

Background Notes

A Census of Population was taken on the night of Sunday, 10 April 2011, in accordance with the Statistics (Census of Population) Order 2010 (S.I. No. 207 of 2010)³. This Report contains provisional results which are based on summaries returned by each of the 4,854 census enumerators. As these results are subject to revision they do not have any statutory force.

Coverage of the Census

The census figures relate to the *de facto* population i.e. the population recorded for each area represents the total of all persons present within its boundaries on the night of Sunday, 10 April 2011, together with all persons who arrived in that area on the morning of Monday, 11 April 2011, not having been enumerated elsewhere. Persons on board ships in port are included with the population of adjacent areas. The figures, therefore, include visitors present on Census Night as well as those in residence, while usual residents temporarily absent from the area are excluded.

The date of the census was chosen to coincide with a period when passenger movements were at a minimum and, consequently, the figures closely approximate to those for the normally resident population. Members of the Defence Forces who, on Census Night, were serving abroad with the United Nations were excluded from the enumeration.

Conduct of the Census

A temporary field force consisting of 6 Census Liaison Officers, 44 Regional Supervisors, 438 Field Supervisors and some 4,854 part-time enumerators carried out the census enumeration. During the four weeks before Census Day the enumerators entered details in respect of 2 million private residences and communal establishments in their enumerator record books. They simultaneously delivered blank census questionnaires to 1.65 million of these dwellings that were expected to be occupied on Census Night. Approximately 295,000 residences were vacant at the time of the census, while in the remaining cases the household was either enumerated elsewhere or temporarily absent from the State. The collection of completed questionnaires took place between Monday 11 April and Friday 13 May, 2011.

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) wishes to record its appreciation of the public-spirited co-operation received from households and the work carried out by the census field force.

Each enumerator was required to prepare a summary of the population enumerated in his/her enumeration area. These clerical summaries were returned to the CSO in advance of the main body of the census field records and it is from these summaries that this Preliminary Report has been prepared. Dissemination of the definitive population figures, analysing the population by such factors as age, marital status, occupation, etc., will commence in March 2012.

Vacant Dwellings

In identifying vacant dwellings, enumerators were instructed to look for signs that the dwelling was not occupied e.g. no furniture, no cars outside, junk mail accumulating, overgrown garden etc., and to find out from neighbours whether it was vacant or not. It was not sufficient to classify a dwelling as vacant after one or two visits. Similar precautions were also taken before classifying holiday homes.

Dwellings under construction and derelict properties are not included in the count of vacant dwellings. In order to be classified as under construction, the dwelling had to be unfit for habitation because the roof, doors, windows or walls had not yet been built or installed.

³ The Statistics (Census of Population) Order 2010 was made by the Taoiseach in pursuance of powers conferred on him by section 25 (1) of the Statistics Act 1993 (No. 21 of 1993).

Administrative and Census Areas

There are many different geographic divisions of the country. Those which were used in the 2011 Census of Population are described below. All the areas are as defined at the date of the census.

Small Areas

The enumeration of Census 2011 was organised using Small Areas, which are a new administrative unit developed by the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA) at the behest of Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSi) and in collaboration with the CSO. There are approximately 19,000 Small Areas containing, on average, between 75-150 households. The Small Areas nest within existing Electoral Divisions. Each enumerator was assigned an area averaging 420 dwellings consisting of 3-4 Small Areas.

Electoral Divisions (EDs)

The smallest administrative area for which population statistics are published is the Electoral Division (formerly called District Electoral Division). In rural areas each Electoral Division consists of an aggregation of entire townlands. There are 3,440 Electoral Divisions in the State and their populations are available on the CSO website at http://www.cso.ie/census/2011_preliminaryreport.htm.

Town and Rural Districts

Electoral Divisions are aggregated to give Towns (or Cities where appropriate) and Rural Districts which, in turn, build up to counties. The Rural Districts, which numbered 160, were abolished as administrative areas in 1925 (in the case of Rural Districts in County Dublin, in 1930) but have been retained for census purposes as convenient geographical entities, intermediate in size between Electoral Divisions and Counties. They are termed rural areas in the present report.

Counties and Cities

In the census reports the country is divided into 29 Counties and five Cities. In Dublin, four areas are identified separately, i.e. Dublin City and the three Administrative Counties of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin. Outside Dublin there are 26 administrative counties (North Tipperary and South Tipperary are separate counties for administrative purposes) and four Cities, i.e. Cork, Limerick, Waterford and Galway.

The boundaries of the Cities are subject to periodic extensions to keep pace with building development and it is not possible, therefore, to show comparable retrospective population figures over an extended period. Counties, on the other hand, have only been affected to a very minor extent by boundary changes and it is possible to compare county populations (including the appropriate Cities) over a long period of time. This is done in Table 2, which shows county population figures for each census year from 1926 to 2011.

Dáil Constituencies

For the purpose of elections to Dáil Éireann the country is divided into Constituencies which, under Article 16.4 of the Constitution of Ireland, have to be revised at least once every twelve years with due regard to changes in the distribution of the population. The Constituencies were last revised in 2009 and the Schedule to the Electoral (Amendment) Act 2009 (No. 4 of 2009) contains details of their composition. The 2011 population figures for these areas are given in Table 3.

Maps

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Regional Authorities (NUTS₃ Regions)

The geographical sub-divisions used in Table 4 are based on Regional Authorities. These eight regions were established under the Local Government Act 1991, Regional Authorities Establishment Order 1993 which came into operation on 1 January 1994.

Name of region	Constituent counties	Type of area
Border	Cavan Donegal Leitrim Louth Monaghan Sligo	Administrative county Administrative county Administrative county Administrative county Administrative county Administrative county
Dublin	Dublin Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Fingal South Dublin	City Administrative county Administrative county Administrative county
Mid-East	Kildare Meath Wicklow	Administrative county Administrative county Administrative county
Midland	Laois Longford Offaly Westmeath	Administrative county Administrative county Administrative county Administrative county
Mid-West	Clare Limerick Limerick North Tipperary	Administrative county City Administrative county Administrative county
South-East	Carlow Kilkenny South Tipperary Waterford Waterford Wexford	Administrative county Administrative county Administrative county City Administrative county Administrative county
South-West	Cork Cork Kerry	City Administrative county Administrative county
West	Galway Galway Mayo Roscommon	City Administrative county Administrative county Administrative county