



**Co. Louth
Children and Young People's
Services Committee**

Demographic Profile 2017

Produced in November 2017 by:



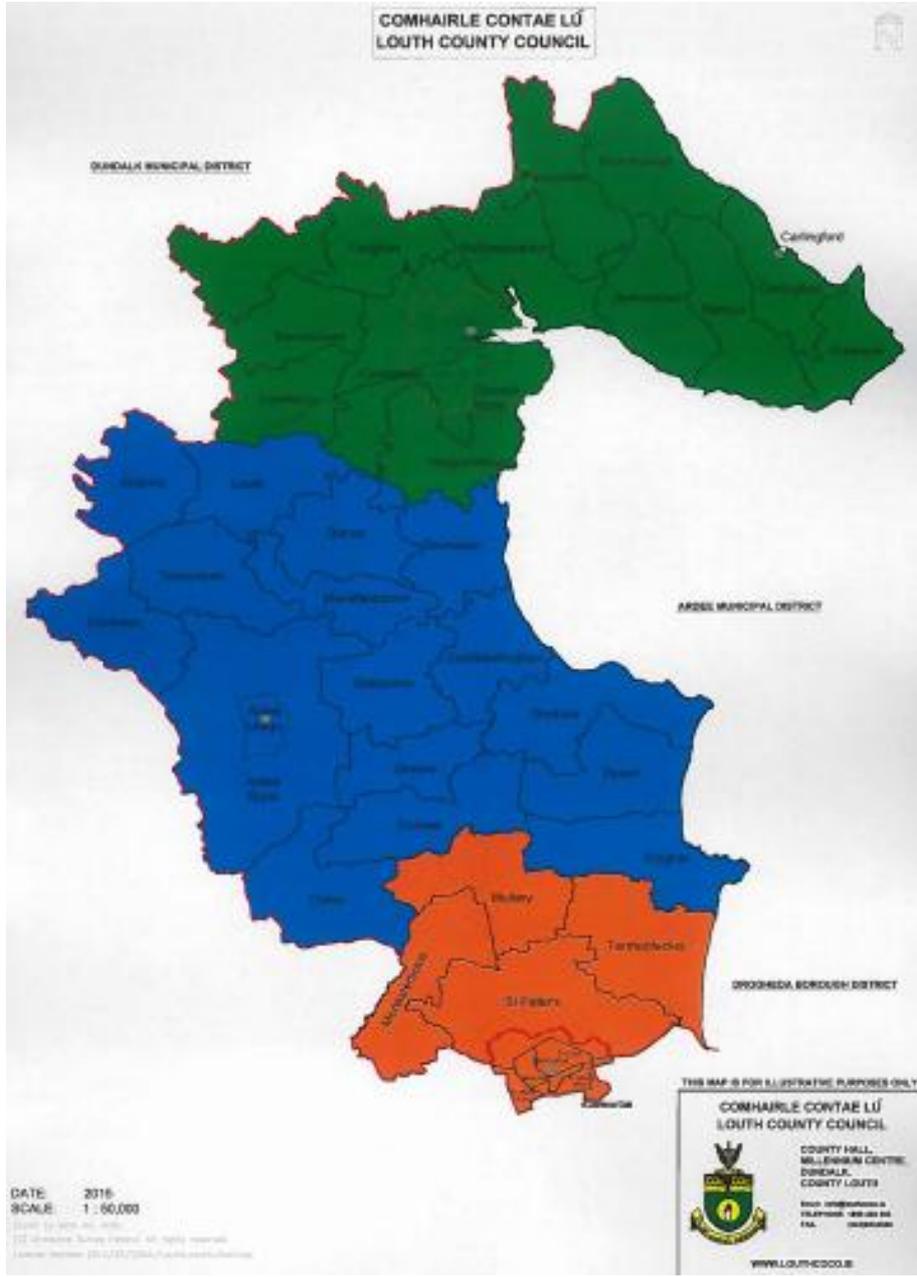


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1 Introduction

The Louth Children and Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC) are a local county based structure for bringing together agencies who work with children and young people to engage in joint planning of services for children. Louth Children and Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC) was established in September 2010 by the Health Service Executive (HSE) under the auspices of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

In October 2012, Louth CYPSC published their Children and Young People's Plan. The report was produced to secure better developmental outcomes for children through more effective integration of existing services and interventions at local level.

This report was developed to provide an updated socio-demographic profile of the county to support informed decision-making based on up-to-date information about the population of County Louth.

2 Socio-Demographic Profile of County Louth

Louth

County Louth is the smallest of Ireland's 32 counties in area (827 km²) and the 18th largest, in terms of population. It is the smallest of 12 counties in Leinster in area, and the 6th largest in terms of population based on census 2016 data, yet it is the most densely populated county in Ireland outside of Dublin with a population density of 156 people per km², more than double that of the national average.

The largest towns in Louth are Drogheda and Dundalk, which is also the county town, a majority of the population reside in the two towns and they account for 62% of all residents in the county. Drogheda (40,956) is ranked as the sixth largest town in Ireland and Dundalk (39,004) is the eight largest according to Census 2016.

Despite being on the coast and its small size, Louth shares a border with three other counties. Armagh to the north, Monaghan to the northwest and Meath to the southwest. With Dublin located south of Meath, and the southern part of the county feeds into part of the Dublin commuter belt.

Population Demographics Overview

With a population of 128,884, Louth has the 18th highest population of all counties in the State. Census 2016 shows an increase of 4.9% from the previous census compared to an increase of 3.8% at State level. This was an actual increase of 5,987 people. This makes Louth proportionally the ninth fastest growing local authority in the State. Despite the population growing by 4.9% the proportion of households in the county grew by a lesser 3.5% over the same time. Net migration has decreased by -1 per 1,000; the natural increase is now 8.9¹ per 1,000, this natural increase was the 11th highest of all local authorities in the State.

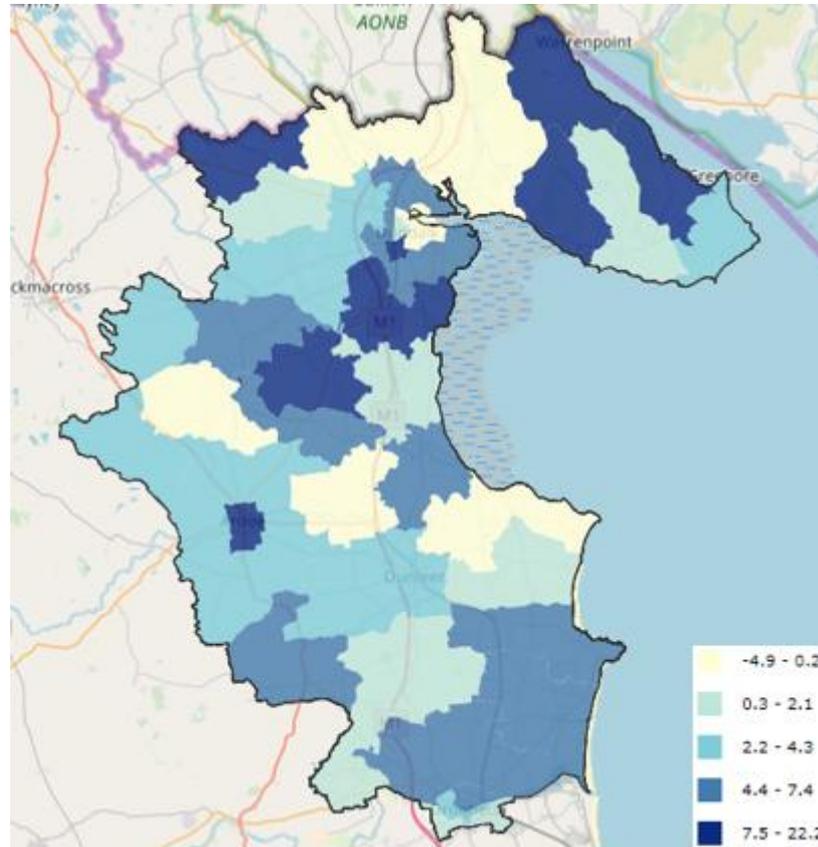
The spatial distribution of the population within Louth is as follows: two thirds of the total population live in the three largest towns, Drogheda (32%), Dundalk (30%) and Ardee (4%).

Louth has experienced a major and consistent expansion of its population in recent years. This expansion is the result of both a high birth rate and high levels of inward migration into the county. Between 1991 and 2016, the population in the county increased by 42%, the 9th highest

¹ <http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cpr/censusofpopulation2016-preliminaryresults/copc/>

of all counties. In the five years since Census 2011, population growth occurred in 36 of the 43 Louth Electoral Districts. The three electoral districts with the highest growth accounted for over a third of the population growth in the county: Dundalk Rural (19%), Fair Gate (10%) and St. Peter's (10%).

Figure 1: Percentage Population Change 2011 - 2016 by Electoral District



27.2% of Louth's population is aged under 18 years (35,046). The county has the 14th largest population under 18 years of the 31 local authorities in Ireland. Given the size of Louth's existing population in the 0 – 4 (7.4%) and 5 – 12 (12.6%) age ranges, it is clear that the county's population is still increasing and that there is likely to be an increased demand for children's and young people's services over the next decade. This is further supported by the fact that for its size, Louth contains relatively high levels of households within the Pre-School (14th highest) and Primary School (14th highest) family life cycle stages.

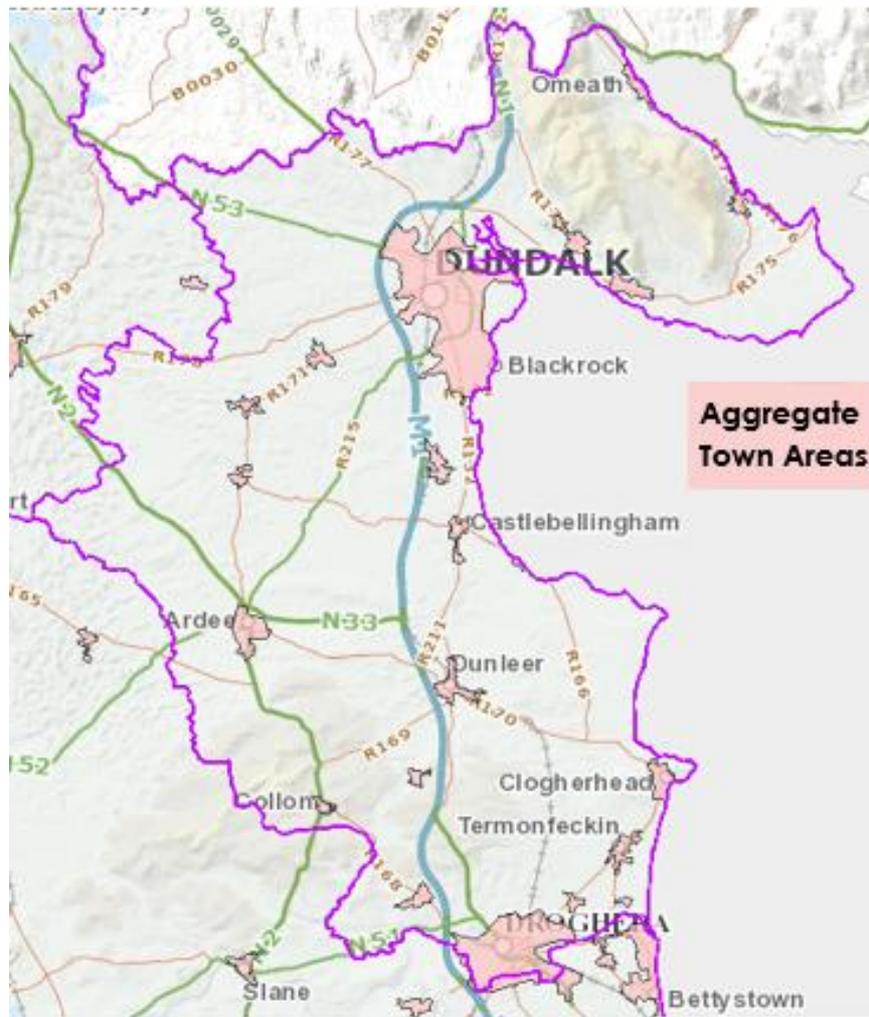
Gender

The population of Louth in 2016 was 128,884, which contains a relatively similar proportion of males (63,633, 50.6%) and females (65,251, 49.4%). The under 18 population is similar, with males making up the majority of the population at 17,789 (50.8%) and 17,257 (49.2%) females.

Urban/Rural Population

The population living in town areas accounts for 66.1% (85,224), those living in rural areas account for 33.9% (43,660) of the population, this compares with 62.7% in town areas and 37.3% in rural areas at a State level. The average age of urban residents was 1.3 years lower than that of rural dwellers. The average age of people living in aggregate town areas was 36, and 37.3 in rural aggregate areas.

Map 1: Aggregate Town Areas Louth 2016



As can be seen in Table 1 the average ages of children in all urban family unit types is older in Louth compared to the State average. The average ages of children in rural areas in Louth are generally similar when compared to State rural areas.

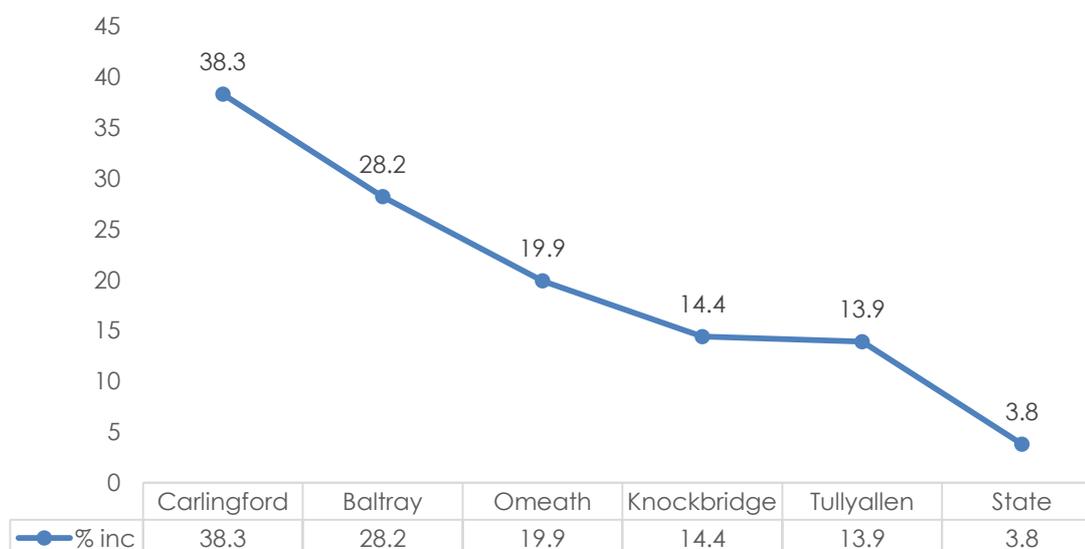
Table 1: Average Age of Child by Family Unit Type in Louth and the State (2016)

Family unit	Louth urban	State urban	Louth rural	State rural
Married couple with children	13.4	11.9	13.9	14.1
Cohabiting couple with children	8.3	8	8.5	8.1
One parent mother with children	15.8	15.2	19.7	20.8
One parent father with children	23.3	21	25.2	24.4

Fastest Growing Towns

Figure 2 illustrates the five towns in Louth that have had the largest proportional increase in their population since the census in 2011. Carlingford saw the largest proportional increase of all towns in Louth with a 38.3% increase or 400 new residents, followed by Baltray (28.2%, 29), Omeath (19.9%, 100), Knockbridge (14.4%, 84) and Tullyallen (13.9%, 189). 14 of the 21 towns listed as being located in Louth by the CSO 2016 grew at rates in excess of the State average 3.8%.

Figure 2: Fastest Growing Towns in Louth 2011 - 2016 (Percentage Increase)



Age

As can be seen in Table 2 below, in County Louth there is a pre-school population of 9,473, who make up 7.4% of the population of the county. For the 0 – 19 age groups, Louth contains proportionally more young people than both Leinster and the State itself, although there is a slightly smaller proportion of 20 – 24-year olds, which may be accounted for by students going to third level having to move out of Louth, despite DKIT having a student population of 5,124 in 2016.

Table 2: Young People by Age Group (% of Total Population)

Age	Louth	Leinster	State
0 - 4	9,473 (7.4%)	187,106 (7.1%)	331,515 (7%)
5 - 9	10,493 (8.1%)	197,669 (7.5%)	355,561 (7.5%)
10 - 14	9,699 (7.5%)	174,752 (6.6%)	319,476 (6.7%)
15 - 19	8,548 (6.6%)	164,149 (6.2%)	302,816 (6.4%)
20 - 24	7,078 (5.5%)	158,240 (6.0%)	273,636 (5.7%)
Total 0 - 24	45,291 (35.1%)	88,1916 (33.4%)	1,583,004 (33.3%)

Age Change Over Time and Youth Dependency Ratio

As can be seen from Table 2, 45,291 of the people in County Louth at the time of the 2016 Census were aged 24 years or younger: this equates to 35.1% of the county's population. The population in Louth increased in all age brackets between 1996 to 2016 with the exception of the 15 – 24-year-old bracket which decreased by 3.5%. Closer analysis reveals that there has been a drop in the proportion of 20 – 34-year olds between 2006 and 2016 by 12.4%, which may be a result of the effects of the economic downturn. This is in keeping with the CSO 2016 finding that the 20 -34-year-old age bracket are the most mobile cohort of the population².

The Youth Dependency Rate is a measure of the number of dependent young people (0-14) to the total working population (15-64). A high ratio means that those of working age face a

²<http://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/pressreleases/2017pressreleases/presstatementcensus2016resultsprofile2-populationdistributionandmovements/>

greater burden in supporting the young population. With a rate of 35.7%, Louth has the ninth highest Youth Dependency Rate in the State of all local authorities and is higher than the State (32.3%), indicating a large youthful population.

Table 3: County Louth Population Change by Age Cohort 1996 – 2016

Age	1996	2002	2006	2011	2016	Total change	% Change 1996 - 2016
0 - 14	22,424	23075	24568	28,662	29,665	7,241	32.3%
15 - 24	16,192	16409	16092	15,443	15,626	-566	-3.5%
25 - 44	25,744	30892	35570	38,282	37,104	11,360	44.1%
45 - 64	17,853	20916	23432	27,033	30,412	12,559	70.3%
65+	9,953	10529	11605	13,477	16,077	6,124	61.5%

Challenge: Youth Dependency Ratio

At 35.7%, Louth has the ninth highest youth dependency rate in the State, higher than the National rate (32.3%) indicating a large young population.

Age by Main Urban Settlements

Census 2016 shows the population of the primary school age group (5-12) at 548,693, an increase of 8.8 %. The secondary school population (13 – 18) increased by 7.7% since 2011 compared to a 3.8 % increase in the population of the State.

In County Louth, the number of primary school aged children was 16,274, an increase of 9%, or 1,339 children and the secondary school population increased by 16.7% (1,578) which is more than double the State growth rate of this age group. This indicates a population that is currently young and continuing to grow.

Table 4: Age Categories 0 to 24 in Main Urban Settlements 2016

Town	All ages	0 - 4 years	5 - 12 years	13 - 18 years	19 - 24 years	0 - 24 years
Drogheda	40,956	3,212	5,331	3,307	2,527	14,377
Dundalk	39,004	2,897	4,593	3,267	3,102	13,859
Ardee	4,928	406	576	336	304	1,622
Clogherhead	2,145	194	339	225	119	877
Rest of Louth	41,851	2,764	5,435	3,902	2,455	14,556

Nationality and Ethnicity

Overview

The population of County Louth has increased significantly in recent years and has become more ethnically and culturally diverse. Table 5 illustrates that the ethnic make-up of County Louth is similar to the make up at State level in 2016. Louth contains twice the proportion of Black or Black Irish residents than the State average and a small proportion more of other white nationalities than the State average.

Table 5: Ethnicity of Census Responders 2016

	Louth	State	Population change in Louth since 2011 census
White Irish	83%	82.2%	-2.7%
White Irish Traveller	0.6%	0.7%	0.1%
Other White	7.8%	9.5%	0.8%
Black or Black Irish	2.8%	1.4%	0.0%
Asian or Asian Irish	1.9%	2.1%	0.3%
Other	1.4%	1.5%	0.5%
Not stated	2.5%	2.6%	1.0%
Total	100%	100%	

Closer analysis reveals that a large proportion of the population within Irish Travellers and Black/Black Irish groups were in the 0 – 19-year-old age group. People aged 0 – 19 years accounted for 41% of the population among Irish Travellers, and 52% among the Black/Black Irish ethnic minority groups, indicating particularly young populations within these groups, the average proportion of 0 – 19-year olds across groups was 30%.

Table 6: Comparison of Broad Age-Groups Among Irish Traveller and Black/ Black Irish Ethnic Minority Populations Within County Louth (2016)

Age group	Irish Traveller	Black ethnic minority	Overall population of County Louth
0 – 19	41%	52%	30%
20 – 64	54%	48%	58%
65+	5%	0%	12%

Travellers

The number of people tallied as Irish Travellers in Census 2016 was 30,987, an increase of 4.8% since census 2011. This is a higher increase than the general populations increase of 3.7% over the same period. The Traveller population is disproportionately young in comparison to the general population; 50% of Travellers in 2016 were aged 0 – 19 years compared to 28% in the general population.

According to the Census, in 2016 there were 772 Travellers living in Louth, or 0.6% of the population. The largest group were in the 0 – 4 age group (92), accounting for 12% of all Travellers in Louth, followed by 5 - 9 years old with 11% (86) of the total Traveller population.

According to The State of the Nation's Children's Report (2016)³, Louth's Traveller children account for 7.9 per 1,000 children in the county compared to 12.4 per 1,000 at State level, which is the fourth lowest rate per county in the country. The majority of the Traveller population could be found around Dundalk (69%, 536) and Drogheda (20%, 153), with almost nine in ten residents from the Traveller community in Louth based there.

Table 7: Irish Travellers by Selected Urban Area in Louth

	Persons (Number)	Travellers per 1,000 total population
Dundalk	536	13.8
Drogheda	153	3.7
Rest of Louth	83	1.7

³ <https://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/stateofthenationschildren/20170302SOTNCRreport2016.pdf>

Other Ethnicities and Nationalities

In 2016, 89% (113,077) of the population in Louth were Irish citizens. Between 2011 and 2016, there was growth in the number of non-Irish nationals, which saw the number rise from 13,996 to 14,634, an increase of 4.6% compared to 5.7% in the State. Slightly over two thirds (68%, 9929) of non-Irish nationals living in County Louth were from the other EU27 nations, the largest communities of non-Irish nationals from the EU27 were Polish (14.4%, 2,107), Lithuanian (13.8%, 2021) and British (13.7%, 2001). Nationalities from outside the EU27 made up the rest of the Louth population with the Asian population representing 8.7%(1277) of the non-Irish national population and Africans accounting for 6.7% (975).

According to the State of the Nation's Children Report 2016, in 2011 there were 93,005 children of non-Irish nationals living in Ireland, which represents a rate of 82.5 per 1,000 of the total child population in Ireland⁴. In Louth there were 2,697 children of non-Irish nationality, representing a rate of 82.1 per 1,000 children in the county.

Households

In 2016, there were a total of 45,448 private households in County Louth with a total of 127,751 people in private households. Consequently, the average number of persons per private household in Louth was 2.8, similar to the State average of 2.7. The average number of people per household has remained the same in the decade since the 2006 census at 2.8, there has been a corresponding rise of 17% of people in private households and number of private households in this period.

Table 8: Private Household Size in 2016

Area	Number of private households	Number of people in private households	Average number of people per household
Louth	45,448	127,751	2.8
Moneghan	21,689	61,328	2.8
Meath	64,234	194,400	3
State	1,702,289	4,676,648	2.7

Family Units

In 2016, the highest percentage of all private households in County Louth was households comprising a married couple and children (46%). Lone parent households accounted for 21% of all private households in County Louth compared with 18% at State level. Lone mothers account for 87% of lone parent households in Louth, similar to 86% at State level. It is also worth noting that County Louth has a higher rate of lone parent families to all family units (1:5) compared with the State (1:5.6), meaning there are proportionally more lone parent families in Louth than at State level.

The lone parent rate varies across electoral divisions in Louth. Generally, there is a higher percentage of one parent families around the two large towns of Drogheda and Dundalk (Dundalk Urban No. 2 (28%), Dundalk Rural (27%) and West Gate (26%)) and a lower percentage in rural divisions, Creggan Upper (9%), Dysart (9%) and Darver (10%).

⁴ <https://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/stateofthenationschildren/20170302SOTNCRReport2016.pdf> - Figures are not yet available from the 2016 census

Table 9: Family Unit Type in Private Households 2016

Family unit type	Louth		State	
	Number of private households	Percentage of private households	Number of private households	Percentage of private households
All family units	33,698	100%	1,218,370	100%
Married couple without children	7,089	21%	278,934	23%
Cohabiting couple without children	1,733	5%	76,715	6%
Married couple with children	15,599	46%	568,317	47%
Cohabiting couple with children	2,491	7%	75,587	6%
One parent mother with children	5,922	18%	189,112	16%
One parent father with children	864	3%	29,705	2%

Department of Social Protection figures for 2015⁵ shows that 1,618 people were in receipt of a One Parent Family Support payment in County Louth (4th highest of 26 counties by number of recipients). The report also shows that 561 (10th highest) were in receipt of Maternity Benefit, while there were 18,662 recipients (11th highest) of Child Benefit for 35,785 children (11th highest). There were 2,285 recipients (10th highest) of Family Income Support and 5,566 of Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance (7th highest).

Education

In 2016, 19.4%⁶ have a third level degree or higher, the 12th lowest of 31 Local Authorities and below the State average of 23.5%. The county has the 12th highest rate of low educational achievement (no formal/primary only – 12.2%), higher than the State level of 10.3% and the joint 17th lowest rate of medium education achievement (lower secondary + upper secondary completed 29.3%) similar to 27.3% at State level.

Challenge: Third Level Education

19.4% of Louth residents have a third level degree or higher compared to 23.5% at State level, the 12th lowest of 31 Local Authorities

Educational Attainment by Geography

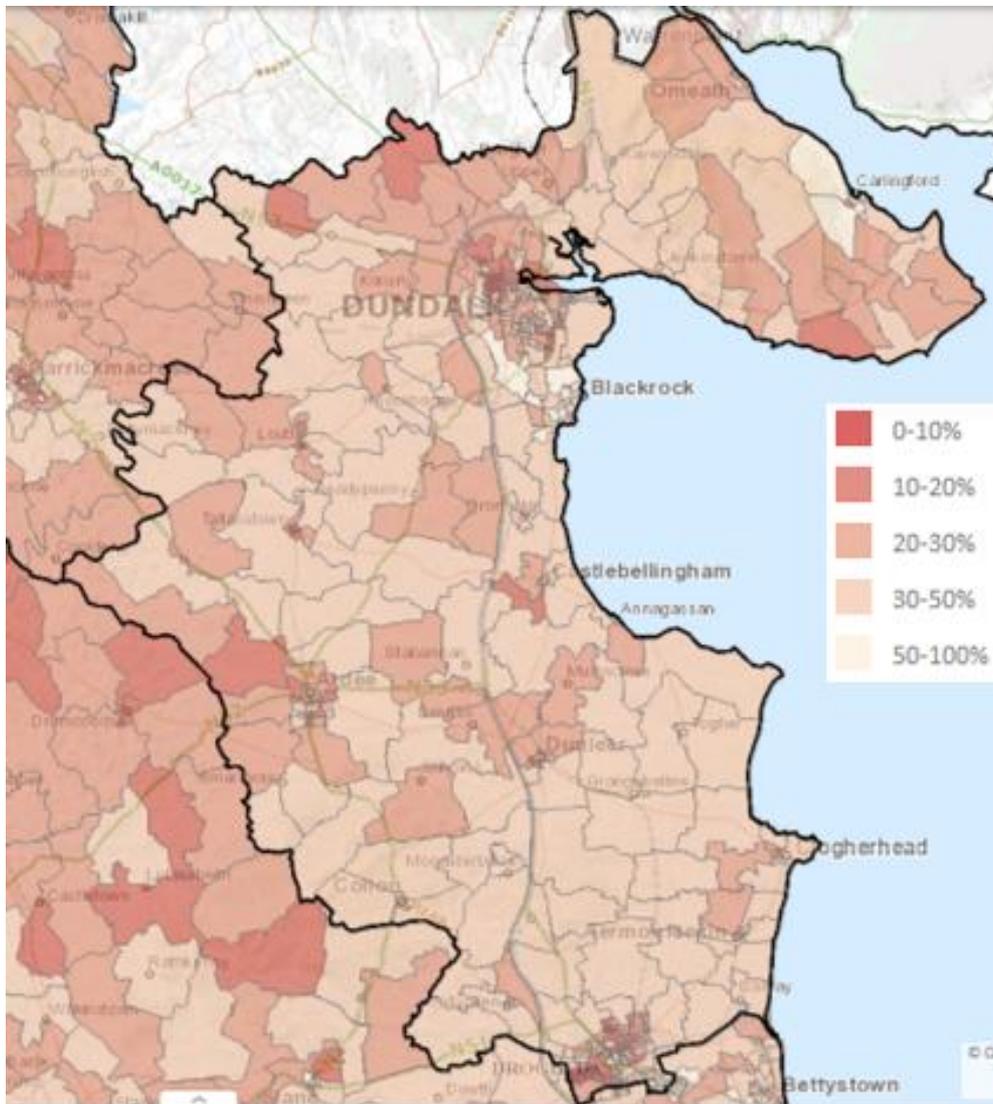
There are small spatial variations in the third level education attainment across Louth. Map 2 illustrates that there are generally lower levels of third level attainment in the north of Louth and pockets of lower third level attainment in some of the Small Areas around urban areas (i.e. Drogheda, Ardee, Dundalk) when compared with the rest of the county.

⁵ <https://www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/Annual-SWS-Statistical-Information-Report-2015.aspx>

⁶ Of population aged 15 years and over. (Ordinary bachelor degree/professional qualification or both, Honours bachelor degree/professional qualification or both, Postgraduate diploma or degree, Doctorate (Ph.D.))

The electoral divisions with the lowest third level attainment are Dundalk Urban No.1 (12.1%) and Westgate (12.8%) in Drogheda. There are small areas around the main urban areas that contain lower levels of third level attainment with a small area in St. Mary's ED near Drogheda containing 3% of residents with a third level qualification and a small area in Dundalk Rural ED containing 3.1% of residents with a third level qualification.

Map 2: Third Level Educational Attainment across Louth 2016 (Percentage)



Educational Attainment of Mother

A mother's education level can be a significant predictor for her children's academic achievements⁷. In the State, 4.8% of children lived in families where the mother had either no formal education or primary education only, compared to 6.1% of children in County Louth, the second highest of the 26 counties. This percentage ranged from 3.3% in County Cork to 9% in County Donegal.

Table 10: Number of Children, by Louth and State and Educational Attainment of Mother (2011)

Primary (including	Lower	Upper	Third-level	Not	Total
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⁷ <http://ns.umich.edu/new/releases/22501-mothers-education-significant-to-children-s-academic-success>

	no formal education)	secondary	secondary	(degree or higher)	stated/not available	
Louth	1,736 (6.1%)	5,110 (17.9%)	11,747 (41.2%)	9,253 (32.5%)	653 (2.3%)	28,499
State	48,040 (4.8%)	141,329 (14.2%)	416,407 (41.9%)	364,299 (36.7%)	23,590 (2.4%)	993,665

Primary Schools⁸

There are 75 Primary Schools in Louth, according to figures from the Department of Education and Skills for the 2016/2017 school year. In total, there are 71 mainstream primary schools in Louth educating 16,997 students and four special schools educating 342 students. Four (5.6%) of these mainstream schools are classified as DEIS⁹ schools. Primary schools in Louth are primarily of a Catholic ethos (68), with the remainder categorised as multi-denominational (4), Church of Ireland (2) and one as Presbyterian.

It is possible to categorise 2016/2017 data from the Dept. of Education and Skills for mainstream primary school students in Louth into three different class sizes:

Table 11: Number of Pupils in each Class Size Range

	< 20 per Class	20 to 30 per Class	>30 per Class	Total
Louth	6.2% (1,040)	71.7% (12,105)	22.1% (3,732)	100% (16,877)
State	10.7% (58,306)	67.6% (368,732)	21.7% (118,326)	100% (545,364)

The average number of students per class in Louth was 25.5, higher than the State average of 24.6 per class.

Secondary Schools¹⁰

As of the 2016/2017 school year, there were a total of 18 post-primary schools in Louth. Of these, five were categorised as DEIS schools which equates to 28% of all schools. This is the 8th highest rate of all counties in the country and is slightly above the median¹¹ number of DEIS schools per county at State level (4.5).

Travellers in Education

Educational attainment among Travellers lags significantly behind that of the general population. Among Traveller females, just 13% were educated to upper secondary level or above, compared with 69% of the general population. 57% of male Travellers were educated to primary level at most, compared with just 14% of the general population. The 167 Travellers with a third-level qualification was almost double the 2011 figure of 89, however this accounts for only one percent of the Traveller population compared to 24% in the general population in 2016.

Early Childhood Care and Education

At a State level in 2016 there were 4,178 services serving 74,125 children under contract to deliver the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). 62% of met the basic capitation criteria, this percentage ranged from 84% in County Leitrim to 26% in County Carlow. 38% met

⁸ <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Statistics/Data-on-Individual-Schools/>

⁹ Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools: DEIS schools form part of the Department of Education and Skills social inclusion strategy Delivering Equality of Opportunity in **Schools (DEIS)** to help children and young people who are at risk of or who are experiencing educational disadvantage.

¹⁰ <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Statistics/Data-on-Individual-Schools/>

¹¹ Median used as Dublin with 58 DEIS schools skews the mean value to 7.1 DEIS schools per county

the higher capitation criteria, this percentage ranged from 16% in County Leitrim to 74% in County Carlow.

Louth contained 105 pre-school services under contract to deliver the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) which served 2,014 children. 78% (82) of these services met basic capitation criteria, the second highest in the country and 22% (23) of these services met the higher capitation criteria, the second lowest in the country.

Table 12: Percentage of Pre-school Services Under Contract to Deliver the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme that Meet Basic and Higher Capitation Criteria, (June 2016)¹²

	Total children	Total ECCE services	Meeting basic capitation criteria		Meeting higher capitation criteria	
	Number	Number	Number	%	Number	%
Louth	2,014	105	82	78%	23	22%
State	74,125	4,178	2,603	62%	1,575	38%

Youth Unemployment

While not a measure of unemployment in the county, the Live Register figures¹³ from the three social welfare offices (Ardee, Drogheda, Dundalk) do give an indication of unemployment in the county. In September of 2017 there were 9,591 people on the live register in Louth, there has been a decrease of 44% in people on the live register over the period of September 2012 to September 2017.

In September of 2017 there were 1,290 people under 25 years on the Live Register in Louth equating to 13.5% of all total Live Register recipients in the county; this compares to 11.7% at State level. 59% (757) of under 25-year olds on the Live Register are male and 41% (533) are female, these figures are similar to the State level figures for male's (58%) and female's (42%) on the live register under 25 in the same time period.

Almost half of the U25s on the Live Register attend the Dundalk social welfare office (597, 46%), the Drogheda social welfare office (546, 42%) with lower numbers attending the Ardee social welfare office (147, 11%).

Disability

Disability in Louth

The Census 2016 results show that nationally, a total of 643,131 in the Irish State had a disability, which accounted for 13.5% of the population. Males accounted for 48.4% of all disabilities and females accounted for 51.6%. Since 2011 there has been an increase in the number of people classified as having a disability of 47,796 or 8%.

In Louth, the older the age bracket, the larger the proportion of people with disabilities found within it. 33.8% of people with disabilities in Louth were 65 or older, while 19.9% were 25 – 44 years and 8.9% were 14 years or younger. Similarly, as can be seen in Table 13 The older the age group, generally the more likely you are find a greater proportion of the cohort to have a disability.

¹² ECCE Database - <https://www.dcy.gov.ie/eyrq/default.asp?mypage=4&mpge=3&CountryID=17&>

¹³ <http://www.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/statire/SelectVarVal/Define.asp?Maintable=LRM07&PLanguage=0>

In Louth 5.4% of 0 – 14-year olds have a disability compared to 5.9% at State level and 8.6% of 15 – 24-year olds have a disability compared to 9.3% at State level.

Table 13: Disabilities in Louth by Age Groups 2016

Age	0 - 14	15 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+
Population (Number)	29,665	15,626	37,104	30,412	16,077
Population with a disability (Number)	1,599	1,345	3,561	5,332	6,044
Population with a disability as % of relevant age group	5.4%	8.6%	9.6%	17.5%	37.6%

Children as Carers

According to the 2016 State of the Nation's Children report 5.6 per 1,000 children provide regular unpaid personal help for a friend or family member with a long-term illness, health problem or disability. There were 6,449 children providing this form of care which accounted for 0.6% of all children in the State. In Louth, the rate was lower at 4.3 per 1,000, or 143 individuals.

Health

General Health Question from the Census

Respondents to Census 2016 are asked to self-assess their own general level of health by selecting one of five categories ranging from very good to very bad. Census respondents' answers clearly showed the decline in quality of health with age. Among 0 – 24-year old's in Louth and in the State approximately 80% responded that they were in very good health, this proportion dropped to a little over 50% for 25 – 64-year old's and further dropped to approximately 22% for 65 years or more in both Louth and the State.

Table 14: Age of Census Respondents that Replied their Health was 'Very Good'

Age	State	Louth
0-24	80.3%	79.9%
25-64	55.3%	52.3%
65+	23.7%	21.7%

In Louth, in the 0 – 24 population, 94.3% (42,725) people stated that they were in very good or good health, this is the same proportion 94.3% (1,492,454) in the general population. While 0.2% stated that they were in bad or very bad health compared to 0.3% at the State level.

Table 15: Census Self-Reported Level of Health Indicator 2016, 0 – 24 Year Old's

Area	Very good	Good	Fair	Bad	Very bad	Not stated
Louth	79.9%	14.4%	1.7%	0.1%	0.1%	3.8%
State	80.3%	14.0%	1.7%	0.2%	0.1%	3.8%

Births

According to CSO Vital Statistics report¹⁴ for 2016 there were 1,812 registered births, providing a birth rate of 15.2¹⁵ for County Louth, the second highest level of all local authorities, compared

¹⁴ <http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-vsyst/vitalstatisticsyearlysummary2016/>

¹⁵ Births per year per 1,000 population. Annual rates based on estimated usual residence 2016 population

to 13.7 at State level. The average age of mothers was 31.8 years for all births and 29.4 years for first births compared to 32.7 years and 30.9 years respectively at a State level.

Births outside of marriage/civil partnership in Louth accounted for 45.3% of births, the sixth highest of all local authorities compared with 37.6% at a State level. In Louth, 46 (2.5%) babies were born to women under 20, 594 (32.8%) to women aged 20 – 29, 1,066 (58.8%) to women aged 30 – 39 and 106 (5.8%) to women aged 40+.

Challenge: Births to Mothers Under 20

There were 46 births to mothers under the age of 20 in Co. Louth in 2016 accounting for 2.5% of births in the county compared with 1.7% at State level.

Births to Mothers Under 20 Years of Age

Births to mothers under the age of 20 in Louth in 2016 are 47% higher as a percentage of all births compared to State level. Since 2011, births to mothers under the age of 20 in Louth have decreased by 0.8% as a percentage of all births compared to a decline of 0.6% at State level.

Table 16: Births to Mothers Under 20 Years of Age 2016

	Births to mothers under 20	Total births	% of total births
Louth	46	1,812	2.5%
State	1098	63897	1.7%

Infant and Neonatal Mortality

There were 208 infant deaths registered in the State in 2016 giving an infant mortality rate of 3.3 per 1,000 live births. While there were 155 neonatal deaths registered in 2016 providing a neonatal death rate of 2.4. The rate of infant mortality and neonatal mortality in Louth are 1.1 and 1.1 per 1,000 of the population, lower than that of the State.

Table 17: Infant and Neonatal Mortality by Area of Residence of Deceased

	Infant mortality per 1,000 live births		Neonatal mortality per 1,000 live births	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Louth	2	1.1	2	1.1
Moneghan	1	1.3	1	1.3
Meath	8	2.9	6	2.1
Leinster	123	3.3	94	2.6
State	208	3.3	155	2.4

Birth Weight

Nationally, the percentage of low weight babies has increased slightly from 5.4% in 2011 to 5.9% in 2015¹⁶, of all babies born in the low birth weight category³¹⁷. At county level, the

¹⁶ <https://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/stateofthenationschildren/20170302SOTNCRReport2016.pdf>

¹⁷ Weighing less than 2,500 grams

percentage ranged from 4.4% in Roscommon to 7.3% in Louth, marking Louth as the highest proportion of babies born with a low birth weight out of 27 counties¹⁸.

Breastfeeding

Table 18 illustrates that mothers who engaged in breastfeeding of some description in Louth were proportionally 9.5% lower than the State average. This places Louth sixth lowest out of the 26 counties for take up in some form of breastfeeding.

Table 18: Percentage of Infants who are Breastfed by Mother's County of Residence¹⁹

	Exclusive breastfed	Combined (Breast & artificial)	Artificially fed	Total breastfed (Exclusive + combined)
State	47.7%	10.3%	42.1%	58%
Louth	35.3%	12.2%	52.6%	47.5%

Intellectual Disability

According to the State of the Nation's Children Report 2016, two thirds (67%) of children registered as having an intellectual disability are boys and that 9,066 children had registered as having an intellectual disability in the State²⁰. Registrations by county ranged from 4.5 per 1,000 children in Offaly to 12 per 1,000 children in Limerick and averaged 7.9 registrations per 1,000 across the State. Louth recorded 11.4 registrations per 1,000, which was the third highest registration rate per 1,000 children in the State.

Challenge: Intellectual Disability

Table

Louth recorded 11.4 registrations per 1,000 children having an intellectual disability which was the third highest registration rate per 1,000 children in the State by county.

Having Disability

19: Number of Children Registered as an Intellectual

	Number	Percentage of total registrations
Louth	380	4.4%
State	9,066	100%

Physical and Sensory Disability

According to the State of the Nation's Children Report 2016, 6,230 children had registered as having a physical or sensory disability in the State²¹, 62% of which were boys. The Annual

¹⁸ Dublin city and county are split into 2 different areas

¹⁹ http://www.hpo.ie/latest_hipe_nprs_reports/NPRS_2015/Perinatal_Statistics_Report_2015.pdf

²⁰ <https://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/stateofthenationschildren/20170302SOTNCRReport2016.pdf>

²¹ <https://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/stateofthenationschildren/20170302SOTNCRReport2016.pdf>

National Physical and Sensory Disability 2016²² report from the HRB report stated that approximately a third (31.9%) of registrations have multiple disabilities. Registration by county ranged from 1.9 per 1,000 children in County Clare to 12 per 1,000 children in Tipperary and averaged 5.4 registrations per 1,000 across the State. Louth recorded 4.8 registrations per 1,000 which was the 11th lowest registration rate per 1,000 children per county in the State.

Table 20: Number of Children Registered as Having a Physical and/or Sensory Disability

	Number	% of total registrations in the State
Louth	159	2.6%
State	6,230	100%

Sexual Health and Behaviour: Teen Births²³

Between 2011 (391 births) and 2015 (301 births) the number of babies born to girls aged 17 and under decreased by 23%. According to the State of the Nation's Children 2016 report there were 8 births to mothers aged 10 to 17 in County Louth in 2015 which equated 4.4 births per 1,000 births in the county, which is similar to the State rate of 4.6 per 1,000. This is the 12th lowest rate in the 26 counties.

It is worth noting that 26.9% of children aged 15 – 17 in the State reported being sexually active. In the Border region, of which Louth is part, this figure was also 26.9%, which was the third highest rate of the eight regions.

Challenge: Sexual Health & Behaviour

26.9% of children aged 15 – 17 in the State reported as being sexually active, while in the Border region of which Louth is part was also 26.9%, which was the third highest rate of the eight regions.

Public Health Nurse Visit

Nationally in 2015, 97.5% of new-born babies were visited by a public health nurse within 72 hours²⁴ of discharge from hospital for the first time. This ranged from 88.1% in Meath to 100% in 11 of the HSE Region and Local Health Office (LHO) areas; 99.5% of new-borns in Louth were visited within 72 hours of discharge by a public health nurse.

Mental Health

The State of the Nation's Children Report 2016 states that among children, 'depressive disorders' were the most common reason for admission to psychiatric hospitals/units and child and adolescent units. 80.9% of admissions to psychiatric hospitals/units and child and adolescent units were children aged 15 – 17 years. Girls accounted for 60% (303) and boys for 40% (200) of total admissions of 0 – 17-year olds (503). In Louth in 2016 there were 529 referrals of children under the age of 18 referred to CAMHS which accounts for 15.1 per 1,000 children under the age of 18 in Louth.

²² http://www.hrb.ie/uploads/tx_hrbpublications/NPSDD_Annual_Report_2016.pdf

²³ <http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-vs/vitalstatisticsyearlysummary2016/>

²⁴ In 2015, the HSE collected data on the percentage of new-born babies who were visited by a public health nurse within 72 hours of discharge from hospital for the first time. This replaced data collection on visits within 48 hours of discharge from hospital. The previous year's figure was 85.7% for a visit within 48 hours.

Suicide and Self-Harm

In 2015, there were 14 suicides in the State by children between the age of 10 – 17. The number of suicides by children aged 10–17 was higher among boys (12) than girls (2). The Health Profile 2015 for Louth²⁵ shows that the suicide rate in Louth between 2007 and 2013 was 12.5 per 100,000 higher than the national rate of 11.3.

The Health Profile for Louth provided information in relation to self-harm. In 2012, 163 males self-harmed in Louth giving a rate of 279.7 per 100,000, compared to a national rate of 195.1. In the same year, 132 females self-harmed giving a rate of 224.8 per 100,000 in Louth compared to the national rate of 228.0. It should be noted that actual self-harm statistics are considered to be much higher as the statistics represent hospital presentations only. It should also be noted that suicide rates are nearly 7 times higher in Traveller men compared with the general male population and suicide accounts for 11% of all Traveller deaths.

Deprivation

Measurement of affluence and disadvantage in Ireland is based on the Pobal HP Deprivation index, which has recently been updated for 2016 census data. The index is based on three dimensions of affluence/disadvantage:

- i) demographic profile
- ii) social class composition
- iii) labour market

The index provides two different statistical outputs, the Absolute Index score²⁶ and the Relative Index score²⁷.

Relative and Absolute Deprivation

Using relative deprivation data derived from the 2016 Pobal HP Deprivation Index, Louth is the 13th most disadvantaged local authority in the country, but the second most affluent local authority in the Border region of which it is part. The Border region however, is the most disadvantaged of the eight national regions.

The Absolute Deprivation score for 2016 shows the extent to which the county has recovered from the economic recession. The absolute score rose from -9.9 in 2011 to -7.2 in 2016, representing an increase of 2.7 points. This is the same as the national increase of 2.7.

Deprivation at Electoral Division and Small Area

Looking at County Louth from an Electoral Division level it is not characterised by extremes as there are no EDs classified as affluent, very affluent, extremely affluent, very disadvantaged, or extremely disadvantaged. There are only two electoral divisions (4.7%) around Dundalk that are categorised as disadvantaged (Dundalk Urban 1 & 2), with Dundalk Urban 1 being the most disadvantaged electoral division in the county. 25 of the EDs or 58.1% are classified as marginally below average, while 16 (37.2%) are classified as marginally above average.

Examining the data at Electoral Division hides some of the pockets of deprivation which exist in the county; it is therefore worthwhile looking at the Small Area statistics. The Dundalk area contains the largest number of Small Areas classified as very disadvantaged with 12 (58%), followed by Drogheda with eight (38%) and Ardee with one (5%).

Table 21: Location of Small Areas of Disadvantage

Electoral Division	Number of Small Areas	Nearest large town
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²⁵ <http://www.lenus.ie/hse/bitstream/10147/584038/5/Louth.pdf>

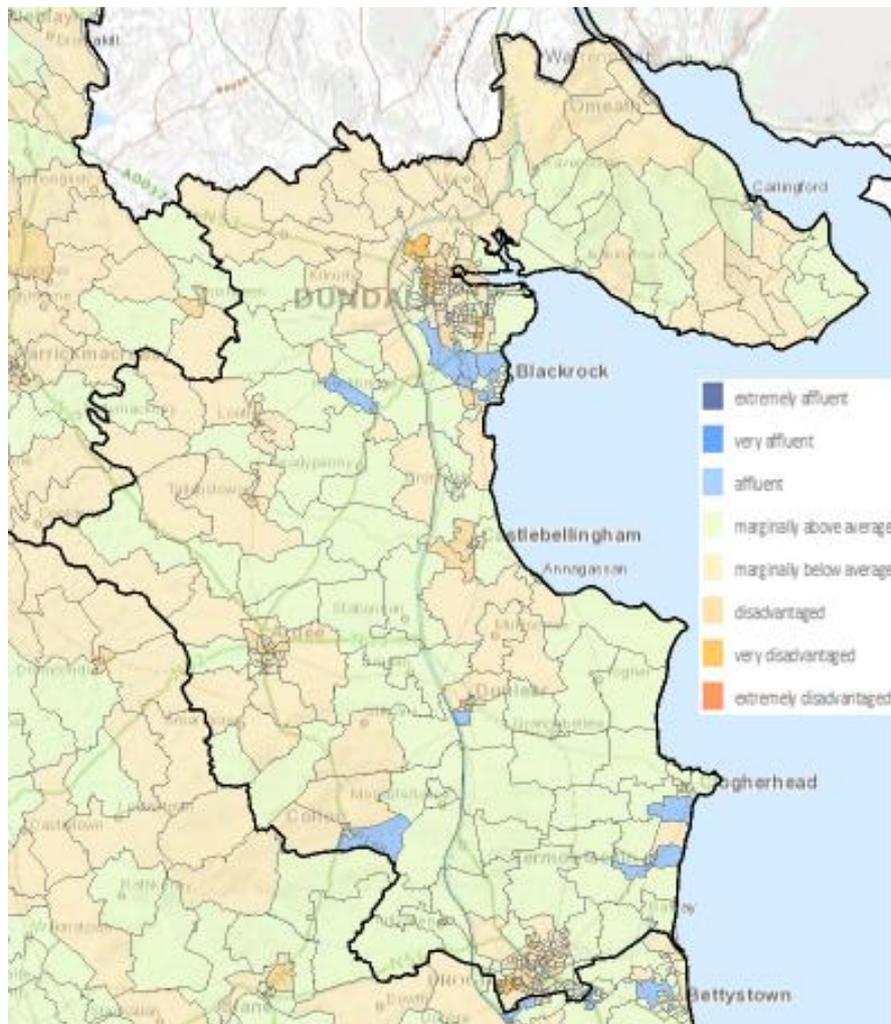
²⁶ Used to make a comparison over time

²⁷ Used to refer to an area at a particular point in time

categorised as very disadvantaged		
Dundalk Rural	10	Dundalk
Castletown	2	Dundalk
West Gate	5	Drogheda
St. Marys	2	Drogheda
Fair Gate	1	Drogheda
Ardee Urban	1	Ardee

Unlike the Electoral Division level, Louth does contain some Small Areas that are very disadvantaged and affluent. Louth does not have any small areas that are extremely disadvantaged, very affluent or extremely affluent. This can be observed in Map 3.

Map 3: Deprivation in Louth by Small Area



Challenge: Deprivation

Louth is the 13th most disadvantaged local authority in the country. There are a number of Small Areas around the towns of Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee that are classified as being 'very disadvantaged' on the Pobal Deprivation Index 2016.

People at Risk of Poverty

The SILC survey (Survey on Income and Living Conditions) is the official data source on household and individual income and provides indicators on national poverty, including the 'at risk of poverty' rate, the rate of consistent poverty and rates of enforced deprivation.

In Ireland, the population 'at risk of poverty' rate²⁸ in 2015 was 16.9%, which has fallen from 17.3% in 2012 but is still higher than 14.1% in 2009, and equates to one in six of the population. Children between the ages of 0 – 17 were the most at-risk group in Ireland with an at-risk poverty rate of 19.5%. They were also the age group most likely to experience consistent poverty, with a rate of 11.5% for this age group.

Applying the national rates to County Louth suggests that 6,834 children are 'at risk of poverty' in the county and 4,030 children experience consistent poverty. It is important to note that children not living in households are not included in these figures. Other children at a high risk of poverty include children living in temporary accommodation such as bed and breakfasts, children seeking asylum and children leaving institutional care.

In 2015, the families living in a household consisting of a single adult with children under 18 were the most likely to be at risk of poverty at 36.2%. This is quite higher than households with 2 adults and 1 – 3 children aged under 18 (14.5%) and other households with children (21.9%). The consistent poverty rate for households of a single adult with children under 18 was also substantially higher at 26.2% compared to 7.7% of households with two adults and 1 – 3 children under 18 years and 13.4% in households of other families with children.

Housing

According to the Summary of Social Housing Assessments 2016²⁹ from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, in 2016, there were 46,294 households with children identified as being in need of social housing in the State. In Louth, the total figure was 1,411 households which accounted for 3.05% of all cases in the State. This ranked Louth as the county with the 14th highest number of households with children being in need of social housing in the country out of 31 Local Authorities.

In Louth, 52% (743) of households with children identified as being in need of social housing were one-parent households, 47% (661) were two-parent households and the remaining 1% (7) multi-adult households.

Table 22: Households with Children Identified as being in Need of Social Housing, by Household Structure in Louth and the State (2016)

	Single with child/children	Couple with child/children	Multi-adult households with children	All households with child/children	% Total in the State
Louth	743	661	7	1,411	3.05%
State	27,851	18,112	331	46,294	100%

²⁸ The relative or at-risk of poverty threshold represents an income of less than 60% of the national median (middle) annual income. In 2015 the national median (middle) income was €20,000 making the at risk of poverty threshold €12,000 (€229.97 per week) - <http://www.eapn.ie/eapn/training/consistent-poverty-rates>

²⁹ <http://www.housing.gov.ie/housing/rebuilding-ireland/needs-assessment/summary-social-housing-assessments-2016>

Homelessness

Data from the Dept. of Housing, Planning and Local Government's Pathway Accommodation & Support System (PASS) from July 2017 indicates that there were 5,187 homeless persons in Ireland, this is an increase of 32% from 18 months previously in February 2016 (3,930). The number of homeless persons in Louth for the same period rose by 78% from 69 to 123 persons which accounted for 2.4% of all homeless persons in the State. This placed Louth as the 6th highest county in the country for its number of homeless persons.

In the North-East region, of which Louth is part, there are 127 registered homeless people, 123 of these are registered in Louth. The number of families reporting as homeless rose by 82% between February 2016 and July 2017. There was specifically a larger increase in the proportion of single parent families (150%) and dependents (220%) reporting as homeless in the timeframe. Table 23: Homeless Families in the North-East Region June 2017

	Region	Total Families	Total adults	(of which) single parent families	Total dependents
Feb-2016	North-East	11	18	4	15
Jul-2017	North-East	20	30	10	48
% change		82%	67%	150%	220%

Challenge: Homelessness

Department of Housing data for Louth indicates a rise in the number of homeless persons in Louth of 78% from 69 – 123 persons in 18 months leading up to July 2017, placing Louth as the 6th highest county in Ireland for its number of homeless persons.

School Attendance

The Tusla report School Attendance Data from Primary and Post – Primary Schools 2014/2015³⁰ illustrates school attendance in the county. In the 2014/2015 academic year in Louth primary schools, the mean percentage of days lost was 5.9 (Leinster 5.9 and State 5.5) while the post primary schools' mean percentage of school days lost through absence was 6.7 for Louth, 8.0 for Leinster and 8.0 for the State.

Junior and Leaving Certificate Retention Rates

It is possible to look at the retention rates in secondary schools for Junior and Leaving Certificate. The 2016 report published by the Department of Education and Skills provides data for the 2009 entry cohorts and the figures for County Louth are illustrated in Table 22 of all students in Louth who started secondary school in 2009, 95.9% of students completed the Junior Cert cycle. This proportion is similar to the proportion of students that finished the Junior Cert in the whole State and which ranks County Louth the 6th lowest Junior Cert completion rate out of 34 Administrative Counties. 87.1% of all students in Louth who started secondary school in 2009 completed the Leaving Certificate, which is a lower rate than the State average. This ranks County Louth as the third lowest rate out of 34 Administrative Counties for Leaving Cert completion.

³⁰ http://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Tusla_Annual_Attendance_Report_2014-2015.pdf

Table 24: Retention Rates to the Junior and Leaving Certificate in Louth Schools, 2009 Cohort³¹

	Junior Cert Retention Rate	Leaving Cert Retention Rate
Louth	95.9%	87.1%
State	96.7%	90.2%

Referrals to the Garda Youth Diversion Programme

In 2015, the number of children referred to the Garda Diversion Programme nationally was 9,807 children aged 10–17, a 2% decrease since 2014. The number of incidents referred did not correspond to the number of children referred, as some children were referred more than once. The total number of referrals received amounted to 19,495, a ratio of two referrals per child. 75% of referrals were for boys and 25% for girls while 74% of referrals were between the age of 15 – 17 years old and 26% were under 15 years of age.

In Louth the number of children referred to Garda Youth Diversion projects was 249, a 6% decrease on the previous year and the total number of referrals was 597, an increase of 22% in the number of referrals from the previous year, the highest increase in all Garda Divisions for the year. Louth's ratio of 2.4 referrals per child is above the State average of 2.0. This is the highest³² average ratio of referrals of children referred in the country.

Table 25: Number of Young People and Referrals to the Garda Diversion Project 2015³³, by Region and Division (2015), and rate (per 1,000) in State/County (2016)

	Total number of children referred		Total number of referrals		
	No.	2015 referral rate per 1,000 children aged 10–17 ³⁴	No.	2015 referral rate per 1,000 children aged 10–17	Average ratio of referrals to number of children referred
Louth	249	16.5	597	39.6	2.4
State	9,807	19.5	19,495	38.7	2.0

Child Protection

Meitheal Practice Model in Louth/Meath

A key aspect of the Meitheal programme is the Meitheal Practice Model which aims to ensure the needs and strengths of children and their families are effectively identified, understood and responded to in a timely way so that they receive the help and support needed to improve outcomes and realise their rights. According to the TUSLA Louth/Meath Service Report 2016 there were 52 male children/young people and 15 female children/young people initiated in the Meitheal programme in the Louth/Meath area.

Child Protection Notification

The Child Protection Notification System (CPNS) became live on the 29th September 2015. The details for this overview are taken from the CPNS register as of 31st December 2016. The number of children on the CPNS was 106 which represents 12.11 per 10,000 population in Louth/Meath. The age range of children on the CPNS register can be observed in Table ?? below:

³¹ <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Statistics/Statistical-Reports/Retention-Rates-of-Pupils-in-Second-Level-Schools-2009-Cohort.pdf>

³² Clare and Galway's average ratio was also 1.7

³³ <http://www.iyjs.ie/en/IYJS/English%20version%20New.pdf/Files/English%20version%20New.pdf>

³⁴ Rates calculated using census data 2016

Table 26: Age of Children on the CPNS Register (Number & Percentage)

	0–6 months	7–12 months	12–18 months	>18 months	Total
Number & %	47 (44%)	40 (38%)	6 (6%)	13 (12%)	106 (100%)

The primary report type for children on the CPNS in Louth/Meath was: neglect (58%), emotional abuse (31%), sexual abuse (7%) and physical abuse (4%).

Children in Care

The number of children in care in Louth/Meath at the end of December 2016 was 396. This number fluctuated minimally for the year of 2016 around 400 children. 332 (84%) of these children had been assigned a social worker and 95% had been allocated a care plan in December 2016. The number of children in care equated to 45 per 10,000 of the Louth/Meath population for under 18-year-olds. There were 70 children aged 16 and 17 in care in 2016 in Louth/Meath, 39% (27) of whom had an aftercare plan for when they turn 18.

Children in Care in Louth

There were 237 children in care in Louth in 2016 on the 31/12/2016, 55 (23%) of these children had been admitted to care in 2016 and 160 (77%) were admitted prior to 2016. 78% (43) of the children admitted to care in 2016 were Irish Nationals, 7% (4) were Irish Travellers and 7% (4) were Latvian.

Table 27: Number of Children Entering Care in Louth (31/12/2016)

	Louth
No of Children in Care on 31/12/2016	237
Admissions to Care in 2016	55
Admitted to care in 2016 and still in care	33
Admitted to Care in 2016 and Discharged in 2016	21
Admitted to Care in 2016 and Turn 18 during 2016	1
Total Number Discharged in 2016	29
Of those Discharged in 2016 how many returned home	22
Turned 18 (now in supported Lodgings)	1
Nationality of those who came into care in 2016	
Irish	43
Irish Traveller	4
Latvian	4
Nigerian	2
Pakistan	1
Unknown	1
Total	55

Foster Care

At the end of 2016 there were 396 children in care including 11 children in private foster care placements. These children were predominately placed with the 190 general foster carers and the 54 approved Section 36 placements. At the end of 2016, there were 10 unapproved Section 36 Foster Carers.

Table 28: Comparative Analysis of Louth/Meath Foster Care Numbers with Other Areas with Similar Number of Children in Care

	Dublin South City	Midland	Louth/Meath	Carlow/ Kilkenny/ South Tipperary	Galway/ Roscommon
Children in Care	383	397	396	366	414
Children in Private Foster Care	76	70	11	2	0
Number of General Foster Carers	162	152	190	222	227
Number of approved Section 36	62	60	54	120	83
Total	224	212	244	346	310

3 Summary

Louth is the second most densely populated county in Ireland after Dublin and contains a young and growing population, with the ninth highest youth dependency rate per county in the country. The majority of the population live in the two towns of Drogheda and Dundalk. While most of the county is categorised as marginally below average and marginally above average on the Pobal Deprivation scale, Louth is the 13th most disadvantaged local authority in the State with small areas around the urbanized Drogheda, Dundalk and Ardee categorised as being very disadvantaged.

The county faces challenges in a number of areas. Compared to State level, Louth contains lower levels of residents with a third level education, a higher proportion of births to women under the age of 20, a high registration rate of people with intellectual disabilities and an increasing number of people who are living in homelessness.