

**SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL &  
SLIGO BOROUGH COUNCIL  
HOUSING STRATEGY  
2005 -2011**



Sligo Borough Council  
Sligo County Council



NATIONAL  
BUILDING  
AGENCY

May 2005



**Sligo County Council &  
Sligo Borough Council  
Housing Strategy  
2005–2011**

**May 2005**

## Sligo County Council

The County Development Plan  
was adopted by Sligo County Council  
on 18 April 2005  
and came into force  
on 16 May 2005

The County Development Plan  
comprises three separate parts:  
the main document,  
the Record of Protected Structures  
and the Housing Strategy (this publication)

All three publications  
may be inspected or purchased  
at the Planning Office  
of Sligo County Council,  
County Hall, Riverside, Sligo  
They are available for free download  
from the Council's website at  
[www.sligococo.ie](http://www.sligococo.ie)

Statutory variations may be made by  
the Members of Sligo County Council  
during the 2005–2011 period

It is advisable to consult  
the Council's website  
or check with the Planning Section  
for up-to-date information  
regarding variations

Housing Strategy  
prepared by the  
National Building Agency  
"Hatherton", Richmond Ave. South  
Milltown, Dublin 6  
Tel. 01 497 9654  
Fax 01 497 2540  
Email [info@nba.ie](mailto:info@nba.ie)

Printed by  
Jaycee Printers, Galway  
2005

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	i	
<b>1.0 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1 - 2</b>	
1.1 Background	1	
1.2 Planning Framework	1	
1.3 Aim of Sligo Housing Strategy	2	
<b>2.0 HOUSING DEMAND</b>	<b>3 - 16</b>	
2.1 County Population Trends	3	
2.2 Household Sizes	5	
2.3 Demand for Residential Land 2005 – 2011	7	
2.4 Household Incomes Projected	7	
2.5 House Prices in the County	9	
2.6 General Housing Demand	13	
2.7 House Price Bands	13	
2.8 Annual Affordability Thresholds	15	
2.9 Assumptions	16	
<b>3.0 HOUSING SUPPLY</b>	<b>17 - 23</b>	
3.1 Housing Land Availability	17	
3.2 Settlement Strategy & Spatial Distribution of Housing Projections	19	
3.3 Capacity to Deliver	20	
3.4 Social and Affordable Housing Distribution	21	
3.5 Mix of House Types and Sizes	23	
<b>4.0 SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING</b>	<b>24 - 32</b>	
4.1 Current Local Authority Housing Stock	24	
4.2 Vacancies and Stock Utilisation	24	
4.3 Age Analysis	25	
4.4 Provision of Local Authority Housing	25	
4.5 The role of the Voluntary & Community Sector	31	
4.6 Affordable Housing	32	
<b>5.0 SUMMARY AND POLICY CONCLUSIONS</b>	<b>33 - 35</b>	
APPENDICES	37 - 67	
Appendix A	Sligo Population Projections 2003 – 2011	39
Appendix B	Sligo Household Projections 2003 – 2011	55
Appendix C	Assessment of Affordability Thresholds	63
LIST OF FIGURES		
Figure 1	Gradual Population Growth Model	3
Figure 2	Faster Population Growth Model	3
Figure 3	Interest rate forecasts for the euro area economy 2003 – 2011	10
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>		
Table 1	Gradual & Faster Growth Models	4
Table 2	Gradual & Faster Population Growth	5
Table 3	Household Size corresponding to the Gradual Growth Model	6
Table 4	Household Size corresponding to the Faster Growth Model	7
Table 5	Estimated Distribution of Household Disposable Incomes	8

## List of Tables continued

Table 6	Household Income Distribution in County Sligo	9
Table 7	Interest Rate & Inflation Forecasts for the Euro Area Economy	10
Table 8	Range of House Price Bands in County Sligo	14
Table 9a	House Price Band Inflation 2005 –2011 (Sligo & Environs)	14
Table 9b	House Price Band Inflation 2005 –2011 (Rest of County)	15
Table 10a	Summary of Social & Affordable Housing (Sligo & Environs)	15
Table 10b	Summary of Social & Affordable Housing need (Rest of County)	16
Table 11	Sligo Borough Council (SBC) Residential Development	17
Table 12	Sligo County Council's (SCC) Residential Development	18
Table 13	Land area available for Residential Development (S&E)	19
Table 14	Possible capacity for Housing Units within Rest of County	20
Table 15	Local Authority Land banks	23
Table 16	Summary of Housing Stock in SCC & SBC	24
Table 17	Vacancies in Council Stock	25
Table 18	Categories of need	25
Table 19	Private Households Classified by Size	26
Table 20	Accommodation facilities for the homeless	27
Table 21a	Number of Essential Repairs Grants	28
Table 21b	Number of Disabled Persons Grants	29
Table 22	Traveller accommodation within SCC & SBC	30
Table 23	Voluntary & Co-operative Housing Sector Housing Stock	32
Table 24	Overview of Key Provisions of the Housing Strategy	33
Table 25a	Analysis of Social & Affordable Housing Supply and Demand	34
Table 25b	Analysis of Social & Affordable Housing Supply & Demand (SCC)	34
Table 25c	Analysis of Social & Affordable Housing Supply & Demand (SBC)	35

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This Housing Strategy has been prepared in accordance with Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 and covers the functional areas of Sligo Borough Council and Sligo County Council for the period of 2005-2011. In accordance with the requirements of this legislation, this Housing Strategy will form part of the *Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2004-2010* and the *Sligo County Development Plan 2005-2011*.

The Strategy has been prepared in accordance with the Model Housing Strategy and Step-by-Step Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (DOELG, December, 2000). The Strategy is predictive, but is based on a number of assumptions about the housing market and seeks to incorporate population projections, household projections, future disposable income, house price trends and interest rates in order to come up with a measure of affordability.

### **The key findings of the Housing Strategy are as follows:**

An estimated 5,672 residential units will need to be jointly provided by Sligo Borough Council and County Council to ensure that supply meets demand. Of this total estimate, it is anticipated that approximately 3,420 units (60%) will need to be supplied within the Sligo City and Environs area.

The capacity of zoned lands in the Borough is adequate to meet the overall housing requirements. However, Sligo Borough Council has insufficient lands to build the planned social and affordable housing called for in the Social and Affordable Housing Action Plan 2004 – 2008.

There is a need to ensure that up to approximately 250 hectares are zoned in various towns and villages throughout the County to meet housing need and, in particular, social and affordable housing need.

A curtailment to the provision of sustainable housing is the lack of proper sewage treatment facilities in the smaller settlements of the County and the lack of zoning provision in these settlements. In order to address this issue, Sligo County Council intends to advance a programme of local area plan preparation and/or mini-plan preparation (as provided for in the *County Development Plan 2005-2011*).

20% of eligible sites, which are the subject of new residential development, are to be set aside for the development of new social and affordable units.

The local authorities will ensure that units are developed to meet the needs of the elderly, people with disabilities and other special needs households.

The local authorities will implement schemes to maximise the utilisation of the existing social and affordable housing stock in the County.

The local authorities will establish a register of eligible households interested in acquiring affordable housing.



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Irish housing policy, as stated by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG) is '*... to enable every household to have available an affordable dwelling of good quality, suited to its needs, in a good environment and, as far as possible, at the tenure of its choice*' (see [www.environ.ie](http://www.environ.ie), under Housing Policy).

Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, requires all Planning Authorities to prepare housing strategies and incorporate these into their development plans. In accordance with Section 94(1)(e) of the Act, this Housing Strategy has been prepared as a joint strategy between the Councils of Sligo County and Sligo Borough. This Housing Strategy will form part of the Council's development plans, namely the Sligo and Environs Development Plan (2004-2010) and the Sligo County Development Plan (2005-2011).

There are a number of policy documents, of national, regional and local significance, that have a bearing on the direction of this Housing Strategy. These documents include:

- National Development Plan 2000-2006
- National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020
- Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region 2004-2024
- Western Development Commission Strategic Statement 2004-2006
- Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines, April 2005
- County Sligo Integrated Strategy 2002-2012
- Sligo Sub-Regional Development Strategy 2001-2021
- Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2004-2010
- Sligo County Development Plan 2005-2011

A summary of the key documents is provided in Appendix A (Key policy documents) of the *Sligo County Development Plan 2005-2011*.

### 1.2 Planning Framework

The Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) provide a long-term strategic planning framework for the development of the Border Region in the period 2004-2024. This planning framework will set the scene for the implementation of the *National Spatial Strategy* at a regional level, and will contain strategic policy directions to be incorporated into the policies of the *Sligo County Development Plan 2005-2011*. The making of this Housing Strategy is part of this development plan process.

The RPGs recommend that, in order to achieve the scale of population growth needed and to ensure that critical mass generated in the Region drives development in the wider hinterland, Planning Authorities should:

- Assess population in the Region and the implications for land use planning for all settlements.
- Review zoned and serviced land available.
- Review Housing Strategies in the Region.

#### 1.2.1 Regional Planning Guidelines and County Sligo

The RPGs seek to implement the *National Spatial Strategy* in the Border Region by promoting the development of critical mass in the three new Gateways of Sligo, Dundalk and Letterkenny (linked with Derry). The goal is to develop Gateways and Hubs to achieve a sustainable population distribution, which supports a living countryside, a network of smaller towns and villages, and a stabilised rural population.

The RPGs project that population levels in the Border Region will be approximately 550,000 in 2020, of which 40,000 would live in Sligo City. This would mean that nearly a quarter of the population of the Region would live in Sligo City by 2020 and would double the 2002 population of the City in eighteen years. Linear interpolation of population growth projected by the RPGs indicates a projected annual increase of 1,111 in the population of Sligo City and a projected population of 30,000 in Sligo City by the end of the Development Plan period in 2011.

### **1.3 Aim of the Sligo Housing Strategy**

The overall aim of the Housing Strategy is to provide for the existing and future housing needs of the area covered by the development plans and set out how this will be achieved.

Specific requirements of the Housing Strategy include:

- An estimate of the existing and future need for housing – including social and affordable housing – and determine the distribution of this housing.
- The need to ensure that there is sufficient zoned and serviced land available in appropriate locations to meet existing and forecasted demands.
- The need to ensure that housing is available for persons with different levels of income.
- The need to ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is developed to reasonably match the requirements of the different categories of households, as may be determined by the planning authority, and including the special requirements of elderly persons and persons with disabilities.
- Counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds
- Include specific objectives in the Plans, reflecting the needs of different areas assessed in the Strategy, to ensure that the necessary social and affordable housing will be provided for.

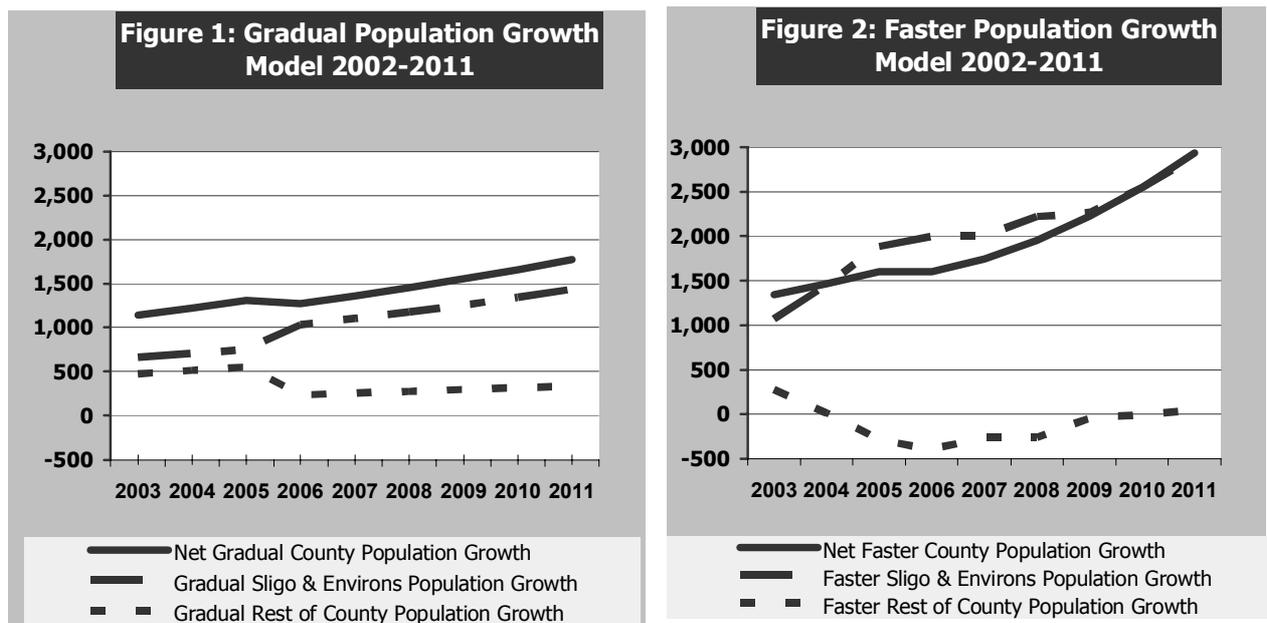
## 2.0 HOUSING DEMAND

This section of the Strategy provides estimates for the overall housing demand, based on anticipated population projections and household projections. This Housing Strategy relies on the population and household projections prepared by Sligo County Council's Development Planning Unit in January 2004, as part of the County Development Plan review process, and the population figures in the *Regional Planning Guidelines 2004-2024*. Social and Affordable housing needs are considered in section 4.0 below.

A number of population growth scenarios were examined. A comprehensive assessment and report on anticipated changes in population and household is provided as Appendix A – Sligo Population Projections 2003-2011 and Appendix B - Sligo Household Projections 2003-2011.

### 2.1 County Population Trends

As part of the assessment of population projection, various models of population change were considered based on particular economic development scenarios that were likely to affect population change in the County. The preferred scenarios for population change were the Gradual Growth Model (Figure 1) and the Faster Growth Model (Figure 2). The corresponding projections indicate a 2011 population of between 70,000 and 75,000 for the whole county (see Table 1).



- The Gradual Growth Model assumes that the Border Region's share of national population remains at its 2002 level, while County Sligo's share stops falling and begins to increase gradually.
- The Faster Growth Model involves share growth for both the Border Region and County Sligo at higher rates.

**Table 1: Gradual and Faster Growth Models for County Sligo 2002-2011**

Year	Gradual Growth Model			Faster Growth Model		
	County Population	Sligo & Environs Population	Rest of County Population	County Population	Sligo & Environs Population	Rest of County Population
2002	58,200	23,108	35,092	58,200	23,108	35,092
2003	59,339	23,772	35,567	59,546	24,177	35,369
2004	60,561	24,479	36,082	61,014	25,630	35,384
2005	61,870	25,233	36,637	62,612	27,514	35,098
2006	63,139	26,265	36,873	64,215	29,513	34,702
2007	64,498	27,367	37,131	65,957	31,519	34,438
2008	65,952	28,544	37,408	67,914	33,741	34,174
2009	67,506	29,801	37,705	70,137	36,009	34,129
2010	69,165	31,144	38,021	72,684	38,559	34,125
2011	70,936	32,580	38,356	75,619	41,449	34,169

*Shaded background: Life of the Sligo County Development Plan 2005 - 2011.*

*Source: Development Plan for the County of Sligo 2005 – 2011, Sligo County Council.*

#### 2.1.1 Influence of the National Spatial Strategy on Population Growth

The underlying assumption is that the implementation of the *National Spatial Strategy* will begin without delay and the effects of Sligo's designation as a 'Gateway City' will become noticeable at an early stage during the life of the *County Development Plan 2005 - 2011*. The different sets of growth rates used in the projections are meant to reflect the government's commitment to tackling Sligo's infrastructural constraint. It is assumed that significant improvements in transport, waste, water, health and social infrastructure can invigorate Sligo's economy and lead to higher levels of employment and population growth.

Having defined the population growth scenarios, there is a need to distribute the population projections between Sligo City and its Environs, and the rest of the County. For each of the two preferred growth scenarios, specific patterns of population share between the Borough and adjacent Electoral Divisions are formulated.

#### 2.1.2 Population Growth in Sligo and Environs

Under the Gradual Growth Model, the Environs' population share is assumed to grow initially faster than that of the Borough, as a consequence of housing development on the existing greenfield sites.

- The combined population share of the borough and adjacent EDs grows at 1% per year from 2003 to 2005 and at 2% per year thereafter.
- The share of the Environs (which are assumed to contain half the population of the adjacent EDs) in the County population grows at 1.5% per year from 2003 to 2005 and at 2% per year thereafter.

The Faster Growth Model involves a significantly higher growth rate in Sligo & Environs than outside, in the adjacent EDs. Such growth can be achieved through the redevelopment of brownfield sites (land previously used for purposes, now obsolete). There is a considerable amount of brownfield land within the boundaries of Sligo and Environs, the best example being the port zone. There are also other mixed-use zones where higher densities will be encouraged and overall the City and Environs has the infrastructure to cater for significant growth associated with a fast growth Gateway City.

### 2.1.3 Population Growth in the ED's adjacent to Sligo and Environs

Regarding the adjacent EDs, it is assumed that the overall population increase will be relatively low, as an effect of policies limiting one-off housing development within the scenic areas surrounding Sligo and Environs. The majority of new residential development, outside Sligo and Environs, will be concentrated in villages such as Grange, Strandhill, Rosses Point, Ballincar, Ballintogher, Calry and Ballysadare (villages within the Sub-Region; refer to *Sligo Sub-Regional Development Strategy 2001-2021*).

- The combined population share of the Borough and adjacent EDs grows at a rate of 2% in 2003; at 3% in 2004; at 4% per year from 2005 to 2006; at 3.5% per year from 2007 to 2008; and at 3% per year thereafter.
- The share of the Environs (which are assumed to contain half the population of the adjacent EDs) in the County population grows at 0.7% per year from 2003-2004; at 0.85% per year from 2005 to 2008; and at 1% per year thereafter.

### 2.1.4 Population Growth in the Rest of the County

The population corresponding to the area covered by the County Development Plan, outside the area of the Sligo and Environs, is calculated by deducting the resulting population of Sligo and Environs from the totals projected for the whole County under the two selected scenarios. The outcome of the two models is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Gradual and Faster Population Growth for County Sligo 2002-2011**

Year	Gradual Growth Model			Faster Growth Model		
	Total County Population Growth	Sligo & Environs Population Growth	Rest of County Population Growth	Total County Population Growth	Sligo & Environs Population Growth	Rest of County Population Growth
2003	1,139	664	475	1,346	1,069	277
2004	1,222	707	515	1,468	1,453	15
2005	1,309	754	555	1,598	1,884	-286
2006	1,269	1,032	236	1,603	1,999	-396
2007	1,359	1,102	258	1,742	2,006	-264
2008	1,454	1,177	277	1,957	2,222	-264
2009	1,554	1,257	297	2,223	2,268	-45
2010	1,659	1,343	316	2,547	2,550	-4
2011	1,771	1,436	335	2,935	2,890	44
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,736</b>	<b>9,472</b>	<b>3,264</b>	<b>17,419</b>	<b>18,341</b>	<b>-923</b>

Source: *Development Plan for the County of Sligo 2005 – 2011, Sligo County Council.*

## 2.2 Household Sizes

In 2001, the average number of persons per private household in Europe was 2.4. County Sligo has one of the smallest average households in the state, consisting of 2.84 persons (2002). An examination of the average household size in the town, revealed 2.68 persons, while the average household size in the aggregate rural area of County Sligo is also among the lowest in the state, at 2.92 persons per household.

For the intercensal period 1996-2002, linear interpolation of average household size values for urban and rural areas of County Sligo indicates a yearly fall of circa 0.045 persons. However, it would be inappropriate to use the same pace of change for household projections. Significant events, among which the introduction of divorce legislation, increasing separation rates, increased immigration and the building boom, might have accelerated the trend towards more and smaller households.

Calculated over a longer period, from 1986 to 2002, the fall from 3.38 to 2.84 persons per household in Sligo (Borough and County) would give an annual equivalent decrease of 0.033 persons.

For the purpose of projecting household numbers, Sligo and Environs and the rural area of the County were treated separately, as their initial (2002) average household size was different. The following assumptions were made:

- The average 'urban' household size, corresponding to Sligo Borough, will also apply to Sligo & Environs.
- The average rural household size applies to the Rest of County Sligo.
- The trend of falling average household size will continue, although at a much slower pace, in Sligo and Environs, which will become more attractive for larger families.
- The trend of falling household size will accelerate in the rural areas of the County as a consequence of levelling off of the differences between rural and urban life styles. The average 'urban' and 'rural' household sizes will converge.

#### 2.2.1 Future Household Sizes

Assumptions on the decreasing rate of household size for each year of the life of the County Development Plan have been made and these rates are outlined in Tables 3 & 4, for each of the models, the Gradual Growth Rate and the Faster Growth Rate.

**Table 3: Household Size and Projected Number of Households 2002-2011**

GRADUAL GROWTH MODEL									
Sligo and Environs					Rest of County Sligo				
Projected Population and numbers of households					Projected Population and numbers of households				
Year	Projected Population	Household Size	Number of Households	Additional Households	Projected Population	Household Size	Number of Households	Additional Households	
<b>2002</b>									
<b>Census</b>	23,108	2.68	8,622	---	35,092	2.92	12,018	---	
<b>2003</b>	23,772	2.65	8,970	348	35,567	2.89	12,307	289	
<b>2004</b>	24,479	2.63	9,308	337	36,082	2.86	12,616	309	
<b>2005</b>	25,233	2.62	9,631	323	36,637	2.82	12,992	376	
<b>2006</b>	26,265	2.61	10,063	433	36,873	2.78	13,264	272	
<b>2007</b>	27,367	2.6	10,526	463	37,131	2.74	13,551	288	
<b>2008</b>	28,544	2.59	11,021	495	37,408	2.70	13,855	304	
<b>2009</b>	29,801	2.58	11,551	530	37,705	2.66	14,175	320	
<b>2010</b>	31,144	2.57	12,118	568	38,021	2.62	14,512	337	
<b>2011</b>	32,580	2.56	12,727	608	38,356	2.58	14,866	355	
Total additional households 2003-2011:				4,104	Total additional households 2003-2011:				2,849
Total additional households <b>2005-2011:</b>				<b>3,419</b>	Total additional households <b>2005-2011:</b>				<b>2,251</b>

Source: Sligo County Development Plan 2005 – 2011, Sligo County Council.

**Table 4: Household Size and Projected Number of Households 2002-2011**

<b>FASTER GROWTH MODEL</b>								
<b>Sligo and Environs</b>					<b>Rest of County Sligo</b>			
Projected Population and numbers of households					Projected Population and numbers of households			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Projected Population</b>	<b>Household Size</b>	<b>No. of Households</b>	<b>Additional Households</b>	<b>Projected population</b>	<b>Household Size</b>	<b>No. of Households</b>	<b>Additional Households</b>
<b>2002</b>								
<b>Census</b>	23,108	2.68	8,622	---	35,092	2.92	12,018	---
<b>2003</b>	24,177	2.65	9,123	501	35,369	2.89	12,238	220
<b>2004</b>	25,630	2.63	9,745	622	35,384	2.86	12,372	134
<b>2005</b>	27,514	2.62	10,501	756	35,098	2.82	12,446	74
<b>2006</b>	29,513	2.61	11,308	806	34,702	2.78	12,483	37
<b>2007</b>	31,519	2.6	12,123	815	34,438	2.74	12,569	86
<b>2008</b>	33,741	2.59	13,027	905	34,174	2.70	12,657	88
<b>2009</b>	36,009	2.58	13,957	930	34,129	2.66	12,830	173
<b>2010</b>	38,559	2.57	15,003	1047	34,125	2.62	13,025	194
<b>2011</b>	41,449	2.56	16,191	1188	34,169	2.58	13,244	219
Total additional households 2003-2011: 7,569					Total additional households 2003-2011: 1,226			
Total additional households <b>2005-2011: 6,446</b>					Total additional households <b>2005-2011: 872</b>			

Source: *Sligo County Development Plan 2005 – 2011, Sligo County Council.*

### 2.3 Demand for Residential Land 2005-2011

It is expected that, during the life of the *Sligo County Development Plan 2005-2011*, it will be necessary to accommodate between 1,246 and 6,446 new households within the Sligo and Environs area.

The models project higher population growth levels in the County core, i.e., Sligo and Environs and its immediate satellites, than in the outer rural towns and villages. Under the Faster Growth Scenario, only 872 additional households would locate in the rural area.

Taking a minimum of 872 and a maximum of 2,497 additional households outside Sligo and Environs, and using an average gross residential density of 10 units per acre, or circa 25 units per hectare (consistent with local preferences), it is estimated that 35 to 100 hectares of land will be needed between 2005-2011 to cater for residential needs. Applying a coefficient of 2.5 to allow for location choice and possible non-release of zoned lands, the County Development Plan must identify between 88 and 250 hectares for residential use in the County area, outside Sligo and Environs.

The expected need for housing land within Sligo and Environs over the same period (calculated using an average density of 35 units per hectare) is between 90 and 460 hectares. This projected demand is adequately catered for by the *Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2004 - 2010*, which zoned 532 hectares of land for residential development.

The overall settlement strategy for County Sligo is based on the following principal requirements:

- promotion and development of Sligo as a Gateway City;
- careful growth management in the Sligo Sub-Region; and
- development of Key Support Towns to serve rural areas.

## 2.4 Household Income Projections

Another important component in estimating the demand for housing in the County is disposable household income. Income figures for the County were derived from four main sources:

- The Household Budget Survey 1999-2000 (Final Results, CSO, 2002)
- County Incomes and Regional GDP, 2001 (CSO, 2001)
- The ESRI Medium Term Review 2003-2010
- The Quarterly Economic Commentary (ESRI, Summer, 2004)

The *Household Budget Survey 1999-2000* (Final Results, CSO, 2002) provides figures for the country as a whole and for the Regional Authority Regions. The data provides the average annual disposable household income and the percentage of households in each income category (deciles)<sup>1</sup>. These national percentages were used to determine the estimated income categories within Sligo (in the absence of any other more relevant data) as presented in Table 5.

**Table 5: Estimated Distribution of Household Disposable Incomes in County Sligo 2001**

Income Range (Gross Income Decile)	Average Weekly Disposable Income (National)	Average Annual Disposable Household Income (National)	% of all Households in each Category (National)	Sligo County Deflator - based on 2001 Indices of Disposable Income (State=100)	Average Annual Disposable Household Income - Co. Sligo
1st Decile: <132.05	€ 106.23	€ 5,523.96	1.93%	0.984	€ 5,435.58
2nd Decile: <214.46	€ 174.42	€ 9,069.84	3.16%	0.984	€ 8,924.72
3rd Decile: <305.97	€ 249.42	€12,969.84	4.52%	0.984	€12,762.32
4th Decile: <473.59	€ 331.80	€17,253.60	6.02%	0.984	€16,977.54
5th Decile: <531.46	€ 423.01	€21,996.52	7.67%	0.984	€21,644.58
6th Decile: <664.19	€ 515.93	€26,828.36	9.35%	0.984	€26,399.11
7th Decile: <810.78	€ 617.76	€32,123.52	11.20%	0.984	€31,609.54
8th Decile: <1016.63	€ 743.45	€38,659.40	13.48%	0.984	€38,040.85
9th Decile: <1339.22	€ 925.42	€48,121.84	16.78%	0.984	€47,351.89
10th Decile: >1339.22	€1,428.71	€74,292.92	25.90%	0.984	€73,104.23

The CSO publication *County Incomes and Regional GDP 2001* provided data on disposable income per person and indicated that County Sligo had the third highest level of disposable income per person after Dublin representing 98.4% of the State average. This reflects a steady improvement over the past decade, indicating a convergence towards the State average. For the purpose of this Housing Strategy, the Council has used an income deflator of 0.98 to determine the likely disposable income within the County. This is shown below in Table 5 above.

The 1999-2000 household income figures were inflated annually to reflect income growth from 2001 to 2011. This income inflation is based on the ESRI's *Medium Term Review 2003-2010*, and their *Quarterly Economic Commentary*, published in the summer of 2004. The projected income for each income band is given per year in Table 6. Data on household income is not available on a sub-county basis.

<sup>1</sup> Note: The average gross weekly household income for the State in 1999-2000, at €666.72, was 53% higher than the €435.69 recorded five years earlier. Households rented from Local Authorities had the lowest Gross Household Income, at €328.41 per week, in 1999-2000.

**Table 6: Household Income Distribution in County Sligo 2001-2011**

Average Annual Disposable Household Income (Sligo)(€)	Disposable Income 2001-2011 (€)										
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
% Growth GNDI	2.9%	1.2%	1.1%	4.5%	5.5%	5.4%	5.7%	5.1%	4.8%	3.2%	
5,435.58	5,593	5,660	5,722	5,980	6,309	6,649	7,028	7,387	7,741	7,989	
8,924.72	9,183	9,293	9,395	9,818	10,358	10,918	11,540	12,129	12,711	13,118	
12,762.32	13,132	13,290	13,436	14,040	14,813	15,612	16,502	17,344	18,177	18,758	
16,977.54	17,469	17,679	17,874	18,678	19,705	20,769	21,953	23,073	24,180	24,954	
21,644.58	22,272	22,539	22,787	23,812	25,122	26,479	27,988	29,415	30,827	31,814	
26,399.11	27,164	27,490	27,793	29,043	30,641	32,295	34,136	35,877	37,599	38,802	
31,609.54	32,526	32,916	33,278	34,776	36,688	38,670	40,874	42,958	45,020	46,461	
38,040.85	39,144	39,613	40,049	41,851	44,153	46,537	49,190	51,699	54,180	55,914	
47,351.89	48,725	49,309	49,852	52,095	54,960	57,928	61,230	64,353	67,442	69,600	
73,104.23	75,224	76,126	76,964	80,427	84,851	89,433	94,530	99,352	104,120	107,452	

Note: Galway County Housing Strategy differentiates between the income levels of the City versus the County. In Sligo's case, the proportionate numbers of social housing units and persons on the housing list in the Borough are much greater than the equivalent figures for the County. Therefore average annual disposable income levels of Borough and Council are expected to be relatively consistent.

## 2.5 House Prices in County Sligo

### 2.5.1 National Market Overview

While the rate of inflation in the Irish housing market has slowed down considerably from growth rates of over 20% on an annual basis in the late 1990s, the buoyant economic conditions, low interest rates and strong inward migration continue to fuel demand. House price inflation remains strong and continues to outstrip growth in personal income. Despite increasing annual house completions, some of the supply increase has been taken up by a demand for holiday homes, though this is not considered to be a significant factor in Sligo. According to the Bacon Report on the Housing Market in Ireland (June 2000), 'the market remains some distance from a sustainable equilibrium in which affordability is improved.'

### 2.5.2 Outlook based on the ESRI's *Quarterly Economic Commentary*

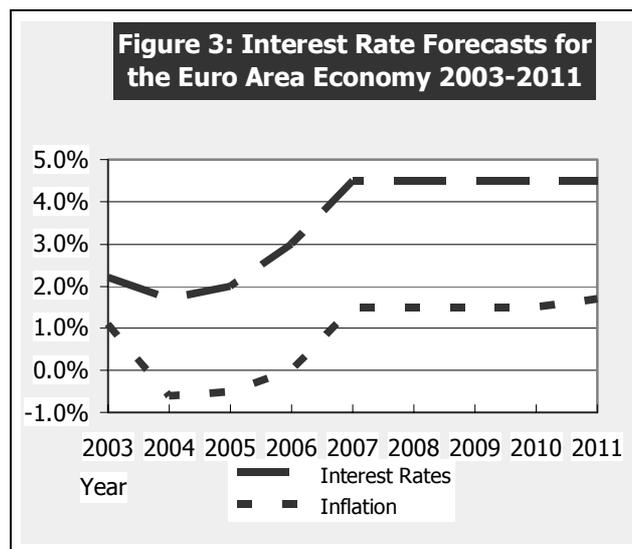
Interest rates have started to increase and there is a slowdown in the rate of increases in house prices. Despite this slowdown, there is still a rising trend and 'the picture is one of continuing instability.'<sup>2</sup>

According to the most recent *Quarterly Economic Commentary* (ESRI, Summer, 2004), the first half of 2004 has seen a strong rebound in the Irish economy which has been driven by the acceleration in international economic demand. The strength of the global market has led to inflationary pressure, evident in significantly higher raw material and fuel prices (notably oil, gas

<sup>2</sup> *The Housing Market in Ireland: An Economic Evaluation of Trends & Prospects*, Peter Bacon & Associates, Economic Consultants (June 6, 2000).

and electricity). It states however, that the medium term trajectory is for the Irish economy to move back above its sustainable, potential growth rate of around 5%. Unemployment is expected to drop further to average 4.3% in 2005. There is likely to be a rise in interest rates in order to deflate demand pressures (in line with UK and US monetary policy). Irish international competitiveness will still be under pressure given the already relatively high cost levels.

The ESRI (Summer 2004) predicts growth rates in real GDP of 4.6% in 2004 and 5.2% in 2005. The medium-term trajectory is for the Irish economy to grow at around 5% per annum. It is expected that house prices will increase broadly in line with those figures for income growth as shown in Table 6 above.



**Table 7: Interest Rate and Inflation Forecasts for the Euro Area Economy (ESRI, July 2003)**

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Interest Rates</b>	2.2%	1.7%	2.0%	3.0%	4.5%	4.5%	4.5%	4.5%	4.5%
<b>Inflation</b>	1.1%	-0.6%	-0.5%	0.0%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.7%

According to *Quarterly Economic Commentary* (ESRI, Summer, 2004);

*"The importance of price expectations in the market, the combination of higher interest rates, reduced affordability and a large number of houses being placed on the market would have a very serious negative impact on the Irish housing market".*

The Bacon Report suggested 'that individuals are increasingly buying houses in anticipation of a capital gain. This effect has the potential to make the market unstable'. Any 'temporary (rise or) shock to the house market can have effects that persist even after the original cause of the shock has disappeared'. Therefore the signs of a slight drop in the rental market may perhaps be a precursor to the levelling off of house prices or even a fall. On this basis we predict a continued decreasing trend. The Bacon Report recalls that 'in the same way that previous price rises feed strongly into current prices the same would be true for a price fall - it would impart quite a sharp reaction'. This implies that the price falls could easily overshoot a target level and fall below the mortgaged value of some properties<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> *The Housing Market in Ireland: An Economic Evaluation of Trends and Prospects*, Peter Bacon & Associates, June, 2000

This outlook or assessment has been reiterated in a recent report prepared by Davy Stockbrokers<sup>4</sup> who indicate that low interest rates mean prices look affordable for buyers at the time being. They see the danger coming from over supply that is already hurting rents and will eventually force down prices to match lower rents. Davys say that they can only find one country, which enjoyed such a sustained rise in house prices as Ireland (that was Singapore from 1986-1996, but prices there have now dropped 38%). Ireland's property boom began in 1987, according to Davys, and prices have risen by 256% since then. It is not unusual for a sustained period of house price appreciation to be followed by a significant correction, they warn, citing examples from Japan, UK and Canada, where drops of 75%, 31% and 22% respectively have been recorded below their all time highs.

Davys also cite the fact that the number of house completions this year is set to exceed 80,000 and that recent annual completion rates of 70-80,000 is almost twice the rate of household formation. They also indicate that rents in some prime Dublin areas are down at least 20% in the space of two years. On this basis, they expect property prices to decline and warn of a property price collapse.

According to some economists, the risk of collapse in house prices remains very low<sup>5</sup>. However, others are less optimistic, suggesting that even with a gradual price contraction to sustainable levels over the next ten years, Irish property markets should see a fall in average house prices of between 20% and 25% from 2003 levels<sup>6</sup>.

Such an impact is likely, however, to facilitate access to the housing market for those who currently find it difficult.

### 2.5.3 Local Market Assessment in County Sligo

The DoELG circular (HS 4/00) of the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2000, recommended that:

*"Planning authorities should construct their own forecasts of house price trends in the light of experience and local circumstances as potentially there will be significant variations in house price levels and trends between different areas of the country (and possibly within individual counties) and between different segments of the market."*

In preparing this Housing Strategy, a series of in-depth consultations was held with a representative selection of auctioneers throughout the County. Of a total of 42 auctioneers and estate agents operating in Sligo, over a quarter was randomly chosen and contacted (13) and there were 9 responses. This represents a high response rate of 69% and is a very good representative sample of the total number of auctioneers (over 20%). This questionnaire survey was supplemented by an Internet survey, which categorised house prices according to different areas of the County.

The following key issues in relation to house prices were considered in the surveys:

- Trends in house prices at County level compared to national trends.
- The incidence of price variation at sub-County level.
- Supply and Demand generally for property throughout the County.
- Projected house price increase for 2005-2011.
- Assessment of the rental market in Sligo.

---

<sup>4</sup> As reported in the *Irish Independent*, 'Davys warn of property price collapse', September 17th, 2004.

<sup>5</sup> King, Eunan, 'A Short History of the House Price Boom', *Business and Finance*, 18<sup>th</sup> November – 1<sup>st</sup> December, 2004, p. 8-10.

<sup>6</sup> Gurdgiev, Constantin, quoting the Economist in an article 'House Price Bubble is Breaking Consumer's Backs.....But How Long Before it Explodes', *Business and Finance*, 18<sup>th</sup> November – 1<sup>st</sup> December, 2004, p. 12-14.

The key findings of the survey were as follows:

- *Average House Prices*

The *Housing Statistics Bulletin* (DoELG, March, 2004) indicated that the average house price in 'Other Areas' of the country (excluding Dublin and the principal cities) was approximately €229,189. This price is generally consistent with the average house price for a dwelling in Sligo and its environs, as quoted by auctioneers operating in Sligo (actual average from the ranges given was €227,050). However, the average house price quoted for rural parts of the County was estimated at €169,800. On this basis, it was one auctioneers' view that there was already a supply of affordable houses in the private sector in certain parts of the County, such as the south and west (including towns such as Ballymote and Tobercurry).

- *The Market Outlook – House Price Projections*

Having regard to the market outlook, there were few concerns regarding the property market in Sligo City and its nearby commuter towns and villages. The impression for many auctioneers was that the market still could be good with more moderate rates of house price growth – some cited growth rates of 4-5% for the period of the Housing Strategy 2005-2011, while others cited growth to slow to 1-2% per year. However, there was particular concern expressed over the rural county towns, where an impression of over-supply has been cited. Such concerns appear to be well founded when one considers that Ballymote has 282 units under construction and an additional 296 units granted planning permission – in a town where there is an estimated 351 units at present. On completion of all dwellings granted planning permission, this would represent an increase of 163% on the 2002 housing stock. Despite some auctioneers' positive outlook, others were less confident. Two of the nine auctioneers perceived that property prices would fall by around 10% over the period of the Housing Strategy and that this outlook was based on a fall in enquiries (and therefore sales) over the past three months or so. These auctioneers felt that the market has gone past where it should be – fuelled by low interest rates and the fact that financial institutions are now offering up to 35 year mortgages. A modest rise in interest rates would stabilise the market, some believed.

Preliminary analysis and calculations as background to this Housing Strategy on projected income growth levels and overall expected property price increases, would suggest that the latter would continue to outstrip growth in income levels. Inter-familial borrowing has added to the problem. This of course is unsustainable and would suggest that eventually there has to be some adjustment with property prices stabilising towards income growth levels. This has been reflected in the property price projections for both Sligo and Environs and the Rest of the County.

- *Housing Supply in the Sligo Area*

The supply of housing generally in the County is very good, particularly in towns such as Ballymote, Tobercurry and Riverstown. Much of this supply has been driven by the Rural Renewal Scheme and in Enniscrone; the Seaside Renewal Scheme has driven the supply. Current supply (or rate of supply) in Ballymote, Tobercurry and Riverstown appears to be adequate and there was some concern expressed that there may even be over-supply, particularly in Tobercurry. One auctioneer described the situation as 'unsustainable'. In areas under the Rural Renewal Scheme, the normal supply and demand factors are significantly distorted, as some people appear to be buying new properties in an effort to save tax and otherwise have little real understanding of the local market. One auctioneer suspected that some investment properties in the rural towns remained unlet.

Within Sligo City the situation was quite different, with most auctioneers indicating that supply was less than adequate. Some larger developments were in the pipeline, but supply was still slack. The demand for houses within the commuter belt (generally described as extending to Grange in the north and as far south as Coolaney in the south) was strong. Rosses Point and

Ballincar were cited as perhaps the most highly sought after locations and property prices in these areas were at a premium.

- *Student Accommodation*

Purpose built student apartments (with internet access) in town that have been completed under Section 50 tax incentives have been extremely popular, with some 2000 beds being provided under the scheme. Development of purpose built student accommodation has freed up a lot of housing stock and has paved the way for first time buyers to enter the market.

- *The Rental Market*

The rental market appears to be well supplied at present and the outlook from some commentators was that this was having an impact on the rental market as houses formerly occupied by students are not as rentable. Some auctioneers believed that rents in these areas may have dropped by as much as 12-15%. Property owners are now faced with refurbishing their dwellings to a much higher standard (to appeal to potential renters) or to place their house on the market. Such housing is likely to be suitable and attractive for the first time buyer.

With a gradual fall in rent levels, investors are now thin on the ground.

## **2.6 General Housing Demand**

Throughout the County three-bedroom houses appeared to be in highest demand (with prices for four-bedroom dwellings not significantly higher). Demand is generally strong among First-Time Buyers (FTB) (looking for two- and three-bedroom units) and among families seeking to upgrade out of semi-detached dwellings. Many families seeking to upgrade are looking for a four-bed detached home with a garage – the garage is seen as a big draw and purchasers are increasingly looking outside the City for such properties (which are in short supply in the City and environs). Overall, the holiday home market in Sligo is small.

The general perception was that supply is starting to catch up with demand.

It was generally believed that the designation of Sligo as a 'Gateway City' has had no discernable impact on the development of the Sligo or its housing market. Likewise the Government's recent decentralisation initiative (2004) has not had, to date, any discernable impact on the property market.

## **2.7 House Price Bands**

Having regard to the views of local auctioneers on the local housing market and a survey of current house prices throughout the County, Table 8 outlines an estimate of the percentage of houses that fall within different house price bands. As outlined in Section 2.5.3, the average house price for a dwelling in Sligo and Environs is approximately €227,050, whereas an average of 169,800 is assumed for the County areas. Surveys carried out indicate that there is little on the market for less than €150,000 and those properties for sale at that price tend to be traditional semi-derelict cottages needing significant work. For this reason, it was decided to commence the range of price bands, at less than €200,000, and in consultation with local auctioneers in the survey, increase the bands at intervals of €50,000.

The average price for a dwelling in the Rest of the County (i.e., €169,800), reflects the price of a dwelling in the south and west of the County. Areas closer to Sligo (i.e., within the Sligo Sub-Region), such as Strandhill, Ballincar and Rosses Point, command higher house prices, due to their relative proximity to Sligo City and unique environmental setting. Given the high demand for houses in these areas, a higher percentage of dwellings fall into the 201,000-250,000 price band than, for example, the first price band of <€200,000. This relative increase of the percentage of dwellings falling into the second band, is indicative of previous findings from the *Sligo Sub-Regional Strategy Development Strategy 2001 - 2021*, which indicated that the Sub-

Region had two-thirds the County's population, even though it had just one-third of the land area.

**Table 8: Range of House Price Bands in County Sligo.**

Range of House Price Bands (€)	% of Houses in Sligo and Environs	% of Houses in the Rest of County Sligo
<b>&lt;200,000</b>	13%	28%
<b>201,000-250,000</b>	25%	33%
<b>251,000-300,000</b>	20%	10%
<b>301,000-350,000</b>	16%	8%
<b>351,000-400,000</b>	8%	7%
<b>401,000-450,000</b>	7%	6%
<b>451,000-500,000</b>	6%	4%
<b>501,000+</b>	5%	4%

The anticipated rate of house price increase over the period 2005 – 2011, is shown in Tables 9a (representing Sligo & Environs) and 9b (Rest of County). The resulting data structure provides the basis for the housing affordability analysis.

**Table 9a: House Price Band Inflation 2005-2011 (Sligo & Environs)**

Year	Average Price Increase (%)	Price Band (€)							
		< 200,000	200,000 to 250,000	250,000 to 300,000	300,000 to 350,000	350,000 to 400,000	400,000 to 450,000	450,000 to 500,000	Greater Than 500,000
<b>2004</b>	<b>10.0%</b>	< 200,000	200,000 to 250,000	250,000 to 300,000	300,000 to 350,000	350,000 to 400,000	400,000 to 450,000	450,000 to 500,000	Greater Than 500,000
<b>2005</b>	<b>7.0%</b>	< 214,000	214,000 to 267,500	267,500 to 321,000	321,000 to 374,500	374,500 to 428,000	428,000 to 481,500	481,500 to 535,000	Greater than 535,000
<b>2006</b>	<b>5.0%</b>	< 224,700	224,700 to 280,875	280,875 to 337,050	337,050 to 393,225	393,225 to 449,400	449,400 to 505,575	505,575 to 561,750	Greater than 561,750
<b>2007</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	< 234,812	234,812 to 293,514	293,514 to 352,217	352,217 to 410,920	410,920 to 469,623	469,623 to 528,326	528,326 to 587,029	Greater than 587,029
<b>2008</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	< 244,204	244,204 to 305,255	305,255 to 366,306	366,306 to 427,357	427,357 to 488,408	488,408 to 549,459	549,459 to 610,510	Greater than 610,510
<b>2009</b>	<b>3.5%</b>	< 252,751	252,751 to 315,939	315,939 to 379,127	379,127 to 442,314	442,314 to 505,502	505,502 to 568,690	568,690 to 631,878	Greater than 631,878
<b>2010</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	< 260,334	260,334 to 325,417	325,417 to 390,500	390,500 to 455,584	455,584 to 520,667	520,667 to 585,751	585,751 to 650,834	Greater than 650,834
<b>2011</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	< 266,842	266,842 to 333,552	333,552 to 400,263	400,263 to 466,973	466,973 to 533,684	533,684 to 600,394	600,394 to 667,105	Greater than 667,105
<b>% of Sligo Units within each band</b>		<b>13%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>5%</b>

**Table 9b: House Price Band Inflation 2005-2011 (Rest of County)**

Year	Average Price Increase (%)	Price Band (€)							
		< 200,000	200,000 to 250,000	250,000 to 300,000	300,000 to 350,000	350,000 to 400,000	400,000 to 450,000	450,000 to 500,000	Greater Than 500,000
2004	10.0%	< 200,000	200,000 to 250,000	250,000 to 300,000	300,000 to 350,000	350,000 to 400,000	400,000 to 450,000	450,000 to 500,000	Greater Than 500,000
2005	4.0%	< 208,000	208,000 to 260,000	260,000 to 312,000	312,000 to 364,000	364,000 to 416,000	416,000 to 468,000	468,000 to 520,000	Greater than 520,000
2006	3.0%	< 214,240	214,240 to 267,800	267,800 to 321,360	321,360 to 374,920	374,920 to 428,480	428,480 to 482,040	482,040 to 535,600	Greater than 535,600
2007	3.0%	< 220,667	220,667 to 275,834	275,834 to 331,001	331,001 to 386,168	386,168 to 441,334	441,334 to 496,501	496,501 to 551,668	Greater than 551,668
2008	2.5%	< 226,184	226,184 to 282,730	282,730 to 339,276	339,276 to 395,822	395,822 to 452,368	452,368 to 508,914	508,914 to 565,460	Greater than 565,460
2009	2.5%	< 231,838	231,838 to 289,798	289,798 to 347,758	347,758 to 405,717	405,717 to 463,677	463,677 to 521,637	521,637 to 579,596	Greater than 579,596
2010	2.0%	< 236,475	236,475 to 295,594	295,594 to 354,713	354,713 to 413,832	413,832 to 472,950	472,950 to 532,069	532,069 to 591,188	Greater than 591,188
2011	1.0%	< 238,840	238,840 to 298,550	298,550 to 358,260	358,260 to 417,970	417,970 to 477,680	477,680 to 537,390	537,390 to 597,100	Greater than 597,100
<b>% of Sligo Units within each band</b>		<b>28%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>4%</b>

### 2.8 Annual Affordability Thresholds

The policy conclusion drawn from the summary analysis for Sligo presented in Tables 10a and 10b has been that the planning authority will aim to reserve 20% of zoned land (as defined under section 94(4)(c)) for the purpose of meeting social and affordable need. The demand for social and affordable housing in Sligo over the period 2005 – 2011 will exceed anticipated supply this is further illustrated on a year-by-year basis in Appendix C.

**Table 10a: Summary of Anticipated Social & Affordable Housing Need within Sligo & Environs**

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
1) Household Formations	323	433	463	495	530	568	608
2) No. of households having affordability problems	150	194	250	246	252	285	291
(2) as a % of (1)	46%	45%	54%	50%	47%	50%	48%

**Table 10b: Summary of Anticipated Social & Affordable Housing Need within Rest of County**

	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
1) Household Formations	376	272	288	304	320	337	355
2) No. of households having affordability problems	103	132	120	126	122	124	127
(2) as a % of (1)	32%	48%	42%	41%	38%	37%	36%

## 2.9 Assumptions

The following assumptions were made or are noted:

- All forecasts have been calculated using household projections anticipated under the Gradual Growth Model, as growth to date has more closely matched the Gradual Growth Model rather than the Faster Growth Model. Furthermore, it is assumed that of the two models, the Gradual Growth Model assumes the minimum level of demand for social and affordable housing. The formation of new households throughout the County will need to be closely monitored and should household formation rates be aligned more closely to the Faster Growth Model over the period of the County Development Plan, then adjustments may need to be made to the Housing Strategy, in accordance with the provisions of section 95(3)(6) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000.
- Significant inter-dependencies exist among the income, house prices and interest rate variables, which mean that changes in one factor could change the analysis.
- The income criteria set out in Sections 93(1) and 93(3) of the Act differ in one important respect from income criteria used in the *CSO Household Budget Survey*. In accordance with the DoEHLG's Housing Strategy Guidelines, the impact of these definitional issues may not prove to be significant in the final analysis of affordable housing demand. In effect, the definition of additional incomes set out in Section 93(1)(a), would increase the incomes of applicant households relative to the anticipated CSO average, which in turn could slightly lessen affordability difficulties.
- The estimated annual rate of new household formations is taken as the proxy for housing demand, however a further potential demand is the routine requirement to replace unfit dwellings (due to age or obsolescence). This is estimated at approximately 0.65% of the total housing stock. In the calculations for the housing model, this has not been reflected in the demand for social and affordable housing.
- CSO analysis indicates that over 38% of pensioners now reside in households in the bottom two income deciles (*CSO, Household Budget Survey 1999-2000*, October 2002). State pensions in total accounted for over 67% of gross income in the lowest income decile households and over 36% in the next lowest decile. It is likely that an unaccounted for proportion of these pensioners resides in family-owned homes, where the mortgage is paid off, yet this is not factored into the calculations.
- The Planning and Development Act, 2000, Section 94(4)(b) indicates that a planning authority may exclude eligible persons who own or have previously owned a house. No determination of this has been made and therefore this has not been addressed in the calculations.

### 3.0 HOUSING SUPPLY

#### 3.1 Housing Land Availability

##### 3.1.1 Residential Development Activity and Pressure

The area of most intensive development pressure is within the Sligo Sub-Region, an area that extends approximately from Grange in the north, to Collooney in the south. This area is under pressure for urban-generated housing, owing to its proximity to Sligo City and Environs. It includes numerous settlements, which have a satellite or dormitory role (refer to Figs. 3.b and 3.c of the *Sligo County Development Plan 2005 - 2011*, for an outline of the area). Section 3.4 of the Plan, entitled 'Growth Management in the Sub-Region', provides a policy response to the pressures in this area.

Section 4.2.2 of the County Development Plan sets out a Rural Housing Strategy that distinguishes between 'Rural Areas Under Urban Influence' and 'Rural Areas in Need of Regeneration' (refer to Fig. 4.a Rural Housing Policy – Area Categories). Rural Areas Under Urban Influence are those under greater pressure for one-off housing and the aim in these areas is to manage the pressure of *urban-generated housing*, while facilitating *rural-generated housing need*.

The area of greatest development pressure is Sligo City and its Environs. This is reflected in the very significant amount of planning and development activity in recent years. In 2003, there were 130 residential units granted planning permission by Sligo Borough Council. In the first ten months of 2004 (to 11/10/04), this number had reached nearly 250 units, with a further 166 on appeal, 430 pending a decision and an additional 66 at pre-planning stage. (See Table 11).

**Table 11: Sligo Borough Council's Residential Developments, 1/1/03 to 11/10/04**

	<b>No. of Residential Units 2003</b>	<b>No. of Residential Units 1/1/03 to 11/10/04</b>	<b>Total Residential Units from 1/1/03 to 11/10/04</b>
Granted	130 (64 of which are student apartments)	249 (27 of which are student apartments)	379
Currently on appeal	-	166	-
Decision Pending	-	430	-
At Preplanning Stage	-	66	-

Housing construction throughout the County has been relatively strong, with a total of 1062 units granted planning permission over the past five years, 38 units pending and a further 172 at pre-planning stage. Table 12 outlines the number of residential units that have been granted, including those pending or at pre-planning stage. An exceptional number of units were granted in Ballysadare, with 473 in total; and Collooney where 303 units have been granted. Other towns where activity is strong include Riverstown (81 units granted) and Castlebaldwin (54 units granted).

**Table 12: Sligo County Council's Residential Developments within the last 5 years**

Town / Village	No. of houses granted permission in the last 5 years	Private	Social	Voluntary	Pending	Pre Planning	Affordable
Ballysadare	473	121(built/under construction)	10 (under construction)	0	11	100	-
Collooney	303	216(built/under construction)	10(under construction)	0		30	-
Ballygawley	22	22(21 built/under construction)	0	0	18	0	-
Ballintogher	13	5 (none constructed)	39(27 constructed)	0	0	0	-
Soeey	11	11(2 constructed)	0	0	0	0	-
Geevagh	27	13 (1 constructed)	14 (8 constructed)	0	0	6	-
Riverstown.	81	71(41 built/under construction)	10 (6 constructed)	0	0	36	-
Castlebaldwin	54	1(constructed)	0	16(not constructed)	9	0	-
Monasteraden	34	34 (1 constructed)	0	0	0	0	-
Culfadda	44	16 (1 constructed)	18 (6 constructed)	10 (all constructed)	0	0	-
Ballymote		578 (282 under construction)					12
<b>Total</b>	<b>1062</b>						

### 3.1.2 Development Plans

Sligo County is covered by two statutory development plans, the *Sligo County Development Plan 2005 - 2011* and the *Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2004 – 2010*. In light of the relatively small scale of the second and third largest towns in the County, Tobercurry and Ballymote, there have been no statutory development plans for these towns to date, but Local Area Plans are imminent for both. The *Sligo County Development Plan 2005 – 2011 incorporates Mini-Plans for Ballysadare, Collooney and Grange, all of which include land use zoning objectives.*

### 3.1.3 Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2004-2010

The development strategy of the *Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2004-2010* promotes a very proactive view towards the provision of land for future development, in line with its designation as a 'Gateway City' in the *National Spatial Strategy*. The Plan provides for various densities throughout the Plan area. Densities are expressed as a range (minimum to maximum) for each zone. Table 13 outlines the total land area available for residential development, amounting to 532 hectares. This land has the capacity to cater for a minimum of 16,915 residential units (or population equivalent of 100,684 at an average household size of 2.79 persons per household).

**Table 13: Total land area available for residential development within Sligo & Environs**

<b>Zone</b>	<b>Minimum Level Units Per Hectare</b>	<b>Total Land Area Available for Residential Development in Hectares</b>	<b>Min. No. of Housing Units</b>	<b>Population Equivalent</b>
R1	3	90.06	270	54237
R2	20	211.52	4230	11801
R3	35	135.10	4728	13202
RS	35	4.34	152	424
C1	50	3.12	4126	11511
C2	50	4.65	232.5	648
C3	35	83.49	2922	8152
NC	35	7.27	254	709
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>532.28</b>	<b>16,915</b>	<b>100,684</b>

Based on the assumption that the average household size will remain at 2.79 persons per household as stated in the *Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2004 - 2010*.

#### 3.1.4 Sligo County Development Plan, 2005-2011

The Mini-Plans for the villages of Ballysadare, Collooney and Grange have zoned approximately 86 hectares of land for residential development. Each of these villages is situated within the Sligo Sub-Region, an area under pressure for urban-generated housing within a reasonable commuting distance of Sligo City, i.e., within approximately 16 kilometres.

#### 3.1.5 Local Area Plans

Local Area Plans have been adopted for the village of Strandhill (8 kilometres west of Sligo City) and the seaside town of Enniscrone. Strandhill is under significant pressure from development due to its proximity to Sligo City. Enniscrone has experienced significant pressure as a designated Seaside Resort tax incentive settlement, due to its high amenity setting and relative proximity to Ballina in County Mayo. These Local Area Plans have zoned a total of 117 hectares of land for residential development.

A Draft Local Area Plan has been prepared for Ballymote and is expected to propose in the region of 50 hectares of land for development. The preparation of a local area plan for Tobercurry is scheduled to commence in 2005.

Section 3.7 of the *County Development Plan 2005-2011* outlines the Council's objective to prepare mini-plans for a number of other settlements throughout the County (refer to list in Schedule B of Section 3.7)

### **3.2 Settlement Strategy and the Spatial Distribution of Housing Projections**

Section 3 of the *County Development Plan 2005-2011* outlines a Settlement Strategy to address the strategic settlement structure of the urban and rural parts of the County. A settlement hierarchy has been formulated to identify the potential population growth in key settlements (Refer to Figs. 3.c, 3.d and 3.e of the Plan).

Section 4.2 of the County Development Plan provides a planning framework for one-off housing and allows for greater planning control of both rural- and urban-generated housing pressures.

### 3.3 Capacity to Deliver

The Sligo and Environs Development Plan has the capacity to cater for 16,915 residential units.

Based on the estimated number of additional households over the period 2005 - 2011, as shown on Table 3 (p.6), between 3,419 and 6,446 households (depending on Gradual or Fast Growth Model) will be needed to provide accommodation in the Sligo and Environs Area. As shown above the Sligo and Environs Area has the capacity to accommodate a **minimum** of 16,915 residential units. On this basis there is significant spare capacity, which should allow for inertia, market choice and delays in the rollout of necessary infrastructure, etc.

It is expected that the Rest of the County may need to accommodate between 872 and 1,251 additional residential units and again there appears to be significant spare capacity, with a minimum capacity for 4,044 additional units. (see Table 14).

The proposed local area plans for Ballymote and Tobercurry and mini-plans for other areas will ensure that there is adequate distribution of zoned land throughout the County and not just in a small number of villages and towns. It is expected that, following the completion of the local area plans for Ballymote and Tobercurry, there will be capacity for at least 2,500 additional households in these areas.

**Table 14: Possible Capacity for Housing units within Rest of County** (includes adopted mini-plans prepared as part of the *Sligo County Development Plan 2005 – 2011* and adopted local area plans)

<b>Location</b>	<b>Min. No. Housing Units</b>	<b>Max. No. Housing Units</b>	<b>Average No. Housing Units</b>
Ballysadare	549.42	747.21	648.31
Ballysadare (50% of <i>Village Centre Type Mixed Zone Areas</i> )	56.84	66.31	61.58
Collooney	969.47	1318.47	1,143.97
Collooney (50% of <i>Village Centre Type Mixed Zone Areas</i> )	23.72	27.68	25.70
Enniscrone	1108.65	1141.12	1,124.89
Grange	451.95	614.66	533.31
Grange (50% of <i>Village Centre Type Mixed Zone Areas</i> )	134.66	157.11	145.89
Strandhill	583.59	873.86	728.72
Strandhill (50% of <i>Mixed Uses Zoned Areas</i> )	30.81	43.14	36.98
Strandhill (50% of <i>Village Centre Mix of Uses Zoned Areas</i> )	135.04	157.55	146.29
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>4044.16</b>	<b>5147.10</b>	<b>4,595.63</b>

Overall, sufficient capacity exists in Sligo to accommodate the required levels of growth, but only if the relevant infrastructure is put in place, especially in those settlements identified in Fig. 3.e of the Development Plan (Settlement hierarchy and potential population growth). It is imperative that the infrastructural needs identified in Section 8 of the Plan, particularly in relation to water supply (Section 8.2.1.1) and wastewater systems (Section 8.2.2.1), are adequately funded to ensure the County's housing needs are met in a sustainable manner.

One of the main constraints for Sligo Borough Council on the proposed levels of activity would be the availability of land in the Borough area and once any suitable land should become available, the cost of such land would be a significant constraint. Currently, zoned housing land is on the market for between €650,000 and €700,000 per acre. In the case of infill housing schemes in the City centre, land costs can be significantly higher.

Many of Sligo's settlements have problems with effluent treatment capacity and, to a lesser extent, with water supply capacity and pressure. The following towns/villages in the County area are affected:

Bunnanaddan (sewerage),	Grange (sewerage),
Cloonacool (sewerage),	Cliffoney (sewerage),
Ballysadare (sewerage),	Ballygawley (water),
Aclare (sewerage),	Collooney (pressure),
Enniscrone (sewerage),	Tobercurry (water).
Tobercurry (sewerage),	

The current Waste Water Services Investment Programme aims to correct deficiencies in the sewage treatment area within the next few years.

The Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2004 – 2010 has identified a number of infrastructural issues, which need to be addressed in the context of the future development of Sligo. The road and services infrastructure in particular are seen as primary constraints. A proposed water treatment works at Kinsellagh in North Sligo is currently with the DoEHLG. This vital piece of infrastructure is required for the delivery of a quality water supply to the northern side of Sligo Borough and its environs.

The Settlement Strategy outlined in Section 3 of the *County Development Plan 2005-2011* provides for a sustainable pattern of development by ensuring that, as far as possible, housing development is designed and located to make full use of public transport and to give access to education, employment, health and other services.

The zoning provisions in the *Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2004-2010*, the County's Local Area Plans and the various Mini-Plans, have regard to the Residential Density Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoELG, 1999) and this is reflected in the amount and location of land zoned for development. These plans encourage the development of mixed and balanced communities in order to counteract undue social segregation.

### **3.4 Social and Affordable Housing Distribution**

Table 10a and 10b in Section 2.8 (pp. 15-16) indicated that well over 20% of new households in Sligo over the period 2005-2011 are likely to present themselves as eligible persons as defined in Section 93(1) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000. Section 94(4)(c) of the Act makes provision for up to 20% of residentially zoned land to be reserved for social and affordable housing. On this basis, and on the basis of the analysis presented in Section 2.8 of this document, it is intended that the planning authorities in Sligo will intervene to reserve 20% of residentially zoned lands for the purpose of providing for social and affordable housing.

In the Key Support Towns of Ballymote and Tobercurry, which have in recent years experienced very significant residential growth and house prices that are frequently within approximately €12,000 of the cost of a Council-provided dwelling, the emphasis may be on the provision of affordable housing.

A weighting in favour of the provision of affordable housing may also be expected in most of the smaller settlements (below 1,500 population size), reflecting the lower levels of services, facilities and transport alternatives in these rural areas.

While the reservation or intervention of 20% for social and affordable housing will be expected on all zoned land in the County, a lower percentage will be considered, particularly where there is already a high level of social housing. In exceptional cases, the planning authority may determine that there is no requirement for an allocation for social and affordable housing in order to counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds (as provided for under Section 95(1)(d) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000). This matter will be addressed in the individual local area plans and in the mini-plans to be adopted by way of variation to the Sligo County Development Plan. In cases where Local Area Plans have already been prepared, the Planning Authority will make the determination on the individual merits of a site and its immediate or relative proximity to existing areas of social housing.

The current land bank of the Councils is indicated on Table 15 and amounts to well over 60 hectares (150 acres). This land bank is capable of providing some of the social housing needs in local and rural locations as is evidenced by the schemes commenced at Ballymote and Ballinode, etc. The development of all of this land could provide up to 6,300 units if constructed at a density of approximately 14 per acre. However, due to servicing difficulties on certain sites and the rural location of some sites, it is likely that lower densities may occur. Nonetheless, these sites could still provide in excess of 3,000 units.

Most of the land banks are situated in relative close proximity to a village or other settlement and as such appear to be suitable for residential development. However, some of these land banks may prove to be more appropriately developed for other uses due to poor residential location and an existing high concentration of local authority housing in the area.

**Table 15: Sligo Local Authority Land Banks**

Lands proposed for Housing		Site Acreage
1	Ballysadare	2.78
2	Ballintogher	2.85
3	Ballinode	37
4	Ballintogher	3.5
5	Ballymote	15 5.5 1.27
6	Bunnanaddan	6.2
7	Carney	5.29
8	Coolaney	4.4
9	Cloonshanbally	5.0
10	Dromore West	8.2
11	Easkey	2.9
13	Grange	6.3 13.6
14	Lisnalurg (Sligo Environs)	57.0
15	Tobercurry	4.75
16	Toorlestown	0.5
Total		<b>182.04</b>
<b>Possible Provision of Halting Sites</b>		
17	Collooney	n/a
18	Cloonamahon	n/a

The Councils will continue providing social and affordable housing through the development of their land banks and through their involvement with voluntary and co-operative housing organisations.

### **3.5 Mix of House Types and Sizes**

Integral to this Strategy is the need to ensure that a range of housing types and sizes will be made available to meet the different demands of the market, including the needs of first-time buyers, single-person households and families of varying sizes. There is also a need to provide for a range of social housing for a broad range of household categories, such as the disabled, the elderly, those on low incomes and the unemployed.

In 1996, either one or two persons occupied 47% of all households. According to the 2002 Census, this has now risen to 51%. This trend towards smaller households is likely to continue over the next decade. The providers of housing need to respond positively to this by building an increasing variety of house types. The provision of a range of housing types and sizes within individual housing schemes will diminish the uniformity of suburban-style housing developments. Properly designed schemes will be expected to integrate one, two, three and four bedroom units in new streets and developments focused on courtyards, squares and greens. Such schemes will facilitate the further integration of social and affordable housing into existing communities.

#### 4.0 SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

At present the local authorities in County Sligo are planning for the development of 651 new housing units over the period 2004-2008 through their local authority Housing Programmes, with the assistance of the DoEHLG.

In light of the very high demand for social and affordable housing units anticipated over the coming years, it is likely that the local authority Housing Programmes will remain an important vehicle for the delivery of social housing throughout the period of the Housing Strategy, the *Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2004 - 2010* and the *Sligo County Development Plan 2005-2011*.

Currently, there are a total of 694 persons on the waiting list of Sligo County Council and a further 958 on the waiting list of Sligo Borough Council.

#### 4.1 Current Local Authority Housing Stock

The Social and Affordable Housing Action Plan 2004-2008 provides a comprehensive analysis of the current local authority housing stock in both Sligo Borough Council and Sligo County Council.

A summary of the key findings of that report is provided hereunder.

There are a total of 1658 local authority units currently in the County, with 741 of these in the County Council area and a further 917 in the Borough (refer to Table 16). A third of all units in the County are one-off dwellings; the corresponding number for the Borough is just 4%.

**Table 16: Summary of Housing Stock in Sligo County and Borough.**

<b>Local Authority Housing Stock</b>	<b>Sligo County Council</b>	<b>Sligo Borough Council</b>
No. of houses in estates	388	585
No. of flats/apartments	0	76
No. of one-off dwellings	245	37
No. of dwellings specifically designed for:		
- Elderly	67	209
- Homeless	0	0
- Persons with Disabilities	30	2
Traveller Specific Accommodation – units of permanent accommodation.	11	8
<b>Total Local Authority Housing Stock</b>	<b>741</b>	<b>917</b>

#### 4.2 Vacancies and Stock Utilisation

Where the local authority has prior notice of a house becoming vacant and the property is in a suitable condition, the average re-letting time is approximately 4-6 weeks. In circumstances where the property needs repairs, the re-letting could take a number of months while the renovations are being carried out. The main reasons for the delay in re-letting houses include: damage through anti-social behaviour in the interim period of a house being vacated and re-allocated; the nature of repairs; tenant delays in returning keys and signing voluntary surrender forms; and delays in clearing a dwelling and returning the keys on the part of relatives of a deceased former tenant

**Table 17: Vacancies in Council housing stock**

<b>Vacancies in Council housing stock</b>	<b>proportion of vacancies due to major refurbishment</b> (% of total number of Council dwellings)	<b>proportion of vacancies due to minor refurbishment</b> (% of total number of Council dwellings)	<b>proportion of vacancies available for letting</b> (% of total number of Council dwellings)	<b>total proportion of vacancies</b> (% of total number of Council dwellings)	<b>Average time taken to re-let dwellings</b>
Sligo County Council	0.7%	0.8%	0.8%	<b>2.3%</b>	4-6 weeks
Sligo Borough Council	1.95%	2.3%	0%	<b>4.25%</b>	4-6 weeks
Voluntary and Co-operative Housing Sector	Nil	Nil	3%	<b>3%</b>	4 weeks

The Social and Affordable Housing Action Plan 2004-2008 identifies and proposes a number of measures to improve the re-let times. These measures include an application under the Housing Management Initiatives Grant Scheme for funding to be made available for the recruitment of a person to carry out a detailed survey of all the Borough Council's housing stock so that all non-emergency maintenance would be carried out in a planned and prioritised manner.

From the vacancy rates outlined above, it is evident that there is a higher incidence of dwellings that are empty in Sligo Borough Council and a higher percentage of empty dwellings that are unavailable for letting in the Borough than in the County. Overall, however, vacancy rates remain low.

### 4.3 Age Analysis

The age of the housing stock is one of the most important factors determining its condition and suitability for use.

#### 4.3.1 Condition of Housing Stock

A Condition Survey was undertaken as part of the Social and Affordable Housing Action Plan 2004-2008. This detailed survey covered approximately half of the County Council's housing stock of 636 houses. It indicates that approximately 68% of housing is in good repair, 24% is in fair repair and the remaining 8% is in poor condition. Sligo County Council has a planned maintenance programme (2002-2007) to address the poor condition of existing housing stock.

Smaller housing estates have managed to present a more positive image, with better amenities, estate management and housing conditions.

### 4.4 Provision of Local Authority Housing

The provision of local authority housing in Sligo has traditionally been funded through housing capital allocations made by the DoEHLG.

**Table 18: Categories of need as specified in Housing Lists of Sligo Local Authorities.**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Sligo County Council (SCC) Housing List</b>	<b>Sligo Borough Council (SBC) Housing List</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>SCC%</b>	<b>SBC%</b>
Homeless	16	45	61	2.31%	4.7%

Travellers	21	16*	37	3.02%	1.67%
Persons living in accommodation that is unfit or materially unsuitable	38	95	133	5.47%	9.92%
Persons living in overcrowded accommodation	26	103	129	3.74%	10.75%
Persons sharing accommodation involuntarily	37	35	72	5.33%	3.65%
Young persons leaving institutional care	0	3	3	0%	0.31%
Persons in need of accommodation on medical and compassionate grounds	165	60	225	23.77%	6.26%
Elderly persons	80	45	104	11.52%	4.70%
Disabled persons	2	13	15	0.28%	1.36%
Persons not able to meet the cost of accommodation or to obtain suitable alternative accommodation	309	543	816	44.52%	56.68%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>694</b>	<b>958</b>	<b>1,595</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

\* This figure relates to the actual number of Travellers who have applied for inclusion on the Housing List. However, it should be noted that the Assessment of Traveller Accommodation Needs, which was carried out during 2003, has revealed that this number will be significantly higher over the lifetime of the County Development Plan, possibly with an additional 50 families.

- Note that Sligo County Council currently has 25 housing applications on hand that have not been assessed or included in the above figures. The corresponding number for Sligo Borough Council stands at 10.

For all new housing schemes, the Councils will expect the following mix of house types and sizes:

One-Bedroom Dwellings:	minimum of 10% of the total number of units.
Two-Bedroom Dwellings:	minimum of 35% of the total number of units.
Three-Bedroom Dwellings:	minimum of 20% of the total number of units.
Four- Bedroom Dwellings:	maximum of 20% of the total number of units.
Five-Bedroom Dwellings:	maximum of 15% of the total number of units.

These percentages have been based on data provided in the 2002 Census on private households classified by composition and size. (See Table 19)

**Table 19: Private Households Classified by Size**

Number of Persons	%
1	24
2	27
3	17
4	16
5+	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: CSO, 2002

Note: The percentage of one-bedroom dwellings required by the Councils is lower than the percentage of one-person households, as many one-person households prefer an additional bedroom, to act as a study, store or guest room etc.

#### 4.4.1 Special Needs Housing

Table 19 outlines the households seeking accommodation from the Sligo local authorities and it includes those with special needs.

#### 4.4.2 Homeless

A total of 61 homeless persons are identified in need of social housing, with the most significant numbers being accounted for in Sligo Borough Council. This sector of the population tends to require one-bedroom units. The voluntary sector plays an important role in meeting the needs of this sector and Sligo Social Services have been the main service delivery agency to homeless people in Sligo. This organisation has built up a comprehensive network of services for the homeless.

The Sligo local authorities must be satisfied that persons presenting as homeless meet the criteria of homelessness as identified in Section 2 of the Housing Act, 1988, before consideration is given to providing emergency accommodation.

In the event of a person presenting as homeless, all personal circumstances are taken into account to assess the type of accommodation considered to be the most suitable for their needs, e.g., single persons may be referred to hostel accommodation, whilst families would be directed to Bed & Breakfast accommodation, with a view to accessing private rented accommodation. In instances where a suitable local authority house is vacant, a homeless family may be offered a tenancy on an emergency basis. In exceptional circumstances, where hostel accommodation is considered the most suitable, the services of Sligo Social Services Ltd. are utilised by the Council and hostel accommodation in Sligo Borough is provided. This system has proved successful in the past and it has not been considered necessary to provide hostel accommodation in the County area.

Sligo Social Services Ltd. acts as an agent for Sligo Borough Council when dealing with homelessness and has been the main service delivery agency in Sligo since its foundation in 1968. Other homeless accommodation providers in Sligo include the Finisklin Housing Association and the Health Service Executive. A list of the facilities provided in Sligo for the homeless is outlined in Table 20.

**Table 20: Accommodation facilities for the Homeless**

<b>Facility</b>	<b>No. of Beds</b>	<b>Caters for</b>
<b>Managed by Sligo Social Services</b> Maryville Ballytivnan Night Shelter McAuley House	10 10 12	Emergency accommodation for males, with one unit for female. Males over 18. 4 Family rooms.
<b>Managed by Finisklin Housing Association</b> Shalomar	17	Mainly indigenous males
<b>Managed by the Health Service Executive</b> Teach Trasna Lios na n-Óg Sligo Mental Health Association	4/5 5-bed. house Árus Na Gréine	Children's homes specialising in adolescence Young Adults 14 Young Adults

Experience shows that there is a need for transitional accommodation in the Sligo area, however, Sligo Social Services Ltd. have indicated that it is their intention to provide 12 units of such accommodation in 2005. It is anticipated that this facility will assist both Sligo Borough Council and Sligo County Council in the accommodation of homeless persons on a transitional basis. An additional provision of 5 new emergency accommodation units is planned for 2006.

The Homeless Action Plan 2002/2003 expired in December 2003 and is due for renewal. It is anticipated that measures will be put in place in the next number of months to prepare a new plan in consultation with the Sligo Homeless Forum, a group comprised of the local authorities, the Health Service Executive and voluntary bodies.

#### 4.4.3 People with Disabilities

Sligo local authorities have a number of units in their housing stock designed specifically for the elderly and disabled. As there are various types of disabilities, this gives rise to a range of housing needs. Access to public transport, local community services and facilities can significantly improve the quality of life for a mobility-impaired person. Sligo Borough Council recently constructed a new scheme of houses at Connaughton Road, designed primarily with the intention of housing the elderly and disabled, because of its close proximity to the town and the hospital.

All houses granted planning permission (including houses developed under the Part VIII provision of the Planning and Development Regulations) since January 2001, must comply with the Part M Building Regulations, the result of which is that all dwellings constructed since that date have to be wheelchair accessible and as such, are accessible for the disabled.

Sligo County Council provides a mix of houses in its estates, including one- and two-bedroom houses, which are normally of a bungalow type that can accommodate the elderly or be easily adapted to provide for the disabled. Some people with disabilities require live-in personal care assistant, a fact that should be considered when designing adapted housing units. Estates are generally designed based on need reflected on the Housing List for the area.

There appears to be excessive demand on facilities for those with special needs. Many are not capable of independent living and in many instances no follow-up care or home-help appears available. Some form of sheltered accommodation is required to cater for this group. The Health Service Executive, in conjunction with Cluid Housing Association and Sligo County Council, have recently provided a ten-bed group home catering for people with special needs in the Enniscrone area. In Easkey, Easkey Mental Health Association, in association with Sligo County Council, has provided a project comprising 12 houses and a Health Centre. It is proposed that future negotiations will take place with the Health Service Executive and Voluntary Bodies with a view to providing similar facilities in the Sligo Borough area and other parts of the County.

The Councils operate a Disabled Persons Grant for those who wish to remain in their homes and require essential works and/or repairs in order to do so. Both authorities fund the 1/3 contribution provided, but are finding it difficult to resource this scheme and will be dependent on the DoEHLG to fully fund these grants in the future.

**Table 21a: Number of Essential Repairs Grants**

<b>Essential Repairs Grants</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
Sligo County Council	50	50	50	50	50
Sligo Borough Council	5	10	10	10	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>60</b>

*Source: 'Social & Affordable Housing Action Plan 2004 – 2008', Sligo County Council & Sligo Borough Council*

**Table 21b: Number of Disabled Persons Grants**

<b>Disabled Persons Grants</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
Sligo County Council	95	85	85	80	80
Sligo Borough Council	40	40	40	40	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>120</b>

*Source: 'Social & Affordable Housing Action Plan 2004 – 2008', Sligo County Council & Sligo Borough Council*

#### 4.4.4 Elderly

Older people have specific housing needs that relate to access, medical care, security and personal safety. The changing demographic profile in Ireland means that there will be more elderly people per head of population than ever before. Therefore considerably more housing for older people will be required in the future. Such housing should be located close to convenience shops, community facilities and public transport.

There is an increased emphasis in recent years for the elderly to remain in their homes as opposed to moving in to Residential Care. As a result of this trend the demand for Essential Repairs Grants is on the increase. Again, the local authorities are finding it difficult to resource this scheme and will be dependent on the DoEHLG to fund these grants 100% in the future.

#### 4.4.5 Traveller Accommodation

The Sligo Local Authorities carried out an assessment of Traveller Accommodation Needs during 2003. Regretably, quite a large number of Traveller families failed to cooperate with the assessment, despite repeated efforts by housing personnel to encourage and facilitate them to do so. Therefore it has been necessary to estimate the needs of such persons based on previous correspondence and history files of the Social Worker.

Sligo Borough and County Councils have prepared a Traveller Accommodation Programme for the period 2005-2008 (see Table 22).

It has become apparent from the assessment of needs that the majority of Travellers are seeking either group housing or standard/single instance houses, hence the proposal not to provide any further indigenous halting sites in the County area. It should be noted that the group housing scheme proposals are based on the preferences of the Traveller families concerned and are dependent on suitable land being identified and acquired as the Council's land bank is exhausted in most of these areas.

**Table 22: Traveller accommodation within Sligo County Council & Sligo Borough Council**

Type of Accommodation to be Provided	No. of Units to be provided in 2005		No. of Units to be provided in 2006		No. of Units to be provided in 2007		No. of Units to be provided in 2008	
	SCC	SBC	SCC	SBC	SCC	SBC	SCC	SBC
<b>Permanent Halting Site</b>	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
<b>Group Housing Scheme</b>	Nil	8 <sup>7</sup>	1 <sup>8</sup>	Nil	Nil	8 <sup>9</sup>	1	6 <sup>10</sup>
<b>Standard LA Housing/ Specific Instance</b>	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	3
<b>Apartment Type Accommodation</b>	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	4
<b>Transient Halting Site</b>	6	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Refurb + 1	Nil	Nil
<b>Indigenous Halting Site</b>	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Refurb.
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Refurb+ 12</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Refurb+ 13</b>
<b>SUBTOTAL:</b>	<b>19</b>		<b>6</b>		<b>Refurb +14</b>		<b>Refurb +16</b>	

#### 4.4.6 Asylum Seekers

The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform indicate that their current policy on housing asylum seekers in direct provision accommodation in hotels, hostels and apartment complexes will continue in the short term. The Department has no future alternative plans for housing asylum applicants. The Council currently provides two units (both B&Bs) for asylum seekers, based in Sligo and Tobercurry.

There are indications that out of all the applications made for refugee status, approximately 20% have a reasonable prospect of success. The Sligo Local Authorities will work with the Health Service Executive to develop a strategy for appropriate long term housing solutions for refugees and will consider the option of allowing certain categories of applicants to move out of direct provision and into private rented housing.

#### 4.4.7 Student Accommodation

Sligo Institute of Technology (Sligo IT) and St. Angela's College both serve Sligo City. The former is situated in the Borough, while the latter is situated in the County. Sligo IT caters for in excess of 3,000 students, with the campus having the capacity to serve 4,500 students by 2006.

<sup>7</sup> Finisklin

<sup>8</sup> Ballinacarrow (unit proposed for 2008 to be provided subject to need)

<sup>9</sup> Bundoran Road/Rathbraughan Area (subject to suitable site being identified)

<sup>10</sup> Maugheraboy

There are plans for further expansion with an overall aim to reach university status in 5-10 years and the potential to serve up to 6,500 students. Such developments will increase the pressure for student accommodation in the City and Environs, and ancillary services and facilities.

St. Angela's college currently serves approximately 700 students and is developing other educational programmes too. Although it has accommodation for its first year students, the vast majority of other students reside in the City and Environs and this also has implications on the provision of student accommodation.

Up until recently, most student accommodation was in the form of privately rented houses, the quality of which varied greatly and some of which were poorly maintained. Much of this accommodation was in housing estates north of Sligo City, in close proximity to the Sligo IT. In recent years there has been a very significant provision of student apartment complexes and townhouses, with approximately 2,000 beds being provided. Many of these units provide free Internet access. This student accommodation has been constructed with Section 50 tax incentives. The development of purpose-built student accommodation has freed up a lot of housing stock and this has paved the way for first-time buyers to enter the market. Sligo planning authorities will continue to encourage and facilitate such developments subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

#### **4.5 The Role of the Voluntary and Community Sector**

Voluntary activity in Ireland is increasingly becoming a strong feature in the delivery of social services. Generally, voluntary housing associations are formed to relieve a local housing need. Many are formed by established caring/voluntary associations who provide services to vulnerable groups such as the elderly or people with disabilities. A marked feature of the voluntary housing sector is that many associations also offer non-housing and related services such as group meals, social activities and welfare advice.

Sligo Borough and County Councils actively promote the involvement of voluntary housing associations in the provision of social housing in their functional areas. They are committed to the continued promotion and development of this sector. Voluntary housing accommodation has been provided to date in both areas by the following bodies:

- Respond! Housing Association
- Cluid Housing Association
- Claddagh Housing Association
- Sligo Social Services Ltd.
- Finisklin Housing Association
- A & M Housing Association
- Banada and Tourlestrane Housing Association
- Kilglass Housing Association
- Nazareth Housing Association
- Culfadda Housing Association.

The Councils also correspond with the voluntary housing association umbrella group, the Irish Council for Social Housing, regarding proposals for voluntary housing in Sligo.

The Capital Loan and Rental Subsidy Scheme (1991), which is financed by the Housing Finance Agency, provides funding through the local authorities for housing associations to provide housing, particularly to meet the needs of low-income families. Both of these schemes are aided by the low costs site scheme administered by local authorities.

Within the County, a scheme of 40 units has been recently completed in Enniscrone and a further 10 are being facilitated by the Council in Culfadda. A further 69 residential units are planned for Strandhill (52 units) and Gurteen (17 units) through the voluntary housing associations. Sligo Borough Council estimates that a total of 80 units of accommodation will be provided under the Capital Assistance and Loan Scheme for the period 2005-8.

**Table 23: Voluntary & Co-operative Housing Sector Housing Stock**

	<b>Sligo County Council</b>	<b>Sligo Borough Council</b>
Number of houses in estates	119	134
Number of flats/apartments	0	19
Number of one-off dwellings	0	0
Number of dwellings specifically designed for		
- Elderly	48 (included above)	0
- Homeless	0	60
- People with disabilities	12 (included above)	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>213</b>

*Source: 'Social & Affordable Housing Action Plan 2004 – 2008', Sligo County Council & Sligo Borough Council*

Discussions are ongoing in both authorities with voluntary housing associations in relation to future proposals. While no figures are available for the likely provision of additional voluntary housing over the period of the Housing Strategy, the Council will continue to support any viable proposition put forward from the voluntary sector in areas where a demand for social housing exists. The Councils, and indeed the voluntary housing associations, see an enhanced partnership between private developers and the voluntary sector where there are requirements for social and affordable housing in private schemes. Cluid Housing Association, in particular, has expressed an interest in actively contributing to the provision of social and affordable housing under Part V within the settlements of Strandhill, Tobercurry, Ballymote, Ballysadare and Collooney. Furthermore, they expressed an interest in playing a part in the regeneration of City-centre housing.

#### **4.6 Affordable Housing**

Due to the significant increase in the cost of houses over the past number of years, many people looking to purchase a property are unable to raise a sufficient mortgage to purchase a property outright. In this regard, purchasing a house under a Shared Ownership Scheme is becoming a popular choice for those looking to access the property market. It is seen as the first step on the housing ladder and in most cases successful applicants redeem the Council's equity as soon as their affordability allows them as the Council's Equity increases annually in line with inflation.

The main instrument of the present affordability scheme is that it subsidises the cost of the land, not the cost of the building, the effect being to bring cheaper houses to the market for qualifying individuals. The current trend represents a wider expression of interest from those who would not qualify for social housing, but who are unable to access affordable property in the private sector.

It is estimated that approximately 2,522 households are likely to experience affordability problems over the period of the Housing Strategy.

In regard to applying for permission to develop, the appropriate Council will assess each application individually, and on the basis of this, enter into an agreement under 96(3)(a) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 for the provision of social and affordable housing.

## 5.0 SUMMARY AND POLICY CONCLUSIONS

The principal conclusions that have been extracted from the Housing Strategy analysis are outlined in Table 24.

**Table 24: Overview of Key Provisions of the Housing Strategy**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Demand for Housing</b>								
Projected Household Formations	<b>5,672</b>	699	705	751	799	850	905	963
Total Households with Affordability Problems	<b>2,522</b>	253	326	370	372	374	409	418
<b>Distribution of Housing Supply</b>								
Private Sector	<b>3671</b>	414	388	438	507	584	644	696
Houses provided under Part V	<b>404</b>	53	49	57	55	59	63	68
Local Authority Housing Programme (1)	<b>1218</b>	167	175	185	174	178	169	170
Voluntary and Community Sector	<b>279</b>	65	93	21	13	29	29	29
Sustaining Progress Affordable Housing initiative	<b>100</b>	0	0	50	50	0	0	0
<b>Total Supply</b>	<b>5672</b>	<b>699</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>751</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>905</b>	<b>963</b>

*Source: Social & Affordable Housing Action Plan 2004 – 2008, Sligo Borough and County Council with NBA estimates for the remaining years.*

The key elements of the Housing Strategy can be summarised as follows:

- The total estimated demand for housing between 2005 – 2011 is 5,672 units and it is estimated that 44% of households (2,522) will meet eligibility criteria for affordability as defined in section 93(1) in the Act, which has been based on the Gradual Growth Model.
- In relation to the supply of housing, 404 house units will be provided under the terms of Part V of the Act. This leaves a shortfall of 2,118 households over the period as a whole whose upper income limit will be sufficient to purchase a house. The housing needs of this lower income grouping have typically been met in the past by the local authority social housing programme, and to a more limited extent by the community and voluntary sector. Over the lifetime of the plan it is estimated that the local authorities housing programmes will provide approximately 1,218 units. The combined housing list of the local authorities at present is 1,239<sup>11</sup>. If we add to this the 2,118 additional households whose affordability problems will not be addressed under Part V, we estimate a total demand for social and affordable housing (above that expected to be provided under Part V) of 3,357 units.

Table 25a illustrates the pattern of housing supply related to anticipated demand trends. The key implication of this analysis is that the local authorities can expect their combined waiting list to increase from a current 1,239 cases (has been reduced by 25% see footnote above) to an

<sup>11</sup> It is currently estimated that the duplication between those on the housing lists of both the Borough and County Councils (and/or other neighbouring Councils) and other duplications from partners living together, is in the order of 25-30%. This matter is to be addressed in 2005 under revised assessment criteria. In the meantime, the housing lists of the Borough and County have each been reduced by 25% to address this issue in the context of this Housing Strategy. Moving forward through the period of the Housing Strategy, it is estimated that affordability difficulties will be reduced for 25% of all households through shared mortgages between double income households.

estimated 1,804 cases over the period of the strategy. A critical assumption in making this estimate is that the targets of the current housing programme will be met.

**Table 25a: Analysis of Social & Affordable housing supply and demand 2004 – 2011**

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Open Waiting List	1,652							
Waiting List with account taken for Duplication <sup>7</sup>	<b>1,239</b>	<b>1,283</b>	<b>1,251</b>	<b>1,260</b>	<b>1,317</b>	<b>1,397</b>	<b>1,505</b>	<b>1,653</b>
Households with Affordability problems	260	253	326	370	372	374	409	418
Provision under Part V	6	53	49	57	55	59	63	68
Provision under Local Authority Programme	201	167	175	185	174	178	169	170
Provision under Voluntary Sector	9	65	93	21	13	29	29	29
Sustaining Progress Affordable Housing initiative	0	0	0	50	50	0	0	0
Closing Waiting List	<b>1,283</b>	<b>1,251</b>	<b>1,260</b>	<b>1,317</b>	<b>1,397</b>	<b>1,505</b>	<b>1,653</b>	<b>1,804</b>

Source: *Social & Affordable Housing Action Plan 2004 – 2008, Sligo Borough and County Council with NBA estimates for the remaining years.*

The following tables 25b and 25c analyse the social and affordable housing supply and demand of Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council respectively.

**Table 25b: Analysis of Social & Affordable housing supply and demand 2004 – 2011, Sligo County Council**

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Open Waiting List	694							
Waiting List with account taken for Duplication	<b>520</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>596</b>	<b>659</b>	<b>717</b>	<b>774</b>
Households with Affordability problems *	138	133	171	170	175	172	181	185
Provision under Part V	0	10	8	12	10	10	20	20
Provision under Local Authority Programme	127	106	88	97	99	90	90	90
Provision under Voluntary Sector	3	55	27	3	3	14	14	14
Closing Waiting List	<b>528</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>596</b>	<b>659</b>	<b>717</b>	<b>774</b>	<b>835</b>

\*Note: There is a very significant area of undeveloped zoned land within the Borough, therefore a split of 80% of new households in the Borough is assumed with 20% falling within the Environs.

**Table 25c: Analysis of Social & Affordable housing supply and demand 2004 – 2011, Sligo Borough Council**

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Open Waiting List	958							
Waiting List with account taken for Duplication	<b>719</b>	<b>755</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>722</b>	<b>721</b>	<b>738</b>	<b>788</b>	<b>879</b>
Households with Affordability problems*	122	120	155	200	197	202	228	233
Provision under Part V	6	43	41	45	45	49	43	48
Provision under Local Authority Programme	74	61	87	88	75	88	79	80
Provision under Voluntary Sector	6	10	66	18	10	15	15	15
Sustaining Progress Affordable Housing initiative	0	0	0	50	50	0	0	0
Closing Waiting List	<b>755</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>722</b>	<b>721</b>	<b>738</b>	<b>788</b>	<b>879</b>	<b>969</b>

\*Note: There is a very significant area of undeveloped zoned land within the Borough, therefore a split of 80% of new households in the Borough is assumed with 20% falling within the Environs.

The waiting lists of both constituents, Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council, are estimated to increase over the development plan period by 38% and 26% respectively. The higher waiting list in the County Council area may be largely due to a lack of previously zoned land within this area, thereby restricting the use of Part V.

The *Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2004 – 2010* and the *County Development Plan 2005 – 2011* incorporate policies and objectives, which complement this strategy namely objectives for:

- the adequate supply of social and affordable housing;
- ensuring a suitable mix of housing types and sizes;
- ensuring adequate serviced land is zoned for residential development throughout the City and County; and
- identifying Traveller accommodation needs.

Specific housing policies and objectives relating to the settlements of Strandhill and Enniscrone are available in their respective Local Area Plans.

Some of the most significant changes in the provision of housing are the involvement of voluntary organisations and Part V agreements, as well as Public-Private Partnerships. In view of this, it is anticipated that the majority of local authority housing in future years will be derived from the voluntary and private sector.



## **APPENDICES**



# Sligo Population Projections 2003-2011

- A. National population figures 2003-2011
- B. Regional population figures 2003-2011
- C. Sligo population figures 2003-2011
- D. Borough and county population growth 2003-2011

Tables 1 to 8 are located at the end of this Appendix

This forecast is not based on the cohort-component method, which consists of projecting natural population change and migration for the study area. One of the reasons for not employing this popular method is the unavailability, at the time of writing, of Census 2002 migration data.

On the other hand, it appears that, at county level, ‘simple share extrapolation techniques perform well compared with the more elaborate cohort component model that is widely used for national projections’ (*Evaluating Methods for Short to Medium Term County Population Forecasting*, Working Paper No. 143, Edgar Morgenroth, Economic and Social Research Institute, 2002).

The method used for this forecast is exponential extrapolation of the growth in population shares. The method was applied first in relation to the Border Region’s share change in the national context and subsequently to County Sligo’s share change within the Border Region.

A national population forecast based on Census 2002 data being unavailable, it was necessary to produce an adjusted national population forecast using existing published projections.

The following publications were consulted:

1. *Regional Population Projections 2001-2031*, Central Statistics Office – June 2001
2. *Population, Labour Force and Housing Demand Projections – the National Spatial Strategy, Final Report*, prepared by Jonathan Blackwell and Associates in association with Roger Tym & Partners – October 2001
3. *Census 2002, Volume 1, Population Classified by Area*, Central Statistics Office – July 2003

## **A. National population figures 2003-2011**

### **CSO regional population projections**

The *Regional Population Projections 2001-2031*, published by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) in June 2001, includes six different regional population scenarios, resulted from the application of various fertility (F1, F2, F3) and migration (M1, M2) assumptions.

For example, scenario **M1F1** involves the following assumptions:

- immigration continuing but diminishing from +20,000 per annum in 1996-2001 to +5,000 per annum in 2011-2031
- total fertility rate (TFR) increases from 1.93 (its 1998 level) to 2.0 by 2001 and remains constant thereafter.

Scenario **M1F2** involves the assumptions:

- immigration continuing but diminishing (as above)
- total fertility rate (TFR) remains constant at 1.93 until 2001, decreases to 1.75 by 2011 and remains constant thereafter.

The CSO stressed that these projections were particularly sensitive to assumptions concerning migration, were based on a continuation of demographic trends and took no account of the likely impact of future specific policies, such as the National Spatial Strategy.

A comparison of the CSO regional projections for 2002 and the population figures recorded in the 2002 Census indicates that the CSO projections consistently under-predicted. At national level, the highest CSO projection (scenario M1F1) was 1.14% lower than the actual population figure. At regional level, the same scenario under-predicted by as much as 7.4% (Midlands Region population). The CSO highest projection for the Border Region (scenario M1F1) was 3% lower than the actual enumerated population.

### **NSS population projections**

Figures resulting from three of the five models presented in the *Population, Labour Force and Housing Demand Projections* prepared for the National Spatial Strategy (Blackwell, Tym et al., October 2001) were compared with population figures recorded in the Census 2002.

The three models considered are:

- a) **CTS1**, Current Trends Scenario 1 – adaptation of CSO M1F1 assumptions
- b) **EGS1**, Economic Growth Scenario 1 – as for (a) above, adjusted based on growth of existing shares of employment
- c) **EGS2(1)**, Economic Growth Scenario 2 (Option 1) – as for (a) above, but with a high proportion of basic sector jobs redirected away from Dublin and the Mid-East.

Among the NSS models considered, **EGS2(1)** was the best approximation of 2002 population, with error margins between -3% (Midland Region population) and +2%

(Midwest population). It was the most accurate predictor for five of the eight regions and also the closest projection of national population, with a projected figure only 0.3% higher than the enumerated population .

**Table 1** shows how the examined projections compare with Census 2002 population figures. Given that both the CSO and the NSS reports published only figures for five-year intervals, the figures for 2002, shown in **Table 1**, were obtained using annual growth rates calculated through exponential interpolation.

**Table 1. Comparison of Census 2002 recorded population figures with CSO and NSS projections interpolated for 2002** (all tables are located at the end of this document)

## **Selected model for national population growth**

Given its good performance, the NSS EGS2(1) model was selected for the national population projection. The model provides population figures at five-year intervals for the period 2000-2030. The figures for 2005 and 2010 were adjusted by 0.997, which is the ratio of the NSS projection to the actual population for 2002. The figures for intermediate years and for 2011 were obtained using annual growth rates calculated through exponential interpolation. The corresponding population for each year from 2003 to 2011 is shown in **Table 2**.

**Table 2. National population projection 2003-2011 based on adjusted NSS EGS2(1) figures**

## **B. Regional population figures 2003-2011**

A brief examination of regional population figures recorded by censuses between 1971 and 2002 reveals a clear trend of regional population share change. While the share of Dublin Region in the national population was practically the same in 2002 as in 1971, at 28.6%, almost all other regions have experienced constant decrease in their population shares.

Despite growing from 360,790 to 432,534 population, between 1971 and 2002, the Border Region, which includes County Sligo, has lost over 1% of its share, falling from 12% in 1971 to 11.04% in 2002. This is equivalent to an annual share loss of 0.299%. The Border has been losing circa 0.2% of its population share, per year, during each of the intercensal periods 1986-1991, 1991-1996 and 1996-2002.

Similarly to the Border Region, the West's share fell from 10.28% to 9.71% of the national population. However, the rate of share loss in the West has considerably slowed down, from minus 0.560% (1971-1981) to minus 0.015% (1996-2002). The Midlands, Mid-West and South-East lost less than 0.4% of their respective population shares during the 31 years. Between 1996 and 2002, the Midlands' share experienced a slight increase, while the shares of the South-East and the West remained approximately the same.

The Mid-East, consisting of the 'commuter belt' counties Kildare, Meath and Wicklow, gained 3.48% in population share between 1971 and 2002, while its population almost doubled from 210,001 in 1971 to 412,625 in 2002. An illustration of regional population shares' evolution is provided in **Table 3**.

**Table 3. Regional population shares in census years between 1971 and 2002 (% of national population)**

## **Selected models for regional population shares change 2003-2011**

It is hoped that the National Spatial Strategy, implemented mainly through the National Development Plan, will be able to stop and reverse the trend that sees the wider Border-Midlands-West (BMW) Region losing population to Dublin's still-expanding hinterland. However, this process might be delayed. It is possible that the Border Region's population share will continue to decline up to 2011, i.e. until the County Development Plan is due for review again.

Nevertheless, the National Spatial Strategy placed three new gateways in the Border Region. As such, it seems reasonable to assume that increasing job creation in Dundalk, Sligo and Letterkenny may help stop the loss of population share of the Border Region.

Three simple scenarios were considered in relation to the Border Region's population change between 2003 and 2011:

- **BL** (Border loses) assumes continuation of the current trend: every year, the Border Region will lose 0.299% of its 2002 share of the national population.
- **BC** (Border stays constant) assumes that the Border Region will be able to maintain its 2002 share in the national population, i.e. 11.04%, until 2011.
- **BG** (Border gains) assumes that the current trend is reversed: the Border Region's population share will grow by 0.299% per year until 2011.

Although scenario **BC** seems more probable in the short-term economic perspective as seen from the end of 2003, scenario **BG** is considered adequate for the purpose of the County Development Plan, as it would be consistent with stated policies of the government.

The underlying assumption is that the implementation of the National Spatial Strategy will begin without delay and the effects will become noticeable at an early stage during the life of the County Development Plan.

The Border Region's population evolution from 2003 to 2011, corresponding to each of the scenarios outlined above, is illustrated in **Table 4**.

**Table 4. Border Region population corresponding to three population share change scenarios 2003-2011**

## **C. Sligo population figures 2003-2011**

Within the Border Region, County Louth stands out by having grown from 20.77% (in 1971) to 23.54% (in 2002) of the region's population. Donegal's share has also grown from 30.03% to 31.81%, while the other counties, including Sligo, lost population share.

Between 1971 and 2002, Sligo's demographic growth has been very slow, occasionally negative. The county's population actually fell from 1986 to 1991, but after 1991 this trend was reversed.

Sligo's share in the region's population fell from 13.93% in 1971 to 13.46% in 2002, which is the equivalent of an annual share reduction of 0.113%.

The evolution of Border counties' shares of regional population between 1971 and 2002 is shown in **Table 5**.

**Table 5. Border counties' shares of regional population in census years between 1971 and 2002 (% of the Border Region's population)**

As a consequence of gateway status being awarded to Dundalk, Sligo and Letterkenny, under the National Spatial Strategy, it is reasonable to expect that counties Louth, Sligo and Donegal will increase their shares in the regional population to the detriment of counties Leitrim, Cavan and Monaghan.

On the other hand, the more favourable location of Dundalk in the Dublin-Belfast corridor could contribute to a rate of population growth in Louth superior to those of Sligo and Donegal. These counties would be able to increase or maintain their 2002 population shares, again, only to the detriment of Leitrim, Cavan and Monaghan.

It would take a radical change in national policies, followed by significant population movement, for county Sligo to grow faster than all or most other Border counties. It is assumed that the National Spatial Strategy, if fully implemented, would be capable of effecting such change.

Five scenarios were considered in relation to County Sligo's population share growth:

- **SL** (Sligo loses) assumes continuation of the current trend: Sligo will lose 0.113% of its share in the regional population every year from 2003 to 2011.
- **SC** (Sligo stays constant) assumes that the county is able to maintain its 2002 share of regional population, which is 13.46%.
- **SG** (Sligo gains) assumes that the current trend is reversed and the county increases its share of regional population by 0.113% per year from 2003 to 2011.
- **SGG** (Sligo – gradual growth) assumes that Sligo's share remains constant at 13.46% until 2004; it grows by 0.15% per year in 2005 and 2006; it grows by 0.20% per year in 2007 and 2008; it grows by 0.30% in 2009 and 2010; and it grows by 0.40% per year in 2011.
- **SFG** (Sligo- faster growth) assumes that Sligo's share grows by 0.15% per year in 2003 and 2004; it grows by 0.20% per year in 2005 and 2006; it grows by 0.30% per year in 2007 and 2008; it grows by 0.40% per year from 2009 to 2011.

Of the scenarios outlined above, **SL** corresponds to the 'worst case', while **SC** can be considered conservative. Scenario **SG** assume a modest growth. Scenarios **SGG** and **SFG** represent the optimistic prospect: Sligo's new designation as a gateway, backed by public and private investment, significantly increases the county's attractiveness as a place to live and work.

### **Selected models for County Sligo's population share change 2003-2011**

Four combinations of national/regional share change were considered representative for particular economic development scenarios that may affect population growth in County Sligo. These models are outlined below.

- **BL-SL**, or the Conservative projection, involves extrapolation of current trends: the Border Region and County Sligo continue to lose share in the national, respectively regional population.
- **BC-SC**, or the Moderate Growth projection, assumes that both the Border Region and County Sligo maintain their 2002 respective population shares.
- **BC-SGG**, or the Gradual Growth projection, assumes that the Border's share remains at its 2002 level, while County Sligo's share stops falling and begins to increase gradually.
- **BG-SFG**, or the Faster Growth projection, involves share growth for both the Border Region and County Sligo at higher rates than above.

The county population figures corresponding to the above four models are shown in **Table 6**.

**Table 6. Sligo population corresponding to four population share change scenarios 2003-2011**

The assumption on which the 'conservative' and the 'moderate growth' projections are based is that there will be no effective policy changes at national level in the short to medium term. As a consequence, Sligo town will not grow enough to attain the required critical mass that would make it a true gateway. The other urban and rural settlements in County Sligo will continue to decline or, at best, will maintain their existing levels of population and economic activity.

The Gradual Growth and the Faster Growth models are based on the assumption that the National Spatial Strategy will be given effect, primarily through the National Development Plans 2000-2006 and 2007-2012. The different sets of growth rates used in these projections are meant to reflect the government's commitment to tackling Sligo's infrastructural constraint.

*The Mid-Term Evaluation of the National Development Plan and Community Support Framework for Ireland, 2000-2006*, prepared by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) and published in October 2003, recommends significant reallocation of funding to underpin the National Spatial Strategy, which was published after the NDP began in 2000.

Increased expenditure is recommended in areas such as national roads, local infrastructure (including non-national roads), public transport, social housing and environmental infrastructure. Funding should be redirected and concentrated to enhance access to the regional gateways. Key infrastructure projects in NSS designated gateways should be funded on a competitive basis.

It is assumed that significant improvements in transport, waste, water, health and social infrastructure can invigorate Sligo's economy and lead to higher levels of employment and population growth.

The preferred scenarios to be used as a basis for the County Development Plan are, therefore, BC-SGG (gradual growth) and BG-SFG (faster growth). The corresponding projections indicate a 2011 population between 70,000 and 75,000 for the whole county.

## **D. Borough and County population growth 2003-2011**

Having defined the preferred population share growth scenarios, the next step is to distribute the resulting population between Sligo town and its Environs, and the rest of the county.

At present, the administrative boundaries of the borough no longer match the extent of the town. Sligo town has outgrown the borough's limits and expanded into the surrounding electoral divisions. This extended town area, known as Sligo & Environs, is the same territory as covered by the Sligo & Environs Development Plan 2003-2009. Unfortunately, census data are published only for borough wards, reduced environs and county electoral divisions (EDs), not for the larger Sligo & Environs area. In this report, 'Environs' (with capital E) signifies the lands covered by Sligo & Environs Development Plan 2003-2009, located between the borough boundary and the Plan limit.

In order to estimate the population of Sligo & Environs, it is assumed that half the population of the EDs that have a common boundary with the borough lives in the town's environs. The other half is considered part of the county's rural population. The five electoral districts adjacent to the borough are: Knockaree, Kilmacowen, Calry, Drumcliff East and Drumcliff West.

An examination of the borough and adjacent electoral divisions' population change between 1991 and 2002 shows that the respective EDs have increased their share by 1.7% (from 14.35% to 16.05%), while the borough's share in the county's population has been quite stable (31.6%-31.86%) over the same period. The equivalent annual rates of share change are 1.022% for the EDs, and 0.346% for the area incorporating the borough and adjacent EDs.

For each of the two preferred growth scenarios, specific patterns of population share change in the borough and adjacent EDs are described through different sets of share growth rates for the borough and adjacent electoral divisions.

- Under the Gradual Growth model, the Environs' population share is assumed to grow initially faster than that of the borough, as a consequence of housing development on the existing greenfield and infill sites.
  - The combined population share of the borough and adjacent EDs grows at 1% per year from 2003 to 2005 and at 2% per year thereafter.
  - The share of Environs (which are assumed to contain half the population of the adjacent EDs) in the county population grows at 1.5% per year from 2003 to 2005 and at 2% per year thereafter.
- The Faster Growth model involves a significantly higher growth rate in Sligo & Environs than outside, in the adjacent EDs. Such growth can be achieved through the redevelopment of brownfield sites (land previously used for other purposes, now obsolete). There is a considerable amount of brownfield land within the boundaries of Sligo & Environs, the best example being the port zone. Such areas can be redeveloped for mixed uses that would include medium- to high-density apartments. Consequently, higher densities of smaller housing units would prevail in the borough, while the Environs would provide for the construction of larger dwellings in lower-density schemes. Before the end of the County Development Plan's life, the area currently considered 'the Environs' of Sligo may be redefined,

possibly extended, as the Sligo & Environs Development Plan comes under review in 2009.

It is assumed that the beginning of the implementation of the NSS recommendations will lead to faster initial growth, which will plateau for a while and then fall slightly towards 2011.

Regarding the adjacent EDs, it is assumed that the overall population increase will be relatively low, as an effect of policies limiting one-off housing development within the scenic areas surrounding Sligo & Environs. The majority of new residential development, outside Sligo & Environs, would be concentrated in villages such as Strandhill, Rosses Point/Ballincar, Balintogher, Calry and Ballysadare.

- The combined population share of the borough and adjacent EDs grows at a rate of 2% in 2003; at 3% in 2004; at 4% per year from 2005 to 2006; at 3.5% per year from 2007 to 2008; and at 3% per year thereafter.
- The share of the Environs (which are assumed to contain half the population of the adjacent EDs) in the county population grows at 0.7% per year from 2003 to 2004; at 0.85% per year from 2005 to 2008; and at 1% per year thereafter.

The population corresponding to the area covered by the County Development Plan, outside the area of Sligo & Environs, is calculated by deducting the resulting population of Sligo & Environs from the totals projected for the whole county under the two selected scenarios. The outcomes of the two models are presented in **Table 7**.

The projections corresponding to the Conservative and Moderate Growth scenarios are presented in **Table 8**.

**Table 7. Sligo & Environs and remaining county population corresponding to the two preferred population growth scenarios 2003-2011**

**Table 8. Sligo & Environs and remaining county population corresponding to the Conservative and Moderate Growth scenarios 2003-2011**

**Table 1.** Comparison of Census 2002 recorded population figures with CSO and NSS projections interpolated for 2002

Region/Total	Census 2002		CSO - M1F1		CSO - M1F2		NSS - CTS1		NSS - EGS1		NSS - EGS2(1)	
	Recorded	Projected	Difference									
<b>Border</b>	432,534	419,658	-2.97%	419,045	-3.12%	414,553	-4.16%	418,293	-3.29%	423,016	-2.20%	
<b>Dublin</b>	1,122,821	1,185,557	+5.58%	1,183,294	+5.38%	1,145,590	+2.03%	1,173,516	+4.51%	1,135,034	+1.09%	
<b>Mid-East</b>	412,625	386,757	-6.27%	386,163	-6.41%	406,487	-1.49%	418,798	+1.50%	418,798	+1.50%	
<b>Midlands</b>	225,363	208,638	-7.42%	208,239	-7.6%	211,719	-6.05%	213,770	-5.14%	218,561	-3.01%	
<b>Mid-West</b>	339,591	334,266	-1.57%	333,657	-1.75%	335,463	-1.22%	337,359	-0.66%	346,546	+2.04%	
<b>South-East</b>	423,616	404,680	-4.47%	404,007	-4.63%	408,927	-3.47%	410,192	-3.17%	414,960	-2.04%	
<b>South-West</b>	580,356	566,779	-2.34%	565,851	-2.5%	564,566	-2.72%	576,266	-0.70%	586,179	+1.00%	
<b>West</b>	380,297	372,651	-2.01%	372,104	-2.15%	383,401	+0.82%	380,614	-0.08%	385,206	+1.29%	
<b>Total (national)</b>	3,917,203	3,879,235	-0.97%	3,872,610	-1.14%	3,871,245	-1.17%	3,930,259	+0.33%	3,929,239	+0.30%	

The percentages shown in **bold** for each region represent the smallest margin of error or difference between projected population and Census 2002 records. It is noted that both NSS Economic Growth Scenarios performed better than the other models. **NSS EGS2(1)** was the most accurate predictor of 2002 population at national level as well as for five out of the eight regions.

**Table 2.** National population projection 2003-2011 based on adjusted NSS EGS2(1) figures

	<b>2002 (Census)</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>National population</b>	<b>3,917,203</b>	3,989,879	4,063,904	<b>4,139,302</b>	4,207,381	4,276,579	4,346,916	4,418,410	4,491,080	<b>4,564,944</b>
<b>Life of the County Development Plan: May 2005 – May 2011</b>										

**Table 3.** Regional population shares in census years between 1971 and 2002 (% of national population)

Census year	<b>Border Region</b>	<b>Dublin Region</b>	<b>Mid-East Region</b>	<b>Midland Region</b>	<b>Mid-West Region</b>	<b>South-East Region</b>	<b>South-West Region</b>	<b>West Region</b>	<b>Total (national)</b>
<b>1971</b>	12.11	28.61	7.05	6.01	9.06	11.03	15.64	10.48	99.99
<b>1981</b>	11.67	29.13	8.33	5.87	8.95	10.88	15.25	9.91	99.99
<b>1986</b>	11.61	28.85	8.89	5.87	8.91	10.87	15.16	9.84	100
<b>1991</b>	11.43	29.08	9.23	5.76	8.81	10.87	15.10	9.73	100.01
<b>1996</b>	11.23	29.18	9.58	5.67	8.74	10.80	15.08	9.72	100
<b>2002</b>	11.04	28.66	10.53	5.75	8.67	10.81	14.82	9.71	99.99

**Table 4.** Border Region population corresponding to three population share change scenarios 2003-2011

Year	Border population corresponding to scenario BL	Border population corresponding to scenario BC	Border population corresponding to scenario BG
<b>2002</b>	<b>432,534</b>	<b>432,534</b>	<b>432,534</b>
<b>2003</b>	439,244	440,559	441,874
<b>2004</b>	446,057	448,733	451,416
<b>2005</b>	452,977	457,058	461,163
<b>2006</b>	459,053	464,575	470,147
<b>2007</b>	465,210	472,216	479,306
<b>2008</b>	471,450	479,983	488,644
<b>2009</b>	477,773	487,877	498,163
<b>2010</b>	484,181	495,901	507,868
<b>2011</b>	490,675	504,057	517,762

Shown in **bold**: the population of the Border Region recorded in the 2002 Census.

Shaded background: life of the County Development Plan, May 2005 to May 2011.

**Table 5.** Border counties' shares of regional population in census years between 1971 and 2002  
(% of the Border Region's population)

Census Year	Sligo's share of Border population (%)	Cavan's share of Border population (%)	Donegal's share of Border population (%)	Leitrim's share of Border population (%)	Louth's share of Border population (%)	Monaghan's share of Border population (%)	Total Border (%)
<b>1971</b>	13.93	14.58	30.03	7.86	20.77	12.82	100
<b>1981</b>	13.81	13.40	31.14	6.87	22.03	12.74	100
<b>1986</b>	13.64	13.13	31.56	6.58	22.34	12.75	100
<b>1991</b>	13.59	13.10	31.79	6.28	22.51	12.73	100
<b>1996</b>	13.71	13.00	31.92	6.15	22.63	12.60	100
<b>2002</b>	13.46	13.07	31.81	5.96	23.54	12.16	100

**Table 6.** Sligo population corresponding to four population share change scenarios 2003-2011

Year	Sligo population corresponding to scenario <b>BL-SL</b>	Sligo population corresponding to scenario <b>BC-SC</b>	Sligo population corresponding to scenario <b>BC-SGG</b>	Sligo population corresponding to scenario <b>BG-SFG</b>
<b>2002</b>	<b>58,200</b>	<b>58,200</b>	<b>58,200</b>	<b>58,200</b>
<b>2003</b>	59,036	59,280	59,339	59,546
<b>2004</b>	59,884	60,380	60,561	61,014
<b>2005</b>	60,745	61,500	61,870	62,612
<b>2006</b>	61,490	62,511	63,139	64,215
<b>2007</b>	62,244	63,539	64,498	65,957
<b>2008</b>	63,008	64,584	65,952	67,914
<b>2009</b>	63,781	65,647	67,506	70,137
<b>2010</b>	64,564	66,726	69,165	72,684
<b>2011</b>	65,356	67,824	70,936	75,619

Shown in **bold**: the population of Sligo County and Borough recorded in the 2002 Census.

Shaded background: life of the County Development Plan, May 2005 to May 2011.

**Table 7.** Sligo & Environs and remaining county population corresponding to the two preferred population growth scenarios 2003-2011

Year	Gradual Growth Model			Faster Growth Model		
	Sligo population corresponding to scenario <b>BC-SGG</b>			Sligo population corresponding to scenario <b>BG-SFG</b>		
	County population	Sligo & Environs population	Rest of county population	County population	Sligo & Environs population	Rest of county population
<b>2002</b>	<b>58,200</b>	23,108	35,092	<b>58,200</b>	23,108	35,092
<b>2003</b>	59,339	23,772	35,567	59,546	24,177	35,369
<b>2004</b>	60,561	24,479	36,082	61,014	25,630	35,384
<b>2005</b>	61,870	25,233	36,637	62,612	27,514	35,098
<b>2006</b>	63,139	26,265	36,873	64,215	29,513	34,702
<b>2007</b>	64,498	27,367	37,131	65,957	31,519	34,438
<b>2008</b>	65,952	28,544	37,408	67,914	33,741	34,174
<b>2009</b>	67,506	29,801	37,705	70,137	36,009	34,129
<b>2010</b>	69,165	31,144	38,021	72,684	38,559	34,125
<b>2011</b>	70,936	32,580	38,356	75,619	41,449	34,169

Shown in **bold**: the population of Sligo (County and Borough) recorded in the 2002 Census.  
 Shaded background: life of the County Development Plan, May 2005 to May 2011.

**Table 8.** Sligo & Environs and remaining county population corresponding to the Conservative and Moderate Growth scenarios 2003-2011

Year	Conservative Growth Model			Moderate Growth Model		
	Sligo population corresponding to scenario <b>BL-SL</b>			Sligo population corresponding to scenario <b>BC-SC</b>		
	County population	Sligo & Environs population	Rest of county population	County population	Sligo & Environs population	Rest of county population
<b>2002</b>	<b>58,200</b>	23,108	35,092	<b>58,200</b>	23,108	35,092
<b>2003</b>	59,036	23,489	35,547	59,280	23,748	35,532
<b>2004</b>	59,884	23,876	36,009	60,380	24,406	35,974
<b>2005</b>	60,745	24,269	36,476	61,500	25,082	36,418
<b>2006</b>	61,490	24,617	36,873	62,511	25,723	36,788
<b>2007</b>	62,244	24,970	37,274	63,539	26,381	37,159
<b>2008</b>	63,008	25,328	37,680	64,584	27,055	37,530
<b>2009</b>	63,781	25,690	38,091	65,647	27,746	37,901
<b>2010</b>	64,564	26,058	38,506	66,726	28,454	38,272
<b>2011</b>	65,356	26,430	38,926	67,824	29,181	38,643

Shown in **bold**: the population of Sligo County recorded in the 2002 Census.

Shaded background: life of the County Development Plan, May 2005 to May 2011.



## **Sligo Household Projections 2003-2011**

- A. Average household size in Europe and Ireland
- B. Average household size in Sligo's aggregate urban and rural areas
- C. Projecting the number of households
- D. Demand for residential land 2005-2011

Tables 9 to 12 are located at the end of the document

### **A. Average household size in Europe and Ireland**

According to Eurostat's *Yearbook 2003*, the average number of persons per private household in the European Union (EU) was 2.4 in 2001. Data compiled by Eurostat from national sources indicate that the EU average household size was 2.82 in 1980 and has been falling steadily since then.

With an average of three persons in 2001 (2.95 persons in 2002 according to census information), the Irish household was among the largest in the EU, matched only by the Spanish (3.0) and followed closely by the Portuguese households (2.9). The smallest average households were found in Sweden (2 persons), Finland and Germany (2.1 persons each).

The trend towards more and smaller households is a long-term one and is likely to continue. According to UN-Habitat projections, the average household size in Europe will be 2.19 persons by 2025. It is assumed that the average Irish household size will continue to fall, converging to the European average.

In Ireland, the larger households appear to be located predominantly in rural areas, but close to the big cities. The largest average household was recorded in the Fingal aggregate rural area – 3.29 persons, followed by Kildare rural area – 3.27 persons, and Meath rural area, with 3.26 persons per household. This is consistent with the 'commuter belt' pattern of development on the east coast.

At overall county level, the largest average households recorded by the 2002 census were in South Dublin (3.21 persons), Fingal (3.18 persons), Kildare (3.18 persons) and Meath (3.17 persons). The average number of persons per household in Dublin City was only 2.59.

## **B. Average household size in Sligo's aggregate urban and rural areas**

County Sligo has one of the smallest average households in the state, consisting of 2.84 persons. Neighbouring counties display similar or lower figures: Mayo – 2.87, Roscommon – 2.88, Leitrim 2.77. Donegal is an exception, with 3.02 persons per household on average.

Available information shows that in 1986, Sligo's average household size – 3.38 persons – was already lower than the state average, which was 3.54. However, over the sixteen-year period from 1986 to 2002, the equivalent yearly regress of the average household size has been slower in Sligo – at approximately 0.033 persons – than in Ireland as a whole, for which the average decrease was circa 0.038 persons per year.

The 2002 census provides separate sets of figures for the average number of persons in private households corresponding to aggregate town area (towns with a population over 1,500) and aggregate rural area (which includes towns with a population below 1,500). Given that in County Sligo there is no town with a population over 1,500, other than the Borough, the figure provided for aggregate town area applies exclusively to Sligo town.

The average household size in Sligo town, 2.68 persons per household, is lower than the corresponding figure for the larger urban centres, such as Galway (2.86 persons), Waterford and Cork (2.76 each), Limerick (2.71), but higher than the average household size in Dublin City (2.59 persons).

The average household size in the aggregate rural area of county Sligo is also among the lowest in the state, at 2.92 persons per household. The corresponding figures are 2.92 for county Roscommon, 2.93 for county Mayo and 3.06 for county Donegal. Among Sligo's neighbours, only Leitrim has a smaller average rural household – 2.79 persons.

## **C. Projecting the number of households**

For the intercensal period 1996-2002, linear interpolation of average household size values for urban and rural areas of County Sligo indicates a yearly fall of circa 0.045 persons. However, using the same pace of change for household projections would be misleading. Significant events, among which the introduction of divorce legislation, the building boom and increased immigration, might have accelerated the trend towards more and smaller households.

Calculated over a longer period, from 1986 to 2002, the fall from 3.38 to 2.84 persons per household in Sligo (borough and county) would give an annual equivalent decrease of circa 0.033 persons.

For the purpose of projecting household numbers, Sligo & Environs and the rural area of the county were considered separately, as their initial (2002) average household size was different. The following assumptions were made:

- The average 'urban' household size, corresponding to Sligo Borough, will also apply to Sligo & Environs. The average 'rural' household size applies to the rest of county Sligo.

- The trend of falling average household size will continue, although at a much slower pace, in Sligo & Environs, which will become more attractive for larger families.
- The trend of falling household size will accelerate in the rural areas of the county, as a consequence of levelling off of the differences between rural and urban life styles. The average ‘urban’ and ‘rural’ household sizes will converge.

### **Future household size in Sligo & Environs**

The average household size corresponding to county Sligo’s aggregate urban area, which was 2.68 in 2002, is applied to Sligo & Environs. It is assumed that the average household size decreases by 0.03 persons in 2003; by 0.02 in 2004; and by 0.01 persons per year thereafter, giving an average of 2.56 persons per household in 2011.

### **Future household size in the rest of the county**

The average household size corresponding to Sligo’s aggregate rural area, which was 2.92 in 2002, applies to the county population living outside Sligo & Environs. It is assumed that the average household size falls by 0.03 persons per year in 2003 and 2004 and by 0.04 persons per year thereafter, giving an average of 2.58 persons per household in 2011.

**Tables 9 to 12** show the projected number of households within Sligo & Environs and the rest of the county for each year between 2003 and 2011, under the four population scenarios. The annual increase in the number of households is also indicated in the tables.

**Table 9. Projected number of households in Sligo & Environs and remaining county area corresponding to the Conservative Growth Scenario (BL-SL), 2003-2011**

**Table 10. Projected number of households in Sligo & Environs and remaining county area corresponding to the Moderate Growth Scenario (BC-SC), 2003-2011**

**Table 11. Projected number of households in Sligo & Environs and remaining county area corresponding to the Gradual Growth Scenario (BC-SGG), 2003-2011**

**Table 12. Projected number of households in Sligo & Environs and remaining county area corresponding to the Faster Growth Scenario (BG-SFG), 2003-2011**

(all tables are located at the end of this Appendix)

## **D. Demand for residential land 2005-2011**

It is expected that, during the life of the County Development Plan (2005-2011), it will be necessary to accommodate between 1,246 and 6,446 new households within the Sligo & Environs area.

The change in the number of households in the rest of the county depends largely on the growth speed of Sligo & Environs. Under the Conservative Growth Scenario, 2,497 additional households would locate in the rural area of the county, while under the Moderate Growth and Gradual Growth Scenarios, the projections would be 2,400 and 2,250, respectively. These models involve higher population growth levels in the county core, i.e. Sligo & Environs and its immediate satellites, than in the outer rural

towns and villages. Under the Faster Growth Scenario, only 872 additional households would locate in the rural area.

Taking a minimum of 872 and a maximum of 2,497 additional households outside Sligo & Environs, and using an average gross residential density of 10 units per acre, or circa 25 units per hectare (consistent with local preferences), it is estimated that 35 to 100 hectares of land will be needed between 2005 and 2011 to cater for residential needs. Applying a coefficient of 2.5 to allow for location choice and possible non-release of zoned lands, the County Development Plan must identify between 88 and 250 hectares for residential use in the county area, outside Sligo & Environs.

The expected need for housing land within Sligo & Environs over the same period (calculated using an average density of 35 units per hectare) is between 90 and 460 hectares. This projected demand is adequately catered for by Sligo & Environs Development Plan, which zoned 458 hectares of land for residential development.

**Table 9.** Projected number of households in Sligo & Environs and remaining county area corresponding to the **Conservative Growth Scenario 2003-2011**

Year	Sligo & Environs					Rest of county Sligo				
	projected population	household size	number of households	additional households*	Projected population and number of households	projected population	household size	number of households	additional households*	Projected population and number of households
<b>2002 Census</b>	23,108	2.68	8,622	---	35,092	2.92	12,018	---		
<b>2003</b>	23,489	2.65	8,864	241	35,547	2.89	12,300	282		
<b>2004</b>	23,876	2.63	9,078	215	36,009	2.86	12,590	290		
<b>2005</b>	24,269	2.62	9,263	185	36,476	2.82	12,935	344		
<b>2006</b>	24,617	2.61	9,432	169	36,873	2.78	13,264	329		
<b>2007</b>	24,970	2.60	9,604	172	37,274	2.74	13,604	340		
<b>2008</b>	25,328	2.59	9,779	175	37,680	2.70	13,956	352		
<b>2009</b>	25,690	2.58	9,957	178	38,091	2.66	14,320	364		
<b>2010</b>	26,058	2.57	10,139	182	38,506	2.62	14,697	377		
<b>2011</b>	26,430	2.56	10,324	185	38,926	2.58	15,088	391		
	Total additional households 2003-2011				1,702	Total additional households 2003-2011				3,070
	Total additional households 2005-2011				<b>1,246</b>	Total additional households 2005-2011				<b>2,497</b>

\* **additional households** = increase in the number of households compared to the previous year

Shaded background: life of the County Development Plan, May 2005 to May 2011.

**Table 10.** Projected number of households in Sligo & Environs and remaining county area corresponding to the **Moderate Growth Scenario, 2003-2011**

Year	Sligo & Environs				Rest of county Sligo				
	Projected population and number of households				Projected population and number of households				
	projected population	household size	number of households	additional households*	projected population	household size	number of households	additional households*	
<b>2002 Census</b>	23,108	2.68	8,622	---	35,092	2.92	12,018	---	
<b>2003</b>	23,748	2.65	8,962	339	35,532	2.89	12,295	277	
<b>2004</b>	24,406	2.63	9,280	318	35,974	2.86	12,578	283	
<b>2005</b>	25,082	2.62	9,573	293	36,418	2.82	12,914	336	
<b>2006</b>	25,723	2.61	9,856	282	36,788	2.78	13,233	319	
<b>2007</b>	26,381	2.60	10,146	291	37,159	2.74	13,562	328	
<b>2008</b>	27,055	2.59	10,446	299	37,530	2.70	13,900	338	
<b>2009</b>	27,746	2.58	10,754	308	37,901	2.66	14,248	349	
<b>2010</b>	28,454	2.57	11,072	318	38,272	2.62	14,608	359	
<b>2011</b>	29,181	2.56	11,399	327	38,643	2.58	14,978	370	
Total additional households 2003-2011				2,777	Total additional households 2003-2011				2,960
Total additional households <b>2005-2011</b>				<b>2,119</b>	Total additional households <b>2005-2011</b>				<b>2,400</b>

\* **additional households** = increase in the number of households compared to the previous year

Shaded background: life of the County Development Plan, May 2005 to May 2011.

**Table 11.** Projected number of households in Sligo & Environs and remaining county area corresponding to the **Gradual Growth Scenario 2003-2011**

Year	Sligo & Environs				Rest of county Sligo			
	Projected population and number of households				Projected population and number of households			
	projected population	household size	number of households	additional households*	projected population	household size	number of households	additional households*
<b>2002 Census</b>	23,108	2.68	8,622	---	35,092	2.92	12,018	---
<b>2003</b>	23,772	2.65	8,970	348	35,567	2.89	12,307	289
<b>2004</b>	24,479	2.63	9,308	337	36,082	2.86	12,616	309
<b>2005</b>	25,233	2.62	9,631	323	36,637	2.82	12,992	376
<b>2006</b>	26,265	2.61	10,063	433	36,873	2.78	13,264	272
<b>2007</b>	27,367	2.60	10,526	463	37,131	2.74	13,551	288
<b>2008</b>	28,544	2.59	11,021	495	37,408	2.70	13,855	304
<b>2009</b>	29,801	2.58	11,551	530	37,705	2.66	14,175	320
<b>2010</b>	31,144	2.57	12,118	568	38,021	2.62	14,512	337
<b>2011</b>	32,580	2.56	12,727	608	38,356	2.58	14,866	355
	Total additional households 2003-2011				Total additional households 2003-2011			
	Total additional households <b>2005-2011</b>				Total additional households <b>2005-2011</b>			
	4,104				2,849			
	<b>3,419</b>				<b>2,252</b>			

\* **additional households** = increase in the number of households compared to the previous year

Shaded background: life of the County Development Plan, May 2005 to May 2011.

**Table 12.** Projected number of households in Sligo & Environs and remaining county area corresponding to the **Faster Growth Scenario 2003-2011**

Year	Sligo & Environs				Rest of county Sligo				
	projected population	household size	number of households	additional households*	projected population	household size	number of households	additional households*	
<b>2002 Census</b>	23,108	2.68	8,622	---	35,092	2.92	12,018	---	
<b>2003</b>	24,177	2.65	9,123	501	35,369	2.89	12,238	220	
<b>2004</b>	25,630	2.63	9,745	622	35,384	2.86	12,372	134	
<b>2005</b>	27,514	2.62	10,501	756	35,098	2.82	12,446	74	
<b>2006</b>	29,513	2.61	11,308	806	34,702	2.78	12,483	37	
<b>2007</b>	31,519	2.60	12,123	815	34,438	2.74	12,569	86	
<b>2008</b>	33,741	2.59	13,027	905	34,174	2.70	12,657	88	
<b>2009</b>	36,009	2.58	13,957	930	34,129	2.66	12,830	173	
<b>2010</b>	38,559	2.57	15,003	1,047	34,125	2.62	13,025	194	
<b>2011</b>	41,449	2.56	16,191	1,188	34,169	2.58	13,244	219	
Total additional households 2003-2011				7,569	Total additional households 2003-2011				1,226
Total additional households <b>2005-2011</b>				<b>6,446</b>	Total additional households <b>2005-2011</b>				<b>872</b>

\* **additional households** = increase in the number of households compared to the previous year

Shaded background: life of the County Development Plan, May 2005 to May 2011.

### **Appendix C: Assessment of Annual Affordability Thresholds**

Section 93(1) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, defines an eligible person as a "person who is in need of accommodation and whose income would not be adequate to meet the payments on a mortgage for the purchase of a house to meet his or her accommodation needs because the payments calculated over the course of a year would exceed 35% of that person's annual income net of income tax and pay related social insurance".

To calculate the price of houses that individuals at different income levels could afford, the following annuity formula was applied:

$$PV = Pt \frac{[1 - (1+i)^{-n}]}{i}$$

Where:

PV = Total loan size (no greater than 90% of Market Value – Section 93(1))

Pt = Monthly repayment amount

i = Monthly interest rate

n = Number of months over which the loan is to be paid

#### **2005 Sligo & Environs**

185 households have an upper limit of €214,567 that they can afford to pay towards the purchase of a house. The lowest price band goes up to €214,000. Based on an even distribution of households a total of 193 have an upper affordability threshold of €214,000. However, only 42 house units are available at this price, leaving a shortfall of 150 households unable to afford €214,000. This shortfall of 150 is equal to 46% of the total number of new household formations in the year. For higher income households, it is expected that sufficient provision is available at prices within affordability thresholds.

#### **2005 Rest of County**

216 households have an upper limit of €214,567 that they can afford to pay towards the purchase of a house. The lowest price band goes up to €208,000. Based on an even distribution of households a total of 208 have an upper affordability threshold of €208,000. However, only 105 house units are available at this price, leaving a shortfall of 103 households unable to afford €208,000. This shortfall of 103 is equal to 32% of the total number of new household formations in the year.

#### **2006 Sligo & Environs**

247 households have an upper limit of €226,369 that they can afford to pay towards the purchase of a house. The lowest price band goes up to €224,700. Based on an even distribution of households a total of 225 have an upper affordability threshold of €224,700. A total of 56 units are available at this price, leaving a shortfall of 169 households unable to afford €224,700.

The second house price range goes up to €280,875. Again, based on an even distribution, the total number of households with affordability problems at this price range is 308. This means that an additional 83 households will be able to afford up to €280,875. There will be 108 houses available up to €280,875.

The total number of households within Sligo (Sligo & Environs) in 2006 facing affordability problems is 194, which represents 44.8% of additional households for that year.

#### **2006 Rest of County**

155 households have an upper limit of €226,369 that they can afford to pay towards the purchase of a house. The lowest price band goes up to €214,240. Based on an even distribution of households a total of 128 have an upper affordability threshold of €214,240. A total of 76 units are available at this price, leaving a shortfall of 52 households unable to afford €214,240.

The second house price range goes up to €267,800. Again, based on an even distribution, the total number of households with affordability problems at this price range is 191. This means that an additional 10 households will be able to afford up to €267,800. There will be 90 houses available up to €267,800.

The total number of households within Sligo (Rest of County) in 2006 facing affordability problems is 132, which represents 48.5% of additional households for that year.

#### **2007 Sligo & Environs**

265 households have an upper limit of €238,592 that they can afford to pay towards the purchase of a house. The lowest price band goes up to €234,812. Based on an even distribution of households a total of 258 have an upper affordability threshold of €234,812. A total of 60 units are available at this price, leaving a shortfall of 198 households unable to afford €234,812.

The second house price range goes up to €293,514. Again, based on an even distribution, the total number of households with affordability problems at this price range is 322. This means that an additional 64 households will be able to afford up to €293,514. There will be 116 houses available up to €293,514.

The total number of households within Sligo (Sligo & Environs) in 2007 facing affordability problems is 250, which represents 54% of additional households for that year.

#### **2007 Rest of County**

165 households have an upper limit of €238,592 that they can afford to pay towards the purchase of a house. The lowest price band goes up to €220,667. Based on an even distribution of households a total of 152 have an upper affordability threshold of €220,667. A total of 81 units are available at this price, leaving a shortfall of 71 households unable to afford €220,667.

The second house price range goes up to €275,834. Again, based on an even distribution, the total number of households with affordability problems at this price range is 198. This means that an additional 46 households will be able to afford up to €275,834. There will be 95 houses available up to €275,834.

The total number of households within Sligo (Rest of County) in 2007 facing affordability problems is 120, which represents 42% of additional households for that year.

#### **2008 Sligo & Environs**

284 households have an upper limit of €252,192 that they can afford to pay towards the purchase of a house. The lowest price band goes up to €244,204. Based on an even distribution of households a total of 268 have an upper affordability threshold of €244,204. A total of 64 units are available at this price, leaving a shortfall of 204 households unable to afford €244,204.

The second house price range goes up to €305,255. Again, based on an even distribution, the total number of households with affordability problems at this price range is 366. This means that an additional 82 households will be able to afford up to €305,255. There will be 124 houses available up to €305,255.

The total number of households within Sligo (Sligo & Environs) in 2008 facing affordability problems is 246, which represents 50% of additional households for that year.

#### **2008 Rest of County**

174 households have an upper limit of €252,192 that they can afford to pay towards the purchase of a house. The lowest price band goes up to €226,184. Based on an even distribution of households a total of 156 have an upper affordability threshold of €226,184. A

total of 85 units are available at this price, leaving a shortfall of 71 households unable to afford €226,184.

The second house price range goes up to €282,730. Again, based on an even distribution, the total number of households with affordability problems at this price range is 202. This means that an additional 46 households will be able to afford up to €282,730. There will be 101 houses available up to €282,730.

The total number of households within Sligo (Rest of County) in 2008 facing affordability problems is 126, which represents 41% of additional households for that year.

#### **2009 Sligo & Environs**

304 households have an upper limit of €265,054 that they can afford to pay towards the purchase of a house. The lowest price band goes up to €252,751. Based on an even distribution of households a total of 278 have an upper affordability threshold of €252,751. A total of 69 units are available at this price, leaving a shortfall of 209 households unable to afford €226,184.

The second house price range goes up to €315,939. Again, based on an even distribution, the total number of households with affordability problems at this price range is 379. This means that an additional 89 households will be able to afford up to €315,939. There will be 132 houses available up to €315,939.

The total number of households within Sligo (Sligo & Environs) in 2009 facing affordability problems is 252, which represents 47% of additional households for that year.

#### **2009 Rest of County**

183 households have an upper limit of €265,054 that they can afford to pay towards the purchase of a house. The lowest price band goes up to €231,838. Based on an even distribution of households a total of 160 have an upper affordability threshold of €231,838. A total of 90 units are available at this price, leaving a shortfall of 70 households unable to afford €231,838.

The second house price range goes up to €289,798. Again, based on an even distribution, the total number of households with affordability problems at this price range is 228. This means that an additional 54 households will be able to afford up to €289,798. There will be 106 houses available up to €289,798.

The total number of households within Sligo (Rest of County) in 2009 facing affordability problems is 122, which represents 38% of additional households for that year.

#### **2010 Sligo & Environs**

326 households have an upper limit of €277,777 that they can afford to pay towards the purchase of a house. The lowest price band goes up to €260,334. Based on an even distribution of households a total of 312 have an upper affordability threshold of €260,334. A total of 74 units are available at this price, leaving a shortfall of 238 households unable to afford €260,334.

The second house price range goes up to €325,417. Again, based on an even distribution, the total number of households with affordability problems at this price range is 325. This means that an additional 95 households will be able to afford up to €325,417. There will be 142 houses available up to €325,417.

The total number of households within Sligo (Sligo & Environs) in 2010 facing affordability problems is 285, which represents 50% of additional households for that year.

### **2010 Rest of County**

193 households have an upper limit of €277,777 that they can afford to pay towards the purchase of a house. The lowest price band goes up to €236,475. Based on an even distribution of households a total of 164 have an upper affordability threshold of €236,475. A total of 94 units are available at this price, leaving a shortfall of 70 households unable to afford €236,475.

The second house price range goes up to €295,594. Again, based on an even distribution, the total number of households with affordability problems at this price range is 128. This means that an additional 57 households will be able to afford up to €295,594. There will be 111 houses available up to €295,594.

The total number of households within Sligo (Rest of County) in 2010 facing affordability problems is 124, which represents 37% of additional households for that year.

### **2011 Sligo & Environs**

349 households have an upper limit of €286,665 that they can afford to pay towards the purchase of a house. The lowest price band goes up to €266,842. Based on an even distribution of households a total of 320 have an upper affordability threshold of €266,842. A total of 79 units are available at this price, leaving a shortfall of 241 households unable to afford €266,842.

The second house price range goes up to €333,552. Again, based on an even distribution, the total number of households with affordability problems at this price range is 400. This means that an additional 102 households will be able to afford up to €333,552. There will be 152 houses available up to €333,552.

The total number of households within Sligo (Sligo & Environs) in 2011 facing affordability problems is 291, which represents 48% of additional households for that year.

### **2011 Rest of County**

203 households have an upper limit of €286,665 that they can afford to pay towards the purchase of a house. The lowest price band goes up to €238,840. Based on an even distribution of households a total of 169 have an upper affordability threshold of €238,840. A total of 99 units are available at this price, leaving a shortfall of 70 households unable to afford €238,840.

The second house price range goes up to €298,550. Again, based on an even distribution, the total number of households with affordability problems at this price range is 220. This means that an additional 60 households will be able to afford up to €298,550. There will be 117 houses available up to €298,550.

The total number of households within Sligo (Rest of County) in 2011 facing affordability problems is 127, which represents 36% of additional households for that year.

### **Summary of Anticipated Social & Affordable Housing Need within Sligo & Environs**

	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
1) Household Formations	323	433	463	495	530	568	608
2) No. of households meeting affordability criteria	150	194	250	246	252	285	291
(2) as a % of (1)	46%	45%	54%	50%	47%	50%	48%

**Summary of Anticipated Social & Affordable Housing Need within Rest of County**

	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
1) Household Formations	376	272	288	304	320	337	355
2) No. of households meeting affordability criteria	103	132	120	126	122	124	127
(2) as a % of (1)	32%	48%	42%	41%	38%	37%	36%