

Travel to Work and Labour Catchments in the Western Region

A Profile of the Ballina Labour Catchment



Introduction

The Western Development Commission (WDC) commissioned All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO) at Maynooth University to undertake an analysis of the Census 2016 Place of Work Census of Anonymised Records (POWCAR) dataset. This was to provide a detailed understanding of the travel to work patterns of workers living in the Western Region. The study was also asked to examine the changes in the travel to work patterns that have occurred since the WDC produced the original report based on Census 2006 data.

Travel to Work and Labour Catchments in the Western Region, published in 2018, identified 42 labour catchments in the Western Region (Census 2016). These are illustrated on Map 1 on page 4. The geographic size of the labour catchments varies considerably, ranging from Galway city with over 70,000 resident workers, to centres with fewer than 1,000 resident workers. Map 1 illustrates the labour catchments of all towns with a population greater than 1,000 in the Western Region as of April 2016. The travel to work patterns of seven towns: Galway, Sligo, Ennis, Letterkenny, Castlebar, Carrick-on-Shannon and Roscommon were examined in the main report and this is available for download from the WDC website¹.

To complement the existing labour catchment analysis the WDC has now produced reports for all other labour catchments associated with towns that are located entirely within the Western Region; 26 in total. This report on the Ballina labour catchment, will identify where the residents of the Ballina labour catchment work and provide a summary of the socio-economic characteristics of all those living in this labour catchment and at work as of April 2016.

Ballina

The Ballina settlement had a population of 10,171 persons recorded in the 2016 Census. Ballina is the 6th largest settlement within the Western Region and the 44th largest in the State. Since 2006, the population residing within the town of Ballina has decreased by -2.3% (-238). In the five years since Census 2011, the population of the town has decreased by -8.3% (-915). Demographic comparisons between urban centres tend to be difficult due to intercensal boundary changes. For instance, in 2014 all legal town boundaries were abolished under the Local Government Act 2014. Accordingly, the population of these former legal towns have been newly defined using the standard census town criteria². For some towns, the impact of this has been to lose area and population, compared with previous computations and this is particularly the case for Ballina.

1 <https://www.wdc.ie/publications/reports-and-papers/>

2 <https://wdcinsights.wordpress.com/2017/06/22/regional-towns-growth-or-decline-can-we-tell/>

Ballina Labour Catchment

The analysis in this series of reports aims to identify labour catchments which are based on travel to work patterns. Each of the 42 labour catchments identified in the main *Labour Catchments in the Western Region* report, of which Ballina is one, are not based on town or county administrative boundaries, but on people's travel to work patterns. The analysis followed the same methodology for assigning EDs to towns that was used in the previous research carried out in 2009 based on Census 2006. Each electoral division (ED) is examined and the place of work of all those who live in that ED is identified (either town, Northern Ireland or rural destination). Each ED is then allocated to a specific town's catchment on the basis of the town to which the highest numbers of its residents travel to work. The full methodology for this is outlined in detail in the Appendix of the main report (see footnote 1).

According to POWCAR 2016, the total number of jobs located within Ballina was 4,810 and accounts for 2% of all jobs located within the Western Region (242,712). It should be noted that the above job numbers relate to those within the town boundary as defined by the CSO and do not include jobs located outside the town boundary or nearby employment concentrations (industrial parks, local factories etc).

In the following section we provide a summary of the socio-economic characteristics of all those living in this labour catchment and at work, even though they may not all have been working in Ballina in April 2016. We do this because although some may not be working in Ballina they are living in the catchment from which the Ballina labour supply is drawn and including them provides a more complete assessment of the potential labour supply for Ballina. The Ballina labour catchment is therefore separated into those who live in the catchment and are employed 'Inside' the town or 'Outside' the town i.e. beyond the town boundary and elsewhere in the Ballina catchment or locations such as Castlebar, Sligo, Donegal etc.

This profile is further supported by an analysis of changes in the catchment between 2006 and 2016, both in terms of geography and socio-economic characteristics, a graphical comparison with regional and State trends and an overall interpretative analysis of the performance of Ballina compared to the Western Region.

Profile of the Ballina Labour Catchment

The Ballina labour catchment is the 7th largest labour catchment in the Western Region with a resident 'at work' population of 9,034 which accounts for 3.5% of the total resident 'at work' population within the Western Region (260,261).

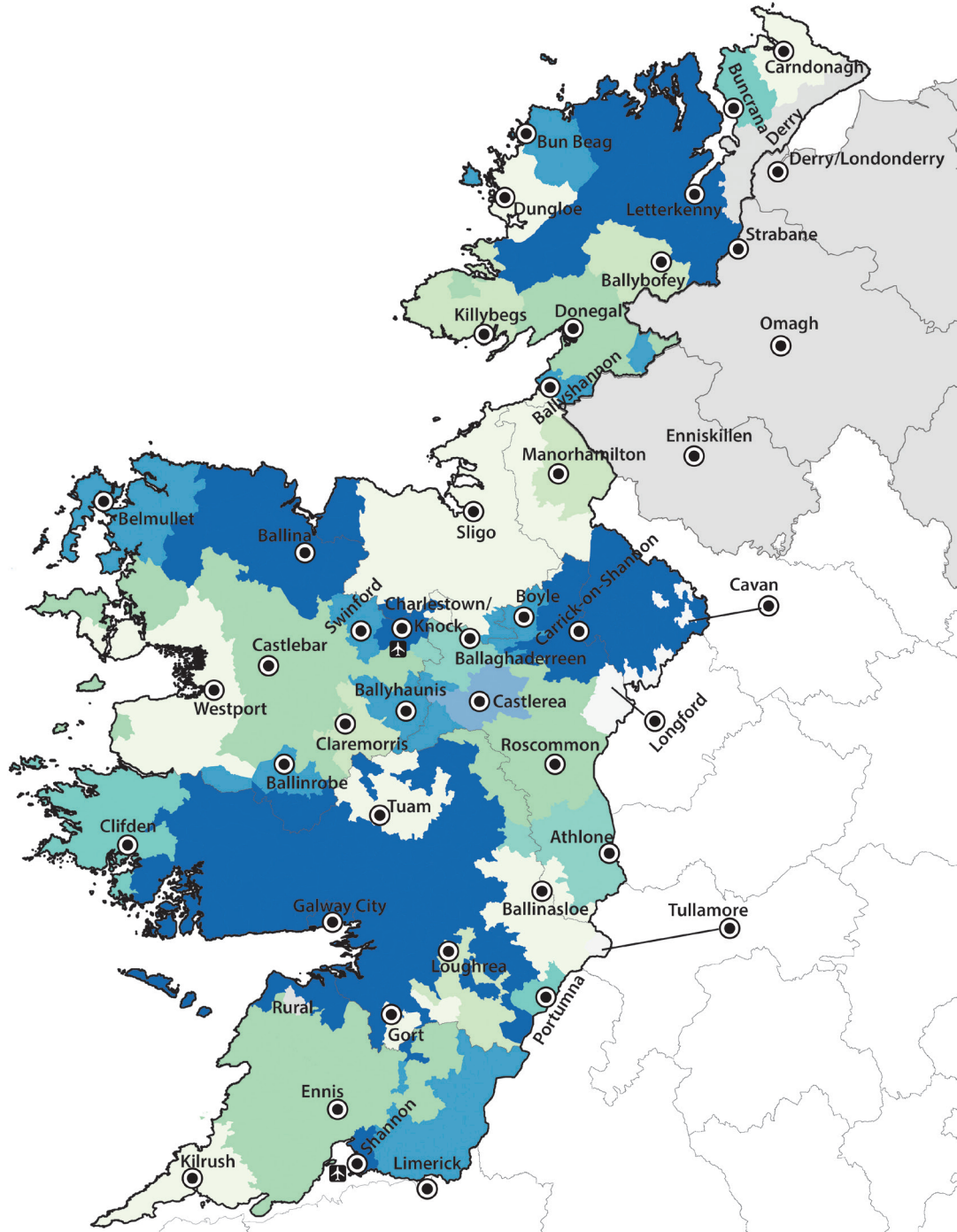
The Ballina labour catchment covers a large proportion of north Mayo and extends slightly into east Sligo (See Map 1 and 2). In 2016, there were 9,034 people classified as at work and living within the labour catchment. This figure is 155.6% more than the resident 'at work' population within the town boundary (3,534). The 2016 total is 2.4% higher than the 2006 total of 8,823.

The Ballina labour catchment is constrained by the influence of Belmullet to the west, Castlebar to the south and Sligo to the east. These towns are themselves the most important places for employment for those living in their immediate hinterlands, and therefore constitute separate and quite large labour catchments within the county boundaries of Mayo and Sligo.

Ballina Labour Catchment

Map 1: Labour Catchments of 42 Towns in the Western Region, 2016 (WDC & CSO POWCAR)

Labour Catchments of 42 Towns in the Western Region, 2016
By Electoral Division (ED)



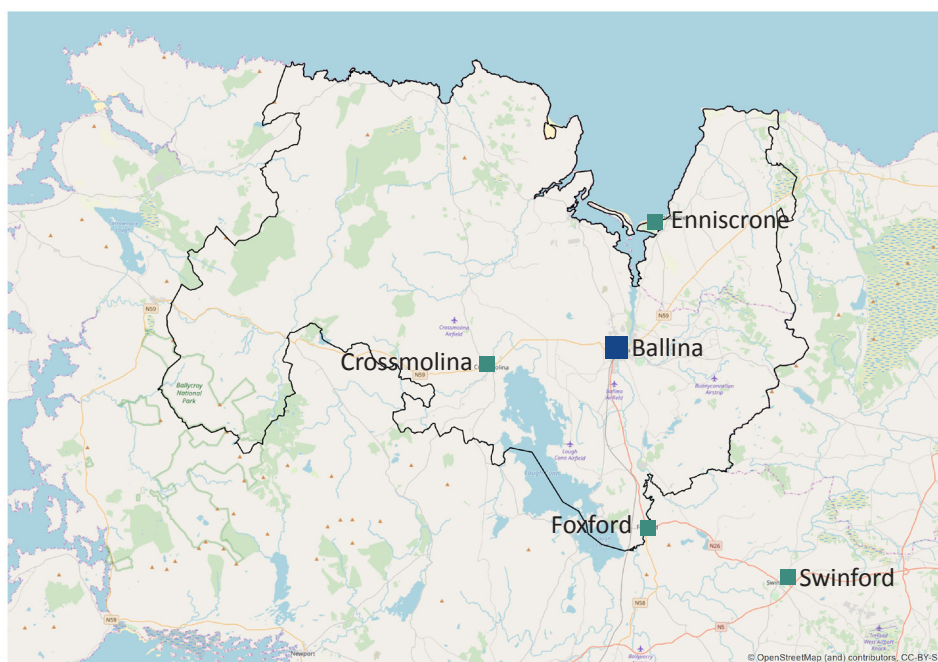
- Western Region
- Local Authority
- Motorway
- Other Key Roads
- Light & Heavy Rail Network
- Key Settlements



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Data Source: CSO POWSCAR 2016

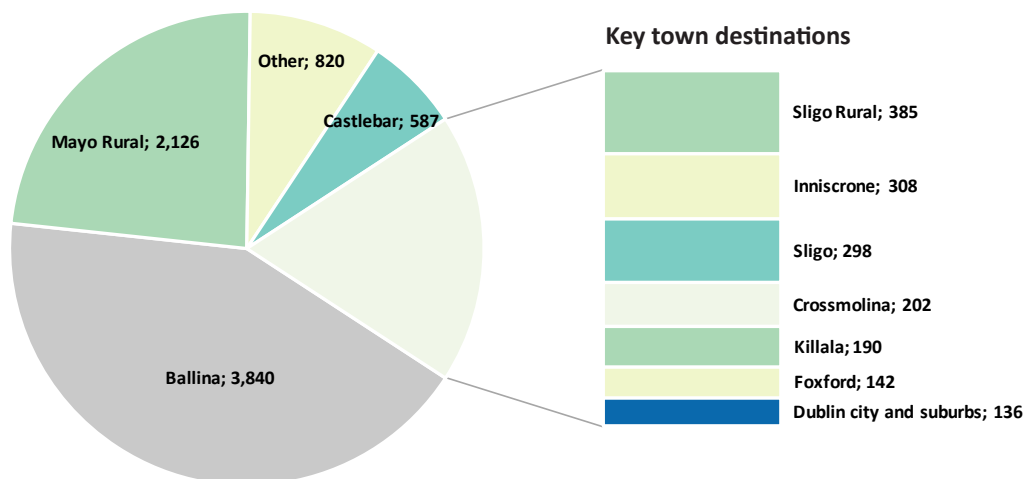
Ballina Labour Catchment

Map 2: Ballina Labour Catchment, 2016 (WDC & CSO POWCAR)



Of those living in the Ballina labour catchment (total = 9,034), 42.5% (3,840) are employed within Ballina town and 57.5% (5,194) are employed outside the town. Key destinations outside the town are Mayo Rural (23.5% or 2,126), Castlebar (6.5% or 587) and Sligo Rural (4.3% or 385) – see Figure 1³ for more details.

Figure 1: Place of work of those living in the Ballina Labour Catchment, 2016 (Source: CSO POWCAR)



The graphics on the following pages provide further detail on the socio-economic characteristics of the workers who live in the Ballina labour catchment. The characteristics of resident workers in the Ballina labour catchment who are employed in the town of Ballina are compared with those working elsewhere. Following this, there is a comparison between the Ballina labour catchment in 2006 and 2016. Finally, there is comparison between the Ballina labour catchment and the State, and the Ballina labour catchment and the Western Region.

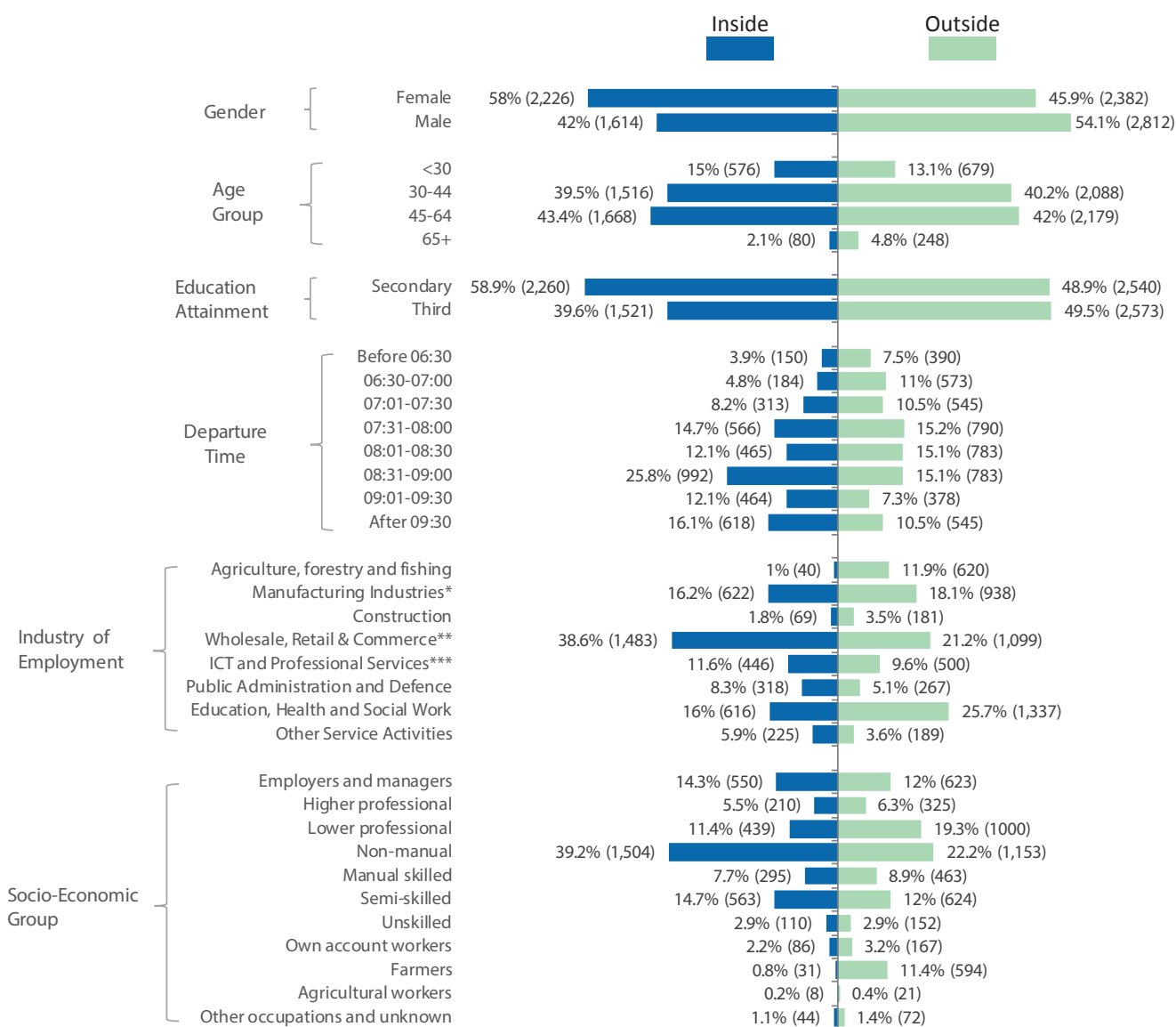
³ The analysis of the labour catchments in the Western Region has highlighted the importance of rural areas as employment locations. Depending on the location of the catchment and the proximity of nearby towns, a large proportion of the labour catchment residents are in fact employed in rural areas. For the purposes of this destination analysis (see Figure 1 above), the CSO define towns as locations with more than 50 inhabited dwellings and areas outside of this as the rural areas of the county i.e., Mayo Rural, Sligo Rural, Galway Rural. In the graphic above, 'Other' refer to all other employment destinations (settlements) of those living in the labour catchment.

Ballina Labour Catchment

Socio-economic comparison of those employed 'Inside' and 'Outside' Ballina town, 2016

The graphic below details the socio-economic characteristics of resident workers living within the Ballina labour catchment who are employed within Ballina town (Inside) and those that are employed outside Ballina town (Outside). This profile, as with all other profiles in the report, are based on the following themes: gender, age cohorts, levels of education attainment, departure time to work, industry of employment and socio-economic group.

Figure 2: Socio-economic comparison of resident workers employed 'Inside' and 'Outside Ballina



Within the Ballina labour catchment, female workers account for 51% and male workers account for 49%, see Figure 3. Of those working inside Ballina, 58% are females whereas 45.9% of those working outside Ballina are females, see Figure 2. In comparison, the national picture (Figure 4) shows that 49.9% of all workers are female and 50.1% are male.

The age profile of those living in the Ballina labour catchment and working inside Ballina is as follows: <30 years (576 or 15%), 30 to 44 years (1,516 or 39.5%), 45 to 64 years (1,668 or 43.4%) and 65 years plus (80 or 2.1%).

Ballina Labour Catchment

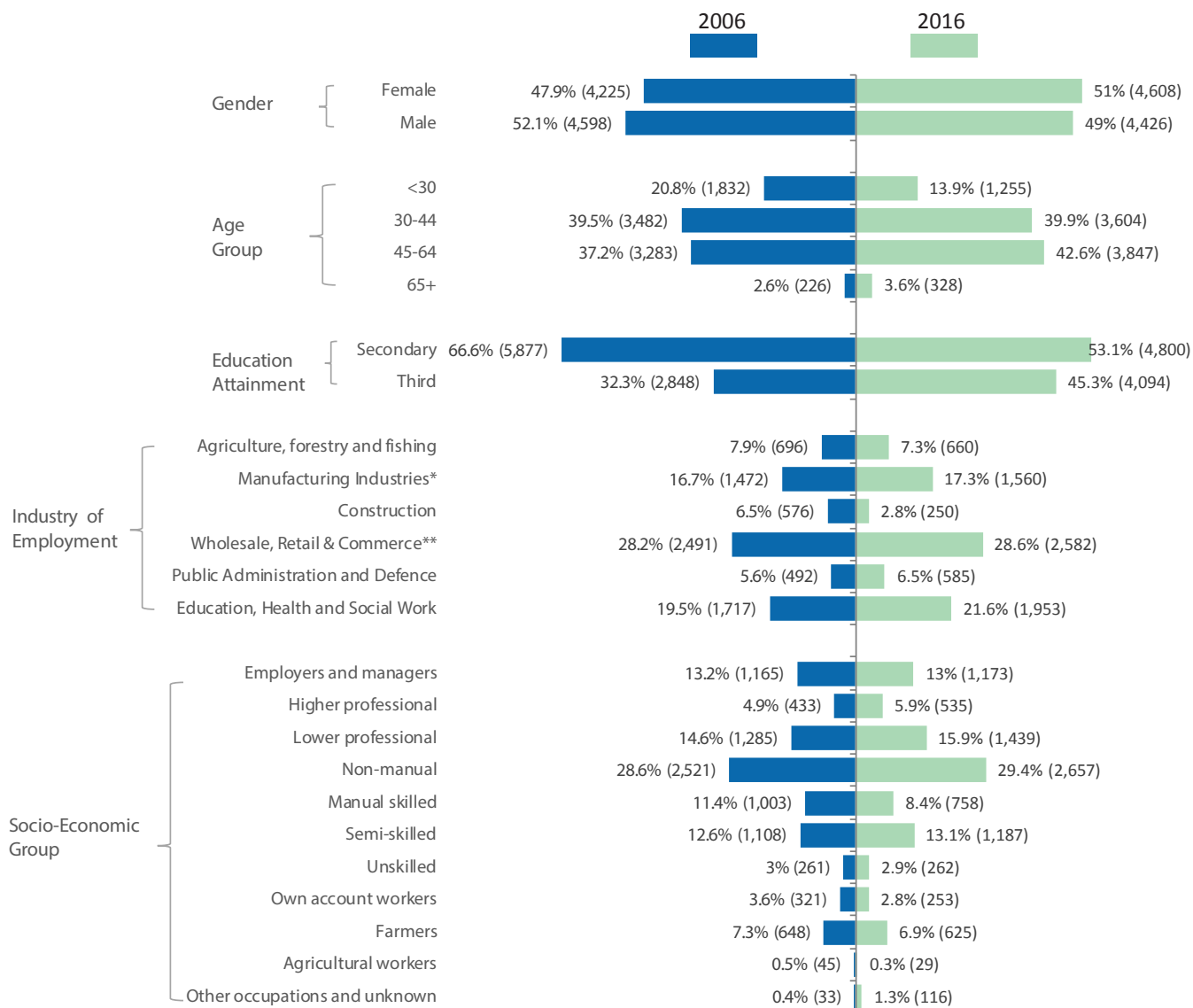
The age profile of those living in the Ballina labour catchment and working outside Ballina is as follows: <30 years (679 or 13.1%), 30 to 44 years (2,088 or 40.2%), 45 to 64 years (2,179 or 42%) and 65 years plus (248 or 4.8%).

An education profile of the Ballina labour catchment shows the following: Of those working inside Ballina town, 39.6% (1,521) have 3rd level qualifications compared to 49.5% (2,573) of those working outside (Figure 2).

Analysis of change between 2006 and 2016

The graphic below details the change that has occurred across the Ballina labour catchment between 2006 and 2016. The most notable changes in terms of socio-economic characteristics certainly relate to the age of resident workers, the rate of third level attainment and much lower dependence on employment within the Construction sector.

Figure 3: Analysis of change between 2006 and 2016

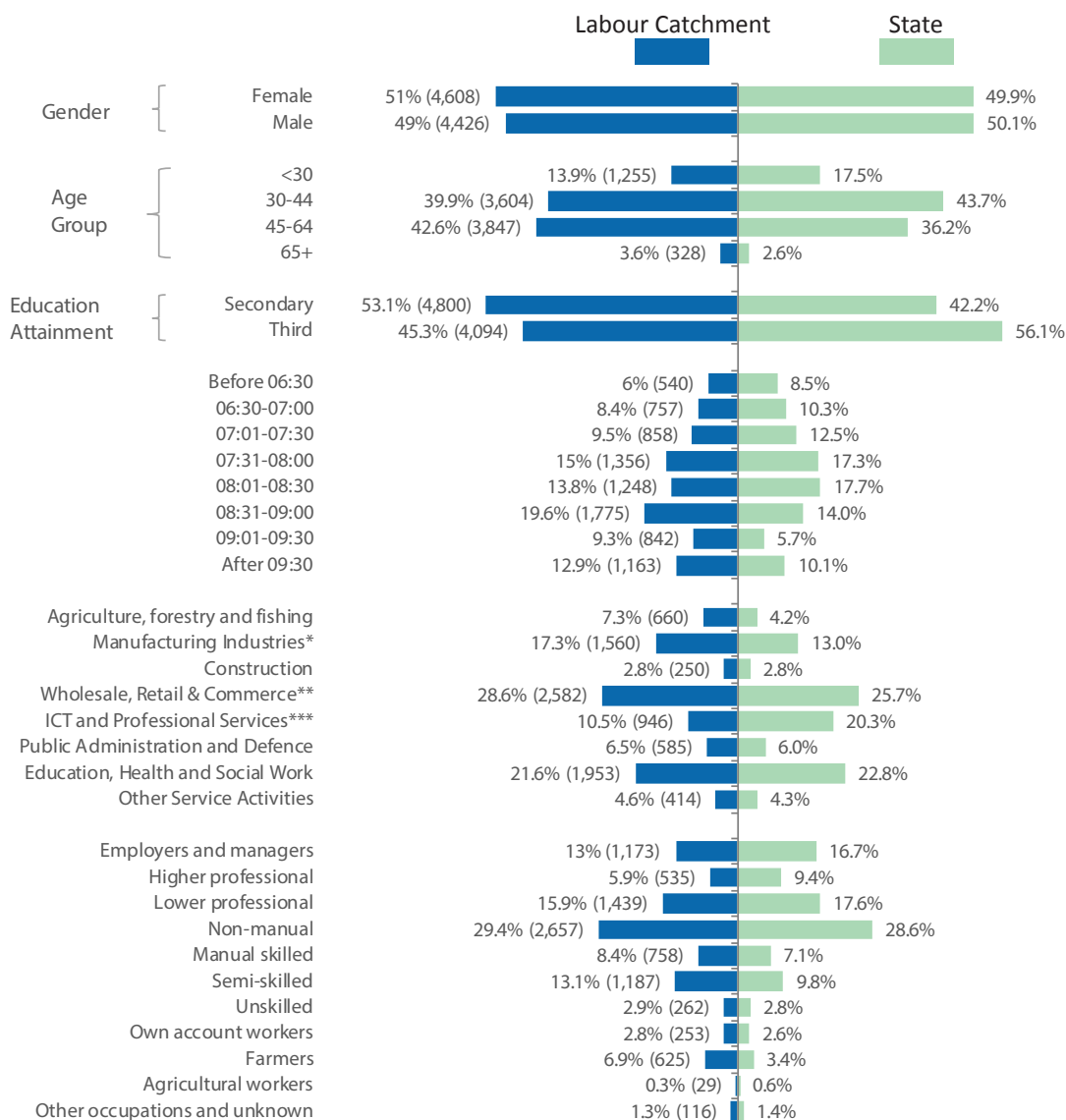


Ballina Labour Catchment

Socio-economic comparison of the Ballina Labour Catchment and the State, 2016

Figure 4 below provides a comparative analysis of the socio-economic results of the Ballina labour catchment and the State average.

Figure 4: Socio-economic comparison of resident workers living in Ballina labour catchment and the State



An age profile of the Ballina labour catchment details the following: Labour Catchment (Total): <30 years (1,255 or 13.9%), 30 to 44 years (3,604 or 39.9%), 45 to 64 years (3,847 or 42.6%) and 65 years plus (328 or 3.6%). In contrast to this, the national average (Figure 4) is as follows: <30 year (17.5%), 30 to 44 years (43.7%), 45 to 64 years (36.2%) and 65 years plus (2.6%)

An education profile of the Ballina labour catchment shows the following: Those at work and residing in the Ballina labour catchment recorded a third level attainment rate of 45.3% (4,094). In contrast to this, the national average is 56.1% (Figure 4).

Analysis of the profile of the industry of employment⁴ within the Ballina labour catchment shows the following:

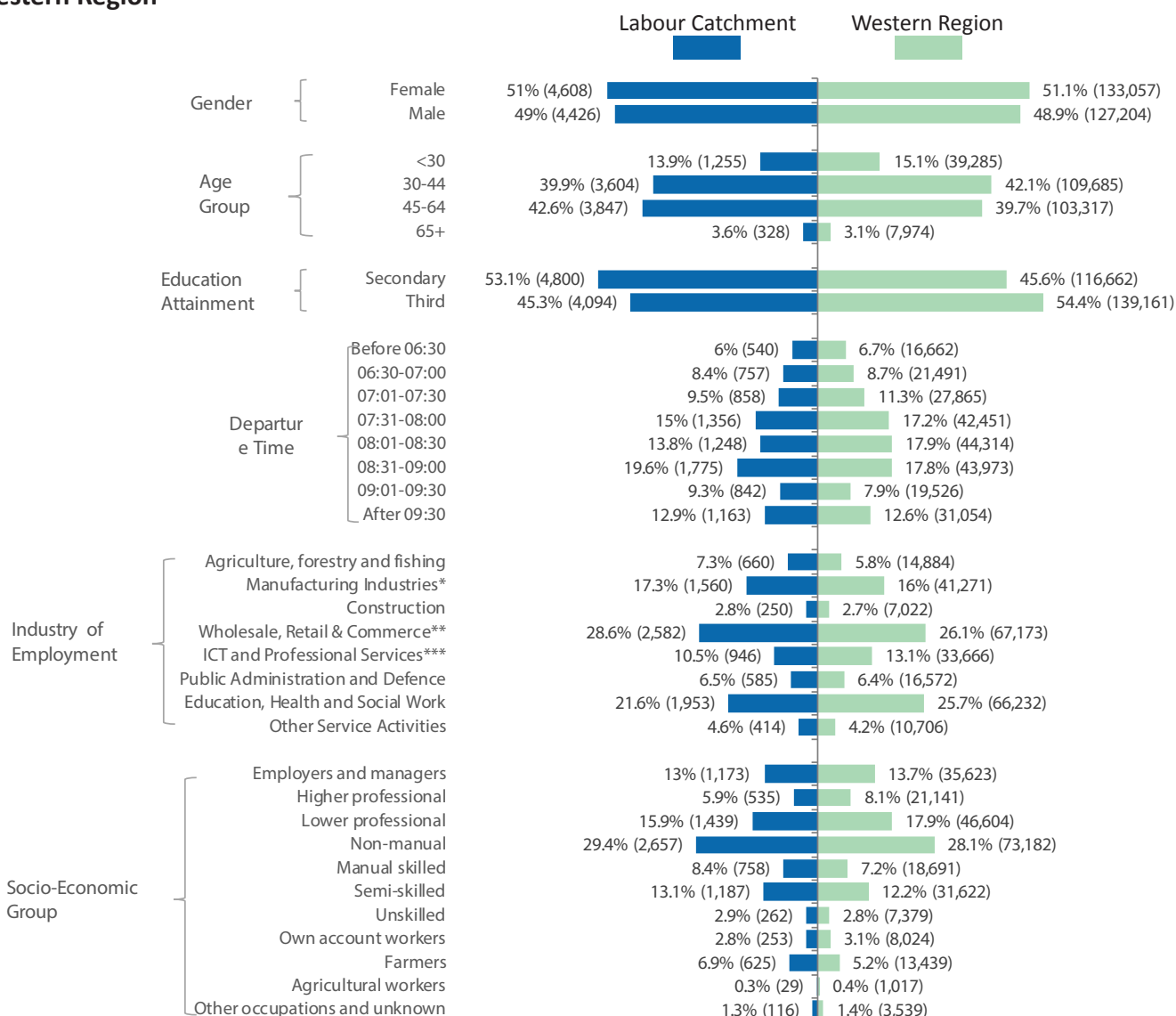
Ballina Labour Catchment

- The single largest employer is the ‘Wholesale, Retail and Commerce’ sector and accounts for 28.6% (2,582) which is higher than the State average (25.7%) (Figure 4).
- Both the ‘Education, Human Health and Social Work’ (21.6% or 1,953) and ‘Manufacturing Industries’ (17.3% or 1,560) are also important employment sectors with ‘Manufacturing Industries’ having a higher proportional share than the State average (13%) (Figure 4).
- ‘ICT and Professional Services’ (10.5% or 946) is the fourth most important sector although much lower than the State average of 20.3% (Figure 4).

Socio-economic comparison of the Ballina Labour Catchment and the Western Region, 2016

The graphic below provides a comparative analysis of the socio-economic results of the Ballina labour catchment and the Western Region average.

Figure 5: Socio-economic comparison of resident workers living in Ballina labour catchment and the Western Region



4 With only nine industrial classifications in POWCAR, the classifications are less detailed than in regular Census outputs and as such several industries are grouped together such as: ‘Manufacturing Industries’ (Manufacturing, mining and quarrying, Electricity, Gas, Water supply and Waste Management), ‘Wholesale, Retail and Commerce etc’ (Wholesale, Retail Trade, Transportation and Storage, Accommodation and Food Service Activities) and ‘ICT & Professional Services’ = (Information and Communication, Financial, Real Estate, Professional, admin and support service activities)

Ballina Labour Catchment

The most notable differences in terms of socio-economic characteristics certainly relate to the education levels amongst resident workers in the Ballina catchment who have a lower rate of 3rd level education attainment than the Western Region. The Ballina catchment also has a higher proportion of workers engaged in the 'Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing', 'Manufacturing Industries' and 'Wholesale, Retail & Commerce' industries. Resident workers in the Ballina catchment also have an older age profile than the Western Region average.

Conclusion

Of the 33 complete labour catchments within the Region, Ballina is one of 21 labour catchments which had an increase in population size between 2006 and 2016, by 2.4% or an additional 211 workers living within the catchment. The geographic size of the catchment decreased slightly over the decade.

For most workers their place of employment is within or adjacent to the catchment, however Dublin city and suburbs features within the top 10 individual employment destinations (higher than Galway city), accounting for 136 workers in 2016, up from 59 in 2006.

The Wholesale, Retail and Commerce sector is the most important and accounts for 28.6% (2,582) which is higher than the State average (25.7%). This broad sector includes tourism and accommodation.

Both the Education, Human Health and Social Work (21.6% or 1,953) and Manufacturing Industries (17.3% or 1,560) are also important employment sectors with Manufacturing Industries having a higher proportional share than the State average. Employment in Ballina Beverages contributes to this. The Ballina catchment also has a higher proportion of workers engaged in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, reflecting the wider agricultural hinterland.

Notes

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