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**Population Distribution and  
Economic Development:  
Trends and Policy Implications**

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*National Economic and Social Council*

**nesc**

No. 102 December 1997

*An Chomhairle Náisiúnta Eacnamaíoch agus Sóisialach*

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# NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

## Population Distribution and Economic Development: Trends and Policy Implications

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ADM	Area Development Management
BES	Business Expansion Scheme
BIM	Bord Iascaigh Mhara
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CCA	Community Care Area
CEB	County Enterprise Board
CODAN	County Dublin Areas of Need
CSF	Community Support Framework
DED	District Electoral Division
DTI	Dublin Transport Initiative
EHB	Eastern Health Board
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
GVA	Gross Value Added
IDA	Industrial Development Authority
LGD	Local Government District
NESF	National Economic and Social Forum
NWHB	North Western Health Board
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development
PESP	Programme for Economic and Social Progress
RDO	Regional Development Organisation
RIS	Regional Innovation Strategies
SAPS	Small Area Population Statistics
SFADCO	Shannon Free Airport Development Company
SME	Small and Medium Sized Enterprises

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

This report arises from a request by Government and a recommendation in the Council's study of *New Approaches to Rural Development* to examine patterns of population settlement in Ireland (NESC 1994). In that study, the Council emphasised that any examination of spatial patterns and trends in population change must be viewed from the perspective of the principles of economic and social equity, accountability in public policy, and overall social and economic objectives.

The objective of this report is to outline a perspective based on observed patterns and trends in settlement and population distribution since the 1950s. These patterns and trends are considered, both in terms of how they are subject to the influence of public policy, particularly economic development policy, and in terms of their implications for public policy and public service provision. The key question we pose, therefore, is how public policy can effectively achieve and sustain a high level of national economic and social development together with a relatively dispersed spatial distribution of the benefits.

In the past, arresting national population decline due to emigration was frequently articulated as a public policy objective. Following the renewed wave of emigration of the late 1980s, a number of reports defined objectives for public policy in terms of "balanced population distribution", with reference to its internal dispersion by region and sometimes by sub-region. These studies have usually focused on the objective of stemming population decline at sub-national levels in either absolute or relative terms. Related to this, there have been calls for a return to policies which were adopted in the 1970s by the IDA, based on the view that these policies would be effective and equitable if applied with equal vigour today. However, these objectives and policy recommendations involve assumptions which need to be carefully examined. A review and analysis of existing settlement patterns, spatial patterns of social,

demographic and economic development and associated public policy issues is essential to this.

Settlement patterns is a very complex subject on which issues such as planning and the environment, housing and house prices, traffic management and the provision of services impinge. We recognise that there are major issues in relation to physical planning, that impinge on settlement particularly in areas experiencing rapid population growth, such as the East. These issues have been the subject of previous Council research (NESC 1981 Report No. 51). The focus of the present study is a much broader exploration of sub-national population trends, the context of economic development that forms the backdrop to these trends and the policy issues arising, both in relation to promoting economic development and providing public services. The study, nevertheless, touches upon a number of issues arising out of the rapid growth of urban centres, particularly in the East region.

In Section 2 of this chapter we set out a framework for viewing settlement patterns which includes the principal influences, both public and private, on changing settlement patterns, as well as the reciprocal influence of settlement patterns on economic activity and public policy. The focus of the study is specifically limited to certain elements of the framework, and these are set out in Section 3.

## 2. FRAMEWORK

The subject of settlement patterns is immensely broad and could be informed by very detailed micro-level analysis. By comparison this report has a relatively limited focus. It considers key aspects of settlement patterns at regional and sub-regional level and the public policy issues arising in the context of these patterns. Implicit in our treatment of these issues is a framework for understanding the relationship between factors and forces shaping settlement patterns and the distribution of population. This framework is summarised in Figure 1.1. While it would be desirable to investigate all the elements described Figure 1.1, that is beyond the scope of this report. We have, instead, drawn on selected elements in the framework which provides the theoretical backdrop to this more restricted analysis.

The framework outlined in Figure 1.1 is intended to show that

settlement patterns are a function of several interacting forces. The most immediate forces are the decisions taken by millions of independent economic actors, comprising firms and households<sup>1</sup>. These do not follow any conscious plan but collectively they give rise to geographic patterns of distribution of economic activity and settlement.

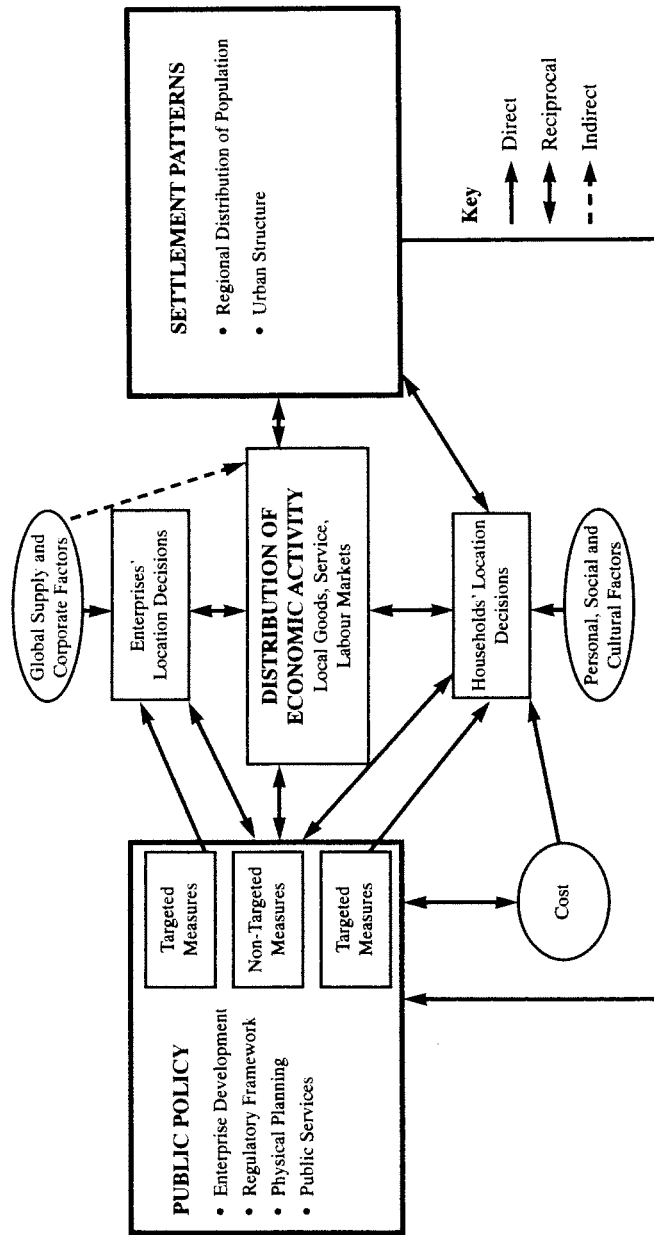
By making this framework explicit at the outset, we are emphasising that public policy is but one among several potential influential factors. These factors provide the context within which public policy is framed. They may also constrain its possibilities. The left hand side of Figure 1.1 sketches out the broad domains of public policy, including regulatory aspects, physical planning, enterprise development and public services. It also indicates that public policy and services may be viewed in terms of the actors they are targeted towards i.e., enterprises or individual households or both.

On the right hand side of Figure 1.1, settlement patterns include the distribution of the population by region and in terms of the urban structure. We view settlement patterns as being influenced not only by the decisions of economic actors but as exerting their own reciprocal influence on these decisions. For example, urban settlements, once established, tend to attract new economic activities and population, and existing settlement patterns may act as a constraint on public policy.

The centre panel is dominated by private economic actors and decision makers. Enterprises make decisions with regard to the location of the relevant goods, service and labour markets. Their decisions may be influenced by a wide variety of corporate factors, the nature of the business, whether it is an indigenous or a foreign company, logistics etc. Settlement patterns are also directly influenced by the decisions of individuals and households. Every year, in Ireland, from 150,000 to 200,000 individuals change address. These decisions are influenced by a variety of sociological, economic and work related factors. The processes whereby private economic actors influence settlement patterns cannot be explored in this study. However, the scope for public policy as an influence on

<sup>1</sup> This is not intended to exclude organisations in the public or voluntary sectors who, to some extent are also independent actors.

**FIGURE 1.1**  
**Overview of Factors Influencing Settlement Patterns**



settlement patterns, needs to be considered against the background of these forces.

Four broad elements provide the basis for the analysis contained in this report. These are:

- existing settlement patterns, which are outlined in Chapter 2;
- patterns of distribution of economic activity, which are the subject of Chapter 3;
- spatial aspects of economic policy, covered in Chapter 4;
- issues concerning the spatial distribution of public services, which are discussed in Chapter 5.

Before outlining the contents of these chapters we briefly discuss the issues of spatial units of analysis and time frame covered by the study.

#### (i) Spatial Units and Time Frame

Spatial units can be thought of in, at least, two different ways. The first way is to divide the state into sub-national units (provinces, counties etc.) and the second is to analyse the rural urban continuum. In this report we use both approaches. In relation to the first approach, while we have considered several levels of analysis, from provinces to district electoral divisions, we concentrate on the 1963 planning regions and county-level analysis. Analysis by province was ruled out because it is too limited and too uneven in spatial terms and is not the usual focus of public policy. On the other hand, original analysis at district electoral division level was not feasible in a study of the present scope. In addition, there are genuine difficulties in producing data on economic activity at this level. We have, nevertheless, made reference to existing research at DED level where appropriate, particularly in describing recent population change and the spatial aspects of inequality. We acknowledge that there is a place for micro level studies in order to develop more detailed aspects of policy and service provision.

The focus on regions and counties is justified on policy and analytical grounds. The regional level is an important reality for policy makers in several sectors, such as training, promoting enterprise, tourism, health services and, latterly, the co-ordination

of local authorities. This reality is important despite the existence of differences in the way that national agencies organise activities at a regional level.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, we do not hold the view that planning region boundaries necessarily define distinct economic regions.

For research purposes, these regions and counties pose less difficulty in accessing data over a longer period. The current regional divisions based on the 1991 Act do not facilitate this over the longer period. Wherever possible, therefore, we present a consistent series, based on the 1963 regions and counties, but where necessary we refer to alternative typologies and data below these levels. The 1963 planning regions and their sub-regions<sup>3</sup> are set out in Table 1.1.

**TABLE 1.1**  
**Planning Regions, 1963**

East	Dublin, Kildare, Meath, Wicklow;
Midlands	Laois, Longford, Offaly, Roscommon, Westmeath;
Mid West	Clare, Limerick, North Tipperary;
North East	Cavan, Louth, Monaghan
North West/Donegal	Donegal, Leitrim, Sligo,
South East	Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Waterford, Wexford
South West	Cork, Kerry
West	Galway, Mayo

The second approach to spatial units is to distinguish between urban and rural population. Describing the urban hierarchy is an essential complement to regional and sub-regional analysis, and we provide

<sup>2</sup> Even though health boards and social welfare regional offices are not coterminous with planning regions, they are, in many instances, recognisably close. The issue of such boundaries is, in addition, an important policy matter in itself.

<sup>3</sup> Sub-regions are generally counties; the exception is Tipperary which is divided into two sub-regions.

regional and sub-regional breakdowns of the urban-rural pattern and the urban system (town-size categories). Urbanisation refers both to the extent of population residing in towns and cities as a proportion of total population at a given time and to the process of urban growth itself.

The importance of analysing urbanisation will be evident in this analysis. The evolving urban pattern has both positive and negative features. While there is a definite Eastern bias in settlement patterns, this is now accompanied by an increase in the importance of other regions. The key to this development, and indeed to developments at sub-regional level, is the emergence of urban centres. The report argues that this must be acknowledged both in tackling the issue of regions and areas suffering population decline and in addressing the issue of population expansion in the East region.

In relation to the time frame, to avoid becoming victim to erroneous generalisation based on short term data, we take 1951 as a starting point. It marks off a period varied in demographic terms and relevant to contemporary public policy issues. This long period of forty five years includes many contrasting demographic trends and patterns, ranging from periods of large scale emigration and population decline in the 1950s to periods of net immigration and unprecedentedly rapid growth in population in the 1970s. More recently, a long term decline in birth rates has begun to make a major impact on population structures at national level. Finally, despite a downward tendency in emigration, this remains volatile, as exemplified by the late 1980s and early 1990s.

### 3. OUTLINE OF REPORT

#### (i) Settlement Patterns

In Chapter Two we provide an account of the changing pattern of population distribution by region and county. We then analyse the pattern of urbanisation in sufficient detail to enable us to elaborate the policy and process issues discussed in later chapters. The economical treatment of such patterns is undertaken in order to highlight the most important policy themes. The analysis demonstrates first, that, although the population of Dublin and the East region has continued to grow more rapidly than other regions,

there has been a deceleration in the rate of share loss by other regions and by most counties. The sub-regional analysis indicates that the problem of declining population level is largely confined to a small number of counties. Second, urbanisation is ongoing at every level from the national to the county, and is critical to the maintenance of population level in regions and sub-regions. The analysis also suggests that the concept of a settlement hierarchy provides an alternative approach not only to defining the interaction of functional and spatial policy issues, but also in addressing the problem of regional or sub-regional population decline.

We also examine age and gender structure, which determine dependency ratios, and can influence the direction of population change through natural increase and/or migration. There are notable similarities between those sub-regions with high old age dependency ratios and those with less developed urban systems. These are also the sub-regions which suffer most population decline. Perhaps surprisingly, these counties do not have particularly low young dependency ratios to compensate. What stands out, therefore, is the depletion of the active age groups in a number of counties. These dependency ratios are indicative of the limitations on labour supply and skills in these counties. Also, because of the combination of population dispersion and declining sources of informal care and supports, difficulties are to be expected in providing health and social services in such areas.

Between 150,000 and 200,000 people change address in Ireland each year. This is of interest insofar as it may be somewhat more amenable to policy influences than external migration and natural increase. We therefore review several analyses of the patterns of internal migration over recent decades with a view to understanding their effects on the distribution of population between regions and sub-regions and between rural and urban areas. The evidence we review shows that internal migration in Ireland has tended to be low by comparative standards and has, in the past, played a much lesser role in changing population distribution than natural increase and external migration (that is immigration and emigration). The review of evidence indicates that natural increase and external migration may become slightly less dominant in future. However, the consequences of even small amounts of net out-migration for rural areas can be significant. In relation to the direction of internal migration, it is suggested that, while the bias to the East remains

important, it is now accompanied by increasingly important poles of attraction in other regional urban centres, particularly Cork, Limerick and Galway and other towns.

### **(ii) Spatial Aspects of Economic Activity**

Settlement patterns interact with economic processes. Chapter 3 provides an examination of the spatial distribution of economic activity and business location patterns. The Chapter demonstrates that distinct spatial and territorial consequences arise from the restructuring of economic activities in different sectors. These factors have influenced settlement patterns in recent decades and policy makers must acknowledge and understand the detailed spatial dynamics arising out of economic activities in different sectors. The analysis shows, in particular, the importance of declining agricultural employment in off-setting non-agricultural employment growth in several regions. It also shows, however, that restructuring of non-agricultural employment has also played a critical role. In the 1970s and early 1980s there was a decline in many of the traditional centres of industrial activity whilst the policy of extensive industrialisation in less developed regions changed the distribution of non-agricultural employment. Since the 1980s there has been a resurgence in the East region. However, the evidence also points to the emergence of new manufacturing and service activities in regions other than the East, particularly in recent years. In contrast to the 1970s, the kind of activities attracting investment now depend on more highly skilled labour pools and, to that extent, favour the larger urban centres.

### **(iii) Spatial Aspects of Economic Development Policy**

Chapter 4 demonstrates that while there are many important spatial aspects to economic development policy these cannot be strictly defined in terms of regional or sub-regional territorial units. The Chapter illustrates how the guiding principle should be to avoid counterposing spatial to functional or sectoral policies. This approach flows from the patterns of economic activity described in Chapter 3. The most effective approach to the spatial distribution of economic development is to grasp the possibilities for integrating functional and sectoral requirements with the spatial/territorial possibilities of each sector. The evolution of an array of policies at

national, regional, county, sub-county and other territorial or spatial levels is described. A review of these policy instruments and public services is provided in the Chapter and we relate our discussion of these to patterns of settlement, and to significant contextual factors, in particular international ones. This demonstrates that policies which are targeted to enterprises cover an array of instruments and services specifically aimed, for example, at maintaining agricultural areas, particular sub-sectors in agriculture and promoting the development of industry and services. These are implemented by agencies such as the IDA, Forbairt, SFADCO and Udarás na Gaeltachta. Latterly, these policies have included the establishment of Area-Based Partnerships, LEADER groups, County Enterprise Boards and other policies directed to rural development or to bring about urban renewal. All of these have some influence on the location of enterprise and employment creation at regional, sub-regional and local level.

A number of other issues are discussed, including the re-location of civil service activity and the development of infrastructure and utilities. Equity and efficiency issues are discussed in relation to liberalisation of utilities.

#### **(iv) Issues in the Spatial Distribution of Public Services**

In Chapter 5 we explore a number of principles and issues pertaining to public services with particular reference to services aimed at individuals and households. These issues are first discussed in the context of health, social services and education, and then in relation to housing and transport. Debates about these services usually centre on their relation to existing settlement patterns in terms of adequacy, equality of access to them, and efficiency of delivery. The Chapter explores the interplay of public service provision and settlement from the perspective of the influence of settlement patterns on the demand for services and the effect of the distribution of service provision on settlement patterns. In many key areas it is the settlement pattern that shapes the pattern of service provision. There is an implicit and sometimes explicit hierarchy of public service provision, however, whereby a particular spatial level is deemed appropriate for a given service. Not only regional and sub-regional levels, but also sub-county levels have a reality for such implicit or explicit service hierarchies.

The pattern of urbanisation, and the urban hierarchy, would seem to have a prior influence on how public services are deployed spatially. This is so because the tendencies towards settlement agglomeration are driven by the quest for economies of scale and by the positive externalities offered by the clustering of population and economic activity. In acknowledging this, the review of issues also notes that agglomeration or improved road access are no guarantee that equal access to services will be achieved in all parts of urban areas and their hinterlands, or in other rural areas. In view of this, the Chapter also considers a number of diverse innovative approaches being piloted in urban niches and in rural settings, aimed at achieving economies of scope in the matching of service provision and needs. This review reveals the need for co-operation and creativity in the face of evolving settlement patterns and the possibility of achieving economies of scope where economies of scale are absent.

In Chapter 6, the main conclusions and implications of the study are drawn together. Different perspectives on the scope for policy influences on settlement are examined and a number of themes are outlined which could provide the focus for specific attention by policy makers.

## CHAPTER 2

### SETTLEMENT PATTERNS

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the main aspects of the distribution of population and changes to the pattern of distribution over time. This is designed to inform discussion about the scope of public policy in influencing this distribution, as well as the consequences of this distribution for public policy.

The key policy questions we hope to inform concern the extent to which changing population distribution patterns are amenable to public policy intervention and the extent to which these spatial distributions have implications for social and economic policy. We examine existing population distribution to provide a more concrete background to informing such questions as whether, on the one hand, successful economic development is dependent on any particular type of settlement pattern or is shaping this pattern in particular ways, or whether, on the other hand, existing patterns and trends exercise an independent influence that runs counter to the requirements of a more effective and equitable distribution of public resources and services. Following this empirical analysis we consider a number of issues that arise in relation to evolving settlement patterns.

The chapter describes the distribution of population in Ireland in terms of a number of dimensions. Sections 2 and 3 provide the necessary empirical background to informed debate on settlement trends and may suggest some of the factors which influence population levels in vulnerable regions or sub-regions, and the proportional regional and sub-regional distribution of population. Section 2 outlines population growth or decline and the trend in the proportional distribution of population by region and sub-region. Although the East region has continued to increase its share of population, the analysis suggests that there are signs of a decrease in the rate of this increase. Correspondingly, the declining share of other regions has slowed down considerably and the West region

has in fact increased its share in the early 1990s. If we focus on the level of population at regional and sub-regional level, the picture is slightly more optimistic again, in view of the fact that population grew by approximately 22 per cent over this period, and most sub-regions have participated in this trend. Section 3 describes the changing urban hierarchy nationally and by region. This section shows that urbanisation levels vary widely between counties, but that there has been considerable urbanisation in most counties since 1971. Those counties whose level and rate of urbanisation have been lowest over recent decades are also the counties which have experienced most difficulty in maintaining population level and share. This suggests that particular attention should be paid to the role of urban centres at regional and sub-regional level in sustaining settlement patterns. The section ends with a consideration of very recent trends (1991-1996) at DED level and in aggregate rural area population.

Section 4 contains a short analysis of population structure, looking at the balance between age groups by sub-region and between the main boroughs and county populations, both as an important aspect of the strength or weakness of settlement patterns and as an indication of the need for public services or other policy intervention. It also examines gender ratios in relation to population structure and distribution. This section also reviews previous research findings on internal migration over several decades. This evidence suggests that we should treat with caution the view that population gain in one region is largely the result of population loss in another. It shows that internal migration, while noteworthy, is relatively less important than fertility and external migration. In section 5 we review the evidence on spatial aspects of inequality, which shows that there is no simple regional pattern or urban/rural dichotomy, but a more complex pattern. In Section 6, we offer some comments and reflections on the evolution of the population distribution and the importance of the urban hierarchy in defining our understanding of this process.

A key conclusion arising from this descriptive account is that there is no simple way to characterise population patterns along regional lines. Rather there is a pattern of urbanisation that leads to intra- as much as inter-regional diversity. Moreover, even at the intra-county



level, the dynamics of urbanisation lead to new settlement patterns and increasingly the emergence of cross-regional similarities.

## 2. POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY REGION AND SUB-REGION

### (i) Regional Population Level and Trends Since 1951

Among the questions that arise in the Irish context concerning the population distribution is to what extent there is a problem of population loss. From once being a national concern this has become increasingly one associated with particular regions, sub-regions or even sub-county areas. At the same time as the concern with population loss has shifted from a national to a regional/local pitch there has been a corresponding interest in the question of achieving an "optimal balance", and, more particularly, concerns have been expressed in certain regions or localities about population growth which appears to outstrip the capacities of public service provision and planning. In order to assess the degree of population re-distribution, we first present an overview of the trend in population distribution by region and county since 1951, examining the changing level and share.

The changing level and share of population by planning region between 1951 and 1996 is shown in Table 2.1. For purposes of consistency with the rest of this Report we are using the 1963 planning regions.

The East region saw the continuation of the trend of population growth which had been ongoing in this group of counties since 1891. In all of the other regions the turning point came much later. Population growth resumed in 1962 in the South West and Mid-West, in 1967 in the North-East and South-East, 1971 in the Midlands and in 1972 in the West and North-West/Donegal. This new trend of growth in all regions during the 1970s was interrupted by its opposite in the late 1980s, when all regions experienced some population decline. While the census figures alone would suggest that the East region experienced no decline, in fact, based on the CSO estimates, there was a decline between 1986 and 1990. Population growth in the East region then recovered slightly earlier and more vigorously than the other regions, which picked up at

TABLE 2.1

Population Levels and Percentage Share of National Population by Region, 1951-1996

	1951	1961	1971	1981	1986	1991	1996
East	888,386	906,347	1,062,220	1,290,154	1,336,119	1,350,595	1,405,671
Per cent	30.01	32.16	35.67	37.47	37.74	38.31	38.77
Midlands	258,092	239,323	232,427	256,689	262,586	254,881	257,517
Per cent	8.72	8.49	7.80	7.45	7.42	7.23	7.10
Mid-West	279,577	260,737	269,804	308,212	315,435	310,728	317,069
Per cent	9.44	9.25	9.06	8.95	8.91	8.81	8.74
North-East	190,493	171,060	173,811	193,561	198,154	194,813	194,423
Per cent	6.43	6.07	5.84	5.62	5.60	5.53	5.42
North-West/Donegal	233,252	200,873	186,979	208,195	212,745	208,174	210,872
Per cent	7.88	7.13	6.28	6.05	6.01	5.90	5.82
South-East	340,794	319,883	328,604	374,575	384,974	383,188	391,517
Per cent	11.51	11.35	11.03	10.88	10.87	10.87	10.80
South-West	467,928	446,901	465,655	525,235	536,894	532,263	546,640
Per cent	15.81	15.86	15.64	15.25	15.16	15.10	15.08
West	302,071	273,217	258,748	286,784	293,736	291,077	300,378
Per cent	10.20	9.69	8.69	8.33	8.30	8.26	8.28
State	2,960,593	2,818,341	2,978,248	3,443,405	3,540,643	3,525,719	3,626,087
Per cent	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: CSO, *Census of Population*, various years.

different rates in the early 1990s. The difference between the two least populated regions, the West and the North-West, in the most recent period is noteworthy. The West grew by over 9,000, or 3 per cent, ahead of the state average and of all other regions except the East, which grew by 3.9 per cent, while the North-West/Donegal region only grew by 1.3 per cent.

Table 2.1 also shows the trend in the population distribution by planning region from 1951 to 1996. The East region stands out in terms both of its share in 1951, at 30 per cent and, since then, its increasing share, which stood at 38.8 per cent in 1996. Noteworthy, however, is the fact that much of this increase took place prior to 1981. Between 1981 and 1996 the share of population in the East

only increased from 37.5 per cent to 38.8 per cent. All the other regions experienced a decline in their share of population, with the greatest proportional decline taking place in the West where it fell from 10.2 per cent in 1951 to 8.28 per cent in 1996, and the North-West/Donegal where it fell from 7.9 to 5.8 per cent over the same period. The redistribution of the share of population was greater in most regions in the first half of this period, up to about 1973, than subsequently. The decline in the proportion of national population, which has continued in all of the other regions, has also shown signs of slowing down recently. It is noteworthy that the proportion of the population living in the West region increased very slightly between 1991 and 1996 in contrast to all other regions except the East.

The population growth rates for each region are shown in Table 2.2. This table shows that in the one hundred and ten years prior to 1951 the population of the East region increased by 11.4 per cent. However the share of population in the East region increased by 145.7 per cent. Thus the growth of the East region was not the main factor creating an imbalance in population, but the much greater decline in population in other regions, due to external migration. Table 2.2 also reveals clearly the declining rate of change of the proportion of population in each region. For example, in the East region the share of population increased by 10.9 per cent in the 1960s and by 5 per cent in the 1970s. The rate of increase fell to less than half of this during the 1980s and in the 1990s. This deceleration can be seen in the second row of Table 2.2 for each of the other regions, more particularly from 1961 – as the total population of the state increased once again, there was a discernible decline in the rate at which the relative shares of regions outside the East declined. It is noteworthy that during the 1970s, the West region lost 4 per cent of its share of total population, but this rate of loss decelerated considerably in the 1980s, and the West increased its share in the 1990s. The North-West/Donegal region also experienced some slowing down in the rate at which its share of population fell, from the 1970s and most notably during the first half of the 1980s: during the late 1980s and early 1990s the proportion of population living in this region continued to decline at a gradual rate.

TABLE 2.2

Percentage Change in Population Level and Percentage Change in Population Share by Region, 1841-1951 and 1951-1996

Region (per cent)	1841-1951	1951-61	1961-71	1971-81	1981-86	1986-91	1991-96
East Change in Population	11.43	2.02	17.20	21.46	3.56	1.08	4.08
Change in Share	145.74	7.17	10.91	5.05	0.72	1.51	1.20
Midlands Change in Population	-68.18	-7.27	-2.88	10.44	2.30	-2.93	1.03
Change in Share	-29.84	-2.59	-8.10	-4.48	-0.51	-2.52	-1.76
Mid-West Change in Population	-65.80	-6.74	3.48	14.24	2.34	-1.49	2.04
Change in Share	-24.59	-2.03	-2.08	-1.20	-0.47	-1.08	-0.78
North-East Change in Population	-66.69	-10.20	1.61	11.36	2.37	-1.69	0.83
Change in Share	-26.54	-5.67	-3.85	-3.68	-0.44	-1.27	-1.96
North-West/Dgl Change in Population	-63.13	-13.88	-6.92	11.35	2.19	-2.15	1.3
Change in Share	-18.69	-9.53	-11.91	-3.69	-0.62	-1.73	-1.51
South-East Change in Population	-63.01	-6.14	2.73	13.99	2.78	-0.46	2.17
Change in Share	-18.42	-1.40	-2.79	-1.41	-0.05	-0.04	-0.65
South-West Change in Population	-59.24	-4.49	4.20	12.79	2.22	-0.86	2.70
Change in Share	-10.11	0.33	-1.40	-2.44	-0.59	-0.44	-0.14
West Change in Population	-63.57	-9.55	-5.30	10.84	2.42	-0.91	3.20
Change in Share	-19.65	-4.99	-10.38	-4.14	-0.39	-0.49	0.34
State	-54.65	-4.80	5.67	15.62	2.82	-0.42	2.85

Source: CSO, *Census of Population*, various years.

(ii) Sub-Regional Population Trends

*Overview of Sub-Regional Trends*

A detailed analysis of each sub-region by region is provided in Appendix 1 to this chapter. The period 1951 to 1996 saw quite varied experiences in regional and sub-regional population size and share (Table 2.1 and appendix tables on sub-regions). The period as

a whole witnessed population growth of 22 per cent which spread from the more urbanised counties throughout the 1960s and 1970s. In all, 17 sub-regions experienced a growth in population between 1951 and 1996. Counties which had substantial population loss (over 20 per cent) over this time include Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo and Cavan. In contrast, eight sub-regions had population growth over 20 per cent, in descending order, Kildare (103 per cent growth), Meath, Wicklow, Dublin, Louth, Waterford, Cork and Carlow (22 per cent growth). However, not all western counties suffered a loss. Galway and Clare each grew by between 15 per cent and 20 per cent.

Because national population grew by 22 per cent the percentage change in each sub-region's share is only positive in seven cases – again these are, in descending order, Kildare (+66 per cent), and the rest of the East Region plus Louth, Waterford and Cork (+0.7 per cent). Seven counties each lost more than 20 per cent of their share in national population.

The four sub-regions of the East may be said to make up a unique “urban region”, by Irish standards, which has evolved with the evolution of the city of Dublin, the borough of Dun Laoghaire and the other small towns, villages and environs in its expanding orbit, within and beyond the Dublin county boundary. This will be considered in the discussion of settlement hierarchy.

This analysis suggests that while population imbalances persist at regional or county level there are signs that the process is slowing down. There would seem to be several demographic and economic factors at work here including falling fertility and declining emigration (or a change in its composition), a slowdown in the rate of loss of population from agriculture, and a trend towards urbanisation in all regions and sub-regions. Some trends – in particular, the fact that population growth was stronger in the more urbanised counties during the 1970s – provide something of a corrective to our understanding of how industrial development policies may be thought to have influenced settlement patterns.

### 3. THE SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

The examination of population distribution by region or sub-region is somewhat abstract without consideration of the structure and distribution of the urban system. It is the latter which, to a large

extent, is the underlying mechanism through which population is distributed. The previous section points implicitly to the role of the urban system in generating the pattern of regional population distribution. Here, we present an overview of the evolving urban system in Ireland. In this section the notion of urban hierarchy is used in the simple sense of the distribution of population by size of centre. Nevertheless it is essential to examine the existing urban pattern in order to explore the related but distinct issue of whether there is a functional hierarchical logic to the urban system. While one assumes that the settlement pattern is influenced to a great extent by functional requirements, including the relevant scale economies for different types of service provision and the need to achieve reasonable proximity of services within localities, it is also inevitable that historical, geographical, political and other types of influences exist. The issue is the relative significance of the functional logic.

#### (i) Urbanisation Level and Change by Sub-Region

Urbanisation has been defined as “the proportion of the population concentrated in urban settlements, or else a rise in that proportion”. (Davis 1965, cited by Bannon, 1983). Table 2.3 shows both the level and change in urbanisation by sub-region over the period 1971 to 1996. Aggregate Town Area population by county is calculated by the CSO based on a cut-off of towns of 1,500 or greater. Aggregate Rural Area is calculated as the residual. This implies a narrower definition of urban areas than will be utilised in our analysis in Section 3 (ii) below. However, it provides a useful perspective on the extent of urbanisation by county over the 1971 to 1996 period.<sup>1</sup>

Table 2.3 sorts counties by their level of urbanisation in 1996. The range is very extreme – from 97.5 per cent in Dublin to 6.1 per cent in Leitrim. Over the period 1971-1996 too, the pattern of change is extremely diverse even though the national trend is towards greater proportions in aggregate town areas.

It is notable that the four counties with the lowest degree of

<sup>1</sup> There is another option here, that is to focus on the legally defined concepts of rural and urban districts. We have opted for the more intuitive approach because it is sufficiently detailed for present purposes and arguably is more realistic.

urbanisation in 1996 – Leitrim, Cavan, Roscommon and Mayo – are also the four which suffered population losses in excess of 20 per cent in the 1951 – 1996 period. In contrast Donegal's population was much the same in 1996 as in 1951, while it increased its urban share from 13.7 per cent to 21.8 per cent between 1971 and 1996.

At the opposite extreme are the counties which have long established urban populations such as Dublin, Louth, Cork, Waterford and Limerick. These all experienced some incremental growth. In the case of Dublin county the population was already highly urbanised in 1971 at 97 per cent and there is little scope for proportional change.

One of the most striking features is the rapid urbanisation of the counties around Dublin but particularly Kildare and Meath whose urban shares have risen substantially. A similar effect may be seen in Co. Clare, insofar as its rising urban level reflects the spillover effects of Limerick city and the effect of the corridor between Limerick and Galway in stimulating the growth of Ennis and Shannon.

Another notable pattern is the substantial rate of urbanisation taking place in counties which suffered considerable population decline in previous decades and which have made demographic recoveries in the past twenty five to thirty years: particularly Galway, Clare, and Donegal, but also Longford and Kerry. This association between population growth and urbanisation has a corollary of declining rural population share and often a decline in rural population level. But it is evident that despite a strong regional bias in changing settlement the story is more complicated than this would suggest: counties which have strong urban centres or are in a position to urbanise are also in a position to retain population, even counties on the Western seaboard. In Chapter 3 we examine the respective influences of declining agricultural employment and rising non-agricultural employment in bringing about these changing settlement patterns.

## (ii) The Settlement Hierarchy

Table 2.4 sets out the trend in population share by town size group between 1951 and 1996 in more detail. In addition to sub-dividing

TABLE 2.3

### Urbanisation\* by Sub-Region in 1971 and 1996 and Rate of Change

County	Aggregate Town Area		Per Cent
	1971	1996	Change 1971-1996
Dublin	96.6	97.5	0.9
Louth	62.6	63.5	1.4
Kildare	34.6	60.6	75.1
Cork	53.8	60.4	12.3
Waterford	55.5	60.1	8.3
Wicklow	46.6	58.4	25.3
Limerick	47.6	49.0	2.9
Carlow	42.1	46.1	9.5
Westmeath	38.4	42.4	10.4
Tipperary, S.R.	38.0	40.4	6.3
Galway	29.1	39.0	34.0
Offaly	33.5	36.6	9.3
Clare	23.3	35.3	51.5
Meath	19.0	33.9	78.4
Tipperary, N.R.	33.8	33.3	-1.5
Sligo	28.8	33.2	15.3
Wexford	32.6	32.0	-1.8
Kerry	24.2	31.2	28.9
Kilkenny	22.1	29.2	32.1
Laoighis	26.3	29.1	10.6
Monaghan	26.6	28.1	5.6
Longford	17.0	23.2	36.5
Donegal	13.7	21.8	59.1
Mayo	16.1	21.3	32.3
Roscommon	13.3	18.4	38.3
Cavan	11.1	16.9	52.3
Leitrim	5.3	6.1	15.1

\* Percentage of Population in Aggregate Town Area (towns over 1,500)

Source: CSO, Census of Population.

**TABLE 2.4**  
**Percentage Distribution of Population of State by Size of Place, 1951-96**

Size of Centre	1951	1961	1971	1981	1986	1991	1996
Greater Dublin area*	21.43	23.54	26.91	26.01	26.75	25.97	26.27
Cork CB and Suburbs	3.78	4.10	4.55	4.91	5.04	4.95	4.96
Limerick CB and Suburbs	1.72	1.84	2.13	2.16	2.22	2.14	2.18
Galway CB and Suburbs**	0.72	0.84	1.00	1.33	1.37	1.44	1.58
Waterford CB and Suburbs	0.97	1.00	1.17	1.16	1.19	1.19	1.22
1. Other towns 10,000 and over	3.58	4.32	6.46	8.63	8.88	9.54	10.49
2. Towns 5000-9999	3.29	3.77	6.03	6.67	6.85	6.20	5.69
3. Towns 3000-4999	2.67	2.99	2.60	2.90	2.98	2.73	2.90
4. Towns 1500-3000	3.30	3.70	2.38	2.63	2.71	2.87	2.83
5. Towns 500-1499	3.29	4.65	4.58	4.91	5.04	4.94	4.70
6. Towns 200-499***	2.10	2.79	2.12	2.58	2.65	2.64	2.63
Rural areas	53.16	46.46	40.08	36.12	37.14	35.39	34.54
State population (n)	2960593	2,818,341	2,978,248	3,443,405	3,540,643	3,525,719	3,626,087

**Note:** \* County Borough (CB) areas are defined legally and subject to revision. The figures here, therefore, vary due to boundary changes as well as population change. A county borough area is the complement of its county population area. In all the data here, we also include the suburbs and environs of boroughs and towns. Greater Dublin includes the Dublin county borough (CB), Dun Laoghaire and suburbs;

\*\* Galway was defined as a county borough only from the 1986 Census;

\*\*\* from 1981, the definition changed to places with less than 500 and at least 50 inhabited houses. This led to the inclusion of some settlements which would have fewer than 200 population, so that there is some inflation of the number of such centres, and their share of population between 1971 and 1981, that has nothing to do with real changes. The increase from 199 to 255 in the number of centres in this category during the 1970s may be in large part attributable to this.

**Source:** CSO, *Census of Population*, various years.

those settlements with 1,500 or more people, it distinguishes two further categories of towns with less than 1,500 people. In the previous section we saw that population grew by about 22.5 per cent over this period and there were important regional and sub-regional variations over this time. However, the distribution of population over different types of settlement also changed radically. In general there was an increase in the concentration of population in the largest and larger population centres, and a decline in the population living in rural areas. The most notable increase was in towns of over 10,000 whose share of population increased from 3.6 per cent to 10.5 per cent. Most smaller towns too experienced some growth. However, this is not always apparent in the data on share of population or the number of towns in each bracket because each of these categories experiences losses to and gains from other categories at each census.

Table 2.5 shows the number of urban settlements in each size category between 1951 and 1996. From 1951 to 1996 the total number of settlements with over 200 people (or over 50 inhabited dwellings from 1981) increased from 390 to 641. This growth in the number of settlements reflects the growth of many tiny clusters beyond the 200 person mark, (or beyond the 50 inhabited houses threshold).

The growth in the number and importance of larger settlements was consistent over time. In 1951, there were 8 large towns (apart from the five cities) with populations of over 10,000. This almost tripled to 23 towns by 1996, while their share of population increased from 3.6 per cent to 10.5 per cent.

The number of settlements in the 5,000 to 10,000 range almost doubled to 29 over the period, accounting for 3.3 per cent of the population in 1951 and 5.69 per cent in 1996. Towns in the 3,000 to 5,000 range increased from 21 to 27. The number of smaller towns in the 1,500 to 3,000 range increased from 44 to 48 but had a declining share of population, down from 3.3 per cent to 2.8 per cent. Again, the small net change in the number of towns in the 1,500 to 5,000 range (10) and in their proportion of population masks the higher gross changes or turnover and hence the fact that towns of this size in 1951, too, experienced considerable growth over the subsequent decades.

The number of villages with between 200 (or over 50 inhabited dwellings) and 500 people increased by 127 and the number of

TABLE 2.5

## Distribution of Urban Places by Size, 1951-96

Size of Centre (Population)	1951	1961	1971	1981	1986	1991	1996
Greater Dublin area*	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Cork CB and Suburbs	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Limerick CB and Suburbs	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Galway CB**	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Waterford CB and Suburbs	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1. Other towns 10,000 and over	8	14	16	17	19	21	23
2. Towns 5000-9999	16	17	22	35	33	31	29
3. Towns 3000-4999	21	21	24	27	27	25	27
4. Towns 1500-3000	44	46	41	40	43	47	48
5. Towns 500-1499	108	156	152	182	194	198	194
6. Towns 200-499***	188	255	199	253	298	306	315
Total count	390	514	459	559	619	633	641

Note: See notes to Table 2.4.

Source: CSO, *Census of Population*, various years.

smaller towns with 500 to 1,500 people, by 86. However the share of population accounted for by this group remains quite low. (Again, it should be noted that the composition of these categories varies from one census year to the next). Below we examine changes in the importance of towns of 1,500 or more.

#### Regional Distribution of Towns by Size in 1996

Table 2.6 summarises the regional distribution of county boroughs and other urban centres with over 1,500 population, by size, in 1996. It shows that all regions had at least one centre over 10,000, and all had at least 9 centres over 1,500 population.

The East and South-West regions, with respectively 40 and 24 towns or cities exceeding 1,500 population, have the most developed urban systems in terms of the number of towns. Also,

TABLE 2.6

## Regional Distribution of Towns over 1,500 by Size Category, 1996

Town Size/Type	E	M	MW	NE	NW/D	SE	SW	W	State
County Borough	1	-	1	-	-	1	1	1	5
10,000	9	3	1	2	2	4	2	-	23
5-10,000	8	2	3	2	-	5	5	4	29
3-5,000	8	4	2	1	2	2	6	2	27
1,500-3,000	14	4	4	4	5	5	10	2	48
Total	40	13	11	9	9	17	24	9	132

Source: CSO, *Census 96*, Volume 1, Table 7.

these two regions have the first and second cities in the state. The third region, in terms of number of towns over 1,500, is the South-East, with 17. As a region, it has a more extensive system of towns than either the Mid-West or West, despite the fact that these two regions contain cities (Limerick and Galway) which are larger than the main city of the South-East. The West, North-West and North-East stand out as having the smallest number of towns. However, parts of these regions show quite strong urban patterns so that, as regions, they have very uneven patterns of urbanisation. Most notably, the long urbanised Louth sub-region of the North-East and the rapidly expanding Galway city area, exhibit these characteristics.

A complete listing of towns by region and size category is provided in Table A2.9 in Appendix 2 to this chapter. Together with the data given in Table 2.3 and Table 2.6 it confirms the weaknesses in urban structure in a cluster of sub-regions in adjacent parts of the North-West, North-East, Midlands and West regions. This applies to Leitrim (North-West/Donegal), Roscommon and Longford (Midlands), Cavan and Monaghan (North-East), and Mayo (West) all of which have experienced severe population decline and have very low population size, density and urbanisation. A key characteristic is the absence of a large centre, – in 10,000 plus range – in these sub-regions. However, parts of other counties, such as Galway, are in a situation similar to these sub-regions.

### Greater Dublin Area

At the top of the rural-urban 'continuum', the Greater Dublin area grew by 50 per cent and its share increased from 21.4 per cent to 26.9 per cent between 1951 and 1971. This area takes in a large continuously built up settlement comprising the Dublin County Borough or city, the borough of Dun Laoghaire and their suburbs and environs. It has had a complex evolution over the decades, though we have simply treated it as one unit. During the 1970s its share of national population declined to around 26 per cent, although, as with rural areas, the population increased in absolute terms (Table 2.7). In the early 1980s too the share of national population in Greater Dublin declined a little, and in the late 1980s, when emigration picked up, there was another small decline in both relative and absolute terms. By 1991, Greater Dublin accounted for just under 26 per cent of the national population. Part of the explanation for the post 1971 decline in share has to be sought in the rise of new residential satellites which remain outside the suburbs / environs of the city both within and outside the county boundaries but well within commuting distance. Part has to do with the factors referred to above, in particular the shake-out in traditional and indigenous industries during the 1970s and early 1980s, many of which were located in the capital.

In the 1991 to 1996 period the Greater Dublin Area grew in absolute and relative terms. Part of the explanation for this is that Lucan, previously separately identified as one of the towns over 10,000, was re-classified as part of the suburbs/environs of Dublin city. Re-

TABLE 2.7

Population in Greater Dublin Area as a Percentage of National Population, 1951-1996

	1951	1961	1971	1981	1986	1991	1996
Population	634,473	667,623	852,219	915,115	920,956	915,516	952,692
% of National Population	21.43	23.54	26.91	26.01	26.75	25.97	26.27

development of inner city areas and improved net migration have also contributed to population growth in the city but so also has the

growth of population in established suburbs, often in the more affluent or 'desired' addresses.

On its own, the growth of the Greater Dublin Area, as defined here, may be misleading since it understates the combined importance of Dublin and the towns of the surrounding areas in shaping regional and national settlement patterns. It is important to note that subsequent sections dealing with the growth of towns by size category also reflect the growth of a built-up urban region in the East. The growth of many of these towns, like the now assimilated Lucan, is bound up with the evolution of the capital. In Appendix 3 to this chapter we report some evidence – based on a different approach – on the more pervasive growth of this city region.

### Cork, Limerick, Waterford and Galway

The population living in the next four largest regional urban centres – Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford – increased by almost 70 per cent and their share rose from 7.2 per cent to 9.9 per cent over

TABLE 2.8

Population in Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford as Percentages of National Population, 1951-1996

Regional Centres	1951	1961	1971	1981	1986	1991	1996
Cork CB and Suburbs	112,009	115,689	135,456	149,792	173,694	174,400	179,954
Per Cent	3.78	4.10	4.55	4.91	5.04	4.95	4.96
Limerick CB and Suburbs	50,820	51,732	63,436	75,520	76,557	75,436	79,137
Per Cent	1.72	1.84	2.13	2.16	2.22	2.14	2.18
Galway CB	21,316	23,700	29,767	41,861	47,104	50,853	57,363
Per Cent	0.72	0.84	1.00	1.33	1.37	1.44	1.58
Waterford CB and Suburbs	28,691	28,216	34,837	39,636	41,054	41,853	44,155
Per Cent	0.97	1.00	1.17	1.16	1.19	1.19	1.22
All Centres	212,836	219,337	260,483	306,809	338,409	342,542	360,609
Per Cent	7.19	7.78	8.85	8.91	9.56	9.72	9.94

the 45 year period up to 1996 (Table 2.8). Galway city experienced rapid population growth, more than doubling its proportion of national population, and increasing its level from 21,300 in 1951 to over 57,000 by 1991. Population growth was at its most rapid during the 1970s, when the city grew by over 42 per cent. It was the fastest growing city in the group, well ahead of the others, at 169 per cent over the period. It also went from fourth position in the group in terms of size, in 1951, to third, passing Waterford, during the 1970s. The latter, nevertheless, increased its population by 54 per cent.

Two of the cities in this group experienced some temporary decline in their relative share of population: in the late 1980s, Cork's share of national population declined a little, although the city's population grew in absolute size. Limerick had a similar experience, and even had a small numerical decline, in the late 1980s. The growth of satellite towns and extended commuter areas outside the "suburbs and environs" of Limerick and Cork cities could account for the slower growth of these two cities in certain sub-periods, just as it would make up for the more recent slowdown of population growth in the Greater Dublin Area. Many cities go through a process of thinning out, particularly in older inner city areas. This usually goes hand in hand with a widening travel-to-work zone beyond the city boundaries.

Although three of these four centres are in Munster, and one in Connacht, all are located in separate planning regions. Together, these centres fan out as coastal points running from the South East to the West and located at considerable distances from the capital, with substantial or rapidly growing populations. The obvious gap is in the North West.

#### *Large Towns, Over 10,000 Population*

Between the rural areas and the five major urban centres, settlements are usually grouped into six population categories. These are summarised in Table 2.9.

In 1951 – apart from the five cities described above – there were only 8 towns with more than 10,000 people, making up a population of 106,000. What stands out, in 1951, is the sparsity of such centres along the west coast, and the absence of any in the midlands. Four were on the east coast (Dundalk, Drogheda, Bray and Wexford),

TABLE 2.9

Population in Towns by Size as Percentage of National Population, 1951-1996

Town Size	1951	1961	1971	1981	1986	1991	1996
1. Other towns 10,000+	106,115	121,638	192,417	256,889	305,657	336,411	380,522
Per Cent	3.58	4.32	6.46	8.63	8.88	9.54	10.49
2. Towns 5000-9999	97281	106,311	179,718	247,240	236,029	218,564	206,346
Per Cent	3.29	3.77	6.03	6.67	6.85	6.20	5.69
3. Towns 3000-4999	79108	84,139	77,355	100,226	102,562	96,403	105,042
Per Cent	2.67	2.99	2.60	2.90	2.98	2.73	2.90
4. Towns 1500-3000	97580	104,333	70,768	85,506	93,165	101,264	102,780
Per Cent	3.30	3.70	2.38	2.63	2.71	2.87	2.83
5. Towns 500-1499	97397	131,122	136,354	166,599	173,672	174,180	170,416
Per Cent	3.29	4.65	4.58	4.91	5.04	4.94	4.70
6. Towns 200-499	62085	78,709	63,029	79,905	91,407	93,045	95,334
Per Cent	2.10	2.79	2.12	2.58	2.65	2.64	2.63

two on or near the west coast, (Sligo and Tralee), and two, both in the South-East, were inland (Kilkenny and Clonmel).

In 1996, there were 23 towns in this size group. The population accounted for had increased by 258 per cent to 336,400 over the 40 years, giving this category the highest rate of population growth. Their relative importance also increased: in 1951, these towns accounted for 3.6 per cent of the state population, and this rose to 10.5 per cent in 1996.

Of the additional 15 towns in this category in 1996, eight could be said to have a satellite and/or dormitory role in relation to Dublin. These are: Swords, Malahide, Navan, Leixlip, Celbridge, Naas, Newbridge and Greystones. Other towns in this category by 1996 were Athlone, Mullingar and Tullamore (Midlands), Letterkenny (North West/Donegal), Ennis (Mid West) Carlow (South-East),



**TABLE 2.10**

**Regional Distribution of Towns with a Population over 10,000 in 1951 and 1996**

Towns of 10,000 and Over		
Region	1951	1996
East	1	9
Midlands	-	3
Mid-West	-	1
North-East	2	2
North-West/Donegal	1	2
South-East	3	4
South-West	1	2
West	-	-
<b>State</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>23</b>

Killarney (South-West). As noted above, Lucan, which in 1991 was in this Category, is now subsumed in the suburbs and environs of the Greater Dublin area.

Table 2.10 shows the regional distribution of towns in this category in 1996 and in 1951. The second column shows the 1996 regional distribution. The following eight sub-regions still lacked an urban centre with a population of 10,000 or more in 1996: Leitrim in the North-West, Laois, Longford and Roscommon in the Midlands, Cavan and Monaghan in the North-East, Tipperary North in the Mid-West and Mayo in the West. In regional terms the East stands out: all of the nine large towns in the East region in 1991 had grown substantially since 1951, some from less than 1,500. In contrast to the East region, many of the large urban centres in other regions grew much more gradually since 1951, with the exception of Letterkenny which grew from less than 5,000 in 1951.

This analysis shows that the East was to remain the dominant focus of urbanisation over this period. Even though the growth took place in towns outside the greater Dublin area, the influence of Dublin city as a pole of attraction was nevertheless decisive in triggering this growth.

*Towns with 5,000-10,000 Population*

Towns with 5,000-10,000 people increased from 16 in 1951 to 29 by 1996 and the number living in such places increased from 97,000 to 206,346 (up 113 per cent). Towns of this size accounted for 3.3 per cent of population in 1951 and 5.7 per cent in 1996. Though their share of population increased, it is evident that this did not increase as much as that of the previous group of larger towns. This does not imply that towns of this size do not grow as rapidly. It is a consequence of turnover in this category.

Table 2.11 shows the regional pattern of distribution of towns in this group in 1991 together with the regional distribution in 1951. In 1996, eight were in the East region and all experienced rapid growth since 1951. This reinforces the trend seen in relation to towns of over 10,000 in the East.

The influence of Dublin generating the growth of satellites of 10,000 population and over in the East is echoed somewhat in other regions, particularly the South-West, in the 5,000 to 10,000 size group. Although the South-West had five such towns in 1996, these experienced rapid growth since 1951. Carrigaline, for example, grew from less than 500 to over 5,000 while Middleton grew from under 3,000 to over 5,000. This pattern of growth suggests that

**TABLE 2.11**

**Regional Distribution of Towns with a Population of 5,000 to 10,000 in 1951 and 1996**

Towns of 5,000 to 10,000		
Region	1951	1996
East	1	8
Midlands	3	2
Mid-West	2	3
North-East	-	2
North-West/Donegal	-	-
South-East	3	5
South-West	4	5
West	3	4
<b>State</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>29</b>

satellite towns near to Cork city explain part of the trend in the South-West, a finding which may account in part for the stabilisation of Cork city in the late 1980s.

By 1996, therefore, several counties which were without towns over 10,000 population had at least a town over 5,000. These include Cavan, Monaghan, North Tipperary, Laois, Longford and Mayo. Roscommon was the only sub-region of the Midlands which had no centre of 5,000 or over 1996. In the North-West/Donnegal region in 1996, county Leitrim was the only sub-region that lacked any town greater than 5,000 population in 1996. Its largest centre in 1996 was the small town of Carrick-on-Shannon with 1,800 people.

#### *Towns with 3,000-5,000 Population*

The next echelon of towns, in the 3-5,000 range, numbered 27 in 1996 compared to 21 in 1951 (Table 2.12). Their share of population remains small having risen from 2.67 per cent to 2.90 per cent of the national total over the 1951 to 1996 period, or from 79,000 to 105,000. This, however, disguises much of the growth in towns of this range. All but five towns in this category in 1996 had less than 3,000 population in 1951.

**TABLE 2.12**

**Regional Distribution of Towns with a Population of 3,000 to 5,000 in 1951 and 1996**

Towns of 3,000 to 5,000		
Region	1951	1996
East	5	8
Midlands	2	3
Mid-West	2	2
North-East	3	1
North-West/Dgl.	2	2
South-East	2	2
South-West	3	6
West	2	3
State	21	27

Again, growth of these centres tends to be influenced by the proximity of major urban centres or to take place in those regions with a relatively strong urban distribution to begin with, in particular the East. Nevertheless all regions had some towns in this range in both 1996 and 1951. The only sub-region without a town of at least 3,000 population in 1996 was Leitrim.

#### *Towns with 1,500-3,000 Population*

There is a large group of towns in the size range 1,500-3,000 (Table 2.13). These have increased in number from 44 to 48 between 1951 and 1996, but it is important to emphasise that due to a very high degree of inflow/outflow as towns grew in size, only about one-third of total towns in this category were present in both years. This might also be masked by the fact that, as a category, the size of population it represents has changed little, from 95,500 to 101,000.

The pattern of distribution of this layer of 48 small towns in 1996 displays a bias towards the East (12) and South-West (10), once again suggesting that the influence of large mature urban centres is important in stimulating the growth of the towns in a region. Further details on the smallest towns (below 1,500) are provided in Appendix 4 to this chapter.

**TABLE 2.13**

**Regional Distribution of Towns with a Population of 1,500 to 3,000 in 1951 and 1996**

Regional Distribution of Towns (n)		
Region	1951	1996
East	8	12
Midlands	5	5
Mid-West	5	5
North-East	3	5
North-West/Donnegal	2	5
South-East	7	5
South-West	13	10
West	1	1
State	44	48

### (iii) Rural Population Change

#### *Population in Rural Areas*

In 1951 over 53 per cent of the state population lived in rural areas, by which is meant open country or local population centres with less than 200 people or, as now defined, less than fifty inhabited houses (Table 2.14). This should not be confused with the term "aggregate rural area" in the census which refers to all places with up to 1,500 people (see below). Aggregate rural population declined more slowly than the population in rural areas as defined here.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s the proportion in rural areas declined substantially to just over 40 per cent in 1971. The decline continued at a slightly slower rate during the 1970s. This slowing of the rate of decline was not confined to the 1970s, but continued into the 1980s and 1990s. However, because the 1970s was a decade of unusually high population growth, the declining proportion on the land translates into an increase in numerical terms. Thus, the rural area population, so defined, fell from 1.57 million in 1951 to 1.19 million in 1971, but increased in the 1970s to 1.28 million. Up to 1991, rural area population declined in absolute as well as relative terms. In the 1991 to 1996 period there was a very slight increase in the population outside settlements of 50 houses or more, as in the 1970s, but the share continued to decline. Since 1981 the decline in the share of population in this more strict definition of rural areas has been continuing at a more gradual rate. It is probable that part of the recent growth in rural areas is an expression of the growth of commuting to towns in all parts of the state.

The longer term trend in rural population decline may be due not only to migration but to the long-term effect of a relatively older

TABLE 2.14

**Population in Country Areas as a Percentage of National Population, 1951-1996**

	1951	1961	1971	1981	1986	1991	1996
Population	1,573,718	1,309,363	1,193,813	1,282,116	1,278,786	1,247,794	1,252,346
% of National Population	53.16	46.46	40.08	37.2	36.12	35.39	34.54

population structure on natural increase in rural areas. In relation to the effect of migration on population loss in rural areas, however, one may distinguish between the 1960s and 1970s. In the 1960s low relative incomes in farming and relatively better pay in non-agricultural employment contributed to an intensification of the exodus from agriculture. In the 1970s, by contrast, there was a narrowing of differences in population growth by region, which may have been related to three factors: rising relative farm income, in part reflecting the Common Agricultural Policy, a decline in traditional industrial employment in Dublin and other major population centres, and rural industrialisation policies. In so far as commuting is a factor, the growth of car ownership over recent decades and improved roads will have facilitated commuters living in rural areas.

Two further aspects of population distribution are considered in relation to the most recent period. These are changes in aggregate rural population and changes at District Electoral Division (DED) level.

#### *Aggregate Rural Population Change*

First, recent trends in settlement patterns may be examined in terms of changes in aggregate urban and aggregate rural population (Table 2.15). The cut-off is towns (inclusive of their environs and suburbs) of 1,500 or over. The 1991-1996 period saw a reversal of the previous period of aggregate rural population decline, from a loss of 29,000 to a rise of 3,000. The recent growth of population in rural areas is noteworthy but has taken place against a backdrop of the continued dominance of urbanisation: in the late 1980s aggregate urban population increased by 14,000 despite a decline in national population and, between 1991 and 1996, urban population increased by 97,000.

At the regional and sub-regional levels the significance of rural population change is often unclear. In the East region the decline in rural population continued in the 1990s. But these changes are miniscule compared to the large growth in urban population. In more rural regions and counties, by contrast, small declines or increases in aggregate rural population are important due both to a lower population base and lower urban share on which to build. There was an improvement, nevertheless, in rural population

TABLE 2.15

Aggregate Town and Rural Population in 1996 and Changes 1991-1996

Regions and Sub-Regions	Aggregate Town Areas		Aggregate Rural Areas		All Areas
	Persons	Change	Persons	Change	Change
	1996	1991-6	1996	1991-96	1991-96
Dublin	1,032,139	33,439	26,125	-479	32,960
Kildare	81,857	11,618	53,135	718	12,336
Meath	37,170	5,117	72,562	-755	4,362
Wicklow	59,985	5,061	42,698	357	5,418
East	1,211,151	55,235	194,520	-159	55,076
Laoighis	15,418	1,173	37,527	-542	631
Longford	6,984	160	23,182	-290	-130
Offaly	21,644	788	37,473	-165	623
Westmeath	26,822	-1,125	36,492	2,559	1,434
Roscommon	9,546	865	42,429	-787	78
Midland	80,414	1,861	177,103	775	2,636
Clare	33,209	2,128	60,797	960	3,088
Limerick	80,893	1,321	84,149	1,765	3,086
Tipperary, N.R.	19,301	-35	38,720	202	167
Mid West	133,403	3,414	183,666	2,927	6,341
Louth	58,482	903	33,684	539	1,442
Cavan	8,974	379	43,970	-231	148
Monaghan	14,437	-135	36,876	155	20
North East	81,893	1,147	114,530	463	1,610
Donegal	28,295	2,115	101,699	-238	1,877
Leitrim	1,532	22	23,525	-266	-244
Sligo	18,509	545	37,312	520	1,065
North West/ Donegal	48,336	2,682	162,536	16	2,698
Carlow	19,168	811	22,448	-137	674
Kilkenny	22,032	2,689	53,304	-988	1,701
Wexford	33,448	630	70,923	1,672	2,302
Tipperary, S.R.	30,535	611	44,979	-15	596
Waterford	56,892	2,967	37,788	89	3,056
South East	162,075	7,708	229,442	621	8,329
Cork	254,012	10,651	166,498	-510	10,141
Kerry	39,386	5,770	86,744	-1,534	4,236
South West	293,398	16,421	253,242	-2,044	14,377
Galway	73,593	6,505	115,261	1,985	8,490
Mayo	23,728	2,318	87,796	-1,507	811
West	97,321	8,823	203,057	478	9,301
State	2,107,991	97,291	1,518,096	3,077	100,368

performance in the 1991-1996 period, relative to the late 1980s in predominantly rural counties, even if this amounted, in some cases, to a smaller decline than previously in rural population. Also, while a number of these counties experienced town population decline in the late 1980s, most have had growing aggregate urban population in the 1990s. The exceptions were Monaghan (down 135) and Westmeath (down 1,125), but both of these, somewhat surprisingly, experienced compensatory increases in aggregate rural population.

The pattern of much recent rural population growth suggests that commuting is an important influence. Simultaneous rural and urban population growth in Galway, Limerick, Sligo and Wexford seem to point to this. In the case of Cork there was a decline in the aggregate rural population but there was substantial growth in towns of 1,500 or more, in the county but outside the county borough. These towns may include many commuters and may have a satellite role in relation to Cork city.

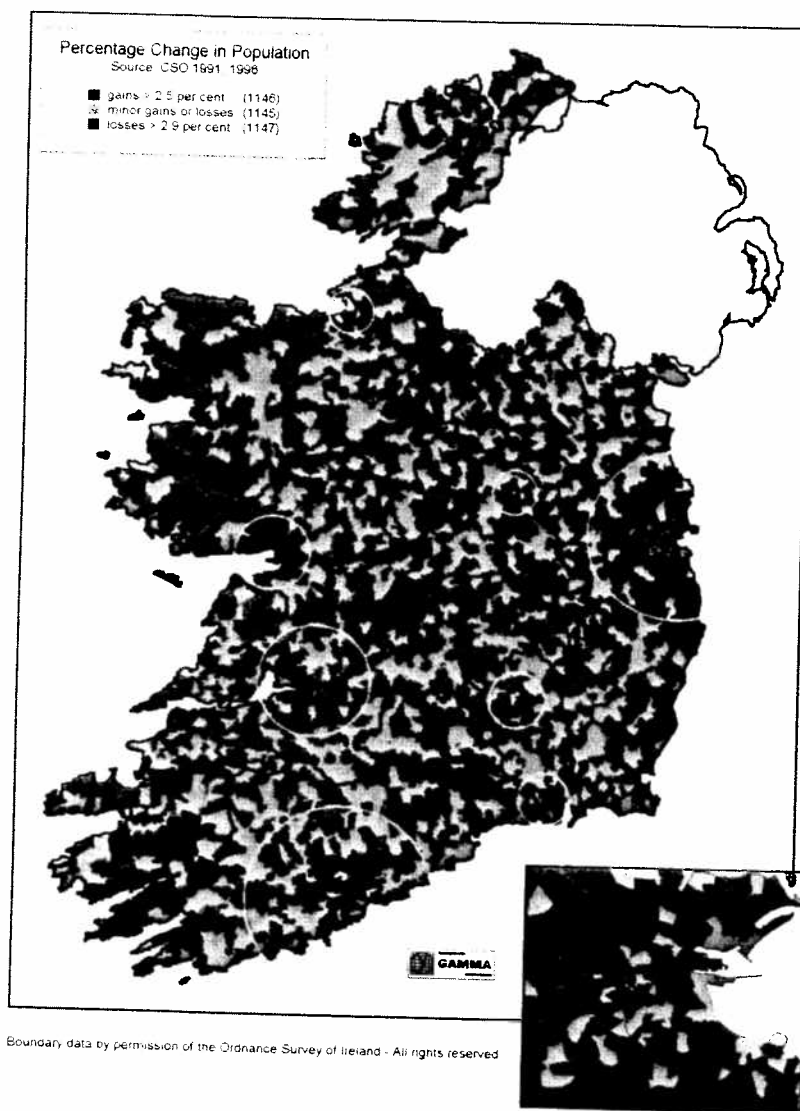
*District Electoral Division Change*

Second, changes at DED level pick up both sub-regional and urban-rural patterns of change. Figure 2.1 shows the change between 1991 and 1996 in 3,438 DEDs.<sup>2</sup> The growth of national population over this period has been reflected in growth rates above 2.5 per cent in the upper third, minor gains and losses in the mid-third (from 2.5 per cent to minus 2.9 per cent) and losses over 2.9 per cent in the remaining third of DEDs. Although growth is concentrated in urban centres, there has been some growth in many rural DEDs beyond major urban centres and towns, and there are districts within larger urban centres where population has declined (see Figure 2.1).

These recent trends have been analysed by Walsh (1996), who points out that much of this spread of growth in rural DEDs appears to be associated either with proximity to a major urban centre or accessibility to one, that is, proximity to a main trunk route. Nevertheless, following the pattern of population decline in rural areas during the 1980s it is heartening to witness population growth in several parts of the demographically weakest sub-regions. The pattern shows that when national population recovers there is a cushioning of the fall, or even some improvement, in more vulnerable districts.

2 The map in Figure 2.1 was provided by Trutz Haase.

**FIGURE 2.1**  
**Population Change, 1991-1996**



In summary, the trends suggest that the recent period population growth has to a limited extent spread out from urban centres over 1,500. This has led to a relatively better performance in aggregate rural population change in 1991-1996 compared to 1986-1991 and to population growth in many rural DEs. However, the growth of rural population is also a reflection of extended commuter zones and, in many areas which have traditionally suffered rural population decline, the trend is still downward. Nevertheless, most of the counties which lost rural population in the first half of the 1990s made gains in overall population. The exceptions were Leitrim and Longford.

#### 4. POPULATION STRUCTURE AND INTERNAL MIGRATION

##### (i) Age Structure and Age Dependency

The age dependency ratios for 1996 in each region and sub-region are shown in Table 2.16. For our purposes we have defined the combined dependency ratio, as the under 20 age group plus the over 60 age group as a proportion of the 20-59 age group. Overall dependency varied around the state average of 94 per cent, from over 116 per cent in Roscommon and Leitrim to less than 81 per cent in Dublin.<sup>3</sup>

Most regions had above the state average, the exception being the East. The four counties with the highest dependency ratios were Roscommon, Leitrim, Mayo and Cavan, which were also the main areas of population decline and the counties with weakest urbanisation rates. To some extent this reflects the high old age dependency ratios in these counties. Each of these sub-regions had old age dependency ratios in excess of 40 per cent, compared to a state average of 29.4 per cent. However, these counties could not be said to have low young dependency ratios as they were close to the

<sup>3</sup> This is a possibly contentious definition but is defended on the grounds of current and projected declining rates of labour force participation above 60 years and below 20. Moreover, the CSO (July 1997) acknowledge that the more usual practice of selecting 15 to 65 years as the active age group is also becoming somewhat arbitrary. We have also calculated ratios on the latter basis. These are in tabular form in Appendix 5 together with comments on any noteworthy differences.

TABLE 2.16

## Age Dependency Ratios by Region and Sub-Region

Region	Dependency Ratio		
	Young	Old	All
North-West/Donegal	71.0	37.2	108.2
Midlands	71.5	35.4	107.0
West	68.4	35.5	103.9
North-East	69.6	32.7	102.3
South-East	67.6	31.7	99.4
Mid-West	66.2	30.9	97.1
South-West	63.9	31.4	95.2
East	58.8	24.3	83.1
Sub-region	Young	Old	All
Roscommon	70.7	45.6	116.3
Leitrim	68.8	47.5	116.2
Mayo	72.5	42.6	115.1
Cavan	73.1	40.5	113.5
Longford	73.8	38.5	112.3
Donegal	73.5	35.6	109.1
Monaghan	73.3	34.3	107.5
Offaly	72.5	32.4	104.9
Tipperary, N.R.	68.6	35.9	104.5
Laoighis	71.5	32.6	104.1
Kerry	66.7	37.0	103.8
Sligo	66.1	36.6	102.6
Tipperary, S.R.	68.5	34.0	102.6
Westmeath	70.2	31.4	101.6
Kilkenny	68.6	32.5	101.1
Clare	68.7	32.4	101.1
Wexford	68.3	31.2	99.5
Carlow	69.4	29.3	98.7
Galway	66.2	31.6	97.8
Meath	70.4	25.4	95.8
Waterford	64.8	30.9	95.7
Louth	65.9	27.9	93.8
Cork	63.1	29.7	92.8
Limerick	64.0	28.4	92.4
Wicklow	65.8	26.3	92.1
Kildare	67.8	18.2	86.0
Dublin	55.9	24.7	80.6
State	63.9	29.4	93.4

TABLE 2.16 – continued

County Borough/County	Dependency Ratio		
	Young	Old	All
Galway County	72.2	37.4	109.6
Waterford County	68.4	34.5	102.9
Cork County	66.7	29.6	96.3
Limerick County	66.7	27.8	94.5
Limerick Co. Borough	58.4	29.5	88.0
Waterford Co. Borough	60.6	26.9	87.5
Cork Co. Borough	55.2	30.0	85.2
South Dublin	70.2	14.5	84.7
Fingal	68.4	14.9	83.2
Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	53.7	28.2	81.9
Dublin Co. Borough	46.4	31.1	77.5
Galway Co. Borough	54.6	20.5	75.1
State	63.9	29.4	93.4

top ratios here too. The four counties with the highest old dependency ratios also have relatively high young dependency ratios – ranging from 69 to 73 per cent, compared to a state average of 64 per cent, and to a maximum of 73.8 per cent in Longford.

By contrast the lowest old age dependency ratios were in the East and particularly in Kildare (18 per cent), Meath (25.4 per cent) and Wicklow (26.3 per cent). Likewise the young dependency ratio is not highest in those counties experiencing rapid population growth or with relatively low old age dependency ratios, but is only moderately above the state average. Only in Dublin and Cork was the young dependency ratio below the state average. These are followed by Wicklow (66 per cent), Kildare (68 per cent), Louth (66 per cent) and Waterford (65 per cent) and Sligo (66 per cent). The counties with the highest young dependency ratios were, in rank order, Longford, Donegal, Monaghan and Cavan. There are variations too within regions. For example, in the East region both Wicklow and Meath have significantly higher old age dependency ratios than Kildare, though all are well below the state average.

Galway city and county exhibit contrasts in terms of old dependency ratios. These urban-rural contrasts are also present in the other main boroughs and their counties, albeit in a weaker form.

The policy implications of higher dependency ratios are not as

simple as might be thought. First, it is true, of course, that community level services – for elderly people for example – must be provided from within the area. However, inter-regional and intra-regional resource transfers between generations also take place. To that extent many local needs may be met through central mechanisms (such as social welfare payments). Second, a lower dependency ratio implies a higher share of population in the working age groups. Thus, policies for the provision of employment need to take special account of those areas with an above average share of population who are “eligible” to seek employment. It is noteworthy, therefore, that areas with higher age dependency ratios, such as less urbanised areas, with declining population or the non-city areas of those counties which contain the main county boroughs also tend to have lower than average unemployment rates (see Chapter 3 Table 3.6): Galway was the exception with county borough unemployment also below average.

We do not deny the existence of intra-urban contrasts or indeed contrasts between rural areas in patterns of age and economic dependency. However, the analysis of age dependency suggests some noteworthy contrasts between rural and urban areas. Typically urban areas have higher working age populations with a greater problem of unemployment, while rural areas have less favourable age structures but lower rates of unemployment.

#### **(ii) Gender, Age Structure and Dependency**

Between 1951 and 1996 there has been a gradual reversal of the population gender imbalance. In 1951 there were 1,036 males per thousand females, falling to 1,010 in 1961, 999 in 1986 and 986 in 1991. In 1996 there were 986 males per thousand females in the national population. This change in the ratio is influenced by differences in births, migration and mortality by gender. First, slightly greater than 50 per cent of all births are male, leading to a male bias in the younger population. The higher the birth-rate, the greater its effect on the proportion of males in society. In 1996 there were 106 males for every 100 females under the age of five. Second, in the economically active age groups the picture becomes quite variable due to the fact that in different decades net male and female emigration rates have diverged widely. This was examined in some detail in the Council’s study of emigration (1991). Third, among older age groups, due to the much higher mortality rate

among males, the male/female ratio is significantly lower. In 1996, there were only 856 males per thousand females in the 65 to 74 age group, only 674 per thousand in the 75 to 84 age group and 439 males per thousand females in the 85-plus age group. At the national level, therefore, population age structure is a significant factor influencing gender ratios. As the population ages this leads to a growing imbalance in favour of females. This is further reinforced by improvements in female, relative to male, life expectancy. In Ireland, the cumulative effect of these factors is a shift, from the 1960s, when males exceeded females in the population by about 15,000, to the present time, when females exceed males by about 25,000.

At the sub-national level, migration, particularly from rural to urban areas, continues to have a large influence and, despite what has happened at national level, the male/female ratio in rural areas remains biased towards males. In 1996, for every 1,000 females in the aggregate rural areas there were 1,060 males. By contrast, for every 1,000 females in urban areas there were 935 males. This is interesting, in that old age dependency is higher in rural areas, yet the gender bias is towards males, who have a lower life expectancy. Evidently, the rural male bias is due to cumulatively higher rates of rural to urban migration by females. In recent decades there has been a decline in males per 1000 females in both rural and urban areas, but this decline has been more gradual in urban areas. Between 1981 and 1996 the urban ratio declined from 943 to 935 while the rural ratio declined from 1,099 to 1,060. This suggests that past imbalances due to differential migration are lessening in importance while the effects of falling birth rates, ageing and differential growth in life expectancy among women are of increasing importance in both rural and urban areas.

Higher rates of rural to urban migration by woman in the fertile age groups directly affect the tendency towards population decline in rural areas. Indirectly, generations of higher female migration from rural to urban areas have also led to higher rates of non-marriage among rural men, fewer marriages and fewer births. Moreover, fertility rates in less urbanised sub-regions have been falling, converging on the lower rates in more urbanised areas and further reducing rural birth rates (Fahey and Fitzgerald 1996). One consequence of these trends has been a greater proportion of older men in rural areas, who are single, living alone, and many of whom

have particular social service needs. However, as noted there are improvements in the gender balance in rural areas. Depending on where these older people are living there may be severe problems providing services, support and care for them. But it is impossible to say precisely what the implications of these changes may be for the provision of services in rural areas without much more detailed information at local level.

### **(iii) Internal Migration and Settlement Patterns**

In recent years, concern has been expressed over the effect of internal migration and there have been suggestions that Government policy encourages the movement of people from Western and more rural counties into the East region. We, therefore, examine evidence on internal migration, its place relative to other components of population change, and the constraints or scope which may arise for policy makers.

Internal migration comprises various different types of movement. Not all changes of residence are triggered by changes of place of employment. Some are related to changes in workplace location and some to a variety of household, life-cycle or social factors (see Chapter 1, Figure 1.1). The link between employment changes and change of residence usually arises only when the distance between existing residence and the new place employment is too great to allow for regular commuting. Hence short and long distance migration figures usually point to different motivating factors: short distance migration is not usually necessitated by job changes. Provided it leaves the individual or household within a commuting range of the place of work (or college etc.) movement of residence may be influenced principally by a range of social, family, age, cost, income, taste, or status related factors.

#### *The 1960s*

According to one of the first Irish studies on the subject of internal migration, inter-county mobility was at a relatively low level in the 1960s and early 1970s by international standards, but it was, nevertheless, important as a component in sub-national population change (Hughes & Walsh 1980). The East region, particularly Dublin, was the most noteworthy net recipient of internal migrants.

However, although the East region consistently gained from all other regions through internal migration there was already a counter-movement from Dublin city and county. While acknowledging the importance of internal migration, the findings stressed that it only accounted for one quarter of urban population growth, and that natural increase was a more important factor. A further notable point is that, in spite of the contrast between the East region and the rest of the country in relation to the direction of inter-county migration, most counties almost without exception, experienced substantial population outflows due to net external migration during the 1960s. For example, Co. Wicklow, which had a net in-migration from other *counties* of approximately 84 per thousand, experienced a net external migration, to other *counties*, of approximately 70 per thousand. Dublin, Kildare and Meath experienced greater net outflows due to external migration than they gained in positive net inflows due to inter-county migration.

#### *The 1970s*

Houriha (1982) showed the continuing importance of cities and the changing role of other towns in relation both to internal migration and immigration during the 1970s. He distinguished between four types of population movement, each with varying influences. He confirmed the importance of Dublin as a recipient of internal migrants. However, he also identified a pattern of immigration directed towards a number of dispersed towns with a manufacturing base, which usually lacked a traditional role in relation to administration and services. Also, there was, in the 1970s, a good deal of migration within counties. Both of these trends might have been related to the extensive growth of manufacturing employment in more rural regions. Another observation was that internal migration across county boundaries, of the kind which benefited Dublin, was more generally associated with those cities and towns with public administration and defence employees.

In his findings and conclusions, Hourihan expressed concern about the continuing growth of Dublin during the 1970s, which required regulatory and planning measures. He suggested that the most effective way to counter the growth of the capital would be through the promotion of secondary centres such as Cork, Limerick or Waterford. He also suggested that short distance migration to smaller urban centres at regional or county level might be a



preferable means of sustaining employment growth than relying on commuting. This was because average commuting distances of many rural towns were much higher than in major urban centres.

#### *The 1980s*

Cawley (1991) analysed internal migration in the early 1970s, early 1980s and mid-1980s, examining regional, urban, rural, short distance and long distance aspects. Approximately 200,000 people changed address within the state over the year 1985-86 (6 per cent of the population). Almost three quarters of these moves comprised changes of address within and between urban areas or within and between rural areas, but principally the former. Also, 60 per cent of intra-urban migration was short distance movement (i.e. within the same town area) while within rural areas only 40 per cent of it was short distance (within the same county).

Cawley found that inter-county migration in 1971, 1981 and 1986 was dominated by two key flows: firstly, into counties with county boroughs – Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Waterford and Galway, and secondly, from Co. Dublin into the three adjacent counties of the East region. These trends in inter-county migration evidently pick up the effect of urbanisation and the counter movement arising from urban spillover.

Flows from rural-to-urban (25,000) and urban-to-rural (21,000) were low by comparison with intra-urban and intra-rural movements. Rural-urban flows were largely to the East region, followed by the South-West, but the West and Mid-West too increasingly became important poles of attraction. About one-third of urban-to-rural flows were within the East Region, followed by the South West and Mid-West, and other large urban centres.

Urban to rural migration largely reflects the process of suburbanisation, whether around large cities and towns, through council and private housing estates, or on the outskirts of towns and villages of all sizes through “ribbon” development. In 1986 Cawley found that such migration comprised only 10 per cent of all internal migration. This type of migration may reflect the extension of commuting distances rather than any change in the location of economic activity. She found that the South West region experienced the most notable rate of urban to rural migration within the county boundary, a reflection of suburban overspill from Cork.

Waterford city, Athlone, Mullingar and Tullamore had similar experiences. Cawley notes that, although the scale of urban to rural migration is less than rural to urban migration, the significance of urban to rural migration is greater, both in relation to the existing population and in environmental terms. Thus, internal migration has been the major factor behind the transformation of small villages (previously defined as rural) into large residential towns, such as typifies many places in Meath, Kildare, Wicklow and parts of Co. Dublin.

Cawley confirms that the role of internal migration in the 1970s and 1980s, has had a limited influence on population distribution, as compared with external migration and natural increase. It also continues to have a bias to the East, as was the case in previous decades. However, since the 1970s, possibly due to the expansion of regional technical colleges, decentralisation of some civil service functions (see Chapter 3) and investment in other key services such as hospitals outside the two key centres, Cawley has also noted a gradual increase in the pulling power of other urban centres. In addition to the continuation of Cork as a destination county and city, Limerick and Galway have also increased in importance. She also notes a longstanding pattern of migration into Donegal, related to its close links with Northern Ireland and to a history of seasonal migration to Scotland.

Walsh (1991) in an analysis of inter-county migration during the 1970s and 1980s, suggests that after a phase during which the direction of internal migration shifted more towards secondary urban centres, the late 1980s witnessed a return to rising shares for Dublin. This he attributes in part to a higher proportion of those graduates who remain in Ireland and obtain employment, doing so in and around Dublin. In the late 1970s, 56 per cent of graduates remaining in Ireland obtained employment in Dublin but this proportion had increased to 61 per cent by 1988. The South-West, West and Mid-West also gained a substantially greater percentage of non-emigrating graduates than the remaining regions. He relates these trends to the continuing adjustment in the labour force which has resulted in greater spatial concentration of employment, and predicts that this trend will continue in the absence of a locational policy applied to certain key sub-sectors.

The second important policy implication, derived by Walsh, arises from the high volume of short distance migration which is evident,

particularly in Dublin and the three surrounding counties. This migration largely relates to residential mobility and has obvious implications for the overall pattern of residential development in the East region. He recommends that they 'should constitute a single region for physical, social and economic planning and that there should be one authority to co-ordinate the administrative functions within the region'. Against this background, he suggests that the division of the East region between Dublin and the Mid-East resulted in 'a very unsatisfactory carving up of Ireland's largest and most complex functional region'.

#### The 1990s

Table 2.17 shows internal migration by county and county borough in 1990/91. It shows gross inflow, outflow, and net flow into or out of a county or county borough. Every county or county borough experienced some inflows and outflows. Gross inflows exceeded gross outflows in only eleven areas, mostly in the East. However, both Galway county borough and Waterford county borough had substantial net inflows, both in absolute terms and compared to their gross flows. Conversely, negative flows were highest in the county parts of Galway, all of Mayo, Wexford and Waterford county, all of which had negative flows in excess of five hundred people. Frequently, both in these areas and in areas which had lower net outflows, the effect on total population, were it to continue over a full intercensal period, would be substantial. The significance of the net flows for the areas concerned depends on total population in the area. Thus, while the net flow to the larger borough areas and more built up counties would be minor as a factor in overall growth, the significance of even small outflows for less populated rural counties is correspondingly greater.

Recent data on internal migration and immigration have been published by the CSO in its volume on Principal Demographic Results (CSO July 1997). The CSO shows that in 1996 almost 99 per cent of the usually resident population were usually resident within the state a year previously, that is, about one per cent had come to Ireland from abroad over the year. The level of internal migration in 1995/1996 was well up on 1990/1991 and on 1986, which was well above the 1990/1991 level. This applies both to migration from elsewhere in a county or migration from another county. In 1991, only 95,000 people moved residence within a

TABLE 2.17

#### Internal Migration by County/County Borough, in 1990-91\*

Region	County/County Borough	County Inflow	County Outflow	Net Flow	Share of Inter-County Flows	
					Inflows	Outflows
East	Dublin Co. Borough	13,398	11,349	2049	20.9	17.7
	Dun Laoghaire - Rathdown	5,017	4,594	423	7.8	7.2
	Dublin - Belgard	4,442	4,513	-71	6.9	7.0
	Dublin - Fingal	4,055	3,249	806	6.3	5.1
	Kildare	2,981	1,987	994	4.7	3.1
	Wicklow	1,874	1,632	242	2.9	2.5
	Meath	1,700	1,597	103	2.7	2.5
Midlands	Westmeath	1,009	1,215	-206	1.6	1.9
	Laoighis	638	868	-230	1.0	1.4
	Offaly	596	902	-306	0.9	1.4
	Roscommon	544	933	-389	0.8	1.5
	Longford	300	524	-224	0.5	0.8
Mid-West	Limerick County	2,548	2,563	-15	4.0	4.0
	Limerick Co. Borough	1,559	1,514	45	2.4	2.4
	Clare	1,170	1,422	-252	1.8	2.2
	Tipperary, N.R.	763	1,130	-367	1.2	1.8
North-East	Louth	931	1,021	-90	1.5	1.6
	Cavan	495	677	-182	0.8	1.1
	Monaghan	338	509	-171	0.5	0.8
North-West	Donegal	932	923	9	1.5	1.4
	Sligo	835	966	-131	1.3	1.5
	Leitrim	271	393	-122	0.4	0.6
South-East	Waterford Co. Borough	1,253	717	536	2.0	1.1
	Kilkenny	904	1,010	-106	1.4	1.6
	Carlow	821	793	28	1.3	1.2
	Tipperary, S.R.	810	1,265	-455	1.3	2.0
	Wexford	755	1,340	-585	1.2	2.1
	Waterford County	649	1,206	-557	1.0	1.9
South-West	Cork County	3,320	3,395	-75	5.2	5.3
	Cork Co. Borough	2,838	3,102	-264	4.4	4.8
	Kerry	1,130	1,465	-335	1.8	2.3
West	Galway Co. Borough	3,016	1,344	1672	4.7	2.1
	Galway County	1,414	2,348	-934	2.2	3.7
	Mayo	772	1,612	-840	1.2	2.5
	Total	64,078	64,078	0.0	100.0	100.0

\* Sorted by Region and Inflow

county as compared to 140,100 in 1996. Only 64,100 moved from another county in 1990/1991 compared to 84,500 in 1995/1996. The late 1980s was a period of heavy emigration, which may partly explain the lower internal migration figures for 1990/1991. Although the economy was recovering at that time, the UK economy was booming and unemployment in Ireland was high. Also, 1990/1991 marked the beginning of a recession, in contrast to 1995/1996, which was characterised by boom conditions. The latter conditions would tend to favour active internal migration.

Taken together, these studies suggest that, given the inevitability of further declining numbers in agriculture, the development of urban centres at regional or sub-regional level offers the best prospect for directing internal migration towards the consolidation of regional or local population levels. With declining fertility and a likely fall in emigration, the role of internal migration could become relatively more important, as it is in other developed economies. This could possibly create some scope for policy makers, for example in planning third level education and training through FÁS etc., to lessen inter-regional migration by students where this is avoidable.

#### *Commuting Patterns*

Commuting can be an alternative to internal migration. Irish commuting patterns are changing, with an increase in longer distance commuting. This implies that not just the suburbs and environs of towns experience population growth but towns and rural areas with ease of access to a major or larger urban centre also tend to grow. Walsh (1996) reports changes in population density by district electoral division (DED, of which there are some 3,400) between 1991 and 1996. He shows a hub and spoke pattern to the distribution of DEDs experiencing population growth. That is, in addition to growth in the suburbs and surrounds of towns and cities, it is possible to detect a pattern of population growth along the main trunk routes, but beyond the towns.

These trends are, no doubt, reinforced by the focus of investment in infrastructure, particularly through structural funds aimed at developing the primary routes. The effect is to bring more rural areas into an expanding hinterland of the main boroughs, for example well beyond the counties of the East which surround Dublin city. However, this also serves to highlight the continued

difficulties in the remaining areas outside these wider commuter zones, which typically are both far away from substantial urban centres and away from the corridors between them. This problem is particularly acute in some of the counties of the West (Mayo), North-West (Donegal and Leitrim), North-East (Cavan and Monaghan), and Midlands (Roscommon and Longford).

Some of these are border areas, which have been affected by the problems arising from the Northern troubles. There may be better prospects for them arising from a successful outcome to the peace process. The policy implications for cross-border collaboration benefiting areas such as these – on both sides of the border – need to be further explored. Appendix 6 to this Chapter summarises recent trends in population distribution patterns in Northern Ireland which reveal some issues of common interest related to settlement patterns.

## **5. SETTLEMENT PATTERNS AND SOCIAL INEQUALITY**

The exploration of settlement patterns and spatial aspects remains a somewhat abstract exercise unless it helps to identify social or economic policy implications. But social or economic differences or inequalities do not coincide with regional or sub-regional divisions. We therefore review some important recent pieces of analysis of the spatial aspects of social inequality. Each one, in a different way provides insights into the complex spatial patterns of inequality that exist and testifies to the need for caution in the face of generalisation based on either regional or sub-regional divisions or an urban/rural contrast.

The first study by Nolan, Whelan and Williams (1997) used three distinct approaches to spatial aspects of poverty as part of their 1987 and 1994 studies. These approaches and the key findings were:

- a regional typology (1963 planning regions – due to sample size sub-regional analysis was not feasible). The differences across regions in 1994 were not startling; the main finding was that the risk of poverty in the East fell relative to other regions between 1987 and 1994.
- a settlement/area typology (categories comprising: “open country”, “village/town < 3,000”, “town > 3,000”, “Cork,

Limerick, Galway, Waterford”, and “Dublin city or county”). This revealed no noteworthy concentration of poverty in one type of area over another, although between 1987 and 1994 there was a decline in poverty risk in open country, and a rise in poverty risk in Dublin, and a relatively higher risk of poverty in both sample years in towns under 3,000.

- a tenure typology (comprising: “own outright”, “own with mortgage”, “local authority tenant purchase”, “local authority rented, private rented”). This was the most revealing approach, showing that people in local authority rented accommodation were at most risk of poverty in both years and, although the incidence of this category of poor has declined with the numbers in such tenure type, the risk was higher in 1994 than in 1987.

Thus, poverty is extensive in all of the geographically defined regions and different trends have been exhibited by different regions and settlement patterns over time. The analysis by tenure serves to emphasise how complex the spatial expression of poverty is, encompassing distinct pockets of poverty which may be adjacent to affluent areas so that regions, sub-regions or sub-units of urban settlements each have a chequered distribution of inequality. These findings are a reminder of the danger of committing an “ecological fallacy” by attributing the average conditions of a region or town to the sub-groups or individuals in it.

Jackson and Haase (1996) confirm the need for much more granular analysis of the spatial distribution of deprivation and affluence. Using the SAPS (Small Area Population Statistics), data from the 1991 Census of Population, they classified District Electoral Divisions (DEDs) on a scale of deprivation and produced a national map of deprivation based on it. To classify each DED, they conducted a factor analysis of census deprivation indicators. Their findings led them to identify three types of factors associated with the spatial distribution of poverty. These were “social class” “urban deprivation” and “rural deprivation”:

Social class was defined on the basis of high loadings on such indicators as the proportion in the DED who were:

- in higher education;
- leaving school at over age 20;

- leaving school at under 15;
- in higher/lower professions;
- in unskilled manual occupations, and
- average rooms per person in dwelling.

Urban deprivation or affluence was defined on the basis of the proportions in the DED who were:

- owner occupiers;
- local authority tenants;
- lone parents, and
- unemployed.

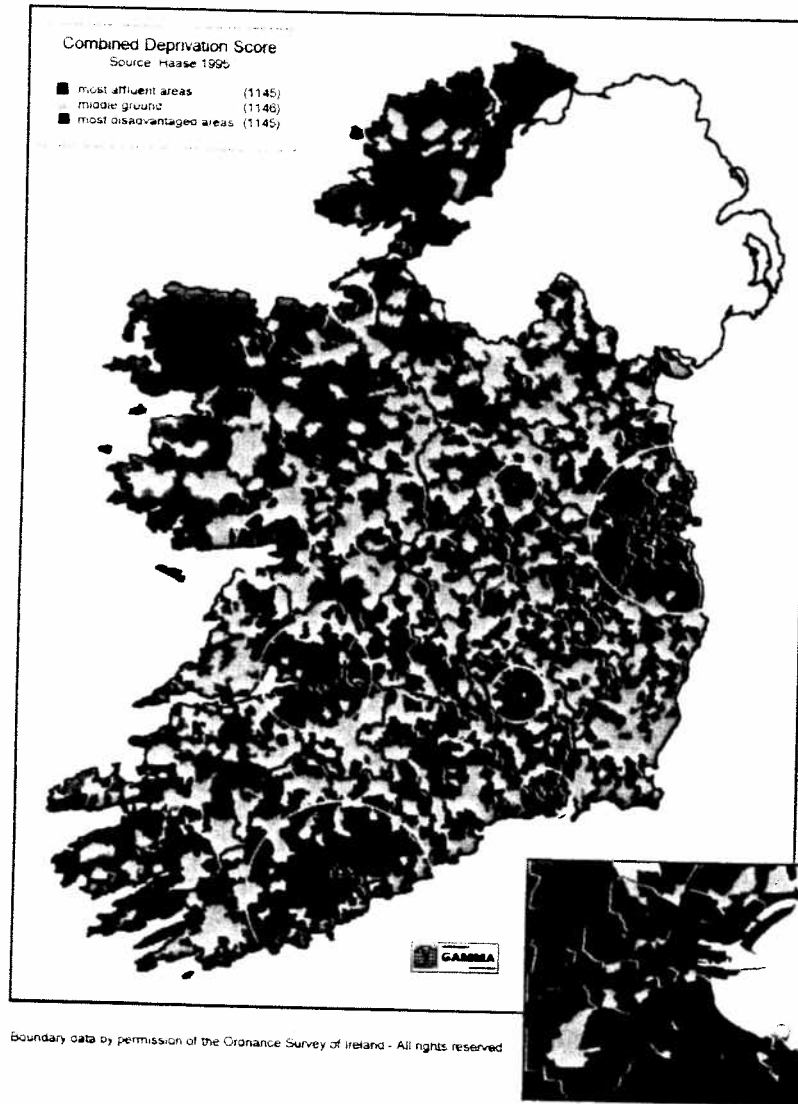
Rural deprivation or affluence was based of high loadings on such items as:

- age dependency rate;
- proportion of small farmers;
- proportion of households with two cars.

Consistent with the findings of Nolan and his colleagues, they concluded that social class is the factor of most importance, although there are important distinct aspects to deprivation in rural and urban areas. Critical, however, is the fact that the pattern of distribution cannot be summarised in regional or sub-regional terms. For purposes of illustration the authors also assign scores to each of the 3,436 DEDs based on the average level of deprivation. They then split the results into three equal divisions based on the points ranking of each DED. The results are presented in the form of a map showing the ‘most affluent’ DEDs, the ‘most deprived’ and the ‘middle ground’ (this is reproduced here in Figure 2.2). Their classification of the geography of affluence and deprivation is quite informative: Using this map they identify a second feature from their analysis which is that the main urban centres, most obviously Dublin and Cork, but also Galway, Limerick, Waterford and smaller towns are characterised by what they describe as an urban fringe of affluence surrounding the central area and extending into the hinterland. These affluent belts often comprise satellite communities which have expanded through industrial expansion and new housing development but are mixed with sometimes large

FIGURE 2.2

Affluence and Deprivation in Ireland in 1991



Source: Kindly provided by Trutz Haase, based on his paper prepared for the Conference on Rural Development and Social Exclusion entitled 'The Nature and Extent of Poverty and Social Exclusion in Rural Ireland'. Cork, 1996.

agricultural holdings. They argue that these urban belts will continue to expand and their effects will extend into a wider hinterland. These belts have developed not only due to population growth but as an escape from inflated centre city rents and housing prices driven by commercial pressure. Consequently, many parts of urban centres (and the some of the older suburbs) are characterised by extensive disadvantage among city dwellers (see Figure 2.2).

Beyond the affluent belts lie what are described as transition zones. These have not yet gained from the beneficial aspects of urban expansion, but do not suffer deprivation to the same extent as parts of Donegal, Mayo, West Galway, West Clare, North Kerry and the extreme West of Limerick, West Kerry, Leitrim, North Galway, North-West Roscommon and a good part of Sligo.

The authors then question the traditional distinction between rural and urban, in relation to the spatial distribution of poverty, suggesting instead a class influence which is expressed through the growth of the urban fringe, while inner city and rural areas simultaneously decline. They add that rural industrialisation policies have brought about some similarity between the fate of urban and rural populations, particularly when the loss of certain factories from rural areas replicates the experience of industrial decline in the cities. The mapping of affluence and deprivation in this way is very valuable in showing that while there are distinct regional biases and urban patterns, there are also limitations to the extent to which one can view deprivation in regional terms or as a function of an urban-rural discontinuity.

A third study, while not national in coverage, but with an even more detailed spatial focus, was conducted on behalf of the Dublin County Council and, more recently, the Fingal, South Dublin County and Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Councils (Nexus 1995, 1994a and 1994b). The studies, under the acronym CODAN, (Co. Dublin Areas of Need) were first compiled in 1987 by Nexus research co-operative. The purpose of this study was to provide area level profiles in order to target neighbourhoods in need. The approach used was to combine Census of Population data (from 1981 and 1991) with information collected from local authorities, other statutory agencies and community workers. The studies are interesting in providing data at the level of enumeration area, which is below the level of district electoral division. In addition to gathering information on individual households – including type of

tenure, number of persons, percentage lone parent households, percentage households with six or more persons, primary school enrolment, unemployment rate of principal earners, number on unemployment assistance or benefit, and average incomes – the study also reports on amenities, community organisations and transport services in the area.

The local area approach, by focusing on neighbourhoods, identifies pockets of severe need. For example, eight neighbourhoods which are profiled in South County Dublin have an average of 66.8 per cent unemployment among principal earners. The population size of these neighbourhoods ranges from 1,228 in Balgaddy to 7,043 in Killinarden (see Table 2.18). Smaller neighbourhood units have very high unemployment levels, for example, even higher than the unemployment rates in the PESP partnership areas, which comprise larger population units, ranging from 20,000 to 60,000. Unemployment as a percentage of labour force in the Dublin area in 1986 was

**TABLE 2.18**

**Percentage Unemployment Rate Among Principal Earners**

Neighbourhood	Per Cent	Population
Bawnogue	68.1%	4,884
Deansrath	63.6%	4,237
Balgaddy	62.9%	1,228
Clonburris	66.7%	2,315
Neilstown	55.9%	4,523
Rowlagh	73.4%	6,855
Quarryvale	59.5%	2,516
Ballyboden	61.7%	3,855
Ballycragh	72.7%	2,002
Brookfield	69.4%	3,015
Jobstown	66.8%	5,188
Fettercairn	63.2%	2,992
Killinarden	72.0%	7,043
St. Dominic's	61.8%	4,774
St. Aonghus's	67.7%	7,000 (approx.)
Average	66.8%	

Source: CODAN (1994).

18.6 per cent but ranged between 25 per cent and 50 per cent in the disadvantaged areas, for example, it was over 47 per cent in Ballymun. Evidently, poverty and disadvantage find a geographical expression in settlement patterns and clusters of disadvantage. We must therefore be wary of the pitfalls of adopting any uniform approach to the spatial division of urban and rural areas. The CODAN research shows that neighbourhoods constitute distinct units within areas, as defined in the area based approach to long term unemployment.

**6. DISCUSSION: URBANISATION AND URBAN HIERARCHIES**

Although urban population growth and the decline of the proportion in rural areas has been a vital aspect of economic and social transformation in modern Ireland, the inevitability of this has not been easily accommodated in the public mind. Bannon (1983) attributes this to historically close links between the agrarian and nationalist movements which sometimes fostered an enduring attachment to rural utopian visions and an anti-urban bias. Such anti-urban views have nevertheless been at odds with actual development and change and have, in his view, obscured the need and ability to address the increasingly urban-centred dynamics of economic and social development. Ironically, this has, he says, often led to failures to address adequately the regulatory implications of urbanisation processes. This was an issue that arose in the 1960s and provoked a debate on the alternatives to the further expansion of the capital. In the context of regulation of urban growth a recurrent theme has been the primacy of Dublin and the claim that the rest of the country suffers under-development for its sake. The Buchanan Report (1968) – in contrast to traditional responses based on the designated areas of the 1950s – proposed to counter Dublin's dominance through an urban-centred approach which targeted regional and to some extent local "growth centres". A different approach was adopted to regional development policy in the 1970s with a more extensive rural industrialisation strategy. The 1970s, however, was still a decade of urbanisation, much of it around Dublin itself.

Apart from the irony of distorting the approach to regulatory aspects of urbanisation, anti-urban views are also, perhaps more importantly, responsible for failing to grasp the pivotal role of the

urban system in functional terms and the benefits to rural hinterlands which thriving towns may bring. While it is certainly true that establishing some counter-balance to the dominance of Dublin and the East is an important task, it must also be acknowledged that it is the development of the *urban* system in other respects that offers the most possibilities for achieving this. This is evident from the fact that population recovery at the sub-regional level is almost always associated with the presence of an urban system which becomes the basis for holding onto population through increased proportions in the aggregate town population. The absence of strong urban systems in Leitrim, Cavan, Roscommon and Mayo illustrate this. This absence is not simply a product of population decline but has long been a contributory factor. Although urbanisation, or the rise in the proportion of population living in towns, is a relatively modern development, the towns which act as magnets for this process are not modern creations (Johnson 1994).

Walsh (1995), in a presentation at the launch of the NESC report on *New Approaches to Rural Development*, contrasted two approaches to settlement patterns and to regions. The first approach is confined to treating regions as patchwork, with the implication of fixed or arbitrary carving up of a national territory, which are often the legal reflection of bygone economic, political, and social patterns of organisation and settlement but may now serve an administrative purpose. For example, the counties of today date from the late medieval and early part of modern Irish history, particularly the shiring of Ireland that followed the plantations. The continued importance of the land based economy of Ireland in the 19<sup>th</sup> and much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the fact that over one-third of the population still live in rural situations today, have given rise to another subjective dimension in the form of regional or more usually county identities, often built up and sustained through sports and cultural bodies. Such a sense can persist even among people who have migrated to urban areas or even emigrated.

From such a perspective a static perception of population distribution and the requirements of maintaining regional or sub-regional levels may arise. Our examination of population distribution by county and region, on its own therefore, would be remiss without an analysis of the role and importance of urbanisation in the process of distributing population.

The alternative approach to regions, outlined by Walsh, is based on a pyramid of areas or regions, and implicitly of urban settlements, whereby successive groups of small population settlements with their hinterlands are nested around larger regional and national centres. This model seeks not to separate the state into parts, but to relate higher and lower levels of aggregation through some functional division of labour that best obtains the efficient and equitable use and distribution of resources between the national, regional, sub-regional and local levels. In an international context the ideal typical model would imply:

- villages and rural areas nested around
- towns and counties nested around
- regions and regional centres nested around
- national capitals and European or global centres.

The latter approach views each region or sub region as a subset or subsystem of a larger unit. This concept, without ignoring the value of competition between regions, better accommodates the notion of regional and sub-regional specialisation and complementarity between such regions and between higher and lower levels. For this reason we have also examined the hierarchical distribution of population between urban and rural settlement types. While our examination of urbanisation and the distribution of population by size of centre and region reveals the validity of an urban-rural settlement hierarchy, it also reveals important variations and unevenness in the regional and sub-regional patterns.

These contrasting ideas about regions and settlement patterns have implications for the approach to economic development, efficient and equitable service provision, planning and regulatory issues. Certain spatial units, for example local areas, have many strengths, but also limitations, particularly in relation to specialist services which are only technically possible or economically feasible if provided on a certain scale. Deciding the appropriate level for each type of service is a key policy issue.

In reviewing the empirical patterns, the concept of an urban hierarchy is useful, as Johnson (1994) notes, provided it is not taken too literally. The hierarchy of settlement patterns is, to a large extent, influenced by the range of services which villages, towns or cities of respective sizes can sustain. In the real world, however, the

definition of such rational hierarchies is rarely uncontentious. First, historical and geographical factors, which have influenced settlement in the past, exercise influences which may run counter to a more contemporary notion of a rational allocation of services. Inherited patterns in the distribution of agricultural or industrial activity, buildings and infrastructure may not coincide with current requirements.

Second, the location or expansion of modern industry and services is not necessarily such as to fit into a nationally defined rational hierarchy, but exercises an influence on settlement patterns directly or indirectly. Historically, the location of many traditional industries was influenced by factors such as the proximity of natural resources, local markets, access to ports etc., giving a specific industrial character to different regions. However, the selection of location by investors today is driven by many additional considerations affecting potential costs and benefits which may lead to a different geographic distribution. This can, in turn, influence settlement patterns, service requirements and the location of key public services and functions.

Third, the notion of a rational hierarchy has connotations of a single peak, whereas, in fact, rival centres often compete over the right to exercise certain functions, such as to be host to the headquarters of business or state organisations, or to provide a unique specialist service, such as a technological college, university or specialist medical service. There is no automatic rule which places such functions in the largest or capital city, even if, based on historical patterns, it often seems to be the obvious choice. Moreover, in the context of a global urban system, there is often a case for specialist functions serving many countries being located in a handful of centres. Thus, there is always a tension between urban centres in spite of some functional division of labour between them.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

### (i) Urbanisation and the Maintenance of Population

Our analysis bears out and to an extent qualifies other commentaries on, and analysis of, changing settlement patterns in the Republic of Ireland. Such accounts consistently reveal certain patterns and trends (Cawley, 1996; 1995; 1991). Of note in Ireland are:

- (i) the dominance which a relatively small number of large centres hold in the overall population distribution;
- (ii) the very large number of small settlements that exist;
- (iii) the continuing importance, despite recent decades of urbanisation, of living on farms, in open country or in very small settlements,
- (iv) the emergence of satellite and dormitory towns around the main cities.

These patterns are broadly confirmed in our account. Our examination qualifies conclusions offered by some commentators in relation to some additional features of urbanisation in Ireland. These qualifications are related to two claims:

- (i) It is sometimes emphasised that imbalance in the distribution of population between the East region and rest of the state is increasing. We have identified a persistence in this imbalance, but it is growing at a weaker rate. In addition, from 1991 to 1996, the West region increased not just its population but also its share. Sub-regions outside the East which increased their share include Clare, Galway, Kerry and Waterford;
- (ii) A widespread decline of towns and villages outside the zone of influence of larger settlements. It is not the case that most towns and villages have declined in size. Most of them have grown, but the growth of those which lack any strategic location tends to be relatively modest with the result that population growth in these towns lags behind other towns.

The analysis shows that, although several regions and sub-regions have experienced relative population decline, there is much evidence of stabilisation. The chapter also indicates that most regions are affected by the common factors which act upon national population growth and decline. Population decline or growth cannot simply be described in terms of regional or sub-regional contrasts and certainly cannot simply be explained in these terms. It is important to understand the separate and independent dynamics of urbanisation and its consequences for the distribution of population. Urbanisation is a process that takes place in all regions and sub-regions, and to that extent is contributing not only to regional



contrasts but also to similarities. Indeed, urbanisation at the regional and sub-regional level contributes significantly to maintaining population and population share at sub-national level.

The chapter also demonstrates that urbanisation, while necessary to the maintenance of population and population share, does not have uniformly beneficial or negative consequences for urban and rural populations. That is, the growth of towns does not necessarily entail the decline of living standards for the smaller population in the countryside. The benefits of economic restructuring are shared unequally both within urban and rural settings. The chapter shows that this is the case by reviewing evidence on the spatial distribution of poverty and affluence.

A number of key patterns and trends have been identified in this Chapter. Some of these are positive and some negative in terms of the settlement objectives often cited of maintaining the level or share of population by different regions or counties. While the state and all regions experienced population increase in the 1991 to 1996 period there are very marked intra-regional variations. The latter indicate that the sub-regional level is a crucial dimension of realistic policy analysis, planning and implementation.

The analysis of the settlement hierarchy also indicates considerable economic and social variations operating across regions and intra-regionally. In particular some counties are poorly endowed in terms of the urban characteristics generally considered favourable to employment creation and the delivery of a comprehensive range of public services.

In recognising the inevitability of changing patterns of settlement embodied in urbanisation, this review has sought to avoid an uncritical view of urbanisation itself. The perspective that emerges is one that views settlement possibilities not in abstract regional or sub-regional terms but in relation to the opportunities provided by existing patterns of urban settlement and population distribution.

The examination of the spatial aspects of social inequality yields a complex pattern that must be understood in terms of several spatial dimensions. Inequality cannot be reduced to regional or sub-regional contrasts without the risk of ecological fallacy. Nor does it line up in terms of simple urban/rural contrasts. There are inequalities within both rural and urban populations. There are both

shared and unique characteristics to be found in urban and rural patterns of deprivation and affluence.

In Chapters 3, 4 and 5 we look at the distribution of economic activity, the spatial dimensions of economic development policy and the implications for public service provisions of evolving settlement patterns.

## APPENDIX 1

### SUB-REGIONAL POPULATION TRENDS

#### *Sub-regions of the East*

Table A2.1 shows the level and percentage of national population in each sub-region of the East – Dublin, Kildare, Meath and Wicklow – from 1951 to 1996. The 1950s saw a slight increase in population in the region, all of which was in Dublin, while there was a small population decline in the other counties. Thereafter all sub-regions had vigorous population growth, particularly Kildare, which has now exceeded – by 18 per cent – the population level it had prior to the Famine. Rapid expansion of satellite towns in north Kildare account for much of this growth. Over the whole period the share of national population in each sub-region has also risen. In the case of Dublin there is a stabilisation of share after 1971. All of the sub-regions in the East also survived high emigration of the late 1980s without net population decline, though Dublin merely stabilised between 1986 and 1991. In contrast, the shares of the other sub-regions have risen more rapidly during the 1970s and subsequently.

TABLE A2.1

Population Level and Percentage of National Population in Sub-Regions of the East, 1951-1996

Sub-region	1951	1961	1971	1981	1986	1991	1996
Dublin	693,022	718,332	852,219	1,003,164	1,021,449	1,025,304	1,058,264
%	23.41	25.49	28.61	29.13	28.85	29.08	29.18
Kildare	66,437	64,420	71,977	104,122	116,247	122,656	134,992
%	2.24	2.29	2.42	3.02	3.28	3.48	3.72
Meath	66,337	65,122	71,729	95,419	103,881	105,370	109,732
%	2.24	2.31	2.41	2.77	2.93	2.99	3.03
Wicklow	62,590	58,473	66,295	87,449	94,542	97,265	102,683
%	2.11	2.07	2.23	2.54	2.67	2.76	2.83
East	888,386	906,347	1,062,220	1,290,154	1,336,119	1,350,595	1,405,671
%	30.01	32.16	35.67	37.47	37.74	38.31	38.77

#### *Sub-regions of the Midlands*

Table A2.2 shows the level and percentage of national population in each sub-region of the Midlands – Laois, Offaly, Longford, Roscommon and Westmeath – from 1951 to 1996. While the region's population in 1996 was slightly lower than in 1951, there are different population patterns across the four counties. Only Roscommon and Longford had lower populations in 1996 than in 1951. The decline in population in Roscommon over the period was over 23 per cent and in Longford over 12 per cent. These figures contrast strongly with a population increase of over 16 per cent in Westmeath and over 12 per cent in Offaly. Longford differs from Roscommon not only in the magnitude of the decline over the period but in the fact that it has experienced more periods of population growth. Population density in Westmeath is now the highest in this region at almost twice that of Roscommon. Having failed to emulate the population recovery of the other counties that took place from the 1960s, Roscommon only experienced a mild and temporary population growth in the 1970s. The magnitude of the population decrease in Roscommon over the entire period suggests that its experience is more similar to that of other western counties, such as Galway and Mayo or more particularly, Leitrim,

TABLE A2.2

Population Level and Percentage of National Population in Sub-Regions of the Midlands, 1951-1996

Sub-region	1951	1961	1971	1981	1986	1991	1996
Laois	48,430	45,069	45,259	51,171	53,284	52,314	52,945
%	1.64	1.60	1.52	1.49	1.50	1.48	1.46
Offaly	52,544	51,533	51,829	58,312	59,835	58,494	59,117
%	1.77	1.83	1.74	1.69	1.69	1.66	1.63
Longford	34,553	30,643	28,250	31,140	31,496	30,296	30,166
%	1.17	1.09	0.95	0.90	0.89	0.86	0.83
Roscommon	68,102	59,217	53,519	54,543	54,592	51,897	51,975
%	2.30	2.10	1.80	1.58	1.54	1.47	1.43
Westmeath	54,463	52,861	53,570	61,523	63,379	61,880	63,314
%	1.84	1.88	1.80	1.79	1.79	1.76	1.75
Midlands	258,092	239,323	232,427	256,689	262,586	254,881	257,517
%	8.72	8.49	7.80	7.45	7.42	7.23	7.10

than to the other counties of the Midlands region. Though the population level increased overall, the share of population declined. Indeed, most sub-regions in the Midlands had a burst of population growth concentrated in the 1970s but all experienced falling shares in national population as the sub-regional growth rates lagged behind the national rate.

#### *Sub-regions of the Mid-West*

Table A2.3 shows the level and percentage of national population in each sub-region of the Mid-West – Limerick, Clare and Tipperary North-Riding – from 1951 to 1996. All three Mid-Western sub-regions lost some population during the 1950s. By the late 1960s and 1970s, however, Clare was growing rapidly along with Limerick while the population of Tipperary North-Riding levelled out after 1981, having recovered in the 1970s. Clare differs from Tipperary North-Riding in that its population grew more vigorously in recent decades, and its population density is now slightly higher.

**TABLE A2.3**

#### **Population Level and Percentage of National Population in Sub-Regions of the Mid-West, 1951-1996**

Sub-region	1951	1961	1971	1981	1986	1991	1996
Clare	81,329	73,702	75,008	87,567	91,344	90,918	94,006
%	2.75	2.62	2.52	2.54	2.58	2.58	2.59
Limerick	141,239	133,339	140,459	161,661	164,569	161,956	165,042
%	4.77	4.73	4.72	4.69	4.65	4.59	4.55
Tipp.,NR	57,009	53,696	54,337	58,984	59,522	57,854	58,021
%	1.93	1.91	1.82	1.71	1.68	1.64	1.60
Mid-West	279,577	260,737	269,804	308,212	315,435	310,728	317,069
%	9.44	9.25	9.06	8.95	8.91	8.81	8.74

These patterns of sub regional decline and recovery point to the possible importance of Limerick city and some relatively important local towns in assisting population recovery. The proximity of Limerick city to Clare, and the substantial growth of Shannon, and the effect of being in the corridor to Galway may explain most of the differential between growth of the Clare and North Tipperary sub-regions in recent decades.

Despite the growth in population levels, again much of it in the 1970s, the share of the Limerick and Tipperary North sub-regions declined in each period, including the 1970s. The strong association between urbanisation and population level and share is explored below, and is particularly evident in Clare.

#### *Sub-regions of the North-East*

Table A2.4 shows the level and percentage of national population in each sub-region of the North East – Cavan, Louth and Monaghan – from 1951 to 1996.

**TABLE A2.4**

#### **Population Level and Percentage of National Population in Sub-Regions of the North-East, 1951-1996**

Sub-region	1951	1961	1971	1981	1986	1991	1996
Cavan	66,377	56,594	52,618	53,855	53,965	52,796	52,944
%	2.24	2.01	1.77	1.56	1.52	1.50	1.46
Louth	68,771	67,378	74,951	88,514	91,810	90,724	92,166
%	2.32	2.39	2.52	2.57	2.59	2.57	2.54
Monaghan	55,345	47,088	46,242	51,192	52,379	51,293	51,313
%	1.87	1.67	1.55	1.49	1.48	1.45	1.42
North-East	190,493	171,060	173,811	193,561	198,154	194,813	196,423
%	6.43	6.07	5.84	5.62	5.60	5.53	5.42

Like the Midlands pattern, one of the sub-regions of the North-East, Louth, contrasts with the other two, Cavan and Monaghan. From an historically lower base Louth's population was greater than those of Cavan and Monaghan by 1951. By 1996 Louth's population was almost equivalent to that of the other two combined. The contrast is even greater in terms of population density. In 1996 the density of population in Louth was almost three times that of Monaghan and almost four times that of Cavan.

The diverging experience of these sub-regions testifies to their contrasting geographical and historical circumstances. Louth, served by two substantial port towns on the east coast, and positioned on the main thoroughfare between Dublin and Belfast, was in a contrasting position to its two larger, neighbouring but

strategically less important sub-regions. Cavan and Monaghan exhibit trends more similar to some of the western counties, while Louth now has a population density second only to Dublin, and substantially ahead of Kildare. Louth also contrasts with the other counties in that its share of population has risen in successive periods from 1951 to 1986, but has since declined.

*Sub-regions of the North-West/Donegal*

Table A2.5 shows the level and percentage of national population in each sub-region of the North West/Donegal – Sligo, Leitrim and Donegal – from 1951 to 1996.

**TABLE A2.5**

**Population Level and Percentage of National Population in Sub-Regions of the North-West/Donegal, 1951-1996**

Sub-region	1951	1961	1971	1981	1986	1991	1996
Donegal	131,530	113,842	108,344	125,112	129,664	128,117	129,994
Per Cent	4.44	4.04	3.64	3.63	3.66	3.63	3.58
Leitrim	41,209	33,470	28,360	27,609	27,035	25,301	25,057
Per Cent	1.39	1.19	0.95	0.80	0.76	0.72	0.69
Sligo	60,513	53,561	50,275	55,474	56,046	54,756	55,821
Per Cent	2.04	1.90	1.69	1.61	1.58	1.55	1.54
North-West/Donegal	233,252	200,873	186,979	208,195	212,745	208,174	210,872
Per Cent	7.88	7.13	6.28	6.05	6.01	5.90	5.82

The population decline, which had characterized the region since the mid nineteenth century, began to ease off from the late 1960s in Sligo and Donegal. From 1971, both began periods of population growth. The population of Leitrim continued to slide even during the 1970s, which was a period of unprecedented general population recovery. The divergence between Leitrim and the other two counties is reflected in the decline of almost 12 per cent in its population between 1971 and 1996 compared to an increase of over 19 per cent and 10 per cent, respectively, in the Donegal and Sligo populations.

Since 1951 the share of population has plummeted by 50 per cent in

Leitrim but much less so in the other two sub-regions. In all three there was a fall in share in the 1970s though this was fairly limited in Donegal. Since the 1970s the rate of decline in population share has lessened. This is particularly apparent in the early 1980s and early 1990s when national population recovered.

*Sub-regions of the South-East*

Table A2.6 shows the level and percentage of national population in each sub-region of the South East – Carlow, Kilkenny, Wexford, Tipperary South-Riding and Waterford – from 1951 to 1996.

**TABLE A2.6**

**Population Level and Percentage of National Population in Sub-Regions of the South East, 1951-1996**

Sub-region	1951	1961	1971	1981	1986	1991	1996
Carlow	34,162	33,342	34,237	39,820	40,988	40,942	41,616
%	1.15	1.18	1.15	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.15
Kilkenny	65,235	61,668	61,473	70,806	73,186	73,635	75,336
%	2.20	2.19	2.06	2.06	2.07	2.09	2.08
Tipp., SR	76,304	70,126	69,228	76,277	77,097	74,918	75,514
%	2.58	2.49	2.32	2.22	2.18	2.12	2.08
Waterford	75,061	71,439	77,315	88,591	91,151	91,624	94,680
%	2.54	2.53	2.60	2.57	2.57	2.60	2.61
Wexford	90,032	83,308	86,351	99,081	102,552	102,069	104,371
%	3.04	2.96	2.90	2.88	2.90	2.89	2.88
South East	340,794	319,883	328,604	374,575	384,974	383,188	391,517
%	11.51	11.35	11.03	10.88	10.87	10.87	10.80

The population patterns and trends in the sub-regions of the South East are relatively similar, without the sharp contrasts which mark certain other regions. Tipperary South, alone, had a slightly lower population in 1996 than in 1951. The populations of Kilkenny and Waterford have increased consistently between 1971 and 1996. The populations of Wexford, Carlow and South Tipperary have also increased in this period. However, these three sub-regions experienced a slight decline in population in 1986 and 1991.

Despite a growth in the level, the share of national population in this

region declined – again more so up to the 1970s than subsequently. This pattern was echoed in all sub-regions except Waterford whose share has increased since 1951.

The moderate changes in population in this group of counties may reflect an absence of the ‘extreme’ characteristics found in the East or the West/North West regions. This seems to point to the balanced economic structure: each has good agricultural land, and is reasonably well endowed with towns. Waterford has an important regional urban centre, while Kilkenny too has an important inland town. Wexford has some significant coastal towns while Carlow and Tipperary South-Riding too have some sizeable inland towns. Though there are differences in urbanisation level and trend between these sub-regions, they are not very wide.

#### *Sub-regions of the South-West*

Table A2.7 shows the level and percentage of national population in each sub-region of the South West from 1951 to 1996. This region comprises the two large area counties of Cork, the largest in the state, and Kerry.

**TABLE A2.7**

#### **Population Level and Percentage of National Population in Sub-Regions of the South-West, 1951-1996**

Sub-region	1951	1961	1971	1981	1986	1991	1996
Cork	341,284	330,443	352,883	402,465	412,735	410,369	420,510
Per Cent	11.53	11.72	11.85	11.69	11.66	11.64	11.60
Kerry	126,644	116,458	112,772	122,770	124,159	121,894	126,130
Per Cent	4.28	4.13	3.79	3.57	3.51	3.46	3.48
South-West	467,928	446,901	465,655	525,235	536,894	532,263	546,640
Per Cent	15.81	15.86	15.64	15.25	15.16	15.10	15.08

Over the 1951 to 1996 period the population of Cork increased by just over 23 per cent while that of Kerry declined marginally. By 1996, the region’s share of national population was marginally down on 1951. But this masks a slight rise in the share in Cork up to 1971, followed by a decline and a decline in Kerry’s share. From the 1970s the fall in share was experienced in both sub-regions and the

direction of population change was similar in both sub-regions thereafter.

Of the two sub-regions Cork was, of course, always much more urbanised. However, since 1971, Kerry too has seen a growth in its urban population from 24 per cent to 31 per cent.

#### *Sub-regions of the West*

Table A2.8 shows the level and percentage of national population in each sub-region of the West region – Galway and Mayo – from 1951 to 1996.

**TABLE A2.8**

#### **Population Level and Percentage of National Population in Sub-Regions of the West, 1951-1996**

Sub-region	1951	1961	1971	1981	1986	1991	1996
Dublin	693,022	718,332	852,219	1,003,164	1,021,449	1,025,304	1,058,264
Galway	160,204	149,887	149,223	172,018	178,552	180,364	188,854
Per Cent	5.41	5.32	5.01	5.00	5.04	5.12	5.21
Mayo	141,867	123,330	109,525	114,766	115,184	110,713	111,524
Per Cent	4.79	4.38	3.68	3.33	3.25	3.14	3.08
West	302,071	273,217	258,748	286,784	293,736	291,077	300,378
Per Cent	10.20	9.69	8.69	8.33	8.30	8.26	8.28

In the 1950s, population decline in Mayo was roughly double that of Galway. During the 1960s, population decline continued in Mayo at about three quarters of its 1950s rate of decline, but population in Galway stabilised. By 1971 Galway’s population stood at almost 150,000 while Mayo had declined to 110,000. Between 1971 and 1981, Galway’s population grew by just over 15 per cent. Mayo’s population too began to grow in the 1970s, but at a much slower rate, by less than 5 per cent. Subsequently, Galway continued its population growth, even during the late 1980s, when national population declined and net emigration grew to very high levels. Mayo, on the other hand, saw its 1970s population growth cancelled out in the late 1980s. In 1996, Galway stood at 188,850, that is almost 18 per cent above its 1951 level and over 26 per cent above its lowest level in the past 40 years – 1971. Mayo had a population

of 110,400 in 1996, that is over 21 per cent below its 1951 level and 21 per cent above its lowest level in the past 40 years – 1971. Population density in Mayo in 1996 was similar to that of Roscommon and only second lowest after Leitrim.

The share of national population in both sub-regions has fallen. However, since 1971, Galway's share has been rising while that of Mayo has continued to decline. The bulk of the decline in this region's share is due to the fall in Mayo's level and share. The level of urbanisation in Galway is about twice that of Mayo, and Galway has sustained this ratio over the period since 1971.

APPENDIX 2

TABLE A2.9

Regional Distribution of Towns (including Environs) over 1,500 by Size in 1996

Region	County Borough	10,000 +	5-10,000	2-5,000	1,500 - 2,000
East	Greater Dublin (953K)	Bray (28K) Swords (22K) Naas (14K) Malahide (14K) Leixlip (13K) Newbridge (13K) Navan (13K) Celbridge (12K) Greystones (11K)	Portlaoise (9.1K) Arklow (8.6K) Maynooth (8.5K) Balbriggan (8.5K) Skerries (7.6K) Wicklow (7.3K) Rush (5.4K) Athy (5.3K)	Ashbourne (5.0K) Trim (4.4K) Kildare (4.2) Ardee (3.8K) Laytown/Bettystown/ Morningtown (3.7K) Kells (3.5K) Clane (3.1K) Dunboyne (3.1K)	Rathcoole (2.78K) Kilcoole (2.69K) Newtownmounkenedy (2.53K) Monasterevan (2.30K) Lusk (2.29K) Kinscally - Drinan (2.18K) Dunshaughlin (2.14K) Portrane (1.92K) Donabate (1.87K) Blessington (1.86K) Kilcock (1.83K) Duleek (1.73K) Kill (1.71K) Kilcullen (1.60K)
Midlands		Athlone (16K) Mullingar (13K) Tullamore (10K)	Portlaoise (9.5K) Longford (7.0K)	Roscommon (3.9K) Birr (4.2K) Edenderry (3.8K) Portlatington (3.3K)	Mountmellick (2.91K) Clara (2.46K) Boyle (2.22K) Castlerea (1.79K)
Mid-West	Limerick (79K)	Ennis (18K)	Shannon (7.9K) Thurles (6.9K) Nenagh (5.9K)	Roscrea (4.2K) Newcastle (Lim) (3.6K)	Kilrush (2.59K) Templemore (2.24K) Rathkeale (1.55K) Newmarket-on-Fergus (1.54K)
North-East		Dundalk (30K) Drogheda (25K)	Monaghan (5.8K) Cavan (5.6K)	Carrickmacross (3.6K)	Castleblaney (2.81K) Clones (2.17K) Cootehill (1.88K) Baileborough (1.53K)

## APPENDIX 3

### THE GROWTH OF THE BUILT-UP DUBLIN REGION

Horner (1990) has analysed changes in population and the extent of the built-up urban area in the Dublin city region, between 1936 and 1988. The methodology used allows comparisons by time based on a framework which is independent of changes to local boundaries and data collection units. The approach adopted designates all points within a 32 km (20 mile) radius of O'Connell Bridge as within the region, and sub-divides this area into four concentric zones, each with radius of 8 km (5 miles). In addition, Horner demarcates an additional zone of 2 km radius, designated as inner city. The urban population in each of these zones is compared for selected years, 1936, 1971, 1981 and 1986.

In addition to assigning population to each of these zones, Horner obtained maps, based on either ordinance survey maps or, more recently, satellite images, in order to estimate the extent of the built-up, or urban, environment. His findings are reported here to indicate the dynamics of urbanisation in the East region more fully.

His findings may be summarised as follows:

- The urban population of the region as a whole increased from 560,000 in 1936 to 1,218,800 in 1986, an increase of 118 per cent. Over the same period, the built-up area increased fourfold, resulting in a reduction in the urban population density, from 87 to 51 persons per hectare of built-up land;
- The inner city (0-2 km radius) population declined over the period as a whole from 266,500 to 83,200 in 1986;
- The rest of the 0 to 7 km zone (including Coolock, Santry, Finglas, Chapelizod and Rathfarnham) increased from 221,100 in 1936 to a peak of 587,000 in 1981, before declining to 546,500 in 1986;
- The 8 to 15 km radius zone (which includes Malahide, Swords, Blanchardstown, Lucan, Clondalkin, Tallaght, Leixlip, Dun Laoghaire and Shankill) grew tenfold over the period as a whole from 45,000 to 476,000. In the more recent period from 1971 to 1986 the increase was between 3 and 4 times;

TABLE A2.9 - continued

Region	County Borough	10,000 +	5-10,000	5,000	1,500 - 5,000
North-West/ Donegal		Sligo (18.5K) Letterkenny (12K)		Buncrana (4.8K) Ballybofey-Stranorlar (3.0K)	Ballyshannon (2.78K) Donegal (2.30K) Carrick-on-Shannon (1.87K) Bundoran (1.80K) Carrondrough (1.58K)
South-East	Waterford (44K)	Kilkenny (18K) Clonmel (16K) Westford (16K) Carlow (15K)	Emisicorthy (7.8K) Dungarvan (7.2K) Tramore (6.5K) New Ross (6.1K) Carrick-on-Suir (5.2K)	Tipperary (4.9K) Gorey (3.9K)	Muinteabeg (2.70K) Cashel (2.69K) Tullow (2.36K) Cahir (2.24K) Thomastown (1.58K)
South-West	Cork (180K)	Tralee (20K) Kilmeragh (12K)	Cobh (8.5K) Carrigaline (7.8K) Mallow (7.8K) Midleton (6.2K) Youghal (5.9K)	Bandon (4.8K) Fermoy (4.5K) Passage West (3.9K) Listowel (3.7K) Mitchelstown (3.1K) Kinsale (3.1K)	Clonakilty (2.95K) Bantry (2.94K) Rathluiré (Charleville) (2.67K) Macroom (2.57K) Castlesland (2.3K) Blarney (1.96K) Skibereen (1.97K) Tower (1.84K) Kanturk (1.67K) Dingle (1.53K)
West	Galway (57K)		Ballina (8.8K) Castlebar (8.5K) Ballinasloe (5.7K) Tuam (5.6K)	Westport (4.5K) Loughrea (3.3K)	Claremorris (1.92K) Athlery (1.61K)

- Finally, both the 16 to 23 km zone and the 24 to 31 km zone increased approximately fourfold over the period as a whole.

The analysis by Horner portrays the regional character of urbanisation and suburban population growth around the capital. The falling density of population in built-up areas within this region reflects different factors, the movement of people to more spacious accommodation, from the older parts of the city and the growth of non-residential property, particularly in the inner city. As discussed in the chapter, Dublin has, in addition, been the recipient of much of the internal migration component in population change in Ireland, even at times when it experienced net external migration above the state average. In the 1970s, for example, Dublin had a net inflow of 23,000, comprising an estimated 31,500 net inflow of internal migrants and an estimated external migration outflow of 9,000 (NESC, 1991 Report No. 90).

Although this analysis cannot be updated here, more recent census findings suggest that the overall story remains similar with regard to growth in the outer suburbs and surrounds, although there is now some new inner city residential population growth.

## APPENDIX 4

### THE SMALLEST TOWNS

#### *Towns with 500-1,500 Population*

The number of small towns in the 500-1500 population range, increased from 108 in 1951 to 194 in 1996. Also, the total population of these towns increased by almost 75 per cent from 97,000 to 170,400 and their population as a percentage of national population increased from 3.29 per cent to 4.94 per cent, over the 40 year period.

#### *Towns with 200-500 Population*

The smallest specified category of towns and villages by size previously included all those places with between 200 and 500 population though, from the 1981 census, the definition was changed to include any settlement with a minimum of 50 inhabited houses, even if the population was above or below 200.

The number of towns increased from 188 in 1951 to 315 in 1996. There were fluctuations over the period: the number of these small centres increased to 255 by 1961 but fell to 199 in 1971 before resuming a more sustained increase. The population accounted for by such villages fluctuated also, with the highest percentage increase taking place in the 1950s and 1970s. In the 1950s the increasing population in such small towns and villages coincided with the largest percentage decline in rural population in any decade since 1951. In contrast, the growth in population in these settlement clusters was also accompanied by rural population growth in the 1970s. The contrast between demographic change in the 1950s and 1970s nationally seems to account for this, in particular the contrasting external migration experience.



## APPENDIX 5

### AGE DEPENDENCY USING 15 TO 65 YEARS AS DENOMINATOR

Table A2.10 shows that changing the cut-off points for age dependency ratios does not significantly alter the rank order of dependency by region and sub-region. At the regional level, the West and North East change rank but are very similar on both measures. Broadly, the most urbanised regions have the most favourable dependency ratios, whether on 'young', 'old' or 'all' dependency measures.

At sub-regional level the changes in rank order are very confined: for example, the four bottom counties merely change places with one another. Old age dependency values appear to vary more by sub-region when using the 65 year cut-off than when a 60 year cut-off is used. Conversely, there appears to be some flattening of the sub-regional differences between young dependency ratios when a cut-off of 15 instead of 25 years is used.

The comparisons between county boroughs and other county areas are broadly similar whether we use a 15-65 year or 20-60 year denominator, with some swapping of places in the mid-range area only. Once again, the strong urban-rural contrast in dependency ratios is evident – but more so with respect to old dependency than young dependency – and tends to favour urban areas.

TABLE A2.10

### Age Dependency Ratios by Region and Sub-Region in 1996\*

Region	Dependency Ratio		
	Young	Old	All
North-West/Donegal	40.1	22.7	62.8
Midlands	40.2	21.0	61.2
West	38.4	21.6	60.0
North-East	39.8	19.6	59.5
South-East	38.3	18.7	57.0
Mid-West	37.2	18.4	55.6
South-West	36.3	18.8	55.1
East	34.1	14.3	48.4
<b>Sub-region</b>	<b>Young</b>	<b>Old</b>	<b>All</b>
Leitrim	39.4	29.5	68.9
Mayo	41.2	26.2	67.4
Roscommon	39.6	27.5	67.1
Cavan	42.4	24.5	66.9
Donegal	41.7	21.6	63.3
Longford	40.6	22.5	63.1
Monaghan	41.7	20.4	62.1
Laoghis	41.4	19.4	60.8
Kerry	38.0	22.5	60.5
Tipperary, S.R.	39.2	20.4	59.7
Clare	39.8	19.8	59.6
Tipperary, N.R.	38.5	21.1	59.6
Offaly	40.5	18.9	59.4
Sligo	36.9	22.3	59.2
Kilkenny	39.3	19.5	58.8
Westmeath	39.2	18.5	57.8
Wexford	39.0	18.2	57.2
Galway	36.9	19.1	56.0
Meath	40.6	15.1	55.7
Carlow	38.4	17.0	55.5
Waterford	36.2	18.0	54.2
Louth	37.5	16.6	54.2
Wicklow	38.4	15.6	54.0
Cork	35.8	17.7	53.5
Limerick	35.4	16.7	52.2
Kildare	39.9	10.8	50.7
Dublin	32.3	14.6	46.9
<b>County Borough/County</b>	<b>Young</b>	<b>Old</b>	<b>All</b>
Galway County	40.5	22.5	63.0
Waterford County	38.6	20.4	59.0
Cork County	38.6	17.8	56.5
Limerick County	37.1	16.6	53.7
Limerick Co. Borough	32.0	17.0	49.0
Fingal	40.6	8.3	48.9
Waterford Co. Borough	33.4	15.2	48.6
South Dublin	40.1	7.7	47.8
Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	30.7	16.7	47.4
Cork Co. Borough	29.8	17.4	47.1
Dublin Co. Borough	26.6	19.0	45.6
Galway Co. Borough	29.6	12.4	42.0
<b>State</b>			

\* In this table the cut-off points are 15 years and 65 years. For each level of analysis, the data are sorted by the overall ratio in descending order.

## APPENDIX 6

### POPULATION DISTRIBUTION IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND THE ISLAND DIMENSION

Population patterns in Northern Ireland are outside the focus of the present study. Nevertheless, patterns and trends in Northern Ireland are relevant to the evolution of patterns and trends in the Republic. Economic and demographic experiences North and South of the border exhibit both similarities and contrasts arising out of the shared historical connection to the UK economy and, subsequently, their separate development. The deepening involvement in the European Union today highlights the similar challenges faced and the potential for co-operation and closer networks.

Compton (1995) provides a review of demographic developments in Northern Ireland, including changing patterns of population distribution. Overall, the trend in population in the North since the famine is most similar to that of the East region in the Republic, a reflection of the prior level of industrial development there. Hence, in 1991 the population of Northern Ireland was 97 per cent of the corresponding area's 1841 figure, compared to 55 per cent for the Republic. Within Northern Ireland there are contrasts too, despite a higher overall level of urbanisation and a more widespread industrial tradition.

Using the 26 Local Government District (LGD) divisions, which are grouped into the East, North, South and West regions, Compton analyses distributional patterns. Population distribution by region in Northern Ireland is less uneven than in the Republic, although 40 per cent of population resided in the East region in 1991. Compton also distinguishes between the areas east and west of the Bann. Over two thirds of the population live east of the Bann with a population density of 185 per km<sup>2</sup>. West of the Bann, population density is 60.5 per km<sup>2</sup>. Compton refers to this as the major demographic fault line in Northern Ireland. At LGD level too, population densities vary, depending on the development of the urban system. East of the Bann are the most densely populated Local Government Districts of Belfast, North Down, Castlereagh, Newtownabbey, Carrickfergus, Coleraine and Craigavon. In contrast, west of the Bann, only Derry LGD stands out as densely populated.

Over recent decades, population growth in Northern Ireland has slowed down while population in the Republic has been growing vigorously. The contrast was particularly dramatic during the 1970s when the North's population was in decline. Both political and economic factors were influential. Compton places recent trends in population distribution in Northern Ireland in the wider UK context, drawing parallels between population decline in Belfast and other established 19<sup>th</sup> Century industrial cities in Britain. He focuses on two broad trends in UK population. First, there has been a long-standing migration from peripheral to core areas of the UK. In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the North-East of Ireland and North and West Midlands of England formed part of the core. However, the core has become ever more concentrated in the South and East of England in the 1980s and 1990s. The second trend he refers to is decentralisation of urban population, due to urban over-spill, demand for new housing and the growth of commuting, facilitated by greater car ownership.

The substantial population decline in Belfast LGD over recent decades is not unusual compared to the experience of Liverpool or Glasgow. However, the decline in the built-up area around Belfast and even a small decline in the zone around this area is somewhat surprising. Instead, Northern Ireland has experienced a re-distribution of population share from the greater Belfast region and its surroundings to the rest of the area east of the Bann ('fringe of the Bann' region) and the area west of the Bann. The components of these population changes by area tell different stories. First, the population decline in the greater Belfast area is driven by out-migration while natural increase is less than the NI average. Second, the growth of the 'fringe of the Bann' population comprises above average natural increase and negligible net migration. Finally, the population growth in the area west of the Bann comprises much higher rates of natural increase which are partly offset by out-migration. This seems to indicate that economic buoyancy is concentrated in the fringe of the Bann area, though many people residing in this area commute to work in Belfast LGD or greater Belfast. West of the Bann, population rises despite relatively less favourable economic conditions. Much of the area west of the Bann is rural but, despite strong employment growth in some parts, high inherited levels of unemployment persist (Haase, 1991).

What emerges is a pattern of change that is a hybrid of patterns seen

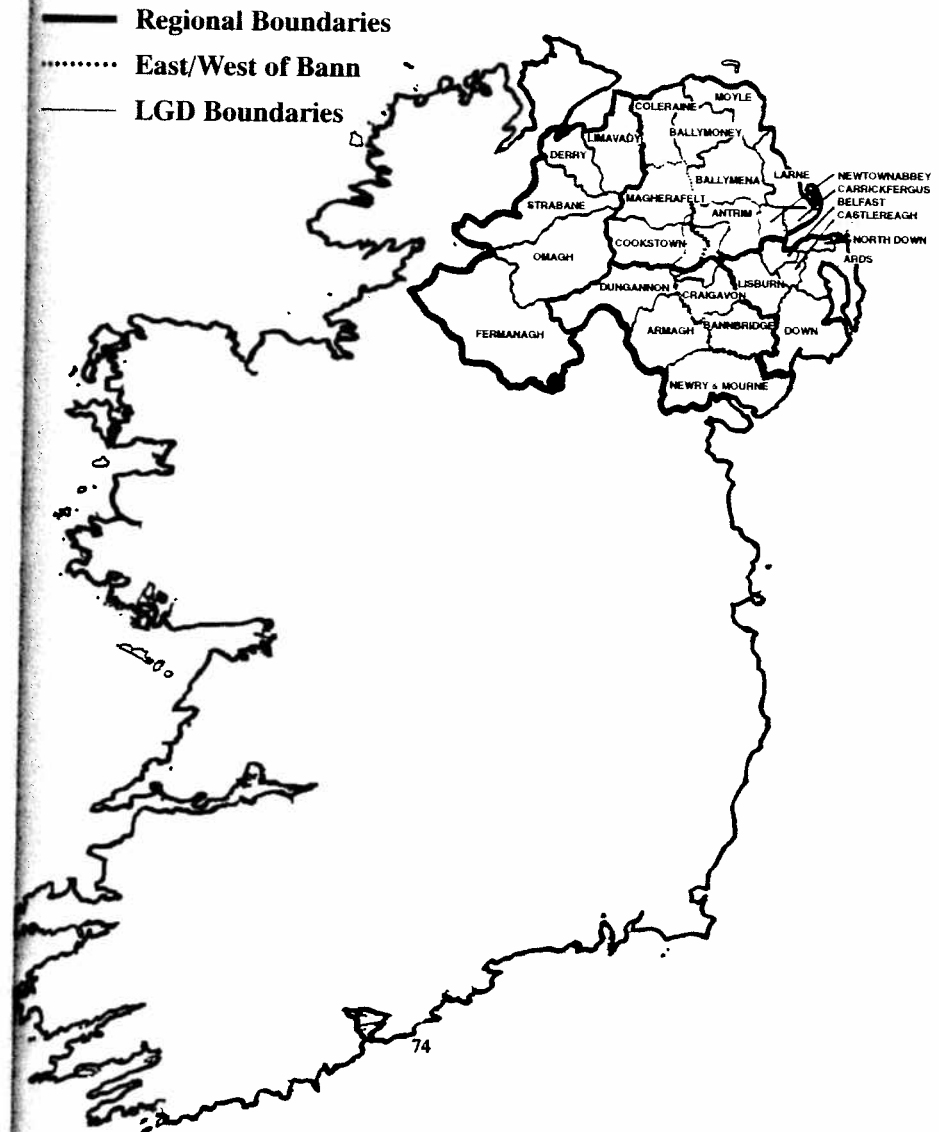
in older industrialised parts of the UK, on the one hand, and certain patterns in the Republic, on the other. First, the changes around Belfast in particular reflect restructuring of established industry and the widening of the urban compass in the East region. Second, Derry and Limavady LGDs, where secondary urban growth outside the range of the Belfast / Eastern region takes place, have high levels of unemployment despite population growth. Third, rural and border areas (such as Strabane, Omagh, Dungannon and Fermanagh) suffer from low population density, limited population growth or relative decline in ways quite similar to neighbouring parts of Donegal, Cavan and Monaghan. Indeed this similarity is part of the shared physical and economic geography of the cross-border area.

The age/sex structure of population in Northern Ireland, similarly, has hybrid features. The age structure is younger than the average in the EU but slightly older than that of the Republic. The more rural LGDs exhibit higher male population shares while the more urbanised districts have higher female shares. Overall, though, there is a stronger female bias in the population than in the Republic (1,052 females per thousand males, compared to 1,011 in the Republic). Compton notes a trend towards convergence in male and female migration rates. This may also be increasingly true of the Republic.

In this context it is noteworthy that the Northern Ireland Department of the Environment has proposed a regional strategy framework to plan towards 2025. In its launch document *Shaping Our Future* (1997), it refers to the importance of trans-regional co-operation, such as the Belfast-Dublin corridor, and the development of Belfast city region, other cities and towns, their commuter zones and rural areas. Some of these developments could provide a boon to border regions North and South. The current peace process will add a further impetus to efforts to identify opportunities for co-operation.

FIGURE A2.1

Local Government Districts in Northern Ireland



## CHAPTER 3

# SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade and particularly since 1994, the Irish economy has performed strongly in terms of economic and employment growth. Concerns have been raised that not all parts of the country have benefited equally from this growth. The purpose of this chapter is to examine economic performance at a sub-national level, both over the past decade and since the 1970s. Differences in economic performance between areas have obvious implications for settlement patterns. Differences in employment growth between broadly defined areas (such as regions) are a key influence on settlement since people generally live and work in the same (broadly defined) area. The precise location of where people choose to live within an area is influenced by a range of other factors such as physical planning, availability of public and private transport, the provision of various public and private services and the operation of the property market. The causality between settlement patterns and economic performance works both ways. In addition to economic performance influencing settlement patterns, settlement patterns also influence the economic performance of an area. For example, once a large settlement develops, this can encourage further development. Alternatively, excessive concentration in an area can encourage business and households to move elsewhere.

Before examining economic performance at a sub-national level, one must consider what spatial units are appropriate. Our choice of spatial unit is constrained by the availability of recent data. In particular, the most recent information on employment trends is from the Labour Force Survey which is only available at regional level.<sup>1</sup> Regional structures are used by many state agencies, although the regional divisions vary across agencies.

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<sup>1</sup> Small Area Population Statistics (SAPS) represent the most detailed level of spatial disaggregation from the Census of Population and are available on request by the CSO. SAPS provide information on a range of variables down to District Electoral Division (DED) level. The first phase of this series from

There is an element of arbitrariness in the use of a regional unit or indeed any spatial unit. Walsh (1996) sets out a more functionally orientated division of Ireland in terms of city regions and other more favoured and less favoured types of areas. However, in his actual description he uses regional data based on administrative regions.

The position adopted in this chapter is that a description of economic performance at regional level is a worthwhile exercise, provided it is borne in mind that regions are not homogenous entities. There are significant economic and social differences within regions – where data are available these are discussed. As was illustrated in Chapter 2 the most pronounced differences in terms of poverty and disadvantage exist at a much lower level than either the region or the county.

Employment and unemployment trends are described in section 2. The decline of agricultural employment has had a major influence on settlement patterns; this is examined in section 3. The performance of the industrial and service sectors including tourism at sub-national level are described in Sections 4 and 5. Regional income trends are described in Section 6. Regional performance under the Community Support Framework is discussed in Section 7.

## **2. EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT TRENDS BY REGION**

### **(i) National Employment**

The key problem and characteristic of the Irish economy until recently has been the weakness of employment growth. By 1961, the level of total employment was actually lower than it had been in 1926. The adoption of a new approach to economic policy in the 1960s, based on movement towards free trade and the attraction of FDI, was successful in achieving economic growth and there was substantial growth in industrial employment and more modest

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the 1996 Census covers only a limited number of variables. The second phase, covering a more comprehensive range of variables including employment and unemployment will be available in December 1997/January 1998. Volume 7 of the Census of Population for 1996, which provides detailed information on employment by industry will be published in July 1998.

growth in services. The employment growth in industry and services in the 1960s was, however, not sufficient to offset the decline in agricultural employment, so that despite the buoyancy of the 1960s, total employment still showed a slight decline.

Substantial employment growth was achieved during the 1970s, particularly in services. This growth was concentrated in the late 1970s and was dependent upon an unsustainable fiscal expansion. With the recession of the first half of the 1980s, the employment growth of the 1970s was to a considerable extent reversed; total employment declined by 5.7 per cent between 1981 and 1986 compared to an increase of 9.2 per cent between 1971 and 1981.

The outstanding feature of the past decade has been the substantial growth of employment. Between 1987 and 1997, total employment increased by about 23 per cent while non-agricultural employment increased by almost 30 per cent. In contrast to the 1970s, this employment growth has been achieved without recourse to an unsustainable fiscal policy. The past decade represents the first time in the history of the state that there has been a sustainable and substantial increase in total employment. Particularly strong employment growth since 1993 has exceeded the growth of the labour force, so that unemployment has fallen substantially.

There are significant differences in labour force trends for males and females. There has been a consistent increase in the female labour force participation rate from 27.9 per cent of the female population of 15 years and older in 1971 to 39.2 per cent in 1997. This increase in female labour force participation took place despite a sharp fall in participation among younger women (15-19). By contrast male labour force participation has been falling steadily for decades, from 80.7 per cent in 1971 to 69.1 per cent in 1997. These changes in labour force participation are reflected in large differences in the gender composition of employment growth. Between 1971 and 1997, female employment increased by 86 per cent while male employment only increased by less than 7 per cent. The period since 1993, however, has been characterised by a substantial increase in both male and female employment.

### **(ii) Regional Employment Trends**

It is clear that there has been a remarkable improvement in the national employment performance over the past decade. Our

concern here is how the different regions have participated in this growth, as well as the regional performance in earlier periods.

#### Total Employment

Regional employment trends are described in this section in terms of the former planning regions rather than the new regions of the Regional Authorities in order to analyse long term trends. There is considerable overlap between the old and new regional boundaries (see note to Table 3.1).

The trend in total employment since 1971 is shown in Table 3.1. Over the period 1971 to 1996 as a whole, total employment growth was dominated by the East region, in which employment grew by 41 per cent, almost double the national average of 23 per cent. Outside the East region, the strongest growth of total employment between 1971 and 1996 was in the South-West (19.9 per cent), the South-East (19.2 per cent) and the Mid-West (16.2 per cent). The East region accounted for 65 per cent of national employment growth between 1971 and 1996. In terms of employment numbers, the increase in total employment in all other regions between 1971 and 1996 was modest.

Despite the regional and rural industrialisation of the 1970s, most of the growth of total employment (77 per cent) during that decade took place in the East region. This was strongly influenced by the decline in agricultural employment. Employment in industry and services increased in other regions during the 1970s, but was considerably offset by the decline in agricultural employment. Total employment declined in three regions during the 1970s: the North-East, the West and the North-West. The strongest growth of employment during the 1970s outside the East region was in the Mid-West (7.7 per cent), the South-East (5.4 per cent) and the South-West (5.3 per cent).

The recession of the first half of the 1980s resulted in a decline in employment in all regions. The recovery of employment since 1986 has benefited all regions. Employment growth over the past decade has been above average in the East (25.8 per cent) and South-West

TABLE 3.1

#### Percentage Change in Employment by Region

	1971-81	1981-86	1986-96	1993-96	1971-96
East	16.5	-4.2	26.3	15.8	41.1
Dublin	14.4	-5.8	23.7	13.0	33.3
Rest of East	25.3	2.3	35.5	25.8	73.4
South-West	5.3	-5.4	20.5	10.4	19.9
South-East	5.4	-3.4	16.9	9.5	19.2
North-East	-1.9	-6.5	15.9	7.8	6.4
Mid-West	7.7	-2.8	10.8	11.6	16.0
Midlands	3.2	-4.9	9.1	13.7	7.2
West	-0.2	-2.0	8.1	7.1	5.7
North-West & Donegal	-6.2	-3.1	11.7	5.5	1.4
Total	7.9	-4.1	18.9	12.1	23.0

Note: To facilitate analysis of long-term trends, the regions in this table are the former planning regions rather than the new regions of the Regional Authorities.

The differences are as follows:

- (i) The former East region has been divided into Dublin and the Mid-East;
- (ii) The former North-East and North-West regions have been amalgamated to form the Border region;
- (iii) County Roscommon was formerly in the Midlands region and is now in the West region.

The composition of the planning regions is provided in the Chapter 1. The figures on total employment in this table differ somewhat from those quoted earlier in the text on national employment. The national employment figures in the text are based on an adjusted long-run series while the corresponding figures in this table are taken directly from the Census of Population.

Source: 1971-81 and 1981-86: CSO, *Census of Population*  
1986-96: Calculated from CSO, *Labour Force Survey*; Employment by planning region in 1996 provided by CSO.

(20.5 per cent). The lowest employment growth was in the West (8.1 per cent). The results from the 1997 Labour Force Survey confirm continuation of employment growth in all regions with one

surprising exception, the Mid-West. There was no net employment growth in this region in 1997<sup>2</sup>.

The East region's share of total employment growth declined from around 77 per cent in the 1970s to around 49 per cent over the past decade. The more even distribution of total employment growth over the past decade is influenced by a slowdown in the decline of agricultural employment. Total employment in regions outside the East increased faster over the past decade compared to the 1970s, partly because there was a slower reduction in agricultural employment.

Differential employment growth has implications for the share of employment in each region. The evolution of each region's share of total employment is shown in the Table 3.2. It is clear that there has been a gradual ongoing increase in the East region's share, from

**TABLE 3.2**  
**Distribution of Employment by Planning Region**  
**As a Percentage of Total Employment in the State**

	1975	1986	1996
East	37.6	39.3	41.7
Dublin	30.1	30.5	31.8
Rest of East	7.5	8.7	9.9
South-West	15.3	14.5	14.7
South-East	10.7	10.5	10.3
North-East	5.8	5.3	5.2
Mid-West	8.7	9.1	8.5
Midlands	7.6	7.5	6.9
West	8.5	8.5	7.7
North West & Donegal	5.8	5.4	5.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: CSO, *Labour Force Survey*.

<sup>2</sup> The 1997 Labour Force Survey results are not included in Table 3.1 and subsequent tables on regional employment because the results are only available using the boundaries of the new Regional Authorities rather than the former planning regions which are used in this chapter.

37.6 per cent in 1975 to 41.7 in 1996. This rise in the share of the East has been due more to the 'rest of the East' (i.e. the new Mid-East region) than to Dublin itself. However, the rise in the share of the Mid-East is partly due to commuting, since employment in the Labour Force Survey is based on residence rather than place of work.

#### *Non-Agricultural Employment*

While a disproportionate share of total employment growth has taken place in the East region since 1971, the position with respect to non-agricultural employment is different. The fastest growth rate of non-agricultural employment since 1971 has occurred in some of the western regions (the West and the Mid-West) and the Midlands. The growth of non-agricultural employment in the East region (46.6 per cent) between 1971 and 1996 was in fact slightly below the national average (48.7 per cent).

The above average growth of employment in some Western regions since 1971 reflects the strong performance of these regions during

**TABLE 3.3**  
**Percentage Change in Non-Agricultural Employment by**  
**Region**

	1971-81	1981-86	1986-96	1993-96	1971-96
East	19.2	-4.0	28.1	16.2	46.6
Dublin	14.9	-8.2	24.6	13.3	31.5
Rest of East	42.8	3.1	42.3	27.3	109.4
South-West	18.8	-4.5	27.8	14.2	45.1
South-East	21.0	-1.7	20.9	12.4	43.8
North-East	12.2	-3.9	22.4	10.0	31.9
Mid-West	26.9	-0.6	24.2	16.0	56.5
Midlands	29.6	-1.8	25.8	19.0	60.1
West	38.9	3.4	23.6	10.5	77.6
North-West & Donegal	23.3	3.1	17.3	7.0	49.0
Total	21.4	-2.6	25.8	14.5	48.7

Source: CSO, *Labour Force Survey*.

the 1970s. The growth of non-agricultural employment in the West region between 1971 and 1981 of 38.9 per cent was almost double the national average (21.4 per cent). Other regions which achieved above average growth of non-agricultural employment in the 1970s were the Midlands (29.6 per cent), the Mid-West (26.9 per cent) and the North-West (23.3). All other regions had below average growth of non-agricultural employment in the 1970s, with the lowest growth rate in the North-East.

There has been strong growth of non-agricultural employment over the past decade, but the regional pattern of this growth has differed substantially from the 1970s. In contrast to the 1970s, the fastest growth of non-agricultural growth between 1986 and 1996 has been in the East (28.1 per cent) and South-West (27.8 per cent). In each case this has been above the national average (25.7), although not dramatically so. There was particularly strong growth of non-agricultural employment in the counties surrounding Dublin (i.e. the new Mid-East region), although, a significant part of the growth in the Mid-East probably reflects the growth of commuting, as explained above. All regions experienced substantial growth of non-agricultural employment, although growth in the North West (17.3 per cent) and to a lesser extent the South East (20.9 per cent ) was substantially below the national average. The difference between the 1986 to 1996 period and the 1970s is that non-agricultural employment is no longer growing far more rapidly in some of the western regions and the Midlands compared to other regions, which was the case in the 1970s.

The growth of non-agricultural employment since 1993 has been particularly strong. It is to this period that the label 'Celtic Tiger' can be most aptly applied. Over this shorter period 1993 to 1996, non-agricultural employment growth has also been above average in the East and South-West, but all regions have benefited from strong non-agricultural employment growth. An interesting feature of this period is that the fastest growth rate of non-agricultural employment has been in the Midlands region. This region would appear to be benefiting from a spreading of growth from the East region. The growth of non-agricultural employment in the Mid-West region has also been very strong between 1993 and 1996, roughly equal to the growth in the East region. However, non-agricultural employment appeared to decline in the Mid-West in 1997.

So far, the growth of non-agricultural employment has been examined in terms of percentage growth rates. If one focuses on non-agricultural employment growth in terms of employment numbers, then the growth of non-agricultural employment over the past decade has been dominated by two regions, the East (111,800) and the South-West (32,000). These two regions accounted for 65 per cent of the growth of non-agricultural employment.

The evolution of each region's share of non-agricultural employment has been considerably more even than in the case of total employment (see Table 3.4). The share of the East region increased by 2 percentage points between 1975 and 1979. It subsequently declined from 45.6 per cent in 1979 to 44.5 per cent in 1986, reflecting the disproportionate impact of the decline of indigenous industry on the East region. The East region's share of non-agricultural employment subsequently increased by 1 percentage point to 45.4 per cent in 1996. This illustrates the fact that while growth of non-agricultural employment in the East region over the past decade has been somewhat above the national average,

TABLE 3.4

**Distribution of Non-Agricultural Employment by Planning Region As a Percentage of Total Non-Agricultural Employment in the State**

	1975	1986	1996
East	45.9	44.5	45.4
Dublin	38.3	35.7	35.4
Rest of East	7.6	8.8	10.0
South West	14.5	13.7	14.0
South East	9.9	10.0	9.6
North East	4.9	4.9	4.8
Mid West	8.2	8.4	8.3
Midlands	6.2	6.3	6.3
West	5.6	7.0	6.9
North West & Donegal	4.7	5.1	4.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: CSO, *Labour Force Survey*.



the growth has been reasonably well balanced from a regional point of view.

### (iii) Unemployment

Regional unemployment rates are shown in Table 3.5. Unemployment rates are broadly similar across all regions, with the exception of the North West in which unemployment is 6 percentage points above the national average. Unemployment is lowest in the Midlands (9.4 per cent) and the rest of the East (10.1 per cent). The rate of unemployment in Dublin (13.8 per cent) is slightly higher than the national average (12.9 per cent). All regions have experienced a reduction in unemployment since 1993.

Unemployment rates by county in 1991 are shown in Table 3.6. In 1991, unemployment tended to be highest in the county boroughs (major cities). In four of the five county boroughs, Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Waterford, unemployment was above 20 per cent. In these combined city and county areas, the rate of unemployment was somewhat above the national average in the case of Dublin and Limerick and somewhat below average for Cork and Waterford.

TABLE 3.5

#### Unemployment Rates by Planning Region (PES Basis)

Region	1975	1985	1993	1996
Dublin	9.6	19.4	17.5	13.8
Rest of East	7.2	14.7	17.2	10.1
Total East	9.1	18.4	17.4	12.9
South West	8.9	14.6	15.0	12.4
South East	8.7	19.0	17.0	13.5
North East	10.6	16.3	17.6	14.1
Mid West	9.2	14.9	15.8	10.2
Midlands	7.6	15.2	16.0	9.4
West	9.0	16.4	16.1	13.8
North West/Donegal	13.1	22.6	17.6	18.3
State	9.3	17.4	16.7	12.9

Source: CSO, Labour Force Survey.

Other counties with unemployment in excess of 20 per cent in 1991 were Louth and Donegal.

The counties with the lowest rates of unemployment in 1991 were Roscommon (10.2 per cent), Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown (11.6 per cent), Cavan (12.6 per cent), Clare (13.4 per cent) and Leitrim (13.7 per cent). Hence, some of the most rural counties are characterised by low unemployment. However, in the case of rural counties, low unemployment is not necessarily a sign of economic vibrancy. First, three of the rural counties (Roscommon, Cavan and Leitrim) which had the lowest rates of unemployment in 1991 are among the counties which have experienced the most severe depopulation since 1951. Second, Nolan *et al* (1994) point out that the relationship between unemployment and level of farming activity must be taken into account: 'those classified in the census as farmers are by definition not counted as unemployed, and districts with the high level of small farming were often those with low unemployment rates, and vice versa' (Nolan *et al*, 1994, p.236). Unemployment in rural areas is understated due to widespread underemployment in agriculture. One indication of the extent of underemployment in rural areas is the fact that almost 50 per cent of farms are not economically viable and neither the holder or spouse has alternative employment (see Section 3 below). Public policy on unemployment needs to be responsive to the differences in the nature of unemployment between urban and rural areas. These differences should be taken into account in the planning of employment services.

Differences in unemployment become greater when one goes below the county level. For example, the regional report of the Dublin Regional Authority (1995) showed that in 1991 unemployment rates exceeded 35 per cent in parts of Dublin. The very high unemployment rates in certain urban areas, however, does not imply that unemployment and deprivation are mainly confined to such areas. Research on the geographical distribution of affluence and deprivation in Ireland is outlined in Chapter 2.

TABLE 3.6

## Unemployment by County, 1991

County	No. of Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
<b>East</b>		
Dublin Co. & Co. Borough	77,681	17.8
Dublin Co. Borough	46,416	21.7
South Dublin	14,079	16.9
Dublin - Fingal	8,176	13.4
Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	9,010	11.6
Kildare	6,853	14.4
Meath	6,082	15.3
Wicklow	6,532	17.7
<b>South-West</b>		
Cork	13,507	12.5
Cork Co. Borough	10,343	21.1
Cork Co. & Co. Borough	23,850	15.2
Kerry	7,570	16.7
<b>South-East</b>		
Carlow	2,815	18.4
Kilkenny	4,244	15.1
Tipperary S.R.	5,116	18.1
Waterford	3,077	15.9
Waterford Co. Borough	3,395	21.0
Waterford Co. & Co. Borough	6,472	18.2
Wexford	7,374	19.2
<b>North-East</b>		
Cavan	2,487	12.6
Louth	7,727	22.2
Monaghan	2,732	14.2
<b>Mid-West</b>		
Clare	4,736	13.4
Limerick	6,006	14.2
Limerick Co. Borough	5,151	25.3
Limerick Co. & Co. Borough	11,157	17.8
Tipperary N.R.	3,302	15.1
<b>Midlands</b>		
Laoighis	3,109	16.2
Longford	1,618	14.9
Offaly	3,677	17.1
Roscommon	1,984	10.2
Westmeath	3,318	14.3

TABLE 3.6 - continued

County	No. of Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
<b>West</b>		
Galway	7,472	15.3
Galway Co. Borough	3,127	15.3
Galway Co. & Co. Borough	10,599	15.3
Mayo	6,397	16.0
<b>North-West and Donegal</b>		
Leitrim	1,273	13.7
Sligo	3,127	14.8
Donegal	11,958	25.4
<b>State</b>	<b>233,790</b>	<b>16.9</b>

Source: Calculated from CSO, *Census of Population*, Volume 4.

## 3. AGRICULTURE

Employment in agriculture in Ireland, as in other OECD countries, has been declining for several decades (Table 3.7). The number of those who describe their principal occupation as being in agriculture, forestry or fishing has fallen by half since 1971, to 136,500 in 1996. The decline has been steepest in the western

TABLE 3.7

## Employment in Agriculture

	1971-96	Percentage Change 1971-96	1996 Regional Shares
East	-9.2	-38.0	11.0
South-West	-19.0	-40.4	20.5
South-East	-15.4	-41.3	16.0
North-East	-9.9	-46.7	8.3
Mid-West	-18.0	-56.1	10.3
Midlands	-18.8	-53.9	11.8
West	-26.9	-57.5	14.6
North-West & Donegal	-19.3	-65.4	7.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>-136.6</b>	<b>-50.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: CSO, *Census and Labour Force Survey*.

regions. The largest decline was in the West itself, which declined by almost 27,000, followed by the North-West (19,300) and the South-West (19,000). The lowest decline was in the East region, while the decline in Dublin itself was marginal. The share of employment in agriculture, forestry and fishing is highest in the South-West (20.5 per cent) followed by the South-East (16.0 per cent) while the lowest share of employment in this sector is in the North-West (7.5 per cent).

The decline in agricultural employment can be expected to continue. Notwithstanding the significant decline to date, employment in agriculture in Ireland continues to be significantly higher than the EU average (Table 3.8).

There are significant structural differences within the agricultural sector. Frawley and Commins (1996) use the concepts of commercial and demographic viability to allocate farms into a number of categories. An economically viable farm is defined as

**TABLE 3.8**

**EU Employment in Agriculture as Percentage of Total Employment**

Member State	1980	1993
Belgium	3.2	2.6
Denmark	8.0	5.4
France	8.2	5.1
Greece	30.3	21.3
Germany (FRG)	5.3	3.0
<b>IRELAND</b>	<b>18.4</b>	<b>12.7</b>
Italy	14.2	7.5
Luxembourg	4.8	3.0
Netherlands	4.9	4.6
Spain	19.3	10.1
Portugal	27.3	11.7
United Kingdom	2.6	2.2
<b>EU-12</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>5.6</b>

Source: European Commission (1995), *The Agricultural Situation in the Community, 1994*.

one having (a) the capacity to remunerate family labour at the average agricultural wage and (b) the capacity to give an additional 5 per cent return on non-land assets. They also classify farms on the basis of their demographic status: households where the holder is over 55 years of age and where there is nobody else under 45 years are regarded as having 'poor demography'.

The first category identified by Frawley and Commins is that of commercial farms. These satisfy the economic viability criterion and are sufficiently large to employ 0.75 standard labour units. There were 35,300 such farms in 1994, accounting for 23 per cent of all farms. The second category is part-time farms. These include farms which are not economically viable or are only viable on a part-time basis and where the operator or spouse has other employment. There were 44,000 such part-time farms in 1994 and they accounted for 29 per cent of all farms.

The remaining 48 per cent of farms are not viable on a full-time basis and neither the occupier or spouse has alternative employment. This 48 per cent is further divided into two categories on the basis of demographic characteristics. First, there are those farms which are not viable on a full-time basis and where the operator or spouse lacks alternative employment, but the household structure can be described as 'good'. This group is referred to as 'marginal under pressure' and is the largest group of farms. In 1994 there were 44,000 farms, or 29 per cent, in this category. The final category comprises those non-viable farms, where neither the holder or spouse has alternative employment and which are characterised by poor demography. This group accounted for 19 per cent of farms in 1994.

Frawley and Commins consider the likely evolution of farms in each of these categories up to 2005. A small decline is expected in the number of commercial farms. The number of part-time farms is likely to be maintained or could even increase; the trend here is dependent on the general availability of employment in rural areas. A significant decline is expected in the marginal category. Some of these will develop their farms and move into the commercial category, but for most this is not a realistic possibility. Some can expect to find employment and become part-time farmers. More will move into the residual category. The number of those in the residual category will decline, but this category is expected to remain a significant feature of Irish agriculture. This is partly because as others disengage from

farming, they will move into this residual category. Taking all categories together, Frawley and Commins expect a decline in the number of farms from 154,000 in 1994 to between 110,000 and 130,000 in 2005. In structural terms, continuing segmentation of the agricultural sector is expected in which a group of commercial farms co-exists with other farm categories.

The spatial dimension of structural change in agriculture is also analysed by Frawley and Commins. While they do not examine the spatial distribution of farms classified on the basis of viability, they do provide a spatial analysis of farms in the related criteria of size. They classify counties into four groups according to the average economic size of farms in each county. This produces a clear spatial pattern, with a gradual progression from the large farm counties of the South-East to the small farm counties of the North-West. The four groups are as follows:

**Group 1: Large Farm Counties**

South-East: Carlow, Kilkenny, Wexford, Tipperary South and Waterford

East: Dublin and Wicklow

South-West: Cork

**Group 2: Medium to Large Farm Counties**

East: Kildare and Meath

Midlands: Laois

North-East: Louth

Mid-West: Tipperary North

**Group 3: Medium to Small Farm Counties**

Midlands: Longford, Offaly and Westmeath

North-East: Cavan and Monaghan

South-West: Kerry

Mid-West: Clare

**Group 4: Small Farm Counties**

North-West: Donegal, Sligo and Leitrim

West: Galway and Mayo

Midlands: Roscommon

It is notable that all of the counties in the South-East are in the large farm category (group 1). The counties of the East region are in either one of the two larger county groups. All of the counties in the West and North-West, together with Roscommon are in the small farm category.

Farms in the large farm counties are on average over three times bigger than those in the small farm counties. Frawley and Commins examine the performance of the groups of counties across the various products. They show that farms in the small farm counties have been unable to retain their share of production, not only in crops and dairying but also in other livestock enterprises. This illustrates that agricultural restructuring produces significantly different effects in different parts of the country.

Walsh (1994) provides an analysis of regional differences in land use, farm size and viability. Pasture is the most important agricultural land use in all regions, averaging 50.6 per cent in 1991. Even in Dublin, 37 per cent of the small agriculture area available is so used. This is followed by silage and hay, at 26 per cent of land use across regions, with a much lower rate in Dublin (14 per cent) and somewhat below average rates in the Border (23.7 per cent) and West (24.4 per cent) regions. In contrast, rough grazing is more important in the Border, West and South-West regions, where farmers concentrate on cattle and sheep rearing, and depend on state subsidies for survival. More prosperous, larger farms in Dublin, the Mid-East and South-East, produce more cereals and other tillage crops, which have a higher added value. Walsh uses the 1991 Census of Agriculture to show regional differences in the gross margin per hectare and per unit of labour. Again, this shows the divide between above average profitability in Dublin, the Mid-East, South-West and South-East, on the one hand, and below average margins the West, Border and Midlands, on the other. The Mid-West was closest to the state average.

Alternatives to more established farming activities through diversification, such as farm tourism, organic farming or afforestation are as yet tiny, though some of these activities are being taken up in the West and Border regions. But the openness to innovation is related to the age of farmers, and average age of farmers is higher in the less viable West and Border regions. Although the impact of diversification on settlement has so far proved modest, it should be seen as an important, if nascent strand, whose long term effects could be considerable.

#### 4. INDUSTRY

Until the early 1960s, the manufacturing base was small and heavily concentrated in the main urban areas. Three regions, the East, North-East and South-East, accounted for almost 62 per cent of manufacturing employment in 1961. The share of manufacturing employment in total employment in most other regions was substantially below average. However, by 1991 differences in the degree of industrialisation had to a large extent been eliminated (see Table 3.9). Regional policy, particularly through the location of overseas investment, played a role in changing this distribution.

The locational distribution of new grant-aided manufacturing firms established between 1960 and 1973 has been analysed by O'Farrell (1975, 1978, 1979, 1980). O'Farrell found that 59.1 per cent of foreign firms located within the Designated Areas<sup>3</sup> between 1960 and 1973, while 42.8 per cent of Irish firms located in these areas.

TABLE 3.9

Manufacturing Employment as a Percentage of Total at Work, by Region, 1961 and 1991

Region	1961	1991
East	27.2	17.7
North East	17.9	23.6
South West	16.7	19.7
South East	13.9	22.0
Mid West	11.4	20.9
Donegal	10.5	
Midlands	8.4	17.5
North West	6.4	20.4
West	5.6	16.0
State	17.0	19.0

\* Donegal is shown separately in 1961, while in 1991 it is part of the North West.

Source: CSO, *Census of Population*

<sup>3</sup> Designated Areas refers to areas identified for special assistance in the Undeveloped Areas Act 1952 and subsequent acts. The definition of Designated Areas has changed over time (see NES, 1985).

Thus, these areas benefited considerably from new investment in manufacturing, particularly by overseas firms, during this period (quoted in Boylan, 1996, p. 181).

#### (i) The 1970s: Rural Industrialisation

The trend in manufacturing and internationally-traded services employment by region and county for Irish and overseas firms since 1973 is presented in the appendix to this chapter. This kind of employment grew by 9.1 per cent between 1973 and 1979. Most of the net increase came from the overseas sector. There was a distinctive regional pattern to this growth during the 1970s. Employment declined in the East and North-East between 1973 and 1979 and grew only modestly in the South-West. It increased in all other regions by in excess of 20 per cent; in the West and Mid-West it increased by 50 per cent between 1973 and 1979. The decline in the East and North-East reflected the decline of Irish-owned manufacturing. At the same time, employment growth in overseas companies took place outside these regions. Employment in overseas companies increased by over 100 per cent in the West and Midlands regions, by almost 75 per cent in the South-East and by 32 per cent in the Mid-West. There was a more modest increase in the South-West of 14.5 per cent.

Another way of considering the locational distribution of manufacturing and internationally traded services employment is to distinguish between, on the one hand, the East region and the counties containing the other urban centres (Cork, Galway, Limerick and Waterford) and, on the other hand, the rest of the country. It can be seen from Table 3.10 that the East and the other counties with large urban centres only accounted for 14.9 per cent of the net increase of such employment between 1973 and 1979. There was substantial employment growth in Galway (42.7 per cent), while both Limerick and Waterford also showed increases somewhat above the national average. However, the distinctive characteristic of the growth of employment between 1973 and 1979 is that over 85 per cent of the net increase in manufacturing and traded services employment took place outside the East and the other counties with the main urban centres. Hence, the employment growth of the 1970s not only took place outside Dublin but was for the most part outside any of the main urban centres.

**(ii) The Early 1980s: General Decline in Manufacturing Employment**

Turning to the 1980s, there was a net decline in manufacturing and internationally traded services employment nationally between 1979 and 1986. All regions experienced a decline with the exceptions of Donegal and the Mid-West regions. The decline was largest in the East region, in which there was a net loss of almost 25,222, representing around 64 per cent of the national decline. Employment in Irish owned firms declined in all regions during this period, with the exception of the North-West. In foreign firms, the decline was less severe (-8.5 per cent). Three regions had net gains in employment in foreign owned firms: the North-West, Mid- West, and South East.

**(iii) 1986-1996: New Regional and Urban Patterns**

The past decade has seen a return to growth of employment in manufacturing and internationally-traded services. The growth has been most vigorous in overseas manufacturing and internationally-

traded services, which increased by almost 39 per cent between 1986 and 1996. There has also been a marked improvement in the employment performance of Irish-owned companies, which showed an increase in employment of 8.7 per cent between 1986 and 1996.

The re-emergence of growth in manufacturing and internationally traded services employment has been accompanied by a distinct change in its regional and sub-regional pattern. This employment is no longer declining in the East region. Between 1986 and 1996, such employment in the East region grew by 25.7 per cent, somewhat above the national average of 21.1 per cent. The fastest employment growth over this period, however, was in the West (32.7 per cent) and the Mid-West (26.9 per cent).

The growth rate of employment in overseas manufacturing and internationally traded services was substantially higher in the East region (47.5 per cent) than in any other region, while the growth of employment in Irish-owned companies was highest in the West (32.4 per cent) and the Mid-West (26.9 per cent). Nonetheless, the East's share of employment growth in Irish companies (46 per cent) was slightly higher than its share of the growth of overseas companies (43.2 per cent). The particularly strong employment growth of the last three years has seen a further increase in the East's share of this growth to 54.1 per cent. This is due to a rise in the East's share of employment growth in overseas companies to almost 60 per cent while its share of the employment growth in Irish manufacturing has declined to 44.5 per cent.

In addition to changes in the regional pattern of growth over the past decade, there have also been changes in the balance between urban areas and other areas (see Table 3.10). Almost 71 per cent of the net increase in manufacturing and internationally traded services employment between 1986 and 1996 took place in the East region and the other four counties containing the main urban centres, although the growth in the case of Waterford was marginal. This is the opposite to the pattern of the 1970s. Over the past decade, the highest growth of this employment has been in those regions with a large urban centre. Thus, the highest growth rates were in the East (Dublin), the South-West (Cork), the West (Galway) and the Mid-West (Limerick). Furthermore, within these regions, apart from the East, employment growth has shifted to the counties containing the urban major centres. This concentration in urban areas has increased

**TABLE 3.10**

**Change in Total Manufacturing and Internationally-Traded Services Employment**

	1973-79 (Percent of total)	1986-96 (Percent of total)	1993-96 (Percent of total)
East region	-1791	19098	16879
Cork county	152	5323	2594
Galway county	2541	3553	2852
Limerick county	790	2694	2197
Waterford county	1290	191	401
East and above 4 counties	2982 (14.5%)	30859 (70.9%)	24923 (79.9%)
Other counties	17523 (85.5%)	12681 (29.1%)	6279 (20.1%)
Total	20505 (100.0%)	43540 (100.0%)	31202 (100.0%)

Source: Calculated from Industrial Database of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

in the most recent three year period, from 1993 to 1996, although in the case of Cork its growth rate has fallen below average.

#### **(iv) Reasons for Changing Location Patterns**

The dispersed pattern of much overseas investment in Ireland until recently has been examined by O'Malley (1994) who argued that the spatial pattern of investment was related to the type of investment:

The willingness of many of the firms concerned to locate in less industrialised regions reflects the fact that they were relatively 'mobile' types of operation, not requiring advanced labour skills or close contact with suppliers or specialised services. Nor, since they were generally highly export-oriented, did they require to be located close to the markets of the principal Irish population centres. Part of the attraction of an Irish location, compared with more advanced countries in Europe, lies in Ireland's relatively low labour costs and investment grant incentives. Thus, it made sense for the more mobile type of operation to go to the smaller towns and rural areas where higher grants were generally offered, as a matter of policy, and where labour costs were somewhat lower and the traditions of labour organisation were weaker than in the main urban centres (O'Malley, p.18).

This explanation suggests that while the provision of incentives played a role in influencing the internal location of overseas investment, it only affected this in the context in which other circumstances favoured a particular location. These circumstances are now changing. The most significant effect is probably the operation of local labour markets. The demand for advanced labour skills by both overseas and domestic investors has been rising. The larger urban centres are in a better position to meet these requirements. Those with the required skills are attracted to urban areas as such areas can provide a range of potential employers. The growing importance of the high technology sectors also encourages location in urban areas. O'Malley (1994) has pointed out that firms in the modern high technology sectors seem to have a particular preference for location in the more urbanised regions and they tend to be disproportionately concentrated in these regions, unlike

typical pattern of foreign firms in other more mature sectors. The growth of the internationally traded services sector also appears to favour urban areas. Finally, although multinationals import a large share of their inputs, the availability of infrastructure, sub-contractors and suppliers of services also tends to encourage investment in urban centres.

Environmental considerations also influence the location of some industries. Certain industries need advanced facilities to mitigate the impact of their activities on the environment. This is an example of a specialised service which can only be economically provided in the vicinity of an urban area.

#### *The Distribution of Human Capital*

The availability of advanced skills is an increasingly important factor for investors so it is worth considering the distribution of human capital. Walsh (1995), used the SAPS data from the 1991 Census to profile the regional distribution of educational qualifications of males and females in employment in 1991, based on the new regional boundaries. The share of male workers with of third level qualifications was highest in the Dublin region at 26 per cent, and lowest in the Midlands, at 12 per cent compared to 19 per cent for the state. The regions with the highest proportions of males with lower levels of formal educational attainment – none, primary or lower second level – were the South-East at 57 per cent, the Midlands at 59 per cent, the West at 60 per cent, the Border region at 68 per cent. The national rate was 52 per cent and the Dublin rate was 40 per cent.

The distribution of unemployment in all regions was skewed towards those with least education, but more so in the Border and Midlands regions, and least so in the Dublin region, while the largest concentrations of unemployed graduates were in regions with universities. This pattern suggests that graduates, even when unemployed, or seeking work, tend to remain in the larger urban centres, rather than return to their locations of origin.

These figures suggest that, even at the regional level, there are quite discernible differences in the skill content of the working population, and indeed in the skills of the unemployed population, favouring the areas of more concentrated population. This supports the argument that proportionately greater concentrations of more

qualified labour can be accessed in those regions with larger towns and cities, and particularly where third level institutions are located. It also indicates that the development of employment with a high skill content is easier to achieve in certain more metropolitan regions.

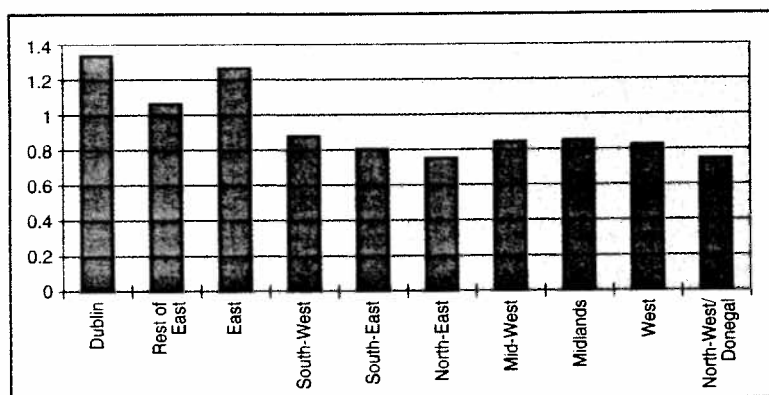
## 5. SERVICES

### (i) Trends in Employment in Services

The previous section has shown that the greater relative concentration of manufacturing employment in the East region has been eliminated, although in recent years the growth of manufacturing employment has favoured the East region. Services employment continues to be concentrated in the East region. This is illustrated in Figure 3.1, which shows the ratio of each region's share of services employment relative to its share of the population. The ratio for the East region is 1.27, indicating that this region's share of services employment is about 27 per cent greater than its share of population.

FIGURE 3.1

Regional Distribution of Services Employment Relative to Population 1996



Source: CSO, Labour Force Survey.

Most of the gain in employment over the past decade has been in services. Dublin accounted for 40 per cent of the growth of services employment between 1986 and 1996, while the Rest of the East (i.e. the Mid East) accounted for a further 15 per cent. Hence the East region as a whole accounted for 55 per cent of the growth of services employment over the past decade. The growth rate of services employment in percentage terms is shown in Table 3.11. This confirms that services employment has grown faster in the East region than elsewhere. Nonetheless the growth of services employment, as with non-agricultural employment generally (see Section 1) has not been dramatically above average in the East region – a growth rate of 36.5 per cent between 1986 and 1996 for the East region compared with a national average of 31.6 per cent. Given that the East region accounted for 55 per cent of the growth of services employment one might expect the growth rate of such employment to be substantially above average in this region. The explanation for this is that the East region's share of services employment was already high in 1986, at 47.7 per cent. This had

TABLE 3.11

Regional Trends in Service Employment  
Total Percentage Change

Regions	Percentage Change	
	1986-1996	1993-1996
Dublin	32.1	14.2
Rest of East	58.0	31.2
East	36.5	17.2
South West	29.7	13.5
South East	25.9	14.3
North East	29.5	9.4
Mid West	28.4	21.0
Midlands	34.9	20.0
West	24.5	14.0
North West/ Donegal	14.4	-3.2
State	31.6	15.3

Note: Special tabulation provided by CSO for 1996.

Source: CSO, Labour Force Survey.



increased to 49.4 per cent in 1996. Given the initial large concentration of services employment in the East region, even if services employment had grown at a similar rate in all regions, the East region would still account for approximately half of the growth of services employment.

There was substantial growth of services employment in most regions. Outside the East region, the growth of services employment between 1986 and 1996 was highest in the Midlands (34.9 per cent), South-West (29.7 per cent) and North-East (29.5 per cent). The growth of services employment over this period was lowest in the North West (14.4 per cent) and the West (24.5 per cent). During the most recent period of rapid growth between 1993 and 1996 the highest growth rates for services employment did not occur in the East, but in the Mid-West (21 per cent) and the Midlands (20 per cent), although in 1997 there was a decline in services employment in the Mid-West. The lowest growth rates occurred in the North-West, where employment declined by 3.2 per cent and the North-East (an increase of 9.4 per cent).

#### **(ii) Sub-Sections within Services**

The services sector embraces a wide range of economic activities and there are substantial regional differences in the growth rates of the different components of the services sector. The Labour Force Survey provides a regional disaggregation of services in terms of five sectors:

- (i) Commerce, insurance, finance and business services;
- (ii) Transport, communication and storage;
- (iii) Professional services;
- (iv) Public administration and defence;
- (v) Other services.

Of these, professional services is the largest, comprising employment of almost 239,000 or 30 per cent of total services employment in 1996. Over the past decade, employment in professional services in the East region (43.6 per cent) has been substantially above the national average (31.4 per cent). The East region accounted for around 60 per cent of the national employment growth in professional services. Employment growth in commerce

and business services has also been concentrated in the East region, which accounted for almost 66 per cent of the national employment growth in this sector between 1986 and 1996. The International Financial Services Centre in Dublin contributed to the above average growth in this sector in the East region.

Growth of employment in the transport and communications sector was more evenly distributed. The highest growth rates occurred in the Mid-West (42 per cent) and the Midlands (50 per cent) but the numbers employed in these regions in this sector is small in absolute terms.

Employment in public administration and defence in the East region grew by 6.6 per cent between 1986 and 1996 which was below the national average of 7.8 per cent. Outside the East region, employment growth in public administration over the past decade was above average in the following regions: the Midlands (23.4 per cent), the Mid-West (23.9 per cent), the North-East (10.3 per cent) and the South-West (8.1 per cent). The above average growth in this sector in certain regions probably reflects the effects of reallocation of government offices. The increase in employment in this sector between 1986 and 1996 nationally was quite small, at around 5,500. However, reallocation of employment of this nature can have a very substantial effect in particular towns.

The residual category – other services – is quite a large sector, comprising over 16 per cent of total services employment. It covers a wide range of personal services, including hotels and restaurants. Employment growth in this category between 1986 and 1996 was below average in the East region and above average in all other regions. The strong employment growth outside the East region in this category was important in enabling most regions to achieve reasonably strong growth of employment in the services sector as a whole.

#### **(iii) Information Technology**

Developments in telecommunications and information technology create possibilities for employment outside major urban centres. For example, Fexco, an Irish financial services company, uses information technology to provide services to both Irish and overseas customers from its base in Killorglin in Kerry. A number of towns including Loughrea and Castleisland provide back-office

services to international customers. However, Commins and Keane (1994), in a report on rural development for the Council argued that there are good grounds for caution against any undue optimism about the contribution of information technology and telecommunications to rural development. They quoted a study on the role of telecommunications in overcoming the remoteness of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland which found that most of the associated inward investment had gone to the more central locations. Another study quoted by NESF (1997) showed that most of the new employment associated with new information and communication technology was in Dublin. The reasons given were the availability of skills and the necessary infrastructure. NESF (1989) concluded that 'it is too simplistic to infer that radical technical, telecommunications and transport improvements, because they technically reduce the significance of distance also reduce its economic significance'. The effects of information technology are highly complex and depend on very specific features of the industry.

#### (iv) Tourism

##### *National Performance*

There has been strong growth in tourism over the past decade. The number of overseas visitors increased by 160 per cent between 1986 and 1996. The number of holiday visitors has increased almost fourfold over this period, while the number of business visitors has more than doubled. Revenue from overseas tourism in nominal terms has increased almost threefold over the past decade. This is in contrast to the period prior to 1987 when Irish tourism was relatively stagnant despite rapid growth in world tourism. Growth rates over the past decade have been well above the OECD average. In 1996, tourism accounted for over 6 per cent of GNP. Employment supported by tourism, including indirect employment, was estimated to be 108,700 in 1996.

##### *The Regional Dimension*

There is an important regional dimension to tourism as is indicated by the patterns outlined in Tables 3.12 and 3.13. While the largest

share of tourism revenue is captured by the Dublin region (24.9 per cent), revenue for this industry is disproportionately concentrated (relative to the distribution of population) in other regions.<sup>4</sup> The combined western regions account for 43 per cent of the population, but captured 55 per cent of the revenue from this industry in 1996. Hence revenue per capita from tourism is above average in a number of the poorer regions (the South-West and West). This is not universally true: in particular the relatively sparsely populated North-West region has below average revenue per capita from tourism.

There is a significant difference in the regional distribution of overseas and domestic tourism revenue. The largest concentration of overseas tourism revenue is in the Dublin region, which accounts for 30.4 per cent of such revenue. This is followed by the South-West, which accounts for almost 20 per cent of overseas revenue and the West, which accounts for 13.3 per cent. By contrast, Dublin's share of revenue from domestic tourism is much lower at 12.3 per cent: this reflects the importance of Dublin as the primary market for domestic tourism. The South-West and the West also have a concentration of revenue from domestic tourism, but on the

TABLE 3.12

#### Regional Distribution of Tourism Revenue and Population, 1996

	Overseas	Northern Ireland	Domestic	Total	Population (%)
Dublin	30.4	19.1	12.3	24.9	29.2
Midlands - East	9.8	2.5	10.1	9.6	17.0
South East	9.3	6.0	15.2	10.8	10.8
South West	19.7	5.1	20.8	19.4	13.2
Mid West	11.3	11.4	12.1	11.5	11.4
West	13.3	13.9	16.8	14.3	9.7
North West	6.3	42.1	12.7	9.5	8.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<sup>4</sup> Note that the regions for the organisation of tourism are different from the planning regions and those used by the new Regional Authorities (see Chapter 4).

TABLE 3.13

## Tourism Revenue Per Capita, 1996

	Overseas	Total (£)
Dublin	417.1	500.7
South-East	344.2	584.9
South-West	595.6	859.3
Mid-West	396.2	591.5
West	547.0	860.2
North-West	290.9	642.3
Midlands/East	232.2	332.5
Total	400.7	586.2

Source: Bord Fáilte, *Tourism Facts 1996* and CSO, *Census of Population*.

whole domestic revenue is much more evenly distributed across regions. Revenue from tourism in Northern Ireland has its own distinctive regional distribution pattern. This revenue is highly concentrated in the North-West (42.1 per cent) which presumably reflects the proximity of this region to the border. The other large concentration of Northern Ireland revenue is in Dublin (19.1 per cent). The distinctive concentration of Northern Ireland tourism in the North-West is a recent phenomenon. Strong growth of this market in the North-West in 1996 resulted in this region doubling its share of revenue from this market. Before 1996, the South-East also accounted for a large share of revenue from Northern Ireland.

There are also substantial differences in the regional distribution of revenue from different overseas markets. Revenue from the European market is heavily concentrated in Dublin, which accounted for 41 per cent of this revenue in 1995. Revenue from the British market has a more even regional distribution although the largest concentration is again in Dublin at 23.6 per cent. The North American market is in an intermediate position in terms of regional concentration, with Dublin accounting for 30 per cent of the revenue from this market in 1995. Revenue from other overseas markets is the most concentrated, with Dublin accounting for almost 50 per cent. This category, however, represents a small percentage of total revenue, although the potential for growth could be considerable, if problems of access can be addressed.

## Regional Growth Rates

The strongest growth of total tourism revenue between 1991 and 1996 was in the North-West, although this was from a low base. After the North-West, growth of total tourism revenue was strongest in Dublin which experienced growth of revenue of 36 per cent between 1991 and 1996, substantially above the national average. Revenue growth in the strong tourist region of the South-West was equal to the national average, while it was below average in the West.

Growth of overseas tourism revenue in the 1990s was dominated by Dublin and the South-East. Overseas revenue growth in the Midlands/East region was also strong, probably reflecting an overflow from Dublin. Growth of overseas tourism revenue in all other regions was below average.

The strong relative performance of the North-West reflects growth in revenue from the domestic and Northern Ireland markets, at a time when domestic tourism revenue was in decline nationally. There are substantial year-to-year fluctuations and the North-West's strong performance between 1991 and 1996 is influenced by

TABLE 3.14

Growth of Tourism Revenue by Region 1991-1996  
Percentage Change

	Overseas Tourism Revenue	Total Tourism Revenue
Dublin	99	36
South-East	91	22
South-West	47	29
Mid-West	47	17
West	64	26
North-West	44	37
Midlands/East	79	31
Total	69	29

Source: Bord Fáilte, *Tourism Facts 1996* and *Perspectives on Irish Tourism: Regions 1991-1995*.

particularly strong growth of domestic and Northern Ireland revenue in 1996.

While growth of tourism revenue during the 1990s has favoured the east coast the position in 1996 was different. Total tourism revenue in 1996 only increased marginally in Dublin (growth of overseas revenue was offset by a decline in domestic revenue) while the largest increases were in the South-West, Mid-West and North-West. The strong performance of the North American and British markets would appear to have supported growth in the western regions in 1996. An increase in domestic revenue in 1996 also assisted the South-West and North-West.

**TABLE 3.15**

**Growth of Tourism Revenue by Region 1995-1996  
Percentage Change**

	Overseas Tourism Revenue	Total Tourism Revenue
Dublin	5.3	0.7
South-East	10.6	9.4
South-West	22.8	16.3
Mid-West	24.4	17.2
West	22.2	5.6
North-West	3.6	22.6
Midlands/East	9.4	3.4

Source: See Table 3.14

An important issue to consider is why, for most of the 1990s, overseas tourism is growing more rapidly on the east coast in comparison to other regions. A key factor has been the improvement of access through Dublin airport and seaports in the Dublin area. Improved access to Dublin has enabled it to benefit from the international trend towards urban tourism. Likewise, Dublin has also benefited from the trend towards shorter breaks. Dublin has also benefited from other specific factors, such as Dublin's current popularity, urban regeneration and an expanding tourism infrastructure. A key problem identified in many reports on

tourism is the pronounced seasonality of demand. Dublin has been more successful than other regions in attracting visitors outside the peak season. A larger share of business travellers facilitates a less seasonal pattern of demand. In short, a range of factors have contributed to strong growth of overseas tourism on the east coast and, in particular, in Dublin.

## 6. REGIONAL INCOMES AND OUTPUT

GDP and GNP are the most widely used measures of economic performance at national level. Until recently, there was no comparable information at sub-national level. Over the past year, the CSO has published information on output for each region, as measured by Gross Value Added (GVA), which is closely related to

**TABLE 3.16**

**Regional Accounts, 1991 and 1993**

Region	Index of GVA Per Capita (State = 100)		Regional GVA Per Capita as % of EU Average 1993 EU15=100
	1991	1993	
Dublin & Mid-East*	116.2	114.7	95.0
Dublin	131.1	131.0	108.5
Mid-East	69.0	64.4	53.3
South West	107.1	111.3	92.2
Mid-West	95.8	93.7	77.6
South-East	89.1	92.2	76.3
West	75.9	71.7	59.4
Border	82.2	83.1	68.8
Midlands	77.0	77.4	64.1
State	100.0	100.0	82.8

\* The combined Dublin and Mid-East regions are shown in this table because the latter region is unique as a high proportion of the workforce residing there work in the Dublin region and, as a result of this, GVA per capita in the Mid-East is artificially low.

Source: CSO, Regional Accounts, 1993. EU comparisons have been calculated on the basis of GDP per capita in Ireland being equal to 82.8 per cent of the EU average in 1993.

GDP, for 1991 and 1993. The main results on output per capita by region are presented in Table 3.16 below.

The combined Dublin and Mid-East region had the highest level of GVA per capita in 1993, around 14 per cent above the average for the state. The South West region had the next highest GVA per capita, 11 per cent above the State average. Apart from the Mid-East region, in which GVA per capita is artificially low, because a lot of the workforce of this region produces value-added in the Dublin region, the regions with the lowest GVA per capita were the Midlands, Border and West.

Comparisons between 1991 and 1993 are not necessarily indicative of any long-term trend as the period involved is so short. This period was also one of fairly slow growth nationally. The ranking of regions in terms of GVA per capita was unchanged over this period. There was a slight relative decline in the relative GVA per capita of the combined Dublin and Mid-East regions and a larger decline in the relative position of the West.

The recent Regional Accounts include revisions to estimated regional GVA for 1991 which had been published earlier. The most significant revision is for the West region. The GVA per capita for the West region had earlier been estimated at 82.6 per cent of the national average in 1991 while the revised estimated was 75.9 per cent. The relative GVA per capita for the West region subsequently fell to 71.7 per cent of the national average in 1993.

The ratio of regional GVA per capita to the EU average is shown in the final column of Table 3.16. This has been calculated by applying the GVA per capita of each region to Ireland's GDP per capita relative to the EU, which was 82.8 per cent in 1993. In 1996, Ireland's GDP per capita was close to 100 per cent of the EU level. However, information is not available on the growth of regional GVA since 1993.

Differences in output per capita do not necessarily reflect differences in productivity. Differences in output per capita could also be explained by differences in the share of the population at work, which in turn could reflect either differences in unemployment or labour force participation. It is possible to combine the information from the regional accounts with the Labour Force Survey to calculate regional productivity. It emerges from this calculation that differences in output per capita are in fact mainly explained by differences in productivity.

It is important to note that GVA is a measure of output so the usual caveats which apply to GDP are also relevant in this context. Regional *income* per capita will differ from regional output per capita. Regional income will be affected by factors such as profit outflows to non-residents of the region, including persons abroad, as well as the distribution of taxes and transfer payments within the State.

Estimates of per capita regional incomes for the years 1960 up to 1977 have been published by NESC (1980). These estimates revealed a pattern of convergence of regional incomes from the mid-1960s up to 1977. There was a steady decline in the relative income position of the East region, partly reflecting the strong population growth of this region. In 1960, the income per capita in the East region was 24.2 per cent greater than the national average; by 1977 this differential had fallen to 15.4 per cent.

More recent estimates of regional incomes are available from the CSO's Household Budget Survey (HBS). The HBS provides estimates of average weekly disposable household income for each region but these are not directly comparable to the earlier estimates of regional per capita income. Estimates of household income by region are available at seven-yearly intervals for the years between 1973 and 1994/95.

Over the period 1973 to 1994/95, there was a slight increase in the relative disposable income of the East region, from 11.5 per cent of the national average in 1973 to 13.2 per cent of national average in 1994/95 (see Table 3.17). Nonetheless, a measure of dispersion of regional household incomes – the coefficient of variation – indicates that on the whole there was a narrowing of the extent of disparities in household incomes by regions over this period. There was a marked improvement in the income position of what were the poorest regions in 1973: the West, Donegal/North West and Midlands regions. The increase was most significant in the case of Donegal/North West; this region's income was about 30 per cent below the national average in 1973, while by 1994/1995 it was only 8.6 per cent below the national average. Apart from the three poorest regions in 1973 and the East, average household disposable income in all other regions declined in relative terms (although not of course in absolute terms). The relative decline was largest in the South-East, followed by the North-East.

**TABLE 3.17**

**Deviation from National Average of Regional Household Income**

Region	1973	1980	1987	1994/95
Eastern	11.5	14.1	8.9	13.2
South-East	7.9	-10.4	-5.7	-12.2
South-West	2.0	1.1	0.7	-6.1
Mid-West	-5.0	-5.3	0.9	-9.4
Western	-13.6	-14.6	-4.6	-0.7
Donegal & North-West	-30.5	-24.1	-16.1	-8.6
Midlands	-18.3	-4.6	-16.5	-5.6
North Eastern	-2.6	-11.3	-10.1	-12.2

Source: CSO, *Household Budget Survey*.

The evidence on regional incomes indicates that there has been a long run trend toward regional convergence since 1960. On the other hand, in the most recent period, household disposable income in the East region grew more rapidly than the national average. This could be a temporary fluctuation but it could also represent the beginning of a new trend of above average income growth in the East region.

Taxes and transfer payments help to reduce the disparities in disposable income by region. Regional differences in direct income (i.e. before taxes and transfers) are much greater than the disparities in disposable income. Nevertheless, the long run trend towards convergence of regional disposable income is reflected in a similar trend of regional direct incomes.

An important caveat to bear in mind when considering inter-regional income comparisons is that income differences within regions are much larger than those between regions. Income differences between regions can only explain a small proportion of inter-personal income differences.

**7. REGIONAL PERFORMANCE UNDER THE COMMUNITY SUPPORT FRAMEWORK**

Previous sections have examined economic performance under a range of different indicators. A recent report by Fitzpatrick Associates combines a number of different indicators of regional performance in an examination of the regional dimension of the Community Support Framework (CSF). Fitzpatrick Associates examine performance over the period 1993 to 1995 or 1996 and use the regional boundaries of the new Regional Authorities. This Chapter has mainly used the former planning regions, to facilitate analysis over a longer period.

The six indicators used in the review by Fitzpatrick Associates were as follows: growth of employment, reduction in unemployment, change in long-term unemployment, growth in new private car registrations, growth in company R & D expenditure and growth of out-of-state tourism revenue. Regions were ranked on the basis of their relative performance in terms of these indicators and an overall ranking was calculated as the average of these six indicators (see Table 3.18). According to this composite index, the Midlands performed better than the other regions. The Mid-East and Mid-West performed relatively well. The weakest performers were the West, Border and South-West.

The strong performance of the Midlands region reflects substantial reductions in unemployment and long-term unemployment. Net out-migration was an important factor here, although the region appears to have benefited in a real way from the spreading of growth from the East.

A comparison was made between the original socio-economic position of each region at the beginning of the CSF period and each region's performance under the CSF. The comparison did not reveal any systematic tendency towards either convergence or divergence.

Fitzpatrick Associates also compared expenditure per capita and performance under the CSF. The rankings for both these variables are shown in Table 3.18. The correlation between expenditure and performance is positive but statistically insignificant at the 5 per cent level (Honohan, 1997, p. 116). The Midlands and the Mid-West are ranked relatively highly in terms of both expenditure and performance. Dublin performs relatively poorly in both expenditure and performance. The Mid-East had a strong performance despite

relatively low expenditure per capita. Conversely, the Border region had the highest expenditure per capita but performed relatively poorly.

**TABLE 3.18**

**CSF Expenditure (1994 and 1995) and Relative Regional Performance**

	<b>Expenditure per Capita (£)</b>	<b>Expenditure Rank</b>	<b>Performance Rank</b>
Dublin	825	8	5
South-East	898	6	4
South-West	1,034	4	6=
Mid-West	1,083	3	3
West	971	5	8
Border	1,236	1	6=
Midlands	1,181	2	1
Mid-East	861	7	2

Source: Fitzpatrick Associates (1997)

While the picture of relative regional performance that emerges from this analysis is quite complex, Fitzpatrick Associates point out that it is nevertheless clear that all regions are sharing in the considerable economic growth in Ireland during the 1990s.

## 8. CONCLUSION

A description of economic development at sub-national level has been presented in this chapter. For the most part we have used regional data. The use of the regional unit is partly for reasons of data availability and also reflects the fact that many state agencies use a regional division. There is, however, an element of arbitrariness in the use of any spatial unit and it needs to be borne in mind that regions are not internally homogenous entities in either economic or social terms.

There has been an ongoing gradual increase in the proportion of national employment located in the East region. This is significantly influenced by the decline in agricultural employment which has

partly offset the growth of employment in other regions but has only marginally affected the East. The decline in agricultural employment can be expected to continue, since the share of agricultural employment continues to represent a significantly higher share of total employment in Ireland compared to other EU countries.

The regional pattern of non-agricultural employment growth has differed from that of total employment. During the 1970s, the western regions and the Midlands had substantially faster growth rates of non-agricultural employment. In the case of the West, non-agricultural employment growth was almost double the rate for the East. Over the past decade the growth of non-agricultural employment has been more similar across all regions; the more rapid growth in non-agricultural employment in the western regions and the Midlands that characterised the 1970s is no longer evident. The growth of non-agricultural employment in two regions, the North-West and the South-East, was considerably below the national average over the past decade.

It was the distinctive regional pattern of manufacturing and internationally-traded services employment growth in the 1970s which enabled some regions to achieve substantially above average growth of non-agricultural employment. For the most part, this growth took place outside major urban centres. Over the past decade, the growth of employment in manufacturing and internationally-traded services has become far more concentrated in the East and other urban centres. As a result of the regional industrialisation of earlier decades, the share of manufacturing in total employment is similar across all regions.

Services employment continues to be disproportionately concentrated in the East region. All regions have benefited from the growth of services employment over the past decade. The growth of services employment has been somewhat above average in the East region but over the last three years, the fastest growth rates of services employment have been in the Mid-West and Midlands. Tourism represents a rapidly growing source of employment within services. The economic significance of tourism is greatest in some of the western regions. During the 1990s, however, the fastest growth of overseas tourism has been on the east coast.

There has been a long-run trend towards regional convergence of

unemployment since 1960. While some of the lowest rates of unemployment are in rural counties, unemployment in such counties tends to be understated due to underemployment. Differences in the nature of unemployment between urban and rural areas needs to be taken into account in the planning of employment services.

Income per capita has also shown a long-run tendency towards convergence since 1960. However, since 1987, disposable household income in the East region grew more rapidly than the national average. This may be a temporary fluctuation but it may also represent the beginning of a new trend of above average income growth in the East region.

A composite index of regional performance under the CSF found that since 1993, the strongest performing region has been the Midlands, followed by the Mid-East and Mid-West. The regions with the weakest relative performance were the West, Border and South-West. However, all regions have benefited from economic growth during the CSF period.

The most significant economic and social differences, however, continue to exist within rather than between regions. The growth of employment has been strongest in or around major urban centres. The research cited in Chapter 2 shows that there is a distinct geographic pattern to the distribution of affluence and deprivation, but this pattern is not 'regional' in the sense of following any regional boundaries. Regional variations account for a relatively small proportion of inter-personal variations in income.

The changing pattern of economic activity in Ireland appears to reflect changes that are taking place elsewhere. Location patterns in the European Union have been analysed in a European Commission report, *Europe 2000 +: Co-Operation for European Territorial Development*. During the 1970s, places outside large cities, which the *Europe 2000* report defined as having a population in excess of 500,000, grew more rapidly than the large cities. During the 1980s, large cities began to grow more rapidly than smaller cities and towns. The report put forward the following explanation of the influence of economic factors on the growth of large cities:

Economic developments over the past decade and more – in the form, in particular, of the growth of service activities relative to manufacturing (even within manufacturing industry itself), the

growing internationalisation of the economy and the increasing degree of competition, the rapid rate of product development and of changes in the production process under the influence of technological advance and the increasing sophistication of products, coupled with the shift away from mass production to tailoring the product to consumer demand – has in virtually all cases tended to increase the attraction of being located in – or within easy reach of – a large city rather than a smaller one. These developments have served, in other words, to put a premium on producing in the most efficient location where external economies, in terms of infrastructure, the provision of business and public services, education and training, skilled labour force and access to research and development facilities, technical know-how and information about market developments, both at national and international level, are at their greatest (European Commission, 1994, p.97).

In the case of overseas investment, given the relatively low linkages with the rest of the economy, the role of some external economies may be somewhat less significant in Ireland. Nonetheless many of these factors are undoubtedly relevant. In particular, the availability of labour skills is a key factor. The demand for advanced labour skills by inward investors has been rising. The larger urban centres are in a better position to meet these requirements. Infrastructure and the availability of specialised services of various kinds can also encourage the location of investment within larger urban centres. It was the relative lack of importance of external economies which O'Malley (1994) identified as the reason why it was possible to have a highly dispersed pattern of inward investment in earlier decades. The current changed circumstances would not favour such a dispersed pattern of investment although of course many enterprises can operate successfully in smaller centres. The constraints on the location requirements of inward investors points to the importance of considering other options. The growth of employment in indigenous manufacturing and internationally traded services has been strongest in the West and Mid-West. Policies for the development of indigenous industry and other parts of the economy are discussed in Chapter 4.



## APPENDIX

### TABLE A3.1

#### Employment in All Manufacturing and Internationally-Traded Services (Percentage Change)

	1973-79	1979-86	1986-96	1993-96	1973-96
Dublin	-6.9	-24.8	19.9	20.0	-16.0
Kildare	23.1	-31.4	85.1	56.1	56.2
Meath	15.6	-13.2	24.0	11.7	24.4
Wicklow	39.7	-32.6	31.9	12.8	24.2
<b>EAST</b>	-1.8	-25.3	25.7	22.0	-7.8
Cork	0.5	-19.6	21.5	9.4	-1.8
Kerry	31.4	-11.3	11.1	-2.7	29.5
<b>SOUTH-WEST</b>	4.5	-18.2	19.7	7.3	2.3
Carlow	57.5	-22.6	-10.6	-6.2	8.9
Kilkenny	22.6	-21.7	5.5	2.7	1.3
Tipperary S.R.	14.3	-1.2	10.1	22.5	24.4
Waterford	13.8	-14.2	2.1	4.6	-0.3
Wexford	15.0	-11.9	19.3	10.1	20.8
<b>SOUTH-EAST</b>	20.6	-14.2	5.5	6.9	9.1
Cavan	43.1	-11.9	-0.8	0.4	25.0
Louth	-13.0	-31.1	14.2	2.3	-31.5
Monaghan	2.8	5.1	16.7	10.3	26.0
<b>NORTH-EAST</b>	-1.2	-19.3	11.2	4.1	-11.3
Clare	35.5	-13.2	25.7	10.8	47.7
Limerick	10.2	28.4	24.6	19.2	76.4
Tipperary N.R.	19.9	-13.3	38.0	8.5	43.4
<b>MID-WEST</b>	21.1	4.3	26.9	14.5	60.3
Laois	54.6	-18.9	-18.3	-1.0	2.5
Longford	67.6	8.1	-10.9	14.7	61.4
Offaly	15.5	-22.2	21.2	16.5	9.0
Roscommon	78.4	-24.0	46.5	19.1	98.7
Westmeath	64.7	-6.5	15.4	8.5	77.8
<b>MIDLANDS</b>	50.0	-13.5	9.5	11.6	42.1
Galway	42.7	15.0	36.4	27.2	123.9
Mayo	61.8	-15.8	25.8	11.2	71.4
<b>WEST</b>	50.1	2.1	32.7	21.5	103.4
Leitrim	74.4	-0.7	-16.3	-4.1	44.9
Sligo	38.4	-26.1	45.7	19.3	49.0
Donegal	15.8	36.1	33.4	5.2	110.1
<b>NORTH-WEST AND DONEGAL</b>	28.4	10.5	30.3	7.6	84.9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>-16.1</b>	<b>21.1</b>	<b>14.3</b>	<b>10.9</b>

Source: Calculated from the Industrial Database of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

### TABLE A3.2

#### Employment in Irish Manufacturing and Internationally-Traded Services (Percentage Change)

	1973-79	1979-86	1986-96	1993-96	1973-96
Dublin	-8.9	-30.3	7.2	10.6	-31.9
Kildare	18.7	-39.0	15.9	31.6	-16.0
Meath	14.2	-23.0	26.6	10.0	11.3
Wicklow	17.1	-34.4	31.9	12.1	1.3
<b>EAST</b>	-4.3	-30.8	11.0	11.9	-26.4
Cork	-3.9	-22.9	5.6	6.9	-21.7
Kerry	23.6	20.4	29.4	5.9	92.7
<b>SOUTH-WEST</b>	-1.6	-18.2	9.4	6.7	-11.9
Carlow	22.8	-37.1	-7.1	-2.3	-28.2
Kilkenny	10.9	-23.9	13.8	5.5	-4.0
Tipperary S.R.	5.8	-13.6	-12.9	2.7	-20.4
Waterford	7.8	-23.6	-17.6	6.4	-32.1
Wexford	-2.7	-7.1	7.6	3.9	-2.7
<b>SOUTH-EAST</b>	8.3	-21.7	-5.6	4.0	-20.0
Cavan	25.1	-12.6	-4.1	-1.1	4.9
Louth	-11.9	-18.1	0.5	1.4	-27.4
Monaghan	8.1	8.3	18.8	9.3	39.0
<b>NORTH-EAST</b>	1.0	-9.3	5.5	3.6	-3.3
Clare	11.8	-21.0	12.2	8.4	-0.9
Limerick	11.6	-9.6	17.0	18.5	18.1
Tipperary N.R.	16.8	-27.3	50.6	3.2	28.0
<b>MID-WEST</b>	12.9	-17.4	22.6	11.4	14.3
Laois	18.3	-17.2	-23.7	0.1	-25.3
Longford	39.6	0.7	-5.6	15.4	32.8
Offaly	-2.9	-31.9	12.4	25.1	-25.6
Roscommon	63.8	-15.9	7.9	3.6	48.7
Westmeath	-8.2	-3.9	17.3	37.0	3.5
<b>MIDLANDS</b>	15.4	-16.8	1.8	15.7	-2.3
Galway	26.9	10.1	32.3	23.5	84.9
Mayo	-3.8	5.1	22.9	11.0	24.3
<b>WEST</b>	13.5	8.3	28.9	18.9	58.4
Leitrim	52.9	-11.5	-18.7	-6.2	10.0
Sligo	-6.4	-16.6	28.1	21.7	0.0
Donegal	6.4	25.7	-1.5	6.8	31.8
<b>NORTH-WEST AND DONEGAL</b>	8.2	11.5	1.1	8.0	21.9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>-20.6</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>-12.3</b>

Source: Calculated from the Industrial Database of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

TABLE A3.3

Employment in Overseas Manufacturing and Internationally-Traded Services (Percentage Change)

	1973-79	1979-86	1986-96	1993-96	1973-96
Dublin	-3.2	-15.6	37.7	32.3	12.5
Kildare	31.0	-19.0	170.6	73.1	187.2
Meath	30.4	78.6	13.4	20.0	164.1
Wicklow	140.8	-28.7	32.0	14.1	126.6
<b>EAST</b>	3.2	-15.4	47.5	35.8	28.7
Cork	8.8	-14.1	45.3	12.3	35.9
Kerry	37.0	-31.6	-9.7	-13.9	-15.4
<b>SOUTH-WEST</b>	14.5	-18.3	34.3	7.9	25.7
Carlow	863.3	20.4	-16.2	-12.1	872.5
Kilkenny	131.8	-11.5	-26.4	-11.6	51.0
Tipperary S.R.	40.9	28.2	46.5	49.8	164.7
Waterford	38.1	15.3	43.5	2.5	128.5
Wexford	62.2	-19.7	41.0	20.3	83.8
<b>SOUTH-EAST</b>	74.7	6.1	27.7	11.5	136.8
Cavan	119.9	-10.3	7.1	3.9	111.2
Louth	-14.1	-44.4	34.6	3.4	-35.7
Monaghan	-17.1	-10.5	4.5	17.9	-22.4
<b>NORTH-EAST</b>	-4.5	-35.4	24.2	4.9	-23.4
Clare	59.8	-7.6	33.9	12.1	97.8
Limerick	8.5	78.1	29.7	19.7	150.6
Tipperary N.R.	30.9	30.5	15.8	22.6	97.8
<b>MID-WEST</b>	32.4	29.7	30.0	16.9	123.3
Laois	169.9	-21.2	-10.4	-2.4	90.8
Longford	143.2	19.5	-17.8	13.6	138.9
Offaly	426.7	18.0	42.3	3.0	784.0
Roscommon	154.8	-51.3	271.7	59.6	361.4
Westmeath	208.0	-8.1	14.3	-4.0	223.6
<b>MIDLANDS</b>	194.4	-8.0	20.8	6.9	227.2
Galway	64.9	20.4	40.4	31.0	178.7
Mayo	222.7	-31.1	29.1	11.5	187.1
<b>WEST</b>	113.6	-3.6	36.6	24.1	181.3
Leitrim	167.3	25.9	-12.2	-0.4	195.4
Sligo	99.3	-32.2	59.5	17.8	115.6
Donegal	60.8	69.0	115.5	3.7	485.6
<b>NORTH-WEST AND DONEGAL</b>	88.5	8.8	81.2	7.3	271.6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24.4</b>	<b>-8.5</b>	<b>38.9</b>	<b>19.8</b>	<b>58.1</b>

Source: Calculated from the Industrial Database of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

TABLE A3.4

Employment in All Manufacturing and Internationally-Traded Services (Change in Numbers)

	1973-79	1979-86	1986-96	1993-96	1973-96
Dublin	-5,889	-19,845	11,976	12,021	-13,758
Kildare	1,483	-2,486	4,619	3,610	3,616
Meath	662	-648	1,023	555	1,037
Wicklow	1,953	-2,243	1,480	693	1,190
<b>EAST</b>	-1,791	-25,222	19,098	16,879	-7,915
Cork	152	-6,014	5,323	2,594	-539
Kerry	1,420	-670	582	-162	1,332
<b>SOUTH-WEST</b>	1,572	-6,684	5,905	2,432	793
Carlow	1,672	-1,035	-377	-208	260
Kilkenny	836	-983	196	97	49
Tipperary S.R.	568	-53	452	907	967
Waterford	1,270	-1,491	191	401	-30
Wexford	718	-656	937	532	999
<b>SOUTH-EAST</b>	5,064	-4,218	1,399	1,729	2,245
Cavan	1,255	-496	-30	16	729
Louth	-1,585	-3,310	1,041	192	-3,854
Monaghan	105	197	683	447	985
<b>NORTH-EAST</b>	-225	-3,609	1,694	655	-2,140
Clare	2,162	-1,091	1,840	877	2,911
Limerick	790	2,418	2,694	2,197	5,902
Tipperary N.R.	566	-455	1,123	318	1,234
<b>MID-WEST</b>	3,518	872	5,657	3,392	10,047
Laois	1,138	-608	-478	-22	52
Longford	934	187	-272	286	849
Offaly	474	-784	585	472	275
Roscommon	1,117	-609	899	455	1,407
Westmeath	1,397	-232	513	301	1,678
<b>MIDLANDS</b>	5,060	-2,046	1,247	1,492	4,261
Galway	2,541	1,278	3,553	2,852	7,372
Mayo	2,356	-974	1,343	660	2,725
<b>WEST</b>	4,897	304	4,896	3,512	10,097
Leitrim	605	-10	-230	-50	365
Sligo	1,011	-952	1,231	634	1,290
Donegal	794	2,101	2,643	527	5,538
<b>NORTH-WEST AND DONEGAL</b>	2,410	1,139	3,644	1,111	7,193
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20,505</b>	<b>-39,464</b>	<b>43,540</b>	<b>31,202</b>	<b>24,581</b>

Source: Calculated from the Industrial Database of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

TABLE A3.5

**Employment in Irish Manufacturing and Internationally-Traded Services (Change in Numbers)**

	1973-79	1979-86	1986-96	1993-96	1973-96
Dublin	-4,895	-15,213	2,523	3,586	-17,585
Kildare	774	-1,917	478	836	-665
Meath	551	-1,022	909	394	438
Wicklow	689	-1,623	987	442	53
<b>EAST</b>	<b>-2,881</b>	<b>-19,775</b>	<b>4,897</b>	<b>5,258</b>	<b>-17,759</b>
Cork	-783	-4,394	836	1,017	-4,341
Kerry	443	474	822	200	1,739
<b>SOUTH-WEST</b>	<b>-340</b>	<b>-3,920</b>	<b>1,658</b>	<b>1,217</b>	<b>-2,602</b>
Carlow	636	-1,271	-152	-47	-787
Kilkenny	363	-887	390	168	-134
Tipperary S.R.	175	-434	-355	62	-614
Waterford	577	-1,875	-1,069	300	-2,367
Wexford	-94	-240	239	128	-95
<b>SOUTH-EAST</b>	<b>1,657</b>	<b>-4,707</b>	<b>-947</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>-3,997</b>
Cavan	593	-371	-107	-28	115
Louth	-720	-967	24	63	-1,663
Monaghan	243	267	656	352	1,166
<b>NORTH-EAST</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>-1,071</b>	<b>573</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>-382</b>
Clare	365	-727	334	237	-28
Limerick	502	-463	742	797	781
Tipperary N.R.	372	-706	954	89	620
<b>MID-WEST</b>	<b>1,239</b>	<b>-1,896</b>	<b>2,030</b>	<b>1,123</b>	<b>1,373</b>
Laois	290	-323	-368	1	-401
Longford	400	10	-79	179	331
Offaly	-85	-908	241	438	-752
Roscommon	764	-311	130	62	583
Westmeath	-117	-51	218	400	50
<b>MIDLANDS</b>	<b>1,252</b>	<b>-1,583</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>1,080</b>	<b>-189</b>
Galway	937	447	1,570	1,223	2,954
Mayo	-103	134	628	333	659
<b>WEST</b>	<b>834</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>2,198</b>	<b>1,556</b>	<b>3,613</b>
Leitrim	349	-116	-167	-48	66
Sligo	-97	-236	333	270	0
Donegal	266	1,138	-81	348	1,323
<b>NORTH-WEST AND DONEGAL</b>	<b>518</b>	<b>786</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>570</b>	<b>1,389</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,395</b>	<b>-31,585</b>	<b>10,636</b>	<b>11,802</b>	<b>-18,554</b>

Source: Calculated from the Industrial Database of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

TABLE A3.6

**Employment in Overseas Manufacturing and Internationally-Traded Services (Change in Numbers)**

	1973-79	1979-86	1986-96	1993-96	1973-96
Dublin	-994	-4,632	9,453	8,435	3,827
Kildare	709	-569	4,141	2,774	4,281
Meath	111	374	114	161	599
Wicklow	1,264	-620	493	251	1,137
<b>EAST</b>	<b>1,090</b>	<b>-5,447</b>	<b>14,201</b>	<b>11,621</b>	<b>9,844</b>
Cork	935	-1,620	4,487	1,577	3,802
Kerry	977	-1,144	-240	-362	-407
<b>SOUTH-WEST</b>	<b>1,912</b>	<b>-2,764</b>	<b>4,247</b>	<b>1,215</b>	<b>3,395</b>
Carlow	1,036	236	-225	-161	1,047
Kilkenny	473	-96	-194	-71	183
Tipperary S.R.	393	381	807	845	1,581
Waterford	693	384	1,260	101	2,337
Wexford	812	-416	698	404	1,094
<b>SOUTH-EAST</b>	<b>3,407</b>	<b>489</b>	<b>2,346</b>	<b>1,118</b>	<b>6,242</b>
Cavan	662	-125	77	44	614
Louth	-865	-2,343	1,017	129	-2,191
Monaghan	-138	-70	27	95	-181
<b>NORTH-EAST</b>	<b>-341</b>	<b>-2,538</b>	<b>1,121</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>-1,758</b>
Clare	1,797	-364	1,506	640	2,939
Limerick	288	2,881	1,952	1,400	5,121
Tipperary N.R.	194	251	169	229	614
<b>MID-WEST</b>	<b>2,279</b>	<b>2,768</b>	<b>3,627</b>	<b>2,269</b>	<b>8,674</b>
Laois	848	-285	-110	-23	453
Longford	534	177	-193	107	518
Offaly	559	124	344	34	1,027
Roscommon	353	-298	769	393	824
Westmeath	1,514	-181	295	-99	1,628
<b>MIDLANDS</b>	<b>3,808</b>	<b>-463</b>	<b>1,105</b>	<b>412</b>	<b>4,450</b>
Galway	1,604	831	1,983	1,629	4,418
Mayo	2,459	-1,108	715	327	2,066
<b>WEST</b>	<b>4,063</b>	<b>-277</b>	<b>2,698</b>	<b>1,956</b>	<b>6,484</b>
Leitrim	256	106	-63	-2	299
Sligo	1,108	-716	898	364	1,290
Donegal	528	963	2,724	179	4,215
<b>NORTH-WEST AND DONEGAL</b>	<b>1,892</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>3,559</b>	<b>541</b>	<b>5,804</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18,110</b>	<b>-7,879</b>	<b>32,904</b>	<b>19,400</b>	<b>43,135</b>

Source: Calculated from the Industrial Database of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

