

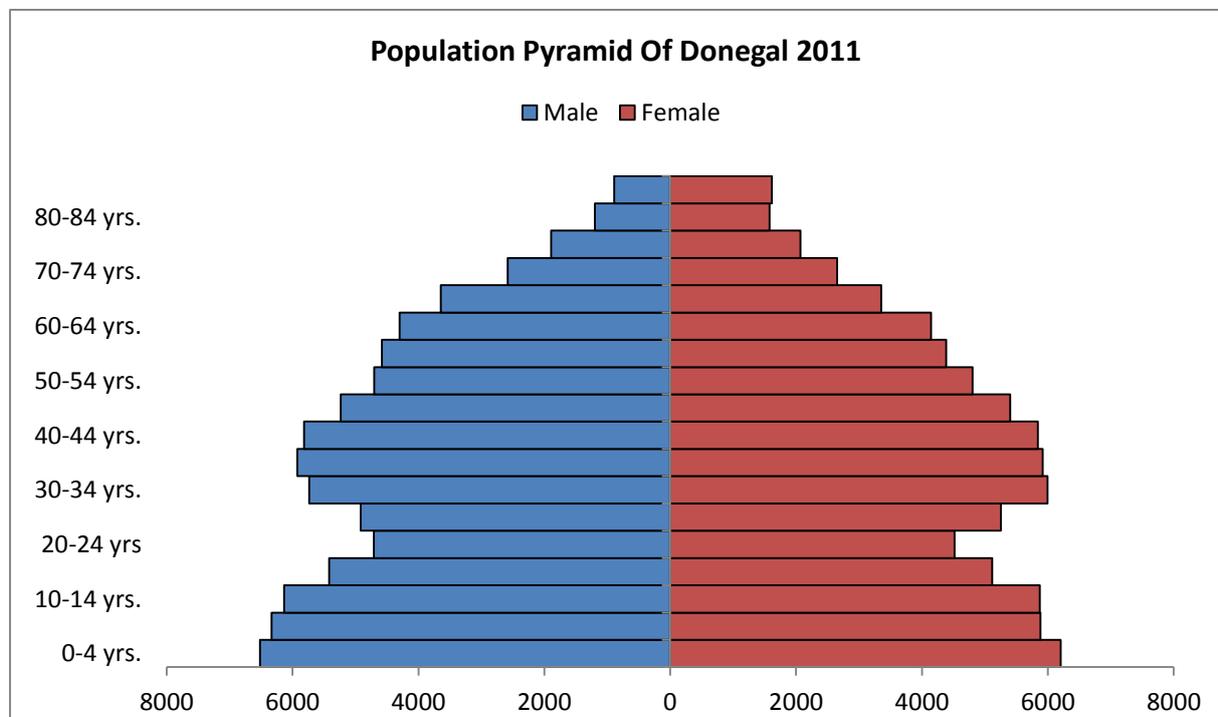
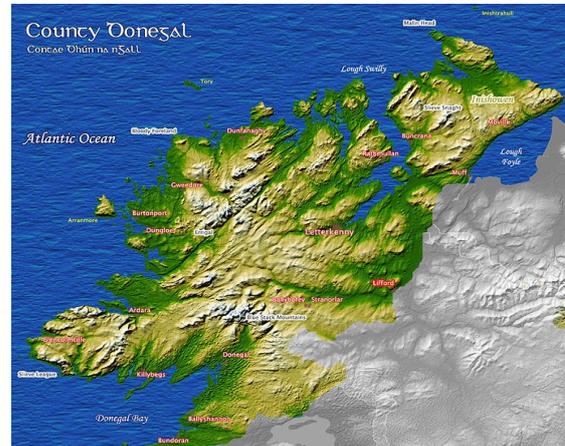


Census of Co. Donegal



In the following essay I will be discussing the reports from the most recent census survey of Donegal, its patterns as well as comparing them to previous census recordings. I will also be giving my opinions on the differences as well as similarities between the two records.

To start things off, Donegal had a population of 161,137 people in April 2011. However, 62% of the population live on 2.4% of Donegal's land. This is due to the mountainous land which covers a vast region of Donegal leaving no option to many but to migrate towards large towns/cities such as Letterkenny. This means that there are fewer and fewer people in the already sparsely populated areas. Because of this, it is getting harder and harder for people and communities to avoid a vicious cycle in which more and more people are migrating from Donegal. I feel that this is a real problem and is causing a lot of urbanisation as well as leaving many regions of Donegal vacant. In the 2006 census the population had grown by just under 14,000 people, but the population distribution has been aimed at the towns/cities as opposed to the small rural towns which are slowly dying out.

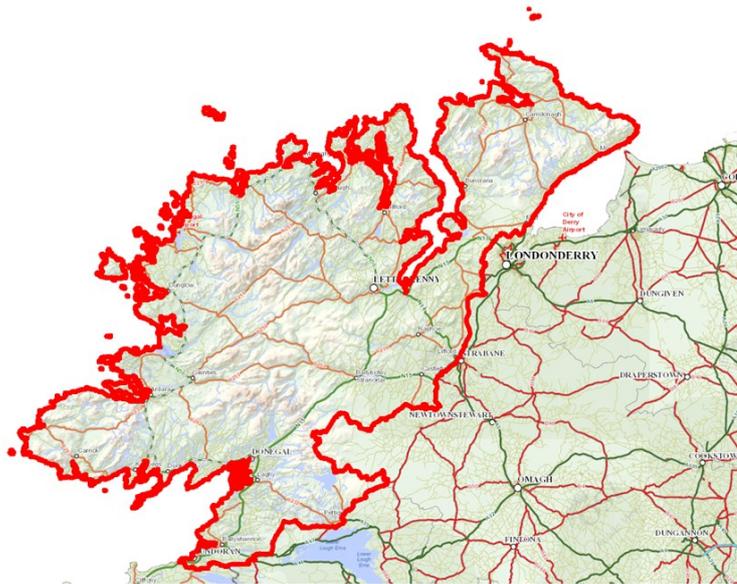




Census of Co. Donegal



As you can see from the population pyramid of Donegal from the 2011 census, it is clear that the population is starting to level out. This could be caused by the recent recession, leading to many young workers migrating to seek work in other parts of the world. This could turn out to become a major problem for Donegal as there may not be many taxpaying workers to support the social costs like pensions and hospitals. This problem could also be a result of the development of Donegal causing the birth and death rates to naturally drop. This means the ratio of young to old is alarmingly close.



However one part of Donegal that I feel is very important for not only the county but for Ireland's culture is their ability to speak our native language, Irish. Of Donegal's population, 38.4% have the ability to speak Irish. The county also boasts many Gaeltacht regions, areas where Irish is the prominent language. These areas are extremely important in my opinion to keep the Irish language and culture alive.

The Gaeltacht areas are not only important for the language but also for tourism. This is because many teenagers still in secondary level education travel to these regions to take part in Gaeltacht courses during the summer. This brings in a lot of income for the more rural areas of Donegal which helps them to survive and give them an extra bit of money to spend throughout the year. From my personal experiences at the Gaeltacht, each person that attends could bring in up to €1,000 for the local economy and if you take in to consideration of the number of people who attend, the amount taken in is staggering.

In conclusion, Donegal is a very mountainous region with a high population density in towns and cities. It suffers greatly from urbanisation. However, it still holds a lot of Ireland's remaining culture.