

National Skills Bulletin

2025



National Skills Bulletin 2025

October 2025

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Foreword

Ireland's economy has demonstrated remarkable resilience in recent years. Despite ongoing geopolitical uncertainty, evolving US-EU trade relations, wars in Ukraine and the Middle East, and associated challenges such as increased cost of living and supply chain disruptions, Ireland's labour market has remained strong. Our people are our greatest natural resource, and they continue to be the foundation of our competitiveness and resilience. That is why we must continue to invest in and champion education and training, research, and innovation to secure and strengthen this vital talent pipeline.

Ireland's continued economic success depends on our ability to adapt to a changing world. Like many EU economies, we face a range of complex challenges. These include global economic uncertainty, demographic shifts such as a growing older population, rapid technological change including the rise of artificial intelligence, and the demands of the green transition. Responding effectively will require foresight, agility and strong collaboration across government, enterprise and the education and training system.

The National Skills Bulletin 2025, the 21st in a series of annual reports produced by the Skills and Labour Market Research Unit in SOLAS, provides insights into the recent developments in Ireland's labour market, identifying jobs which are currently in demand and areas where the available supply of skills is not aligned with what employers are seeking. With employment levels continuing to increase, particularly driven by strong growth amongst females and non-Irish citizens, and unemployment levels remaining at an all-time low, we need to ensure that our education and training system is agile and responsive to the changing needs of the Irish economy.

By analysing skills demand across approximately one hundred occupations, the National Skills Bulletin 2025 serves as a vital resource for education and training providers, as well as policymakers. It supports new entrants and re-entrants to the labour market, along with existing workers, in developing the skills needed to succeed in an ever-changing labour market. By identifying where job opportunities are emerging, where shortages are occurring, and how skill requirements are changing, the Bulletin provides a strong evidence base to inform curriculum design, labour market activation policies, and lifelong learning strategies.

As per the advice of the National Skills Council, the formation of a National Skills Observatory (NSO) would build on the work of the SLMRU, drawing on insights from the National Skills Bulletin and other key sources. By incorporating expertise from enterprise and across the tertiary system, and by identifying future skills needs, it is envisaged the NSO would enable a more strategic and coordinated approach to mapping Ireland's

skills pipeline. This will help ensure that our education and training system remains responsive to evolving demands, and that learners have access to the opportunities they need to develop the skills required to succeed in a modern workforce.

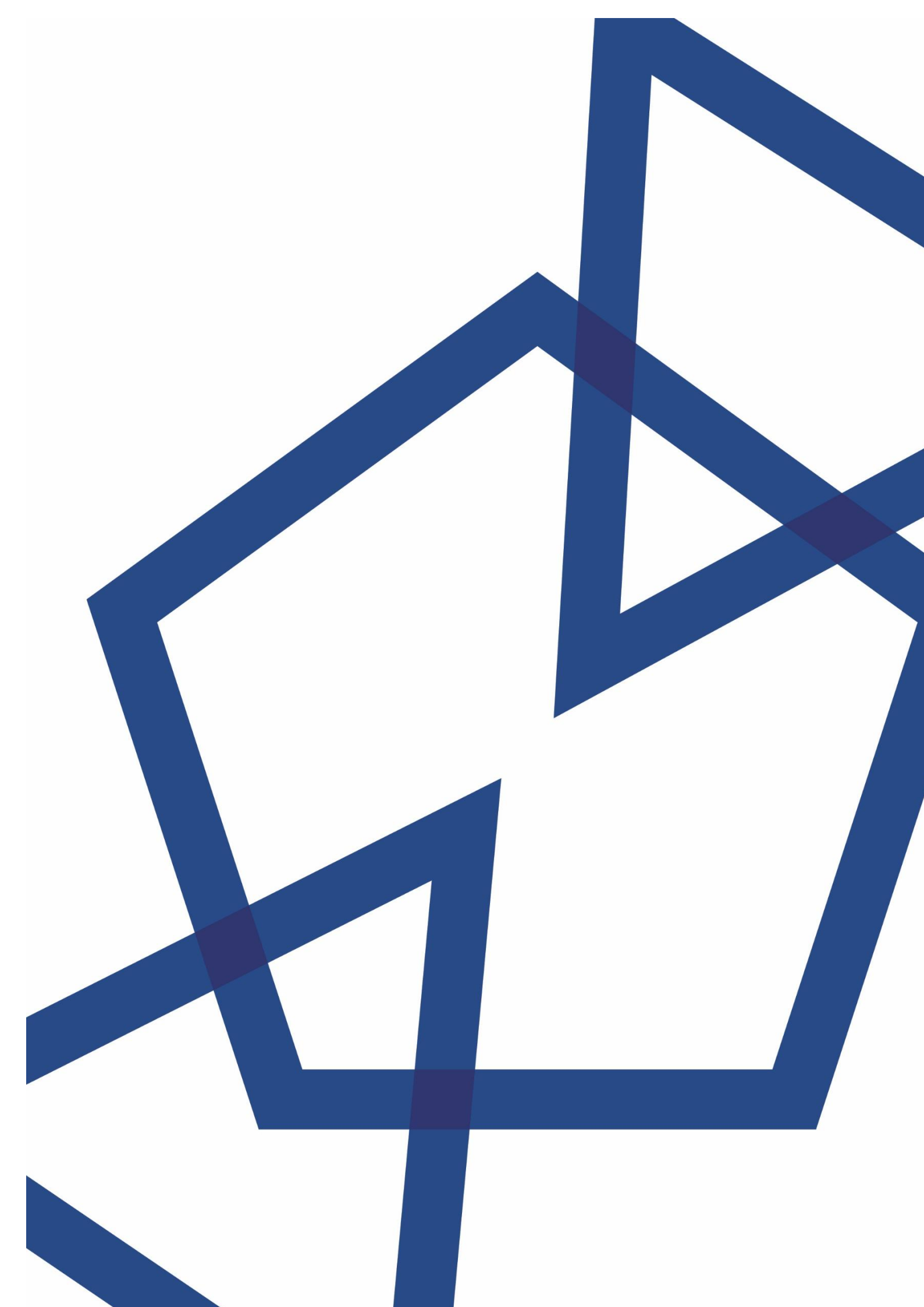
A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James Lawless". The signature is stylized with a large, looping initial "J" and "L".

James Lawless T.D.

Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science

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Executive Summary

The National Skills Bulletin 2025 is the twenty first 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.

Snapshot of the labour market in 2024

Ireland's labour market continued to perform well in 2024, reaching record employment and labour force participation levels, and unemployment remaining at near historic lows.

In 2024 (annual average),

- the **labour force participation rate** reached 65.8%, the highest to-date
- there were 2.88 million persons in the **labour force**, 75,600 (2.8%) more persons than in 2023
- 2.76 million persons were in **employment**, having grown by 72,900 persons (2.7%) since 2023
- the **employment rate** (persons aged 15-64) continued to increase; at 74.5%, it reached the highest ever recorded, and was more than five percentage points higher than in 2019 (69.3%)
- there were 123,000 **unemployed** persons in 2024, an increase of 2.3% on 2023 levels (representing 2,700 extra persons), but broadly in line with unemployment numbers in 2019 (just 800 extra persons, or 0.7%)
- the **unemployment rate** remained unchanged from the 2023 rate, at 4.3%, and 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 2023 and quarter 4 2024,
 - average hourly earnings increased by 6% overall; there were increases across all **sectors**, with the highest increases for the construction (+10.6%), transport (+10.4%), and ICT (+6.9%); the smallest increase was for the financial sector (+1.8%)
 - at 22.5%, the **inactivity rate** (persons aged 15-64) remained almost unchanged, with just a slight fall of 0.2 percentage points on the preceding year
 - the total **age dependency ratio** decreased slightly to 51.9% (from 52.4%).

- there were 1.77 million **labour market transitions**¹ recorded in 2024, compared to 1.72 million in 2023 and 1.7 million in 2019.
- with a total of 498,000, **recent hires** in 2024 were broadly in line with 2023 (493,800) and above pre-pandemic levels in 2019 (450,500); of the recent job hires in 2024,
 - 39% were aged 15-24 years
 - 44% held third level qualifications
 - 30% were in the wholesale and retail and accommodation and food sectors combined
 - 37% were for elementary (20%) or professional occupations (17%).
- over the four quarters of 2024, there was a total of 205,500 **recent job leavers**: 39% entered unemployment and 61% became economically inactive. The number of recent job leavers was 6% higher than in 2023 and 31% higher than in 2019.
- over 33,000 **new employment permits** were issued in 2024, an increase of 14% on the previous year. The increase primarily relates to an increase in the number of permits issued for the ICT, health and agriculture sectors.
- employment grew in all but two **regions**, namely the Border region (4,300 fewer workers), and the Midland region (almost unchanged); the Mid-West and Dublin regions had the largest increases in employment nationally, and combined, these two regions alone made up nearly 63% of the total employment growth observed nationally.
- in quarter 4 2024, 26,900 **vacancies** were reported, representing a job vacancy rate² of 1.2%, unchanged from the quarter 4 2023 rate (Source: CSO EHECS). Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, the overall vacancy rate remained unchanged with only minor fluctuations (ranging from 0 to 0.3 percentage points) for the majority of sectors. Public administration and defence (PAD) had the highest vacancy rate in quarter 4 2024, with the lowest rate observed for the transport sector, at 0.3%.
- in 2023, there were nearly 120,000 **online job adverts** for roles in Ireland, more than half of which were for high skilled occupations. Top skills in demand included job-specific skills (e.g. analyse digital data, plan events), personal skills and development (e.g. communication, team work, assertiveness), and transversal skills (e.g. willingness to learn, working efficiently).

Sectoral employment

In quarter 4 2024, the largest sectors in terms of numbers employed were health & social work (382,500 persons), industry (332,300 persons) and wholesale & retail (326,500 persons). Combined, these three sectors alone accounted for more than one third (38%) of total national employment.

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'.

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.

Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, the highest growth rates were for transport (+11%), construction (+9%), and ICT (+8%), each of which had growth rates that were more than three times higher than the national average (2.6%). Employment declined in four sectors, namely administration & support (-6%), wholesale & retail and agriculture (both -5%) and other NACE activities (-2%).

Over the five-year period, quarter 4 2019 to quarter 4 2024, employment grew in all but two sectors, namely administrative & support services (-11%) and agriculture (-1%). The largest growth rates were for ICT (+42%), professional activities (+39%), PAD (+29%), and health (+28%), all considerably higher than the national average (17%).

Employment by broad occupation

In quarter 4 2024, high skilled occupations (professionals, associate professionals and managers) accounted for almost 1.3 million persons or 46% of the total national workforce.

Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, professionals had the highest absolute increase (+30,500 persons or +5%) while administrative occupations had the greatest relative growth (+10% or +27,000 persons). In contrast, there were declines across four occupations, with the largest absolute fall in sales (-6,900 persons or -4%) followed by operatives (-3,700 persons or -2%).

When compared to quarter 4 2019, the highest increases were recorded for professionals (+172,200 persons or +34%), followed by associate professionals (+85,400 persons or +31%) and managers (+48,000 persons or +25%). The only occupational group where employment fell over this time was sales (9,800 fewer persons or -5%).

Summary of occupational outlooks and shortages

Full details in Section 10

Science & Engineering Occupations

Employment growth was above average for this occupational group. The high number of employment permits issued, frequent mentions in online job adverts, and difficulty in filling vacancies all point to an occupational group where skills are in particular demand. A large share of employment for these occupations was in industrial activities (e.g. pharmaceuticals, medical devices, R&D etc.). These sub-sectors have seen considerable growth in recent years and, to date, employment levels do not appear to have been impacted by the introduction of US tariffs. The green agenda is expected to bring a continued strong demand for scientists and engineers in the development of new work practices, such as sustainable sourcing, circular lifecycles, energy efficiency, and waste minimization.

Shortages

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

ICT Occupations

This occupational group had the strongest annual average employment growth rate over the period 2019-2024, at 9.8%, with much of the growth occurring between 2019 and 2021. Recent job hires far exceeded employment growth between 2023 and 2024, indicating that job churn is a feature for this occupational group. It also signals that at least some of the vacancy notifications for these roles are to replace staff who leave a role rather than due to expansion. The demand for IT skills continues, not only in the ICT sector but across other sectors including finance and industry. The extent to which new technologies, including AI, disrupt employment levels in other IT-related roles such as software development, is as yet unclear but upskilling/re-skilling may be required to adapt to the changing technologies. Although supply from the education/training system remains strong, employment permits remain a key source of supply of skills, and the share of non-Irish citizens employed in these occupations, at 37%, far exceeded the national average.

Shortages

- Software developers/engineers
- IT analysts/engineers

Business & Finance Occupations

Employment grew steadily over the five-year period for business and financial occupations. Evidence from employers suggests technical skills, some of which are also in demand in ICT occupations, continue to be in high demand especially in the financial services sector. The shift towards digital banks, which are typically cloud based

services, requires workers with increasingly sophisticated technical skills (AI, machine learning, blockchain) to improve customer experience, facilitate multiple cyber security measures, and better detect fraud.

Demand for international financial services skills is expected to persist across a number of areas, including sustainable finance and regulatory and compliance activities.

Healthcare Occupations

Employment has grown annually since 2020, with an additional 38,000 persons employed over the five-year period examined. Almost four-fifths of those employed were women, and the share aged 55 years or over was below the national average. Employment permits continued to be a key source of skills for these roles, with healthcare occupations accounting for 22% of all new employment permits issued in 2024.

The demand for healthcare staff is expected to increase in the coming years, driven by a number of factors, including an ageing population, the implementation of the Sláintecare Action Plan, and the Education Therapy Service (part of the Education Plan 2025). The number of health and welfare related awards from the education/training system has been rising in recent years, and further increases are planned, which should go some way towards alleviating growing demand for these roles. Evidence of skills shortages for some healthcare occupations (e.g. therapists) is inconclusive due to small employment levels

Shortages

- Medical practitioners
- Nurses

Education Occupations

Employment has grown steadily for this occupational group over the five-year period. Demographic effects will have an impact on current and future demand for these roles. At primary level, school enrolments are projected to decrease from the year 2024 until 2036 and increase thereafter. In contrast, enrolments at post-primary schools are expected to peak in 2025 and decline into the next decade. There is also a greater demand for special education with Budget 2025 including a provision for additional special education teachers and special needs assistants (SNAs). Issues with filling vacant posts remain an issue across the primary (e.g. special schools, regional issues) and secondary (subject specific) school system.

Shortage

- Subject-specific secondary teachers

Social & Care Occupations

Employment growth was slightly below average for this occupational group, with no change in overall employment levels since 2023. There was a high volume of recent job hires with job churn a factor in a number of roles in this group. There was also a

relatively large number of jobseekers on the Live Register in December 2024 who were previously employed in childcare and healthcare roles. Demographic factors will be the key drivers for demand for these roles in the coming years, with falling numbers of births and an increasingly ageing population.

Skill Shortage

- Subject-specific secondary teachers

Labour Shortage

- Care workers

Legal & Security Occupations

Employment levels in this occupational group saw some fluctuations over the five-year period, with employment returning to 2019 levels. Almost half of persons employed in these occupations worked in the public administration and defence sector, with males representing three quarters of the workforce. The outlook for employment in these occupations may vary depending on factors such as government funding and levels of public consumption.

Construction Occupations

Annual average employment growth in construction occupations was well below the national average over the last five years. Modern methods of construction will represent a shift in the skills profile required in construction: developments such as off-site construction, digital transformation and sustainable construction standards affect the demand for the volume and skills-mix of construction workers.

The supply of construction skills from the formal education and training sector has increased in recent years; however, given the rapid pace of change occurring in today's workplace, many of the required skills will have to be sourced from within the existing workforce, both construction and manufacturing.

Future demand for construction skills will be driven by the nature of both private and public sector activity. Factors affecting activity levels include access to finance, costs (materials, labour), planning and infrastructure capacity, as well as technology and modern methods of construction. Evidence of skills shortage was inconclusive for occupations where employment numbers were too small (e.g. construction technicians, and operative/elementary occupations) to allow for further analysis.

Shortage

- Civil engineers & construction project managers
- Quantity surveyors
- Carpenters

Potential future skills shortage

- Plumbers

Other Craft Occupations

Employment growth over the five-year period for this occupational group was broadly in line with the national average, although employment levels have seen little change since 2022. The climate agenda will be one of the key drivers of employment for these roles, with demand for welders and electricians in particular for the further development of off-shore energy and the insulation and maintenance of solar panels. In addition, it will lead to evolving job tasks such as working with EVs for mechanics. Upskilling and reskilling will be required to ensure those in the workforce can adapt to these changes along with increased digitalisation and automation. Evidence of shortage was inconclusive for other metal-related trades as employment numbers were too small for detailed analysis.

Shortage

- Welders/fabricators

Potential future skills shortage

- Electricians

Agriculture & Animal Care Occupations

Employment growth over the five-year period was below average, with almost no growth since 2023. Despite this, there was a relatively high volume of both recent job hires and recent job leavers, indicating that there is a level of job churn and also that job opportunities are occurring despite the low employment growth, although this is most likely concentrated in elementary agricultural roles. Over a third of persons employed in these occupations held at most a lower secondary education and upskilling/reskilling may be needed to ensure those working in agricultural roles have the skills and knowledge to adapt to new work practices designed to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to climate change. With half of persons employed in these occupations aged 55 years and over, without a high level of replacement, employment is likely to see declines in future years.

Hospitality Occupations

Employment growth was below average for this occupational group, although employment has grown steadily since 2022, having seen significant falls during the COVID-19 pandemic. The relatively high volume of recent job hires and job leavers point to a high level of job churn (most likely related to a high share of students working in hospitality occupations such as waiters, bar staff and kitchen assistants).

The latest Central Bank Bulletin indicates that personal consumption is expected to grow, albeit at a more modest rate, due to rising real wages and stable employment levels, which should have a positive impact on demand for hospitality occupations, although a fall in tourist numbers would likely have a negative effect.

Shortage:

- Chefs

Arts, Sports & Tourism Occupations

Employment growth was below average for this occupational group; employment levels declined as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic but have seen a recovery in more recent years. The share working part-time and aged 15-24 years were both above average and may be a contributing factor in the high volume of recent job hires for these roles.

Consumer spending is an important determinant in the demand for many of these roles, and the recent global economic uncertainty may lead to reduced spending, despite rising real wages, which could have a knock-on effect on employment levels, at least in the short term.

Transport & Logistics Occupations

Transport and logistics occupations overall experienced lower than average employment growth over the five-year period, with some occupations seeing a decline in employment levels since 2019. Most employed were male and many of the occupations had a high share aged 55 years or older, indicating that replacement demand alone will be high in the short- to medium term. Job openings also appear to be arising due to job churn, with a high volume of recent job hires. Demand is evident despite the low employment growth, with many roles mentioned as being difficult-to-fill vacancies and a relatively high number of new employment permits issued. Ongoing geo-political tensions continue to impact on the demand for these skills, with fluctuations in fuel costs and supply chain challenges (particularly in light of US tariffs) requiring monitoring. As digitalisation and sustainable practices change the nature of many of these roles, upskilling and reskilling will be essential for those currently employed in these occupations to adapt to these changes. Evidence of shortage was inconclusive for stock control, transport & distribution administrative occupations due to small employment numbers.

Shortage

- HGV drivers
- Bus and coach drivers

Administrative & Secretarial Occupations

Employment growth was almost on a par with the national average for this occupational group, with an increase of 7,800 persons since 2023. Over half of those employed held third level qualifications; this is likely due to a combination of both more advanced skillsets required due to a reduction in more routine tasks due to digitalisation, along with some level of skills mismatches occurring. This is a large group in terms of employment, and with a higher than average share aged 55 years or older, job opportunities are likely to continue to arise even if the number of new jobs created declines.

Sales, Marketing, & Customer Service Occupations

Although the employment growth in this occupational group over the five-year period was below average, it nonetheless represents an additional 24,500 persons employed since 2019. A high volume of recent job hires and job leavers indicates that job churn is a significant feature, particularly for sales assistants and customer service occupations.

While the Central Bank forecasts a continuation of consumption growth as a result of rising real income and stable employment levels, consumer sentiment has dipped in recent months due primarily to concerns relating to household finances. These trends are likely to have an impact on demand for sales-related occupations, particularly those in the wholesale and retail sector. Recent research by DETE on the potential impacts of AI indicates that sales and marketing occupations have the potential to see both net gains and net losses as a result of the more widespread take-up of AI, with roles such as sales assistants and call centre workers being negatively affected, while AI is expected to enhance jobs such as sales/marketing managers and directors.

Operatives & Elementary Occupations n.e.c.

Overall employment levels for this occupational group have seen low growth since 2022. However, there was a high volume of both recent job hires and leavers indicating a high level of churn for at least some of these occupations. More than half (51%) of the jobs in this group were in industry, a further 14% were in administrative support services (e.g. cleaners) and 11% in wholesale and retail (e.g. warehouse operatives). Almost a fifth (19%) of those employed held at most a lower secondary education, the third highest share with this level of education after agriculture and transport-related occupations. As such, upskilling/reskilling opportunities will be key for this cohort with increased digitalisation of tasks in these jobs.



Introduction

The National Skills Bulletin 2025 is the twenty first 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)³ 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 both this edition of National Skills Bulletin and the 2024 edition 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. The revised 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 the Bulletins for 2024 and 2025 is not identical to earlier years.

³ 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.

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 2019-2024, unless otherwise specified; growth over this period is calculated in terms of the annualised growth rate, 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, sex, citizenship, employment type and education level)**; the analysis is based on the LFS data for quarter 4 2024
- **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 2024
- the level of **difficulty in filling vacancies**; the analysis is based on data from the SLMRU Recruitment Agency Survey conducted in November 2024, from skills audits conducted by Regional Skills Fora, and insights from Enterprise Ireland's client skills data (2024).

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 2024 who stated their previous occupation was too small to report.

The National Skills Bulletin 2025 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 (sex, age, citizenship, education etc.)

Section 3: examines employment trends in economic sectors (quarter 4 2024 is compared with the same period in 2019 and 2023)

Section 4: analyses employment trends by broad occupational group (i.e. employment growth and the composition of employment) up to quarter 4 2024

Section 5: provides an overview of the labour market at regional level up to quarter 4 2024

Section 6: examines recent trends in Irish unemployment (levels and rates) and details the characteristics of the unemployed population (i.e. sex, age, educational attainment, nationality, occupation and sector) up to quarter 4 2024

Section 7: presents an analysis of labour market transitions between unemployment, employment and economic inactivity, an analysis of recent job hires and job leavers in terms of age, education level, sector and occupation in 2024

Section 8: examines the inflow of labour from non-EEA countries through the various employment permit schemes up to 2024

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 2024; it also reports the findings of the November 2024 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

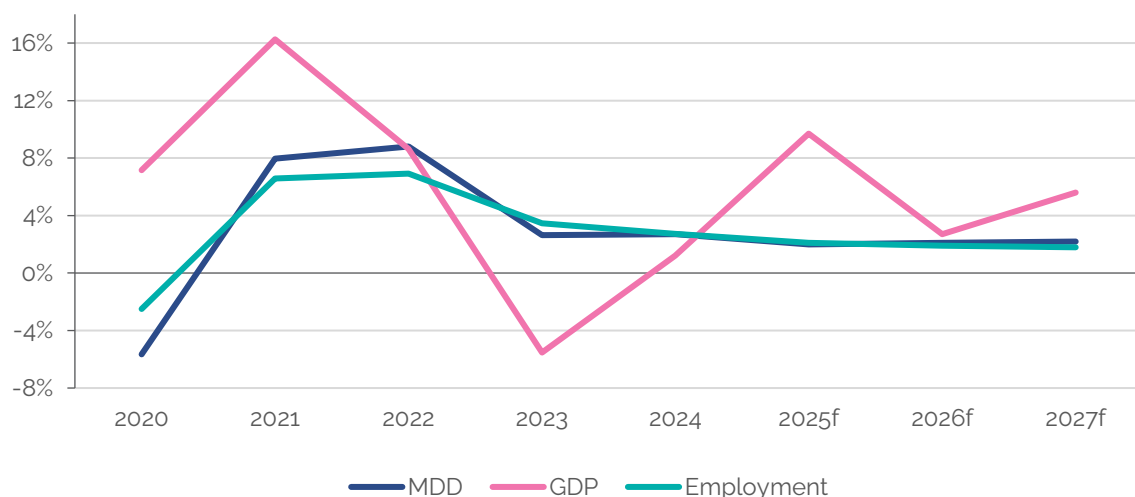
1.1 Introduction

This section provides an overview of Ireland's economic performance in 2024 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 demonstrates the considerable fluctuations that have occurred in the Irish economy in recent years. Recovery following the easing of COVID-19 restrictions resulted in significant increases in both employment and modified domestic demand (MDD) in 2021 and 2022. Both MDD and employment followed similar patterns in subsequent years, each with a more muted increase of 2.7% in 2024. Forecasts from the Central Bank indicate that both employment and MDD will continue to see further moderate growth over the period to 2027, with household consumption forecast to be the main driver of MDD growth, although the implications of US tariffs has increased the level of uncertainty for these forecasts.⁴ The Department of Finance forecasts lower employment growth rates (1.2% in 2027) than those of the Central Bank (of 1.8%) and higher growth rates for MDD (2.8% in 2027 compared to 2.2% by the Central Bank)⁵.

Figure 1.1 GDP*, Modified Domestic Demand* (MDD) & Employment, Annual Change (%), 2020-2024, Forecast 2025-2027



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data, Central Bank Quarterly Bulletin, Q2 2025

*Constant Market Prices, chain linked annually and referenced to year 2022

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has seen more volatile change over the period examined in Figure 1.1 and the surge in pharmaceutical exports in quarter 1 2025 in advance of the introduction of tariffs and the subsequent decline in the following months ensures that annual GDP levels will continue to see considerable fluctuation in the short-term at least.

⁴ Central Bank of Ireland, Quarterly Bulletin, Q2 2025

⁵ Department of Finance, Annual Progress Report - 2025, May 2025

The Central Bank revised their latest forecasts to reflect this with a 9.7% rise in 2025, falling in 2026 and rising again in 2027; the Department of Finance forecast an annual growth for GDP of 4.1% in 2025 falling to 3.4% by 2027. These strong fluctuations in GDP again show that this indicator does not reflect the domestic economy in Ireland and questions its usefulness as a guide of the strength of the labour market and the demand and supply of skills.

Foreign-owned enterprises

As outlined above, activity in foreign-owned multinational enterprises (MNEs) can have a significant effect on GDP figures for Ireland without having an (immediate) impact on employment. However, the threat of tariffs being imposed has created significant uncertainty, already evident in fluctuating levels of consumer confidence⁶ and has the potential to lead to considerable job losses in the future. MNEs have become a significant feature of the Irish economy in recent years and understanding their impact has become increasingly complex (see Fitzgerald, 2023⁷). A number of sectors in Ireland are dominated by MNEs including pharma/chemical production, computer, electronic and optical device manufacturing, medical instrument production and information and communication⁸.

Based on National Accounts data, over the period 2019 to 2022, foreign-owned MNE-dominated sectors accounted for an increasingly larger share of gross value added (GVA) compared to non-MNE sectors, rising from 41% in 2019 to 53% in 2022. Since 2021, GVA for other sectors has been increasing, and combined with a fall in GVA for foreign-owned MNE-dominated sectors in 2023, other sectors have regained the larger share, at 53% in 2024.⁹ Employment growth has eased in two key sub-sectors dominated by foreign-owned MNE, namely pharmaceutical manufacturing and computer programming¹⁰, potentially signalling some caution in recruitment practices for these enterprises. Medicinal and pharmaceutical products are particularly exposed to tariffs on trade with the US, with the US accounting for over two-fifths of their export market.¹¹

Inflation

After a period of elevated inflation in Ireland, peaking at 9.3% in October 2022, an easing began in 2023, with the rate of inflation declining to 1.4% in December 2024, primarily related to a fall in energy prices over this time (Figure 1.2). In 2025 to date, inflation has risen again with a rate of 1.8% recorded for June.¹² The Central Bank forecasts inflation rates below 2% annually from 2025 to 2027.¹³ The reduced 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

⁶ For You. Not Profit. - The Irish League of Credit Unions

⁷ Fitzgerald, J. (2023). Understanding the Irish Economy, ESRI Special Article, ESRI

⁸ Foreign and Domestic GVA Quarterly National Accounts Quarter 1 2025 Provisional - Central Statistics Office

⁹ Based on CSO National Accounts (constant prices): PXStat NAO18

¹⁰ Based on CSO PXstat QES01

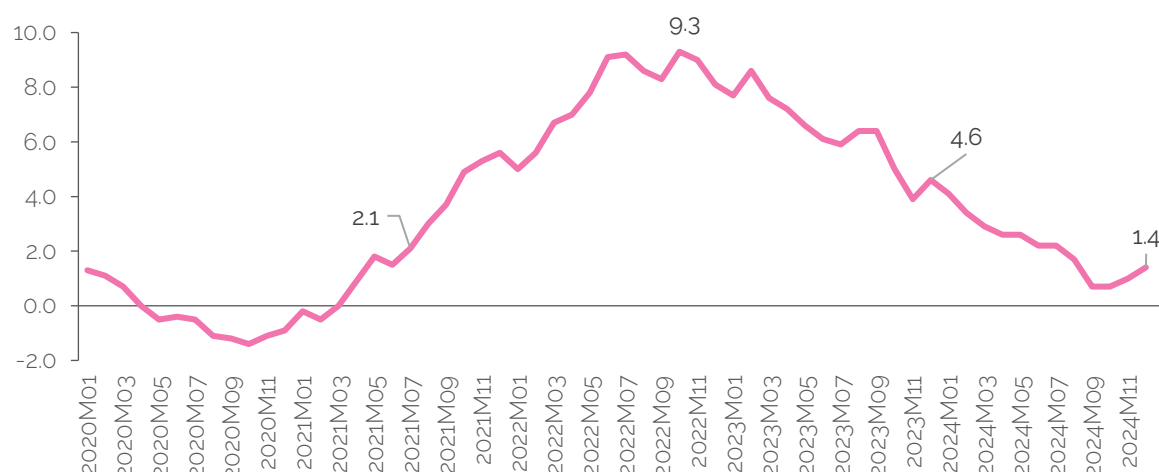
¹¹ Quarterly Economic Commentary, Spring 2025 | ESRI

¹² CSO PXstat CPM01

¹³ Based on Central Bank of Ireland, Quarterly Bulletin, Q2 2025; the Central Bank report on Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP) which differs from CPI in the exclusion of mortgage interest.

retail and accommodation and food sectors continues to be lower than the national average, having been particularly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic; if inflation remains low, rising real wages and stable employment levels have the potential to lead to increased consumer spending and therefore increased employment levels in these sectors.

Figure 1.2 Annual Rate of Change (%) in Consumer Prices Index (CPI), 2020-2024



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data

1.3 Enterprise sector

The strength of the Irish economy in 2024 was reflected in the continued attractiveness of Ireland as a location for foreign direct investment. In 2024, the IDA reported that their 1,800+ client companies employed over 300,000 persons, similar to 2023 levels, with recent investments expected to create 13,500 jobs over the coming years.¹⁴ This is despite a challenging international environment and increased competition. In terms of indigenous firms, Enterprise Ireland (EI) reported that total employment across their client companies had reached a new high of almost 234,500 in 2024 and announced a strategy to grow this to 275,000 people employed in supported companies by 2029.¹⁵

1.4 Competitiveness

The IMD World Competitiveness Ranking 2025 saw Ireland's ranking falling for the second consecutive year to 7th place (from 4th place in 2024 and 2nd place in 2023) among 63 countries benchmarked, with Switzerland in first position; this is still a marked improvement on 2021 when Ireland was ranked 13th place and Ireland is ranked the highest euro area country¹⁶. The fall in ranking is largely attributed to a decline in ranking for economic performance from 1st place in 2023 to 9th place in 2025 and in business efficiency, falling from 3rd place in both 2023 and 2024 to 11th place in 2025. The government efficiency score increased slightly from 6th to 5th place since 2024 while the

¹⁴ IDA (2024). Record R&D, strong capital investment, and high number of new investors | IDA Ireland

¹⁵ Enterprise Ireland (2025). [Delivering for Ireland. Leading Globally. Strategy 2025-2029.](#)

¹⁶ <https://www.imd.org/centers/wcc/world-competitiveness-center/rankings/world-competitiveness-ranking/>

ranking for infrastructure remained unchanged at 17th in 2025. The National Competitiveness and Productivity Council (NCPC) note that rankings such as IMD should be treated with some level of caution due to the methodological choices, data limitations, and structural assumptions made when producing such rankings; they also highlight the critical need to address infrastructural deficits and to invest in education and skills development to drive competitiveness and productivity.¹⁷ The recent Draghi report on EU competitiveness provides key recommendations for increasing competitiveness across EU countries with promoting skills and quality jobs a key enabler of this.¹⁸ The recently published Action Plan on Competitiveness and Productivity outlines Government plans to make the Irish economy more competitive and resilient to external shocks.¹⁹

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 2024, actual hours worked per week were highest in the industrial and health sectors at 11.2 and 11.1 million hours respectively, followed by the wholesale and retail sector at 9.3 million hours (Figure 1.3). The lowest actual hours worked in quarter 4 2024 were in the administrative and support services sector at 2.9 million hours.

In the period since quarter 4 2019, actual hours worked in the economy grew by 7.4 million hours. The largest growth over the time period occurred in the health, professional services and ICT sectors, increasing by 2.1, 1.5 and 1.4 million hours respectively. Five sectors saw declines in actual hours worked, namely administrative and support services (-0.7m hours), agriculture (-0.5m hours), wholesale & retail (-0.3m hours), accommodation and food (-0.2m hours), and arts, entertainment and other services (-0.1m hours). For the most part, increases in actual hours worked were reflected in increases in employment over the same time period. For a number of sectors, namely wholesale and retail, accommodation and food, and arts, entertainment and other services, there was a decline in actual hours worked despite an increase in employment, reflecting the higher share in part-time employment in these sectors.

¹⁷ NCPC (2025). *Ireland's Competitiveness Challenge*

¹⁸ European Commission (2024). *The Draghi report on EU competitiveness*

¹⁹ Action Plan on Competitiveness and Productivity - DETE

Figure 1.3 Actual Hours Worked Per Week (Millions), Quarter 4 2019 & Quarter 4 2024

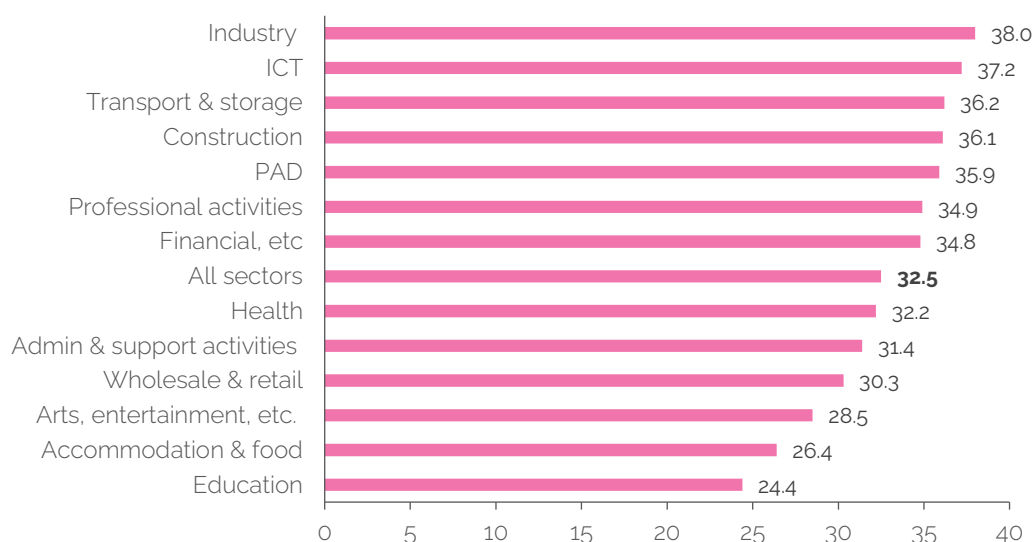


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO (LFS) data

Average weekly paid hours

In quarter 4 2024, the number of average weekly paid hours for the overall economy was 32.5 hours (Figure 1.4). Those employed in industry had the highest average weekly paid hours at 38.0 hours followed by ICT at 37.2 hours. The education sector had the lowest average hours worked within a week (24.4 hours), followed by the accommodation & food sector (26.4 hours).

Figure 1.4 Average Weekly Paid Hours by Sector, Quarter 4 2024



Source: CSO, Earnings, Hours and Employment Costs Survey

When compared with quarter 4 2023, the average weekly paid hours decreased across many sectors, particularly in the case of transport and storage and construction, which declined by 2.0 and 1.0 hours respectively (Figure 1.5). Average weekly paid hours increased in only four sectors, the largest being education with an increase of 0.5 hours.

The transport sector experienced the largest increase in average weekly paid hours since quarter 4 2019, at 1.2 hours, which indicates that despite the recent decline, the average weekly paid hours remain higher than pre-COVID-19 levels. A number of sectors experienced declines in both time periods, including construction, administrative and support services, and accommodation and food.

Figure 1.5 Change in Average Weekly Paid Hours by Sector

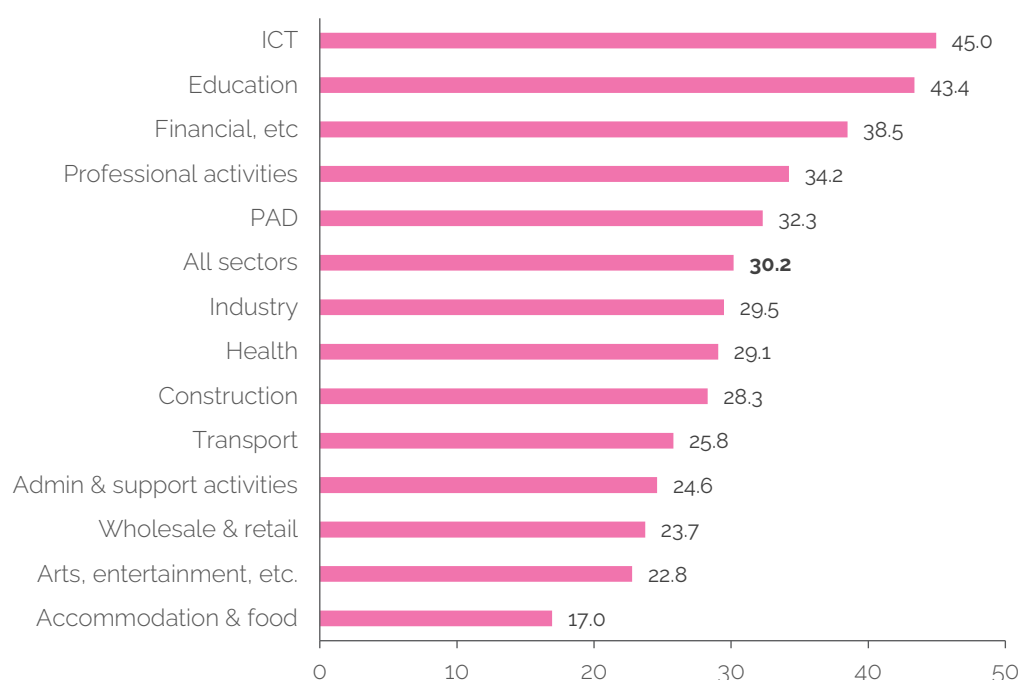


Source: CSO, Earnings, Hours and Employment Costs Survey

Average hourly earnings

In quarter 4 2024, average hourly earnings were €30.20. Average hourly earnings were highest in the ICT and education sectors, at €45.00 and €43.40 per hour respectively, and lowest in the accommodation & food sector, at €17.00 per hour (Figure 1.6). This represents a gap in the average hourly earnings of €28 between the highest and lowest paid sectors.

Figure 1.6 Average Hourly Earnings by Sector (€), Quarter 4 2024

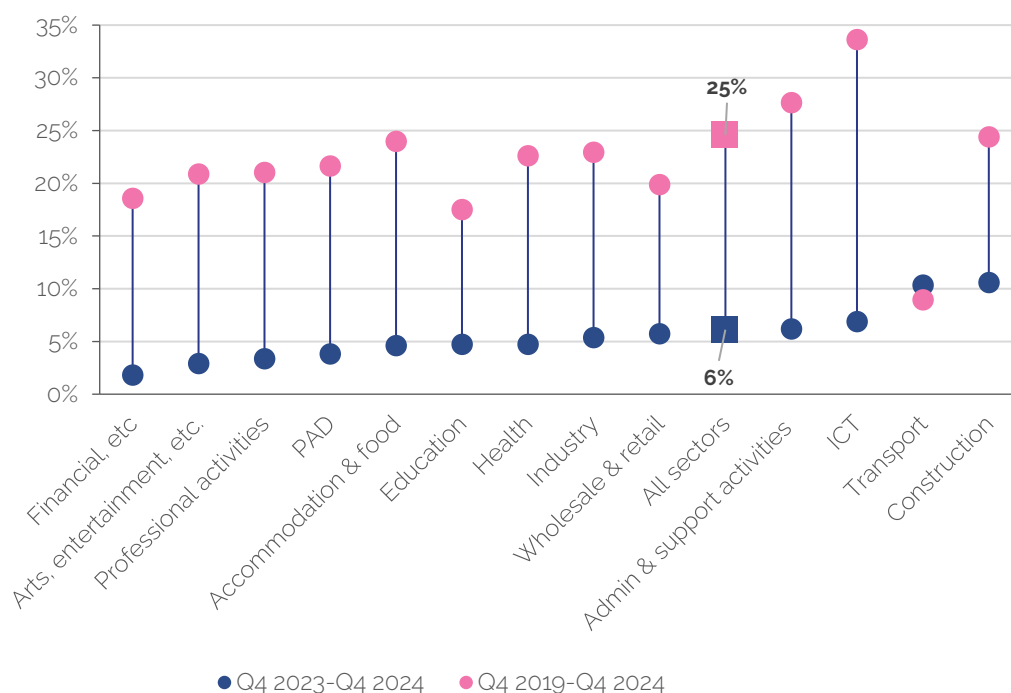


Source: CSO, Earnings, Hours and Employment Costs Survey

Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, average hourly earnings increased by €1.70, or 6% (Figure 1.7) with increases across all sectors. The largest increases in average hourly earnings over the one-year period were in the construction, transport, and ICT sectors, increasing by 10.6%, 10.4% and 6.9% respectively. The financial sector had the lowest growth in average hourly earnings over the time period, of just 1.8% (or €0.70).

Over the five-year period since quarter 4 2019, average hourly earnings increased by €6.00, or 25%, again with increases across all sectors. The ICT sector accounted for the largest increase over this period, increasing by 34% or €11.30 per hour on average. The transport sector had the lowest growth of just 9% over the five years, far below all other sectors and was the only sector with a lower growth over the five-year period compared to the one-year period.

Figure 1.7 Change in Average Hourly Earnings by Sector, %

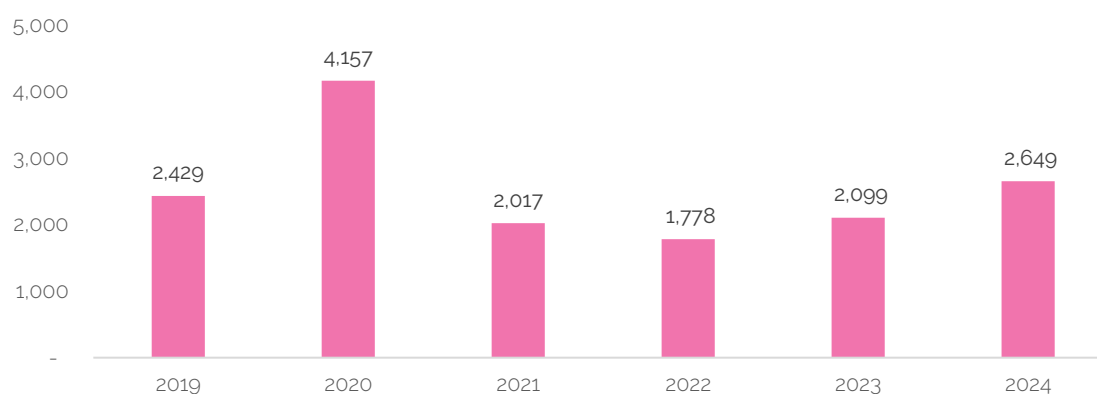


Source: CSO, Earnings, Hours and Employment Costs Survey

1.6 Redundancies

Following an increase in the number of applications for redundancies as a result of COVID-19 restrictions in the Irish economy, the numbers between 2021 and 2023 remained below pre-COVID-19 levels (Figure 1.8). The number of applications has been increasing since 2022, however, with an increase of 550 applications since 2023, reaching 2,649 in 2024.

Figure 1.8 Applications Received Under the Redundancy Payment Scheme, 2019-2024

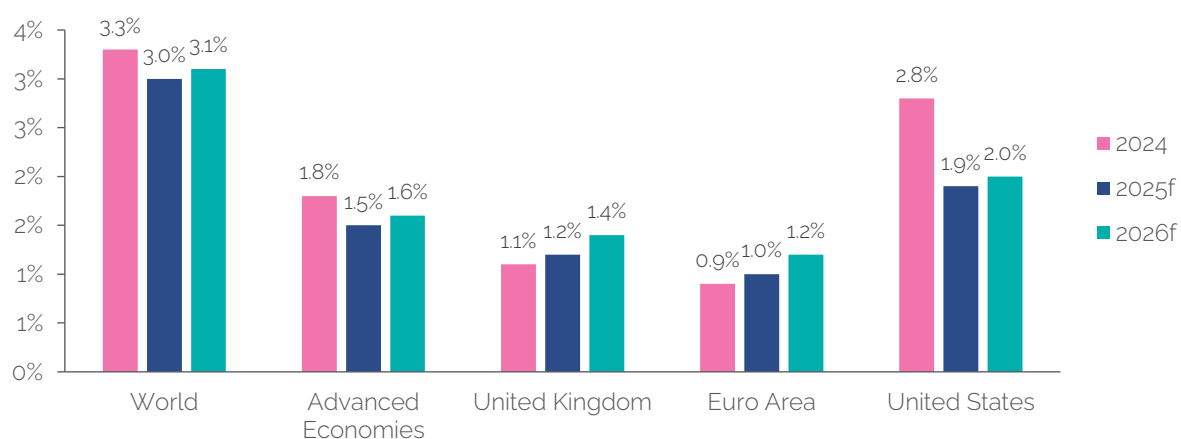


Source: DSP

1.7 Global and national outlook

According to the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) World Economic Outlook (updated in July 2025), the world economy is forecast to continue to see growth in 2025 and 2026, albeit at slightly lower rates than that of 2024 (Figure 1.9). Trade tensions in the first half of the year have led to increased volatility, with the most recent forecasts being revised upwards since the April update, having been revised downward in January.²⁰ More modest increases in GDP by 2026 are forecast for advanced economies (1.6%); the United Kingdom (1.4%) and the Euro area (1.2%). The US is forecast to see a drop in their growth rate from 2.8% in 2024 to 2.0% in 2026. At 2.3% in 2025 and 2.1% in 2026, the forecast for Ireland (not illustrated in the graph and relates to the April issue) exceeds the projected growth for the Euro area over the same time period.

Figure 1.9 World Economic Outlook Projections (Real GDP, Annual Percentage Change), 2024-2026



Source: International Monetary Fund

²⁰ World Economic Outlook Update, July 2025: Global Economy: Tenuous Resilience amid Persistent Uncertainty



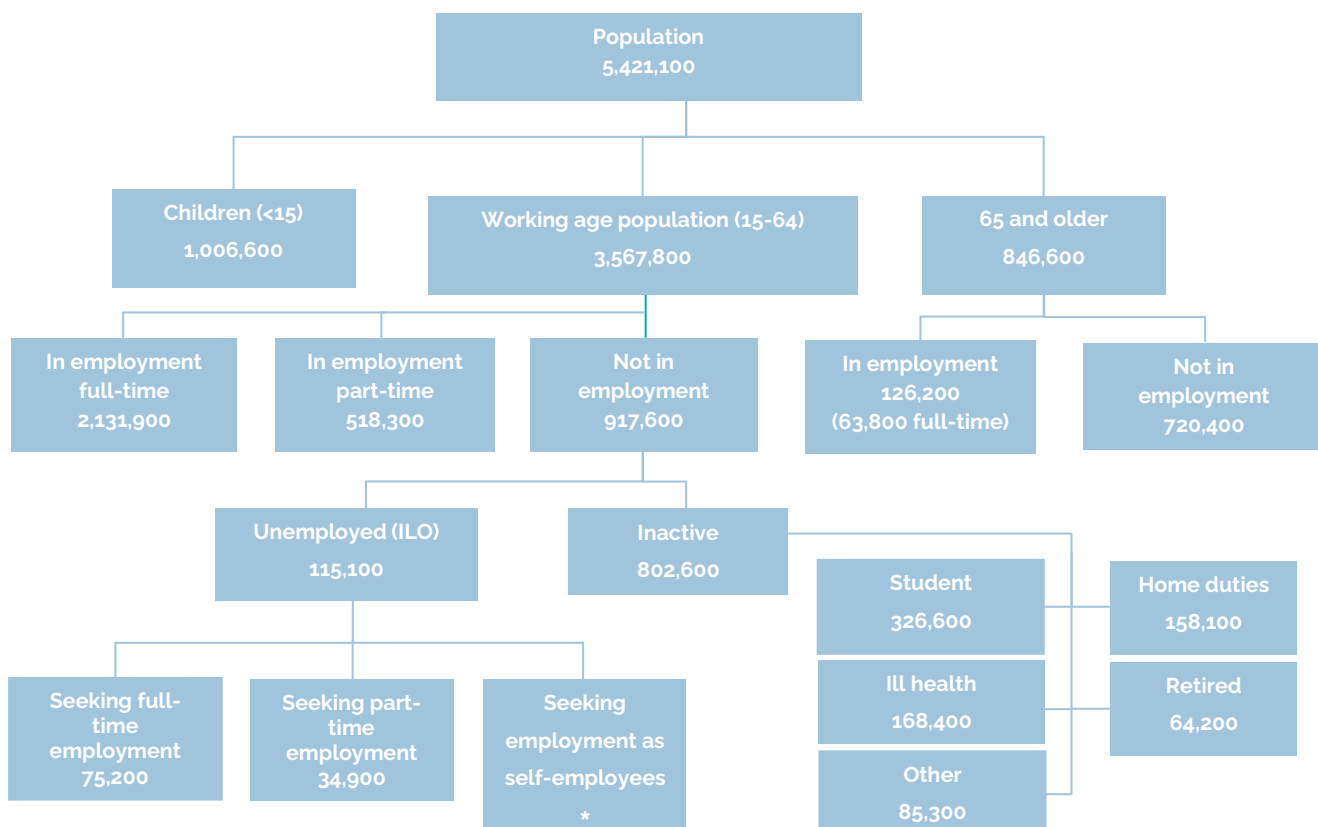
Section 2 Labour Market Overview

2.1 Population: Labour Market Status

In quarter 4 2024, Ireland's population was estimated to be over 5.42 million (Figure 2.1), 91,100 (1.8%) more persons than in quarter 4 2023.

The working age population (aged 15-64 years) comprised nearly 3.57 million persons, a rise of nearly 2% (69,800 persons) compared to quarter 4 2023. Over the same one-year period, the number of children (aged less than 15 years) fell slightly (by 4,700, -0.5%) to just over 1 million, while the number of persons aged 65 years and older grew (by 26,000, or 3.2%) to reach 846,600 persons.

Figure 2.1 Population by Labour Market Status (ILO defined), Q4 2024



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Note: Discrepancies are due to rounding.

In quarter 4 2024,

- of the nearly 3.6 million persons in the working age population (15-64 years), 2.13 million were in full-time employment, an increase of 78,500 (+3.8%) on quarter 4 2023; a further 518,300 persons in this age group were in part-time employment, 17,000 fewer (-3.2%) than in quarter 4 2023

- of those aged 65 years or over, 126,200 persons were in employment (nearly 51% of whom were in full-time employment), a 7% increase on quarter 4 2023, representing 8,500 extra workers.

Of the working age population (aged 15-64 years), there were 917,600 persons who were not in employment, of whom 115,100 were unemployed, with the remaining 802,600 classified as economically inactive. When compared to quarter 4 2023, the number of unemployed persons (aged 15-64 years) fell slightly by 1.7% (2,000 fewer persons), while the number of inactive individuals grew by 1.3% (amounting to 10,300 additional persons). As a result, the total number of persons outside the workforce grew slightly (by 0.9%, or 8,300 extra people).

Of the 802,600 persons aged 15-64 years who were **not in the labour force** (i.e. economically inactive) in quarter 4 2024,

- 326,600 were students; of these, approximately three quarters (74%) were aged less than 20 years; the number of students (all ages) increased by 6.6% (20,200 extra people) compared to quarter 4 2023
- 168,400 were inactive due to ill-health, 3,000 more people (+1.8%) year-on-year
- 158,100 were engaged in domestic tasks, an increase of 20,600 (15%) when compared to quarter 4 2023, more than offsetting the 9.3% decline (or 14,100) observed between quarter 4 2022 and quarter 4 2023.
- 64,200 were retired, broadly similar to the 65,200 one year earlier in quarter 4 2023
- 85,300 were inactive for other reasons; of these, an estimated [7,000] persons were discouraged workers, although the numbers are small and should be interpreted with caution; a further 15,100 were available for work but not seeking work. When compared to quarter 4 2023, the number of persons inactive for other reasons decreased by 32,300 (-27.5%), and while the number of discouraged workers was broadly similar to the preceding year, the number of persons available but not seeking work fell from 18,200 in quarter 4 2023 to 15,100 in quarter 4 2024.

As shown in Table 2.1, in quarter 4 2024,

- the total age dependency rate (youth and older age) was 51.9%, a slight decline on the rate in quarter 4 2023
- the youth dependency rate declined by 0.7 percentage points to 28.2%
- the old age dependency rate rose marginally (by 0.2 pp) to 23.7% •
- the inactivity rate declined slightly to 22.5%
- the economic dependency ratio, which compares the total population not in the labour force to the number of those in the labour force, rose very slightly to 1.14.

Table 2.1 Dependency and Inactivity Rates, Quarter 4 2023 and Quarter 4 2024

	Quarter 4 2023	Quarter 4 2024
Total dependency rate (0-14 and 65+)	52.4%	51.9%
Youth dependency rate (0-14)	28.9%	28.2%
Old age dependency rate (65+)	23.5%	23.7%
Inactivity rate (15-64)	22.7%	22.5%
Economic dependency ratio	1.13	1.14

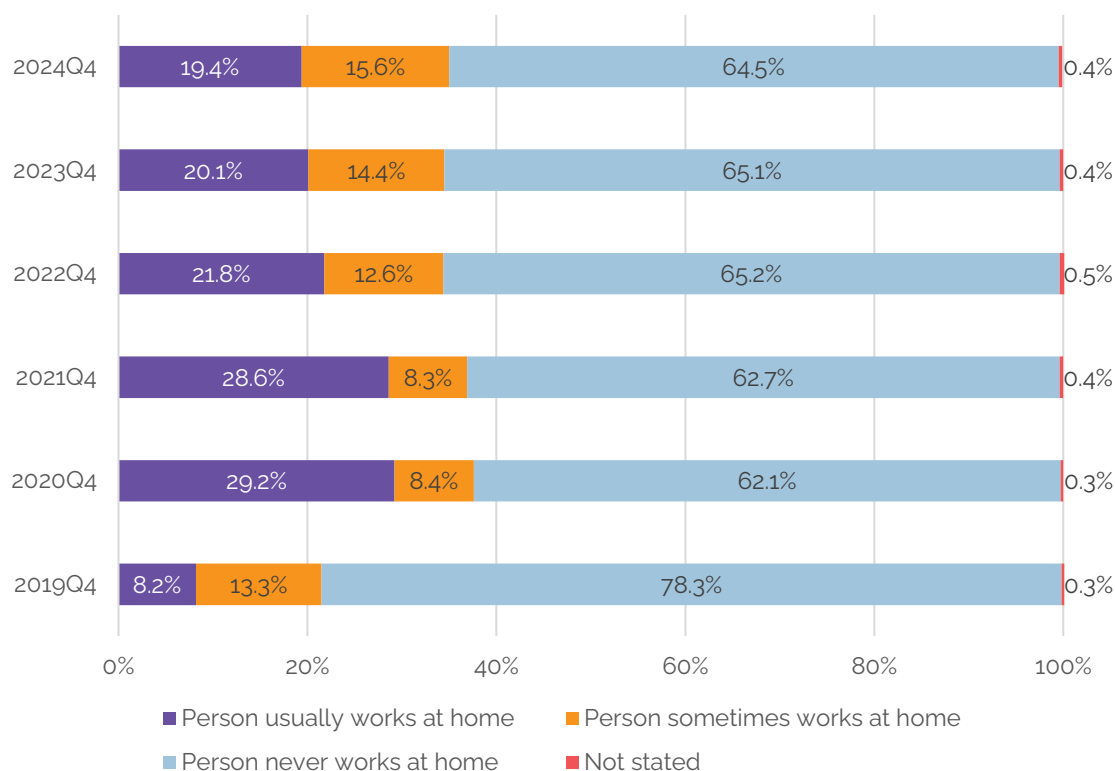
Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

Persons working from home

Over a third (or 972,700 persons) of the 2.78 million persons (aged 15+) in employment in quarter 4 2024, either usually or sometimes worked from home (Figure 2.2). Due to the economic restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, in quarter 4 2020 the share of employed persons working usually or sometimes from home reached 37.6% (although the share was higher still at 43.9% in quarter 1 2021 – not illustrated in graph). Patterns of working from home shifted thereafter, with the share of individuals who sometimes worked from home returning close to pre-COVID levels by quarter 4 2024 (15.6%), despite a small 1.2 percentage point increase between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024. In contrast, the proportion of those usually working from home remained considerably higher, at 19.4% in quarter 4 2024, more than double the pre-pandemic figure.

In absolute terms, there were increases in both the number of persons who never worked from home (+29,200 persons, or 2%) and the number of persons sometimes worked from home (+43,600 persons, or 11%) between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024. In contrast, the number of persons who usually worked from home fell slightly (by 4,100 persons 1%) over the same period, although they remained substantially higher than the 194,600 persons observed pre-COVID.

Figure 2.2 Employed Persons Usually, Sometimes, or Never Working from Home (%), Q4 2019-Q4 2024



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 labour force, employment and unemployment levels and rates; an outline of population migration trends is also provided.

Labour force, employment and unemployment levels

In 2024, Ireland's labour force stood at 2.88 million persons (annual average), 75,600 (2.8%) more persons than in 2023 and 422,300 more than in 2019 (+17.2%) (Figure 2.3). The Central Bank of Ireland projects labour force growth of 2.4% in 2025, slowing to 2.2% in 2026 and 1.9% in 2027, to reach 3.07 million persons by 2027²¹.

The number of persons in employment in Ireland in 2024 (annual average) reached its highest level to date, at 2.76 million persons, 2.7% more than in 2023 and 18% more than in 2019. The strong growth in employment of 6.6% and 6.9% in 2021 and 2022 respectively (associated with the recovery from the pandemic) subsequently eased in 2023 and 2024, and while expected to continue to grow, the rate of employment expansion is projected to slow further to 2.1% in 2025, to 1.9% in 2026, and 1.8% by 2027. However, uncertainty regarding tariffs and global trade could have implications for

²¹ [Quarterly Bulletin Q2 2025 | Central Bank of Ireland](#)

future employment levels in Ireland, with an estimated 50,000-to-75,000 jobs potentially affected (either lost or not created).²²

There were 123,000 unemployed persons in Ireland in 2024, up from 120,300 in 2023 (+2.3%, or an additional 2,700 persons) but broadly in line with unemployment numbers in 2019 (just 800 extra persons, or 0.7%). Unemployment is projected to increase somewhat in the years to 2027 to reach 151,000. The unemployment rate is expected to grow annually from 4.3% in 2024 to reach an expected rate of 4.9% by 2027.

Figure 2.3 Labour Force, Employment and Unemployment (000s), 2007-2024, and 2024f-2027f



Source: CSO (LFS) and Central Bank of Ireland Quarterly Bulletin Q2 2025

Labour force, employment and unemployment rates

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 in 2024, at 65.8% and 74.5% respectively in 2024. By 2023, the unemployment rate had declined to 4.3%, and it remained at this near-historic low rate into 2024 (despite an increase in the absolute number of unemployed persons, as detailed in Figure 2.3 above).

²² [Over 50,000 jobs could be affected by tariffs - Donohoe](#)

Table 2.2 Labour Force, Employment and Unemployment Rates, 2019-2024 (Annual Average)

	Labour force participation rate (15+)	Employment rate (15-64 years)	Unemployment rate (15-74 years)
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%
2024	65.8%	74.5%	4.3%

Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO data

Migration Estimates

In 2025 net migration totalled 59,700 persons (Table 2.3), a fall of nearly a quarter, or 19,600 fewer persons, when compared to 2024. While there were falls in the number of both inward and outward migrants, the decline of 23,900 persons in the number entering Ireland between 2023 and 2024, far outweighed the size of the fall in the number of outward migrants (4,300). Despite the decrease since 2024, net migration in Ireland remains considerably higher than either pre-COVID (2019) or 2016 levels.

At 61% in 2025, the share of total net migration that were male was nine percentage points higher than in 2024 (52%) and was the second highest observed for the ten-year period; only in 2016 was the share of males higher, at 62%.

Table 2.3 Inward, Outward and Net Migration (000s), 2016-2025

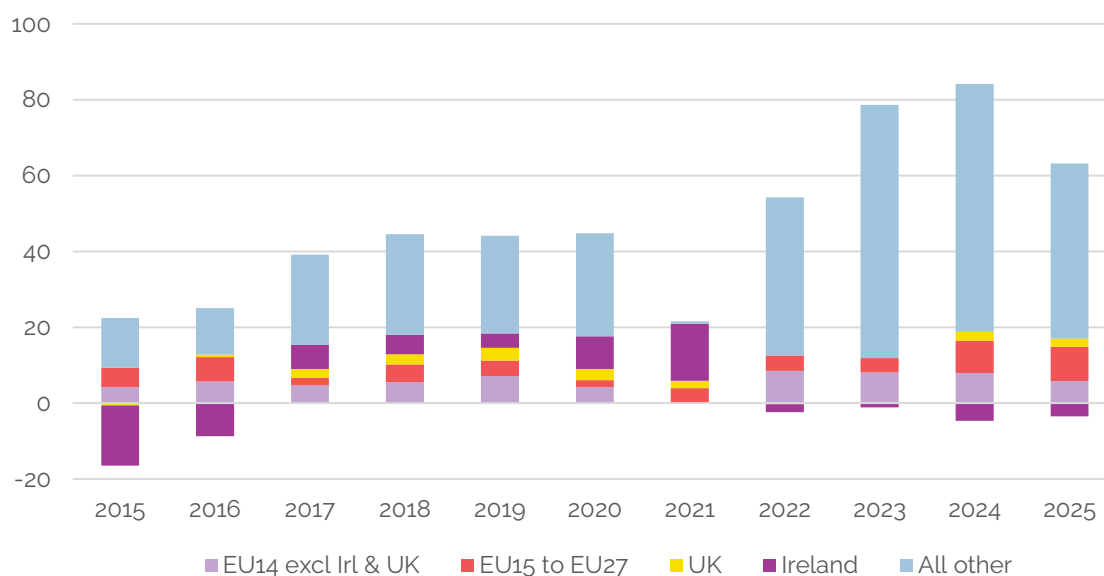
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Inward	82.3	95.3	96	97.1	95.6	74.1	107.8	141.6	149.2	125.3
Outward	66.2	56.1	51.6	53.1	50.9	52.3	56.1	64	69.9	65.6
Net migration	16.1	39.2	44.4	44.0	44.7	21.8	51.7	77.6	79.3	59.7

Source: CSO Annual Population Estimates

At 46,200 persons, citizens of countries other than the EU (including Ireland) and the UK accounted for more than three quarters (77%) of total net migration in Ireland in 2025; EU citizens (EU 14 + EU 15-27) accounted for 14,800 persons, making up a quarter; Irish citizens, for whom net migration was negative (at -3,500 persons) accounted for 6% of the total (Figure 2.4).

When compared to 2025, the decline in net migration was driven primarily by a decline of 19,100 citizens in the other countries category.

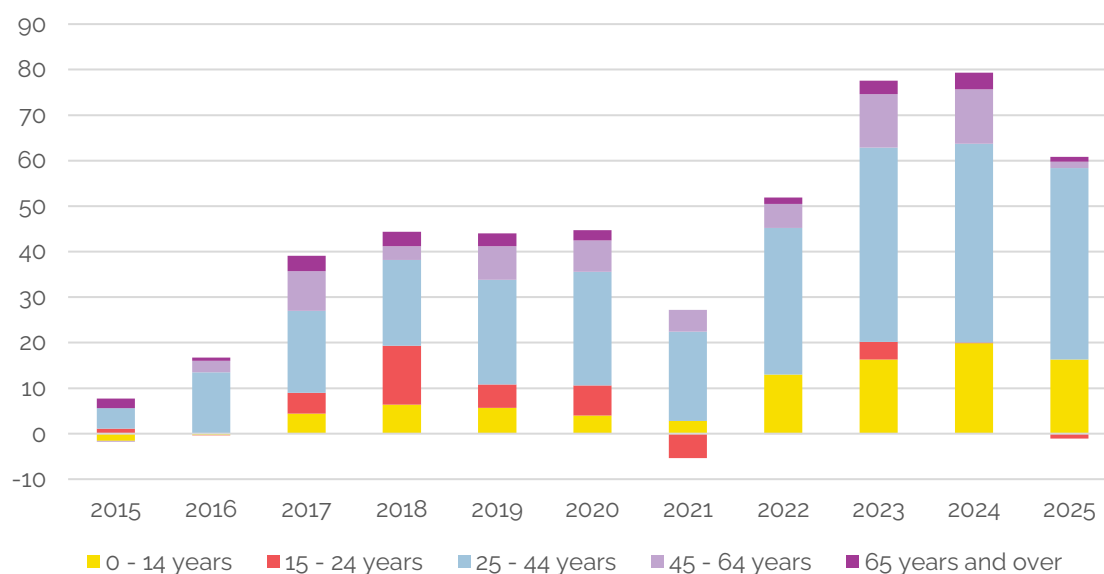
Figure 2.4 Net Migration Estimates (000s) by Citizenship, 2016-2025



Source: CSO Annual Population Estimates

Net migration estimates by age group are shown in Figure 2.5. Persons in the 25-44-year old age category formed the largest group every year, and amounted to 71% (42,100 persons) in 2025; while the absolute number of net migrants in this age group declined slightly from 43,700 in 2024, their share of total migration increased in 2025 (from 55% to 71%). Although declines occurred across all age groups, the largest decline was for those aged 45-64 years (10,600 persons).

Figure 2.5 Net Migration Estimates by Age Group (000s), 2016-2025



Source: CSO Annual Population Estimates

2.3 Employment Composition

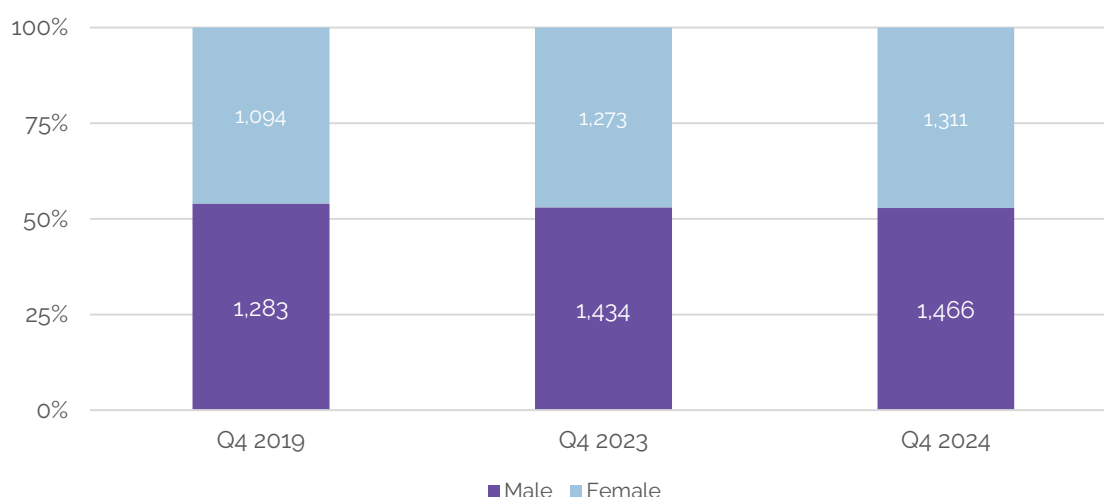
This section profiles persons in employment (aged 15 years and over) by a range of variables, including sex, age, education level, work status, professional status and citizenship. Ireland's progress towards the 2025 National Skills Strategy targets is also provided.

Employment by Sex

Of the 2.78 million persons in employment in quarter 4 2024, over 47% (1.31 million workers) were female (Figure 2.6), a share broadly in line with that observed in quarter 4 2023, but higher than the 46% in quarter 4 2019.

There were increases in employment numbers for both males and females, although, as was the case last year (quarter 4 2022-quarter 4 2023), the employment growth for females (at 3%, or 38,000 extra workers) was stronger than that of males (+2.2%, or 32,000 extra workers). Similarly, when compared to quarter 4 2019, the increase in the number of females (216,200 extra, +20%) was greater than that of males (+182,400 workers, +14%).

Figure 2.6 Employment (000s) by Sex, Q4 2019, Q4 2023 and Q4 2024



Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

Employment by Full-time/Part-time Status

In quarter 4 2024, full-time workers made up 79.1% of total employment, 16.4% were part-time not underemployed and 4.5% were part-time under-employed (Figure 2.7).

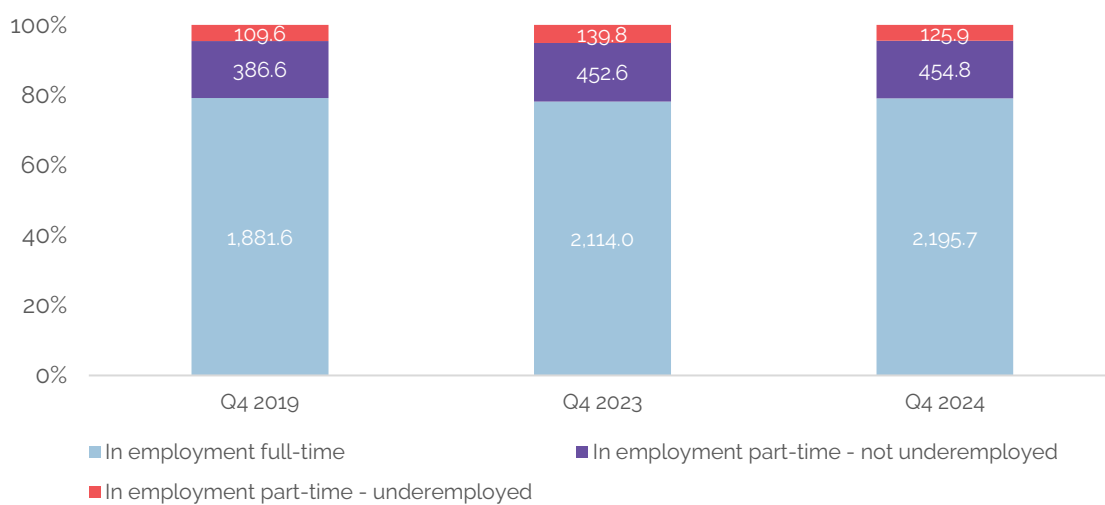
When compared to quarter 4 2023, the number of persons

- in **full-time employment grew** by 81,700 (+3.9%), with increases for both males and females
- in **part-time employment fell** by 11,700 (-2%) to 580,700 persons; although females made up over two thirds of all persons employed part-time, the fall in part-time employment was higher for males (-8,400 males) than it was for females (-3,300 workers)

- who were **part-time under-employed** were the main drivers of the decline in part-time employment as this group **fell by 13,900 persons**; there were falls for both males (-10,300) and females (-3,500)
- in part-time employment but **not under-employed** remained **almost unchanged** with just 2,200 extra workers (or +0.5%), although this masks an increase of 7,000 additional female workers and a decline of 4,800 males.

When compared to quarter 4 2019, the numbers for each employment status category increased, although there was little change in the shares in part-time (both under- and not under-employed) compared to full-time employment.

Figure 2.7 Employment by Employment Type (000s), Q4 2019, Q4 2023 and Q4 2024



Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO LFS data

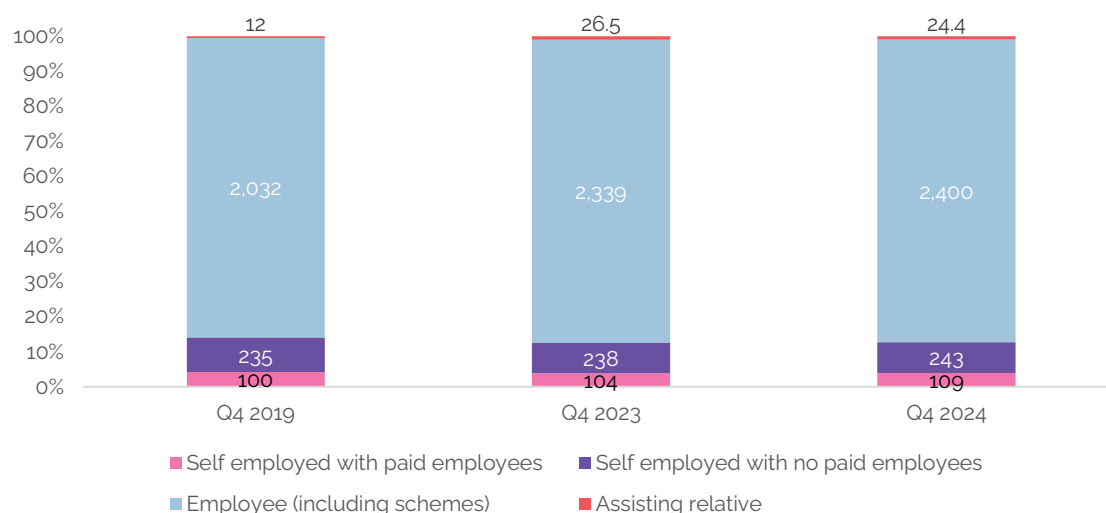
Employment by Professional Status (Self-Employed, Employee etc)

In quarter 4 2024, of the 2.78 million persons in employment, just over 86% were employees, amounting to nearly 2.4 million workers (Figure 2.8); 12.7% were self-employed, and of these 243,100 were self-employed with no paid employees, while 109,300 were self-employed *with* paid employees, representing nearly 9% and 4% of total employment respectively. Just under 1% of total employment (24,400 persons) were assisting relatives.

There was very little change in the shares employed in each professional status category between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024. Nonetheless, over the one-year period, the numbers increased for all but the assisting relatives category (which fell by 2,100 persons), with the largest percentage growth of 6% for the self-employed with paid employees (an extra 5,700 persons).

Compared to quarter 4 2019, numbers increased for all categories, although there was a slight shift in the distribution away from the self-employed with no paid employees category (down from 10%) towards the employee category (up from 85%) over the five-year period.

Figure 2.8 Employment (000s) by Professional Status, Q4 2019, Q4 2023 & Q4 2024

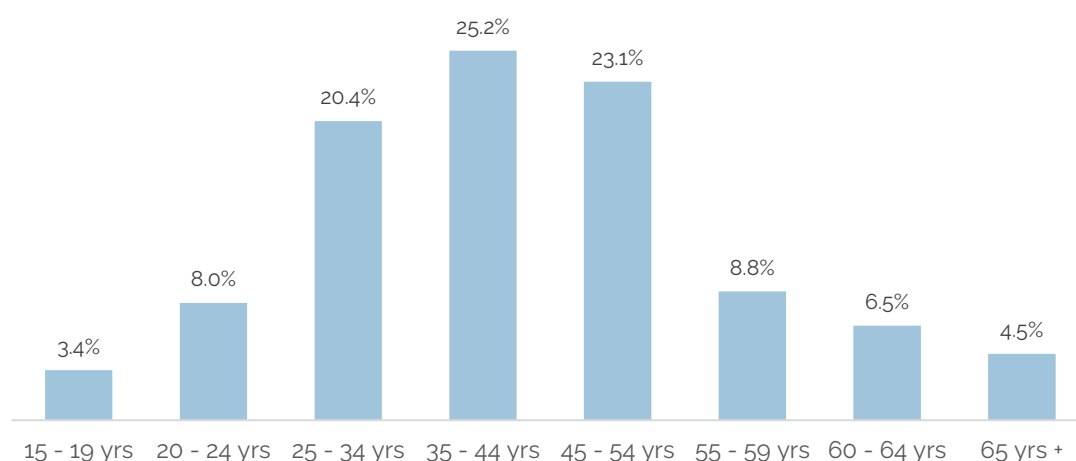


Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

Employment by Age Group

In quarter 4 2024, young people (aged 15-24 years) comprised 11.4% of national employment; persons aged 25-64 years made up nearly 84%, with those aged 65 years or more accounted for the remaining 4.5% (Figure 2.9).

Figure 2.9 Distribution of Employment by Age Group, Q4 2024



Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO LFS data

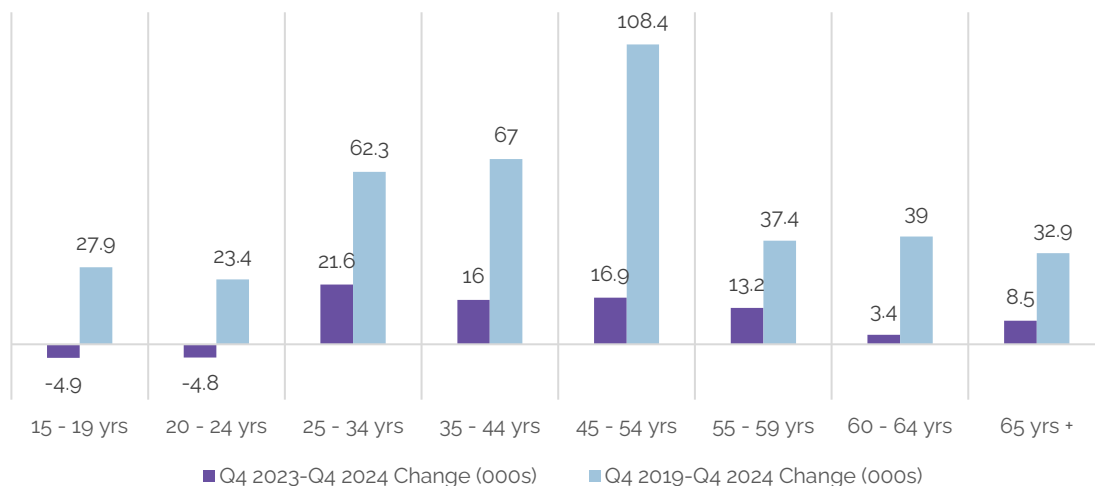
As shown in Figure 2.10, over three quarters (78%, or 54,500 extra workers) of the total increase in employment in the year to quarter 4 2024 was due to growth in the numbers of those in the prime working age cohort (persons aged 25-54 years):

- nearly one third (31%, or 21,600 workers) of the 70,000 additional persons in employment in Ireland were aged 25-34 years
- 23% (16,000 additional persons) were aged 35-44 years
- 24% (+16,900 additional persons) were aged 45-54 years.

In contrast, over the same one-year period, the number of young workers declined, with falls of 4,900 and 4,800 for those aged 15-19 years 20-24 years, respectively. The decrease in youth employment was due almost entirely to smaller numbers of female workers, as the number of young males in employment remained almost unchanged (the number of males aged 15-19 rose by 600 and the number aged 20-24 fell by 700).

When compared to quarter 4 2019, the number of workers increased across all age groups, with the largest absolute increases for those aged 45-54 years, with 108,400 additional persons employed.

Figure 2.10 Employment Change (000s) by Age Group, Q4 2019-Q4 2024 and Q4 2023-Q4 2024



Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO LFS data

Employment by Education Attainment Level (NFQ)

Figure 2.11 shows how the distribution of employment by the highest level of education attained shifted further, albeit slightly, towards qualifications at the higher end of the National Framework of Qualifications. In quarter 4 2024,

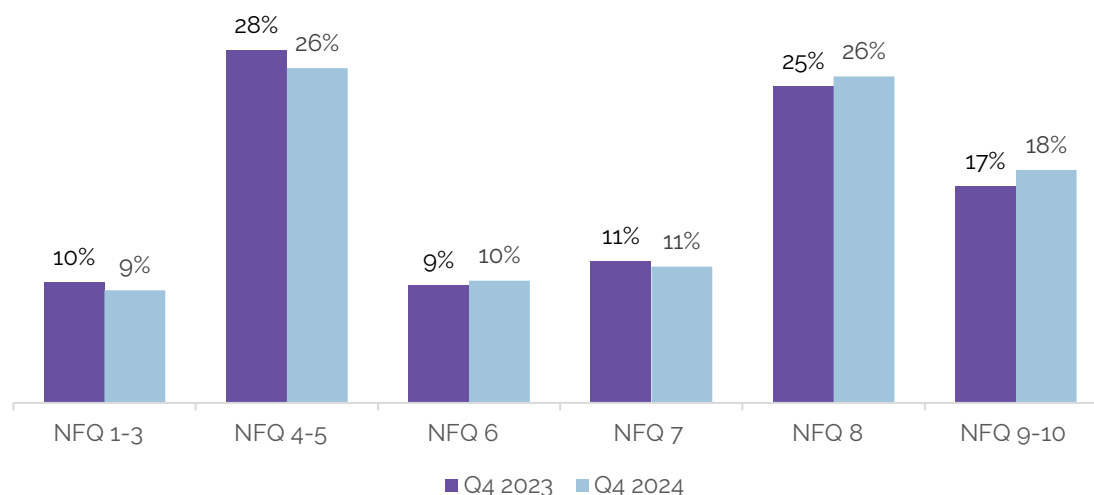
- at 9%, the share of employment with at most a **level 3 qualification** (e.g. Junior Cert) **declined** slightly when compared to quarter 4 2023
- just over a quarter (26%) held a **level 4/5 qualification** (e.g. Leaving Cert or FET level 4 or 5),²³ having declined from nearly 28% in quarter 4 2023
- the share of employed persons holding a **level 6 (craft, advanced or higher certificate) or level 7 (e.g. ordinary bachelor degree) qualification remained broadly** unchanged since quarter 4 2023, with just a 0.4 percentage point rise at

²³ Of the 720,300 employed persons with level 4/5 qualifications in quarter 4 2024, 591,700 were for upper secondary qualifications (e.g. Leaving Cert) and 128,600 were for FET qualifications (e.g. award on completion of a PLC course).

level 6 and a 0.4 percentage point fall at level 7; combined level 6 and 7 qualification holders made up a fifth of total employment

- more than two fifths (44%) of workers in Ireland held at least a **level 8 (e.g. bachelor degree) qualification, an increase on the 42% observed one year earlier.**

Figure 2.11 Distribution of Employment by NFQ Level*, Q4 2023 & Q4 2024



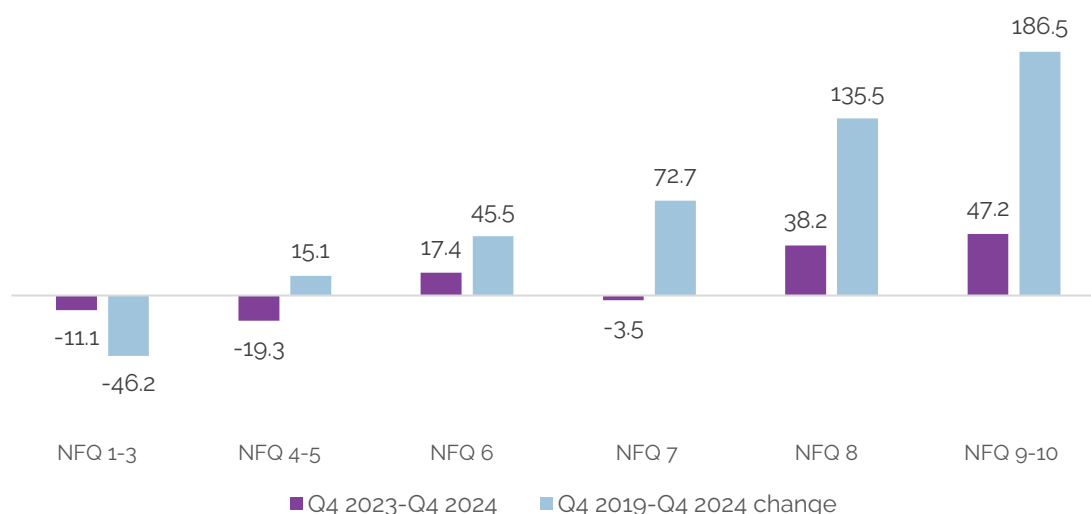
Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

*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 2024 (excluding those who did not state an NFQ level). Over two thirds of the total increase in employment over the period quarter 4 2023 to quarter 4 2024 was due to an increase in the number of people holding postgraduate qualifications at NFQ 9 or 10 (+47,200 workers). Over the same one-year period, the number of persons with at most a level 3 qualification fell by 11,100 (-4.4%) and those at level 4/5, by 19,300 (12,300 of whom were upper secondary qualification holders; the remainder were FET qualification holders).

When compared to quarter 4 2019, there were increases in the numbers employed at almost all NFQ levels, with the exception of those with at most a level 3 qualification (which fell by 16%, or 46,200 persons). By far the largest increase was for NFQ 9/10 qualification holders, with 186,500 additional persons employed (+59%). In fact, nearly half (47%) of the total additional people employed in Ireland over this period held level 9/10 qualifications. A further third (135,500 persons) held level 8 qualifications.

Figure 2.12 Employment Change (000s) by NFAQ Level*, Q4 2019-Q4 2024 and Q4 2023-Q4 2024



Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data;

*Excludes those who did not state an NFAQ level

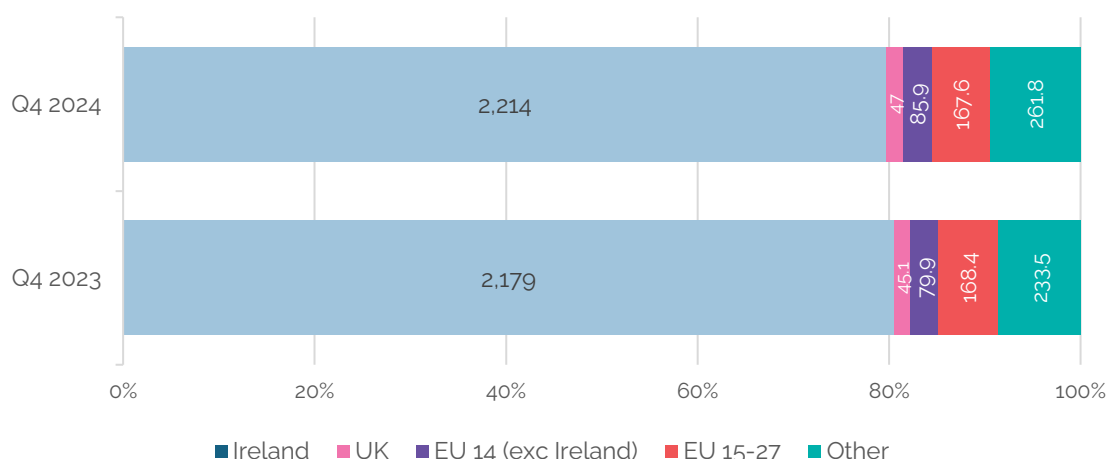
Employment by Citizenship

Note: due to changes introduced to the LFS in 2021 for detailed citizenship, comparable data for 2019 is not available.

Of the 2.78 million persons in employment in Ireland in quarter 4 2024, over 2.21 million (just under 80%) were Irish citizens (Figure 2.13). A further 253,500 persons were other EU citizens, making up over 9% of employment (comprising 3.1% from EU 14 countries and 6% from EU 15-27 countries). UK citizens, with 47,000 persons in employment, made up 1.7% of total national employment, while the remaining 261,800 persons employed (9.4%) were citizens of other countries.

The distribution of employment by citizenship in quarter 4 2024 was broadly similar to that of quarter 4 2023. Nonetheless, the share of Irish citizens fell slightly (0.8 percentage points) from nearly 81%, while there was a concomitant rise (0.8 pp) in the share of persons employed who were from the 'other countries' category.

Figure 2.13 Employment by Citizenship (000s & %), Q4 2023-Q4 2024

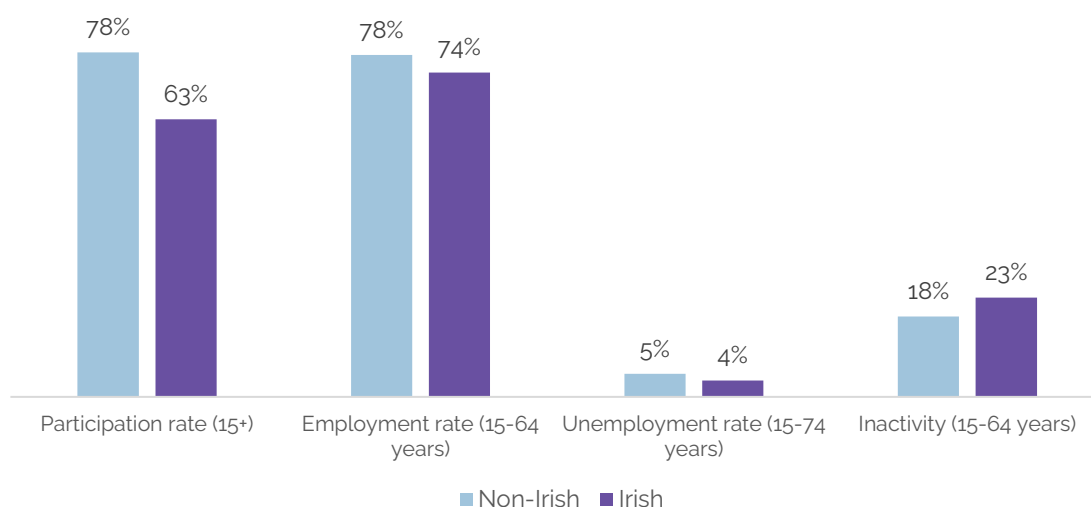


Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

When compared to quarter 4 2023, employment numbers for most citizenship categories grew, with the exception of those from EU 15-27 countries, where employment was almost unchanged (just 800 fewer citizens). Nearly half of total employment growth in Ireland in the year to quarter 4 2024 was due to an increase in the number of Irish citizens, with a further two fifths due to an additional 28,300 citizens from the 'other' category.

In quarter 4 2024, the labour force participation, employment, and unemployment rates were higher for non-Irish citizens than for Irish citizens (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 15 percentage points higher than that of Irish citizens.

Figure 2.14 Participation Rate, Employment Rate, UE Rate & Inactivity Rate by Citizenship, Q4 2024



Source: Eurostat

When compared to quarter 4 2023, there were only small changes in the participation, employment, unemployment, and inactivity rates for both Irish and non-Irish citizens.

- For non-Irish citizens, there were declines in the labour force participation rate (of 1.8 percentage points), employment rate (0.2 pp), and unemployment rate (-0.3 pp), but a 0.5 pp increase in the inactivity rate.
- For Irish citizens, there were small increases (less than half a percentage point) in the participation and employment rates, while there were slight falls (0.2 pp each) in the unemployment and inactivity rates.

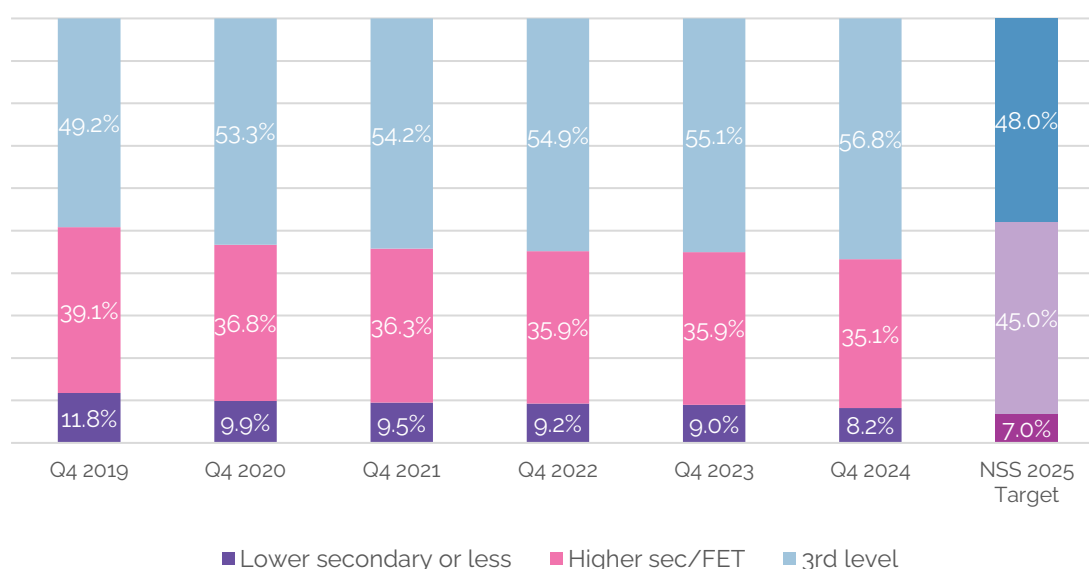
Progress Towards National Skills Strategy Targets

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.

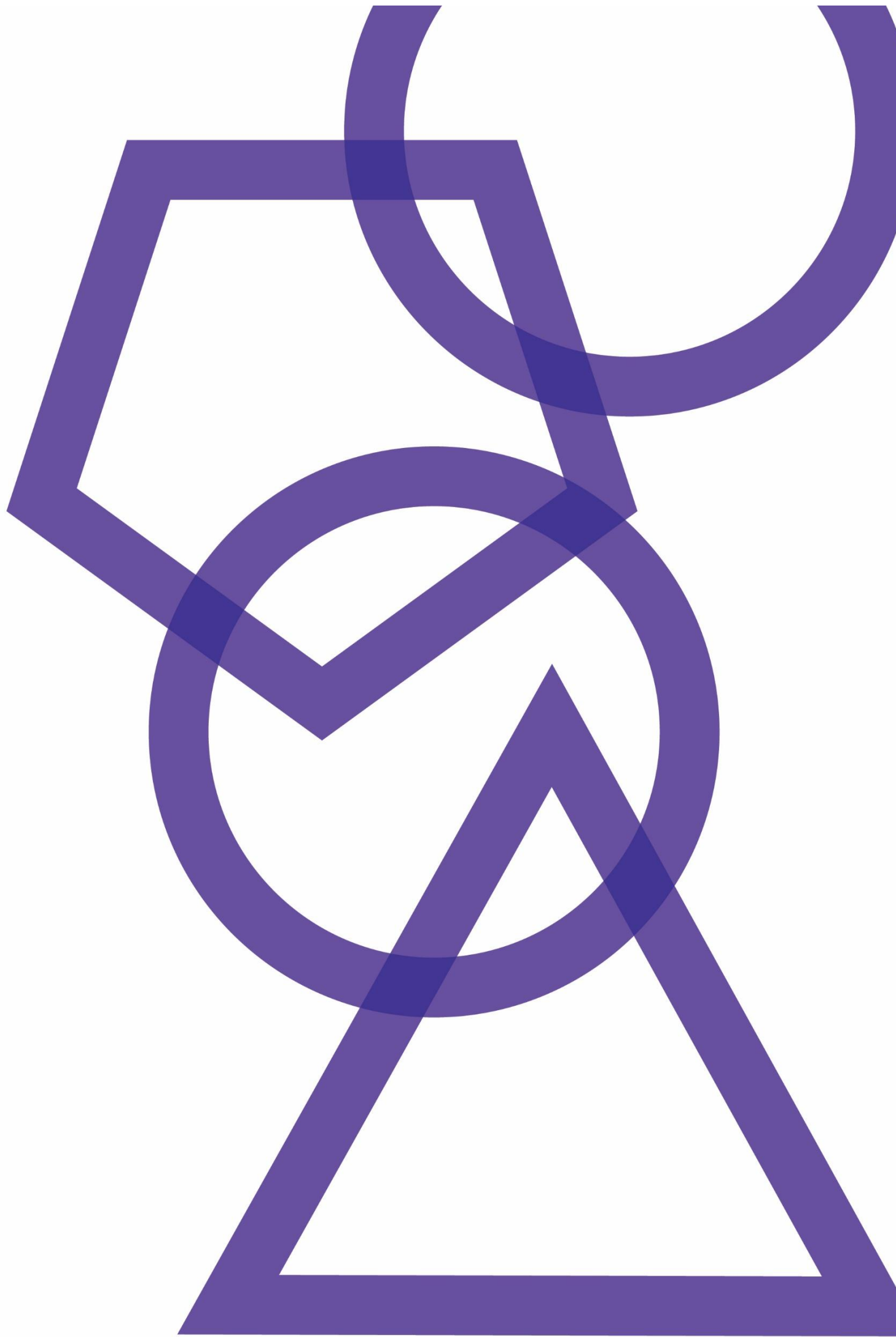
Over the period quarter 4 2019-quarter 4 2024,

- the share of the labour force (15-64 years) with **third level** qualifications increased, and by quarter 4 2024, had reached nearly 57%, which is well above the 48% target set out in the National Skills Strategy
- the share holding at most **higher secondary/FET** qualifications fell by four percentage points, and at just over 35% in quarter 4 2024 was almost ten percentage points below the target (45%)
- At 8.2% in quarter 4 2024, the share with **lower secondary or less** educational attainment fell, although it remained higher than the target of 7%.

Figure 2.15 Labour Force by Educational Attainment and NSS targets Q4 2019-Q4 2024



Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data



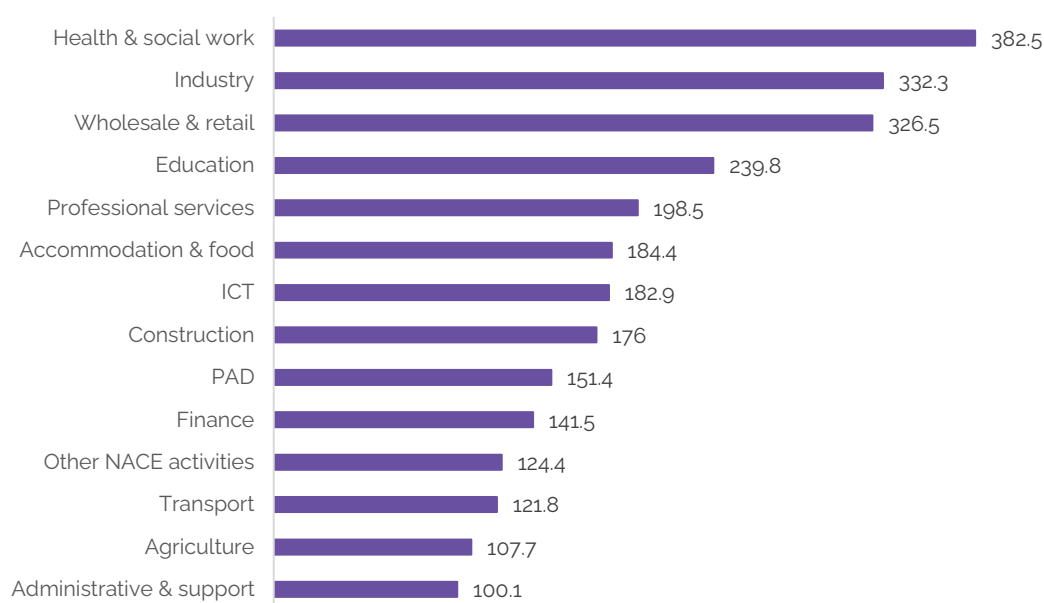
Section 3 Employment by Economic Sector

This section analyses Ireland's workforce at sectoral level, presenting the sectors in which Ireland's 2.8 million persons were employed in quarter 4 2024. Employment growth in the Irish economy saw a relatively large increase over the five-year period quarter 4 2019-quarter 4 2024 (17%) 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 (2.6%) 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 2024, the largest sectors in terms of numbers employed were health & social work (382,500 persons), industry (332,300 persons) and wholesale & retail (326,500 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 2024*



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data

*Excludes instances where the sector of employment was not stated

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

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 2023 and quarter 4 2024, the highest growth rates were for transport (+11%), construction (+9%), and ICT (+8%), each of which had growth rates that were more than three times higher than the national average (2.6%). In absolute terms, however, the largest growth was for the health sector, which employed an additional 17,200 persons. Employment declined in four sectors, namely administration & support (-6%), wholesale & retail and agriculture (both -5%) and other NACE activities (-2%).²⁴

Over the five-year period, quarter 4 2019 to quarter 4 2024, the sectors with the highest relative growth rates were ICT (+42%), professional activities (+39%), PAD (+29%), health & social work (+28%) and education (+25%), which all grew far higher than the national average (17%) over this time. Employment declined in two sectors, namely administrative & support services (-11%) and agriculture (-1%).

Figure 3.2 Employment Growth (%) by Sector, Q4 2019-Q4 2024 & Q4 2023-Q4 2024



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

²⁴ At the time of writing, data from the Labour Force Survey for Q1 2025 had been released and showed that employment in the transport and health and social work sectors fell by 10,000 and 14,000 persons respectively (compared to Q4 2024), which is contrary to the 1-year increases between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024. In addition, the numbers employed in wholesale & retail continued to decline (-5,800 persons), while administrative and support services recovered (+11,200 persons) in quarter 1 2025 compared to quarter 4 2024.

3.3 Sector of employment by citizenship

In quarter 4 2024, industry, health and wholesale/retail were the largest sectors of employment for both Irish and non-Irish citizens (Table 3.1), although these sectors represented a slightly higher share of employment for non-Irish citizens (40%) compared to Irish citizens (37%).

Non-Irish citizens as a share of total sectoral employment in quarter 4 2024 was highest in ICT (35%), accommodation/food (33%), admin/support services (27%). With the exception of agriculture (where the number of non-Irish citizens was too small to report), the share of sectoral employment which were non-Irish citizens was smallest for education (10%) and construction (18%).

When compared to quarter 4 2023, the number of both non-Irish and Irish citizens grew for most sectors, with the exception of admin/support services and other NACE activities, where employment declined for both citizenship groups. In contrast, while **employment of non-Irish citizens declined in the ICT and education** sectors (by 900 persons and 2,300 persons respectively), employment of Irish citizens in these sectors increased. In a similar vein, employment of non-Irish citizens grew in the wholesale/retail (+6,100 persons) and accommodation/food (+4,900 persons) sectors but declined for Irish citizens.

Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, the share of ICT sectoral employment that was comprised of non-Irish citizens fell from 38% to 33%. Smaller declines were also observed in industry and education sectoral employment (-1 percentage point each). In contrast the share of wholesale/retail sectoral employment comprising non-Irish citizens increased by three percentage points (up from 18%), that of transport rose by four percentage points (up from 15%), and that of accommodation/food by more than two percentage points (up from 30%).

Table 3.1 Employment by Sector and Citizenship, Quarter 4 2023 and Quarter 4 2024

	Non-Irish Citizens			Irish		
	Q4 2023 000s	Q4 2024 000s	Q4 2024 %	Q4 2023 000s	Q4 2024 000s	Q4 2024 %
Agriculture etc	*	*	*	108.9	102.8	5%
Industry	75.5	76.5	14%	244.9	255.8	12%
Construction	27.5	30.9	5%	133.8	145.1	7%
Wholesale & retail	61.8	67.9	12%	282.0	258.6	12%
Transport	16.7	23.3	4%	92.9	98.5	4%
Accommodation & food	55.4	60.3	11%	127.7	124.1	6%
ICT	64.5	63.6	11%	104.4	119.3	5%
Finance etc	22.7	26.4	5%	113.0	115.1	5%
Professional activities	38.2	42.0	7%	148.4	156.6	7%
Admin & support	28.5	26.6	5%	78.0	73.5	3%
PAD	*	[10.2]	2%	136.5	141.2	6%
Education	26.1	23.8	4%	208.9	215.9	10%
Health	73.8	80.4	14%	291.5	302.1	14%
Other NACE activities	24.2	23.1	4%	103.1	101.3	5%
Not stated	*	*	*	[5.5]	*	*
Total persons	527.0	562.6	100%	2,179.4	2,213.8	100%

Source: [CSO LFS Time Series](#) (Table A2 Web Tables)

Numbers in square brackets are based on small numbers and should be interpreted with caution; numbers too small to report have been suppressed and indicated with an asterisk (*)

3.4 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.

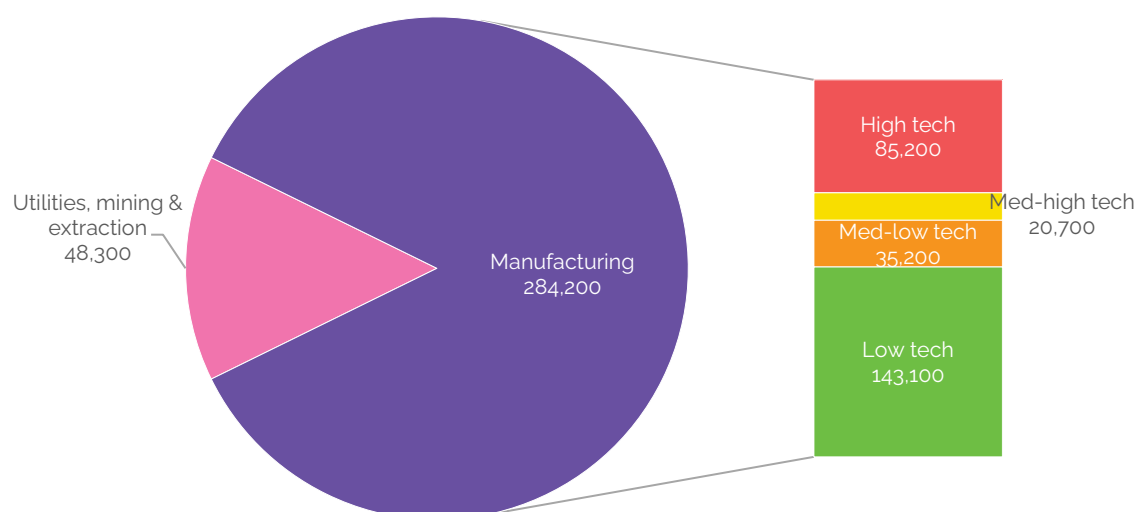
Industry

In quarter 4 2024, 332,300 persons were employed in industry, accounting for 12% of total national employment. Employment in this sector rose by 4% compared with quarter 4 2023, while there was a higher growth rate of 15% over the five-year period. Over the 1-year period, an additional 11,900 persons were employed and over the five-year period, an additional 44,000 persons were employed.

Figure 3.3 presents industrial employment by sub-sector and technological intensity. In quarter 4 2024, 85% of industrial employment was in manufacturing (284,200 persons), with utilities, mining & extraction accounting for the remaining 15% (48,300 persons). In terms of technological intensity, low-technology manufacturing accounted for one half (50% or 143,100 persons) of total manufacturing employment. High technology manufacturing represented 30% (85,200 persons), while medium-low technology

employment and medium-high technology employment made up 12% and 7% respectively. Of the 85,200 persons in high-technology manufacturing in quarter 4 2024, 63,200 (74%) were employed in pharmaceuticals alone.

Figure 3.3 Industrial Employment by Sector and Technological Intensity, Quarter 4 2024



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data

Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, manufacturing employment levels remained almost stable with a rise of just 500 persons. The number employed in high technology and medium-low technology manufacturing employment fell by 5% (4,100 fewer persons) and 8% (3,100 fewer persons) respectively, but these declines were outweighed by an increase in low technology manufacturing employment (5% or +7,400 persons). The number of persons employed in medium-high technology manufacturing remained almost unchanged with just 300 extra workers. Over the year, the numbers employed in utilities, mining & extraction went up by 31% (+11,500 persons), predominantly in utilities (+10,100 persons).

Looking over the longer-term five-year period, quarter 4 2019 to quarter 2024, employment levels increased across each of the industrial sub-sectors (except medium-low technology manufacturing and mining & extraction). Overall, the manufacturing sub-sector grew by 11% (27,100 persons), with the largest increase in high-technology manufacturing (30% or +19,800 persons), which was driven mostly by increases in the manufacture of pharmaceuticals (+19,400 employed). Employment in utilities grew strongly, with 18,400 additional persons (+76%).

Construction

In quarter 4 2024, construction accounted for a 6% share of national employment with 176,000 persons employed in the sector. The construction of buildings sub-sector employed 79,000 persons closely followed by the specialised construction activities sub-sector at 78,300 persons, which combined made up 89% of total construction

employment. The remaining 11% (or 18,700 persons) were engaged in the civil engineering sub-sector.

Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, construction sector employment grew by 9%, representing 14,700 more persons, which was the second highest sectoral growth rate after transport. Growth in this sector was driven by the largest sub-sector, construction of buildings,²⁵ which with an increase of 32% (19,100 more persons employed) was greater than the decline in other two sub-sectors; specialised construction activities fell slightly by 1% (800 fewer persons) and civil engineering went down by 16% (3,600 fewer persons). This growth in employment in the construction of buildings sub-sector over the year is also reflected by the increasing share of construction employment that works mainly on new housing developments/renovations, which rose from 54% in quarter 4 2023 to 59% in quarter 4 2024 (CSO, 2025).²⁶

Between quarter 4 2019 to quarter 4 2024, employment in the construction sector increased by 19%, which comprised of 28,000 additional persons employed. In particular, employment in the construction of buildings sub-sector saw an increase of 50% (26,200 more persons).

Agriculture, forestry and fishing

In quarter 4 2024, 107,700 persons were employed in the agriculture sector representing 4% of national employment. Of the total employment in the sector, the vast majority (96%) was in crop and animal production, with the remainder in forestry and fishing. In the last year, between quarter 4 2023 to quarter 4 2024, the agriculture sector had the second highest rate of decline, at -5% (or 5,200 fewer persons), after administrative and support services (-6%). Similarly, agriculture had the second highest rate of rate of decline (-1%) over the 5-year period quarter 4 2019-quarter 4 2024, again second to administrative & support services (-11%).

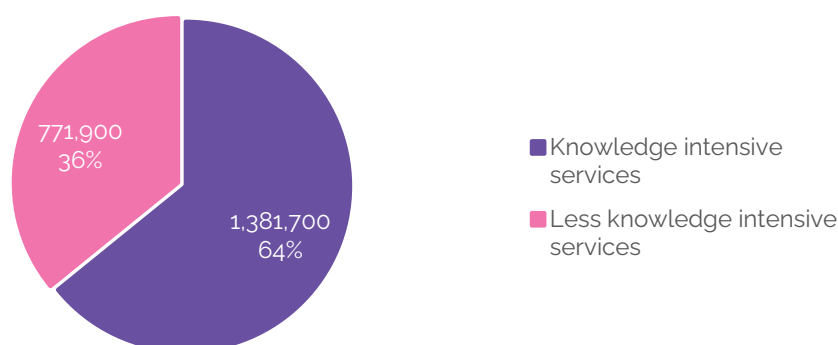
Services

In quarter 4 2024, there were 2.15 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, 64% (1,381,700 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.).

²⁵ The construction of buildings sub-sector includes the development of building projects for residential and non-residential buildings by bringing together financial, technical and physical means to realise the building projects for later sale. It includes for example the building of houses, apartments, schools, hospitals, hotels, warehouses, etc.

²⁶ See Table QLF52 on Construction Employment based on data from the CSO Labour Force Survey

Figure 3.4. Services Sector Employment, Quarter 4 2024



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data

Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, employment levels in the services sector rose by 49,200 persons (or 2%). Over the year, employment grew in the KIS segment by 5% (67,000 more persons), while it fell in the LKIS segment (-2% or 17,800 fewer persons).

When compared to quarter 4 2019, employment in services increased by 18%, resulting in 327,000 additional persons employed, with growth being driven primarily by an increase of 28% (or 303,400 additional persons) in the KIS segment. Over the five-year period, the share of KIS within services employment grew from a 59% share in quarter 4 2019 to 64% in quarter 4 2024.

Wholesale & retail

Employment Q4 2024	% share of total employment Q4 2024	Sub-sectors in Q4 2024	% Growth	
			1-year Q4 '23-'24	5-year Q4 '19-'24
326,500	12%	68% - retail trade 21% - wholesale trade 11% - motor trade	-5%	+5%

In quarter 4 2024, over two thirds of employment in this sector was in the retail trade sub-sector.

Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, wholesale and retail was one of four sectors to experience a decline in employment (-5% or 17,300 fewer persons). The strongest absolute and relative decrease in employment by sub-sector was in the wholesale trade (-12% or 9,700 fewer persons) followed by retail (-3% or 7,100 fewer persons); employment levels in the motor trade sub-sector were almost unchanged with just 400 fewer workers (-1%).

Over the five-year period, the overall growth in the wholesale and retail sector, at 5%, was just under one third of the five-year national average of 17%. The wholesale trade had the largest employment growth (+19% or +10,800 persons), while the motor trade was the only sub-sector to record a decline (-7% or -2,600 persons). Employment in retail increased by 3% (+6,900 persons).

Accommodation and food services

Employment Q4 2024	% share of total employment Q4 2024	Sub-sectors in Q4 2024	% Growth	
			1-year Q4 '23-'24	5-year Q4 '19-'24
184,400	7%	74% - food & beverage services 26% - accommodation	+1%	+2%
In the year to quarter 4 2024, employment remained fairly stable, going up by just under 1% (+1,300 persons), due entirely to employment growth in the food & beverage services sub-sector (+3% or +4,100 persons). In contrast, the number of persons engaged in the accommodation sub-sector declined (by 6% or 2,800 fewer persons). Over the five-year period, quarter 4 2019-quarter 4 2024, employment in the sector grew by 2% (or 3,600 additional persons), although this masks a 12% decline in the accommodation sub-sector (-6,300 persons), while food & beverage services experienced an 8% increase (9,800 additional persons).				

Professional, scientific and technical activities

Employment Q4 2024	% share of total employment Q4 2024	Sub-Sectors in Q4 2024	% Growth	
			1-year Q4 '23-'24	5-year Q4 '19-'24
198,500	7%	32% - legal and accounting 30% - architectural & engineering activities; technical testing/analysis 10% - Activities of head offices; management consultancy activities Remainder includes scientific R&D (5%), advertising/market research (8%), other professional services (12%), and veterinary activities (3%)	+6%	+39%
Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, employment in the professional services sector increased by 6% (+11,900 persons), with the largest absolute increases for architectural/engineering activities & technical testing/analysis (+8,700 persons or +17%) followed by activities of head offices and management consultancy services (+4,300 persons or +29%). Over the five-year period, quarter 4 2019 to quarter 4 2024, employment in the sector as a whole went up by 39% (56,200 additional persons), with the biggest absolute increase in the architectural/engineering activities & technical testing and analysis sub-sector (+24,500 persons or +72%). Growth occurred in all sub-sectors to different extents over this time, while in relative terms, veterinary activities had the strongest growth (+91% or +3,100 persons).				

Financial, insurance and real estate

Employment Q4 2024	% share of total employment Q4 2024	Sub-Sectors in Q4 2024	% Growth	
			1-year Q4 '23-'24	5-year Q4 '19-'24
141,500	5%	51% - financial services (e.g. banking) 22% - insurance 17% - auxiliary financial services 9% - real estate activities	+4%	+22%
Employment levels went up by 4% between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, with increases in auxiliary financial services (+4,800 persons), real estate activities (+1,300 persons) and insurance (+1,100 persons), although there was a decline in financial services (-1,500 persons). Between quarter 4 2019 and quarter 4 2024, employment grew by 22% and increased in all four segments of the sector, but it was particularly strong, in absolute terms, in the auxiliary financial services segment (+12,000 persons), followed by the insurance sub-sector (+6,800 persons). Artificial Intelligence (AI) is likely to affect future employment in the financial sector; the Central Bank of Ireland (2025)²⁷ viewed it as having the highest exposure to AI across the economy, as well as it being identified as a 'highly AI intensive sector' of the economy by the OECD (2024).²⁸				

Transportation and storage

Employment Q4 2024	% share of total employment Q4 2024	Sub-Sectors in Q4 2024	% Growth	
			1-year Q4 '23-'24	5-year Q4 '19-'24
121,800	4%	49% - land transport 26% - warehousing 13% - postal & courier activities 12% - water & air transport	+11%	+12%
Employment grew by 11% (+12,200 persons) between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, which was the highest growth rate across all sectors over this time. In absolute terms, this was largely driven by increases in land transport (+8,800 persons) and air transport (+4,700 persons). In contrast, there were falls in two segments: warehousing and postal/courier activities, with 1,100 and 1,600 fewer persons respectively. The five-year period showed an increase in employment of 12% (+13,200 persons). This was largely due to absolute increases in the land and air transport segments, which rose by 5,300 and 3,300 persons respectively. Employment in all segments went up over this time except for postal and courier activities (-200 persons).				

²⁷ <https://www.centralbank.ie/publication/quarterly-bulletins/quarterly-bulletin-quarter-1-2025#subContent9>

²⁸ https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/a-sectoral-taxonomy-of-ai-intensity_1f6377b5-en.html

Information and communications (ICT)

Employment Q4 2024	% share of total employment Q4 2024	Sub-Sectors in Q4 2024	% Growth	
			1-year Q4 '23-'24	5-year Q4 '19-'24
182,900	7%	72% - computer programming 14% - telecommunications 4% - motion picture, tv & music production Remainder includes broadcasting, publishing & information services	+8%	+42%
Between quarter 4 2023-quarter 4 2024, employment grew by 8% (+14,000 persons), with the highest growth in the telecoms segment (+47% or +8,500 persons). Employment also grew in computer programming (+3%, or 3,300 persons), due to growth in the first three quarters of 2024, which was enough to offset a 7% fall in the final quarter of 2024. ICT had the strongest employment growth of all sectors between quarter 4 2019 and quarter 4 2024 (+42%), driven largely by growth of 57% (+48,200 persons) in computer programming and a 57% increase in telecoms (+9,700 persons). Employment in the remaining segments declined to different extents, with the greatest fall in the information service activities (-13%, or 1,100 fewer persons) sub-sector.				

Administrative and support service activities

Employment Q4 2024	% share of total employment Q4 2024	Sub-Sectors in Q4 2024	% Growth	
			1-year Q4 '23-'24	5-year Q4 '19-'24
100,100	4%	40% - buildings & landscape services 16% - office administrative activities 14% - security activities Remainder includes employment activities (12%), renting/leasing activities (10%), and travel services (7%)	-6%	-11%
Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, employment in most sectors declined especially in the rental and leasing activities and buildings & landscape services, which fell by 3,500 and 3,200 persons respectively. However, the employment activities segment was the only exception to this which grew by 39% (+3,400 persons). Over the five-year period, quarter 4 2019 to quarter 4 2024, employment fell by 11% (-12,000 persons), with the strongest relative and absolute decline in security activities (-30% or -6,000 persons), in line with declines in most segments. However, the only exception to this downward trend over this time was a 43% growth in employment activities (+3,600 persons). Of all the sectors, administrative and support service activities was the only one not to return to pre-COVID employment levels in quarter 4 2024, with the exception of agriculture (which was just 800 persons below that in quarter 4 2019).				

Health and social work

Employment Q4 2024	% share of total employment Q4 2024	Sub-Sectors in Q4 2024	% Growth	
			1-year Q4 '23-'24	5-year Q4 '19-'24
382,500	14%	58% - human health activities 30% - social work activities 12% - residential care activities	+5%	+28%
Employment grew by 5% (+17,200 persons) over the one-year period, quarter 4 2023 to quarter 4 2024, with the largest absolute increase in the residential care activities segment (+8,700 persons or +24%), while there was a 2% increase in human health activities (+5,300 persons) and a 3% increase in social work activities (+3,300 persons). Over the five-year period, quarter 4 2019-quarter 4 2024, 84,400 additional persons were employed in the sector (+28%), which was the largest absolute increase across all sectors over this time. The majority (71%) of these additional workers were in human health activities (+59,800 persons), while employment in social work activities saw an increase of 20,800 persons and residential care activities, an additional 3,900 persons.				

Education

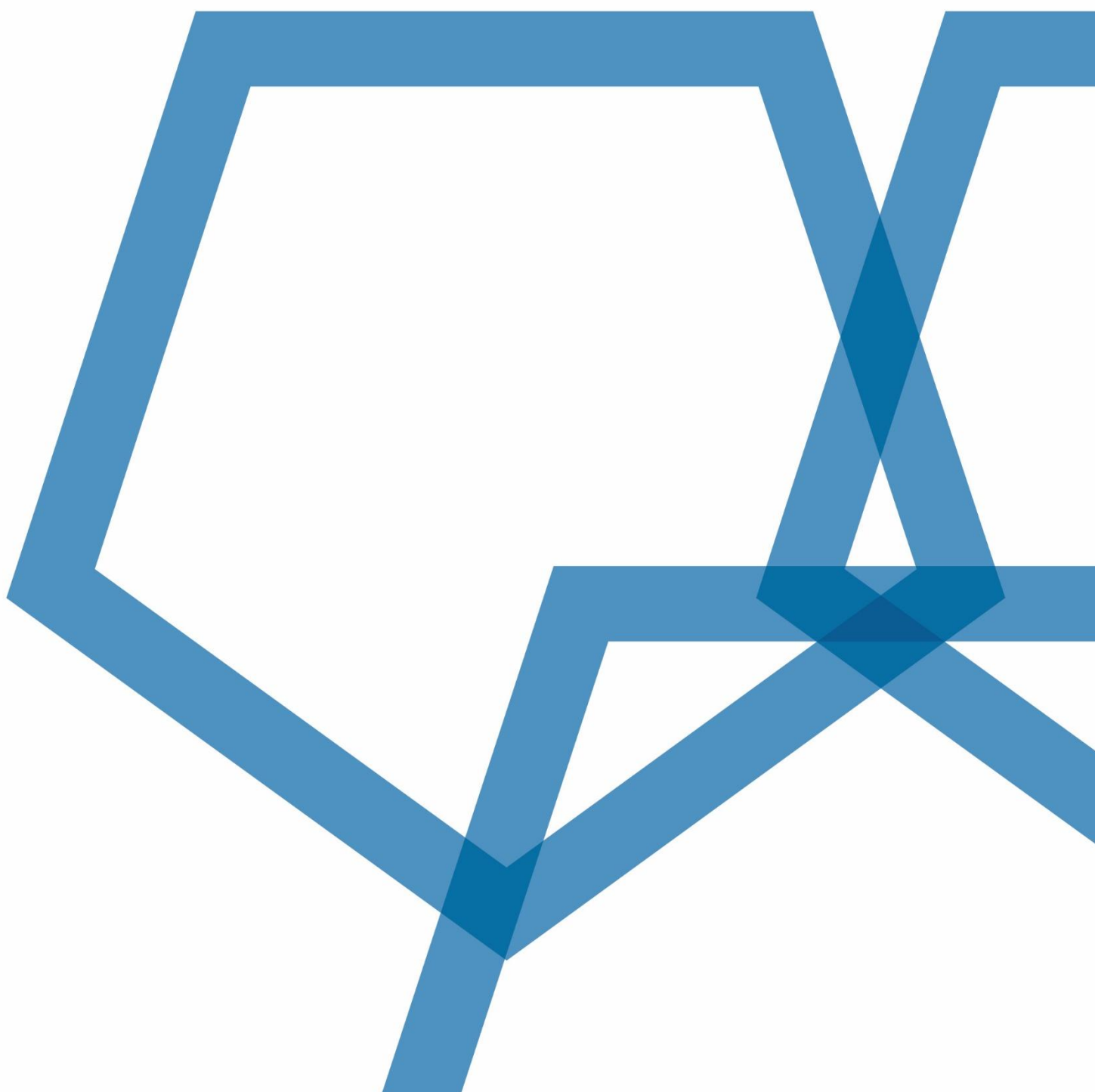
Employment Q4 2024	% share of total employment Q4 2024	Sub-Sectors in Q4 2024	% Growth	
			1-year Q4 '23-'24	5-year Q4 '19-'24
239,800	9%	-	+2%	+25%
Employment in this sector increased by 2% (4,800 additional persons) over the last year and by 25% (47,500 more persons) over the five years.				

Public administration and defence (PAD)

Employment Q4 2024	% share of total employment Q4 2024	Sub-Sectors in Q4 2024	% Growth	
			1-year Q4 '23-'24	5-year Q4 '19-'24
151,400	5%	-	+6%	+29%
There was an upward trend in employment for this sector, with the strongest growth occurring over the five-year period, at 29% (+33,600 persons), the third highest across all sectors (after professional activities and ICT). Employment also rose (by 6%, or 8,700 persons) in the last year, quarter 4 2023 to quarter 4 2024.				

Other NACE activities

Employment Q4 2024	% share of total employment Q4 2024	Sub-Sectors in Q4 2024	% Growth	
			1-year Q4 '23-'24	5-year Q4 '19-'24
124,400	4%	30% - other personal services (e.g. hairdressing) 27% - sports activities 11% - creative arts and entertainment 16% - activities of membership organisations Remainder in gambling activities, libraries, repair of computers/household equipment, and activities of households as employers of domestic personnel	-2%	+5%
Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, the number of persons employed in most segments of this sector fell, although the 2% decline for the largest segment, other personal service activities, translated into just 600 fewer workers. In contrast, employment in sports, amusement and recreation activities grew by 4,000 persons (+14%). Between quarter 4 2019 and quarter 4 2024, increases in the creative, arts etc segment (+3,100 persons, or +30%), the activities of membership organisations segment (+2,400 persons), sports activities etc (+2,200 persons) and other personal services (+2,100 persons) outweighed declines in other much smaller segments of this sector.				



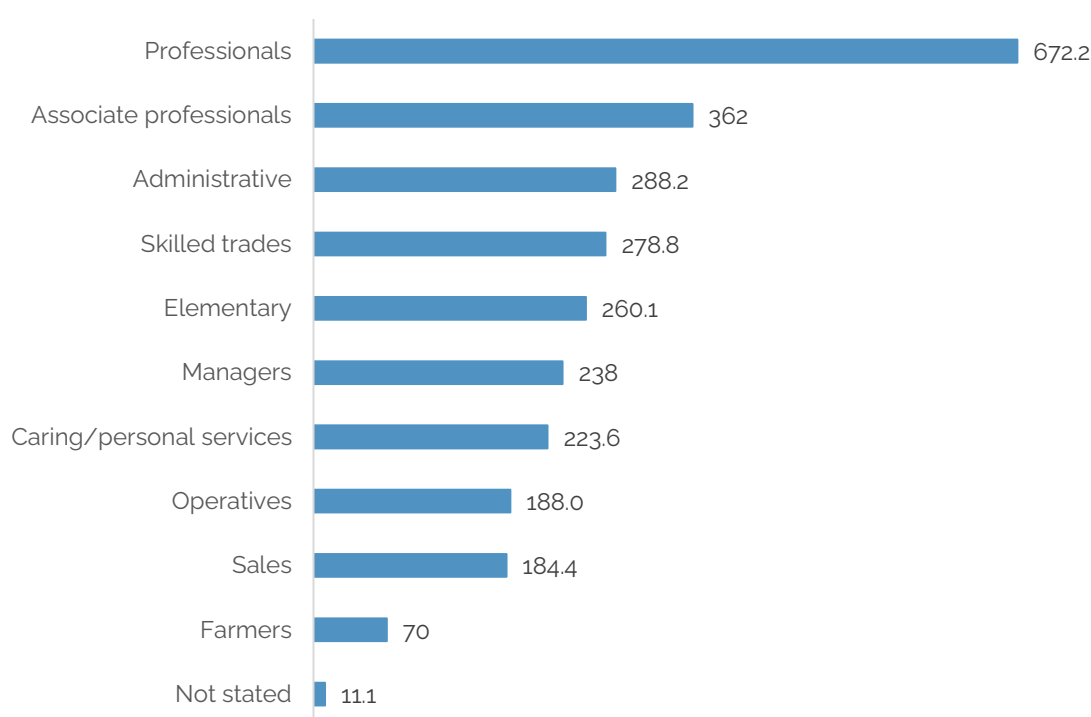
Section 4 Employment by Broad Occupation

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 2024 by broad occupation. In quarter 4 2024, professionals had the highest level of employment, at 672,200 persons followed by associate professionals (362,000). Combined, the high skilled occupations (professionals, associate professionals and managers) accounted for almost 1.3 million persons or 46% of the total national workforce, up from 45% last year. Administrative occupations and skilled trades each accounted for 10% of the workforce, with 288,200 and 278,800 persons employed respectively, while farmers (70,000) represented nearly 3%. The number of persons in elementary occupations accounted for a further 9% of the workforce (260,100 persons).

Figure 4.1 Employment by Broad Occupational Group (000s), Quarter 4 2024



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data

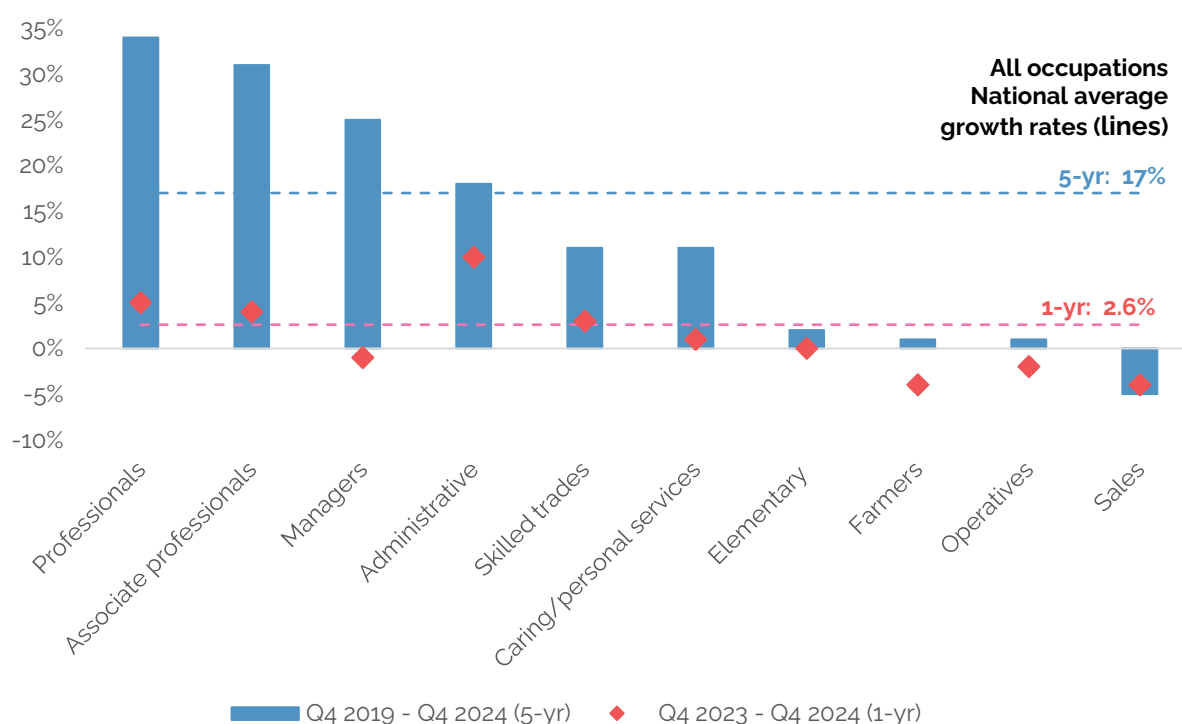
4.2 Employment growth

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 2023 and quarter 4 2024, employment growth was 2.6% (70,000 additional persons) across all occupational groups. Professionals had the highest absolute increase (+30,500 persons or +5%) while administrative occupations had the greatest relative growth (+10% or +27,000 persons). In addition, associate professionals also went up (+4% or +14,800 persons) and skilled trades (+3% or +9,500 persons). In contrast, there were declines across four occupations, with the largest absolute fall in sales (-6,900 persons or -4%) followed by operatives (-3,700 persons or -2%). The numbers employed in farming occupations also fell by 4% (-2,700 persons), while elementary occupations remained largely unchanged (600 fewer persons).

The rate of employment growth over the five-year period, quarter 4 2019 to quarter 4 2024, was 17%. In absolute terms, the highest increases were recorded for professionals (+172,200 persons or +34%), followed by associate professionals (+85,400 persons or +31%) and managers (+48,000 persons or +25%). Over this time, employment in most other occupations also increased including administrative (+44,100 persons or +18%), skilled trades (+27,500 persons or +11%) and caring services (+21,800 persons or +11%) occupations. Employment growth for a number of occupations was below the national average, namely skilled trades and caring services (both 11%), and most notably, for elementary (+2%), operative and farming occupations (both +1%). The only occupational group where employment fell over this time was sales (9,800 fewer persons or -5%).

Figure 4.2 Employment Growth by Broad Occupational Group, Q4 2019-Q4 2024 & Q4 2023-Q4 2024



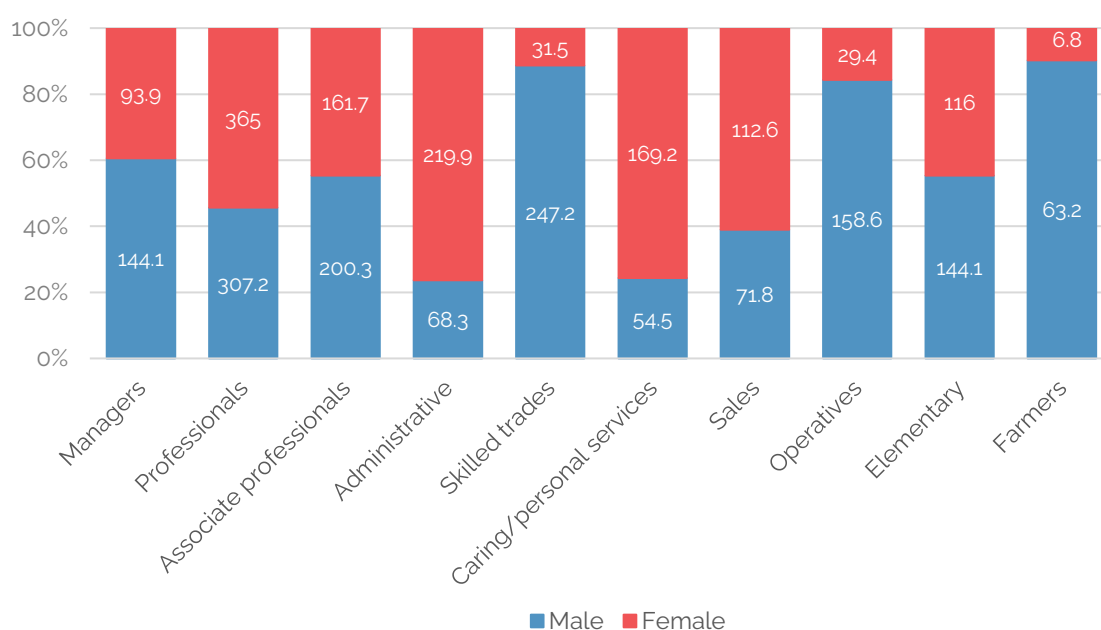
Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data
Excludes not stated

4.3 Employment by sex and age

Sex

Employment by sex for broad occupations in quarter 4 2024 is presented in Figure 4.3. Although females made up less than half (47%) of all employment, they accounted for just over three quarters of employment amongst administrative and caring/personal services occupations, both at 76%. In contrast, males accounted for at least four fifths of employment amongst farmers (90%), skilled trades (89%) and operatives (84%). The employment of males and females was closest to evenly distributed for elementary, associate professional (both 45% female) and professional occupations (54% female). In absolute terms, the highest number of females were employed in professional (365,000 persons) and administrative (219,900) occupations, while the highest number of males were employed in professional (307,200) and skilled trades (247,200) occupations.

Figure 4.3 Employment by Sex and Broad Occupational Group (000s), Quarter 4 2024



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

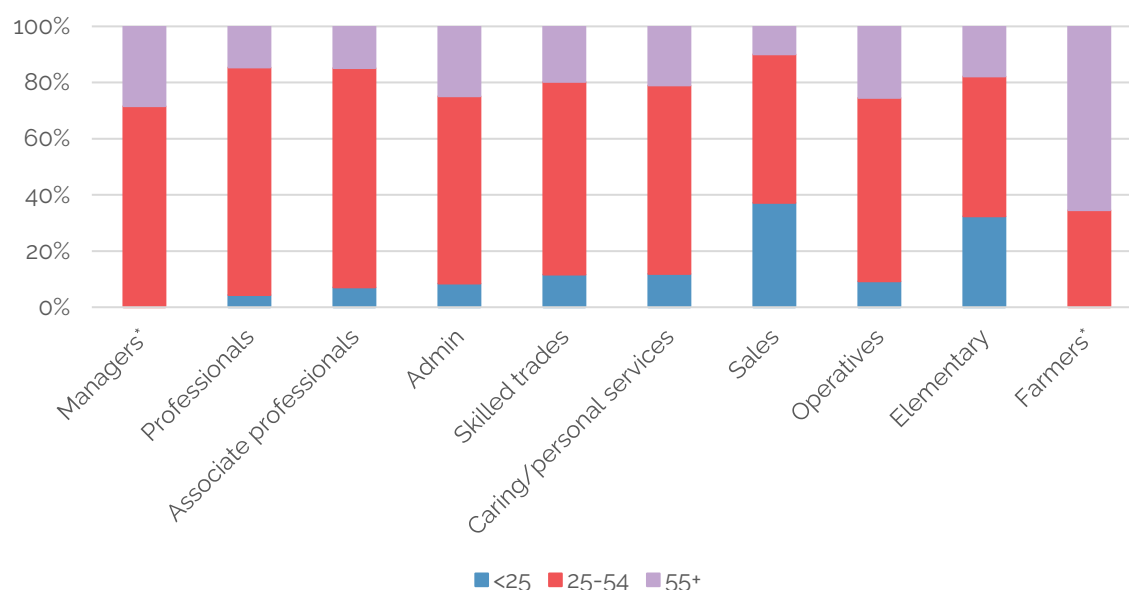
In the year to quarter 4 2024, the number of males and females in employment grew (by 32,000 and 38,000 respectively); The largest increase for males was in professional occupations (+19,500 persons) while for females the largest increase was in administrative occupations (+22,200 persons) followed by professionals (+11,100 persons). The largest decline for males occurred in managerial occupations (-7%, or 11,200 fewer persons), which in contrast increased for females (+9,600 persons or +11%). While the largest absolute falls in the number of females employed were in operative (-6,700 females) and caring (-4,700 females) occupations, these declines were offset to some extent (or more than offset in the case of caring occupations) by increases in the number of males in these occupations over the same period (at 3,000 and 8,000 additional persons respectively).

When compared to quarter 4 2019, there were 182,400 more males and 216,200 additional females in employment in quarter 4 2024, which comprised increases of 14% and 20% respectively. For males, the largest absolute increase was for professionals (+78,800 persons), an occupation which also had the biggest increase for females (+93,400 persons). Over the five-year period, the number of males declined in three occupational groups; sales (-2,400 persons), operatives (-1,500 persons), and elementary (-1,300 persons), while it remained almost unchanged for farmers (-700 males). Sales was the only occupation where the number of females fell (-7,400 persons).

Age

Figure 4.4 presents the age distribution of employment by broad occupational group. In quarter 4 2024, with the exception of farmers, employment in all occupational groups was highest in the 25-54-year age cohort. Sales and elementary occupations had the youngest age profile, with around one third of individuals employed aged 15-24 years (37% and 32% 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 2024



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 2023 and quarter 4 2024, the number of employed **15-24-year-olds** fell by 3% (9,700 fewer persons), in contrast to the 2.6% growth rate for all age groups. This was largely driven by an 11% fall in sales and an 8% decline in elementary occupations, which resulted in 8,600 and 7,800 fewer young workers respectively. The largest absolute increases in employment for this cohort were in administrative (+2,900 persons) and caring services (+2,500 persons) occupations. When compared to quarter 4 2019, the number of employed young people increased by 20% (more than the 17% rise for all age groups), with the largest absolute increases for elementary occupations

(+13,000 persons) followed by skilled trades (+8,800 persons) and sales (+8,700 persons); when combined these three occupations accounted for nearly 60% of the total rise in youth employment over the five years.

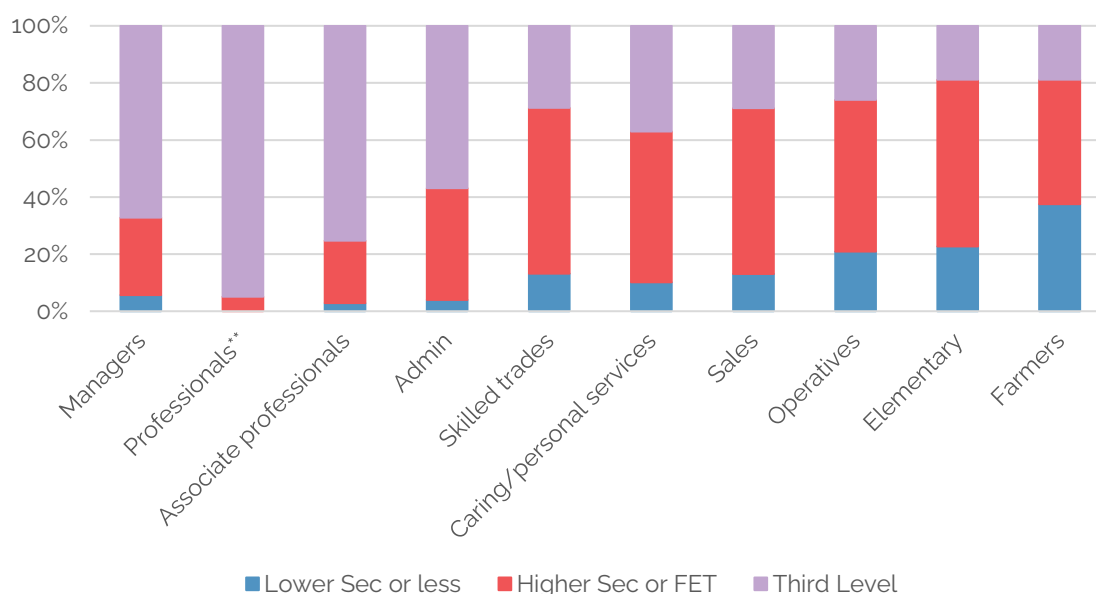
Looking at employment trends amongst **25-54-year-olds**, there was an increase of 3% (+54,500 persons) over the one-year period, quarter 4 2023 to quarter 4 2024. This was largely attributable to a 6% rise in professional occupations (+30,400 persons). In addition, the number employed went up in administrative (+13,300 persons) and associate professional (+7,900 persons) occupations. In contrast, there were declines in three occupations for this age group; with the largest absolute fall for managers (-5,500 persons) followed by operatives (-5,200 persons); employment also fell slightly for farmers with 1,100 fewer persons. Over the five-year period, there was an upward trend in employment for this age group across several occupations especially professionals (+140,000 persons) and associate professionals (+64,800 persons), with the exception of four occupations; sales (-15,300 persons), elementary (-13,100 persons), operatives (-12,200 persons) and farmers (-4,800 persons) occupations.

In the year to quarter 4 2024, there was an increase of 5% (+25,100 persons) in employed individuals aged **55 years and older**, which was more than the 2.6% increase across all age groups, the largest absolute increase being for administrative occupations (+10,800 persons), followed by associate professionals (+6,400 persons) and skilled trades (+5,100 persons). In contrast, there were declines in employment in this age group for sales (-4,000 persons), which also had the largest relative decline at 18%, followed by farmers (-1,600 persons) and caring services (-1,400 persons). Compared to quarter 4 2019, the number of employed persons aged 55 years and older went up by 25% in quarter 4 2024, which exceeded the growth rate across all age groups (+17%), and largely due to an increase in professional (+27,600 persons) and managerial (+20,400 persons) occupations, which combined accounted for 44% 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 2024. Excluding the not stated categories, over half (57%) of Ireland's workforce held third level qualifications (up from 55% one year previously), but the share was considerably higher for professionals (95%), associate professionals (75%) and managers (67%). Occupations with the greatest shares of higher secondary/FET qualification holders were elementary, skilled trades and sales occupations, all at 58%. Farmers had the lowest education attainment, with 37% holding lower secondary or less, followed by elementary (23%) and operatives (21%), shares that are much higher than the national average (9%).

Figure 4.5 Employment by Education* and Broad Occupational Group (%), Quarter 4 2024



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.

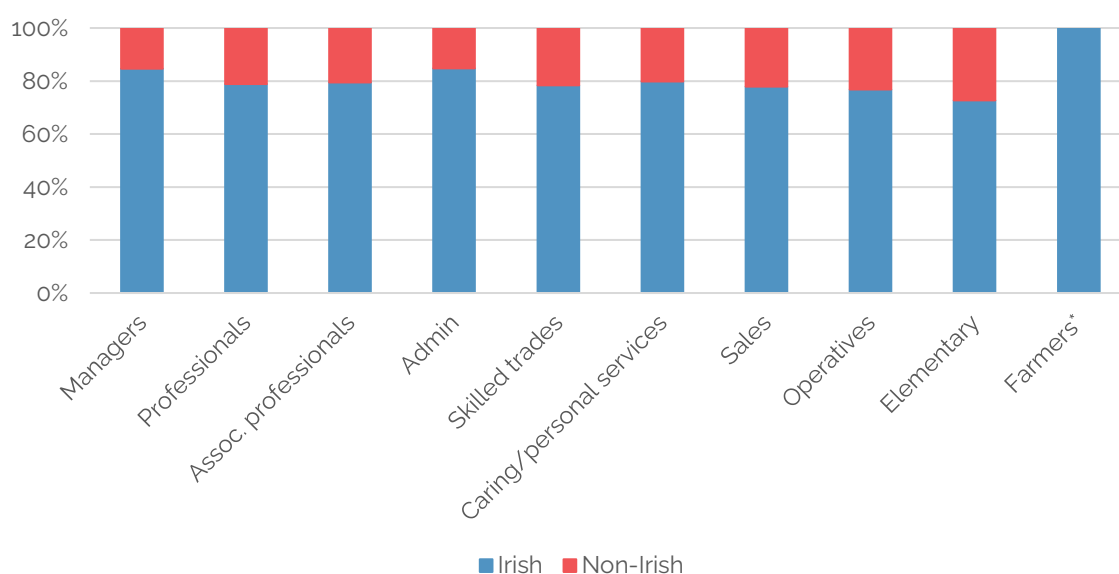
In the year to quarter 4 2024, excluding those who did not state an occupation, employment growth was greater for those with higher education levels; there was a 6% increase in employment for persons with third level qualifications, while there was a decline for those with higher secondary/FET qualifications (-1,800 persons, due entirely to a fall in those with higher secondary qualifications) and at most lower secondary education (-11,600 persons). For those with **third level** qualifications, the largest absolute increase in employment was in administrative occupations (+26,500 persons) followed by professionals (+19,700), with a decline in just one occupation, farming (-1,200 persons). Where individuals had **higher secondary/FET** qualifications, employment went up across several occupational groups, in particular skilled trades (+7,000 persons), and professionals (+6,300 persons); however, there were declines in four occupations (sales, managers, operatives and administrative), which exceeded the gains. Amongst those with at most **lower secondary** qualifications, there were declines in several occupations, most notably elementary (-7,800 persons), which alone made up over two thirds of the total decline in those with lower secondary qualifications in employment.

Compared to quarter 4 2019, there was a continuing shift towards higher levels of educational attainment amongst Ireland's workforce in quarter 4 2024, which saw an increase of 36% (405,600 persons) in the number employed with a third level qualification. Employment amongst **third level graduates** grew across all occupations, with the largest absolute increases for professionals (+163,000 persons) and associate professionals (+74,100 persons). In relation to those with **higher secondary/FET** qualifications, there were increases in employment for nearly all occupations except sales (-6,400 persons), with the largest absolute increase for skilled trades (+14,000 persons). By contrast, over the five-year period, the number of employed persons who held at most **lower secondary** education declined (-46,300 persons), with the largest absolute falls for farmers (-10,400 persons) and operative (-8,700 persons) occupations.

4.5 Employment by citizenship

In quarter 4 2024, the share of employment by citizenship across all occupations was 80% Irish (2,213,800 persons) and 20% non-Irish (562,300 persons). The distribution of employment in broad occupational groups by citizenship is presented in Figure 4.6. In quarter 4 2024, at 27%, elementary workers had the highest share of non-Irish citizens. In contrast, apart from farmers (where the number of non-Irish citizens was too small to report), administrative workers and managerial occupations had the lowest share of non-Irish citizens, both with 15%.

Figure 4.6 Employment by Citizenship and Broad Occupational Group (%). Quarter 4 2024



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data

*Number of non-Irish farmers was too low to report

Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, for Irish citizens, the largest absolute growth occurred in professional occupations (+29,800 persons) followed by administrative (+12,200 persons) occupations. For non-Irish citizens, the highest increase was for administrative occupations (+14,800 persons) followed by associate professional (+11,700 persons) occupations. The number of Irish citizens declined across five occupations, with the largest absolute fall in sales (-15,500 persons), which in contrast increased for non-Irish citizens (+8,600 persons). Employment went down in three occupations for non-Irish citizens, with the largest absolute fall in skilled trades (-5,200 persons), although employment by Irish citizens in this occupation rose (+14,700 persons).

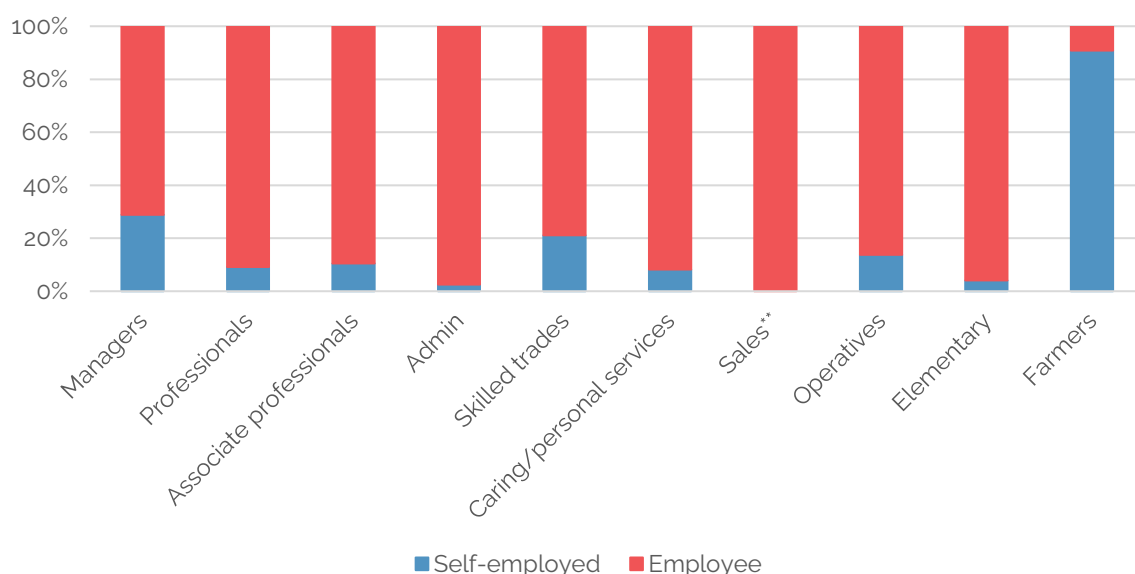
Over the five-year period, quarter 4 2019 to quarter 4 2024, professional occupations accounted for the highest increase in employment amongst both Irish (+113,900 persons) and non-Irish citizens (+57,900 persons). However, the number of Irish citizens declined in sales (15,900 fewer persons), operatives (5,700 fewer persons) and elementary (2,400 fewer persons), while employment by non-Irish citizens went up by 6,100, 7,200 and 7,500 persons in these occupations respectively. Finally, the number of both Irish and non-Irish citizens in skilled trades increased by 15,800 and 11,600 persons respectively.

4.6 Employment status

Self-employed/employee

In quarter 4 2024, the share of self-employed and employed workers across all occupational groups was 13% and 86% respectively, with 1% assisting relatives. Figure 4.7 presents employment in broad occupational groups by employment status. In quarter 4 2024, the majority of workers across all occupations were employees, with the exception of farmers where 91% (or 59,400 persons) were self-employed.²⁹ After farmers, managers and skilled trades occupations had the highest share of workers who were self-employed (at 29% and 21% respectively).

Figure 4.7 Employment by Employment Status* and Broad Occupational Group (%), Quarter 4 2024



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 2023 to quarter 4 2024, the number of employees and self-employed persons both increased by nearly 3% (in line with the national average), a rise of 61,100 persons and 11,000 persons respectively. Administrative occupations saw the largest absolute increase for employees (+26,700 persons), while professional occupations had the largest increase amongst the self-employed (+5,900 persons). In relation to employees, there were also increases in professional (+24,700 persons) and associate professional occupations (+17,700 persons), while there were declines in operatives (-8,700 persons) and sales (-7,700 persons). For the self-employed, the numbers in operative occupations and caring services went up by 5,300 and 4,200 persons respectively, while there were declines for those employed as managers (-3,000 persons), farmers (-2,600 persons) and in associate professional (-2,200 persons) occupations.

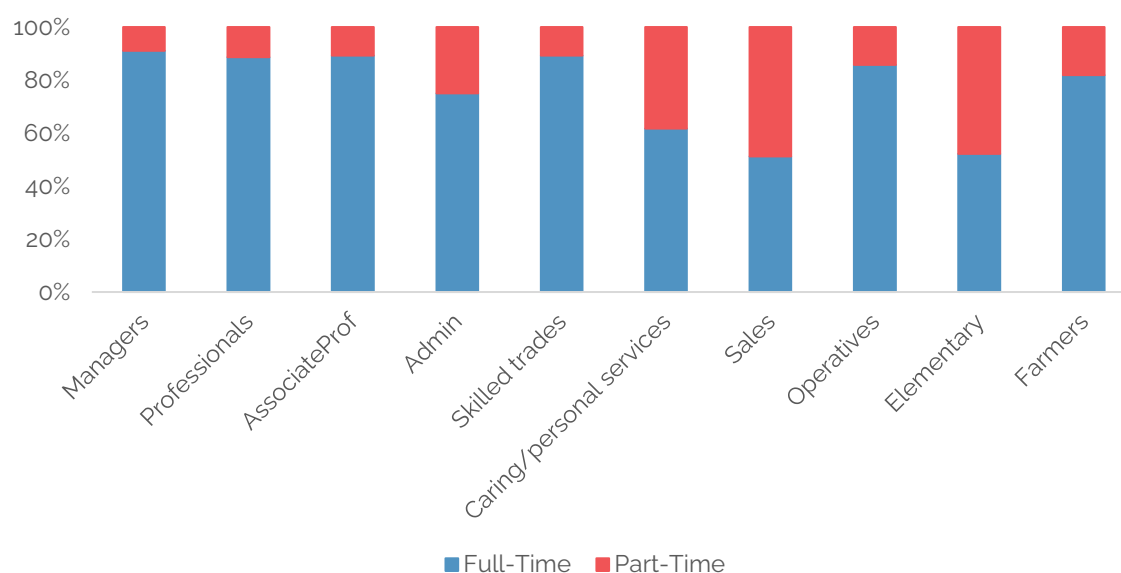
²⁹ The share of farmers who were employees is based on small numbers and should be interpreted with caution.

Between quarter 4 2019 and quarter 4 2024, the number of employees and self-employed persons grew; the rate of increase for employees was more than four times that for the self-employed, at 18% (+367,300 persons) and 4% (+17,100 persons) respectively. For employees, the largest absolute rises were in professional occupations (+160,200 persons or +36%), which represented 44% 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 (+10,900 or +22%) followed by associate professionals (+3,500 persons or +10%). Over the five-year period, employment went up across all occupations for both employees and self-employed, with two exceptions for each group: self-employed farmers (-2,900 persons) and managers (-3,900 persons); and employees working in sales (-10,700 persons) and elementary (almost unchanged at 800 fewer persons) occupations.

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 2024, most workers across all occupational groups were in full-time employment (79%). Occupations where the shares of full-time workers were highest were managers (91%), skilled trades, associate professional and professional occupations, all at 89%. The lowest share of full-time workers was in sales occupations, where just over one half (51%) were working full-time, followed by elementary (52%) and caring/personal services (62%) occupations.

Figure 4.8 Full-Time and Part-Time Employment by Occupational Group (%), Quarter 4 2024

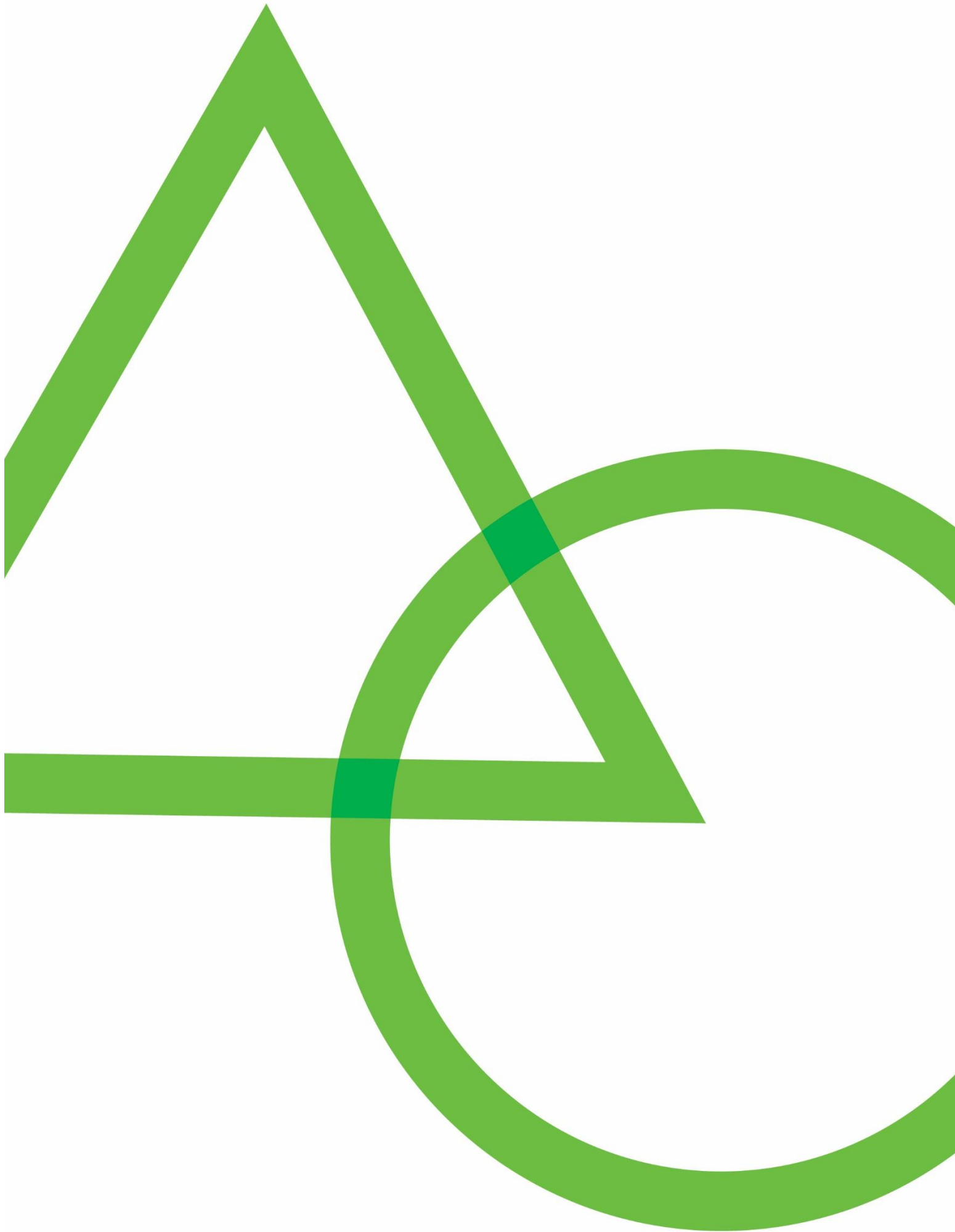


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data

Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, excluding those who did not state an occupation, the number in full-time employment increased by 82,700 additional persons (+4%), while it declined for those working part-time (13,200 fewer persons), a fall of 2%. For those employed full-time, the largest absolute increases were for administrative (+31,000 persons) followed by professional (+30,200 persons) occupations. In contrast, the highest growing occupational groups for part-time employed individuals were

operatives (+6,300 persons) and caring services (+5,900 persons). There were also variations in the occupations that experienced a decline in employment amongst the two groups; the largest fall for full-time workers was for operatives (-10,100 persons), while the largest fall for part-time employed was for sales (-11,300 persons).

Over the five-year period, the growth rate in employment was the same for those in full-time and part-time employment, at nearly 17%. In relation to part-time workers, there was an increase in all occupational groups, in particular caring services (+14,500 persons), elementary (+12,600 persons) and professionals (+12,300 persons). The number of full-time workers increased across several occupational groups, especially amongst professionals (+159,800 persons), although there were falls in sales (-17,200 persons), elementary (-7,600 persons), farming (-5,400 persons) and operatives (-2,000 persons).



Section 5 Regional Labour Markets

This section presents an overview of the labour market in each of Ireland's eight NUTS 3 administrative regions. Key labour market indicators are provided, including labour force participation rates, employment (e.g. sex, age, education, citizenship, occupation), and unemployment.

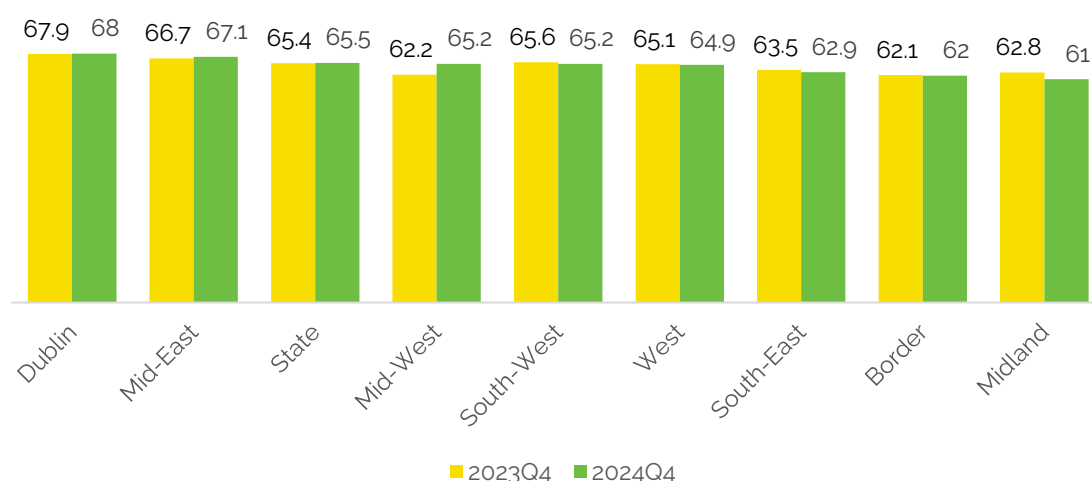
5.1 Labour Force Participation by Region

Figure 5.1 shows the labour force participation rates by region in quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024. In quarter 4 2024, the rates were above the State average of 65.5% for two regions: Dublin (68%) and the Mid-East (67.1%). Rates in all other regions were lower, albeit only slightly so for the Mid-West and South West regions (each at 65.2%). The lowest participation rates were in the Border and Midland regions at 62% and 61% respectively.

When compared to quarter 4 2023, the change in the labour force participation rate amounted to less than half a percentage point for most regions, except the Mid-West (where participation grew by 3 pp) and the Midlands and South East regions (where participation declined by 1.8 pp and 0.6 pp respectively).

Over the five-year period, quarter 4 2019–quarter 4 2024, the labour force participation rate grew for all regions, particularly for the Mid-West region, with a 7.1 percentage point (pp) increase, which was more than twice the pp growth observed nationally (+ 3 pp).

Figure 5.1 Labour Force Participation Rate (%) by Region Quarter 4 2023 & Quarter 4 2024

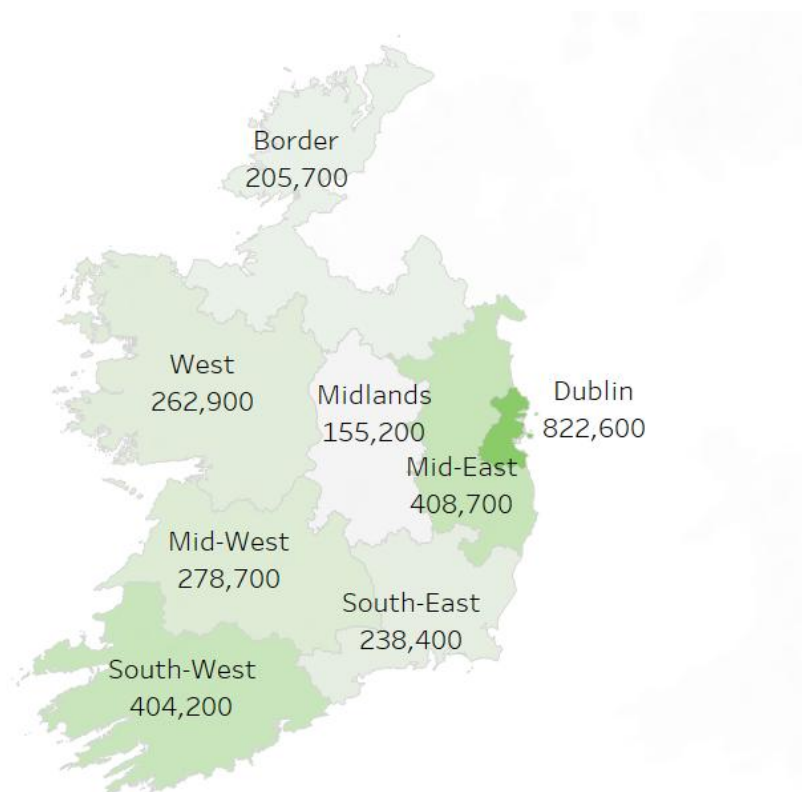


Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

5.2 Employment and Employment Growth

With 822,600 persons in quarter 4 2024, the Dublin region had the largest number of persons employed, accounting for 30% of Ireland's workforce (Figure 5.2). This was followed by the Mid-East (408,700 workers) and South West regions (404,200 workers), which combined made up a further 30% of the total national employment. The Midland region had the smallest workforce, with 155,200 workers.

Figure 5.2 Employment (aged 15+) by Region, Quarter 4 2024



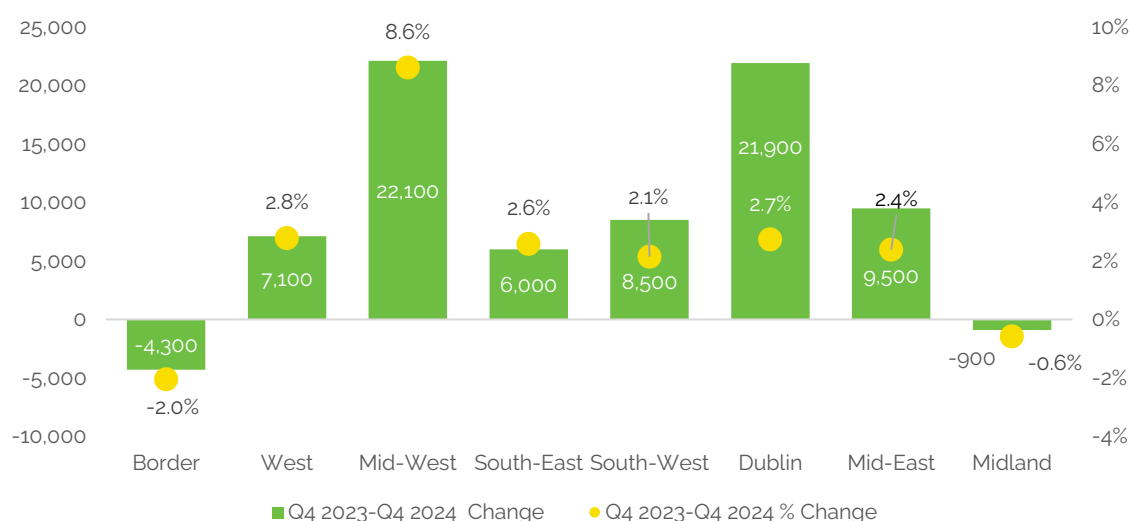
Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

Employment Change: 1-Year (Quarter 4 2023-Quarter 4 2024)

The absolute and relative changes in employment by region in the year to quarter 4 2024 are shown in Figure 5.3. Employment grew in all but two regions, namely the Border region, which had 4,300 fewer workers, and the Midland region, which remained almost unchanged (with just 900 fewer workers). The Mid-West region, followed by the Dublin region, had the largest increases in employment nationally, at 22,100 and 21,900 extra workers respectively. Combined, these two regions alone made up nearly 63% of the total employment growth observed nationally.

In relative terms, the Mid-West had by far the highest growth rate over the period quarter 4 2023-quarter 4 2024, which at 8.6%, was more than three times that of the average for the State (2.6%).

Figure 5.3 One-Year Employment Change by Region, Quarter 4 2023-Quarter 4 2024



Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

Employment Change: 5-Year (Quarter 4 2019-Quarter 4 2024)

Over the five-year period, quarter 4 2019-quarter 4 2024, the number of persons employed increased in all regions (Figure 5.4). Dublin, followed by the South West region, had the largest absolute increases, with 99,900 and 62,500 additional workers, respectively. At 26%, the Mid-West had the largest relative growth, well above the national average of 17%, with over half (57%) of this growth occurring in the two years since quarter 4 2022. The South East also had above average growth, at 20%, as well as the West and South West, at 18% each.

Figure 5.4 Five-Year Employment Change by Region, Quarter 4 2019- Quarter 4 2024



Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data.

5.3 Regional Employment by Sex

At 48.6% and 47.6%, respectively, the Dublin and South East regions had the highest shares of regional employment that were female in quarter 4 2024. The Mid-West region's share was at the national average (47.2%), while all remaining regions had lower than average shares, with the lowest of all in the West region, at 45.9%.

When compared to quarter 4 2023, employment increased for females in all but the Midland region and for males in all but the Midland and Border regions. The number of additional females in employment was greater than the number of additional males for the Mid-West and Dublin, while in the Border region the number of females grew (albeit very slightly with just 800 extra workers) but the number of males declined considerably (5,100 fewer workers), largely due to falls in the number of males engaged in the construction and agriculture sectors.

Table 5.1 Share of Females in Regional Employment (Quarter 4 2024) & Employment Change by Sex, Quarter 4 2023-Quarter 4 2024

	% Female Q4 2024	Q4 2023-Q4 2024 change	
		Male	Female
Border	46.8%	-5,100	800
West	45.9%	4,200	2,900
Mid-West	47.2%	9,500	12,600
South-East	47.6%	3,400	2,700
South-West	47.0%	5,100	3,400
Dublin	48.6%	6,500	15,500
Mid-East	46.0%	8,700	900
Midland	46.0%	-200	-600
State	47.2%	32,000	38,000

Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

5.4 Regional Employment by Age

Regional workforces with the **highest shares of younger workers** (aged < 25 years) in quarter 4 2024 were the South East, the Mid-West and the Mid-East, all at 13% (Table 5.2). Dublin had the smallest share of younger workers, at 10%.

At 16%, Dublin also had had the smallest share of persons in its workforce who were **aged 55 years and over**, which was well below the national average of 20%. In contrast, the Border region had the highest share of older workers, at 23%.

When compared to one year earlier, the number of **15-24-year-olds in employment declined in all but three regions**, with the largest absolute decline of 6,600 young workers in the Dublin region. At the same time, the number of younger workers

increased in the West, South East and Mid-West regions. **The number of older workers grew in most regions**, with the exception of the Border region (3,600 fewer persons aged 55+ years in employment), the Midland region (900 fewer older workers) and the South East region, which remained almost unchanged (with just 100 fewer older workers).

Table 5.2 Share of Workers Aged <25 Yrs and 55+ Yrs by Region, Q4 2024 and Q4 2023-Q4 2024 Change

Region	Q4 2024 (%)		Q4 2023-Q4 2024 change	
	<25 years	55+ years	<25 years	55+ years
Border	12%	23%	-2,500	-3,600
West	12%	22%	1,400	400
Mid-West	13%	22%	3,300	7,300
South-East	13%	21%	1,500	-100
South-West	11%	21%	-4,800	3,700
Dublin	10%	16%	-6,600	6,900
Mid-East	13%	21%	-1,100	11,400
Midland	11%	21%	-1,000	-900
State	11%	20%	-9,800	25,100

Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

5.5 Regional Employment by Educational Attainment Level

With the exception of the South East and Midland regions, more than half of the workforces in most regions held third level qualifications in quarter 4 2024 (Table 5.2), with the share rising to nearly two thirds (65%) in the Dublin region. At the other end of the qualifications scale, just 6% of persons in employment in the Dublin region held, at most, NFQ 3 qualifications in quarter 4 2024; the share was at least twice that in the Border region (13%), the South East (12%) and Midland regions.

When compared to quarter 4 2023, there were increases in the number of third level qualification holders in most regions, except the Midland region, where the number remained unchanged. Over the same period, there were declines in the number of workers at NFQ level 1-3 for most regions; only three regions saw an increase: Mid-West (+1,900 workers), Mid-East (+3,500) and Midland (+1,000).

Table 5.3 Share of Workers with NFQ 1-3 and NFQ 6 (HE)+ by Region, Q4 2024 and Q4 2023-Q4 2024 Change

Region	Q4 2024 (%)		Q4 2023-Q4 2024 change	
	NFQ 3 or less	3 rd level (NFQ 6+)	NFQ 3 or less	3 rd level (NFQ 6+)
Border	13%	52%	-7,700	9,600
West	9%	56%	-1,800	10,600
Mid-West	10%	54%	1,900	24,300
South-East	12%	49%	-700	4,300
South-West	9%	54%	-3,700	5,000
Dublin	6%	65%	-3,700	24,200
Mid-East	8%	55%	3,500	4,400
Midland	12%	45%	1,000	No change
State	9%	56%	-11,100	82,200

Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

5.6 Regional Employment by Citizenship

Table 5.4 shows the share of employment that was comprised of Irish citizens in quarter 4 2024. The share of Irish citizens in regional workforces was below the national average (80%) for the Dublin (71%) and Midland regions (77%) and highest in the South East (88%) and Mid-West (87%) regions.

Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, the decline of 18,600 employed Irish citizens in the Dublin region was more than offset by 40,500 additional non-Irish citizens working in the same region. The number of non-Irish citizens in employment grew in only two other regions, namely the Midlands (where the 10,300 additional non-Irish partially offset a decline of 11,300 Irish workers) and the West (1,600 additional non-Irish workers).

Table 5.4 Share of Workers by Citizenship and Region, Q4 2024 and Q4 2023-Q4 2024 Change

	% Irish	Q4 2023-Q4 2024 Change	
		Irish	Non-Irish
Border	86%	-3,700	-600
West	83%	5,400	1,600
Mid-West	87%	23,700	-1,500
South East	88%	12,800	-6,800
South West	82%	8,700	-200
Dublin	71%	-18,600	40,500
Mid-East	83%	17,500	-8,000
Midland	77%	-11,300	10,300
State	80%	34,400	35,300

Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

5.7 Regional Employment by Work Status

Table 5.5 shows the share of regional workforces who were employed full-time, as well as the absolute change observed in the year to quarter 4 2024 in full- and part-time employment. In quarter 4 2024, 79% of employed persons in Ireland were in full-time employment. The share was higher than the national average in the Dublin (82%), Midlands (82%), and Mid-East regions (80%), and lowest in the South West region, at 75%.

Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, with the exception of the Border region, the number of full-time employed persons increased in almost all regions; the largest absolute increases in the number of full-time employed persons were for Dublin (+24,900 persons) and the Mid-West (+21,000 persons) regions, which combined made up more than half of the total increase (+81,700) in full-time employment in Ireland over this period.

In contrast, the number of persons in part-time employment fell in five of Ireland's eight regions, with increases observed in the Mid-West (+1,200), South East (+1,500) and South West (+1,700) regions being insufficient to offset the overall decrease in part-time employment nationally (-11,700 persons).

Table 5.5 Share of Workers by Part/Full-Time Status and Region, Q4 2024 & Q4 2023-Q4 2024 Change

	% Full-Time	Q4 2023-Q4 2024 Change	
		Full-Time	Part-Time
Border	77%	-3,500	-900
West	78%	14,800	-7,700
Mid-West	78%	21,000	1,200
South East	77%	4,500	1,500
South West	75%	6,800	1,700
Dublin	82%	24,900	-3,000
Mid-East	80%	10,800	-1,300
Midlands	82%	2,500	-3,200
State	79%	81,700	-11,700

Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

5.8 Regional Employment by Professional Status

In quarter 4 2024, the share of employees in regional labour markets ranged from 82% in the West region to 90% in Dublin (Table 5.6). In absolute terms, the Midland region, because it is the smallest workforce across all regions, had the smallest number of employees (134,100 persons), although its share of employees (87%) was actually slightly above the national average (86%).

When compared to quarter 4 2023, the number of employees grew in almost all regions (except the Border region, where it declined). With 17,600 extra employees, the largest

year-on-year increase was for the Mid-West region, which made up over a quarter (29%) of the total increase in employee numbers over the one-year period. The number of self-employed persons grew in most regions, although there were decreases in the Border (2,900 fewer self-employed persons), the Mid-East (-4,200 persons) and the Midlands (-2,400 persons).

Table 5.6 Share of Workers by Professional Status and Region, Q4 2024 & Q4 2023-Q4 2024 Change

	% Employee	Q4 2023-Q4 2024 Change	
		Self-employed	Employee
Border	84%	-2,900	-1,300
West	82%	3,700	4,700
Mid-West	85%	4,300	17,600
South East	84%	200	5,200
South West	84%	2,500	6,500
Dublin	90%	9,900	12,500
Mid-East	88%	-4,200	14,500
Midland	87%	-2,400	1,400
State	86%	11,100	61,100

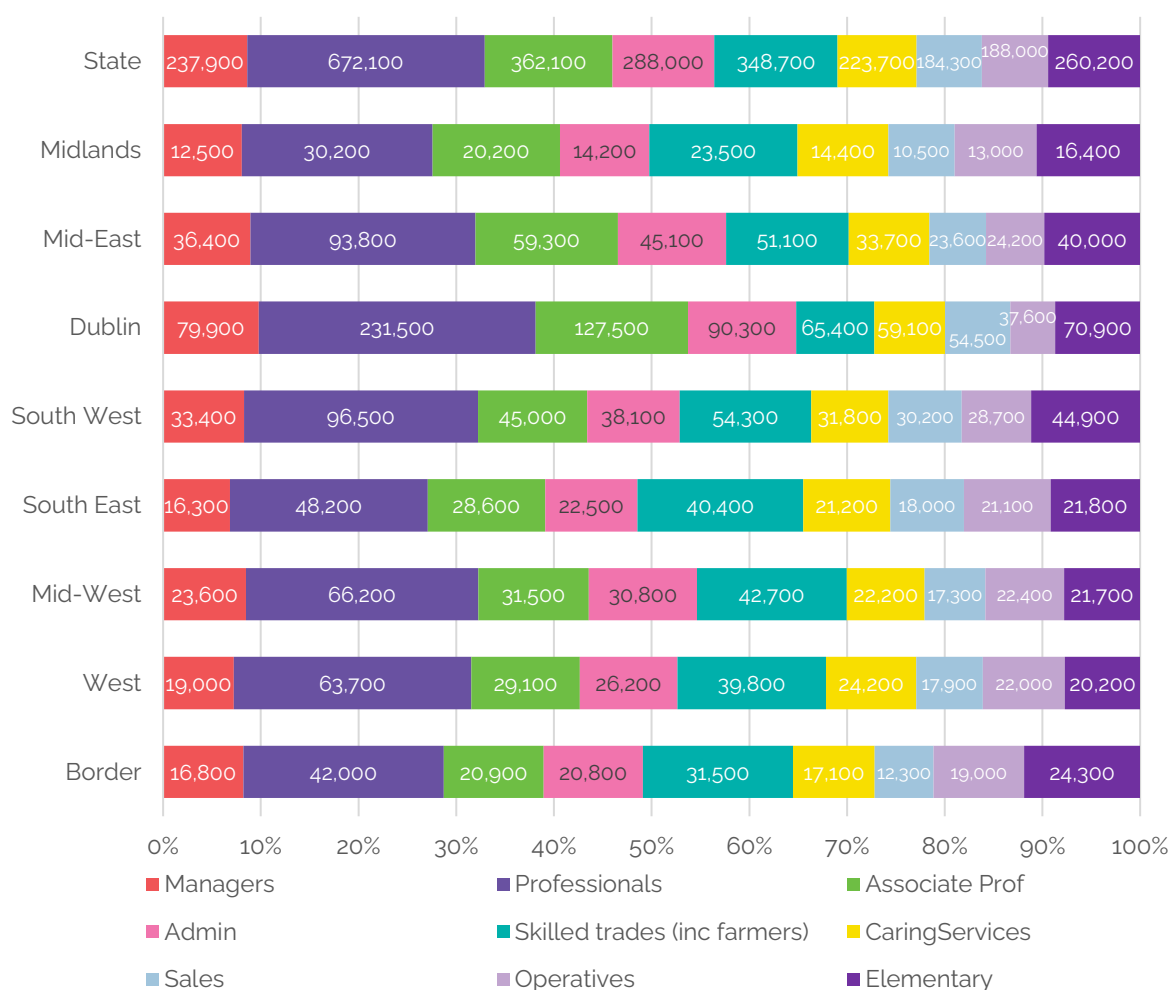
Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

5.9 Regional Employment by Occupation

Figure 5.5 shows the occupational composition of each region's workforce in quarter 4 2024. Key points to note include

- **professionals** were the largest occupational group in each region. While nearly one quarter (24%) of total national employment was in professional occupations, this share varied from less than a fifth (19%) in the Midlands region to 28% in the Dublin region.
- with the exception of the Dublin and Mid-East regions, **skilled trades** were the second largest occupational group, comprising at least 15% of total regional employment in many regions, rising to 17% in the South East. Nonetheless, Dublin, where skilled trades accounted for just 8% of total regional employment, had the largest absolute number of workers in this occupation at 65,400 persons.
- at 15% and 16%, respectively, Dublin and the Mid-East regions had the highest share of employed persons working in **associate professional occupations** – above the national average of 13%.
- the Border region, followed by the South West and Midlands regions, had the highest shares of **elementary** workers, at 12%, 11% and 11% respectively, above the state average of 9%.
- the share of employment in **administrative, sales** and **caring** occupations was broadly similar across regions, with, at most, a one percentage difference from the national averages of 10% (administrative occupations), 7% (sales occupations) and 8% (caring service occupations).

Figure 5.5 Regional Employment by Occupation, Quarter 4 2024



Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data
Excludes instances where occupation was not stated.

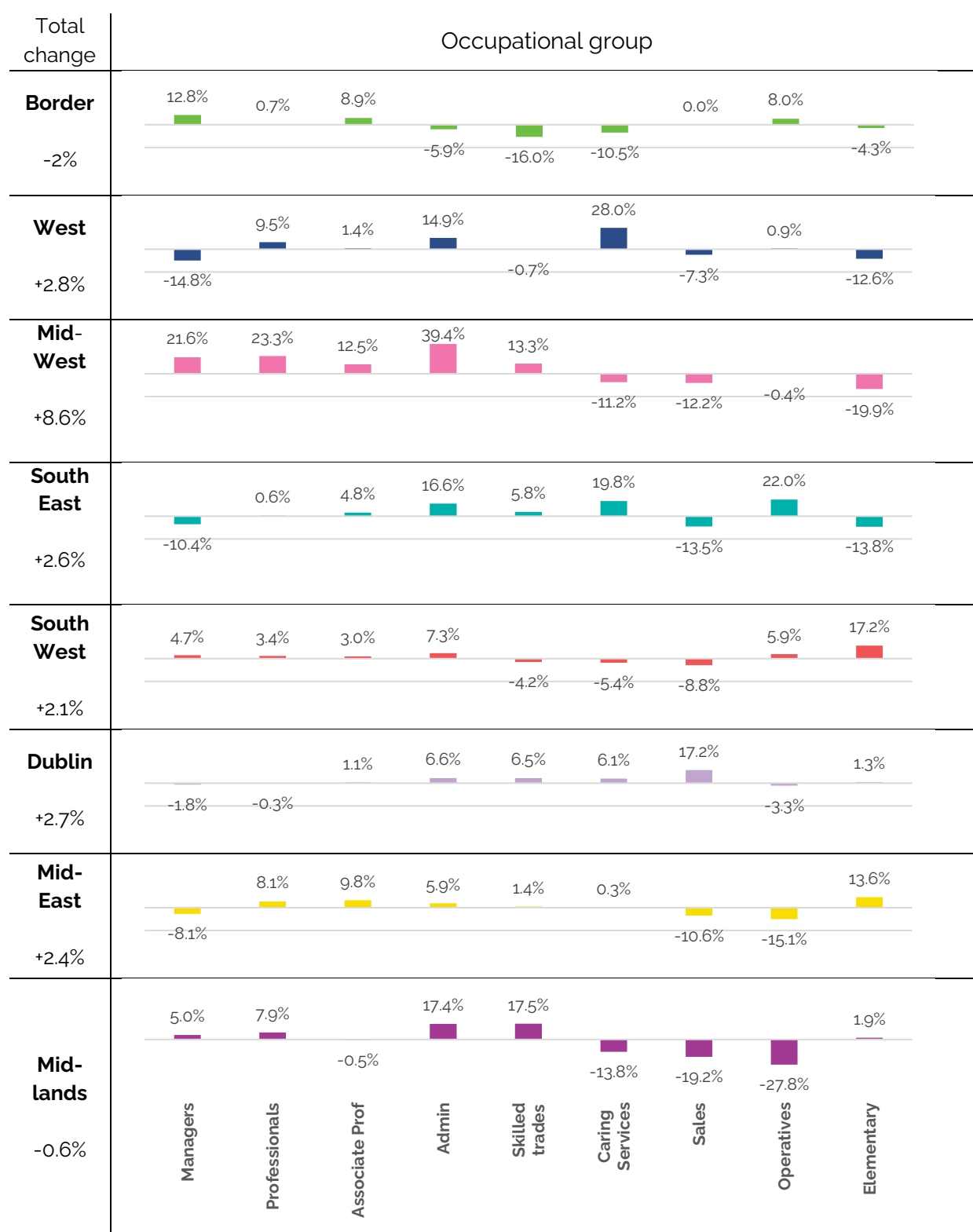
As shown in Figure 5.6, when compared to quarter 4 2023, the largest relative increases in quarter 4 2024 were for

- **admin and professional occupations in the Mid-West** region (+39.4% and +23% respectively); the growth of nearly a quarter (23%) in the number of professionals in the Mid-West region translated into an additional 12,500 persons employed – the largest absolute growth across all occupations, regardless of region.
- **caring services occupations in the West** region (+28%, representing 5,300 additional workers).

In the year to quarter 4 2024, the largest relative declines were for

- **operative and sales occupations in the Midland** region (-27.8% and 19.2% respectively); because the Midlands workforce is the smallest in Ireland, these percentage changes in occupational employment translated into just 4,300 fewer operatives and 2,800 fewer sales workers.
- **elementary occupations in the Mid-West** (19.9%), which, with 5,400 fewer workers, was the second largest absolute decrease in occupational employment across all regions (after skilled trades in the Border region, which had 6,000 fewer workers).

Figure 5.6 Change (%) in Regional Employment by Occupation, Quarter 4 2023-Quarter 4 2024



Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

5.10 Regional Employment by Sector

Figure 5.7 shows the distribution of regional employment by sector in quarter 4 2024.

- With the exception of the Dublin region, the sectors with the largest shares of regional employment were **health, industry, and wholesale/retail**, although the rank order varied slightly. Combined these three sectors made up 38% of total national employment (see Section 3, Figure 3.1), with the share rising to 43% in the Border and South East regions.
- The fourth largest sector of employment in most regions was **education** with the exception of Dublin (see below), the Border region (where the fourth largest sector was accommodation/food) and the Midland region (where it was construction).
- Sectoral employment in **the Dublin region differed** from that of all other regions, with the top sectors, along with health (13%) and wholesale/retail (10%), being **ICT (11%), professional services (9%), and finance (8%)**. Accommodation/food and education, the next largest sectors, each accounted for just under 8% of employment. Dublin had the lowest share of regional employment in industry, at 7% (half the share observed in most other regions).

When compared to quarter 4 2023, key changes included the following:

- Growth in **accommodation/food** sector employment was confined to three regions only: Dublin (+9,200 persons), the South West (+2,500) and the Border (+1,300) regions.
- Employment in **industry** grew in all regions except the South West (4,400 fewer employed) and the Border (1,800 fewer persons) regions.
- **Construction** employment numbers increased in all but three regions; it fell in the Border region (-2,700 workers), and remained almost unchanged in the Mid-West (-100 workers), and the South East (-500 workers).
- Conversely, **wholesale/retail** sectoral employment fell in all but two regions: the South West, where employment grew (+1,600) and the Border, where the level remained almost the same (+500 workers).
- **Health** increased in most regions except the Mid-West (almost unchanged with just 400 fewer workers) and the Mid-East (2,900 fewer workers).
- **ICT** sectoral employment grew in all but two regions – the South West (where it remained almost the same, with just 900 fewer workers) and the Midland region (where it remained almost unchanged with just 100 fewer workers).
- Employment growth in the **education** sector varied by region, with growth of 5,300 in the Mid-West region and 4,400 each in the South West and West regions helping to offset declines in many other regions, particularly a fall of 4,000 in Dublin and 3,600 in the Border region.

Figure 5.7 Regional Employment by Sector (%), Quarter 4 2024

	Border	West	Mid-West	South East	South West	Dublin	Mid-East	Midland
Agriculture	7%	6%	7%	6%	5%		3%	6%
Industry	14%	15%	16%	14%	14%	7%	11%	14%
Construction	7%	8%	6%	7%	6%	5%	8%	7%
Wholesale/retail	11%	12%	11%	13%	14%	10%	13%	13%
Transport	4%	3%	4%	4%	3%	6%	5%	4%
Accom/food	8%	5%	6%	6%	8%	8%	5%	5%
ICT	3%	5%	5%	3%	5%	11%	6%	5%
Finance	4%	4%	2%	4%	3%	8%	5%	4%
Prof	5%	6%	7%	4%	7%	9%	8%	6%
Admin support		3%	3%	3%	5%	4%	4%	
PAD	5%	5%	6%	5%	4%	6%	7%	6%
Education	7%	10%	10%	8%	9%	8%	9%	7%
Health	18%	15%	14%	16%	13%	13%	12%	15%
Other	4%	4%	4%	5%	4%	5%	4%	5%

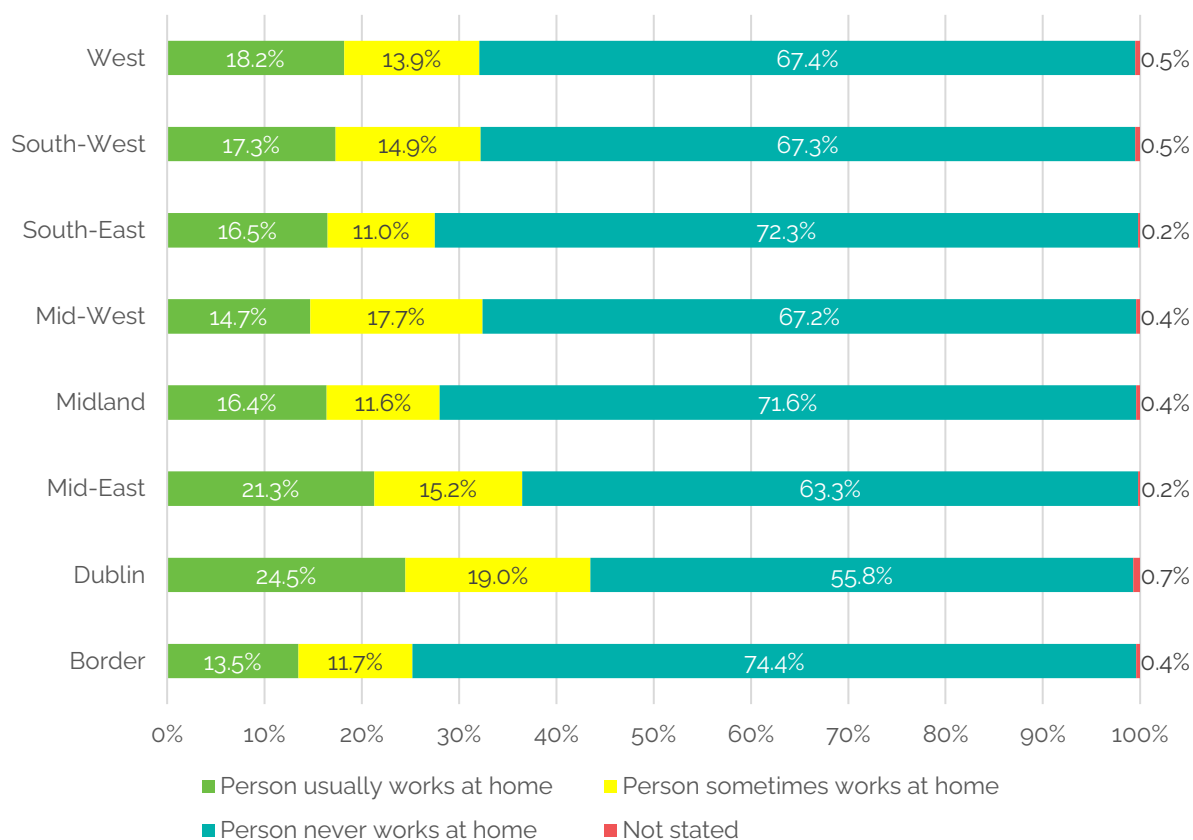
Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data.

Numbers employed in admin & support in the Midland and Border regions and in agriculture in the Dublin region were too small to report.

5.12 Regional Employment by Working from Home Status

In quarter 4 2024, the highest level of employed persons either usually or sometimes working from home was recorded in Dublin, at 43.5% or 357,800 persons (Figure 5.8). This contrasts with 43,400 persons (or 28.0%) in the Midland region — the lowest number, and 25.2% (51,900 persons) in the Border region, which had the lowest overall share.

Figure 5.8 Employed Persons Usually, Sometimes, or Never Working from Home by Region (%), Q4 2024



Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

When compared to quarter 4 2023, the proportion of persons who either usually or sometimes worked from home remained broadly similar to that observed in quarter 4 2024 across most regions, with the exception of the Mid-West, where there was a 4.2 percentage point increase, driven mainly by an increase in the share who sometimes worked from home (up from 13.9% to 17.7%). In absolute terms, the largest increase was 10,000 additional persons working *sometimes* from home in the Dublin region, although this was partly offset by a fall of 4,700 in the number of persons *usually* working from home in this region.

5.13 Regional Unemployment

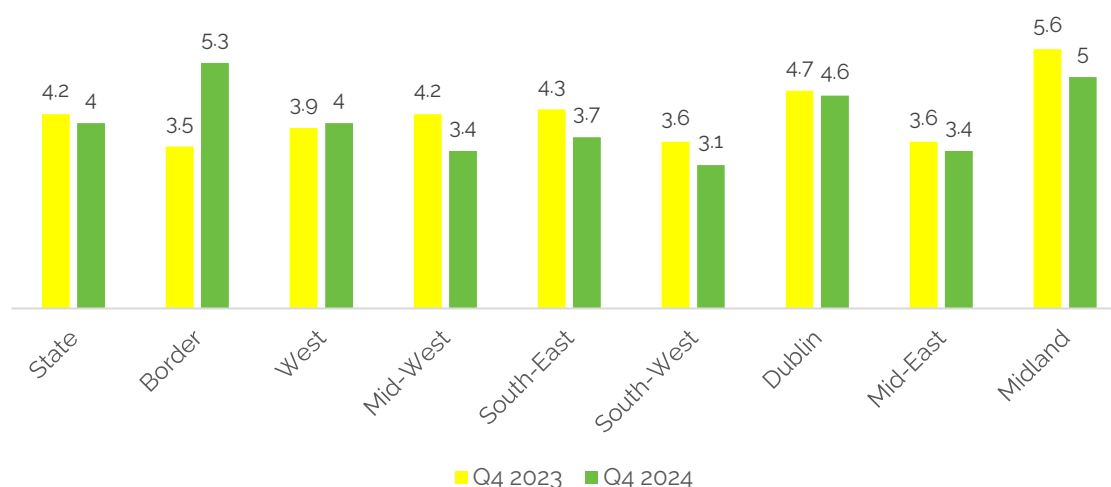
Unemployment rates

In quarter 4 2024, the highest unemployment rates were observed in the Border and Midland regions, at 5.3% and 5% respectively, while the lowest, at 3.1%, was in the South West region (Figure 5.9).

When compared to one year earlier in quarter 4 2023, changes in the unemployment rate for most regions, except the Border region, were generally small (less than one percentage point (pp)). Unemployment rates declined in all but the Border region (an increase of 1.8 percentage points) and the West region (almost unchanged at 4% in

quarter 4 2024, compared to 3.9% in quarter 4 2023). The largest fall in unemployment rates was in the Mid-West region, where it fell by 0.8 percentage points.

Figure 5.9 Unemployment Rates by Region, Quarter 4 2023 & Quarter 4 2024



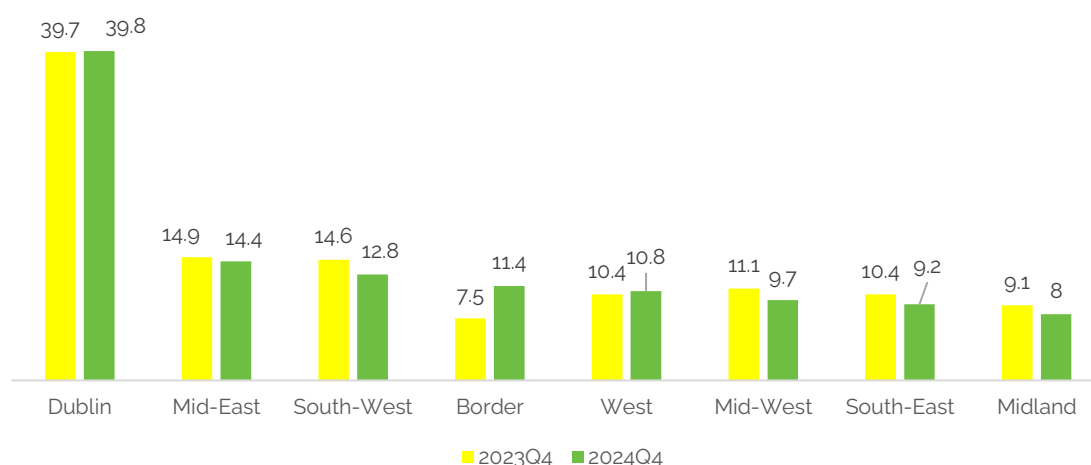
Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data

Unemployment levels

More than one third of total unemployment in Ireland was in the Dublin region, with 39,800 unemployed persons in quarter 4 2024 (Figure 5.10). The Midland region had the smallest number of unemployed persons at 8,000, despite having a higher than average unemployment rate (see Figure 5.9 above).

When compared to quarter 4 2023, the number of unemployed persons fell in almost all regions, except the Border, West, and Dublin (Figure 5.10). Although unemployment in the West and Dublin regions remained broadly in line with the preceding year (just 400 and 100 extra unemployed), unemployment levels in the Border region grew by more than a half (3,900 extra unemployed), and roughly mirrored the decline in employment (Figure 5.3) that occurred in this region over the same period.

Figure 5.10 Number of Unemployed Persons (000s) by Region, Quarter 4 2023 & Quarter 4 2024



Source: SLMRU analysis of CSO (LFS) data



Section 6 Unemployment

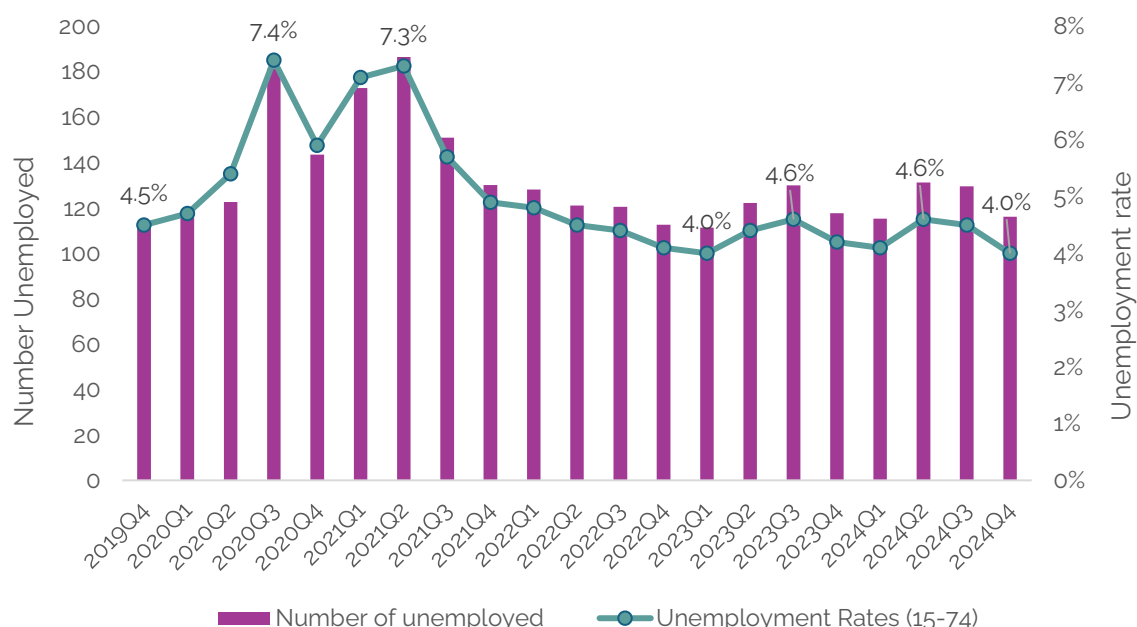
6.1 Introduction

This section provides an overview of persons aged 15-74 years who were unemployed over the period quarter 4 2019-quarter 4 2024. The analysis by age, sex, previous sector and occupation (where relevant), citizenship, and education is primarily 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 rose significantly, from 111,600 persons to 186,400 persons, largely as a result of restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Subsequently, there was a notable decline, with unemployment figures dropping to 111,300 persons by quarter 1 2023, effectively returning to the levels observed in 2019. By quarter 4 2024, unemployment stood at 116,100 persons. This followed a temporary increase during quarters 2 and 3, mirroring trends observed the year before. In quarter 4 2024, the unemployment rate remained low, at 4.0%.

Figure 6.1 Unemployment Levels (000s) and Unemployment Rates (%), Quarter 4 2019–Quarter 4 2024



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

In quarter 4 2024, the long-term unemployment rate (i.e. those unemployed for one year or more) was 1.0%, nearly unchanged from the rate in quarter 4 2023, and 0.6 percentage points lower than in quarter 4 2019 (Table 6.1). In quarter 4 2024, 28,200 persons were classified as long-term unemployed, representing a decrease of 1,300 persons (or 4.4%) since quarter 4 2023 and 10,600 persons fewer than in quarter 4 2019. Between quarter 4

2023 and the quarter 4 2024, long-term unemployment as a share of total unemployment declined from 25% to 24%.

The broad unemployment measure, which includes both unemployed and part-time underemployed persons, stood at 8.4% in quarter 4 2024, down from 9.1% in quarter 4 2023 and 8.9% in quarter 4 2019.

In quarter 4 2024, the youth unemployment rate (i.e. persons aged 15 to 24) was 9.9%, 0.5 percentage points higher than in quarter 4 2023 (9.4%) and 0.3 percentage points higher than in quarter 4 2019 (9.6%). In absolute terms, youth unemployment stood at 35,000 persons. This represents an increase of 1,200 persons (or 3.6%) compared to quarter 4 2023 and an increase of 6,800 persons (or 24.1%) compared to same quarter in 2019 (when 28,200 youths were unemployed).

In quarter 4 2024, the NEET rate (the share of 15-24-year-olds who were not in employment, education or training) was 5.5% compared to 5.0% in quarter 4 2023 and 8.7% in the same quarter of 2019.

Table 6.1 Other Unemployment Indicators, Quarter 4 2019–Quarter 4 2024

	Long term UE rate (%) (15-74)	Broad UE rate (%) (15-74)	Youth UE rate (%) (15-24)	NEET* rate (%) (15-24)
Q4 2019	1.6	8.9	9.6	8.7
Q4 2020	1.5	9.9	14.3	9.8
Q4 2021	1.7	9.0	10.2	5.7
Q4 2022	1.3	7.9	9.1	6.7
Q4 2023	1.1	9.1	9.4	5.0
Q4 2024	1.0	8.4	9.9	5.5

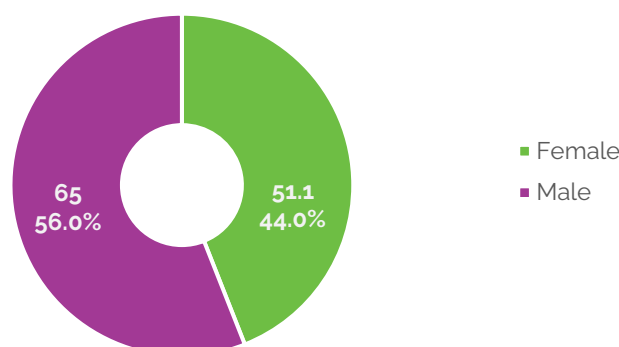
Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

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 Sex

As showed in Figure 6.2, in quarter 4 2024, the majority of unemployed persons were male (56%, or 65,000 persons), while females accounted for 44% (51,100 persons). Compared to the same quarter in 2023, the share of males increased by 4.9 percentage points, with the number of unemployed men rising by 8.2% (4,900 persons). The number of unemployed females in quarter 4 2024 fell by 11.3% (6,500 persons) relative to quarter 4 2023. Overall unemployment levels in quarter 4 2024 were similar to those of 2019, with only minor changes in the sex composition; there were 2,100 more unemployed men and 2,300 more unemployed women in quarter 4 2024.

Figure 6.2 Unemployment by Sex (000s, %), Quarter 4 2024

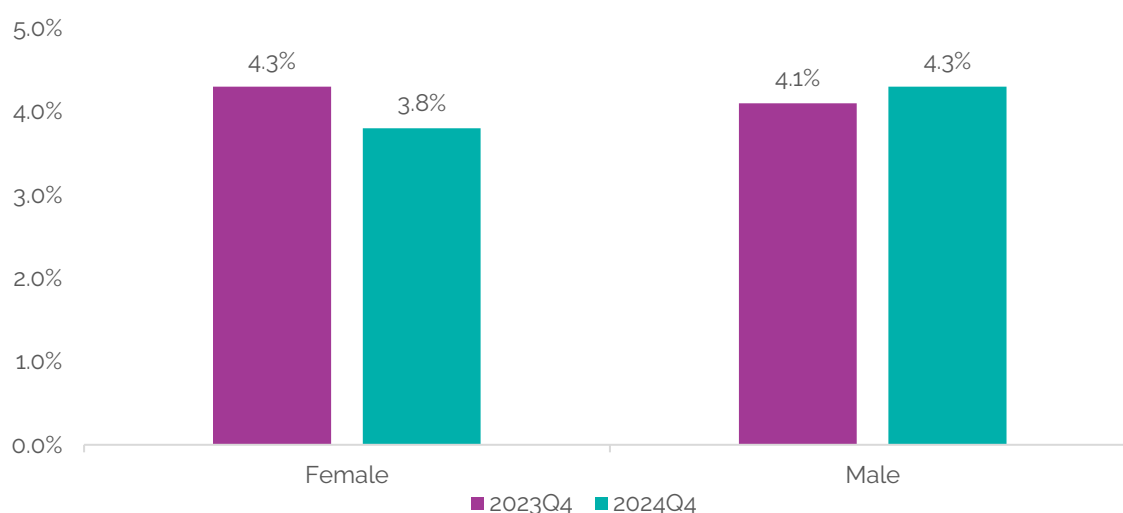


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Figure 6.3 presents unemployment rates by sex. Unemployment rates by sex in quarter 4 2024 were close to historic lows and broadly similar to those recorded in both quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2019. Compared to quarter 4 2023, the rate for females fell by 0.5 percentage points to 3.8%, while the rate for males increased by 0.2 percentage points to 4.3%.

Between quarter 4 2019 and quarter 4 2020, the unemployment rate rose for both sexes due to the COVID-19 pandemic and then declined between 2021 and 2022 as restrictions were lifted. Compared to quarter 4 2019, the unemployment rate in quarter 4 2024 was 0.4 percentage points lower for males and 0.5 percentage points lower for females.

Figure 6.3 Unemployment Rate by Sex (%), Quarter 4 2023–Quarter 4 2024



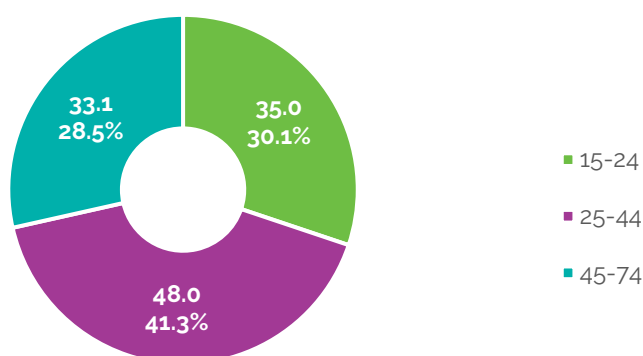
Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

6.4 Unemployment by Age

Unemployment by age group is shown in Figure 6.4. In quarter 4 2024, persons aged 25–44 years accounted for the greatest share of unemployed persons (at 41%, or 48,000 persons). Those aged 15–24 years and 45–74 years accounted for 30% (or 35,000 persons) and 29% (or 33,100 persons) respectively.

Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, unemployment increased slightly among those aged 15–24 years (up 3.6%, or 1,200 persons) and 45–74 years (up 7.8%, or 2,400 persons), while it declined among those aged 25–44 years (down 9.8%, or 5,200 persons). Compared to quarter 4 2019, unemployment in quarter 4 2024 was higher for the 15–24 years group (up 24%, or 6,800 persons), lower for the 25–44 years group (down 4.2%, or 2,100 persons), and broadly unchanged for the 45–74 years group.

Figure 6.4 Unemployment by Age (000s, %), Quarter 4 2024

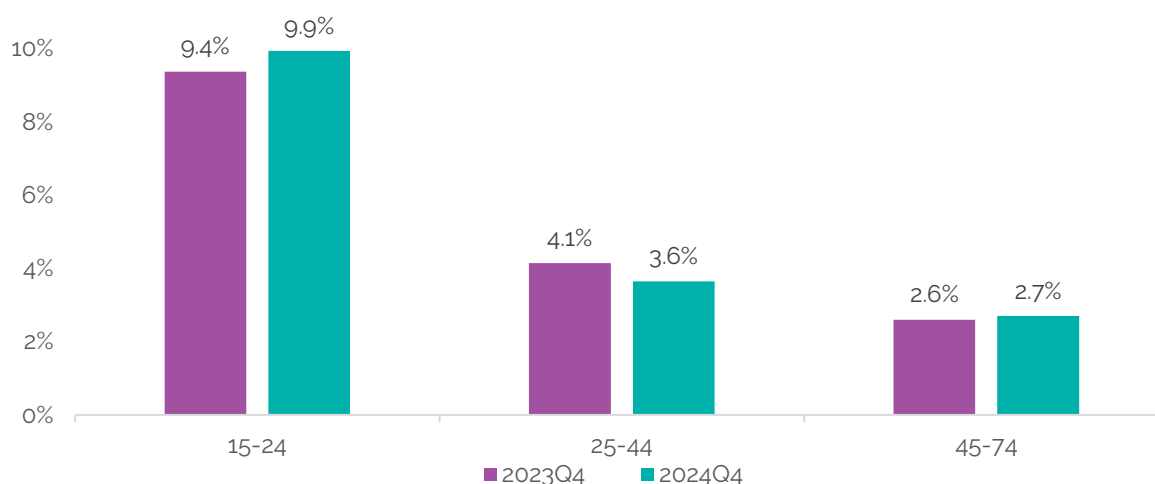


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

The age-specific unemployment rates for the period from quarter 4 2023 to quarter 4 2024 are shown in Figure 6.5. Between quarter 4 2019 and quarter 4 2024, the unemployment rate for young people aged 15–24 years remained consistently higher than for the other age groups. This group also experienced the most fluctuation during the period, largely due to the impact of COVID-19. By quarter 4 2024, their unemployment rate had reached 9.9%, a 0.6 percentage point increase since quarter 4 2023, and was slightly above the level recorded in quarter 4 2019 (9.6%).

In comparison, the unemployment rate for those aged 25–44 years declined by 0.5 percentage points between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024 and was 0.6 percentage points lower than in quarter 4 2019. For the 45–74 year age group, the rate remained relatively stable, with only a marginal increase over the past year, and was 0.6 percentage points below its pre-pandemic level in quarter 4 2019.

Figure 6.5 Unemployment Rate by Age (%), Quarter 4 2023–Quarter 4 2024

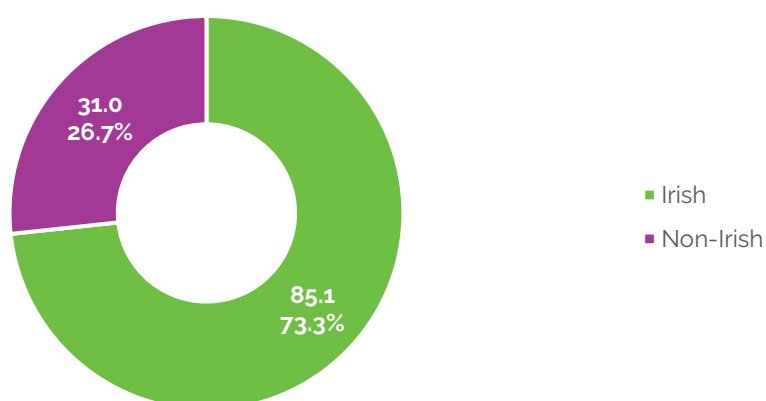


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

6.5 Unemployment by Citizenship

Figure 6.6 presents the distribution of unemployment by citizenship. In quarter 4 2024, there were 31,000 unemployed non-Irish citizens, accounting for 27% of all unemployed persons. Compared to quarter 4 2023, this group remained almost unchanged, growing by just 400 persons (by 1.3%), while the number of unemployed Irish citizens decreased by 2,000 (or 2.4%) persons.

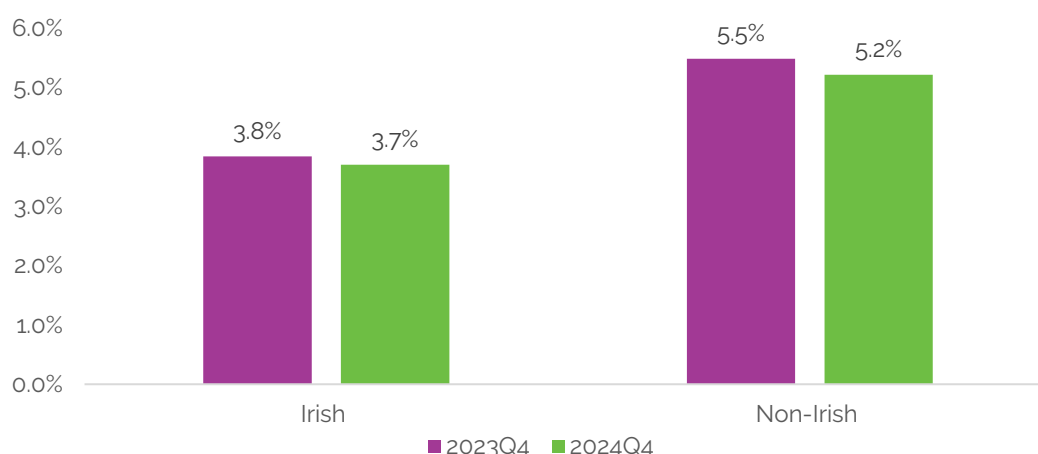
Figure 6.6 Unemployment by Citizenship (000s, %), Quarter 4 2024



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Figure 6.7 presents unemployment rates for Irish and non-Irish citizens in quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024. In quarter 4 2024, the unemployment rate stood at 5.2% for non-Irish citizens compared to 3.7% for Irish citizens. In comparison to quarter 4 2023, the rate for Irish citizen changed very little (a fall of 0.1 percentage points), while there was a slight fall for non-Irish citizens.

Figure 6.7 Unemployment by Citizenship (%), Quarter 4 2023–Quarter 4 2024



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

6.6 Unemployment by Sector

Figure 6.8 presents the unemployment levels and rates by sectors, excluding those who did not state a previous sector of employment. As unemployment numbers have declined since 2021, several sectors have been grouped to facilitate reporting.

In quarter 4 2024, the highest number of unemployed persons had previously worked in construction/transport or industry (a combined total of 16,500 persons). This was followed by a further 15,900 persons who were previously employed in financial/professional activities or ICT, and 10,900 persons who were previously employed in the wholesale/retail trade. The lowest unemployment rate was among those previously employed in health, education, or public administration and defence (1.4%). The highest rate was among those who were previously employed in the accommodation and food sector, though this rate is based on small sample sizes and should be interpreted with caution.

Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, changes in unemployment levels varied across different sectors. The largest decline was among those previously employed in health, education and PAD, where unemployment fell by 3,500 people (-25%). This was followed by wholesale/retail, which saw an 18% (or 2,400) decrease, and accommodation & food services, where unemployment dropped by 900 people (-9%). There has been an increase in the number of unemployed individuals who were previously employed in certain sectors. Those previously employed in financial/professional activities and ICT saw a rise of 1,500 people (or 10%), while those from the construction, transport, and industry sectors experienced an increase of 600 people (or 4%).

When data from quarter 4 2024 is compared to quarter 4 2019 the most significant change occurred for those previously employed in financial/professional activities and ICT, where unemployment levels increased by 79% (an additional 7,000 people).

Figure 6.8 Unemployment by Sector (000s, %), Quarter 4 2024



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

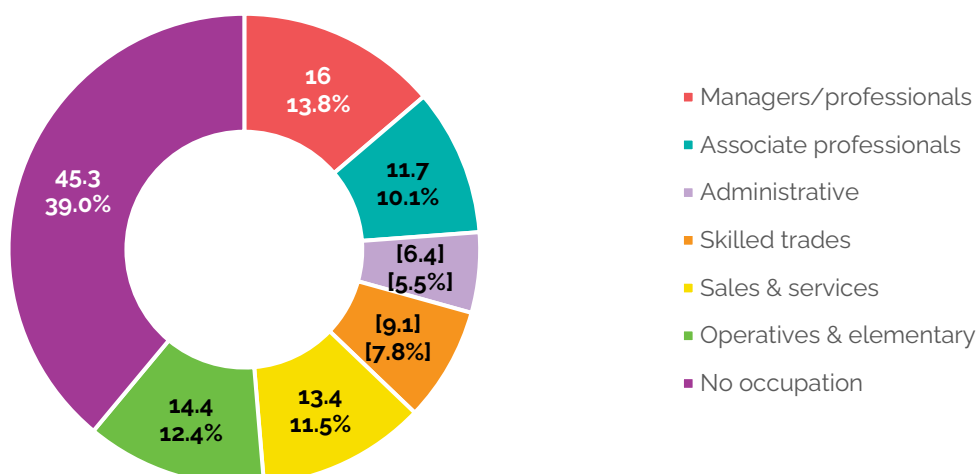
Note*: Includes administrative support services, agriculture, arts, entertainment and other services and other sectors. Numbers in square brackets are based on small sample sizes and should be treated with caution.

6.7 Unemployment by Occupation

Figure 6.9 presents the distribution of unemployment by broad occupation, with some grouped due to small numbers. In quarter 4 2024, about 39% of unemployed persons had not stated a previous occupation (e.g. first-time job seekers or those re-entering the labour force). Among those who had, the largest shares had previously been employed in managerial or professional occupations (14%), followed by those previously employed in operative or elementary roles and sales and personal services occupations (12% each).

Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, the number of unemployed persons increased for those previously employed in associate professional, administrative or skilled trades roles and decreased for those in managerial or professional occupations, sales and services roles and operatives and elementary jobs. The largest absolute decrease was among those previously employed in operative or elementary roles and sales/services (3,700 fewer persons each).

Figure 6.9 Unemployment by Previous Occupation (000s, %), Quarter 4 2024



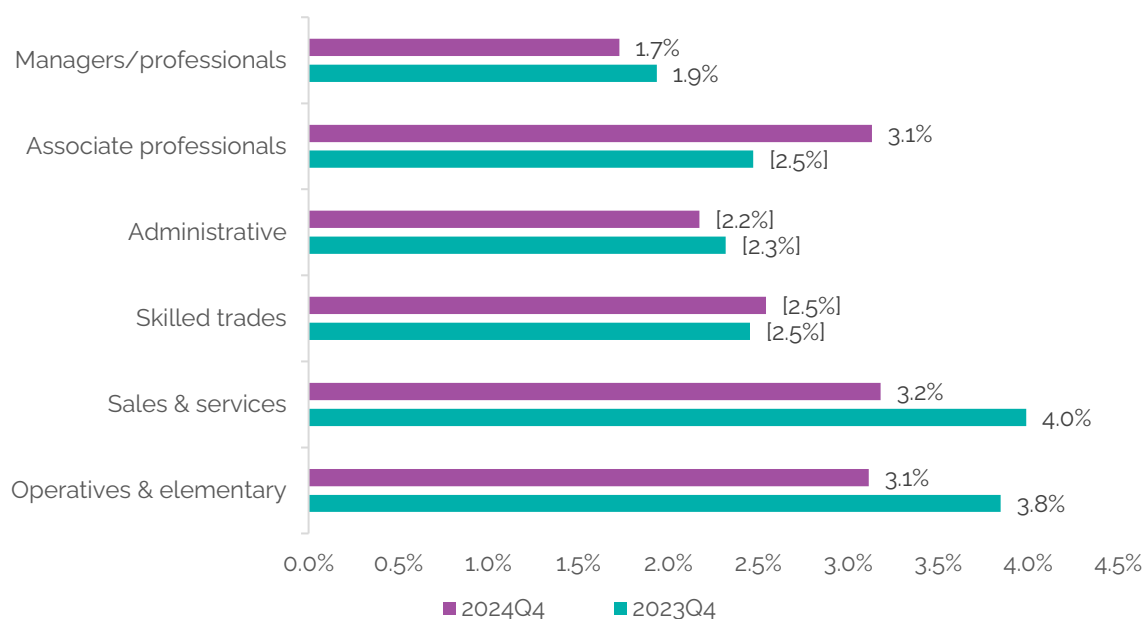
Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Numbers in square brackets are based on small sample sizes and should be treated with caution.

In quarter 4 2024, those previously employed in managerial or professional occupations continued to have the lowest unemployment rate at 1.7%, while those from operative or elementary occupations, associate professionals and sales or services occupations had the highest rates, at 3.1%, 3.1% and 3.2% respectively (Figure 6.10). Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, unemployment rates across most occupational groups remained relatively stable, with no changes exceeding 0.8 percentage points. Those previously employed as associate professionals experienced the most notable increase, though it was still modest; the unemployment rate remaining virtually unchanged for those previously employed in skilled trades.

Compared to quarter 4 2019, the unemployment rate in quarter 4 2024 remained broadly similar across most occupational groups. However, associate professionals, managerial or professional occupations, and administrative roles experienced a marginal increase in unemployment rates. In contrast, the remaining groups recorded a decline. Notably, operative and elementary occupations saw the greatest improvement, with unemployment rates falling by 1.2 percentage points from quarter 4 2019 levels.

Figure 6.10 Unemployment Rate by Previous Occupation (%), Quarter 4 2023–Quarter 4 2024



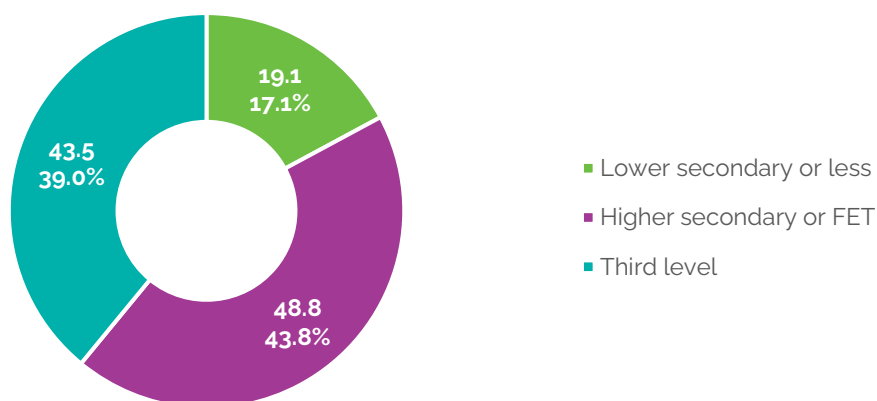
Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

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 6.11. In quarter 4 2024, 44% of all persons unemployed (excluding those who did not state a level of education) had a higher secondary education/FET qualification, 17% had attained lower secondary education or less, while 39% held a third level qualification. Compared to quarter 4 2023, the number of persons unemployed with lower secondary education or less declined significantly (by 5,300 persons or 21.7%), while it increased slightly for those with higher secondary/FET qualifications (up 800 persons, or 1.7%). Unemployment among third-level graduates rose by 1,000 persons (2.4%).

Figure 6.11 Unemployment by Education* (000s, %), Quarter 4 2024



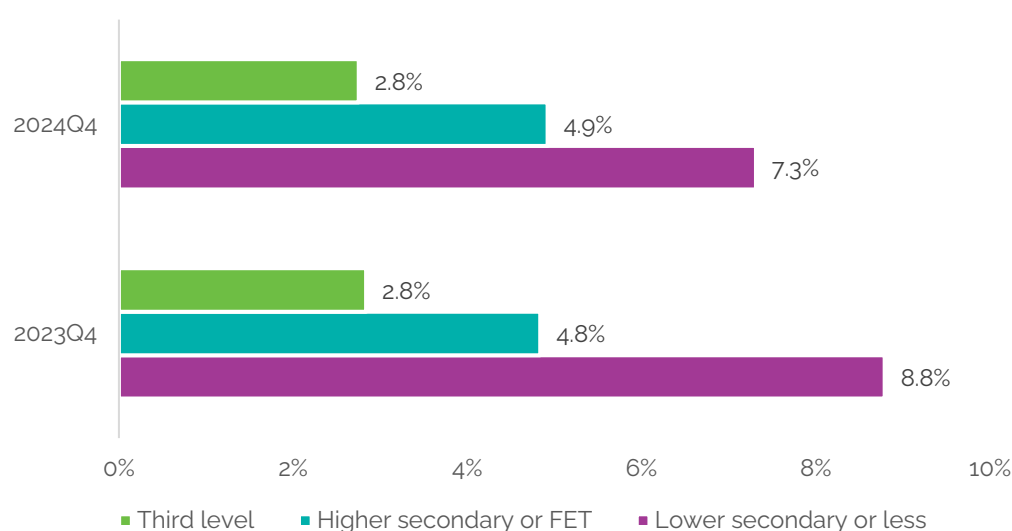
Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Note: Excludes not stated.

Unemployment rates by education for the period from quarter 4 2023 to quarter 4 2024 are presented in Figure 6.12. Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, unemployment rates by education level remained relatively stable for those with higher secondary/FET and third level education. Those with a lower secondary education or less continued to experience the highest unemployment rate, despite a notable decrease of 1.5 percentage points, bringing the rate down to 7.3% in quarter 4 2024. In contrast, individuals with a third-level education maintained the lowest unemployment rate at 2.8%, unchanged from quarter 4 2023.

When compared to quarter 4 2019, the unemployment rate in quarter 4 2024 remained highest among those with lower secondary education or less, though it had declined by 1.1 percentage points over the period. For persons with higher secondary/FET, the unemployment rate remained unchanged, despite a 6% increase in the number of unemployed persons with this education level over the period. Meanwhile, the unemployment rate for those with third-level education was slightly lower than in quarter 4 2019, continuing a consistent trend of low unemployment rates for this group, even though the number of unemployed third-level graduates rose significantly—by 6,000 persons, or 16%.

Figure 6.12 Unemployment Rate by Education (%), Quarter 4 2024



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

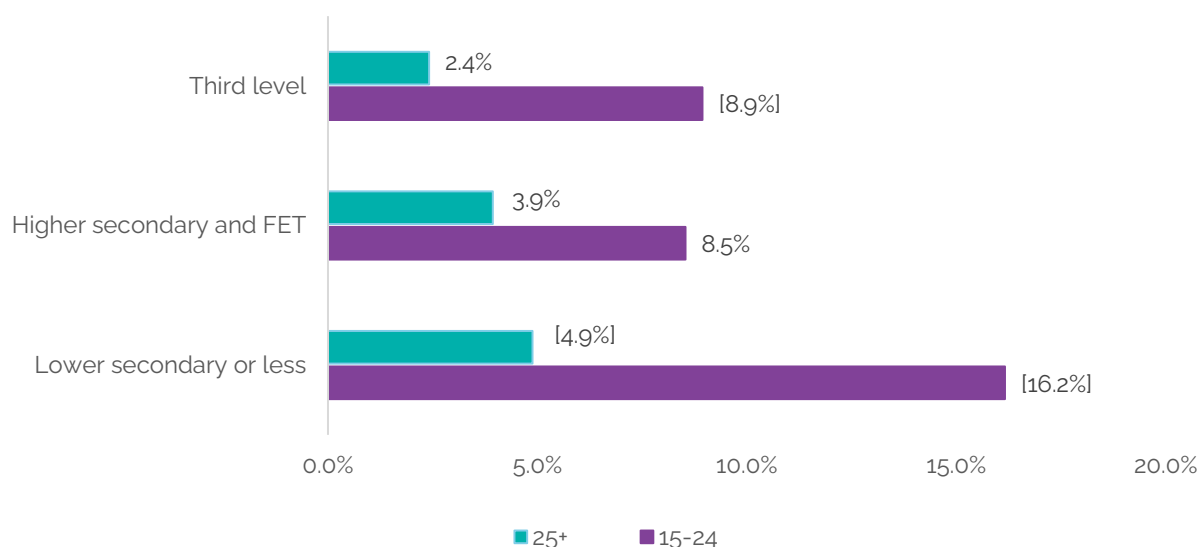
Note: Excludes not stated.

Unemployment rates by education and age are presented in Figure 6.13. In quarter 4 2024, persons aged 15-24 years had the highest unemployment rates across all levels of education; those aged 15-24 years with lower secondary education or less had the highest unemployment rate (at 16.2%). Those aged 25 years or above with third level qualifications had the lowest unemployment rate (at 2.4%).

Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, the unemployment rate remained largely stable across the age groups and education levels. The largest changes occurred for those unemployed persons with at most a lower secondary education; the

unemployment rate rose for those aged 15-24 years (by 0.8 percentage points) but declined for those aged 25 years or over (by 2.2 percentage points). This education cohort also saw the largest change in the unemployment rate between quarter 4 2019 and quarter 4 2024 - down by 4.2 percentage points for those aged 15-24 years and by 2.0 percentage points for those aged 25 years and over. The unemployment rates for those with higher secondary/FET and third level education remained broadly the same for both age cohorts over this period.

Figure 6.13 Unemployment Rate (%) by Education and Age, Quarter 4 2024



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Note: Excludes not stated.

Numbers in square brackets should be treated with caution.



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 2024 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 2024, 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 2023, the distribution of transitions remained broadly unchanged.

Table 7.1 Labour Market Transitions³⁰ by ILO Status (Persons Aged 15-74), 2024

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 data.

Figure 7.1 shows estimated annual transitions in the Irish labour market in 2024. It is estimated that 1.77 million transitions occurred in the labour market in 2024, compared with 1.72 million in 2023, 2.01 million in 2022 and 1.7 million in 2019. In 2024, there were approximately 237,000 transitions between employment and unemployment, 693,000 between employment and inactivity and 290,000 between unemployment and inactivity.

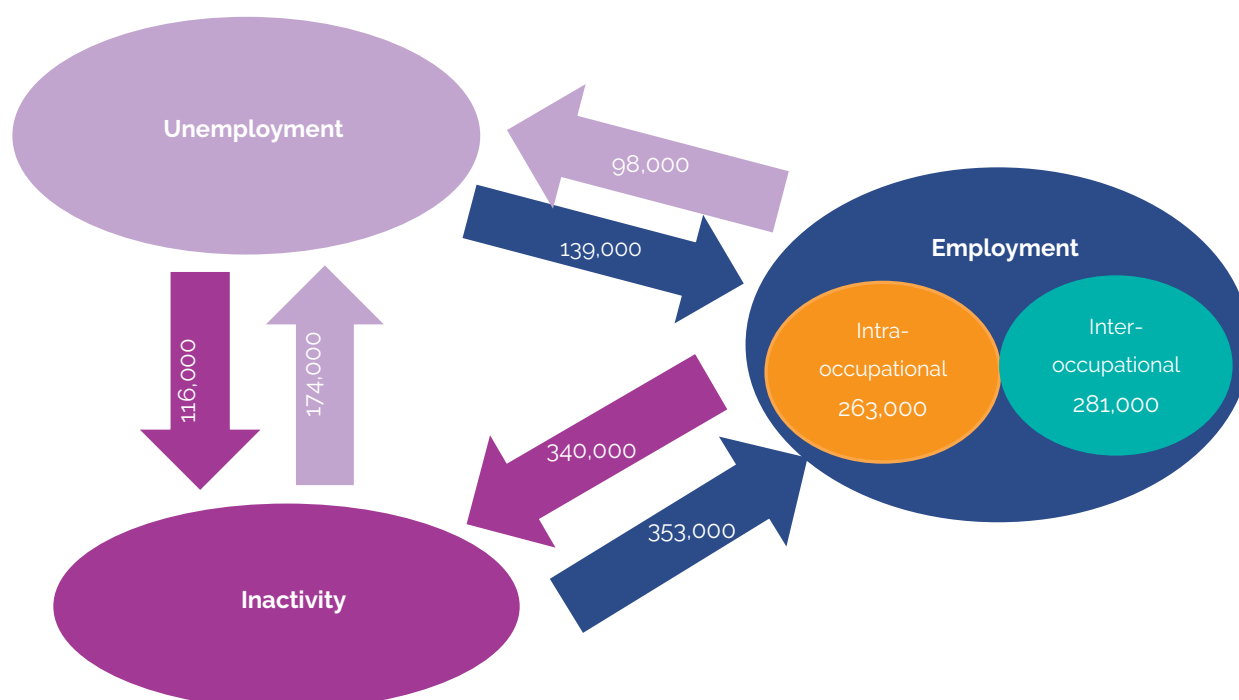
³⁰ Sum of transitions between quarter 4 2023 to quarter 1 2024, quarter 1 2024 to quarter 2 2024, quarter 2 2024 to quarter 3 2024, and quarter 3 2024 to quarter 4 2024.

In addition, there were 544,000 transitions which occurred within employment, due to change of occupation (inter-occupational transitions) or change of employer (intra-occupational transitions). In 2024, there were 281,000 inter-occupational transitions and 263,000 intra-occupational transitions.

In 2024, the number of transitions into employment from both unemployment and inactivity (approximately 492,000) exceeded the number of transitions out of employment (approximately 438,000). The number of transitions from unemployment to employment was approximately 139,000 compared to approximately 98,000 in the opposite direction, while the number from inactivity to employment was approximately 353,000 compared to 340,000 in the opposite direction.

Compared to 2023, there was an increase in the volume of transitions from employment to unemployment (6,000) and from unemployment to employment (5,000), a combined 11,000 additional transitions. The number of transitions from employment to inactivity grew by 42,000, while the number of transitions from inactivity to employment fell by 5,000. Transitions from inactivity to unemployment decreased (by 6,000), with an increase in the number of transitions from unemployment to inactivity (of 3,000). There were only 5,000 fewer movements observed for those already in employment, with the number of both inter and intra-occupational transitions broadly in line with the number observed in 2023.

Figure 7.1 Labour Market Transitions, 2024 (Sum of Four Quarters)



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

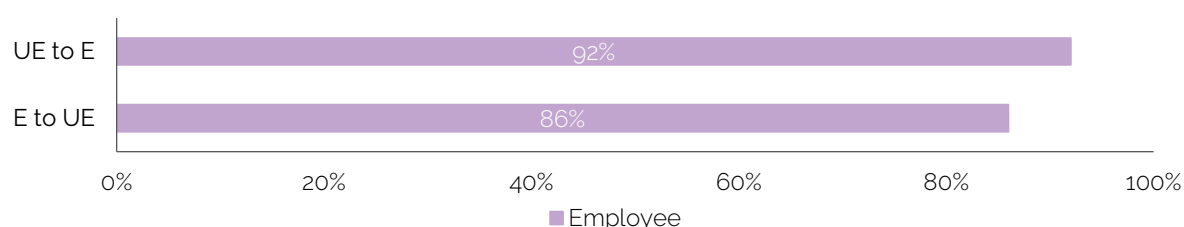
7.2 Transitions between Employment and Unemployment

The composition of transitions between employment and unemployment is presented in Section 7.2.

Employment Status

In 2024, at 86%, the employee category accounted for most of those transitioning from employment to unemployment, which was six percentage points lower than the share observed in 2023 (at 92%) (Figure 7.2). Of these, only 1% were associated with State-sponsored employment schemes. Of transitions from unemployment to employment, 92% were to the employee category, which was 1 percentage point lower than the share observed in 2023 (at 93%). Of these, 3% 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.

Figure 7.2 Employment and Unemployment by Employment Status, 2024



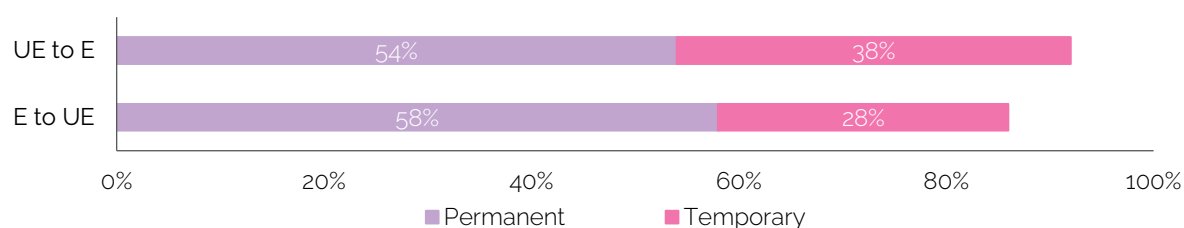
Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Note: Figures for the self-employed and assisting relatives are excluded as the numbers were too small to report.

Job Tenure

In terms of permanency of tenure, 58% of exits to unemployment were from permanent jobs, compared to 54% of entries into employment (Figure 7.3). The share of persons in temporary employment was greater in entries into employment compared to their share in exits to unemployment (38% compared to 28%). Compared to 2023, the share exiting employment from permanent or temporary jobs decreased (almost five and 1.5 percentage points respectively). The share entering permanent posts increased (three percentage points), while the share entering temporary jobs decreased (four percentage points).

Figure 7.3 Employment and Unemployment by Job Tenure, 2024



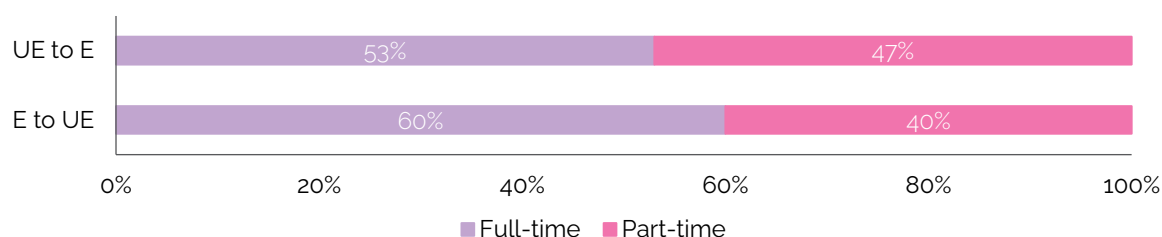
Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

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

Full-Time or Part-Time

In 2024, 60% of transitions from employment to unemployment were from full-time employment, compared to 53% of transitions from unemployment to employment (Figure 7.4). Compared to 2023, the share of entries to full-time employment decreased (three percentage points less), while a four percentage point decrease was observed for the share of exits from full-time employment.

Figure 7.4 Employment and Unemployment by Full-Time and Part-Time, 2024

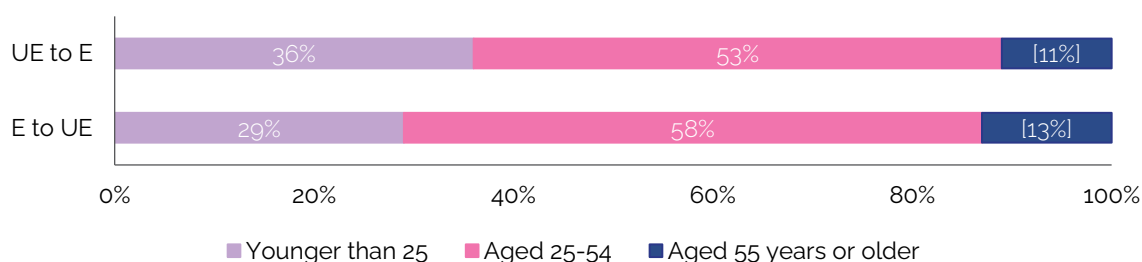


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Broad Age Group

In 2024, 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 from employment (36% compared to 29%) (Figure 7.5). Over half (53%) of entries into employment was associated with those aged 25-54 compared to 58% in exits from employment.

Figure 7.5 Employment and Unemployment by Broad Age Group, 2024



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

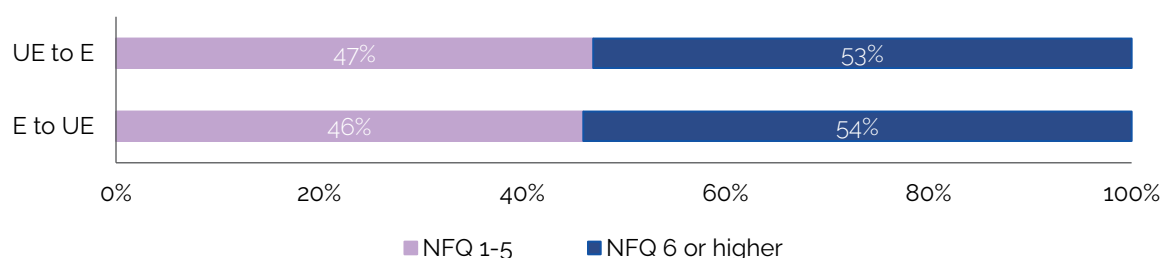
Note: The figures in square brackets for those aged 55 years or older in transitions from employment to unemployment or unemployment to employment are small and should be treated with caution.

National Framework Qualification (NFQ) Level

In 2024, the distribution of exits from and entries to employment by NFQ level was broadly similar (Figure 7.6). At or close to 54% of transitions in each direction (from employment to unemployment or unemployment to employment) was associated with persons with NFQ level 6 qualifications or higher, while at or close to 47% of transitions in each direction was associated with persons with NFQ level 5 qualifications or less. Approximately 35% of transitions from employment to unemployment was associated with persons with NFQ level 4/5 qualifications, compared with 37% in the opposite direction.

Compared to 2023, the distribution of entries to employment by holders of NFQ level 1-5 qualifications or NFQ level 6 qualifications or higher remained broadly similar. In terms of exits from employment, a four percentage point decrease was observed in the share of persons with NFQ level 5 qualifications or less.

Figure 7.6 Employment and Unemployment by NFQ Level, 2024



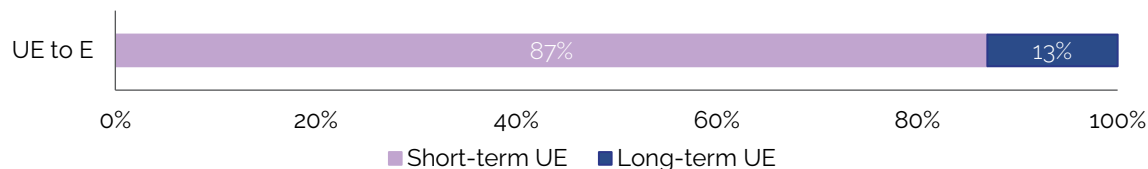
Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

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 2024, 13% of transitions from unemployment to employment were from long-term unemployment, compared to 17% in 2023 (Figure 7.7).

Figure 7.7 Unemployment to Employment by Duration of Unemployment, 2024



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

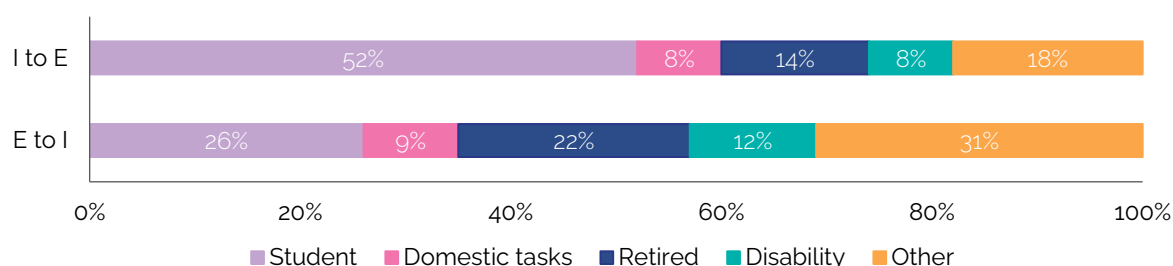
7.3 Transitions between Employment and Inactivity

The composition of transitions between employment and inactivity is examined in Section 7.3

Principal Economic Status

Of the total transitions from employment to inactivity, 26% was to study, 22% was to retirements, 12% was accounted for by exits due to ill health, 9% was due to being engaged in domestic tasks, while the remaining 31% was for other reasons (Figure 7.8). In terms of transitions from inactivity to employment, just over a half (52%) was from study, 14% from retirement, 8% from domestic tasks, 8% from ill-health, with the remaining 18% from other forms of inactivity. Compared to 2023, the most notable change in the distribution of transitions from employment to inactivity was a five percentage point decrease in the share of exits from employment to study (from 31% to 26%).

Figure 7.8 Employment and Inactivity by Principal Economic Status, 2024

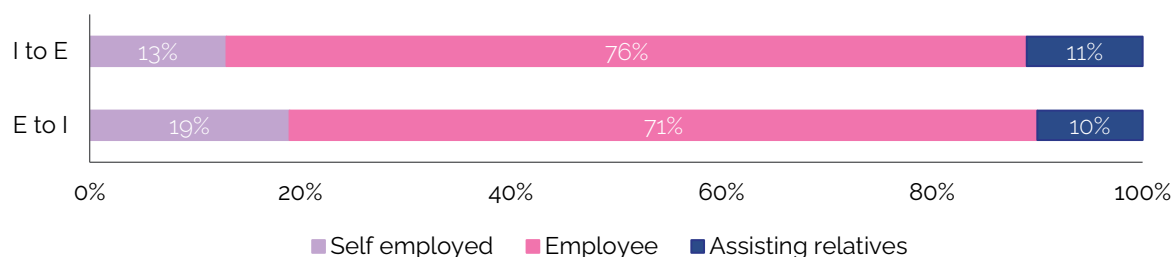


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Employment Status

In 2024, 71% of transitions from employment to inactivity were in the employee category (of which 3% was associated with Government employment schemes), while 76% of transitions from inactivity to employment was associated with employees (of which 2% was associated with Government employment schemes) (Figure 7.9). These shares are broadly comparable with those observed in 2023.

Figure 7.9 Employment and Inactivity by Employment Status, 2024

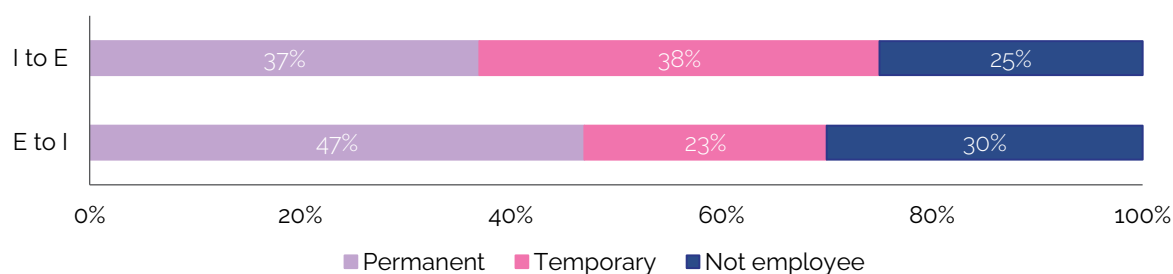


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Job Tenure

In 2024, 47% of transitions from employment to inactivity were from permanent employment, compared to 37% of transitions from inactivity to permanent employment (Figure 7.10). Compared to 2023, the share of transitions from inactivity to permanent employment increased by three percentage points, while the share from inactivity to temporary employment decreased by two percentage points.

Figure 7.10 Employment and Inactivity by Job Tenure, 2024

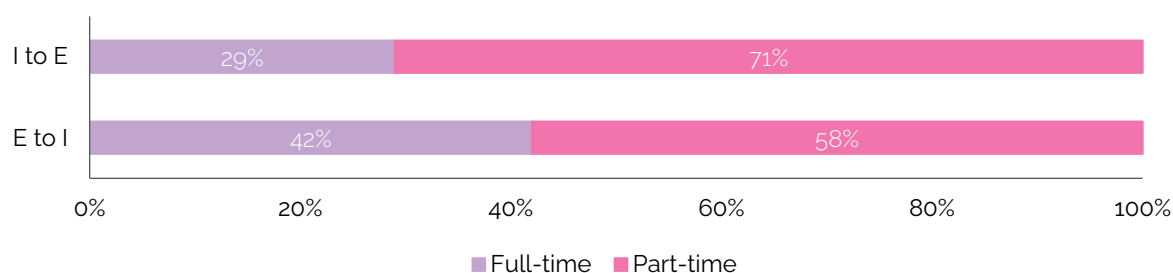


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Full-Time and Part-Time

In 2024, 58% of transitions from employment to inactivity were associated with part-time employment, while the distribution of flows from inactivity to employment was more skewed towards part-time employment (71% of transitions were into part-time employment) (Figure 7.11). Compared to 2023, the distribution of transitions from inactivity to employment did not change significantly; in terms of transitions in the opposite direction, the share of transitions from part-time employment into inactivity decreased by two percentage points.

Figure 7.11 Employment and Inactivity by Full-Time and Part-Time, 2024



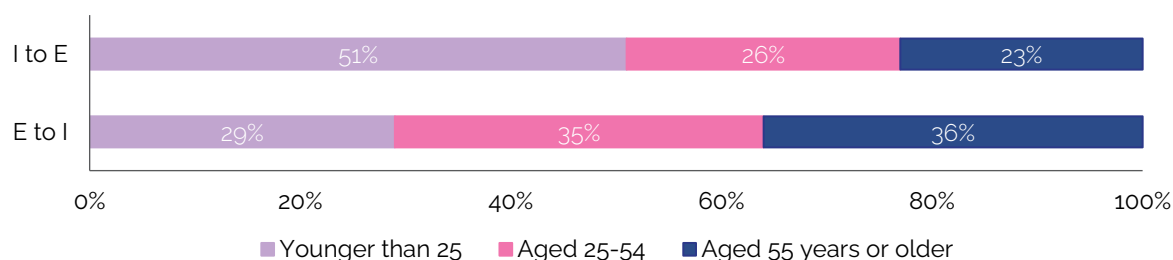
Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Broad Age Group

In 2024, the share of persons aged under 25 in transitions from inactivity to employment was greater than their share in exits from employment (51% compared to 29%); the opposite was the case for persons aged 55 years and over (36% of transitions were from employment to inactivity compared to 23% from inactivity to employment) and for persons aged 25-54 (35% of transitions were from employment to inactivity compared to 26% from inactivity to employment) (Figure 7.12).

Compared to 2023, the distribution of transitions from inactivity to employment remained relatively unchanged; in terms of transitions in the opposite direction, the most notable change was a two percentage point decrease in the share of persons aged under 25 in transitions from employment to inactivity.

Figure 7.12 Employment and Inactivity by Broad Age Group, 2024

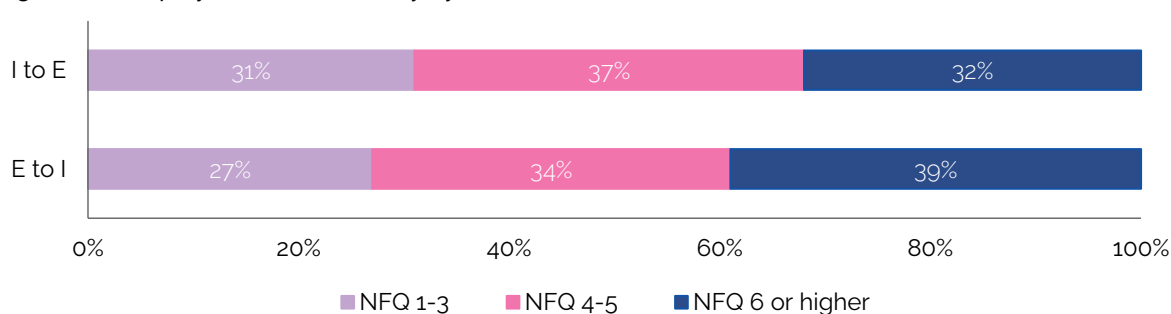


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

National Framework Qualification (NFQ) Level

In 2024, 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 transitioning from inactivity to employment, at 68%); the share transitioning from employment to inactivity at NFQ level 6 or above was higher than the share transitioning from inactivity to employment (39% compared to 32%). The share transitioning from employment to inactivity at NFQ level 4/5 was lower than the share transitioning from inactivity to employment at this education level (34% compared to 37%) (Figure 7.13). Compared to 2023, the distribution of transitions from inactivity to employment decreased by two percentage points for those with qualifications at NFQ level 5 or below.

Figure 7.13 Employment and Inactivity by NFQ Level, 2024



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

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

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

7.4 Transitions between Unemployment and Inactivity

This section examines the composition of transitions between unemployment and inactivity.

In 2024, 30% of transitions from unemployment to inactivity were associated with persons who did not want a job for various reasons. In the opposite direction, the share was higher in transitions from inactivity to unemployment, 44% 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, although the numbers in such categories are not too small to report.

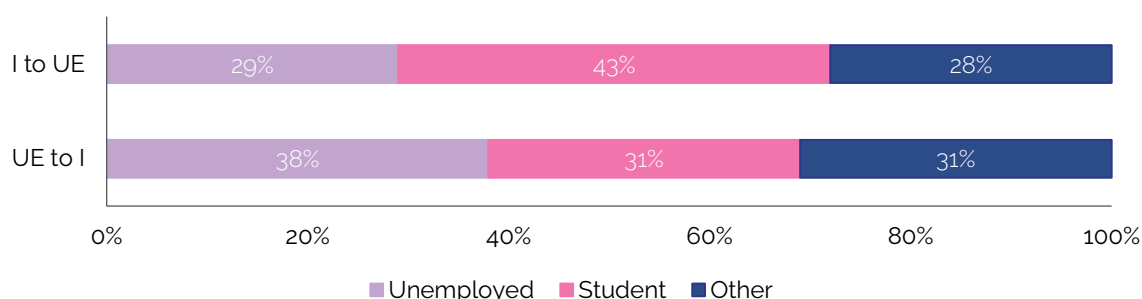
Compared to 2023, a 16 percentage point decrease was observed in the share of persons who did not want a job in transitions from unemployment to inactivity, while a 17 percentage point decrease was observed in the share in transitions in the opposite direction.

Principal Economic Status

In 2024, 38% of all persons moving from unemployment to inactivity continued to state their current principal economic status as unemployed; the share transitioning in the opposite direction (from inactivity to unemployment) was lower, at 29%. Just over 30% (31%) of transitions from unemployment to inactivity were to study, compared with 43% in the opposite direction (from inactivity to unemployment) (Figure 7.14). Approximately 31% of transitions from unemployment to inactivity were categorised as 'other' (which includes those retired, engaged in domestic tasks, unable to work due to long standing health problems or for other reasons) compared with 28% in the opposite direction.

Compared to 2023, a three percentage point increase was observed in the share of students in transitions from unemployment to inactivity, while a two percentage point increase was observed for this category in transitions in the opposite direction.

Figure 7.14 Unemployment and Inactivity by Principal Economic Status, 2024



Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

7.5 Inter and Intra-Occupational Transitions by Broad Occupation

In 2024, the highest number of inter-occupational transitions³¹ into occupations (inter in) was for associate professionals, professionals, managers 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 professionals. Transitions in were greater than transitions out for administrative, operatives, associate professionals and managerial occupations, resulting in net gains. Transitions out were greater than transitions in (resulting in net losses) for skilled trades, sales, elementary and personal services occupations. Inter-occupational movements were neutral for professional occupations. Administrative, operative and associate professional occupations were the largest net gainers, while skilled trades, sales and elementary occupations were the largest net losers in terms of inter-occupational flows.

In 2024, the highest number of intra-occupational transitions³² was observed for professionals, elementary occupations and associate professionals, accounting for 20%,

³¹ This relates to persons who remained in employment between two quarters but changed occupation.

³² Persons who remained employed in the same occupation between the two quarters but who changed employer.

16% and 14% of intra-occupational transitions respectively. Compared to 2023, while intra-occupational transitions declined very modestly (by 0.1%), this was not the case across the broad occupational groups. Declines in intra-occupational transitions were observed for skilled trades, elementary and personal services occupations (with the largest for skilled trades), while the largest increases were observed for administrative, sales and operatives.

Table 7.2 Inter and Intra Occupational Labour Market Transitions (000s) (Persons Aged 15-74), 2024

	Inter-In	Inter-Out	Intra
Managers	35.0	32.0	*
Professionals	35.0	35.0	52.1
Associate professionals	44.0	37.0	35.4
Administrative	33.0	21.0	33.9
Skilled trades	31.0	38.0	[16.4]
Personal services	[16.0]	19.0	[21.5]
Sales	[19.0]	26.0	32.7
Operatives	24.0	[15.0]	[20.7]
Elementary	33.0	39.0	42.2
Not stated	*	20.0	*
Total	281.0	281.0	263.2

Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Note: Figures in square brackets are small and should be treated with caution. Asterix denotes that numbers were too small to report.

Numbers in cells for inter-out occupational transitions do not sum to the total figure due to rounding.

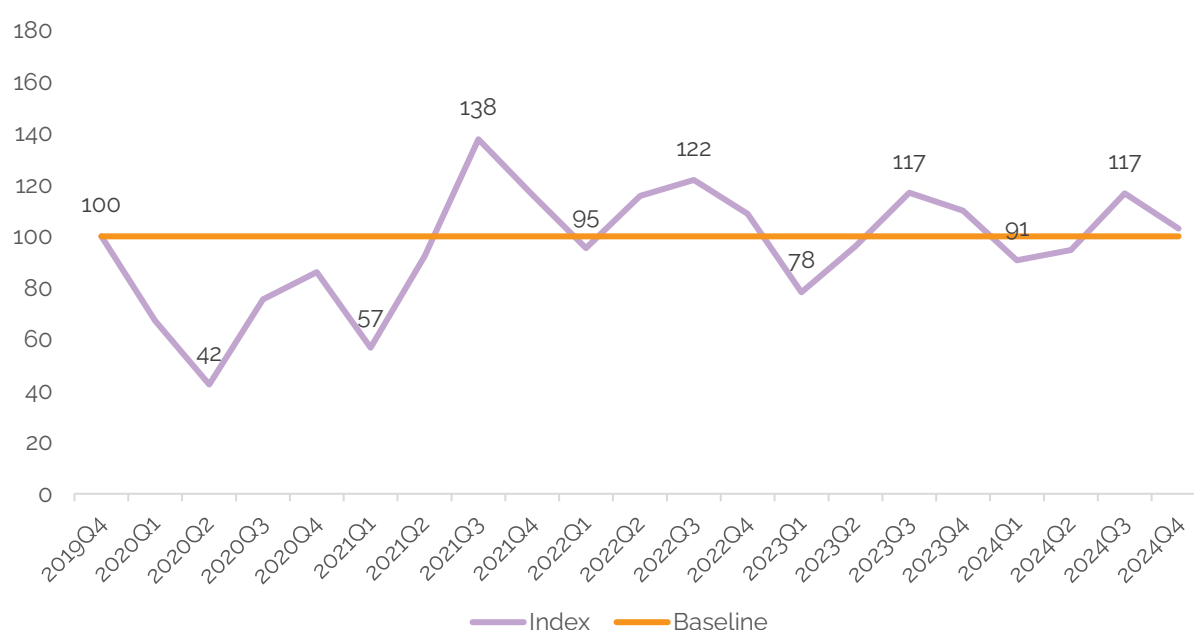
Numbers were too small to report for intra-occupational transitions for managers.

7.6 Recent Job Hires and Job Leavers

7.6.1 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 quarter 4 2019 (baseline) to quarter 4 2024. The impact of COVID-19 on hirings and the subsequent recovery is evident in the fall in the number of hirings in 2020 and early 2021. Following a sharp increase in quarter 3 2021, the number of recent job hires has since fluctuated, following a somewhat cyclical pattern with numbers dipping in quarter 1 each year, but increasing in subsequent quarters.

Figure 7.15 Index of Recent Job Hires by Quarter, Quarter 4 2019 – Quarter 4 2024



Baseline=Quarter 4 2019

Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Key Findings:

This detailed analysis of recent job hires covers the total of all four quarters for each year examined. By summing the four quarters within any given year, the analysis yields a more nuanced understanding than would be feasible if only a single quarter were scrutinised. However, it is important to note that individuals may be counted more than once within the same year if they change jobs across different quarters.

With a total of 498,000, recent hires in 2024 were broadly in line with 2023 (493,800) and above pre-pandemic levels in 2019 (450,500), though they remained below the 2022 peak post-COVID-19 hirings of 543,300. Figure 7.16 presents a summary of the key indicators related to recent job hires in 2024.

Sector: The wholesale and retail sector accounted for the highest share of recent job hires, at 16%, followed by accommodation & food (14%), health (11%) and industry (10%).

Recent job hires outpaced overall employment growth across all sectors. As with the previous year, this trend is particularly pronounced in the wholesale & retail and accommodation & food sectors, suggesting that job churn continues to be a significant factor (these sectors also feature strongly in job churn data produced by the CSO³³). Many sectors experienced growth in recent hires when compared to quarter 4 of 2023. Notably, the highest year-on-year increases were observed in administrative and support services (34%), public administration and defence (21%), and transportation and storage (20%). Conversely, a few sectors recorded declines compared to the previous year. These included financial activities (with a 16% decrease in recent hires); wholesale and retail, which also recorded the highest absolute decline (a fall of 13,000 persons, or 14%), and construction (down 12%).

Occupation: Recent job hires were highest for elementary occupations in 2024, at 20% (or 101,200), followed by professional occupations, at 17%. In contrast, the lowest number of recent hires (not illustrated in graph) were for managerial (3%) and operative occupations (7%).

The most frequently occurring occupations with job hires in 2024 included

- elementary service occupations (e.g. catering assistants, waiters and bar staff), 12% of total
- sales assistants (10% 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); combined accounting for 10% of total
- caring personal services (e.g. care workers, healthcare assistants) and childcare roles, at 7% combined
- various administrative and secretarial occupations (e.g. government admin, receptionists, bookkeepers/payroll and other admin), at 6%.

Sex: In 2024, the number of recent hires were divided almost equally between males and females, at 51% (or 255,600 persons) and 49% (or 242,500 persons) respectively.

Full-time/part-time: 63% were hired for full-time positions, whereas full-time roles accounted for 79% of total employment in 2024; this suggests that job churn is more prevalent in part-time roles.

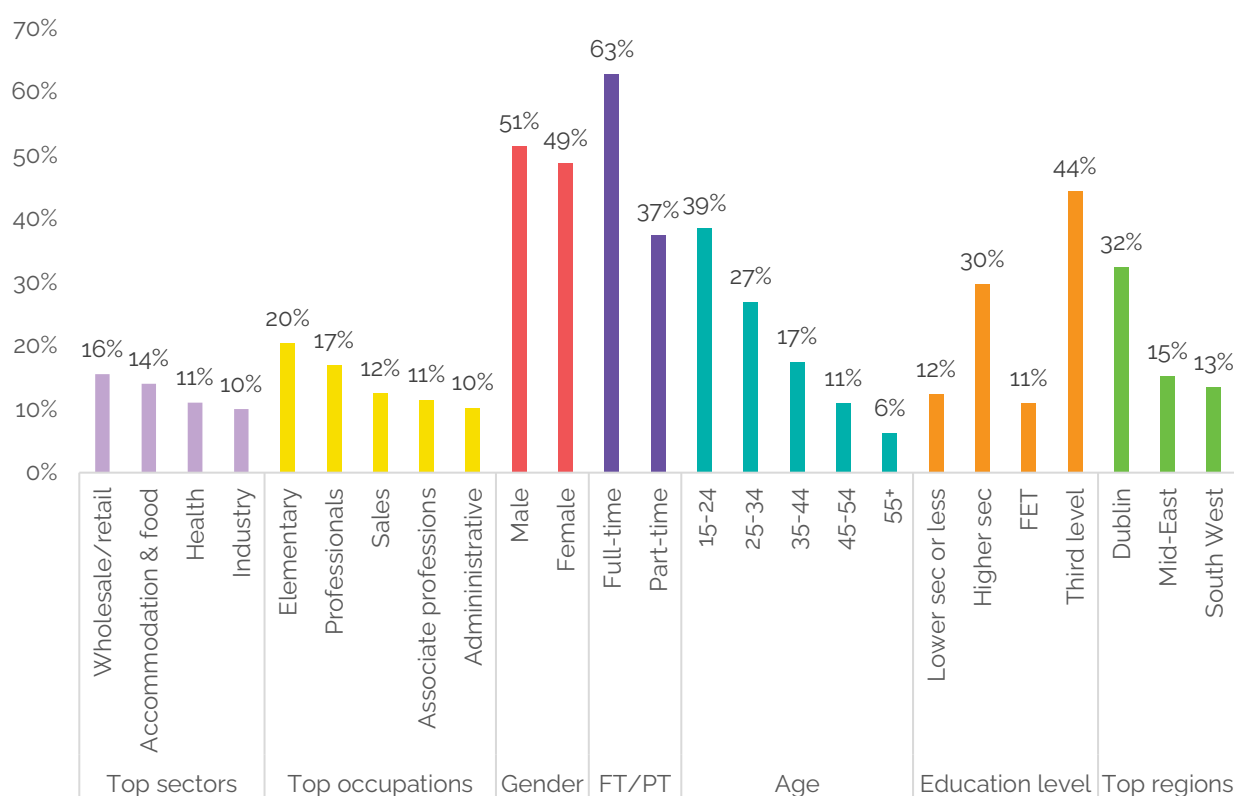
Age: Those aged 15-24 years accounted for the highest number of hires in 2024 (almost 192,000, or 39%); this is despite this age cohort accounting for just 12% of total employment in 2024. Between 2023 and 2024, recent job hires among this age cohort declined by nearly 21,000. The only other age cohort to experience a year-on-year decrease was the 45-54 year age group, with a reduction of approximately 2,200 hires. In contrast, all other age groups recorded increases, with the most notable growth observed among those aged 25-34 years, where job hires rose by over 20,000.

³³ <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/fp/fp-lmc/labourmarketchurnq12025/>

Education level: In 2024, individuals with third-level qualifications represented the largest share (at 44%) of recent job hires, totalling 220,300. Those with further education and training (FET) qualifications saw the highest absolute increase compared to 2023, with an additional 9,900 hires. Meanwhile, hires among individuals with lower secondary education or less declined by approximately 6,600, reflecting a 10% decrease. This decline aligns with a broader trend of decreasing numbers of individuals with lower secondary education or less in employment in recent years, contributing to the overall drop in hires within this group.

Region: Dublin recorded the largest share of job hires in 2024, at 32%, followed by the Mid-East and South West regions at 15% and 13% respectively. The Midlands region recorded the largest decline in the number of hires between 2023 and 2024 (falling by 8,300) while the West region recorded the highest increase in the same time period (9,900 or 24%).

Figure 7.16 Recent Job Hires by Key Indicators, 2024 (sum of four quarters)

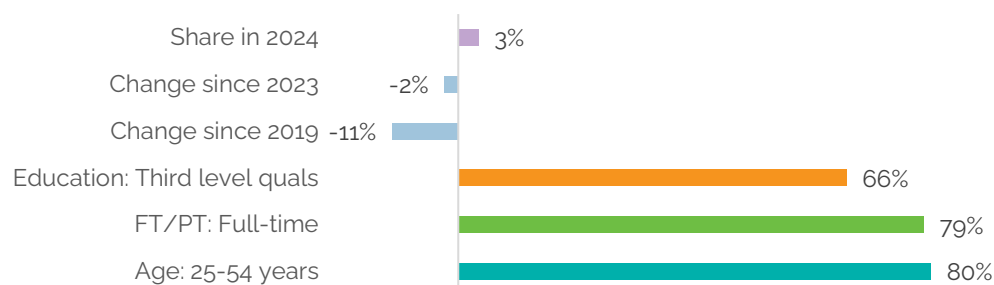


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Managers (16,700 recent job hires in 2024):

The managerial occupation had the smallest share of recent job hires in 2024; however, it recorded the highest proportion of individuals in the 25–54 age bracket.

Figure 7.17 Recent Job Hires for Managers by Key Indicators, 2024 (sum of four quarters)

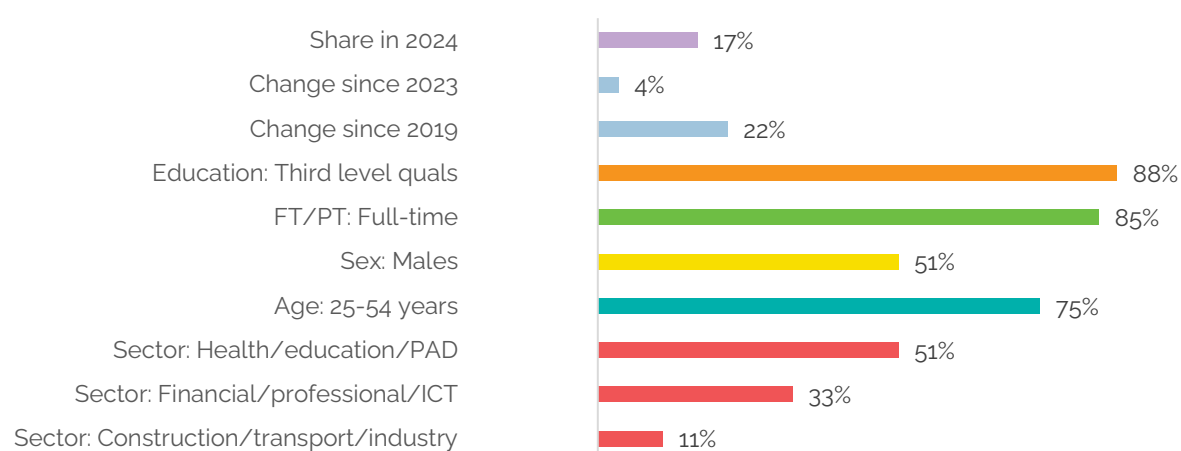


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Professionals (84,300 recent job hires in 2024):

The professional occupation group had the highest share of recent hires that held a third level qualification and the highest share with full-time positions in 2024. Recent hires were particularly strong for teaching (e.g. primary teachers), business roles (e.g. accountants) and ICT roles (e.g. software developers).

Figure 7.18 Recent Job Hires for Professionals by Key Indicators, 2024 (sum of four quarters)

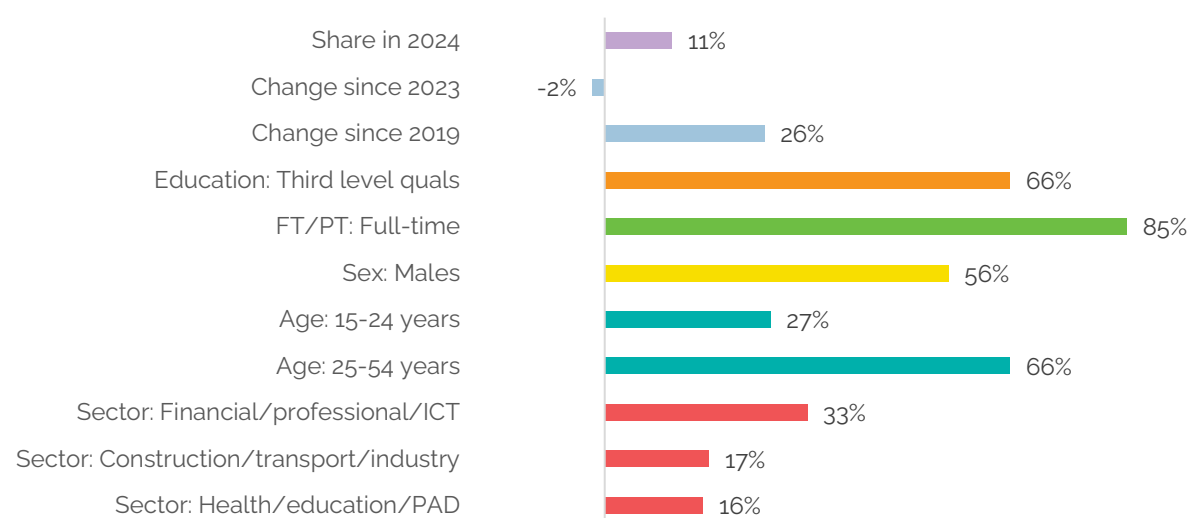


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Associate professionals (57,100 recent job hires in 2024):

In both 2024 and 2023, the majority of recent hires for associate professionals were in sales and marketing, as well as business and financial roles. While the number of recent hires declined slightly in 2024 compared to the previous year, associate professionals have recorded the largest overall growth of all occupational groups since 2019.

Figure 7.19 Recent Job Hires for Associate Professionals by Key Indicators, 2024 (sum of four quarters)

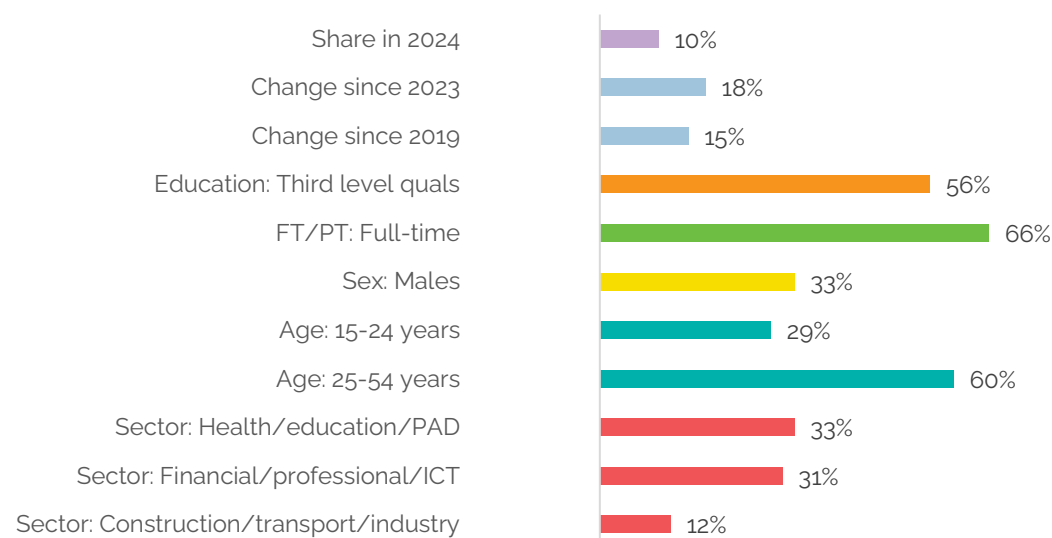


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Administrative (50,900 recent job hires in 2024):

In 2024, one tenth of recent job hires were in administrative occupations. This group recorded the largest increase in recent hires since 2023 and had the second highest proportion of hires for females.

Figure 7.20 Recent Job Hires for Administrative Occupations by Key Indicators, 2024 (sum of four quarters)

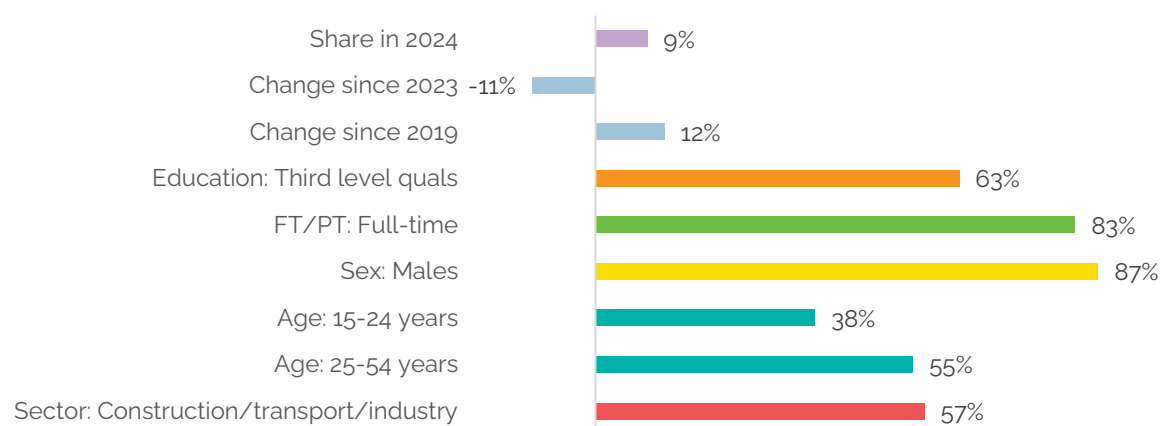


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Skilled trades (42,900 recent job hires in 2024):

In 2024, skilled trades occupations had the highest share of recent hires with higher secondary education or FET qualification and recorded the highest proportion of male hires across all occupational groups. Skilled trades also experienced the largest percentage decline in recent job hires between 2023 and 2024. At the occupational level, food preparation trades (e.g. chefs) accounted for the largest number of hires.

Figure 7.21 Recent Job Hires for Skilled Trades Occupations by Key Indicators, 2024 (sum of four quarters)

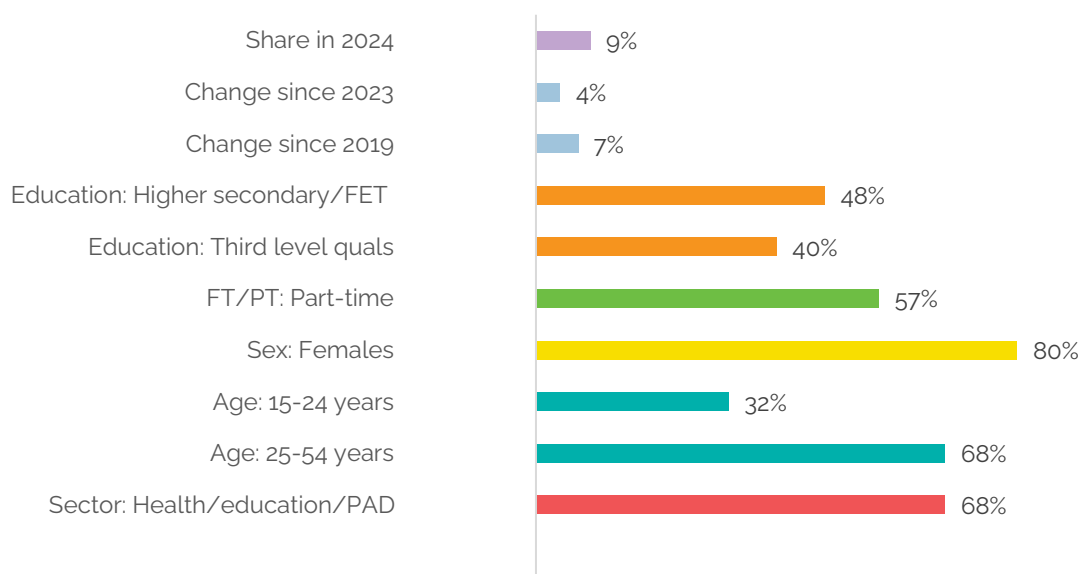


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Personal services (44,800 recent job hires in 2024):

In 2024, personal services recorded the highest share of female hires and the second highest proportion of part-time roles across recent hires. At a more granular occupational level, care workers and childminders represented the largest share within this group, accounting for more than half of all hires.

Figure 7.22 Recent Job Hires for Personal Services Occupations by Key Indicators, 2024 (sum of four quarters)

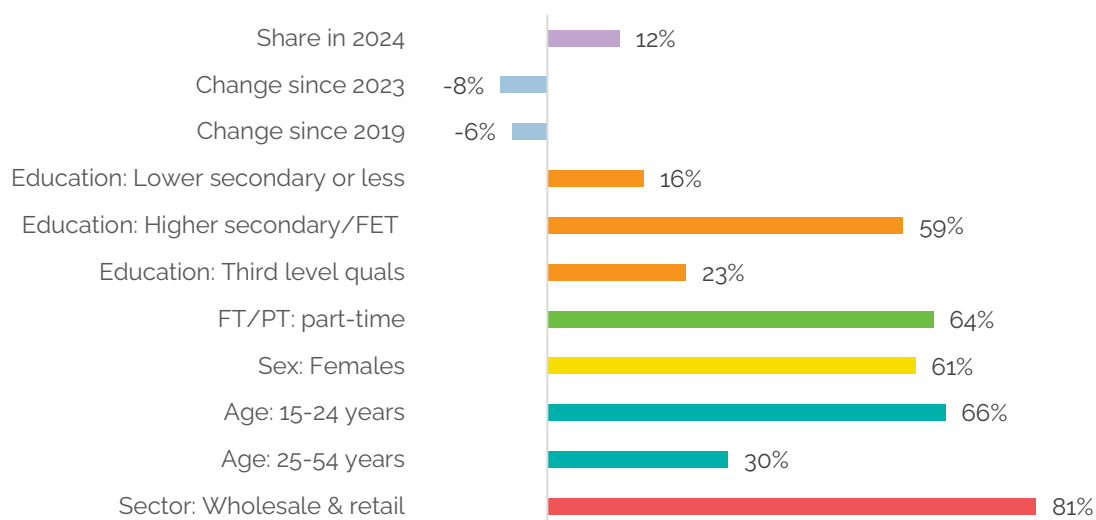


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Sales (62,200 recent job hires in 2024):

The sales occupational group accounted the highest share of recent hires in the 15-24 years age group and the lowest share of those in the 25-54 year age group in 2024. This occupation also accounted for the highest share of recent hires in part time roles.

Figure 7.23 Recent Job Hires for Sales Occupations by Key Indicators, 2024 (sum of four quarters)

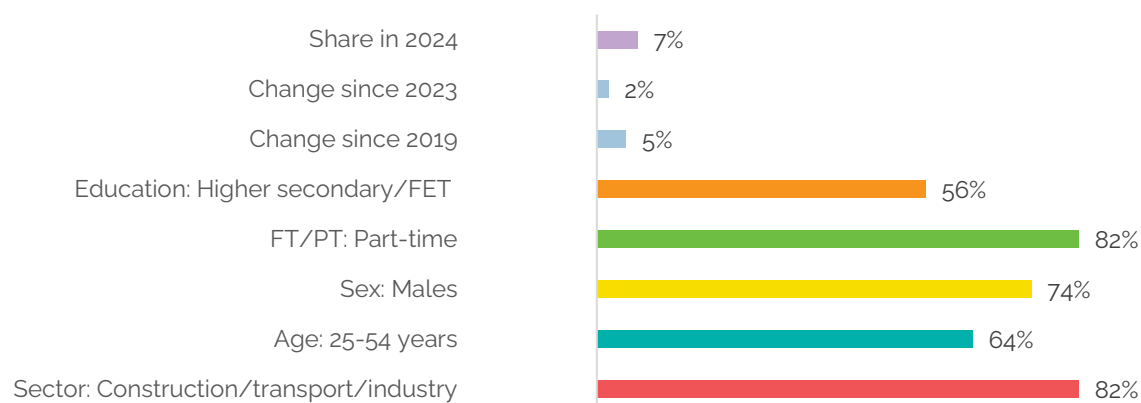


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Operatives (34,500 recent job hires in 2024):

In 2024, the operatives occupational group recorded the second highest share of male hires, following skilled trades occupations. More than three quarters of recent hires in this group were concentrated in the industry, construction, and transport sectors, with road transport drivers making up the largest share.

Figure 7.24 Recent Job Hires for Operatives by Key Indicators, 2024 (sum of four quarters)

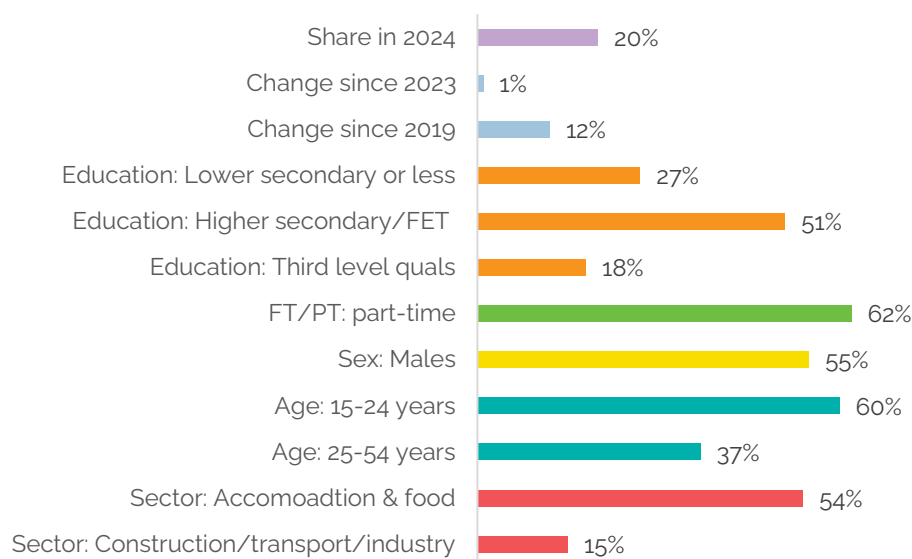


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

Elementary (101,200 recent job hires in 2024):

Elementary occupations accounted for one fifth of recent job hires in 2024, making them the largest occupational group among recent hires that year. This group also had the lowest proportion of recent hires with third-level qualifications. The most commonly reported occupations were in service-related positions, including waiters, bar staff, and kitchen assistants, along with cleaning occupations.

Figure 7.25 Recent Job Hires for Elementary Occupations by Key Indicators, 2024 (sum of four quarters)

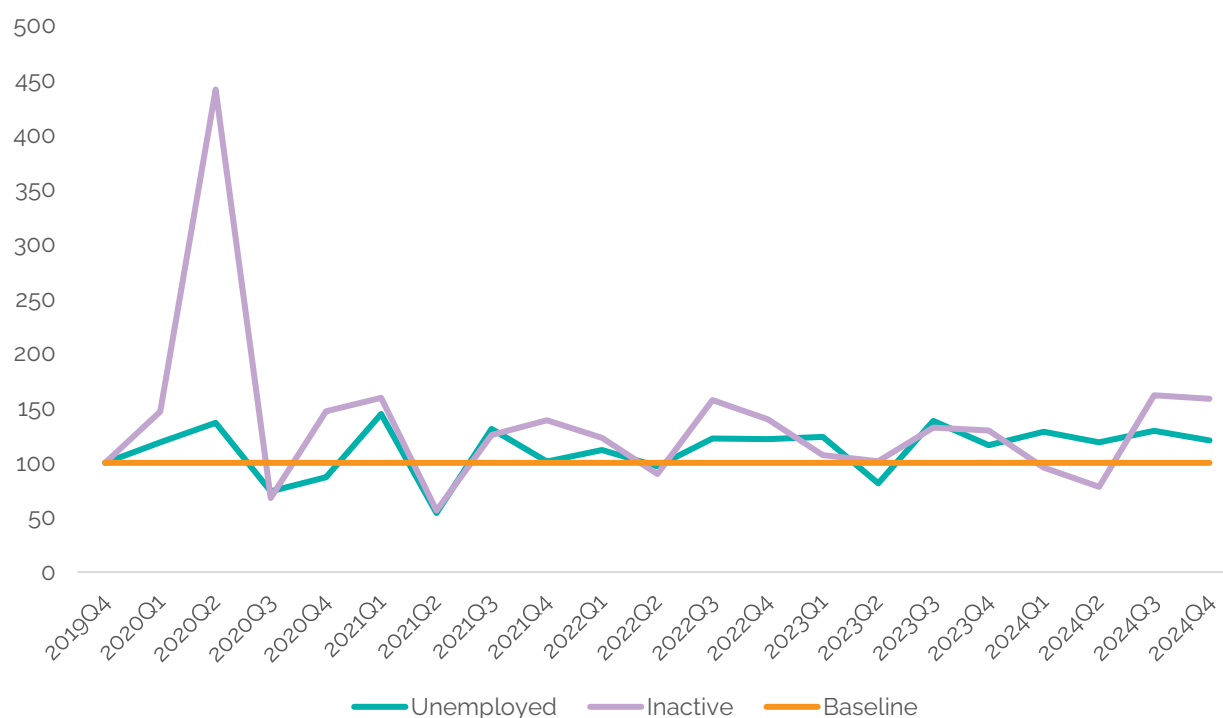


Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

7.6.2 Recent Job Leavers

The measure of recent job leavers includes persons who exited employment within the past three months and subsequently became either unemployed or economically inactive. As shown in Figure 7.26, the index tracking these persons indicates that the numbers transitioning to unemployment has remained relatively stable and close to the baseline for most of the period since quarter 4 2019. Persons who exited the labour market experienced a more pronounced impact with the onset of COVID-19, peaking in quarter 2 of 2020. Since quarter 3 2021, their numbers have remained, for the most part, above the baseline.

Figure 7.26 Index of Recent Job Leavers by Quarter (000s), Quarter 4 2019 – Quarter 4 2024



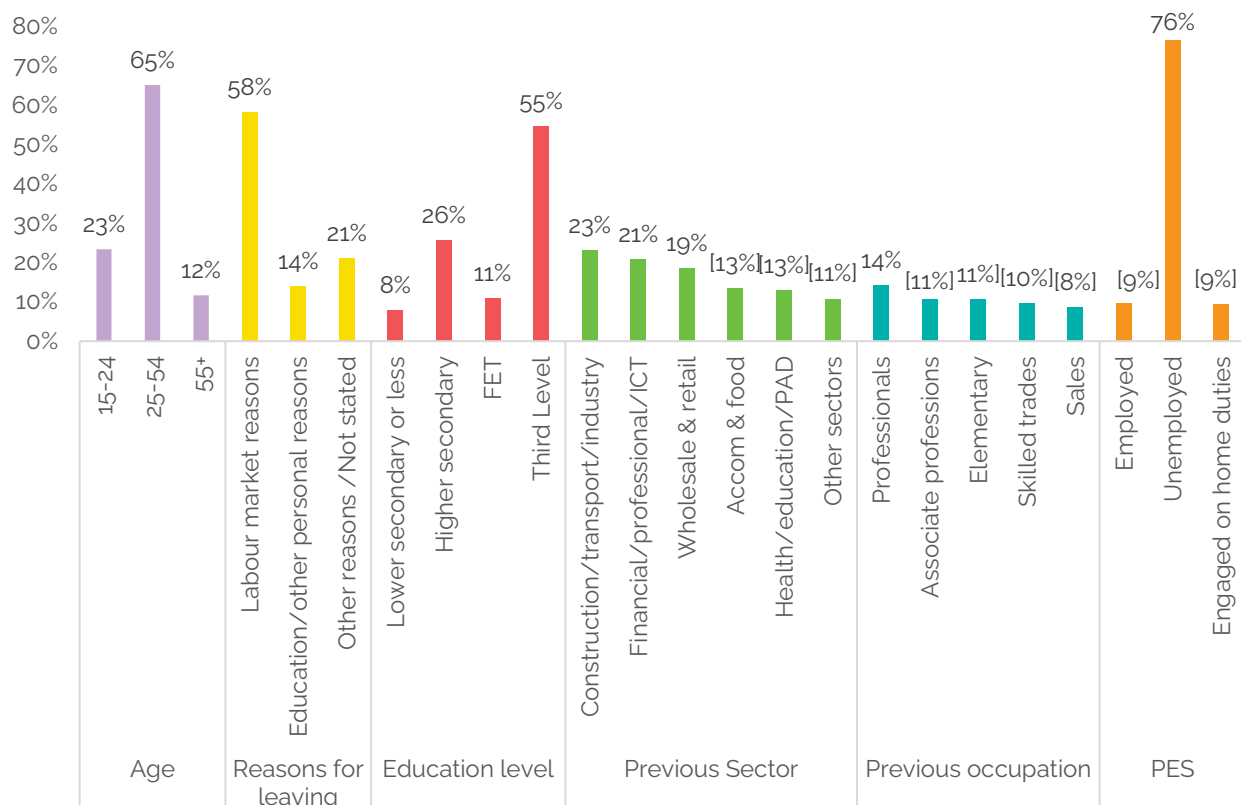
Baseline=Quarter 4 2019

Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO LFS data

As with recent job hires, the more detailed analysis of recent job leavers presented in Figures 7.27 and 7.28 is based on the sum of all four quarters of 2024 as quarterly figures may be too small to interpret reliably. This analysis does not account for the duration that a leaver remains outside of the workforce and a single person may be recorded as leaving employment on multiple occasions within the year.

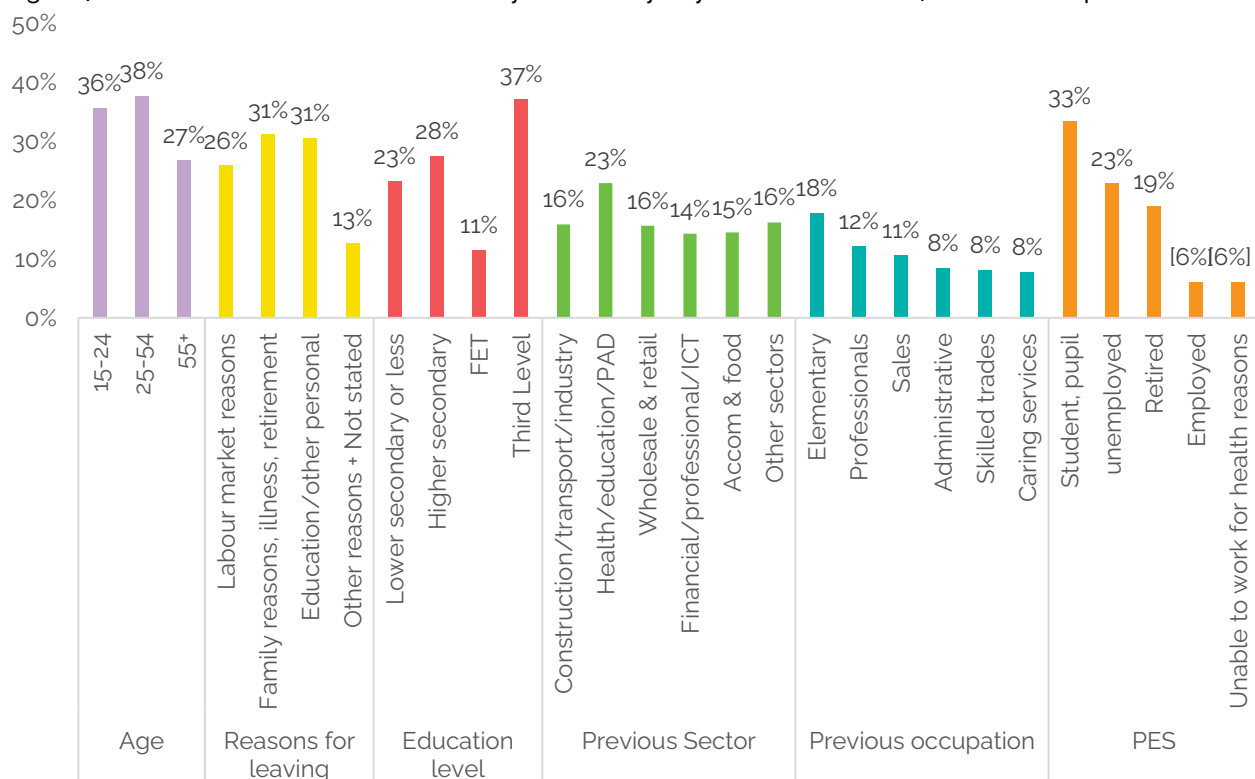
Over the four quarters of 2024, there was a total of 205,500 recent job leavers: 39% entered unemployment and 61% became economically inactive. The number of recent job leavers was 6% higher than in 2023 and 31% higher than in 2019. Figure 7.27 examines the key indicators for those leaving employment and becoming unemployed while Figure 7.28 details those who left and became economically inactive.

Figure 7.27 Recent Job Leavers (Unemployed) by Key Indicators (%), 2024 (sum of four quarters)



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

Figure 7.28 Recent Job Leavers (Economically Inactive) by Key Indicators (%), 2024 (sum of four quarters)



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

Age: Almost two-thirds (65%) of persons who became unemployed after leaving employment were aged 25-54 years, compared to over one-third (38%) of those who became economically inactive. The economically inactive group had a notably higher proportion aged 55 and over (27%) and 15-24 years (36%) compared to 12% and 23% respectively among the unemployed.

Reason for leaving: Over half (58%) of leavers who moved into unemployment left the workforce for labour market reasons³⁴ with a further 14% leaving for education or other personal reasons. Among those who became economically inactive, nearly a third (31%) left for family reasons, illness, or retirement. A similar share (31%) left for education or other personal reasons, while 26% exited the workforce for labour market-related reasons.

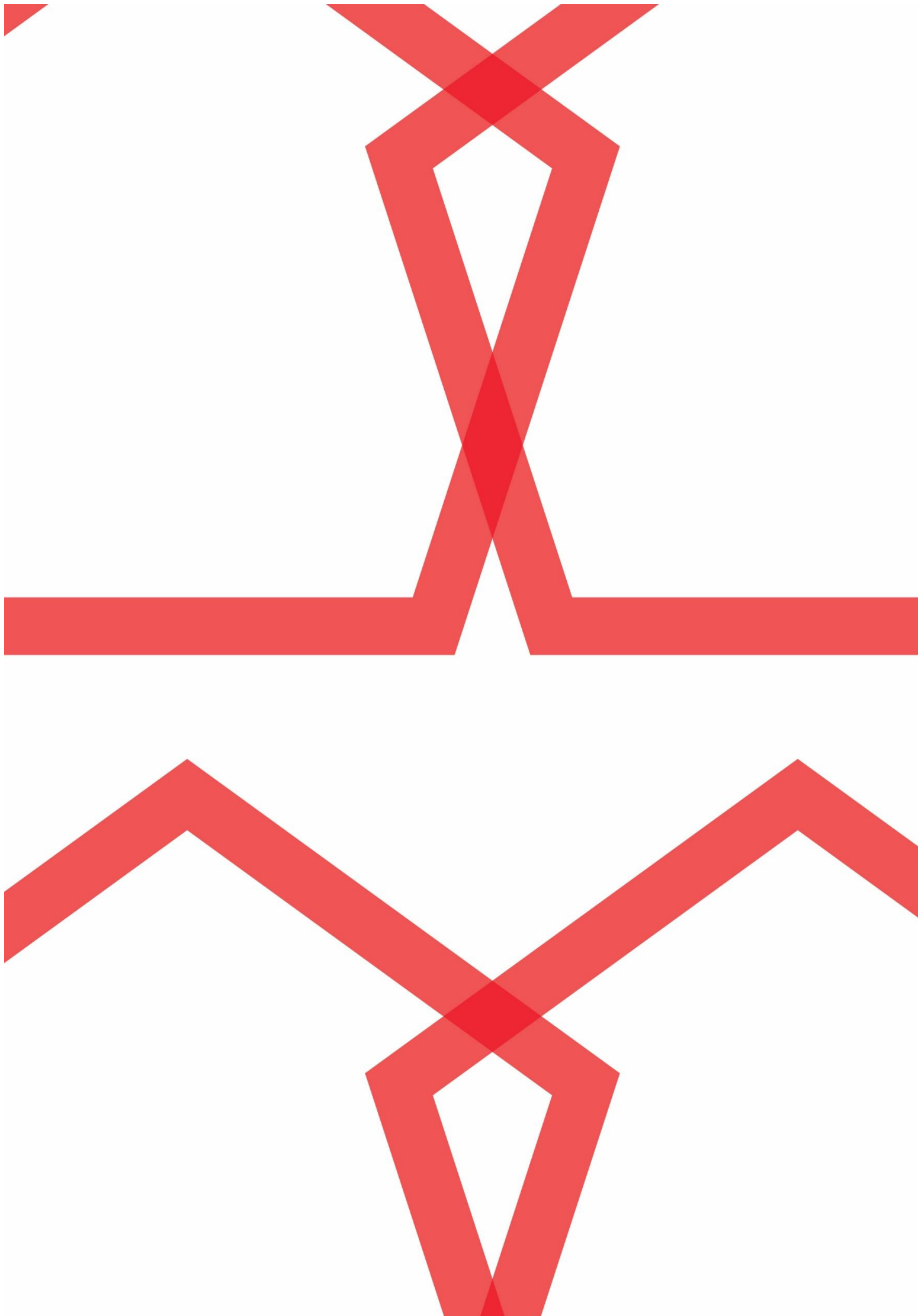
Education level: Over half (55%) of unemployed persons who had recently left the workforce held a third-level qualification. In contrast, among those who became economically inactive, 37% held a third-level qualification.

Previous sector: The highest proportion of recent job leavers who were unemployed were previously employed in construction, transport, and industry (23%), followed by financial, professional, and ICT services (21%), and the wholesale and retail sector (19%). Among those who became economically inactive, the largest share came from health, education, and public administration (23%), followed by construction, transport, and industry, as well as wholesale and retail, each accounting for 16%.

Previous occupation: Over a quarter of unemployed leavers did not state their previous occupation; a further 14% were previously employed in professional roles. For those leavers who became economically inactive, the highest shares were previously employed in elementary (18%), professional (12%) and sales (11%) occupations.

Principal economic status (PES): Among recent job leavers classified as unemployed, 76% identified themselves as unemployed. An additional 9% considered themselves employed - though they did not meet the ILO definition of employment - and another 9% reported being engaged in home duties (although numbers are small for both of these incidents and should be treated with caution). In contrast, among those who became economically inactive, one-third identified as students, 23% as unemployed, and 19% as retired.

³⁴ 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

This section provides an overview of the extent to which employers source labour from outside the EU through an analysis of employment permit data. An employment permit is required for all non-EEA nationals who wish to take up employment in Ireland (unless an exemption applies). An analysis of the occupations for which employment permits are issued allows policymakers to ascertain the areas where employers are having difficulty in sourcing suitably qualified candidates from the Irish and EU labour market.

Over 33,000 new employment permits were issued in 2024, an increase of 14% on the previous year. The increase primarily relates to an increase in the number of permits issued for the ICT, health and agriculture sectors. A further almost 6,000 renewal permits were also issued in 2024, an increase of 270% on the previous year.

8.2 Overall Trends

Key findings for new employment permits issued in 2024 include

- Over half (61%) were held by persons from India, the Philippines, Brazil, and Pakistan (Figure 8.3).
- Over half (52%) were for positions in Dublin (Figure 8.4).
- Almost three quarters (73%) were for persons with third level education (Figure 8.5).
- The ICT and health sectors combined accounted for over half (51%) (Figure 8.6).
- Professional occupations accounted for over half (58%) of total new permits issued (Figure 8.7).

Employment permits by permit type

There are nine types of employment permits available³⁵. 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 €34,000* 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 €46,000; personnel undergoing training programmes must have a minimum salary of €34,000.

** Some exceptions apply*

³⁵ The details of the other six permit types are available on the DETE website: <https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/What-WeDo/Workplace-and-Skills/Employment-Permits/Permit-Types/>

Of the 33,404 new employment permits issued in 2024 (Figure 8.1),

- more than one half (51%, 17,162 permits) were new critical skills employment permits
- more than two fifths (42%, 14,070 permits) were general employment permits
- 4% were for intra-company transfers.

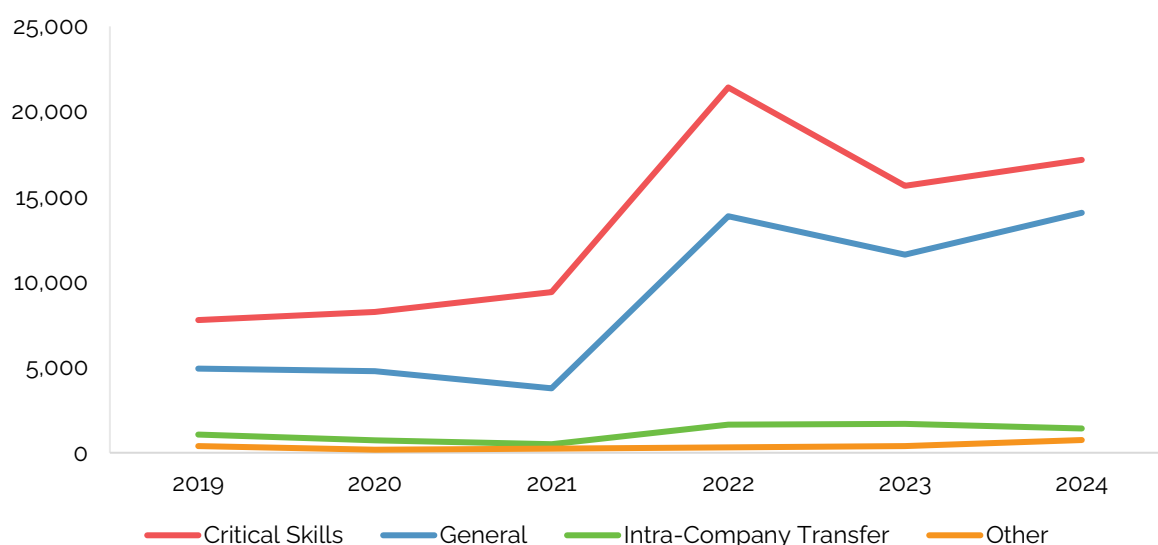
Between 2023 and 2024, the number of **new permits increased by 14%** or 4,047 additional permits, most of which was due to increases for new general and critical skills employment permits.

- **General permits** accounted for the largest absolute increase (2,456 extra permits, or +21%), mostly related to increases in the number of permits issued for the agricultural, transport and storage, and other services sectors
- **Critical skill permits**, accounted for the second largest absolute increase, with 1,501 additional permits (+10%), with the increase related primarily to growth in the number of these permits issued for the ICT and health sectors.

Between 2019 and 2024, the number of new permits issued more than doubled (19,238 additional permits), with much of the growth occurring between 2021 and 2022. The most notable growth during this period was for the two largest permit types: general employment permits which accounted for 48% of the growth (9,144 additional permits) and critical skills permits which accounted for 49% (9,382 additional permits) of the growth.

However, 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 nearly 2,300) mostly related to the reductions in the number of permits issued in the agricultural sector.

Figure 8.1 New Employment Permits Issued by Type, 2019-2024

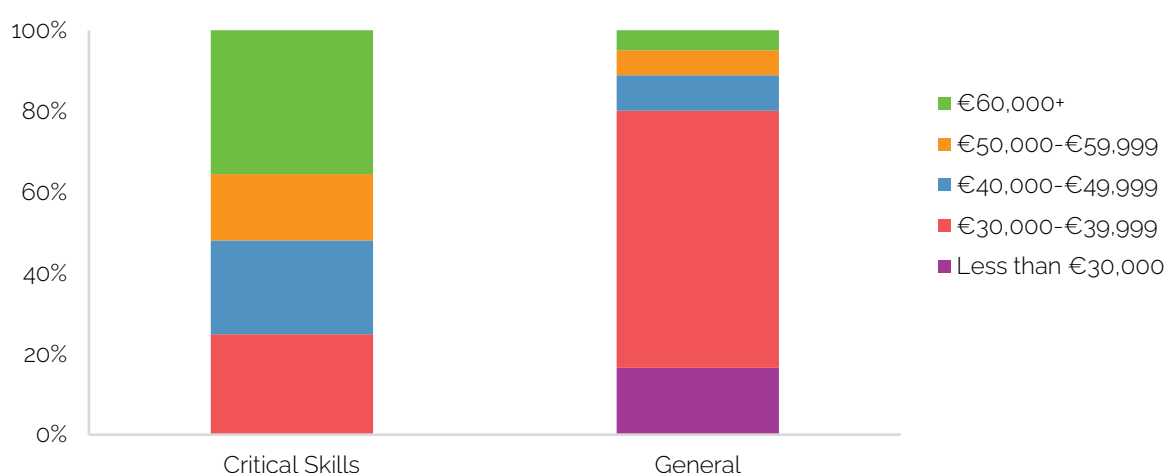


Source: DETE

Employment permits by salary level

Of the new critical skills permits issued in 2024, 25% were for salaries of €30,000-€39,999, a further 23% for salaries of €40,000-€49,999, and 36% for salaries of €60,000 or above (Figure 8.2). Of the new general permits issued, 17% were for salaries of less than €30,000 with a further 64% for salaries of €30,000-€39,999 and 9% for salaries of €40,000-€49,999. Currently, the minimum salary for those occupations on the critical skills occupations list is €38,000 per annum and €64,000 for all other occupations that are not on the critical skill list but are eligible for an employment permit. Proposed plans to increase the minimum annual remuneration for employment permits in January 2025 were postponed pending a review.³⁶

Figure 8.2 New Employment Permits Type by Salary, 2024



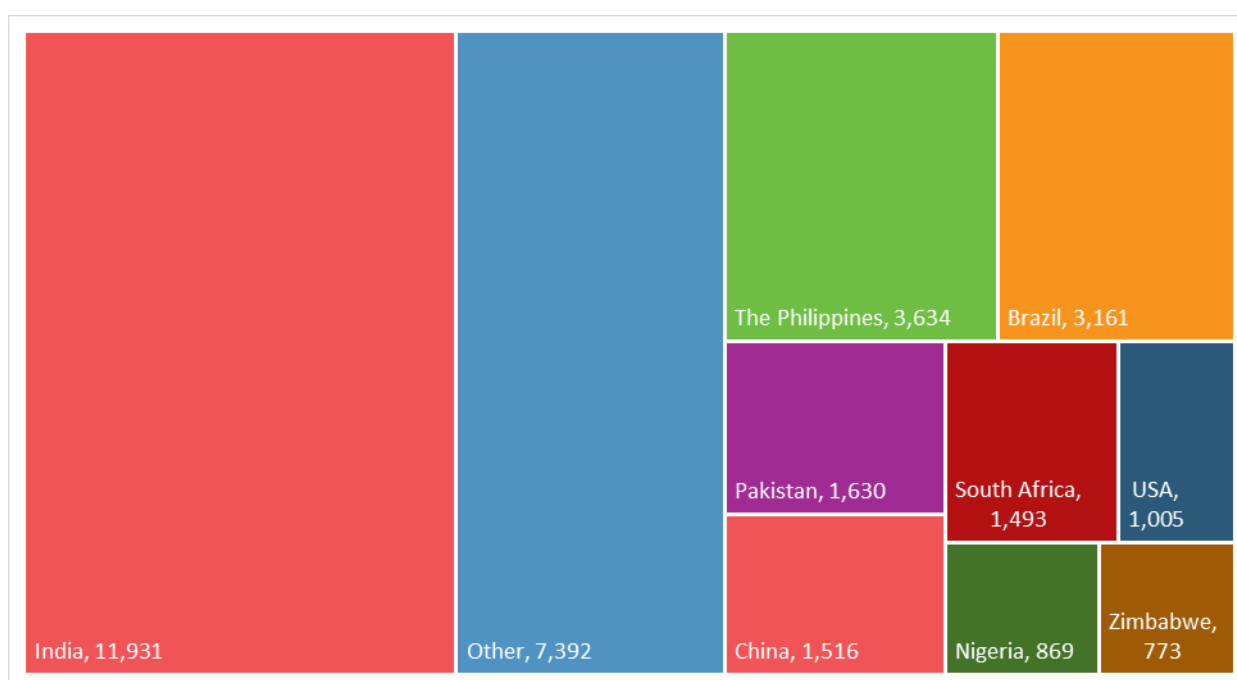
Source: DETE

Employment permits by nationality

Figure 8.3 shows the most frequently occurring nationalities for which new employment permits were issued in 2024. Well over half (61%) of the 33,404 new permits issued in 2024 were held by persons from India, the Philippines, Brazil, and Pakistan collectively. Over two thirds (69%) of new permits issued to Indian nationals were for the health and ICT sector combined. Over a third (40%) of new permits issued to persons from the Philippines were for positions in the health sector. Over half (56%) of new permits issued to persons from Brazil were for positions in the agriculture, accommodation/food and health sectors combined, while just over half (51%) of new permits issued to Pakistan nationals were for positions in the health sector.

³⁶ [Deferral of increases to Minimum Annual Remuneration for employment permits - DETE](#)

Figure 8.3 New Employment Permits by Nationality, 2024

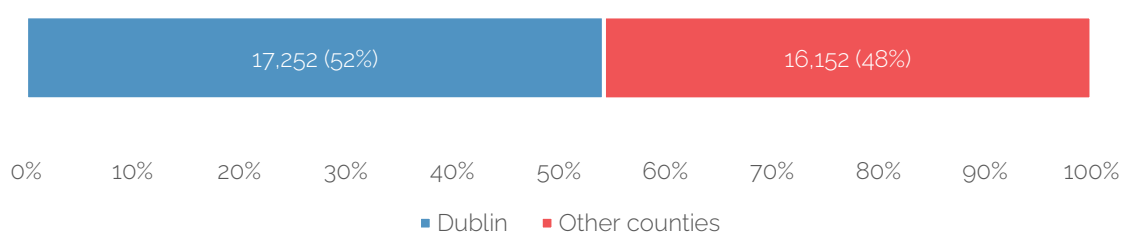


Source: DETE

Employment permits by region

Over half (52%) of all new permits issued in 2024 were for positions in Dublin (Figure 8.4), the majority of which were for positions in the ICT (28%), health (28%), and financial sector (12%).

Figure 8.4 New Employment Permits by Region, 2024

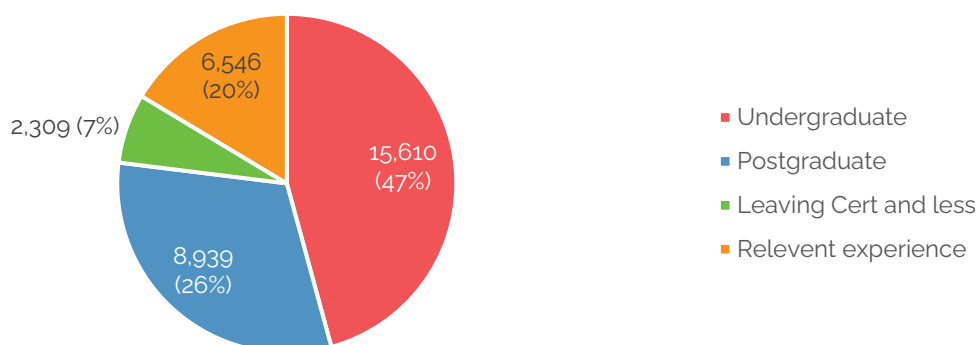


Source: DETE

Employment permits by qualification

Almost three quarters (73%) of new permits issued in 2024 were for persons with third level qualifications (undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications combined) (Figure 8.5), of which over two thirds (67%) were critical skill permits. New permits issued that required relevant experience were primarily general employment permits.

Figure 8.5 New Employment Permits by Qualifications, 2024



Source: DETE

8.3 Employment Permits by Sector

Key Sectors

Figure 8.6 illustrates the breakdown of new employment permits issued for key sectors; combined these sectors accounted for 94% of all new permits issued in 2024.

In 2024, the largest number of new employment permits issued was for the health (10,852 permits, or 32%) and ICT (6,151 permits, or 18%) sectors, which combined made up just over a half of total new permits issued that year.

- In the **health** sector, over half (55%) of total new permits issued in 2024 were critical skills permits, while a further 45% were general employment permits³⁷
- In the **ICT** sector, four fifths (80%) of total new permits issued in 2024 were critical skills permits.

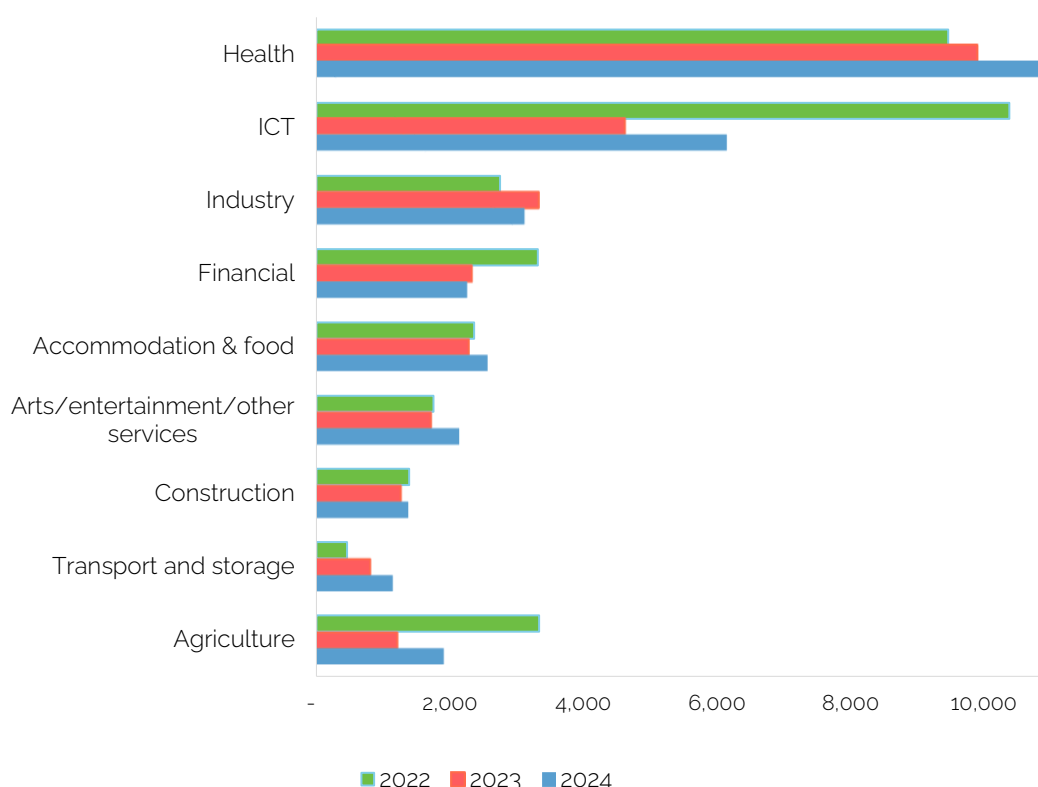
When compared to one year earlier, the number of new employment permits in 2024 increased for most sectors. The largest growth in absolute terms was for

- the ICT sector (which increased by a third, with 1,530 additional new employment permits); the increase in this sector, however, was not enough to offset the 55% fall that occurred between 2022 and 2023, a fall most likely related to the restructuring and reduced hiring in the ICT sector for that period.
- the health sector (951 additional new permits, or a 10% increase).

The increase in new permits issued for agricultural roles in 2024 related primarily to new quotas for 1,000 horticultural workers and 350 dairy farm assistants, while a new quota of 150 permits was also introduced for sea fishers to address the skill shortages in the Irish fishing fleet. The number of new permits issued for arts, entertainment and other services, transport and storage, accommodation and food, and the construction sector were also up from the previous year, albeit to a lesser extent. The number of employment permits in 2024 fell, when compared to 2023, for just two sectors, namely industry (-6%, or 213 fewer new permits) and finance (-3%, or 69 fewer permits).

³⁷ In addition, demand for new permits in the health sector is likely to continue with the introduction of a quota of 1,000 general employment permits for the role of care worker and home carer in March 2025.

Figure 8.6 New Employment Permits for Selected Sectors*, 2022-2024



Source: DETE

*In 2024, these selected sectors account for 94% of all new permits issued.

8.4 Employment Permits by Occupation

At 19,250 new employment permits in 2024, professional occupations accounted for 58% of all new permits issued that year, down from 61% in 2023 and 63% in 2022 (Figure 8.7).

There were 4,684 new permits for skilled trades in 2024, up from 3,711 in 2023. This increase is likely to have been impacted, at least in part, by a number of measures which were introduced in 2024 relating to skilled trades occupations including:

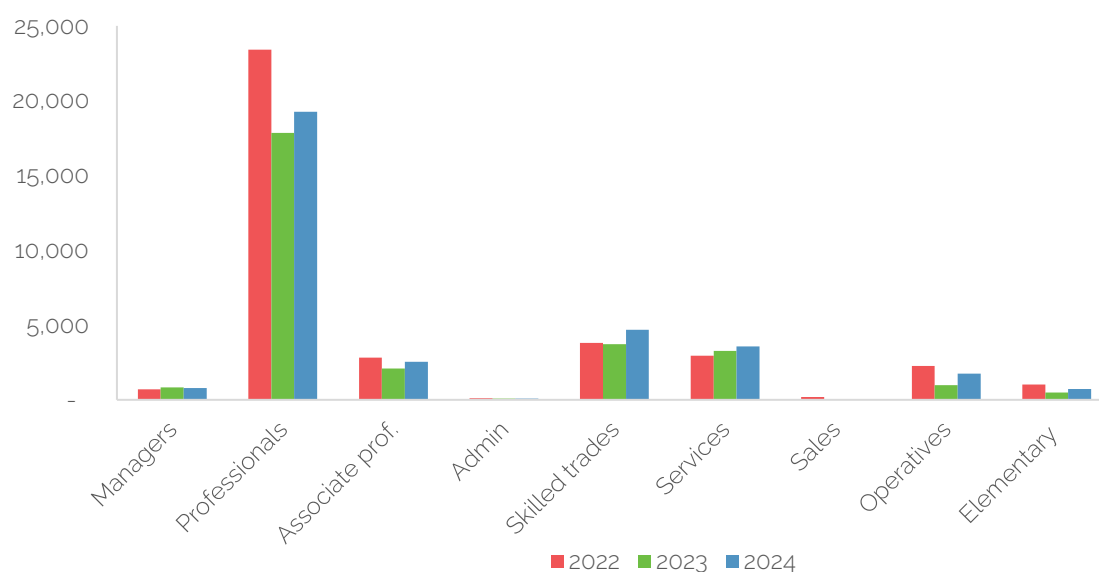
- a quota for meat deboners was extended by an additional 350 permits in January 2024
- in August 2024 a new quota for 250 additional permits was established for lineworkers to help relieve the pressure on the ESB Networks' overhead lines framework contractors
- in November 2024 a quota was extended for an additional 200 car mechanics, motor mechanics, auto electricians, motor vehicle technicians, to meet the needs of the transport and storage sector
- in July 2024, a quota of 150 permits was introduced for sea fishers to address the skill shortages in the Irish fishing fleet. This new quota was introduced following a recommendation by a Cross-Governmental group to move the role of sea fisher from the Atypical Working Scheme (AWS) to the Employment Permit System.

New permits for services occupations grew slightly between both 2022-2023 and 2023-2024. 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, grew slightly in the year to 2024, having declined significantly in the preceding year, possibly due to quotas filled for these permits. In June 2022, the food industry saw a quota for 425 meat processing operative permits introduced; this quota was extended by an additional 1,000 permits in January 2024.

Although the number of new employment permits issued for elementary occupations grew between 2023 and 2024 to reach 731 in 2024, they remained below their 2022 level of 1,017. The increase in 2024 was partly due to an extension of quotas for this occupation in 2024, with 1,000 permits issued for horticultural workers and 350 dairy farm assistants.

Figure 8.7 New Employment Permits by Broad Occupation, 2022-2024

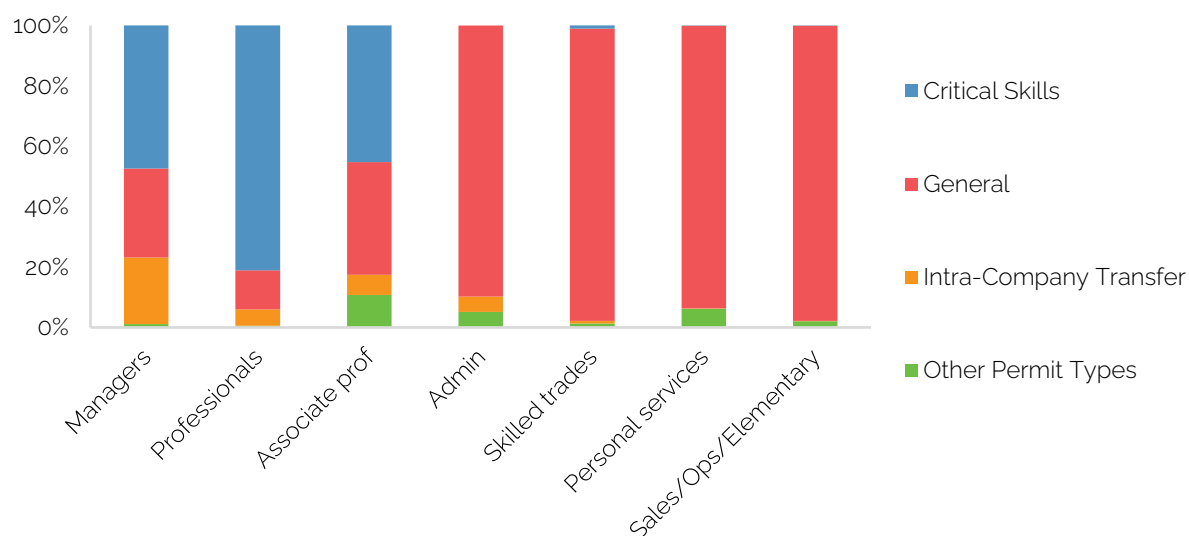


Source: DETE

New Permits by Occupation & Type

The type of employment permit issued varied across occupational groups in 2024 (Figure 8.8). Almost half (47%) of new permits issued for managers and over four-fifths (81%) of new permits issued for professionals in 2024 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, 2024

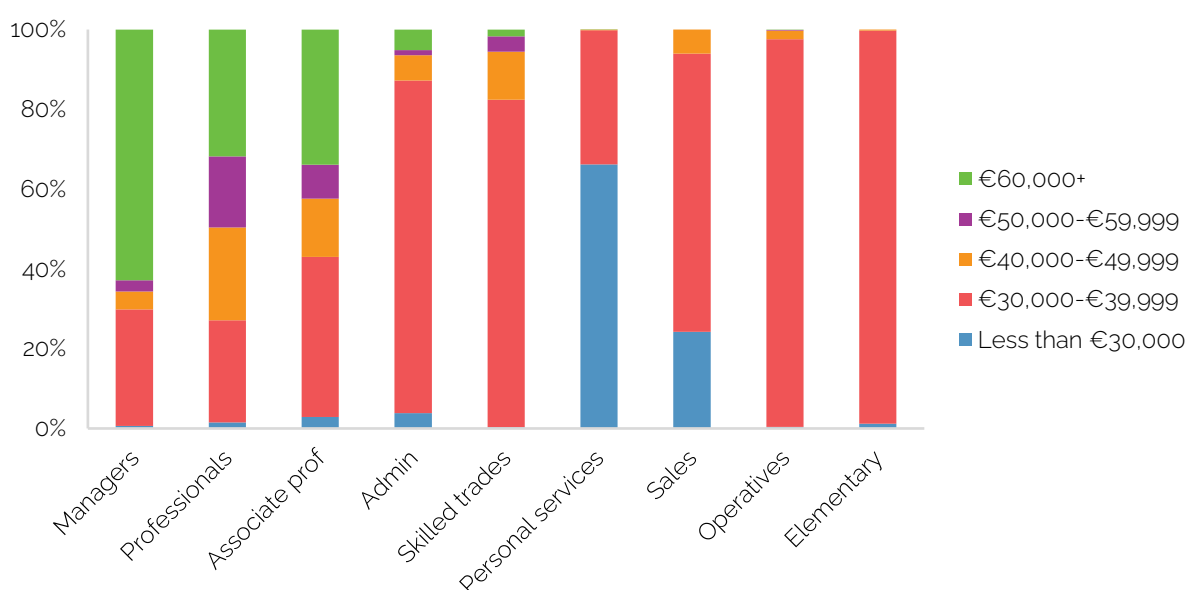


Source: DETE

New Permits by Occupation & Salary

Of the new permits issued for managers, almost two thirds (63%) were for roles which offered a salary of €60,000 or above; half (50%) of new permits issued for professionals were for a salary of €50,000 or above (Figure 8.9). The majority of new permits issued for admin, skilled trades, personal services, sales, operatives and elementary occupations had a salary of less than €40,000.

Figure 8.9 New Employment Permits by Occupation and Salary, 2024



Source: DETE

Managers

- **Overall:** new employment permits for managerial positions accounted for 2% of all permits issued in 2024
- **Type:** critical skills accounted for 47% of the new permits issued for this occupation, with a further 29% for general permits and 22% for intra-company transfers
- **Salary:** 63% of new permits issued had a salary of €60,000 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 (24%), ICT (17%), accommodation and food services (14%) and for financial services (13%)
- **Nationality:** just over a fifth of all permits issued for managers were for those originating from the USA, with a further 19% of permits issued for those originating from India
- **Region:** over half (59%) 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 manufacturing, IT and financial services
 - managers in accommodation & food, farming, construction (including site and project), wholesale/retail, transport & storage.

Professionals

- **Overall:** new employment permits for professionals accounted over half (58%) of total permits issued in 2024
- **Type:** critical skills accounted for the majority (81%) of the new permits issued for this occupation, with a further 13% for general permits and 5% for intra-company transfers
- **Salary:** almost half (49%) of new permits issued were for a salary of between €30,000 and €49,999 with a further 50% with a salary of €50,000 or more
- **Sector:** new permits were mainly issued for positions in the health (39%), IT (26%), and for industry and finance sector (each at 10%)
- **Nationality:** almost half (48%) of all new permits for professionals were issued to persons from India, while a further 17% were to persons from the Philippines, Pakistan and Brazil collectively
- **Region:** over half (59%) of all new permits issued for professionals were for positions in Dublin.
- **Occupations:** new employment permits were most frequently issued for
 - 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, physiotherapists, cardiac physiologists/audiologists, social workers, pharmacists, dentists, occupational therapists, optometrists, psychologists, speech therapists
 - IT: software engineers/developers, analysts/engineers (cloud, security, systems, test, network), IT business analysts/project managers, architects (software, systems, technical, solutions), web design, data analysts/scientists, consultants (in cyber security, SAP, business process), UX designers
 - financial: analysts (business, financial, risk, data, tax, regulatory/compliance), accountants (in auditing), actuaries
 - industry: engineers (e.g., process, design, electrical, mechanical, quality, electronic, automation, validation), quality assurance/quality control and regulatory professionals, scientists (including analytical, medical, chemical), business analysts
 - construction: civil/site engineers and other engineers (electrical, mechanical and design), quantity surveyors, project managers and architectural technologists.

Associate Professionals & Technical

- **Overall:** new employment permits for associate professionals accounted for 8% of total permits issued in 2024
- **Type:** critical skills accounted for over two fifths (45%) and general employment permits for 37% of new permits issued for this occupation
- **Salary:** 43% of new permits issued had a salary of less than €40,000 and a further 42%, a salary of €50,000 or more
- **Sector:** over a third (34%) of new permits issued were for positions in the ICT sector, with a further 22% for the arts, entertainment and other services collectively and 10% for positions in finance
- **Nationality:** persons from India, Brazil and the USA collectively accounted for 47% of all new permits issued for this occupational group
- **Region:** the majority (73%) 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 marketing specialists, business development and sales executives but also account managers/strategists (with languages),
 - other: financial/data/business/quality analysts, technician roles (e.g. manufacturing, electrical, BIM/CAD, financial accounting), film/TV roles (e.g. actors, producers, directors, animators, visual effects supervisors), IT technical support, customer engineers, HR/recruitment consultants, sports coaches/players, procurement analysts/buyers, estimators, health and safety officers/advisors, writers, dancers.

Administrative and Secretarial

- **Overall:** with 78 permits, administrative positions accounted for less than 1% of total new permits issued in 2024
- **Type:** the majority of new permits issued for this occupational group were general permits (90%)
- **Salary:** most (87%) of new permits issued had a salary of less than €40,000
- **Region:** over half (56%) of all new permits issued were for positions in Dublin
- **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 14% of total new permits issued in 2024
- **Type:** the majority (97%) of new permits issued were general employment permits
- **Salary:** most of the new permits issued (82%) had a salary of less than €40,000
- **Sector:** almost half (48%) of all new permits issued were for positions in the accommodation and food services sector, 14% for the arts, entertainment and other services sector combined and a further 13% for industry
- **Nationality:** persons from the Philippines, Brazil and China accounted for half (51%) of all new permits issued for this occupational group
- **Region:** over a third (38%) 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)
- HGV/car mechanics/technicians, roadworthiness testers, aircraft mechanics/technicians, panel beaters/spray painters
- welders/fabricators, CNC programmers/operators, lineworkers, pipe fitters
- carpenters (primarily shuttering), bricklayers/stone masons, sheet metal workers, painters, plumbers, tilers, plasterers (including drywall), maintenance fitters/technicians
- meat deboners/knifepersons.

Personal Services

- **Overall:** personal services occupations accounted for 11% of total new permits issued in 2024
- **Type:** the majority (94%) of the new permits issued for this occupational group were general employment permits
- **Sector:** most (91%) of new permits issued were for positions within the health sector
- **Salary:** two thirds (66%) of new permits issued were for employment with a salary of less than €30,000
- **Nationality:** persons from India, Brazil and the Philippines accounted for over two thirds (68%) of all new permits issued for this occupational group
- **Region:** over two fifths (41%) of all new permits issued for personal services roles were for positions in Dublin, with a further 26% in the Mid-East
- **Occupations:** permits were most frequently issued for healthcare assistants, the majority of which were employed in the health sector; a further small percentage were issued for work riders and playgroup leaders.

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 2024
- **Salary:** most (94%) new permits issued had a salary of less than €40,000
- **Sector:** over two thirds (67%) 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 5% of total permits issued in 2024; the majority (99%) of permits issued for this occupational group were issued for general employment permits and almost all (98%) had a salary of less than €40,000
- **Sector:** over half (56%) of new permits issued were for positions in the agriculture sector and a further 34% were issued for positions in the transport and storage sector
- **Nationality:** persons from Brazil accounted for over two fifths (44%) of all new permits issued with South Africa and the Philippines accounting for a further 19% and 16% respectively
- **Region:** the South-East region accounted for 27% of new permits issued, followed by the Mid-East (21%), Dublin (14%) and Border (11%).
- **Occupations:** new permits were most frequently issued for meat processing operatives, followed by HGV and bus/coach drivers.

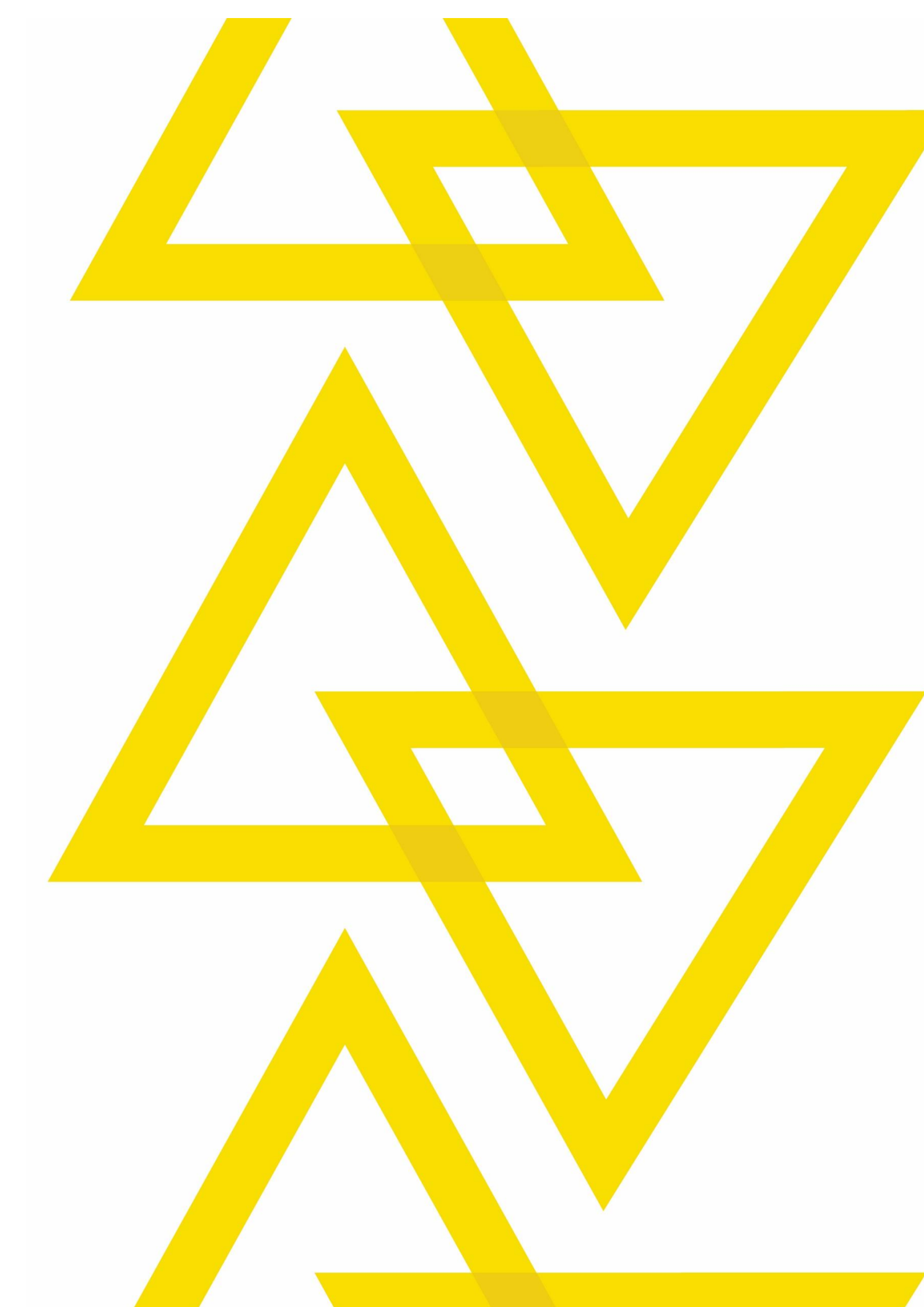
Elementary occupations

- **Overall:** new employment permits for elementary positions accounted for 2% of total new permits issued in 2024, the majority (96%) of which were issued for general employment permits and almost all had a salary of less than €40,000; the Border region accounted for 32% of new permits issued, followed by the South-East (19%); most were in the agricultural sector in roles including horticultural operatives/mushroom harvesters and dairy and pig farm assistants.

Key findings for renewal employment permits issued

The number of employment permit renewals grew significantly in 2024 having averaged 2,300 over the previous five years. The growth can be attributed mainly to skilled trades, personal services and operative roles (e.g. chefs, healthcare assistants, meat processing operatives). Of those renewals issued in 2024:

- **Overall:** almost 6,000 renewal permits were issued
- **Type:** the majority (90%) of renewal permits issued were general employment permits
- **Salary:** most of the renewal permits issued (84%) had a salary of less than €40,000
- **Sector:** over a quarter (29%) of all renewal permits issued were for positions in the agriculture sector, with a further 28% for the health sector and 13% for positions in the accommodation and food services sector
- **Nationality:** persons from India and Brazil accounted for half (50%) of all permits issued
- **Region:** almost a third (31%) of all permits issued were for positions in Dublin with a further (20%) for the Mid-East and (15%) for the South-East.



Section 9 Vacancies

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

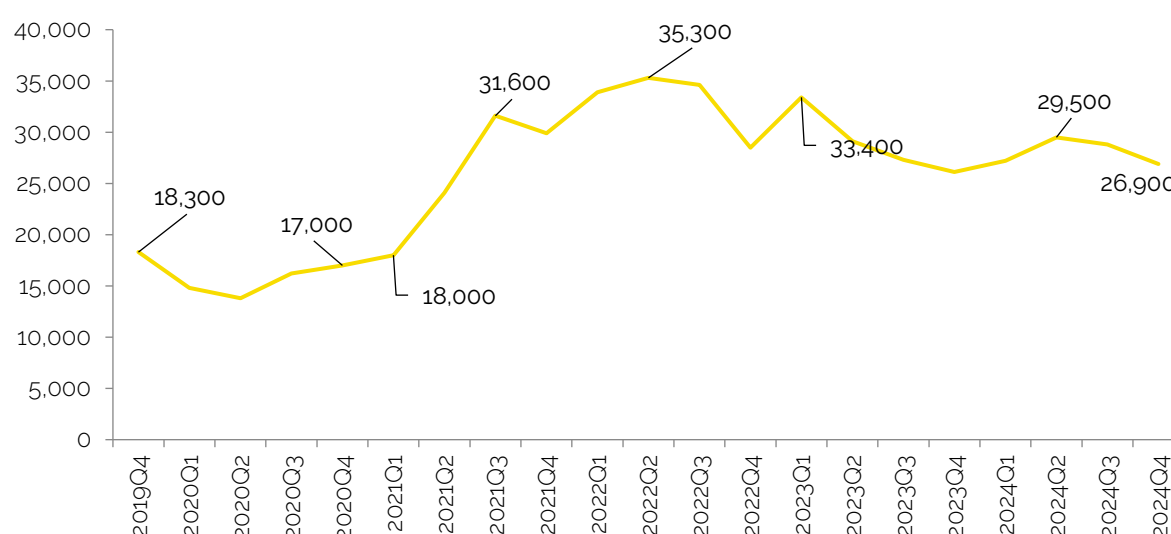
- job vacancy numbers and rates by sector (Source: CSO)
- advertised job vacancies by occupation (sources: Eurostat's Web Intelligence Hub (WIH)/CEDEFOP and JobsIreland.ie (DSP))
- results of the SLMRU's own Recruitment Agency Survey.

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.

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 2024, there were 26,900 vacancies reported, representing a job vacancy rate³⁸ of 1.2%. As the economy recovered following the onset 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 35,300 vacancies (Figure 9.1). The number of vacancies has fluctuated since; in quarter 4 2024, although they were at a lower level than the peak in 2022, they remained above pre-COVID-19 levels. The private sector accounted for almost two-thirds (65%) of the 26,900 job vacancies in quarter 4 2024, with the remaining 35% in the public sector; this compares to shares of 77% and 66% in the private sector in quarter 4 2019 and quarter 4 2023 respectively.

Figure 9.1 Job Vacancies (CSO), Quarter 4 2019 - Quarter 4 2024



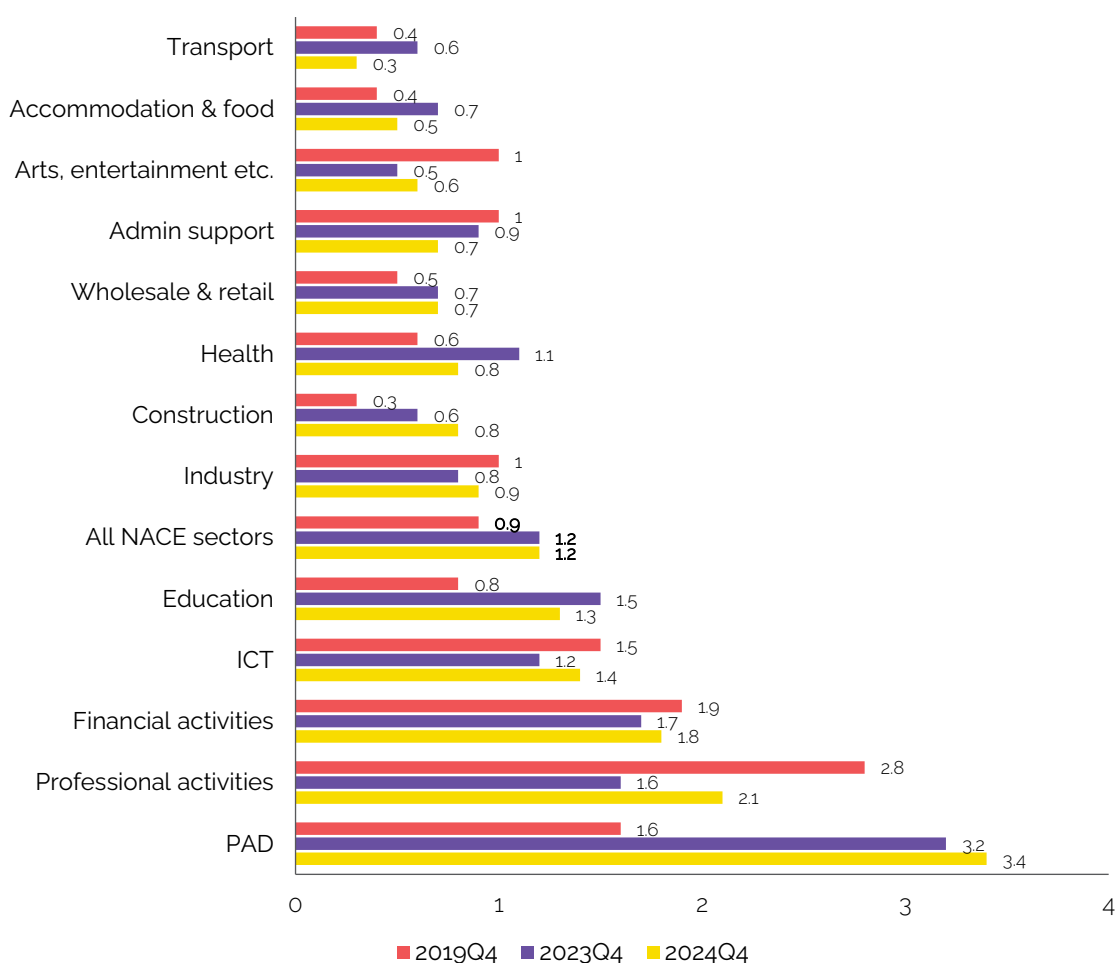
³⁸ The job vacancy rate, as detailed in the CSO Earnings, Hours and Employment Costs Survey (EHECS), measures the proportion of total posts that are vacant as a proportion of total occupied posts combined with job vacancies.

Source: CSO EHECS

Figure 9.2 presents the job vacancy rates by sector for quarter 4 2019, quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024. Public administration and defence (PAD) had the highest vacancy rate in quarter 4 2024, at 3.4%, 2.2 percentage points above the rate for all sectors (1.2%). The transport sector had the lowest job vacancy rate at 0.3% (with just 300 reported vacancies). Between quarter 4 2023 and quarter 4 2024, the overall vacancy rate remained unchanged with only minor fluctuations (ranging from 0 to 0.3 percentage points) for the majority of sectors. The largest change in this time period was for the professional activities sector with a 0.5 percentage point increase.

In quarter 4 2024, the overall vacancy rate was 0.3 percentage points higher than in quarter 4 2019. The PAD sector had the largest growth since quarter 4 2019 of 1.8 percentage points, followed by the education and construction sectors (both increasing by 0.5 percentage points). The largest decline was for the professional activities sector with the job vacancy rate falling from 2.8% to 2.1%; this sector has seen significant fluctuations in its job vacancy rate over the time period, peaking at 4.5% in quarter 2 2022 before declining to 1.6% in quarter 4 2023.

Figure 9.2 Job Vacancy Rate (%) by Sector, Quarter 4 2019, Quarter 4 2023 and Quarter 4 2024



Source: CSO EHECS

9.2 Advertised job vacancies

Analyses of online job advertisements can provide insights into the types of 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 needs to be 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.

Section 9.2.1 examines online job adverts available via the Eurostat/CEDEFOP Web Intelligence Hub (WIH). This is followed by section 9.2.2, which provides an analysis of a subset of the WIH data, namely the job vacancy adverts posted on the Department of Social Protection's portal, jobsireland.ie.

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.

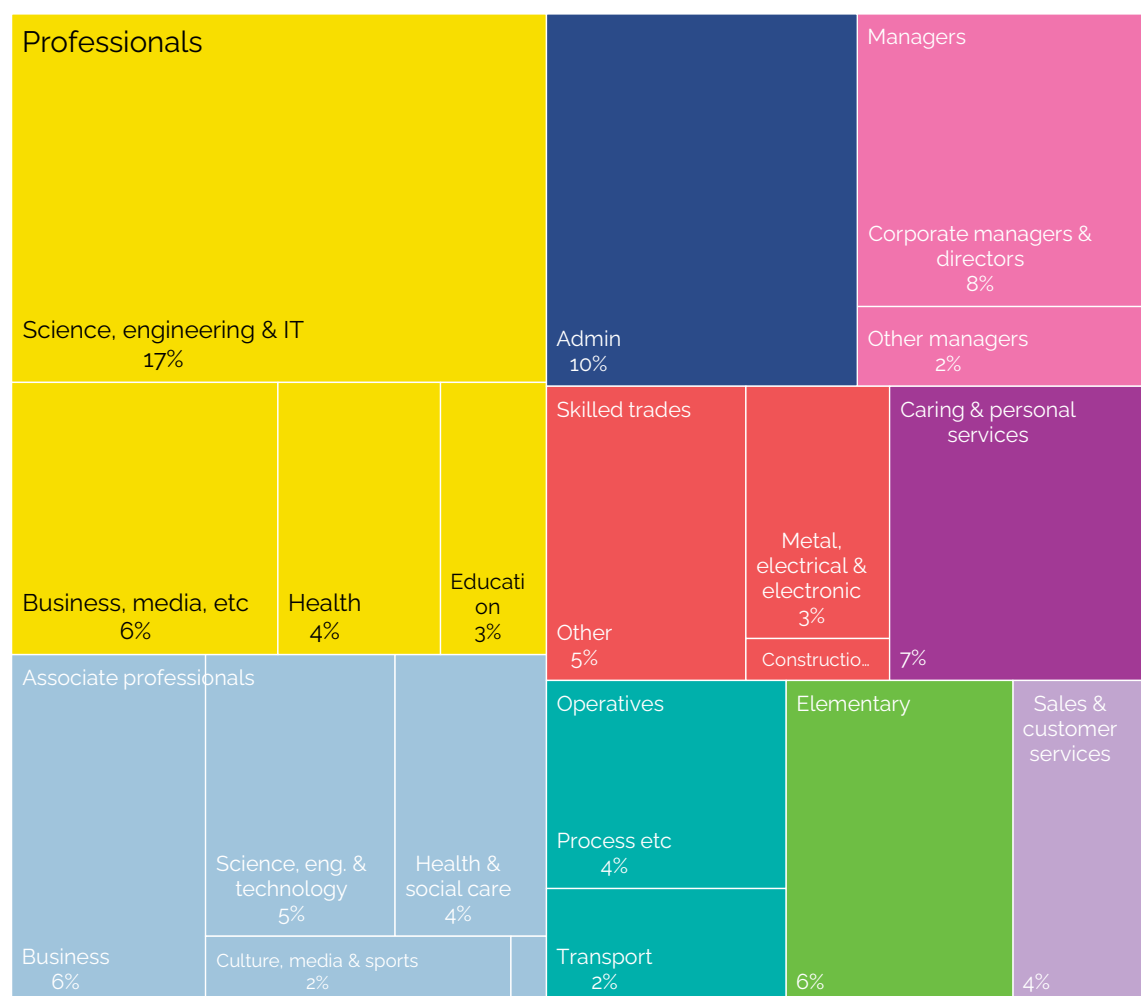
It should be noted that this dataset is relatively new and continuously subject to refinements and improvements. In 2023 and 2024, technical adjustments to the scraping and processing of job postings at EU level have seen a reduction in data volume compared to earlier data extractions. In addition, the number of websites and job portals for Ireland included in the online job adverts database in 2024 was considerably lower than in 2022 or 2023. Consequently, the data presented here is not comparable with that in earlier versions of the National Skills Bulletin.

Occupations in online job adverts

Compared to numbers employed (see Section 2.1), online job adverts tend to be skewed towards higher skilled occupations: of the nearly 120,000 job adverts for roles in Ireland in 2024, more than one half (57%) were for high skilled occupations (Figure 9.3); in contrast, high skilled occupations made up 47% of total employment in Ireland in quarter 4 2024 (see Section 4 of this report). And while adverts for science, engineering & IT professional roles made up 17% of online job ads in 2024, they accounted for just 7% of total employment in quarter 4 2024.

The largest occupation, despite a three percentage-point decrease on the 2023 share, was for **science, engineering & IT professionals, at 17%**, followed by **corporate managers and directors** (e.g. directors in marketing, retail & wholesale, finance), at 8%.

Figure 9.3 Distribution of Online Job Adverts by Occupation, 2024



Source: WIH (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

Skills in online job adverts

Skills information in online job adverts (WIH as well as in the JobsIreland portal) are classified according to ESCO, the classification of European skills/competencies, qualifications and occupations.³⁹ 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, 22 Level 1 categories, and four Level 0 categories.

In 2024, of the four Level 0 skill classification categories, 38% of skill mentions in online job ads were for work-related skills, 31% for knowledge (corresponding to ISCED fields of learning – the international classification for education/training programmes), and 31% were for transversal skills and competences. The remaining 1% was for language skills and knowledge.

Figure 9.4 details the top 30 skills (ESCO Level 3) mentioned in online job adverts in 2024. Combined these 30 skills made up 70% of all skill mentions. The **transversal** skills most in demand included

- demonstrating willingness to learn (including adapting to change),

³⁹ [Skills & competences | European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations \(ESCO\)](#)

- working efficiently (including attention to detail, manage time/quality)
- collaborating in teams

The most frequently mentioned **work-related skills** were

- accessing and analysing digital data
- accompanying & welcoming people (e.g. making reservations, greeting guests/visitors)
- using digital tools for collaboration and productivity (e.g. MS Office, customer relationship software)

The areas of **knowledge** most in demand in online job adverts related to

- Personal skills & development (e.g. teamwork, communication)
- Business:
 - management/administration,
 - wholesale/retail sales – comprising sales activities, quality standards, sales promotion and augmentation
 - marketing & advertising – sales strategies, customer segmentation, social media and digital marketing techniques.

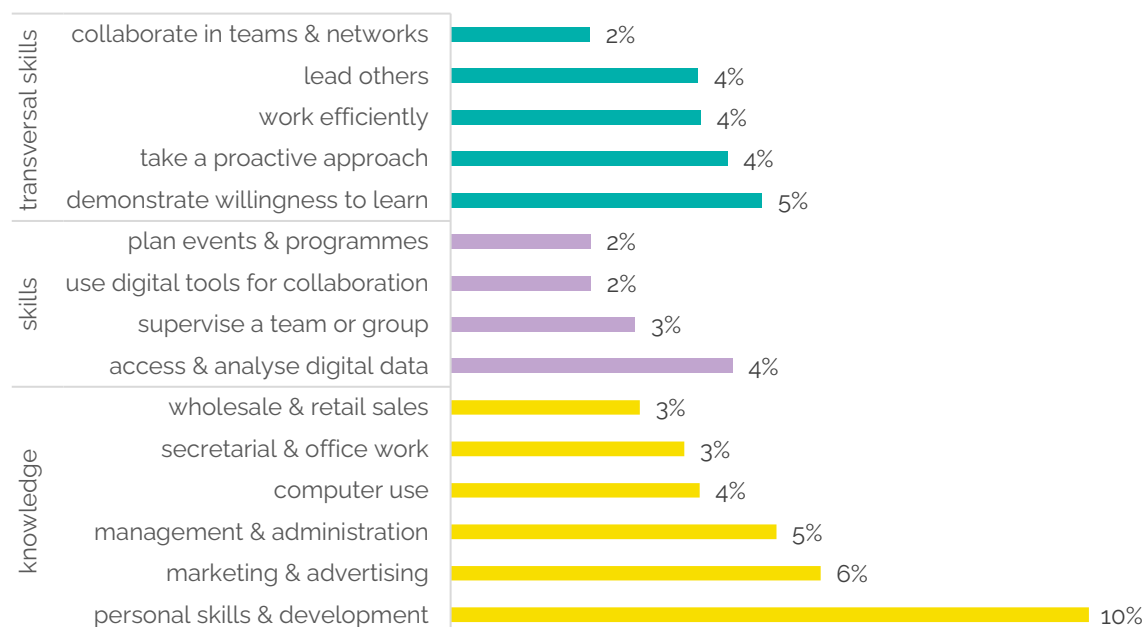
Figure 9.4 Most Frequently Mentioned Skills in Online Job Adverts, 2024



Source: WIH (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

Broad Occupation	Manager Occupations	
Share of total OJAs	2023	2024
	11.6%	9.8%
Most frequently occurring detailed occupations in 2024	- Marketing and sales directors - Managers and directors in retail and wholesale - Managers and proprietors in other services n.e.c.* - Restaurant and catering managers and proprietors - Financial managers and directors Combined, these five occupations accounted for 60% of OJAs for manager occupations in 2024.	
Most frequently mentioned skills in ads for manager occupations, 2024	- Subject knowledge made up the largest group of skills for managers, accounting for 38%, which was the largest share observed across any occupational group. - Personal skills and development for managers mostly referred to knowledge of teamwork principles and team building. - Management & admin knowledge included project management, customer relationship management, cost management, and corporate social responsibility.	

Figure 9.5 Most Frequently Mentioned Detailed Skills in Ads for Manager Occupations, 2024

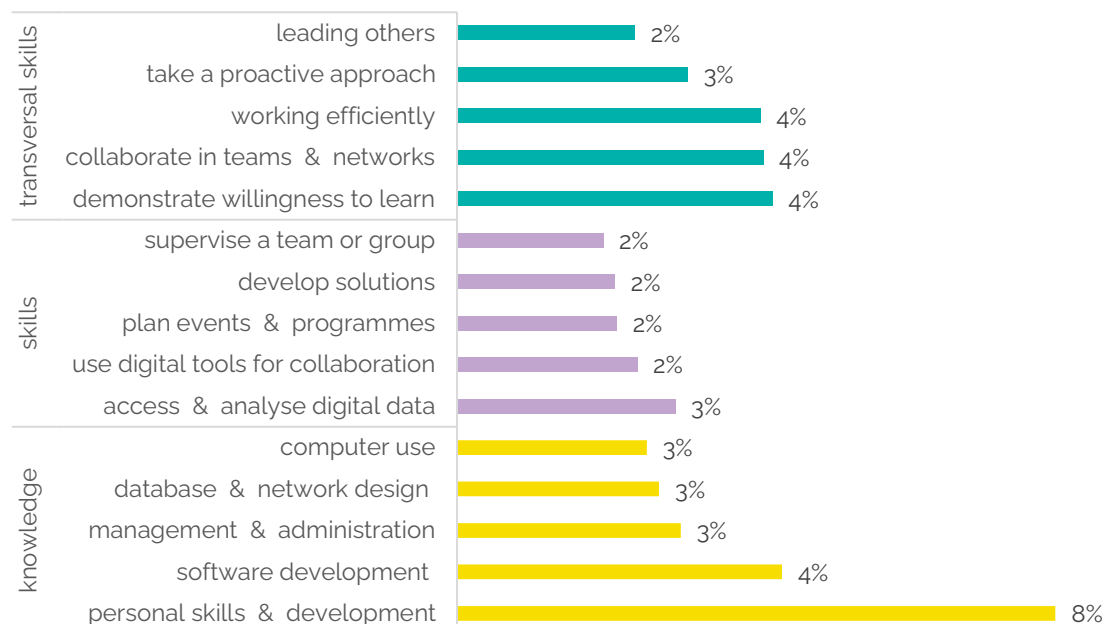


Source: WIH (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

**This occupation includes property managers, hairdressing salon owners/managers, waste disposal and environmental services managers.

Broad Occupation: Professional Occupations		
Share of total OJAs	2023	2024
	33.0%	30.3%
Most frequently occurring detailed occupations in 2024	• Programmers & software development professionals • Engineering professionals not elsewhere classified • IT business analysts, architects and systems designers • Research and development managers • Nurses Combined, these five occupations accounted for 51% of OJAs for professional occupations.	
Most frequently mentioned skills in ads for professional occupations, 2024	• Self-management related skills (e.g. willingness to learn, take a proactive approach, work efficiently) made up 10% of all skill mentions for this occupation. • Personal skills related mostly to knowledge of teamwork and communication principles. • Knowledge of software development and computer use (nearly 7% of skill mentions) skills were mostly mentioned in ICT occupations; however, they were also mentioned for other occupations such as accountants and engineers (civil, electronic, production).	

Figure 9.6 Most Frequently Mentioned Detailed Skills in Ads for Professional Occupations, 2024



Source: WIH (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

Broad Occupation: Associate Professional Occupations		
Share of total OJAs	2023	2024
	18.0%	16.5%
Most frequently occurring detailed occupations in 2024	- Welfare and housing associate professionals n.e.c. - Business sales executives - Health associate professionals n.e.c. - Laboratory technicians - HR and industrial relations officers Combined, these five occupations accounted for nearly two fifths (39%) of all associate professional OJAs. IT support and IT operations technicians combined made up a further 9% while science & engineering (excluding lab) technicians made up 14%. The decline in the share of associate professionals in total OJAs was mostly due to falls for science & building engineering technicians and finance & investment analysts.	
Most frequently mentioned skills in ads for associate professional occupations, 2024	38% of total skill mentions were for job-related skills. - Subject knowledge of personal skills & development mostly referred to teamwork and communication principles (especially for HR officers, IT user support technicians, and business sales executives). - The ability to work efficiently referred mostly to an ability to manage time, manage quality or pay attention to detail.	

Figure 9.7 Most Frequently Mentioned Detailed Skills in Ads for Associate Professionals, 2024

transversal skills	working efficiently	5%
	demonstrate willingness to learn	5%
	collaborate in teams & networks	4%
	take a proactive approach	4%
	lead others	2%
skills	access & analyse digital data	3%
	accompany & welcome people	2%
	use digital tools for collaboration	2%
	sell products or services	2%
knowledge	personal skills & development	7%
	marketing & advertising	4%
	wholesale & retail sales	3%
	management & admin	2%
	database & network design	2%
	computer use	2%

Source: WIH (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

Broad Occupation: Administrative Occupations		
Share of total OJAs	2023	2024
	10.8%	10.2%
Most frequently occurring detailed occupations in 2024	- Personal assistants and other secretaries - Local government administrative occupations - Receptionists - Book-keepers, payroll managers and wages clerks - Stock control clerks and assistants The five most frequently occurring roles accounted for more than four fifths (83%) of all administrative OJAs.	
Most frequently mentioned skills in ads for associate professional occupations, 2024	- More than two fifths (43%) of mentions were job-related skills, the second highest (after elementary occupations). - Personal skills and development knowledge for administrative occupations related mostly to communication and assertiveness skills. - Work skills related exclusively to customer service knowledge. Digital skills (accessing & analysing digital data, using digital tools, and computer use) made up 10% of all skill mentions for this occupation. Finance related skills (including skills outside the top 15 mentioned in the chart below) made up 7% of skill mentions.	

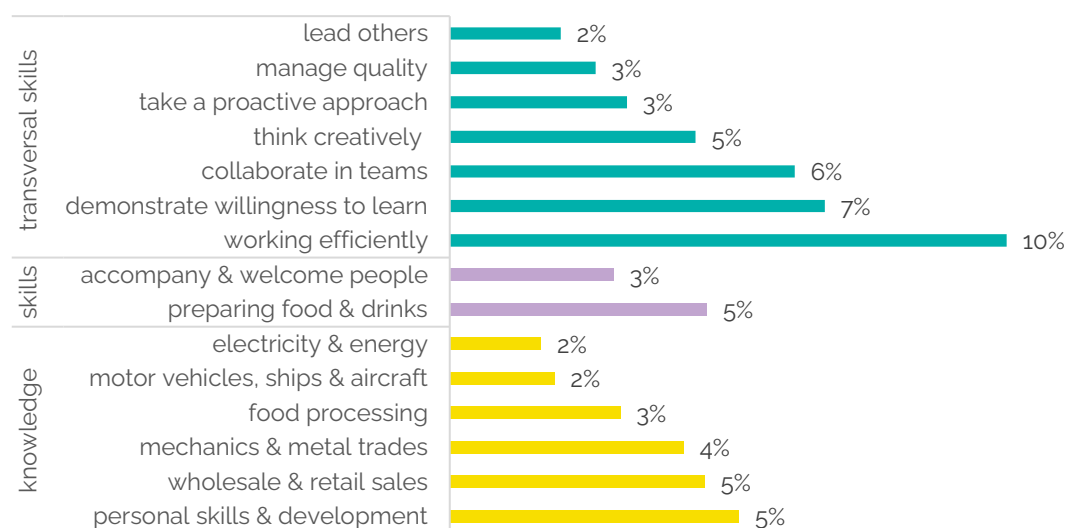
Figure 9.8 Most Frequently Mentioned Detailed Skills in Ads for Adminiatriative Occupations, 2024



Source: WIH (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

Broad Occupation: Skilled Trades Occupations		
Share of total OJAs	2023	2024
	7.2%	8.9%
Most frequently occurring detailed occupations in 2024	• Chefs • Vehicle technicians, mechanics and electricians • Electricians and electrical fitters • Sheet metal workers Combined, these five occupations accounted for 70% of all skilled trades OJAs.	
Most frequently mentioned skills in ads for skilled trades occupations, 2024	• Working efficiently was the largest individual skill and mostly referred to an ability to manage quality; this skill was mentioned in more than half of job ads for chefs and in more than a third of ads for electricians. • Knowledge of wholesale and retail sales was almost exclusively related to being able to apply quality standards, defined in ESCO as the knowledge of <i>requirements, specifications and guidelines to ensure that products, services and processes are of good quality and fit for purpose</i>. This skill was mentioned in nearly 60% of ads for chefs.	

Figure 9.9 Most Frequently Mentioned Detailed Skills in Ads for Skilled Trades Occupations, 2024



Source: WIH (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

Broad Occupation: Caring & Personal Service Occupations		
Share of total OJAs	2023	2024
	4.5%	6.9%
Most frequently occurring detailed occupations in 2024	Nearly three quarters of OJAs for caring/personal service occupations in 2024 were for just three occupations • Nursing auxiliaries and assistants • Caretakers • Childminders and related occupations	
Most frequently mentioned skills in ads for caring/personal service occupations, 2024	• Self-management skills (work efficiently, demonstrate a willingness to learn and the ability to take a proactive approach) made up 29% of skill mentions. Willingness to learn was particularly relevant to healthcare assistants and was mentioned in over 90% of job ads. • Personal skills knowledge was related mostly to mentions for communication (especially childcare workers) and assertiveness skills (especially for healthcare assistants).	

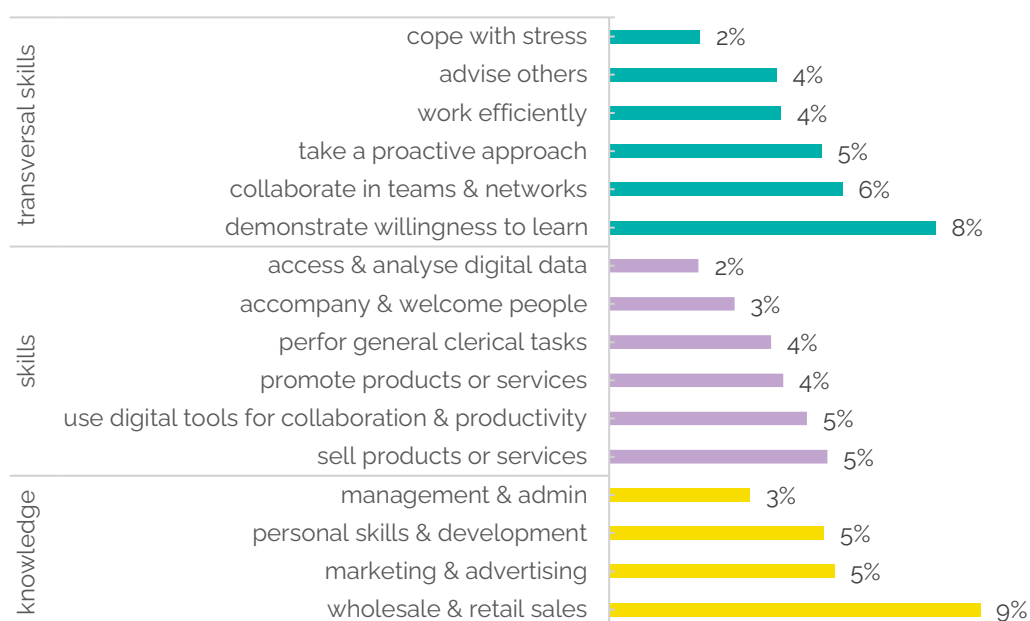
Figure 9.10 MostFrequently Mentioned Detailed Skills in Ads for Caring & Services Occupations, 2024



Source: WIH (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

Broad Occupation: Sales & Customer Service Occupations		
Share of total OJAs	2023	2024
	4.2%	4.1%
Most frequently occurring detailed occupations in 2024	Most (57%) online job adverts for sales related occupations were for sales and retail assistants ; for all other sales occupations, the number of job adverts was under 1,000.	
Most frequently mentioned skills in ads for sales occupations, 2024	- Management and administration knowledge related almost exclusively to customer relationship management. - Under personal skills and development, the most frequently mentioned skills were communication, followed by assertiveness.	

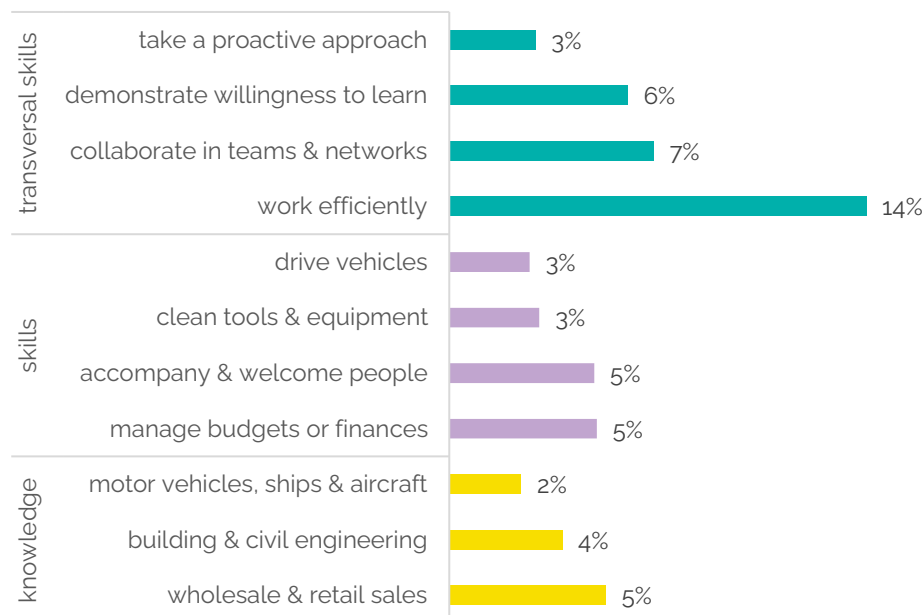
Figure 9.11 Most Frequently Mentioned Detailed Skills in Ads for Sales Occupations, 2024



Source: WIH (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

Broad Occupation: Operative Occupations		
Share of total OJAs	2023	2024
	5.5%	6.8%
Most frequently occurring detailed occupations in 2024	- Paper and wood machine operatives - Mobile machine drivers and operatives n.e.c. - Large goods vehicle drivers Combined, these three occupations made up over half (54%) of OJAs for operative occupations in 2024:	
Most frequently mentioned skills in ads for operative occupations, 2024	- Being able to work efficiently was by far the largest skill in mentioned for this occupation and encompassed detailed skills such as being able to pay attention to detail, manage quality and manage time. - Wholesale and retail sales knowledge was primarily associated with knowledge of quality standards, followed by warehouse operations. - The largest detailed skill within civil & building engineering related to technical drawing.	

Figure 9.12 Most Frequently Mentioned Detailed Skills in Ads for Operative Occupations, 2024

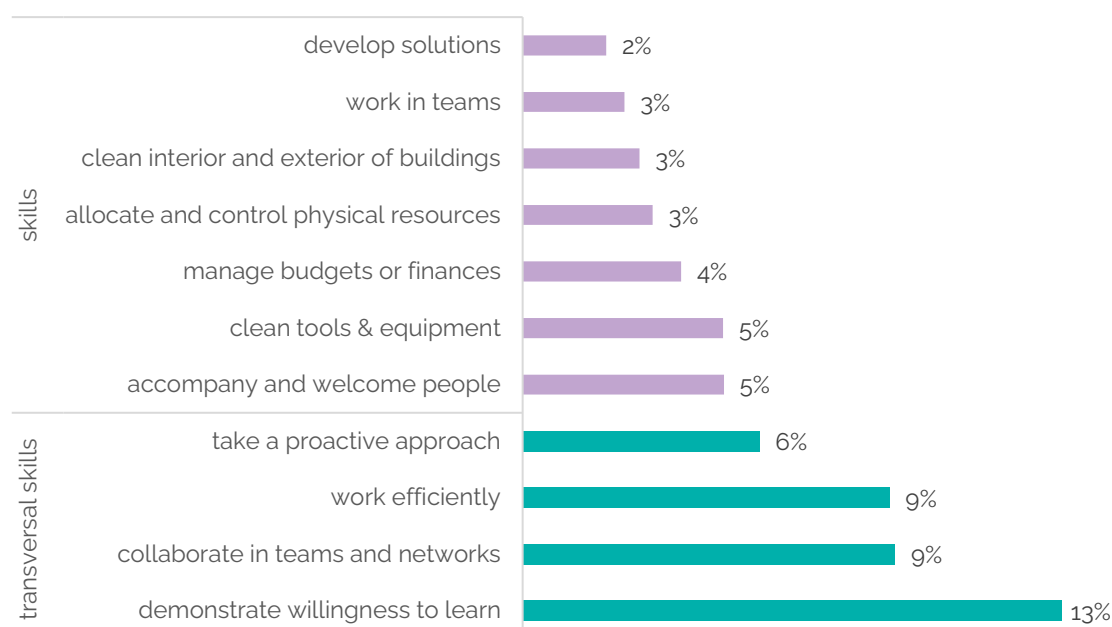


Source: WIH (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

Excludes skills with fewer than 1,000 mentions

Broad Occupation: Elementary Occupations		
Share of total OJAs	2023	2024
	5.2%	6.5%
Most frequently occurring detailed occupations in 2024	- Kitchen and catering assistants - Cleaners and domestics - Elementary storage occupations - Bar staff & waiting staff These four occupations made up nearly three quarters (72%) of OJAs for elementary occupations.	
Most frequently mentioned skills in ads for elementary occupations, 2024	Willingness to learn was mentioned in most job ads (at least 88%) for each of the four most frequently occurring occupations (above). Working efficiently was made up of a range of detailed skills including attention to detail (especially relevant for cleaners, where 67% of job ads mentioned this skill) and the ability to manage time and quality. - This was the only occupation where the knowledge category of skills had fewer than 1,000 mentions.	

Figure 9.13 Most Frequently Mentioned Detailed Skills in Ads for Elementary Occupations, 2024



Source: WIH (Eurostat/CEDEFOP)

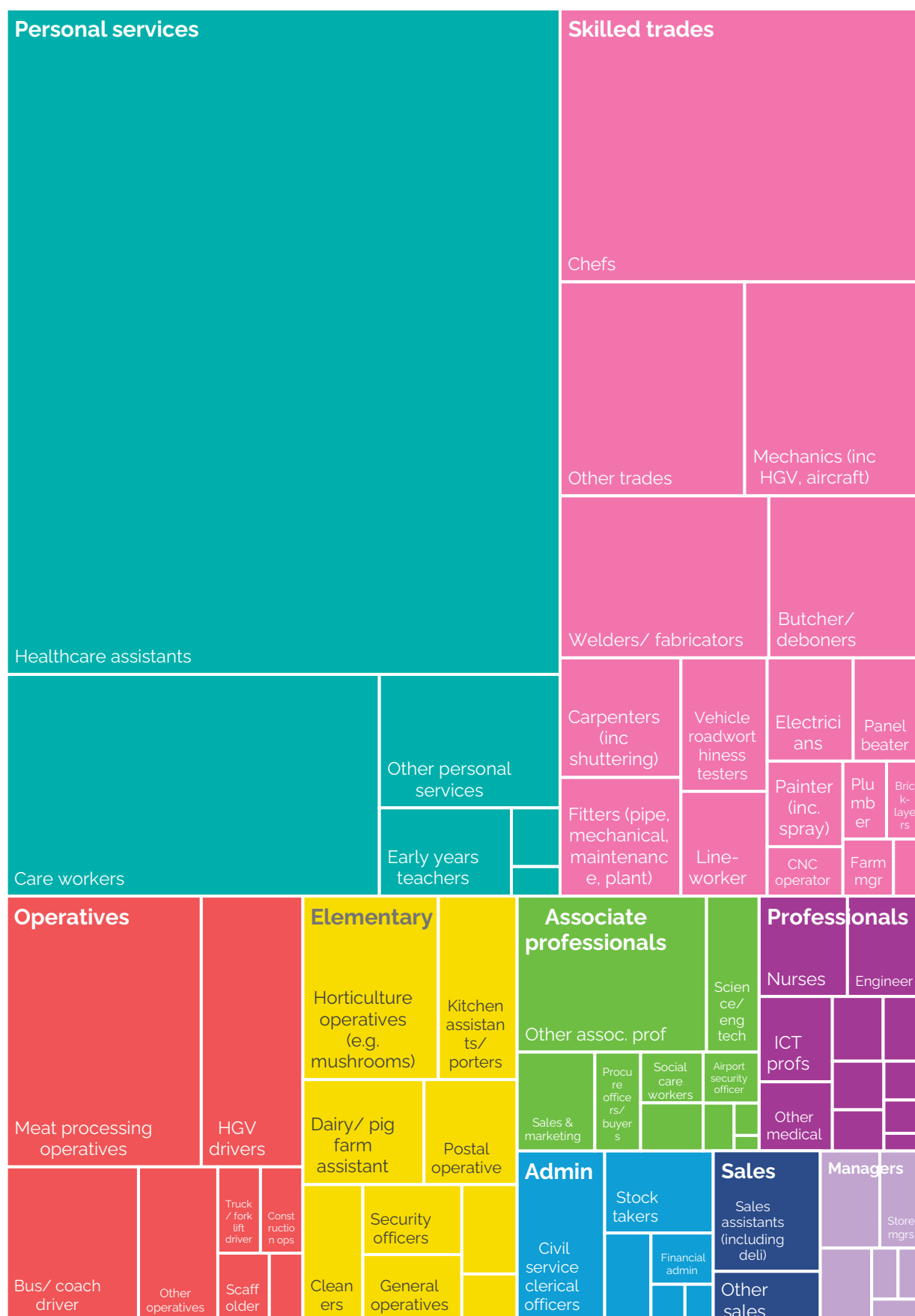
Excludes skills with fewer than 1,000 mentions

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 9.14 relate to paid positions only and refer to posts rather than adverts. The overall number of paid position posts advertised on DSP Jobs Ireland in 2024 was broadly in line with the previous year, although the distribution across occupations changed, with a fall in the number of sales-related posts advertised (e.g. sales assistants) and a rise in the number of advertised posts for personal services (e.g. healthcare assistants). The key findings from the latest data by occupation include:

- **Managers** accounted for 1% of vacancies in 2024, with job titles relating to managers in restaurants, bars and hotels, store managers, production/operations managers, construction project managers, and supply chain managers. The fall in the share of vacancies since 2023 (from 3%) relates mainly to a fall in the number of posts for hospitality-related managers
- **Professionals** accounted for 4% of vacancies in 2024, with job titles including nurses, various engineers, ICT professional roles, youth/social workers, quantity surveyors, business analysts. The number of professional posts advertised has fallen since 2023, related, in part, to a fall in the number of posts for lecturers, nurses and other medical roles.
- **Associate professional** vacancies (5% of total in 2024 and in line with share in 2023) included social care/support workers, various technicians (including mechanical, maintenance, electrical, CAD), sales representatives, procurement officers/buyers, community employment supervisors, business development/marketing executives, and HR roles
- **Administrative** vacancies (3% of total in 2024) primarily related to the recruitment of civil service clerical officers (both temporary and permanent); there were also posts advertised for stock-takers, financial and transport admin roles, receptionists/secretaries
- **Skilled trades** vacancies (27% of total) were primarily for chefs (with chef de partie appearing most frequently); adverts for posts for welders/fabricators also occurred frequently with a sharp increase in the number of posts for mechanics (including HGV and aircraft) since 2023; in addition, posts for butchers/deboners, vehicle roadworthiness testers, carpenters (including shuttering), fitters (including mechanical, maintenance, plant, pipe, tyre), electricians, lines workers, painters (including spray), panel beaters, CNC operators, bricklayers, plasterers, plumbers and farm managers occurred frequently
- **Personal services** posts advertised rose in 2024 when compared to 2023, accounting for the largest share across all occupations (41% of total), with healthcare assistants accounting for three-quarters of all posts advertised in this category; in addition, posts arose for care workers, early years teachers, tour guides, and hairdressers, barbers, spa therapists
- **Sales** roles accounted for 2% of posts advertised in 2024 compared to 9% in 2023, with the fall in share primarily related to a sharp drop in the number of posts for sales assistants and customer service representatives
- **Operative** roles accounted for 10% of all posts advertised in 2024 (as it did in 2023), with the majority relating to meat processing operatives along with HGV and bus/coach drivers; other posts included for scaffolders, other drivers (e.g. truck, forklift, van, delivery) and production/general operatives
- **Elementary occupations** (8% of total in 2024) were primarily for agricultural roles including horticultural operatives (e.g. mushroom pickers) and dairy/pig farm assistants, but also for hospitality roles (kitchen assistants/porters, waiters, bar staff/baristas), postal operatives, cleaners, security officers (including event and retail), warehouse operatives, and general operatives.

Figure 9.14 DSP Jobs Ireland Vacancies (Paid Positions Only) by Occupational Group & Key Job Titles, 2024



Source: DSP Jobs Ireland

9.3 Recruitment Agency Survey (November 2024)

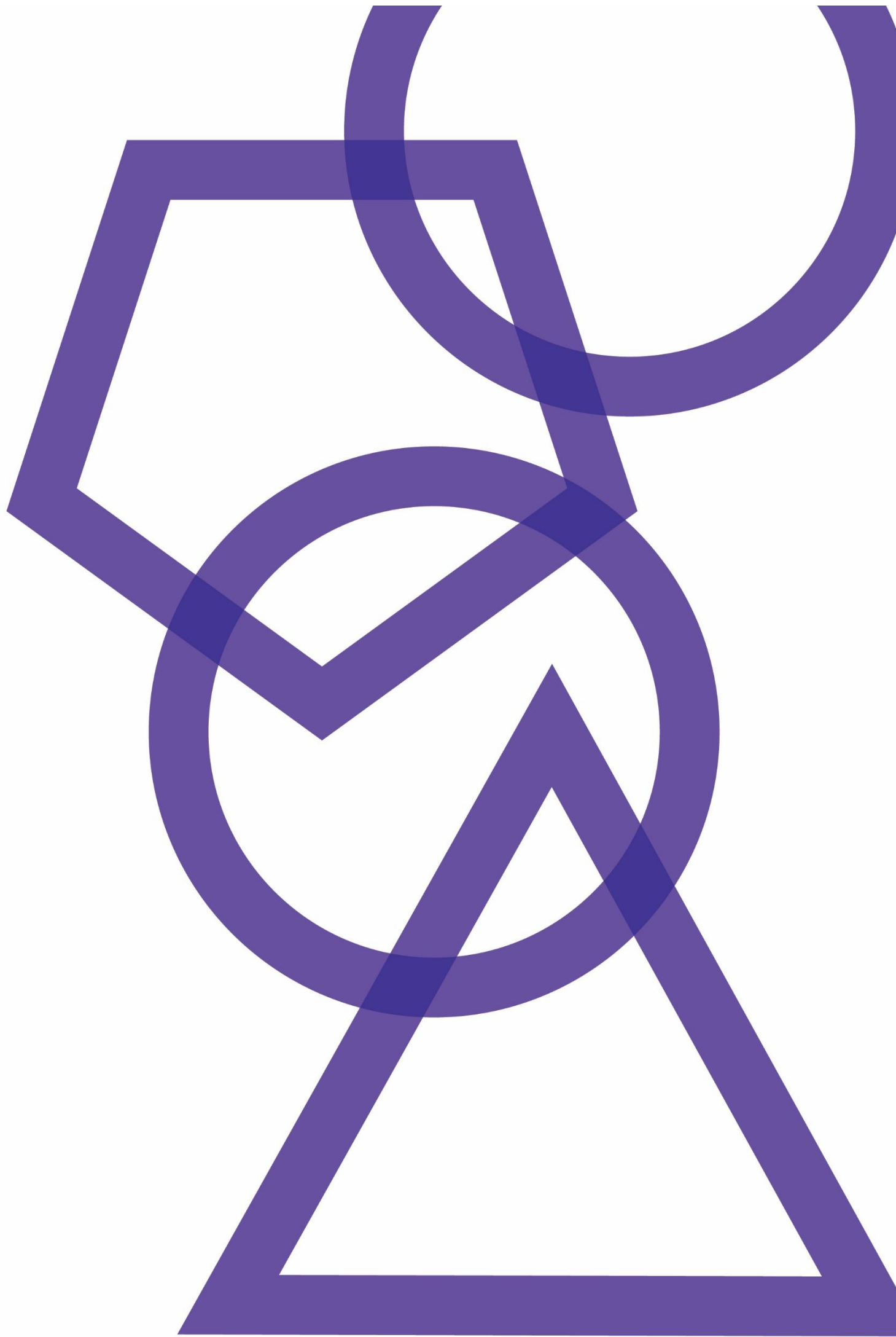
The SLMRU in SOLAS conducts a recruitment agency survey to gather recruitment agencies' views on vacancies which in their experience are proving difficult to fill. Table 9.1 refers to the roles that were most frequently identified as difficult-to-fill when agencies were surveyed in November 2024.

Table 9.1 Summary of Main Job Titles Identified as Difficult-To-Fill, November 2024

Managers	Project/site/contracts managers in construction
	Logistics/warehouse/procurement/ mid-upper management)
	Production managers (bioscience)
	Finance/insurance managers
	Restaurant managers
Professionals	Software developers: C++, Python, Java, DevOps, full stack, front end, IT engineers (cyber security, AI, site reliability, network, cloud, test) Other IT: big data analysts (e.g. SQL, Oracle), solutions architects, data scientists, machine learning
	Engineering: quality control/quality assurance, EHS (environmental health & safety), process, validation, automation, R&D, mechanical, manufacturing, electrical Pharmacovigilance specialists, scientists (analytical & process), microbiologists Regulatory affairs, compliance and quality managers/specialists in pharma
	Business & finance: financial/practice/tax/insurance accountants, newly/part-qualified accountants, financial controllers (senior roles)
	Civil/site engineers, quantity surveyors
	Nurses (staff, general), nurse managers, medical consultants and registrars (psychiatric, emergency medicine), general practitioners (GPs), radiographers
Associate professionals	Sales/marketing managers, sales agents (industry experience), freight sales
	Supply chain analysts, planners (construction & industry)
	Health & safety officers, BIM/draughtspersons, data analysts
	IT technicians: tech support/customer care (with language skills), content reviewers
	Insurance sales/brokers/underwriter roles, risk/compliance officers
	Other technicians: maintenance (electrical/mechanical), engineering, services. QA technician (construction)
	Recruitment specialists
Administrative	Credit control/accounts/insurance/payroll roles
	Freight forwarders, procurement /site administration roles
Skilled trades	Welders: TIG, ARC
	Construction: carpenters (inc. shuttering), steel fixers/erectors, electricians, building supervisors/foreman, fitters & glaziers, blocklayers, curtain wallers
	Mechanics, EV technicians
	Events/bar managers, chefs
Personal services	Healthcare assistants, nursing home care workers
Sales & customer service	Hotel customer service

Operatives and Elementary	Drivers: HGV (artic/rigid) (C, CE license), reach/forklift drivers, machine, site dump, crane, teleporters
	Operatives (warehouse, packaging, food, production)
	Waiting and cleaning staff
	Construction: general labourers, banksman, scaffolders, pipe layers, ground workers

Source: Recruitment Agency Survey, November 2024



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, as this is the classification used by the CSO for the Labour Force Survey. 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
- education 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.

In 2024, the SLMRU conducted a review of the occupations included in each occupational group resulting in the introduction of some minor changes to some of the groups (see the 2024 edition for further details). 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 editions of the National Skills Bulletin prior to 2024. Full details of the 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 2024
- **Employment growth:** the annualised rate of employment growth for the period 2019-2024
- **Females:** the percentage of females employed in an occupation (based on quarter 4 2024 data from the LFS)

- **Full-time:** the percentage of persons who work full-time in an occupation (based on quarter 4 2024 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 2024 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 2024 data from the LFS)
- **Third level graduates:** the percentage of persons who have attained a third level qualification (based on quarter 4 2024 data from the LFS)
- **Employment permits:** issued to non-EEA nationals in 2024. 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 2024; Source: Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment)
- **Recruitment Agency Survey:** presents the results of the SLMRU (SOLAS) Recruitment Agency Survey conducted in November 2024. The occupations with mentions of difficult-to-fill vacancies reported by recruitment agencies are indicated by a 'v'.

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) and/or employer engagement officers (DSP) in the 12 months to June 2025, identified job vacancies which in their experience were proving difficult to fill
- Data on employers' skills needs gathered from Enterprise Ireland's **client skills data**
- **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 2024 (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 2024; 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

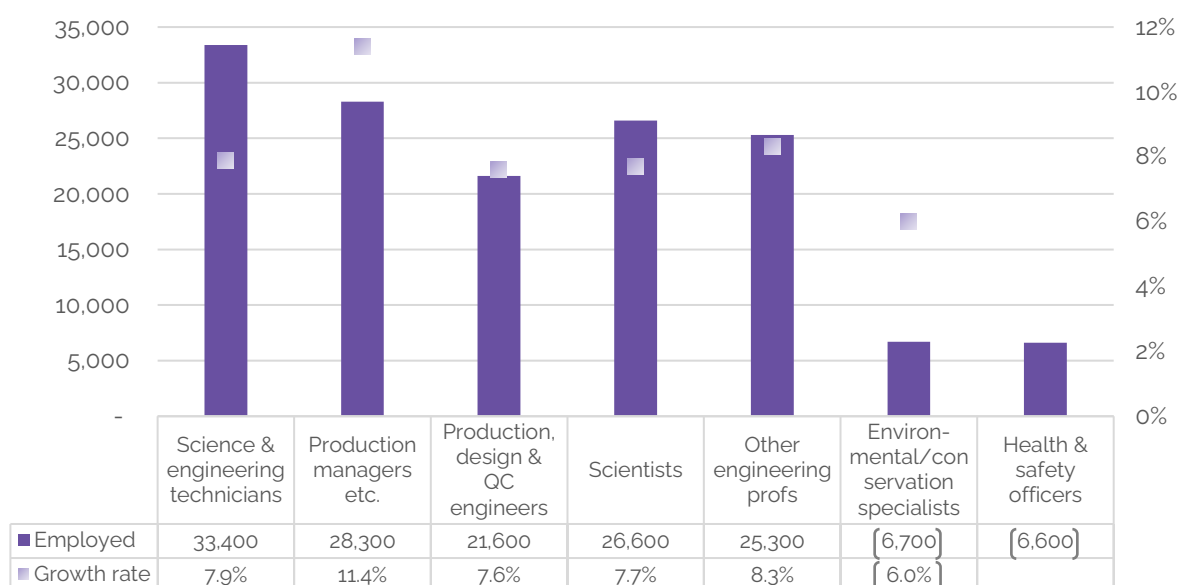
are based on current data, future shortages are only indicated in cases where there is clear evidence that the shortages will persist or if current trends in education provision indicate that future shortages may emerge. The outlook was deemed inconclusive in circumstances where issues were identified 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, the evolution of new skills due to technological advances or structural changes in the economy, 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 (2024) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2019-2024)



Overall employment	148,500
Share of total workforce	5.0%
Main sectors of employment	48% - Industry 19% - Professional activities [8%] - ICT [4%] - Public administration and defence
Employment growth	+49,800 between 2019 and 2024 +8.5% on average annually (compared to +3.4% for total workforce)

2024	% 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	54%	92%	[17%]	74%	96%	433	✓
Other engineering professionals	...	98%	...	71%	93%	1,338	✓
Production, design & QC engineers	[30%]	98%	...	76%	89%	1,666	✓
Science & engineering technicians	42%	97%	[13%]	72%	74%	197	✓
Production managers etc.	31%	98%	[23%]	83%	73%	116	
Environmental/conservation specialists	...	[93%]	...	[96%]	[82%]	45	✓
Health and safety officers	...	...	...	...	...	15	✓
Overall total	34%	96%	17%	77%	84%	3,810	

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 the second highest growth rate after ICT occupations, resulting in an additional 50,000 persons employed since 2019. Employment growth was particularly strong since 2023, with 12,000 extra persons employed. The majority of persons employed in these roles held third level qualifications. 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 all point to an occupational group where skills are in particular demand.

A large share of employment for these occupations was in industrial activities (e.g. pharmaceuticals, medical devices, R&D etc.). These sub-sectors have seen considerable growth in recent years, with a recent report by the EGFSN on the skills needs in the biopharma sector estimating the additional jobs required for this sector over the next five years to be in the range of 14,000 to 26,000.⁴⁰ The potential risk to employment associated with the introduction of US tariffs is already having an impact on GDP in Ireland, due to a significant jump in pharmaceutical exports in March 2025 in anticipation of the threat of tariffs; however, employment levels do not appear to have been impacted to date. The green agenda is expected to bring a continued strong demand for scientists and engineers in the development of new work practices, such as sustainable sourcing, circular lifecycles, energy efficiency, and waste minimization. This may also lead to increased demand for upskilling and reskilling (e.g. AI) for the existing workforce in these roles. Finally, while graduates from science and engineering disciplines are pivotal across industry and related sectors (professional services), they are also much sought after in other areas (e.g. education, health, PAD). As such, demand for these science and engineering skills is likely to continue.

Supply continues to be strong from the education and training system. At NFQ levels 8-10, there were almost 6,000 science awards and over 4,500 engineering/manufacturing awards made in 2023 to students at HEA-funded institutions; the number of awards was similar to those made in 2022 for science-related courses, while there was an increase of just over 200 awards in engineering/manufacturing. A potential key to unlocking further supply of skills for these roles would be to find additional ways to attract and retain women for these roles (only a third of employment in these jobs is currently undertaken by women).

Occupation	Economic summary
Scientists Skills shortage: Analytical, process, & medical scientists	Employment growth was above average for this occupation over the five-year period with growth since 2023 of 4,100 persons. At 26%, the share of non-Irish citizens employed in this occupation was above the national average. Over a third of all science & engineering online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) in 2024 were for this occupation, especially relating to R&D managers. Employment permits issued were mainly for roles in industry including medical/analytical scientists, chemists). The Recruitment Agency Survey highlighted issues with recruiting for various scientific roles, while Skills for Growth data identified issues recruiting chemists and microbiologists with key skills in demand including AI, quality standards/quality processes, leadership and technical

⁴⁰ https://www.egfsn.ie/media/x4xbx222/egfsn-skills-for-biopharma-2024_.pdf

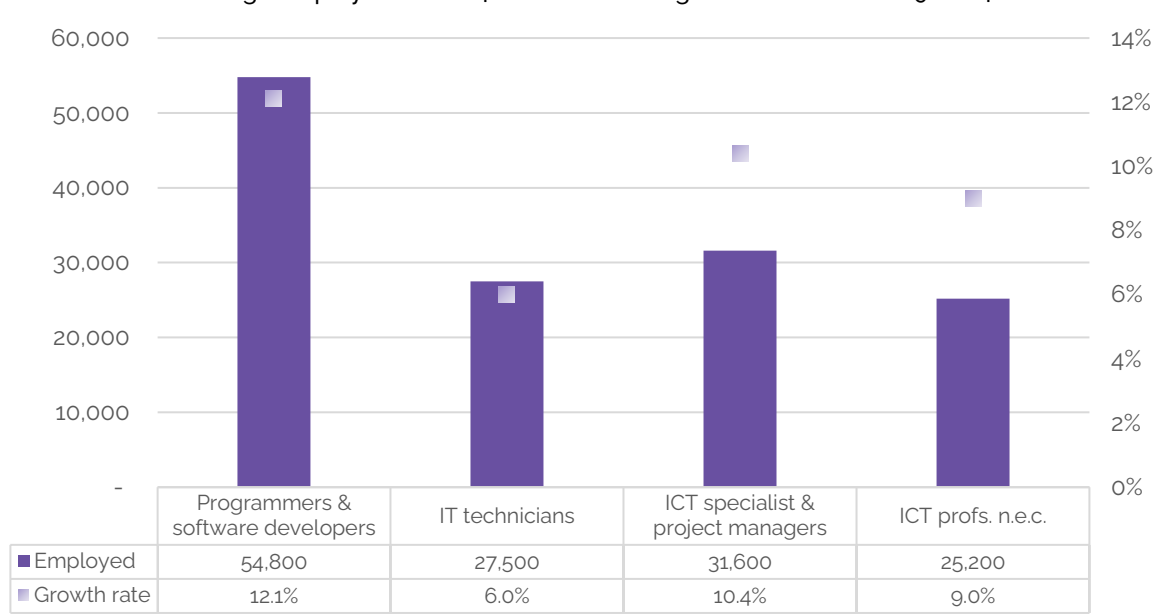
	report writing. Compared to 2019, the number of biochemistry and chemistry awards in 2023 increased to reach over 700 and more than 1,200 awards respectively. Despite this increase in supply, it does not appear to be sufficient to meet the high level of demand for these occupations. Shortages are expected to persist, particularly in the life sciences sector, for those with experience and/or in niche areas.
Production, design & QC engineers Skills shortage: Quality control/assurance, process, and design engineers	Although the five-year annual average employment growth was above average for this occupation, employment levels declined since 2023, returning to 2021/2022 levels. Despite this, there were frequent mentions of difficult-to-fill vacancies (various engineers including validation, process, quality, R&D, regulatory) in the Recruitment Agency Survey. Skills for Growth data also highlighted issues recruiting engineers (including quality auditor) for high tech sectors (e.g. electronics, life sciences) with key skills in demand including process knowledge, innovation, communication, lean. The almost 1,700 employment permits were across the ICT and industry sector for roles across design, process and quality. Together, these data sources indicate that issues are persisting in sourcing suitably qualified personnel for these roles in sufficient numbers.
Other engineering professionals (e.g. mechanical, electrical and electronic engineers) Skills shortage: Engineers (mechanical, electrical, automation)	Employment levels grew strongly between 2023 and 2024 (by 6,300 persons), resulting in above average annual employment growth over the five-year period. Almost half were employed in the professional activities sector with a further quarter employed in industry. At 29%, the share of non-Irish citizens was above average which is borne out in the employment permit data, with over 1,300 new permits issued in 2024 primarily for electrical, mechanical, automation and project engineers. Skills for Growth data highlighted issues in the utilities and manufacturing sectors, particularly relating to mechanical, electrical and lead instrumentation engineers; with automation, mechanical and electrical engineers also identified as roles which were difficult-to-fill in the Recruitment Agency Survey. Experience (usually at least 2 years) was a key demand along with technical (biomedical, electrical/power engineering, life sciences etc.), finance, leadership, and digital (including data analysis and AI) skills. These skills play a critical role in Ireland's industrial sector, particularly in the life sciences, and in the transition to a digital and green economy. As such, demand is likely to persist for these roles. Although the supply of skills from the education and training system appears strong, the recent employment growth and the demand for specific skills and experience means that skills shortages are persisting.
Science & engineering technicians Skills shortage: Maintenance/manufacturing/lab technicians	Employment levels have fluctuated over the last five years, but overall, employment growth was above average, with an additional 5,500 persons employed since 2023. Demand was evident across a range of data sources, including employment permits (aircraft, manufacturing, electrical, and quality), online job adverts (lab technicians, manufacturing, HVAC, avionics, electrical, production and mechanical technicians), difficult-to-fill vacancies including maintenance, manufacturing, and engineering technicians (Recruitment Agency Survey), as well as laboratory analysts (Skills for Growth). Skills in demand included quality standards, problem solving, project management, and people skills. Supply from the education and training system remains strong. In 2023, there were 3,800 higher education awards at levels 6 and 7, with further possible supply from level 8 graduates who may begin their careers in technician level roles. Despite this, many graduates move to other roles or may already be in employment and shortages for certain technician-level roles persist. The intensity of any shortage will depend on the impact of US tariffs on EU trade on the sub-sectors where many of these technicians are employed.
Production managers in manufacturing	Employment growth was above average for this occupation, with strong annual growth between 2020 and 2023 but employment levels have seen only marginal growth since 2023. Employment permits were issued for production managers and directors but no other data sources pointed to issues with sourcing suitably qualified personnel for these roles.

Environmental/ conservation specialists Shortage: Inconclusive	Employment levels have grown at an above average rate over the five-year period, although the numbers employed remain too small for detailed analysis. A small number of employment permits were issued for roles such as environmental health & safety (EHS) specialists/managers, environmental consultants and ecologists. EHS engineers/managers were also mentioned in the Recruitment Agency Survey as difficult-to-fill vacancies. Skills for Growth data highlighted issues with recruiting environmental chemistry analysts. Reaching targets set out in the Climate Action Plan by 2030 should see demand for these roles increasing; however, environmental and green skills may also become an increasingly key component of already existing job roles, as highlighted in the recent SLMRU report examining green skills.⁴¹
Health and safety officers	The numbers employed in this occupation were too small for detailed analysis. 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. However, knowledge of health and safety regulations was frequently mentioned as a required skill across a range of other occupations in the Skills for Growth data (e.g. engineering professionals, skilled trades (fabricator, mechanics, CNC operators and fitters), electricians, and HGV drivers).

⁴¹ Spring Skills Bulletin 2025

10.2 ICT Occupations

Figure 10.2 Annual Average Employment (2024) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2019-2024)



Overall employment	139,000
Share of total workforce	5.0%
Main sectors of employment	65% - ICT 9% - Financial activities 8% - Industry
Employment growth	+51,800 between 2019 and 2024 +9.8% on average annually (compared to +3.4% for total workforce)

2024	% 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	34%	97%	[15%]	68%	89%	593	
Programmers & software developers	[19%]	99%	...	59%	94%	2,395	✓
ICT profs. n.e.c.	...	92%	...	65%	86%	1,984	✓
IT technicians	[26%]	96%	...	62%	82%	136	✓
Overall total	25%	97%	10%	63%	89%	5,108	

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

This occupational group had the strongest annual average employment growth rate over the five-year period, at 9.8%; much of the growth was between 2019 and 2021 (with an extra 34,000 persons employed), with an average additional 6,000 persons employed each year since 2022. Recent job hires far exceeded employment growth between 2023 and 2024 for these occupations indicating that job churn is a feature for this occupational group. It also signals that at least some of the vacancy notifications for these roles are to replace staff who leave a role rather than due to expansion. Similar to the science and engineering occupational group, the share of females employed is far below average and attracting (and retaining) more women to these roles could, in part, offset issues in finding sufficient candidates to fill roles.

At present, employment permits remain a key source of supply of skills, with over 5,000 new permits issued in 2024, accounting for 15% of all new permits issued. The share of non-Irish citizens employed, at 37%, far exceeded the national average. Supply from the education and training system continues to increase. Between 2022 and 2023, the number of FET and higher education awards in ICT increased by 7% and stood at 11,200 awards. In particular, awards in software development went up by 29% (+735 awards) over the year, 300 of which were at NQF levels 8-10. For several years, the share of third level graduates in Ireland who had studied IT-related subjects was amongst the highest across the EU, and in 2023 was third largest (after Estonia and Luxembourg).

Despite this, the demand for IT skills continues, not only in the ICT sector but across other sectors including finance and industry. Cyber Ireland report that the cyber security sector employed approximately 8,000 persons in 2024, with demand likely to rise to 17,000 persons by 2030.⁴² In addition, cyber security and AI skills have been identified in the Skills for Growth data, with AI skills in particular arising across job roles, both IT and non-IT related. The extent to which new technologies, including AI, disrupt employment levels in other IT-related roles such as software development, is as yet unclear but upskilling/re-skilling may be required in some areas to adapt to the changing technologies.

Occupation	Economic summary
ICT specialist & project managers	Employment growth was above average for this occupation, with steady growth each year. Most employment permits issued were in the ICT sector for roles including IT project/product managers and directors. A third of those employed were female and the share of non-Irish citizens, at 32%, was above the national average. This occupation accounted for the smallest share of online job ads (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) and there were no reported issues with filling vacancies.
Programmers & software developers	Employment grew strongly for software developers/programmers between 2019 and 2022; following a fall in employment in 2023, it grew strongly in 2024 (by 7,400 persons), above 2022 levels. Three quarters of employment was in the ICT sector with the remainder spread across sectors including financial, professional activities and industry. Less than a fifth of those employed were women, and 41% were non-Irish citizens which is over double the national average. Almost 2,400 new employment permits were issued in 2024 for various software developer/engineer roles. The Recruitment Agency Survey
Skills shortage:	

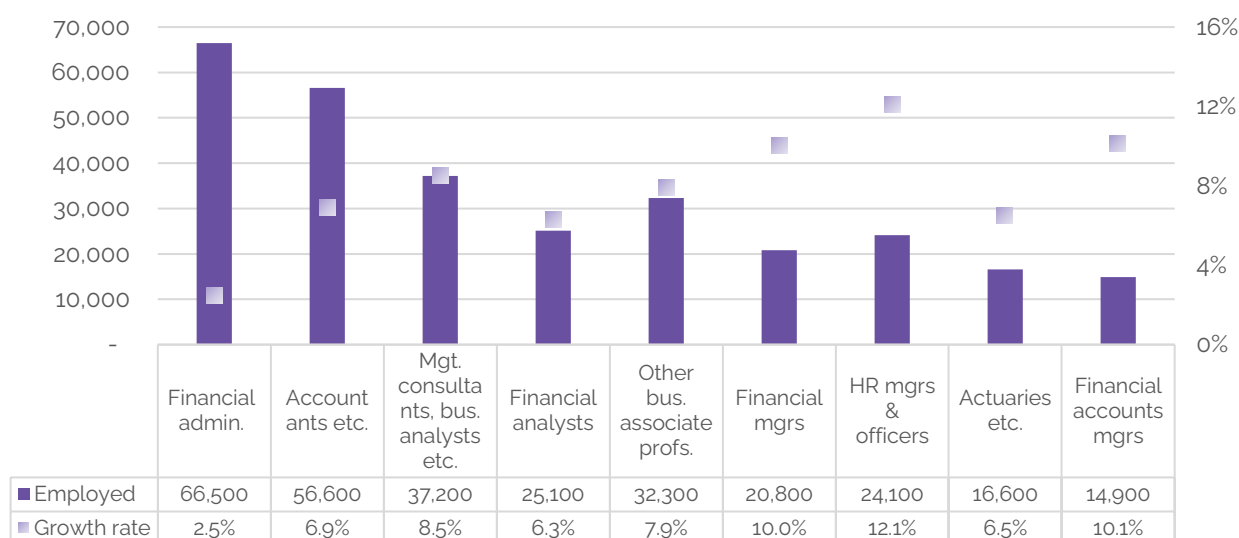
⁴² [Ireland-Cyber-Security-Sector-Snapshot-2024.pdf](#)

Software developers/engineers	highlighted issues in filling vacancies for software developer/ engineer roles with Skills for Growth data pointing to issues relating to cyber security, cloud security, AI, and DevOps and those with sales and innovation skills. Future demand for this occupation, especially entry-level roles, may be eased somewhat due to advances in technology, particularly if the adoption of artificial intelligence and increased automation extends to small and medium-sized firms and across sectors. The share of online job adverts for these roles has declined in recent years and Indeed's Job Posting Index for the UK and US⁴³ shows a sharp fall in postings related to software development. Nonetheless, practical constraints on the widespread implementation of such technologies (e.g. finance, personnel and skills availability), as well as the demand to keep pace with emerging technologies, mean that shortages for this occupation, especially for senior roles, will persist.
ICT profs. n.e.c. Skills shortage: IT analysts/engineers	The annual average employment growth was above average for this occupation over the five-year period, although employment levels have fluctuated over this time; strong employment growth in both 2020 and 2023 more than offset the declines in the other years. The number of non-Irish citizens far exceeded the national average and almost 2,000 new employment permits were issued (in roles including analysts (data, business, IT), data scientists, network and security engineers and web and UX/UI developers. Online job adverts for these roles included network and cyber security specialists (jobsireland.ie) and IT business analysts, architects and systems designers (Eurostat/CEDEFOP). Difficult-to-fill vacancy mentions (Skills for Growth and Recruitment Agency Survey) included digital and data scientists, cloud security engineers, and SOC (Security Operations Centre) analysts. Increasing reliance on digital systems as well as global insecurities in recent years, including the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East, have fuelled demand for cyber security specialists as organisations recognise the need to safeguard systems against potential cyber security breaches. Skills to anticipate, manage and address IT security risks across both private and public sector organisations mean security-related skills will be key for this occupation, with shortages occurring for network and security engineers.
IT technicians	The above average employment growth rate for this occupation can be attributed to strong growth between 2020 and 2021; levels have fluctuated since but in 2024 remained below the 2021 peak. A quarter of those employed were women and the share of non-Irish citizens was double the national average. A small number of employment permits were issued for tech support and customer engineer roles. Online job ads, from both sources, related to ICT user support technicians. Difficult-to-fill vacancies mentioned in the Recruitment Agency Survey related mainly to technical support roles (with language skills). Although some issues with attracting people with specific skills (e.g. languages) is evident, the lack of employment growth suggests that there is no overall shortage of IT technicians at present.

⁴³ [Hiring Lab](#) | [Data Portal](#) | [Indeed.com](#)

10.3 Business & Financial Occupations

Figure 10.3 Annual Average Employment (2024) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2019-2024)



Overall employment	294,200
Share of total workforce	11%
Main sectors of employment	31% - Financial activities 22% - Professional activities 9% - Industry 8% - ICT
Employment growth	+81,500 between 2019 and 2024 +6.7% on average annually (compared to +3.4% for total workforce)

2024	% 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	53%	92%	15%	86%	98%	696	✓
Mgt. consultants, business analysts & project managers	47%	96%	...	80%	89%	1,748	
Actuaries, economists & statisticians	[46%]	93%	...	81%	97%	102	✓
Financial analysts and insurance underwriters	45%	96%	...	78%	88%	98	✓
Other business associate professionals	54%	93%	...	64%	83%	335	✓
Financial accounts managers	[55%]	92%	...	84%	79%	24	
Financial managers & directors	47%	95%	[21%]	87%	87%	77	✓
Financial admin. occupations	73%	80%	21%	80%	66%	3	✓
HR managers and officers	77%	90%	...	80%	93%	109	✓
Overall total	58%	90%	15%	80%	85%	3,192	

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 steadily over the five-year period for business and financial occupations, with an additional 81,000 persons employed since 2019 and the third highest growth rate nationally, at 6.7%. This occupational group also had a higher than average share of women employed, accounting for 58% of its workforce.

Evidence from employers (including Skills for Growth, the EGFSN's International Financial Services Skills Implementation Group) suggests technical skills, some of which are also in demand in ICT occupations (see Section 10.2), continue to be in high demand (e.g. security, cloud, UX design), especially in the financial services sector. Digital skills in demand for this occupational group include Excel, data/business analysis, and data visualisation (e.g. Power BI), while other business skills sought by employers included leadership, innovation, people management, project management, and regulation/compliance.

While traditional, physical banks remain the preferred option for their main current account amongst most adults in Ireland, an increasing share also use digital banks (e.g. Revolut): nearly two fifths of adults were using a digital bank in 2024 (up from 18% in 2022).⁴⁴ The shift towards digital banks, which are typically cloud based services, requires workers with increasingly sophisticated technical skills (AI, machine learning, blockchain) to improve customer experience, facilitate multiple cyber security measures, and better detect fraud.

Demand for international financial services skills is expected to persist across a number of areas, including sustainable finance and regulatory and compliance activities.⁴⁵ Business and financial jobs have also been identified as accounting for a significant share of green employment in Ireland with skills such as corporate social responsibility occurring in online job adverts.⁴⁶ In addition, demand for blockchain skills was evident in the financial sector according to a recent report by the ESRI.⁴⁷

Occupation	Economic summary
Accountants & tax experts	Accountants and tax experts are the second largest occupation in this grouping, with above average employment growth over the five-year period; this was particularly pronounced between 2023 and 2024, with an additional 9,700 persons employed. Employment was spread across sectors but particularly in professional activities, financial and industry. This occupation had an above average share of women employed and a below average share of non-Irish citizens. Most of the employment permits issued related to auditors in the financial sector. Despite the strong growth in employment, the share of OJAs for accountants (for the total business and financial group) has fallen since 2023. Difficult-to-fill mentions (RAS and Skills for Growth) related to accountants, including cost accountants, across financial, tax, insurance, practice and the manufacturing sector, with both newly and part-qualified accountants in demand. In addition to accountancy-related skills, employers were seeking candidates with experience, especially in manufacturing, as well as digital (Excel) and organisational skills.

⁴⁴ Department of Finance (2024). [Consumer Sentiment Banking Survey Report 2024](#).

⁴⁵ EGFSN (2024). [Skills for International Financial Services](#).

⁴⁶ SOLAS (2025). Spring Skills Bulletin 2025

⁴⁷ ESRI (2024). [Skill Requirements for Emerging Technologies in Ireland](#).

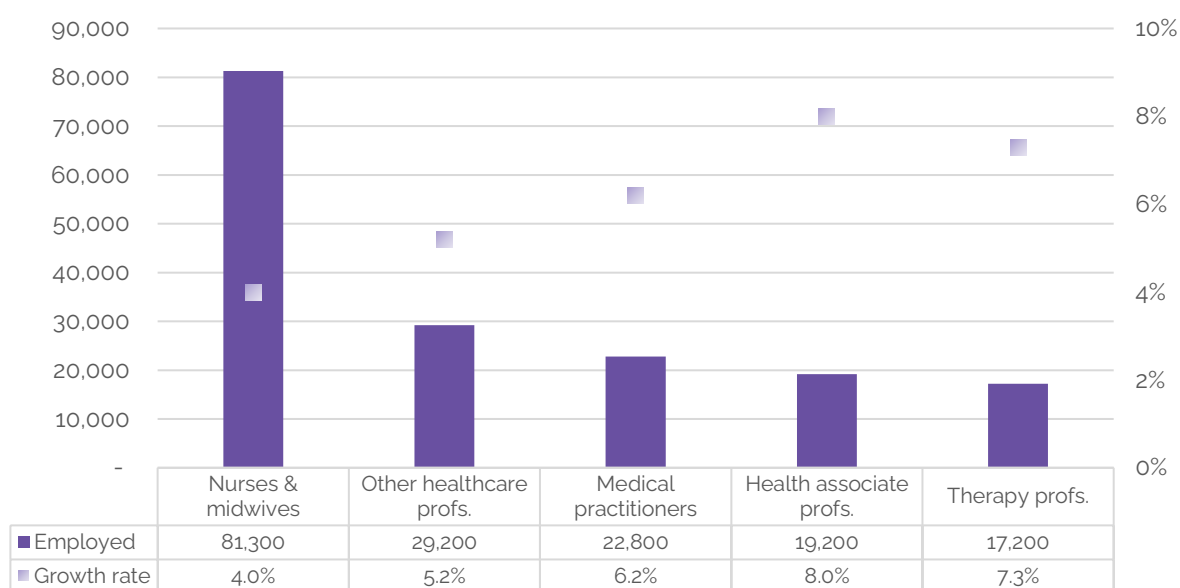
	While demand is evident at present, artificial intelligence is likely to play a transformational role in the tasks associated with this occupation with some ⁴⁸ highlighting the likely decline in employment numbers for accountants in the long term. However, given such a large occupation, job opportunities will persist.
Mgt. consultants, business analysts & project managers	Employment growth was above average for this occupation over the five-year period, particularly relating to growth between 2023 and 2024 of 6,900 persons. Both the share of women and non-Irish citizens employed was broadly in line with the national average and employment was concentrated in the professional activities sector along with industry, financial and ICT. The high number of new employment permits related mostly to roles in the financial and ICT sectors for positions including analysts (financial, business, data), project managers and management consultants. Employer data from Skills for Growth noted issues sourcing business analysts and those with skills in customer relationships, leadership, lean, and business. The share of OJAs (as a percentage of business/financial OJAs) increased between 2023 and 2024. Although demand is evident for specific skills in this occupation, no shortages have been identified.
Actuaries, economists & statisticians; other business profs.	Employment grew steadily for this occupation between 2020 and 2023 but declined in 2024. Approximately two-fifths were employed in the public administrative sector with the share of women and non-Irish citizens broadly in line with the national average. Employment permits issued were primarily for data scientists and actuarial analysts, with data scientists also appearing as difficult-to-source in the Recruitment Agency Survey. While demand exists for these roles, the numbers involved are likely to be small.
Financial analysts and insurance underwriters	Despite above average employment growth over the five-year period for this occupation, employment has fallen by 4,000 persons since 2023. Most were employed in the financial sector. Employment permits were primarily for financial analysts. Difficult-to-fill vacancies identified in the Recruitment Agency Survey mostly related to insurance roles; Skills for Growth data highlighted issues with recruiting insurance underwriters and those with skills in ESG, R&D, regulation, risk, and digital (including AI) skills.
Financial accounts managers	With the exception of a small decline in 2022, employment levels have grown steadily over the five-year period for financial accounts managers, increasing by 1,900 persons since 2023. Employment was spread across a range of sectors including financial activities and industry. Only a small number of employment permits were issued and this occupation did not feature in any other data sources relating to demand for skills.
Other business associate profs. (e.g. accounting technicians, estimators, valuers)	The five-year annual average growth rate for this occupation was above average, although there have been some fluctuations in employment levels since 2022. Approximately half of those employed were working in the financial and professional activities sectors. Females accounted for the larger share at 54% and the share of non-Irish citizens far exceeded the national average. A third of the new employment permits issued were for roles in the ICT sector; job titles included AI safety annotator, data/business analysts, financial/accounting technicians and estimators. Mentions in the Recruitment Agency Survey related to data analysts and planners. Other business associate professionals made up nearly a quarter of all OJAs for finance and business related occupations in 2024, up from 18% in 2023, largely due to increases in the share for business associate professionals not elsewhere classified (e.g. data analysts) and, to a lesser extent, accounting technicians. There were a small number of mentions in the Skills for Growth data for data analysts; however, the demand for data analysis skills was more prevalent as a skill associated with non-data analyst roles (e.g. project managers, engineers), particularly in sales and manufacturing.
Financial managers & directors	Having grown annually in recent years, employment for financial managers and directors fell by 2,800 since 2023; however, the annual average employment growth rate of 10% over the five-year period far exceeded the national average. Over two-thirds were employed in the financial activities sector with the share of women and non-Irish citizens broadly in line with the national average. A relatively small number of employment permits were issued for financial managers and director roles. The skill set required for financial managers, particularly those managing financial institutions, is rapidly evolving due to significant changes within the financial sector. These changes include the impacts

⁴⁸ World Economic Forum (2025). [Future of Jobs Report](#)

	of automation and digitalisation, leading the implementation of AI (especially in small and medium enterprises), the shift to online banking, and the transition to sustainable finance. Consequently, upskilling and reskilling will likely become essential requirements to meet the future demands of the industry.
Financial admin.	Although financial administration roles have seen a below average growth over the five-year period, they remain the largest occupation in this group. Two thirds of employment relates to the financial, professional activities and wholesale and retail sectors combined. Almost three quarters of those employed in these roles were female, two-thirds held third-level qualifications and one fifth were working part-time. With very little employment growth but a relatively high level of recent job hires, replacement demand appears to be the main source of job opportunities for these roles. DSP Jobs Ireland vacancy posts related to accounts assistants/administrators, bookkeepers, payroll and finance/pension administrators. Difficult-to-fill vacancies mentioned in the Recruitment Agency Survey and Skills for Growth data pointed to issues in sourcing candidates with skills and knowledge in credit control, accounts, payroll, customer care, compliance skills, import/export & trade knowledge, and digital skills. Given the size of this occupation and the high level of turnover, demand is expected to persist in the short to medium term.
HR managers and officers	Strong employment growth between 2023 and 2024 (with 4,700 additional persons) has led to a significantly above average employment growth rate over the five-year period for this occupation; this is despite declines in both 2021 and 2023. Most employed in these roles are female and the share of non-Irish citizens was broadly in line with the national average. Posts for HR officers/assistants, generalists, recruitment consultants, talent acquisition specialists and HR managers appeared frequently through DSP Jobs Ireland, with the share of OJAs within this occupational group increasing since 2023. Employment permits were issued for similar job titles, with a third of all new permits for this occupation issued for the ICT sector. A small number of mentions of difficult-to-fill vacancies occurred in the Recruitment Agency Survey for talent acquisition specialist and recruiters. Skills identified in the Skills for Growth data for these roles included recruitment, absence and performance management, employee welfare, engagement and employee relations. Although overall employment growth has begun to slow, the greater emphasis being placed on retention, talent development and staff well-being will likely ensure a continued demand for HR and recruitment roles.

10.4 Healthcare Occupations

Figure 10.4 Annual Average Employment (2024) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2019-2024)



Overall employment	169,800
Share of total workforce	6.0%
Main sectors of employment	87% - Health sector 7% - Wholesale & retail
Employment growth	+38,100 between 2019 and 2024 +5.2% on average annually (compared to +3.4% for total workforce)

2024	% 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	48%	91%	...	67%	99%	1,689	✓
Therapy profs.	78%	69%	...	82%	99%	120	
Nurses & midwives	91%	82%	16%	69%	98%	5,107	✓
Other healthcare profs.	75%	85%	[16%]	92%	95%	331	✓
Health associate profs.	78%	69%	...	91%	71%	16	
Overall total	79%	81%	16%	77%	95%	7,263	

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 has grown annually for healthcare occupations since 2020, with an additional 38,000 persons employed over the five-year period examined. Almost four-fifths of those employed were women, and the share aged 55 years or over was below the national average. Employment permits continued to be a key source of skills for these roles, with healthcare occupations accounting for 22% of all new employment permits issued in 2024, an increase of 769 on the previous year.

A number of recent ESRI reports have pointed to an increasing demand for healthcare services: projections of a 40% rise in inpatient bed capacity by 2040 will lead to further substantial demand for healthcare staff, particularly in urban and ageing regions,⁴⁹ while the demand for GP consultations is forecast to increase by at least 23% for the same time period, driven primarily by population growth.⁵⁰ The continued implementation of the Sláintecare Action Plan will also see an increased demand for services particularly in the community setting. The recently launched Education Plan 2025 details the establishment of an Education Therapy Service which includes the recruitment of 90 occupational and speech therapists for special schools for the 2025/2026 school year with a plan to roll-out to mainstream schools in the future.⁵¹ All of these point to continued demand for healthcare occupations in the coming years. The annual survey of the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation (INMO) highlighted the belief among the majority of members that current staffing levels and skill mix were inadequate to meet clinical and patient demands.⁵²

In recent years, the number of health and welfare related awards has been rising, with a 4% increase between 2019 and 2023, particularly relating to NFQ level 9/10 awards (nearly 2,000 additional awards). While there were increases in the number of awards between 2022 and 2023 in the detailed fields of medicine, dental studies and pharmacy, the number of nursing/caring awards declined by more than 700 (largely at NFQ levels 8-10), although much of the decline related to continuing education (certs/diplomas) for already qualified nurses (e.g. infection control, nursing management). To address issues with skill supply, over €130 million has been allocated to expand healthcare education, including new medical, pharmacy, dental, and GP training programmes, with a focus on rural and remote care.⁵³ The annual intake of doctors into the GP training programme has increased by approximately 80% from 2019 to 2024, with 350 new entrant training places made available from 2024⁵⁴. Education and training places for health and social care professional roles (especially therapy related) are set to increase from 2025;⁵⁵ an additional 325 places will be introduced in 2025, with further increases in subsequent years. This increase in supply from the education/training system will go some way towards alleviating growing demand for these roles.

⁴⁹ ESRI (2025) [Projections of national demand & bed capacity requirements for public acute hospitals in Ireland, 2023–2040](#)

⁵⁰ New ESRI report projects that demand for GP consultations will increase by at least 23 per cent by 2040 | ESRI

⁵¹ Minister McEntee and Minister of State Moynihan publish Education Plan 2025

⁵² www.inmo.ie/News-Campaigns/Details/staffing-deficits-compromising-health-of-nurses-midwives-and-patients

⁵³ DHERIS (2024) [Minister O'Donovan announces major increase in healthcare places across Ireland](#)

⁵⁴ PQ General Practitioner Services Dáil Éireann Debate, Thursday - 29 May 2025

⁵⁵ DFHERIS (2025). [Government approves major expansion in Health and Social Care Profession training places](#); Subject areas comprise physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, radiation therapy, radiography, podiatry, social work, medical science, and dietetics.

Occupation	Economic summary
Medical practitioners Skills shortage: Medical practitioners	The annual average employment growth over the five-year period was above average for medical practitioners, with almost 6,000 additional persons employed since 2019. The gender split was broadly in line with the national average, whereas, at 33%, the share of non-Irish citizens employed was above average. Almost 1,700 new employment permits were issued for roles including senior house officers, registrars, GPs and in emergency medicine. Mentions of difficult-to-fill vacancies in the Recruitment Agency Survey were for those in psychiatric and emergency medicine and GPs. The share of OJAs for medical practitioners (as a share of all healthcare-related OJAs) increased from 11% to nearly a fifth between 2023 and 2024. Issues with sourcing GPs has been particularly highlighted. There has been an increase in the annual intake of doctors into the GP training programme, with 350 new training places made available in 2024.⁵⁶ The Programme for Government commits to increasing the number of GPs through both international recruitment and increasing the number of training places.⁵⁷ Our population growth and ageing population will lead to increased demand for medical practitioners across services and shortages are expected to persist.
Therapy profs. (e.g. occupational, speech & language, physiotherapist) Shortage: Inconclusive	Employment in this occupation has been growing annually since 2022, with an additional 1,200 persons employed since 2023. Over three-quarters of those employed were women and almost a third were working part-time. Employment permits issued spanned various therapist roles (e.g. physio, occupational, speech & language) and chiropractors. The delivery of Sláintecare, particularly in terms of community care and mental health services, will require additional staffing in these occupations as will the Education Therapy Service outlined above. The number of awards relating to therapy and rehabilitation have remained stable in recent years, at approximately 1,200 awards annually between 2019 and 2023; with enrolments levels largely unchanged in recent years, output is not expected to increase in the short-term. A new tertiary occupational therapy degree was announced in May 2025, although the number of places is unlikely to be sufficient to meet demand. Although demand is evident, the numbers employed in each of the therapy categories are too small to allow for detailed analysis and to determine the extent to which shortages exist. A new workforce plan, as detailed in the Programme for Government, will help to determine the extent to which shortages are occurring in these roles.
Nurses & midwives Skills shortage: Nurses	At over 80,000 persons employed, this is one of the largest occupations in the economy (after sales assistants). The annual average employment growth rate over the five-year period was above average, but employment declined by 1,800 persons since 2023. The majority of nurses employed were women and 31% of those employed were non-Irish citizens. Despite the decline in employment, 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 and nurse managers. The high volume of recent job hires and employment permits (the highest number across all occupations), with no employment growth suggests that a significant level of job roles filled were most likely replacing those who had exited the occupation. The number of student enrolments across HEA funded institutions for level 8 honours degree courses in nursing and midwifery was steady at around 7,600 in 2021/22 and 2022/23, although increasing from 7,000 enrolments in 2018/19 (HEA). Along with increasing the number of training places for nurses, the government are committed to increasing the number of Advance Nurse Practitioners and the expansion of other services will increase the demand for nurses. The ESRI report detailed above, also highlights the need for increased general practitioner nurses to meet the needs of a

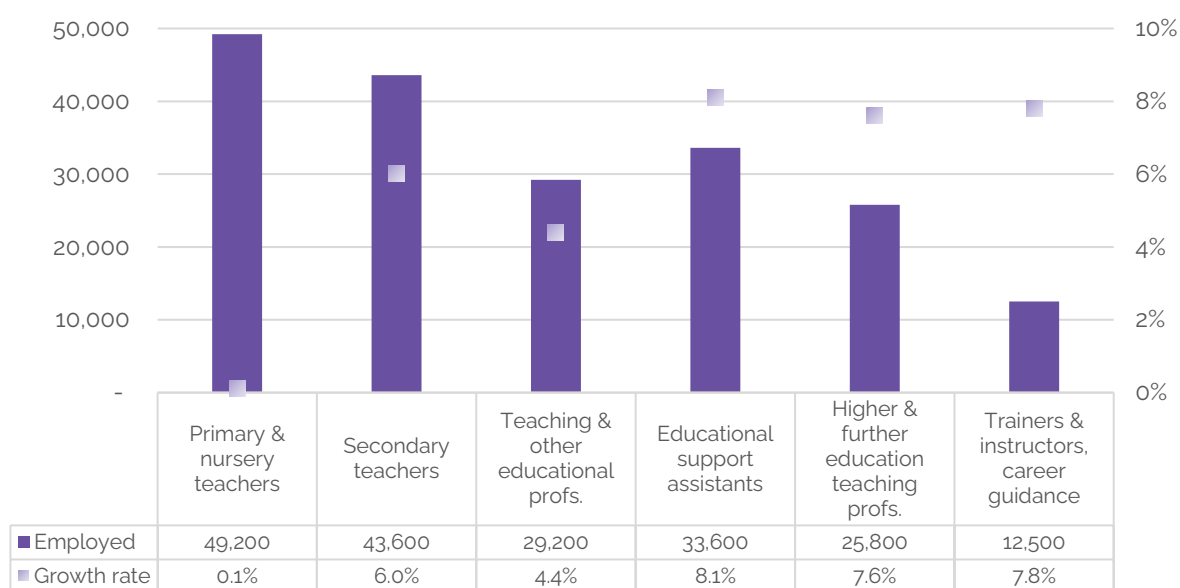
⁵⁶ [thejournal.ie-investigates GP crisis](#)

⁵⁷ [programme-for-government-securing-irelands-future.pdf](#)

	growing population. Demand and shortages of nurses is expected to persist, particularly if issues with retention continue.
Other healthcare profs. (e.g. dentists, pharmacists, psychologists, radiographers, opticians & health services managers) Shortage: Inconclusive	Employment levels have fluctuated over the five-year period, with numbers employed in 2024 broadly in line with that of 2021. Three-quarters of persons employed were women, with a lower than average share who were non-Irish citizens. New employment permits were issued across a range of job titles including radiographers, cardiac physiologists, dieticians, audiologists, pharmacists, dentists, optometrists, and psychologists. There was a fall in the share of OJAs for this occupation between 2023 and 2024, mostly related to a fall in health services and public health managers and directors. Although demand is evident and the Government is committed to increase training places and recruitment for many of these roles, the extent to which shortages are occurring is difficult to determine due to the relatively small number of persons employed in each speciality. A workforce plan for the healthcare sector should assist in shedding further light on the issues facing this occupation.
Health associate profs. (e.g. pharma /medical technicians, dental nurses, paramedics, dispensing opticians)	Despite strong employment growth over the five-year period, levels have remained fairly stable since 2022. Most (78%) employed are female, most are Irish citizens and 31% were employed in part-time roles. At 56%, this occupation had the lowest share employed in the health sector with employment also in wholesale and retail and industry. A small number of new employment permits were issued for dental hygienists, prosthetists and orthotists. There was a relatively large share of OJAs for this occupation, primarily for health associate professionals n.e.c. but also a small share for medical & dental technicians. The available data sources do not currently point to issues with sourcing suitably qualified personnel for these roles.

10.5 Education Occupations

Figure 10.5 Annual Average Employment (2024) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2019-2024)



Overall employment	193,900
Share of total workforce	7.0%
Main sectors of employment	94% - Education sector
Employment growth	+39,500 between 2019 and 2024 +4.7% on average annually (compared to +3.4% for total workforce)

2024	% 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.	49%	80%	28%	81%	98%	82	
Secondary teachers	70%	88%	[14%]	95%	100%		
Primary & nursery teachers	83%	83%	[9%]	96%	93%	24	
Teaching & other educational profs.	73%	74%	[21%]	94%	86%	42	
Educational support assistants	88%	71%	24%	90%	45%		
Trainers & instructors, career guidance	[51%]	81%	...	78%	75%	2	
Overall total	73%	80%	18%	91%	85%	150	

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 has grown steadily for this occupational group over the five-year period, with an additional 39,500 persons employed. Almost three quarters of those employed were female and most held third level qualifications. Demographic effects will have an impact on current and future demand for these roles. At primary level, school enrolments are projected to decrease from the year 2024 until 2036 (the extent of which will depend on the level of migration over this time) and increase thereafter. In contrast, enrolments at post-primary schools, which have been growing in recent years, are expected to peak in 2025 and decline into the next decade. There is also a greater demand for special education, with Budget 2025 including a provision for 768 additional special education teachers and 1,600 more special needs assistants (SNAs).

Issues with filling vacant posts remain across the primary (e.g special schools, regional issues)⁵⁸ and secondary (subject specific)⁵⁹ school system.

Occupation	Economic summary
Higher & further education teaching profs.	This occupation has seen steady employment growth over the five-year period, with an additional 7,900 persons employed since 2019. There was almost an equal gender divide in this occupation and the share of non-Irish citizens employed was broadly in line with the national average. The share aged 55 years and older was above average, at 28%, which may have an impact on replacement demand in the coming years. There was a small number of employment permits issued for lecturers and associate professors across a range of fields, but no other data source indicates issues with recruitment for these roles. However, the Global Talent Ireland initiative has been recently launched to attract international research leaders for both higher education and public research bodies. ⁶⁰
Secondary teachers	Over the five-year period, employment has increased by 11,000 persons, with an increase of 3,800 persons since 2023 alone. Most employed as secondary teachers were female and working in full-time roles. The number of recent job hires exceeded employment growth indicating job churn is occurring for these roles, which may be indicative of the shorter-term contracts associated with substitute teaching. An analysis of education vacancies ⁶¹ over the last year shows that the vast majority (96%) of teaching vacancies advertised for roles in post-primary education were fixed term contracts; in addition, the most common subjects listed in the vacancy notifications were maths, Irish, English, and PE. Other frequently mentioned subjects included technology, politics & society and home economics.
Skill shortage: Subject-specific secondary teachers	In addition, careers advice in Ireland's post-primary school system is provided by guidance counsellors, who typically hold both teaching and guidance counselling qualifications, with many combining guidance with subject teaching duties. As such, many guidance professionals are captured in the data within this occupation (secondary teachers) rather than under careers advisers (see final occupation in this group). The National Strategic Framework for Lifelong Guidance 2024-2030 is expected to increase the demand for guidance professional services across the system (not just at post-primary level), although the number of training places for guidance counsellors is set to double by January 2026. Attracting and retaining second level teachers, particularly for specific subjects, continues to be an issue.

⁵⁸ www.into.ie/2024/10/21/another-year-of-crisis-in-recruitment-and-retention

⁵⁹ www.asti.ie/news-campaigns/latest-news/minister-at-sixes-and-sevens; The Irish Times (2025). Hundreds of teaching posts vacant at secondary schools across country.

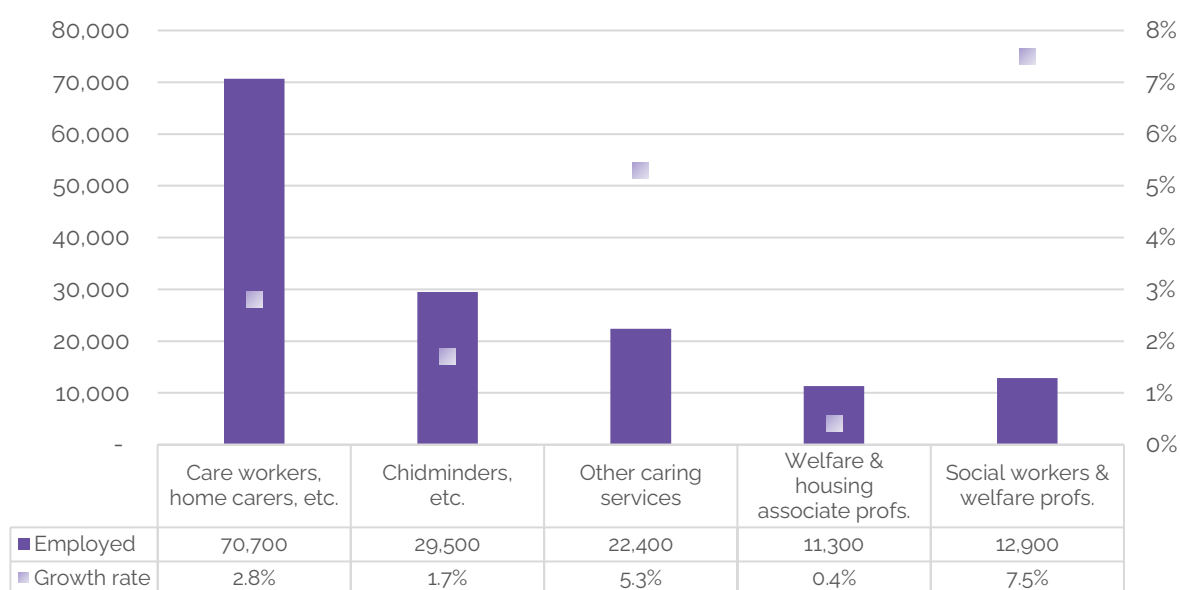
⁶⁰ DFHERIS (2025). Minister Lawless announces launch of Global Talent Ireland to attract world-class researchers

⁶¹ Home - EducationPosts.ie; the SLMRU have begun tracking vacancies posted on educationposts.ie which will in time allow for a deeper understanding of the trends relating to education vacancies, the type of contracts on offer, the counties with the highest share of vacancies and the subjects most in demand.

Primary & nursery teachers	Employment levels peaked at 55,300 in 2022 but have declined annually since. Despite this decline, there was a large volume of recent job hires for this occupation, with short-term/temporary contracts potentially a factor here. Most were female, in full-time positions, and Irish citizens. Recent measures which led to increased places on primary school teacher training courses will aim to alleviate issues with recruitment and retention for these roles. Changes to pupil-teacher ratios and demographic patterns are likely to be the main drivers of demand along with policy initiatives in this area.
Teaching & other educational profs.	The above average employment growth for this occupation over the five-year period primarily relates to a significant jump in numbers employed between 2022 and 2023; since 2023, there was a decline of 1,000 persons. Special needs teachers, school principals, and nursery managers/owners are included in this occupation. Three quarters of those employed were female and a quarter worked in part-time roles. As mentioned above, Budget 2025 made a provision for special needs teachers and these have been particularly highlighted as being difficult to recruit, similar to issues relating to primary teachers.
Educational support assistants	The above average employment growth can be attributed to growth in both 2022 and 2024, with little to no growth in the other years of the five-year period. Most employed were female, 29% were working part-time, a higher than average share were aged 55 years or over and fewer than half held third level qualifications. The additional allocations for special needs assistants' posts have been a driver of employment growth for this occupation, with future demand also likely to be dependent on demographic factors and government funding.
Trainers & instructors, career guidance	This is a relatively small occupation in employment terms with growth primarily occurring since 2022. Those providing career guidance in secondary schools are typically employed (and qualified) as post-primary teachers and are most likely categorised above. Under plans to strengthen lifelong guidance in Ireland, the demand for careers advisors, careers information officers etc. outside the post-primary sector is expected to be sustained and possibly increase. The EU lifelong learning participation targets (over 60% for Ireland) are also likely to be a key driver of demand for these skills, particularly given the need for continued workforce development to address skills gaps and adapt to the evolving world of work.

10.6 Social & Care Occupations

Figure 10.6 Annual Average Employment (2024) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2019-2024)



Overall employment	146,800
Share of total workforce	5.0%
Main sectors of employment	86% - Health 7% - Other NACE activities
Employment growth	20,700 between 2019 and 2024 +3.1% on average annually (compared to +3.4% for total workforce)

2024	% 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.	[57%]	81%	...	89%	89%	19	
Childminders, etc.	96%	51%	...	81%	[34%]	123	
Other caring services	70%	65%	[21%]	71%	[34%]	2,430	✓
Social workers & welfare profs.	[59%]	84%	...	84%	94%	106	
Care workers, home carers, etc.	75%	66%	26%	76%	46%	808	✓
Overall total	75%	66%	22%	78%	49%	3,486	

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

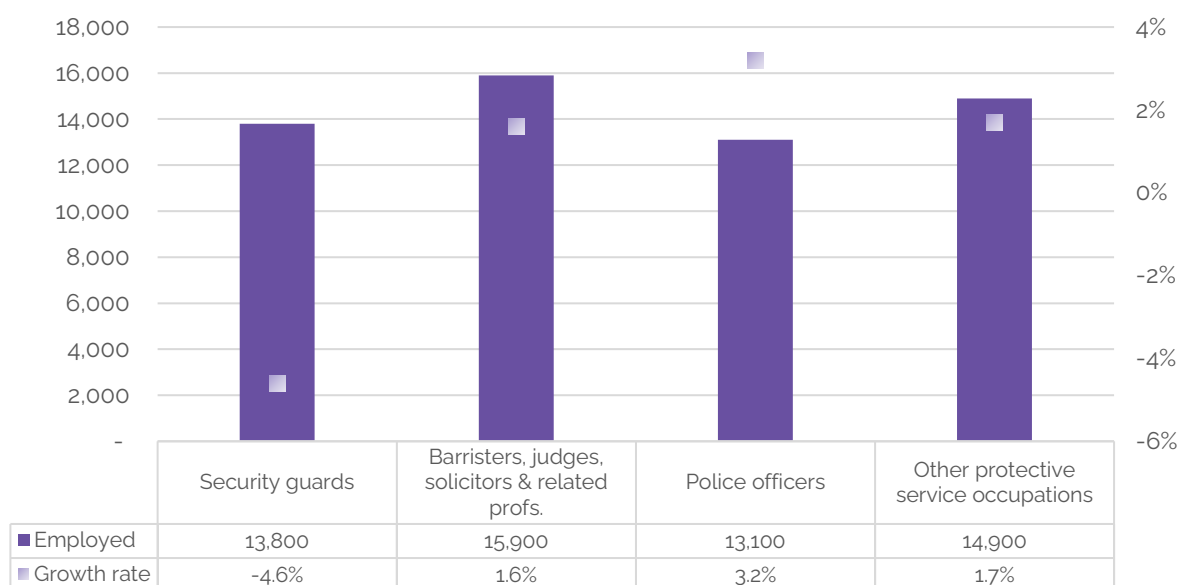
Employment growth was slightly below average for this occupational group, with no change in overall employment levels since 2023. There was a high volume of recent job hires with job churn a factor in a number of roles in this group. There was also a relatively large number of jobseekers on the Live Register in December 2024 who were previously employed in childcare and healthcare roles. Demographic factors will be the key drivers for demand for these roles in the coming years, with falling numbers of births and an increasingly ageing population.

Occupation	Economic summary
Welfare & housing associate profs.	Employment in this occupation fluctuated over the five-year period, with employment in 2024 returning to 2019 levels. Over half (57%) of those employed were female, most were Irish citizens and approximately a fifth were working in part-time positions. There was a high volume of vacancies through DSP Jobs Ireland for support workers (including community and youth) and housing officers but none of the other data sources point to issues with recruiting for these positions.
Childminders, etc.	Employment growth was below average for childminders and related roles with some fluctuation in levels since 2019; employment declined by 1,100 persons since 2023. Almost all employed were female and approximately half were working part-time. Despite the fall in employment, there was a high level of recent job hires, indicating a high level of turnover for these roles. In addition, a relatively high number of jobseekers registered with DSP in December 2024 were classified as previously employed in childcare roles. Vacancies notified through DSP Jobs Ireland were mainly for early years educators, playgroup leaders and childcare practitioners. New employment permits issued were mainly for playgroup leaders. Demand for these roles will be determined by demographic factors (i.e. the falling number of 0–4-year-olds in the population), the levels of childcare usage and Government childcare strategies such as the National Childcare Scheme. There is significant supply from education and training for these roles, with approximately 5,300 awards across NFQ levels 4-9, although the extent to which this represents new supply or upskilling of the current workforce is unclear.
Social workers & welfare profs.	The numbers employed in this occupation are relatively small with employment growing annually since 2022. Over half (59%) of those employed were women. A small number of new employment permits were issued for social workers. In order to address issues with recruiting and retaining social workers, a new apprenticeship in social work (level 9) and a social work tertiary degree (level 8) were introduced in 2024.
Care workers, home carers, etc. Labour shortage: Care workers	This occupation saw large annual increases in employment in 2021 and 2022, but numbers have declined since. Despite this, there was a large volume of recent job hires for this occupation in 2024, indicating that job churn is a considerable factor. This is also reflected in the large number of posts advertised on DSP Jobs Ireland for care workers. Three quarters of all persons employed in this occupation were female, a third were working part-time and the share of non-Irish citizens was slightly above the national average. Almost half of those employed held third level qualifications, indicating a level of skills mismatch, and over a quarter were aged 55 years or over, indicating that job openings due to replacement demand are likely to persist in the coming years. Attracting and retaining staff will continue to be a key challenge for these roles with an ageing population likely to be a driver of demand for the foreseeable future.
Other caring services Skills shortage: Healthcare assistants	Employment grew strongly for this occupation in 2022 and 2023 but declined slightly in 2024. Most employed in these roles were female and over a third worked part-time. There was a large volume of posts advertised for healthcare assistants on DSP Jobs Ireland, exceeding the total number of persons employed in this occupation. It is likely that there is some overlap in the vacancies for skilled healthcare assistants in hospital and nursing home settings with other care assistant roles included in the occupation above; indeed, further interrogation of the data shows that only a relatively small share of the notified posts required a minimum level 5 qualification and/or any level of

	experience. There were a large volume of new employment permits and renewals issued for healthcare assistants and issues with filling vacancies for these roles was identified in the Recruitment Agency Survey. Despite some overlap in the data with care workers creating difficulties in interpretation, demand for qualified, skilled healthcare assistants is expected to persist due to our growing and ageing population. Supply from the education/training system has remained stable in recent years, with approximately 2,300 level 5 major awards per annum in 2023 and 2024.
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10.7 Legal & Security Occupations

Figure 10.7 Annual Average Employment (2024) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2019-2024)



Overall employment	57,700
Share of total workforce	2.0%
Main sectors of employment	48% - Public administration and defence 24% - Professional activities [13%] - Administrative and support services
Employment growth	700 between 2019 and 2024 +0.2% on average annually (compared to +3.4% for total workforce)

2024	% 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.	[52%]	91%	...	92%	100%	38	
Police officers	...	100%	...	99%	84%		
Other protective service occupations	...	94%	...	85%	[45%]		
Security guards	...	[82%]	...	74%	...	1	
Overall total	26%	92%	15%	87%	65%	39	

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 in this occupational group saw some fluctuations over the five-year period, with employment since 2023 declining by 5,000 persons, returning to 2019 levels. Almost half of persons employed in these occupations worked in the public administration and defence sector, with males representing three quarters of the workforce. The outlook for employment in these occupations may vary depending on factors such as government funding and levels of public consumption.

Occupation	Economic summary
Barristers, judges, solicitors & related profs.	Employment levels have seen some fluctuation over the five-year period, although there has been little change in the number of persons employed since 2023. Of the approximately 16,000 persons employed in this occupation, there were 3,080 on the Roll of Practising Barristers (as of June 2025) ⁶² and 12,175 solicitors held practising certificates at the end of 2024 (an increase of 304 on 2023). ⁶³ In addition, there are approximately 200 judges in Ireland with plans in place to increase the number of judges in the coming years. ⁶⁴ Most in this occupation (83%) were employed in the professional activities sector, with women accounting for a slightly higher share than men. A small number of employment permits were issued for legal counsel, foreign registered lawyers and trainee solicitors.
Police officers (e.g. Gardaí)	Employment levels declined by 2,600 since 2023 for this occupation but this is not reflected in the Department of Justice workforce data ⁶⁵ which saw marginal increases in the number of gardaí (excluding civilian garda staff and reserves) over this time. A recruitment campaign will be launched in Autumn 2025 to work towards the government target of 5,000 new recruits over the next 5 years with changes to age limits of new recruits and increases in the Garda trainee allowance and the retirement age to address issues with attracting and retaining Gardaí. ⁶⁶
Other protective service occupations (e.g. army personnel, fire/prison service officers)	Having declined annually since 2021, employment levels increased by 2,300 between 2023 and 2024 for this occupation. DSP Jobseeker data from December 2024 indicates the presence of a number of job seekers who had previously been employed as protective services officers. The data does not point to any issues in sourcing staff for these roles.
Security guards	Employment numbers fell sharply in this occupation when compared to 2023, with 4,300 fewer persons employed, having been reasonably steady in the years preceding this. There was a high volume of jobseekers in the DSP Jobseeker data from December 2024 who were previously employed in security and related occupations. DSP Jobs Ireland vacancy posts were mainly for airport search unit officers, and security guards/officers for bars, retail and events. Future demand for these roles will likely be particularly dependent on consumer spending in areas including retail and hospitality.

⁶² Roll of Practising Barristers – Legal Services Regulatory Authority

⁶³ LSRA-Pathways-S33-Annual-Report-2024-FINAL.pdf

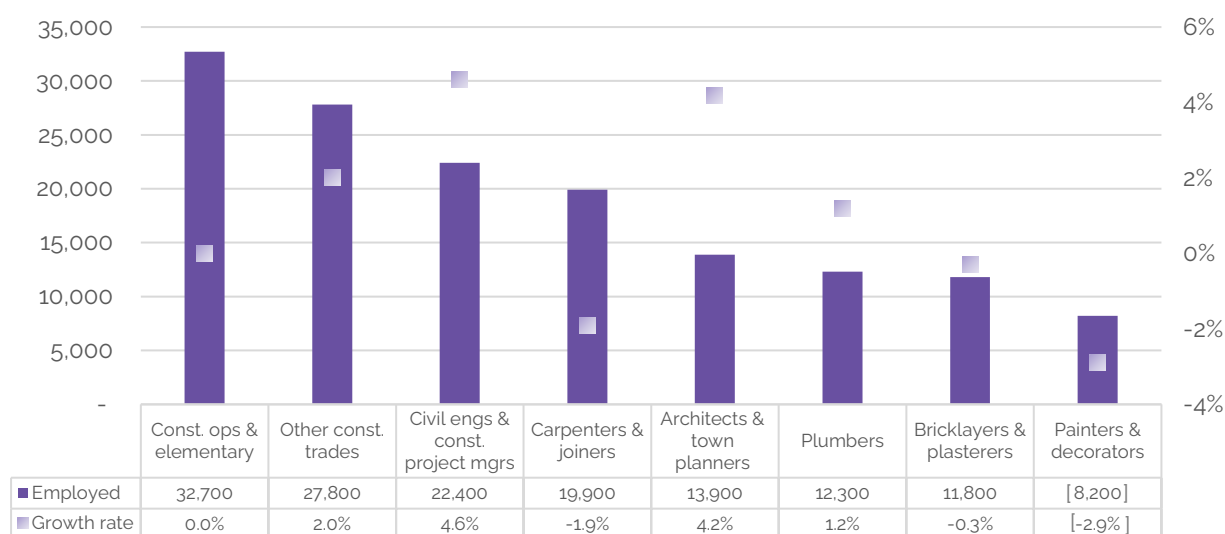
⁶⁴ Minister McEntee secures government approval for 20 additional Judges

⁶⁵<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/66833-garda-workforce/>

⁶⁶ Justice Committee Opening Statement

10.8 Construction Occupations

Figure 10.8 Annual Average Employment (2024) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2019-2024)



Overall employment	152,600
Share of total workforce	6.0%
Main sectors of employment	73% - Construction 13% - Professional activities [5%] - Industry
Employment growth	+7,000 between 2019 and 2024 +0.9% on average annually (compared to +3.4% for total workforce)

2024	% 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 & const. project mgrs	...	93%	[20%]	87%	81%	623	✓
Architects & town planners etc.	...	94%	...	74%	93%	171	✓
Construction related technicians	...	...	...	...	...	57	✓
Bricklayers & plasterers	...	92%	...	84%	...	55	✓
Plumbers	...	96%	...	98%	...	45	
Carpenters & joiners	...	98%	...	77%	...	231	✓
Painters & decorators	...	[91%]	...	[69%]	...	36	
Other construction trades	...	96%	[22%]	79%	...	100	✓
Construction operatives & elementary	...	85%	[21%]	77%	...	23	✓
Overall total	[7%]	93%	20%	80%	35%	1,341	

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

Annual average employment growth in construction occupations was well below the national average over the last five years, and actually declined slightly between 2023 and 2024. To date, some planned construction projects have not yet been realised (e.g. the number of housing completions), although retrofitting activities (e.g. energy upgrades) are increasing with nearly 48,000 home energy upgrades in 2023 (up 76% on 2022), and almost 54,000 in 2024.⁶⁷

Modern methods of construction will represent a shift in the skills profile required in construction: developments such as off-site construction, digital transformation and sustainable construction standards affect the demand for the volume and skills-mix of construction workers, with skills in demand ranging from technical (including digital and advanced machinery, as well as traditional construction skills), communication/collaboration (especially in logistics, supply chain, leadership), planning & scheduling, quality control, regulatory knowledge, data analysis, among others.⁶⁸

The supply of construction skills from the formal education and training sector has increased by 38% to reach approximately 4,000 (mostly major) awards over the period 2019-2023; however, given the rapid pace of change occurring in today's workplace, many of the required skills will have to be sourced from within the existing workforce, both construction and manufacturing, with upskilling opportunities playing a vital role in ensuring Ireland has the right skills in its construction workforce. The relatively high number of jobseekers registered with the DSP at the end of December 2024 who stated that their previous occupation was in construction trades or other construction-related occupations points to some potential additional supply for these roles, although it was not possible to disaggregate across trades or to determine if they were qualified tradespersons. With the removal of a number of construction occupations from the ineligible list for employment permits in recent years, supply from outside the European Economic Area has increased. Employment data shows that construction jobs have a particularly high share of males employed; expanding female employment in construction jobs would go a considerable way in meeting skills requirements for these roles.

The recently updated National Development Plan (July 2025) is set to provide funding for large strategic projects in housing, water, energy, and transport, and will require a significant and sustained expansion of the construction workforce.⁶⁹ A recent DFHERIS report estimates that between 68,000 and 80,000 additional construction workers would be required by 2030 to deliver on housing and retrofitting targets alone.⁷⁰

Future demand for construction skills will be driven by the nature of both private and public sector activity. Factors affecting activity levels include access to finance, costs (materials, labour), planning and infrastructure capacity, as well as technology and modern methods of construction.

⁶⁷ SEAI (2024). SEAI-Retrofit-Full-Year-Report-2024.pdf (page 22)

⁶⁸ DFHERIS (2025). Modern Methods of Construction Action Plan. Modern Methods of Construction Action Plan June 2025 Skillnet Ireland (2022). Modern-Methods-of-Construction-Defining-MMC-Business.pdf

⁶⁹ NDP_Review_document_-_22_July_2025_1025.pdf

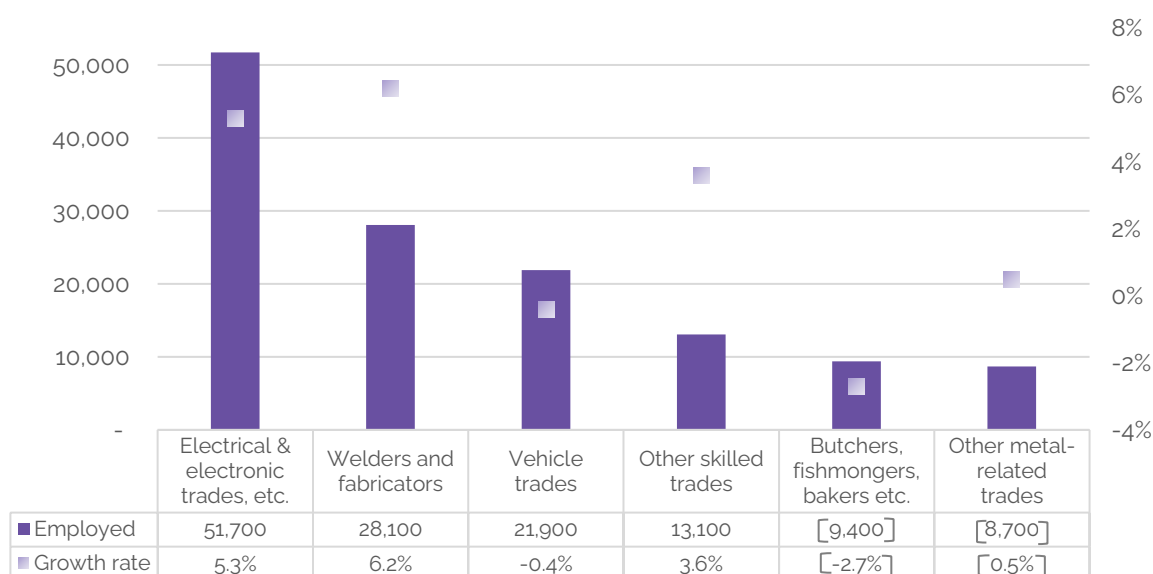
⁷⁰ An Update to the Report on the Analysis of Skills for Residential Construction and Retrofitting

Occupation	Economic summary
Civil engineers & construction project managers Skills shortage: Civil engineers & construction project managers	Employment growth was above average for this occupation although employment levels remained unchanged since 2023. New employment permits issued were primarily for civil engineers and construction project managers, but also for site and structural engineers. Difficult-to-fill mentions in both the Recruitment Agency Survey and Skills for Growth data identified a demand for site managers/engineers, project managers, civil/building engineers, with key skills in demand including BIM, design, and sector specific knowledge (e.g. life sciences, renewables, etc). The number of awards from higher education has increased considerably in recent years (following declines associated with the aftermath of the 2008 recession), and were at their highest levels in a decade by 2023 (the number of level 8 and 9 awards in civil engineering related courses had risen to 322, and structural engineering to 90, up from 260 and 81 in 2019 respectively). These increases may help alleviate some of the issues with sourcing suitably qualified personnel for these roles. Increasing housing provision, addressing infrastructure (i.e. utilities) capacity issues, and retrofitting activities will increase demand for these roles.
Architects & town planners, architectural technologists, & surveyors Skills shortage: Quantity surveyors	Although employment growth was above average for this occupation, there have been fluctuations in recent years, with employment in 2024 broadly in line with 2021 levels. Employment levels for the individual job roles within this occupation are too small to allow for an analysis on patterns between roles. Most employed in these occupations were male, and the share of non-Irish citizens employed was above the national average. Employment permits issued in 2024 were mainly for quantity surveyors, architectural technologists, architects (mainly landscape) while mentions of difficult-to-fill vacancies in the Recruitment Agency Survey all referred to quantity surveyors. The number of level 8-10 awards for surveyors (quantity and building) increased from 221 in 2019 to 341 in 2023, while levels 8-10 awards for town planners increased from 66 in 2019 to 114 in 2023. Town planners are likely to be in continued demand to design and locate infrastructure and manage housing/commercial development; however, the numbers employed are too small to allow for detailed analysis. Demand for quantity surveyors and architects is expected to increase with any growth in housing and infrastructure activity, with shortages already evident for quantity surveyors likely to persist.
Construction-related technicians Shortage: Inconclusive	The numbers of persons employed in this occupation are too small to allow for analysis, but demand is evident from a number of sources. Vacancies for CAD technicians/designers appeared in the DSP Jobs Ireland data with both CAD and BIM technicians mentioned as difficult to source in the Recruitment Agency Survey. Employment permits issued for this occupation were also primarily related to CAD and BIM technicians. BIM skills are often a required skill for CAD technicians (along with AutoCAD and Revit) and are also being incorporated into other roles, such as architectural technologists. These skills are also in demand across other sectors beyond construction (including manufacturing and professional activities).
Bricklayers & plasterers	Annual average employment growth over the five-year period was negative for bricklayers/plasterers, although employment has grown strongly since 2023 (an additional 2,500 persons), with numbers almost returning to 2019 levels. Just 55 new employment permits were issued (three fifths for bricklayers, the remainder for plasterers), down from 191 in 2022 and 84 in 2023. A small number of difficult-to-fill vacancy mentions were identified for blocklayers in the Recruitment Agency Survey. Vacancy posts in the DSP Jobs Ireland data were primarily for plasterers and brick/block layers followed by stone masons. In 2024, the number of new apprentice registrations for brick and stone laying was 78 (an 18% increase compared to 2023, although just below 2019 registration levels), with 28 awards in 2023. Since 2022, the number of new plastering apprentice registrations remained at around 30 annually, compared to 36 in 2019, with just 3 awards in 2023 (down from 19 in 2022). Increased uptake of MMC for housebuilding is expected to lead to a reduction in the demand for plasterers and bricklayers but in the short-term, any acceleration of house building or residential repair/retrofitting activity may lead to issues with sourcing supply for these roles.

Plumbers Potential future skills shortage: Plumbers	Although the five-year annual average employment growth rate was below the national average, employment levels for plumbers have been growing annually since 2021. Plumbers and heating/ventilation engineers were the main job titles for both new employment permits and in the DSP Jobs Ireland vacancy data in 2024. The number of new plumbing apprentice registrations was 832 (a 13% increase compared to 2023 and a 32% increase compared to 2019 registration levels); the number of awards was also up, with 409 awards issued in 2023, compared to 204 in 2019. Plumbers play a key role in home energy upgrades (e.g. installation of sustainable heat pumps) and demand for plumbers, particularly those with skills and expertise in water, waste water, and energy efficient systems, will be in demand.
Carpenters & joiners Skills shortage: Carpenters	Employment has fluctuated over the five-year period for carpenters and joiners; employment declined by 1,700 persons in 2024, returning to 2019 levels. Despite this, demand is evident. There was a large volume of vacancy posts notified through DSP Jobs Ireland with shuttering carpenters accounting for a significant share. The number of employment permits (for carpenters including shuttering) has been increasing annually since 2021 and carpenters (including shuttering) also appeared in the Recruitment Agency Survey as being difficult-to-source. In 2024, at 771, the number of new carpentry and joinery apprentice registrations was 8% higher than in 2023 and 29% higher than 2019 pre-COVID levels (at 597). The number of carpentry/joinery level 6 awards has also increased, from 148 in 2019 to 397 in 2023. The lack of employment growth may suggest that employers have been unable to find suitable candidates in the available labour market. MMC adoption may see a dampening of demand for these occupations in the long-term.
Painters & decorators	Employment levels have remained stable since 2022 for painters/decorators. The share of non-Irish citizens was above the national average. A small number of employment permits were issued for painters (including industrial and spray) with spray painters appearing frequently in the DSP Jobs Ireland data; relevant experience rather than qualifications was the main pre-requisite for both the employment permits and vacancies. Although demand for painters in housebuilding activities may decline with increased use of MMC, job opportunities will likely continue to arise for home maintenance activity and in industrial settings.
Other construction trades (e.g. construction supervisors, floorers, glaziers, roofers)	Although employment grew strongly in 2022 and 2023, it declined by 800 persons in 2024. There was a large volume of vacancy posts on DSP Jobs Ireland in 2024 primarily for steel fabricators/fixers, but also for construction supervisors/forepersons, floor and wall tilers, roofers, and glaziers. Online job ads related mainly to tilers and steel erectors. The number of new employment permits issued increased since 2023; the main job roles included steel fixers, tilers, floorers and window fitters. Increased demand in the short-term for roofers and glaziers for retrofitting activities may be dampened with more off-site construction activities.
Construction operatives & elementary Shortage: Inconclusive	Employment numbers in 2024 returned to 2019 levels for this occupation. Despite the recent decline in employment, the high number of recent job hires indicate that job churn is a factor. There was a relatively large volume of vacancy posts on DSP Jobs Ireland, primarily for scaffolders with a smaller share for concrete workers, insulation installers/fitters and groundworkers. The small number of employment permits issued in 2023 were mainly for scaffolders. The Recruitment Agency identified difficult-to-fill vacancies for banksman, scaffolders, pipe layers and general labourers. Between 2023 and 2024, the number of new scaffolding apprentice registrations increased from 18 to 48. Although issues with recruiting scaffolders in particular is evident, the numbers employed are not large enough to determine the extent to which supply meets demand, with increased house building activity likely to accentuate any issues currently being experienced.

10.9 Other Craft Occupations n.e.c.

Figure 10.9 Annual Average Employment (2024) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2019-2024)



Overall employment	132,900
Share of total workforce	5.0%
Main sectors of employment	37% - Industry 20% - Construction 14% - Wholesale & retail [8%] - Professional activities [6%] - ICT
Employment growth	+19,500 between 2019 and 2024 +3.2% on average annually (compared to +3.4% for total workforce)

2024	% 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	...	89%	[20%]	81%	[34%]	616	✓
Other metal-related trades	...	[97%]	...	[83%]	...	242	
Vehicle trades	...	97%	...	82%	...	756	✓
Electrical & electronic trades etc.	...	96%	14%	91%	40%	205	✓
Other skilled trades	...	[77%]	...	82%	...	16	
Butchers, fishmongers, bakers etc.	...	...	...	...	...	125	
Overall total	[8%]	92%	16%	84%	32%	1,960	

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 this occupational group was broadly in line with the national average, although employment levels have seen little change since 2022. Most employed were male and almost three-fifths held higher secondary/FET qualifications. The climate agenda will be one of the key drivers of employment for these roles, with demand for welders and electricians in particular for the further development of off-shore energy and the insulation and maintenance of solar panels. In addition, it will lead to evolving job tasks such as working with EVs for mechanics. Upskilling and reskilling will be required to ensure those in the workforce can adapt to these changes along with increased digitalisation and automation.

Occupation	Economic summary
Welders & fabricators Skills shortage: Welders/fabricators	Although employment growth was above average for this occupation over the five-year period, recent growth has been more modest, with approximately an additional 2,000 persons employed since 2022. There was a high volume of vacancies for welders/fabricators on DSP Jobs Ireland – many of the posts which sought welders/fabricators were seeking individuals with experience in welding trades. TIG/ARC welders were identified in the Recruitment Agency Survey as difficult to source, while Skills for Growth data noted issues with sourcing certified metal fabricators in manufacturing; required skills included the ability to read drawings (including on digital devices), welding skills (MIG, TIG, Orbital) and good English. There was also a high number of employment permits issued for welders and fabricators, with relevant experience a key requirement; approximately 30% were for roles in industry with the remainder shared between other services and construction. Supply from the FET system has increased in recent years, with 160 QQI major awards (level 6) in metal fabrication in 2024 which is the highest number made over the last ten years, and well over the 70 awards made in 2019. Similarly, the number of learners completing welding courses has increased since 2019, reaching their highest numbers to date in 2023 (at nearly 1,900 learners), up from over 1,200 in 2019. Nonetheless, many learners are already in employment and do not necessarily represent a new supply of skilled welders to the labour market. Demand for welders and fabricators remains strong, with issues with sourcing suitable candidates persisting. The development of Ireland's off-shore energy capacity is expected to lead to a continued demand for welders in the coming years.⁷¹
Other metal-related trades Inconclusive: CNC programmers	This group contains, amongst others, sheet metal workers, toolmakers and pipefitters. The numbers employed have seen marginal annual declines in recent years but are too small to allow for detailed analysis. Despite the small numbers employed, there was a large volume of posts advertised on DSP Jobs Ireland for job titles including CNC operators/programmers. There was a relatively large number of employment permits issued primarily for CNC operators/programmers, pipefitters and sheet metal workers, with a smaller number issued for air-conditioning refrigeration engineers and toolmakers. Half of the employment permits issued for CNC-related roles required relevant experience, with the remainder primarily requiring a Leaving Cert education level; most were for a salary of €35,000 or less. Skills for Growth data identified issues with sourcing maintenance fitters across a range of sectors and those with skills in lean practices, CNC, CAD, PLC (programmable logic controllers), problem solving and health & safety guidelines. With fewer than 60 awards made per annum, the supply of skills from the formal education system for sheet metal workers, pipefitters, and CNC operators is small. Although there is evidence of demand for CNC operators/programmers, due to the small numbers employed in this role, it is not possible to determine if shortages are occurring.

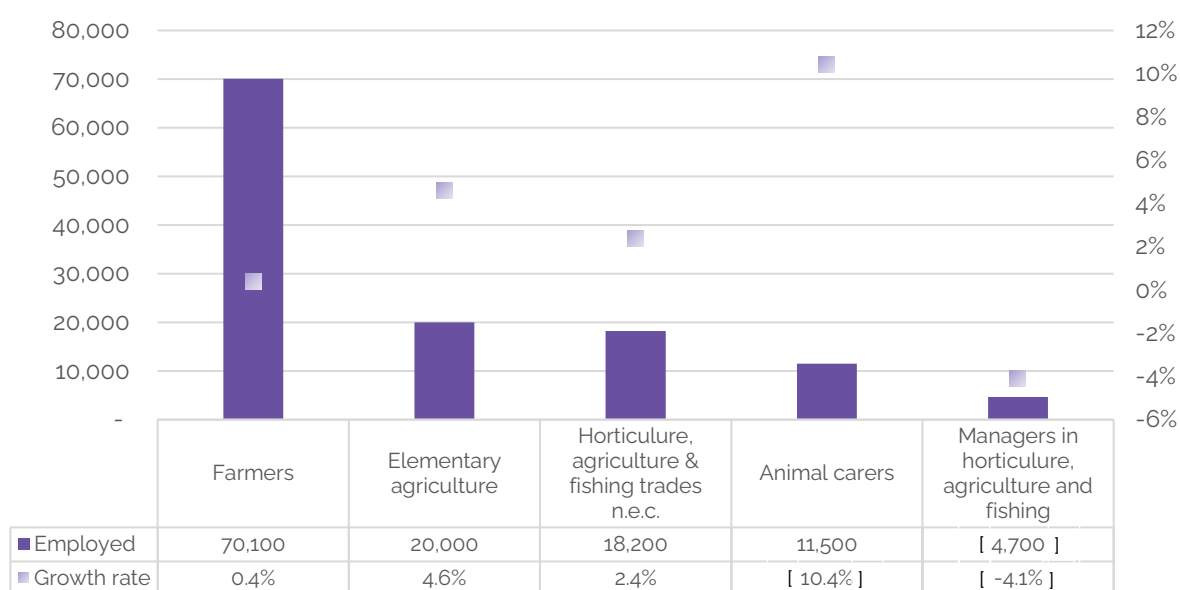
⁷¹ https://www.skillnetireland.ie/uploads/attachments/Building_Our_Potential-Ireland's_Offshore_Wind_Skills_and_Talent_Needs_Jan_2024.pdf

Vehicle trades	Employment in 2024 was below 2019 levels, with some fluctuation over this period. Despite this, there was a large volume of vacancy posts on DSP Jobs Ireland for roles including HGV mechanics, vehicle roadworthiness testers, panel beaters/spray painters, car mechanics, motor/vehicle technicians and aircraft mechanics with employment permits issued for similar roles. A small number of difficult-to-fill vacancy mentions occurred for mechanics and EV technicians in the Recruitment Agency Survey while Skills for Growth data highlighted issues with HGV mechanics (especially for the haulage sector, but also in manufacturing) with digital and health and safety skills in demand for these roles. The number of apprenticeship awards issued for aircraft mechanics remains small (30 awards in 2024), with 79 new apprentices registered in 2024. There were 100 awards for HGV mechanics in 2024, down slightly on the 125 in 2023, but nonetheless higher than in 2019 (70 awards); at 226 persons, new apprenticeship registrations in 2024 for this role were down 3% on 2023 but 30% above 2019 levels. The number of awards for motor mechanics stood at 220 awards in 2024, down slightly on 260 awards in 2023; however, new apprenticeship registrations for this trade were substantially higher than reported in 2023 and 2019 (by 20% and 41% respectively) indicating increases in awards for this trade in the short-to-medium term. The increased output from the education system, particularly in relation to HGV mechanics, should help to ease any issues in sourcing suitably qualified personnel for these roles. Continued investment in upskilling/reskilling for those already in the roles will be essential for adapting to new technologies (including increased use of electric vehicles and eco-driving).
Electrical & electronic trades, etc. Potential future skills shortage: electricians	Overall employment growth was strong for this occupation with an additional 11,700 persons employed between 2019 and 2024; having declined in 2023, employment grew by 3,600 in 2024, almost returning to 2022 levels. There was a high volume of recent job hires for this occupation, indicating that job churn is a factor. Approximately 40% were employed in the construction sector, with a further 40% employed in either industry or the ICT sector. DSP Jobs Ireland vacancy posts were mainly for lines workers, electricians and HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) engineers. Difficult-to-fill-vacancy mentions in the Recruitment Agency Survey related to electricians in the construction sector while Skills for Growth data identified issues with sourcing electricians, mostly for utilities sector (including telecoms) and to a lesser extent manufacturing; digital and good communications skills were sought along with persons who were self-motivated. New employment permits were issued for roles including lines workers, electricians and field service engineers. The demand for electricians spans a range of economic sectors beyond construction. In manufacturing, electricians with expertise in automation, robotics, etc will likely be in demand to maintain and repair onsite production and power systems, while the shift towards more sustainable energy solutions will require electricians to install and maintain various types of power systems (wind, solar, etc). Finally, although still small in number, the increasing number of electric vehicles (with further increases likely) will require electricians for EV charging infrastructure projects. The number of Level 6 FET craft awards for electricians has risen sharply in recent years to 1,775 in 2023 (from 499 in 2019 and 1,087 in 2022), and despite a slight decline in 2024 (to 1,690 awards), remains at their highest levels observed over the last ten years. In 2024, new electrical apprenticeship registrations (at 3,074) were 8% higher than in 2023 and 58% higher than in 2019. Of the total electrical craft apprenticeship population as of June 2025, 94% were employed in the construction sector, with 4% in engineering-related activities. The higher outputs from the apprenticeship system for this trade are helping to meet the increased demand for electricians. However, demand is expected to continue as a result of planned increases in activity in housebuilding and retrofitting (e.g. installation of solar photovoltaic panels) and for renewable energy projects. This may lead to shortages occurring for electricians.

Other skilled trades (e.g. printers, furniture makers, and textile trades)	Employment growth was just above average over the five-year period for this occupation, with employment levels seeing little change since 2022. A small number of employment permits were issued for furniture makers and upholsterers, having been recently removed from the ineligible list of occupations for employment permits, with a small volume of DSP Jobs Ireland vacancy posts also relating to these roles. An increased focus on the circular economy may lead to future demand for at least some of these roles (e.g. furniture makers), although the numbers involved are likely to be small.
Butchers, fishmongers, bakers etc.	Employment numbers in 2024 were below 2019 levels with little change in the intervening years. Employment permits were issued for skilled butchers and de-boners, all for salaries of less than €36,000. Attractiveness of the role is likely to be one of the key factors relating to issues in sourcing suitable candidates, particularly for meat de-boners.

10.10 Agriculture & Animal Care Occupations

Figure 10.10 Annual Average Employment (2024) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2019-2024)



Overall employment	124,500
Share of total workforce	5.0%
Main sectors of employment	79% - Agriculture sector [7%] - Administrative and support services
Employment growth	+10,600 between 2019 and 2024 +1.8% on average annually (compared to +3.4% for total workforce)

2024	% 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	...	...	...	...	...	42	
Farmers	10%	82%	63%	99%	19%		
Horticulture, agriculture & fishing trades n.e.c.	...	63%	57%	86%	...		
Elementary agriculture	...	[46%]	[24%]	84%	...	714	
Animal carers	[63%]	[75%]	...	77%	[49%]	193	
Overall total	17%	74%	50%	93%	22%	949	

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 was below average, with almost no growth since 2023. Despite this, there was a relatively high volume of both recent job hires and recent job leavers, indicating that there is a level of job churn and also that job opportunities are occurring despite the low employment growth, although this is most likely concentrated in elementary agricultural roles. The number of new employment permits issued for these roles increased in 2024 compared to 2023 with new quotas being released; there was also a relatively high volume of permits renewed.

Over a third of persons employed in these occupations held at most a lower secondary education, the highest share across all occupational groups. Upskilling/reskilling may be needed to ensure those working in agricultural roles have the skills and knowledge to adapt to new work practices designed to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to climate change. With half of persons employed in these occupations aged 55 years and over, without a high level of replacement, employment is likely to see declines in future years.

Agriculture will play a key role in reducing carbon emissions and adapting to climate change, including the need to maintain and increase food production and improve biodiversity according to Teagasc's Climate Action Strategy.⁷²

Occupation	Economic summary
Managers in horticulture, agriculture and fishing	Numbers employed in this occupation are too small to allow for detailed analysis, with marginal annual declines in employment since 2021. New employment permits issued related mainly to farm managers (including dairy and pig farming) with a small number related to foresters.
Farmers	Farmers were the fifth largest occupation in the Irish economy in 2024. There have been some small fluctuations in employment over the five-year period, although employment in 2024 was only marginally above 2019 levels. Most employed as farmers were male, almost two-thirds were aged 55 years and over, and 38% 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; as such, upskilling/reskilling will likely be a key requirement to adjust to these changes.
Horticultural, agricultural & fishing trades n.e.c. (e.g. gardeners)	Employment growth was below average for this occupation, with little growth between 2023 and 2024. Almost half were employed in the administrative services sector with the remainder primarily employed in agriculture and other NACE sectors. A relatively high share (37%) of persons employed in this occupation were employed part-time. This occupation also had a high share employed who were aged 55 years and older which will likely lead to higher replacement demand in the coming years and job opportunities even in the absence of employment growth. Coillte's commitment to promoting the use of wood products to facilitate an increase in the level of timber-framed homes from 20% to 80% by 2050 has the potential to lead to increased demand for skilled workers in the forestry and wood processing sector, although likely to be small in number. ⁷³
Elementary agriculture	Employment growth was above average for elementary agriculture occupations with numbers employed growing annually for all years excluding in 2022. Most employed were male, a third held at most a lower secondary education, and almost a quarter were aged 55 years or older. A further 37% were aged 15-24 years and over a half were employed part-time which suggests that a share of persons employed were also in full-time education. This may be leading to a level of job churn which is in turn a contributing

⁷² <https://www.teagasc.ie/media/website/publications/2022/Teagasc-Climate-Action-Strategy-2022-2030-web.pdf>

⁷³ Coillte (2022). [A Greener Future for All. Annual Report 2022](#)

	factor for the high volume of vacancy posts on DSP Jobs Ireland. In addition to the 714 new employment permits issued for farm assistants (dairy, pig) and horticulture operatives (including mushroom harvesters), 424 renewal permits were issued. The increased adoption of automated processes could reduce issues with sourcing personnel for some of these roles. ⁷⁴ A seasonal employment permit was introduced earlier this year which aims to alleviate issues in areas such as horticulture.
Animal carers (including vets)	Annual employment growth over the five-year period was above average, with steady growth since 2022. This is the only agriculture-related occupation where females accounted for the higher share in employment. A higher than average share were employed part-time and approximately half held third level qualifications. DSP Jobs Ireland vacancy posts related to equine workers (e.g. work riders), zookeepers and dog groomers and employment permits were issued for work and exercise riders.

⁷⁴ <https://assets.gov.ie/229861/gd3aa8co-b2b8-4b71-9341-b154b1e7ac20.pdf>

10.11 Hospitality Occupations

Figure 10.11 Annual Average Employment (2024) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2019-2024)



*The numbers employed as catering/bar managers were too small to report in 2024

Overall employment	177,900
Share of total workforce	6.0%
Main sectors of employment	86% - Accommodation & food 7% - Health
Employment growth	+12,500 between 2019 and 2024 +1.5% on average annually (compared to +3.4% for total workforce)

2024	% 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	52%	85%	[34%]	71%	[45%]	92	✓
Chefs & cooks	42%	78%	[16%]	55%	48%	2,234	✓
Catering & bar managers	...	...	...	...	...		✓
Kitchen & catering assistants	63%	45%	[11%]	65%	28%	1	
Waiters & waitresses	71%	[30%]	...	73%	...	2	✓
Bar staff	[38%]	...	...	92%	...	1	
Housekeepers & caretakers, etc.	[92%]	...	...	...	...		
Overall total	56%	54%	14%	68%	31%	2,330	

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, although employment has grown steadily since 2022, having seen significant falls during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although this group represented 6% of the total workforce, it accounted for 13% of recent job hires and 11% of recent job leavers, indicating a high level of job churn (most likely related to a high share of students working in hospitality occupations such as waiters, bar staff and kitchen assistants). Over a third (34%) of those employed were aged 15-24 years, considerably higher than the national average. The share of non-Irish citizens, at 32%, was also above average, with over 2,300 new employment permits and almost 800 renewal permits issued in 2024, primarily for chefs.

The Programme for Government 2025⁷⁵ acknowledges the increased cost pressures for SMEs including those in the hospitality sector, and along with proposed changes to VAT and PRSI rates there are plans to expand courses in tourism and hospitality. The latest Central Bank Bulletin⁷⁶ asserts that personal consumption is expected to grow, albeit at a more modest rate, due to rising real wages and stable employment levels, which should have a positive impact on demand for hospitality occupations, although a fall in tourist numbers would likely have a negative effect.

Occupation	Economic summary
Hospitality managers	After rebounding in 2022, employment levels have remained relatively unchanged for hospitality managers since. Just over half of those employed were female and just under a half held third level qualifications. The share of those employed aged 55 and over and the share of non-Irish citizens were both above the national average. New employment permits issued were primarily for restaurant and duty managers, and the majority of posts advertised on DSP Jobs Ireland related to restaurant managers. There was a small number of mentions of difficulty in recruiting for restaurant managers and middle managers in the Recruitment Agency Survey. Given the lack of employment growth in recent years for this occupation, it is difficult to determine the extent to which there is a lack of suitably qualified personnel for these roles or whether retention is a larger issue for this occupation.
Chefs & cooks Skills shortage: Chefs	Although the employment growth was below average over the five-year period for chefs, there has been annual growth since 2022. However, the number of recent job hires in 2024 far exceeded employment growth indicating that job churn is occurring. Almost half (45%) of those employed were non-Irish citizens, the second highest share after food operatives. Over 2,200 new employment permits were issued and 750 renewals (both were primarily for chef de partie roles). There was a high volume of posts notified on DSP Jobs Ireland for chefs (again, primarily chef de partie) and most online job adverts for this group related to chefs. Skills for Growth data indicates difficulties in attracting learners to relevant courses, which in turn affects the supply from the education/training system, which saw a decline in the number of FET and 3 rd level awards made in 2023 (to 665 awards), down from 777 awards in 2019. In addition, a relatively high volume of persons in the DSP Jobseeker data in December 2024 were previously employed in jobs in food preparation trades. Failte Ireland tourism careers labour market research (November 2024) shows that recruitment and retention challenges amongst employers have eased for the third year in a row although chefs remain the most difficult position to fill. ⁷⁷ Although retention remains a challenge, the supply of chefs from the education and training system does not appear to be sufficient to meet demand and shortages are likely to persist.

⁷⁵ [Programme for Government 2025 - Securing Ireland's Future](#)

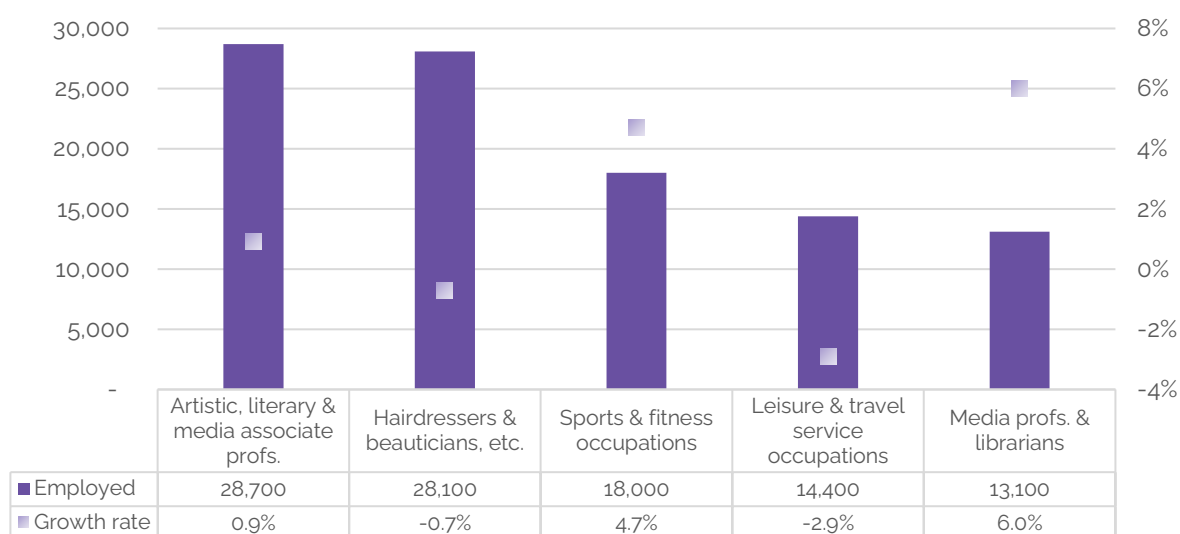
⁷⁶ [Quarterly Bulletin Q2 2025 | Central Bank of Ireland](#)

⁷⁷ www.failteireland.ie/SUMMARY-REPORT-Careers-Surveys-2024.pdf

Catering & bar managers	Employment numbers were too small for a detailed analysis for this occupation although the Recruitment Agency Survey indicated difficulty in filling vacancies for bar and events managers and posts notified in the DSP Jobs Ireland data related mainly to food and beverage and bar managers.
Kitchen & catering assistants	Employment has grown annually for this occupation since 2021 with particularly strong growth since 2023 of 9,500 persons. Despite the strong employment growth, the number of recent job hires far exceeded growth (the second highest after sales assistants), indicating that job churn is a factor for this occupation. Almost two thirds of those employed were female and over half worked part-time. Over a third employed were non-Irish citizens. There was a relatively large volume of vacancy posts in the DSP Jobs Ireland data for roles including food service assistants, kitchen assistants/porters, crew members and baristas.
Waiters & waitresses	Following a recovery in employment since the COVID-19 pandemic, the numbers employed fell slightly in the previous two years with 2024 employment remaining below 2019 levels. Along with bar staff, this occupation had the highest share of persons employed in part-time roles, and the highest shares aged 15-24 years (60% for waiters/waitresses). There was also a substantial number of recent job hires, likely a reflection of a high share of students taking up short-term employment in these roles.
Bar staff	Employment returned to pre-COVID-19 levels in 2023 but declined again in 2024, by 1,400 persons. Despite the decline in employment, there was a high volume of recent job hires indicating job churn. Bar staff had the highest share of persons employed aged 15-24 years, and along with waiters/waitresses, had the highest share of persons working part-time. Almost two-thirds of persons employed were male, the highest share across all hospitality occupations.
Housekeepers	Employment numbers in this occupation were too small for any detailed analysis.

10.12 Arts, Sports & Tourism Occupations

Figure 10.12 Annual Average Employment (2024) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2019-2024)



Overall employment	101,800
Share of total workforce	4.0%
Main sectors of employment	60% - Other NACE activities 10% - ICT 9% - Professional activities
Employment growth	+4,500 between 2019 and 2024 +0.9% on average annually (compared to +3.4% for total workforce)

2024	% 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	[57%]	[84%]	...	[73%]	[87%]	45	
Artistic, literary & media associate profs.	45%	74%	[23%]	83%	77%	290	
Sports & fitness occupations	[42%]	[58%]	...	83%	[52%]	64	
Leisure & travel service occupations	[54%]	[50%]	...	90%	[44%]	3	
Hairdressers & beauticians, etc.	76%	62%	...	73%	...	19	
Overall total	56%	65%	14%	80%	55%	421	

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 declined as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic but has seen a recovery in more recent years. The share working part-time and aged 15-24 years were both above average; this may be a contributing factor in the high volume of recent job hires for these roles.

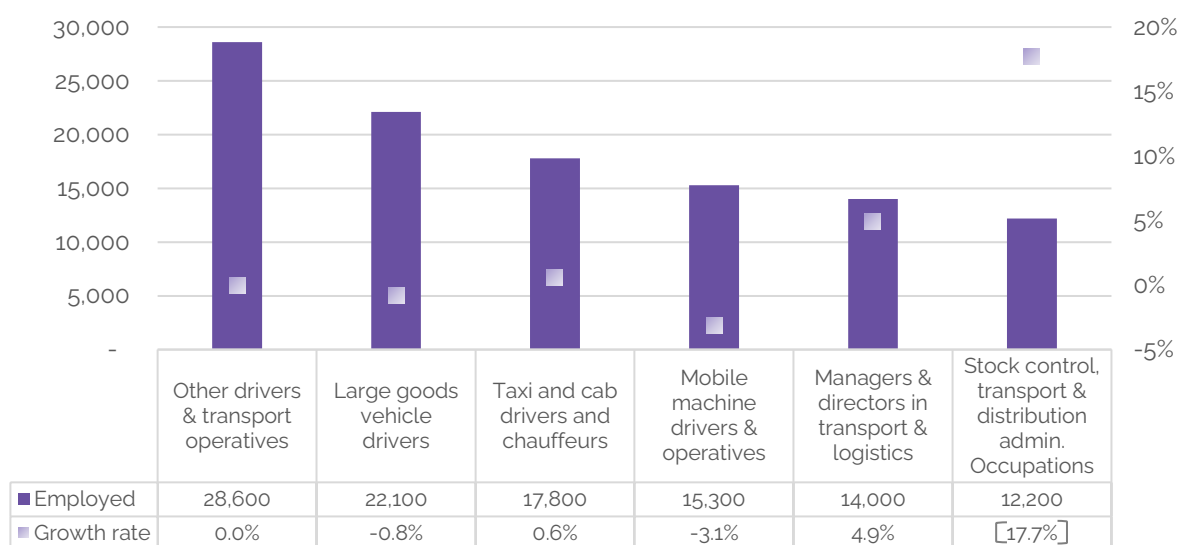
Consumer spending is an important determinant in the demand for many of these roles, and the recent global economic uncertainty may lead to reduced spending, despite rising real wages, which could have a knock-on effect on employment levels, at least in the short term.

Occupation	Economic summary
Media profs. & librarians	Employment growth was above average for this occupation, with employment levels increasing annually since 2022. At 57%, females accounted for the larger share of employment and the share of non-Irish employed was above average. The small number of employment permits issued were for roles including communications/social media/public relations officers and art directors (in animation). This occupation accounted for the largest number of online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) within this group for roles including advertising accounts managers and creative directors. The numbers employed across the various roles within this occupation are too small to allow for any detailed analysis of demand but there is no clear evidence at present of any issues in sourcing suitable candidates for these roles.
Artistic, literary & media associate profs.	Employment growth was below average for this occupation; having peaked at 36,000 in 2022, levels have declined annually since. The CSO Labour Force Survey does not allow for a detailed breakdown of job titles within this occupation, but Census 2022 showed that over a quarter were graphic designers, with other key roles including actors, authors/writers, photographers, artists and arts officers. Employment permits issued in 2024 were for roles including actors, directors, producers, animators, graphic designers, linguists (ICT), dancers, and costume/set designers. Online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) related mainly to jobs for authors, journalists & translators; although small in number, green skills mentioned in ads for journalists is most likely linked to the green economy to inform and generate awareness. Overall, the data does not point to any significant issues in sourcing skills for this occupation.
Sports & fitness occupations	Employment growth was above average for this occupation, mostly due to a large increase in employment in 2023 with only a marginal increase in 2024. Over half employed held third level qualifications and over two-fifths were working part-time. Employment permits issued were for various sporting player and coach roles (in basketball, gymnastics, swimming, golf, hockey, cricket and rugby). Increasing real wages may lead to demand for fitness-related jobs although the evolution of the use of digital platforms for fitness may also have an impact.
Leisure & travel service occupations	Although employment numbers have been increasing since 2022, they have yet to return to pre-COVID-19 levels. Over half of those employed were female, almost two-fifths were aged 15-24 years, and half were in part-time roles (one of the highest shares outside of hospitality occupations). Vacancy posts advertised on DSP Jobs Ireland included summer camp counsellors, lifeguards and tour guides. Due to the small numbers employed in this occupation, detailed analysis is not possible; however, CSO Census data indicates that approximately half of those within this occupation were engaged as air travel assistants or travel agents. Factors such as consumer spending trends and environmental initiatives are expected to influence future demand for these roles.

Hairdressers & beauticians, etc.	Employment levels rebounded in 2022, following declines as a result of COVID-19, but marginal declines since then mean that employment remains below 2019 levels. Over three-quarters employed were female, almost two-fifths were working part-time, and a higher than average share were non-Irish citizens. The relatively high volume of jobseekers registered with DSP in December 2024 who were previously employed as hairdressers, beauticians or related occupations indicates that there is potential supply in the wider labour force. In 2024, there were 260 new registrations for the hairdressing apprenticeship (almost a 10% increase compared to 2023). Rising business costs and competition from the informal sector are likely to continue to impact on employment levels for this occupation as will tourism levels (particularly for those working in hotel settings) and changes in real disposal income for consumers. The adoption of more green and sustainable practices may require upskilling/reskilling interventions for the current workforce.
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10.13 Transport & Logistics Occupations

Figure 10.13 Annual Average Employment (2024) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2019-2024)



Overall employment	113,700
Share of total workforce	4.0%
Main sectors of employment	56% - Transport 13% - Wholesale & retail 12% - Industry [7%] - Construction
Employment growth	+8,300 between 2019 and 2024 +1.5% on average annually (compared to +3.4% for total workforce)

2024	% 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%	...	77%	53%	34	✓
Stock control, transport & distribution admin. occupations	...	86%	...	69%	...	66	✓
Large goods vehicle drivers	...	92%	[35%]	84%	...	482	✓
Mobile machine drivers & operatives	...	90%	...	87%	...	1	✓
Taxi/cab drivers and chauffeurs	...	74%	44%	81%	...		
Other drivers & transport operatives	...	74%	34%	79%	...	145	
Aircraft pilots, ship officers, air traffic controllers	...	...	...	...	...	3	
Overall total	9%	84%	30%	79%	27%	731	

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

Transport and logistics occupations overall experienced lower than average employment growth over the five-year period, with some occupations seeing a decline in overall levels since 2019. For the most part, the educational attainment level for those employed in these occupations is below the national average, most employed are male, and many of the occupations have a high share aged 55 years or older, indicating that replacement demand alone will be high in the short- to medium term. Job openings also appear to be arising due to job churn, with a high volume of recent job hires. Demand is evident despite the low employment growth, with many roles mentioned as being difficult-to-fill vacancies in the Recruitment Agency Survey and Skills for Growth data and a relatively high number of new employment permits issued. Ongoing geo-political tensions continue to impact on the demand for these skills, with fluctuations in fuel costs and supply chain challenges (particularly in light of US tariffs) requiring monitoring. As digitalisation and sustainable practices change the nature of many of these roles, upskilling and reskilling will be essential for those currently employed in these occupations to adapt to these changes.

Occupation	Economic summary
Managers & directors in transport & logistics	Although the annual average employment growth was above average for this occupation over the five-year period, employment levels have remained unchanged since 2023. Most employed were male, over half held third level qualifications and the share of non-Irish citizens employed was slightly above the national average. The volume of vacancy notifications (DSP Jobs Ireland, Eurostat/CEDEFOP) was small but difficult-to-fill vacancies for warehouse and logistics managers were identified in the Recruitment Agency Survey, with most employment permits relating to these roles. Skills for Growth data highlighted a demand for transport planners, with project management, problem solving and route planning design skills, as well as digital and communication skills; green skills were also in demand for those already engaged in these roles. With little growth in employment numbers since 2023, and the possible disruption in global supply chains due to ongoing uncertainty in relation to the potential knock-on effects of US tariffs, there is no evidence of a shortage for this occupation.
Stock control, transport & distribution admin. Shortage: inconclusive	Numbers employed in this occupation have been small over the five-year period so the high employment growth should be treated with caution; however, employment has grown considerably (by 3,800 persons) since 2023. Approximately two-thirds of those employed were male, and the share of non-Irish citizens in employment was above average. There was a high volume of vacancies in DSP Jobs Ireland primarily related to stock takers, but also for transport and distribution assistants and logistics coordinators/controllers with employment permits issued for similar roles. Vacancies for freight forwarders were mentioned as difficult-to-fill in the Recruitment Agency Survey. Skills for Growth data highlighted issues with recruiting those with customer experience, import/export trade knowledge, documentation regulation and compliance. The introduction of US tariffs could see demand for these roles increase and may lead to shortages in the short-to-medium term.
Large goods vehicle drivers Skills shortage: HGV drivers	Employment fell by 3,400 persons since 2023 for this occupation, with numbers employed falling below 2019 levels. Most employed are male and the high share aged 55 years and older means that replacement demand alone in the coming years will likely lead to issues for this occupation. There was a large volume of vacancies notified through DSP Jobs Ireland for HGV drivers. Most employment permits related to HGV drivers, primarily from South Africa, followed by Zimbabwe (both countries have a left-hand drive as in Ireland) with most offering salaries of less than €35,000. Rigid/arctic truck drivers were mentioned in the Recruitment Agency Survey with skills in health & safety, transport planning, digital and eco driving highlighted in the Skills for Growth data along with the need for licences and Safe Pass certification. Along with the ageing workforce, factors such as working conditions, regulatory changes, economic effects

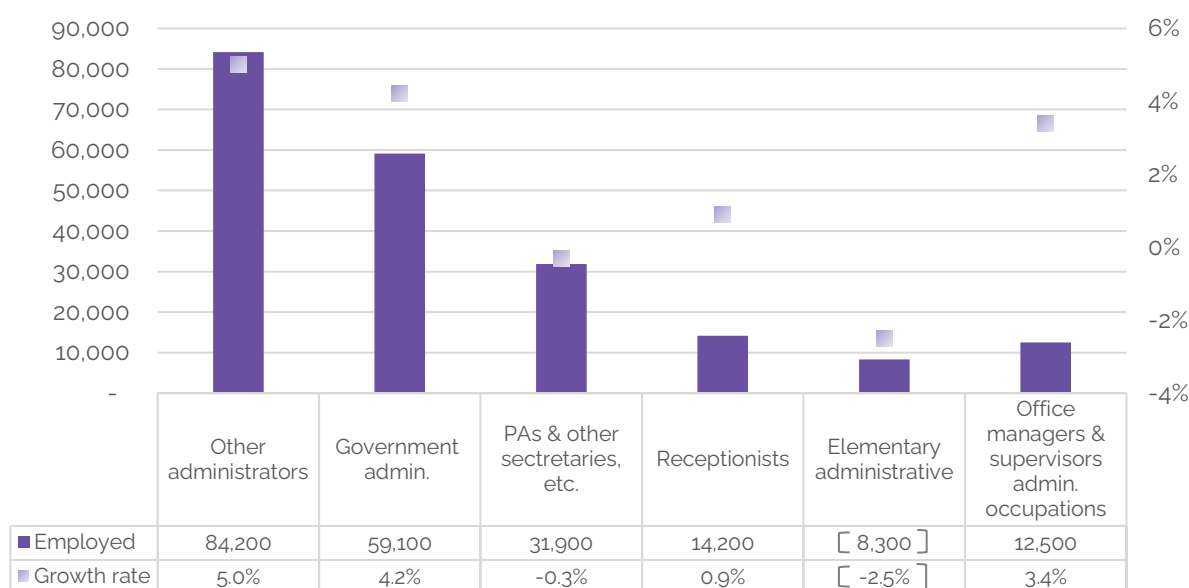
	such as the cost of fuel and competition from other industries with more attractive pay and conditions are resulting in increased difficulty in sourcing HGV drivers. ⁷⁸ This lack of available skills is limiting employment growth for these roles, as is the perceived attractiveness of the job, and is leading to continued shortages.
Mobile machine drivers & operatives	Having declined in the first two years of the five-year period, employment levels have seen only marginal increases in recent years, with numbers employed remaining below 2019 levels. Employment is spread across a number of sectors including construction, industry and transport. Difficulty in recruiting drivers for both the transport and construction sector (e.g. reach forklift, machine, dumper, teleporters) was highlighted in the Recruitment Agency Survey. Although demand is evident, it is likely to be relatively small in number.
Taxi drivers and chauffeurs	This occupation has seen fluctuations in employment over the five-year period, with an increase of 3,200 persons since 2023 returning employment to 2019 levels. Almost all taxi drivers/chauffeurs were male, a considerable share (44%) were aged 55 years or over, and over a quarter worked part-time. In May 2025, there were 20,745 SPSV (Small Public Service Vehicle) licences active, an increase of approximately 500 on the previous year. ⁷⁹ Demand for taxi drivers is likely to continue due to replacement demand.
Other drivers & transport operatives Skills shortage: Bus and coach drivers	Following some fluctuations in the intervening years, employment in 2024 returned to 2019 levels (declining by 2,600 persons since 2023). Combined, van drivers and bus/coach drivers accounted for approximately three quarters of employment in this occupation with the remainder being train/tram drivers and air/rail/marine transport operatives. Over a third in this occupation were aged 55 years or older which will likely lead to increased replacement demand in the coming years. Despite the fall in employment, there was a high volume of recent job hires indicating a high level of job churn. There was also a relatively large volume of vacancy posts on DSP Jobs Ireland for bus and coach drivers, driven by significant recruitment campaigns by Bus Eireann and Dublin Bus. In addition, there was a small number of employment permits issued for bus and coach drivers. Issues with recruitment for this occupation relate to bus and coach drivers only; expansion of bus services nationwide is also fuelling increasing demand and although there has been significant recruitment of drivers recently, turnover and replacement are resulting in a continuation of shortages.

⁷⁸ <https://www.hgvireland.com/where-have-all-the-truck-drivers-gone/>

⁷⁹ <https://www.nationaltransport.ie/taxi/statistics-and-legislation/vehicle-licences-statistics/>

10.14 Administrative & Secretarial Occupations

Figure 10.14 Annual Average Employment (2024) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2019-2024)



Overall employment	210,200
Share of total workforce	8.0%
Main sectors of employment	30% - Public administration and defence (PAD) 17% - Health 7% - Professional activities 7% - Wholesale & retail
Employment growth	+30,000 between 2019 and 2024 +3.1% on average annually (compared to +3.4% for total workforce)

2024	% 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.	69%	91%	29%	94%	59%	2	
Other administrators	81%	68%	23%	84%	55%	4	✓
Office managers & supervisors	86%	87%	...	86%	72%		
PAs & other secretaries, etc.	95%	53%	35%	85%	44%	3	
Receptionists	82%	[52%]	...	83%	...	1	
Elementary administrative	...	[80%]	...	[100%]	...		
Overall total	78%	73%	27%	88%	53%	10	

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

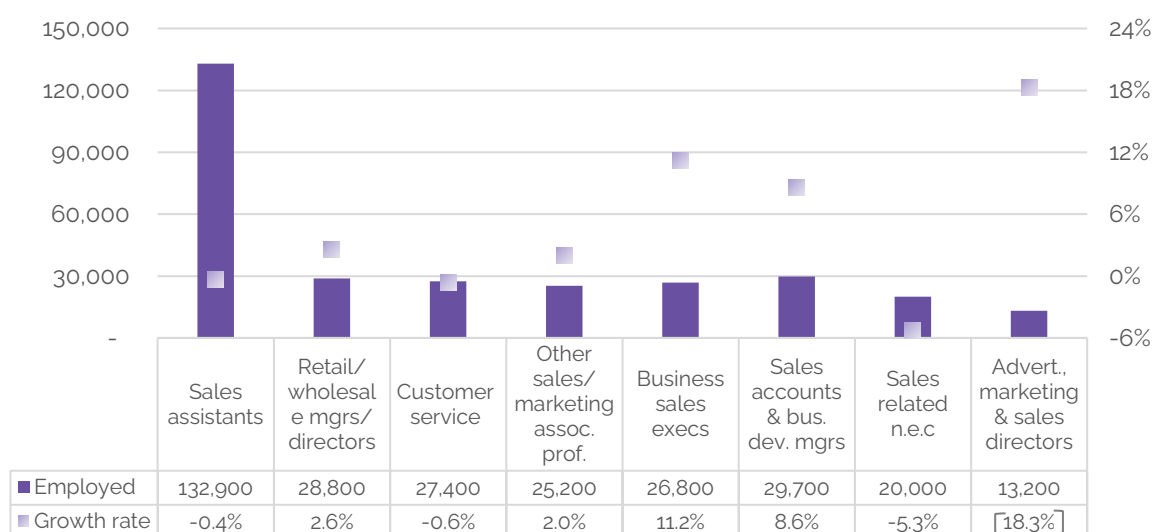
Employment growth was almost on a par with the national average for this occupational group, with an increase of 7,800 persons since 2023. Over half of those employed held third level qualifications; this is likely due to a combination of both more advanced skillsets required due to a reduction in more routine tasks due to digitalisation, along with some level of skills mismatches occurring. This is a large group in terms of employment, and with a higher than average share aged 55 years or older, job opportunities are likely to continue to arise even if the number of new jobs created declines.

-Occupation	Economic summary
Government admin. occupations	The numbers employed dipped in 2023, but with 3,200 additional persons employed in 2024 employment returned to 2021 levels. This occupation had the lowest share of females employed across the administrative occupations, although still above the national average. Job opportunities are expected to continue, particularly given the size of the occupation and the 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. ⁸⁰
Other administrators	Most of the growth in employment for this occupation over the five-year period occurred between 2019 and 2020; employment has seen little change since then. Despite this there was a high volume of recent job hires, indicating job churn. Employment was across an array of sectors, almost a third worked part-time, most were female, and over half held third level qualifications. No issues have been identified with these roles.
Office managers & supervisors	Employment growth was on a par with the national average, with most of the growth occurring since 2023 (an additional 3,700 persons). Almost three quarters of those employed held third level qualifications and most were female.
PAs & other secretaries, etc.	After declining annually since 2019, employment grew in both 2023 and 2024, almost returning to 2019 levels. Almost all employed were female and only 53% worked in full-time positions. Employment was mainly in the health, education and professional activities sectors. Over a third were aged 55 years or older and although not all who retire will be replaced (with the digitalisation of tasks reducing the demand for these roles), some job opportunities are likely to continue.
Receptionists	Employment numbers for receptionists have levelled off after a post-COVID-19 recovery. The majority employed as receptionists were female and approximately half worked part-time. The digitalisation and automation of tasks associated with this role has seen a reduced demand for this occupation.
Elementary admin (e.g. postal workers, couriers)	The numbers employed in this occupation are too small for detailed analysis. There was a relatively large volume of vacancy posts on DSP Jobs Ireland through 2024 for postal operatives with An Post.

⁸⁰ <https://assets.gov.ie/211842/8d223347-g114-43dd-84c5-78f685c63f1b.pdf>

10.15 Sales, Marketing & Customer Service Occupations

Figure 10.15 Annual Average Employment (2024) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2019-2024)



Overall employment	303,900
Share of total workforce	11%
Main sectors of employment	64% - Wholesale & retail 8% - Industry 6% - ICT
Employment growth	+24,500 between 2019 and 2024 +1.7% on average annually (compared to +3.4% for total workforce)

2024	% 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	...	96%	...	79%	82%	105	✓
Managers & directors in retail & wholesale	35%	92%	[23%]	82%	46%	21	
Business sales executives	...	95%	[18%]	77%	46%	335	✓
Sales accounts & bus. dev. managers	38%	98%	...	86%	77%	254	✓
Other sales and marketing assoc. prof.	56%	85%	...	87%	79%	603	✓
Sales assistants	64%	42%	9%	80%	22%	5	
Sales related n.e.c.	[47%]	70%	...	77%	[32%]		
Customer service	57%	79%	...	69%	56%	28	
Overall total	52%	68%	13%	80%	43%	1,351	

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 sales, marketing and customer service occupational group is the largest group (alongside business and financial), accounting for 11% of the total workforce in 2024. Although the employment growth over the five-year period was below average, with only minor growth since 2022, it nonetheless represents an additional 24,500 persons employed since 2019. This occupational group accounted for 16% of recent job hires and 12% of recent job leavers, both higher than the workforce share, indicating that job churn is a significant feature, particularly for sales assistants and customer service occupations.

Despite the current economic uncertainty, the Central Bank forecasts a continuation of consumption growth as a result of rising real income and stable employment levels. However, consumer sentiment has dipped in recent months due primarily to concerns relating to household finances.⁸¹ These trends are likely to have an impact on demand for sales-related occupations, particularly those in the wholesale and retail sector. Recent research by DETE on the potential impacts of AI indicates that sales and marketing occupations have the potential to see both net gains and net losses as a result of the more widespread take-up of AI, with roles such as sales assistants and call centre workers being negatively affected, while AI is expected to enhance jobs such as sales/marketing managers and directors.⁸²

Sales and customer service skills are not confined to sales occupations, with many roles (project managers, engineers, skilled trades), particularly in manufacturing, utilities (renewable energy), ICT, and professional services requiring some degree of sales and/or customer service, customer experience, and marketing skills in addition to the technical and transversal skills necessary for the roles. Skills for Growth data indicates a strong demand for digital (including data analysis and AI expertise) skills for many sales roles at associate professional level.

Occupation	Economic summary
Advertising, marketing & sales directors	Employment has grown annually over the five-year period, with the exception of 2023, giving rise to a high annual average growth rate. However, despite an increase of 2,600 persons employed since 2023, employment levels in this occupation remain small and detailed analysis is not possible. A third of the employment permits issued for this occupation related to roles in the ICT sector with permits issued for roles including marketing managers/directors. The relatively high volume of online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) for this occupation mostly related to marketing/sales directors.
Managers & directors in retail & wholesale	Employment levels have declined annually since 2022 for this occupation, resulting in a below average annual average employment growth rate over the five-year period. Just over a third of those employed were female, and a higher than average share were aged 55 years and older. Demand for these roles in the short to medium terms will be dependent on consumer spending levels.
Business sales executives	Employment levels were unchanged between 2019 and 2021 but have grown annually since, resulting in a strong employment growth rate for this occupation. Less than half employed held third level qualifications. At 44%, the wholesale/retail sector was the

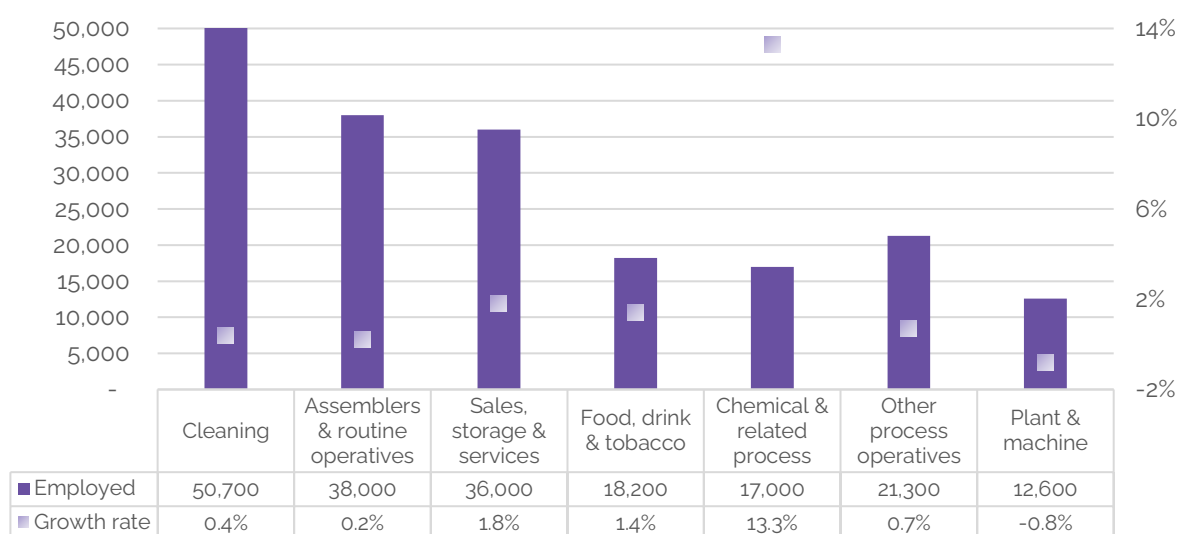
⁸¹ [For You. Not Profit. - The Irish League of Credit Unions](#)

⁸² [A Review of How AI could impact Ireland's Labour Market.pdf](#)

	largest employer. Over half of the employment permits issued were for roles in the ICT sector; permits were issued for roles including business sales executives and account managers/strategists, DSP Jobs Ireland vacancy posts were mainly for field sales agents/representatives, and business sales executives. The small number of mentions in the difficult-to-fill vacancy survey related to sales agents. Skills for Growth identified issues with recruiting business sales executives across manufacturing and wholesale/retail sectors; digital skills were a requirement in most roles, with customer experience and project management skills also in demand; in addition, employers mentioned upskilling needs in leadership and lean practices amongst existing staff.
Sales accounts & bus. dev. managers	The above average employment growth rate relates to particularly strong growth since 2023 (an additional 8,300 persons employed) after very little change in levels in the preceding years. Employment permits were issued for various roles including business development managers, with almost half of all permits issued for the ICT sector. Difficult-to-fill vacancies in the Recruitment Agency Survey were for sales/marketing managers with Skills for Growth data identifying issues with sourcing customer service/product managers, with project management and sales skills in particular demand. If employment continues to grow strongly for this occupation, issues with sourcing suitably qualified candidates may occur, although changes to international trade regulations and organisational re-structuring may temper this demand.
Other sales & marketing assoc. professionals	Job roles within this occupational group include marketing associate professionals, buyers and procurement officers, estate agents/managers and conference managers and organisers. Employment levels peaked at 28,800 in 2021 and declined in the subsequent two years; employment saw some growth in 2024, but the growth rate remains below average. Despite this, there was a relatively high volume of employment permits issued, in roles including marketing executives/managers/analysts (including digital) and account managers; as with the other sales occupations above, almost half of permits issued were for roles in the ICT sector, despite only a small share of employment in this occupation relating to the ICT sector. Online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) were mainly for buyers and procurement officers. Difficult-to-fill vacancies in the Recruitment Agency Survey related to procurement and supply chain analysts roles, while Skills for Growth data identified issues with sourcing candidates with digital marketing skills for the construction sector.
Sales assistants	Despite a dip in employment numbers in 2024 and an overall negative growth rate, this occupation remains by far the largest occupation across all occupational groups with over 130,000 persons employed. This occupation accounted for 10% of all recent job hires, highlighting 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 Jobs Ireland). Many employed in this role are likely to also be engaged in full-time education, given the lower age profile (45% aged 15-24 years) and the high share working part-time. Replacement demand alone will ensure continued job opportunities for this occupation even without any employment growth.
Customer service occupations	Employment levels have seen some fluctuations over the five-year period, and despite increases since 2023, employment in 2024 remained below 2019 levels. The number of recent job hires exceeded any employment growth in 2024, indicating that job churn is a factor for this occupation. A higher than average share employed were non-Irish citizens. A small number of employment permits were issued mostly in the ICT sector and related to roles as customer service associates and RCO investigation specialists.
Sales related occupations n.e.c.	Employment increases since 2023 (of 3,100 persons) did not negate the recent declines in employment (in 2022 and 2023), with employment remaining far below 2019 levels. Less than a third employed in these occupations held a third level qualification, and 30% were employed part-time.

10.16 Operatives & Elementary Occupations n.e.c.

Figure 10.16 Annual Average Employment (2024) & Annual Average Growth Rates (2019-2024)



Overall employment	193,800
Share of total workforce	7.0%
Main sectors of employment	51% - Industry 13% - Administrative and support services 13% - Wholesale & retail
Employment growth	+13,800 between 2019 and 2024 +1.5% on average annually (compared to +3.4% for total workforce)

2024	% 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	...	84%	...	[51%]	...	1,014	✓
Chemical & related process		95%	...	81%	[43%]		
Other process operatives	[37%]	80%	[25%]	67%	...	30	✓
Plant & machine	...	88%	...	76%	...	55	
Assemblers & routine operatives	43%	91%	...	75%	46%	2	
Cleaning	65%	42%	30%	58%	[18%]	1	✓
Sales, storage & services	...	73%	[21%]	82%	...	5	✓
Overall total	37%	74%	21%	70%	24%	1,107	

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 for this occupational group have only seen small growth since 2022. However, there was a high volume of both recent job hires and leavers indicating a high level of churn for at least some of these occupations. More than half (51%) of the jobs in this group were in industry, a further 14% were in administrative support services (e.g. cleaners) and 11% in wholesale and retail (e.g. warehouse operatives). Almost a fifth (19%) of those employed held at most a lower secondary education, the third highest share with this level of education after agriculture and transport-related occupations. As such, upskilling/reskilling opportunities will be key for this cohort with increased digitalisation of tasks in these jobs.

Occupation	Economic summary
Food, drink & tobacco	Employment levels have seen little change over the five-year period, with a decline of 1,300 persons employed since 2023. Almost two-thirds of those employed held higher secondary/FET education and the majority employed were male. This occupation had the highest share of non-Irish employed at 49%, although the numbers involved are small and should be treated with caution. This is reflected in the high number of both new and renewal employment permits issued, primarily for meat processing operatives (but also for boning hall/abattoir and general operatives). There was a high volume of vacancy posts for meat processing operatives notified through the DSP Jobs Ireland portal while almost half of all OJAs notified for this group related to food etc. operatives. Difficult-to-fill vacancies mentioned in the Recruitment Agency Survey included food operatives and meat boners with general operatives appearing in the Skills for Growth data. The lack of employment growth for this occupational group indicates that most job opportunities for these roles relate to replacement demand, with the perceived attractiveness of the job impacting on recruitment.
Chemical & related process	The above average employment growth relates mainly to increases in 2021 and 2022; employment fell by 1,400 persons since 2023. Most employed were male, while almost two-fifths held third-level qualifications. Given the small volume of vacancy notifications (DSP Jobs Ireland) and online job adverts (Eurostat/CEDEFOP) for this occupation and the recent fall in employment levels, no issues have been identified.
Other process operatives & process plant occupations (e.g. packers, bottlers)	Employment in this occupation fell in the early part of the five-year period, but increased annually since 2022, with employment in 2024 exceeding 2019 levels for the first time over the period. A third of those employed were non-Irish citizens, exceeding the national average. Posts notified through DSP Jobs Ireland were primarily for general operatives but also included concrete finishers/moulders and galvanisers. A small number of employment permits were issued (for roles including galvanisers) with difficult-to-fill mentions in the Recruitment Agency Survey for general/packaging operatives with general operatives in construction and manufacturing highlighted in the Skills for Growth data. Issues with recruitment relate, at least to some extent, to the perceived attractiveness of the job (e.g. shift work)
Plant & machine operatives (e.g. quarry workers, energy & sewerage plant operatives)	Employment levels have seen little change over the five-year period with employment in 2024 below 2019 levels. Vacancy posts included wood machine operatives and overhead power networks patrollers (DSP Jobs Ireland). A small number of new employment permits were issued including for wood machine operatives. While the green transition may lead to a higher demand for elementary workers in energy and wastewater plant operations, the data does not point to difficulties in sourcing personnel for these positions at present.
Assemblers & routine operatives	This occupation has seen considerable fluctuations in employment over the five-year period, with employment in 2024 similar to 2019 levels. The share of non-Irish citizens employed in this occupation, at 25%, was above the national average and almost half (46%) held third-level qualifications with over-qualification likely to be a factor for some in these roles. There was a high level of recent job hires indicating that job churn is occurring and DSP jobseeker data (from December 2024) shows a high volume of

	persons on the Live Register who were previously employed in jobs classified as assemblers/line workers and other routine process workers.
Cleaning operatives	Employment levels have fluctuated in this occupation over the five-year period, with 2024 employment only marginally above 2019 levels. Two-thirds of those employed were female, 58% worked part-time, 31% held at most lower secondary education, 42% were non-Irish citizens (over double the national average), and 30% were aged 55 years or over. There was a high volume of recent job hires which would indicate that even when employment is decreasing, job opportunities are arising due to replacement demand.
Sales, storage & services	Despite a below average employment growth rate over the five-year period, employment grew by 4,100 persons in 2024. Most employed were male, a quarter worked part-time, and two-thirds held higher secondary/FET qualifications. The high volume of recent job hires suggests a high level of job churn for these roles. Vacancy adverts (DSP Jobs Ireland) related mainly to warehouse operatives. These roles were also mentioned as difficult to fill vacancies (Recruitment Agency Survey and Skills for Growth data), with shift work perceived to be an issue; digital, legal, quality, forklift, and customer service skills were identified as being in demand.



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 and safety officers	Health and safety officers
	Production, design & QC 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
	Mgt. 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 administrative occupations	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
		Veterinarians
		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.
	Police officers (e.g. Gardai)	Senior police officers
		Police officers (sergeant and below)
	Other protective service occupations	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
		Elementary construction occupations

	Construction operatives & elementary	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 and 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.
		Skilled metal, electrical and electronic trades supervisors
	Other skilled trades	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
	Animal carers	Agricultural and fishing trades n.e.c.
		Veterinary nurses
		Pest control officers
		Veterinarians
	Elementary agriculture occupations	Animal care services occupations n.e.c.
		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
Arts, Sports & Tourism Occupations	Media pros. & librarians	Housekeepers and related occupations
		Cleaning and housekeeping managers and supervisors
		Librarians
		Archivists and curators
		Journalists, newspaper and periodical editors
	Artistic, literary & media associate professionals	Public relations professionals
		Advertising account managers and creative directors
		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.	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 administrative occupations	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
		National government administrative occupations

Administrative & Secretarial Occupations	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 administrative occupations	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
		Call and contact centre occupations

	Customer service 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
		Elementary process plant occupations n.e.c.
	Plant & machine operatives	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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