

Overview of Census 2011 Preliminary Results for the Western Region

Western Development Commission July 2011

Key Points

- The Western Region's population in 2011 is 819,851. This is 57,516 (7.5%) more than in 2006 (a slightly lower increase than nationally).
- The female population increased by more than the male population (8.7% compared with 6.4%).
- The gap in the population growth rate between the Western Region and the rest of the state, which was significant from 1951 to 1981, has narrowed substantially. Although 2006-2011 saw a bigger difference between them than in 2002-2006.
- Migration played a more significant role in the Western Region's total population increase (45% of total) than in the rest of the state (35% of total).
- Average birth rates in all western counties have increased and death rates decreased since the last Census.
- Leitrim, Roscommon and Donegal have among the highest migration rates nationally.
- Many of the electoral divisions which have shown greatest population increases are on the edges or within commuting distance of larger urban centres, while many urban centre locations and more remote rural areas have experienced population decline.
- The region's housing stock has increased by more than the rest of the state (15.5% compared with 13.3%) and vacancy rates in the region are also higher (22.8% compared with 12.6%).

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1. Introduction

The Census 2011 Preliminary Results were issued on 30 June and contain data based on the returns of the enumerators (rather than the full Census forms). These data only give the number of males and females in each enumerator's area and the housing stock. The full Census 2011 preliminary results are available to download from http://www.cso.ie/census/2011_preliminaryreport.htm. These figures are preliminary and may be revised when the first final results of Census 2011 are released in March 2012. The full Census results will be issued over the course of the following year.

This report provides an overview of the Census 2011 Preliminary Results for the counties of the Western Region. Data are provided on population, population change and its components, estimated net migration and the housing stock.

2. What is the population of the Western Region and how has it changed since 2006?

The total population of the state increased by 341,421 persons (+8.1%) between 2006 and 2011 and reached 4.58 million (Table 1). The population of the Western Region increased by 57,516 persons or 7.5% which was slightly lower than the state average. In total the Western Region's population is 819,851 people in 2011.

All counties in the Western Region experienced population growth over the period. Galway County (+10%), Leitrim (+9.8%) and Donegal (+9.3%) experienced the highest growth while Galway city (+4.1%) and Clare (+5.3%) experienced the lowest.

Table 1: Population in 2006 and 2011 of western counties, Western Region and rest of state²

| | Population 2006 (No.) | Population 2011 (No.) | Actual Change in Population 2006-2011 (No.) | Percentage Change in Population 2006-2011 (%) |
|----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|--|
| Clare | 110,950 | 116,885 | 5,935 | 5.3 |
| Donegal | 147,264 | 160,927 | 13,663 | 9.3 |
| Galway | 231,670 | 250,541 | 18,871 | 8.1 |
| Galway City | 72,414 | 75,414 | 3,000 | 4.1 |
| Galway County | 159,256 | 175,127 | 15,871 | 10.0 |
| Leitrim | 28,950 | 31,778 | 2,828 | 9.8 |
| Mayo | 123,839 | 130,552 | 6,713 | 5.4 |
| Roscommon | 58,768 | 63,898 | 5,130 | 8.7 |
| Sligo | 60,894 | 65,270 | 4,376 | 7.2 |
| Western Region | 762,335 | 819,851 | 57,516 | 7.5 |
| Rest of State | 3,477,513 | 3,761,418 | 283,905 | 8.2 |
| State | 4,239,848 | 4,581,269 | 341,421 | 8.1 |

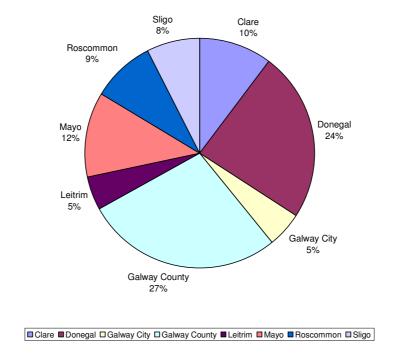
Source: CSO, Census of Population 2011: Preliminary Results, Table 1

¹ Counties Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, Galway and Clare.

² Rest of state refers to all the counties in the state except for the seven counties of the Western Region.

The total increase in the Western Region's population (57,516 people) was made up of increases in all counties (Fig. 1). Galway County, Donegal, Mayo and Clare accounted for almost three-quarters of the region's total population increase.

Fig. 1: Composition of total population increase in the Western Region, 2006-2011



Source: CSO, Census of Population 2011: Preliminary Results, Table 1

Fig. 2 below compares population growth in the western counties with that in the other administrative areas in the state. The western counties and Western Region are marked in green, while the state and rest of state are in red. Laois, Cavan, Fingal and Longford had the highest percentage population growth in the state. The three highest population growth rates in the Western Region (Galway County, Leitrim and Donegal) were tenth, eleventh and twelfth highest in the state. In total, four western counties (these three plus Roscommon) had higher than average population growth. At the other end, the lowest population growth in the region (Galway city, Clare and Mayo) were sixth, seventh and eight lowest in the state.

Of all the cities in the state, Galway city had the highest population growth, with both Cork and Limerick cities experiencing population decline.

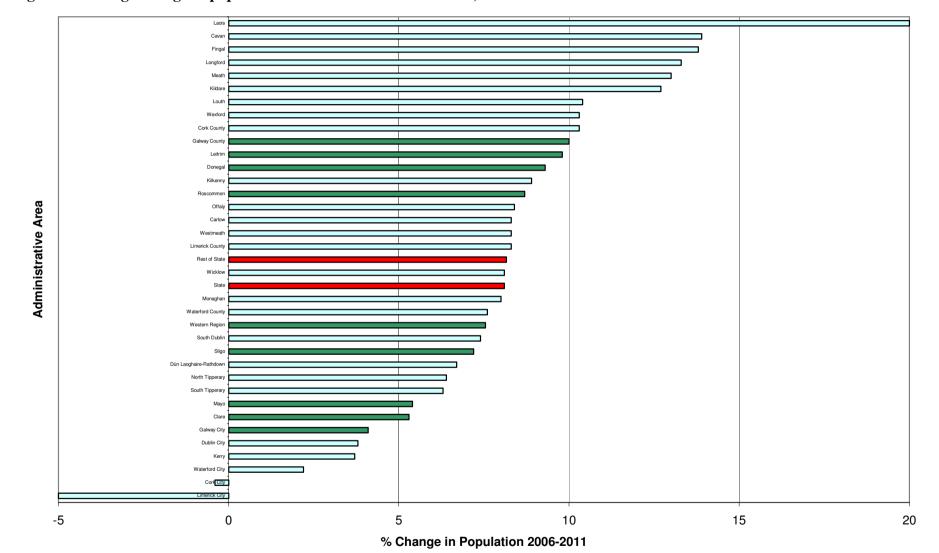


Fig. 2: Percentage change in population in each administrative area, 2006-2011

The percentage population change (as shown in Fig. 2) is influenced by the current size of each area's population. Therefore Table 2 sets out the current population of each administrative area and the actual and percentage change since the last Census (in descending order of its actual population change). Cork County, Fingal, Kildare and Meath experienced the largest population increases in the state over the period.

Table 2: Population, actual and percentage change in population in all administrative areas in the state, 2006-2011

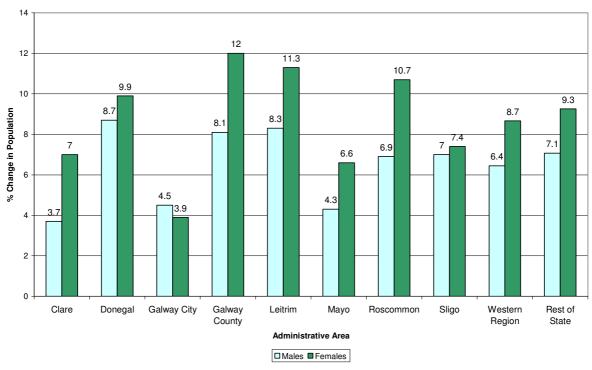
| | Population 2011 | Actual Change in | Percentage Change |
|------------------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| | (No.) | Population | in Population |
| | | 2006-2011 (No.) | 2006-2011 (%) |
| Cork County | 399,216 | 37,339 | 10.3 |
| Fingal | 273,051 | 33,059 | 13.8 |
| Kildare | 209,955 | 23,620 | 12.7 |
| Meath | 184,034 | 21,203 | 13.0 |
| Dublin City | 525,383 | 19,172 | 3.8 |
| South Dublin | 265,174 | 18,239 | 7.4 |
| Galway County | 175,127 | 15,871 | 10.0 |
| Donegal | 160,927 | 13,663 | 9.3 |
| Wexford | 145,273 | 13,524 | 10.3 |
| Laois | 80,458 | 13,399 | 20.0 |
| Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown | 206,995 | 12,957 | 6.7 |
| Louth | 122,808 | 11,541 | 10.4 |
| Limerick County | 134,527 | 10,262 | 8.3 |
| Wicklow | 136,448 | 10,254 | 8.1 |
| Cavan | 72,874 | 8,871 | 13.9 |
| Kilkenny | 95,360 | 7,802 | 8.9 |
| Mayo | 130,552 | 6,713 | 5.4 |
| Westmeath | 85,961 | 6,615 | 8.3 |
| Offaly | 76,806 | 5,938 | 8.4 |
| Clare | 116,885 | 5,935 | 5.3 |
| Kerry | 145,048 | 5,213 | 3.7 |
| South Tipperary | 88,433 | 5,212 | 6.3 |
| Roscommon | 63,898 | 5,130 | 8.7 |
| Waterford County | 66,960 | 4,747 | 7.6 |
| Longford | 38,970 | 4,579 | 13.3 |
| Monaghan | 60,495 | 4,498 | 8.0 |
| Sligo | 65,270 | 4,376 | 7.2 |
| North Tipperary | 70,219 | 4,196 | 6.4 |
| Carlow | 54,532 | 4,183 | 8.3 |
| Galway City | 75,414 | 3,000 | 4.1 |
| Leitrim | 31,778 | 2,828 | 9.8 |
| Waterford City | 46,747 | 999 | 2.2 |
| Cork City | 118,912 | -506 | -0.4 |
| Limerick City | 56,779 | -3,011 | -5.0 |

3. Was there a difference in population growth by gender?

There was higher growth in the female population than the male population in the Western Region (+8.7% in female population, +6.4% in male population) as well as in the rest of the state (+9.3% in female and +7.1% in male) (Fig. 3).

This is also true for all western counties (except Galway city). Indeed in Clare, Roscommon, Mayo and Galway County the increase in the female population was more than one and a half times that of the increase in the male population. This was due to the pattern of migration, given that natural increase is relatively similar for the two sexes (see section 7).

Fig. 3: Percentage change in male and female population in western counties, Western Region and rest of state, 2006-2011



4. How does the population in 2011 compare with previous periods?

The population of each western county has increased in each of the last two censuses (Fig. 4). The 2002-2006 period coincided with the first phase of the 'Celtic Tiger' economic boom, while the second period (2006-2011) included several years of a continuation and peaking of that boom (2006-early 2008) followed by the recession.

250,000 200,000 100,000 50,000 Clare Donegal Galway Leitrim Mayo Roscommon Sligo

Fig. 4: Population of western counties, 2002, 2006, 2011

Source: CSO, Census of Population 2011: Preliminary Results, Table 2A

Comparing population growth over these two periods, Donegal and Sligo experienced greater population growth in the more recent period (2006-2011), while Clare, Galway, Leitrim and Roscommon experienced stronger growth in the previous period (2002-2006). Mayo had the same population growth in both periods.

Over the longer term, the Western Region experienced rates of population change between censuses (called intercensal periods) which were considerably below those in the rest of the state from 1936 to 1981 (Fig. 5). In each intercensal period from 1936 to 1951 the Western Region experienced population decline while the rest of the state had population growth. At that point (1951-1956) the rest of the state also lost population. Then again during 1961-1971 the region had population decline while the rest of the state had population growth.

Fig. 5: Percentage change in population since previous census in Western Region and rest of state, 1936-2011

 $Source: \ CSO, \ Census \ of \ Population \ 2011: \ Preliminary \ Results, \ Table \ 2$

Since 1981 population growth rates in the Western Region have continued to be below those in the rest of the state but the gap has narrowed considerably. Growth rates are now quite similar, though the gap did widen slightly between 2002-2006 and 2006-2011.

Considering individual counties over this period, there was a fairly consistent decline in the population of the western counties in each census between 1926 and 1971 (Fig. 6). Since then there has been some variation in how individual counties have performed.

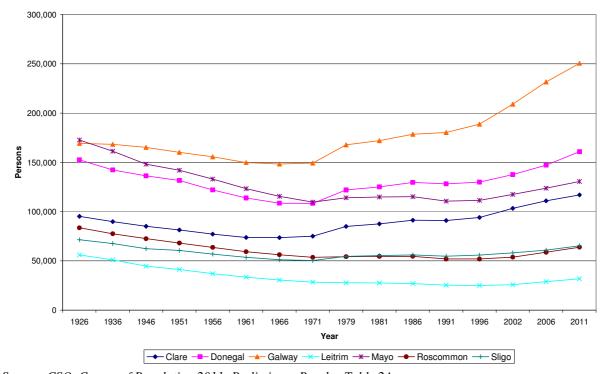


Fig. 6: Population of the western counties, 1926-2011

Source: CSO, Census of Population 2011: Preliminary Results, Table 2A

Galway (city plus county) has experienced population growth in each intercensal period since 1971. Leitrim on the other hand experienced population decline in each period until 2002. All of the other counties of the region, as well as the Western Region as a whole, experienced population growth since 1971 with the exception of the 1986-1991 period when there was a drop in population.

5. What caused population growth between 2006 and 2011?

Population change is caused by two factors – natural increase (difference between births and deaths) and net migration (difference between in-migration and out-migration). For the state as a whole the total population increase of 341,421 people was made up of a natural increase of 222,771 and net migration of 118,650 (Table 3). This meant that 35% of the total population increase in the state was due to migration.

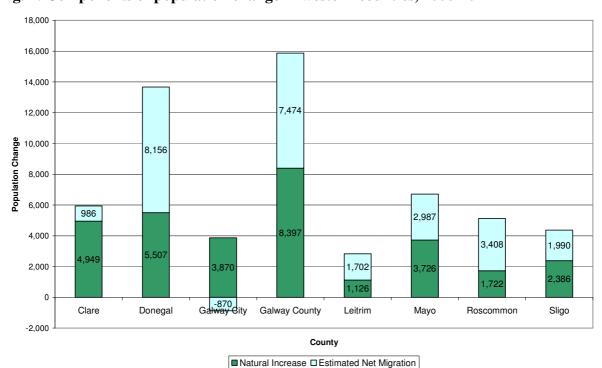
For the Western Region, migration accounted for a considerably higher share of its total population growth. Of the total increase of 57,516 in the region's population, 45% was due to migration. For almost all of the counties in the region migration accounted for a higher share of their total population growth than the state average. The only exceptions were Clare where only 16.6% of its population increase as due to migration and Galway city which experienced out-migration.

Table 3: Total population change and its components in western counties, Western Region and rest of state, 2006-2011

| | Change in Population (No.) | Natural Increase (No.) | Estimated Net Migration ³ (No.) | Natural Increase as % of Total Change | Estimated Net Migration as % of Total Change |
|----------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Clare | 5,935 | 4,949 | 986 | 83.4 | 16.6 |
| Donegal | 13,663 | 5,507 | 8,156 | 40.3 | 59.7 |
| Galway | 18,871 | 12,267 | 6,604 | 65.0 | 35.0 |
| Galway City | 3,000 | 3,870 | -870 | 129.0 | -29.0 |
| Galway County | 15,871 | 8,397 | 7,474 | 52.9 | 47.1 |
| Leitrim | 2,828 | 1,126 | 1,702 | 39.8 | 60.2 |
| Mayo | 6,713 | 3,726 | 2,987 | 55.5 | 44.5 |
| Roscommon | 5,130 | 1,722 | 3,408 | 33.6 | 66.4 |
| Sligo | 4,376 | 2,386 | 1,990 | 54.5 | 45.5 |
| Western Region | 57,516 | 31,683 | 25,833 | 55.1 | 44.9 |
| Rest of State | 283,905 | 191,088 | 92,817 | 67.3 | 32.7 |
| State | 341,421 | 222,771 | 118,650 | 65.2 | 34.8 |

From Table 3 it is clear there are considerable differences between the western counties in terms of what drove their population growth (Fig. 7). For Roscommon, Leitrim and Donegal 60% or more of their population growth was due to migration, much higher than the state average of 35%.

Fig. 7: Components of population change in western counties, 2006-2011



Source: CSO, Census of Population 2011: Preliminary Results, Table 5

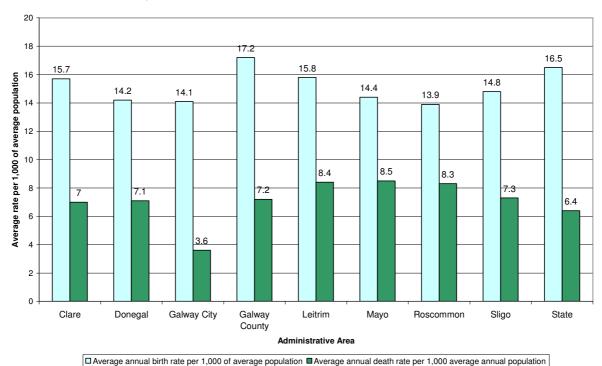
³ This is referred to as estimated net migration by the CSO as it is calculated by subtracting the natural increase from the total change in population and the remainder is estimated to be due to migration.

6. What are the birth and death rates in the Western Region?

Given that migration accounted for a higher than average share of population growth in the Western Region and most western counties, it follows that natural increase accounted for a lower than average share of total population growth. Galway city and Clare were the only counties in the region where the natural increase accounted for a higher than average share of total population growth (Table 3 above). The natural increase in each county depends on its birth and death rates.

Between 2006 and 2011 the annual average birth rate nationally was 16.5 per 1,000 of average population (Fig. 8). All counties in the region (except Galway County) had a birth rate below the state average. The highest birth rates in the region were in Galway County (17.2), Leitrim (15.8) and Clare (15.7). While Roscommon (13.9), Galway city (14.1), Donegal (14.2) and Mayo (14.4) had the lowest and were in the bottom 10 administrative areas nationally.⁴

Fig. 8: Average annual birth and death rates per 1,000 of average population in western counties and the state, 2006-2011



Source: CSO, Census of Population 2011: Preliminary Results, Table 5

In terms of death rates, for the state it was 6.4 per 1,000 of average population and in the region only Galway city was below this. The highest death rates in the region were in Mayo (8.5), Leitrim (8.4) and Roscommon (8.3) which had the third, fourth and fifth highest average death rates nationally.

Comparing the situation in the recent period (2006-2011) with the previous Census period (2002-2006) in Table 4 shows that the state and all western counties experienced an increase

⁴ It has not been possible to calculate average annual birth or death rates for the Western Region as a whole or the rest of the state.

in their birth rates between these two periods. The state and all counties in the region, except Galway city, also experienced a decline in their death rates between the two periods.

Table 4: Average annual birth and death rates per 1,000 of average population in the 2002-2006 and 2006-2011 periods in western counties and the state

| | Avg. Annual Birth Rates | Avg. Annual Birth Rates | Avg. Annual Death Rates | Avg. Annual Death Rates |
|---------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| | 2002-2006 | 2006-2011 | 2002-2006 | 2006-2011 |
| Clare | 15.7 | 15.7 | 7.5 | 7 |
| Donegal | 13.5 | 14.2 | 8.0 | 7.1 |
| Galway | 14.9 | 16.3 | 7.0 | 6.1 |
| Galway City | 13.8 | 14.1 | 3.3 | 3.6 |
| Galway County | 15.4 | 17.2 | 8.7 | 7.2 |
| Leitrim | 12.9 | 15.8 | 11.0 | 8.4 |
| Mayo | 13.1 | 14.4 | 9.4 | 8.5 |
| Roscommon | 11.3 | 13.9 | 8.5 | 8.3 |
| Sligo | 12.9 | 14.8 | 8.2 | 7.3 |
| State | 15.0 | 16.5 | 7.0 | 6.4 |

Source: CSO, Census of Population 2011: Preliminary Results, Table 5

7. What was the pattern of migration between 2006 and 2011?

All counties in the Western Region (except Galway city) experienced net in-migration between 2006 and 2011. The initial period (2006 to early 2008) was characterised by strong economic growth. The fact that there was net in-migration over the full 2006-2011 period means that even if out-migration is increasing (as is indicated by other data sources) it has not occurred to such an extent as to undo the strong in-migration in the early part of the period. Another factor is that some people originally from the region who had been working elsewhere may have moved back home when they lost their job, increasing in-migration to the region.

The importance of migration in total population growth in Leitrim, Roscommon and Donegal has already been noted (section 5). This can also be seen when average annual rates of estimated net migration are compared for all counties (Fig. 9). These three counties had the fourth, fifth and sixth highest annual migration rates in the state. Sligo and Galway also had migration rates above the state average. In contrast Clare had the fourth lowest migration rate.

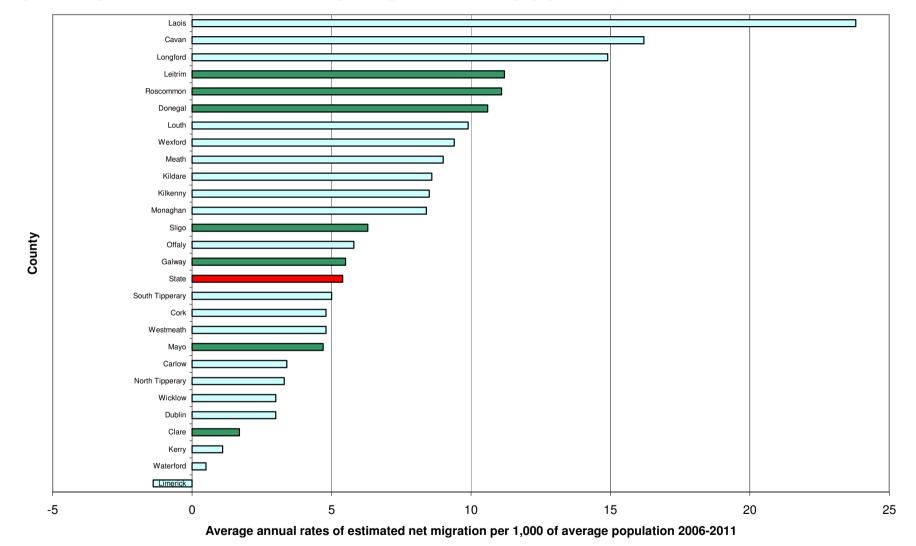


Fig. 9: Average annual rates of estimated net migration per 1,000 of average population by county, 2006-2011

Women accounted for a greater share than men of total migration in all western counties (except Galway city) as well as in the Western Region as a whole and in the rest of the state (Fig. 10). The gender difference is very significant for many counties. It is likely this is partly due to the collapse of the construction sector and the recent out-migration of male workers (foreign nationals and Irish) from this sector.

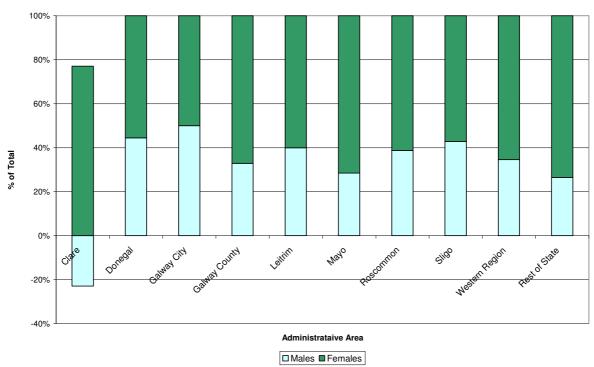


Fig. 10: Gender composition of total estimated net migration in western counties, Western Region and rest of state, 2006-2011

Source: CSO, Census of Population 2011: Preliminary Results, Table 5

The share of total migration into the Western Region accounted for by women (65.4%) was lower than that in the rest of the state (73.5%). Within the region Clare had the highest female share in its total migration, as it actually had net out-migration of men. Mayo and Galway County had the next highest female shares.

8. How has migration changed over time?

The positive migration patterns seen in the Western Region in this and recent censuses are in contrast to earlier patterns of migration (Fig. 11 below). Each of the western counties, and the state as a whole, had negative average annual migration rates in each intercensal period from 1951-1956 until the 1971-1979 period when they turned positive. This was followed by a return to negative migration rates during the 1980s until the 1991-1996 period. The exception to this overall pattern was Leitrim which experienced negative annual migration rates in every period until 1991-1996.

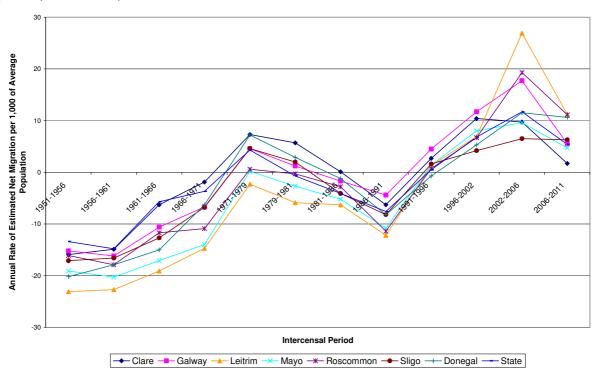


Fig. 11: Annual estimated net migration per 1,000 of average population by intercensal period, 1951-2011, in western counties and state

From 1996 onwards there have been high and positive annual migration rates in all western counties, peaking at a rate of 26.9 in Leitrim in the 2002-2006 period. From Fig. 11 it is clear that the average annual rate of migration, while still high, has fallen in the 2006-2011 period, though the decline was small for Sligo and Donegal. Thus while migration rates remain quite high in many of the western counties, they have declined from the peak of 2002-2006.

9. How did population change at a sub-county level?

The preliminary Census results also contain population data at the electoral division (ED) level. There are almost 1,000 EDs in the Western Region and it is not possible to examine these data in great detail in this report. An overview is provided here and full details of population at ED level is provided in Appendix 1 for information. It should also be noted that some changes in population may be due to changes in ED boundaries since the last Census, we are aware this is an issue for Shannon but it may also be a factor in other areas.

Of the 1,000 EDs in the region, three-quarters of them experienced population growth between 2006 and 2011 with 260 EDs experiencing population decline. Of those that experienced population growth 419 had population growth greater than the average for the region (7.5%) and nine had growth of over 50%.

In terms of the actual increase in their population the ten EDs in the Western Region with the greatest population growth were:

- 1. Ballybaan, Galway City (+2,394)
- 2. Bearna, Galway City (+1,597)
- 3. Athlone West Rural, Co. Roscommon (+1,337)
- 4. Ennis Rural (Part Urban), Co Clare (+1,055)

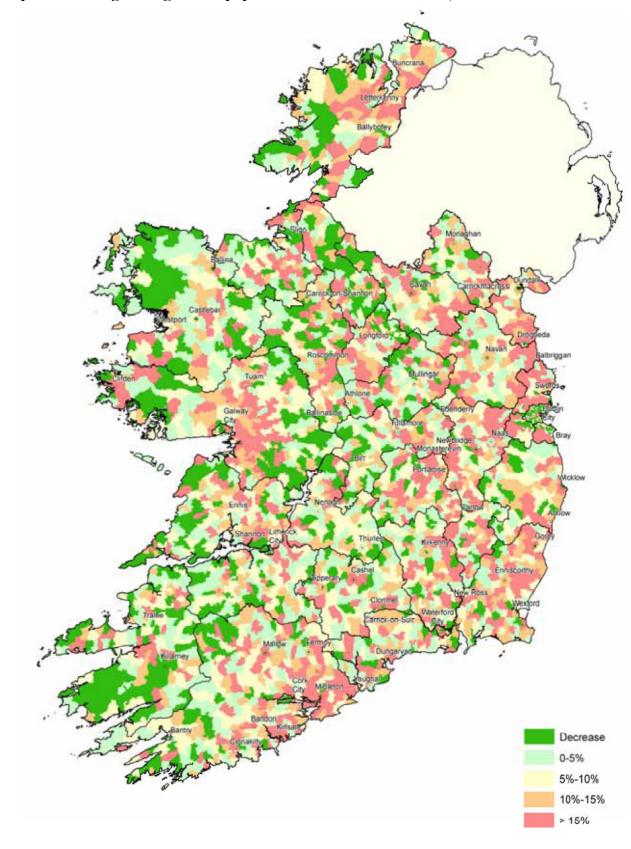
- 5. Tuam Rural, Co. Galway (+903)
- 6. Claremorris, Co. Mayo (+809)
- 7. Edenacarnan (Part Rural), Co. Donegal (+801)
- 8. Buncrana Rural, Co. Donegal (+798)
- 9. Oranmore, Co. Galway (+798)
- 10. Athenry, Co. Galway (+792)

The ten EDs in the Western Region with the largest population decline between 2006 and 2011 were:

- 1. Mionlach, Galway City (-756)
- 2. Dangan, Galway City (-535)
- 3. Ennis No. 2 Urban, Co Clare (-480)
- 4. Letterkenny Rural (Part Urban), Co. Donegal (-404)
- 5. Sligo East, Co. Sligo (-386)
- 6. Mervue, Galway City (-334)
- 7. Kilkee, Co Clare (-301)
- 8. Ballina Urban, Co. Mayo (-254)
- 9. Taylors Hill, Galway City (-249)
- 10. Claddagh, Galway City (-227)

In general it can be seen that many of the EDs with the strongest population growth are on the edges or within easy commuting distance to the larger urban centres in the region. In contrast the EDs with the largest population declines are mainly within urban centres.

Of course as this list considers actual changes in population numbers, more populated urban EDs are likely to feature strongly. When considering the percentage change, more rural EDs and especially those relatively distant from larger centres, have experienced decline. This is clear from Map 1 which shows the percentage change in the population of each ED between 2006 and 2011.



Map 1: Percentage change in the population of Electoral Divisions, 2006-2011

Table 5 provides details of the EDs in each county with the largest population increase (in actual population) and the EDs with the largest declines.

Table 5: The electoral divisions with the largest population growth and largest

population decrease in western counties, 2006-2011

| County | EDs with Largest Population | EDs with Largest Population |
|-------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| - | Growth | Decrease |
| Clare | 032 Ennis Rural (Part Urban) | 002 Ennis No. 2 Urban |
| | 041 Sixmilebridge | 088 Kilkee |
| | 151 Quin | 001 Ennis No. 1 Urban |
| Donegal | 100 Edenacarnan (Part Rural) | 105 Letterkenny Rural (Part Urban) |
| | 069 Buncrana Rural | 006 Ballyshannon Urban |
| | 105 Letterkenny Rural (Part Rural) | 024 Pettigoe |
| Galway City | 001 Ballybaan | 010 Mionlach |
| | 003 Bearna | 006 Dangan |
| | 004 An Caisleán Gearr | 011 Mervue |
| Galway | 215 Tuam Rural | 090 Gort |
| County | 060 Oranmore | 196 Dunmore South |
| | 101 Athenry | 016 Kiltormer |
| Leitrim | 015 Carrick-on-Shannon | 060 Carrigallen East |
| | 030 Gubacreeny | 049 Kiltyclogher |
| | 039 Drumahaire | 042 Glenade |
| Mayo | 089 Claremorris | 002 Ballina Urban |
| | 034 Ballinrobe | 118 Sonnagh |
| | 085 Ballyhaunis | 001 Ardnaree South Urban |
| Roscommon | 001 Athlone West Rural | 031 Boyle Urban |
| | 105 Roscommon Rural | 017 Lecarrow |
| | 065 Castlereagh | 011 Creagh |
| Sligo | 046 Collooney | 001 Sligo East |
| | 073 Coolaney | 048 Drumcliff West |
| | 082 Tobercurry | 003 Sligo West |

Source: CSO, Census of Population 2011: Preliminary Results, Table 8

10. What is the housing stock in the Western Region?

In total the Western Region has a housing stock of 401,295 in 2011, an increase of 15.5% on 2006 (Table 6). This was greater than the increase in the state as a whole which was 13.3%. Within the region the highest growth in the housing stock occurred in Donegal, Leitrim and Roscommon. These were also the three counties with the highest rates of net migration over the period.

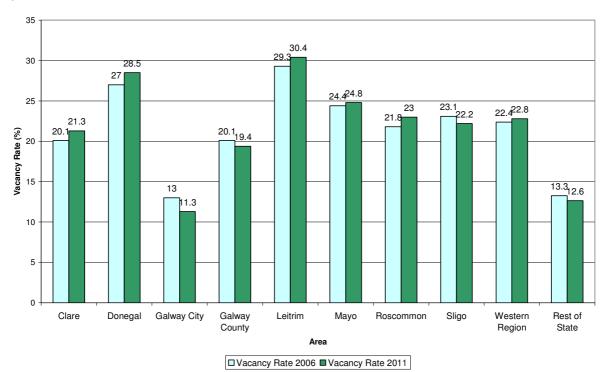
Table 6: Housing stock in the western counties, Western Region and rest of state, 2006-2011

| | Housing Stock 2006 (No.) | Housing Stock 2011 (No.) | Percentage Change in Housing Stock 2006-2011 (%) |
|----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Clare | 48,834 | 55,826 | 14.3 |
| Donegal | 70,526 | 84,356 | 19.6 |
| Galway | 98,326 | 111,849 | 13.8 |
| Galway City | 30,589 | 33,826 | 10.6 |
| Galway County | 67,737 | 78,023 | 15.2 |
| Leitrim | 15,282 | 18,237 | 19.3 |
| Mayo | 58,717 | 66,086 | 12.6 |
| Roscommon | 26,979 | 31,718 | 17.6 |
| Sligo | 28,751 | 33,223 | 15.6 |
| Western Region | 347,415 | 401,295 | 15.5 |
| Rest of State | 1,422,198 | 1,602,880 | 12.7 |
| State | 1,769,613 | 2,004,175 | 13.3 |

11. What are the vacancy rates in the region?

The vacancy rate measures the share of the housing stock in each county that is recorded as a vacant dwelling by the Census enumerators. The average vacancy rate in the Western Region in 2011was 22.8%, marginally higher than in 2006 (22.4%) (Fig. 12). This was higher than the average vacancy rate in the rest of the state which was 12.6%, a decline on the rate of 13.3% in 2006.

Fig. 12: Vacancy rates in western counties, Western Region and rest of state, 2006 and 2011



Most counties in the Western Region experienced a slight increase in their vacancy rates between 2006 and 2011. Galway and Sligo however experienced a slight decline. In total Leitrim (30.4%), Donegal (28.5%) and Mayo (24.8%) had the highest vacancy rates in the region, while Galway city (11.3%) had the lowest.

At a national level, Leitrim and Donegal have the highest vacancy rates in the country (Fig. 13). In total six of the ten administrative areas with the highest vacancy rates nationally are in the Western Region.

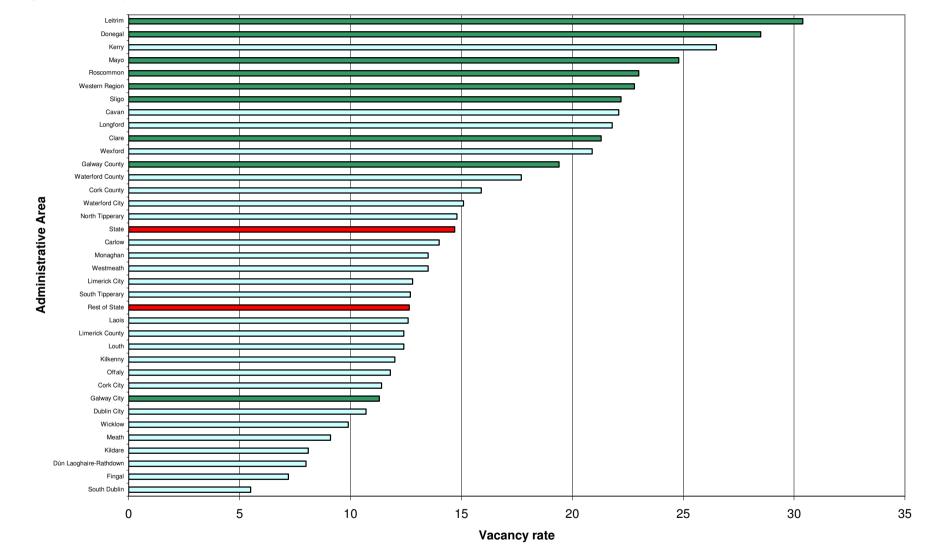


Fig. 13: Vacancy rates in each administrative area, 2011

12. Conclusion

The preliminary results of Census 2011 indicate that the Western Region is continuing to experience strong population growth, as is the country as a whole. Indeed the gap between population growth rates in the region and rest of the state, which was quite large between 1951 and 1981, has narrowed significantly, although the 2006-2011 period saw the gap widen again slightly. What distinguishes the region most is the extent to which inward migration has influenced overall population growth. While the region may currently be experiencing out-migration, particularly among men, this has not been sufficient to undo the strong inward migration of the boom years. Meanwhile birth rates are rising and death rates falling in the region, though several counties continue to have relatively low birth rates and high death rates.

Overall the population results are quite positive for the region, given the importance of the region's human resource for future growth. Continuing population growth and a rising birth rate will also have important implications for service delivery in the region.

The WDC will be undertaking further analysis of the final Census 2011 results as they become available during 2012. If you have any queries on any of the data contained in this report please contact Pauline White, Policy Analyst, WDC <u>paulinewhite@wdc.ie</u> or 094 986 1441.

13. Appendix 1

Appendix 1 contains data on the population of each ED in the Western Region in 2006 and 2011. It also provides data on the gender breakdown of the 2011 population and the actual and percentage change in population between 2006 and 2011.