

COMMENTARY

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

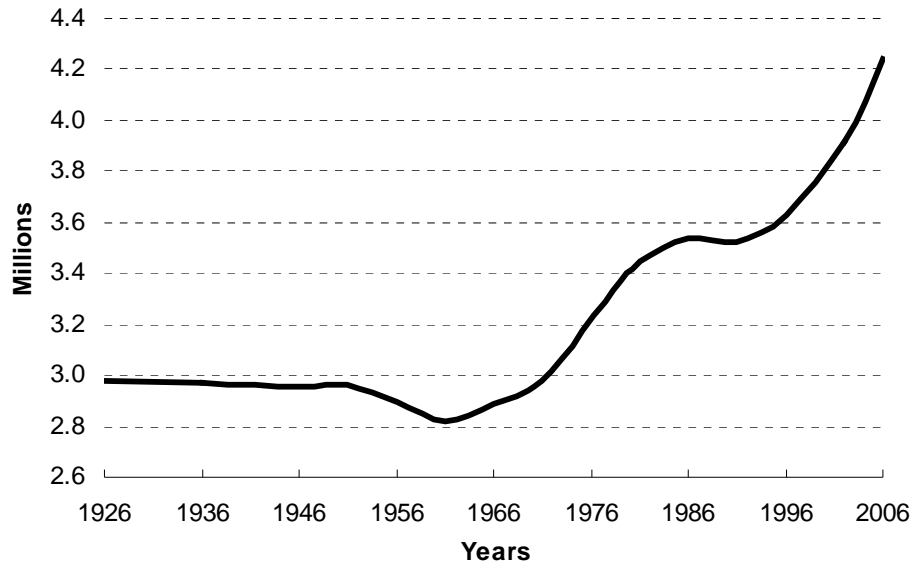
Total enumerated population

(Source: Table 1)

The 2006 census was the fifteenth census taken since the foundation of the State. The population enumerated on census night, 23 April 2006, was 4,239,848 persons compared with 3,917,203 in April 2002, representing an increase of 322,645 persons or 8.2 per cent over the four-year period.

Figure 1 provides a graph of the total enumerated population in each of the censuses conducted between 1926 and 2006 inclusive.

Figure 1 Population, 1926-2006



Factors affecting population change

The factors which affect population change between successive censuses are births, deaths, immigration and emigration. The number of births less deaths is referred to as the natural increase in the population, while net migration is the difference between the number of immigrants and emigrants. As the number of births and deaths are known from the published vital statistics series, net migration can be derived as population change less the natural increase in population.

Table A shows the factors affecting population change, expressed in the form of annual averages, for each intercensal period between 1926 and 2006 and helps in understanding the population graph shown in Figure 1.

Table A Average annual births, deaths, natural increase and estimated net migration for each intercensal period, 1926-2006

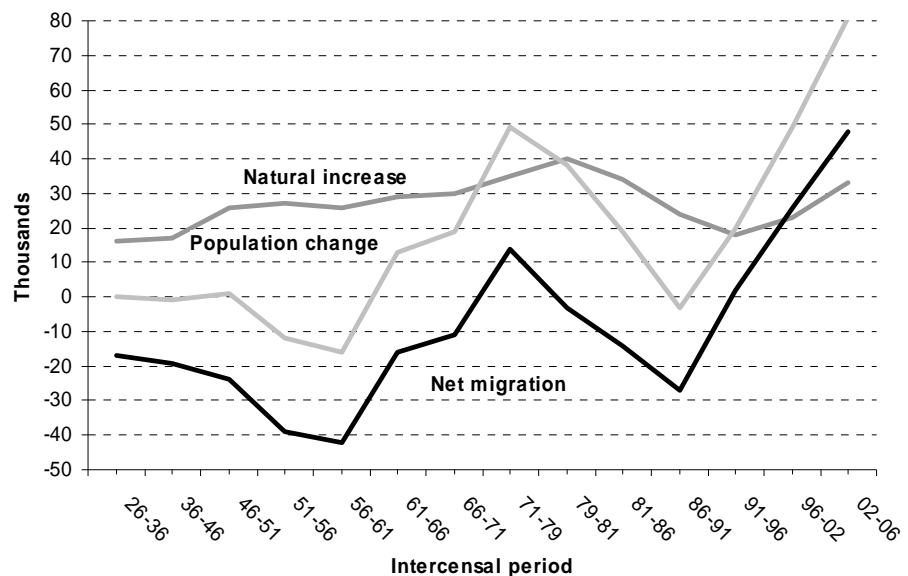
Period	Births	Deaths	Natural increase	Change in population	Estimated net migration
Thousands					
1926 – 1936	58	42	16	0	-17
1936 – 1946	60	43	17	-1	-19
1946 – 1951	66	40	26	1	-24
1951 – 1956	63	36	27	-12	-39
1956 – 1961	61	34	26	-16	-42
1961 – 1966	63	33	29	13	-16
1966 – 1971	63	33	30	19	-11
1971 – 1979	69	33	35	49	14
1979 – 1981	73	33	40	38	-3
1981 – 1986	67	33	34	19	-14
1986 – 1991	56	32	24	-3	-27
1991 – 1996	50	31	18	20	2
1996 – 2002	54	31	23	49	26
2002 – 2006	61	28	33	81	48

The eighty year period 1926-2006 shown in Table A can be broken down into a number of sub-periods, each of which displays distinctive demographic trends.

1926-1951	The population was stable at just under 3 million as a result of the moderate natural increase being counterbalanced by net outward migration.
1951-1961	High net outward migration flows were responsible for the population falling to its lowest level of 2.8 million in 1961.
1961-1971	The natural increase exceeded declining net outward migration leading to an increase in population during 1961-1966 – the first significant intercensal population increase.
1971-1979	A reversal in net migration from outward to inward alongside an increase in births led to an average annual population growth rate of 1.5 per cent over the period.
1979-1986	Net outward migration resumed, though not on a scale sufficient to offset the natural increase in population.
1986-1991	A declining natural increase coupled with high net outward migration led to a small fall in population.
1991-2006	Both natural increase and significant net inward migration have culminated in record population growth for the most recent intercensal period.

Figure 2 shows annual averages for population change, natural increase and net migration for the period 1926-2006. The dominant influence which migration has exerted on the pattern of population change over the eighty year period can be clearly seen from the graph.

Figure 2 Components of population changes, 1926-2006



GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Major geographical change

(Source: Table 4)

Table 4 gives population figures for each of the counties and cities for 2002 and 2006. All counties in Leinster increased their populations between 2002 and 2006. The fastest growing counties were Fingal (+43,579 or 22.2%), Meath (+28,826 or 21.5%) and Kildare (+22,391 or 13.7%). The population of all counties in Leinster apart from Dublin City (+2.1%), Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown (+1.2%) and Dublin South (+3.4%) grew by more than the national average rate of 8.2 percent. Taking a ten-year perspective (i.e. 1996-2006), three Leinster counties accounted for about 29 per cent of the overall 613,800 growth in population at State level. They were Fingal, Meath and Kildare.

On the other hand, Cork City and Limerick City were the only two of the thirty-four administrative counties to experience population decline between 2002 and 2006, the decreases being 3 per cent and 2.7 per cent respectively. In percentage terms Cork County (+11.4%) was the fastest growing county in Munster, followed by Waterford County (+9.2%) and Limerick County (+8.4%). Developments in the suburban areas adjacent to the cities of Cork, Waterford and Limerick were major contributors to this growth.

Of the Connacht counties, Leitrim (+3,151 or 12.2%) had the highest population growth rate in the recent intercensal period. This followed on from the modest increase of 3 per cent between 1996 and 2002, which in itself marked a turn around after a century and a half of continuous decline. Galway County experienced an 11.2 per cent increase, while the rapid growth in the population of Galway City experienced in the previous two intercensal periods moderated to 10 per cent between 2002 and 2006.

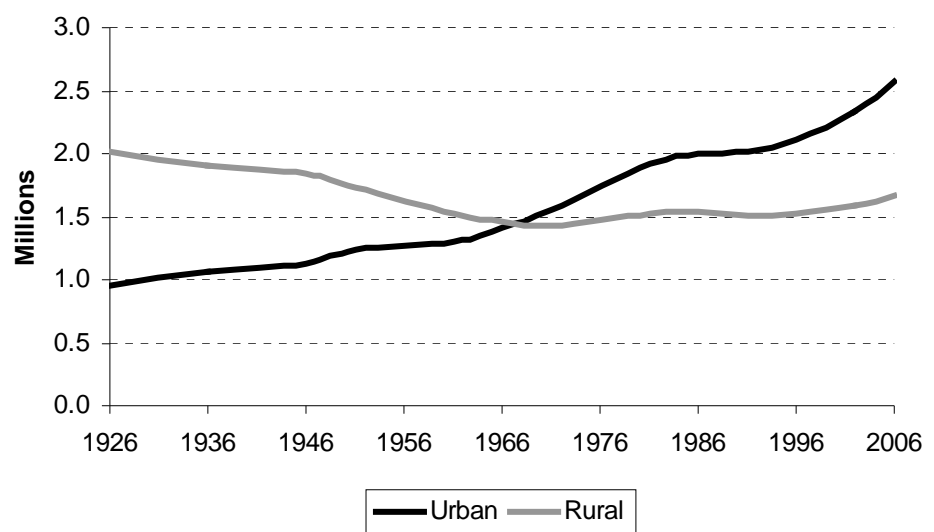
Cavan had the highest growth rate in Ulster (part of) - the main stimulus coming from the south of the county which is within commuting distance of Dublin. Donegal and Monaghan each grew by less than the national average rate in the last four years.

Urban/Rural

(Source: Tables 5B and 5C)

In common with many developed countries, Ireland has moved from having a largely rural population to a predominantly urban one. Figure 3 graphs the urban and rural populations at each census since 1926.

Figure 3 Urban/rural population, 1926-2006



The population living in urban areas (i.e. in towns with a population of 1,500 or more) has increased at every census since the foundation of the State, although it was fairly flat at around 1.9 to 2 million between 1981 and 1991. In the ten years to 2006 the urban population has increased by 460,000. The population living in rural areas has experienced a recovery in recent years following decades of decline with

the increase in the period 1996-2006 amounting to 150,000. Notwithstanding the recent increase in the population of rural areas, the urban share of the population has continued to grow with the result that by 2006, approximately 61 per cent of the Irish population were living in urban areas.

Table B provides a breakdown of the population of urban areas, including their suburbs/environs where appropriate, for 2002 and 2006.

Table B Population of Urban areas, 2002 and 2006

Area	Number of centres		Population		Proportion of total population	
	2002	2006	2002	2006	2002	2006
			Thousands		%	%
Greater Dublin Area*	1	1	1,004.6	1,045.8	25.6	24.7
Cork	1	1	186.2	190.4	4.8	4.5
Limerick	1	1	87.0	90.8	2.2	2.1
Galway	1	1	66.2	72.7	1.7	1.7
Waterford	1	1	46.7	49.2	1.2	1.2
Towns						
10,000 and over	28	34	496.2	615.9	12.7	14.5
5,000-9,999	33	39	233.9	272.7	6.0	6.4
3,000-4,999	25	29	99.5	108.6	2.5	2.6
1,500-2,999	53	63	114.0	128.3	2.9	3.0
Total	144	170	2,334.3	2,574.4	59.6	60.7

The Greater Dublin Area consists of Dublin City along with its suburbs in Fingal, South Dublin and Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown.

Increasing urbanisation

The top three population centres (Dublin, Cork and Limerick) lost population share compared with 2002. The trend towards increasing urbanisation is most evident in the towns rather than in the cities. The combined population of towns with a population of 10,000 or more is now over 600,000. Smaller towns with a population of 1,500 to 9,999 increased in population by 13.9 per cent – well in excess of the national average of 8.2 per cent. Overall, there was a gain of 1.1 percentage points in the share of the population living in urban areas – up from 59.6 per cent in 2002 to 60.7 in 2006.

AGE AND SEX COMPOSITION

Age structure

(Source: Table 9)

The age structure of any population results from past trends in fertility, mortality and migration. Figure 4, which shows the population classified by age and sex in 2006, clearly indicates the effect of the peak in the number of births which occurred in 1980; the sharp decline which followed over the next fifteen years and the subsequent partial recovery over the past decade. The impact of migration, especially on males in their twenties and thirties, is also evident.

Figure 4 Population by age and sex, 2006



An ageing population

The average age of the population was 35.6 years in 2006 compared with 35.1 years in 2002. Dublin Fingal had the youngest population in 2006 (average age 32.2 years) followed by Kildare (32.8 years). Roscommon, with an average age of 38.3 years, had the oldest population in the State at the time of the 2006 census followed by Leitrim (38.1 years).

Dependency declining

Age dependency³ ratios provide crude but useful summary measures of the age structure of the population at a particular point in time. The young and old dependency ratios are derived by expressing the young population (aged 0-14 years) and the old population (aged 65 years and over) as percentages of the population of working age (15-64 years). The total dependency ratio is the sum of the young and old ratios. Figure 5 shows dependency ratios for the period 1926 to 2006.

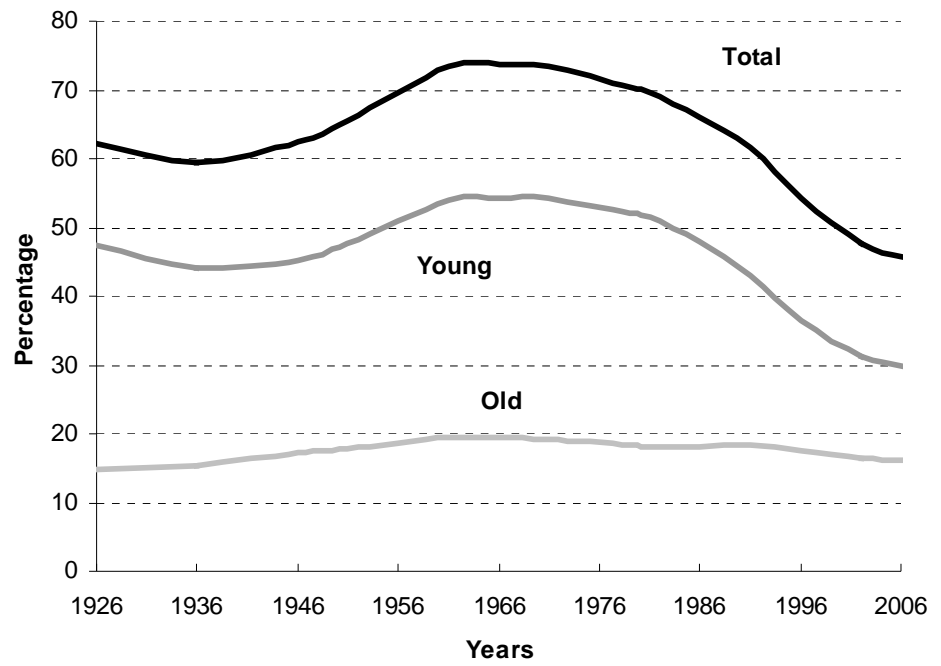
The number of young persons which peaked at over 1 million in 1981 has since declined to around 827,500 in 2002 mainly as a result of declining fertility rates. The most recent intercensal period has seen the population of this age group

³ The notion of dependency is not entirely precise as variations occur over time in the number of young persons staying on for longer periods in full-time education and in the number of persons over 65 years of age continuing to work. The relative proportions of persons aged 15-64 years who are inside and outside the labour force may also vary over time.

increase by 4.5 per cent to 864,600. The old population has increased at every census since 1961 from 315,000 in that year to just under 468,000 in 2006.

However, it is the change in the number of persons of working age which has been the main determinant of the shape of the dependency ratio graph. This population sub-group, which has grown from 1.63 million in 1961 to 2.9 million in 2006, has ensured that the dependency ratios have continued to decline during that period.

Figure 5 Age dependency ratios, 1926-2006



Sex ratio

Table C presents the population by broad age group and sex for 2006.

Table C Population by sex and age group, 2006

Age Group	Males	Females	Males per 100 females
Thousands			
0-4 years	154.6	147.7	104.6
5-14 "	288.5	273.7	105.4
15-24 "	321.0	311.7	103.0
25-34 "	366.7	355.5	103.1
35-44 "	315.2	308.2	102.3
45-54 "	262.5	259.3	101.3
55-64 "	205.5	201.6	102.0
65-74 "	127.4	135.1	94.4
75-84 "	64.8	92.5	70.1
85 years and over	14.8	33.2	44.6
Total	2,121.2	2118.7	100.1

Overall, the number of males exceeded the number of females by just 2,500 in 2006. The male excess applied to each of the age groups shown from birth to age 65. The effects of lower female mortality are clear for age groups over 65, with the sex ratio (i.e. the number of males per 100 females) decreasing with increasing age. For every 100 females aged 85 years and over in 2006 there were less than 45 males.

MARITAL STATUS

Table D analyses the population aged 15 years and over by marital status in 1996, 2002 and 2006.

Table D Population aged 15 years of age and over classified by marital status, 1996, 2002 and 2006

Years	Population 15+	Single	Married	Separated	Divorced	Widowed
Thousands						
1996	2,766.7	1,137.9	1,356.6	78.0	9.8	184.4
2002	3,089.8	1,314.7	1,454.4	98.8	35.1	186.9
2006	3,375.4	1,453.2	1,565.0	107.3	59.5	190.4
Percentage change						
1996/2002	11.7	15.5	7.2	26.6	258.2	1.3
2002/2006	9.2	10.5	7.6	8.6	69.8	1.9

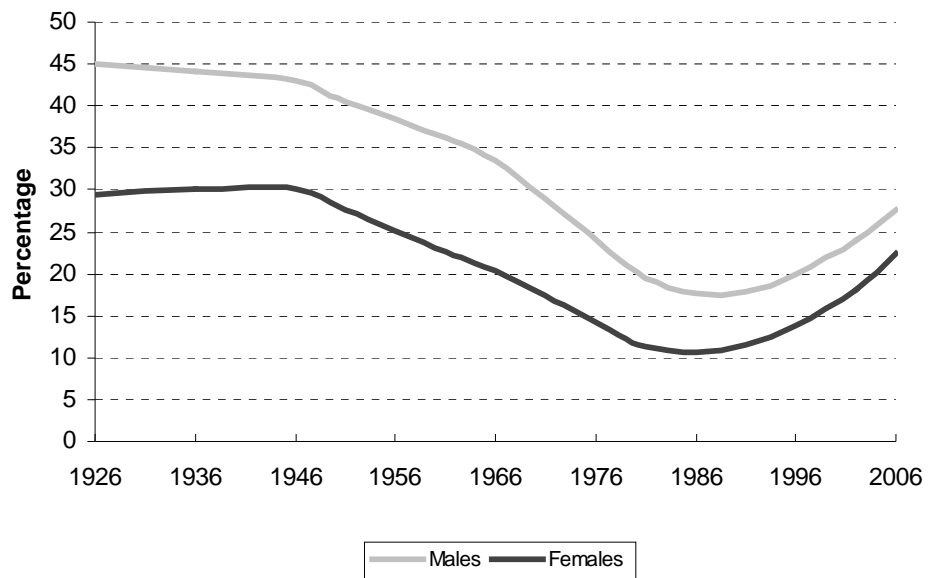
More single persons

(Source: Table 6A)

The population aged 15 years of age and over increased by 285,600 or 9.2 per cent between 2002 and 2006. The number of single persons grew by 138,600 (10.5%) over the same period while the increase in the number of married persons was 110,600 (7.6%).

Given that almost 85 per cent of marriages occur between persons aged under 35 years of age, the proportion of the 35-44 year age group who are single is a good indicator of long-term trends in the population who never marry. Figure 6 charts the percentage of persons in this age group who were single at each census since 1926, distinguishing males and females.

Figure 6 Percentage single aged 35-44 years, 1926-2006



A higher proportion of males than of females in the 35-44 age group was single at each census since 1926. The long-term decline since 1926 in the proportion of 35-44 year olds who were single was halted in 1986. The proportion has increased at all censuses since then. This reflects the fact that while the marriage rate increased for most of the period it declined again over the last two decades.

The divorced category was the fastest growing marital status category in the period since 1996. The number of persons recorded as divorced in the census increased from a low base of 9,800 in 1996 to 35,000 in 2002 and has since increased to 59,500 in the most recent census. The upward movement reflects the legalisation of divorce in the State since 1997. The number of persons describing themselves as separated has increased by 3.2 per cent on an annual average basis between 1996 and 2006. However, the annual rate of increase has fallen from 4 per cent between 1996 and 2002 to 2.1 per cent during 2002-2006.

More separated females than males

(Source: Tables 6B and 6C)

Figure 7 distinguishes separated and divorced males and females from 1996 to 2006. Females accounted for 57.3 per cent of separated persons and 54.3 per cent of divorced persons in 2006.

Figure 7 Separated and divorced by sex, 1996-2006



Marital breakdown

An indication of the relative extent of marital breakdown is provided by expressing the number of separated and divorced persons as a percentage of the total number of ever-married persons. In 2006 this proportion stood at 8.7 per cent compared with 7.5 per cent four years earlier.

Using the same measure Limerick City (12.9%) had the highest rate of marital breakdown in the country followed by Dublin City (11.6%). At the opposite end of the scale Galway County (6.3%) and Cavan (6.4%) had the lowest rates in 2006.

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

Different types of households

(Source: Table 12)

There were a total of 1,469,521 occupied private households in 2006, containing 4,123,318 usual residents. Of these, 1,430,493 were private households in permanent housing units and 7,225 were in temporary units. In the remaining 31,803 housing units the type of accommodation was not stated. These have been included with permanent housing units in the tables.

The average size of private households fell from 2.94 in 2002 to 2.81 in 2006, thus continuing the long-term decline.

Table E provides a breakdown of private households by composition⁴ in 2002 and 2006.

Table E Private households by composition, 2002 and 2006

Composition of Household	Number of households		Change 2002-2006	
	2002	2006	Actual	Percentage
		Thousands		%
One person	277.6	329.5	51.9	18.7
Couple* without children	211.4	269.5	58.1	27.5
Couple* with children	489.5	517.3	27.8	5.7
Couple* without children but with other persons	17.2	23.9	6.7	39.0
Couple* with children and other persons	44.3	31.7	-12.6	-28.4
Lone parent with children	131.2	152.5	21.3	16.2
Lone parent with children and other persons	19.4	17.2	-2.2	-11.4
Two or more family units	5.7	20.3	14.6	253.6
Non-family households	91.7	107.6	15.9	17.3
Total	1,288.0	1,469.5	181.5	14.1

* Couples include both married and cohabiting couples.

The predominant household type, which accounted for 35 per cent of all households in 2006, consisted of couples along with their children. One person households and couples without children accounted for a further 40 per cent while one in ten households consisted of lone parents and their children.

Of these four principal household types the fastest growing category was couples without children which increased by 27.5 per cent between 2002 and 2006.

Just over 20,000 households had more than one family unit living in them. However, the comparison with 2002, when the number of such households was 5,700, is affected by the new relationship question introduced in the 2006 census. In 2002, households which were classified as couples with children and other persons may have contained second family units which it was not possible to distinguish given the question layout used at that time (i.e. relationship to reference person).

⁴ The determination of household and family composition is based on responses to the question on the census form dealing with relationships within the household. In the 2002 and previous censuses the question referred to the relationship of all persons in the household to the reference person in the household. The question used in the 2006 census took account of relationships to the first four persons in the household. This version of the question has facilitated the coding of more complex and atypical family types than heretofore. In particular it allows a more accurate assessment of multi-family households. For some of the categories distinguished therefore strict comparability between the 2002 and 2006 data is not possible.

Old people living alone

(Source: Table 15)

Table F provides an analysis of elderly persons (i.e. those aged 65 years and over) living alone.

Table F Elderly population living alone in private households, 2006

Age group	Persons in private households	Persons living alone	Persons living alone as a percentage of persons in the age group in private households
	Thousands		%
65 years and over	422.2	121.2	28.7
70 years and over	286.2	94.1	32.9
75 years and over	174.5	65.1	37.3

Persons aged 65 years and over living alone comprised 36.8 per cent of all persons living alone in 2006, while persons aged 75 years and over accounted for just under 20 per cent of the total.

Nearly 29 per cent of persons aged 65 years and over in private households lived on their own. The proportion rose to 33 per cent for persons aged 70 years and over and to 37.3 per cent for those aged 75 years and over.

Family units

(Source: Table 16)

The decline in the total fertility rate, from over four in the 1960s to less than two in the 1990s, has had a major impact on family size. Table G traces the evolution of family size over the twenty-year period 1986 to 2006.

Table G Family units classified by number of children, 1986–2006

Number of children	1986	1991	1996	2002	2006
	Thousands				
None	132.1	145.4	173.5	232.9	303.6
One	161.7	174.2	195.7	243.1	300.1
Two	168.4	182.5	203.5	234.8	253.1
Three	128.3	130.4	131.9	134.7	131.7
Four or more	148.9	125.3	102.3	78.9	64.7
Total family units	739.5	757.9	806.8	924.5	1,053.2
Total children in family units	1,605.9	1,523.9	1,470.2	1,470.8	1,486.4
Average number of children per family	2.2	2.0	1.8	1.6	1.4

There were over a million families in the State in 2006 – up 42 per cent compared with twenty years earlier. Most of the increase took place in the most recent decade. The fastest growing category was families consisting of couples (whether married or not) without children. Their number increased by 130 per cent since 1986. There was also strong growth in families with one or two children, while the number of families with four or more children more than halved over the twenty-year period. More than four out of five families in 2006 contained two children or less compared with 62.5 per cent in 1986. The average number of children per family fell consistently from 2.2 to 1.4 over the same period.

Lone parent families

There were approximately 189,200 lone parent families in 2006, an increase of 23 per cent on 2002. However, it must be borne in mind that the more precise family coding allowed by the revised relationship question used in the 2006 census has contributed to this increase. Lone mothers, where all of the children were under 15 years, showed the greatest increase (+57.6%). Nearly 86 per cent of lone parent families were headed by females (see Table 16). Single parents accounted for 36

per cent of all lone parent families in 2006 while in 29 per cent of families the lone parent was a widow. In a further 30 per cent of families the lone parent was separated or divorced.

Cohabiting couples

Table H provides information on the number of cohabiting couples in 1996, 2002 and 2006 classified by size of family unit.

Table H Cohabiting couples by size of family unit, 1996, 2002 and 2006

Number of children	1996	2002	2006
	Thousands		
None	18.6	47.9	77.8
One	6.6	15.7	23.7
Two	3.5	8.8	13.4
Three or more	2.6	5.2	6.9
Total family units	31.3	77.6	121.8
Total children in family units	23.0	51.7	74.5
Average number of children per family	0.7	0.7	0.6

In total there were 121,800 family units consisting of cohabiting couples in 2006, up from 77,600 four years earlier. Almost two thirds of these were couples without children. Of the remaining 44,000 family units, over half had just one child.

Overall, cohabiting couples accounted for 11.6 per cent of all family units in 2006 compared with 8.4 per cent in 2002. Those without children accounted for one in four of all couples without children in 2006, while those with children represented 7.8 per cent of all couples with children. The number of children living with cohabiting parents increased from 51,700 in 2002 to 74,500 four years later.

A more in-depth analysis of the data relating to cohabiting couples reveals that 81.7 per cent of cohabiting couples without children were unions in which both partners were single, while in a further 5 per cent of cases both partners were either separated or divorced. The corresponding proportions for cohabiting couples with children were 68 per cent and 8.5 per cent respectively. Over 53 per cent of females in cohabiting partnerships were aged less than 30 years while the corresponding proportion for males was 40.8 per cent.

The number of same sex cohabiting couples recorded in the 2006 census was 2,090 compared with 1,300 in 2002. Two thirds of these were male couples.

Womens' fertility declining

(Source: Table 18)

A new question on the number of children born alive was asked of women in the 2006 census. A version of the question referring to the number of children born within the current marriage was asked in the 1961, 1971 and 1981 censuses. The main purpose of the question included in the 2006 census is to assess the factors impacting on fertility rates with a view to informing assumptions about likely future trends for population projections. Table 18 contains an analysis of females by age group, marital status and the number of children to which they have given birth.

Over 97 per cent of women aged 20 years and over responded to the question. Focussing on women aged 40 years and over i.e. those who are likely to have completed their childbearing, about 17.5 per cent had no children while 20 per cent had two children and a further 20 per cent had three children.

The decline in fertility in Ireland which has been evident since the 1960s is borne out by the average number of children which women of different generations who were alive on census day have given birth to. 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).

MIGRATION

Location of usual residence

(Source: Table 19)

The census figures relate to the de-facto population, i.e. persons present in the State on census night. Therefore, visitors present on census night are included while usual residents temporarily absent are excluded. Table I provides a breakdown of the enumerated population in 2006 by location of usual residence.

Table I Enumerated population by location of usual residence, 2006

Location of usual residence	Persons	Percentage
	Thousands	%
Where enumerated	4,067.8	95.9
Elsewhere in county	43.5	1.0
In another county	60.7	1.4
Outside Ireland	67.8	1.6
Total	4,239.8	100.0

Close to 4.07 million persons, representing 95.9 per cent of the enumerated population, were counted at their place of usual residence. A further 43,500 were enumerated elsewhere in the county where their usual residence is located, while 60,700 were enumerated elsewhere in the State. Approximately 67,800 visitors from abroad (representing 1.6 per cent of the enumerated population) were present in the State on census night. The largest categories were visitors from England and Wales (17,100), Poland (10,100) and the United States (8,600).

Absent persons

In addition to the *de-facto* methodology used to enumerate the population, a measure of the number of usual residents who were absent from their usual residence on census night was provided by the responses to a set of questions, introduced for the first time in the 2002 census, relating to absent persons. Clearly, these questions had to be completed by some remaining persons in the household which meant that complete households absent on census night were not enumerated.

In addition to the 4,067,000 persons enumerated in their usual residence on census night, a further 186,500 were recorded as being absent and, of these, 113,600 were reported as being temporarily absent (i.e. for a period of less than 3 months) on census night. As illustrated in Table J, 119,900 of the absentees were in the State on census night which meant that they were counted, albeit at a residence other than their usual residence.

Table J Absent persons by location and duration of absence, 2006

In the Republic of Ireland on Sunday 23 April 2006?	Total	Duration absent from usual residence		
		Less than 3 months	3 months or more	Not stated
		Thousands		
Yes	119.9	74.7	44.6	0.6
No	60.9	36.1	24.7	-
Not stated	5.7	2.8	2.2	0.8
Total	186.5	113.6	71.5	1.4

The effect of migration on age groups

By comparing the actual numbers of persons in a particular age group at one census with the number in the same cohort at the previous census and making allowances for births and deaths, a measure of the impact of migration on the relevant cohort is derived. Estimates of net migration classified by broad age groups for various intercensal periods since 1986 are shown in Table K.

Table K The effect on selected age groups of net migration during the intercensal periods since 1986

Age Group	1986-1991	1991-1996	1996-2002	2002-2006
	Thousands			
Males				
0-14 years	-4.5	10.3	15.7	11.4
15-24 "	-40.2	-26.1	-13.8	10.1
25-34 "	-28.1	1.4	25.8	48.5
35-44 "	-4.3	6.1	27.8	23.7
45-54 "	-1.9	3.0	9.3	9.1
55-64 "	1.0	3.4	6.1	2.5
65 years and over	3.9	3.5	5.3	1.9
Total	-74.0	1.6	76.3	107.2
Females				
0-14 years	-3.6	9.8	17.1	11.4
15-24 "	-37.6	-22.8	-6.9	14.1
25-34 "	-19.6	7.6	31.1	37.6
35-44 "	-1.8	5.9	21.2	14.1
45-54 "	-1.3	1.6	5.6	4.5
55-64 "	1.1	2.1	4.9	0.9
65 years and over	3.3	2.4	4.5	0.9
Total	-59.6	6.7	77.6	83.6
Average annual net migration	-26.8	1.7	25.6	47.7

At an aggregate level, net migration changed in direction from net outward during the 1986-1991 period to increasingly net inward in the subsequent periods shown.

The 15-24 year age group experienced losses due to net outward migration during three of the four sub-periods shown above. This was particularly pronounced when overall net outward migration was high between 1986 and 1991. Even in the 1996-2002 period, when average annual net inward migration exceeded 25,000, the 15-24 year age group continued to record net losses due to emigration.

The 25-34 and 35-44 age groups were also affected heavily by migration. In recent years, immigration of non-Irish nationals and returning Irish-born migrants have boosted the numbers in these age groups with the impact being greater for males than for females during the 2002-2006 period.

The remaining tables in the Migration section relate to the usually resident population excluding those temporarily absent from the State on census night.

Place of birth

(Source: Table 20)

An indication of long-term migration is provided by analysing the usually resident population by place of birth. Table L provides such an analysis for 2002 and 2006.

Table L Usually resident population by place of birth, 2002 and 2006

Place of birth	2002		2006	
	Thousands	%	Thousands	%
Ireland	3,458.5	89.6	3,559.4	85.3
County of usual residence	2,697.7	69.9	2,710.0	65.0
Other county	760.7	19.7	849.4	20.4
Outside Ireland (Republic)	400.0	10.4	612.6	14.7
EU 25	290.9	7.5	438.5	10.5
Northern Ireland	49.9	1.3	50.2	1.2
Great Britain	198.6	5.1	221.6	5.3
Poland	2.2	-	63.1	1.5
Lithuania	2.1	-	24.8	0.6
Other EU25	38.1	1.0	78.8	1.9
USA	21.5	0.6	25.2	0.6
Other countries	87.6	2.3	149.0	3.6
Total	3,858.5	100.0	4,172.0	100.0

The number of persons present and usually resident in the State on census night was 4,172,000, up 312,900 or 8.1 per cent since 2002. About two-thirds of these were living in their county of birth at the time of the census, while a further 20 per cent were living in a different county from the one in which they were born.

Over 610,000 usual residents, representing 14.7 per cent of the total, were born outside the State, with EU 25 (excluding Ireland) accounting for nearly 440,000 (10.5%) of the total. The largest category was those born in Britain (221,600) while persons born in Poland (63,100) are now the second largest group amongst the foreign-born. Table 21 gives a detailed country breakdown classified by broad age group. This shows that 84.4 per cent of persons from the ten new countries which acceded to membership of the EU on 1 May 2004 and who were permanently living in the State at the time of the census were aged 15-44 years.

Nationality

(Source: Table 25)

The question on Nationality, which was included for the first time in the 2002 census, was repeated in 2006. Tick boxes were used for the three categories: "Irish", "Other nationality" (the response had to be written in) and "No nationality". Respondents could indicate more than one nationality. Table M provides an analysis of the usually resident population by nationality and sex.

Table M Usually resident population by nationality, 2002 and 2006

Nationality	2002		2006	
	Thousands	%	Thousands	%
Irish (including dual Irish/other)	3,585.0	92.8	3,706.7	88.9
UK	103.5	2.7	112.5	2.7
Other EU 25	38.4	1.0	163.2	3.9
Rest of Europe	14.7	0.4	24.4	0.6
Africa	21.0	0.5	35.3	0.8
Asia	21.8	0.6	47.0	1.1
USA	11.4	0.3	12.5	0.3
Other countries	11.2	0.3	22.4	0.5
Multiple nationality	2.3	0.1	2.4	0.1
No nationality	0.8	0.0	1.3	0.0
Not stated	48.4	1.3	44.3	1.1
Total	3,858.5	100.0	4,172.0	100.0

The number of Irish nationals (including those with dual Irish and other nationality) who were usually resident at census time was 3.7 million, up 120,000 or 3.4 per cent since 2002.

Non-Irish nationals who were resident in the State increased from 224,000 to 420,000 (+87%) over the same period. The fastest growing categories were EU nationals, apart from Irish or UK nationals, along with Africans and Asians. Polish nationals numbered 63,300 while the number of Lithuanian nationals was 24,600. In overall terms non-Irish nationals made up 10 per cent of the usually resident population that indicated a nationality in April 2006.

Usual residence one year ago

Table N classifies the usually resident population aged one-year and over by usual residence twelve months before the census in 2002 and 2006. The data provide a picture of recent migration both within the State and from outside the State.

Table N Usual residents aged one year and over by usual residence twelve months before the census, 2002 and 2006

Usual residence twelve months ago	2002	2006
	Thousands	
Ireland	3,728.3	3,989.6
Same address	3,467.4	3,667.5
Elsewhere in county	185.8	233.8
In another county	75.0	88.2
Outside Ireland (Republic)	76.1	121.7
Northern Ireland	3.5	3.4
Great Britain	22.2	19.3
Poland	0.8	33.4
Lithuania	1.1	7.4
Other EU 25	12.0	26.6
USA	6.1	5.9
Other countries (incl. not stated)	30.4	25.8
Total	3,804.4	4,111.3

Migration within the State, as measured by changes of address in the twelve months before the census, increased by 23.4 per cent in the twelve months to April 2006 compared with the same period four years earlier. Nearly 73 per cent of those who changed address within Ireland in the twelve months before census day moved within the same county. Given the changing geographic distribution of the population it is likely that most such moves were from city areas to outlying suburban areas within the same county.

The number of persons who migrated into the State in the twelve months before census day increased by 60 per cent compared with four years previously. Approximately three quarters of them were from EU countries. Poland (33,400) was the single largest category, followed by UK (22,600) and Lithuania (7,400). The remaining EU countries accounted for nearly 22 per cent of the one-year inflow.

Persons who lived abroad for one year or more

(Source: Table 24)

Table O provides a classification of usual residents aged one year and over who were born outside the State classified by period of taking up residence in the State and country of previous residence. A fuller analysis, distinguishing Irish born residents who lived outside the State for a continuous period of one year or more, is given in Table 24.

Table O Usually resident population aged one year and over who were born outside the State classified by period of taking up residence in Ireland (Republic) and country of previous residence, 2006

Year of taking up residence in Ireland (Republic)	Total	UK	EU 15 excluding Ireland and UK	EU15 to EU25 accession states	USA	Other countries
Before 1951	2,184	1,528	82	11	313	250
1951 - 1960	2,823	2,175	161	12	176	299
1961 - 1970	11,150	8,641	484	18	820	1,187
1971 - 1980	26,636	21,391	1,160	61	1,478	2,546
1981 - 1990	25,867	18,028	2,286	84	1,921	3,548
1991 - 2000	106,101	62,266	10,569	1,814	8,072	23,380
2001 - 2006	188,657	45,898	20,030	59,218	8,640	54,871
Not stated	40,406	5,542	3,382	11,183	986	19,313
Total	403,824	165,469	38,154	72,401	22,406	105,394

Approximately, 34 per cent of the 611,190 usual residents aged 1 year or over who were born abroad did not reply to this question. Because of the formulation used i.e. "Have you lived outside the Republic of Ireland for a continuous period of one year or more?", there may have been a misunderstanding that this question did not apply to persons born abroad.

Of the 404,000 persons who did respond, two out of five of them indicated that they came from the UK while a further 18 per cent came from the ten countries which joined the EU on 1 May 2004. Nearly 38 per cent of those who came from the UK took up residence in the State in the 1990s, while in the case of those from the new accession States almost 82 per cent of them arrived in the 2001-2006 period.

ETHNIC OR CULTURAL BACKGROUND

New question on ethnic or cultural background

(Source: Table 27)

A new question on ethnic or cultural background was included in the 2006 census. CSO consulted the various representative agencies who suggested the tick box categories chosen and the wording used to describe these categories. This formulation was included in a census pilot test carried out in April 2004. Based on the results of the census test it was decided to include the question in the 2006 census. Table P summarises the headline figures for usual residents.

Table P Usual residents by ethnic or cultural background, 2006

Category	Thousands	%
<u>White</u>		
Irish	3,645.2	87.4
Irish Traveller	22.4	0.5
Any other White background	289.0	6.9
<u>Black or Black Irish</u>		
African	40.5	1.0
Any other Black background	3.8	0.1
<u>Asian or Asian Irish</u>		
Chinese	16.5	0.4
Any other Asian background	35.8	0.9
<u>Other including mixed background</u>		
	46.4	1.1
Not Stated	72.3	1.7
Total	4,172.0	100.0

White was the predominant category accounting for nearly 95 per cent of the usually resident population. Persons of Asian or Asian Irish background accounted for a further 1.3 per cent, while those who ticked the African box in the Black or Black Irish section made up 1 per cent of usual residents.

Irish traveller numbers down

(Source: Table 28)

The number of usual residents for whom the Irish Traveller box was ticked in the most recent census was 22,369, down from 23,509 in 2002. It should be borne in mind that the version of the question used in the 2002 census was a direct 'Yes'/No' tick box question i.e. "Are you a member of the Irish Traveller Community?". The change in the formulation of the question appears to have affected the comparability of the results between 2002 and 2006. Based on known fertility and mortality rates among travellers, a figure in excess of 25,000 would have been expected if the 2002 question layout were retained unchanged in 2006.

There were 22,435 Irish Travellers, representing 5.3 per thousand of the total population, enumerated in the 2006 census. This represents a decline of 1,254 or 5.3 per cent compared with 2002. Galway City (16.4 per thousand) was the county with the highest proportion of Travellers in 2006, followed by Longford (15.8 per thousand). Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown (1.9 per thousand) and Cork County (2.0 per thousand) had the lowest proportions.

More travellers in permanent accommodation

(Source: Table 30)

Just over 2 per cent of travellers were enumerated in communal establishments. Of the remaining 22,002, 69.1 per cent lived in permanent accommodation (including permanent accommodation in traveller encampments), 24.9 per cent lived in caravans or mobile homes while 6 per cent did not answer the relevant question. Notwithstanding the lower overall number of travellers enumerated in 2006 the numbers 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.

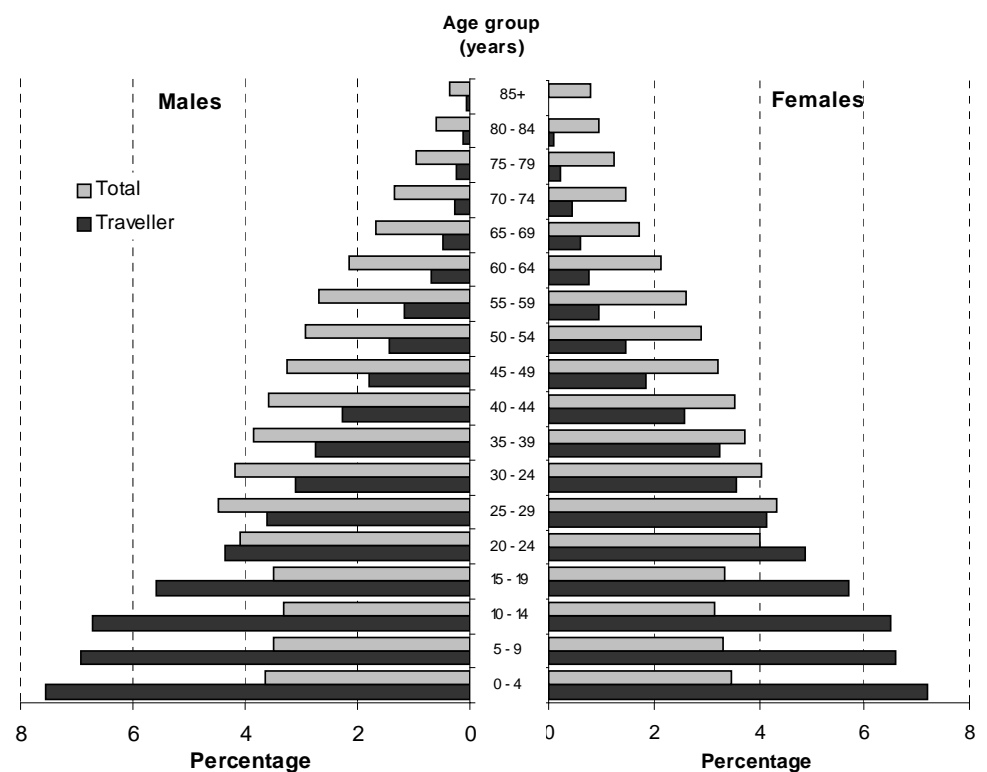
There were 96.7 males per 100 females among the Traveller Community - lower than the sex ratio of 100.1 recorded for the population as a whole. The contrast between the age structure of the Traveller Community and the overall population

by single year of age is however quite stark (see Figure 8). The age profiles of the two populations differ markedly. While the young population aged 0-14 years accounted for 20.4 per cent of the general population, the corresponding proportion was 41.4 per cent for Travellers. Older Travellers (i.e. those aged 65 years and over) accounted for just 2.6 per cent of the total Traveller population compared with 11 per cent for the general population.

The distinctive age structure of the Traveller Community resulted in a median age of 18 compared with a national figure of 33.

The high birth rate prevalent in the Traveller Community contributes to both higher proportions in the younger age groups and consequentially lower proportions in the older age groups. In addition, the latter is also affected by higher mortality rates for the Traveller Community at younger ages compared with the population as a whole. This may be seen from Figure 8 by observing the more rapid decline in the proportions of older aged Travellers.

Figure 8 Percentage population by age, 2006



Marital status

Proportionately fewer of the population aged 15 years and over among the Traveller Community were single (39%) compared with the general population (43%). The tendency for higher marriage rates among Travellers was more prevalent in the younger age groups. 21.6 per cent of male Travellers aged 15-24 years were married compared with 1.4 per cent for the general male population. The corresponding rates for females were 26 per cent and 2.7 per cent respectively.

IRISH LANGUAGE

New question on Irish

The question on ability to speak the Irish language which was introduced in the 1996 census was retained unchanged in 2002 and 2006 enabling the results of these three censuses to be directly compared. The version of the question on frequency of speaking the language which was used in 1996 and 2002 was changed in 2006 to separately distinguish daily Irish speakers within and outside the education system. Comparisons between the results of the most recent census and the previous two censuses on this topic are likely to have been affected by the wording change introduced.

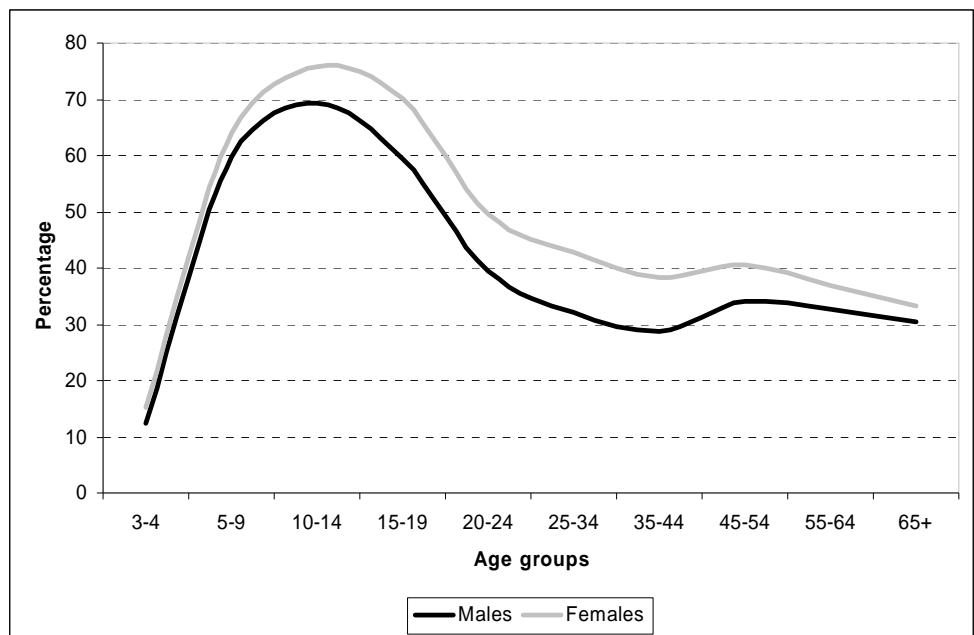
Ability to speak Irish

(Source: Table 31)

Approximately 1.66 million persons aged three years of age and over were recorded as being able to speak Irish in 2006. This represents 40.8 per cent of the respondents to that question, compared with 42.8 per cent in 2002. The age groups with the highest proportions of persons able to speak Irish were those corresponding to the school-going population, i.e. 10-14 and 15-19 (see Figure 9). Ability declines in the immediate post education age groups but picks up again for the 45-54 year age group. Thereafter, the proportion of persons able to speak Irish declines steadily with increasing age.

Proportionately more women (45.3%) than men (38.4%) were able to speak Irish in 2006, down from 45.9 per cent and 39.7 per cent, respectively in 2002. As in 1996 and 2002, the female excess was evident in each age group - the differential being most pronounced in the 15-19 age group.

Figure 9 Ability to speak Irish by age group and sex, 2006



Frequency of use

(Source: Tables 32A-32B)

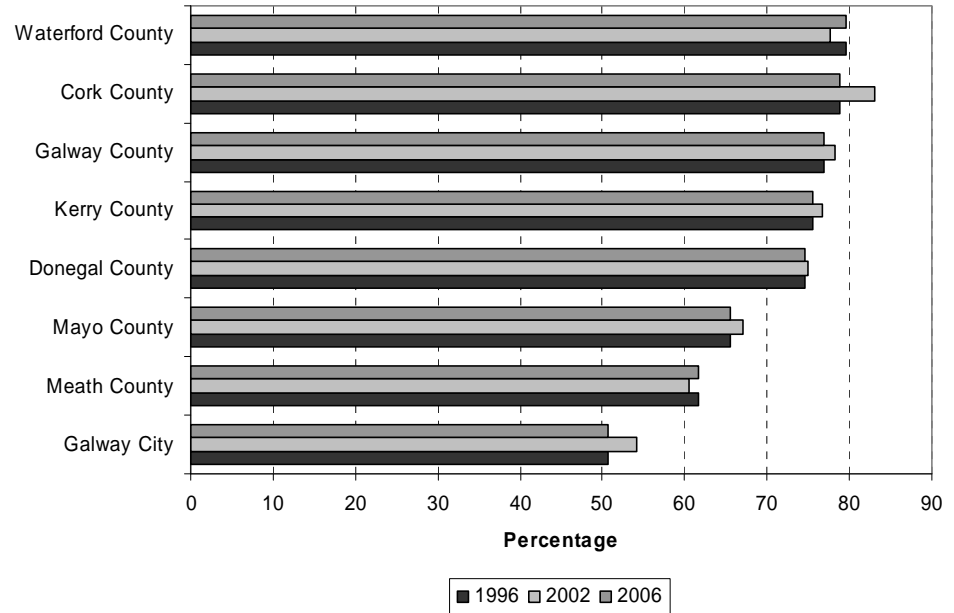
Of the 1.66 million persons who indicated that they could speak Irish, 485,000 (29.3%) spoke it on a daily basis within the education system while a further 53,500 (3.2%) persons spoke it on a daily basis outside the education system. The combined percentage (32.5%) is well in excess of the 2002 percentage (21.6%). Given the downward trend between 1996 and 2002 in the number of daily Irish speakers, the 2002 to 2006 differential contains a significant questionnaire effect. The fact that the school-going age groups 5-19 years accounted for 80 per cent of the daily speakers in 2006 compared with 76.8 per cent in 2002 would support this contention.

Gaeltacht areas

(Source: Tables 33-34)

Irish speakers represented 70.8 per cent of the population aged 3 years and over within Gaeltacht areas in 2006, down from 72.6 per cent in 2002. The proportion of Irish speakers declined in all Gaeltacht areas apart from the Meath and Waterford – the two smaller Gaeltacht areas. The proportion of Irish speakers varied between different Gaeltacht areas as shown in Figure 10.

Figure 10 Percentage of the population age 3 years and over in Gaeltacht areas who are Irish speakers*, 1996, 2002 and 2006



* Excluding not stated.

57 per cent of Irish speakers located in Gaeltacht areas speak Irish on a daily basis and a further 10.2 per cent on a weekly basis. The corresponding proportions in 2002 were 55.6 per cent and 11 per cent, respectively. However, it has to be borne in mind that the change in the question layout may have affected these comparisons. Just over 23 per cent of the Irish speaking Gaeltacht population speak Irish less frequently than weekly, while 6.7 per cent were recorded as never speaking the language (see Table 34).

RELIGION

Religion

(Source: Tables 35-36)

Table Q summarises the population by main religious groupings in 2002 and 2006.

Table Q Population by religious grouping, 2002 and 2006

Religion	2002	2006	Actual change 2002-2006	Percentage change 2002- 2006
	Thousands			%
Roman Catholic	3,462.6	3,681.4	218.8	6.3
Church of Ireland (incl. Protestant)	115.6	125.6	10.0	8.7
Christian (unspecified)	21.4	29.2	7.8	36.4
Presbyterian	20.6	23.5	2.9	14.1
Muslim (Islamic)	19.1	32.5	13.4	70.2
Orthodox	10.4	20.8	10.4	100.0
Methodist	10.0	12.2	2.2	22.0
Other stated religions	40.0	57.9	17.9	44.8
No religion	138.3	186.3	48.0	34.6
Not stated	79.1	70.3	-8.8	-11.2
Total	3,917.2	4,239.8	322.6	8.2

The number of Roman Catholics recorded increased by 218,800 or 6.3 per cent between 2002 and 2006. However, as the percentage increase was lower than for the population as a whole over that period (8.2%), the share of Roman Catholics in the population fell from 88.4 per cent in 2002 to 86.8 per cent in 2006.

The number of Church of Ireland (including Protestant) adherents increased by 10,000 or 8.7 per cent – just ahead of the national increase in population. Muslims represented the third largest religious category in 2006 – up 13,400 to just over 32,500. Adherents of the Orthodox religion doubled in number to 20,800 between 2002 and 2006. Approximately 186,300 persons, representing 4.4 per cent of the population, ticked the 'No religion' box in 2006.

Changes in the number of adherents of the various religious groupings over recent censuses have been influenced by trends in migration. Table 36 classifies usual residents by religion and nationality. The table shows that 92 per cent of Irish nationals were Roman Catholics compared with 50.8 per cent for non-Irish nationals.

The religious grouping with the highest proportion of non-Irish national adherents was Orthodox (84.2%) with its members coming mainly from Eastern Europe outside the European Union.

Muslims, with 68 per cent of their adherents being non-Irish nationals, are mainly of African and Asian extraction.

HOUSING

There were just over 1.46 million permanent housing units containing usual residents at the time of the 2006 census (see Table 37). Of these, 912,700 (62.4%) were located in urban areas i.e. in towns and cities with a population of 1,500 or more. Table R provides a breakdown of occupied housing units by type of dwelling distinguishing urban and rural areas.

Table R Percentage distribution of housing units by type of dwelling, 2006

Dwelling type	Total	Urban	Rural
Detached house	42.8	19.2	82.1
Semi-detached house	27.2	37.8	9.7
Terraced house	17.6	25.6	4.4
Flat or apartment in a purpose-built block	7.5	11.4	1.1
Flat or apartment in a converted house or commercial building	2.0	2.7	0.9
Bed-sit	0.6	0.9	0.1
Not stated	2.2	2.4	1.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Detached dwellings predominate

(Source: Table 37)

Detached dwellings were the predominant housing type in 2006, accounting for nearly 43 per cent of all housing units. More than one in four houses were semi-detached, 17.6 per cent were terraced while flats and apartments accounted for 10.2 per cent of all housing units. More than four out of five rural dwellings were detached residences while semi-detached and terraced housing were the most common dwelling types in urban areas. Flats and apartments featured strongly in urban areas, making up 15 per cent of urban dwellings in 2006, continuing the upward trend observed in 2002.

Most houses built since 1971

(Source: Tables 38A-38C)

Table S provides an analysis of the occupied housing stock by period of construction distinguishing urban and rural dwellings. The main housing characteristics are classified by period of construction in Tables 38A-38C of the report.

Table S Percentage distribution of housing units by period in which built, 2006

Period of construction	Total	Urban	Rural
Before 1919	10.6	7.3	16.0
1919 to 1940	7.4	6.5	8.8
1941 to 1960	9.7	10.6	8.3
1961 to 1970	7.7	9.1	5.5
1971 to 1980	14.5	14.8	14.0
1981 to 1990	11.4	10.6	12.6
1991 to 1995	6.4	6.9	5.5
1996 to 2000	10.6	10.9	10.0
2001 or later	17.1	17.2	16.8
Not stated	4.7	6.1	2.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Six out of every ten occupied permanent housing units distinguished in the 2006 census were built since 1971. The upsurge in population during 1970s was responsible for the growth in housing during that period while the period since 2000 has seen house building surpass previous records. Looking back at previous periods, one sixth of rural houses were built before 1919 compared with 7.3 per cent of the urban stock.

Table T sets out the changes that have occurred since 1961 in the distribution of household units by occupancy status.

Owner occupation still dominates

Owner occupied dwellings continue to be the most prevalent occupancy status. While the number of such dwellings increased by 7.8 per cent (from 991,000 to 1,091,900) during the most recent intercensal period, their share of all housing units actually fell from 77.4 per cent in 2002 to 74.7 per cent in 2006 – continuing the downward trend which commenced between 1991 and 2002.

Table T Percentage distribution of housing units by occupancy status, 1961 to 2006

Occupancy status	1961	1971	1981	1991	2002	2006
LA rented	18.4	15.9	12.7	9.7	6.9	7.2
Other rented	17.2	10.9	8.1	7.0	11.1	13.4
Owner occupied	53.6	60.7	67.9	80.2	77.4	74.7
Other	10.8	12.5	11.2	3.0	4.6	4.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

The number of Local Authority rented dwellings declined at each census between 1961 and 2002 but increased by 17,500 during the most recent intercensal period. Housing units rented from private landlords or voluntary bodies increased their share from 11.1 per cent in 2002 to 13.4 per cent in 2006.

Of the 1.46 million housing units identified in the 2006 census, approximately 1,093,000 (74.8%) relied on public mains for their water supply while a further 173,000 (11.8%) houses were connected to a group water scheme. Just over 145,000 (9.9%) of houses, located almost exclusively in rural areas, had a private source of water.

Over 956,000 (65.4%) housing units were connected to a public sewerage system in 2006. Houses using individual septic tanks for sewerage disposal amounted to 418,000 (28.6%). These were mainly located in rural areas.

One off housing

One in five of the 497,000 housing units built since 1991 were individual one-off houses in rural areas (i.e. detached buildings with individual septic tanks). The counties with the highest percentage of these one-off housing units built since 1991 were: County Galway (52.7%), Roscommon (43.4%), Donegal (41.4%) and Monaghan (40.4%).

As part of their duties the enumerators noted, in their enumerator record books, the dwelling status of the various housing units which they visited. The following categories were distinguished: occupied, temporarily absent, vacant house, vacant flat and holiday home. The results are given in Table 40.

The total stock of permanent housing units on 23 April 2006 was 1.77 million. Of these, 1.47 million (or 83.3%) were occupied. Approximately 175,000 housing units were vacant houses, a further 41,600 were vacant flats and 49,800 were holiday homes. This categorisation was made based on the enumerator's assessment in the field which would have involved checking with neighbours where appropriate.

Vacancy rate of 15%

(Source: Table 40)

By expressing the total vacant houses and flats and holiday homes as a percentage of the total housing stock it is possible to derive an overall vacancy rate. This stood at 15 per cent for April 2006. The counties with the highest vacancy rates were Leitrim (29.3%), Donegal (27%) and Kerry (24.8%) while South Dublin (6.2%), Fingal (8.8%) and Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown (8.9%) had the lowest rates.

