

Kildare Census 2022 Profile Summary



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Introduction

Kildare County Council (KCC) through the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) worked with the All-Island Research Observatory at Maynooth University Social Science Institute (MUSI) to prepare a socio-economic profile on behalf of Kildare County Council. The profile's primary purpose is to provide an evidence-base to inform and assist in the development and monitoring of the County Kildare Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2024-2029. This profile can also be used, for a much broader set of functions, by Kildare County Council and by other organisations, individuals, and the private sector. It updates work carried out to inform the initial LECP 2014-2020, based on Census 2016.

This profile is presented in nine individual reports and while these themes are discrete, they also interconnect:

- Demographic
- Socio Economic
- Education
- Economic
- Transport and Commuting
- Housing
- Health and Disability
- Environment
- Agriculture.

These individual reports present a large volume of statistical and spatial data (in the form of graphs/charts and maps). The data has been derived from the most recently available sources, including the Census of Population (2022 and 2016), other Central Statistics Office (CSO) publications and public bodies.

The All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO) presents graphs and charts that visualise the most up-to-date data. They also present maps (at electoral division - ED) that illustrate micro-level trends. The graphs and maps are prefaced by a narrative and comments on the most relevant spatial patterns in the county. For each indicator, data is presented under the following spatial scales:

- State, Region (Regional Assembly and Strategic Planning Area),
- County,
- Municipal District,
- Urban/Rural (urban classed as settlements $\geq 1,500$ population),
- Key Kildare settlements as per the Kildare County Development Plan,
- Electoral Division (ED) level

This report provides a short synopsis of the key facts that emerged from the analysis of the data collated. However, for a more detailed analysis and visual charts/maps please review the detailed profile reports available on the LCDC webpage of Kildare County Council:

<https://kildarecoco.ie/AllServices/Community/KildareLCDC/LocalEconomicandCommunityPlan/>



Comhairle Contae Chill Dara
Kildare County Council

Demographics

Settlement population in 2022 and change since 2016



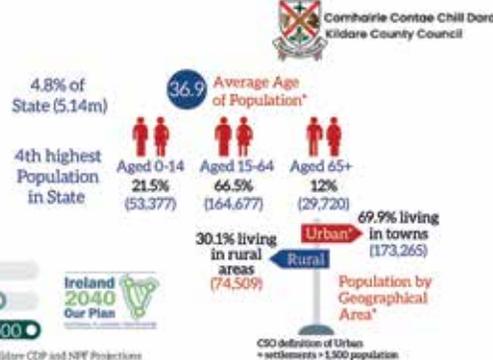
Kildare Population in 2022
247,774

+25,644 (+11.5%) from 2016
+37,462 (+17.8%) from 2011

+18,726 (+7%) 2022 to 2031



Population estimates for 2026 and 2031 based on Kildare CSO and NFP Projections



Our Community

Top 3 Nationalities other than Irish*



Persons Living Alone*



Good or Very Good Health*



Persons with a Disability*



Homes & Housing

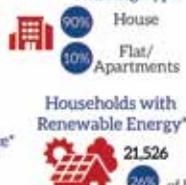
Housing Stock & Private Households*



Housing Tenure*



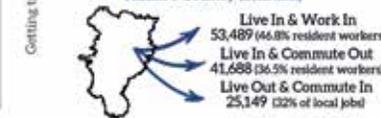
Housing Type*



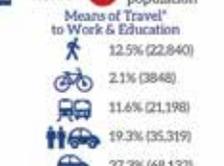
Sales & Rental Prices



Education



Working from Home* 13,816 (7.9% of the total population)



Economy, Jobs & Income

Economic Status - At Work & Unemployed*



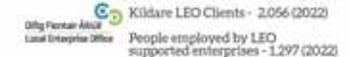
Top 3 Employment Sectors (2022 data)



Local Jobs (78,638) Jobs located within the County



Active Enterprises 15,372 (2021)



Infrastructure & Facilities



Remote Hubs and Connectivity



Water and Wastewater Facilities*



Demographic

1. Kildare continues to have a significant population base within the State.

County Kildare has a total population of 247,774 (Census 2022), making it the fifth most populated local authority area in the State. This represents 4.8% of the States population (5.1m). The population of Kildare in 2022 is just less than twice that of Waterford City and County (127k), three time that of Cavan (81k) and more than four times the population of neighbouring Carlow (62k).

Only Dublin City, Cork County, Fingal and South Dublin have higher populations. At the Municipal District (MD) level, the Kildare Newbridge MD (68,185) and Clane-Maynooth MD (66,159) are the most populated and each account for more than a quarter of the population of the county. The populations of these MDs are in line with the overall population of many counties.

2. Kildare continues to grow rapidly

Over the past thirty years the population of Kildare has doubled from 124,321 in 1991 to 247,774 (2016). This increase alone is comparable to the current population of Waterford City and County. During the six years 2016 to 2022, Kildare experienced population growth of 11.4%, an additional 25,270 persons (equivalent to the population of Newbridge). The county's population grew at a much higher rate than that of the state (+8.1%). Kildare experienced the fourth-highest level of population growth nationally. Neighbouring counties of Fingal (+11.6%) and Meath (+13.2%) grew at a slightly higher rate in the period since 2016. Longford recorded the highest growth rate of 14.4%.

The population growth in Kildare between 2016 and 2022 is evenly balanced between natural increase (birth minus death) and net in-migration with a respective ratio of 49.2 : 50.8. This relates to both a high birth rate and the availability of new housing developments over the last five years (i.e., large new housing developments in Kilcock, Maynooth, Naas etc.), making it attractive for people to move to the county. There are considerable variations within the county (2016-2022),the Naas MD experienced a growth rate of 17.1%, while the Celbridge-Leixlip MD grew by 4.9%.

3. Kildare has a young population

At 36.9 years, Kildare has the second youngest average age of all counties in Ireland. Only Fingal has a younger population. Two towns in Kildare are amongst the youngest ten towns in the State – Maynooth with an average age of 34 years and Kildare Town with an average age of 35 years. Kildare is home to more than 86,000 young people (under 25) and this is the 5th highest number across all local authorities in Ireland. Kildare has the 4th highest proportion of resident young people (0-24 years) in the State, nearly 35%. Within our younger population the largest increase is at the teenage (13-17 year) age group. The numbers and levels of children, young people and young families are key characteristics of Kildare. This results in high levels of demand for childcare, schools, recreational facilities and specialist supports to respond to the needs of children.

While Kildare is a young county, overall Census 2022 highlighted that people aged 65+ (29,720) comprise just over 12% of the county's resident population. This cohort has increased by over a third (+35% or +7,706) since 2016 and is the first large intercensal transition towards a much older population. This has implications for future service demands. Over the next twenty years, County Kildare's population is projected to increase by about 18.6 percent, but at the same time, it will age considerably, and the number of persons aged 65+ is projected to increase substantially – increasing from 28,010 in 2021 to 59,016 in 2040.

4. Kildare is becoming more urban but almost 75,000 people live in rural areas

In terms of its population distribution, Kildare is one of the most urban counties in the State. According to Census 2022, approximately 70% of the population in the county (173,000) reside in urban areas (towns \geq 1,500 population). According to the results from Census 2022, Kildare now has seven settlements with a population greater than 10,000 (eligible for URDF) and four settlements with a population between 5,000 and 10,000. The largest settlements in the county are: Naas (26,180), Newbridge (24,366), Celbridge (20,601), Maynooth (17,259), Leixlip (16,733), Athy (11,035), Kildare Town (10,302), Kilcock (8,674), Clane (8,152), Sallins (6,269) and Monasterevin (5,307). The remainder of Kildare is classified as rural with a total population of 74,509 (30%, 7th lowest rate). However, this is the 11th highest number of rural dwellers in the State. The total number of rural dwellers in Kildare is greater than the entirety of the population of counties such as Sligo or Roscommon.

Socio Economic

1. Almost 5,000 families (with children under 15) are headed by a lone parent - the 5th highest number in the State

While the proportion of families (with children under 15 years of age) headed by a lone parent (15.6%) is lower than the State (18.6%) and regional levels, Kildare has 5th highest number of Lone Parent families (with children under 15) in the State. The number of lone parents in Kildare is significant with a total of 4,482 residing in the county (the number has declined by -6.5% (-313) from 2016).

Within the county, values are generally higher in towns and villages. There are six settlements in the county in which the proportion of families headed by a lone parent exceeds 25% - Athy, Derrinturn, Allenwood, Ballymore-Eustace, Kilmeague and Robertstown.

2. Almost 18,000 children in Kildare are in childcare

On Census Night 2022, there were approximately 53,000 children aged under 15 in the Kildare. Of these children, a third (33.3% or 17,772) were in childcare. This is the second highest rate after Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown (37.3%). A crèche or a similar facility was the most common form of childcare (6,757 or 38%) in Kildare, followed by an unpaid relative or family member (4,725 or 27%). Almost one in six spent 31 hours or more per week in childcare.

Childcare fees in County Kildare are above the State average (€192 per week) and have increased over recent years – the weekly cost in Kildare is the eighth highest in the State. Kildare has the lowest rate of community based childcare facilities in the State (2021/21) with only 9 of the 189 (5%) childcare services (providing ECCE programme) classed as community services. This is in stark contrast to neighbouring counties of Meath (12%), Wicklow (12%), Carlow (35%) and Laois (21%). The national average is 24%.

3. Families in Kildare are getting older

Adult families (i.e. families where the eldest child was 20 years or over) were the most prevalent family unit type in 2022, at 26.4% of all family units. This family type has increased across the State and in Kildare an additional 3,163 adult families since 2016. Pre-school and early-school family cycle types accounted for 19.7% of all family units (almost 2% higher than the State average). Both younger family types have declined by almost ten percent since 2016 (as reflected in the transition through primary school age). Retired family cycle units made up 9.7% of all families, up by forty percent since 2016 (+1,806 families) – again this is reflective of the increasing age of the resident population.

4. Kildare is a diverse county with Polish nationals continuing to be the largest community

Based on the results from Census 2022, 11.4% of County Kildare's resident population has a nationality other than Irish. This proportion is below the corresponding values across the State and several urban local authorities in the Eastern and Midland Region Assembly - with both Dublin and Fingal having rates above seventeen percent.

The highest number of non-Irish nationals are citizens from Poland (2.3% or 5,586), the UK (1.3% or 3,177), Romania (1.2% or 3,007), India (0.75% or 1,820) and Lithuania (0.6% or 1,527). The rate of Polish nationals living in Kildare is like Fingal the highest in the region. Kildare is a truly diverse county with high numbers of citizens from more than twenty-five other countries. As of October 2023, there were 1,772 Ukrainian arrivals registered as residing in County Kildare. Most of those who have come to the county.

5. Kildare has lower than national and regional rates of Travellers resident in Kildare-c Profile, 20

According to Census 2022, there are just over 929 Irish Travellers resident in Kildare. They comprise 0.4% of the resident population. The county's Traveller population is concentrated in clusters – generally in the peripheries of towns with highest rates in Athy, Newbridge and Kilcock. According to the Kildare County Council Annual Traveller Survey the number of Traveller families in the county has increased from 242 in 2016 to 379 in 2022. Approximately 70% of Traveller families live in standard housing.

6. Deprivation levels are clustered in pockets of Kildare

County Kildare recorded a score of +3.1 on the Pobal HP Index of Affluence and Deprivation making it the 4th most affluent local authority area in Ireland. It was 5th most affluent in 2016. However, there is significant deprivation in pockets of Kildare. The most disadvantaged parts of the county are in the peripheral north-west (significant pockets of disadvantage) and south of the county in areas close to Athy. A number of Kildare Small Areas in Athy West Urban, Monasterevin, Newbridge and Kildare are amongst the most disadvantaged Small Areas in the country.

In total, a population of 21,270 or just over eight percent of the population in County Kildare are classed as being disadvantaged. This is significant. At the MD level, the Athy MD is the only MD in the county that is classed as 'marginally below average'. Within the Athy MD, nearly a 5th of the population (19.5%) are residing in areas classed as being disadvantaged.

Education

1. Kildare continues to have a very well-educated population

County Kildare has one of the highest levels of educational attainment, amongst adults, in Ireland. The county has the 6th highest rate of people with a third-level qualification dropping slightly from 5th in 2016. Kildare has the 3rd lowest rate of people who did not progress beyond primary school (4th lowest in 2016). This could be linked to the county's young population, as education attainment levels have risen significantly in recent decades.

2. There continues to be spatial variations in education attainment across Kildare

There is a contrast between the north-east metropolitan area of the county in respect of educational attainment levels where they are higher and the south and west of the county, where they are lower. Some of the larger settlements in the county, Athy (11.5%), Kildare Town (10.5%) and Monasterevin (11.2%) stand out and have much lower level of education attainment than the north-east and metropolitan towns. Low levels of educational attainment are associated with an older age profile, rurality, socio-economic deprivation, gender (males) and membership of the Travelling community. High levels of educational attainment (third level plus) are more prevalent in the North of the County (Maynooth, Leixlip, Celbridge, Kilcock, Clane, Johnstown) in addition to (Naas, Straffan, Caragh, Athgarvan).

Due to the growth of the youth population in Kildare it can be very challenging to access school places. There is often limited choice or availability. This sometimes results in young people having to travel outside of their town to access secondary schools due to capacity issues.

3. DEIS school provision remains low in Kildare

There are a total of 101 mainstream primary schools in Kildare with 29,290 students enrolled in 2022/23. Of these, the 15 DEIS schools account for 4,139 of all primary students in Kildare. Kildare has the 3rd lowest rate of primary schools designated as DEIS. The Department of Education data for school term in 2023/24, outlined that of the 101 primary schools in Kildare, fifteen (15%) have DEIS status (an additional six schools from 2021/22). There are 30 primary schools in Kildare that are in areas of disadvantage that are currently not classed as having DEIS

status. Many of these schools are in the south and central Kildare in the areas around Newbridge-Kildare-Kilcullen, and in areas to the north of Kildare such as Allenwood, Blackwood and towards Carbury. Of the 29 post-primary schools in Kildare, seven (24%) have DEIS status. This is the ninth lowest rate in the State.

4. Kildare has the third highest pupil/teacher ratio in Ireland

The pupil : class ratio in mainstream primary schools is the third highest nationally at 24.2: 1 in Kildare. The national ratio is 22.85:1. Fingal and Dun Laoghaire Rathdown have classes with slightly higher rates.

The Department of Education also provides a breakdown of student's numbers in each class size range. In summary, 8.8% of Kildare's primary pupils are in classes with less than 20 pupils, 82.9% are in classes with between 20 and 30 pupils (second highest rate in the State), and 8.3% are in classes with more than 30 pupils.

Economic

1. Kildare's labour force participation rate remains very high

Just under ninety three percent (92.7%) of Kildare's labour force is at work. The number of people at work has increased by +19.7% (+18,882) since 2016 and the county, as per Ireland, has record levels of employment. This is higher than national and most of the local authorities in the region.

2. People are employed in a variety of sectors

Relative to the State, County Kildare has a higher proportion of the resident workforce employed in the following sectors: building and construction; manufacturing industries; commerce and trade; and public administration.

Since 2016, the largest sectoral increases (in employed persons) in employment by industry have been in 'Transport and Communications' (+27.7% or 2,293), 'Commerce and Trade' (+21.1% or +5,397) 'Professional Services' (+23.7% or +5,201) and 'Manufacturing Industries' (+19.8% or +2,235).

3. Kildare has the 3rd highest rate of Managers, Directors and Senior Officials in the region

The rate of people in Kildare employed as Managers, Directors and Senior Officials (9.4%) is higher than national levels (7.7%) and the third highest in the region. This is reflective of high levels of education. Within Kildare rates are highest in the Naas MD (10.4%) and lowest in the Athy MD (7.7%).

4. Kildare has low levels of people employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing overall but the Athy MD has double the national average

While the rate of people employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing is lower than national levels (2.6% compared to 3.5%), Kildare has the third highest rate of people employed in this sector in the region. The Athy MD has double the national average at 6.3% working in this sector.

5. Kildare has approximately 79,000 jobs (excluding mobile and unknown workers)

This is an increase of +15,653 (+24.8%) known jobs in Kildare since 2016. Key job locations are in the settlements of Naas (11,690 jobs), Leixlip (9,166 jobs), Newbridge (7,337 jobs) and Maynooth (6,898).

6. 13,439 (11.8%) of resident Kildare workers mainly working from home (Census 2022)

In line with national trends increasing numbers of workers now work mainly from home in Kildare.

7. Foreign owned (FDI) companies remain major employers, but indigenous industries are also big employers in Kildare

Kildare is home to some of the biggest FDI companies nationally. The numbers of jobs in FDI companies in Kildare has risen annually since 2016 (10,433) to 2022 (12,659). The rate of employment in Kildare in FDI (16.1%) is second to Dublin City (20.6%) at regional level. However, Kildare also has a strong indigenous base with numbers increasing from 6,979 in 2016 to 7,809 in 2022.

8. Small enterprise development is strong in Kildare

In 2022, 280 clients were supported by the Kildare Local Enterprise Office (LEO). This is the sixth highest number nationally. 93% of active enterprises in Kildare employed under 10 people.

9. In December 2023, 6,182 people were recorded on the Live Register in Kildare

This is a decrease from 9,389 in 2018. Across Kildare, the Newbridge Office recorded 3,293 (including 310 U25) Maynooth (1,897 including 148 U25) and Athy (995 including 145 U25). One in ten people in 2023 are aged under 25 (9.8% or 603).

The unemployment rate in Kildare (Census) 2022 was the 3rd lowest in the State at 7.3%, (8,999) compared to 8.3% nationally.

10. Disposable income in Kildare is high but costs are amongst the highest nationally

While disposable income in Kildare is amongst the highest in the State (3rd highest at €23,554) there are considerable economic and financial pressures on Kildare citizens with some of the highest national costs relating to childcare, house rental and house prices nationally.

11. Kildare households rank among the top in the country for broadband access

According to Census 2022, a total of 70,349 (85.2%) households in Kildare have access to broadband. This is the 4th highest rate of all local authorities. The number of households with access to broadband has increased by more than a quarter since 2016 an additional 7,763 (27.8%) of households.

Transport and Commuting

1. In Kildare the number of people commuting to work, school or college has increased

In Kildare, the number of people commuting to work, school or college increased by a fifth since 2016 (+20.8% or +31,534). However, the rate of population growth needs to be recognised as a factor.

2. Kildare continues to have the 6th highest rate of outbound commuters in the State

Kildare has the sixth highest rate of external commuting. Key destinations are Dublin City (16,201), South Dublin (11,310), Fingal (3,843) and Dun Laoghaire Rathdown (3,084). External commuting to work patterns are largely confined to areas within the Metropolitan part of the county, along the eastern border with Wicklow and to the south of the county (flows to Carlow etc). In areas stretching east and north-east from Kilcock, Clane, Naas and Ballymore-Eustace, over a third of resident workers are commuting to employment locations outside of Kildare.

3. Kildare workers have one of the longest average commute times nationally

At 34 minutes, Kildare workers have the second longest average commute times in the State. In total, 17% of Kildare workers (17,395) commute for more than an hour to work (two hours each way). This is the third highest time in the State. Within Kildare, the settlements of Rathangan (22.8%), Derrinturn (21.2%) and Athy (21.2%) and Maynooth (19.7%) had the highest percentage of resident workers commuting for more than one hour.

4. However, most resident workers in Kildare are employed in the county

There are 114,328 resident workers in Kildare, a total of 53,489 (46.8%) are employed within Kildare. A total of 41,688 (36.5%) commute out of the county to employment destinations. The remaining 19,151 (16.8%) have unknown work destination or are classed as Mobile workers (construction sector, transport etc).

5. Kildare is also a key destination for workers outside of the county

Kildare is also a major employment destination for workers who reside outside the county with 25,149 commuting to Kildare for employment - highest numbers coming from Laois (3,789), South Dublin (3,429), Meath (3,094) Dublin City (2,592), Offaly (2,009), Fingal (1,743) and Carlow (1,253).

6. Working from home has become more prevalent in line with national trends

The number of workers who are classed as 'Working Mainly from Home' has increased from 3,789 in 2016 to 13,439 in 2022 (+255% or +9,653).

7. Commuting to School or College is usually by "private mode"

For those who commute to school or college in Kildare there has been little change in the overall mode share with 'Private Mode' still being the dominant mode and represents just under a half of commuters in 2022 (48.9% or 33,696). While this share is comparable to 2016 (48% or 27,018) it is important to note that the number of people commuting using 'Private Mode' has increased by 6,678 over that period.

Those using 'Active Mode' (walking/cycling) have witnessed a slight proportional drop between 2016 and 2022 (27.9%) of all commuters to school or college. However, because of the growth in young people at school or education in Kildare, there has been an increase of 2,927 people walking/cycling.

Those using 'Public Mode' has seen the lowest intercensal change with an additional 5% or 526 using this mode since 2016. The proportional share using 'Public Mode' to school or college now stands at 16.8% (11,578).

Housing

1. Kildare has had one of the highest levels of housing completions nationally

Since 2016, there have been 13,794 housing completions in County Kildare, and the year-on-year trend has been upward, apart from 2019-2020 – due to COVID-related restrictions. Apart from Dublin City (17,767) and Fingal (15,124), more housing units were completed in Kildare over this period than any other local authority. 2,720 housing completions occurred in 2023.

Of these units, the vast majority were scheme houses (75.1% or 2,042). Apartments accounted for 18.2% (494) of completions in 2023 and single houses accounted for 6.8% (184). Across the county, the highest number of completions between 2016 and 2023 were in the Naas LEA (25.6% or 3,530), Maynooth LEA (17.8% or 2,454) and the Kildare LEA (15.5% or 2,136). The Athy LEA had the lowest number of completions over this period and accounted for 4.3% (589).

2. Kildare has the 7th highest housing stock nationally

Kildare has a total housing stock of just under 89,000. This is the seventh highest housing stock of all local authorities and accounts for 4.2% of the State total. In 2016 the housing stock in Kildare was 73,348.

3. Home ownership in Kildare with a mortgage is the second highest rate nationally

Almost one in four homes in Kildare (39.1% or 32,264) are owner-occupied with a mortgage. This is the 2nd highest rate in the State, increasing from 3rd highest in 2016. The highest rates of this type of home ownership are in towns and in peri-urban zones that have a relatively new housing stock and a younger population in settlements such as Kilcock (50.5% or 1,445), Caragh (56% or 159), Staffan (55.4% or 206) and Athgarvan (55.9% or 205).

Since 2016, there are now nearly two thousand additional homes in Kildare with a mortgage or loan.

4. Kildare has one of the lowest rates of vacant housing units in Ireland

According to the CSO Census in 2022, there are 4,528 vacant properties in Kildare (5.1% of housing stock). The vacancy rate in Kildare dropped from 5.7% of housing stock in 2016. Across the county, there is a variation in terms of both the location of vacant properties and the type of vacant properties. Highest rates are in rural Kildare (5.8%) and within some settlements such as Ballymore Eustace (8.9%), Monasterevin (7.3%) and Athy (7.5%).

The single most common cause of housing vacancy, in Kildare, is that the property is a 'rental property', this occurs in approximately one in five cases (21.5%). A slightly smaller proportion (16.5%) of vacant dwellings are 'for sale', while just under fourteen percent is undergoing renovation. Other, less prevalent, reasons for housing vacancy include the owner being deceased, the owner being in a nursing home / hospital or temporarily living with relatives.

5. The private rental sector accounts for one in seven of households in Kildare

Almost one in seven households in Kildare is in the private rental sector (14.9% or 12,339). Households who are renting from a private landlord account for approximately a fifth of all households in the towns of Maynooth (29.5% or 1,687), Sallins (22.5% or 470%), Clane (19.1% or 542), Athy (19.6% or 792) and Naas (19.4% or 1,713). In contrast to owner occupation, private rented tenure is more than double the rate in urban Kildare (17.3%) as opposed to the case in rural Kildare (7.5%).

6. Kildare has some of the least affordable private rental properties of any county in Ireland

Rent has increased consistently over the past eight years. In the second quarter of 2023, the average monthly rent for a home in Kildare stood at €1,447. This is the third highest across the thirty-one local authority areas. In Q2 2023, rents in Kildare were forty-five percent higher than they were in Q2 2016. There are regional variations with Maynooth and Naas being the most expensive place to rent. Athy has lower rental costs. However, the rental costs in Athy are still more expensive than the average costs in eighteen other counties e.g. Carlow, Waterford, Laois.

7. Almost one in six private rental properties in the county (17.4%) are in receipt of housing assistance payment (HAP)

Across the county, the proportional rate of HAP tenancies is by far highest in the Athy LEA where over a third (36.1%) of rental properties are in receipt of HAP payments.

8. 7,107 (8.6%) of households in Kildare live in Social Housing.

Over 7,000 households are renting from the local authority or an approved housing body. Proportionately, this is the twentieth highest rate in the State. Across the county this varies, with higher rates in the Athy and Kildare/Newbridge MDs. The number of social housing units in Kildare has increased by more than a third since 2016 (+35.7% or +1,868).

9. House prices in Kildare are above the national average

Data for November 2023 shows that, in Kildare, the average house sale price was €394,892. This is almost €30,000 higher than the State average. This was the sixth highest among the thirty-one local authority areas.

There is major variation in house prices across Kildare with average prices varying from €239,656 in south Kildare to €445,00 in north-east Kildare. Between November 2014 and November 2023, the average recorded sale price for a house in Kildare has increased by almost seventy percent.

10. Electricity is increasingly being used to heat homes in Kildare⁴

There has been a big shift in the main type of central heating used in housing built in recent years. Historically, oil has been the most common type of fuel used for heating with both oil and gas being the most prevalent source of heating in homes in Kildare. However, housing built since 2016 were much more likely to rely on electricity for central heating.

Health and Disability

1. 21% of Kildare's population has a disability

Twenty-one percent (20.4% or 50,502) of Kildare County's population has a self-declared disability (long-lasting condition or difficulty experienced to any extent). This proportion is slightly below the State equivalent (21.5%). The highest rates of persons with a disability are in locations that have older age profiles. These include rural communities in the south and southwest of the county, such as Athy (25.0%), Ballitore (24.0%), Ballymore-Eustace (23.5%) and Suncroft (29.1%). In contrast, the lowest rates in the county are in the north-east from Naas to Maynooth and is due to a younger population in these areas.

2. The rates of health rated as "bad" or "very bad" in Census 2022 has increased

Across Kildare, almost 3,700 persons declared their health to be either bad or very bad (1.5% of population), and this figure has increased, in absolute and relative terms since 2016 (+20.1% or +618). However, relative to Ireland as a whole, Kildare has slightly fewer persons with a disability and persons whose self-declared health status is either bad or very bad.

Like disability, poor health is associated with an older age profile. It is, however, also associated with socio-economic deprivation. People who live in households experiencing deprivation and disadvantaged areas are more likely to have poor health than are the rest of the population. Within the county, the areas that have the highest proportions of persons with bad / very bad health are generally in the south and southwest – in both rural communities and towns, though there are some exceptions.

3. The rate of Carers in Kildare is in line with national levels

In Kildare, between 2016 and 2022, there was an additional 60.1% (+4,890) persons providing regular unpaid care. The rate in Kildare is 5.3% (13,032), marginally lower than the State average of 5.8%. Across the county, rates are higher in the south and west regions and areas outside the metropolitan areas. Rates are higher in rural areas (5.4%) with urban areas lower at 4.9%.

4. Social determinants of health in Kildare are in line with overall national trends.

According to the Healthy Ireland Outcomes Framework (2022), County Kildare performs well in respect of social determinants of health, but the county has relatively high proportions of persons with instances of cancers, particularly amongst men and cardiovascular diseases. Death by suicide is also above national levels.

However, County Kildare residents have lower rates of Smoking, Sedentary Lifestyle and have a higher cancer screening participation rate and MMR vaccine uptake compared to State levels.

Environment

1. Kildare has several Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)

The north of the county contains the Carbury Bog NHA and the Hogestown Bog NHA. In addition, there are proposed NHAs (pNHAs) in the county, which were published on a non-statutory basis in 1995 but have not since been statutorily proposed or designated. These sites are of significance for wildlife and habitats - the Royal Canal, Rye Water Valley/Carton, Donadea Wood, the Grand Canal and the Curragh.

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are prime wildlife conservation areas in the country, considered to be important on a European as well as having national significance. The north of the county contains Ballinafagh Bog SAC and Ballinafagh Lake SAC. To the north of Newbridge are the Polardstown Fen SAC and Mouds Bog SAC and running south from Monasterevin to Athy is the River Barrow and Nore SAC.

2. The Building Efficiency Rating (BER) of housing stock in Kildare is high

Over recent years, there has been a concerted effort to reduce the carbon footprint of our homes, by improving their BER among other measures. Of the assessed housing stock in County Kildare (2022), almost 38% have a BER rating of B2 or higher. This is the highest of all local authorities. It should be noted, however, that only 42% of the county's housing stock has had its BER assessed.

3. Reducing energy demand remains a priority for Kildare

Good BER ratings are associated with low levels of heat demand, and 2022 figures indicate that County Kildare had the seventh-lowest per capita level of heat demand of all counties.

Total energy demand, across all sectors in County Kildare, amounted to 1,211 gigawatt hours (in 2022) – the fourteenth highest level in the State.

County Kildare has no wind farms but has (Feb 2023) thirteen planned solar farms with a projected maximum export capacity (MEC) of 114MW - 5.9% of that planned for the State.

4. Recycling rates in Kildare are positive overall

County Kildare performs quite well with only 38.6% of domestic waste (black bin) going to landfill. A further 14.5% is recycled as mixed dry recyclables (green bin) and 15% as organic waste (brown bin - higher than the national rate at 11.1%).

5. Car buyers in Kildare are increasingly purchasing electric and hybrid vehicles

Sales of electric and hybrid vehicles have been increasing over recent years, and in 2023, they accounted for almost 50% of all new car sales in County Kildare – up from 7% in 2018.

Agriculture

1. Agricultural Land in Kildare is used differently across the county

Agricultural land use in Kildare follows the suitability and use range of the soils. The north and east of the county is dominated by pastureland. Almost 43% percent of farms in County Kildare are classified as specialist beef production farms – the highest proportion of any farm type in the county. This farm type is primarily focussed on the rearing and fattening of specialist cattle (specialist grazing livestock).

In the south, tillage farming is very important with less than 40% of the land in this area used as pastureland. Specialist tillage - specialist cereal, oilseeds and protein crops and general field cropping is commonplace in farms across South Kildare.

Whilst County Kildare is well known for its rich pasturelands, 32% of land in the county is considered marginal (of little use to traditional farming practices). In this way, there are very diverse agricultural practices in Kildare from the harvesting of peat from the bogland in the west/southwest of the county.

2. The average farm size in Kildare is well above the national average, particularly in the South of the county

The average farm size (measured in both hectares and output levels) in Kildare is well above the national average throughout most of the county and especially in the south. Smaller farms are mostly concentrated in the north, midlands and west of the county as well as some pockets east of Naas.

3. Kildare has some of the most expensive land in the country

A recent survey from Teagasc (2022), has noted that Kildare has the most expensive land in the country, with good quality land fetching an average of just over €15,000 per acre. The average price of good quality land on holdings of less than 50 acres in Kildare is €15,333 per acre, followed by Meath (€15,200) and Waterford (€15,000).

4. The median standard output per farm in Kildare is in line with other farms in the region

The median standard output per Kildare farm, in the year 2020 (€20,089) was the tenth highest in the State and like the eastern counties of Meath and Wicklow.





Comhairle Contae Chill Dara
Kildare County Council