



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

**Press Statement**  
**Preas Ráiteas**

**Census 2006 – Principal Demographic Results**

**Non-Irish nationals account for 10 per cent of population**

Non-Irish nationals account for 10 per cent of persons usually resident in the State, a report released today by the Central Statistics Office shows.

This information is contained in *2006 Census of Population – Principal Demographic Results* which gives the final results of the Census conducted on 23 April 2006. The report gives the breakdown of the population by age, sex, marital status, household composition, usual residence, nationality, place of birth, ethnic or cultural background as well as information on the Irish language, religion and housing.

Nearly 420,000 (10%) persons who were usual residents of the State in April 2006 indicated that they had a nationality other than Irish. The corresponding figure in 2002 was 224,000 (5.8%).

**Population getting older**

The number of persons aged 65 and over has increased at every census since 1961 from 315,000 in that year to 468,000 in 2006. This category now represents 11 per cent of the total population.

The State's population has aged by half a year since 2002 leading to an average age of 35.6 years in 2006 compared with 35.1 four years earlier.

Dublin Fingal had the youngest population with an average age of 32.2 in 2006 followed by Kildare with an average age of 32.8 years.

Roscommon, with an average age of 38.3 in 2006, had the oldest population in the State followed by Leitrim (38.1 years).

**Divorce on the increase**

*2006 Census of Population – Principal Demographic Results* also reveals that the number of divorced persons has increased by 70 per cent, from 35,000 to 59,500, between 2002 and 2006, reflecting to a large extent the legalisation of divorce in the State in 1997. The proportion of ever-married persons who were either separated or divorced increased from 7.5 per cent in 2002 to 8.7 per cent in 2006.

**Women having fewer children**

Every 100 women aged 65-69 years at the time of the census gave birth on average to 350 children during the course of their lifetimes compared with 220 children for women aged 40-44 years. Within a generation, therefore, the average number of children per woman has declined by 1.3 (from 3.5 to 2.2).

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## **Smaller families**

The report indicates that the number of families in the State increased by 42.4 per cent in the last twenty years. Falling fertility has had a major impact on family size and has seen the average number of children per family decline from 2.2 in 1986 to 1.4 in 2006.

Cohabiting couples accounted for 11.6 per cent of all family units in 2006 compared with 8.4 per cent four years earlier. Almost two thirds of these were couples without children.

## **22,400 Irish Travellers enumerated in Census**

According to a new question on ethnic or cultural background introduced in the 2006 Census there were 22,435 Travellers enumerated in the most recent census – down from 23,681 in 2002. Notwithstanding the lower overall number of travellers enumerated in 2006, those living in permanent accommodation increased by 1,750 (13%) since 2002 while the numbers living in temporary housing units fell by 2,295 (29.5%) during the same period.

## **Slight decline in percentage of Irish speakers**

Based on the results of the census, more persons indicated that they could speak Irish in 2006 (1.66 million) compared with 2002 (1.57 million). However, in percentage terms there was a slight decline from 42.8 per cent in 2002 to 41.9 per cent in 2006.

The proportion of Irish speakers declined in all Gaeltacht areas apart from the Meath and Waterford areas – the two smaller Gaeltacht areas.

## **Muslims third largest religious category**

Muslims represented the third largest religious category (behind Roman Catholic and Church of Ireland) in 2006 – up 13,400 since 2002 to just over 32,500 in number. While Roman Catholic is the predominant religious category with 3.68 million adherents its share fell from 88.4 per cent in 2002 to 86.8 per cent in 2006.

## **More flats and apartments**

The number of occupied flats and apartments increased from 110,500 units in 2002 to 148,600 in 2006. This category now accounts for 15 per cent of housing units located in urban areas.

The housing stock consisted of 1.77 million units in April 2006. Approximately 266,000 (15%) of these residences were vacant at the time of the census, while in a further 30,000 cases the complete household was either enumerated elsewhere or absent from the State at census time.

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

Central Statistics Office, Information Section, Skehard Road, Cork

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 below).

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