

Monaghan – An Economic Profile



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Strategic Operational Base

Due to the significant investments in road infrastructure in Monaghan town, journey times have been dramatically reduced, congestion avoided, and a road network developed which meets the needs of the local business community.

Distance from major urban centres: -

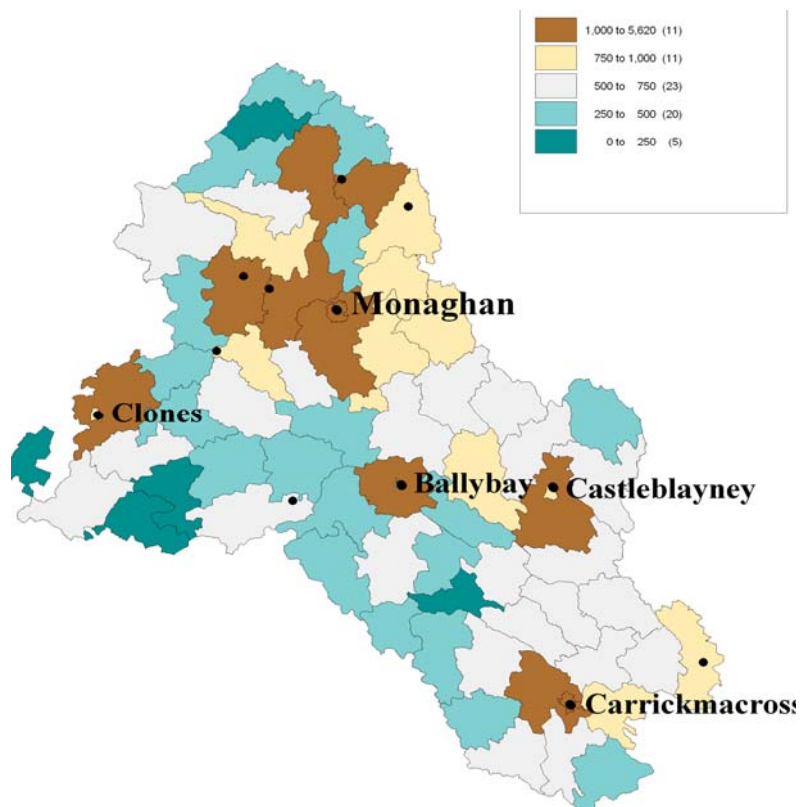
Dublin city – 82 miles
Belfast city – 57 miles
Drogheda – 53 miles
Derry – 35 miles
Dundalk – 32 miles

Various accessible seaports: - Larne, Belfast, Dublin, Drogheda.

Demographics

Population

The population in county Monaghan has increased by 6.5% from 2002 to 2006 according to the census data from 52,593 to 55,997, with Monaghan Town Urban ED growing from 5,717 in 2002 to 6,250 in 2006 (an increase of 8.5%). As residential and other development in Monaghan town has since moved further outwards beyond the urban boundary, the population has increased dramatically. In the period from 2002 to 2006, Monaghan Rural ED has grown from a population of 1,284 to 5611, an increase of 337%. This represents a significant pool of potential employees to be utilised by future business development in the area.



The map to the left clearly demonstrates the significant increases in population density (persons per square kilometre) from 2002 to 2006 in and around the main urban centres, particularly Monaghan Town.

In terms of the individual age categories, Monaghan has been advancing in terms of numbers in the younger age brackets. This is a good indicator of growth in the county. As can be seen from the tables below, Monaghan has a 1% higher number of 0-14 yr olds as a proportion of the population compared to the national average. Monaghan has also been making significant gains in the 25-44 yr old bracket, with an increase of 1,942 in the period from 2002 to 2006.

Percentage population in each age category 2006

	0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65-74	75 +
Monaghan 2002	22.40%	16.20%	27.70%	21.40%	6.70%	5.60%
Monaghan 2006	21.20%	14.80%	29.50%	22.50%	6.50%	5.60%
State 2006	20.40%	14.90%	31.70%	21.90%	6.25%	4.80%

Numbers in each age category

	Aged 0 to 14 2006	Aged 15 to 24 2006	Aged 25 to 44 2006	Aged 45 to 64 2006	Aged 65 to 74 2006	Aged 75 Plus 2006
2002	11,774	8,530	14,573	11,242	3,513	2,961
2006	11,869	8,270	16,515	12,593	3,612	3,138
Change	+95	-260	+1,942	+1,351	+99	+177

Population Projections

At the time of the publication of the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (NSS), the population of Monaghan as a HUB town was 5,936. The population in 2006, based on preliminary 2006 ED data provided by the CSO was estimated to be 6,587. This represented a 2.64% increase from 2002 census figures, higher than the national average (1.97%).

The NSS projected population for Monaghan Hub was 20,000 by year 2020. When taking recent growth patterns into account, the projections for all Hubs under the NSS were revised downwards. The projected population of Monaghan Hub for 2020 is now 10,000, based on recent growth patterns.

Age dependency

There has been a continuous decline in the age dependency rate (the proportion of population under 15 years of age or over 64 as part of the total population) throughout Ireland over the past 15 years, from 38.1% in 1991 to 31.4% in 2006. An even greater decline applies to County Monaghan (41.6% to 33.2%), albeit starting from a higher level. Within Monaghan, there exist the typical urban-rural differential, with age dependency being lower in the county's urban areas (31.3%) and higher in its rural areas.

Lone Parents

The proportion of lone parents (as a proportion of all households with dependent children) in Ireland has exactly doubled over the past 15 years, growing from 10.7% in 1991 to 21.3% nationally in 2006. County Monaghan had a rate of 16.5% in 2006; i.e. well below the national average.

Social Class Composition

The changes in social class composition experienced throughout Ireland over the past 15 years largely parallels those in educational achievement, with a gradual increase in the number of professionals and an even greater decline in the proportion of semi- and unskilled

manual workers. At the national level, the proportion of professionals in all classes rose from 25.2% in 1991 to 32.9% in 2006.

In Monaghan County, the proportion in the professional classes was 28.8% in 2006 and the proportion in the lower skilled professions was 21.5%.

Monaghan Rural ED displays a much higher percentage of those within the higher social classes than in other areas with 31.1% being of a professional status. Monaghan Urban ED also displays disproportionately higher levels of those within the higher social classes (5-7 = 44%) compared to the national equivalent of 33%.

Absolute and Relative Deprivation

In overall terms, the Trutz Haase summary of deprivation levels in Monaghan states that the county is not characterised by particular extremes either with regard to affluence or deprivation. The most affluent areas are the rural areas surrounding Monaghan town and Carrickmackross, whilst the Northern and Western parts of the county tend to be slightly more disadvantaged. Monaghan County lies in the middle in terms of deprivation scores on a county level when it comes to the various different measures.

Education

The following table denotes the primary and secondary schools in Monaghan town with enrolment figures.

School Name	Level	Enrolment
Gaelscoil Ultain	Primary	196
Monaghan Model School	Primary	121
Scoil Bhrighde	Primary	45
St Louis Girl's National School	Primary	277
St Louis Infant School	Primary	279
St Mary's Boys National School	Primary	291
Beech Hill College	Secondary	601
Coláiste Oiriall	Secondary	68
Monaghan Collegiate School	Secondary	213
St. Louis Secondary School	Secondary	743
St. Macartan's College	Secondary	703

There has been a continuous improvement in the level of education amongst adults over the past 15 years throughout Ireland. In 1991, 36.7% of the adult population had primary education only. This dropped to half that level (18.9%) by 2006. There has been a percentage decrease in County Monaghan from 46.0% in 1991 to 25.1% in 2006. This is a fall of -20.9% compared to -17.8% nationally.

When it comes to third level education, the numbers nationally have more than doubled over the past 15 years. In 1991, 13.0% of the national adult population had completed third level education. This grew to 30.5% in 2006. The proportion of Monaghan's population with third level education has grown from 8.3% to 21.6% in the same period. These figures do not however take into account those students achieving third level education in other counties and in Northern Ireland. While the economic downturn and the likelihood of third level fees will present a challenge going forward, equally this can be counteracted by the opportunity to attain third level qualifications locally through the expansion of Monaghan Institute of Further Education and Training (MIFET), and better use of Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT).

In an effort to exploit these opportunities, Monaghan Institute of Further Education & Training have joined the North East Further & Higher Education Alliance (NEFHEA). They have developed a new collaborative model for expanding access to further and higher education in the North East Region. The alliance consists of: -

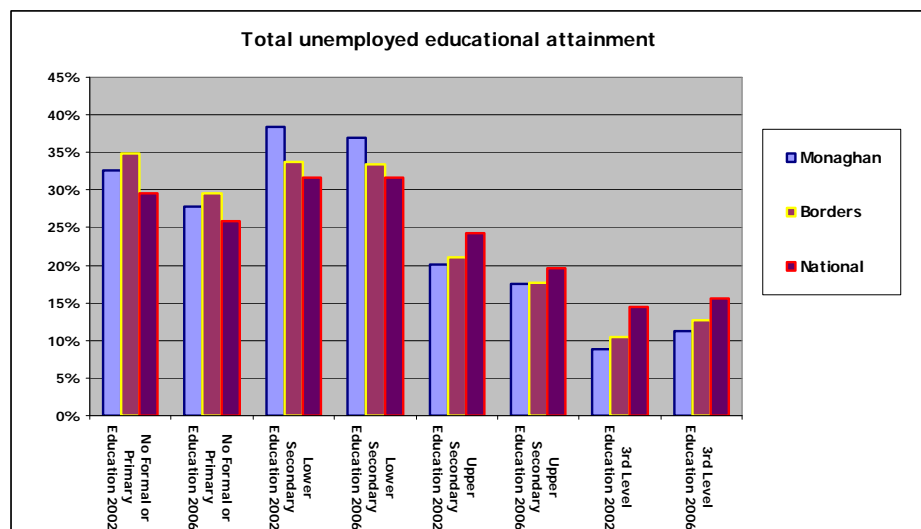
- Cavan Institute
- Drogheda Institute of Further Education
- Dunboyne College for Further Education
- Dundalk Institute of Technology
- Monaghan Institute of Further Education & Training
- O’Fiaich Institute of Further Education

The above institutions have signed a “Memorandum of Understanding” in November 2008, agreeing to collaborative work in relation to the following: -

- To promote access, transfer and progression between further and higher education in the North East region.
- Increase progression from Further Education Colleges to Dundalk Institute of Technology
- Identify areas of potential sharing of expertise between FE colleges
- Develop a pre entry college module.

Education Levels of Unemployed

Educational Levels of Total Unemployed 2002-2006 percentages



(Source: Gamma CSO Baseline Data Report 2006)

The situation in relation to those unemployed with no formal qualifications has improved across the board, i.e. they take up less of a share of the total figures in 2006, compared to 2002, with Monaghan seeing a slightly greater drop (-4.9%) compared to the national perspective (-3.7%).

In terms of those with higher or 3rd level education, Monaghan has enjoyed significantly less being unemployed when compared to the national figures from 2002 to 2006. Given the economic downturn and subsequent mass job losses Ireland has suffered in recent times, the picture here is likely to represent a much higher percentage of those with higher and 3rd level education finding themselves unemployed.

While in other county's unemployment has risen significantly, the capacity and skills of people in Monaghan leaves them well placed to become involved in new business ventures/start up's or other employment opportunities.

Roads

A top-class national roads network is vital to improving the competitiveness of business and industry in Monaghan County, facilitating further inward investment, and supporting all-island co-operation. Through the National Development Plan over €14.1 million was allocated for national road improvements and maintenance in the county in 2008.

The improvement of non national roads is also critical and a further €16.9 million was provided for local projects including the R178 Carrickmacross to Dundalk Road, the R162 Ballybay Main Street Junction, the R188 Monaghan to Cootehill Road, Annaghroe Bridge and the Castleblayney Backlands Road Project.

Monaghan Town Bypass

The Monaghan town bypass was completed in September 2006 and opened by Mr Pat the Cope Gallagher, T.D. The bypass which was funded by the Irish Government and co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund consists of 2.9kms two-lane road from the N2/N12 junction (Armagh Road) north of Monaghan town to a new roundabout on the N2 at Corlatt. The Bypass serves not only to alleviate traffic congestion, but also has a very positive impact, socially, economically and environmentally for all concerned. Tourism, enterprise and local services are more competitive as a result of the bypass by enhancing the capacity for the movement of people, goods, energy and information between key urban areas both north and south of the Border.

Carrickmacross Bypass

The N2 Carrickmacross to Aclint Road Realignment or Carrickmacross Bypass was completed in January 2005 involving the construction of 8.5 km of single carriageway roadway and seven bridge structures, providing separation between national and local traffic. This represented a significant infrastructural development in Carrickmacross. The Bypass was named Sli an Chaomhánaigh - 'Kavanagh Way' - to perpetuate the memory and literary achievements of the local poet and author Patrick Kavanagh. The bypass has made a major impact on the town since it opened, not only reducing traffic and congestion, but has also improved pedestrian safety and radically reduced traffic pollution which in turn have enhanced the town centre environment and made a more pleasant place to visit.

Castleblayney Bypass

This was completed in November 2007 and opened by the Minister for Transport Noel Dempsey T.D. The Bypass is 15.9 km in length and was funded under the National Development Plan. It is a realignment of the existing N2 National Primary Route from the townland of Moy Otra, north of Clontibret to the town land of Drumcrew, south of Castleblayney town. The N2 National Primary Route is considered the main arterial route from Dublin to Derry, Donegal and the northwest.

Transport 21

Transport 21 sets out the government's strategy for development of Ireland's road network to 2015, with €30 billion pledged in order to deliver a world class transport system. The recent economic downturn may however present challenges in terms of the delivery of such a large project. Part of that network will incorporate the N2 Dublin-Derry Road from Clontibret to the north of Emyvale village. The N2 has been cited as a strategic route with regional and

national importance. At its southern end the scheme will join the Castleblayney Bypass and at the northern end it will tie-in to the proposed upgrade of the N2/A5 route through Northern Ireland. Coupled with the Monaghan Town bypass and the Carrickmacross bypass, this new road will complete the upgrading of the Derry/Dublin National Primary route from north of Monaghan town to the Capital. The timesaving and improved safety of the route will further enhance the attractiveness of County Monaghan as a place to live, work and visit.

The substantial enhancements to Monaghan's road network in recent times together with proposed improvements to come will undoubtedly have a very positive impact, socially, economically and environmentally on the entire region. Car journeys will be cut significantly, congestion in our main towns drastically reduced, enhancing the populations quality of life greatly.

Connectivity

Monaghan County Council has completed the construction of a Metropolitan Area Network (MAN) in Monaghan town. These works were co funded by the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.

Alternative backhaul was provided to the Monaghan MAN resulting from completion of the Armagh Monaghan Digital corridor. Monaghan County Council provided financial and technical assistance to this project which was led by Monaghan County Enterprise Board.

Monaghan County Council is currently working with 3G, which has recently been appointed by the Government to implement the National Broadband Scheme. This project will provide broadband access to those sections of County that currently do not have broadband service. Construction of this network will commence in 2010.

Monaghan will also by March 2010 have access to faster and cheaper broadband access to several main business centres in Ireland, Northern Ireland, Europe and the United States of America.

Project Kelvin is a joint €30 million initiative between DETI and DCENR and is partly funded through the EC INTERREG IVA programme. Hibernia Atlantic Ltd have been appointed to implement Project Kelvin, which will see an underwater transatlantic cable laid for the first time. Communications between Ireland and North America will now be directly routed instead of having to use external networks such as London.

The project will provide more efficient, cost effective direct telecoms connectivity to Monaghan, and will link cities and towns such as Belfast, Derry, Coleraine and Armagh in the North, and Letterkenny, Castleblayney, Drogheda and Dundalk, and Dublin in the South to Europe and North America.



Training and Employment

The current economic situation, which having resulted in substantial job losses nationally, has created additional demand for training and upskilling. Supports are provided by a range of organisations in Monaghan for example FAS, Monaghan CEB, Enterprise Ireland etc.

Monaghan Enterprise Board support innovation in micro-enterprises at local level, through direct grant aid and indirect, non-financial support. During 2008, the Monaghan Board was allocated over €870,000 and provided a wide range of supports to local enterprises.

Training and upskilling our labour force is vital, both for those in employment and those who are unemployed. It helps provide the skills necessary to maintain economic development and also to offer employment opportunities to people who are out of work.

During 2008, 114 local people participated in a wide range of FÁS training courses and a variety of other programmes, including apprenticeships, vocational training and in-company training. Skillnets promotes and facilitates learning as a key element in sustaining Ireland's national competitiveness. The Border EDGE Skillnet received funding of over €400,000 to provide local training and cutting-edge quality training to engineers and other technical professionals throughout the Border region, including County Monaghan.

Monaghan Retail Park

Monaghan Retail Park is strategically positioned on the Clones Road (N54), 1 kilometre from Monaghan town centre. The Park has succeeded in attracting a number of major national businesses to date. Monaghan town has been successful in developing this out of town facility whilst at the same time maintaining a vibrant and successful town centre which the town has become well known for over the years.

Monaghan Business & Technology Park - IDA

Monaghan Business & Technology Park is a 12 hectare (29 acre) park located on the N12 National Primary Route east of Monaghan Town, 125km from Dublin Airport. There are at present over 18 individual businesses and organisations based in the park, with a wide range of services and products being provided for example website design, graphics design, precision engineering, energy conservation technology, digital mapping, as well as numerous other public and private organisations who make use of the parks many fully serviced cluster units.

The Park is also the location of Monaghan Enterprise Board. The Board list the following as their primary objectives: -

- promoting economic and entrepreneurial activity
- Developing local indigenous enterprise potential in the micro-business sector
- Creation of an enterprise culture
- The provision of advice, management training, mentoring and a range of financial supports

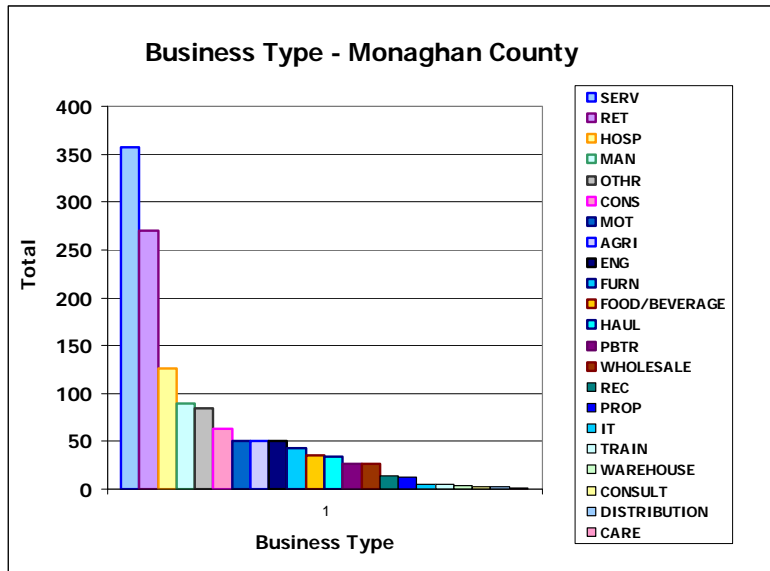
The Park also serves as the headquarters of Co Monaghan VEC which is involved in education provision for second level, and mature students, further education, vocational training, adult education, outdoor education and special education for early school leavers. The VEC is also responsible for the management of 6 VEC schools, appointment of teaching staff, development of educational buildings, EU funded programmes, and schools transportation services.

Monaghan Peace and Reconciliation Partnership

County Monaghan has benefited from significant investment in recent years from the EU for the purposes of peace building and reconciliation. The Monaghan Peace III partnership have been granted funding in excess of €4 million to develop and assist a wide range of economic and social activities in and around Monaghan town and the county as a whole from 2008 to 2010.

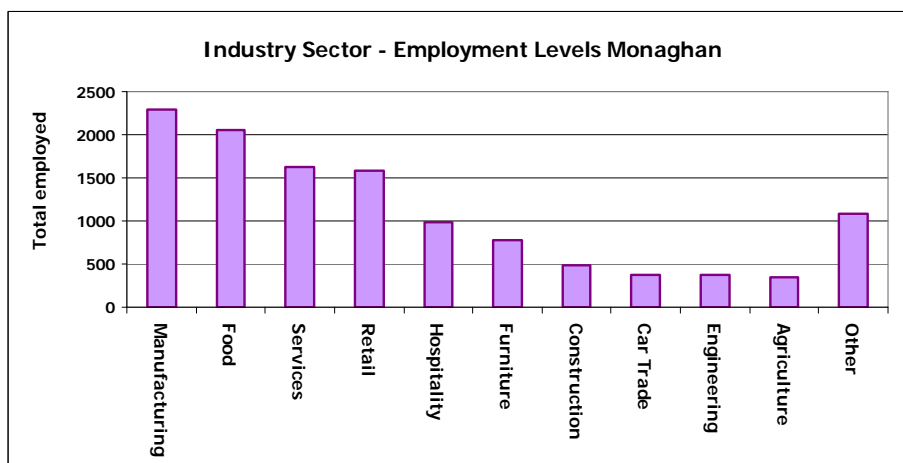
Industry Analysis

The Kompas Business Directory is a database with over 2.2 million companies registered across the world. The Directory provides information such as name, location, employee levels, industry sectors, product produced and executive contacts for hundreds of thousands of businesses across Ireland.



As of December 2008 there were a total of 1353 businesses in county Monaghan, those within the Service and Retail sectors account for 627, highlighting that these two sectors are proving to be very successful in Monaghan today.

Construction and Manufacturing accounts for a total of 153 employers, and would traditionally be more representative of the county from an industrial perspective.



In terms of actual employment levels in county Monaghan, it can be seen above that from the Kompas Business Directory December 2008, manufacturing businesses (2292) and Food related businesses (2056) were responsible for providing employment to the most people in the county. Services (1626) and Retail (1577) despite representing the largest share in terms of employers come 2nd and 3rd respectively when it comes to total numbers employed, indicating that these are often smaller businesses conducting their business in the various urban centres around the county. Hospitality is another area where Monaghan has built up an

enviable position in high quality service provision, and this is demonstrated by the numbers employed (984).

Water & Waste

Monaghan Main Drainage Scheme

It is proposed to carry out improvements to the Monaghan Town Waste Water Collection System, in order to provide an adequate collection system for the town and its environs for the next 25 years. The scheme includes the current Water Services Investment Program and will cost in the region of € 27M.

The works shall consist of restructuring and remedial works to the existing Monaghan Town Collection System, including the Old Cross Square / Municipal Treatment Works Pumping Station and extensions to the Monaghan Town Collection System drainage network.

Given the size of this scheme it was decided that some sections would be advanced through the construction of two service land initiatives: - Old Armagh Rd/Castleblayney Road & North East Region Serviced Land Initiative.

Old Armagh Rd/Castleblayney Road Serviced Land Initiative

The Old Armagh Road / Castleblayney Road Serviced Land Initiative will service existing development in the area as well as up to 200 acres of new development lands zoned for future development. The total cost of this scheme was €2.8m.

North East Region Serviced Land Initiative

The scheme will provide a sewerage collection system for development lands in the Ballyalbany, Coolshannagh and Rooskey areas of Monaghan town. The total estimated cost of the scheme is €6.5 M. The scheme has the potential service in excess of 750 new dwelling houses, over an estimated 100 acres of additional lands along the Blackwater Vale. Construction commenced in August 2008 by Piers Contracting Ltd. and will be completed by autumn 2009.

Tourism & Leisure

Under the Tourism Capital Investment Programme, County Monaghan received an allocation of over €302,000 for tourism projects in 2008. Funds were approved for Lough Major in Ballybay, Carrickmacross Historic Town Trail and the Ballybay Wetlands Project. Under ACCESS II, the Arts and Culture Capital Enhancement Support Scheme the Garage Theatre in Monaghan was allocated €2 million toward the construction of a purpose built theatre.

Monaghan Leisure Complex was built and is owned by both Monaghan County Council & Monaghan Town Council. The Complex is operated and managed by Coral Leisure and opened for business on 19th August 2006. The leisure complex consists of a 6-lane 25 metre swimming pool, children's pool, 25-meter flume, sauna, steam room, Jacuzzi, 2 Tennis Courts and a fully equipped gym, which includes a wide range of cardiovascular and resistance equipment.

Other attractions include the County Museum, 17thc Market House, the Courthouse, St Patrick's Church of Ireland, and the First Monaghan Presbyterian Church. The Rossmore Memorial and the Market Cross are also of historical significance. St. Macartan's Cathedral was built in 1892 and contains interesting Stations of the Cross and tapestries. For visitors wishing to trace their family origins, Monaghan Ancestral Research provides a wealth of information.

Rossmore Forest Park, the former estate of Robert Cunningham MP for Monaghan (1769-1796) with its hardwood, broadleaf and conifer trees, mixed grasses, lakes and rivers creates a teeming wildlife habitat. Walkways incorporate a wedge tomb, yew, giant red wood and a mausoleum. Nearby is Rossmore Golf Club which offers an exceptional 18-hole championship course.

One of the great innovations in Ireland's calendar of musical events is the Monaghan Rhythm and Blues Festival one of the most prestigious and established festivals, held each September, which has attracted many well known performers including Van Morrison, Peter Green of Fleetwood Mac and ex-Rolling Stones guitarist, Mick Taylor.

Monaghan town also boasts a well established and vibrant evening economy with a wide range of top quality eateries and restaurants available. The Diamond Screen Cineplex can also be found in Monaghan town centre as well as numerous bars and bistros.

Conferencing facilities

Given Monaghan Town's excellent strategic positioning, it has excelled in providing state of the art conferencing, exhibition and other event facilities with numerous top quality hotels, The Hillgrove, The Four Seasons and Westenra for example, capable of hosting events with up to 1,500 delegates. These facilities make Monaghan an enviable location with a gateway to Northern Ireland, proximity to our own capital city & Dublin International Airport with an ever improving road network, thus providing seamless access to the home of some of Ireland's most prestigious conference and meeting venues.

Monaghan – Comparative Advantages

Monaghan Town makes offers a number of advantages in terms of being a location for new enterprise, below are listed just a few: -

- Sound base of indigenous industry and family businesses
- Development hub under National Spatial Strategy
- Strategically located on primary routes to Dublin, Belfast and Derry
- Approximately 1 hour from Dublin and Belfast airports
- A number of options in relation to seaports including: -
Dublin Port, Larne Port, Belfast and Drogheda
- Upgrading of N2 – Carrickmacross, Castleblayney and Monaghan Town bypasses
- Border location – Access two markets
- Labour availability on both sides of the border
- Increased broadband availability
- New Retail Park
- IDA Business Park
- New M:TEK facilities
- Work ethic – entrepreneurial ability
- Quality of life