

10.11 Hospitality Occupations

Figure 10.11 Annual Average Employment (2022) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2017-2022)



Overall employment	157,600
Share of total workforce	6.2%
Main sectors of employment	84% - Accommodation & food 7% - Health
Employment growth	+3,200 between 2017 and 2022 +0.4% 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
Hospitality managers	45%	87%	[23%]	67%	52%	57	✓
Chefs & cooks	[30%]	78%	...	50%	40%	2,171	✓
Catering & bar managers	...	[88%]	...	...	...		✓
Kitchen & catering assistants	61%	34%	...	77%	...	4	
Waiters & waitresses	76%	...	...	86%	...		✓
Bar staff	[33%]	...	...	94%	...		
Housekeepers & caretakers, etc.	[79%]	...	...	[59%]	...		
Overall total	53%	50%	12%	72%	27%	2,232	

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 for the selected hospitality occupations saw a significant rebound in 2022, with an additional 28,000 persons employed compared to 2021; however, employment levels remained slightly below 2019 levels. As detailed in Section 1, 8% of total earnings in quarter 2 2022 for the accommodation and food sector, where the majority of persons in these hospitality occupations are employed, was funded from the EWSS, indicating that COVID-19 was still a factor for those employed in these roles. The repurposing of hotels to accommodate refugees is also having an impact on employment in hospitality roles.

The high inflation rates and changes to the VAT rate may also have an impact on consumer spending and the cost of doing business which will have knock-on effects on employment levels for these occupations.

Occupation	Economic summary
Hospitality managers	Despite a lower than average employment growth rate for this occupation over the five-year period, employment grew strongly between 2021 and 2022 with an additional 5,700 persons employed, surpassing 2019 levels. Approximately a third working in these roles were non-Irish citizens, above the national average, and employment permits issued related to roles for restaurant managers, hotel, duty and accommodation managers. Advertised vacancies in the OVATE data grew strongly (by nearly a third), albeit from a low base. Vacancies advertised through DSP Jobs Ireland were primarily for restaurant managers but also for managers in catering, food and beverage and hotel. The future demand for hospitality managers will depend on the performance of the different segments of the hospitality sector, with a greater requirement for restaurant managers likely compared to accommodation-related managers.
Chefs & cooks Skills shortage: Chefs	The five-year employment growth rate was negative for chefs; despite a growth of over 5,000 persons employed since 2021, employment levels in 2022 remained below pre-COVID-19 levels. One half of those employed as chefs were non-Irish citizens, far exceeding the national average of 19%. The number of employment permits issued grew from an average of approximately 500 per annum between 2019 and 2021 to over 2,100 in 2022; this is in line with the overall increase in employment permits issued in 2022. A high volume of vacancies advertised through DSP Jobs Ireland (primarily for chef de partie roles), and the increased volume of advertised vacancies in the OVATE data, indicate that demand was strong for chefs in 2022. However, it should also be noted that there was a relatively high share of jobseekers registered with the DSP in December 2022 who indicated that they had previously been employed in food preparation trades. Despite an increase between 2020 and 2021, output from the further and higher education and training system has been, in the main, declining in recent years. As such, skill shortages persist.
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.
Kitchen & catering assistants	Employment has grown annually for this occupation since 2020, with employment levels in 2022 returning to pre-COVID-19 levels. Two-thirds of persons employed worked part-time and 46% were aged 15-24 years. There was a very high number of recent job hires for this occupation indicating that job churn is a significant factor. There was also a high volume of jobseekers registered with DSP in December 2022 who were previously employed in catering occupations. DSP Jobs Ireland vacancies were primarily for roles in catering companies and fast-food outlets. The high volume of recruitment demand for this occupation is most likely related to a significant level of job churn.
Waiters & waitresses	Although employment grew strongly for both waiters/waitresses and bar staff between 2021 and 2022, with an additional 12,000 persons employed combined, the numbers remained below pre-COVID-19 levels. While waiters/waitresses were predominately female, the opposite was the case for bar staff with males accounting for the higher share. Those aged 15-24 years accounted for the majority of persons employed as waiters/waitresses and bar staff, at 73% and 64% respectively; at least 75% of those employed in these occupations were working part-time. Both occupations had high volumes of recent job hires highlighting that job churn is a particular feature of these roles. Although issues with attracting candidates to the roles are evident, no shortages have been identified.
Bar staff	
Housekeepers & caretakers, etc.	Although employment numbers increased since 2021, they remain too low for detailed analysis.