



**Central Statistics Office**  
An Phríomh-Oifig Staidrimh

**Press Statement**  
Preas Ráiteas

**2006 Census of Population – Volume 2 – Ages and Marital Status**

**Dublin's commuter belt towns have highest proportion of young people**

Dublin's commuter belt towns have the highest proportion of young people aged 0-14 years with Ratoath in County Meath having the highest at 32 per cent. Donabate (30.5%) in Fingal, Prosperous (29.3%) in County Kildare and Dunboyne (29.1%) in County Meath have the next highest proportions – all well above the national average of 20.4 per cent. Urban areas (defined as cities and towns with a population of 1,500 or more) had proportionately fewer younger persons (19.3%) compared with rural areas (22.1%).

This information is contained in *Census 2006 Volume 2 - Ages and Marital Status*, which gives further detailed results of the Census conducted on 23 April 2006. The report gives the final population figures classified by age, sex, and marital status for detailed territorial divisions in the country. (See editor's note).

**Higher proportion of older persons in rural areas**

People aged 65 years and over account for 11.0 per cent of the total population in the State. However, there are proportionally more older people in rural areas than in urban locations, 12.2 per cent compared with 10.3 per cent.

In towns with a population of 1,500 or more, Castlerea in County Roscommon had the highest proportion of those aged 65 years and over (23.2%) while at the other end of scale Kinsealy-Drinan in Fingal had only 1.3 per cent of its population in this age group.

**Large increase in persons aged 25 to 44**

Persons aged between 25-44 years is the fastest growing segment of the population and increased by 17.2 per cent in urban areas and 8.6 per cent in rural areas between 2002 and 2006. It now accounts for 31.7 per cent of the total population, compared with 30.1 in 2002. This large increase has been strongly influenced by the high net inward migration of recent years.

The young dependency ratio, which is derived by expressing the population aged 0-14 as a percentage of the population of working age (15-64 years) has also been influenced by this increase. It peaked at over 50 per cent in the 1970s but has since been in decline and reached a new low of 29.7 per cent in 2006.

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## **Divorce is fastest growing marital status category**

The number of divorced persons increased from 35,100 to 59,500 between 2002 and 2006, an increase of 69.8 per cent, making it the fastest growing marital status category. This continued upward movement in the number of divorced persons, from a relatively low base, reflects the introduction of divorce in the State in 1997. The number of separated persons increased from 98,800 to 107,300 over the same period – up 8.6 per cent.

The CSO report also reveals that Limerick City has the highest proportion of separated persons at 12.9 per cent. This measure expresses the number of separated and divorced persons as a percentage of those who ever married including those who were widowed at the time of the census. Limerick City was followed by Dublin City (11.6%). At the other end of the scale, County Galway (6.3%) had the lowest separation rate.

## **Galway remains Ireland's singles city**

Galway and Maynooth remain the single capitals of Ireland and are joined by Kinsealy-Drinan in Fingal in having the highest proportion of single persons.

The latest report shows that in the State as a whole 43.0 per cent of the population aged 15 and over were single and 46.4 per cent were married (excluding those separated). The remaining 10.6 per cent were either widowed or separated (including divorced).

However, in Galway City and Maynooth – both university locations – the single category predominated. Singles make up 59.1 per cent of the population in Galway City with married people accounting for 32.4 per cent, while in Maynooth singles were also in the majority with a 56.2 per cent compared with 36.9 per cent married. In Kinsealy-Drinan the figures were 57.1 per cent single and 35.5 per cent married.

The number of single people grew by over 138,500 (10.5%) between 2002 and 2006 compared with an increase in married people of almost 110,600 (7.6%) over the same period.

Overall, there was a higher proportion of single persons in urban areas – 47 per cent compared with 42.2 per cent married (excluding separated). In rural areas, 36.7 per cent of the population aged 15 and over were single and 53.1 per cent were married.

## **Editor's note**

The publication *Census 2006 – Principal Demographic Results*, released on 29 March 2007, contains a summary at State level of data from Volumes 1-4, 8, 11 and 12 of the detailed census reports which will be published over the coming months (see CSO website for release dates). The publication released today, Volume 2, gives figures on age and marital status at a more detailed geographical level.

## **For copies of the publication contact:**

Central Statistics Office, Information Section, Skehard Road, Cork 021 453 5011

or

Government Publications Sales Office, Sun Alliance House, Molesworth Street, Dublin 2.

Price: €15.00

Copies can also be downloaded from the CSO website (see address below).

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