

# CENSUS IN SCHOOLS

Civic, Social and  
Political Education

**Introduction to Be Counted!**

A learning and teaching resource  
on the Census for use in CSPE

**CENSUS**  
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[www.census.ie](http://www.census.ie)

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# Overview

*Welcome to Be Counted!* This teaching and learning resource has been written to engage and inspire students to be curious and interested in interpreting, evaluating, gathering, recording and analysing data as a way of understanding our ever-changing world.

It seeks to help students and teachers access and understand the broad range of important, useful and interesting information that the census provides, and how this information helps to shape and reform our communities and society in the future through policy related to all aspects of our lives.

It seeks to empower students to become active citizens and to develop a range of skills which are in line with the Junior Cycle statements of learning along with the key skills and specific learning outcomes of the *new CSPE short course*.

It also aims to help guide and support teachers who are tasked with implementing the CSPE short course in their classrooms by being divided and structured around the three strands of the course. It aims to provide background information for teachers and students on census related matters, such as why we need the census information, what data is collected, how the census is conducted, what happens to the data, and the issue of validity.

## How the Resource Pack links to the curriculum: Teacher notes

The layout of the Resource Pack aligns the information and data provided by the census, and other CSO resources, into lesson plans based specifically on the three strands in the *2021 Curriculum Specification*. It must be noted that Strand 1 is usually taught in first year, Strand 2 in second and Strand 3 in third. The final three activity lesson plans can be added to each one of the lesson blocks and provide teachers with an opportunity to have an action record completed for each year group. Also note that in most schools CSPE is taught in one period per week in first and third year and for two periods a week in second, hence the extra lesson planned for this year group. Each lesson is designed for use during a forty-minute class period.

Students must complete three citizenship actions as part of their learning across the strands of the CSPE short course. The course focuses on students learning the potential of working with others to affect change. This resource includes possible actions that encourage students to create a citizenship action record based on their learning on the census.

# Strand 1

# Rights and Responsibilities

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## Lesson 1

The Census and Equality: This lesson serves as an introduction to and a focus on how the census connects to human rights and equality, particularly children's rights. This lesson should inform students how information provided in the census helps to highlight the need for facilities such as homes, schools, childcare, health centres, sports and recreational facilities.

**Learning Outcomes: 1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 1.11**

## Lesson 2

The Census, Human Dignity and Diversity: This lesson focuses on how the questions on the census help us to understand diversity in our society and how the data gathered can help us as a society to promote equality, to help prevent discrimination, and give us the tools to better overcome discrimination. This lesson also examines threats to human rights such as prejudice and stereotyping.

**Learning Outcomes: 1.8, 1.11**

# Strand 2

# Global Citizenship

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## Lesson 3

The Census and Economics: This lesson seeks to explain how the data from the census helps inform government policy on matters of economics, e.g. where housing, shops and other economic services are required. How questions such as the rural urban divide should be addressed, and how to identify and provide for areas of social growth or of social deprivation.

**Learning Outcomes: 2.6, 2.7, 2.12**

## Lesson 4

The Census, Development and Sustainable Development: This lesson explores the concept of development and will create an understanding how development can occur in a responsible way. The focus is to link data collected in the census to a democratic planning process. The students will be made aware of the complex nature of planned solutions and that sustainable development needs to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

**Learning Outcomes: 2.2, 2.4, 2.7, 2.12**

## Lesson 5

The Census and Climate Change: This lesson directly links to the census questions on renewable energy, heating, car ownership, and sustainable living. The focus is on students' understanding that they are part of the environment and about how they can contribute as citizens to making the world a better place by reducing their ecological footprint. Students should be able to connect how the data collected from the census informs government planning to achieve important climate targets.

**Learning Outcomes: 2.4, 2.9, 2.10, 2.12**

# Strand 3

## Exploring Democracy

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## Lesson 6

The Census and Democracy and Government Policy: This lesson identifies how the census and democracy are linked, focusing on how the information obtained from the census can be used to inform decision-making processes on policy and public services. Students should learn the way in which citizens can shape their State.

**Learning Outcomes: 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 3.6, 3.14**

## Lesson 7

The Census and the Law: This lesson looks at how the law affects us all in our everyday lives, particularly the importance of legality and validity in data collection. It also provides an opportunity to explore legal documents.

**Learning Outcomes: 3.7, 3.8, 3.11, 3.14**

# Action Weeks

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These lessons can be used at the end of each of the three strands and allows for flexibility so that the action undertaken reflects the learning completed from the strands:

### Lesson 8

**The Time Capsule:** This lesson directly links to the time capsule element of the census, giving students the time to explore and create a diary of the day to day contexts and institutions to which they belong and highlighting where they have power and influence. They will be able to communicate how they are connected to and dependent on ecosystems of people and places near and far. Additionally, they will be able to discuss what it means to be human and to live in a community with rights and responsibilities in the world of today.

**Learning Outcomes: 1.1, 2.1, 3.1 depending on the strand**

### Lesson 9/10

Activity weeks are structured in two main steps. Firstly, research in the form of data collection and secondly, action based on these findings.

These action weeks aim to allow the students some voice over a survey style action based on the census format in order to help raise awareness on one of the topics covered during this Resource Pack. The survey will help to inform the action then undertaken. It is intended that these activity weeks can be flexible in scale to allow the teacher to gauge the ability and interest of her students and to use them as shorter assessment pieces or as Citizenship Action records or CBAs.

The Statements of Learning from a Framework for Junior Cycle  
which align with this Resource

3: Creates, appreciates and critically interprets a wide range of texts

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6: Appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which she/he lives

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7: Values what it means to be an active citizen with rights and responsibilities in local and wider contexts

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8: Values local, national and international heritage and understands the importance of the relationship between past and current events and the forces that drive change

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9: Understands the origins and impacts of social, economic and environmental aspects of the world around her/him

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10: Has the awareness, knowledge, skills, values and motivation to live sustainably

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16: Describes, illustrates, interprets and explains patterns and relationship

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18: Observes and evaluates empirical events and processes and draws valid deductions and conclusions

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# The Census Explained

The census tells us who we are. Every five years we get a chance to make our mark by recording who we are, where we are, what we do, what we have to offer and what our current situation is. The census counts all the people and households in the country. Each census gives us a clear picture of the social and living conditions of the people. The census, therefore, provides vital information for planning Ireland's future. All of this information is freely available on the Central Statistics Office (CSO) website.

The census is compulsory; there is a legal requirement on the public to co-operate. Under Section 26 of The Statistics Act, 1993 any person who fails or refuses to provide this information or who knowingly provides false information may be fined up to €44,440.

The confidentiality of each household's Census return is legally guaranteed by The Statistics Act, 1993 and information may only be used for statistical purposes.

Since the 1950's Ireland has generally held a census every five years. A census was due to take place in 2021 but was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.