

Spatial Patterns associated with Disadvantage and Deprivation in South Kerry, June 2011

Disadvantage and social exclusion affect the lives of many people in South Kerry. The area exhibits several manifestations of rural disadvantage, particularly in peripheral parts of the Iveragh and Beara Peninsulas. Such communities are disadvantaged by poor service provision, low levels of connectivity, a high age dependency ratio and a reliance on marginal farming and low-skilled employment. Many communities, particularly those in Beara and in the interior parts of Iveragh have become more disadvantaged since 1991, and require targeted interventions, not just through the LCDP, but through the renewed efforts of local government and the statutory sector, with agencies working in partnership with one another and with the local communities. Villages and towns in South Kerry show evidence of increased social polarisation and class segregation. Several neighbourhoods in the main towns and villages experience multi-level and inter-generational deprivation, and levels of social and economic exclusion are particularly high among those who reside in local authority housing estates. While there is abundant evidence that the outputs and impacts of SKDP to date have served to alleviate disadvantage and social exclusion, there is a clear need for greater agency support for area-based partnership and community development, as well as new approaches to planning and poverty-proofing of policies.

Economic and Social Disadvantage in 2011

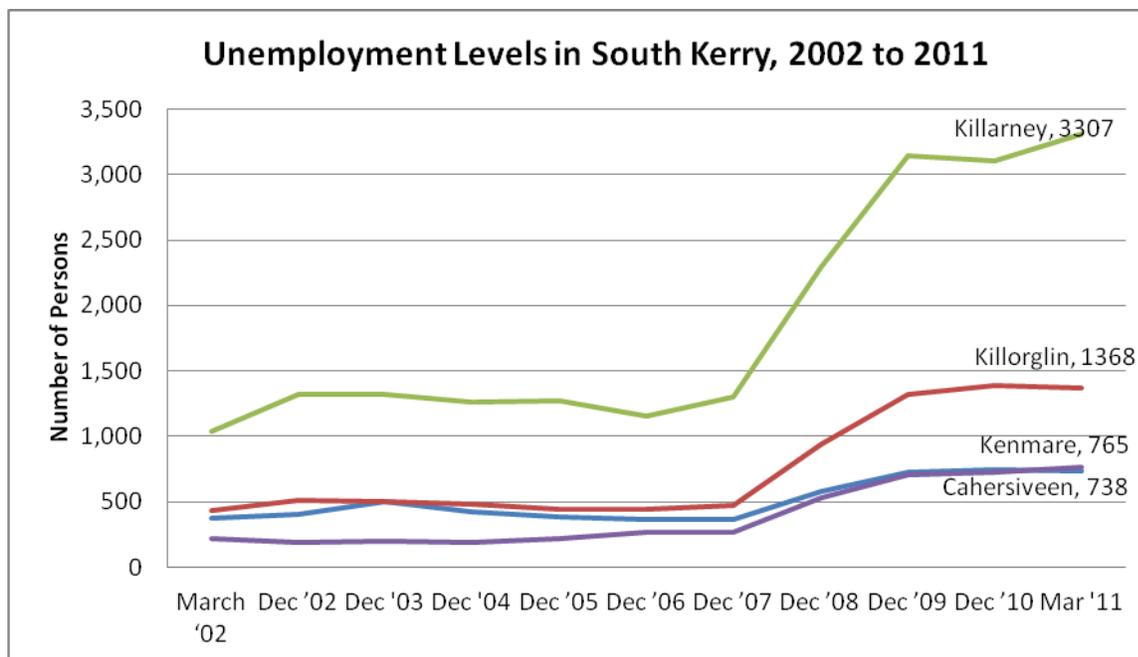
The publication of the Haase Report in November 2010 reveals that twenty-eight (out of a total of 65) EDs in South Kerry are statistically more disadvantaged than the national average – all have scores ranging from -.1 to – 16.3¹. The greatest concentrations of disadvantaged EDs, as defined by the Haase Index, are in Beara and Rural Iveragh. The spatial pattern is broadly similar to that which has previously been identified by South Kerry Development Partnership (Reference 2007 Profile and Poverty Profile). While the current version of the Haase Index takes rural factors into account to a greater extent than did previous versions thereof, it is still best suited to measuring urban deprivation. Therefore, the fact that the aforementioned areas in South Kerry register as ‘disadvantaged’ and ‘very disadvantaged’ on it demonstrates that they are extremely structurally weak, and that local citizens are very vulnerable to social exclusion. Given the demographic and typographical nature of communities such as Lauragh, Tousist, Sneem, Castlecove, Glencar and Máistir Gaoithe, community development efforts need to be extensive and consistent, and the investment of LCDP resources, as a direct contribution and as a means of priming exogenous supports is essential.

A number of social and economic changes are illuminated by the newly-published Haase data. At national level there has been a growth in affluence and a corresponding decline in deprivation since the 1990s. While this trend is evident in parts of South Kerry, there are a number of very notable exceptions; a total of twenty EDs in South Kerry have become relatively more disadvantaged since 1991.

¹ The Haase Index measures disadvantage and affluence on a scale that ranges from -30 to +30. Minus scores indicate relative disadvantage. Positive scores indicate relative affluence. The national average is zero.

Most of those areas that have become more disadvantaged are rural, and have a narrow economic base. Rural communities most affected by decline are Lauragh, Caherdaniel, Tahilla, Milltown and Sneem, as well as dispersed communities in the centre of Iveragh. Perhaps, more surprising however is the increase in deprivation in the towns of Killarney (including environs), Kenmare and Cahersiveen.

As is the case nationally, unemployment in South Kerry has risen very sharply over recent years, but the rate of increase is much greater than in the state as whole, and it predates the 2008 recession. Therefore, as the following graph shows, long-term unemployment requires specific targeting.



Between March 2002 and 2011, the number of registered unemployed persons in South Kerry rose from 2,065 to 4,113; an increase of 200%. While Killarney has the greatest number of unemployed persons, the most rapid increase has been in Kenmare, as the following table shows.

Absolute and Percentage Increase in Unemployment in South Kerry, March 2002 to March 2011

	Cahersiveen	Killorglin	Killarney	Kenmare
Absolute Increase	361	937	2265	550
% Increase	95.76	217.40	217.37	255.81

The LDCP, and the specific actions presented in this strategic plan represent an essential component of SKDP’s approach to combating employment. The Partnership’s services are locally-based, accessible, agency-independent and focus on empowerment of target group members. In addition, SKDP envisages on-going and deepening collaboration with the Department of Social Protection in delivering the Back to Work Area Enterprise Allowance, together with working in partnership with other agencies in operating the Local Employment Service and delivering Services to Unemployed People.

Rural Patters and Trends

In order to further understand the dynamics of disadvantage in rural communities, and to complement the Haase Index and previous research it has undertaken, South Kerry Development Partnership undertook a statistical analysis of the available data at ED level. It has paralleled this with an analysis of the newly-released small area data. The methodology applied by SKDP was based on measuring degrees of association between all socio-economic variables. This was done using the statistical package – PASW (also referred to as SPSS). A grid was generated, which revealed statistically-significant² relationships between a numbers of variables. Having identified the significant relationships, the relevant variables were mapped, so as to enable SKDP to identify the priority locations in terms of targeting resources under the forthcoming LCDP. This approach used data from the 2002 and 2006 Census of Population. By analysing the associations between variables, it enables a forward longitudinal projection, such that in the absence of contemporary data from the CSO, it provides a profile of conditions in 2011.

The statistical analysis confirms that rural disadvantage is compound and is associated with factors in addition to those used for the Haase Index. In South Kerry rural disadvantage is associated with lower levels of educational attainment, a predominance of one-person households and lower levels of participation in the labour force. Thus, the analysis points to the need for additional outreach and second-chance education and training programmes, the on-going development of the LISI (Low-Income Smallholder Initiative), with an increased focus on social inclusion for persons living alone. The data underscore the importance of general economic diversification and a widening of the range of economic activities. The latter requires LCDP intervention in respect of enterprise supports, and these must be supported by relevant agencies.

In terms of the spatial patterns associated with compound rural disadvantage, clear patterns can be identified. There is a statistically significant relationship between rurality and exclusion from the workforce in South Kerry ($R=.32$). Among the areas most affected are the south west of Iveragh, as well as Glenbeigh, Portmagee, Valentia, Keel and Inch. Previous work by SKDP has noted these areas' dependence on construction sector employment. Therefore, given the recent downturn in that sector, the levels of economic disadvantage in the aforementioned areas have increased. The fall-out from the decline in the construction sector is already evident in the increase in farm assist allocations in South Kerry:

Farm Assist Clients in South Kerry since 2005

	31/12/2005	31/12/2006	31/12/2007	31/12/2008	31/12/2009	31/12/2010	31/03/2011
Cahersiveen	126	120	115	120	133	141	139
Kenmare	57	55	56	52	71	93	90
Killarney	50	45	39	44	48	58	58

² Statistical significant was defined as a Chi Square Value of $<.05$ (95% Confidence Interval), and Pearson's R was computed to measures degrees of association between variables /factors.

Killorglin	126	112	112	109	129	137	143
Total South Kerry	359	332	322	325	381	429	430

An almost equally strong relationship ($R=.31$) exists between rurality and lower educational attainment in South Kerry. Spatial analysis shows that the priority areas for the provision of outreach second chance education under the LCDP and other initiatives include communities in the West of Iveragh, Glenbeigh, Ballagh and Glencar.

Rurality in South Kerry is associated with one-person households – those who live alone are statistically more likely to be in rural, rather than in urban areas ($R=.266$). The Partnership has developed a strong track record in reaching out to and engaging with people in isolated rural locations and those with perceived poor social skills. In furthering this work, key target areas include Ballinskelligs, An Gleann, Maistir Gaoithe, Valentia, Caherdaniel, Castlecove, Waterville and Inch. Throughout South Kerry, the more rural areas emerge as those that require an increased range of education and training programmes and supports to enable economic diversification. At national level, there is a predominating reliance on multi-national companies and foreign direct investment, as evidenced by the determination to maintain low levels of corporation tax. This narrow strategy has little relevance for people outside the main urban conurbations, as rural areas' capacity to attract FDI has already been weakened. In parallel however, many small businesses and would-be entrepreneurs struggle against increased levies and local authority rates. Thus, while the LCDP and LEADER represent important tools in promoting a widening of the economic base in disadvantaged rural communities in South Kerry, such efforts need to be supported and stimulated by national initiatives, including within the social welfare and local authority planning systems.

The need for enterprise supports to target the areas specified in the previous paragraphs is further evidenced by the statistical analysis undertaken. This shows associations between rurality, low levels of educational attainment and reliance on low skill manual employment in many locations in South Kerry. Areas with high levels of inter-related disadvantage on these scales in 2006, such as Inch, Keel, Milltown, Glenbeigh, Kells, Foilmore, Glencar, Sneem, Kilgarvan, Lauragh, Tousist, Clonkeen, Castlecove, Caherdaniel and Ballinskelligs are now those with the highest levels of under-employment, and are most in need of economic diversification and up-skilling of the labour force. They are also in need of public sector investment to tackle poor service provision and to provide conducive conditions for employment growth.

Social Exclusion

The positive association between educational attainment and occupational advancement has been well documented, and is statistically significant in South Kerry. Analysis also shows that persons – and women in particular, who have lower levels of educational attainment are more likely to be involved in caring or dedicated to home duties ($R = .435$). The areas most pronounced in terms of low levels of educational attainment and working within the home are in the west of Iveragh and between Inch and Castlemaine.

Lone Parents emerge as a population cohort in South Kerry adversely affected by several manifestations of disadvantage. Clear correlations exist locally between lone parenthood, unemployment and poor educational performance. Lone parents are statistically less likely than all other persons in South Kerry ($R = .355$) to secure a third level qualification, and they are less likely to progress beyond lower second level education. Unlike in many other parts of Ireland, this association between lone parenthood and low levels of educational attainment is stronger in rural, rather than in urban areas in South Kerry, and the greatest barriers to the educational (and by extension, occupational) advancement of lone parents are in structurally-weak rural areas.

People with disabilities experience many of the structural barriers to employment faced by lone parents, and in South Kerry there is a negative association ($R = -.278$) between having a disability (for persons aged 15 to 65) and having a job.

Those living in local authority housing estates in any part of South Kerry are statistically less likely to complete second level education ($R = -.255$) or to gain a third level qualification ($R = -.287$). When the statistics are computed at ED level, a number of rural communities emerge as the most disadvantaged in this respect, including Portmagee, Maistir Gaoithe, Glencar and Killgobent. In addition, several estates in the main towns also exhibit similar and additional forms of deprivation.

Deprivation in Towns and Large Villages

In South Kerry, there are forty-eight housing estates (local authority and private) that have significant negative scores using the Haase Index. The most disadvantaged is St. Brendan's Place in Killarney (deprivation score of -18.09), which experiences disadvantage that is on a scale worse than many RAPID-designated areas. In fact, a total of thirteen estates / neighbourhoods have scores of worse than -10.

In Killarney, there are a total of twelve neighbourhoods - twenty-one estates that record negative deprivation scores. As the map of deprivation in the town shows, there is clear evidence of social segregation in Killarney. Affluent areas are more likely to be in the town centre and those to where tourists are directed, while the deprived neighbourhoods dominate the east and north of the town. Some of the estates are in relatively obscure locations and are accessible only from one entrance road. Thus, people in these estates who do not have their own private car face considerable barriers to social inclusion. One of the newer estates is actually located outside the town by-pass and is accessible only from the main Tralee Road. Given the planning, siting and design of many of the more deprived estates in the town, residents are disadvantaged in seeking to access employment and training or indeed, social activities. The failure to implement Part Five Social Housing Provisions is clearly evident in Killarney and is among the reasons why the town now emerges as having increased in deprivation since 1991 (by -6.9 on the Haase Index). This marks Killarney out from other similar-sized towns in Ireland, as almost all medium – large towns gained in relative affluence since 1991.

The towns of Cahersiveen and Kenmare have also become more deprived on the same scale since 1991, although to a lesser extent; Kenmare by -3.6 and Cahersiveen by -1.3. Deprivation in Kenmare is particularly complex. The figures presented here -5.86 for the estates to the west of Market Street and -3.87 for Scarteen (on the north east of the town) contrast strikingly with the relative affluence evident in the south of the town and the tourist areas in the town centre. The figure for Scarteen is however a definite underestimation of the level of deprivation present there, as the Small Area for which the data have been published includes the rather fashionable Killowen Road overlooking the Golf Club and Kenmare Bay Hotel. In the west of the town, the neighbourhoods of Market Lane, Davitt's Place, Pound Lane and Coffey's Row are characterised by a high age dependency ratio and striking levels of female unemployment.

In the case of Cahersiveen, the whole town is notably more disadvantaged than others in South Kerry, when all towns are taken as units. Disadvantage in the town has been compounded by decades of economic decline associated with rural restructuring and the decline of its rural hinterland. Improved connectivity and public investment over the past decade have improved the town's development potential. However, the realisation of this potential requires greater local empowerment, ownership of development processes and revitalisation of its appearance. The whole Main Street area and surrounding neighbourhoods register a deprivation score of -1.95; the only town to record a negative score in its core. The highest levels of deprivation in the town are in the west of the town and include Fertha Drive, The Avenue, Singerson Place and Riverview. These neighbourhoods are marked by high

concentrations of lone parent households, low levels of progression to third level education, local authority housing and levels of male unemployment in excess of six times the national average. Levels of deprivation are also very high in the east of Cahersiveen, notably in St. Brendan’s Terrace, Woodbrook Estate and Bridge Street. This part of the town has a deprivation score of -9.41, and experiences high concentrations of lone parents and low levels of educational attainment.

Killorglin experiences less social class segregation than either Killarney or Kenmare, but clear clusters of deprivation can be identified. These include Iveragh Park and Clover Hill Close, which record a deprivation score of -3.43. Worryingly high levels of deprivation are evident in Sneem Village and in neighbourhoods in Waterville and Annascaul, associated with local authority housing, high age dependency ratios, low levels of educational attainment and poor social services.

As the following table shows, there are over 900 households in South Kerry on the Local Authority Housing Waiting List, many of whom have been in this position for several years.

Numbers on Local Authority Housing Waiting Lists in South Kerry by Place and Year

Year of Application	Killarney	Killorglin	Cahersiveen	Kenmare	Waterville	Total per Year	%
2011	14	50	20	28	4	116	12.76
2010	60	54	25	29	8	176	19.36
2009	68	86	28	65	17	264	29.04
2008	45	44	13	23	4	129	14.19
2007	33	23	11	13	3	83	9.13
2006	27	17	9	9	2	64	7.04
2005	10	7	7	6		30	3.30
2004	9	2	5	5		21	2.31
2003	7	2	0	3		12	1.32
2002	4		2	1		7	0.77
Before 2002	7					7	0.77
Totals by Place	284	285	120	182	38	909	

Most of those on the waiting lists cite financial reasons, but as the following table shows, there are other forms of disadvantage that compel people:

Reasons for Inclusion in the Local Authority Waiting Lists in South Kerry (2011)

Financial	Medical	Travellers	Elderly	Unfit	Overcrowded	Sharing	Homeless	Other
507	109	34	26	16	9	9	4	197

These figures suggest that in addition to those already in local authority housing in South Kerry, there are many more households experiencing disadvantage and social exclusion, and who may well merit accommodation, but are prevented from accessing it due to scarce local authority resources. In responding to those on this extensive list, it is essential to avoid the creation of ghetto-type deprived neighbourhoods as has occurred in the past, and to create sustainable and healthy communities instead. Estates that come into the possession or part-possession of NAMA offer an opportunity in this respect.

In addition, every effort should be made to provide for people in their community of origin, so as to enable them to access family and kindred supports. This is particularly important for lone parents.