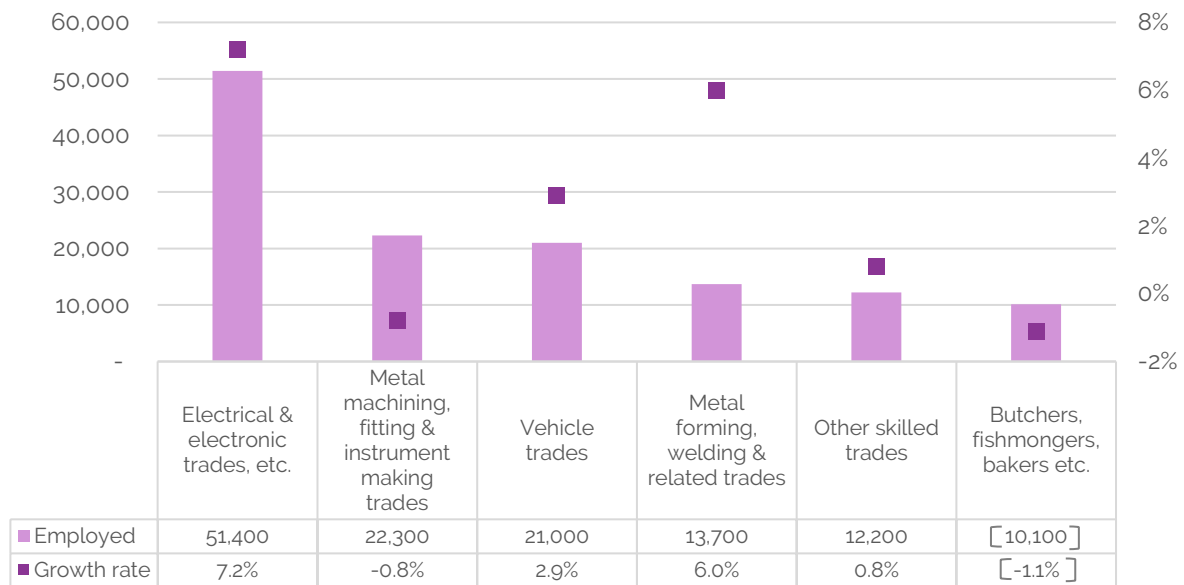


## 10.9 Other Craft Occupations n.e.c.

Figure 10.9 Annual Average Employment (2022) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2017-2022)



<b>Overall employment</b>	<b>130,700</b>
<b>Share of total workforce</b>	5.1%
<b>Main sectors of employment</b>	36% - Industry 22% - Construction 17% - Wholesale 8% - ICT
<b>Employment growth</b>	+20,300 between 2017 and 2022 +3.4% on average annually (compared to +3.0% for total workforce)

2022	% 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
Metal forming, welding & related trades	...	98%	...	78%	...	429	✓
Metal machining, fitting & instrument making trades	...	96%	[23%]	88%	[34%]	119	
Vehicle trades	...	96%	...	75%	...	53	
Electrical & electronic trades etc.	...	97%	[14%]	87%	37%	141	✓
Other skilled trades	...	82%	...	76%	...	1	
Butchers, fishmongers, bakers etc.	...	[81%]	...	[58%]	...	363	
<b>Overall total</b>	<b>[6%]</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>1,106</b>	

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 five-year annual average employment growth for other craft occupations was above the national average, driven primarily by growth in employment between 2021 and 2022 with an additional 23,000 persons employed (mainly electricians). Employment in these occupations in 2022 was across industry, construction, wholesale/retail and ICT, and most in employment were male (94%). The number of new employment permits issued grew strongly, increasing from approximately 150 in 2021 to over 1,100 in 2022, partly related to new quotas for meat deboners. Future outlooks for this occupational group will vary depending on the main sector of employment for the individual occupations, with upskilling/reskilling requirements a feature for many of these roles due to increased digitalisation and automation.

Occupation	Economic summary																		
<p>Metal forming, welding &amp; related trades</p> <p><b>Skills shortage: Welders/fabricators</b></p>	<p>Despite declines in 2020 and 2021, the five-year annual average employment growth was strong (6%), with employment levels for this occupational group reaching their highest levels to date. The demand for welders has persisted, with employers (Skills for Growth) and the Recruitment Agency Survey both citing welding positions as difficult to fill, typically for roles requiring MIG/TIG and arc welding skills or for the machinery manufacturing sector. Job vacancies advertised through the DSP included welder/fabricators, pipefitters, and sheet metal workers/fabricators, while online job adverts, although small in number, grew by 16% year-on-year, driven by increases for sheet metal workers. Employment permits related to welders/fabricators, pipe fitters and, to a lesser extent, sheet metal workers. Output from the further education and training system has increased in recent years: compared to pre-COVID levels (in 2019), the number of industry and craft awards in welding and metal fabrication grew by 388 and 77 awards, to reach nearly 1,600 and 145 awards respectively. Smaller numbers of awards were made to qualifying apprentices in pipefitting and sheet metal working (combined 38 awards in 2022). Recent growth in the number of new apprentice registrations in metal fabrication, pipefitting and sheet metal working are expected to lead to further increased output for these occupations in the medium term. The SOC classification system does not capture the extent of the merging of skills in these roles; welder, fabricator and even pipe fitter skills are merging which span both this and the occupation below. Although welders are employed across sectors, shortages are particularly emerging for qualified and experienced welders/fabricators in industry including high-tech manufacturing.</p>																		
<p>Metal machining, fitting &amp; instrument making trades</p> <p><b>Skills shortage: CNC programmers</b></p>	<p>Although the five-year annual average growth for this occupation was negative, the number of persons employed was more than a third higher than the pre-COVID-19 level. Vacancies for computer numerical control (CNC) programmers and operators occurred frequently in the DSP Jobs Ireland data and were also the main roles for which employment permits were issued for this occupational group. Demand for this occupation was evident in the Skills for Growth data, in particular for qualified CNC operators, toolmakers, and maintenance fitters, with demand mostly, although not exclusively, related to high-tech manufacturing (i.e. medtech, pharma); skills in demand for this occupation included problem solving, communications, digital, and lean processing skills. The higher than average share of persons employed aged 55 years and older also indicates that replacement demand is likely to create job opportunities for these roles. Although shortages of CNC programmers persist, they are considered niche and most likely affecting small and medium sized firms in particular. With different types of tasks associated with CNC programming work, some are more exposed to automation than others, depending on the type of machinery used.</p>																		
<p>Vehicle trades</p>	<p>Employment levels have seen little change in recent years resulting in a below average annual growth rate over the five-year period. Census data shows that although employment is spread across a range of roles, the majority are employed as vehicle technicians, mechanics and electricians.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>CSO Census</th> <th>2016</th> <th>2022</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Vehicle technicians, mechanics and electricians</td> <td>16,011</td> <td>16,159</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vehicle body builders and repairers</td> <td>2,337</td> <td>2,024</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Aircraft maintenance and related trades</td> <td>1,415</td> <td>1,540</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Boat and ship builders and repairers</td> <td>449</td> <td>437</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rail and rolling stock builders and repairers</td> <td>49</td> <td>98</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>There was a higher-than-average share of non-Irish citizens employed (25% compared to 19% nationally). Employment permits issued for this occupation were mainly for vehicle roadworthiness testers with a small number for aircraft engineers. Vacancies advertised through DSP Jobs Ireland included various mechanics (aircraft, HGV, motor) and vehicle inspectors. There was a relatively high volume of jobseekers registered with the DSP in December 2022 who had previously been employed in vehicle trades roles. New apprenticeship registration numbers for both HGV and motor mechanics declined in 2022 when compared to the previous year but were relatively on a par with</p>	CSO Census	2016	2022	Vehicle technicians, mechanics and electricians	16,011	16,159	Vehicle body builders and repairers	2,337	2,024	Aircraft maintenance and related trades	1,415	1,540	Boat and ship builders and repairers	449	437	Rail and rolling stock builders and repairers	49	98
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2019 levels. The decline in new diesel and petrol car registrations along with the increased uptake of electric and hybrid vehicles is likely to result in an increased demand for electric vehicle (EV) mechanics and a gradual decline in demand for traditional motor mechanic skills. In 2022, there were 15,462 EV cars licensed for the first time in Ireland, representing a 3.5-fold increase (+349%) on 2019 numbers. Growth is expected to continue, as in the first five months of 2023 numbers had already reached nearly 12,000, a 52% increase on the same period in the preceding year. Although no shortages have been identified, upskilling/reskilling in digital skills will be required for the current vehicle mechanic workforce.

Electrical & electronic trades, etc.

Employment growth for this occupation was well above the national average; employment grew strongly in the second half of 2022, significantly above pre-COVID levels. As the Census data indicates, electricians and electrical fitters account for the largest share of those employed in this occupation, with employment growing by almost 7,000 persons since 2016.

CSO Census	2016	2022
Electricians and electrical fitters	15,560	22,327
IT engineers	3,764	6,079
Electrical and electronic trades n.e.c.	3,920	3,878
Telecommunications engineers	4,193	3,595
Skilled metal, electrical and electronic trades supervisors	3,330	3,276
TV, video and audio engineers	758	809

There was a relatively high number of vacancies for electricians advertised through DSP Jobs Ireland in 2022. Employment permits mostly related to customer engineers and field service engineers and were for roles within the ICT sector. Difficult-to-fill vacancy mentions in the Recruitment Agency Survey were for electricians in the construction sector. There have been increasing numbers of new apprenticeship registrations for electricians in recent years (over 2,600 in 2022), with over 500 craft awards made in 2021. Employment is expanding for this occupation with demand occurring across a variety of sectors. Although supply is considered sufficient for the housing sector (based on DFERIS report), demand is being driven in part by energy efficiency and the green agenda. There also appears to be a shift in the skills mix required for electricians to energy performance in building, energy sector policy, maintenance and repair. Although no shortages are identified at present, they may potentially emerge if employment continues to grow at its current rate.

Other skilled trades (e.g. printers, furniture makers, and textile trades)

The five-year annual average employment growth rate was below average for this occupation, although there was an increase of over 2,000 persons employed between 2021 and 2022. As the Census data indicates, there are a large number of roles within this group, with many employing fewer than 1,000 persons. Between 2016 and 2022, employment levels fell for many of these roles.

CSO Census	2016	2022
Furniture makers and other craft woodworkers	3,054	3,426
Printers	3,772	2,874
Florists	936	1,050
Glass and ceramics makers, decorators and finishers	1,052	1,039
Upholsterers	725	682
Tailors and dressmakers	891	646
Print finishing and binding workers	502	403
Footwear and leather working trades	232	218
Weavers and knitters	222	185
Textiles, garments and related trades n.e.c.	92	74
Other skilled trades n.e.c.	2,398	2,360

Despite the decline in employment evident in the Census data, the Skills for Growth data indicates issues with recruitment of upholsterers for both the industry and retail (repair) sectors; upholsterers also appeared in the DSP Jobs Ireland vacancy data (albeit in small numbers), along with spray painters (included in the other skilled trades n.e.c. category). Although demand for many of these trades have declined in recent years, an increased focus on the circular economy may see increased demand, or at least slow the decline for roles such as upholsterers and tailors.

Butchers, fishmongers, bakers etc.

This occupation had a negative annual average employment growth rate over the five-year period, although there was some growth in the year since 2021. The CSO Census data shows that employment levels for butchers fell between 2016 and 2022; the fall was greatest for those employed in the retail sector, although there were also declines for those employed in manufacturing (in 2022, 59% of butchers were employed in wholesale/retail and 37% were in manufacturing). Over half of those employed as bakers and flour confectioners in 2022 were working in manufacturing, with a further 30% in retail.

<b>CSO Census</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2022</b>
Butchers	6,306	5,153
Bakers and flour confectioners	3,049	3,272
Fishmongers and poultry dressers	360	291

At 42%, this occupation had a far higher share employed who were non-Irish citizens than the national average. The relatively high volume of employment permits were primarily for meat deboners and skilled knifemen. In addition, the Skills for Growth data highlights issues with the recruitment of experienced bakers. There was a high volume of vacancies advertised with DSP Jobs Ireland for meat deboners and skilled knifepersons, with a smaller share for pastry chefs and bakers. Climate targets may impact the future demand for butchers and meat processing activities. Although no shortages are evident from the data, issues with the attractiveness of the job may potentially cause issues in sourcing suitable candidates.