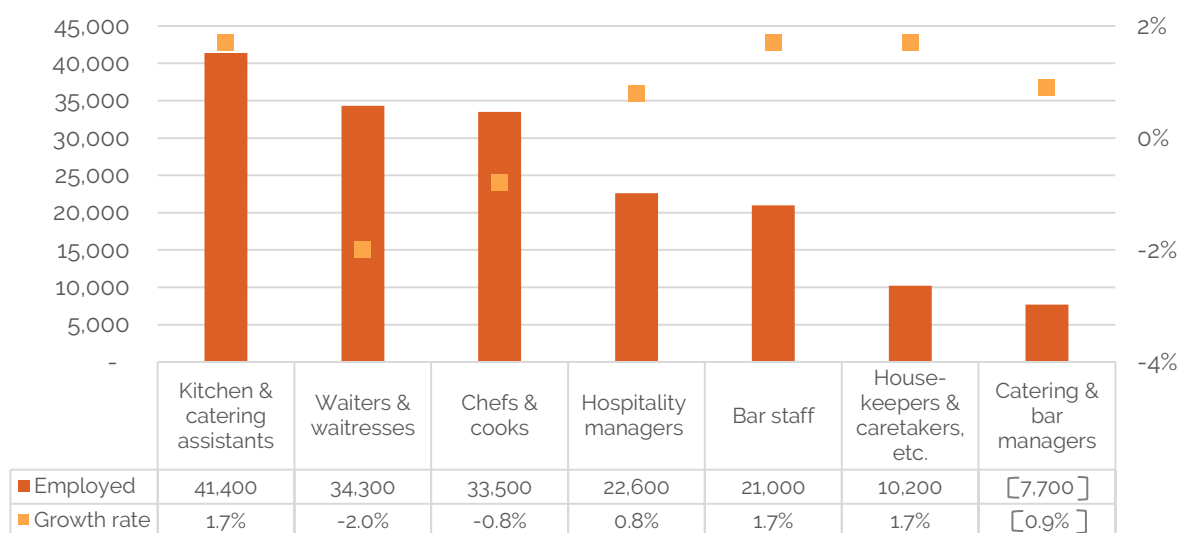


10.11 Hospitality Occupations

Figure 10.11 Annual Average Employment (2023) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2018-2023)



Overall employment	170,800
Share of total workforce	6.0%
Main sectors of employment	86% - Accommodation & food 6% - Health
Employment growth	+2,100 between 2018 and 2023 +0.3% on average annually (compared to +3.5% for total workforce)

2023	% Female Q4	% Full-time Q4	% Aged 55 years & over Q4	% Irish citizens Q4	% Third level graduates Q4	Number of new employment permits	Recruitment Agency Survey
Hospitality managers	47%	88%	[26%]	75%	[45%]	94	✓
Chefs & cooks	32%	76%	...	53%	41%	2,043	✓
Catering & bar managers	...	[96%]	...	[76%]	...		✓
Kitchen & catering assistants	68%	39%	[14%]	66%	[20%]	2	
Waiters & waitresses	78%	77%	...	2	✓
Bar staff	[27%]	[31%]	...	86%	...	1	
Housekeepers & caretakers, etc.	[83%]	[74%]	...		
Overall total	53%	51%	13%	70%	27%	2,142	

Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO (LFS) data, DETE, and SLMRU Recruitment Agency Survey (RAS)
Numbers in square brackets should be treated with caution; an ellipsis (...) denotes numbers too small to report

Overall Outlook for these Occupations

The small overall employment gains over the five-year period for hospitality occupations disguises the significant fall in employment levels during the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent rebound in 2022 and 2023.¹ At 36%, the hospitality occupational group had the largest share of young persons (aged 15-24 years) employed across all occupational groups (and the second highest level in absolute terms after sales-related occupations). Approximately a half were employed in part-time roles, far above the national average and this group had a large share of recent job hires indicating that for some hospitality roles the length of employment is shorter, particularly for waiters, bar staff and kitchen assistants. Demand for these occupations will likely be affected by the fall in inflation levels, the anticipated increase in real income for consumers and continued growth in tourism numbers, along with issues such as the cost of doing business.

Occupation	Economic summary
Hospitality managers	Employment growth was below average for this occupation over the five-year period with employment levels remaining unchanged since 2022. With over a quarter (26%) aged 55 years and over, replacement demand may be higher in the coming years. There was a considerable volume of advertised vacancies across both sources for restaurant, bar, duty, catering and hotel and accommodation managers with employment permits issued for these areas. Skills for Growth data and the Recruitment Agency Survey point to issues in recruiting duty managers, middle managers and those with good interpersonal skills. The extent to which this occupation is experiencing a skills shortage or just a difficulty due to the attractiveness/retention of the job is difficult to determine. With employment levels not growing the high volume of vacancies may relate to churn.
Chefs & cooks Skills shortage: Chefs	The five-year employment growth rate was negative for chefs; although employment levels have grown annually since 2021, they remained marginally below pre-COVID-19 levels. Recent job hires for this occupation far exceeded employment growth in 2023 however, indicating that job churn was occurring. At 47%, chefs had one of the highest shares of non-Irish citizens employed (alongside butchers and software developers). There was a high volume of vacancies advertised across both sources (Eurostat/CEDEFOP and DSP JobsIreland), particularly for chef de partie and over 2,000 new employment permits were issued for chefs in 2023. Both the Recruitment Agency Survey and the Skills for Growth data highlight issues in recruiting chefs, particularly for suitably qualified and experienced chefs (10+ years in some cases). The number of culinary skills awards in higher education at levels 6-9 have declined in recent years (from 501 in 2018 to 346 in 2022); the number of new apprenticeship registrations for chefs also fell slightly between 2022 and 2023 (from 112 to 89); without an increase in provision, shortages are likely to persist for this occupation in the short-to-medium term.
Catering & bar managers	Numbers were too small for a detailed analysis of employment for this occupation although the Recruitment Agency Survey indicated difficulty in filling vacancies for bar and events managers and the Skills for Growth data pointed to issues in relation to the recruitment of food and beverage managers with experience.
Kitchen & catering assistants	Employment growth for this occupation was below average despite annual growth in employment levels since 2020. Recent job hires in 2023 far exceeded employment growth however, indicating that job churn is a significant feature for these roles. Three-fifths of those employed were working part-time and 44% were aged 15-24 years; at 34%, the non-Irish share was higher than the national average. Vacancies for this occupation were primarily for kitchen porters, crew members and catering assistants. The Skills for Growth data identified issues in recruiting kitchen porters, with no specific qualifications required for the role.
Waiters & waitresses	Employment levels for waiters/waitresses remained below pre-COVID levels in 2023; although employment levels had been increasing post pandemic, there were marginal declines in 2023. The high level of recent job hires for these roles shows that job churn is a significant feature. With 72%

¹ The changing patterns of employment in these occupations is profiled in more detail in the recent SOLAS report: <https://www.solas.ie/f/70398/x/2e26383ae0/hospitality-skills.pdf>

	<p>aged 15-24 years, this occupation had the youngest age profile across all occupations. Over three quarters of persons employed were female and four fifths were working part-time. Issues with recruiting waiting staff were identified in both the Recruitment Agency Survey and the Skills for Growth data although no qualifications were required.</p>
Bar staff	<p>Employment growth was below average for this occupation although employment has grown annually since 2021. A high level of recent job hires also occurred for bar staff in 2023. Those employed were primarily male, working part-time and young (63% were aged 15-24 years). Skills for Growth data identified issues with recruiting bar staff, with competition for skills a key factor.</p>
Housekeepers	<p>Employment growth for this occupation was below average, although employment has grown annually since 2021. Skills for Growth data pointed to some issues for accommodation assistants and supervisors with experience.</p>