

RTB Rent Index shows 7% annual increase in rent levels outside Dublin for Q1 2021

- *National rents grew by 4.5% year-on-year in Q1 2021 in comparison to 4.7% in Q1 2020*
- *Outside Dublin, year-on-year price inflation stood at 7%, while in Dublin inflation was 2%*
- *The national standardised average rent stood at €1,320 in Q1 2021, an increase of €33 compared to the previous quarter*
- *In Q1 2021 in Dublin, the standardised average rent stood at €1,820 per month, a 2% increase year-on-year, while the lowest monthly rent was in Leitrim at €596 per month, a 3.8% year on year increase*
- *The county with the fastest growing rents in Q1 2021 was Kilkenny at 12.3% year-on-year growth. Clare, Galway and Mayo all had annualised growth above 10% in Q1 2021*
- *There has been a decline in the number of tenancies registered with the RTB in Q1 2021 (15,532) versus Q4 2020 (16,235)*

Wednesday, 14 JULY: The [Residential Tenancies Board](#) (RTB) has published the quarterly Rent Index for the January to March period (Q1) of 2021. The annual national standardised average rent stood at €1,320 in the Quarter. This is an increase of €33 in comparison to Q4 2020.

The county with the highest standardised average rent in Q1 2021 was Dublin (€1,820 per month) and the county with the lowest monthly rents was Leitrim (€596 per month). At Local Electoral Area (LEA) level, the highest standardised average rent was in Stillorgan, County Dublin (€2,378 per month), and the lowest was Lifford - Stranorlar, Co. Donegal (€566 per month).

There was annual growth recorded across 25 out of 26 counties in Q1 2021, with 17 counties recording annual growth of more than 5% in the first Quarter of 2021. Year-on-year price inflation stood at 7% outside Dublin.

The standardised average rent for houses stood at €1,304 per month, which is an increase of 2.6% on the previous quarter and a rise of 7.0% year-on-year. The standardised average rent for apartments stood at €1,351 per month this quarter, which is an increase of 2.2% on Q4 2020 and 2.2% year-on-year. For both houses and apartments, yearly growth was strongest Outside the Greater Dublin Area (GDA), while the lowest growth rate for both property types was seen in the GDA.

Padraig McGoldrick, Interim Director of the RTB, commented on the latest Rent Index findings:

“The Covid-19 pandemic continued to impact the economy and the rental sector in the first quarter of 2021. Q1 2021 was a period in which the Irish economy experienced a strict lockdown stemming from the spread of Covid-19, which impacted unemployment and had a knock-on effect on the rental sector.

The Q1 2021 Rent Index shows that there were fewer tenancies registered with the RTB, a reduction that may be linked to public health restrictions. It also showed that inflation is rising, which is especially evident outside of Dublin and in house rental prices – both representing a 7% annual increase. This may be the start of a potential trend of people moving outside of urban centres as a result of Covid-19, which we will continue to monitor.

Covid-19 has also brought about further legislative change for the rental sector in relation to rent reviews, rent arrears and deposits. For those most vulnerable and financially impacted by Covid-19 and in rent arrears, protections remain in place until 12th January 2022 if you qualify. There are also new measures being introduced where rents in RPZs can now only go up, if necessary, in line with general inflation as recorded in the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP). The RTB will continue to support landlords and tenants to help navigate these recent changes. If you are a landlord or tenant and need information, you can contact the RTB Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm on 0818 303037 or 01 702 8100 or use our webchat facility on www.rtb.ie.”

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 15,532 private tenancies registered with the RTB in the quarter, compared to 16,235 in Q4 2020. The tenancies registered with the RTB in Q1 2020 are only made up of new tenancies in existing housing stock and new tenancies in new stock that has not previously been rented out.

In Q1 2021, eight counties had standardised average rents above €1,000 per month: Cork, Dublin, Galway, Kildare, Limerick, Louth, Meath, and Wicklow. Year-on-year, the fastest-growing rent in the first quarter of 2021, by county, was seen in County Kilkenny (12.3%), and the county with the largest year-on-year decline in rents was Wicklow (-0.1%).

For anyone experiencing issues in their tenancies, please visit www.rtb.ie for information on how to resolve issues and, if necessary, use the RTB’s free telephone mediation service on 0818 30 30 37. This is available to help both landlords and tenants resolve a dispute in a mutually beneficial manner and does not require people to leave their home.

The full Q1 2021 RTB Rent Index Report and supporting infographics can be downloaded below:

[Rent Index Q1 2021](#)
[Q1 2021 Infographic](#)
[Regional Infographic](#)

ENDS

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Appendix 1: Q1 2021 RTB Rent Index Summary Results

Registered Tenancies: Sample Used for Rent Index & Part 4 Renewals

Up to now, each Rent Index Report analysed tenancies that are registered with the RTB which were made up of new tenancies in existing housing stock, new tenancies in new stock, and tenancies that have been renewed. For tenancies that began before 24th December 2016, landlords were required to renew their tenancies with the RTB every four years once the tenant was still living in the rented dwelling throughout the four years. After 24th December 2016, this requirement increased to every six years. This change has meant that there are no tenancy renewals due to be registered with the RTB until Q1 2023.

As a result, the tenancies analysed as part of Q1 2021 Rent Index Report did not include any renewal tenancies, only tenancies that are new in existing housing stock and new tenancies in new housing stock. When tenancies are new to market and have not been rented out in the previous two years, they are exempt from following RPZ rules and can set their rents to market rent.

In order to ensure that results are consistent across time and that they are not driven by changes in the tenancy registration sample composition, all renewal tenancies have therefore been removed from the tenancies analysed to generate the indices and standardised averages going back to 2007.

The Residential Tenancies (No.2) Act 2021: New Legislation for the Rental Sector

The Residential Tenancies (No.2) Act 2021 (RTA(2) 2021) was enacted and came into operation on 9 July 2021, apart from section 6. Section 6 which deals with rent setting will come into operation as soon as possible.

The RTA(2) 2021 extends the protections given to tenants under the Planning and Development, and Residential Tenancies, Act 2020 (PDRTA) until 12 January 2022. These protections apply to qualifying tenants whose tenancies are at risk of being terminated because they cannot pay their rent as a result of Covid-19. For a full overview of the protections provided by the PDRTA click [here](#).

The RTA(2) 2021 also introduces permanent changes to the Residential Tenancies Act 2004. There is a new method for landlords to calculate how to set rent in a Rent Pressure Zone (RPZ). Prior to the coming into operation of section 6, rents in RPZs could not be increased by more than 4% annually. Section 6 provides that any rent increase in an RPZ cannot exceed general inflation, as recorded by Harmonised Index of the Consumer Price (HICP) and to be published in the RTB HICP Table on www.rtb.ie. This part of the legislation has not yet taken effect.

There are also changes which give greater protections and certainty for tenants, including students, such as limits on the amount landlords can require anyone to pay to secure a tenancy:

- A deposit cannot exceed more than one month's rent; and
- An advance payment of rent cannot exceed one month's rent. In other words, landlords cannot ask anyone to pay more than the equivalent of 2 months' rent in total to secure a tenancy.

In addition, any ongoing advance rent payment during a tenancy cannot exceed one month's rent.

A further change is that students who are residing at Student Specific Accommodation (SSA) are only required to give 28 days' notice to the provider of SSA, if they want to terminate the tenancy arrangement. These students can give a longer period of notice if they wish, but there is no requirement in law to do so. These measures are aimed at improving the operation of the residential rented sector and protecting tenants, particularly during a sustained period of constrained supply in the private rental accommodation sector which has been negatively impacted by Covid-19.

For further detail, please refer to the [Government Guidance Document](#) and RTB [FAQs](#).

National

- The national standardised average rent stood at €1,320 in Q1 2021.
- Year-on-year rents grew by 4.5% in the first quarter of 2021. This growth rate is higher than that of Q4 2020 (3.3%)
- Nationally, in terms of property type, 60.4% of the tenancies registered in Q1 2021 were apartments or flats.
- In Q1 2021, 2.6% of properties had a monthly rent level of less than or equal to €500; 29.9% had a monthly rent level of €501-€1,000; 29.8% had a monthly rent level of €1,001-€1,500; and 37.6% had a monthly rent level in excess of €1,500.
- There has been a decline in the number of tenancies registered with the RTB and used in our sample in Q1 2021 (15,532) compared to Q4 2020 (16,235). This reduction may be linked to increased public health restrictions in place during the first quarter of Q1 2021.

The Dublin Market

- Dublin accounted for 77.2% of tenancies in Q1 2021.
- Year-on-year price inflation stood at 2% in the Dublin area.
- In Dublin, 77.2% of tenancies in Q1 2021 were for apartments, while it was 43.8% and 50.6% in the Rest of the Country and the GDA (Greater Dublin Area), respectively.
- In Dublin, 67.9% of rents were over €1,500, and another 25.6% were between €1,001 and €1,500.
- As of Q1 2021, standardised average rent in Dublin was higher than outside Dublin (Non-Dublin) at €1,820 per month compared to €1,017 per month. The standardised average rent in the GDA stood at €1,333 as of Q1 2021, while it was €971 outside the GDA.
- Compared to Q4 2020 (€1,745), the standardised average rent in Dublin was €8 higher in Q1 2021 (€1,753).
- Year-on-year apartment rents fell at -0.1% in Dublin.

Outside Dublin

- The standardised average rent is considerably less outside Dublin, standing at €1,017 in Q1 2021.
- Year-on-year price inflation stood at 7% outside Dublin.
- Taking a typical two-bedroom house, the standardised average rent in Dublin stood at €1,684 per month in Q4 2020. This is nearly twice the level for a two-bedroom house outside Dublin, for which the most recent standardised average rent was €878 per month.

- Year-on-year apartment rents grew by 6.5% outside Dublin. In Q1 2021, apartment rental prices Outside the GDA experienced the strongest annual growth, with an increase of 8.1% year-on-year.
- The lowest rent for houses across the regions was for a one-bed house outside the GDA for which the standardised average rent was €786 per month in Q1 2021.
- The county with the fastest growing rents in Q1 2021 was Kilkenny at 12.3% year-on-year growth. Clare, Galway and Mayo all had annualised growth above 10% in Q1 2021 as well

Greater Dublin Area (Meath, Kildare, Wicklow)

- The standardised average rent in the GDA stood at €1,333 as of Q1 2021 while it was €971 outside the GDA.
- Dublin and the GDA accounted for over half (55.8%) of all tenancy agreements registered in Q1 2021.
- The standardised average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in the Greater Dublin Area was €1,278 in Q1 2021 while the equivalent apartment outside the GDA carried an average rent of approximately €962 per month.
- Price inflation was lowest in the GDA at -0.1% year-on-year.

Cities

- While rents in Dublin City were 1.6% higher in Q1 2021 compared to Q4 2020, they decreased year-on-year by 1.0%.
- Rent levels in Dublin City averaged €1,724 per month in Q1 2021.
- Galway City had the second-highest standardised average rent level in Q1 2021 at €1,301. The standardised average rent in Cork City stood at €1,291 per month in Q1 2021 and was €1,056 in Limerick City.
- The only city with standardised average rent lower than €1,000 per month was Waterford City, where it was €884 per month in Q1 2021.
- The year-on-year growth rates in Cork City and Galway City were 5.9% and 10.5%, respectively.
- Rents in Waterford City and Limerick City also increased significantly in Q1 2021 compared to the Q1 2020 rent levels increasing by 7.1 and 8.1% year-on-year respectively.

Trend in House Rent Prices

- Taking a typical two-bedroom house, the standardised average rent in Dublin stood at €1,753 per month in Q1 2021. This is nearly twice the level for a two-bedroom house outside Dublin for which the most recent standardised average rent was €924 per month.
- The average standardised rent for a two-bedroom house in the GDA was €1,232 in Q1 2021.
- The difference in level of rents between Dublin and elsewhere can be noticed for a one-bedroom house in Dublin (€1,412 per month) costs just over €250 per month more than a house with four or more bedrooms outside Dublin (€1,160). The lowest rent for houses across the regions was for a one-bed house outside the GDA for which the standardised average rent was €786 per month in Q1 2021.
- A four-bed house in Dublin and outside of the GDA experienced the strongest yearly increase overall with growth of 9.5% and 10% yearly, respectively.
- A three-bed house in the GDA fell by 1.4% year-on-year, representing a €20 per month decrease.

Trend in Apartment Rent Prices

- Taking a typical two-bedroom apartment, the standardised average rent in Dublin stood at €1,857 per month in Q1 2021. Similar to the house rental market, this is

significantly (€850) more than the level for a two-bedroom apartment outside Dublin, for which the most recent standardised average rent was €1,007 per month.

- The standardised average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in the Greater Dublin Area was €1,278 in Q1 2021, while the equivalent apartment outside the GDA carried an average rent of approximately €962 per month.
- The difference in the level of rents between Dublin and elsewhere is again noticeable as the rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Dublin (€1,475 per month) costs just over €300 per month more than an apartment with three or more bedrooms outside Dublin (€1,169 per month).
- The fastest-growing apartment prices across the regions were apartments with three or more bedrooms in the GDA, which grew at 11.7% year-on-year.

More information on House and Apartment Rent Prices can be found on pages 10 of the Q1 2021 Rent Index Report.

Due to a large 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 1. (See pages 11 of the Q1 2021 RTB Rent Index for more information).

Rental Developments Across Counties

- Eight counties have standardised average rents above €1,000 per month: Cork, Dublin, Galway, Kildare, Limerick, Louth, Meath and Wicklow.
- On a quarterly basis, rents rose in all but 5 counties (Leitrim, Meath, Offaly, Wicklow, Roscommon) in Q1 2021.
- The county with the fastest-growing rents in Q1 2021 was Kilkenny at 12.3% year-on-year growth. Clare, Galway and Mayo all had annualised growth above 10% in Q1 2021 as well.

A full county by county breakdown is available on pages 24 of the Q1 2021 RTB Rent Index Report.

Local Electoral Area (LEA) Trends

- In Q1 2021, the LEA with the highest standardised average rent was Stillorgan, Co. Dublin at €2,378.
- The LEA with the lowest standardised average rent in Q1 2021 was Lifford - Stranorlar, Co. Donegal at €566.

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 Rent Pressure Zone (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 Investigations and Sanctions Unit, please visit the RTB website [here](#).