

# **POVERTY INDICATOR PROFILE OF SOUTH KERRY**

*prepared for*

SOUTH KERRY DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP LTD.

*by*

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## INTRODUCTION

This profile of poverty indicators for South Kerry has been commissioned by the South Kerry Development Partnership Ltd. (SKDP), which has worked since 1991 to redress social exclusion and economic disadvantage throughout South Kerry. According to the Combat Poverty Agency (2006b), a person is considered poor if either their income or their spending falls below a threshold called the poverty line. Poverty is also measured as deprivation of items or activities considered necessities, such as not having new clothes or a warm waterproof overcoat, going without a substantial meal one day every two weeks, or going without heating in the last year due to lack of funds. However, data on poverty are only available at NUTS 3 level<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, to assess poverty in South Kerry, alternative indicators known to be associated with poverty, such as persons with a disability, lone parent families and non-Irish nationals, are used to reveal the local geographies of poverty across the territory.

Approaches to addressing poverty in South Kerry will vary depending on the spatial patterns of its distribution as well as whether the poverty is in an urban area and thus likely to be both concentrated in certain neighbourhoods and more visible or whether it is dispersed across the rural countryside, where the poor and wealthy are more likely to interact as neighbours or through work and friendships, and is hidden in more isolated households. In some rural areas, the cycle of population decline and public service withdrawal, as identified by O’Keeffe (2007) across much of the Iveragh Peninsula, makes tackling poverty a dynamic challenge. The objective of this report is to, firstly, assess the distribution of poverty indicators throughout South Kerry to provide a planning tool for targeting SKDP resources and programmes that tackle disadvantage and to, secondly, provide a baseline with which conditions can be compared in the future to determine the success of those measures. Material presented here draws primarily on the recent demographic and socio-economic profile of South Kerry by Dr. Brendan O’Keeffe to help explain the patterns observed and also on the publication *People and place: a census atlas of the Republic of Ireland* edited by Professor Jim Walsh of NUI, Maynooth to compare trends in South Kerry with those across the State.

## REPORT OUTLINE

After documenting the data and mapping methods used, the poverty profile begins with an assessment of the population of South Kerry<sup>2</sup>, in terms of age dependency and how it changed between 2002 and 2006. It then looks at certain groups within the population such as: Travellers and how their numbers changed between 2002 and 2006; Asians and Asian Irish; and the proportion of non-UK EU 25 nationals comprised of Poles and Lithuanians. The report goes on to assess vulnerable populations such as: persons with a disability; persons unable to work due to permanent sickness/disability; and carers. This section concludes with a look at those involved in voluntary activities. The unit of focus then moves from the person to the household and the family. The report examines households with lone parents in 2006 and how the number changed between 2002 and 2006. New data collected by the CSO only since 2006 allows a deeper analysis into lone parent households with other persons and this is explored for any important implications missed from assessing the lone parent only households. Next, lone parent family data allow a comparison of the distribution of all lone parent families with children of any age, including adult children, with the distribution of lone parent families where *all* the children are younger than 15 years - lone parent families with very different service

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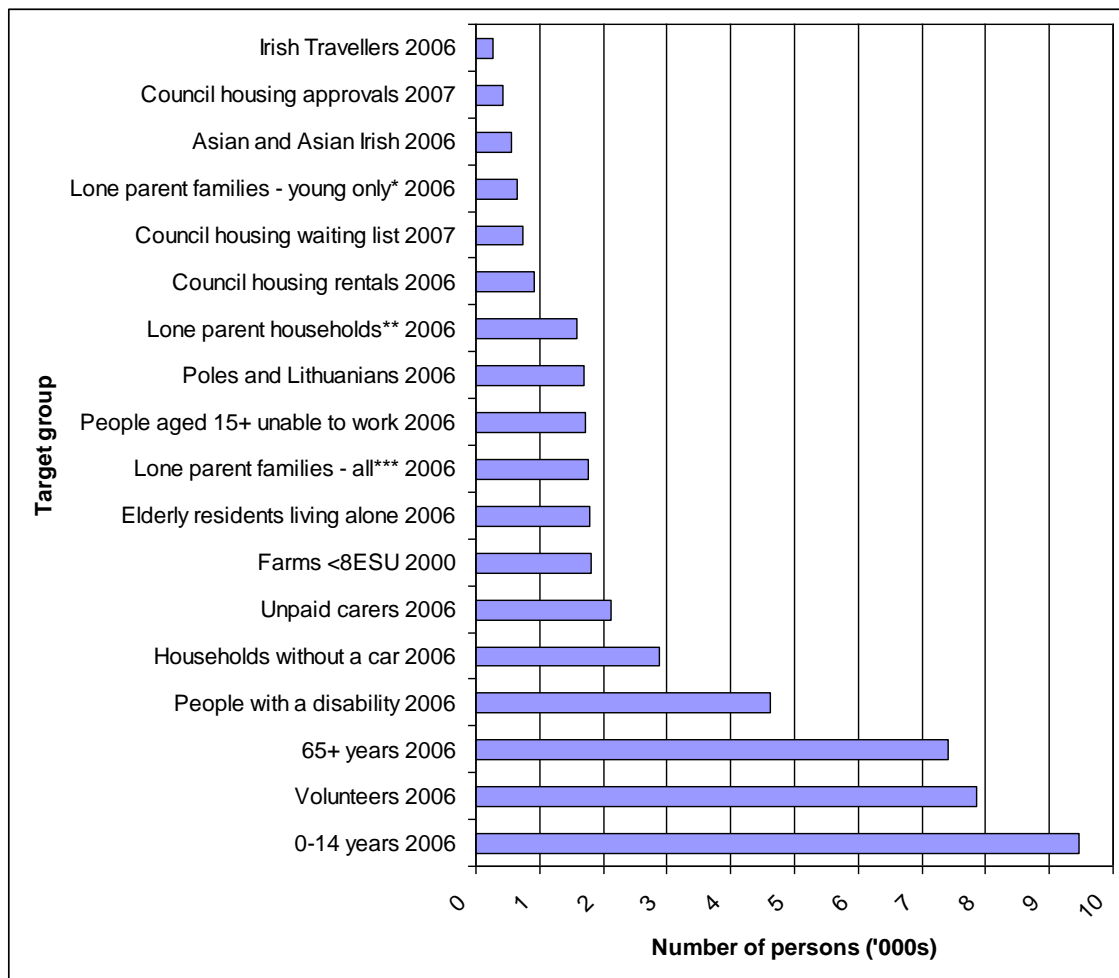
<sup>1</sup> Data for Kerry and Cork are aggregated into the South-West Region.

<sup>2</sup> The term ‘South Kerry’ refers to the territory of South Kerry Development Partnership Limited.

needs. The assessment of households continues with a look at elderly residents living alone and households without a car. Local Authority (LA) housing is considered next. This section begins with council house rentals in 2006 and how they changed since 2002. It then focuses in on data from 2007 for specific settlements in South Kerry that reveals: the number of houses rented and purchased from the LA; the number and marital status of both approved council housing applicants and those still on the waiting list; and, in the case of the latter, the number of families by number of dependents. The final poverty indicator assessed is the distribution of small farm enterprises across South Kerry in 2000 and how their numbers changed since 1991. Their spatial pattern is compared with that of uptake of the Farmers' Enterprise Assistance initiative and the report ends with an assessment of the potential for a local food economy in South Kerry.

Figure 1 gives an overview of the number of persons per target group in ascending order to allow a comparison of the actual numbers in each group. It must be acknowledged however that such a numerical comparison fails to distinguish the widely varying deprivation levels both within some groups (such as living standards among the age-dependent classes) and between the target groups especially.

**Figure 1 Target groups in South Kerry, various years**



\* All offspring <15 years

\*\* Includes households with other persons (e.g. grandparents) and lone parents with adult offspring

\*\*\* Includes lone parents with adult offspring

## DATA SOURCES

This report employed small area population statistics from the most recent Census of Population in 2006 conducted by the Central Statistics Office (CSO). CSO data on agriculture came from the most recent Census of Agriculture in 2000 and the earlier census of 1991. Council housing data were sourced by the SKDP from Kerry County Council.

## MAPPING

Data at the spatial scale of the electoral division (ED) were mapped<sup>3</sup> to elucidate trends across the study area. The territory covers an area of almost 2,500km<sup>2</sup> and is made up of 65 EDs (*Map 1*). By 2006, almost 51,000 people lived in South Kerry. *Map 2* displays the distribution of its main towns and villages to use as map-reading reference points.

There are drawbacks to using EDs as spatial units of analysis because they are not homogenous in area and population size, with rural EDs typically larger in area than urban districts but with smaller populations. For example, local populations across the territory in 2006 ranged from 118 in Lickeen to 10,191 in Killarney Urban, while local population densities ranged from two persons per km<sup>2</sup> in Clydagh to 871 per km<sup>2</sup> in Killarney Urban. These differences affect data comparability. Secondly, EDs are so large that they can mask variations in socio-economic and demographic conditions among their residents. Therefore, this report provides a spatial base on which to layer the local knowledge of the SKDP staff in their particular areas of expertise.

## VULNERABLE POPULATIONS, HOUSEHOLDS AND FAMILIES

This section explores the distribution of vulnerable groups in the population in 2006, namely: age-dependent classes, ethnic minorities (including Irish Travellers) and non-Irish nationals, people with disabilities, people unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability, and persons involved in caring activities. It concludes with a look at those involved in voluntary activities across the territory.

### Age-dependency

In 2005, the at-risk-of-poverty rate<sup>4</sup> for those aged 0-14 years was 21 percent and that of 65+ was 20 percent, compared with a lower rate of 17 percent among the 15-64 age group (Central Statistics Office, 2006). Table 1 summarises the proportion of the population in the young and elderly age groups for South Kerry in comparison with Kerry county and the State.

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<sup>3</sup> The mapping used the natural breaks classification scheme with five classes to display the census data. In the case of a change map, four classes were used and a zero inserted in the appropriate class to distinguish between increases and decreases. Only three classes were used in the map of change in the number of Travellers due to the small number of EDs with data.

<sup>4</sup> This is the share of persons whose equivalised income is below 60 percent of the national median income. It is calculated by ranking persons by equivalised income from smallest to largest to determine the median or middle value. Equivalised income gives an approximate measure of the household income attributed to each adult and child (<14 years) in the household (CSO, 2006).

**Table 1 Comparative Age Profiles for South Kerry, Kerry and the State, 2006**

	<i>% Population aged 0 to 14 years</i>	<i>% Population aged 65 years and over</i>
South Kerry	18.5	14.5
Kerry	19.5	13.8
State	20.4	11.0

Derived from: Census of Population, 2006

South Kerry has a smaller proportion aged 14 years or younger and a larger proportion aged 65 years or older, likely a reflection of selective out-migration of college students and of working adults of reproductive age to larger urban centres beyond the territory, including the nearby town of Tralee - the administrative capital of Kerry and the location of its Institute of Technology. O’Keeffe (2007) also attributed lower age dependency ratios in urban areas to the recent in-migration of Central and Eastern Europeans. This urban pattern is picked up in South Kerry with lower rates of age dependency (<32 percent) in and around Killarney town and along the N72 to Killorglin (*Map 3*). In contrast, the highest rates of age dependency in South Kerry are found in more rural areas, with the largest contiguous cluster of districts with rates of 37 percent and higher around Kilgarvan. Generally, higher percentages of older people are associated with the peninsulas while greater values for the younger age groups are found in the east and north-east from Killorglin and Killarney to Kilgarvan (see O’Keeffe, 2007).

Between 2002 and 2006, the number of children aged 14 years and younger increased by almost six percent while the number of elderly persons aged 65 years and older rose slightly faster at 7.5 percent (Table 2).

**Table 2 Change in age dependent groups in South Kerry, 2002 - 2006**

	2002	2006	% Change
<i>Number of persons aged 0 to 14 years</i>	8,944	9,461	5.8
<i>Number of persons aged 65 years and over</i>	6,890	7,407	7.5

Derived from: Census of Population, 2002 and 2006

The highest rates of increase (7.5 percent plus) are found in Killarney town and throughout its hinterland, as well among districts along the N70 from south of Tralee through Milltown and Killorglin to Cromane (*Map 4*).

#### Foreign Immigrants and Irish Travellers

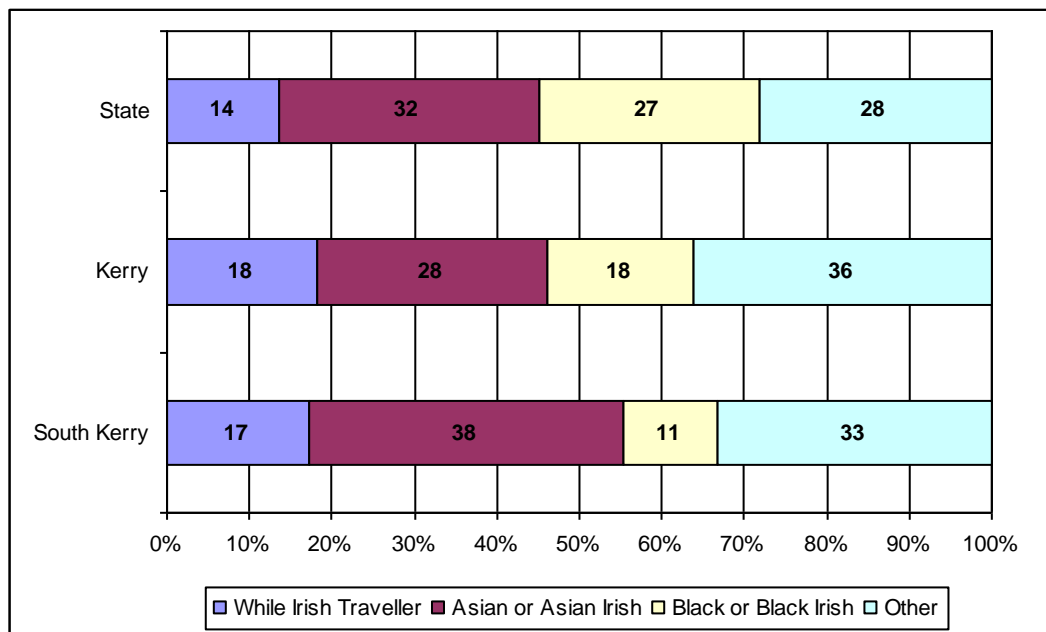
Foreign ethnic minorities and non-Irish nationals are assessed in the profile because those who are newcomers to Ireland are vulnerable to isolation and poverty due to language and cultural barriers, and may be the subject of prejudice. As for Travellers, they require support at a local level to promote integration and interculturalism (O’Keeffe, 2007). In 2005, 27 percent of non-Irish nationals were at risk of poverty compared to just 18 percent for Irish nationals. Yet, according to the Enterprise Strategy Group (2004), they not only currently contribute to Irish economic development but have a significant role to play in its future. For instance, people from outside the European Economic Area require a work permit to work in Ireland and in the last few years, three out of four permits issued were for low-skilled and/or low-income jobs in

the service sector particularly<sup>5</sup>, jobs that are less attractive to Irish workers (Immigrant Council of Ireland, 2005).

### Ethnic Minorities

There are almost 1,500 persons living in South Kerry, who are members of an ethnic minority. Their spatial patterns show a strong association with urban areas. Figure 2 shows the proportions of the main ethnic minority categories in South Kerry in comparison to Kerry county and the State. The largest ethnic group in the territory comprising 38 percent of ethnic minorities and 1.1 percent of the total population is the Asian and Asian Irish with 567 persons. Black or Black Irish comprise just 11 percent of ethnic groups with 171 persons (0.3 of the total population), reflecting the low levels of urbanisation in the territory. For example, Walsh *et al.* (2007a) found that 90 percent of non-Irish nationals from Asia and 87 percent of those from Africa lived in urban areas and cities in 2006. The three asylum seekers centres in South Kerry - Linden House, Atlas House and Park Lodge - are all in Killarney, with a total capacity of 200.

**Figure 2 Proportions of Ethnic Minorities in South Kerry, 2006**



Derived from: Census of Population, 2006

In 2006, 17 percent of ethnic minorities (0.5 percent of the population in the territory) were Irish Travellers. According to Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, Travellers have much lower rates of educational attainment compared with the settled community, while Walsh *et al.* (2007a) noted how at 16.5 percent, the employment rate among Travellers in 2002 was less than half the State average of 37.6 percent. The SKDP funds a part-time Traveller Development Worker in association with the Kerry Traveller Development Group to meet with Travellers to assess their educational and training requirements in order to counter inequality and to improve access to employment. Its Rural Cool initiative supports youth groups that help early school leavers, including young Travellers, to develop personally and socially.

<sup>5</sup> One quarter were issued in the catering sector alone.



In 2002, Walsh *et al.* (2007a) noted that three quarters of Travellers in the State resided in urban areas and *Map 5* reveals a similar urban pattern in South Kerry in 2006. The largest populations are located in and around Killarney and Killorglin towns with 195 persons in Killarney Rural (three percent of the population), 37 in Killarney Urban (0.4 percent), 11 in Killorglin (0.3 percent) and nine in Kilgobnet (1.1 percent) districts. Travellers were not recorded beyond these areas in the 2006 Census with the exception of one Traveller in Loughbrin ED. These data broadly correspond to the findings of the local Traveller Development Worker, Brigid O'Donoghue, who provided the following information. As of September 2007, there were 136 Traveller families in Killarney (a number that is constantly expanding), one family in Killorglin and in Cahersiveen and two families in Milltown. The urban distribution is related to better housing opportunities in towns and villages. In addition, the only two halting sites in South Kerry are located in Killarney. The first, which is in need of refurbishment, has 14 families. While another six families want to get into this site, there is no room available for them at present. The second halting site holds just five families. As a result of limited housing and halting site availability in South Kerry, some Irish Traveller families who wish to settle are compelled to travel instead, while there is a steady trend of migration to Dublin to avail of better housing opportunities there.

The number of Travellers in South Kerry fell by 28 percent between 2002 and 2006, from 356 to 258 persons. *Map 6* shows that declines in and around Killarney and Killorglin towns are smaller than 31 percent while declines of up to 100 percent occurred in more rural districts, indicating a contraction of Travellers from rural areas. According to the local Traveller Development Worker, the census provides an undercount of the actual Traveller population for a number of reasons. Some Travellers chose not to identify their ethnicity; among those who did, the tendency for three or four families to share a house was compounded by confusion over census form filling which led to forms being filled out incorrectly or not at all, while in other cases, completed forms were not collected by the enumerators. The resulting undercount, which is a nationwide problem, may lead to insufficient resources being allocated to Traveller needs for education, employment and housing. This highlights the importance of funding local resource workers who through their work on the ground with Irish Travellers may provide more accurate assessments of their numbers and circumstances.

As for Irish Travellers, the largest populations of Asian and Asian Irish are located in and around Killarney and Killorglin with 447 in Killarney Urban, 35 in Killarney Rural and 22 in Killorglin (*Map 7*). However, unlike Irish Travellers, the distribution of this ethnic minority also extends to Kenmare with 14 persons, while mostly solitary inhabitants among scattered districts of Iveragh ends with a group of seven in Cahersiveen.

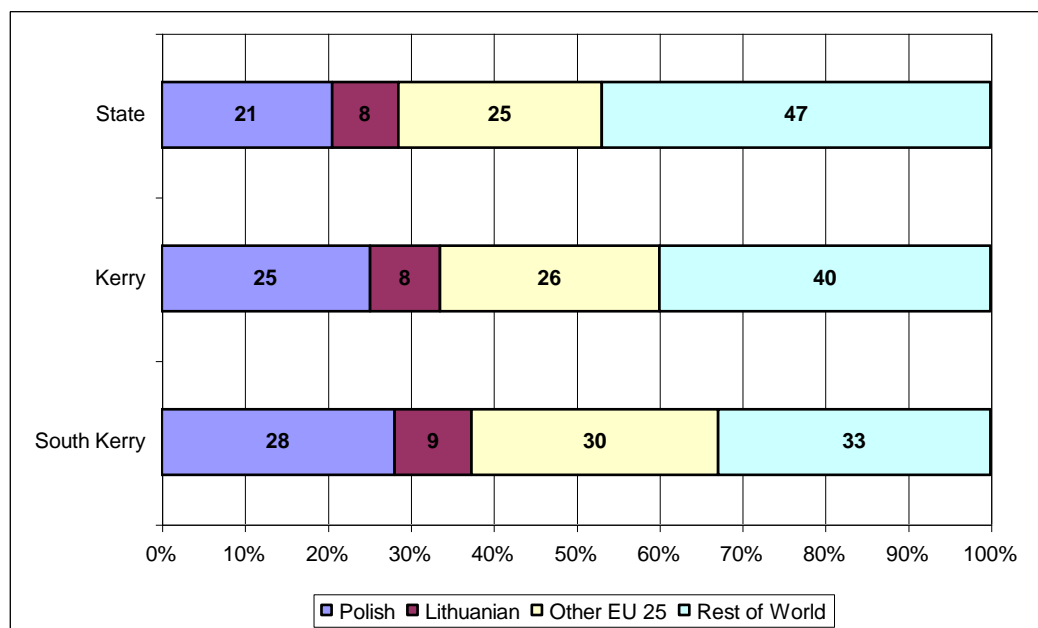
#### Non-Irish Nationals

In 2006, almost 6,800 persons in South Kerry comprising 13.5 percent of the population were non-Irish nationals, greater than the ten percent found in both Kerry and the State. One quarter of non-Irish nationals in the territory came from just two Eastern European countries: Poland and Lithuania. This is higher than the 21 percent that these two nationalities represented in Kerry and the State.

As Figure 3 shows, 28 percent of all non-Irish and non-UK nationals in South Kerry in 2006 were Polish (1,270 persons) and eight percent were Lithuanian (419 persons), higher proportions than found in either Kerry or the State, particularly in terms of Poles.

While a higher proportion (30 percent) were from other EU 25 states, one third came from the Rest of the World compared to almost one half for the State overall.

**Figure 3 Proportions of Non-Irish and Non-UK Nationals in South Kerry, Kerry and the State, 2006**



Derived from: Census of Population 2006

The largest cluster of districts where over half of all non-Irish nationals are Poles and Lithuanians runs from Killarney to Kenmare and Kilgarvan (*Map 8*). Over 1,100 persons are located in Killarney Urban and Rural districts alone. Another cluster runs along the N70 through Milltown, Killorglin and Cromane and a final group is made up of a triangle from Cahersiveen to Waterville and Ballinskelligs. The distribution reflects the migrant worker status of these foreign nationals and the role of employment in tourism, construction and mining in their settlement patterns.

### Persons with Disabilities

The poverty levels of the ill and the disabled are comparable to those of the unemployed. In 2005, 41 percent of the ill or disabled were at risk of poverty, although this represented a notable improvement from 52 percent just two years previously (Central Statistics Office, 2006). According to the CSO, individuals are classified as having a disability if they have any one of the following conditions:

- A long-lasting condition such as blindness, deafness or a severe vision or hearing impairment,
- A condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting or carrying.

They are also classified as a person with a disability if they have a physical, mental or emotional condition lasting six months or longer that makes it difficult to perform the following activities:

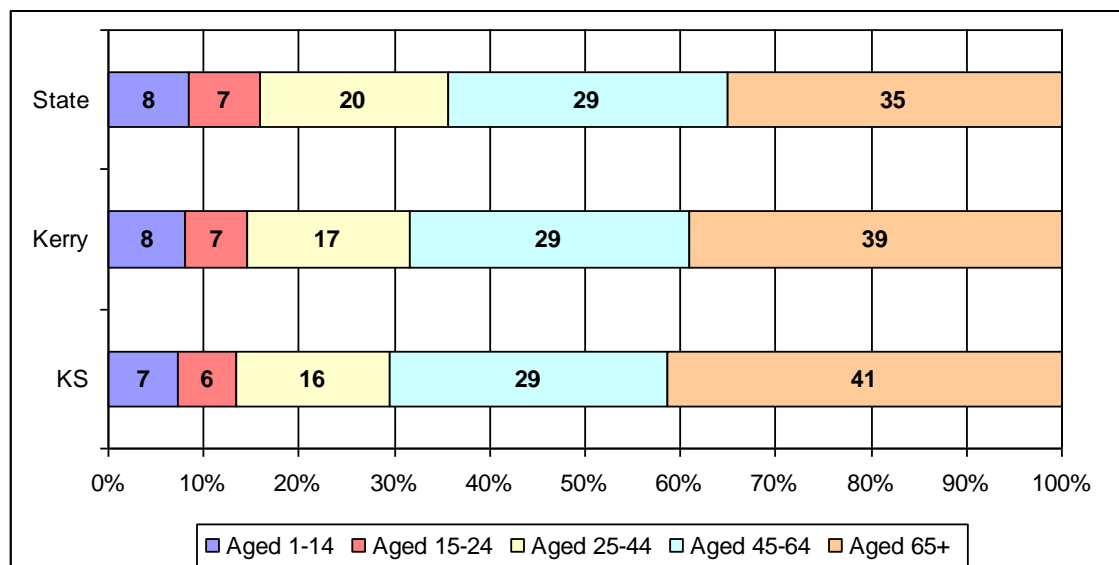
- for persons aged five years plus
- Learning, remembering or concentrating,
- Dressing, bathing or getting around inside the home

- for persons aged 15 years plus

- Going outside the home alone to shop or visit a doctor's office
- Working at a job or business

In 2006, 8.9 percent of the population in the study area or 4,627 persons had long-lasting health conditions or disabilities lasting six months or more, less than the Kerry average of 9.4 percent and the State average of 9.3 percent. The number of people with a disability in South Kerry rose by almost 550 persons between 2002 and 2006 reflecting rising trends in the county and across the state. In all cases, the increases in persons with a disability have occurred among those younger than 65 years. Figure 4 provides a breakdown of people with a disability in South Kerry in comparison with Kerry and the State classified by age groups. It shows that South Kerry and Kerry have almost identical profiles and they both differ from the State primarily by their greater proportions of those aged 65+ with a disability. This is another result of historical patterns of out-migration of younger people where older members of the population remain in more rural areas.

**Figure 4 Proportions\* of people with a disability in South Kerry, Kerry and the State classified by age, 2006**



Derived from: Census of Population 2006

\*Proportions may exceed 100% due to rounding

*Map 9* reveals that the largest proportions of people with a disability occur in the north of the territory around Kilgobnet and throughout the south of the territory, especially on Valentia Island and around Sneem. Two less accessible districts with high rates of persons with a disability are Canuig and Mastergeehy in the interior of Iveragh. In part, the spatial pattern is underpinned by the location of residential care facilities for persons with a disability, including the elderly, such as St. Mary of the Angels in Kilgobnet, St. Joseph's Nursing Home in Killorglin (with 40 residents<sup>6</sup>), Ashborough Lodge in Milltown (54 residents), Heatherlee Nursing Home in Killarney (23 residents), St. Joseph's Nursing Home in Killowen, Kenmare (28 residents), Kenmare Nursing Home (21 residents) and Valentia Hospital in Knightstown. Elsewhere, the mainly rural distribution along with the fact that over 40 percent of all persons with a disability in

<sup>6</sup> Data on number of residents in 2007 from Health Service Executive nursing home inspection reports (see [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)).

South Kerry are aged 65+ highlights the need for supports for local carers to provide home care, e.g., through the Rural Social Scheme.

#### Persons unable to work due to Permanent Sickness or Disability

In 2006, 4.1 percent of the population aged 15+ (1,716 people, an increase of more than 60 persons since 2002) in South Kerry were unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability, comparable to the 4.3 percent in Kerry overall and 4.1 percent in the State. In their recent population atlas, Walsh and Walsh (2007) noted that the number in this category rose by 66 percent between 1996 and 2002, mainly due to a large increase in the number of females unable to work. As for the distribution of people with a disability, the largest proportion of people unable to work (over 14 percent) is found in Kilgobnet district near Killorglin (*Map 10*). Elsewhere, districts with the next highest values of 5.9 to 6.8 percent are dispersed throughout less densely populated rural areas of the territory, presenting a challenge to providing services for this group.

#### Persons involved in Caring Activities

A carer is defined by the CSO as a person aged 15 years and over who provides regular unpaid personal help<sup>7</sup> for a friend or family member with a long-term illness, health problem or disability, including problems related to old age. Those in receipt of the Carers Allowance are included in the category, but not ‘Meals on Wheels’ staff. In 2006, 2,117 residents in South Kerry or five percent of persons aged 15+ were involved in caring activities (an increase of over 180 carers since 2002), falling within the range of 5.2 percent in Kerry and the State average of 4.8 percent. Table 3 shows that while more than half of the carers provided less than 15 hours of unpaid help per week, over one quarter contributed 43 or more hours per week, signalling a significant burden for these 567 individuals.

**Table 3 Carers classified by hours of unpaid help per week, 2006**

<i>Hours</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1-14	1,176	56
15-28	232	11
29-42	142	7
43+	567	27
Total	2,117	100

Derived from: Census of Population 2006

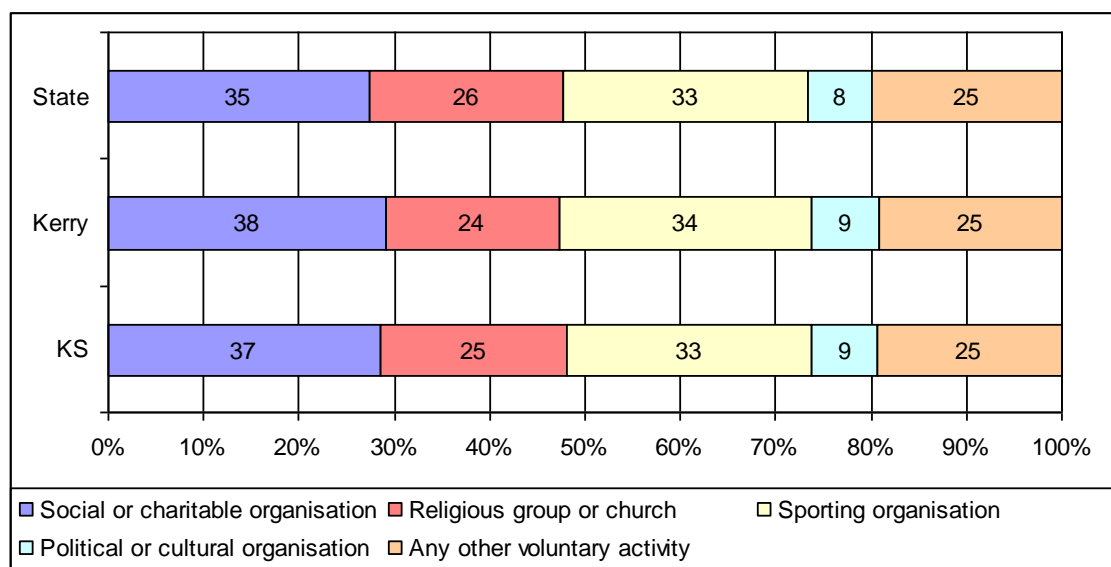
Walsh *et al.* (2007a) noted that approximately 60 percent of all carers in the State in 2002 were female and they also discovered an urban-rural divide with a higher percentage of carers in rural areas (5.4 percent) than in urban areas (4.5 percent). This is reflected in South Kerry with, for example, carers making up just 3.5 percent (314 carers) of the Killarney Urban population aged 15+ (*Map 11*). The highest value of 15.4 percent occurs in Clydagh, north of Kilgarvan. Other high values of 7.6 percent plus occur in other rural areas around Kilgarvan, through the Iveragh Peninsula, and a few northern districts.

<sup>7</sup> Includes help with such fundamental tasks as feeding and dressing.

### Persons involved in Voluntary Activities

The 2006 Census of Population recorded information on voluntary activities for the first time. The census questionnaire asked if the person did any activities without pay in the four weeks preceding census night in a number of categories. Figure 5 compares voluntary activities between the territory, the county and the State. The levels per category are very similar. Participation in social or charitable organisations does appear to be greater in South Kerry and Kerry compared with the State in general

**Figure 5 Proportions\* of people involved in one or more voluntary activities in South Kerry, Kerry and the State, 2006**



Derived from: Census of Population 2006

\*Proportions may exceed 100% due to rounding

At 15.1 percent, engagement in all voluntary activities in South Kerry is greater than in Kerry (14.1 percent) and the State (13.0 percent) suggesting good levels of community engagement in the territory. The spatial pattern reveals higher levels of voluntary activities in and around villages throughout South Kerry but less involvement in the towns of Killarney, Kenmare, Killorglin and Cahersiveen (*Map 12*). Rural districts along the road network generally show higher values while engagement in voluntary activities is lowest throughout the interior of the Iveragh Peninsula and inland of Kenmare.

### Lone Parent Households

In 2005, 19 percent of all Irish households experienced some element of enforced deprivation<sup>8</sup>; this rose to 60 percent among lone parent households (Central Statistics Office, 2006). In the South-West, which comprises Kerry and Cork, 17 percent of children (21,351 persons) younger than 16 years in 2005 were at risk of poverty<sup>9</sup> (Caroline Corr, Combat Poverty Agency, pers. comm.). Since the number of individuals living in these households totals just 45,682 persons, many of the children at risk of poverty in the region lived in lone parent households. Issues to address with this vulnerable group is that almost half of lone parents have a primary education only and

<sup>8</sup> Such as going without a substantial meal one day in every two weeks.

<sup>9</sup> Here, poverty risk occurs when weekly income is 60 percent of the national median income, which was €192.74 per individual in 2005.

while they need to enter employment, they also need to retain their social welfare benefits; this dilemma results in some lone parents becoming trapped in part-time work that is low paid (Combat Poverty Agency, 2006a). Education, training, job choices and career advancement are also limited by juggling courses or work with childcare and after school care. Therefore, the SKDP's support role for this group is to meet the needs of their children and to promote lone parents' access into employment.

The SKDP have responded to the disadvantages faced by lone parents with young families in South Kerry by disseminating an information pack that provides them with local and national information to support them in raising their families. For lone parents with young children, the SKDP childcare coordinator works with the Kerry County Childcare Committee to support existing childcare services and increase childcare places. With regards to older children, its Schools' Counselling Initiative helps young people at risk of early school leaving, due to difficult family situations such as separation and divorce, to complete their secondary education. The service is provided by the Killarney Counselling Service in agreement with secondary schools throughout the territory.

In 2006, 8.8 percent (1,454) of all households in the study area were lone parent households with children (the sum of households of either mothers or fathers with one or more usually resident children *of any age*). This rises to 9.6 percent (1,590) of all households when lone parents with children and other persons in the household are taken into account. Table 4 illustrates how lone parent households are approximately six times more likely to be headed by a mother than by a father, a gender difference underpinned by culture and, in the case of marital separation or divorce, by Irish family law. This has implications for lone parent household income. For example, while sixty percent of those in receipt of the One Parent Family Payment in the State are employed, most female lone parents work part-time while most males work full-time (Combat Poverty Agency, 2006a).

**Table 4 Lone parent households by gender and as percentage of all private households, 2006**

	<i>Households of Father with children (and other persons)</i>	<i>Households of Mother with children (and other persons)</i>	<i>% Households of Lone Parent with children (and other persons)</i>
South Kerry	209 (244)	1,245 (1,346)	8.8 (9.6)
Kerry	718 (815)	4,173 (4,534)	10.2 (11.1)
State	21,689 (24,933)	130,853 (144,847)	10.4 (11.6)

Derived from: Census of Population 2006

*Map 13* shows the distribution of lone parent households as a percentage of total households in 2006 across South Kerry. It reveals values above the Kerry average of 11.1 percent and State average of 11.6 percent in some of the least accessible districts of the territory along the centre of Iveragh and to the south of Kenmare and Kilgarvan, presenting challenges to providing supports to lone parents with young families in those areas. High values are also found in Ballynacourty and Milltown EDs.

*Map 14* of percentage change in the number of all lone parent households between 2002 and 2006 reveals that increases in this demographic category were widespread, especially in the north and east of the territory as well as the lower half of Iveragh.

### Lone Parent Families

The CSO defines a family as (1) a husband and wife or a cohabiting couple or (2) a husband and wife or a cohabiting couple or a lone parent with one or more usually resident never-married children of any age; in all cases family members must be usual residents of the relevant household. An adaptation to the question on household relationships in Census 2006 allows an assessment of multi-family households. Thus the number of lone parent families is greater than the number of lone parent households.

Turning to lone parent families allows an examination of lone parents with young children in particular. In 2006, there were 1,772 lone parent families in South Kerry, comprising 15 percent of all families. The distribution of lone parent families shows a similar spatial pattern as that of lone parent households with the largest cluster of districts with high values of 18 percent and greater in the centre of Iveragh (*Map 15*).

Table 5 reveals that the number of lone parent family units as a percentage of total family units rose from a range of 17-18 percent in Killarney and Kenmare in 2002, both less than the State average in urban areas of 19 percent, to 18.5 to 24.5 percent in both towns and in Killorglin by 2006, around the State average of 21 percent in that census year. It also shows that the number of lone parent family units rose at a faster rate in the South Kerry towns than for all urban areas in the State over this intercensal period.

**Table 5 Lone parent family units in major towns of study area, 2002-2006**

Town	Lone parent family units with children				2002-2006	
	2002		2006		Absolute change	Percentage change
Number	Percentage of total	Number	Percentage of total			
Killarney	394	17	514	18.5	120	30.5
Kenmare	57	18	74	21	17	30
Killorglin	No data	No data	96	24.5	No data	No data
State urban areas	101,756	19	128,985	21	27,229	27
State rural areas	52,170	14	60,255	14	8,085	15.5

Derived from: Census of Population 2002 and 2006

Focusing in further, 37 percent of lone parent families (652 families) in South Kerry are made up of children younger than 15 years. When their distribution is explored it reveals a shift to urban areas as they comprise six percent or more of families in districts in and around the towns and villages of Killarney, Kenmare, Beaufort, Milltown, Cahersiveen and Waterville (*Map 16*), suggesting that many of the above average values in more rural districts in the previous map may represent mature farm families such as widows or widowers with resident adult children. However, Derriana and Cloon districts off the Ring of Kerry continue to exhibit high values of eight percent plus. The nearest community centre for these districts is in Dromid, which has a parent and toddler group, as well as a youth club. The high values around Killarney and Kenmare correspond with areas where Walsh *et al.* (2007a) found above average percentages of separated or divorced parents.

### Elderly People Living Alone

Social transfers play an important role in reducing the risk of poverty for those aged 65 years and older. In 2005, their risk of poverty was 88 percent without pensions and survivors' benefits; the inclusion of these social transfers brought their risk of poverty

down to 40 percent (Central Statistics Office, 2006). Furthermore, there were large decreases in the risk of poverty to elderly men and women between 2004 and 2005. The at risk of poverty rate for males aged 65 and older fell from 26 percent to 20 percent, while that of females fell even more, from 28 percent to 20 percent (Central Statistics Office, 2006). The rate among '1 adult, no children' households, a category mainly comprised of the elderly living alone, was much higher at 29 percent. Along with their greater risk of poverty, elderly people living by themselves are also vulnerable in terms of personal safety, health concerns and general quality of life. This is compounded by poor public transport services when they live in less densely populated rural areas and either do not have a car or are no longer able to drive. Two ways in which the SKDP helps older people in South Kerry are by supporting Active Age Groups and training workers in caring for older people.

In 2006, 10.5 percent (1,786) of households in the territory were made up of elderly people living alone, slightly greater than that of Kerry (9.9 percent) and notably greater than the 8.8 percent found in the State. *Map 17* illustrates a spatial pattern where higher values (9.7 percent plus) are more likely to occur in and around coastal districts, as well as near villages and towns. These data are not available by gender in 2006 but an analysis of elderly males and females living alone in 2002 revealed that females were more likely to live closer to urban areas. One possible reason for a lower association between elderly men and urban areas may relate to the tradition of patrilineal farm inheritance for keeping the family name on the land, combined with a decline in young and interested successors for non-viable farms, which leaves elderly bachelor farmers continuing on a subsistence level of farming and living alone in remote rural areas. This underscores the importance of Partnership work in visiting and bringing services to such isolated men. Conversely, widows on farms may be more inclined to transfer, lease or sell the family farm and move into villages or towns. For example, while only 16 percent of all farmers in 1991 aged 65+ were female, women comprised more than half of all farmers who transferred or leased their farms to younger farmers between 1994 and 1999 under the Farm Retirement Scheme (Department of Agriculture Food and Rural Development, 2000).

Elderly women can counter their isolation through engagement in Women's Groups under the umbrella of the SKDP's Kerry Women Together Programme. Although the programme is aimed at improving women's business and employment opportunities, it also serves to increase women's participation in the economic and social affairs of the territory. This includes engaging elderly women living alone in one of the numerous women's groups in the area to not only counter their isolation, but to avail of their life experience, which as O'Keeffe (2007) pointed out, could contribute to local governance and community development.

#### Households without a Car

The distribution of private households without a car is assessed next to examine service accessibility in rural areas at a distance from settlements and public transport routes. This is particularly relevant as ongoing restructuring in the agricultural and manufacturing sectors, and the rise of service employment, have concentrated employment opportunities into urban centres, necessitating greater levels of commuting from rural areas. In 2006, 2,871 private households in South Kerry did not have a car, an increase of 160 households since 2002. Table 6 shows favourable levels of car ownership in South Kerry compared with Kerry and the State.



**Table 6 Comparative Levels of Car Ownership in South Kerry, Kerry and the State, 2006**

	<i>% Households with no car</i>	<i>% Households with 1 car</i>	<i>% Households with 2 Cars</i>	<i>% Households with 3+ Cars</i>
South Kerry	16.9	39.3	34.3	9.4
Kerry	18.0	39.8	33.1	9.1
State	19.7	38.6	32.9	8.7

Derived from: Census of Population 2006

Focusing on the households with no car, high values of 16.7 percent plus occur in all districts with towns and many with villages (*Map 18*). Whereas private households in rural areas generally have higher levels of car availability (Walsh, *et al.*, 2007b), this map reveals large extents of Iveragh, as well as some districts on the Corcadh Dhuibhne, where 12 percent or more of households had neither a car nor lived in an ED adjacent to a primary or secondary road more likely to be serviced by public transport. When Fitzpatrick Associates (2001) investigated the incidence of Kerry residents with little or no access to a car and living in a district without a suitable transport service in 2001, they found that unmet transport needs were most acute among lower income groups followed by older people, young people, and persons with an illness or a disability. Thus, the distribution shown here highlights rural areas in the territory where increased frequency of Rural Transport Programme services could improve accessibility for some of the groups most at risk of poverty in South Kerry.

#### LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING

For those who are not in a position to inherit property in the form of a house or land, access to affordable and good quality housing is another factor that influences poverty. The Local Authority works to provide housing for those who, usually for financial reasons, cannot access housing through the private property market.

#### Council Housing Rentals

Although persons living in rented or rent free accommodation make up less than 22 percent of the population in the State, they comprise over 43 percent of persons at risk of poverty (Central Statistics Office, 2006). Local Authority (LA) tenants face a much higher risk of poverty than any other tenure type including LA purchasers and owners, and this risk increases in rural areas (Watson, *et al.*, 2005). These researchers noted that the increased risk of poverty is largely accounted for by the socio-demographic profile of public sector tenants. In 2006, 905 dwellings or 5.4 percent of the total ‘permanent’ houses in South Kerry were rented from the LA. This falls short of the 6.6 percent rented in all of Kerry and the 7.2 percent rented in the State and is likely influenced by the extent of rural areas across the territory as Walsh *et al.* (2007b) noted how only about one-fifth of all rented LA housing was found in rural areas in 2002. The largest expanse of high values of 6.4 percent and higher in rural areas occurs throughout the interior of Iveragh, from Sneem on the southside to Glenbeigh on the northside (*Map 19*). Elsewhere, high values are associated with the presence of a settlement in the district, such as in the triangle of Cahersiveen, Valentia and Waterville, around the towns of Killarney, Kenmare and Killorglin, and the villages of Kilgarvan, Milltown, and Annascaul.

Overall, 51 percent (819 houses) of council housing in South Kerry acquired through Killarney Town Council and Kerry County Council has been purchased. The remaining

49 percent (777 houses) is still being rented. *Map 20* shows the distribution of both purchased and rented council houses in July, 2007 by settlement. It reveals that Killarney, at 64 percent, has the largest proportion of purchased council houses. Conversely, more than 70 percent of all council housing in Sneem, Milltown, Valentia, Kilgarvan and Kenmare is rented.

Between 2002 and 2006, the number of houses rented from the LA rose by almost 20 percent. Districts in rural areas are more likely to display a decline in the number of houses rented from the LA, while districts with a settlement are more likely to exhibit an increase (*Map 21*). The main exceptions to this pattern are the districts of Kenmare (-2 percent), Sneem (-16 percent) and Valentia (-14 percent), which all show declines.

### Council Housing Approvals

By July 2007, 413 applications for council housing had been approved by Kerry County Council in South Kerry. These are housing applicants who have passed an interview by the Local Authority's investigating officers. Figure 6 gives the breakdown of the applicants' marital status and shows that 37 percent (147 applicants) are single, 18 percent (74) are lone parents, 17 percent (72) are married and 13 percent (53) are separated.

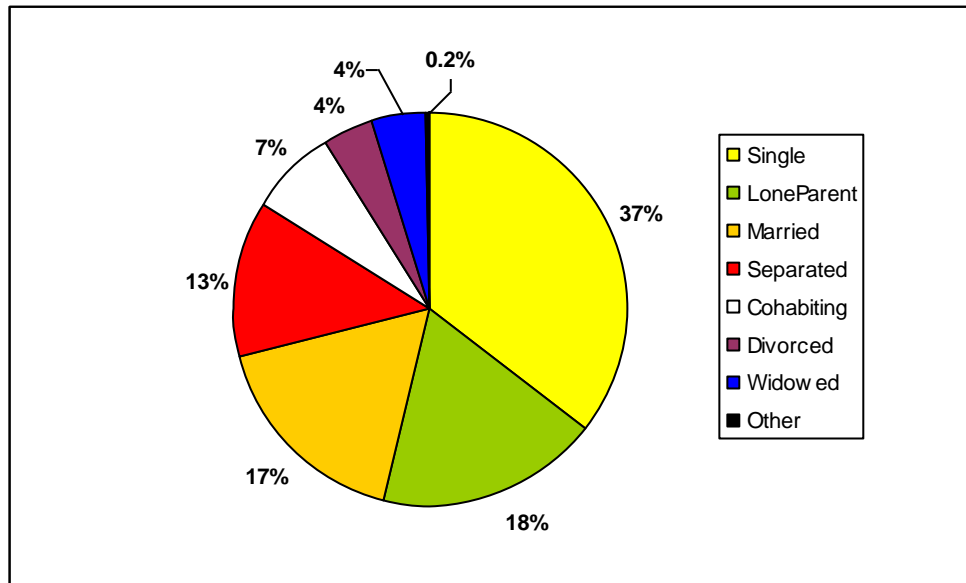
The remaining 67 applicants are cohabiting, divorced or widowed, with one 'other'<sup>10</sup>. In total, more than one-third of approvals are lone parents, separated or divorced and this highlights the influence of changing family structures on the incidence of poverty in South Kerry, as noted by Tovey and Share (2003).

*Map 22* shows the distribution of these applicants by their area of choice. It reveals that applicants who are single form the biggest group in all the larger towns of Killarney, Kenmare, Killorglin and Cahersiveen. Lone parents comprise a greater proportion of applicants as you move away from the peninsulas and make up the largest group in Milltown and Glenbeigh. Divorced applicants appear to comprise a larger proportion of applicants in the coastal settlements of Ballinskelligs, Annascaul, Sneem and Cahersiveen.

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<sup>10</sup> Indicates where applicant did not declare their marital status.

**Figure 6 Approved applicants for council housing by marital status, 2007**

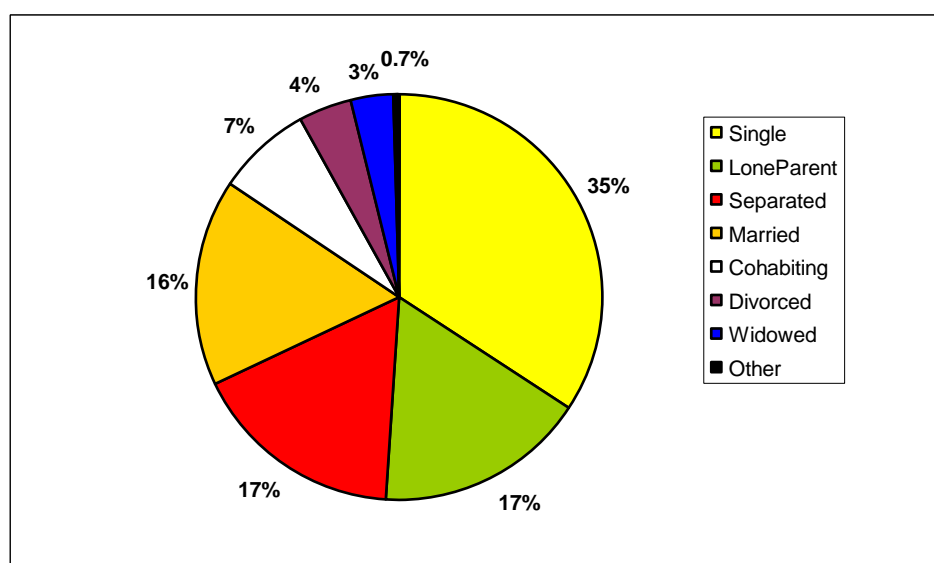


Based on data from Kerry County Council

Council Housing Waiting List

In July 2007, there were 734 applicants on the waiting list for council housing from Kerry County Council. Those on the waiting list have approximately four to six weeks until their interview with the LA investigating officer. Figure 7 gives the breakdown of their marital status and shows that 35 percent (250 applicants) are single, 17 percent are lone parents (126) and another 17 percent are separated (123) and 16 percent are married (121). The remaining 15 percent (114) are cohabiting, divorced, widowed, or 'other'. In all, 38 percent of those on the waiting list for council housing are lone parents, separated or divorced, greater than the 35 percent of those who have been approved for council housing (see previous section).

**Figure 7 Applicants on waiting list for council housing by marital status, 2007**

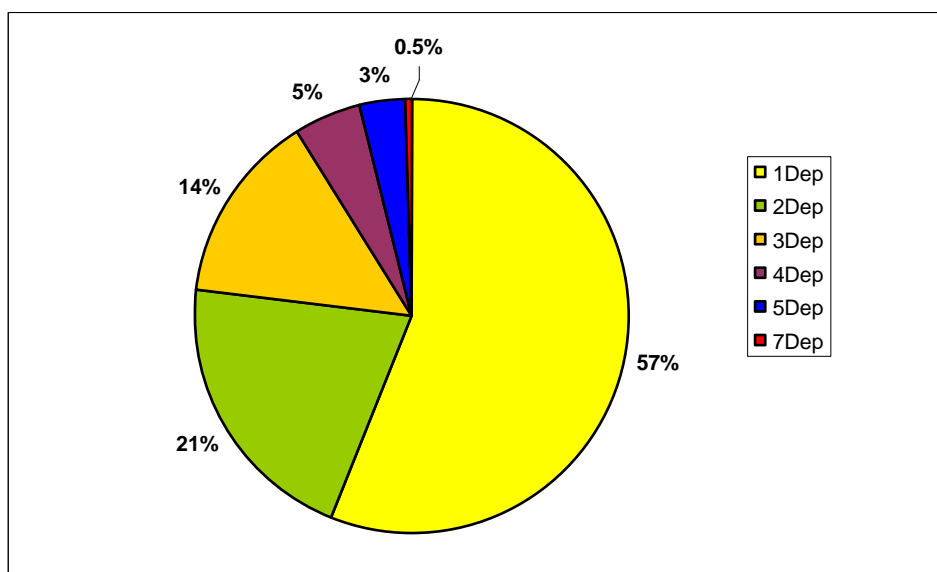


Based on data from Kerry County Council

Map 23 shows the distribution of housing applicants on the Kerry County Council waiting list across South Kerry by area of choice in July 2007. As for approved applicants, the category of 'single' makes up the largest proportion of any group in the larger towns of Killarney, Kenmare, Killorglin and Cahersiveen, but it also forms a larger proportion in smaller settlements as well. Similarly, lone parents comprise a larger proportion of applicants in settlements away from the peninsulas, such as: Milltown, Killarney and Killorglin. In South Kerry, lone parents make up a much smaller proportion of those on the waiting list for council housing, compared with the 43 percent found for the State overall (Combat Poverty Agency, 2006a), but the trend is one of increase.

Of the 734 applicants awaiting housing from Kerry County Council, 410 have dependents. Thus, 56 percent of households awaiting council housing are comprised of families and this is in turn linked to the changing structures of Irish families as only 19 percent of total applicants are either married or widowed. Figure 8 gives the composition of these families and shows that 57 percent have one dependent, 21 percent have two dependents and 14 percent have three dependents. The proportions continue to decline with a greater number of dependents; there is one large family that consists of seven dependents.

**Figure 8 Applicants on waiting list for council housing by number of dependents, 2007**

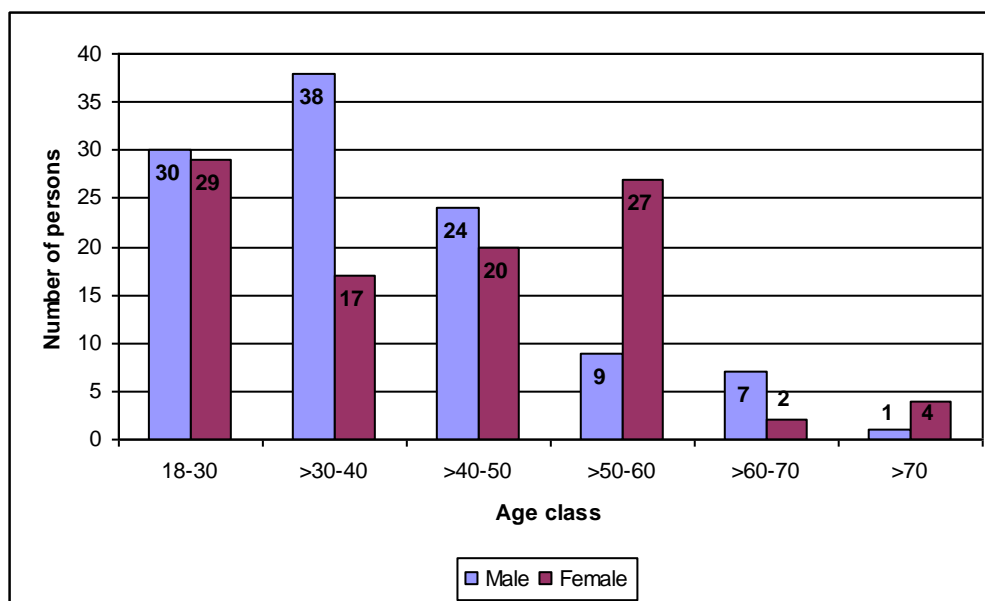


Based on data from Kerry County Council

Map 24 shows the distribution of these families by area of choice. There are above average proportions of families on the waiting list for council housing with just one dependent in Portmagee, Glenbeigh, Kilgarvan and Killorglin. Larger families comprise a greater proportion in Cahersiveen and Waterville than elsewhere.

Figure 9 shows the age and gender breakdown of applicants who are single and currently on the waiting list from Killarney Town Council in July, 2007. There are 208 applicants comprised of 99 females and 109 males. The number of males peaks in the 30s age class (38 persons) and falls off thereafter, while the number of females decline from a peak in the 20s age class (29 persons) and rises again from the 40s to another peak in the 50s age class (27 persons), which may be related to marital breakdown.

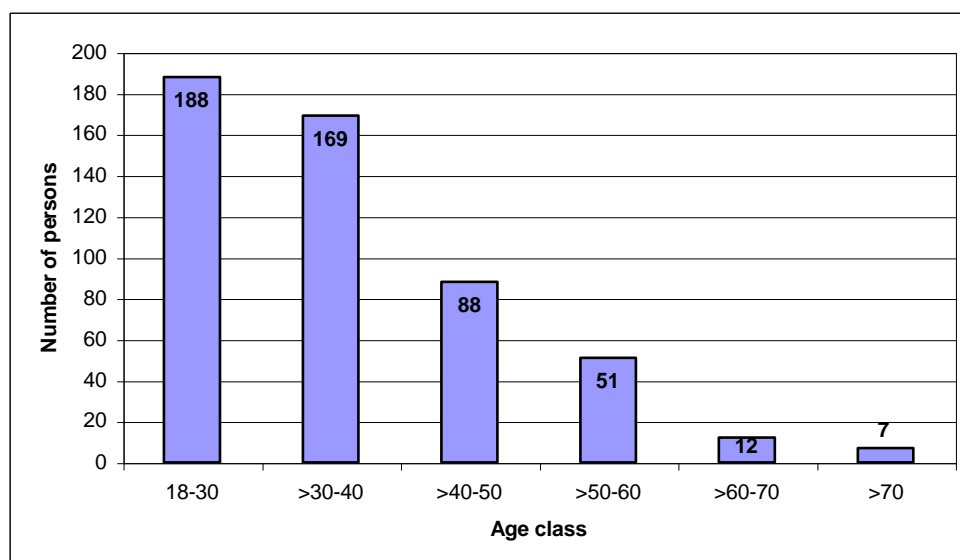
**Figure 9 Applicants on Killarney Town Council waiting list for single households by age and gender, 2007**



Based on data from Kerry County Council

In total, there are 537 adults on the waiting list for council housing in Killarney town. The following analysis assesses their age distribution by the category of housing need. The vast majority (515 persons) are on the housing list out of financial need. Figure 10 shows that most of those in financial need are in their 20s (188 persons) and 30s (169 persons) and that the numbers decline with age. There are just 19 applicants who are older than 60 years.

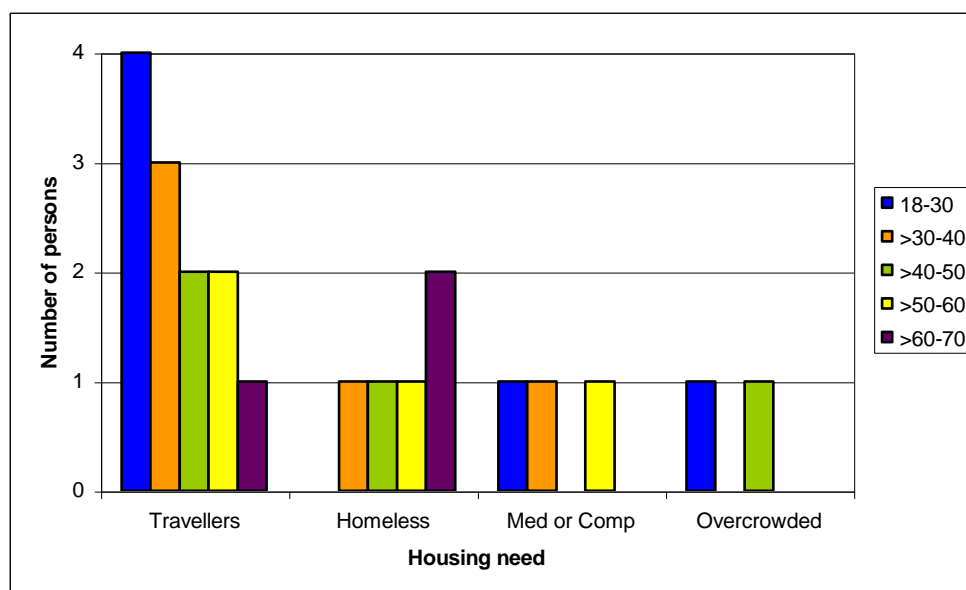
**Figure 10 Applicants on Killarney Town Council housing waiting list in financial need by age, 2007**



Based on data from Kerry County Council

The remaining 22 applicants on the waiting list are Travellers (12), homeless (five), have medical need (three) or are in overcrowded conditions (two). Figure 11 shows that while the number of Travellers declines with age, the low numbers of other applicants are fairly evenly distributed across the age classes.

**Figure 11 Other applicants approved for Killarney Town Council housing by age and need, 2007**



Based on data from Kerry County Council

### SMALL-SCALE FARMING ENTERPRISES

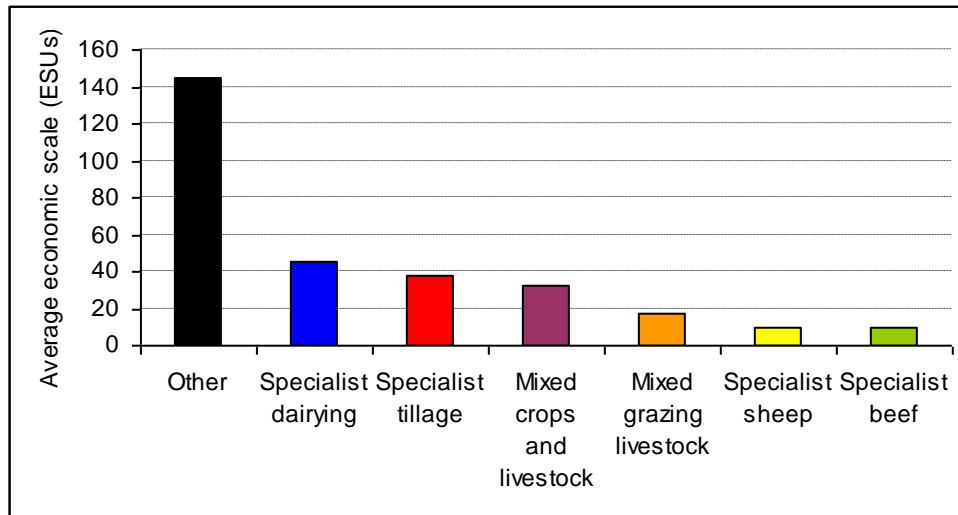
The final section of this profile of poverty indicators for South Kerry looks at the distribution of small-scale farm enterprises. In 2000, the year of the last Census of Agriculture, there were 3,460 farms in South Kerry with an average farm size of 37.7ha, well above the State average of 31.4ha. However, farm size is not a reliable indicator of the scale of the farm enterprise because farms in areas of poor land use ranges, such as hill farms, tend to be larger to compensate for inferior land resources. A more accurate measure to use is the economic scale of agricultural output. The economic scale of a farm is measured in European size units (ESU). ESU represent the sum of standard gross margins (SGM) for farm output or the monetary value of its gross production less specific costs, where 1 ESU = €1,200 SGM<sup>11</sup>. Gross production comprises the farm gate value of primary and secondary farm products, inclusive of relevant subsidies and exclusive of value added tax (VAT). Specific costs are direct costs related to the production of farm output less the value of subsidies associated with the costs and exclusive of VAT. Crop direct costs include seeds, purchased fertilisers, pesticides, marketing and insurance, while livestock direct costs include feed, livestock replacement, veterinary services, marketing and insurance. Direct costs do not include such expenses as labour, machinery, buildings and fuel.

#### Average Economic Scale of the Main Farming Systems

In 2000, the average farm economic scale in the State was 20.7 ESU. Farming systems classified as ‘other’, which includes highly intensive indoor production units such as specialist pig, poultry and horticultural enterprises, had the largest economic scale of all systems with an average of 144 ESU (Figure 12). When ‘other’ farms are excluded from the calculations, the average farm economic scale falls to 19.1 ESU.

<sup>11</sup> Using 1986 and 1996 standard gross margins in the 1991 and 2000 Census of Agriculture, respectively.

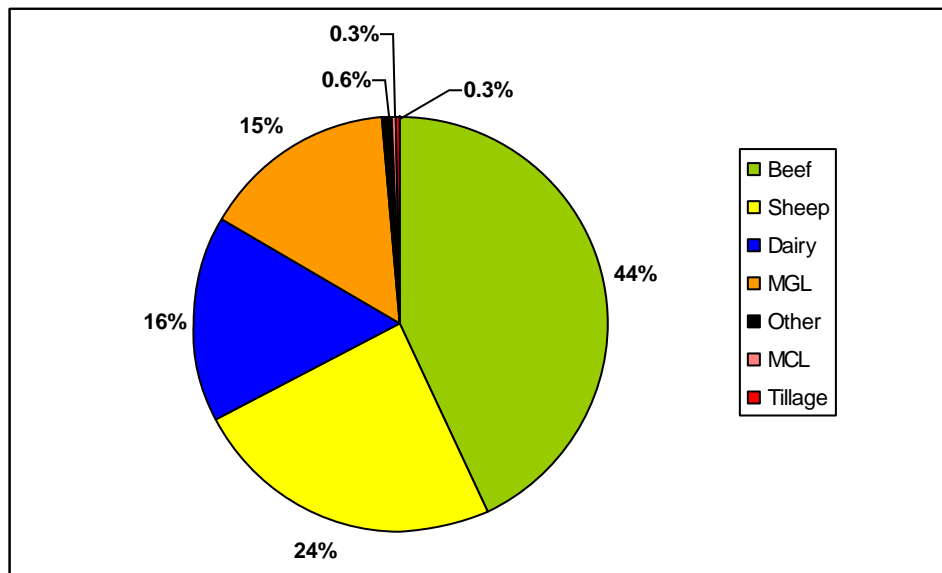
**Figure 12 Average farm economic scale (ESU) by farming system, 2000**



Derived from: Census of Agriculture, 2000

The farm systems with the next highest average economic scale in 2000 were specialist dairy and tillage with 46 ESU and 38 ESU, respectively. In comparison, specialist beef and specialist sheep farms were low-income systems of just nine ESU and ten ESU, respectively. The average farm economic scale in the territory in 2000 was just 13.1 ESU, compared with the Kerry average of 18.7 ESU and the State of 20.7 ESU. Figure 13 helps to explain this relatively low average value for South Kerry: 83 percent of farms were in the lowest income drystock farming systems of beef, sheep and mixed grazing livestock.

**Figure 13 Composition of farms by farming system in South Kerry, 2000**



Derived from: Census of Agriculture 2000

MGL = Mixed Grazing Livestock

MCL = Mixed Crops and Livestock

Other = Pigs/Poultry/Horticulture

### Farms smaller than 8 ESU

In 2000, 53 percent of all farms in South Kerry were small-scale farm enterprises of less than 8 ESU, a much higher proportion compared with that of Kerry overall (Table 7) and the State.

**Table 7 Number and percentage of farms less than 8 ESU in South Kerry, Kerry and the State, 2000**

	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
South Kerry	1,815	53
Kerry	3,736	44
State	62,841	45

Derived from: Census of Agriculture 2000

Coastal EDs are more likely to exhibit a high incidence of small-scale farm enterprises (*Map 25*). In EDs surrounding Sneem on the south side of Iveragh, between Waterville and Cahersiveen to Valentia Island, and from Glenbeigh to Killorglin, 58 percent and higher of all farms are less than 8 ESU. A line from Cromane to below Killarney forms the southern border of the comparatively lucrative dairy farming system more common in North and East Kerry, although pockets of dairy farming occur around Waterville and Valentia Island. What actually matches this distribution of small-scale enterprises is specialist beef farming, which comprises 42 percent plus of farms in these areas, with the next most common systems being specialist sheep farming (19 percent plus) and mixed grazing livestock (15 percent plus) (Crowley, *et al.*, In progress).

Between 1991 and 2000, the number of farms smaller than 8 ESU declined in all districts of South Kerry, with the largest percentage declines in the eastern half of the territory (*Map 26*). The number of farmers in receipt of Farm Assist<sup>12</sup> payments in September 2007 reflects the distribution of small-scale farm enterprises in 2000 (Table 8). Over one hundred farmers were on Farm Assist in Cahersiveen and Killorglin, while the numbers in Kenmare and Killarney were half that or less. A comparison of the numbers in receipt of FA and UA in the four locations reveals differences in their job markets. Similar numbers for both in Cahersiveen and Kenmare reflect the more traditional rural job market in these areas and the persistence of low income farmers. Conversely, those in receipt of FA comprise only one quarter or less of the numbers in receipt of UA in Killarney and Killorglin, indicating the smaller proportion of the labour market still dependent on small-scale farming.

**Table 8 Numbers in receipt of Farm Assist and Unemployment Assistance, September 2007**

<i>Location</i>	<i>Farm Assist (FA)</i>	<i>Unemployment Assistance (UA)</i>	<i>Ratio of FA to UA</i>
Cahersiveen	114	118	1:1
Killorglin	109	430	1:4
Kenmare	55	54	1:1
Killarney	40	170	1:4

Based on data provided by the Department of Social and Family Affairs

<sup>12</sup> Farm Assist is a weekly means-tested payment for low income farmers. According to the DSFA, receipt of FA precludes a farmer from UA but it is also more beneficial.



### Changing Nature of Farming in South Kerry

The introduction of the Single Farm Payment and full decoupling of agricultural production from farm income subsidies in 2005, means that REPS plays a crucial role in maintaining small-scale farming in much of Ireland. By 2003, uptake of the Rural Environment Protection Scheme (REPS) was high along the west of Ireland, including South Kerry, and the number of REPS farms increased in most of the districts in South Kerry between 1999 and 2003, reflecting both the relative ease of complying with REPS regulations on less intensive drystock farms and the importance of REPS subsidies on low income farms (see Crowley, *et al.*, In progress; Kearney and Sage, 2006). The REPS serves to compensate farmers throughout this scenic territory for the public goods they provide that underpin the tourist sector, for example, along the Ring of Kerry. Specifically, these public goods range from the environmental (conserving wildlife populations, and both their terrestrial and aquatic habitats) to the cultural (maintaining vernacular farmstead architecture and stonewalls) and the archaeological (protecting monuments such as standing stones and stone circles).

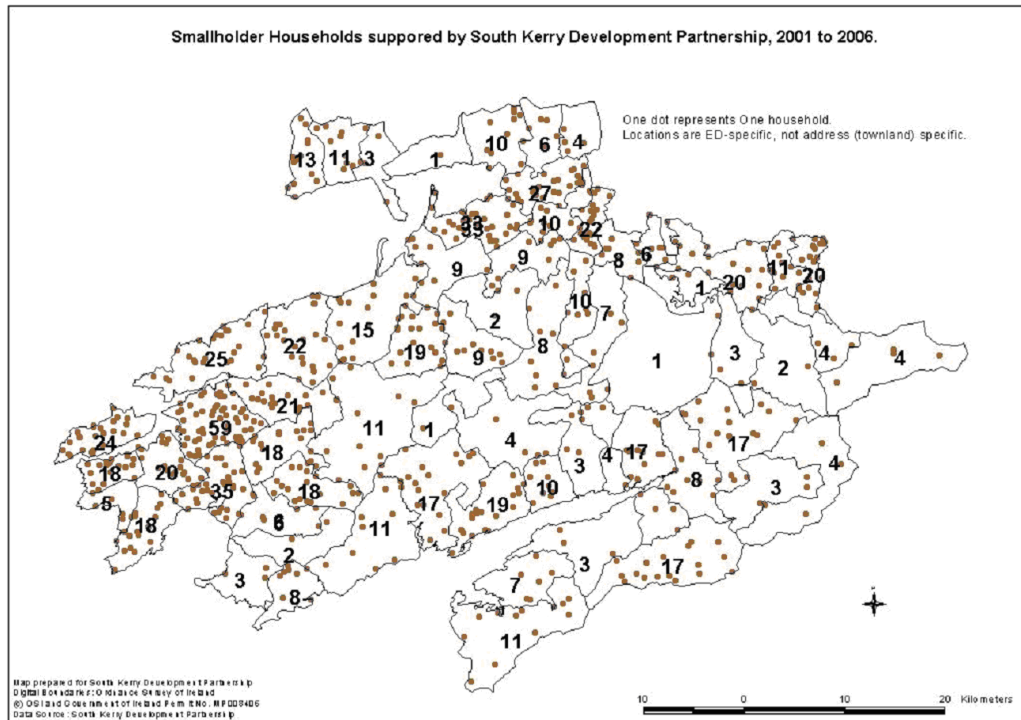
Additionally, a growing majority of Irish farmers are combining farming with another job, usually off-farm and more lucrative than farming. However, many off-farm jobs are in the construction industry, which O’Keeffe (2007) observed can entail long daily commutes of more than 100km that compromises the sustainability of combining employment with farming. This highlights the need for locally-based alternative employment in rural areas. Furthermore, the construction industry is vulnerable to a downturn in the economy and in that event, farmers’ lower educational levels compared to the general population reduces their capacity to compete for more professional employment, which points to the need for improving skills to access alternative employment when available.

### The South Kerry Farmers’ Enterprise Assistance Initiative

This section draws primarily from the report by Kearney and Sage (2006). The Farmers’ Enterprise Assistance (FEA) initiative supports underemployed farmers in receipt of Farm Assist, as well as their families, in generating sustainable farm income and becoming independent of social welfare. It provides alternatives to commuting long distances to off-farm jobs or to selling the family farm and in doing so, farm families maintain ownership of their land and continue to farm it. This in turn works to maintain rural populations - a living countryside - and supports the goal of sustaining the tourist asset of a scenic pastoral landscape. Furthermore, the FEA recognises that South Kerry has increasing numbers of non-Irish nationals who may compete with farmers to take low-skilled off-farm jobs with which farmers traditionally supplement their farm income, such as work in the construction industry and, increasingly, agricultural contracting.

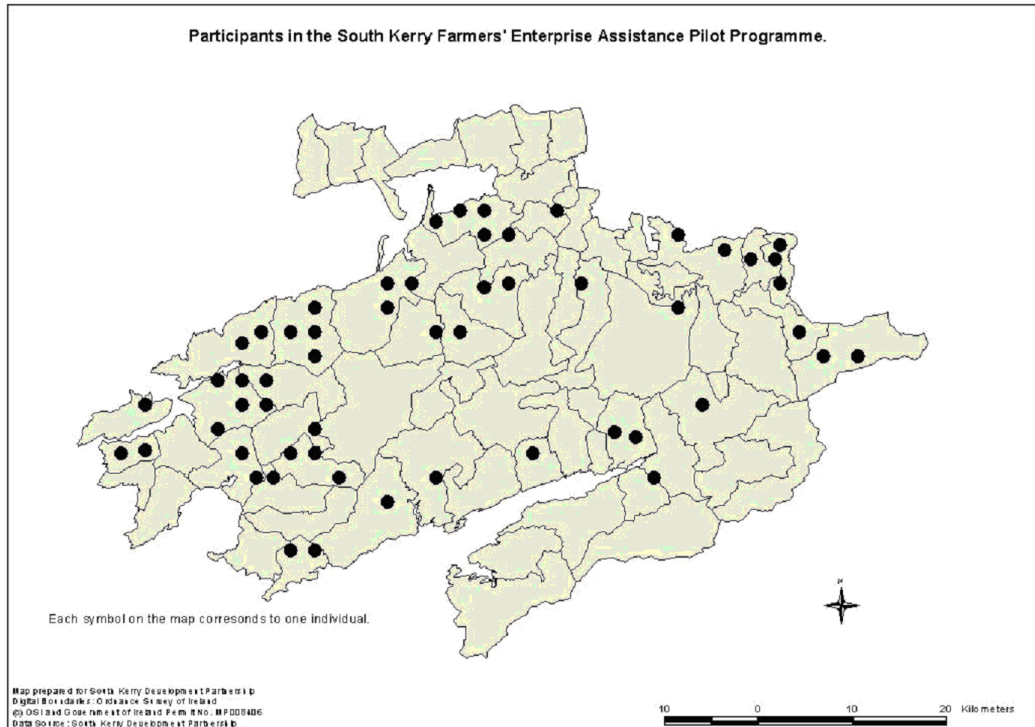
Figure 14 shows the distribution of smallholder households supported by the SKDP between 2001 and 2006, while Figure 15 focuses on the distribution of the 55 smallholders supported through the FEA pilot programme. In 2004, there were an estimated 400 Farm Assist recipients in South Kerry, which equates to approximately a quarter of all farm less than 8 ESU in 2000. A comparison of these distributions with high proportions of farms less than 8 ESU (see *Map 25*) shows a good degree of overlap indicating uptake of support in areas of need. There also appears to be particularly high levels of uptake among the relatively smaller proportion of small-holders in districts that border with North and East Kerry likely associated with greater enterprise generating opportunities in EDs with greater accessibility and proximity to urban areas.

**Figure 14 Smallholder households supported by the SKDP, 2001-2006**



Source: Kearney and Sage (2006: 6)

**Figure 15 Participants in the South Kerry FEA pilot, 2000-2006**



Source: Kearney and Sage (2006: 14)

Kearney and Sage (2006) noted that the farmer's spouse can be the main person engaged in establishing the new on- or off-farm enterprise supported through the FEA. Unless the farm is transferred to them or they own their own land and are eligible for Farm Assist, farm successors with enterprise ideas are not eligible to access support

through the FEA, although they still gain benefits indirectly from their parents participation. For instance, Kearney and Sage (2006: 25) observed that the FEA “allows the families of participants to become more confident and optimistic and to consider staying in or returning to their home place as an option in their own futures.”

### A Local Food Economy

With a negative outlook for farm income into the future in all farming systems due to growing competition from producers in low-cost economies (with the current exception of dairying and cereal growers, uncommon systems in the territory), the future of farming in marginal agricultural areas such as South Kerry is dependent on building linkages between the tourism and farm sectors, not just in terms of the obvious value of scenic landscapes and a high quality environment, but also in terms of building a high quality local food economy that enhances a region’s image. A local food economy is whereby a diverse range of produce is grown and reared for local food-processing and for local consumption, and not simply for input to low-value international agricultural commodity markets over which Irish farmers have no control. The need for a local food economy to be diverse in its range of products calls for a territory-wide network of food producers and processors. This in turn requires a diversity of skills ranging from primary food and fish production, along with land and aquatic resource management, to manufacturing skills and expertise in food processing and food safety regulations, to marketing and business skills in promoting and selling the output through various supply channels. A local food economy depends on those inside and outside the farm sector and entails strong rural-urban linkages.

The foundation for a local food economy is already in place in South Kerry with Ring of Kerry Foods. Funding for food enterprises is available through the LEADER+ Food Sector Scheme, which promotes such innovation, added-value, collective action and networking. The concept of a local food economy brings these together into a unified platform on which to integrate complementary farming, fishing and food enterprises that serve a common local market, while maintaining the potential to reach international markets. O’Keeffe (2007) synthesised South Kerry into six sub-areas to demonstrate their differing contributions to local and polycentric development. The potential contribution from each sub-area to a local food economy includes an agricultural, fish farming and marine production base in ‘Killorglin and Mid-Kerry’, ‘Peripheral South Kerry’, and ‘Cahersiveen, Valentia and Portmagee’, an alternative agricultural production base with organics and permaculture in ‘Kenmare and the Roughty Valley’, landscape with an international reputation throughout to help market the produce and products but particularly in ‘Killarney National Park’, and a hospitality hub in ‘Killarney and Environs’ to help generate a local market with an international reach.

A local food economy provides another draw for discerning tourists looking to eat a uniquely Kerry food, such as steaks from a Kerry Blue cow or lamb reared on wild herbs and flowers in the Macgillicuddy Reeks. This approach has already been adopted by the Burren Beef and Lamb Producers Group and Connemara Hill Lamb Ltd. in comparable tourist regions. These groups process their own meat and market it using the virtues of their regions’ unique animal breeds, landscape, flora and traditional farming practices (Crowley, 2007b). Kerry Flavours, a website that promotes artisanal Kerry produce and food products, follows a similar marketing strategy that describes how “you can actually taste the area by getting to know the local products”. It describes Kerry dairy products that “taste of the herbs and grasses of the grazing fields. Nowhere in the world will you find dairy products which taste quite like these.” In these ways, a

local food economy contributes to O’Keeffe’s (2007) call for a greater valorisation of local resources.

Increasingly well-educated and well-travelled potential farm successors assess their future employment options and, with the encouragement of their parents, see better prospects and living standards in the non-farm sector, especially in marginal farming areas such as South Kerry. Yet, innovative Irish farm enterprises that produce artisanal foods are growing into viable businesses, winning international awards and acclaim for their products (Crowley, 2007a), both of which serve to make them more attractive to the next generation of farmers. Therefore, developing a local food economy supports farmers in producing a diverse range of high quality produce with artisanal qualities such as rare animal breeds and plant varieties, creates added-value through local food processing and packaging units, integrates the food with the local catering sector to enhance the available tourist experience (tourists who can then buy the food if available over the internet when they return home). Public procurement of local produce and processed foods in hospitals, educational institutes and public sector canteens is another way to support the local food economy. The role for the SKDP is to support and mentor the small-scale farmers in the added-value stages of processing, packaging, marketing or retailing the produce so that they can increase their farming income and thereby attract farm successors, without whom the sector cannot continue. In the case of drystock farmers, a template is provided by the producer groups in the Burren and Connemara. Developing a local food economy entails the creation of non-farm jobs in areas of food processing, packaging and marketing, and thereby serves to not only sustain farming but to also generate alternative employment for other rural dwellers.

When considering the options for developing the FEA initiative further in South Kerry, Kearney and Sage (2006) saw the potential for the scheme to contribute to other programmes in the areas of the rural economy, and the natural/cultural landscape. For example, the FEA initiative can bring the new farm enterprise to the next stage at which it graduates to LEADER funding for future development. This funding supports business plans and projects that generate or at least sustain employment, have a positive impact on women and youth, are innovative and add value to products, services or the area, and that entail engaging with other businesses or community groups. Developing a local food economy fits this description and the youth dimension to the LEADER funding favours the participation of farm successors and meets the goal of sustaining small-scale family farming into the next generation. Thus, food-based enterprises germinated and grown via the FEA could graduate into a LEADER funded scheme to develop a local food economy, providing a strong end goal for these participants and a network into which they can link for future support and enterprise development.

#### SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS FROM THE POVERTY PROFILE

- Ethnic minorities and eastern Europeans are concentrated in and around urban areas, in the north and east, related to service employment and construction. Pole and Lithuanians are also based around Cahersiveen, likely related to jobs in a local mine.
- Lone parent households are located in urban areas and throughout Iveragh, while lone parent families with young children are predominantly found in more urban areas.
- However, 12 lone parent families with young children are in Derriana and Cloon districts in the Iveragh interior and this highlights the important role of the Dromid

Centre in providing local services such as a parent and toddler group, and a youth club.

- A higher proportion of persons with a disability in South Kerry are aged 65+ and there are large extents of above average rates on the lower half of Iveragh.
- Higher proportions of persons unable to work due to permanent illness or disability are scattered in less populated areas.
- Higher proportions of unpaid carers are located in rural areas in the east and the lower half of Iveragh.
- These spatial patterns reveal both the high proportions of persons with a disability in more isolated areas along with the extent of home care provision in those locations.
- This highlights the vital role of carers in South Kerry in areas more distant to services for the permanently ill and the disabled.
- Levels of voluntary activity in South Kerry compare favourably with the State average. They tend to be associated with more densely populated areas and this highlights the significance of Partnership activities in more remote parts of the territory.
- There is an association between elderly females living alone and proximity to a town or village, while elderly males living alone are likely to live in more rural areas, which presents a challenge for addressing isolation among elderly males in South Kerry, especially around Sneem and on Beara.
- The proportions of households without a car are generally higher in districts with settlements and along the road network but moderate to high levels in rural districts, particularly in the west of the territory, underscores the important role of Rural Transport services in this part of South Kerry especially.
- Higher percentages of council house rentals are generally associated with towns and villages, but also occur in the interior of Iveragh, between Sneem and Glenbeigh.
- Increases in council housing rentals are common in districts with settlements while declines occurred in more rural areas, including districts in the Iveragh interior.
- Thirty-five percent of applicants approved for council housing and 38 percent of those still on the waiting list in South Kerry are lone parents, separated or divorced. This signals the increasing effect of changing family structures on poverty in the territory.
- Small-scale farming in South Kerry is associated with low income drystock farming systems, especially beef production, followed by sheep and mixed grazing livestock.
- There is a good degree of overlap between high proportions of small-scale farms in districts and participation in the Farmers' Enterprise Assistance Initiative pilot programme, apart from districts around Sneem and Kenmare.
- A number of factors in South Kerry ranging from the tourist sector, international reputation for a scenic and unspoilt environment and established artisanal food enterprises provide a foundation on which to build a local food economy to sustain small-scale farmers and generate rural-based employment for an increasingly well-educated rural population. Diversification of the rural economy using natural resources as a foundation has become increasingly important in light of the current economic downturn and large job losses in the construction sector and growing declines in low-skilled service employment.

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