

The Future of Rural Areas?

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Presentation Outline

- Ireland's 'Rural Areas'
- Rural Population Trends
- Population Distribution in Rural Areas
- Demographic Structure of the Rural Population
- Economic Trends
 - Primary Sector
 - Broader Rural Economy
- The Future of Rural Areas

Ireland's Rural Areas Official Designation



- Urban Districts / Rural Areas
- 9.98% increase in UD
- 22.5% increase in RA



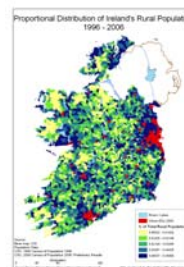
Ireland's Rural Areas Statistical Definition



Rural Population Trends

	No. of EDs	Area - Km ²	Urban Population	% Total Population	Rural Population	% Total Population
Urban Area 1996	620	1891	1,984,079	55%	1,642,008	45%
Urban Area 2006	644	2971	2,452,369	58%	1,782,556	42%
1996 - 2006 Change	7%	57% (4% Total)	24%	-----	9%	-----

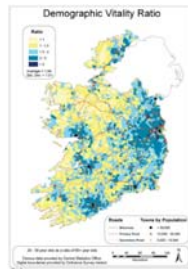
Ireland's Rural Population



- Settlement patterns reflect the restructuring of the economy and absence of a coherent spatial strategy in relation to economic and residential housing development.

Demographic Structure

- Rural areas accessible to larger urban centers maintain high demographic viability
- Remote / inaccessible areas experiencing no growth or declining population

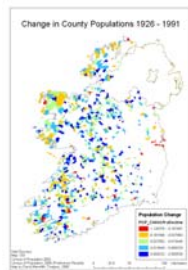


Population Decline

- Urban decline
 - 72% of total
 - Household Size
 - 'Empty Nest'
- Five counties with largest rural populations account for 42% of rural population decline



Population Decline



Economic Trends

- Concentration of employment opportunities
- Decline of traditional rural industry sectors (food / manufacturing / rural tourism)
- High dependence on the construction sector
- Dependence on accessing urban based employment



Spatial Typology of the Rural Economy

- 'New' urban areas
- Expanding peri-urban areas with improving infrastructure links with major urban centers.
- Rural areas dependent on the non-food economy (manufacturing / tourism / construction).
- Commercial farming areas (Southeast Region).
- Economically weak rural areas dependent on State transfers, public sector employment and heavily subsidised farming.

The Future of Rural Areas

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