Population Profiling of the new Regional Health Areas (RHAs)

Using available population-level data to deliver the Sláintecare vision of right care, right place, right time.

Units: Sláintecare - Regional Health Areas; Stats & Analytics Unit

An Roinn Sláinte
Department of Health

What is Population-Based Profiling?

Population profiling uses data around a range of indicators to develop a descriptive overview of population health and wellbeing. By analysing the factors that influence population health, this approach informs policy decision-making and service planning, and facilitates a larger move towards a more equitable, needs-based resource allocation for defined regional populations and national services. These factors can include demographics, socioeconomic status, health status, health behaviours, and/or health service utilisation. (1)

Sláintecare Policy Context:

In the Sláintecare Report (2017), a vision and a plan for re-orienting our health and social care service towards a high-quality integrated system providing care on the basis of need and not ability to pay was outlined. This included the need to examine existing and forecast demand on health services, including the changing demographics in the Irish population. (2)

Challenges

Though it is hindered by the lack of available data in an Irish context, population segmentation is an iterative process that will be refined and added to over successive cycles, with future developments in health data e.g., Electronic Health Record (EHR), Individual Health Identifier (IHI), alllowing for more rich and integrated sources of data to be incorporated into the model as it becomes available.
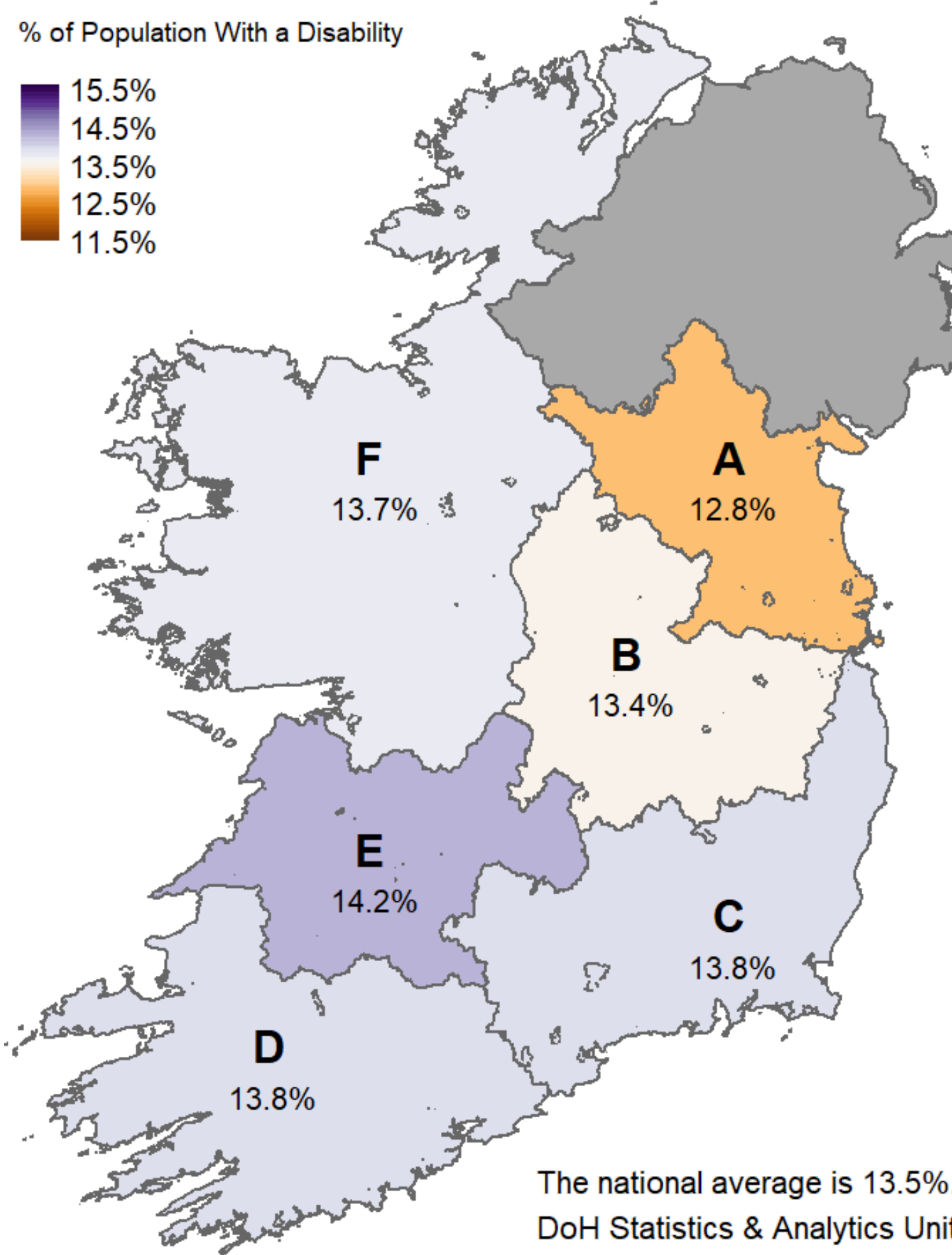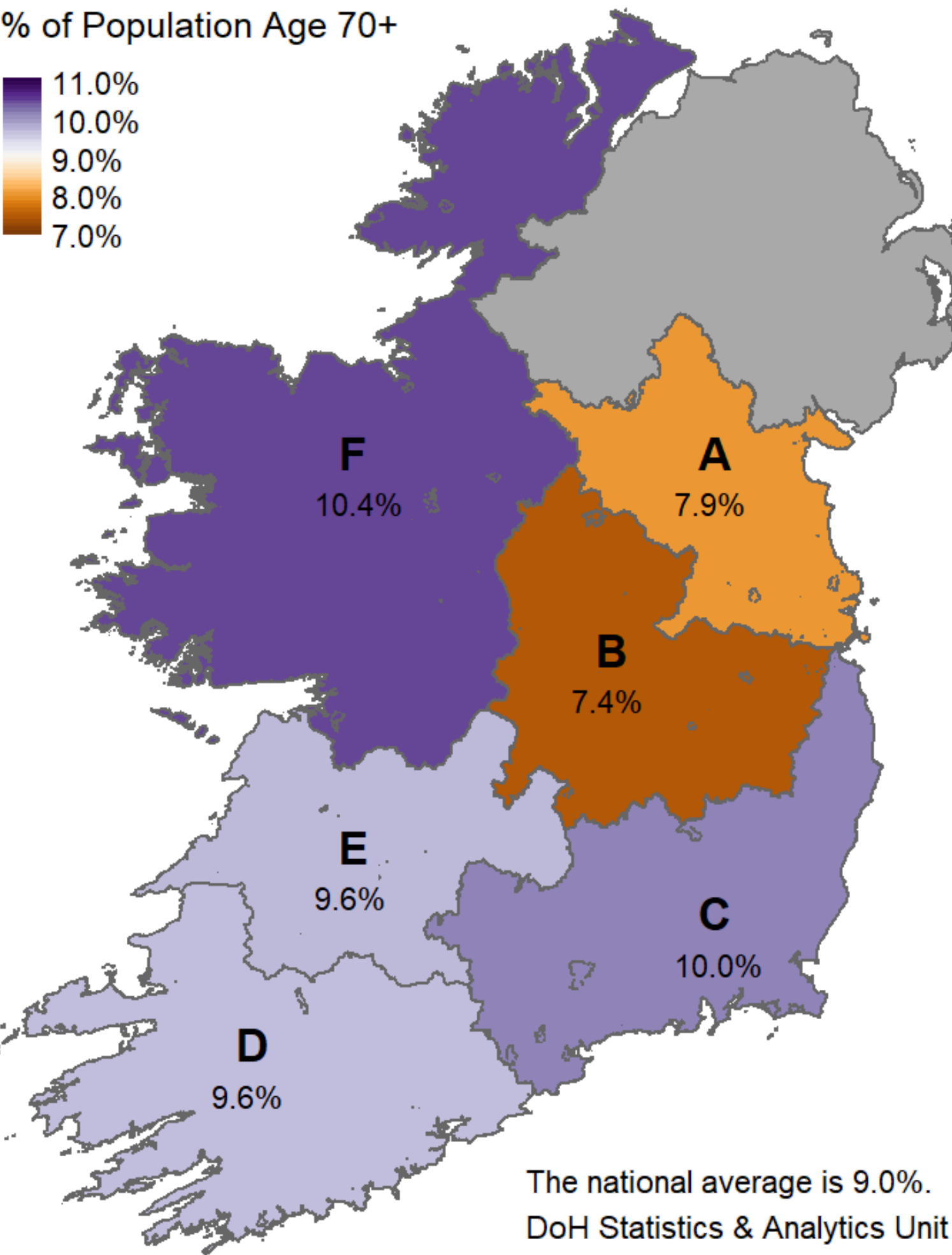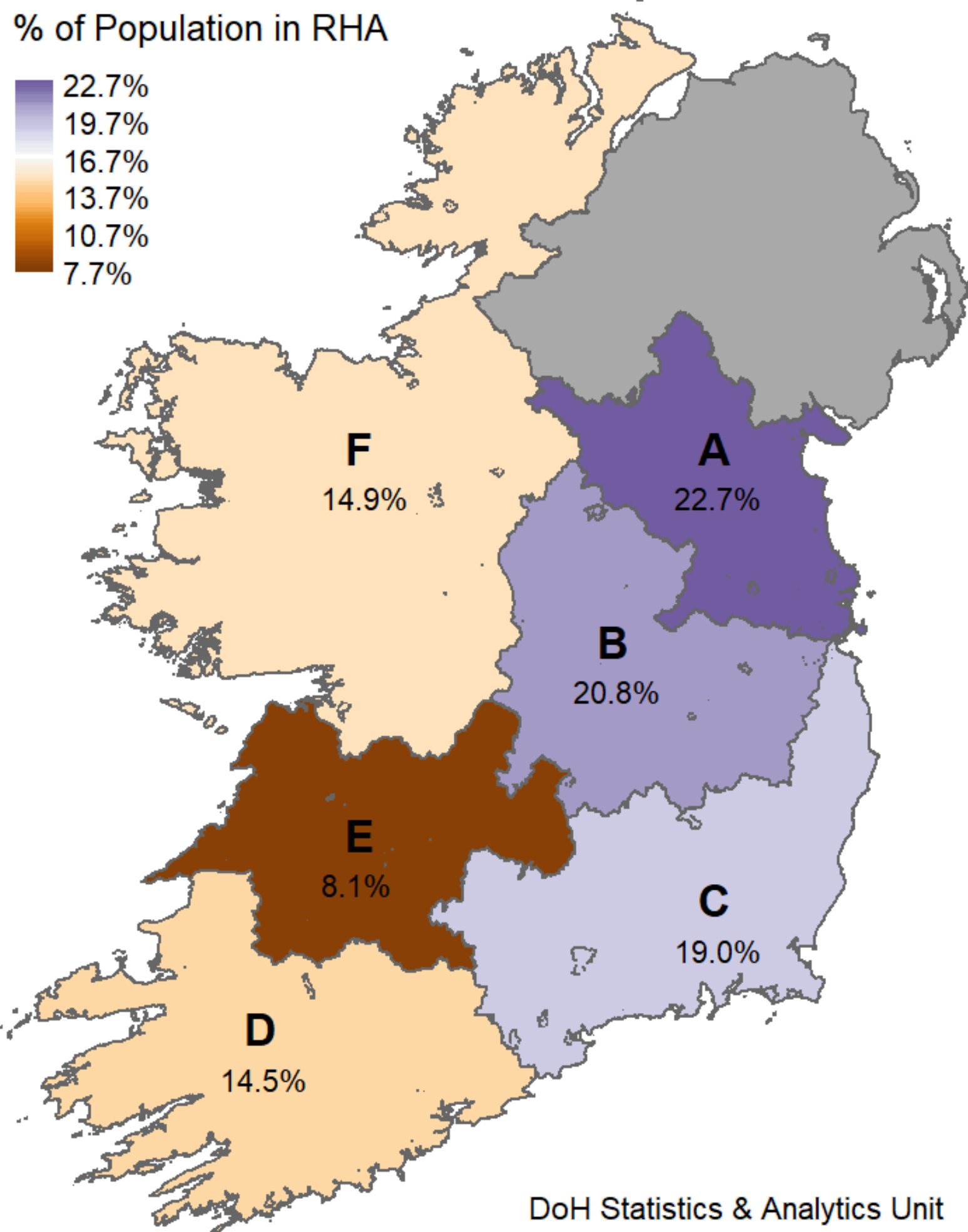
Next Steps

The completion of population profiling of each of the six RHAs is a key enabler for the development of a population-based resource allocation (PBRA) model, capital planning, and strategic workforce planning for RHAs. The Department of Health has developed an initial profile of the six regions based on a number of data sources for use in service planning and funding. It is currently engaging with other government departments and decision-makers about the future development of its profiling methodology.
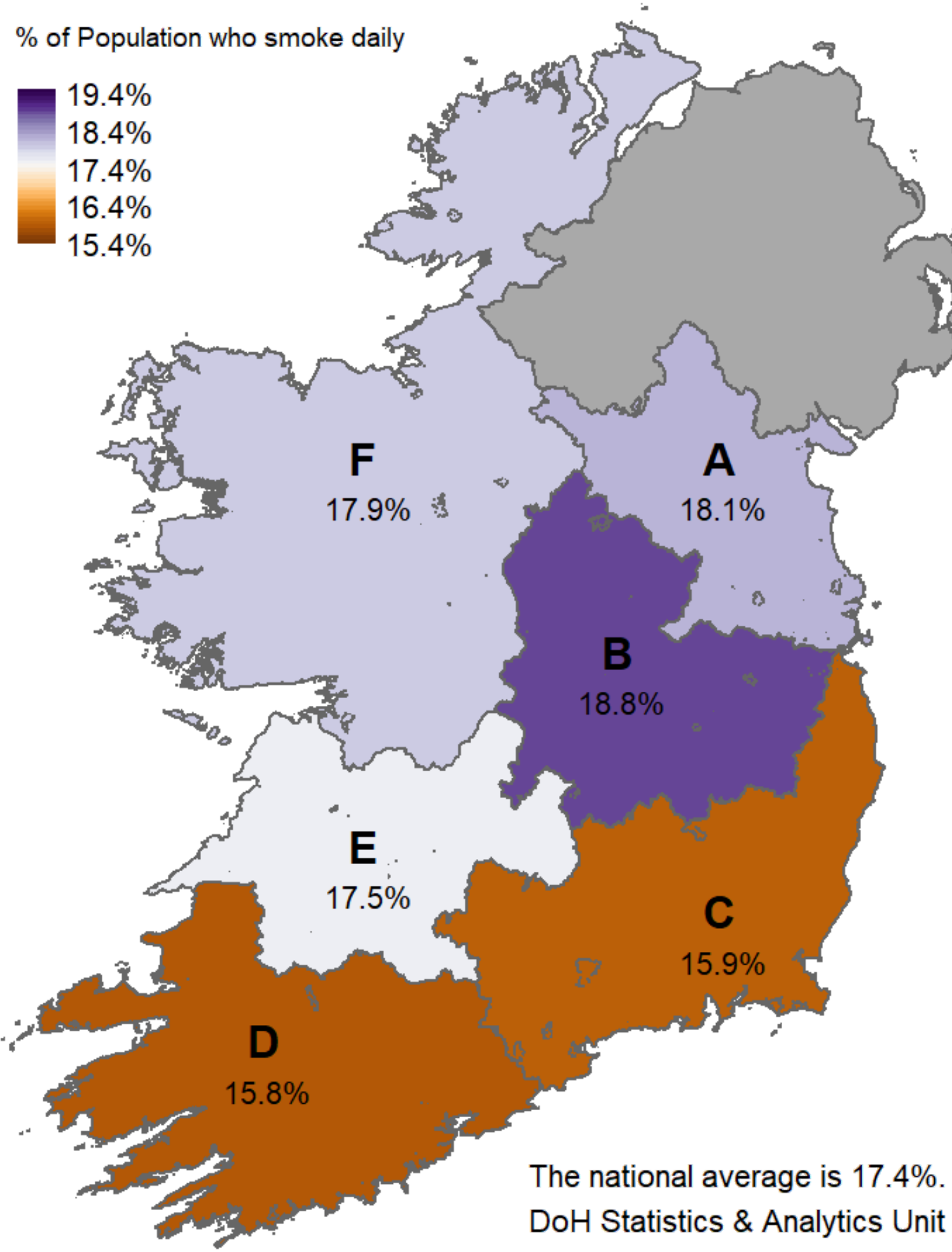
References:
(1) Department of Health (2022). Business Case for the Implementation of Regional Health Areas (RHAs).
(2) Houses of the Oireachtas Committee on the Future of Healthcare (2017). Sláintecare Report.

Census 2016*

*to be updated with 2022 Census data when available.

% of Population in RHA
22.7%
19.7%
16.7%
13.7%
10.7%
7.7%

F 14.9%
A 22.7%
B 20.8%
E 8.1%
C 19.0%
D 14.5%

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% of Population Age 70+
11.0%
10.0%
9.0%
8.0%
7.0%

F 10.4%
A 7.9%
B 7.4%
E 9.6%
C 10.0%
D 9.6%

The national average is 9.0%.
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% of Population With a Disability
15.5%
14.5%
13.5%
12.5%
11.5%

F 13.7%
A 12.8%
B 13.4%
E 14.2%
C 13.8%
D 13.8%

The national average is 13.5%.
DoH Statistics & Analytics Unit

Healthy Ireland

% of Population who smoke daily
19.4%
18.4%
17.4%
16.4%
15.4%

F 17.9%
A 18.1%
B 18.8%
E 17.5%
C 15.9%
D 15.8%

The national average is 17.4%.
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Urban/Rural Split

Breakdown of Area Type Classification by RHA

population (y-axis: 0%, 25%, 50%, 75%, 100%)

x-axis: Area A, Area B, Area C, Area D, Area E, Area F

Legend:
1. Cities
2. Satellite urban towns
3. Independent urban towns
4. Rural areas with high urban influence
5. Rural areas with moderate urban influence
6. Highly rural/remote areas

Source: CSO Area type classification by small area 2016

Deprivation Index

Mean Deprivation Decile
7.5
6.5
5.5
4.5
3.5

F 5.9
A 5.5
B 5.7
E 5.5
C 5.1
D 5.2

The national average is 5.5.
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Deprivation Decile of Each Small Area
10 - most deprived
8
6
4
2 - least deprived