

5. Diversity

Place of birth

Immigration

Nationality

Foreign language and ability to speak English

Visitors

Born abroad

The number of Irish residents born outside Ireland continued to increase and stood at 810,406 in 2016, an increase of 43,636 on the 2011 figure. In April 2016, persons born abroad accounted for 17.3 per cent of the population, up from 17 per cent in 2011.

However, this increase is in sharp contrast to the previous inter-censal period which saw the number born outside Ireland rise by 154,141 over the period 2006 to 2011.

[See web table EYO20](#)

Table 5.1 Place of birth of Irish residents from countries with largest increases, 2011 - 2016

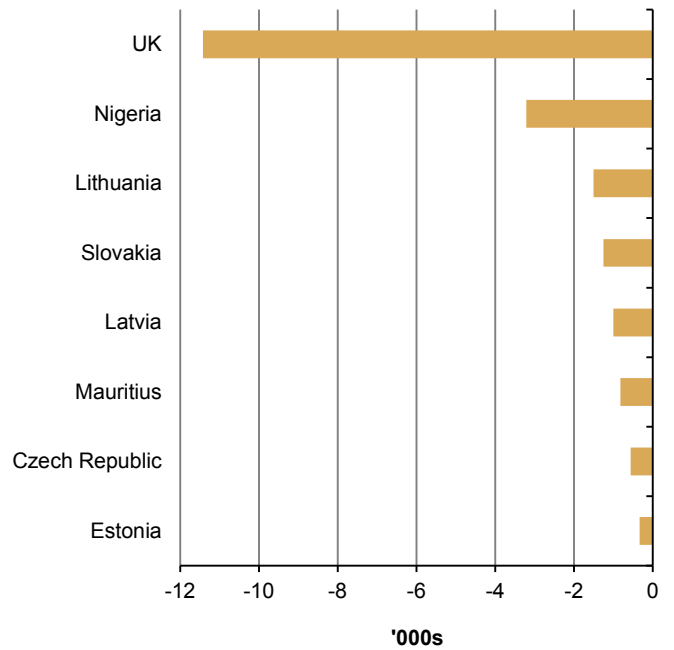
Country	2011	2016	Actual change
Romania	17,995	28,702	10,707
Brazil	9,298	15,796	6,498
Spain	7,003	11,809	4,806
Pakistan	8,329	12,891	4,562
Croatia	980	5,202	4,222
Italy	7,146	10,913	3,767
India	17,856	20,969	3,113
Moldova	3,421	6,472	3,051
France	10,070	11,906	1,836
Portugal	2,246	3,866	1,620
Other	682,426	681,880	-546
Total	766,770	810,406	43,636

Romanians, Brazilians and Spanish show largest increases

The groups which showed the largest increase were those already well established in Ireland. The fastest growing groups in absolute terms were Romanians (up 10,707), Brazilians (up 6,498) and Spanish (up 4,806).

Other smaller groups showed large increases in percentage terms such as Croatia which increased by 431 per cent to 5,202, Venezuela (increased by 259% to 1,729), Afghanistan (increased by 212 % to 1,729) and Syria (increased by 199% to 920).

Figure 5.1 Fall in persons born abroad from selected countries, 2016



Those born in the UK and Nigeria show largest decreases

Between 2011 and 2016 the number of Irish residents born in the UK fell by 11,421. Other countries also showed falls, as presented in Figure 5.1. The number of those born in Nigeria fell by 3,211 and from Lithuania by 1,503.

In total the number of persons born in 58 different countries fell during this most recent inter-censal period.

It's a fact!

17.3%

The percentage of Irish residents born abroad (up 0.3% on 2011)

11,421

The decrease in the number of Irish residents born in the UK

Immigration

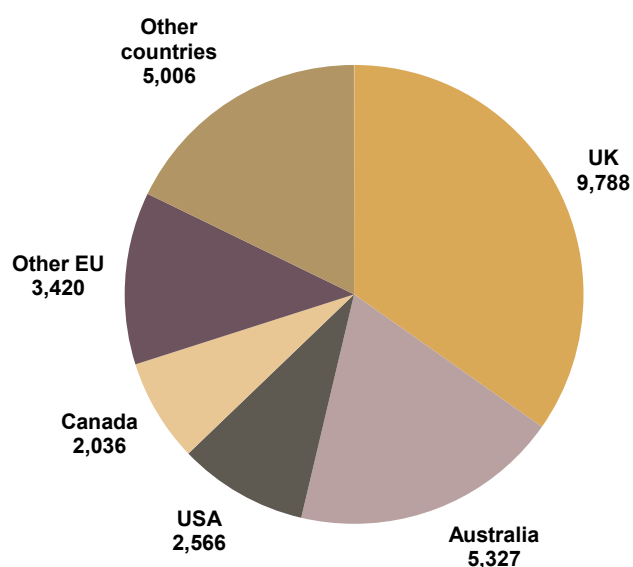
A question on usual residence one year ago provides information on inward migration in the year leading up to the census. The results show that 82,346 persons moved to Ireland in the year to April 2016. Of this, 28,143 were Irish nationals, up from 19,593 in the year to April 2011.

Figure 5.2 below presents the country of origin of returning Irish immigrants.

The UK was the most popular country of origin for returning Irish immigrants, followed by Australia (5,327) and the USA (2,566). The remainder of returning Irish came from a wide range of countries with Canada (2,036 persons returning), New Zealand (798), Spain (682), France (669) and the United Arab Emirates (550) accounting for the next five most popular countries.

[See web table EY022](#)

Figure 5.2 Usual residence one year ago of Irish nationals who lived abroad, 2016



New arrivals

Inward migration to Ireland by foreign nationals in the year to April 2016 was 54,203, as presented in Table 5.2 below.

The data shows non-Irish immigrants arrived from a large selection of countries. As with Irish immigrants the UK was the top country of origin with 7,506 arrivals, followed by Brazil with 4,848 and Poland with 3,689.

Between them France, Germany, Italy and Spain accounted for 9,293 arrivals. There were also more than 1,000 non-Irish immigrants from each of China, India, Romania, the USA and Croatia. Altogether 180 distinct countries were recorded as a country of origin for non-Irish immigrants in the year to April 2016 on the census.

Table 5.2 Usual residence one year ago by top 10 countries of origin, 2016

Top 10 countries	Irish	Non-Irish	Total
UK	9,788	7,506	17,294
Australia	5,327	811	6,138
Brazil	116	4,848	4,964
USA	2,566	2,313	4,879
Spain	682	3,159	3,841
Poland	95	3,689	3,784
France	669	2,500	3,169
Canada	2,036	767	2,803
Croatia	12	2,340	2,352
India	107	2,233	2,340
Rest of World	6,745	24,037	30,782
Total	28,143	54,203	82,346

It's a fact!

180

The number of countries from which non-Irish immigrants arrived into Ireland in the year to April 2016

Ever lived abroad

Census 2016 included a question on whether a person had ever lived abroad. Responses provide important information on the year of arrival and country of previous residence.

Table 5.3 presents the data by year of taking up residence in Ireland, broken down by Irish and non-Irish

nationals. For those who answered the question, the results show that 165,612 residents arrived in the years 2012 to 2016, of whom 70,782 were Irish nationals.

The United Kingdom was the most popular country of previous residence with 37,495 persons followed by the EU15 with 27,115 persons.

[See web table EY023](#)

Table 5.3 Irish residents by year of arrival, broad nationality and country of previous residence, 1997-2016

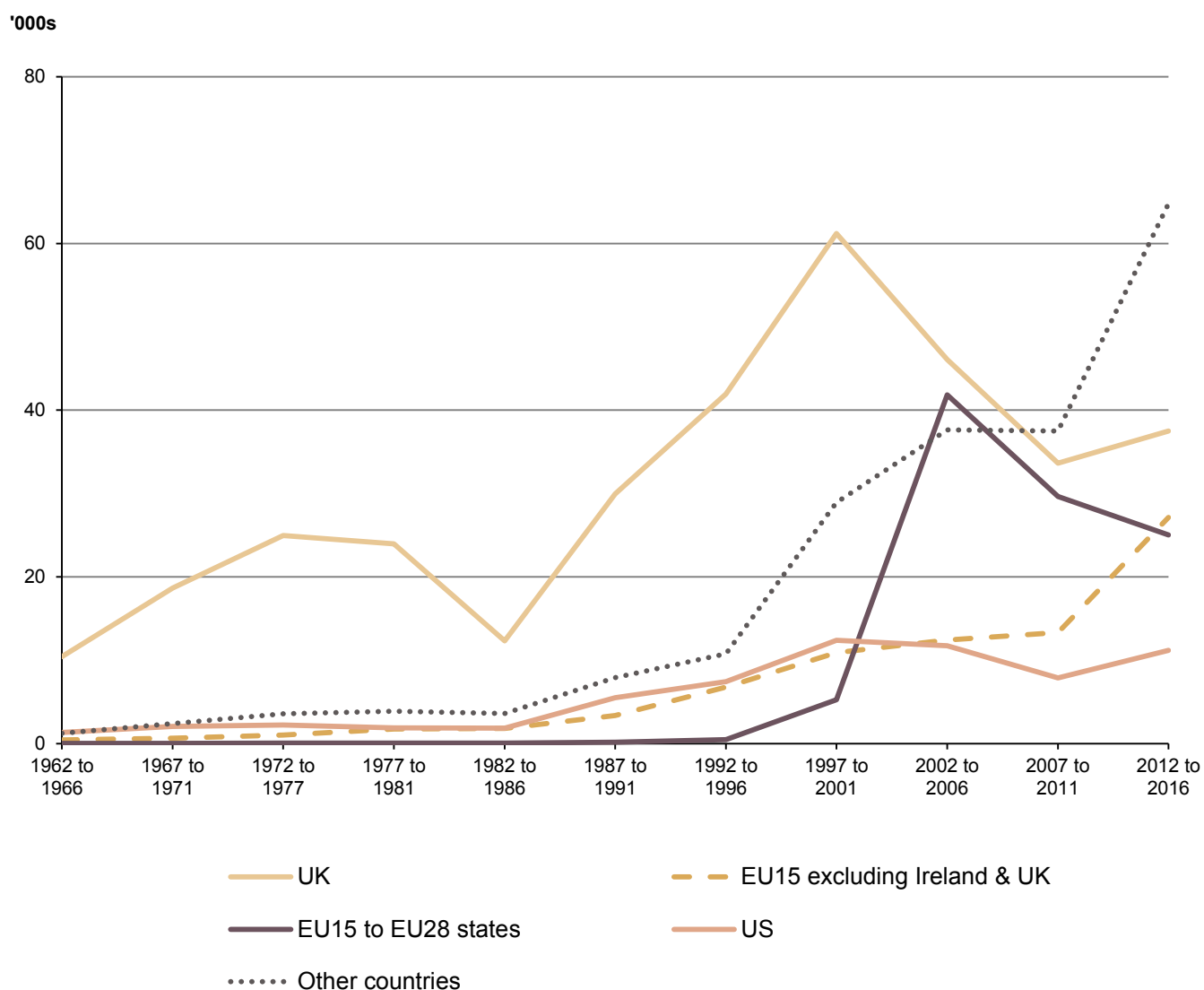
	Total	1997 - 2001	2002 - 2006	2007 - 2011	2012 - 2016
Irish					
All countries	302,935	91,031	79,546	61,576	70,782
United Kingdom	124,629	46,615	31,595	22,881	23,538
EU15 excluding Ireland & UK	25,738	6,648	6,390	5,616	7,084
EU15 to EU28 states	6,411	1,511	2,458	1,473	969
USA	35,299	11,512	10,408	6,301	7,078
Other countries	110,858	24,745	28,695	25,305	32,113
Non-Irish					
All countries	251,044	27,217	69,682	59,922	94,223
United Kingdom	53,183	14,381	14,333	10,630	13,839
EU15 excluding Ireland & UK	37,871	4,237	6,002	7,663	19,969
EU15 to EU28 states	94,941	3,701	39,227	28,057	23,956
USA	7,737	821	1,305	1,549	4,062
Other countries	57,312	4,077	8,815	12,023	32,397
No nationality (incl. not stated)					
All countries	1,978	397	510	464	607
United Kingdom	589	191	163	117	118
EU15 excluding Ireland & UK	149	26	28	33	62
EU15 to EU28 states	430	43	149	121	117
USA	116	39	27	16	34
Other countries	694	98	143	177	276
Total	555,957	118,645	149,738	121,962	165,612

Figure 5.3 shows the country of origin of all those who ever lived abroad by their year of arrival.

The graph illustrates the sharp peak in arrivals from the UK in the late 1990's with just over 61,000 arrivals, the majority of whom had been born in Ireland. Arrivals from the accession states (EU15 to EU28) increased

dramatically from 5,255 in the 1997 to 2001 period to 41,834 between 2002 and 2006. Arrivals from the rest of the world have been increasing steadily since 2002 and are now the largest group, accounting for 39.1 per cent of all arrivals in the period from 2012 to 2016. Irish born persons accounted for nearly 50 per cent of this group.

Figure 5.3 Persons who lived abroad by country of origin and period of taking up residence, 2016



Irish, non-Irish

Table 5.4 Usually resident population by nationality, 2016

Nationality	2011	2016	% change
Irish	3,927,143	4,082,513	4.0
of which Irish only	3,871,238	3,977,729	2.8
dual Irish nationality	55,905	104,784	87.4
Non-Irish	544,357	535,475	-1.6
No nationality (incl. not stated)	53,781	71,933	33.8
Total	4,525,281	4,689,921	3.6

Between 2011 and 2016 the number of non-Irish nationals fell for the first time since the question was introduced on the census in 2002 and stood at 535,475 down from 544,357 five years earlier.

The proportion of the population who were non-Irish nationals has also fallen from 12.2 per cent in 2011 to 11.6 per cent in 2016.

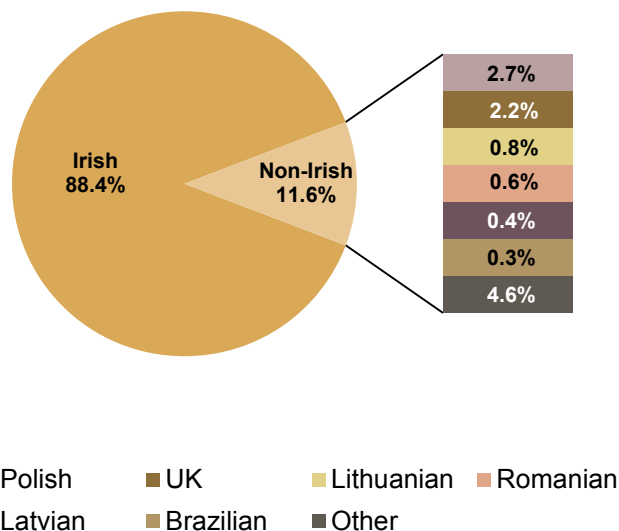
This fall in non-Irish nationals can in part be explained by the rise in the number of those with dual Irish nationality.

Dual nationalities have always been captured and coded on the census and 55,905 persons were recorded as having dual-nationality in 2011. Since then there has been an increase in the number of people acquiring Irish citizenship, estimated at some 94,000 since the last census in 2011.

This would appear to have had an impact on the large increase in the number of persons recorded as having dual Irish nationality, up by 48,879 since April 2011 to 104,784 in April 2016.

[See web table EYQ24](#)

Figure 5.4 Distribution of population by nationality, 2016



Fall in UK nationals

While the number of Polish nationals (122,515) has remained virtually unchanged since 2011, the number of UK nationals fell by 9,146 to 103,113. Romanian nationals showed the largest absolute increase rising by 11,882 to 29,186. While Spanish nationals had the largest percentage increase of 78.3 per cent, large increases were also seen in Brazilian and Italian nationals. The number of Indian nationals fell by 33 per cent to 11,465.

Table 5.5 Persons usually resident by nationality for selected countries, 2011-2016

Nationality	2011	2016	% change
Irish	3,927,143	4,082,513	4.0
Polish	122,585	122,515	-0.1
UK	112,259	103,113	-8.1
Lithuanian	36,683	36,552	-0.4
Romanian	17,304	29,186	68.7
Latvian	20,593	19,933	-3.2
Brazilian	8,704	13,640	56.7
Spanish	6,794	12,112	78.3
Italian	7,656	11,732	53.2
French	9,749	11,661	19.6
German	11,305	11,531	2.0
Indian	16,986	11,465	-32.5
American (US)	11,015	10,519	-4.5
Slovakian	10,801	9,717	-10.0
Chinese	10,896	9,575	-12.1

Dual Irish nationalities

In 2016 the number of persons with dual Irish nationality almost doubled on the 2011 figure increasing from 55,905 to 104,784 in April 2016. Persons born in Ireland accounted for 37 per cent of this group or 38,344 persons.

Figure 5.5 presents this group by their dual nationality split between those who were born in Ireland and those born abroad. The longer the bar overall the higher the number of persons of that dual nationality.

Irish-Americans were the largest dual-Irish group accounting for 17,552 persons, of whom 6,358 (36%) were born in Ireland and the remainder, 11,194 (64%) born abroad.

Among Irish-UK nationals the majority (86%) were born outside Ireland with just 2,170 (14%) born in Ireland. Among Irish-Polish nationals the majority were born here; there were 2,743 persons born outside Ireland who now identify as part-Irish.

[See web table EY024](#)

Figure 5.5 Persons with dual Irish nationality by place of birth, 2016

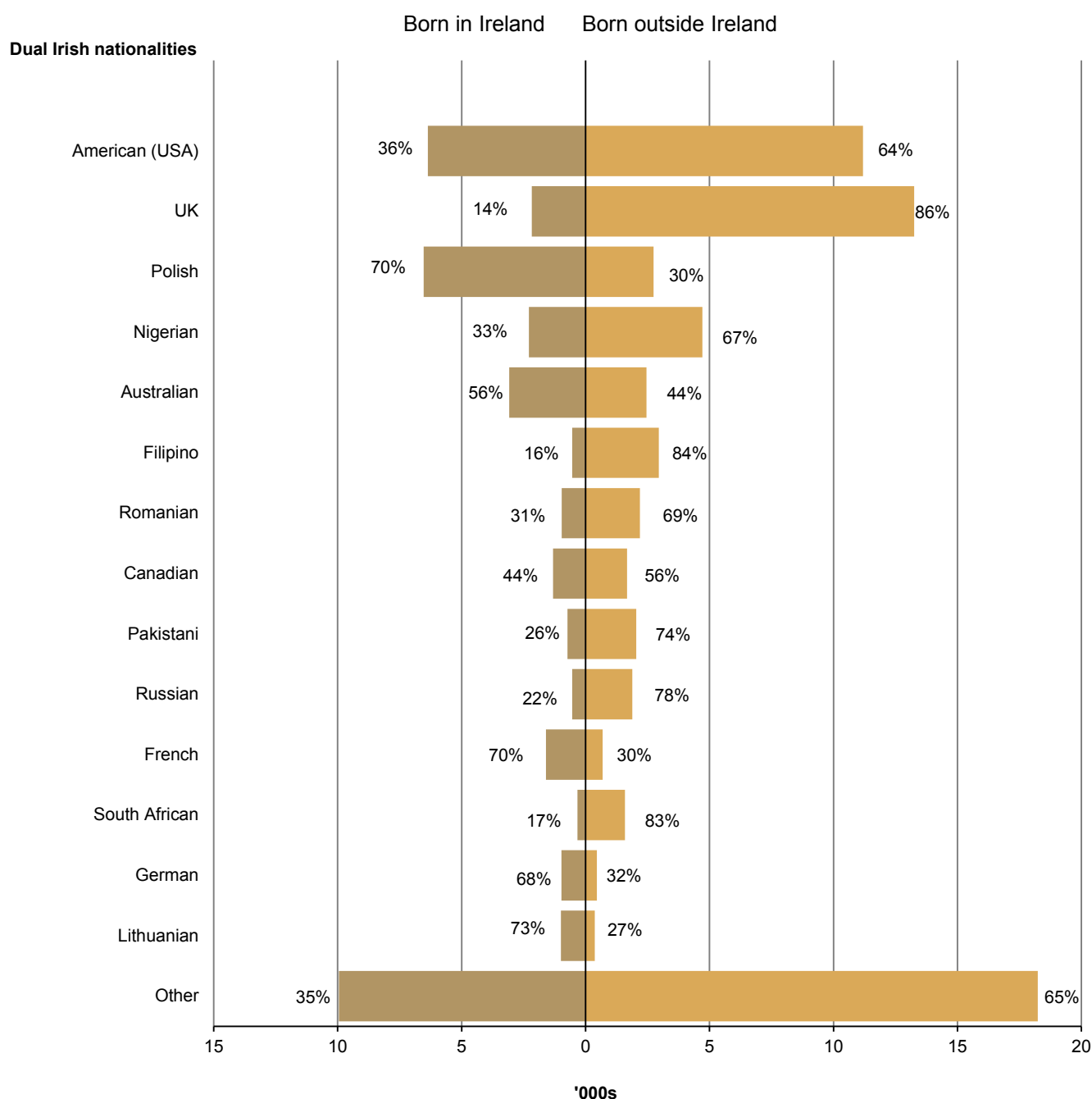
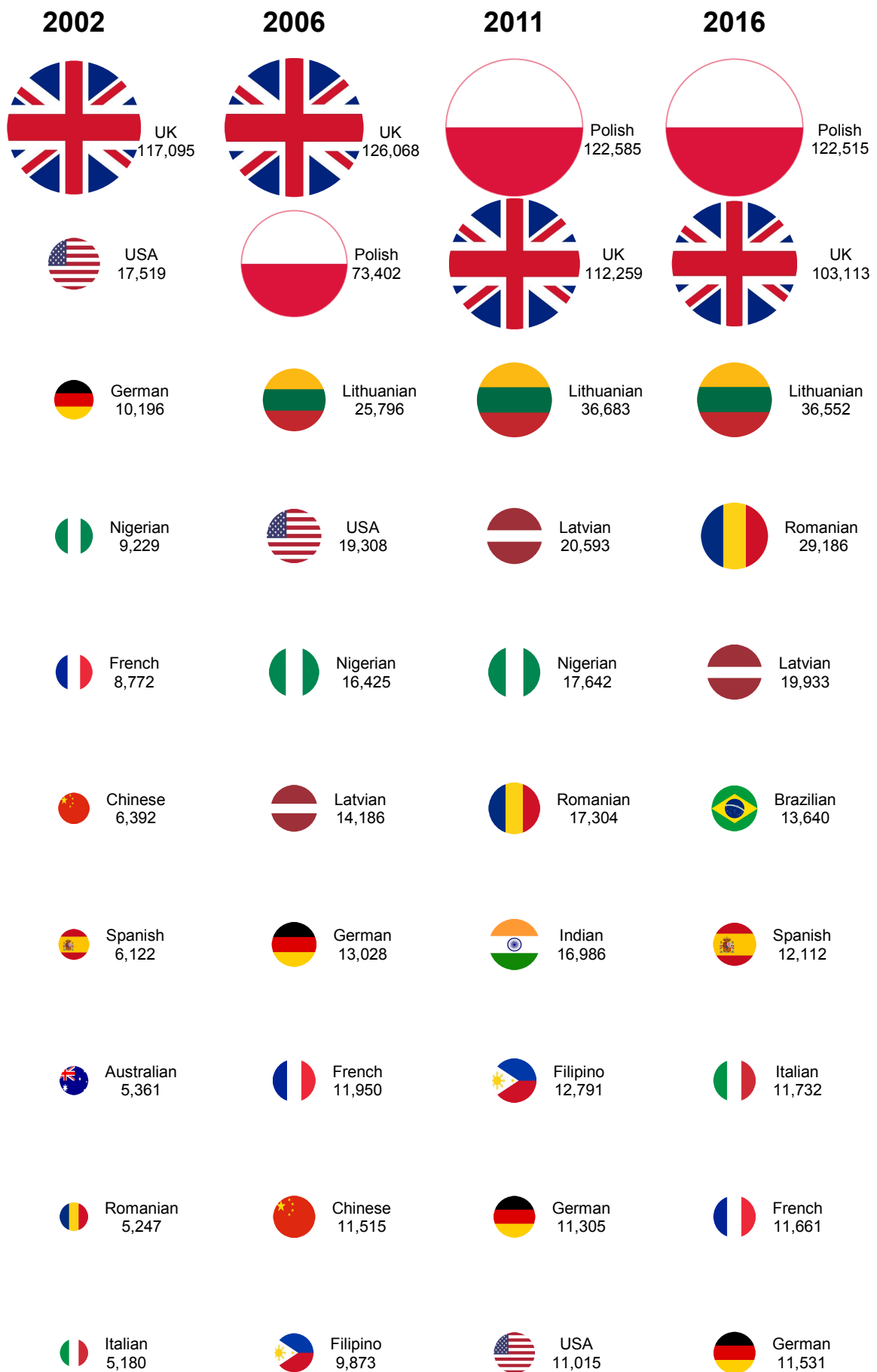


Figure 5.6 Population of top 10 non-Irish nationalities usually resident in the State by size and census year



Getting older

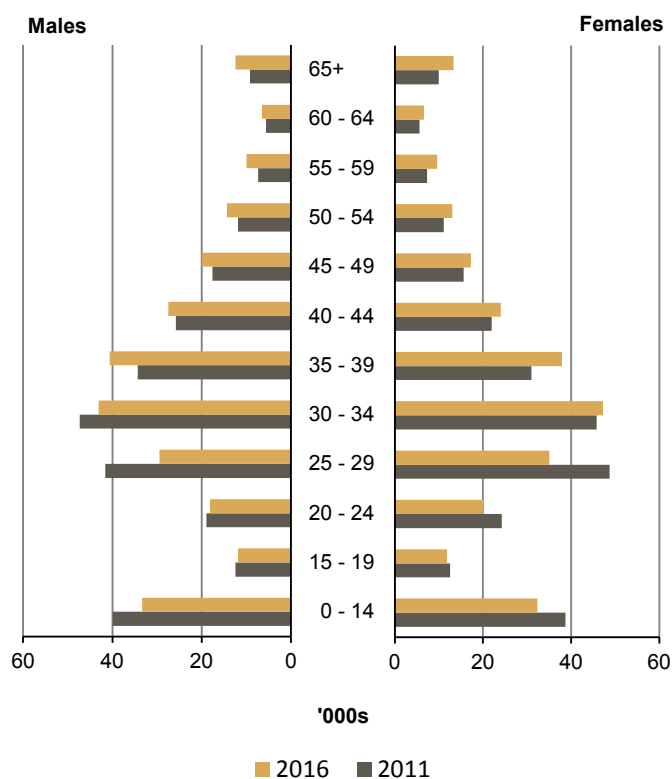
As the total number of non-Irish overall has stabilised over the past five years it can be expected that those who are here will be gradually ageing, and this is illustrated in Figure 5.7. Numbers have increased for all groups aged 35 and over and decreased for all age groups aged 34 and under.

Persons aged 65 and over increased by 34.5 per cent from 19,145 to 25,754 over the five years while the number of children aged 14 and under has fallen to 65,641, down from 78,569 in 2011.

The average age for all persons in Ireland increased by 1.3 years between 2011 and 2016. The average age of non-Irish nationals increased by almost twice that (2.5 years) over the five years rising from 32.9 to 35.4, while amongst Polish nationals the average age increased by 3.5 years rising from 27.9 to 31.4.

[See web table EY024](#)

Figure 5.7 Non-Irish population pyramid, 2011 and 2016



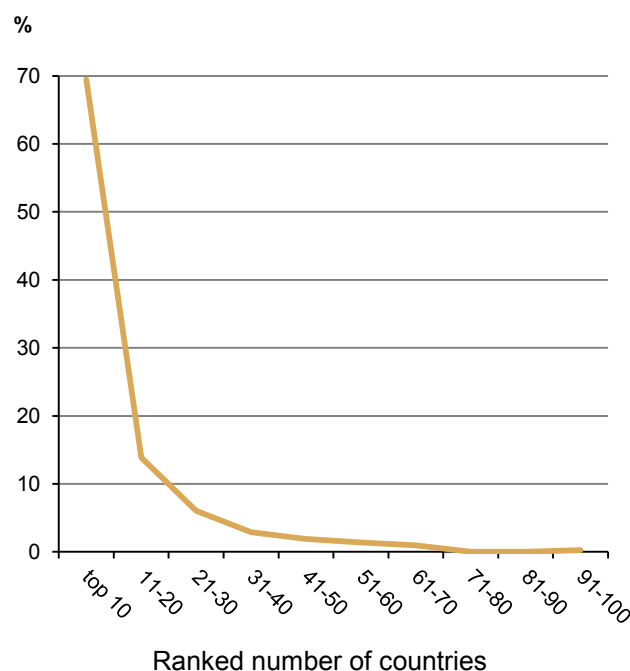
From every corner of the world

In April 2016, there were 535,475 non-Irish nationals of over 200 different nationalities living in Ireland. However, a very small number of these accounted for the majority of persons in this group with the top 10 nationalities accounting for 69 per cent of the total.

The top 11 to 20 nationalities accounted for a further 14 per cent of all non-Irish.

All other nationalities therefore represented the remaining 17 per cent. This is reflected in the tailing off of the line on Figure 5.8.

Figure 5.8 Non-Irish population by top nationality groupings, 2016



A multi-lingual country

A question on foreign languages was asked for the first time in Census 2011 and covered foreign languages spoken at home and how well those who did speak another language at home could speak English.

The 2016 results show that 612,018 Irish residents spoke a foreign language at home (up 19 per cent from 514,068 in 2011). Polish was by far the most common language, followed by French, Romanian and Lithuanian.

French and Russian

The results for French and Russian are noteworthy. Of those who spoke French at home 75.1 per cent were Irish nationals, only 16.2 per cent were French nationals while 3.7 per cent were of African nationality.

Of the 21,707 persons who spoke Russian at home only 8.9 per cent were Russian nationals, while 29.5 per cent were of Irish or dual Irish nationality, 23 per cent were Latvian nationals, 9.1 per cent were Lithuanian, 4.0 per cent Estonian and 2.5 per cent Ukrainian.

[See web table EY025](#)

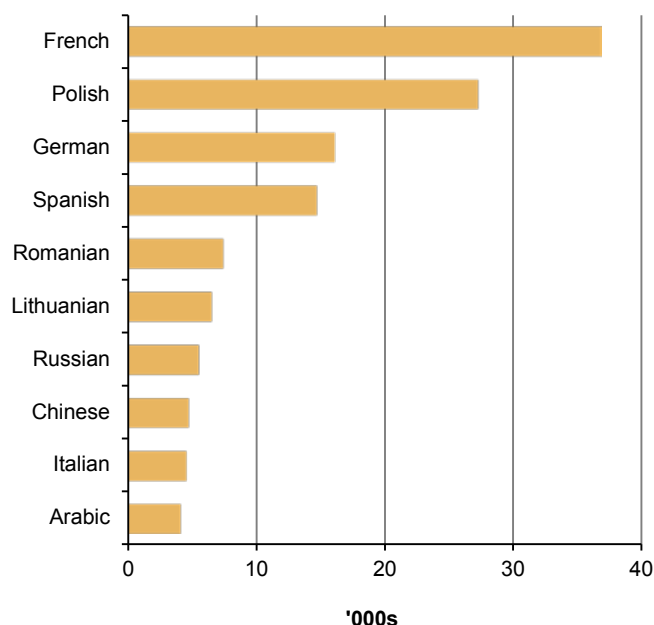
Language	Total	Born in Ireland	Born elsewhere
Polish	135,895	27,197	108,698
French	54,948	36,810	18,138
Romanian	36,683	7,396	29,287
Lithuanian	35,362	6,481	28,881
Spanish	32,405	14,680	17,725
German	28,331	16,077	12,254
Russian	21,707	5,494	16,213
Portuguese	20,833	2,829	18,004
Chinese	17,584	4,691	12,893
Arabic	16,072	4,071	12,001
Other	212,198	58,197	154,001
Total	612,018	183,923	428,095

Irish born and multi-lingual

Over a quarter (30%) of those who spoke a foreign language at home were born in Ireland and the languages spoken are presented in Figure 5.9. Of these, 19,743 were pre-school children (aged 3-4 years), 54,693 were primary school children and 31,078 were secondary school children. Together, these accounted for 57.4 per cent of all Irish-born speakers of foreign languages.

French was by far the most popular language spoken by those born in Ireland, with the majority of those speaking it aged 13 and over (86.5%). Polish and German were the next most popular languages.

Figure 5.9 Irish born speaking a foreign language, 2016



Ability to speak English

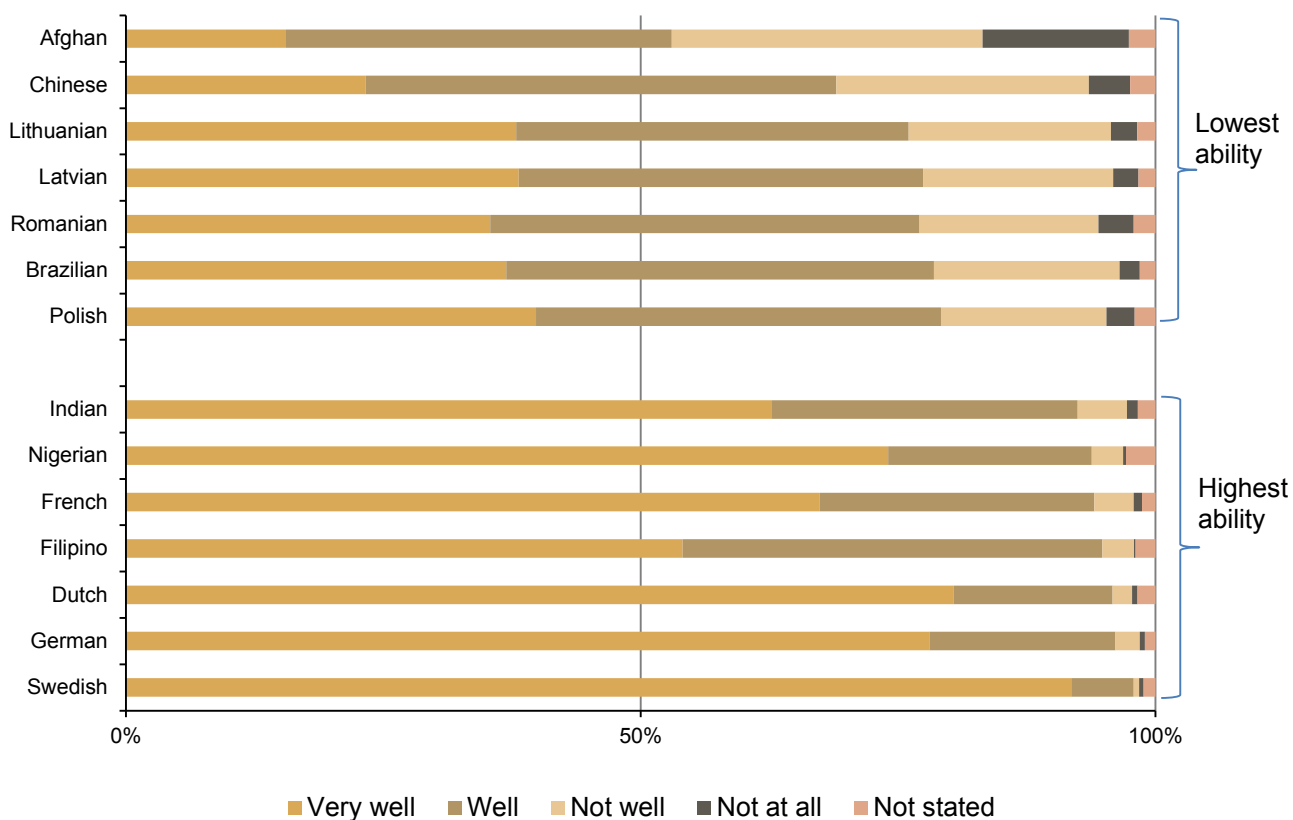
A question on ability to speak English was asked of those who spoke a language other than English or Irish at home. Ability was broken down into four categories - 'very well', 'well', 'not well' and 'not at all'.

Of the 612,018 people who spoke another language at home 508,016 (83%) indicated they could speak English 'well' or 'very well', while 86,608 people (14.2%) indicated 'not well' or 'not at all'.

Figure 5.10 presents the data by nationality. While persons from Poland had the highest absolute number of persons who spoke English 'not well' or 'not at all' (21,316 or 18.8%) those from Afghanistan had the highest percentage (466 or 44.4%), followed by persons from China (2,234 or 28.5%).

[See web table EY027](#)

Figure 5.10 Ability to speak English by selected nationality, 2016



Ability to speak English by age group

Table 5.7 presents the data by age group separating out the various stages of education and working life.

Of the 22,221 pre-school children (aged 3-4 years) who spoke a foreign language at home 1,710 (8%) could not speak English at all while a further 5,989 could not speak English well.

Ability improves rapidly once children start school with only 386 children unable to speak English in primary school going years.

Children of secondary school age were the cohort with the best English speaking ability as can be seen in Table 5.7.

There were 2,469 persons aged 65 years and over who could not speak English well or at all. This equates to 20 per cent of persons in that age group.

[See web table EY028](#)

Table 5.7 Ability to speak English by age group, 2016

Age group	Total	Very well	Well	Not well	Not at all
Pre-school 3-4 years	22,221	7,254	7,268	5,989	1,710
Primary 5-12 years	76,301	55,694	15,991	4,230	386
Secondary 13 - 18 years	56,296	44,578	8,605	2,916	197
Young adult 19 - 24 years	45,839	28,153	12,904	4,413	369
Working age 25-64 years	365,887	182,806	129,150	48,829	5,102
Older people 65 years and over	12,303	7,729	2,105	1,564	905
Total	578,847	326,214	176,023	67,941	8,669

Visitors on Census Night

The Irish census is conducted on a De Facto basis which means that everyone who is in the country on Census Night is enumerated on a census form.

There were 71,944 visitors in Ireland on Census Night, an increase of 8,973 on the 2011 figure of 62,971.

Figure 5.11 presents the distribution of visitors by country of usual residence.

The largest group were UK residents with 21,861 persons, representing 30 per cent of all visitors, followed by those from the USA with 11,461 visitors (16% of total).

There were significant numbers of visitors from France (5,535), Germany (4,572) and Spain (3,323). There were 4,032 visitors from Asia and 2,535 from Australia.

Figure 5.11 Where visitors usually live, 2016

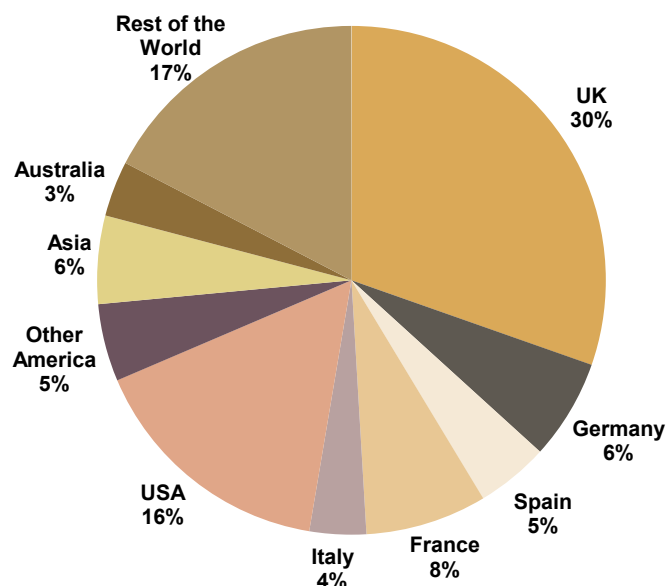


Table 5.8 Visitors from abroad, 2016

Country	Private Households	Hotels & Guest houses	Other	Total
UK	12,440	9,133	288	21,861
France	3,002	2,045	488	5,535
Germany	1,997	2,419	156	4,572
Spain	2,472	561	290	3,323
Italy	1,205	1,344	37	2,586
Poland	1,575	185	45	1,805
Other Europe	933	766	118	1,817
USA	4,069	7,212	180	11,461
Other America	2,309	1,037	189	3,535
Australia	1,668	810	57	2,535
Asian Countries	3,133	724	175	4,032
Rest of World	5,293	3,266	323	8,882
Total	40,096	29,502	2,346	71,944

Hotels and guest houses

Of the total 71,944 visitors in Ireland on Census Night, 29,502 were staying in hotels and guest houses with a further 2,346 staying in other tourist accommodation.

Persons from the UK, numbering 9,133, made up the largest group in hotels and guest houses, followed by persons from the USA at 7,212 with Germany the third largest group at 2,419.

People from France favoured guest houses over hotels whereas nearly all other groups had more persons staying in hotels over other tourist accommodation.

Over half (55.7%) of all visitors in Ireland were staying in private households, presumably visiting family and friends.

[See web table EY010](#)

It's a fact!

71,944

The total number of visitors in Ireland on Census Night