.ie
Identifiably Irish
Ireland's Domain Registry

dot ie
Domain Profile Report

January 2018

Contents

Foreword

IE Domain Registry (IEDR) is pleased to publish the latest edition of the dot ie Domain Profile Report, which examines the makeup of the .ie domain database.

I am happy to report that the .ie domain namespace is in excellent health. In fact, 2017 was a record-breaking year: 39,523 new domains were registered – an average of 108 every day. This is more than any other single year. The total .ie database now comprises of 237,412 domains.

Reflecting the growth in our economy, more than two-thirds of new .ie domains in 2017 were registered by corporate bodies and sole traders. In numerical terms, this represents a 6% increase on the previous year.

While the majority of new .ie domain registrations originate from Dublin or Leinster, every province in Ireland recorded significant increases in registrations. If we examine the database further, nearly every county in Ireland experienced an increase in new registrations.

Irish businesses, organisations, communities and citizens recognise the value of having their own website. It is a place on the internet, controlled by them, that can be used to promote goods and services, goals, ideas, and to reach out to customers, advocates, colleagues, and neighbours. Uniquely, a .ie domain provides a layer of identifiably Irish authenticity and trustworthiness.

However, while the take-up of websites and .ie domains remains strong, problems persist in Ireland's internet ecosystem. A December 2017 report by EU statistics body Eurostat ranked Ireland number one in Europe for web sales. Superficially, the findings seem a good advertisement for digital Ireland. But they are misleading. Like the similarly positive DESI report of early 2017, the Eurostat survey omitted 92% of Ireland's business landscape – the micro-businesses that employ fewer than ten people. We discuss this, and Ireland's actual e-commerce capabilities, in a special chapter on page 17.

Ireland is on track once again to be one of the EU's fastest growing member states in 2018. More of the world's largest multinationals are choosing Ireland as a location, and many of those already located here are growing their presence. We are in an enviable position.

But there is work to be done. In many parts of the country, our internet infrastructure is inadequate. This hinders business growth. E-commerce adoption amongst Ireland's overall SME community remains poor, despite reports to the contrary. This will become a serious problem in the future if we do not act now.

Government and industry bodies must work hand-in-glove to ensure that 2018 is a year of meaningful change for Ireland's internet community.

David Curtin
Chief Executive, IEDR
January 2018

Executive summary

- 39,523 new .ie domains were registered in 2017 – an average of 108 a day. This is a 14% increase on the previous year and an all-time record for new .ie registrations in a single year.

- There are now 237,412 registered .ie domains. In 2017, the total .ie database increased by 7% on 2016, and by almost 30% on the same period five years ago, in 2012.

- In 2017, more than two-thirds (67%) of all new .ie domains were registered to corporate bodies and sole traders.

- Of the 39,523 .ie domains registered in 2017, 94.5% were registered on the island of Ireland – 36,743 were registered in the Republic of Ireland (up 16% on 2016) and 618 in Northern Ireland (up 10%).

- 2,162 .ie domains were registered outside the island of Ireland in 2017, a 9.5% decrease on 2016.

- All provinces posted significant increases on 2016. New .ie registrations in Ulster were up by 23%, in Connacht by 21%, in Munster by 19%, and in Leinster by 14%.

- At the end of 2017, .ie domains registered in Dublin accounted for 46% of .ie domains registered on the island of Ireland, followed by Cork (8.5%) and Galway (4%).

- Every county in Ireland bar four – Antrim, Carlow, Roscommon and Tyrone – recorded an increase in new .ie registrations in 2017.

- Dublin, with 74, has the greatest number of .ie domains per 1,000 people in the Republic of Ireland, followed by Carlow (58) and Wicklow (52).

- The majority of .ie domain names are between seven and fourteen characters in length. 36 .ie domains have just one character (for example t.ie), while 640 .ie domains have two characters.

- The longest .ie domain name currently active is www.lithuanian-and-russian-translation-and-language-school.ie, which has 54 characters.

- With 50, Ireland ranks 18th out of 22 European countries for the number of country domains per 1,000 people.

OVERVIEW OF .ie DOMAIN PROFILE

Total registered .ie domains at the end of 2017:

237,412

Up **7%** on 2016

30% increase since **2012**

67% of all new .ie domains registered in 2017 were **businesses**

76.5% of the total .ie database are **businesses**

108
new .ie domains registered every single day in 2017.

14%

39,523
new .ie domains registered in 2017 – an all-time record.

% increase in new .ie domains registered

Kilkenny

+51%

Carlow

-8%
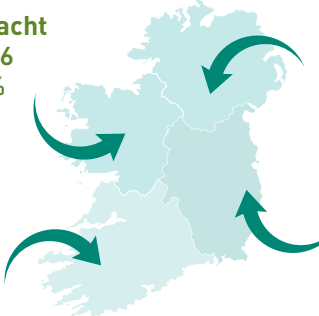
Fewest new .ie domains*

171 Leitrim

Most new .ie domains

16,065 Dublin

Analysis of .ie domain registry by province

- **Connacht**
- 18,116
- 8.38%
- 33

- **Ulster**
- 10,149
- 4.7%
- 5

- **Munster**
- 40,034
- 18.53%
- 31

- **Leinster**
- 147,800
- 68.39%
- 56

- Province • Total • % Share • Domains per 1,000 population

Percentages based on domains registered to addresses in the island of Ireland only

Ireland ranks **18th out of 22** in Europe for the number of country code domains per 1,000 people – ahead of France and Spain.

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

Donegal (21)

Top 3 counties with the highest number of domains per 1,000 people

Dublin (74)

Carlow (58)

Wicklow (52)

*Republic of Ireland; excluding Northern Ireland

ANALYSIS OF .ie DOMAIN DATABASE AND GROWTH

There are now **237,412** registered .ie domains. In 2017, the total .ie database increased by 7% on 2016, and by almost 30% on the same period five years ago, in 2012.

39,523 new .ie domains were registered in 2017, an average of 108 a day. This is a 14% increase on the previous year and an all-time record for new .ie registrations in a single year.

Driven by the increase in new .ie registrations, net additions to the .ie database (including deletions) increased by 40% on 2016 (+15,342).

.ie domain database size and growth
Total number of registered .ie domains at end of each year and percentage growth
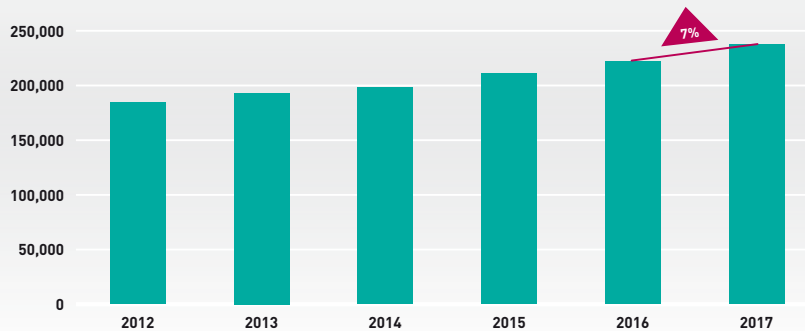
New .ie registrations and growth
Number of new registrations in .ie domain database for full year and percentage growth
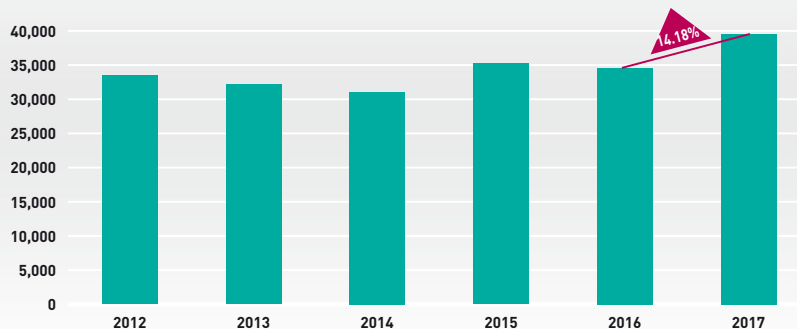
Total .ie registrations and growth

Total number of new .ie registrations, deletions and net additions for 2017 and percentage growth

	14.18%		2.09%		40.37%

● New Registrations ● Deletions ● Net Additions
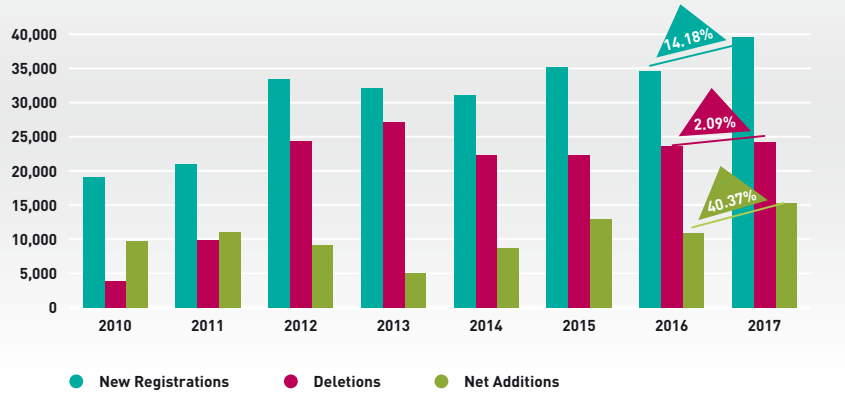
ANALYSIS OF .IE DOMAIN DATABASE BY TYPE

When a .ie domain is registered, IEDR collects useful information about the registrant (domain holder), specifically the type (e.g. whether they are a sole trader or a statutory body) and their geographical location.

In 2017, 67% of all new .ie domains were registered to corporate bodies (companies) and sole traders. While this is less than the percentage share in 2016 (72%), the actual number of corporate bodies and sole traders increased by 5%.

The total .ie database remains dominated by corporate bodies and sole traders. 76.5% of all .ie domains are registered to entities in these categories.

Classification of .ie domain database by domain holder type

Classification of all .ie registrants at end of 2017

127,618	Body Corporate
156	Constitutional Body
15,937	Discretionary Applicant
11,340	Natural Person
3,909	School/Educational Institution Name
54,065	Sole Trader
4,278	Statutory Body
20,109	Unincorporated Association
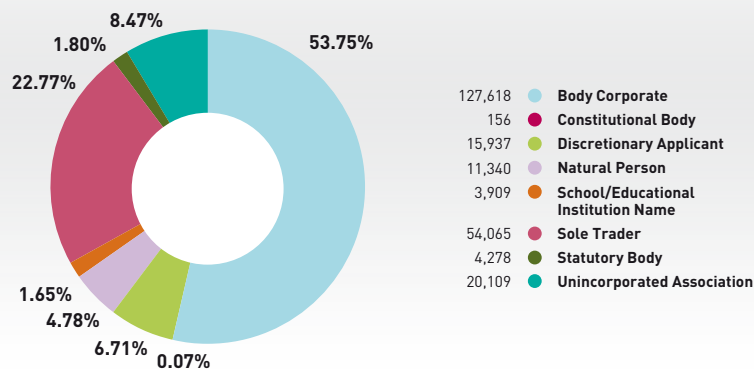
Classification of new .ie registrations by domain holder type

Classification of all new .ie registrations in 2017

17,641	Body Corporate
1	Constitutional Body
7,422	Discretionary Applicant
2,566	Natural Person
322	School/Educational Institution
8,840	Sole Trader
437	Statutory Body
2,294	Unincorporated Association
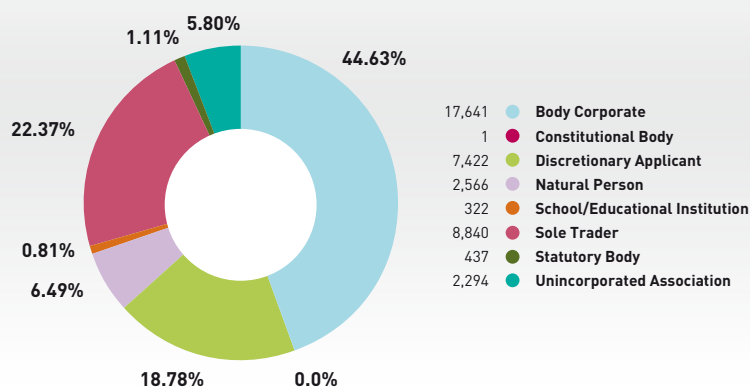
Growth of .ie domain database by domain holder type

Growth of .ie domain database by domain holder type and percentage change in 2017 compared to 2016

Chart showing growth of .ie domain database by domain holder type with percentage change values:
- Body Corporate: 5.63%
- Constitutional Body: -3.11%
- Discretionary Applicant: 43.16%
- Natural Person: 9.32%
- School/Educational Institution: 2.54%
- Sole Trader: 3.84%
- Statutory Body: 5.97%
- Unincorporated Association: 3.27%

● 2016   ● 2017
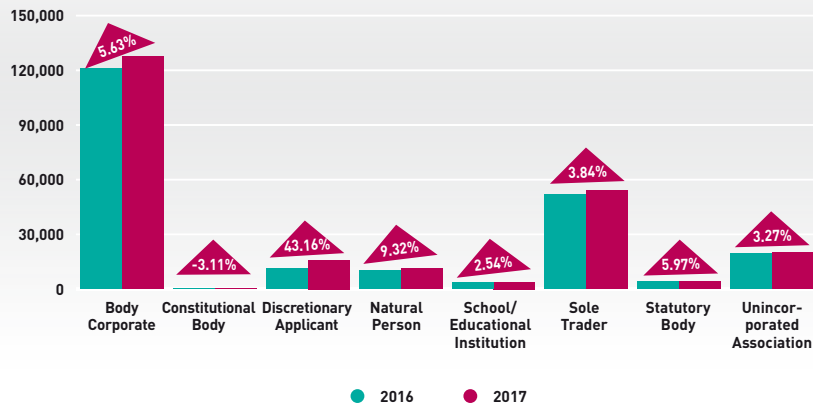
ANALYSIS OF .ie DOMAIN DATABASE BY GEOGRAPHY

At the end of 2017, the total number of .ie domains registered on the island of Ireland was 216,099, accounting for 91% of the total database.

Of the 39,523 .ie domains registered in 2017, 94.5% were registered on the island of Ireland. 36,743 were registered in the Republic of Ireland (up 16% on 2016) and 618 in Northern Ireland (up 10%).

2,162 .ie domains were registered outside the island of Ireland in 2017, a 9.5% decrease on 2016.

Island of Ireland
Total Number of
Registered Domains
216,099
% Share
91%

Northern Ireland
Total Number of
Registered Domains
3,514
% Share
1.5%

Republic of Ireland
Total Number of
Registered Domains
212,585
% Share
89.5%

International
Total Number of
Registered Domains
21,313
% Share
9%
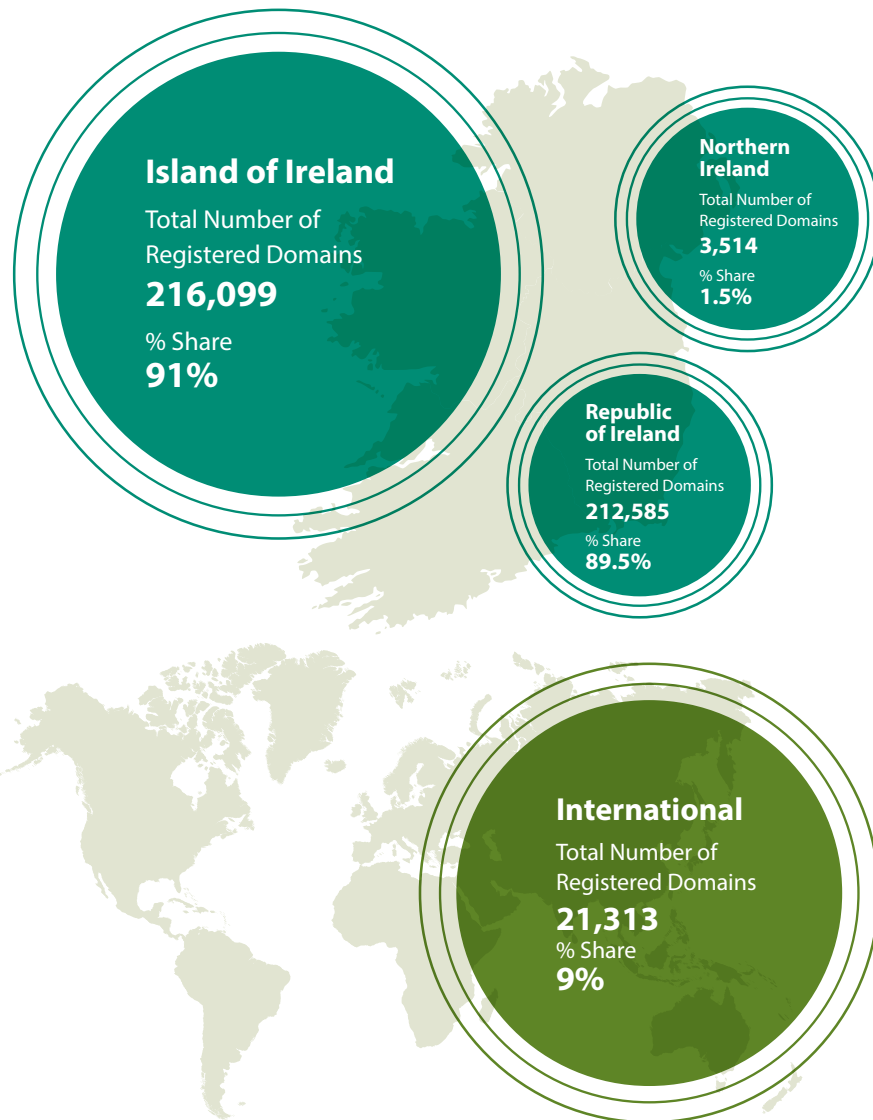
Split and growth of new registered .ie domains by geography

New .ie domain registrations by geography and percentage growth over 2017

Region	New Reg 2017	% Share	% Change Year On Year
Connacht	3,318	**8.40%**	21.14%
Leinster	24,776	**62.69%**	13.97%
Munster	7,347	**18.59%**	18.79%
Ulster	1,920	**4.86%**	22.92%
International	2,162	**5.47%**	-9.54%
Total	**39,523**	**100%**	

ANALYSIS OF .ie DOMAIN DATABASE BY PROVINCE

Within Ireland, Leinster accounts for the majority of .ie domains in the database (68% or 147,800 domains), followed by Munster (18.5% or 40,034) and Connacht (8% or 18,116). Ulster, with 10,149 registered .ie domains, accounts for nearly 5% of the database, a figure that is improving steadily each year.

In terms of new .ie registrations in 2017, in line with the total database, Leinster led the way, with 66% of all new registrations (24,776), followed by Munster (20%, 7,347), Connacht (9%, 3,318) and Ulster (5%, 1,920).

All provinces posted significant increases on 2016. New .ie registrations in Ulster were up by 23%, in Connacht by 21%, in Munster by 19%, and in Leinster by 14%.

Ulster
- 10,149
- 4.70%
- 5

Connacht
- 18,116
- 8.38%
- 33

Leinster
- 147,800
- 68.39%
- 56

Munster
- 40,034
- 18.53%
- 31

● Province   ● Total   ● % Share   ● Domains per 1,000 population
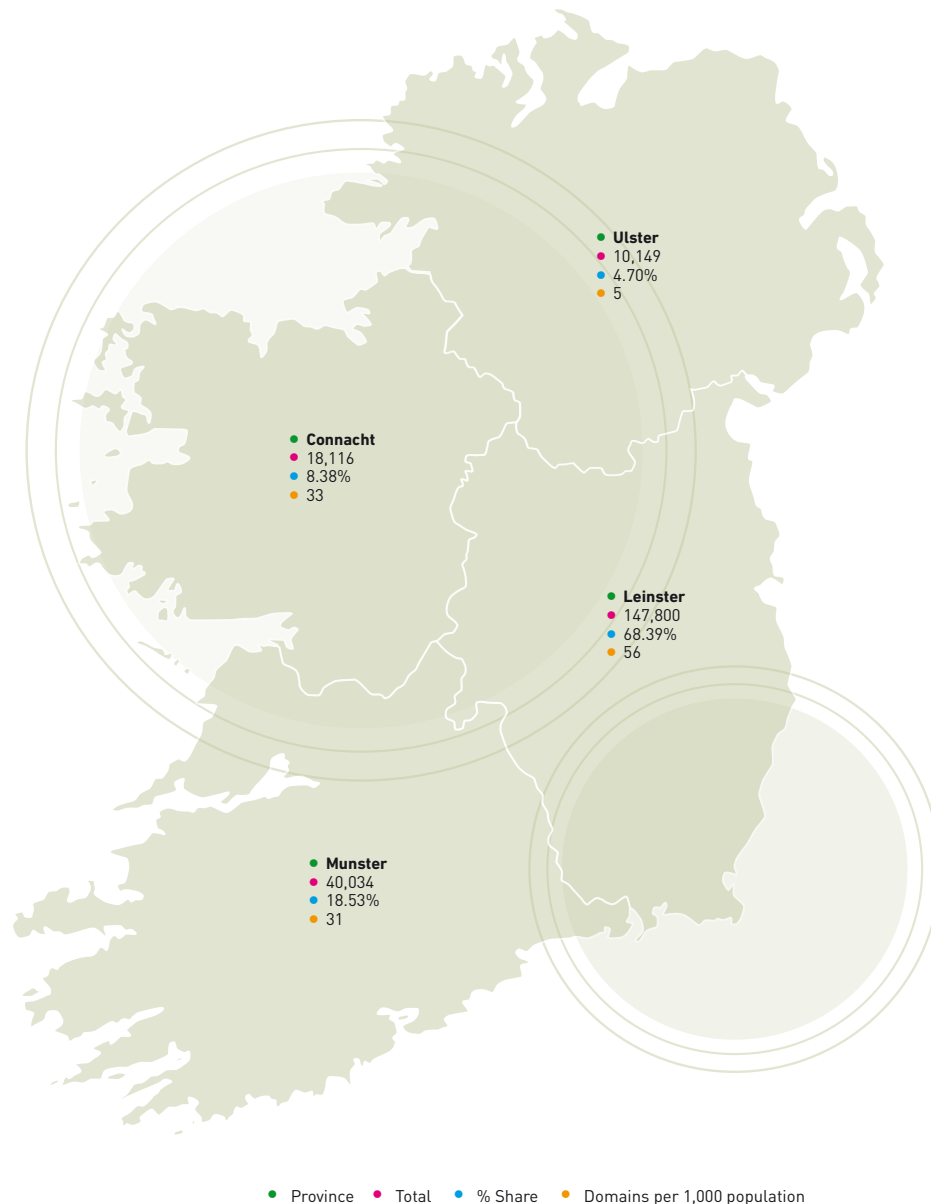
Split and growth of new .ie registrations by province

New .ie domains registered by province and percentage growth over 2017

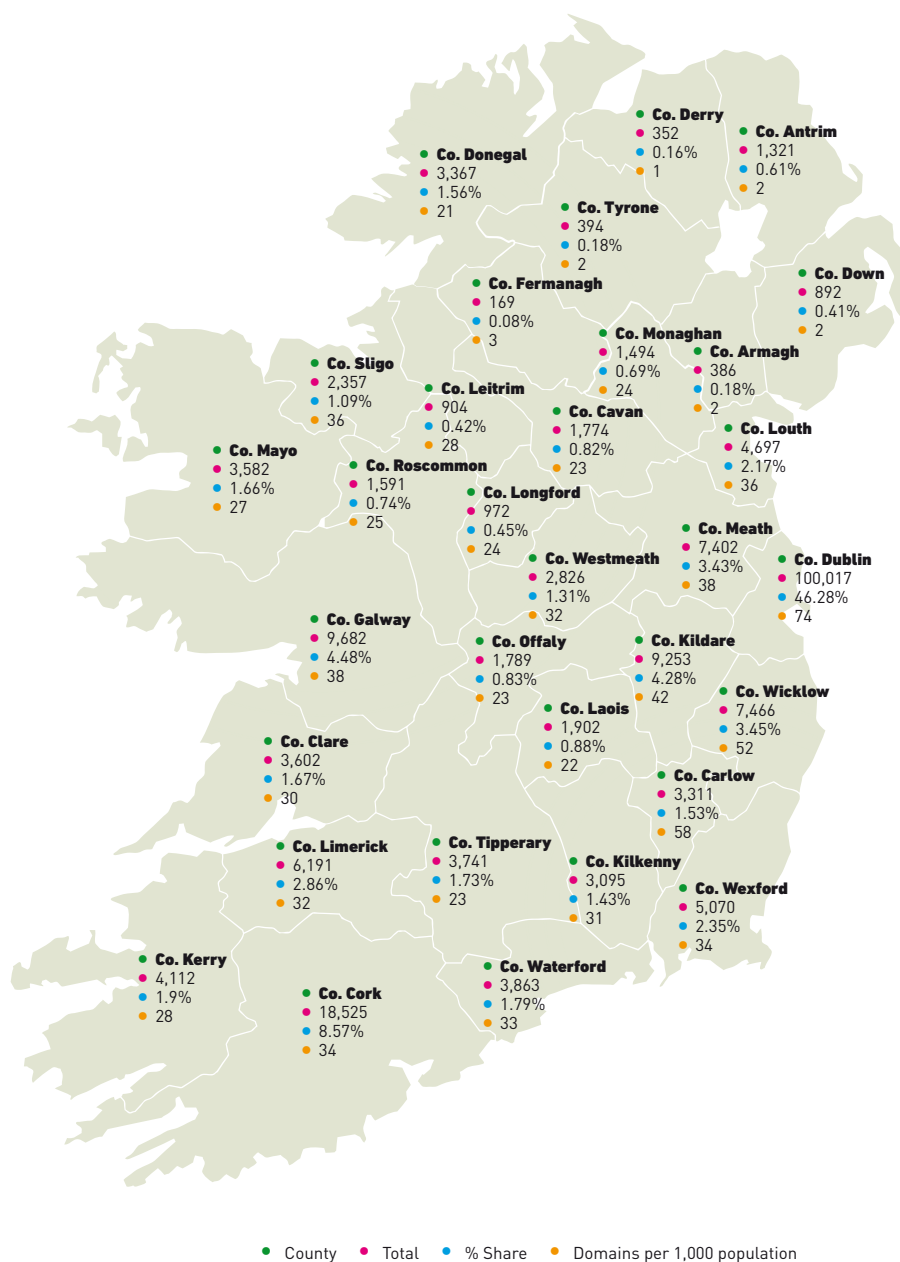| Province	New Reg 2017	% Share	% Change Year On Year
Connacht	3,318	**8.88%**	21.14%
Leinster	24,776	**66.32%**	13.97%
Munster	7,347	**19.66%**	18.79%
Ulster	1,920	**5.14%**	22.92%
Ulster - ROI	1,302	**3.48%**	29.94%
Ulster - UK	618	**1.65%**	10.36%
Total (excl International)	**37,361**		

ANALYSIS OF .ie DOMAIN DATABASE BY COUNTY

At the end of 2017 .ie domains registered in Dublin accounted for 46% of .ie domains registered on the island of Ireland, followed by Cork (8.5%) and Galway (4%).

In 2017, the majority of new .ie domains were registered in Dublin (43% or 16,065 .ie domains). This was a 13% increase on the previous year. The capital was followed by Cork (9% or 3,280 domains) and Galway (5% or 1,807 domains), a 16% and 19.5% increase year-on-year respectively. Every county in Ireland bar four – Antrim, Carlow, Roscommon and Tyrone – recorded an increase in new .ie registrations in 2017.

Fermanagh registered the smallest number of new .ie domains on the island of Ireland with 39, although this was a 26% increase on 2016. Leitrim registered the smallest number of .ie domains in the Republic of Ireland, with 171, although again, this was a 31.5% increase on the previous year.

Dublin, with 74, has the greatest number of domains per 1,000 people in the Republic of Ireland, followed by Carlow (58) and Wicklow (52). Derry has the smallest number of domains per 1,000 people on the island of Ireland (1) while Donegal has the smallest in the Republic (21).

Co. Derry
- 352
- 0.16%
- 1

Co. Antrim
- 1,321
- 0.61%
- 2

Co. Donegal
- 3,367
- 1.56%
- 21

Co. Tyrone
- 394
- 0.18%
- 2

Co. Down
- 892
- 0.41%
- 2

Co. Fermanagh
- 169
- 0.08%
- 3

Co. Monaghan
- 1,494
- 0.69%
- 24

Co. Armagh
- 386
- 0.18%
- 2

Co. Sligo
- 2,357
- 1.09%
- 36

Co. Leitrim
- 904
- 0.42%
- 28

Co. Cavan
- 1,774
- 0.82%
- 23

Co. Louth
- 4,697
- 2.17%
- 36

Co. Mayo
- 3,582
- 1.66%
- 27

Co. Roscommon
- 1,591
- 0.74%
- 25

Co. Longford
- 972
- 0.45%
- 24

Co. Meath
- 7,402
- 3.43%
- 38

Co. Dublin
- 100,017
- 46.28%
- 74

Co. Westmeath
- 2,826
- 1.31%
- 32

Co. Galway
- 9,682
- 4.48%
- 38

Co. Offaly
- 1,789
- 0.83%
- 23

Co. Kildare
- 9,253
- 4.28%
- 42

Co. Wicklow
- 7,466
- 3.45%
- 52

Co. Clare
- 3,602
- 1.67%
- 30

Co. Laois
- 1,902
- 0.88%
- 22

Co. Carlow
- 3,311
- 1.53%
- 58

Co. Limerick
- 6,191
- 2.86%
- 32

Co. Tipperary
- 3,741
- 1.73%
- 23

Co. Kilkenny
- 3,095
- 1.43%
- 31

Co. Wexford
- 5,070
- 2.35%
- 34

Co. Kerry
- 4,112
- 1.9%
- 28

Co. Cork
- 18,525
- 8.57%
- 34

Co. Waterford
- 3,863
- 1.79%
- 33

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

Split and growth of new .ie registrations by county

New .ie domains registered in 2017 by county and percentage change from 2016

| County Total	New Reg 2017	% Share	% Change
Co. Antrim	205	0.55%	-4.65%
Co. Armagh	71	0.19%	47.92%
Co. Carlow	578	1.55%	-7.81%
Co. Cavan	339	0.91%	26.02%
Co. Clare	670	1.79%	20.50%
Co. Cork	3,280	8.78%	15.62%
Co. Derry	58	0.16%	23.40%
Co. Donegal	639	1.71%	41.06%
Co. Down	175	0.47%	18.24%
Co. Dublin	16,065	43.00%	13.24%
Co. Fermanagh	39	0.10%	25.81%
Co. Galway	1,807	4.84%	19.51%
Co. Kerry	816	2.18%	12.55%
Co. Kildare	1,638	4.38%	17.93%
Co. Kilkenny	597	1.60%	51.14%
Co. Laois	392	1.05%	26.05%
Co. Leitrim	171	0.46%	31.54%
Co. Limerick	1,168	3.13%	29.78%
Co. Longford	188	0.50%	40.30%
Co. Louth	779	2.09%	9.72%
Co. Mayo	676	1.81%	29.25%
Co. Meath	1,349	3.61%	8.88%
Co. Monaghan	324	0.87%	15.71%
Co. Offaly	328	0.88%	21.93%
Co. Roscommon	260	0.70%	-0.38%
Co. Sligo	404	1.08%	29.07%
Co. Tipperary	712	1.91%	28.29%
Co. Tyrone	70	0.19%	-1.41%
Co. Waterford	701	1.88%	14.54%
Co. Westmeath	639	1.71%	42.00%
Co. Wexford	898	2.40%	0.79%
Co. Wicklow	1,325	3.55%	16.53%
Total	**37,361**		

ANALYSIS OF .ie DOMAIN DATABASE BY DOMAIN CHARACTER LENGTH

The majority of .ie domain names are between seven and fourteen characters in length. Ten-character domain names are the most common, with 18,851 registered.

36 .ie domains have just one character (for example t.ie), while 640 .ie domains have two characters. Scarce and memorable one- and two-letter .ie domains are in high demand. Currently www.al.ie is for sale on the domain name auction website www.sedo.com for €2,999.

721 .ie domains have more than thirty characters. The longest currently active domain name is www.lithuanian-and-russian-translation-and-language-school.ie, which has 54 characters.

Analysis of .ie domain names by number of characters
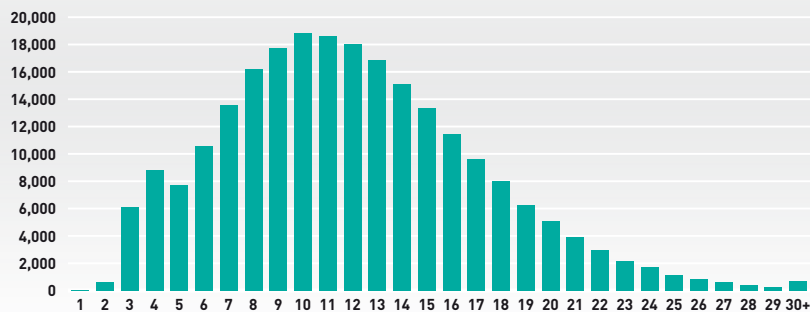
INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON OF DOMAIN MARKETS

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

Ireland ranks **18th** out of 22 European countries for the number of country domains per 1,000 people. This remains largely unchanged on previous years.
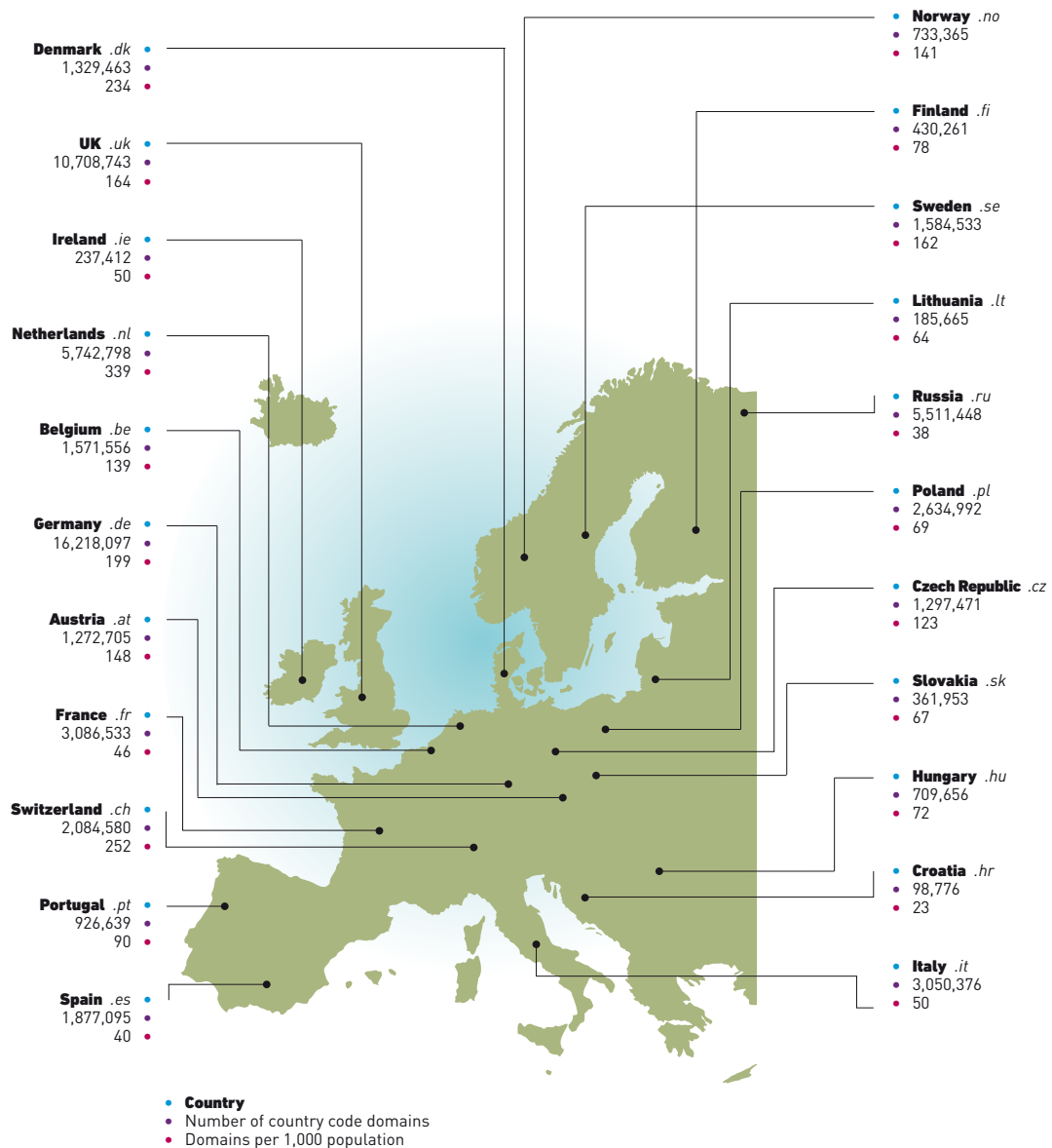
With 50 .ie domains per 1,000 people, Ireland ranks ahead of some larger countries, including France (46 .fr domains per 1,000 people), Spain (40 .es domains), and Russia (38 .ru domains).

However, there are countries with smaller or similar populations that have significantly more, including Lithuania (64 .lt domains per 1,000 people), Norway (141 .no domains), and Denmark (234 .dk domains).

Our closest neighbour, the UK, has 164 .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

Denmark .dk	**Norway** .no
1,329,463	733,365
234	141
UK .uk	**Finland** .fi
10,708,743	430,261
164	78
Ireland .ie	**Sweden** .se
237,412	1,584,533
50	162
Netherlands .nl	**Lithuania** .lt
5,742,798	185,665
339	64
Belgium .be	**Russia** .ru
1,571,556	5,511,448
139	38
Germany .de	**Poland** .pl
16,218,097	2,634,992
199	69
Austria .at	**Czech Republic** .cz
1,272,705	1,297,471
148	123
France .fr	**Slovakia** .sk
3,086,533	361,953
46	67
Switzerland .ch	**Hungary** .hu
2,084,580	709,656
252	72
Portugal .pt	**Croatia** .hr
926,639	98,776
90	23
Spain .es	**Italy** .it
1,877,095	3,050,376
40	50

- **Country**
- Number of country code domains
- Domains per 1,000 population

Source: Council of European National Top Level Domain Registries (www.centr.org)

Is Ireland really Europe's e-commerce role model?

According to a December 2017 report from Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union, Ireland ranks number one in the EU for web sales capability. National media quickly pronounced a victory for Irish business.

The survey follows the European Commission's Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) published early last year which made similar claims.[1] In response, the Government praised Ireland's e-commerce and internet infrastructure.

While on the surface, these results seem immensely positive, they have the potential to be highly misleading. In their methodology, both Eurostat and DESI classify 'small enterprises' as any business with between ten and 49 employees. Micro-businesses, or businesses with fewer than ten employees, are completely excluded from the research.

This omission is critically important. In Ireland, **92% of all businesses are micro-businesses** – larger SMEs and multinationals make up the remaining 8%. Employees of micro-businesses represent 28% of Ireland's workforce.[2] While the Eurostat and DESI reports 'look' good for Irish e-commerce, with such a significant demographic missing from them, they cannot be said to be an accurate reflection of the reality of Irish e-commerce.

IEDR's dot ie Digital Health Index, published biannually, measures the number and quality of digital assets used by Irish SMEs. The majority of the 500 SMEs we survey are micro-businesses (as our sample selection mirrors the CSO Business Demography). According to the most recent dot ie Digital Health Index, published in December 2017, 66% of Irish SMEs with a website cannot process online payments, and almost one in five SMEs have no online presence at all, either website or social media page.

This offline attitude in a digital age is harming Irish SMEs, and Irish consumers are not waiting around for their local businesses to get online. More than half (54%) said they would shop with a competitor for the same product or service if their preferred retailer was offline, while 59% said that if a business has no online presence, they would be less likely to use their services or do business with them.

By 2021, Ireland's share of the European digital marketplace is expected to total €14 billion, but without a change to the way SMEs engage in e-commerce, as much as 60% of that spend could go abroad to foreign retailers.

There are steps we can take now so that Ireland can have a better digital economy tomorrow. IEDR recommends a number of changes to policy makers in Government and industry, including the rollout of a national campaign to develop the digital skills of micro-businesses; a one-to-one 'buddy' mentoring system that pairs up micro-businesses with successful e-commerce companies; and the prioritisation of broadband provision to rural communities.

Our recommendations can be read in full in the latest edition of the dot ie Digital Health Index. If these are implemented, they could help micro-businesses to close the digital divide with SMEs greater than ten employees, which we are proud to acknowledge are European leaders for web sales capability.

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1   DESI 2017 – Ireland: https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/scoreboard/ireland

2   Source: CSO Business Demography 2015, Fig. 8: Distribution of Enterprises and Persons Engaged by Size Class 2015:
    http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/bd/businessdemography2015

Getting local .ie domain names will soon be easier and faster

The widespread growth in .ie domain name registrations in 2017 is testament to the fact that the economy is growing. This is in line with Ireland being one of the fastest growing economies in the Eurozone.

Significantly, growth in new .ie registrations was countrywide, with each province showing positive growth compared to 2016. This was particularly notable in Connacht and Ulster. Both regions experienced more than a 20% rise on 2016. Munster followed closely behind with an almost 19% rise in new .ie domain registration numbers on the previous year.

The growth of .ie domain registrations shows that businesses, clubs, and individuals recognise the value of having a .ie domain name – which is known for its stability, security and traceability. When visiting a .ie website, consumers know who is behind the name.

From March 2018, it will be even easier and faster to get any available .ie online address. Currently, to register a .ie domain name, an individual or business must prove that they have a valid claim to the desired name **and** a real, tangible connection to the island of Ireland.

In March, there will be a change to the registration process. We will drop the need to prove a valid claim to the name but retain the requirement for applicants to prove their connection to Ireland. Going forward, any individual or business with a provable connection to Ireland will be able to register any available .ie domain name on a first-come, first-served basis.

If you haven't already registered a .ie domain for your business, townland, parish or club and you have a valid claim to the name, you should get it today, before the claim requirement is removed. This is the only way to ensure that no one else gets your name.

About IE Domain Registry

IE Domain Registry (IEDR) is the official registry for .ie domain names, and it maintains the database of registered .ie domain names. IEDR originated as a spinout from University College Dublin, becoming an independent, separate limited company in July 2000.

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

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

Policy development for the .ie namespace follows a bottom-up, consensus driven and consultative approach, set out in IEDR's 10-step Policy Development Process (PDP).

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 IEDR can administer and manage the .ie namespace. The roles, responsibilities and services are delivered on a cost recovery basis. IEDR liaises with Government departments, governing bodies, trade associations, and abides by internet best practice principles while still operating as an independent public company.

Why choose a .ie domain name?

A .ie domain name has a number of distinct advantages when compared against alternatives:

- A .ie web address tells the global community that you are Irish and tells the Irish community that you are local.

- It gives consumers a greater sense of security, particularly when buying online from a known local business.

- There is more choice of domain names, as a .ie is more likely to be available than a similar .com.

- .ie is the only domain namespace reserved for anyone with a connection to Ireland and helps to connect Irish businesses to local and global markets online.

Visit www.iedr.ie to register your .ie domain name.

Identifiably Irish

Ireland's Domain Registry

IE Domain Registry CLG (IEDR)

4th Floor
2 Harbour Square
Crofton Road
Dun Laoghaire
Co Dublin
A96 D6RO

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