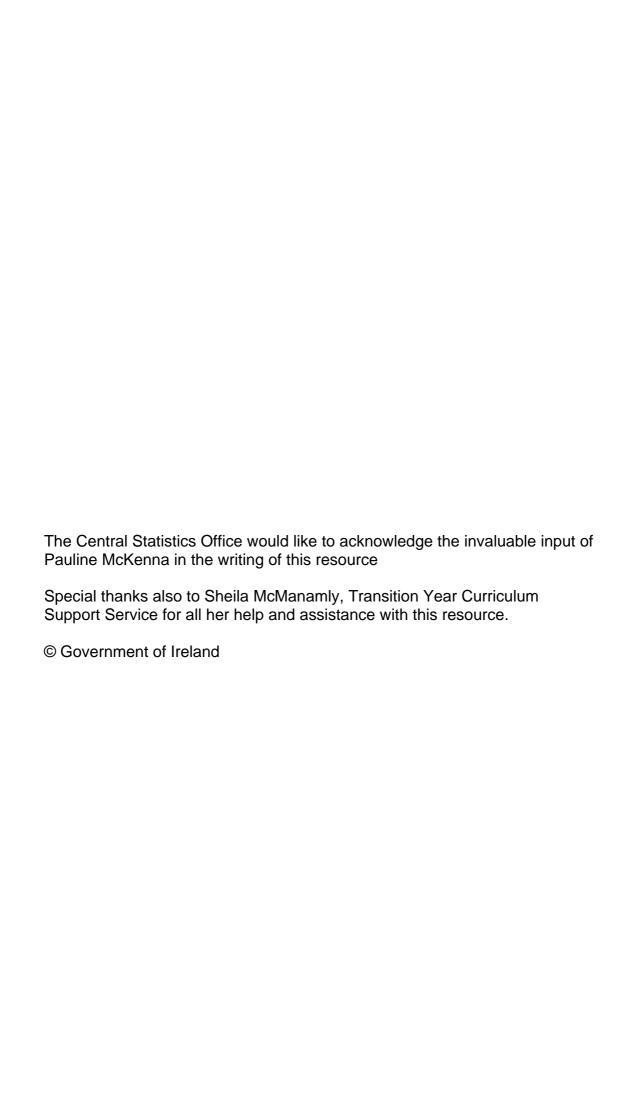# Making Sense of Us
Transition Year Census Module

Resource material developed for teachers of Transition Year in preparation for Census Day April 28th 2002

1. Overview

This activity demonstrates to students through hands on experience, many of the aspects of completing, analysing and reporting a survey. The survey can then act as a time capsule and this will involve future years using the data and statistics as a comparative model.

Students will learn to analyse and report on their survey. A vital aspect is that students will in turn analyse their own material and extrapolate from it wider concepts and understandings about their attitudes, habits and motivations. The questions on the survey are classified according to these three areas.

This activity should involve all transition year classes. By using it as a time capsule it is intended that this exercise will act as a snapshot of the present but in turn will also give students a comparative portrait for the future.

2. Class Time

It is intended that four class periods should be spent on this subject.

➤ **Class 1;** Did you know? (handout 1)
Getting started exercise (section 5 and Appendix 2)
That's easy for you to say   (handout 2)
Census activity (part)   (section 6)

➤ **Class 2;** Census activity (remainder)   (section 6)
Discuss questionnaire content (handout 3)
Discuss how information will be processed and collected (sections 7 and 8)
Filling out survey

➤ **Class 3;** Compiling results (section 9)

➤ **Class 4;** Students prepare report
Analysis of report (section 10)

3.   Learning Objectives

- Process of Survey

- Compiling results of survey

- Report on analysis of survey of results

- Discussion and organisation of time capsule

- Confidentiality is a primary concern here so it is intended that students will write their name on the detachable slip, which has a corresponding file number. However the actual survey will only have a file number. The idea is that should students wish to return to their file in years to come, it can be located through this simple and effective system. The detached slips and corresponding surveys should be filed in a box and kept in the room of the teacher or co–ordinator.

For Class 1 distribute **Handout 1** enclosed in Teacher's pack.

NOTE: Further information about all aspects of **Census 2002**
(including a schools page) is available at www.cso.ie

Handout 1 – Did You Know?

Did You Know?

Question two on the census form relates to sex i.e. male/female.
Although it may not appear important, it is vital in that it helps us to understand the changing roles of men and women in our families and communities. Were it not for this information we would never know that half of the female workforce was married in 1996 compared with only 14% in 1971.

In 1950 there were nine murders committed. Yet by 1999 this figure had risen to thirty eight.

In the 1986 and the 1991 Censuses female participation in education exceeded that of males at each year of age from 15 to 19 inclusive. Male participation rates were consistently higher for each year from 20-24 inclusive. In the most recent census, however, the greater female participation extends to each single year in the 15-22 year age group. The most interesting thing is that it is only for ages 23 and 24, when education participation begins to decline steeply, that the male rate exceeds the female one.

In 1981 1,126 female students and 1,405 male students aged 19 years and over travelled to school or college by car as a passenger. However, in 1996 this figure had risen to 4,663 and 4,259 respectively.

Question three on the census form establishes the usual make up households and family dwellings. The information shows changes in the nature of families and helps the government to plan for housing social welfare programmes and employment services.
We are now aware that there are twice as many separated persons in 1996 (87,800) than in 1986 (37,200).

According to the 1996 census there were 59,953 males involved in building and construction on a full-time basis while there were only 1,236 females involved in the same industry on the same basis.

The purpose of this section is to familiarise students with facts relating to some topical issues in Ireland today. It is important that students begin to read between the lines, so to speak. Students should extract information from the statistics, which will in turn allow them to compare and contrast with other statistics. It is important that students use these facts to build a picture of their own society. Part of the work of the CSO office is to gather this type of information and to then make it available to the public.

- **Ask the class to estimate how many people were attending third level education in 1965, keeping in mind that our population was almost three million at the time.**
  Give the class the following possible answers
  20,698
  84,920
  110,234
  Answer:20,698
- **Ask the students to work out what percentage of the population attended third level education at that time.**
  Answer: 0.7%
- How do they react to this figure?

- What does it tell us about society at this time?

- **Now ask students to write down the number of students participating in third level education in 1999 at a time when our population was 3.74 million.**
  Answer: 122,626
- **Ask the class to again work this figure out as a percentage of the population.**
  Answer: 3.3%
- What factors do the students think have caused such a change over forty years?

Similarly in 1981 82,130 males and 69,822 females walked to work. By 1996 this figure had fallen to 67,964 for males but had risen to 80,412 for females.

➢ Why do you think more females than males walk to work?
➢ If there are less people walking to work what implications would this have on traffic congestion and health?

Appendix 1 contains more tables that may also be useful in stimulating further discussion along the lines of the above.

From viewing the above figures in total ask the class to write down four reasons as to why they think the census plays a vital part in the social and living conditions of the Irish people while also allowing us to plan for the Ireland of the twenty first century.

Now distribute Handout 2: That's Easy For You To Say!

The census is conducted by the Central Statistics Office (CSO). The information received by this office will be treated with the greatest confidence and will be only used for statistical purposes, and the results will be prepared and analysed in a fair and balanced manner. It takes approximately 4,400 temporary field staff to carry out the census field operation. 4,000 of these are known as Enumerators and they will all carry ID cards.

- The population of Ireland in 1996 was 3,626,087. That was easy to say wasn't it? In a few breaths you have just stated what it took years to produce. It's a big job.
- It is estimated that the 2002 population will be the highest since 1871. Can you think of any reasons why?

- **See appendix 2 for population in each census between 1841 and 1996**

A good way to understand the many aspects of conducting and reporting a census is to take one yourself. If you want to conduct a census or survey in your school, take a look at the checklist of questions that must be answered before you can get it off the ground. (The section on processing list all the questions that must be dealt with and answered) Once you have answered these questions, it will be easy to walk up to someone and say, "Hi! I have a few questions to ask you"

Teacher Hints

- Make sure that students understand all questions before they answer them.
- Question one may appear simplistic in a single sex school but it is included on the questionnaire for the benefit of co-educational schools.
- It is important to explain exactly HOW to complete the survey. Each question requires One answer only. When the student has decided upon their choice they are asked to tick the box like this ✔ . However should they make a mistake they should colour in the incorrect box completely and then continue to make their choice in that particular question. E.g. ■
- Emphasise the important contribution that they are making not only to their year and school but also to future generations of students. It is their initial action that will provide the basis for all future actions.
- While some students may feel that question 10 is very similar to question 9 it is important to point out that question 9 relates to intrinsic or internal factors while question 10 relates to extrinsic or external factors.
- Although there are ten questions in the survey, given class sizes, teachers and students may wish to analyse only some questions

- . For example a class may decide to focus on question 10 only and they may also wish to focus on similarities and differences between other transition year groups.

Note: Be sure to obtain permission for the school Principal/Manager in advance.

Distribute handout 3: Student

Survey on Future Plans

- Ask students to consider the merits of the prepared questionnaire by taking note of its concise questions, multiple choice format and lack of open-ended questions.
- The questions on the survey are grouped under the headings:
  - **Habits**
  - **Attitudes / Motivations**
- It is important to emphasise again the importance of honesty as the results of the survey will form the basis of their time capsule and will act as a comparative model for future classes.
- Ask students to consider how they would feel about knowing that their information is helping to build a picture of the present but will also allow us to understand the future. They are the first contributors to a most important and long-term survey.

7. Collecting the Information

- Who will answer the questions?
- Are you going to have enumerators or is this a hand-in/hand-out project?
- How will you deal with the privacy of the respondents if you ask for their names?
- Do you need publicity?
- What will you do if someone is away or does not answer?
- The class teacher should keep a list of those absent on the day and if the class wishes they should be allowed fill out the survey on another date.
- How will you make sure that everyone is only surveyed once?
- It is advisable that the teacher will have a list of students and the names of those present should be ticked off.
- How will you know that all the forms were returned?
- To ensure that all forms are returned the teacher may wish to revert back to the class list.

8. Processing the Information

- How will you check the returned questionnaires for completeness?
- In order to maintain confidentiality it is best advised that the class teacher checks the returned slips.
- Who will detach the slip with the names from the sheet with the corresponding number?
- Where will the slips be filed?
- How will the survey sheets be filed? What about the summary sheets?
- How can we ensure their safety?
  All of the above can be satisfied easily if the class teacher keeps them in his/her room as already suggested.

- How will we summarise the information?   (Tables, graphs, charts)
- Have you access to a computer or are you relying upon manual tallying?
- If you are relying upon manual tallying have you taken into account the amount of extra time that you may need.
- How will you check to make sure that there are no errors in the processing?

- If you are processing on computer, how will you construct the database? The template below is an example of what may prove useful for this process. This section will be quite time consuming so it is important to have it well organised before you begin processing the results. It is advised that the class teacher will delegate one pupil to prepare the template for whatever question the class has decided to focus on. Then all the class need do is process the results.
- If the class is composed of both males and females the class teacher should divide the findings into those respective groups thus allowing the students to make comparisons.
- It is very important to discuss with the class beforehand which mode of processing will be used. This will prove the most time consuming therefore it is important to have this area well organised before you begin processing the results.
- The template below is an example of what may prove useful when summarising the data.
- If it is done by hand, how will you record the information- on a form, on the blackboard, something else?

9. Compiling the Information

The following are examples of how a class may wish to
1) Summarise the information they collect for question 3, using the codes assigned for each response. *(Note: the summary shows detailed data at individual level so it is not for display purposes.)*

Student no.*	3A	3B	3C	3D
R01	✔			
R02			✔	
R03		✔		
R04				✔
R05		✔		
R06		✔		
R07		✔		
Total	1	4	1	1

*ie Slip no.

2) Display the results in a table
Number of hours spent working last week doing unpaid work

	None	Under 5	5-9	10 or more
Total	1	4	1	1

3) Use classification variables
Before processing the survey it can be decided if 'classification variables' will be used. If you choose to use a classification variables eg sex, and the results are to be processed manually, then the completed survey forms should firstly be sorted by sex and then summarised separately for male and female. A table along the following lines can then be produced:

Number of hours spent working last week doing unpaid work classified by sex

Sex	Number of hours worked			
	None	Under 5	5-9	10 or more
Males	1	1		1
Females		3	1	
Total	1	4	1	1

10.   Reporting the Data

- How will you report the information?
- What tables do you want to make?
- Do you want to include graphics, like a bar or pie chart?
- Would percentages help communicate the information better?
- Should we compile a main report on the findings?
- Should we file a copy of this report with the detachable slips and survey sheets?
- Can the information be published in the school newsletter?

Directions

> - Ensure that you have been assigned a slip number e.g. R01, R02, etc and that the same slip number has been entered on the slip and on the questionnaire.
> - For each question mark the box next to the answer chosen.
> - When answering please tick the box like this ✔ .
> - If you make a mistake please fill in the box like this ▮.
> - Your answers will be completely confidential only summary data will be reported.
> - Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your participation in the survey is important for producing accurate information.

Slip No: …………. Name:……………………..

Slip No: ………….

Question 1. What is your sex?

Code	
1a	Male
1b	Female

Habits

Question 2. How many hours did you spend last week on PAID work? (*Tick one box only***.)**

2a	None
2b	Under 5 hours
2c	5-9 hours
2d	10-14hours

Question 3. How many hours did you spend last week doing UNPAID work? (eg. babysitting, housework etc) (*Tick one box only***.)**

3a	None
3b	Under 5 hours
3c	5-9 hours
3d	10+

Question 4. How many hours did you spend last week on homework/project work? (*Tick one only.***)**

4a	Under 2 hours
4b	2-5 hours
4c	6-9 hours
4d	10 or more hours

Motivations & Objectives

Question 5. After secondary school which of the following do you plan to do? (*Tick one box only.***)**

5a	Apprenticeship
5b	Get a full-time job
5c	Post Leaving Cert course
5d	Third Level education
5e	Travel
5f	Other

Question 6. Which of the following occupations would you MOST LIKE to pursue after school? (*Tick one box only.***)**

6a	Building & Construction
6b	Clerical & office workers
6c	Engineering & Trades
6d	Farming/Fishing/Forestry
6e	Health related workers
6f	Personnel Services *(Hotel/Catering/Childcare)*
6g	Sales occupation
6h	Teaching
6i	Other

Question 7. Which of the following would you consider as your favourite subject? (*Tick one box only.***)**

7a	Accountancy
7b	Art
7c	Biology
7d	Business Studies
7e	English
7f	French
7g	Geography
7h	German
7i	History
7j	Irish
7k	Maths
7l	Physics
7m	Religion

Question 8. Which of the following motivates you the MOST towards your choice of career? (*Tick one only*.**)**

8a	Ambition
8b	Competition
8c	Money
8d	Parents
8e	Points system

Question 9. Which of the following do you think would influence you the most in relation to your future choice of career? (*Tick one only*.**)**

9a	Career Guidance
9b	Financial rewards (*associated with the career*)
9c	Friends
9d	Knowing someone who works in that area
9e	Parents
9f	Status associated with career
9g	Teachers
9h	Other

Question 10. What do you think could be the greatest obstacle to achieving your career objective? (*Tick one only*.**)**

10a	Distracted by friends
10b	Unable to organise material for revision
10c	Part-time work demands
10d	Points requirements
10e	Time required for socialising

Appendix 1: Miscellaneous tables with data from previous censuses

TABLE 1: Occupations with highest segregation, 1996

Occupation	Females as %of total	Occupation	Males as % of total
Bricklayers	0.3	Secretaries	1.8
Plasterers	0.4	Housekeepers	2.9
Roofers	0.5	Receptionists	3.0
Mechanical plant drivers	0.5	Radiographers	6.7
Carpenters	0.6	Nurses	7.6
Road construction workers	0.6	Physiotherapists	8.8
Motor mechanics	0.6	Educational assistants	9.5
Builders	0.8	Sewing machinists	11.4
Pipe layers	0.9	Hairdressers and barbers	12.7
Rail construction workers	0.9	Catering assistants	13.3

TABLE 2: Percentage of males and females aged 15 to 24 years receiving full-time education, 1991 and 1996

Age	1991		1996	
	Males	**Females**	**Males**	**Females**
15 years	94.3	96.2	96.3	97.5
16 years	84.5	91.4	88.3	93.8
17 years	71.1	83.0	78.7	88.1
18 years	50.9	61.9	59.8	71.7
19 years	35.4	40.1	43.3	53.3
Total 15-19 years	67.8	75.1	74.4	81.8
20 years	27.6	26.7	35.7	41.2
21 years	20.1	18.6	28.4	30.4
22 years	13.3	10.7	19.0	19.1
23 years	8.0	6.0	11.4	10.8
24 years	4.8	3.3	6.9	6.2
Total 20-24 years	15.5	13.7	20.7	21.9
Total 15-24 years	44.6	47.9	49.6	53.9

TABLE 3: Percentage distribution of persons whose full-time education has ceased, classified by age at which education ceased, 1981-1996

Year	Age at which full-time education ceased					
	Under 15 years	Under 16 years	Under 17 years	Under 18 years	Under 19 years	Total whose full-time education has ceased (excl. age not stated)
1981	36.8	49.7	66.2	77.8	89.9	100.-
1986	28.6	41.8	60.1	73.1	88.0	100.-
1991	27.8	40.0	57.6	70.9	86.6	100.-
1996	23.9	34.9	50.8	64.4	80.8	100.-

Table 4: Average distance travelled to school or college, 1996			
	Average distance travelled (miles)		
Year	**State**	**Urban**	**Rural**
Primary (5-12 years)			
1981	1.5	1.1	2.1
1986	1.5	1.1	2.1
1991	1.5	1.1	2.1
1996	2.0	1.5	2.6
Secondary (13-18 years)			
1981	3.3	1.8	5.1
1986	3.3	1.9	5.1
1991	3.6	2.0	5.5
1996	4.4	2.5	6.4
Third level (19 years and over)			
1981	4.6	3.8	8.9
1986	5.0	3.9	9.7
1991	5.7	4.5	10.7
1996	7.3	5.2	14.8

TABLE 5: Means of travel to school or college, 1981 and 1996

Means of travel	Primary		Secondary		3rd level	
	1981	1996	1981	1996	1981	1996
	%					
On foot	47.3	33.0	30.0	27.6	23.5	31.0
Bicycle	4.0	2.5	12.9	7.6	22.7	12.5
Bus	19.1	21.4	37.5	38.5	20.7	27.5
Train	0.1	0.1	0.9	1.3	4.2	6.3
Motor cycle	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.1	3.7	0.7
Car driver	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.3	7.3	5.9
Car passenger	19.7	35.8	8.0	19.3	7.7	8.8
Other (incl. lorry/van)	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.4	0.5	0.5
None	1.3	1.0	4.8	1.9	4.8	2.3
Not stated	8.2	5.8	5.4	3.1	4.9	4.5
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Appendix 2: Population in each census since 1841

Census Year	State	Leinster	Munster	Connaught	Ulster (part of)
1841	6,528,799	1,973,731	2,396,161	1,418,859	740,048
1851	5,111,557	1,672,738	1,857,736	1,010,031	571,052
1861	4,402,111	1,457,635	1,513,558	913,135	517,783
1871	4,053,187	1,339,451	1,393,485	846,213	474,038
1881	3,870,020	1,278,989	1,331,115	821,657	438,259
1891	3,468,694	1,187,760	1,172,402	724,774	383,758
1901	3,221,823	1,152,829	1,076,188	646,932	345,874
1911	3,139,688	1,162,044	1,035,495	610,984	331,165
1926	2,971,992	1,149,092	969,902	552,907	300,091
1936	2,968,420	1,220,411	942,272	525,468	280,269
1946	2,955,107	1,281,117	917,306	492,797	263,887
1951	2,960,593	1,336,576	898,870	471,895	253,252
1956	2,898,264	1,338,942	877,238	446,221	235,863
1961	2,818,341	1,332,149	849,203	419,465	217,524
1966	2,884,002	1,414,415	859,334	401,950	208,303
1971	2,978,248	1,498,140	882,002	390,902	207,204
1979	3,368,217	1,743,861	979,819	418,500	226,037
1981	3,443,405	1,790,521	998,315	424,410	230,159
1986	3,540,643	1,852,649	1,020,577	431,409	236,008
1991	3,525,719	1,860,949	1,009,533	423,031	232,206
1996	3,626,087	1,924,702	1,033,903	433,231	234,251