

A Socio-Economic and Demographic Profile of Co. Offaly



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Offaly County Council



Coiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Áitiúil Uíbh Fhailí
Offaly Local Community Development Committee

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Introduction

Offaly County Council has prepared this socio-economic and demographic profile as part of the development of its Local Economic and Community Plan. This profile will inform the local authority of key priority needs with respect to social, economic and community development.

This socio-economic profile will provide a focus on the key issues (incorporating both challenges and opportunities) impacting Co. Offaly. These issues will be addressed in the Local Economic and Community Plan, based on an analysis of currently available economic, social and demographic data. Key data sources for this socio-economic and demographic profile include:

- 2022 Census of Population (only variable available include: population total; vacancy rate)
- 2016 Census of Population
- Department of Education School Enrolment Figures (2021 / 2022)
- Environmental Protection Agency Water Quality Data (2013 – 2018)
- Environmental Protection Agency Household Waste Statistics (2020)
- Pobal HP Deprivation Index (2016)
- CSO data (available at www.cso.ie)

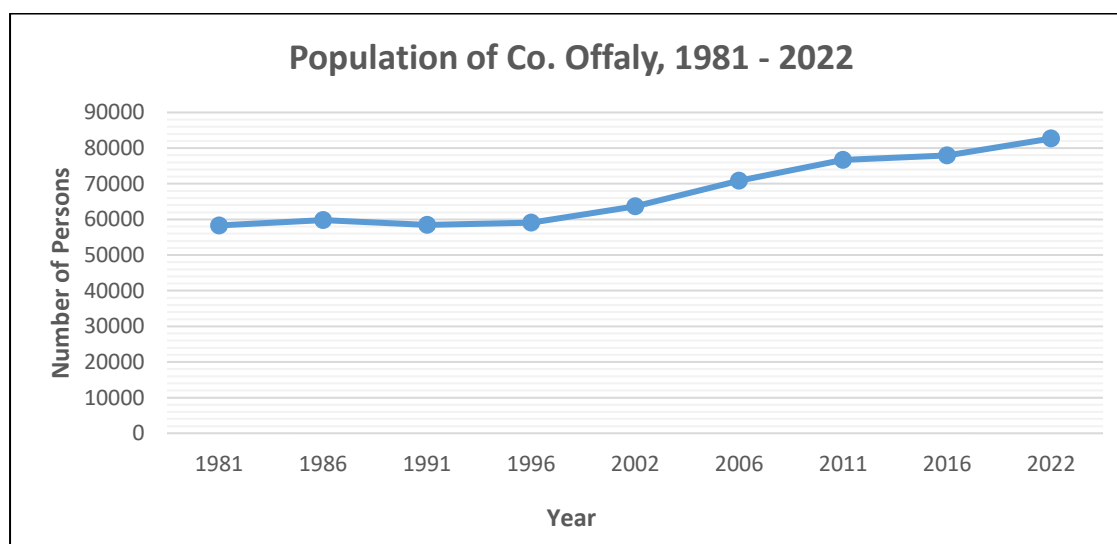


Demographic Profile

The preliminary population figures from Census 2022 indicate significant population growth in Ireland, with the population increasing from 4,761,865 to 5,123,536 between 2016 and 2022. This equates to a population increase of 7.59%. The population in Ireland exceeded five million people for the first time in over 170 years.

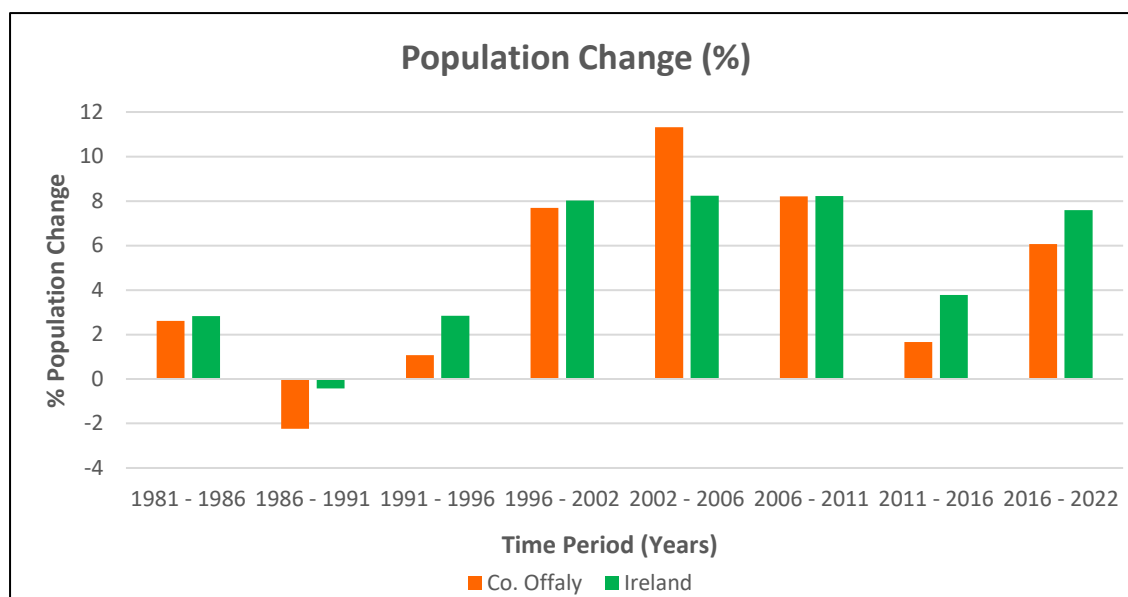
According to Census 2022, there are 82,688 individuals living within Co. Offaly. This equates to 1.61% of Ireland's overall population. Similar to the State, Co. Offaly has also recorded a population increase (6.06%; n = 4,727). However, the growth rate is less than the national average. The highest population growth was recorded in Counties Meath (+13%); Fingal and Kildare (+11% in each). The lowest population growth was recorded in Counties Donegal, Kilkenny, Kerry and Tipperary (approximately +5% each). Therefore, no County in Ireland recorded a population decline between 2016 and 2022. The population of Co. Offaly has been steadily increasing over recent decades, with significant increases occurring during the Celtic Tiger time-period (Figure 1). Individuals moved to Co. Offaly in order to avail of cheaper properties outside the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) whilst commuting long distances in order to avail of employment opportunities.

Figure 1: Population of Co. Offaly (1981 – 2022)



The population has increased by 41.8% in Co. Offaly between 1981 (58,312) and 2022 (82,688). This population increase is proportionately smaller than the national average (48.8%). Figure 2 provides an overview of the population increase between the different Censuses of Population. Overall, population growth in Co. Offaly has lagged behind the national average with the 2002 – 2006 intercensus period being the only exception. Both Ireland and Co. Offaly witnessed a decline in population between 1986 and 1991, with the decline being more pronounced in Co. Offaly.

Figure 2: Population Change By Selected Location and Census Year



Population data for Municipal Districts is not yet available for Census 2022. The drivers of population change are natural increase (births minus deaths) and net migration (immigration minus emigration). Ireland’s population increase between 2016 and 2022 was attributed to 47.4% from natural increase and 52.6% from net migration. In Co. Offaly over the same time period, net migration was responsible for only 42.37% of the population increase with the remainder attributed to natural increase. According to Census 2022, Monaghan (+1,353), Kilkenny (+1,756) and Offaly (+2,003) were the three counties that experienced the lowest inward migration.

Characteristics by Gender and Age

According to Census 2016, there were 38,838 males and 39,123 females living in Co. Offaly. Table 1 provides a break-down of population by gender in each Municipal District within Co. Offaly. Overall, there is no significant differences between the proportion of males and females at either a County or Municipal District level.

Table 1: Population by Gender and Municipal District (2016)

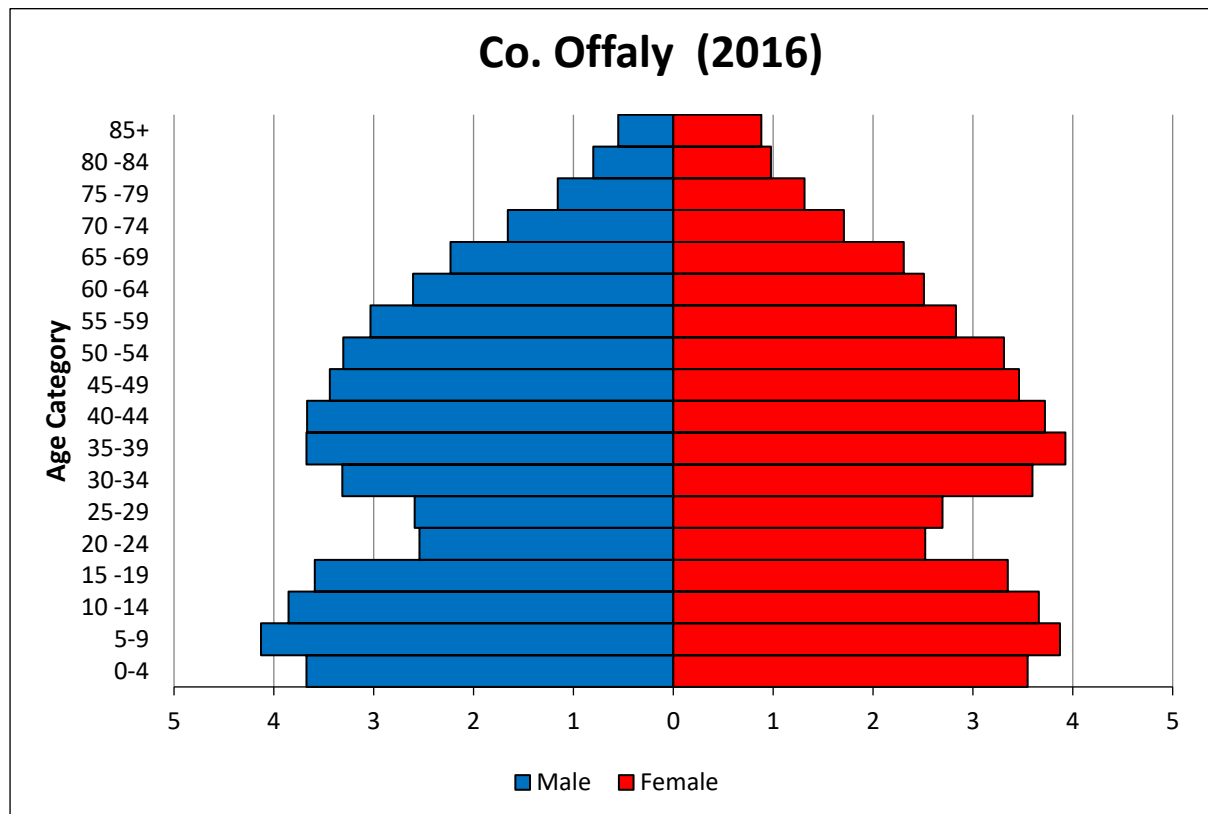
| Municipal District | Males | Females | Total |
|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Tullamore | 14,321 (49.11%) | 14,838 (50.89%) | 29,159 (100%) |
| Edenderry | 11,675 (50.05%) | 11,651 (49.95%) | 23,326 (100%) |
| Birr | 12,842 (50.41%) | 12,634 (49.59%) | 25,476 (100%) |

The population pyramid (data derived from the 2016 Census of Population data) for Co. Offaly highlights a varied population structure (Figure 3). The population profile should conform to a pyramid structure¹ with a broad base and tapering sides to form a narrow peak. The more rectangular the graph is shaped, the slower the population is growing. The population pyramid for Co. Offaly is not

¹ A population pyramid is a graph which represents the age – sex distribution of a given population. Sex is shown on the left / right sides; age on the y-axis (vertical); and the percentage of the population on the x-axis (horizontal). Each group (male 0 to 4) is called a cohort.

uniform in shape. There is a noticeable inversion in the population pyramid for the age categories between 20 – 29 years. This suggests young people have migrated to other settlements in Ireland or further afield in order to obtain a higher level education and / or to secure employment opportunities. There is a danger that these young people may not return, especially if suitable employment (consummate with educational qualifications and skillsets) is not available. However, the population pyramid indicates a healthy proportion of people in the home-making and child-bearing age cohorts, thereby indicating Co. Offaly is a desirable place to rear a family. This is also reflected in a significant proportion of the population aged less than 19 years.

Figure 3: Population Pyramid for Co. Offaly (2016)



Similar trends are also apparent in the population pyramids for Tullamore Municipal District (Figure 4); Birr Municipal District (Figure 5); and Edenderry Municipal District (Figure 6).



Figure 4: Population Pyramid for Tullamore Municipal District (2016)

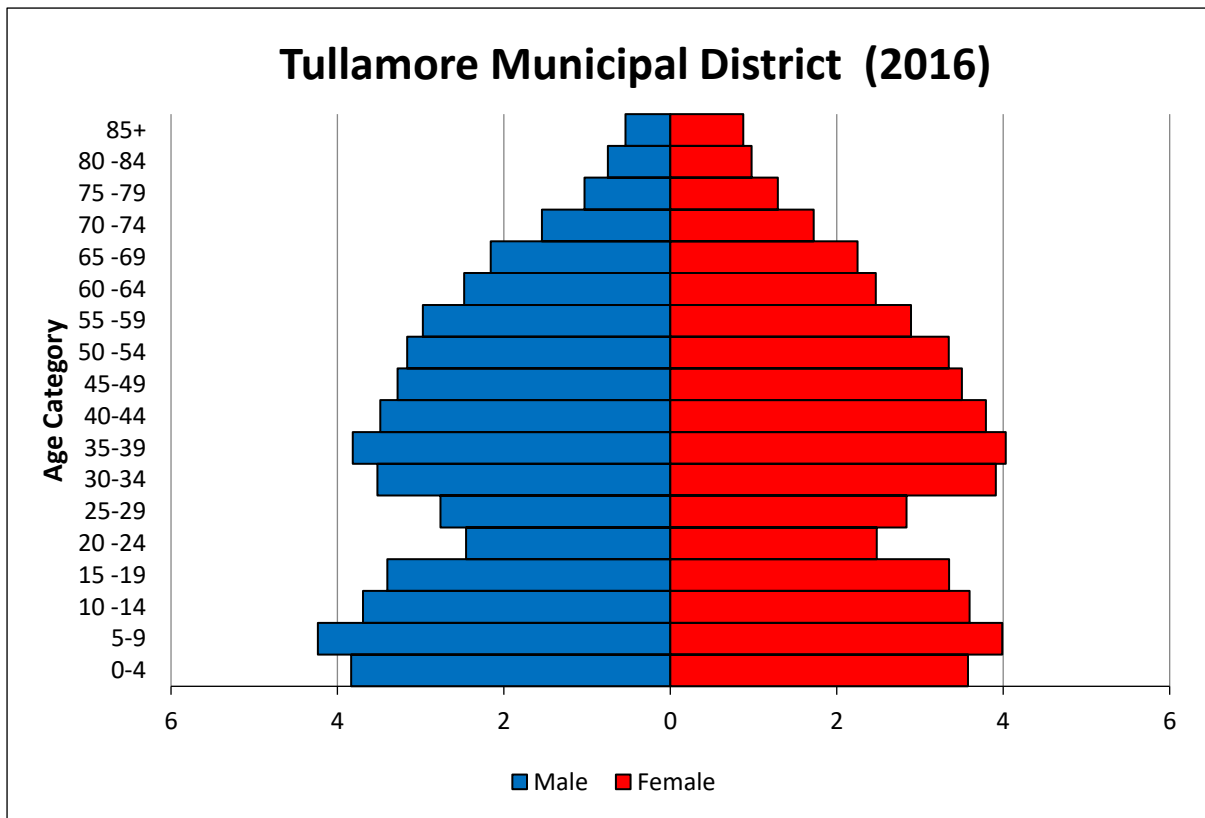


Figure 5: Population Pyramid for Birr Municipal District (2016)

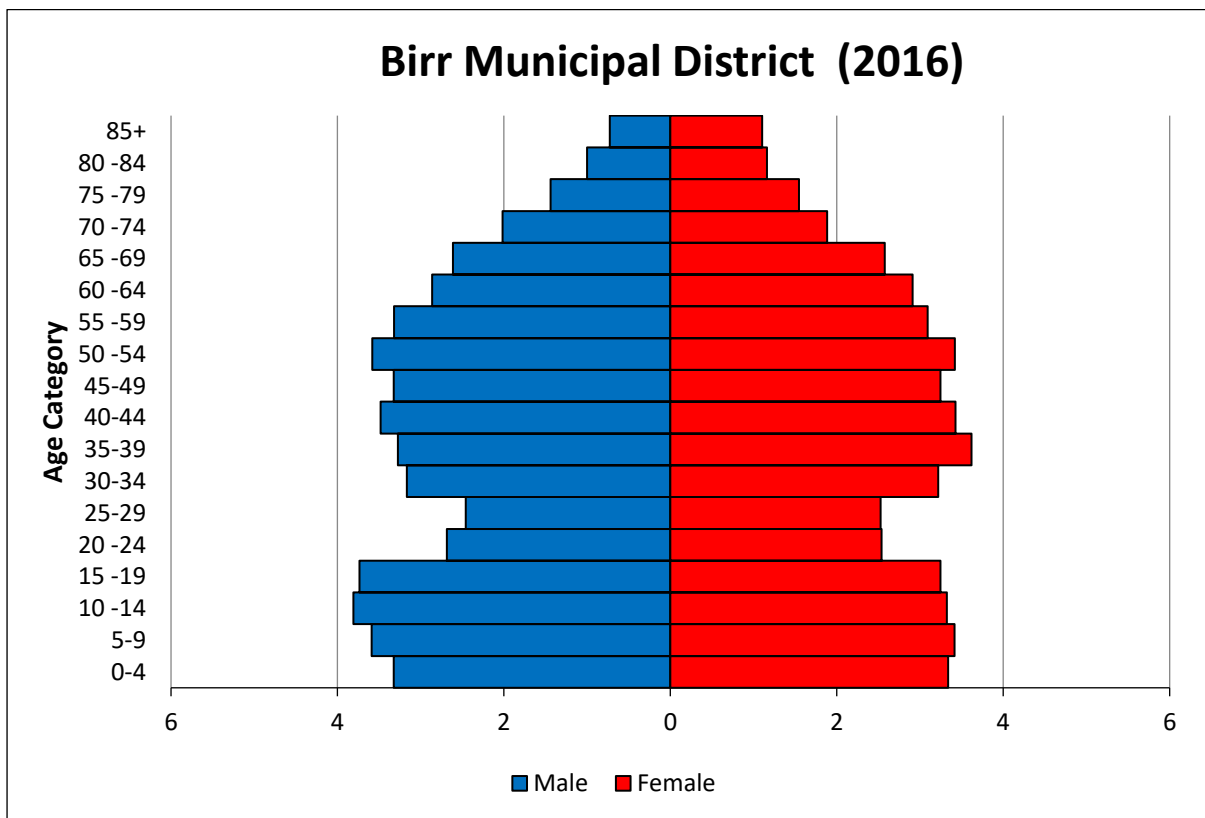


Figure 6: Population Pyramid for Edenderry Municipal District (2016)

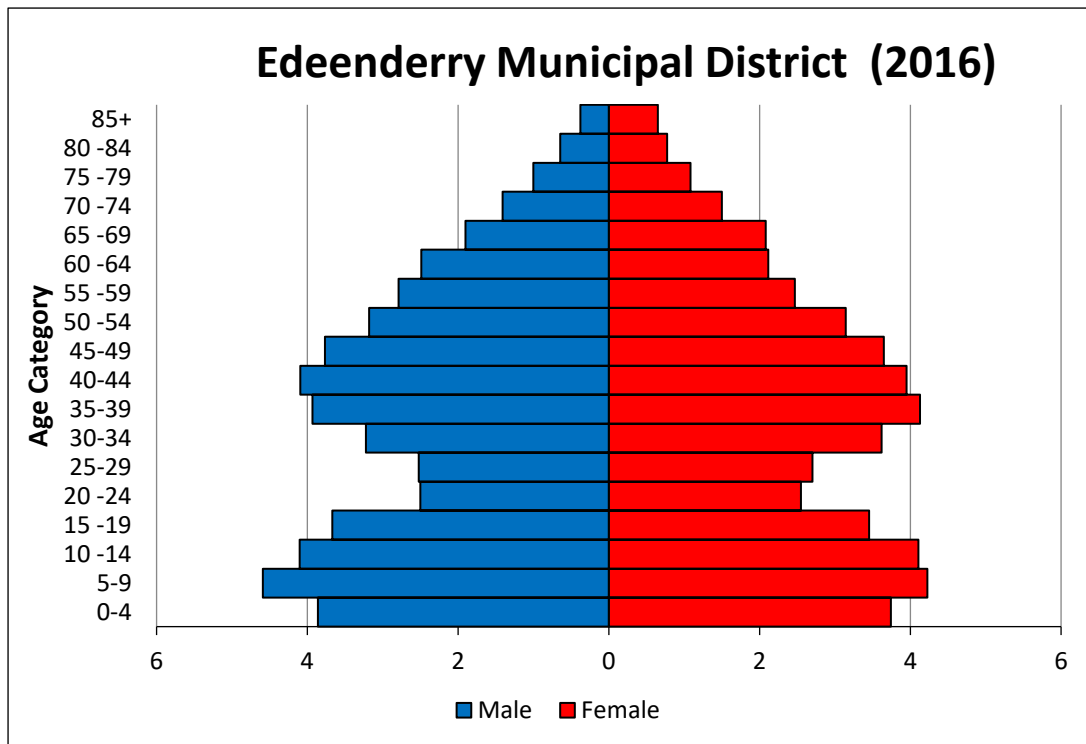


Table 2 provides a break-down of population of age cohorts in each Municipal District within Co. Offaly.

Table 2: Population by Age Cohorts in Co. Offaly (2016)

| Age Cohort | Tullamore MD | Edenderry MD | Birr MD | Co. Offaly |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 0-4 | 2161 | 1773 | 1773 | 5631 |
| 5-9 | 2398 | 2057 | 2057 | 6239 |
| 10-14 | 2126 | 1915 | 1915 | 5857 |
| 15-19 | 1969 | 1662 | 1662 | 5410 |
| 20-24 | 1439 | 1178 | 1178 | 3948 |
| 25-29 | 1632 | 1218 | 1218 | 4120 |
| 30-34 | 2166 | 1596 | 1596 | 5389 |
| 35-39 | 2288 | 1880 | 1880 | 5924 |
| 40-44 | 2122 | 1876 | 1876 | 5758 |
| 45-49 | 1977 | 1729 | 1729 | 5380 |
| 50-54 | 1898 | 1475 | 1475 | 5156 |
| 55-59 | 1710 | 1227 | 1227 | 4571 |
| 60-64 | 1442 | 1074 | 1074 | 3987 |
| 65-69 | 1285 | 930 | 930 | 3537 |
| 70-74 | 952 | 679 | 679 | 2625 |
| 75-79 | 678 | 487 | 487 | 1926 |
| 80-84 | 504 | 330 | 330 | 1385 |
| 85+ | 412 | 240 | 240 | 1118 |
| Total | 29159 | 23326 | 23326 | 77961 |

Age Profile and Dependency Ratios

The youth and elderly dependency ratio and the demographic vitality ratio can be utilised to measure the vibrancy of a population within a selected location. The youth dependency ratio refers to the number of young people (aged 0 to 14) in relation to the number of working (economically active) population (aged 15 to 64). The youth dependency ratio for Co. Offaly (0.33) is marginally higher than the average (0.30), whilst being marginally lower than the Midlands (0.34). Table 3 identifies Edenderry Municipal District (0.36) as having the highest youth dependency ratio in Co. Offaly, whilst the lowest was recorded in the Birr Municipal District (on par with the national average). According to Census 2016, almost a quarter (22.73%) of Offaly's population are children aged 0 – 14 years.

The demographic vitality ratio refers to the number of persons aged 20-39 years as a ratio of number of people aged over 60 years. There is a more significant variation with respect to the demographic vitality ratio with Co. Offaly having a lower rate in comparison to the Midlands and Ireland. This implies the ratio of 20–39-year-olds to those aged in excess of 60 years is lower in (2.74) in comparison to the national average (3.10). The lowest demographic vitality ratio was recorded in the Birr Municipal District (2.15).

The elderly dependency rate refers to the number of elderly people (aged 65+) in relation to the number of working (economically active) population (aged 15 to 64). Co. Offaly (0.33) has a slightly higher elderly dependency ratio in comparison to the national average (0.30), whilst marginally lower than the Midlands. There is also variation within the County with the Edenderry Municipal District (0.36) having a higher elderly dependency ratio than Birr Municipal District. Older people account for 9.05% of the population of Co. Offaly in 2016. According to national and international research, there will be a significant and continuous ageing of the population within developed countries. Therefore, this presents issues for the planning and delivery of age-appropriate services, especially for the elderly. A growing elderly dependency ratio implies a higher proportion of dependents relying on those who are economically active within society.

Table 1: Youth, Elderly and Demographic Vitality Ratios (2016)

| Location | Youth Dependency Ratio | Elderly Dependency Ratio | Demographic Vitality Ratio |
|--------------|------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Tullamore MD | 0.34 | 0.13 | 2.96 |
| Edenderry MD | 0.36 | 0.11 | 3.38 |
| Birr MD | 0.30 | 0.16 | 2.15 |
| Co. Offaly | 0.33 | 0.13 | 2.74 |
| Midlands | 0.34 | 0.12 | 3.06 |
| Ireland | 0.30 | 0.13 | 3.10 |

Nationality and Ethnicity

According to the 2016 Census of Population, 89.94% of Co. Offaly's population are categorised as having Irish nationality. Consequently, Co. Offaly has a lower proportion (8.53%) of foreign nationals in comparison to the Midlands region (10.71%); and Ireland (11.42%). Figure 7 indicates that Polish (2.49%) and Other EU (1.98%) are the most significant foreign national groupings within Co. Offaly. There is significant spatial variation in the settlement choices of specific nationalities at Municipal District level. For instance, there is an over-representation of UK nationals in the Birr Municipal District, whilst having an under-representation of all other nationality cohorts. The proportion of Lithuanian nationals is higher in Edenderry and Tullamore Municipal Districts in comparison to the other selected locations. There is a higher proportion of Polish nationals in Tullamore Municipal District in comparison to the national average.

Figure 7: Proportion (%) of Foreign Nationality Groups by Selected Location (2016)

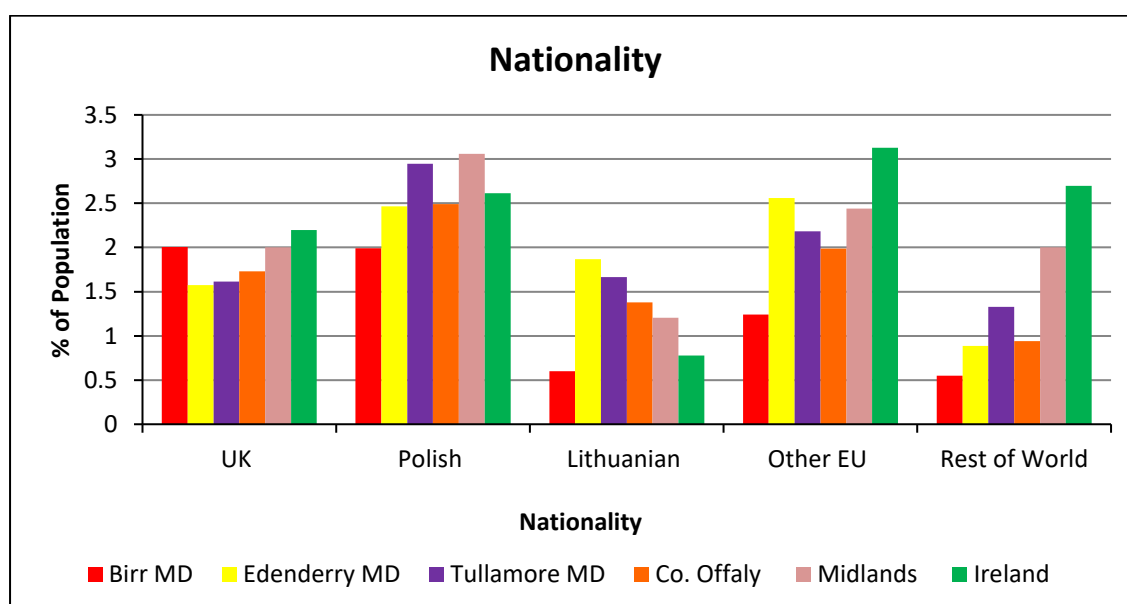


Table 3 provides a breakdown of the population by nationality in Co Offaly. Figures are provided for each of the Municipal Districts – Birr, Edenderry and Tullamore from Census 2016. The nationality cohorts included: Ireland, UK, Poland, Lithuanian, Other EU² and Rest of World.

Table 3: Population by Nationality and Municipal District in Co. Offaly (2016)

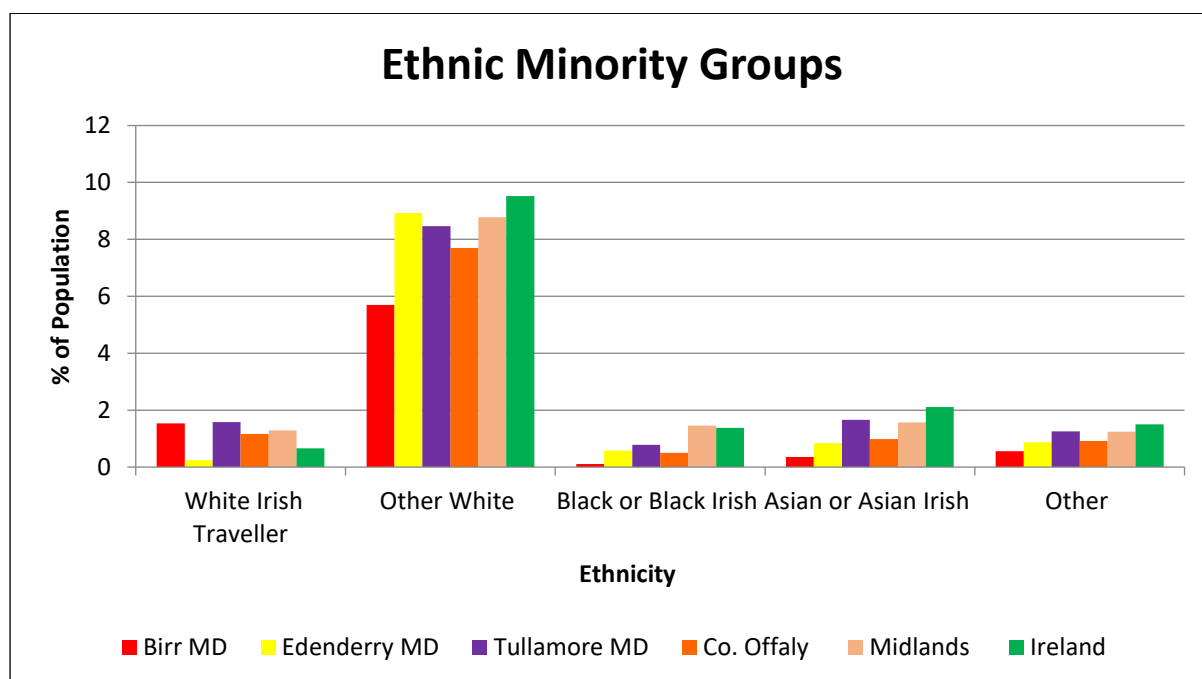
| | Ireland | UK | Poland | Lithuania | Other EU28 | Rest of world | Total Foreign Nationals |
|---------------|---------|------|--------|-----------|------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| Birr MD | 23388 | 507 | 504 | 152 | 314 | 139 | 1616 |
| Edenderry MD | 20853 | 366 | 573 | 434 | 595 | 206 | 2174 |
| Tullamore MD | 25530 | 468 | 855 | 483 | 633 | 385 | 2824 |
| County Offaly | 69771 | 1341 | 1932 | 1069 | 1542 | 730 | 6614 |

² Census Day 2016 pre-dates the BREXIT referendum in the UK.

According to the 2016 Census of Population, there is a higher proportion of white Irish travellers living in Co. Offaly (1.16%) in comparison to the national average (0.66%). However, the spatial concentration is uneven within the county with a higher proportion in the Tullamore (1.58%) and Birr (1.53%) Municipal Districts in comparison to the Edenderry (0.24%) Municipal District. The most significant minority ethnic group living in Co. Offaly is other white, accounting for 5.69% of the population (Figure 8). This refers to white individuals who are neither white Irish nor white Irish traveller. It is important to note that the ‘other white’ ethnic cohort has increased significantly since the arrival of Ukrainian refugees. This change in ethnicity will not be reflected in Census 2022 as Census Day predates the arrival of most Ukrainian refugees into Co. Offaly.

Overall, 11.27% (8,741 individuals) of the population living in Co. Offaly are non-Irish white (this term refers to all minority groups including white Irish travellers). In absolute terms, there are 905 white Irish travellers; 5,971 other white; 392 black or black Irish; 765 Asian or Asian Irish and 708 other (not classified by CSO).

Figure 8: Proportion (%) of Ethnic Minority Groups in Selected Locations (2016)



Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Since February 2022, Ireland has provided special sanctuary to refugees fleeing the Russian invasion of Ukraine. According to the CSO (2023), “There were 74,458 Personal Public Service Numbers (PPSNs) given to arrivals from Ukraine by the week ending 12 February 2023, under the Temporary Protection Directive. As of 12 February 2023, 28,774 arrivals had attended an employment support event arranged by Intreo Public Employment Services. Of those 70% (or 20,016 persons) noted that English language proficiency was a challenge in securing employment.” According to the CSO, there were 671 Ukrainian refugees living in Co Offaly in week ending 12 February 2023 (Table 4).

Table 4: Ukrainian Refugees by Municipal District (week ending 12 February 2023)

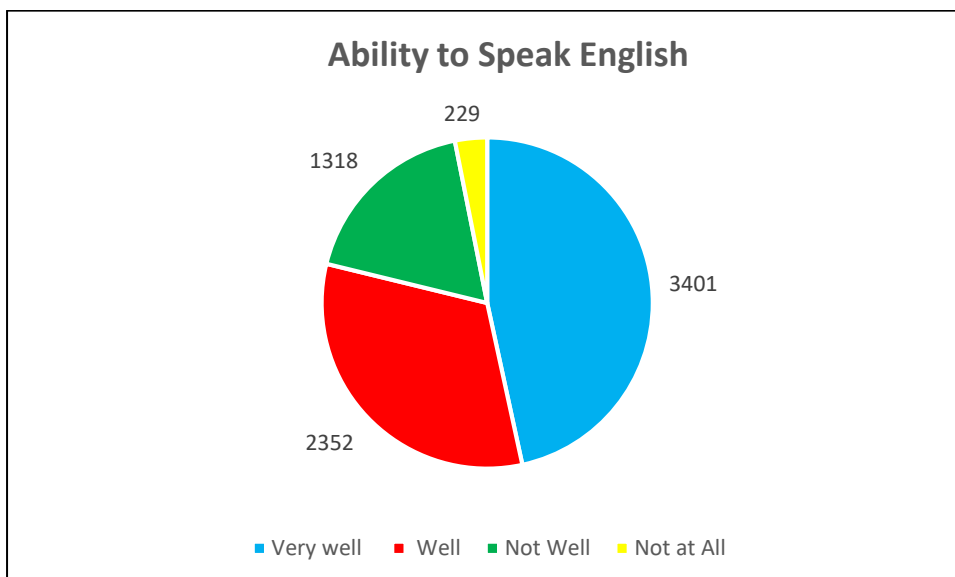
| Municipal District | Number | % of Population |
|--------------------|--------|-----------------|
| Birr | 118 | 0.436794 |
| Tullamore | 478 | 1.550689 |
| Edenderry | 75 | 0.302078 |

According to Offaly County Council, there are currently 1,131 refugees and asylum seekers living in county. The vast majority are Ukrainian refugees (n = 900). These refugees only arrived into the county since March 2022. In 2017, 31 refugees moved to Tullamore under the United Nations HCR programme. A further 90 Syrian refugees moved to Birr, Clara and Tullamore in 2020- 2021. The remaining 180 individuals are asylum seekers who are resident in direct provision centres located in Tullamore, Banagher and Dunkerrin. Therefore, Co. Offaly has witnessed a significant and sharp increase in the number of refugees over a relatively short time span. The refugees and asylum seekers in Co. Offaly are concentrated within the towns of Tullamore (567), Portarlinton (265) and Birr (114). Refugees and asylum seekers require education and training provision; language classes (especially if not fluent in the English language); accommodation; and health care.

Foreign Languages

According to Census 2016, approximately 20% of foreign nationals living in Co. Offaly could not speak English 'not well' or 'not at all'. This is higher than the national average (14%). Overall, 1,547 individuals stated in the census that they spoke English not well or not all. An inability to speak the vernacular language poses difficulties with respect to integration. The situation is more profound in rural areas where a small number of people trying to access local English language supports / services would be unfeasible and impractical. Therefore, these individuals are at significant risk of isolation and marginalisation. The recent arrival of Ukrainian refugees into Co. Offaly will pose a challenge, as a significant number are not fluent in English.

Figure 9: Ability to Speak English by Foreign Nationals in Co. Offaly (2016)



The most spoken foreign language in Co. Offaly is Polish (2,066) and Lithuanian (1,043). Interestingly, there are more Polish speakers (2,066) than Polish nationals (1,932) in Co. Offaly (Figure 10). Conversely, there are slightly less Lithuanian speakers (1,043) than Lithuanian nationals (1,069). This information is important for service providers as it informs which languages are required for translation purposes.

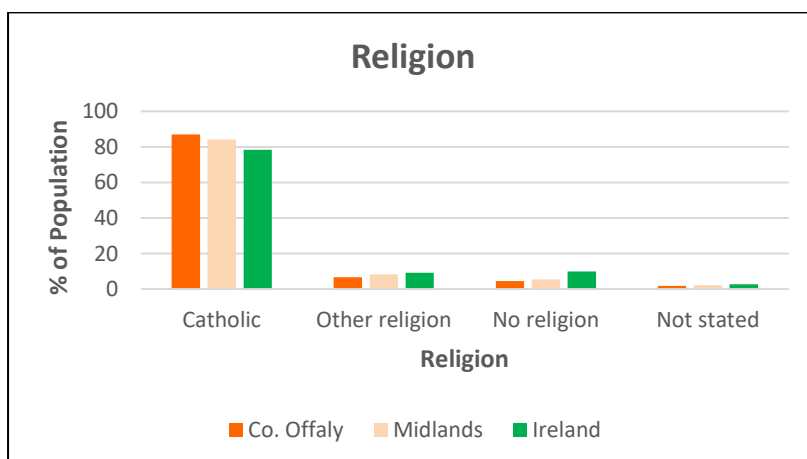
Figure 10: Speakers by Foreign Language Spoken (2016)



Religion

According to the 2016 Census of Population, a significant majority of the population were Catholics, with a higher proportion in Co. Offaly (89.25%) in comparison to the Midlands (84.18%) and Ireland (78.31%). A further 6.4% of the population in Co. Offaly belonged to other religious denominations (Figure 11). According to the 2016 Census of Population, 4.51% of the population classified themselves as 'no religion'. It is important to note that the question on the topic of religion in the census form does not refer to frequency of attendance at church or other places of worship. In total, there are 67,849 Catholics, 5,180 other religious denominations / faith and 3,520 atheists (no religion) living in Co. Offaly. A further 1,412 individuals did not answer the question on religion.

Figure 11: Proportion (%) of Population by Religion in Selected Locations (2016)



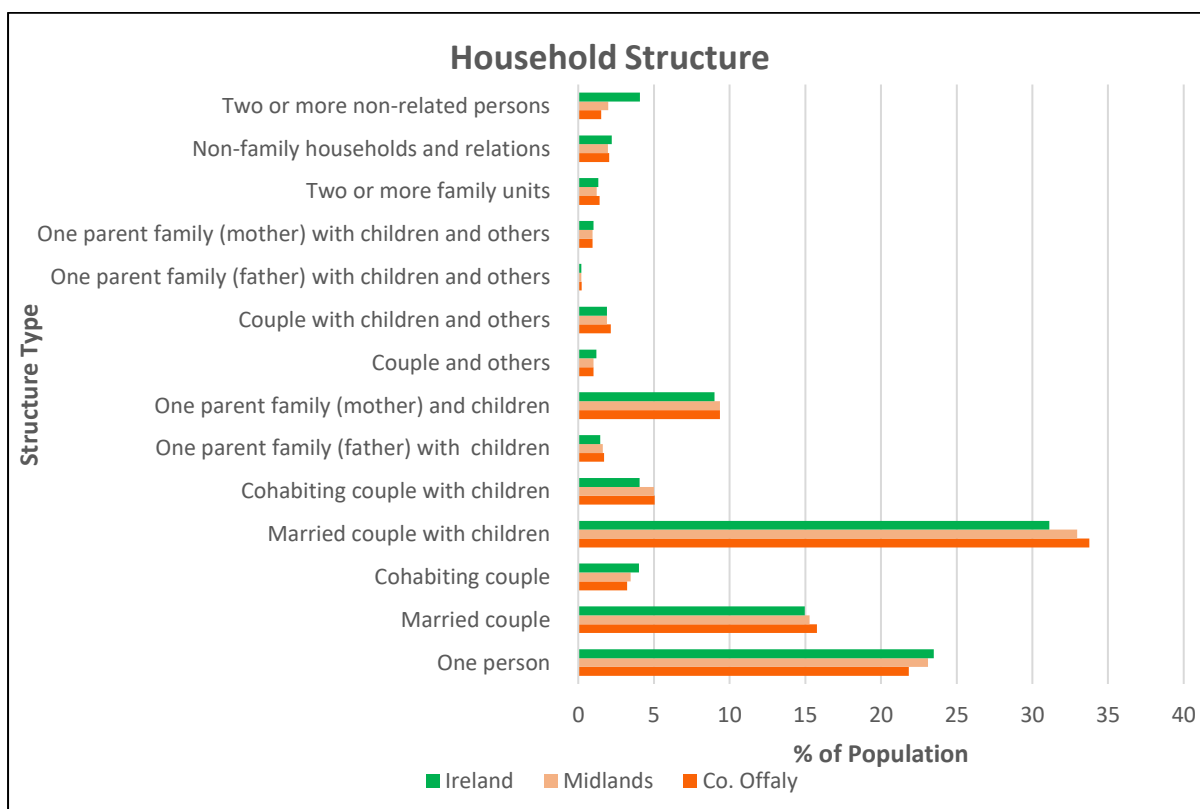
Household Structure

Household structure / composition is a useful indicator of disadvantage, especially for the number of one person households and lone parent households within a specific location. One person households can be an indicator of isolation and social exclusion, especially for individuals who are elderly, widowed and / or with a disability.

Co. Offaly's household structure differs slightly from the Midlands and Ireland (Figure 12). This is due to Co. Offaly having a larger proportion of married couple with children; and married couples in comparison to the other selected locations. Furthermore, the proportion of one person households is lower in comparison to the selected households. The proportion of lone parents (lone fathers and lone mothers) is similar to the national and regional averages. This group is the most susceptible to living in disadvantage. Lone parent households have a particularly high risk of living below the poverty threshold. According to Grotti et al's. (2017) analysis of Irish SILC (Survey on Income and Living Conditions) data, lone parents are the most susceptible social group to being affected by deprivation and poverty. The high levels of poverty in lone parent households are attributable to an inability to access employment due to high childcare costs and potential loss of medical card; low wage part-time employment; and low education attainment rates (Combat Poverty Agency, 2009). Furthermore, the overwhelming majority of lone parents tend to be female. In Co. Offaly,

The number of persons belonging to each family type Co. Offaly includes: one person (5,970); married couple (4,310); cohabiting couple (882); married couple with children (9,232); cohabiting couple with children (1,382); lone father and children (467); lone mother and children (2,557); couple with children and others (588); One parent family (father) with children and others (60); one parent family (mother) with children and others (259); two or more family units (387); non-family households and relations (2,018); and two or more non-related persons (2,052).

Figure 12: Household Structure for Selected Locations (2016)



Housing

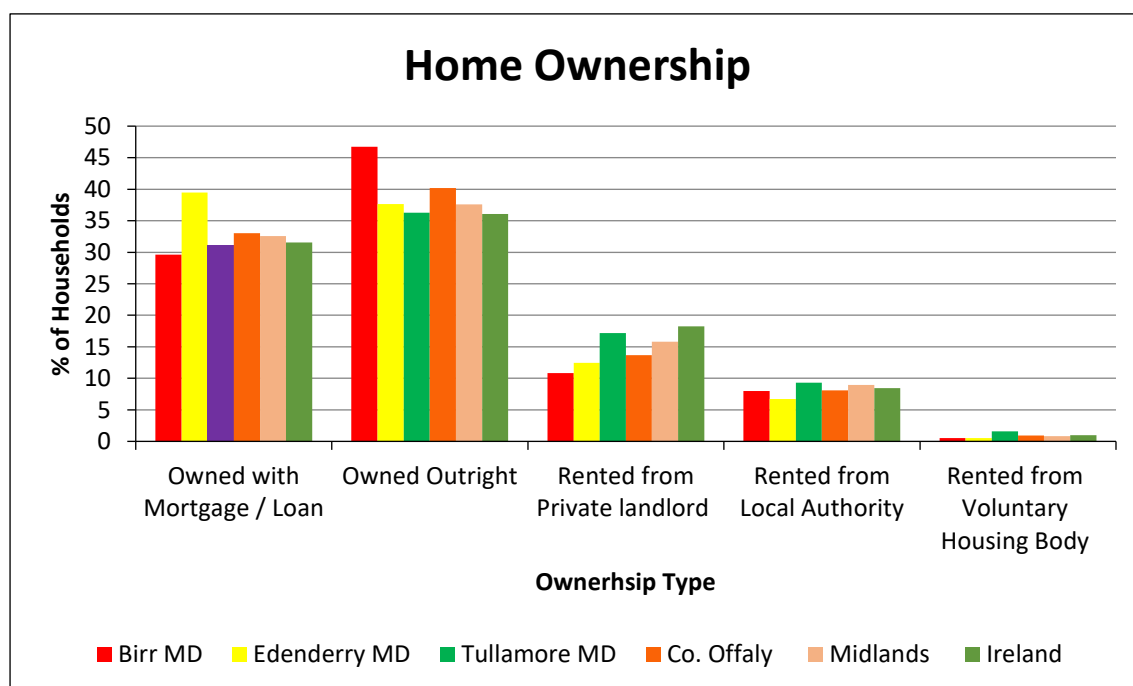
According to the 2016 Census of Population, the vast majority of the accommodation in Co. Offaly is comprised of houses / bungalows (94; n = 25,773). The remainder consists of flats / apartments (3.53%; n = 967); bedsits (0.9%; n = 25); and caravan / mobile home (0.58%; n = 159).

In Co. Offaly, there are differences in relation to the nature of housing occupancy relative to national and regional trends (Figure 13). A higher proportion of households own their home with mortgage / loan in Co. Offaly (40.17%) in comparison to the national average (36.04%). The proportion of home ownership is very significant in the Birr Municipal District (46.74%). Furthermore, an additional 33% of homes in Co. Offaly are owned with a mortgage / loan. The proportion of homes owned with a mortgage / loan in the Edenderry Municipal District (39.44%) is significantly higher than the national average (31.55%). Therefore, private home ownership is very dominant in Co. Offaly. Therefore, these cohorts are most likely to invest in their homes.

Consequently, there is a lower proportion of households renting from private landlords in Co. Offaly (15.82%), with a significantly lower rate in the Birr Municipal District (10.82%); and Edenderry Municipal District (12.47%). The proportion of local authority housing in Co. Offaly (8.11%) is broadly consistent with the national average (8.43%), albeit a higher concentration in the Tullamore Municipal District (9.29%). At the end of 2015, Offaly County Council had 3,220 registered tenancies. NOAC (2021, p.11) states in 2014 Offaly County Council had '1,822 dwellings located in 158 housing estates and 65 units were in single rural locations. It had a 2.6% vacancy rate at end 2014 and it had the median unit re-letting cost of €8,375'.

The following provides a breakdown (absolute numbers) of the status of home ownership in Co. Offaly: ownership with mortgage / loan (8,973); owned outright (10,920); rented from private landlord (3,721); rented from local authority (2,206); rented from voluntary housing association (251); and occupied free of rent (467). In 2016, there were 702 Irish travellers living in 224 private (permanent) households whilst a further 102 Irish travellers were living in 42 temporary private housing units.

Figure 13: Home Ownership Status for Selected locations (2016)



According to the CSO (2023), there were 416 new dwelling completed in Co. Offaly. Table 5 provides a breakdown of the number of completed dwellings by Municipal District in Co. Offaly. For Quarter 1, 2023, a further 105 new dwellings were completed in Co. Offaly, with 12 in Birr Municipal District; 73 in Tullamore Municipal District; and 20 in Edenderry Municipal District. The CSO calculates new dwelling completions through data collected by the ESB with respect to new connections.

Table 5: Number of New Dwellings by Municipal District in Co. Offaly (2022)

| Time Period | Birr MD | Tullamore ED | Edenderry MD | Co. Offaly |
|-------------|---------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| Quarter 1 | 22 | 97 | 19 | 138 |
| Quarter 2 | 21 | 48 | 22 | 91 |
| Quarter 3 | 26 | 19 | 17 | 62 |
| Quarter 4 | 44 | 60 | 21 | 125 |
| 2022 | 113 | 224 | 79 | 416 |

In Co. Offaly, there are 144 single houses, which are one-off dwellings connected to the ESB network (Table 6). There are 234 scheme dwellings which refer to houses that form part of a multi-unit development of two or more houses connected to the ESB network. Only 38 apartment dwellings were built in Co. Offaly. According to the CSO (2023), apartments are within a multi-unit development and are specifically identified by the ESB as apartments.

Table 6: Type of New Dwellings in Co. Offaly (2022)

| | Single House | Scheme House | Apartment | Total |
|-------|--------------|--------------|-----------|-------|
| Q1 | 23 | 102 | 13 | 138 |
| Q2 | 33 | 49 | 9 | 91 |
| Q3 | 40 | 18 | 4 | 62 |
| Q4 | 48 | 65 | 12 | 125 |
| Total | 144 | 234 | 38 | 416 |

Age of Housing Stock

Table 7 provides an age profile of permanent private housing stock in Co. Offaly. Currently, there are 34,426 people living in 13,733 houses prior to 1990. If these homes have not been retrofitted, this means that these homes are underperforming with respect to energy conservation. Therefore, these home are more expensive to maintain and are contributing to Co. Offaly's carbon footprint. In the inter-census period of 2011 – 2016, 473 homes were constructed in Co. Offaly. This low number is attributed to the significant economic recession experienced in Ireland post 2008. During the Celtic Tiger period (2001 – 2010), 28% of the housing stock was constructed in Co. Offaly.

Table 7: Permanent Private Housing Stock by Year Built in Co. Offaly

| Period Built | Households | Persons | Households (%) | Persons (%) |
|---------------|------------|---------|----------------|-------------|
| Pre 1919 | 2,362 | 5,572 | 8.69 | 7.20 |
| 1919 - 1945 | 2,100 | 4,863 | 7.73 | 6.28 |
| 1946 - 1960 | 2,076 | 4,882 | 7.64 | 6.31 |
| 1961 - 1970 | 1,586 | 3,903 | 5.83 | 5.04 |
| 1971 - 1980 | 3,137 | 8,019 | 11.54 | 10.36 |
| 1981 - 1990 | 2,472 | 7,187 | 9.09 | 9.29 |
| 1991 - 2000 | 3,693 | 12,194 | 13.59 | 15.75 |
| 2001 - 2010 | 7,770 | 25,276 | 28.58 | 32.65 |
| 2011 or Later | 473 | 1,428 | 1.74 | 1.84 |
| Not stated | 1,515 | 4,080 | 5.57 | 5.27 |
| Total | 27,184 | 77,404 | 100.00 | 100.00 |

Source: Census of Population (2016)

Vacancy Rate

According to the CSO (2023), a vacant dwelling is 'classed as vacant by census enumerators if it is unoccupied on Census night, is not used as a holiday home and is not usually inhabited by occupants who are temporarily absent at the time of census. The Census definition of a vacant dwelling is a point in time indicator taken on Census night. Census vacancy should not be used as a measure of long-term vacancy or compared directly with vacancy figures produced by other sources which may use different definitions or methodology'. The vacancy rate for Co. Offaly in 2022 was 8.3%, a marginal decrease of 0.3% since the 2016 Census of Population. There are 2,663 vacant dwellings in Co. Offaly. The most recent Census of Population in April 2022 has enumerated 211 unoccupied holiday homes in Co. Offaly. This is a decrease of 33 since the 2016 Census of Population.

Table 8 provides an overview of the number of houses and vacant dwellings, along with vacancy rate (%) for each Electoral Division in Co. Offaly. This data was obtained from the 2022 Census of Population (Preliminary Results). The Electoral Divisions with the highest number of dwellings include: Tullamore Urban (412); Birr Urban (250); and Edenderry Urban (192). The Electoral Divisions with the highest vacancy rates include: Derryad (17.1%); Barna (14.9%); and Portarlinton North (14.3%). In contrast, the Electoral Divisions which recorded the lowest vacancy rates include: Cangort (1.4%); Rathfeston (2.6%); and Knockdrin (3.1%).

Table 8: Profile of Housing Stock, Vacant Dwellings and Vacancy Rate (%) by Electoral Division in Co. Offaly (2022)

| Electoral Division | Housing Stock | Vacant dwellings | Vacancy Rate (%) |
|--------------------|---------------|------------------|------------------|
| Birr Rural | 531 | 43 | 8.1 |
| Birr Urban | 2102 | 250 | 11.9 |
| Bracknagh | 409 | 20 | 4.9 |
| Broughal | 54 | 6 | 11.1 |
| Portarlinton North | 1056 | 151 | 14.3 |
| Rahan | 270 | 24 | 8.9 |
| Raheenakeeran | 165 | 7 | 4.2 |

| | | | |
|------------------|------|-----|------|
| Rathfeston | 155 | 4 | 2.6 |
| Cangort | 72 | 1 | 1.4 |
| Cappancur | 621 | 37 | 6 |
| Clara | 1628 | 111 | 6.8 |
| Cloghan | 420 | 33 | 7.9 |
| Rathrobin | 172 | 15 | 8.7 |
| Roscomroe | 56 | 3 | 5.4 |
| Screggan | 522 | 33 | 6.3 |
| Clonbulloge | 288 | 12 | 4.2 |
| Clonmacnoise | 140 | 13 | 9.3 |
| Clonmore | 172 | 7 | 4.1 |
| Clonygowan | 256 | 19 | 7.4 |
| Seirkieran | 176 | 12 | 6.8 |
| Shannonbridge | 147 | 20 | 13.6 |
| Shannonharbour | 140 | 8 | 5.7 |
| Croghan | 196 | 13 | 6.6 |
| Cullenwaine | 318 | 24 | 7.5 |
| Daingean | 604 | 45 | 7.5 |
| Shinrone | 441 | 33 | 7.5 |
| Silverbrook | 289 | 20 | 6.9 |
| Srah | 274 | 19 | 6.9 |
| Derrinboy | 131 | 18 | 13.7 |
| Derryad | 105 | 18 | 17.1 |
| Derrycooley | 103 | 13 | 12.6 |
| Doon | 195 | 12 | 6.2 |
| Templeharry | 102 | 10 | 9.8 |
| Tinamuck | 107 | 11 | 10.3 |
| Tinnycross | 161 | 9 | 5.6 |
| Tulla, Co.Offaly | 44 | 4 | 9.1 |
| Dromoyle | 126 | 12 | 9.5 |
| Drumcullen | 167 | 19 | 11.4 |
| Dunkerrin | 150 | 17 | 11.3 |
| Tullamore Rural | 1375 | 151 | 11 |
| Tullamore Urban | 4912 | 412 | 8.4 |
| Durrow | 277 | 19 | 6.9 |
| Edenderry Rural | 307 | 17 | 5.5 |
| Edenderry Urban | 2776 | 192 | 6.9 |
| Eglish | 67 | 7 | 10.4 |
| Ettagh | 188 | 11 | 5.9 |
| Ferbane | 555 | 58 | 10.5 |
| Gallen | 228 | 20 | 8.8 |
| Geashill | 605 | 31 | 5.1 |
| Gorteen | 115 | 11 | 9.6 |
| Gorteen | 132 | 9 | 6.8 |
| Hammerlane | 215 | 11 | 5.1 |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|-----|----|------|
| Hinds | 139 | 7 | 5 |
| Huntston | 155 | 18 | 11.6 |
| Kilclonfert | 153 | 12 | 7.8 |
| Kilcolman | 163 | 18 | 11 |
| Kilcormac | 625 | 53 | 8.5 |
| Kilcumreragh | 209 | 18 | 8.6 |
| Killeigh | 469 | 27 | 5.8 |
| Killooly | 108 | 15 | 13.9 |
| Killoughy | 286 | 22 | 7.7 |
| Killyon | 111 | 10 | 9 |
| Kinnitty | 245 | 21 | 8.6 |
| Knockbarron | 78 | 8 | 10.3 |
| Aghancon | 157 | 8 | 5.1 |
| Ballincor | 65 | 3 | 4.6 |
| Ballyburly | 515 | 28 | 5.4 |
| Knockdrin | 64 | 2 | 3.1 |
| Lea | 141 | 13 | 9.2 |
| Letter | 61 | 3 | 4.9 |
| Lumcloon | 159 | 15 | 9.4 |
| Ballycommon | 228 | 8 | 3.5 |
| Ballycumber | 293 | 28 | 9.6 |
| Ballymacwilliam | 232 | 20 | 8.6 |
| Ballyshear | 141 | 6 | 4.3 |
| Lusmagh | 216 | 15 | 6.9 |
| Monasteroris | 321 | 21 | 6.5 |
| Mountbriscoe | 86 | 8 | 9.3 |
| Banagher | 908 | 86 | 9.5 |
| Barna | 74 | 11 | 14.9 |
| Bawn | 129 | 12 | 9.3 |
| Mounterin | 103 | 12 | 11.7 |
| Mountheaton | 201 | 23 | 11.4 |
| Moyclare | 253 | 19 | 7.5 |
| O'Dempsey | 58 | 5 | 8.6 |
| Esker / Ballaghassaan | 188 | 13 | 6.9 |

Heating Methods

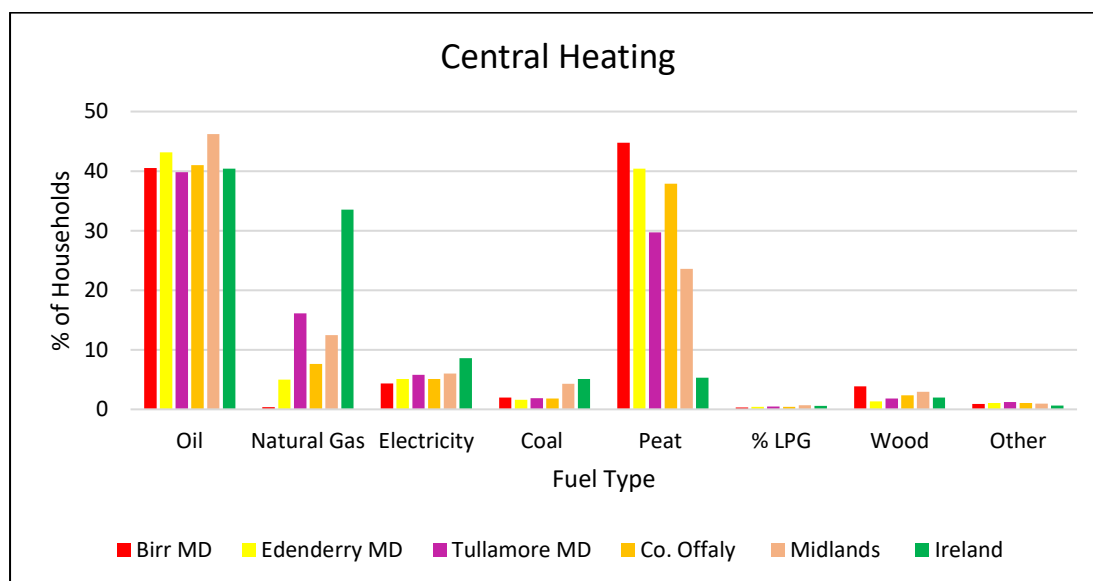
The heating methods utilised by households in Co. Offaly differs significantly with the regional and national profiles (Figure 14). In Co. Offaly, there is a very strong reliance by households on peat (37.86% as a fuel source). The proportion of households using peat / turf in the Midlands (23.6%) and Ireland (5.3%) is considerably lower. Furthermore, the proportion of households using peat / turf in Birr Municipal District (44.7%) and Edenderry Municipal District (40.4%) is higher than the county average. Due to the ongoing curtailment of peat extraction from bogs on environmental grounds, there will be a need for households in Co. Offaly to transition to alternative and cleaner fuel sources for central heating.

Figure 14 also shows a lower consumption of natural gas in Co. Offaly (7.6%) in comparison to the Midlands (12.44%) and Ireland (33.52%). It is important to note that the majority of gas consumption is confined to the Tullamore Municipal District, with 16.13% of households using this fuel source. The consumption of oil is broadly consistent across all selected locations, albeit a higher proportion of households using oil in the Midlands (46.22%) in comparison to Co. Offaly (41.02%). Oil is the most popular fuel source for heating homes across all selected locations. The steep rise in the cost of heating oil due to the current war in Ukraine would disproportionately impact on households with lower and / or fixed incomes.

The use of coal (including anthracite) for central heating by households is lower in Co. Offaly (1.83%) in comparison to the Midlands (4.2%) and Ireland (5.1%). A similar trend has also been observed for the use of electricity as a fuel source. In the future, electricity will become a more prominent source of heating dwellings in order to produce domestic hot water mainly from heat pumps (Superhomes 2.0, 2019). However, buildings will need to be retrofitted accordingly.

According to the 2016 Census of Population, 0.94% of households in Co. Offaly had no central heating system. Individuals living in households without a central heating system are considered to be living in deprivation and at a greater risk of living in consistent poverty.

Figure 14: Permanent Private Housing by Central Heating

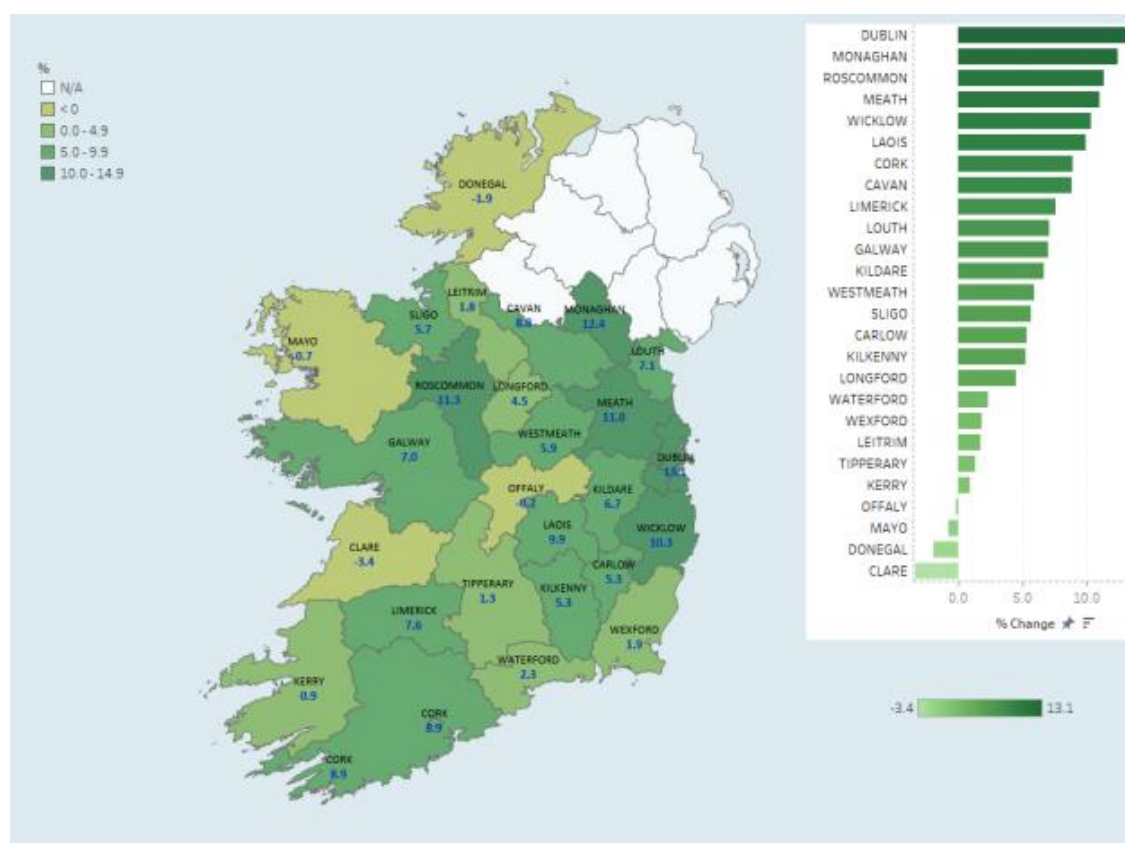


Education

School Enrolments

Co. Offaly witnessed a decline in enrolments in primary school (-0.2%) between 2011 and 2021, with Counties Mayo (-0.7%), Donegal (-1.9%) and Clare (-3.4%) recording a higher decline (Figure 15). In contrast, Counties Dublin (13.1%), Monaghan (12.4%) and Meath (11%) recorded the highest increase in primary school enrolments. For the academic year 2021 / 2022, there were 9,311 (female n = 4,534 and male n = 4,777) students enrolled in primary schools in Co. Offaly. Catholic ethos primary schools are the most dominant, with 8822 students enrolled in 60 schools. In Co. Offaly, there are 3 Church of Ireland primary schools and 2 multi-denominational primary schools (Department of Education, 2023a). At primary level, there is only one special primary school in Co. Offaly, located in Tullamore, with a total enrolment of 42 students for the academic year 2021 /2022.

Figure 15: Percentage Change in Enrolments in Primary Schools, by County (2011 – 2021)

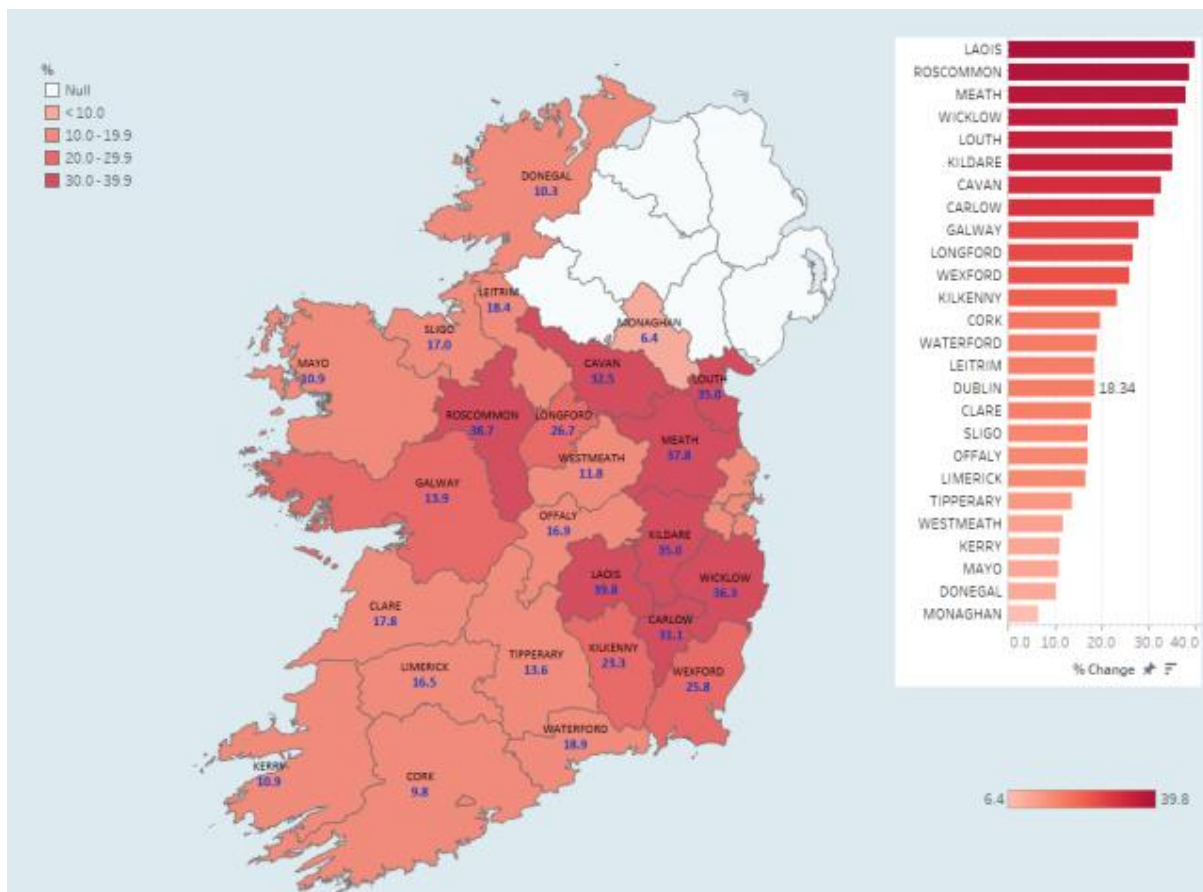


Source: Statistical Bulletin (July 2022) – Department of Education p.3

Co. Offaly recorded an increase in enrolments at post-primary schools (16.9%) between 2011 and 2021. The increase is significant, but it is less than the percentage increase recorded in Counties Laois (39.8), Roscommon (38.7) and Meath (37.8). Counties Monaghan (6.4) and Donegal (10.3) recorded the lowest percentage increase at post-primary level between 2011 and 2021 (Figure 16). For the academic year 2021 / 2022, there were 6,612 students enrolled at 11 post-primary schools in Co. Offaly. By ethos, there were 4 Catholic (students n = 2,714); 4 multi-denominational (students n = 2,149); and 3 inter-denominational (students n = 1,749) post-primary schools in Co. Offaly. There are only 2 single sex (one male and one female) post primary schools in Co. Offaly, both situated in Tullamore. In total, 8 post-primary schools in Co. Offaly had DEIS designation³ (Department of Education, 2023b).

³ The DEIS programme is the Department of Education’s main policy initiative to respond to educational disadvantage. The DEIS programme focuses on targeting additional resources to those schools included in the programme to ensure every child has an equal opportunity to achieve their potential. According to the Department of Education (2022), “Resources available under the DEIS programme are used by schools to provide their students with the support and opportunities that they may not otherwise be available to them. Some of the supports that schools in DEIS get are home-school community liaison support to build a positive relationships between the student’s home and school lives and an enhanced schoolbook grant rate to ease the financial burden on families and schools”.

Figure 16: Percentage Change in Enrolments in Post Primary Schools, by County (2011 – 2021)



Source: Statistical Bulletin (July 2022) – Department of Education p.14

Education Attainment

The education attainment rates for Co. Offaly are broadly consistent with the rates recorded in the Midlands region but diverge from the national averages for the 2016 Census of Population (Figures 17 and 18). There is a lower proportion of Third Level graduates in Co. Offaly in comparison to the other selected locations. There is a gender divide across all geographical locations, with males being more likely to be early school leavers than females; and females more likely to have a higher level of education than males. An early school leaver has been defined as a person who has completed only minimal education (up to and including Junior Certificate) or no formal education whilst third level graduates includes undergraduate and postgraduate degree holders. In absolute terms, 16,931 individuals living in Co. Offaly are classified as early school leavers (no formal education (1047); primary (6673); and lower secondary (9,211); whilst the number of third level graduates is considerably lower (9,689). However, a large number of individuals have attained a technically orientated education / skillset - technical or vocational qualification (4,813); advanced certificate / completed apprenticeship (3,461). The number of individuals who ceased with an upper secondary qualification (Leaving Certificate) is 10,186. In Co. Offaly, the slightly lower education attainment rates might be explained due to a lower proportion of individuals within the 15 - 29 age category, a cohort which has higher education attainment rates in comparison to the over 65 years age categories (may not have been able to avail of free post-primary education prior to 1968).

Figure 17: Gender Profile of Early School Leavers in Selected Locations (2016)

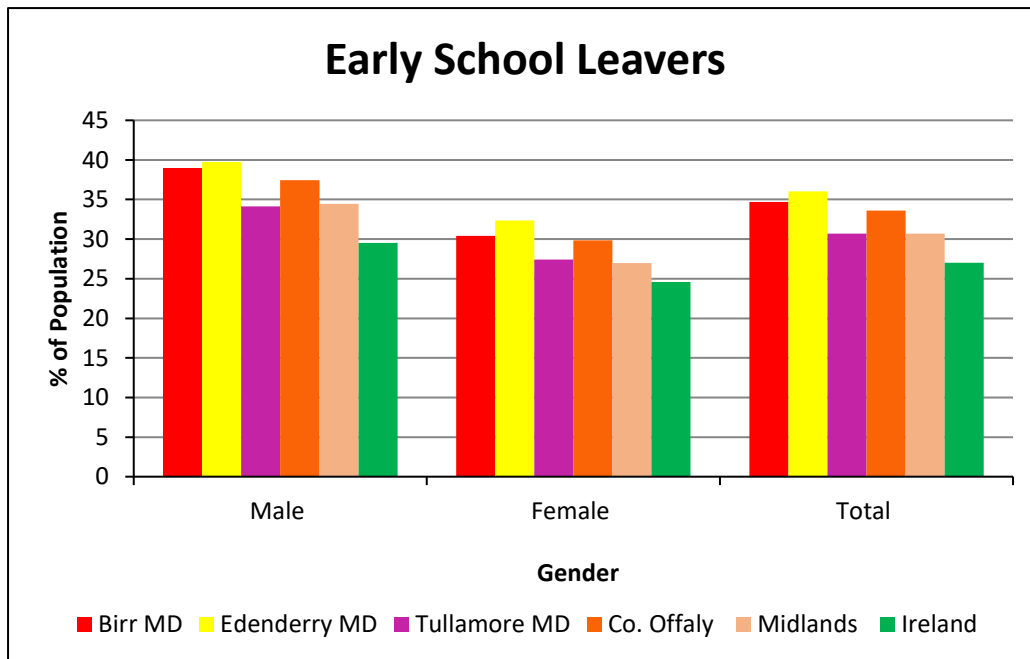
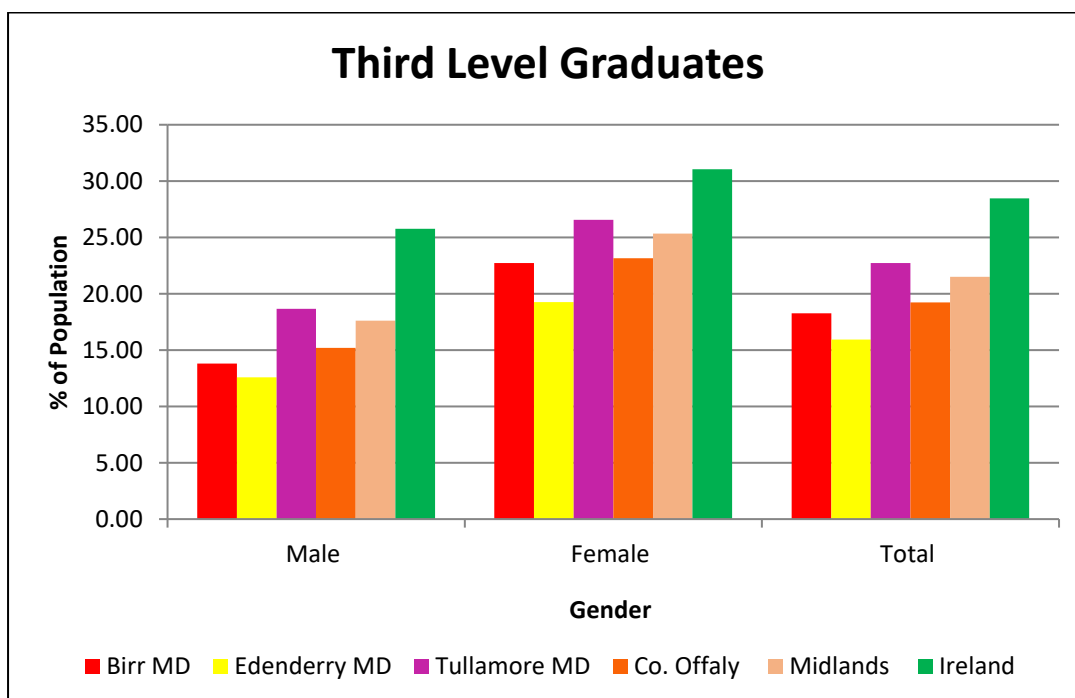


Figure 18: Gender Profile of Third Level Graduates in Selected Locations (2016)



Lifelong Learning

According to Aontas (2023, p.7), lifelong learning ‘encompasses all learning activity, including formal, non-formal and informal learning undertaken throughout the life course’. This concept adheres to UNESCO’s four pillars of education: learning to be, learning to do, learning to know and learning to live together. Apart from early childhood, primary and post-primary education provision, Laois Offaly Education and Training Board (LOETB) is a key provider of lifelong learning services in Co. Offaly.

LOETB is one of the main employers in the midlands with 1,000 staff providing education for over 4,000 students at post-primary level and over 11,000 beneficiaries on FET programmes and services. LOETB has a responsibility to support the provision, coordination, administration, and assessment of youth work services in its functional area and, through co-operation with other institutions, provide support to a wide variety of programmes and agencies to deliver education and training programmes that cannot be met by mainstream educational services in counties Laois and Offaly. Key services provided by LOETB include:

Further Education and Training (FET)

Further Education and Training (FET) offers a wide variety of life-long education options to individuals over 16 years of age. FET includes apprenticeships, traineeships, Post Leaving Cert (PLC) courses, community and adult education, as well as core literacy and numeracy services and English as a Second Language (ESOL). FET courses are provided at levels one to six on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). The aim of the service is to encourage, enable and support adults who wish to return to education to avail of the educational opportunities that best suit their needs. In Co. Offaly, FET centres are situated in Banagher, Birr, Clara, Edenderry and Tullamore. The FET centre in Tullamore provides a range of PLC courses in business, childcare, computing, engineering, hospitality, science, social studies, health care and nursing.

Midlands Skills Centre

The Midlands Skills Centre (established in 2019) in Tullamore is amongst the country's newest and best equipped facilities catering to the specialist training and upskilling of those who wish to seek employment in the rapidly growing bio-pharma and medical-tech sectors. The centre delivers holistic training solutions in a realistic GMP simulated manufacturing environment, enhancing the learning experience through adjacent IT and meeting facilities. Facilities include a state-of-the-art cleanroom, laboratories and classrooms. Located in the Axis Business Park, the Centre is a Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board (LOETB) development. Providing unique training solutions for midlands-based clients ranging from operator through to senior management training. Training can be structured and delivered to suit each client's requirements, which has helped deliver integrated outcomes for those seeking employment and industries eager to hire highly skilled personnel.

National Construction Training Centre, Mount Lucas

LOETB has assumed management of The National Construction Training Centre at Mount Lucas. Currently the Centre focusses primarily on Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) Tickets and the transfer of those to the UK equivalent (CPCS)/ on HSE (the UK SafePass). The Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) provides for the training, assessment, certification and registration of non-craft operatives within the construction sector.

Birr Outdoor Education Centre

Birr Outdoor Education Centre offers environmental education courses, adventure sports and team building activities to groups of people from the ages of 8 to 80 years. It provides expert tuition, specialist equipment, accommodation, meals and laundry facilities. Courses are flexible and tailored to meet the needs of primary schools, secondary schools, youth groups and corporate groups. Table 9 outlines the activities offered by Birr Outdoor Education Centre.

Table 9: Activities At Birr OEC

| | | |
|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Canoeing | Archery | Kayaking |
| Team Building | Gorge Walking | Obstacle Courses |
| Raft Building | Indoor Rock Climbing | Hillwalking |
| Orienteering | Sailing | Low Ropes Course |
| Abseiling | Rock Climbing | Body Surfing |
| Shelter Building | Gaisce Programme | Camping & Camp Craft |

Youthreach Programme

The Youthreach Programme gives young people between the ages of 15 and 20, who left school early, an opportunity to get recognised qualifications and training. Youthreach offers a flexible and dynamic programme of integrated general education, vocational training and work experience. Learners set personal and educational goals that increase their self-esteem, skill and knowledge base and employability. Essential course elements include Personal and Social Development, Vocational Skills and Communications Skills. Youthreach centres operate from the FET centres in Banagher, Clara and Edenderry.

Information Hub

Laos Offaly Education Training Board operates one information hub in Co. Offaly, situated in Tullamore. The Information Hub is a place where individuals can access LOETB's Adult Educational Guidance and Information Service (AEGIS). This service offers free, impartial, confidential guidance and information. In the Information Hub individuals can:

- Access information on education and training options and funding supports
- Gain a greater understanding of progression options available through Further Education and Training in LOETB with links to third level colleges
- Research course options independently or with support
- Reserve a space to study, research or attend online classes

Social Inclusion

Relative Deprivation

The Pobal – HP Deprivation Index (Haase and Pratschke (2017)) synthesises a range of indicator variables from the Census of Population to measure affluence and deprivation. This index provides a composite or overall measure of affluence or deprivation. It has been used by agencies, most notably Pobal, since the early 1990s, and is widely accepted as providing an objective analysis of the socio-economic well-being of localities. The Index is derived from data on employment and unemployment levels, educational attainment, housing tenure, social class and demography, each of which can be used independently as indicators for deprivation.

The index has two measures: relative and absolute index scores. The relative index scores provide a comparison of each ED / SA relative to all other EDs / SAs⁴ in 2016 around a national average of ‘zero’. Negative scores on the index imply cumulative disadvantage, while positive values are associated with affluence. The relative index is the measure that its developers and many policymakers and public bodies recommend and apply when targeting resources to areas of disadvantage as it highlights areas of most need at a particular point in time. According to Crowley et al. (2016), the Pobal HP Deprivation Index ‘underestimates deprivation in rural areas. For example, the index does not account for such key factors of rural disadvantage as distance from public and private services and many job opportunities, access to transport, and poorer physical and ICT infrastructure. The area-based nature of the index also works against rural areas where disadvantaged families and households are less likely to cluster together than in urban areas. As a result of this rural-urban difference, rural areas are less likely to register high values of relative deprivation’.

According to the Pobal – HP Deprivation Index, Co. Offaly has been classified as marginally below average (-4.58). The relative deprivation rate for Co. Offaly was -4.61 in 2011 and -3.17 in 2006⁵. However, the deprivation / affluence rates vary significantly throughout the county, with an urban – rural divide being observed at SA level. However, the index is possibly under-representing the level of deprivation in rural areas. There are 286 SAs situated within 86 EDs in Co. Offaly. Table 10 provides an overview of the number and percentage of SAs against each classification type in the Pobal – HP Deprivation Index. There are 8 very disadvantaged and 54 disadvantaged SAs in Co. Offaly, with a further 147 SAs recorded as being marginally below average. Even though there is a high rate of deprivation in specific SAs within Co. Offaly, this does not necessarily mean there is a high proportion of the population living in poverty. One has to acknowledge the difference between social deprivation and material deprivation. The latter is typically associated with poverty. However, the high level of unemployment experienced in the region as a consequence of the economic downturn (post 2008) has had a compounding effect in increasing the rates of deprivation.

⁴ Since 2011, the Census of Population has been providing data at Small Area (SA)⁴ level, the smallest spatial unit for comprehensive analysis. SA data allow for the investigation of social and economic variation in considerably more detail than Electoral Divisions (EDs). Nationally, the EDs vary widely in terms of population size. For instance, some EDs have a population base less than 100 individuals whilst the Blanchardstown – Blakestown ED has a population in excess of 32,000 inhabitants. The SA boundaries resolve this deficiency in respect to population size as the boundary dimensions have to adhere to the following criteria: a minimum of 65 households, a mean of 92 and a maximum of just over 900 households. Furthermore, SA boundaries have to respect townland, ED and county boundaries; and wherever possible follow natural features on the landscape (Gleeson, Kitchin, Bartley & Tracey, 2009). However, SAs do not respect the boundaries of individual housing estates / developments within urban centres.

⁵ Please note, relative deprivation cannot be compared across years. It can only be compared spatially at a fixed point in time.

Table 10: Number and Percentage of SAs by Pobal – HP Deprivation Classification Type in Co. Offaly (2016)

| Classification | No. | % of SAs |
|--------------------------|-----|----------|
| Very Affluent | 0 | 0.00 |
| Affluent | 5 | 1.75 |
| Marginally Above Average | 72 | 25.17 |
| Marginally Below Average | 147 | 51.40 |
| Disadvantaged | 54 | 18.88 |
| Very Disadvantaged | 8 | 2.80 |

Source: Pobal (2017)

The SAs which recorded the highest rates of deprivation were primarily situated within the towns of Edenderry and Tullamore (Table 11). The SAs with the highest rates of deprivation include: 187036003; 187036013; and 187036012 (all situated in the ED of Edenderry Urban). In total, 17,186 individuals are living in SAs which have been classified as either very disadvantaged (2,570) or disadvantaged (14,616). This equates to approximately 22% of the population in Co. Offaly living in either a very disadvantaged or disadvantaged location. Table X identifies the SAs which were classified as very disadvantaged or disadvantaged in the 2016 Pobal – HP Deprivation index.

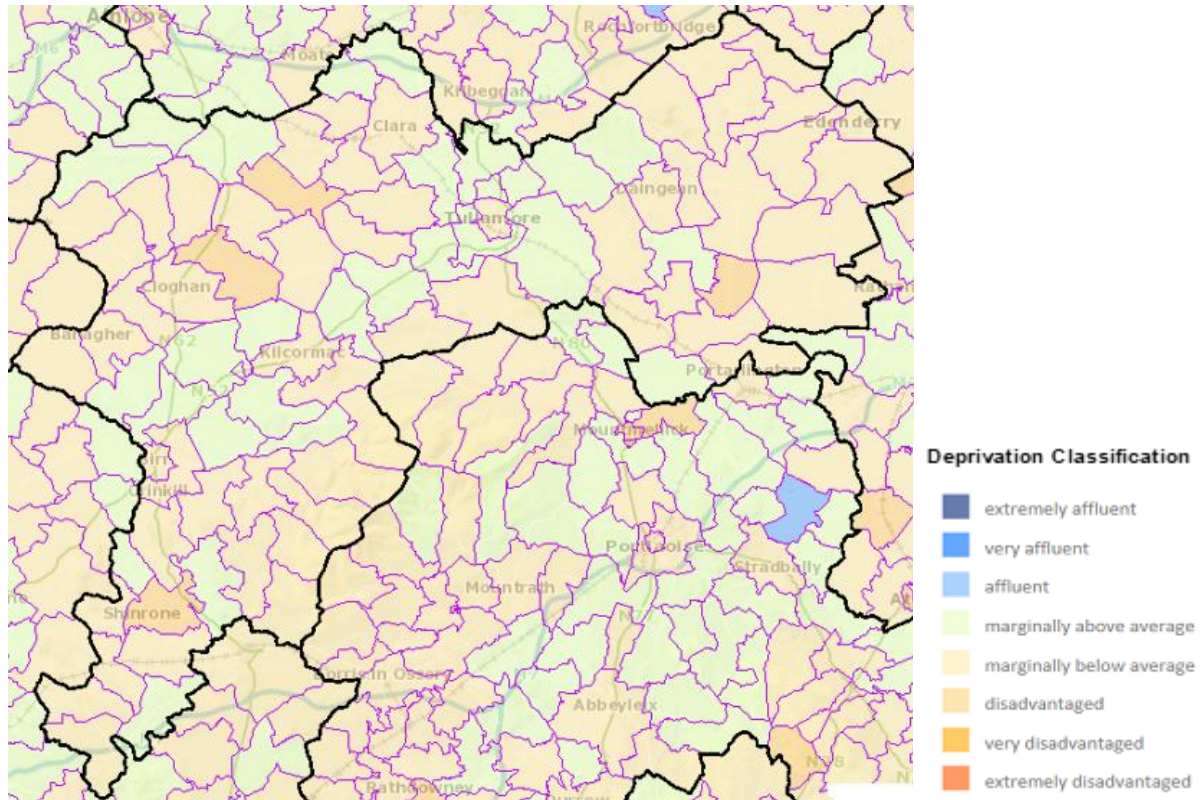
Table 11: Very Disadvantaged and Disadvantaged SAs in Co. Offaly (2016)

| Small Area ID | With ED | Total Population 2016 | Deprivation Score 2016 | Classification Type |
|---------------|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| 187036003 | Edenderry Urban | 267 | -24.02 | Very Disadvantaged |
| 187036013 | Edenderry Urban | 428 | -23.24 | |
| 187036012 | Edenderry Urban | 366 | -22.58 | |
| 187087042 | Tullamore Urban | 381 | -22.03 | |
| 187087018 | Tullamore Urban | 264 | -21 | |
| 187041002 | Gallen | 264 | -20.78 | |
| 187087005 | Tullamore Urban | 308 | -20.58 | |
| 187087035 | Tullamore Urban | 292 | -20.15 | |
| 187087028 | Tullamore Urban | 276 | -19.98 | Disadvantaged |
| 187069007 | Portarlington North | 190 | -19.84 | |
| 187009005 | Banagher | 238 | -19.47 | |
| 187087030 | Tullamore Urban | 262 | -18.66 | |
| 187087008 | Tullamore Urban | 439 | -18.25 | |
| 187087037 | Tullamore Urban | 392 | -18.23 | |
| 187087010 | Tullamore Urban | 194 | -18.17 | |
| 187013015 | Birr Urban | 409 | -18.08 | |
| 187013016 | Birr Urban | 219 | -17.81 | |
| 187075002 | Screggan | 234 | -17.72 | |
| 187018013 | Clara | 250 | -17.53 | |
| 187087029 | Tullamore Urban | 193 | -17.48 | |
| 187018006 | Clara | 207 | -17.47 | |
| 187012004 | Birr Rural | 270 | -17.46 | |

| | | | |
|-----------|--------------------|-----|--------|
| 187050004 | Kilcormac | 293 | -17.34 |
| 187050002 | Kilcormac | 198 | -17.3 |
| 187026005 | Daingean | 267 | -16.78 |
| 187018009 | Clara | 230 | -16.32 |
| 187026004 | Daingean | 196 | -16.14 |
| 187018007 | Clara | 274 | -15.6 |
| 187069005 | Portarlinton North | 337 | -15.35 |
| 187079004 | Shinrone | 153 | -15.29 |
| 187013014 | Birr Urban | 287 | -15.28 |
| 187013008 | Birr Urban | 403 | -15.07 |
| 187081001 | Srah | 429 | -14.83 |
| 187018010 | Clara | 208 | -14.71 |
| 187036002 | Edenderry Urban | 233 | -14.24 |
| 187050003 | Kilcormac | 176 | -14.14 |
| 187081002 | Srah | 275 | -14.07 |
| 187036006 | Edenderry Urban | 373 | -13.99 |
| 187087020 | Tullamore Urban | 104 | -13.51 |
| 187079003 | Shinrone | 193 | -13.47 |
| 187014002 | Bracknagh | 282 | -13.4 |
| 187009006 | Banagher | 308 | -12.84 |
| 187018002 | Clara | 241 | -12.84 |
| 187087033 | Tullamore Urban | 121 | -12.73 |
| 187087014 | Tullamore Urban | 349 | -12.67 |
| 187087007 | Tullamore Urban | 248 | -12.63 |
| 187071001 | Raheenakeeran | 399 | -12.45 |
| 187079005 | Shinrone | 240 | -12.34 |
| 187018005 | Clara | 215 | -12.21 |
| 187013013 | Birr Urban | 203 | -12.15 |
| 187036005 | Edenderry Urban | 307 | -12.07 |
| 187013018 | Birr Urban | 372 | -11.94 |
| 187004004 | Ballyburly | 397 | -11.81 |
| 187040002 | Ferbane | 168 | -11.69 |
| 187026006 | Daingean | 321 | -11.51 |
| 187018011 | Clara | 94 | -10.97 |
| 187087034 | Tullamore Urban | 132 | -10.8 |
| 187036024 | Edenderry Urban | 388 | -10.59 |
| 187036001 | Edenderry Urban | 353 | -10.27 |
| 187087012 | Tullamore Urban | 330 | -10.15 |
| 187013007 | Birr Urban | 407 | -10.13 |
| 187019002 | Cloghan | 339 | -10.12 |

The majority of EDs in Co. Offaly were recorded as being marginally above or below average. There are no EDs recorded as very affluent, affluent, very disadvantaged or extremely disadvantaged in Co. Offaly (Figure 19). The EDs of Srah (-14.53); Gallen (-13.02); Raheenakeeran (- 12.45); and Shinrone (-10.71) were classified as disadvantaged in the Pobal – HP Deprivation index. These EDs are situated in rural areas within Co. Offaly. It is important to note that the SA data has pinpointed specific locations of significant disadvantage within the urban centres of Edenderry, Tullamore and Birr in Co. Offaly.

Figure 19: Relative Deprivation by ED in Co. Offaly (2016)



Household Income

According to the CSO (x), total income refers to primary income (Compensation of employees (i.e. Wages and Salaries, Benefits in kind, Employers’ social insurance contributions) plus income to self-employed plus rent of dwellings plus net ineptest of dividends) plus social benefits plus other current transfers. In 2020, the total income person in Co. Offaly was €24,671.99. This was lower than the Ireland total income per person average (€32,967.97). Despite having a lower total income, individuals in Co. Offaly have a higher percentage of disposable income (including and excluding rent) in comparison to the Irish average (Table 12). Disposable income refers to household gross income less: employer’s social insurance contributions; tax (including USC) on income or profit; social insurance contributions; and tax deducted at source from individual private pension plans. Co. Dublin has the highest disposable income €27,686 whilst Co. Donegal has the lowest disposable income (€18,322).

Table 12: Total Income and Disposable Income per Person by Selected Location (2020)

| | Offaly | Ireland |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| Total Income per Person (€) | 24,671.99 | 32,967.97 |
| Disposable Income (€) | 18,757.43 | 23,460.59 |
| Disposable Income - excluding rent (€) | 16,306.53 | 19,946.79 |
| % of Income which is Disposable (%) | 76.03 | 71.16 |
| % of Income which is disposable - excluding rent (%) | 66.09 | 60.50 |

The median gross income for households was €45,256 in 2016 and ranged from €32,259 in Donegal to €66,203 in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown. The median gross income for Co. Offaly was € 41,271. This was €3985 below the national average. According to the CSO (2019), ‘Social welfare payments to people of working age made up more than half of the income in 13.7% of households while the state pension formed the majority of income in 12.9%. This gave a total of 26.6% of households where social welfare made up more than half of household income in Ireland in 2016’.

The household median income varied significantly by ED in Co. Offaly in 2016 (Table 13). The EDs of Shinrone (€33,421); Birr Urban (€34,479) and Srah (€34,908) have the lowest household income in Co. Offaly. Shinrone’s household median income is significantly less than the Co. Offaly (€41,271) and Ireland (€45,256). The EDs of Durrow (€60828); Silverbrook (€58750); and Mounterin (€58264) recorded the highest household median income.

Table 13: Household Median Gross Income by ED in Co. Offaly (2016)

| ED Code | ED Name | Household median gross income (€) |
|---------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 12001 | 001 Birr Urban, Co. Offaly | 34479 |
| 12002 | 002 Tullamore Urban, Co. Offaly | 36142 |
| 12003 | 003 Ballycumber, Co. Offaly | 39836 |
| 12004 | 004 Banagher, Co. Offaly | 36886 |
| 12005 | 005 Birr Rural, Co. Offaly | 35695 |
| 12006 | 006 Broughal, Co. Offaly | 40348 |
| 12007 | 007 Cloghan, Co. Offaly | 40185 |
| 12008 | 008 Clonmacnoise, Co. Offaly | 45257 |
| 12009 | 009 Derrinboy, Co. Offaly | 51260 |
| 12010 | 010 Derryad, Co. Offaly | 44782 |
| 12011 | 011 Doon, Co. Offaly | 51414 |
| 12012 | 012 Dromoyle, Co. Offaly | 44446 |
| 12013 | 013 Drumcullen, Co. Offaly | 47404 |
| 12014 | 014 Eglisk, Co. Offaly | 39073 |
| 12015 | 015 Ferbane, Co. Offaly | 43491 |
| 12016 | 016 Gallen, Co. Offaly | 37669 |
| 12017 | 017 Hinds, Co. Offaly | 51074 |
| 12018 | 018 Huntston, Co. Offaly | 40577 |
| 12019 | 019 Kilcolman, Co. Offaly | 46948 |
| 12020 | 020 Kilcormac, Co. Offaly | 36365 |

| | | |
|----------|---------------------------------|-------|
| 12021 | 021 Killyon, Co. Offaly | 52221 |
| 12022 | 022 Kinnitty, Co. Offaly | 37119 |
| 12023 | 023 Knockbarron, Co. Offaly | 47232 |
| 12024 | 024 Lea, Co. Offaly | 43061 |
| 12025 | 025 Letter, Co. Offaly | 43080 |
| 12026 | 026 Lumcloon, Co. Offaly | 42123 |
| 12027 | 027 Lusmagh, Co. Offaly | 47815 |
| 12028 | 028 Mounterin, Co. Offaly | 58264 |
| 12029 | 029 Moyclare, Co. Offaly | 46044 |
| 12030 | 030 Seirkieran, Co. Offaly | 48105 |
| 12031 | 031 Shannonbridge, Co. Offaly | 42101 |
| 12032 | 032 Shannonharbour, Co. Offaly | 48376 |
| 12033 | 033 Srah, Co. Offaly | 34908 |
| 12035 | 035 Ballyburly, Co. Offaly | 41146 |
| 12036 | 036 Ballymacwilliam, Co. Offaly | 51729 |
| 12037 | 037 Bracknagh, Co. Offaly | 47474 |
| 12038 | 038 Clonbulloge, Co. Offaly | 41195 |
| 12039 | 039 Clonmore, Co. Offaly | 47591 |
| 12040 | 040 Croghan, Co. Offaly | 54698 |
| 12041 | 041 Edenderry Rural, Co. Offaly | 53928 |
| 12042 | 042 Edenderry Urban, Co. Offaly | 39255 |
| 12043034 | 999 Esker / Ballaghassaan | 51569 |
| 12044 | 044 Knockdrin, Co. Offaly | 42113 |
| 12045 | 045 Monasteroris, Co. Offaly | 52172 |
| 12046 | 046 Aghancon, Co. Offaly | 36742 |
| 12047 | 047 Ballincor, Co. Offaly | 47459 |
| 12048 | 048 Barna, Co. Offaly | 46165 |
| 12049 | 049 Cangort, Co. Offaly | 45843 |
| 12050 | 050 Cullenwaine, Co. Offaly | 40064 |
| 12051 | 051 Dunkerrin, Co. Offaly | 47247 |
| 12052 | 052 Ettagh, Co. Offaly | 51168 |
| 12053 | 053 Gorteen, Co. Offaly | 37704 |
| 12054 | 054 Mountheaton, Co. Offaly | 45620 |
| 12055 | 055 Roscomroe, Co. Offaly | 39479 |
| 12056 | 056 Shinrone, Co. Offaly | 33421 |
| 12057 | 057 Templeharry, Co. Offaly | 36171 |
| 12058 | 058 Tulla, Co. Offaly | 48979 |
| 12059 | 059 Ballycommon, Co. Offaly | 54260 |
| 12060 | 060 Ballyshear, Co. Offaly | 55017 |
| 12061 | 061 Bawn, Co. Offaly | 46819 |
| 12062 | 062 Cappancur, Co. Offaly | 48396 |
| 12063 | 063 Clara, Co. Offaly | 36885 |
| 12064 | 064 Clonygowan, Co. Offaly | 43185 |
| 12065 | 065 Daingean, Co. Offaly | 38209 |

| | | |
|-------|------------------------------------|-------|
| 12066 | 066 Derrycooley, Co. Offaly | 45440 |
| 12067 | 067 Durrrow, Co. Offaly | 60828 |
| 12068 | 068 Geashill, Co. Offaly | 45415 |
| 12069 | 069 Gorteen, Co. Offaly | 55450 |
| 12070 | 070 Hammerlane, Co. Offaly | 52592 |
| 12071 | 071 Kilclonfert, Co. Offaly | 54500 |
| 12072 | 072 Kilcumreragh, Co. Offaly | 51845 |
| 12073 | 073 Killeigh, Co. Offaly | 50711 |
| 12074 | 074 Killooly, Co. Offaly | 53342 |
| 12075 | 075 Killoughy, Co. Offaly | 47544 |
| 12076 | 076 Mountbriscoe, Co. Offaly | 48116 |
| 12077 | 077 O'Dempsey, Co. Offaly | 44952 |
| 12078 | 078 Portarlinton North, Co. Offaly | 37869 |
| 12079 | 079 Rahan, Co. Offaly | 49073 |
| 12080 | 080 Raheenakeeran, Co. Offaly | 39295 |
| 12081 | 081 Rathfeston, Co. Offaly | 45214 |
| 12082 | 082 Rathrobin, Co. Offaly | 41230 |
| 12083 | 083 Screggan, Co. Offaly | 51632 |
| 12084 | 084 Silverbrook, Co. Offaly | 58750 |
| 12085 | 085 Tinamuck, Co. Offaly | 52198 |
| 12086 | 086 Tinnycross, Co. Offaly | 48672 |
| 12087 | 087 Tullamore Rural, Co. Offaly | 48310 |

Crime and Community Safety

In Co. Offaly, there have been 17 roads fatalities on its roads between 2016 to 2020, with 4 in 2016, 2 in 2017; 2 in 2018; 5 in 2019; and 4 in 2020. The number of injured persons caused by road traffic collisions was 1,829 between 2016 and 2019. It should be noted that the figures available for 2020 and 2021 have been skewed significantly due to the travel restrictions imposed by the Irish government in order to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. The number of penalty points recorded in Co. Offaly was 10,426 in 2019 and 10,858 in 2020. This was an annual increase of 4.1%. This was significantly higher than the national annual increase (1.7%) between 2019 and 2020. In 2020, 3,535 individuals (1,126 females, 2,332 males and 77 no gender recorded) received a penalty point endorsement letter. These figures are based on the postal address of the individual. Therefore, the offence could have occurred anywhere in the Irish state.

Table 14 provides an overview of crimes reported to garda stations within the catchment area of Co. Offaly in 2021 (Irish Independent, 2022). The majority of the offences were reported at the Garda station in Tullamore (1,051). The least number of offences were reported at Clonbullogue Garda station (23). The most common offences in Co. Offaly were theft (444); public order (321); assaults / threats (309); and criminal damage (302).

Table 14: Reported Crimes to Garda Stations in the Co. Offaly Catchment Area (2021)

| Station | Assaults/ threats | Burglary | Drugs | Criminal damage | Dangerous driving | Fraud | Public order | Robbery | Theft | Other | Total Offences |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------|-------|--------------------|----------------------|-------|-----------------|---------|-------|-------|-------------------|
| Clonbullogue, Offaly | 2 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 23 |
| Shinrone, Offaly | 3 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 27 |
| Durrow, Laois/Offaly | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 8 | 3 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 26 |
| Kinnitty, Offaly | 4 | 6 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 18 |
| Cloghan, Offaly | 5 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 6 | 2 | 37 |
| Banagher, Offaly | 6 | 2 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 10 | 6 | 0 | 9 | 1 | 48 |
| Ferbane, Offaly | 7 | 15 | 6 | 9 | 0 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 16 | 0 | 65 |
| Clonaslee, Laois/Offaly | 9 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 26 |
| Rhode, Offaly | 9 | 2 | 1 | 9 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 31 |
| Daingean, Laois/Offaly | 10 | 8 | 13 | 16 | 2 | 7 | 6 | 0 | 9 | 3 | 74 |
| Kilcormac, Offaly | 13 | 5 | 8 | 24 | 1 | 1 | 13 | 0 | 5 | 4 | 74 |
| Clara, Offaly | 24 | 13 | 12 | 19 | 2 | 25 | 29 | 0 | 16 | 17 | 157 |
| Edenderry, Offaly | 41 | 11 | 18 | 37 | 10 | 30 | 26 | 1 | 68 | 16 | 258 |
| Birr, Laois/Offaly | 44 | 17 | 13 | 45 | 17 | 33 | 44 | 0 | 60 | 15 | 288 |
| Tullamore, Offaly | 128 | 64 | 102 | 121 | 25 | 114 | 179 | 4 | 230 | 84 | 1051 |
| Total | 309 | 168 | 190 | 302 | 65 | 248 | 321 | 6 | 444 | 150 | 2203 |

Source: Irish Independent, 1 November 2022

Please note the CSO has published the recorded crime statistics under reservation. This categorisation indicates that the quality of these statistics do not meet the standards required of official statistics published by the CSO.

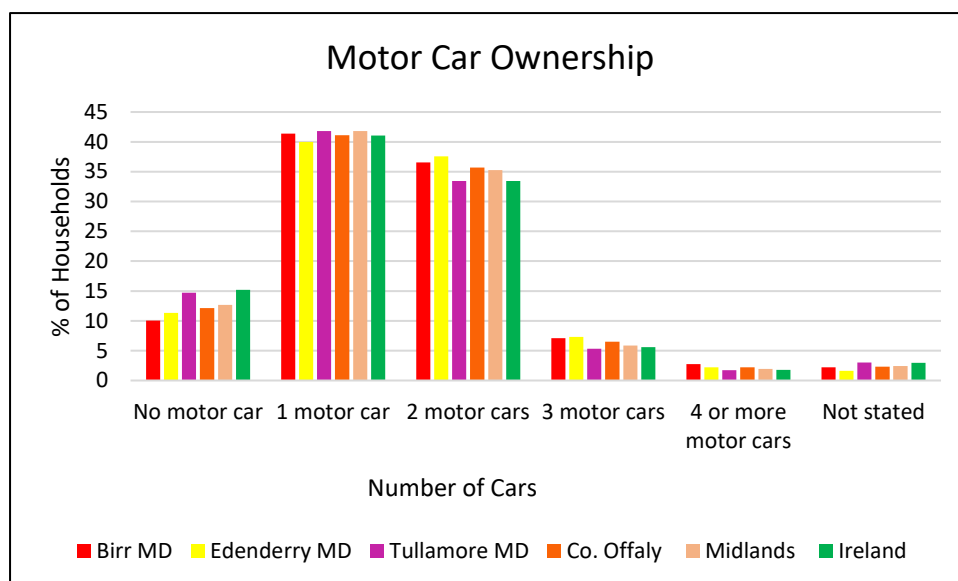
Access to Services

Individuals in Co. Offaly have to travel longer distances in order to avail of key medical services. For instance, 49.85% of the population must travel in excess of 20Km in order to reach the nearest adult emergency department, whilst only 38.42% of the Irish population have to travel the equivalent distance. Furthermore, nearly half of the population in Co. Offaly (46.84%) live within 2Km of a doctors surgery. The equivalent proportion for the state (Ireland) was 65%. Approximately 36% of the population have to travel in excess of 5Km in order to access the nearest pharmacy. This is a significantly higher rate in comparison to Ireland as only 20% travel this distance to the nearest pharmacy (CSO, 2019).

The rurality of Co. Offaly has impeded the development of transportation. For example, a significant proportion of the population in Co. Offaly (50.9%) live over 5Km from the national and secondary road network. The equivalent proportion for the Irish state is 29.9%. In Co. Offaly, 59.4% of the population have less than 10 departures at their closest public transport stop. The equivalent proportion for Ireland is 32.2% (CSO, 2019).

In Census 2016, 12.16% of households did not possess a motor car. This was lower than the national average (15.17%). For those living in a rural area, the use of a private motor vehicle is important in order to avail of essential services. In Co. Offaly, most households own either one (41%) or two (35%) private cars (Figure 20). Therefore, there is a high dependency on cars within Co. Offaly.

Figure 20: Motor Car Ownership by Selected Location (2016)



The Laois – Offaly Local Link (2023) provides a network of local bus services across the region. These bus service connect peripheral rural areas to regional market towns / urban centres. Figure 21 provides an overview of the Local Link bus services available in Co. Offaly.

Figure 21: Local Link Services Serving Co. Offaly

| Days: | Service ID: | Route Area: | Destination: |
|--------------|-------------|---|--------------|
| Mon & Fri | 2327 | Castlejordan Area - Edenderry | Edenderry |
| Tues | 909 | Clareen - Kinnitty - Knockbarron - Cadamstown - Tullamore | Tullamore |
| Tues | 912 | Moneygall - Roscrea | Roscrea |
| Tues | 910 | Pollagh - Ferbane - Tullamore | Tullamore |
| Tues | 2326 | Ballybryan - Tullamore via Ballingar | Tullamore |
| Tues | 7098 | Coolderry - Shinrone - Birr | Birr |
| Tues & Thurs | 2328 | Bracknagh - Cushina - Portarlinton | Portarlinton |
| Wed & Fri | 921 | Clara - Tullamore | Tullamore |
| Wed | 918 | Lemanaghan - Ferbane (Sept-Jun) | Ferbane |
| Wed | 2331 | Edenderry - Tullamore via Kilclonfert | Tullamore |
| Wed & Fri | 2330 | Walsh Island - Portarlinton | Portarlinton |
| Thurs | 923 | Ballycumber - Tullamore via Mucklagh | Tullamore |
| Thurs | 1859 | Ballycumber - Birr via Lemanaghan | Birr |
| Fri | 920 | Ballycumber and Surrounding Areas | Ballycumber |
| Fri | 913 | Cloghan - Pollagh - Tullamore | Tullamore |
| Fri | 908 | Roscrea Loop via Moneygall | Roscrea |
| Fri | 911 | Kinnitty - Clareen - Birr | Birr |
| Sat | 7099 | Roscrea - Nenagh via Moneygall | Nenagh |
| Sat | 914 | Shannonbridge - Ferbane - Athlone | Athlone |

Access to Computers and Broadband

According to the 2016 Census of Population, 9,314 households in Co. Offaly did not possess a personal computer. This equates to 34.26% of the population. This is a higher percentage in comparison to the Midlands (32.54%) and Ireland (28.18%). Consequently, a higher proportion of households in Co. Offaly (24.67%) do not have internet access in comparison to the Midlands (22.79%) and Ireland (18.43%). Access to high-speed broadband will be essential for the future socio-economic development of Co. Offaly. In 2016, approximately 60% of households had access to broadband. The Census form did not ask the respondent to comment on the quality and / or speed of the broadband service.

Health and Disability

People who have an injury, disease or physical or mental disability are more likely to be dependent on the state for financial assistance. In order to receive a disability payment, the ailment must substantially restrict a person from acquiring work that would otherwise be suitable on the grounds of age, qualifications and experience. The percentage of people with a disability⁶ is higher for males and females in Co. Offaly in comparison to the Midlands and Ireland (Figure 21). This is due to an older age profile living in Co. Offaly. The proportion of individuals with a disability is lower in the Edenderry Municipal District (13.73%) in comparison to the Birr (14.6%) and Tullamore (14.5%) Municipal Districts. According to the 2016 Census of Population, there were 11,154 individuals (5,461 males and 5,693 females) with a disability living in Co. Offaly. The overall proportion of carers is marginally higher than the regional and national averages (Figure 22). There is a higher proportion of carers in Tullamore Municipal District in comparison to Birr and Edenderry Municipal Districts. There is a tendency for a higher proportion of females to pursue unpaid caring roles in the home than males. A similar trend is observed across all selected locations. In Co. Offaly, there are 1,293 male and 2,064 female carers.

According to the CSO (2022), there were 8 (7 male, 1 female) in Co. Offaly in 2021. The overall suicide rate was 9.7. The suicide rate is higher than the rate recorded in the Midlands (8.8) and Ireland (8.0). However, the suicide rate in Co. Offaly has fallen from 10.1 in 2016 to 9.7 in 2021.

⁶ The CSO calculated disability 'from answers to questions 16 and 17 of the census questionnaire. Question 16 was a seven-part question that asked about the existence of the following long lasting conditions: (a) blindness or a serious vision impairment, (b) deafness or a severe hearing impairment, (c) a difficulty with basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting or carrying, (d) an intellectual disability (e) a difficulty with learning, remembering or concentrating, (f) a psychological or emotional condition and (g) a difficulty with pain, breathing or any other chronic illness or condition. If a person answered YES to any of the parts of Q16, they were then asked to answer Question 17. This question was a four-part question that asked whether an individual had a difficulty doing any of the following activities: (a) dressing, bathing or getting around inside the home (self-care disability); (b) going outside the home alone to shop or visit a doctor's surgery (going outside the home disability); (c) working at a job or business or attending school or college (employment disability) and (d) participating in other activities, such as leisure or using transport. Individuals were classified as having a disability if they answered YES to any part of the above two questions, including, in particular, if they ticked YES to any of the parts of Q17 even though they may not have ticked YES to any of the parts of Q16.'

Figure 21: Proportion of Population with a Disability in Selected Locations (2016)

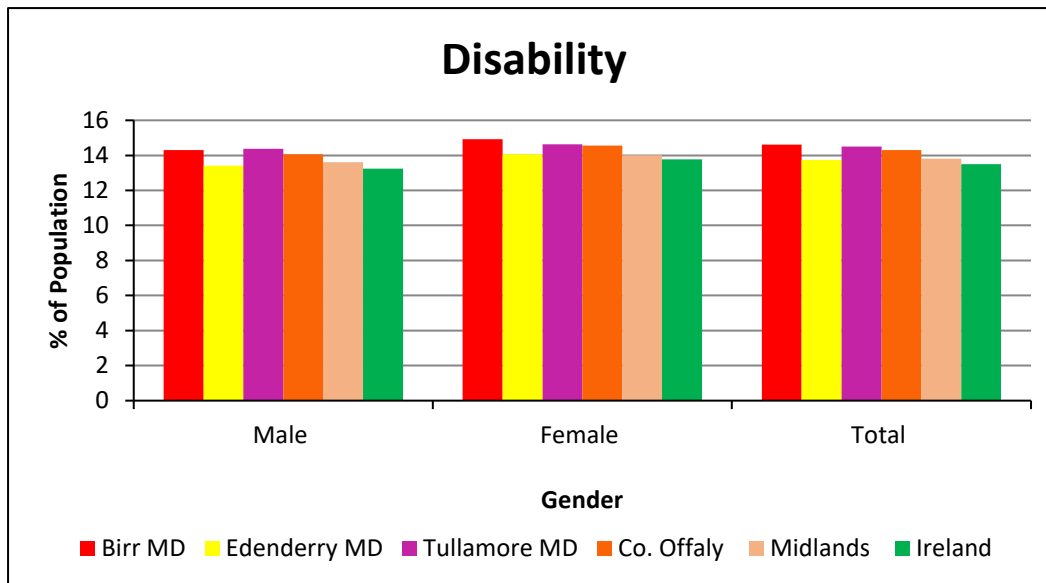


Figure 22: Proportion of Population Working as Unpaid Carers in Selected Locations (2016)

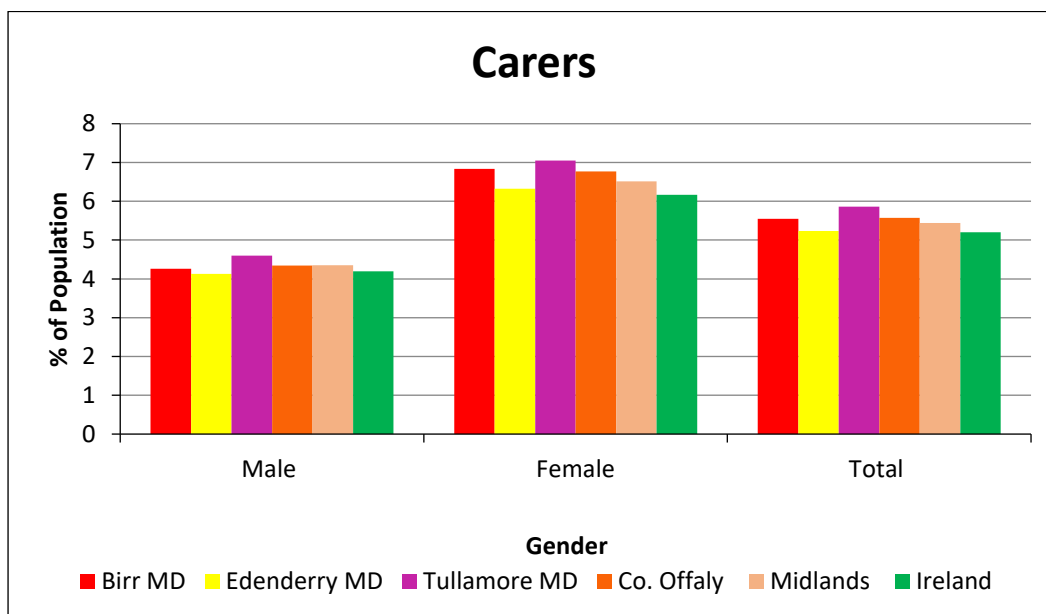
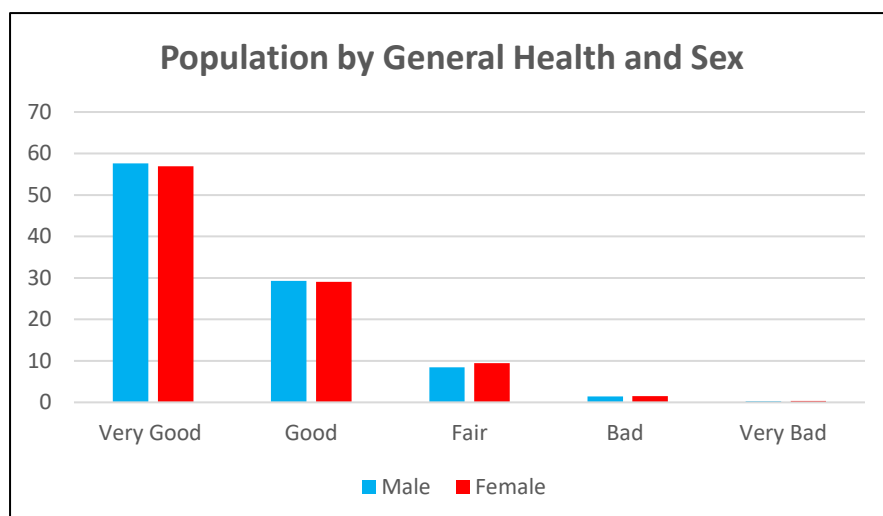


Figure 23 provides an overview of general health by sex in Co. Offaly. All respondents to the 2016 Census of Population were required to self-declare the overall status of their health. The choices ranged from very good to very bad. Overall, 1,436 individuals (686 male; 750 female) living in Co. Offaly reported their health as being bad or very bad in the 2016 Census of Population. This equates to 1.84% of the population and it is higher than the national (1.6%) average.

Figure 23: Population by General Health and Sex in Co. Offaly (2016)



Employment Activity

The labour force participation rate, employment rate and unemployment rate which are calculated from the 2016 Census of Population provide a snapshot in time of the overall economic performance of Co. Offaly. It is important to note that significant global events (COVID-19; war in Ukraine; rising consumer inflation) have had an impact on the overall economic performance of local and regional economies, with Co. Offaly and the Midlands being no exceptions.

The labour force participation rate in Co. Offaly (as recorded in the 2016 Census of Population) is slightly lower for both males and females in comparison to the Midlands and Ireland (Table 15). There is a considerably lower female labour participation rate in the Birr Municipal District (57.86%) in comparison to the national average (55.15%).

Table 15: Labour Force Participation Rate; Employment Rate and Unemployment Rate Comparison Summary Table for Selected Locations (2016)

| Location | Labour Force Participation Rate (%) | | | Employment Rate (%) | | | Unemployment Rate (%) | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|--------|------------|---------------------|--------|------------|-----------------------|--------|------------|
| | Male | Female | Total Pop. | Male | Female | Total Pop. | Male | Female | Total Pop. |
| Birr MD | 65.48 | 50.21 | 57.86 | 55.43 | 42.64 | 49.05 | 15.34 | 15.07 | 15.22 |
| Edenderry ED | 69.88 | 52.01 | 60.90 | 58.85 | 43.01 | 50.89 | 15.78 | 17.30 | 16.43 |
| Tullamore MD | 67.66 | 54.19 | 60.71 | 56.34 | 45.78 | 50.90 | 16.71 | 15.51 | 16.16 |
| Co. Offaly | 67.57 | 52.24 | 59.81 | 56.77 | 43.94 | 50.28 | 15.98 | 15.89 | 15.94 |
| Midlands | 67.92 | 53.74 | 60.79 | 56.72 | 45.16 | 50.913 | 16.48 | 15.96 | 16.25 |
| Ireland | 67.81 | 55.15 | 61.35 | 58.51 | 48.55 | 53.43 | 13.70 | 11.97 | 12.90 |

The employment rate refers to persons who worked in the week before the Census for one hour or more for payment or profit, including work on the family farm or business and all persons who had a job but were not at work (examples include illness and holidays) in the week. In Co. Offaly, the male employment rate (56.34%) is significantly higher than the female employment rate (43.94%). However, this trend is replicated across all of the selected geographic locations. Furthermore, the Birr

Municipal District recorded the lowest employment rates for both males (55.43%) and females (42.64) in comparison to the selected locations (Table 15).

Since 2008, the global economic downturn has had a detrimental effect on the Irish labour market, with Co. Offaly being no exception. In recent years, there has been a gradual reduction in unemployment rates across the state. However, some locations have not recorded an overall decline in unemployment rates, with Co. Offaly being one example. The official unemployment rate is calculated by the CSO and it is updated on a regular basis through the Quarterly Household Survey. In the second quarter of 2016, the unemployment rate recorded in the Midlands of Ireland was 10.7% (national average 8.6%). According to the 2016 Census of Population, the national (12.91%) and local authority (15.94%) unemployment rate (individuals looking for first job; and unemployed individuals lost or given up previous job) was considerably higher (See (CSO, 2012) for an explanation with regard to this anomaly). The unemployment rate for males (15.98%) and females (15.89%) in Co. Offaly did not differ significantly (Table 15). The male unemployment rate was highest in the Tullamore Municipal District (16.71%), whilst the female unemployment rate was highest in the Edenderry Municipal District (17.30%).

In Co. Offaly, there are 3,185 individuals (on the live register⁷ in March 2023. This is a decrease of 15 (-0.47%) since March 2022 (Table 16). The number of young people (under the age of 25 years) on the live register in Co. Offaly has also reduced from 352 to 344 within the same period (Table 17). This equates to a 2.27% reduction.

Table 16: Persons on the Live Register in Co. Offaly (March 2022 – March 2023)

| Gender | Mar-22 | Mar-23 | Change | % Change |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------|
| Male | 1771 | 1759 | -12 | -0.68 |
| Female | 1429 | 1426 | -3 | -0.21 |
| Total | 3200 | 3185 | -15 | -0.47 |

Table 17: Persons on the Live Register Under 25 Years in Co. Offaly (March 2022 – March 2023)

| Gender | Mar-22 | Mar-23 | Change | % Change |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------|
| Male | 207 | 204 | -3 | -1.45 |
| Female | 145 | 140 | -5 | -3.45 |
| Total | 352 | 344 | -8 | -2.27 |

Occupational Profile

There are not significant variations in the male occupational profile for Co. Offaly when compared with the Midlands (Figure 24). However, the proportion of agricultural, forestry and fishery workers in Co. Offaly (11.68%) is higher than the national average (7.3%). This is not surprising as Co. Offaly is a predominantly rural county. However, the male workforce in agriculture, forestry and fishing is concentrated within the Birr Municipal District (17.46%). It is significantly less in the Edenderry (9.9%) and Tullamore (7.8%) Municipal Districts. The proportion (%) of males resident in Co. Offaly (23.04%) who are engaged in manufacturing is significantly higher than the Midlands (18.7%) and national (15.13%) averages. The highest concentration of male manufacturing jobs is concentrated within the

⁷ The Live Register 'comprises of persons under 65 years of age in the following classes: All Claimants for Jobseeker's Benefit (JB) excluding systematic short-time workers; Applicants for Jobseeker's Allowance (JA) excluding smallholders/farm assists and other self-employed persons; and other registrants including applicants for credited Social Welfare contributions but excluding those directly involved in an industrial dispute'.

Edenderry Municipal District (25.46%). Furthermore, there is an under-representation of males engaged in commerce and trade; transportation and communications; and professional services.

Figure 24: Male Occupational Profile in Selected Locations (2016)

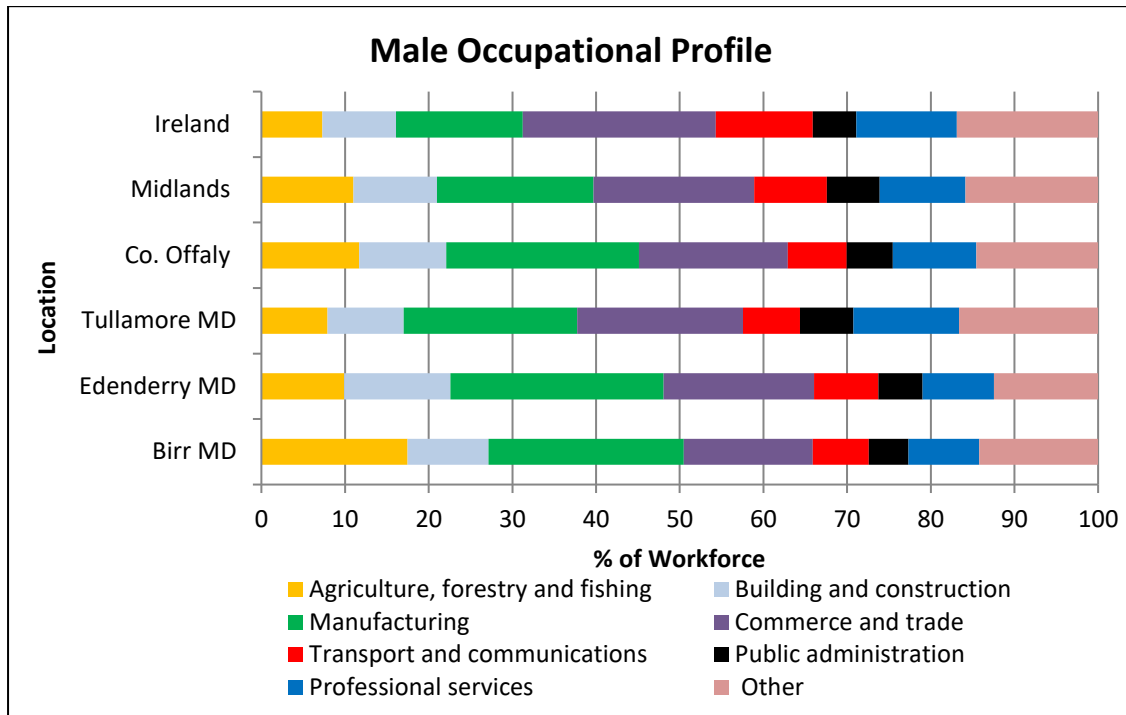
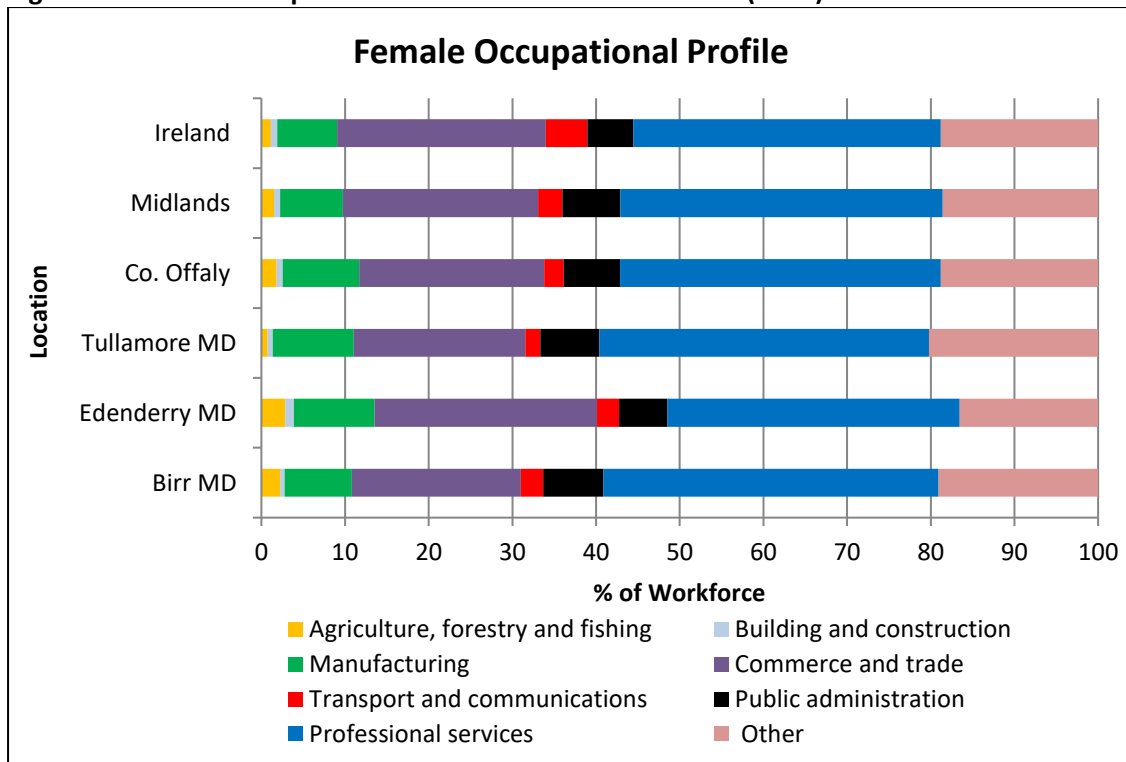


Figure 25: Female Occupational Profile in Selected Locations (2016)



The female occupational profile for Co. Offaly is broadly similar with the regional and national profiles, albeit there is a higher proportion working in manufacturing; and professional services but a slightly

lower proportion working in commerce and trade; and professional services (Figure 25). In Co. Offaly, The ‘other’ category is broadly similar to the national average for both males and females. This category refers to individuals engaging in multiple types of employment (pluriactivity).

Table 18 provides an overview of the number of male and female workers by employment sector who are resident in Co. Offaly. For males, the most significant employment sector is manufacturing industries (3,892) whilst professional services (5,138) is the most significant for females. Overall, the most significant employment sector for residents in Co. Offaly is professional services (6,824).

Table 18: Number of Employees by Sector in Co. Offaly (2016)

| Employment Sector | Male | Female | Total |
|-----------------------------------|--------|--------|-------|
| Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing | 1,973 | 244 | 2217 |
| Building and Construction | 1,757 | 95 | 1852 |
| Manufacturing Industries | 3,892 | 1,225 | 5117 |
| Commerce and Trade | 3,004 | 2,966 | 5970 |
| Transport and Communications | 1,188 | 309 | 1497 |
| Public Administration | 932 | 902 | 1834 |
| Professional Services | 1,686 | 5,138 | 6824 |
| Other | 2,458 | 2,518 | 4976 |
| Total | 16,890 | 13397 | 30287 |

Environmental Protection and Sustainability

Household Waste

The EPA (2022) defines household waste as ‘residual waste, recyclable waste and organic waste collected directly from households and waste brought by householders to waste collection centres such as bring banks, civic amenity sites, and pay-to-use compactors’. In 2020, Ireland produced 1.89 million tonnes of waste, of which 1.85 million tonnes was managed. Table 16 provides a summary of Co. Offaly’s household waste in 2020. It is important to note that individuals were confined to their homes for a significant time period in 2020 due to COVID-19 travel restriction. This would have impacted on the volume of waste produced by households.



Table 16: Summary of Co. Offaly's Household Waste (2020)

| Waste Type | Tonnage |
|--|---------------|
| Mixed residual waste collection (black bin) | 12,122 |
| Mixed dry recyclables collection (green bin) | 3,566 |
| Organic waste collection (brown bin) | 1,712 |
| Segregated glass collection | 0 |
| Bring banks | 2,113 |
| LA Civic amenity sites | 3,948 |
| Private Civic amenity sites | 0 |
| Skip collections from households | 1,907 |
| Other Collections ¹ | 0 |
| Household waste delivered directly to landfill | 0 |
| Pay to use compactors | 0 |
| Total household waste | 25,369 |

Source: EPA (2022)

In Co. Offaly, individuals are depositing most of their waste (average per capita – 155 Kgs) into the mixed residual collection (Table 17). The amount deposited into mixed dry recyclables and organics collection bins is significantly lower. There needs to be a stronger emphasis placed on recycling. Only 65% of households in Co. Offaly have a recycling bin collection service, whilst only 24% have access to an organic bin collection service.

Table 17: Household Bin Waste Kg per Capita in Co. Offaly (2020)

| Mixed residual collection (black bin) | Mixed dry recyclables collection (green bin) | Organics collection (brown bin) | % of households with residual bin collection (bin sharing not included) | % of households with recycling bin collection service | % of households with organic bin collection service |
|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Avg kilos per capita | Avg kilos per capita | Avg kilos per capita | percentage | percentage | percentage |
| 155 | 46 | 22 | 65% | 65% | 24% |

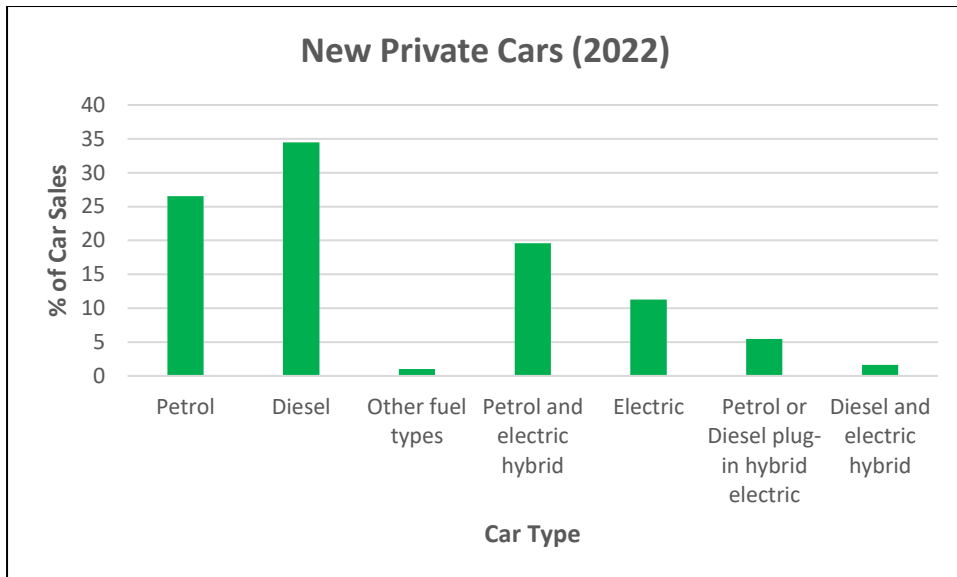
Source: EPA (2022)

New Private Car Registrations – Electric Vehicles

In order to mitigate against climate change, the Irish government and European Commission have promoted the 'greening' of the car fleet throughout Europe. Figure 26 provides an overview of the proportion of new private cars licensed for the first time by fuel type in Co. Offaly in 2022. Overall, 1,285 new private cars were registered with the local authority in 2022, with the vast majority being

either petrol (26.53%; n = 341) or diesel (34.47%; n = 443) cars. In Co. Offaly, very few electric private cars (11.28%; n =145) were registered with the local authority. For hybrid vehicles, the most popular type was petrol and electric, with 252 registrations during 2022.

Figure 26: Proportion of New Private Cars Licensed for the First Time by Fuel Type in Co. Offaly (2022)



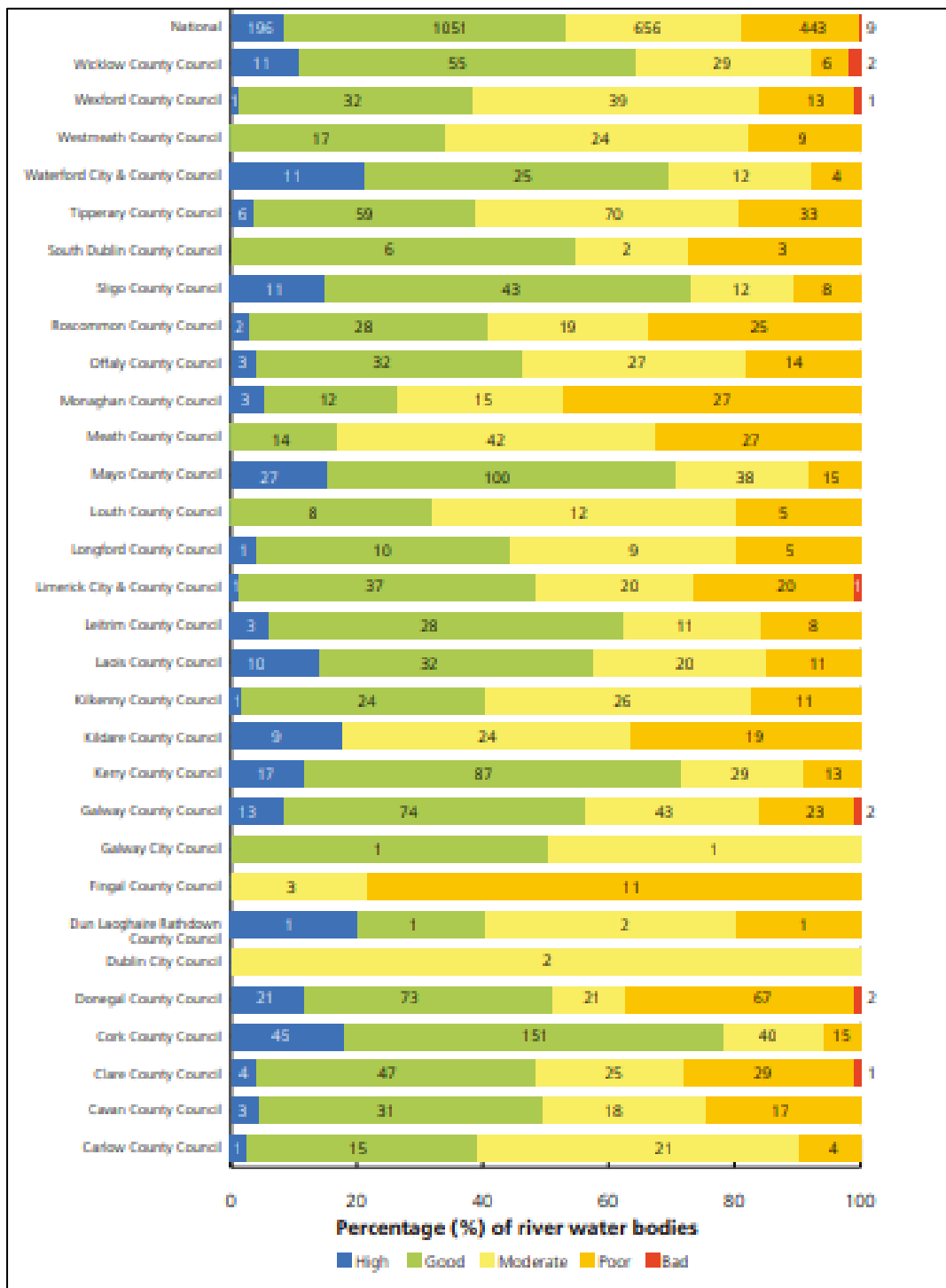
Water Quality

The EPA's 'Water Quality in Ireland 2013 – 2018' provides a comprehensive overview on the quality of river, lake and groundwater bodies in Ireland, along with transitional and coastal waters (not relevant for Co. Offaly). Figure 27 provides an overview on the ecological status of 2,355 monitored river water bodies by local authority region for 2013–2018. In Co. Offaly, 35 river water bodies were classified as either 'high' or 'good' whilst 14 river water bodies were recorded as being 'poor'. No river water bodies in Co. Offaly were recorded as being 'bad'.

According to the EPA (2019), the ground water in Clara Bog, Co. Offaly failed to meet the quantitative status objective. This was due to historical regional and local drainage schemes. Clara bog was only one of two groundwater bodies in Ireland to have failed to meet the quantitative status objective.



Figure 27: Ecological status of 2,355 monitored river water bodies by local authority region for 2013–2018



Source: EPA (2019, p. 31)

Habitats and Biodiversity

The protection of habitats and biodiversity is critically important for environmental sustainability. The habitats and biodiversity of Co. Offaly have been recorded and analysed through a number of studies commissioned solely or jointly by Offaly County Council. Prominent examples include:

- [Offaly Barn Owl Survey](#) BirdWatch Ireland 2021

- [Offaly Hedgerow Study](#), N. Foulkes and A. Murray, 2005
- [Offaly Esker Study](#), Mary Tubridy and Associates, 2006
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Co. Offaly is renowned for its bogs, with 21% of its land area covered by peatlands. In recent years, the Irish government have initiated a number of schemes / programmes in order to rejuvenate and restore peatland habitats which had been destroyed or damaged for the purpose of energy production. In 2021, Bord na Mona rehabilitated nearly 5,200 hectares of peatland in Ireland, thereby capturing 7.5 million tonnes of carbon. Approximately half of the peatland restoration initiated by Bord na Mona occurred in Co. Offaly (2,519 hectares).

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