

Irish Travellers

“Our Traveller Community is an integral part of our society for over a millennium, with their own distinct identity - a people within our people” ENDA KENNY, AN TAOISEACH 2017.



Irish Travellers have been documented as being part of Irish society for centuries. Travellers have a long shared history, traditions, language, culture and customs. Traveller culture is based on a nomadic tradition and sets Travellers apart from the sedentary population or 'settled people'.

Traveller ethnicity was recognised by the Irish State on March 1st 2017 and was recognised in Northern Ireland and the UK since 2004.

“Respect for our culture has the potential to deconstruct centuries of internalised shame within the Traveller community and allow future generations of Travellers to grow up with pride in their identity,” Martin Collins, Pavee Point Director.

POPULATION

According to Census 2016 there are 30,987 Travellers in the Irish State representing 0.7% of the general population.

YOUNG

- Just over 73% of Travellers are aged 34 or younger while just 7.5% are over 54.
- Nearly 6 in 10 Travellers are under 25 years compared to 3 in 10 in the general population (Census 2016)

LARGELY URBAN

Although Travellers at one time populated mainly rural areas 78.6% of Travellers now live in cities or towns, compared to 62.4% of the general population. (Census 2016)

Dublin city and suburbs has the largest number of Irish Travellers followed by Galway city and Cork city and suburbs. (Census 2016)

MARRY YOUNGER

Travellers tend to marry younger and have larger families:

- According to Census 2016 over 1 in 3 Travellers aged 15-29 years were married compared to just over 1 in 20 of the general population.
- Traveller households have an average of 5.3 people compared to 4.1 for the general population.

HIGHER MORTALITY

Only 3% of Travellers are aged 65 or over. (All Ireland Traveller Health Study 2010)

According to the 2010 All Ireland Health Study, Traveller men live 15 years less than men of the settled population and Traveller women 11.5 years less.

According to the same study infant mortality ratio for Traveller children is 3.6 times higher than in the general population.

INEQUALITY

Irish Travellers fare badly on all indicators of equality with lower outcomes in education, a huge health gap and a shocking 80% unemployment rate.