

## 1926 Census Statistics on Religion. Source – The Central Statistics Office.

<https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/ptnli/thenandnowlifeinirelandin1926and2022/placeofbirthreligionandirishlanguage/>

- In 1926, Roman Catholics made up 93% of the population, while by 2022 this had fallen to 69%, showing a much smaller majority.
- In 1926, 6% of people identified with the Church of Ireland and other Protestant denominations, compared with 3% in 2022.
- The 1926 census did not record a separate category for people with no religion, and those outside the main denominations were instead captured under 'other' category. In 2022 15% of the population identified with no religion.
- Those identifying with 'other' religions increased from less than 1% in 1926 to 7% in 2022.
- In 1926, there was effectively no 'not stated' category recorded. In 2022, almost 7% of the population did not complete the religion question.

<https://data.cso.ie/table/TNLIA05> for Table 2.4 Population by religion, 1926 to 2022

## Religion by County, 1926 and 2022.

Map 2.3 of this report provides a county-level representation of religious composition in Ireland in 1926.

- Monaghan had the lowest proportion of Roman Catholics in the state (79%) compared to the national average of 93%.
- Wicklow had the highest Church of Ireland population at 15%, significantly above the national average of 6%.
- Dublin was the most religiously diverse county, with the largest Jewish population and the highest Methodist share, alongside a lower Catholic proportion (86%) than most counties.
- Cavan had a comparatively large Church of Ireland population at 12%, above most other counties.
- Presbyterians made up 11% of the population in Monaghan and 8% in Donegal, compared to the national average of just over 1%.
- Western counties including Clare, Galway, Mayo, Kerry, and Roscommon were predominantly Roman Catholic (over 98%).
- Donegal showed a near-equal split between Church of Ireland (9%) and Presbyterians (8%), giving it one of the strongest combined Protestant communities in the Free State.

<https://data.cso.ie/table/TNLIA05> Table 2.5 Religion by county, 1926

Map 2.4 highlights the county-level distribution of religious affiliation in Ireland in 2022, showing clear regional contrasts when compared with national patterns.

- Dublin had a diverse religious profile, with the lowest share of Roman Catholics (57%) and the highest proportions of both 'No religion' (20%) and 'Other stated religions' (10%).
- At close to 80%, Mayo, Tipperary, Offaly and Roscommon recorded the highest proportions of Roman Catholics, placing them more than ten percentage points above the national average of 69%.
- Presbyterian affiliation concentrated heavily in the northern border counties with Monaghan and Donegal (both 3%) exceeding the national average of less than 1%, although both proportions were considerably lower than their 1926 levels.
- Wicklow (6%) and Cavan (5%) recorded the largest Church of Ireland populations, both above the national average of 3%.

Map 2.4 Religion by county, 2022 <https://data.cso.ie/table/TNLIA05>

Table 2.6 Religion by county, 2022

### **Religion by District Electoral Division, 1926.**

- Similar to the shifts in population and language, Census 1926 reveals a significant change in the religious landscape of the Irish Free State. The category 'Other Religions' includes Protestant Episcopalians (Church of Ireland), Presbyterians, Methodists, and Other Denominations (including Jewish and Baptist communities).
- By 1926, 93% (2,751,269 people) of the Free State was Roman Catholic. The remaining 7% (220,723) belonged to 'Other Religions' as seen in Table 1A.
- Between 1911 and 1926, the population belonging to 'Other Religions' dropped by almost 33% (from 327,179 to 220,723) for the same 26 County area as seen in Table 8b.
- Roman Catholics (2,751,269): As the predominant faith, Catholics made up more than 99% of the population in many rural districts. DEDs like Castleblakeney, Mount Bellew Rural District, Co Galway and Kinard DED, Dingle Rural District, Co Kerry were recorded as 100% Roman Catholic. In the cities, counts remained high, with the Arran Quay Ward in Dublin City housing more than 31,000 Catholic residents.
- Protestant Episcopalians (164,215): The largest minority groups were anchored in Dublin and the bordering counties. The Rathmines and Rathgar area in Dublin was home to more than 9,367 Episcopalians, while Springfield DED, Cavan Rural District, Co Cavan saw a rare non-Catholic rural majority of 73%.

- Presbyterians (32,429): Heavily concentrated in the North-West and Border, Rathmelton DED, Millford Rural District, Co Donegal, recorded 638 Presbyterians, making up the largest 'Other religion' group in that area.
- Methodists (10,663): More than 1,000 lived in Rathmines and Rathgar. Smaller clusters existed elsewhere, such as 210 in Cork No 3 Urban DED, Cork City and 132 in Dunkineely DED, Donegal Rural District, Co Donegal.
- Other Denominations, which include Jewish and Baptist Communities (13,416): These groups were localised in Dublin City. Dublin's Wood Quay Ward was a primary centre with 1,357 residents. Other notable groups appeared in Cork No. 5 Urban DED, Cork City (245) and Ballyglass DED, Meelick Rural District, Co Clare (148).

Map 2.5 Religion by District Electoral Division, 1926 <https://data.cso.ie/table/HCA29>