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1991 Census Statistical Paper No 9

IRISH-BORN PEOPLE IN GREAT BRITAIN:
Settlement patterns and socio- economic circumstances

David Owen

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1991 Census Statistical Paper no. 9

by

David Owen

National Ethnic Minority Data Archive

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February 1995

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1. Introduction

This Statistical Paper presents information from the 1991 Census on the social and economic circumstances of people living in Britain who were born either in Northern Ireland or in the Irish Republic. This is one of a series of Statistical Papers (numbers 6 to 9) which present in-depth analyses of the socio-economic differentials which exist between ethnic groups, making use of data sources which have recently become available; primarily the OPCS "1991 Census Ethnic Group and Country of Birth" report and the Samples of Anonymised Records drawn from the 1991 Census¹. These enable a number of topics which the Census Local Base Statistics do not cover (data from which were presented in Statistical Papers 1 to 5) to be analysed. This Statistical Paper differs from the others in the series in focusing upon national origins, rather than on a particular ethnic group.

The first section of the paper defines the nature of the population groups being studied, discusses the data available from the Census of Population on the Irish as an ethnic group, and illustrates the changing numbers of Irish-born people living in Great Britain during the twentieth century. It goes on to describe the demographic structure of the Irish-born population, thus establishing the context for analyses of their geographical distribution, household and family structure, housing characteristics, levels of health, participation in the labour market, patterns of employment and unemployment, and educational participation and attainment in the sections which follow. Parallel statistical papers in this series are concerned with the "Black" (Statistical Paper 6), South Asian (Statistical Paper 7) and "Chinese & Other" ethnic groupings (Statistical Paper 8).

2. Background to the "Born in Ireland" Census category

The 1991 Census includes in most of the tables disaggregated by ethnic group, a column headed 'Born in Ireland'. This column represents the analysis of people by geographical origin rather than ethnic group (as defined by the Census). Since people born in Ireland can be of any of the ethnic groups in the remaining columns of the table, they therefore appear in the relevant column for their ethnic group as well as in the 'Born in Ireland' column. These 'Irish-born' columns were included by the Census Offices in response to recommendations from the Commission for Racial Equality and various Irish community organisations that an 'Irish' category be included in the ethnic group classification. The Census Offices considered it too late to include such a category, as there was insufficient time to test an 'Irish' option on the Census question by the time the issue was raised. However, the 'Born in Ireland' category was added to the ethnic group tables in order to provide some information on the characteristics of Irish people living in Great Britain.

As part of their campaign to have the Irish recognised as an ethnic group in the Census, the Irish Community Census Campaign tried to persuade people who regarded themselves as being ethnically Irish to write "Irish" in the space provided under the 'Any other ethnic group' category in the ethnic group question. The Census Offices planned to report the number of people who did so in Table A of the Country of Birth and Ethnic Group Report (which provides a 35-fold breakdown of ethnic group by local authority district of residence), but as a result of a processing fault, the number of these responses was under-recorded. Hence, this table only included 457 people, 381 of whom were resident in Greater London. This error was subsequently corrected, and a supplement to the report², reveals that about 11 thousand people identified their ethnic group as "Irish" on the Census form, 10 thousand of whom lived in Greater London. There were an additional 20 thousand people in Greater London who wrote in 'Irish', but who had also ticked the white box. These responses are not analysed in the supplement to the report.

However, people identifying themselves as being from an Irish ethnic group represent only a small percentage of all persons born in Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic. Overall, 294,914 persons born in Northern Ireland and 592,020 persons born in the Irish Republic were living in Great Britain in 1991, and together they formed 1.5 per cent of the British population. For those from Northern Ireland, the identity of 'Irish' has become a highly political matter,

wrapped up with the Troubles of the last 25 years. A large percentage would feel themselves to be British. Anecdotal evidence suggests that, when people from Northern Ireland come to Great Britain, they are regarded as being 'Irish', whatever identity they themselves feel. The actual size of the Irish ethnic group is undoubtedly much larger, since many people born in England, Wales or Scotland to parents born on the island of Ireland (or with Irish grandparents) regard themselves as being Irish. The 1 per cent household Sample of Anonymised Records allows the number of people living in households headed by an Irish-born person to be identified, and thus provides some indication of the magnitude of the larger Irish ethnic group. This reveals that 3.5 per cent of the population (representing about 1.95 million people) and 3.2 per cent of all dependent children lived in households in which either the household head or the partner of the household head had been born in Ireland in 1991. This figure is so large because Irish-born people living in Britain tend to form partnerships with people born somewhere other than Ireland. Of all households containing an Irish-born partner, in only 20.2 per cent were both partners born in Ireland. Clearly, not all members of households with an Irish-born head or partner would regard themselves as ethnically Irish, but on the other hand, it is probable that many other people with Irish grandparents or other looser connections (not revealed in these figures) feel that they are part of the Irish ethnic group.

Migration from the island of Ireland to Great Britain has long been substantial. The Industrial Revolution in Britain was facilitated by mass migration from Ireland in the nineteenth century, and as a result, a large (but unknown) part of the British population have ancestors from Ireland. Migration from Ireland has also been substantial during the twentieth century, as demonstrated by the trend in the number of British residents born in Ireland during this century (Figure 1). Initially around two-thirds of a million, this number declined in the inter-war period (the extent of decline being disguised by the absence of Census data for 1941), since migrants tended to prefer the United States rather than Britain as a destination. The great increase in the Irish-born population occurred after the Second World War and up to the early 1960s, with migrants attracted by the availability of jobs, especially in construction. During the period 1951-61, there was net emigration of 409 thousand, equivalent to a seventh of the 1961 population of the Irish Republic, most of whom would have gone to the United Kingdom. Migration rates declined in the 1960s, reversed during the 1970s, and reversed again during the 1980s when net in-migration from the Irish Republic to the United Kingdom resumed.³

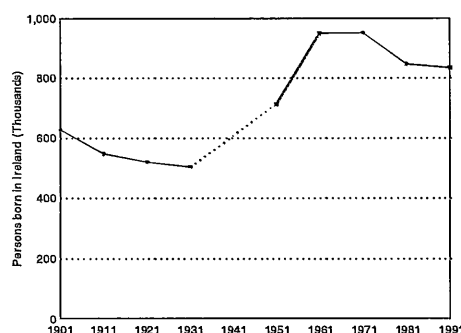


Figure 1: Trends in the number of Irish-born (people born in Northern Ireland or the Irish Republic) living in Great Britain, 1901-1991

Irish-born people are overwhelmingly (99.1 per cent were recorded as white on the ethnic group question). They may be regarded as a distinct ethnic group, since Irish people have a different culture and identity from people from the white British ethnic groups, and they have suffered discrimination in a number of areas. In the remainder of this Statistical Paper, the circumstances of Irish-born people are compared with those of all white people and with people from the minority ethnic groups covered by the Census, in order to demonstrate the extent to which the experience of this section of the population is distinctive. However, people born in Northern Ireland may not regard themselves as being from the same ethnic group as those born

in the Republic, and therefore, wherever possible, the analysis distinguishes the separate experience of people born in the two parts of Ireland.

3. Demographic patterns

The age and gender structure of people born in Ireland is summarised in the population pyramid in Figure 2a. This pyramid is strikingly different from that for both white people as a whole, and all minority ethnic groups. This is a relatively elderly population, with age cohorts aged 40 and over much larger than younger age groups. The size of each age group up to retirement age is quite similar, after which the population in each age group declines. Children are almost absent from the pyramid, and younger working age adults are much less numerous than older people, though the number of men aged 20-34 is probably underestimated. The dark shading at the end of each bar represents the estimated size of each age cohort after adjusting for Census underenumeration. Females are in the majority throughout the age range, and most strongly outnumber men in the oldest age groups. Indeed, while for people born in Northern Ireland there are 948 males per 1000 females (just above the average for all white people of 935), there are only 862 males for every 1000 females among those born in the Irish Republic. There are interesting differences in age structure between people born in Northern Ireland and the Republic⁴. The population pyramid for the Northern Ireland-born (Figure 2b) again has few children, but people in the younger economically active age ranges (up to 45) are more numerous than those aged over 45. There are notable 'bulges' in the 25-29 and 40-44 years age groups. The younger Northern Irish people would have migrated to Great Britain during the 1980s, attracted by the availability of employment at a time of exceptionally high unemployment in Northern Ireland. However, older people are also very prominent in the population. People born in the Republic of Ireland are predominantly middle aged (Figure 2c), with men in the majority. In the older age groups, women form the majority of the population. Young working age people are much less common than in the Northern Irish-born population.

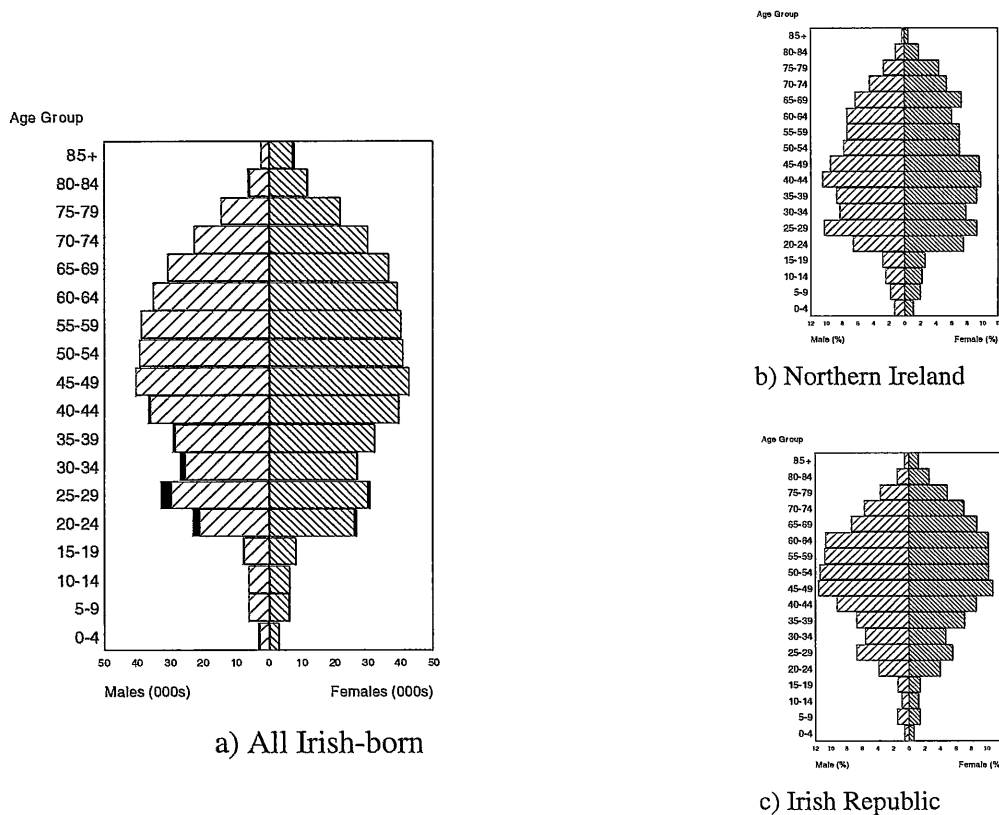


Figure 2: Age and gender pyramid for the Irish-born (people born in Northern Ireland or the Irish Republic), 1991

Further details of the population structure of people born in Ireland and a comparison with all white people and people from minority ethnic groups as a whole are presented in Table 1. This confirms that the Irish-born are much older on average than the rest of the population, while people born in the Irish Republic are about five years older on average than those born in Northern Ireland. The Irish Republic-born are more than ten years older on average than white people as a whole, and nearly twice the age of people from minority ethnic groups. Clearly, both Irish groups differ greatly from visible minority ethnic groups in the much smaller percentage of the population accounted for by children. This percentage is higher for the Northern Irish-born than for the Republic-born, since it includes more children who will have moved to Great Britain with their parents, since the size of the main child-raising age group (aged 25-44) is much larger among the former than the latter. The Northern Irish differ from the Republic-born, all white people and minority ethnic groups in the high percentage of people in this age group. In contrast, the percentage of the Republic-born who are middle aged (aged 45 to retirement age) is much higher than for the Northern Irish-born, twice as high as for all white people and nearly three times the percentage for minority ethnic groups. Pensioners account for a similar percentage to white people as a whole for the Northern Irish-born, but the percentage for those born in the Republic is about half as high again as the white average.

Table 1 Summary demographic characteristics of people born in Ireland compared with white people and people from minority ethnic groups in Great Britain, 1991

Age group, marital category, birthplace, migrants	White People		Minority ethnic groups		Born in Northern Ireland		Born in the Irish Republic	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Population (000s)	25,066.4	26,807.4	1,508.6	1,506.5	119.2	125.7	274.3	318.2
% aged 0-4	6.7	6.0	11.3	10.9	1.3	1.1	0.6	0.6
% aged 5-15	13.8	12.2	22.4	21.5	4.7	4.6	2.7	2.8
% aged 16-24	13.0	12.1	15.8	16.4	8.9	9.6	5.0	5.1
% aged 25-44	29.8	28.2	31.1	33.9	37.9	35.9	28.2	26.0
% aged 45-59/64	22.8	16.6	16.1	12.0	32.2	23.4	44.5	31.2
% of pensionable age	13.9	24.8	3.4	5.3	14.9	25.3	18.9	34.4
Median age in years	35.8	38.9	25.3	25.6	43.6	44.8	49.2	50.8
Percent aged 16 and over								
single	29.5	22.6	37.1	33.4	29.4	25.8	25.0	19.2
married	61.0	56.1	58.0	56.2	53.6	48.7	58.0	53.0
widowed	3.9	14.5	1.3	5.3	3.9	12.4	5.5	16.2
divorced	5.5	6.8	3.6	5.2	13.1	13.1	11.5	11.6
% living outside Great Britain one year before Census	0.5	0.5	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.9	2.2	2.1

Sources: 1991 Census Local Base Statistics and 1 per cent individual SAR (ESRC purchase); Crown Copyright. OPCS/GRO(Scotland) (1994) Country of Birth and Ethnic Group report (HMSO).

These patterns suggest that the Republic-born population is dominated by those who migrated in the 1940s and 1950s, while the Northern Irish-born population contains a much larger percentage of people who crossed the Irish Sea in the 1970s and 1980s. Over two per cent of Irish-born people had been living outside Great Britain a year before the Census was taken, a rate of one-year migration higher than for white people as a whole or minority ethnic groups, emphasising the continuing importance of migration for these population groups, but also representing the circulatory (as opposed to permanent) nature of much movement between the

two land masses. The percentage of migrants was slightly higher for the Northern Irish-born than the Republic-born, possibly reflecting the greater ability of residents of Northern Ireland to migrate to jobs elsewhere in the United Kingdom, than citizens of the Irish Republic.

The distribution of Irish-born people by marital status is similar to that of white people as a whole, with one notable exception. The percentage of single people is around the average for white people for the Northern Irish-born, but somewhat lower for the Republic-born. However, the percentage married is lower for Irish-born people than for all white people, and is similar for the Republic-born and people from minority ethnic groups. The latter have a higher percentage of single people as a result of their youthful age distribution. As a result of their greater average age, a higher percentage of Irish Republic-born people are widows or widowers than white people or people from minority ethnic groups. A very notable difference is the much greater incidence of divorce among the Irish-born than in other sections of the population; there is little difference between the genders, for each of which the Irish have much higher percentages of people divorced than either white people as a whole or people from minority ethnic groups.

4. Geographical distribution of people born in Ireland within Great Britain

The broad regional distribution of people born in Ireland is presented in Table 2. The Irish-born population as a whole has some similarities to people from minority ethnic groups in its geographical distribution. Nearly half live in South-East England, with Greater London having the largest single concentration, but the degree of concentration of Irish-born people in the capital is less marked than for people from minority ethnic groups. The West Midlands metropolitan county contains the second largest concentration of Irish-born people, but Greater Manchester and Scotland have shares of the Irish-born population almost as high. Overall, the table reveals a much more widespread geographical distribution of the Irish-born population than for people from minority ethnic groups; though the Irish-born are less common than the former ethnic groups in the urban centres of Yorkshire.

Table 2 reveals interesting differences in the geographical distribution of people born in Northern Ireland compared to those born in the Irish Republic. Northern Irish-born people have a geographical distribution quite similar to that of white people as a whole. The main differences are that the percentage living in Greater London is much higher than the average for all white people, the share of this population group living in North-West England and Scotland is above the average, while the percentage of this ethnic group living in more peripheral and easterly regions (with the exception of East Anglia) is well below the average for all white people.

In contrast, people born in the Irish Republic display a more strongly concentrated geographical distribution, with more than a third living in Greater London and over half living in South-East England. The other major concentrations of Irish Republic-born people are in the West Midlands and Greater Manchester metropolitan counties. A larger than average share of all Republic-born people live in East Anglia, but the share of the population living in Scotland is well below the average for the white ethnic group as a whole. The Republic-born are even less likely than the Northern Ireland-born to live in other eastern regions of Britain.

The local variations underlying these broad regional averages are revealed in Figures 3 to 5, which map those local authority districts in which the percentage of the population born in Ireland as a whole, in Northern Ireland and in the Irish Republic are above the national average.⁵ People born in Ireland as a whole (Figure 3) are most strongly represented in districts on the western side of the area of greatest population density. The main concentrations are around London, to the west and north-west of London, in the West Midlands metropolitan county and neighbouring commuter towns, in the cities of the East Midlands, around Manchester and elsewhere in the North-West of England and in Glasgow. The greatest local concentrations are found in Boroughs in central and north-west London. Other areas in which the percentage of Irish-born people is high include North Yorkshire, Stranraer and Folkestone; the former is probably due to the location of members of the armed forces in British military bases (near

Catterick), the next reflects the residence of people involved in the ferry trade, while the third concentration may be of Irish workers involved in Channel Tunnel construction.

Table 2 The regional distribution of Irish-born people resident in Great Britain, 1991

Standard Region or <i>metropolitan</i> <i>county</i>	Population totals and regional percentage share of GB								
	Total Population (000s)	All white People (%)	Minority ethnic groups (%)	All Irish- born (000s)	(%)	Born in Northern Ireland (000s)	(%)	Born in the Irish Republic (000s)	(%)
South East	17208.3	29.9	56.2	412.9	49.3	89.6	36.6	323.3	54.6
<i>Greater London</i>	6679.7	10.3	44.6	256.5	30.6	42.2	17.2	214.2	36.2
East Anglia	2027.0	3.8	1.4	47.3	5.6	18.8	7.7	28.5	4.8
South West	4609.4	8.8	2.1	18.4	2.2	7.6	3.1	10.9	1.8
West Midlands	5150.2	9.1	14.1	91.4	10.9	24.2	9.9	67.1	11.3
<i>West Midlands MC</i>	2551.7	4.2	12.4	65.4	7.8	14.5	5.9	50.9	8.6
East Midlands	3953.4	7.3	6.2	42.5	5.1	14.6	6.0	27.9	4.7
Yorks & Humberside	4836.5	8.9	7.1	40.7	4.9	15.4	6.3	25.3	4.3
<i>S Yorkshire MC</i>	1262.6	2.4	1.2	7.8	0.9	2.7	1.1	5.1	0.9
<i>W Yorkshire MC</i>	2013.7	3.6	5.4	22.2	2.7	7.3	3.0	14.9	2.5
North West	6243.7	11.6	8.1	98.0	11.7	32.1	13.1	65.9	11.1
<i>Greater Manchester</i>	2499.4	4.5	4.9	51.0	6.1	13.2	5.4	37.8	6.4
<i>Merseyside</i>	1403.6	2.7	0.9	17.3	2.1	5.8	2.4	11.4	1.9
North	3026.7	5.8	1.3	16.3	1.9	8.9	3.6	7.4	1.3
<i>Tyne & Wear</i>	1095.2	2.1	0.7	5.2	0.6	2.6	1.1	2.6	0.4
Wales	2835.1	5.4	1.4	20.8	2.5	7.4	3.0	13.5	2.3
Scotland	4998.6	9.5	2.1	49.2	5.9	26.4	10.8	22.8	3.8
Great Britain	54,888.8	100.0	100.0	837.5	100.0	244.9	100.0	592.5	100.0

Source: 1991 Census Local Base Statistics (ESRC purchase); Crown Copyright.

People born in Northern Ireland have a rather more widespread geographical distribution than Irish-born people as a whole (Figure 4). The most striking feature of the map is the large part of Scotland in which the percentage of the population born in Northern Ireland is above the British average. The largest percentages in Scotland occur in Galloway, while Northern Irish-born people are widely spread across the more rural districts as well as the cities of Scotland, but with a western bias to the distribution. There are no above average concentrations in Wales, but Northern Ireland-born people again have a more widespread distribution than all Irish-born people in England, and again tend to be located in more westerly areas. The main areas of concentration are in central southern England, in the western South-East and eastern South-West. Other concentrations occur in much of the North-West and in the cities and commuter towns of the midlands. There is a notable concentration in Kent, which may reflect the location of construction workers, but there is also some linen manufacturing, which attracted Northern Irish workers.

People born in the Irish Republic have a much more concentrated geographical distribution (Figure 5). The largest local concentrations of the Republic-born occur in London, mainly in the western and north-western Boroughs. Elsewhere, the main local concentrations are around Manchester and Birmingham. However, London is the centre of a wider area of Republic-born settlement extending north-westwards towards the midlands and including most of the districts surrounding London. Relatively high percentages of Republic-born people are also found in port cities such as Bristol and Southampton.

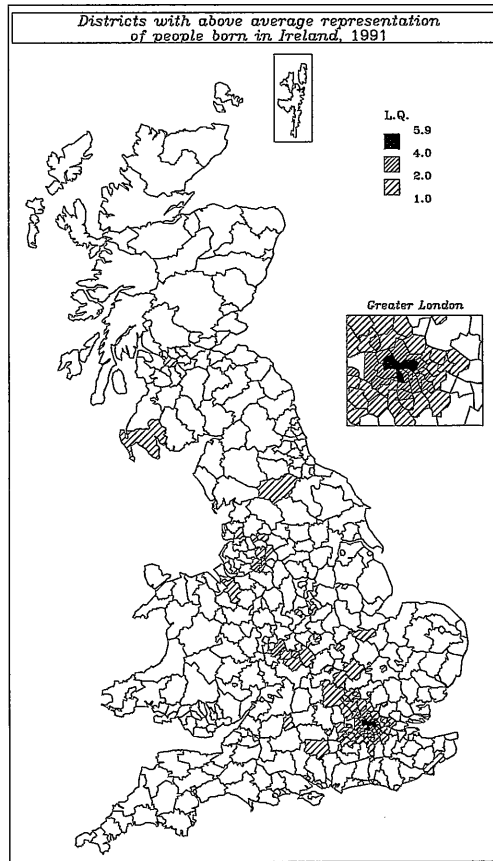


Figure 3

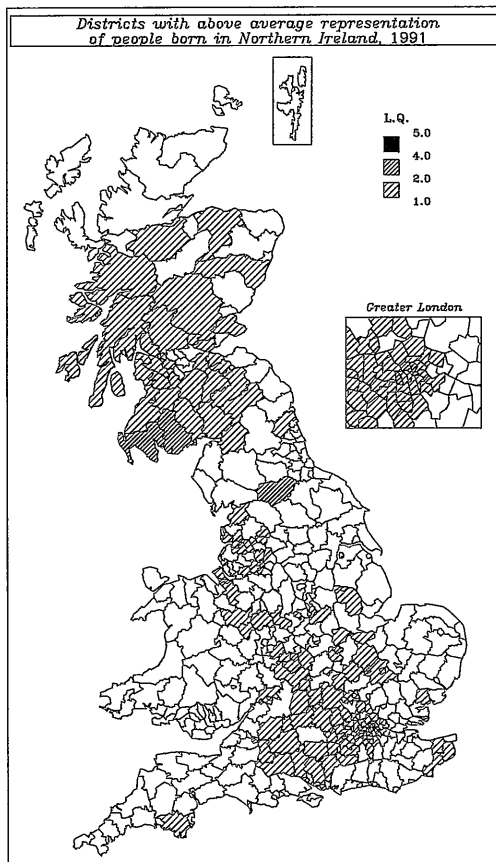


Figure 4

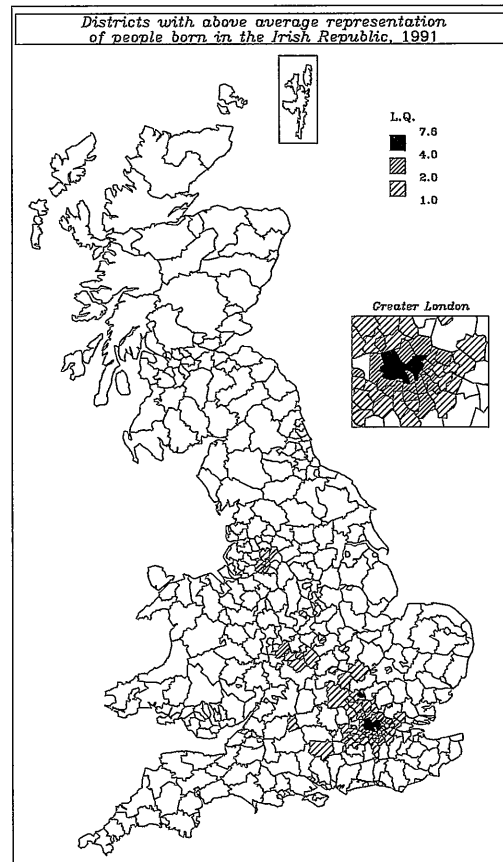


Figure 5

Table 3 presents an alternative perspective upon the geographical distribution of Irish-born people, focusing upon those administrative and political areas in which people from these ethnic groups are most prominent in the local population. Two types of area are reported; local authority districts and parliamentary constituencies.

The local authority districts in which 5 per cent or more of the population was born in Ireland in 1991 were (with the exception of Luton) all located within London. Brent stands out as having a particularly high percentage of Irish-born people, followed by a number of Boroughs in central London, Ealing and Luton. However, the substantial presence of Irish-born people in other British cities is reflected in the high position in the ranking of Coventry and Manchester, in each of which the Irish-born account for nearly 5 per cent of the population. The relatively widespread distribution of Northern Ireland-born people is reflected in their small share of the population of most districts. The largest percentage share is 1.6 per cent, in Corby (a former steel town which developed rapidly after the Second World War). The areas at the head of the ranking are a mixture of central London Boroughs, provincial cities and rural areas. Both Coventry and Manchester again appear in the top 15, while the high representation of Northern Ireland-born people in Galloway is reflected in the high position in the ranking of Wigtown and Stewartry. In contrast, the largest concentrations of people born in the Irish Republic are found in London, mostly located in central and western parts of London. In both Coventry and Manchester, 3.6 per cent of the population of were born in the Irish Republic, while 4.6 per cent of Luton's population had been born in the Irish Republic.

The parliamentary constituencies in which the share of the population born in Ireland is highest are mainly found in the same areas, except that the Irish-born form a significant percentage of the population of some Birmingham constituencies. Almost an eighth of the population of the Brent East constituency was born in Ireland, and the Irish-born are also prominent in the other Brent constituencies, as well as a number of other constituencies in central and western London. The Irish-born account for more than 5 per cent of the population of two Birmingham constituencies and 6.3 per cent of the population of Manchester Gorton. This constituency and Coventry South-East have the highest percentage shares of the Northern Irish-born of all mainland British constituencies, at 1.2 per cent of the population. Three Manchester and three Coventry constituencies also appear in the list of 15 constituencies with highest population shares born in Northern Ireland. The geographical distribution of the Northern Irish-born is again wider than for the Republic-born, with Roxburgh & Berwick and Edinburgh East also having more than 1 per cent of their populations born in Northern Ireland. In contrast, the nine constituencies in which the share of the population born in the Irish Republic is highest were all in central and northern parts of London, with the likely political influence of the Republic-born being greatest in the Brent constituencies. Outside London, the share of the Irish Republic-born in a constituency's population only exceeded 5 per cent for Manchester Gorton, and was at 4.7 per cent in the Sparkbrook and Erdington constituencies of Birmingham.

5. Households, family structure and housing characteristics

In the Census of Population, one person is requested to complete the form on behalf of all members of the household. A household may contain more than one family (for example, where a married couple live with one set of parents). Though families may be of more relevance in terms of social organisation, most of the information on housing characteristics and material deprivation in the Census is presented on the basis of households. Table 4 presents some key characteristics of all white households, households headed by persons from minority ethnic groups, and households headed by persons born in Northern Ireland or the Irish Republic. Irish-headed households are similar to those headed by all white people in size and in the number of dependent children, and somewhat smaller than minority ethnic group households. Though the Irish-born population is elderly compared to the rest of the population, the percentage of pensioner households is slightly lower than for the white households as a whole; probably reflecting the concentration of Irish-born people in late middle age.

Owner-occupation is a less common form of housing tenure for households with Irish-born heads than for all white-headed households from or for minority ethnic group households; only just over half of Irish-headed households own or are buying their own homes. The percentage of Irish-headed households renting from the private sector is similar to that for minority ethnic groups and well above the average for all white households. Renting from Housing Associations is more common among Irish-headed households than for white households as a whole, but this percentage is slightly lower than for minority ethnic groups. More than a quarter of Irish-headed households were accommodated by the public sector in 1991, a percentage well above the averages for white households and minority ethnic group households.

Table 3 Largest local concentrations of people born in Ireland within Great Britain, 1991

Area	All born in Ireland		Born in Northern Ireland		Born in the Irish Republic	
	Area	Percent	Area	Percent	Area	Percent
Local Authority Districts (all ages)						
Brent	9.0	Corby	1.6	Brent	8.2	
Islington	7.1	Wigtown	1.5	Islington	6.2	
Hammersmith & Fulham	6.8	City of London	1.5	Hammersmith&Fulham	1.1	
Camden	6.5	Richmondshire	1.3	Camden	5.4	
Ealing	6.0	Hammersmith & Fulham	1.1	Ealing	5.1	
Luton	5.4	Camden	1.0	Luton	4.6	
Westminster, City of	5.3	Coventry	1.0	Westminster, City of	4.5	
Haringey	5.2	Islington	1.0	Haringey	4.4	
Harrow	4.9	Manchester	1.0	Harrow	4.4	
Lambeth	4.8	Stewartry	1.0	Lambeth	3.9	
Coventry	4.6	Westminster, City of	0.9	Southwark	3.8	
Manchester	4.6	Rushmoor	0.9	Manchester	3.6	
Southwark	4.5	West Wiltshire	0.9	Coventry	3.6	
Wandsworth	4.2	Hyndburn	0.9	Wandsworth	3.4	
Kensington&Chelsea	4.0	Kyle & Carrick	0.9	Hackney	3.3	
Parliamentary Constituencies						
Brent East	12.3	Manchester, Gorton	1.2	Brent East	11.2	
Hammersmith	8.5	Hammersmith	1.2	Brent South	7.5	
Brent South	8.2	Coventry South East	1.2	Hammersmith	7.3	
Islington North	8.2	Manchester, Withington	1.1	Islington North	7.1	
Ealing, Acton	6.8	Birmingham, Erdington	1.1	Brent North	5.9	
Holborn and St. Pancras	6.7	Corby	1.1	Ealing, Acton	5.8	
Brent North	6.5	Roxburgh & Berwick	1.1	Holborn and St. Pancras	5.6	
Manchester, Gorton	6.3	Brent East	1.1	Ealing North	5.3	
Hampstead and Highgate	6.2	Holborn and St. Pancras	1.1	Hampstead and Highgate	5.3	
Ealing North	6.2	Edinburgh East	1.1	Manchester, Gorton	5.1	
Islington South and	5.9	Ealing, Acton	1.1	Islington South and	5.1	
Birmingham, Erdington	5.8	Coventry North East	1.1	Westminster North	5.0	
Westminster North	5.8	Islington North	1.1	Harrow East	4.9	
Birmingham, Sparkbrook	5.7	Coventry North West	1.1	Birmingham, Sparkbrook	4.7	
Harrow East	5.5	Manchester, Central	1.0	Birmingham, Erdington	4.7	

Source: 1991 Census Local Base Statistics (ESRC purchase); Crown Copyright.

Table 4 presents a number of measures derived from the Census which have commonly been used as indicators of physical housing deprivation and material need: overcrowding, lacking or sharing a bathroom or WC and ownership of a car. Overcrowding affects more than an eighth of minority ethnic group households (probably reflecting larger average household size and the inability to afford larger accommodation), and while the incidence of overcrowding is much less for households with Irish-born heads, the percentage living in overcrowded conditions is much higher than the average for all white households, probably as a result of the higher percentage of Irish-headed households living in privately rented accommodation. This factor also accounts for the percentage of Irish-headed households having to share bathrooms and WCs being higher than the averages for both the white and minority ethnic groups. A higher incidence of renting and a tendency to live in poorer quality accommodation may indicate lower levels of income, which tends to be confirmed by the high percentage of Irish-headed households which do not possess a car.⁶

Table 4 Household and family composition, housing tenure and housing amenities for Irish-born people, white people and people from minority ethnic groups in Great Britain, 1991

Household characteristics or family type	White people	Minority ethnic groups	Born in Ireland
All Households (100%)	21,026,565	870,757	449,696
Mean household size	2.4	3.3	2.4
Mean no. of dependent children	1.8	2.2	1.8
Percent pensioner households	25.7	4.2	23.2
% households owner-occupied	66.6	59.5	55.4
% renting from private sector	7.0	10.8	10.9
% renting from Housing Associations	3.0	5.9	5.1
% renting from public sector	21.4	21.8	26.3
% with 1+ person per room	1.8	13.1	2.9
% lacking/sharing bathroom/WC	1.2	2.1	2.2
% without a car	33.0	40.8	45.5
All families (10% sample)	1,462,155	83,095	43,064
<i>Married couple families (%)</i>	79.2	74.2	76.2
With no dependent children	35.6	17.1	32.9
With 1 or more dependent children	25.0	49.0	26.8
With non-dependent children	12.5	8.1	16.5
<i>Cohabiting couple families (%)</i>	7.7	4.9	6.9
With no dependent children	4.9	2.6	4.6
With 1 or more dependent children	2.5	2.1	1.9
With non-dependent children	0.3	0.2	0.4
<i>Lone parent families (%)</i>	13.1	20.9	16.9
With 1 or more dependent children	7.8	15.8	8.0
With non-dependent children	5.4	5.1	8.9

Sources: 1991 Census Local Base Statistics (ESRC purchase); Crown Copyright. OPCS/GRO(Scotland) (1994) Country of Birth and Ethnic Group report (HMSO).

The family composition of Irish-born people is compared with that of all white families and families from the minority ethnic groups in Table 4. This presents the percentage of all

families falling into the categories married couple, cohabiting couple and lone parents, each of which is further disaggregated according to whether or not they have dependent children, or whether their children are no longer dependent. Marriage is more common among Irish-headed families than for minority ethnic groups, but the percentage of married couples is somewhat lower than the average for all white families. Only a quarter of white married couples, and a slightly larger percentage of Irish-headed married couples have dependent children, compared to more than half of married couples from minority ethnic groups. As a concomitant, only 17.1 per cent of married couples from minority ethnic groups do not have dependent children, compared to more than a third of white couples, and a slightly smaller percentage of married couples with Irish-born heads. The older average age of white people as a whole is responsible for white married couples having a much higher percentage of non-dependent children (since these will be children still living with their parents who are no longer economically dependent, having reached adulthood) and this percentage is thus even higher for families with Irish-born heads, due to the greater percentage of people in late middle age in this ethnic group.

The percentage of all families accounted for by cohabiting couples is about two-thirds as high among people from minority ethnic groups as for white people, while the percentage of cohabiting couples amongst Irish-headed families is slightly lower than the white average. While 42.8 per cent of cohabiting couples from minority ethnic groups have dependent children, just under a third of all white cohabiting couples have dependent children, and the percentage for Irish-headed cohabiting couples is lower again, at 27.5 per cent. Thus, two-thirds of Irish-headed cohabiting couples do not have dependent children, a percentage much higher than the averages for white families and families from minority ethnic groups. Irish-headed cohabiting couples are also more likely to have non-dependent children.

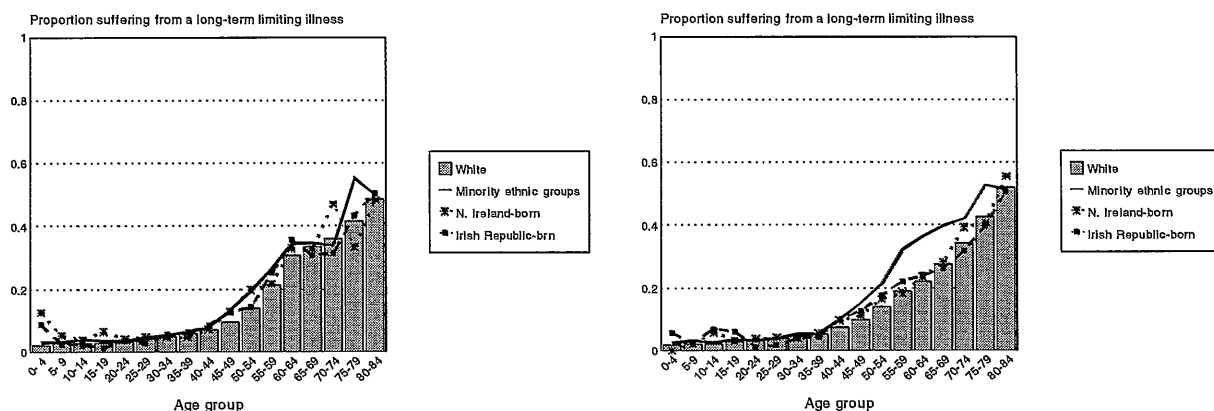
While around an eighth of white families are lone-parent families, lone parents account for more than a fifth of all families from minority ethnic groups, and the percentage of lone parents among Irish-headed families is intermediate between these two broad divisions of the population. Minority ethnic groups are distinguished by the high percentage of lone parent families (75.6 per cent) containing dependent children; probably reflecting the higher incidence of single parenthood among young people. However, this state also includes people who have experienced partnership break-up, divorce or widowhood. Thus, lone parent families containing no dependent children account for 41.2 per cent of all white lone parent families and 52.7 per cent of lone parent families with Irish-born heads.

6. Health differentials for Irish-born people

The 1991 Census included for the first time a question intended to yield information on the incidence of long-term illness and disability within the population. The wording of this question was "*Does the person have any long-term illness, health problem or handicap which limits his/her daily activities or the work he/she can do?*". The responses to the question can be regarded as quite a good indicator of the general level of health of the population, but the usefulness of the information yielded by the question for the study of illness is limited by the fact that all types of health problem are treated as being of equal severity. The Census enables the proportions of males and females suffering a long-term health problem to be calculated for each ethnic group. Table 5 presents the incidence of long-term limiting illness for people born in Ireland compared with the white and minority ethnic groups.

Since it is derived from Local Base Statistics, the upper section of Table 5 does not distinguish between people born in Northern Ireland and people born in the Irish Republic. The basic Census information on limiting long-term illness reveals that Irish-born people suffer poorer levels of health than both the white ethnic group and minority ethnic groups as a whole. The number of Irish-born people suffering limiting long-term illnesses is more than half the corresponding figure for minority ethnic groups, and thus the rate of limiting long-term illness is more than twice as high. This rate is also a third higher than for white people as a whole. More than a quarter of households headed by an Irish-born person contain a person suffering from a limiting long-term illness, well above the average for white people, but the average number of ill

persons per household is lower than for both all white people and minority ethnic groups. In part a result of smaller household size, it may also indicate a lesser tendency for illness to be concentrated, with a number of ill persons in a household.



a) Males

b) Females

Figure 6: Rates of limiting long-term illness by age group

Health tends to deteriorate with age, and inter-ethnic group differences are thus strongly influenced by the differences in age structure between ethnic groups. The Irish-born would thus be expected to have poorer health because of their older average age. It is thus more meaningful to compare the rate of limiting long-term illness with the same rate standardised to take the age structure of an ethnic group into account. These rates can be calculated using the individual 1 per cent Sample of Anonymised Records; the results are presented in Table 5⁷. The percentage of all white people with limiting long-term illnesses is very close to (actually marginally below) that which would be expected from the age structure of the ethnic group for both males and females. However, people from minority ethnic groups are revealed to have much poorer health than would be predicted from their age structure. The percentage of males with limiting long-term illnesses is 15 per cent above the expected percentage, while the percentage of females with limiting long-term illnesses is nearly a third higher than the number which would occur if the illness rates for each age group were the same as the national average. The opposite result is obtained for Irish-born people. Their age-standardised illness rate is much closer to the actual illness rate, indicating that the main influence on their higher rates of illness is the large percentage of older people in the population. However, the illness rates of Irish-born are still 5 to 10 per cent higher than the hypothetical rates, with the poor health differential wider for males than females. Northern Ireland-born people have lower rates of limiting long-term illness, but are younger on average than people born in the Irish Republic. Hence, their relative illness rates are higher than those for people born in the Republic.

The influence of age upon health is demonstrated in Figures 6a and 6b, which plot the proportion of males and females with limiting long-term illnesses in each 5-year age group for people born in Northern Ireland, the Irish Republic and people from minority ethnic groups, compared with all white males and females. Levels of ill-health are low for all four ethnic groups in the younger age ranges, except for children, amongst whom illness rates for the Irish-born are higher. The most rapid increases in the proportion of the population suffering from limiting long-term illness occur from middle-age onwards, while in the oldest age groups, about half the population is suffering from a limiting long-term illness. People from minority ethnic groups suffer poorer levels of health than the white population, with the differential widest for middle-aged women. Irish-born people experience a pattern of limiting long-term illness by age close to that of all white people. The main difference is a slightly higher rate of long-term illness amongst the middle-aged for both men and women. A higher percentage of elderly people amongst the Northern Ireland-born suffer from limiting long-term illnesses in comparison with

all white people and people born in the Irish Republic, probably accounting for the slightly poorer overall levels of health of the Northern Ireland-born.

Table 5 The incidence of limiting long-term illness among the Irish-born, all white people and minority ethnic groups in Great Britain, 1991

Long-term ill persons and illness rates	White people	Minority ethnic groups	Born in Ireland	Born in Northern Ireland	Born in the Irish Republic
Persons suffering limiting long-term illness (000s)	6,949.7	251.7	149.0	n/a	n/a
Percent of all persons	13.4	8.4	17.8	n/a	n/a
Households containing a long-term ill person (000s)	5,227.4	182.3	121.5	n/a	n/a
Percent of all households	24.9	20.9	27.0	n/a	n/a
Mean no. ill per household	1.3	1.4	1.2	n/a	n/a
Male age standardised long-term illness rate	12.0	8.1	16.1	13.8	17.0
Female age standardised long-term illness rate	13.1	6.1	16.4	13.9	17.4
Male relative illness rate	0.99	1.15	1.07	1.10	1.05
Female relative illness rate	0.99	1.32	1.04	1.06	1.03

Sources: 1991 Census Local Base Statistics (ESRC purchase) and 2 % individual Sample of Anonymised Records; both Crown Copyright.

Note: LBS data does not provide separate information for those born in Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic.

7. Economic activity, employment and unemployment

In this section, detailed information on the experience in the labour market of people born in Ireland is presented for Great Britain as a whole. It covers three broad dimensions; contrasts in participation in the labour market by age and gender, differences in the industries and occupations in which Irish-born men and women work, and variations in unemployment between Irish-born people and the white and minority ethnic groups.

7.1 Labour Market participation

The main dimensions of economic participation by Irish-born people are presented in Table 6. The economic activity rate is an extremely important indicator, representing the percentage of people who participate in the labour market (either through being in work or by seeking work)⁸. The table contrasts the economic activity of all persons aged 16 and over, people of economically active age and those aged 16-24. Unfortunately, the published Census data does not provide data on the economic characteristics of people born in Northern Ireland or the Irish Republic, and thus only the averages for all Irish-born people are presented here.

Amongst people aged 16 and over, economic activity rates are very similar for all white people, people born in Ireland and people from minority ethnic groups; about three-quarters of men and around a half of women are economically active. However, this comparison is distorted by the relatively high percentages of both the entire white population and of Irish people who are of pensionable age, since minority ethnic groups have relatively youthful populations. A more accurate comparison of economic activity rates focuses on the economically active age range, which is 16-64 for men and 16-59 for women. For the working age range, the economic activity

rate of Irish-born men (85.6 per cent) is just below the average for all white men, while that for women is just above the white average (69.6 per cent). Economic activity rates for minority ethnic groups are well below those for Irish-born men and women. Young people (aged 16-24) are less likely to be economically active than people aged 25 and over, since a relatively large percentage of this age group is still engaged in full-time education. However, young Irish-born men have economic activity rates only slightly lower than the average for all Irish-born men, while the economic activity rate for young Irish-born women is well above the average for Irish-born women. These economic activity rates are well above the overall averages for the white and minority ethnic groups. The greater average age of Irish-born people is responsible for the male economic inactivity rate being well above the average for white men (itself higher than the average for men from minority ethnic groups). However, Irish-born women are no more likely to be economically inactive than other women.

Table 6 Economic characteristics of people born in Ireland, compared with all white people and minority ethnic groups in Great Britain, 1991

Economic status	White People		Minority ethnic groups		Born in Ireland	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
<i>Aged 16+</i>						
Total (000s)	19,927.7	21,918.7	1,000.6	1018.1	377.0	428.0
Economically active (000s)	14,577.7	10,897.4	761.9	539.8	264.1	213.4
Economic activity rate (%)	73.2	49.7	76.2	53.0	70.1	49.9
<i>Aged 16-59/64</i>						
Total (000s)	16,442.7	15,259.2	949.9	937.7	300.5	283.2
Economically active (000s)	14,299.4	10,422.8	755.0	530.4	257.3	197.2
Economic activity rate (%)	87.0	68.3	79.5	56.6	85.6	69.6
<i>16-24 year olds</i>						
Total (000s)	3,262.1	3,246.6	237.8	246.5	27.5	32.7
Economically active (000s)	2,544.2	2,169.9	138.4	120.4	23.0	25.0
Economic activity rate (%)	78.0	66.8	58.2	48.8	83.5	76.6
<i>Economically inactive aged 16 and over</i>						
Total (000s)	5,350.0	11,021.3	238.7	478.4	112.8	214.6
Inactivity rate (%)	26.9	50.3	23.8	47.0	29.9	50.1
<i>Composition of the economically inactive</i>						
full-time students (%)	13.5	6.7	49.9	20.7	4.5	2.5
permanently sick (%)	18.5	6.6	19.9	7.6	26.1	8.8
retired (%)	65.2	42.9	21.9	10.9	65.9	46.9
other inactive (%)	2.7	43.9	8.2	73.4	3.5	41.8

Source: 1991 Census Local Base Statistics (ESRC purchase); Crown Copyright.

The detailed variation in labour market participation within the working age range is illustrated in Figures 7a (for men) and 7b (for women), which reveal very different patterns for people born in Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic, compared with all white people and minority ethnic groups (these rates are calculated from the 2 per cent individual Sample of Anonymised Records). Economic activity rates for men born in both Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic vary with age in a similar fashion to those for white men as a whole. Initially low, they increase to a peak for men in their late twenties, remaining at a high level until the 40-44 year old age group, when a slow decline begins, which accelerates for men aged 55 and over. The greatest fall occurs at retirement age, though some men aged 65 and over remain economically active. The increase in economic activity rates at the younger end of the age range is more rapid for Irish Republic-born men, for whom the economic activity rates of 20-24 year olds is well above that for Northern Ireland-born men and white men as a whole. While the economic activity rates of Northern Ireland-born men closely reflects the white average throughout the age range, economic activity rates for men born in the Irish Republic begin to

decline for men in their mid thirties, and the percentage of middle-aged men economically active is lower than the white average and the corresponding percentage for Northern Ireland-born men. Men from minority ethnic groups display a very different pattern of economic activity, with rates of labour market participation increasing much more slowly with increasing age, and the peak activity rates being maintained for a shorter part of the age range.

Economic activity rates for white women as a whole do not reach the same levels as those of men for any part of the economically active age range. They display a characteristic pattern of peaks of labour market participation for women in their early twenties and early forties, with a trough between corresponding to the ages where many women withdraw from the labour market in order to bear and care for children. This pattern is repeated for women from minority ethnic groups as a whole, but economic activity rates are well below those for white women throughout the age range. Women born in Ireland experience a distinctive pattern of labour market participation. For Northern Ireland-born women, the first peak of economic activity is reached in the 25-29 year age group, at over 80 per cent, thereafter falling back. Economic activity rates for women aged 35 and over closely follow the white average, and thus there is a second peak for the 40-44 year age group, but at a much lower participation rate than the earlier peak. Economic activity rates for women born in the Irish Republic increase even more rapidly with age, and while their first peak occurs in the 20-24 year age group, this represents a participation rate of well over 80 per cent, well above the averages for other ethnic groups. There is less evidence of a second peak for women in their forties, and in contrast to other women, economic activity rates for older women do not come close to those for younger women. The implication is that many Irish Republic-born women do not return to the labour force after having started a family.

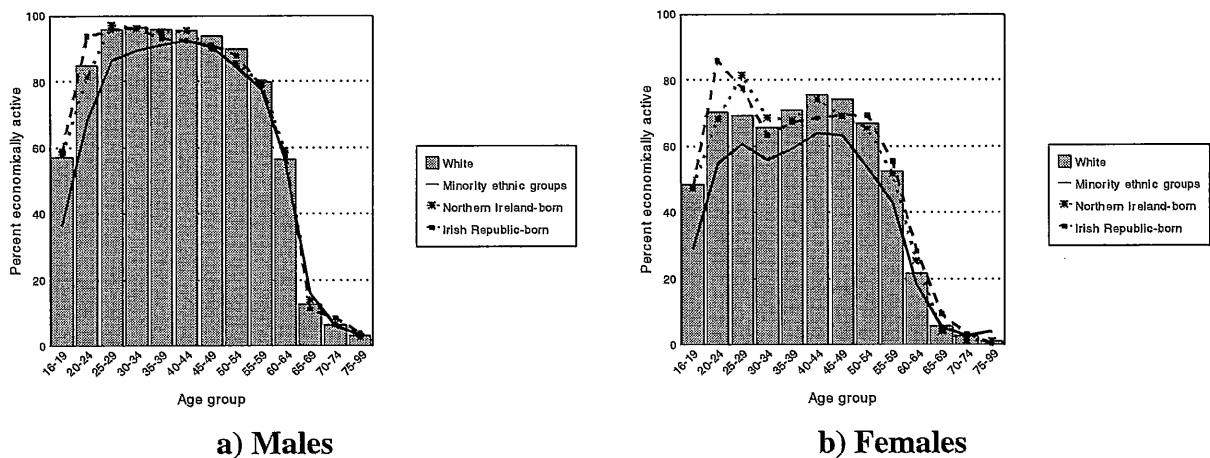


Figure 7: Percentage economically active by age group

Table 6 provides further insights into the reasons underlying differences in labour market participation between Irish-born people and the rest of the population, through a breakdown of the structure of the economically inactive. Economic inactivity rates (the percentage of those aged 16 and over neither employed nor seeking work) are higher for women than for men, and higher for Irish-born men than for other men. Half of economically inactive men from minority ethnic groups are full-time students, with about a fifth in both the states retired and permanently sick. Students are much less common for all inactive white men, nearly two-thirds of whom are retired, but the percentage permanently sick is similar to that for minority ethnic groups. Two-thirds of economically inactive Irish-born men are retired, reflecting the large percentage of older men, and a very small percentage are full-time students. However, over a quarter are permanently sick; this might result from older men experiencing long-term unemployment and then moving from unemployment benefit to sickness benefit, but may also result from a higher incidence of industrial illnesses contracted by manual workers. There is very little difference

between Irish-born women, all white women and women from minority ethnic groups in the percentage inactive, despite the greater average age of all white women and Irish-born women, due to the lower activity rates of women from minority ethnic groups across the age range. For Irish-born and white women as a whole, the two main components of the economically inactive are the retired and the "other inactive"; mainly those looking after a home or family full-time. In contrast, three-quarters of economically inactive women from minority ethnic groups are "other inactive", but a fifth are full-time students; only 2.5 per cent of Irish-born women are full-time students.

7.2 Employment

Table 7 outlines the broad dimensions of employment for men and women born in Ireland, compared with the averages for the white people as a whole and minority ethnic groups. Irish-born people have similar characteristics to both all white people and people from minority ethnic groups. Over the last two decades or so, part-time employment has grown rapidly, at the expense of full-time jobs. Most of these jobs have gone to women, and Irish-born men are no more likely to gain from the shift to part-time working than other men. Only 4 per cent of Irish-born men employees worked part-time, a percentage slightly lower than for the other sections of the population. Irish-born women were more similar to all white women than to women from minority ethnic groups, since nearly two-fifths of those who were employees worked part-time. However, both men and women born in Ireland worked longer hours on average than men and women from the white ethnic group as a whole, though women from minority ethnic groups worked slightly more hours per week on average than Irish-born women.

Table 7 Employment characteristics of people born in Ireland compared with all white people and minority ethnic groups in Great Britain, 1991

Economic status	White People		Minority ethnic groups		Born in Ireland	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
All in work (000s)	12,822.4	10,087.9	589.4	440.8	222.7	197.2
Employees FT (000s)	10,121.9	5,677.0	444.2	307.6	170.4	115.6
Employees PT (000s)	444.9	3,743.6	27.0	95.9	7.1	71.0
%employed pt	4.2	39.7	5.7	23.8	4.0	38.0
Median hours worked	38.2	33.8	38.2	36.2	38.5	34.3
Self-employed with employees (000s)	737.2	241.5	50.8	14.5	12.9	4.5
Self-employed without employees (000s)	1,518.4	425.9	67.4	22.8	32.4	6.1
%working self-employed	17.6	6.6	19.5	8.2	20.1	5.3
Self-employed with employees as percent of economically active	5.1	2.2	6.7	2.7	4.9	2.1
Econ. active students (000s)	97.1	125.2	6.3	6.4	0.6	0.8

Source: 1991 Census Local Base Statistics (ESRC purchase) and OPCS/GRO(Scotland) (1994) Country of Birth and Ethnic Group report (HMSO); both Crown Copyright.

Another major change in the nature of work in recent years has been the growth of self-employment. The number of people self-employed increased by nearly a million during the 1980s, boosted by government policies aimed at encouraging people to be more "entrepreneurial" and start up their own businesses (e.g. the Enterprise Allowance Scheme). However, some of this growth resulted from changes in employment contracts enforced by employers, rather than being a result of people starting their own businesses, while the growth of self-employment was beginning to slow down by 1991 as a result of the return of recession conditions. Census data provides some insight into the extent to which self-employment reflects

small business formation, since it distinguishes whether the self-employed had employees or not. Irish-born men are more likely than all white men or men from minority ethnic groups as a whole to be self-employed, but "entrepreneurs" (the self-employed employing others) are less common among the Irish-born than for the other two groups; men from minority ethnic groups are more entrepreneurial than white men. This result probably reflects the importance of the construction industry as a source of work for Irish men, since many building workers are nominally self-employed. Women are less likely than men to be self-employed and Irish-born women are even less likely than other women to be working on their own account. "Entrepreneurs" are far less common among Irish-born women than among women from minority ethnic groups.

Table 8 The industrial structure of work for people born in Ireland compared with that of all white people and minority ethnic groups in Great Britain, 1991

Industrial category	White People		Minority ethnic groups		Born in Northern Ireland		Born in the Irish Republic	
	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Agriculture, etc.	2.9	1.0	0.1	0.1	1.2	0.4	0.9	0.3
Mining	1.1	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.8	0.1	0.8	0.1
Utilities	1.8	0.7	0.5	0.5	1.6	0.6	1.4	0.5
Metals&minerals	2.1	0.7	1.6	0.4	1.6	0.5	1.4	0.4
Chemicals	1.7	0.9	1.1	1.0	1.9	1.0	1.1	1.0
Engineering	13.2	4.4	12.2	5.0	10.6	4.8	10.3	4.1
Food,drink,tobacco	2.4	2.1	2.6	2.4	1.8	2.5	2.0	2.0
Textiles&clothing	1.3	2.7	4.8	6.7	1.1	1.8	0.8	1.7
Other manufacturing	5.7	3.1	4.2	2.7	3.9	2.1	3.6	2.0
Construction	12.5	1.6	5.8	0.9	16.5	1.0	32.1	1.7
Distribution	16.7	24.1	28.9	24.3	13.7	23.9	11.8	23.1
Transport/comms.	8.7	3.3	11.2	4.6	8.3	2.8	10.1	3.4
Business services	11.2	13.6	10.6	12.9	11.8	11.3	8.9	10.3
Misc. services	5.7	14.1	4.9	12.5	6.8	15.4	5.3	17.5
Health&education	5.7	20.8	6.9	18.9	8.1	24.7	5.6	26.0
Public administration	7.3	6.9	4.3	7.1	10.3	7.2	3.9	5.8

Source: 1991 Census 2 % Individual Sample of Anonymised Records; Crown Copyright.

There are major contrasts between ethnic groups and between men and women in the type of work which they are engaged in. Two important dimensions of work are the industry (detailed in Table 8) and occupation (presented in Table 9) in which a person works⁹. Most white men work in four industrial sectors; engineering, construction, distribution (which includes hotels, catering and retailing) and business services. This contrasts strongly with white women, the great majority of whom work in the service sector, mainly in distribution and the health and education services. The industrial distribution of work for men from minority ethnic groups is quite different from that of white men. Though 12.2 per cent work in the engineering industry, they are far more likely than white men to work in service sector industries, especially in the distribution industry (which covers retailing, catering and wholesaling), together with the transport and communications and business services sectors. Women from minority ethnic groups are even more likely to work in the service sector, with distribution, health & education and miscellaneous services being the largest employers.

The majority of men born in Northern Ireland work in five industries; construction, distribution, business services, engineering and public administration, with construction providing about a sixth of all jobs. The industrial distribution of work for men born in the Irish Republic is much more concentrated. Four industries dominate their employment; construction,

distribution, engineering and transport and communications. Moreover, nearly a third of Republic-born men work in the construction industry, double the percentage of Northern Ireland-born men. The latter are more likely to be employed in 'white-collar' service sector industries such as business services, health & education and miscellaneous services. Nearly half of women born in Northern Ireland are employed in two industrial sectors; distribution and health & education. The service sector provides the bulk of work for the remainder, mainly in business and miscellaneous services. The industrial distribution of work for Irish Republic-born women is extremely similar, though the percentage working in the health & education sector is even higher.

The occupational structure of work is partly determined by the industrial structure; thus there are more manual jobs in the manufacturing sector and more white-collar jobs in the service sector. However, there is a long term trend towards decline in manual work in all sectors of the economy and a growth in non-manual employment, even in manufacturing industry, in which firms both carry out many 'service-like' functions, such as marketing and administration, and are increasingly relocating production activities to low labour-cost regions of the world. Comparing the occupational structure of white men and white women highlights the substantial gender division of work which exists in Britain (Table 11). The most common occupations for white men are corporate managers, other skilled trades, skilled engineering trades and industrial machine and plant operators (semi-skilled manual jobs), with "other elementary occupations" (unskilled manual work) and "managers and proprietors in agriculture and services" (self-employed farmers and business people) also important sources of work. In contrast, the dominant types of work done by white women are clerical occupations, followed by personal service occupations (hairdressers, etc.), secretarial occupations, other elementary occupations (unskilled manual jobs) and sales occupations. The percentage of corporate managers is just over half that for white men, and women are also less likely to be scientists and engineers or work in skilled manual craft occupations. However, white women are more likely than white men to be teachers or nurses (health associate professionals). The largest occupations for men from minority ethnic groups are protective services (armed forces, security, etc.), plant & machine operatives, managers & proprietors (reflecting the high percentage running their own businesses), secretarial and other elementary occupations, but the percentage working as health professionals and associate professionals is higher than for white men. The largest occupations for women from minority ethnic groups are secretarial, personal service and other elementary occupations, but they are more likely to be health professionals or skilled manual workers than white women.

The occupational specialisation of people born in Ireland is very different. More than an eighth of men born in Northern Ireland are corporate managers & administrators, but the next largest occupational category is "other elementary occupations", followed by other skilled trades and drivers & mobile machinery operators. However, the percentage of men working in professional and associate professional occupations in science & engineering, health and teaching is larger than for white men as a whole. Women born in Northern Ireland have an occupational distribution more similar to all white women. The three largest occupations are clerical, personal service and other elementary occupations, but they are even more likely than white women as a whole to be working as corporate managers & administrators or as professionals or associate professionals in the health sector.

In contrast, people born in the Irish Republic have a much lower chance of working in "white-collar" jobs. The largest occupations for men born in the Irish Republic are other elementary occupations (which covers many construction jobs), other skilled trades, industrial plant & machine operators, corporate managers & administrators (though the percentage working in this occupation is well below the average for all white people) and skilled construction trades. In the professions, only the percentages of health professionals and associate professionals are higher than the overall average for white men. Women born in the Irish Republic are also concentrated into more routine and lower-level jobs, with a fifth employed in other elementary occupations. Three other occupations account for the bulk of women in work; personal service occupations, clerical occupations and health associate

professionals. The percentage employed as health associate professionals is twice as high as for white women as a whole.

Table 9 The occupational structure of work for people born in Ireland compared with that of all white people and minority ethnic groups in Great Britain, 1991

Standard Occupational Classification sub-major group	White People		Minority ethnic groups		Born in Northern Ireland		Born in the Irish Republic	
	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Corporate managers and administrators	12.4	6.6	6.5	4.2	13.0	7.3	9.3	5.0
Managers and proprietors agriculture&services	7.1	5.2	9.9	5.0	5.1	4.4	4.8	5.0
Science and engineering professionals	3.8	0.5	3.3	0.7	4.0	0.8	2.1	0.6
Health professionals	0.7	0.5	2.9	1.4	2.1	1.4	1.0	0.5
Teaching professionals	2.5	5.2	1.6	2.9	3.0	5.8	1.4	3.0
Other professionals	2.6	1.6	2.6	2.1	4.8	3.0	1.7	1.5
Science and engineering associate professionals	3.4	1.1	0.0	0.0	2.6	1.2	2.1	1.0
Health assoc. professionals	0.5	5.0	2.7	1.3	1.0	8.3	0.7	10.9
Other associate professionals	4.1	3.6	0.9	7.3	4.1	4.8	2.4	2.7
Clerical occupations	6.4	18.3	3.1	3.5	5.7	13.9	5.5	12.0
Secretarial occupations	0.2	10.3	9.1	17.2	0.3	8.5	0.3	7.9
Skilled construction trades	4.7	0.1	0.4	8.6	5.2	0.1	9.2	0.1
Skilled engineering trades	7.9	0.3	1.8	0.1	5.4	0.2	5.7	0.1
Other skilled trades	11.0	3.1	5.5	0.3	7.6	1.7	10.7	2.2
Protective service occs.	3.3	0.6	11.1	6.7	5.4	0.2	2.8	0.6
Personal service occs.	2.4	12.4	7.1	11.5	3.5	12.0	3.2	15.3
Buyers, brokers, sales reps	2.5	1.0	1.7	0.7	1.8	0.9	1.4	0.6
Other sales occupations	1.8	9.2	4.1	8.0	1.5	7.9	1.0	6.1
Industrial plant and machine operators, assemblers	7.7	4.6	11.1	8.9	6.2	5.1	9.3	4.2
Drivers and mobile machinery operators	6.7	0.4	5.8	0.2	7.1	0.4	8.8	0.5
Other occupations in agriculture, forestry and fishing	1.0	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.2	0.4	0.1
Other elementary occupations	7.1	9.9	8.7	9.4	10.0	12.0	16.1	20.2

Source: 1991 Census 2 % Individual Sample of Anonymised Records; Crown Copyright.

7.3 Unemployment

Table 10 contrasts the experience of unemployment for people born in Ireland with those of all white people and minority ethnic groups as a whole. Once again, there are both ethnic group and gender dimensions to the pattern of variation presented. Women experience lower unemployment rates than men, with the gender differential greatest for Irish-born people and least for white people as a whole. Men born in Ireland suffer an unemployment rate 50 per cent higher than the white average, but this is still substantially below the average unemployment rate for men from minority ethnic groups, for whom a fifth of the economically active are

unemployed. The unemployment rate for Irish-born women is only slightly higher than the average for all white women, and less than half that for women from minority ethnic groups. The 2 per cent individual Sample of Anonymised Records reveals that unemployment rates are higher for men and women born in the Irish Republic than for those born in Northern Ireland. Unemployment rates for people born in Northern Ireland and women born in the Irish Republic are just above the white average, but those for men born in the Irish Republic are nearly as high as for men from minority ethnic groups. Amongst white people as a whole, men are slightly more likely than women to participate on government schemes, but the percentage of people born in Ireland on such schemes is only half the white average for each gender. Men from minority ethnic groups are much more likely than white men to be on such schemes and the participation rate for women from minority ethnic groups is nearly three times that for white women.

For white men as a whole, unemployment rates are highest for young men, decline to their lowest levels for people in their forties, before rising again for older workers. White unemployment rates are higher for men than for women in all parts of the age range, and the increase for older workers is more marked for men than for women. The pattern of unemployment rates with age is very similar for people from minority ethnic groups, but the unemployment rate in each age group is around twice that for the white ethnic group. Unemployment rates vary much less with age for Irish-born men as a whole, for whom 40-49 year olds experience rather lower unemployment rates than other age groups. The pattern is very similar for men born in the Irish Republic, but unemployment rates for men born in Northern Ireland display a pattern more like the average for all white men. Unemployment rates are higher for Irish-born men than for all white men in all but the youngest age group; one explanation might be that those least able to find employment would not migrate, while the unemployed may return to Ireland rather than stay in Great Britain. Unemployment rates for all Irish-born women and women born in the Irish Republic vary in a very similar manner with age to the average for all white women. Those for women born in Northern Ireland are much higher than the white average in the 16-24 age group, but then decline to levels near the white average for the older age groups.

It is also possible to analyse the incidence of unemployment by industry and occupation. Turning first to industry, unemployment rates for all white men are highest in the construction sector, and both men and women experience lower unemployment rates in the service sector than in manufacturing industry. The pattern of unemployment rates is similar for people from minority ethnic groups, but the percentages unemployed are much higher, with the male unemployment rates for workers in manufacturing industry almost twice the corresponding white rate. For Irish-born people, the pattern of unemployment rates by industry is similar, and unemployment rates for men are again highest in the construction sector, and lowest in the service sector. Unemployment rates in the agriculture and energy sectors are very high, specially for women, but involve very small numbers of people. There is little difference in the unemployment rate for workers in the manufacturing sector between men and women and between people born in Northern Ireland or the Irish Republic. However, unemployment rates in the service sector are much lower for Irish-born women than Irish-born men or for white women as a whole.

Unemployment rates for white men as a whole tend to rise as the level of skill in an occupation falls. Thus, managers and professional people experience the lowest unemployment rates, while unskilled workers suffer the highest rates of unemployment. This pattern is broadly repeated for men from minority ethnic groups as a whole, but skilled manual workers experience higher unemployment rates than semi-skilled manual workers, and the unemployment rate for the latter occupational group is slightly lower than that for white men. Unemployment rates for white women and women from minority ethnic groups as a whole are lowest for managerial and professional occupations and highest for skilled manual occupations, and then decline as skill levels decline. The differential in unemployment rates is narrowest for the least skilled men and most skilled women, and widest for skilled manual workers from both genders. Unemployment rates by occupation follow a very similar pattern to the white ethnic group as a whole for Irish-born men and women. However, unemployment rates for Northern Irish-born people in

managerial and professional occupations are well below the average for all white people, while for unskilled workers, unemployment rates are well above the average for Northern Ireland-born men and below the white average for Irish Republic-born men.

Table 10 Unemployment among people born in Ireland, all white people and minority ethnic groups in Great Britain, 1991

Economic activity, age, industry and occupation groups	White People		Minority ethnic groups		Born in Ireland		Born in Northern Ireland		Born in the Irish Republic	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Economically active	14577.7	10897.4	761.9	539.7	264.1	213.4	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Unemployed	1556.5	689.7	154.4	84.0	39.5	14.9	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Unemployment rate	10.7	6.3	20.3	15.6	15.0	7.0	12.2	6.6	19.3	8.3
On govt. scheme (000s)	198.8	119.8	18.1	15.0	2.0	1.3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
% on schemes	1.4	1.1	2.4	2.8	0.7	0.6	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Unemployment rates by age group</i>										
16-24	18.0	12.3	33.3	26.6	15.5	13.3	14.2	15.2	16.4	12.2
25-39	10.2	6.1	19.1	13.6	14.8	8.0	11.2	4.9	17.0	10.1
40-49	7.5	4.1	13.1	10.2	11.9	6.1	7.6	4.7	13.9	6.7
50-59/64	10.7	5.5	22.6	11.1	16.3	6.7	13.3	5.4	17.1	7.1
<i>Unemployment rates by previous industry of employment</i>										
Agriculture/energy	7.8	3.7	7.6	1.1	9.3	18.5	2.5	7.7	13.2	26.3
Manufacturing	9.1	7.8	18.4	13.0	10.0	9.0	10.3	9.4	9.9	8.7
Construction	15.8	6.7	25.4	11.8	16.5	3.2	16.0	-	16.7	4.0
Services	8.2	5.0	11.9	8.9	7.6	3.9	5.5	3.1	8.8	4.2
<i>Unemployment rates by previous occupation of employment</i>										
Managerial/professional	4.5	3.5	8.0	6.3	5.5	3.3	3.7	2.8	6.8	3.6
Other white collar	8.6	4.9	13.6	10.4	9.4	4.6	8.7	3.6	9.8	5.1
Skilled manual	12.1	9.8	19.1	19.6	14.7	10.4	12.2	3.5	15.5	12.9
Semi-skilled	11.1	7.6	17.5	10.8	10.4	6.3	7.6	6.2	11.6	6.3
Unskilled	19.1	5.6	20.5	9.1	18.9	5.1	22.5	5.7	17.9	4.9

Source: 1991 Census Local Base Statistics (ESRC purchase) and 2 % Individual Sample of Anonymised Records; both Crown Copyright.

Note: Absolute numbers unemployed are not available for persons born in Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic.

8. Participation in higher and further education and highest qualifications held

The recent expansion of the higher education system and increasing awareness of the need to raise general levels of education and training in order to improve national economic competitiveness has led to young people being encouraged to continue in full-time education for longer, in order to gain additional qualifications. Asian young people (Indians in particular) displayed higher staying-on rates than white and African-Caribbean young people at the start of the 1980s, but Labour Force Survey data reveals that the latter two ethnic groups had caught up to some extent by the end of the decade¹⁰. Figure 8 contrasts the participation of young people born in Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic in full-time education with the average participation rates for all white people and minority ethnic groups as a whole for males and females separately from the three "Chinese & Other" ethnic groups in further and higher education is illustrated in Figure 8 (a and b). This diagram plots the percentage of each ethnic

group who were full-time students at the time of the Census, for each single year of age from 16 to 29.

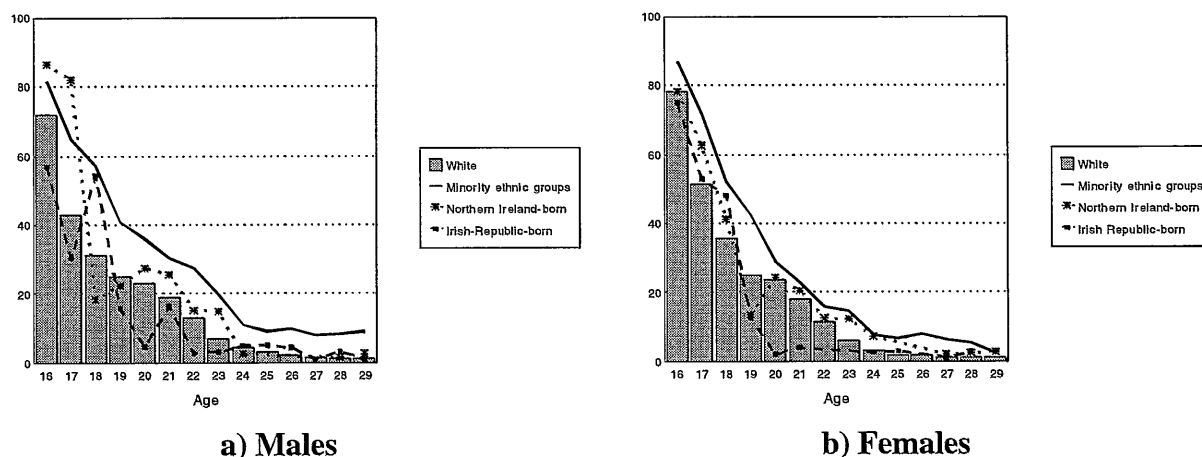


Figure 8: Percentage in full-time education by single year of age

The general trend for all white males and females is for the percentage involved in full-time education to decline with age, with a rapid fall associated with school leaving and then a more gradual decline up to the age of 25. The decline levels out after this point, with students representing a small but steady percentage of 25-29 year olds. Full-time students represent a higher percentage of women aged 16-18 than they do of men of the same age, with over three-quarters of 16 year old white women staying in full-time education. Educational participation rates for all white men and women converge after the age of 18, and a higher percentage of white men than white women remain in full-time education during their twenties (but representing a very small percentage of the age group). The percentage of people who are full-time students is higher for minority ethnic groups than for white people throughout the 16-29 year age range, and the decline in participation rates for people in their late teens is less marked. Educational participation rates remain higher for people in their twenties, especially for men.

The pattern of educational participation of people born in Ireland is more similar to the average of all white people than to that of the minority ethnic groups, but there are notable differences between the Northern Ireland-born and Irish Republic-born in their participation in education. The Northern Ireland-born tend to have higher educational participation rates than white people as a whole, while the Irish Republic-born tend to have lower participation rates. Educational participation rates for young women born in Ireland follow the average for all white women quite closely, starting at around 80 per cent for 16 year olds and falling steadily to just over 20 per cent for 19 year olds. However, while the participation rates for Northern Ireland born women continue to mirror the white average in then declining at a much slower rate for women in their early twenties, the percentage of women born in the Irish Republic still in full-time education continues to fall steeply, and remains below 5 per cent for women in each year of age from 20 to 29. There is greater year-to-year volatility in the trend of educational participation rates for young men born in Ireland, but the differentials between the Northern Ireland-born and the Republic-born are maintained. Educational participation rates for 16 year olds are about 25 per cent higher for men born in Northern than in the Irish Republic, but fall rapidly with age to around 20 per cent in the 18-20 age range. Participation rates remain high for Northern Ireland-born men in their early twenties, and then decline. There are two peaks of educational participation at ages 18 and 21 for Irish Republic-born men, but the percentage in full-time education is well below the average for all white men throughout the age range, declines earlier, and is particularly low in the 18-21 age range. These patterns are not unexpected if most people born in the Irish Republic migrated to Great Britain independently; though some young people would have come specifically to study, the bulk will be seeking work. The higher educational participation rates of the Northern Ireland-born suggests that a larger percentage of young people will have migrated to Great Britain with their families and

hence will still be at school, but also, since Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom, it is easier for young Northern Irish people to move to educational institutions in Great Britain

Table 11 Highest qualification held, and the characteristics of highly qualified people born in Ireland, compared with all white people and people from the white and minority ethnic groups in Great Britain, 1991.

Qualifications, age groups and economic status	White people	Minority ethnic groups	Born in Ireland	Born in Northern Ireland	Born in the Irish Republic
Persons aged 18 and over(000s)	40,559.6	1875.3	794.5	n/a	n/a
Persons with highest qualification better than A-Level or equivalent (000s)	5,416.6	289.3	118.6	n/a	n/a
persons with higher degree (000s)	365.0	33.1	10.9	n/a	n/a
persons with first degree (000s)	2,489.3	139.6	47.5	n/a	n/a
persons with Diploma or equivalent (000s)	2,562.3	116.7	60.2	n/a	n/a
Percentage share of each age group with higher level qualifications:					
aged 18-29	21.4	30.5	24.0	10.3	22.5
aged 30-44	40.0	47.1	34.7	20.5	32.0
aged 45 up to pensionable age	26.2	20.2	25.3	39.9	26.2
of pensionable age	12.4	2.2	16.1	29.3	19.4
All aged 18 and over	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Percentage of all people in the age group with higher level qualifications:					
aged 18-29	12.5	12.9	24.9	32.5	22.5
aged 30-44	19.7	20.0	22.0	28.4	18.0
aged 45 up to pensionable age	14.0	13.8	10.8	15.7	8.5
Of pensionable age	6.6	4.9	8.6	10.6	8.5
All aged 18 and over	13.4	15.4	14.9	21.7	12.3
Qualified persons aged 18-59/64 (000s)	4,745.5	282.9	118.6	n/a	n/a
Total economically active (000s)	4,208.3	236.8	88.4	n/a	n/a
Percent economically active	88.7	83.7	88.8	89.6	88.2
Employed or self-employed (000s)	4,044.6	20.9	8.4	n/a	n/a
On a government scheme (000s)	14.3	0.5	0.0	n/a	n/a
Unemployed (000s)	149.5	1.9	0.3	n/a	n/a
Unemployment rate	3.6	8.2	3.6	3.0	5.2

Sources: 1991 Census Local Base Statistics (ESRC purchase); Crown Copyright and OPCS/GRO(Scotland) (1994) Country of Birth and Ethnic Group report (HMSO).

Note: This table is based on a 10 per cent sample of Census returns. The population estimates were obtained by multiplying the sample counts by 10.162.

Table 11 presents contrasts between people born in Ireland, white people as a whole and people from minority ethnic groups in their achievement of further and higher education qualifications. The percentage of people from minority ethnic groups aged 18 and over with further and higher education qualifications is just over two per cent higher than the average for all white people, and the percentage of Irish-born people with such qualifications is slightly lower than the average for minority ethnic groups. The percentages of all white people and people from minority ethnic groups with high-level qualifications in each age group are very

similar; for both, about an eighth of 18-29 year olds have these qualifications and the highest incidence of qualifications is in the 30-44 year age group, of which a fifth are highly qualified. However, the percentage of younger Irish-born people with higher education qualifications is much higher, with a maximum of 24.9 per cent of 18-29 year olds holding further and higher education qualifications. On the other hand, the percentage of Irish-born people of older working age with such qualifications is much lower than the white and minority ethnic group averages, though the percentage of highly qualified pensioners is also much higher. Though a higher percentage of Irish-born have higher educational qualifications, these tend to be of a lower level than for all white people and for minority ethnic groups as a whole; thus the percentage of qualified Irish-born people with degrees is 40.1 per cent compared with 59.7 per cent for minority ethnic groups and 52.7 per cent for white people as a whole.

People born in Northern Ireland are more likely than those born in the Irish Republic to have higher education qualifications. The difference is very marked and exists in all age groups. Nearly a third of Northern Ireland-born people aged 18-29 have higher education qualifications, compared to nearly a quarter of Irish Republic-born people. The percentage of Northern Ireland-born people with higher educational qualifications is also well above that for the Irish Republic-born, all white people and minority ethnic groups as a whole in the 30-44 age group. This percentage remains close to or well above the average in the older age groups. Young people born in the Irish Republic are also much more likely than all white people and people from minority ethnic groups as a whole to hold higher educational qualifications, but the percentage of older people with such qualifications is much lower. The very high percentage of Irish-born people with higher educational qualifications demonstrates that the high and persistent unemployment rates prevailing in both parts of Ireland has induced the better-qualified sections of the population to migrate in search of better employment prospects.

The 30-44 year old age group accounts for 40 per cent of all highly qualified white people, but nearly half of those from minority ethnic groups. Over three-quarters of all highly qualified people from minority ethnic groups are aged under 45, but 40 per cent of all highly qualified white people were aged 45 or more in 1991. Older people account for an even larger share of highly qualified people born in Ireland, reflecting the large number of Irish-born people of middle age and younger pensionable age. Only 30.8 per cent of the highly qualified born in Northern Ireland were aged under 45 in 1991, though 54.5 per cent of the Irish Republic-born highly qualified were aged under 45. The higher share of the young amongst the Republic-born highly qualified may be picking up the trend for better qualified people to move from the Irish Republic to Britain (especially London) during the 1980s in search of better paid employment (though often accepting lower rates of pay than British people).

Amongst the highly qualified, the percentage of people from minority ethnic groups who are economically active is far lower than for all white people, while their unemployment rate is more than twice as high, mirroring the differentials in the population as a whole. The economic activity rate for highly-qualified Irish people is slightly higher than the average for all white people, and their unemployment rate is the same. Possession of higher education qualifications is therefore even more of an advantage in the labour market for Irish people than for white people as a whole. Once again, people born in Northern Ireland are advantaged relative to those born in the Irish Republic, since the unemployment rate for the Northern Irish-born is lower than the average for all white people, while that for Irish Republic-born people is almost twice as high.

9. Conclusions

This Statistical Paper has presented a comprehensive picture of the social and economic experience of Irish-born people living in Britain. The availability of the Samples of Anonymised Records has enabled the very important differences which exist between people born in Northern Ireland and those born in the Republic to be revealed. Overall, Northern Ireland people are closer to the average for all white people than are the Irish Republic-born, across a range of indicators. A number of key findings may be highlighted;

- The Irish-born population of great Britain is now declining, after having increased substantially in the early post-war decades;
- Irish-born people are distinctive in being much older on average than the rest of the population;
- Republic-born people have an even older age distribution than people born in Northern Ireland;
- Half of all people born in the Irish Republic live in South-East England and over a third in Greater London, the other main foci for settlement being Birmingham and Manchester;
- The geographical distribution of the Northern Ireland-born is very different. They are more widespread within Britain and are particularly well-represented in Scotland. Some of their largest local concentrations occur in rural parts of Scotland;
- The main local concentrations of Irish Republic-born people occur in London. They are most prominent in parliamentary constituencies in north and west London (forming 11.2 per cent of the population of Brent East), together with parts of Birmingham and Manchester;
- A higher percentage of households with Irish-born heads live in public sector rented property than either all white-headed or minority ethnic group-headed households;
- The percentage of Irish-headed households lacking housing amenities or not owning a car is well above the average for all white people;
- The structure of Irish-headed families is similar to the white average, but divorce is much more common than the average for white people as a whole;
- Lone parent families are thus more common for Irish-headed households than all white households, but these are likely to have older heads without dependent children;
- The percentage of Irish-born people with limiting long-term illnesses is well above the average for all white people;
- However, if their age structure of Irish people is taken into account, they are found to have better levels of health than minority ethnic groups;
- Irish-born people have very high rates of participation in the labour market, especially for young people;
- Irish-born people are more likely to be self-employed than white people as a whole;
- Northern Ireland-born and Irish Republic-born men tend to work in very different industries. The former mainly work in the service sector, while nearly a third of Republic-born men work in the construction industry;
- People born in Northern Ireland are more likely to work in white-collar jobs than those born in the Republic, for whom less skilled jobs account for a larger share of employment. Nursing jobs are an important source of employment for women from both parts of Ireland;
- Unemployment rates for Irish Republic-born men are almost as high as those for minority ethnic groups, while those for the Northern Ireland-born are close to the overall white unemployment rate;
- Irish-born young people are less likely to be in full-time education than white people as a whole or minority ethnic groups;
- A large percentage of the Irish-born are highly qualified. This percentage is even larger for the Northern Ireland-born than the Republic-born;
- The highly qualified Northern Ireland-born fare even better in the labour market than white people as a whole, but the Republic-born do less well.

10. Notes and references

- 1 The Samples of Anonymised Records consist of the responses for a 2 per cent sample of all individuals and a 1 per cent sample of all households in Great Britain. They permit a range of information not available from the standard tables released by OPCS and GRO (Scotland) to be derived.
- 2 OPCS/GRO (Scotland) (1994) **1991 Census: Supplement to Report on Ethnic Group and Country of Birth (HMSO: London)**.
- 3 Peach, G.C.K., Robinson, V., Maxted, J. and Chance, J. (1988) 'Immigration and Ethnicity', Chapter 14 of A.H. Halsey (ed) **British Social Trends since 1900: A Guide to the Changing Social Structure of Britain** (Basingstoke: Macmillan), 561-615.
- 4 This analysis is based on the Sample of Anonymised Records, and hence the diagram is of the percentage distribution of the population across age groups, not of the numbers in each age group.
- 5 These maps are based on the "location quotient" for each ethnic group. This is the ratio of the percentage of the population from a given ethnic group in an area to the percentage of the population of Great Britain from that ethnic group. Thus, values less than 1.0 occur where the representation of an ethnic group in an area is less than its share of the British population; values above 1.0 represent relative concentration of the ethnic group. The areas mapped are local authority districts.
- 6 It should be noted that while the percentage of households without a car is often used as a surrogate for household income, this figure may be inflated by the relative concentration of Irish-born people in London and the other large cities, where the lack of a car is a less serious limitation on the daily activity of a household due to the existence of better public transport than elsewhere, and is hence a poorer reflection of income levels.
- 7 This involves calculating the proportion of the entire population in an age group for Great Britain as a whole and applying this percentage to the age-disaggregated population of each ethnic group to yield a hypothetical number of long-term ill persons, if the ethnic group suffered the same age-specific illness rates as the population as a whole. The actual number of long-term ill persons can then be expressed as a ratio of the hypothetical number, and if greater than 1, the ethnic group can be said to have poorer health than the population as a whole. The calculation excludes persons in communal establishments, since these include hospitals, which would tend to artificially inflate illness rates.
- 8 However, the choice of the appropriate age range over which to calculate it strongly influences the result. The usual definition of the economically active age range is from 16 to retirement age (59 for women and 64 for men), but many people remain in the labour force beyond conventional retirement age. Many analysts thus base the calculation on all persons aged over 16, but this clearly greatly depresses the white economic activity rate relative to that based on 16-59/64 year olds. This is unrealistic, because the calculations for all white people and (even more so) Irish-born people include a large number of retired people. People from minority ethnic groups are much younger on average, and hence retirement has much less influence upon their economic activity rates.
- 9 These tables include both employees and the self-employed.
- 10 Jones, T. (1993) **Britain's Ethnic Minorities** (PSI: London).

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