

Population Distribution of Greater Dublin |

Sample Answer

‘The boundaries of city regions have expanded over time.’ Discuss this statement with reference to one example you have studied.

(2006 Q4.c)

In this answer I will discuss the population distribution in the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) core region and how it has expanded over time.

Dublin is the capital of Ireland and therefore is the centre of decision making. Dublin is a primate city and contains 25% of the nation’s population. The GDA consists of four counties, Dublin Kildare, Wicklow and Meath.

Dublin is the nation’s largest city and a nodal point for transport with all roads and rail leading there. 90% of flights land in Dublin Airport. This makes the region a hub for rural – urban migration.

Pre 1960’s Dublin

Up to the 1960’s, Dublin was a bleak city with a large population living in the city centre tenement buildings, crowded into often just one room per family and poor shared sanitation facilities. In the 60’s, Ireland like the rest of the world, endured a population and an economic boom.

These tenement dwellers were rehoused to new towns for example Ballymun and Tallaght. Ballymun flats were built but soon became an area of social decline.

During this period Ireland moved from stage 2 to stage 3 of the population cycle which meant there were high birth rates and also low death rates at the same time. This was due to the hospital services becoming better and also a baby boom.

Dublin area holds 1/3 of the nation's population at 1.8million. The urban sprawl was forced west due to barriers such as the sea to the east and mountains to the south.

Post 1960's Dublin

Since the 1960's, commuter towns which are also provincial towns e.g. Naas have tripled in population due to their access to Dublin. These towns have experience great economic uplift with the large number of houses being built and sold.

Dublin has poor transport facilities for such a large urban area. However, public transport in rural Ireland is almost non-existent except for local links. And, even though Dublin is a nodal point the DART and bus are often avoided, with the population continued with the use of car transport which causes major back log on the M50. The Luas, however, was used 42 million times in 2019.

Dublin's docklands were set up as a new hub in 1980 with the introduction of the IFSC. Eleven thousand housing units were built on the site during the 1987 Docklands regeneration.

Forty thousand people now live here in the docklands e.g. Spencer Dock. These are young finance workers who have large disposal income and have gentrified the area.

Newer towns such as Adamstown were set up to calm urban sprawl. Adamstown was to house 25k people away from the city and provide good transport links to the city. Now it has agglomerated.

Cherrywood is an example of a new development situated on the south side at the end of the luas stop in Brides Glen. This is due to house 20,000 people with 10% of housing given over to social housing. This area aims to become Dublin's 'Tech Hub'.

The Dublin Area Rapid Transport provides links only along the coastline as far as villages like Malahide in the north and Greystones in the south. These villages have expanded with growing populations and are often used only for sleeping. Known as dormitory towns.

The current population density in the GDA is 1458 people/km² compared the 37/km² in the Border Midlands West (BMW) region, for example. This density is spread over four counties as the Greater Dublin region continues to expand over time.