



KILKENNY CYPSC: Socio-Economic Profile 2024



INTRODUCTION

7 Overview & Structure of Socio-Economic Summary

DEMOGRAPHICS - CHAPTER 1

19 Introduction
25 Total Population, 2022
26 Population Change, 2016-2022
27 Long-term Population Change in Kilkenny - County & MDs
28 Population 0-4 Years, 2022
29 Population 5-12 Years, 2022
30 Population 13-17 Years, 2022
31 Population U18 Years, 2022
32 Population 18-24 Years, 2022
33 Population 0-24 Years, 2022
34 Households - One person, 2022
35 Percentage of Children Living in a Single Parent Family Unit, 2022
36 Families - Lone Parents with Children U15, 2022
37 Families - Lone Fathers with Children U15, 2022
38 Families - Lone Mothers with Children U15, 2022
39 Citizenship - Non-Irish Citizens, 2022
40 Foreign Citizen Children (per 1,000 children), 2022
41 Ethnicity - White Irish Traveller, 2022

- 43 Ethnicity - Asian or Asian-Irish, 2022
- 44 Ethnicity - Black or Black-Irish, 2022
- 45 Ability to Speak English - Not well/Not at all, 2022

ECONOMIC SECURITY - CHAPTER 2

- 47 Introduction
- 42 Rate of Traveller Children (per 1,000 children), 2022
- 50 Labour Force - Unemployed (Total), 2022
- 51 Prof., Managerial & technical, and Non-manual workers, 2022
- 52 Skilled manual, Semi-skilled, and Unskilled, 2022 53 POBAL HP Deprivation Index -
Relative Score, 2022

EDUCATION - CHAPTER 3

- 55 Introduction
- 59 Completed Education - No Formal or Primary (Total), 2022
- 60 Completed Education - Lower Secondary (Total), 2022
- 61 Completed Education - Upper Secondary (Total), 2022
- 62 Technical qualification, Apprenticeship or Certificate (Total), 2022
- 63 Completed Education - Lower 3rd Level (Total), 2022
- 64 Completed Education - Higher 3rd Level (Total), 2022
- 65 Completed Education - All 3rd Level (Total), 2022
- 66 Education Attainment of Mothers, 2016
- 67 Primary and Post-Primary School Absence Rate, 2003 to 2021
- 68 Primary School Absence Rate, 2021

69 Post-Primary School Absence Rate, 2021
70 Leaving Certificate Retention Rate - (2016 school entry cohort)

ENVIRONMENT - CHAPTER 4

72 Introduction
74 Household Central Heating Main Source - Coal (incl. anthracite), 2022
75 Household Central Heating Main Source - Oil, 2022
76 Household Central Heating Main Source - Peat (incl. turf), 2022
77 Households - 2 or more Cars, 2022
78 Travel to Work/Education Commuting Times: Greater than 1 hour, 2022

HEALTH - CHAPTER 5

80
85
86 Introduction
87 Rate of Births (per 1,000 mothers) to Mothers Aged 15-17, 2021
88 Percentage of Babies Born Weighing <2,500 grams, 2021
89 Percentage of Infants who are Breastfed (exclusive & combined), 2021
90 Percentage of Pregnant Women Attending Antenatal Care in 1st Trimester, 2021
91 Newborns Visited by Public Nurse within 72 Hours of Hospital Discharge, 2022
92 Children attending developmental health screening before 12 Months, 2022
93 Immunisation uptake rates at 12 & 24 Months, 2022
Rate of Children (per 1,000 children) in the Care of TUSLA,
2022

	Rate of Admission to Psychiatric Hospital Units, 2022
94	General Health - Bad or Very bad (Total), 2022
95	General Health - Good or very good (Total), 2022
96	Carers by Age & Gender, 2022
97	Rate of Children who Provide Unpaid Care to Friend or Family, 2022
98	Population who are Carers, 2022
99	Number of Persons with a Disability by Extent, 2022
100	Number of Persons with a Disability by Age & Gender, 2022
101	Rate of Children (per 1,000 children) with a Disability, 2022
102	Population with a Disability, 2022
103	Population who Smoke, 2022
104	Rate of Hospital Discharges of Children, 2022
105	Rate of Children with Intellectual Disability, 2022
106	Rate of Children with Physical or Sensory Disability, 2022

SECURITY & SAFETY - CHAPTER 6

107	Rate of Child Welfare and Protection Referrals to TUSLA, 2022
109	Introduction
114	Total Number of Referrals (Child Abuse / Welfare), 2019 - 2024
115	Children listed as 'active' on the Child Protection Notification System
116	Number of Children in Care
117	Crime Incidents in Carlow/Kilkenny Division

118 Private Households - Owner Occupied (owns outright), 2022
119 Private Households - Owner Occupied (mortgage or loan), 2022
120 Private Households - Owner Occupied (All), 2022
121 Private Households - Rented from private landlord, 2022
122 Private Households - Social Rented, 2022

CONCLUSION

123 Private Households - All Rented, 2022
124 Vacancy Rate, 2022 125 HAP Profile, 2022

APPENDIX

126 Strategic Actions & Outcomes

131 Location of Children Services within Kilkenny

This report was commissioned by Kilkenny Children and Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC) and compiled by People and Place. Kilkenny CYPSC was formed in 2016. It promotes interagency collaboration to ensure that children and young people's lives in County Kilkenny are improved under the five National Outcomes for Children i.e. that they are:

- healthy and active;
- achieving full potential in learning and development;
- safe and protected from harm;
- enjoy economic security and opportunity; and • are connected, respected and contributing to their world.

Kilkenny CYPSC is committed to systematic engagement and consultation with children and young people, both directly and through intermediate structures, to ensure that they have a voice in decisions that affect their lives. It focuses on improving and establishing mechanisms to ensure the participation of seldomheard and vulnerable children and young people in decisionmaking.

People and Place is a Maynooth University spin-out consultancy with links to the national leaders in socio-demographic analysis in Ireland – the All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO). Established as a multi-disciplinary consulting unit, specialising in collaborative and evidence-informed decision making for social, economic and community development,

People and Place is based in Maynooth (Co. Kildare), and has remote hub locations in Ennis (Co. Clare), Cahersiveen (Co. Kerry) and Galway.

This report seeks to support evidenced-based decision-making. It presents a contemporary and bespoke profile of County Kilkenny – focusing particularly on variables that are relevant to the lives of children and young people. The material presented here will feed directly into the CYPSC's work in respect of strategic planning, service enhancement, partnership working and advocacy.

Moreover, it will be of use to all groups and organisations that work with children and young people, and Kilkenny CYPSC encourages stakeholders to share and disseminate this information.

Structure of the Report

The report presents detailed demographic and socio-economic data under the following headings:

1. Demographics;
2. Economic security;
3. Education;
4. Environment;
5. Health; and
6. Safety & Security

It presents detailed information in respect of each of these six themes on county level, and these are benchmarked against the corresponding figures for Ireland. Where possible, the report also presents the relevant data for the Southern Region (Regional Assembly Area) and the Southern

Region (Regional Planning Area). Where sub-county figures are available, the report presents data for each of the following: municipal districts; Kilkenny City, the Kilkenny part of Waterford City i.e., Ferrybank, settlements with populations of over 1,500 (n=5) (including Graiguenamanagh and Rosbercon as individual areas) and rural towns and villages (n=22). Where data are available at electoral division (ED) level, People and Place has mapped these, and several maps have been included in this report.

Overview of County Kilkenny's Main Demographic and Socio-Economic Features

1. Demographics

1.1 Population

- According to the most recent (2022) Census of Population, County Kilkenny has a total resident population of 104,160 (2% of Ireland's population). Its population increased by 5% since 2016 (the second-lowest rate among Ireland's 31 local authority areas).
- County Kilkenny has four municipal districts (MDs): Kilkenny City (most populous), Piltown, Castlecomer, and Callan-Thomastown.
- Population growth, by MD, has been variable, since 2016. Piltown has experienced the fastest growth (+7%) and the Kilkenny City MD has experienced the slowest growth (+2%).
- Longer-term (since 1991) trends show, however, that the Kilkenny City MD's population increased by 46%, while the Castlecomer MD had the lowest level of long-term growth (+29% since 1991).

1.2 Age

and Clogh.

Children aged 0-4 account for 5.6% of the population. Levels are largely consistent across MDs but higher in settlements like Stoneyford (11.4%), Knocktopher (9.8%), Ballyhale (8.2%).

Children aged 5-12 account for 11.6%, above national and regional equivalents; highest in Callan-Thomastown and Piltown MDs.

Young People aged 13-17 account for 7.4% of the population. This is above state and regional values; highest in Waterford City's northern Young adults aged 18-24 account for a further 7.4%; this is lower than state level, and the highest levels in communities like Slieverue

Overall, 32% of the population is aged 0-24, with the Piltown MD having the highest proportion (36.1%).

1.3 Household Composition

- There are 8,208 households in County Kilkenny.
- One-person households: 22.3% (slightly below national figure), with Kilkenny City MD having the highest proportion (25.8%).
- Children in lone-parent families: 13.4%, lower than national level; lone-mother families are more common than lone-father families (12.4% vs. 1.4%).

1.4 Nationality and Ethnicity

- 8% of the population has non-Irish citizenship, with Kilkenny City having a relatively high proportion (14.4%).
- New Ross has the highest proportion of non-Irish citizens (as a proportion of the total resident population) (over 20%).

- 637 persons (0.6% of the population) are Irish Travellers. These are mainly concentrated in New Ross, Kilkenny City, and Urlingford.
- 1.8% describe their ethnicity as Asian or Asian Irish, mostly in Urlingford, Ballyhale, and Kilkenny City.
- 0.7% describe their ethnicity as Black or Black Irish, concentrated in Waterford's suburbs, Kilkenny City, and Urlingford.

1.5 Language

- Nearly 1,300 people cannot speak English well or at all, with most residing in Kilkenny City and the highest concentration being in the city's southeastern suburbs.

2. Economic Security

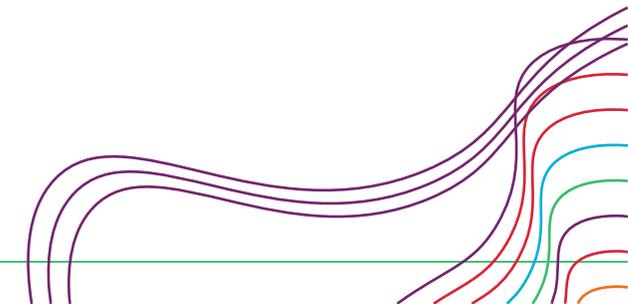
2.1 Unemployment

- Total unemployed: just over 4,000 (8% of the labour force), slightly below national and regional rates.
- Highest unemployment rates in Kilkenny City (some areas over 20%) and lowest in Castlecomer MD.
- Highest unemployment in settlements: New Ross, Urlingford, Kilmoganny (over double the county rate); Mooncoin and Freshford also have high rates (>14%).
- Rural areas in the centre and south of the county have higher unemployment levels than the north.

2.2 Social Class

- Higher social classes (professional, managerial, technical, non-manual workers): 56.7% of the workforce, slightly above national level. Highest in Callan-Thomastown MD, lowest in Piltown MD.
- Areas with the highest concentration of higher social classes: Kilkenny City suburbs, N78 corridor (within 10km of the city), and settlements like Stoneyford, Kells, Paulstown, and Knocktopher.
- Lower social classes (skilled, semi-skilled, unskilled workers): 29.1% of the workforce, above national level. The highest concentration is in the Piltown MD, and the lowest is in Kilkenny MD.

Areas with the highest relative proportions of lower social classes: rural communities, particularly in the northeast and south.



2.3 Affluence and Deprivation (PobalHP Index)

- Kilkenny's score: -0.41 (slightly more disadvantaged than Ireland; national score (on the index): +0.40, but more affluent than the Southeast Region).
- All MDs have slightly negative scores, with Piltown MD being the most disadvantaged (-0.52).
- Kilkenny City shows variation in affluence / deprivation: Eastern suburbs (north/south of Dublin Road): classified as disadvantaged or very disadvantaged. Affluent areas: northeast of the city, outside the ring road.
- Rural areas show mixed patterns of affluence and deprivation.
- Most disadvantaged settlements: New Ross, Urlingford, Kilmoganny, Freshford, Goresbridge, Clogh, and Moneenroe (scores of -10 or lower).
- Most affluent settlements: Stoneyford (affluent), Kells, Paulstown, and Kilmacow (marginally above average).
- There are areas of affluence in Kilkenny's commuter belt, and pockets of deprivation in the northwest (Urlingford, Johnstown) and northeast (Castlecomer area).

3. Education

3.1 Educational Attainment (among those aged 15+ who completed formal education):

- Primary school only: 9.6%, slightly below the national and regional equivalents. Higher rates (>15%) in New Ross, Castlecomer, and Graiguenamanagh-Tinnahinch. Highest rates in rural areas and communities furthest from Waterford and Kilkenny Cities (e.g., Kilmoganny, Goresbridge, Clogh).
- Lower secondary school: Small cohort, highest rates in rural areas and peripheral towns (e.g., Johnstown, Freshford, Mooncoin).

- Upper secondary school (Leaving Certificate): 18.5%, slightly higher than the national figure. Higher in Waterford City suburbs (20.8%) and some areas (>25%, e.g. Clogh, Slieverue).
- Technical qualifications/ apprenticeships: 15.1%, above national and regional equivalents. Most prevalent in rural areas, with clusters in Slieverue, Castlecomer, and areas around Callan and Freshford.
- Third-level qualifications (NFQ Levels 7 to 10): 36.6%, below the national level (39.2%), but higher than regional figure. Areas with high third-level attainment: Kilkenny City suburbs, Stoneyford, Paulstown, Gowran, Callan.
- Advanced degrees (Levels 8 to 10): 22.8%, similar to regional level but lower than national. Highest values in Kilkenny MD and city suburbs, lowest in disadvantaged and rural areas (e.g. Urlingford, Goresbridge, and Clogh).

3.2 Educational Indicators (Children and Young People)

- Mothers' education: 20.6% of mothers in Kilkenny did not progress beyond primary school. This is slightly better than the national figure (21.4%).
- At a national level, the percentages of school absenteeism for 2019–20 were the lowest recorded, with 2021–22 being the highest recorded, corresponding to the peak of Ireland's COVID-19 cases over winter in 2021–22. In 2019–20, there were 19,067 primary students with 20 or more absent days. These absences increased twofold in 2020–21, rising to 39,879, with a further fourfold increase to 173,072 in 2021–22. Post-primary students had a similar, albeit less severe pattern, rising from 20,977 in 2019–20 and 21,687 in 2020–21 to 69,097 in 2021–22. Post-primary students with 20 or more days of absences represented 26.8% of all responding students in 2021–22.

to the national rate (91.7%).

4. Environment

4.1 Household Heating

- School absenteeism in Kilkenny (2021): 36.8% of primary school children were absent for more than 20 days, lower than the national rate (39%). This rate increased from 3.8% in 2019-20 and 8.1% in 2020/21. 26.1% of post-primary students were absent for more than 20 days, lower than the national average (28%). This rate increased from 10.3% in 2019-20 and 12.8% in 2020/21. While official statistics from 2022/23 and onwards are not published yet, anecdotal evidence suggests that absenteeism rates have not returned to pre-COVID levels.
- Leaving Certificate completion rate: 91.8% of students who started secondary school in 2016 completed their leaving certificate, similar
- Coal: 2,359 households (over 6%) in County Kilkenny use coal as their primary heating source, higher than the national average. Significant variations exist: 2.5% in the Kilkenny City MD vs. 9.7% in the Castlecomer MD. Specific towns with higher coal usage: Castlecomer, Graiguenamanagh-Tinnahinch, New Ross.
- Oil Heating: Over 54% of households use oil as their primary heating source, significantly higher than the national average, linked to rurality and distance from gas networks. There is higher oil usage in smaller towns and villages, with lower usage in Waterford's suburbs and Kilkenny City.
- Peat/Turf Heating: Only 257 households (0.7%) use peat or turf as an heating source, mainly in the northwest of the county. Significant areas: Urlingford, Johnstown, Clogh, and Freshford.

4.2 Car Ownership

- Car Ownership as an economic indicator: 49.5% of households have two or more cars, eight percentage points higher than the national average. There is a contrast between Kilkenny City (32.7% with two or more cars) and rural areas (exceeding 54% in some communities).

- Specific towns and villages with high car ownership: Kells, Stoneyford, Paulstown, Fiddown, Moneenroe, Kilmacow, and Knocktopher.
- Towns and villages with low car ownership: Mullinavat, Urlingford, Goresbridge, and Freshford.

4.3 Commuting Patterns

- Long-Distance Commuting: 7.1% of County Kilkenny's resident workers have one-way commutes exceeding one hour. Longer commuting times are more common in rural areas, especially in the north. Areas with high long-distance commuting: Johnstown, Moneenroe, and Kells.
- Kilkenny and Waterford Cities are the main commuter destinations, with an increasing number commuting to the Greater Dublin Area.

5. Health

5.1 Neonatal and Antenatal Well-being

- County Kilkenny had the fourth-highest birth rate (3.6 per 1000 births) among young mothers (ages 15-17) in 2022, above the national average of 2.3.
- 5.8% of babies in County Kilkenny were born weighing under 2.5 kg, slightly below the national figure (5.9%).
- Breastfeeding rates in County Kilkenny (61.1%) are slightly below the national average (61.9%).
- Antenatal care attendance in the first trimester in County Kilkenny (87.7%) is slightly lower than the national average (89.4%).
 - Nearly all newborns in Carlow/Kilkenny (98.9%) were visited by a public health nurse within 72 hours of hospital discharge.
 - Developmental health screening attendance for children before 12 months in Carlow/Kilkenny (93.4%) is significantly higher than the national rate (85.4%).

Ireland.

5.2 Health Status

- Immunisation rates at 12 months are comparable to the national average, but at 24 months, they are lower for certain vaccines (e.g., 12 percentage points lower for Hibb).

Slightly higher proportion of children in TUSLA care in the Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary region than across all TUSLA regions.

Psychiatric hospital admission rate for children and adolescents is low, in relative terms, (0.4 per 100,000), the ninth lowest in

1.6% of the population in County Kilkenny reports having ‘bad’ or ‘very bad’ health, just below the national level (1.7%). Higher rates of negative health outcomes are observed in socio-economically deprived areas.

- 85.3% of people in County Kilkenny describe their health as ‘good’ or ‘very good’, slightly higher than the national figure (82.9%). Good health status is more prevalent in rural areas.
- Lower proportions of people reporting good health in larger towns, especially Graiguenamanagh-Tinnahinch (71.8%) and New Ross (73.6%).

5.3 Carers

- County Kilkenny has 6,501 family carers, with 61% being female, mostly aged 45 to 59.
- There are 108 child carers (aged <15) and 278 young adult carers (aged 15-24), with the child carer rate (7.8 per 1,000 children) higher than the national average (6.7 per 1,000).
- Carers make up 6.2% of County Kilkenny’s population, slightly higher than the national rate (5.8%).
- There are high proportions of carers in rural areas, especially in Mullinavat (11%) and Johnstown (10.1%) – among the resident population.

5.4 Disability

- 22,402 people in County Kilkenny have a self-declared disability, including 3,837 individuals aged 0 to 24.
- Males aged 0 to 24 are more likely to have a disability than females (ratio 1.17:1).
- The disability rate among children in County Kilkenny (97.1 per 1,000) is lower than the national average (108.1 per 1,000).
- Lower referral rates to TUSLA in the Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary region compared to other TUSLA regions.

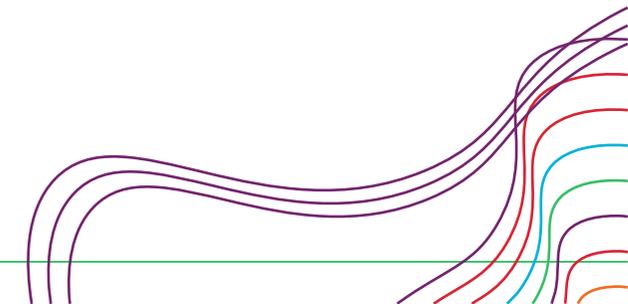
5.5 Lifestyle and Well-being

- The smoking rate in County Kilkenny (12.7%) is slightly below the national rate (13.1%).
- Smoking is more common in urban areas, particularly in local authority housing estates.
- Hospital discharge rate for children in County Kilkenny (96 per 1,000) is lower than the national rate (110.3 per 1,000).
- 3.1% of children in County Kilkenny have an intellectual disability, below the national rate (7.2%).
- Lower referral rates to TUSLA in the Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary region compared to other TUSLA regions.

6. Security and Safety

6.1 Referrals (child welfare and child abuse)

- Within the Carlow / Kilkenny / South Tipperary area, there were 4,361 referrals to Child Protection and Welfare Services during 2023; this is 478 (12.3%) more than in 2022 (n=3,883) and 423 (10.7%) fewer than 2021 (n=3,938).



- More than half of referrals in 2023 (61%; 2,684) were for welfare concerns, 34% (n=1,480) were for abuse/neglect, and the primary report type was not recorded for the remaining 197 referrals. Of the 1,480 abuse/neglect referrals, a total of 355 were for physical abuse, 660 for emotional abuse, 273 for sexual abuse and 192 for neglect.

6.2 Social Work Activity Data (child protection and welfare)

- Across the State, there were 21,408 cases open to social work at the end of Q2 2024 (June); this is 885 (4%) fewer than Q1 2024 (n=22,293) and 1,403 (6%) fewer than Q2 2023 (n=22,811). Open cases include those held on intake, allocated, unallocated child welfare and protection and children-in-care cases. The number of open cases ranged from 2,381 (11%) in Cork to 268 (1%) in Sligo/ Leitrim/West Cavan. Within the Carlow / Kilkenny / South Tipperary area, there were 714 open cases (3.2%).
- Since Q2 2019 (June), there has been a steady decrease in open cases within the Carlow / Kilkenny / South Tipperary area, with the number decreasing from 1,236 in 2019, to 933 in 2022 to the Q2 total of 714 in 2024.

6.3 Child Protection Notification System

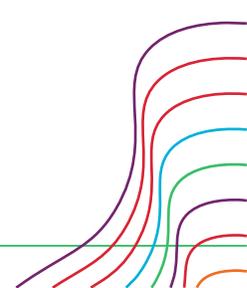
- Across the State, there were 1,024 children listed as 'active' on the Child Protection Notification System (CPNS) at the end of Q2 2024; this is 17 (2%) more than Q1 2024 (n=1,007) and the sixth consecutive increase. Within the Carlow / Kilkenny / South Tipperary area, there were 61 children listed as 'active' on the CPNS. This is equivalent to a rate of 9.8 per 10,000 population and is the sixth highest rate of all 17 reporting areas. All 61 children listed as 'active' on the CPNS have been allocated a social worker with 43 listed for 0-6 months (70%), 14 listed for 7-12 months (23%), 4 listed for 12-18 months (7%) and no child listed for longer than 18 months.

6.4 Children in Care

- Across the State, there were 5,804 children in care at the end of Q2 2024, 44 (<1%) more than Q1 2024 (n=5,760). This figure (n=5,804) includes 141 children reported by the Service for Separated Children Seeking International Protection.
- Within the Carlow / Kilkenny / South Tipperary area, there were a total of 312 children in care, which is equivalent to 5 per 1,000 children aged 0-17 years of age. This is the fifth-highest rate in the State. Of the 312 children in care, 200 were in Foster Care General, 88 in Relative Foster Care, 12 in Residential Care General and 12 in other placement types.

7. Facilities and Services

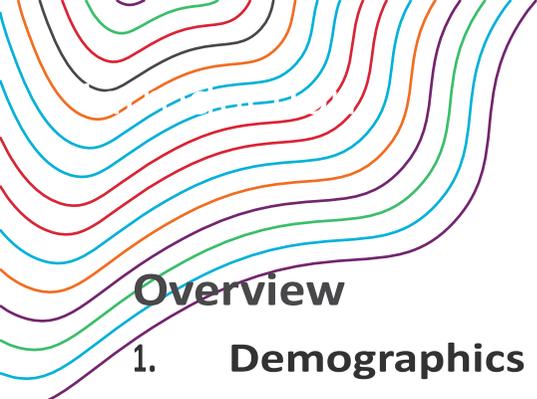
- The Appendix of this document contains a range of maps that detail the location of children related services within Kilkenny. Mapped services include education and childcare facilities, health facilities, addiction services, disability services, child welfare protection services, family resource centres and youth services





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Demographics



Overview

1. Demographics

1.1 Population

- County Kilkenny has four municipal districts (MDs): Kilkenny City (most populous), Piltown, Castlecomer, and Callan-Thomastown.
- Population growth, by MD, has been variable, since 2016. Piltown has experienced the fastest growth (+7%) and the Kilkenny City MD has experienced the slowest growth (+2%).
- Longer-term (since 1991) trends show, however, that the Kilkenny City MD's population increased by 46%, while the Castlecomer MD had the lowest level of long-term growth (+29% since 1991).

1.2 Age Profile

- Children aged 0-4 account for 5.6% of the population. Levels are largely consistent across MDs but higher in settlements like Stoneyford (11.4%), Knocktopher (9.8%), Ballyhale (8.2%).
- Children aged 5-12 account for 11.6%, above national and regional equivalents; highest in Callan-Thomastown and Piltown MDs.

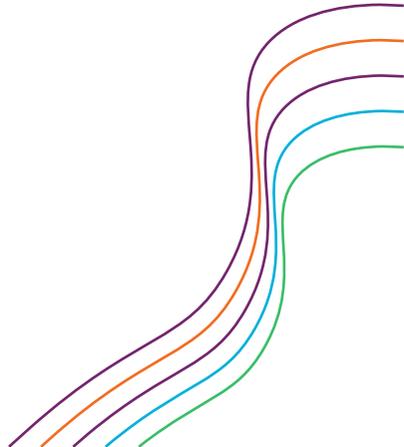
- According to the most recent (2022) Census of Population, County Kilkenny has a total resident population of 104,160 (2% of Ireland's population). Its population increased by 5% since 2016 (the second-lowest rate among Ireland's 31 local authority areas).

- Young People aged 13-17 account for 7.4% of the population. This is above state and regional values; highest in Waterford City's northern environs.
- Young adults aged 18-24 account for a further 7.4%; this is lower than state level, and the highest levels in communities like Slieverue and Clogh.
- Overall, 32% of the population is aged 0-24, with the Piltown MD having the highest proportion (36.1%).

1.3 Household Composition

- There are 8,208 households in County Kilkenny.
- One-person households: 22.3% (slightly below national figure), with Kilkenny City MD having the highest proportion (25.8%).
- Children in lone-parent families: 13.4%, lower than national level; lone-mother families are more common than lonefather families (12.4% vs. 1.4%).

1.4 Nationality and Ethnicity

- 8% of the population has non-Irish citizenship, with Kilkenny City having a relatively high proportion (14.4%).
- 

- New Ross has the highest proportion of non-Irish citizens (as a proportion of the total resident population) (over 20%).
- 637 persons (0.6% of the population) are Irish Travellers. These are mainly concentrated in New Ross, Kilkenny City, and Urlingford.
- 1.8% describe their ethnicity as Asian or Asian Irish, mostly in Urlingford, Ballyhale, and Kilkenny City.
- 0.7% describe their ethnicity as Black or Black Irish, concentrated in Waterford’s suburbs, Kilkenny City, and Urlingford.

1.5 Language

- Nearly 1,300 people cannot speak English well or at all, with most residing in Kilkenny City and the highest concentration being in the city’s southeastern suburbs.

According to the most recent Census of Population (2022), County Kilkenny has a total population of 104,160, which is equivalent to two percent of the population of Ireland. The county has four municipal districts (MDs) – Piltown, Castlecomer, CallanThomastown and Kilkenny City. Of these, Kilkenny City is the most populous.

Population Change

In the six years to 2022, the population of County Kilkenny increased by five percent (+4,928 persons). This is the secondlowest rate of growth of any county in Ireland – just above the rate for County Donegal. Over the same period, the population of the State grew by eight percent. Kilkenny’s neighbouring counties, of Carlow, Wexford and Waterford experienced faster rates of growth than Ireland, while Tipperary’s growth rate was only marginally faster than that of County Kilkenny.

Within County Kilkenny, population growth rates ranged from almost seven percent in the Piltown MD (fastest) to just over two percent in the Kilkenny MD (slowest).

While the Kilkenny MD grew more slowly than other MDs during the most recent intercensal period, a longitudinal analysis of the population figures (since 1991) reveals that the MD’s population has grown at a similar rate to that of the State; it has over 46% more people than was the case in 1991. The Piltown MD experienced a lower level of population growth than the Kilkenny MD and the State between 1991 and 2002, but it has grown more rapidly than them over the past twenty years. The Callan-Thomastown MD has experienced rates of growth, over the past thirty years, that are just below those of the State. The Castlecomer MD has consistently had the lowest level of growth; it has just 29% more people than was the case in 1991.

Age profile

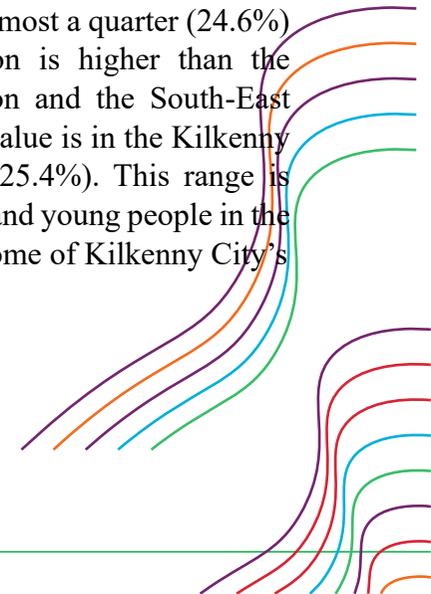
In County Kilkenny, children aged 0 to 4 comprise 5.6% of the county's total population. This is broadly in line with the regional and state figures, and values are largely consistent across the county's four MDs. There are, however, some notable variations within the county, and the following settlements have values (the proportion of persons aged 0 to 4) that are notably above the county value: Stoneyford (11.4%); Knocktopher (9.8%); and Ballyhale (8.2%), although in all these villages the absolute numbers are small. It is worth noting that the northern environs of Waterford City have an higher proportion of persons aged 0 to 4 than Kilkenny City. As the accompanying map illustrates, there is no pronounced spatial pattern in respect of the distribution of 0- to 4-year-olds in County Kilkenny.

Children aged 5 to 12 comprise 11.6% of County Kilkenny's population. This is higher than the equivalent values for the State and the South-East Region. Within County Kilkenny, the Callan-Thomastown and Piltown MDs both have values that exceed twelve percent. As is the case with younger children, the proportion is higher in the Waterford City environs than in Kilkenny City. Some of the county's settlements emerge as having high (>15%) proportions of persons aged 5 to 9. These include the following: Paulstown, Piltown and New Ross, while values are also high in Ballyhale, Fiddown and Knocktopher. While there is no significant spatial pattern in respect of the distribution of persons aged 5 to 12, there are some notable geographical clusters with relatively high (>13%) values. These include Freshford and surrounding rural areas, and rural communities to the northeast of Kilkenny City including Ballycomey/Damerstown

and the Brown Mountain and to the south of Callan, although absolute values in these communities are small. The east of Kilkenny City (especially the communities to the north of the Dublin Road) has high absolute and relative values in respect of children aged 0 to 4 and 5 to 12.

Young people aged 13 to 17 account for 7.4% of County Kilkenny's population. This value is higher than the equivalent values for Ireland and the Southern Region, and it is marginally above the corresponding value for the Southeast (SE) Region. As is the case with children aged up to 12 years, Waterford City's northern environs have an higher proportion of teenagers, in the resident population, than does Kilkenny City. The following are among the settlements in which teenagers constitute a significant (>9%) proportion of the population: New Ross, Paulstown and Fiddown. Relative values are also high in Kells and Piltown. As the accompanying map shows, the most significant geographical clusters with high values, in respect of the proportion of teenagers in the resident population, are as follows: Kells, Stonyford, Ballyhale (outside of the village), Kilmoganny and surrounding rural areas; Gowran and its environs; Ballyfoyle and town lands to the east of Mullinavat.

Children and young people aged 0 to 18 comprise almost a quarter (24.6%) of County Kilkenny's population. This proportion is higher than the equivalent values for Ireland, the Southern Region and the South-East Region. Across the county's four MDs, the lowest value is in the Kilkenny MD (23.3%) and highest is in the Piltown MD (25.4%). This range is associated with relatively high numbers of children and young people in the northern suburbs and environs of Waterford City. Some of Kilkenny City's



neighbourhoods, especially those in the City Centre, have among the lowest relative values in the county. Children and young people (aged 0 to 18) represent almost twenty-eight percent of the resident population in the Waterford Metropolitan Area (the part that is in County Kilkenny). The settlements in which children and young people constitute the most significant proportions of the population (>29%) are as follows (in descending order): Paulstown, Stoneyford, Fiddown, New Ross. In contrast, the lowest relative values (<18%) are in Mullinavat, Goresbridge, Clogh, Inistioge and Kilkenny City’s urban core.

Young adults aged 18 to 24 represent over seven percent (7.4%) of County Kilkenny’s resident population. This proportion is lower than the equivalent values for Ireland, the Southern Region and South-East Region, and it is associated, in part, with County Kilkenny not having an higher-education institute in the form of a university or technological university. As is the case with children and young people (aged 0 to 18), the Kilkenny MD has the lowest value, while the Piltown MD has the highest value, among the county’s four MDs. Across the county’s settlements, the highest values (>9%) are in Slieverue, Clogh and Kells, although absolute numbers in those communities are small. The accompanying maps shows that the most significant geographical clusters with relatively high proportions of

persons aged 18 to 24 are in the south of the county, while there are also some notable clusters in Johnstown and Paulstown.

Children, teenagers and young adults (aged 0 to 24) comprise almost one third (32%) of County Kilkenny’s resident population. This is similar to the equivalent values for Ireland, the Southern Region and South-East Region. As noted throughout this commentary, the Piltown MD (South County Kilkenny) has the highest relative value, among the four MDs. Similarly, the Waterford City suburbs and environs record an higher value (36.1%) than Kilkenny City (30.4%) – almost six percentage points higher. Notwithstanding its relatively low values (across the children and young people age cohorts that have been referenced in this text), Kilkenny City has, by far, the highest absolute numbers of any settlement in the county. The settlements with the highest relative values i.e. the highest proportions of persons aged 0 to 24 in County Kilkenny are as follows (in descending order): Paulstown, Piltown, New Ross, Ferrybank (Waterford Suburbs), Stoneyford and Fiddown.

Household Composition

There are 8,208 households in County Kilkenny. Over one-in-five households (22.3%) are one-person (or single-occupancy) households. This proportion is slightly below the corresponding values for Ireland, the Southern Region and South-East Region, but there are notable variations within County Kilkenny. Across the county’s four MDs, values range from 19.6% in Piltown (lowest) to 25.8% in Kilkenny (highest). These figures indicate that oneperson households are less prevalent in the MDs with the

highest proportions of children and young people. Across the county, the settlements with the highest proportions of one-person households (as a percentage of all households) are as follows: Mullinavat; Freshford; Ballyhale; Knocktopher; and Inistioge. All these communities record values of over thirty percent. As the accompanying map illustrates, one-person households are most prevalent in Kilkenny City – especially the urban core – and in rural communities, most notably in the west of the county and those that are further than 15km from Kilkenny and Waterford

Cities. In contrast, rural areas that are well connected to the cities have lower proportions of one-person households.

In County Kilkenny, almost one in seven children (13.4%) under the age of 15 live in families that are headed by a single parent. This proportion is over two percentage points lower than the equivalent for Ireland as a whole, and it is the seventh-lowest value among the State's thirty-one local authority areas.

When the data in respect of lone-parent families are analysed, it is evident that several areas in County Kilkenny have proportions that are significantly higher than the national and county levels. In the Kilkenny MD, nineteen percent of households with children are headed by a lone parent, and in many parts of the city – most notably its urban core and eastern suburbs – over a third of families with children are lone-parent families. Over a quarter of families with children are headed by a lone

parent in each of the following communities (in descending order): Freshford, Johnstown, Graiguenamanagh-Tinnahinch, Ballyhale, Piltown, Kilmoganny and Goresbridge. Lone parent families are more likely to live in urban areas – towns and villages – than in rural communities.

Children who live with lone parents are more than nine times more likely to live with a lone mother than a lone father, in County Kilkenny; families headed by a lone father account for 1.4% of families and those headed by a lone mother account for 12.4% of families with children under the age of 15. While the number of children living with lone-parent fathers is small in absolute terms, there are notable numbers of such families, in absolute and relative terms, in Kilkenny City, Slieverue, Ballyragget, Thomastown and Mooncoin. The local-level data reveal that there are over a thousand children in Kilkenny City who live in families headed by lone mothers, and almost three hundred in the Waterford City environs. These families are concentrated in the following parts of Kilkenny City: Hebron Road and adjoining estates, Jamesgreen / Dominic Street and the Archer's Street Lot. Outside Kilkenny City, the settlements with the highest absolute numbers of families headed by lone mothers are as follows: Thomastown, Callan and Paulstown, while the highest relative values are in Freshford, Johnstown, GraiguenamanaghTinnahinch and Ballyhale.

Nationality and Ethnicity

In County Kilkenny, eight percent of the resident population has a citizenship other than Irish. While this is a smaller proportion than pertains across Ireland and the Southern Region, there are several communities in

County Kilkenny in which non-Irish citizens constitute significant proportions of the population. In Kilkenny City, one in seven persons (14.4%) has a citizenship other than Irish. Non-Irish citizens are more prevalent in the city centre and in Newpark than in the outer suburbs. The proportion is higher in the environs of Waterford City (16.7%), while New Ross records the highest proportion of non-Irish citizens (as a percentage of the resident population) of any settlement in the county. Over one fifth of New Ross' population has a citizenship other than Irish. This proportion is more than double the values for the Southern Region and South-East Region. Non-Irish citizens are more likely to live in urban areas than in rural areas. Urlingford and Mooncoin are the two rural communities with the highest numbers of non-Irish citizens.

For every 1,000 children (aged <15) in County Kilkenny, 47.4 have a citizenship other than Irish. This is the lowest proportion in any of Ireland’s thirty-one local authority areas.

There are 637 persons in County Kilkenny who self-declare as an Irish Traveller. These persons constitute 0.6% of the resident population – the same as is the case across Ireland as a whole. County Kilkenny’s Traveller population is concentrated in particular geographical communities, specifically New Ross, the outer suburbs of Kilkenny City and Urlingford. There are also Traveller families residing in Thomastown, Callan, Castlecomer, Mooncoin, Bennettsbridge and Ballyragget, and there are smaller numbers (≤4 persons) in Graiguenamanagh-Tinnahinch, Freshford, Piltown and Paulstown.

For every 1,000 children (aged <15) in County Kilkenny, 12.1 are Irish Travellers. This is higher than the State equivalent (11.6), and it is the fifteenth highest among Ireland’s thirty-one local authority areas.

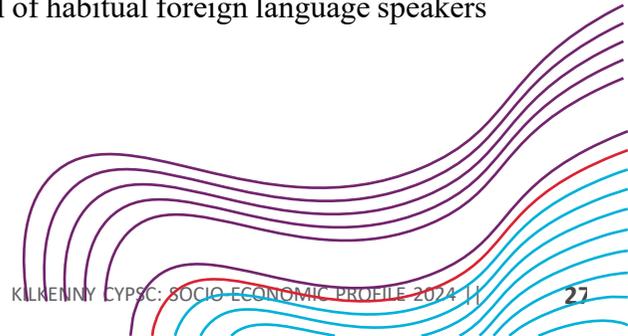
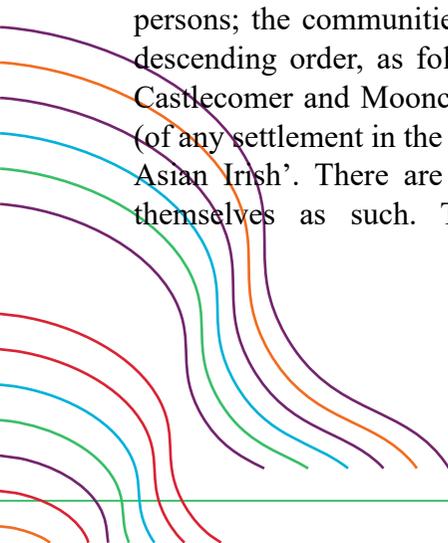
Under two percent (1.8%) of County Kilkenny’s resident population describes their ethnicity as ‘Asian or Asian Irish’. This proportion is below the State value (3.3%), and it is on a par with the value for the South-East Region. There are notable geographical concentrations of this cohort of persons; the communities with the highest relative values (>3%) are, in descending order, as follows: Urlingford, Ballyhale and Kilkenny City, Castlecomer and Mooncoin. The city has the highest number of persons (of any settlement in the county), who describe their ethnicity as ‘Asian or Asian Irish’. There are 1,079 persons in Kilkenny City who describe themselves as such. This figure is considerably higher than the

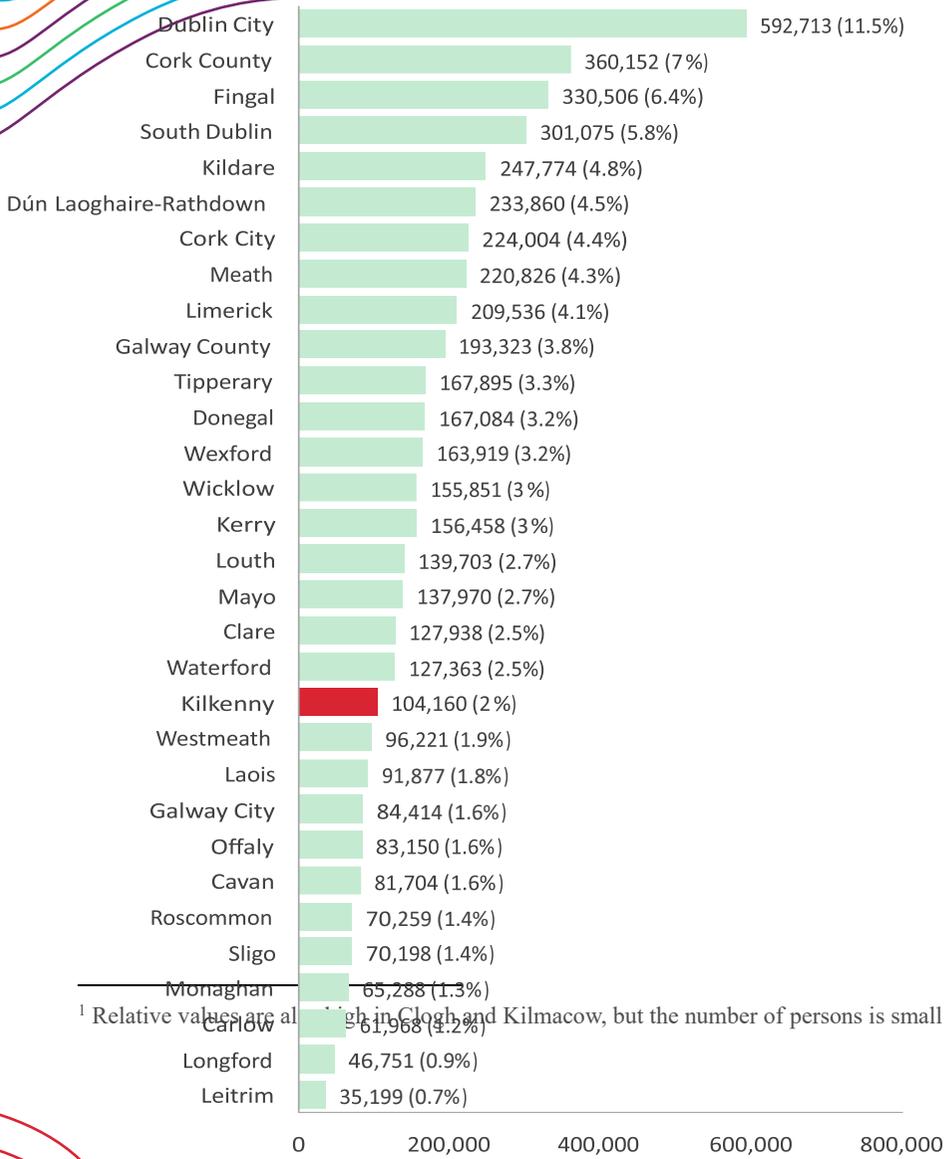
corresponding value (n=130 persons) for the Waterford City environs. Within Kilkenny City, the neighbourhoods with the highest proportions of persons in this cohort are Butt’s Green, Ayrfield, Grange Road and John Street / Maudlin Street.

Under one percent (0.7%) of County Kilkenny’s resident population describes their ethnicity as ‘Black or Black Irish’. This proportion is below the State value (1.5%), and it is slightly below the value (0.9%) for the South-East Region. There are notable geographical concentrations in the distribution of this cohort of persons; the communities with the highest relative values (≥ 1%) are, in descending order, as follows: Waterford suburbs / Ferrybank, Kilkenny City, Urlingford, Slieverue and Callan. Kilkenny City has the highest number of persons (of any settlement in the county), who describe their ethnicity as ‘Black or Black Irish’. There are 393 persons in Kilkenny City who describe themselves as such. Within Kilkenny City, the neighbourhoods with the highest proportions of persons in this cohort are along the Callan Road and the city centre – on the eastern bank of the River Nore (i.e. John Street, John’s Quay).

There are almost 1,300 persons in County Kilkenny who are not able to speak English well or at all. Almost half (n=577) of these persons live in Kilkenny City, with the highest geographical concentration being in the city’s south-eastern suburbs, especially Bohernatounish.

The corresponding figure for Waterford’s northern suburbs is lower (n=204 persons), but these account for a larger proportion of habitual foreign-language speakers than is the case in Kilkenny City. Other settlements within which a notable (>20%) level of habitual foreign language speakers





¹ Relative values are all high in Clough and Kilmacow, but the number of persons is small (n=7).

cannot speak English well or at all include the following: New Ross, Piltown and Urlingford¹.

Figure 1.1: Total Population in Local Authorities, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

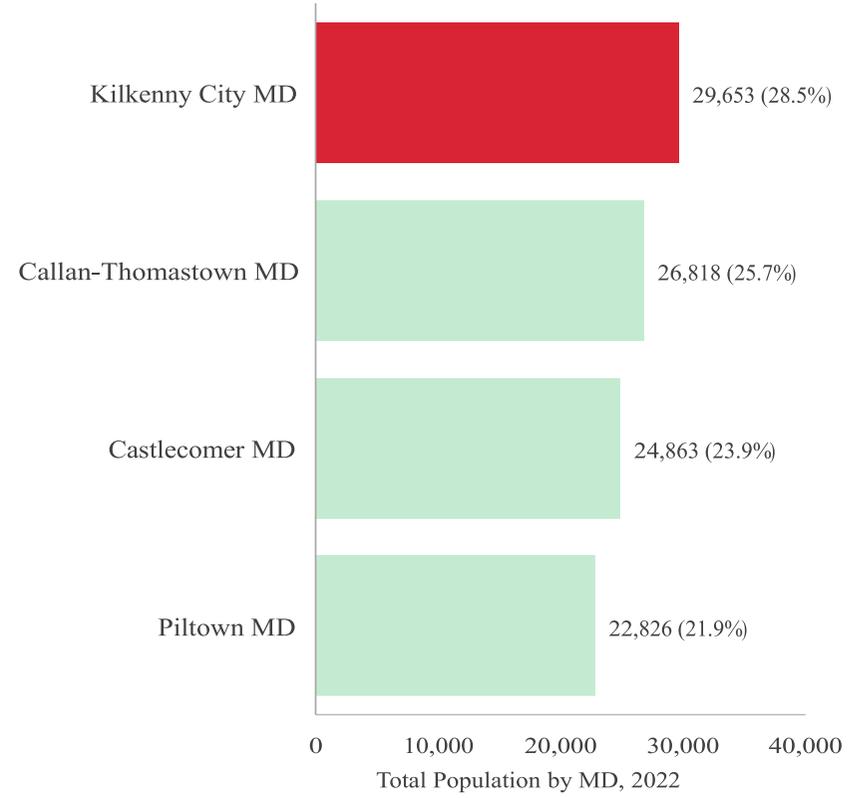


Figure 1.2: Total Population in Kilkenny Municipal Districts (MDs), 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

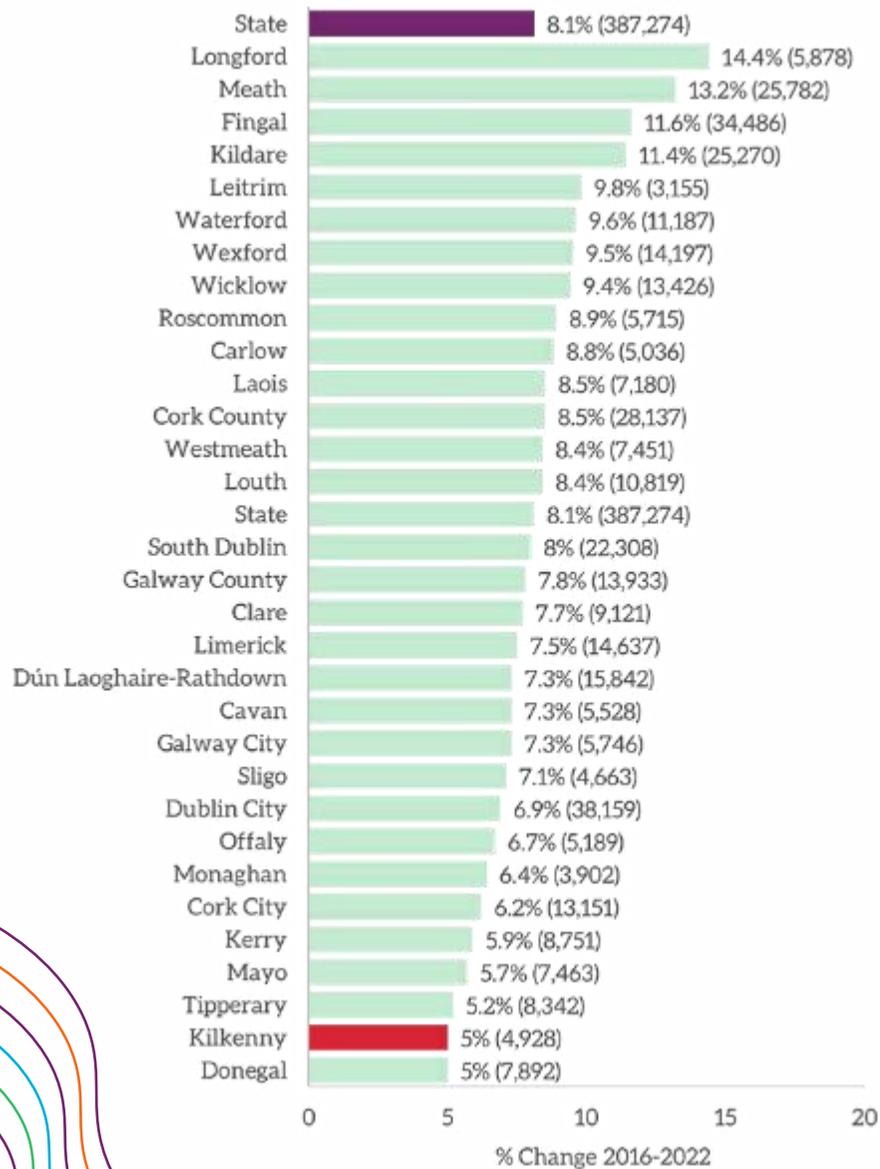


Figure 1.3: % Population Change in Local Authorities, 2016-22 (CSO Census 2022)

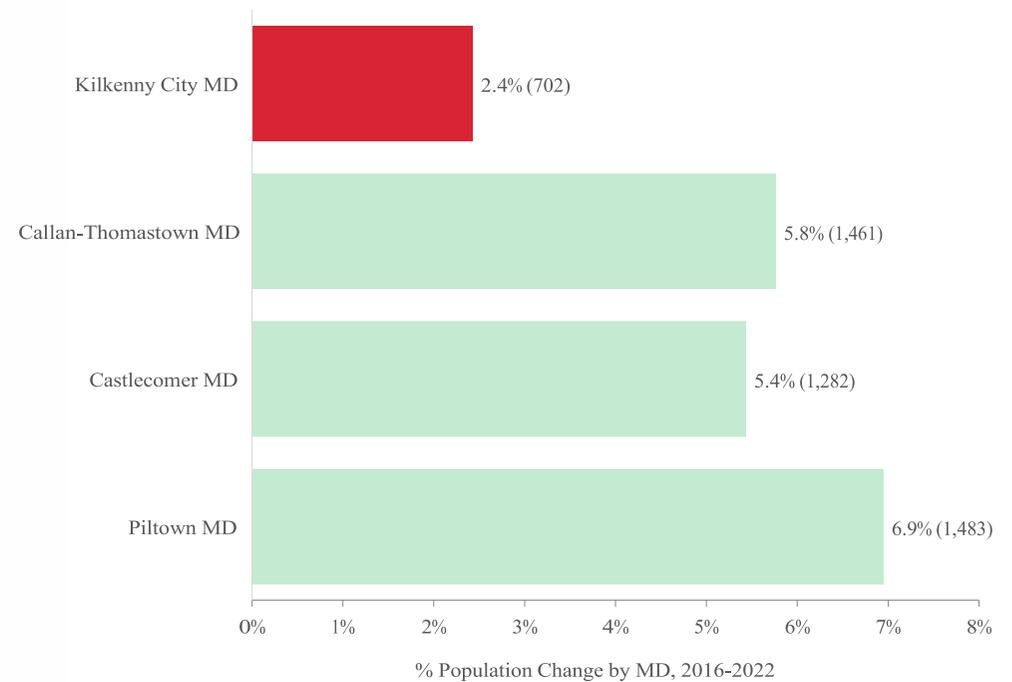


Figure 1.4: % Population Change in Municipal Districts (MDs), 2016-22 (CSO Census 2022)

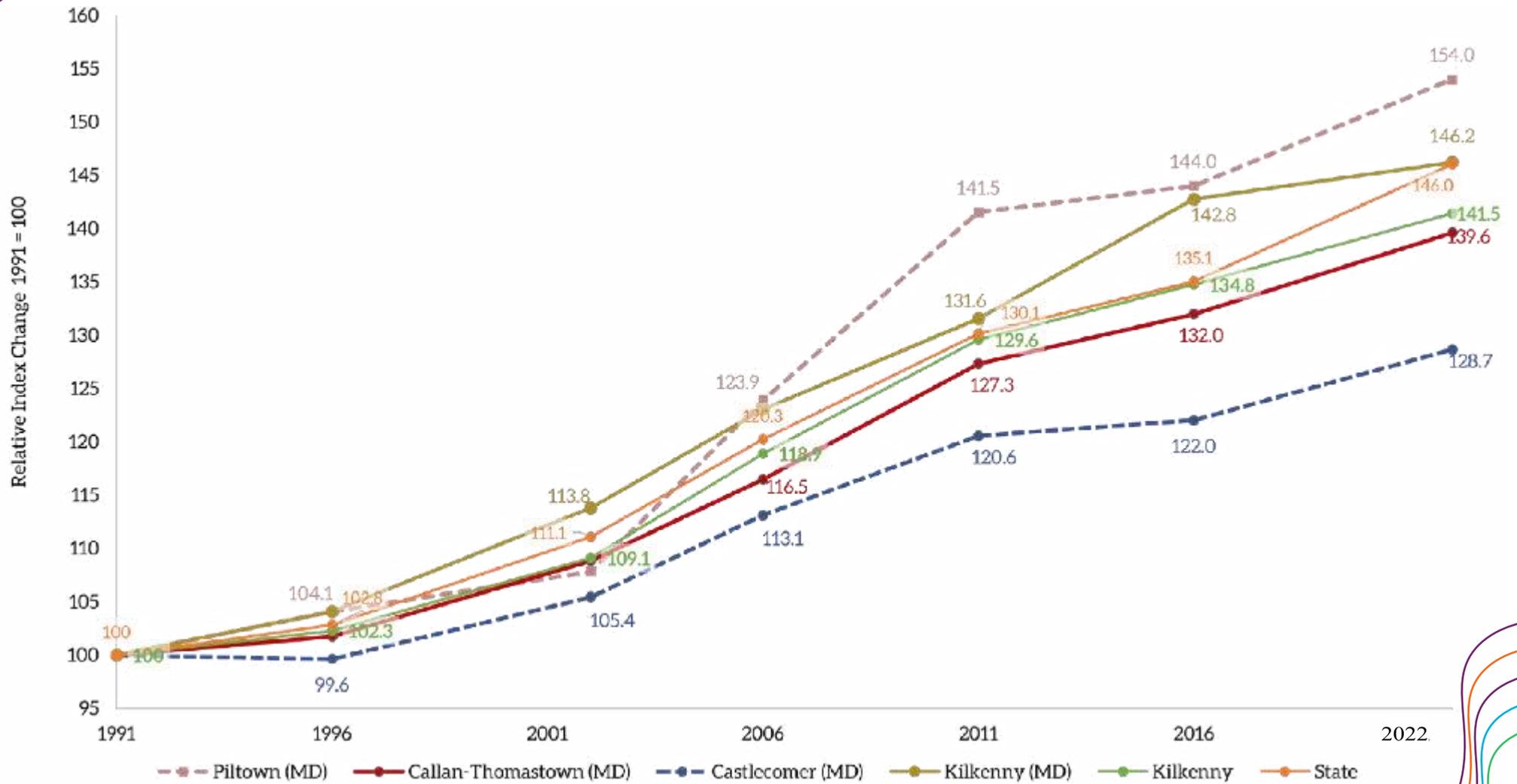


Figure 1.5: Relative Population Index Change in Kilkenny and MDs, 1991 to 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

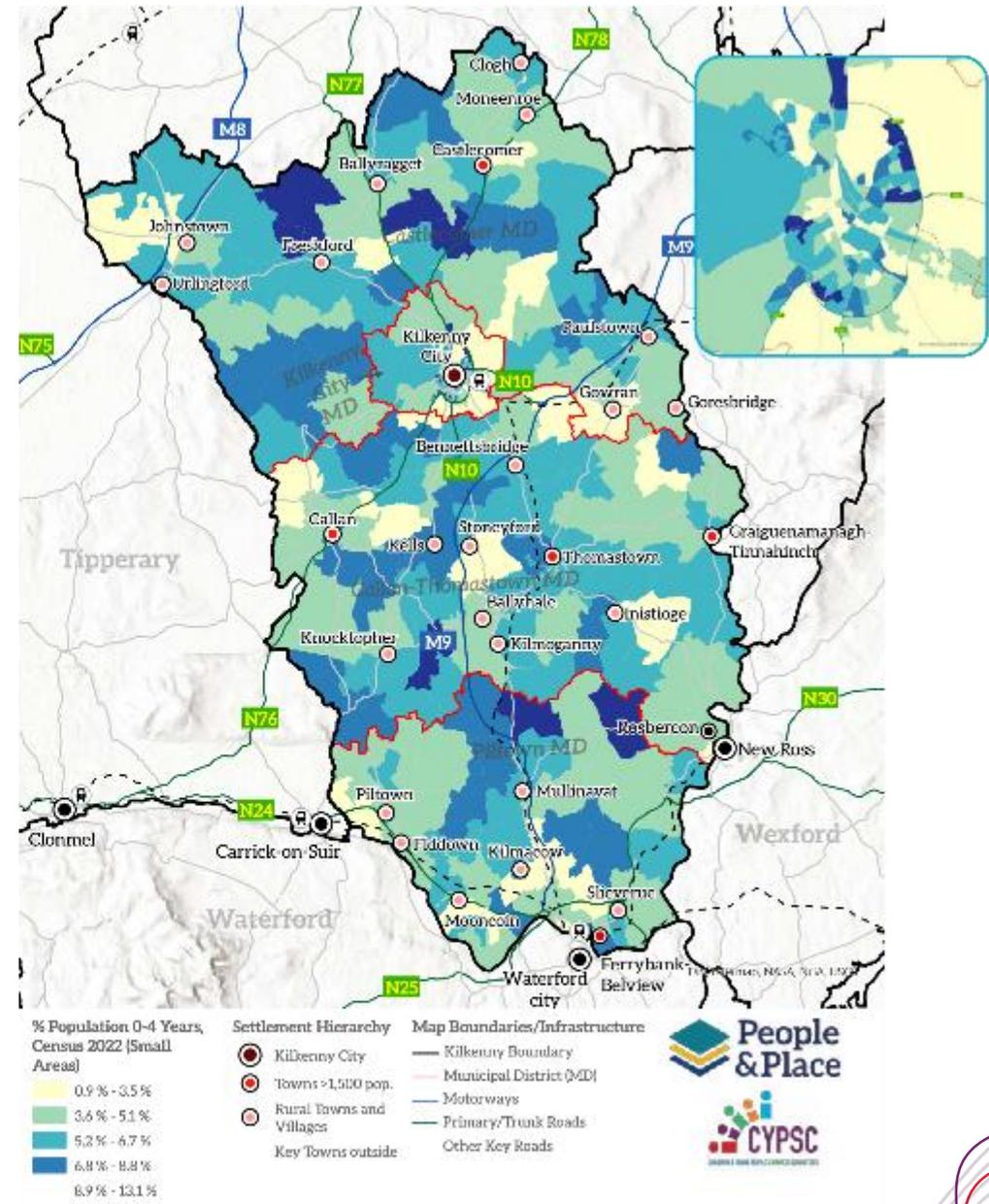
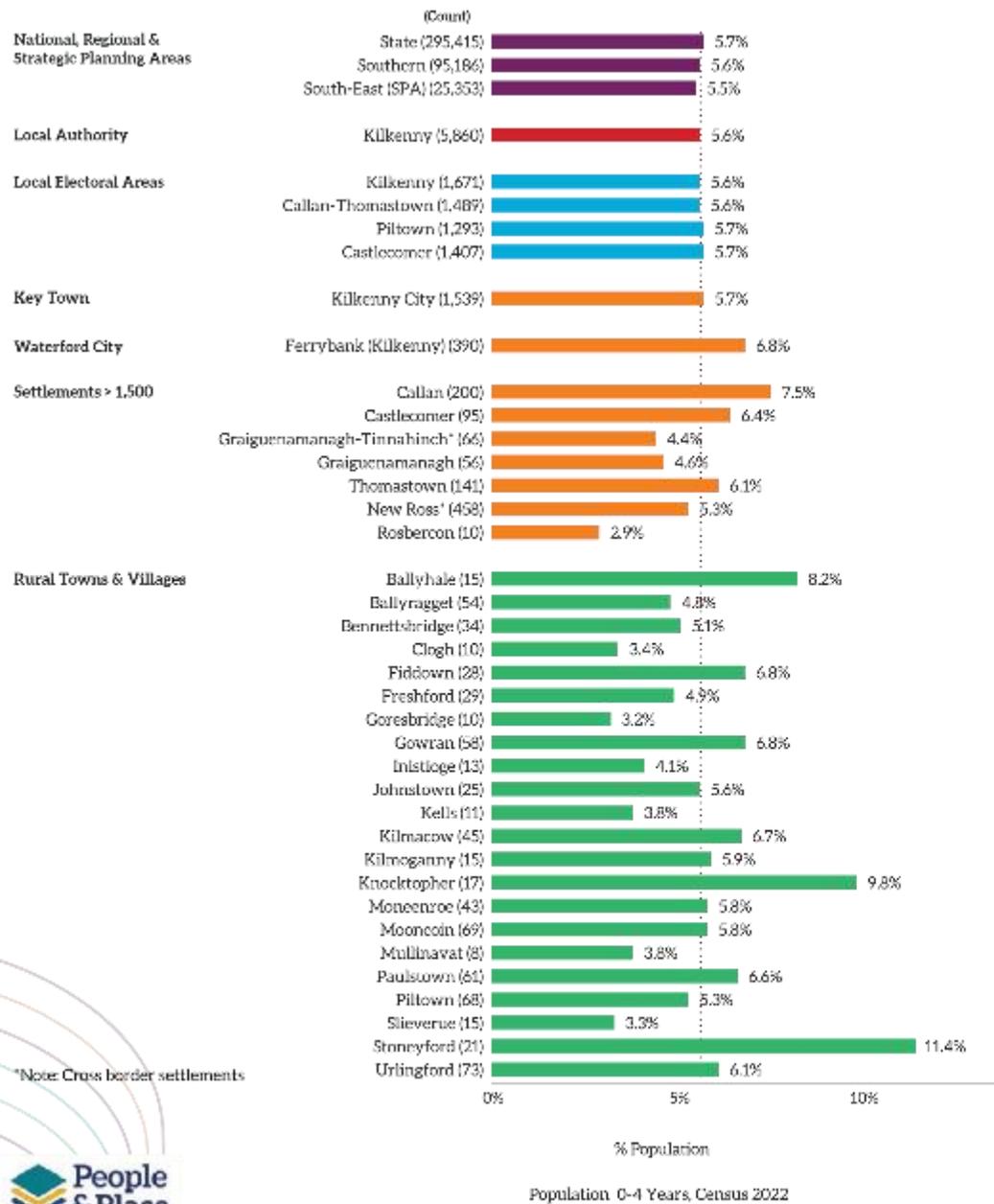


Figure 1.6: % Population Aged 0-4 Years, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

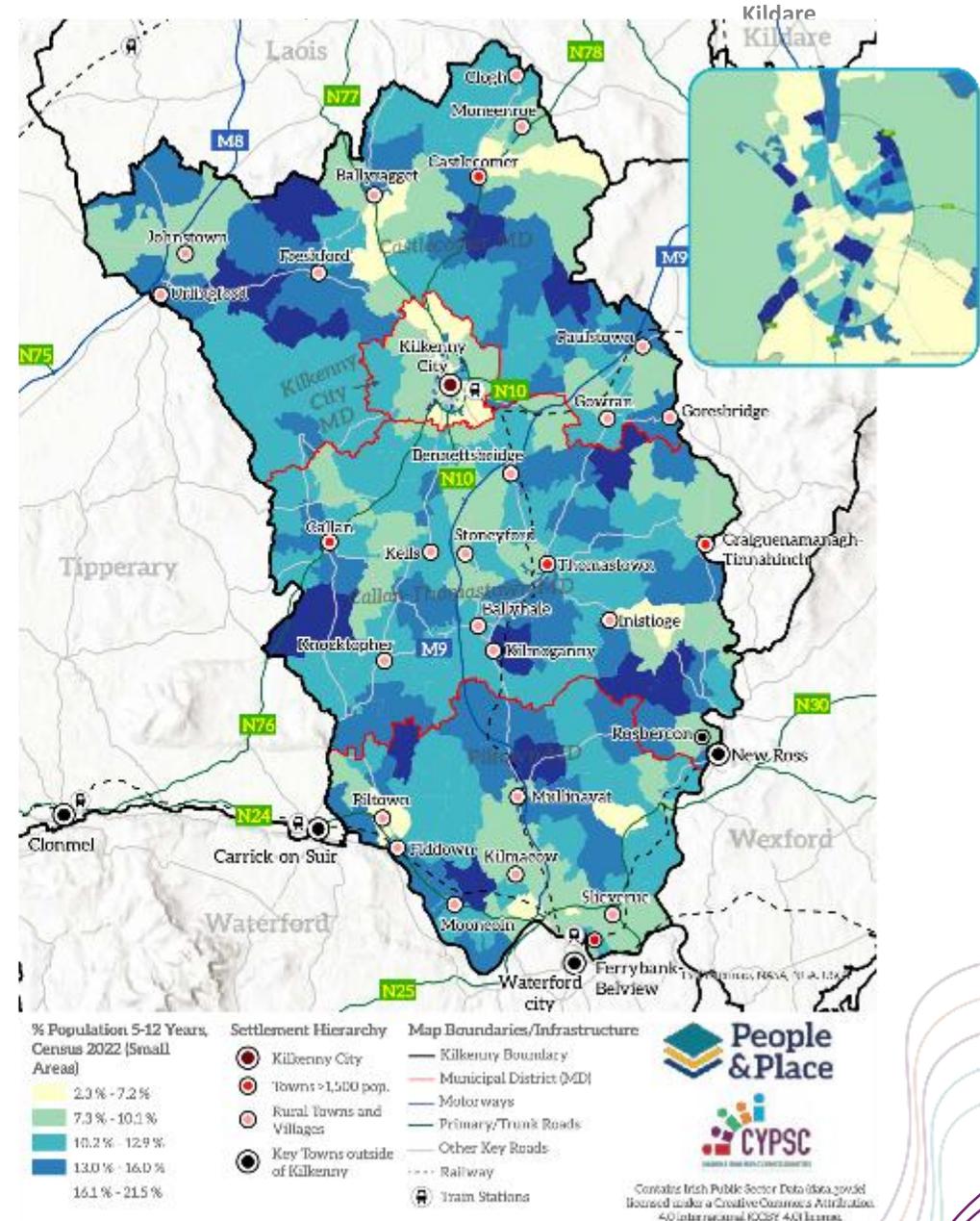
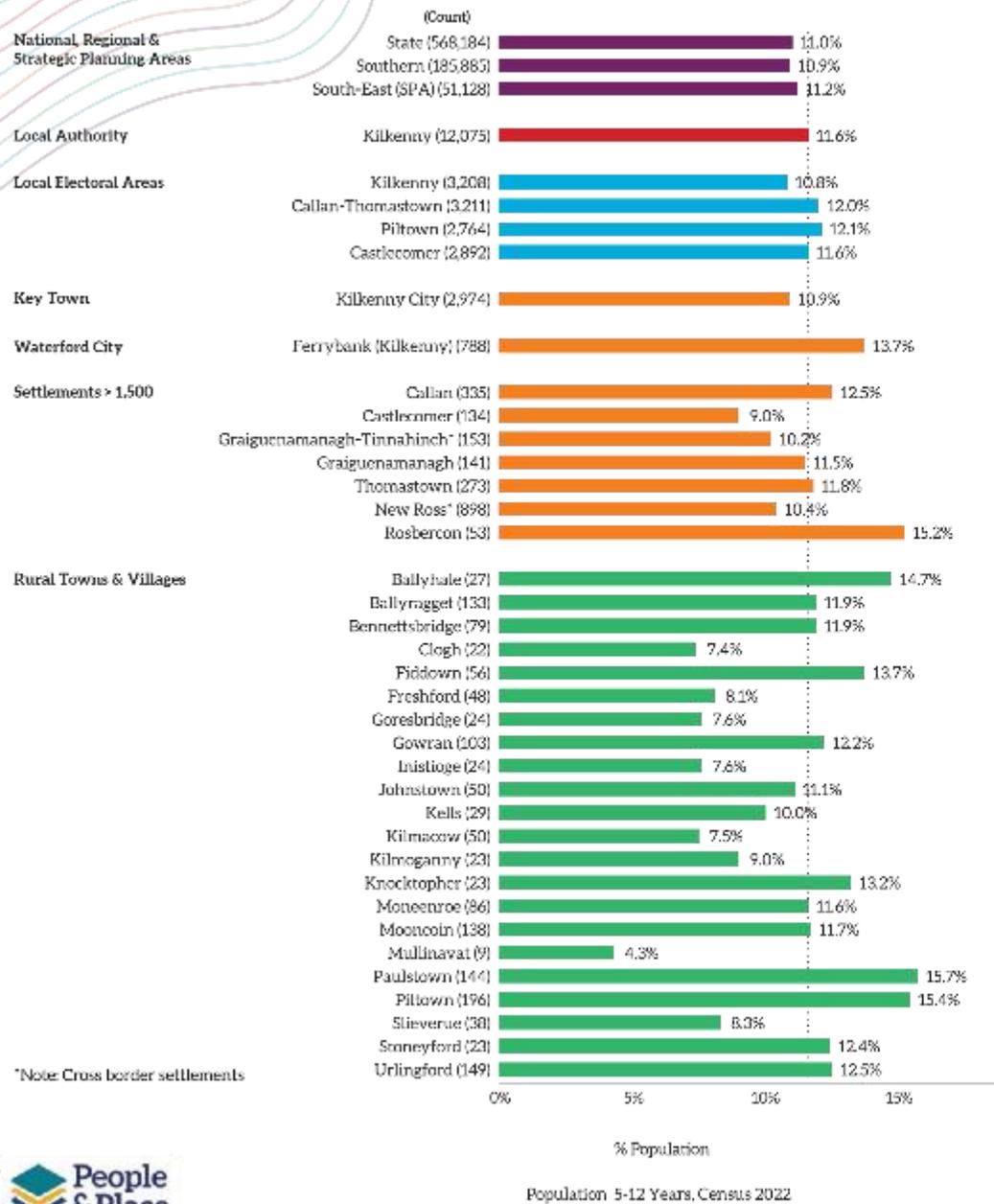


Figure 1.7: % Population Aged 5-12 Years, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

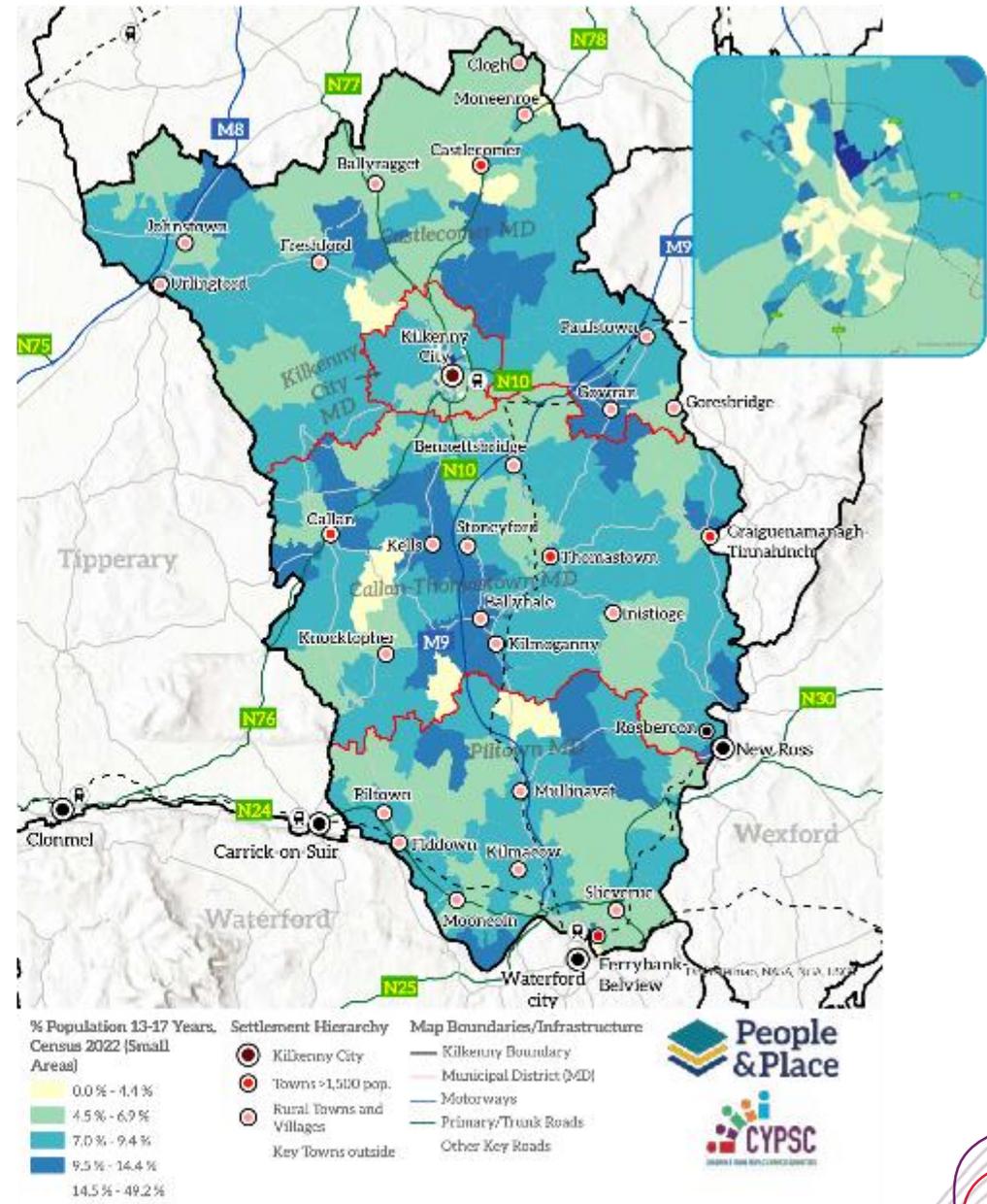
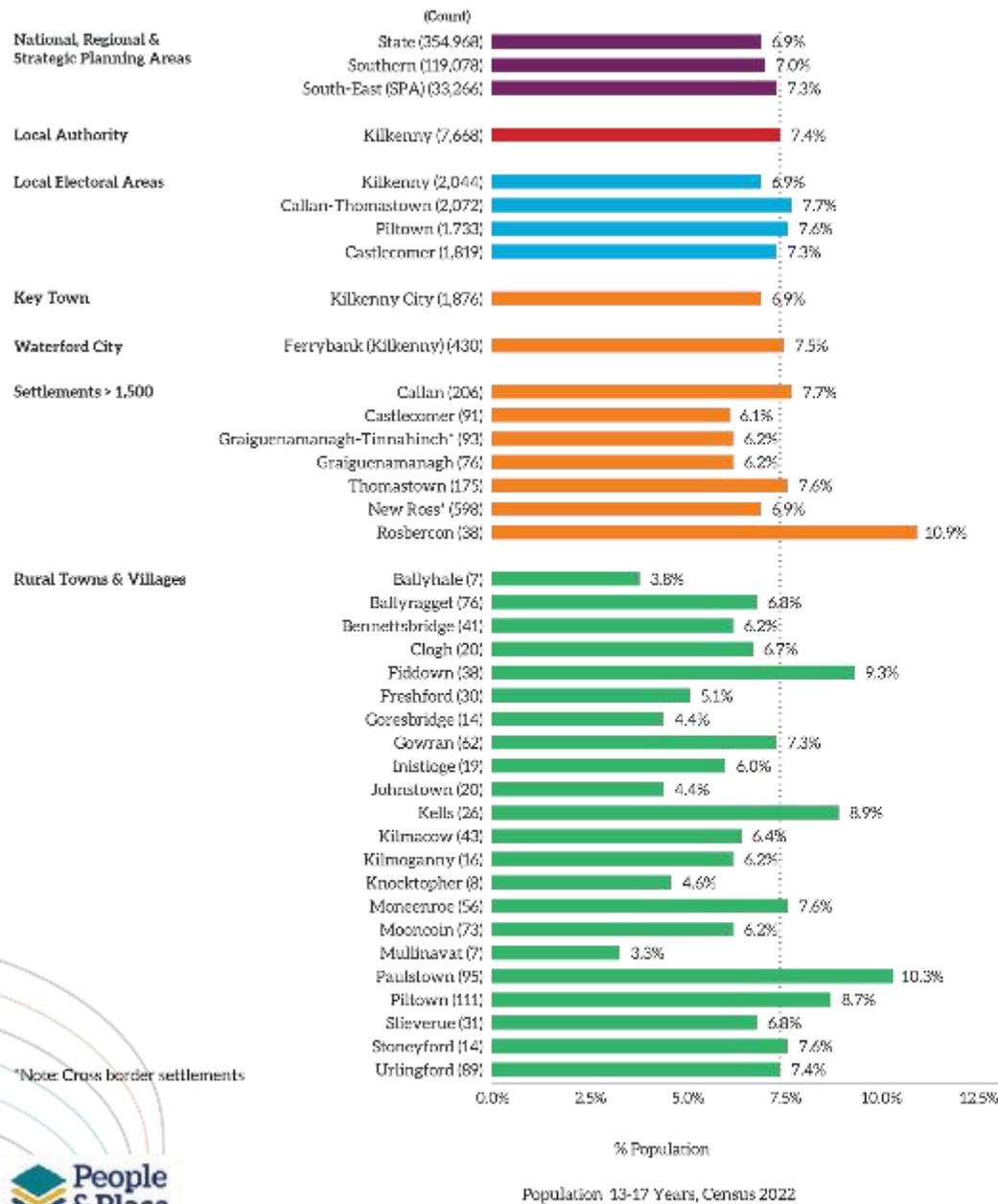


Figure 1.8: % Population Aged 13-17 Years, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

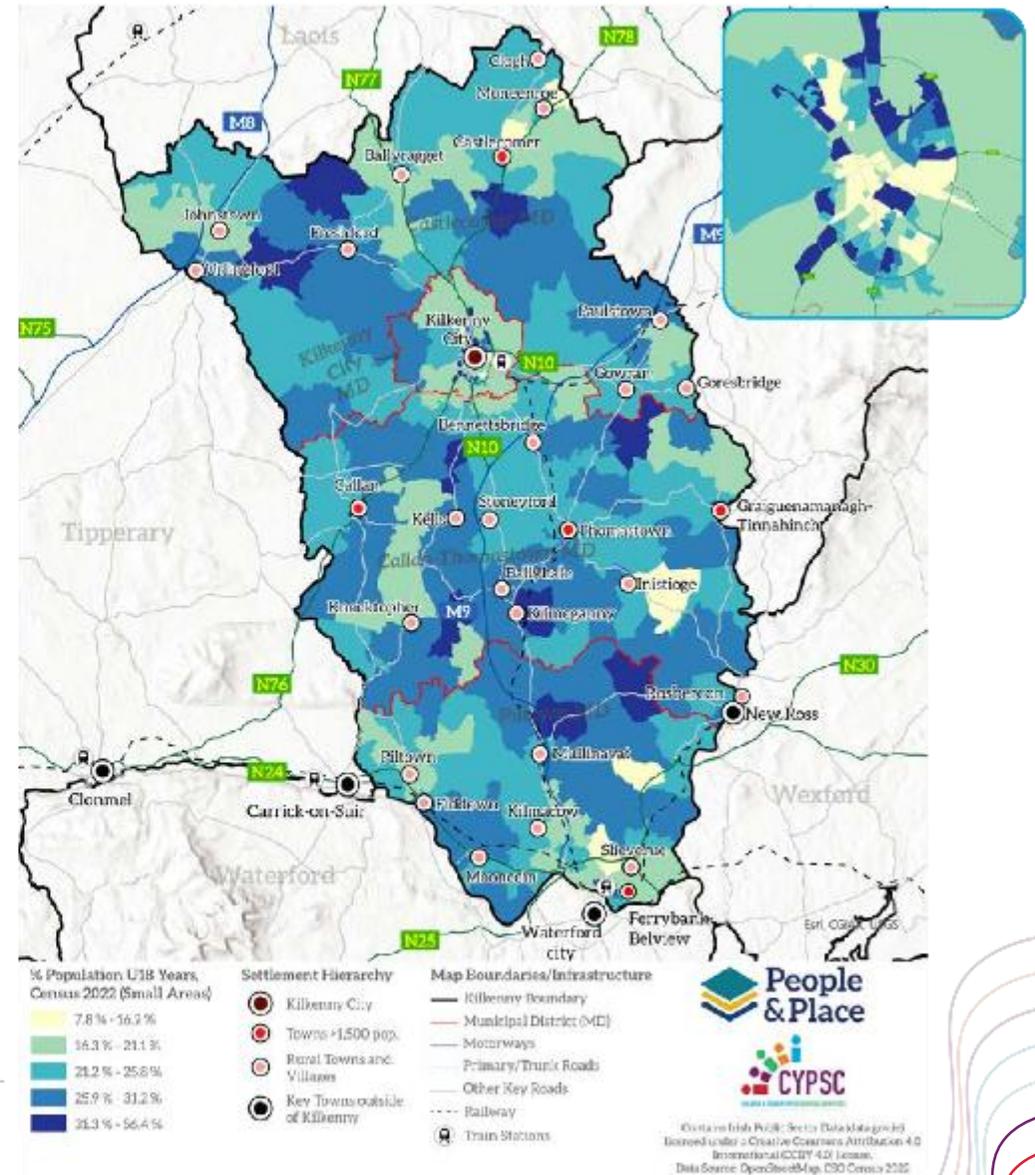
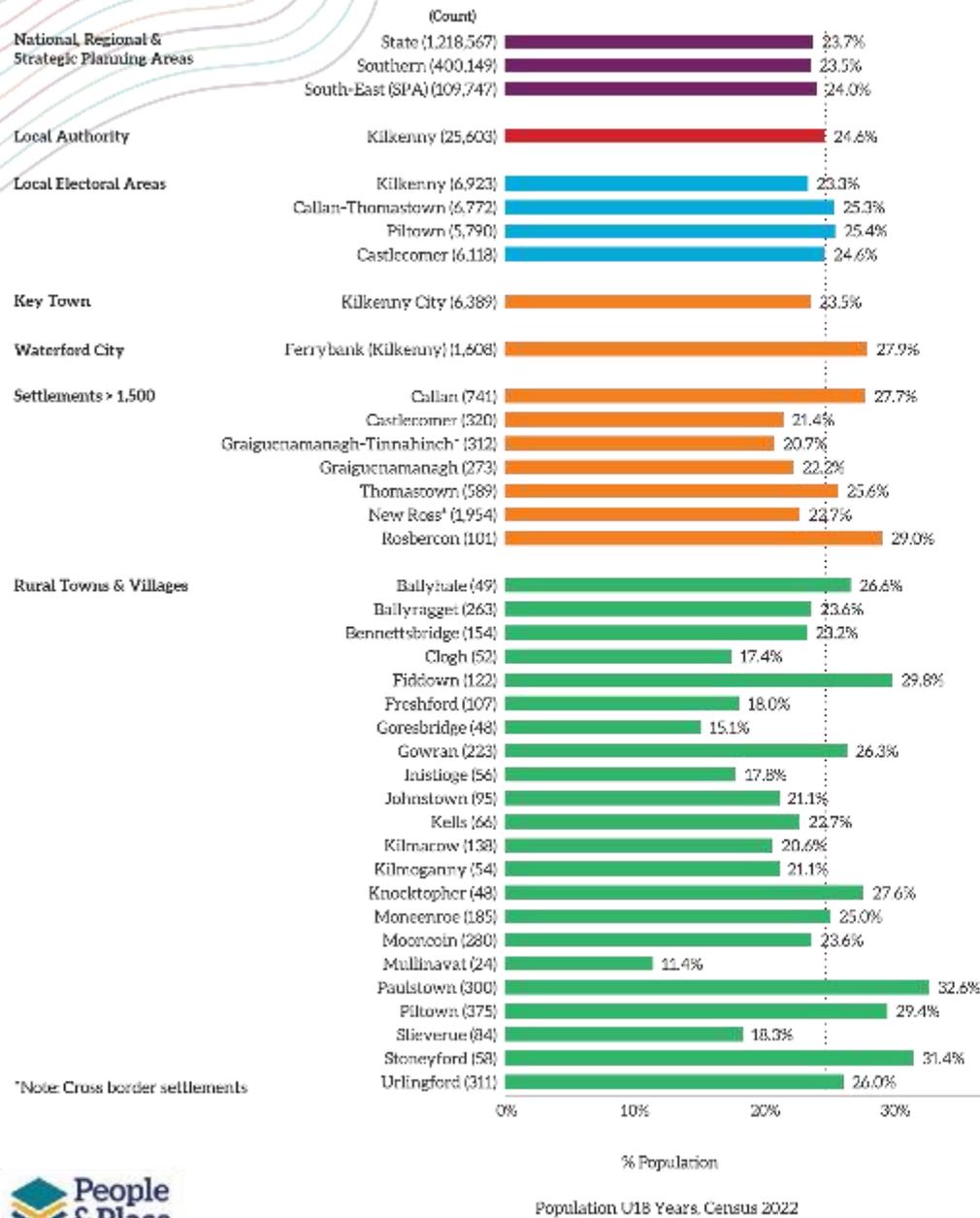


Figure 1.9: % Population Aged Under-18 Years, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

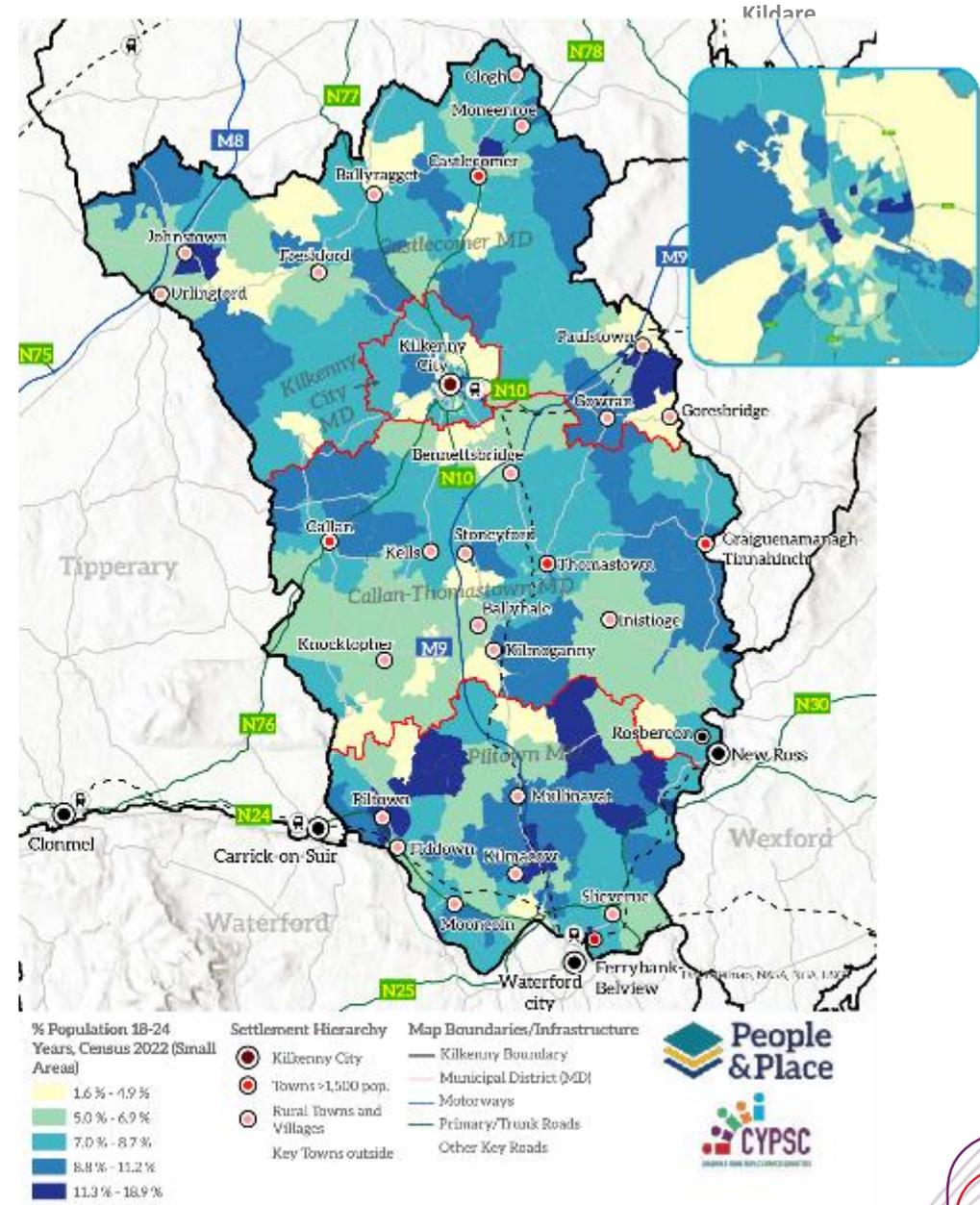
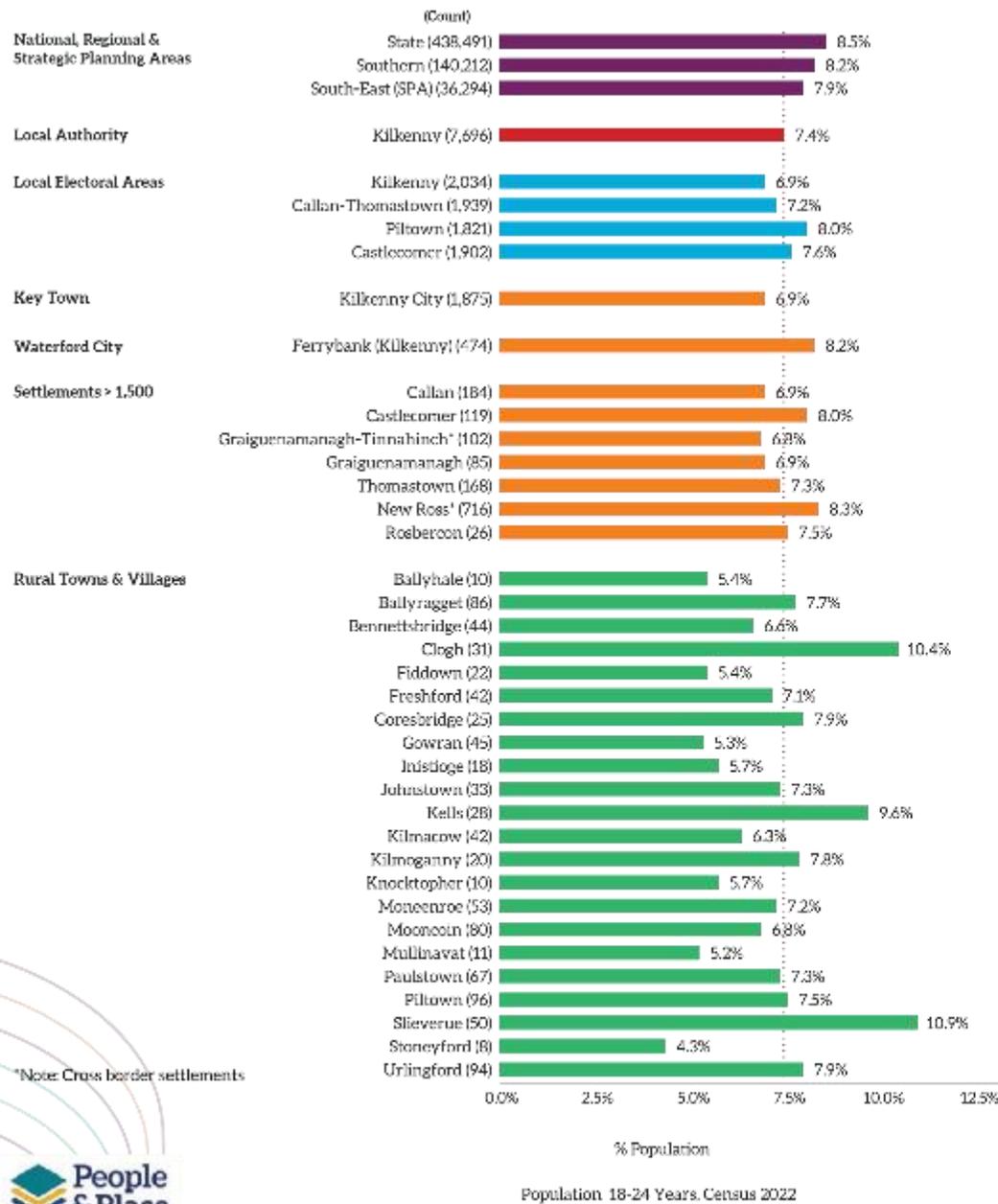


Figure 1.10: % Population Aged 18-24 Years, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

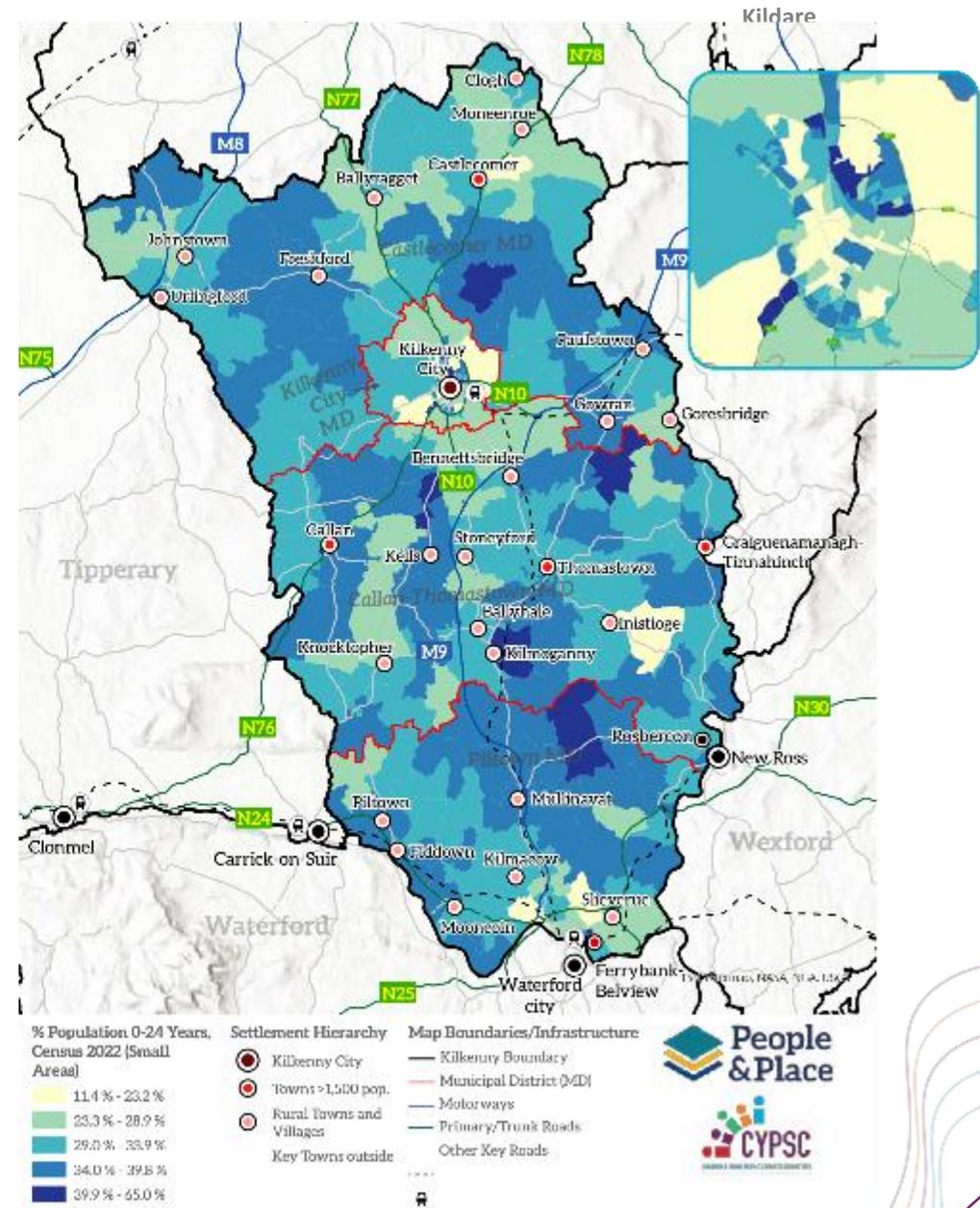
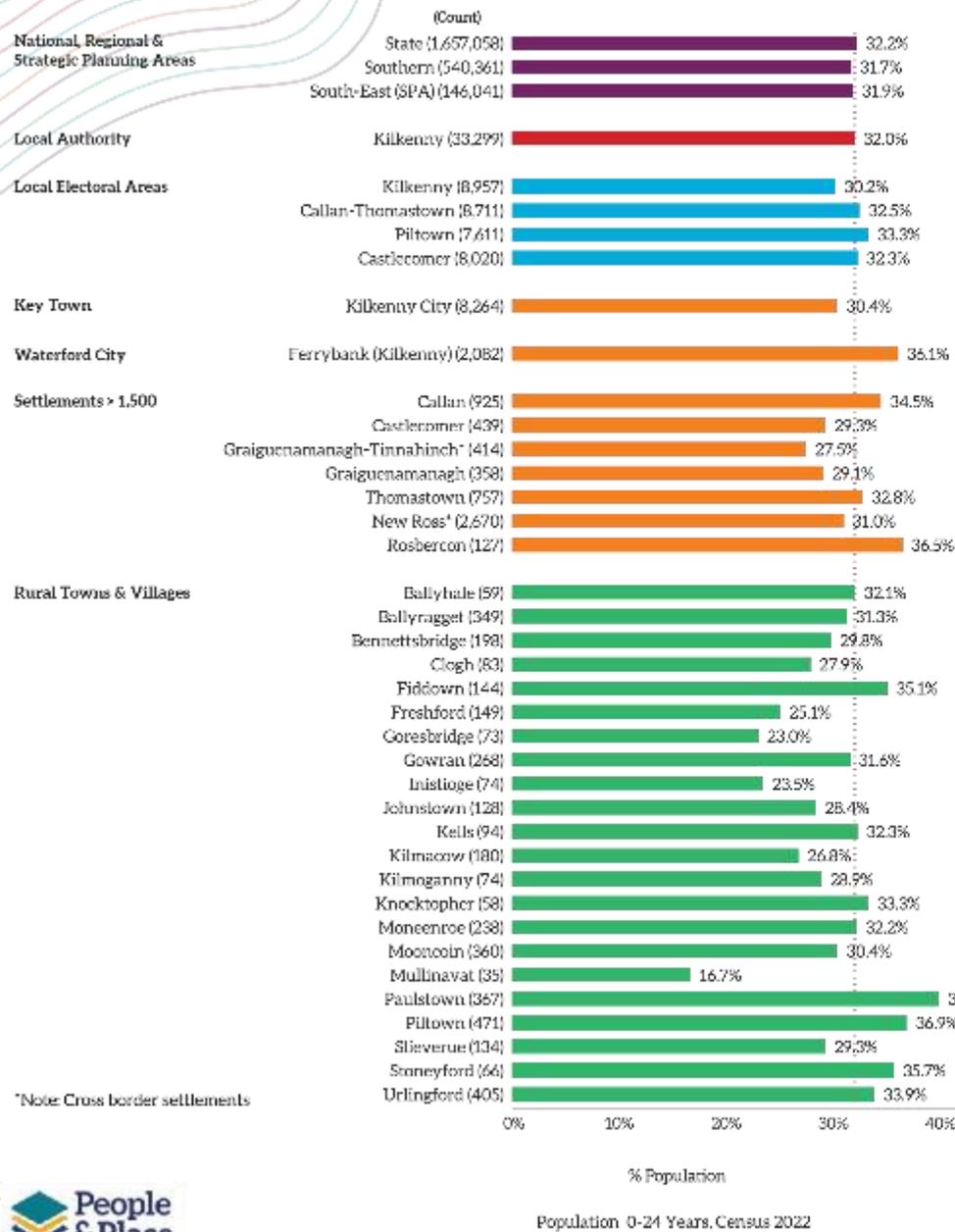


Figure 1.11: % Population Aged 0-24 Years, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

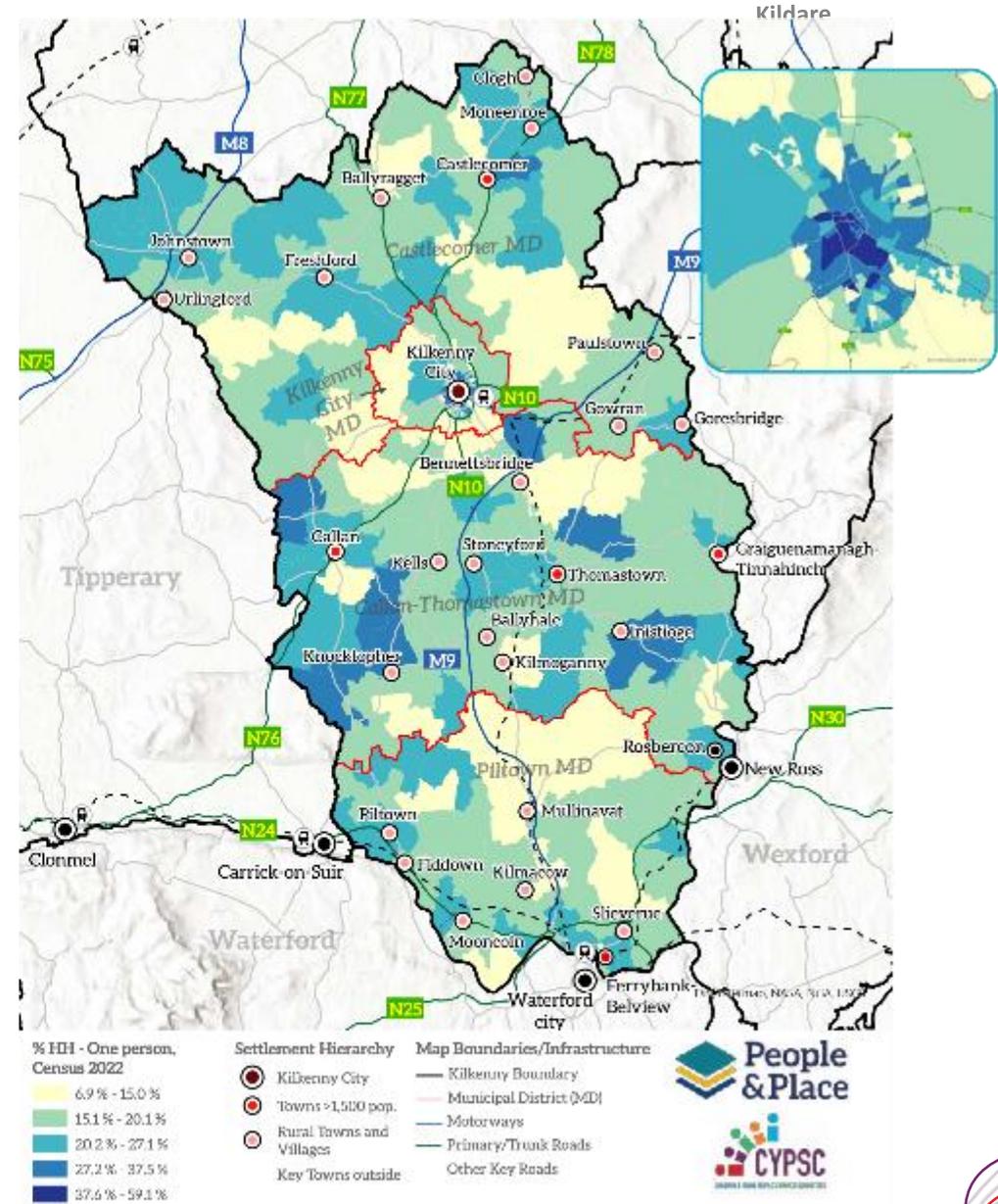
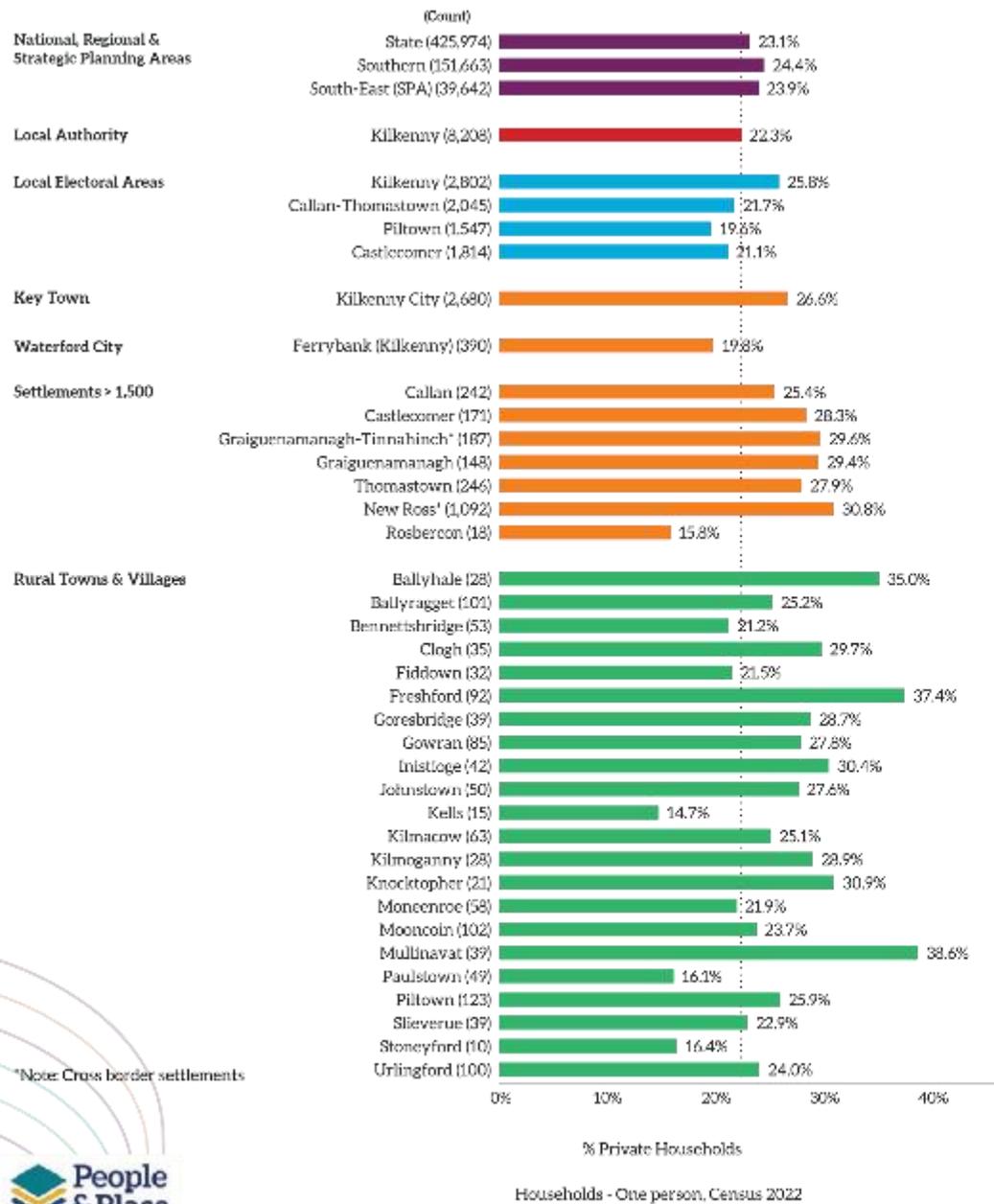


Figure 1.12: % Households - One Person, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

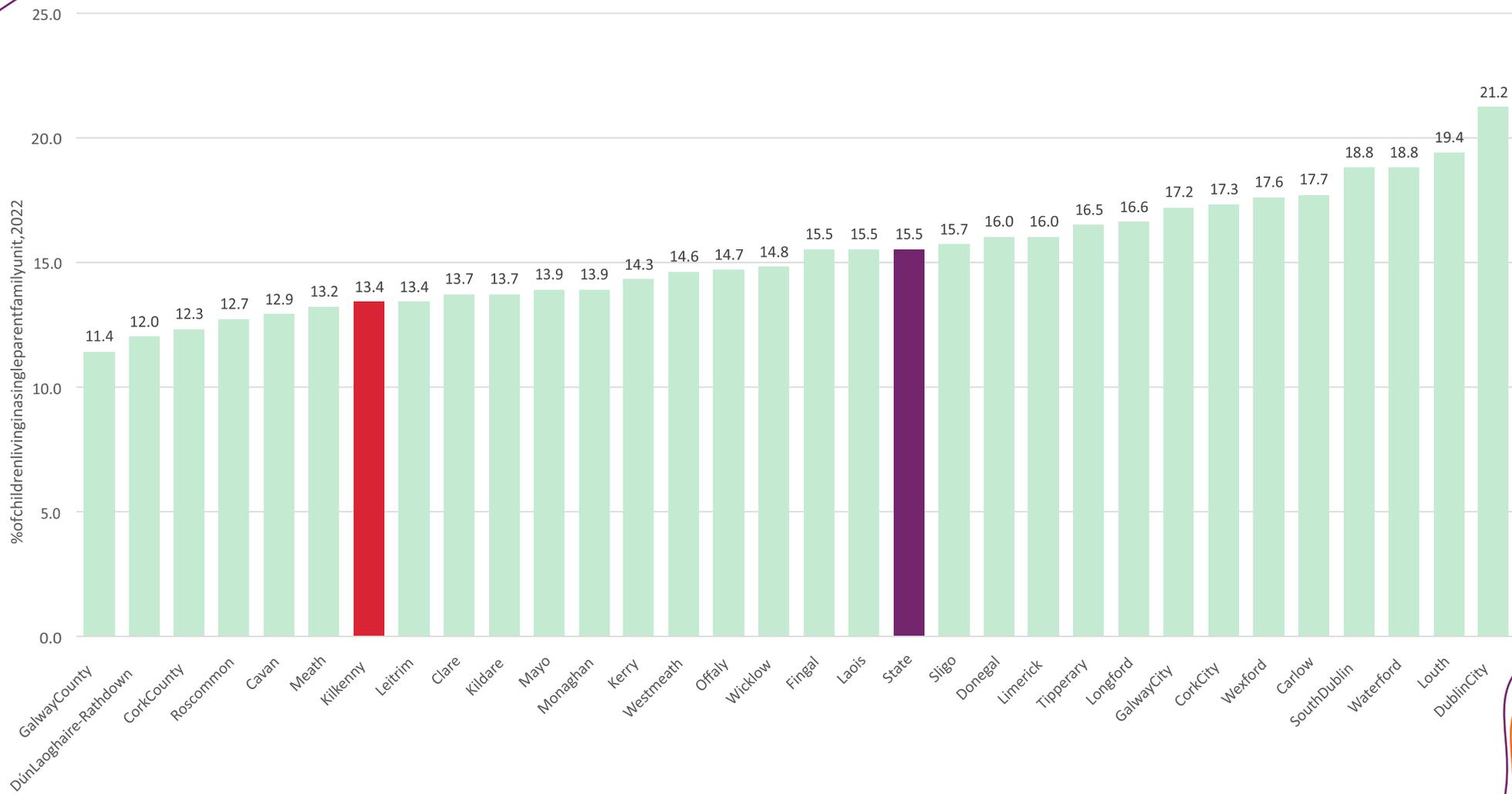


Figure 1.13: Percentage of Children Living in a Single Parent Family Unit, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

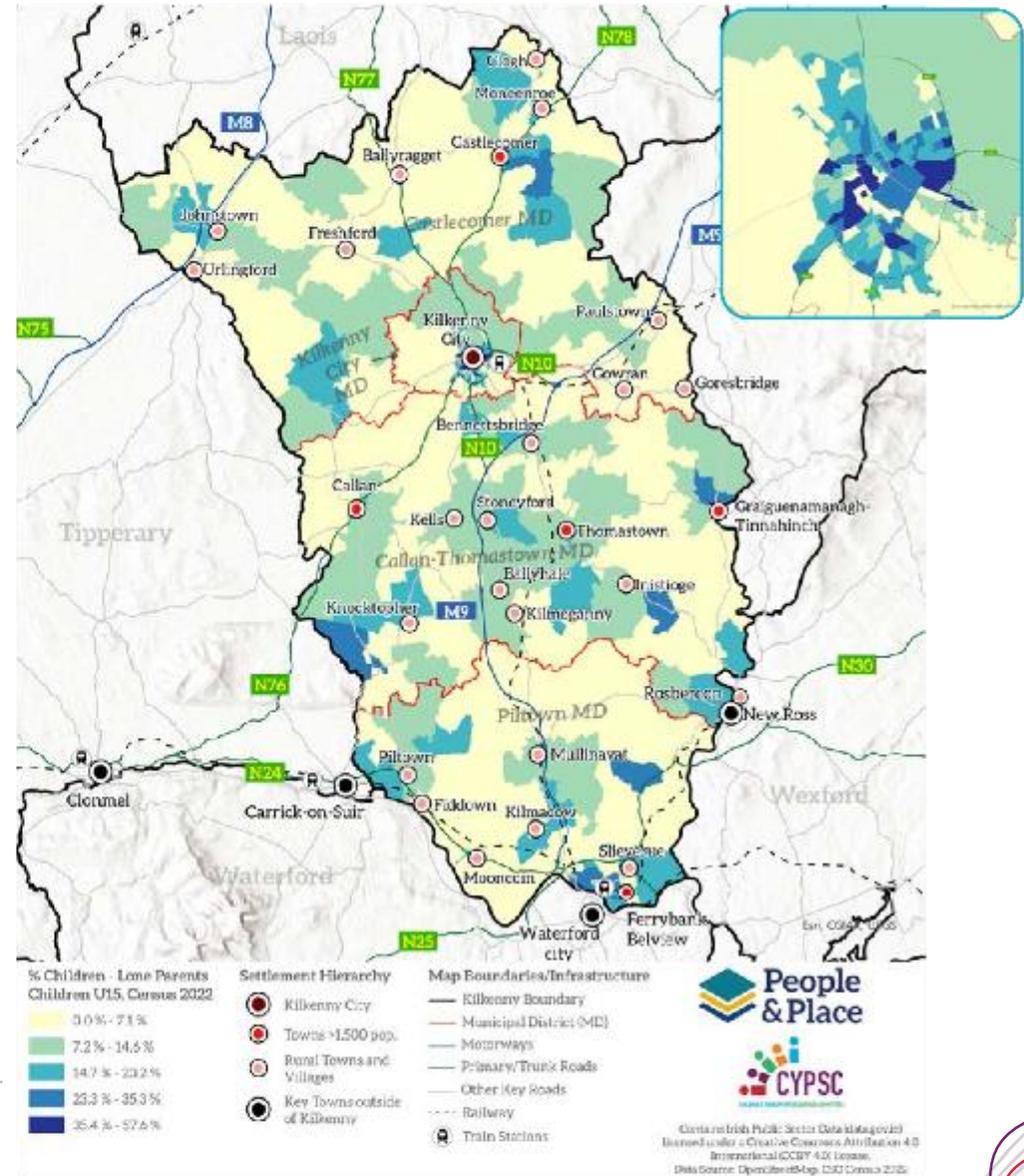
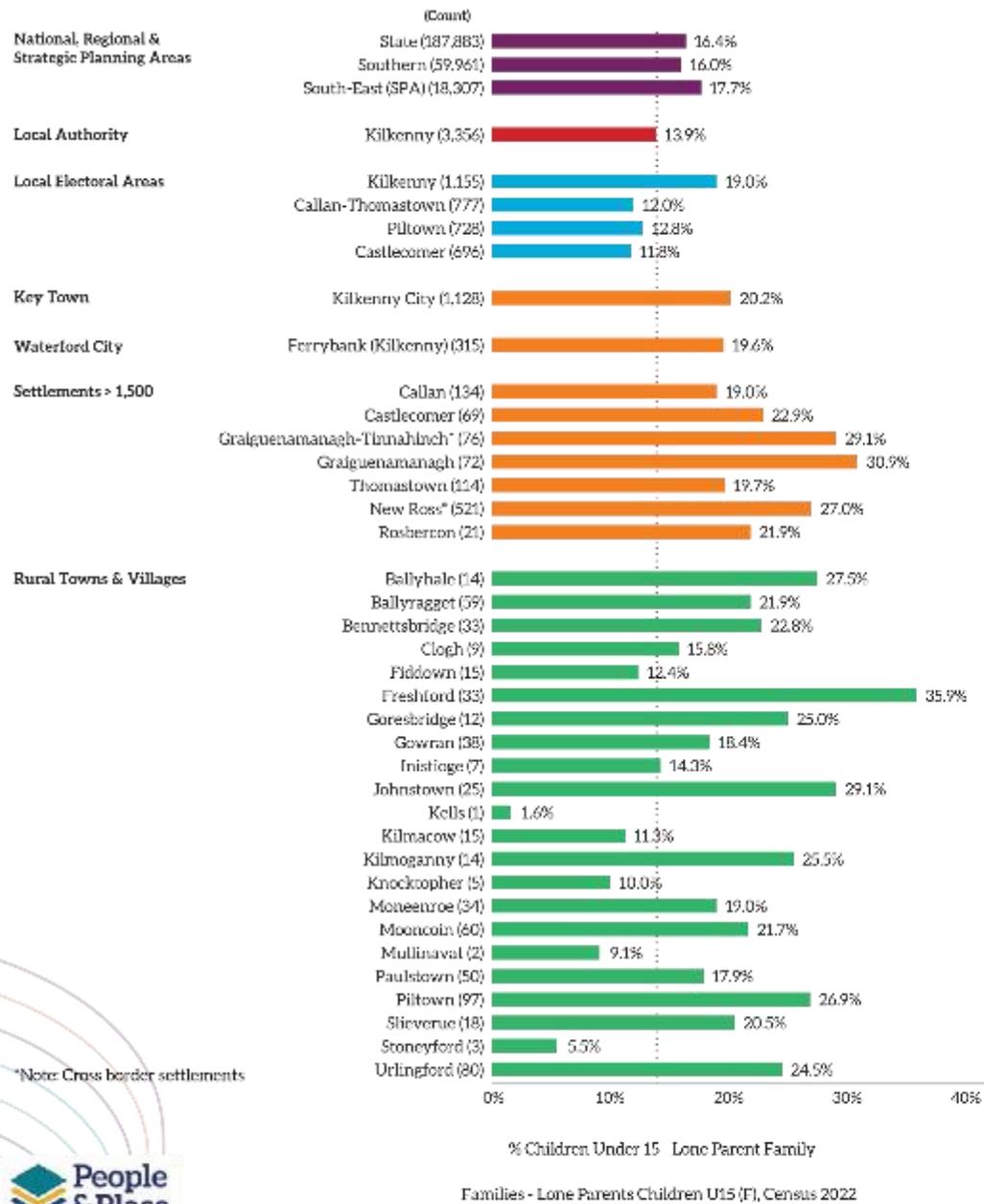


Figure 1.14: % Families - Lone Parents with Children U15, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

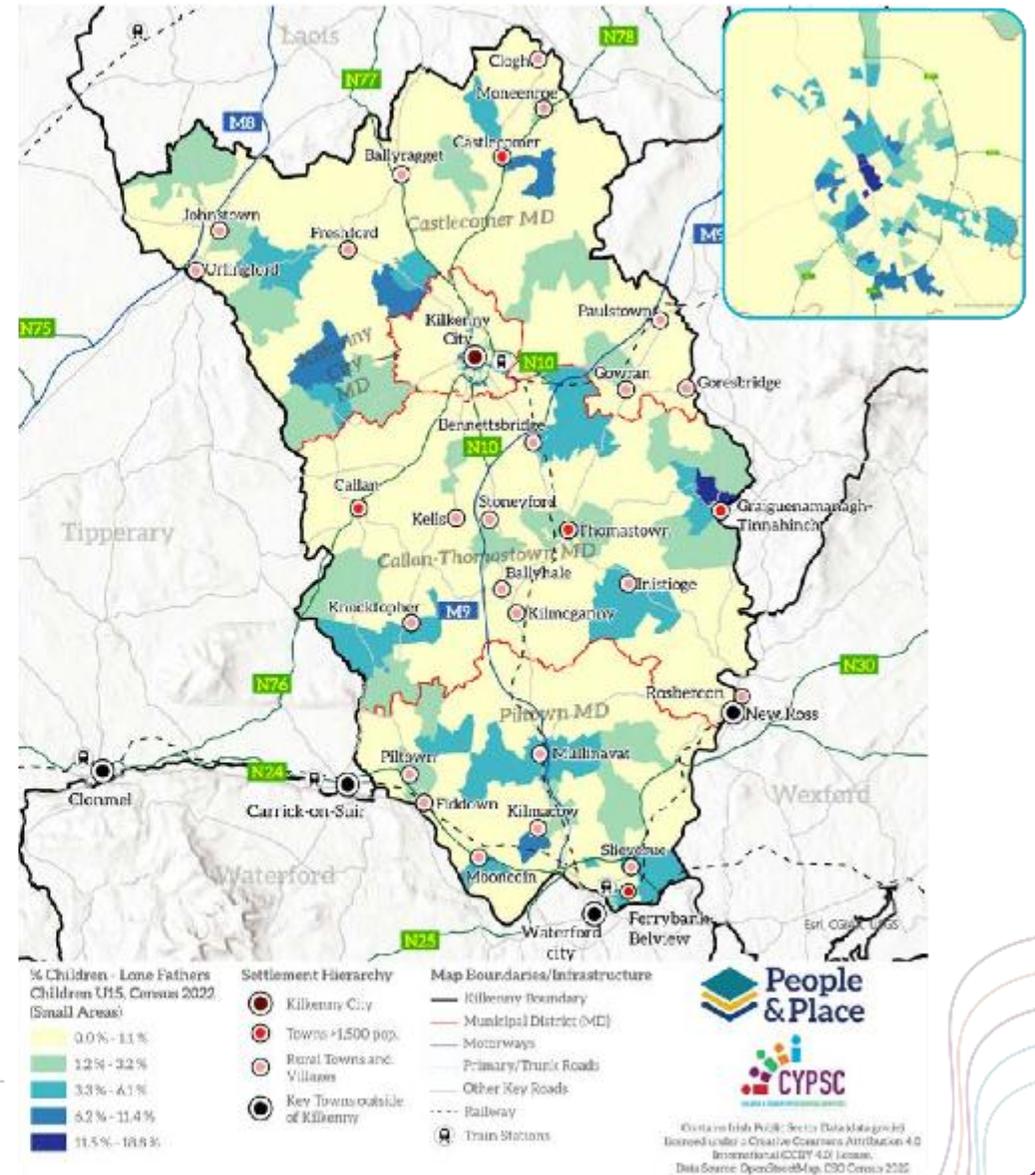
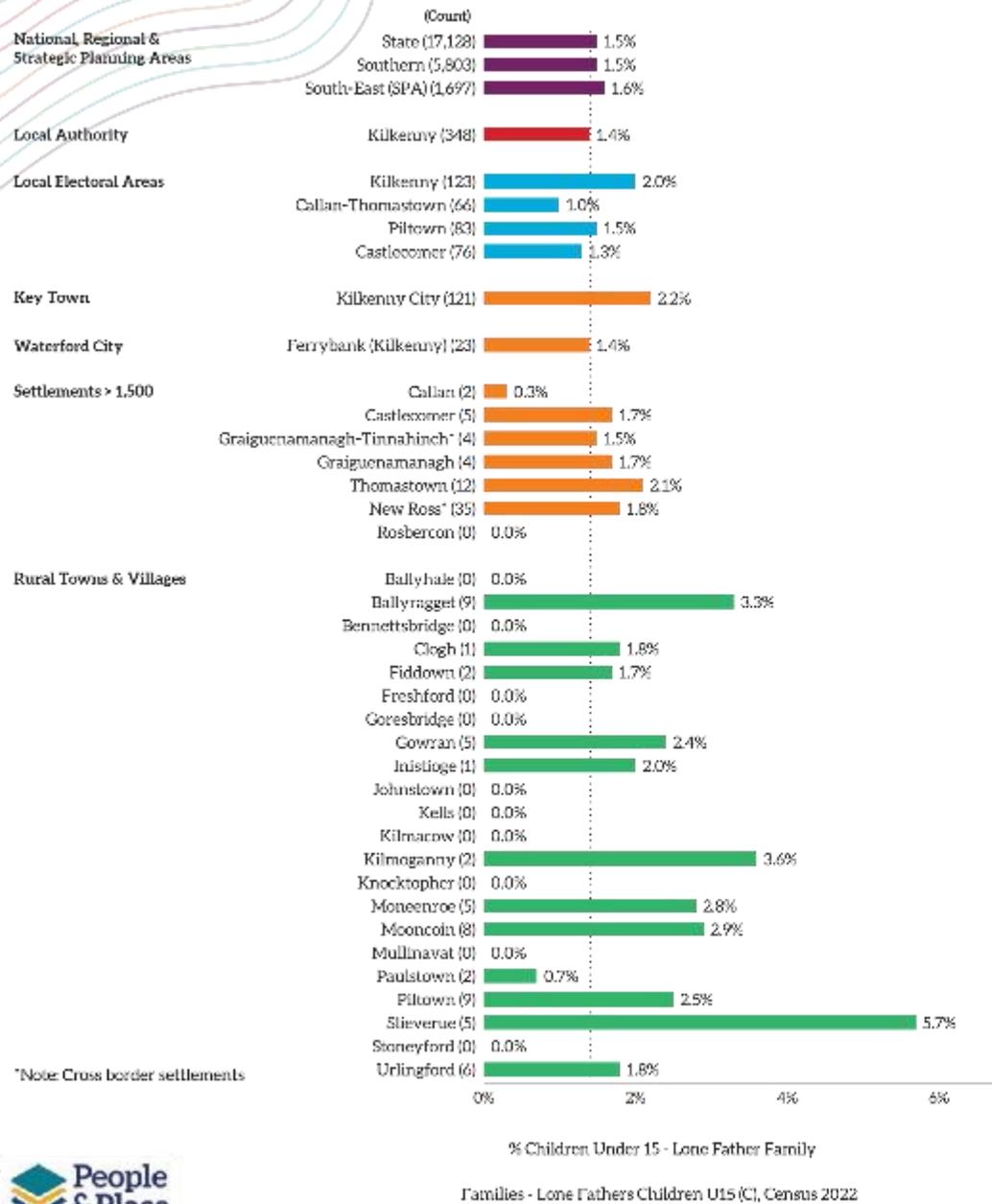


Figure 1.15: % Families - Lone Fathers with Children U15, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

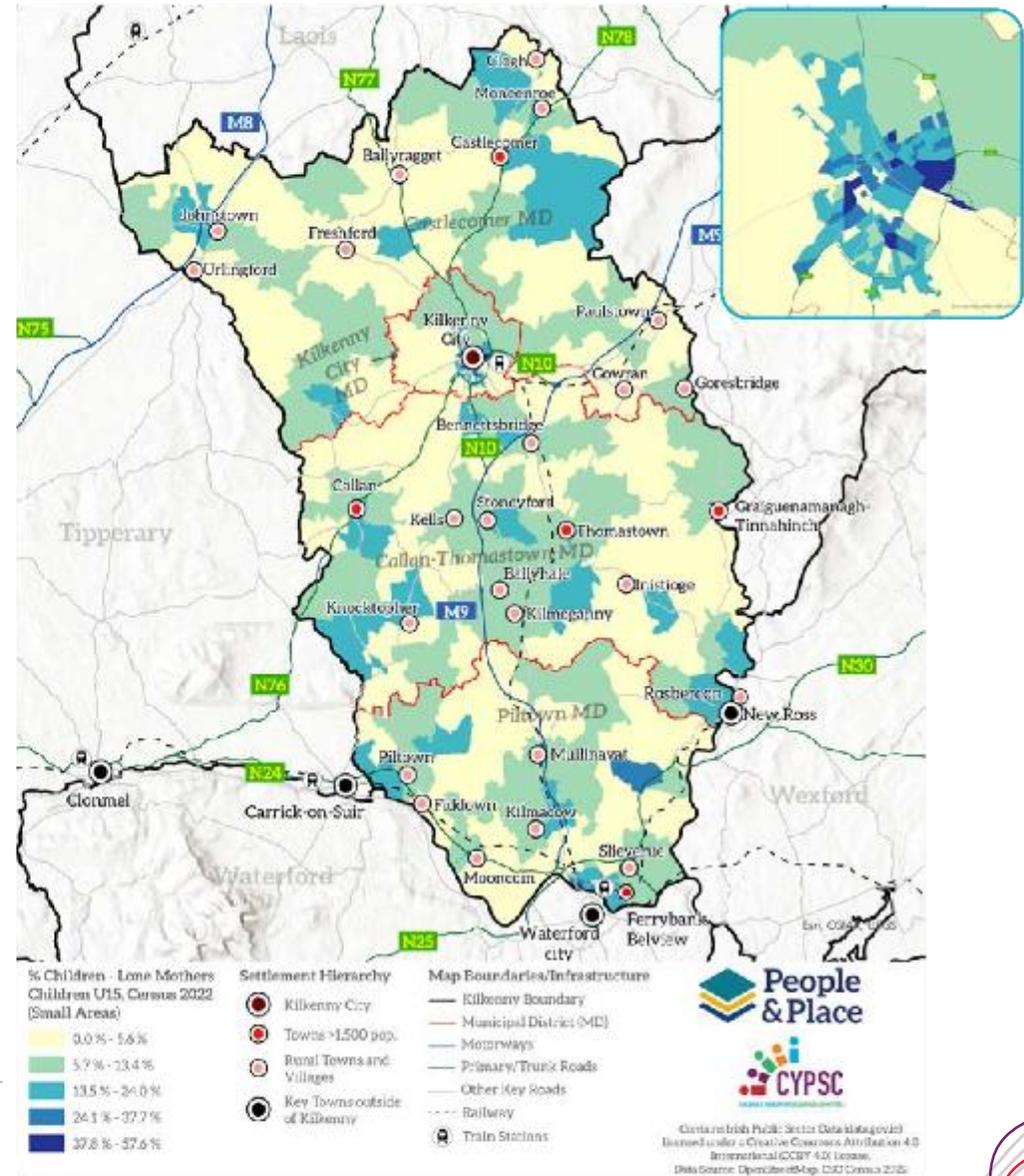
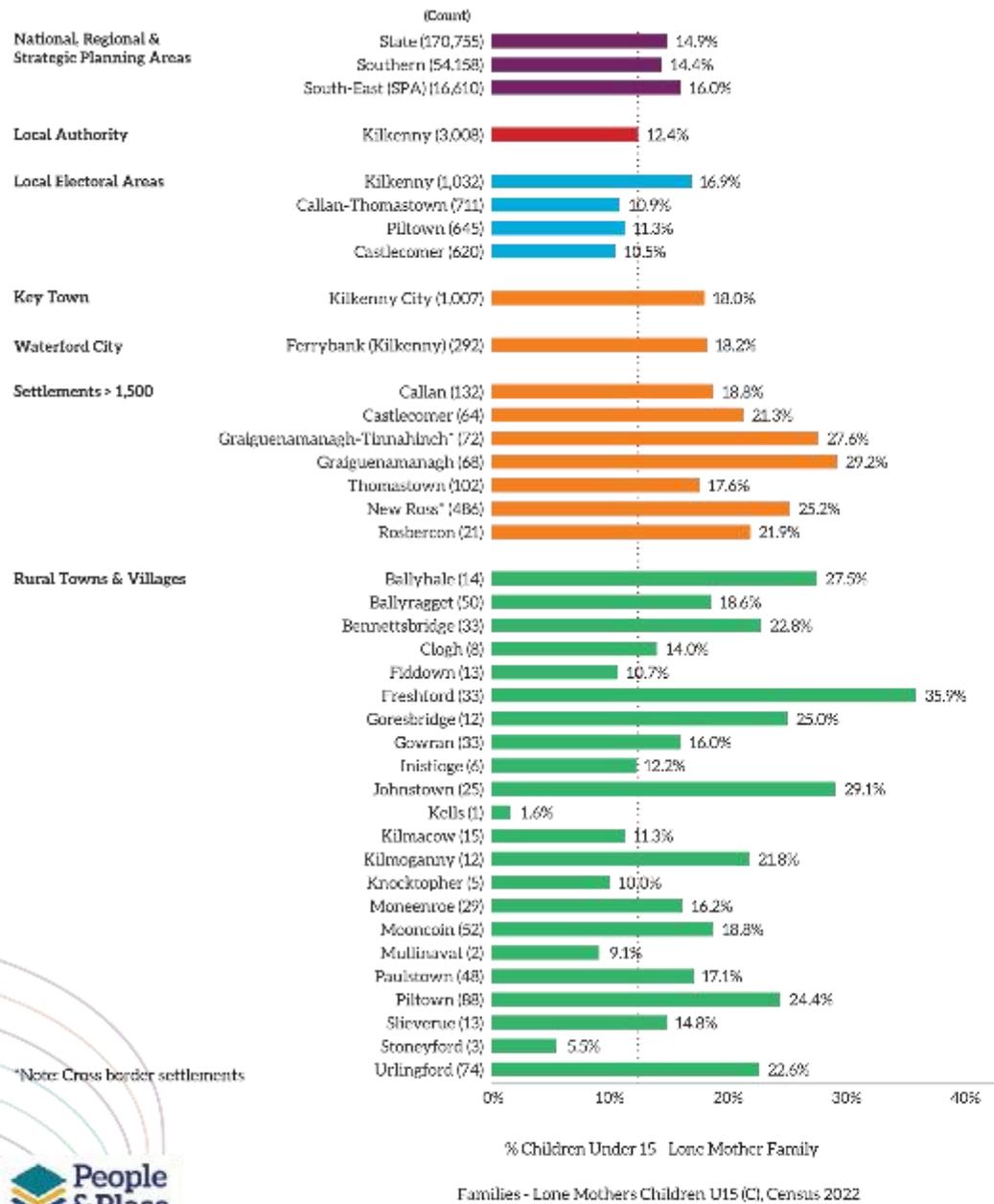


Figure 1.16: % Families - Lone Mothers with Children U15, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

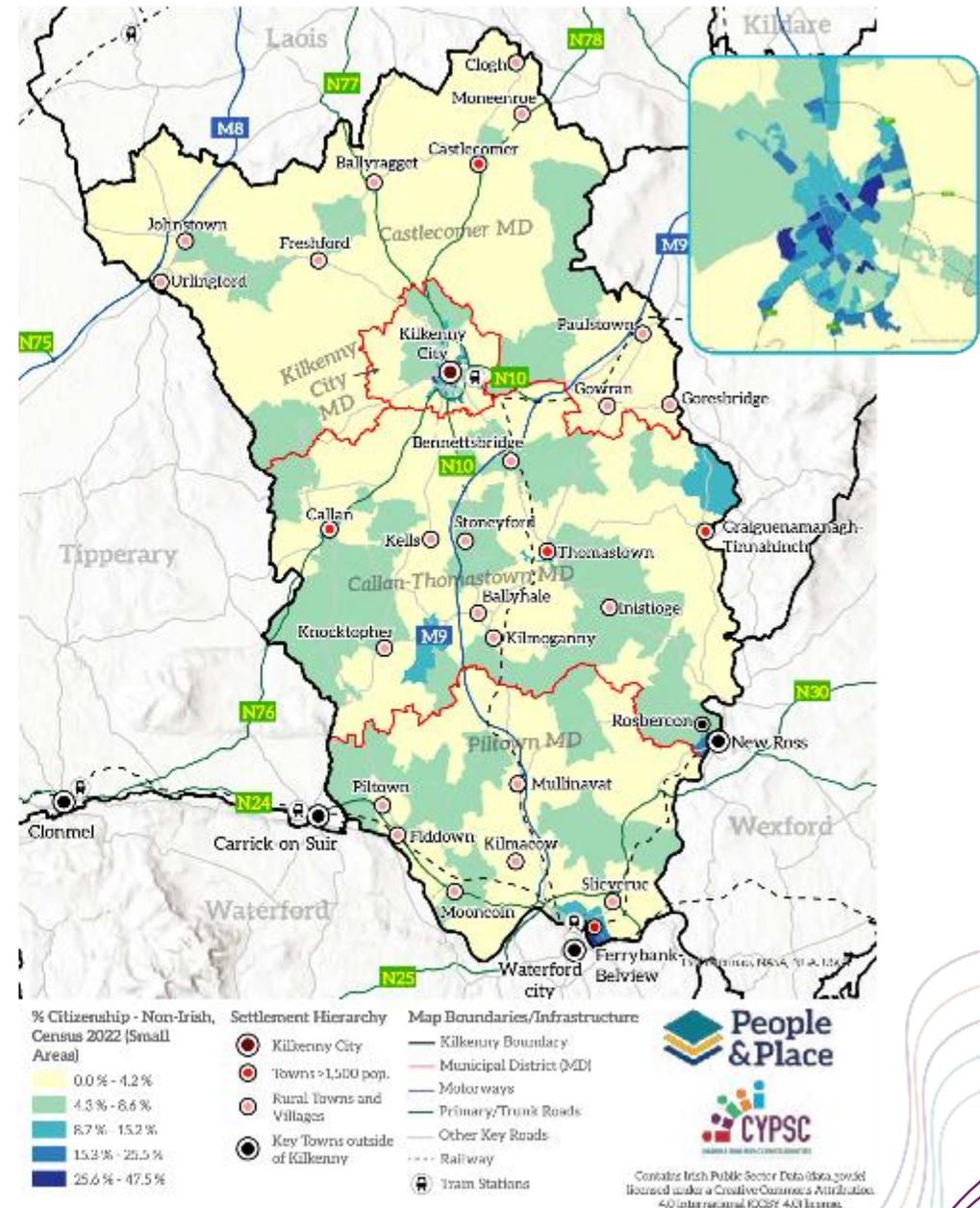
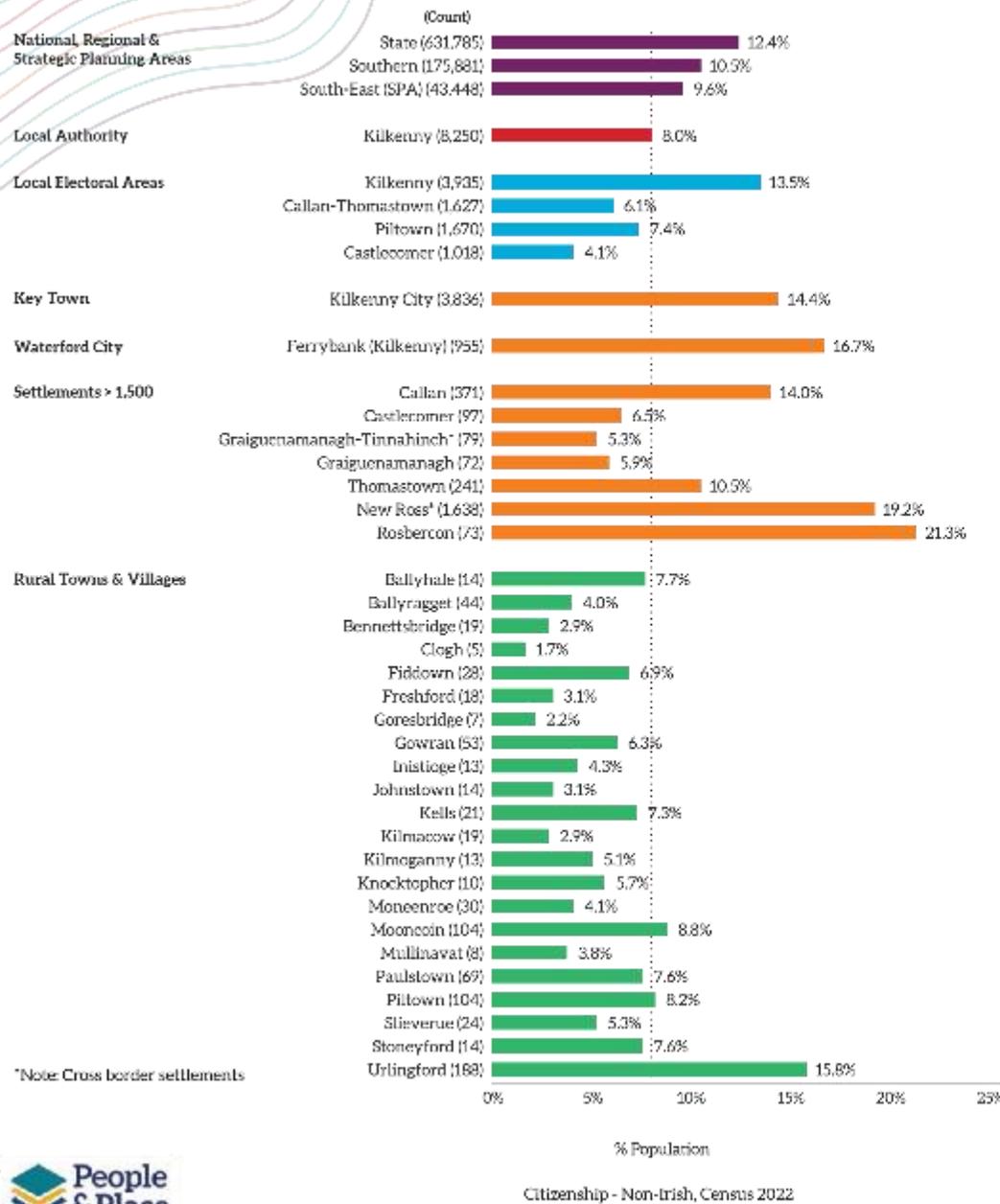


Figure 1.17: Citizenship - % Non-Irish Citizens, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

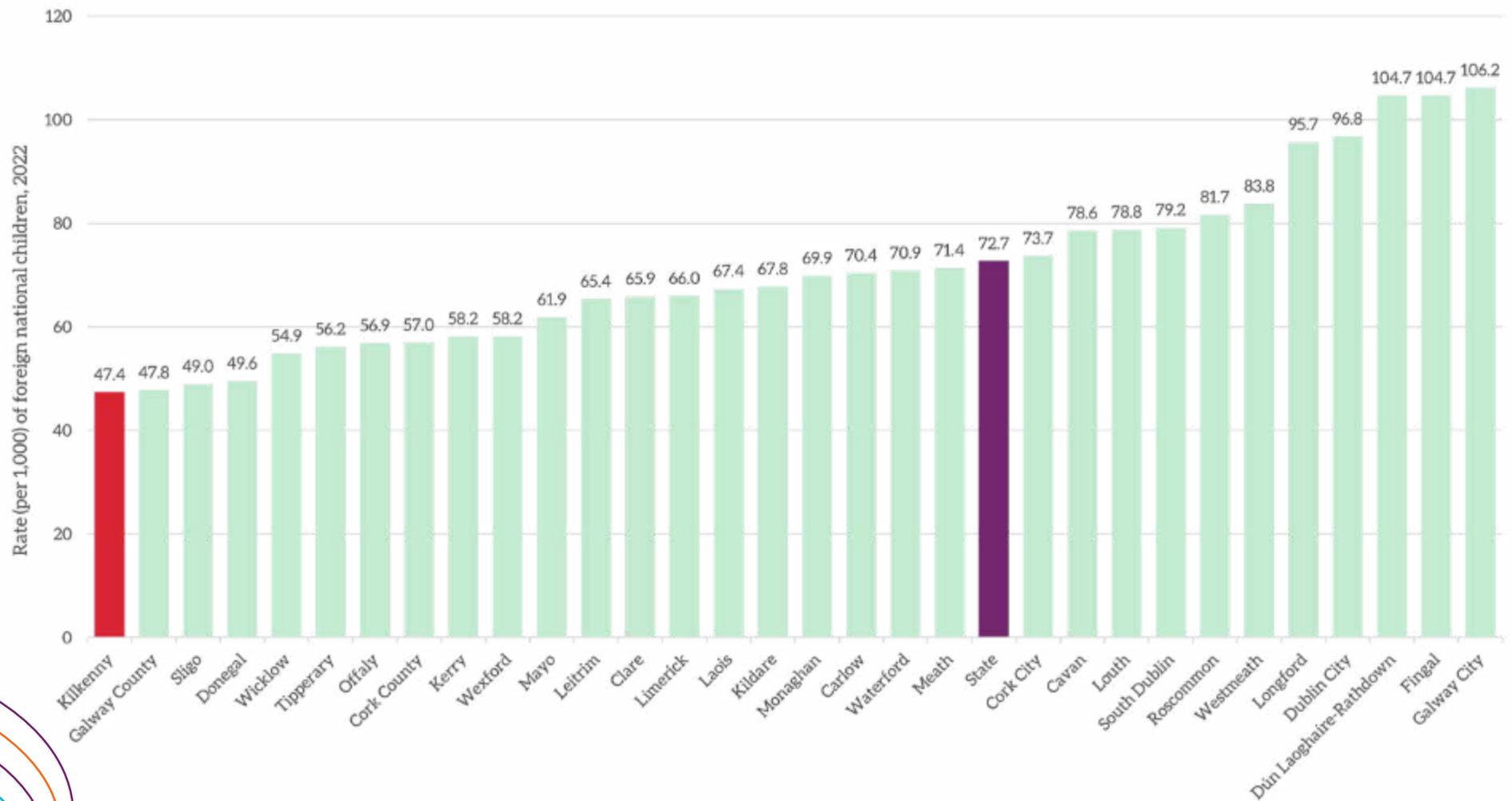


Figure 1.18: Foreign Citizen Children (per 1,000 children), 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

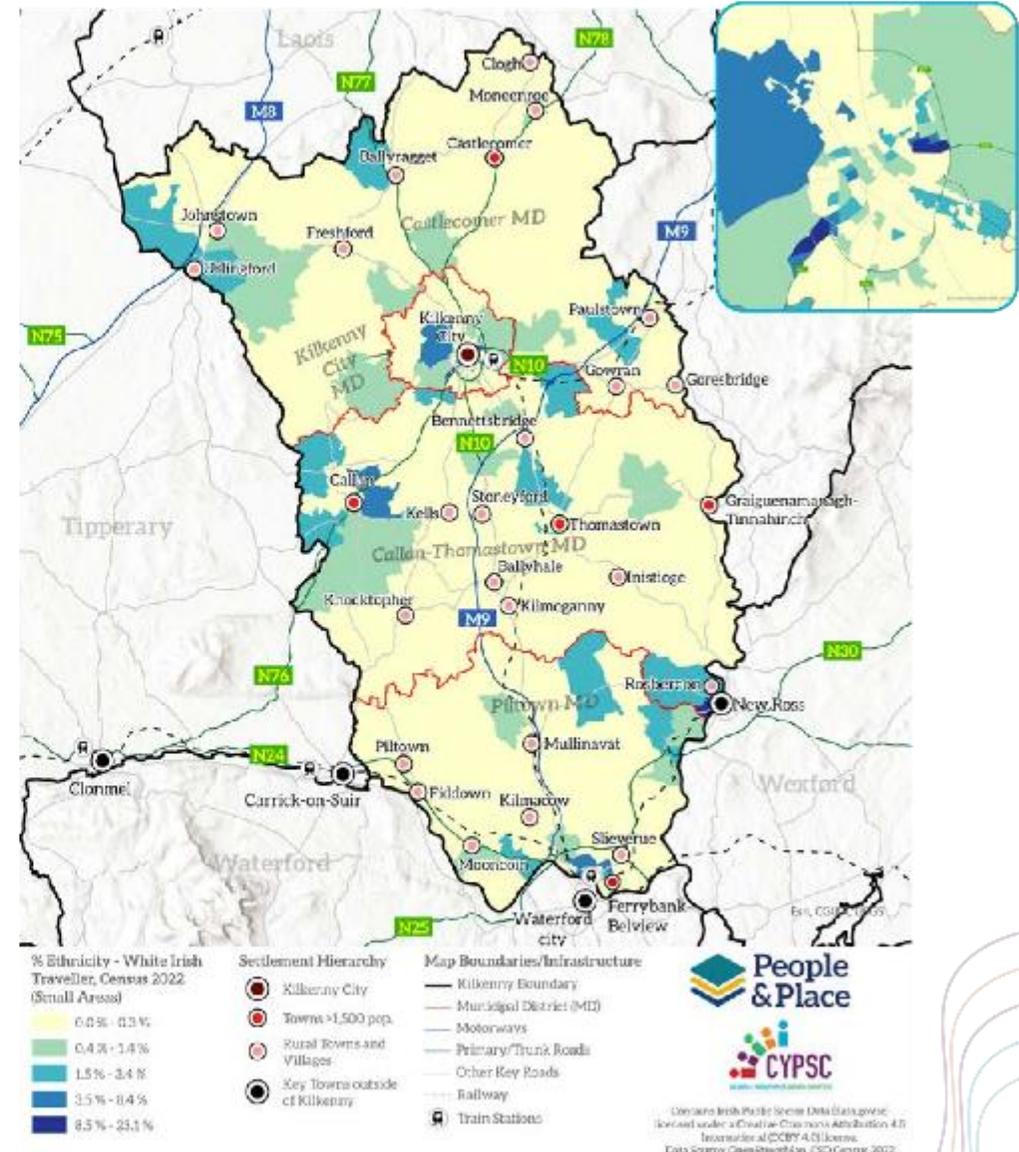
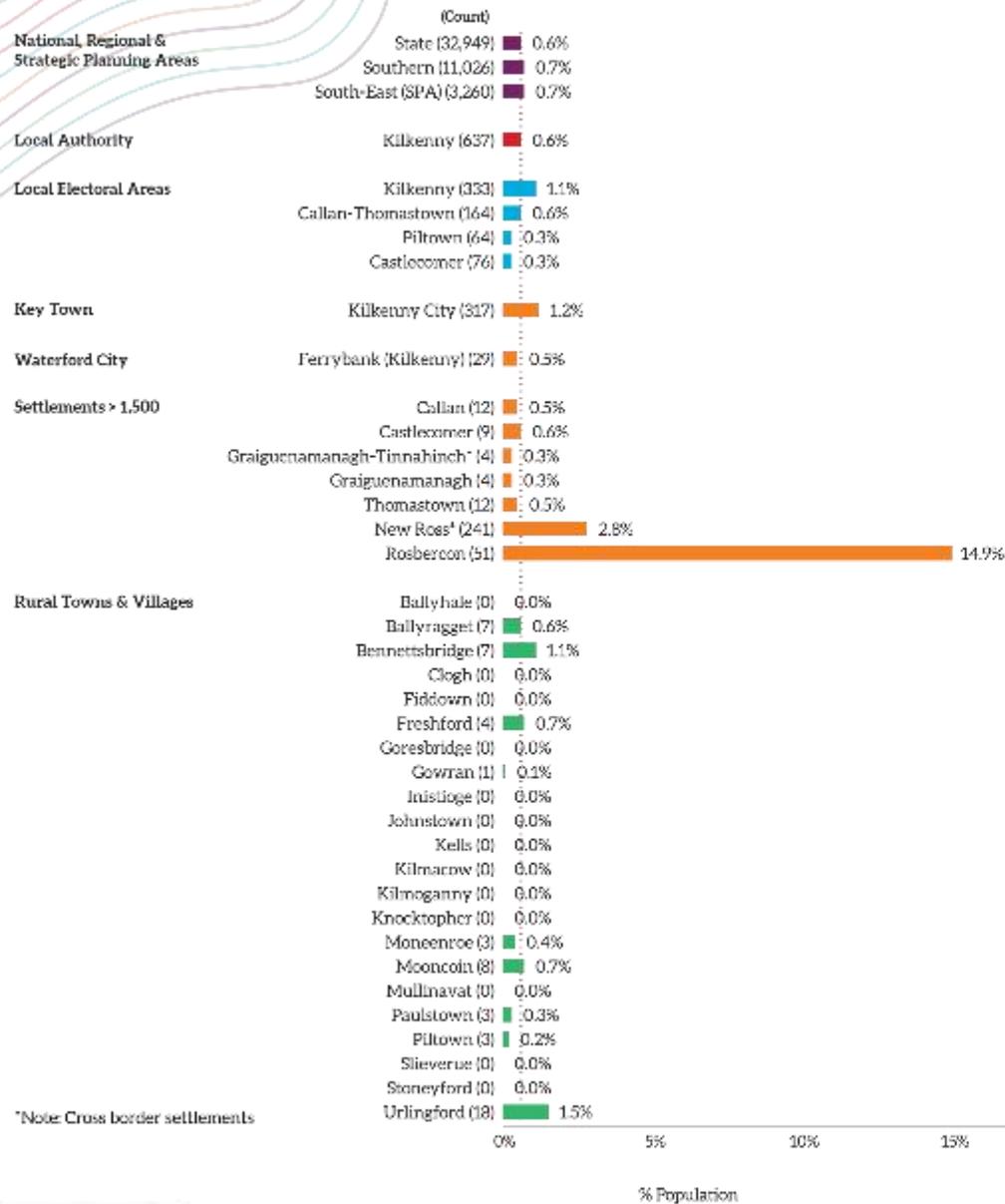


Figure 1.19: Ethnicity - % White Irish Traveller, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

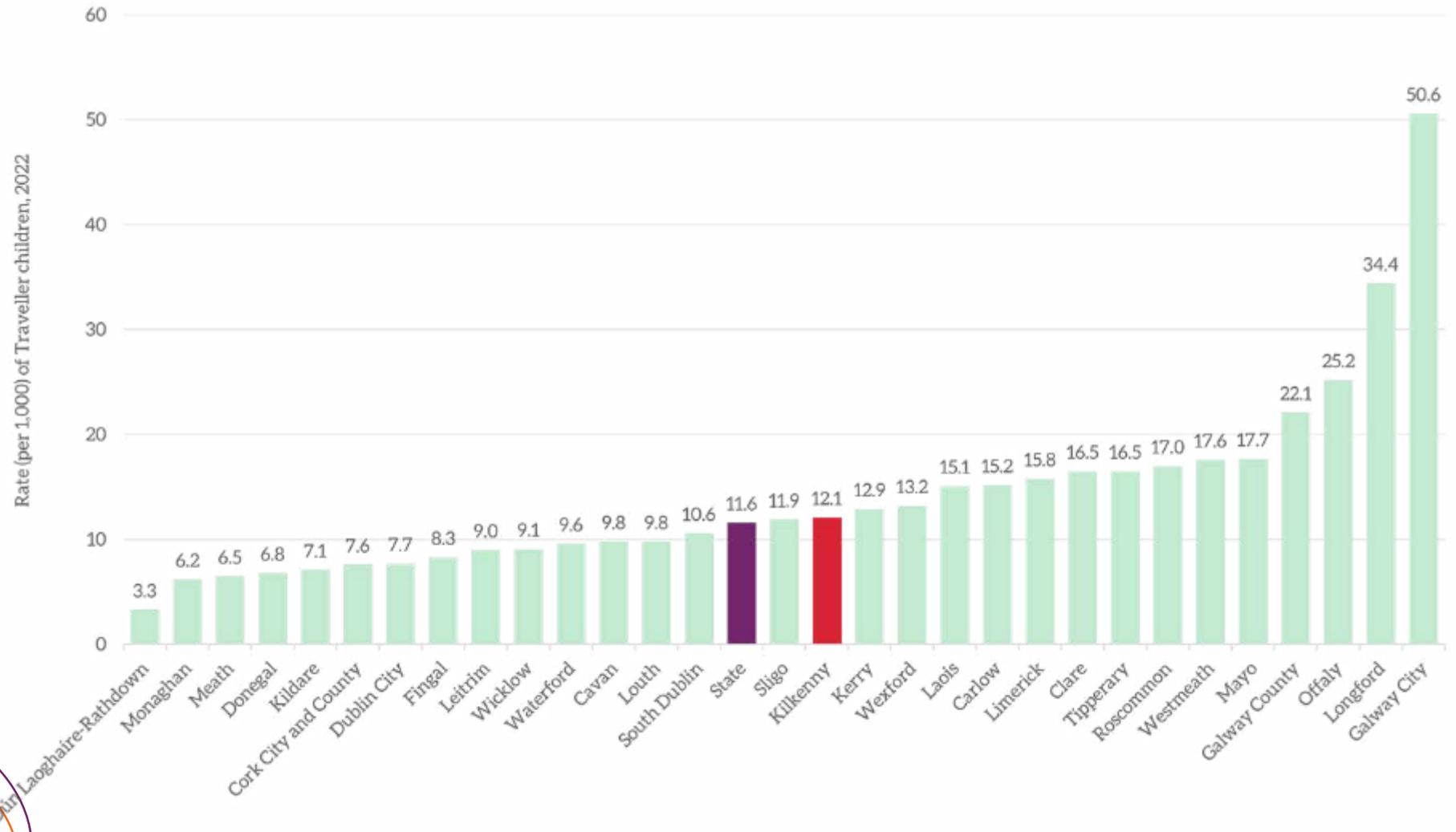


Figure 1.20: Rate of Traveller Children (per 1,000 children), 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

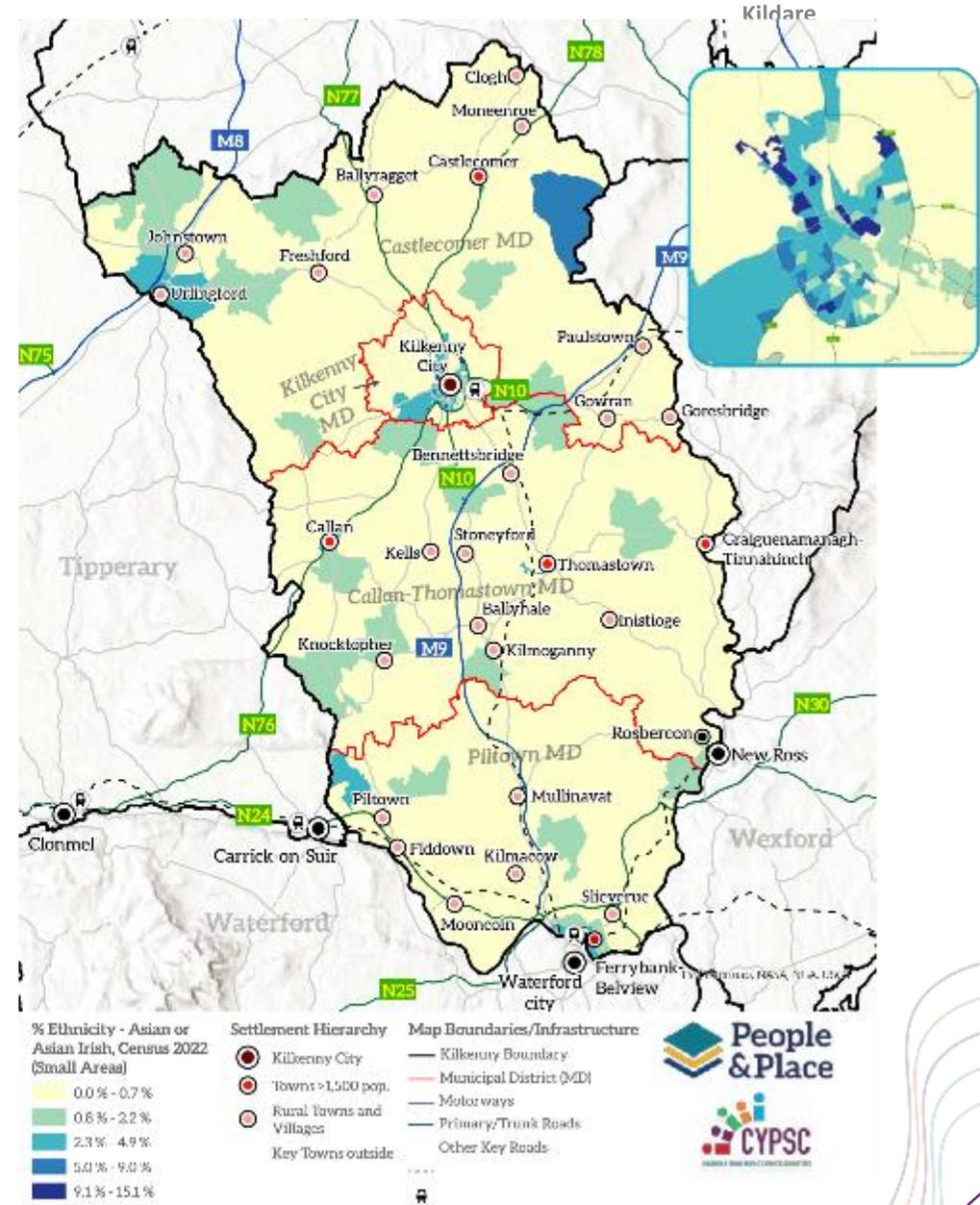
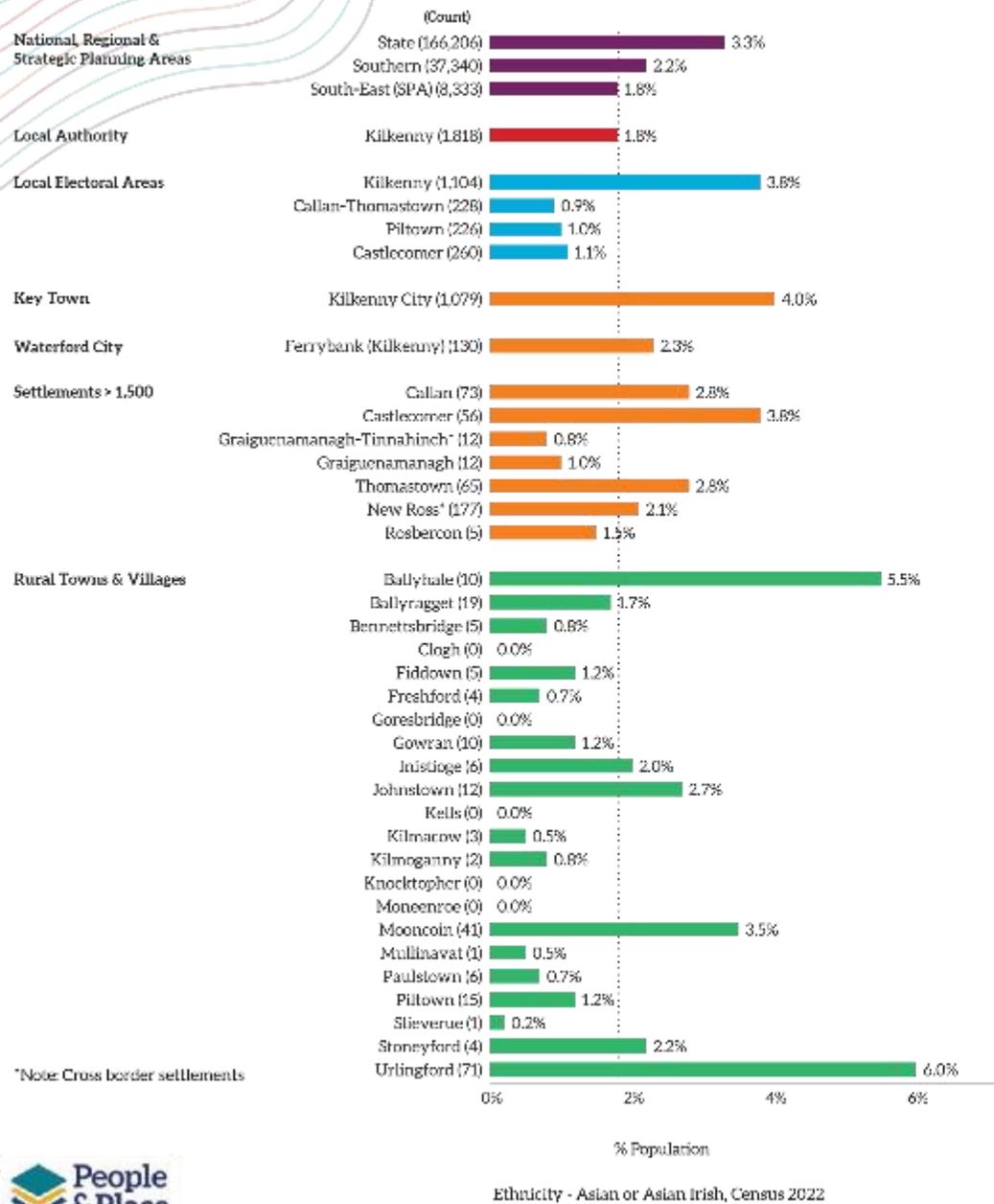


Figure 1.21: Citizenship - % Asian or Asian-Irish Citizens, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

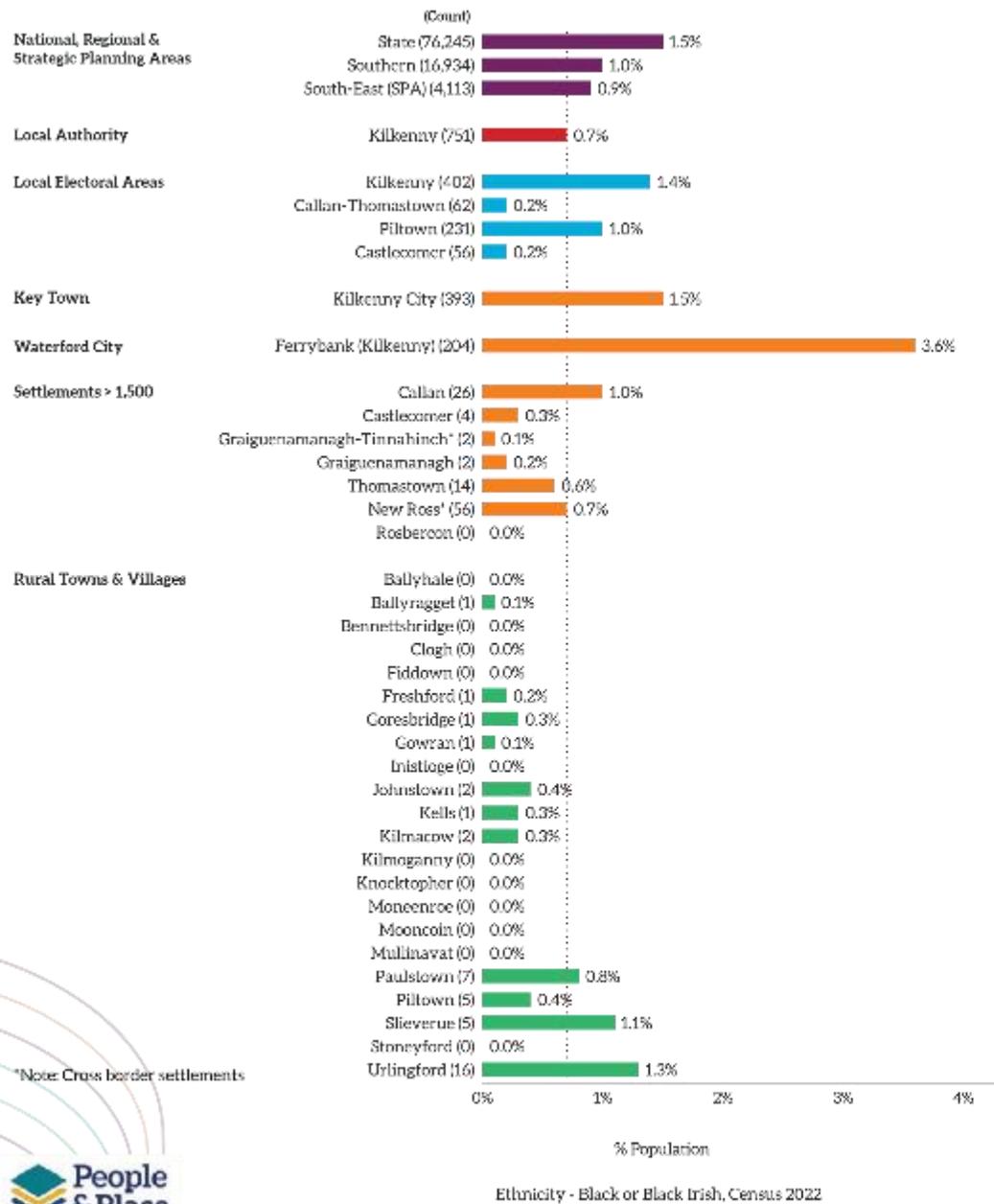


Figure 1.22: Citizenship - % Black or Black-Irish Citizens, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

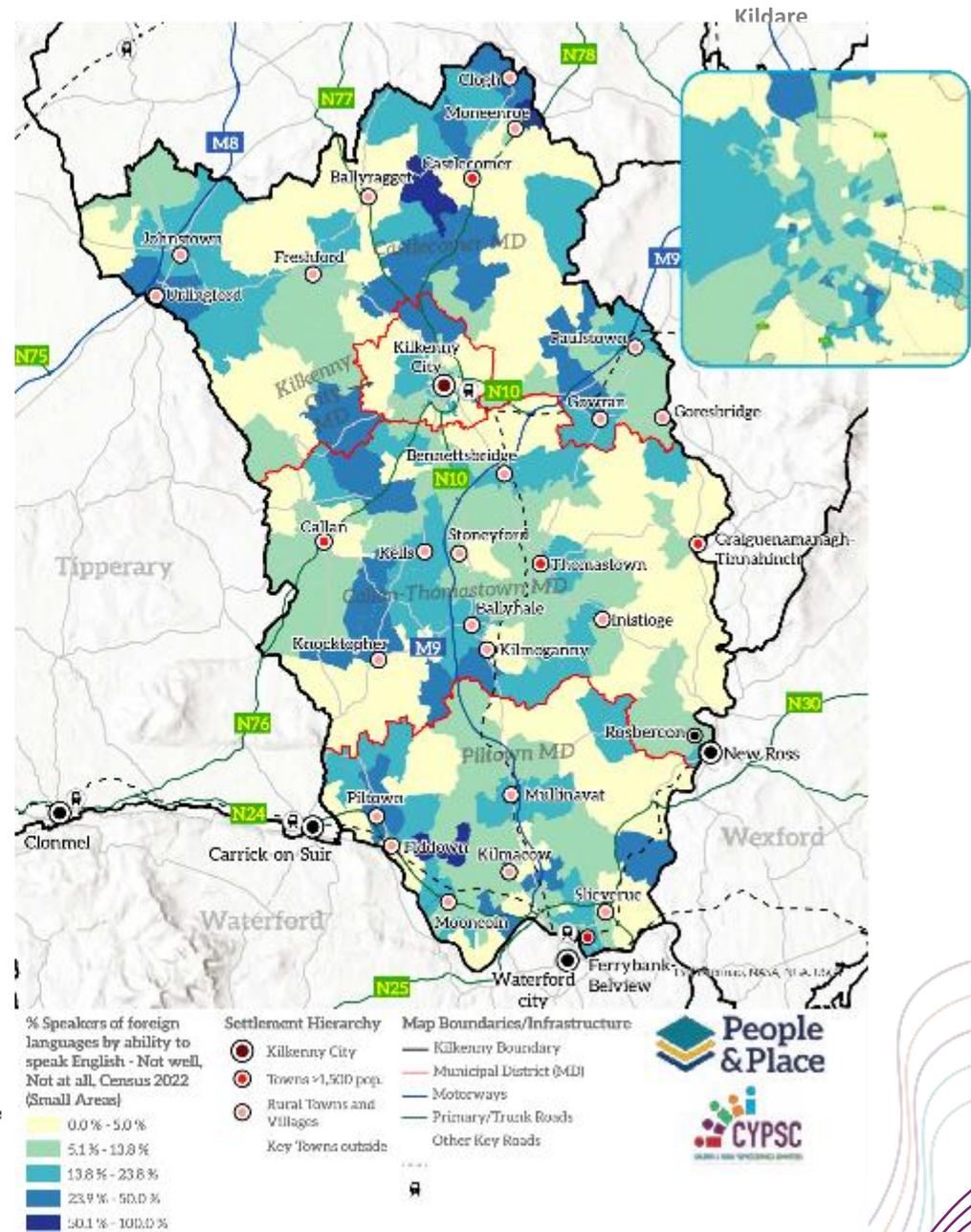
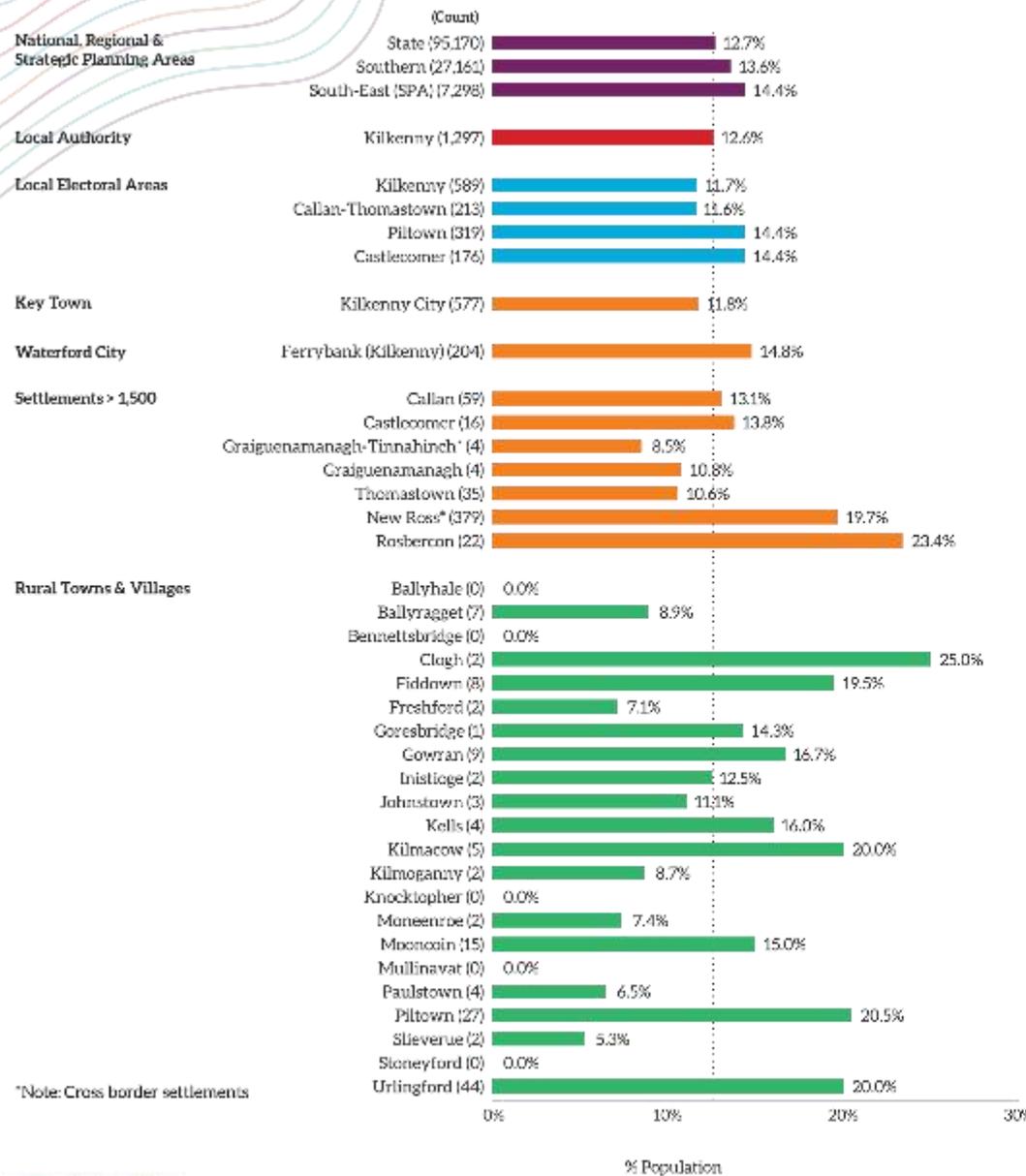


Figure 1.23: Ability to Speak English - Not well/Not at all, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)



Economic Security

02

Overview

2. Economic Security

2.1 Unemployment

Castlecomer MD.

- Highest unemployment in settlements: New Ross, Urlingford, Kilmoganny (over double the county rate); Mooncoin and Freshford also have high rates (>14%).
- Rural areas in the centre and south of the county have higher unemployment levels than the north.

2.2 Social Class

- Higher social classes (professional, managerial, technical, non-manual workers): 56.7% of the workforce, slightly above national level. Highest in Callan-Thomastown MD, lowest in Piltown MD.
- Areas with the highest concentration of higher social classes: Kilkenny City suburbs, N78 corridor (within 10km of the city), and settlements like Stoneyford, Kells, Paulstown, and Knocktopher.

- Total unemployed: just over 4,000 (8% of the labour force), slightly below national and regional rates.

- Highest unemployment rates in Kilkenny City (some areas over 20%) and lowest in

- Lower social classes (skilled, semi-skilled, unskilled workers): 29.1% of the workforce, above national level. The highest concentration is in the Piltown MD, and the lowest is in Kilkenny MD.

- Areas with the highest relative proportions of lower social classes: rural communities, particularly in the northeast and south.

2.3 Affluence and Deprivation (PobalHP Index)

- Kilkenny's score: -0.41 (slightly more disadvantaged than Ireland; national score (on the index): +0.40, but more affluent than the Southeast Region).
- All MDs have slightly negative scores, with Piltown MD being the most disadvantaged (-0.52).
- Kilkenny City shows variation in affluence / deprivation: Eastern suburbs (north/south of Dublin Road): classified as disadvantaged or very disadvantaged. Affluent areas: northeast of the city, outside the ring road.
- Rural areas show mixed patterns of affluence and deprivation.
- Most disadvantaged settlements: New Ross, Urlingford, Kilmoganny, Freshford, Goresbridge, Clogh, and Moneenroe (scores of -10 or lower).
- Most affluent settlements: Stoneyford (affluent), Kells, Paulstown, and Kilmacow (marginally above average).

- There are areas of affluence in Kilkenny's commuter belt, and pockets of deprivation in the northwest (Urlingford, Johnstown) and northeast (Castlecomer area).

Unemployment

The 2022 Census of Population records that there were just over 4,000 unemployed persons in County Kilkenny. This figure is higher than the number of persons who are on the live register (with the Department of Social Protection). This cohort represents eight percent of the total labour force, and this proportion is slightly below the equivalent values for the State and Southern Region (8.3% and 8.1% respectively). The equivalent value for the South-East Region is higher (9.2%). Of the county's four MDs, Kilkenny has the highest unemployment rate, while the Castlecomer MD has the lowest rate. The unemployment rate in Kilkenny City is higher than in the county as a whole and in the Kilkenny MD. Within the City, the unemployment rate exceeds twenty percent in some estates to the south of the Hebron Road and in neighbourhoods to the west of the city's urban core.

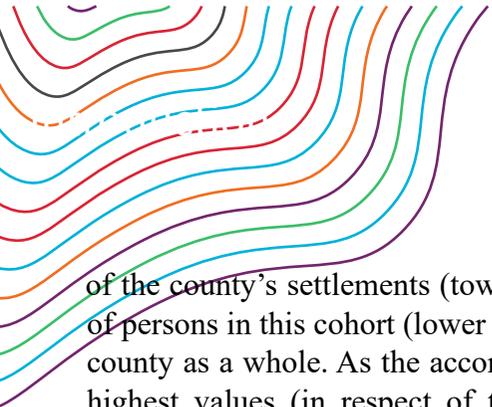
The unemployment rate in Waterford's northern suburbs is lower than in Kilkenny City (8.8% and 10.2% respectively), but it is above the rate for Ireland. The settlements with the highest unemployment rates, in County Kilkenny, are as follows: New Ross, Urlingford and Kilmoganny; these three settlements have rates that are more than double the county rate. There are also high rates (>14%) in the following communities: Mooncoin and Freshford. As the accompanying map shows, unemployment rates in rural communities tend to be higher in the centre

and south of the county than in the north of the county, with the exceptions of Clogh and Johnstown.

Social Class

Professional, managerial and technical and non-manual workers, generally represent those who belong to the three highest social classes. This cohort represents over half (56.7%) of County Kilkenny's workforce; a proportion that is just above the equivalent for Ireland and is almost four percentage points above the equivalent value for the South-East Region. Among the county's four MDs, Callan-Thomastown has the highest proportion of persons in this cohort, while Piltown has the lowest proportion. Only four of the county's settlements (towns and villages) have greater proportions of persons in this cohort (higher social classes) than is the case across the county as a whole; these are Stoneyford, Kells, Paulstown and Knocktopher. As the accompanying map illustrates, the areas with the highest values (in respect of the proportion of persons employed in professional, managerial and technical and non-manual roles) are in the outer suburbs of Kilkenny City and in communities along the N78 (main road) within 10km of the city.

Skilled manual, semi-skilled and unskilled workers, generally represent those who belong to the three lowest social classes. This cohort represents just under thirty percent (29.1%) of County Kilkenny's workforce; a proportion that is just above the equivalent for Ireland and is two percentage points below the equivalent value for the South-East Region. Among the county's four MDs, Piltown has the highest proportion of persons in this cohort, while Kilkenny has the lowest proportion. Several (n=23)



of the county's settlements (town and villages) have greater proportions of persons in this cohort (lower social classes) than is the case across the county as a whole. As the accompanying map illustrates, the areas with highest values (in respect of the proportion of persons employed in Skilled manual, semi-skilled and unskilled roles) are rural communities, particularly in the northeast and south of the county.

Affluence and Deprivation

County Kilkenny is slightly more disadvantaged than Ireland as a whole, when affluence and deprivation / disadvantage are measured using the Pobal HP Index. The composite score for Ireland (on this index) is +.40, while the score for County Kilkenny is -.41. This is a very small differential, and Kilkenny is more affluent than the South-East Region as a whole.

While the composite scores for each of the four MDs are all negative (indicating they are more disadvantaged than affluent), they are only marginally on the negative scale (of this index), and there is little difference between them; values range from 0.0 in Callan-Thomastown to -.52 in the Piltown MD.

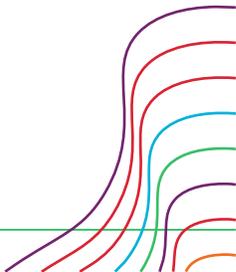
The overall scores, on the Pobal HP Index, show little difference between Kilkenny City and Waterford's northern suburbs, but as the accompanying map illustrates, there are considerable variations within Kilkenny City. The city's eastern suburbs – immediately north and south of the Dublin Road are classified as either 'disadvantaged' or 'very

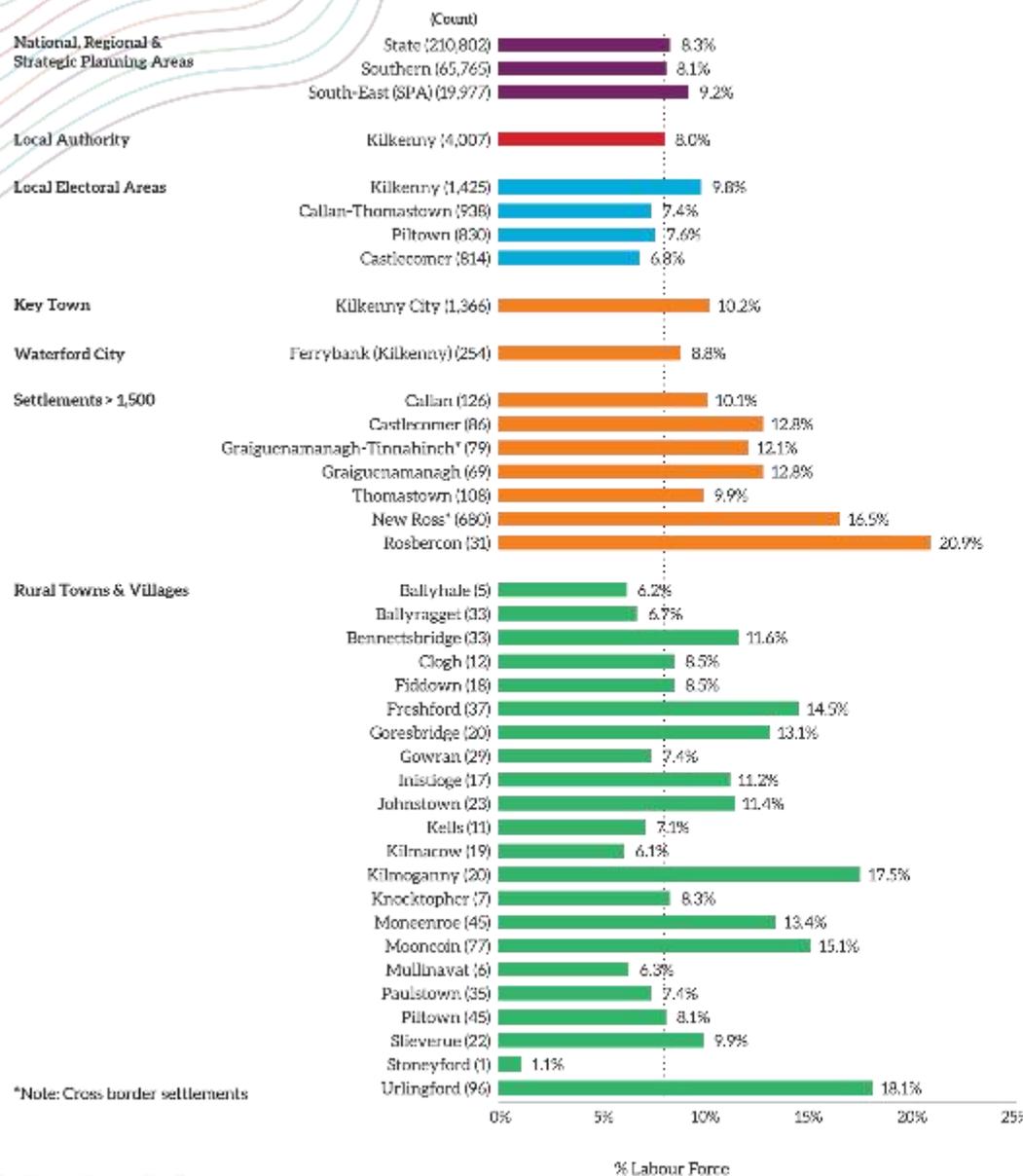
disadvantaged'. There are also areas of disadvantage in the west of the city – mainly to the west of Irishtown, and to the south of the city – in and around

Larchfield. In contrast, there is considerable affluence to the east and north of the city, immediately outside the city's ring road. Several of the county's settlements record scores of -10 or lower on the Pobal HP Index, thereby indicating that they are either 'disadvantaged' or 'very disadvantaged'. These towns and villages are – in descending order – New Ross, Urlingford, Kilmoganny, Freshford, Goresbridge, Clogh and Moneenroe. Stoneyford is the only settlement that emerges as 'affluent' while only three other settlements, namely Kells, Paulstown and Kilmacow, are classified as 'marginally above average' (relative to Ireland). As the accompanying map illustrates, there is no clear or dominant spatial pattern with respect to affluence and deprivation in rural areas. While there are areas of affluence in Kilkenny City's commuter belt, there are also areas of deprivation, and the greatest concentrations of deprivation are in the northwest (Urlingford and Johnstown) and northeast (to the east and north of Castlecomer) of the county. Most communities in the east of the county, along the border with County Carlow, record scores that are marginally below average, as do the majority of areas in South



Kilkenny, including Piltown, Fiddown, Mooncoin, Kilmacow and Slieverue.





*Note: Cross border settlements

Principal Economic Status - Unemployed All, Census 2022

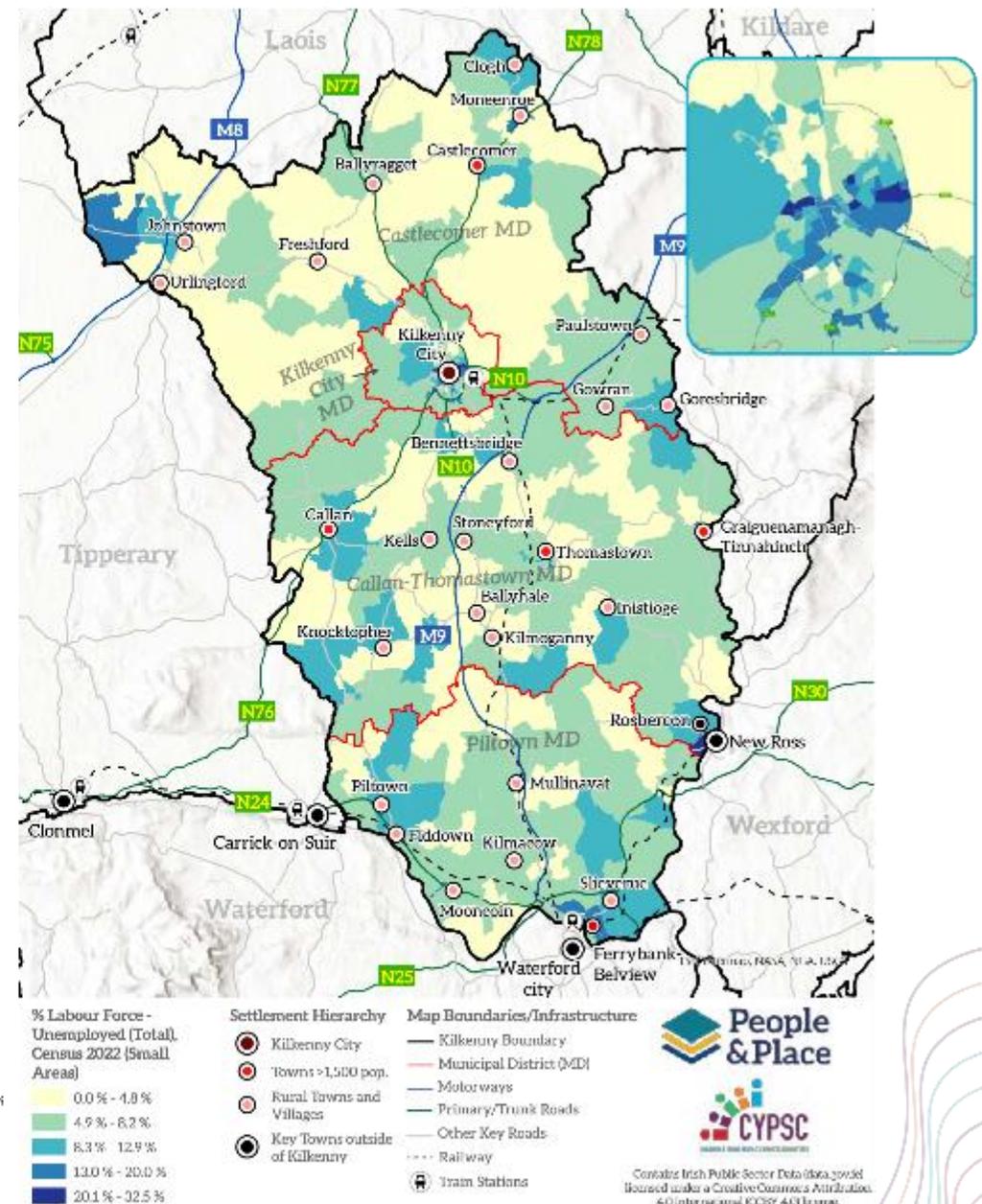
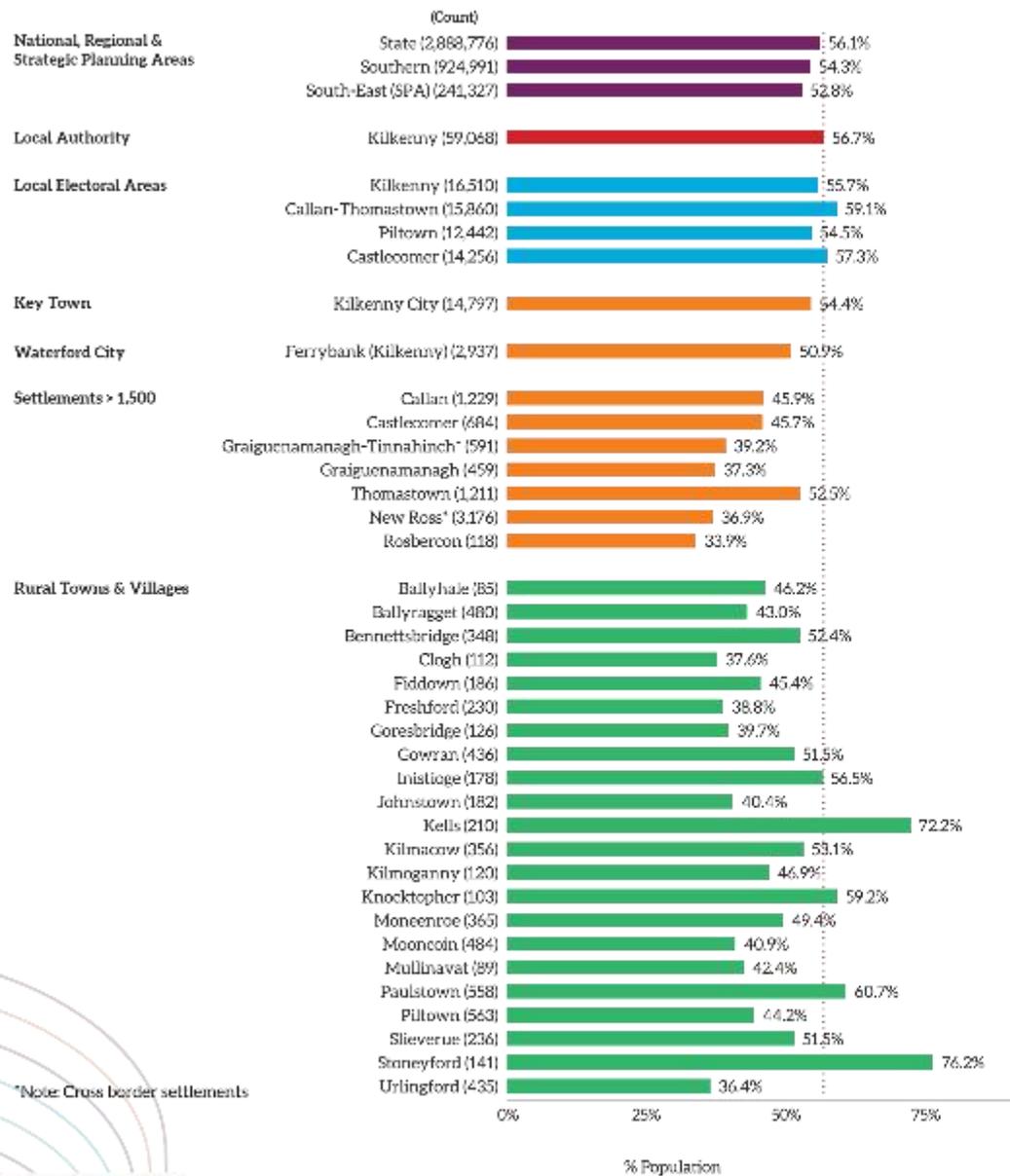


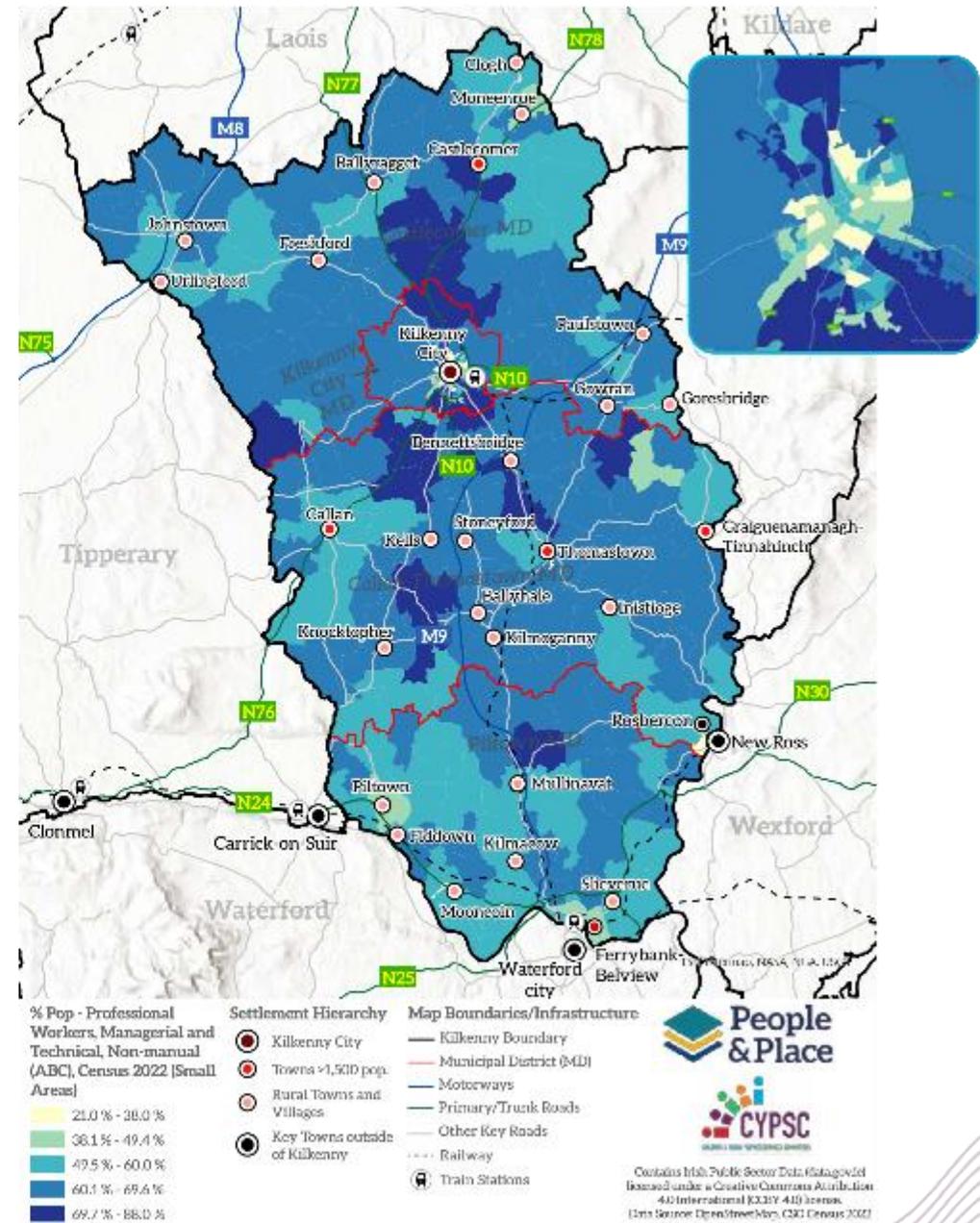
Figure 2.1: Labour Force - % Unemployed (Total), 2022 (CSO Census 2022)



*Note Cross border settlements

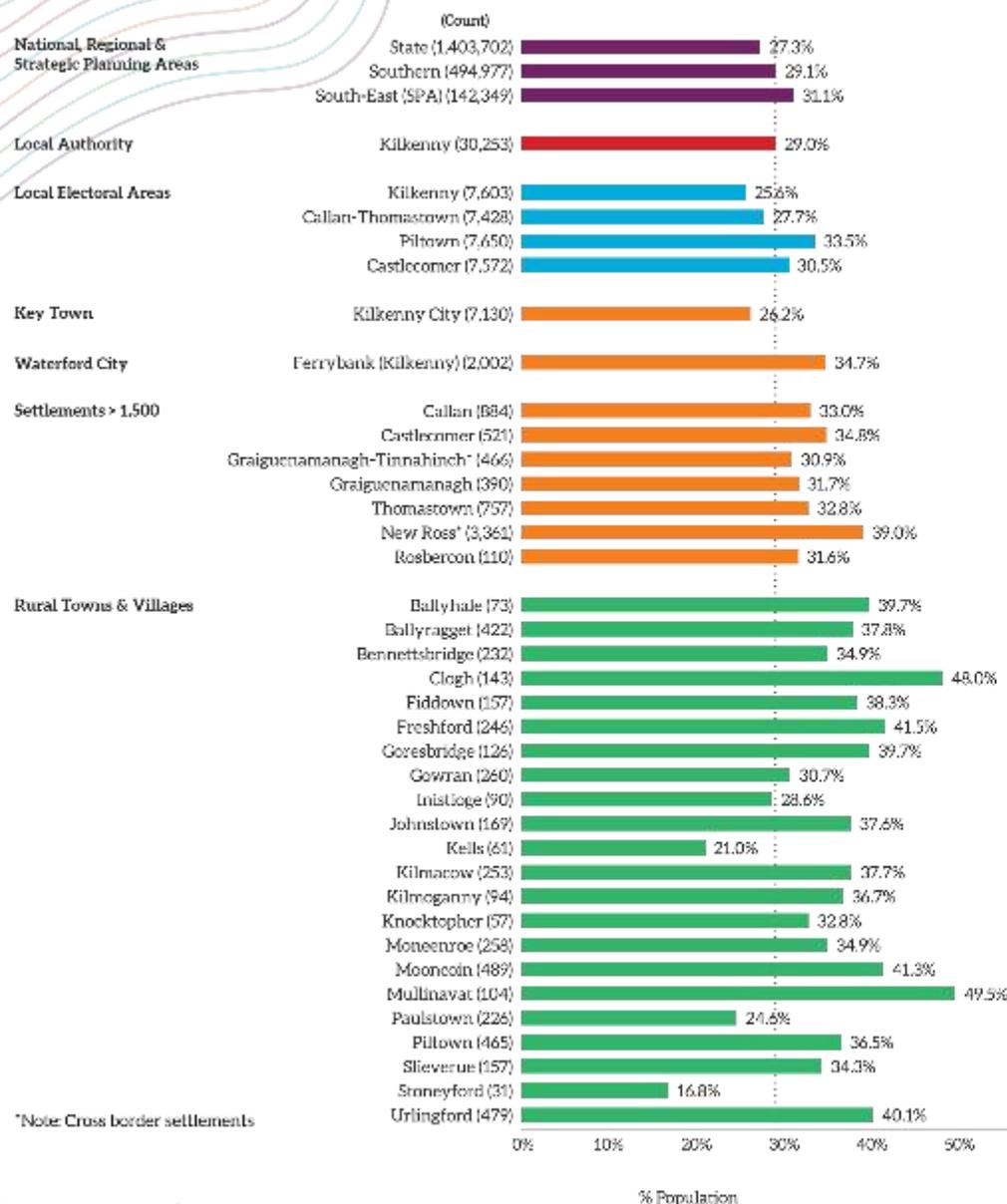


Professional, Managerial & technical, and Non-manual workers, 2022



Contains Irish Public Sector Data (Statagóid) licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0) license. Data Source: DatafreeMap, CSO Census 2022

Figure 2.2: % Social Class: Prof., Managerial & technical, and Non-manual workers, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)



*Note: Cross border settlements



Skilled manual, Semi-skilled, and Unskilled, 2022

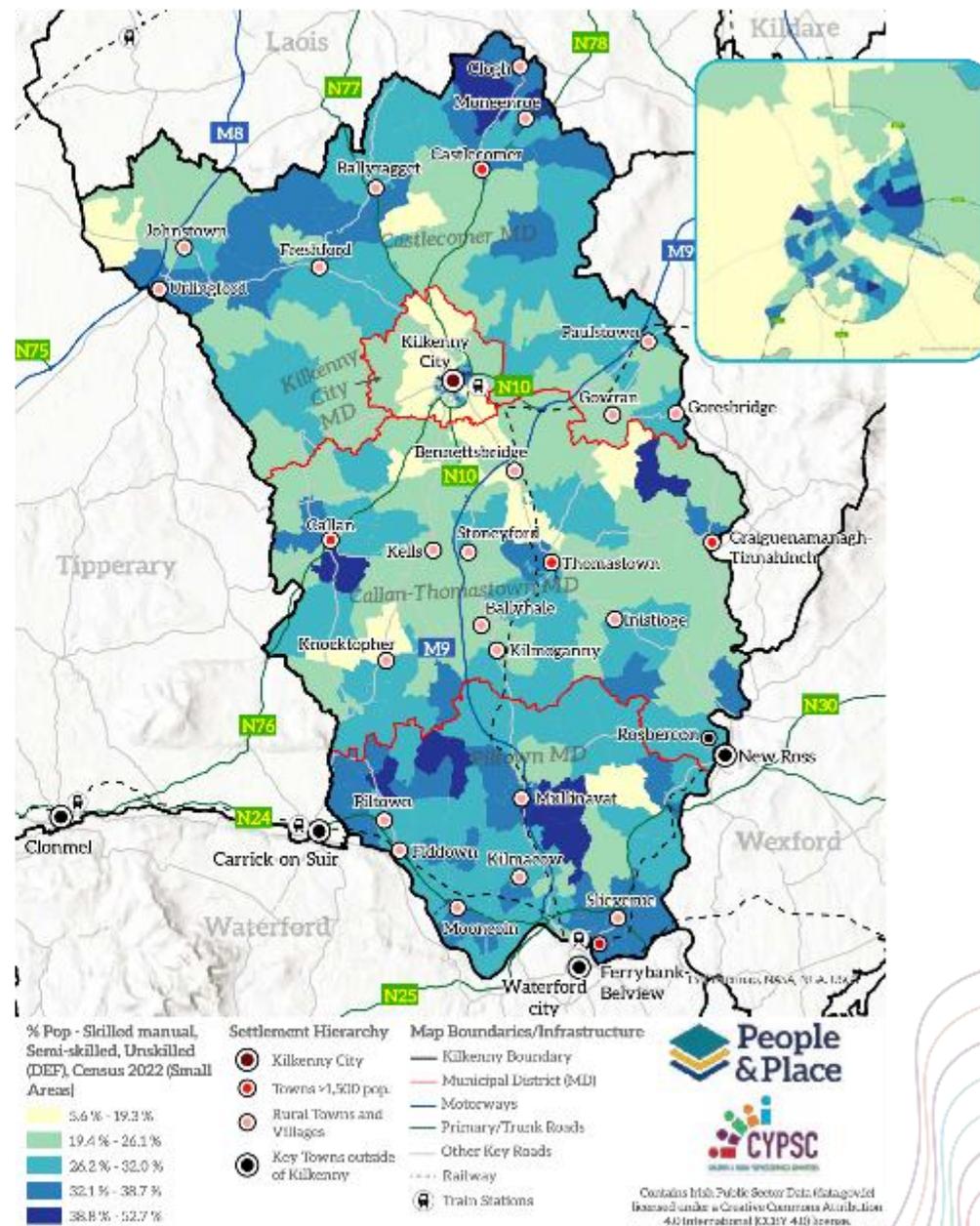


Figure 2.3: % Social Class: Skilled manual, Semi-skilled, and Unskilled, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

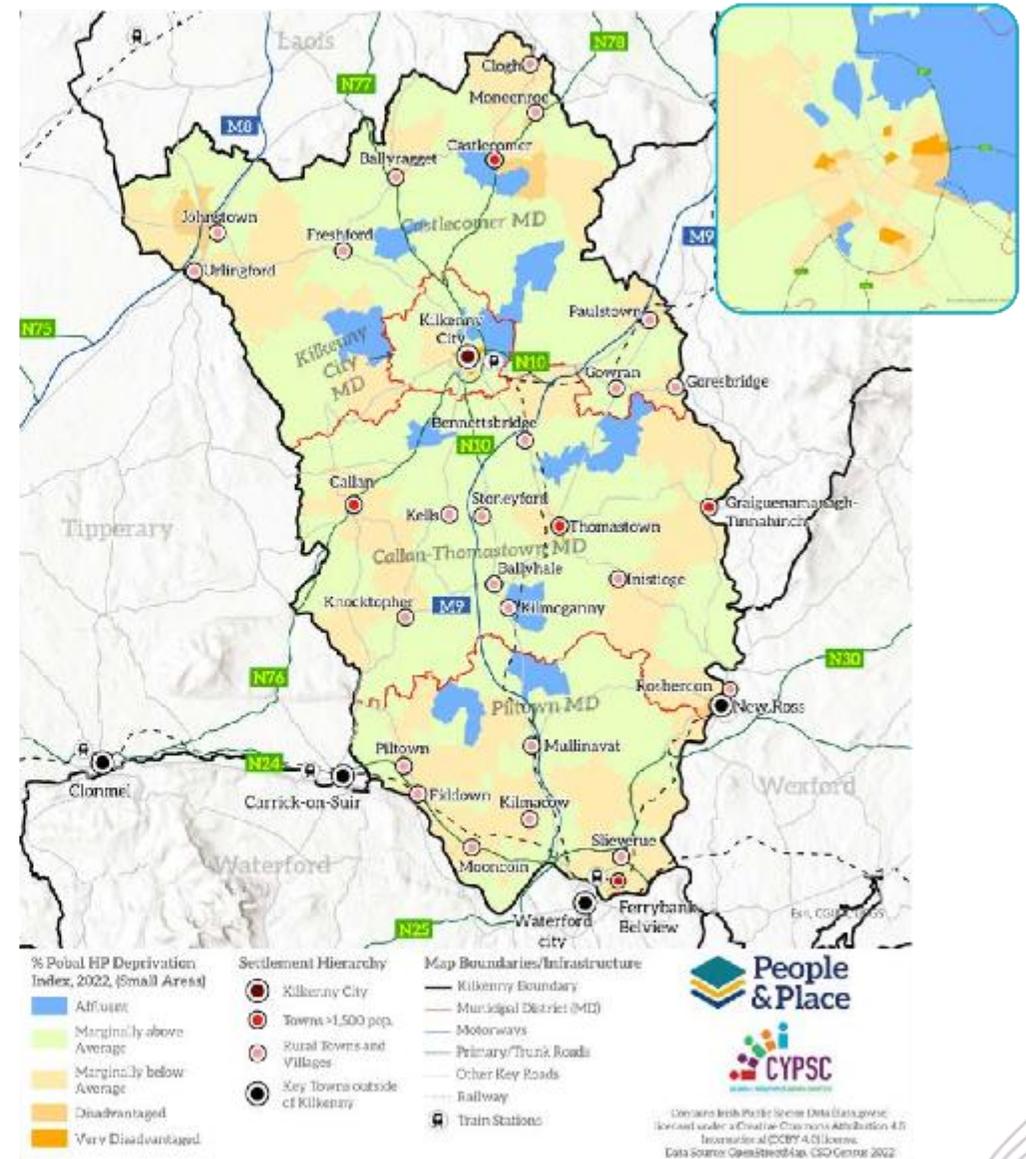
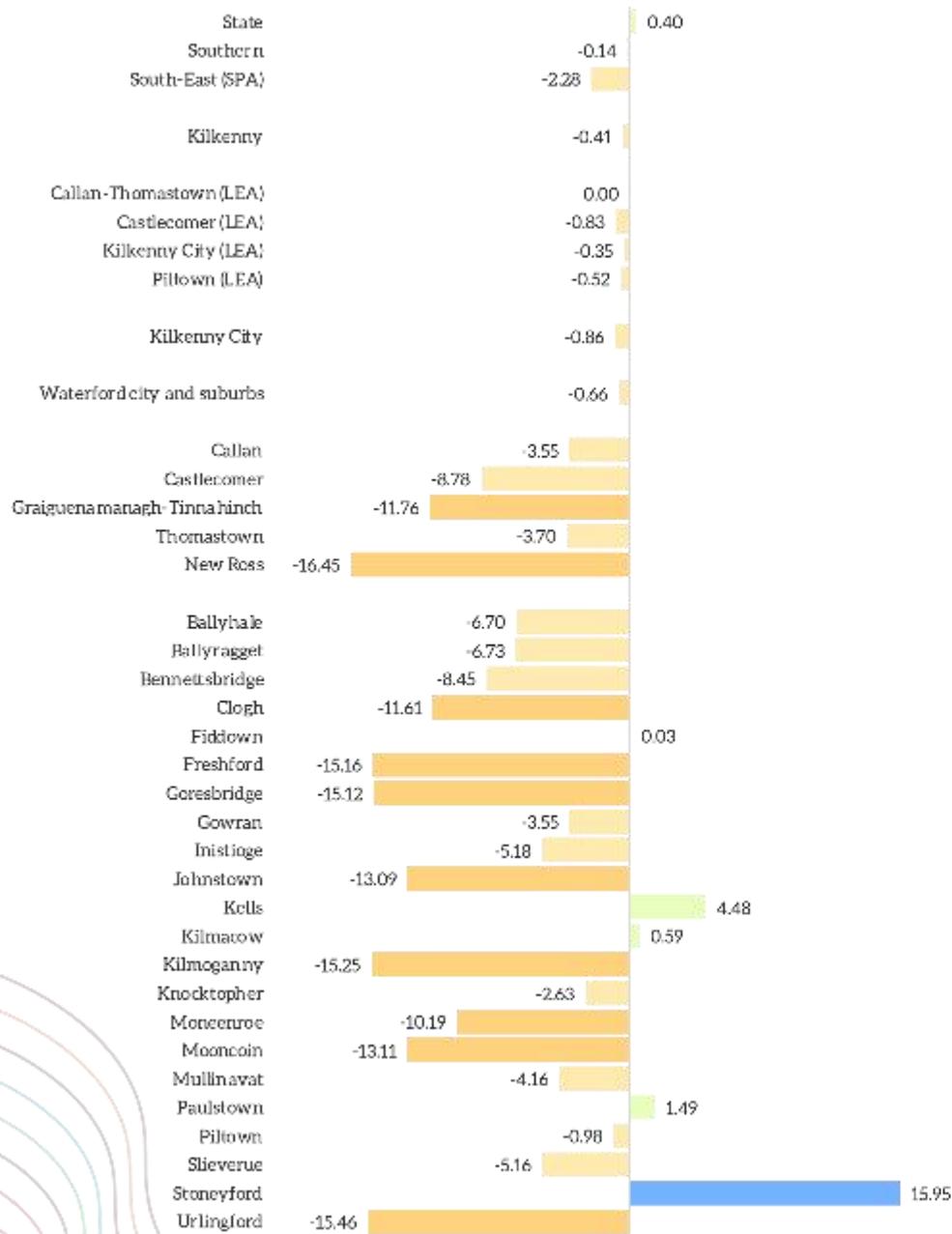


Figure 2.4: POBAL HP Deprivation Index - Relative Score, 2022 (Pobal 2022)



03

Education



Overview

3. Education

3.1 Educational Attainment (among those aged 15+ who completed formal education):

- Primary school only: 9.6%, slightly below the national and regional equivalents. Higher rates (>15%) in New Ross, Castlecomer, and Graiguenamanagh-Tinnahinch. Highest rates in rural areas and communities furthest from Waterford and Kilkenny Cities (e.g., Kilmoganny, Goresbridge, Clogh).
- Lower secondary school: Small cohort, highest rates in rural areas and peripheral towns (e.g., Johnstown, Freshford, Mooncoin).
- Upper secondary school (Leaving Certificate): 18.5%, slightly higher than the national figure. Higher in Waterford City suburbs (20.8%) and some areas (>25%, e.g. Clogh, Slieverue).
- Technical qualifications/ apprenticeships: 15.1%, above national and regional equivalents. Most prevalent in rural areas, with clusters in Slieverue, Castlecomer, and areas around Callan and Freshford.
- Third-level qualifications (NFQ Levels 7 to 10): 36.6%, below the national level (39.2%), but higher than regional figure. Areas with high third-level attainment: Kilkenny City suburbs, Stoneyford, Paulstown, Gowran, Callan.
- Advanced degrees (Levels 8 to 10): 22.8%, similar to regional level but lower than national. Highest values in Kilkenny MD and city suburbs, lowest in disadvantaged and rural areas (e.g. Urlingford, Goresbridge, and Clogh).

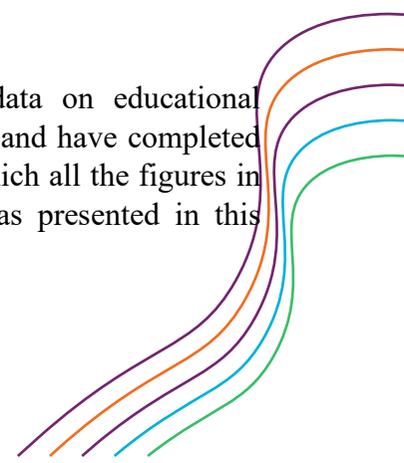
3.2 Educational Indicators (Children and Young People)

- Mothers' education: 20.6% of mothers in Kilkenny did not progress beyond primary school. This is slightly better than the national figure (21.4%).
- School absenteeism (2021): 36.8% of primary school children were absent for more than 20 days, lower than the national rate (39%). 26.1% of secondary students were absent for more than 20 days, lower than the national average (28%).
- Leaving Certificate completion rate: 91.8% of students who started secondary school in 2016 completed their leaving certificate, similar to the national rate (91.7%).

This section begins by dealing with educational attainment among the entire population of County Kilkenny. It also looks specifically at educational data that relate to children and young people.

Educational Attainment

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) publishes data on educational attainment in respect of persons who are aged 15+ and have completed formal full-time education. This is the metric on which all the figures in respect of educational attainment are calculated, as presented in this report.



The data in respect of educational attainment show that, in County Kilkenny, almost one-in-ten persons (9.6% of the population aged 15+ who have completed formal full-time education) did not progress beyond primary school. While this figure is slightly below the corresponding values for Ireland and the Southern Region, the local-level data reveal that low levels of educational attainment are problematic in many communities, especially in small towns and rural parts of the county. In all of County Kilkenny's towns (with populations over 1,500), the proportion of persons who did not progress beyond primary school is greater than the equivalent value for the county, and values exceed fifteen percent in New Ross, Castlecomer and Graiguenamanagh Tinnahinch.

County Kilkenny has twenty-two rural towns and villages, and in sixteen of these the proportion of persons who did not progress beyond primary school exceeds ten percent. The highest proportions are in Kilmoganny, Goresbridge and Clogh. There is a correlation between rurality and low levels of educational attainment, and it is worth noting that the communities with the largest proportions of persons who did not progress to secondary education are on the county's periphery – at greatest physical distance from Waterford and Kilkenny Cities. The accompanying map also illustrates the spatial pattern within Kilkenny City, and it shows that the highest levels, on this indicator, are in the city's eastern, southeastern and western suburbs, namely Hebron Road, Bohernatounish / Ardmore and Pearse Street¹.

The spatial pattern in respect of the distribution of persons who completed their formal education at lower secondary level (i.e. group, intermediate or junior certificate) is similar to that in

¹ When analysing the data on this indicator, it is important to take account of the locations of care homes and other residential facilities for older people, as these places of residence may drive up the figures for their neighbourhoods.

respect of those who did not progress beyond primary school, although the former is a smaller cohort. The proportion of persons in this cohort is higher in rural areas than in Kilkenny City, but it is high in the aforementioned city neighbourhoods. As the accompanying map shows, values are highest in peripheral parts of North Kilkenny and rural



communities in the south of the county. In each of the following towns and villages, the proportion of persons who did not progress beyond lower second level education exceeds twenty percent: Johnstown, Freshford, Mooncoin, Kilmacow, Bennettsbridge, Urlingford, Mullinavat, Ballyragget, Moneenroe and Clogh.

Almost one in five persons (18.5%) in County Kilkenny completed their formal education at upper secondary-school level (leaving certificate or equivalent). This proportion is slightly higher than the corresponding value for Ireland as a whole (18.1%). The proportion of persons in this cohort is higher in Waterford City's suburbs (20.8%) than in Kilkenny City (17.9%), although values exceed twenty-five percent in the city's southern suburbs. Other locations with relatively high values (>25%) include Clogh and Slieverue.

In County Kilkenny, almost one in seven (15.1%) persons, who have completed formal full-time education, holds a technical qualification or has completed an apprenticeship or accredited certificate course. This proportion is two percentage points higher than the equivalent value for



Ireland, and it is slightly above the corresponding values for the Southern Region and South-East Region. As the accompanying map shows, persons

with these qualifications are more prevalent (in proportional terms) in rural areas than in Kilkenny City and its environs. The map also shows there are notable geographical clusters in which persons with technical, apprenticeship and certificate-level qualifications are prominent. These include Slieverue and surrounding rural communities, areas around Castlecomer and rural communities in the vicinities of Callan, Freshford, Tullaroan and Ballygorteen.

The proportion of persons, in County Kilkenny, who have a third-level qualification (Levels 7 to 10 on the National Qualifications Framework (NFQ)) is slightly lower than is the case across Ireland as a whole; the respective figures are 36.6% and 39.2%.

Yet, County Kilkenny has an higher proportion of persons with third-level qualifications than do the Southern Region and SouthEast Region. Moreover, the proportion of persons with a Level 6 or 7 qualification (advanced certificate, diploma or ordinary level degree i.e. 'lower' third level) is slightly higher in County Kilkenny than is the case nationally; the corresponding figures are 13.8% and 13.6% respectively. Of the county's four MDs, the proportion is highest in the Kilkenny MD, although the range is just 1.6 percentage points. The values in Kilkenny City (14.4%) and Waterford's suburbs (14%) are higher than the corresponding values in almost all other settlements in the county, with the exceptions of Stoneyford, Paulstown, Mullinavat, Fiddown, Gowran, Callan and Thomastown; these all have values that exceed fourteen percent. Within Kilkenny City, the spatial pattern is the reverse of that shown in the previous maps; the highest values are in the city centre (eastern bank of the River Nore) and in the neighbourhoods of Glendine, Talbot's Inch,

Bennettsbridge Road, The Orchard, Golf Links Road and the estates along the Waterford and Kells Roads.

Almost twenty-three percent (22.8%) of the population, in County Kilkenny has an higher third-level qualification (i.e. at Levels 8 to 10 – an honours degree or postgraduate qualification). This figure is on a par with that of the Southern Region, although it is nearly three percentage points lower than the corresponding value for Ireland. The highest values in the county are in the Kilkenny MD, and specifically in the city's outer suburbs. In contrast, the lowest values are in local authority housing estates in Kilkenny City and in rural communities such as Urlingford, Goresbridge, Clogh, Johnstown and Mooncoin.

The composite dataset in respect of all persons with a third-level qualification clearly illustrates the spatial patterns that have been referred to in the previous paragraphs. High levels of educational attainment are associated with affluent areas, most notably Kilkenny City's outer suburbs and peri-urban fringe, while low levels of educational attainment are associated with areas of disadvantage and rural peripherality.

Education Indicators that relate specifically to children and young people

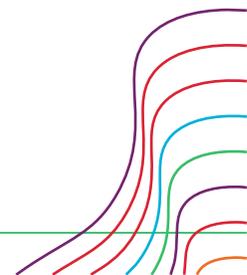
As noted in Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures (BOPF) and other publications, mothers' educational attainment levels correlate with those of their children. The most recent data (2016), reveal that, in Ireland, 21.4% of mothers with children aged <15 had not progressed from primary to secondary education. The corresponding figure for County Kilkenny was slightly lower at 20.6%.

At a national level, the percentages of school absenteeism for 2019–20 were the lowest recorded, with 2021–22 being the highest recorded, corresponding to the peak of Ireland's COVID-19 cases over winter in 2021–22. In 2019–20, there were 19,067 primary students with 20 or more absent days. These absences increased twofold in 2020–21, rising to 39,879, with a further fourfold increase to 173,072 in 2021–22. Post-primary students had a similar, albeit less severe pattern, rising from 20,977 in 2019–20 and 21,687 in 2020–21 to 69,097 in 2021–22.



During the 2021/22 school year, thirty-nine percent of primary school children in Ireland were absent for more than twenty days. The corresponding proportion, in County Kilkenny, was lower (36.8%). This rate increased from 3.8% in 2019-20 and 8.1% in 2020/21. County Kilkenny also recorded a lower absentee rate among second-level students; the proportion who were absent for twenty or more days was almost two percentage points lower than across Ireland (28% and 26.1% respectively). This rate increased from 10.3% in 2019-20 and 12.8% in 2020/21. While official statistics from 2022/23 and onwards are not published yet, anecdotal evidence suggests that absenteeism rates have not returned to pre-COVID levels.

Of those who commenced second-level education in Ireland in 2016, the vast majority progressed to completing their leaving certificate; 91.7% of all those in Ireland and 91.8% of those in County Kilkenny did so. This implies that over eight percent of those who commenced second-level education in County Kilkenny, in 2016, did not complete their leaving certificate.



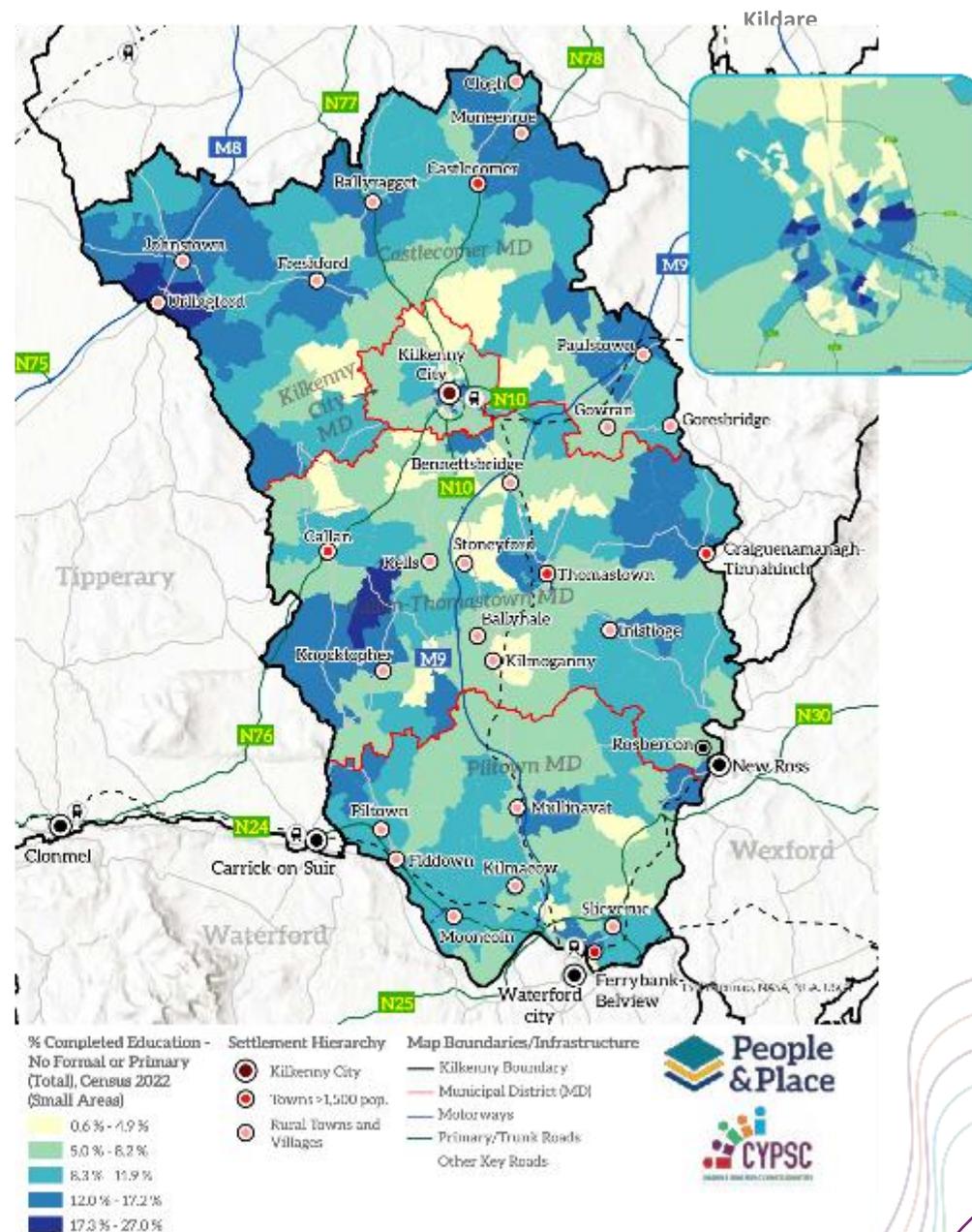
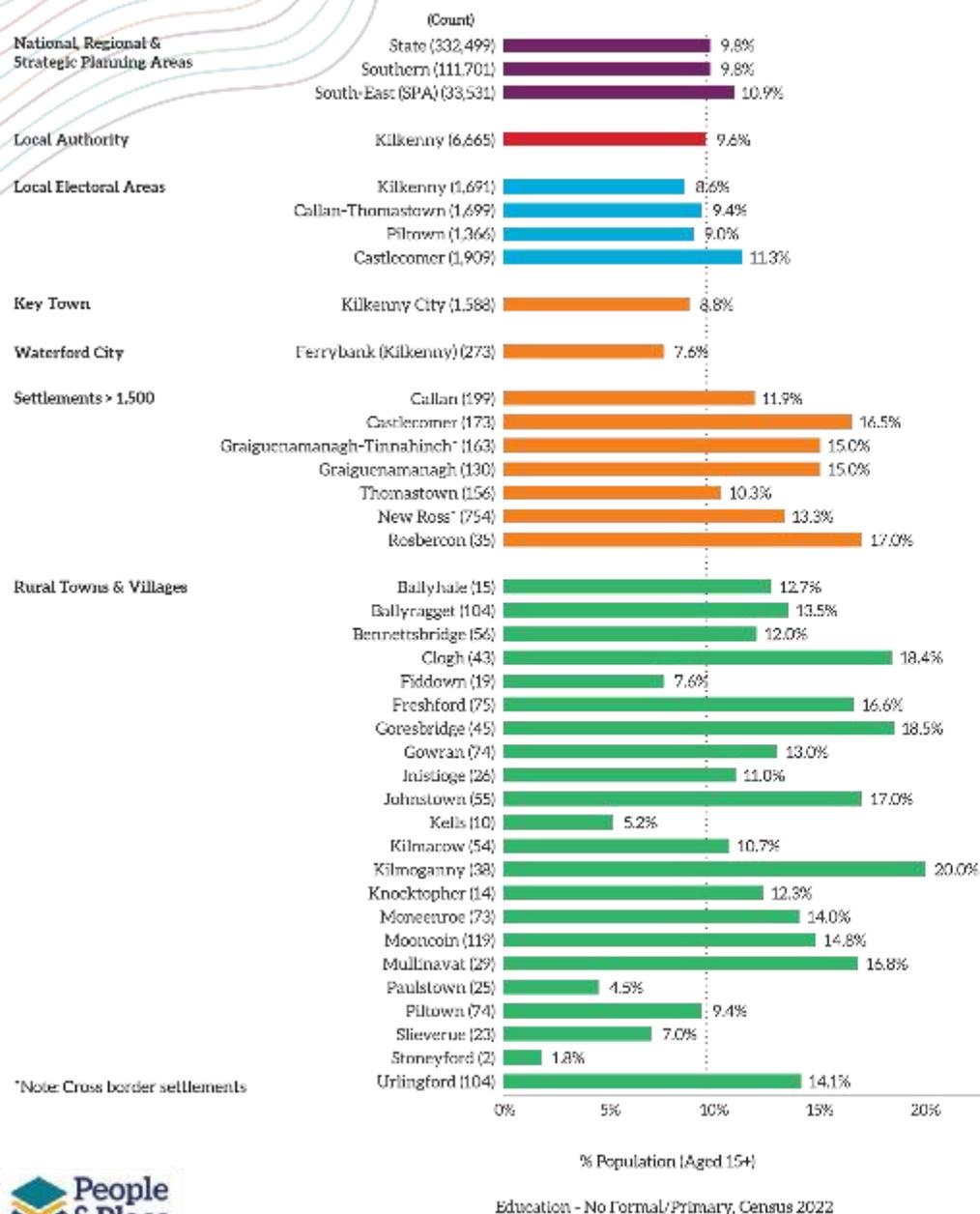


Figure 3.1: % Pop 15+ Completed Education - No Formal or Primary (Total), 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

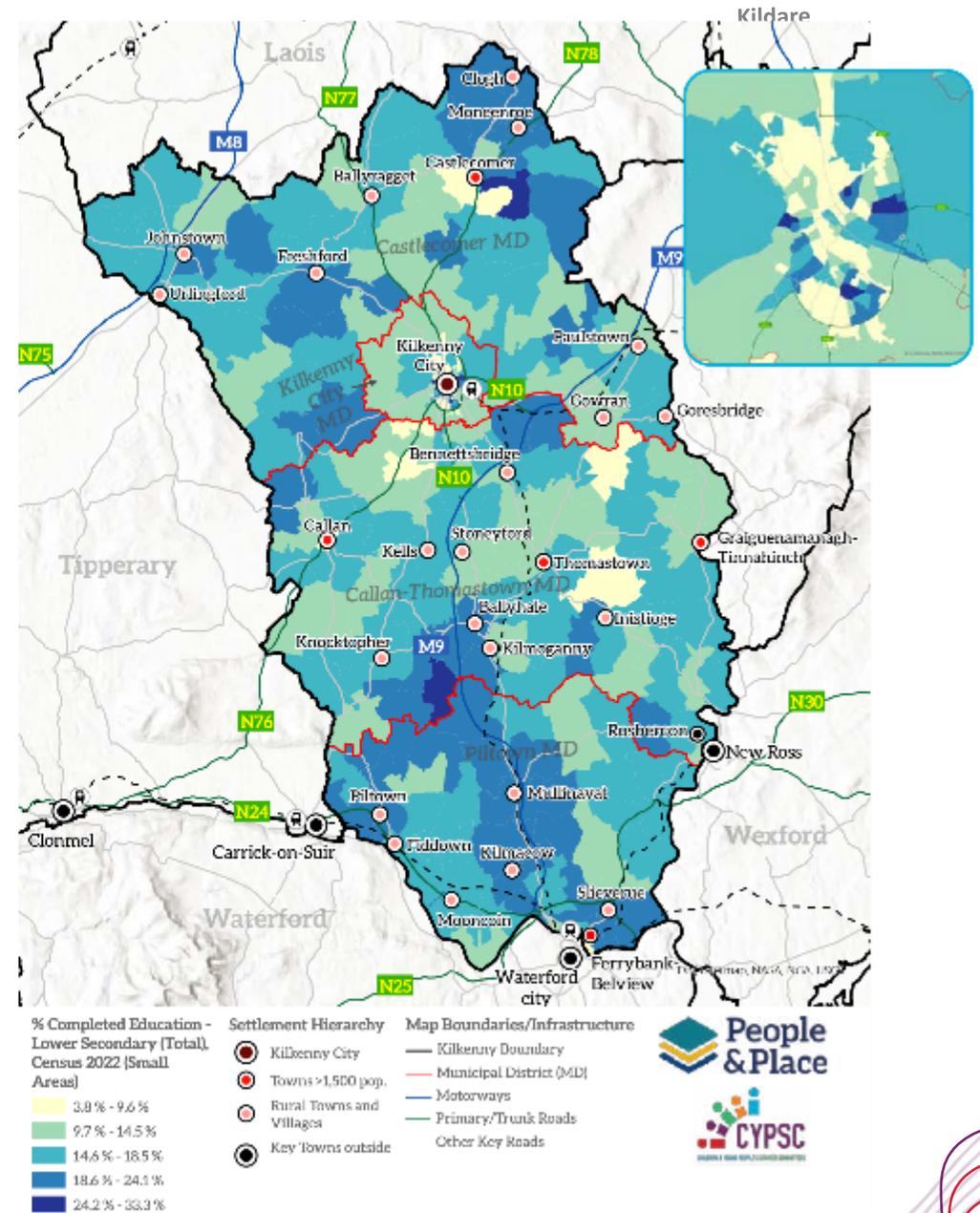
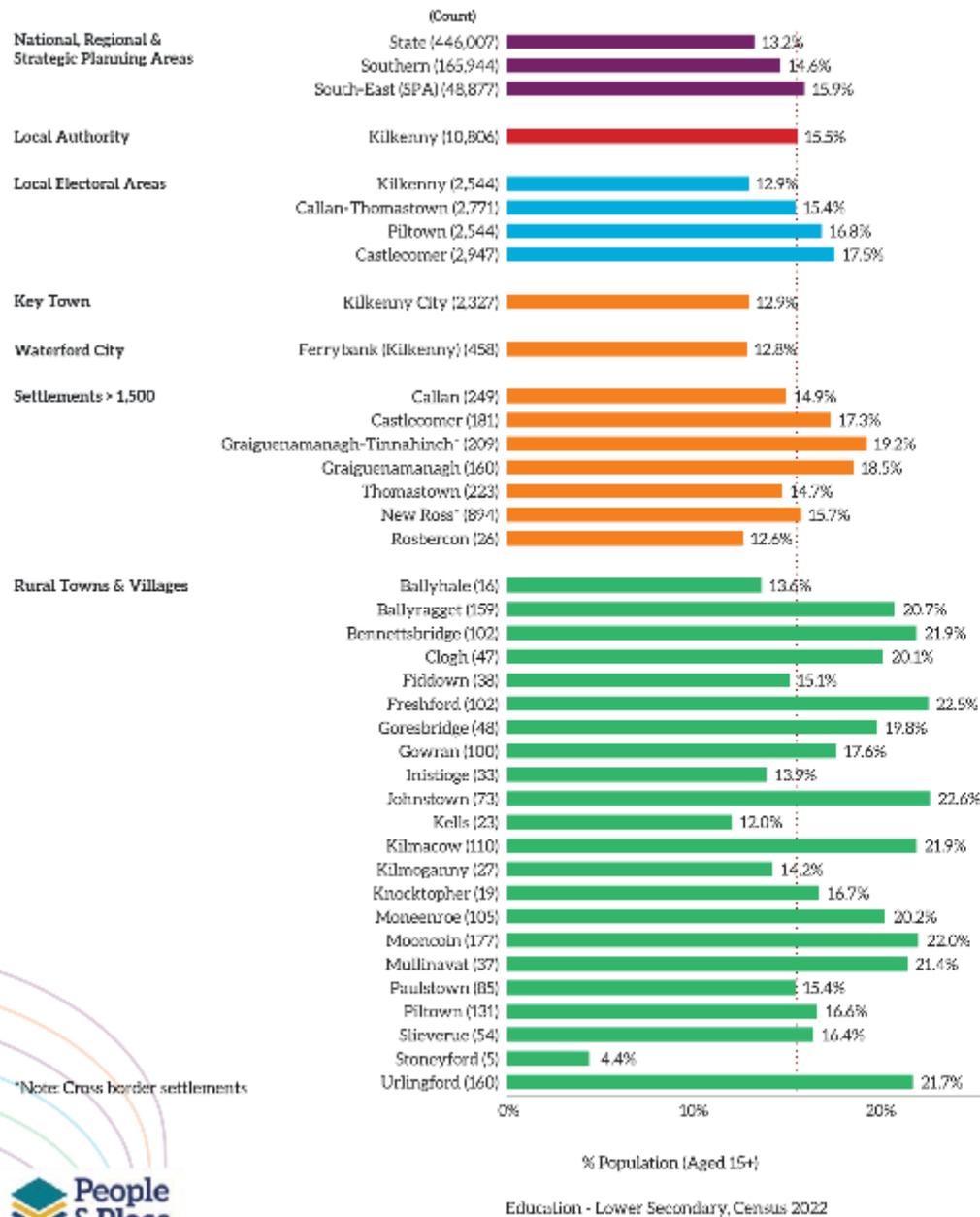


Figure 3.2: % Pop 15+ Completed Education - Lower Secondary (Total), 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

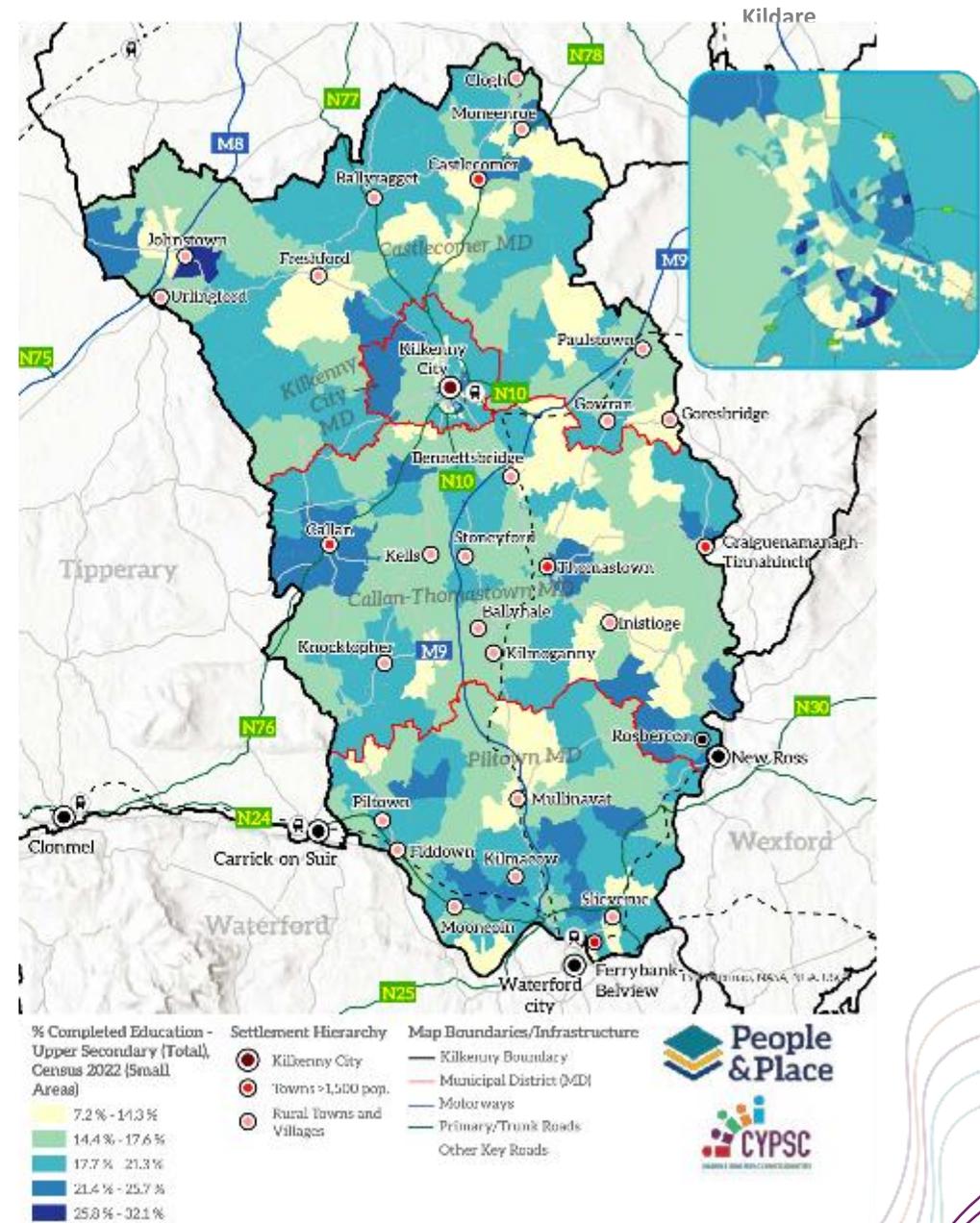
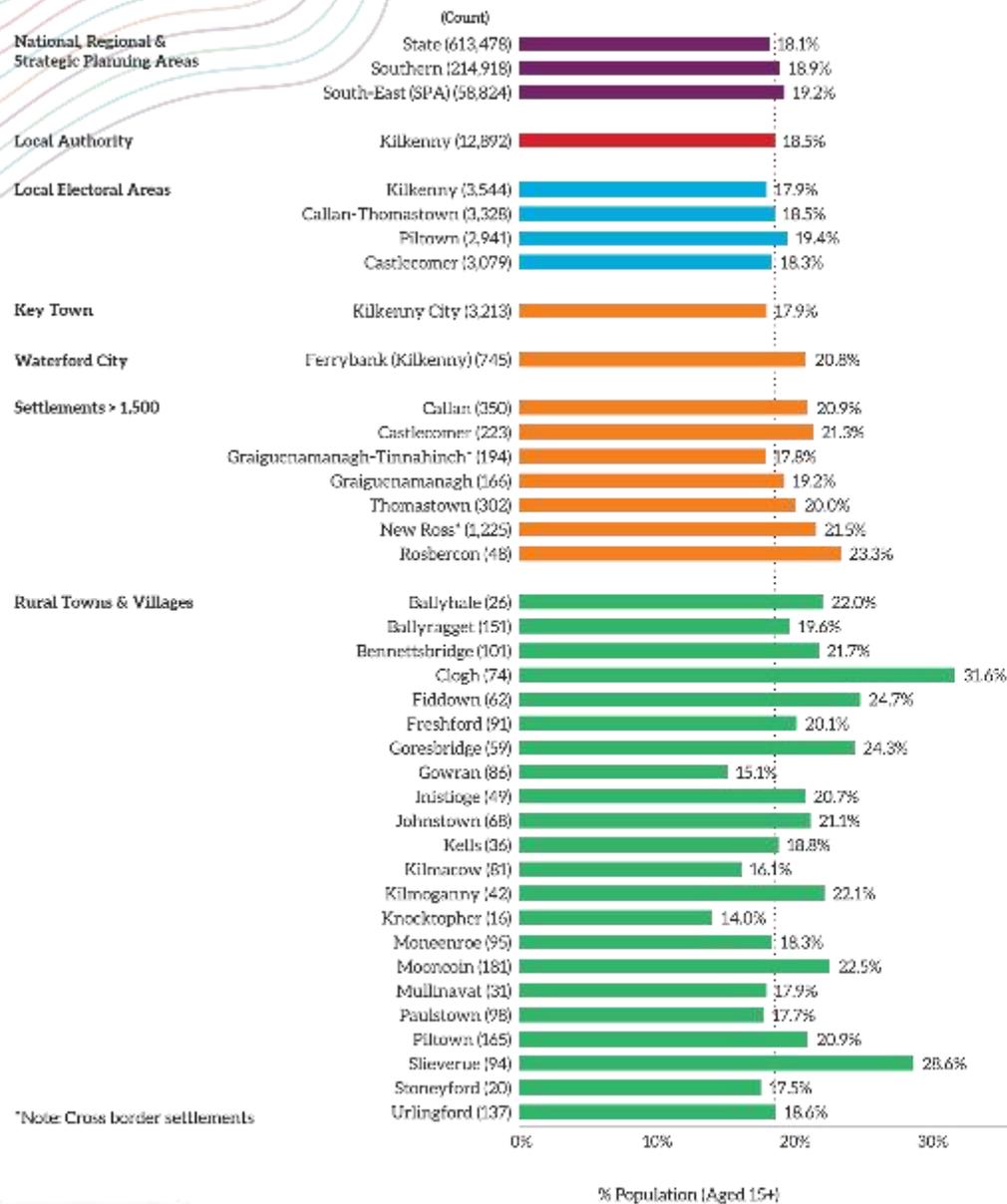


Figure 3.3: % Pop 15+ Completed Education - Upper Secondary (Total), 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

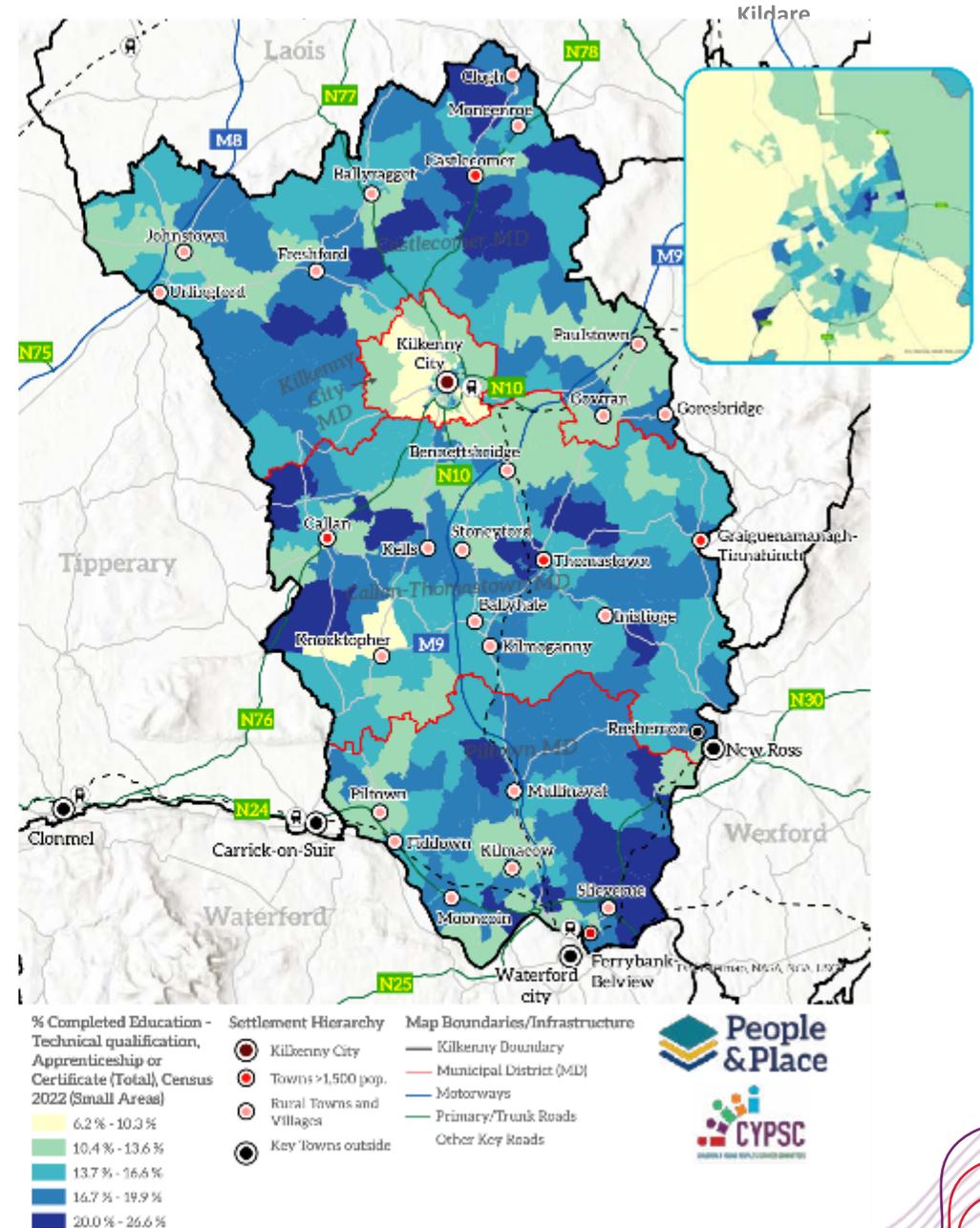
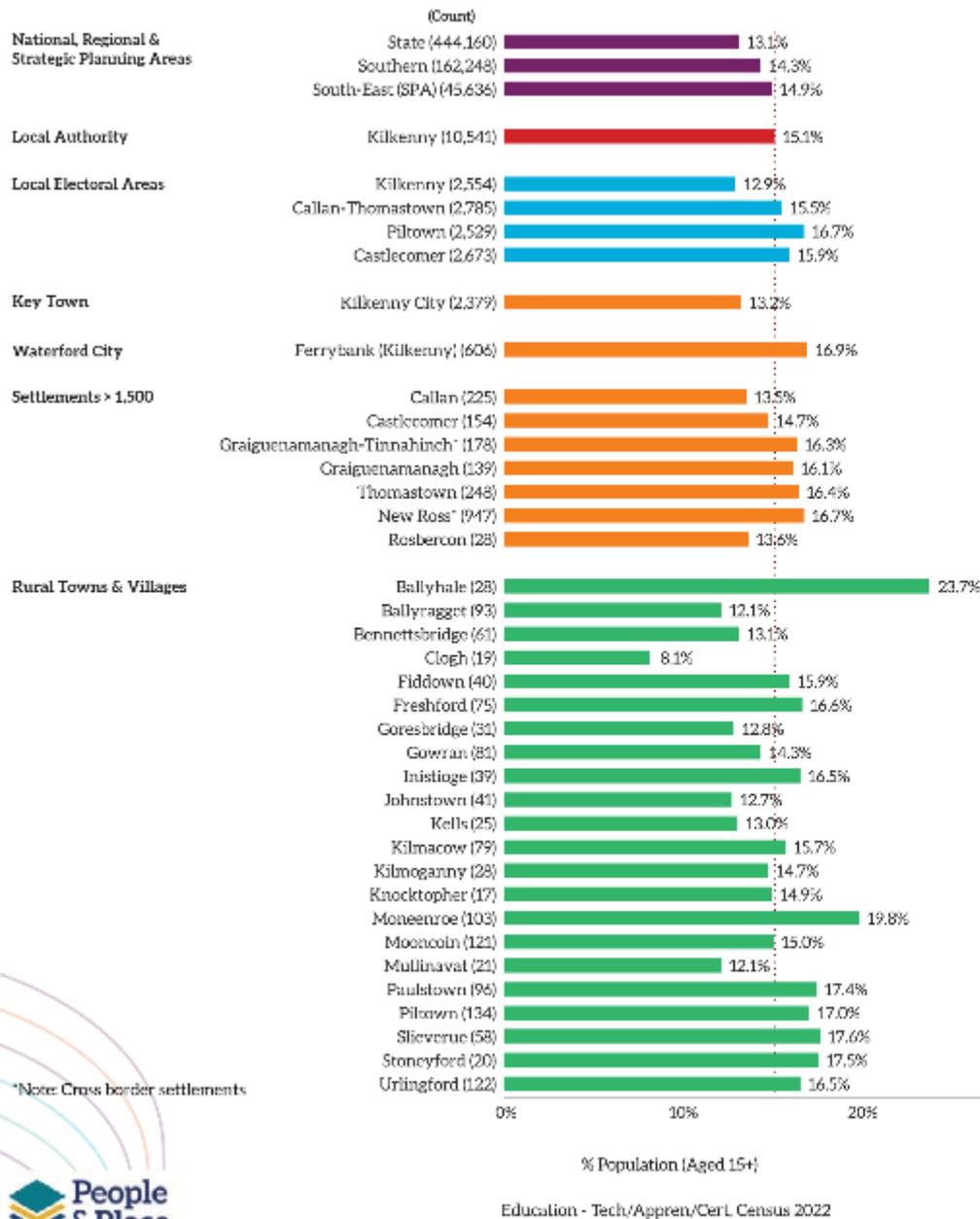


Figure 3.4: % Pop 15+ Technical qualification, Apprenticeship or Certificate (Total), 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

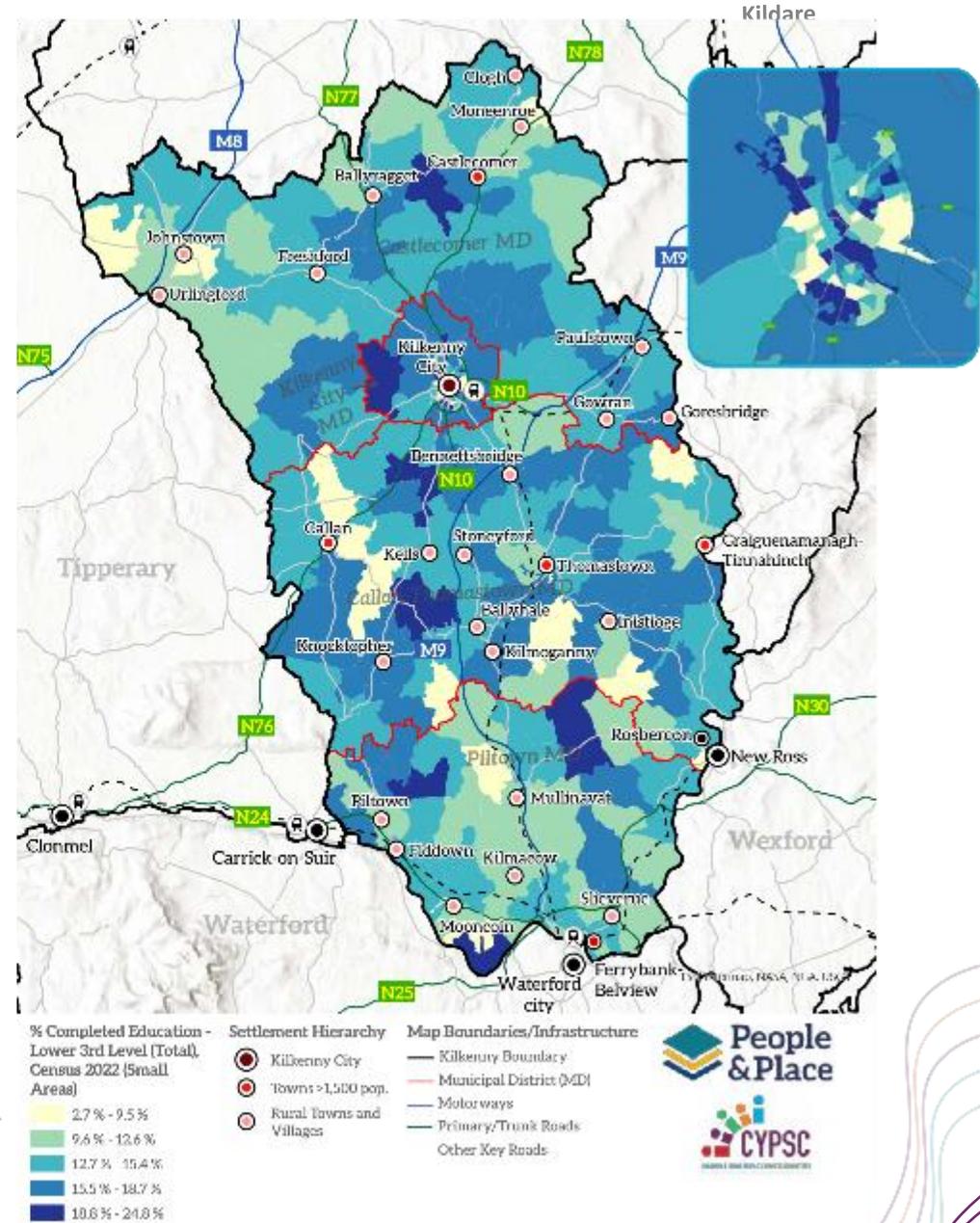
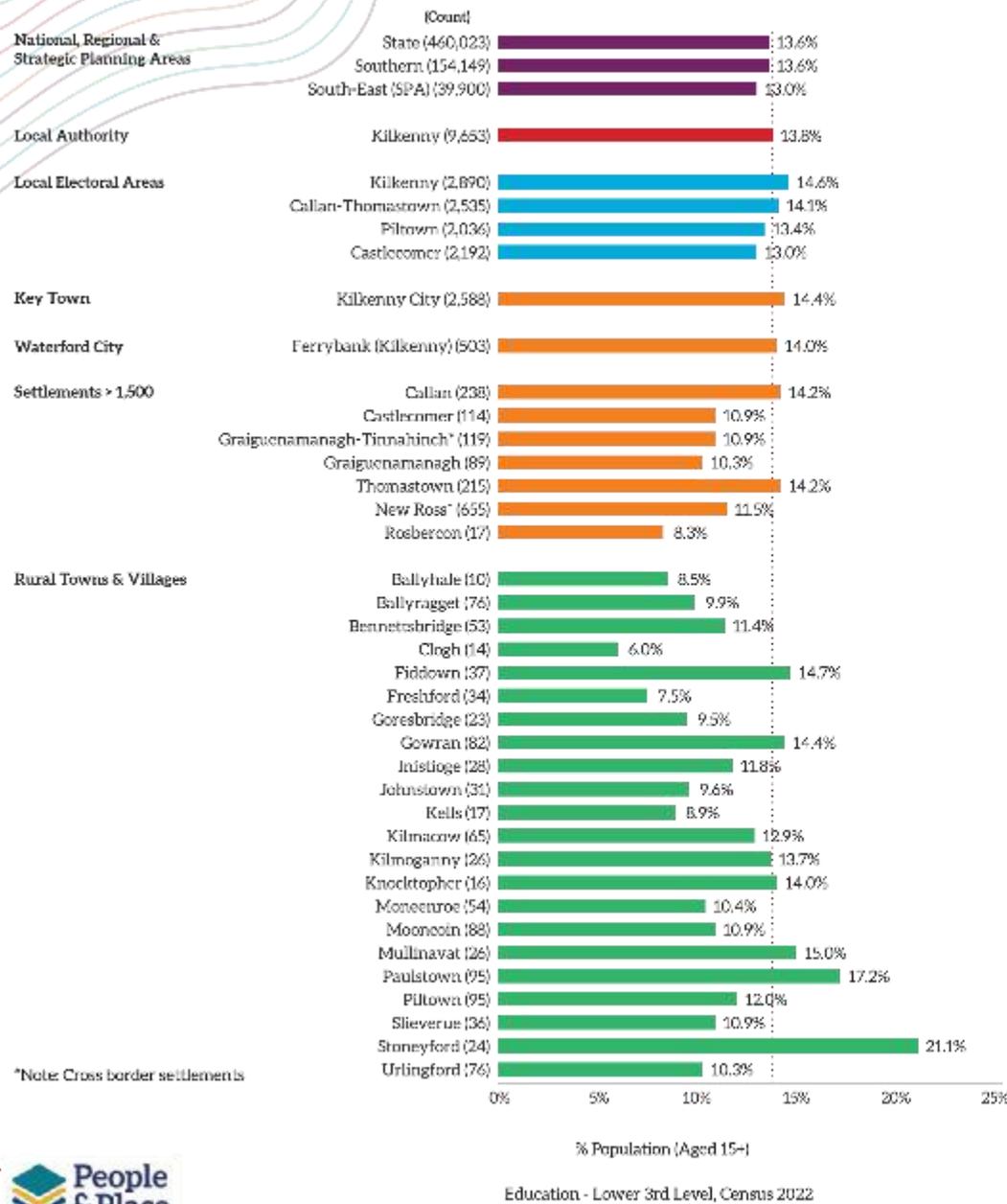


Figure 3.5: % Pop 15+ Completed Education - Lower 3rd Level (Total), 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

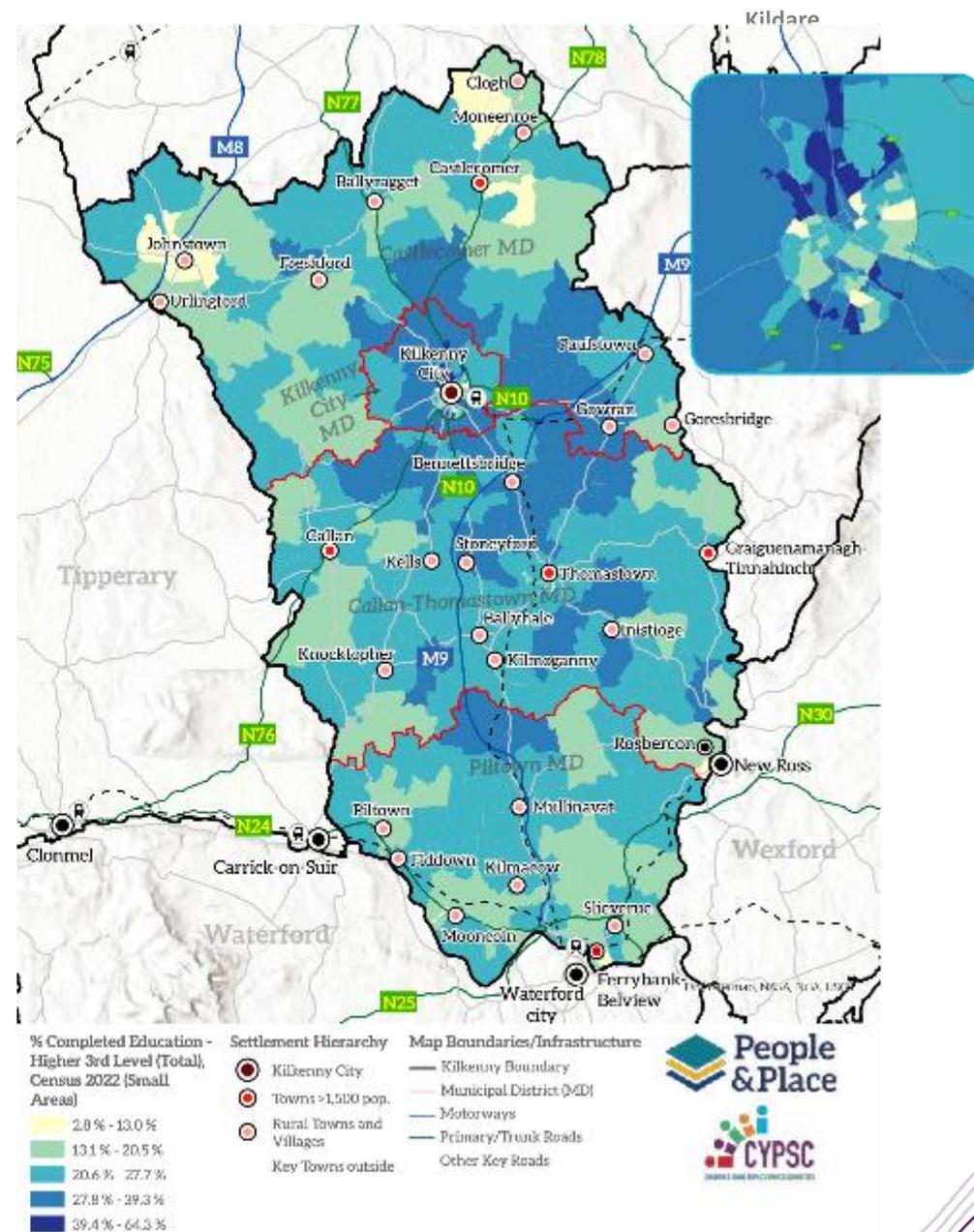
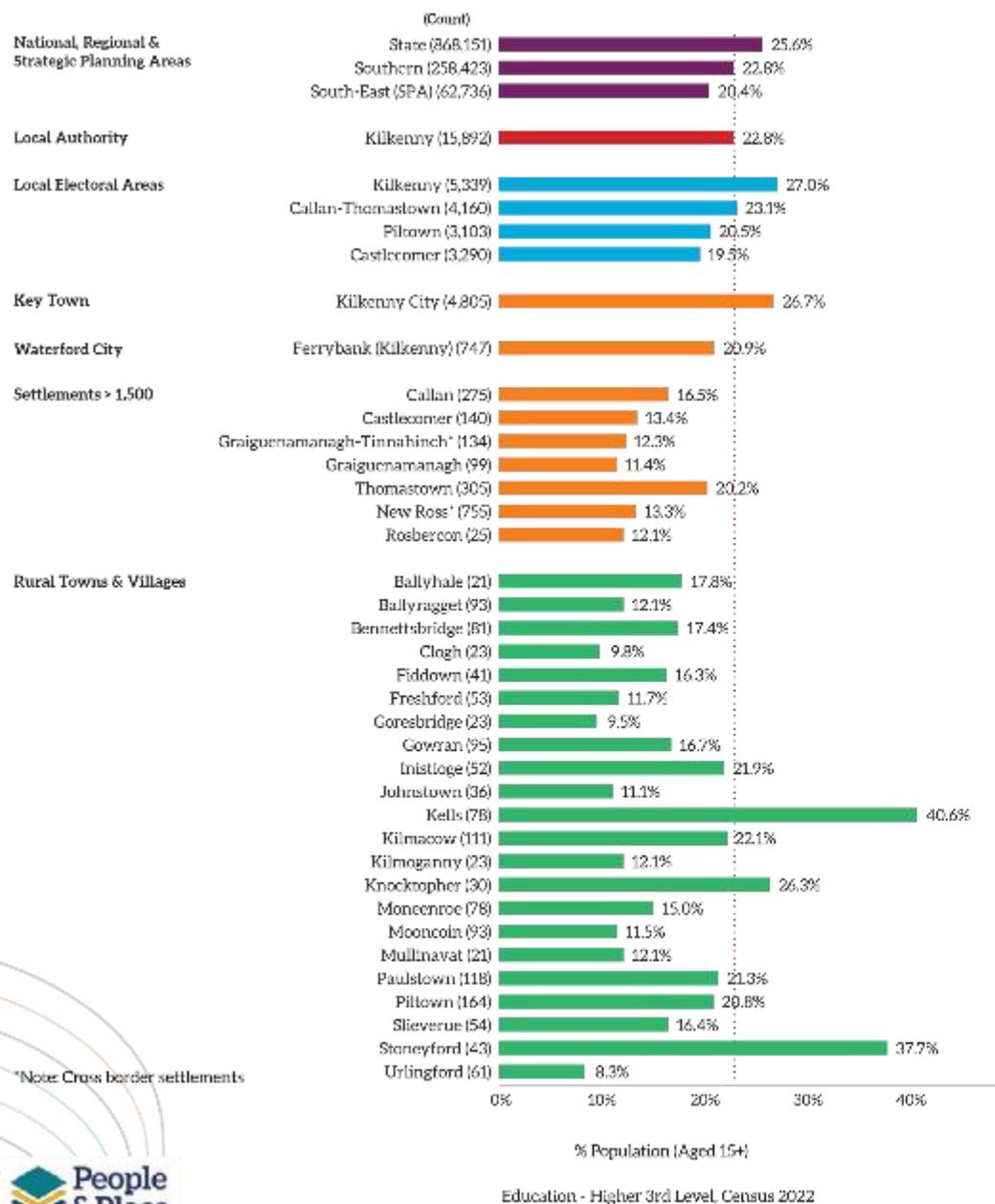


Figure 3.6: % Pop 15+ Completed Education - Higher 3rd Level (Total), 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

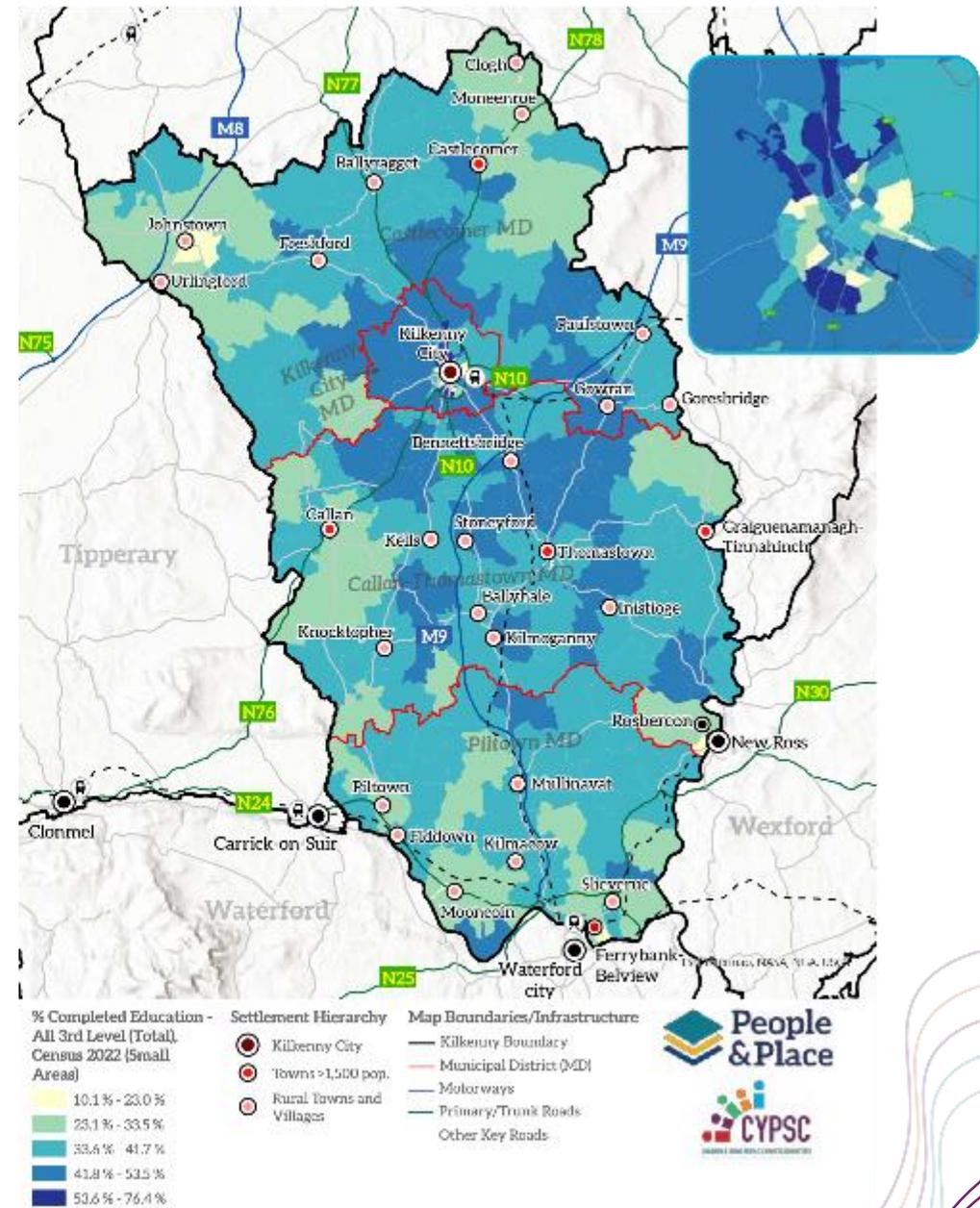
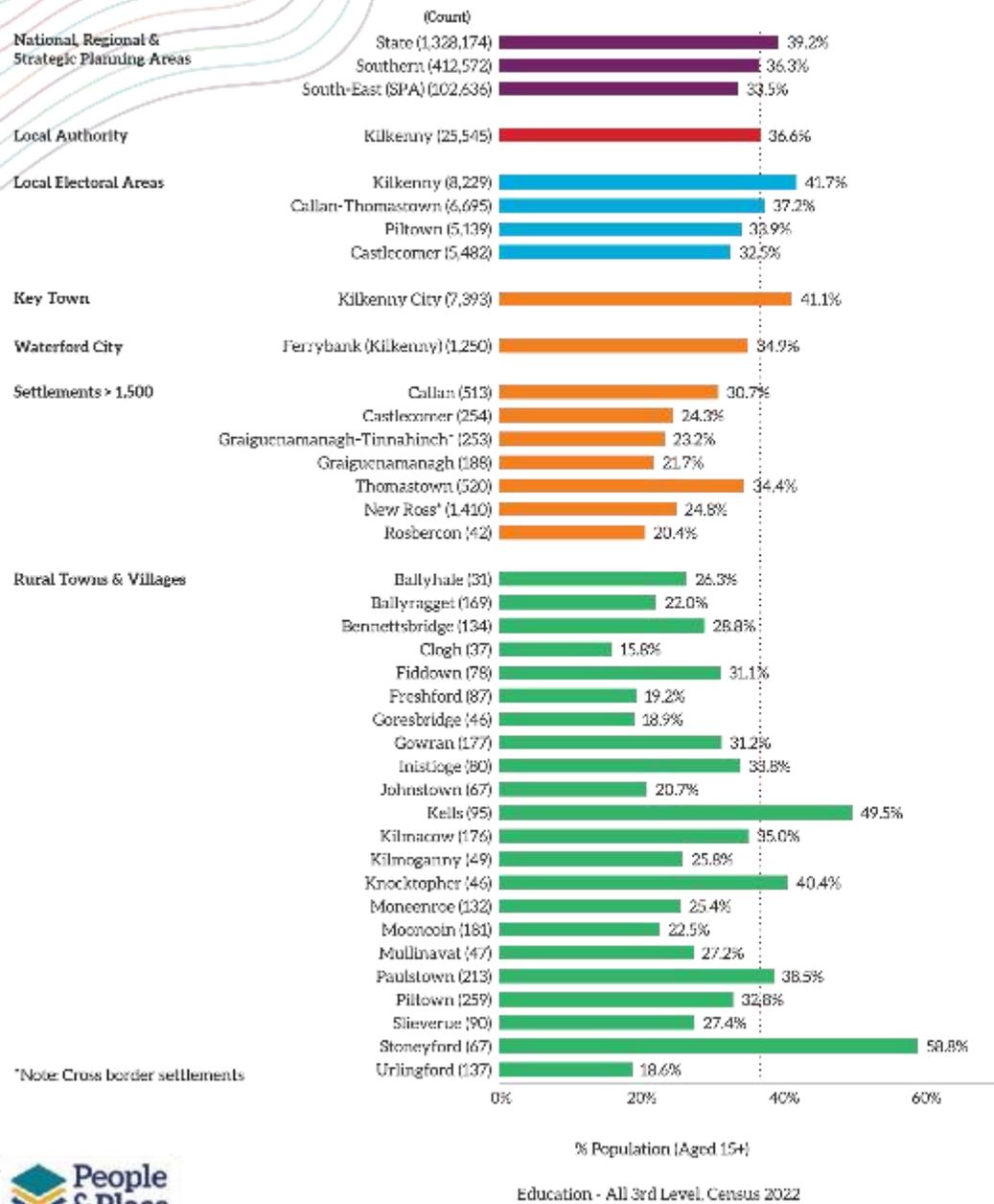


Figure 3.7: % Pop 15+ Completed Education - All 3rd Level (Total), 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

Laois

Kildare

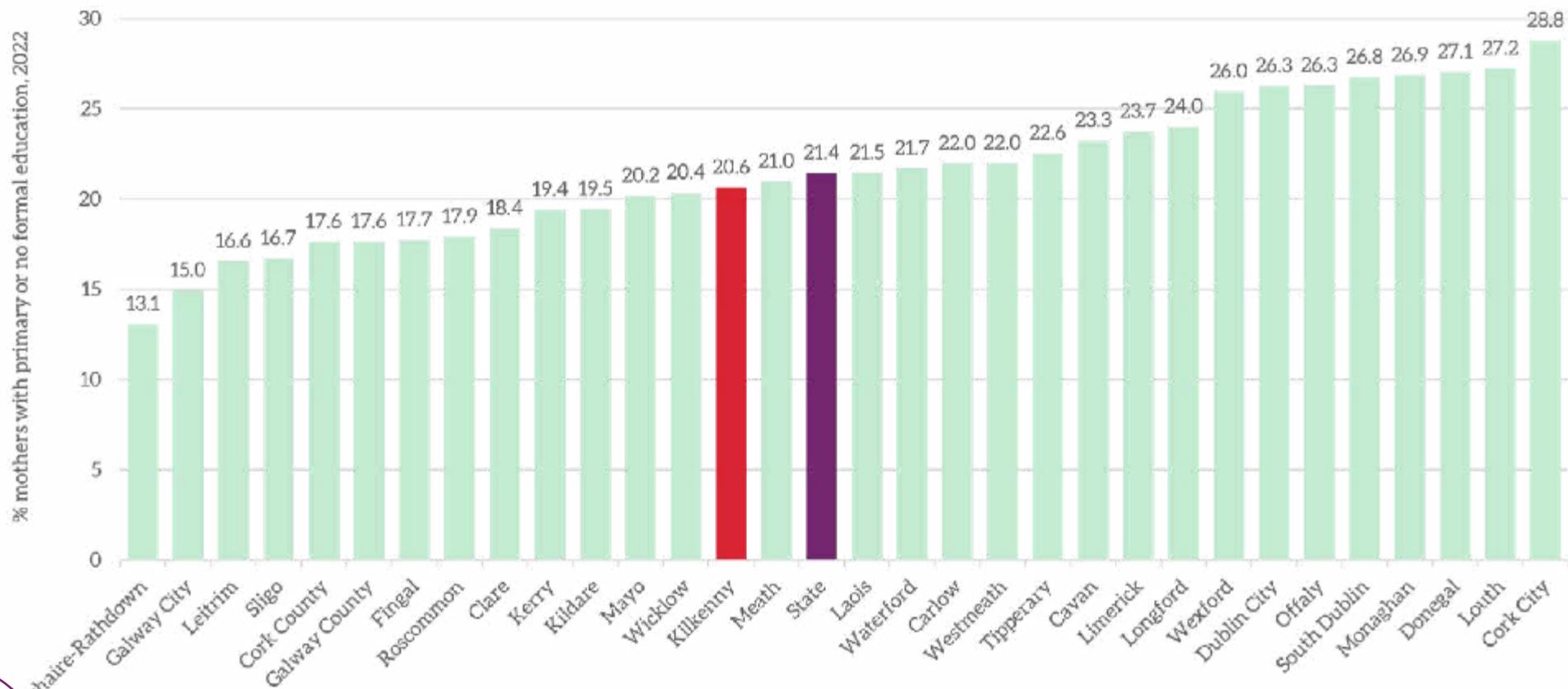
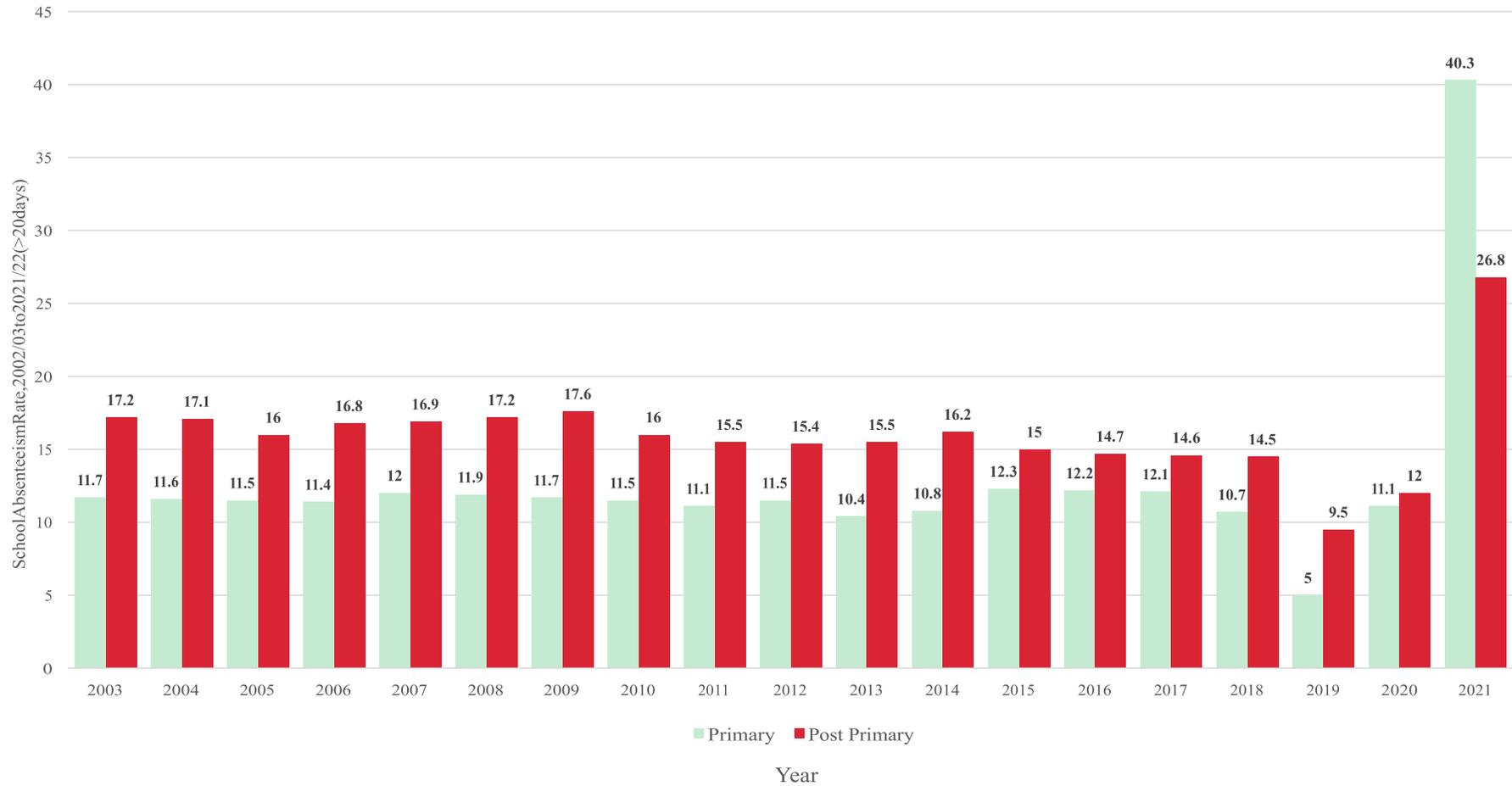


Figure 3.8: Education Attainment of Mothers, 2016 (CSO, 2016)

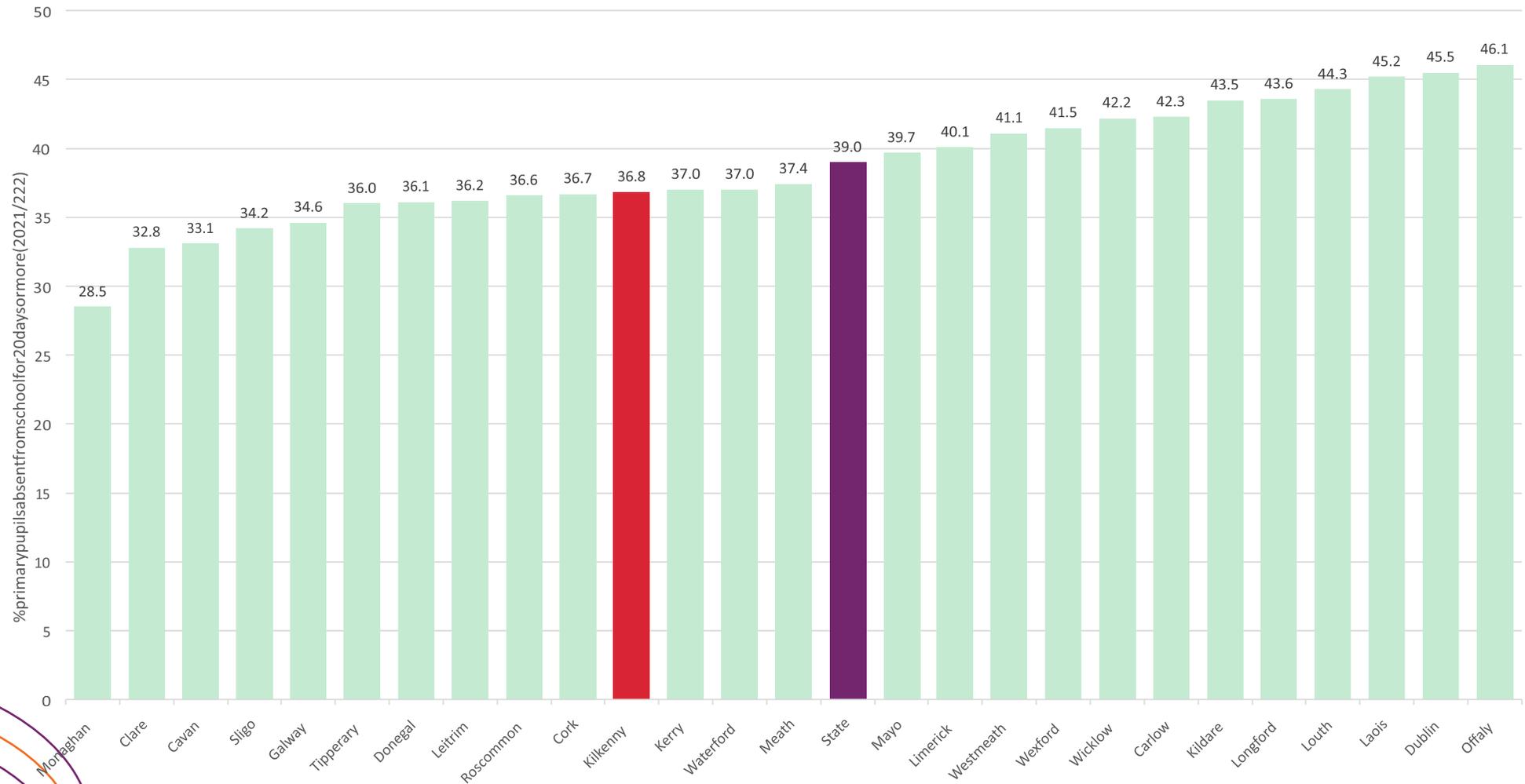
● Key Towns outside of Kilkenny
— Railway
Ⓜ Train Stations

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 4.0 International (CCBY 4.0) license.
 Data Source: OpenStreetMap, CSO Census 2022



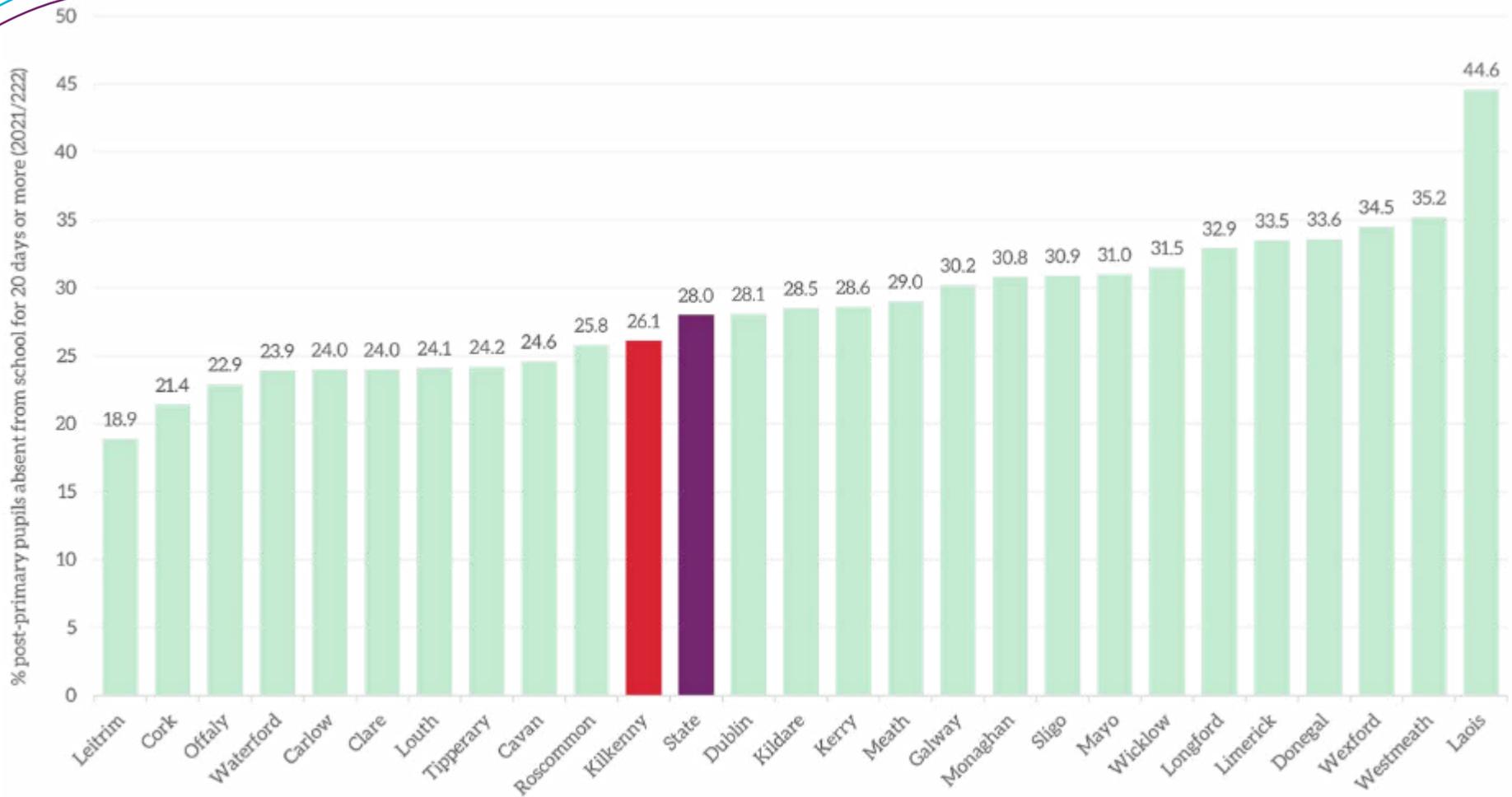
The summary results from TUSLA are reported on a national level of the total represented student population, with percentages reflecting national measures recorded based on data collected from individual schools. Percentage rates are based on the number of responding schools. Percentage rates at the national level are calculated differently from the individual county mean figures presented in Figures 3.10 and 3.11.

Figure 3.9: Primary and Post-Primary School Absence Rate, 2013-21/22 (TUSLA)



This figure presents the mean percentages at the county level for 20-plus day absences. The percentages presented relate to the mean population of individual schools.

Figure 3.10: Primary School Absence Rate, 2021 (TUSLA, the Child and Family Agency & SONC 2024)



This figure presents the mean percentages at the county level for 20-plus day absences. The percentages presented relate to the mean population of individual schools.

Figure 3.11: Post-Primary School Absence Rate, 2021 (TUSLA, the Child and Family Agency & SONC 2024)

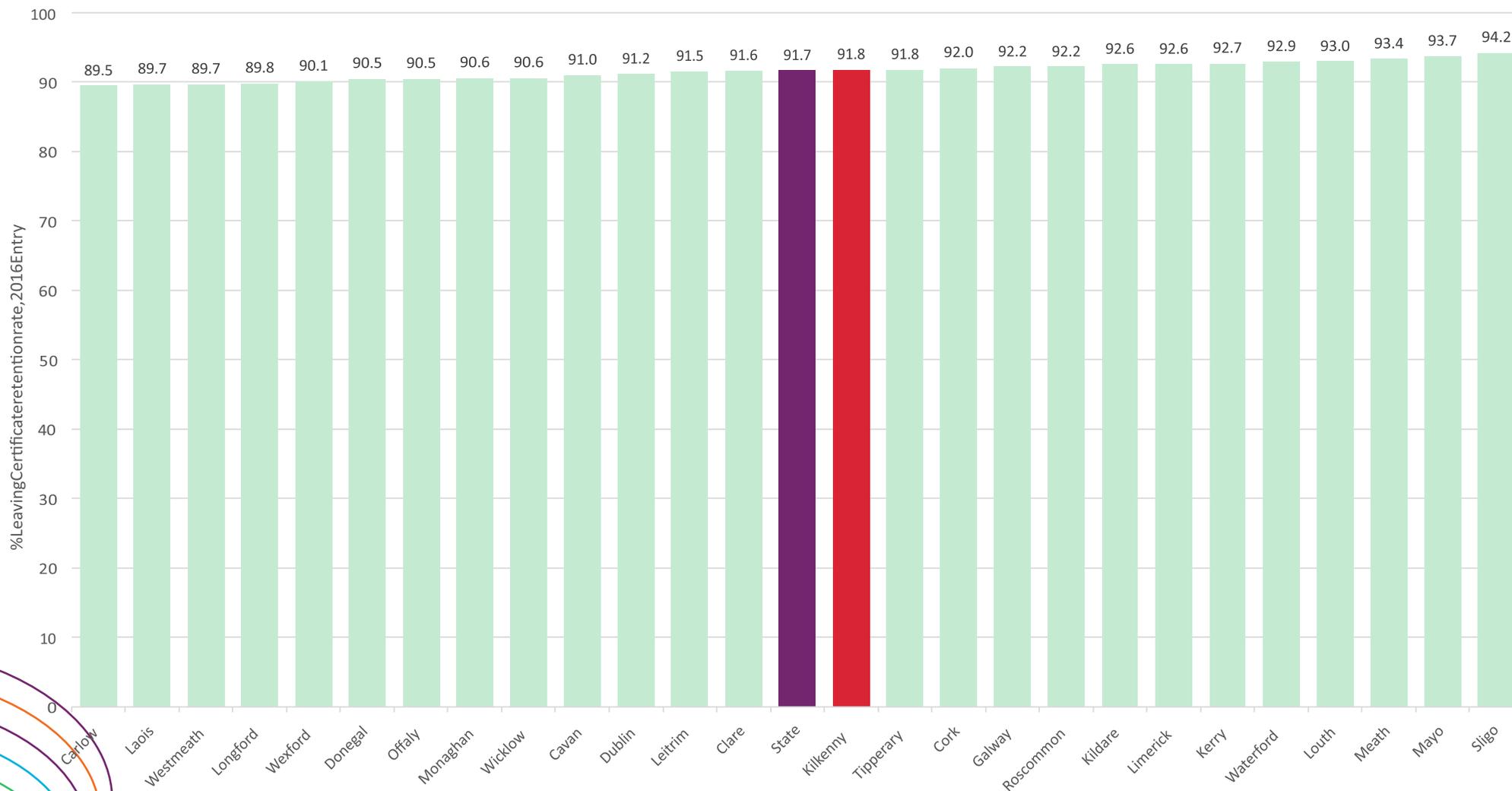


Figure 3.12: Leaving Certificate Retention Rate - (2016 school entry cohort) (Department of Education & SONC 2024)



Environment

04



Overview

4.

4.1 Household Heating

- Coal: 2,359 households (over 6%) in County Kilkenny use coal as their primary heating source, higher than the national average. Significant variations exist: 2.5% in the Kilkenny City MD vs. 9.7% in the Castlecomer MD. Specific towns with higher coal usage: Castlecomer, GraiguenamanaghTinnahinch, New Ross.
- Oil Heating: Over 54% of households use oil as their primary heating source, significantly higher than the national average, linked to rurality and distance from gas networks. There is higher oil usage in smaller towns and villages, with lower usage in Waterford's suburbs and Kilkenny City.
- Peat/Turf Heating: Only 257 households (0.7%) use peat or turf as an heating source, mainly in the northwest of the county. Significant areas: Urlingford, Johnstown, Clogh, and Freshford.

4.2 Car Ownership

- Car Ownership as an economic indicator: 49.5% of households have two or more cars, eight percentage points higher than the national average. There is a contrast between Kilkenny City (32.7% with two or more cars) and rural areas (exceeding 54% in some communities).
- Specific towns and villages with high car ownership: Kells, Stoneyford, Paulstown, Fiddown, Moneenroe, Kilmacow, and Knocktopher.

Environment

- Towns and villages with low car ownership: Mullinavat, Urlingford, Goresbridge, and Freshford.

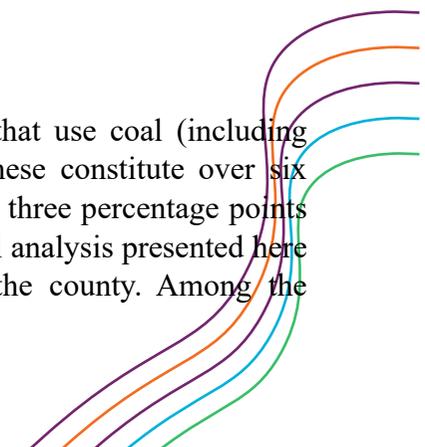
4.3 Commuting Patterns

- Long-Distance Commuting: 7.1% of County Kilkenny's resident workers have one-way commutes exceeding one hour. Longer commuting times are more common in rural areas, especially in the north. Areas with high long-distance commuting: Johnstown, Moneenroe, and Kells.
- Kilkenny and Waterford Cities are the main commuter destinations, with an increasing number commuting to the Greater Dublin Area.

This section looks at relevant indicators in respect of the context in which children and young people live. These include household heating, car ownership and commuting. As well as being relevant indicators of well-being, they can be mapped and analysed at subcounty level.

Household Heating

In County Kilkenny, there are 2,359 households that use coal (including anthracite) as their primary source of heating. These constitute over six percent of households – a proportion that is almost three percentage points higher than the equivalent for Ireland. As the spatial analysis presented here shows, there are considerable variations across the county. Among the county's



four MDs, values range from 2.5% in the Kilkenny MD to 9.7% in Castlecomer. In Castlecomer Town, as well as in Graiguenamanagh Tinnahinch and New Ross, almost one in every seven households relies on coal for home heating. Values are higher, than the county level, in several smaller towns and villages and in communities with a mining heritage, including Clogh, Moneenroe, Goresbridge, Slieverue, Ballyragget and Urlingford.

Over half (54.3%) of households in County Kilkenny use oil as their primary source of heating. This level is more than fifteen percentage points above the level across Ireland, and it is associated with rurality and distance from, or lack of connectivity to, Gas Networks Ireland pipelines. The lowest values on this indicator are in Waterford's suburbs and Kilkenny City, while values are in excess of sixty percent in almost all the county's smaller towns and villages.

Due to its physical geography (more pasture and tilled land than boglands), County Kilkenny has relatively few households in which peat / turf is the primary source of heating. There are 257 households (0.7% of the total) that rely on turf, and most of these are in the northwest of the county – mainly around Urlingford and Johnstown. The reliance on turf is also notable in Clogh and surrounding town lands, and to some extent around Freshford. The data in respect of coal, oil and turf / peat are significant in the context of the Just Transition to a post-carbon society.

Car Ownership

Car ownership is a useful proxy indicator of economic means, while it is also an indicator of independence and well-being, especially in rural communities in which other transport options are limited. Almost half (49.5%) of households in County Kilkenny have two or more cars. This proportion is eight percentage points higher than the figure for Ireland as a whole (41.5%). The data at sub-county level show a clear distinction between Kilkenny City and the rest of the county; less than one third (32.7%) of households in the city have two or more cars, while the corresponding proportions exceed fifty-four percent in all MDs other than the Kilkenny MD.

The accompanying map shows that households with two or more cars are more prevalent in Kilkenny City's peri-urban fringe and in areas of open countryside than in the county's towns and villages. In just seven of the county's twenty-eight towns and villages, at least half ($\geq 50\%$) of households have two or more cars. These are Kells, Stoneyford, Paulstown, Fiddown, Moneenroe, Kilmacow and Knocktopher. The proportion of households with two or more cars is below thirty-five percent in the following settlements: Mullinavat, Urlingford, Goresbridge and Freshford.

Long-distance commuting can have damaging effects on family life. Just over seven percent (7.1%) of County Kilkenny's resident workers have one-way commutes of over one hour. Commuting times are generally longer for those who live in rural areas, especially in the north of the county. In some communities, such as Johnstown, Moneenroe and Kells more than ten percent of commuters travel more than one hour to their place of work. Kilkenny City and Waterford City are the primary commuter destinations,

but over recent decades there has been an increase in the number of persons commuting to the Greater Dublin Area. Carlow, Portlaoise and Thurles are also important commuter destinations.

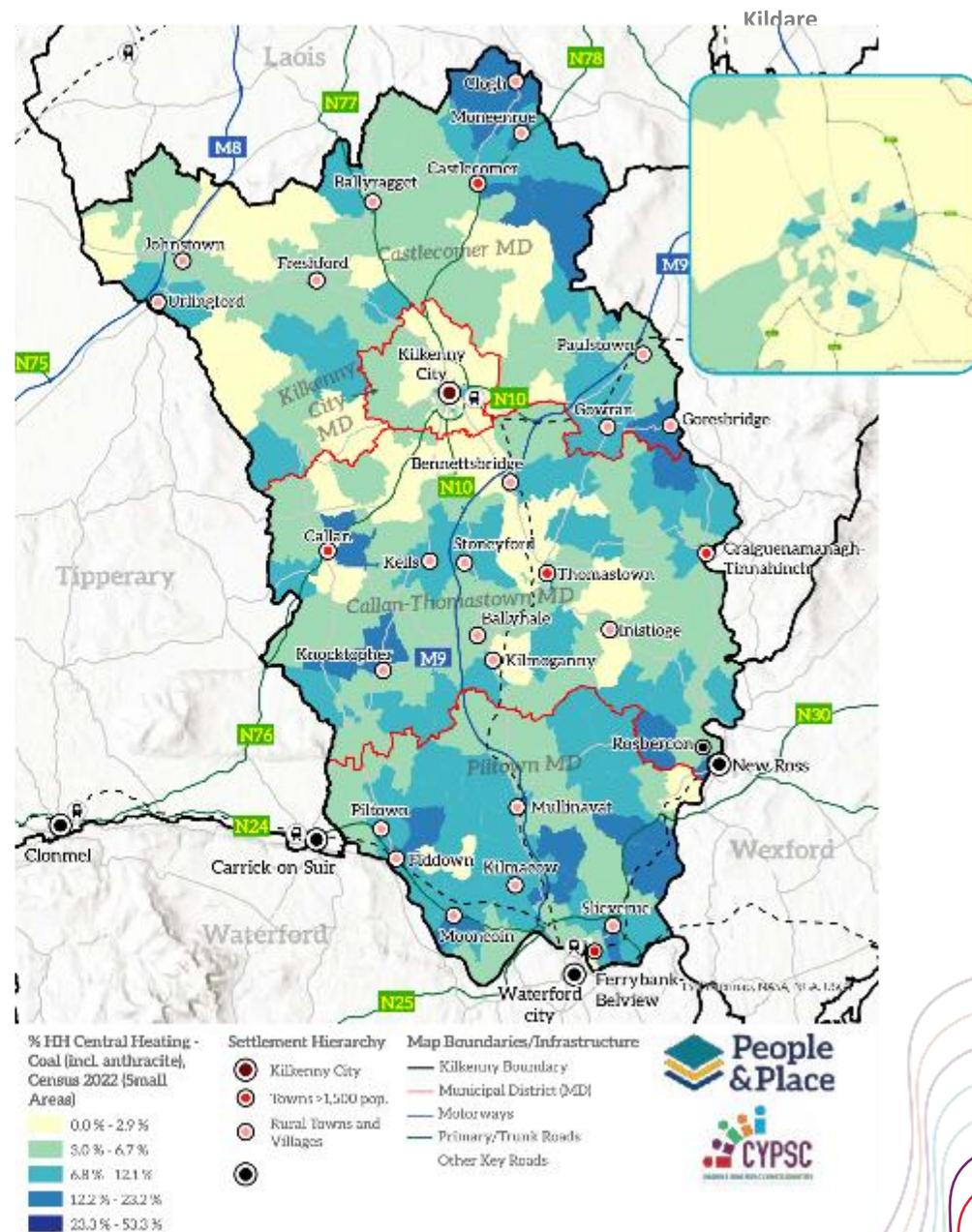
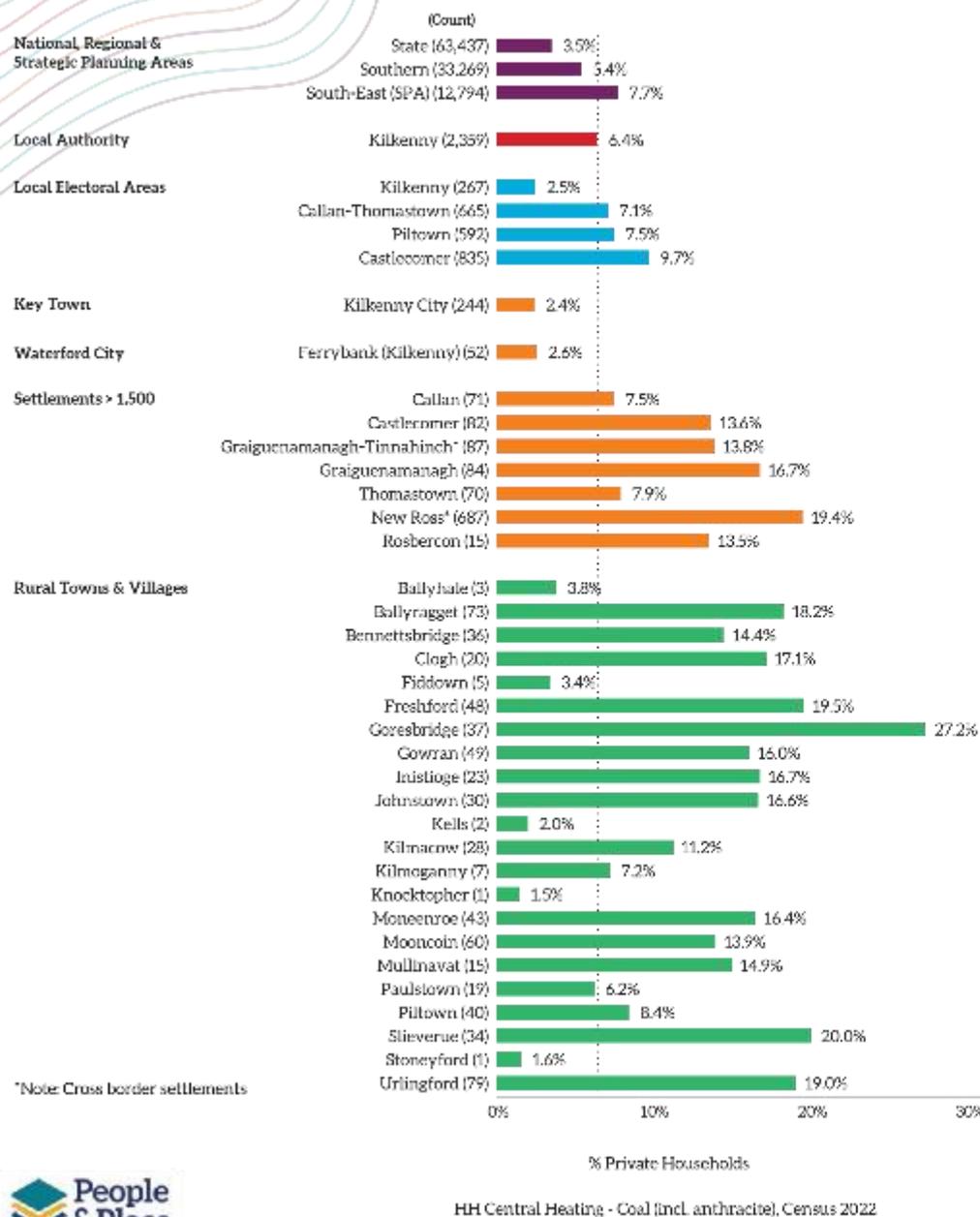


Figure 4.1: % Household by Main Source of Central Heating - Coal (incl. anthracite), 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

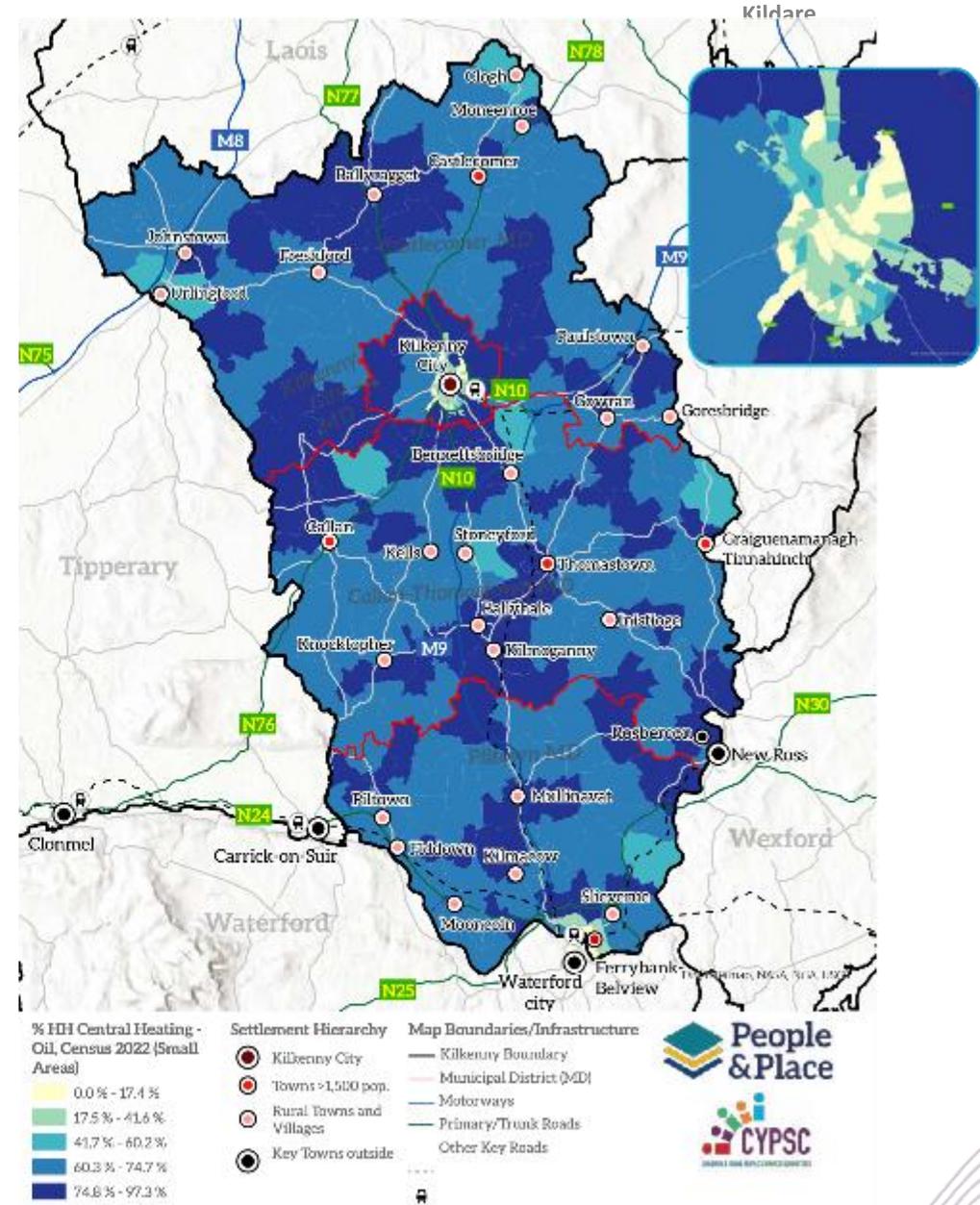
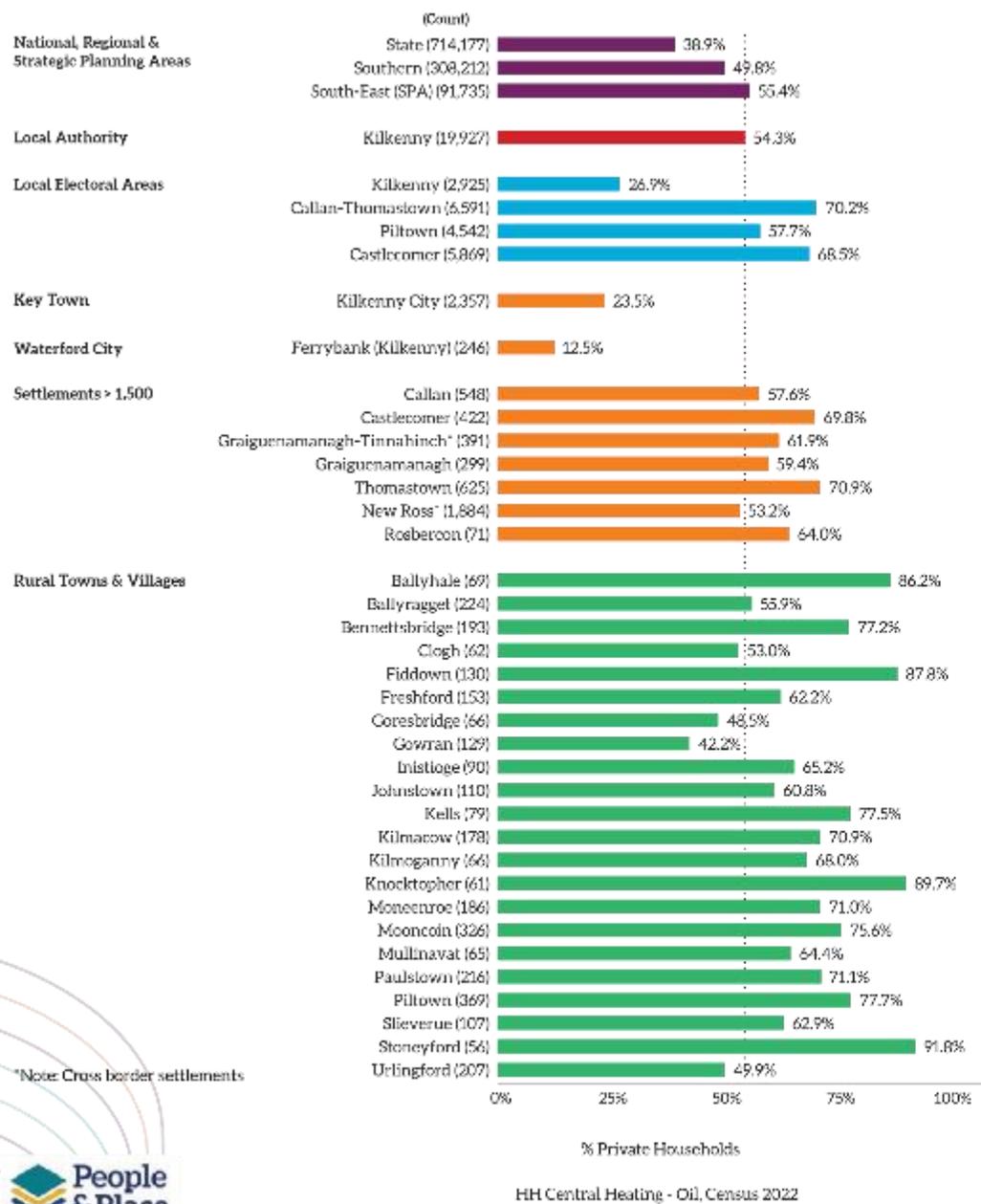


Figure 4.2: % Household by Main Source of Household Central Heating - Oil, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

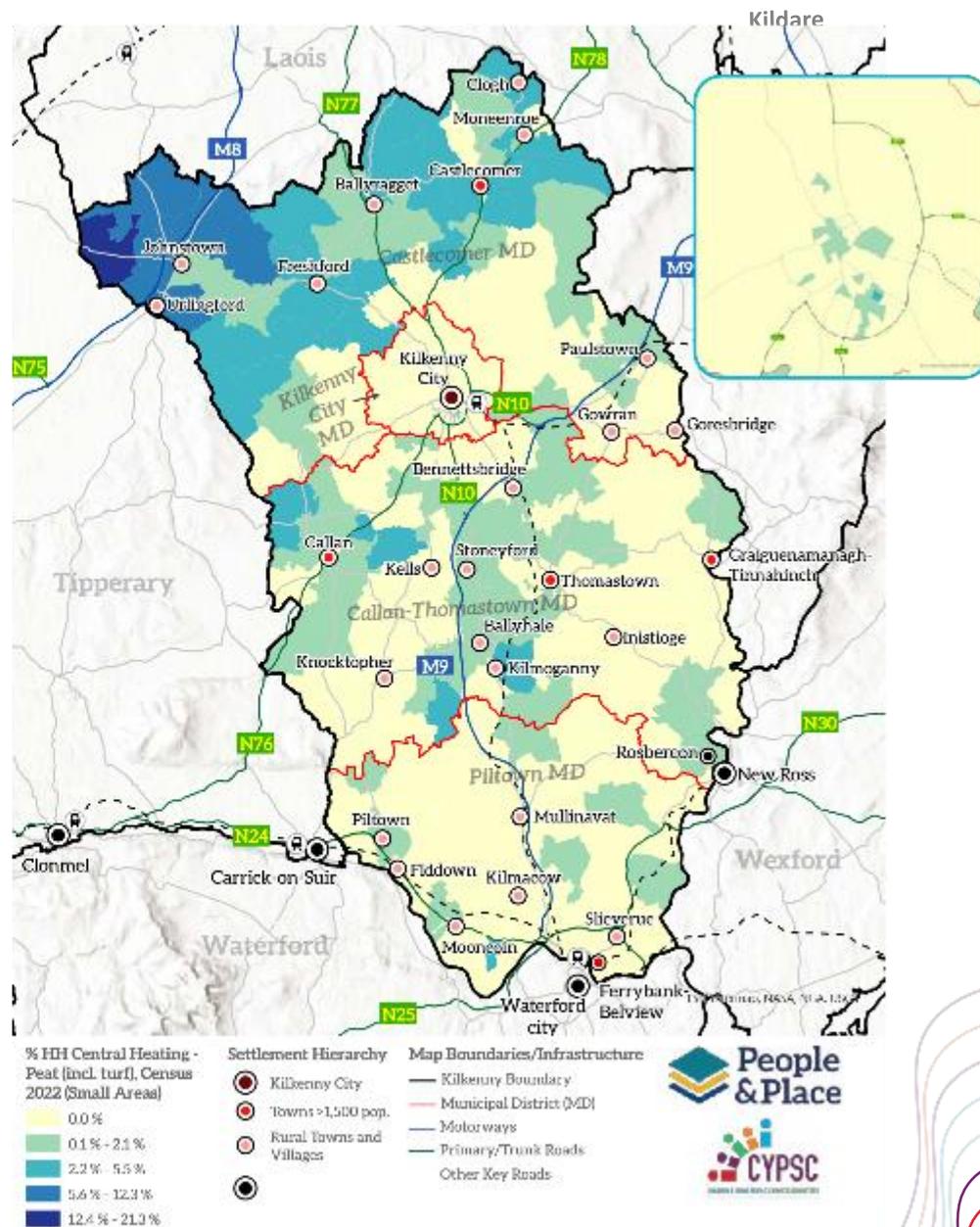
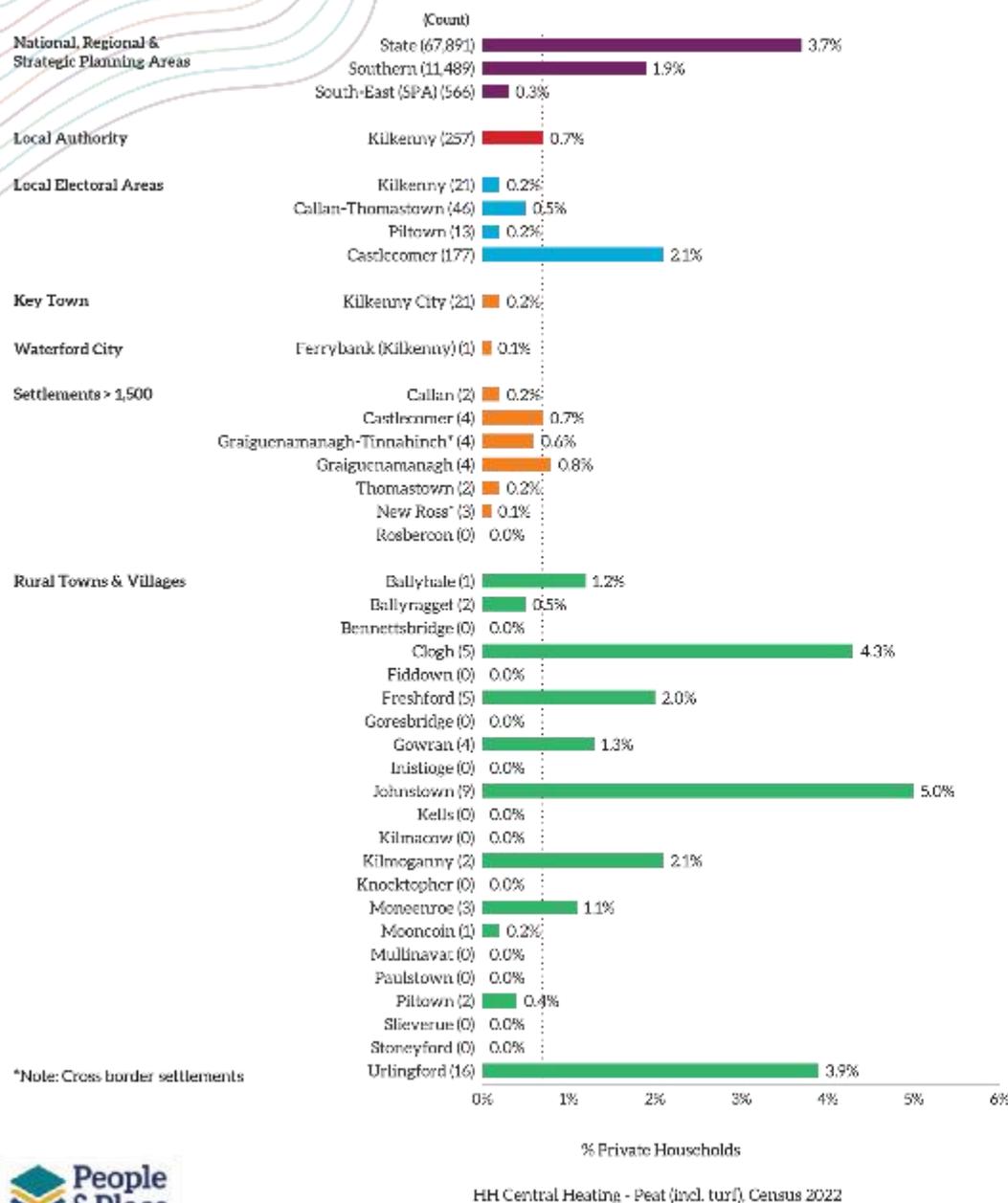


Figure 4.3: % Household by Main Source of Household Central Heating - Peat (incl. turf), 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

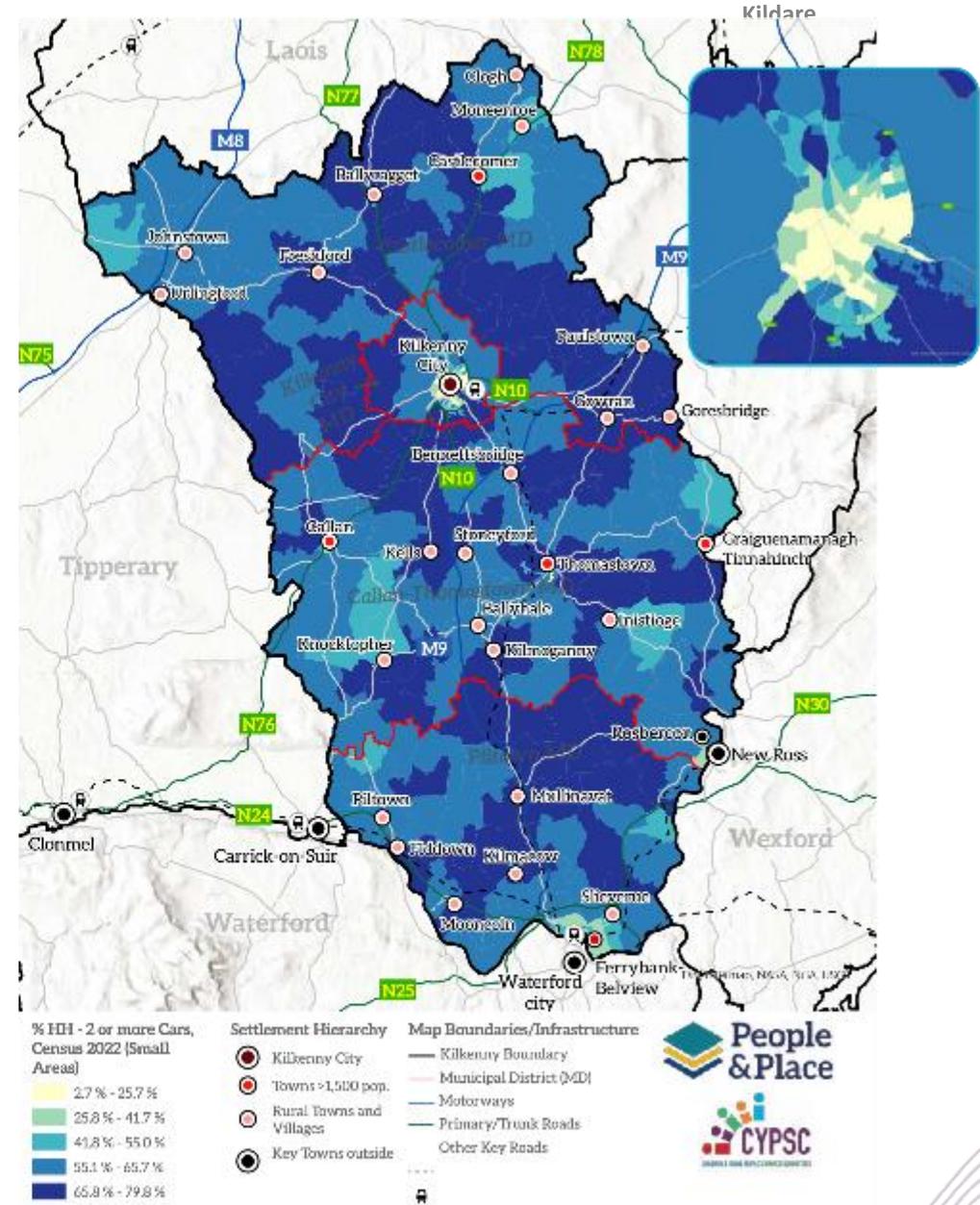
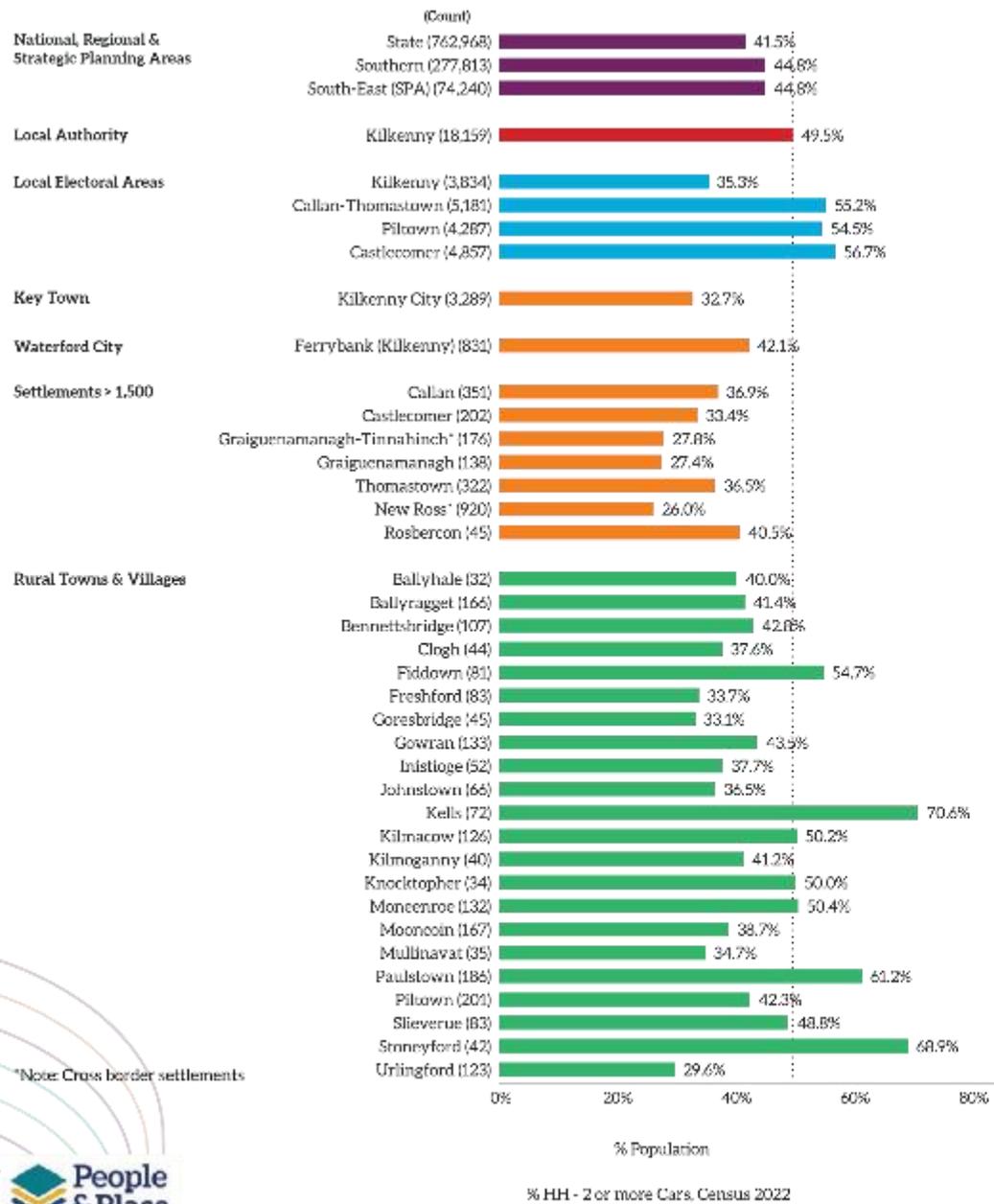


Figure 4.4: % Households - 2 or more Cars, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

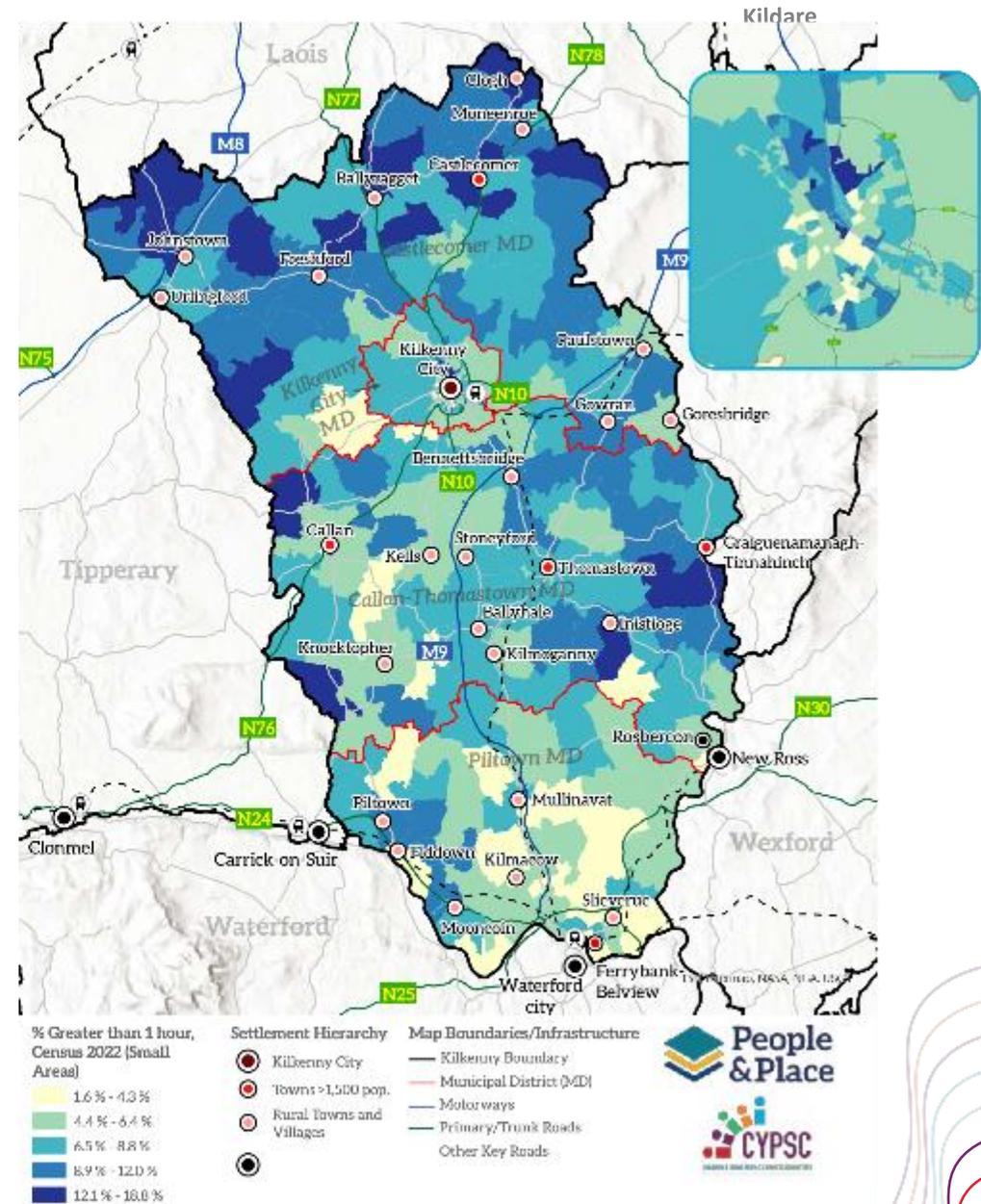
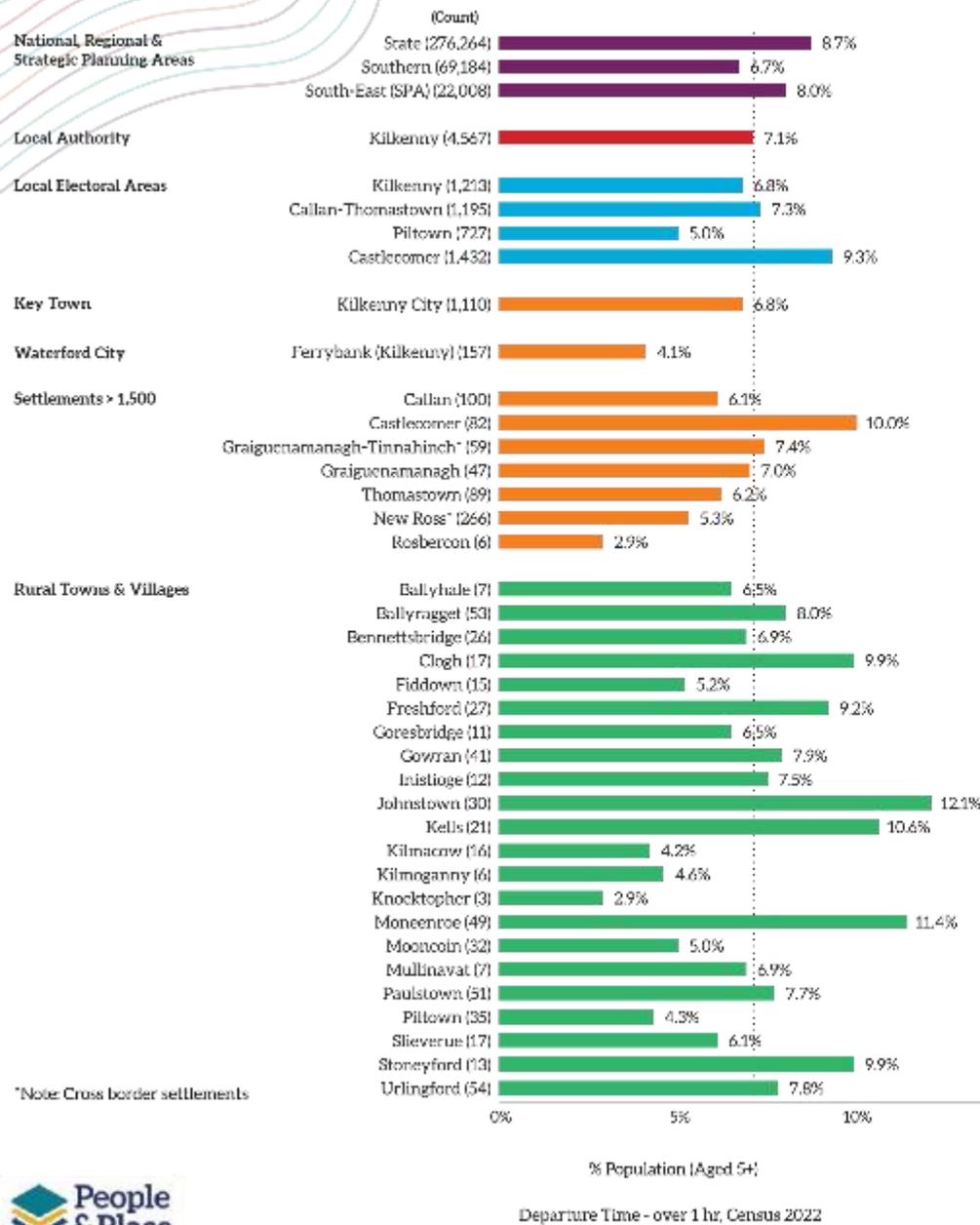


Figure 4.5: % At Work/Education by Commuting Times: Greater than 1 hour, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)



05

Health

Overview

5. Health

5.1 Neonatal and Antenatal Well-being

- County Kilkenny had the fourth-highest birth rate (3.6 per 1000 births) among young mothers (ages 15-17) in 2022, above the national average of 2.3.
- 5.8% of babies in County Kilkenny were born weighing under 2.5 kg, slightly below the national figure (5.9%).
- Breastfeeding rates in County Kilkenny (61.1%) are slightly below the national average (61.9%).
- Antenatal care attendance in the first trimester in County Kilkenny (87.7%) is slightly lower than the national average (89.4%).
- Nearly all newborns in Carlow/Kilkenny (98.9%) were visited by a public health nurse within 72 hours of hospital discharge.
- Developmental health screening attendance for children before 12 months in Carlow/Kilkenny (93.4%) is significantly higher than the national rate (85.4%).
- Immunisation rates at 12 months are comparable to the national average, but at 24 months, they are lower for certain vaccines (e.g., 12 percentage points lower for Hibb).

- Slightly higher proportion of children in TUSLA care in the Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary region than across all TUSLA regions.
- Psychiatric hospital admission rate for children and adolescents is low, in relative terms, (0.4 per 100,000), the ninth lowest in Ireland.

5.2 Health Status

- 1.6% of the population in County Kilkenny reports having 'bad' or 'very bad' health, just below the national level (1.7%). Higher rates of negative health outcomes are observed in socio-economically deprived areas.
- 85.3% of people in County Kilkenny describe their health as 'good' or 'very good', slightly higher than the national figure (82.9%). Good health status is more prevalent in rural areas.
- Lower proportions of people reporting good health in larger towns, especially Graigueanamanagh-Tinnahinch (71.8%) and New Ross (73.6%).

5.3 Carers

- County Kilkenny has 6,501 family carers, with 61% being female, mostly aged 45 to 59.

- There are 108 child carers (aged <15) and 278 young adult carers (aged 15-24), with the child carer rate (7.8 per 1,000 children) higher than the national average (6.7 per 1,000).
- Carers make up 6.2% of County Kilkenny's population, slightly higher than the national rate (5.8%).
- There are high proportions of carers in rural areas, especially in Mullinavat (11%) and Johnstown (10.1%) – among the resident population.

5.4 Disability

- 22,402 people in County Kilkenny have a self-declared disability, including 3,837 individuals aged 0 to 24.
- Males aged 0 to 24 are more likely to have a disability than females (ratio 1.17:1).
- The disability rate among children in County Kilkenny (97.1 per 1,000) is lower than the national average (108.1 per 1,000).

5.5 Lifestyle and Well-being

- The smoking rate in County Kilkenny (12.7%) is slightly below the national rate (13.1%).
- Smoking is more common in urban areas, particularly in local authority housing estates.
- Hospital discharge rate for children in County Kilkenny (96 per 1,000) is lower than the national rate (110.3 per 1,000).

- 3.1% of children in County Kilkenny have an intellectual disability, below the national rate (7.2%).
- Lower referral rates to TUSLA in the Carlow/Kilkenny/ South Tipperary region compared to other TUSLA regions.

This section presents data in respect of several relevant health-related indicators, including birth rates, neonatal and antenatal health, the population's health status, carers and persons with disabilities.

Neonatal/Antenatal Well-being and Care

The most recent data (2022) show that County Kilkenny had the fourth-highest birth rate among young mothers (aged 15 to 17) among the twenty-six counties in the State. Its rate (3.6 births to young mothers per 1,000 births) is higher than the corresponding value for Ireland (2.3 births per 1,000). In Ireland, in 2021 (most recent dataset), just under six percent (5.9%) of babies were born weighing under 2.5kg. In County Kilkenny, a slightly smaller percentage (5.8%) of babies were in this category.

Data for 2021 also reveal that almost sixty-two percent (61.9%) of infants in Ireland were breastfed (exclusive and combined). The figure for County Kilkenny was just slightly below this (61.1%). The vast majority (89.4%) of expectant mothers, in Ireland, attended for antenatal care in the first trimester of pregnancy (during 2021). The figure for County Kilkenny was slightly lower (87.7%) and was the ninth-lowest level among the counties of Ireland.

In 2022, almost all (98.9%) of newborn babies, in Carlow/Kilkenny (Local Health Office Area), were visited by a public health nurse within 72 hours of hospital discharge. Most LHO areas in Ireland recorded universal home visits (100% of newborns).

The vast majority (93.4%) of children in Carlow/Kilkenny attended



developmental health screening before the age of 12 months. This figure is notably higher than the rate for Ireland as a whole (85.4%).

The immunisation rate for infants, in Carlow/Kilkenny, is the same as the rate for Ireland as a whole (87%), in respect of those aged up to 12 months, for all vaccines except MenC1; for which the rate in Carlow/Kilkenny is one percent higher (88%). Immunisation rates at 24 months of age are generally one or two percentage points lower in Carlow/Kilkenny than in

Ireland as a whole. They are, however, three percentage points lower in respect of MenC2 and PCV3, and a notable twelve percentage points lower in respect of Hibb.

The proportion of children in the care of TUSLA (2022 data) is slightly higher in the Carlow/ Kilkenny/ South Tipperary Administrative Area than is the case across all TUSLA regions combined. The rate of admission to psychiatric hospitals, among children and adolescents in County Kilkenny, is 0.4 per 100,000. This is the ninth lowest rate across the twenty-six counties.

Health Status

There are almost 1,700 persons in County Kilkenny (1.6%) of the resident population, who describe their health status as either 'bad' or 'very bad'. This is just below the corresponding value (1.7%) for Ireland as a whole. Negative health outcomes are generally associated with socio-economic deprivation, and as the accompanying map shows, the proportion of persons who describe their health as either 'bad' or 'very bad' is highest in areas that record negative scores on the Pobal HP Index of Affluence and Deprivation. These include some of the local authority estates in Kilkenny City. Other areas in which relatively high (>2.5%) proportions of persons describe their health status as either 'bad' or 'very bad' include Castlecomer, Ballyhale, Goresbridge, Inistioge, Gowran, Ballyragget, Johnstown and GraiguenamanaghTinnahinch. Readers should note that the spatial distribution of persons with 'bad' or 'very bad' health status is associated, in part, with the distribution of care facilities (e.g.

convalescent and nursing homes), in addition to the other factors already mentioned here.

The vast majority of people in County Kilkenny (85.3%) describe their health status as either 'good' or 'very good'. This is over two percentage points higher than the corresponding value (82.9%) for Ireland as a whole. Good health status is generally associated with socio-economic affluence, youth, access to community and sporting facilities and amenities, and the maintenance of healthy lifestyles. As is the case nationally, the proportion of persons who describe their health status as either 'good' or 'very good' is generally higher in rural areas than in urban areas. In County Kilkenny, the Piltown, Callan-Thomastown and Castlecomer MDs have higher proportions of persons with 'good' or 'very good' health status than the Kilkenny MD. All the county's main towns have lower proportions of persons in this cohort than does the county as a whole; the lowest rates are in GraiguenamanaghTinnahinch (71.8%) and New Ross (73.6%). In rural communities, values are

According to the most recent Census of Population, there are 6,501 family carers in County Kilkenny. The majority (61%) of these are female, and most carers are aged 45 to 59. There are 108 children (aged <15) and 278 teenagers and young adults (aged 15 to 24) who provide regular unpaid care for another person. In County Kilkenny, the rate of child carers (children who provide care to others) is 7.8 per 1,000 children. This is notably above the rate for Ireland as a whole (6.7 per 1,000).

Carers (of all ages) constitute just over six percent (6.2%) of County Kilkenny's resident population, which is a slightly higher proportion than is the case across Ireland (5.8%). Values are generally higher in rural areas than in urban areas, and the villages of Mullinavat and Johnstown emerge as having notably

highest in those that have young populations and good levels of connectivity to Kilkenny and Waterford Cities.

Carers

high proportions of people who are engaged in caring duties; the respective figures are 11% and 10.1%. As the accompanying map shows, the communities with the most significant populations of carers are in the northeast of the county, while there are also some notable concentrations in and around GraiguenamanaghTinnahinch and Glenmore.

Disability

There are 22,402 persons in County Kilkenny who have a selfdeclared disability. While these are predominantly in the older age cohorts, it should be noted that there are 3,837 persons aged 0 to 24 who have a disability (to any extent). Among young people (those aged 0 to 24),



males are more likely than females to have a disability; in County Kilkenny, the ratio is 1.17: 1. The rate of children with a disability, in County Kilkenny, is 97.1 per 1,000, which is lower than the corresponding value for Ireland (108.1).

In respect of their geographical distribution, persons with a disability, in County Kilkenny, are more prevalent in urban areas and in towns and villages than in rural areas. The Kilkenny MD has a higher proportion of persons with a disability than is the case in the other three MDs. In four of the county's five main towns (the exception being New Ross) the proportion of persons with a disability is above the county value (>21.5%). A similar observation can be made in respect of seventeen of the county's twenty-two villages. As the accompanying map illustrates, there are some geographical clusters in which there are relatively large (>29%) proportions of persons with disabilities. Some of these clusters are associated with the locations of residential facilities for persons with special needs.

Lifestyle and Well-being

Just over one in eight persons (12.7%) in County Kilkenny is a smoker. This rate is slightly below those of Ireland (13.1%), the Southern Region (13.2%) and the South-East Region (13.8%). Smoking is more prevalent in urban areas (including Kilkenny City and the county's towns and villages)

than among those who live in the countryside. The areas with the highest proportions of smokers (as a percentage of the resident population) are local authority housing estates in Kilkenny City, Goresbridge, Clogh, Urlingford, Castlecomer, Slieverue, Johnstown and Mooncoin.

In 2022, the rate of hospital discharges among children, resident in County Kilkenny, stood at 96 per 1,000, while the corresponding rate for Ireland was higher at 110.3 per 1,000.

Figures for 2022 show that 3.1% of the county's resident children have an intellectual disability. This is the sixth-lowest rate of any county, and it is below the proportion in Ireland as a whole, which is 7.2%. Relative to the State, Kilkenny also has a lower proportion of children with physical or sensory disabilities; the respective values are 5.2% and 3.8%.

The rate of referrals to TUSLA is lower in the



Carlow/Kilkenny/ South Tipperary TUSLA Region than is the case across all TUSLA regions as a whole; the respective values are 15.1 and 18.0 per 1,000 children.

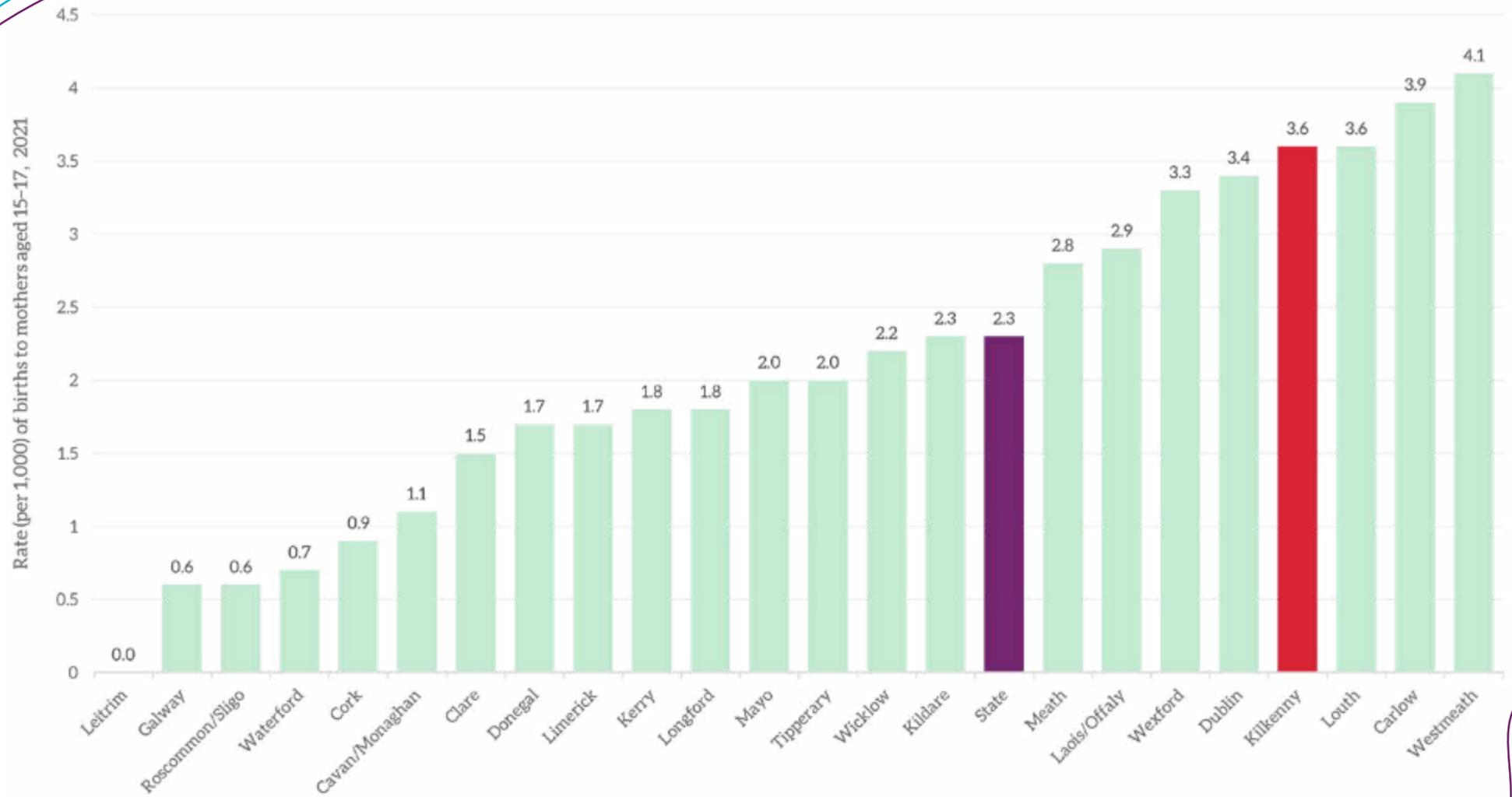


Figure 5.1: Rate of Births (per 1,000 mothers) to Mothers Aged 15-17, 2021

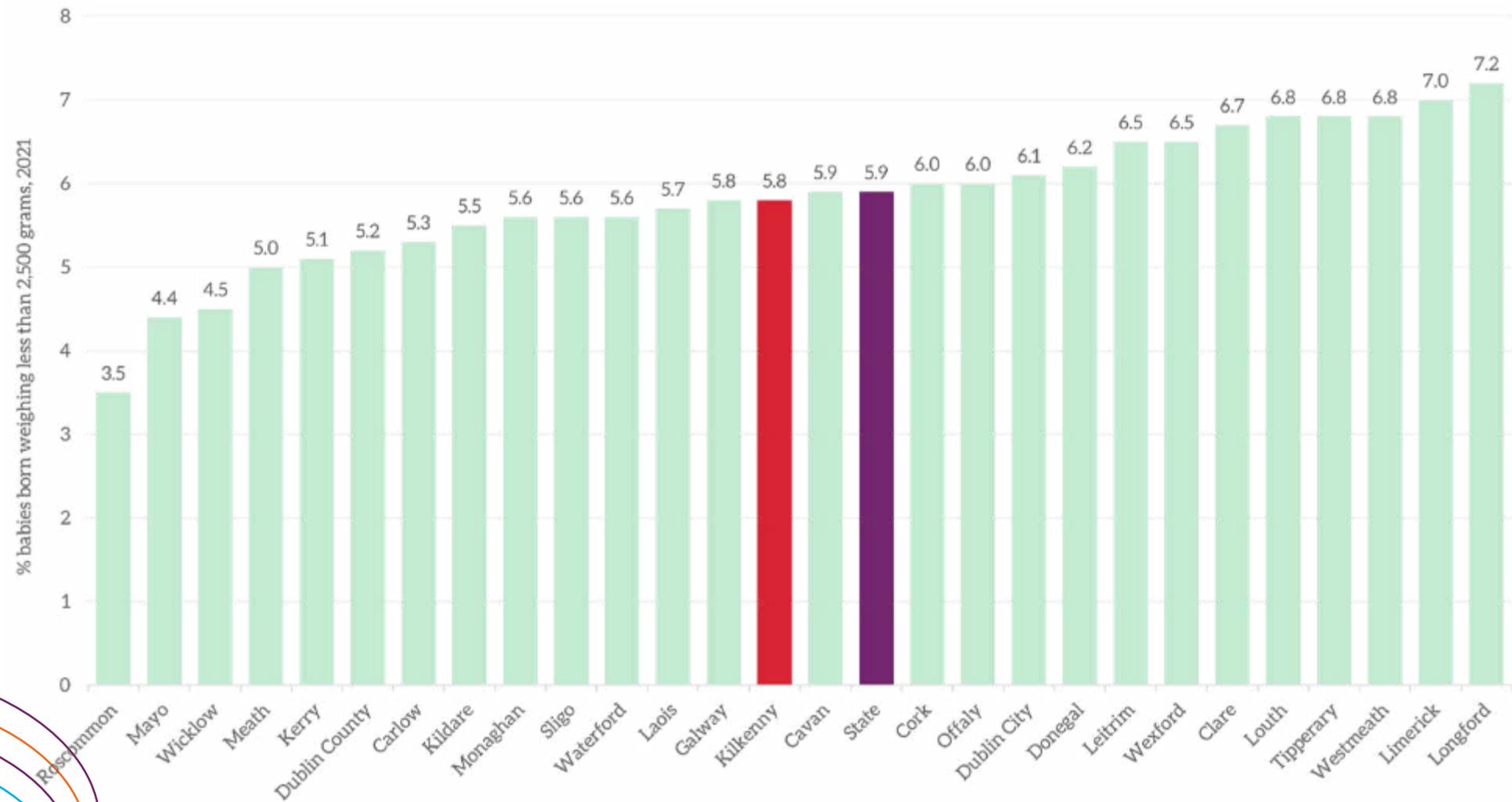


Figure 5.2: Percentage of Babies Born Weighing <2,500 grams, 2021 (NPRS & SONC 2024)

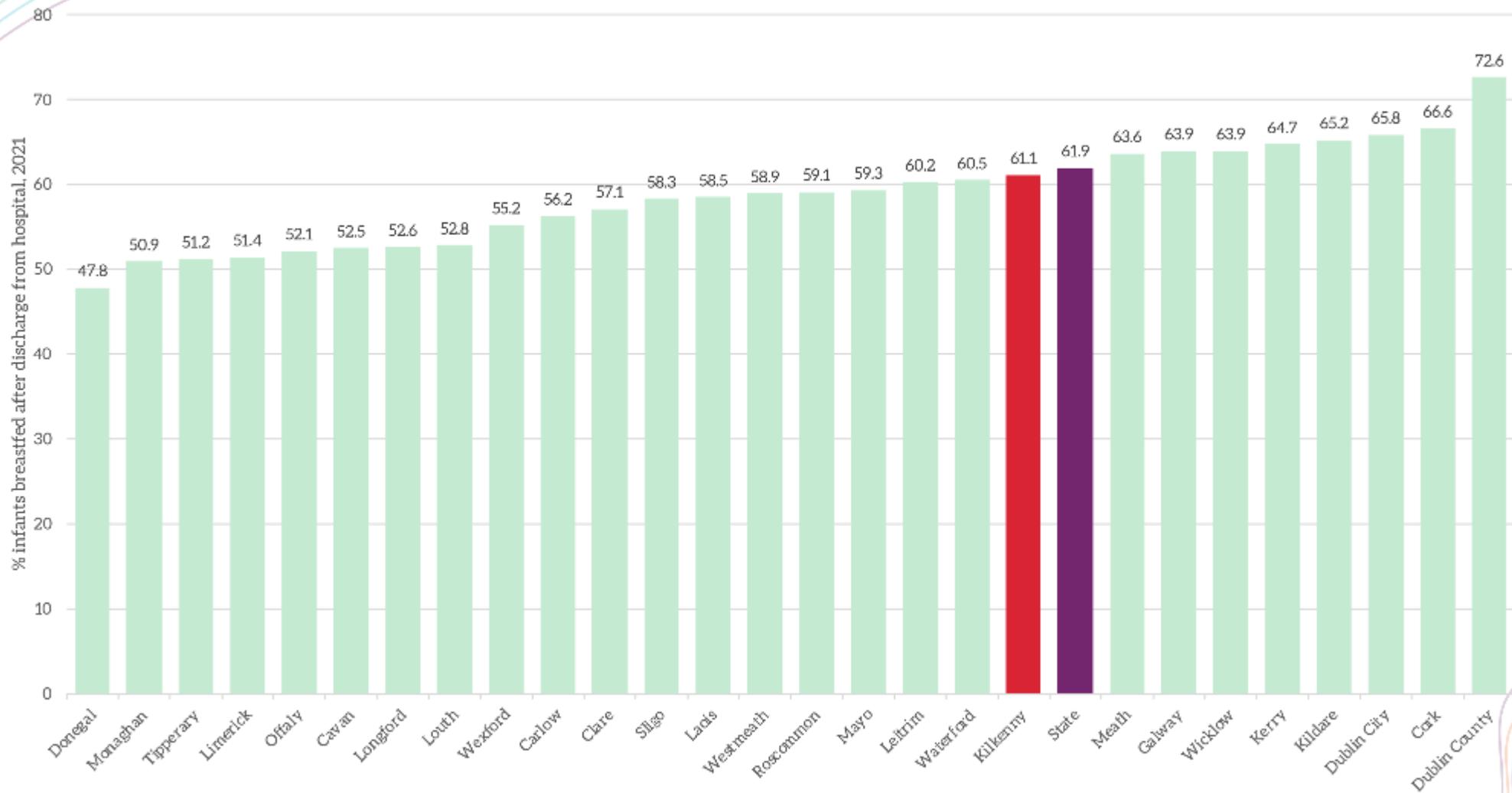


Figure 5.3: Percentage of Infants who are Breastfed (exclusive & combined), 2021 (NPRS & SONC) 2024)

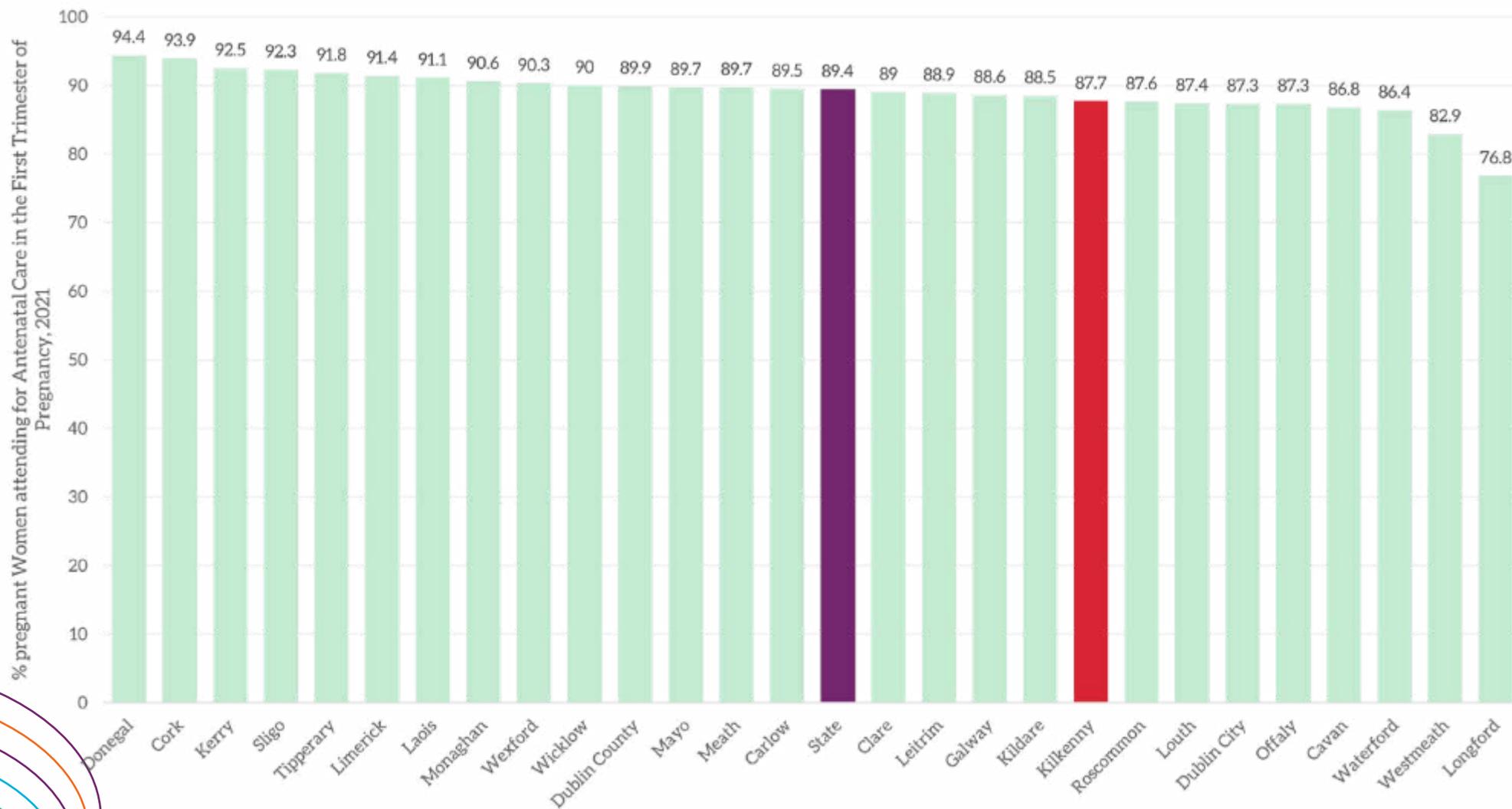
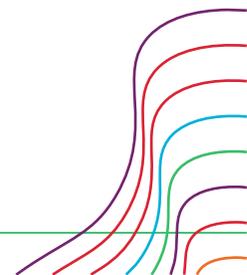
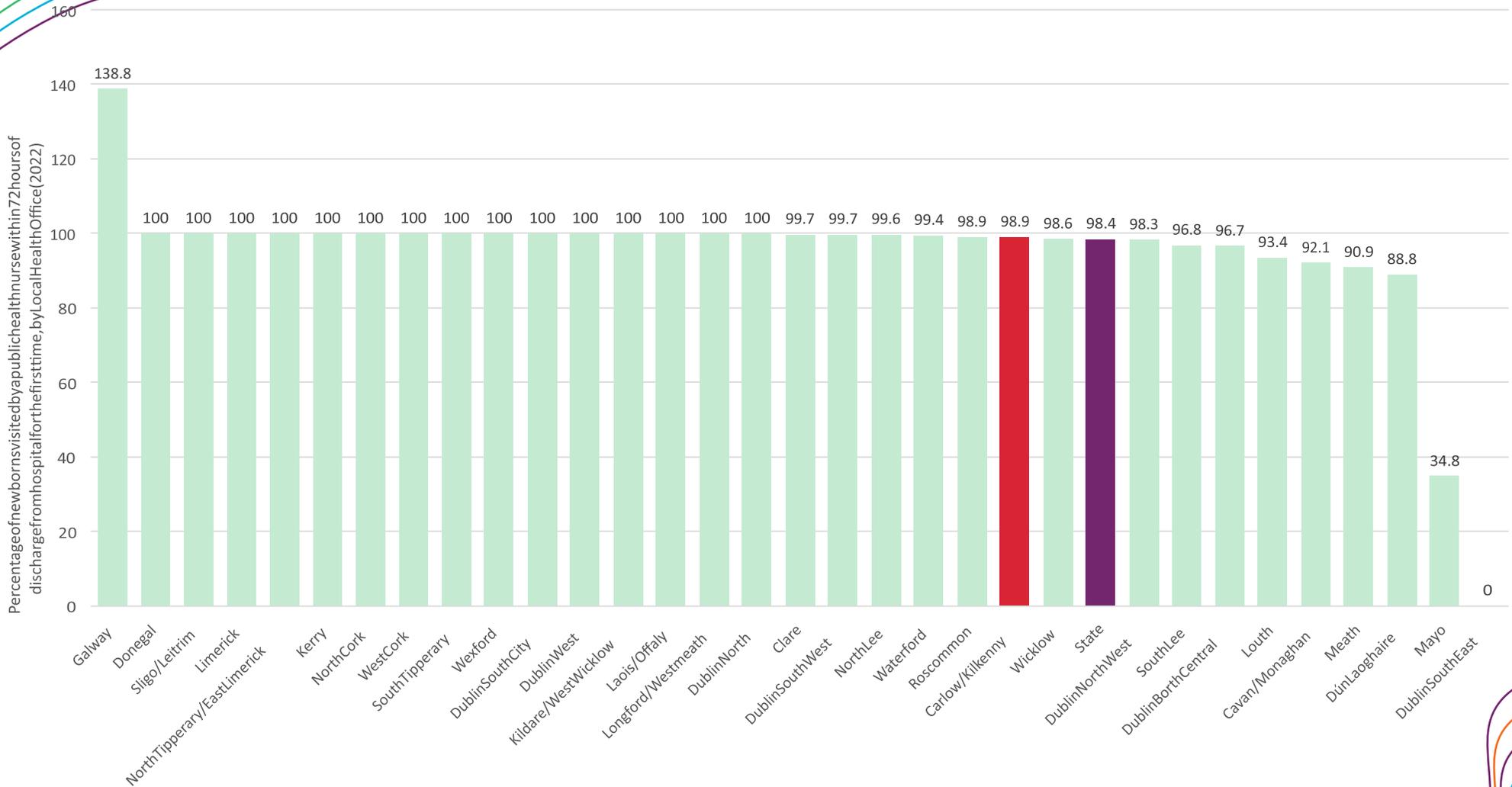


Figure 5.4: Percentage of Pregnant Women Attending Antenatal Care in 1st Trimester, 2021 (NPRS & SONC 2024)





*Note: Numbers greater than 100% are due to newborn babies being present in one area for the first 24/48 hours after birth and then moving to another area within 72 hours of birth

Figure 5.5: Newborns Visited by Public Nurse within 72 Hours of Hospital Discharge, 2022 (NPRS & SONC 2024)

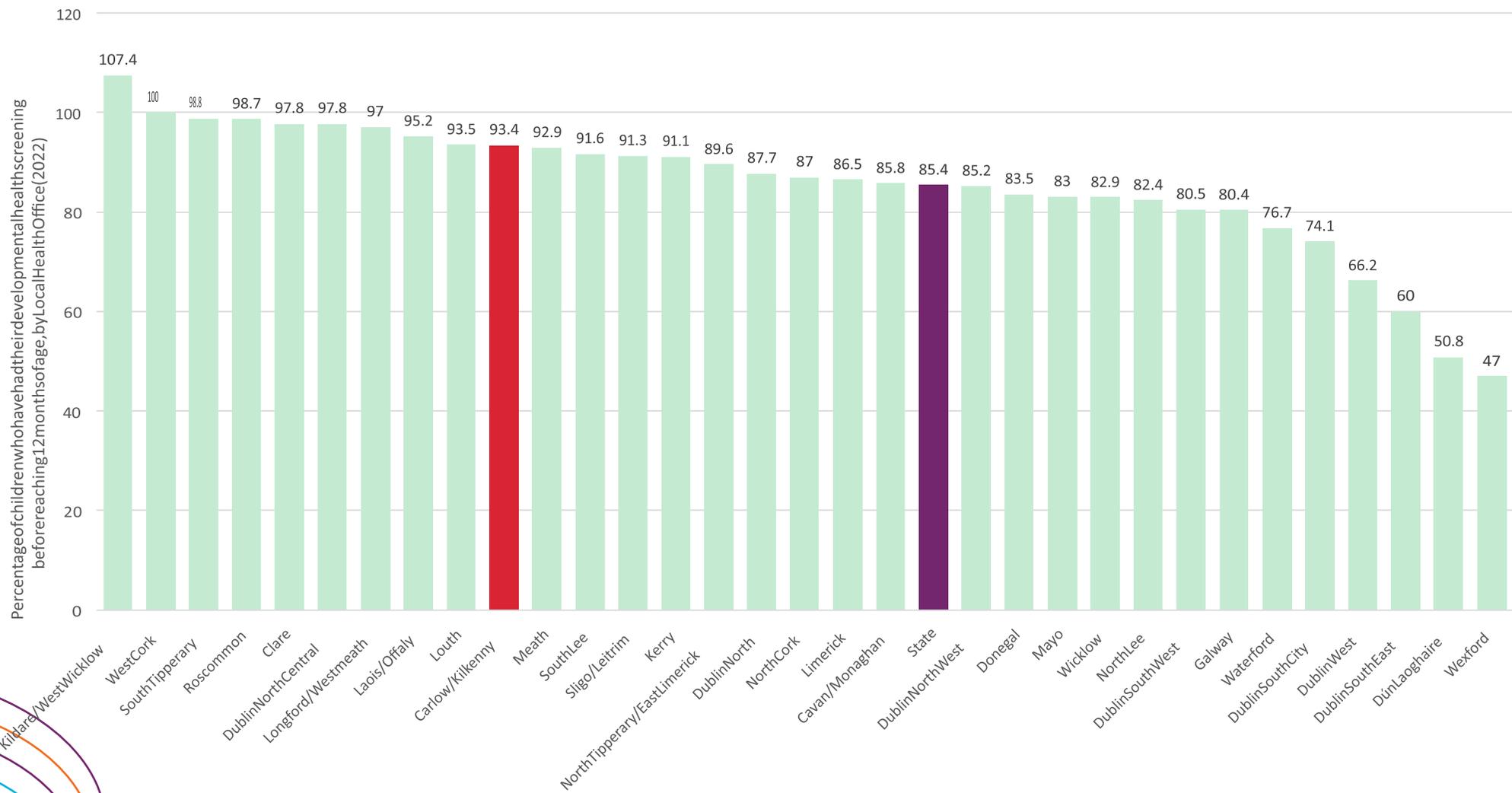


Figure 5.6: Children Attending Developmental Health Screening before 12 Months, 2022 (NPRS & SONC 2024)

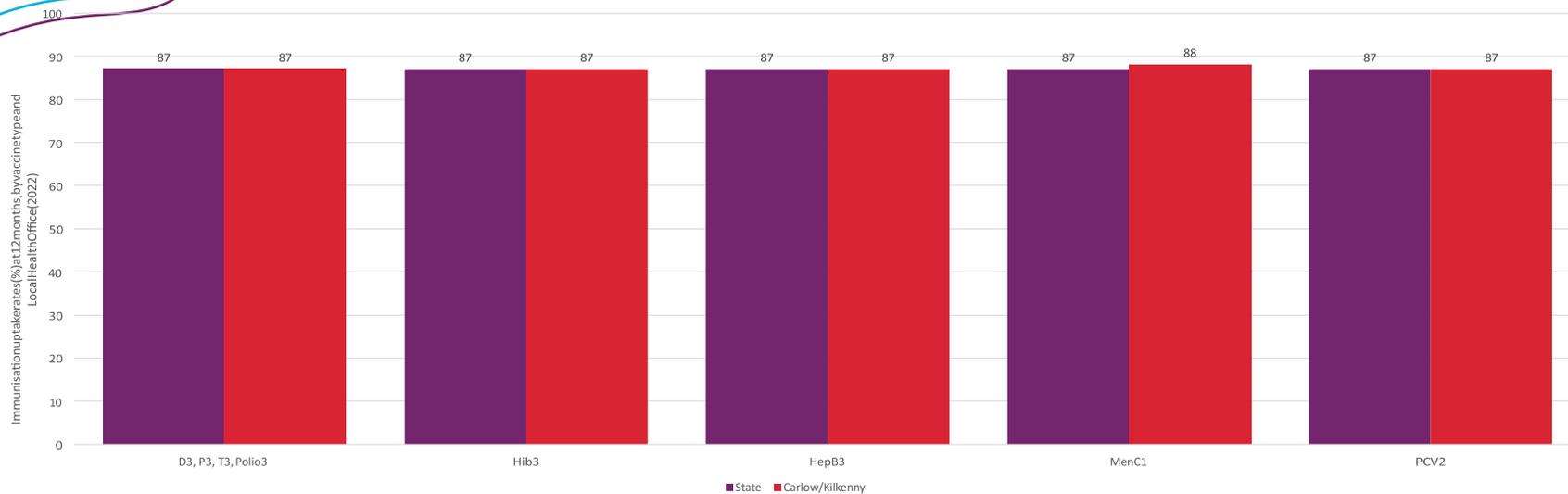
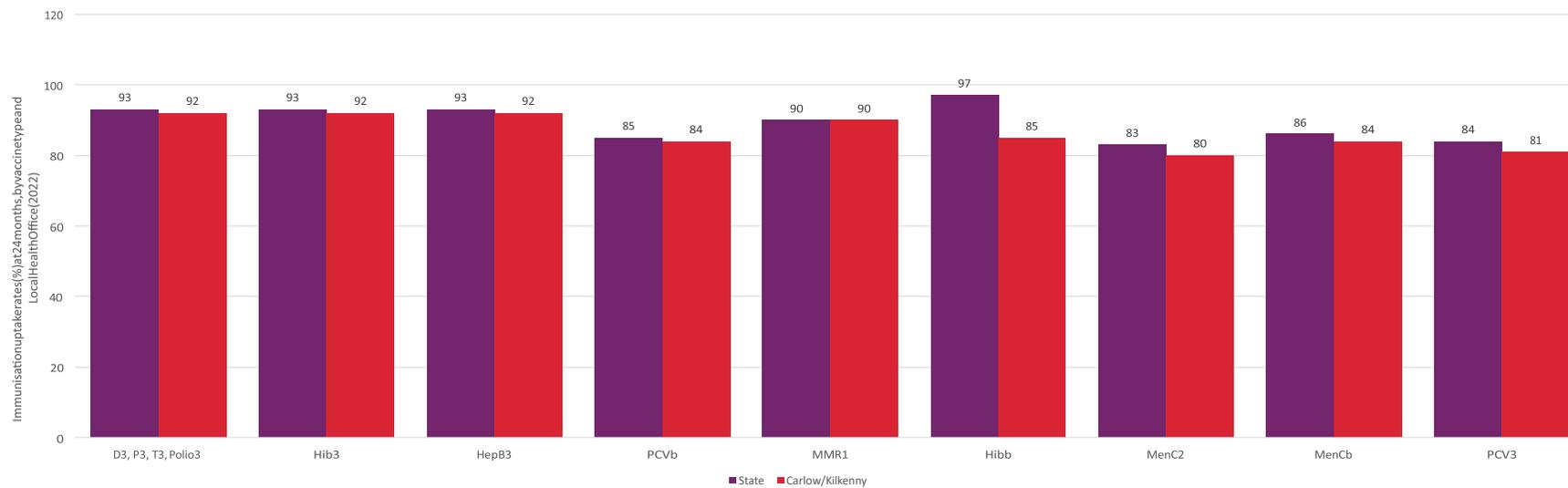


Figure 5.7 and 5.8: Immunisation Uptake Rates at 12 & 24 Months, 2022 (HPSC & SONC 2024)



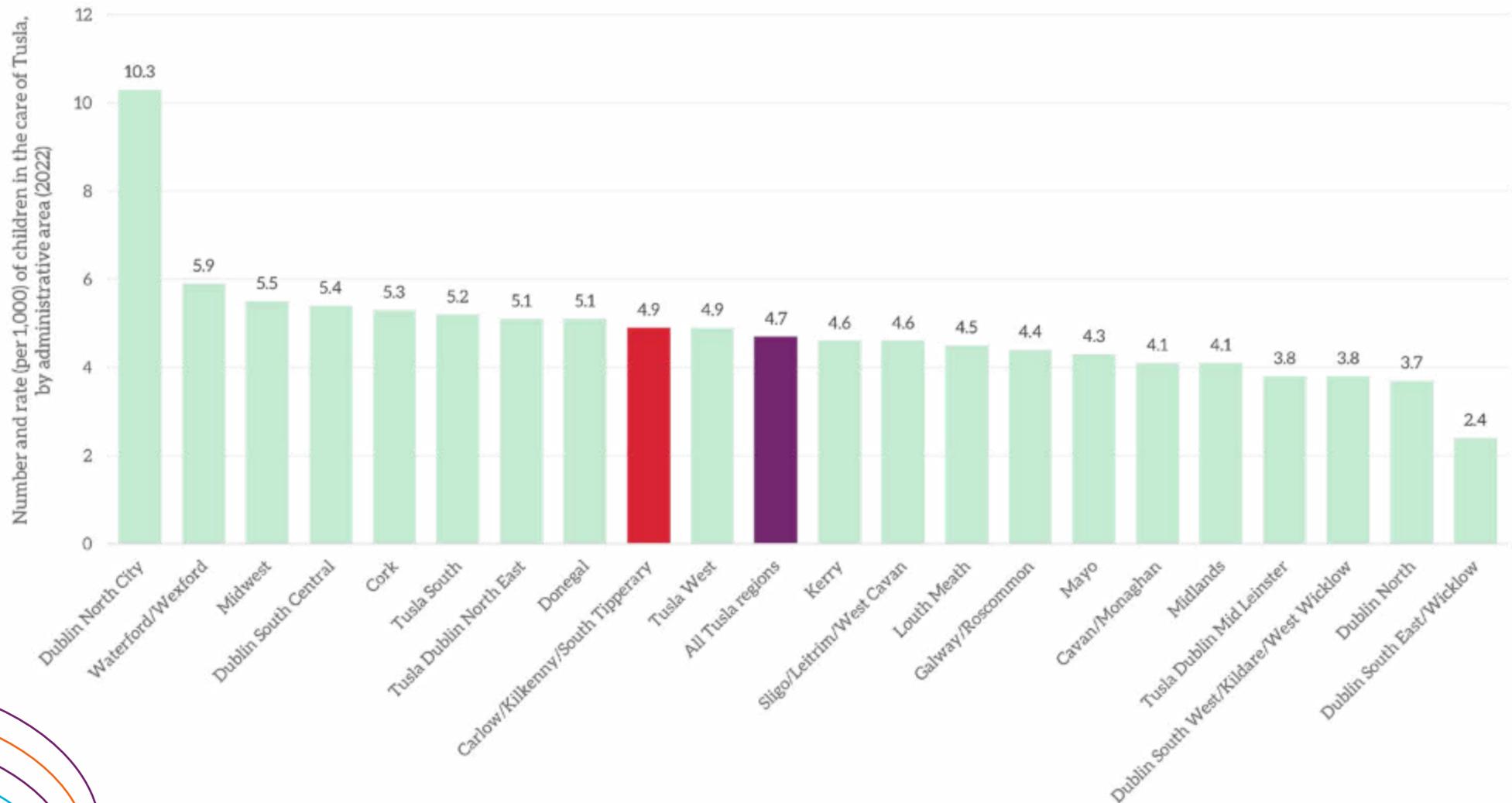
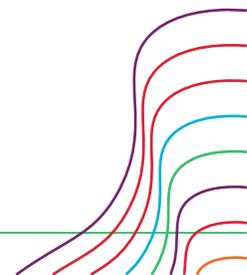


Figure 5.9: Rate of Children (per 1,000 children) in the Care of TUSLA, 2022 (TUSLA & SONC 2024)



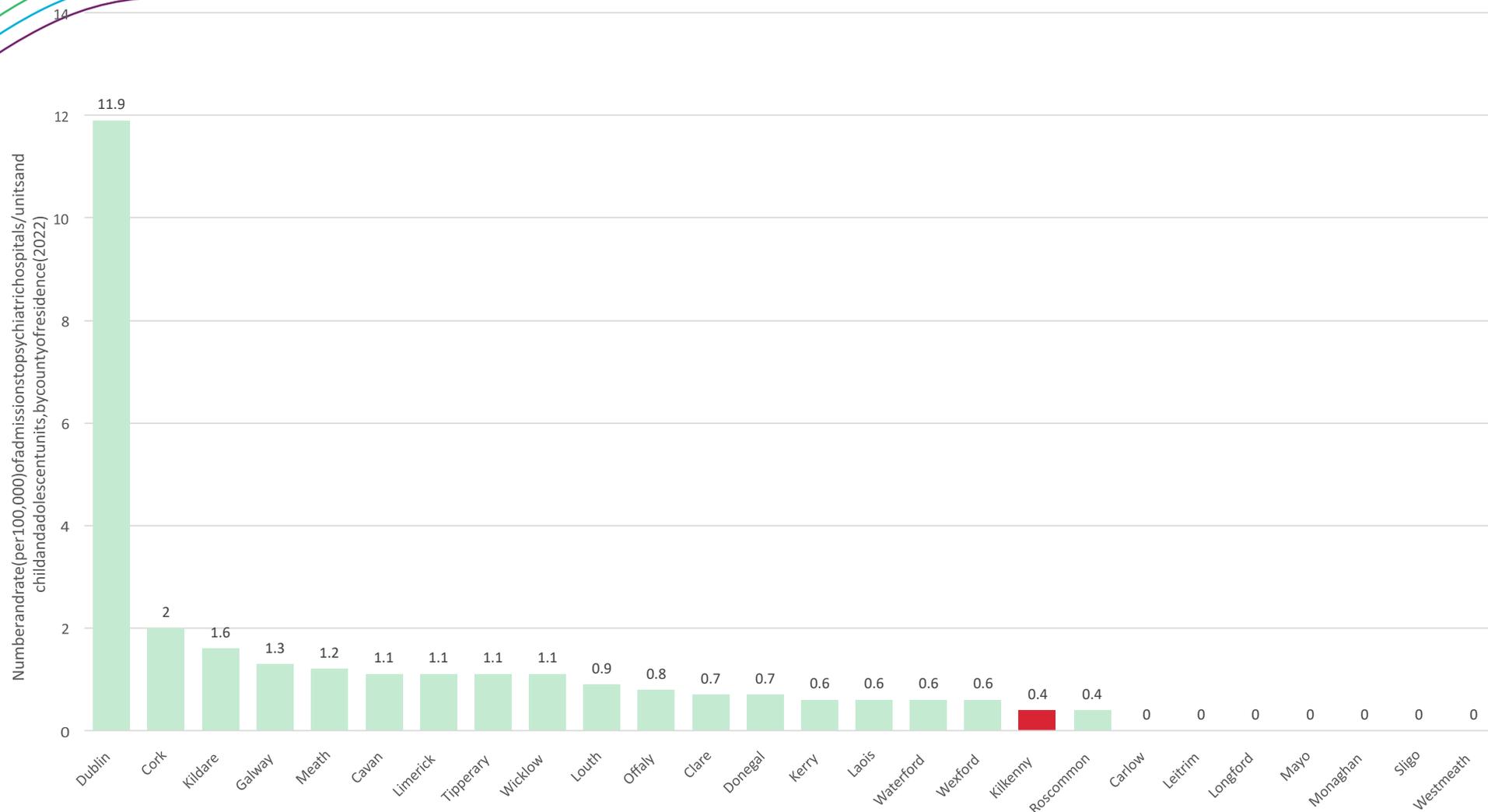


Figure 5.10: Rate of Admission to Psychiatric Hospital Units, 2022 (Health Research Board and SONC 2024)

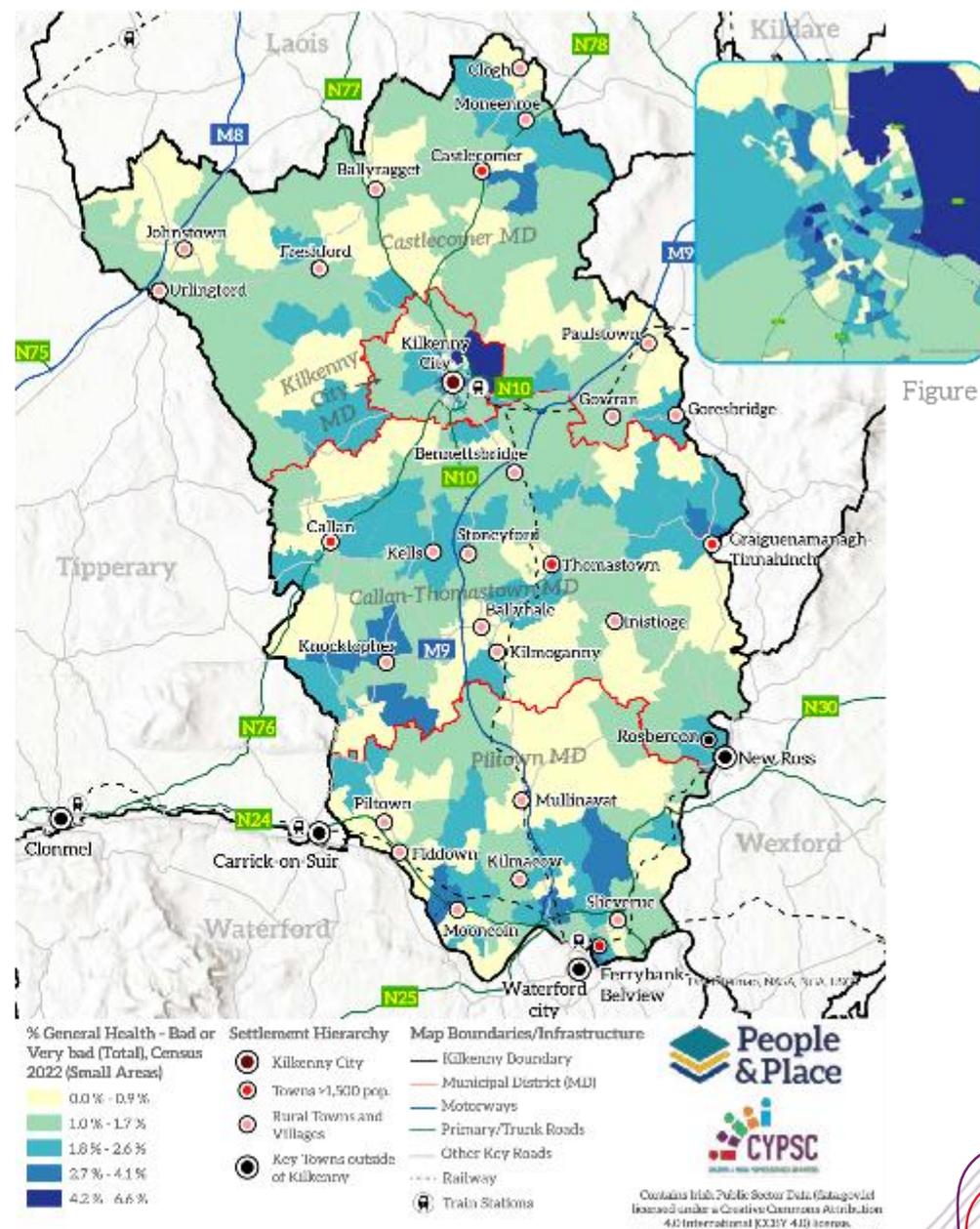
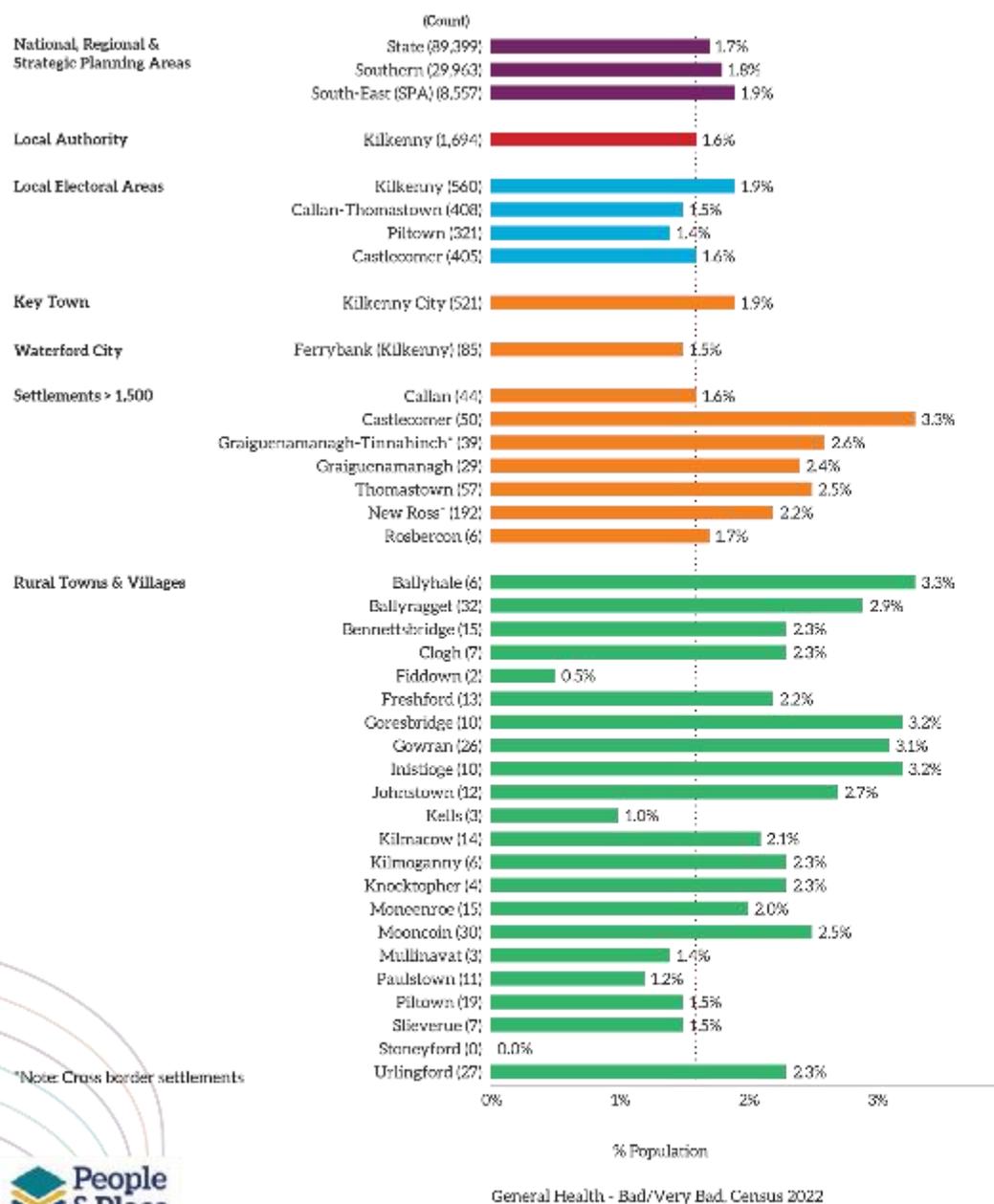


Figure 5.11: % General Health - Bad or Very bad (Total), 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

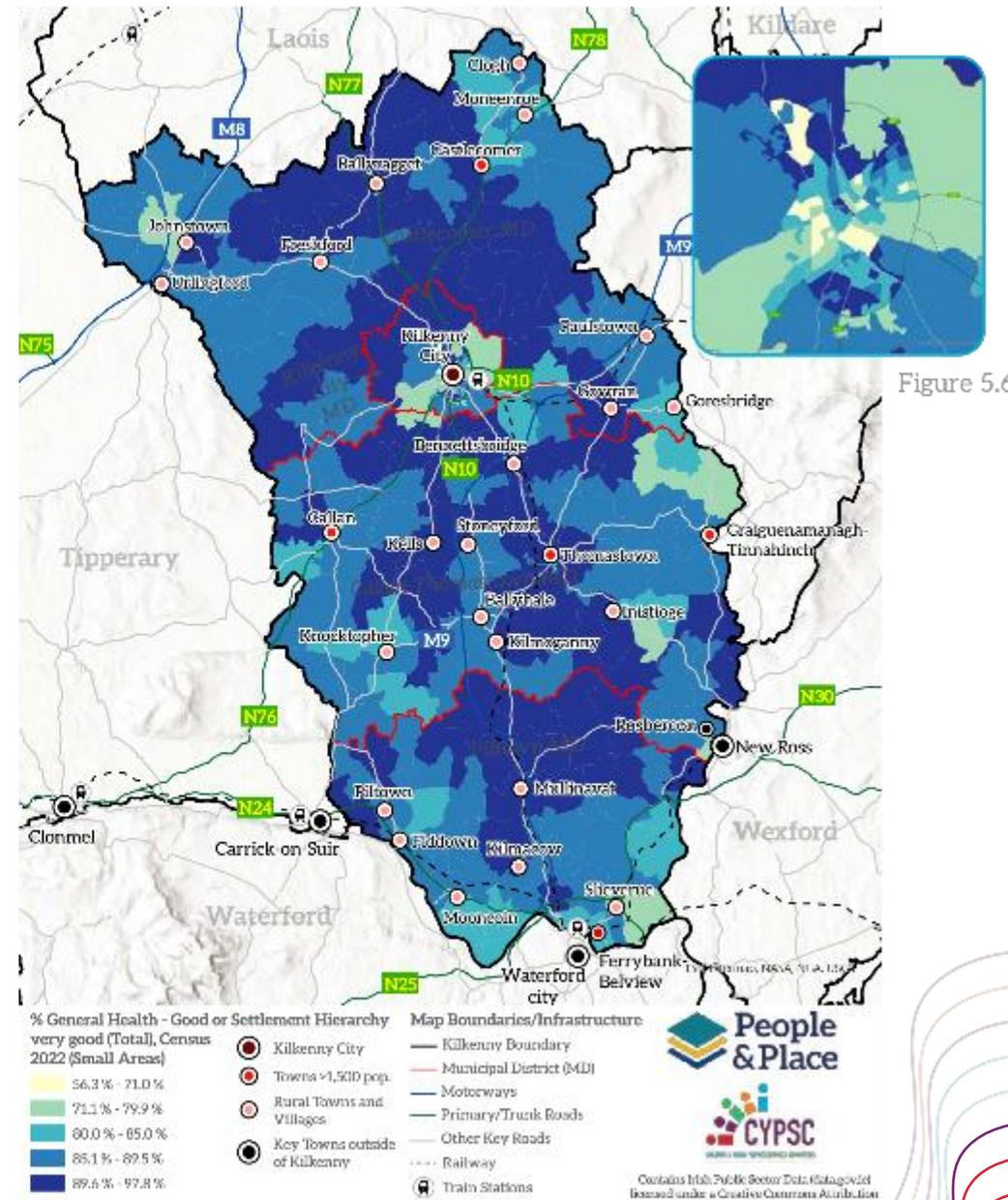
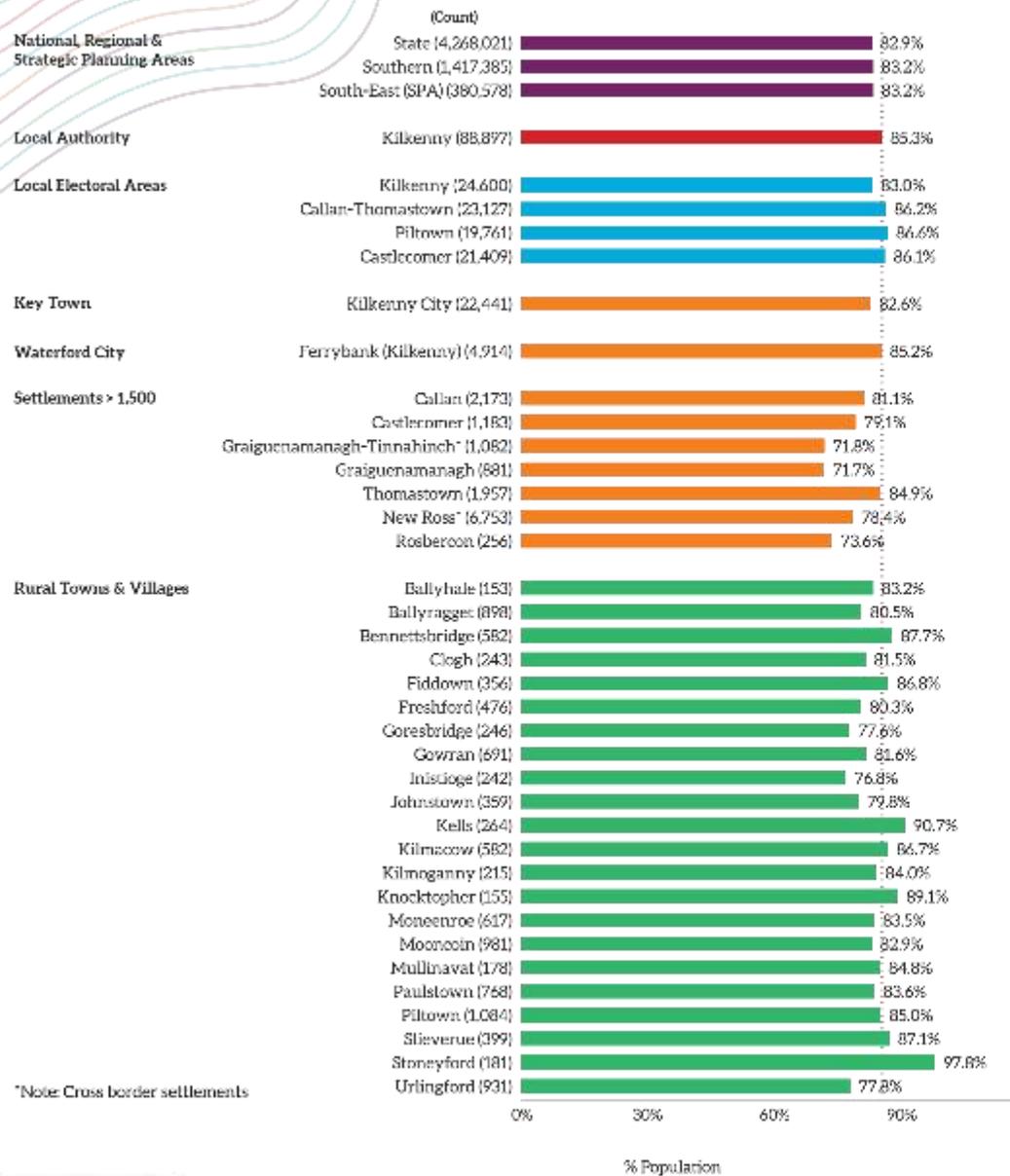


Figure 5.6



General Health - Good/Very Good, Census 2022

Figure 5.12: % General Health - Good or very good (Total), 2022 (CSO Census 2022)



Contains Irish Public Sector Data (Statagóid Seiceála) under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0).
Data Source: DataTreeMap, CSO Census 2022

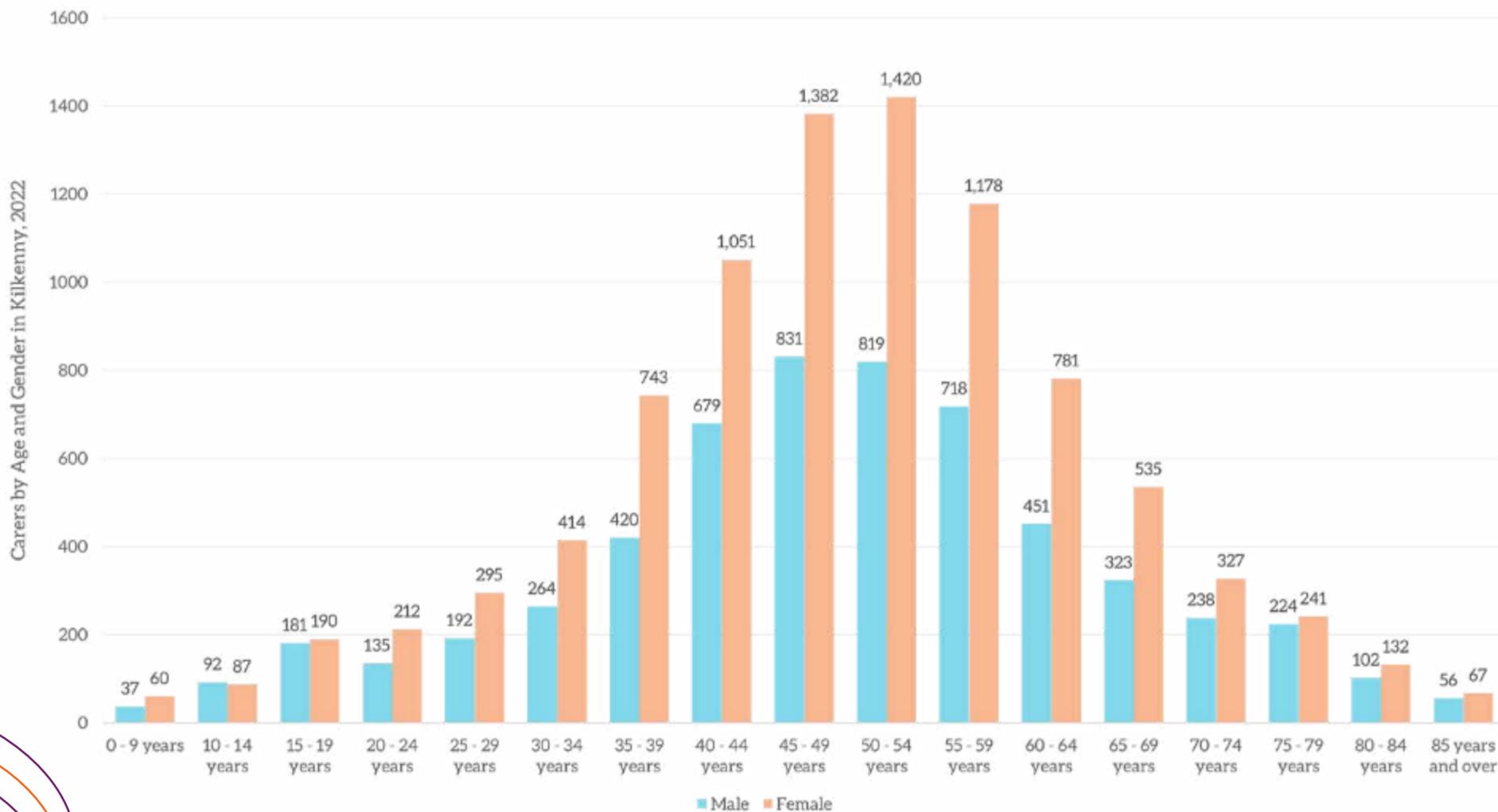


Figure 5.13: Carers by Age & Gender, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

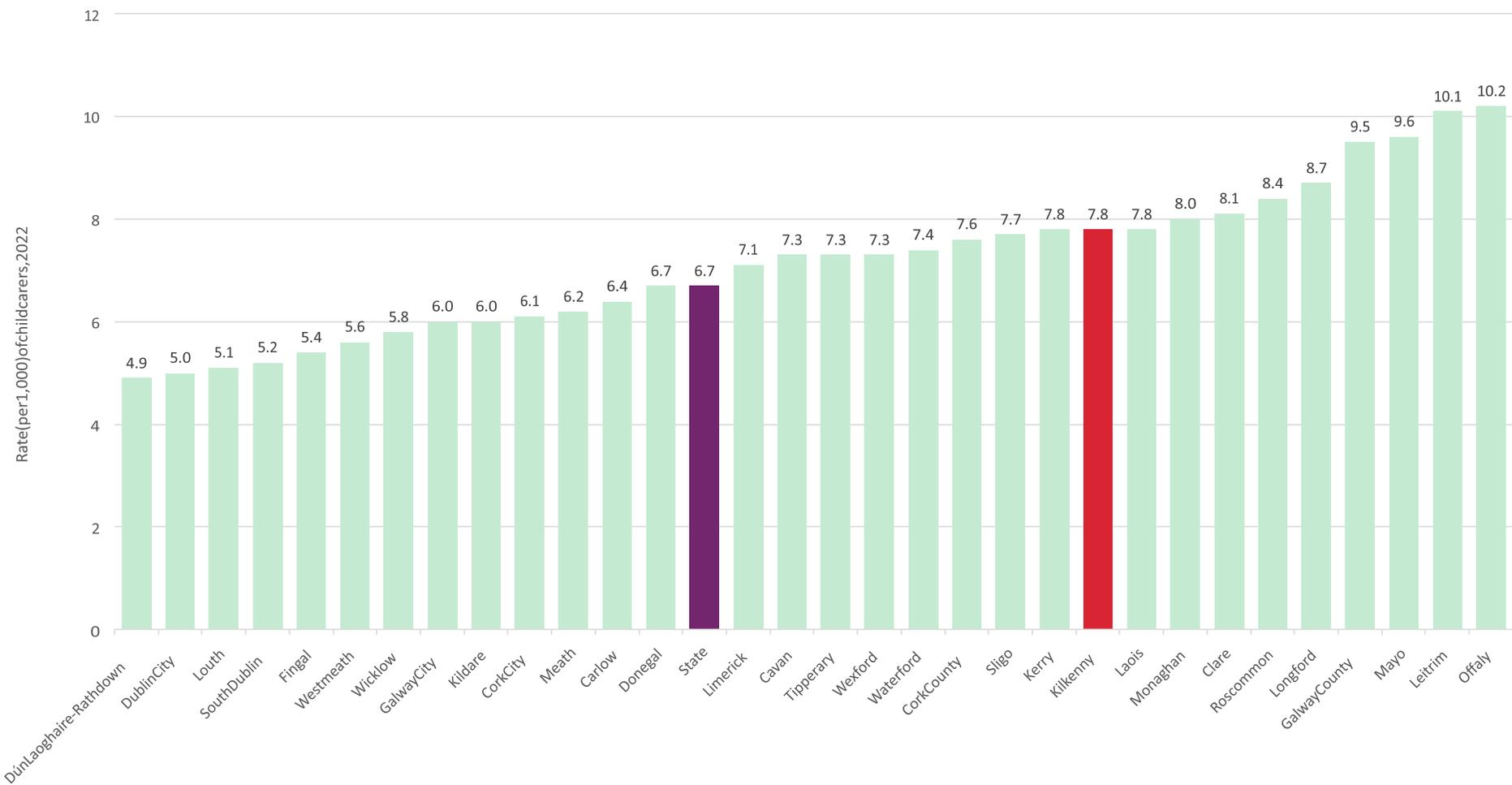


Figure 5.14: Rate of Children who Provide Unpaid Care to Friend or Family, 2022 (CSO & SONC 2024)

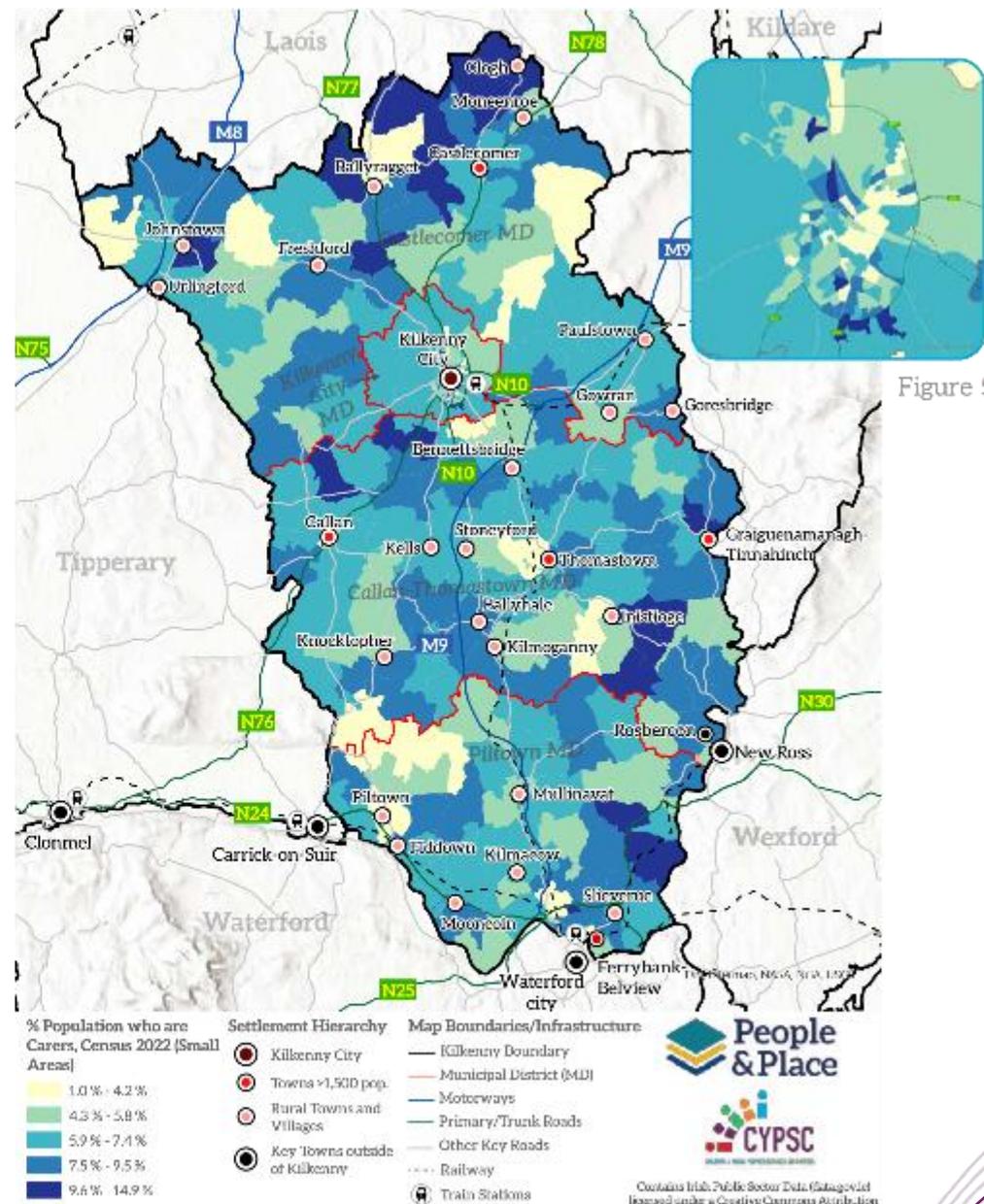
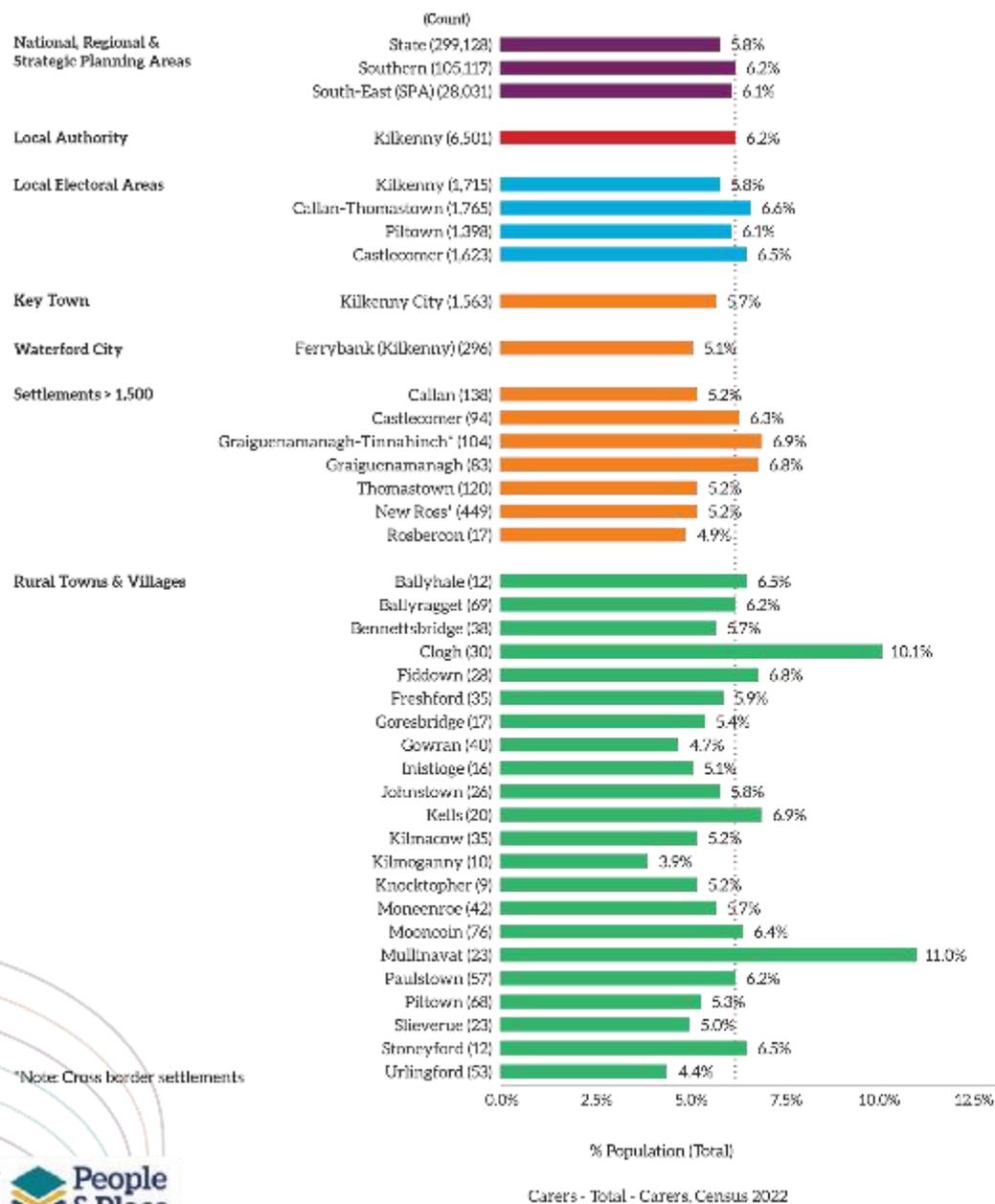


Figure 5.15: Population who are Carers, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

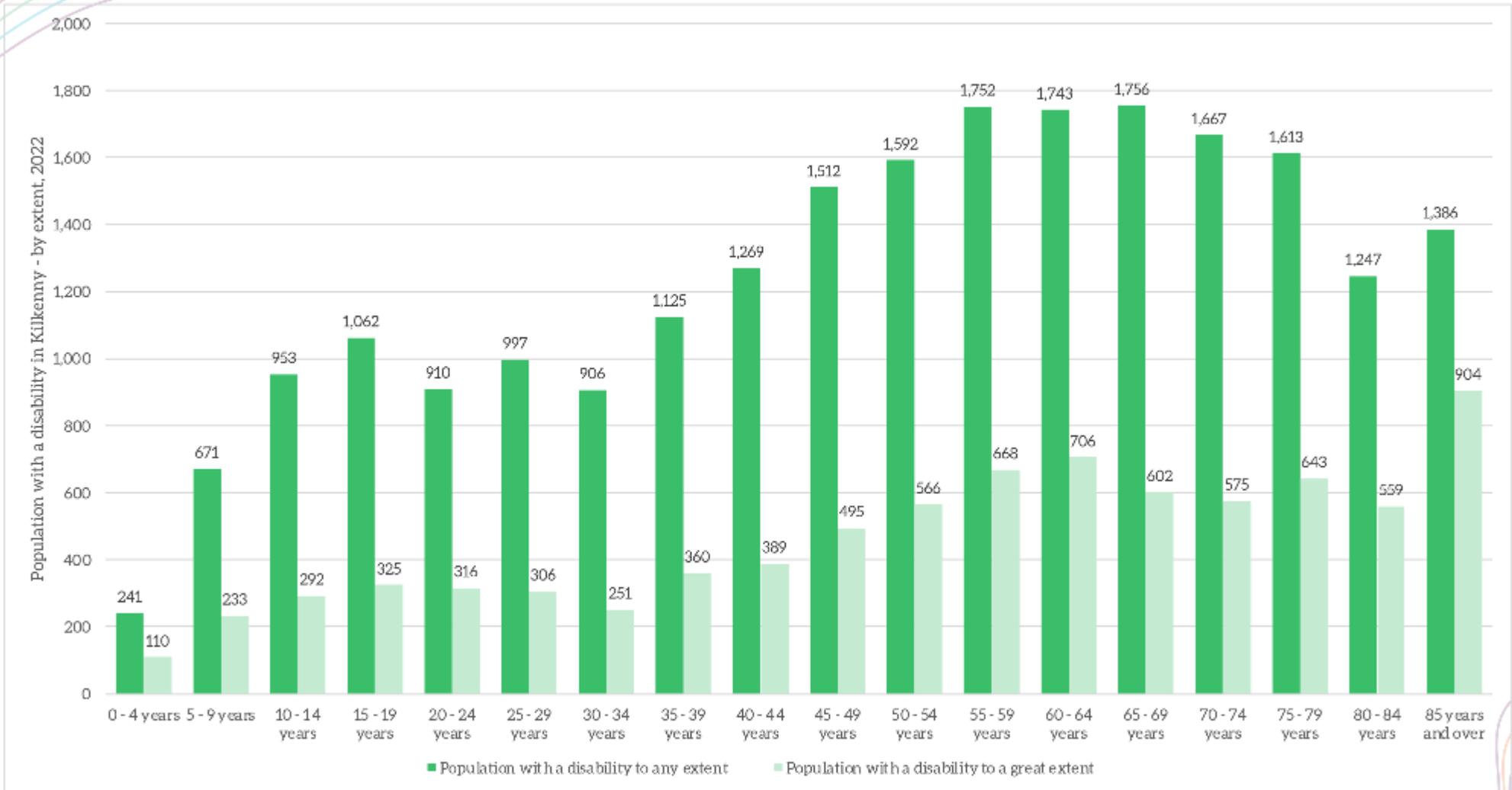


Figure 5.16: Number of Persons with a Disability by Extent, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

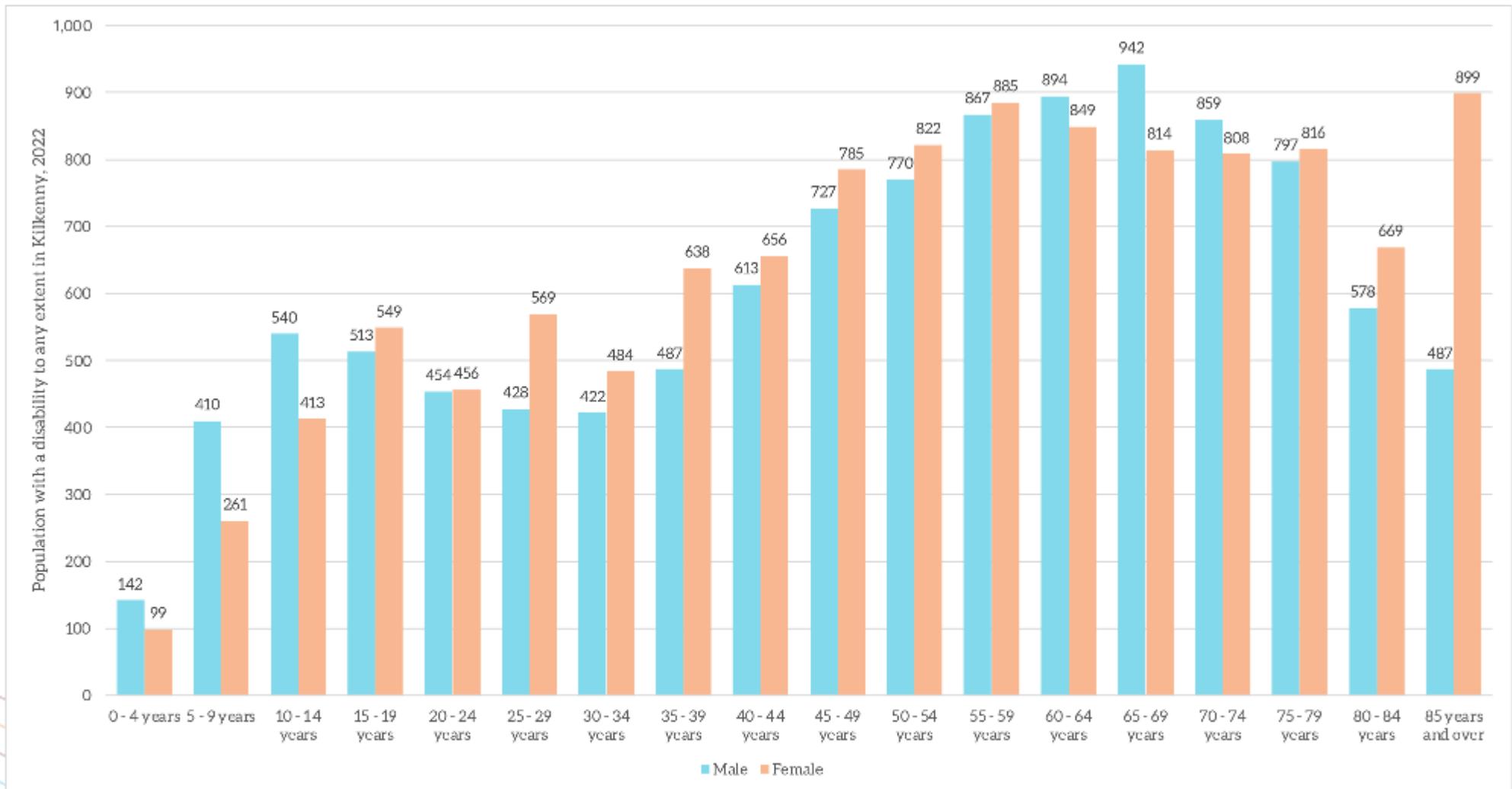
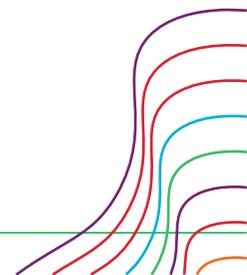


Figure 5.17: Number of Persons with a Disability by Age & Gender, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)



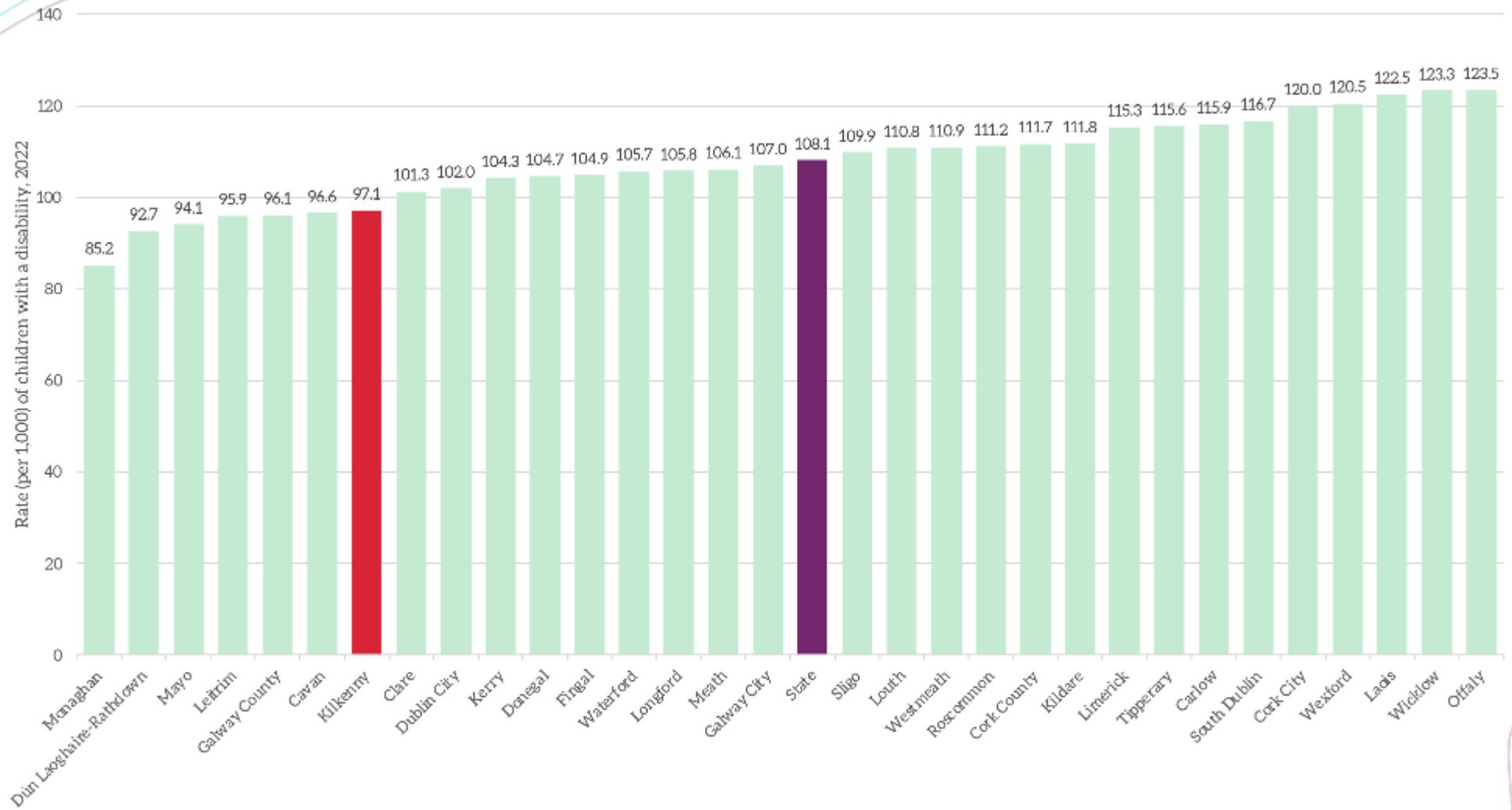


Figure 5.18: Rate of Children (per 1,000 children) with a Disability, 2022 (CSO & SONC 2024)

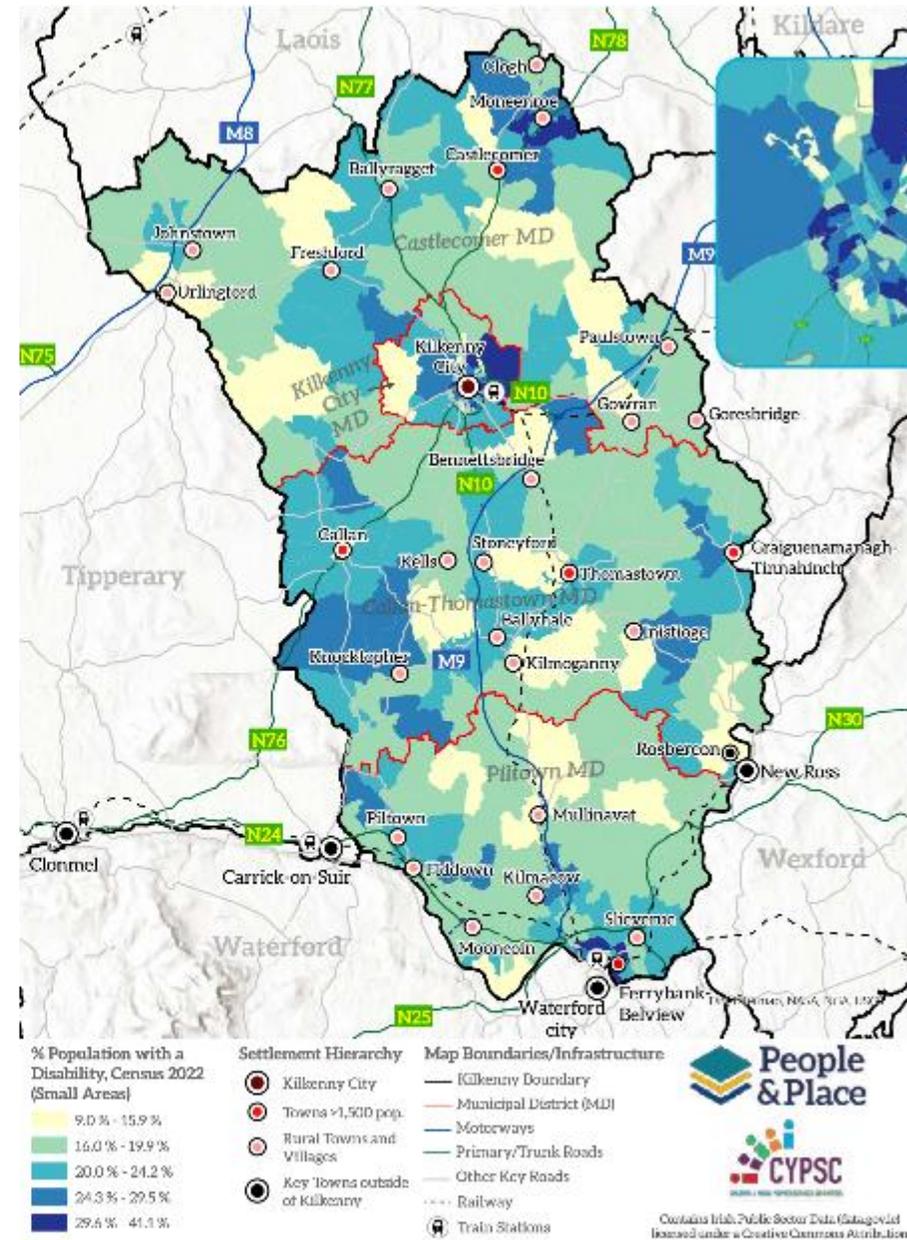
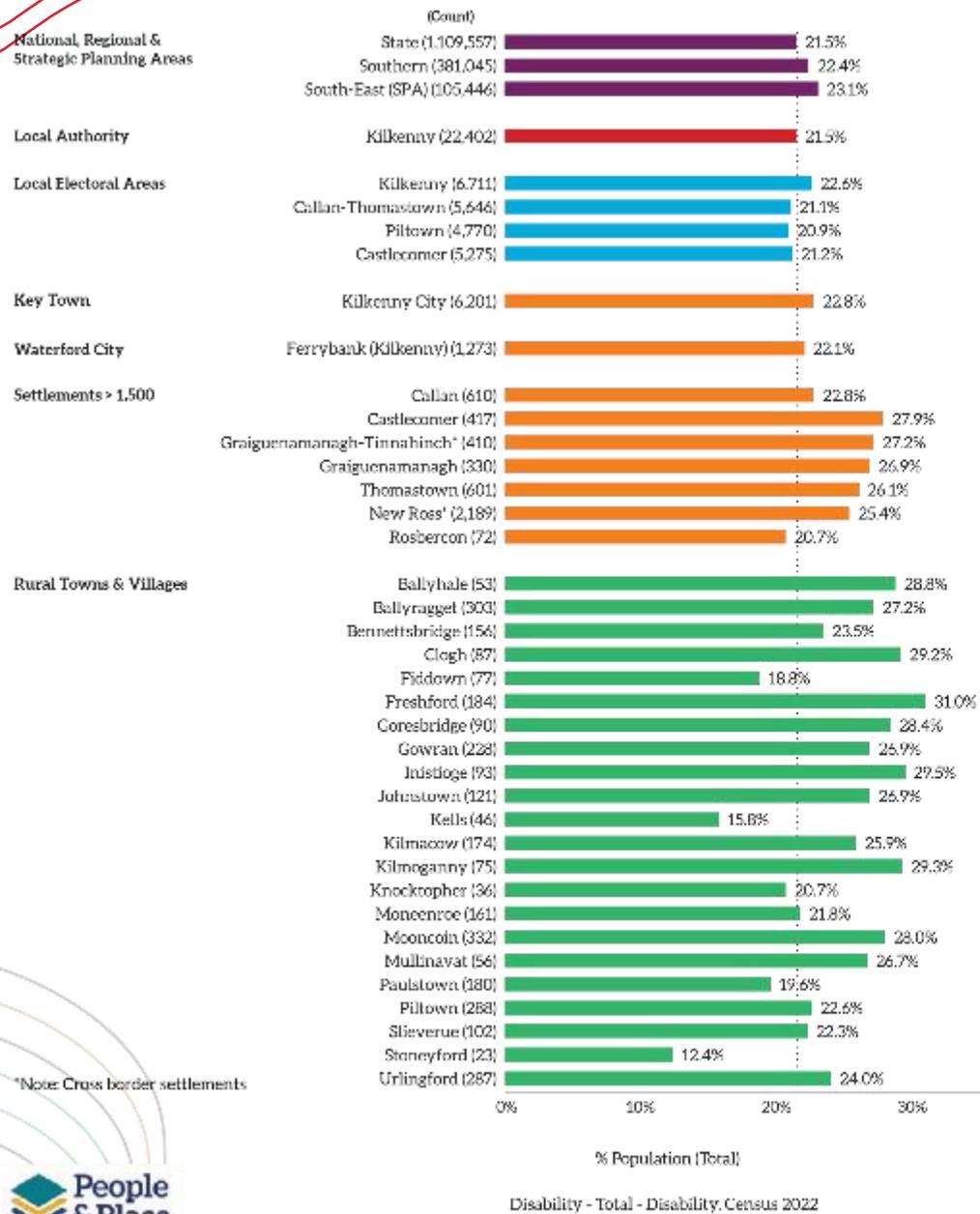


Figure 5.15

Figure 5.19: Population with a Disability, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

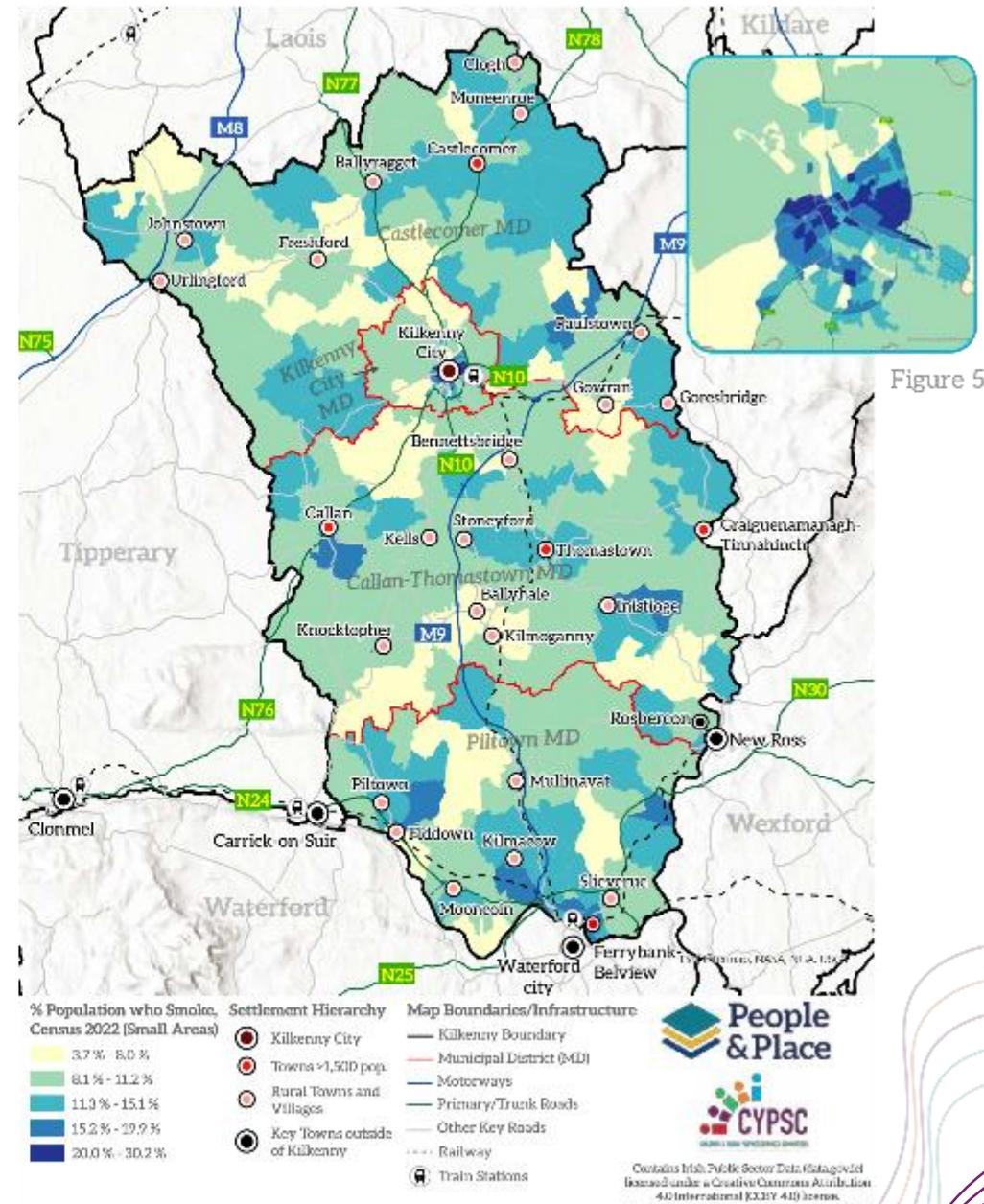
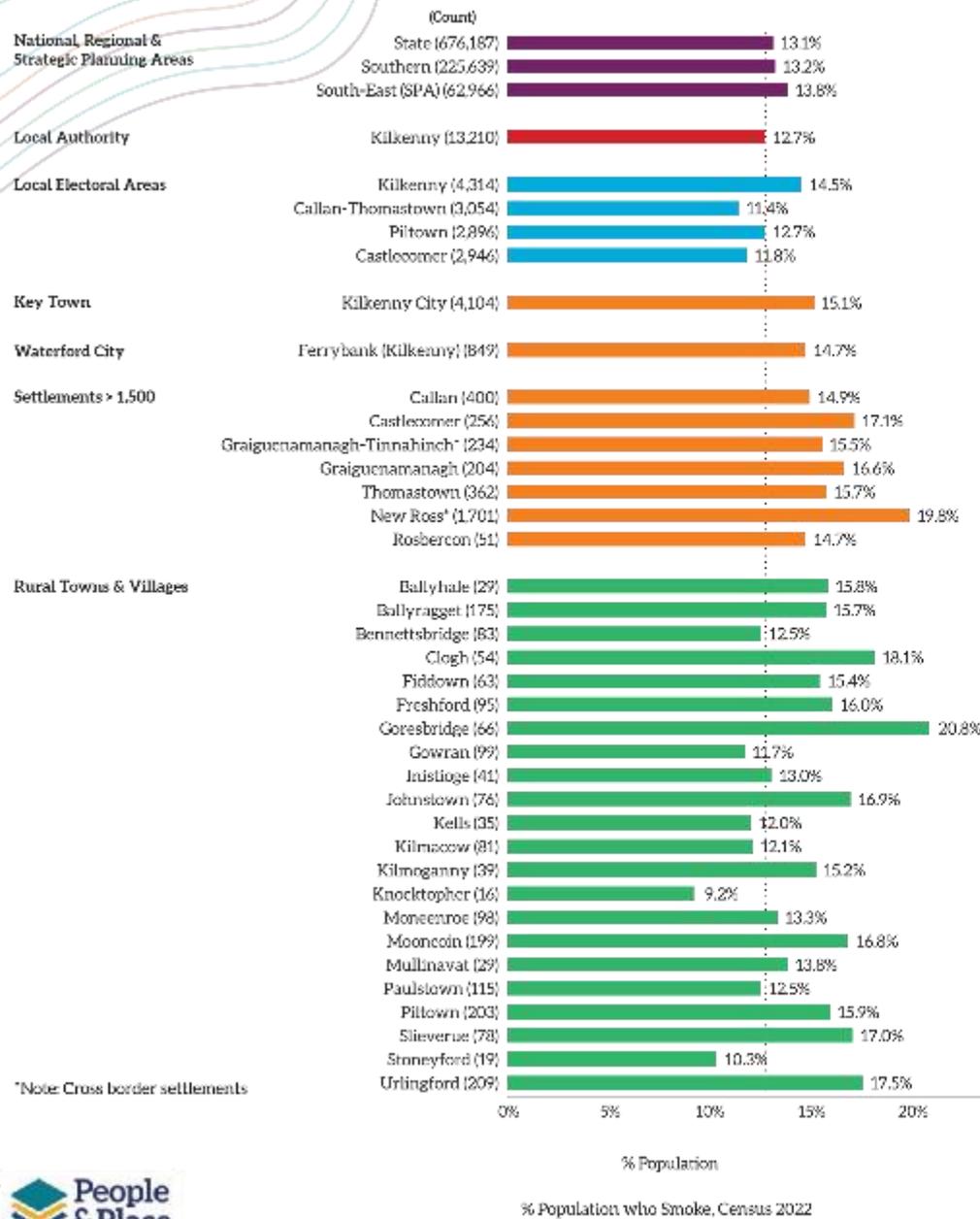


Figure 5.12

Figure 5.20: Population who Smoke, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

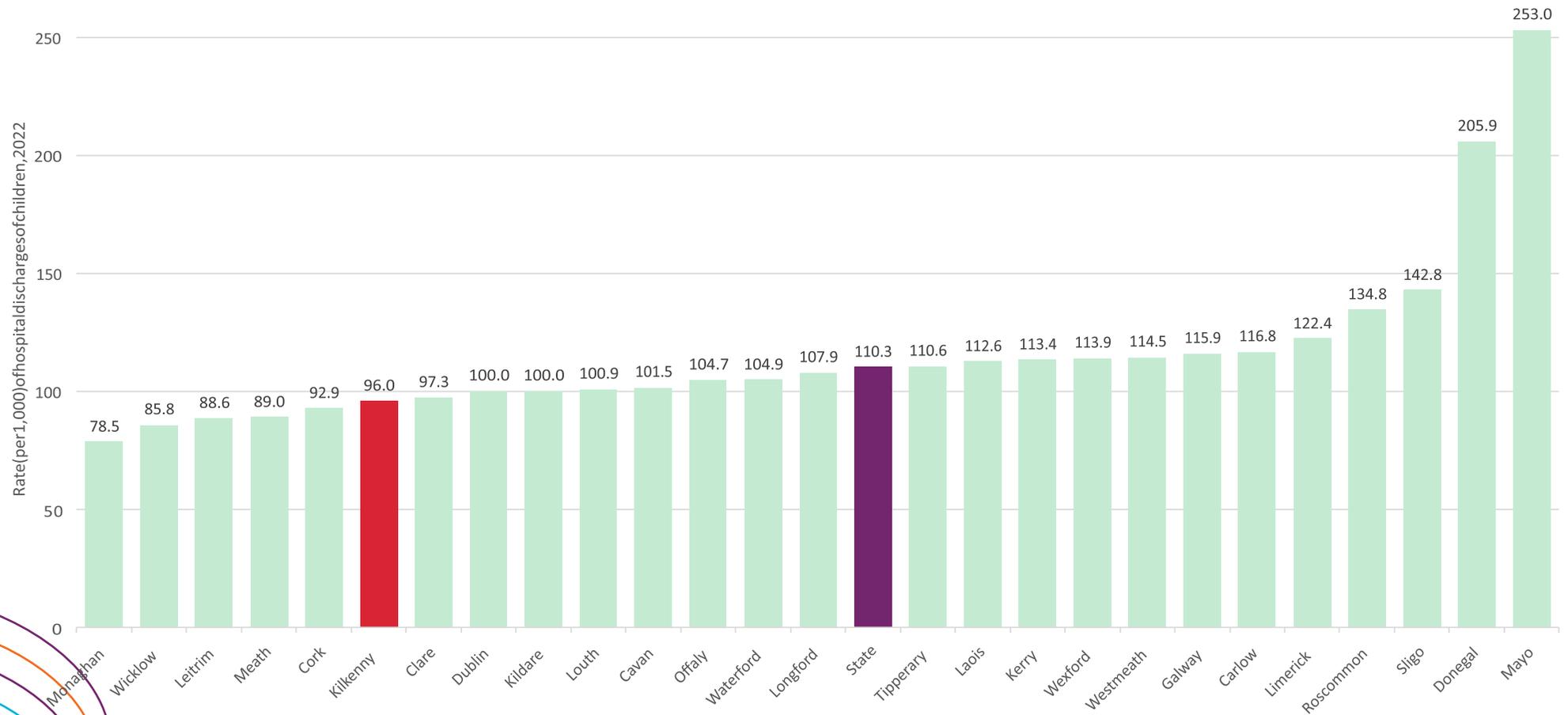


Figure 5.21: Rate of Hospital Discharges of Children, 2022 (HIPE & SONC 2024)

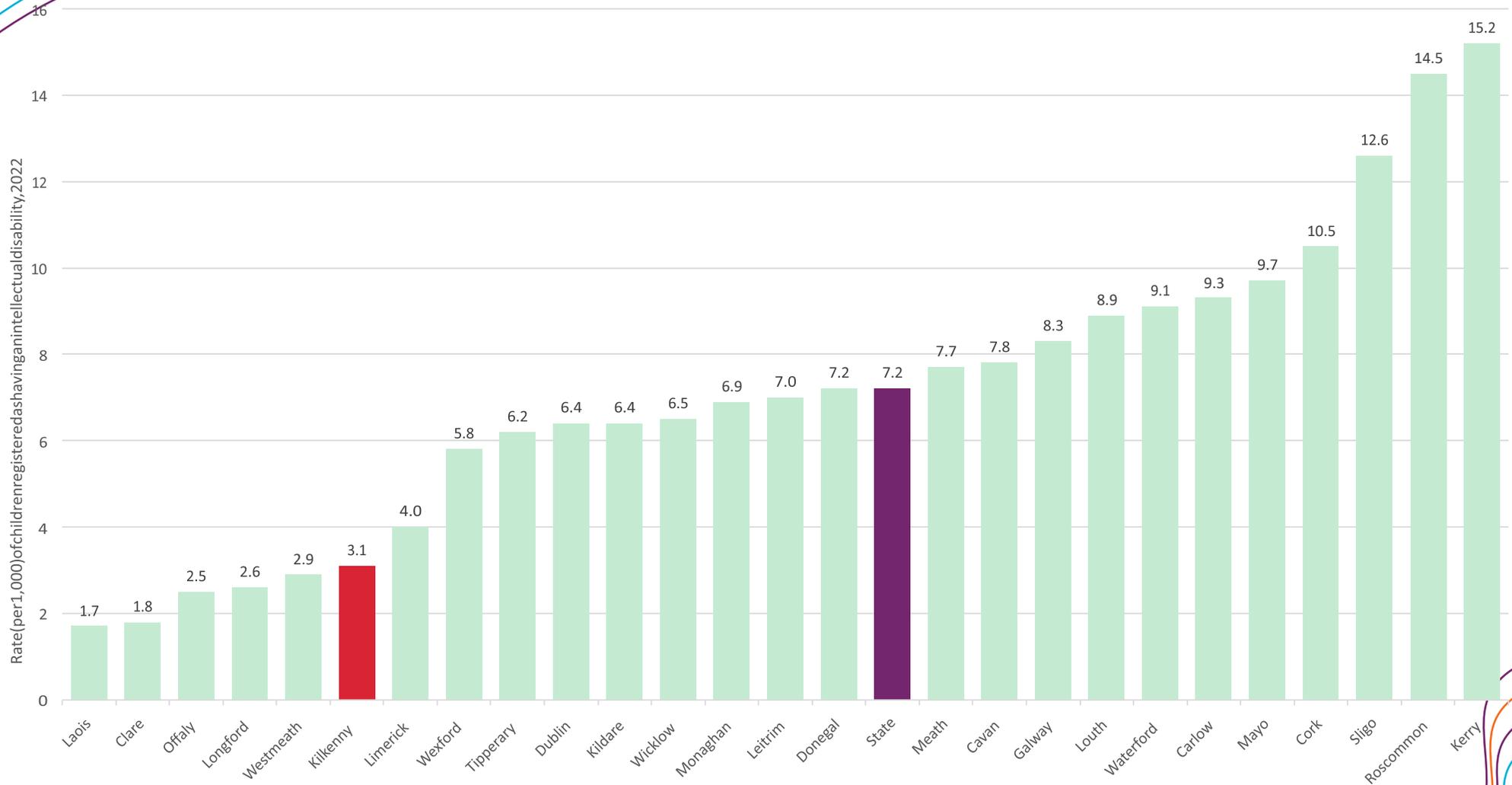


Figure 5.22: Rate of Children with Intellectual Disability, 2022 (National Ability Support System & SONC 2024)

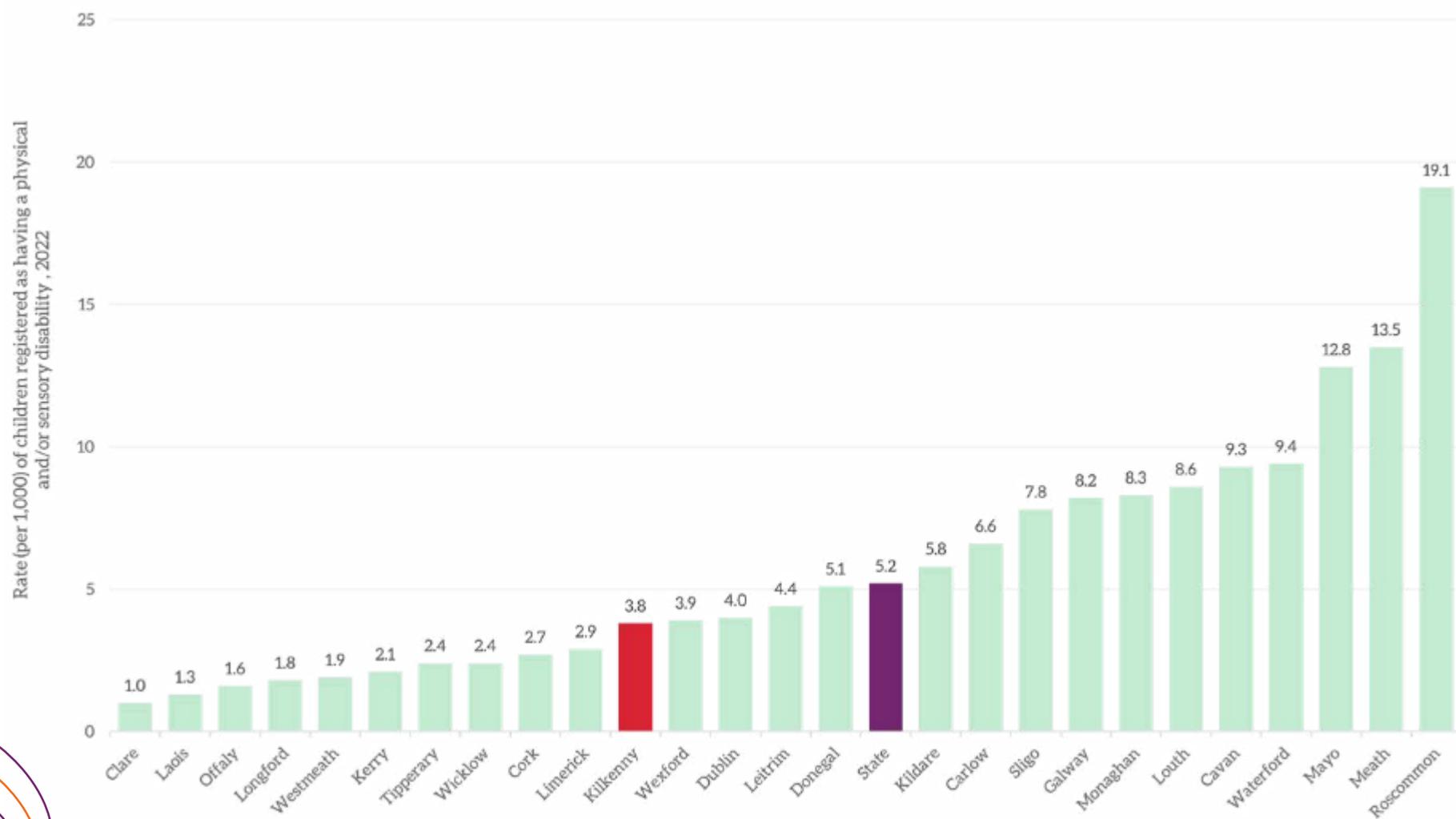


Figure 5.23: Rate of Children with Physical or Sensory Disability, 2022 (National Ability Support System & SONC 2024)

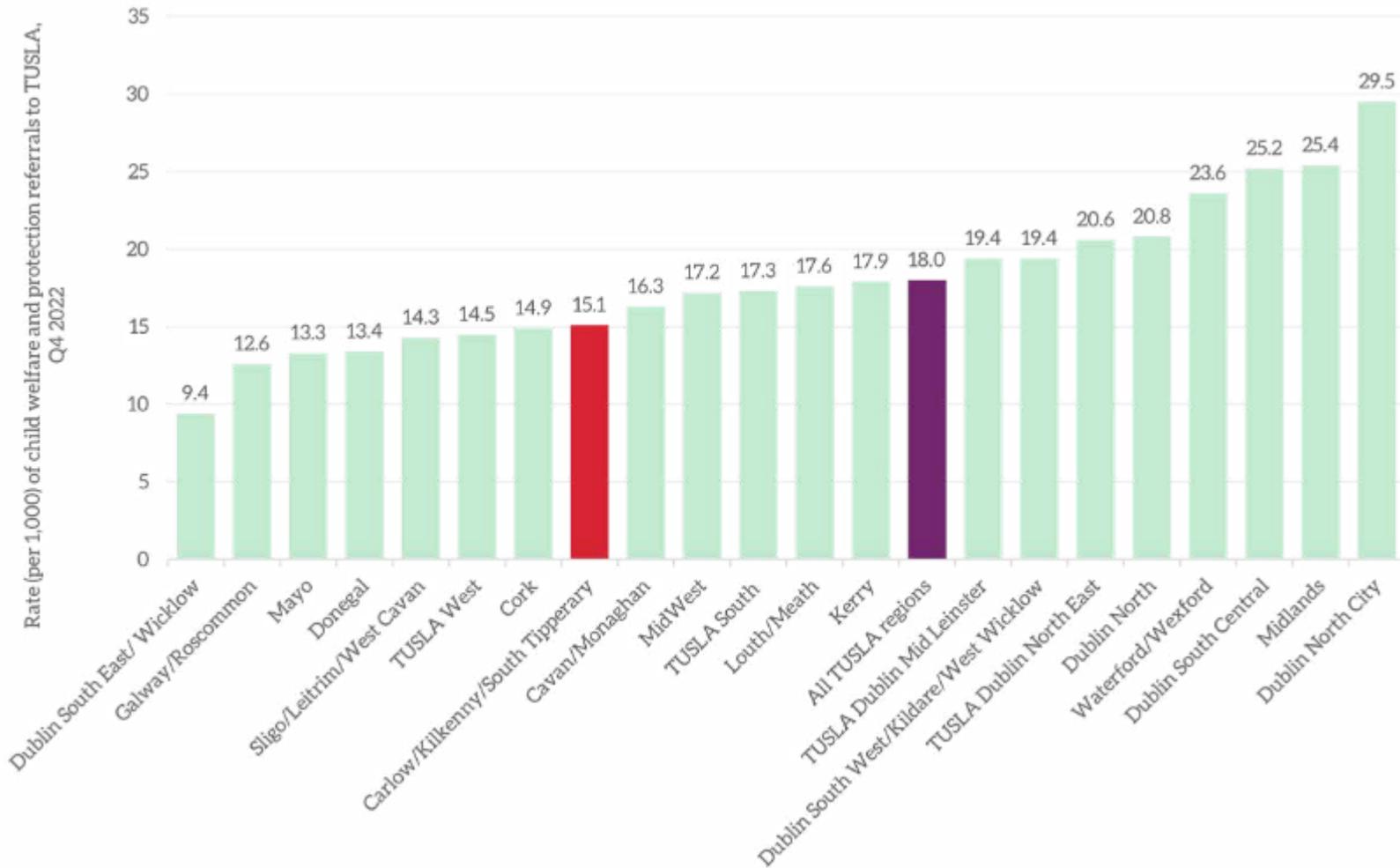


Figure 5.24: Rate of Child Welfare and Protection Referrals to TUSLA, 2022 (TUSLA, the Child and Family Agency & SONC 2024)



Security & Safety

06

Overview

This section looks at relevant indicators in respect of security and safety of children within Kilkenny with an overview of the latest data available from TUSLA on engagement of services - referrals (child welfare and child abuse), social work activity data (child protection and welfare), the child protection notification system and children in care.

The chapter also focuses on household tenure (ownership). It presents quantitative and spatial data in respect of owneroccupied homes (with and without mortgages) and those that are rented (from private landlords, approved housing bodies or local government).

Data and Analysis of Engagement in Services

The latest Quarterly Service and Performance Activity Report from TUSLA provides an update on the performance and activity of TUSLA services at the end of Q2 2024. It deals with key performance and activity measures included in the agency's business plan. The data presented were provided by services, and they refer to the latest performance and activity information available at this time. The report also provides details on Child Protection and Welfare Services - with specific datasets available for referrals (child welfare and child abuse), social work activity data, the Child Protection Notification System (CPNS) and Crisis Intervention Service (CIS).

While the data in the report are available at the national level, they are also published for the 17 reporting areas of which 'Carlow / Kilkenny / South Tipperary' is one.

Referrals (child welfare and child abuse)

Within the Carlow / Kilkenny / South Tipperary area, there were 4,361 referrals to Child Protection and Welfare Services during 2023; this is 478 (12.3%) more than in 2022 (n=3,883) and 423 (10.7%) fewer than 2021 (n=3,938). More than half of referrals in 2023 (61%; 2,684) were for welfare concerns, 34% (n=1,480) were for abuse/neglect, and the primary report type was not recorded for the remaining 197 referrals. Of the 1,480 abuse/ neglect referrals, a total of 355 were for physical abuse, 660 for emotional abuse, 273 for sexual abuse and 192 for neglect.

Relative to the 17 reporting areas, the Carlow / Kilkenny / South Tipperary area recorded the seventh lowest rate per thousand population with a rate of 69.9. This was below the State average of 75.4. The highest rates were recorded in the Midlands (109.8) and Dublin North City (109.6).

At the State level, the most common source of referrals in Q1 2024 was members of An Garda Síochána - accounting for 33% of referrals, followed by teachers (13%), social workers (12%) and safeguarding officers (11%). Mandated persons accounted for 90% of all sources.

Social Work Activity Data (child protection and welfare)

Across the State, there were 21,408 cases open to social work at the end of Q2 2024 (June); this is 885 (4%) fewer than Q1 2024 (n=22,293) and 1,403 (6%) fewer than Q2 2023 (n=22,811). Open cases include those held on intake, allocated, unallocated child welfare and protection and children-in-care cases.

The number of open cases ranged from 2,381 (11%) in Cork to 268 (1%) in Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan. Within the Carlow / Kilkenny / South Tipperary area, there were 714 open cases (3.2%). Nine of the 17 areas had between 1,000 and 2,000 cases; a further six areas had fewer than 1,000 cases, while the remaining two areas (Cork and Dublin South Central) had in excess of 2,000 cases. Since Q2 2019 (June), there has been a steady decrease in open cases within the Carlow / Kilkenny / South Tipperary area, with the number decreasing from 1,236 in 2019, to 933 in 2022 to the Q2 total of 714 in 2024.

Across the State, 77% (n=16,509) of open cases were allocated to a worker at the end of Q2 2024, down two percentage points from Q1 2024 (79%). The number of allocated cases reflects a changing environment in TUSLA, where allocation of cases to a social worker has become more difficult, due to reduced availability of social workers nationally. Many cases are now allocated to other professionals, and this also reflects the changing nature of social work teams. Within the Carlow / Kilkenny / South Tipperary area, there were a total of 487 (68.2%) open cases with an allocated social worker and 227 (31.8%) awaiting an allocated social worker. Dublin South Central reported the highest number of cases awaiting allocation (n=1,194; 24% of the State total) followed by Cork (n=482; 10% of State total), Dublin South West/ Kildare/West Wicklow (n=462; 9% of State total), Louth/Meath (n=450; 9% of State total), Dublin South East/Wicklow (n=340; 7% of State total) and Midwest (n=337; 7% of State total). These six areas account for 67% (n=3,265) of cases awaiting allocation.

Across the State, 10% (n=500) of cases awaiting allocation at the end of Q2 2024 were categorised as high priority. This level is 131 (36%) more than Q1 2024 (369), but it is 24 (5%) fewer than Q2 2023 (524). Within the Carlow / Kilkenny / South Tipperary area, there were a total

of 36 (5% of all open cases) open cases that were classed as high priority.

Child Protection Notification System

Across the State, there were 1,024 children listed as ‘active’ on the Child Protection Notification System (CPNS) at the end of Q2 2024; this is 17 (2%) more than Q1 2024 (n=1,007) and the sixth consecutive increase. The CPNS, in accordance with the Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, 2011, is a national record of all children who are the subject of a child protection plan agreed at a child protection conference. The CPNS is accessible to named professional groups subject to strict protocols.

Within the Carlow / Kilkenny / South Tipperary area, there were 61 children listed as ‘active’ on the CPNS. This is equivalent to a rate of 9.8 per 10,000 population and is the sixth highest rate of all 17 reporting areas. All 61 children listed as ‘active’ on the CPNS have been allocated a social worker with 43 listed for 0-6

months (70%), 14 listed for 7-12 months (23%), 4 listed for 12-18 months (7%) and no child listed for longer than 18 months.

Children in Care

Across the State, there were 5,804 children in care at the end of Q2 2024, 44 (<1%) more than Q1 2024 (n=5,760). This figure (n=5,804) includes 141 children reported by the Service for Separated Children Seeking International Protection.

Across the 17 areas, the number of children in care ranged from 676 in Cork to 114 in Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan. Dublin North City reported the highest rate of children in care per 1,000 population under 18 years (9.4). This is more than double the national rate, and it is followed by Waterford/Wexford (6.2), Donegal (5.4) and the Midwest (5.2). The lowest rate reported was in Dublin South East/Wicklow (2.3) followed by Dublin South West/Kildare/West Wicklow (3.6) and Dublin North (4.0).

Within the Carlow / Kilkenny / South Tipperary area, there were a total of 312 children in care, which is equivalent to 5 per 1,000 children aged 0-17 years of age. This is the fifth-highest rate in the State. Of the 312 children in care, 200 were in Foster Care General, 88 in Relative Foster Care, 12 in Residential Care General and 12 in other placement types.

Across the State, 80% (n=4,671) of children in care at the end of Q2 2024 had an allocated worker with 1,133 (20%) children awaiting the allocation of a worker at the end of Q2 2024; this figure is 150 (15%) more than Q1 2024 (n=983). The percentages with an allocated worker ranged from 38% (Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary) to 100% (Donegal, Mayo and Galway/Roscommon). Seven areas reported allocation rates of 90% or higher.

The area with the highest number of children awaiting allocation is the Midwest (n=241; 48%). This is followed by Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary (n=194; 62%), Dublin South West/Kildare/ West Wicklow (n=154; 39%), Dublin South Central (n=93; 28%) and Louth/Meath (n=79; 19%). These five areas account for 67% (n=761) of all cases awaiting allocation.

Crime Incidents

An analysis of crime trends in the Kilkenny/Carlow Division across all the offence groups shows that there were 4,718 recorded offences in the year to Q2 2024. In general, recorded crime incidents have decreased from a high of 5,366 in the year to Q2 2016 to a low of 4,202 in the year to Q2 2021 (COVID). The largest types of offences committed in the year to Q2 2024 were 'Theft and Related Offences' (4,413 or 29.9%) and 'Public Order Offences' (830 or 17.6%).

Owner-Occupied Housing

In County Kilkenny, forty-two percent of households are outright owner occupiers i.e. they do not have a mortgage. This figure is five percentage points higher than the corresponding value for Ireland (37%), and within County Kilkenny, as is the case elsewhere in Ireland, the highest rates of outright home ownership are in rural areas, especially among farming households. Values are also higher in areas that have older (i.e. inter-generational) housing stock, as evidenced by the data in respect of County Kilkenny's four MDs. Fewer than

a third (31.5%) of homes in Kilkenny City and just over a fifth (21.2%) in Waterford's northern suburbs are owned outright by their residents. Within Kilkenny City, the proportion of households that own their homes outright is highest (>33%) in the more established neighbourhoods, such as those along Grange's Road and Freshford Road, Geldine, the Castlecomer Road, and Ardnore. Mullinavat is the only town or village in which more than half of homes are owner occupied without a mortgage, while the proportion exceeds forty-five percent in Inistioge, Moneenroe, Freshford, Kilmacow, Bennettsbridge and Knocktopher.

Almost thirty percent (29.5%) of households in County Kilkenny are owner occupiers with a mortgage or loan. This proportion is slightly above the corresponding values for Ireland, the Southern Region and South-East Region. Across the county's four MDs, Kilkenny has the smallest proportion (24.4%), while Piltown has the highest proportion (34.3%), and these figures are associated with a faster rate of new house building in the Piltown MD, especially in Waterford's suburbs and peri-urban fringe, than was the case in County Kilkenny as a whole, over the past two decades. The proportion of households that own their home, with a mortgage, is almost fifteen percentage points higher in Waterford's northern suburbs than is the case in Kilkenny City; the respective values are 24% and 38.7%. High values (i.e. >40%) are also evident in the villages of Paulstown, Stoneyford and Fiddown - associated with population growth over the past twenty years. In contrast, the lowest values (<20%), on this indicator, are in Kilkenny City Centre and in Johnstown, Inistioge, Freshford, Clogh, Graiguenamanagh-Tinnahinch and New Ross.

The composite data in respect of home ownership (i.e. those with and those without mortgages) further emphasise the spatial patterns outlined in the two preceding paragraphs. The rate of home ownership is higher in County Kilkenny than is the case across Ireland; the

respective figures are 71.6% and 65.9%. Within the county, the highest rates of home ownership are in rural areas and villages, and in Kilkenny City's peri-urban fringe. The lowest rates are in Kilkenny City's urban core and in settlements that have relatively high proportions of households who rent their homes – either from private landlords, approved housing bodies or Kilkenny County Council.

Just over one in eight households (12.7%) in County Kilkenny are renting their homes from a private landlord. This proportion is more than five percentage points lower than the corresponding value for Ireland (18%), and it is lower than the value for the SouthEast Region (14.5%). Sub-county figures reveal that renting from a private landlord is more prevalent in urban areas than in rural areas. Almost a quarter (22.8%) of households in Kilkenny City are renting from a private landlord, while the corresponding figure for Waterford's northern suburbs is also above the county and national figures; it stands at 18.3%. After Kilkenny City, Urlingford has the second-highest proportion (21.7%) of households, who are renting from a private landlord. In Urlingford's case, this phenomenon is associated, in part, with a significant non-Irish population (as noted earlier in this report). Ballyhale, Inistioge and Fiddown also have relatively high (>16%) proportion of households who are renting from a private landlord, but the absolute numbers (n=23 and n=24) are small in a county context. In Piltown, there are 72 households renting from a private landlord, and these account for almost one in seven (15.2%) of all households.

Just over one in ten (10.4%) of households, in County Kilkenny, are renting their homes from Kilkenny County Council or an approved housing body

(AHB). This proportion is slightly above the corresponding value for Ireland (10%), and slightly below the value for the South-East Region (11.4%). The proportion of households who are renting from the local authority or an AHB (social renting) is higher in urban areas than in rural areas in County Kilkenny. The proportions in Kilkenny City (17.3%) and Waterford's northern suburbs (18.7%) are more than seven percentage points higher than the county figure. Within Kilkenny City, the proportion of households in this category exceeds fifty percent in some neighbourhoods off the Hebron Road, Connolly Street, Pearse Street and in the Newpark area. Across the county's towns and villages, those with the most significant numbers of households (considering absolute and relative values) who are social renting are as follows: Clogh, Urlingford, Goresbridge and Ballyhale.

The composite data in respect of households who are renting their homes further emphasise the spatial patterns outlined in the two preceding paragraphs. The proportion of households who are renting their homes is lower in County Kilkenny than is the case across Ireland; the respective figures are 23.1% and 28%. Within the county, the highest rates (of private and social renting combined) are in urban areas, especially in Kilkenny City's urban core. Rates are also significant in Urlingford, Clogh and Ballyhale. The lowest rates are in rural areas.

The most recent (2022) data in respect of the housing assistance payment (HAP) indicate that there are 724 households in County Kilkenny in receipt of HAP supports. These represent 155.8 per 1,000 private rental tenancies – the twelfth-lowest rate among Ireland's thirty-one local authority areas. There has been a gradual decline in the number of HAP tenancies in County Kilkenny

since 2018, when there were over 900 in the county. While the Kilkenny MD has the highest absolute number of HAP properties (n=296), it has the lowest relative proportion (125.2 per 1,000 private rental tenancies) among the county's four MDs. Castlecomer has the highest rate (210.8 per 1,000 private rental tenancies). HAP expenditure in County Kilkenny, for the period 2019 – 2021 amounted to €3.3m – the eight-lowest level among Ireland's local authority areas.



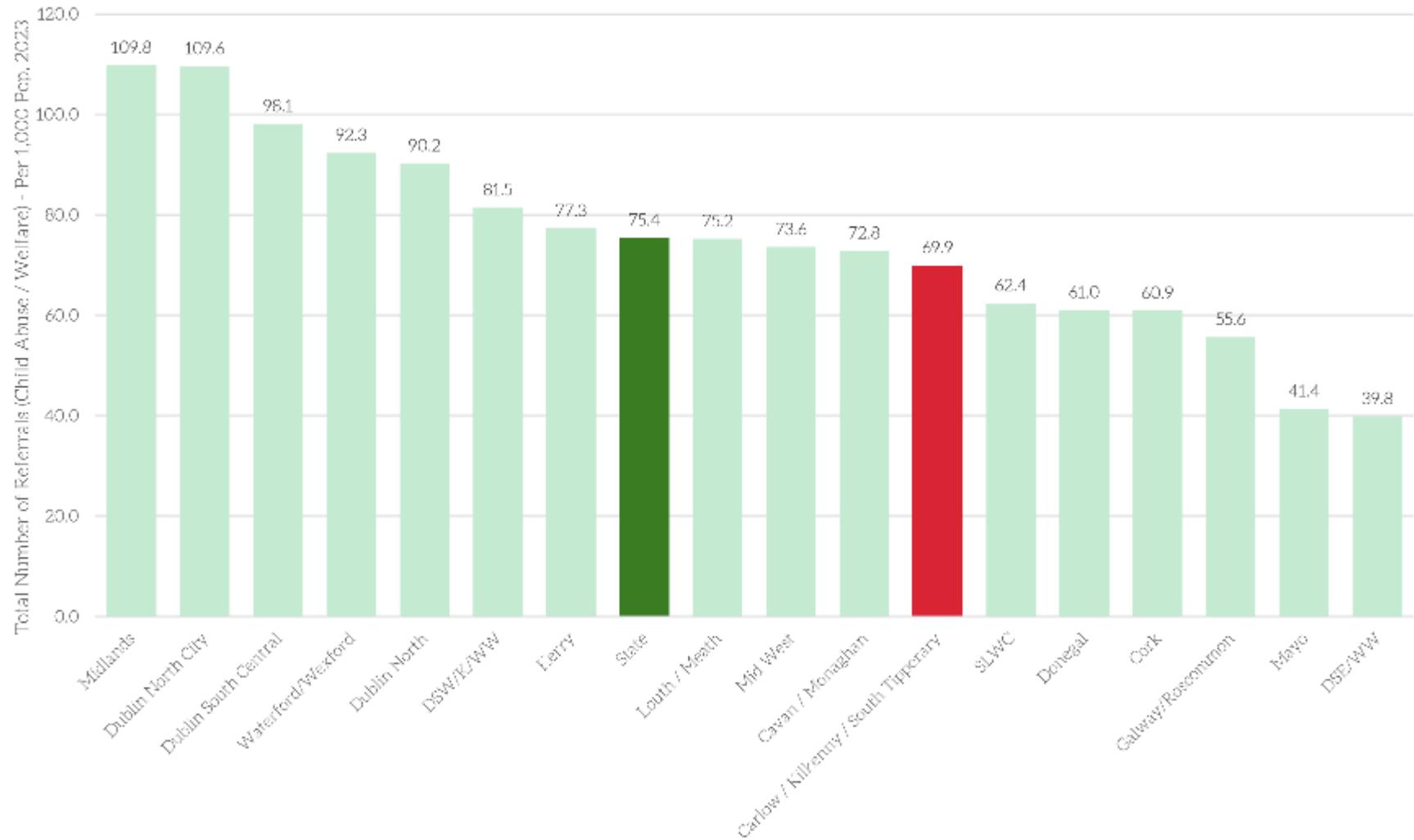


Figure 6.1: Total Number of Referrals (Child Abuse / Welfare) - Per 1,000 Pop, 2023

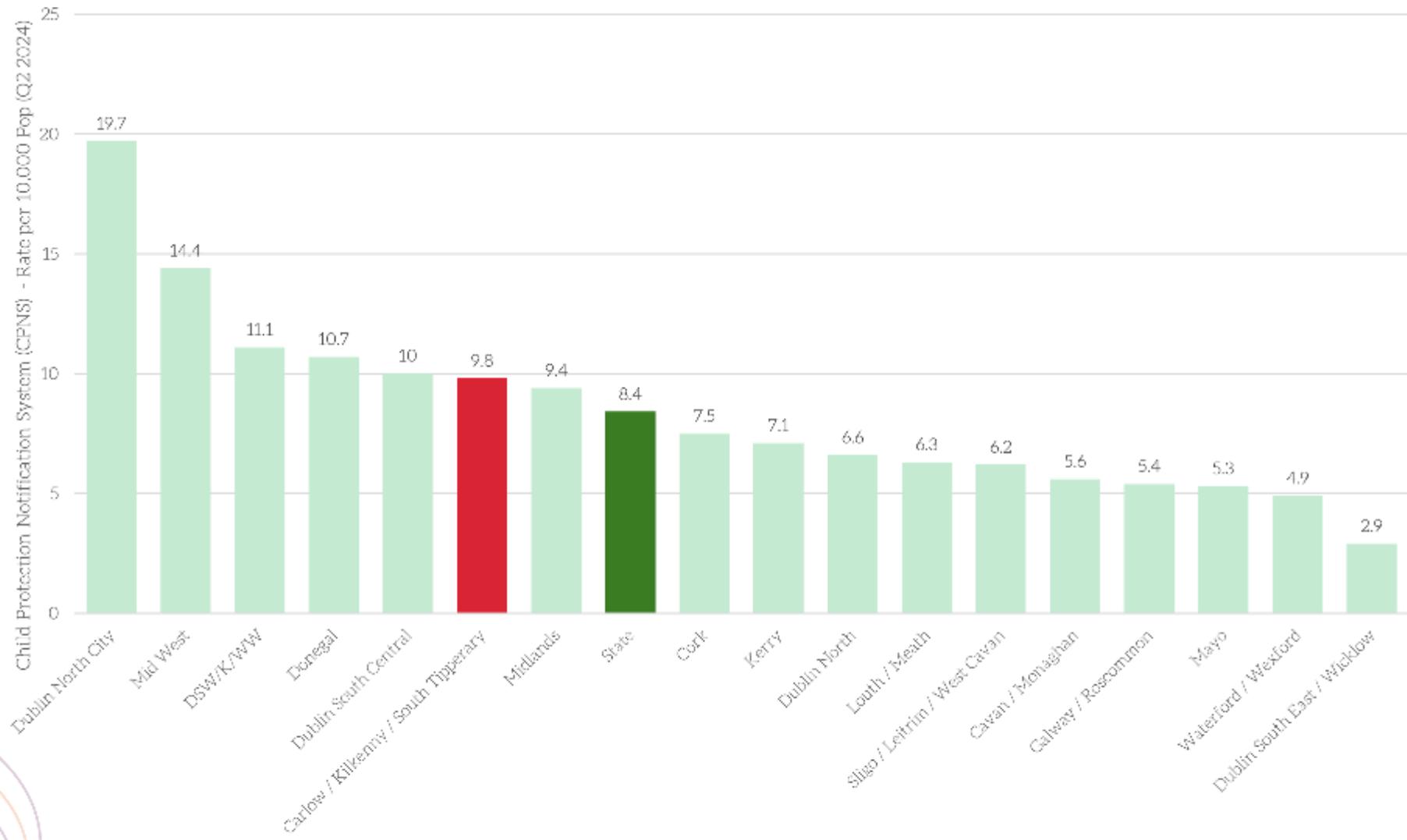


Figure 6.2: Child Protection Notification System (CPNS) - Rate per 10,000 Pop (Q2 2024)

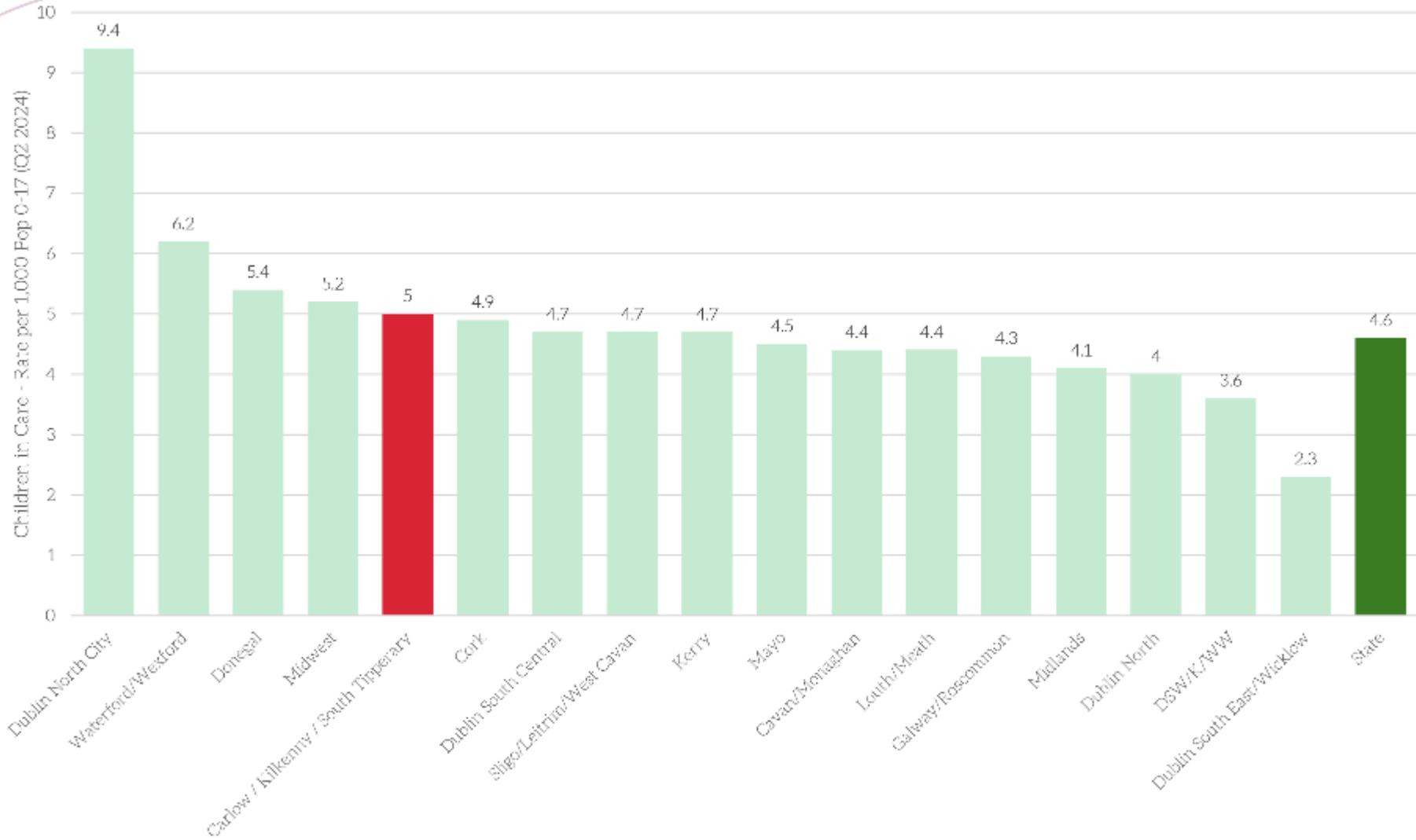


Figure 6.3: Children in Care - Rate per 1,000 Pop 0-17 (Q2 2024)

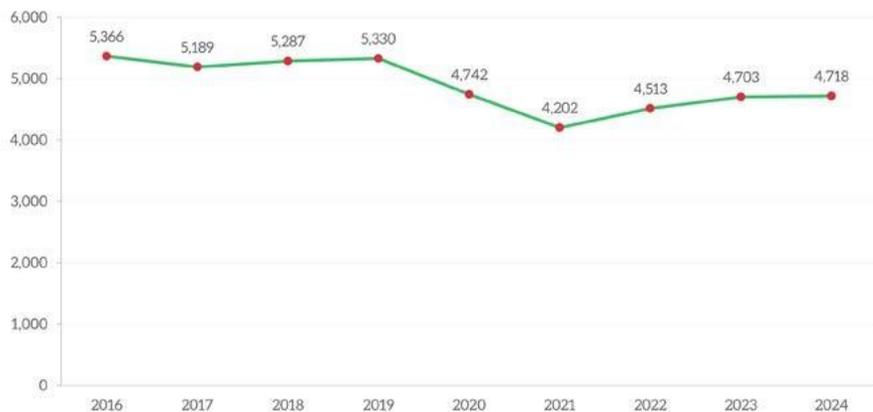


Figure 6.5: Total Crime Incidents in Kilkenny/Carlow Garda Division (Q2 2016-Q2 2024)

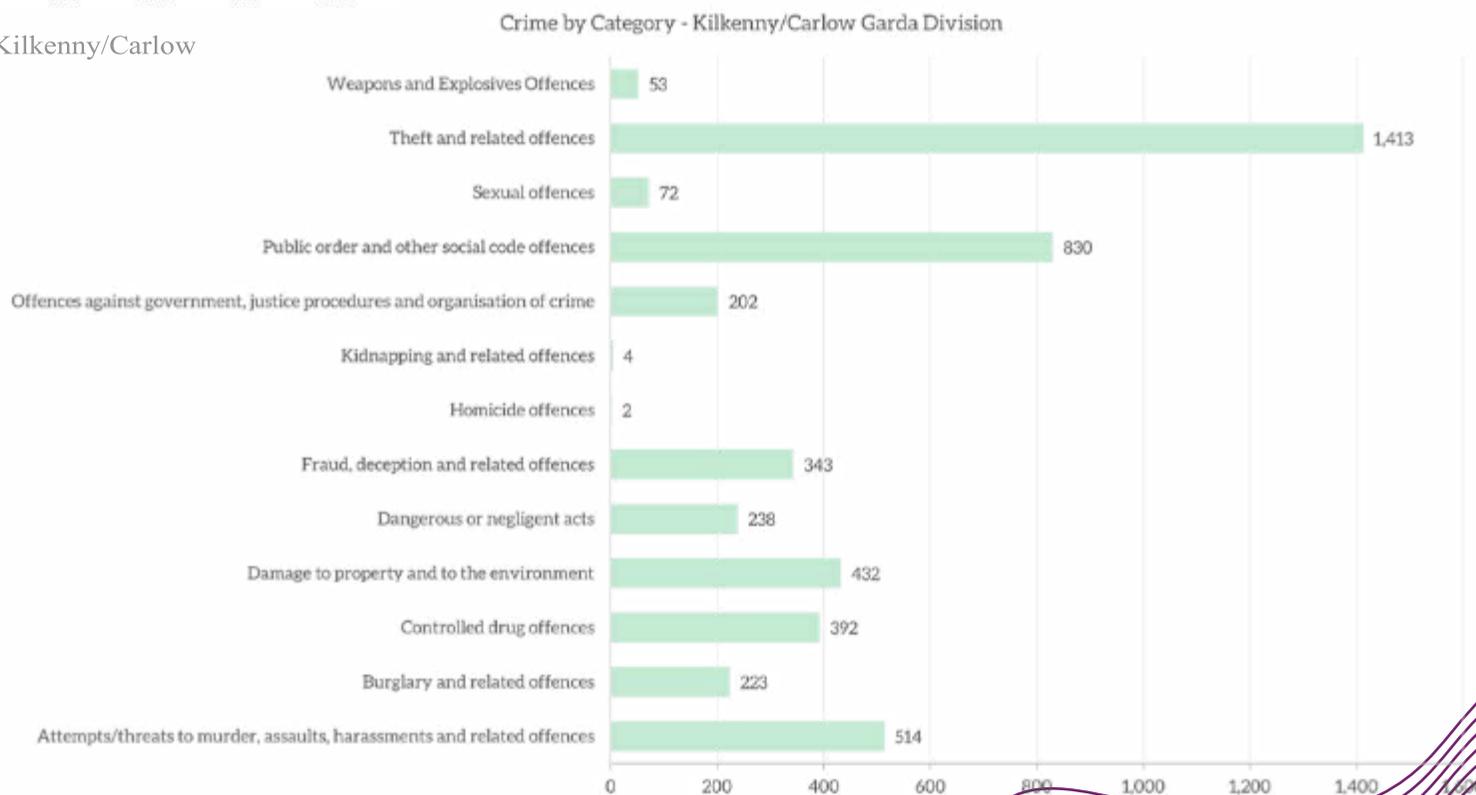


Figure 6.4: Crime Incidents by Category in Kilkenny/Carlow Garda Division Rolling Year 2024 (Q2)

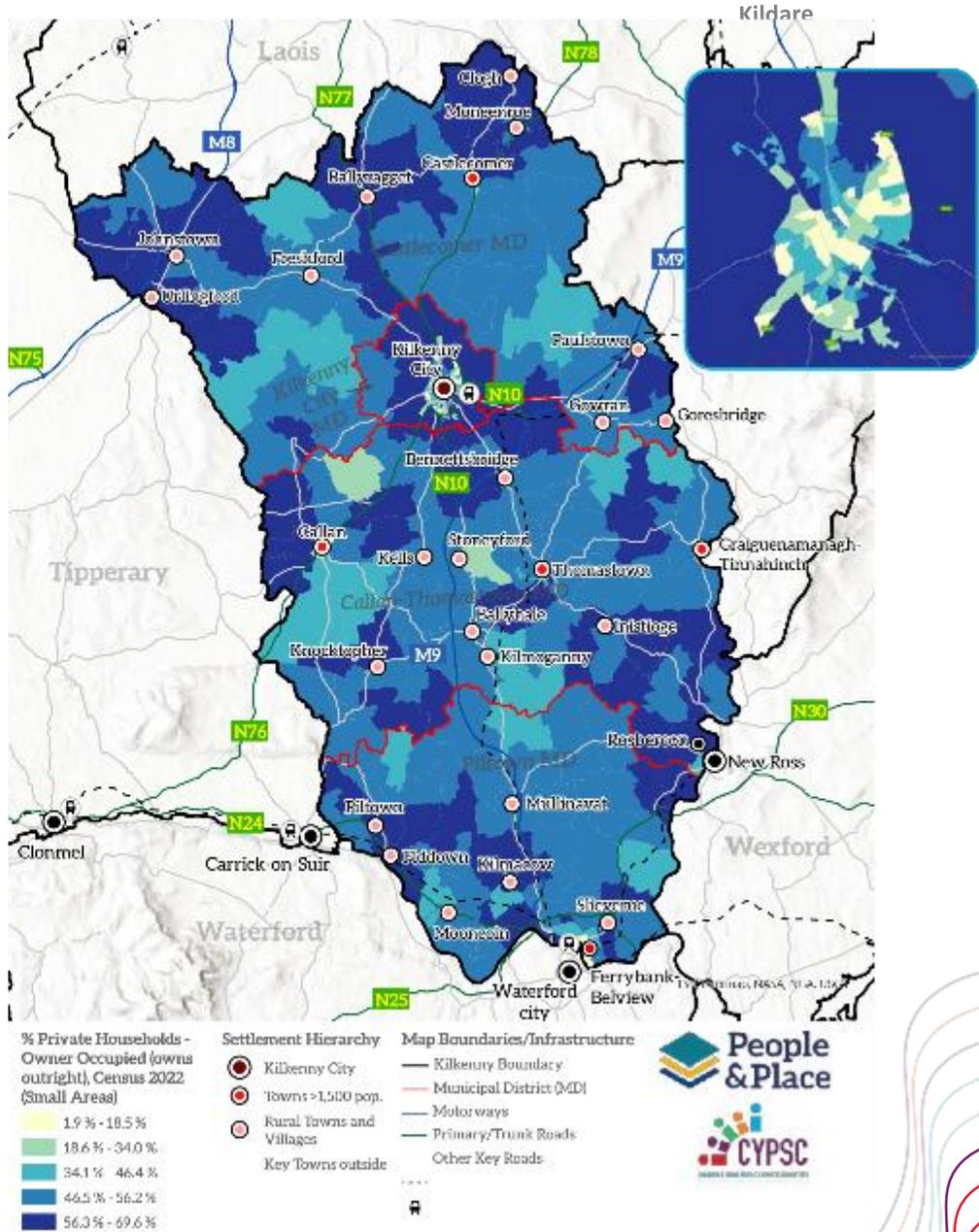
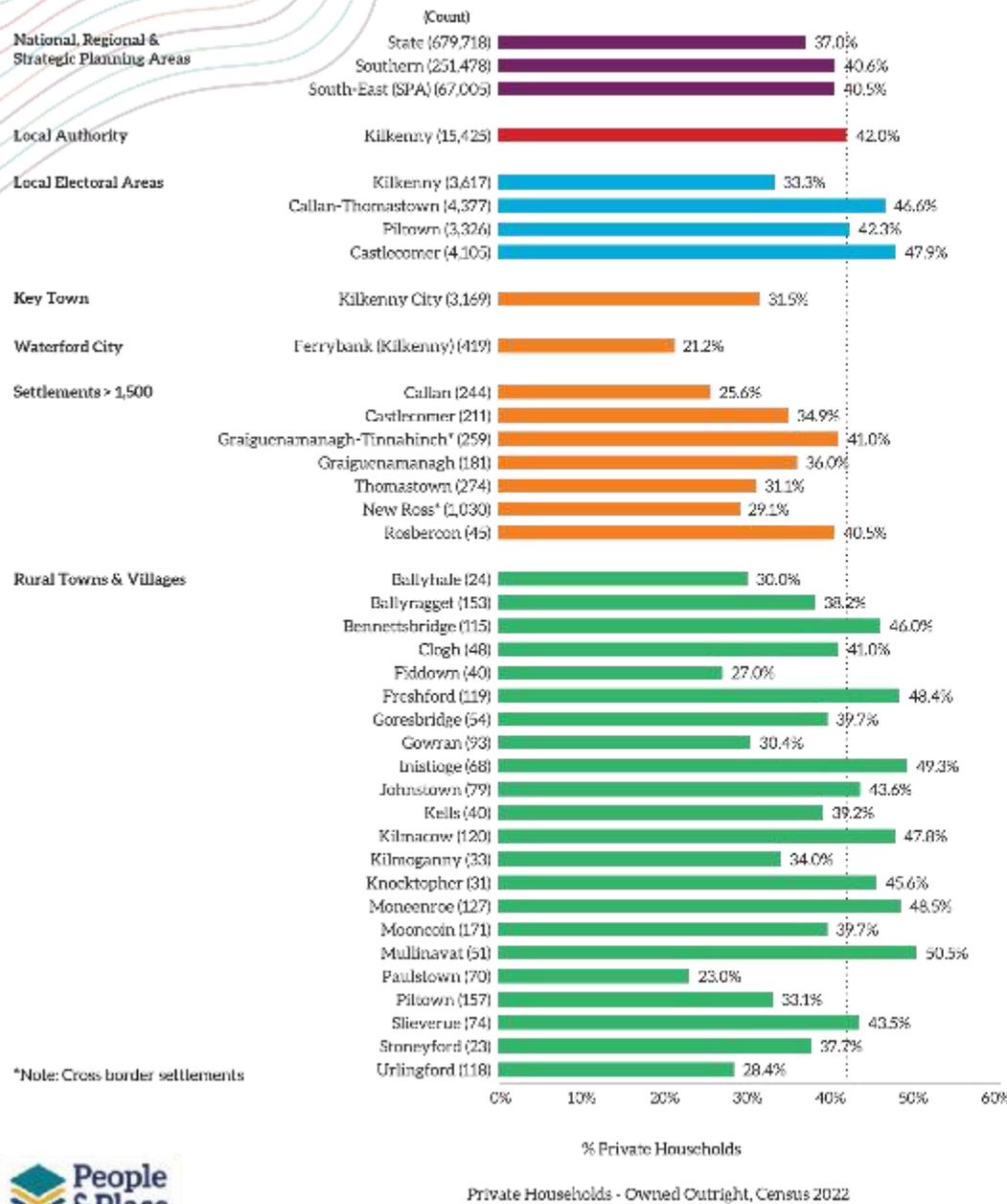
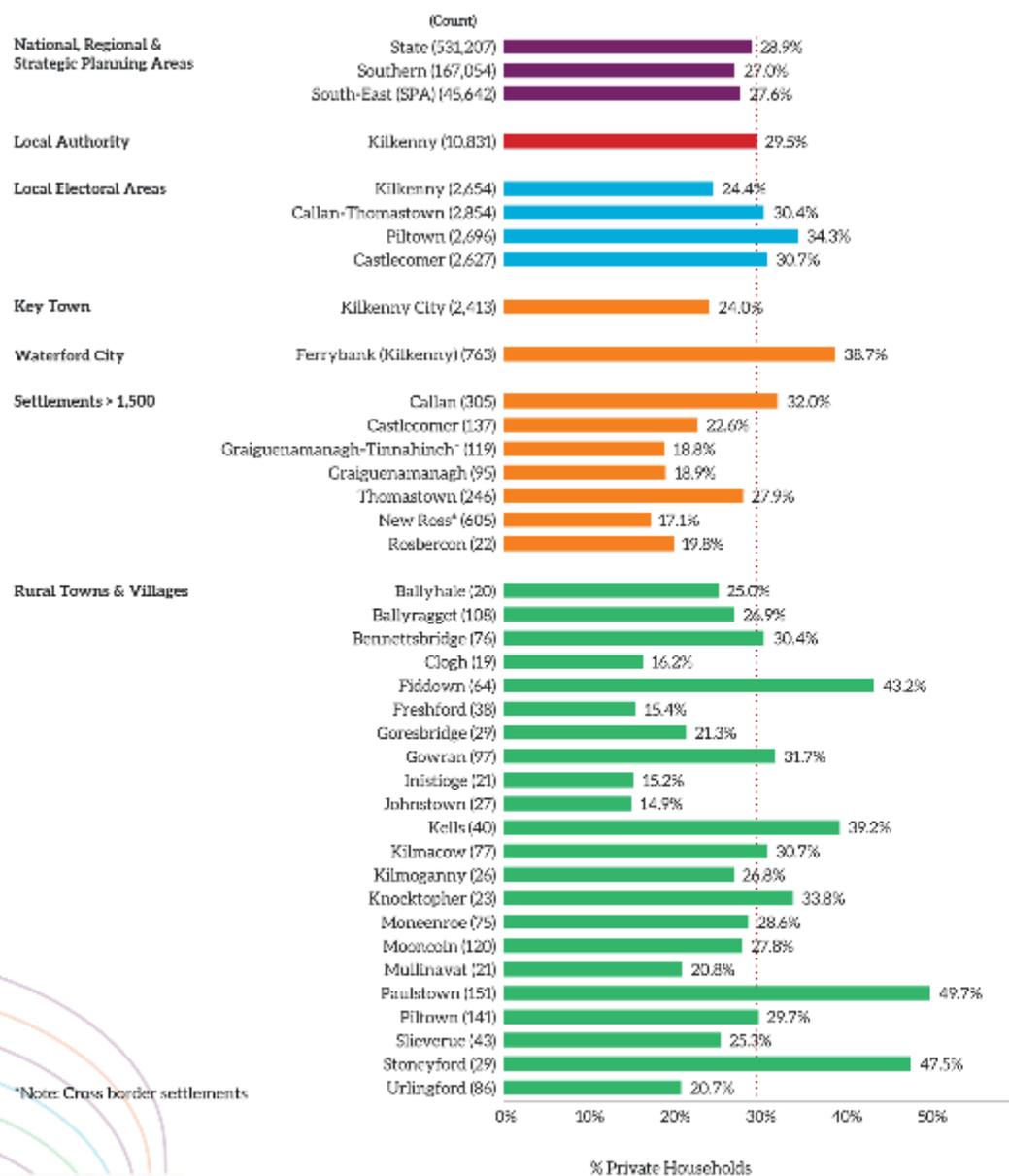


Figure 6.6: Private Households - % Owner Occupied (owns outright), 2022 (CSO Census 2022)



*Note: Cross border settlements



Private Households - Owned with Mortgage or Loan, Census 2022

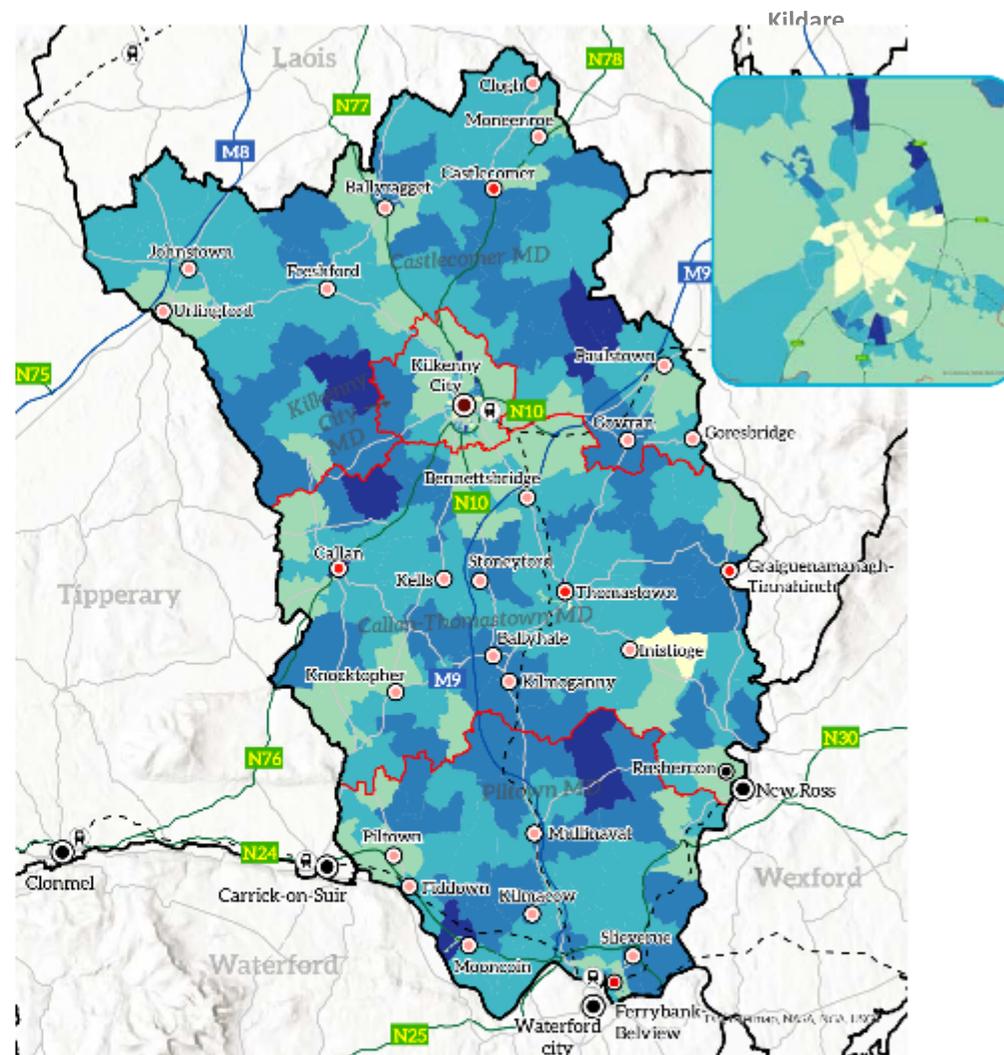
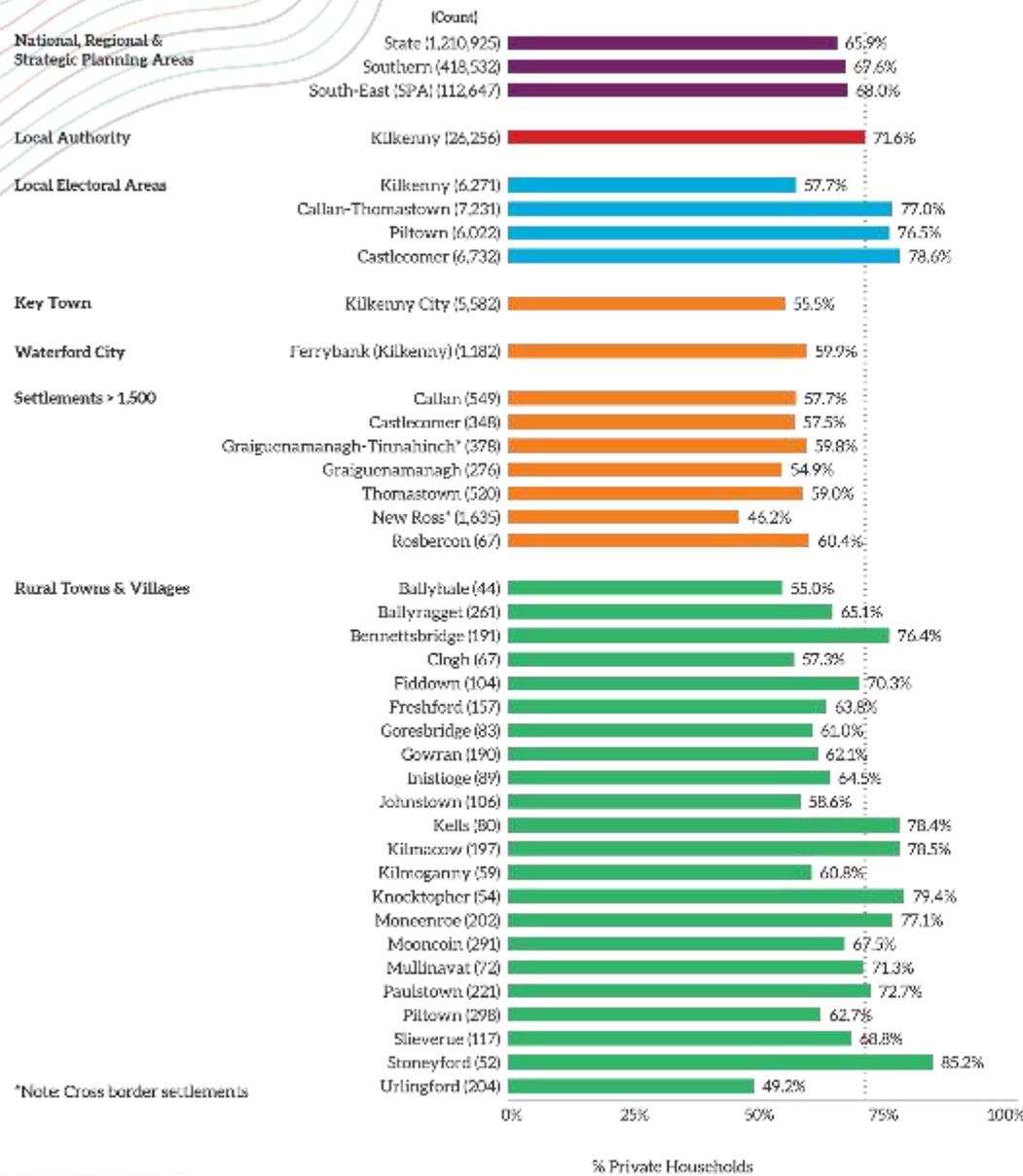


Figure 6.7: Private Households - % Owner Occupied (mortgage or loan), 2022 (CSO Census 2022)



*Note: Cross border settlements



Private Households - Owner Occupier All, Census 2022

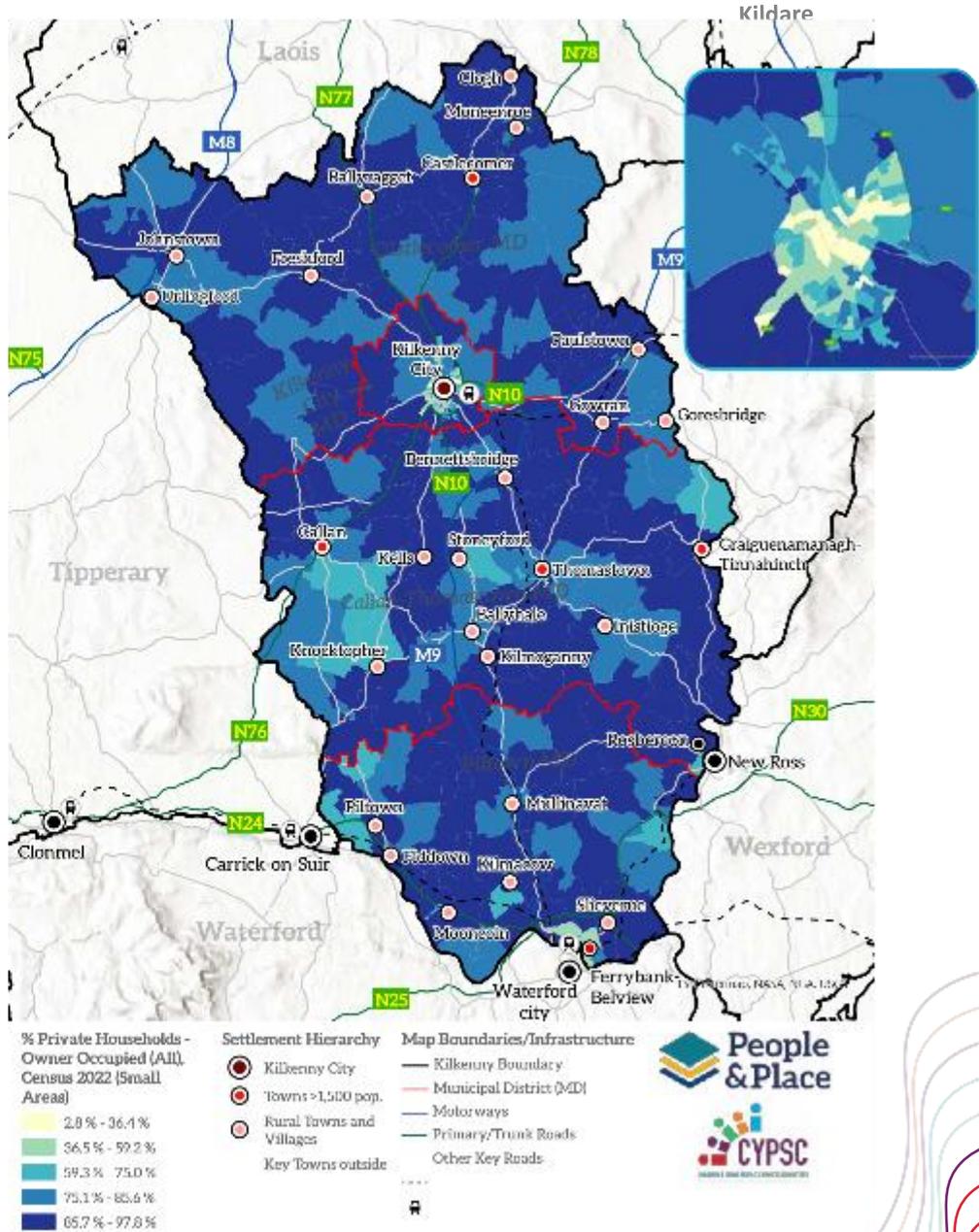
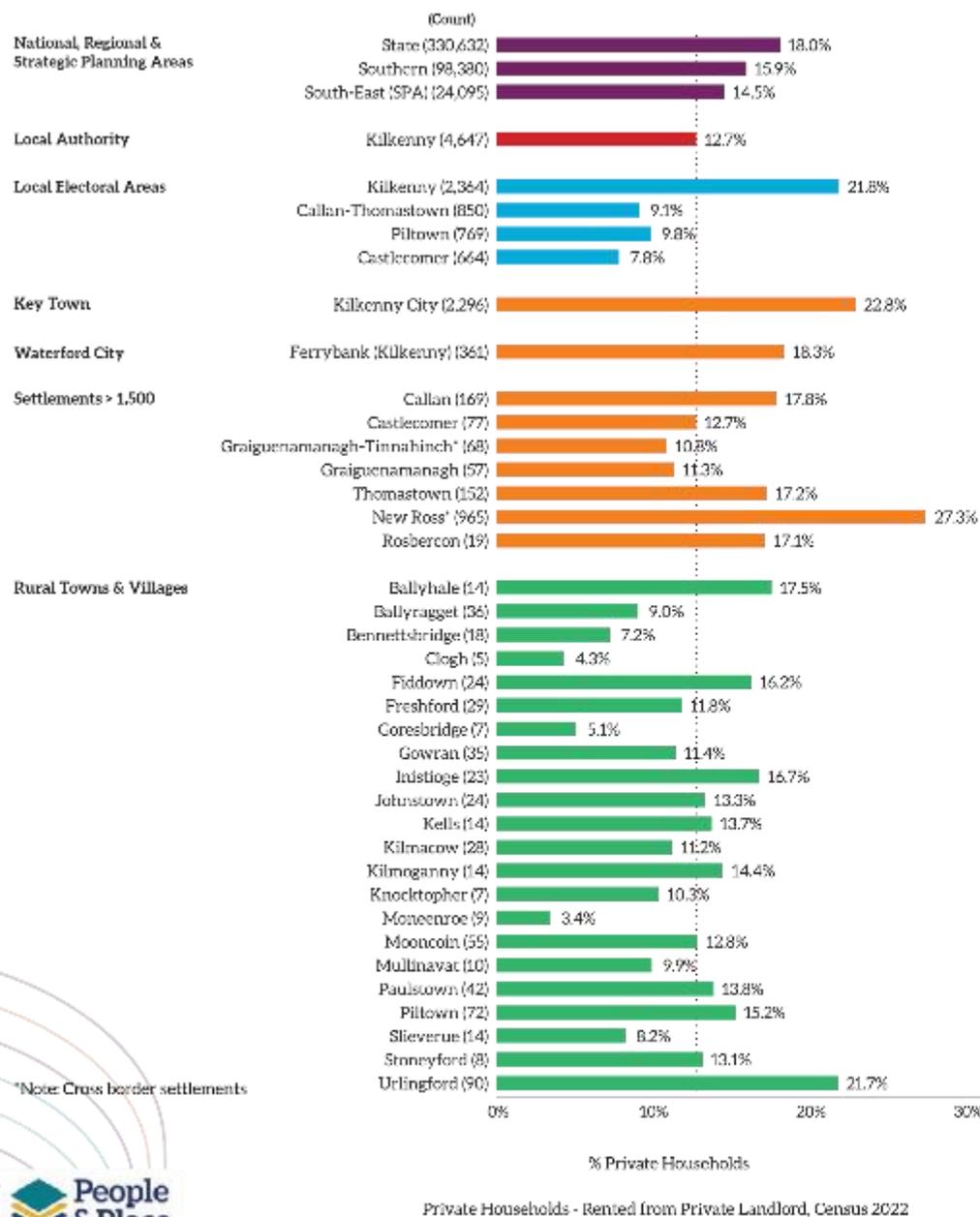


Figure 6.8: Private Households - % Owner Occupied (All), 2022 (CSO Census 2022)



*Note: Cross border settlements

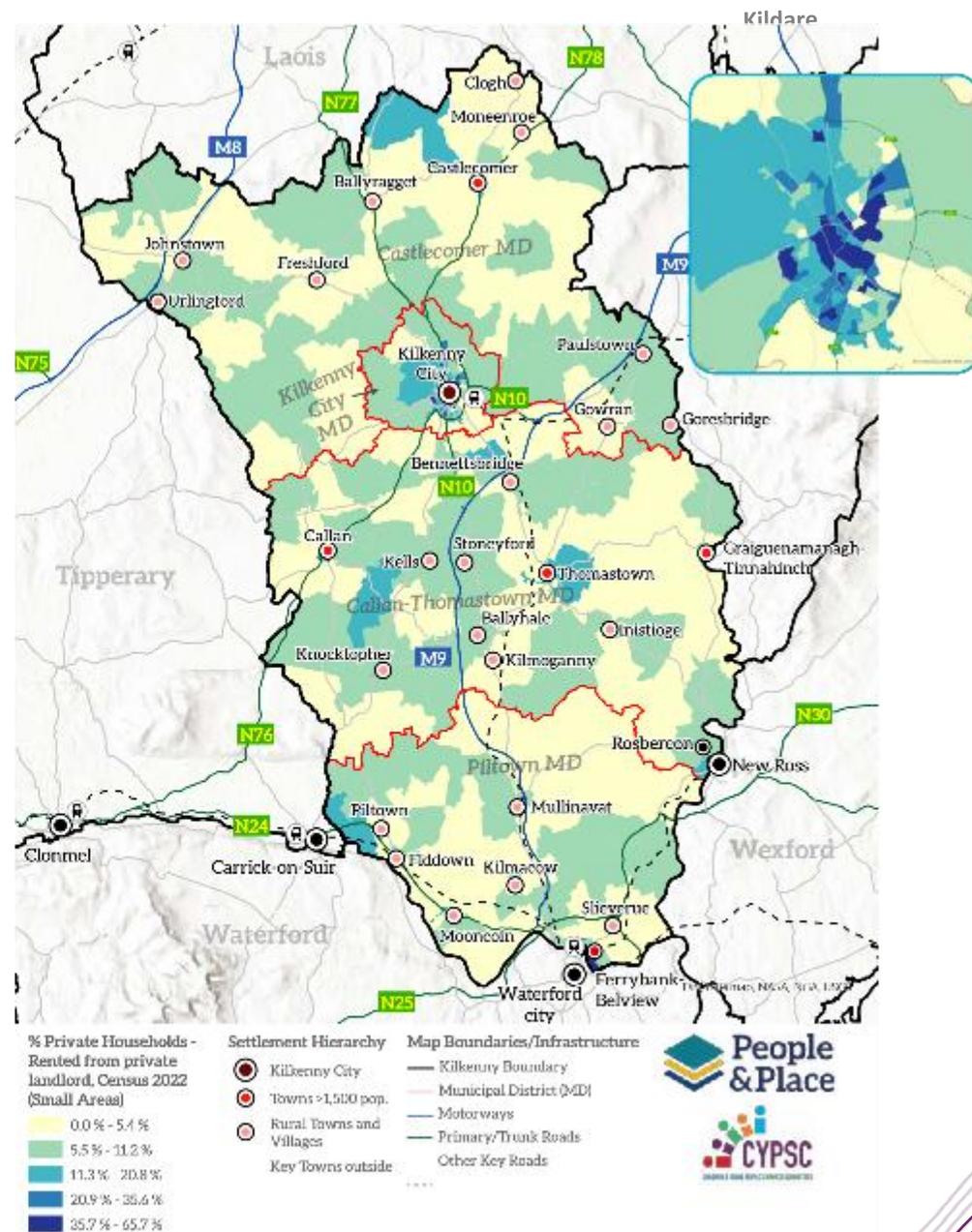
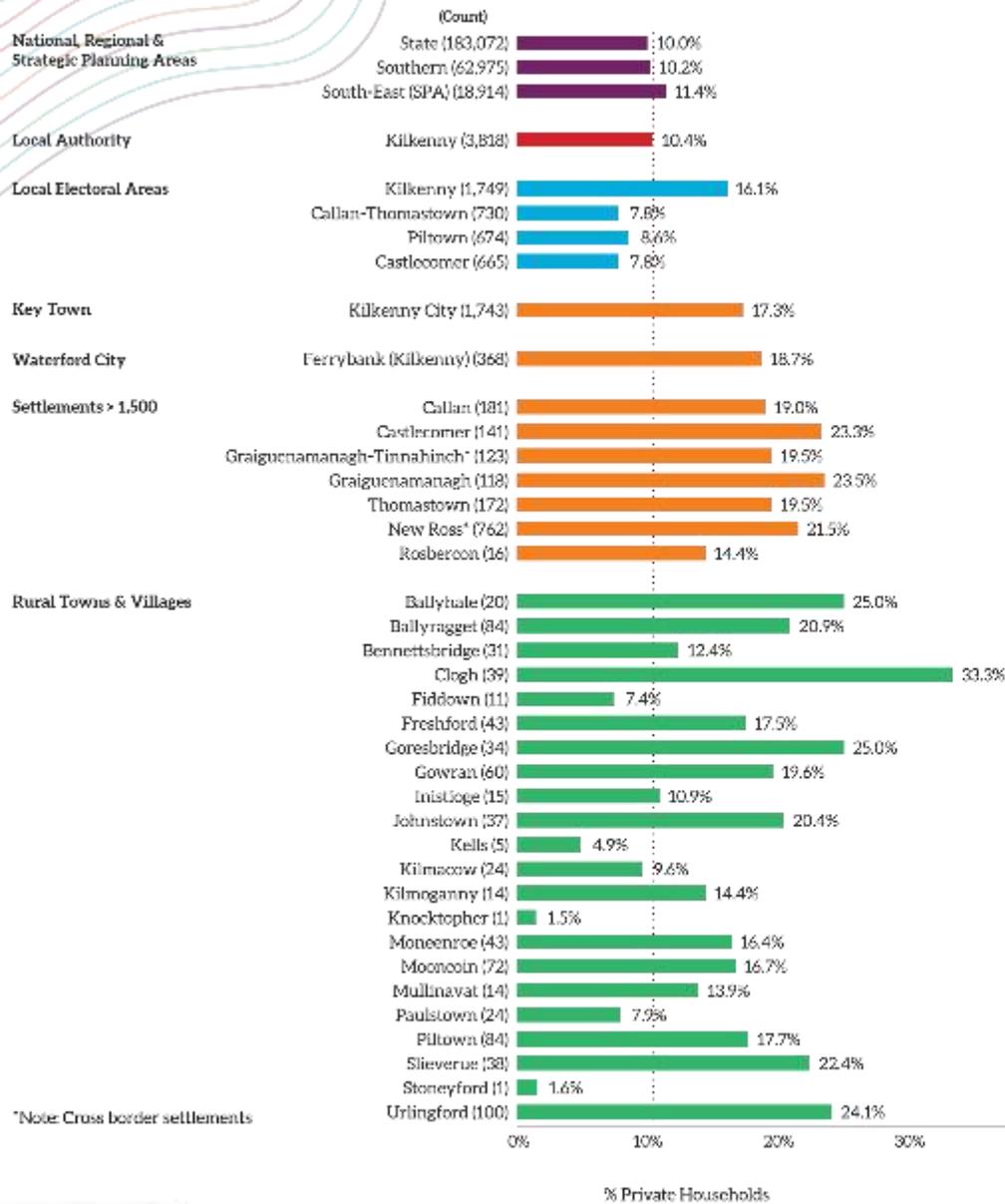


Figure 6.9: Private Households - % Rented from private landlord, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)



*Note: Cross border settlements

Private Households - Social Rented, Census 2022

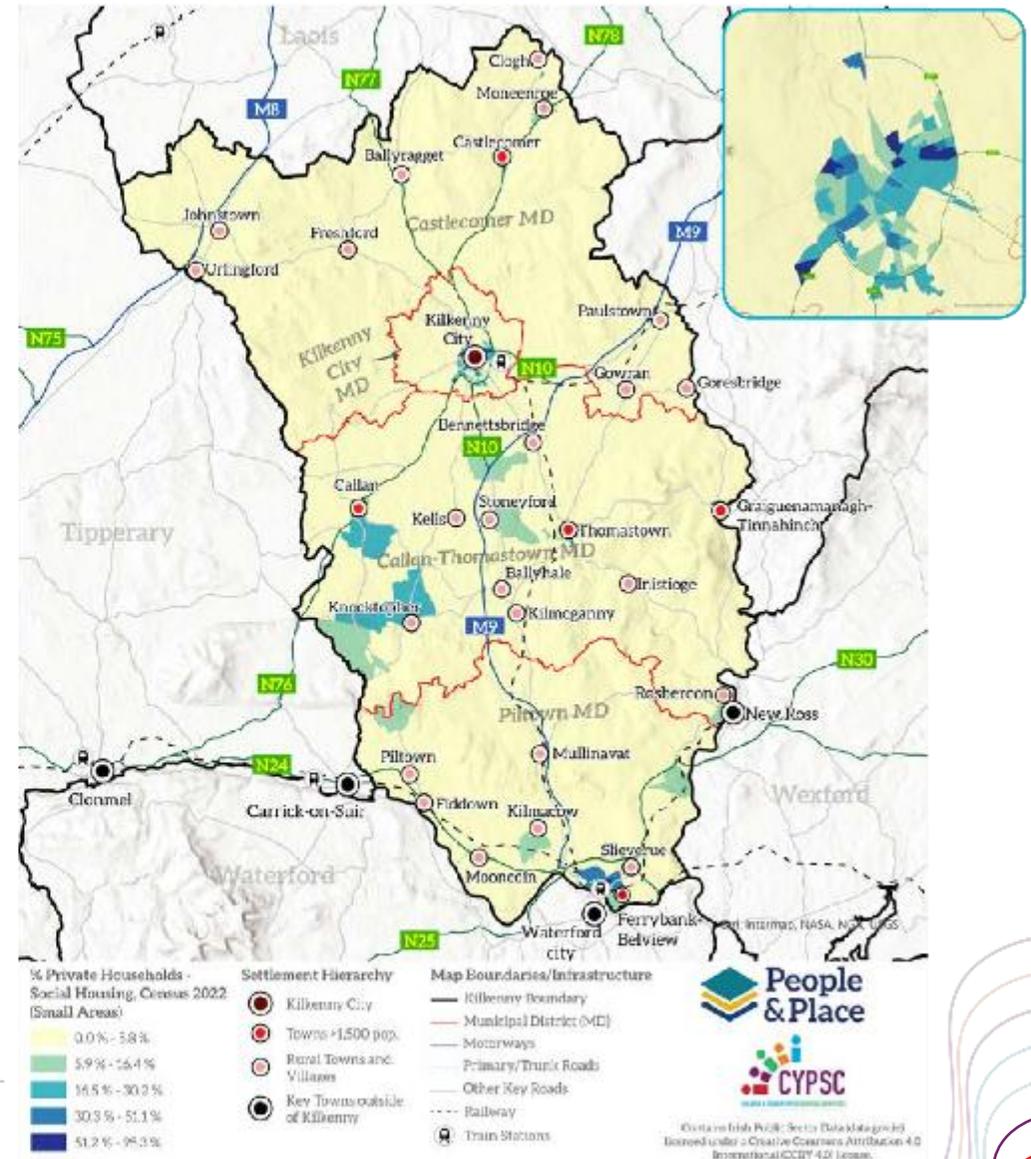


Figure 6.10: Private Households - % Social Rented, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

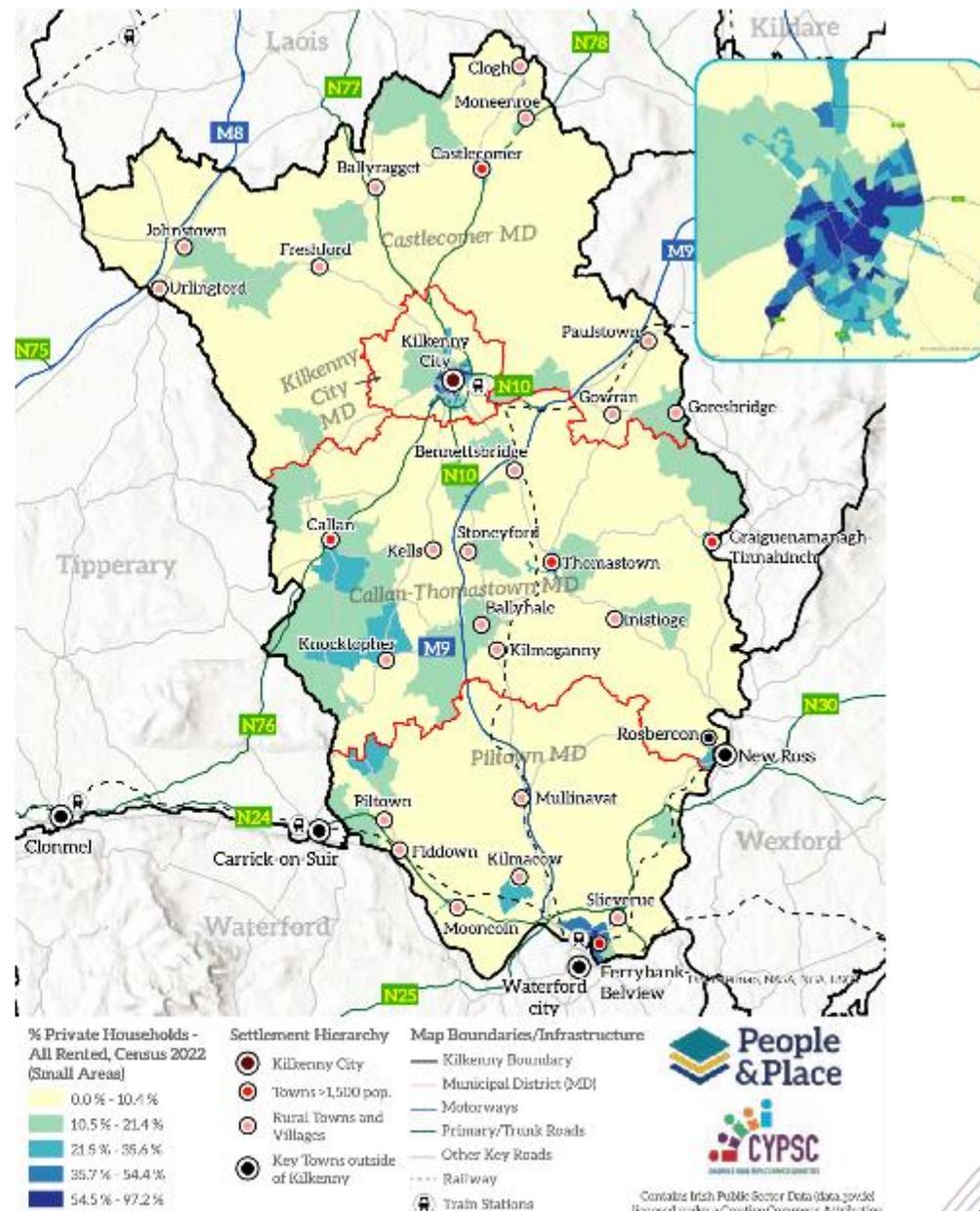
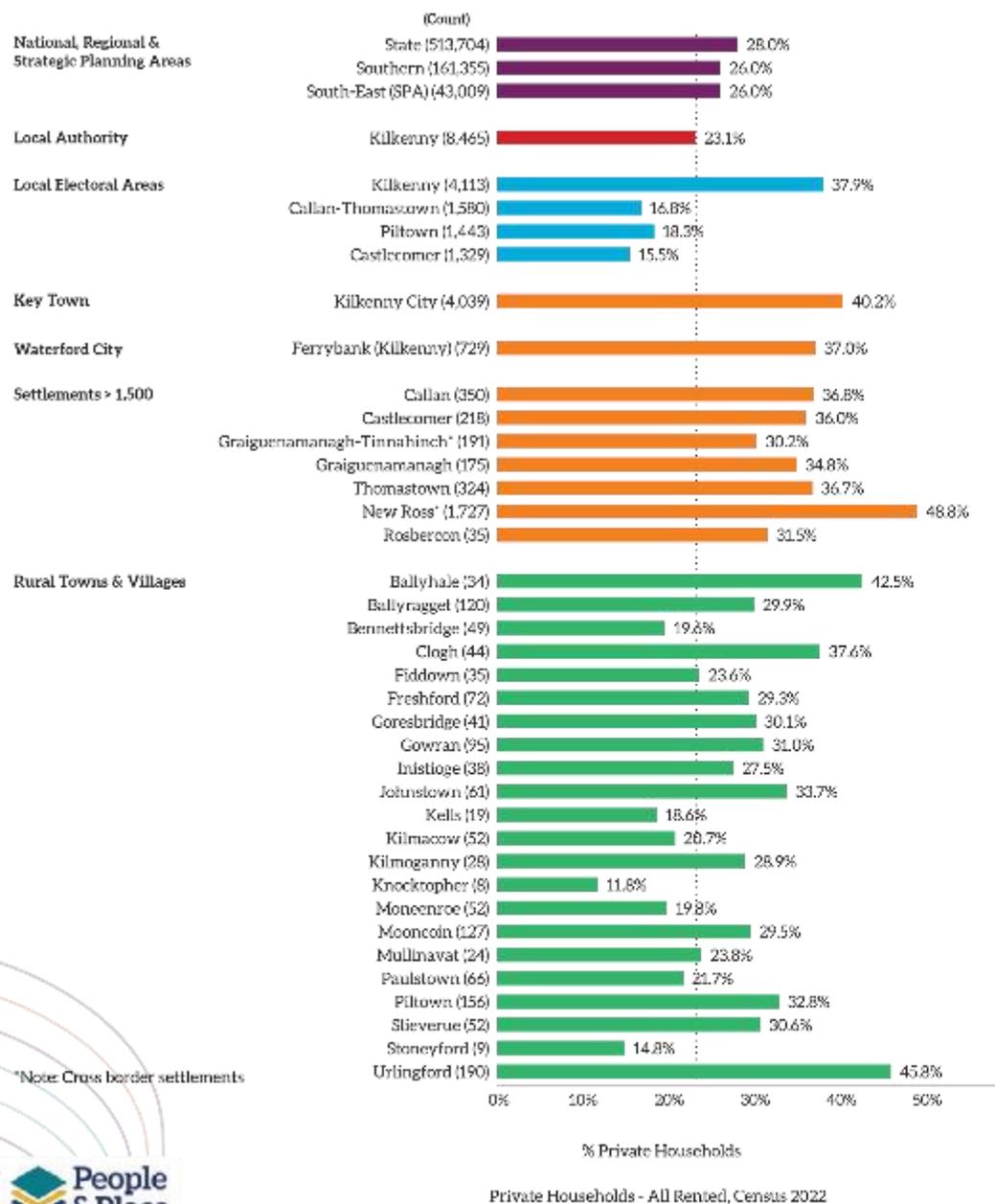


Figure 6.11: Private Households - % All Rented, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

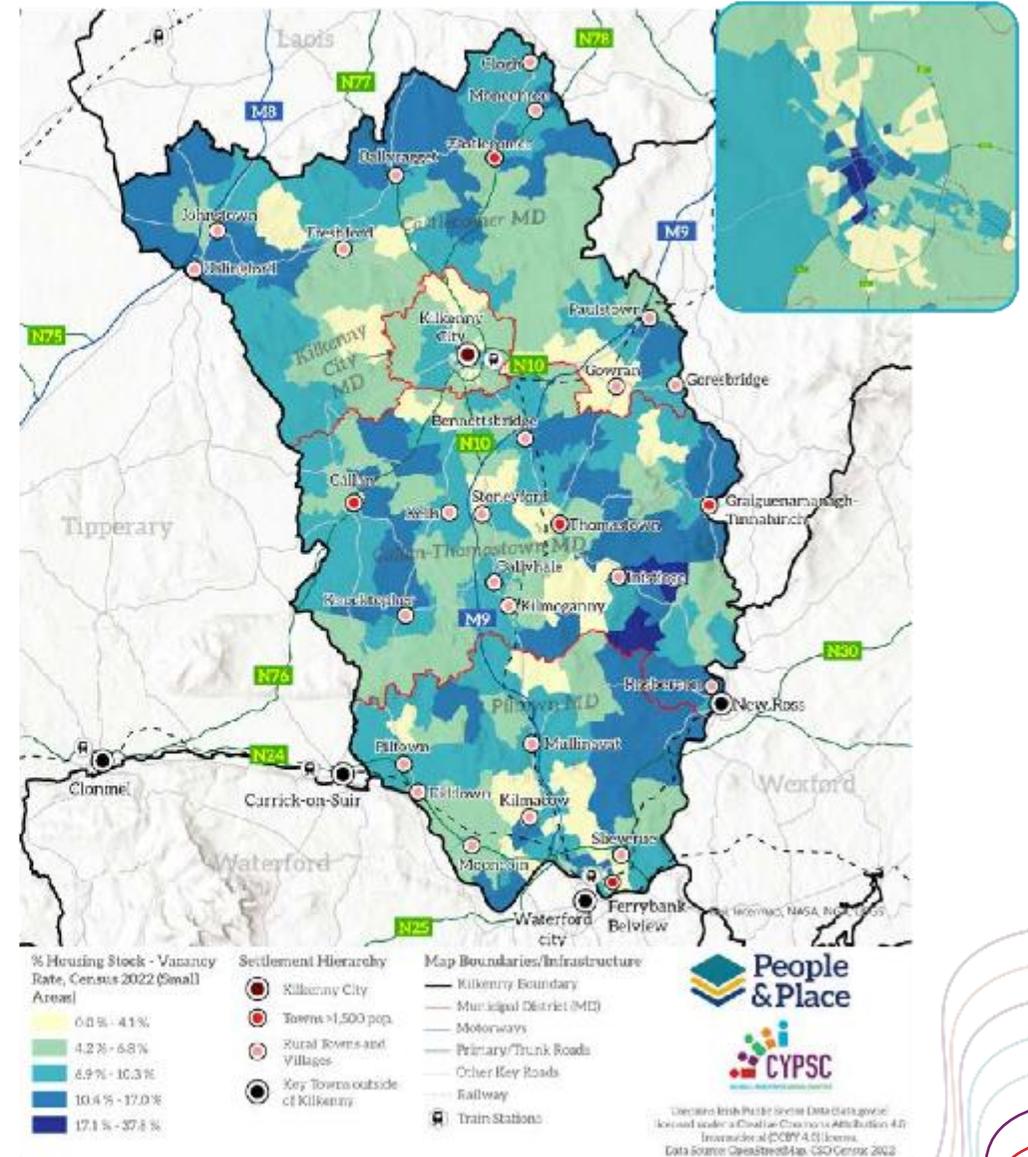
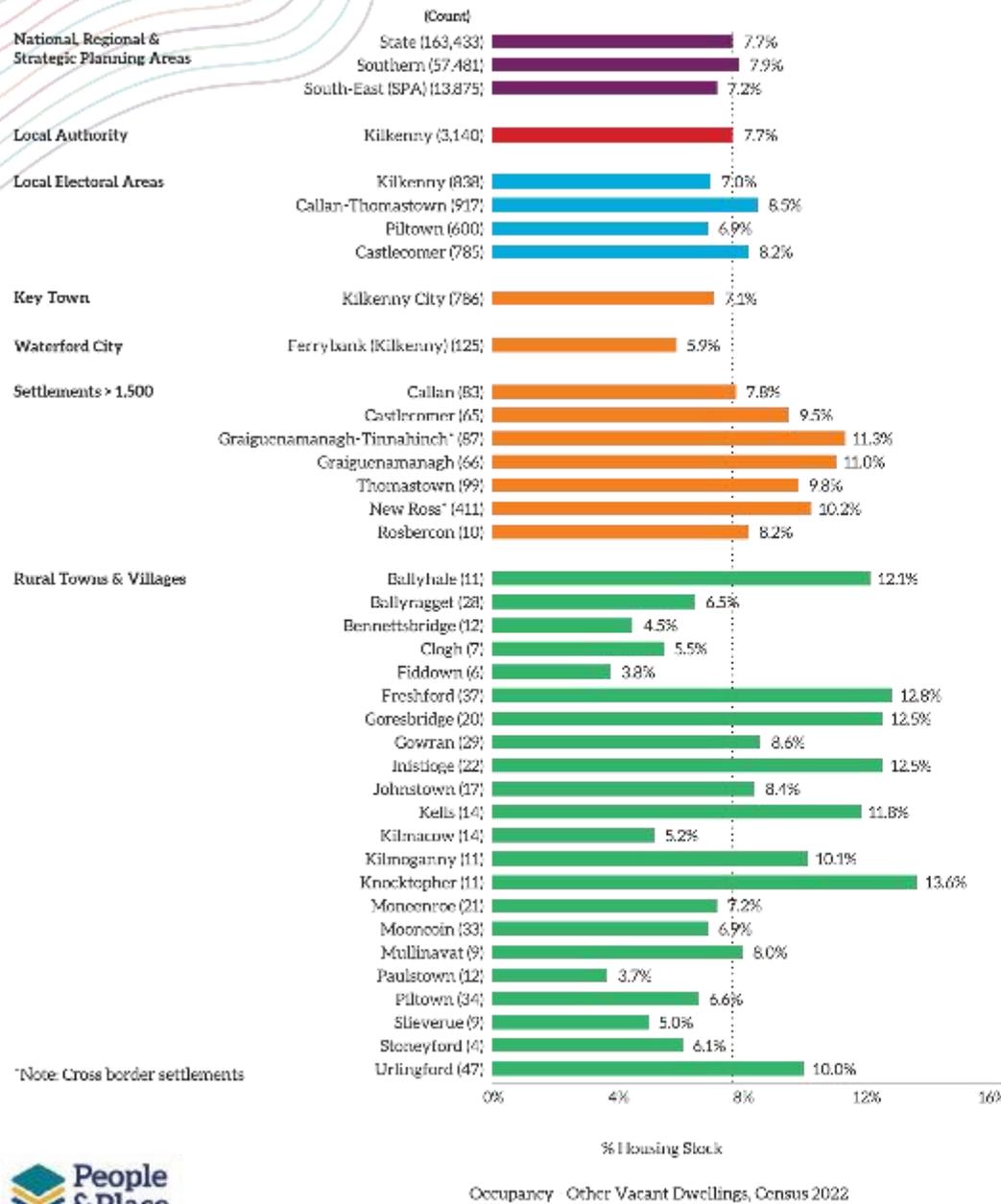


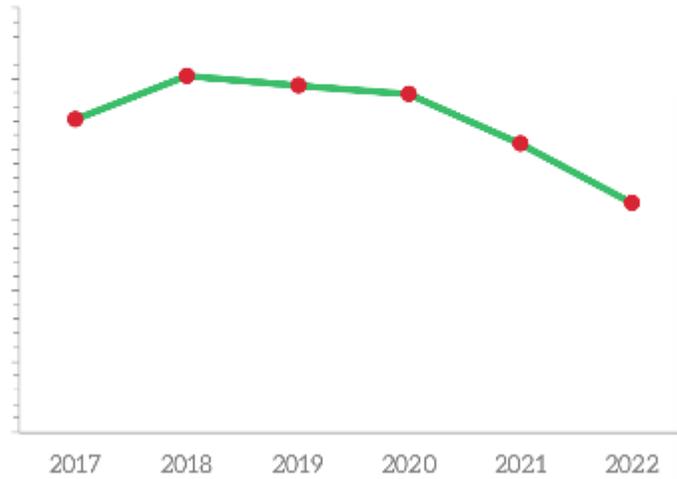
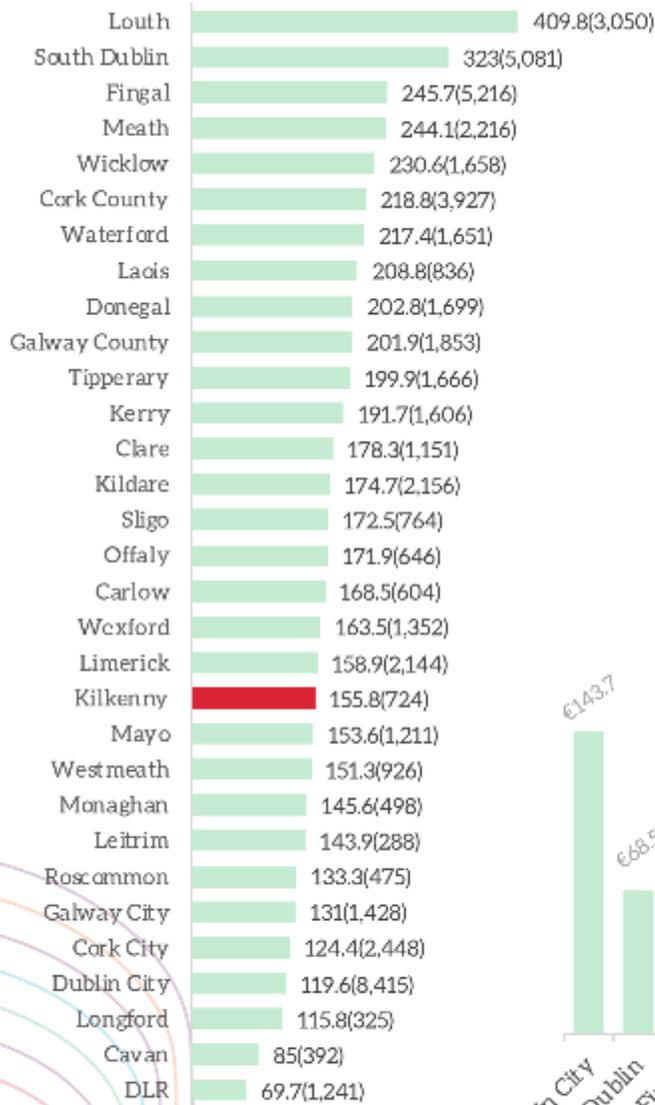
Figure 6.12: Housing Vacancy Rate, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

HAP Properties per 1,000 Private

Kilkenny County HAP Tenancy Timeline 2017 - 2022,

1,000

Rental Tenancies



HAP Properties per 1,000 Private Rental Tenancies by LEA, 2022



HAP Exchequer Spend 2021

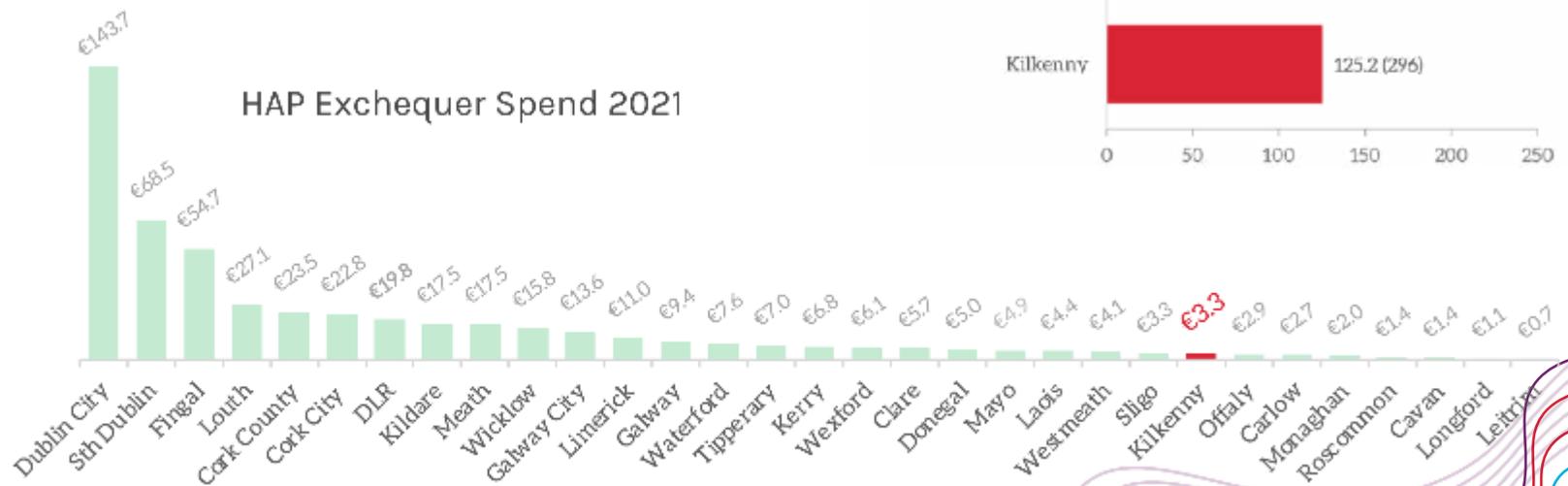


Figure 6.13: Kilkenny Housing Assistance Profile, 2022 (CSO Census 2022)

900
800
700 600 500
400

The statistical and spatial data presented in this report complement and add value to the knowledge, expertise and insights of local and regional stakeholders, including the members of the Kilkenny Children and Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC). Moreover, the data provide pointers and signposts that ought to assist local and regional stakeholders in making decisions and in designing and pursuing strategies that will deliver better outcomes for children and young people. Some of the data presented here may surprise readers, and stakeholders are encouraged to partake in discussions, and where appropriate, to undertake further research to garner additional data and insights. Many of the statistics and analysis presented in this report will serve to affirm stakeholders in the work they are currently doing and give them the ability to leverage resources and make further investments in frontline and strategic supports and interventions.

The data in this report relate, in the main, to the administrative unit that is County Kilkenny. This is a clearly defined geography – based on administrative boundaries, and statistics are presented, at county level, for each of the variables that Kilkenny CYPSC had specified at the outset of this assignment. People and Place has also presented all possible data at municipal district (MD) / local electoral area (LEA), electoral division (ED), town and village levels. We also recognise that residents of County Kilkenny relate to other geographies, in their everyday lives; many young people attend schools in adjoining counties, and they access services (e.g. healthcare) in regional centres, such as Waterford City. At the same time, many people from other counties, especially County Carlow, access services that are based in County Kilkenny. Therefore, county boundaries should be seen as fuzzy and porous – in line with socio-economic realities, and stakeholders are recommended to consult the corresponding CYPSC and other profiles for the counties that adjoin County Kilkenny.

In recognising the importance of contemporary geographical patterns, People and Place has included data in respect of all counties in the South-

East Region, and we have presented figures for the Waterford Metropolitan Area. Moreover, the data take account of settlements that straddle county boundaries such as New Ross-Rosbercon and Graiguenamanagh-Tinnahinch. The analysis presented here and People and Place's wider experiences of working in Counties Carlow and Wexford point to the merits of collaborative and inter-county approaches to addressing local needs and enhancing outcomes for young people in these communities and in other areas that are close to county boundaries.

Kilkenny CYPSC is a multi-stakeholder partnership, and it works in collaboration with several agencies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community representatives and service providers. The CYPSC has contributed to the formulation of the County Kilkenny Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2023-2028. The LECP includes several objectives specifically focused on supporting children and young people. Under Goal 11, which aims to address poverty and social exclusion, one objective highlights the importance of prioritising young people in efforts to reduce poverty and promote inclusion. The plan also recognises the need to create equal opportunities across various demographics, including children and youth, to ensure they can fully engage in social and economic activities. Additionally, the LECP goals around education and skills development include efforts to improve educational access and attainment, which indirectly benefits younger residents, aiming to empower them through better learning and development opportunities.

This profile has identified several strengths and foundations on which new and on-going strategic actions can be built. It has also identified areas of need, and it has highlighted gaps and challenges that ought to be addressed. The county's strengths and challenges can be classified as follows, in line with the action

areas that are articulated in five national outcomes – originally articulated in Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures and now incorporated into the Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2023-2028.

Outcome 1: Healthy and Active

According to the national policy, this means that children and young people:

- have the best possible physical and mental health;
- make informed health and lifestyle choices; and
- enjoy leisure time, express themselves creatively and access nature and recreation.

In these respects, the profile points to the following:

Physical and Mental Health Support: The Kilkenny CYPSC profile indicates generally positive health trends for children, but with pockets of poor health in socio-economically disadvantaged areas, most notably in Kilkenny City (urban core and eastern suburbs), the north-west of the county and in several rural communities. Promoting equitable health outcomes, prioritising access to health resources and preventative care, in these areas and with vulnerable cohorts (e.g. young carers, early-school leavers, minorities) can bridge gaps in physical and mental health. **Youth-Focused Health Initiatives:** With a relatively high proportion of young people (as a proportion of the resident population), particularly in Kilkenny City and the Piltown Municipal District, initiatives that promote active lifestyles and mental well-

In these respects, the profile points to the following:

Improving Educational Attainment: Educational attainment levels are lower than national levels, especially in rural and disadvantaged communities. Investing in initiatives that being, such as youth-centred sports programmes, recreational facilities, and mental health resources, will be essential.

Maternal and Early Childhood Health: County Kilkenny has an higher rate of births among young mothers than is the case across Ireland as a whole, which necessitates robust maternal and family support systems. Enhancing prenatal and postnatal services, such as breast-feeding support, early childhood development initiatives, good quality and affordable childcare, and accessible maternal health care, will be important for young families.

Outcome 2: Achieving Full Potential in Learning and Development

According to the national policy, this means that children and young people:

- are positively engaging with their learning and development from birth;
- can successfully navigate life's transitions and make informed choices around their future; and
- have the social, emotional and communication skills to achieve their potential and lead fulfilling lives.

encourage progression through secondary education and access to third-level or vocational training can help bridge these gaps. The delivery of life-long and

life-wide learning pathways and the provision of targeted supports for parents will contribute to a milieu that is conducive to enabling young people to stay in education / training and to acquire qualifications. Digital literacy and connectivity can enable more young people and their parents to avail of new and emerging opportunities in education and training.

Addressing School Absenteeism: While school absenteeism in Kilkenny is lower than the national level, the COVID-19 pandemic has adversely impacted attendance and engagement. Recent trends indicate that stakeholders should support schools in reengaging students, particularly those in disadvantaged and rural areas, to foster consistent attendance and academic development. There is a particular need to focus on supporting those who have special needs.

Accessible Early Childhood Education: The large proportion of young children, in areas such as Piltown and Callan-Thomastown, requires an emphasis on accessible and quality early childhood education. Expanding access to early years programmes and family support services in these districts, in particular, can lay a strong foundation for learning and development.

Outcome 3: Safe and Protected from Harm

According to the national policy, this means that children and young people:

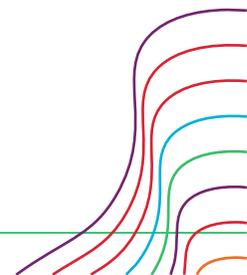
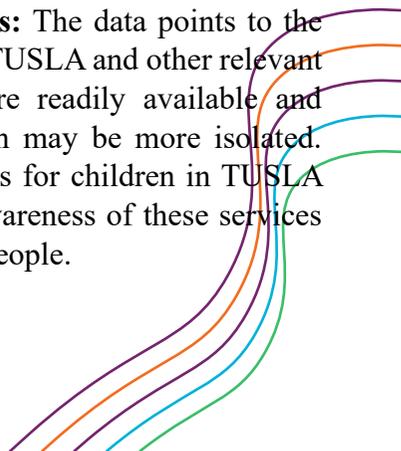
- have family and homes that are loving, connected, safe and nurturing
- are protected from violence, neglect, ill-treatment and harm; and that

- Everyone is alert to child protection issues and knows how to report a concern.

In these respects, the profile points to the following:

Community Safety and Support for Vulnerable Families: Pockets of socio-economic deprivation, particularly in Kilkenny City and rural areas, are associated with higher levels of loneparent families and young carers, both of whom face distinctive challenges. Targeted support systems—such as childcare services, family counselling, and financial support—are essential to alleviate pressures on vulnerable families and ensure children’s safety and stability.

Reducing Disparities in Child Protection Services: The data points to the need for the CYPSC members to work closely with TUSLA and other relevant bodies to ensure that child protection services are readily available and responsive, especially in rural areas where children may be more isolated. Providing mental health and well-being programmes for children in TUSLA care or in other vulnerable situations and raising awareness of these services can help ensure safety and protection for all young people.



Enhanced Local Safety Measures: With significant car usage in rural areas, traffic and transport safety are of critical importance. Kilkenny County Council and other relevant stakeholders (e.g. Transport Infrastructure Ireland - TII) could explore enhanced safety measures for young people commuting to schools and recreational facilities, with traffic calming initiatives and increased public transport options to make commuting safer and more accessible. There is also a clear need for investment in active and green infrastructure, so that children and young people can walk, cycle, and / or use public transport, thereby contributing to both healthy lifestyles and a better-quality environment.

Outcome 4: Economic Security and Opportunity

According to the national policy, this means that children and young people:

- are protected from poverty and social exclusion;
- live in stable housing that is affordable, warm and dry, in child and youth-friendly communities; and
- have pathways to economic participation and independent living.

In these respects, the profile points to the following:

Employment and Training Programmes for Young Adults:

County Kilkenny's youth population, especially in areas with high unemployment rates, would benefit from further employment and training initiatives that align with local and emerging job sectors. Tailored programmes that link young adults to skills training, apprenticeships, and

career pathways within the county can mitigate out-migration for work and boost local economic security. As the county does not have an higher-education institutes (HEI), linkages and collaborations with higher education providers need to be further promoted, so as to promote outreach delivery.

Reducing Energy and Heating Costs: The high dependency on coal and oil for household heating, particularly in Castlecomer, Graiguenamanagh-Tinnahinch, and other rural areas, highlights the need for sustainable energy programmes. Promoting affordable and environmentally friendly heating alternatives can reduce costs and improve economic security for families, aligning with national sustainability goals and the delivery of Just Transition objectives.

Addressing Child Poverty: Kilkenny's socio-economic profile reveals a need for initiatives that address child poverty and deprivation directly, particularly in disadvantaged areas. Financial support for education, health, and basic living needs will enhance economic security and allow children and young people to thrive, irrespective of their socio-economic background. The data suggest a need for targeted interventions – geographically and with particular cohorts e.g. children with special educational needs, and those from minority backgrounds, especially members of the Travelling Community.

Progression Pathways: The data highlight correlations between rurality, low levels of educational attainment and economic challenges (e.g. lower levels of employment opportunities and a narrower economic base). Diversifying the rural economy, enhancing public transport linkages, and delivering bespoke training and apprenticeship programmes,

commensurate with local economic potential, can offer young people positive progression pathways. Their development will require strong inter-agency collaboration and the application of rural-proofing approaches.

Outcome 5: Connected, Respected, and Contributing to Their World

According to the national policy, this means that children and young people:

- are aware of their rights and are civically socially and environmentally engaged off-line and online;
- are accepted, respected and valued at home, school, and in their community; and
- have their own identity, connected to their culture, language and beliefs.

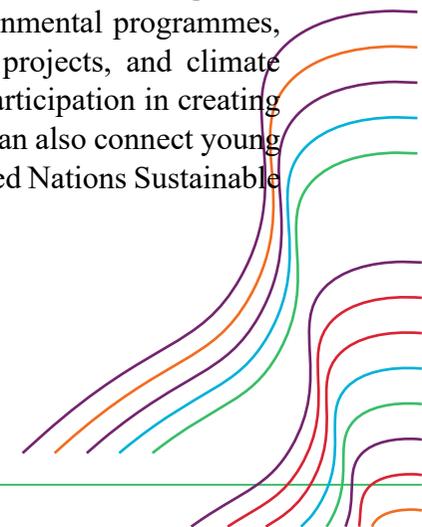
In these respects, the profile points to the following:

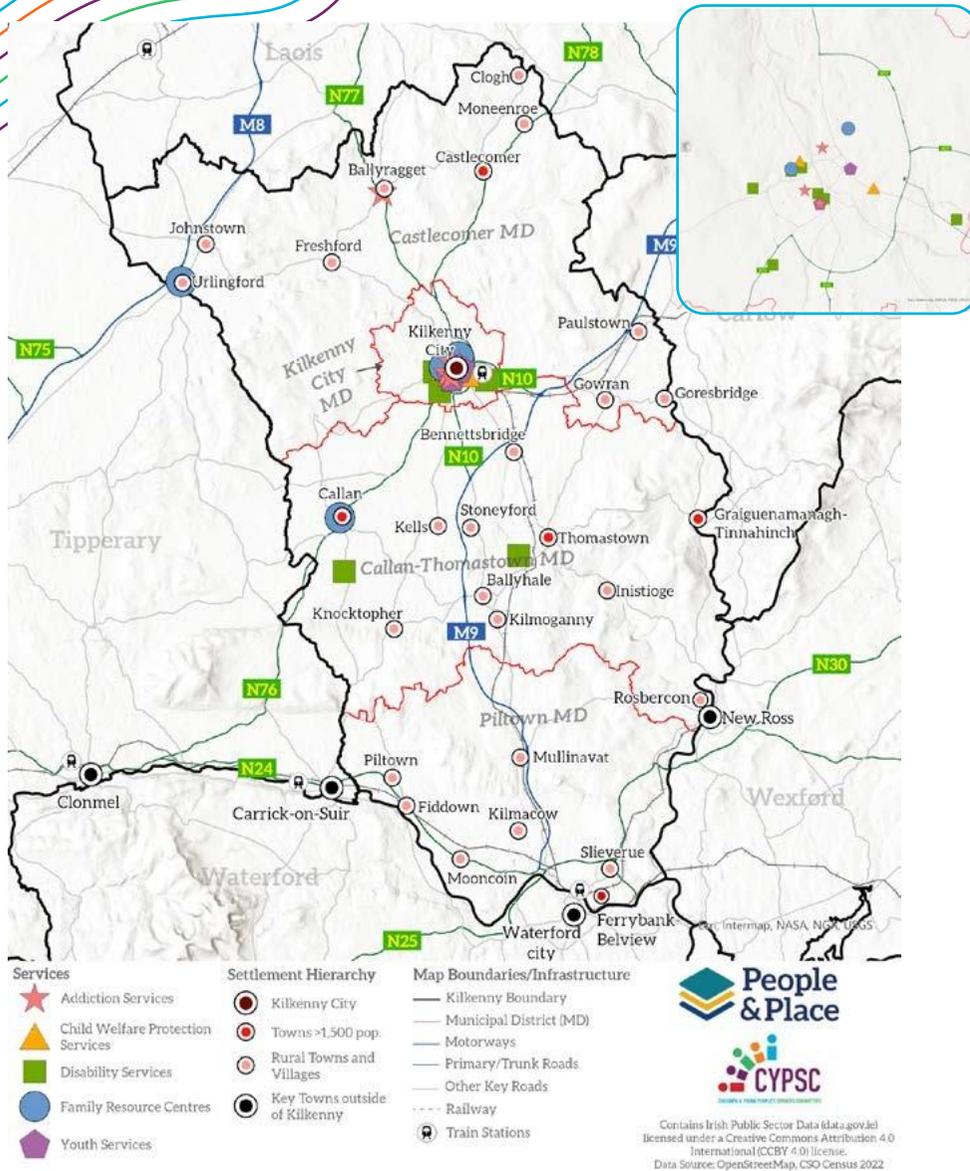
Engagement with Youth Voices: Kilkenny CYPSC's emphasis on consulting children and young people is highly commendable; this is essential to ensure that their voices shape the services and policies that affect them. Youth councils, forums, and regular consultations within schools and communities, in collaboration with youth organisations (e.g. Ossary Youth Services, Foróige) can foster a culture of inclusion and respect and promote best practices.

Support for Cultural and Ethnic Diversity: As Kilkenny City and New Ross, among other areas, experience higher proportions of non-Irish citizens, programmes that promote cultural inclusion and celebrate diversity are recommended. Language support and cultural orientation programmes for young people from immigrant backgrounds will enhance their ability to connect with peers and contribute to community life. There is scope to dovetail CYPSC objectives with those of the Kilkenny Migrant Integration Strategy.

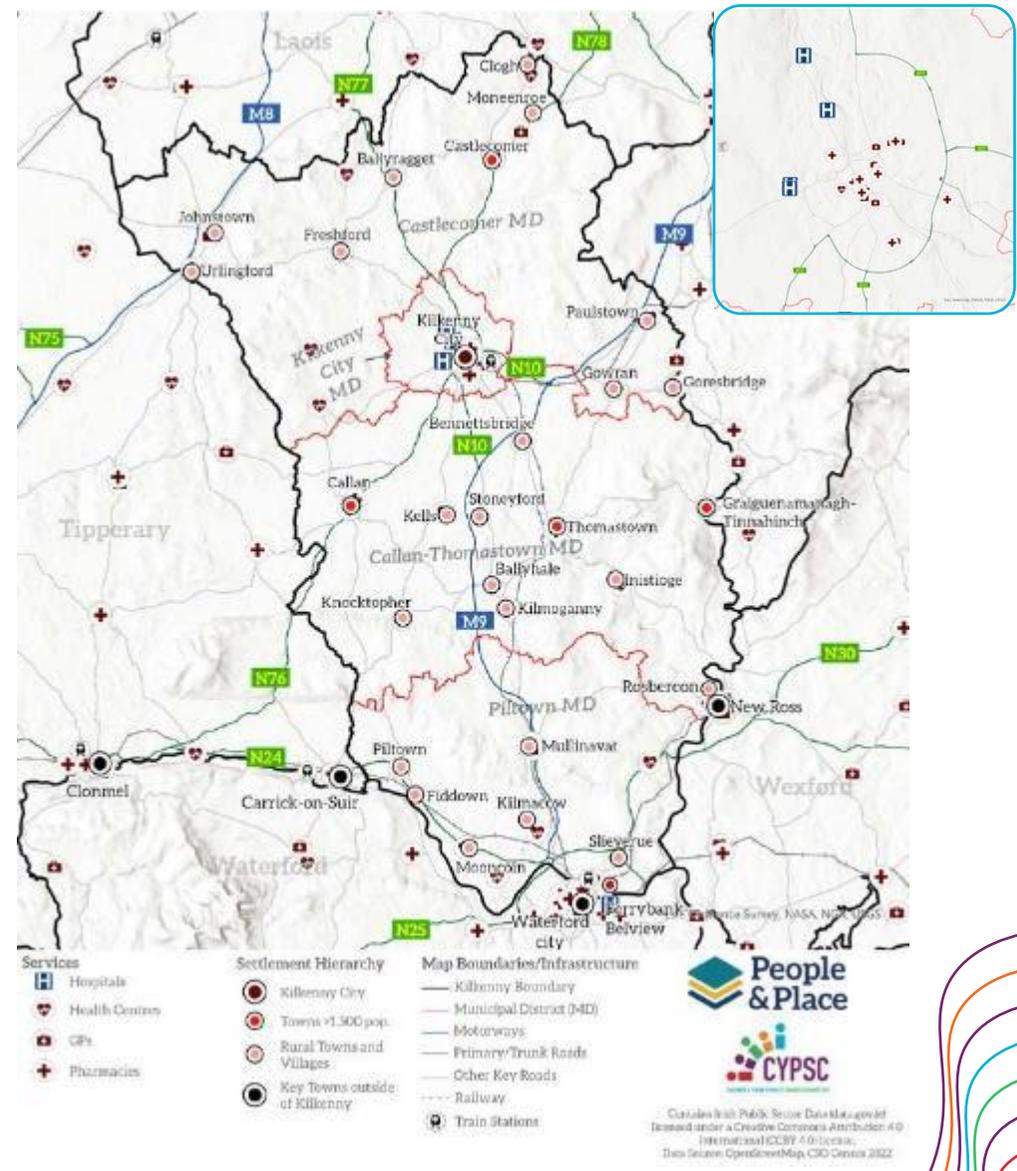
Strengthening Social Infrastructure in Rural Areas: Many rural communities, especially in North Kilkenny, face isolation due to lower connectivity and fewer social resources. By enhancing transport networks, creating community hubs, and strengthening digital infrastructure, Kilkenny CYPSC can, in collaboration with other agencies, help young people in rural areas stay connected and engaged with broader society. The Kilkenny Local Development (LEADER) Strategy and Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) can offer complementary supports in terms of promoting local social capital and improving connectivity.

Environmental Awareness and Youth Advocacy: Young people are increasingly informed about, and concerned with, climate change and environmental issues. Developing youth-led environmental programmes, such as recycling initiatives, nature conservation projects, and climate awareness campaigns, can encourage their active participation in creating a sustainable future for Kilkenny. These initiatives can also connect young people locally and globally – in the spirit of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs).

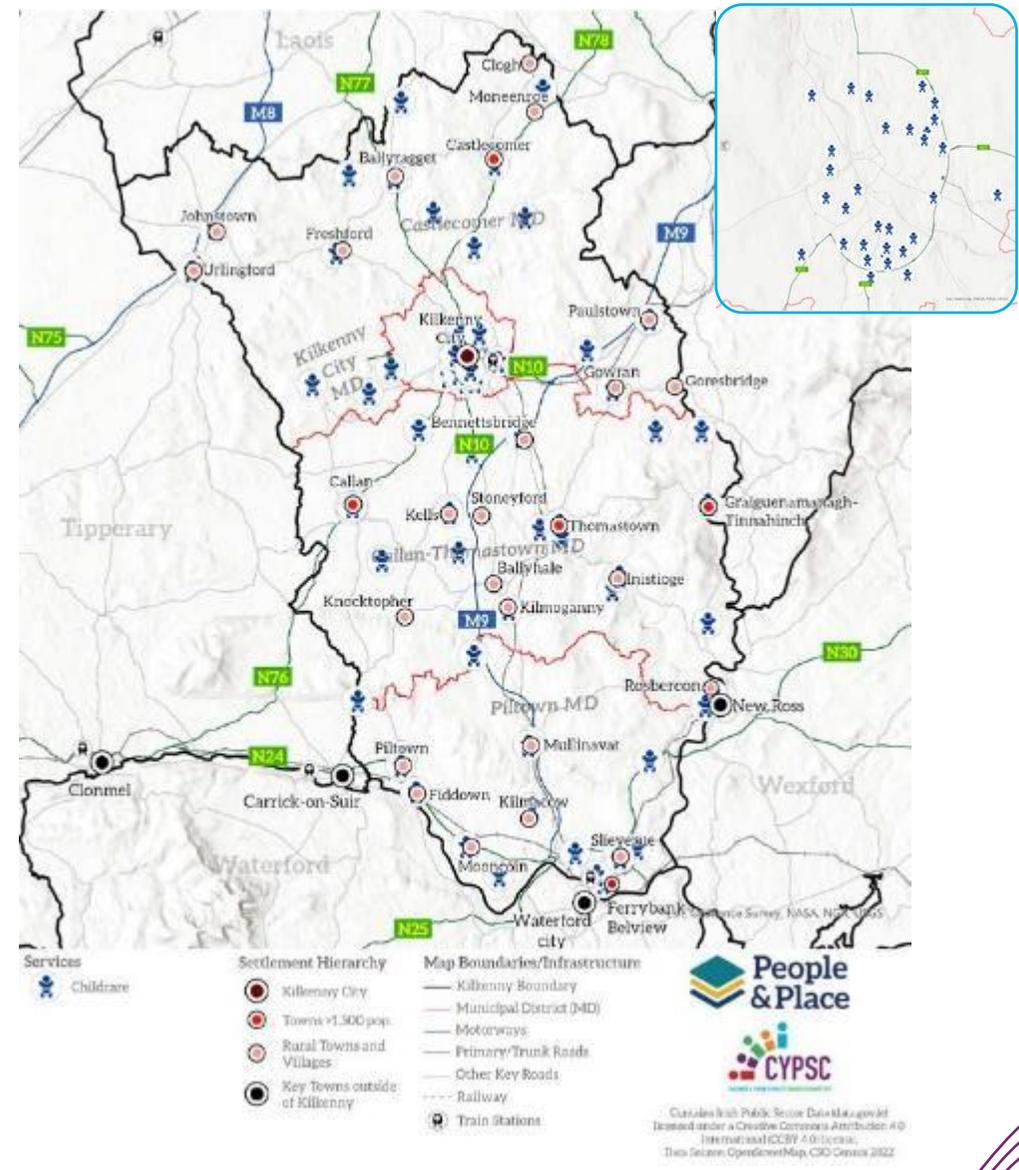
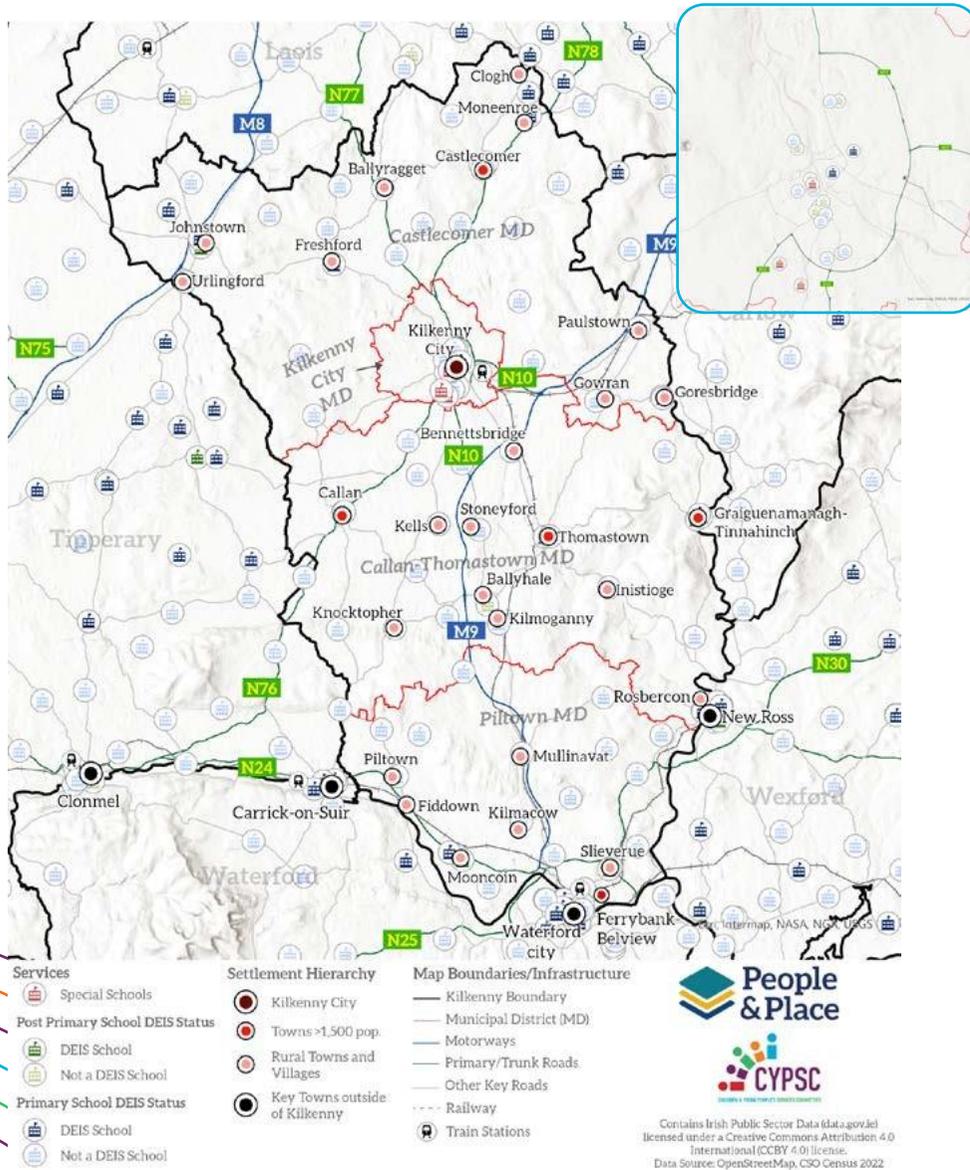




Map 1: Children Services within Kilkenny, 2024 (Source: Kilkenny CYPSC)



Map 2: Health Services within Kilkenny, 2024 (Source: Kilkenny CYPSC)



Map 3: Education Facilities (by DEIS) in Kilkenny, 2024 (Source: Kilkenny CYPSC)

Map 4: Childcare Facilities in Kilkenny, 2024 (Source: Kilkenny CYPSC)

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