



Central Statistics Office
An Phríomh-Oifig Staidrimh

Press Statement
Preas Ráiteas

2002 Census of Population – Volume 3 – Household Composition and Family Units

Rise in number of childless couples

There has been a dramatic increase in the number of wives aged 25 to 34 who have no children, a new report from the Central Statistics Office today reveals.

This information is contained in *Census 2002 Volume 3 - Household Composition and Family Units* which gives further detailed results of the census conducted on 28 April, 2002. The report gives the final figures on household composition and family units classified by age, sex and detailed territorial divisions in the country. (*See editor's note*).

The report shows that 38 per cent of wives (this includes women in cohabiting couples) in the 25 to 34 age group had no children in 2002, compared with 28 per cent six years earlier.

Also revealed is the fact that households made up of both married and cohabiting couples with no children was the fastest-growing category of family household in the six-year intercensal period. This type of household went from 169,300 in 1996 to 228,600 in 2002 - a rise of nearly 35 per cent.

Over a third of all families in Kinsale, Co. Cork and Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim had no children when the census was carried out in April 2002. For the State as a whole 25 per cent of families had no children.

In Ballinrobe, Co. Mayo, Dunmore East, Co. Waterford, Sallins, Co. Kildare and Boyle, Co. Roscommon, 32 per cent of families had no children.

At the other end of the scale Portmarnock, in Co. Dublin, emerged as the town with the highest proportion of families with children at 74 per cent, followed by the Meath towns of Ratoath (73%), Dunboyne (73%) and Dunshaughlin (72%).

In April 2002, when the census was conducted, 47,778 households consisted of cohabiting couples with no children. Nearly two thirds of these couples lived in Leinster while Dublin City and County accounted for 40 per cent of them.

Continued fall in average household size

The average size of private households in permanent housing units in the State fell from 3.14 in 1996 to 2.95 in 2002, which is a continuation of a long-term decline. The report shows that the average size in 1946 was 4.16.

The Census 2002 volume also details that household size is smallest in Dublin City with an average of 2.59 people. The largest households were located in South Dublin with an average size of 3.21.

More /...

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The total number of private households is up from 1.123 million to 1.288 million between 1996 and 2002 - a rise of 165,000 or 14.7 per cent.

The average number of children per family has fallen from 2.2 in 1981 to 1.6 in 2002.

Households consisting of one person increased by 15 per cent (+35,700) since 1996. Dublin City and County accounted for 32 per cent of these with 85,004. One-person households represent 22 per cent of the total number in the State. South Dublin had the lowest percentage at 14 per cent.

More lone-parent households

Census 2002 Volume 3 - Household Composition and Family Units also shows that there has been a 20 per cent increase in the number of lone-parent households with children in the State, from 125,500 in 1996 to 150,600 in 2002. Two thirds of lone-parent households were in urban areas.

Children staying with parents longer

Overall the number of children living with both parents declined by 2.6 per cent from 1,229,000 in 1996 to 1,197,000 in 2002. As a result of declining fertility, the number of children aged 0-9 years declined by 3 per cent while those aged 10-19 fell by 11.7 per cent. However, the number of "children" in their twenties increased by 13.7 per cent since 1996 while those in their thirties numbered 42,500 in April 2002, up 39 per cent compared with six years earlier. Males accounted for nearly two-thirds of persons in their thirties living with both parents.

Editor's note:

The publication *Census 2002 - Principal Demographic Results*, released on 19 June 2003, contains a summary at State level of data from volumes 1 - 4, 8, 11 and 12 of the detailed census reports. The publication released today, Volume 3, gives corresponding figures at a more detailed geographical level.

All published tables from Census 2002 are being made available on the CSO web site (www.cso.ie). Tables at Electoral Division, Local Electoral Area and small town level are being made available exclusively on the CSO web site.

For copies of the publication contact:

Central Statistics Office, Information Section, Skehard Road, Cork

or

Government Publications Sale 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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