



**Census 2022
Population Increase
by Local Authority:**
A Review of Preliminary Data



Census 2022

Population Increase by Local Authority: A Review of Preliminary Data



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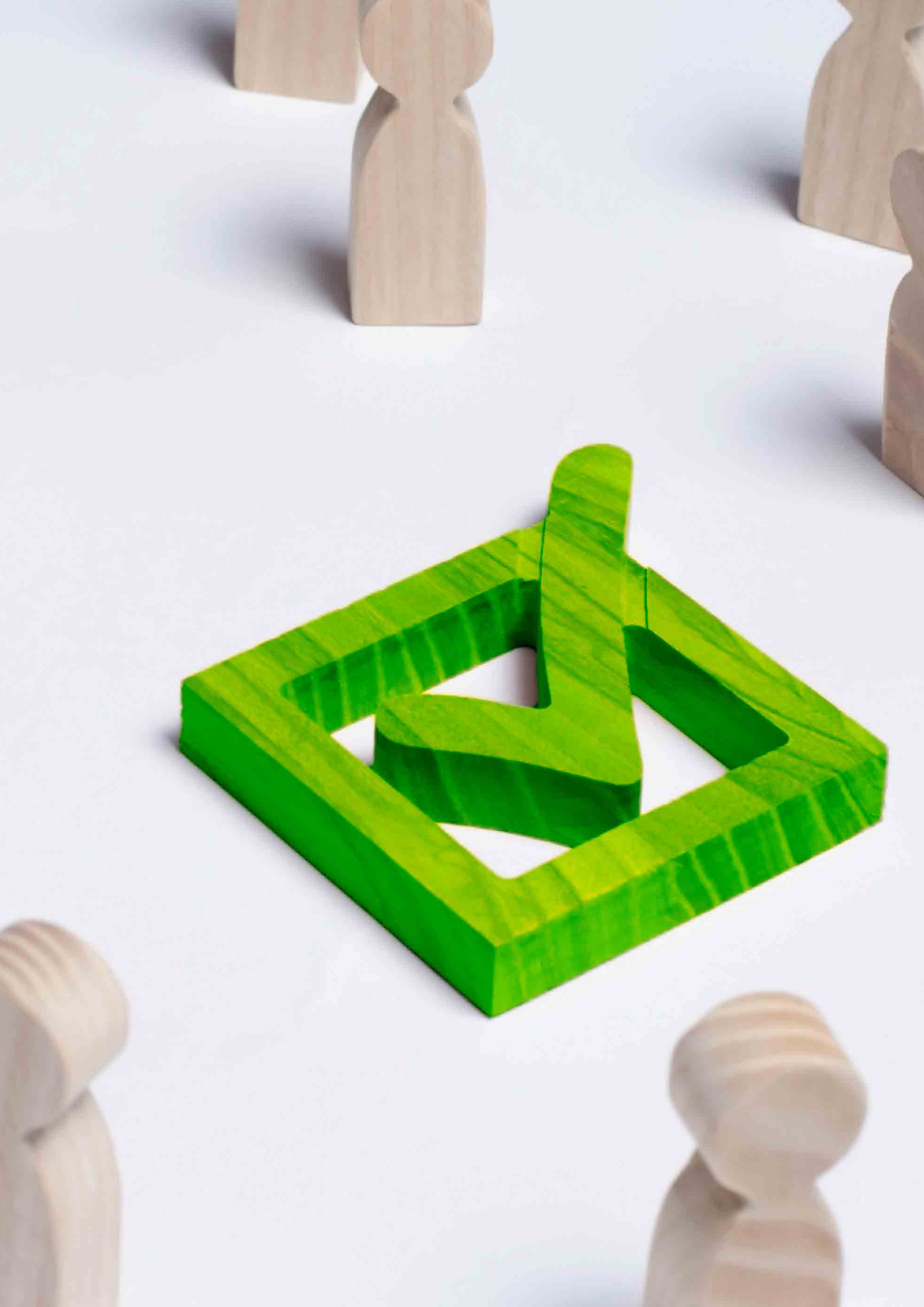
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Executive Summary

The population of the State was 5,123,536 on the night of the 2022 census. This is an increase of 361,671 on the 2016 census figure, or an 8 per cent increase. All local authorities experienced a growth in population between 2016 and 2022.

The population increase was made up of two components, a natural increase in population because births exceeded deaths, and an increase in net migration¹. Nationally, 47 per cent of the growth was as a result of a natural increase and 53 per cent from net migration. However, the national figures mask a wide variation across local authorities in terms of the number of additional people in the area, the rate of growth, and the components of the growth.

- Dublin City continues to have the largest population with 588,233 people counted on the night of the census in 2022 followed by Cork County at 358,898, Fingal at 329,218 and South Dublin at 299,793.
- On average there was an 8 per cent increase in the population nationally but Longford reported a 14 per cent increase, Meath's population increased by 13 per cent, and Fingal and Kildare increased by 11 per cent. Wexford, Waterford, Wicklow, Carlow and Leitrim all had an increase of 9 per cent in their population. The lowest rate of increase at 4 per cent was reported in Kilkenny and Donegal.

- Leitrim showed the highest variation from the national average in relation to how much of their population increase was as a result of net migration rather than a natural increase. Nationally, net migration accounted for 53 per cent of growth and natural increases 47 per cent. In Leitrim, net migration accounted for 74 per cent of the growth, and it was 73 per cent in Roscommon, and 72 per cent in Longford. This contrasts with South Dublin where only 28 per cent of the population growth was from net migration and 72 per cent because of a natural increase (i.e., births exceeding deaths). Similarly, in Galway City, Monaghan, and Kilkenny, in excess of 60 per cent of their increase was accounted for by a natural increase and less than 40 per cent from net migration.
- The birth to death ratio was highest in Fingal at 3.97 (i.e., for every one death, 3.97 births were recorded). At the lowest end of the scale, Mayo had a birth to death ratio of 1.35 and Kerry of 1.37.

The preliminary results published by the CSO are provisional and they caution that they may need further analysis.

¹ Cork City and County combined by CSO for breakdown of population increase as birth/deaths data not aligned to revised 2019 boundaries.

Census 2022 - Preliminary Results

Introduction

The census is normally held every five years but was postponed in 2021, due to the Covid pandemic. Instead, the most recent census was conducted on the 3rd of April 2022. Less than twelve weeks after census night, in June 2022, the Central Statistics Office (CSO) released preliminary figures based on initial counts from more than 5,000 enumeration areas. *The Census of Population 2022: Preliminary Results* stated that the population of the Irish state has, for the first time since 1851, been recorded above five million. This concise briefing will give an overview of the state's population figures and drill down into the population statistics for local authorities. While overall figures in relation to population growth are available from the CSO for all local authorities, figures are combined for Cork City and County in relation to the type of population growth as the data has not been configured to align to revised 2019 boundary changes at this point.

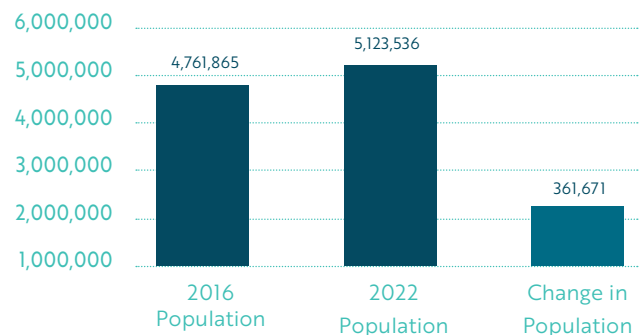
1. Population of the State

On census night, 3rd of April 2022, the Irish state population was recorded as being 5,123,536. This was an increase of 361,671 people or 8 per cent per cent compared with 2016 Census figures.

Notably, all counties experienced population growth since the previous census, which is a first in Irish census history. In fact, the latest state population figure is the highest recorded within any census since the year 1851.

The overall population increase is made up of two components (i) the natural increase in population, which is the difference between total births and deaths, and (ii) net migration, which is the difference between the number of people immigrating and emigrating.

Figure 1 Census Population 2016 and 2022



2022 Natural Population Increase

Between 2016 and 2022, the Irish state recorded 360,701 births and 189,363 deaths, as illustrated in Figure 2. Therefore, as births exceed deaths nationally, there was a natural increase in the population of the state of 171,338 over the six-years between the 2016 and 2022 censuses.

2022 Net Migration

From 2016 to 2022, an average annual net inflow of 31,722 was recorded, culminating in a total net migration figure over the period of 190,333. This disrupts the historical trend of average net outflow of 4,934 per year experienced in Ireland in the 2011-2016 intercensal period.

Total Increase in Population Between 2016 and 2022

Over the six-year census period, the population increase of 361,671 was constituted by a natural increase of 171,338, and an estimated net inward migration of 190,333. Therefore, net migration accounts for 53 per cent of the population increase and natural increases account for 47 per cent.

The CSO has issued a note of caution in relation to these population change statistics as such data uses preliminary birth and death data from the first quarter of 2022, which is subject to change. The CSO is also cautious about the net migration figures as they are subject to temporary and 'non-migratory movements' i.e., temporary visitors in the home or residents temporarily out of the State on census night. However, they provide a useful synopsis and approximation of the population increase breakdown.

Figure 2 Total Births and Deaths 2016-2022

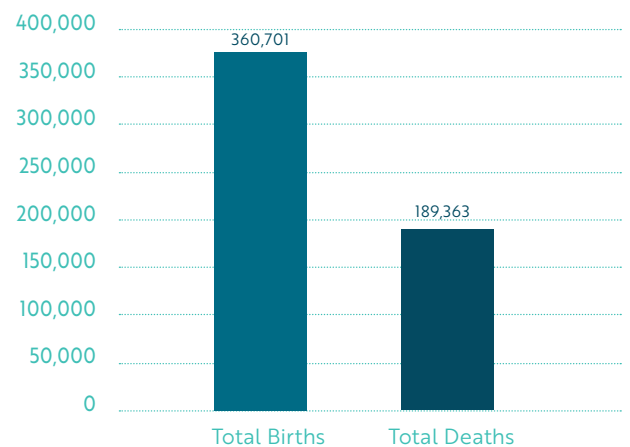
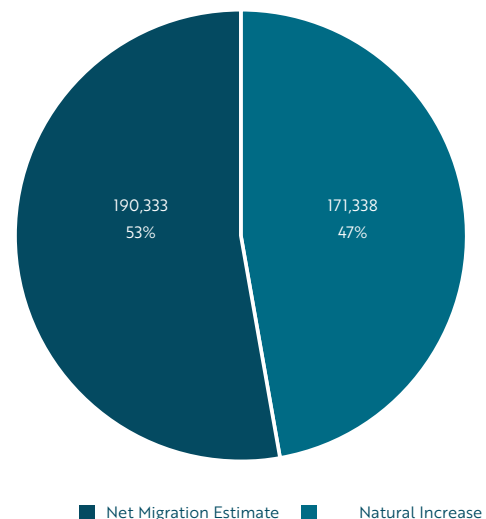


Figure 3 Population Increase Breakdown



2. Population of Local Authorities²

Population growth has occurred in each local authority area, including Mayo, Sligo, and Donegal where a fall in population had been recorded in the 2016 census.

In terms of size, Dublin City continues to be the most populated local authority area (588,233) followed by Cork County (358,898) in 2022. The Dublin local authorities remain high with Fingal recording a population of 329,218, South Dublin 299,793, and Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown 233,457. Counties bordering Dublin also reveal high numbers with 246,977 recorded in Kildare and 220,296 recorded in Meath.

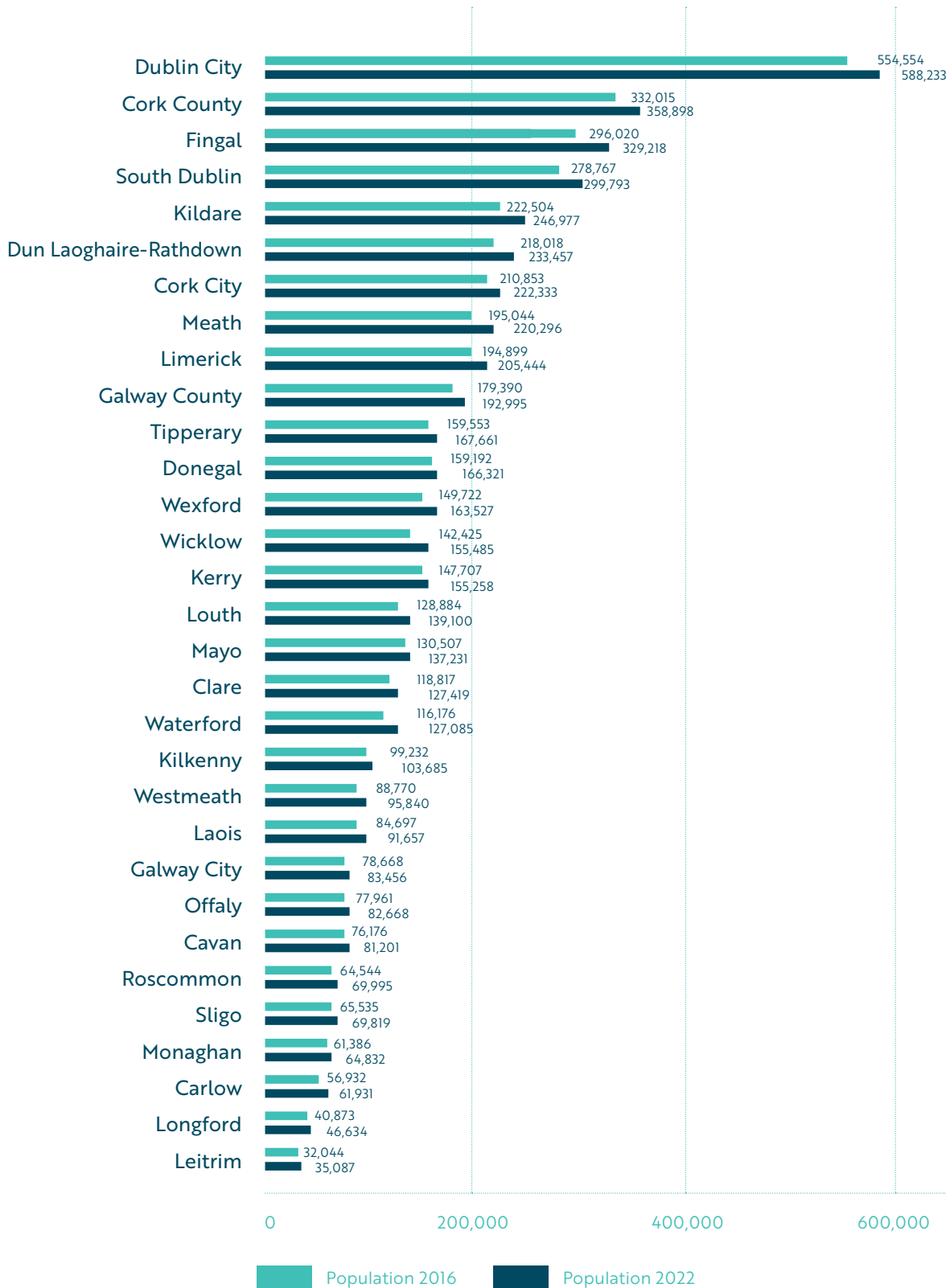
Cork City population increased to 222,333 while the population in Limerick City and County now exceeds 200,000 as 205,444 people were recorded in the county on census night.

There are eleven local authorities with populations between 100,000 and 200,000 (Galway County; Tipperary; Donegal; Wexford; Wicklow; Kerry; Louth; Mayo; Clare; Waterford; and Kilkenny) and eleven local authorities between 35,000 and 100,000 (Westmeath; Laois; Galway City; Offaly; Cavan; Roscommon; Sligo; Monaghan; Carlow; Longford; and Leitrim).



² Data for all 31 local authority areas are presented by the CSO in the 2022 preliminary release. Revised 2016 Census figures for Cork City and County used in this report were extracted from the report *Local Electoral Area Boundary Committee No. 1 Report 2018* to undertake the comparison elements of the overall population increase. <https://www.boundarycommittee.ie/reports/Local%20Electoral%20Area%20Boundary%20Committee%20No.1%20Report%20-%202018.pdf>. However, the CSO have confirmed that the breakdown of births and deaths has not taken into account the boundary change in Cork in 2019, therefore Cork City and County figures are combined for the purposes of reviewing the composition of the population increase.

Figure 4 2016 and 2022 Population by Local Authority



Population Increases in Each Local Authority Area

Population growth occurred in every local authority ranging from between 33,679 in Dublin City, and 3,043 in Leitrim. The percentage growth varies from 14 per cent in Longford (5,761) to 4 per cent in both Kilkenny (4,453) and Donegal (7,129).

Dublin City and Fingal experienced the largest population increase, at 33,679 and 33,198 respectively. However, the increase in Fingal represents an 11 per cent increase, which is considerably above the 8 per cent national average compared to a 6 per cent increase in Dublin City. Cork County's increase of 26,883 is in line with the national average increase as it represents an 8 per cent increase.

There were several counties in close proximity to Dublin that experienced significant increases in both the number and rate of growth including Meath at 13 per cent, which is 25,252 people, and 11 per cent in Kildare which is 24,473 additional people. South Dublin and Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown saw increases of 21,026 and 15,439 respectively, which equates to a growth rate of 8 and 7 per cent.

Table 1 Population Increase by Local Authority 2022

Population Growth 2016 -2022	Population Increase	Percentage Increase
Dublin City	33,679	6%
Fingal	33,198	11%
Cork County	26,883	8%
Meath	25,252	13%
Kildare	24,473	11%
South Dublin	21,026	8%
Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	15,439	7%
Wexford	13,805	9%
Galway County	13,605	8%
Wicklow	13,060	9%
Cork City	11,480	5%
Waterford	10,909	9%
Limerick	10,545	5%
Louth	10,216	8%
Clare	8,602	7%
Tipperary	8,108	5%
Kerry	7,551	5%
Donegal	7,129	4%
Westmeath	7,070	8%
Laois	6,960	8%
Mayo	6,724	5%
Longford	5,761	14%
Roscommon	5,451	8%
Cavan	5,025	7%
Carlow	4,999	9%
Galway City	4,788	6%
Offaly	4,707	6%
Kilkenny	4,453	4%
Sligo	4,284	7%
Monaghan	3,446	6%
Leitrim	3,043	9%
State	361,671	8%

Across Leinster, seven of the fifteen local authorities have a rate of population increase, which is above the national average (Longford; Meath; Fingal; Kildare; Wexford; Wicklow; and Carlow). A further four are at the national average of 8 per cent (Laois; Westmeath; Louth; and South Dublin). Like Dublin City, Offaly recorded a 6 per cent rate of increase, equating to 4,707 people, while the rate of increase in Kilkenny was 4 per cent, which is 4,453 people.

In Connacht, Leitrim recorded the highest percentage increase at 9 per cent, the only local authority in this province with a rate of growth above the national average, which represents an additional 3,043 people in the county. An additional 13,605 people were recorded in Galway County, which is an 8 per cent increase and in line with the national average. Similarly, Roscommon, with 5,451 additional people, has a growth rate of 8 per cent. Sligo, Galway City and Mayo recorded growth rates of 7, 6, and 5 per cent respectively.

Waterford was the fastest growing local authority in the Munster region at 9 per cent representing 10,909 additional people recorded in the county on census night. It is the only local authority recording a rate of increase above the national average in Munster, while Cork County's population increase of 26,883 was at the national 8 per cent average. Cork City have an additional 11,480 people in their county which is a 5 per cent increase, a similar rate to Limerick City and County who had an additional 10,545 people. This is the same rate of growth as Tipperary and Kerry who recorded increases of 8,108 and 7,551 respectively. Clare had a 7 per cent increase which is 8,602 additional people in the area.

Rates of growth in the Ulster area were lower than the national average. Cavan had an additional 5,025 people, which is a 7 per cent growth rate; Monaghan had 3,446 additional people, which is a 6 per cent growth; while Donegal recorded a 4 per cent growth, which is 7,129 additional people.

Table 2 Population Increase by Province and Local Authority 2022

Provincial Growth 2016 -2022	Population Increase	Percentage Increase
Leinster		
Dublin City	33,679	6%
Fingal	33,198	11%
Meath	25,252	13%
Kildare	24,473	11%
South Dublin	21,026	8%
Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	15,439	7%
Wexford	13,805	9%
Wicklow	13,060	9%
Louth	10,216	8%
Westmeath	7,070	8%
Laois	6,960	8%
Longford	5,761	14%
Carlow	4,999	9%
Offaly	4,707	6%
Kilkenny	4,453	4%
Connacht		
Galway County	13,605	8%
Mayo	6,724	5%
Roscommon	5,451	8%
Galway City	4,788	6%
Sligo	4,284	7%
Leitrim	3,043	9%
Munster		
Cork County	26,883	8%
Cork City	11,480	5%
Waterford	10,909	9%
Limerick	10,545	5%
Clare	8,602	7%
Tipperary	8,108	5%
Kerry	7,551	5%
Ulster		
Donegal	7,129	4%
Cavan	5,025	7%
Monaghan	3,446	6%
State	361,671	8%

Natural Population Increases in Each Local Authority Area

Every local authority reports an excess of births over deaths, resulting in natural population increases. Dublin City and Cork (City and County combined) record the highest number of births and deaths, both recording more than 40,000 births compared to over 22,000 deaths.

However, when the birth to death ratio is considered, a clearer picture of the profile of the population in the area emerges. Areas with a high birth to death ratio, have a population with younger age profile, while those with a lower ratio, tend to have population with an older age profile.

Fingal has the highest proportion of births compared to deaths in the state at 3.97 i.e., for every one person who dies, there are 3.97 births. This compares with Mayo where the ratio is lowest. In Mayo, for every death, 1.35 births are recorded. These figures give an indication of the rate and pace of growth amongst young families in the area.

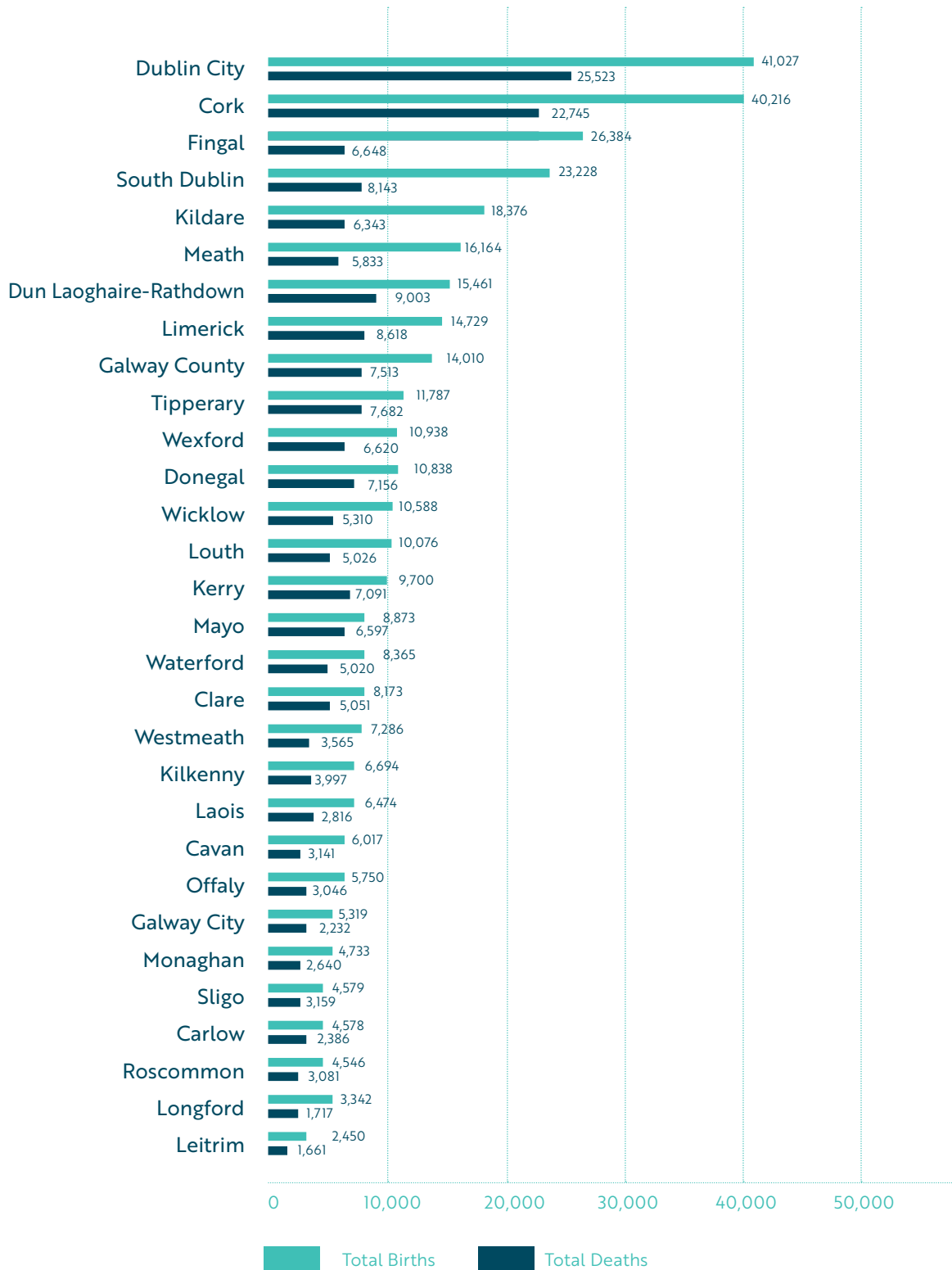
There are seven local authority areas, that have a birth to death ratio of between 2 and 3. They are Kildare; South Dublin; Meath; Galway City; Laois; Westmeath; and Louth. Apart from Galway City, each of these local authorities are in the commuter zone around Dublin.

The remaining twenty-two local authorities all have a ratio that exceeds 1.35 but is less than 2.

Table 3 Birth to Death Ratio by Local Authority 2022

Birth to Death Ratio					
Fingal	3.97	Carlow	1.92	Wexford	1.65
Kildare	2.90	Cavan	1.92	Clare	1.62
South Dublin	2.85	Offaly	1.89	Dublin City	1.61
Meath	2.77	Galway County	1.86	Tipperary	1.53
Galway City	2.38	Monaghan	1.79	Donegal	1.51
Laois	2.30	Cork	1.77	Roscommon	1.48
Westmeath	2.04	Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	1.72	Leitrim	1.48
Louth	2.00	Limerick	1.71	Sligo	1.45
Wicklow	1.99	Kilkenny	1.67	Kerry	1.37
Longford	1.95	Waterford	1.67	Mayo	1.35

Figure 5 Natural Population Increase by Local Authority 2022

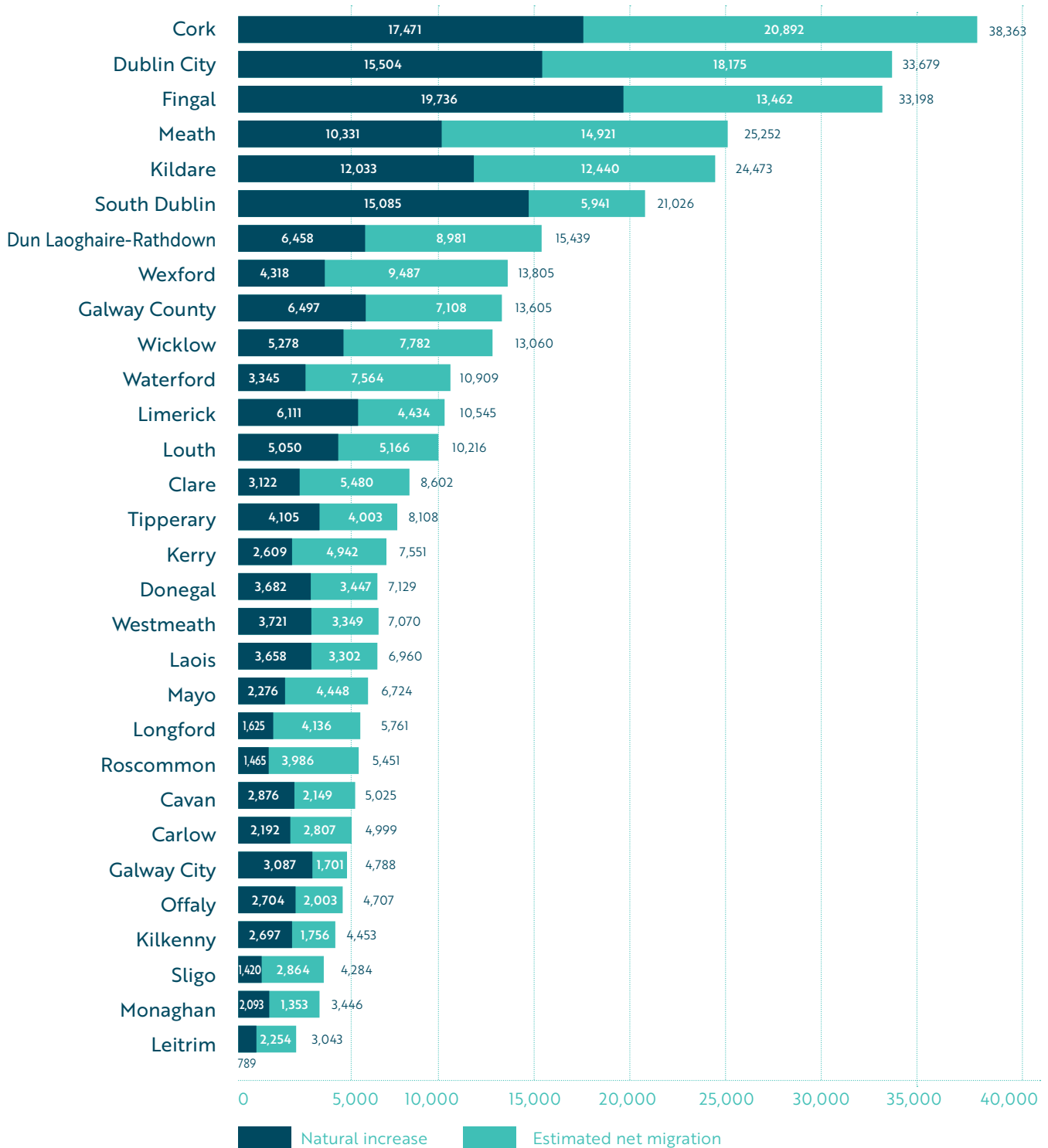


Natural Increases and Net Migration per Local Authority

The net migration figure for each local authority is added to the natural increase to arrive at the total population increase. At a national level, net migration exceeds natural increases by 18,995 and represents 53 per cent of the national

increase in population since 2016. Net migration figures are highest in Cork (City and County combined), where the figure is 20,892. This is followed by Dublin City with 18,175 people, and Meath with 14,921 people. Fingal and Kildare report 13,462 and 12,440 people respectively.

Figure 6 Population Increase Breakdown by Local Authority



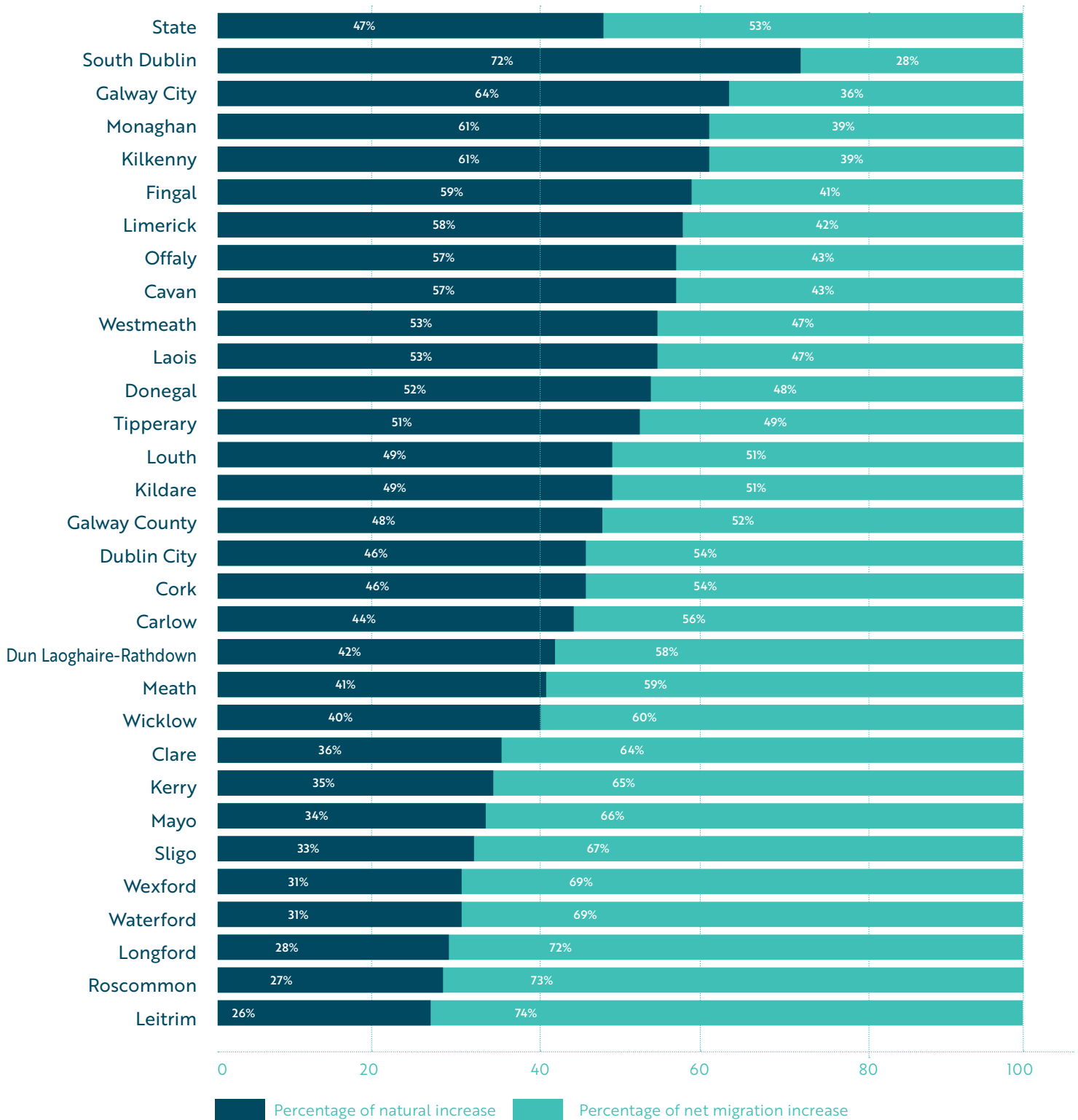
While the national average shows that net migration accounts for more of the population increase than the natural increase, this national figure covers up the huge variance across local authorities. Variances range from 28 per cent to 74 per cent in terms of the contribution of net migration to the overall population growth in a local authority area.

Fifteen of the thirty local authorities had an excess of natural increases over net migration that exceeded the national average. This is most pronounced in South Dublin, where 72 per cent of their increase was because of a natural increase compared with the 47 per cent national average. Galway City was also significantly above the national average at 64 per cent, as were Monaghan and Kilkenny both at 61 per cent. Fingal reported 59 per cent and Limerick was 58 per cent, while Offaly and Cavan were both 57 per cent.

This contrasts with the counties where net migration accounts for most of the increase. In Leitrim, Roscommon, and Longford, 74, 73 and 72 per cent respectively of their population increases were accounted for by a net migration, which was in excess of the national average of 53 per cent. Similarly, between 60 and 70 per cent of the population increase in Waterford, Wexford, Sligo, Mayo, Kerry, Clare and Wicklow was as a result of net migration.



Figure 7 Percentage Natural Increase and Net Migration



Conclusion

For the first time since 1851, the population of the Irish state was recorded at over five million, which is an 8 per cent increase upon the 2016 census. Over the census time-period, births surpassed deaths reaching a natural increase figure of 171,338, while the estimated net inward migration figure increased to 190,333. However, the CSO has clarified that such migration figures are preliminary and may need further analysis.

In the terms of local authorities, unlike the 2016 census that saw Mayo, Sligo, and Monaghan record population decreases; in the 2022 census, all counties recorded population growth without exception. The largest population change occurred in Dublin City, Fingal, and Cork County ranging from 33,679 to 26,883 additional people. When the percentage increase is reviewed, Longford, Meath, Kildare, and Fingal all have growth rates of between 14 and 11 per cent, which is considerably higher than the 8 per cent national average increase.

The birth to death ratio is highest in Fingal, where 3.97 births are recorded for every one death. It is lowest in Mayo and Kerry, where the ratio is 1.35 and 1.37 respectively. The breakdown between population increases resulting from natural increases and net migration varies widely across local authorities. While 53 per cent of the population increase was because of net migration, in South Dublin net migration only accounts for 28 per cent of the population growth. At the other extreme, net migration accounts for 74 per cent of the population growth in Leitrim.

The data reviewed in this report provides local authorities with a preliminary description of the composition and rate of population growth in each area, but greater insights will become available following the release of more detailed census information from the CSO.



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