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## New Report puts future of Dublin Region under microscope

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 (<http://www.dublincity.ie/print/new-report-puts-future-dublin-region-under-microscope>)

Lord Mayor Andrew Montague launches 'Changing Faces – Shifting Sands' at the Mansion House, Dawson St today 28th February at 11am. 'Changing faces – Shifting Sands' is a major new Report on demographic trends in the greater Dublin Region. Prepared by three leading academics it analyses the recent census and Eurostat data to come up with recommendations for the future of the Dublin Region. Commissioned by Dublin City Council as part of its "Think Dublin " programme it provides a descriptive overview of the key trends in the structure and the movement of the population, the report also draws out some of the policy implications of these changes for Dublin and Ireland over the coming years. The question is posed: what do demographic trends tell us about how to shape our world today and a better future tomorrow?

Some of the key findings for Ireland and Dublin include:

The population of Ireland is projected to increase from 4.5 million in 2010 to 6.5 million in 2060

In the last number of years a 'baby boom' has been in evidence across the country and with a record numbers of births in the last five years (a high of 75,068 in 2008) Ireland now has the highest fertility rate and one of the highest rates of natural increase of the population in the EU-27

Although Ireland currently enjoys a much younger population structure than other European countries, the number of people in the over 65 age group is set to double by 2035, requiring careful policy planning across domains including pensions, health and care services, housing and the development of technological solutions for independent living.

In 2006, the Dublin region was home to some 150 different nationalities and almost 15 per cent of all residents were non-Irish nationals, representing a 367 percent increase over the 20 year period to 2006

During the period 1991 to 2011, Dublin's population growth (+23.9%) was below the national average of 29.9 percent. The rapid growth of population in the Mid-East region (+63.1%) during the same period puts a figure on the challenges of residential sprawl, commuter journey times and associated expense and the demand for reliable and low cost public transport. Equally, it raises challenges in policy areas such as flexible work practices and childcare as well as local service delivery and facilities

Within Dublin, some of the population trends are equally striking, with the Dublin City administrative area growing by just 9.8 percent over the period 1991 to 2011. By contrast, the inner city area of Dublin grew by 62 percent during those years while the population of Fingal grew by a staggering 78.7 percent.

The findings were put under the microscope at a launch "provocation" in Dublin's Mansion House. Some 25 experts in different fields gathered to identify key policy and practise implications arising from the Report's recommendations. They focused on the implications for education provision, transport and infrastructure, jobs and economy and future Regional Governance.

Lord Mayor Andrew Montague, one of the contributors to the launch provocation observed :

"The challenge of Governance is the key to how we manage and address the other challenges in education, ageing, transport, business and jobs.

To summarise:

Let's begin by asking Dubliners how they would like to be governed;

Let's redefine the role of Local Government and examine new areas of possible responsibility such as education, health, economic development, transport and policing;

Let's examine the case for a directly elected Mayor of Dublin;

Let's compliment national funding options which allow for local decision on expenditure priorities.

Today is about challenging current thinking. I hope we can begin the research into international best practise and generate the debate that could identify how governance could be restructured for the challenges ahead."

This report comes at a time when the United Nations estimates that approximately half of the world's population now lives in cities, with that figure projected to rise to 70 percent by 2050. It is anticipated that by 2070 the population of the world will stand at 9.4 billion persons and only then begin to decline. Although that global population continues to increase, the working age population in the EU-27 is in decline, putting pressure on labour markets and economies and making the competition for workers all the more intense. Dublin, as an already relatively young city is in a good position to compete internationally for skilled workers to stimulate economic growth.

The demographic trends in evidence in this report point to the need to carefully plan the quantum and distribution of future growth, creating sustainable cities and towns; how to better manage societal needs in the future; to increase mobility and accessibility; and the appropriate location and provision of critical services.

The report is a useful and timely handbook for any public, private or non-governmental organisation engaged in policy planning. It is designed to inform, educate and create debate. It is released in as a forerunner to the upcoming CSO Census release on principal demographic results.

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## For more information

For further information

Peter Finnegan, Director, Office of International Relations and Research, Dublin City Council Press Office T. (01) 222 2107,

Note to Editors

Demographic Trends in Dublin was researched and written by Declan Redmond and Brendan Williams, School of Geography, Planning and Environmental Policy, University College Dublin

Brian Hughes, School of the Built Environment, Dublin Institute of Technology.

The full report is available at <http://www.creativedublinalliance.ie> (<http://www.creativedublinalliance.ie/>)

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**Office address:**

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Dublin City Council  
Civic Offices  
Wood Quay  
Dublin 8  
D08 RF3F

**Customer service:**

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**T:** (01)222 2222

**E:** [customerservices@dublincity.ie](mailto:customerservices@dublincity.ie) (mailto:customerservices@dublincity.ie)

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