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**DEVELOPMENT TRENDS
IN
COUNTY KILDARE**

Prepared for

KILDARE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD

By

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NIRSA

&

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NUI MAYNOOTH
Ollscoil na hÉireann Mhá Nuad



NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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FOREWORD

This profile and analysis of County Kildare provides a picture of the current situation in the County in terms of its economic, social and cultural development. Drawing on a wide range of sources, the profile provides information on demography, the environment, employment, changes in rural life, community development, public services and education, to name but a few areas.

In the first instance, the profile will be used by Kildare County Development Board (KCDB) in drawing up the 10-year County Strategy for Economic, Social and Cultural Development. KCDB also sees this profile as a resource to be used by many other interested bodies in the County - local government, statutory bodies, community groups, business people, students, learning institutions and the general public.

We hope that you find this profile both informative and useful. It is our intention to update the County Profile as and when the next Census of Population becomes available so that this valuable resource will become an integral part of information on the county.

Timmy Conway
Chairperson KCDB

William G. Carroll
Director of Community & Enterprise

The profile has been prepared for Kildare County Development Board by the National Institute of Regional and Spatial Analysis and by the Community & Enterprise Department of Kildare County Council.

KILDARE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD

The County/City Development Boards are an innovative Government initiative, set up on the recommendations of a Task Force chaired by Noel Dempsey, TD, Minister for the Environment and Local Government. The Boards bring together the key players at local level to plan for the long-term future of the county and co-operate together in the way services are delivered. The CDB initiative is the first time that this range of interests have been brought together in this way.

Kildare County Development Board (KCDB) aims to improve co-ordination and co-operation in the delivery of services at local level thereby improving the quality of those services and to involve local interests and communities in deciding on how, where and what type of services should be available. The broad functions of KCDB are to firstly, draw up the 10 year Strategy for the Economic, Social and Cultural Development of the County and oversee its implementation and secondly, to promote co-operation between the various bodies and interests represented on the Board ensuring that all members of the board take an active role in this new partnership.

OVERVIEW OF COUNTY KILDARE

County Kildare forms part of the Greater Dublin Area and, therefore, exhibits many of the characteristics that are typically associated with rapid economic expansion and population growth on the edge of a metropolitan region. The county has a number of competitive advantages over other parts of the country. These include the proximity to Dublin and the associated benefits of access to markets, business support services and key decision makers in the administrative, economic, social, cultural and political systems; some of the best road transport infrastructure in the state including the main routes to the west, midwest, southwest and southeast; and easy access to Dublin airport and the seaports at Dublin, Rosslare and Waterford.

Kildare has been the fastest growing county in Ireland since the early 1990s. This has placed very considerable pressures on the physical and social infrastructure and also on the natural and built environments of the county. However, there are significant contrasts within the county with most of the recent development concentrated in the northeast, which is within easy commuting distance of the Dublin region. Other parts of the county, which have a more traditional economic structure, have experienced changes that have resulted in a decline in economic opportunities and consequently out-migration of younger members of the population.

The profile examines the geographical distribution of several variables that are considered relevant to the themes suggested in the '*Shared Vision*'¹ document and outlines the range and scope of the main social services in the county. The final section of the profile draws a number of conclusions as to the current situation in the county and makes recommendations as to what needs to happen if Kildare is to maintain its share of national growth and its status as one of the most significant counties in Ireland.

¹ *A Shared Vision for City/County Development Boards, Department of the Environment & Local Government, June 2000. This document sets out the guidelines for the development of the County Strategy.*

WIDER CONTEXT FOR KILDARE

The annual investment of the National Development Plan 2000-2006 is split by region in line with the designation of Ireland into two regions – the Southern and Eastern Region and the Border, Midland and Western Region – for Structural Fund purposes. Kildare is located in the former because of the relative prosperity and development of the county over the period of the last two development plans and the proximity of the county to Dublin. The county is also located in the Mid-East Region which also includes Meath and Wicklow. **(map 6: Regional Authority Areas & Objective 1 Regions)**

In terms of the National Development Plan and the Southern and Eastern Region, Kildare is not as high a priority area for development as other counties in the region because of the high growth levels the county has experienced in comparison to the others. Kildare has been designated as a mainly strong rural area in the Southern and Eastern Region Development Strategy 2000-2006. However, the northwest and parts of the south and south east of the county have been designated as pockets of rural disadvantage. These areas are in need of investment and development. Under the balanced regional development objectives of the National Spatial Strategy and the European Spatial Development Perspective, these areas must be kept up to pace with the rest of the county.

Kildare forms part of the Greater Dublin Area along with the counties, Meath, Wicklow and Dublin. In terms of the Strategic Planning Guidelines which set out a framework for the development of the Greater Dublin Area, Kildare is pivotal particularly in the area of transportation and development centres. Two of the main existing transport corridors from Dublin traverse the county from east to west. The strategy also envisages a future transportation corridor from Kildare Town to Athy. The northeast of the county including the towns of Maynooth, Celbridge, Leixlip and Kilcock are in the Dublin Metropolitan area and are areas for development along with the rest of the Dublin urban area. The Naas/Newbridge/Kilcullen area is seen as a primary development centre and the areas of Kildare Town/Monasterevin and Athy are seen as secondary development centres in the strategy. The rest of the county (northwest, south and southeast) has been designated as strategic green belts.

It is in the context of these wider developments and trends that this report is set. The current circumstances within the county must be viewed and considered in relation to these wider developments and their consequences for the future of County Kildare.

KILDARE'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Introduction

This section examines the features of the natural and physical environment of County Kildare. In particular it details Kildare's location, its main topographical features, drainage and water systems, the quality of those systems, the soil types within the county and the particular natural heritage areas located within Kildare. (**map 1: Kildare physical features**)

A number of sources were used to provide the information for this section;

- A Waste Management Plan for County Kildare 1999
- Kildare County Development Plan 1999
- Three Rivers Project, Water Quality and Monitoring & Management, Interim Report 2001
- Environmental Protection Agency, Ireland's Environment - A Millennium Report 2000
- Environment Department, Kildare County Council

Landscape

Kildare, once forming part of the historical buffer between Dublin and the Pale and the rest of Ireland, today forms the westernmost part of the Greater Dublin Area. Kildare remains the gateway to and from Dublin for the majority of the land mass of Ireland. The county covers approximately 1,700 square kilometres, 2.4% of the total area of the state.

To the north the county is bounded by Meath, to the east are Dublin and Wicklow, to the south lies Carlow while Offaly and Laois bound the western side of the Thoroughbred County².

Within the county, there are three broad topographical units³:

- (i) the Plains, which form part of the Central Lowlands of Ireland, extend throughout most of the county and include the unique landscape of the Curragh and the northwestern boglands
- (ii) the uplands to the east of the county which separate the Plains from the Wicklow Mountains and Blessington, including the highest elevated point in the county at 379 metres above sea level
- (iii) the hills to the north of Kildare town which locally interrupt the Plains and include the Chair of Kildare and the Newtown Hills

² *The Thoroughbred County is a branding initiative of the Kildare Horse Development Company designed to promote Kildare as a high quality location for investment, tourism and recreation etc.*

³ *For a fuller description of the physical landscape, see the County Development Plan, Kildare County Council, 1999*

Drainage

A county without a coastline, Kildare is amply drained by a number of river systems including parts of the Liffey, Boyne and Barrow catchments. River catchments are an important water resource, provide essential drainage and, in addition, are an important amenity feature in the landscape.

The Royal Canal and Grand Canal traverse the county from east to west with the Royal Canal running close to the northern county boundary. While the canals have long since lost their primary economic function as commercial route-ways, they are important amenity features providing habitat diversity and growing opportunities for water-based and canal-side recreational pursuits and tourism. **(map 72: waterways-canal and rivers network)**

Water Quality

In terms of water quality, the main rivers in Kildare experience varying levels of pollution. The Three Rivers Project monitors the Liffey, Boyne and Suir rivers using EPA and project-specific Water Quality Objectives, while the EPA carries out periodic surveys of water quality on the canals and Barrow river system.

A number of 'hotspots' in the Liffey Catchment's 631km² meandering through County Kildare have been identified by the Three Rivers Project, specifically the Middle Liffey channel which stretches from Osberstown to Leixlip. This stretch of the river is polluted due to intensive agricultural landuse and increased urban development but upgrading of wastewater treatment plants at Osberstown and Leixlip have "contributed significantly to the improvement in water quality downstream"⁴. This stretch has also recently been designated, along with 30 other water bodies, for additional protection requiring higher level of treatment for waste water discharges⁵. The other 'hotspots' are the Naas and Awillyinish streams where pollution is most likely caused by urbanisation and wastewater treatment.

The water quality of the canals in Ireland was measured between 1990 and 1994 and again in 1995 and 1997. In general water quality was found to be good with the main source of the small levels of pollution to be nutrient-rich feeder streams.

Soils

The soils throughout most of the county are very well suited to agriculture, especially in the south where the dry mineral soils in the hinterland of Athy are eminently suited to intensive tillage farming. Some areas of the county have poor quality soils, principally the northwest where there is an extensive area of basin peat which has very limited agricultural potential but which has, in the past, supported industrial activity linked to peat extraction, processing and power generation.

Natural Heritage and Conservation

The landscape also includes a number of areas of ecological significance specifically, 19 proposed National Heritage Areas and 4 candidate Special Areas of Conservation.

⁴ *Three Rivers Project Interim Report, MCOS Consultant Engineers, 2000*

⁵ *Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations July 2001, Local Authority Times, Vol 20 No. 3, pg21, 2001*

The proposed National Heritage Areas protect the diverse natural resources of the county and range from boglands to forests and canals. The pNHAs are as follows;

- ❑ Ballina Bog
- ❑ Barrow Valley at Tankardstown Bridge
- ❑ Carbury Bog
- ❑ Corballis Hill
- ❑ The Curragh
- ❑ Derryvullagh Island
- ❑ Donadea Wood
- ❑ Dunlavin Marshes (*bordering Wicklow*)
- ❑ Grand Canal
- ❑ Hodgestown Bog
- ❑ Killeel Wood
- ❑ Liffey at Osberstown
- ❑ Liffey Bank above Athgarvan
- ❑ Liffey Valley Meander Belt
- ❑ Mouds Bog
- ❑ Oakpark
- ❑ Poulaphouca Reservoir (*at the border with Wicklow*)
- ❑ Red Bog (*at the border with Wicklow*)
- ❑ Royal Canal

The four candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) designated for County Kildare are;

- ❑ Ballynafage Bog
- ❑ Pollardstown Fen
- ❑ Rye Water Valley
- ❑ Ballynafage Lake

cSACs are the most significant of the National Heritage Areas which are of special wildlife interest under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). By designating these areas as cSACs, the EU aims to ensure biodiversity through conserving natural habitats and flora and fauna.

Pollardstown Fen

In Kildare, the most significant of the cSACs is Pollardstown Fen. The Fen, designated as a nature reserve since 1978 is the largest and best developed natural fen in Ireland. It is home to several rare species of plants and animals but is most notable for the specific individual ecosystem which operates there.

The Curragh

The Curragh is a feature unique to Kildare and is one of the major amenity areas in the State. This elevated flat landscape is "very fragile and any development will have a major impact"⁶.

Boglands

There are over 20,000 acres of boglands in the county most of which is, or has been, worked by Bord na Mona. Although practically all of the raised bog has been cut away or developed, the County Development Plan 1999 considers that it is important to preserve at least one intact area for educational and heritage reasons and specifically mentions Carbury Bog.

⁶ *Kildare County Development Plan, pg 42, Kildare County Council, 1999*

DEMOGRAPHY

Introduction

This section of the profile sets out the main demographic changes and structure of the population over the past number of years, and gives an estimate of the current and future population levels for the county and the main towns. The section also looks at migration patterns, an important factor for a rapidly growing county such as Kildare.

The main sources used for this section are;

- Census of Population 1991, 1996
- Kildare County Development Plan 1999
- County Housing Strategy, 2001 - Population and Household Projections for County Kildare 2001
- Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 1999

Population Change & Growth

Although covering only 2.4% of the total area of the state, County Kildare accounts for 3.7% of the population of Ireland. Between 1991 and 96 the total population increased by 10.1% (12,336) compared to an increase of 2.8% for the state. Most of the increase was concentrated in the northeast extending from Naas to Clane to Maynooth, Celbridge and Leixlip. Celbridge experienced the greatest rate of increase in population and it is worth noting that the density of population in Celbridge Rural District is almost three times the county average. In 1996 it was estimated that 53.3% of the county population had been born outside the county, with 26% having been born in Dublin, 21% in other counties and 6.5% born outside the country, just 0.5% lower than the National average.

(map 11: population change 1991-1996)

The growth in these areas can be attributed to a number of factors, including;

- the influx of commuters in search of housing at lower prices than in Dublin
- job opportunities afforded by the location of new high-tech industries in the northeast of the county
- overall population growth in the Greater Dublin area
- improvement in communications and transport systems enabling easier commuting

By contrast population decline occurred in many rural areas especially in districts to the south of Newbridge, and throughout most of the south of the county and also in some districts in the west.

Population Projections

Forecasting population growth at county level is difficult due to the level of uncertainty surrounding some of the key variables. For Kildare a major influence on population growth is the extent of in-migration associated with commuting to Dublin. This variable is particularly difficult to forecast as it is dependent on factors such as the supply and cost of housing, competing supply patterns in neighbouring counties, and so on.

However, for the purposes of the County Development Board Strategy it is necessary to have some idea of the current and future population in the county. Without an up to date Census of Population⁷ other sources have been examined. The County Development Plan, Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area, the forthcoming Department of Environment & Local Government National Spatial Strategy (NSS) all use the Cohort Survival Model as the basis for calculations. This model applies trends to rates of births, deaths, fertility and migration and projects these over time for different age groups and according to gender.

Using the most recent forecasts for the Department of the Environment and Local Government National Spatial Strategy⁸ the population of the Mid-East Region and Kildare are estimated to grow as follows;

Table 1 National Spatial Strategy Population Projections - Kildare & Mid East Region

	1996	2000	2010	2020
Mid East	348,000	387,300	450,000	500,000
Kildare (39% of region)	134,992	150,300	175,000	196,000

For the recently adopted County Housing Strategy, Jonathan Blackwell and Associates took the NSS calculations and modified them by looking at household numbers and changes in Kildare's share of the households in the region. This method allows for more accurate projections as it takes account of local factors which influence population and provides a check against figures calculated on regional share alone. These projections are as follows;

Table 2 County Housing Strategy Population Projections

	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016	2021
Kildare	134,992	159,824	181,952	203,248	224,302	245,182
Number of Households	38,929	51,536	65,159	78,869	90,110	100,184

The prospect of such a high level of population growth has major implications for physical and social planning in the county. On the other hand, the population growth may slow down if for example, the price of housing continues to rise in Kildare, forcing people to live elsewhere, or if the influence of the National Spatial Strategy enables dynamic gateways to be established in other parts of the state.

Population Density

The total county population in 1996 was almost 135,000 of which 61% resided in urban areas. Density levels vary from less than 20 persons per square kilometre in the more rural parts of the south and west to very high levels in the districts containing principal towns.

⁷ A Census of Population due to take place in 2001 was deferred to 2002 due to Foot and Mouth Disease

⁸ The National Spatial Strategy is a plan for balanced regional development. It will be available in 2002.

For example in Naas Urban District the average density is 2,238 persons per square kilometre (km²). The next highest levels are 1,829 in Newbridge Urban District, 1,082 in Leixlip, 778 in Athy and 737 in Celbridge. The overall density is 80 persons per square kilometre compared to 52 persons for the state⁹. **(map 9: population density)**

Taking the population projections on the previous page, the average density is currently 94 people per km². This will have grown to 119 persons per km² by 2011, reaching 144 persons per km² by 2021. Projections for the Mid-East Region, which comprises the counties of Kildare and Wicklow, both very densely populated, and Meath currently with an average of 47 people per km², estimate the following densities for the same period: 82 persons per km² by 2011 reaching 95 persons per square kilometre in 2021.

No doubt variations in the spread of densities within the county, and between the three counties in the Mid-East Region will continue. Clearly these density projections have implications for land use, the spread of development and housing densities in the county. These issues must be taken into account in any forward planning for the county.

Population in Main Towns

The populations of the principal towns and the extent of change since 1986 are summarised in Table 3, along with projections for town populations, where available, in 2006.

Four towns, Naas, Leixlip, Newbridge and Celbridge had populations in excess of 12,000 in 1996 with by far the largest gain over the previous decade having occurred in Celbridge. In relative terms there was also very significant growth in Maynooth and Clane. All towns with a population greater than 1,000 in 1996, had gained in population over the previous five years except Kilcullen. The experience of smaller centres was more mixed with 11 of the 17 smaller centres declining in population.

⁹ *Census of Population, 1996*

Table 3 Population of principal towns and changes since 1986

	Total 1996	Change 1986-91	Change 1991-96	Change 1986-96
Naas	14074	1124	2933	4057
Leixlip	13451	1256	257	1513
Droichead Nua + environs	13363	566	1294	1860
Celbridge	12289	2494	2660	5154
Maynooth	8528	1259	2501	3760
Athy	5306	-245	102	-143
Kildare	4278	-72	82	10
Clane	3126	55	1304	1359
Monasterevan	2302	81	78	159
Kilcock	1825	137	274	411
Kill	1711	15	193	208
Kilcullen	1604	-29	-60	-89
Rathangan	1190	-141	61	-80
Sallins	854	9	71	80
Prosperous	814	117	-68	49
Castledermot	733	-51	-8	-59
Ballymore Eustace	719	50	94	144
Coill Dubh	682	-79	-11	-90
Derrinturn	544	25	-9	16
Suncroft	490	7	-30	-23
Kilberry	466	-21	-35	-56
Brownstown	462	112	-82	30
Kilmeague	451	36	33	69
Allenwood	341	13	38	51
Straffan	341	38	0	38
Milltown	297	1	-14	-13
Ballytore	295	3	2	5
Robertstown	206	-29	-29	-58
Maddenstown	189	-29	-26	-55

Hierarchy of Settlements

Table 4 gives us a broad indicative hierarchy of settlements in County Kildare, based on the various town sizes and their functions. Naas, the administrative and commercial centre in the county, provides the widest range of facilities (local government, retail, medical, recreational). The remaining towns are arranged into categories by population size. The exceptions to this are Rathangan and Castledermot which are in category C rather than D. This is due to their functions as local service centres in the mid-west of Kildare and the south of Kildare respectively.

Recent analysis undertaken by NUI Maynooth and Brady Shipman Martin Consultants for the National Spatial Strategy has shown that;

- The functional rank (i.e. range of services and functions) of Naas is much greater than its population rank reflecting the status of the town as the county capital.

- Leixlip, Celbridge and Maynooth each have lower functional ranks than their population size would suggest confirming their role as partial dormitory centres. In the south the strong local service role of Athy is also evident from the broad range of services provided.
- Newbridge, by contrast, provides much less services than its population rank would suggest.

Table 4 Hierarchy of settlements in Co. Kildare

A.	B.	C.	D.
Naas (<i>administrative capital of County Kildare</i>)	Newbridge Athy (<i>centre for South Kildare</i>) Celbridge/Leixlip/ Maynooth (<i>centres for North/Northeast Kildare</i>)	Kildare Town Rathangan * Monasterevin (<i>centres for West Kildare</i>) Clane Kilcock Kill Killcullen Castledermot *	Sallins Prosperous Ballymore Eustace Coill Dubh Derrinturn Suncroft Kilberry Brownstown Kilmeague Allenwood Straffan Milltown Ballytore Robertstown Maddenstown

*Note: the towns are categorised from A to D. Category A denotes county towns, Category B denotes towns of population > 5,000, Category C denotes towns of population, 1,500-4,999 and category D denotes towns of population < 1,500. The higher the category, the broader the array of services/function that becomes available. The hierarchy is broadly based on the population of towns as per the 1996 Census. Adjustments are made where a settlement (marker *) is seen to serve more functions than its population might suggest, however.*

Population & Migration

Net migration movements are a major influence on the distribution of population change. Net changes in the size of selected age cohorts, or groups, over the decade after 1986 are summarised on the accompanied maps. They provide acceptable estimates of the extent of net migration. Clearly there was a very considerable level of out-migration from the rural areas and also from Newbridge and Athy. The net increase in the size of the cohort aged 20-29 years in 1986 and aged 30-39 years in 1996, is most pronounced in the northeast reflecting the in-migration of young families.

(map 12: age specific migration 10-19 years) & (map 13: age specific migration 20-29 years)

Age Structure of the Population

Kildare has a relatively young population with 37% of the total population in 1996 being under 19 years of age (8% pre-school, 19% 5-14 years, 10% 15-19 years). 56% of the population was aged between 20 and 64 years, with the remaining 7% of people having reached retirement age.

Chart 1 Age Structure of the Population of Kildare

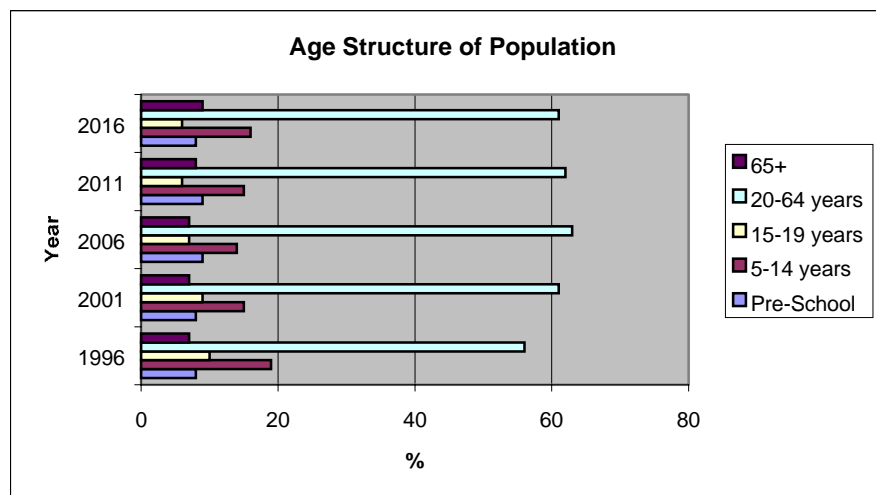


Chart 1 shows that the percentage difference between the age groups is likely to change little over the coming decades¹⁰, although it appears that the 65+ cohort is likely to increase up to 2016. This indicates that provision will have to be made for a growing older population and a consistent young population in the County.

(map 21: vitality ratio & maps 14 – 18: percentages of population – certain age groups)

Geographical Spread of Age Groups

The impacts of migration movements over a long period are reflected in the age profile of the population (Table 5). The DED's around the main urban centres have above average concentration in the principal family formation age group (25-34 years) and the related share of children aged under 14 years in the total population. This contrasts with the weaker and more remote rural parts which have high proportions aged over 65 years.

The contrasts in age profiles are more clearly demonstrated in the youth and elderly dependency ratio¹¹ maps. The youth dependency ratios are particularly low in the area between Newbridge and Kilcullen and south of Castledermot showing that an older population resides in these areas. By contrast elderly dependency rates are lowest in the northeast. **(maps 19 & 20: youth and elderly dependency ratio)**

¹⁰ These forecasts are taken from the County Housing Strategy Population and Household Projections for County Kildare, Blackwell & Associates, 2001

¹¹ Youth Dependency Ratio is the number of young people per 1,000 people aged 15-64. Elderly Dependency Ratio is the number of older people per 1,000 people aged 15-64.

Table 5 Age profile and Dependency ratios, 1996

	Kildare	Meath	Wicklow	Dublin	Ireland
% aged < 15	26.5	26.1	24.9	22.0	23.7
% aged 15-24	18.1	16.8	16.5	18.6	17.5
% aged 25-44	30.6	28.2	28.6	30.3	28.0
% aged 45-64	17.6	19.3	19.8	19.1	19.4
% aged 65 +	7.2	9.7	10.1	9.9	11.4
Youth dependency	39.9	40.6	38.4	32.3	36.5
Elderly dependency	10.8	15.1	15.6	14.6	17.6
Vitality ratio	438.4	286.6	283.4	337.1	258.3

Looking to the future provides a measure of demographic vitality¹² which clearly demonstrates the urban/rural and north/south contrast in the county. These contrasts are likely to become greater unless some changes in settlement policy are implemented via the County Development Plan. These findings also point to the concentration of different population types in different parts of the county, each with different needs. This has implications for determining the type of services and amenities delivered.

Ethnic Groups

Kildare also has a significant minority of ethnic groups who form part of the demographic make-up of the county.

In 1996, 6.5% of the population of Kildare (8,699 people) had been born outside the country. Of these, 84% (7,307 persons) are EU Nationals (including the UK), while the remaining 16% (1,392 persons) are non-EU Nationals including people born in the USA, Asia and Africa. This figure has undoubtedly grown since the last Census given the improved economic climate which has attracted many non-Nationals and returning Irish emigrants with non-Irish National spouses and children to work here.

Kildare also has a minority of Travellers who form a distinct ethnic group. There are currently 48 Traveller families accommodated in the county and varying numbers of transient families reside in the county at different times of the year.

¹² *Demographic Vitality is the number of persons aged 20-39 years in 1996 as a ratio of number of persons aged over 60*

PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

With the growing population and development of the county over the past decade the environment in Kildare has come under increasing pressure. The capacity to deal with this growth needs to be ensured across a number of fronts. In this section the physical infrastructure of the county is profiled in terms of waste management, water treatment and supply, roads and transport, and energy and communications infrastructure.

Sources for this section include;

- ❑ A Waste Management Strategy for County Kildare, 1999
- ❑ Action South Kildare
- ❑ Bus Eireann
- ❑ County Housing Strategy, 2001
- ❑ Environment Department, Kildare County Council, Naas Urban District Council and Athy Urban District Council
- ❑ Environmental Bulletin, Department of Environment & Local Government, October 2000
- ❑ Housing Department, Kildare County Council
- ❑ National Roads Authority
- ❑ OAK Partnership
- ❑ Rural Water Programme, Kildare County Council
- ❑ Vehicle Registration Office

Transport Infrastructure

Road Network

The 2,668km of roads in Kildare, of which almost 40km are motorway, experience ever growing levels of traffic each year. 187.9km of the roads in the county are national roads, 38.9km of which is motorway, 10.9km is dual-carriageway and the remainder is single lane national primary (112.4km) and secondary (25.7km) roads. Of the remaining roads 387.87km are regional roads, and 1692km are local roads. (**map 2: road network**)

Some 80% of the state is connected to Dublin by roads that pass through Kildare. The accompanying map shows the location of the roads infrastructure of the county and shows that the majority of national roads cross the county on an east-west basis towards and out of Dublin. Given this, it is not surprising that the volume of traffic on these roads is enormous. The table below summarises the daily flows on the major routes in Kildare;

Table 6 Daily Traffic Flows on Major Roads in Kildare 2001

Road	Location	Daily Flow 2001
N4	West of Kilcock and motorway	20,663 vehicles
M7	2.2 miles east of motorway start	19,932
M7	1km before M7/M9 slipway	34,091

Source: National Roads Authority Traffic Counter

Commuting

Because of its location close to Dublin and as part of the Greater Dublin Area, large areas of Kildare have become integral parts of the commuter belt with a significant proportion of the population travelling every day to work. Between 1991 and 1996 the percentage of people in Kildare travelling over 15 miles to work increased by 63.1% (12.6% increase annually over the period). According to the Quarterly National Household Survey 1st Quarter 2000, almost 57% of the population of the Mid East Region travel more than 5 miles to work each day, with 27% travelling more than 15 miles.

Bus Eireann commuter routes travelling through the county show increasing numbers of passengers. The Kildare Town to Dublin route has one of the highest number of passengers in the Mid East Region (12,885 passengers every week - 1999).¹³

Clearly this level of commuting has implications for the quality and capacity of transport infrastructure, for quality of life and community and for sustainability. However, the county is now included in the Dublin Transportation Office area and, as such, will qualify for inclusion in public transport initiatives which may alleviate some of the pressures associated with high levels of commuting. **(map 64: public transport routes)**

Traffic Accidents & Fatalities

Map 38 shows the location of road traffic accidents and fatalities on the roads in Kildare for the year 2000. Summary statistics for these accidents are contained in the table below. **(map 63: distribution of serious road accidents)**

Table 7 Road Traffic Fatalities, Injuries and Accidents in Kildare 1996-2000

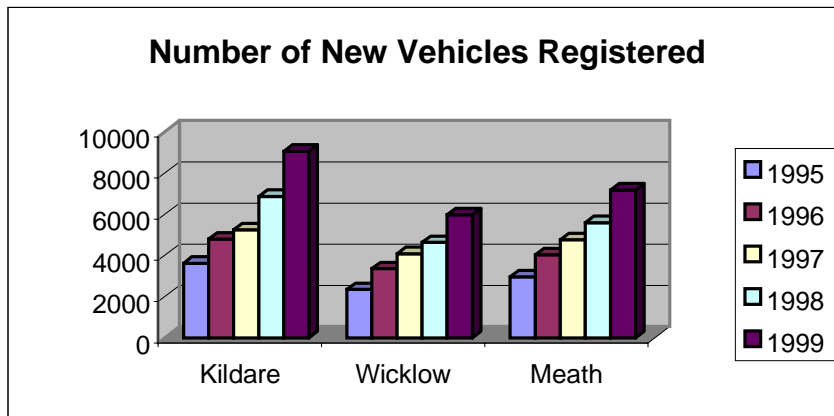
Year	Fatalities	Injuries	Accidents
1996	27	385	702
1997	20	440	926
1998	20	490	1031
1999	22	410	909
2000	19	280	731

New Vehicles Registered

The figures for the number of new vehicles registered in the county indicates increasing or decreasing pressures on the roads and transport infrastructure. In Kildare in 1995, the number of new vehicles registered was 3,624. This number had reached 9,058 in 1999, a 150% increase in the number of new vehicles registered in the county over a five year period. This demonstrates that the volume of traffic traversing the roads infrastructure in the county is increasing at a rate of 30% per year compared to much lower growth and pressure on roads in other counties in the region. Chart 2 below shows the position of Kildare relative to the other counties in the Mid-East Region.

¹³ *Analysis of the Economic and Social Profile of the Greater Dublin Region, pg 56, Morgenroth, ESRI 2001*

Chart 2 **Number of New Vehicles Registered 1995-1999**



Public Hire Vehicles

As at July 2001 Kildare County Council had issued 447 Hackney licences issued and 35 limo licences. At this same time Athy Town Council had issued 78 Hackney licences issued while Naas Town Council had issued 37 Hackney and 37 Taxi licences.

Bus Networks

Bus Eireann operate a number of routes in the county, most of which radiate out from Dublin and continue on to locations outside of Kildare. 18 buses travel into Dublin from Edenderry and 19 travel from Edenderry to Dublin daily serving the northwest and northeast Kildare areas. Bus Eireann also operate services which run diagonally through the county serving locations from Naas to Monasterevin as part of the Portlaoise Expressway route, Naas to Athy as part of the Kilkenny Expressway service, and Naas to Castledermot as part of the Expressway service to Carlow.

However, the overriding feature of Bus Eireann services in the county is the radial nature of public transport services. Inter town linkages are virtually non-existent and very few services are available within the rural areas.

Private services are offered by Rapid Town Link which runs services from Naas to a number of different towns – Clane, Kill and Kilcullen. The Slieve Bloom service runs to and from Dublin from Clonygowan, Co Offaly.

A number of proposals to enhance rural transport, including the development of local services in the north-west in collaboration with the local community, are being examined at present. A rural service which links Athy and the south of the county to NUI Maynooth, Leixlip and Naas has been operational since the Autumn of 2001 and links the county on a north-south basis. This service is currently not available by either Bus Eireann or private services.

Rail Networks

The county is well serviced by rail routes with stations located on mainline routes at Sallins (Naas), Celbridge (Hazelhatch), Maynooth, Kilcock, Leixlip, Confey, Newbridge, Kildare, Monasterevin and Athy. Services operate regularly with Arrow and Suburban services operating from Dublin to Monasterevin, Kildare, Newbridge, Naas/Sallins and Celbridge together, on the Galway line, and to Maynooth and Leixlip on the Sligo line. An Arrow Service is proposed to run from Dublin to Athy, thus including Athy as a commuter station.

Airports & Seaports

Kildare is located within easy access to Dublin and Shannon airports. However, growing volumes of traffic mean that travelling times to the airport are increasing. Baldonnell Airport located in South Dublin, at the boundary of Kildare, is a military airport but is the subject of debate as to its potential for development as a commercial enterprise. Weston Airport, situated at the border of South Dublin and Kildare at Leixlip, is a small airport with capacity to cater for 16-seater planes. At the moment this airport has the most take-offs and landings of any airport in the state.

Because of its central location, Kildare is also within easy reach of the major sea ports including Dublin Port, Dun Laoighre Port, Bellevue in Waterford and Rosslare, Co Wexford and the smaller ports at Greenore, Co Louth and Arklow, Co Wicklow allowing ease of import and export of goods.

Waste Management

Waste Levels

Domestic waste collected on behalf of Kildare Local Authorities amounted to 42,000 tonnes in 1998. The Waste Management Plan published in 1999 by Kildare County Council, estimated domestic waste in 1999 to be 46,730 tonnes for a projected population of 141,600. The quantity of commercial waste generated in the county in 2001 was an estimated 52,774 tonnes, all of which was collected by private contractors, while industrial waste was estimated to amount to 26,387 tonnes for the same year.

The Waste Management Plan estimates that waste levels will grow as follows over the next two decades;

Table 8 Estimated Growth in Waste Levels 2001-2018

Waste Type	2001	2006	2011	2016	2018
Domestic Waste	52,774	65,175	73,868	77,393	80,388
Commercial Waste	26,387	32,558	36,934	38,697	40,194
Industrial Waste	32,300	36,500	39,300	41,300	42,100

Source: Waste Management Strategy for County Kildare, 1999

- *These figures are based on earlier population projections than those included in this profile and therefore can be taken as indicative.*

Waste Management Facilities

There are currently 13 operators with a valid permit to collect, transport and dispose of domestic, commercial and industrial waste in the county. In the county, Athy and Naas UDC areas 22,100 households are serviced on behalf of the local authorities by private contractors, with the remaining households are serviced by private independent contractors.

The only authorised landfill site for the county is located at Silliot Hill and is operated by Kildare County Council. In 1998 Silliot Hill accepted 188,600 tonnes of waste including household, commercial, industrial, construction and demolition, material for site work, sludge and recyclable materials. This facility will reach full capacity late in 2001 and so the full implementation of the Waste Management Strategy of recycling, landfill and other waste management systems will be required.

Recycling

There are currently 34 recycling banks located throughout the county. Between 1998 and 2000, recycling facilities were estimated to have generated the following recyclable material;

Table 9 Recycled Material in County Kildare

Material	1998	1999	2000
Glass	400 tonnes	No figures	1,616 tonnes
Aluminium	No figures	1 ton	11 tonnes

Source: Environment Department, Kildare County Council

Silliot Hill also accepts scrap cars, fridges, old cookers and so on, which are recycled for metal by a scrap metal company. There is a waste oil collection point in addition to bottle, can and textile recycling banks.

Kildare County Council has operated a composting system since 1996. This entails the purchase of a composting bin for domestic recycling of organic material into compost. In 1996 the estimated take up of the scheme was 250 units, growing to 600 in 1998 and 1,000 in 2000. The estimate for 2001 is 1,500 take ups of the scheme.

These figures and the table above demonstrate exponentially increasing levels of recycling in the county. However, by comparison to the amount of waste going to landfill each year, the level of recycling is minimal. The amount of waste recycled accounts for only 1.5% of the total waste generated and 3% of household waste generated. Currently the national average for recycling is 9%. With ever increasing population and development, clearly the county does not have the capacity to continue to landfill. Increased recycling, reuse and alternative waste management methods are required.

Litter Prosecutions

In 1999, 957 on-the-spot litter fines were issued. 65% of these (625) were paid with a further 28% being either waived or deemed uncollectable. The figures for 2000 show that 1,102 litter fines were issued with 447 (41%) paid (a drop of 24% on 1999) and a further 27% either waived or deemed uncollectable. 10 prosecutions were issued for litter offences in 2001 with one conviction attained.

Water Supply & Treatment

The water supply in the county is drawn from a number of different sources the most important of which are the Mid East Regional Water Supply Scheme taken from the Dublin Corporation Works at Ballymore Eustace, and the North East Regional Water Supply Scheme supplied from Fingal County Council's treatment plant at Leixlip. Individual wells and group schemes generally supply the remaining domestic water requirements for the county. 85% of the population of the county have mains water supply.

There are currently 124 group water schemes operating in the county developed off public water supply pipelines and 20 public water schemes. 5,000 individual wells¹⁴ are estimated to be in place in the county and 402 Well Grants, for the sinking and testing of individual wells, have been awarded by Kildare County Council since 1997. **(map 69: existing and proposed water sites)**

The county's water treatment and supply facilities are spread evenly throughout the county. A number of these, most notably the plants at Ballymore Eustace and Leixlip, have been upgraded over the past number of years improving the supply and quality of water.

Sewage Treatment

There are two major regional sewerage schemes in the county. The Lower Liffey Valley Regional Sewerage Scheme is capable of treating discharge from a population of 60,000 while the Upper Liffey Valley Regional Sewerage Scheme caters for 40,000 people. Both of these facilities are currently at, or nearing, full capacity and will be extended over the life of the current County Development Plan. **(map 71: sewerage treatment plants)**

The towns and villages not served by these schemes are served by independent sewerage schemes bringing the combined capacity of all sewerage schemes in the county to 117,663 people while a large number of individual dwellings and small developments have their own septic tanks to cater for wastes.

¹⁴ *This figure is based on the 1996 Census of Population data available and Water Strategy for County Kildare*

Energy and Communications Infrastructure

Electricity

The ESB deliver electricity to Kildare from the following sources;

- ❑ 220/110kV transformer station at Maynooth is a bulk-feed for much of Dublin and Kildare
- ❑ 400kV transformer station at Dunstown, Kilcullen
- ❑ Liffey hydro-electric generation station
- ❑ 110/38kV stations at Liffey (Poulaphouca), Allenwood, Griffin Rath and Newbridge are connected to the main 220kV grid system
- ❑ 38kV stations at Naas, Allenwood, Kildare, Sallins, Kilcullen, Celbridge, Leixlip, Newbridge, Athgarvan, Kildare and Athy are supplied from the 110/38kV stations and others outside the county

Previously, the ESB operated a peat-fired generating station in Allenwood, fueled by the Bord na Mona plants in Lullymore and Timahoe. After continual decline in numbers employed over the 1986 - 1991 period the ESB Station in Allenwood closed in 1997. Both the Bord na Mona plants remain open but are currently operated by small numbers of staff.

The new peat-fired Generating Station - Europeat 1 - in Edenderry, adjoining the county, will provide additional power and will be fired from the boglands in the county, excluding Areas of High Amenity and NHAs.

Natural Gas

A natural gas pipeline from Cork to Dublin passes through the east of the county, with feeder lines supplying Naas, Newbridge and adjoining towns. Feeder lines from Dublin supply Leixlip, Maynooth and Celbridge. Athy has recently been included allowing the servicing of other towns and villages in south Kildare.

Telecommunications Infrastructure

The county is well served by telecommunications infrastructure with the combined cabling networks of Esat and Eircom ensuring that the entire county is serviced by main fibre optic cables and lines. Broadband Technology encompassing ISDN lines, are provided by ESAT in the county as follows (Information on the EIRCOM network was unavailable at the time);

Table 10 Telecommunications Infrastructure in County Kildare

Line Type	No of Lines
STM 16 ring A (2.5 GB/s Capacity)	1
STM 64 Single Fibre DWDM Ring (10 GB/s)	2
STM 16 ring B (2.5 GB/s Capacity)	2
STM 16 ring F (2.5 GB/s Capacity)	1
ESAT (5 GB/s)	1
EAM	2

Source: Esat Business, Dublin Office

KELT, the Leader Company, has recently been granted IR£4 million (euro 5,078,952) as part of the EU Leader Plus Programme 2000-2006. Under this programme, KELT will establish a network of IT Centres throughout the county offering training and IT access for the community and adding to the telecommunications capacity of the county. **(Map 67)**

The main issue for the future concerning telecommunications infrastructure is accessibility. While KELT's programme will ensure accessibility to hardware and training, a role exists for the Local Authority to become involved in the provision of spurs from mainline telecommunications cabling and infrastructure.

Housing

Number of Houses Built

The total number of housing completions in the county over the past decade are as follows;

Table 11 House Completions 1996-2000

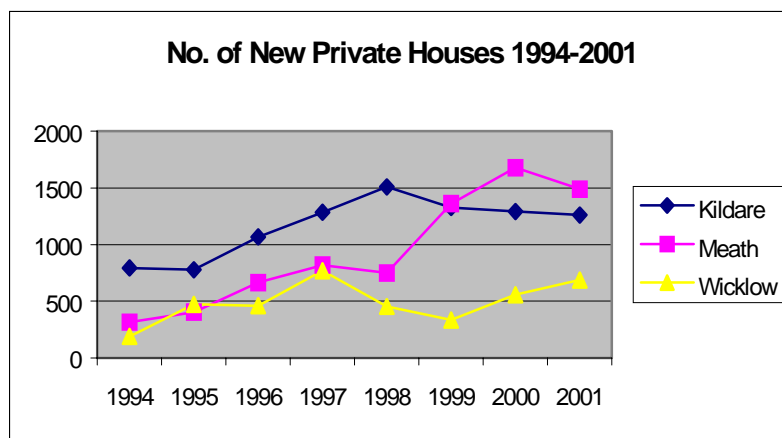
Year	No of house completions	% Change
1991	639	
1995	1,635	+ 155%
1999	2,419	+ 48%

Source: *Population and Household Projections for County Kildare*

Private Housing

The majority of new privately owned homes built in Ireland are registered with Homebond, the National House Building Guarantee Company. Homebond regularly provide statistics and analysis based on registered homes, which give a general picture of the current situation regarding the housing industry in the country. Figures for Kildare since 1994 show a changing market in new private ownership which, after steady increases between 1994 and 1998, have begun to level out and slightly decline.

Chart 3 New Private Houses 1994-2001 (yearly period from 1st January - 31st July)



Source: *Homebond, 2001*

The County Housing Strategy 2001-2005 states that the average house price in the county was €193,277 in 2000, an increase of 15.6% on 1999. Naas, Newbridge and Kildare Town are the areas where housing is in most demand. The Housing Strategy predicts a slow down in the rate of price increases over the next number of years, stating the likely increase on 2004 to be between 7.5% and 6% in 2005.

Private Rented Accommodation

Under current housing legislation, private landlords are required to register with the County Council. Up to July 2001, 850 landlords were registered with Kildare County Council. Given the extent of the population in the county and the nature of accommodation in some areas, for example Maynooth where students make-up a significant minority, this is unlikely to represent the actual number of units in the county with people living in private rented accommodation.

Local Authority Housing Provision

In 2000, Kildare Local Authorities were providing housing to almost 2,500 households - 1,600 by Kildare County Council, 410 in Athy Town Council and 437 in Naas Town Council area. There are significant concentrations of local authority housing in Naas, Kildare, Athy and Newbridge and to a lesser extent in Leixlip, Celbridge and Maynooth.

As at May 2001, there were 2,451 people on the housing list for Kildare County Council, 149 on the housing list for Athy Town Council and 490 on the list for Naas Town Council. The County Housing Strategy for the period 2001-2005 provides for the construction of 1,085 housing units plus 330 voluntary housing units and 58 Traveller accommodation units over the 2001-2003 period, to cater for people on the housing list.

Kildare Local Authorities continue to build and acquire new houses. In 1996 Kildare Local Authorities built 82 new houses and bought 21. These figures grew steadily in the intervening period and in December 2000 the local authorities had 230 units in progress and had acquired 25 houses.

Local Authority Tenants also have the option to buy out their homes from the local authorities. In 1996 only 18 homes were purchased by tenants, rising to 36 in 1999. The figures for 2000 show 48 sales had been approved, suggesting that the buoyant economy has enabled increased home ownership by local authority tenants.

(map 10b: local authority housing & halting sites)

Voluntary Housing

Even with the construction of the local authority units set out above, there remains an inadequate provision of housing for people with special needs. Kildare County Council and a number of Voluntary Housing Organisations have been charged with the remit of providing housing to meet this demand in so far as possible. A number of organisations are constructing schemes or managing voluntary housing schemes for the County Council. For example Respond, are currently constructing 38 units in Athy, to cater for people with special needs. Over the period 2000/2001, 307 voluntary housing dwellings are to be built in Athy, Naas, Leixlip, Clane, Monasterevin, Kilcullen, Brownstown and Maynooth as well as in a number of smaller villages.

Kildare Local Authorities also provide for people with special needs including older people, travellers, people with disabilities, and the homeless.

THE ECONOMY & LABOUR FORCE

Introduction

The strength of the Kildare economy has provided many opportunities for employment over the past decade. In this section, the economy and income levels within the county are examined as are the employment levels in various sectors, and also the persistent levels of unemployment.

Sources for this section are;

- ❑ Census of Population, 1991 & 1996
- ❑ Analysis of the Economic, Employment and Social Profile of the Greater Dublin Region, Morgenroth, ESRI, 2001
- ❑ Kildare Farming 2000
- ❑ Teagasc, Kildare Office
- ❑ Kildare Horse Development Company
- ❑ IDA
- ❑ Enterprise Ireland
- ❑ Forfas – National Spatial Strategy paper
- ❑ CSO Census of Industrial Production 1998
- ❑ Midlands East Regional Tourism Authority
- ❑ Bord Failte
- ❑ Eircom Golden Pages 2001
- ❑ FAS
- ❑ Local Employment Services Network
- ❑ OAK Partnership
- ❑ Action South Kildare

The Economy & Income Levels

Although covering only 2.4% of the total area of the state, Kildare contains 3.7% of the population (1996) and generates approximately four percent (4.1% in 1995) of the total Gross Value Added¹⁵. On almost any indicator of wealth or living standards the county is ranked among the highest.

As can be seen from Table 11 below, per capita GVA in 1995 was 11% above the average for the State (fourth highest among 27 counties) mainly due to the presence of multinational companies such as Intel and Hewlett Packard producing very large amounts of high value-added goods. While some of the value added generated by multinational companies does leak out of the local and national economy through the repatriation of profits, the residents of Kildare nevertheless enjoy per capita disposable incomes¹⁶ that are above the national average, second only to Dublin in 1997.

¹⁵ *Gross Value Added (GVA) is the total value of goods and services produced in the county.*

¹⁶ *Per Capita Disposable Income is the average income per person after current taxes on income, social insurance contributions, and current transfer payments have been paid.*

Table 12 Income indices

	GVA per capita 1995	Disposable Income Per capita 1997	Percent of population covered by medical cards, September 2000
Meath	68	90.9	27.8
Kildare	111	102.2	26.4
Wicklow	80	93.0	32.3
Mid East Region	88	95.8	N/A
Dublin	127	114.1	25.6
Ireland	100	100.0	30.6

Source: CSO Regional Accounts and Household Incomes

Another index of the level of household incomes is the percentage of the population covered by medical cards, which was only 26.4% in September 2000 compared with an overall figure of 30.6% nationally¹⁷. Comparative data for neighbouring counties are presented in Table 12, and confirm the very strong economic position of Kildare within the Mid-East Region.

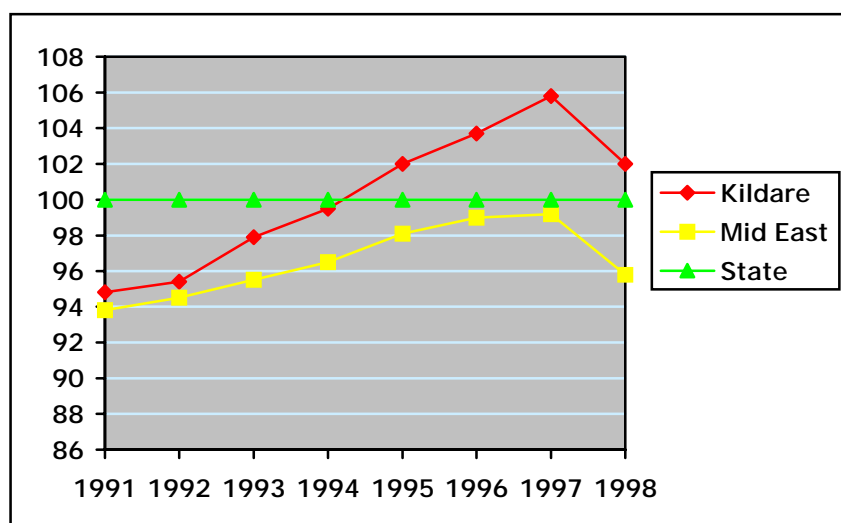
Household Income

Disposable income can be defined as total income minus current taxes on income, social insurance on income (income tax etc.), social insurance contributions, and current transfer payments. As can be seen from the chart below, the indices of disposable income for County Kildare are higher than the state average and the average for the Mid-East Region.

In 1991 the figure for County Kildare was 94.8 and the figure for the Mid-East Region was 93.8. In 1998 the figure for County Kildare was 102 and the figure for the Mid-East Region was 95.8. This shows that the indices for County Kildare have increased significantly in comparison to the state average and the Mid-East Region. The figure for County Kildare was higher than the mid-east region by 6.2 and 2 points higher than the State average in 1998.

¹⁷ *Calculated from data provided by Department of Health and Children*

Chart 4 Indices of Disposable Income 1991 - 1998 (State = 100)



Source: Household Incomes Analysis, CSO May 2001

Labour Force Participation

The total county labour force in 1996 was almost 58,000. While much of the recent growth in the county labour force can be attributed to in-migration, the overall increase in the national labour force has been very strongly influenced by changes in participation within the State. This reflects the age profile of the county where, by comparison with most other counties, a larger proportion of those aged over 16 are in the working age groups and also the fact that greater opportunities for employment exist (Table 13). **(map 23: labour force participation rate, all persons)**

The female participation rate is also higher in Kildare than neighbouring counties, though within the county there is a major contrast between the urban and rural areas. Female participation rates have traditionally been highest for younger women. However, the situation has altered greatly in recent years with much greater numbers of older women participating in the labour force. This has occurred in response to a number of factors including; higher levels of education; smaller families with many couples deferring the commencement of family formation until their mid thirties; economic pressures associated with the cost of housing and, more generally; a scarcity of labour in the metropolitan region as evidenced by very low unemployment rates. **(map 24: labour force participation rate, females)**

Table 13 Labour force participation rates, 1996

	Dublin	Kildare	Meath	Wicklow	Ireland
Male participation rate	72	74.1	73.8	72.2	70.7
Female participation rate	46.7	42.3	39.5	39.1	40.7

Source: Census of Population, 1996

Sectoral Employment

Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry

The sectoral distribution of employment is presented in Table 14 on page 8. Agriculture, forestry and fishing accounted for only 7% of the total at work in 1996, the number employed in the industry having dropped by 17% over the 1991-1996 period. This reflects the general decline in agriculture and is the only area, apart from Mining, Quarrying & Turf Cutting, to have experienced a decline in numbers employed. The decrease in Mining, Quarrying & Turf Cutting of 39% can be attributed to the closure and downsizing of Bord na Mona and the ESB in the northwest of the county. Employment in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector is concentrated in the northwest and south of the county.

Manufacturing

Manufacturing industries account for 20% of the total at work. This figure only refers to persons resident in the county – there are undoubtedly many working in manufacturing firms, especially around Leixlip, who reside in Dublin. The relative importance of manufacturing employment is greatest in the area north of Rathangan and also in the southwest around Athy. The sectors represented by firms in these areas are, however, more traditional and prone to losses of employment than is the case for firms located in the northeast.

Services

The Services sector accounts for the largest share of the workforce and is also the most rapidly growing sector with gains particularly strong among those employed in commerce (including retail), insurance and finance and also in the number employed in professional services. It is also in these two sectors that the largest increases in female employment have occurred.

The increase in the number employed in commerce, insurance and financial activities is well dispersed throughout the county, excepting the most rural areas. By contrast most of those employed in professional services (in many cases in jobs located in Dublin city) are concentrated in the area extending north of Newbridge to the northeast, reflecting the influx of commuters who work in Dublin and also the concentration in Naas of county-based professional employment.

Table 14 Number of persons at work classified by broad industrial sectors, 1996

	Males 1996	Females 1996	Total 1996	Males Change 1991-96	Females Change 1991-96	Total Change 1991-96	% Change	% of Labour Force
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	3100	533	3633	-606	-32	-638	-18%	7%
Mining, quarrying, turf production	333	37	370	-143	0	-143	-39%	0.7%
Manufacturing	7357	2971	10328	1691	694	2385	+23%	20%
Electricity, gas and water supplies	362	64	426	32	19	51	+12%	0.8%
Building and construction	3703	225	3928	991	97	1088	+28%	8%
Commerce, insurance, finance	6215	4706	10921	1291	1426	2717	+25%	21%
Transport, communication, etc	2046	526	2572	311	149	460	+18%	5%
Public administration and defence	3797	1227	5024	7	309	316	+6%	10%
Professional services	2963	5828	8791	706	1581	2287	+26%	17%
Others	2565	2741	5306	1001	1060	2061	+39%	10%
Total	32441	18858	51299	5281	5303	10584	+21%	

Sources: Census 1996 – Principal Economic Status and Industries Tables: 13a, 13b, 13c.
Census 1991 – Industries Tables 8a, 8b, 8c.

Unemployment in Kildare

Between 1991 and 1996 the total number of persons at work who were resident in the county increased by 26%, compared with an increase of 10% nationally. The gains were particularly strong around Naas, Clane, Maynooth and Celbridge. The smallest gains were mainly in rural areas especially in parts of the southwest.

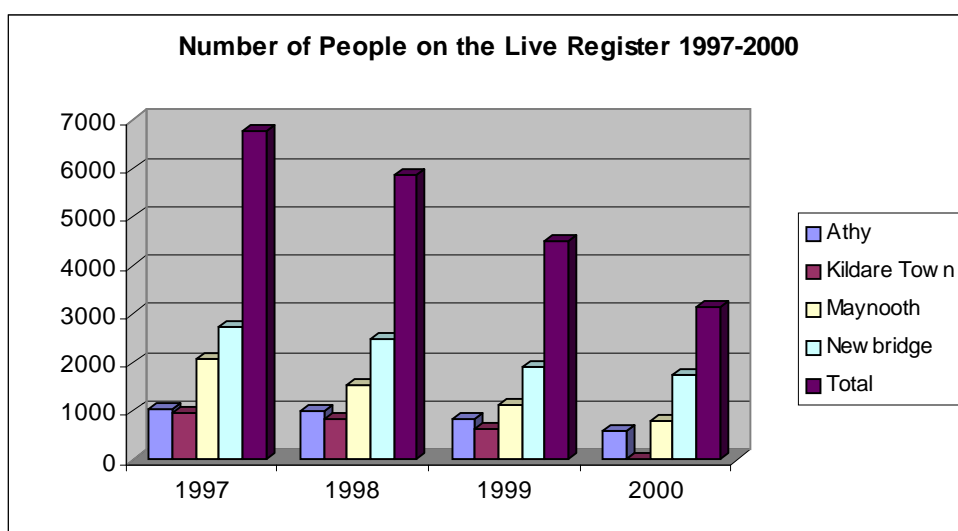
In 1996 there were 6,457 unemployed persons¹⁸ in the county amounting to 11.2% of the labour force. However, there were very great differences in unemployment rates between the rapidly growing districts in the northeast, where the rates were typically about 5-6%, and most of the south of the county, and some districts in the northwest, where the rates exceeded 16%. **(map 29: unemployment rate)**

¹⁸ *Census of Population, 1996*

Of course, since 1996 there has been a very large reduction in the unemployment rate to about 4% throughout the state. While there has also been a significant decline in unemployment throughout the county it is likely that the fundamental contrast between the northeast and most of the rest of the county has not altered very much.

Chart 5 shows the number of people on the Live Register (i.e. those claiming unemployment payments from Social Welfare, including part-time and seasonal workers). It is not specifically a measure of unemployment but indicates trends in employment and unemployment. Of those on the Live Register in April 2001, 26% had been on the Live Register for more than one year, 60% of these were registered in the Athy Local Social Welfare Office, and 16% were under 25 years of age.

Chart 5 Number of People on the Live Register 1997-2000



Source: CSO Live Register Area Analysis. Note in 2000, claims from Kildare were transferred to Newbridge.

A number of supports are also in place to counter unemployment and assist people back into the workforce. These include;

CE/Jobs Initiative Programmes

These programmes are administered by FAS and typically run by community and voluntary organisations and public sector bodies. In Kildare at present there are 907 people employed through CE Schemes and 56 people employed on three Jobs Initiative Schemes.

Local Employment Services Network

The Local Employment Services Network provides mentoring support and access to training for long term unemployed people in the county. Since its inception in 1996, 1,620 people have used the services offered by the Network.

Local Development Agencies – Services to the Unemployed

The Local Development Agencies in the county, in particular the OAK Partnership and Action South Kildare offer specific services to the unemployed in terms of counselling, mentoring, job placement and retraining.

ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC SECTORS

This chapter describes the main trends and features of the main economic sectors in the economy of the county. In particular the contribution of agriculture, manufacturing, services and tourism to economic growth are analysed. Sources for this chapter are the same as those for chapter 7.

Agriculture

In 1991 there were 6,769 people employed in agriculture in the county on 3,251 farms of an average size 37.8 hectares. By 1996 the number employed in agriculture had declined to 3,633 a decline of 18%. The period since 1996 has also undoubtedly seen a further decline in agriculture employment. **(map 25: % at work in agriculture, forestry & fishing)**

While the characteristics of agriculture in the county compare very favourably with that in other parts of the country (see Table 15) there are of course some notable differences in the strength of the sector throughout the county.

Table 15 Principal Characteristics of Agriculture in Mid-East counties, 1991

	Kildare	Meath	Wicklow	Dublin	Ireland
Avg. farm size (ha.)	37.8	33.9	38.1	32.6	26.0
Avg. farm size (ESUs)	15.3	16.8	17.1	19.2	11.6
% farmers aged >65	20.5	20.8	20.1	20.2	22.8
% farmers part-time	31.6	33.0	24.7	34.5	26.6
Marginal land % of total	32	12	47	11	49
Specialist tillage %	11.8	6.7	5.3	26.9	2.9
Specialist dairying %	11.4	21.5	14.1	7.4	24.4
Specialist beef production %	31.9	38.3	17.9	21.0	42.1
Specialist sheep %	10.9	6.4	27.9	7.9	8.8
Mixed grazing livestock %	24.6	22.1	28.4	20.7	17.9
Mixed crops & livestock %	7.4	3.4	4.4	5.0	2.5

Source: Census of Agriculture, 1991 CSO

The average farm size (measured in both hectares and output levels) is well above the national average especially in the south, an area that also coincides with the best farmland in terms of land capability. **(map 31: Average farm size)**

Specialised Farming

Intensive specialist tillage farming is very much concentrated on larger farms in the south and parts of the northeast. Winter barley is the most important crop followed by spring barley, winter wheat, sugar beet and fodder beet. The more extensive beef cattle systems are mainly found in the west where the average herd size is 21 but ranges from 1-95.

Sheep rearing is most prevalent in the Curragh and the upland eastern areas adjoining County Wicklow. The average number of breeding ewes is 177. Dairy farm herds average 60 cows with 60% having more than 50 cows. The average milk quota is 59,000 gallons.¹⁹

Horticulture is an increasingly important diversification activity in agriculture in the county. It is estimated that 350 people are currently employed in horticulture, yielding £10 million in production from an estimated 35 nurseries.

Forestry accounts for only a small proportion of production. Currently only 2.5% (3,815 hectares) of the landmass of the county is under forest. Five full-time Coillte employees work in Kildare. Much of the forestry work is carried out by contract labour but little data exists on the contribution of labour figures for forestry.

The *Kildare Farming 2000* report identified a somewhat bleak future for Kildare farming. Less than one-quarter of the farms included in the survey had identified a successor and almost half of the respondents expected their successor to farm part-time. Nevertheless the strong commercial orientation and the scale of farms in the south are such that farming there is likely to remain a commercially viable activity on a full time basis. In the northwest where the quality of the resource base is more limited and farms are smaller there is likely to be a further shift towards part-time farming. Off-farm employment opportunities and/or possibilities for diversification from traditional farming are more likely to be sought in these areas.

Equine/Horse Industry

Nationally, the Equine Industry employs more than 30,000 people, contributes £58 million per annum to the economy from the breeding sector alone and has been recognised as a sector of strategic importance. The equine sector is uniquely strong in Kildare. It is estimated that 20% of all equine personnel are based in Kildare, providing direct employment to between 5,500 and 6,000 workers which is more than the total number that are currently estimated to be directly involved in farming.

The county has the largest concentration of stud farms in the country, giving rise to a sector that has earned a world class reputation. 27% of all horses in training and 16% of all Thoroughbred Stallions in the country are based in Kildare. There are estimated to be 8,700 horses and ponies in the county comprising horses in training, broodmares, foals yearlings etc.

Aside from the 16 equestrian centres, a range of national equine institutions such as The Turf Club, Kildare Horse Development Company, The National Stud, Goffs, RACE, the Irish Thoroughbred Association and the Irish Jockeys Association are also based in the county. Ancillary Services supporting the equine industry in Kildare are estimated to generate revenue of £5.7 million into the local economy each year.

¹⁹ *Kildare Farming 2000, Kildare Agriculture Task Group 1999*

Manufacturing Industry

The profile of the manufacturing sector in the county is one of the strongest in the country. Kildare has 21 multinational companies assisted by the IDA and almost 150 indigenous companies assisted by Enterprise Ireland. **(map 26: % at work in manufacturing industries)**

The overseas sector includes flagship plants by Intel and Hewlett-Packard (Leixlip), Wyeth Medica (Newbridge) and Donnelly Mirrors (Naas) to name but a few. **(map 39: distribution of companies assisted by Enterprise Ireland and IDA)**

An analysis undertaken by Forfas for the National Spatial Strategy of 141 industrial plants in the county has shown that 40% of manufacturing employment is in the electrical and electronic equipment sectors (compared with 20% for the state). A further 18% of manufacturing employment is in the chemical, pharmaceutical and plastics sector (15% in the state) while the reliance on traditional sectors such as food, drink, wood, textiles, printing etc. is only 26% compared to 34% for the state. In summary almost 60% of total employment is in companies that are part of the technologically advanced sectors, compared with 45% for the state.

Table 16 provides a summary profile of the industrial sector based on the Forfas database and the CSO Census of Industrial Production 1998. The 141 industrial units had a total employment of 14,393 in 1999, 29.4 % more than in 1995. The comparable rate of increase for the state was 23.9%. The importance of the multinational sector is demonstrated by the fact that 70% of the net gain in employment between 1995 and 1999 was in these companies.

The final three rows of the table provide proxy measures of competitiveness. Productivity levels are above average, the share of net output accounted for by wages is very low and there is a high ratio of skilled technical and professional workers.

The geographical distribution of IDA assisted firms is very strongly concentrated in the main urban centres especially Naas, Newbridge, Leixlip and Celbridge. The companies assisted by Enterprise Ireland are more dispersed with significant concentrations in the towns that have IDA companies and also many other centres. Athy has a significant number of Enterprise Ireland companies, which to some extent compensates for the fact that the town has only one IDA assisted company and that over the past decade there has been a decrease in the numbers employed in manufacturing from 1,100 to 750 people.

Since 1994 the County Enterprise Board has assisted micro enterprise development in the county. A broad range of financial and soft supports has been provided from a one-stop-shop facility located in Clane **(map 40: distribution of CEB assisted companies)**

Innovation Centres are notably lacking in the county. There are, at present, no innovation centres within Kildare. However, the proximity of the county to the National Digital Park and to the innovation centres located in Dublin Universities mean that industry within the county has potential to access to the latest research and

development work available. A feasibility study has been undertaken to consider the potential for a business information centre in north Kildare that would involve, amongst others, Kildare County Council, Enterprise Ireland and NUI Maynooth.

Table 16 Industrial indicators for Dublin and Mid-East counties, 1995-1999

	Kildare	Meath	Wicklow	Dublin	Ireland
No. of Industrial plants 1999	141	138	135	1716	5474
Total employment in mfg. and intl. Traded services 1999	14393	5931	8091	102558	324422
Net employment gain 1995-99 All firms	3274	531	1609	32637	62524
Net employment gain 1995-99 Foreign-owned	2307	- 118	964	22781	39453
Net employment gain 1995-99 Irish-owned	967	649	645	9656	23071
% employed in advanced sectors	58.7	15.8	43.5	59.2	44.9
Share of employment in five Largest firms	49	21	29	7	N/A
GVA per person employed 1998 (Ireland = 100)	109.0	42.9	140.5	133.4	100.0
Wages and salaries as % of net output	16.7	42.6	13.4	25.9	16.9
Ratio of industrial to admin/ Technical workers	2.6	6.3	4.5	3.9	4.5

Source: Forfas database and CSO Census of Industrial Production, 1998

Services Sector

In 1996 there were over 27,300 people working in the services sector with commercial and professional services representing the largest sub-sectors followed by public administration and defence. **(Map 27 & 28 % at work in commerce, insurance, finance & business services)**

The most recent data available for the services sector set out in the table below shows the number of firms in existence rather than the numbers employed. However, this information still demonstrates the strength of the sector and gives a rough idea of the extent of each sub-sector;

Table 17 Estimated Number of Building Construction and Market Service Firms 2000

	Kildare	Meath	Wicklow	Total
Building & Construction	890	1092	813	2795
Wholesals and Retail	1003	1117	1169	3289
Hotels, Restaurants and Catering	317	366	440	1123
Transport and Communication	234	259	194	687
Finance & Insurance	73	55	83	211
Other Business & Personal Services	614	610	734	1958
Other	352	339	403	1094

Source: Analysis of the Economic and Social Profile of the Greater Dublin Region, ESRI 2001

Tourism Industry

Building on its natural, cultural and historical resources, County Kildare has begun to take advantage of the growing opportunities the tourism industry offers. In 1999, the county attracted 163,000 overseas visitors, which generated approximately £36m in revenue. Although lagging behind County Wicklow, Kildare attracted 54,000 more overseas visitors than County Meath in 1999. One Tourist Office located in Kildare Town serves the needs of tourists to the county.

Kildare has a number of major tourism attractions, which have been promoted by Midlands East Regional Tourist Authority (MERTA) and Kildare Failte. Targeting niche opportunities could further develop the potential of the sector. The county has a number of cultural and historical features, most notably the Japanese Gardens & Irish National Stud, Estate Houses, the Curragh and Pollardstown Fen which could be developed in this regard. **(map 41: tourism visitor attractions)**

Table 18 Tourist Attractions & Visitor Numbers

Attraction	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000
Athy Heritage Centre	N/A	N/A	N/A	1,453	2,432
Castletown House	12,903	12,602	8,014	N/A	8,714
Irish National Stud	84,000	119,066	137,261	129,453	c. 140,000
Maze in the Maise	N/A	N/A	N/A	4,000	15,000
Peatland World	1,000	7,000	N/A	N/A	N/A
Irish Steam Museum	1,092	6,250	7,700	N/A	N/A

Source: MERTA

The table below shows the extent of tourist accommodation in the County.

Table 19 Bord Failte Approved Tourist Accommodation in Kildare

	Number of Units				Number of Rooms			
	1991	1995	1998	2000	1991	1995	1998	2000
Hotels	13	16	20	20	230	297	483	550
B&B, Town & Country Houses	34	38	58	53		161	222	193
Farmhouses	8	15	14	15		58	55	61
TOTAL	55	69	92	88		516	760	804
% Increase 1995-2000				27.53				55.8%
Self-Catering	9	15	12	13		43	34	83
Camping / Carvaning	1	1	-	1	-	15 pitches	-	-

Source: MERTA

Kildare has a plentiful supply of restaurants spread throughout the county from the large urban areas to small rural hamlets. This is a positive point for both tourists and resident alike.

Tourism is clearly a developing section of business and employment in Kildare with ever growing potential to capitalise on the county's location beside Dublin and the quality of resources available.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

Introduction

One of the major challenges facing a county experiencing such rapid change and development as Kildare is that of ensuring the most vulnerable groups in society can benefit from and take part in the development of the county. This section of the profile examines the circumstances of vulnerable groups in society who are excluded from mainstream activities and details recent initiatives to include them more fully into society.

Sources for this section include;

- ❑ Action South Kildare
- ❑ Census of Population 1996
- ❑ Department of Social, Community & Family Affairs
- ❑ Haase Index of Deprivation 1996
- ❑ Housing Department, Kildare County Council
- ❑ KELT
- ❑ OAK Partnership
- ❑ OECD
- ❑ Social Inclusion Measures Working Group - Matrix of Social Inclusion Programmes
- ❑ Traveller Accommodation Programme 2000-2004, Kildare County Council

Identifying Social Exclusion

Social exclusion is defined in the National Development Plan 1999 as;

"cumulative marginalisation from production, consumption, social networks, decision-making and from an adequate quality of life".

It is normally measured using a deprivation index (e.g. Haase Index of Deprivation) which uses a number of different variables (e.g. income, educational attainment) to calculate an overall deprivation score. The most recent deprivation scores for Kildare are derived from the 1996 Census of Population. This shows the most disadvantaged DED areas in Kildare to be;

Table 20 Disadvantage in Kildare

DED	Electoral Area
❑ Athy West Urban ❑ Grangemelton ❑ Kilberry	Athy
❑ Timahoe South ❑ Robertstown	Clane
❑ Ballybackan ❑ Nurney	Kildare

Source: County Childcare Census for County Kildare, ADM 2000

For the purposes of this profile, in order to measure the extent of social exclusion, the 1996 Census has been used to identify a number of factors which contribute to levels of exclusion. These factors are the level of long term unemployment, the number of older people living alone, number of people claiming social welfare payments, levels of educational attainment and social class. Later in the section, more recent information is given on various groups experiencing social exclusion and initiatives to counter current levels of exclusion in the county.

Long Term Unemployment

While there are undoubtedly concentrations of the incidence of long-term unemployment within most of the urban centres which are masked by the ratios calculated for entire districts, **Map XX** identifies a number of rural areas, especially in the south and parts of the northwest, where, in 1996, over half of the unemployed were out of work for more than one year. It is noteworthy, perhaps, that these rural areas contain some of the best and also some of the poorest quality agricultural land in the county. The accompanying map taken in conjunction with the previous maps on the labour force emphasise the very different types of labour markets that are operating in different parts of the county. (**map 48: long term unemployment rate**)

While not an accurate measure of unemployment because seasonal and part-time workers are included, current Live Register Figures provided earlier, show that just above 3,000 people are currently claiming unemployment payments in the county, a figure steadily declining since 1997.

Older People Living Alone

In 1996 just over 25% of all persons aged over 65 were living alone. The number of females in this category (1,478) greatly exceeded the number of males (775). The distribution of over 65s living alone as a percentage of the total population reflects to some extent the overall age profile with the highest rates of elderly living alone found in the most rural areas. (**map 49: % aged +65 and living alone**)

Social Welfare Recipients

Since 1996 Kildare has had the highest rates of increase among the counties in the region in the number of recipients of the one parent family allowance, disability benefits and invalidity pensions. By contrast the number of persons on the Live Register declined faster than in either Meath or Wicklow. For comparative purposes the data are presented in Table 21 for each of the Mid East counties and Dublin.

Information on the location of recipients of Social Welfare payments is presently not available but will be contained in future versions of the County Profile.

Table 21 No. of recipients of Social Welfare benefits 1999 and percentage change 1996-99

	Kildare	Meath	Wicklow	Dublin	Ireland
One parent family Allowance 1999	2468	1540	2289	26983	70387
% change 1996-99	49.0	43.0	40.5	30.9	39.2
Disability benefits	3760	2733	2849	28602	107057
% change 1996-99	38.7	36.2	33.6	21.9	33.0
Invalidity pensions	1414	1050	1199	15920	46946
% change 1996-99	12.3	18.9	8.3	6.0	9.1
No. on live register	4347	2753	4784	45483	176539
% change 1996-99	- 44.7	- 30.4	- 36.8	- 45.6	-34.6

*Source Department of Social, Community & Family Affairs

Educational Attainment & Disadvantage

The distribution of the population according to educational attainment levels is summarised in Table 22. The data to some extent reflect the age profile of the county with comparatively low proportions having either only primary or low second level education. Just over one-fifth of the population had a third level qualification in 1996. The distribution of persons with this level of education is clearly high by comparison with many of the other variables that have been examined. The contrast between the more youthful and highly urbanized northeast and the rural parts could hardly be more striking. The geographical distribution pattern of people with postgraduate qualifications is almost the reverse of that for people whose highest level of education is lower secondary level. **(Map 44 & 45: education attainment)**

Table 22 Percentage distribution of population aged 15 years and over by highest level of education completed 1996

	Kildare	Meath	Wicklow	Dublin	Ireland
Primary	24	27	26	24	29
Lower Secondary	21	22	20	18	20
Upper Secondary	32	31	30	29	29
Third level - non degree	11	10	11	10	9
Third level - degree or higher	10	8	10	14	10
Not Stated	2	2	3	4	3
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Census of Population, 1996

According to the OECD International Adult Literacy Survey 1997, 20% of Irish Adults have literacy difficulties and 4% are functionally illiterate. Applying these percentages to the 1996 population of Kildare it is estimated that, potentially, 27,000 people in the county may have literacy difficulties while 5,400 people may be functionally illiterate.

Social Class

Educational attainment levels have a strong influence on occupational choices, which in turn impact on the social class²⁰ to which individuals are assigned. In Kildare 20% of the population are classified as belonging to either social classes 5 (semi-skilled) or 6 (unskilled workers) compared with 21% for the total population of Ireland. **(maps 46&47: % population in social classes 1&2, 5&6)**

These social groups are very strongly represented in the rural western DEDs, apart from the area around Rathangan and the rural areas adjacent to Portarlington, which are likely to include some skilled manual and professional workers associated with the peat processing and electricity generating operations.

Table 23 Percentage distribution of population by social classes, 1996

	Dublin	Kildare	Meath	Wicklow	Ireland
1. Professional workers	7	5	5	6	5
2. Managerial and technical	24	24	23	24	22
3. Non-manual workers	20	21	17	17	18
4. Skilled manual Workers	18	20	23	21	20
5. Semi-skilled manual Workers	12	11	12	12	13
6. Unskilled Workers	6	9	10	9	9
7. Others	13	10	9	10	12
8. Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Census of Population, 1996

The distribution of social classes 1 and 2 (professional and managerial/ technical workers) is almost the reverse of that for classes 5 and 6. In the county 29% of the population belong to classes 5 and 6 compared with 27% for the state. In some DEDs in the northeast the proportion exceeds 40%.

This also mirrors the findings for educational attainment, indicating that the more highly skilled and higher earning population in the central-northeast strip are employed in professional, services and high-tech industries, while the lower skilled and low earning population in the south-northwest band rely on agriculture and traditional industry for employment. Coupled with the finding that the majority of public services are provided in a diagonal pattern stretching from the northeast to the mid-central areas of the county, it would appear that the south and northwest are disadvantaged both in earning power and in service provision.

²⁰ *The social class of a person is determined by their occupation and the level of skill required ranging from 1 (highest) to 7 (lowest). When determining Social Class no account is taken of the differences between people on the basis of other characteristics such as education. (CSO, Census 96 Vol 7, Occupations).*

Socially Excluded Groups

Within the county a number of specific groups exist who continue to experience social exclusion and who require specific targeted intervention in order to reverse this situation.

Travellers

As of November 2001 the county currently had a permanent population of 66 Traveller families, who are accommodated as follows;

Table 24 Accommodation for Traveller Families

Accommodation Type	No of Families accommodated
4 Permanent Halting Sites	39
Standard Housing	17
2 Temporary Unauthorised Sites	10

Source: Kildare County Council Traveller Accommodation Programme

As at 30th November 2001, there were 5 Traveller families living on the roadside in the county.

Over the period of the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2000-2004, 87 units will be provided in rural and standard housing (25 units), group housing (35) and in residential caravan places in Kildare Town, Newbridge, Leixlip, Maynooth and Naas (27 places). In addition three transient residential parks will be provided in the north, mid and south of the county.

A Co-ordinated Interagency Response to Travellers was established in 1998 to co-ordinate provision of services to travellers. The Committee is composed of representatives from Kildare Local Authorities, the Eastern Health Board, Garda Síochána, Department of Education and County Kildare VEC and has to date, facilitated the establishment of learning programmes and traveller groups.

A number of voluntary sector initiatives also provide specific support to traveller families in the county, namely; Athy Travellers Project, Naas Equality for Travellers and Maynooth Travellers Education Project. These organisations provide valuable education and training, social, lifeskills and civil rights support to the travelling community.

Refugees & Asylum Seekers

A further group requiring services to promote their inclusion into society is Refugees and Asylum Seekers. According to the South Western Area Health Board, Kildare currently has a population of XX Refugees and Asylum Seekers, of whom XX live in rented accommodation and 179 live in Magee Barracks in receipt of Direct Provision. A variety of services are being developed to support the Refugees and Asylum Seeker population in the County namely;

- Action South Kildare, Kildare Community Services and Kildare VEC Support Programme in Magee Barracks
- County Steering Group for Refugee & Asylum Seeker Needs
- South Western Area Health Board Services for Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Homeless People

Kildare County Council has responsibility for housing homeless people. In 2000, the County Council provided 56 hostel beds for homeless people and housed 5 families in Bed & Breakfasts. At present, the County Council has 14 families accommodated in B&Bs. There are three main hostels for homeless people in the county: Cuan Mhuire in Athy, St. Vincent dePaul in Newbridge and Youth for Peace in Athy. These centres receive grant assistance from the County Council, 90% of which is then recouped from the Department of the Environment and Local Government.

The South Western Area Health Board and a number of Voluntary Organisations (e.g. St. Vincent dePaul) also provide community-based residential accommodation and services to the homeless. A Homeless Forum is due to be established in the county, under the auspices of the Housing & Social Inclusion Strategic Policy Committee of the County Council. This Forum will consist of members of the County Council, the Health Board and Voluntary Bodies.

People with Disabilities

There are currently 5,174 people in receipt of disability or invalidity payments in the County. People with disabilities are a target group for the local development agencies in the county to ensure that this group have equal access to facilities and services. A number of networks exist including Kildare Network of People with Disabilities and Kildare Coalition of Supported Employment, who represent people with disabilities on various policy groups and steering committees (e.g. Kildare Local Sports Partnership, Kildare County Council Transportation SPC on behalf of the Community & Voluntary Forum).

One Parent Families

Although below the national average, Kildare also has a significant number of one-parent families who often find themselves prevented from entering the labour force because of lack of adequate childcare, and therefore must rely on child benefit and other payments for income. According to the ADM National Childcare Census Report 2000, 10.7% of households (the national average was 11.2%) were one-parent families in 1996, a total of 4,314 families. 84% of one parent families in the county were categorised as lone mothers with children. **(Map 50)**

Childcare

In terms of childcare provision, there is a concentration of facilities in the north east and around Naas and Newbridge, where the greatest concentration of young people are. Areas to the south and northwest are very poorly served. These poorly served areas are also those with poor transport and access to main centres where childcare is provided. 143 childcare facilities exist in the county providing care to 2,028 children and providing employment to 146 full time and 142 part-time workers. The recently established County Childcare Committee, which brings together parents, service providers, statutory agencies and the community sector aims to ensure that there is adequate provision of childcare in the county to allow all parents full participation in social, economic and cultural activities.

Barriers to Social Inclusion

Despite the efforts of statutory, local development and community sector organisations over the past decade a number of barriers to inclusion continue to exist within the county. The most important of these are;

- ❑ Inadequate provision of childcare
- ❑ Lack of transport
- ❑ Persistent unemployment
- ❑ Lack of affordable housing
- ❑ Access to education
- ❑ Accessibility of services and physical access

Countering Social Exclusion

At present a number of initiatives are in operation to counter the barriers listed above including; childcare programmes operated by ASK and OAK; the recently formed County Childcare Committee whose remit is to co-ordinate the provision of childcare services; Action South Kildare's Rural Transport Initiative which aims to provide linking bus services on a north-south basis in the county; the County Housing Strategy which makes provision for increasing the stock of affordable housing available; Community & Adult Education services provided by County Kildare VEC; and the Disability Proofing requirements with regard to public services and programmes.

Community & Local Development Activities

Since 1996 the OAK Partnership and Action South Kildare have run programmes to promote social inclusion targeted at a number of specific groups including long term unemployed people, women, travellers, older people, refugees and asylum seekers and ex-prisoners. These agencies have spent in excess of £3.5 million on these programmes and have provided services to almost all areas of the county, apart from the north-east. These organisations have recently begun a new cycle of programmes under the current National Development Programme period to run until 2006. A number of local voluntary and community based organisations also operate in the county to represent the needs of excluded groups for example;

- ❑ Kildare Community & Voluntary Forum
- ❑ Athy Community Development Programme
- ❑ St. Vincent de Paul
- ❑ Kildare Network of People with Disabilities

Public Sector Led Initiatives

The recently formed Social Inclusion Measures Working Group of the County Development Board will play a major role in countering social exclusion in the county in the future. The SIM Working Group is composed of the main statutory providers who run programmes for social inclusion and the local development agencies. The aim of the Working Group is to co-ordinate current and future programmes, and the spending of monies, for social inclusion and also to promote co-operation between the main agencies in the delivery of programmes. In achieving these aims, it is hoped that services are delivered in a more appropriate and better quality way and that groups who currently fall through the net are catered for in a way more appropriate to their needs.

HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

Introduction

The Health and Social Services provided in the county are set out in this section. The extent of the Health, Crime & Safety, Social Welfare, Emergency and Education Services available to the public are detailed.

Sources for the Health and Social Services section are;

- ❑ Census of Population 1996
- ❑ CSO Vital Statistics 1996 & Third Quarter 2000
- ❑ Department of Health & Children
- ❑ Eastern Regional Health Authority Annual Report 2000
- ❑ South Western Area Health Board
- ❑ Kildare Fire Service
- ❑ Chief Superintendent's Office, Kildare Division, Garda Siochana
- ❑ Department of Education and Science
- ❑ Public Health Information System

The Health of the Population

Births & Deaths

The birth rate for the county is increasing over time and is the highest of all the counties. In 1996 the ratio of births per 1,000 people was 16.39. By 1999 it had increased to 18.8 with a further increase to 19.8 in 2000 resulting in 2,788 births. The national average for 1996 and the third quarter of 2000 were 14 and 14.8 respectively. These findings are unsurprising given the young profile of the population in the county.

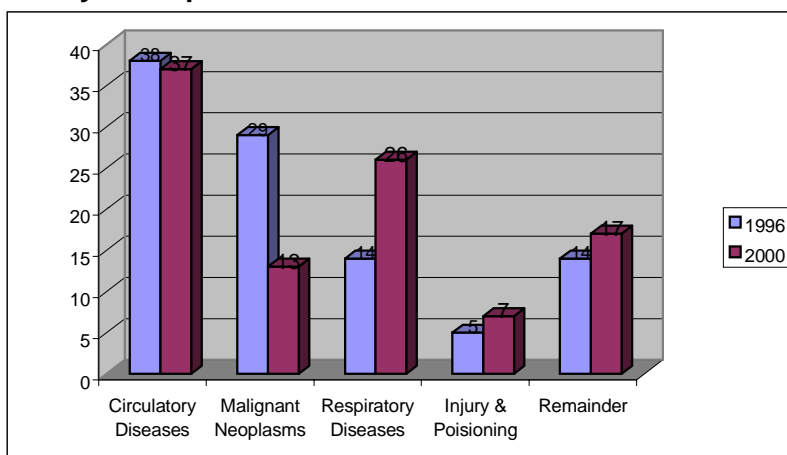
Annual data on infant mortality rates need to be treated with caution as they are calculated from very small numbers. The main finding from the annual reports on Vital Statistics compiled by the CSO is that the rates for Kildare have been consistently below the national average.

Deaths in the county occurred at the ratio of 6.4 per 1,000 persons up to the third quarter of 2000, remaining practically static from the 1996 ratio of 6.42 deaths per 1,000 persons. These figures compare favourably to the national averages for the period of 8.75 for 1996 and 7.2 for the period up to the third quarter of 2000.

Causes of Death

According to the Vital Statistics Reports causes of death can be classified into 5 main groups. The chart below shows the main causes of death for the years 1996 and 2000.

Chart 6 Death by Principal Cause 1996 and 2000



Health Administration

Kildare forms part of the Eastern Regional Health Authority Area which covers the South West, Mid East and Dublin Health Board Areas. For administrative purposes Kildare forms part of the South Western Area Health Board Area.

Hospital Services

There are two hospitals in County Kildare - Naas General Hospital and St. Vincents Hospital, Athy. It is common practice for people living in certain areas to use hospitals located in neighbouring counties for example, Blanchardstown Hospital and Tallaght Hospital. **(map 73: health services)**

Naas General Hospital has 138 beds and provides the full range of services including Acute Care, Out-Patient, Accident & Emergency and Physiotherapy. The annual report of SWAHB states that in 2000 the hospital had 6,239 admissions with 59,415 bed days an increase of 12% on the 1998 figure for admissions of 5,558 patients.

St. Vincents Hospital, Athy offers Geriatric, X-Ray, Physiotherapy and other basic services.

Community Health

The South Western Area Health Board (SWAHB) also provide a number of community hospitals, day centres and dental clinics in various locations in the county. The county's 18 Health Centres and 2 Dental Clinics are located in;

Table 25 Location of Health Centres & Dental Clinics in Kildare

Location	Electoral Area
Athy Ballitore Castledermot	Athy
Celbridge	Celbridge
Clane Coill Dubh Derrinturn Johnstown Kilmeague	Clane
Newbridge Kildare Town Monasterevin Rathangan (Health Centre & Dental Clinic)	Kildare
Maynooth	Leixlip
Ballymore Eustace Kill Kilcullen Naas Dental Centre	Naas

Source: *Kildare Audit of Services, 2001*

Specialist Care

Day Care Centres

Day Care Centres which provide services for Older People are located in Newbridge, Maynooth, Kildare, Naas and Athy, and provision elsewhere is provided by voluntary organisations.

Mental Health Facilities

Psychiatric Services are also provided by the SWAHB and operate from a number of centres throughout the county. These centres vary from hostels to clinics and are located in Athy, Castledermot, Celbridge, Kilcock, Kildare Town, Newbridge, Maynooth and Naas.

People with Learning Disabilities

KARE is a voluntary organisation which provides education, training and health services for people with learning disabilities. KARE has an extensive network of facilities in Kildare including residential facilities, childrens' services, adult services and support services. KARE facilities are located as follows;

Table 26 Location of KARE Services

Service	Location
Adult Services	Athy Clane Newbridge Kildare Town Naas
Children's Services	Athy Newbridge The Curragh
Community Residences	Athy Newbridge Kildare Town Brownstown Naas
Support Services	Newbridge Kildare Town Kilcullen

Source: Kildare Audit of Services, 2001

The SWAHB also run specific health programmes for Travellers, Homeless People, Drug Addicts, people with HIV/AIDS, Young Mothers and Children and Families at risk.

Suicide

Suicide figures for the county have been received from the National Suicide Research Foundation and show the following trends;

Table 27 Number of Suicides in Kildare

Year	Male	Female	Total
1990	11	0	11
1995	14	1	15
2000	9	4	13

Source: National Suicide Research Foundation

Social Welfare Services

For the purposes of Social Welfare services, Kildare forms part of the Dublin West Region with head offices in Tallaght. Within Kildare there are three local offices in Naas, Maynooth, and Athy. An information service is provided once a week in the Social Welfare Investigators office in Naas.

Crime & Safety

Kildare is part of two Garda Districts. The majority of the county lies in the eastern region Garda District, while the area around Celbridge and Leixlip forms part of the Dublin Garda District. At present there are 228 Gardai (including Sergeants, Inspectors etc.) serving in Kildare, from 14 Stations located throughout the county. This gives a ratio of 1 Garda to every 640 Civilians in the county. **(Map 60)**

The table below provides the crime statistics for the county for the year 2000. The overall number of indictable crimes in the county in 1999 was 2,566 which dropped to 2,444 in 2000 showing an overall decrease of almost 5% in the rate of crime in Kildare.

Table 28 Crime Statistics for County Kildare

Type of Offence	Number of Incidents*
Traffic Accidents Reported	1142
Drunken Driving Arrests	366
Public Order Offences	965
Parking Offences	1,488
Speeding Offences	5,562
Speeding Offences (Court Prosecutions)	760
Other Road Traffic Prosecutions	5,177
Underage Drinking	38
Domestic Violence (breach of barring order)	48
Assaults	256
Drug Seizures	572

Source: Chief Superintendent's Office, Kildare Division

* These figures are for the entire county including those parts of Kildare which fall into other Garda Districts

In terms of initiatives to prevent crime there were 49 Community Alert Groups and 133 Neighbourhood Watch Groups in operation during 2000.

The Gardai in Kildare also police a number of major events which are not experienced in other counties for example the Punchestown Racing Festival and the Derby Festival, each of which have up to 90,000 people in attendance.

Emergency Services

Ambulance Services

The Eastern Health Board operates the Ambulance Service with a fleet of 50 Ambulances and 142 other vehicles including minibuses, cars, mobile clinics etc. for the region of Kildare, Wicklow and Dublin.

Fire Service

The Fire Service in Kildare is administered by Kildare County Council. There are 6 fire Stations located in Maynooth, Leixlip, Naas, Newbridge, Athy and Monasterevin with a complement of 60 Fire Fighters. Emergency calls for fire services are routed through the call centre at Newbridge. Edenderry Fire Station also provides services to northwest Kildare.

For further information on the location of social services see Kildare Audit of Service Provision, Kildare County Development Board, 2001. The Audit contains information on over 50 service providers and details their services and contact points.

EDUCATION

Introduction

The central role of education in social and economic transformation is widely acknowledged, indeed the fruits of long-term investment in education are to be seen in the unprecedented level of economic expansion and social change that has occurred in Ireland since the early 1990s. The education system in Kildare has undoubtedly contributed to the strong economic position of the county. This section examines the education system in terms of facilities, completion, third level participation and adult and community education. It draws on the following sources;

- ❑ County Kildare Vocational Education Committee
- ❑ NUI Maynooth
- ❑ Department of Education and Science
- ❑ Kildare Youth Conference & Survey

Education Centres & Facilities

There are in total 155 educational centres in Kildare including;

- ❑ 93 primary schools
- ❑ 27 second level schools
- ❑ 32 VEC Centres
- ❑ one University campus that includes NUI Maynooth and St. Patricks College
- ❑ 4 Schools with Special Needs (**map 43: location of schools**)

The second level schools in the county have 19,294 pupils and 675 teachers. 186 students attend the four schools for people with special needs.

Education and training programmes are provided by the institutions listed above and also by a number of voluntary and informal education providers, local development agencies and statutory agencies.

Educational Attainment

Table 22 earlier showed the levels of educational attainment achieved by people over 15 in the county in 1996. Kildare has a higher rate of people completing school at upper secondary than either Meath, Wicklow or Dublin, indicating that a higher than average percentage of people in the county remain in school to leaving certificate level. A higher than average percentage of people (11%) in the county also have a third level qualification. These findings demonstrate that Kildare has a well educated population served by a high quality formal and non-formal education service.

Third Level Participation

Kildare has the advantage of having a university located within the county. NUI Maynooth provides a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate level programmes in the Humanities, Science (including Computer Science) and Engineering. Furthermore, the Institutes of Technology in Carlow and Tallaght are within easy reach of the south and northeast of the county respectively, while the Dublin based universities and the DIT also offer a wide range of programmes.

With this level of accessibility, it is interesting to note the educational attainment map which shows that the majority of people living in the northwest, west and south of the county completed their education at lower secondary or less in 1996. This would indicate that although third level facilities are located in or near the county, the majority of people do not go on to third level education.

However, in a recent survey²¹, almost 75% of young people, from all around the county, aged 15-18 years surveyed expressed an intention to continue into third level education indicating a possible change in the trend for low third level attainment.

Adult & Community Education

Adult Education is offered, predominantly, by County Kildare VEC. In 1999, over 5,000 adults participated in VEC courses. Adult Literacy Schemes, Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme, Night Classes and YouthReach facilities are all offered by the VEC at a number of locations in the county.

NUI Maynooth also provides Adult & Community Education offering certified courses in social studies, local history, community education and rural development etc.

Local Development Agencies in the county, namely; OAK Partnership, Action South Kildare, KELT and the County Enterprise Board have been to the fore in offering community education over the past decade. Courses offered range from Childcare to Start Your Own Business, to IT Training and Personal Development.

Aside from community education, local development agencies also provide services for early school leavers and after schools services.

²¹ *Kildare Youth Survey, Kildare County Development Board, February 2001*

ARTS, CULTURE & RECREATION IN COUNTY KILDARE

Introduction

The County of Kildare has a unique identity and culture built around a number of central elements. This identity and the artistic, social, cultural and recreational infrastructure necessary to develop cultural activities are set out in this section.

The sources for the information provided here are;

- Cultural Focus Group, Kildare County Development Board
- County Arts Office
- County Library Service
- Kildare Local Sports Partnership
- Leisure Services Department, Kildare County Council

Elements of Kildare's Unique Identity

The unique elements of Kildare culture, combined with the history of the County, have created a county-identity which consists of tremendous loyalty, pride of place and attachment to community, a practical, enterprising culture, an openness to 'outsiders' and a sense of being a melting-pot of cultures. **(map 58: arts and culture)**

The elements contributing to Kildare's identity can be summarised as;

St. Brigid: The county's association with this icon of Christianity brings a pride of association and identifies Kildare throughout the world. St. Brigid also brings a celtic theme to county identity particularly with St. Brigid's Cross.

The Thoroughbred County: Kildare is renowned world-wide for the quality of its bloodstock and racing industry and it is also well-known that the Thoroughbred Brand is now being used as a symbol and image with which to promote the county.

Boglands and Plains: The natural environment of the county, the boglands in west Kildare and the central plains of the Curragh, have had a grounding effect in the Kildare mindset

Curragh Camp & the Army: For hundreds of years the county has played a central role in the military history of Ireland.

The Pale: Kildare's location at the 'Edge of the Pale' has given a certain worldview to people within the county looking both towards Dublin but also outwards towards the rest of Ireland. Kildare has been the buffer between rural Ireland and its capital city.

Historically, Kildare has always been a place that took people in. Over hundreds of years armies travelled through Ireland and camped in the Curragh, the Land Commission relocated many communities to the county and to this day Kildare continues to house the overspill from Dublin. (move to next page on CD)

The sense of community is also identified through local activity (e.g. GAA, Local Stables, Local Resources) which has always been prolific. A strong attachment to community has resulted in a strong tradition of community development activity.

Culture and Heritage

There are over 1,100 protected structures of significance spread widely throughout the county. These structures are protected by Duchas, the Heritage Agency, the OPW and the Conservation Office in Kildare County Council.

The most notable of the protected sites are;

- Moone High Cross
- The Moat of Ardsull
- Castletown House
- Kildare Cathedral

Arts & Cultural Infrastructure

Library Service

A network of 16 full and part-time libraries are dotted throughout the county and a mobile library ensures that the most remote areas have access to library services. In 2000 Kildare libraries issued a total of 371,851 books to 15,779 members, an average of 24 books per member per year.

In addition to book lending, the Library Service offers a range of other services including assistance to people with literacy difficulties, IT and Internet access in every library, provision of musical instruments to schools and education services for traveller children in Maynooth library.

County Arts Office

The County Arts Office is operated as part of the integrated library and arts service of Kildare County Council. The County Arts Officer works with local artists, community groups and schools in promoting the development of the arts and arts-based activities in the county. Grants are also provided by the County Arts Office for Festivals and Arts/Cultural activities.

Arts & Cultural Centres

Kildare County Council has been to the forefront in pursuing an integrated library/arts strategy for a number of years and the new Riverbank facility at Newbridge comprising a County Library Headquarters/Arts Centre is designed to further strengthen this approach. This Centre opened in September 2001 and provides a gallery, performance space and the county library. It is the first facility of its type in the county.

The location of the 11 arts and cultural centres in Kildare are shown on the accompanying map. The majority of these centres are clustered around the centre and northeast of the county with few centres in rural areas. Apart from one venue in Athy the south of the county has very little facilities. Similarly, the northwest has no facilities apart from access to the venues in Robertstown and Kilcock.

Arts groups are also shown on the map. These have been categorised into different group types, namely; literature groups of which there are 6, music groups (9), performing arts/dance (2), theatre/drama (16) and visual arts (5).

Festivals and Events

Best known for horseracing festivals there are, in fact, 22 festivals of varying size and scale are held in the county throughout the year, the majority of which take place in the Newbridge-Curragh-Naas area. The most notable of these festivals are the;

- ❑ Punchestown Festival
- ❑ Irish Derby Weekend
- ❑ Feile Bhríde
- ❑ Leixlip Festival
- ❑ Gerard Manley Hopkins Summer School

Amenity and Sporting Facilities

Kildare Local Authorities manage a number of public sporting facilities and amenity areas in the county. These are;

- ❑ Naas Swimming Pool - soon to be refurbished
- ❑ Athy Swimming Pool - soon to be refurbished
- ❑ Naas Sports Centre
- ❑ Newbridge Sports Centre
- ❑ 22 Green Areas/Open Spaces in the areas around Newbridge, Leixlip, Celbridge, Kilcock, Naas, Kilcullen, Monasterevin and Athy.

There are currently over 140 sporting organisations listed on Kildare County Council's database of sports groups and in excess of 80 sport and/or community facilities. At present an Audit of Facilities is being carried out by Kildare County Council to assess the suitability of these venues for sports and community use.

Within the county there are also 135 acres of amenity land, comprising playing pitches, open spaces and other sports/recreational amenities as well as 20 golf courses.

Local Sports Partnership

Kildare was recently awarded one of 8 Local Sports Partnerships by the Irish Sports Council. The LSP brings together various organisations and bodies interested in the development and promotion of sporting activities in the county. A Sports Development Officer will be employed to develop participation, social inclusion, facilities and the involvement of young people in competitive and community-based sports activity.

Cinemas

There are two cinemas in the county, located in Naas and Newbridge.

Religious/Spiritual Facilities

The county has long-standing connections with a number of different religious denominations. The most significant of these connections with the Catholic Church, specifically the location at Maynooth of St. Patrick's Seminary and the Pontifical University of Ireland. The Irish College of Bishops also meet at Maynooth every year. Further south in the county, the village of Ballitore was home to a Quaker community until recent times, and the Quaker Meeting House in the village has recently been

reopened as a local library and heritage centre celebrating the area's Quaker tradition. Kildare is well served by churches and other religious facilities. A number of different denominations are active within the county with three Baptist Churches in Athy, Brannockstown and Leixlip and 11 Church of Ireland and 50 Catholic Churches spread evenly throughout the county. Elsewhere in the county a Jehovah's Witness community is located in Athy and one Bible Fellowship Church is located in Newbridge.

Irish Language

The level of knowledge of Irish appears to be quite high in the county with at least 20% of the population in each DED professing to be able to speak the language and higher concentrations in areas around Leixlip, Celbridge and Maynooth, where up to 56% of people can speak Irish. **(map 59: % population able to speak Irish)**

LOCAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

A county with a strong tradition of community development and a long list of community activities, civic involvement has made a significant contribution in making Kildare a vibrant county replete with dynamic urban and rural communities. This final section looks at political representation and participation, community and local development in the county.

Sources include;

- Register of Electors
- Community & Enterprise Department, Kildare County Council
- Kildare Community & Voluntary Forum
- Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs

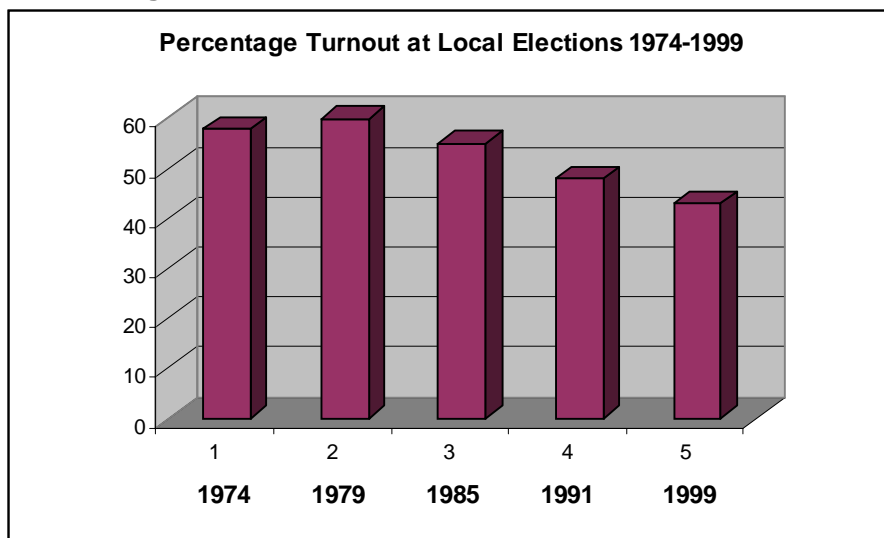
Political Representation

For the purposes of political elections Kildare is divided into 6 Electoral Areas each of which elects Members to the County Council. The Electoral Areas are Athy (which elects 3 Members to the County Council), Clane (4 Members), Celbridge (3 Members), Kildare (6 Members), Leixlip (4 Members) and Naas (5 Members). The Elected Members from each Area also form the Area Committee to discuss issues specific to the Electoral Area. Athy, Naas, Newbridge and Leixlip are designated Urban Authorities. These areas have separate local elections to elect the Town Councils.

Kildare is currently divided into two Dail Constituencies - North Kildare and South Kildare from each of which 3 TDs are elected. The county is thus served by 6 TDs and 2 Senators (one of whom was appointed by the list system) who represent the interests of the county at national level. The 89 DEDs in the county are used for the purposes of counting votes at local and national elections.

The turn out at local elections over the past series of elections has been steadily decreasing as shown in the chart below. In the last local elections the turnout in Kildare was a full 6.5% below the national average.

Chart 7 Percentage Turnout at Local Elections 1974-1999



Source: Department of Environment & Local Government

Local Development Agencies

There are several agencies with responsibility for promoting local development in the county. These include in particular;

Kildare Local Authorities

Kildare County Council, Naas Urban District Council, Athy Urban District Council, Newbridge and Leixlip Town Commissions combined form Kildare Local Authorities. Since the reform of local government the role of local authorities in local and community development has expanded. While local authorities have a long track record in providing services such as grants to local groups for environmental works, Urban and Village Renewal and local economic development, the new and expanded role for local authorities includes engaging in partnership projects with communities outside of traditional environmental activities and encouraging their participation in democratic structures and policy committees. **(Map 61)**

Kildare County Enterprise Board

The County Enterprise Board was set up in 1993 and is responsible for assisting small and medium sized enterprises (with 1-10 workers) to start-up or expand their services and provide 'soft' supports such as training and mentoring for entrepreneurs. While Enterprise Ireland and the IDA support larger enterprises, the CEB fills the gap in services for the SME sector. Since their inception, the CEB has provided grant aid for capital, employment and feasibility studies. It has promoted entrepreneurship among young people through schools initiatives, promoted Kildare crafts through trade fairs and up skilled employers and other individuals through training programmes.

KELT

Responsible for implementing the EU LEADER II Programme between 1996 and 2000, KELT aimed to promote opportunities for rural development. Specific measures were established for groups to apply for funding. These measures included Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Training & Employment, Crafts, Heritage and the Environment. KELT has supported 136 businesses and, through its grant-aid, has created and sustained 343 jobs. Initiatives organised directly by KELT provided training supports for 946 people. For the period 2001-2006, KELT will be responsible for delivering a programme of rural IT and enterprise development.

Action South Kildare

ASK was formed in 1993 as a response to the issues of long term unemployment and social disadvantage in the South Kildare area. ASK is an ADM funded Community Group which brings together the efforts and resources of state bodies, the local authority, voluntary agencies, local communities and entrepreneurs for the benefit of the South Kildare Area. Over the past eight years ASK have provided support in the areas of Enterprise, Community Development, Infrastructure, Education and Training. ASK have recently been awarded funding for the period 2000-2006 to target specific groups and areas for example Refugees and Asylum Seekers, ex-Prisoners, Enterprise, Childcare and Infrastructure.

OAK Partnership

Similarly to ASK, the OAK Partnership delivers programmes to ensure that excluded groups can engage fully in society. The OAK Partnership is an ADM funded Partnership Company covering North West Kildare and North East Offaly. OAK has been in existence since 1995 and during that period has delivered successful programmes around childcare, services to the unemployed, community development and education. The OAK Partnership has recently been awarded funding to implement its action plan for 2000-2006.

Each of these, with the exception of the Local Authority, which is governed by the Elected Council, has a board of directors with representatives drawn from the State Agencies, the social partners, voluntary/community sector and local councillors. Each agency has its own Action Plan to guide the implementation of measures prescribed by the parent government departments.

Community & Voluntary Groups

The work of these partnership-based agencies is supplemented by a very considerable amount of activity undertaken by many voluntary community organisations throughout the county. The accompanying map shows the widespread locations of 900 groups listed on Kildare County Council's database of community organisations, although there are still a number of rural DEDs where there appear to be very few community based groups. The database was compiled in 1999 and therefore is unlikely to capture all the groups that currently exist. However, it gives a general overview of the widespread nature of community activity in the county. **(map 70: community groups)**

These groups range in size and scope from locally-based residents associations to service providers such as the Irish Wheelchair Association and area-based groups targeting specifically disadvantaged areas such as Athy CDP, the only such group funded by the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs in the county.

The recently formed Kildare Community and Voluntary Forum, as a county-wide network of community and voluntary groups, aims to enable networking between these groups and to act as a representative body for groups in the county ensuring that their views are taken on board in structures determining policy for the future of the county (e.g. Strategic Policy Committees of Kildare County Council, Kildare County Development Board and the County Childcare Committee²²).

Further information on the range and scope of the activities of community groups in the county is available in the Kildare Community Audit undertaken jointly by Kildare County Development Board and Kildare Community & Voluntary Forum.

²² *The Strategic Policy Committees are partnership groups set up to propose policy for the County Council. They involve Elected Members and representatives of sectoral interest groups. The County Childcare Committee is a partnership group which aims to co-ordinate and improve the provision of childcare in the county.*

TPOLOGY OF RURAL AREAS IN COUNTY KILDARE

A rural typology map has been prepared for all of Ireland as part of the research undertaken by NUI Maynooth and Fitzpatrick Associates for the National Spatial Strategy. The map is intended as a summary of the different types of rural areas in Ireland at the beginning of the twenty first century. It is based on 30 statistical indicators measured from the Censuses of Population and Agriculture for the each of the 2,716 rural district electoral divisions (DEDs) in the state. It provides a summary synthetic profile for all parts of the county while also establishing the position of the county relative to the rest of rural Ireland. **(map 62: Kildare Rural Typology)**

These 30 indicators were then examined in terms of their relationship to one another. From this 8 new composite indicators were produced which were then used to classify each of the DEDs into the 'area type' to which it is most similar.

The Indicators

The analysis was based on indicators selected to measure the following aspects of the rural socio-economic structure:

1. Demographic structure (6 indicators) [e.g. youth dependency, population change etc.]
2. Labour force characteristics (8 indicators) [e.g. unemployment, participation rates]
3. Education and social classes (3* indicators)
4. Sectoral employment profiles (5 indicators)
5. Structure /strength of agriculture (3 indicators)
6. Changes in demography and labour force (5 indicators)

*Only three indicators were selected to measure the education levels and distribution by social classes as these indicators are strongly correlated with some of the other indicators.

The typology map

The typology map shows the distribution of six types of rural areas and also the urban areas that were excluded from the analysis. The areas have been given the following summary labels.

1. Peri-urban areas
2. Very strong rural areas
3. Strong agricultural areas undergoing adjustment
4. Structurally weak rural areas
5. Marginal areas
6. Highly diversified rural areas

In short, the 6 different areas each represent an area undergoing different levels of change from an agricultural or rural nature to an urban or amenity area. The distribution of population by area type (including Urban areas) for Kildare and adjoining counties is shown in Table 29.

Table 29 Percentage distribution of population by area type, 1996

Area Type	Meath	Kildare	Wicklow	Dublin Fingal	Ireland
<i>Urban</i>	46.2	65.7	64.8	93.2	60.7
Peri-urban	20.1	11.7	10.6	2.5	22.2
Very strong rural	29.4	20.2	12.9	4.0	10.4
Strong agricultural	0.8	0.8	3.9	0.0	16.2
Structurally weak	3.2	0.1	0.7	0.0	6.3
Marginal	0.0	0.4	0.4	0.0	3.0
Highly diversified	0.3	1.0	6.7	0.3	2.5

A brief description of each area type follows.

1. Peri-urban areas

These areas are generally characterised by high population densities, an advanced level of transition to a higher socio-economic profile (higher proportions with advanced levels of education, larger shares of the workforce in professional services and commerce functions) and low reliance on agricultural employment and high levels of commuting to work. Generally found in close proximity to urban centres and are particularly evident around the larger towns and the cities. In County Kildare these areas, which account for almost 12 per cent of the population are located in the hinterlands of the expanding urbanising areas of Maynooth, Celbridge, Clane and Naas and in the hinterland of Kildare town.

2. Very strong rural areas

These areas are very prominent throughout the rural parts of the mid-east and much of the southeast of the county. As well as possessing a strong agricultural base DEDs that constitute this cluster also exhibit an above average level of transition to non-agricultural employment. The rate of population increase in this area type is higher than in the peri-urban areas and is reflected in a more youthful population. The rate of increase in the number of persons at work is significantly larger than in the peri-urban areas (15.5% compared to 12.7%). This suggests that some parts of this area type are experiencing the demographic and labour force effects associated with the increase in long distance commuting. In Kildare this area type which accounts for 20 per cent of the population distribution is strongly represented in the western and southern parts of the county.

3. Strong agricultural areas undergoing adjustment

The type of rural area is represented by DEDs that are mostly concentrated in the south of the county and contain one-sixth of the population. Agriculture in these areas is strong due to a combination of larger farms with an orientation towards either dairying or tillage. Full-time rather than part-time farming is more the norm. Female participation rates are below average and throughout all of these areas across the state the rate of employment growth between 1991-96 was exceptionally low. Following the introduction of restrictions on agricultural output as part of the CAP reforms in the 1990s the opportunities for further expansion have become severely restricted. Such areas are present in only two parts of County Kildare, DEDs east and west of Athy, comprising only 0.8 per cent of the population.

4 & 5 Weak rural areas

These two area types represent the rural DEDs that are economically and demographically most disadvantaged. The defining attributes are a strong reliance on a very weak farm structure (elderly farmers on small farms producing very low levels of output, high level of decline in number of farmers, though they still account for the largest share of the workforce), low levels of employment in manufacturing or services and a below average level of self-employment outside agriculture, and the lowest level of females in part-time employment. These economic attributes have contributed to the emergence of a very weak demographic profile based on an ageing population with relatively fewer households with young children. These area types account for only 0.5 percent of the population in Kildare but are much more prevalent in other parts of the country. They are mostly found in the west of the county in the peatland areas.

6 Highly diversified rural areas

This area type is represented by only a few DEDs, accounting for only one percent of the total population. These include Pollardstown, as well as three DEDs in the southern part of the county adjacent to the N9. Elsewhere in the country this type of area is mostly associated with scenic and high amenity landscapes that attract large numbers of tourists and support a distinctive socio-economic profile. This type of area has emerged as having higher levels of self-employment outside agriculture (22.4% of the workforce) and higher levels of part-time work especially for women, though the share of employment in manufacturing is very small (only 11% of the workforce in contrast to approximately 20% in most other areas). The demographic structure is typical of areas experiencing some net in-migration of persons aged over 25.

FURTHER INFORMATION SOURCES

Apart from the many sources listed in each section of this document, the following information sources may be of value for further research;

1. Probation and Welfare Service Report (Gov. Pubs.) – probation orders made by district court categorised by age and sex of offender
2. Promoting Employment – Annual Report (Dept. of Enterprise & Employment) – qualitative information relating to laws enacted and directives adopted. Contains a list of Enterprise programmes on going
3. The Economic Status of School Leavers 1992-1994 (Dept. of Enterprise and Employment in conjunction with the ESRI) – survey of school leavers one year after completion of secondary school, destination, occupation, etc.
4. Report, Accounts and Student Statistics (HEA) – student numbers & retrospective data, full time students, full time undergrads, postgrads, part time students, part time undergrads, postgrads, degrees, diplomas, certifications obtained, all by field of study and college
5. First Destination of Award Recipients in Higher Education (HEA) – report on the initial destination, employment further education and training patterns of certificants, diplomates and graduates
6. Working Against Poverty (Dept. of Social Welfare) – poverty and wealth, unemployment and education, women and poverty, concentrations of poverty
7. Poverty Today and CPA Annual Report (Combat Poverty Agency) – various qualitative information and data sets
8. FÁS Annual Report and Financial Statements (FÁS) – qualitative data on the services provided to job seekers, communities and businesses
9. Health Statistics (Dept. of Health) – Statistical information: population & vital statistics, community protection programmes, community health services, community welfare
10. Regions in Ireland – A Statistical Profile (Regional Studies Association & J. Walsh) – tables on: demographic statistics, labour force, agriculture, industries, services, education and training, household income, heritage and environment
11. Census of Population: 1991, 1996 – details information on population, economics and industry, vital statistics
12. Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC)

13. Analysis of the Economic, Employment and Social Profile of the Greater Dublin Area: Mongenroth, ESRI, 2001
14. Services Industry Research Centre (SIRC)
15. Services Census (CSO) – qualitative data on persons engaged in retailing, turnover, purchases of goods for resale, total wages/salaries
16. Irish Shopping Centres: A Statistical Profile (Centre for Retail Studies, UCD)
17. Chambers of Commerce - periodic studies and information
18. Irish Economy and Agricultural Statistic Compendium (Dept. of Agriculture) – data on the national economy and the agricultural economy
19. Pathways to Progress – a Five Year Programme for Forest Research and Development 1994-1999 (National Council for Forest Research and Development) – species distribution in private afforestation on a county basis
20. State of the Environment in Ireland (EPA) – pressures on environment, quality of water etc., pollution, management, control and economic aspects
21. National Canals and Waterways (Brady, Shipman, Martin & OPW) – Examines and assesses those parts of the once navigable waterways system that are now in operation, in the context of an overall vision of the waterways in the country
22. Visitor Attractions Survey Republic of Ireland (Tourism Development International Limited) – statistical data on visitor number etc.