



An  
Phríomh-Oifig  
Staidrimh

Central  
Statistics  
Office



Census  
AtSchool

## CensusAtSchool 2019

21st October 2019



**Please note: This survey is voluntary. It is not part of a representative sampling process. Hence, the results of the survey are less reliable in providing inferences about the overall secondary school student population.**

### What is CensusAtSchool?

CensusAtSchool is an online educational project that takes place every year with the aim of bringing statistics to life in the classroom. Schools take part voluntarily. Supervised by teachers, students use a variety of digital devices that are connected to the Internet to answer 30 questions about their lives and opinions. The data is then collated and made available for class exercises, so that students can see the real-life relevance of statistics.

From an estimated 362,000 secondary school students, 1,417 (0.4%) students completed the Phase 18 questionnaire of the CensusAtSchool survey. It was available between September 2018 and August 2019. The Phase 18 questionnaire covered a variety of topics including:

- ◆ immersion and interest in languages
- ◆ the most popular shoes
- ◆ objects to bring to a desert island

### Background information

CensusAtSchool is a non-profit making international project. It is funded by organisations interested in promoting good use of statistics, mathematics and data handling. Ireland became involved in CensusAtSchool in 2009. Four Irish bodies are collaborating in this project:

- ◆ the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST)
- ◆ the CSO
- ◆ Project Maths
- ◆ the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).

The Irish website, [www.censusatschool.ie](http://www.censusatschool.ie), has been in place since 2009.

For more information, contact Sarah Crilly at 021 453 5085.

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CSO on the Web: [www.cso.ie](http://www.cso.ie)  
and visit  
[www.censusatschool.ie](http://www.censusatschool.ie)

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## Footwear

Students were asked about the types of footwear they own and the cost and colour of their last pair of trainers. Three in four students spent less than €100 on their last pair of trainers (75%) while less than one in twenty students spent over €200 on their last pair of trainers (4%).

The most popular type of shoe with students are trainers, with over half of students owning at least three pairs of trainers (56%). Wellies are the least popular, with only 45% of students owning at least one pair. See Figures 1 and 2.

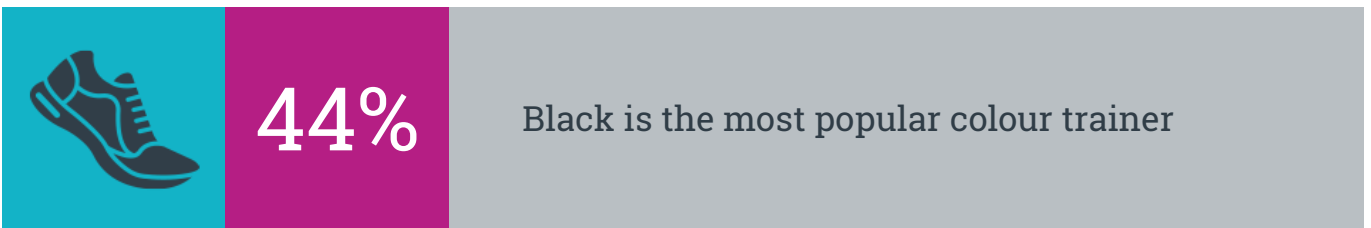
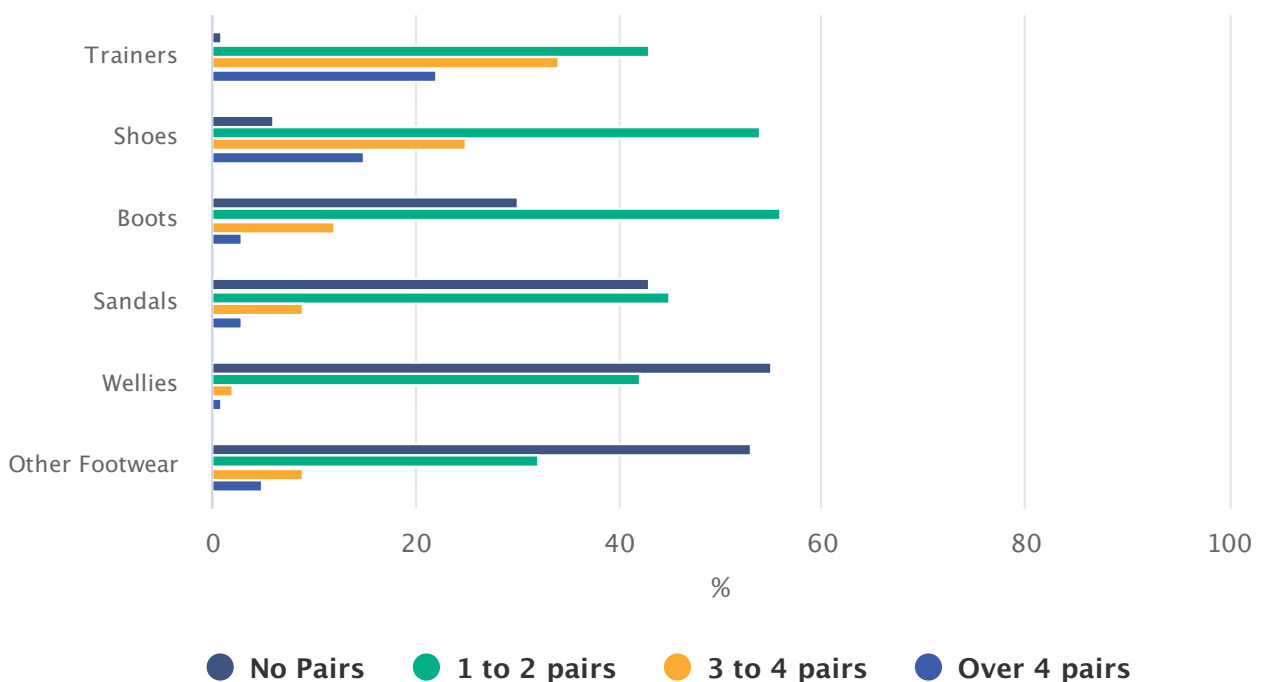
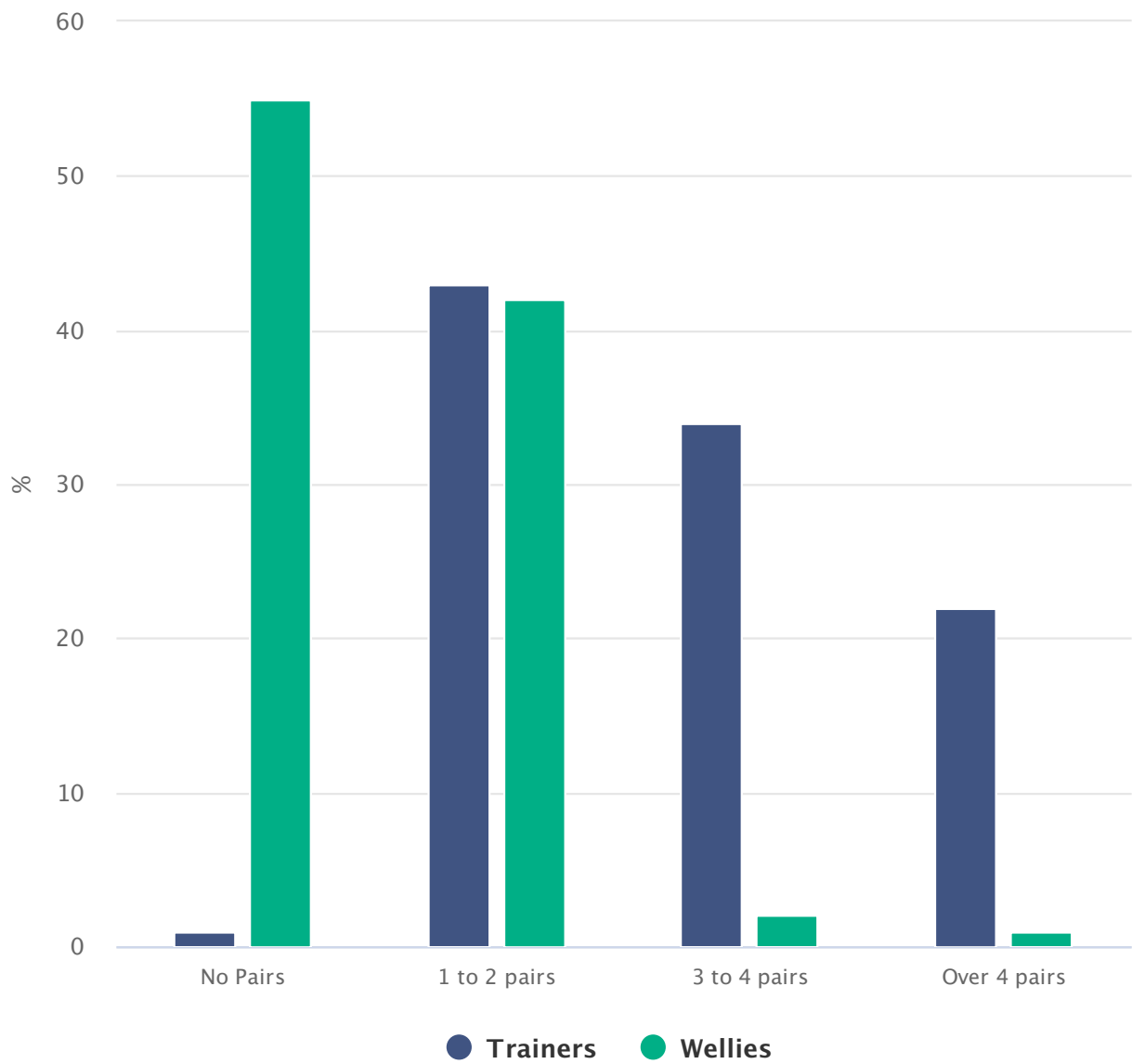


Fig 1 How many pairs of the following types of footwear do you own?



Source: CSO Ireland

Fig 2 Trainers v's Wellies – How many pairs do you own?



Source: CSO Ireland

## Languages



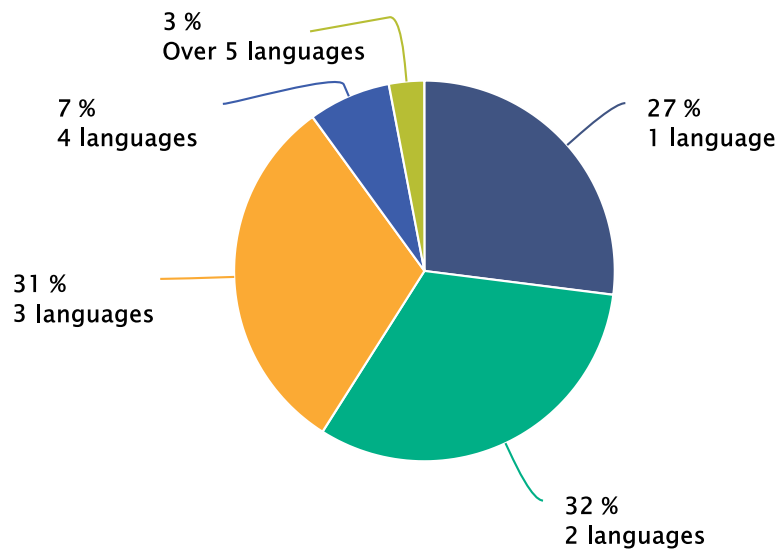
Students were also asked various questions on languages including which languages they can hold conversations in and languages which they would like to learn. They were also asked which reasons would encourage them to learn languages and also the downsides to learning languages.

Of the students that do speak Irish, almost three in five never speak Irish outside of school (59%). Just under one in 12 students speak Irish daily outside of school (8%).

The most popular language to learn, that is unavailable at school, is Spanish. Over four in ten females would like to learn Spanish (42%) while a third of males would like to learn Spanish (33%). Forty-four different languages were mentioned by students in their responses. A broad diversity of languages were mentioned by students including Mongolian, Bisaya, Igbo, Korean and many more.

Four in ten students can hold an everyday conversation in at least three languages (41%). Approximately 3% of students are conversant in at least five languages. See Figure 3.

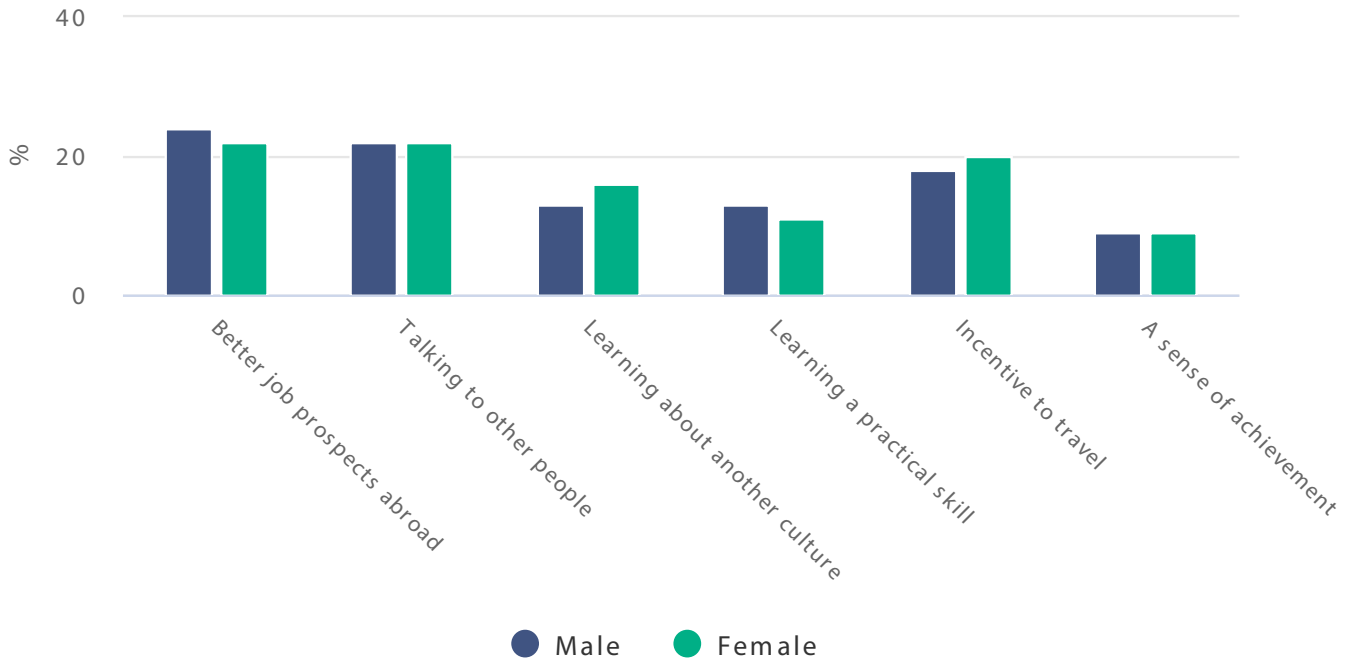
Fig 3 In how many languages can you hold an everyday conversation?



Source: CSO Ireland

Just over one in five females (22%) and under one in four males (24%) would learn a new language as there are “better job prospects abroad”. The least popular reason to learn a new language was “a sense of achievement” with less than one and ten students choosing this reason (9%). See Figure 4.

Fig 4 In your opinion what are the three main reasons for learning a new language?



Source: CSO Ireland

### Height of students



Students were also asked to measure their height. Over 83% of respondents were in either 1st year (54%) or transition year (29%). The average height of a male 1st year was 1.63m, 4cm taller than female first years. This height difference increased to 13cm in transition year, with female transition years measuring 1.65m and male transition years measuring 1.78m.

## School bags

The weight of school bags was also measured. Almost seven in ten students found that their school bags weighed less than 2kg. Males were more likely to have a school bag that weighed over 6kg (15% of males, 10% of females).

School books were the heaviest object in student’s bags. Females were more likely to report that their drink bottle was the heaviest object in their bag than males (13% of females, 6% of males). See Figure 5.

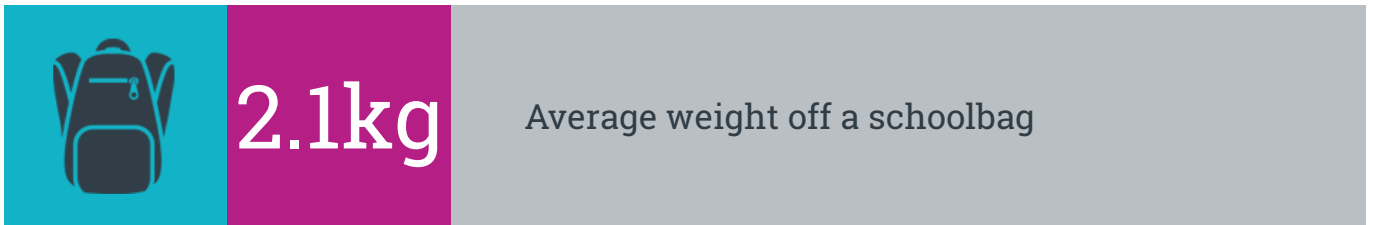
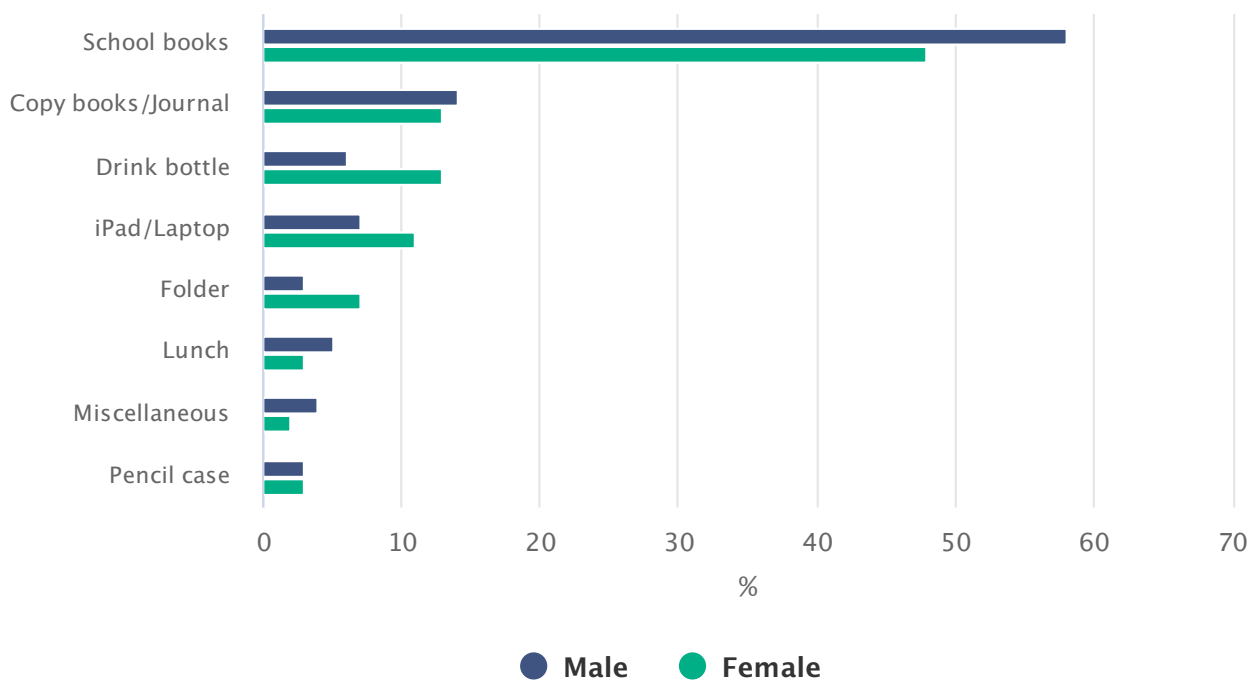


Fig 5 What is the single heaviest object in your bag today?



Source: CSO Ireland

## Desert Island

Students were asked what one object they would bring to a desert island. The most popular object to bring to a desert island was food and water with over one in three females (35%) and one in four males (26%) choosing this object. Males were more likely to want transport off the island (24% of males, 17% of females) while females were more likely to want to bring a phone (15% of females, 6% of males). See Figure 6.

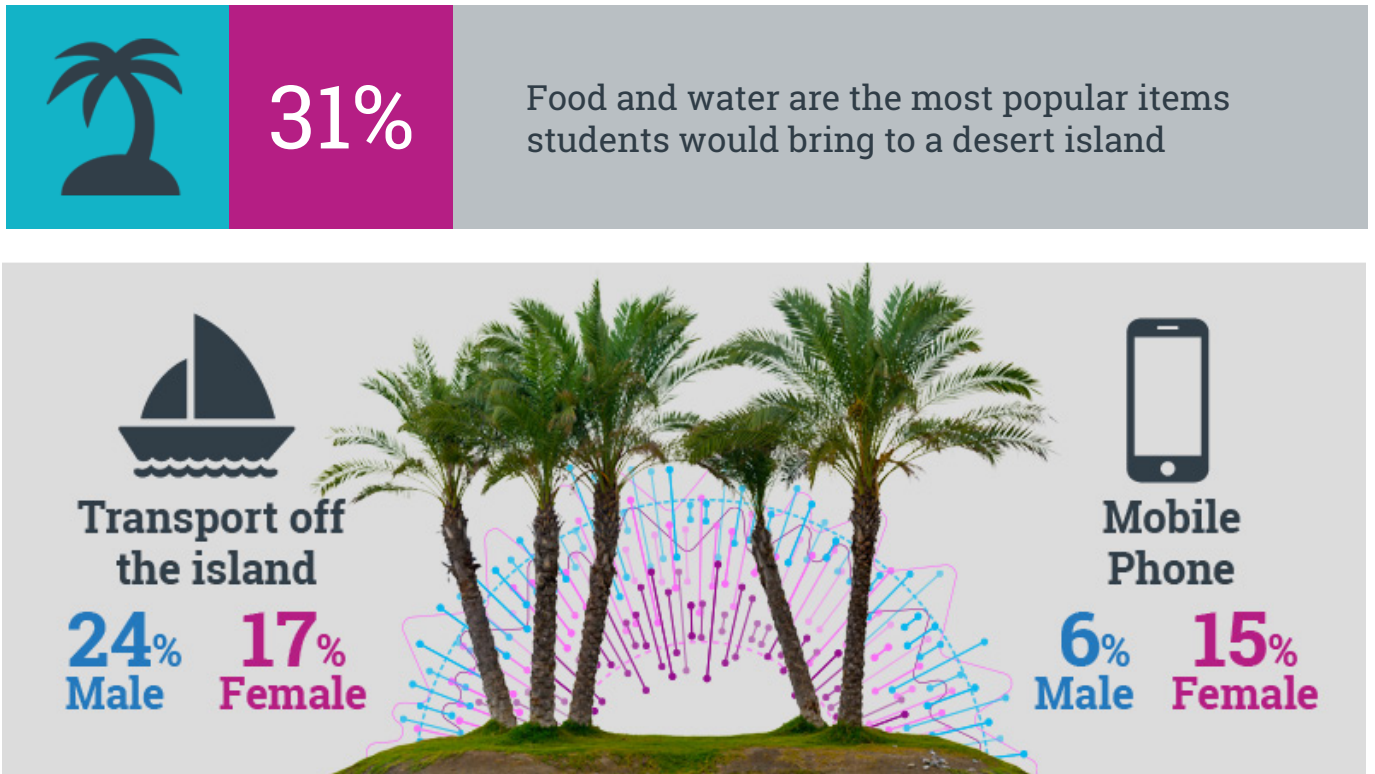
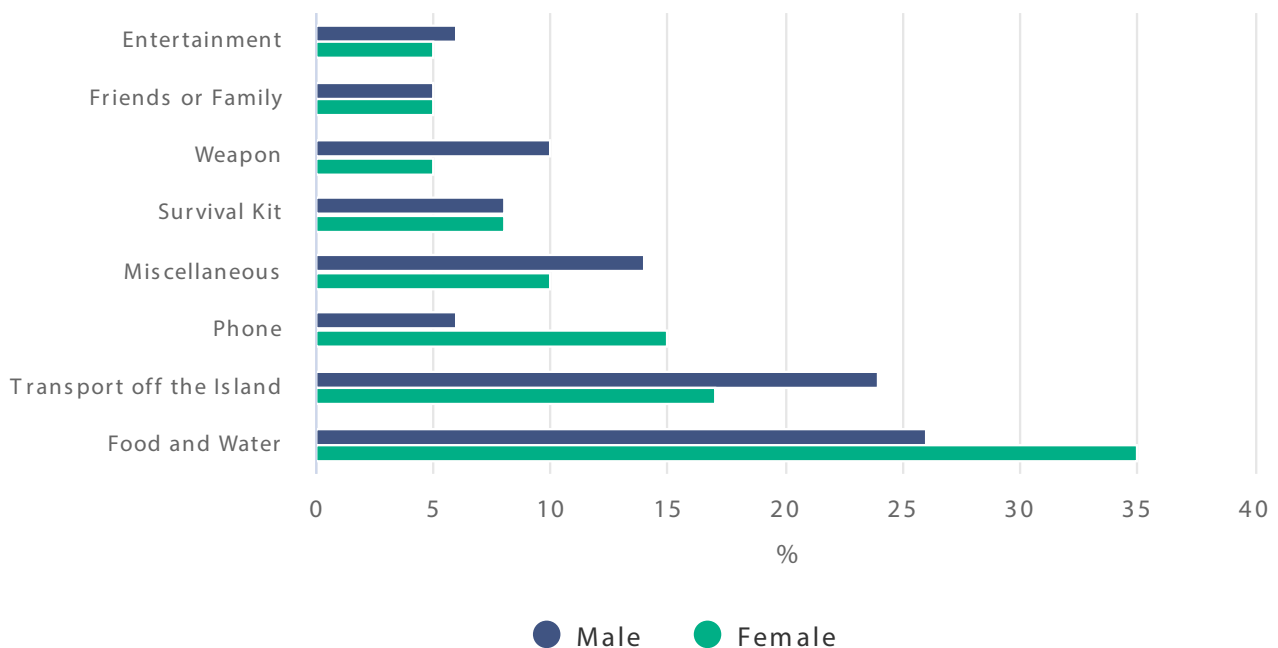


Fig 6 If you found yourself on a desert island, what one object would you like to have with you?





### CensusAtSchool 2018/2019 Questionnaire

1. Are you:  
 Female       Male

2. a) Please state your present age in completed years.  
 years

2. b) What year are you in at school?  
 Year      e.g. 5<sup>th</sup> Year

3. In what county do you live?

4. In what country were you born?

5. What is your...  
*(Answer to nearest tenth of a cm)*

Height (without shoes) .....cm  
 Span of the hand you write with .....cm  
 Vertical reach .....cm  
 Length of right foot .....cm  
 Circumference of right wrist .....cm

6. a) What is the weight of your school bag today? *(Answer to one decimal place)*  
 School bag weight .....kg

6. b) What is the single heaviest object in your bag today?

6. c) Do you have a locker in school?  
 Yes       No

7. a) How many pairs of each type of footwear do you own?

Trainers/sports shoes  
 Shoes (casual + formal)  
 Boots  
 Sandals  
 Wellies  
 Other

7. b) How much did you spend on your last pair of trainers/sports shoes?  
 Euro

7. c) What was the colour of your last pair of trainers/sports shoes?

8. a) Do you live in a Gaeltacht area?  
 Yes       No

8. b) Have you attended/do you attend a Gaelscoil?  
 Yes       No

8. c) Do you speak Irish?  
 Yes       No  
 If yes, outside of school, do you speak Irish:  
 Daily       Weekly  
 Monthly       Yearly  
 Never

9. a) In how many languages can you hold an everyday conversation?  
 Languages

9. b) Is there a language you would like to learn that is not currently available in your school?  
 Yes       No  
 If yes, please specify: .....

10. a) In your opinion what are the three main reasons for learning a new language?  
 Better job prospects abroad  
 Talking to other people  
 Learning about another culture  
 Learning a practical skill  
 Incentive to travel  
 A sense of achievement

10. b) In your opinion what are the three main downsides to learning a language?  
 Learning grammar is difficult  
 Learning vocabulary is hard  
 Most people speak English  
 Languages taught in school are not useful in real life  
 Most languages are not useful

10. c) If you had a choice, would you study a Modern Foreign Language for your Leaving Certificate?  
 Yes       No  
 If you answered 'no', which of the following reasons describe why you chose not to study a Modern Foreign Language?  
 Other subjects more interesting  
 Languages are difficult  
 Languages are too much work  
 Learning languages is boring  
 Most people speak English

10. d) What would encourage you to learn a language?  
 School exchange abroad  
 Speaking to native speakers  
 More help with grammar  
 Interactive lessons  
 Interesting language topics

11. Who first published a recognisable Periodic Table of Elements?

12. a) How many elements were in the original Periodic Table of Elements?  
 Elements

12. b) How many elements are in the current Periodic Table of Elements?  
 Elements

12. c) Name the element - Au

13. a) In what year did the first Dáil meet?

13. b) Where did the first Dáil meet?  
 Cork City Hall  
 Mansion House, Dublin  
 Leinster House, Dublin  
 Hyde Park, Roscommon

14. If you found yourself on a desert island, what one object would you like to have with you?



## Background Notes

### About CensusAtSchools

The Royal Statistical Centre for Statistical Education (RSSCSE) started the CensusAtSchool project in 2000 in conjunction with the Office of National Statistics (ONS) in the UK. The project, originally a one-off, was linked to the UK population census of 2001. It has now developed into a dynamic, on-going and exciting initiative running in a number of countries.

Further information can be found here:

USA	<a href="http://ww2.amstat.org/censusatschool/index.cfm">http://ww2.amstat.org/censusatschool/index.cfm</a>
Canada	<a href="http://www.censusatschool.ca/">http://www.censusatschool.ca/</a>
New Zealand	<a href="http://new.censusatschool.org.nz/explore/">http://new.censusatschool.org.nz/explore/</a>
UK	<a href="http://www.censusatschool.com/">http://www.censusatschool.com/</a>
Japan	<a href="http://census.ism.ac.jp/cas/">http://census.ism.ac.jp/cas/</a>

### Sample

1,417 secondary school attendees from 78 secondary schools completed the Phase 18 questionnaire of the CensusAtSchool survey between September 2017 and August 2018. Because the survey is not part of a representative sampling process, the results of the survey are less reliable in providing inferences about the overall secondary school student population.

### Questionnaire

The CensusAtSchool Phase 18 questionnaire and more results from the survey can be found on the CensusAtSchool website at <http://www.censusatschool.ie/en/take-part/questionnaires>

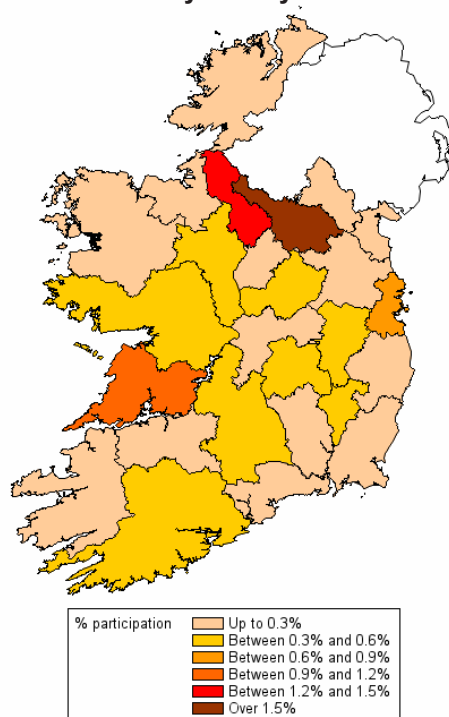
A data tool for examining international CensusAtSchool data can be found:

<http://new.censusatschool.org.nz/explore/>

It can be further explored using the facilities inbuilt in the inZight site operated by Statistics New Zealand.

<https://www.stat.auckland.ac.nz/~wild/inZight/index.php>

**Map 1. Student participation in CensusAtSchool Phase 17 questionnaire classified by county location of school**



**Note:** The map only includes survey responses when the roll number on the questionnaire response matched a school roll number provided by the Department of Education and Skills.





