

The Weather of Winter 2006/7

(December, January & February summary)

Warmer, wetter and mostly sunnier than normal

Temperatures were well above normal throughout most of the season, but there were also short spells of cold weather during each of the winter months. Overall, mean air temperatures were between one and two degrees above normal for the 1961-90 period and it was the warmest winter for 8 or 9 years generally, while it was the warmest for 18 years at both Rosslare and Valentia Observatory. There was a total of between 16 and 21 air frosts at inland stations compared with a range of between 25 and 30 air frosts in these areas during an average winter, while there was no air frost recorded at Rosslare. Almost all stations measured their lowest temperatures of the season on either February 6th or 7th.

Rainfall totals for the season were above normal everywhere and they were well above normal in the north and northwest. It was the wettest winter for between 5 and 7 years generally and the wettest since 1994/5 in the Dublin area. December was a wet month everywhere, especially in the west, while totals for January and February were very variable across the country. The number of wetdays (days with 1mm or more rainfall) measured during the season was also higher than normal everywhere; there were between 41 and 65 wetdays compared with the normal range for winter of between 35 and 55.

Winter sunshine totals were above normal at most stations but they were a little below normal in parts of the south and west. The season's highest daily values at almost all stations were measured during the first week of February.

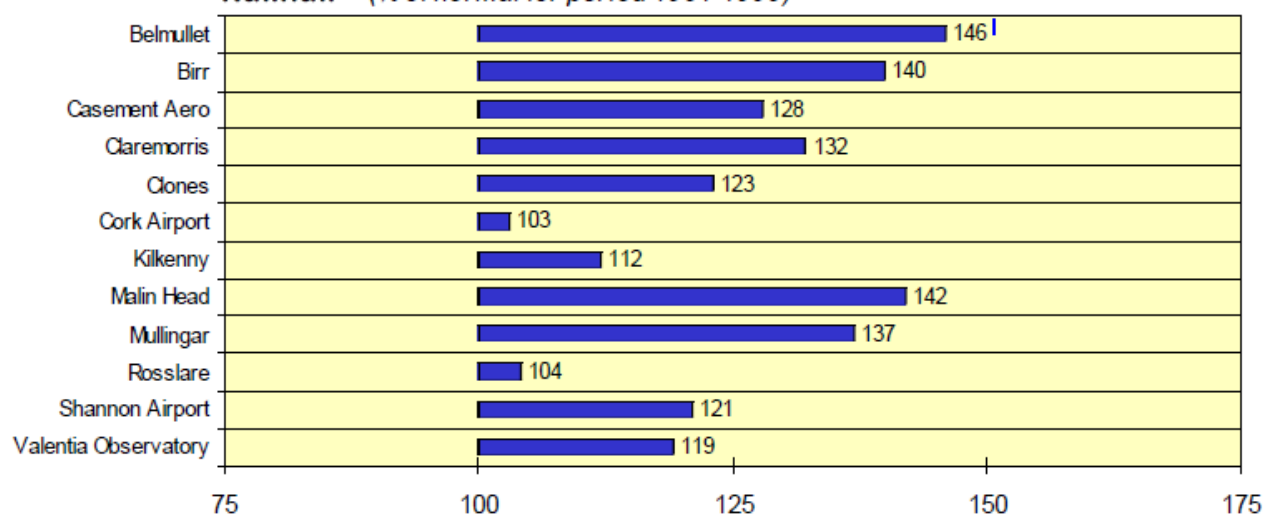
There were spells of stormy weather at times during the winter, especially in December and January. Mean windspeeds for the season of between 9 and 19 knots (*17 and 35 km/hour*) were above normal everywhere and were the highest for winter for between 5 and 12 years generally. Dublin Airport measured its highest gust in over 65 years of record when it recorded 80 knots (*148 km/hour*) on January 18th, but the highest gust of the season, 81 knots (*150 km/hour*), was measured at Belmullet on January 20th, the highest gust there since February 2000.

Extreme values

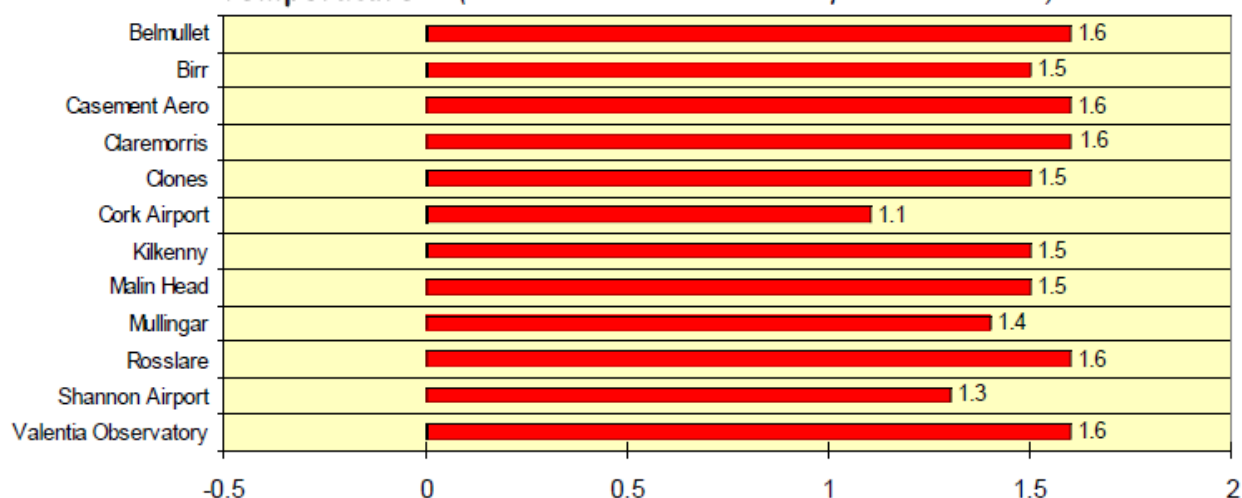
Rainfall	Highest seasonal total: 537mm at Valentia Observatory (<i>its wettest winter since 1999/2000</i>)
	Lowest seasonal total: 238mm at Casement Aerodrome (<i>its wettest winter since 1994/5</i>)
	Highest daily rainfall: 37.3mm at Valentia Observatory on February 19th
Temperature	Highest mean seasonal temperature: 8.6°C at Valentia Observatory (<i>its warmest winter since 1988/9</i>)
	Lowest mean seasonal temperature: 5.3°C at Knock Airport (<i>its warmest winter since 1997/8</i>)
	Highest temperature: 14.7°C at Kilkenny on February 27th (<i>its highest winter value since 1997/8</i>)
	Lowest air temperature: -6.5°C at Clones on February 7th (<i>its lowest winter value since 2000/1</i>)
Sunshine	Lowest grass minimum temperature: -13.1°C at Birr on February 7th
	Highest seasonal total: 225 hours at Rosslare
	Lowest seasonal total: 136 hours at Valentia Observatory
	Highest daily sunshine: 8.9 hours at Knock Airport on February 6th

Winter 2006/7 Percentage / Difference from 1961-90 monthly normals

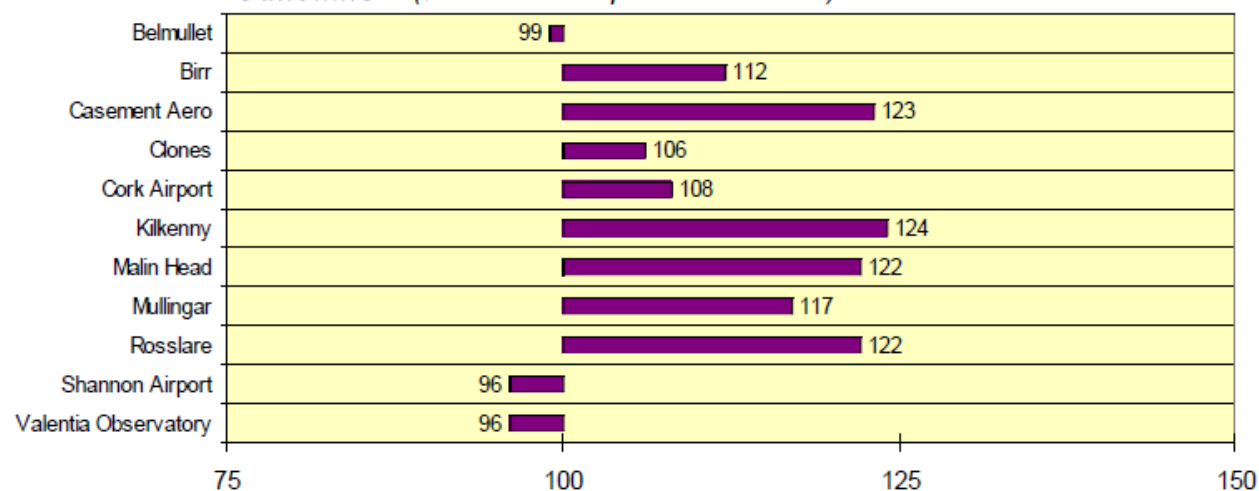
Rainfall (% of normal for period 1961-1990)



Temperature (°C difference from normal for period 1961-1990)



Sunshine (% of normal for period 1961-1990)



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This report is based on preliminary data from the synoptic weather stations operated by Met Éireann

A detailed summary is available in the *Monthly Weather Bulletin*

For more information, contact Met Éireann at 01-8064200 or e-mail: climate.enquiries@met.ie website: www.met.ie/climate