



Balbriggan: A Socio-Economic Profile

March 2024





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1. Introduction

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Balbriggan is a coastal town located on the northern edge of Fingal. It lies approximately 32km north of Dublin City and is a commuter town, primarily served by the rail network and road infrastructure along the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor.

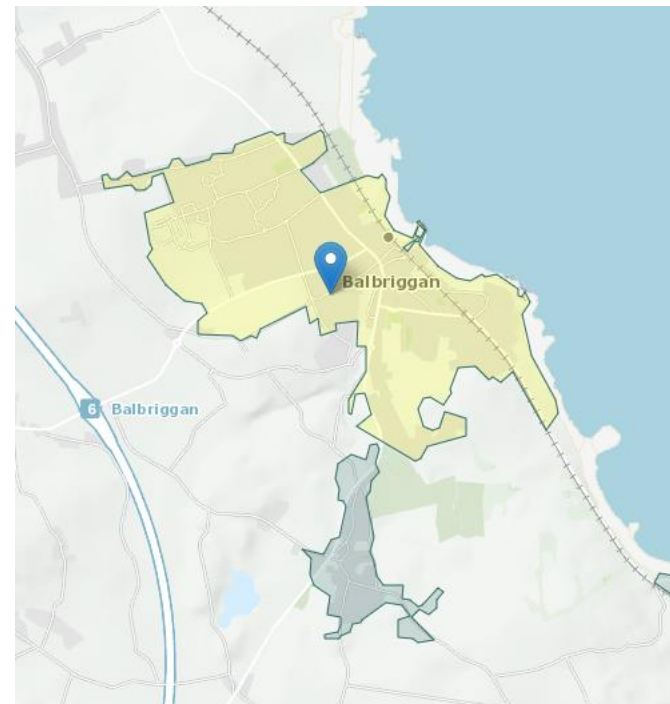
Between 1991 and 2022, Balbriggan's population increased by 215%, experiencing especially strong population growth in the early part of the 2000s. The area is ethnically diverse with the 2022 Census showing almost 30% of Balbriggan's population were born outside of Ireland.

The town has a rich maritime and manufacturing history and is well served by local and international corporations including Techrete, Wavin and Bridgestone. The area is also home to the National Passport Office. Balbriggan is also an attractive location for agri-food and distribution businesses.

Balbriggan was the first town in Ireland to be named as a Smart District due to its growing, youthful and culturally diverse population. The Smart Balbriggan programme aims to ensure that Balbriggan benefits from 'smart' and 'digital' initiatives and its core focus will be to enhance community life, support economic opportunities and drive innovation through a number of smart district projects.

Balbriggan has a number of geographic definitions, including 'Balbriggan Town' illustrated in Figure 1, two Electoral Divisions in 'Balbriggan Urban' and 'Balbriggan Rural', depicted in Figure 2, and 82 'Small Areas'.

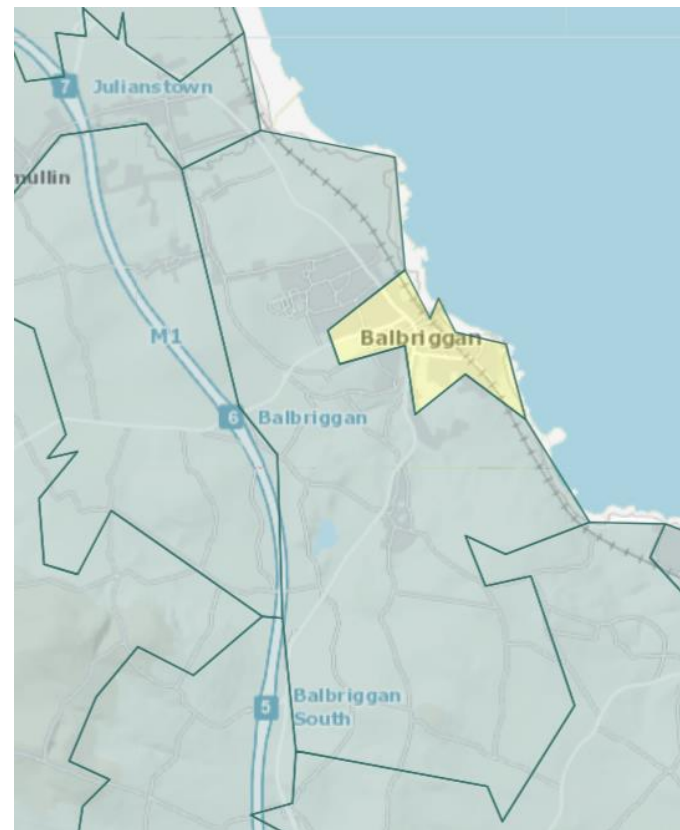
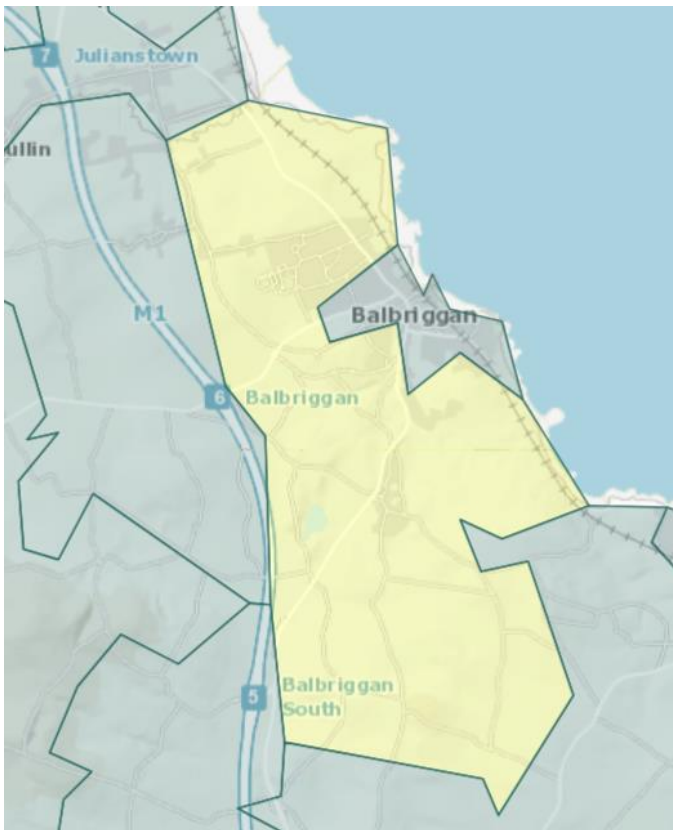
Figure 1: Map of Balbriggan Town



Source: CSO.

1. Introduction

Figure 2: Maps of Balbriggan Rural (Left) & Balbriggan Urban (Right) Electoral Divisions



Source: CSO.

1. Introduction

1.2 Note on 'Our Balbriggan'

In May 2019, the 'Our Balbriggan' Rejuvenation Programme was launched by Fingal County Council's Economic, Enterprise, Cultural and Tourism Department, setting out to transform Balbriggan with €50 million of public investment between 2019 and 2025. 'Our Balbriggan' contains 93 actions across key priority areas which were shaped by the community, and based on consultations with over 25% of the town's population.

Key initiatives include:

1. Public Realm and Placemaking;
2. Growing the 'Local Economy';
3. Community Affairs and Integration; and
4. Education, Training and Employment.

Making Balbriggan a 'destination' is critical in celebrating the diverse population of the area, forging a sense of social cohesion and local wealth building, and encouraging active community involvement and ownership. Since the launch of the programme, significant strides have been made to physically transform the area. A multi-million euro refurbishment of Balbriggan's Quay Street and Harbour are in their final planning stages, and aims to generate increased social and commercial activity, ensuring better connectivity along the coast and throughout the town.

Fingal County Council's approval of a €3.3m creative hub at 2-4 Dublin Street, is another key landmark for the rejuvenation

programme, and is expected to be in use by mid-2025. Along with the Our Balbriggan Hub, these investments will encourage social integration and networking by providing communal spaces that promote local economic development opportunities.

'Our Balbriggan' proposes key interventions to improve employment opportunities and make Balbriggan a more desirable place to work, by increasing support services to potential entrepreneurs and small and medium enterprises. It also highlights the necessity for targeted supports for black and minority ethnic communities, as well as young people. To achieve the objective of making Balbriggan a place with excellent education, training & employment opportunities, the Programme targets the promotion of apprenticeships with prospective employers and upskilling opportunities, as well as establishing new pathways for progression with 3rd level institutions. 'Our Balbriggan' also sets out to implement the Fingal Skills Strategy recommendations, by targeting the needs of local employers in areas such as STEM and the Green Economy.

2. Socio-Economic Profile

2. Socio-Economic Profile

2.1 Population

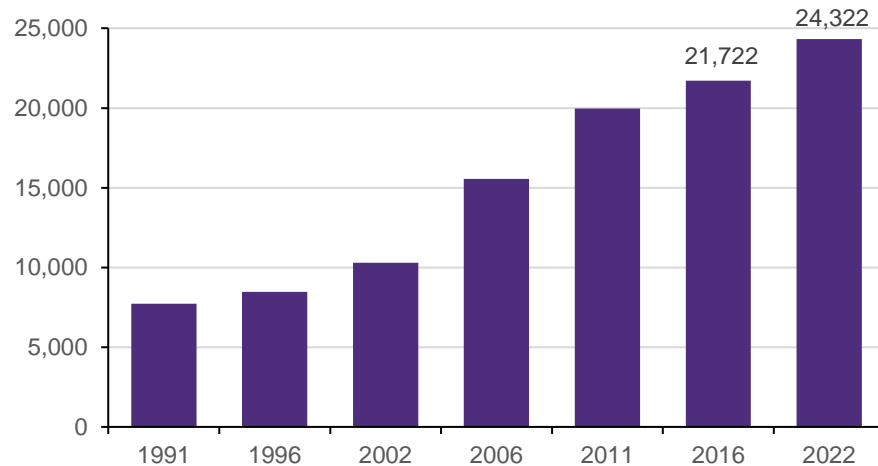
The population of Balbriggan Town reached over 24,300 at the time of the 2022 Census, split 51.3% to 48.7% between females and males. The 2022 population of the town reflected a continuation of growth from the preceding inter-Censal periods, and indeed an acceleration of growth. As depicted in Figure 3, the population expanded by 12% between 2016 and 2022 as 2,600 more people were resident in the town.

The strong rate of population growth in Balbriggan Town from 1991 to 2022 is further illustrated in Figure 4. On a base of 100 in 1991, Balbriggan's population

reached an index reading of 315 in 2022. This far outstripped Fingal (216), Dublin (142), and the State (146) over the period – thus underlining the seismic growth of the town since the early 1990s.

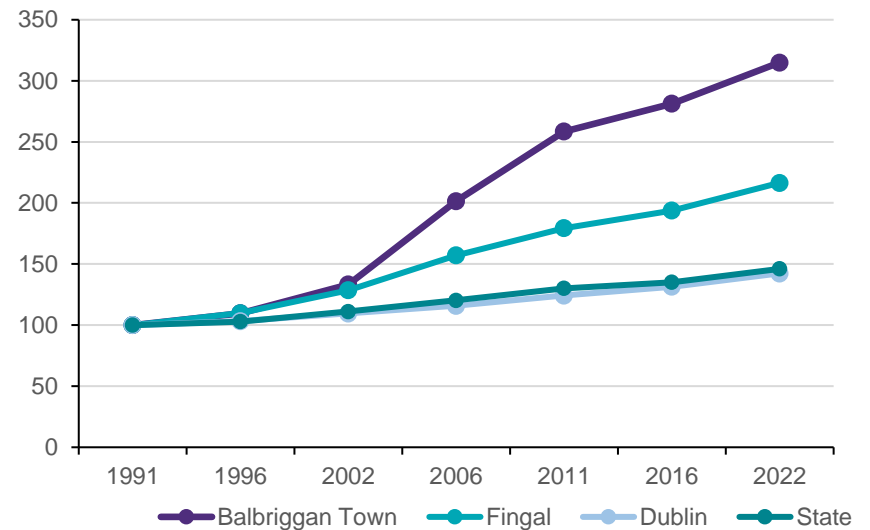
The town is characterised by its relatively youthful populace, and was the youngest town in Ireland with a population of more than 10,000 in 2022.

Figure 3: Population of Balbriggan Town, 1991 – 2022



Source: CSO Census.

Figure 4: Population Growth in Balbriggan Town, Fingal, Dublin and Nationally, 1991 – 2022 (1991=100)



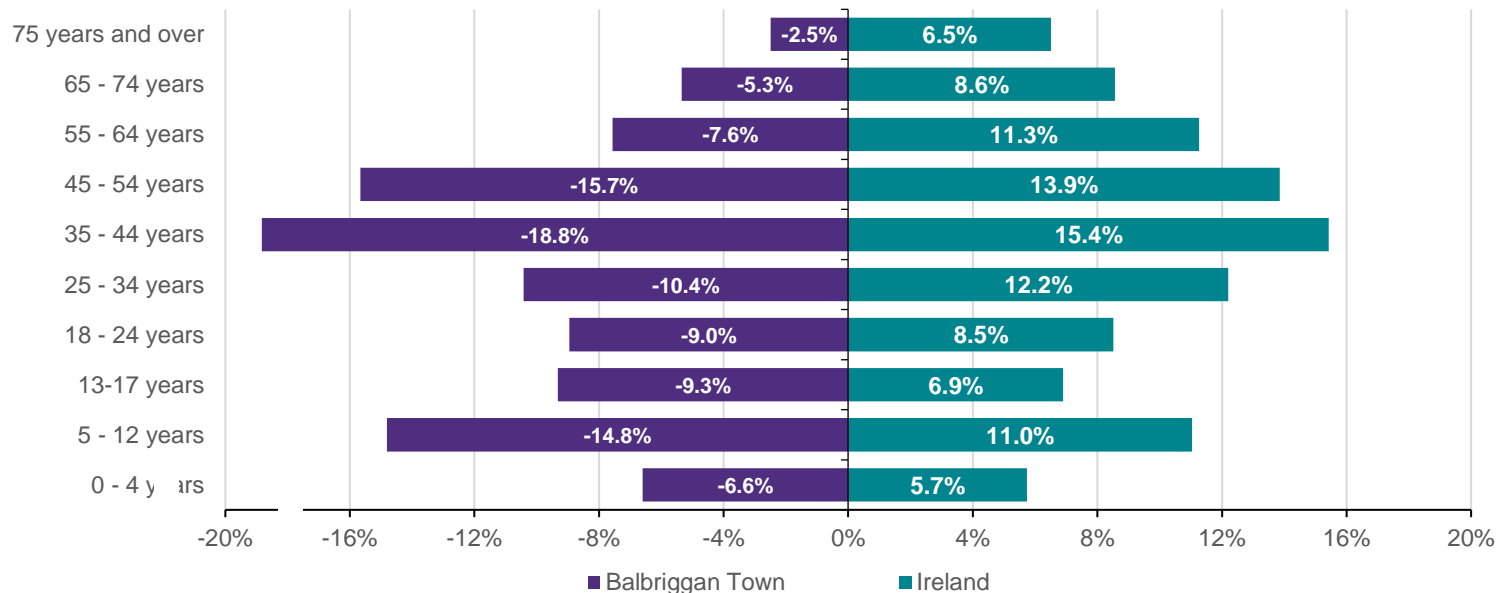
Source: CSO Census.

2. Socio-Economic Profile

Figure 5 captures the key drivers of this – namely higher than average proportions in younger age cohorts, and lower proportions over 54 years of age. Almost a third (30.7%) of the Balbriggan population in 2022 was under 18 years of age, and 84.6% were under 55 years old, compared to respective proportions of 23.6% and 73.6% nationally. In a similar sense, just 15.4% of the town's population were aged 55 years and over – considerably smaller than the national equivalent of 26.4%.

Balbriggan Town's age dependency ratio, which shows younger people (0-14 years) and older people (65+ years) relative to the total, was broadly in line with the national average in 2022. The town's ratio of 33.3% was just below the State level of 33.4%, though the key driver for Balbriggan was the younger age cohort which made up 25.4 percentage points of the ratio. The age dependency ratio was also broadly aligned with Fingal and Dublin at 39.1% and 36.6% respectively.

Figure 5: Age Comparison of Balbriggan Town versus National Averages, 2022



Source: CSO Census.

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Table 1 underlines the relative youthfulness of many of the Small Areas in the Balbriggan Urban and Rural EDs. Up to 44% of residents in certain Small Areas were aged under 18 – with multiple Small Areas having more than a third of their population in this category. The most youthful areas Balbriggan were all located in the Rural ED, with the area surrounding Taylor Hill Green containing the largest proportion of their population under 18 years of age (44.2%). The areas with the second (43.4%) and third largest (42.4%) proportions were both located around Chieftain’s Crescent.

Table 1: Youngest Balbriggan Urban and Rural Small Area Populations, 2022

Small Area ID	Electoral Division	Age Under 18
267002002/03	Balbriggan Rural	44.2%
267002021	Balbriggan Rural	43.4%
267002010	Balbriggan Rural	42.4%
267002020	Balbriggan Rural	40.4%
267002026	Balbriggan Rural	40.0%
267002043/02	Balbriggan Rural	39.6%
267002023	Balbriggan Rural	39.6%
267002004	Balbriggan Rural	38.9%
267002024	Balbriggan Rural	38.8%
267002017	Balbriggan Rural	38.8%
267002012	Balbriggan Rural	38.1%
267002047	Balbriggan Rural	37.9%
267002003	Balbriggan Rural	37.8%
267002035	Balbriggan Rural	37.7%
267002027	Balbriggan Rural	37.4%

Source: CSO Census.

By contrast, Table 2 shows the relative dearth of Small Areas where more than a third of residents were aged 65 and over in 2022. The three Small Areas with the highest proportion in this category were all situated along the coast, with two directly neighbouring each other around Hampton Cove and Fancourt Heights. The Small Area (267003019) with the largest proportion of residents aged 65 and above (38.2%) is located north of Balbriggan Harbour and behind Balbriggan Football Club.

Table 2: Oldest Balbriggan Urban and Rural Small Area Populations, 2022

Small Area ID	Electoral Division	Age 65+
267003019	Balbriggan Urban	38.2%
267003014	Balbriggan Urban	38.2%
267003015	Balbriggan Urban	31.1%
267003018	Balbriggan Urban	28.0%
267002038	Balbriggan Rural	27.7%
267003006	Balbriggan Urban	26.3%
267002025	Balbriggan Rural	26.3%
267002037	Balbriggan Rural	26.1%
267003007	Balbriggan Urban	25.5%
267003017	Balbriggan Urban	24.5%
267002042	Balbriggan Rural	22.8%
267003028	Balbriggan Urban	21.9%
267003027	Balbriggan Urban	20.4%
267003009	Balbriggan Urban	19.6%
267003022	Balbriggan Urban	17.7%

2. Socio-Economic Profile

As shown in Table 3, the relative youthfulness of Balbriggan Town is also reflected in the broad economic status of those aged 15 years and over. Higher than average proportions of students (13.4%, above the national average of 11.1%) and fewer retirees (9.1%, compared to 15.9% nationally) are hallmarks of this.

The town also had higher proportions at work (57.5%) and unemployed (5.7%) compared to national averages which point to the wide labour force in the town. The portion caring for home/family was also marginally greater than the national average at 7.4%.

Table 3: Principal Economic Status of Balbriggan Town Population versus Fingal, Dublin and National Averages, 2022

	Balbriggan Town	Balbriggan Town (%)	Fingal	Dublin	Ireland
At work	10,430	57.5%	60.5%	58.8%	56.1%
Looking for first regular job	256	1.4%	0.9%	0.9%	0.8%
Short term unemployed	413	2.3%	1.9%	1.8%	1.7%
Long term unemployed	614	3.4%	2.3%	2.5%	2.6%
Student	2,433	13.4%	11.5%	11.3%	11.1%
Looking after home/family	1,345	7.4%	6.4%	5.7%	6.6%
Retired	1,644	9.1%	12.6%	14.4%	15.9%
Unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability	907	5.0%	3.4%	3.8%	4.6%
Other	99	0.5%	0.6%	0.6%	0.7%
Total	18,141	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: CSO Census.

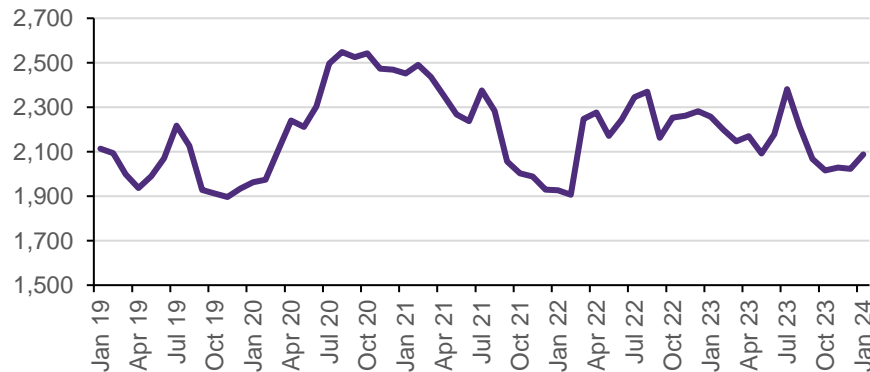
2. Socio-Economic Profile

2.2 Labour Force & Work Force

Balbriggan Town's labour force as of the 2022 Census consisted of 18,141 people. The vast majority (10,430) were at work. A total of 1,283 people were either unemployed or looking for their first job. This equated to an unemployment rate of 11%, with a higher proportion falling within the 'long term unemployed' category. The unemployment rate in the town was higher than the respective Fingal and national averages of 7.8% and 9.2% which indicated close to 'full employment'.

As of January 2024, close to 2,100 people were signing on to the Live Register¹ at Balbriggan Intreo Centre. This was marginally below the five year average (2,184) though Covid-19 did have a complexity of effects over that period. Importantly, the number on the Live Register in the town in January 2024 was also considerably lower than the peak of over 5,300 in 2012.

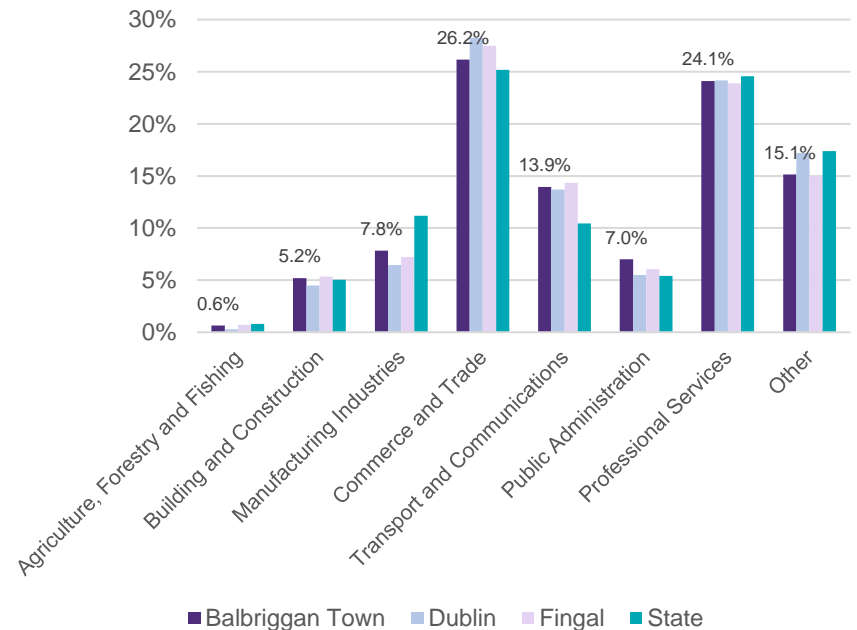
Figure 6: Persons on the Live Register, Balbriggan Intreo Centre, 2019-2024



Source: CSO.

In terms of employment and industry groups, the largest proportions of employed residents of Balbriggan Town worked in Commerce & Trade (26.2%) and Professional Services (24.1%) in 2022. Compared to national averages, the town had relatively high proportions working in Transport & Communications (13.9%) and Public Administration (7%).

Figure 7: Breakdown of Workforce by Industry Group for Populations of Balbriggan Town, Dublin, Fingal and the State, 2022



Source: CSO Census.

¹ Which includes part-time (those who work up to three days a week), seasonal and casual workers entitled to Jobseekers Allowance and or Jobseekers Benefit.

2. Socio-Economic Profile

2.3 Socio-Economic Groups

Figure 8 shows the breakdown of the population aged 15+ of Balbriggan Town by socio-economic group. Over 18,100 people were captured in socio-economic groups at the time of the Census, and the largest proportion (41%) were in the Non-Manual category. This was greater than the national average of 37.1% but broadly aligned with the Fingal mean (41.4%). The second

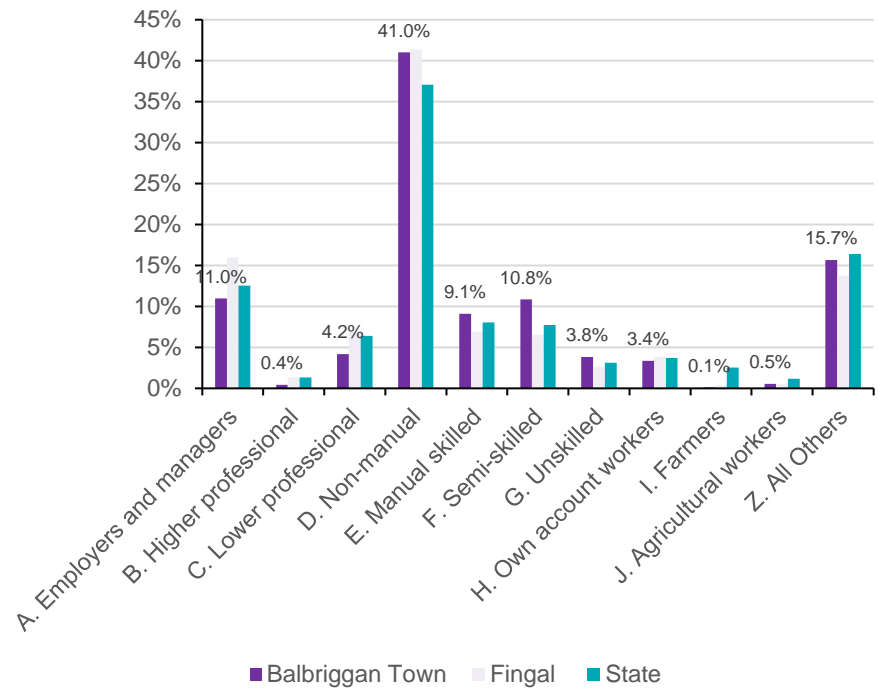
largest socio-economic group was Employers & Managers at 11% though this was below the national (12.5%) and Fingal equivalents (16%) at the time.

Greater than average concentrations were seen in the Semi-Skilled socio-economic group (10.8%) which was large compared to the national (7.7%) and Fingal (6.5%) ratios. Similarly, the proportion in the Manual Skilled socio-economic group (9.1%) exceeded Irish (8%) and Fingal (6.9%) equivalents.

Other notable outliers were:

- The Lower Professional (4.2%) and Higher Professional (0.4%) socio-economic groups, and Own Account Workers (3.4%) which were comparatively small with regards to the county and national averages; and
- The Unskilled socio-economic group which accounted for a larger than average proportion at 3.8%.

Figure 8: Population Aged 15+ by Socio-Economic Group in Balbriggan Town, Fingal and the State, 2022



Source: CSO Census.

2. Socio-Economic Profile

2.4 Affluence and Deprivation

The Balbriggan Urban and Rural EDs were both found to be 'Marginally Below Average' in terms of affluence in 2022. According to the *Pobal Deprivation Index*, the urban area had a relative score of -4.70, below the rural area at -0.17, and the zero baseline which separates 'affluence' from 'disadvantage'. Per Table 4, this placed the urban area within the five most disadvantaged Electoral Divisions in

Table 4: Affluence and Deprivation by Fingal Electoral Division, 2022 – Highest 10

	ED Name	Pobal HP Index 2022	Population 2022	Pobal HP Description 2022
Highest 10	Lucan North	13.3	1,765	Affluent
	Castleknock-park	11.0	6,355	Affluent
	Castleknock-knockmaroon	10.7	20,967	Affluent
	Malahide East	9.6	8,406	Marginally Above Average
	Malahide West	9.0	6,014	Marginally Above Average
	Donabate	8.5	11,783	Marginally Above Average
	Portmarnock South	8.2	4,729	Marginally Above Average
	Swords-seatown	7.4	7,465	Marginally Above Average
	Kinsaley	7.1	11,470	Marginally Above Average
	Howth	7.0	8,399	Marginally Above Average

Source: *Pobal HP Index*.

Fingal. It also represented greater relative deprivation when compared to the 2016 index reading of -3.44 despite improvements in the proportion with a third level education and in the male and female unemployment rates.

Table 5: Affluence and Deprivation by Fingal Electoral Division, 2022 – Lowest 10

	ED Name	Pobal HP Index 2022	Population 2022	Pobal HP Description 2022
Lowest 10	Swords Village	0.0	2,786	Marginally Below Average
	Balbriggan Rural	-0.2	19,347	Marginally Below Average
	Swords-glasmore	-0.6	7,674	Marginally Below Average
	Blanchardstown-roselawn	-1.4	1,647	Marginally Below Average
	Kilsallaghan	-3.3	2,406	Marginally Below Average
	Blanchardstown-mulhuddart	-4.4	4,219	Marginally Below Average
	Balbriggan Urban	-4.7	8,102	Marginally Below Average
	Blanchardstown-coolmine	-5.4	11,271	Marginally Below Average
	Blanchardstown-tyrrelstown	-11.6	3,343	Disadvantaged
	Blanchardstown-corduff	-14.2	3,689	Disadvantaged

Source: *Pobal HP Index*.

2. Socio-Economic Profile

Key drivers of the urban area's relative deprivation in 2022 were the proportion of lone parent households which, at 25.8% of total households, exceeded the Dublin average of 21.3%. In terms of education, 12.5% of the populace had primary only, higher than the Dublin average of 9.2%. The proportion with a third level education (32.2%) was also lower than Dublin's average of 50.3%.

For the rural area, the main drivers were lone parent households (24.9%) and the proportion with a third level education (39.8%). However, Balbriggan Rural's relative index reading had increased to -0.17 from -0.45 in 2016 with all metrics improving versus 2016.

The unemployment rates for the areas were also higher than average, though not significantly. Male unemployment rates were 2.3pp and 2.9pp higher in the

respective urban and rural areas compared to the county average of 7.6%. Similarly, the female unemployment rates were 2.1pp and 3.1pp higher than the Fingal average of 7.8%.

As illustrated in Figure 9 overleaf, there was only one Small Area in Balbriggan – located around Castleland Park Way – that was classified by the Pobal HP Deprivation Index as 'Very Affluent' in 2022. This directly neighbours one of two Small Areas classified as 'Affluent', of which the other is located along Taylor Hill Grange. The HP Index did not identify any areas as 'Extremely Disadvantaged'. There were, however, three areas classified as 'Very Disadvantaged'; one located along Pinewood Green Court, and two in the Lambeecher area.

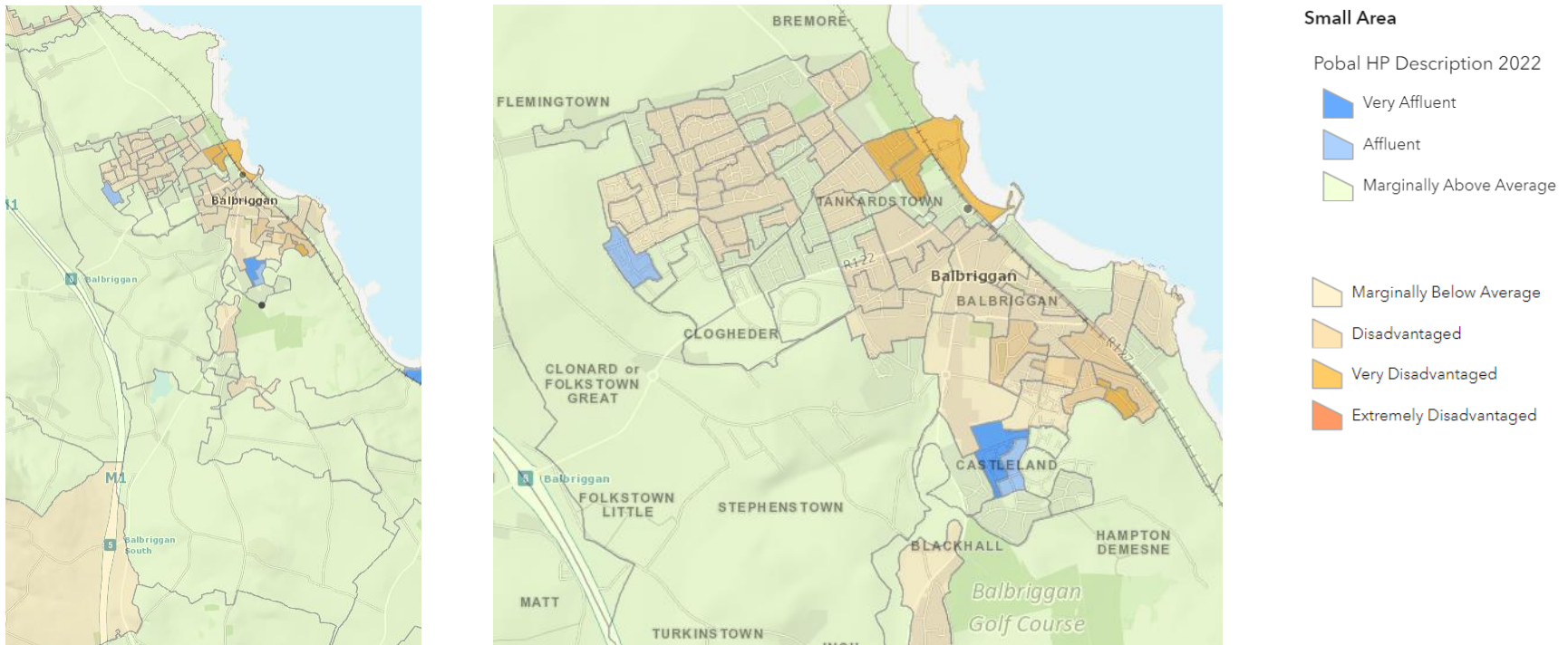
Table 6: Affluence and Deprivation by Balbriggan Small Area, 2022

	Small Area ID	Electoral Division	Pobal HP Index 2022	Population 2022	Pobal HP Description 2022
Most Affluent	267002043/01	Balbriggan Rural	21.88	419	Very Affluent
	267002043/03	Balbriggan Rural	17.05	275	Affluent
	267002002/04	Balbriggan Rural	11.38	413	Affluent
Most Disadvantaged	267002046	Balbriggan Urban	-21.46	229	Very Disadvantaged
	267003018	Balbriggan Urban	-22.85	264	Very Disadvantaged
	267003019	Balbriggan Urban	-24.86	251	Very Disadvantaged

Source: Pobal HP Index.

2. Socio-Economic Profile

Figure 9: Pobal HP Indices Map, Small Areas, Balbriggan, 2022



Source: Pobal HP Index.

2. Socio-Economic Profile

2.5 Education

The educational profile of residents of Balbriggan Town is characterised by:

1. Relatively high levels with lower and upper secondary education only; and
2. Comparatively low levels with degrees, post-graduate degrees and PhDs or higher.

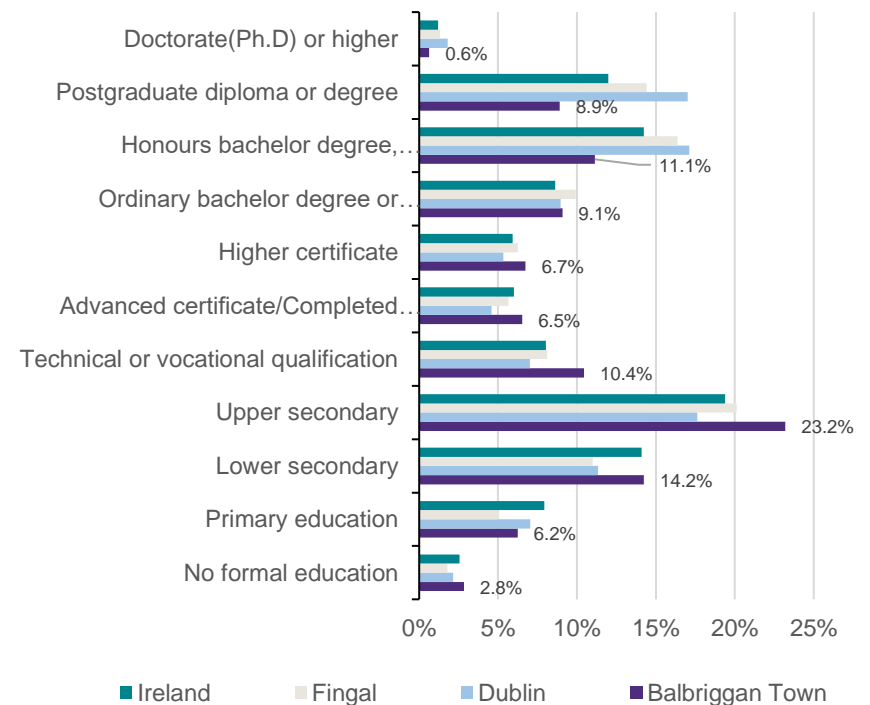
As shown in Figure 10, 37.4% of the population had either lower (14.2%) or upper secondary (23.2%) education only in 2022. This was above the equivalent figures for:

- Fingal (31.1%);
- Dublin (29%); and
- The State (33.5%).

Contrastingly, less than 30% had an ordinary degree/national diploma or higher. This was considerably lower than the Fingal (42%), Dublin (44.9%) and national (36%) averages.

As of the 2022 Census, over 2,400 students/pupils were resident in Balbriggan Town. This equated to 23.4% of the population aged 15 years and older, and was substantially higher than the equivalent rates for Fingal (11.5%) and the State (11.1%).

Figure 10: Highest Level of Educational Attainment Amongst Populations of Balbriggan Town, Fingal, Dublin and the State, 2022



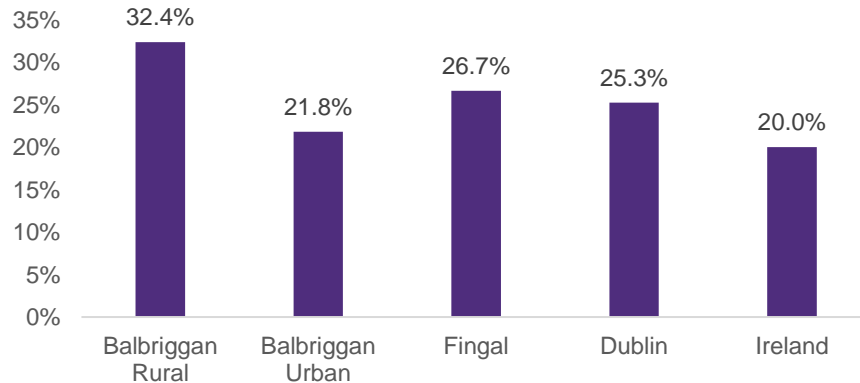
Source: CSO Census.

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2.6 Diversity

As of the 2022 Census, 29.3% of the combined populations of the Balbriggan Urban and Rural EDs were born outside of Ireland. The proportions born in Poland (4.8%) and the UK (3.5%) were the largest recorded for individual countries, with significant other proportions born across the rest of the world (11.4%) and the rest of the EU27 (8.3%). As shown in Figure 11, the percentage of the population born outside of the State was considerably higher in the rural area (32.4%) than the urban area (21.8%), Fingal (26.7%), Dublin (25.3%) and national (20%) equivalents. While the rich diversity of the population in Balbriggan is not a recent development, recent inward migration into Ireland and the county will have likely contributed further since 2016.

Figure 11: Percentage of Population Born Outside of Ireland in Balbriggan Rural & Urban, Fingal Dublin, and the State, 2022



Source: CSO Census.

Table 7 underlines the higher concentrations of people born outside Ireland in specific Small Areas. Close to 58% of the population in Small Area 267003010 on Drogheda Street was born outside the State in 2022, and this was followed by 267002002/02 in Cloghader (53.5%) and 267002002/04 in Taylor Hill (52.1%).

Table 7: Percentage of Population Born Outside of Ireland in Specific Small Areas in the Balbriggan Rural and Urban EDs, 2022

Small Area ID	Electoral Division	Percentage
267003010	Balbriggan Urban	57.7%
267002002/02	Balbriggan Rural	53.5%
267002002/04	Balbriggan Rural	52.1%
267003013	Balbriggan Urban	52.0%
267002043/01	Balbriggan Rural	50.8%
267002002/01	Balbriggan Rural	49.2%
267002043/03	Balbriggan Rural	48.3%
267002027	Balbriggan Rural	46.0%
267002009	Balbriggan Rural	45.6%
267002002/03	Balbriggan Rural	45.4%
267002026	Balbriggan Rural	45.3%
267002023	Balbriggan Rural	44.8%
267002020	Balbriggan Rural	41.8%
267002028	Balbriggan Rural	41.3%
267002005	Balbriggan Rural	41.1%

Source: CSO Census.

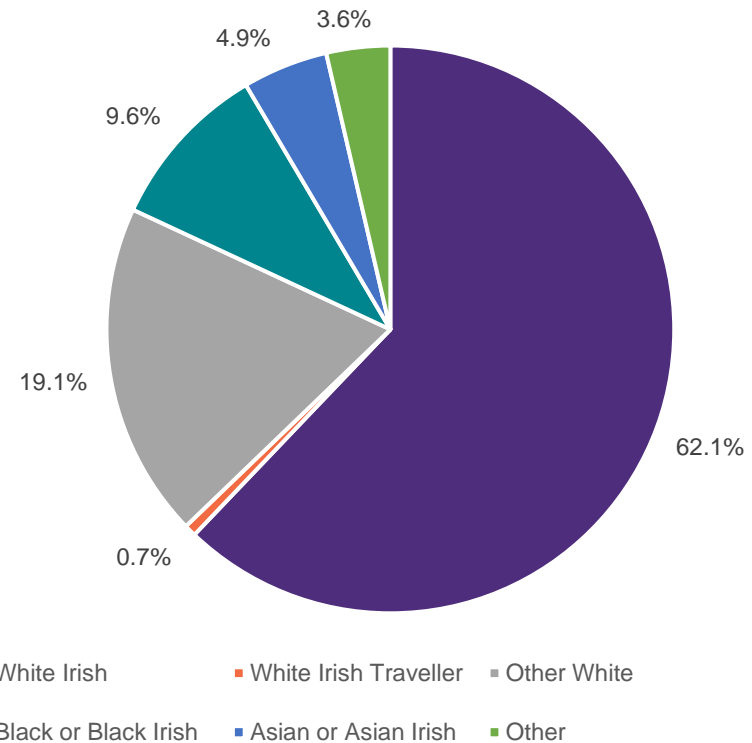
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The diversity of birthplaces is also reflected in the ethnic mix in the two Balbriggan EDs. Figure 12 shows that 62.1% of those with a stated ethnicity were White Irish, and a further 19.1% were 'Any Other White Background'. Other significant proportions were Black or Black Irish (9.6%) and Asian or Asian Irish (4.9%). 0.7% of those with a stated ethnicity were White Irish Travellers.

The prevalence of foreign languages amongst the population of the Balbriggan Rural and Urban EDs is a further indication of the rich diversity of the local population. Over 8,400 people spoke a foreign language at the time of the Census. Over 19% of these spoke Polish, with 4.5% and 3.4% speaking French and Spanish respectively. Almost 73% spoke another language outside of Polish, French and Spanish.

Of the combined Balbriggan Rural and Urban populations, less than 60% reported that they were able to speak English 'very well'. A further 27.4% stated that they could speak English 'well' but almost 13% (1,049 people) either couldn't speak the language well or couldn't speak it at all.

Figure 12: Ethnicity of Combined Populations of the Balbriggan Rural and Urban EDs, 2022



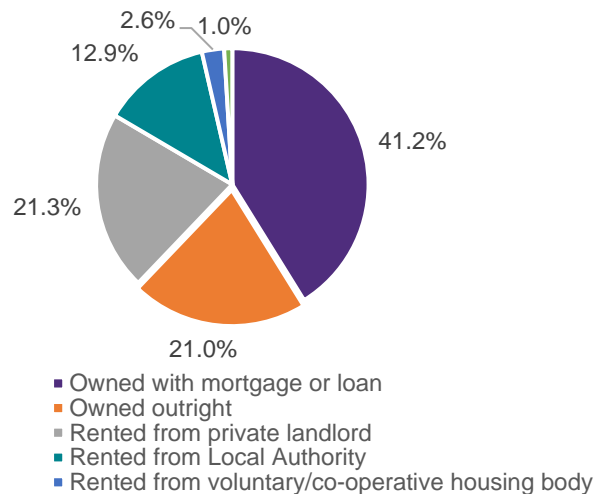
Source: CSO Census.

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2.7 Housing and Households

The total housing stock in the Balbriggan Urban and Rural EDs amounted to over 9,700 dwellings in 2022. Of these, the vast majority (93.9%, 9,111 dwellings) were occupied. The vacancy rate of 6.3% compared to 6.4 in Fingal, 7.9 in Dublin, and 10.5 nationally. Almost a third of occupied dwellings (62.1%) were either owned with a mortgage or owned outright. A total of 21.3% of the stock was rented from a private landlord. Further proportions of 12.9% and 2.6% were rented from Fingal County Council and from voluntary/co-operative housing bodies respectively – as shown in Figure 13.

Figure 13: Breakdown of Combined Housing Stocks of the Balbriggan Urban and Rural EDs by Tenure, 2022



Source: CSO Census.

Balbriggan Urban and Rural’s average household size was 3 persons in 2022. There was a wide variance between the highest (3.9 people in Westbrook, Small Area 267003004) and lowest average (2.1 people in Drogheda Street, Small Area 267003011) across the constituent Small Areas. This compared to averages of 3, 2.7 and 2.7 in Fingal, Dublin and the State respectively. As outlined above, lone parent households were relatively prevalent in both the Balbriggan Rural and Urban EDs in 2022 with respective proportions of 24.9% and 25.8%. These figures – which were influenced by rates of up to 38% in certain Small Areas, per Table 8, were considerably higher than the averages of 12.5%, 11.9% and 12.6%, in Fingal, Dublin and the State respectively.

Table 8: Percentage of Single Parent Households, Top 15 Small Areas in the Balbriggan Rural and Urban EDs, 2022

Small Area ID	Electoral Division	Single Parent Households
267002007	Balbriggan Rural	38.0%
267002015	Balbriggan Rural	31.8%
267002002/03	Balbriggan Rural	30.2%
267002048	Balbriggan Rural	29.1%
267002005	Balbriggan Rural	26.9%
267002027	Balbriggan Rural	26.8%
267002046	Balbriggan Rural	26.6%
267002008	Balbriggan Rural	26.1%
267002047	Balbriggan Rural	25.5%
267002016	Balbriggan Rural	25.2%
267002026	Balbriggan Rural	25.0%
267002039	Balbriggan Rural	24.3%
267002020	Balbriggan Rural	24.2%
267002029	Balbriggan Rural	23.9%
267002012	Balbriggan Rural	23.3%
267003008	Balbriggan Urban	22.6%

Source: CSO Census.

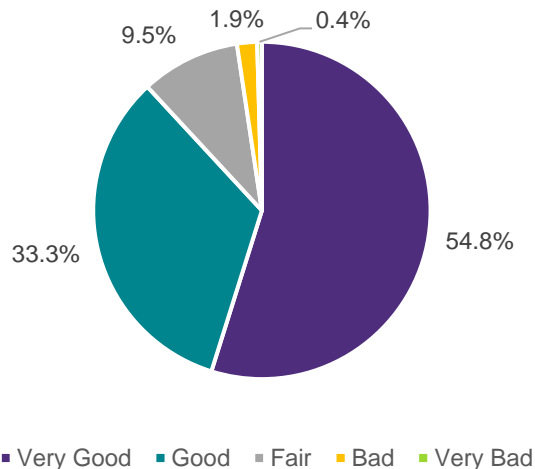
2. Socio-Economic Profile

2.8 Health

The population of Balbriggan Town was largely in good health as of the 2022 Census. Of those that reported their health status, 88.1% stated it as 'Very Good' or 'Good'. A further 9.5% reported their health as 'Fair'. A total of 443 people (1.9%) reported that they were in 'Bad' health, with 103 (0.4%) stating their health condition was 'Very Bad'.

With regards to disability, over 5,200 residents of Balbriggan Town reported being disabled to either some extent or a great extent in 2022. As demonstrated in Table 9, the greatest prevalence of disability was amongst those aged 45-64 (30.3%), followed by the 25-44 age group (25.6%). A further 16.5% of those with a disability were in the 65+ age group.

Figure 14: Population of Balbriggan Town by Health Status, 2022



Source: CSO Census.

Over 1,200 people in Balbriggan Town were carers in 2022. Of those, 37.7% reported that they undertook 14 hours or fewer of unpaid care each week. The next largest cohort (33.8%) were at the other end of the scale in providing 43 or more hours each week.

Table 9: Population of Balbriggan Town with a Stated Disability, 2022

Age Cohort	Disability to Some Extent	Disability to Great Extent	Total
0 - 14 years	464	288	752
15 - 24 years	448	241	689
25 - 44 years	947	390	1,337
45 - 64 years	976	607	1,583
65+ years	503	360	863
Total	3,338	1,886	5,224

Source: CSO Census.

Table 10: Population of Balbriggan Town with a Stated Disability, 2022

Hours per Week	Number of Carers
1-14 hours unpaid help per week	463
15-28 hours unpaid help per week	167
29-42 hours unpaid help per week	76
43 or more hours unpaid help per week	415
Not Stated	106
Total	1,227

Source: CSO Census.

2. Socio-Economic Profile

2.9 Commuting and Remote Working

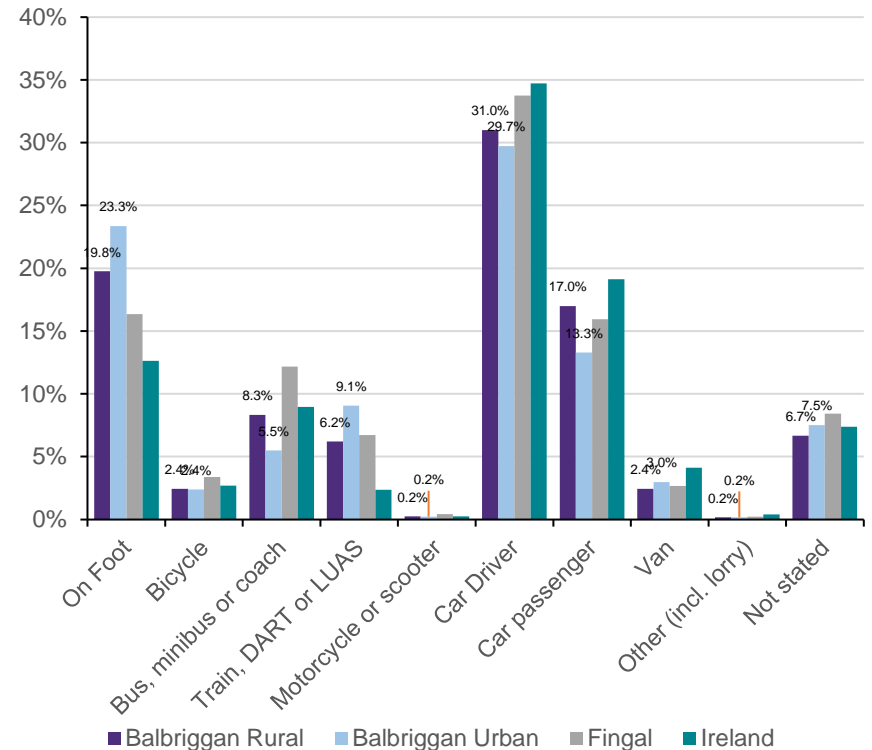
Close to 15,000 residents of the combined Balbriggan Rural and Urban EDs typically travelled to their place of work, school, college or childcare in 2022. Car was the favoured means of transport amongst the populace – accounting for 48% of movements in the rural area and 43% in the urban area. These were below the Fingal (49.7%) and national averages (53.8%) in both instances.

Movements on foot were the next most common and were far in excess of county and national averages. Close to 20% of rural movements and 23.3% of urban movements were made on foot – comparing favourably to Fingal (16.3%) and the country as a whole (12.6%).

Movements via rail were greater than the Fingal average (6.7%) in the urban area (9.1%) but below average in the rural Balbriggan area (6.2%).

Buses, minibuses or coaches were less common means of travel, accounting for 8.3% in the rural area and 5.5% in the urban area – considerably lower than in Fingal (12.2%) and nationally (9%).

Figure 15: Population Who Travel to Work, School, College or Childcare by Means of Travel in the Balbriggan Rural and Urban EDs, Fingal and the State, 2022



Source: CSO Census.

2. Socio-Economic Profile

Short journey times of less than 15 minutes were most common in both rural (30.6%) and urban (33.9%) cases – comparing to 26.7% in Fingal and 32.9% nationally. Journeys of 15-45 minutes were less common than the county and national averages. Longer journey times of 45 minutes or more were more common in both EDs than at the national level – likely reflecting the distance to Dublin City Centre, and other major conurbations on the east coast.

Table 11: Commuting Times to Work, School, College or Childcare of Populations of the Balbriggan Rural and Urban EDs, Fingal and the State, 2022, 2022

	Balbriggan Rural	Balbriggan Urban	Fingal	Ireland
Under 15 mins	30.6%	33.9%	26.7%	32.9%
1/4 hour - under 1/2 hour	27.2%	25.7%	28.6%	31.5%
1/2 hour - under 3/4 hour	19.4%	17.6%	21.9%	19.3%
3/4 hour - under 1 hour	7.8%	8.6%	9.2%	6.6%
1 hour - under 1 1/2 hours	9.9%	10.2%	10.4%	6.9%
1 1/2 hours and over	5.0%	4.0%	3.2%	2.8%

Source: CSO Census.

The proportions of people working from home in Balbriggan Rural (28.2%) and Urban (25.4%) were relatively low by national standards (32.1%) in 2022. This may be a reflection of the nature of work undertaken by residents which may not lend itself to remote working options.

Table 12: Proportion of Population Who Work from Home in the Balbriggan Urban and Rural EDs and Ireland, 2022

	Balbriggan Rural	Balbriggan Urban	Ireland
Persons who work from home	2,355	871	736,110
% of all working persons	28.2%	25.4%	32.1%

Source: CSO Census.

3. Comparator Analysis

3. Comparator Analysis

3.1 Background to Comparator Towns

For the purposes of comparison, this section posits Balbriggan Town in the context of nine towns in Leinster of broadly similar size and/or proximity to Dublin City. These towns are spread across Dublin, Kildare, Louth and Wicklow and are analysed in terms of:

- A. Population, including growth rates;
- B. Average age, and dependency ratios;
- C. Lone Parents;
- D. People with disabilities;
- E. Unemployment;
- F. Deprivation Index Score;
- G. Diversity.

3.2 Socio-Economic Comparison of Comparator Towns

Table 13 shows the populations of each town in 2022 and the (positive) growth rates which applied to each between 2016 and 2022. The population of Balbriggan was most closely comparable to Greystones-Delgany (22,009), Naas (26,180) and Newbridge (24,366). Its growth rate of 12% in the inter-Censal period was broadly average compared to the other nine towns. It fell short of the exponential growth rates of 22.4% in Naas and 21.3% in Greystones-Delgany, but was considerably stronger than the equivalents for Bray (2.8%) and Newbridge (7.1%).

Table 13: Proportion of Population Who Work from Home in the Balbriggan Urban and Rural EDs and Ireland, 2022

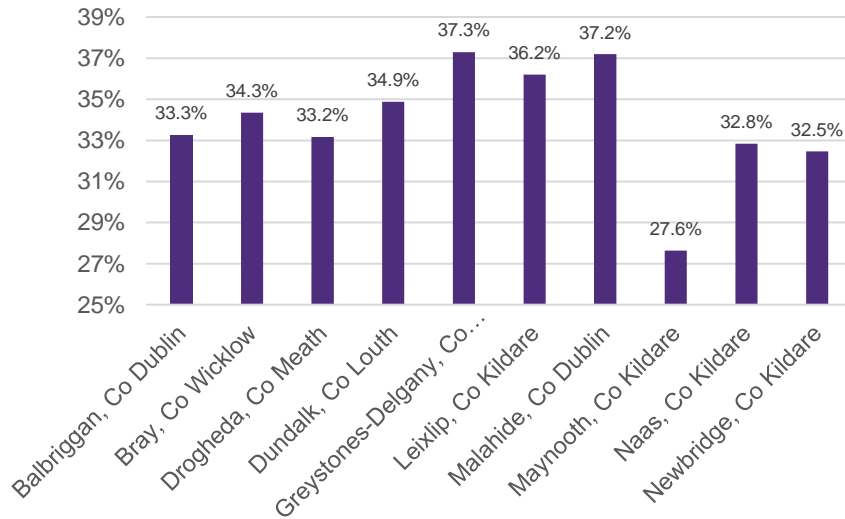
Comparator Towns	Population (2022)	Growth Rate (2016-2022)
Balbriggan, Co Dublin	24,322	+12.0%
Bray, Co Wicklow	33,512	+2.8%
Drogheda, Co Meath	44,135	+7.8%
Dundalk, Co Louth	43,112	+10.5%
Greystones-Delgany, Co Wicklow	22,009	+21.3%
Leixlip, Co Kildare	16,733	+7.9%
Malahide, Co Dublin	18,608	+12.4%
Maynooth, Co Kildare	17,259	+18.3%
Naas, Co Kildare	26,180	+22.4%
Newbridge, Co Kildare	24,366	+7.1%

Source: CSO Census.

3. Comparator Analysis

Figure 16 compares the age-dependency ratios for the towns. Balbriggan (33.3%) ranks in the middle of the comparators – and in line with the national average – below the likes of Greystones-Delgany (37.3%) and Malahide (37.2%) but above Maynooth, which had the lowest ratio at 27.6%. At 33.6 years, the average age of the Balbriggan populace was the lowest of the comparator towns.

Figure 16: Age Dependency Ratios of Comparator Towns, 2022



Source: CSO Census.

Lone parent households were most prevalent in Balbriggan when compared to the other nine comparator towns. Over 18% of all households were headed by a lone parent in 2022. This exceeded all other towns, with Dundalk (16%) having the second highest and Maynooth (7.2%) recording the lowest.

Table 14: Lone Parent Households as a Percentage of Total Households in Comparator Towns, 2022

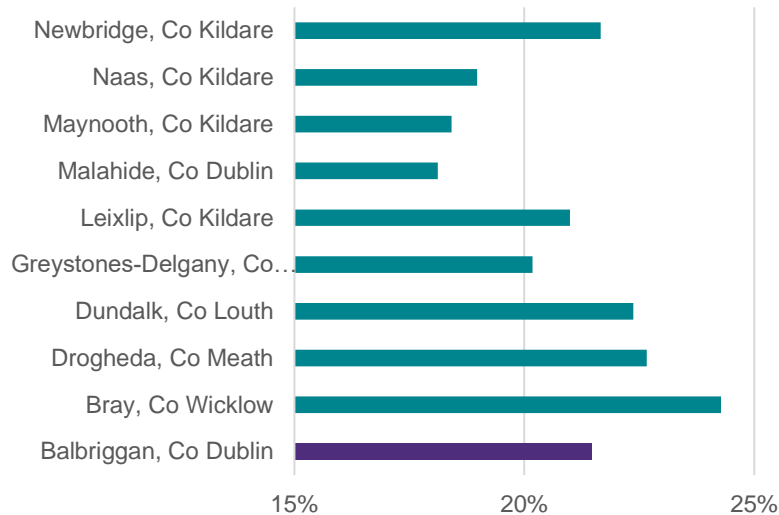
Comparator Towns	Lone Parent Households as a % of Total Households
Balbriggan, Co Dublin	18.2%
Bray, Co Wicklow	13.2%
Drogheda, Co Meath	14.3%
Dundalk, Co Louth	16.0%
Greystones-Delgany, Co Wicklow	10.2%
Leixlip, Co Kildare	10.1%
Malahide, Co Dublin	7.8%
Maynooth, Co Kildare	7.2%
Naas, Co Kildare	10.0%
Newbridge, Co Kildare	13.5%

Source: CSO Census.

3. Comparator Analysis

The proportion of the Balbriggan population living with a disability (21.5%) was in line with the comparator towns' average in 2022 (21.4%). This was somewhat surprising given the youthful profile of the town and was substantially higher than the lowest of the cohort – Malahide (18.1%). Bray had the highest proportion of the comparators at 24.3%.

Figure 17: Proportion of Population of Comparator Towns with Any Disability, 2022



Source: CSO Census.

Census 2022 recorded a national unemployment rate of 9.2%. At the time, Balbriggan Town's rate stood at 11%. This was substantially higher than the lowest of the comparator towns; Malahide (4.8%) and Maynooth (5.4%). It was, however, lower than the highest rates of 14.2% and 11.3% recorded in Dundalk and Drogheda respectively.

Table 15: Unemployment Rates in Comparator Towns, 2022

	Short term un-employed	Long term un-employed	Looking for first regular job	Un-employed	Un-employment Rate
Balbriggan	413	614	256	1,283	11.0%
Bray	471	761	244	1,476	8.9%
Drogheda	725	1287	438	2,450	11.3%
Dundalk	833	1514	523	2,870	14.2%
Greystones-Delgany	237	256	84	577	5.5%
Leixlip	191	241	91	523	6.2%
Malahide	176	185	60	421	4.8%
Maynooth	200	197	86	483	5.4%
Naas	297	406	143	846	6.2%
Newbridge	361	550	222	1,133	9.3%

Source: CSO Census.

3. Comparator Analysis

The rich ethnic diversity in Balbriggan is reflected in Figure 18. The town had the lowest proportion of White Irish and White Irish Travellers of the comparator group at 57.1% in 2022. This was significantly higher than the next highest proportion of 67% which was recorded in Maynooth. Malahide had the least ethnically diverse population with 82.7% in the White Irish and White Irish Traveller categories.

Figure 18: Breakdown of Populations of Comparator Towns by Ethnicity, 2022



Source: CSO Census.

