoolchildren walking to school declined from 39.4 per cent to 24.3 per cent.

9.3 per cent of population with a disability

Almost 394,000 persons, representing 9.3 per cent of the total population, had a long lasting health problem or disability in April 2006. The incidence of disability was higher among females than males (9.6% compared with 9%) and nearly two-thirds of those with a disability were aged 50 years or over.

Almost 161,000 carers

Almost 161,000 persons aged 15 years and over (4.8% of the total) indicated that they provided regular unpaid personal help for a friend or family member with a long-term illness, health problem or disability in April 2006. Women accounted for over 100,000 (or 62%) of the 2006 total and over half of them were in their forties or fifties.

1 in 6 persons aged 15 years and over involved in voluntary work

Over 553,000 persons, representing 16.4 per cent of the population aged 15 and over, were involved in voluntary activity according to the results of a new question introduced in the 2006 census. The 45-49 age group had the highest participation rate in voluntary activities (23.3%) while almost one in four of all voluntary workers were in their forties. The activity with the highest recorded number of volunteers was social or charitable work (193,000 persons) followed by sporting activities (180,000).

PC ownership and Internet access

Over 828,000 (56.6%) households had a personal computer (PC) in April 2006 while 683,000 (46.7%) had access to the Internet. Of this latter figure, 292,000 households had a broadband connection to the internet. The Dublin counties of Dún Laoghaire/Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin had the highest penetration rates for PCs and Internet access while Limerick City, Longford and Cork City had the lowest.

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