



**Identifiably Irish**

Ireland's Domain Registry



# dot ie

## Domain Profile Report

### August 2016

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# Foreword

The IE Domain Registry (IEDR) is delighted to publish our third dot ie Domain Profile Report. In this edition, we continue our series of analysis of the total database of registered .ie domain names, looking specifically at the period 1 January to 30 June 2016 (H1 2016).

Our analysis focuses on the number of new registrations over the half-year period; the make-up of all .ie domain names in terms of sector type; classification of registrants; and the geographic spread of .ie domains by county and province.

IEDR manages and administers Ireland's official domain, .ie, in the interest of the Irish internet community.

Business sentiment in Ireland continues on a positive, upward trajectory as economic conditions improve. There are now more than 217,000 registered .ie domains, and that number is growing at a steady rate. Since January alone, 18,179 new .ie domains have been added to the .ie database.

In a continued positive trend for Ireland's digital economy, 72% of all new .ie domains this year were registered by private or public limited companies and sole traders. Clearly, more and more Irish businesses recognise the value of a .ie website, and, in particular, .ie as an authentic and trusted "Identifiably Irish" brand.

However, the findings in our most recent dot ie Digital Health Index – which measures Irish SMEs' use of digital assets, such as websites, e-commerce and social media – showed that while more Irish SMEs now have a website than at any point since our research began, there still remains a small cohort of businesses that do not see the value of a website and have no intention of building one in the future. These 'offliners' may never register a website and their reluctance to do so could impact on the current and future growth of .ie registrations.

The value of e-commerce enabled websites to the Irish economy simply cannot be overstated. Irish consumers spent €6.5 billion online in 2015, and that figure is projected to grow to €21 billion by 2020\*. On the surface, this level of internet usage looks extremely positive. But look deeper and it becomes clear that only a small proportion is actually being spent in Ireland and with Irish retailers. As our recent dot ie Digital Health Index showed, just 25% of Irish SMEs can process payments online. More work needs to be done to enable Irish businesses embrace the benefits of selling online.

As we highlighted in our two previous dot ie Domain Profile Reports, densely populated urban areas continue to register large numbers of .ie domains, with rural counties lagging behind. Munster, even with the cities of Cork, Limerick and Waterford, was over 8,000 .ie domains behind Leinster in H1 2016. Connacht, and particularly Ulster, including counties in Northern Ireland, are notably under-developed in terms of the number of .ie domain names registered.

Poor and/or almost non-existent broadband infrastructure in many parts of the country remains a significant obstacle for businesses planning to expand their operations with e-commerce-enabled websites. Steps to remedy this have been slow. Business associations, local enterprise offices and other groups must continue to pressure the Government and internet providers to speed-up the provision of broadband in these areas.

The extent of the vacuum is clear when Ireland is compared to similar-sized European countries. Comparing general country domain usage, the number of .ie domains (46 per 1,000 people) in Ireland is significantly lower than equivalent domains per capita in countries with similar populations, like Denmark (232) and Norway (133).

As an industry, we must work harder collectively to address these challenges so that all SMEs – regardless of geographic location – can take advantage of the opportunities that the digital marketplace undoubtedly presents.

**David Curtin**

*Chief Executive*

IE Domain Registry Limited (IEDR)

August 2016

\*Source: Visa Europe Irish Consumer Spending Index, Feb 2016

# About IE Domain Registry (IEDR)

The IEDR is the official registry for .ie internet domain names and maintains the database of registered .ie domain names.

The IEDR originated as a spinout from University College Dublin, becoming an independent, separate limited company 16 years ago in July 2000. Under the terms of the Companies Acts, it is defined as a public company.

The IEDR is responsible for the management and administration of Ireland's official internet address .ie, in the interest of the Irish and global internet communities. The IEDR operates the domain name system (DNS) for the .ie namespace, facilitates a dispute resolution service with WIPO and operates a public 'Whois' lookup service for .ie domains.

The IEDR is a managed registry which means that there are policies and procedures governing the registration of .ie domain names. New applications are reviewed to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of registration. This contrasts with .com and .eu where there is no manual review, and the domain applied for will be automatically registered – once the name is available.

Only the IEDR can administer and manage the .ie namespace. These roles and responsibilities are undertaken as a public service. The IEDR liaises with government departments, governing bodies, trade associations and abides by internet best-practice principles while still operating as an independent public company.

The IEDR's mission is to provide unique, identifiably Irish domain names along with registry and related services to the local and international internet community.

A .ie domain name requires a connection with the island of Ireland and a legitimate claim to the chosen name.

A .ie domain name has a number of distinct advantages when compared against alternatives. These include: letting consumers know that a business is Irish; giving customers a greater sense of security particularly when buying online from a known local business; and providing more choices of desirable names, as a .ie domain name is more likely to be available than a similar .com.

Along with the recent introduction of one and two letter .ie domain names 2016 will also see the launch of .ie domains names with fadas as well as a change to policies to enable the resale of .ie domains, pending a public consultation process.

**The IEDR's mission is to provide unique, identifiably Irish domain names along with registry and related services to the local and international internet community.**

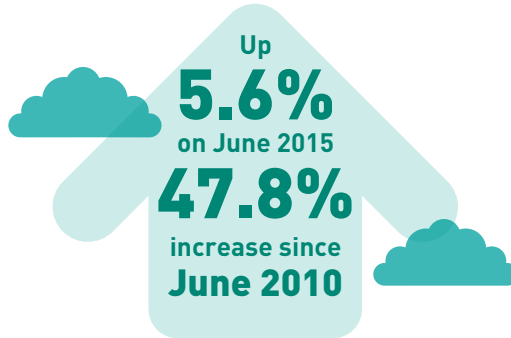
# Summary

- 217,374 .ie domains are active in the .ie registry, an almost 6% increase from June 2015, or 47.8% in the last six years.
- While the .ie domain registry continues to grow, it is growing at a slower rate than noted over the same period last year (Jan - June 2015). A similar 'plateau phase' was noted in the most recent dot ie Digital Health Index, which revealed that of those SMEs without a website, which is 1 in 6, more than half (55%) have no plans to build a website.
- 18,179 .ie domains were registered in H1 2016 (1 January—30 June), a slight 3.65% decrease year-on-year.
- Corporate bodies and sole traders made up 72% of all .ie registrations in H1 2016. This is in line with the total .ie registry, where 78% of all domains are corporate bodies and sole traders.
- Of the .ie domains registered in Ireland in H1 2016, 16,714 were registered in the Republic of Ireland (a 5% decrease year-on-year) and 301 in Northern Ireland (a 6% increase).
- In H1 2016, 1,164 .ie domains were added to the .ie database by international registrants, up 14% year-on-year.
- The largest number of new .ie registrations in H1 2016 was recorded in Leinster, with 11,386, down 6%.
- The largest percentage increase in registrations was recorded in Munster, with 3% growth (3,312 .ie domains).
- 40% of all .ie registrations in H1 2016 were recorded by Dublin residents, followed by Cork (8%), Galway (4%) and Kildare (4%).
- Fermanagh, Armagh and Derry combined accounted for just 0.35% of .ie registrations in H1 2016.
- At June 2016 County Dublin has the most .ie domains per 1,000 people, with 73, followed by Carlow, Wicklow and Meath.
- County Derry has the lowest number of .ie domains per 1,000 people, with just 1; in the Republic of Ireland, County Donegal has the lowest, with 18.
- Ireland ranks joint 16th out of 20 in Europe for the number of country code domains per 1,000 people, with 46.
- In this regard, Ireland ranks ahead of countries with larger populations, including France and Spain, but significantly behind other countries of similar size, including Denmark and Norway.

# OVERVIEW OF .ie DOMAIN PROFILE

Total registered .ie domains at the end of June 2016:

**217,374**



**72.2%** of all new .ie registrations between January and June 2016 are **businesses**



**78.1%** of the total .ie registry are **businesses**

**18,179**

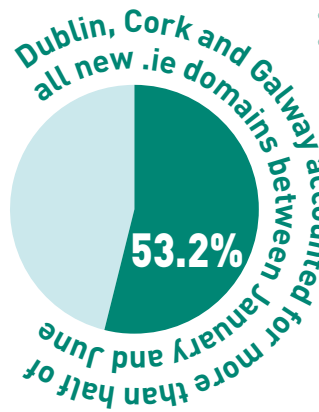
.ie domains registered between January and June 2016

**4%**

**301**

.ie domains registered in Northern Ireland between January and June 2016

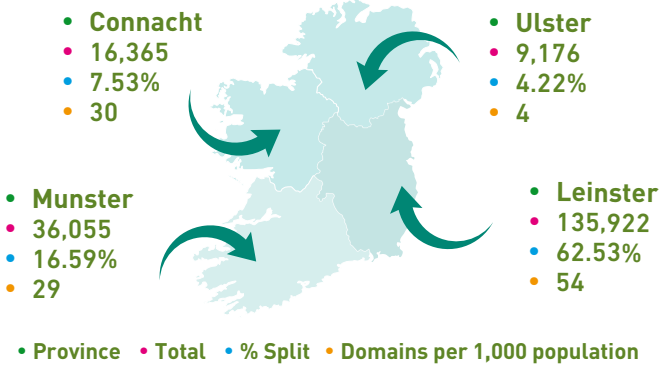
**6%**



Most new .ie domains

**7,368**  
Dublin

## Analysis of .ie domain registry by province



% increase in .ie domains registered

Monaghan

**19%**

Longford

**-39%**

Fewest new .ie domains\*

**59**  
Leitrim

Ireland ranks joint **16th out of 20** in Europe for the number of country code domains per 1,000 people, but ahead of France and Spain.



Donegal has the lowest number of .ie domains per 1,000 people\*

**Donegal (18)**



Top 4 counties with the highest number of .ie domains per 1,000 people

**Dublin (73)**

**Carlow (56)**

**Meath (37)**

**Wicklow (50)**

\*Republic of Ireland; excluding Northern Ireland

## ANALYSIS OF .ie DOMAIN REGISTRY AND GROWTH

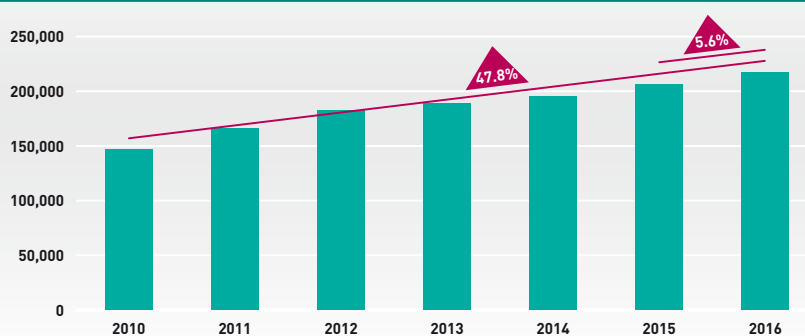
The .ie domain registry continues to grow at a steady rate. At the end of June 2016 the total number of registered .ie domains was 217,374, an almost 6% increase from June 2015, and a 47.8% increase over the same period in the last six years.

18,179 new .ie domains were registered in H1 2016, a 3.65% decrease year-on-year.

Due to this decrease in new .ie registrations and a 6% increase year-on-year in deletions (domain holders not renewing their .ie domains), net additions to the .ie registry were down by 18%.

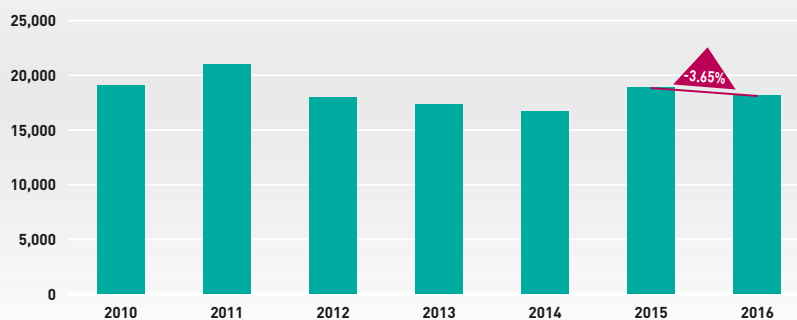
### .ie domain registry size and growth

Total number of registered .ie domains at end June each year and percentage growth



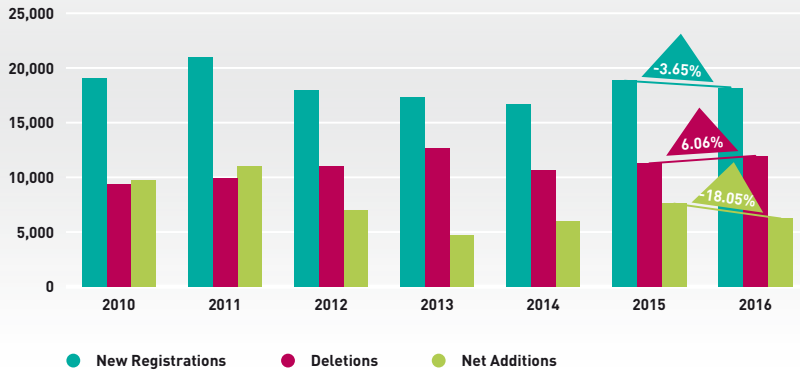
### New .ie registrations and growth

Number of new registrations in .ie domain registry from January to June each year and percentage growth



## Total .ie registrations and growth

Total number of new .ie registrations, deletions and net additions at end June each year and percentage growth





## ANALYSIS OF .ie DOMAIN REGISTRY BY TYPE

Every time a .ie domain is registered, IEDR collects valuable information profiling the registrant: specifically, the type of registrant and their location.

In H1 2016, 13,124 of all new .ie domains (72%) have been registered by corporate bodies (i.e. public or private companies) and sole traders.

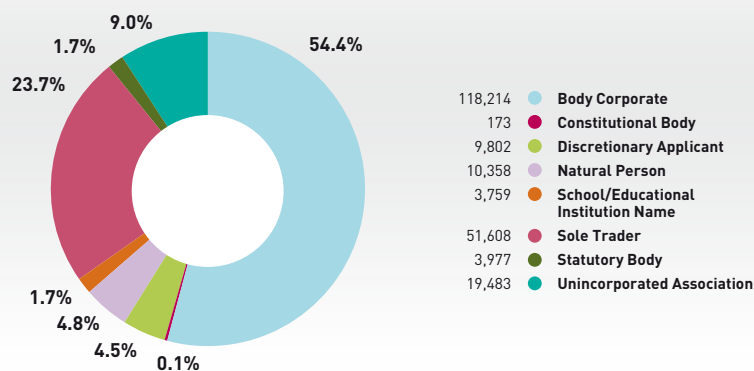
These figures are generally in line with the total .ie registry: 78% of all .ie domains are registered to corporate bodies and sole traders.

However, the number of new .ie domains registered by Irish businesses was down slightly, by 3%, compared to the same period last year.

Discretionary applicants (applicants who are deemed to have a right to register a name but don't fulfill the criteria of any other classification) registered 2,534 .ie domains in H1 2016, up 6% on the same period last year.

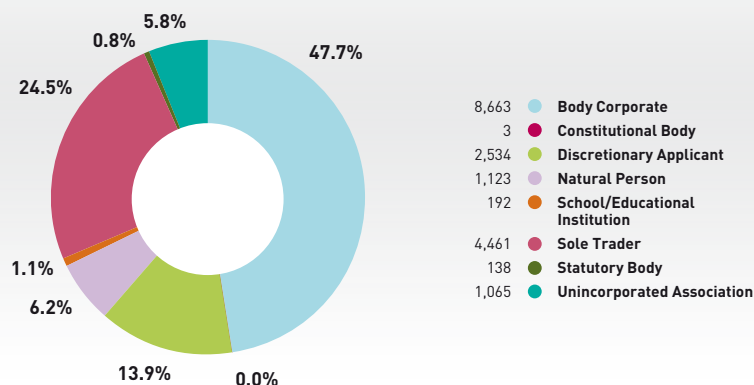
### Classification of .ie domain registry by registrant type

Classification of all .ie registrants at end June 2016



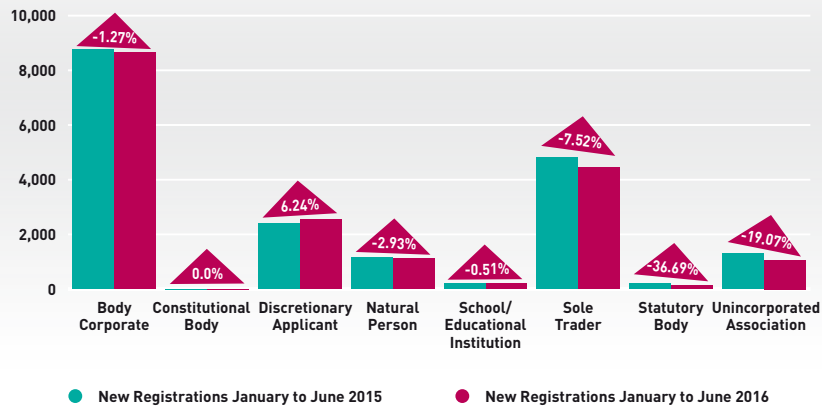
### Classification of new .ie registrations by registrant type

Classification of all new .ie registrations from January to June 2016



## Growth of new .ie registrations by registrant type

Increase in new .ie domain registrations by registrant type and percentage growth/decline from January to June 2016 period compared to same period in 2015

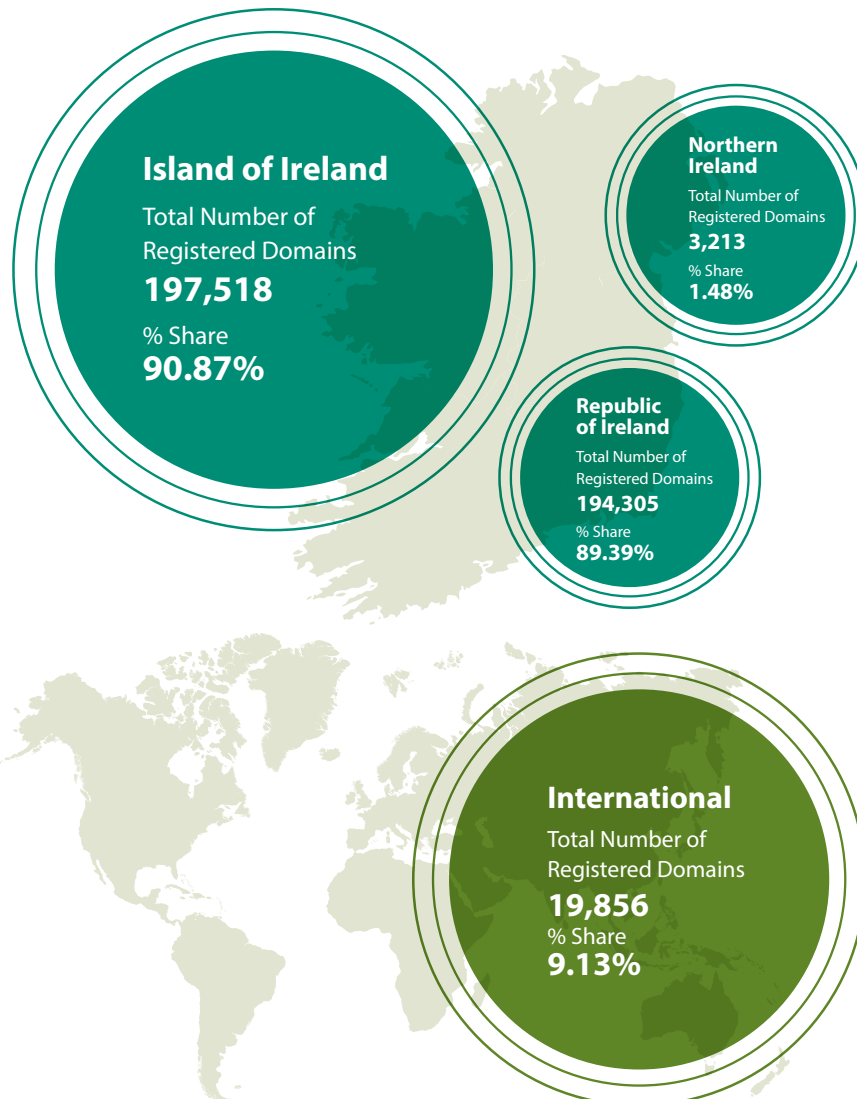


## ANALYSIS OF .ie DOMAIN REGISTRY BY GEOGRAPHY

There are 197,518 .ie domains registered to addresses on the island of Ireland, or 91% of all .ie domains in the IEDR registry. A total of 17,015 were registered in H1 2016, an almost 5% decrease compared to the same period last year.

Of the new .ie domains registered on the island of Ireland in H1 2016, 16,714 .ie domains were registered in the Republic of Ireland (a 4.8% decrease year-on-year) and 301 in Northern Ireland (a 6.4% increase).

9% of all .ie domains (19,856) are registered outside the island of Ireland. 1,164 new .ie domains were registered to international addresses in H1 2016, an increase of almost 14% year-on-year.



## Split and growth of new registered .ie domains by geography

New .ie domain registrations by geography and percentage growth over previous period January to June 2015

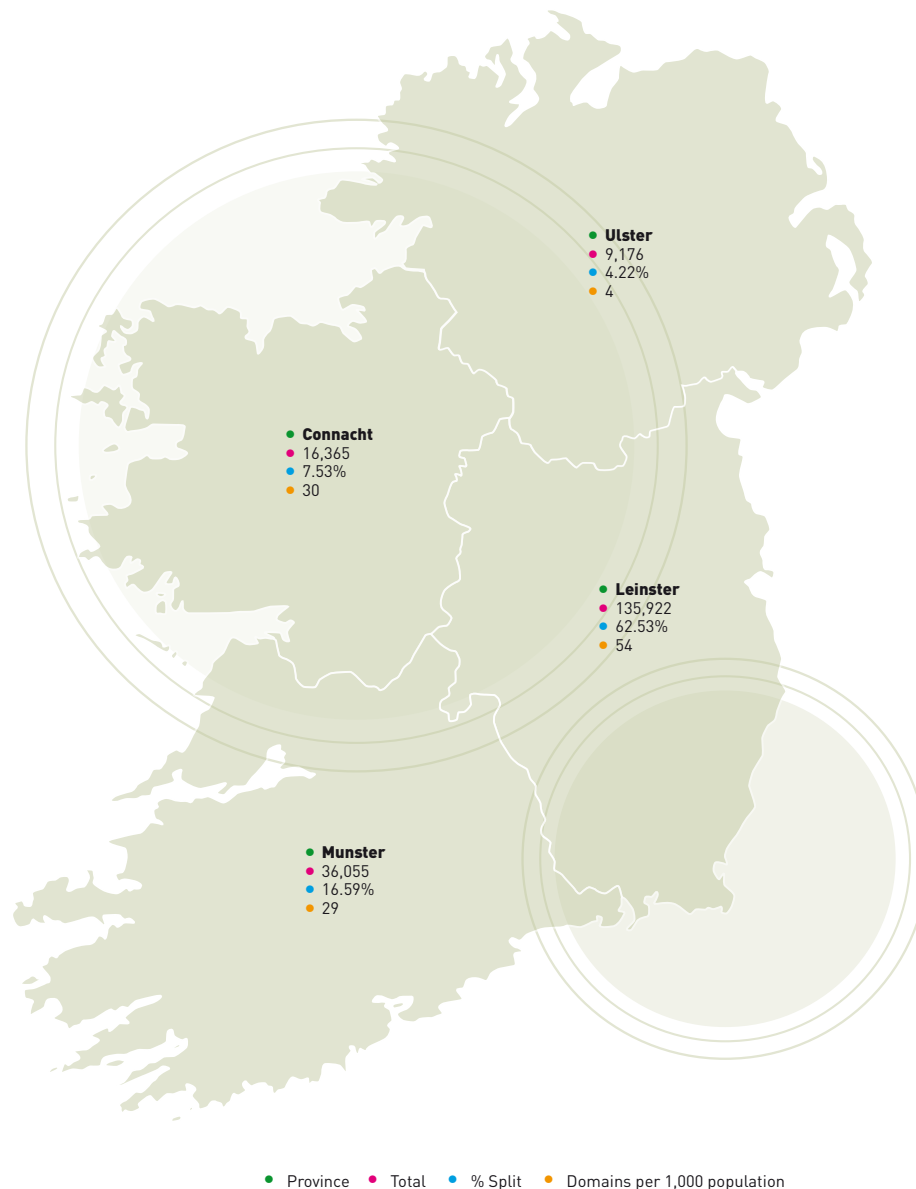
| Country           | New Reg H1 2016 | % Mix  | % Increase Year On Year |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------|-------------------------|
| International     | 1,164           | 6.40%  | 13.78%                  |
| Island of Ireland | 17,015          | 93.6%  | -4.65%                  |
| Ireland           | 16,714          | 91.94% | -4.83%                  |
| Northern Ireland  | 301             | 1.66%  | 6.36%                   |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>18,179</b>   |        | <b>-3.65%</b>           |

## ANALYSIS OF .ie DOMAIN REGISTRY BY PROVINCE

Excluding .ie domains registered outside the island of Ireland, Leinster accounts for 62.5% of all .ie domains in the registry, followed by Munster (16.6%) and Connacht (7.5%). Ulster remains impacted by the low level of registrations in Northern Ireland, accounting for just 4% of .ie domains – despite holding a third of the island's population.

In terms of domains per 1,000 people, Leinster leads again, with 54, followed by Connacht and Munster, with 30 and 29 respectively. Ulster as a whole has just 4 domains per 1,000 people, or 20 for those counties in the Republic of Ireland and 2 for the counties in Northern Ireland.

With 11,386, Leinster recorded the largest number of new .ie registrations in H1 2016, a year-on-year decrease of 6%. Munster, with 3,312 .ie domains, recorded the largest year-on-year increase, 3%.



## Split and growth of new .ie registrations by province

New .ie domains registered by province and percentage growth over previous year  
January to June

| Province              | New Reg<br>Jan to June 2016 | % Mix          | % increase/<br>decrease<br>Year On Year |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|---|
| Connacht              | 1,468                       | <b>8.08%</b>   | -10.54%                                 |
| Leinster              | 11,386                      | <b>62.63%</b>  | -6.40%                                  |
| Munster               | 3,312                       | <b>18.22%</b>  | 3.08%                                   |
| Ulster                | 849                         | <b>4.67%</b>   | 2.66%                                   |
| Ulster - ROI          | 548                         | <b>3.01%</b>   | 0.74%                                   |
| Northern Ireland - UK | 301                         | <b>1.66%</b>   | 6.36%                                   |
| International         | 1,164                       | <b>6.40%</b>   | 13.78%                                  |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>18,179</b>               | <b>100.00%</b> | <b>-3.65%</b>                           |

## ANALYSIS OF .ie DOMAIN REGISTRY BY COUNTY

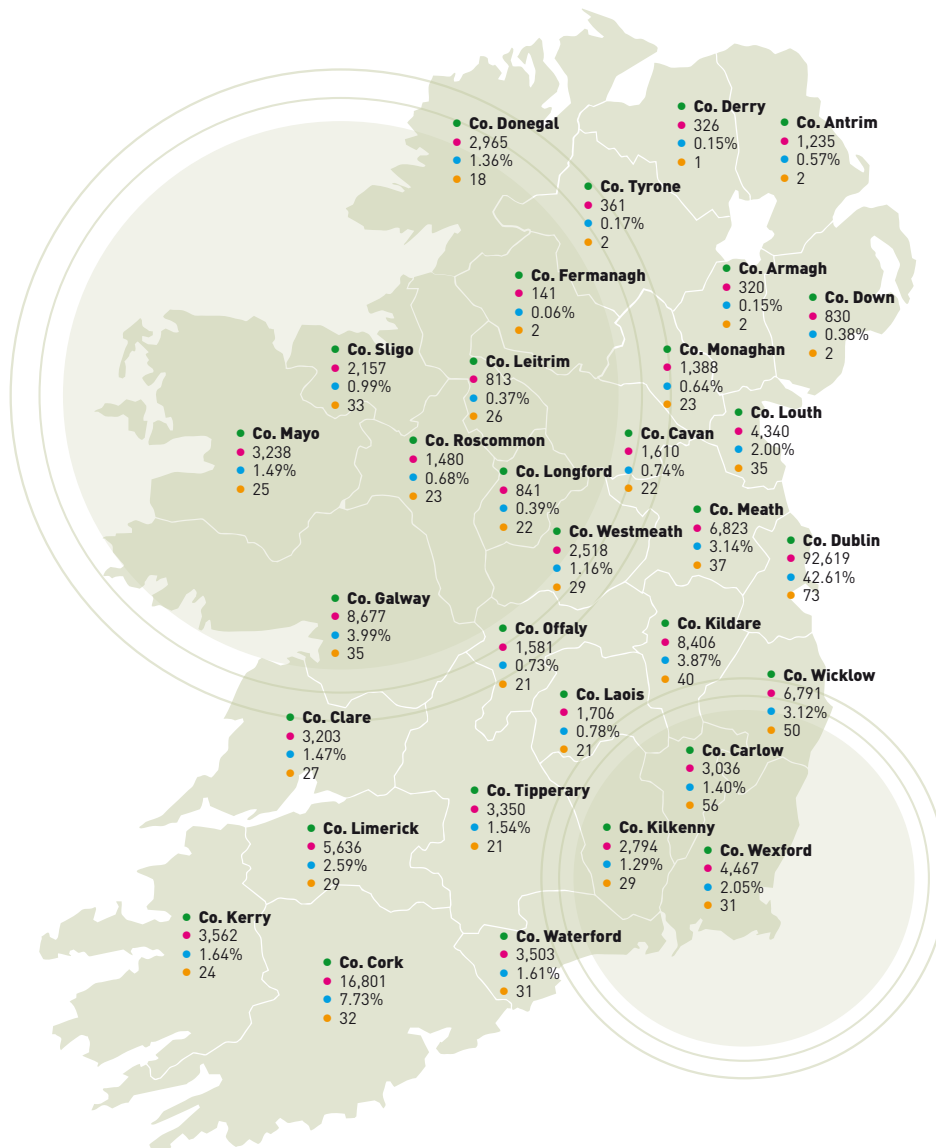
Dublin continues to dominate the .ie registry, accounting for 40% of all new registered domains during H1 2016. Cork was the second highest, with 8%, followed by Galway and Kildare with 4%. These figures are in line with county figures for the overall .ie registry.

Fermanagh, Armagh and Derry were the least prolific registrants of new .ie domains, accounting for a combined 0.36% of registrations in H1 2016.

In terms of overall .ie domains per 1,000 people, Dublin again leads, with 73, followed by Carlow with 56 and Wicklow with 50. In Northern Ireland, Derry has just 1 .ie domain per 1,000 people, the lowest throughout the island of Ireland. In the Republic of Ireland, Donegal has just 18 .ie domains per 1,000 people.

Dublin also accounted for the largest actual number of .ie domains registered in H1 2016—7,368. This was, however, a slight decrease of 7% on the same period last year. The smallest number of .ie registrations was recorded in Fermanagh, with just 15.

Despite this, Fermanagh actually recorded the largest percentage increase in .ie domain registrations anywhere in Ireland, with 50% more new .ie registrations compared to the same period last year.



● County ● Total ● % Split ● Domains per 1,000 population

## Split and growth of new .ie registrations by county

New .ie domains registered in H1 2016 by county and percentage growth over previous year January to June

| County Total         | Total New Reg H1 2016 | % Split      | % Increase    |
|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Co. Antrim           | 123                   | 0.68%        | 32.26%        |
| Co. Armagh           | 21                    | 0.12%        | 0.00%         |
| Co. Carlow           | 374                   | 2.06%        | -0.80%        |
| Co. Cavan            | 139                   | 0.76%        | -10.32%       |
| Co. Clare            | 303                   | 1.67%        | 12.64%        |
| Co. Cork             | 1,501                 | 8.26%        | 0.74%         |
| Co. Derry            | 23                    | 0.13%        | -32.35%       |
| Co. Donegal          | 241                   | 1.33%        | -2.82%        |
| Co. Down             | 80                    | 0.44%        | -18.37%       |
| Co. Dublin           | 7,368                 | 40.53%       | -7.12%        |
| Co. Fermanagh        | 15                    | 0.08%        | 50.00%        |
| Co. Galway           | 801                   | 4.41%        | -3.03%        |
| Co. Kerry            | 391                   | 2.15%        | 7.71%         |
| Co. Kildare          | 724                   | 3.98%        | -8.01%        |
| Co. Kilkenny         | 211                   | 1.14%        | -24.10%       |
| Co. Laois            | 176                   | 0.97%        | -4.86%        |
| Co. Leitrim          | 59                    | 0.32%        | -32.95%       |
| Co. Limerick         | 491                   | 2.70%        | 4.03%         |
| Co. Longford         | 64                    | 0.35%        | -39.05%       |
| Co. Louth            | 364                   | 2.00%        | -3.19%        |
| Co. Mayo             | 296                   | 1.63%        | -16.38%       |
| Co. Meath            | 690                   | 3.80%        | 2.99%         |
| Co. Monaghan         | 168                   | 0.92%        | 19.15%        |
| Co. Offaly           | 129                   | 0.71%        | -14.57%       |
| Co. Roscommon        | 143                   | 0.79%        | -10.06%       |
| Co. Sligo            | 169                   | 0.93%        | -21.03%       |
| Co. Tipperary        | 305                   | 1.68%        | -6.73%        |
| Co. Tyrone           | 39                    | 0.21%        | 44.44%        |
| Co. Waterford        | 321                   | 1.77%        | 9.93%         |
| Co. Westmeath        | 245                   | 1.35%        | -5.41%        |
| Co. Wexford          | 456                   | 2.51%        | 15.44%        |
| Co. Wicklow          | 585                   | 3.22%        | -9.72%        |
| <b>International</b> | <b>1,164</b>          | <b>6.40%</b> | <b>13.78%</b> |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>18,179</b>         | <b>100%</b>  | <b>-3.65%</b> |

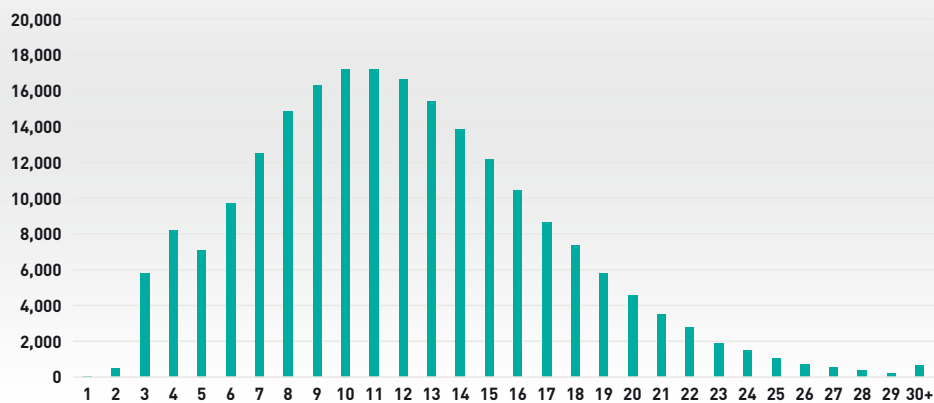


## ANALYSIS OF .ie DOMAIN NAMES BY CHARACTER LENGTH

An analysis of .ie domain names by length of name shows that the majority of names are between 9 and 12 characters in length. The chart below shows the distribution of .ie domain names by the number of characters at end June 2016. There were 35 one-character domain names and 491 two-character domain names included in the total database. The most common length of domain is 10 characters, with 17,231 such domains registered.

The longest domain name registered is 58-characters long, however, at the time of writing, this domain name is not active. The longest active domain name, at 54-characters, is **[www.lithuanian-and-russian-translation-and-language-school.ie](http://www.lithuanian-and-russian-translation-and-language-school.ie)**.

### Analysis of .ie domain names at 30 June 2016 by number of characters



# INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON OF DOMAIN MARKETS

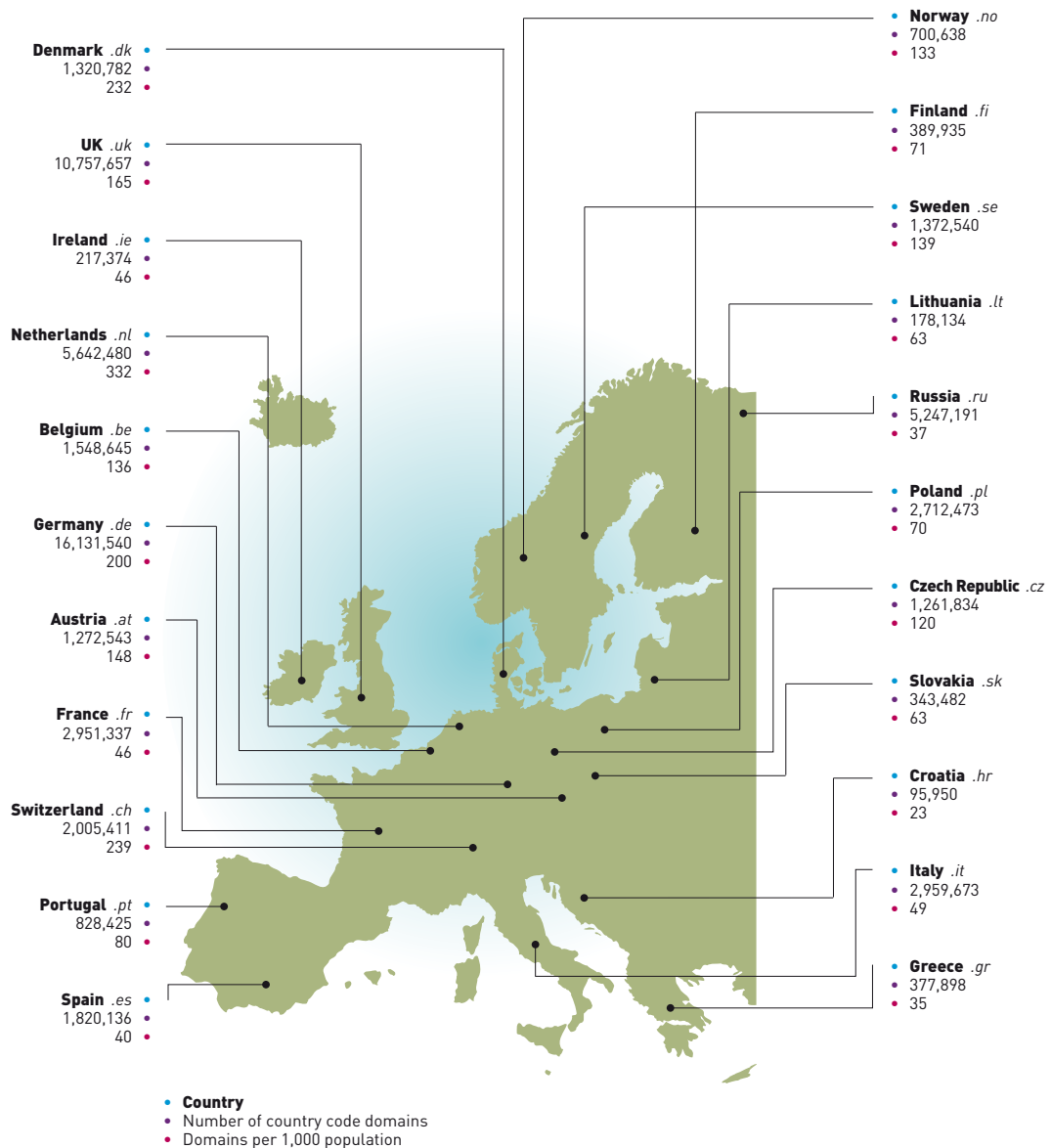
There are more than 240 country code top-level domain extensions (ccTLDs) worldwide, including .ie.

Compared to other European countries, Ireland ranks joint 16th out of 20 in terms of the number of country code domains per 1,000 people. With 46 .ie domains per 1,000 people, Ireland ranks ahead of, or comparable to, significantly larger countries, including Spain (40 .es domains per 1,000), France (46 .fr domains) and Italy (49 .it domains).

However, Ireland ranks behind other countries with similar populations, including Denmark (232 .dk domains per 1,000 people), Norway (133 .no domains) and Finland (71 .fi domains). Our closest neighbours, the UK, have 165 .co.uk domains per 1,000 people.

## Analysis of European domain market size

Breakdown of international domain market size by country and per 1,000 population



Source: Association of European National Top Level Domain Registries ([www.centr.org](http://www.centr.org))

## SECONDARY MARKET FOR .ie DOMAIN NAMES

In 2014, a policy change request was submitted to the IEDR Policy Advisory Committee (PAC), proposing to allow the introduction of a secondary market for .ie domains. With this change, .ie registrants would be allowed to sell the right to use their domain to anyone who meets the IEDR's Registration and Naming Policy criteria.

A public consultation is currently underway to ensure that the opinions of the Irish internet community are taken into consideration during the decision-making process. This consultation will close on 16 August 2016 and more information on the process and the rationale for the policy change can be found at <https://www.iedr.ie/secondary-market/>.

Provided that the results of the public consultation are positive, it is hoped that the secondary market for .ie domains will launch in November 2016. This will mean that .ie domains can be sold or auctioned to anybody who can prove their connection to Ireland and provide a valid claim to the .ie domain name.

In terms of the global domain market, the resale of .com domain names has been a popular and often profitable enterprise for many years. Given that there are no registration criteria for .com domain names there have been many high profile domain name sales and auctions via online domain marketplaces such as [www.sedo.com](http://www.sedo.com). According to a recent article by Business Insider UK<sup>1</sup>, the table below represents the most expensive domain name only .com auction sales since 2003 as reported by [www.DNJournal.com](http://www.DNJournal.com).

| Domain Name     | Price        | Year Sold |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------|
| Sex.com         | \$13,000,000 | 2010      |
| Fund.com        | \$9,999,950  | 2008      |
| Porn.com        | \$9,500,000  | 2007      |
| Porno.com       | \$8,888,888  | 2015      |
| We.com          | \$8,000,000  | 2015      |
| Diamond.com     | \$7,500,000  | 2006      |
| Z.com           | \$6,784,000  | 2014      |
| Slots.com       | \$5,500,000  | 2010      |
| Toys.com        | \$5,100,000  | 2009      |
| Clothes.com     | \$4,900,000  | 2008      |
| Medicare.com    | \$4,800,000  | 2014      |
| IG.com          | \$4,700,000  | 2013      |
| MI.com          | \$3,600,000  | 2014      |
| Whisky.com      | \$3,100,000  | 2014      |
| Candy.com       | \$3,000,000  | 2009      |
| Vodka.com       | \$3,000,000  | 2006      |
| CreditCards.com | \$2,750,000  | 2004      |
| Social.com      | \$2,600,000  | 2011      |
| Investing.com   | \$2,450,000  | 2012      |
| Youxi.com       | \$2,430,000  | 2014      |

Of course, domain name sales are not always conducted by auction and they can often be part of a larger deal which may include other various assets. Insurance.com was sold for \$35.6 million in 2010 and VacationRentals.com went for \$35 million in 2007. In terms of ccTLD domain sales, \$2,858,945 was paid for Shopping.de in 2009 and Furniture.co.uk was sold at auction for \$650,000 in July 2015.

<sup>1</sup> Source: <http://uk.businessinsider.com/most-expensive-domain-names-of-all-time-2016-4?r=US&IR=T>



**Identifiably Irish**

Ireland's Domain Registry

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