

RTB Rent Index shows 6.4% annual increase in national standardised average rents for Q4 2019, the lowest recorded annual increase since Q1 2014

- *The Q4 2019 RTB Rent Index shows the national standardised average rent was €1,226 per month.*
- *The report shows a 6.4% annual increase in the national standardised average rent - this is the lowest annual increase since Q1 2014.*
- *The average rent for Dublin was €1,716, up 5% year-on-year, the lowest annual increase in Dublin since Q2 2013.*
- *Based on the Rent Pressure Zone criteria, five Local Electoral Areas are now designated as Rent Pressure Zones.*
- *New Covid-19 emergency legislation prevents tenancies from ending and any rent increases from taking effect during the emergency period.*

Wednesday, 22 April 2020: The [Residential Tenancies Board](#) (RTB) has published the quarterly Rent Index for the October-December period (Q4) of 2019. The national standardised average rent was €1,226 per month, up by 6.4% (€74) from Q4 2018, and quarter-on-quarter rents decreased nationally by -1.2% (€15) in Q4 2019.

Following referral from the Housing Agency and the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government, Eoghan Murphy T.D., the RTB, using the Q4 2019 Rent Index, has confirmed to Minister Murphy that five Local Electoral Areas (LEAs), Mallow LEA, Killarney LEA, Athy LEA, Tullamore LEA and Mullingar LEA, meet the Rent Pressure Zone (RPZ) designation criteria. As a result, these LEAs are designated RPZs as of today, 22 April 2020.

Padraig McGoldrick, Interim Director of the RTB, reflected on the report's latest findings and the current climate the rental sector faces;

"We are encouraged to see that Q4 2019 recorded the lowest annual rent increase in six years, showing signals of stabilisation in urban areas. The designation today of a further five LEAs as RPZs provides further protection for renters in these areas.

However, I am aware that the period reflected in the latest Rent Index represents a very different world to the one we are living in today, and that the Covid-19 crisis presents new challenges for both landlords and tenants across the country.

These temporary measures help to ensure a balanced and fair market in the current circumstances and while rent must still be paid, no rent increases can take effect."

The RTB Rent Index, which is compiled in conjunction with the [Economic and Social Research Institute](#) (ESRI), is the authoritative report on the Irish rental market. It is based on actual rents paid on 17,269 tenancies registered with the RTB in the quarter, which is made up of housing stock new to the rental sector, new tenancies in existing housing stock and renewals of existing tenancies.

In Dublin, the standardised average rent is now €1,716 per month, up 5% (€82) year-on-year, the lowest annual increase in Dublin since Q2 2013. On a quarterly basis, the standardised average rent decreased by €33 (-1.9%) in comparison to Q3 2019.

Outside of Dublin, the standardised average rent is considerably less, standing at €922 in Q4 2019. This represents an annual increase of 7.6% (€65).

As of Q4 2019, there were seven counties where the standardised average rent exceeds (or equals) €1,000 per month. They are; Cork, Dublin, Galway, Kildare, Louth, Meath and Wicklow. Three counties (Kilkenny, Laois, and Limerick) all have a standardised average rent between €900 and €999. The high rental levels in these areas relative to other counties reflect the concentration of demand close to the country's largest employment hubs.

Nationally, the annual growth in standardised average rents for apartments has stood at under 6% in three consecutive quarters (5.7% in Q2 2019, 5.4% in Q3 2019 and 5.9% in Q4 2019), showing signs of stabilisation particularly in urban markets.

Concluding, Pádraig McGoldrick outlined the need for tenants and landlords to continue to fulfil their obligations throughout the Covid-19 crisis;

“There are some simple rules that should be reiterated at this time. Rent must still be paid by tenants as it falls due. Where a tenant is genuinely struggling to pay the rent, they may be entitled to support measures including income support and rent supplement, which we would encourage tenants to seek promptly.

This difficult period has borne witness to a lot of good will and support between landlords and tenants, and the RTB would encourage everyone to continue to communicate and support each other so that any challenges faced can be resolved through working together.

We are encouraging those who are experiencing issues in their tenancies during this time, to visit our website for information on how to resolve issues and, if necessary, use the RTB's telephone mediation service, which is a free service to help landlords and tenants resolve a dispute in a mutually beneficial manner, and does not require people to leave their home.

All the latest information on the emergency legislation and Q4 2019 Rent Index can also be found on our website at www.rtb.ie.”

The full Q4 2019 RTB Rent Index Report and supporting infographic, can be downloaded here:

- [Q4 2019 RTB Rent Index Report](#)
- [Supporting infographic](#)

Accompanying photography can be downloaded [here](#).

ENDS

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Emergency Legislation for Rental Sector and RTB Services

For more information on the COVID-19 Emergency Legislation for the Rental Sector, please read the Government Guidance Document on COVID-19: Supports for Landlords and Tenants [here](#). You may also visit www.rtb.ie for latest information.

RTB customers are encouraged to use online services such as webchat and email, as far as possible, during the emergency period, as there may be some delays to the RTB phone lines. Email contacts for all RTB Business Units and access to our Web Chat facility can be found on the RTB website [here](#). Our telephone lines remain open too (0818 30 30 37/01 702 8100), from 9am to 5pm, but we are requesting that all our customers try and seek solutions through our online and email services in the first instance.

Notices of Termination during the Emergency Period

No one can be made to leave their accommodation (other than in limited and exceptional circumstances where a breach of tenant obligations takes place and an RTB Determination Order is sourced through the dispute resolution process).

- Tenants do not have to leave their rental accommodation during the COVID-19 emergency period unless a notice of termination was issued before the emergency period, and the RTB issues a Determination Order supporting the tenancy termination for breach of tenant obligations.
- A notice of termination cannot be served during the COVID-19 emergency period. All notices of termination which were served before the emergency period and fall within this period, are paused; a tenant cannot be told to leave their rented accommodation during this time.

To learn more about the COVID-19 Emergency Legislation for the Rental Sector, please visit www.rtb.ie.

*New Rent Pressure Zones

Five Local Electoral Areas (LEAs), Mallow LEA, Killarney LEA, Athy LEA, Tullamore LEA, and, Mullingar LEA, meet the RPZ designation criteria. As a result, these LEAs are designated RPZs as of 22 April 2020.

For an area to be designated as an RPZ, it must meet the following criteria:

- **Criteria 1:** The annual rate of rent inflation in the area must have been 7% or more in four of the last six quarters.
- **Criteria 2:** The rent is above the comparison standardised average rent, which is appropriate for that area.

Table 1: New Rent Pressure Zones Designated on the 22nd April 2020

Local Electoral Area	County	Year-on-year Change in Rents	Number of Quarters >7% growth	Standardised average rent Q4 2019
Mallow LEA-5	Cork	8.65%	5	€905.60

Killarney LEA-7	Kerry	13.85%	4	€923.63
Athy LEA-5	Kildare	11.52%	6	€951.70
Tullamore LEA-7	Offaly	19.10%	5	€874.73
Mullingar LEA-6	Westmeath	19.03%	5	€907.96

**Please be advised that including the five new designations, there are now a total of five local authorities and 47 LEAs which are RPZs in Ireland.*

Appendix 1: Q4 2019 RTB Rent Index Summary Results.

The Dublin Market

- Dublin's rental market continues to be the largest in the country in Q4 2019, accounting for 41.9% or just over two in five new tenancies registered with the RTB in Q4 2019.
- The standardised average rent in Dublin was €1,716, up from €1,634 (Q4 2018) one year earlier. This represents an annual increase of 5.0% or €82.
- This growth rate compares to 6.2% in Q3 2019, 7.1% in Q2 2019, and 7.7% in Q1 2019.
- Relationship to peak - €1,301 in Q4 2007 was the peak pre-recession so rents are now 32% higher than this peak or €415 higher.
- On a quarterly basis the standardised average rent decreased by €33 or -1.9% in comparison to Q3 2019.
- The acute price pressures in Dublin are clearly evidenced with just 9.6% of tenancies agreed at less than €1,000 per month as compared to just below 66.7% elsewhere.
- In Dublin, just over 59% of tenancies had a rent level greater than €1,500 compared to 6% in the rest of the country.
- Apartments or flats make-up 71.5% of the rental market in Dublin compared to 42.9% in the Greater Dublin Area (excluding Dublin) (GDA) and 38.1% in the rest of the country.
- As Dublin accounts for a large share of economic activity and employment, housing demand can be considerable in, and around, the capital.

The Greater Dublin Area (Meath, Kildare, Wicklow)

- Outside of Dublin, the standardised average rent for the GDA (excluding Dublin) was standing at €1,247 up from €1,158 the previous year.
- On a year on year basis, the GDA (excluding Dublin) standardised average rent was up 7.7% (€89).
- The quarter-on-quarter rate of change in the standardised average rents for the GDA (excluding Dublin) was -0.2% in Q4 2019, a decrease from 4.2% in Q3 2019 (4% difference).
- Relationship to peak - €1,025 in Q4 2007 was the peak pre-recession so rents are now 22% higher than this peak or €222.

Outside GDA

- In Q4 2019, the standardised average rent for Outside the GDA was €872 up from €809 the previous year.
- On a year on year basis, outside the GDA standardised average rent was up 7.8% (€63).

- The quarter on quarter rate of change in the standardised average rents for outside the GDA area was -2.2% in Q4 2019, down from 5.2% in Q3 2019.

A full county-by-county breakdown is available on page 21 of the Q4 2019 RTB Rent Index.

Rental Developments across Cities – Irish Cities Index Q4 2019

Table 2: RTB Rent Index – Irish Cities

	Index Q4 2019	Standardised Average Rent Q4 2019	Standardised Average Rent Q3 2019	Q-o-Q Change (%)	Standardised Average Rent Q4 2018	Y-on-Y Change (%)
Cork City	123	€1,207	€1,194	1.1	€1,130	6.8
Dublin City	134	€1,677	€1,714	-2.2	€1,593	5.2
Galway City	122	€1,147	€1,274	-10.0	€1,085	5.7
Limerick City	119	€925	€975	-5.2	€9,01	2.7
Waterford City	123	€796	€786	1.3	€7,38	7.9

Due to a larger concentration of jobs and amenities within urban areas, the majority of the population is concentrated in cities and housing demand is highest in these areas. To provide more insight into rental developments across cities in Ireland, we present standardised average rents for each of the cities. The data is presented in Table 2 (see page 19 of the Q4 2019 RTB Rent Index for more information).

Investigations and Sanctions

On 1 July 2019, the RTB was given new powers to directly investigate and sanction breaches of rental law. The RTB can start an investigation into the following matters:

- Failure to comply with the RPZ requirements or falsely relying on an RPZ exemption;
- Failing to register a tenancy;
- Failing to offer a tenant their tenancy back where it has been terminated; and
- Citing a false or misleading reason to end a tenancy.

If you are aware of a potential breach of rental law as outlined above, you can bring it to the attention of the Investigations and Sanctions unit in three ways, by:

- Calling us on 0818 776297 or 01 6753724.
- Emailing us at investigations@rtb.ie.
- Making a formal complaint by filling out and returning the RTB Sanctions and Alleged Breach Complaint form found on www.rtb.ie.

To learn more about the RTB's new Investigations and Sanctions Unit, please visit the RTB website [here](#).

Registrations

The Q4 Rent Index Report is based on 17,269 registrations which consists of new housing stock being made available, new tenancies and contract renewals of existing tenancies.

To read the full Q4 2019 RTB Rent Index Report please click here.

For more information, please visit www.rtb.ie.