

Construction up 36% since June 2016

-Number of vacant properties almost 50% lower than previously estimated-

Highlights:

- There are 1,967,698 residential dwellings across the country in June 2017.
- The national average housing turnover rate was 2.22%. When Dublin is excluded the turnover rate falls to 2.05%.
- The report estimates that the turnover of residential stock was 43,767 transactions in the year to May 2017.
- The national average house price for the year was €250,188. This drops to €175,782 when Dublin is excluded.
- A total of 5,966 residential dwellings were classified as being under construction in the GeoDirectory Database in June 2017.

DATE: Residential construction has increased by 36% year-on-year, according to the latest edition of GeoView published today by GeoDirectory. A total of 5,966 buildings were classified as being under construction in the GeoDirectory database in June 2017, compared with the June 2016 figure of 4,375. Dublin continues to account for the bulk of new construction activity, at just under 25% of all buildings under construction.

The database found that there was a total of 1,967,698 residential dwellings across the country in June 2017. By cross referencing data from the 2016 CSO Census of Population, the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government and the GeoDirectory Database, the GeoView report offers new, unique insights into the residential housing density, turnover and construction levels and the housing shortage across the country.

One of the reasons for the sharp increase in construction is the low number of vacant properties in the market. In the GeoView report, a property is considered vacant if it falls into one of the following groups:

- The dwelling is vacant and ready to be inhabited, based on whether the property does or does not receive post;
- The dwelling is vacant and requires a small amount of cosmetic/repair work to make it habitable; and
- The dwelling is not a holiday home.

GeoDirectory report an estimated vacant stock of 96,243 (4.9% of the total stock) address points or dwellings in June 2017, while the 2016 Census reported a vacant stock of 183,312 (12.3%) dwellings, as of April 2016. The 2016 Census enumerators, in identifying vacant dwellings, were instructed to look for signs that the dwelling was not occupied e.g. no furniture, no cars outside, junk mail accumulating or overgrown garden, and to find out from neighbours whether it was vacant or not. It was not sufficient to classify a dwelling as vacant after one or two visits.

Dublin (0.89% of the Dublin total stock) and the surrounding counties of Kildare (1.99%), Meath (3.35%), Wicklow (2.65%) and Louth (3.61%) had the lowest percentages of vacant units by county in

the State. The other end of the scale is dominated by counties in the west of Ireland, namely Leitrim (16.61%), Roscommon (13.88%) and Mayo (13.06%).

Residential data from the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government showed that in the twelve months to March 2017, a total of 14,192 commencements were registered, with Dublin (5,317), Cork (1,568) and Meath (1,291) between them accounting for just under 60 per cent of the national total.

The gulf between the housing market in Dublin and the rest of the country can be seen clearly when the average national property price is examined. The national average house price over the twelve months to May 2017 was €250,188, an increase of almost €23,739 on the corresponding period the previous year. When Dublin is removed from the figures, the national average property price falls to €175,782. The average residential property price in Dublin over the same period was €404,911, this is €40,628 above the price for the same period last year. This is well above the averages for the rest of the country with the next highest average price recorded in Wicklow (€316,057). Longford, where the property market has been one of the poorest performers recorded the lowest average price of €92,084.

An analysis of dwellings per 1,000 of the population, shows a further example of the urban / rural divide that currently exists in Ireland. Counties on the west coast of Ireland recorded the greatest concentration of dwellings per 1,000 of the population, particularly Leitrim (552), which had the lowest average household size in the country (2.3 persons per household). In contrast, Meath had only 353 dwellings per 1,000 of the population, while it had the largest average household size (3 persons per household).

The average national housing turnover rate in the twelve months to May 2017 was 2.22 per cent, with seven of the twenty-six counties recording turnover rates above this average. The counties with the highest turnover rates were Westmeath (2.88%), Dublin (2.69%) and Kildare (2.55%).

Commenting on the findings, Dara Keogh, CEO, GeoDirectory said: "From this edition of GeoView, we have some very interesting findings. We can see that there has been a sharp increase in construction levels, 36% year-on-year. This however is focused on Dublin, where the property market is under severe pressure to keep up with demand. This pressure on the market is again evident when we look at vacancy rates. By evaluating how GeoDirectory defines a vacant property, we have reached a figure of 96,243 vacant address points; this is almost 50% lower than previously reported and we believe this is much closer to the true figure."

Annette Hughes, Director of DKM Economic Consultants said: "As of June 2017, there were 1,967,698 residential dwellings across the Republic of Ireland. With 43,767 property transactions in the year there was a turnover rate of 2.22%; 90% of the properties transacted were second hand dwellings. This along with increasing property prices suggests that a substantial increase in construction activity is very much needed."

The GeoDirectory database is the most comprehensive address database of dwellings in the Republic of Ireland. A copy of the GeoView Residential Buildings Report is attached in PDF format and is available at www.geodirectory.ie

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Notes to Editor:

Dara Keogh, CEO, GeoDirectory and Annette Hughes, Director of DKM Economic Consultants are available for interview.

GeoDirectory was jointly established by An Post and Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSi) to create and manage Ireland's only complete database of commercial and residential buildings. The figures are recorded through a combination of the An Post network of 5,600 delivery staff working with OSi.

The GeoDirectory database is used by many different companies and organisations across a diverse range of applications. Its database and services are used by Central Statistics Office to achieve more accurate census results, Gas Networks Ireland has used for GeoDirectory to identify and categorise new potential customers and 11890 Directory Inquiries have used GeoDirectory to provide detailed directions and maps to their customers.

In the property sector, GeoDirectory is used by Daft.ie and the Property Registration Authority. In addition, utility companies, banking and insurance providers, and all local authorities use the database.

For further information or to view relevant case studies please visit www.geodirectory.ie

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