

National Skills Bulletin 2024



National Skills Bulletin 2024

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Foreword

This year marks an important year as we celebrate the 20th edition of the National Skills Bulletin, a series of reports compiled annually since 2005 by the Skills and Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU) in SOLAS. Since the first ever National Skills Bulletin was published in 2005, Ireland's labour market has undergone profound changes, ranging from economic shocks (2008 financial crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic) and subsequent recoveries to disruptors such as automation, the digital and green transitions, demographic change, as well as a more general shift towards a higher skilled, smarter economy. Within the context of these developments, Ireland's labour market has performed well, particularly in recent years, with employment rates and numbers reaching record high levels in 2023. Together with near historically low unemployment rates in 2023, the outlook for Ireland's labour market remains positive.

After accelerated growth in recent years, employment levels are expected to see more moderate growth over the next year; indeed, the high level of movements between occupations seen in 2022 has returned to pre-COVID-19 levels. As outlined in this year's Bulletin, 2023 saw an easing in employment growth rates and a decline in the number of online job postings. The mandate of my Department working closely with all the sectors comprising Ireland's tertiary education system is to ensure that Ireland's workforce is equipped with the skills required to continue to drive economic growth and social progress. With unemployment at historically low levels, a particular priority must be on upskilling and reskilling existing workers to meet the challenges arising from the green transition and digital transformation across all of the key sectors of our economy.

Findings from the National Skills Bulletin show that some employers continue to report difficulties in sourcing candidates with the right combination of skills, qualifications and/or experience, and skills shortages across a number of areas (including health, information and communications technology (ICT), construction, transport etc.) persist. This highlights the central importance of re-skilling and up-skilling amongst current and future workforce in meeting priority skills needs.

In addition, the accelerating pace of change in the labour market means that workers will need to continuously develop new skills throughout their working lives in order to remain relevant in the workforce. Investment of €20 million for a skills package in Budget 2025 is intended to increase investment in employment focused skills and training, assisting and enhancing competitiveness and productivity of businesses. This is because competitiveness today is less about relative labour costs and more about knowledge and skills embodied in the work force.

The findings from this year's Bulletin underscore the need for workforce upskilling: in addition to digital (including data analysis) and sustainability skills, there is evidence of a persistent demand across the economy for soft skills, such as communication, teamwork and leadership, as well as cross sectoral or cross occupational skills, such as sales, marketing, talent management, project management, data analysis, among many others.

Responding to changing skills demand, including addressing skills shortages, requires an analysis of a range of indicators that is translated into reliable, trusted information on labour market demand. Such skills intelligence is provided every year by SOLAS' Skills and Labour Market Research Unit through the publication of the National Skills Bulletin, and armed with this intelligence, our education and training providers play a pivotal role in ensuring the skills of the workforce are aligned with the needs of the economy and the future world of work.

Ireland's education and training system has much to offer learners, workers and employers. But we cannot be complacent, and an ability to make informed decisions that allow us to adjust appropriately to the digital and green transition and other megatrends affecting both Ireland's economy and society is vital. Using the information on skills demand detailed in the Bulletin, we can ensure that Ireland's education and training system can foster the skills needed for work and life in the 21st century.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick O'Donovan'.

Patrick O'Donovan, T.D
Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science

Table of Contents

Foreword.....	2
Executive Summary.....	6
Introduction.....	15
Section 1 Macroeconomic Context.....	18
Section 2 Labour Market Overview.....	27
Section 3 Employment by Economic Sector.....	42
Section 4 Employment by Broad Occupation.....	54
Section 5 Regional Labour Markets.....	64
Section 6 Unemployment.....	75
Section 7 Labour Market Transitions.....	86
Section 8 Employment Permits.....	104
Section 9 Vacancies.....	116
Section 10 Occupational Employment Profiles.....	137
10.1 Science & Engineering Occupations.....	140
10.2 ICT Occupations.....	143
10.3 Business & Financial Occupations.....	146
10.4 Healthcare Occupations.....	149
10.5 Education Occupations.....	152
10.6 Social & Care Occupations.....	155
10.7 Legal & Security Occupations.....	157
10.8 Construction Occupations.....	159
10.9 Other Craft Occupations n.e.c.....	163
10.10 Agriculture & Animal Care Occupations.....	166
10.11 Hospitality Occupations.....	168
10.12 Arts, Sports & Tourism Occupations.....	171
10.13 Transport & Logistics Occupations.....	173
10.14 Administrative & Secretarial Occupations.....	176
10.15 Sales, Marketing and Customer Service Occupations.....	178
10.16 Operatives & Elementary Occupations n.e.c.....	181
Appendix.....	184



Executive Summary

The National Skills Bulletin 2024 is the twentieth in an annual series of reports produced by the Skills and Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU) in SOLAS. It presents an overview of the Irish labour market at occupational level. The Bulletin aims to assist policy formulation in the areas of employment, education/training, and immigration (particularly the sourcing of skills which are in short supply in the Irish and EU labour market from the EEA); it also aims to inform career guidance advisors, students and other individuals making career and educational choices.

For the most part, the analysis presented in the Bulletin reflects the data gathered by the SLMRU across a range of data sources, including the CSO's Labour Force Survey; it spans 100 occupational groups and examines a number of labour market indicators.

Snapshot of the Irish labour market in 2023

Ireland's labour market has proven to be remarkably resilient in recent years, recovering strongly from the pandemic in 2022, and continuing to grow in 2023, albeit more moderately. In 2023,

- the **labour force participation rate** (annual average) reached 65.5%, the highest to-date
- there were 2.8 million persons (annual average) in **the labour force**, 89,200 (3.3%) more persons than in 2022
- **2.68 million persons were in employment**; following strong growth as Ireland emerged from the pandemic (employment grew by 6.9% in 2022), employment growth in 2023 was 3.4% (89,500 extra workers).
- at 74%, the **employment rate** (persons aged 15-64) was the highest ever recorded, and an increase of more than five percentage points compared to 2018
- there were 120,300 unemployed persons in 2023; with the exception of 2020 and 2021, unemployment levels in Ireland have declined annually since 2012
- at 4.3%, the **unemployment rate** for 2023 was amongst the lowest annual average unemployment rates observed since before the financial crisis in 2008.

Other labour market developments worth noting include the following:

- between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023,
 - o **average hourly earnings increased** by 1.9% overall; hourly earnings increased in most sectors excluding health (which remained unchanged) and transport, public administration and defence (PAD) and education, which all saw declines
 - o the **inactivity rate (persons aged 15-64) declined** by 0.8 percentage points to 22.7%
 - o the **total age dependency ratio decreased** to slightly 52.4% (from 52.8%)
- there were **1.72 million labour market transitions¹** recorded in 2023, compared to 2.01 million in 2022 and 1.7 million in 2019; the most significant change between 2022 and 2023 related to a decline of over 200,000 transitions for those changing occupations (inter-occupational), reversing the increase seen in 2022
- at **494,000, the total number of new hires in 2023** (all four quarters summed) were slightly higher than their pre-COVID-19 levels (450,000 in 2019) but below the number of hires for 2022 (543,000); of the recent job hires in 2023, 43% were aged 15-24 years, 44% held third level qualifications, the wholesale and retail and accommodation and food sectors combined

¹ The change in the labour market status of individuals – employment, unemployment and economic inactivity – between two points in time is referred to as a 'labour market transition'.

accounted for 32% of hires, and elementary and professional occupations combined accounted for 36% of hires

- over the four quarters of 2023, there was a total of **193,500 recent job leavers**, 4% lower than in 2022: 38% entered unemployment and 62% became economically inactive
- approximately **29,000 new employment permits** were issued in 2023, a decrease of 21% on the previous year but considerably higher than 2021 levels. The decline primarily relates to a reduced number of permits issued for the ICT sector. The ICT and health sectors combined accounted for half of new permits issued
- in February 2024, there were **25,006 employees from Ukraine** with 35,533 employments (an individual may have more than one employment activity, including changing jobs). Of the employments amongst the arrivals from Ukraine, approximately one third were in the accommodation and food sector; a further 16% were in wholesale and retail and 12% in manufacturing
- **at regional level**, the size of the workforce in each of Ireland's eight administrative regions grew over the period quarter 4 2022-quarter 4 2023; in relative terms, the strongest growth was in the South East (6.1%); in absolute terms, the South West had the largest increase, adding 20,900 employed persons
- in quarter 4 2023, there were 24,700 **vacancies** reported, representing a job vacancy rate² of 1.1%. Between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023, the vacancy rate increased in just three sectors, PAD, accommodation and food, and education
- in 2023, there were nearly 294,000 online **job adverts** for roles in Ireland, 17% fewer than the comparable figure in 2022. Top skills in demand included transversal skills (e.g. adapt to change, team work), job-specific skills (e.g. planning events, accessing data), and knowledge (e.g. management/administration and marketing/advertising).

Sectoral employment

In quarter 4 2023, the largest sectors in terms of numbers employed were health & social work (365,300 persons), wholesale & retail (343,800 persons), and industry (320,400 persons). Combined, these three sectors alone accounted for more than one third (38%) of total national employment.

Between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023, the highest growth rates were for education (+12%), agriculture (+9%), other NACE (+8%), professional services (+7%), accommodation & food (+7%), health & social work (+6%) and wholesale & retail (6%), all of which had growth rates that were higher than the national average (3%) over the period. The numbers employed declined in four sectors, namely transport (-5%), administrative & support services (-4%), construction (-2%) and industry (-2%). For the ICT and finance sectors, employment levels remained broadly unchanged.

Over the five-year period, quarter 4 2018 to quarter 4 2023, the sectors with the highest relative growth rates were ICT (+44%), professional services (+37%), PAD (+32%) and education (+31%), which all grew far higher than the national average (18%) over this time.

² The job vacancy rate, as detailed in the CSO Earnings, Hours and Employment Costs Survey (EHECS), measures the proportion of total posts that are vacant as a proportion of total occupied posts combined with job vacancies.

Employment by broad occupation

In quarter 4 2023, high skilled occupations (professionals, associate professionals and managers) accounted for approximately 1.2 million persons or 45% of the total national workforce.

Between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023, professionals had the highest relative and absolute growth (+13% or +72,500 persons), followed by elementary occupations (+5% or +11,700 persons) and caring services (+4% or +9,100 persons). By comparison, there were declines for associate professionals (3,100 fewer persons) and managers (2,000 fewer persons), both of which fell by 1%, while skilled trades remained stable over the year.

When compared to quarter 4 2018, employment for professional occupations grew by 168,400 persons (or +36%); that of associate professionals, by 75,200 persons (or +28%) and managers, by 51,200 persons (or +27%). Despite increases in most other occupational groups, however, employment growth was below the national average for some, most notably for skilled trades, sales, elementary and operative occupations. The only occupational group where employment fell over this time was farmers (3,200 fewer persons or -4%).

Occupational outlooks and shortages

Science & Engineering Occupations

Employment growth was above average for this occupational group with demand for these skills evident in the high number of employment permits issued, frequent mentions in online job adverts and difficulty in filling vacancies highlighted by employers and recruitment agencies. Approximately half of the workforce were employed in industrial activities (e.g. medical devices, pharmaceuticals, R&D etc.), with multinational enterprises playing a significant role in future demand. In addition, adapting to new work practices as a result of the green agenda, such as sustainable sourcing, circular lifecycles, energy efficiency, and waste minimization, will ensure a continued strong demand for scientists and engineers in these areas.

Skill shortages:

- Analytical, process, and medical scientists
- Quality control/ assurance, process, and design engineers
- mechanical, electrical, automation engineers
- Maintenance/lab technicians

ICT Occupations

This occupational group had the strongest annual average employment growth rate over the five-year period (9.8%). The largest share of this growth occurred between 2019 and 2021, although overall levels have continued to grow annually since, despite a slowdown in hirings in the ICT sector. Although most are employed in the ICT sector, demand for these roles occurs across other sectors including finance and industry. At present, migration is a key source of skills for these roles, with non-Irish citizens accounting for almost two-fifths of persons employed, the highest share across all occupational groups.

Skill shortages:

- Software developers/ engineers
- IT analysts/ engineers

Business and Finance Occupations

The business and financial occupational group had the largest increase in numbers employed over the five-year period across all occupational groups, with an additional 82,700 persons employed. The employment growth rate was above average across all occupations in this grouping, with the exception of accountants. Business and finance skills are required across all sectors of the economy, with a third employed in the financial activities sector and the remainder across sectors including professional activities, industry and wholesale/retail. A 2022 report on the financial services in Ireland indicated that demand is being driven by advances in digital technology (particularly distributed ledger technology/blockchain, AI etc)³ with demand for blockchain skills (and AI and automation to a lesser extent) evident in the financial sector according to a recent report by the ESRI⁴. These, along with the increased focus on sustainable finance, will be the main drivers of upskilling and reskilling needs across most financial occupations.

Healthcare Occupations

Employment growth over the five-year period for healthcare occupations was above the national average; employment growth was particularly strong between 2021 and 2023, with an increase of over 15,000 persons employed annually, relating mainly to nurses. Employment permits continued to be a significant source of skills for these occupations with almost 6,500 new permits issued in 2023, the highest number across all occupational groups. A 2022 ESRI report estimated that the healthcare workforce (e.g. doctors, nurses, healthcare assistants, various therapists) will need to grow by between 1.7% and 2.1% on average annually, or by between 12,400 and 15,500 WTE posts, for the forecast period to 2035 in order to meet recruitment demands in acute hospitals alone arising from a number of factors (including the implementation of Sláintecare).⁵ The number of training places for many healthcare occupations is expected to increase strongly in the coming years, particularly for nursing, medicine, and therapy related courses, which may go some way in alleviating current issues with sourcing many of the healthcare occupations. Evidence of skills shortages for some healthcare occupations (e.g. therapists) is inconclusive due to small employment levels.

Skill shortages:

- Medical practitioners
- Nurses

Education Occupations

Employment growth for this occupational group was above average, with an additional 39,200 persons employed over the five-year period. Three quarters of those employed were female and most were Irish citizens. The demand for primary teachers is projected to decrease over the next decade, driven by declining numbers of enrolments, although the extent to which the continued war in Ukraine will impact future enrolment figures is as yet unclear.⁶ Increasing enrolments at post-primary level until the latter part of this decade are expected to result in an under-supply of post-primary teachers until the mid-2030s.

³ IFS Skillnet - Financial Services in Ireland - Skills of the Future Report <https://www.ibec.ie/-/media/documents/connect-and-learn/industries/financial-services-leasing-and-professional-services/financial-services-ireland/2022/financial-services-in-ireland---skills-of-the-future.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.esri.ie/publications/skill-requirements-for-emerging-technologies-in-ireland>

⁵ <https://www.esri.ie/system/files/publications/RS147.pdf>

⁶ Enrolments in primary schools are projected to decline annually to 2036, while post-primary school enrolments are estimated to continue to grow to 2025 and then to decline annually thereafter. Department of Education, Projections of full-time enrolments, Primary and Second Level, 2023-2042. March 2024. See <https://www.gov.ie/>

Issues with recruiting and retaining teachers have been highlighted at both primary level (e.g. regional issues and/or availability of substitute teachers) and for post-primary teachers (subject-specific). The on-going cost of living crisis and lack of affordable housing, which is having a negative impact on the recruitment and retention of key workers across several economic sectors, is deemed to be a significant factor. Policy responses to issues with sourcing teachers have included increasing the number of places on teacher training courses for the academic year 2024-2025⁷ as well as the expansion of free upskilling programmes which seeks to increase the number of qualified teachers in high-demand subjects.

Skill shortage:

- Subject-specific secondary teachers

Social & Care Occupations

Employment levels grew slightly above the national average for social and care occupations, with an additional 25,000 persons employed since 2018. This primarily related to increases in employment of care workers and healthcare assistants (in the other caring services category). These two occupations also accounted for the largest share of employment permits issued in this occupational group in 2023. Over three-quarters of those employed in social and care occupations were female with almost a third employed part-time. With an ageing population, demand for care roles is likely to be in increasing demand in the years to come.

Skills shortage:

- Healthcare assistants

Labour shortage:

- Care workers

Legal & Security Occupations

Employment grew in 2023 but remained below 2021 levels. Approximately a half of those employed in these occupations worked in the public administration and defence sector, with males accounting for three quarters of employment. The outlooks are likely to vary across occupations depending on government funding for some and the level of public consumption for others.

Construction Occupations

Employment growth was below average in construction-related occupations with an increase of just 12,000 persons employed between 2018 and 2023. Employment growth slowed or declined across these occupations during the COVID-19 pandemic, with many roles only seeing employment numbers returning to pre-COVID-19 levels in 2022. Almost all persons employed were male with the majority of those employed in full-time roles. There was a relatively high number of jobseekers registered with the DSP at the end of December 2023 who stated that their previous occupation was in construction trades or other construction-related occupations; although it was not possible to disaggregate across trades or to determine if they were qualified tradespersons, it does indicate some potential additional supply for these roles.

The demand and supply of construction related skills is affected by a range of factors. Government plans alone are likely to see demand increasing in order to deliver on housing and

⁷ <https://www.rte.ie/news/education/2023/0327/schools-teacher-shortage>

climate action targets⁸. The demand for construction-related skills will also be impacted by the potential demands of non-residential building as well as Government infrastructure projects (e.g. Project Ireland 2040). In addition, the nature of the skills mix required for construction-related jobs is changing: modern methods of construction may require less on-site labour and may go some way to mitigate issues with supply of skills by relying more on off-site manufacturing processes.⁹ These new methods, along with the transition to a zero-carbon economy, will have significant implications for construction-related skills, with a changing skills mix for a range of existing occupations (e.g. civil engineers, plumbers, roofers, glaziers, etc) likely to require considerable levels of upskilling/reskilling.

Skill shortages:

- Civil engineers & construction project managers
- Quantity surveyors

Potential future skill shortages:

- Plumbers
- Carpenters

Other Craft Occupations n.e.c.

Employment growth for this occupational group over the five-year period was largely attributed to increases in levels for welders/fabricators and electricians. Males accounted for by far the largest share employed across all of the occupations in this group. Employment permits were issued across all occupations indicating some level of difficulty in sourcing skills from the available labour market. Employment was spread across many sectors including industry, construction and wholesale & retail. Future outlooks for this occupational group will vary depending on the main sector of employment for the individual occupations. Increased digitalisation and automation in these roles will require investment in upskilling/reskilling for those already in employment.

Skill shortages:

- Welders/ fabricators
- CNC programmers

Agriculture & Animal Care Occupations

Although there was some employment growth for this occupational group overall, it was considerably below the national annual average for the five-year time period examined. Despite the low employment growth, issues with recruitment for some agricultural roles persist. Half of the workforce were aged 55 years or over (mostly related to the age profile of farmers), the oldest age profile across all the occupational groups. Teagasc's Climate Action Strategy highlights the key role that agriculture will play in reducing carbon emissions and adapting to climate change, including the need to maintain and increase food production and improve biodiversity.¹⁰

⁸ A 2022 DFHERIS report estimates that 50,000 new entrants will be required across all skill levels over the period 2023-2030 to deliver Government targets for housing and retrofitting alone (gov.ie - Report on the Analysis of Skills for Residential Construction & Retrofitting, 2023 to 2030 (www.gov.ie))

⁹ <https://skillsireland.ie/all-publications/2024/skills-for-modern-methods-of-construction.html>

¹⁰ <https://www.teagasc.ie/media/website/publications/2022/Teagasc-Climate-Action-Strategy-2022-2030-web.pdf>

Hospitality 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. 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 increased real income for consumers and continued growth in tourism numbers, along with issues such as the cost of doing business.

Skill shortage:

- Chefs

Arts, Sports & Tourism Occupations

Employment growth was below average for this occupational group; employment levels fell due to the COVID-19 pandemic but have increased annually since. Three fifths of those employed were female, with a higher than average share working in part-time roles. Over half of employment was concentrated in the other NACE activities sector (which includes arts, entertainment and other services) with a further 22% employed in the ICT and professional activities sectors combined. Those employed in services roles were likely impacted by the higher cost of living in recent years but should benefit from expected increases in real income in the short- to medium term.

Transport & Logistics Occupations

The below average employment annual growth rate over the five-year period primarily relates to a fall in the number of taxi drivers employed. Almost all employed in these occupations were male and the higher than average share aged 55 years and older suggests that replacement demand may be an issue in the short- to medium term. Although the number of online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) declined in 2023, it was by a far smaller share than the overall average. Upskilling and reskilling will continue to be a key feature for these occupations as digitalisation and sustainable practices change the nature of the work. Supply chain challenges and fuel costs also remain as challenges for these roles, particularly given the continuing geo-political tensions.

Skill shortages:

- HGV drivers
- Bus and coach drivers

Administrative & Secretarial Occupations

Despite a growth rate on a par with the national average, overall employment levels over the five-year period in this occupational group have seen little change since 2021. Automation and the digitalisation of tasks are likely to impact on employment growth in the coming years; however, given the higher than average share aged 55 years and over, it is unlikely to offset the considerable replacement demand that will arise due to retirements. With almost half of those employed holding third level qualifications, skills mismatches may also be a feature for these roles.

Sales, Marketing and Customer Service Occupations

Overall employment levels in this occupational group between 2022 and 2023 remained almost unchanged, with elevated levels of inflation and reduced consumer demand during this period likely to have been contributing factors, particularly for those employed in the wholesale and retail sector. The Central Bank forecasts an increased level of consumer spending in 2024 as real income improves which should have a positive effect on sales roles in the short-term at least.¹¹ Although the wholesale and retail sector accounted for the highest share of employment in these occupations (driven by the high volume of sales assistants employed in this group), issues with sourcing certain sales roles, as identified in the employment permits data, appear to relate to other sectors such as the ICT sector, which accounts for a far smaller share of employment. Sales skills feature strongly in Enterprise Ireland's Spotlight on Skills data spanning a range of skills from marketing, communication, negotiation, solving customers' problems and product/technical knowledge.

Operatives & Elementary Occupations n.e.c.

With little change in employment levels since 2022, the annual average growth over the five-year period to 2023 was below the national average. Over half of employment in this occupational group was in industry, with 14% in administrative support services (e.g. cleaners) and 11% in wholesale and retail (e.g. warehouse operatives). Almost a third of those employed were non-Irish citizens and a high share of recent job hires in some roles suggests a high level of churn and issues in relation to the attractiveness of the job. The relatively high share of those employed who held at most lower secondary education (at 18%) indicates that upskilling/reskilling requirements will be key for this cohort with increased digitalisation of tasks in these jobs.

¹¹ Central Bank of Ireland, Quarterly Bulletin, Q2 2024



Introduction

The National Skills Bulletin 2024 is the twentieth in an annual series of reports produced by the Skills and Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU) in SOLAS. The Bulletin provides an overview of the Irish labour market at occupational level, with the aim of assisting policy formulation in the areas of employment, education/training, and immigration (particularly the sourcing of skills which are in short supply in the Irish and EU labour market from the EEA). It also aims to inform career guidance advisors, students and other individuals making career and educational choices.

The Bulletin draws on a range of data sources relevant to Ireland's labour market. The main data source is the CSO's Labour Force Survey (LFS)¹² which provides detailed employment numbers, including by occupation. The LFS, which replaced the Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) in Quarter 3 2017, has undergone a number of revisions in recent years:

- data from the intercensal period (2017-2022) was adjusted in line with findings from Census 2022.
- changes to the LFS questionnaire were introduced in line with new IESS (Integration of European Social Statistics) regulations for the Labour Force Survey in quarter 1 2021, with the addition of new questions and the removal of certain questions.

As a result, the LFS numbers (e.g. employment, unemployment, overall population, etc) in this edition of the National Skills Bulletin will differ from the numbers reported in earlier National Skills Bulletins.

Occupation-related data

Section 10 provides a detailed analysis of trends and outlooks at occupational level. Occupations are classified using the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC 2010). In cases where the number of persons employed in an occupation is too small to allow for meaningful statistical analysis, two or more occupations were merged to form an occupational group.

In 2024, the SLMRU conducted a review of how occupations were grouped. Revisions made during this process are outlined at the beginning of Section 10 and the occupations included in each occupational group are available in the Appendix. As a result of these changes, along with revised employment data from the CSO for 2017-2022 (as detailed above), the composition of some occupational groups in this year's Bulletin is not identical to earlier years.

Each occupation is examined in terms of the following:

- employment level and recent employment trends; the analysis is based on the data from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) Labour Force Survey; when interpreting the employment data, the following should be borne in mind:
 - the employment level for each occupation is expressed as an annual average (i.e. the average of four quarters in a calendar year)
 - the trend analysis covers the five-year period 2018-2023, unless otherwise specified; growth over this period is calculated in terms of the annualised growth rate,

¹² The LFS data presented in this report is either extracted from the CSO's PxStat Open Data Statistical Database or is based on an analysis of strictly controlled Research Microdata Files provided by the Central Statistics Office (CSO). The CSO does not take any responsibility for the views expressed or the outputs generated from this research.

sometimes referred to as the 'average annual growth rate' for ease of reading (although the two terms are not technically identical)

- an employment profile (e.g. age, gender, citizenship, employment type and education level); the analysis is based on the LFS data for quarter 4 2023
- vacancies advertised through the Department of Social Protection's (DSP) Jobs Ireland vacancy portal (i.e. the Public Employment Service (PES)) and the Ireland subset of the Web Intelligence Hub (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) Online Job Adverts database in 2023
- the level of difficulty in filling vacancies; the analysis is based on data from the SLMRU Recruitment Agency Survey conducted in November 2023, from skills audits conducted by Regional Skills Fora, and insights from Enterprise Ireland's Spotlight on Skills initiative.

The unemployment rate by detailed occupation continues to be excluded from the analysis in this edition of the Bulletin as the number of persons unemployed in 2023 who stated their previous occupation was too small to report.

The National Skills Bulletin 2024 is structured as follows:

Section 1: sets the Irish labour market within the context of recent trends and developments in the macroeconomy, and presents an overview of the economic and employment outlook for Ireland

Section 2: examines trends in key labour market indicators (employment, unemployment and the labour force) and the composition of national employment (gender, age, citizenship, education etc.)

Section 3: examines employment trends in economic sectors (quarter 4 2023 is compared with the same period in 2018 and 2022)

Section 4: analyses employment trends by broad occupational group (i.e. employment growth and the composition of employment) up to quarter 4 2023

Section 5: provides an overview of the labour market at regional level up to quarter 4 2023

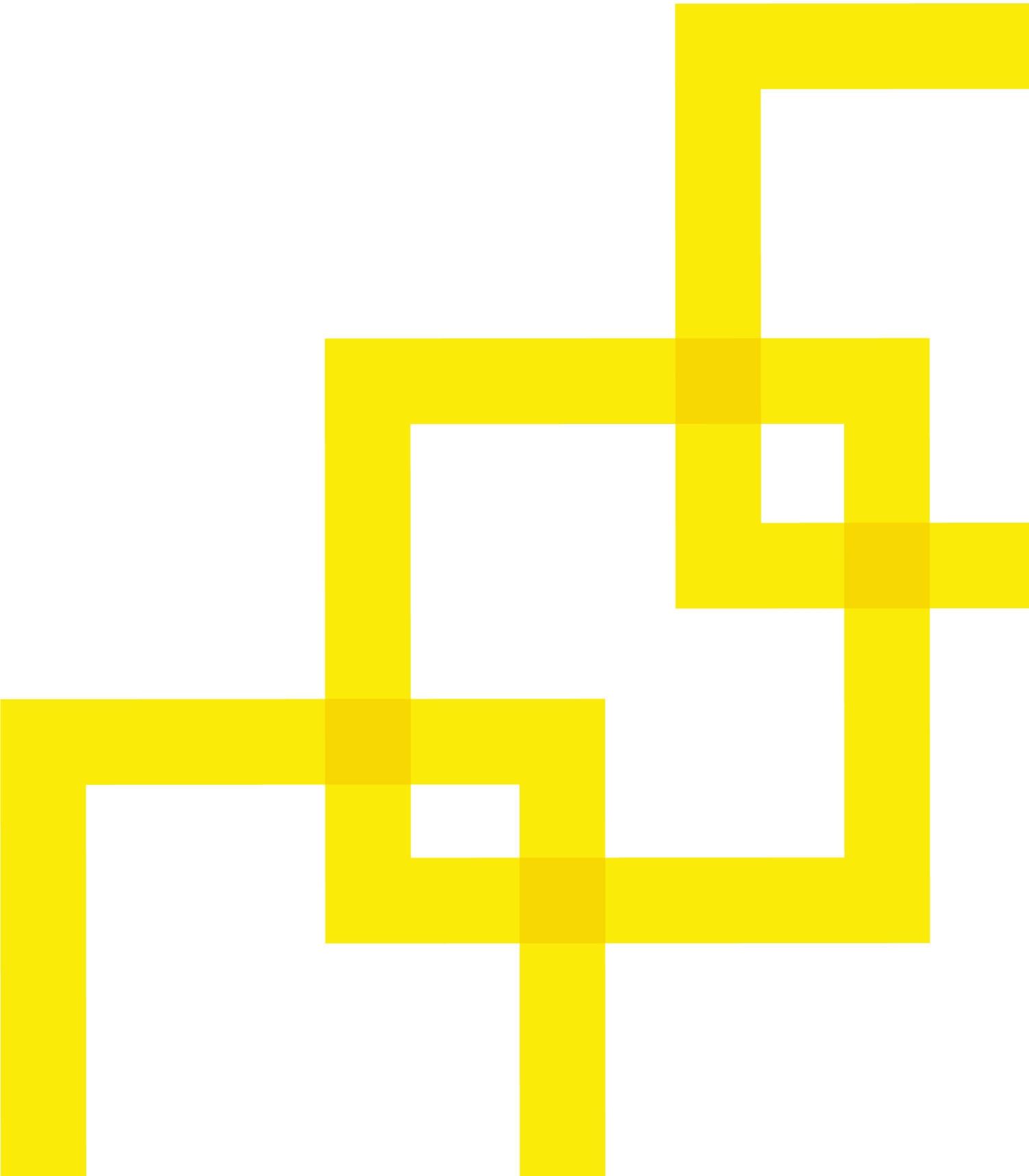
Section 6: examines recent trends in Irish unemployment (levels and rates) and details the characteristics of the unemployed population (i.e. gender, age, educational attainment, nationality, occupation and sector) up to quarter 4 2023

Section 7: presents an analysis of labour market transitions between unemployment, employment and economic inactivity, an analysis of recent job hires in 2023 in terms of age, education level, sector and occupation, and a new section for this edition on recent job leavers

Section 8: examines the inflow of labour from non-EEA countries through the various employment permit schemes up to 2023

Section 9: provides an overview of trends and the types of vacancies advertised through the DSP Jobs Ireland vacancy portal and the Ireland subset of the Web Intelligence Hub – Online Job Adverts (WIH-OHA) data in 2023; it also reports the findings of the November 2023 SLMRU Recruitment Agency Survey on difficult-to fill vacancies and on the CSO vacancy rate by sector

Section 10: provides labour market indicators for 100 occupations presented in 16 occupational groups and provides an outlook for each occupation.



Section 1

Macroeconomic Context

1.1 Introduction

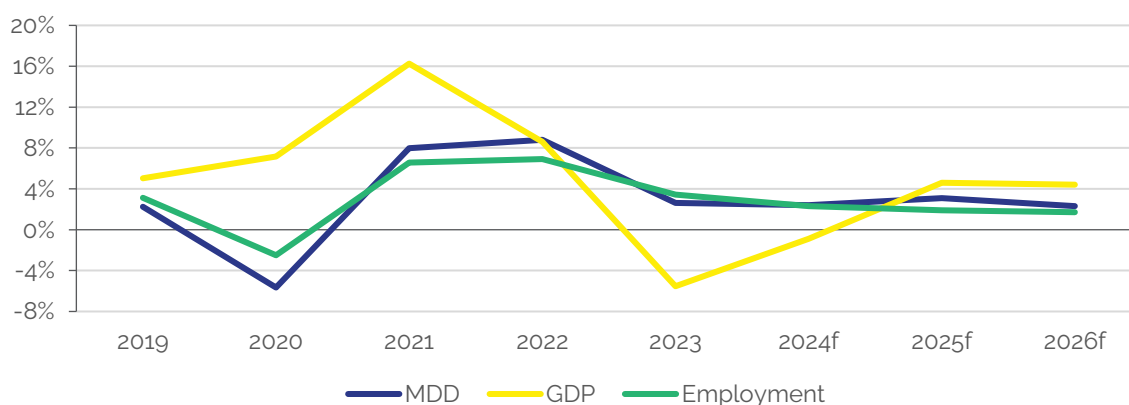
This section provides an overview of Ireland's economic performance in 2023 and examines the macroeconomic outlook, at both a national and international level, all within the context of the likely impact on Ireland's labour market.

1.2 Economic performance

Figure 1.1 shows that the main indicators for the Irish economy have seen considerable fluctuations in recent years. The onset of COVID-19 restrictions resulted in significant dips in both employment and modified domestic demand (MDD) in 2020, followed by a subsequent rebound in 2021. MDD grew strongly in 2022 (by 8.8%) before dipping to 2.6% in 2023, with the growth primarily associated with increased household expenditure. Employment levels continued to expand in 2023, albeit at a slower rate (3.4% compared to 6.9% in 2022). Forecasts from the Central Bank indicate that both employment and MDD will continue to see further moderate growth over the period to 2026¹³. These forecasts are underpinned by, amongst others, the expectation of rising real household incomes, increased residential construction and a stabilising of activity in the MNE-dominated sectors. The Department of Finance forecasts similar employment growth rates to that of the Central Bank and slightly higher growth rates for MDD (2.9% in 2026 compared to 2.3% by the Central Bank)¹⁴.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew strongly during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a 16.3% increase in 2021; the 5.5% fall in 2023 is largely associated with reduced goods exports related to the pharma and ICT sectors, with the Central Bank forecasting continued declines in 2024 (-0.9%), but recovering to 4.6% in 2025 and 4.4% in 2026. However, the extent to which GDP accurately reflects the economy in Ireland has been questioned and as such, it is less useful in providing a guide to the health of the labour market and the demand and supply of skills.

Figure 1.1 GDP*, Modified Domestic Demand* (MDD) and Employment, Annual Change (%), 2019-2023, Forecast 2024-2026



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data, Central Bank Quarterly Bulletin, Q3 2024
 *Constant Market Prices, chain linked annually and referenced to year 2022

¹³ Central Bank of Ireland, Quarterly Bulletin, Q3 2024

¹⁴ Department of Finance, Stability Programme Update, April 2024

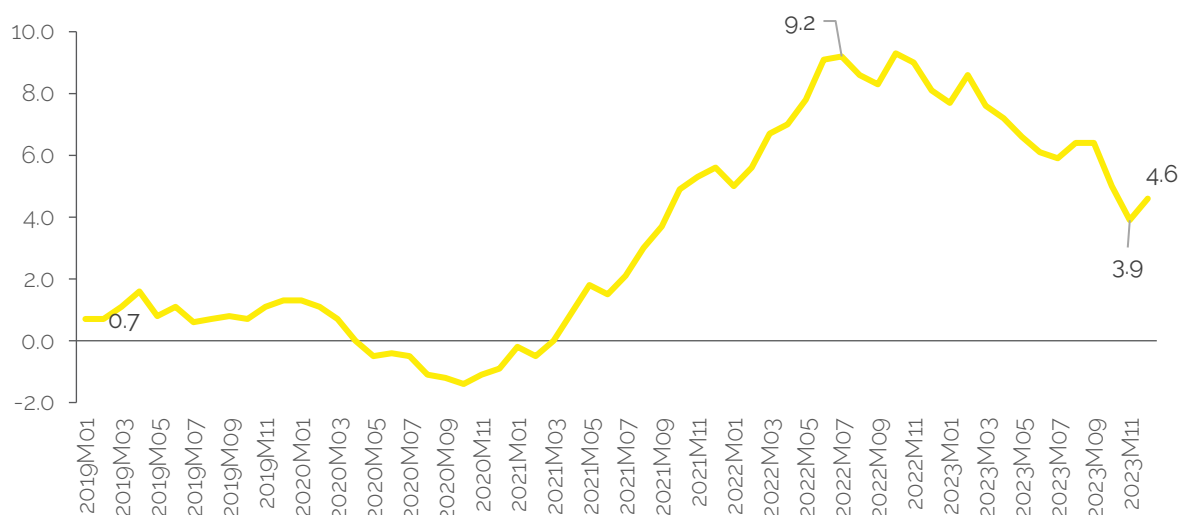
Foreign-owned enterprises

Foreign-owned multinational enterprises (MNEs) have become a significant feature of the Irish economy in recent years and understanding their impact has become increasingly complex (see Fitzgerald, 2023¹⁵). The CSO notes that MNEs dominate a number of sectors in Ireland including pharma/chemical production, computer, electronic and optical device manufacturing, medical instrument production and information and communication¹⁶. Based on National Accounts data, foreign-owned MNE-dominated sectors accounted for an increasingly larger share of gross value added (GVA) compared to non-MNE sectors over the period 2019 to 2022, rising from 41% in 2019 to 53% in 2022; a fall in GVA for foreign-owned MNE-dominated sectors in 2023, along with a rise in GVA for other sectors, saw their share fall back to 47%.¹⁷ Despite the recent reduction in GVA for foreign-owned MNE-dominated enterprises, two key sub-sectors, namely pharmaceutical manufacturing and computer programming, continued to experience employment growth in 2023, with an additional 57,000 persons employed in these two sub-sectors combined since 2020 (CSO LFS data).

Inflation

After a period of elevated inflation in Ireland, peaking at 9.2% in July 2022, an easing began in 2023, with the rate of inflation declining to 3.9% in November 2023, primarily related to a fall in energy prices over this time (Figure 1.2). In 2024 to date, inflation has continued to decline with a rate of 2.6% recorded for May.¹⁸ The Central Bank forecasts inflation rates of 2.3% in 2024, 2% in 2025 and 1.6% in 2026. The falling levels of inflation are likely to have an impact on consumer spending and the cost of doing business, benefitting services sectors such as retail and hospitality. Employment growth in the wholesale and retail and accommodation and food sectors has been lower than the national average, having been particularly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic; increased consumer spending has the potential to lead to increased employment levels in these sectors.

Figure 1.2 Annual Rate of Change (%) in Consumer Prices Index (CPI), 2019-2023



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data

¹⁵ Fitzgerald, J. (2023). Understanding the Irish Economy, ESRI Special Article, ESRI

¹⁶ <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-na/quarterlynationalaccountsquarter12024provisional/foreignanddomesticgva/>

¹⁷ Based on CSO National Accounts (constant prices): PXStat NAO18

¹⁸ <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cpi/consumerpriceindexmay2024/>

1.3 Enterprise sector

The strength of the Irish economy in 2023 was reflected in the continued attractiveness of Ireland as a location for foreign direct investment. In 2023, the IDA reported that their 1,800+ client companies employed over 300,000 persons, similar to 2022 levels, with recent investments expected to create 19,000 jobs¹⁹. This is despite a challenging international environment and increased competition. In terms of indigenous firms, there was also encouraging news from Enterprise Ireland (EI) which reported over 15,000 new jobs created in 2023, with total employment across their client companies reaching over 225,000, a net gain of 5,000 jobs²⁰.

1.4 Competitiveness

The IMD World Competitiveness Ranking 2024 saw Ireland's ranking falling to 4th place (from 2nd place in 2023) among 63 countries benchmarked, below Singapore, Switzerland and Denmark; this is still a marked improvement on 2022 when Ireland was ranked 11th place²¹. The fall in ranking is largely attributed to a decline in ranking for economic performance from 1st place in 2023 to 10th place, although remaining higher than its 22nd place in 2021. Ireland's ranking for business efficiency remained unchanged at 3rd, government efficiency fell from 3rd to 6th place, while the ranking for infrastructure grew to 17th in 2024 (from 19th in 2023). The National Competitiveness and Productivity Council (NCP) contends that Ireland's continued high ranking has been because of our competitive strengths such as our skilled workforce, business-friendly environment and strong institutions; to enhance Ireland's competitiveness, they contend that there will be a need to address some of the weaker areas such as infrastructural deficits, along with a need to invest in energy infrastructure²².

1.5 Hours worked and earnings

This section examines actual hours and average weekly paid hours across all sectors in the Irish economy along with average hourly earnings.

Actual hours worked

In quarter 4 2023, actual hours worked per week were highest in the health and industrial sectors at 10.4 million hours respectively, followed by the wholesale and retail sector at 9.9 million hours (Figure 1.3). The lowest actual hours worked in quarter 4 2023 were in the administrative and support services sector at 3 million hours.

The actual hours worked increased for the majority of sectors over the period since quarter 4 2018, with the largest growth for the health, professional services and ICT sectors, each increasing by 1.4 million hours. Declines in actual hours worked occurred in three sectors, namely accommodation and food (-0.5m hours), agriculture (-0.5m hours), and administrative and support services (-0.3m hours); actual hours were unchanged for the wholesale & retail and arts, entertainment and other services sectors. The increase in actual hours of work for the health sector since quarter 4 2018 is reflected in the increase in employment in this sector over the same time period; however, increases in employment for industry and wholesale and retail (of 41,400 and 31,800 persons respectively) did not result in a concomitant increase in actual hours of work in these sectors.

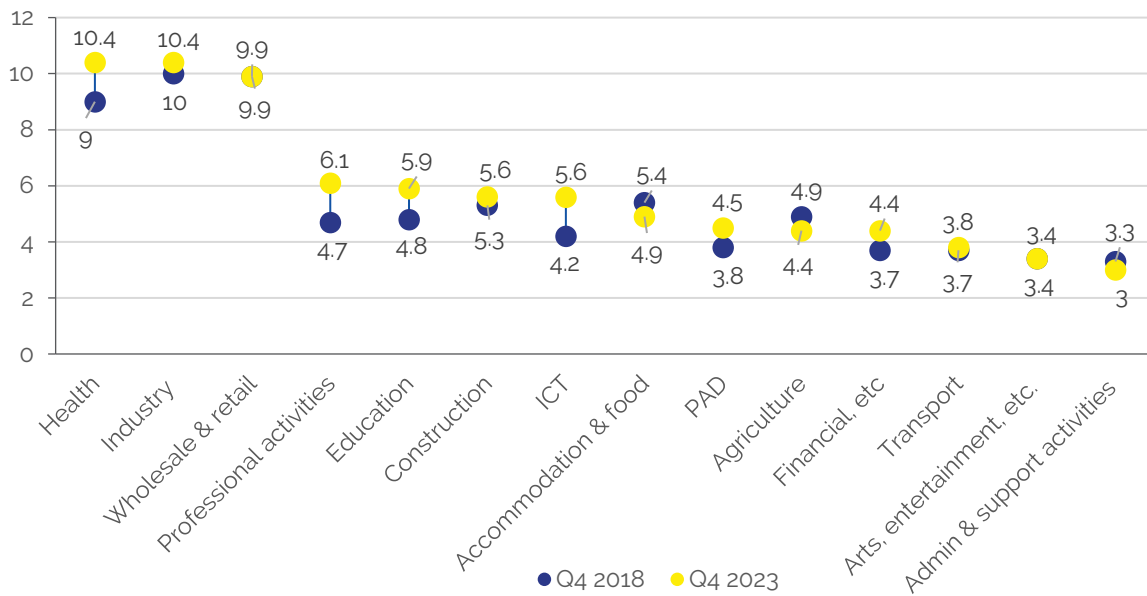
¹⁹ <https://www.idaireland.com/latest-news/press-release/ida-ireland-reports-strong-annual-results-for-2023-d7f663755a3657aa71d82b5de15428f3>

²⁰ <https://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/news/employment-in-enterprise-ireland-supported-companies>

²¹ <https://www.imd.org/centers/wcc/world-competitiveness-center/rankings/world-competitiveness-ranking/>

²² <https://www.competitiveness.ie/media/wc5cpja0/ncpc-bulletin-24-4-imd-world-competitiveness-rankings-2024.pdf>

Figure 1.3: Actual hours worked per week (millions), Quarter 4 2018 & Quarter 4 2023

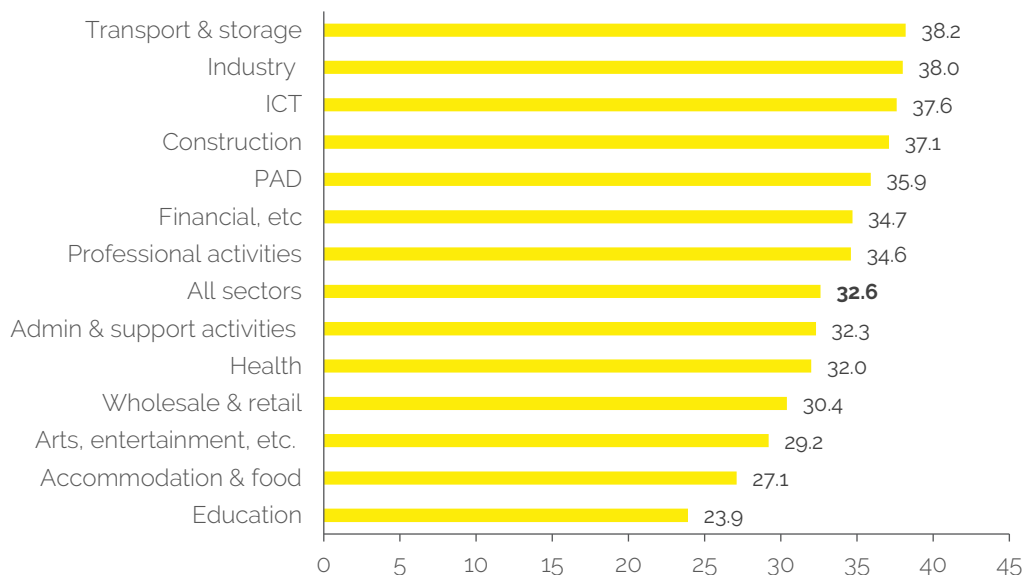


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO (LFS) data

Average weekly paid hours

In quarter 4 2023, the number of average weekly paid hours for the overall economy was 32.6 hours (Figure 1.4). Although the actual hours worked per week in the transport sector was relatively low, the average weekly paid hours for this sector were the highest across all sectors, at 38.2 hours. This was followed by industry (38.0 hours) and ICT (37.6 hours). The education sector recorded the lowest average hours worked within a week (23.9 hours), followed by the accommodation & food sector (27.1 hours).

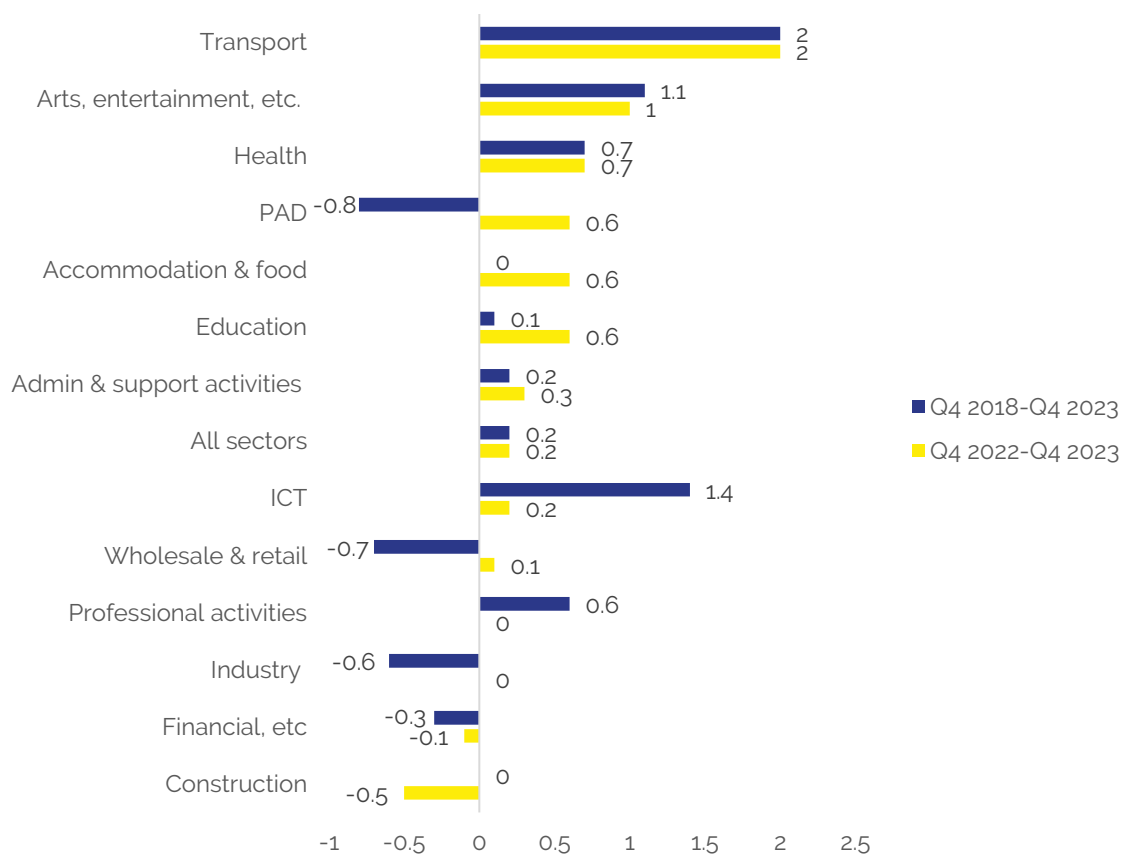
Figure 1.4 Average Weekly Paid Hours by Sector, Quarter 4 2023



Source: CSO, Earnings, Hours and Employment Costs Survey

When compared with quarter 4 2022, the average weekly paid hours increased across most sectors, with declines only occurring in the construction and financial activities sectors, of 0.5 and 0.1 hours respectively (Figure 1.5). The largest increase in average weekly paid hours was for the transport sector (+2 hours) and the arts, entertainment and other services sector, which increased by one hour. The transport sector also had the highest increase over the five-year period since quarter 4 2018, with an average of an additional two weekly paid hours, followed by the ICT (1.4 hours) and arts, entertainment and other services (1.1 hours) sectors. The PAD, wholesale and retail and industry sectors saw the largest declines in average hours worked since quarter 4 2018, at 0.8, 0.7 and 0.6 hours respectively.

Figure 1.5 Change in Average Weekly Paid Hours by Sector

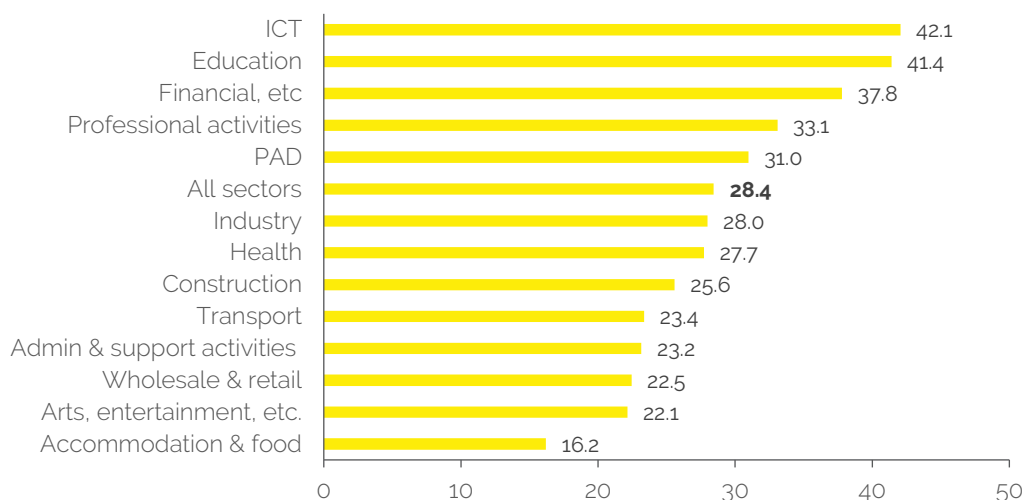


Source: CSO, Earnings, Hours and Employment Costs Survey

Average hourly earnings

In quarter 4 2023, average hourly earnings were €28.40. Average hourly earnings were highest in the ICT and education sectors, at €42.10 and €41.40 per hour respectively, and lowest in the accommodation & food sector, at €16.20 per hour (Figure 1.6).

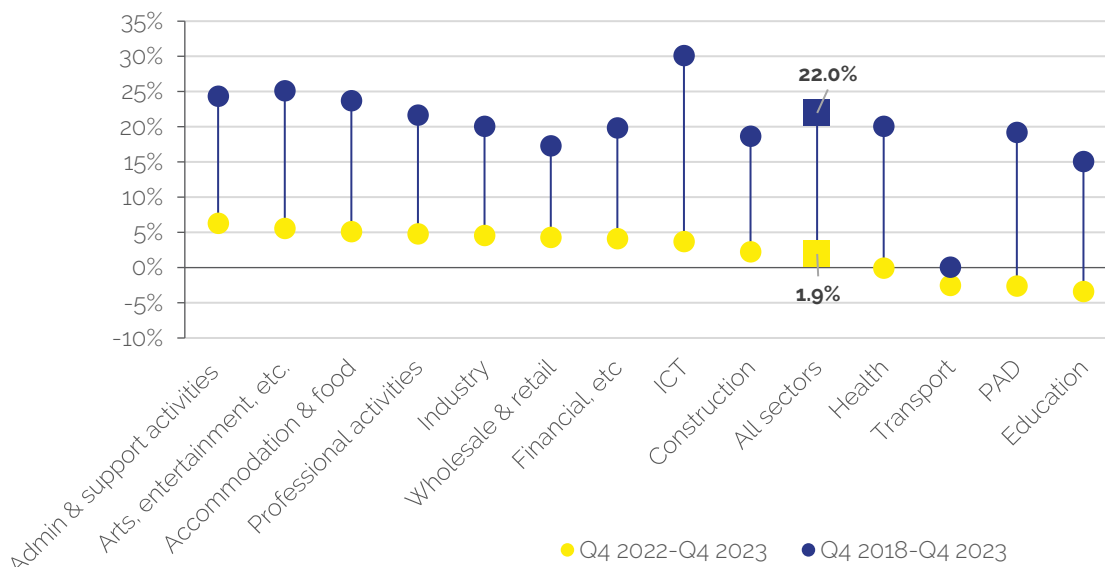
Figure 1.6 Average Hourly Earnings by Sector (€), Quarter 4 2023



Source: CSO, Earnings, Hours and Employment Costs Survey

Between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023, average hourly earnings increased by €0.50, or 1.9% (Figure 1.7). The largest increases in average hourly earnings over the one-year period were in the administrative and support services, arts, entertainment and other services and the accommodation and food sectors, increasing by 6.3%, 5.6% and 5.1% respectively. Despite this, these sectors remained among the lowest in terms of average hourly earnings. Declines occurred for the education, PAD and transport sectors. Over the five-year period since quarter 4 2018, average hourly earnings increased by €5.10, or 22%, with increases across all sectors. The ICT sector accounted for the largest increase over this period, increasing by 30% or almost €10 per hour on average. The transport sector had the lowest growth of just 0.1% over the five years.

Figure 1.7 Change in Average Hourly Earnings by Sector, %

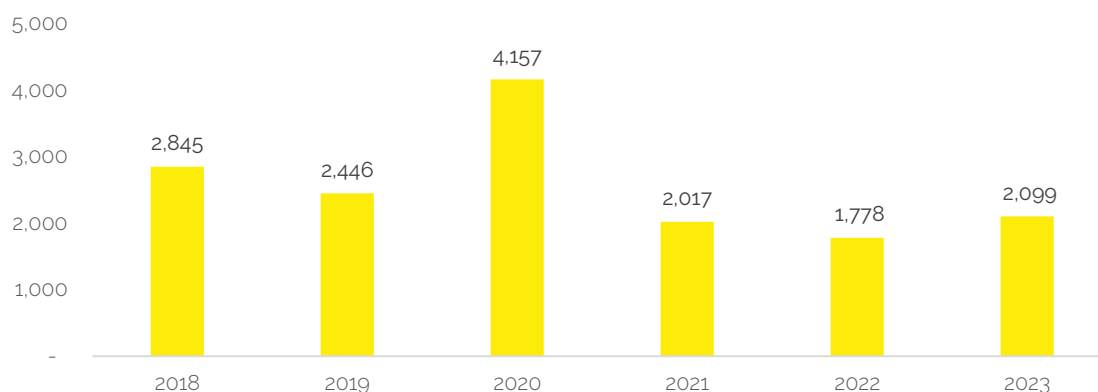


Source: CSO, Earnings, Hours and Employment Costs Survey

1.6 Redundancies

The number of applications for redundancies grew strongly in 2020 as a result of COVID-19 restrictions in the Irish economy (Figure 1.8). However, the increase in the number of redundancy applications could have been significantly higher if not for the introduction of income support payments, such as EWSS, which were thought to have protected many businesses which were impacted by the restrictions imposed. The number of applications for redundancies has been below pre-COVID-19 levels since 2021, although it increased by 321 to 2,099 in 2023.

Figure 1.8 Applications Received Under the Redundancy Payment Scheme, 2018-2023



Source: DSP

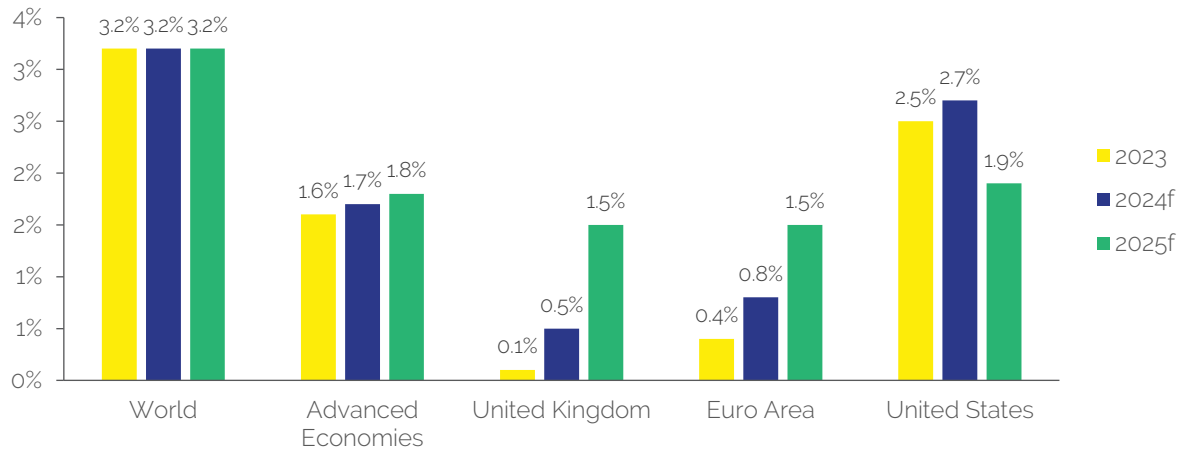
1.7 Global and national outlook

According to the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) World Economic Outlook, the world economy is forecast to continue to grow at the rate seen in 2023 (3.2%) for 2024 and 2025 (Figure 1.9), primarily driven by GDP growth in emerging market and developing economies.²³ More modest increases in growth are forecast for advanced economies (of 1.8% in 2025); the Euro area is expected to see progressive growth over the forecast period, as is the United Kingdom, albeit both from low bases (0.4% and 0.1% in 2023 respectively). Growth in the United States is forecast to be above the total for advanced economies in 2024 (2.7% compared to 1.7%), although broadly in line in 2025. At 1.5% in 2024 and 2.5% in 2025, the forecast for Ireland (not illustrated in the graph) exceeds the projected growth for the Euro area over the same time period.

Geopolitical tensions remain a risk for future growth with differing levels of disinflation across countries potentially leading to pressure on financial sectors. Measured fiscal policies along with structural reforms and the adoption of artificial intelligence are some factors discussed by the IMF, which have the potential to raise economic activity and lead to positive global growth.

²³ International Monetary Fund, World Economic Outlook, April 2024

Figure 1.9 World Economic Outlook Projections (Real GDP, Annual Percentage Change), 2023-2025



Source: International Monetary Fund



Section 2

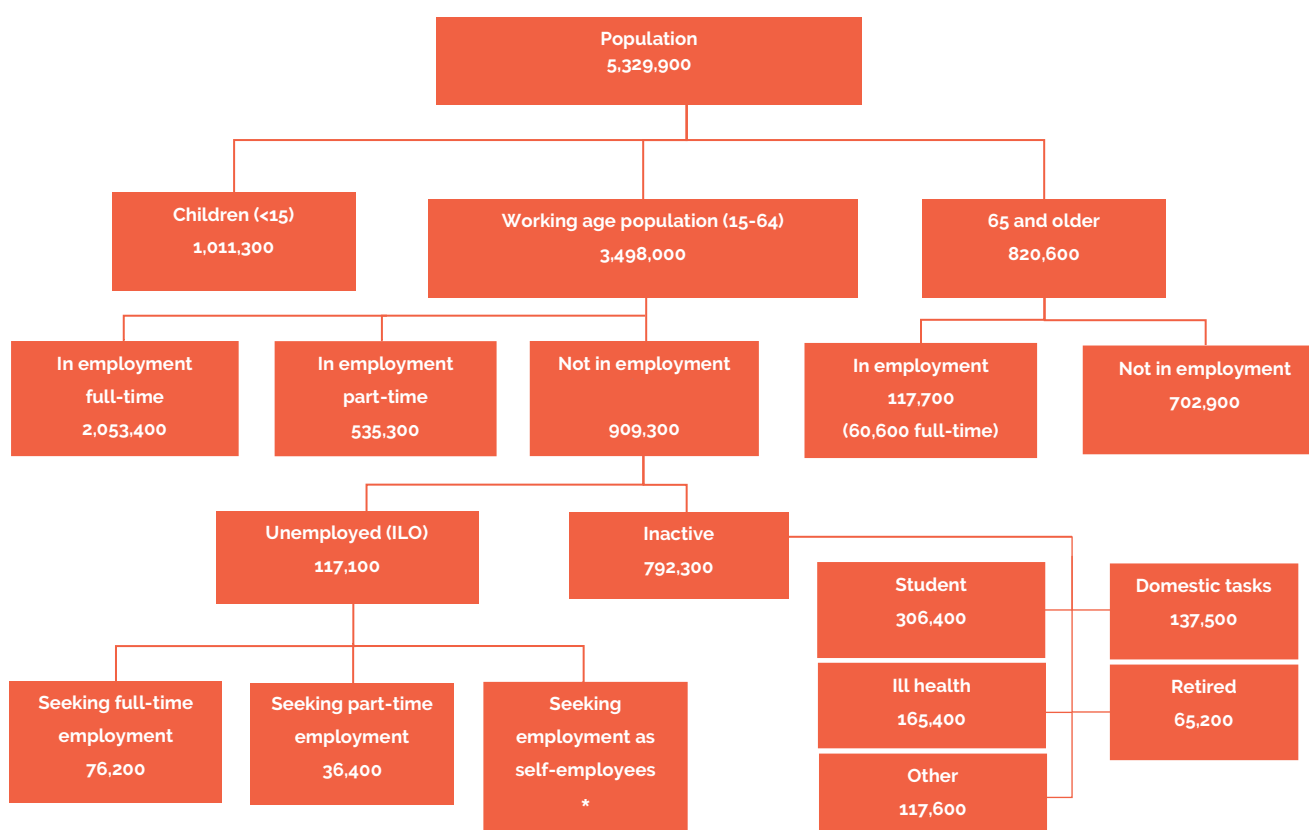
Labour Market Overview

2.1 Population: labour market status

As shown in Figure 2.1, Ireland's estimated population was nearly 5.33 million in quarter 4 2023, 88,700 (1.7%) more than in quarter 4 2022.

The working age population (aged 15–64 years) comprised nearly 3.5 million persons, a rise of 2% (68,900 persons) compared to quarter 4 2022. Between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023, the number of children (aged less than 15 years) fell slightly (by 7,700, -0.8%) to just over 1.01 million, while the number of persons aged 65 years and older grew (by 27,600, or 3.5%) to reach 820,600 persons.

Figure 2.1 Population by Labour Market Status (ILO defined), Quarter 4 2023



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Note: Discrepancies are due to rounding.

In quarter 4 2023, of the working age population, 2.05 million were in full-time employment and 535,300 persons were in part-time employment, representing increases of 2.6% (51,100 additional workers) and 4.7% (24,100 extra workers) respectively compared to quarter 4 2022. Of those aged

65 years or over, 117,700 persons were in employment (51% of whom were in full-time employment), a 13.9% rise (14,400 extra workers) on quarter 4 2022.

Of the working age population (aged 15-64 years), there were 909,300 persons who were not in employment, of whom 117,100 were unemployed, with the remaining 792,300 classified as economically inactive. When compared to quarter 4 2022, the number of unemployed persons (aged 15-64 years) grew by 6,200 persons (+5.6%), while the number of inactive individuals fell by 12,400. As a result, the total number of persons outside the workforce fell slightly (by 0.7%).

Of the 792,300 persons aged 15-64 years who were **not in the labour force** (i.e. economically inactive) in quarter 4 2023,

- 306,400 were students, a fall of 2.1% (6,500 fewer persons) compared to quarter 4 2022
- 165,400 were inactive due to ill-health, 5,000 more people (+3.1%) year-on-year
- 135,500 were engaged in domestic tasks, a decline of 14,100 (-9.3%)
- 65,200 were retired, a decline of 5,200 persons (-7.4%)
- 117,600 were inactive for other reasons; of these, an estimated 7,100 persons were discouraged workers, although the numbers are small and should be interpreted with caution; a further 18,200 were available for work but not seeking work. When compared to quarter 4 2022, the number of persons inactive for other reasons grew by 7.5% (8,200 extra people), and while the number of discouraged workers was broadly similar to the preceding year, the number of persons available but not seeking work grew by nearly a third (+4,400 people, or 31.9%).

As shown in Table 2.1, in quarter 4 2023,

- The total age dependency rate (youth and older age) was 52.4%, a slight decline on the rate in quarter 4 2022
- The youth dependency rate declined by nearly 1 percentage point to 28.9%
- The old age dependency rate rose marginally (by 0.4 pp) to 23.5%
- The inactivity rate declined to 22.7%
- The economic dependency ratio, which compares the total population not in the labour force to the number of those in the labour force, rose to 1.13

Table 2.1 Dependency and Inactivity Rates, Quarter 4 2022 and Quarter 4 2023

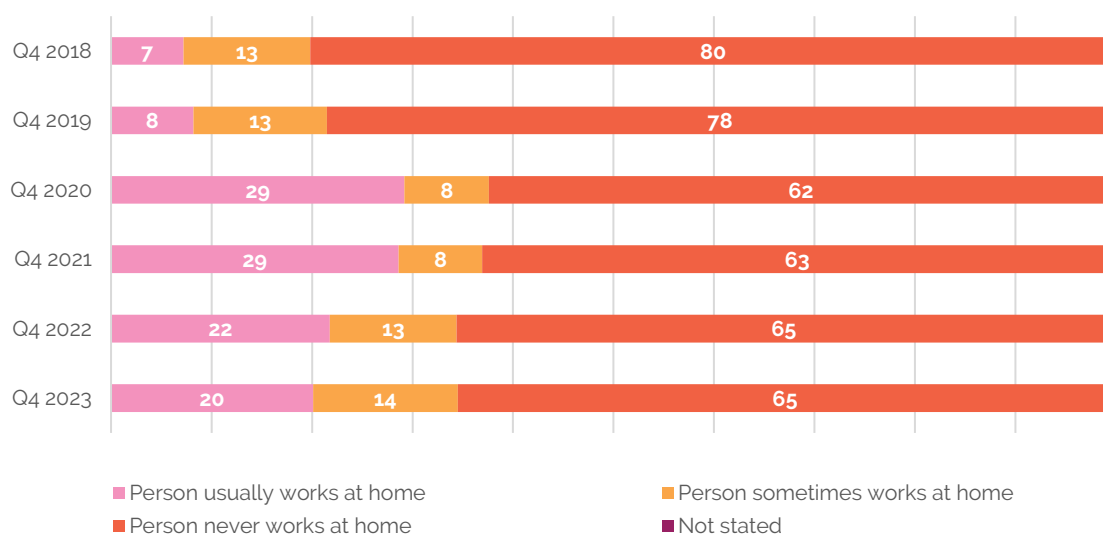
	Quarter 4 2022	Quarter 4 2023
Total dependency rate (0-14 and 65+)	52.8%	52.4%
Youth dependency rate (0-14)	29.7%	28.9%
Old age dependency rate (65+)	23.1%	23.5%
Inactivity rate (15-64)	23.5%	22.7%
Economic dependency ratio	1.09	1.13

Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Persons working from home

Of the 2.7 million persons (aged 15+) in employment in quarter 4 2023, over a third (or 933,200 persons) either usually or sometimes worked from home (Figure 2.2). The share of employed persons working usually or sometimes from home reached 37% in quarter 4 2020 (although the share was higher still at 44% in quarter 1 2021 – not illustrated in graph). Patterns of working from home changed thereafter: while the share of those who usually worked from home fell annually between quarter 4 2021 and quarter 4 2023, at 20% in quarter 4 2023, the share remained well over twice that observed in quarter 4 2019 (8%); at the same time, the share who sometimes worked from home returned to just above the pre-COVID levels (at 14% in quarter 4 2023).

Figure 2.2 Employed Persons Usually, Sometimes, or Never Working from Home (%), Q4 2018-Q4 2023



Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

2.2 Labour market trends

This section examines key labour market trends including the expected changes for the next few years based on projections from the Central Bank of Ireland. The focus is on annual average labour force, employment and unemployment levels and rates; an outline of population migration trends is also provided.

Labour force, employment and unemployment levels

In 2023, Ireland's labour force stood at 2.8 million persons (annual average), 89,200 (3.3%) more persons than in 2022 and 401,000 more than in 2018 (+16.7%) (Figure 2.3). The Central Bank of Ireland projects labour force growth of 2.5% in 2024, 2.0% in 2025 and 1.8% in 2026, to reach 2.985 million persons by 2026²⁴.

There were 2.68 million persons in employment in Ireland in 2023 (annual average), the highest employment level to date. Following strong growth as Ireland emerged from the pandemic, (employment grew by 6.9% in 2022), employment growth in 2023 was 3.4% (89,500 extra workers). Employment growth, however, is expected to moderate in the coming years, growing by 2.3% in 2024, 1.9% in 2025 and 1.7% in 2026. By 2026, there are expected to be 2.85 million persons in employment in Ireland.

²⁴ Central Bank of Ireland Quarterly Bulletin No. 3 2024. Quarterly Bulletin Q3 2024 | Central Bank of Ireland

Unemployment levels in Ireland stood at 120,300 persons on average annually in 2023. With the exception of 2020 and 2021, unemployment levels in Ireland have declined annually since 2012. Unemployment is projected to increase slightly in the years to 2026 to reach 136,000. The unemployment rate over this period is expected to remain broadly similar, however, growing from 4.3% in 2023 to 4.5% in 2024 and 4.6% by 2026.

Figure 2.3 Labour Force, Employment and Unemployment (000s), 2007-2023, and 2024f-2026f



Source: CSO (LFS) and Central Bank of Ireland Quarterly Bulletin

Labour force, employment and unemployment rate

Table 2.2 shows the annual average rates for labour force participation, employment and unemployment. With the exception of 2020, the annual average labour force participation and employment rates grew each year, and reached their highest rates to date, at 65.5% and 74% respectively in 2023. Also in 2023, the unemployment rate declined further to 4.3%, which was slightly (0.2 percentage points (pp)) below 2022, and 1.5 pps below the 2018 rate; the unemployment rate in 2023 was amongst the lowest annual average unemployment rates observed since before the financial crisis in 2008.

Table 2.2 Labour Force, Employment and Unemployment Rates, 2018-2023 (Annual Average)

	Labour force participation rate (15+)	Employment rate (15-64 years)	Unemployment rate (15-74 years)
2018	62.0%	68.4%	5.8%
2019	62.2%	69.3%	5.0%
2020	60.1%	66.5%	5.9%
2021	64.4%	69.8%	6.2%
2022	64.9%	73.3%	4.5%
2023	65.5%	74.0%	4.3%

Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO data

Migration Estimates

As shown in Table 2.3, total net migration in Ireland reached 79,300 persons in 2024, an increase of 2% or 1,600 persons when compared to 2023. This was the highest level observed in the ten-year period 2015-2024, and the second highest after the 2007 (Celtic Tiger) peak, when net migration reached 104,800

Inward migration to Ireland grew by 5% (or 7,600) between 2023 and 2024, reaching 149,200 persons in 2024, the second highest level to date (only in 2007 were numbers higher, at 151,100 persons). Outward migration also increased between 2023 and 2024, with an additional 5,900 persons leaving the State in 2024 compared to 2023. While the level of outward migration is almost on a par with that observed in 2015, the number remains lower than any observed in the years following the financial crisis, most notably over the period 2011-2014.

In 2024, 52% (41,300) of total net migration was male; 48% (38,000) were female.

Table 2.3 Inward, Outward and Net Migration (000s), 2015-2024

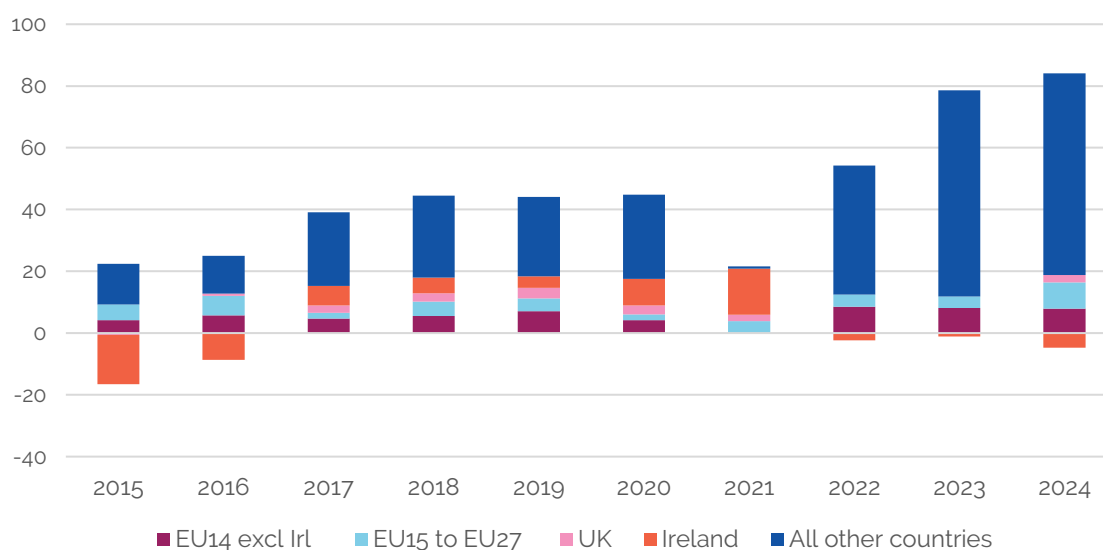
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Immigrants (inward)	75.9	82.3	95.3	96.0	97.1	95.6	74.1	107.8	141.6	149.2
Emigrants (outward)	70.0	66.2	56.1	51.6	53.1	50.9	52.3	56.1	64.0	69.9
Net migration	5.9	16.2	39.2	44.4	44.0	44.7	21.8	51.7	77.7	79.3

Source: CSO Annual Population Estimates

Citizens of countries other than the EU (including Ireland) and the UK accounted for 65,300 (or 82%) of total net migration to Ireland in 2024 (Figure 2.4). Compared to 2023, net migration to Ireland by citizens of other countries declined slightly (by 1,400 persons, or 2%) but when compared to 2015 levels (13,100) was nearly five times higher. Due to the decline between 2023 and 2024, citizens of other countries as a share of total net migration fell from 86% to 82% in 2024.

While inflows of Irish citizens outnumbered outflows in the years 2017-2021, net migration of Irish citizens has been negative since 2022, and in 2024, the number of Irish citizens who left the State was 4,700 persons greater than the number that entered.

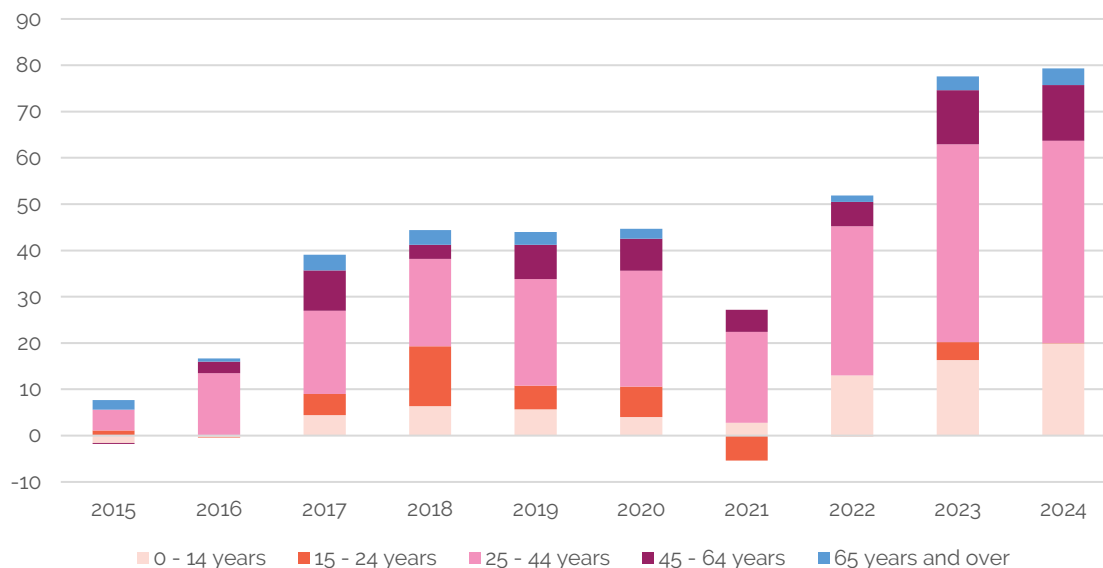
Figure 2.4 Net migration by citizenship, 2015-2024



Source: CSO Annual Population Estimates

In 2024, with 43,700 persons, 55% of total net migration was in the 25-44-year-old age cohort, and a further quarter (19,900 persons) were children aged less than 15 years (Figure 2.5). When compared to both 2015 and 2023, net migration in most age groups (except 15-24-year-olds) grew. The largest absolute growth occurred amongst 25-44-year-olds, with 39,200 additional persons compared to 2015 (nearly a ten-fold increase) and an increase of 1,000 (2%) persons compared to 2023.

Figure 2.5 Net Migration by Age Group (000s), 2015-2024



Source: CSO Annual Population Estimates

Arrivals from Ukraine

As of February 15th 2024, there were 105,156 PPSNs issued to arrivals from the Ukraine; by June 20th 2024, this number had risen to 107,225. In February 2024, there were 25,006 employees from Ukraine with 35,533 employments (an individual may have more than one instance of 'employment' activity since arrival), rising to 28,468 employees with 42,170 employments in June 2024.

The employments activity of some of these arrivals is detailed in Table 2.4. Of the employments amongst the arrivals from Ukraine, approximately one third (in both February and June) were in the accommodation and food sector; a further 16% were in wholesale and retail and 12% in manufacturing. Combined these three sectors made up 70% of the total employments in each time period.

Table 2.4 Employments of Arrivals from Ukraine by Sector, February & June 2024

	February 2024 Employments	% February Employments	June 2024 Employments	% June Employments
Accommodation/food	11,823	33%	13,671	32%
Wholesale/retail	5,841	16%	6,934	16%
Manufacturing	4,103	12%	4,902	12%
Admin & support services	3,179	9%	3,813	9%
Construction	1,991	6%	2,400	6%
All other sectors	8,596	24%	10,450	25%
Total	35,533	100%	42,170	100%

Source: Ukraine Arrivals in Ireland CSO (Tables UA20 and UA36).
Data is cumulative.

2.3 Employment composition

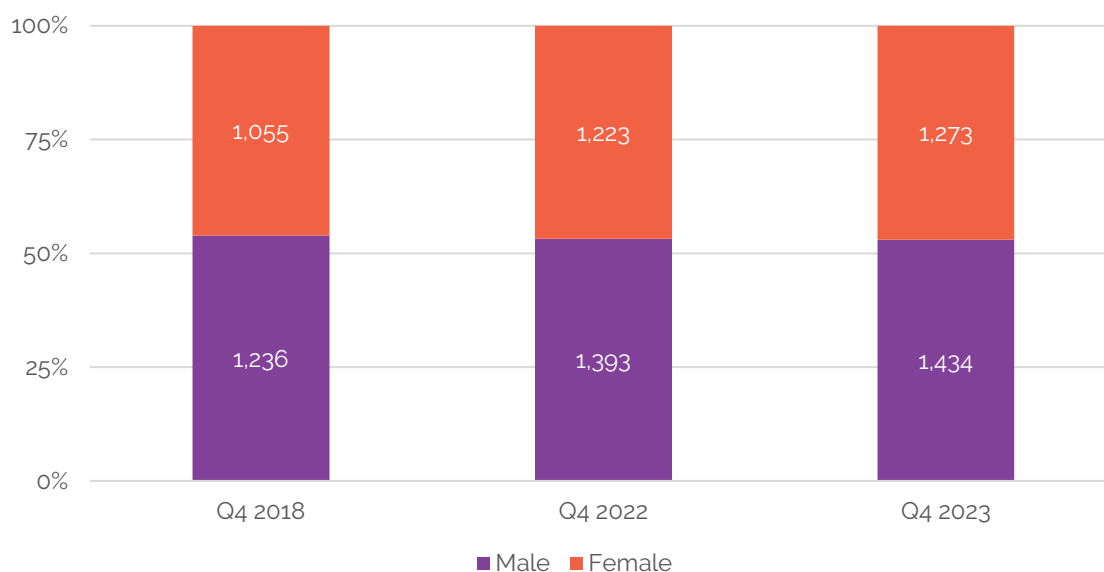
This section profiles persons in employment (aged 15 years and over) by a range of variables, including gender, age, education level, work status, professional status and citizenship.

Gender

Of the 2.7 million persons in employment in quarter 4 2023, 1.27 million (47%) were female (Figure 2.6). While the female share of employment was slightly higher than in quarter 4 2018 (46%), it was broadly in line with that for quarter 4 2022.

Employment growth between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023 was stronger for females, with 49,200 extra females (+4%) compared to 40,500 extra males (+2.9%). Similarly, when compared to quarter 4 2018, there were 217,900 extra females (+20.7%) compared to 198,000 extra males (+16%) in employment.

Figure 2.6 Employment (000s) by Gender, Quarter 4 2018, Quarter 2022 & Quarter 4 2023



Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

Full-time/Part-time Status

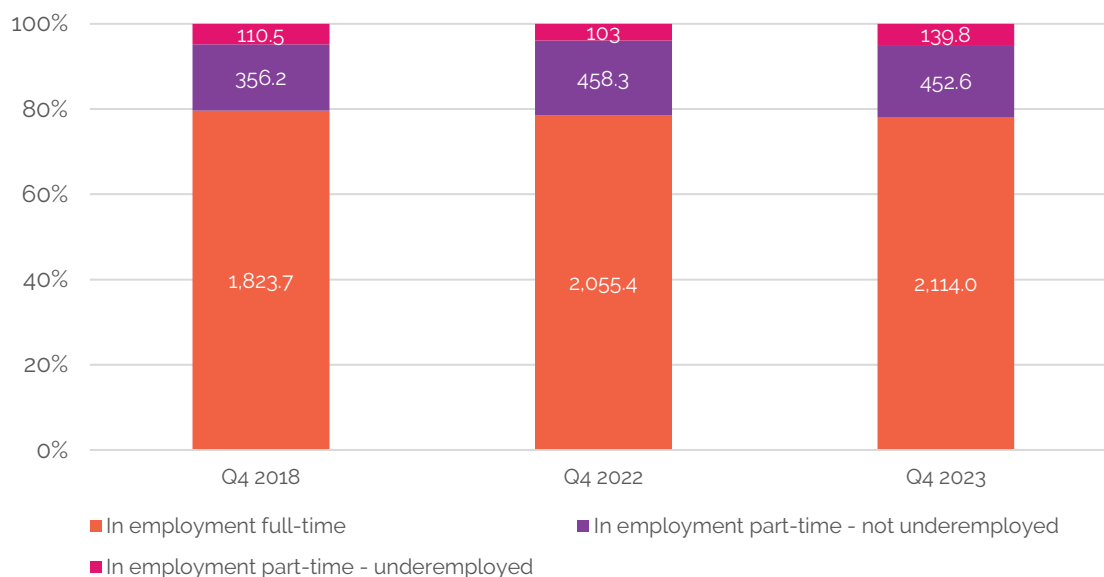
In quarter 4 2023, full-time workers made up 78.1% of total employment, 16.7% were part-time (not under-employed) and 5.2% were part-time under-employed (Figure 2.7).

When compared to quarter 4 2022, there were increases in the number of full-time (+58,600) and part-time employed persons (+31,100 persons). However, this masks a slight shift within part-time employment, where the number of persons who were part-time *underemployed* rose (+36,800), while the number of persons who were employed part-time but *not underemployed* fell (-5,700)²⁵.

When compared to quarter 4 2018, the numbers for each employment status category increased, although the share of persons working full-time fell slightly (from 79.1%), with small increases in both part-time employed categories.

²⁵ The fall in the number of part-time employed who were *not underemployed* was due entirely to a decline in the number of females in this category (9,500 fewer females, or -3%); the number of males who were employed part-time but not underemployed grew (+3,800 extra males, or +3%). In contrast, the number of persons who were employed part-time and who were underemployed grew for both males (+17,300 persons) and females (+19,400 persons).

Figure 2.7 Employment by Employment Type (000s), Quarter 4 2018, Quarter 4 2022 and Quarter 4 2023



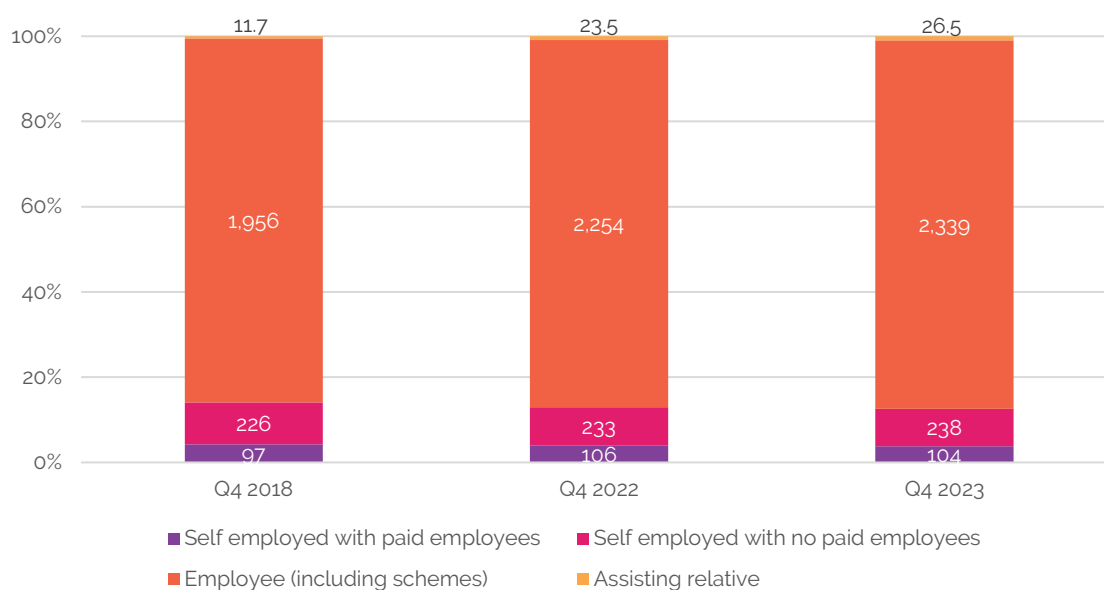
Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO LFS data

Professional Status (Self-Employed, Employee etc)

In quarter 4 2023, of the 2.7 million persons in employment, 86% were employees, amounting to nearly 2.34 million workers (Figure 2.8); 12.6% were self-employed, and of these 238,000 were self-employed with no paid employees, while 104,000 were self-employed *with* paid employees, representing nearly 9% and 4% of total employment respectively. Just 1% of total employment (26,500 persons) were assisting relatives.

The distribution of employment by professional status category remained largely the same between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023 and, despite a small decline of 2,200 persons for those who were self-employed with employees, numbers rose in all categories. When compared to quarter 4 2018, there was a slight shift away from the share of those in the self-employed categories (falling from 14.1% overall to 12.6%) towards the employee category (from 85.4% to 86.4%). The share assisting relatives also rose, albeit by just 0.5 percentage points.

Figure 2.8 Employment (000s) by Professional Status, Q4 2018, Q4 2022 & Q4 2023

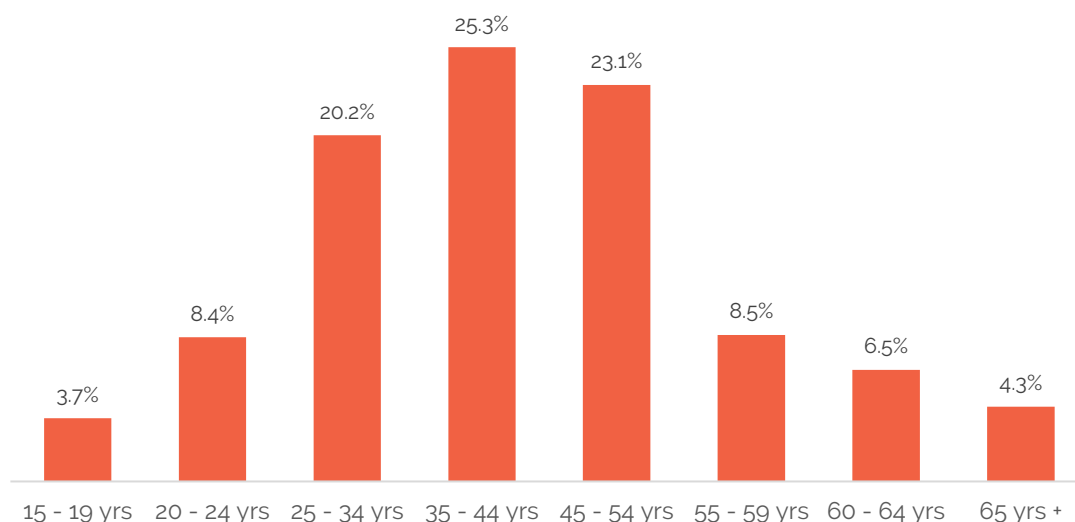


Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

Employment by Age Group

In quarter 4 2023, 12% of national employment was aged 15-24 years, nearly 84% was aged between 25 and 64 years, and just over 4% were aged 65 years or older (Figure 2.9). This distribution is broadly in line with that of quarter 4 2022, but when compared to quarter 4 2018, the shares of employment aged either less than 25 years or 65 years and older grew by one percentage point each, while there was a corresponding fall of two percentage points in the share of employment aged 25-64 years (down from 86%).

Figure 2.9 Distribution of Employment by Age Group, Q4 2023

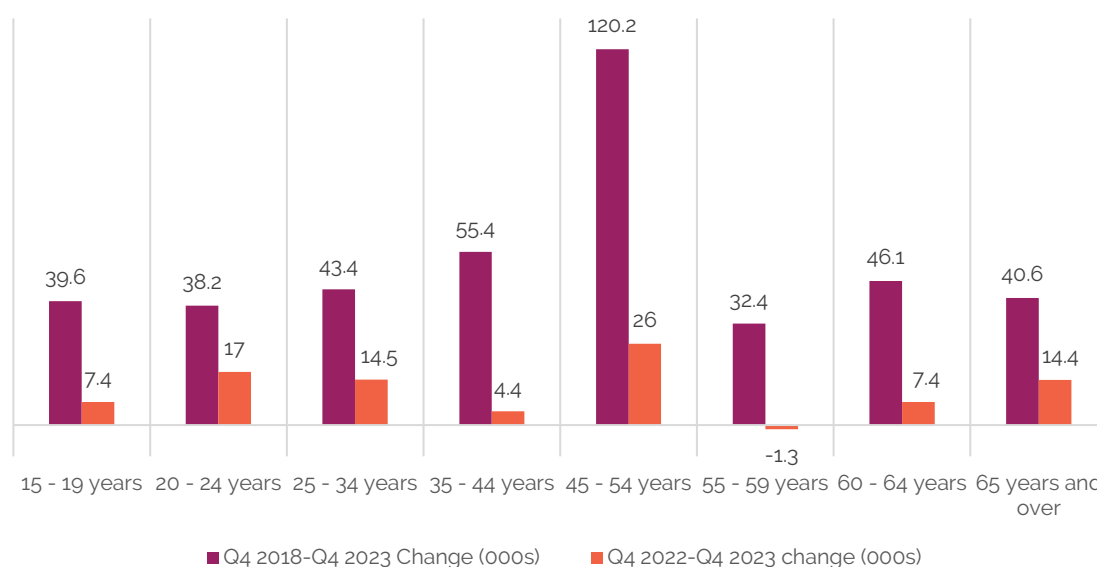


Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO LFS data

Between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023, of the 89,700 additional workers in Ireland, well over a quarter (29%, or 26,000) were aged 45-54 years; a further quarter (27%, 24,400 persons) were aged less than 25 years (Figure 2.10). The number in employment aged 65 years and over also grew strongly, with 14,400 extra workers, which in relative terms was the strongest increase (+12%) observed across all age cohorts. Only the 55-59 year-old age cohort declined (albeit marginally), where numbers employed fell by 1,300 (-1%).

Over the period quarter 4 2018-quarter 4 2023, the largest absolute increase in persons employed occurred for those aged 45-54 years, with 120,200 extra workers, accounting for 29% of the total increase in employment.

Figure 2.10 Employment Change (000s) by Age Group, Q4 2018-Q4 2023 and Q4 2022-Q4 2023



Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO LFS data

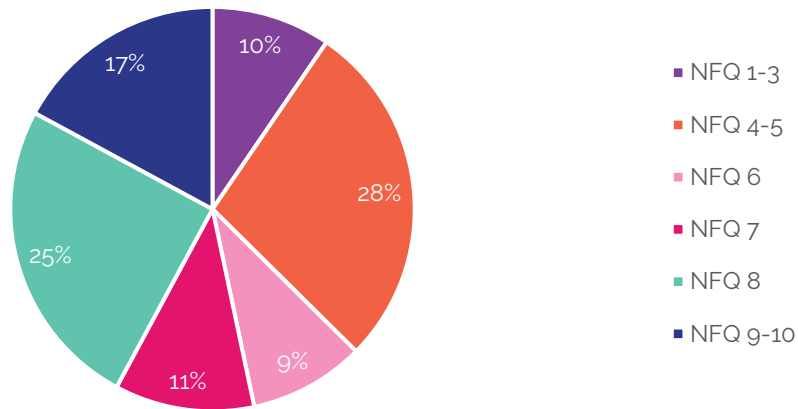
Employment by Education Attainment Level (NFQ)

Figure 2.11 shows the distribution of employment by the highest NFQ level of education attained. In quarter 4 2023,

- 10% of persons in employment had attained at most qualifications at NFQ levels 1-3 (e.g. Junior Certificate)
- 28% had qualifications at NFQ levels 4-5 (e.g. a Leaving Certificate or equivalent)
- 9% had qualifications at NFQ level 6 (e.g. craft certificate or higher certificate)
- 53% held qualifications at levels 7-10 on the NFQ (equivalent of ordinary degree level or higher).

The distribution of employment by NFQ level was broadly similar to that of quarter 4 2022, but represents a shift to higher levels of educational attainment compared to quarter 4 2018: the share of workers holding a level 7 qualification or higher grew by five percentage points (pp), from 48%, over the five-year period; at the same time the share of workers with qualifications at NFQ 1-3 and NFQ 4-5 declined by 3 pp and 2 pp respectively.

Figure 2.11 Employment by NFQ Level*, Quarter 4 2023

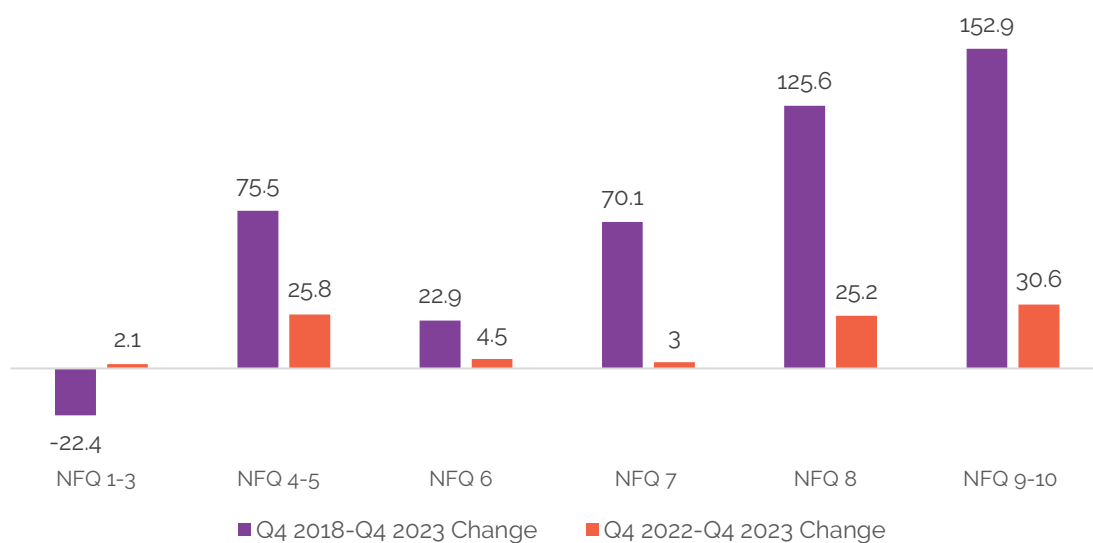


Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data
 *Excludes those who did not state an NFQ level

Figure 2.12 shows, in absolute terms, the change in employment at each NFQ level in the one-year and five-year periods to quarter 4 2023. Between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023, the number of persons employed at each NFQ level rose, with the largest absolute increase for those with post-graduate qualifications at level 9 or 10 (+30,600 persons, or 7%).

When compared to quarter 4 2018, however, the only level for which the number of employed persons declined was NFQ 1-3 (22,400 fewer qualification holders, or -8%). The number of employed persons with at least an ordinary degree (i.e. NFQ 7 or higher) rose by 348,600 persons, making up more than four fifths of the total increase in national employment over the five-year period.

Figure 2.12 Employment Change (000s) by NFQ Level*, Q4 2018-Q4 2023 and Q4 2022-Q4 2023



Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data; *Excludes those who did not state an NFQ level

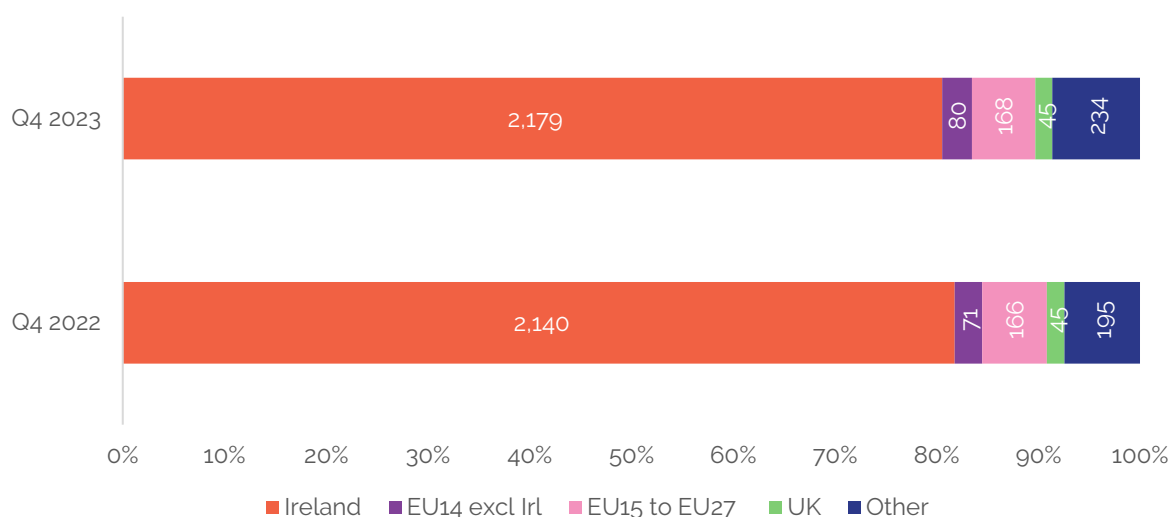
Employment by Citizenship

Note; Comparable data for quarter 4 2018 is unavailable due to changes to the Labour Force Survey as a result of the IESS regulation introduced from 2021.

In quarter 4 2023, nearly 2.18 million persons employed in Ireland were Irish citizens, representing four fifths of total national employment (Figure 2.13). A further 248,300 persons were other EU citizens, making up over 9% of employment (comprising 3% from EU 14 countries and 6.2% from EU 15-27 countries). With 45,100 workers, UK citizens made up nearly 2% of total employment. The remaining 8.6% of employed persons were citizens of other countries, making up 233,500 workers.

When compared to quarter 4 2022, there were increases for each of the citizenship categories. The number of Irish citizens in employment increased by 39,300 persons, while the number of non-Irish citizens grew by 50,300. Of the non-Irish citizens, the largest increase in employment was amongst those from 'other' countries, where employment grew by 38,500.

Figure 2.13 Employment (000s) by Citizenship, Q4 2022 & Q4 2023



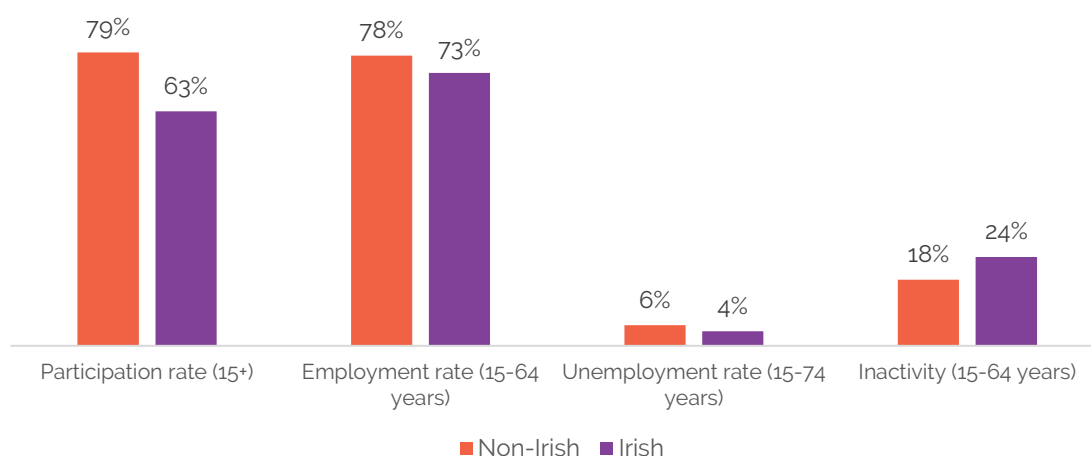
Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

In quarter 4 2023, non-Irish citizens had higher participation, employment and unemployment rates compared to their Irish citizen counterparts (Figure 2.14). In contrast, the inactivity rate (share of population outside the labour force) was lower for non-Irish compared to Irish citizens. The largest gap in terms of percentage points was in the participation rate, with the share of non-Irish citizens participating in the labour force being 16 percentage points higher than that of Irish citizens.

When compared to quarter 4 2022,

- the labour force participation rate increased for both Irish and non-Irish citizens, although the percentage point increase was slightly greater for non-Irish (+ 2pp) than for Irish (+1pp) citizens
- the employment rate increased slightly for non-Irish citizens (to 78%) but remained unchanged for Irish citizens at 73%
- the unemployment rate increased by one percentage point for non-Irish citizens reaching nearly 6% in quarter 4 but remained almost unchanged at 4% for Irish citizens
- at 18% in quarter 4 2023, the inactivity rate fell for non-Irish citizens (down from 19%) but remained broadly unchanged at approximately 24% for Irish citizens.

Figure 2.14 Participation rate, employment rate, UE rate & inactivity rate by citizenship, Q4 2023



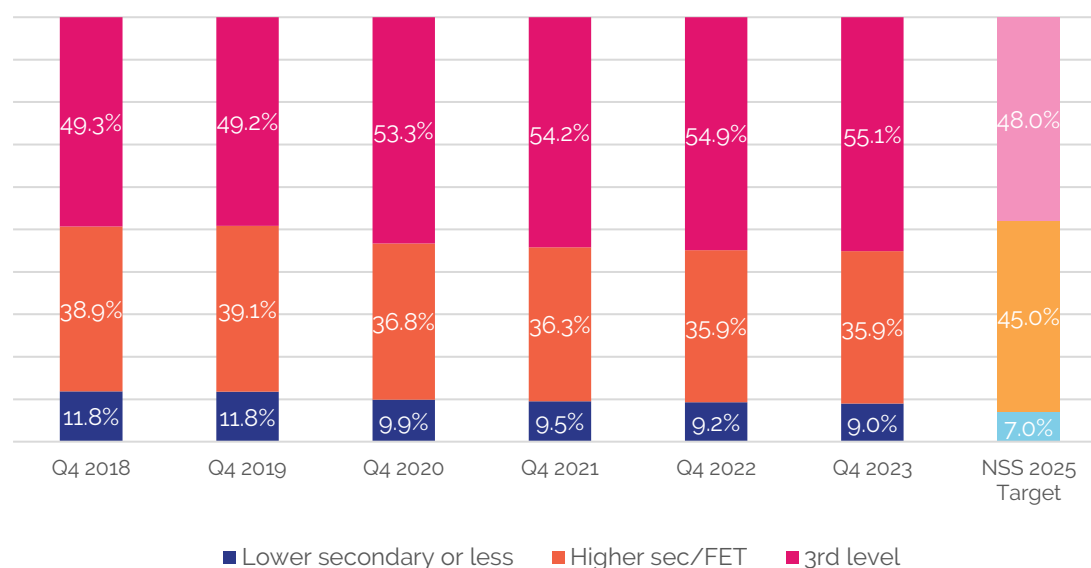
Source: Eurostat

2.4 Progress Towards National Skills Strategy Targets

Figure 2.15 presents the educational attainment of the labour force aged 15-64 years and the targets set out in the 2007 National Skills Strategy (NSS), which were carried over in the National Skills Strategy 2025. Over the period quarter 4 2018-quarter 4 2023,

- the share of the labour force (15-64 years) with **third level** qualifications increased, and by quarter 4 2023, had exceeded 55%, which is well above the 48% target set out in the National Skills Strategy.
- the share of the labour force holding **higher secondary/FET** qualifications, at nearly 36%, was nine percentage points below the target (45%).
- the share with **lower secondary or less** educational attainment progressed steadily towards the target, although at 9% in quarter 4 2023, it remained two percentage points off the target of 7%.

Figure 2.15 Labour Force (aged 15-64 years) by Educational Attainment and NSS targets, Q4 2018-Q4 2023



Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data



Section 3

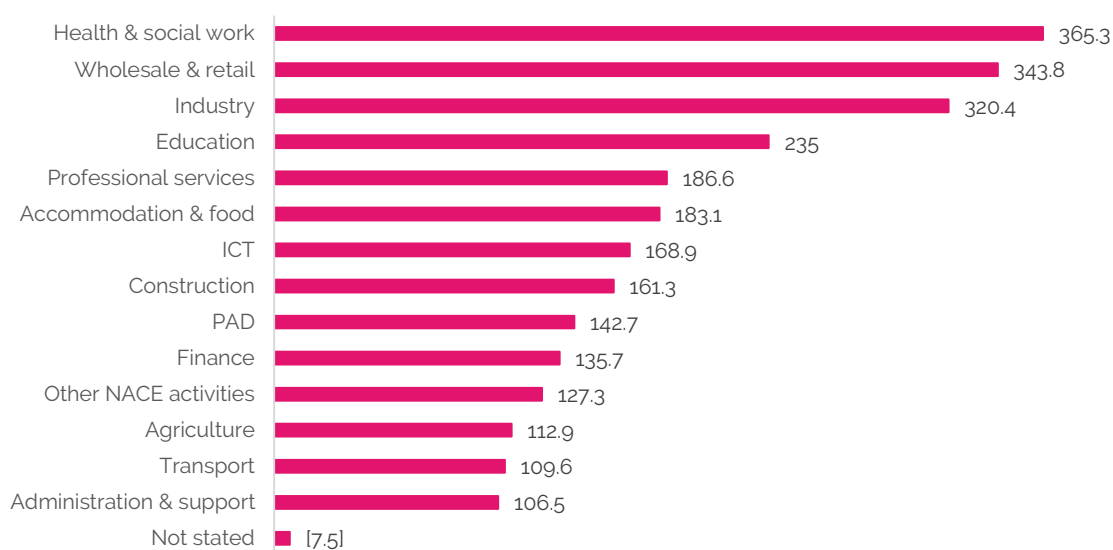
Employment by Economic Sector

This section analyses Ireland's workforce at sectoral level, presenting the sectors in which Ireland's 2.7 million persons were employed in quarter 4 2023. Employment growth in the Irish economy saw a relatively large increase over the five-year period quarter 4 2018-quarter 4 2023 (18%) despite the economic shocks that have occurred over this time, both at home and abroad (e.g. COVID-19, Brexit and war in Ukraine and the Middle East). Employment continued to increase in the last year, albeit at a slower rate (3%) compared to previous years, although this varied across sectors.

3.1 Employment by sector

Figure 3.1 presents national employment by broad economic sector (NACE Rev 2). In quarter 4 2023, the largest sectors in terms of numbers employed were health & social work (365,300 persons), wholesale & retail (343,800 persons), and industry (320,400 persons). Combined, these three sectors alone accounted for more than one third (38%) of total national employment.

Figure 3.1 Employment by Sector (000s), Quarter 4 2023



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data

Note: Other NACE includes activities such as arts, entertainment & recreation, other service activities (e.g. repair of goods), etc.

[] Numbers in square brackets are small and should be interpreted with caution

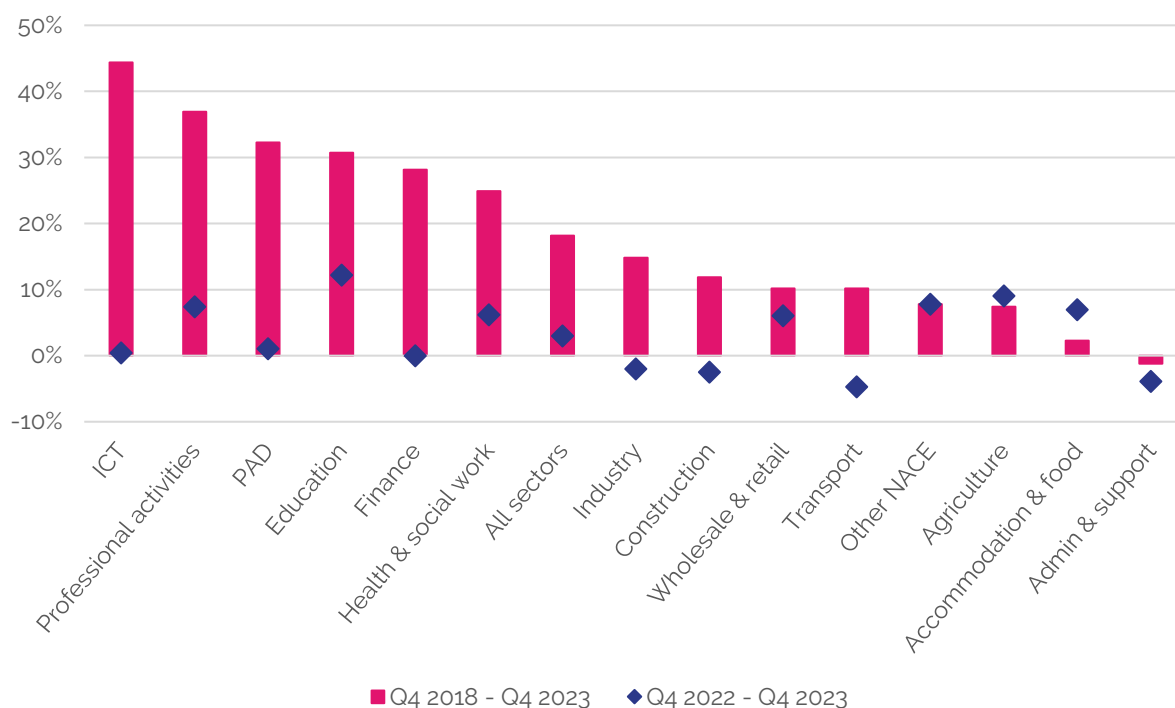
3.2 Employment growth by sector

Employment growth by sector is presented in Figure 3.2. Trends in employment growth over two timeframes are presented which comprise one-year and five-year sectoral growth rates.

Between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023, the highest growth rates were for education (+12%), agriculture (+9%), other NACE (+8%), professional services (+7%), accommodation & food (+7%), health & social work (+6%) and wholesale & retail (6%), all of which had growth rates that were higher than the national average (3%) over the period. The numbers employed declined in four sectors, namely transport (-5%), administrative & support services (-4%), construction (-2%) and industry (-2%). For the ICT and finance sectors, employment levels remained broadly unchanged.

Over the five-year period, quarter 4 2018 to quarter 4 2023, the sectors with the highest relative growth rates were ICT (+44%), professional services (+37%), PAD (+32%) and education (+31%), which all grew far higher than the national average (18%) over this time. Those with the lowest growth rates were administrative & support services (-1%) and accommodation & food (2%).

Figure 3.2 Employment Growth (%) by Sector, Q4 2018-Q4 2023 & Q4 2022-Q4 2023



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data
Excludes not stated

3.3 Employment by economic sub-sector

In this section, we examine economic sectors within four broad categories:

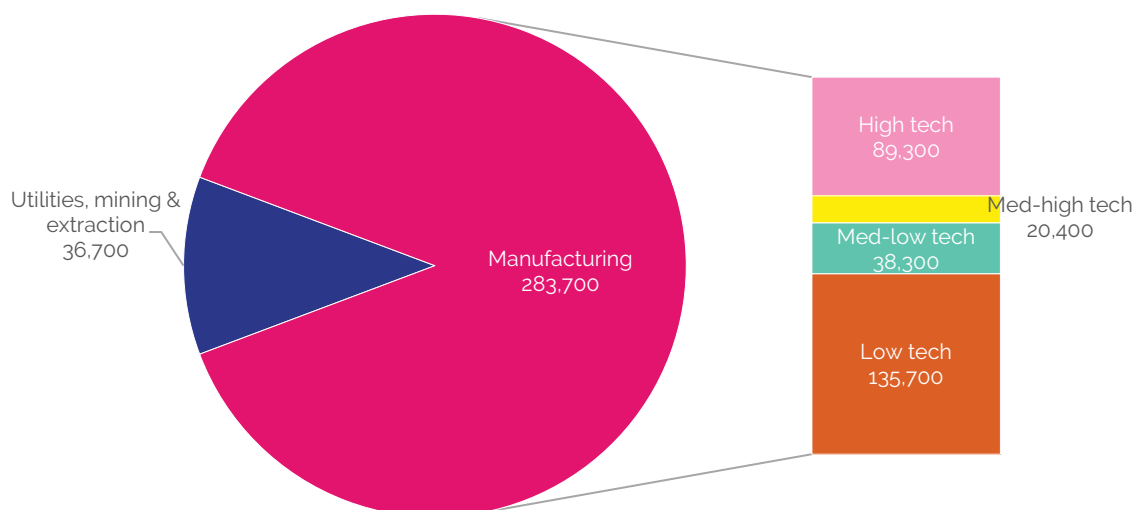
- industry, comprising manufacturing, utilities and mining/extraction
- construction
- agriculture, forestry and fishing (abbreviated in this document to 'agriculture')
- services, which includes 11 NACE sectors; services are firstly analysed by knowledge intensive services and less knowledge intensive services, followed by a detailed breakdown by individual sector.

Industry

In quarter 4 2023, 320,400 persons were employed in industry, accounting for nearly 12% of total national employment. Employment in this sector declined by 2% compared with quarter 4 2022, while it grew by 15% over the five-year period. Despite a decline of 6,500 people in the year to quarter 4 2023, growth in earlier years (quarter 4 2018-quarter 4 2022) translated into 41,400 additional persons working in this sector in quarter 4 2023 when compared to quarter 4 2018.

Figure 3.3 presents industrial employment by sub-sector and technological intensity. In quarter 4 2023, 89% of industrial employment was in manufacturing (283,700 persons), with utilities, mining & extraction accounting for the remaining 11% (36,700 persons). In terms of technological intensity, low-technology manufacturing accounted for nearly one half (48% or 135,700 persons) of total manufacturing employment. High technology manufacturing represented 31% (89,300 persons), while medium-low technology employment and medium-high technology employment made up 14% and 7% respectively. Of the 89,300 persons in high-technology manufacturing in quarter 4 2023, nearly 65,400 were employed in pharmaceuticals.

Figure 3.3 Industrial Employment by Sector and Technological Intensity, Quarter 4 2023



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data

Between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023, manufacturing employment levels fell by 1% (2,900 fewer persons). Although the number employed in high technology and medium-high technology manufacturing employment rose by 2% (1,400 persons) and 5% (1,000 persons) respectively, these increases were outweighed by declines in medium-low (-7% or -2,700 persons) and low technology manufacturing employment (-2% or -2,600 persons). Similarly, the numbers employed in utilities, mining & extraction fell by 9% (3,800 fewer persons), predominantly in mining & extraction.

Looking over the longer-term five-year period, quarter 4 2018 to quarter 2023, employment levels increased across each of the industrial sub-sectors (except mining & extraction). Overall, the manufacturing sub-sector grew by 14% (34,800 persons), which was largely due to an increase in high-technology manufacturing (42% or +26,300 persons).

Construction

In quarter 4 2023, construction accounted for a 6% share of national employment with 161,300 persons employed in the sector. The specialised construction activities sub-sector employed 79,100 persons followed by the construction of buildings sub-sector at 59,900 persons, which combined made up 86% of total construction employment. The remaining 14% (or 22,300 persons) were engaged in the civil engineering sub-sector.

Between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023, construction sector employment fell by 2%, representing 4,100 fewer persons. The largest sub-sector, specialised construction activities, declined by 5% (4,200 fewer persons employed) and the construction of buildings sub-sector fell by 7% (4,300 fewer persons). However, this decline was partially offset by an increase in the civil engineering sub-sector, which rose by 25% (4,400 persons).

Between quarter 4 2018 to quarter 4 2023, there was a 12% increase, which comprised of 17,100 additional persons employed. In particular, employment in the civil engineering sub-sector saw an increase of 62% (8,500 more persons).

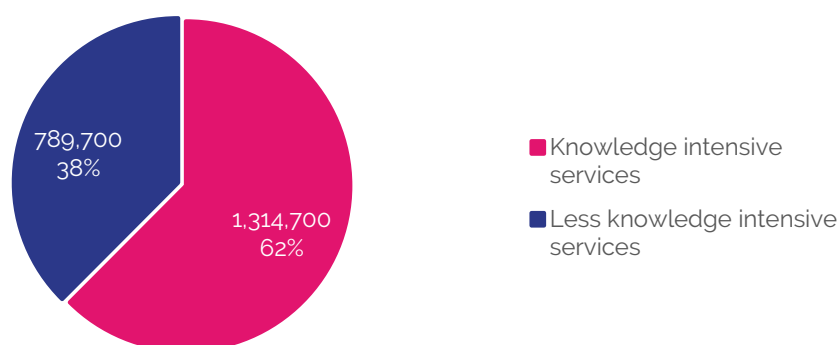
Agriculture, forestry and fishing

In quarter 4 2023, 112,900 persons were employed in the agriculture sector representing 4% of national employment. Of the total employment in the sector, the vast majority (95%) was in crop and animal production, with the remainder in forestry and fishing. In the last year, between quarter 4 2022 to quarter 4 2023, the agriculture sector had the second highest growth rate of 9% (+9,400 persons), after education (+12%). This was in contrast to having had one of the lowest growth rates (7%) over the period quarter 4 2018-quarter 4 2023, with only two sectors, accommodation & food and administrative & support services, recording lower growth rates over this time.

Services

In quarter 4 2023, there were over 2.1 million persons employed in services-related activities, accounting for more than three quarters of national employment (78%). The composition of the services sector in terms of knowledge intensity is presented in Figure 3.4. Of the total services employment, 62% (1,314,700 persons) was in knowledge intensive services - KIS (e.g. ICT, finance, legal, accounting, engineering, R&D, education, health and arts etc.). The remainder was in less knowledge intensive services - LKIS (e.g. wholesale & retail, transport, accommodation & food, office administration, real estate, travel, etc.).

Figure 3.4. Services Sector Employment, Quarter 4 2023



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data

Between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023, employment levels in the services sector rose by 93,000 persons (or 5%). Employment numbers in both the KIS and LKIS segments grew over the year, with the strongest growth in KIS of 5% (+66,800 persons) while LKIS rose by 3% (+26,200 persons).

When compared to quarter 4 2018, employment in services increased by 20%, resulting in 348,600 additional persons employed, with growth being driven primarily by an increase of 29% (or 296,400 additional persons) in the KIS segment.

Wholesale & retail

Employment Q4 2023	% share of total employment Q4 2023	Sub-sectors in Q4 2023	% Growth	
			1-year Q4 '22-'23	5-year Q4 '18-'23
343,800	13%	67% - retail trade 23% - wholesale trade 10% - motor trade	+6%	+10%

In quarter 4 2023, just over two thirds of employment in this sector was in the retail trade sub-sector.

Between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023, the sectoral growth rate at 6% was nearly twice as high as the national average of 3%. The strongest absolute and relative growth in employment by sub-sector was in wholesale trade (+27% or +16,700 persons), while there was also an increase in motor trade (+8% or +2,700 persons). Employment in retail remained stable over the last year (+200 persons).

Over the five-year period, the overall growth in the wholesale and retail sector, at 10%, was well below the five-year national average of 18%. Wholesale trade had the largest employment growth (+56% or +28,100 persons), while motor trade was the only sub-sector to record a decline (-6% or -2,400 persons). Employment in retail increased by 3% (+6,000 persons).

Accommodation and food services

Employment Q4 2023	% share of total employment Q4 2023	Sub-sectors in Q4 2023	% Growth	
			1-year Q4 '22-'23	5-year Q4 '18-'23
183,100	7%	73% - food & beverage services 27% - accommodation	+7%	+2%
<p>This sector was among those most severely impacted by the economic restrictions associated with COVID-19, with employment remaining below pre-COVID levels up to quarter 4 2022. Nonetheless, in the year to quarter 4 2023, employment increased by 7% (+11,900 persons), the majority of which occurred in the food & beverage services sub-sector (+9,000 persons or +7%). The number of persons engaged in the accommodation sub-sector also increased (by 6%, or +2,900 persons).</p> <p>Over the five-year period, quarter 4 2018-quarter 4 2023, employment in the sector grew by 2% (or 4,200 additional persons), although this masks a 2% decline in the accommodation sub-sector (-800 persons), while food & beverage services experienced a 4% increase (5,000 additional persons).</p> <p>Of the 183,100 persons employed in this sector in quarter 4 2023, it is estimated that approximately 11,400 were Ukrainian nationals (based on data from the week of 12th December 2023). This represented one third (34%) of all Ukrainian arrivals to Ireland who were employed and was the highest across all sectors. By April 2024, this figure had increased to 12,545 persons (Source: CSO Ukrainian Hub Statistics).²⁶</p>				

²⁶ See link <https://data.cso.ie/product/UAK>

Professional, scientific and technical activities

Employment Q4 2023	% share of total employment Q4 2023	Sub-Sectors in Q4 2023	% Growth	
			1-year Q4 '22-'23	5-year Q4 '18-'23
186,600	7%	34% - legal and accounting 27% - architectural & engineering activities; technical testing/analysis 8% - Activities of head offices; management consultancy activities Remainder includes scientific R&D, advertising/market research, other professional services, and veterinary activities	+7%	+37%
<p>Between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023, employment in the professional services sector increased by 7% (+12,900 persons), with the largest absolute increases for legal & accounting activities (+10%, +5,700 persons) and architectural/engineering activities & technical testing/analysis (+13%, +5,700 persons). However, there were declines in two sub-sectors; other professional services (-6% or 1,700 fewer persons) and advertising & market research (-4% or 600 fewer persons).</p> <p>Over the five-year period, quarter 4 2018 to quarter 4 2023, employment in the sector as a whole went up by 37% (50,300 additional persons), with the biggest absolute increases in the two largest sub-sectors; legal and accounting activities (15,800 more persons) and architectural/engineering activities/technical testing and analysis (14,100 more persons). Growth occurred in all sub-sectors to different extents over this time, while in relative terms, advertising and market research had the strongest growth (+70% or +6,200 persons).</p>				

Financial, insurance and real estate

Employment Q4 2023	% share of total employment Q4 2023	Sub-Sectors in Q4 2023	% Growth	
			1-year Q4 '22-'23	5-year Q4 '18-'23
135,700	5%	54% - financial services (e.g. banking) 22% - insurance 15% - auxiliary financial services 9% - real estate activities	0%	+28%
<p>Overall employment levels remained unchanged between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023; absolute increases in insurance (+5,000 persons) and auxiliary financial services (+800 persons) were cancelled out by declines in financial services (-4,800 persons) and real estate activities (-1,000 persons).</p> <p>Between quarter 4 2018 and quarter 4 2023, employment grew by 28% and increased in each of the four segments of the sector, although it was particularly strong, in absolute terms, in the financial services segment (+14,400 persons), followed by the insurance and auxiliary financial services, which increased by 7,000 persons in both segments.</p>				

Transportation and storage

Employment Q4 2023	% share of total employment Q4 2023	Sub-Sectors in Q4 2023	% Growth	
			1-year Q4 '22-'23	5-year Q4 '18-'23
109,600	4%	46% - land transport 30% - warehousing 16% - postal & courier activities 8% - water & air transport	-5%	+10%

Employment in this sector declined by 5% (5,400 fewer persons) between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023. In absolute terms, this was largely driven by falls in land transport (-2,800 persons), air transport (-2,100 persons) and postal & courier activities (-2,000 persons). Contrary to this overall decline in the sector was the warehousing segment, which saw an increase in employment of 4% (1,200 persons).

The five-year period showed an increase in employment of 10% (+10,100 persons). This was largely due to strong growth in the warehousing segment of 56% (+11,800 persons). In contrast, employment in land transport fell by 2% (1,100 fewer persons).

Information and communications (ICT)

Employment Q4 2023	% share of total employment Q4 2023	Sub-Sectors in Q4 2023	% Growth	
			1-year Q4 '22-'23	5-year Q4 '18-'23
168,900	6%	76% - computer programming 11% - telecommunications 3% - motion picture, tv & music production Remainder includes broadcasting, publishing & information services	+0.4%	+44%

Between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023, employment in ICT remained fairly stable at 0.4% (+700 persons), despite a relatively large absolute increase of 8% (+9,200 persons) in the computer programming segment which was largely offset by declines in other sub-sectors, especially in motion picture, TV & music production (-33% or -2,800).

Despite the unchanged employment levels in the most recent year, ICT had the strongest employment growth of all sectors between quarter 4 2018 and quarter 2023, driven largely by growth of 68% (+52,000 persons) in the computer programming segment and a relatively smaller increase of 10% (+1,700 persons) in telecommunications.

Administrative and support service activities

Employment Q4 2023	% share of total employment Q4 2023	Sub-Sectors in Q4 2023	% Growth	
			1-year Q4 '22-'23	5-year Q4 '18-'23
106,500	4%	41% - buildings & landscape services 17% - office administrative activities 14% - security activities Remainder includes renting/leasing activities (13%), employment activities (8%) and travel services (7%)	-4%	-1%

Many activities in this sector were negatively impacted by restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic and it experienced the second highest decline in employment of 28% (54,100 fewer persons) over the year quarter 4 2019 to quarter 4 2020 (after accommodation & food) and despite growth in the year to both quarter 4 2021 and quarter 4 2022, employment levels in this sector have yet to return to their pre-COVID levels.

Over the last year, employment in this sector declined by 4% (4,300 fewer persons), with the highest absolute falls in services to buildings & landscape activities (-5,300 persons) and office administrative activities (-3,500 persons). This downward trend in the sector occurred despite increases in rental and leasing (+3,200 persons) and travel services (+1,300 persons) over this time.

Over the five-year period, quarter 4 2018 to quarter 4 2023, employment fell by 1% (-1,300 persons), with the strongest absolute decline in services to buildings & landscape activities (2,700 fewer persons) and security activities (-2,000 persons). Despite the overall downward trend, there were increases in office administrative activities (+2,000 persons), travel services (+1,200 persons) and rental & leasing (+700 persons).

Health and social work

Employment Q4 2023	% share of total employment Q4 2023	Sub-Sectors in Q4 2023	% Growth	
			1-year Q4 '22-'23	5-year Q4 '18-'23
365,300	13%	59% - human health activities 31% - social work activities 10% - residential care activities	+6%	+25%
<p>Employment grew by 6% (+21,400 persons) over the one-year period, quarter 4 2022 to quarter 4 2023, which was largely due to an increase of 12% in human health activities (+22,500 persons). In addition, residential care activities rose by 7% (+7,000 persons), while social work activities declined by 18% (-8,000 persons).</p> <p>Over the five-year period, quarter 4 2018-quarter 4 2023, almost 73,000 additional persons were employed in the sector (+25%), which was the largest absolute increase across all sectors over this time. The majority of these additional workers were in human health activities (+48,800 persons), while residential care activities saw an increase of 26,300 persons. In contrast, social work activities fell by 2,300 persons, the only sub-sector to experience a decline over the five-year period.</p>				

Education

Employment Q4 2023	% share of total employment Q4 2023	Sub-Sectors in Q4 2023	% Growth	
			1-year Q4 '22-'23	5-year Q4 '18-'23
235,000	9%	-	+12%	+31%
<p>Employment in this sector increased by 12% (25,600 additional persons) over the last year and by 31% (55,200 more persons) over the five years.</p>				

Public administration and defence (PAD)

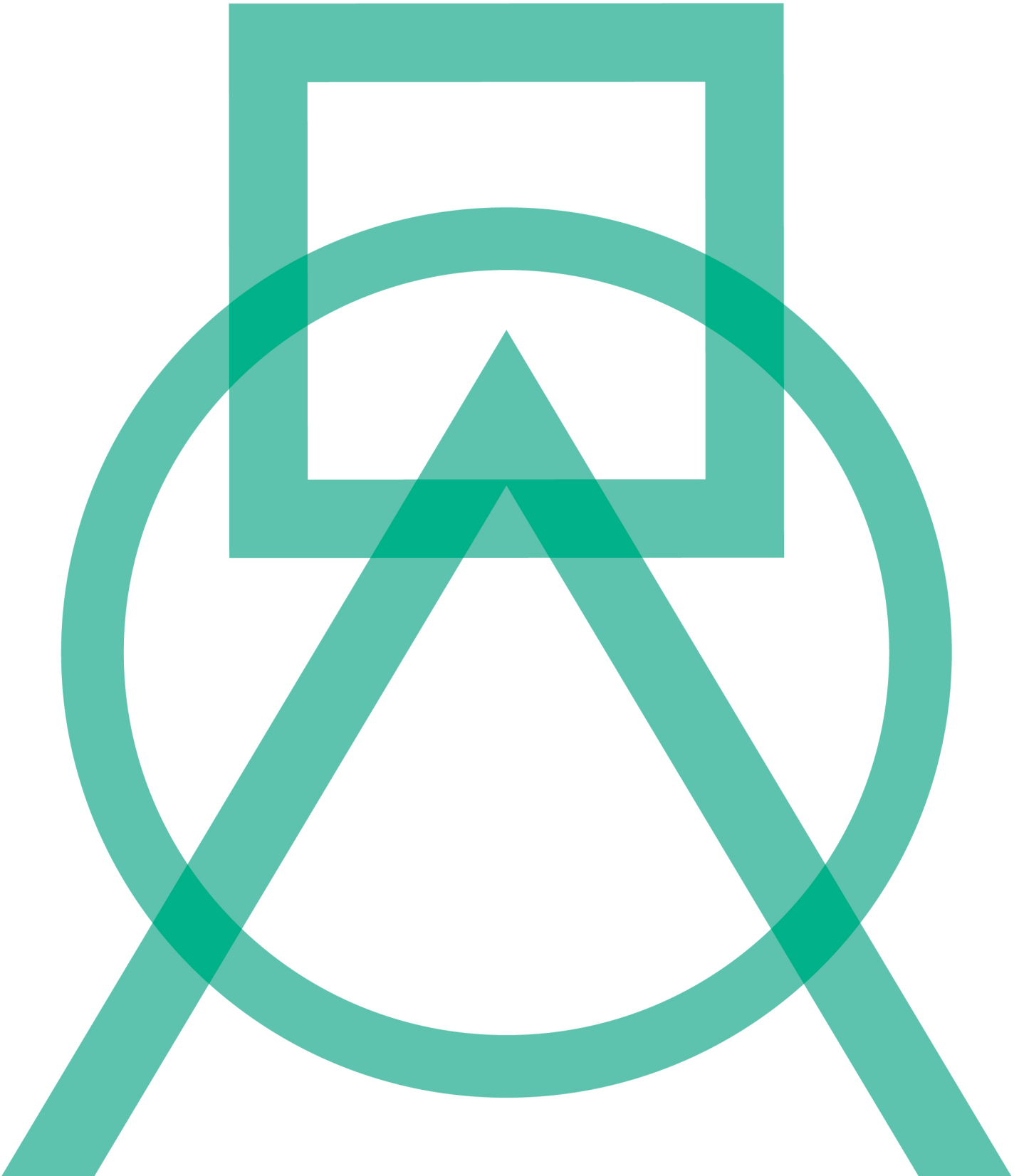
Employment Q4 2023	% share of total employment Q4 2023	Sub-Sectors in Q4 2023	% Growth	
			1-year Q4 '22-'23	5-year Q4 '18-'23
142,700	5%	-	+1%	+32%
<p>There was an upward trend in employment for this sector, with the strongest growth occurring over the five-year period, at 32% (+34,800 persons). By comparison, the numbers employed rose by just 1% (+1,500 persons) in the last year, quarter 4 2022 to quarter 4 2023.</p>				

Other NACE activities

Employment Q4 2023	% share of total employment Q4 2023	Sub-Sectors in Q4 2023	% Growth	
			1-year Q4 '22-'23	5-year Q4 '18-'23
127,300	5%	30% - other personal services (e.g. hairdressing) 23% - sports activities 11% - creative arts and entertainment 15% - activities of membership organisations 7% - gambling activities Remainder in libraries, repair of computers/household equipment, and activities of households as employers of domestic personnel.	+8%	+8%

The rate of employment growth was the same over the last year and five-year period, at 8%, representing an additional 9,200 persons in both timeframes. In the last year, the highest absolute increase occurred for activities of membership of organisations, which went up by 6,000 persons. Between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023, the only sub-sector to record a fall in employment was other personal services, where 3,000 fewer people were employed.

Between quarter 4 2019 to quarter 4 2020, at a time of economic restrictions due to COVID-19, this sector had the third highest decline in employment (after accommodation & food and administrative & support services). By quarter 4 2023, the number of people employed in this sector (at 127,300) exceeded those employed before the pandemic, with 118,800 persons in quarter 4 2019.



Section 4

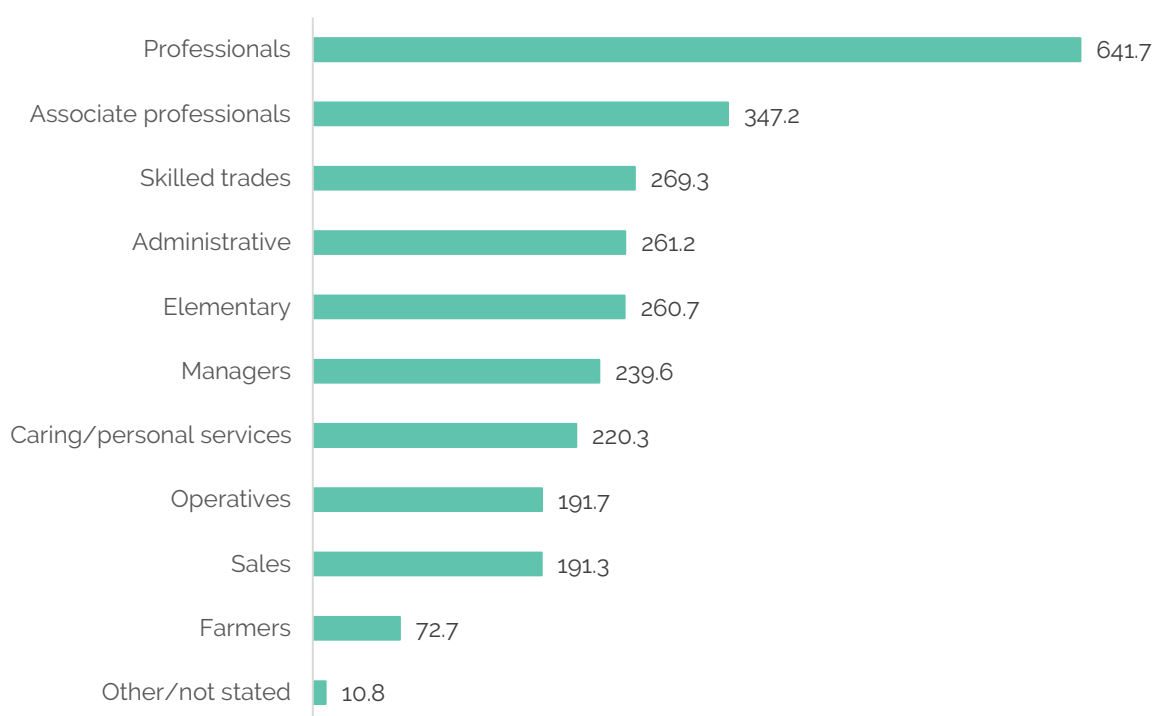
Employment by Broad Occupation

This section examines employment by broad occupation across several variables. Throughout this section, farmers are presented as an occupation separately from other skilled trades.

4.1 Employment by occupation

Figure 4.1 presents employment in Ireland in quarter 4 2023 by broad occupation. In quarter 4 2023, professionals had the highest level of employment, at 641,700 persons followed by associate professionals (347,200). Combined, the high skilled occupations (professionals, associate professionals and managers) accounted for approximately 1.2 million persons or 45% of the total national workforce. Skilled trades, with 269,300 persons employed, accounted for 10% of total employment while farmers (72,700) represented 3%. The number of persons in elementary occupations accounted for a further 10% of the workforce (260,700 persons).

Figure 4.1 Employment by Broad Occupational Group (000s), Quarter 4 2023



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data

4.2 Employment growth

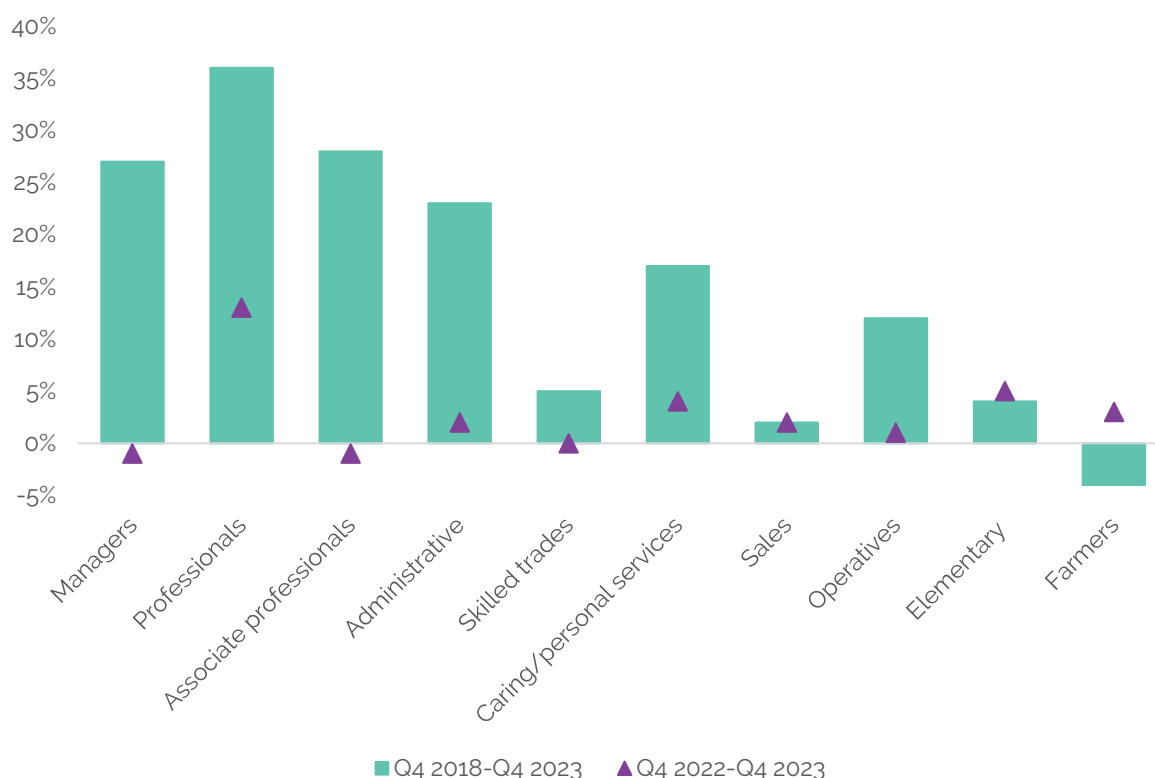
Figure 4.2 presents employment growth by broad occupational group, examining the one-year and five-year occupational growth rates to explore employment trends over time.

Between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023, employment growth was over 3% (89,800 additional persons) across all occupational groups. Professionals had the highest relative and absolute growth (+13% or +72,500 persons), followed by elementary occupations (+5% or +11,700 persons) and caring services (+4% or +9,100 persons). By comparison, there were declines for associate

professionals (3,100 fewer persons) and managers (2,000 fewer persons), both of which fell by 1%, while skilled trades remained stable over the year. Not illustrated in Figure 4.2, however, is a decline of 10,800 persons in the other/occupation not stated category.

The rate of employment growth over the five-year period, quarter 4 2018 to quarter 4 2023, was 18%. In absolute terms, the highest increases were recorded for professionals (+168,400 persons or +36%), followed by associate professionals (+75,200 persons or +28%) and managers (+51,200 persons or +27%). Over this time, employment in most other occupations also increased including administrative (+48,100 persons or +23%), caring services (+32,200 persons or +17%), and skilled trades (+12,000 persons or +5%). Despite increases, however, employment growth for a number of occupations was below the national average, most notably for skilled trades, sales, elementary and operative occupations, The only occupational group where employment fell over this time was farmers (3,200 fewer persons or -4%).

Figure 4.2 Employment Growth by Broad Occupational Group, Q4 2018-Q4 2023 & Q4 2022-Q4 2023



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data
Excludes not stated

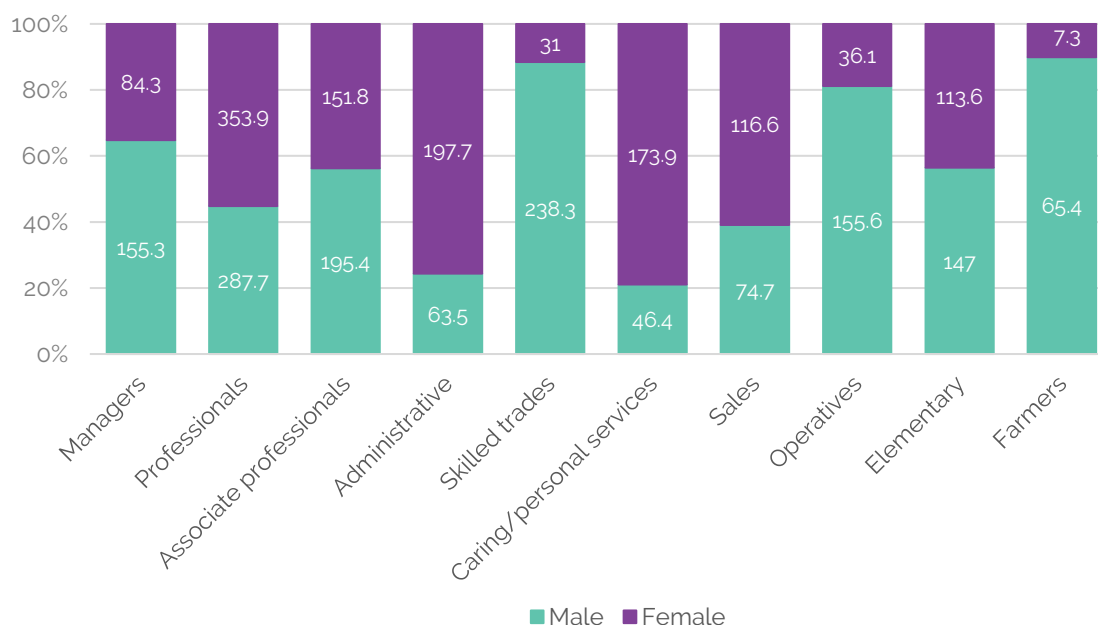
4.3 Employment by gender and age

Gender

Employment by gender for broad occupations in quarter 4 2023 is presented in Figure 4.3. Although females made up just under half (47%) of all employment, they accounted for at least three quarters of employment amongst administrative (76%) and caring/personal services (79%) occupations. In contrast, males accounted for at least four fifths of employment amongst farmers (90%), skilled trades (88%) and operatives (81%). Employment was closest to gender balanced for elementary, associate professional and professional occupations.

In absolute terms, the highest number of females were employed in professional (353,900 persons) and administrative (197,700) occupations, while the highest number of males were employed in professional (287,700) and skilled trades (238,300) occupations.

Figure 4.3 Employment by Broad Occupational Group (000s), Quarter 4 2023



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data
Excludes not stated

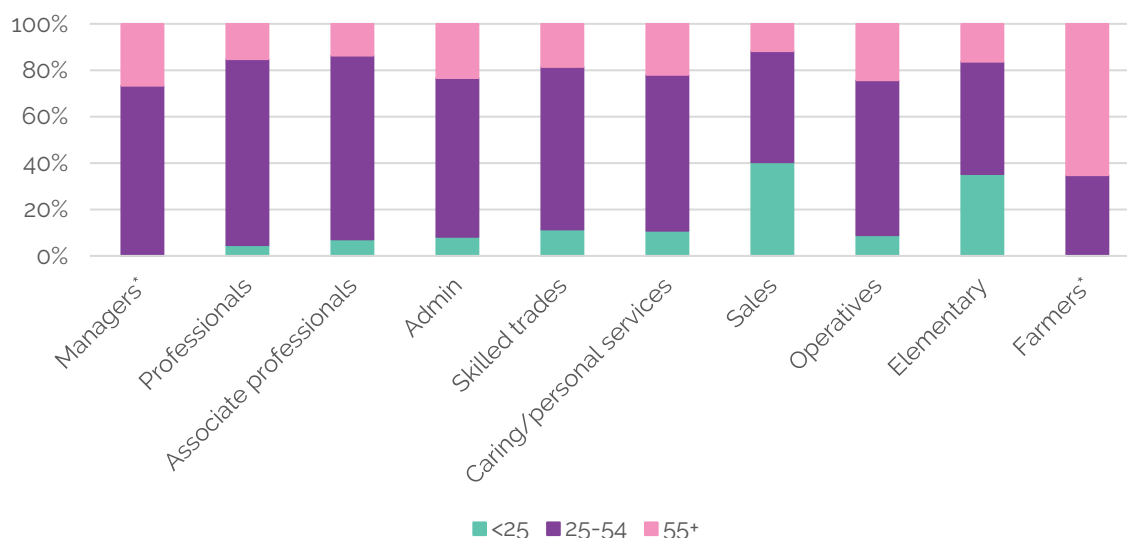
In the year to quarter 4 2023, the number of males and females in employment grew (by 40,500 and 49,200 respectively); the number of males increased in most occupations except for skilled trades (-3%), operatives (-1%) and managers (-1%), while the number of females fell in five occupations, namely associate professionals (-6%), sales (-2%), elementary (-2%) and managers (-0.5%); the number of females in farming occupations also declined (-15%) but the numbers involved are small translating into a decline of just 1,300 females. In relation to skilled trades, the absolute decline amongst males (6,700 fewer persons) was more than cancelled out by an increase in females (7,200 additional persons), although the number of females in skilled trades occupations remains small relative to the number of males.

When compared to quarter 4 2018, there were 198,000 more males and 217,900 additional females in employment in quarter 4 2023, which represented increases of 16% and 21% respectively. For males, the largest absolute increase was for professionals (75,500 more persons), an occupation which also had the biggest increase for females (92,800 additional persons). The only occupational groups where employment declined over the five-year period were farmers for males (-4,100 persons) and sales for females (-1,400 persons).

Age

Figure 4.4 presents the age distribution of employment by broad occupational group. In quarter 4 2023, with the exception of farmers, employment in all occupational groups was highest in the 25-54-year age cohort. Elementary and sales occupations had the youngest age profile, with more than one third of individuals employed aged 15-24 years (35% and 40% respectively), and lower than average shares aged 55 years or over. Farmers had by far the oldest age profile, with 65% aged 55 years or over.

Figure 4.4 Employment by Age and Broad Occupational Group (%), Quarter 4 2023



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data

Excludes not stated

*The numbers of managers and farmers aged under 25 were too low to report.

Between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023, the number of employed **15-24-year-olds** went up by 8% (+24,300 persons), which was more than twice the rate for all age groups (3%). This was largely driven by a 19% increase in employment in elementary occupations and a 14% rise in sales occupations, which resulted in 14,700 and 9,200 additional young workers respectively. Over the year, there were increases in employment for all other occupations in this age group except for administrative (-5% or 1,200 fewer persons) and associate professional occupations (-2% or 500 fewer persons). When compared to quarter 4 2018, the number of employed young people increased by 31% (higher than the 18% rise for all age groups), with the largest absolute increases again for elementary and sales occupations, representing 29,500 additional young persons (+47%) and 18,600 more young persons (+32%) respectively; when combined these two occupations accounted for 62% of the total rise in youth employment over the five-year period.

Looking at employment trends amongst **25-54-year-olds**, there was an increase of 2% (+44,900 persons) over the one-year period, quarter 4 2022 to quarter 4 2023, which was largely attributable to a 13% rise in professional occupations that accounted for 58,600 more persons. In addition, the number employed rose in administrative (+8,000 persons) and caring services (+5,400 persons) occupations. In contrast, there were declines in all other occupations for this age group (except for associate professionals which remained the same), with the largest absolute falls for sales (-7,600 persons) and managerial (-5,600 persons) occupations. Over the five-year period, there was an upward trend in employment for this age group across most occupations, with the exception of elementary (-30,000 persons), sales (-16,200 persons) and farmers (-6,700 persons) occupations.

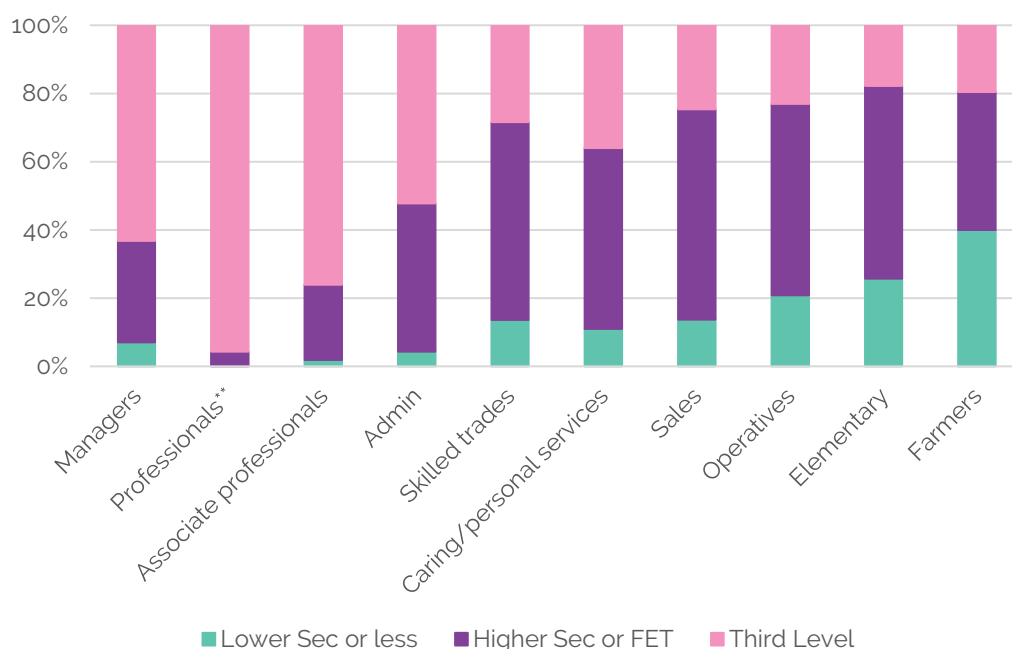
In the year to quarter 4 2023, there was an increase of 4% (+20,400 persons) in employed individuals aged **55 years and older**, which was above the 3% increase across all age groups; the largest absolute increase being for professional occupations (+12,700 persons), followed by operatives (+4,000 persons) and caring services (+3,600 persons) occupations. In contrast, there were declines in employment in this age group for administrative and associate professional occupations, which both fell by 5%. Compared to quarter 4 2018, the number of employed persons aged 55 years and older went up by 29% in quarter 4 2023, which was higher than the

increase across all age groups (+18%), and largely due to the professional (+28,800 persons) and manager (+20,300 persons) occupations, which combined accounted for 41% of the total increase in employment amongst older workers over the five-year period.

4.4 Employment by education

Figure 4.5 presents the educational distribution of employment for each occupational group in quarter 4 2023. Over half (55%) of Ireland's workforce held third level qualifications, but the share was considerably higher for professionals (96%), associate professionals (76%) and managers (63%). Occupations with the highest shares of higher secondary/FET qualification holders were sales (62%), skilled trades (58%) and elementary and operatives, both at 56%. Farmers had the lowest education attainment profile, with 40% holding lower secondary or less, followed by elementary (26%) and operatives (21%), considerably higher than the national average (9%).

Figure 4.5 Employment by Education* and Broad Occupational Group (%), Quarter 4 2023



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data

*Excludes those who did not state their level of education.

**The number of professionals with lower secondary or less level of education attainment was too low to report.

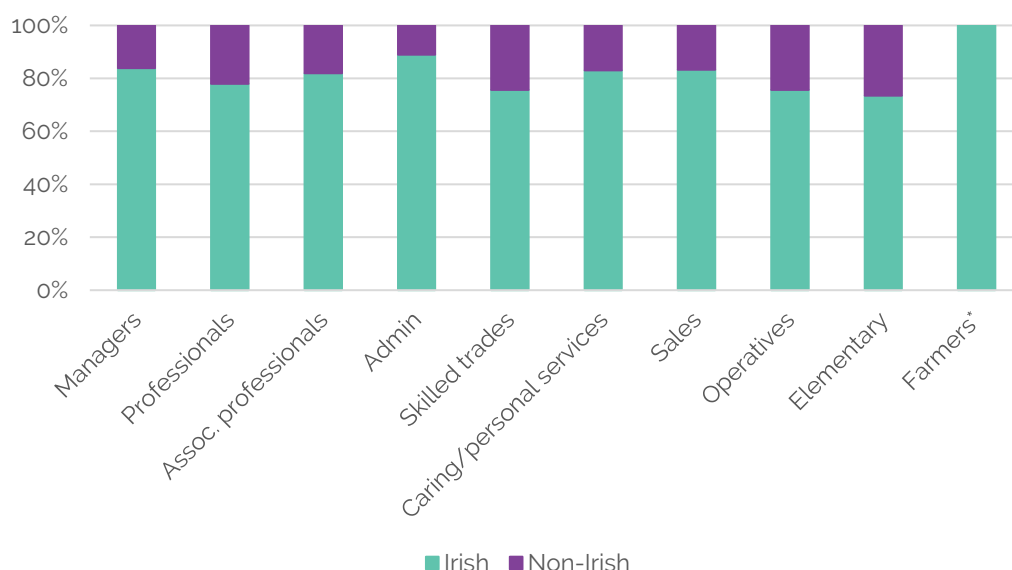
In the year to quarter 4 2023, employment growth was greater for those with higher education levels; there was a 4% increase in employment for persons with higher secondary/FET or third level qualifications compared to 1% for those with at most a lower secondary education. Where individuals had higher secondary/FET qualifications, there was an increase in employment across most occupational groups, in particular operatives (+7,800 persons), administrative (+7,200 persons) and managers (+7,000 persons); the exception was for skilled trades (6,300 fewer persons). For those with third level qualifications, the largest absolute increase in employment was in professional occupations (+74,600 persons) followed by skilled trades (+4,400 persons), but there were declines in several occupations, most notably associate professional (9,400 fewer persons) and managers (7,400 fewer persons). Amongst those with lower secondary qualifications, there were small increases in most occupations especially elementary (+3,500 persons) and skilled trades (+3,000 persons). However, there were declines in associate professional (3,000 fewer persons) and professional (2,000 fewer persons) occupations.

Compared to quarter 4 2018, there was a shift towards higher levels of educational attainment amongst Ireland's workforce in quarter 4 2023, which saw an increase of 32% (355,100 persons) in the number employed with a third level qualification. For almost all occupations, except sales and elementary, the number of third level graduates in employment grew, with the largest absolute increases for professionals (+167,100 persons) and associate professionals (+64,200 persons). In relation to those with higher secondary/FET qualifications, there were increases in employment for all occupations except farmers (-1,300 persons), with the largest absolute increase for operatives (+19,000 persons). During the five-year period, there was an overall decline in the number of employed persons who held at most lower secondary education attainment, with the largest absolute falls in skilled trades (-11,300 persons) and operative (-11,000 persons) occupations. Despite this, there were increases in employment for those with the lowest educational attainment in sales, elementary, caring services and administrative occupations.

4.5 Employment by citizenship

In quarter 4 2023, the share of employment by citizenship across all occupations was 81% Irish (2,179,400 persons) and 19% non-Irish (527,000 persons). The distribution of employment in broad occupational groups by citizenship is presented in Figure 4.6. In quarter 4 2023, at 27%, elementary workers had the highest share of non-Irish citizens, followed by skilled trades and operatives, both with 24%. In addition, 22% of those employed in professional occupations were non-Irish citizens. In contrast, apart from farmers (where the number of non-Irish citizens is too small to report), administrative workers had the lowest share of non-Irish citizens, at 11%.

Figure 4.6 Employment by Citizenship and Broad Occupational Group (%). Quarter 4 2023



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data
 *Number of non-Irish farmers was too low to report

Between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023, the number of Irish citizens in employment increased by nearly 2% (+39,300 persons) and the number of non-Irish by 11% (+50,600 persons). The largest absolute employment growth occurred in professional occupations for both Irish (+42,400 persons) and non-Irish citizens (+30,100 persons). The number of Irish citizens declined in both skilled trades (7,800 fewer persons) and operatives (5,900 fewer persons), in contrast to an increase of 8,500 persons and 8,300 persons respectively amongst non-Irish citizens in these two occupations.

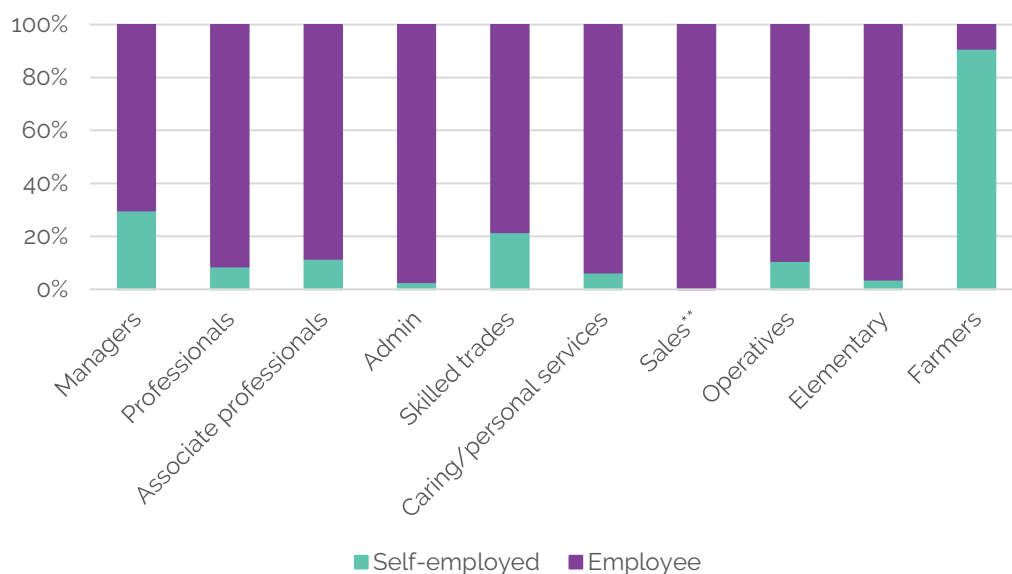
Over the five-year period, quarter 4 2018 to quarter 4 2023, the number of Irish citizens in employment grew by 13% (258,300 additional persons) and the number of non-Irish by 43% (157,500 additional persons). Professional occupations accounted for the highest increase in employment amongst Irish (+96,300 persons) and non-Irish citizens (+72,100 person). However, the number of non-Irish citizens declined in elementary (3,100 fewer persons) and sales (1,600 fewer persons) occupations compared to increases for Irish citizens of 12,700 persons and 4,700 persons respectively in these two occupations. Finally, although the number of Irish citizens in skilled trades fell by 3,400 persons, it increased for non-Irish citizens (+15,300 persons).

4.6 Employment status

Self-employed/employee

In quarter 4 2023, the share of self-employed and employed workers across all occupational groups was 13% and 87% respectively. Figure 4.7 presents employment in broad occupational groups by employment status. In quarter 4 2023, the majority of workers across all occupations were employees, with the exception of farmers where 91% (or 62,000 persons) were self-employed.²⁷ After farmers, managers and skilled trades occupations had the highest share of workers who were self-employed (at 30% and 22% respectively).

Figure 4.7 Employment by Employment Status* and Broad Occupational Group (%), Quarter 4 2023



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data

*Excludes those assisting relatives and on employment schemes.

**Number of self-employed in sales were too low to report.

Over the period quarter 4 2022 to quarter 4 2023, the number of employees and self-employed persons both increased, with an almost 4% rise (+84,300 persons) and 1% rise (+2,400 persons) respectively. Professional occupations saw the largest absolute increase for both employees and self-employed, with an additional 66,700 persons (+13%) and 7,200 persons (+15%) respectively. In relation to employees, there were increases in caring/personal services (+12,900 persons), elementary (+7,200 persons) and sales (+4,200 persons) occupations, while for self-employed individuals, skilled trades and farmers experienced the next biggest absolute rise of 4,200 and 3,100 additional persons respectively. By contrast, skilled trades occupations saw the largest

²⁷ The share of farmers who were employees is based on small numbers and should be interpreted with caution.

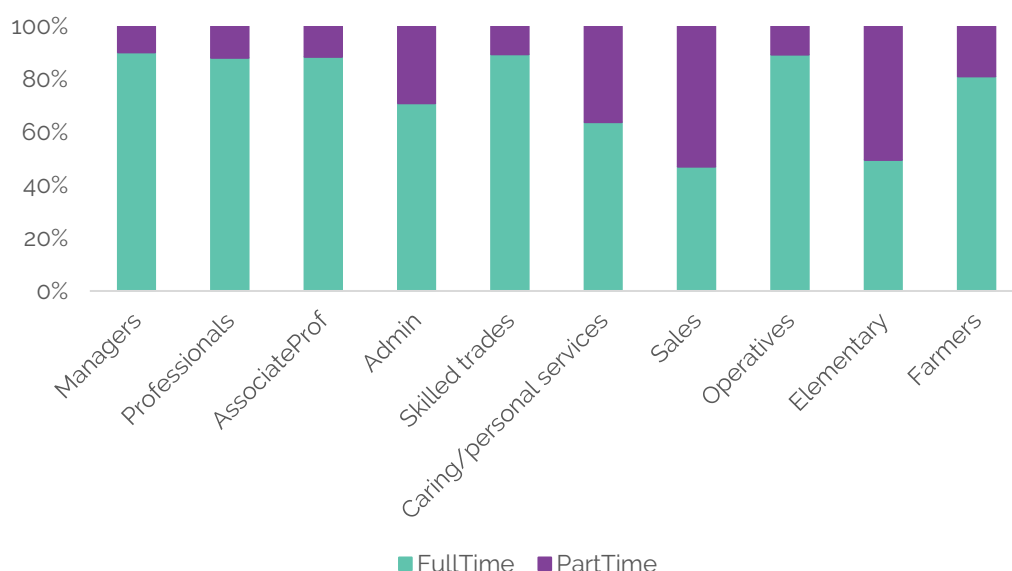
absolute decline for employees of 4,300 fewer persons (or -2%) over the year. The number of self-employed persons in managerial, caring/personal services and associate professional occupations fell by 8% (-6,300 persons), 22% (-3,900 persons) and 7% (-3,200 persons) respectively.

Between quarter 4 2018 and quarter 4 2023, there was an increase in the number of employees and self-employed persons; the rate of increase for employees was more than three times that for the self-employed, at 20% (+382,900 persons) and 6% (+18,200 persons) respectively. For employees, the largest absolute rises were for professional occupations (+153,100 persons or +35%), which represented 40% of the total increase for this group over the five years. Looking at the self-employed, the largest absolute increases were also recorded for professionals (+14,300 or +35%) and associate professionals (+3,700 persons or +10%). Over the five-year period, there were increases in all occupational groups for both employees and self-employed, with two exceptions: self-employed farmers (-9% or 6,400 fewer persons); and self-employed sales (-24% or 1,200 fewer persons).

Full-time/part-time

Figure 4.8 presents the breakdown of employment in broad occupational groups by full-time and part-time work status. In quarter 4 2023, most workers across all occupational groups were in full-time employment. Occupations where the shares of full-time workers were highest were managers (90%), skilled trades (89%), operatives (89%), associate professional (88%) and professionals (88%); occupations with the lowest share of full-time workers were sales occupations, where less than one half (47%) were working full-time, followed by elementary (49%) and caring/personal services (64%) occupations.

Figure 4.8 Full-Time and Part-Time Employment by Occupational Group (%), Quarter 4 2023

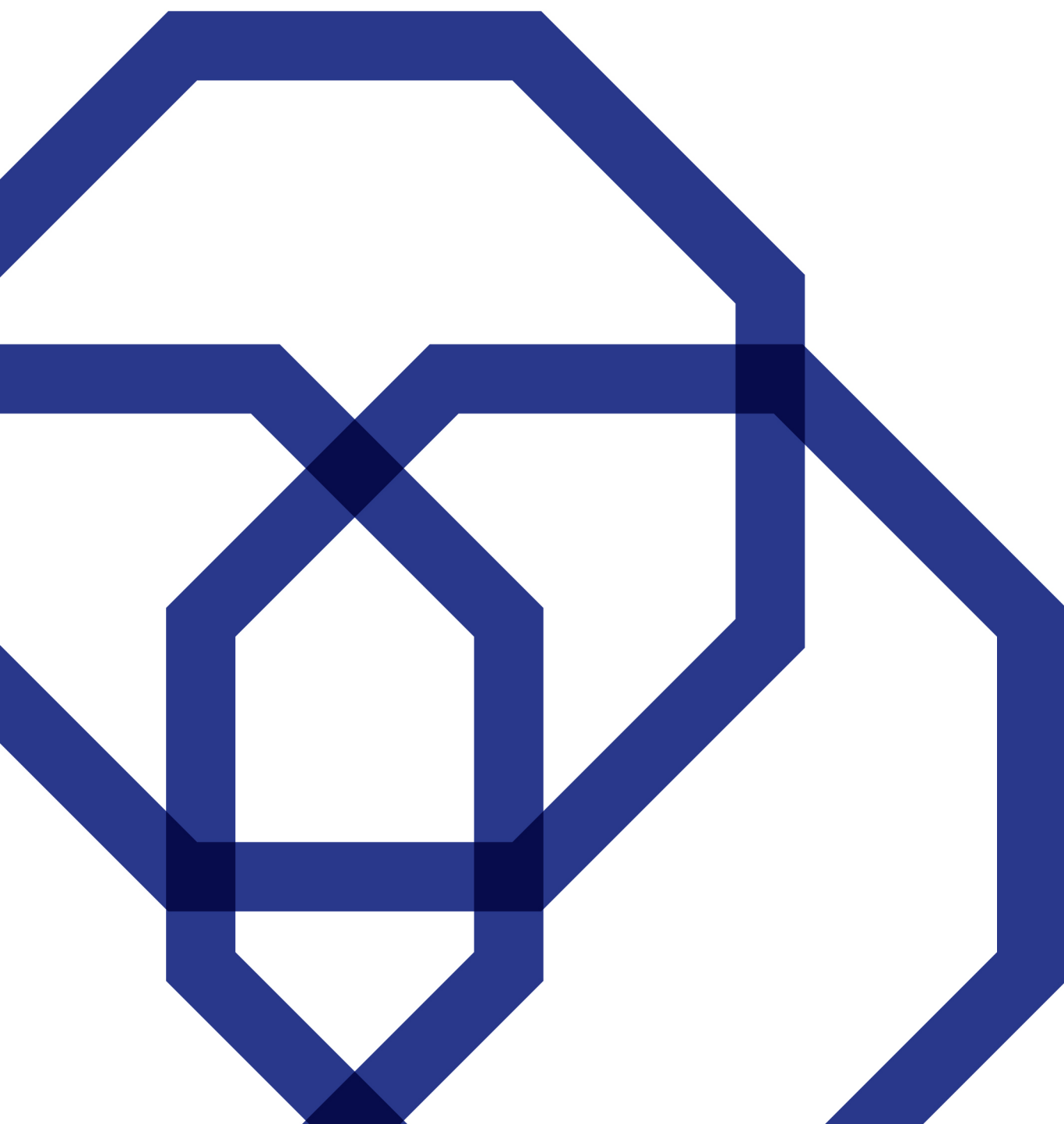


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data

Between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023, the numbers in both full-time and part-time employment increased by 58,600 additional persons (+3%) and 31,100 more persons (+6%) respectively. For those employed full-time, the largest absolute increases were for professional occupations (+63,700 persons) followed by caring/personal services (+12,100 persons). By

contrast the highest growing occupational groups for part-time employed individuals were sales (+10,400 persons) and administrative (+9,400 persons). There were also variations in the occupational groups that experienced a decline in employment amongst the two groups; the largest fall for full-time workers was for managers (-7,800 person), while the largest fall for part-time employed was for associate professionals (-3,400 persons).

Over the five-year period, the number in part-time employment increased at a higher rate than those working full-time, at 27% (+125,700 persons) and 16% (290,300 persons) respectively. In relation to part-time workers, there was an increase in all occupational groups, in particular sales, elementary and professionals, which rose by an additional 23,800 persons, 21,700 persons and 20,700 persons respectively. The number of full-time workers increased across most occupational groups, especially amongst professionals (+147,700 persons), although there were falls in sales (-20,600 persons), elementary (-12,100 persons) and farming occupations (-9,100 persons).



Section 5

Regional Labour Markets

This section presents an overview of the labour market in each of Ireland's eight NUTS 3²⁸ administrative regions. Key labour market indicators examined include labour force participation rates, employment (e.g. gender, age, education, citizenship, occupation), and unemployment.

5.1 Regional labour force participation

In quarter 4 2023, Dublin had the highest labour force participation rate, at 67.9%, followed by the Mid-East (66.7%) and South West at 65.6% (Figure 5.1). The participation rate in all other regions was below the State average of 65.4%, with the lowest of all being for the Border (62.1%) and Mid-West (62.2%) regions.

When compared to quarter 4 2022, the participation rate increased for all but two regions, with the largest increase for the South West region (+2.3 percentage points). Very small declines (less than half a percentage point (pp) each) were observed in the participation rates for the Midland (-0.1 pp) and Mid-East region (-0.3 pp).

When compared to quarter 4 2018, the participation rate grew in all eight regions, particularly in the Border (+4.6 pp), South West (+4.5 pp), and South East regions (+4.4 pp).

Figure 5.1 Labour Force Participation (%) by Region, Q4 2018, Q4 2022 & Q4 2023



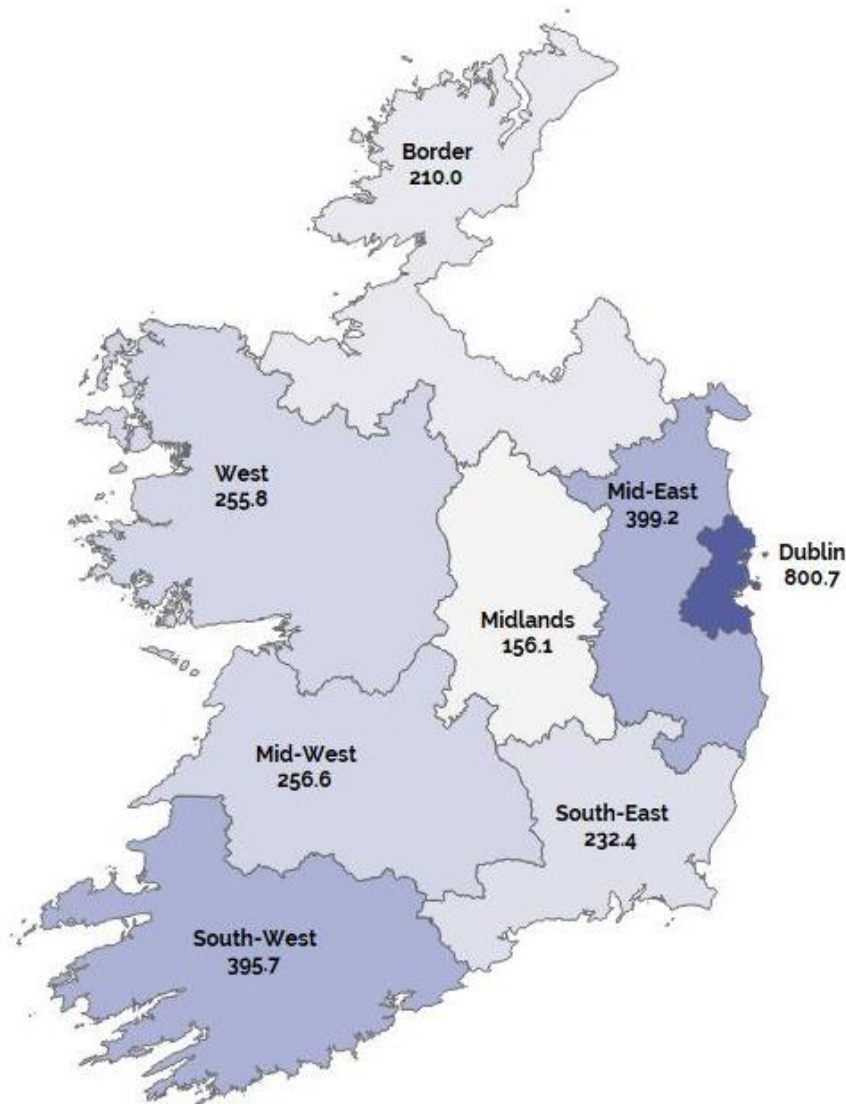
Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

²⁸ The Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS) is a geographical nomenclature subdividing territories of the EU into regions at three different levels, NUTS 1, 2 and 3 respectively, with the most detailed being NUTS 3. NUTS3 regions for Ireland are made up of the following counties: Border (Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo), West (Galway, Mayo, Roscommon), Mid-West (Limerick, Clare, Tipperary), South West (Cork, Kerry), South East (Waterford, Wexford, Carlow, Kilkenny), Dublin (Dublin), Mid-East (Louth, Meath, Kildare, Wicklow) and Midland (Laois, Offaly, Longford, Westmeath).

5.2 Regional employment & employment growth

The regions with the largest workforces in Ireland in quarter 4 2023 were Dublin (800,700 persons), the Mid-East (399,200), and the South West (395,700), making up 29.6%, 14.8% and 14.6% of total national employment respectively (Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2 Employment by Region, Quarter 4 2023



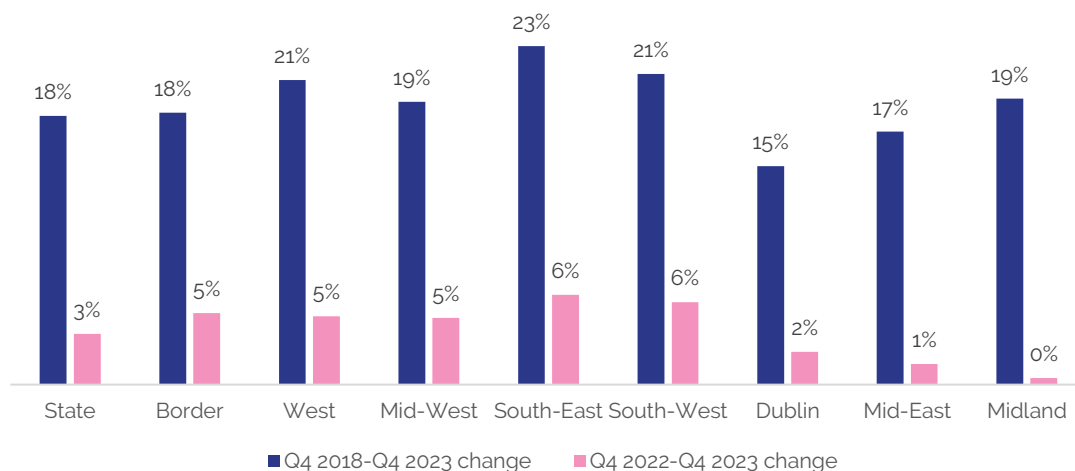
Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

When compared to both quarter 4 2018 and quarter 4 2022, employment in quarter 4 2023 grew in all regions, albeit by varying amounts (Figure 5.3a). In relative terms, the strongest growth over both time periods was for the South East (22.9% and 6.1% respectively). In Dublin and the Mid-East, employment growth was below the national average for both time periods.

In absolute terms, the South West had the largest increase in employment in the one-year period to quarter 4 2023, adding 20,900 persons (Figure 5.3b). While the Midland's employment growth was by far the smallest, with just 700 extra workers, this followed a period of particularly strong growth in employment in this region between quarter 4 2019 and quarter 4 2021. Over the period

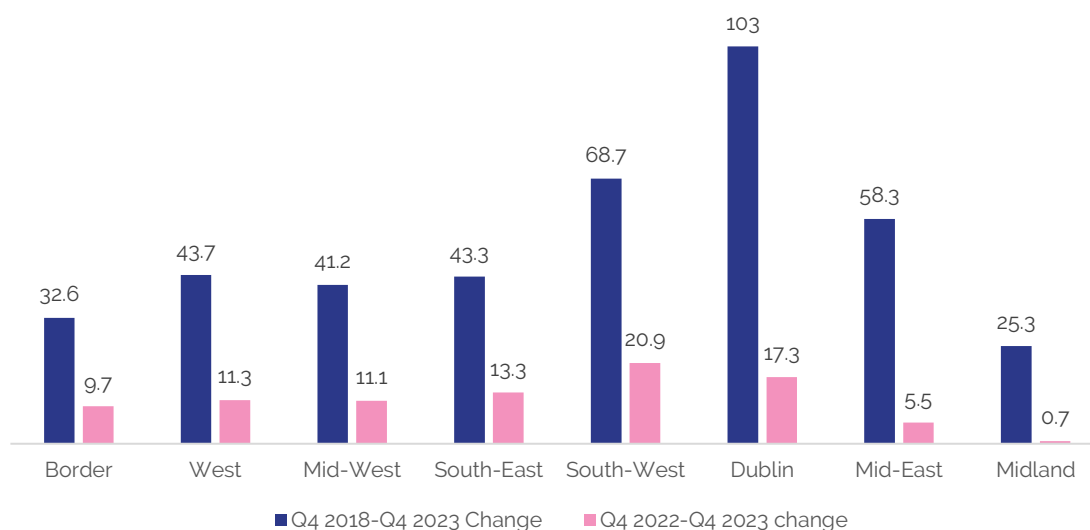
quarter 4 2018-quarter 4 2023, the 15% growth observed for the Dublin region translated into 103,000 additional workers, the largest absolute increase of all regions.

Figure 5.3a Employment Change (%), Q4 2018-Q4 2023 & Q4 2022-Q4 2023



Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

Figure 5.3b Employment Change (000s), Q4 2018-Q4 2023 and Q4 2022-Q4 2023, by Region



Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

5.3 Regional employment by gender

Dublin, the South East, and to a lesser extent the South West, regions each had workforces with a higher than national average (47.0%) share of females (Table 5.1). The share of employed females was lowest in the Border region, at 45.4%. When compared to one year earlier, the number of females in employment grew for each region and, with the exception of the Border and South West regions, the number of additional females in the workforce was greater than the number of additional males.

Table 5.1 Share of Female Employment by Region, Q4 2023 and Q4 2022-Q4 2023 Change

	Q4 2023	Q4 2022-Q4 2023 change (000s)	
	% Female	Females	Males
Border	45.4%	2,400	7,300
West	46.1%	7,100	4,100
Mid-West	46.4%	6,900	4,200
South-East	47.7%	7,500	5,800
South-West	47.1%	9,600	11,200
Dublin	47.9%	9,600	7,700
Mid-East	46.8%	3,700	1,800
Midland	46.2%	2,200	-1,600
State	47.0%	49,200	40,500

Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

5.4 Regional employment by age

In quarter 4 2023, 12% of Ireland's workforce was aged less than 25 years and 19% was aged 55 or over. At 13% each, the share of **younger workers** was highest in the Mid-East, the South East and the Mid-West (Table 5.2). In the year to quarter 4 2023, the number of younger workers increased in most regions, particularly in the Mid-West (+5,900 young people). The number of employed persons aged less than 25 years, however, remained almost unchanged in the Midlands and Dublin, with just 200 fewer young persons each in the workforce.

Dublin had the smallest share of **older workers**, at 15%, followed by the Mid-East (18%) with the Border and West region having the highest shares, at 24% and 23% respectively. When compared to quarter 4 2022, the number (and share) of older people in the workforce grew in most regions (except the Mid-West and Midlands), although the increases in Dublin and the Mid-East were almost negligible (at 400 and 600 extra people respectively).

Table 5.2 Share of Workers Aged <25 yrs and 55+ yrs by Region, Q4 2023 & Q4 2022-Q4 2023 Change

	Q4 2023		Q4 2022-Q4 2023 change	
	% < 25 years	% 55+ years	< 25 years	55+ years
Border	12%	24%	4,200	4,400
Dublin	11%	15%	-200	400
Mid-East	13%	18%	2,100	600
Mid-West	13%	21%	5,900	-1,400
Midland	12%	21%	-200	-1,100
South East	13%	22%	4,000	5,000
South West	12%	21%	4,800	6,900
West	12%	23%	3,800	5,600
State	12%	19%	24,300	20,400

Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

5.5 Regional employment by education

The share of those in employment with at most a **Junior Certificate or equivalent (i.e. NQF 3 qualifications)** was, on average, 10%, but the share was lower in the Dublin and Mid-East regions at 7% and 8% respectively (Table 5.3) and highest in the Border region (16%). When compared to quarter 4 2022, the number of persons in employment with qualifications at this level grew in most regions except the Mid-East, Dublin and Midland regions.

Overall, more than half (55%) of Ireland's workforce held **third level qualifications** in quarter 4 2023, with the share rising to 64% in the Dublin region. Workers holding third level qualifications grew in all regions except the Midlands in the year to quarter 4 2023, with the largest increase being for the South West region (+17,400 persons). The decline in the Midlands region was partially offset by an increase (of 4,800) in the numbers with FET qualifications – one of only two regions (along with the West) with an increase in qualification holders at this level.

Table 5.3 Share of Workers with NQF 1-3 and NQF 6 (HE)+ by Region, Q4 2023 & Q4 2022-Q4 2023 Change

	Q4 2023		Q4 2022-Q4 2023 change	
	% NQF 3 or less	% 3 rd level (NQF 6+)	NQF 3 or less	% 3 rd level (NQF 6+)
Border	16%	46%	1,500	3,400
Dublin	7%	64%	-1,400	11,300
Mid-East	8%	55%	-6,600	14,300
Mid-West	11%	50%	1,400	4,600
Midland	11%	44%	-1,300	-7,800
South East	12%	48%	2,300	5,200
South West	10%	54%	4,000	17,400
West	10%	53%	2,300	7,400
State	10%	55%	2,100	55,900

Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

5.6 Regional employment by citizenship

Regional workforces with above average (81%) shares of Irish citizens were the Border, Mid-West, Midland, South East and West (Table 5.4). Dublin had the smallest share of employed persons who were Irish citizens, at 75%. When compared to quarter 4 2022, except for the West region, the number of non-Irish citizens increased in each region, with the largest number of non-Irish citizens added in the Mid-East region; indeed, the growth in the number of non-Irish citizens more than offset the decline of 16,600 in the number in Irish citizens working in the he Mid-East region.

Table 5.4 Share of Workers by Citizenship and Region, Q4 2023 & Q4 2022-Q4 2023 Change

	Q4 2023	Q4 2022-Q4 2023 change	
	Irish	Irish	Non-Irish
Border	86%	-800	10,500
Dublin	75%	17,000	500
Mid-East	81%	-16,600	22,000
Mid-West	85%	8,500	2,500
Midland	83%	300	500
South East	84%	8,600	4,600
South West	81%	9,200	11,700
West	84%	13,000	-1,700
State	81%	39,300	50,800

Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

5.7 Regional employment by work status

In quarter 4 2023, 22% of all employed persons worked part-time; however, the share was considerably higher in the West (26%) and South West (25%) regions, and lowest in the Dublin region (19%) (Table 5.5). When compared to quarter 4 2022, the number of full-time workers declined in just one region (Midland), while the number of part-time workers declined in the Border region and the Mid-East region.

More than a quarter (27%, 15,600 extra workers) of all additional full-time workers in Ireland were in the South West region, and a further fifth were in Dublin. In contrast more than a half of all additional part-time workers in Ireland were in the Mid-West or the South East regions (with 8,000 and 8,500 extra part-time workers each).

Table 5.5 Share of Workers by Part/Full-Time Status and Region, Q4 2023 & Q4 2022-Q4 2023 Change

	Q4 2023	Q4 2022-Q4 2023 change	
	% Part-time	Part-time	Full-time
Border	23%	-600	10,300
Dublin	19%	5,200	12,100
Mid-East	21%	-5,400	10,800
Mid-West	23%	8,000	3,000
Midland	20%	2,400	-1,800
South East	23%	8,500	4,800
South West	25%	5,300	15,600
West	26%	7,600	3,700
State	22%	31,100	58,600

Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

5.8 Regional employment by professional status

Dublin had the highest share of employees in the workforce, at 91%, while the smallest shares were in the Border, South East and West, each with 84% (Table 5.6). When compared to quarter 4 2022, the share of employees grew in each of Ireland's regions, with the largest growth in the Mid-West region, at 17,900 additional employees. The number of self-employed persons increased in most regions, with the exception of the Mid-West (6,600 fewer self-employed persons) and the Midlands (1,200 fewer).

Table 5.6 Share of Workers by Professional Status and Region, Q4 2023 & Q4 2022-Q4 2023 Change

	Q4 2023	Q4 2022-Q4 2023 change	
	% Employee	Employee	Self-employed
Border	84%	9,500	400
Dublin	91%	17,300	600
Mid-East	87%	3,200	1,000
Mid-West	87%	17,900	-6,600
Midland	86%	1,000	-1,200
South East	84%	10,400	3,600
South West	86%	15,000	4,300
West	84%	10,100	300
State	87%	84,300	2,300

Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

* Excludes those assisting relatives due to small numbers

5.9 Regional employment by occupation

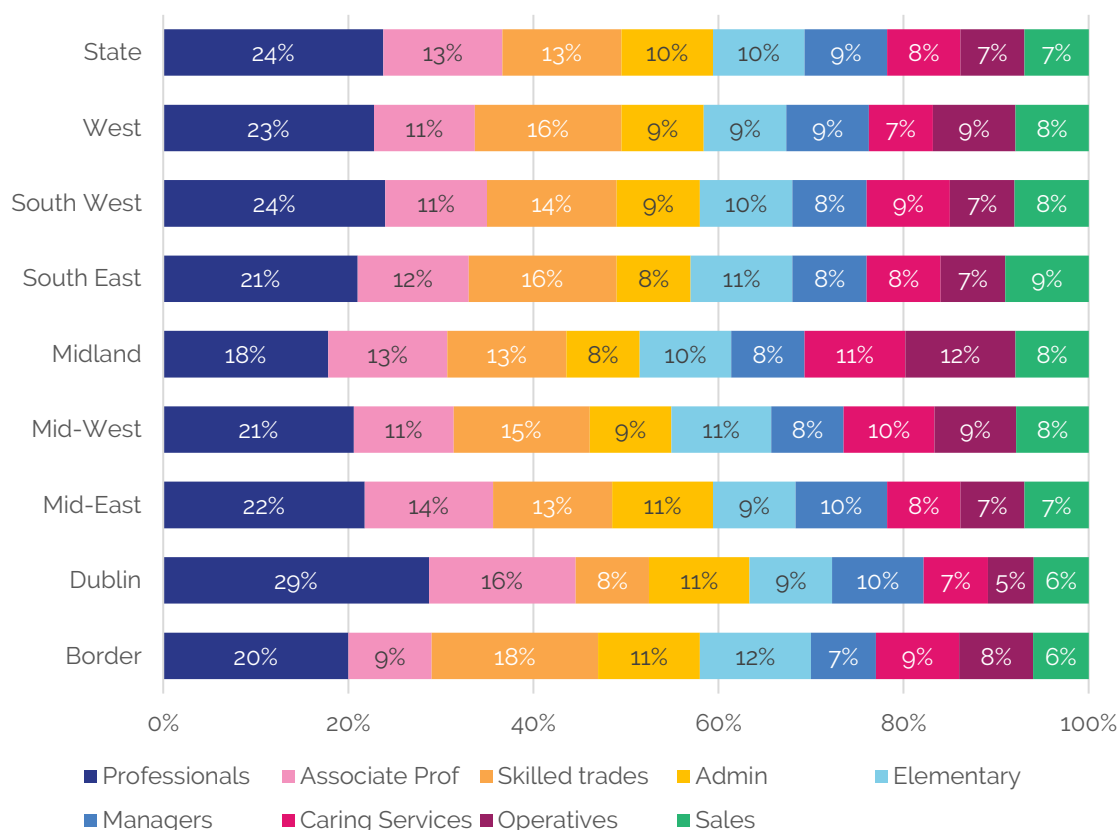
Figure 5.4 shows the occupational distribution of each regional workforce in quarter 4 2023. Of particular note were the following:

- professionals were the largest occupational group in each region, ranging from 18% of the workforce in the Midland region to 29% in Dublin
- the second largest occupational group was associate professionals for Dublin and the Mid-East, but was skilled trades for the remaining regions (except for the Midlands where associate professionals and skilled trades were both 13%)
- on average, operatives made up 7% of Ireland's workforce, but the share rose to 12% for the Midland region.

When compared to quarter 4 2022,

- the number of professionals in employment grew in each region except the Midlands (-2,900 workers)
- the number of associate professionals grew in the West (+5,000), Mid-West (600), South West (1,800), and South East (1,100) regions, but these increases were not enough to offset the declines that occurred in all other regions, and as a result employment of associate professionals nationally fell (and with managers was one of only two occupational groups to do so).

Figure 5.4 Occupational Distribution of Employment by Region, Quarter 4 2023



Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data
Excludes not stated

5.10 Regional employment by sector

With the exception of Dublin, three sectors, health, wholesale & retail, and industry, combined made up at least one third of total regional employment, rising to nearly 45% for the Midlands region and over 44% for the Mid-West (Figure 5.5). Other points of note in regional sectoral employment include

- in Dublin, the ICT, professional services and finance etc sectors made up 28% of total regional employment, in contrast to the Midlands and Mid-West regions where these three sectors made up 11.1% and 11.5% respectively
- the construction sector share in employment was highest in the Border and South East regions, at 7.9% each, above the average of 6%
- agriculture made up 9% of employment in the Border region, more than twice the national average (4.2%).

When compared to one year earlier, the distribution of the top three sectors was broadly similar, although the share for Dublin's workforce in health, industry and wholesale/retail declined slightly (to 31%, down from 32%), mainly due to a fall of 5,700 persons employed in industry.

Although the numbers employed nationally in the construction sector fell, there were increases for the Border (3,000 extra workers, or +22%), Mid-West (2,200 extra, or +16.3%), and South East (2,500 extra, or +15.8%), while the Mid-East region was the only region to experience a decline in the numbers employed in accommodation/food (3,100 fewer workers, or -11.4%).

Figure 5.5 Regional Employment by Sector, Quarter 4 2023



Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

5.11 Unemployment by region

Unemployment levels

Figure 5.6 shows regional unemployment for quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023, although it excludes the Midland region in quarter 4 2022 where unemployment numbers were too small to report. With 39,700 persons, Dublin made up more than a third of Ireland's total unemployed; combined, the Mid-East (14,900 persons) and the South West (14,600) made up a further quarter.

When compared to quarter 4 2022, unemployment levels declined in the South East (2,000 fewer persons), Border (-1,500) and Mid-East (-1,300) regions. The largest absolute increase was observed for the South West region (+3,300 unemployed persons).

When compared to quarter 4 2018, unemployment levels in quarter 4 2023 were lower for all regions except the Dublin and Border regions (400 additional unemployed persons each) and the Midland region, where the numbers were the same at 9,100 persons.

Figure 5.6 Unemployment (000s) by Region, Q4 2022 & Q4 2023



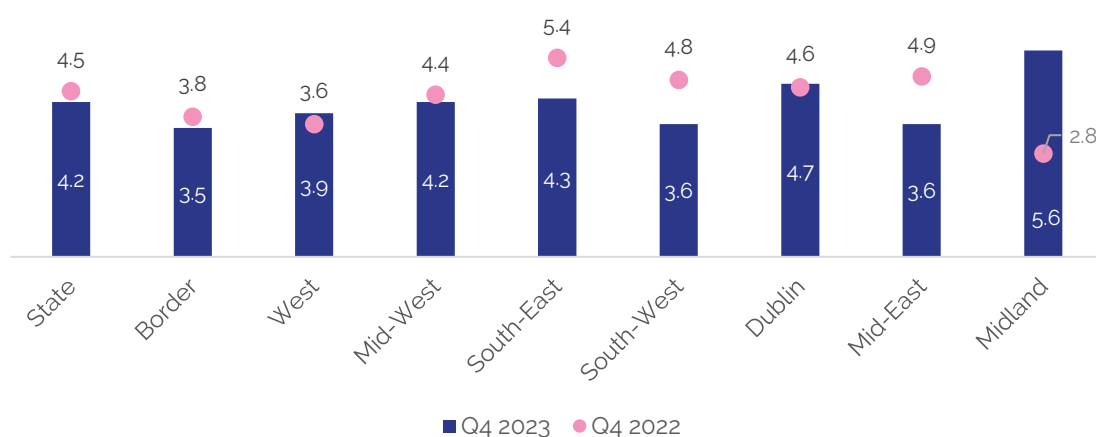
Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

*The number of unemployed persons in the Midland region in Q4 2022 was too small to report.

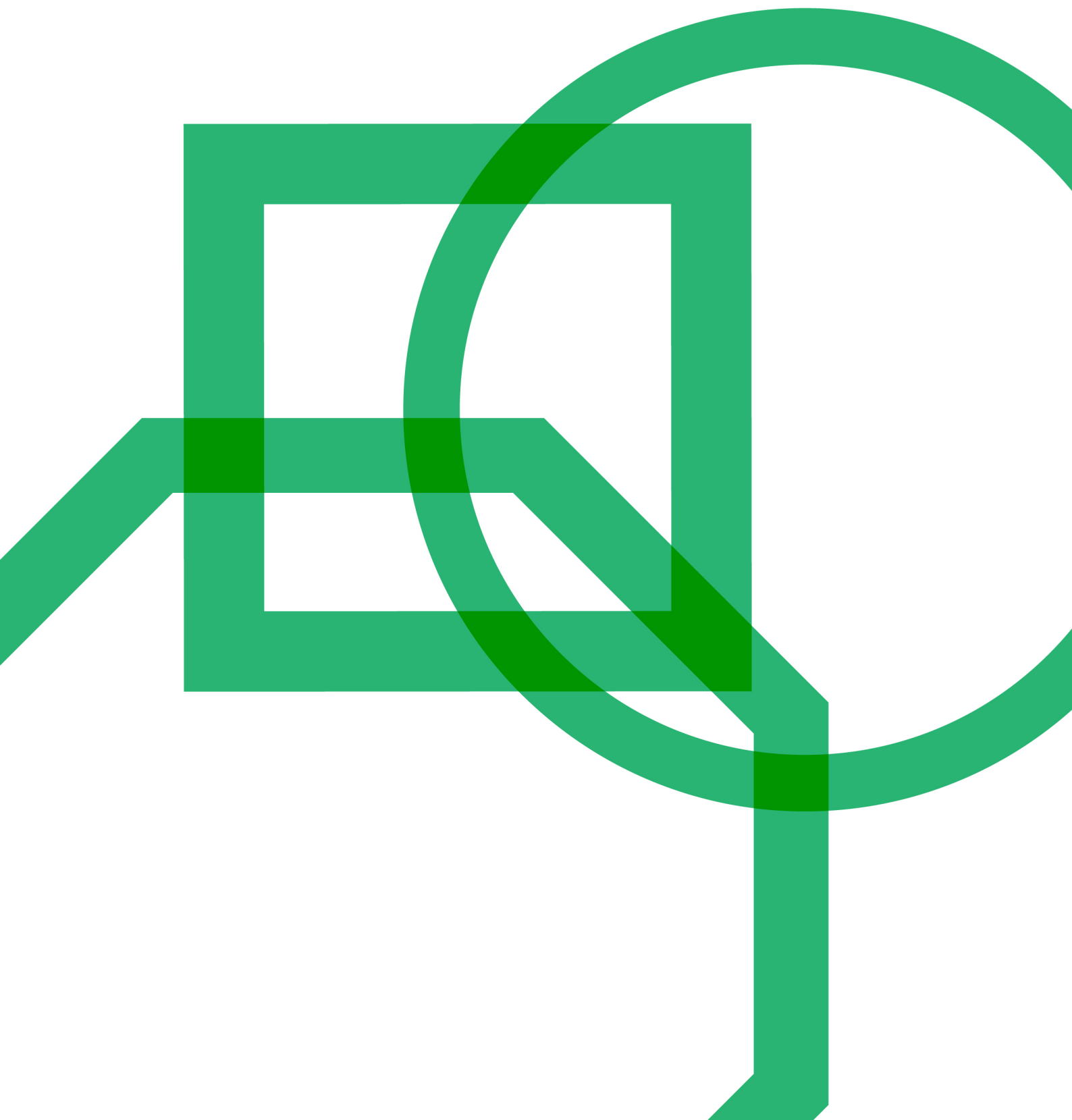
Unemployment rates

In quarter 4 2023, the unemployment rate was below the national average (4.2%) for the Border (3.5%), the South West and Mid-East (3.6% each), and the West region (3.9%). The highest unemployment was in the Midland region, at 5.6%, although the numbers are small (Figure 5.7). When compared to one year earlier, the unemployment rate fell in all but three regions (Midland, West and Dublin), while compared to quarter 4 2018 (not illustrated in graph), the employment rates were lower in quarter 4 2023 for all regions.

Figure 5.7 Unemployment Rates by Region, Q4 2022 & Q4 2023



Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data



Section 6

Unemployment

6.1 Introduction

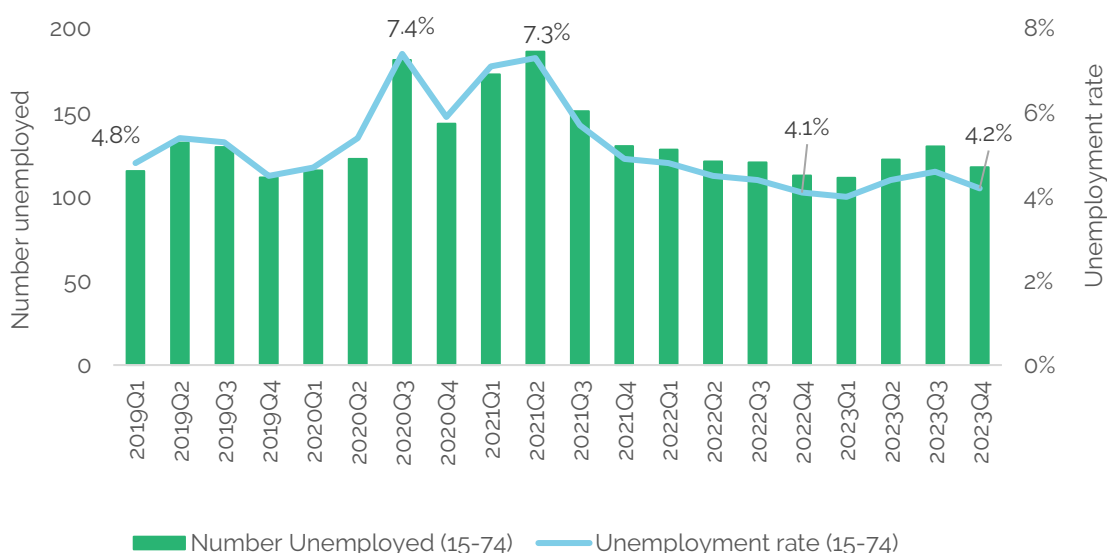
This section provides a profile of persons aged 15-74 years who were unemployed over the period 2019-2023. For the most part, the analysis by age, gender, sector and occupation of previous employment (where relevant), citizenship and education is based on annual average data from the CSO's Labour Force Survey.

6.2 Unemployment and Unemployment Rates

Between quarter 4 2019 and quarter 2 2021, unemployment levels in Ireland increased strongly from 111,600 persons to 186,400 persons (due to the COVID-19 pandemic health restrictions) and then sharply declined to 111,300 persons in quarter 1 2023 (returning to quarter 4 2019 levels). In quarter 4 2023, unemployment levels stood at 117,700 persons after having increased between quarter 1 2023 and quarter 3 2023 (Figure 6.1). In quarter 4 2023, the unemployment rate was low, at 4.2%; this compares with rates as high as 7.4% in quarter 3 2020 and 7.3% in quarter 2 2021 and 4.5% in quarter 4 2019 (the quarter just before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic).

In terms of annual average unemployment for those aged 15-74 years (as detailed in the remainder of this section), unemployment in 2023 stood at 120,300 persons, almost on a par with the 120,600 persons in 2022 and 122,200 persons in 2019. In 2023, the unemployment rate was at the near historic lows observed in the early 2000s, at 4.3% (annual average), compared to 4.5% in 2022, 6.2% in 2021 and 5.0% in 2019.

Figure 6.1 Unemployment Levels (000s) and Unemployment Rates (%), Quarter 1 2019–Quarter 4 2023



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

In 2023, the long-term unemployment rate (i.e. those unemployed for one year or longer) was 1.2% (almost on a par with the rate observed in 2022) and 0.4 percentage points lower than the rate in 2019 (Table 6.1). This compares to a peak of 9.2% in 2012. In 2023, 31,300 persons were classified as long-term unemployed, 3,700 persons fewer than in 2022 and 7,800 persons fewer than in 2019. Between 2022 and 2023, long-term unemployment as a share of total unemployment declined from 29% to 26%. In 2023, the broad unemployment measure (combining those unemployed and part-time underemployed) was 9.0%, an increase of 0.6 percentage points from 8.4% in 2022 and a decrease of 0.5 percentage points from 9.5% in 2019.

In 2023, the youth unemployment rate (i.e. persons aged 15 to 24) was 10.6%, 0.6 percentage points above the rate observed in 2022 (at 10%) and 1.8 percentage points lower than the rate observed in 2019 (at 12.4%). In absolute terms, youth unemployment stood at 38,300 persons, this represents an increase of 3,800 persons (or 11.0%) compared to 2022 and an increase of 1,700 persons (or 4.5%) compared to 2019 (when 36,700 youths were unemployed). In 2023, the NEET rate (the share of 15-24-year-olds who were not in employment, education or training) was 6.5% compared to 6.8% in 2022 and 10.1% in 2019.

Table 6.1 Other Unemployment Indicators, 2019-2023 (Annual Average, %)

	Long term UE rate (%) (15-74)	Broad UE rate (%) (15-74)	Youth UE rate (%) (15-24)	NEET* rate (%) (15-24)
2019	1.6	9.5	12.4	10.1
2020	1.3	10.2	15.9	12.0
2021	1.8	10.7	14.8	7.7
2022	1.3	8.4	10.0	6.8
2023	1.2	9.0	10.6	6.5

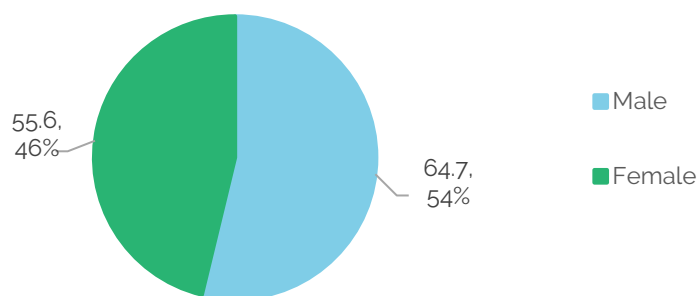
Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Note: Not in employment, education or training, ILO defined; there is a discrepancy between ILO and PES (self-declared principal economic status) measure of participation in education with the former used in the NEET rate potentially overstating the non-participation in the case of Ireland.

6.3 Unemployment by Gender

Figure 6.2 presents the number of unemployed persons by gender. In 2023, 54% of all unemployed persons nationally were male (or 64,700 persons), greater than the share of unemployed females, at 46% (or 55,600 persons). Compared to 2022, the share of unemployed males increased by 1.8 percentage points; the number of unemployed males increased by 2.9% (1,900 persons), while the number of unemployed females decreased by 3.7% (or 2,200 persons). In 2023, overall unemployment levels were broadly similar to 2019 levels and the gender composition did not change considerably, with 4,300 fewer males unemployed and 2,300 more females unemployed.

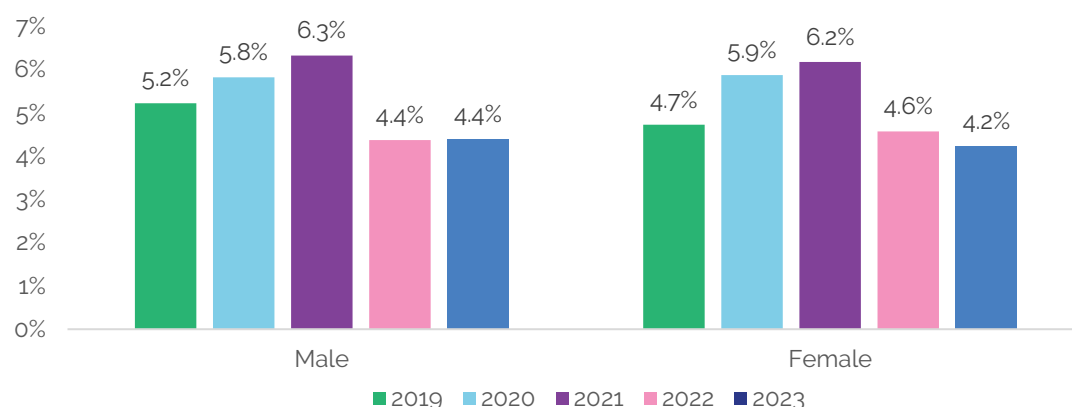
Figure 6.2 Unemployment by Gender (000s, %), 2023 (Annual Average)



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Figure 6.3 presents unemployment rates by gender. In 2023, the unemployment rates for males and females were broadly similar, at 4.4% and 4.2% respectively (rates at or near historic lows). Between 2019 and 2021, the unemployment rate increased each year for both genders (as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic) and then decreased for both genders between 2021 and 2022 (reflecting the removal of COVID-19 pandemic health restrictions in early 2022). Between 2022 and 2023, the unemployment rate for males remained unchanged, while the rate for females decreased by 0.4 percentage points. When compared with pre-COVID-19 levels in 2019, the unemployment rate for males in 2023 was 0.8 percentage points lower while 0.5 percentage points lower for females.

Figure 6.3 Unemployment Rate by Gender (%), 2019-2023 (Annual Average)



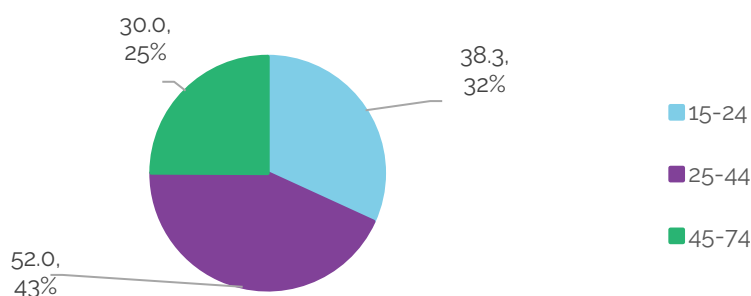
Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

6.4 Unemployment by Age

Figure 6.4 presents the number of unemployed persons by age group. In 2023, persons aged 25-44 years accounted for the greatest share of unemployed persons (at 43%). Those aged 15-24 years and 45-74 years accounted for 32% (or 38,300 persons) and 25% (or 30,000 persons) respectively.

Between 2022 and 2023, the number of unemployed persons aged 15-24 years increased (11%, or 3,800 more persons), while those aged 45-74 years decreased (10.9%, or 3,700 fewer persons), and those aged 25-44 years remained almost unchanged. When compared to pre-COVID-19 levels in 2019, unemployment for those aged 15-24 years was higher in 2023 (4.5%, or 1,700 more persons), lower for those aged 45-74 years (9.9%, or 3,300 fewer persons) and broadly similar for those aged 25-44 years.

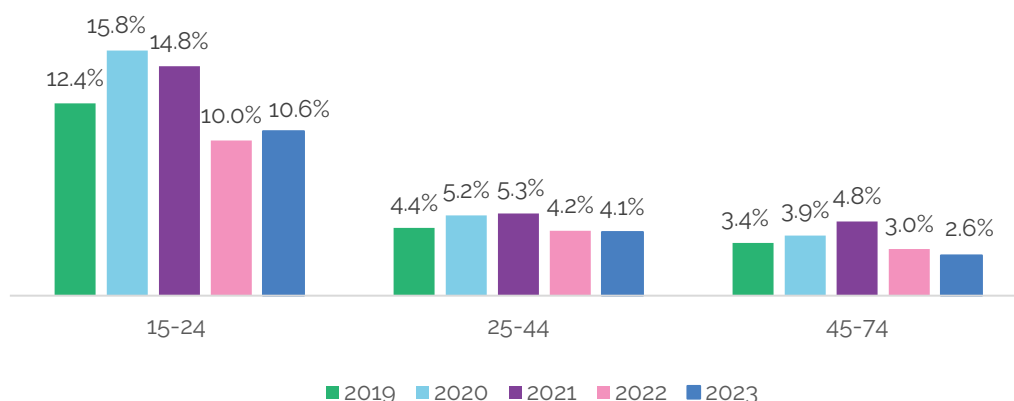
Figure 6.4 Unemployment by Age (000s, %), 2023 (Annual Average)



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Figure 6.5 presents unemployment rates by age for the period from 2019 to 2023. Across all years examined, the unemployment rate for persons aged 15-24 years was far higher than for the other age cohorts; in contrast, the unemployment rate was the lowest for those aged 45-74 years over the same period. Between 2022 and 2023, although the unemployment rate for those aged 15-24 years increased (by 0.6 percentage points) to 10.6%, the rate remained below that observed in 2019. The unemployment rate for those aged 45-74 years decreased over the same time period (0.4 percentage points) and remained almost unchanged for those age 25-44 years and were 0.8 and 0.3 percentage points below their respective pre-COVID-19 rates in 2019.

Figure 6.5 Unemployment Rate by Age (%), 2019-2023 (Annual Average)

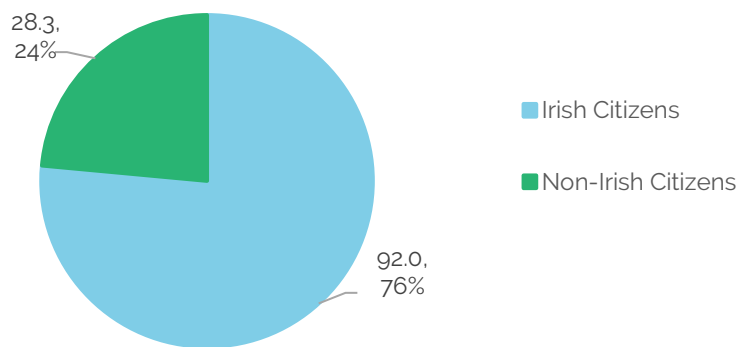


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

6.5 Unemployment by Citizenship

Figure 6.6 presents the distribution of unemployment by citizenship. In 2023, there were 28,300 non-Irish citizens, accounting for 24% of all unemployed persons. Between 2022 and 2023, the number of unemployed non-Irish citizens increased (by 8.0%, or 2,100 more persons), while the number of unemployed Irish citizens decreased (by 2.5%, or 2,300 fewer persons). Compared to 2019, there was a 20.5% increase (+4,800) in the number of unemployed non-Irish citizens (above 2019 levels of 23,500 persons); in contrast, there was a 6.8% decrease (or 6,700) in the number of unemployed Irish citizens (below 2019 levels of 98,700 persons).

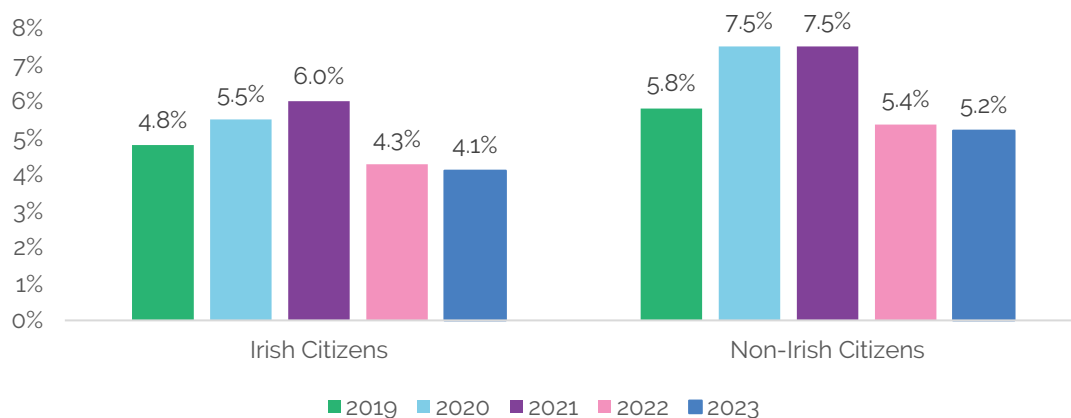
Figure 6.6 Unemployment by Citizenship (000s, %), 2023 (Annual Average)



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Figure 6.7 presents unemployment rates for Irish and non-Irish citizens over the period 2019-2023. For each of the years over the period 2019-2023, the unemployment rate for non-Irish citizens was higher than that for Irish citizens. In 2023, the unemployment rate for non-Irish citizens was 5.2% compared to 4.1% for Irish citizens. Following increases in the unemployment rates between 2019 and 2021 (due to the COVID-19 pandemic), the rates declined for both Irish and non-Irish citizens between 2021 and 2023, although the rates remained relatively unchanged between 2022 and 2023 (with a 0.2 percentage point decrease observed for each citizenship group).

Figure 6.7 Unemployment by Citizenship (%), 2019-2023 (Annual Average)



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

6.6 Unemployment by Sector

Table 6.2 presents the annual average unemployment levels and rates by sectors, excluding those who did not state a previous sector of employment. As the number of persons unemployed by sector has fallen since 2021, a number of sectors were grouped to facilitate reporting.

In 2023, the highest number of unemployed persons had previously worked in construction/transport or industry (a combined total of 14,500 persons). This was followed by a further 12,900 persons who were previously employed in financial/professional activities or ICT and 12,700 persons who were previously employed in wholesale/retail trade. At 1.7%, those previously employed in health/education or public administration and defence (PAD) had the lowest unemployment rate; in contrast, those previously employed in the accommodation and food sector had the highest unemployment rate, although these relate to small numbers and should be treated with caution.

Between 2022 and 2023, the change in the numbers unemployed varied by sector. Those previously employed in health/education/PAD recorded the largest decline in the number unemployed (2,000 fewer persons), followed by those previously employed in construction/transport/industry (1,700 fewer persons); in contrast, those previously employed in financial/professional or ICT recorded the largest increase in the number unemployed (1,700 more persons); there was no change in the number unemployed for those who previously worked in the accommodation and food sector. There were very modest changes in the unemployment rate for the remaining sectors (except wholesale and retail for which there was no change).

Table 6.2 Unemployment by Sector (000s, %), 2023 (Annual Average)

	Unemployed (000s)	Unemployment Rate (%)
Construction/transport/industry	14.5	2.4%
Financial/professional activities/ICT	12.9	2.6%
Wholesale & retail	12.7	3.7%
Health/education/PAD	12.2	1.7%
Other sectors*	[10.2]	[3.0%]
Accommodation & food	[9.7]	[5.2%]

Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

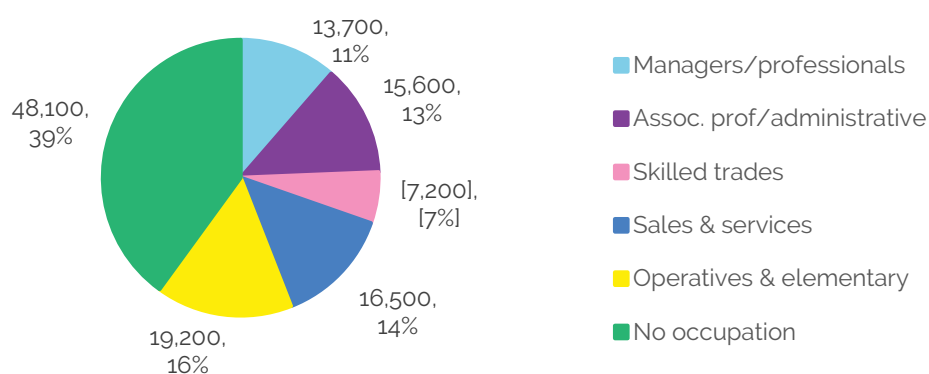
Note*: Includes administrative support services, agriculture, arts, entertainment and other services and other sectors. Numbers in square brackets are small and should be treated with caution.

6.7 Unemployment by Occupation

Figure 6.8 presents the distribution of unemployment by broad occupations, with some grouped due to small numbers. In 2023, unemployed persons who did not state their previous occupation (e.g. looking for work for the first time, entering employment from inactivity) accounted for almost 40% of all unemployed persons. The greatest share of unemployed persons who stated a previous occupation had previously worked in operative or elementary occupations (at 16%), sales and personal services occupations (14%) and associate professional and administrative occupations (13%).

Between 2022 and 2023, the number of unemployed persons decreased for most occupations, except those previously employed in managerial or professional occupations and associate professional or administrative roles. In terms of absolute numbers, unemployed persons who were previously employed in operative or elementary roles observed the greatest decrease (1,500 fewer persons) followed by those in skilled trades (1,000 fewer persons).

Figure 6.8 Unemployment by Previous Occupation (000s, %), 2023 (Annual Average)



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

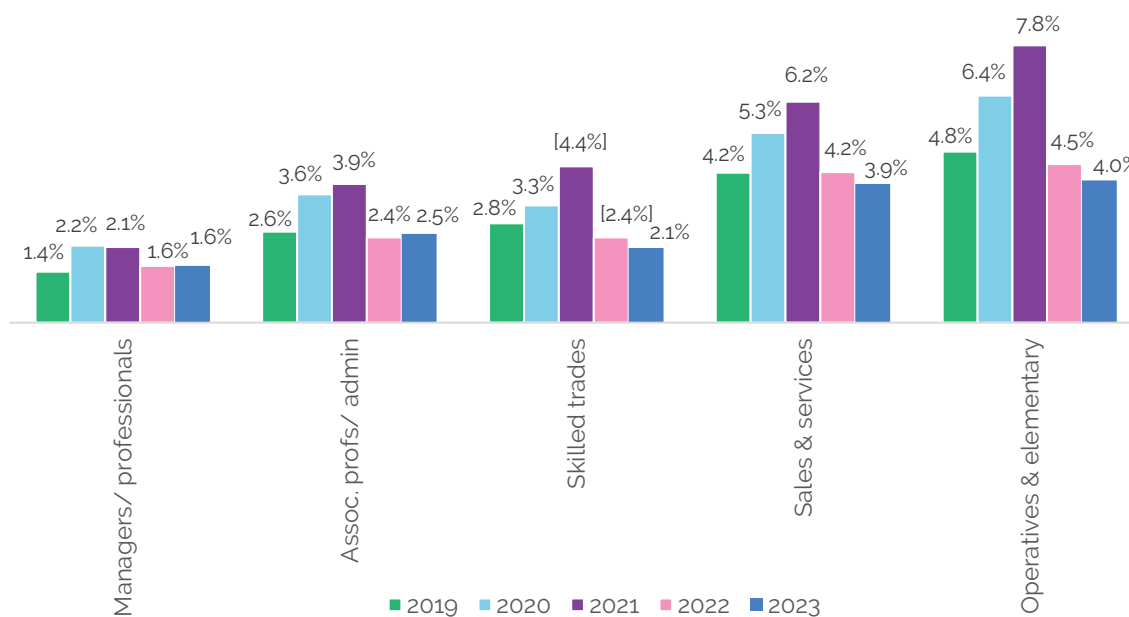
Note: Numbers in square brackets should be treated with caution.

The unemployment rate by broad occupation for the period 2019 to 2023 is presented in Figure 6.9. Those previously employed in managerial or professional occupations consistently had the lowest unemployment rate for each of the years over the period examined. In 2023, the unemployment rate for this group was 1.6% (on a par with the rate observed in 2022, but marginally above the rate in 2019). In contrast, those previously employed in operative or elementary occupations and sales or services occupations had the highest unemployment rates observed over the period 2019 to 2023. In 2023, the unemployment rate for both of those occupational groups was similar (at or close to 4%). Over the period 2019 to 2022, those previously employed in operative or elementary occupations had the highest unemployment rate, rising from 4.8% in 2019 to 7.8% in 2021, but declining to 4.5% in 2022 (modestly above the unemployment rate observed for those previously employed in sales or services occupations, at 4.2%).

For all occupations (excluding managers or professionals), the unemployment rate grew annually between 2019 and 2021, followed by sharp declines in 2022. Between 2022 and 2023, the unemployment rate for all occupations (excluding managers or professionals) did not change considerably (declines of 0.5 percentage points or less). The unemployment rate for managers or professionals remained unchanged. Compared to pre-COVID-19 rates in 2019, the

unemployment rate for most occupations (except managers or professionals) in 2023 was lower. The unemployment rate for managers/professionals was slightly above the 2019 rate.

Figure 6.9 Unemployment Rate by Previous Occupation (%), 2019-2023 (Annual Average)



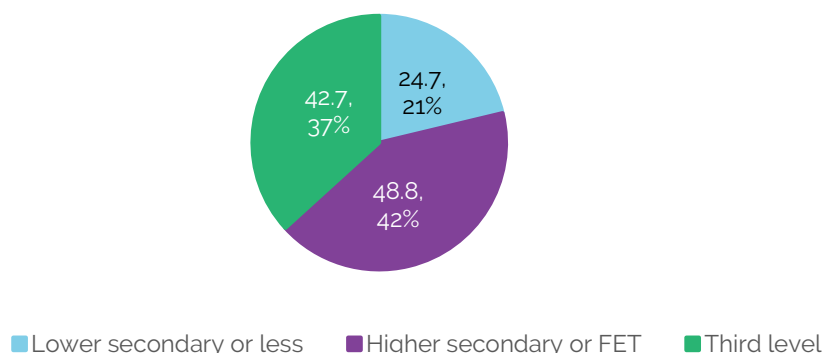
Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Note: Excludes persons who did not state or have a previous occupation; numbers in square brackets should be treated with caution.

6.8 Unemployment by Education

Unemployment by education is presented in Figure 6.10. In 2023, 42% of all persons unemployed had a higher secondary education/FET qualification, 21% had attained lower secondary education or less, while 37% had a third level qualification. Between 2022 and 2023, the number of unemployed persons declined across all levels of education (except lower secondary or less), with the greatest absolute fall observed for those with a higher secondary education/FET qualification (1,400 fewer persons, or 2.8%). The number of unemployed persons with a lower secondary education or less remained unchanged. Compared to 2019, the number of unemployed persons with a lower secondary education or less or a higher secondary education/FET qualification was lower in 2023 (2,600 and 6,500 fewer persons respectively), while the number with a third level qualification was higher (5,200 more persons).

Figure 6.10 Unemployment by Education* (000s, %), 2023 (Annual Average)

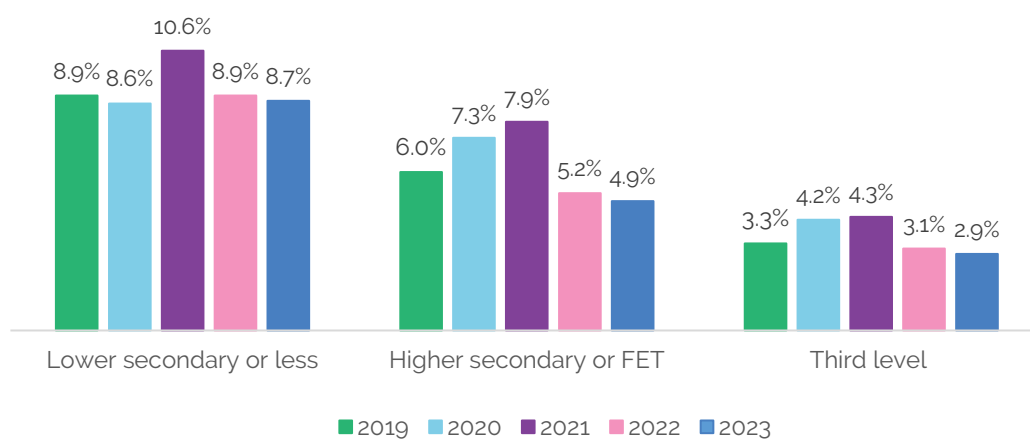


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Note: * Excludes not stated.

Unemployment rates by education for the period 2019 to 2023 are presented in Figure 6.11. For each of the years over the period 2019 to 2023, persons who had attained at most a lower secondary level of education or less had the highest unemployment rate (at 8.7% in 2023). In contrast, persons with a third level education had the lowest unemployment rate across the period examined (at 2.9% in 2023).

Figure 6.11 Unemployment Rate by Education (%), 2019-2023 (Annual Average)



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

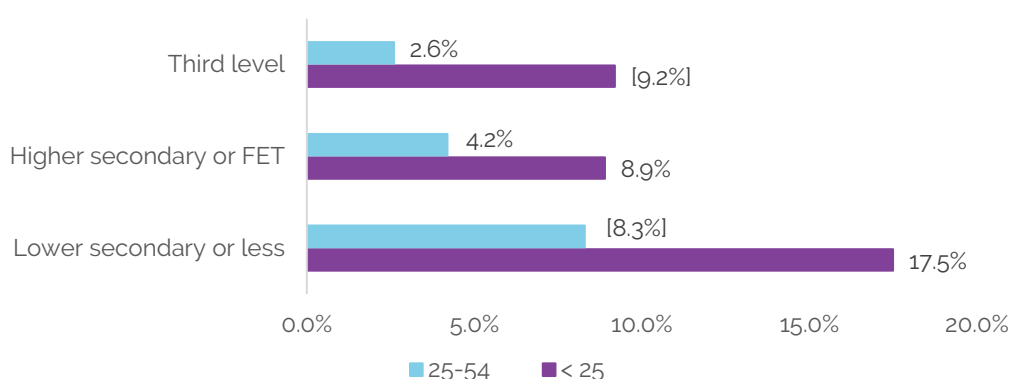
Note: Excludes not stated.

Between 2019 and 2021, the unemployment rate for those with a higher secondary education or FET qualification had the largest increase (almost 2 percentage points, from 6.0% to 7.9%) across the education levels, but subsequently had the largest decline between 2021 and 2023, falling to 4.9% (a 3-percentage point decrease). Between 2022 and 2023, the unemployment rate for the different education levels declined very modestly (decreases of 0.3 percentage points or less). Between 2019 and 2023, the unemployment rate for third level qualification holders declined modestly (a decrease of 0.4 percentage points), despite an increase in the absolute numbers unemployed with third level qualifications.

Unemployment rates by education and age are presented in Figure 6.12. In 2023, persons aged under 25 years had the highest unemployment rates across all levels of education; those aged under 25 years with lower secondary education or less had the highest unemployment rate (at 17.5%). Those aged 25-54 years with third level qualifications had the lowest unemployment rate (at 2.6%).

Between 2022 and 2023, the unemployment rate remained broadly unchanged across all age groups and education categories. The unemployment rate increased slightly for those aged under 25 years across all levels of education (0.7 percentage points or less); in contrast, the unemployment rate decreased modestly for those aged 25-54 years across all levels of education (one percentage point or less).

Figure 6.12 Unemployment Rate by Education and Age (%), 2023 (Annual Average)

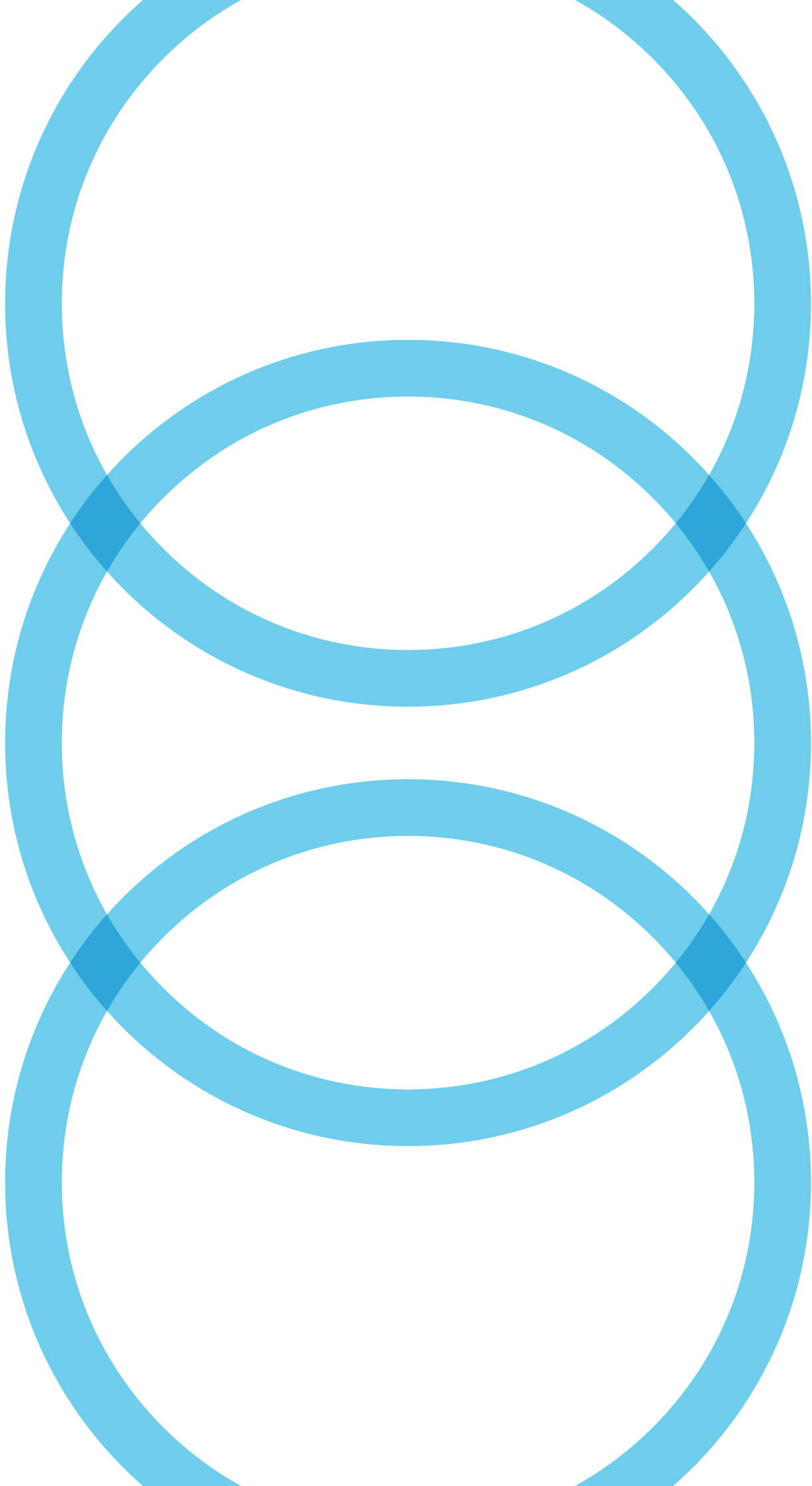


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Note: Excludes not stated.

Numbers in square brackets should be treated with caution.

The unemployment rate for those aged 55-74 with lower secondary education or less or higher secondary education/FET qualification or third level education was too small to report.



Section 7

Labour Market Transitions

This section examines movements within the Irish labour market, examining labour market transitions, those who commenced a job within the previous three months (recent job hires) and those who exited the workforce within the previous three months (recent job leavers).

7.1 Overall Transitions

The change in the labour market status of individuals – employment, unemployment and economic inactivity – between two points in time is referred to as a 'labour market transition'. The analysis of labour market transitions is based on the CSO Labour Force Survey (LFS) which allows for the examination of survey participants who remain on the survey panel in two subsequent quarters.

Average quarterly labour market transitions for 2023 are presented in Table 7.1. As observed in preceding years, with the exception of the unemployed, most individuals do not change their labour market status between successive quarters. In 2023, on average, 96% of individuals who were in employment remained employed, 88% of those economically inactive continued to be outside the labour force and 41% of those unemployed remained unemployed. Nonetheless, some individuals changed their labour market status between quarters: 4% of individuals transitioned out of employment, 3% to inactivity and 1% to unemployment; 59% of individuals transitioned out of unemployment 32% to employment and 27% to inactivity; 12% of individuals transitioned out of inactivity, 8% to employment and 4% to unemployment.

Compared to 2022, there were some changes observed in the distribution of transitions. There was a decrease in the share of persons moving from unemployment to employment (from 34% in 2022 to 32% in 2023) and an increase in the share of persons moving from unemployment to inactivity (from 26% in 2022 to 27% in 2023). Over the same period, the share of persons remaining unemployed increased (from 40% in 2022 to 41% in 2023).

Table 7.1 Labour Market Transitions²⁹ by ILO Status (Persons Aged 15-74), 2023

ILO start quarter	ILO end quarter		
	Employed	Unemployed	Inactive
Employed	96%	1%	3%
Unemployed	32%	41%	27%
Inactive	8%	4%	88%

Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS 8

Figure 7.1 shows estimated annual transitions in the Irish labour market in 2023. It is estimated that 1.72 million transitions occurred in the labour market in 2023, compared with 2.01 million in 2022 and 1.7 million in 2019. In 2023, there were approximately 226,000 transitions between employment and unemployment, 656,000 between employment and inactivity and 293,000 between unemployment and inactivity. In addition, there were 549,000 transitions which

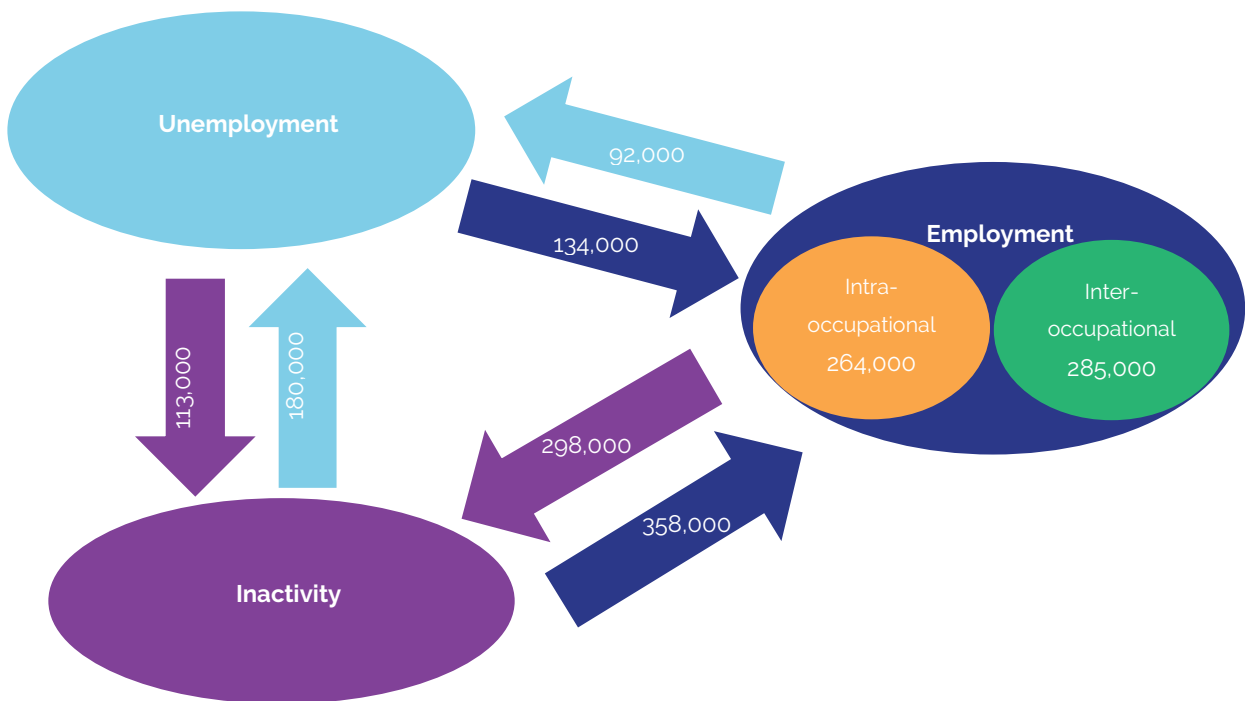
²⁹ Sum of transitions between quarter 4 2022 to quarter 1 2023, quarter 1 2023 to quarter 2 2023, quarter 2 2023 to quarter 3 2023, and quarter 3 2023 to quarter 4 2023.

occurred within employment, either due to change of occupation (inter-occupational transitions) or change of employer (intra-occupational transitions). In 2023, there were 285,000 inter-occupational transitions and 264,000 intra-occupational transitions.

At 492,000, the number of transitions into employment from both unemployment and inactivity exceeded the number of transitions out of employment (approximately 390,000). The number of transitions from unemployment to employment was 134,000 compared to 92,000 in the opposite direction, while the number from inactivity to employment was 358,000 compared to 298,000 in the opposite direction.

Compared to 2022, there was a decrease in the volume of transitions from employment to unemployment (20,000) and from unemployment to employment (20,000), a combined decrease of 40,000 transitions. The number of transitions from employment to inactivity decreased by 21,000, while the number of transitions from inactivity to employment decreased by 10,000, a combined decrease of 30,000. The number of transitions from inactivity to unemployment increased by 11,000, while the number of transitions from unemployment to inactivity decreased by 2,000. There were 224,000 fewer movements observed for those already in employment, with a significant decline observed for inter-occupational transitions (208,000), but broadly in line with the number in 2021 (287,600); there were 16,000 less intra-occupational transitions than in 2022 and 23,100 less than in 2021.

Figure 7.1 Labour Market Transitions, 2023 (Sum of four quarters)



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

7.1.1 Transitions between Employment and Unemployment

The composition of transitions between employment and unemployment is presented in Section 7.1.1.

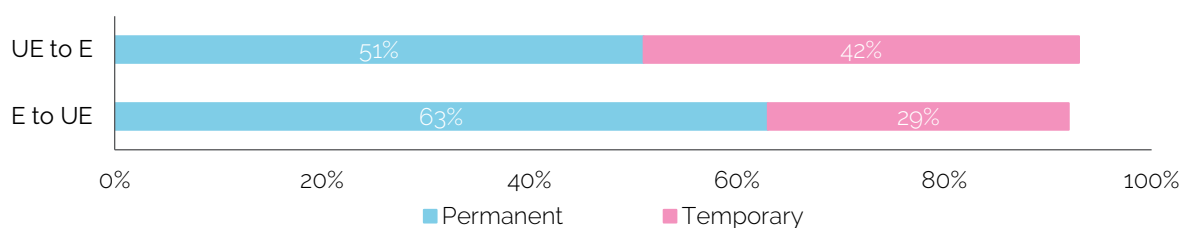
Employment Status

At 92%, the employee category accounted for most of those transitioning from employment to unemployment, which was 8 percentage points higher than the share observed in 2022 (at 84%). Of these, 6% were associated with State-sponsored employment schemes. Of transitions from unemployment to employment, 93% were to the employee category, which was 5 percentage points higher than the share observed in 2022 (at 88%). Of these, 6% were associated with employment schemes. In respect of both transition flows, the remainder were either self-employed or assisting relatives, but the numbers were too small for reporting and analysis.

Job Tenure

In terms of permanency of tenure, 63% of exits to unemployment were from permanent jobs, compared to 51% of entries into employment (Figure 7.2). The share of persons in temporary employment was greater in entries into employment compared to their share in exits to unemployment (42% compared to 29%). Compared to 2022, the share exiting employment from permanent posts increased (9 percentage points), while the share entering temporary posts increased (4 percentage points).

Figure 7.2 Employment and Unemployment by Job Tenure, 2023



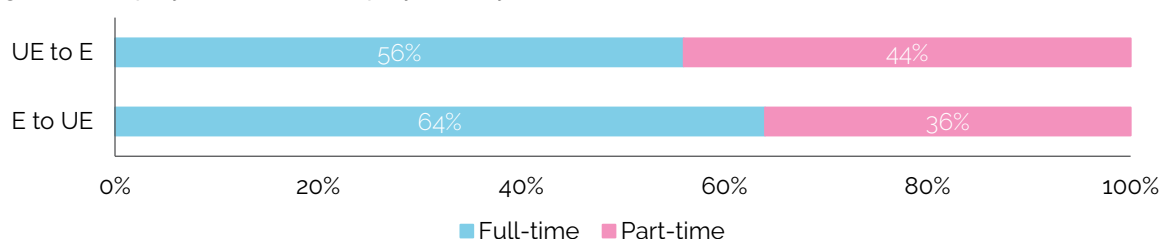
Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Note: Figures for the not employee category are excluded as the numbers were too small to report.

Full-Time or Part-Time

In 2023, 64% of transitions from employment to unemployment were from full-time employment, compared to 56% of transitions from unemployment to employment (Figure 7.3). Compared to 2022, the share of entries to full-time employment decreased (3 percentage points less), while no change was observed for the share of exits from full-time employment.

Figure 7.3 Employment and Unemployment by Full-Time and Part-Time, 2023

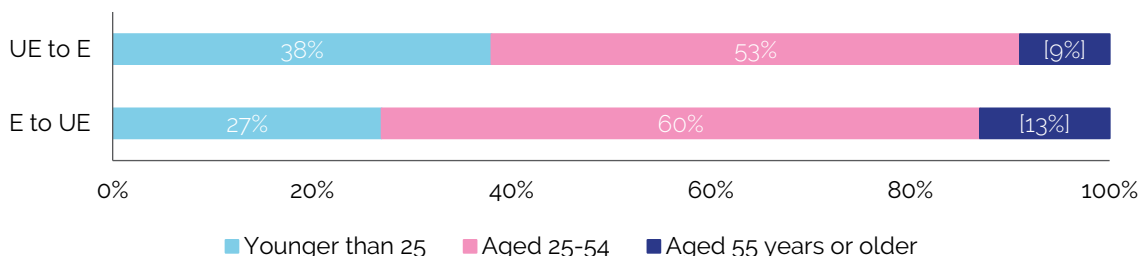


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Broad Age Group

In 2023, the age distributions of exits from and entries to employment differed in that the share of persons younger than 25 years was greater in entries to employment compared to their share in exits to unemployment (38% compared to 27%) (Figure 7.4). Over half (53%) of entries into employment was associated with those aged 25-54 compared to 60% in exits from employment.

Figure 7.4 Employment and Unemployment by Broad Age Group, 2023



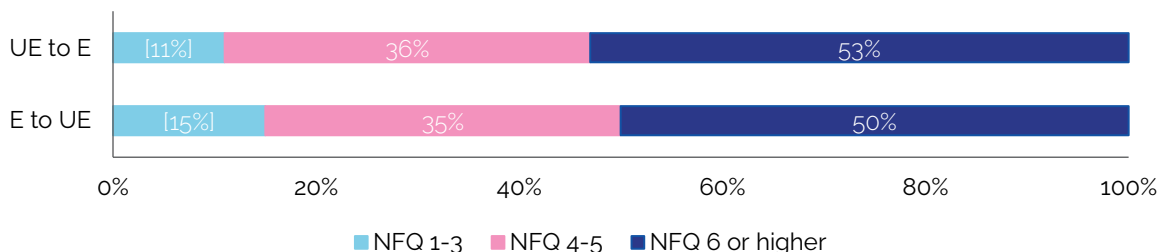
Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Note: The figure in square brackets for those aged 55 years or older in transitions from employment to unemployment or unemployment to employment is small and should be treated with caution.

National Framework Qualification (NFQ) Level

In 2023, the distribution of exits from and entries to employment by NFQ level was broadly similar (Figure 7.5). Just over half (53%) of transitions from unemployment to employment was associated with holders of NFQ6 qualifications or higher, while the share was 50% in the opposite direction (i.e. employment to unemployment). At or close to 36% of transitions in each direction was associated with persons with NFQ4/5 qualifications.

Figure 7.5 Employment and Unemployment by NFQ Level, 2023



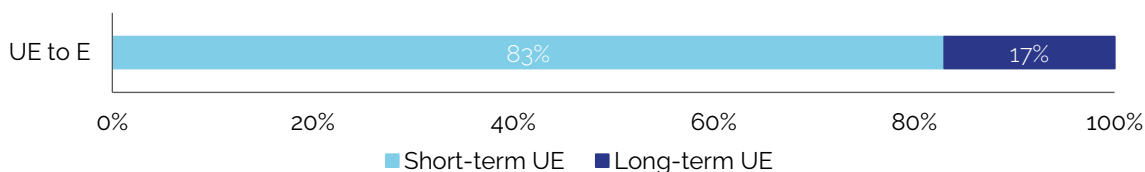
Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Note: Figures in square brackets are small and should be treated with caution. Total figures exclude those who did not state their NFQ level qualification.

Duration of Unemployment

In 2023, 17% of transitions from unemployment to employment were from long-term unemployment compared to 21% in 2022 (Figure 7.6).

Figure 7.6 Unemployment to Employment by Duration of Unemployment, 2023



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

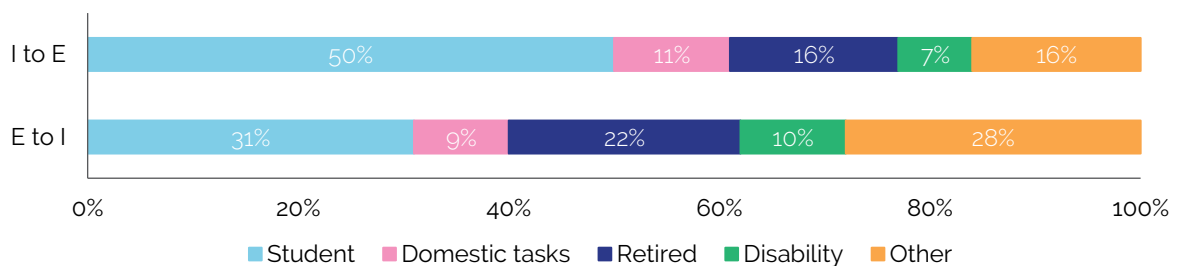
Total figures exclude those who did not state whether they were short-term or long-term unemployed

7.1.2 Transitions between Employment and Inactivity

The composition of transitions between employment and inactivity is examined in Section 7.1.2.

Of the total transitions from employment to inactivity, 31% was to study, 22% to retirements, 10% was accounted for by exits due to ill health, 9% was due to being engaged on home duties, while the remainder was for other reasons (Figure 7.7). In terms of transitions from inactivity to employment, a half (50%) was from study, 16% from retirements, 11% from home duties, with the remaining 23% from other forms of inactivity. Compared to 2022, the most notable change in the distribution of transitions from employment to inactivity was a three-percentage point decrease in the share of exits from employment to retirement.

Figure 7.7 Employment and Inactivity by Principal Economic Status, 2023

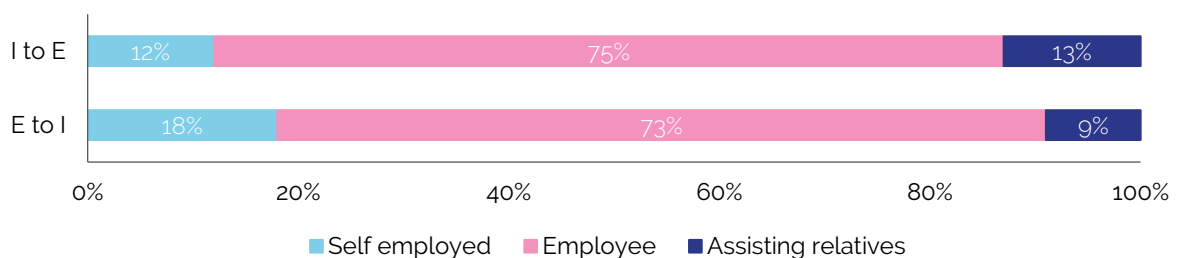


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Employment Status

In 2023, over 70% (73%) of transitions from employment to inactivity were in the employee category (of which 2% was associated with Government employment schemes), while over 70% (75%) of transitions from inactivity to employment was associated with employees (of which 2% was associated with Government employment schemes) (Figure 7.8). Compared to 2022, the distribution of transitions from employment to inactivity remained relatively unchanged, with some notable changes observed in the distribution of transitions in the opposite direction (the share of employees entering employment from inactivity decreased (by three percentage points), while the share associated with assisting relatives increased (by five percentage points)).

Figure 7.8 Employment and Inactivity by Employment Status, 2023

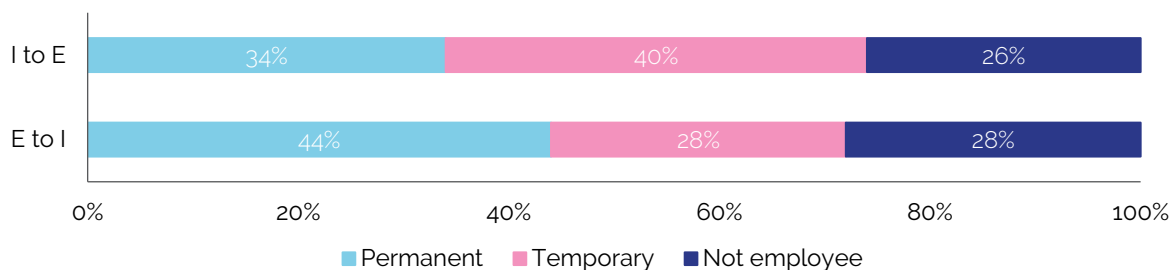


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Job Tenure

In 2023, 44% of transitions from employment to inactivity were from permanent employment, compared to 34% of transitions from inactivity into permanent employment (Figure 7.9). Compared to 2022, the share of transitions from inactivity to permanent employment decreased by three percentage points, while the share from inactivity to temporary employment decreased very modestly (by 0.6 percentage points).

Figure 7.9 Employment and Inactivity by Job Tenure, 2023

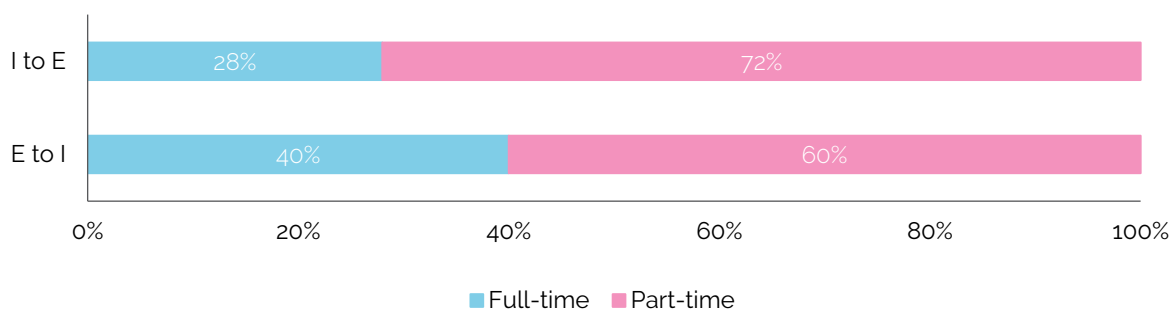


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Full-Time and Part-Time

In 2023, 60% of transitions from employment to inactivity was associated with part-time employment, while the distribution of flows from inactivity to employment was also skewed towards part-time employment (72% of transitions were into part-time employment) (Figure 7.10). Compared to 2022, the distribution of transitions from employment to inactivity remained relatively unchanged; in terms of transitions in the opposite direction, the share of transitions from inactivity into part-time employment increased (by almost four-percentage points).

Figure 7.10 Employment and Inactivity by Full-Time and Part-Time, 2023

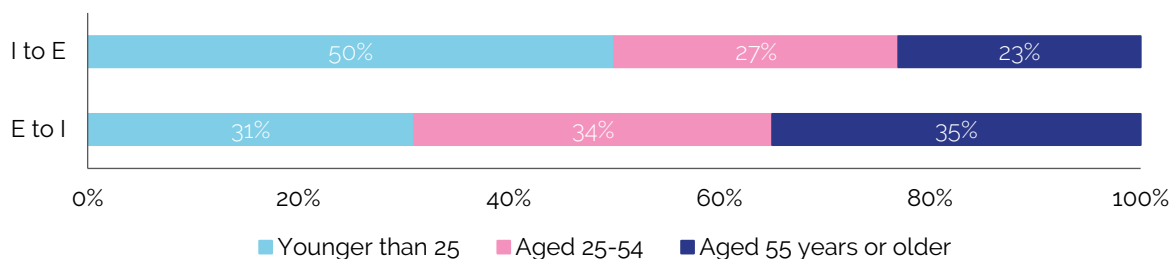


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Broad Age Group

In 2023, the age distributions of exits from employment to inactivity and entries to employment from inactivity differed in that the share of persons aged under 25 was greater in entries to employment compared to their share in exits from employment (50% compared to 31%); the share of persons aged 55 or older in exits from employment was 35% compared to 23% in entries to employment, while the share of persons aged 25 to 54 years in exits from employment was 34% compared to 27% in entries to employment (Figure 7.11).

Figure 7.11 Employment and Inactivity by Broad Age Group, 2023



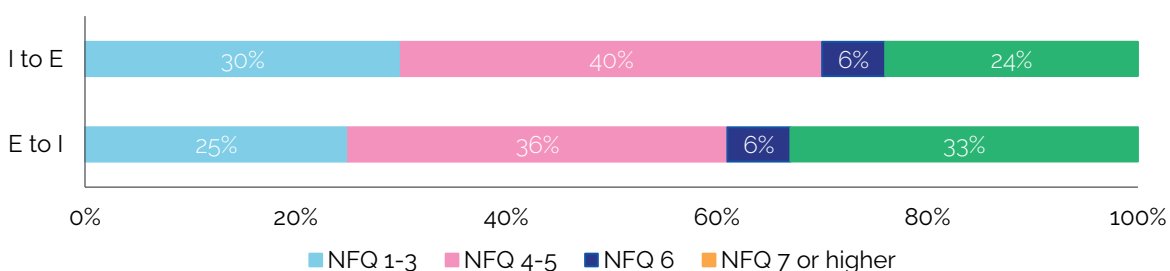
Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Compared to 2022, the distribution of transitions from inactivity to employment remained relatively unchanged, while a three-percentage point decline was observed in the share of persons aged under 25 in transitions from employment to inactivity, and a four-percentage point increase in the share of persons aged 25 to 54 years.

National Framework Qualification (NFQ) Level

In 2023, 61% of transitions from employment to inactivity were associated with persons who had attained qualifications equivalent to NFQ level 5 or below (which was lower than the share (at 70%) transitioning from inactivity to employment); the share transitioning from employment to inactivity at NFQ 6 or above was higher than the share transitioning from inactivity to employment at this education level (39% compared to 30%) while the opposite was the case for transitions at NFQ level 4/5 (40% with this qualification level transitioning from inactivity to employment compared to 36% transitioning from employment to inactivity) (Figure 7.12) Compared to 2022, the distribution of transitions from employment to inactivity declined by three-percentage points for those with qualifications at NFQ level 5 or lower.

Figure 7.12 Employment and Inactivity by NFQ Level, 2023



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

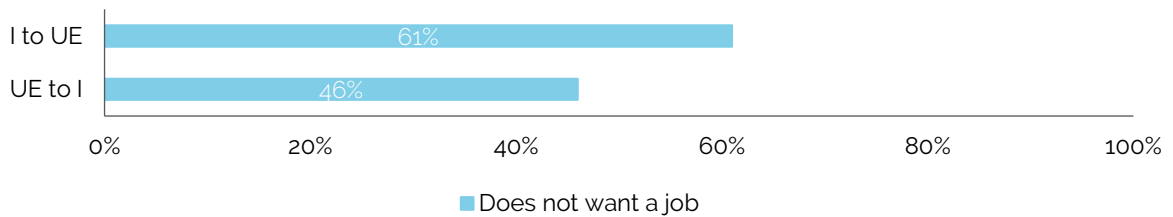
Total figures exclude those who did not state their NFQ level qualification.

7.1.3 Transitions between Unemployment and Inactivity

The composition of transitions between unemployment and inactivity is examined in Section 7.1.3.

In 2023, 46% of transitions from unemployment to inactivity was associated with persons who did not want a job for various reasons (Figure 7.13). In the opposite direction, the share was higher in transitions from inactivity to unemployment, 61% of persons did not want a job. Other categories include discouraged workers, persons who want a job, but not available or seeking work due to being in education or training, illness/disability, looking after children, or for other reasons. The numbers in such categories are not reported as they are too small.

Figure 7.13 Unemployment and Inactivity, 2023

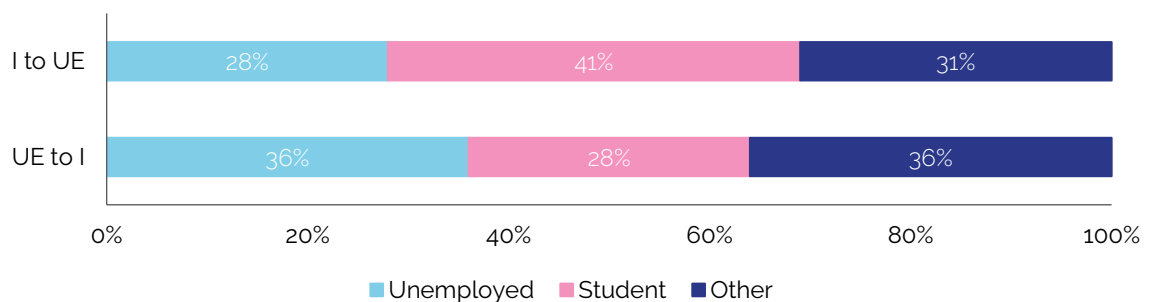


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Principal Economic Status

In 2023, transitions from unemployment to inactivity were distributed as follows: 36% of all persons moving from unemployment to inactivity continued to state their current principal economic status as unemployment; the share transitioning in the opposite direction (from inactivity to unemployment) was 28%; 28% of transitions from unemployment to inactivity were students, compared with 41% in the opposite direction (from inactivity to unemployment) (Figure 7.14).

Figure 7.14 Unemployment and Inactivity by Principal Economic Status, 2023



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

7.1.4 Inter and Intra-Occupational Transitions by Broad Occupation

In 2023, the highest number of inter-occupational transitions³⁰ into occupations (inter in) was for professionals, managers, associate professionals and elementary occupations (Table 7.2). In the opposite direction, the highest number of inter-occupational transitions out of occupations (inter-out) was for elementary occupations, skilled trades, associate professionals and managers. Transitions in were greater than transitions out for professionals, managers, administrative and operative occupations, resulting in net gains, while net losses (transitions out were greater than transitions in) for skilled trades, sales, personal services, elementary and associate professionals. Professionals were the largest net gainers, while skilled trades were the largest net losers in terms of inter-occupational flows.

Compared to 2022, there was a considerable decline in the number of inter-occupational transitions into occupations (inter in) and out of occupations (inter out) for all broad occupational groups, with the largest decline in both directions observed for associate professionals and professionals.

In 2023, the highest number of intra-occupational transitions³¹ was observed for professionals, elementary occupations and associate professionals, accounting for 19%, 17% and 13% of intra-occupational transitions respectively (Table 7.2).

Compared to 2022, while intra-occupational transitions declined, this was not universal across the broad occupational groups. The most notable decline in intra-occupational transitions was observed for associate professionals and sales occupations, while the largest increases were observed for skilled trades and operatives.

Table 7.2 Inter and Intra Occupational Labour Market Transitions (000s) (Persons Aged 15-74), 2023

	Inter-In	Inter-Out	Intra
Managers	40.1	36.2	*
Professionals	44.4	31.6	51.0
Associate professionals	40.2	40.6	34.0
Administrative	26.0	22.0	26.0
Skilled trades	30.2	41.4	25.0
Services	[13.0]	[15.9]	22.0
Sales	21.6	25.5	30.0
Operatives	23.6	20.2	19.0
Elementary	38.6	41.4	46.0
Total	285.3	285.3	264.0

Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Note: Figures in square brackets are small and should be treated with caution. Excludes not stated and numbers too small to report for intra-occupational transitions for managers

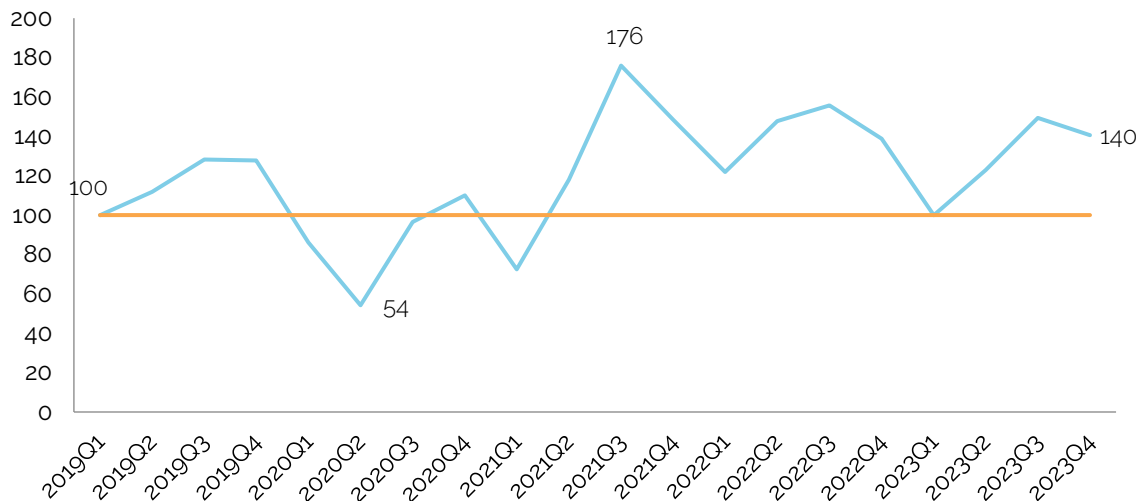
³⁰ This relates to persons who remained in employment between two quarters but changed occupation.

³¹ Persons who remained employed in the same occupation between the two quarters but who changed employer.

7.2 Recent Job Hires

Recent job hires data refers to those who commenced employment in the previous three months. Figure 7.15 details an index of recent job hires across the period from 2019 to 2023, with quarter 1 2019 as the baseline. The impact of COVID-19 on hirings and the subsequent recovery is evident; following a sharp decline in 2020, for the most part, hirings in 2021 and 2022 were above pre-COVID-19 levels. In the first quarter of 2023, hirings dipped to the baseline level but were above for all subsequent quarters.

Figure 7.15 Index of Recent Job Hires by Quarter (000s), 2019 - 2023



Baseline=Quarter 1 2019

Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Key Findings:

The detailed analysis of recent job hires that follows relates to a sum of the four quarters for each year examined. Summing the four quarters in any given year allows for a more detailed analysis than would be possible if examining just one quarter, although it should be noted that it is possible for an individual to appear multiple times in the year if they move jobs across the quarters.

At 494,000, the total number of new hires in 2023 were slightly higher than their pre-COVID levels (450,000 in 2019) but below the number of hires for 2022 (543,000). Figure 7.16 provides an overview of the key indicators for recent job hires in 2023.

Sector: The wholesale and retail sector accounted for the highest share of recent job hires, at 18%, followed by accommodation & food (14%), health (11%) and industry (10%). Recent job hires exceeded employment growth across all sectors but was particularly evident for the wholesale & retail and accommodation & food sectors indicating that job churn is likely to be a significant factor (these sectors also feature strongly in job churn data produced by the CSO³²). Since 2022, the accommodation & food sector has seen the largest decline in the number of job hires, returning to pre-COVID levels; the number of job hires has also fallen sharply for the ICT sector (not shown in Figure 7.16), with numbers also returning to pre-COVID-19 levels.

³² <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/fp/fp-lmc/labourmarketchurnq12024/>

Occupation: Recent job hires were highest for elementary occupations in 2023, at 20% (or 100,000), followed by professional occupations, at 16%. The number of hires fell across all occupations between 2022 and 2023, with the exception of skilled trades which increased by 6,900 to 47,000, or 10% of total hires.

The most frequently occurring occupations with job hires in 2023 included

- sales assistants (12% of total)
- elementary service occupations (e.g. catering assistants, waiters and bar staff), 11% of total
- teaching and education professionals (e.g. primary school teachers), business, research and administrative professionals (e.g. accountants), ICT professionals (e.g. software developers), and nurses; combined accounting for 11% of total
- caring personal services (e.g. care workers, healthcare assistants) and childcare roles, at 6% combined
- construction trades and chefs (combined accounting for 5% of total)
- various administrative occupations (e.g. government admin, receptionists, book-keepers/payroll and other admin), at 4%.

Gender: The number of recent hires were divided equally between males and females in 2023.

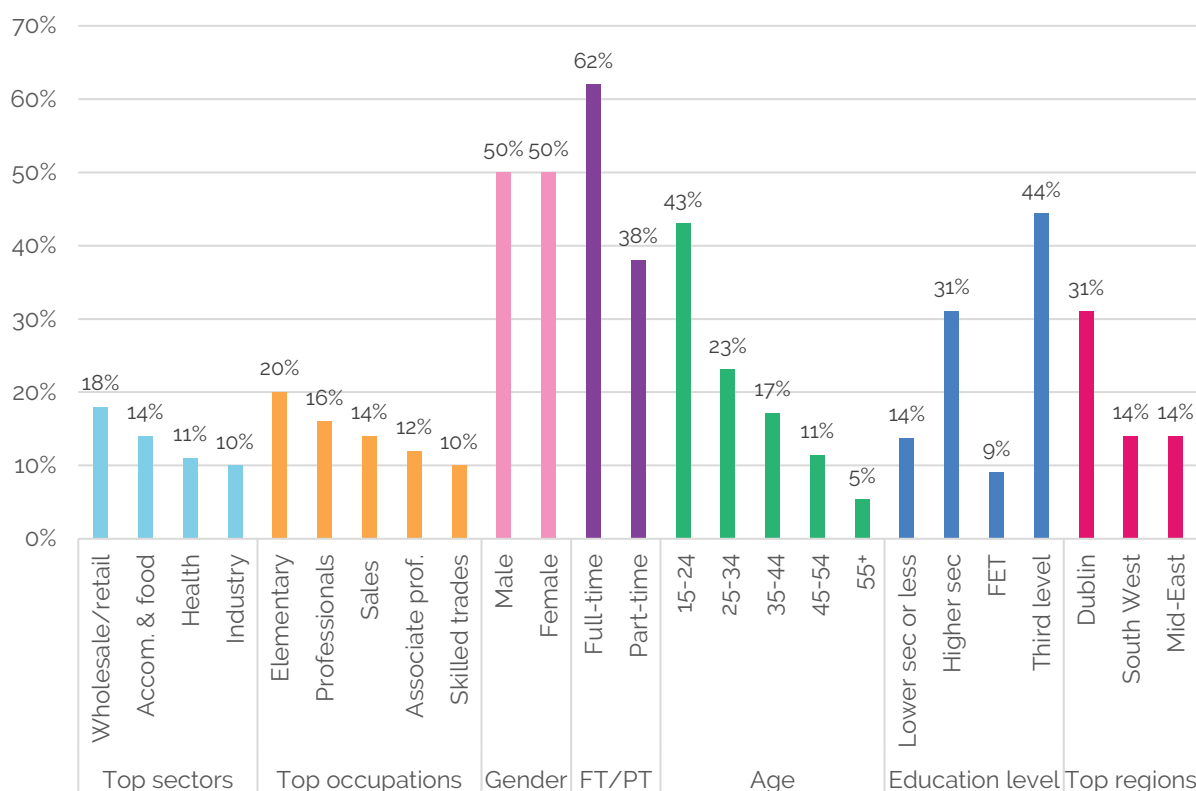
Full-time/part-time: 62% were hired for full-time positions, whereas full-time roles accounted for 78% of total employment in 2023; this suggests that job churn is more prevalent in part-time roles.

Age: Those aged 15-24 years continued to account for the highest number of recent job hires in 2023, at over 210,000 (or a share of 43%); this is despite this age cohort accounting for just 12% of total employment in 2023. Between 2022 and 2023, the number of job hires declined across all age groups, with the largest decline (-30,000) for those aged 25-34 years, with recent job hire numbers below 2019 levels.

Education level: Recent job hires were most frequent for those with third level qualifications, with almost 220,000 recent job hires in 2023. Between 2022 and 2023, the largest fall in the number of hires was for those with third level qualifications (-36,500). For those with FET qualifications, the number of hires fell by 13,400 over the same period; this was the only education cohort to see numbers fall to below 2019 levels.

Region: Dublin accounted for the largest number of job hires, at 31%, followed by the South West and Mid-East regions at 14% respectively. The Dublin region experienced the largest fall in the number of hires between 2022 and 2023 (falling by 37,000) and was the only region to have numbers fall below 2019 levels. The South East and Border regions were the only regions to see an increase in the number of hires since 2022, of 6,200 and 3,600 respectively.

Figure 7.16 Recent Job Hires by Key Indicators, 2023 (sum of four quarters)



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Managers (17,100 recent job hires in 2023):

- accounted for a 3% share of total recent job hires in 2023
- 76% of new hires held a third level qualification
- at 82%, this occupational group had the highest share of new hires for full-time roles
- 64% of recent hires were male
- the number of recent job hires in 2023 was almost on a par with the previous year.

Professionals (81,000 recent job hires in 2023):

- at 16%, this occupational group accounted for the second highest share of recent hires in 2023
- professionals had the highest share of new hires that held a third level qualification, at 88%
- 81% of recent hires were for full-time positions
- females accounted for 60% of new hires
- 69% were aged between 25 and 54 years, compared to 52% for all recent hires
- in terms of sectors, the education, health, professional activities, and ICT sectors combined accounted for over three quarters of new hires for this occupation
- in 2022, new hires were particularly strong for ICT roles (e.g. software developers), teaching (e.g. primary teachers), business roles (e.g. accountants) and nursing
- the number of recent job hires for professionals fell by 12,000 or 13%, when compared with 2022, although the number of hires still exceeded levels in 2019.

Associate professionals (58,400 recent job hires in 2023):

- associate professionals accounted for 12% of total recent hires in 2023
- almost three quarters (70%) held a third level qualification
- 81% of new hires were for full-time roles
- recent hires were almost gender equal, with males accounting for a 51% share

- almost a third were aged 15-24 years (32%) with a further 64% aged between 25 and 54 years
- in terms of sectors, recent hires were spread across a number of sectors including wholesale & retail, professional activities, ICT and financial activities; these combined accounted for over half of new hires
- in 2023, sales and marketing along with business and financial roles accounted for the largest number of hires
- the number of recent job hires for associate professionals in 2023 was 16%, or 10,800, lower than in 2022 but remained 29% higher than in 2019.

Administrative (42,100 recent job hires in 2023):

- 9% of total recent hires were for administrative roles in 2023
- over a half (55%) held a third level qualification
- over two thirds (67%) of hires were for full-time roles
- with females accounting for 70% of recent hires, this occupation had the second highest share of female hires
- over a third (36%) were aged 15-24 years, with those aged 25-54 accounting for a further 56% of job hires
- the public administration and defence sector along with health, financial and professional activities accounted for the highest shares of hires
- the 'other administrative occupations' category accounted for the highest number of hires, followed by financial admin roles
- the number of recent job hires for administrative occupations was 14% lower than in 2022, and 5% lower when compared with 2019.

Skilled trades (47,300 recent job hires in 2023):

- skilled trades occupations accounted for 10% of recent job hires in 2023
- over half (58%) had attained higher secondary education or a FET qualification; a further 30% held a third level qualification
- 81% of recent hires were for full-time roles
- 86% of all hires were male, the highest share of males across all occupations
- almost two thirds were aged 25-54 years (63%) with a further 28% aged 15-24 years
- the construction sector accounted for a third of recent hires, with industry and the accommodation and food sector combined accounting for a further 39%
- at occupational level, construction and food preparation trades (e.g. chefs) accounted for the largest number of hires
- skilled trades were the only occupational group to experience a growth in the number of recent job hires between 2022 and 2023, growing by 6,900, or 17%.

Personal services (43,100 recent job hires in 2023):

- personal services accounted for 9% of recent job hires in 2023
- 49% had attained a higher secondary/FET education, while a further 39% held a third level qualification
- new hires were more likely to be in part-time roles, with a share of 55%
- 73% were female, the highest share of females across all occupations
- a third were aged 15-24 years, with a further 61% aged 25-54 years
- the health sector accounted for over half of recent job hires (53%), with arts, entertainment and other services (e.g. hairdressers) accounting for a further 19%
- care workers and childminders accounted for the largest number of hires at detailed occupational level
- the number of recent job hires for personal services occupations fell by 3% when compared to 2022, with numbers marginally above 2019 levels.

Sales and customer services (68,100 recent job hires in 2023):

- this occupational group accounted for 14% of recent hires in 2023
- over half (51%) of those hired in these occupations held a higher secondary education; 19% held at most a lower secondary education and a further 22% held a third level qualification
- 69% of hires were for part-time roles, the highest share of part-time hires across all occupational groups
- 61% of new hires were female
- this group had the youngest age profile after elementary occupations, with 72% of new hires aged under 25 years, compared to 43% for total recent hires
- recent hires were predominately for roles in the wholesale and retail sector (at 89%)
- new hires for retail sales assistants, at 52,500, accounted for 11% of all recent hires in 2023
- the number of recent job hires for sales occupations fell by 10% when compared to 2022, but remained 3% higher than in 2019.

Operatives (33,800 recent job hires in 2023):

- this occupational group accounted for 7% of recent job hires in 2023
- over half (56%) of those recently hired held at most a higher secondary education; 28% held third level qualifications, although the numbers were small and should be treated with caution
- 81% of recent hires were for full-time roles
- 84% were male, the second highest share of males after skilled trades occupations
- 61% of recent hires were for those aged 25-54 years
- over half (52%) of recent job hires were in industry
- process operatives (e.g. food operatives) and road transport drivers accounted for the highest share of hires
- the number of recent job hires for operative roles fell by 3%, to a level similar to that of 2019.

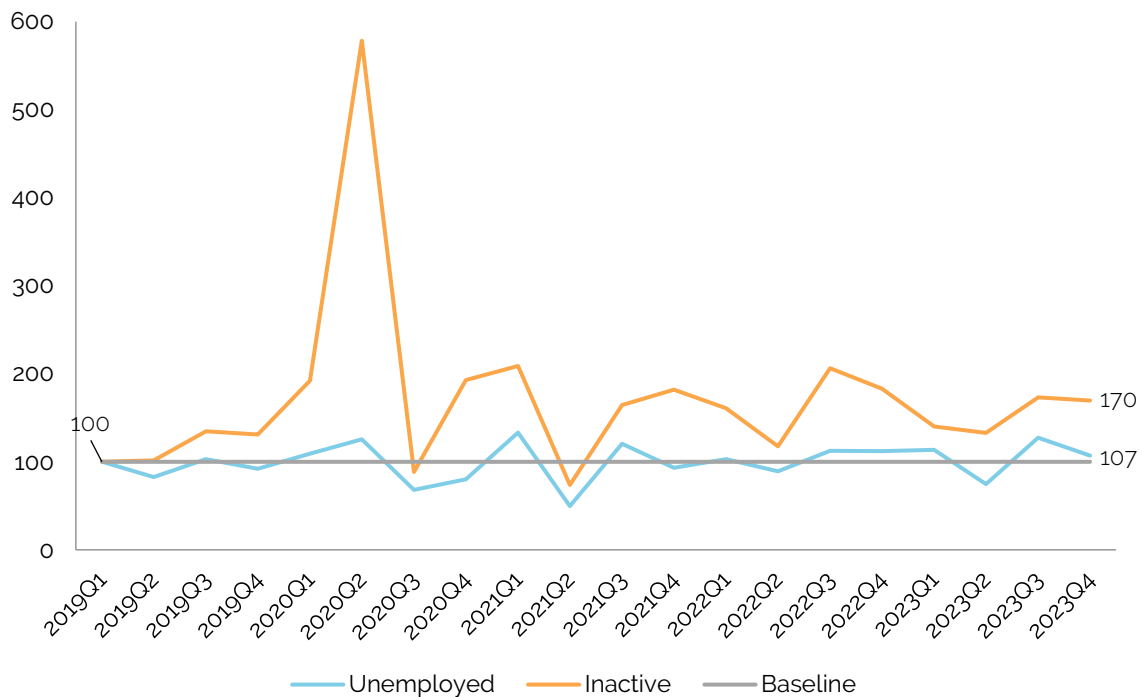
Elementary (99,500 recent job hires in 2023):

- elementary occupations accounted for 20% of recent job hires in 2023
- 42% held a higher secondary while a further 32% had attained lower secondary education or less; this occupational group had the lowest share of new hires who held third level qualifications (at 15%)
- this occupation had the second highest share of new hires that were for part-time roles, at 61%
- 52% of hires were male
- new hires in these occupations had the second youngest age profile with 69% aged 15-24 years
- the accommodation and food services sector accounted for by far the highest share of recent hires, at 51%; administrative services, construction and transport sectors combined accounted for a further quarter
- the most frequently cited occupations were for services roles (e.g. waiters, bar staff, kitchen assistants), cleaners and construction labourers
- the number of recent job hires for elementary occupations declined by 16,000, or 14%, compared to 2022, but were 10% higher than in 2019.

7.3 Recent Job Leavers

The measure of recent job leavers refers to those who left employment within the previous three months and their status moved to either unemployed or economically inactive in the labour market. The index of recent job leavers outlined in Figure 7.17 demonstrates that the number of recent job leavers who became unemployed has remained relatively close to the baseline over the period since 2019. Those who exited the labour market saw a more significant effect with the onset of COVID-19, peaking in quarter 2 2020, and has remained above the baseline since quarter 3 2021.

Figure 7.17 Index of Recent Job Leavers by Quarter (000s), 2019 - 2023



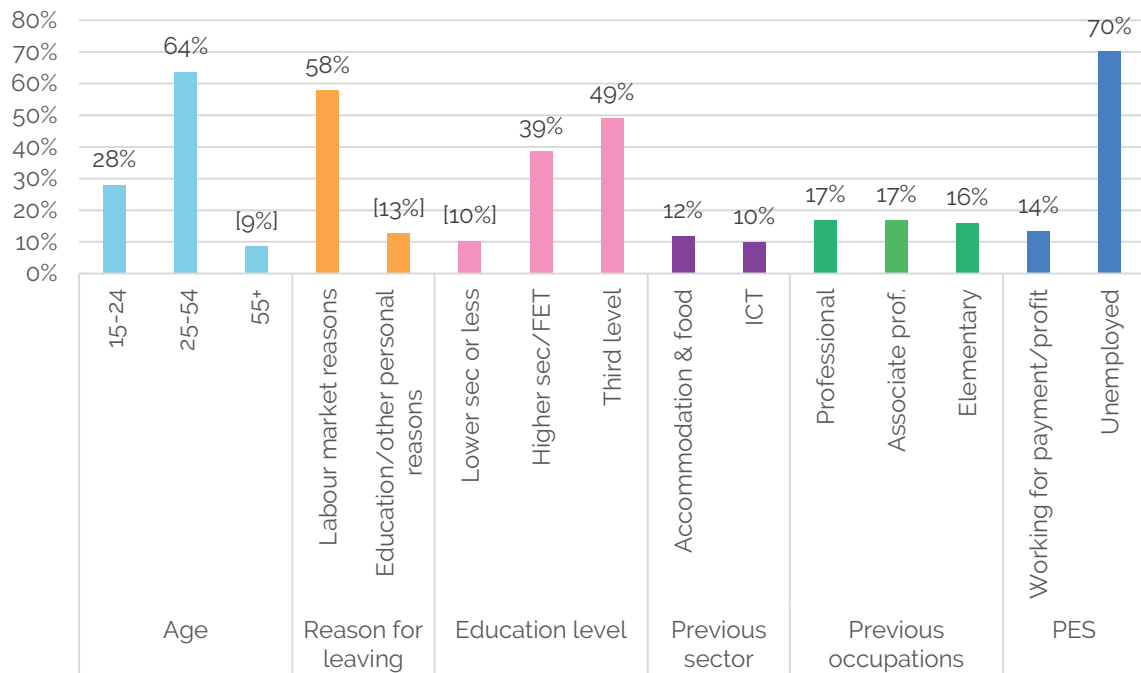
Baseline=Quarter 1 2019

Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

As was the case for recent job hires, the more detailed analysis of recent job leavers in Figures 7.18 and 7.19 refers to the four quarters of 2023 summed as the numbers may be too small otherwise. This analysis does not measure the length of time that a leaver remains outside of the workforce and an individual could have two or more occasions of leaving over the year.

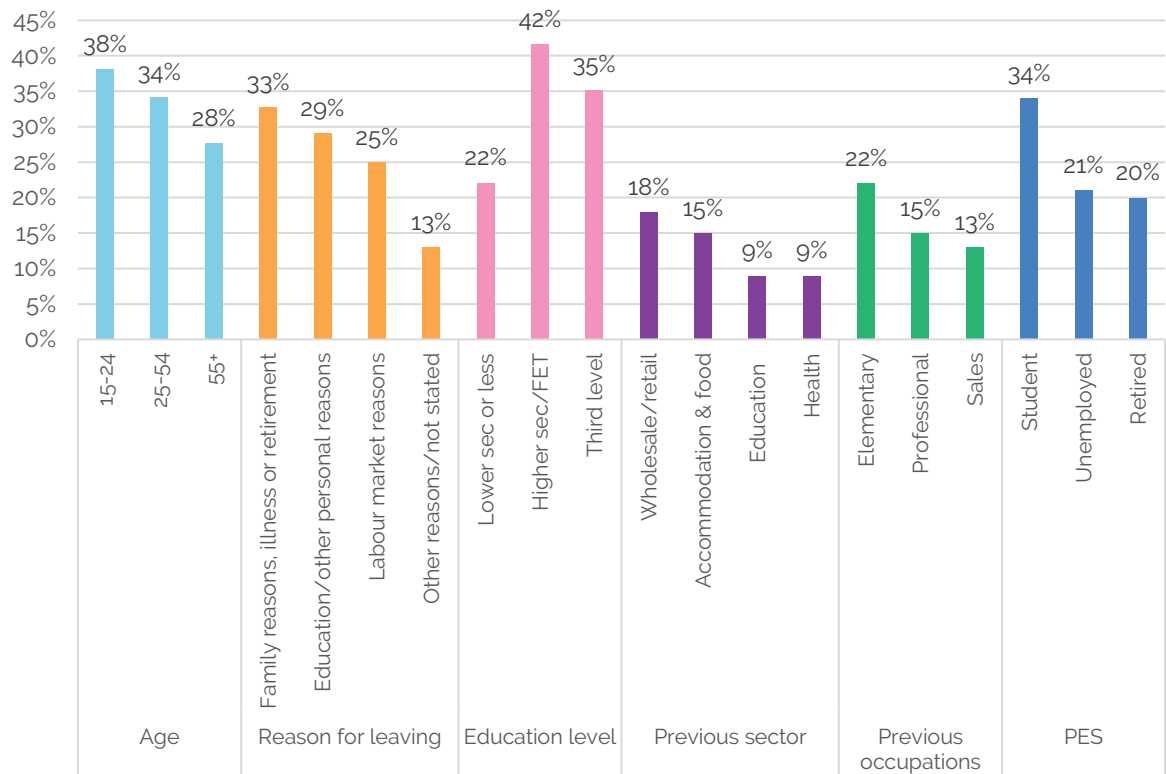
Over the four quarters of 2023, there was a total of 193,500 recent job leavers: 38% entered unemployment and 62% became economically inactive. Compared to 2022, the number of recent job leavers was 4% lower, related to a fall in the numbers leaving the labour force. Figure 7.18 examines the key indicators for those leaving employment and becoming unemployed while Figure 7.19 details those who left and became economically inactive.

Figure 7.18 Recent Job Leavers (Unemployed) by Key Indicators (%), 2023 (sum of four quarters)



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data
 Numbers in square brackets should be treated with caution

Figure 7.19 Recent Job Leavers (Economically Inactive) by Key Indicators (%), 2023 (sum of four quarters)



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Age: Almost two-thirds (64%) of those who were unemployed after having left employment were aged 25-54 years, compared to approximately a third (34%) of those who were economically inactive; the latter category had a far higher share aged 55 years and above (28% compared to 9% for those unemployed).

Reason for leaving: Over half (58%) of leavers who moved into unemployment left the workforce for labour market reasons³³; for those economically inactive, a third left for family reasons, illness or retirement, 29% left for education or other personal reasons, with a quarter leaving for labour market reasons.

Education level: Almost a half (49%) of unemployed leavers who recently left the workforce held a third level qualification, compared to 35% for those who were economically inactive.

Previous sector: Those recent leavers who were unemployed had previously been employed across all sectors; those with the highest shares included accommodation & food, at 12%, and ICT at 10%; for those economically inactive, wholesale/retail accounted for the highest share at 18%, followed by accommodation & food (15%), education (9%) and health (9%).

Previous occupation: The top three previous occupations for unemployed leavers were professional, associate professional and elementary occupations; for those leavers who were economically inactive, the highest shares were previously employed in elementary (22%), professional (15%) and sales (13%) occupations.

Principal economic status (PES): Of those leavers who were defined as being unemployed, 70% classified themselves as unemployed whereas 14% considered themselves employed (but they did not fit the ILO definition of employment); over a third of recent leavers who were economically inactive classified themselves as students, 21% as unemployed and 20% as retired.

³³ Labour market reasons include being dismissed or made redundant or when a job of a limited duration has ended.



Section 8

Employment Permits

8.1 Introduction

In this section, we provide an overview of the extent to which employers source labour from outside the EU through an analysis of employment permit data, to assess where employers are having difficulty in sourcing suitably qualified candidates from the Irish and EU labour market. Unless they are exempt, a non-EEA national must hold a valid Employment Permit in order to work in Ireland. The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE) has responsibility for the administration of the employment permit system in Ireland. Employment permits are granted for roles that cannot be filled from the available labour pool in Ireland and the rest of the EEA. There are nine types of employment permits available.³⁴ The three most common employment permits issued in Ireland include:

- **Critical skills:** designed to attract highly skilled people into the labour market and take up residence in the State
- **General:** designed to attract non-EEA nationals for occupations which are experiencing a labour or skills shortage in roles that pay at least €30,000* per year
- **Intra-company transfer:** designed to facilitate the transfer of key personnel, senior management and trainees who are non-EEA nationals from an overseas branch of a multinational corporation to its Irish branch. The annual salary for senior management and key personnel applicants must be at least €40,000, personnel undergoing training programmes must have a minimum salary of €30,000.

** Some exceptions apply (information on new salary thresholds due to commence January 2024 is available on the DETE website)*

Approximately 29,000 new employment permits were issued in 2023, a decrease of 21% on the previous year but considerably higher than 2021 levels. The decline primarily relates to a reduced number of permits issued for the ICT sector. The number of new permits issued for the financial and agriculture industry were also down from the previous year, albeit to a lesser extent.

8.2 Overall Trends

Key findings for new employment permits issued in 2023 include:

- over half (61%) of new permits issued were held by persons from India, the Philippines, Brazil, and Pakistan (Figure 8.3).
- half (50%) of all new permits issued were for positions in Dublin (Figure 8.4).
- over three quarters (78%) of new permits issued were for persons with third level education (Figure 8.5).
- the ICT and health sectors combined accounted for half of new permits issued (Figure 8.6).
- professional occupations accounted for over half (61%) of total new permits issued (Figure 8.7).

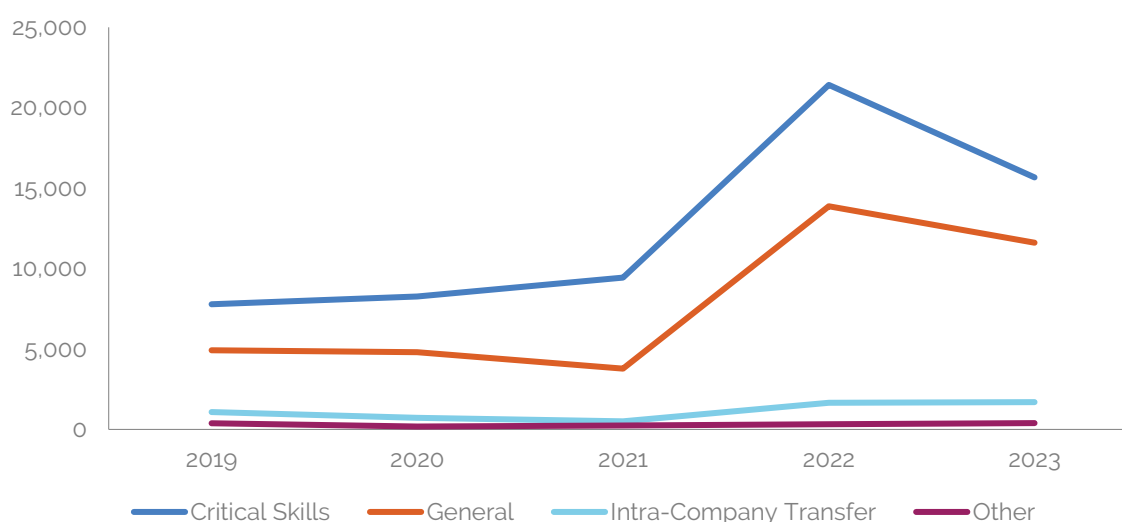
³⁴ The details of the other six permit types are available on the DETE website: <https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/What-We-Do/Workplace-and-Skills/Employment-Permits/Permit-Types/>

Employment permits by permit type

Between 2019 and 2023, there was significant growth in the number of new permits issued, with much of the growth occurring between 2021 and 2022. The most notable growth for new permits issued occurred for two permit types during this period: critical skills permits which accounted for 52% of the growth, and general employment permits which accounted for 44% of the growth (Figure 8.1).

Critical skills permits accounted for over half (53%) of all new permits issued in 2023, while general permits accounted for 40% and intra-company transfers for 6% of all new permits issued in the same period. Between 2022 and 2023, the number of permits declined by 21% or 7,900 permits. Critical skills permits accounted for the largest decline (of almost 6,000), primarily relating to a contraction in the number of these permits issued for the ICT sector in Ireland. The decline in the number of general permits (of over 2,000) for the same period mostly relates to the reductions in the number of permits issued in the agricultural sector.

Figure 8.1 New Employment Permits Issued by Type, 2019-2023



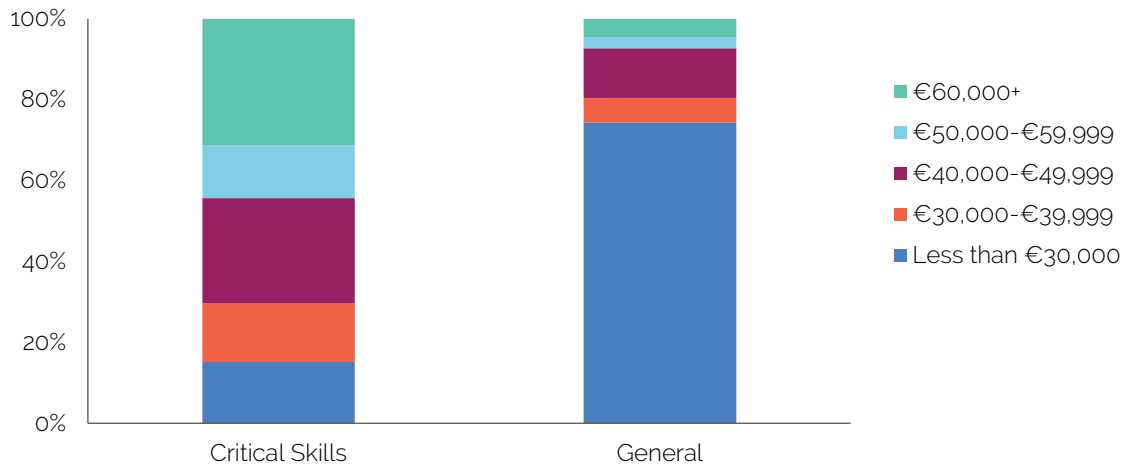
Source: DETE

Employment permits by salary level

Of the new critical skills permits issued in 2023, 15% were for salaries of less than €30,000 and for salaries of €30,000-€39,999 equally with a further 26% for salaries of €40,000-€49,999 and 31% for salaries of €60,000 or above (Figure 8.2). Of the new general permits issued, 74% were for salaries of less than €30,000 with a further 12% for salaries of €40,000-€49,999. From January 2020, as advised by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, the minimum salary for those occupations on the critical skills occupations list increased from €30,000 to €32,000 per annum and from €60,000 to €64,000 for all other occupations that are not on the critical skill list but are eligible for an employment permit. In December 2023, Minister Richmond announced the largest ever expansion to the employment permits system, with 43 changes to the jobs eligible for employment permits as well as a roadmap for increasing salary thresholds, to commence in January 2024.³⁵

³⁵ Information on expansion to permits and new salary thresholds are available on the DETE website: <https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/news-and-events/department-news/2023/december/20122023.html>

Figure 8.2 New Employment Permits Type by Salary, 2023

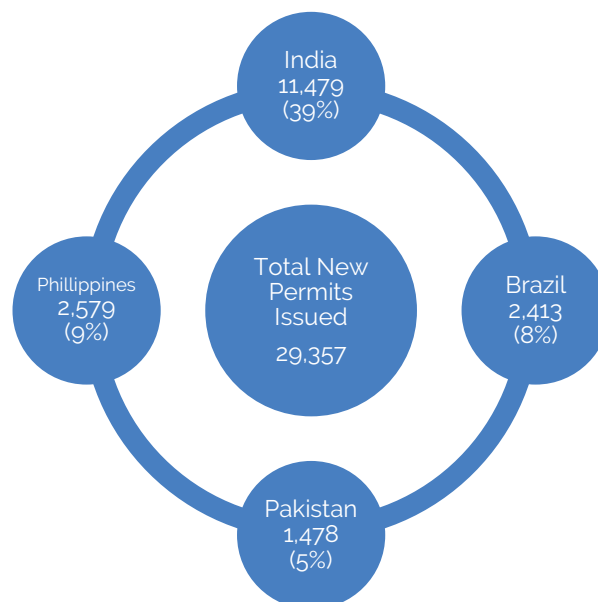


Source: DETE

Employment permits by nationality

In 2023, over half (61%) of total new permits issued were held by persons from India, the Philippines, Brazil, and Pakistan collectively (Figure 8.3). Almost two thirds (64%) of new permits issued to Indian nationals were for those in the health and ICT sector combined. Almost half (45%) of new permits issued to persons from the Philippines were for positions in the health sector. Of the permits issued to persons from Brazil, one half were for those working in the agriculture, health, and accommodation/food sectors combined, while a half of new permits issued to Pakistan nationals were in the health sector.

Figure 8.3 New Employment Permits by Nationality, 2023

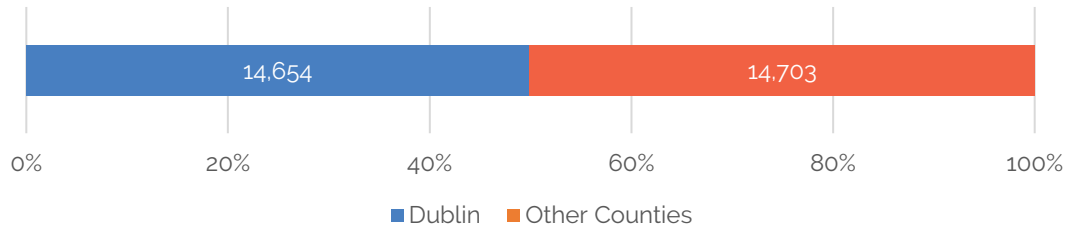


Source: DETE

Employment permits by region

Half (50%) of all new permits issued in 2023 were for positions in Dublin (Figure 8.4), the majority of which were for positions in the health (27%), ICT (25%), and financial sectors (15%).

Figure 8.4 New Employment Permits by Region, 2023

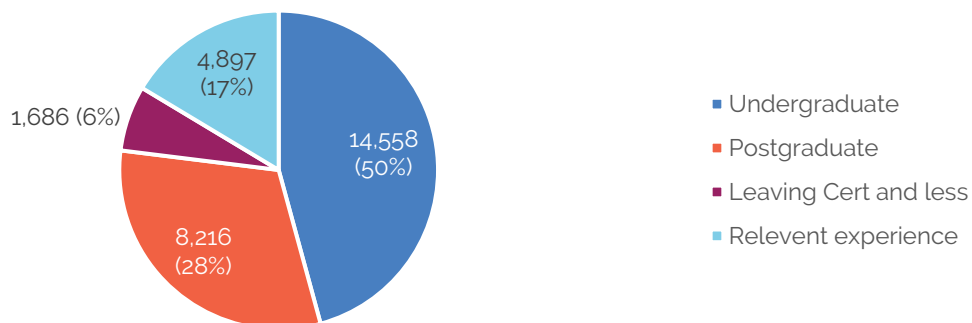


Source: DETE

Employment permits by qualification

Over three quarters (78%) of new permits issued in 2023 were for persons with third level qualifications (undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications combined) (Figure 8.5), of which two thirds were critical skill permits. New permits issued that required relevant experience were primarily general employment permits.

Figure 8.5 New Employment Permits by Qualifications, 2023



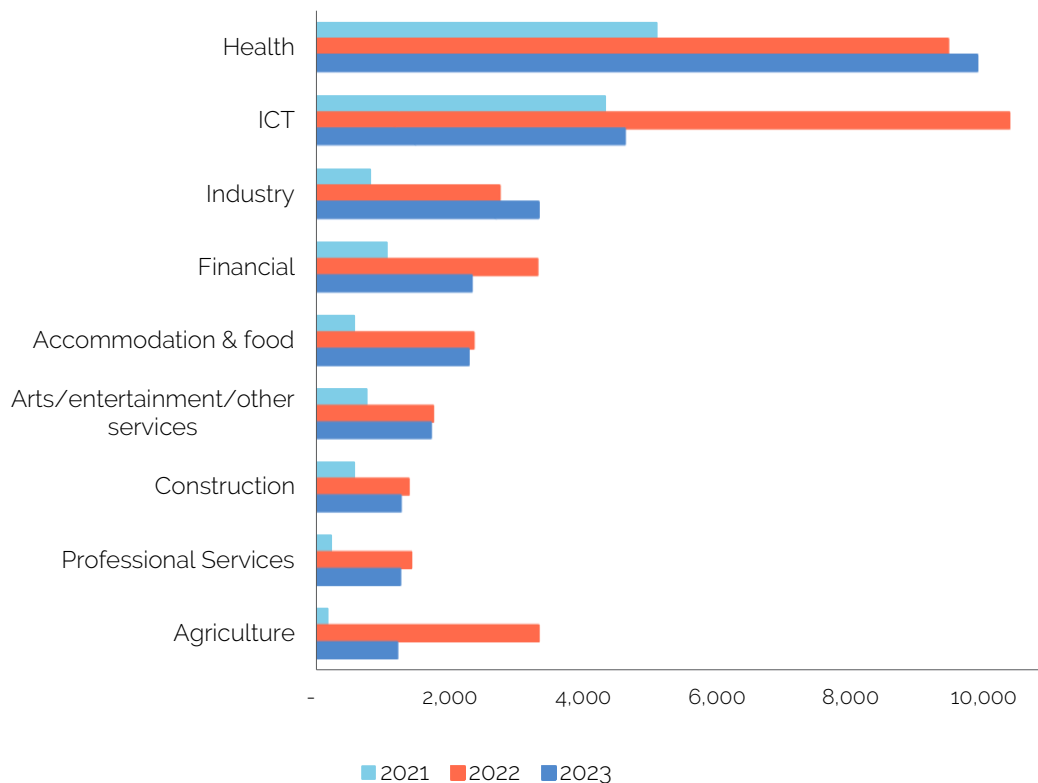
Source: DETE

8.3 Employment Permits by Sector

Key Sectors

Figure 8.6 illustrates a breakdown of new employment permits issued for key sectors; combined they accounted for 92% of all new permits issued in 2023. In 2022, the number of new employment permits issued increased across all of these sectors when compared with 2021, with the ICT and health sectors accounting for approximately 45% of the total increase in 2022. However, in 2023, the number of new employment permits issued increased in two sectors only: health and industry. The number of new permits issued in 2023 for the ICT sector decreased significantly, returning to 2021 levels. The agriculture sector also experienced a decline in the number of new permits issued in 2023 when compared to 2022. The variation in the number of permits in the agriculture sector likely relates to the exhausting of quotas and the issuing of new quotas for horticultural operatives and dairy farm assistants over this period. In addition, the recent addition of pig farmers and pig farm assistants to the eligible list of occupations for employment permits, along with an extension of the quota for horticultural workers, will likely see continued demand for permits in this sector.

Figure 8.6 New Employment Permits for Selected Sectors*, 2021-2023



Source: DETE

*In 2023, these selected sectors account for 92% of all new permits issued.

Health and ICT Sectors

In 2023, the health and ICT sectors accounted for 50% of total new permits issued with 9,901 and 4,621 new permits respectively. Over three quarters (80%) of the total new permits issued for the ICT sector in 2023 were critical skills permits. Over half (53%) of the total of new permits issued for the health sector for the same period were also critical skills permits while a further 47% were general employment permits.

The health sector accounted for the largest share (34%) of new permits issued in 2023. New employment permits for the health sector remains elevated post 2021 levels and demand continues nationally for critical skills permits within this sector. In support of the health sector demands, the healthcare professional occupations of pharmacist, cardiac physiologist, medical scientist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, podiatrist/chiroprapist, psychologist and speech and language therapist were added to the critical skills occupations list in June 2022, while a quota of 1,000 general employment permits for care workers and home carers was also introduced in December 2022.

New employment permits issued for the ICT sector increased substantially in 2022 and accounted for 28% of total new permits issued for that period. However, in 2023 the number of new permits issued for ICT have returned to 2021 levels; the decline in the number of critical permits issued between 2022 and 2023 most likely relates to the recent restructuring and reduced hiring in the ICT sector in Ireland.

Health Sector

- **Overall:** new employment permits issued for those in the health sector accounted for 34% of total new permits issued in 2023
- **Salary:** of those new permits issued for this sector, over half (56%) were for roles which offered a salary of less than €40,000
- **Nationality:** persons from India accounted for over half (51%) of all new permits issued for this sector
- **Region:** over a third (40%) of all new permits issued for the health sector were for positions in Dublin with the remainder spread across all other counties.

ICT Sector

- **Overall:** new employment permits issued for those in the ICT sector accounted for 16% of total new permits issued in 2023
- **Salary:** over half (51%) of permits issued for this sector were for employment with a salary of €60,000 plus
- **Nationality:** persons from India accounted for over half (52%) of all new permits issued for this sector
- **Region:** over three quarters (80%) of all new permits issued for the ICT sector were for positions in Dublin with the remainder spread across all other counties.

8.4 Employment Permits by Occupation

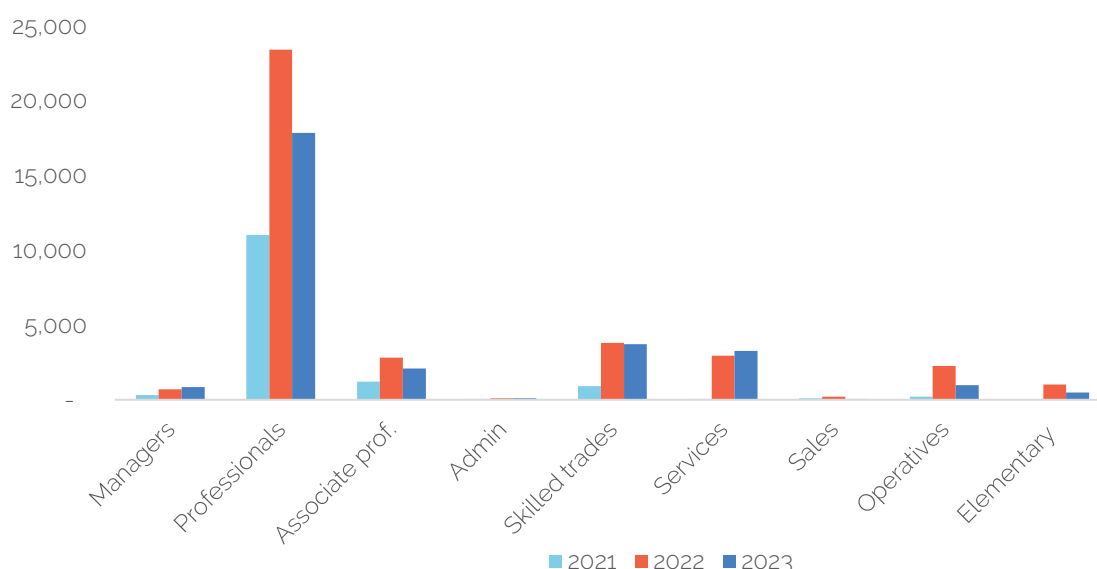
Professional occupations accounted for the majority (80%) of new permits issued in 2021, for almost two thirds (63%) of new permits issued in 2022 and over half (61%) of new permits issued in 2023 (Figure 8.7). They also accounted for over half (53%) of the growth in the number of new permits issued over the period 2021-2022 and for almost three quarters (70%) of the decline in the number of new permits issued over the period 2022-2023 (relating to a decline in the number of new permits issued for ICT professionals during this period).

New permits for skilled trades increased in 2022 as a result of most construction sector jobs being made eligible for a general employment permit from October 2021, with the number of permits almost on a par in 2023. The quota for meat deboners has also been extended by an additional 350 permits, to commence in January 2024.

New permits for services occupations were up slightly between 2022 and 2023; the majority of the new permits were issued for healthcare assistants, partly due to the fact that in December 2022, a quota of 1,000 general employment permits for the role of care workers and home carers was introduced.

New permits for operative occupations, which were predominantly general employment permits, decreased significantly between 2022 and 2023, possibly due to quotas filled for these permits. In support of post-COVID growth and sector demand, a quota for 1,500 new permits for bus and coach drivers was added in December 2022. In June 2022, the food industry saw a quota for 425 meat processing operative permits introduced; this quota is due to be extended by an additional 1,000 permits in January 2024. Within elementary occupations, the number of new permits also declined in 2023, primarily related to a fall in the number of permits issued for horticultural operatives.

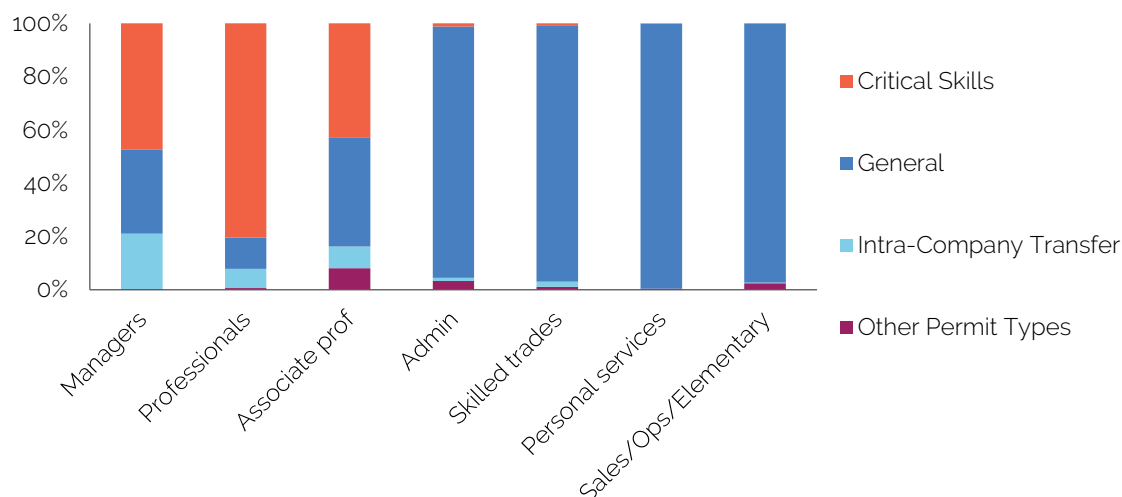
Figure 8.7 New Employment Permits by Broad Occupation, 2021-2023



Source: DETE

The type of employment permit issued varied across occupational groups in 2023 (Figure 8.8). Almost half (47%) of new permits issued for managers and four-fifths of new permits issued for professionals in 2023 were critical skills permits while the majority of new permits issued for administrative, skilled trades, personal services, sales, operatives and elementary occupations were general permits.

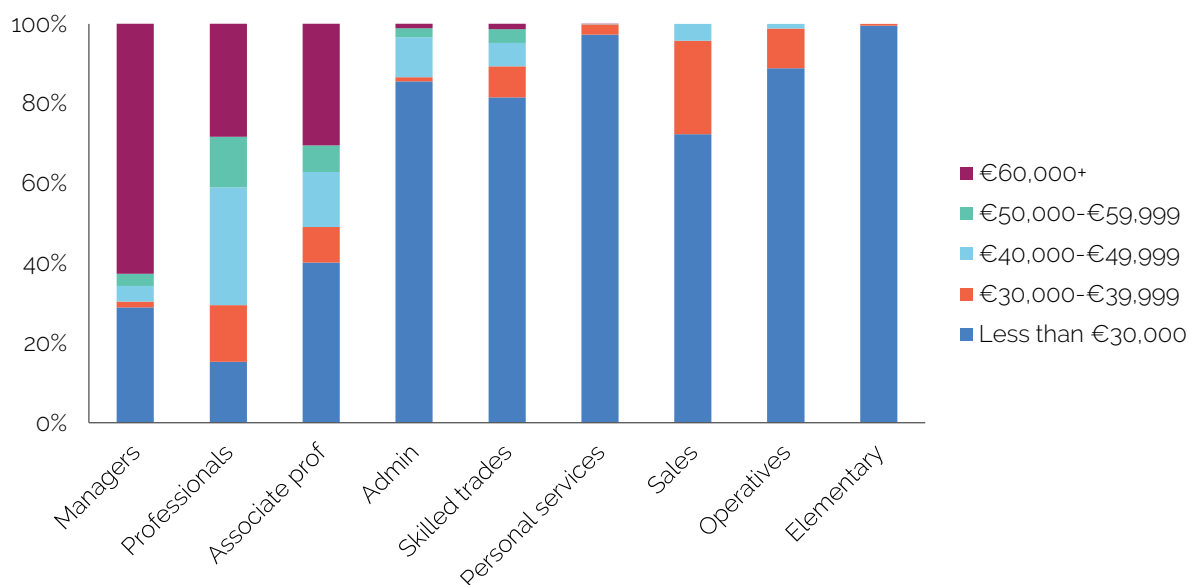
Figure 8.8 New Employment Permits by Occupation and Permit Type, 2023



Source: DETE

Of those new permits issued for managers, almost two thirds (63%) were for roles which offered a salary of €60,000 or above; 41% of new permits issued for professionals were for a salary of €50,000 or above (Figure 8.9). The majority of new permits issued in administrative, skilled trades, personal services, sales, operatives and elementary occupations had a salary of less than €30,000.

Figure 8.9 New Employment Permits by Occupation and Salary, 2023



Source: DETE

Managers

- **Overall:** new employment permits for managerial positions accounted for 3% of all permits issued in 2023
- **Type:** critical skills accounted for 47% of the new permits issued for this occupation, with a further 32% for general permits and 20% for intra-company transfers
- **Salary:** 66% of new permits issued had a salary of €50,000 or more, this occupation has the largest share of permits offering salaries at this level
- **Sector:** employment permits were primarily issued for positions in industry (23%), ICT (17%), and the financial services, agriculture and accommodation/food sectors (each with a 12% share)
- **Nationality:** a fifth of all permits issued for managers were for those originating from India with a further 18% of permits issued for those originating from the USA
- **Region:** over half (58%) of all new permits issued for managers were for positions in Dublin
- **Occupations:** new employment permits were most frequently issued for
 - vice presidents/CEOs and directors in IT, financial services and manufacturing
 - managers in farming, accommodation and construction (including site and project).

Professionals

- **Overall:** new employment permits for professionals accounted for almost two thirds (61%) of total permits issued in 2023
- **Type:** critical skills accounted for the majority (80%) of the new permits issued for this occupation, with a further 12% for general permits and 7% for intra-company transfers
- **Salary:** almost half (44%) of new permits issued were for a salary of between €30,000 and €49,999 with a further 41% with a salary of €50,000 or more
- **Sector:** new permits were mainly issued for positions in the health (37%), ICT (21%), and industry (14%) sectors
- **Nationality:** almost half (48%) of all new permits for professionals were issued to persons from India, while (17%) of all new permits issued were to persons from the Philippines, Pakistan and Brazil collectively
- **Region:** over half (56%) of all new permits issued for professionals were for positions in Dublin
- **Occupations:** new employment permits were most frequently issued for
 - IT: software engineers/developers, IT business analysts/project managers, analysts/engineers (cloud, security, systems, network, test), architects (software, systems, technical, solutions), data analysts/scientists, consultants (in cyber security, SAP, business process), web design, UX designers
 - health: the majority of permits were issued for nurses (primarily staff nurses), senior house officers, registrars (general, emergency medicine, paediatrics, anaesthesiology) and general practitioners. There were further permits issued for medical specialists such as radiographers/sonographers, cardiac physiologists, medical scientists, dentists, physiotherapists and audiologists
 - financial: analysts (business, data, financial, risk, tax, regulatory/compliance), accountants (in auditing), actuaries
 - industry: engineers (e.g., process, design, electrical, mechanical, quality, automation, validation, electronics), quality assurance/quality control and regulatory professionals, scientists (including analytical, chemical), business analysts
 - construction: civil/site engineers and other engineers (design, mechanical and electrical), project managers, quantity surveyors and architectural technologists.

Associate Professionals & Technical

- **Overall:** new employment permits for associate professionals accounted for 7% of total permits issued in 2023
- **Type:** critical skills accounted for over two fifths (43%) and general employment permits for 41% of new permits issued for this occupation
- **Salary:** 40% of new permits issued had a salary of less than €30,000 and a further 37% with a salary of €50,000 or more
- **Sector:** a third of new permits issued were for positions in the ICT sector, with a further 21% for the arts, entertainment and other services collectively and 11% for positions in industry
- **Nationality:** persons from India, Brazil and the USA collectively accounted for 47% of all new permits issued for this occupational group
- **Region:** the majority (74%) of all new permits issued for associate professionals were for positions in Dublin
- **Occupations:** new employment permits were most frequently issued for
 - sales & marketing: primarily account manager/strategists (with languages), but also marketing specialists, business development and sales executives
 - other: financial/data/business analysts, technical support, HR/recruitment consultants, procurement analysts/buyers, film/TV roles (e.g. actors, producers, directors, animators, visual effects supervisors), production designers, sports coaches/players, various technician roles (e.g. manufacturing, electrical, financial accounting).

Administrative and Secretarial

- **Overall:** with 90 permits, administrative positions accounted for less than 1% of total new permits issued in 2023
- **Type:** new permits issued for this occupational group were primarily general permits (94%)
- **Salary:** the majority (86%) of new permits issued had a salary of less than €30,000
- **Region:** the majority (83%) of all new permits issued were for positions in Dublin and Cork
- **Occupations:** new employment permits were most frequently issued for transport and distribution clerks and assistants.

Skilled Trades

- **Overall:** new employment permits issued for those in skilled trades accounted for 13% of total new permits issued in 2023
- **Type:** the majority (96%) of new permits issued were general employment permits
- **Salary:** most of the new permits issued (82%) had a salary of less than €30,000
- **Sector:** over half (55%) of all new permits issued were for positions in the accommodation and food services sector, with a further 13% in the construction sector and 11% in industry
- **Nationality:** persons from Brazil, the Philippines and China accounted for almost half (47%) of all new permits issued for this occupational group
- **Region:** over a third (34%) of all new permits issued for skilled trades were for positions in Dublin with the remainder spread across all counties
- **Occupations:** new permits were most frequently issued for
 - chefs (primarily Chef de Partie)
 - welders/fabricators, CNC programmers/operators, pipe fitters

- carpenters (primarily shuttering), bricklayers/stone masons, sheet metal workers, painters, plumbers, plasterers (including drywall), tilers
- maintenance fitters/technicians
- meat deboners/knifepersons
- aircraft mechanics/technicians, vehicle roadworthiness testers, customer/field service engineers.

Personal Services

- **Overall:** personal services occupations accounted for 11% of total new permits issued in 2023
- **Type:** the majority (99%) of the new permits issued for this occupational group were general employment permits
- **Salary:** almost all (97%) new permits issued were for employment with a salary of less than €30,000
- **Region:** over a third (37%) of all new permits issued for personal services roles were for positions in Dublin, with a further 27% in the Mid-East
- **Occupations:** permits were most frequently issued for healthcare assistants, the majority of which were employed in the health sector.

Sales and Customer Services

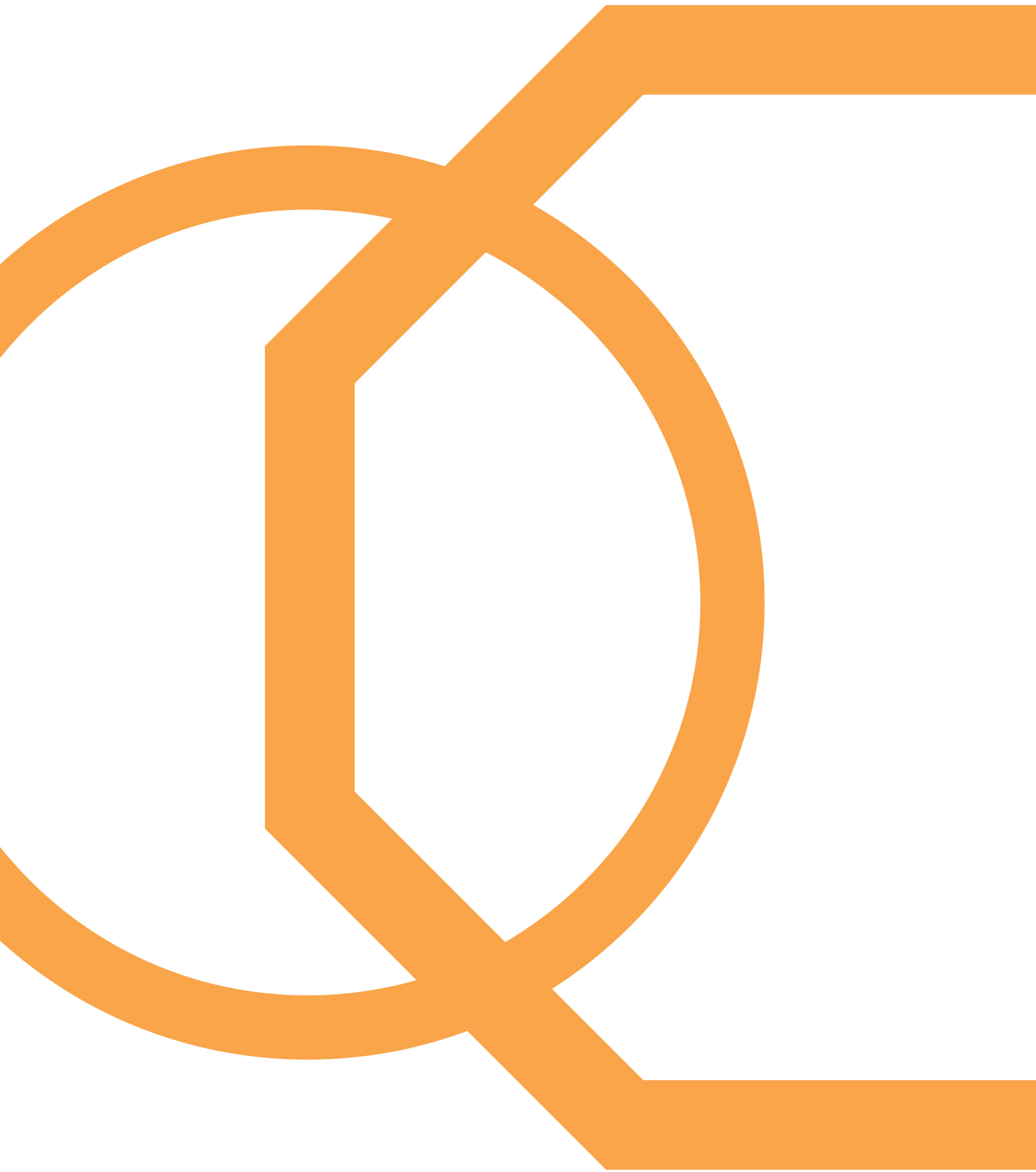
- **Overall:** new employment permits issued for those in sales related occupations accounted for less than 1% of total permits issued in 2023
- **Salary:** almost all (96%) new permits issued had a salary of less than €40,000
- **Sector:** the majority (83%) of new permits issued were for positions in the ICT sector
- **Occupations:** permits were most frequently issued for customer service and sales support occupations (with languages) within the general employment permits; specific roles included registration and compliance operations (RCO)/investigation specialists and customer services associates.

Operatives

- **Overall:** new employment permits issued for those in operative occupations accounted for 3% of total permits issued in 2023; the majority (98%) of permits issued for this occupational group were issued for general employment permits and most (89%) had a salary of less than €30,000
- **Sector:** almost half (47%) of new permits issued were for positions in the transport and storage sector and a further 45% were issued for positions in the agriculture sector
- **Nationality:** persons from Brazil accounted for almost a third (31%) of all new permits issued with South Africa accounting for 29% and the Philippines accounting for a further 14%
- **Region:** the South-East region accounted for 21% of new permits issued, followed by the Mid-East (15%), Dublin (14%) and Border (14%)
- **Occupations:** new permits were most frequently issued for meat processing operatives, followed by HGV and bus/coach drivers.

Elementary occupations

- **Overall:** new employment permits for elementary positions accounted for 2% of total new permits issued in 2023, the majority (97%) of which, were issued for general employment permits and all had a salary of less than €39,999; most were in the agricultural sector in roles including horticultural operatives/mushroom harvesters and dairy farm assistants.



Section 9

Vacancies

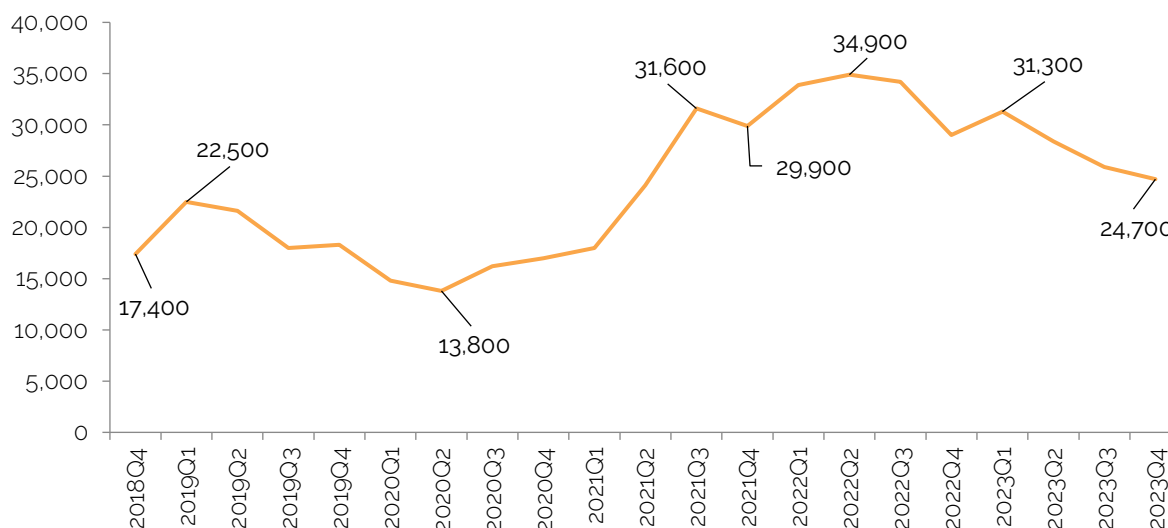
This section provides an analysis of job vacancy data in Ireland. It examines a number of indicators including

- job vacancy numbers and rates by sector (Source: CSO)
- advertised job vacancies by occupation (sources: Eurostat/CEDEFOP Web Intelligence Hub (WIH) and JobsIreland.ie (DSP))
- results of the SLMRU's own Recruitment Agency Survey.

9.1 Vacancy rates (CSO)

The CSO's Earnings, Hours and Employment Costs Survey (EHECS) examines the number of open job vacancies businesses have at the end of each quarter. In quarter 4 2023, there were 24,700 vacancies reported, representing a job vacancy rate³⁶ of 1.1%. Following a decline as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of reported vacancies increased quarterly from quarter 3 2020 to quarter 2 2022 (with the exception of quarter 4 2021), peaking at 34,900 vacancies (Figure 9.1). The number of vacancies has fluctuated since, with 6,600 fewer vacancies in the last quarter of 2023 compared to the first quarter. Of the 24,700 job vacancies in quarter 4 2023, 70% were in the private sector, with the remaining 30% in the public sector; this compares to shares of 78% and 81% in the private sector in quarter 4 2018 and quarter 4 2022 respectively.

Figure 9.1 Job Vacancies (CSO), Quarter 4 2018 - Quarter 4 2023



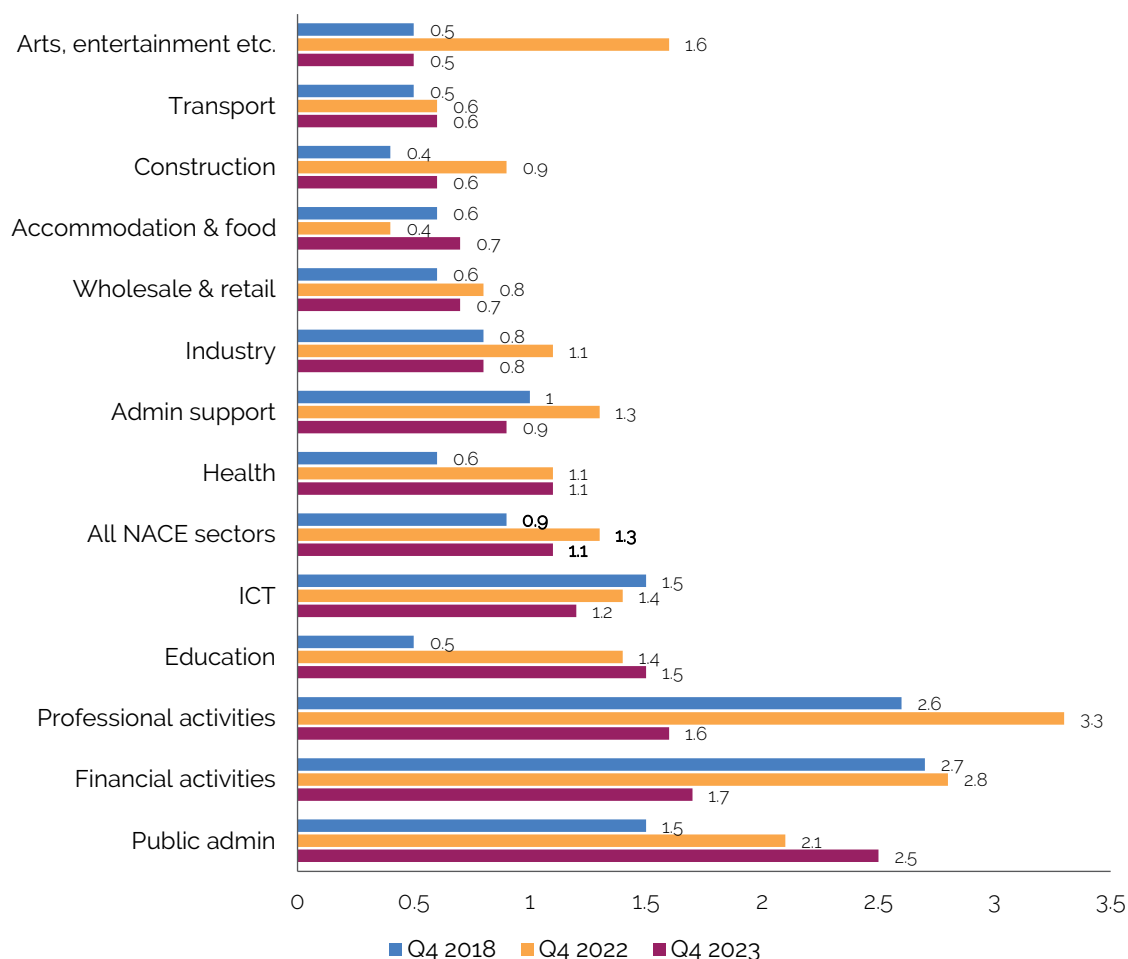
Source: CSO EHECS

³⁶ The job vacancy rate, as detailed in the CSO Earnings, Hours and Employment Costs Survey (EHECS), measures the proportion of total posts that are vacant as a proportion of total occupied posts combined with job vacancies.

Figure 9.2 presents the job vacancy rates by sector for quarter 4 2018, quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023. Public administration and defence (PAD) had the highest vacancy rate in quarter 4 2023, at 2.5%, 1.4 percentage points above the rate for all sectors (1.1%). Between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023, the vacancy rate increased in just three sectors, PAD (by 0.4 percentage points), accommodation and food, by 0.3 percentage points, and education (by 0.1 percentage points). The largest decline over this period occurred for professional activities (-1.7 percentage points), financial activities, and arts and entertainment (both by 1.1 percentage points).

The vacancy rate was 0.2 percentage points higher than in quarter 4 2018. The rate in quarter 4 2023 was within 0.2 percentage points for over half the sectors detailed below. However, the education and public administration sectors both had rates one percentage point higher in quarter 4 2023, while for the professional and financial activities sectors, the rates in quarter 4 2023 were one percentage point lower than in quarter 4 2018.

Figure 9.2 Job Vacancy Rate (%) by Sector, Quarter 4 2018, Quarter 4 2022 and Quarter 4 2023



Source: CSO EHECS

9.2 Advertised job vacancies

This section first examines online job vacancy adverts available from the Eurostat/CEDEFOP Web Intelligence Hub (WIH); there then follows an analysis of one subset of this data, namely the job vacancy adverts posted on jobsireland.ie. Online job advertisements provide information on the jobs and skills for which employers are seeking candidates. It should be borne in mind that not all job openings are advertised, and not all adverts are online postings. For this reason, the data presented in this section is best interpreted in the context of broader labour market trends, including the employment, recent job hires and transitions data presented in earlier sections of this report.

9.2.1 Eurostat/CEDEFOP online job adverts

The WIH is a database of online job advertisements (OJAs), developed by CEDEFOP and Eurostat, containing data relating to vacancies advertised across a range of public (e.g. jobsireland.ie) and private (e.g. irishjobs.ie) online recruitment portals as well as job search engines (e.g. Monster). To minimise the occurrence of duplication, where the same job vacancy may be advertised on more than one portal, the vacancy data undergoes a de-duplication process. The online job adverts data presented here (and on the CEDEFOP dashboards) do not contain all the job advertisements collected. Many online job advert portals do not provide a stable data feed over time, and as a result job advertisements from some portals are excluded from the WIH OJA data.

Finally, this dataset is relatively new, and continuously subjected to refinements and improvements. In 2023, technical adjustments to the scraping and processing of job postings at EU level have seen a reduction in data volume compared to earlier data extractions. As a result, data presented here is not comparable with that published in earlier versions of the National Skills Bulletin.

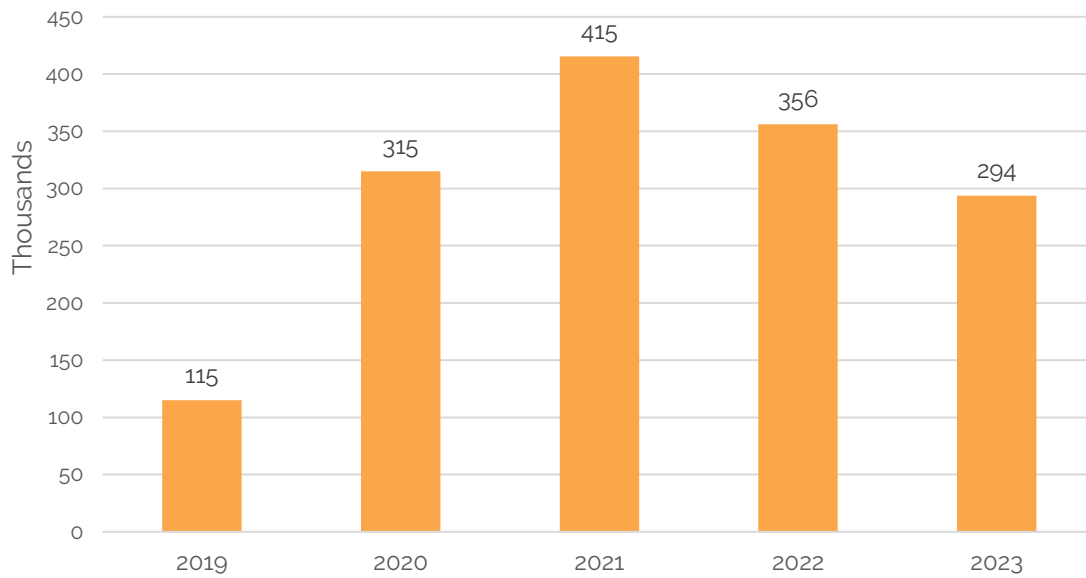
In 2023, WIH captured nearly 294,000 job adverts for roles in Ireland (Figure 9.3), 17% fewer than in 2022 and 29% fewer than in 2021. The number of online job adverts peaked in quarter 2 2021, most likely linked to re-hiring activity following the economic restrictions associated with COVID 19. Since then, while numbers in the first three quarters of 2022 and 2023 were broadly similar, there was a significant decline in quarter 4 2023, with numbers lower than in any other period since quarter 1 2019.

The decline in the number of job adverts needs to be interpreted within the broader context of employment data (see Sections 1-4): while employment declined significantly during the pandemic in 2020, the subsequent re-opening of the economy and increase in employment resulted in substantial re-hiring activity, reflected particularly in the recent hires, jobs adverts and transitions data during this period. As a result, the decline in job adverts in 2023 is thought to be partly the result of an easing of the need to re-hire staff following re-opening of the economy after the pandemic. This is in line with the trend observed across the EU-27 countries: with just eight exceptions³⁷, the number of job adverts in the year to quarter 4 2023 declined for most occupations on average across the EU³⁸.

³⁷ The eight occupations (ISCO 3 digit groups) comprised street vendors, street & market sales persons, complimentary medicine professionals, mixed crop & animal producers, locomotive engine drivers & related workers, sports & fitness workers, animal producers, and university & higher education teachers.

³⁸ CEDEFOP OVATE Occupation Focus: <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/skills-online-vacancies/occupations/focus> (last accessed 12.07.2024).

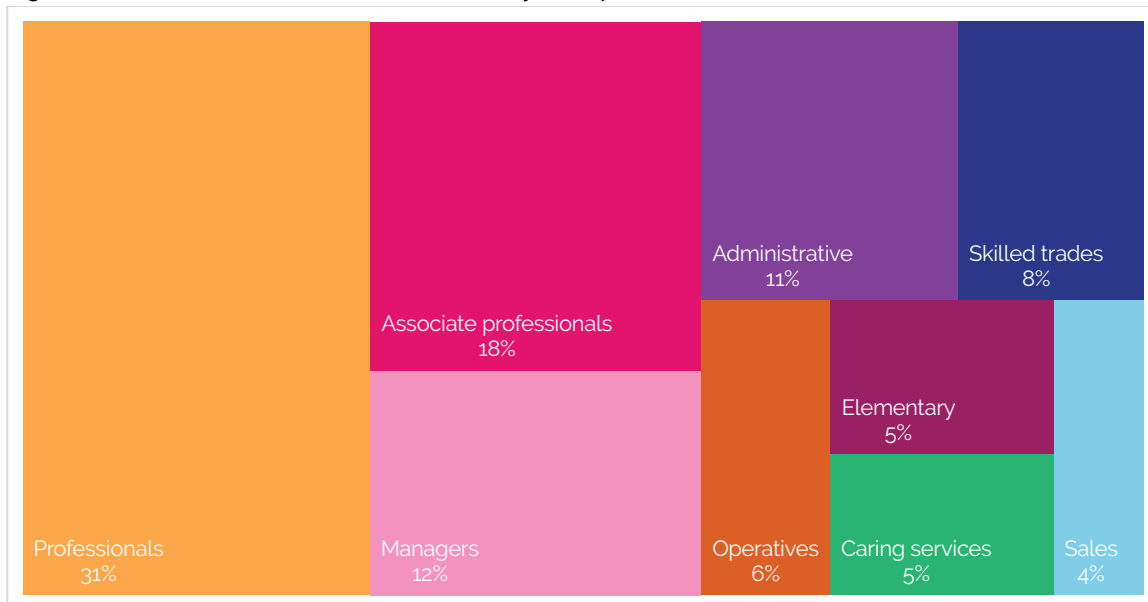
Figure 9.3 Online Job Adverts (000s) for Posts in Ireland, 2019-2023



Source: WIH-OJAs (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

As shown in Figure 9.4, online job adverts tend to be skewed towards higher skilled occupations, with 61% of all ads in 2023 for managerial, professional or associate professional roles (compared to 45% of employment in quarter 4 2023 – see Section 4). Adverts for both professional and associate professional occupations were dominated by engineering, including ICT and business roles.

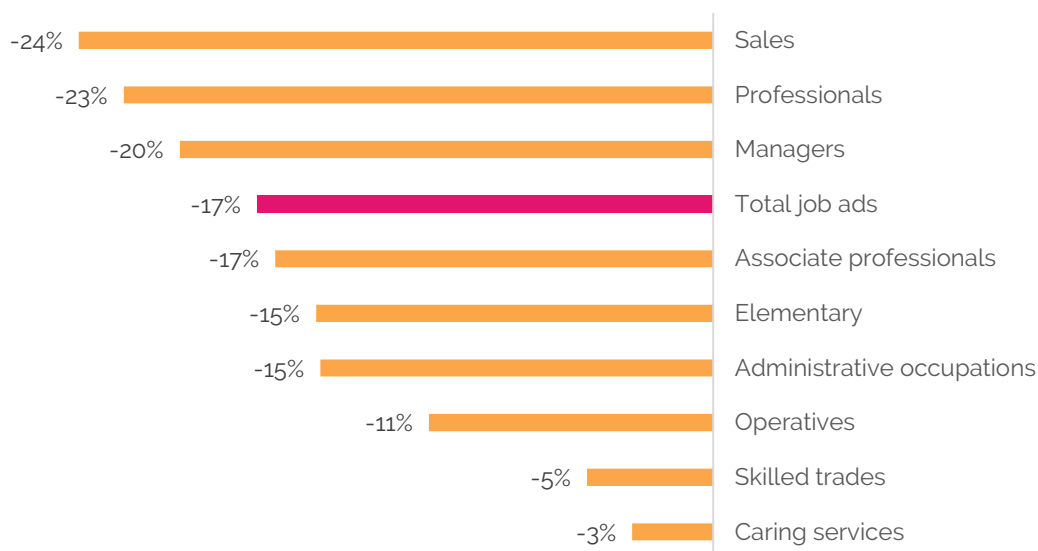
Figure 9.4 Distribution of Online Job Adverts by Occupation, 2023



Source: WIH-OJAs (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

When compared to 2022, there were declines in the number of job adverts for each occupational group; above average declines were recorded for sales, professional and manager occupations, although in absolute terms, professionals had by far the largest fall (with nearly 27,000 fewer ads, 42% of which were for IT professional occupations alone). Adverts for caring, skilled trades and operatives, which were already small occupations in terms of volume, had smaller than average falls, and combined, amounted to approximately 4,000 fewer adverts.

Figure 9.5 Percentage Change in Job Advert Numbers by Occupational Group, 2022-2023



Source: WIH-OJAs (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

On average, over a fifth of job adverts did not state **a contract type**, although this share rises to over a quarter (27%) for managerial occupations and nearly a third (31%) for professional occupations (Table 9.1). For all occupational groups, job adverts offering full-time contracts outnumbered those offering part-time contracts. Adverts for skilled trades roles had the smallest share of part-time contracts (8%), while caring and personal services had the largest (35%).

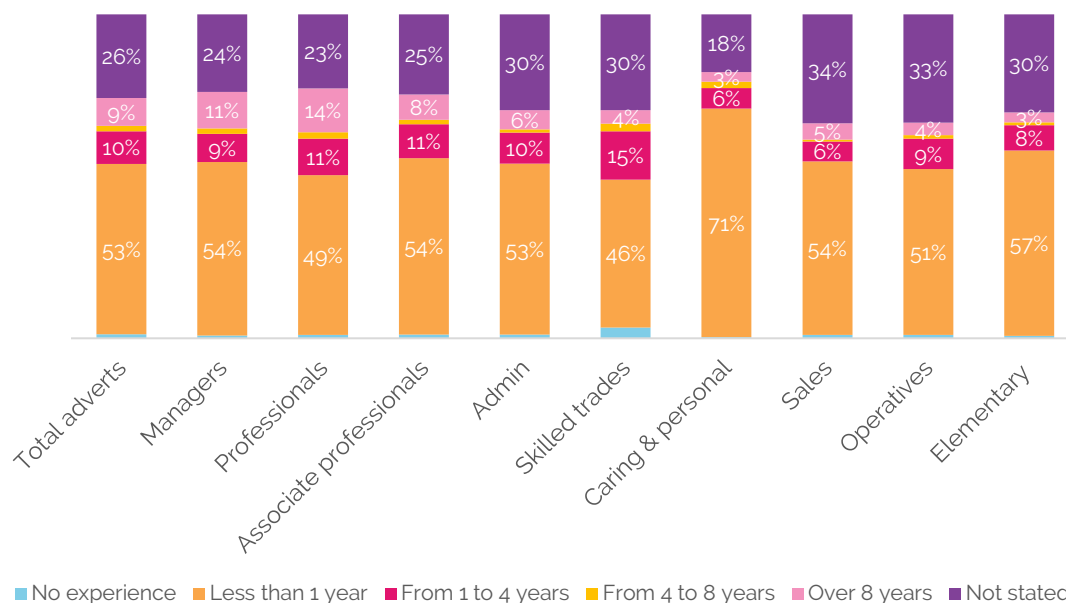
Table 9.1 Job Vacancy Adverts by Full/Part-Time Contract Offered, 2023

	Full- time	Part-time	Not stated
Managers	66%	7%	27%
Professionals	56%	13%	31%
Associate professionals	63%	13%	24%
Administrative	56%	28%	16%
Skilled trades	80%	8%	13%
Caring & personal services	56%	35%	9%
Sales	61%	24%	15%
Operatives	69%	20%	11%
Elementary	63%	27%	10%
Total adverts	62%	16%	22%

Source: WIH-OJAs (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

More than a quarter of job adverts did not specify the **length of work experience** required. Approximately one half (53%) required at least some experience (up to one year), with the share rising to 71% for caring and personal service occupations. Professionals had the highest share specifying more than eight years' experience at 14% (Figure 9.6).

Figure 9.6 Job vacancy Adverts by Level of Experience Required, 2023



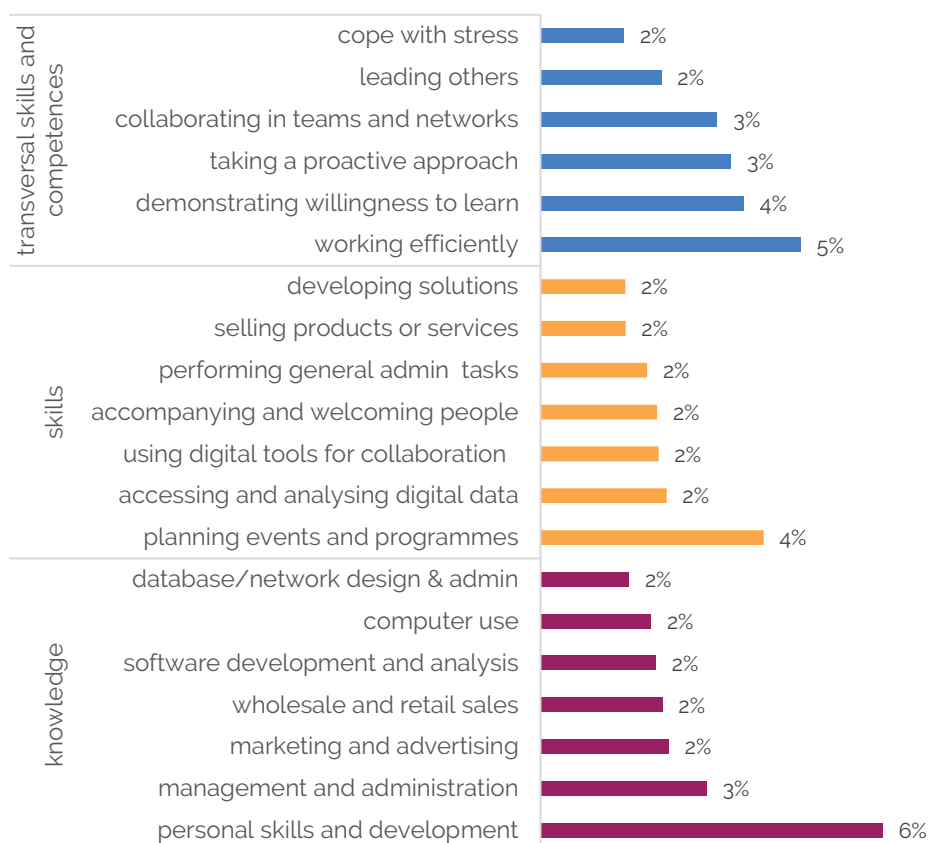
Source: WIH-OJAs (Eurostat/CEDEFOP); experience categories are based on Eurostat/CEDEFOP pre-defined bands.

In the WIH-OJA database, skills are classified according to ESCO, the classification of European skills/competencies, qualifications and occupations. Skills and competencies can be categorised into sub-classifications at different levels of detail. In ESCO, there are approximately 13,500 detailed skill categories, 300 level 3 categories, 100 level 2 categories, and 22 level 1 categories, and 4 level 0 categories

Figure 9.7 details the top 20 skills (ESCO levels 0 and 3) mentioned in online job adverts in 2023. Combined these 20 skills made up nearly 54% of all skill mentions. At the more detailed level, the top skills were

- personal skills and development (e.g. teamwork, communication)
- working efficiently
- planning events and programmes (e.g. ability to adjust priorities, co-ordinate, etc)
- demonstrating willingness to learn (includes adapt to change)
- taking a proactive approach (e.g. assume responsibility, show determination).

Figure 9.7 Skill Mentions (as % of Total Skill Mentions) in Job Vacancy Adverts, 2023



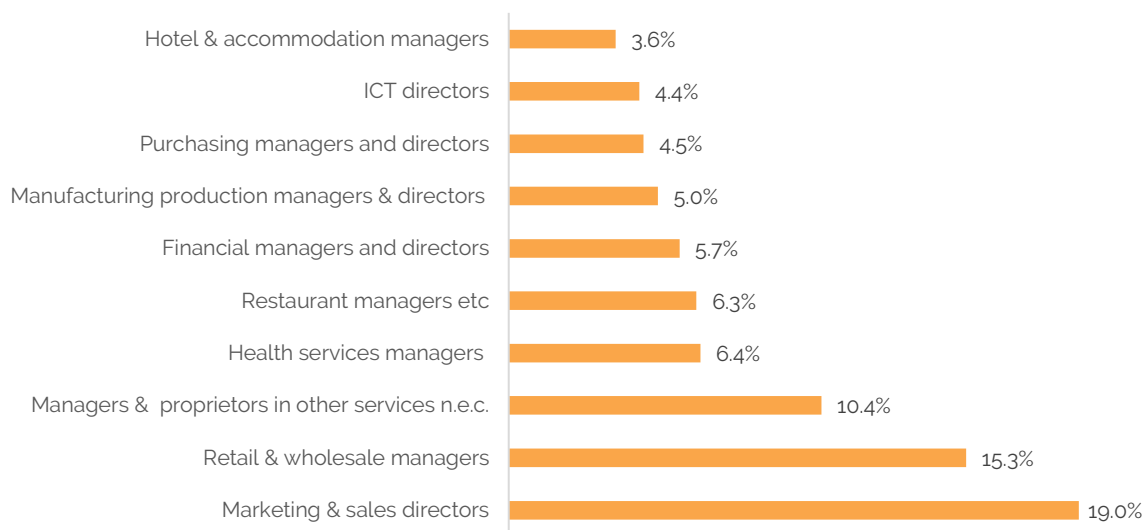
Source: WIH-OJAs (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

Advertised job vacancies by occupational group

Manager occupations

Approximately 12% of all online job adverts in 2023 related to manager roles. While the absolute number for managers fell, their share in total job ads was broadly in line with that of 2022 (when manager occupations made up 11.6% of total job ads). When combined, sales-related managers (i.e. sales & marketing directors, wholesale/retail managers) made up a quarter of all manager adverts (Figure 9.8). This occupation had the second highest share (after professionals) of job adverts that specified work experience of eight years or more (as shown earlier in Figure 9.6).

Figure 9.8 Most Frequently Mentioned Detailed Occupations (as a Share of Total Manager Ads), 2023



Source: WIH-OJAs (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

Figure 9.9 shows the most frequently mentioned skills in adverts for manager jobs in 2023. Transversal skills (e.g. adapt to change, assume responsibility, manage time), digital skills (computer literacy, office software etc) and teamwork were amongst the most in-demand skills for managers, along with business related skills (e.g. office admin, project management).

Figure 9.9 Most Requested Detailed Skills in Adverts for Manager Occupations, 2023

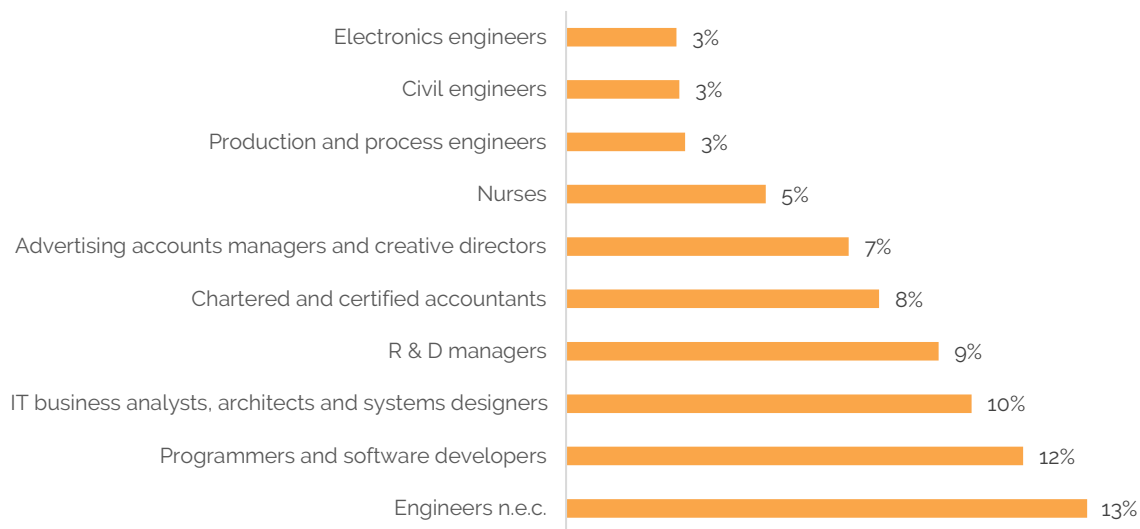


Source: WIH-OJAs (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

Professional occupations

Professional occupations were the largest occupational group, accounting for 31% of all online job adverts, down slightly from the 33% share in 2022; this fall related primarily to a stronger than average fall in ICT related roles advertised. Adverts for professional occupations were dominated by engineering (approximately a fifth) and ICT (22%) roles (Figure 9.10). At 14%, professional occupations had the largest share of adverts requiring at least eight years' experience (Figure 9.6).

Figure 9.10 Most Frequently Cited Professional Occupations (as a Share of Total Professional Adverts), 2023



Source: WIH-OJA (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

Teamwork related skills (e.g. work in teams, lead a team, plan teamwork, etc), followed by computer skills (literacy, programming, MS Office) were among the most frequently mentioned skills for professional occupations (Figure 9.11).

Figure 9.11 Most Frequently Mentioned Skills In Job Ads For Professional Occupations, 2023

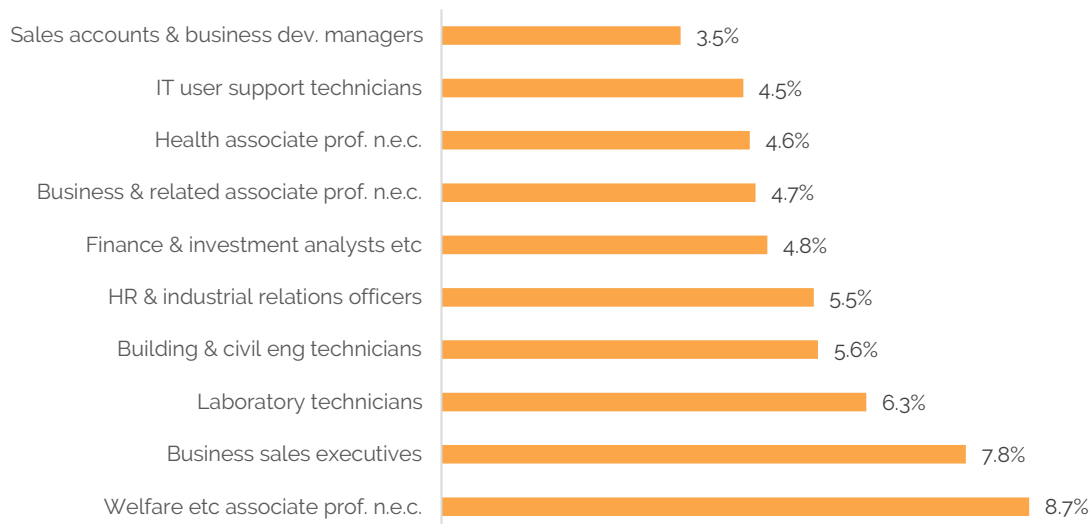


Source: WIH-OJA (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

Associate professional occupations

Nearly one fifth (18%, or approximately 52,900) of all online job adverts in 2023 were for associate professional roles, which is similar to the share observed in 2022, despite the decline in the absolute number of job adverts year-on-year. Approximately a fifth of adverts for associate professionals related to business, finance & sales related roles areas (Figure 9.12).

Figure 9.12 Most Frequently Cited Associate Professional Occupations (as a Share of Total Associate Professional Adverts), 2023



Source: WIH-OJA (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

The most frequently mentioned skills for associate professional occupations are detailed in Figure 9.13. The top skills were adapt to change, work in teams, computer literacy, and manage time.

Figure 9.13 Most Frequently Mentioned Skills in Job Ads for Associate Professional Roles, 2023

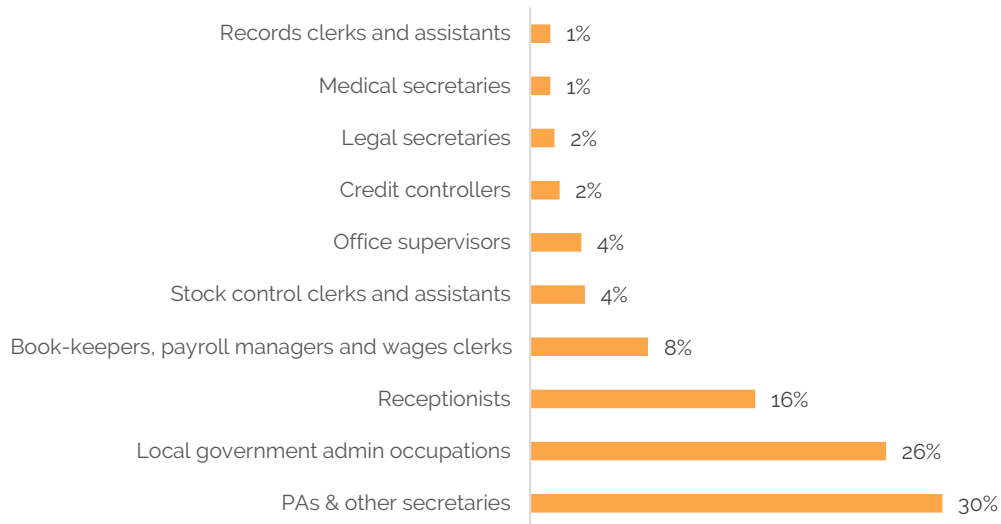


Source: WIH-OJA (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

Administrative occupations

Despite a 15% decline in the total number of job adverts for administrative occupations between 2022 and 2023, the share of administrative occupations in online job adverts remained unchanged at 11%. More than one half of adverts were for PAs/other secretaries or local government administrative occupations (Figure 9.14). After caring and personal service occupations, this group had the highest share of adverts offering part-time contracts (28%) (Table 9.1).

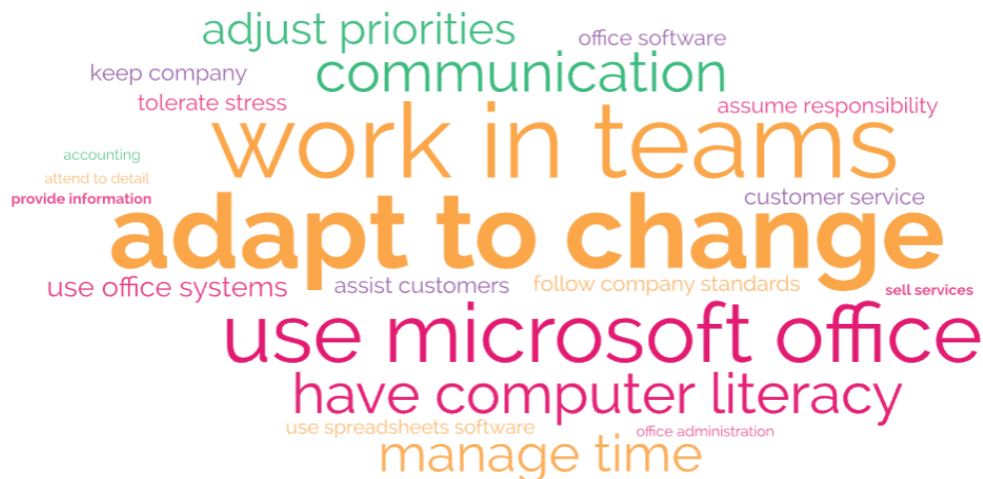
Figure 9.14 Most Frequently Cited Administrative Occupations (as a Share of Total Admin Adverts), 2023



Source: WIH-OJA (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

Digital skills (MS Office, having computer literacy, and using office systems and using spreadsheets), adapt to change and work in teams were amongst the most frequently mentioned skills for administrative occupations (Figure 9.15).

Figure 9.15 Most Frequently Mentioned Skills in Adverts for Administrative Occupations, 2023

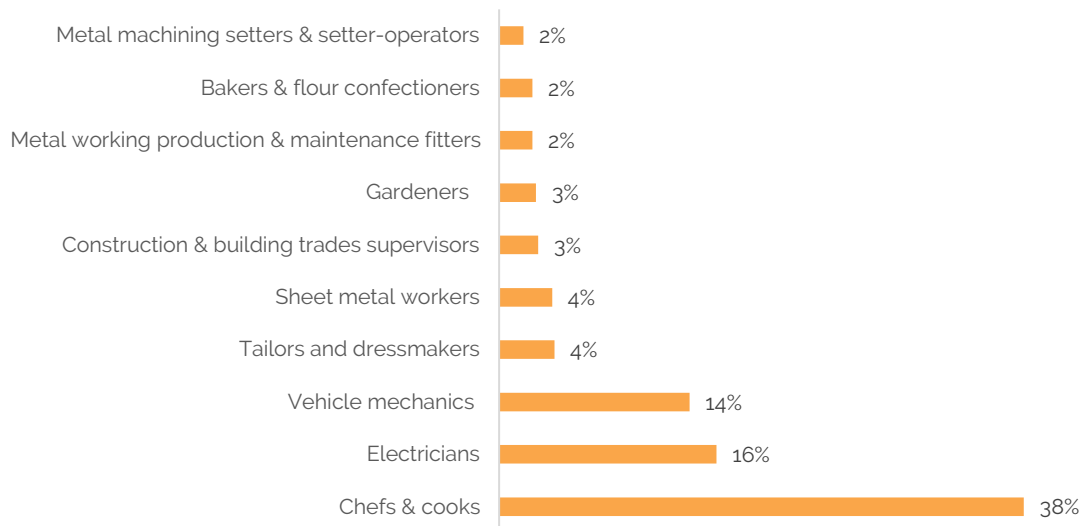


Source: WIH-OJA (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

Skilled trades occupations

Skilled trades occupations made up 8% of total online job adverts in 2023, a slight increase on the share observed in 2022 (7%). While the total number of job adverts declined by 17%, the fall for skilled trades was considerably smaller at 5%. More than one third of all skilled trades adverts were for chefs or cooks (Figure 9.16). Adverts for skilled trades occupations, at 80%, had the highest share offering full-time contracts (Table 9.1).

Figure 9.16 Most Frequently Cited Skilled Trades Occupations (as a Share of Total Skilled Trades Ads), 2023



Source: WIH-OJA (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

For skilled trades occupations, quality related skills (quality standards, manage quality, and define quality standards) were among the most frequently occurring skills in job adverts, along with teamwork and an ability to adapt to change (Figure 9.17).

Figure 9.17 Most Frequently Mentioned Skills in Adverts for Skilled Trades, 2023

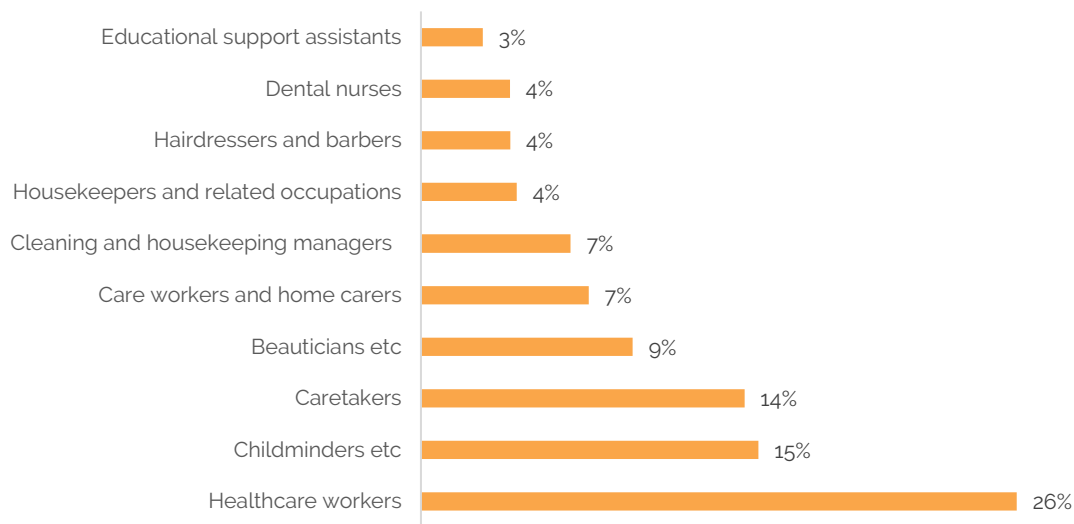


Source: WIH-OJA (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

Caring & personal services occupations

Caring and personal services occupations made up nearly 5% of total job adverts in 2023, slightly higher than the 4% observed in 2022. The decline in the number of adverts for this occupational group, at 3%, was considerably lower than average for total job adverts (-17%). One quarter of all job adverts for caring and personal services occupations were for healthcare workers, with a further 7% for care workers/home carers (Figure 9.18). More than a third of adverts for this occupational group offered a part-time contract – the highest share across all occupational groups (Table 9.1).

Figure 9.18 Most Frequently Cited Caring & Personal Service Occupations (as a Share of Total Caring & Personal Service Adverts), 2023



Source: WIH-OJA (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

The ability to adapt to change, communication, and working in teams were amongst the most sought-after skills in job adverts for caring and personal service occupations (Figure 9.19).

Figure 9.19 Most Frequently Mentioned Skills in Ads for Caring & Personal Service Occupations, 2023

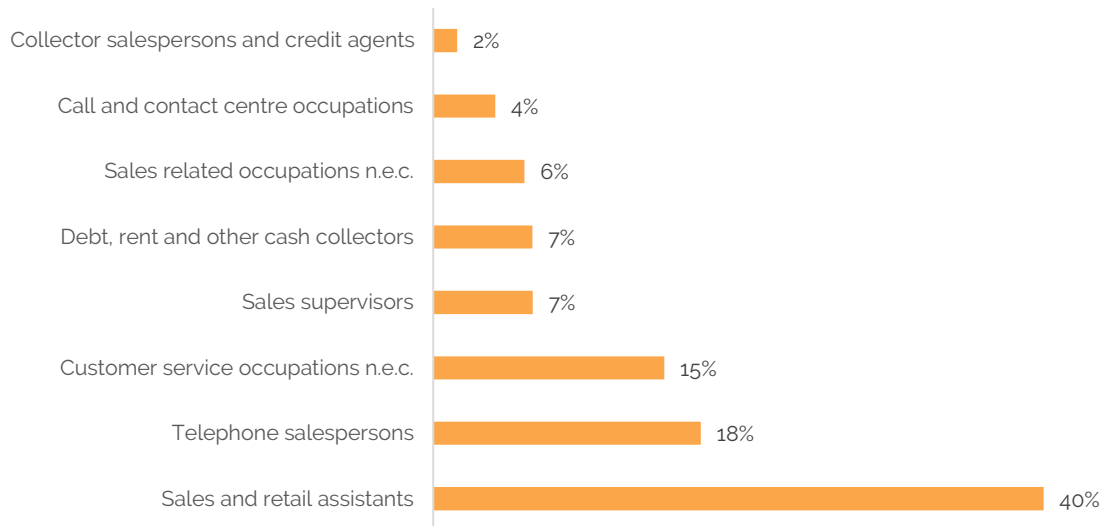


Source: WIH-OJA (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

Sales occupations

Sales occupations accounted for 4.1% of the total online job adverts in 2023, broadly similar to 2022 (4.5%), despite the 24% drop in the number of adverts for this occupational group. Two fifths of all online job adverts for sales occupations related to sales and retail assistants (Figure 9.20).

Figure 9.20 Most Frequently Cited Sales Occupations (as a Share of Total Sales Adverts), 2023



Source: WIH-OJA (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

Along with the ability to adapt to change and work in teams, skills cited for this occupational group, unsurprisingly, also featured sales related skills (e.g. sales promotion techniques, the ability to sell services and products, and knowledge of sales strategies) (Figure 9.21). Combined these sales skills made up nearly 10% of all skills mentioned in adverts for this occupation in 2023.

Figure 9.21 Top Skills Mentioned in Adverts for Sales Occupations, 2023

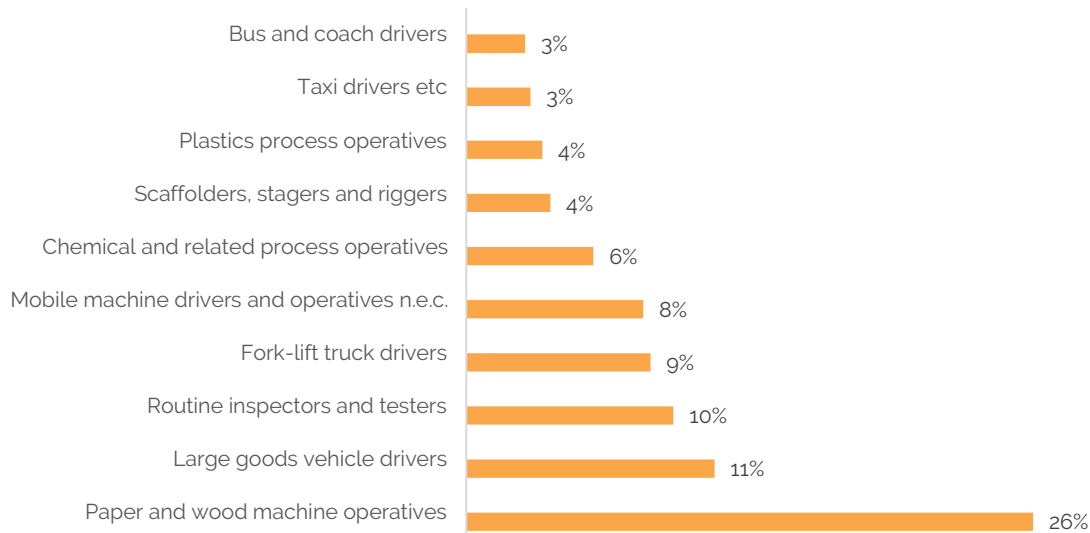


Source: WIH-OJA (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

Operative occupations

Operative occupations accounted for nearly 6% of all job adverts in 2023, up slightly from 5.5% in 2022. Although paper/wood machine operatives are the single largest occupation for operative job adverts, when combined, adverts for various types of drivers made up over a third (Figure 9.22). After skilled trades occupations, operatives had the second highest share of adverts that offered a full-time contract (69%) (Table 9.1).

Figure 9.22 Most Frequently Cited Operative Occupations (as a Share of Total Operative Adverts), 2023



Source: WIH-OJA (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

The most frequently mentioned skills in job adverts for operatives included the ability to adjust priorities, work in teams and manage time (Figure 9.23); other skills included attention to detail, quality standards and manage quality.

Figure 9.23 Most Frequently Mentioned Skills in Adverts for Operative Occupations, 2023

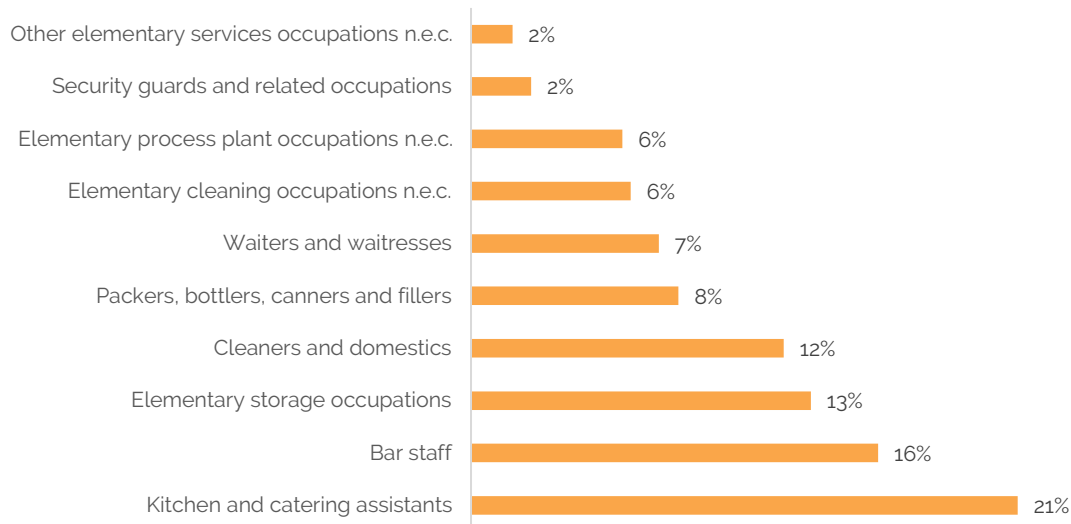


Source: WIH-OJA (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

Elementary occupations

As in 2022, elementary occupations made up over 5% of all job adverts in 2023. Combined hospitality related occupations (kitchen assistants, bar staff and waiting staff) accounted for nearly 45% of job ads in this occupational group (Figure 9.24). This group had the second highest share of adverts that required candidates to have experience of one year or less (Figure 9.6).

Figure 9.24 Most Frequently Mentioned Operative Occupations (as a Share of Total Elementary Ads), 2023



Source: WIH-OJA (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

For elementary occupations, the top three skills mentioned in job adverts were the ability to adapt to change, work in teams and work in shifts (Figure 9.25). Many of the other skills reflected the food/catering occupations advertised, and included cleaning kitchen equipment, monitoring kitchen supplies, and maintaining work area cleanliness.

Figure 9.25 Most Frequently Mentioned Skills in Adverts for Elementary Occupations, 2023



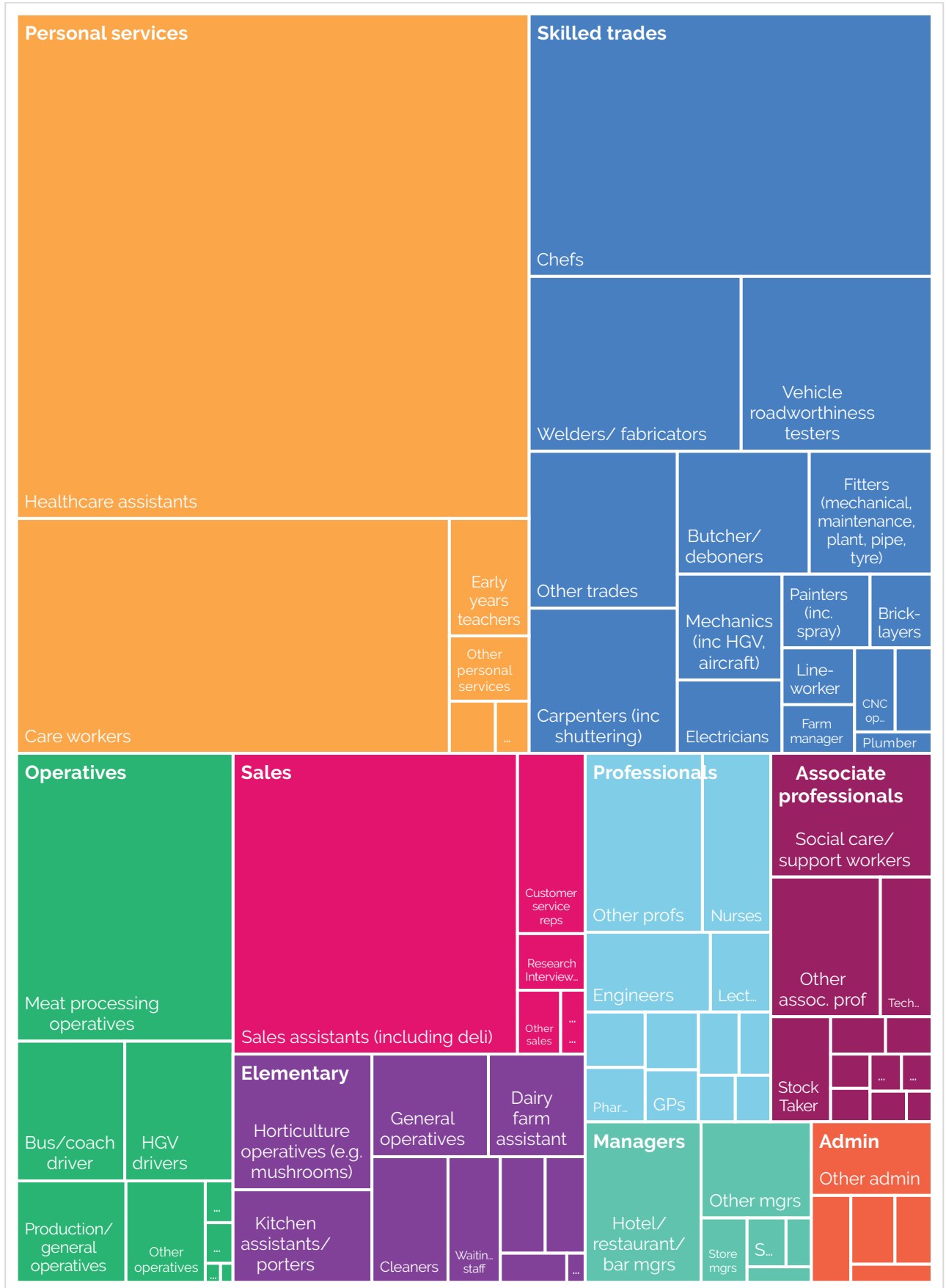
Source: WIH-OJA (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

9.2.2 DSP JobsIreland.ie vacancy adverts

The Eurostat's Web Intelligence Hub (WIH) data examined above includes data from the DSP JobsIreland.ie site. In addition, the SLMRU receive a separate JobsIreland.ie vacancy dataset directly from the DSP which contains additional detail such as job title that offers useful insights into the type of roles employers are recruiting through this portal. The vacancies detailed in Figure 9.26 relate to paid positions only from this dataset. There was a decline of 14% in the number of paid position posts advertised on DSP Jobs Ireland in 2023 when compared to the previous year. This was particularly related to declines in advertised posts for personal services (e.g. care workers) and to a lesser extent, elementary occupations (with a fall in the number of posts for horticultural workers in particular). Despite this, there was growth in a number of occupations, with the largest growth for skilled trades. In 2023,

- **Managers** accounted for 3% of vacancies, with job titles relating primarily to managers in restaurants, bars and hotels, but also for store managers, sales/marketing managers, construction project managers, and supply chain managers
- **Professionals** accounted for 6% of vacancies, with job titles including nurses, various engineers, lecturers, pharmacists, product development managers, family doctors/GPs, youth/social workers, quantity surveyors, business analysts, and accountants
- **Associate professional** vacancies (5% of total) included social care/support workers, various technicians (including mechanical, maintenance, electrical, CAD), stock takers, camp counsellors (mainly for posts in France), community employment supervisors, sales representatives, business development/marketing executives, procurement officers/buyers, youth workers, Garda trainee positions, prison officers, and HR roles
- **Administrative** vacancies (2% of total) primarily related to the recruitment of civil service clerical officers (both temporary and permanent); there were also vacancies advertised for transport/stock control clerks, receptionists, and administrators
- **Skilled trades** vacancies (25% of total) were primarily for chefs (accounting for two-fifths of all vacancies in this group), with chef de partie appearing most frequently; adverts for posts for welders/fabricators also occurred frequently, followed by vehicle roadworthiness testers, carpenters (including shuttering), butchers/deboners, fitters (including mechanical, maintenance, plant, pipe, tyre), mechanics (including HGV and aircraft), electricians, bricklayers/stonemasons, painters (including spray), line workers, farm managers, CNC operators, plasterers, and plumbers
- **Personal services** vacancy notifications fell significantly in 2023 when compared to 2022 but still account for the largest share across all occupations (34% of total); a large number of posts were advertised for healthcare assistants and care workers, with a smaller share relating to early years teachers along with hairdressers, barbers, spa therapists and housekeepers in hotels
- **Sales** roles accounted for 9% of vacancies, primarily related to sales assistants (including deli) with approximately three quarters of all sales roles advertised; the remainder were for roles such as customer service representatives, research interviewers, sales advisors, and merchandisers
- **Operative** roles accounted for 10% of all vacancies advertised, with the majority relating to meat processing operatives; there were also vacancies for HGV and bus/coach drivers along with production/general operatives, other drivers (e.g. van, delivery, forklift, machine), and scaffolders
- **Elementary occupations** (7% of total) were primarily for agricultural roles including horticultural operatives (e.g. mushroom pickers) and dairy farm assistants, but also for hospitality roles (kitchen assistants/porters, waiters, bar staff/baristas), cleaners, warehouse operatives, security officers (including event and retail), baggage handlers, labourers, and general operatives.

Figure 9.26 DSP Jobs Ireland Vacancies (Paid Positions Only) by Occupational Group & Key Job Titles, 2023



Source: DSP Jobs Ireland

9.3 Recruitment Agency Survey (November 2023)

The SLMRU in SOLAS conducts a recruitment agency survey to gather recruitment agencies' views on vacancies which in their experience are proving difficult-to-fill. Table 9.2 refers to the roles that were most frequently identified as difficult-to-fill when agencies were surveyed in November 2023.

Table 9.2 Summary of Main Job Titles Identified as Difficult-To-Fill, November 2023

Managers	Project/site/contracts managers in construction
	Logistics/warehouse/procurement/supply chain managers (mid-upper management)
	Production managers (bioscience)
	Restaurant managers/hotel front office managers
	HR managers
	Finance managers
Professionals	Software developers: Java, C++, Python, DevOps, Scala IT engineers (security, test, site reliability, network, cloud, windows deployment) Other IT: big data analysts (e.g. SQL, Oracle), solutions architects, data scientists, quality analyst
	Engineering: quality control/quality assurance, electrical, EHS (environmental health & safety), process, validation, R&D, automation, mechanical, manufacturing, chemical Pharmacovigilance specialists, scientists (analytical & process), microbiologists/managers Regulatory affairs, compliance and quality managers/specialists in pharma
	Business & finance: financial/practice/tax/insurance accountants, newly/partly qualified accountants, financial controllers (senior roles)
	Quantity surveyors, civil/site engineers
	Nurses (staff, intensive care/theatre, general, oncology), medical consultants and registrars (psychiatric, emergency medicine), general practitioners (GPs)
Associate professionals	Sales/marketing managers, field sales agents (construction), freight sales
	Supply chain analysts, procurement administrators, planners (construction & industry)
	Health & safety officers, BIM/draughtspersons, data analysts
	IT technicians: tech support/customer care (with language skills), content reviewers
	Other technicians: maintenance (electrical/mechanical), lab
Administrative	Accounts/financial/office administrative roles, credit control administrators, payroll

	Freight forwarders, site administration roles
Skilled trades	Welders: TIG, ARC
	Construction: carpenters (inc. shuttering), electricians, steel fixers/erectors, curtain wallers, fitters & glaziers, building supervisors/foreman, mechanics
	Events/bar managers, chefs
Personal services	Healthcare assistants, nursing home care workers
Sales & customer service	Hotel customer service
Operatives and Elementary	Drivers: reach/forklift drivers, HGV (artic/rigid) (C, CE license), machine, site dump, crane, teleporters
	Operatives (warehouse, packaging, manufacturing, food, production)
	Waiting and cleaning staff
	Construction: general labourers, banksman, scaffolders, pipe layers, ground workers

Source: Recruitment Agency Survey, November 2023



Section 10

Occupational Employment Profiles

This section provides a statistical analysis of employment at occupational level. Employment profiles are provided for nearly 100 occupations. The occupations were based on the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) 2010; in cases where estimated employment was too small to report for statistical reasons, two or more occupations were merged. All of the occupations were then grouped into 16 groups. In general, occupations that were associated with the same sector of employment or occupations with similar duties were grouped together. The occupational groups were as follows

- science and engineering occupations
- ICT occupations
- business and financial occupations
- healthcare occupations
- social and care occupations
- legal and security occupations
- construction occupations
- other craft occupations
- agriculture and animal care occupations
- hospitality occupations
- arts, sports and tourism occupations
- transport and logistics occupations
- administrative and secretarial occupations
- sales, marketing and customer service occupations
- operative and elementary occupations (labourers) n.e.c.

This year, a review of the occupations included in each occupational group was conducted by the SLMRU resulting in the introduction of some minor changes to some of the groups. As a result, in addition to the break in series (outlined in the Introduction), data in Section 10 is not directly comparable with that in Section 10 of earlier editions of the National Skills Bulletin. The changes are detailed below.

- The science and engineering occupational family contains two new occupations:
 - **environmental/conservation specialists**: this occupation comprises a number of detailed occupations that had previously been grouped either with other science & engineering occupations or in the other occupations n.e.c. group.
 - **health and safety officers** (previously grouped with other occupations n.e.c.).
- Care workers, home carers, etc. now also include the detailed **residential, day and domiciliary care managers and proprietors** occupation (previously grouped with managers and proprietors in other services).
- The other craft occupational group has been reorganised as follows:
 - welding trades (previously included in the metal forming, welding and metal trades group) has been combined with metal working, production and maintenance fitters (previously included in the metal machining, fitting and instrument making trades group) to form the **welders and fabricators** occupation
 - the remaining occupations from these two groups have been combined to form **other metal trades**.
- The animal carers occupation in the agriculture and animal care occupations family now also includes **veterinarians** (which had previously been categorised with healthcare occupations).

- The hairdressers & beauticians, etc. occupation now also includes **hairdressing and beauty salon managers and proprietors** (which had previously been categorised with other occupations n.e.c.).
- Within the transport and logistics occupational family,
 - **large goods vehicle drivers** (formerly grouped within the truck and van driver occupation) are presented separately. Van drivers are now included within the other drivers & transport operatives occupation.
 - taxi drivers have been removed from the other drivers and other transport operatives group to form a stand-alone occupation **taxi/cab drivers and chauffeurs**.

Full details of the new occupations included in each occupational group are available in the Appendix.

For each of the occupations, an analysis was conducted using the following indicators:

- **Employment:** an annual average of employment figures over the four quarters in 2023
- **Employment growth:** the annualised rate of employment growth for the period 2018-2023
- **Females:** the percentage of females employed in an occupation (based on quarter 4 2023 data from the LFS)
- **Full-time:** the percentage of persons who work full-time in an occupation (based on quarter 4 2023 data from the LFS)
- **Aged 55 years and over:** a higher than average share of persons aged 55 years and over indicates a higher expected retirement rate in the short to medium-term (based on quarter 4 2023 data from the LFS)
- **Non-Irish citizens:** a higher than average proportion of non-Irish citizens in an occupation indicates employers' reliance on sourcing skills/labour from abroad to fill vacancies (based on quarter 4 2023 data from the LFS)
- **Third level qualifications:** the percentage of persons who have attained a third level qualification (based on quarter 4 2023 data from the LFS)
- **Employment permits:** issued to non-EEA nationals in 2023. This is an indicator of the demand for skills that could not be met from domestic or EEA sources. (Based on new permits issued in 2023; Source: Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment)
- **Recruitment Agency Survey:** presents the results of the SLMRU (SOLAS) Recruitment Agency Survey conducted in November 2023. The occupations with mentions of difficult-to-fill vacancies reported by recruitment agencies are indicated by a '√'.

In addition, the outlooks for each of the occupations were determined using the above data and a number of additional sources including

- The **Skills for Growth** data, where employers, working directly with Regional Skills Fora managers (DFHERIS) throughout 2023, identified job vacancies which in their experience were proving difficult-to-fill
- Data on employers' skills needs gathered from Enterprise Ireland's **Spotlight on Skills** workshops
- **Recent job hires** data (from the LFS) refers to those who commenced employment in the previous three months and is examined in detail in Section 7.2; for the outlooks by occupation, a high volume of recent job hires often signals job churn, particularly when there is little evidence of employment growth
- **Vacancy data** from both CEDEFOP/Eurostat's Web Intelligence Hub and DSP Jobs Ireland in 2023 (as detailed in Section 9)
- **DSP Jobseekers** data, where relevant, refers to the number of job ready unemployed persons registered with DSP with previous experience in a given occupation (based on data for December 2023; Source: DSP)

- **Supply of skills** was approximated using the expected output from the formal education and training system, bearing in mind that education/training provision is not always directly linked to a specific occupation and that for many occupations there are no mandatory qualification requirements
- Reference is also made to any relevant **sectoral and Government reports** which directly impact on skills.

From analysing these numerous data sources, an indication of the outlook for each of the occupations was derived and any shortage or potential shortage was identified.

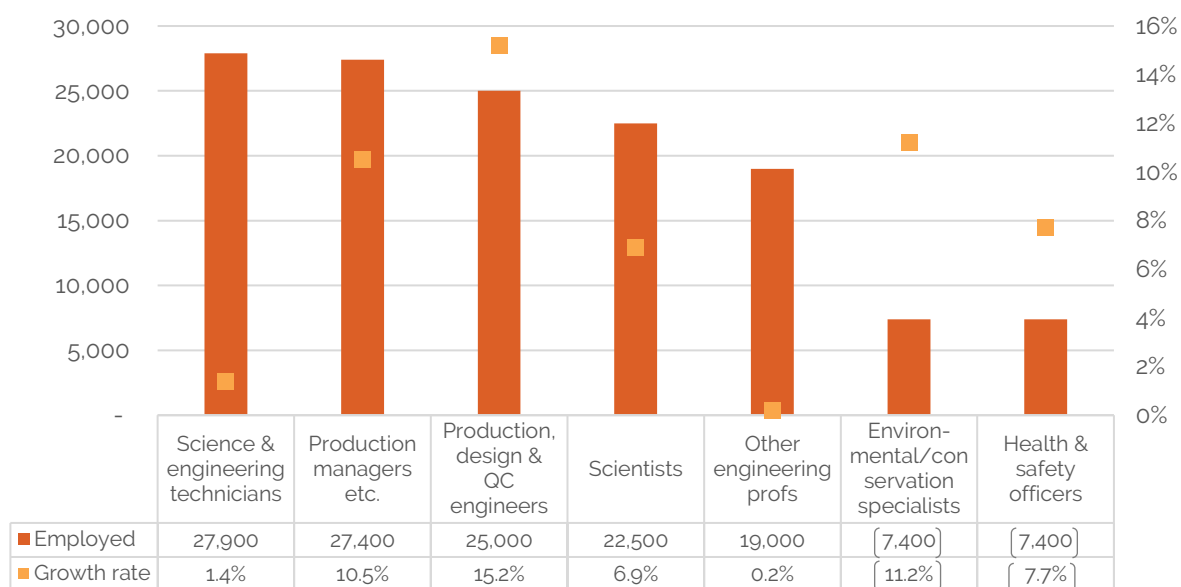
The term 'shortage' within this report refers only to the situation whereby the supply of skills or labour from within the Irish workforce is insufficient to meet demand. Where possible, a distinction is made between skill or labour shortages. Given that the findings are based on current data, future shortages are only indicated in cases where there is clear evidence that the shortages will persist or if current trends in education provision indicate that future shortages may emerge. The outlook was deemed inconclusive in circumstances where issues were identified within an occupation but the numbers employed were too small to determine, based on the available data, if a shortage exists.

A skills shortage may arise for a number of different reasons. For example, the shortage may reflect a temporary or a sustained increase in the demand for a particular skill, or a reduction in the number of students who are acquiring the relevant qualifications. The most effective way to alleviate a shortage will depend on the reason for which the shortage has arisen. For example, if the shortage is of a temporary nature, it may be more effective to source the scarce skills from abroad, rather than to increase the number of student places in the relevant disciplines.

The results also indicate the specific job titles within the occupation that are experiencing shortages because the shortages, in most cases, do not relate to all of the job titles linked to an occupation. The purpose of this bulletin is solely to identify occupations for which shortages exist, without quantifying them. The identification of the cause and magnitude of these shortages and the appropriate (if any) policy response requires further research. The EGFSN's research programme includes a number of such studies.

10.1 Science & Engineering Occupations

Figure 10.1 Annual Average Employment (2023) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2018-2023)



Overall employment	136,400
Share of total workforce	5.0%
Main sectors of employment	49% - Industry 21% - Professional activities [8%] - ICT [6%] - Health
Employment growth	+37,200 between 2018 and 2023 +6.6% 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
Chemical, biological & physical scientists	[46%]	92%	...	74%	97%	429	✓
Other engineering professionals	...	97%	...	73%	92%	1,545	✓
Production, design & QC engineers	[35%]	95%	...	76%	96%	1,748	✓
Science & engineering technicians	45%	98%	...	87%	73%	180	✓
Production managers etc.	[25%]	97%	[23%]	85%	68%	82	✓
Environmental/conservation specialists	...	[88%]	...	[82%]	[69%]	42	✓
Health and safety officers	...	[85%]	...	[92%]	...	5	✓
Overall total	33%	95%	14%	80%	83%	4,031	

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

Employment growth was above average for this occupational group with demand for these skills evident in the high number of employment permits issued, frequent mentions in online job adverts and difficulty in filling vacancies highlighted in both the Skills for Growth data and through the Recruitment Agency Survey. Only a third of those employed were female; a recent report from SOLAS³⁹ highlights the fact that reducing occupational gender segregation in certain occupations could unlock additional supply of skills, particularly where skills are in high demand.

Approximately half of the workforce were employed in industrial activities (e.g. medical devices, pharmaceuticals, R&D etc.), with multinational enterprises playing a significant role in future demand. In addition, adapting to new work practices as a result of the green agenda, such as sustainable sourcing, circular lifecycles, energy efficiency, and waste minimization, will ensure a continued strong demand for scientists and engineers in these areas. An analysis by CEDEFOP of online job vacancies for Ireland shows that the number of job ads for professional and associate professional green jobs remains small but policy developments are likely to see an increase in demand for these green skills across a range of occupations (e.g. European Green Deal⁴⁰). A recent report by the EGFSN on the skills needs in the biopharma sector, where many of those employed in these occupations work, estimated the additional jobs required for this sector over the next five years to be in the range of 14,000 to 26,000.⁴¹ The report also notes that new technologies such as artificial intelligence are likely to increase the demand for those who can adapt to and apply new technologies, particularly in certain sectors such as the life sciences.

Skills identified as being in demand by employers (through Skills for Growth and Enterprise Ireland's Spotlight on Skills) included project management, communication, technical skills, product knowledge, documentation/compliance procedures knowledge. Leadership skills were also in demand, as those previously in technical roles move to management, communication and strategic roles; R&D, innovation and product management were also of importance.

Output from third level education remains strong: at levels 8-10, there were over 6,000 science awards and over 4,300 engineering/manufacturing awards made in 2022 to students at HEA-funded institutions.

Occupation	Economic summary
Scientists* Skills shortage: Analytical, process, and medical scientists	<p>Average annual employment growth over the five-year period was above average for this occupation, although employment levels remained unchanged between 2022 and 2023. At 26%, the share of non-Irish citizens employed in this occupation was above the national average. Despite a fall in the number of online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) in 2023, scientists were the fifth most frequently occurring occupation across all online job adverts. Employment permits issued were across various roles in industry and health including bio-process associates, QC chemists, and medical scientists. The Recruitment Agency Survey highlighted issues with recruiting process/analytical scientists and microbiologists, while Skills for Growth data identified the need for skills in good manufacturing practices (GMP), quality and validation.</p> <p>The number of biochemistry and chemistry awards made at third level has been growing annually for several years and reached nearly 900 and 1,000 awards respectively in 2022 (up from 580 and 800 in 2018). Similarly, the number of awards made in medical or pharma/bio-pharma fields grew to 1,400 (up from 1,300 in 2018).</p> <p>A high level of demand for these occupations remains evident, with shortages expected to persist, particularly in the life sciences sector, for those with experience and/or in niche areas.</p>

³⁹ https://www.solas.ie/f/70398/x/3070efff73/solas_summer-skills-bulletin_2024_.pdf

⁴⁰ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en

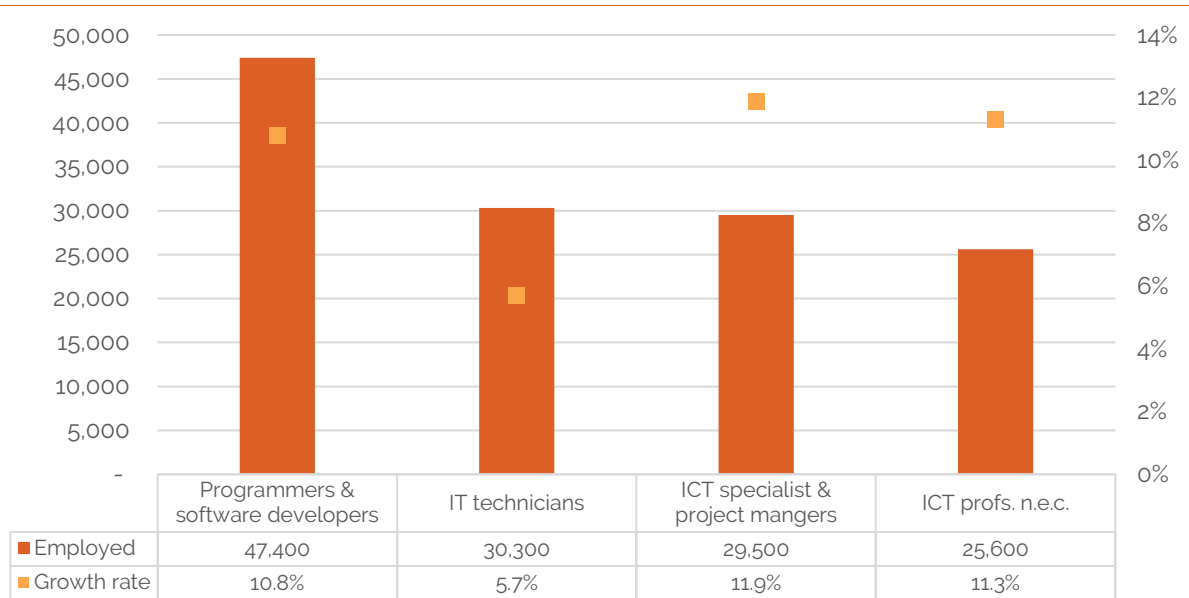
⁴¹ <https://skillsireland.ie/all-publications/2024/skills-for-biopharma.pdf>

<p>Production, design & QC engineers*</p> <p>Skills shortage: Quality control/assurance, process, and design engineers</p>	<p>Employment grew very strongly for this occupation over the five-year period, increasing by over 12,000 persons; between 2022 and 2023 employment levels grew by 3,400. Two thirds were employed in industry; 24% were non-Irish citizens, above the national average. The large volume of employment permits issued were particularly high for quality control/assurance, design and process engineers. This occupation had the highest number of mentions in the Recruitment Agency Survey for engineering roles including quality control/assurance, compliance/regulatory and process, validation and R&D. In terms of skills in demand for these roles, data from Spotlight on Skills and Skills for Growth highlight the need for good interpersonal, project management, budgeting, and quality management skills. The strong employment growth and the numerous mentions across other data sources for these roles shows that demand is continuing and that shortages are occurring particularly for those with specific skills and experience.</p>
<p>Other engineering professionals (e.g. mechanical, electrical and electronic engineers)</p> <p>Skills shortage: Engineers (mechanical, electrical, automation)</p>	<p>Employment levels have declined annually for this occupation since 2021, resulting in an average growth rate only slightly above zero. Employment is primarily divided between industry and the professional activities sector. Over a quarter (27%) of those employed were non-Irish citizens and 87% were male. Despite the fall in employment, demand remains evident. This occupation accounted for the highest share of online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) in 2023. Vacancies advertised through DSP related mainly to mechanical and electrical engineers. A high volume of employment permits were issued for electrical, mechanical and automation engineers amongst others, and these were mentioned in the Recruitment Agency Survey results as difficult-to-fill vacancies and also in the Spotlight on Skills data. Skills in demand for these roles included project management, interpersonal, analytics and mathematical skills (based on Skills for Growth data). Demand persists for some specific roles within this occupation, namely mechanical, electrical and automation engineers, despite the decline in overall employment levels. While employment for each of these individual occupations is small, these skills play a critical role in industry, particularly in the life sciences, and in the transition to a digital and green economy.</p>
<p>Science & engineering technicians</p> <p>Skills shortage: Maintenance/lab technicians</p>	<p>Employment growth was below average for this occupation with employment levels remaining almost unchanged between 2022 and 2023. A half of those employed were in industry, with the remainder spread across most other sectors. Online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) were particularly prevalent for lab technicians followed by electrical/electronic technicians, while vacancies advertised through DSP were notable for mechanical, maintenance and electrical technicians. Employment permits were issued across a number of technician roles including manufacturing, mechanical and maintenance. The Recruitment Agency Survey identified vacancies for maintenance and lab technicians as difficult-to-fill, while Skills for Growth data indicated issues with sourcing lab analysts and maintenance, QA/QC and process technicians. Skills in demand included environmental awareness and monitoring as well as health and safety. With output from new apprenticeships (e.g. lab analyst/technician, OEM engineer, wind turbine maintenance technician) along with other apprenticeship awards for these roles (e.g. manufacturing technology), supply may soon be sufficient to meet demand for these roles, particularly without any employment growth. While output from new apprenticeships has begun to emerge, demand for this occupation remains strong with shortages persisting in the short term.</p>
<p>Production managers in manufacturing</p>	<p>Employment growth was above average for this occupation, growing by between 3,500 and 4,400 annually since 2020. Approximately two thirds of those employed held third level qualifications and almost a quarter were aged 55 years and older (above the national average). Employment permits were issued across a number of manufacturing areas including pharmaceuticals, computers, food and medical devices. Employers (via EI's Spotlight on Skills and the Recruitment Agency Survey) have highlighted recruitment difficulties for production (in bio-industry) and operations managers. To date, issues with sourcing candidates with specific skills sets and industry experience are small in number but if employment levels continue to grow, future shortages may emerge.</p>
<p>Environmental/conservation specialists*</p> <p>Shortage: Inconclusive</p>	<p>Although the numbers employed are too small for detailed analysis, employment levels have grown above average over the five-year period. A small number of employment permits were issued in 2023 across a number of sectors for roles such as environmental health & safety (EHS) specialists/managers, environmental engineers and ecologists. EHS engineers were also mentioned in the Recruitment Agency Survey as difficult-to-fill vacancies. As we strive to reach the targets set out in the Climate Action Plan, demand for these roles is likely to increase.</p>
<p>Health and safety officers*</p>	<p>The numbers employed remain too small for detailed analysis but employment growth was above average. Health and safety officers in the construction sector were mentioned in the Recruitment Agency Survey and a small number of employment permits were issued for these roles. Skills for Growth data highlighted skills requirements including industrial safety, risk assessment, report writing and communication.</p>

* This occupation is new or has been changed since the previous edition. See page 137 for details of the revision and Appendix for a list of job roles included in this occupation.

10.2 ICT Occupations

Figure 10.2 Annual Average Employment (2023) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2018-2023)



Overall employment	132,800
Share of total workforce	5.0%
Main sectors of employment	68% - ICT 9% - Financial activities 9% - Industry
Employment growth	+49,700 between 2018 and 2023 +9.8% 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
ICT specialist & project managers	[31%]	99%	...	70%	93%	548	
Programmers & software developers	[20%]	98%	...	53%	96%	1,822	✓
ICT profs. n.e.c.	[27%]	95%	...	63%	89%	1,909	✓
IT technicians	[31%]	91%	...	61%	70%	173	✓
Overall total	26%	96%	10%	61%	89%	4,452	

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

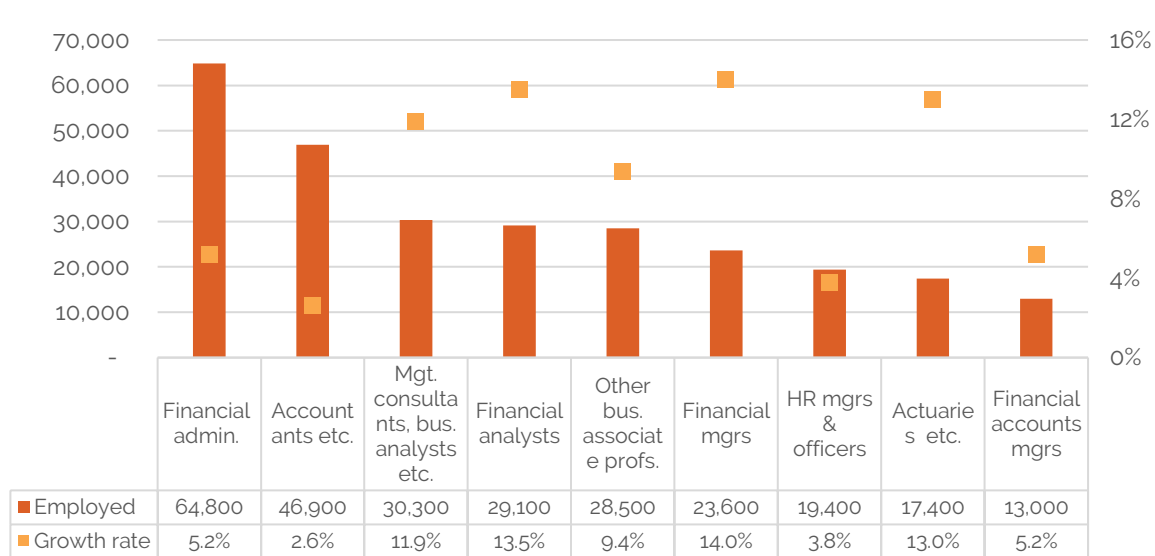
At 9.8%, this occupational group had the strongest annual average employment growth rate over the five-year period, with an additional 50,000 persons employed. The largest share of this growth occurred between 2019 and 2021, although overall levels have continued to grow annually since, despite a slowdown in hirings in the ICT sector. Although most are employed in the ICT sector, demand for these roles occurs across other sectors including finance and industry. Only a quarter of those employed were female, and the recent SOLAS report (referenced previously) highlights the fact that reducing occupational gender segregation would increase the potential supply of skills for in demand roles such as these. At present, migration is a key source of skills for these roles, with non-Irish citizens accounting for almost two-fifths of persons employed, the highest share across all occupational groups; this group also had the second largest number of employment permits issued in 2023 after healthcare occupations. Supply from the education and training system remains strong, with nearly 8,000 graduates from ICT programmes at third level alone; despite a small decline of 130 awards year-on-year, the total number of awards made in this field remains one third higher than in 2018.

Occupation	Economic summary
ICT specialist & project managers	Employment growth was above average for this occupation, with employment levels continuing to grow between 2022 and 2023 (by 4,400). Employment permits were primarily issued for the ICT sector across a number of roles including project/product managers. The number of online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) was small for this occupation, with no indication from either the Recruitment Agency Survey or Skills for Growth data of issues with sourcing persons for these roles; Although demand for this role continues, issues with recruitment appear to have eased, with no shortages identified at present.
Programmers & software developers Skills shortage: Software developers/engineers	Although employment growth was above average for this occupation, employment levels declined in 2023, returning to 2021 levels (but remaining far above pre-COVID-19 levels). At 47%, this occupation has the second highest share of non-Irish citizens employed (alongside chefs, with the highest share for butchers). Only one fifth were female and over three quarters were employed in the ICT sector. Over 1,800 new permits were issued in 2023, a decline of 2,500 on 2022 and accounting for over half of the decline in permits issued for this occupational group. Despite a large fall in the number of online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) compared to the previous year, this occupation still accounted for the fourth largest share in 2023. There was a relatively high volume of difficult-to-fill mentions in the Recruitment Agency Survey (various developer roles) and employer data (Skills for Growth, Spotlight on Skills) highlighted issues sourcing VR developers, junior software developers, computer programmers and those with skills in cyber security, AWS and tech development stack. There are some signs of a slowdown in demand and hirings in this occupation after the significant expansion in the ICT sector in recent years. However, demand continues, both in the ICT sector and across all sectors in the economy, with shortages likely to persist for the foreseeable future.
ICT profs. n.e.c. Skills shortage: IT analysts/engineers	Employment growth was significantly above average for this occupation, with particularly strong growth between 2022 and 2023 (an additional 6,500 persons). Those employed were primarily male, working full-time and holding third-level qualifications. The share of non-Irish citizens employed far exceeded the national average (37% compared to 19% nationally). Although the number of employment permits issued declined by 1,600 between 2022 and 2023, this occupation had the highest share of permits issued in 2023 across the ICT occupations for roles including data engineers, IT analysts/engineers (systems, security, cloud, network, test, technical support). With the third highest share of online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) across all occupations, roles included IT business analysts, architects and systems designers. Vacancies were mentioned as difficult-to-fill in the Recruitment Agency Survey for security/network/site reliability engineers and solutions architects, while network engineers were noted as difficult to source in the Skills for Growth data. Demand for these roles is evident from the data and with the continued cybersecurity threats, and the emergence of advanced technologies (e.g. AI, machine learning and Blockchain), demand is expected to persist particularly for security engineers.

IT technicians	<p>Although there was an above average annual employment growth rate over the five-year period for this occupation, it was the lowest across all ICT occupations, with employment levels remaining relatively unchanged since 2021. Employment in this occupation was spread across a wide range of sectors, with only half of employment in the ICT sector; it also had the lowest share of those employed with third level qualifications (at 70%). Almost two fifths of those employed were non-Irish citizens, significantly above the national average. Employment permits related to technical support roles, primarily in the ICT sector. Mentions of difficult-to-fill vacancies in the Recruitment Agency Survey related mainly to technical support and customer care roles (with language skills required for both). Skills for Growth data noted issues with sourcing maintenance technicians for the ICT services sector (industry certified and with problem solving skills). Although issues have arisen in attracting people with specific skills (e.g. languages), the lack of recent employment growth suggests that there is no overall shortage of IT technicians at present.</p>
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10.3 Business & Financial Occupations

Figure 10.3 Annual Average Employment (2023) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2018-2023)



Overall employment	272,900
Share of total workforce	10%
Main sectors of employment	35% - Financial activities 20% - Professional activities 9% - Industry 7% - Wholesale & retail
Employment growth	+82,700 between 2018 and 2023 +7.5% 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
Accountants & tax experts	54%	92%	15%	80%	95%	671	✓
Mgt. consultants, business analysts & project managers	45%	94%	...	84%	87%	1,636	
Actuaries, economists & statisticians	51%	90%	...	89%	99%	109	✓
Financial analysts and insurance underwriters	48%	94%	...	80%	87%	111	
Other business associate professionals	52%	90%	...	81%	85%	223	✓
Financial accounts managers	[55%]	95%	...	80%	86%	31	
Financial managers & directors	50%	89%	...	78%	88%	84	✓
Financial admin. occupations	72%	75%	18%	85%	60%	3	✓
HR managers and officers	76%	85%	...	85%	87%	116	
Overall total	57%	88%	15%	81%	83%	2,984	

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 business and financial occupational group had the largest increase in numbers employed over the five-year period across all occupational groups, with an additional 82,700 persons employed. The employment growth rate was above average across all occupations in this grouping, with the exception of accountants. Business and finance skills are required across all sectors of the economy, with a third employed in the financial activities sector and the remainder across sectors including professional activities, industry and wholesale/retail.

The recent EGFSN report on the skills for international financial services details demand for roles including accountants and tax experts, and senior/specialist skills such as anti-money laundering (AML), insurance claims, and credit research specialists.⁴² Skills identified included knowledge of sustainable finance practices and ESG standards, risk and compliance, regulatory, AML. In addition, EI's Spotlight on Skills data identified skills including teamwork, team leadership, and people/financial/project management as in demand across a variety of financial roles. The demand for financial skills is also being shaped by factors such as the changing patterns of banking; the exit of Ulster Bank and KBC from the Irish market, and the shift towards digital banking platforms (e.g. Revolut) will require different skillsets. A 2022 report on the financial services in Ireland indicated that demand is being driven by advances in digital technology (particularly distributed ledger technology/blockchain, AI etc)⁴³ with demand for blockchain skills (and AI and automation to a lesser extent) evident in the financial sector according to a recent report by the ESRI⁴⁴. These, along with the increased focus on sustainable finance, will be the main drivers of upskilling and reskilling needs across most financial occupations.

Occupation	Economic summary
Accountants & tax experts	Employment growth was below average for this occupation over the five-year period, with employment declining by 2,200 between 2022 and 2023. The professional activities sector accounted for the largest share of employment at 44%, with industry and the financial activities sectors combined accounting for a further 28%. Over half (54%) of those employed were female with most working full-time. The number of employment permits issued fell by 320 between 2022 and 2023 but remained higher than previous years; half of the permits issued related to auditing roles, with the remainder for other accountants (financial, tax, fund) and tax consultants. This occupation accounted for 2.5% of all online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) in 2023. The Recruitment Agency Survey and Skills for Growth data identified difficult-to-fill vacancies for part- or newly-qualified accountants and qualified financial accountants (including those with management experience, communication skills, IT skills and those with experience (5 years+)). Demand is likely to be strong due to replacement demand alone for such a large occupation. Upskilling/reskilling will be required for many of those currently employed to adapt to changing skills profiles as a result of digitalisation/AI, climate change (e.g. understanding environmental, social and governance (ESG) practices/criteria), corporate sustainability reporting (under CSRD), and changing regulation (e.g. Brexit).
Mgt. consultants, business analysts & project managers	Employment growth was above average for this occupation, although employment declined marginally between 2022 and 2023. Employment was spread across a number of sectors, primarily professional activities, industry, financial activities and ICT. This occupation had the largest number of employment permits issued across all financial occupations, although the numbers issued fell by almost 900 since 2022; permits issued were primarily for analysts and consultancy roles in the financial activities and ICT sectors. Employer data from Skills for Growth and Spotlight on Skills noted issues sourcing business process managers, project managers, those with data analytics and leadership skills and sector specific experience (e.g. life sciences, ICT). Project management skills are increasingly mentioned in relation to the skills profile for other roles (e.g. ICT, engineers, etc) rather than just as a standalone role. Although demand is evident for specific skills in this occupation, no shortages have been identified.

⁴² <https://skillsireland.ie/all-publications/2024/skills-for-international-financial-services.html>

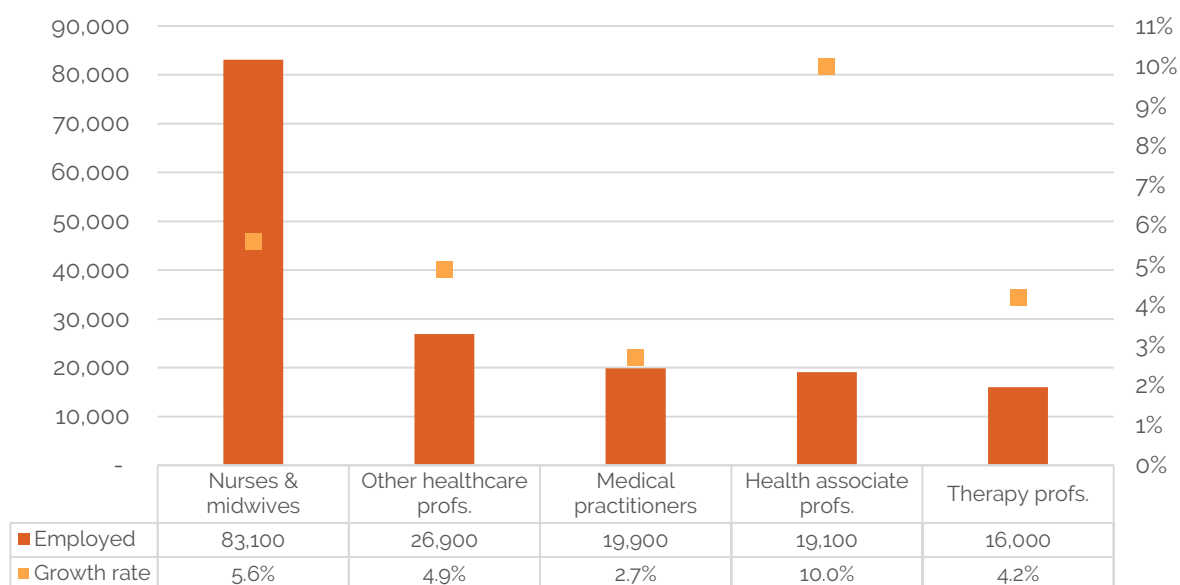
⁴³ IFS Skillnet - Financial Services in Ireland - Skills of the Future Report <https://www.ibec.ie/-/media/documents/connect-and-learn/industries/financial-services-leasing-and-professional-services/financial-services-ireland/2022/financial-services-in-ireland---skills-of-the-future.pdf>

⁴⁴ <https://www.esri.ie/publications/skill-requirements-for-emerging-technologies-in-ireland>

Actuaries, economists & statisticians; other business profs.	Employment growth was above average for this occupation, with steady growth in recent years. There was almost an equal gender split for these roles (51% female) and 11% were non-Irish citizens (compared to 19% nationally). Almost half of employment was in the public administration and defence sector. Employment permits issued in 2023 were primarily in the financial activities sector in roles including actuaries and data scientists. Mentions of data scientists as difficult-to-source occurred in both the Recruitment Agency Survey and Skills for Growth data, particularly for those with strong analytics, teamworking and problem-solving skills. While demand exists for these roles, the numbers involved are likely to be small.
Financial analysts and insurance underwriters	Employment levels have grown annually since 2018 for this occupation, with particularly strong growth between 2021 and 2022 of an additional 5,800 persons (and a more modest growth of 2,000 persons between 2022 and 2023). Employment is concentrated in the financial activities sector, accounting for 88% of employment. Employment permits issued primarily related to various financial analyst roles in the financial sector. Evidence from Skills for Growth and/or Spotlight on Skills data points to issues in sourcing accredited product advisors and qualified financial advisors (QFAs), with demand also for skills in areas such as green/sustainability, pensions, QFA regulations, cyber security, financial management and financial forecasting.
Financial accounts managers	Employment growth was above average for this occupation, largely related to an increase of 2,000 persons employed between 2022 and 2023. Employment was spread across a range of sectors including financial and professional activities, transport and storage and industry. The small number of employment permits issued in 2023 were mainly for account manager roles. The data provides no evidence of issues in relation to this occupation.
Other business associate profs. (e.g. accounting technicians, estimators, valuers)	The five-year annual average growth rate for this occupation was significantly above average, although employment levels declined by 1,800 persons between 2022 and 2023. Employment in these roles was spread across most sectors but particularly in professional and financial activities, industry, ICT and wholesale/retail. This occupation accounted for a 1.8% share of all online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) in 2023. Employment permits were issued for a wide array of roles including logistics/supply chain specialists, financial controllers and accounting technicians. Mentions in the Recruitment Agency Survey related to planners in the transport sector and data analysts (also mentioned in the Skills for Growth data). Demand for data analytics skills is becoming increasingly incorporated into existing roles which may see the demand for data analysts as a standalone role declining.
Financial managers & directors	This occupation had the strongest five-year annual average employment growth rate across all business and financial occupations; employment grew by 4,900 between 2022 and 2023. There was an equal gender split for this occupation. Three quarters of employment was in the financial activities sector. Employment permits were issued for financial managers/directors across a range of sectors. Skills for Growth data noted issues with attracting finance directors for the hospitality sector. Skills for financial managers, and in particular financial institution managers, are evolving with the changing nature of the financial sector, e.g. the impact of automation and digitalisation, the move to online banking and the transition to sustainable finance, with upskilling/reskilling likely to be a key requirement to meet future demand.
Financial admin.	Financial administration roles accounted for the largest occupation in this group. Employment growth was above average although employment levels in 2023 recovered from a dip in 2022. Approximately a third of persons employed were in the financial sector, with the remainder spread across most other sectors including professional activities and wholesale & retail. Almost three quarters of those employed in these roles were female, and 60% held third-level qualifications. The high volume of recent job hires, far exceeding employment growth, indicates that job churn is a feature of this occupation. The Recruitment Agency Survey identified roles including credit control, accounts payable/receivable and customer care (in insurance and banking) as difficult-to-fill. Skills identified in the Skills for Growth data included IT, communication, organisational, payroll, problem solving and report writing. For such a large occupation, and with a high level of job churn, demand for these roles is likely to continue in the short to medium term.
HR managers and officers	Employment growth was marginally above the national average for this occupation, with employment levels almost unchanged between 2022 and 2023. Three quarters of those employed were female and 85% were in full-time roles (above the national average of 78%). Employment permits were issued in 2023 across all sectors for roles including recruitment consultants, HR generalists/specialists, talent acquisition specialists and HR managers. Spotlight on Skills data noted that talent development (and not just retention) is in high demand which requires learning and career development skills. The greater emphasis being placed on retention, talent development and staff wellbeing will likely counteract any potential fall in demand for HR roles for recruitment purposes due to fall in the number of hirings since the post-COVID peak in 2022.

10.4 Healthcare Occupations

Figure 10.4 Annual Average Employment (2023) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2018-2023)



Overall employment	165,000
Share of total workforce	6.0%
Main sectors of employment	89% - Health sector
Employment growth	+38,100 between 2018 and 2023 +5.4% 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
Medical practitioners	53%	92%	...	76%	99%	1,632	✓
Therapy profs.	83%	65%	[27%]	91%	99%	78	
Nurses & midwives	90%	84%	13%	63%	99%	4,346	✓
Other healthcare profs.	69%	79%	[22%]	90%	97%	409	
Health associate profs.	65%	74%	...	76%	65%	19	
Overall total	78%	81%	16%	73%	94%	6,484	

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

Employment growth over the five-year period for healthcare occupations was above the national average; employment growth was particularly strong between 2021 and 2023, with an increase of over 15,000 persons employed annually, relating mainly to nurses. Over three quarters of those employed were female, most were in full-time roles, and most held third level qualifications; the share of non-Irish citizens varied across occupations. Employment permits continued to be a significant source of skills for these occupations with almost 6,500 new permits issued in 2023, the highest number across all occupational groups.

The Sláintecare Progress Report 2021–2023 notes an increase of 26,172 whole time equivalent (WTE) staff working in the health service when compared to 2020; this breaks down into an additional 8,038 nurses and midwives, 4,017 health and social care professionals, and 2,904 doctors and dentists.⁴⁵ A 2022 ESRI report estimated that the healthcare workforce (e.g. doctors, nurses, healthcare assistants, various therapists) will need to grow by between 1.7% and 2.1% on average annually, or by between 12,400 and 15,500 WTE posts, for the forecast period to 2035 in order to meet recruitment demands in acute hospitals alone arising from a number of factors (including the implementation of Sláintecare).⁴⁶

The number of training places for many healthcare occupations is expected to increase strongly in the coming years, particularly for nursing, medicine, and therapy related courses, which may go some way in alleviating current issues with sourcing many of the healthcare occupations. A HSE recruitment embargo, introduced in October 2023, was lifted in July 2024 and may alleviate some shortages across the healthcare system.

Occupation	Economic summary
<p>Medical practitioners</p> <p>Skills shortage: Medical practitioners</p>	<p>The annual average employment growth for medical practitioners was below average over the five-year period, with marginal increases in employment between 2022 and 2023. The share of females in employment was slightly above average as was the number of non-Irish citizens. Employment permits remain a key source of supply of skills for these roles although the number of new permits issued in 2023 was 500 fewer than in 2022; permits were issued across a range of specialities. The Recruitment Agency Survey identified issues with sourcing psychiatric registrars/consultants, emergency medicine consultants and locum GPs. In particular, issues with attracting GPs have been highlighted with increased training places and the International Medical Graduate (IMG) scheme being used to alleviate some of the shortfall.⁴⁷ Overall supply from the third level education system is set to expand by 200 additional places by 2026 (having commenced in 2022). Given the duration of medical training, however, this increased supply is not expected to have an impact on the labour market in the short-to-medium term. The increasing demand for medical practitioners due to the roll-out of the Sláintecare Action Plan, the ageing population and the continued tackling of lengthy waiting lists will result in shortages for this occupation persisting.</p>
<p>Therapy profs. (e.g. occupational, speech & language, physiotherapist)</p> <p>Shortage: Inconclusive</p>	<p>Employment growth was above average for therapy professionals, mostly related to an increase in employment between 2022 and 2023 of 3,000 persons. Over four-fifths of those employed were female and a third were working part-time (the highest share across healthcare occupations); this occupation also had a high share who were aged 55 years and over which will have future implications for replacement demand. A small number of employment permits were issued mainly for physiotherapists, but also for occupational and speech and language therapists. The delivery of Sláintecare, particularly in terms of community care and mental health services, will require additional staffing in these occupations. Provision in the education/training system for these occupations has expanded, with 100 places added in 2023 (across Ireland and Northern Ireland), and further places announced for September 2024. Given the duration of training programmes, recruitment difficulties for these posts are unlikely to ease in the short-to-medium term. However, the numbers employed in each of the therapy categories are too small to allow for detailed analysis and to determine if shortages exist.</p>

⁴⁵ <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/SlaintecareProgressReport>

⁴⁶ <https://www.esri.ie/system/files/publications/RS147.pdf>

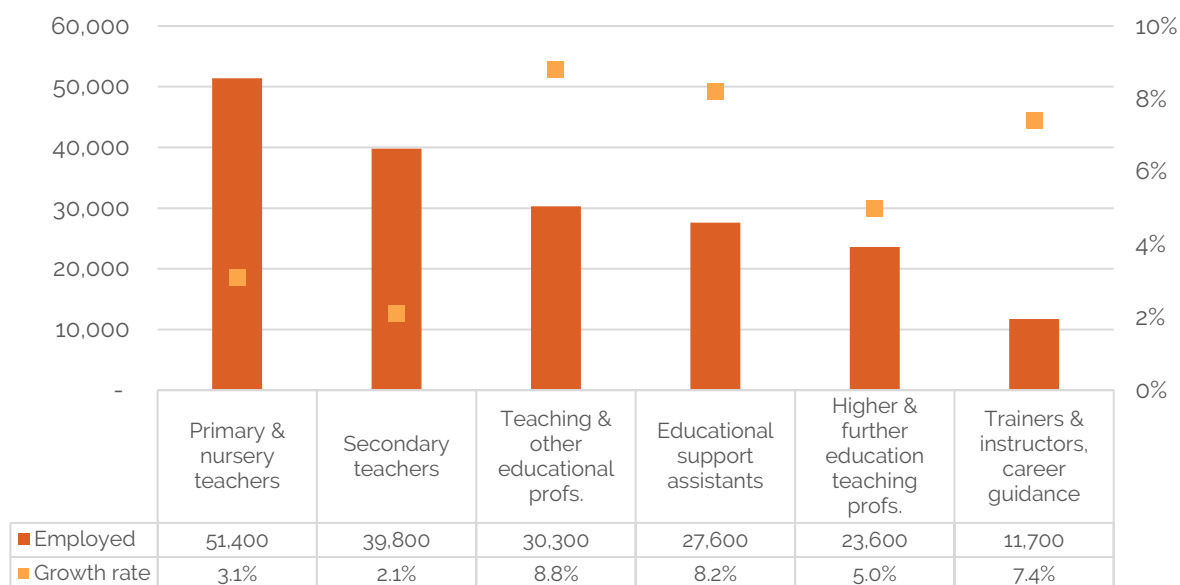
⁴⁷ [https://www.rte.ie/news/health/2024/0313/New measures put in place to tackle shortage of GPs](https://www.rte.ie/news/health/2024/0313/New%20measures%20put%20in%20place%20to%20tackle%20shortage%20of%20GPs)

<p>Nurses & midwives</p> <p>Skills shortage: Nurses</p>	<p>This occupation is the second largest (after sales assistants) across all occupations. Employment growth was above average, with particularly strong growth between 2021 and 2023 (an additional 20,500 persons employed). There was also a high number of recent job hires for this role, reflecting both the employment growth and turnover in roles with short-term contracts. Almost all employed were female (90%) and 37% were non-Irish citizens. This is also reflected in the high number of employment permits, the highest across all occupations, with staff nurses the most common role where permits were issued. There was a relatively high volume of jobs advertised online (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) and of posts notified to DSP for nurses; difficult-to-fill vacancies in the Recruitment Agency Survey included for staff nurses, theatre, ICU, oncology, and nurse managers.</p> <p>Recent changes to the education/training for nurses has seen additional places on existing courses and new routes (e.g. tertiary programmes and allocated places for students from the Republic of Ireland to study in Northern Ireland) which will go some way to alleviating issues with sourcing nurses in the coming years. A high demand for nurses is likely to persist and replacement demand alone for such a large occupation will also contribute to continued job openings.</p>
<p>Other healthcare profs.* (e.g. dentists, pharmacists, psychologists, radiographers, opticians & health services managers)</p> <p>Shortage: Inconclusive</p>	<p>Employment growth for this occupation was above the national average, although employment levels have declined annually since 2021. Employment was spread across a large number of roles, with low numbers in employment in each making it difficult to determine any changes in individual occupations. Overall, 69% were female, a quarter were in part-time roles and there was a slightly higher than average share who were aged 55 years and over. Online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) were primarily for health services and public health managers/directors, and to a lesser extent, pharmacists. Employment permits issued were mainly for radiographers, but also included cardiac physiologists, dentists, psychologists and pharmacists. Evidence of shortages is difficult to determine for these roles due to the small numbers employed.</p>
<p>Health associate profs. (e.g. pharma/medical technicians, dental nurses, paramedics, dispensing opticians)</p>	<p>This occupation had the largest employment growth rate across all the healthcare occupations, relating mainly to growth between 2021 and 2022. Two thirds of those employed were female, a quarter were working part-time and 24% were non-Irish citizens. At 58%, this occupation had the lowest share employed in the health sector with employment also in wholesale and retail and industry. The small number of employment permits issued related to paramedics and prosthetists/orthotists. This was one of the few occupations not to experience a decline in the number of online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) between 2022 and 2023; adverts included roles for medical/dental and pharmaceutical technicians. The available data sources do not currently point to issues with sourcing suitably qualified personnel for these roles.</p>

**This occupation has been updated from previous editions with veterinarians removed (now included in the animal carers occupation in the Agriculture & Animal Care Occupations section).*

10.5 Education Occupations

Figure 10.5 Annual Average Employment (2023) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2018-2023)



Overall employment	184,500
Share of total workforce	7.0%
Main sectors of employment	95% - Education sector
Employment growth	+39,200 between 2018 and 2023 +4.9% 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
Higher & further education teaching profs.	55%	79%	[29%]	74%	99%	70	
Secondary teachers	67%	86%	[14%]	95%	99%	...	
Primary & nursery teachers	88%	85%	...	96%	96%	...	
Teaching & other educational profs.	72%	73%	33%	84%	89%	50	
Educational support assistants	93%	71%	27%	94%	46%	...	
Trainers & instructors, career guidance	[63%]	77%	...	84%	76%	6	
Overall total	75%	80%	20%	90%	87%	126	

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

Employment growth for this occupational group was above average, with an additional 39,200 persons employed over the five-year period. Three quarters of those employed were female and most were Irish citizens. The demand for primary teachers is projected to decrease over the next decade, driven by declining numbers of enrolments, although the extent to which the continued war in Ukraine will impact future enrolment figures is as yet unclear.⁴⁸ Increasing enrolments at post-primary level up to the latter part of this decade are expected to result in an under-supply of post-primary teachers until the mid-2030s.

In March 2024, there were 74,146 FTE (full time equivalent) equating to 78,646 teachers employed working in the Irish education system. Despite this, issues with recruiting and retaining teachers have been highlighted for both primary level (e.g. regional issues and/or availability of substitute teachers) and for post-primary teachers (subject-specific). The on-going cost of living crisis and lack of affordable housing, which is having a negative impact on the recruitment and retention of key workers across several economic sectors, is deemed to be a significant factor particularly for schools in urban areas, as highlighted at the annual conference of the Irish National Teachers' Organisation in April 2024.⁴⁹ Policy responses to issues with sourcing teachers have included:

- increasing the number of places on teacher training courses on a temporary basis by the Department of Education for the academic year 2024-2025 (290 more places on primary teacher training courses and an additional 200 places on primary teaching masters courses)⁵⁰
- an increase in the number of allocated teaching posts at both primary and post-primary level
- the expansion of free upskilling programmes which seeks to increase the number of qualified teachers in high-demand subjects
- and increasing the pool of teachers available to undertake substitute work, including encouraging retired teachers to work as substitute teachers.

Enrolment levels across all regions in Ireland, any changes to pupil-teacher ratios, the working patterns of teachers, and other policy initiatives are likely to drive future demand for education-related occupations.

Occupation	Economic summary
Higher & further education teaching profs.	The five-year annual average growth for this occupation was above average, mainly due to an increase of 2,400 persons employed between 2022 and 2023. This occupation is characterised by a higher than average share of persons employed who were female, aged 55 years or over and non-Irish citizens. Both vacancies (advertised through the DSP) and employment permits related mainly to lecturers. Demographic factors and government funding are likely to be the main drivers of demand for these roles.
Secondary teachers Skill shortage: Subject-specific secondary teachers	Since 2020 employment levels have only seen marginal increases, resulting in a below average growth rate annually over the five-year period. Two-thirds of secondary teachers were female, and most were in full-time roles. Recent job hires for these roles far exceeded employment growth which may be indicative of the shorter-term contracts associated with substitute teaching. With enrolments at post-primary level expected to peak in 2025 and decline thereafter, an overall increase in demand is not expected. At the same time, the number of post-primary teachers registered with the Teaching Council has grown by, on average, 1,000 registrations per annum over the last five years. However, recruitment and retention, particularly for certain key subjects has

⁴⁸ Enrolments in primary schools are projected to decline annually to 2036, while post-primary school enrolments are estimated to continue to grow to 2025 and then to decline annually thereafter. Department of Education, Projections of full-time enrolments, Primary and Second Level, 2023-2042, March 2024. See <https://www.gov.ie/>

⁴⁹ <https://www.irishtimes.com/ireland/education/2024/04/02/teachers-leaving-in-droves-due-to-mountain-paperwork-and-rising-living-costs-into-conference-hears/>

⁵⁰ <https://www.rte.ie/news/education/2023/0327/schools-teacher-shortage>

	<p>become an increasing issue for schools. A 2023 Teachers' Union of Ireland survey found that the most difficult subjects to find qualified teachers for were maths, woodwork/construction studies, Irish, biology, home economics and chemistry.⁵¹ The Department of Education recently introduced a suite of measures to address teacher demand in priority subjects, including procuring Level 8 programmes to upskill teachers to teach mathematics, physics and Spanish as well as a pilot scheme to facilitate teacher sharing between schools.⁵² The lack of employment growth and the expected future decline in enrolment numbers suggest that employment levels are unlikely to grow for this occupation; however, shortages are arising for teachers in specific subject areas.</p>
Primary & nursery teachers	<p>Employment growth for primary teachers was marginally below average, with employment levels declining by 3,900 between 2022 and 2023. Despite the fall in employment, there was a large volume of recent job hires, indicating that recruitment is continuing, replacing those who have left or those on temporary contracts. Most were female, in full-time positions, and Irish citizens.</p> <p>Despite employment levels declining, recruitment and retention issues continue to persist. The €2,000 incentive scheme for new graduates and a temporary increase in primary teacher training places⁵³ have been enacted to assist with alleviating issues filling vacant teacher posts. Future demand for primary teachers will depend on demographic patterns, pupil-teacher ratios and other policy initiatives.</p>
Teaching & other educational profs.	<p>This occupation (which includes special needs teachers, nursery managers/owners and school principals) experienced the highest employment growth rate across all education occupations, with an additional 8,100 persons employed between 2022 and 2023. Most were female and a third were aged 55 years and older which may lead to future demand implications for this role. A small number of employment permits were issued across a range of roles including special needs teachers. Many of the issues regarding recruitment and retention identified in relation to primary and secondary teachers also apply to special needs teachers.</p>
Educational support assistants	<p>Employment growth for educational support assistants was above average over the five-year period, although employment levels remained unchanged between 2022 and 2023. At 93%, educational support assistants had the highest share of females in employment across all education occupations; 27% were aged 55 years and older, which is above the national average. Less than half of those employed held third level qualifications. Recent employment growth is likely the result of additional allocations for special needs assistants' posts, with future demand also likely to be dependent on demographic factors and government funding.</p>
Trainers & instructors, career guidance	<p>Despite little growth in employment levels between 2020 and 2022, employment grew in 2023 (by 1,400 persons) resulting in an above average growth rate annually over the five-year period. A small number of employment permits were issued, mainly for guide dog instructors. It should be noted that career guidance professionals working in the second level system are most likely captured in the secondary teaching occupations. The introduction of additional policy initiatives aimed at increasing Ireland's lifelong learning participation (to reach new EU targets) will likely lead to increased demand for these roles.</p>

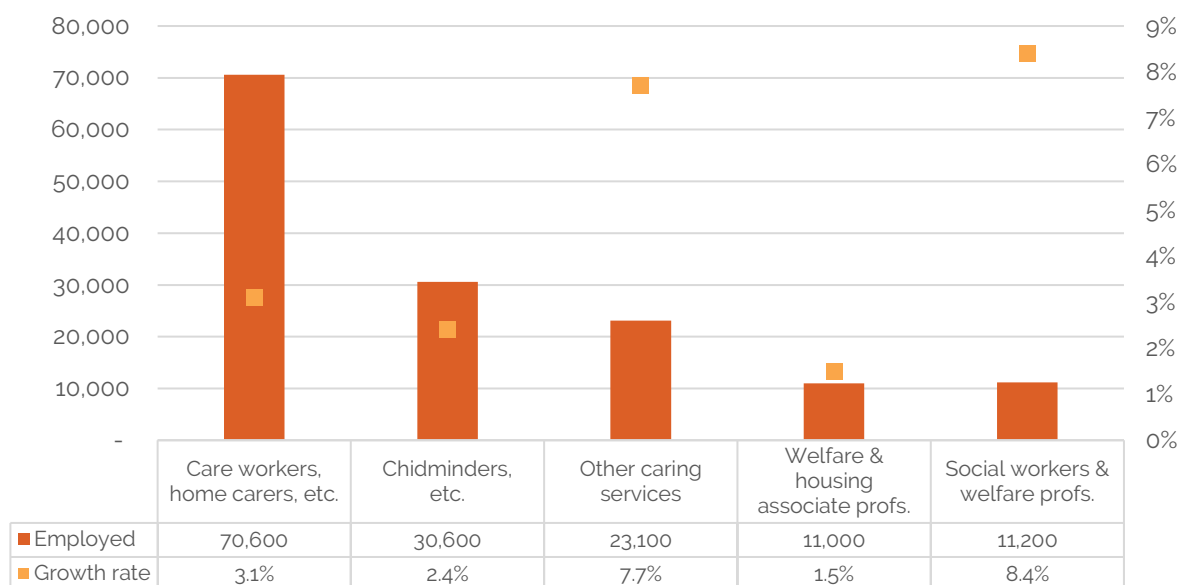
⁵¹ <https://www.tui.ie/news/new-survey-64-of-schools-have-unfilled-vacancies%C2%A0just-1-believe-enough-being-done-by-government.14906.html>

⁵² <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/30ed2-launch-of-teacher-sharing-scheme-pilot/>

⁵³ <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/1e3f9-minister-foley-announces-610-additional-places-on-primary-initial-teacher-education-ite-programmes-over-2023-and-2024/>

10.6 Social & Care Occupations

Figure 10.6 Annual Average Employment (2023) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2018-2023)



Overall employment	146,500
Share of total workforce	5.0%
Main sectors of employment	86% - Health 8% - Other NACE activities [3%] - Education
Employment growth	25,000 between 2018 and 2023 +3.8% 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
Welfare & housing associates profs.	[59%]	[83%]	...	92%	90%	1	
Childminders, etc.	97%	59%	...	79%	[35%]	40	
Other caring services	65%	73%	...	73%	[39%]	2,728	✓
Social workers & welfare profs.	[52%]	90%	...	86%	97%	14	
Care workers, home carers, etc.	80%	67%	25%	87%	40%	438	✓
Overall total	77%	69%	22%	83%	47%	3,221	

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

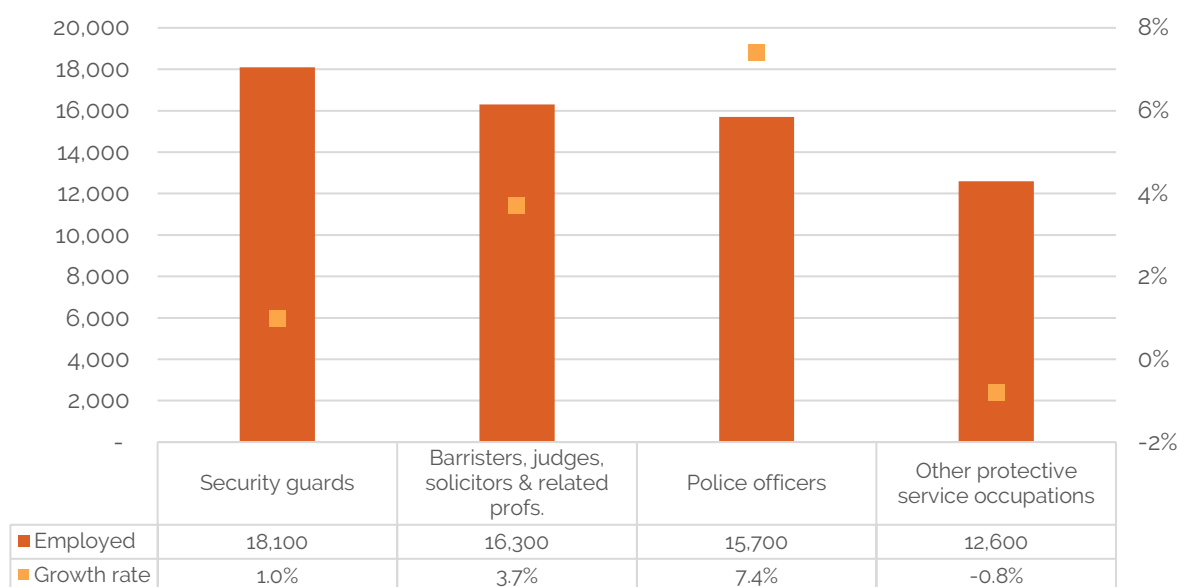
Employment levels grew slightly above the national average for social and care occupations, with an additional 25,000 persons employed since 2018. This primarily related to increases in employment of care workers and healthcare assistants (in the other caring services category). These two occupations also accounted for the largest share of employment permits issued in this occupational group in 2023. Over three-quarters of those employed in social and care occupations were female with almost a third employed part-time. With an ageing population, demand for care roles is likely to be in increasing demand in the years to come.

Occupation	Economic summary
Welfare & housing associate profs.	Employment growth was below average for this occupation with employment declining between 2022 and 2023. Despite this, the number of online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) grew for this occupation, one of the few occupations to increase in the last year. Youth and community workers account for the largest share of occupations within this group.
Childminders, etc.	Employment growth was below average for childminders and related roles; employment declined in 2022 but returned to 2021 levels by 2023. Almost all persons employed in these roles were female, with a high share working part-time. The high volume of recent job hires for this occupation indicates that job churn is a significant factor for these roles; in addition, a relatively high number of jobseekers registered with DSP in December 2023 were classified as previously employed in childcare roles. Future demographic factors (i.e. the falling number of 0–4-year-olds in the population) along with levels of childcare usage (Census 2022 indicates that 28% of under 5s are in some form of formal childcare) and Government childcare strategies such as the National Childcare Scheme will be the main drivers of demand for childcare workers in the coming years. Supply from education and training is significant; there were approximately 4,400 early childhood care and education awards in FET and HE in 2022, as well as over 850 higher education awards for pre-school teaching related subjects.
Social workers & welfare profs.	The strong employment growth rate for this occupation masks a fall in employment levels in 2021 and 2022; employment grew in 2023, returning to 2021 levels. A small number of employment permits were issued for social workers in 2023. Issues with recruitment and retention of social workers have been identified, particularly in key areas such as child protection and adult safeguarding ⁵⁴ but the data does not currently point to a shortage. The embargo on recruitment in the HSE until mid-2024 is likely to have subdued recruitment of these occupations. There were over 1,400 awards made in 2022 at level 8 or higher in the broad social work field and it is expected that in the medium term two new pathways to careers in social work, launched in summer 2024 (new apprenticeship leading to a level 9 qualification and a tertiary degree (Bachelor of Social Work)) will alleviate some of the current difficulties in recruiting social workers.
Care workers, home carers, etc. Labour shortage: Care workers	Despite a small decline in employment levels between 2022 and 2023, employment growth for this occupation was only marginally below average. Although employment numbers fell, the high level of recent job hires in 2023 indicates that job churn is a significant feature for these roles. Most employed in these roles were female, with a third working part-time; in addition, a quarter were aged 55 years and over which point to a potential high level of replacement demand in the coming years. With 40% of those employed with third level qualifications, over-qualification may be a feature. There was a high volume of job posts advertised through DSP for carers. The data points to issues with attracting and retaining staff for these roles and demand is likely to increase in future years as a result of our ageing population.
Other caring services Skills shortage: Healthcare assistants	Employment levels have grown strongly in this occupation since 2021, resulting in a strong employment growth rate over the period. There was a high volume of online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) and posts for healthcare assistants accounted for the largest share of vacancies advertised through DSP Jobs Ireland across all occupations. In addition, there was 2,700 employment permits issued in 2023 and a small number of difficult-to-fill mentions in the Recruitment Agency Survey. The number of healthcare support awards has risen each year for the last three years, reaching 2,329 in 2023, although still well below the 2019 level of 2,771. Demand for this role does not appear to be abating, with shortages expected to continue in the coming years, particularly given increased demand across the hospital and nursing home sectors for healthcare assistants linked to Ireland's ageing demographics.

⁵⁴ O'Meara, K & Kelleher, K. (2022): Training, Recruiting & Retaining Social Workers in Ireland: A Scoping Exercise to Assess and Respond to Significant Challenges, Irish Association of Social Workers

10.7 Legal & Security Occupations

Figure 10.7 Annual Average Employment (2023) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2018-2023)



Overall employment	62,700
Share of total workforce	2.0%
Main sectors of employment	48% - Public administration and defence 21% - Professional activities 19% - Administrative and support services
Employment growth	7,800 between 2018 and 2023 +2.7% 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
Barristers, judges, solicitors & related profs.	[49%]	90%	...	99%	98%	39	
Police officers	...	100%	...	100%	90%	...	
Other protective service occupations	...	93%	...	97%	...	...
Security guards	...	71%	...	81%	...	1	
Overall total	26%	88%	15%	94%	62%	40	

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

Employment grew in 2023 but remained below 2021 levels. Approximately a half of those employed in these occupations worked in the public administration and defence sector, with males accounting for three quarters of employment. The outlooks are likely to vary across occupations depending on government funding for some and the level of public consumption for others.

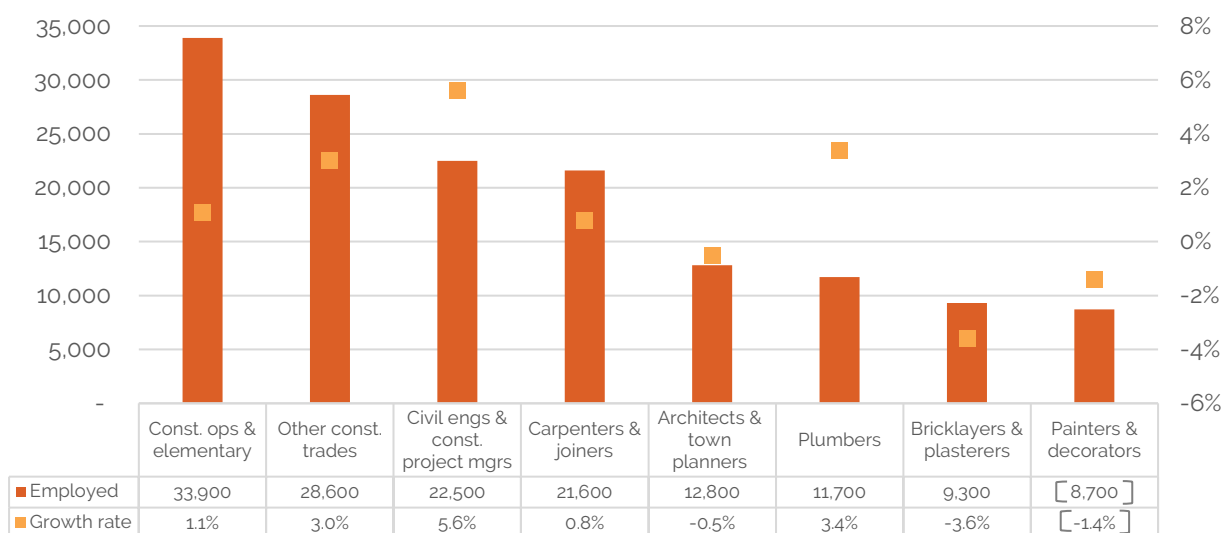
Occupation	Economic summary
Barristers, judges, solicitors & related profs.	Employment levels have fluctuated over the last five years; after declining annually in 2021 and 2022, an increase of 2,800 persons employed in 2023 saw a return to 2020 levels. Employment is almost equally split across genders, with four-fifths employed in the professional activities sector. Employment permits for this occupation were mainly for roles such as legal counsel/solicitors across a range of sectors including ICT, financial and professional activities.
Police officers (e.g. Gardaí)	Employment growth was strong for this occupation; although employment grew in the year to 2023, levels remained below that of 2021. All of employment was in full-time roles, with the majority holding third level qualifications. Department of Justice workforce data ⁵⁵ indicates that the number of gardai (excluding civilian garda staff and reserves) has declined marginally each year since 2020, with a workforce in May 2024 of just under 14,000. Retirements and retention issues have been highlighted as explanations for the fall in numbers. ⁵⁶ Despite some recruitment issues, the data does not indicate that shortages exist.
Other protective service occupations (e.g. army personnel, fire/prison service officers)	Employment growth was negative for this occupation, with employment levels declining annually since 2020. A relatively small number of job adverts were notified through the DSP in 2023, including for prison officers.
Security guards	Employment growth was below average for security guards; employment levels dipped in 2020 as a result of COVID-19 restrictions but rebounded in 2021 with only marginal changes since. Two thirds of employment was in the administrative support services sector. In previous years, the share of non-Irish citizens employed far exceeded the national average, but in quarter 4 2023, the share was in line with the national average. Most employed in these roles were male with 29% working in part-time positions. Employment for security guards is spread across events, retail and in offices, and future demand will depend on the growth for these areas.

⁵⁵<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/66833-garda-workforce/>

⁵⁶ Garda numbers continue to fall despite major recruitment effort – The Irish Times

10.8 Construction Occupations

Figure 10.8 Annual Average Employment (2023) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2018-2023)



Overall employment	154,500
Share of total workforce	6.0%
Main sectors of employment	73% - Construction 11% - Professional activities [6%] - Industry
Employment growth	+12,200 between 2018 and 2023 +1.7% 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
Civil engineers & construction project mgrs	...	98%	[22%]	84%	77%	681	✓
Architects & town planners etc.	...	94%	...	84%	96%	136	✓
Construction related technicians	22	✓
Bricklayers & plasterers	...	[91%]	...	98%	...	84	
Plumbers	...	97%	...	96%	...	32	
Carpenters & joiners	...	96%	...	82%	...	195	✓
Painters & decorators	...	[92%]	...	...	...	46	
Other construction trades	...	94%	27%	76%	...	58	✓
Construction operatives & elementary	...	88%	[15%]	75%	...	14	✓
Overall total	[5%]	93%	20%	81%	33%	1,268	

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
Construction related technicians are included in overall total but numbers are too small to report.

Overall Outlook for these Occupations

Employment growth was below average in construction-related occupations with an increase of just 12,000 persons employed between 2018 and 2023. Employment growth slowed or declined across these occupations during the COVID-19 pandemic, with many roles only seeing employment numbers returning to pre-COVID-19 levels in 2022. Almost all persons employed were male with the majority of those employed in full-time roles. There was a relatively high number of jobseekers registered with the DSP at the end of December 2023 who stated that their previous occupation was in construction trades or other construction-related occupations; although it was not possible to disaggregate across trades or to determine if they were qualified tradespersons, it does indicate some potential additional supply for these roles. The number of employment permits issued in 2023 declined slightly compared to 2022, although remained higher than in 2021 (as a number of construction occupations were removed from the ineligible list for employment permits during this time).

The demand and supply of construction related skills is affected by a range of factors. Government plans alone are likely to see demand increasing in order to deliver on housing and climate action targets⁵⁷ and both the Construction Industry Federation⁵⁸ and DPENDR⁵⁹ highlight the importance of the supply of skills and labour needed to meet these targets. The demand for construction-related skills will also be impacted by the potential demands of non-residential building as well as Government infrastructure projects (e.g. Project Ireland 2040). In addition, the nature of the skills mix required for construction-related jobs is changing: modern methods of construction may require less on-site labour and may go some way to mitigate issues with supply of skills by relying more on off-site manufacturing processes.⁶⁰ These new methods, along with the transition to a zero-carbon economy, will have significant implications for construction-related skills, with a changing skills mix for a range of existing occupations (e.g. civil engineers, plumbers, roofers, glaziers, etc) likely to require considerable levels of upskilling/reskilling.

The recent SLMRU report on occupational gender segregation noted that construction jobs have a particularly high share of males employed; increasing flexibility in the workplace will be required to attract and retain women and increase the supply of skills for these roles, as also emphasised in DFHERIS' Careers in Construction Action Plan.⁶¹

Occupation	Economic summary
Civil engineers & construction project managers Skills shortage: Civil engineers & construction project managers	Employment growth was above average for this occupation with annual increases since 2020, and growing by 2,400 persons employed since 2022. The number of employment permits issued grew on the previous year, with civil/site/structural engineers and construction project managers accounting for most of the permits issued. Online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) related mainly to civil engineers; DSP adverts were smaller in quantity but included civil, site and project engineers. Data from the Recruitment Agency Survey, Skills for Growth and Spotlight on Skills noted issues with filling vacancies for civil/site engineers and/or construction project managers; skills in demand associated with these vacancies included project management, problem solving and critical thinking skills. The number of awards for civil and building engineering subjects has been increasing in recent years, with over 1,000 awards at levels 8-10 in 2022; of these, 266 awards were for civil engineering, the highest number in several years, and a third more than in 2018 (although the numbers have fluctuated in the intervening years). Although shortages are arising for both roles, civil engineers account for over half of employment in this occupation.

⁵⁷ A 2022 DFHERIS report estimates that 50,000 new entrants will be required across all skill levels over the period 2023-2030 to deliver Government targets for housing and retrofitting alone (gov.ie - Report on the Analysis of Skills for Residential Construction & Retrofitting, 2023 to 2030 (www.gov.ie))

⁵⁸ Turnover and employment continued to increase in the construction sector - CIF Construction Outlook Survey, Quarter 2 2024 - Construction Industry Federation

⁵⁹ gov - Build 2024 - Construction Sector Performance and Capacity (www.gov.ie)

⁶⁰ <https://skillsireland.ie/all-publications/2024/skills-for-modern-methods-of-construction.html>

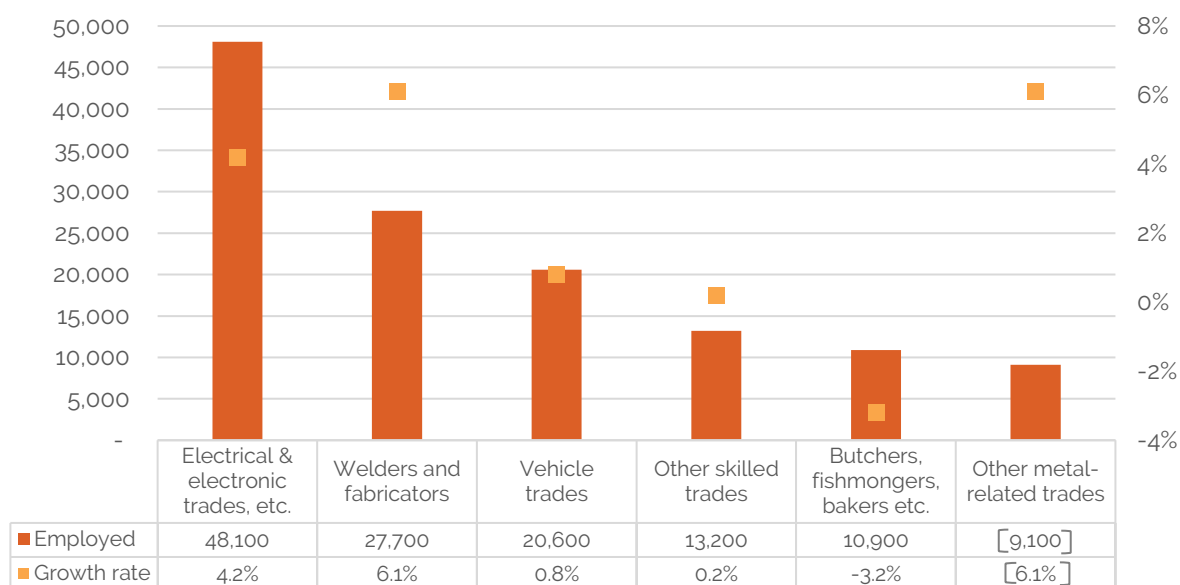
⁶¹ gov - Careers in Construction: Action Plan (www.gov.ie)

<p>Architects & town planners, architectural technologists, & surveyors</p> <p>Skills shortage: Quantity surveyors</p>	<p>This occupation had a negative annual average employment growth rate over the five-year period, with employment declining annually since 2021; the numbers employed across the roles within this group are too small to determine which are particularly contributing to the decline. The number of job adverts were also relatively small (mainly for architects, town planners and quantity surveyors). Despite this, our other data sources point to issues with attracting suitably qualified persons for these roles. Employment permits issued in 2023 were mainly for quantity surveyors and architectural technologists. The Recruitment Agency Survey identified issues with sourcing quantity surveyors while the Skills for Growth data identified issues with sourcing experienced (2-5 years) façade designers, quantity surveyors and architects with knowledge of codes, regulations and fire safety, as well as experience with tender documents.</p> <p>There were over 750 architecture related awards in 2022; of these, 155 awards were made to learners on RIAI accredited programmes (i.e. qualified architects), which fell slightly from nearly 170 awards in 2021, but was 44% higher than in 2018. There were 288 awards in quantity surveying at levels 8, considerably higher than the 144 awards in 2018. Demand for these skills is likely to continue with shortages persisting for quantity surveyors (albeit small in number given the small number employed).</p>
<p>Construction related technicians</p> <p>Shortage: Inconclusive</p>	<p>Numbers were too small to report for these roles but there was a relatively high level of jobs advertised online via the Eurostat/CEDEFOP database (mainly for building and civil engineering technicians), with vacancies for CAD and BIM technicians notified through the DSP Jobs Ireland. In addition, BIM technicians were mentioned in both the Recruitment Agency Survey and Skills for Growth data as difficult to source, with CAD technicians also highlighted in the Skills for Growth data for roles in both construction and manufacturing. In a review of employment permits in December 2023, BIM co-ordinators/technicians were added to the critical skills list.</p>
<p>Bricklayers & plasterers</p>	<p>Employment levels for bricklayers and plasterers have been declining annually since 2021 with numbers employed in 2023 below pre-COVID-19 levels; the numbers employed are too small to determine if the decline is related to one role more than the other. The number of employment permits issued declined between 2022 and 2023, particularly related to a fall in the number issued for plasterers. The number of online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) was small, while DSP Jobs Ireland vacancy notifications were for plasterers, stonemasons and bricklayers. The demand for both bricklayers and plasterers for housing is expected to decline in the coming years (see DFHERIS report); apartments account for an increasing share of housing stock and have fewer requirements for bricklayers due to the use of pre-cast concrete and modern methods of construction (MMC) where much of this work is carried out off-site. While MMC and offsite construction are likely to further dampen the demand for bricklayers and plasterers, retrofit activities are likely to see the need for reskilling and upskilling (e.g. heritage retrofitting, wall retrofit and external wall insulation techniques) for some of those currently employed in this occupation.</p>
<p>Plumbers</p> <p>Potential future skills shortage: Plumbers</p>	<p>Employment growth for plumbers was in line with the national average with approximately an additional 1,000 persons employed annually since 2020 (returning to 2019 levels). New employment permits issued related to both plumbers and plumbing, heating and ventilation engineers. The number of craft awards for plumbers has been increasing annually in recent years with 384 awards in 2023; the increased number of new apprenticeship registrations suggests that output will continue to be strong in the short-to medium term. While demand remains strong, the shortage of plumbers appears to have been alleviated. However, any acceleration of retrofitting activities will result in a significant increase in demand for these roles as plumbers will have an integral role in the installation of sustainable heat pumps. In addition, upskilling/reskilling of employed plumbers will be key in the coming years to ensure they are in a position to adapt to new technologies (e.g. heat pumps, new ventilation systems, wastewater drain heat recovery) and working in areas linked to alternative renewable energy sources (e.g. the shift away from traditional fossil fuel boilers towards the installation of heat pumps).</p>
<p>Carpenters & joiners</p> <p>Potential future skills shortage: Carpenters</p>	<p>Although employment levels have been increasing for carpenters and joiners since 2021, they have not fully recovered to pre-COVID-19 levels. Despite this, there was a relatively high share of vacancies advertised on JobsIreland.ie for carpenters (including shuttering) with an increase in the number of new employment permits issued in 2023 compared to the previous year (primarily for shuttering carpenters). The number of new craft awards for carpenters has been increasing annually with 314 awards in 2023; apprenticeship registrations were also higher in 2023 than pre-COVID-19. As such, there are indications that with the increased supply, issues with recruitment have eased. The DFHERIS report suggests that developments in off-site construction manufacturing may</p>

	dampen demand for carpenters somewhat, although reaching the Government target of 50,000 new homes annually until 2030 will likely see increased demand for carpenters as activity levels increase. For some carpenters, reskilling and upskilling may be required to meet passive housing construction/retrofitting requirements (e.g. installing air-tight, energy efficient timber frame windows and thermal bridging reduction).
Painters & decorators	The numbers employed as painters and decorators in 2023 remained below pre-COVID-19 levels. There were some employment permits issued for these roles and vacancy notifications related to both residential and commercial painters. The supply of skills from the education and training system is small although a craft award is not always a requirement for this role. The future demand for painters will be mostly associated with home repair and maintenance activity, although there may be increased demand associated with retrofitting and the potential increase in house building activity. Currently, however, the data does not suggest there are any issues for this occupation.
Other construction trades (e.g. construction supervisors, floorers, glaziers, roofers)	This occupation had the largest absolute increase in employment since 2022 across construction occupations (+3,200 persons). Over a quarter of persons employed were aged 55 years and older which may lead to increased demand in future years to replace those leaving the occupation. Online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) were primarily for supervisors, other trades and steel erectors and DSP Jobs Ireland vacancy notifications included forepersons, tilers and glaziers. Employment permits issued in 2023 were across a number of roles including tilers, steel fixers, forepersons, roofers, and floorers. Skills for Growth data indicated issues with sourcing roofers with carpentry skills for solar panel installation. Increased offsite construction of roofs is likely to have knock-on effects for demand for these skills although this may be offset by increased demand for roofers and glaziers for retrofitting activities (see DFHERIS report).
Construction operatives & elementary Shortage: Inconclusive	Employment growth for this occupation was below average with only marginal annual changes over the five-year period. There was a high share of recent job hires for these roles indicating that many of the roles may be transitory in nature. Over a third held at most lower secondary education, far exceeding the national average. A quarter of those employed were non-Irish citizens, also above the national average. Scaffolders featured strongly in the online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) and also in the DSP data along with floor and wall cladding installers and groundworkers. The small number of employment permits issued in 2023 were mainly for scaffolders. The first awards made to learners on the new scaffolding apprenticeship programme were made in 2024 with 27 QQI awards made at NFQ level 5. Demand for scaffolders appeared strong but the numbers employed are too small to determine if supply from the education/training system is sufficient to meet demand.

10.9 Other Craft Occupations n.e.c.

Figure 10.9 Annual Average Employment (2023) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2018-2023)



Overall employment	129,600
Share of total workforce	5.0%
Main sectors of employment	36% - Industry 18% - Construction 17% - Wholesale & retail 8% - Professional activities [7%] - ICT
Employment growth	+17,500 between 2018 and 2023 +2.9% 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
Welders and fabricators	...	97%	[23%]	82%	37%	587	✓
Other metal-related trades	...	[97%]	...	[83%]	...	190	
Vehicle trades	...	94%	...	79%	[32%]	228	
Electrical & electronic trades etc.	...	97%	[14%]	82%	40%	107	✓
Other skilled trades	...	85%	...	73%	...	12	
Butchers, fishmongers, bakers etc.	...	[76%]	...	[45%]	...	126	
Overall total	10%	93%	17%	77%	35%	1,250	

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

Employment growth for this occupational group over the five-year period was largely attributed to increases in levels for welders/fabricators and electricians. Males accounted for by far the largest share employed across all of the occupations in this group. Employment permits were issued across all occupations indicating some level of difficulty in sourcing skills from the available labour market. Employment was spread across many sectors including industry, construction and wholesale & retail. Future outlooks for this occupational group will vary depending on the main sector of employment for the individual occupations. Increased digitalisation and automation in these roles will require investment in upskilling/reskilling for those already in employment.

Occupation	Economic summary
<p>Welders & fabricators*</p> <p>Skills shortage: Welders/fabricators</p>	<p>Employment growth was above average for welders and fabricators; employment grew strongly in 2022 with more moderate growth in 2023. The age profile was older than the national average indicating that replacement demand may lead to openings in the coming years. Almost 600 employment permits were issued in 2023 for welders/fabricators, primarily in industry and construction but also across other sectors in the economy with a relatively high share of vacancies advertised through DSP for these roles. The Recruitment Agency Survey noted difficulty in filling vacancies for welders (TIG/ARC) with Skills for Growth data noting strong evidence of issues highlighted for welders (MIG/TIG/ARC), and to a lesser extent, fabricators; difficulties arose across a range of manufacturing sectors (e.g. machinery, steel fabricators (doors, containers etc.)). In addition, future demand for welders is anticipated in relation to the development of Ireland's off-shore energy capacity⁶². Supply from the education and training system does not appear to be meeting current demand for these roles with fluctuating numbers of apprenticeship registrations for metal fabrication.</p>
<p>Other metal-related trades*</p> <p>Skills shortage: CNC programmers</p>	<p>This group contains, amongst others, sheet metal workers, toolmakers and pipefitters. Employment growth was above average for this occupation but numbers employed are too small for detailed analysis. Employment permits issued in 2023 related mainly to CNC programmers/operators, but also for sheet metal workers and pipefitters. Vacancies advertised across the two sources were for sheet metal workers, press break operators and CNC operatives/machinists. Skills for Growth data also highlights issues with recruiting CNC operators along with pipe fitters, maintenance technicians and refrigeration technicians. Demand persists for CNC programmers/operators in particular with shortages arising; however, the numbers are likely to be small given the size of the overall occupation.</p>
<p>Vehicle trades</p>	<p>Vehicle technicians and mechanics account for the majority share of employment in this occupation. Employment growth was below average with employment declining marginally since 2022. Employment permits issued in 2023 related mainly to vehicle roadworthiness testers and aircraft mechanics. The large volume of job adverts through the DSP were for vehicle roadworthiness testers along with various mechanics (aircraft, HGV and car). Skills for Growth data highlights issues recruiting HGV mechanics and auto electricians.</p> <p>The number of apprenticeship awards issued for aircraft mechanics remains small (28 in 2023). Awards for HGV mechanics rose from 78 in 2022 to 115 in 2023; new apprenticeship registrations in 2023 for this role were higher than seen previously at 232 persons. The number of awards for motor mechanics stood at 225 awards in 2023 although new apprenticeship registrations were substantially higher in 2021 and 2022, indicating increases in awards for this trade in the short-to-medium term.</p> <p>Given the lack of employment growth in this occupation, issues with sourcing HGV mechanics should ease in the short-term with increased numbers undertaking apprenticeships and the recent removal of this occupation from the ineligible list for employment permits (along with bus/car mechanics) subject to a quota of 200 general employment permits. Upskilling/reskilling will be a key requirement for these roles as we move increasingly towards electric vehicles.</p>

⁶² https://www.skillnetireland.ie/uploads/attachments/Building_Our_Potential-Ireland's_Offshore_Wind_Skills_and_Talent_Needs_Jan_2024.pdf

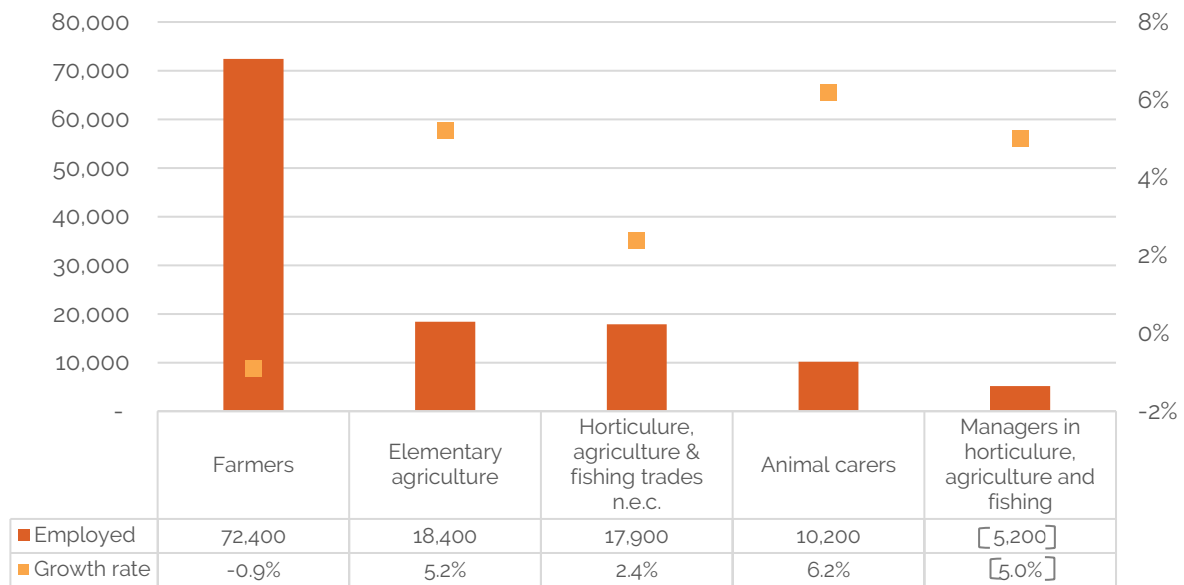
<p>Electrical & electronic trades, etc.</p>	<p>Although annual average employment growth was above average, employment levels declined by 4,000 between 2022 and 2023 for this occupation (having grown strongly in 2022). There was a relatively high share of recent job hires for these roles indicating that job churn has been occurring. Two-fifths of employment was in the construction sector, with a further two-fifths in industry and ICT combined. Difficult to fill vacancy mentions in the Recruitment Agency Survey and Skills for Growth data were for electricians (including high voltage), while new employment permits were issued for roles included electricians and field service engineers. Online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) were mainly for electricians while adverts through DSP included electricians and overhead line workers.</p> <p>Demand is being driven by activity in the construction sector but also in part by energy efficiency and the green agenda. This is leading to a shift in the skills mix required for electricians to energy performance in building, energy sector policy, maintenance and repair. Depending on the extent to which the technology for all electric, smart-ready homes and businesses is adopted, there is likely to be additional demand for this occupation, particularly in relation to energy saving, energy generation (via photovoltaic panels) and electric battery charging.</p>
<p>Other skilled trades (e.g. printers, furniture makers, and textile trades)</p>	<p>There was almost no employment growth over the five-year period for this occupation; employment declined in the earlier years but has been increasing since 2021, returning to 2018 levels. At 27%, the share of non-Irish citizens was above the national average. The volume of vacancies was small for this occupation; most online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) related to tailors and dressmakers with DSP adverts for upholsterers. Employment growth in recent years may be related to an increased focus on the circular economy leading to larger demand, or at least a slowing of the decline, for roles such as upholsterers and tailors. In the latest review by DETE, upholsterers, tailors and dressmakers have been removed from the ineligible list of occupations for employment permits, subject to a quota.⁶³</p>
<p>Butchers, fishmongers, bakers etc.</p>	<p>Following annual declines in employment between 2018 and 2021, employment levels grew in subsequent years; however, levels remained below that of 2018 resulting in a negative growth rate. Approximately three-fifths of those employed were in industry with the remainder working in the wholesale and retail sector. Over half (55%) of those employed were non-Irish citizens, the highest share across all occupations. Online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) were small in number and related primarily to bakers/confectioners with skilled meat deboners and butchers the largest share of DSP Jobs Ireland vacancy adverts. New employment permits issued in 2023 were mainly for meat deboners, with a new quota of 350 employment permits for butchers/deboners and 200 for bakers issued in December 2023. Skills for Growth data indicated some issues with finding skilled bakers. The attractiveness of the job is likely to be one of the key factors relating to issues in sourcing suitable candidates, particularly for meat deboners. Climate targets may impact the future demand for butchers and meat processing skills.</p>

** This occupation has been revised since the previous edition. See page 137 for details of the revision and Appendix for a list of job roles included in this occupation.*

⁶³ <https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/publications/publication-files/outcome-of-the-review-of-the-employment-permits-occupations-lists-december-2023.pdf>

10.10 Agriculture & Animal Care Occupations

Figure 10.10 Annual Average Employment (2023) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2018-2023)



Overall employment	124,000
Share of total workforce	5.0%
Main sectors of employment	82% - Agriculture sector
Employment growth	+6,700 between 2018 and 2023 +1.1% 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
Managers in horticulture, agriculture and fishing	...	...	...	[97%]	...	101	
Farmers	10%	81%	63%	99%	20%		
Horticulture, agriculture & fishing trades n.e.c.	...	65%	[39%]	94%	...		
Elementary agriculture	[25%]	40%	29%	90%	...	481	
Animal carers	[57%]	[74%]	...	77%	[60%]	68	
Overall total	16%	71%	50%	95%	22%	650	

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

Although there was some employment growth for this occupational group overall, it was considerably below the national annual average for the five-year time period examined. Despite the low employment growth, issues with recruitment for some agricultural roles persist. Half of the workforce were aged 55 years or over (mostly related to the age profile of farmers), the oldest age profile across all the occupational groups. Teagasc's Climate Action Strategy highlights the key role that agriculture will play in reducing carbon emissions and adapting to climate change, including the need to maintain and increase food production and improve biodiversity.⁶⁴

Occupation	Economic summary
Managers in horticulture, agriculture and fishing	Numbers employed in this occupation are too small to allow for any analysis. Employment permits issued in 2023 related to farm managers such as dairy and pig farming (particularly relating to farrowing).
Farmers	Although there was a negative employment growth rate for farmers on average annually over the five-year period, employment levels have seen some growth since 2021. Almost two-thirds of farmers were aged 55 years and older and 40% held at most a lower secondary education. Farmers will have a key role in Ireland's Climate Action targets in the context of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the need for an adaptation of farming practices to be more resilient to the impacts of climate change; upskilling/reskilling will be key in the coming years to adjust to these requirements.
Horticultural, agricultural & fishing trades n.e.c. (e.g. gardeners)	Employment growth over the five-year period was below average for this occupation, although employment levels have increased by almost 3,000 since 2022. At 39%, the share aged 55 years or older was more than double the national average of 19%. A relatively high share (35%) of persons employed in this occupation were employed part-time. Vacancies related to gardeners, arborists and tree surgeons with Skills for Growth data pointing to issues recruiting saw doctors and professional foresters. Although the numbers involved are very small ⁶⁵ , an increase in demand for trained forestry workers may arise in line with Ireland's Forest Strategy (2023-2030). Forestry workers and speciality harvesting technicians were removed from the ineligible list for employment permits in December 2023, subject to a quota.
Elementary agriculture	Employment growth for elementary agriculture workers over the five-year period was above average; although employment levels fell in 2022, they increased again in 2023. Three-fifths of those employed in these occupations were employed part-time, 44% were aged 15-24 years and 29% were aged 55 years and older (both age cohorts above the national average). Almost a half held at most a lower secondary education (the highest share across all occupations). A high volume of vacancies were advertised through the DSP Jobs Ireland for roles including horticultural operatives, and dairy farm assistants. Employment permits were primarily issued for dairy farm assistants and horticultural operatives. Issues with recruitment are likely to relate to some extent to the apparent attractiveness of the job; the high share of younger persons employed and part-time employment suggest that some of these jobs may experience a high level of job churn which is leading to the high volume of job vacancy adverts. One of the key strategic actions in the National Strategy for Horticulture 2023-2027 is to review horticulture course availability and suitability to attract talent and promote sustainability of the sector. ⁶⁶ In addition, the increased adoption of automated processes could help alleviate labour shortages in certain areas. ⁶⁷
Animal carers*	Annual employment growth over the five-year period was strong for animal carers with employment levels increasing since 2021. This group had the highest share of females employed (57%) across all of the agricultural occupations; the share of non-Irish citizens (23%) was above average. The high share of persons employed with third level qualifications is driven by veterinarians. A small number of vacancies related to equine workers (groomers and work riders), and dog groomers with posts for work riders identified in the Skills for Growth data as difficult to fill.

**This occupation has been updated from previous editions and now includes veterinarians (previously included in healthcare occupations).*

⁶⁴ <https://www.teagasc.ie/media/website/publications/2022/Teagasc-Climate-Action-Strategy-2022-2030-web.pdf>

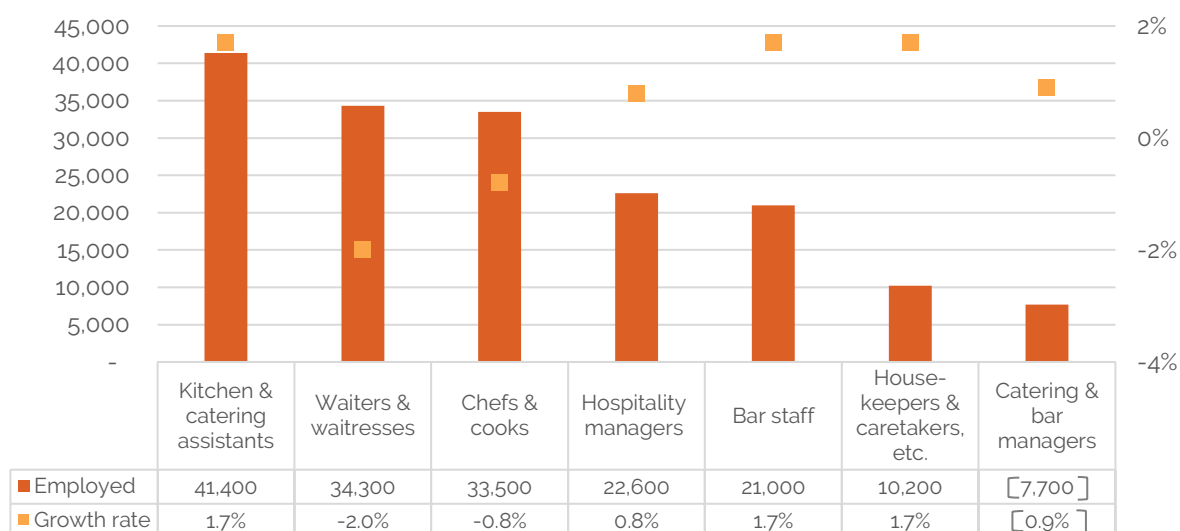
⁶⁵ Partnership for Skills (June 2022) report. Available at <https://regionalskills.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5022a479ede2060ea00e2b0ee&id=236e45ec9f&e=9ac4cage00>

⁶⁶ www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/259509/9bad0225-cb0a-4b8c-a713-5a63b632e61e.pdf#page=null

⁶⁷ <https://assets.gov.ie/229861/9d3aa8c0-b2b8-4b71-9341-b154b1e7ac20.pdf>

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 2023.⁶⁸ 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.

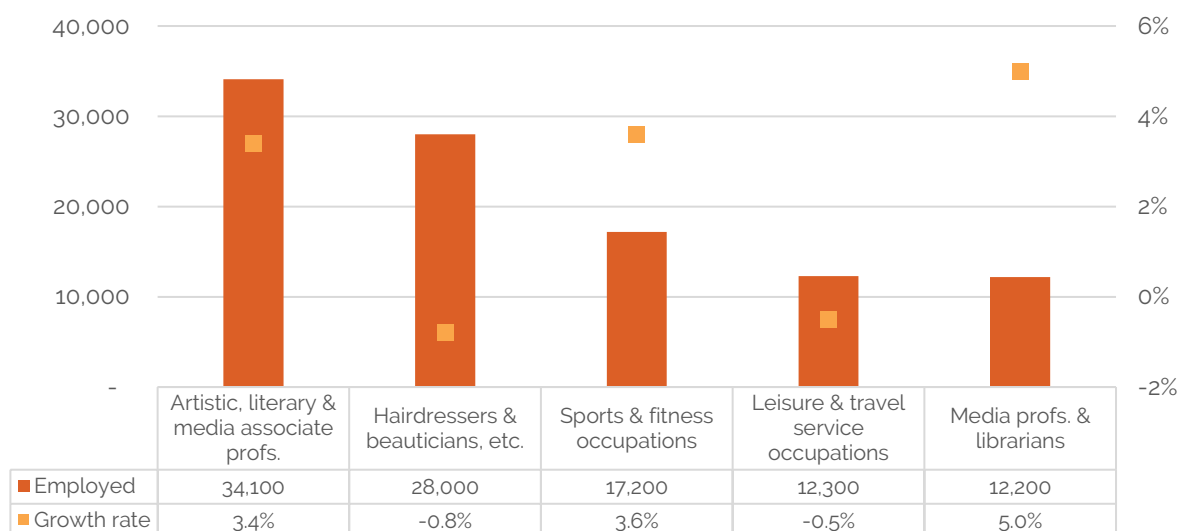
Occupation	Economic summary
Hospitality managers	Employment growth was below average for this occupation over the five-year period with employment levels remaining unchanged since 2022. With over a quarter (26%) aged 55 years and over, replacement demand may be higher in the coming years. There was a 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%

⁶⁸ 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>

	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.
Bar staff	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.
Housekeepers	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.

10.12 Arts, Sports & Tourism Occupations

Figure 10.12 Annual Average Employment (2023) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2018-2023)



Overall employment	103,600
Share of total workforce	4.0%
Main sectors of employment	57% - Other NACE activities 12% - ICT 10% - Professional activities
Employment growth	+9,200 between 2018 and 2023 +1.9% 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
Media profs. & librarians	[55%]	86%	...	86%	96%		
Artistic, literary & media associate profs.	46%	75%	[19%]	84%	77%	221	
Sports & fitness occupations	[41%]	[59%]	...	82%	[59%]	63	
Leisure & travel service occupations	[70%]	[61%]	...	79%	...	2	
Hairdressers & beauticians, etc.	88%	64%	...	76%	[24%]	2	
Overall total	60%	69%	13%	81%	58%	288	

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

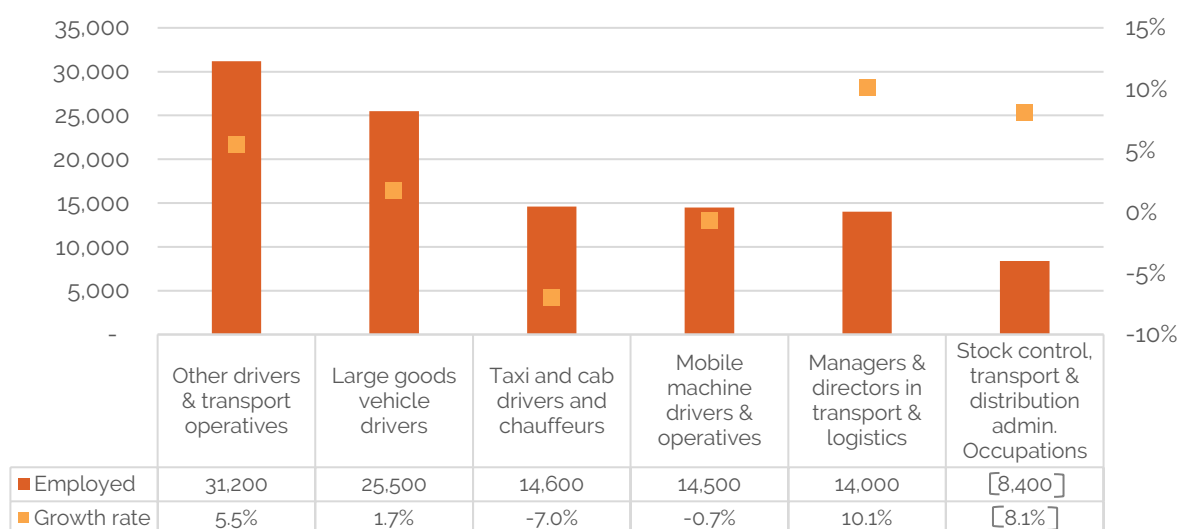
Overall Outlook for these Occupations

Employment growth was below average for this occupational group; employment levels fell due to the COVID-19 pandemic but have increased annually since. Three fifths of those employed were female, with a higher than average share working in part-time roles. Over half of employment was concentrated in the other NACE activities sector (which includes arts, entertainment and other services) with a further 22% employed in the ICT and professional activities sectors combined. Those employed in services roles were likely impacted by the higher cost of living in recent years but should benefit from expected increases in real income in the short- to medium term.

Occupation	Economic summary
Media profs. & librarians	Employment growth was above average for this occupation, and was primarily related to an increase of over 2,000 persons employed since 2022. There was a relatively high volume of online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP), mostly for advertising accounts managers. Employment is spread across a number of roles within this occupational group with Census 2022 data indicating that journalists/editors, PR professionals and librarians accounted for the largest share; the numbers employed across these roles are too small to allow for any detailed analysis of the future outlook within this occupation but the data at present does not point to any issues in sourcing skills for these roles.
Artistic, literary & media associate profs.	Employment growth was almost on a par with the national average for this occupation; employment grew strongly between 2021 and 2022 but declined slightly thereafter. Based on the CSO Census data, over a quarter were graphic designers, with other key roles including actors, authors/writers, photographers, artists and arts officers. Employment permits issued in 2023 were primarily for roles in animation, film and TV. Online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) related mainly to graphic designers. At present, the data does not indicate that issues exist in sourcing skills for this occupation.
Sports & fitness occupations	Strong employment growth between 2022 and 2023 led to an employment growth rate that was slightly above average, despite declines between 2021 and 2022. Fitness instructors and sports coaches accounted for large shares of employment in this occupation. Two-fifths of those working were in part-time roles. Restrictions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the increased cost of living is likely to have impacted employment in this occupation in recent years. Changes to consumers' disposable income and take-up of digital platforms for fitness in the coming years will likely affect demand for these skills.
Leisure & travel service occupations	Despite some growth since 2022, employment in 2023 was below the levels observed five years' previous. Most employed were female and almost two-fifths worked part-time. There was a relatively high volume of recent job hires indicating that job churn is a feature of these occupations. The numbers employed across the various roles in this occupation are too small for further analysis but the CSO Census data shows that approximately half of those in this occupation worked as air travel assistants or travel agents, with 2022 employment levels for these roles well below their 2016 levels. Levels of consumer spending and the green agenda will be some of the factors driving demand for these roles in the coming years.
Hairdressers & beauticians, etc.	Although employment levels returned to pre-COVID-19 levels in 2022, declines occurred in 2023 resulting in an overall negative growth rate annually over the five-year period. Most employed were female, with over a third working part-time; a higher than average share were non-Irish citizens. Vacancies were advertised across a number of roles including spa beauty therapists, barbers, nail technicians and hair stylists; Skills for Growth data highlights issues with recruiting spa therapists with the relevant industry qualifications (i.e. CIBTAC). There was a relatively high volume of jobseekers registered with DSP in December 2023 who were previously employed as hairdressers, beauticians or related occupations. In 2023, there were 237 new registrations for the newly introduced hairdressing apprenticeship. Costs of doing business, competition from the informal sector and the adoption of more green and sustainable practices are likely to continue to impact on employment levels for this occupation along with levels of tourism (particularly for those working in hotel settings) and changes in real disposal income for consumers.

10.13 Transport & Logistics Occupations

Figure 10.13 Annual Average Employment (2023) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2018-2023)



Overall employment	110,800
Share of total workforce	4.0%
Main sectors of employment	54% - Transport 15% - Wholesale & retail 13% - Industry [6%] - Construction
Employment growth	+10,600 between 2018 and 2023 +2% 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
Managers & directors in transport & logistics	...	97%	...	88%	[40%]	22	✓
Stock control, transport & distribution admin. occupations	...	[88%]	...	[75%]	...	84	✓
Large goods vehicle drivers	...	95%	37%	81%	...	270	✓
Mobile machine drivers & operatives	...	97%	...	84%	...		✓
Taxi/cab drivers and chauffeurs	...	[79%]	[46%]	80%	...		
Other drivers & transport operatives	...	77%	35%	80%	...	216	
Aircraft pilots, ship officers, air traffic controllers	4	
Overall total	[7%]	88%	31%	81%	23%	596	

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 below average employment annual growth rate over the five-year period primarily relates to a fall in the number of taxi drivers employed. Almost all employed in these occupations were male and the higher than average share aged 55 years and older suggests that replacement demand may be an issue in the short-to medium term. Although the number of online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) declined in 2023, it was by a far smaller share than the overall average. Upskilling and reskilling will continue to be a key feature for these occupations as digitalisation and sustainable practices change the nature of the work. Supply chain challenges and fuel costs also remain as challenges for these roles, particularly given the continuing geo-political tensions.

Occupation	Economic summary
Managers & directors in transport & logistics	This occupation had the strongest employment growth across all transport occupations, with employment growing by 2,400 since 2022. Vacancies which were identified as difficult-to-fill in the Recruitment Agency Survey mainly related to warehouse and logistics managers. Although Skills for Growth data did not identify issues with recruitment, it highlighted the need for upskilling in automation, leadership and supply chain for logistics planners
Stock control, transport & distribution admin. Shortage: inconclusive	Employment growth was above average for this occupation, with levels growing since 2021; however, numbers in the LFS are too small to allow for any detailed analysis. New employment permits issued related mainly to transport and distribution clerks and freight forwarders with freight forwarders also mentioned in the Recruitment Agency Survey as vacancies which were difficult-to-fill. Online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) related mainly to stock control clerks. Skills for Growth data highlighted issues with recruitment of supply chain administrators, demand planners, transport route planners/warehouse co-ordinators, with digital skills considered to be key. This remains an occupation in demand with some issues with recruitment in evidence; however, numbers employed are too small to determine if shortages exist.
Large goods vehicle drivers* Skills shortage: HGV drivers	Employment levels declined in 2021 but have grown since, although annual average growth over the five-year period remained below average. Despite this, demand is evident from the volume of online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) and new employment permits issued for HGV drivers. The Recruitment Agency Survey and Skills for Growth data both highlight issues in recruiting artic/rigid drivers with skills in documentation, time management and digital all noted as required. With over a third (37%) aged 55 years and older, replacement demand alone in the coming years is likely to lead to issues for this occupation. Along with the ageing workforce, factors such as working conditions, regulatory changes, economic effects such as the cost of fuel and competition from other industries with better pay and conditions are resulting in increased difficulty in sourcing HGV drivers ⁶⁹ . Recent research from Indeed shows that significant demand for truck drivers is continuing due to backlogs for those sitting HGV driving exams in combination with increased online orders and international shipping ⁷⁰ .
Mobile machine drivers & operatives	Employment growth was below average for this occupation, with little change in employment levels in recent years. Online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) and DSP vacancy advertisements related mainly to mobile machine and forklift drivers. Difficulty in recruiting drivers for both the transport and construction sector (e.g. reach forklift, machine, dumper, teleporters) was noted in the Recruitment Agency Survey while the need for crane drivers and forklifting skills for other occupations in transport/logistics were identified in the Skills for Growth data. Although there is evidence of demand for some specific roles within this occupation, static employment levels suggest no overall issues exist.
Taxi drivers and chauffeurs*	The negative growth rate for this occupation relates to annual declines in employment between 2018 and 2021 (falling by a total of 8,000 persons); employment levels increased in 2022 but experienced further declines in 2023. Almost half (46%) employed were aged 55 years and above which may lead to issues for this occupation in the coming years. In July 2024, there were 20,236 SPSV (Small Public Service Vehicle) licences active ⁷¹ . In 2023, the number of new licences issued averaged 166 per month, compared to 99 per month in 2022 and 45 per month in 2021; this increase is attributed to the Driver Recruitment Campaign by the NTA ⁷² .

⁶⁹ <https://www.hgvireland.com/where-have-all-the-truck-drivers-gone/>

⁷⁰ <https://www.rte.ie/news/business/2024/0725/1461729-indeed-survey-on-demand-for-jobs>

⁷¹ <https://www.nationaltransport.ie/taxi/statistics-and-legislation/vehicle-licences-statistics/>

⁷² <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2024-04-09/213/>

Other drivers & transport operatives*

Skills shortage: Bus and coach drivers

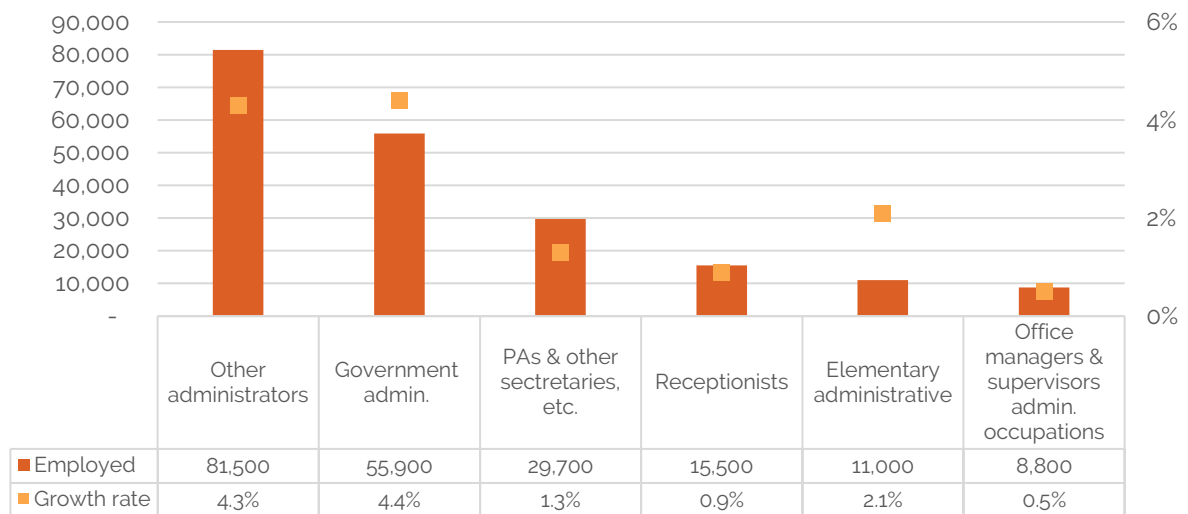
Van and bus/coach drivers account for the largest share of employment within this occupational group. Employment growth was above average, primarily related to growth between 2018 and 2019; employment levels in 2023 were broadly in line with levels in 2021. The new quota for employment permits for bus/coach drivers in December 2022 resulted in 216 new permits issued in 2023. There was a relatively high share of vacancies advertised through DSP for bus and coach drivers and Skills for Growth data noted issues with recruiting bus drivers. With over a third aged 55 years and older, openings may be more frequent in coming years due to replacement demand. The NTA and operators have engaged in extensive recruitment campaigns and open days recently along with introducing an employee referral programme⁷³. Despite this, shortages of bus and coach drivers persists.

** This occupation has been revised since the previous edition. See page 137 for details of the revision and Appendix for a list of job roles included in this occupation.*

⁷³ <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2024-05-16/65/>

10.14 Administrative & Secretarial Occupations

Figure 10.14 Annual Average Employment (2023) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2018-2023)



Overall employment	202,400
Share of total workforce	8.0%
Main sectors of employment	27% - Public administration and defence (PAD) 16% - Health 9% - Professional activities 8% - Transport
Employment growth	+30,300 between 2018 and 2023 +3.3% 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
Government admin.	71%	88%	21%	94%	59%		
Other administrators	80%	68%	26%	92%	49%	2	✓
Office managers & supervisors	[68%]	[77%]	...	86%	[57%]		
PAs & other secretaries, etc.	91%	56%	33%	93%	49%	1	
Receptionists	82%	...	...	78%	...		
Elementary administrative	...	87%	...	94%	...		
Overall total	75%	70%	25%	91%	48%	3	

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

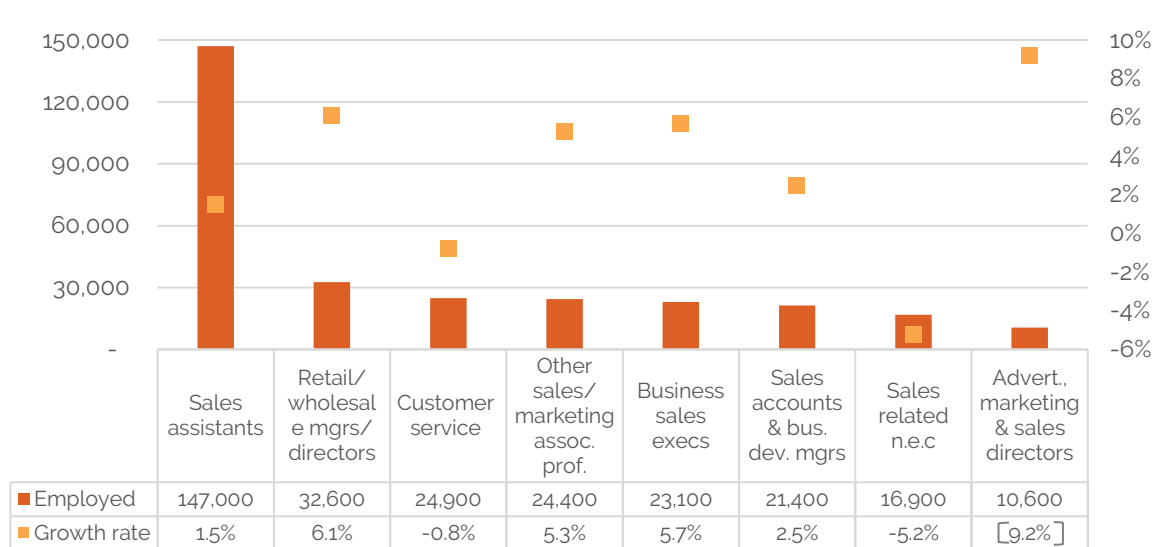
Despite a growth rate on a par with the national average, overall employment levels over the five-year period in this occupational group have seen little change since 2021. Automation and the digitalisation of tasks are likely to impact on employment growth in the coming years; however, given the higher than average share aged 55 years and over, it is unlikely to offset the considerable replacement demand that will arise due to retirements. With almost half of those employed holding third level qualifications, skills mismatches may also be a feature for these roles.

Occupation	Economic summary
Government admin. occupations	The strong employment growth rate for this occupation relates mainly to growth between 2020 and 2021, with employment levels falling by 7,000 since 2022. Despite this there was a relatively high level of recent job hires for this occupation in 2023, and it also featured strongly in online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) data. At 59%, this occupation had the highest share with third level qualifications across the group potentially leading to a level of skills mismatches. Job openings are likely to continue, particularly given the size of the occupation and the slightly higher than average share of older workers. Upskilling and reskilling may also be required for those already employed in these occupations in order to reach targets set out in the Civil Service Renewal Plan 2024 in areas such as in digital skills. ⁷⁴
Other administrators	Employment levels have been static since 2021 with the higher-than-average growth rate relating to earlier in the five-year period. This is the largest of the administrative occupations, with employment spread across all sectors of the economy. The small number of mentions of difficult-to-fill vacancies in the Recruitment Agency Survey related to site administration roles with Skills for Growth data also noting issues with recruitment for general office admin roles. A high volume of recent job hires suggests job churn is occurring, and with a high share of those employed aged 55 years or over, job opportunities are likely to arise even without any employment growth due to replacement demand alone.
Office managers & supervisors	Employment levels have been declining marginally for this occupation since 2021. The numbers employed are relatively small and therefore do not allow for more detailed analysis for this occupation.
PAs & other secretaries, etc.	Despite below average employment growth rates, this occupation featured strongly in the online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) data. Employment was across sectors including health, professional activities and education. At 91%, PAs and other secretaries had the highest share of females employed across administrative occupations, almost half were employed part-time and a third were aged 55 years or over. Automation and digitalisation of tasks are likely to reduce demand for these roles; however, job opportunities are likely to continue due to some level of replacement demand.
Receptionists	Employment levels dipped during the COVID-19 pandemic, most likely related to reduced demand for hotel receptionists and offices closing; employment in 2023 had returned to pre-COVID-19 levels. The majority employed as receptionists were female and were working part-time. Factors such as automation may reduce the future demand for these roles.
Elementary admin (e.g. postal workers, couriers)	Employment levels for this occupation have remained unchanged since 2020. Most are employed in the transportation and storage sector. There were few job adverts and there were no other indications of issues with recruitment for these roles.

⁷⁴ <https://assets.gov.ie/211842/8d223347-9114-43dd-84c5-78f685c63f1b.pdf>

10.15 Sales, Marketing and Customer Service Occupations

Figure 10.15 Annual Average Employment (2023) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2018-2023)



Overall employment	300,800
Share of total workforce	11%
Main sectors of employment	71% - Wholesale & retail 6% - Industry 5% - ICT
Employment growth	+30,100 between 2018 and 2023 +2.1% 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
Advertising, marketing & sales directors	...	97%	...	[86%]	[78%]	78	✓
Managers & directors in retail & wholesale	38%	91%	[24%]	82%	51%	15	
Business sales executives	[28%]	89%	[17%]	78%	62%	273	✓
Sales accounts & bus. dev. managers	[34%]	98%	...	80%	80%	230	✓
Other sales and marketing assoc. prof.	54%	88%	[18%]	85%	81%	463	✓
Sales assistants	63%	39%	11%	84%	19%	2	
Sales related n.e.c.	[43%]	75%	...	84%	[36%]		
Customer service	65%	79%	...	77%	54%	45	
Overall total	52%	64%	14%	83%	41%	1,106	

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

Overall employment levels in this occupational group between 2022 and 2023 remained almost unchanged, with elevated levels of inflation and reduced consumer demand during this period likely to have been contributing factors, particularly for those employed in the wholesale and retail sector. The Central Bank forecasts an increased level of consumer spending in 2024 as real income improves which should have a positive effect on sales roles in the short-term at least.⁷⁵ Although the wholesale and retail sector accounted for the highest share of employment in these occupations (driven by the high volume of sales assistants employed in this group), issues with sourcing certain sales roles, as identified in the employment permits data, appear to relate to other sectors such as the ICT sector, which accounts for a far smaller share of employment. Sales skills feature strongly in Enterprise Ireland's Spotlight on Skills data spanning a range of skills from marketing, communication, negotiation, solving customers' problems and product/technical knowledge.

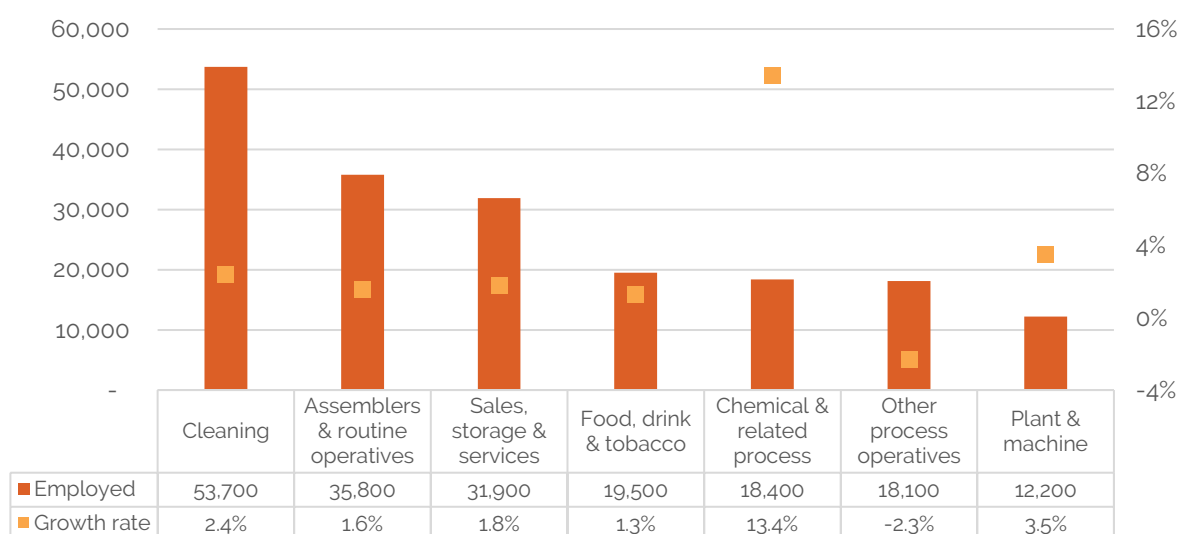
Occupation	Economic summary
Advertising, marketing & sales directors	This is a relatively small occupation with just over 10,000 persons employed in 2023; despite strong growth between 2018 and 2022, employment contracted (by 1,000) in the most recent year. There was a relatively high volume of online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) for this occupation in 2023, primarily related to marketing/sales directors. Skills for Growth data identified issues recruiting digital marketing specialists (with knowledge of social media) with marketing, branding, digital advertising and ecommerce skills highlighted as in demand in EI's Spotlight on Skills data.
Managers & directors in retail & wholesale	Employment growth for this occupation was above average, although employment levels fell by 3,000 in 2023. Almost a quarter (24%) were aged 55 years and older. There was a relatively high share of online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) for these roles. Future employment growth for this occupation will be dependent on consumer spending and changing patterns of shopping for goods (e.g. online shopping).
Business sales executives	Employment levels were steady between 2019 and 2021 but employment numbers have grown since, with an additional 6,000 persons employed between 2022 and 2023. New employment permits issued were mostly critical skills permits, with half relating to the ICT sector. Employers, via Skills for Growth and EI's Spotlight on Skills data, identified issues with recruiting those in technical sales with technical/engineering skills and knowledge (e.g. solar panel sales, manufacturing), with a demand also for skills in customer relationship management and being able to adapt to the customer type (i.e. managing an existing relationship vs attracting new customers). The extent to which the slowdown in hirings in the ICT sector, where particular issues have been identified, will alleviate recruitment issues is yet to be determined, particularly given the recent growth in employment.
Sales accounts & bus. dev. managers	Employment levels remained almost unchanged since 2021 resulting in a below average growth rate. A third of the new employment permits issued in 2023 related to roles in the ICT sector for a broad range of titles including business development managers. Difficult-to-fill vacancies in the Recruitment Agency Survey were for sales/marketing and lead category managers. EI's Spotlight on Skills identified strategic buyers (with project management) and sales account managers (with CRM skills) as being difficult to source particularly relating to the manufacturing sector. Although some issues with recruitment have been identified, the lack of employment growth in recent years does not point to an overall shortage for these roles at present.
Other sales & marketing assoc. professionals	Employment growth was above average for this occupation, having grown steadily between 2018 and 2021; employment levels have declined annually since (and by 3,000 in 2023). Online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) were mainly for buyers and procurement officers. Approximately half of the new employment permits issued in 2023 were for the ICT sector (although the share in employment in this sector was small); roles included marketing executives, procurement and supply chain roles and account managers/strategists. Difficult-to-fill vacancies in the Recruitment Agency Survey related to procurement and supply chain roles. Skills identified in the Spotlight on Skills data included bid preparation, procurement, and tender writing skills.

⁷⁵ Central Bank of Ireland, Quarterly Bulletin, Q2 2024

Sales assistants	<p>The below average growth rate for sales assistants relates to a dip in employment levels in 2020 with the onset of COVID-19 restrictions; employment levels in 2022 had returned to pre-COVID levels and employment continued to grow in 2023. Recent job hires far exceeded any employment growth suggesting that job churn is a significant feature of this occupation and is likely to be the main cause of the high volume of vacancies for these roles (both Eurostat/CEDEFOP and DSP). Three fifths of employment was for part-time roles and almost half were aged 15-24 years, with students in full-time education likely to feature strongly in this role. Replacement demand is likely to remain strong for this occupation. Skills for Growth data indicated issues with recruitment of retail sales assistants with knowledge of specific manufacturing sectors and for specialist shops.</p>
Customer service occupations	<p>The below average growth rate for this occupation primarily related to a fall of 4,700 persons employed between 2022 and 2023. Despite the fall in employment in 2023, there was a relatively high share of recent job hires, indicating that job churn is a factor for this occupation. New employment permits issued in 2023 were mainly for roles in the ICT sector (e.g. RCO investigation specialist). The number of online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) almost halved between 2022 and 2023; DSP job adverts were mainly for mystery shoppers and customer services agents. Spotlight on Skills data noted issues with recruiting persons with customer service skills (i.e. being able to interact effectively with customers).</p>
Sales related occupations n.e.c.	<p>Although employment grew steadily between 2018 and 2021, sharp falls in 2022 (by 9,200) and again in 2023 (by a more moderate 2,400) resulted in a negative employment growth rate. Skills for Growth data highlighted issues with recruiting technical sales representatives with product knowledge (including IT).</p>

10.16 Operatives & Elementary Occupations n.e.c.

Figure 10.16 Annual Average Employment (2023) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2018-2023)



Overall employment	189,600
Share of total workforce	7.0%
Main sectors of employment	53% - Industry 14% - Administrative and support services 11% - Wholesale & retail
Employment growth	+20,900 between 2018 and 2023 +2.4% 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
Food, drink & tobacco	...	85%	...	56%	...	441	✓
Chemical & related process	[37%]	98%	...	78%	[44%]		
Other process operatives	[39%]	83%	...	65%	...	15	✓
Plant & machine	...	90%	...	78%	...	4	
Assemblers & routine operatives	46%	93%	[15%]	72%	35%	11	
Cleaning	68%	45%	23%	58%	[16%]	1	✓
Sales, storage & services	...	70%	...	78%	...		✓
Overall total	40%	75%	18%	68%	25%	472	

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

With little change in employment levels since 2022, the annual average growth over the five-year period to 2023 was below the national average. Over half of employment in this occupational group was in industry, with 14% in administrative support services (e.g. cleaners) and 11% in wholesale and retail (e.g. warehouse operatives). Almost a third of those employed were non-Irish citizens and a high share of recent job hires in some roles suggests a high level of churn and issues in relation to the attractiveness of the job. The relatively high share of those employed who held at most lower secondary education (at 18%) indicates that upskilling/reskilling requirements will be key for this cohort with increased digitalisation of tasks in these jobs.

Occupation	Economic summary
Food, drink & tobacco	Despite some growth since 2022, the employment growth rate was below average for this occupation. The share of non-Irish citizens in this occupation continues to grow, reaching 44% in quarter 4 2023. Employment permits issued related primarily to meat processing operatives and these roles were also mentioned in the Recruitment Agency Survey. The high volume of vacancies for meat processing operatives advertised through DSP Jobs Ireland may relate in part at least to notification obligations for the employment permit system. Skills for Growth data identified issues with recruiting food processing operatives and process technicians to operate high tech machinery (with Leaving Cert or NQF 6 level of education). Issues with recruitment for meat processing operatives are likely to persist due to the perceived attractiveness of the job, although targets to reduce agricultural carbon emissions may see demand for this occupation curtailed in future years.
Chemical & related process	The strong employment growth rate for this occupation relates to significant growth in employment occurring between 2021 and 2022, with only small increases to 2023. With few vacancy notifications (DSP) and online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) and a levelling of employment, no issues have been identified for this occupation.
Other process operatives & process plant occupations (e.g. packers, bottlers)	Despite employment levels increasing annually since 2021, they remained below pre-COVID-19 levels. There was a relatively high volume of online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) for this occupation, primarily for packers, although the level of adverts has fallen since 2022. Posts advertised through DSP related mostly to general operatives. These roles were also highlighted as difficult-to-fill in the Recruitment Agency Survey and Skills for Growth data (along with shift operators), with the perceived attractiveness of the job (e.g. shift work) a potential contributing factor in terms of recruitment issues for this occupation.
Plant & machine operatives (e.g. quarry workers, energy & sewerage plant operatives)	The employment growth rate was on a par with the national average, although employment levels declined marginally in 2023. There was a relatively high volume of online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP), mostly for paper and wood machine operatives, although the number of adverts has fallen since 2022. Although the green transition may result in an increased demand for elementary workers in energy and sewerage plant operations, there is no current evidence that issues exist with sourcing personnel for these roles.
Assemblers & routine operatives	A large decline in employment levels in 2023 for this occupation (by 6,100 persons) resulted in a below average growth rate. The share of non-Irish citizens, at 28%, was above the national average and over a third employed held third-level qualifications, indicating that over-qualification may be a factor for some persons in these roles.
Cleaning operatives	Employment levels for cleaners fell in 2020 and 2021 as a result of COVID-19 restrictions; employment has grown strongly since 2022 although the employment growth rate was below average. Over two-thirds of those employed were female, over half worked part-time, almost a quarter were aged 55 years or over and 42% were non-Irish citizens, with the shares for each of these categories being above the national average. The level of educational attainment for those employed as cleaners was below average; 30% had attained at most a lower secondary education and a further 54% had attained a higher secondary/FET level of education. Recent job hires in 2023 far exceeded employment growth indicating that job churn is occurring in this role.
Sales, storage & services	Employment levels have remained relatively stable in recent years, although small declines occurred since 2022. Despite this decline, a high volume of recent job hires occurred. A higher than average share (30% compared to 12% nationally) employed were aged 15-24 years. Difficult to fill vacancies identified for this occupation in the Recruitment Agency Survey and Skills for Growth data related to warehouse operatives in the wholesale & retail sector and industry, with shift work perceived to be an issue. Vacancy adverts (DSP) and online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) also related mainly to these roles.



Appendix

Breakdown of Occupational Groups

Occupational Groups	Occupations	SOC Description
Science & Engineering Occupations	Chemical, biological & physical scientists	Chemical scientists
		Biological scientists and biochemists
		Physical scientists
		Social and humanities scientists
		Natural and social science professionals n.e.c.
		Research and development managers
	Environmental/conservation specialists	Conservation and environmental associate professionals
		Conservation professionals
		Environment professionals
		Production managers and directors in mining and energy
		Waste disposal and environmental services managers
		Environmental health professionals
	Health & safety officers	Health and safety officers
	Production, design & quality control engineers	Production and process engineers
		Design and development engineers
		Quality control and planning engineers
		Quality assurance and regulatory professionals
	Other engineering professionals	Mechanical engineers
		Electrical engineers
		Electronics engineers
		Engineering professionals n.e.c.
	Science & engineering technicians	Laboratory technicians
		Electrical and electronic technicians
Engineering technicians		
Quality assurance technicians		
Planning, process and production technicians		
Science, engineering and production technicians n.e.c.		
Production managers in manufacturing	Production managers and directors in manufacturing	
ICT Occupations	ICT specialist & project managers	Information technology and telecommunications directors
		IT specialist managers
		IT project and programme managers
	Programmers & software developers	Programmers and software development professionals
	ICT professionals n.e.c.	IT business analysts, architects and systems designers
		Web design and development professionals
		Information technology & telecommunications professionals n.e.c.
	IT technicians	IT operations technicians
		IT user support technicians

Business & Financial Occupations	Accountants & tax experts	Chartered and certified accountants and taxation experts
	Management consultants, business analysts & project managers	Management consultants and business analysts
		Business and financial project management professionals
	Actuaries, economists & statisticians; other business professionals	Actuaries, economists and statisticians
		Business and related research professionals
		Business, research and administrative professionals n.e.c.
	Financial analysts & insurance underwriters	Brokers
		Insurance underwriters
		Finance and investment analysts and advisers
	Other business associate professionals	Estimators, valuers and assessors
		Importers and exporters
		Financial and accounting technicians
		Business and related associate professionals n.e.c.
		Legal associate professionals
	Financial accounts managers	Financial accounts managers
	Financial managers & directors	Financial managers and directors
		Financial institution managers and directors
	Financial admin.	Credit controllers
		Book-keepers, payroll managers and wages clerks
		Bank and post office clerks
Finance officers		
Financial administrative occupations n.e.c.		
Pensions and insurance clerks and assistants		
HR managers & officers	Human resource managers and directors	
	Human resources and industrial relations officers	
Healthcare Occupations	Other healthcare professionals	Psychologists
		Pharmacists
		Opticians (including dispensing opticians)
		Dental practitioners
		Medical radiographers
		Podiatrists
		Health professionals n.e.c.
		Health services and public health managers and directors
		Social services managers and directors
	Health care practice managers	
	Medical practitioners	Medical practitioners
	Therapy professionals	Physiotherapists
		Occupational therapists
		Speech and language therapists
		Therapy professionals n.e.c.
	Nurses & midwives	Nurses and midwives

	Health associate professionals	Paramedics
		Pharmaceutical technicians
		Medical and dental technicians
		Health associate professionals n.e.c.
		Dispensing opticians
		Dental nurses
Education Occupations	Higher & further education teaching professionals	Further and higher education teaching professionals
	Secondary teachers	Secondary education teaching professionals
	Primary & nursery teachers	Primary and nursery education teaching professionals
	Teaching & other educational professionals	Senior professionals of educational establishments
		Special education teaching professionals
		Education advisers and school inspectors
		Teaching, special needs, & other educational professionals n.e.c.
	Educational support assistants	Teaching assistants
		Educational support assistants
	Trainers & instructors, career guidance	Vocational and industrial trainers and instructors
		Careers advisers and vocational guidance specialists
		Driving instructors
Social & Care Occupations	Welfare & housing associate professionals	Youth and community workers
		Child and early years officers
		Housing officers
		Counsellors
		Welfare and housing associate professionals n.e.c.
	Childminders etc.	Nursery nurses and assistants and playworkers
		Childminders and related occupations
		Playgroup leaders
	Other caring services	Nursing auxiliaries and assistants
		Ambulance staff (excluding paramedics)
		Undertakers, mortuary and crematorium assistants
	Social workers & welfare professionals	Social workers
		Probation officers
		Clergy
		Welfare professionals n.e.c.
	Care workers, home carers, etc.	Houseparents and residential wardens
		Care workers and home carers
		Residential, day and domiciliary care managers and proprietors
		Senior care workers
		Care escorts
Legal & Security Occupations	Barristers, judges, solicitors & related professionals	Barristers and judges
		Solicitors
		Legal professionals n.e.c.
	Gardai	Senior police officers

	Other protective service occupations	Police officers (sergeant and below)	
		Officers in armed forces	
		Senior officers in fire, ambulance, prison and related services	
		NCOs and other ranks	
		Fire service officers (watch manager and below)	
		Prison service officers (below principal officer)	
		Police community support officers	
		Protective service associate professionals n.e.c.	
	Security guards	Security guards and related occupations	
		Parking and civil enforcement occupations	
		School midday and crossing patrol occupations	
		Elementary security occupations n.e.c.	
	Construction Occupations	Civil engineers & construction project managers	Civil engineers
			Construction project managers and related professionals
Production managers and directors in construction			
Architects & town planners, architectural technologists, & surveyors		Architects	
		Quantity surveyors	
		Town planners	
		Chartered surveyors	
		Chartered architectural technologists	
Construction related technicians		Building and civil engineering technicians	
		Architectural and town planning technicians	
		Draughtspersons	
Bricklayers & plasterers		Bricklayers and masons	
		Plasterers	
Plumbers		Plumbers and heating and ventilating engineers	
Carpenters & joiners		Carpenters and joiners	
Painters & decorators		Painters and decorators	
Other construction trades		Steel erectors	
		Roofers, roof tilers and slaters	
		Glaziers, window fabricators and fitters	
		Construction and building trades n.e.c.	
		Floorers and wall tilers	
		Construction and building trades supervisors	
Construction operatives & elementary		Elementary construction occupations	
		Scaffolders, staggers and riggers	
		Road construction operatives	
		Rail construction and maintenance operatives	
		Construction operatives n.e.c.	
Other Craft Occupations		Other metal-related trades	Smiths and forge workers
	Moulders, core makers and die casters		
	Sheet metal workers		

		Metal plate workers, and riveters
		Air-conditioning and refrigeration engineers
		Metal machining setters and setter-operators
		Tool makers, tool fitters and markers-out
		Precision instrument makers and repairers
		Pipe fitters
	Welding & fabricators	Welding trades
		Metal working production and maintenance fitters
	Vehicle trades	Vehicle technicians, mechanics and electricians
		Vehicle body builders and repairers
		Vehicle paint technicians
		Aircraft maintenance and related trades
		Boat and ship builders and repairers
		Rail and rolling stock builders and repairers
	Electrical & electronic trades etc.	Electricians and electrical fitters
		Telecommunications engineers
		TV, video and audio engineers
		IT engineers
		Electrical and electronic trades n.e.c.
	Other skilled trades	Skilled metal, electrical and electronic trades supervisors
		Weavers and knitters
		Upholsterers
		Footwear and leather working trades
		Tailors and dressmakers
		Textiles, garments and related trades n.e.c.
		Pre-press technicians
		Printers
		Print finishing and binding workers
		Glass and ceramics makers, decorators and finishers
		Furniture makers and other craft woodworkers
		Florists
	Other skilled trades n.e.c.	
Butchers, fishmongers, bakers etc.	Butchers	
	Bakers and flour confectioners	
	Fishmongers and poultry dressers	
Agriculture & Animal Care Occupations	Managers in horticulture, agriculture & fishing	Managers and proprietors in agriculture and horticulture
		Managers and proprietors in forestry, fishing and related services
		Managers and proprietors in horse-racing and related industries
	Farmers	Farmers
	Horticultural, agricultural & fishing trades n.e.c.	Horticultural trades
		Gardeners and landscape gardeners
Groundsmen and greenkeepers		

		Skilled workers in horse racing and related industries
		Agricultural and fishing trades n.e.c.
	Animal carers	Veterinary nurses
		Pest control officers
		Veterinarians
		Animal care services occupations n.e.c.
	Elementary agriculture occupations	Farm workers
		Forestry workers
		Elementary occupations in horse racing and related industries
		Fishing and other elementary agriculture occupations n.e.c.
Hospitality Occupations	Hospitality managers	Hotel and accommodation managers and proprietors
		Restaurant and catering establishment managers and proprietors
		Publicans and managers of licensed premises
	Chefs & cooks	Chefs
		Cooks
	Catering & bar managers	Catering & bar managers
	Kitchen & catering assistants	Kitchen and catering assistants
	Waiters & waitresses	Waiters and waitresses
	Bar staff	Bar staff
	Housekeepers etc.	Housekeepers and related occupations
Cleaning and housekeeping managers and supervisors		
Arts, Sports & Tourism Occupations	Media professionals & librarians	Librarians
		Archivists and curators
		Journalists, newspaper and periodical editors
		Public relations professionals
		Advertising account managers and creative directors
	Artistic, literary & media associate professionals	Artists
		Authors, writers and translators
		Actors, entertainers and presenters
		Dancers and choreographers
		Musicians
		Arts officers, producers and directors
		Photographers, audio-visual and broadcasting equipment operators
		Graphic designers
	Product, clothing and related designers	
	Sports & fitness occupations	Leisure and sports managers
		Sports players
		Sports coaches, instructors and officials
		Fitness instructors
	Leisure & travel service occupations	Sports and leisure assistants
		Travel agents
		Air travel assistants

		Rail travel assistants
		Leisure and theme park attendants
		Travel agency managers and proprietors
		Leisure and travel service occupations n.e.c.
	Hairdressers & beauticians etc.	Beauticians and related occupations
		Hairdressers, barbers, beauticians and related occupations
Hairdressing and beauty salon managers and proprietors		
Transport & Logistics Occupations	Managers & directors in transport & logistics	Managers and directors in transport and distribution
		Managers and directors in storage and warehousing
	Stock control, transport & distribution admin.	Stock control clerks and assistants
		Transport and distribution clerks and assistants
	Large goods vehicle drivers	Large goods vehicle drivers
	Mobile machine drivers & operatives	Crane drivers
		Fork-lift truck drivers
		Agricultural machinery drivers
		Mobile machine drivers and operatives n.e.c.
	Taxi/cab drivers & chauffeurs	Taxi and cab drivers and chauffeurs
	Other drivers & transport operatives	Marine and waterways transport operatives
		Air transport operatives
		Rail transport operatives
		Bus and coach drivers
		Train and tram drivers
		Van drivers
		Other drivers and transport operatives n.e.c.
Aircraft pilots, ship officers, air traffic controllers	Air traffic controllers	
	Aircraft pilots and flight engineers	
	Ship and hovercraft officers	
Administrative & Secretarial Occupations	Government admin.	National government administrative occupations
		Local government administrative occupations
		Officers of non-governmental organisations
	Other administrators	Records clerks and assistants
		Library clerks and assistants
		Human resources administrative occupations
		Sales administrators
		Other administrative occupations n.e.c.
	Office managers & supervisors	Office managers
		Office supervisors
	PAs & other secretaries etc.	Medical secretaries
		Legal secretaries
		Personal assistants and other secretaries
		Typists and related keyboard occupations
	Receptionists	Receptionists

	Elementary administrative	Postal workers, mail sorters, messengers and couriers
		Elementary administration occupations n.e.c.
Sales & Customer Service Occupations	Advertising, marketing & sales directors	Marketing and sales directors
		Purchasing managers and directors
		Advertising and public relations directors
	Managers & directors in retail & wholesale	Managers and directors in retail and wholesale
	Business sales executives	Business sales executives
	Sales accounts & business development managers	Sales accounts and business development managers
	Other sales & marketing associate professionals	Buyers and procurement officers
		Marketing associate professionals
		Estate agents and auctioneers
		Conference and exhibition managers and organisers
		Property, housing and estate managers
	Sales assistants	Sales and retail assistants, cashiers and checkout operators
		Retail cash desk and check-out operators
		Telephone salespersons
		Pharmacy and other dispensing assistants
		Vehicle and parts salespersons and advisers
	Sales related occupations	Collector salespersons and credit agents
		Debt, rent and other cash collectors
		Roundspersons and van salespersons
		Market and street traders and assistants
		Merchandisers and window dressers
		Sales related occupations n.e.c.
		Sales supervisors
Customer service occupations	Call and contact centre occupations	
	Telephonists	
	Communication operators	
	Market research interviewers	
	Customer service occupations n.e.c.	
	Customer service managers and supervisors	
Operatives & Elementary Occupations n.e.c.	Food, drink & tobacco operatives	Food, drink and tobacco process operatives
	Chemical & related process	Chemical and related process operatives
	Other process operatives & process plant occupations	Glass and ceramics process operatives
		Textile process operatives
		Rubber process operatives
		Plastics process operatives
		Metal making and treating process operatives
		Electroplaters
		Process operatives n.e.c.
		Industrial cleaning process occupations
		Packers, bottlers, canners and fillers

	Plant & machine	Elementary process plant occupations n.e.c.
		Paper and wood machine operatives
		Coal mine operatives
		Quarry workers and related operatives
		Energy plant operatives
		Metal working machine operatives
		Water and sewerage plant operatives
		Printing machine assistants
		Plant and machine operatives n.e.c.
	Assemblers & routine operatives	Assemblers (electrical and electronic products)
		Assemblers (vehicles and metal goods)
		Routine inspectors and testers
		Weighers, graders and sorters
		Tyre, exhaust and windscreen fitters
		Sewing machinists
		Assemblers and routine operatives n.e.c.
	Cleaning	Window cleaners
		Street cleaners
		Cleaners and domestics
		Launderers, dry cleaners and pressers
		Refuse and salvage occupations
		Vehicle valeters and cleaners
		Elementary cleaning occupations n.e.c.
	Sales, storage & services	Shelf fillers
		Elementary sales occupations n.e.c.
		Elementary storage occupations
		Hospital porters
Other elementary services occupations n.e.c.		

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