

Exploring the 1926 Census

Conference Programme

Thursday, 4 June 2026

Hibernia Conference Centre, Dublin Castle



An Chartlann Náisiúnta
National Archives

Census 1926

About the Conference

The Exploring the Census 1926 Conference will bring together researchers, practitioners, and the wider heritage community to reflect on and celebrate the release of the Census 1926 by the National Archives.

Set within the historic surrounds of Dublin Castle, the event offers a full-day programme that traces the journey of the census from its historical context and preparation for release to its public impact and future potential.

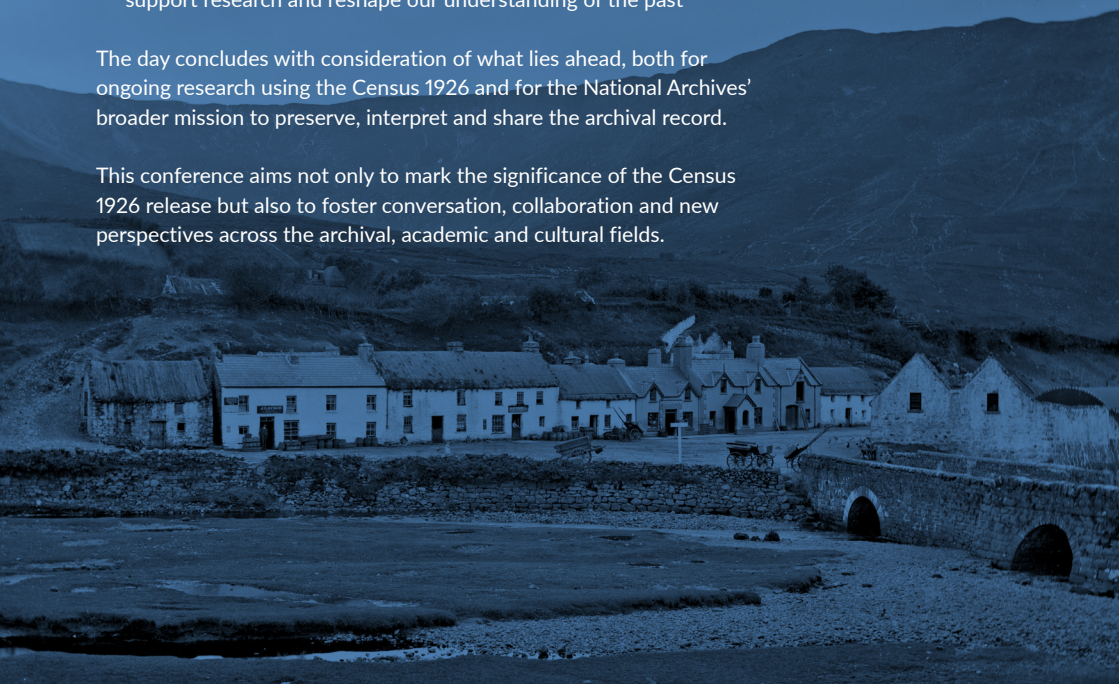
Across keynote lectures, thematic panels and discussions, the conference will explore the census as both a historical document and a contemporary resource.

Beginning with a framing of Ireland in 1926, the programme moves through a series of focused panels:

- Deepening our understanding of Irish society at the time
- Highlighting the extensive conservation, transcription and digitisation work undertaken to prepare the records
- Exploring the creative and public engagement initiatives developed around the release
- Demonstrating how innovative digital methodologies and tools support research and reshape our understanding of the past

The day concludes with consideration of what lies ahead, both for ongoing research using the Census 1926 and for the National Archives' broader mission to preserve, interpret and share the archival record.

This conference aims not only to mark the significance of the Census 1926 release but also to foster conversation, collaboration and new perspectives across the archival, academic and cultural fields.



Programme

09.00 Registration

09.45 **Welcome & Introduction**
Orlaith McBride, Director, National Archives

09.50 **Official Launch**
Minister Patrick O'Donovan, Department of Culture,
Communications and Sport

09.55 **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**
Prof. Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh, University of Galway

10.20 **PANEL 1**
Understanding the 1926 Census
Chair: **Katie Hannon, RTÉ**

Dr Joost Augusteijn, University of Leiden
Prof. Marie Coleman, Queen's University Belfast
Prof. Lindsey Earner Byrne, Trinity College Dublin
David McWilliams, *Irish Times*

11.15 **Coffee Break**

11.45 **PANEL 2**
Preparing the 1926 Census
Chair: **Orlaith McBride, Director, National Archives**

Jessica Baldwin, National Archives
Niamh McDonnell, National Archives
Dáire Rooney, National Archives

12.30 **Lunch**

Programme

13.15

PANEL 3

Engaging the 1926 Census

Chair: Zoë Reid, National Archives

John Beattie, 2021–23 Artist in Residence, National Archives

Owen Boss, ANU Productions

Maurice Sweeney, Director and filmmaker

Dr John Gibney, Documents on Irish Foreign Policy &
Co-Editor of *The Story of Us*

14.15

PANEL 4

Using the 1926 Census

Chair: Lynn Scarff, Royal Irish Academy

John Grenham, Genealogist

Dr Georgina Laragy, Trinity College Dublin

Prof. Gerardine Meaney, University College Dublin

Brendan Murphy, Central Statistics Office

15.10

Closing Remarks

Orlaith McBride, Director, National Archives



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