



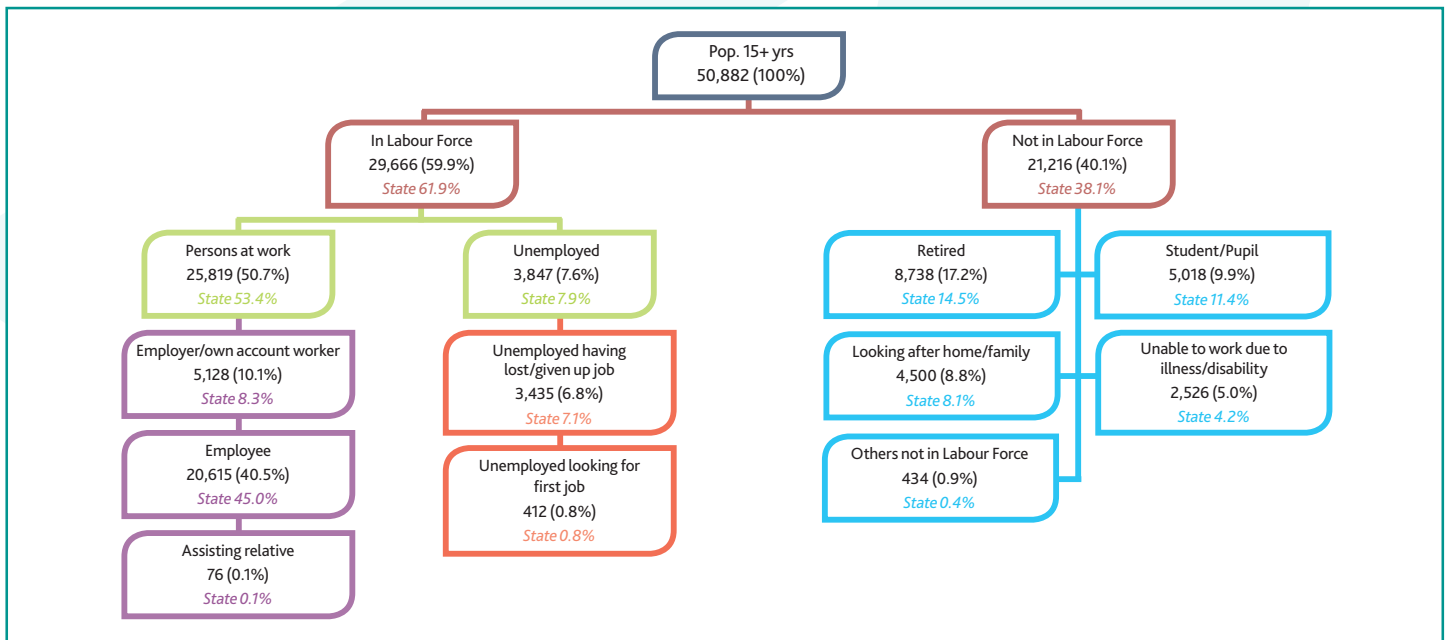
## County Roscommon's Labour Market – Census 2016

In this *WDC Insights* we provide an overview of the labour market in county Roscommon based on data from the Census of Population 2016.<sup>1</sup> The county had a total population of 64,544 in 2016; a 0.7% increase since the last Census (2011) and 9.8% higher than a decade earlier (2006). Total employment in Roscommon grew by 5.9% between 2011 and 2016; significantly below the 11% national growth.

### Principal Economic Status of Roscommon's population

Principal Economic Status (PES) measures the economic status e.g. at work, student, of the population aged 15 years and over. This status is self-assigned and is different from the definition used in the Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) and official employment and unemployment figures.<sup>2</sup> Fig. 1 shows Roscommon's adult population by principal economic status compared with the State average.

Fig. 1: Population of county Roscommon aged 15 years and over by principal and labour force status, 2016



Around 60% of the county's adults are in the labour force, either working or looking for work, slightly below the national average. The 29,666 people who are in the county's labour force is 1.9% below the 2011 figure (compared with 3.2% growth nationally); Roscommon is one of only six counties where the labour force shrank. Half (50.7%) of the county's adults are 'at work', below the 53.4% national average; the share unemployed is close to average. The county's labour force differs most notably from the national pattern in self-employment (employer/own account worker) with Roscommon having a far higher share; 10.1% compared with 8.3%.

For the 40% of adults outside the labour force, 'retired' was the largest group accounting for a considerably higher than average share, reflecting the county's older age profile. Roscommon also has a higher share unable to work due to disability/illness but a lower share of students/pupils, influenced by the absence of a third level institution in the county.

1. CSO, Census 2016 Summary Results – Part 2. Table EZ011

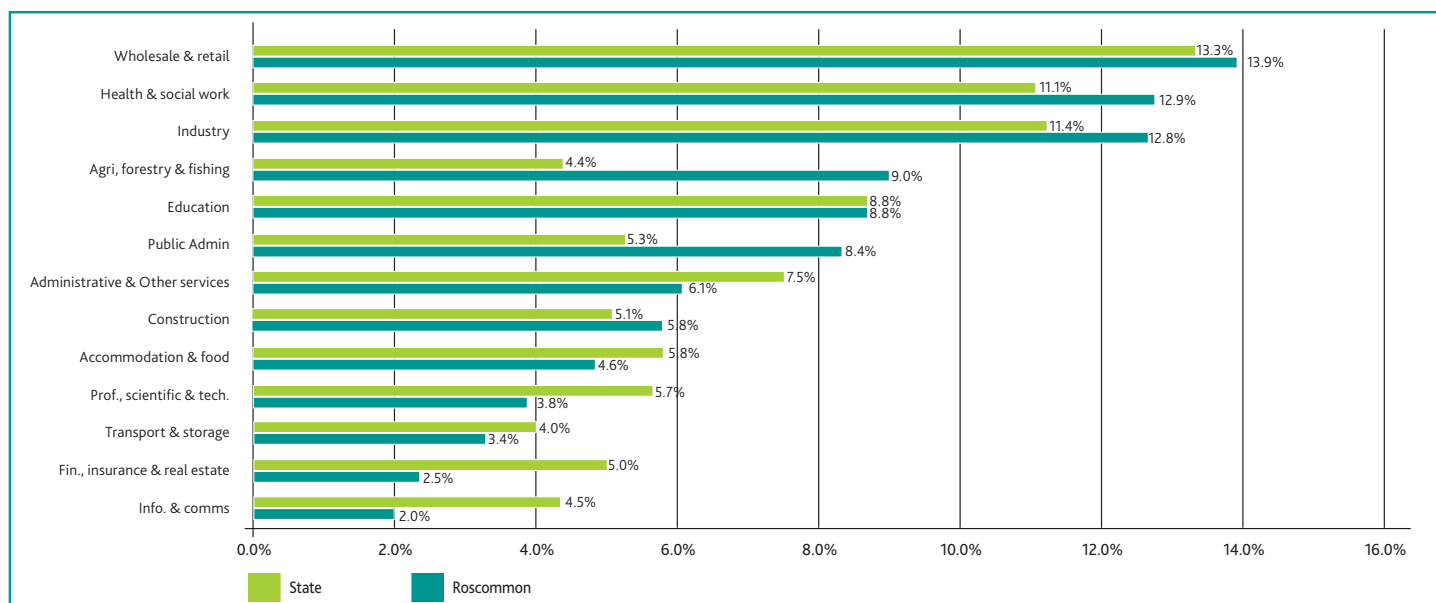
2. The ILO definition, used in the QNHS and official employment statistics, is that if a person has worked for payment or profit for 1 hour or more in the previous fortnight they are counted as employed. This results in a higher number being counted as employed than when people are asked to select their own economic status, as in the Census.



## Sectoral pattern & recent changes in employment

Fig. 2 shows the sectors where the 25,819 Roscommon residents who are 'at work' are employed. Commuting is an important factor and the 9,220 people living in county Roscommon who travel outside of the county for work are counted here, but the 3,847 people living outside the county who travel into it for work are not.<sup>3</sup>

**Fig. 2 Percentage of total employment in each broad sector in county Roscommon and State, 2016**



Roscommon's largest employers are Wholesale & Retail, Health and Industry; all more important to Roscommon than elsewhere. Their fortunes have varied since 2011. Employment in Wholesale & Retail declined marginally (0.9%) compared with slight growth nationally (1.7%) while Health & Social Work enjoyed the county's strongest growth, up 24.4% compared with 13.4% nationally. As this sector includes child and elder care, the county's age profile could be a factor. Rising by 15.9%, Industry in Roscommon outperformed the national average (9.4%).

Agriculture's share of employment in Roscommon is close to double the national average, contributing to the county's higher self-employment. It was one of five sectors that experienced employment decline since 2011; down 3.9% compared with a State average decline of 2.7%. Public Administration is also a significantly more important employer for the county; it saw a 7% decline in employment (6.3% decline nationally). Construction experienced lower than average growth (11.1% v 16.6%) but remains a more important employer in the county.

Accommodation & Food service is notably less important in Roscommon than nationally and performed far more weakly since 2011, growing only 1.4% compared with 12.9% national growth. Roscommon's tourism sector is not benefitting to the same extent from recent growth in visitor numbers. Knowledge intensive services (Professional, Scientific & Technical activities, Financial, Insurance & Real Estate and Information & Communications) are among the smallest employers in the county and less important than nationally.

Though the county's smallest sector, Information & Communications grew very strongly (20.1%) since 2011, as did Professional services (13.2%), though both below the State average (31.4% and 22.2% respectively). Financial services however experienced a large fall, down 13% in Roscommon compared with a 1.3% decline nationally, linked to closures of local bank and insurance branches.

It is important that we more fully understand why some of the sectoral changes in employment are taking place in county Roscommon, and its wider region, and the impact that these are having on the county's economy and its residents.

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All data from CSO, Census 2016 Summary Results – Part 2. Table EZ011

3. Detailed analysis of commuting patterns in the Western Region will be published by the WDC in future.