

Appendix 9

Administrative and Census Areas in Census 2006

Introduction

There are many different territorial divisions of the country of which the most important, from the point of view of the Census of Population, are described below. All the areas are as defined at the date of the 2006 Census and any subsequent revisions have not been taken into account.

Townlands

The enumeration of the census is carried out, in the first instance, by townlands in rural areas and by streets in urban areas. The townland is the smallest territorial division used for administrative purposes. Population figures in respect of townlands, of which there are about 51,000, have not been published since the census of 1911. Townlands are not used as administrative areas within the boundaries of legally defined urban areas – Cities, and Towns - and for most other urban areas without legal boundaries it is not possible to compile townland population figures as building development has completely obliterated the physical features by which townland boundaries were originally defined on Ordnance Survey maps.

Electoral Divisions (EDs)

The smallest administrative area for which population statistics are published is the Electoral Division. In rural areas each Electoral Division consists of an aggregation of entire townlands. There are 3,440 Electoral Divisions in the State.

The term District Electoral Division was changed to Electoral Division by Section 23 of the Local Government Act, 1994. S.I. 196 of 1996 refers.

Town and Rural Areas

Electoral Divisions are aggregated to give Towns¹ (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 units of area, intermediate in size between Electoral Divisions and Counties. They are termed rural areas in the 2006 results. In the case of County Dublin, however, it is not possible to compile rural area figures because of extensive revisions that have taken place in the boundaries of Electoral Divisions over the years.

Counties and Cities

Under the Local Government Act, 2001 (S.I. 591 of 2001), the areas formerly known as County Boroughs are now called Cities. Areas formally known as Municipal Boroughs are now called Boroughs. The area of North Tipperary Riding and South Tipperary Riding are now known as North Tipperary and South Tipperary, respectively.

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

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.

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 2005 and the Schedule to the Electoral (Amendment) (No 16) Act 2005 contains details of their composition.

Appendix 9 (contd.)

Local Electoral Areas

For the purpose of County Council and City Council elections each county and city is divided into Local Electoral Areas which are constituted on the basis of Orders made under the Local Government Act, 1941. In general, these areas are formed by aggregating Electoral Divisions. However, in a number of cases Electoral Divisions are divided between Local Electoral Areas to facilitate electors. The population figures for Local Electoral Areas given in Table 9 in Volume 1 reflect the composition of these local electoral areas in April 2006 as established by relevant Statutory Instruments.

The boundaries between Counties Louth, Meath and Counties Carlow, Laois were altered, for electoral purposes only, by the Local Government (Boundaries) (Town Elections) Regulations, 1994. Due to these boundary changes, the sum of the number of persons in the Local Electoral Areas in each of these four counties does not match the published population figures for these counties.

Towns

For census purposes towns fall into two types, namely those with and those without legally defined boundaries.

Towns with legally defined boundaries consist of:

- (1) five Cities;
- (2) five Boroughs;
- (3) 75 Towns.

Under Section 62 of the Local Government Act, 1994 (S.I. 171 of 1994, the following six towns ceased to have town status: Callan, Fethard, Newcastle West, Rathkeale, Roscommon and Tullow. The Towns Improvement Act has now ceased under the Local Government Act, 2001 (S.I. 591 of 2001). Under this act the areas previously known as Urban Districts are now called Towns, as are the 26 towns which were formally towns under the Towns Improvement Act.

Extensions to the boundaries of the towns of Letterkenny and Athlone were formally approved between the 2002 and 2006 censuses.

Towns without legally defined boundaries are called "census towns". Their boundaries are determined, for census purposes only, by the Central Statistics Office. There were 664 such towns in 2006.

(i) Towns with Legally Defined Boundaries

In the case of towns with legally defined boundaries it is necessary, for administrative purposes, to compile population figures for the areas within these boundaries. However, many of these towns have expanded beyond their legally defined boundaries. As a result large numbers of persons in the communities for which these towns are the nuclei would be excluded if the coverage were confined strictly to legally defined boundaries. This problem tends to become more pronounced from one census to the next as urban areas extend further into the surrounding countryside. Revisions of the legally defined boundaries tend to lag behind these developments, as they are dependent on other factors besides the necessity of defining urban areas for Census of Population purposes.

Much of the census analysis is concerned with the overall size of population clusters and not simply with areas within legally defined boundaries. Consequently, where urban areas have extended beyond the legally defined town boundary, the Central Statistics Office draws up ~~new boundaries~~new boundaries defining the *suburban* areas of Cities and *environs* of Boroughs and other legal towns for census purposes.

Suburbs/environs are defined, in conformity with United Nations recommendations, as the continuation of a distinct population cluster outside its legally defined boundary in which no occupied dwelling is more than 200 metres distant from the nearest occupied dwelling. New suburbs or environs are defined only where there are at least twenty occupied dwellings outside the legal boundary within the new limit. In applying the 200-metre criterion, industrial, commercial and recreational buildings and facilities are not regarded as breaking the continuity of a built-up area.

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Suburban areas for Dublin City and Cork City were defined for the first time at the 1951 Census. For the 1956 Census all towns with legally defined boundaries were examined in co-operation with the Local Authorities concerned and where necessary, suburban areas or environs were defined for them for census purposes. The suburban boundaries were reviewed for each subsequent census. A comprehensive review was carried out as part of the processing phase of the 2006 Census.

(ii) Census Towns

As in censuses since 1971, a census town is defined as a cluster of fifty or more occupied dwellings, not having a legally defined boundary, in which within a distance of 800 metres there is a nucleus of either thirty occupied houses on both sides of the road or twenty occupied houses on one side of the road. A complete review was carried out of the boundaries of existing and potential census towns as part of the processing phase of the 2006 Census. In this review the limits to existing census towns were extended where appropriate using the 200-metre criterion as described for suburban areas above. 52 new census towns were created for the 2006 Census. In addition, six towns, which ceased to be legally defined towns, became census towns (see previous page).

For the censuses of 1926 to 1951 a census town was defined simply as a cluster of twenty or more houses and the precise delimitation of the town was left to the discretion of the individual enumerator concerned. As part of the general review of towns for the 1956 Census, the boundaries for the census towns were drawn up in consultation with the various Local Authorities applying uniform principles in all areas of the country. The definition of a census town was changed at the 1956 Census, from twenty houses to twenty occupied houses; this definition was also applied at the 1961 and 1966 Censuses.

Dublin Area

The description *Greater Dublin Area* in the 2006 Census denotes Dublin City and its suburbs (i.e. Greater Dublin Suburbs). Various tables contain information on the population of Dublin City and individual towns (which are separately identified from Greater Dublin) as well as for the Aggregate Town and Aggregate Rural Areas of Dublin County and City.

Aggregate Town and Aggregate Rural Areas

In continuation of the definition used in reports of censuses since 1966, the population in the Aggregate Town Area, is defined as those persons living in population clusters of 1,500 or more inhabitants. If a town with a legally defined boundary has a suburban area or environs outside this boundary and if the total population made up of the population inside the legally defined boundary plus that in the suburbs or environs amounts to 1,500 persons or over, this town (including its suburbs or environs) is classified as belonging to the Aggregate Town Area. Similarly, a census town with 1,500 inhabitants or over is classified as belonging to the Aggregate Town Area.

The population residing in all areas outside clusters of 1,500 or more inhabitants is classified as belonging to the Aggregate Rural Area. It should be particularly noted that the term "Aggregate Rural Area" is not connected with that of rural area as described earlier. Whereas the Aggregate Rural Area is a statistical concept, the rural area is a former administrative unit of area. From Table 7 of Volume 1 it may be seen that the Aggregate Town Area population was 2,574,313 persons in 2006.

Gaeltacht Areas

The Gaeltacht Areas Orders, 1956, 1967, 1974 and 1982 defined the Gaeltacht as comprising 155 Electoral Divisions or parts of Electoral Divisions in the counties of Cork, Donegal, Galway, Kerry, Mayo, Meath and Waterford.

Islands off the Coast

In some cases the areas of land concerned may not, strictly speaking, be considered as islands since they are connected to the mainland by a causeway or bridge, or may be reached by land at low tide. However, they have been retained unchanged in the present publication in order to provide continuity with previous censuses.

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Regional Authorities

Eight regions were established under the Local Government Act, 1991, Regional Authorities Establishment Order, 1993 which came into operation on 1 January 1994.

Two further Regional Authorities to be known as Regional Assemblies were established in 1999 under the Local Government Act, 1991, Regional Authorities Establishments Order, 1999 (S.I. 226 of 1999 refers). The two assemblies are based on the Existing Regional Authority Structure and are as follows:

Name of region	Constituent Local Authorities
Border, Midland and Western Regional Assembly (BMW)	County Councils of Cavan, Donegal, Galway, Laois, Leitrim, Longford, Louth, Mayo, Monaghan, Offaly, Roscommon, Sligo and Westmeath and Galway City Council
Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly (S&E)	County Councils of Carlow, Clare, Cork, Dún Laoghaire/Rathdown, Fingal, Kerry, Kildare, Kilkenny, Limerick, Meath, South Dublin, North Tipperary, South Tipperary, Waterford and Wicklow and the City Councils of Cork, Dublin, Limerick and Waterford
