

Appendix B. **Demographic profile**

Components of population change 1996–2002

The total population of the County increased by 2357 persons between 1996 and 2002. Only 945 of these persons were born in County Sligo. The difference represents net migration.

The rate of natural increase was, on average, 2.8 per thousand population (‰) per year, while the net migration rate was 4.2‰ per year for the period 1996-2002. This rate is lower than the State average (6.8‰) and also lower than the average net migration rates of counties Mayo (8.0‰), Leitrim (6.9‰), Roscommon (6.7‰) or Donegal (5.3‰).



Births and deaths

The basic components of population change are births and deaths, usually expressed as average annual rates per thousand population. For the period 1996-2002, Sligo recorded:

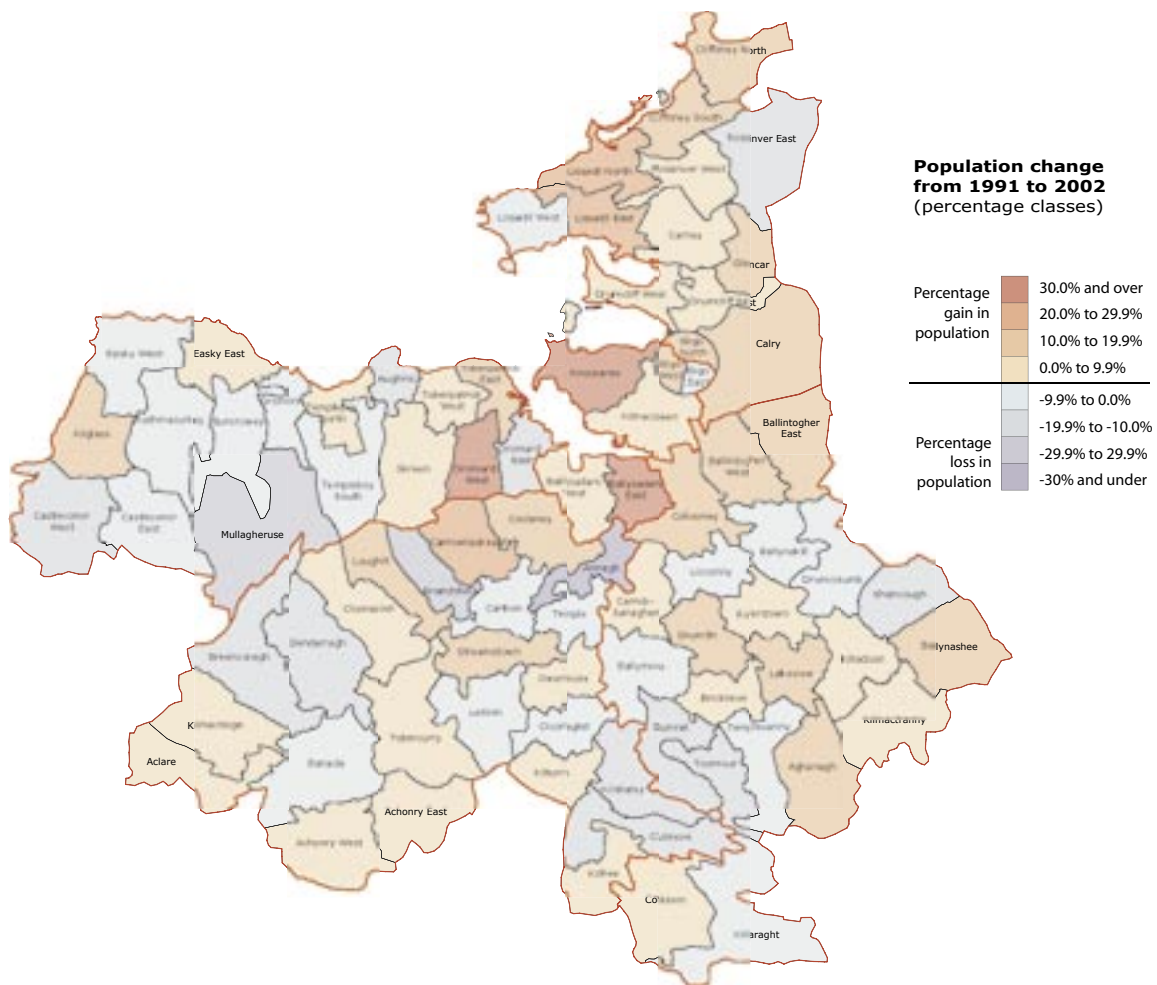
- a birth rate of 12.9‰; this compares unfavourably with the State average (14.3‰), but is higher than the equivalent rates of Leitrim (11.4‰), Roscommon (10.2‰) and Mayo (12.5‰);
- a death rate of 10.2‰; this is higher than the State average (8.3‰), but lower than the death rate in Leitrim (13.5‰), Roscommon (11.2‰) and Mayo (11.8‰)

The other main component of population change is migration, presented in statistics as migratory in- and outflows or as net migration, i.e the difference between inflows and outflows.

Migration

Of the 58,200 persons enumerated in County Sligo in 2002, a total of 1443 – including 539 males and 904 females – represented net migration. This indicates that net migration was responsible for 2.48% of the overall 4.26% population growth in County Sligo between 1996 and 2002

For Sligo, the estimated average annual net migration rate for the period 1996 to 2002 was 4.2 per thousand population (‰).



Residential mobility

Of a total of 79 rural EDs, 36 continually lost population from 1991 to 2002. This type of process is often described as rural depopulation. However, the pace of depopulation appears to have slowed down: between 1991 and 1996, 40 rural EDs lost population, but only 34 rural EDs underwent this process between 1996 and 2002.

Some large areas that have seen their population fall, largely coincide with the extensive sensitive rural landscape covering the west and south-west of the county.

In the year to the date of Census 2002, 8.4% of the people usually resident in County Sligo had moved house (the rate refers to the entire county population, including the borough). This residential mobility rate is slightly lower than the national average (8.85%), but higher than that of the neighbouring counties (Roscommon – 7.65%; Mayo – 7.7%; Leitrim – 7.83%; Donegal – 6.78%). For the year preceding Census 1996, Sligo's residential mobility rate was 7.45% of the total usually resident population.

Given the fact that 43 rural EDs – i.e. the majority of EDs - have recorded population growth during the period 1991-2002, it would be difficult to talk about rural depopulation. It would appear rather that people increasingly move closer to either employment centres or to national roads.

Population composition

Age structure

The proportion of persons under 15 years of age in the county's population fell from 26.11% in 1991 to 23.16% in 1996 and further to 20.77% in 2002. During the same intervals, the proportion of persons aged 15 to 64 grew from 59.26% (1991) to 62.83% (1996) and to 66.04% (2002). This evolution signals a possible future increase in the proportion of elderly or retired population, combined with a notable fall in the number of young people entering the labour force. The 2002 ratio of population over 65 years in Sligo, i.e. 13.18%, is already above the national average (11.13%), while the proportion of persons under 15 years is below the national average (21.12%).

Table B.1 Population of County Sligo by broad age group in census years 1991, 1996 and 2002

| Age group | Census 1991 | | Census 1996 | | Census 2002 | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| | persons in age group | % of total population | persons in age group | % of total population | persons in age group | % of total population |
| under 15 years | 14,295 | 26.11% | 12,927 | 23.16% | 12,089 | 20.77% |
| 15-64 years | 32,451 | 59.26% | 35,071 | 62.83% | 38,438 | 66.04% |
| Over 65 years | 8,010 | 14.63% | 7,823 | 14.01% | 7,673 | 13.18% |
| Total population | 54,756 | 100% | 55,821 | 100% | 58,200 | 100% |

Gender balance

An analysis of Sligo's population by gender reveals some interesting facts. The county's population, as a whole, is gender-balanced, in the sense that it consists of 50.6% females and 49.4% males. However, at ED level, there are certain imbalances that form a distinguishable pattern.

The proportion of women is higher in Sligo Borough (53.65%) and in the EDs that contain commuter/satellite settlements like Ballysadare, Rosses Point, Strandhill. The towns of Tobercurry, Ballymote and Enniscrone are balanced (approximately 50-50 split). The rural EDs are populated predominantly by men, with only few exceptions. The male-to-female ratio can be as large as 57 to 43 (Cartron ED, south-west of Coolaney).

It must be noted, however, that the situation in general has improved since the 1991 census, when there were proportionally fewer women in rural Sligo than there were in 2002.

Irish Traveller population

Census 2002 recorded 326 Irish Travellers in County Sligo, or the equivalent of 6.2 per thousand population (‰), slightly higher than the national average (6.0‰). In a total of 63 Traveller households, 122 persons lived in permanent households and 142 lived in temporary households (the difference was 'non-stated'). There were also 19 mixed (Traveller – non-Traveller) households, with a total of 79 Traveller members. A comparison with previous censuses is not possible, as Traveller population was recorded separately in 2002 for the first time.

National mix

Of the 57,087 usual residents enumerated in County Sligo in 2002, circa 93% (53,071 persons) were Irish nationals (without a second citizenship). The low proportion of non-nationals is consistent with the relatively low net migration rates in the general population of County Sligo, as recorded in 2002. There were also 726 dual citizenship holders (Irish-Other) living in Sligo in 2002.

Among the foreign nationalities represented were: UK - 1,969; other EU state – 373; other European (non-EU) state – 124; America (US) – 197; Asia – 90; other nationalities – 78; multiple nationality – 21; no nationality – 7; not stated – 910.

Household composition

Small households constitute the majority in County Sligo. In 2002, 24.34% of all (private) households consisted of one person (up from 23.6% in 1996) and 26.56% were two-person households (up from 23.27% in 1996).

Childless couples represented 16.78% of all households in 2002 (up from 13.53% in 1996), while the proportion of couples with children grew by less than one percentage point, from 35.71% in 1996 to 36.45% between 1996 and 2002.

The proportion of households headed by a lone parent increased from 8.52% in 1996 to 9.97% in 2002.

Compared to the State and Border Region average figures, Sligo household data indicates smaller than average households, with a trend to fall further.

Table B.2 Households in County Sligo classified by size of household (number of persons in the household), 1996 and 2002

| household size (number of persons) | Census 1996 | | Census 2002 | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| | number of households | percentage of total | number of households | percentage of total |
| 1 | 4,143 | 23.60% | 4,782 | 24.34% |
| 2 | 4,085 | 23.27% | 5,218 | 26.56% |
| 3 | 2,690 | 15.33% | 3,357 | 17.09% |
| 4 | 2,741 | 15.62% | 2,976 | 15.15% |
| 5 | 1,967 | 11.21% | 2,024 | 10.30% |
| 6 | 1,112 | 6.34% | 850 | 4.33% |
| 7+ | 815 | 4.64% | 436 | 2.2% |
| total | 17,553 | 100% | 19,643 | 100% |

Table B.3 Household types in County Sligo classified by composition of household (relation between persons in the household), 1996 and 2002

| household composition | Census 1996 | | Census 2002 | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| | number of households | percentage of total | number of households | percentage of total |
| one person | 4,143 | 23.60% | 4,782 | 24.34% |
| couple (married and unmarried) | 2,375 | 13.53% | 3,296 | 16.78% |
| couple with children | 6,269 | 35.71% | 7,159 | 36.45% |
| lone parent | 1,495 | 8.52% | 1,958 | 9.97% |
| non-family, but related | 619 | 3.53% | 593 | 3.02% |
| non-family, non-related | 878 | 5.00% | 796 | 4.05% |
| total households | 17,553 | 100.00% | 19,643 | 100.00% |

Labour force

Note: In accordance with International Labour Organisation (ILO) classification, the labour force (or active population) consists of persons aged 15 and over, employed plus unemployed (having lost their job and seeking regular work for the first time). All other persons (not in labour force) form the inactive population. This category includes students, persons looking after the home and retired people.

The main trends affecting the labour force, recorded by past censuses, are:

- a strong labour force growth due to the underlying growth in the population aged 15 and over, and
- increased female labour force participation.

Both trends are evident at national, regional and county level.

Sligo's labour force growth has generally followed the above-mentioned trends in relation to size and composition. However, it appears that Sligo continues to have a reserve of population aged 15 and over, able to ensure future labour force growth.

Sligo's labour force

The labour force has increased from 51.76% in 1981 to 56.85% of the population 15+, in 2002. During the same period, the proportion of women in the labour force has grown considerably, from 27.92% to 42.6%.

The proportion of people at work in Sligo has grown from 43.33% in 1986 to 51.89% of the population 15+, in 2002. This was the highest percentage among Border counties (Donegal 45.94%, Leitrim 49.03%, Louth 50.51%)

The proportion of unemployed and first-job seekers has fallen from 8.17% in 1986 to 4.95% of the population 15+, in 2002. The proportion of unemployed women in the female population 15+ was 1.73% in the same year.

Sligo's inactive population

The proportion of students in Sligo has risen from 8.15% in 1981 to 12.55% of the population 15+, in 2002. Corresponding national figures are 8.35% and 11.35%.

The proportion of students in Sligo's female population aged 15+ grew from 8.83% in 1981 to 13.41% in 2002. This is significantly higher than the state average – 11.78% students in the female population aged 15 and over. If Sligo Borough is considered on its own, the proportion of students in the female population 15+ is even higher, at 17.02% (corresponding male proportion is only 13.79%, and total student ratio in the population 15+ is 15.55% in the Borough).

The proportion of people looking after the home or the family has decreased from 26.29% to 12.85% of those aged 15 and over, between 1981 and 2002. However, women constitute the overwhelming majority of these people. In 1981 over half (53.25%) of all women 15+ were working in the home, compared to under one quarter (23.75%) in 2002.

Retired people, only 7.39% of the population aged 15+ in 1981, represented 10.79% in 2002. Although more than half of the retired people are men, the proportion of retired women has been growing faster, from 4% in 1981, to 9.18% of all women 15+ in 2002.

Employment

Note 1: The 2002 Census is the first census in which industries have been coded using NACE – the General Industrial Classification of Economic Activities within the European Communities. As a consequence, only limited comparison can be made between the number of people classified in broad industrial groups as recorded in Census 2002 and previous censuses, where a different classification was used.

Note 2: The industry in which a person is engaged is determined by the main economic activity carried out in the local unit in which he/she works, irrespective of occupation. The term 'industry' as used for census purposes is synonymous with the term 'sector of economic activity'.

The main trends affecting employment in broad industrial groups at national level, as recorded by 1996 and 2002 censuses, are:

- a significant fall in the number of people employed in agriculture and manufacturing;
- a notable growth of employment in construction, real estate, banking and financial services;
- a strong increase in the number of those employed in non-conventional areas, classified under 'industry not stated'.

Among Sligo's main characteristics, perhaps the most notable is the high dependence on public sector employment, in the fields of public administration, health and education: 29%, or almost one third of the working population is engaged in public sector jobs.

Employment in the service sector (retail, tourism, banking, real estate business and professional/personal services), is relatively low, while agriculture still retains 8% of the working population.

Principal features of employment in County Sligo in 2002

Employment in agriculture and forestry had a dramatic evolution in County Sligo, having fallen from 19.83% in 1991 to 8.06% of all working people in 2002. The proportion of Sligo persons engaged in agriculture was still higher than the national average, 5.96%, but below the Border Region figure of 9.02% of all employed.

There was an unusually high proportion of people working in health and social services: 14.9%. This may be indicating the importance of the regional hospital as a local employer. The national average for this category was only 8.74%, while the Border Region's corresponding figure was 9.95% of the population at work.

Public administration and defence (7.56% together), and education (7.28%) also employed people to levels higher than the national averages of 5.77% and 6.66%, respectively. This probably reflects the employment provided by the government (Revenue offices) and higher education institutions: Sligo Institute of Technology and St Angela's College.

Manufacturing in 2002, at 15.61% was slightly under the 1991 level (16.18%), after a short-lived increase recorded in 1996 – 18.77% of all people with jobs. The 2002 national and regional figures were 14.88% and 17.20%, respectively.

Tourist-related businesses (hotels and restaurants) in Sligo employed 4.95% of those at work, very similar to the national level, 4.96%, but slightly under the regional level of 5.05%. It is noted that hotel and restaurant businesses in neighbouring counties Donegal and Mayo employed 6.28% and 6.29%, respectively, of the working population.

Four sectors were relatively underdeveloped in Sligo in 2002:

- The construction industry employed 8.63% of the working persons, which was below the national and regional levels, 9.09% and 10.53%, respectively.
- Real estate was poorly represented, at 5.17% (national – 9.20%; regional – 5.33%).
- Banking and financial services were also rather unimportant as employers, at 2.39% (national – 4.32%, regional – 2.71%).
- Employment in wholesales and retail, at 11.97% of the labour force, was significantly lower than the national and regional averages, i.e. 13.35% and 13.30%.

B. Demographic Profile

Table B.4 **County Sligo: employment by industrial group in census years 1991, 1996 and 2002**

| Industrial group | Census 1991 | | Census 1996 | | Census 2002 | |
|---|---------------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|
| | persons | percentage of all employed | persons | percentage of all employed | persons | percentage of all employed |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing | 3,568 | 19.83% | 2,934 | 14.52% | 1,928 | 8.06% |
| Mining, quarrying and turf production | 39 | 0.22% | 31 | 0.15% | 45 | 0.19% |
| Manufacturing industries | 2,911 | 16.18% | 3,793 | 18.77% | 3,735 | 15.61% |
| Electricity, gas and water supply | 198 | 1.10% | 153 | 0.76% | 179 | 0.75% |
| Construction | 1,162 | 6.46% | 1,362 | 6.74% | 2,064 | 8.63% |
| Wholesale and retail trade | 2,427 | 13.49% | 2,635 | 13.04% | 2,863 | 11.97% |
| Hotels and restaurants | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,184 | 4.95% |
| Transport, storage and communications | 771 | 4.29% | 948 | 4.69% | 1,016 | 4.25% |
| Banking and financial services | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 572 | 2.39% |
| Insurance, finance, business | 572 | 3.18% | 638 | 3.16% | n/a | n/a |
| Real estate, renting and business activities | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,238 | 5.17% |
| Public administration and defence | 1,098 | 6.10% | 1,329 | 6.58% | 1,808 | 7.56% |
| Education | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,742 | 7.28% |
| Health and social work | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 3,396 | 14.19% |
| Professional services | 3,679 | 20.45% | 4,471 | 22.13% | n/a | n/a |
| Other community, social and personal service activities | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 770 | 3.22% |
| Personal services | 1,071 | 5.95% | 1,312 | 6.49% | n/a | n/a |
| Recreational services | 169 | 0.94% | 314 | 1.55% | n/a | n/a |
| Industry not stated | 327 | 1.82% | 284 | 1.41% | 1387 | 5.80% |
| All industries | 17,992 | 100% | 20,204 | 100% | 23,927 | 100% |

