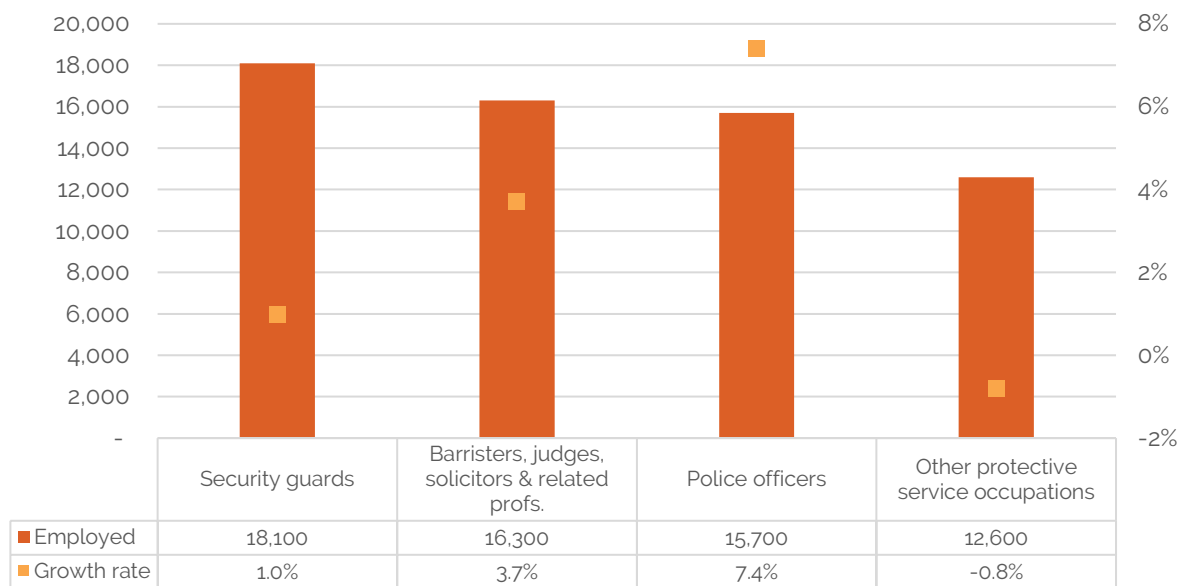


10.7 Legal & Security Occupations

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. Gardai)	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 ¹ 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. ² 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.

¹<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/66833-garda-workforce/>

² Garda numbers continue to fall despite major recruitment effort – The Irish Times