

## 1981 CENSUS OF POPULATION

6 November 1981

### First results for Ireland

A census of population was carried out in Ireland on the night of 5 April 1981 within the context of the Community directive on synchronised censuses in 1981. The preliminary report was published in October 1981 and the general picture shown by the census results is of a continuing growth of population. For administrative reasons it was necessary to conduct a census in Ireland in April 1979, so that it is possible to make short-term inter-censal comparisons 1979-1981 as well comparisons over the longer period to the preceding census of 1971.

The preliminary total of the population enumerated on census night 1981 was 3,440,000 persons compared with 3,368,000 in April 1979, an increase of 72,000 persons representing a growth rate of almost 1.1 percent per annum. During the period 1971 to 1979 the average annual rate of increase amounted to 1.5 percent.

Population trends in Ireland in the past decade have been remarkable when viewed in relation to trends over a considerably longer period. Within the present territory of Ireland the total population attained its highest level in the year 1841, declining at each successive census (apart from a slight recovery between 1946 and 1951) until the year 1961, by which time it was considerably below half the 1841 figure. A continuing increase in population observed at each census since 1961 and which was particularly marked between 1971 and 1979 has restored the total State figure to within 28,000 of the level pertaining in 1891.

The birthrate in Ireland has been consistently at a high level by comparison with most European countries and the decline in population up to the year 1961 was the result of a high rate of emigration. In particular between the years 1951 and 1961 the loss of population through emigration exceeded the total number of deaths occurring in the country. By contrast, subsequent to 1961 there was a sharp fall in emigration while the years from 1971 to 1979 were the only period since records were first kept to show a net gain of population through migration. In the most recent period, 1979 to 1981, there was again a net outward migration, although very low by comparison with the level of earlier periods.

The distribution of population by principal regions (provinces, counties and county boroughs) at the 1971, 1979 and 1981 censuses and percentage changes 1971-1981 and 1979-1981 are shown in Table 1 on the reverse. Between 1971 and 1981 substantial increases in population occurred in most regions of the country. Dublin County Borough, which is the central administrative region of the Dublin agglomeration, was an exception showing a fall of 7.5 percent. The remainder of Dublin County, containing the newer portions of the Dublin agglomeration, increase by 8.3 percent.

The census results in respect of Planning Regions, which correspond to the Level III Regions of the Community nomenclature for statistical units of territory are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 1 - POPULATION OF EACH PROVINCE, COUNTY AND COUNTY BOROUGH

	Population			Increase 1971-1981 (- = Decrease)	Increase 1979-1981 (- = Decrease)
	1971	1979	1981	Percentage %	Percentage %
TOTAL	2,978,248	3,368,217	3,440,427	15.5	2.1
LEINSTER	1,498,140	1,743,861	1,788,844	19.4	2.6
Carlow	34,237	38,668	39,814	16.3	3.0
Dublin Co. and Co. Borough	852,219	983,683	1,001,985	17.6	1.9
Dublin Co. Borough	567,866	544,586	525,360	- 7.5	- 3.5
Dun Laoghaire Borough	53,171	54,244	54,405	2.3	0.3
Dublin*	231,182	384,853	422,220	82.6	9.7
Kildare	71,977	97,185	104,097	44.6	7.1
Kilkenny	61,473	69,156	70,768	15.1	2.3
Laoighis	45,259	49,936	51,169	13.1	2.5
Longford	28,250	30,785	31,138	10.2	1.1
Louth	75,104	86,135	88,359	17.6	2.6
Meath	71,576	90,715	95,602	33.6	5.4
Offaly	51,829	57,342	58,307	12.5	1.7
Westmeath	53,570	59,885	61,300	14.4	2.4
Wexford	86,351	96,421	99,016	14.7	2.7
Wicklow	66,295	83,950	87,289	31.7	4.0
MUNSTER	882,002	979,819	997,948	13.1	1.9
Clare	75,008	84,919	87,489	16.6	3.0
Cork Co. and Co. Borough	352,883	396,118	402,288	14.0	1.6
Cork Co. Borough	128,645	138,267	136,269	5.9	- 1.4
Cork	224,238	257,851	266,019	18.6	3.2
Kerry	112,772	120,356	122,734	8.8	2.0
Limerick Co. and Co. Borough	140,459	157,407	161,586	15.0	2.7
Limerick Co. Borough	57,161	60,665	60,721	6.2	0.1
Limerick	83,298	96,742	100,865	21.1	4.3
Tipperary, N.R.	54,337	58,476	58,965	8.5	0.8
Tipperary, S.R.	69,228	75,265	76,239	10.1	1.3
Waterford Co. and Co. Borough	77,315	87,278	88,647	14.7	1.6
Waterford Co. Borough	34,226	38,478	38,457	12.4	- 0.1
Waterford	43,089	48,800	50,190	16.5	2.8
CONNACHT	390,902	418,500	423,915	8.4	1.3
Galway	149,223	167,838	171,836	15.2	2.4
Leitrim	28,360	27,844	27,607	- 2.7	- 0.9
Mayo	109,525	114,019	114,548	4.6	0.5
Roscommon	53,519	54,189	54,499	1.8	0.6
Sligo	50,275	54,610	55,425	10.2	1.5
ULSTER (part of)	207,204	226,037	229,720	10.9	1.6
Cavan	52,618	53,720	53,763	2.2	0.1
Donegal	108,344	121,941	124,783	15.2	2.3
Monaghan	46,242	50,376	51,174	10.7	1.6

\* Excluding Dun Laoghaire Borough

TABLE 2 - POPULATION OF PLANNING REGIONS (Community level III Regions)

Region	Population			Increase 1971-1981	Increase 1979-1981
	1971	1979	1981	%	%
East	1,062,067	1,255,533	1,288,973	21.4	2.7
South West	465,655	516,474	525,022	12.7	1.7
South East	328,604	366,788	374,484	14.0	2.1
North East	173,964	190,231	193,296	11.1	1.6
Mid West	269,804	300,802	308,040	14.2	2.4
Donegal	108,344	121,941	124,783	15.2	2.3
Midlands	232,427	252,137	256,413	10.3	1.7
West	258,748	281,857	286,384	10.7	1.6
North West	78,635	82,454	83,032	5.6	0.7
TOTAL	2,978,248	3,368,217	3,440,427	15.5	2.1

Composition of PLANNING REGIONS

Planning regions	Composition
East	Counties of Dublin, Kildare, Meath and Wicklow, Dublin County Borough
South West	Counties of Cork and Kerry, Cork County Borough
South East	Counties of Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary South Riding, Waterford and Wexford, Waterford County Borough
North East	Counties of Cavan, Louth and Monaghan
Mid West	Counties of Clare, Limerick and Tipperary North Riding, Limerick County Borough
Donegal	County Donegal
Midlands	Counties of Laoighis, Longford, Offaly, Roscommon and Westmeath
West	Counties of Galway and Mayo
North West	Counties of Leitrim and Sligo