



# **Carlow Volunteer Centre**

## **Annual Report**

### **2020**

# The Staff of Carlow Volunteer Centre



Helen Rothwell (Manager, Garda vetting liaison officer)

Natasha Akerele (Placement officer, Garda Vetting liaison officer)

Sinead Kirwan (Placement officer, Education Coordinator.)

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## 1. Operational Content:

### 1.1 Governance: -

Carlow Volunteer Centre is an independent organisation. There is a volunteer Board of Directors in place made up of five representatives from the local community which represent key stakeholders. The board oversee the strategic direction of the organisation and delegate operational activities to the manager.

Chairperson: - Michelle o Hara

Company Secretary: - Frank Comerford

Martin Meagher

Martha Jane Duggan

Fiona Dunne

### 1.2 Staffing:

One full time member (Manager) and two-part time staff members. Volunteers are utilised to enhance services periodically but to Covid 19 this was not possible in 2020. An extra staff member was employed two days a week to look after Kilkenny and Wexford VIS until they opened as a Centre in 2021.

### 1.3 Area Profile: -



Carlow County is an inland county, measuring 896 sq. km in area, located in the South East Region, and bordered by Counties Wicklow, Wexford, Kilkenny, Laois, and Kildare. Carlow Volunteer Centre serves the county-wide area – a population of 56,932. The population density for County Carlow of 56.4 people per sq. km remains below the national average of 60.6, thus indicating a relatively high level of population dispersal in the County. This suggests a likelihood of social issues related to rural isolation and impacts on the ability of isolated people to become involved in formal voluntary activity based within the urban centers. This is exacerbated by the poor public transport within the county, especially in rural areas.

Carlow has a higher level of social housing provision than most other Irish counties – the fifth highest proportion among Ireland's thirty-one local authorities. In respect of family cycle, Carlow has a higher proportion of households with preadolescent and adolescent children than is the case nationally, and the county-level data, suggest that this demographic bulge is not being sustained, as the proportion of pre-family households is below the State average. Like most of Ireland, Carlow is becoming increasingly diverse in respect of nationalities,

ethnicity, and languages. Non-Irish nationals and those with dual nationality account for 12% of the county's population. There are notable micro-level geographies associated with the distribution of foreign-born persons. Tullow and Carrickduff have notable concentrations of Poles, while Myshall has the highest proportion of Lithuanians among its resident population. Polish, French and Latvian are the most widely spoken foreign languages in Carlow. While foreign-born persons are distributed across most of Carlow's towns and villages, Ireland's largest ethnic minority, Irish Travellers are concentrated; the settlements with the highest proportions of Travellers in the resident population are Carrickduff and Tullow. The Haase-Pratschke Index of Affluence and Deprivation reveals that Carlow is less socially polarised than are most other Irish counties. While there are pockets of affluence, over three-quarters of Electoral Divisions (EDs) in Carlow record scores on this Index that are 'marginally below average' and a further 7% are classified as 'disadvantaged'. A micro-geographical analysis of affluence and deprivation reveals that a number of neighbourhoods in Carlow Town and Hacketstown are classified as 'very disadvantaged.'

## 2. Introduction

Carlow Volunteer Centre offers support and guidance to individuals and Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs) to reach their individual and collective goals while making a significant contribution to their local community and society.

This report outlines the work and highlights the achievements of Carlow Volunteer Centre (CVC) in 2020. Along with Co. Carlow, CVC were tasked with looking after Volunteers, Volunteer Involving Organisations and the I-Vol database for Kilkenny and Wexford VIS until they become Volunteer Centres in 2021.

CVC employs three staff, one full time and two on a part-time basis. For 2020 an extra staff member was contracted to work part time to help with the extra workload with the two extra Counties. Together they offer support and guidance to individuals and Volunteer-Involving- Organisations (VIOs).

CVC currently works with 399 VIOs offering them a range of services. In addition, CVC works with over 1,200 active volunteers in Carlow, is part of a national network of volunteer centres and works closely with other organisations in the county including Carlow Public Participation Network, Carlow County Council, and both local partnership companies.

With the arrival of COVID-19, how CVC offered their services had to change from meetings, outreaches and presentations in person to the delivery of all services using technology. This required a steep learning curve as all staff had to learn how to use a range of new programmes

such as What's App, ZOOM, Microsoft Teams, Eventbrite and many more. In addition to this learning curve, it was recognised by the Manager and staff of CVC that keeping in regular contact with both volunteers and VIOs would be essential to the continued support of the sector, while also ensuring the CVC played its part in the community response to COVID-19.

It was agreed CVC would:

- Update VIO's on the latest news from the HSE, Health and Safety Authority, Carlow County Council and other sources through emails, coffee mornings and our Social Media Channels.
- Continue our advertisement in the Carlow Nationalist and our Social media platform outlining new volunteering opportunities and thanking volunteers for their interest.
- Contact and supporting new community groups which sprang up in response to COVID-19, many of whom did not understand the importance of volunteer screening and management.
- Work closely with Carlow County Council on the Community Response Team to help identify and ameliorate community issues caused by COVID-19, such as food poverty, isolation and the digital divide.
- Liaise with all registered VIOs to help them deliver their services virtually.
- Conduct research on the involvement of volunteers and volunteer-involving-organisations in the COVID-19 response.
- Promote training and webinars from Carlow Volunteer Centre, Sports Partnership, ETB, Public Participation Network, Volunteer Ireland, The Wheel and others.
- Organise virtual events for National Volunteer Week that addressed the topic of well-being.
- Continue our Transition Year Student programme virtually and promote virtual volunteering opportunities.

## 2.1 Our Vision

"A vibrant Carlow society where every person feels connected to their community through active participation in voluntary activities"




## 2.2 Our Mission

To promote the value of volunteering and increase the range and quality of volunteering in Carlow,  
To help individuals find meaningful opportunities to volunteer and to support not-for-profit organisations to involve volunteers in their work.

## 2.3 Our Values

Our key values are:

 Equality.

We believe all people should be valued and respected equally. We are also committed to removing barriers that exclude vulnerable groups from participating fully in society.

 Sense of Community.

Volunteering is ultimately about people helping others and feeling connected with their community.

 Professionalism.

We work in an environment where honesty and integrity is paramount and where people are encouraged to bring their ideas to life while remaining accountable to ourselves and others.





## Chairpersons Report

2020 was a year that highlighted the Value of volunteering and of having a Volunteer Centre in our County. The Covid-19 pandemic has changed the voluntary sector. It has impacted the delivery of services, how they are being delivered, to whom they are delivered and, often, by whom they are being delivered. It has impacted how voluntary and community groups are being managed, as new risk factors and new methods of communicating with service users add extra pressure to already stretched management resources. And yet, as repeatedly testified to by local and national government, the sector has risen to the current challenge with enthusiasm.

Carlow Volunteer Centre has seen an outpouring of support from people wanting to help those in need of support during COVID-19. This is fantastic and exactly what we have come to expect from the people of Co. Carlow.

CVC worked collectively with all relevant government Departments, National organisations plus local community groups to support the response to the management of Coronavirus (COVID-19). We commend and value the community-based volunteer response that was mobilised and want to provide both organisations and members of the public wishing to volunteer with practical advice and guidance, bearing in mind that as a community our main task is to minimise the spread of coronavirus.

Carlow Volunteer Centre proactively developed new initiatives to address gaps in services that appeared. In addition, the Centre provided leadership and support where groups were under resourced or in danger of being overwhelmed. These included: -

- Prioritising recruitment, support and promotion of volunteer roles related to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) response.
- Communicating with local volunteers and organisations to let them know what is happening and connect them where relevant.
- Providing advice and guidance on volunteering safely when dealing with vulnerable members of the public.
- Sharing stories of those volunteering and raising awareness of the positive impact of volunteers.
- Prioritising Garda vetting applications for Covid 19 response.

On behalf of the Board of Carlow Volunteer Centre I would like to thank the staff who had the added task of managing Kilkenny and Wexford VIO's along with Carlow Volunteer Centre during this time. Their commitment, passion and dedication to help their community has been clearly demonstrated throughout this challenging year.

My sincere thanks to the Board of Carlow Volunteer Centre whose guidance and support was invaluable during the year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Colette Lane and Karl Duffy who left our Board during the year. They made a huge contribution to the Board over the years and I would like to wish them the best going forward.

Finally, I would like to thank Carlow Co. Council for the use of their premises and the Dep. Of Environment, Community and Local Government for funding of the Centre.

Michelle O'Hara

(Chairperson)

## 4. Services Provided by Carlow Volunteer Centre



**We help members of the public to find suitable volunteer roles from a constantly updated list of volunteer opportunities. This has been done virtually in 2020.**



**We advertise volunteer opportunities on behalf of non-profit organisations to the public. This included virtual opportunities.**



**We continued to provide training and consultancy on volunteer management to charities and community organisations through zoom. We also provide coffee mornings with Organisations to help with any problems they are encountering because of Covid-19. We provide access to Garda Vetting for non-profit organisations.**



**We attend Community forum meetings with our local Authority and place volunteers where needed in response to the Community helpline for Covid-19.**

## 5. Our impact in 2020



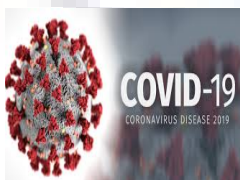
**613** Volunteers were supported in finding volunteer roles in Co. Carlow



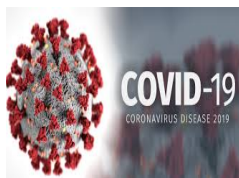
**380** Volunteers were supported in finding volunteer roles in Co. Kilkenny



**173** Volunteers directly placed in Covid-19 roles helping our Community in Co. Carlow



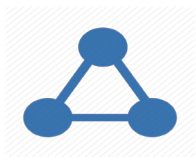
**115** Volunteers directly placed in Covid-19 roles helping our Community in Co. Kilkenny



**82** Volunteers directly placed in Covid-19 roles helping our Community in Co. Wexford



**6,959** Hours contributed by Volunteers in Co. Carlow with a value of €160.500



**183** Organisations using our services in Co. Carlow



**57** Organisations took part in training events and coffee information - mornings.



**762** Volunteer Opportunities Published



**12** New Training sessions attended by CVC staff.



**15** Staff meetings held during 2020



Webinar on the Benefits of Volunteering created by CVC and sent to all the Second and Third level Schools.



**216** Organisations using Garda Vet-ting service and??? Applications processed.



THE NATIONAL VOLUNTEERING DATABASE

A large, abstract, pixelated graphic in the background, featuring swirling shapes in shades of purple, pink, and light blue.

# **i-VOL STATISTICS**

## **2020**

The national placement rate for 2020 across Volunteer Centres is 26.89%.

The national median time to placement is 24 days.

The national median for time to first contact is 81% of volunteers contacted in 4 days or under

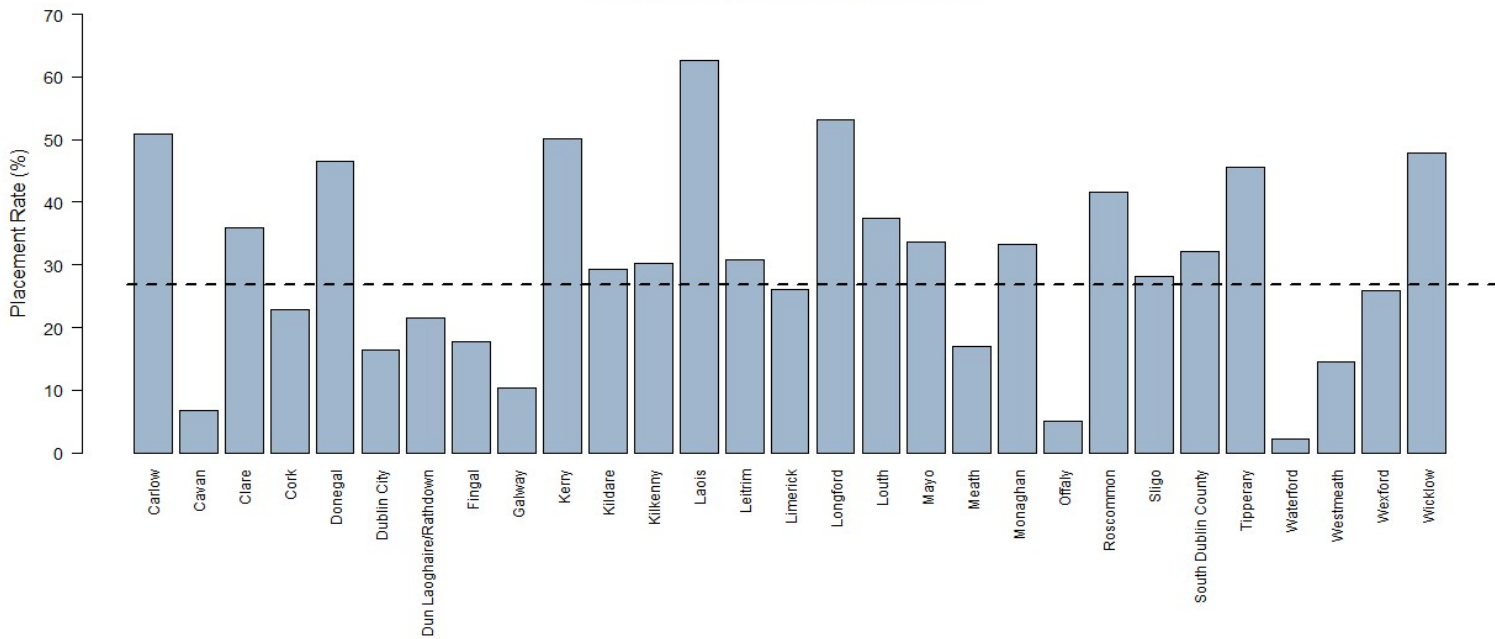
This document provides i-VOL statistics under 3 main headings:

**Volunteering placement rate** is measured by the number of unique volunteers placed in a role.

**Time to placement** is the median time for a volunteer to begin volunteering. This is measured from the time a volunteer first begins volunteering.

**Time to first contact** is measured from the time a volunteer first registers until a first activity, task or email is recorded on the volunteer's record.

Placement Rate: Volunteer Centre

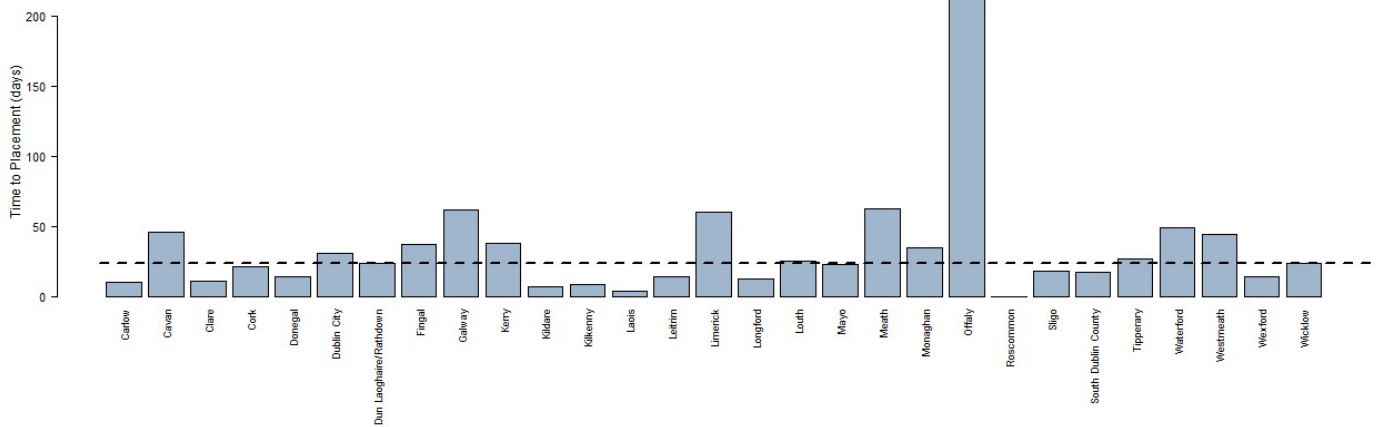


Summary Rates Graph Details						
	Number of Applications	Unique Applicants	Number of Placements	Unique Volunteers	Verified	Placement Rate
Carlow	609	314	226	160	226	50.96
Cavan	324	193	13	13	13	6.736
Clare	848	499	223	179	220	35.87
Cork	2997	1360	365	312	365	22.94
Donegal	685	417	226	194	226	46.52
Dublin City	8955	3784	769	619	769	16.36
Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown	3001	1307	383	281	383	21.5
Fingal	2205	1005	238	178	238	17.71
Galway	2196	996	133	104	133	10.44
Kerry	1409	752	506	377	506	50.13
Kildare	1215	623	229	183	229	29.37
Kilkenny	327	159	52	48	52	30.19
Laois	348	238	167	149	165	62.61
Leitrim	139	78	25	24	25	30.77
Limerick	863	440	121	115	105	26.14
Longford	335	177	128	94	128	53.11
Louth	1788	915	437	343	437	37.49
Mayo	652	422	154	142	154	33.65
Meath	1048	538	103	91	103	16.91
Monaghan	385	222	80	74	80	33.33
Offaly	150	80	4	4	3	5
Roscommon	188	120	61	50	61	41.67
Sligo	725	379	123	107	123	28.23
South Dublin County	2231	1068	430	344	430	32.21
Tipperary	878	489	286	223	286	45.6
Waterford	237	135	3	3	3	2.222
Westmeath	674	384	66	56	65	14.58
Wexford	264	139	44	36	44	25.9
Wicklow	1172	637	379	305	379	47.88
Total	36848	17870	5974	4808	5951	26.90543



## TIME TO PLACEMENT VOLUNTEER CENTRE

Time to Placement: Volunteer Centre



Summary

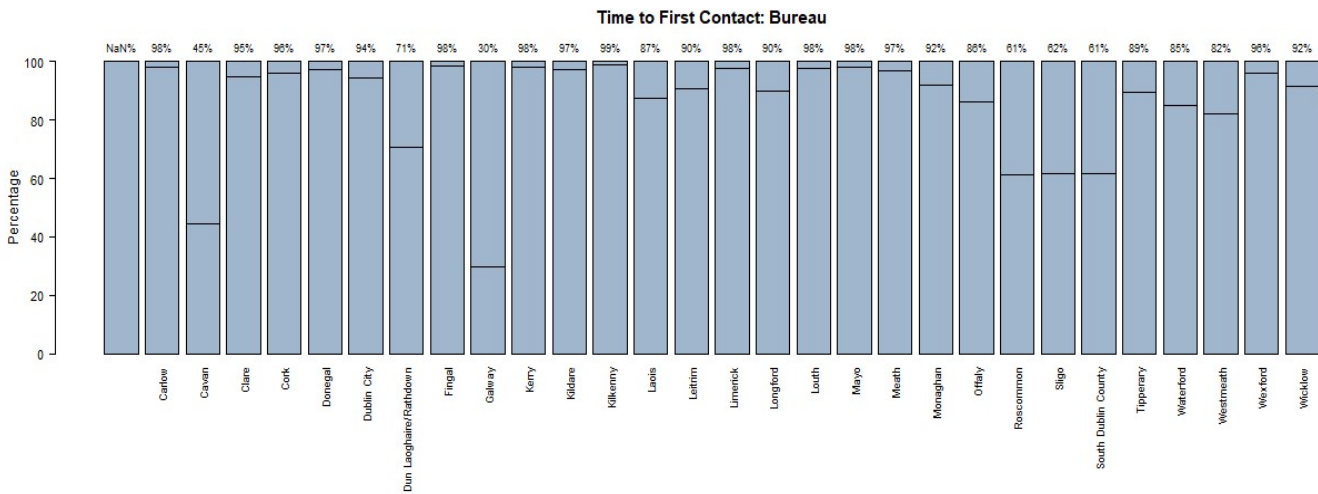
Graph

Details

	Number Placed	Min	Average	Median	Max	Std Dev	Number Invalid	Verified
Carlow	224	0	36.41964	10.5	1484	129.0479	6	230
Cavan	14	0	51.92857	46	200	55.95254	0	14
Clare	228	0	43.29825	11	1068	120.9309	1	226
Cork	377	0	66.16976	21	1527	154.5622	3	380
Donegal	223	0	35.61883	14	1644	131.7636	0	223
Dublin City	776	0	62.76546	31	1209	102.804	10	786
Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown	382	0	49.1911	24	935	97.83296	2	384
Fingal	208	0	71.90385	37	1715	181.3397	1	209
Galway	125	0	122.64	62	1428	192.5291	0	125
Kerry	507	0	57.02367	38	722	75.8676	1	508
Kildare	228	0	62.73246	7	1561	209.2034	1	229
Kilkenny	53	0	38.86792	9	525	97.87021	0	53
Laois	118	0	22.09322	4	320	55.13976	7	123
Leitrim	25	0	56.72	14	294	80.99152	0	25
Limerick	43	0	133.5116	60	930	202.9263	0	26
Longford	149	0	102.5638	13	1430	212.4307	4	153
Louth	440	0	91.68864	25	1047	172.8496	5	445
Mayo	155	0	87.94839	23	1805	201.5212	0	155
Meath	104	0	116.8077	63	888	150.7448	0	104
Monaghan	73	0	69.12329	35	1092	139.1715	0	73
Offaly	5	0	255	213	529	264.5477	0	3
Roscommon	61	0	23.34426	0	464	63.78895	0	61
Sligo	119	0	110.8067	18	1768	279.8107	0	119
South Dublin County	427	0	44.94614	17	1433	92.58149	1	428
Tipperary	241	0	80.11618	27	2311	175.8904	0	241
Waterford	3	5	40.66667	49	68	32.31615	0	3
Westmeath	68	0	146.0441	44.5	2235	347.1353	0	66
Wexford	46	0	103.2174	14	705	179.2953	0	46
Wicklow	377	0	72.35809	24	1835	193.5785	2	379
Total	5799	0	66.80203	24	2311	153.5154	44	5799

Measuring each VC against the 24-median number of days to placement

## TIME TO FIRST CONTACT



Summary	Graph	Details						
		Number People	Average Days	Median Days	Max	Number Invalid	% under 5 Days	Completed Rate
		0	NaN	NA	-Inf	3	NaN	0
Carlow		365	0.6767123	0	73	1	97.97297	31.97
Cavan		290	16.1069	3	98	40	44.58874	3.33
Clare		511	2.150685	1	76	4	94.87805	14.37
Cork		2899	1.656088	1	108	21	95.97523	7.16
Donegal		626	0.6757188	0	51	6	97.18876	22.15
Dublin City		5809	2.457566	2	217	2	94.35103	7.23
Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown		2153	6.442638	1	148	3	70.7828	8.95
Fingal		1664	1.742188	1	170	0	98.22878	8.11
Galway		2675	67.32822	38	219	31	29.69644	2.03
Kerry		788	1.045685	1	17	0	97.8389	32.74
Kildare		1153	1.134432	1	80	7	97.23757	13.19
Kilkenny		299	1.137124	1	14	1	98.99497	14.67
Laois		390	1.889744	0	43	5	87.42515	27.09
Leitrim		148	3.135135	1	132	4	90.47619	13.16
Limerick		872	1.147936	1	154	0	97.69094	10.78
Longford		163	1.257669	0	22	0	90	24.54
Louth		878	1.082005	1	78	1	97.68786	16.95
Mayo		558	0.8243728	0	28	1	97.79412	14.49
Meath		918	1.363834	1	57	2	96.81021	6.63
Monaghan		321	2.46729	1	214	7	92.05607	13.41
Offaly		163	6.711656	1	147	2	86.33094	1.21
Roscommon		216	22.05093	2	170	13	61.41304	21.4
Sligo		428	5.787383	1	145	4	61.8123	12.04
South Dublin County		1704	7.620892	1	43	5	61.45374	13.81
Tipperary		677	1.689808	1	35	0	89.3617	20.97
Waterford		522	13.47318	1	192	31	84.92823	0.54
Westmeath		402	6.415423	2	133	1	82.15385	9.18
Wexford		353	2.260623	1	134	0	96.06987	7.93
Wicklow		815	2.640491	1	216	4	91.61074	23.81
31		28760	NaN	1	219	199	NaN	10.89491

## PLACEMENT RATE

Breakdown of volunteers who register, apply and are placed

Overall Placement Rate is 26.896%

	Number Registered	Number of Applications	Unique Applicants	Number of Placements	Unique Volunteers	Verified	Placement Rate
Carlow	366.00	609.00	314.00	226.00	160.00	226.00	50.96
Cavan	330.00	324.00	193.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	6.74
Clare	515.00	848.00	499.00	223.00	179.00	220.00	35.87
Cork	2920.00	2997.00	1360.00	365.00	312.00	365.00	22.94
Donegal	632.00	685.00	417.00	226.00	194.00	226.00	46.52
Dublin City	5811.00	8955.00	3784.00	769.00	619.00	769.00	16.36
Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown	2156.00	3001.00	1307.00	383.00	281.00	383.00	21.50
Fingal	1664.00	2205.00	1005.00	238.00	178.00	238.00	17.71
Galway	2706.00	2196.00	996.00	133.00	104.00	133.00	10.44
Kerry	788.00	1409.00	752.00	506.00	377.00	506.00	50.13
Kildare	1160.00	1215.00	623.00	229.00	183.00	229.00	29.37
Kilkenny	300.00	327.00	159.00	52.00	48.00	52.00	30.19
Laois	395.00	348.00	238.00	167.00	149.00	165.00	62.61
Leitrim	152.00	139.00	78.00	25.00	24.00	25.00	30.77
Limerick	872.00	863.00	440.00	121.00	115.00	105.00	26.14
Longford	163.00	335.00	177.00	128.00	94.00	128.00	53.11
Louth	879.00	1788.00	915.00	437.00	343.00	437.00	37.49
Mayo	559.00	652.00	422.00	154.00	142.00	154.00	33.65
Meath	920.00	1048.00	538.00	103.00	91.00	103.00	16.91
Monaghan	328.00	385.00	222.00	80.00	74.00	80.00	33.33
Offaly	165.00	150.00	80.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	5.00
Roscommon	229.00	188.00	120.00	61.00	50.00	61.00	41.67
Sligo	432.00	725.00	379.00	123.00	107.00	123.00	28.23
South Dublin County	1709.00	2231.00	1068.00	430.00	344.00	430.00	32.21
Tipperary	677.00	878.00	489.00	286.00	223.00	286.00	45.60
Waterford	553.00	237.00	135.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.22
Westmeath	403.00	674.00	384.00	66.00	56.00	65.00	14.58
Wexford	353.00	264.00	139.00	44.00	36.00	44.00	25.90
Wicklow	819.00	1172.00	637.00	379.00	305.00	379.00	47.88
Total	28956.00	36848.00	17870.00	5974.00	4808.00	5951.00	26.91