



**An Roinn
Ealaíon, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta**

**Department of
Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht**

**Oifig an Aire
Office of the Minister**

Minister Shane Ross
Shane.ross@oireachtas.ie

19 August 2016

Our Ref: 16/002586

Dear Shane,

I refer to your recent correspondence on behalf of Jillian van Turnhout, in relation to the release of the 1926 Census.

The 1926 Census is the next full set of Census records available to the State following the 1911 returns. A 1926 Census Working Group has examined this complex project and agreed what resources will need to be in place to move the project forward to completion.

The 1926 Census project will require very significant additional financial, staff and infrastructural resources in the National Archives. The Archives, with the assistance of this Department, is working towards building the necessary capacity to undertake and oversee the Census and other important projects. As the necessary capacity is being acquired, the Census project will be a priority for the National Archives once Decade of Commemorations projects have been completed.

Under current legislation, (the Statistics Act, 1993), census data must be withheld for 100 years. At this time there are no plans for the 1926 Census returns to be released before the statutory period has elapsed in 2026. If the records were to be released before the expiry of 100 years, a major change in legislation and policy would be required to allow for the early release. This is not currently being proposed.

The Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs has no statutory function in relation to the statistics bill. This would be under the remit of Department of An Taoiseach.

I hope that this clarifies the matter for you.

Yours sincerely,

Heather Humphreys T.D.
Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs

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