

Travel to Work and Labour Catchments in the Western Region

A Profile of the Belmullet 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 5. 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 on 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 Belmullet labour catchment, will identify where the residents of the Belmullet 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.

Belmullet

The Belmullet settlement had a population of 1,019 persons recorded in the 2016 Census. Belmullet is the 60th largest settlement within the Western Region and the 276th largest in the State. Since 2006, the population residing within the town of Belmullet has decreased by -5.1% (-55). In the five years since Census 2011, the population of the town has decreased by -6.4% (-70). 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, though this is not the case for Belmullet.

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/>

Belmullet 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 Belmullet 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 Belmullet was 689 and accounts for 0.3% 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 Belmullet in April 2016. We do this because although some may not be working in Belmullet they are living in the catchment from which the Belmullet labour supply is drawn and including them provides a more complete assessment of the potential labour supply for Belmullet. The Belmullet 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 Belmullet catchment or locations such as Ballina, Castlebar and Sligo 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 Belmullet compared to the Western Region.

Profile of the Belmullet Labour Catchment

The Belmullet labour catchment is the 28th largest labour catchment in the Western Region with a resident 'at work' population of 1,751 which accounts for 0.7% of the total resident 'at work' population within the Western Region (260,261).

The Belmullet labour catchment covers a relatively small area in north-west Mayo (See Map 1 and 2). In 2016, there were 1,751 people classified as at work and living within the labour catchment. This figure is 341.1% more than the resident 'at work' population within the town boundary (397). The 2016 total is -9% lower than the 2006 total of 1,924.

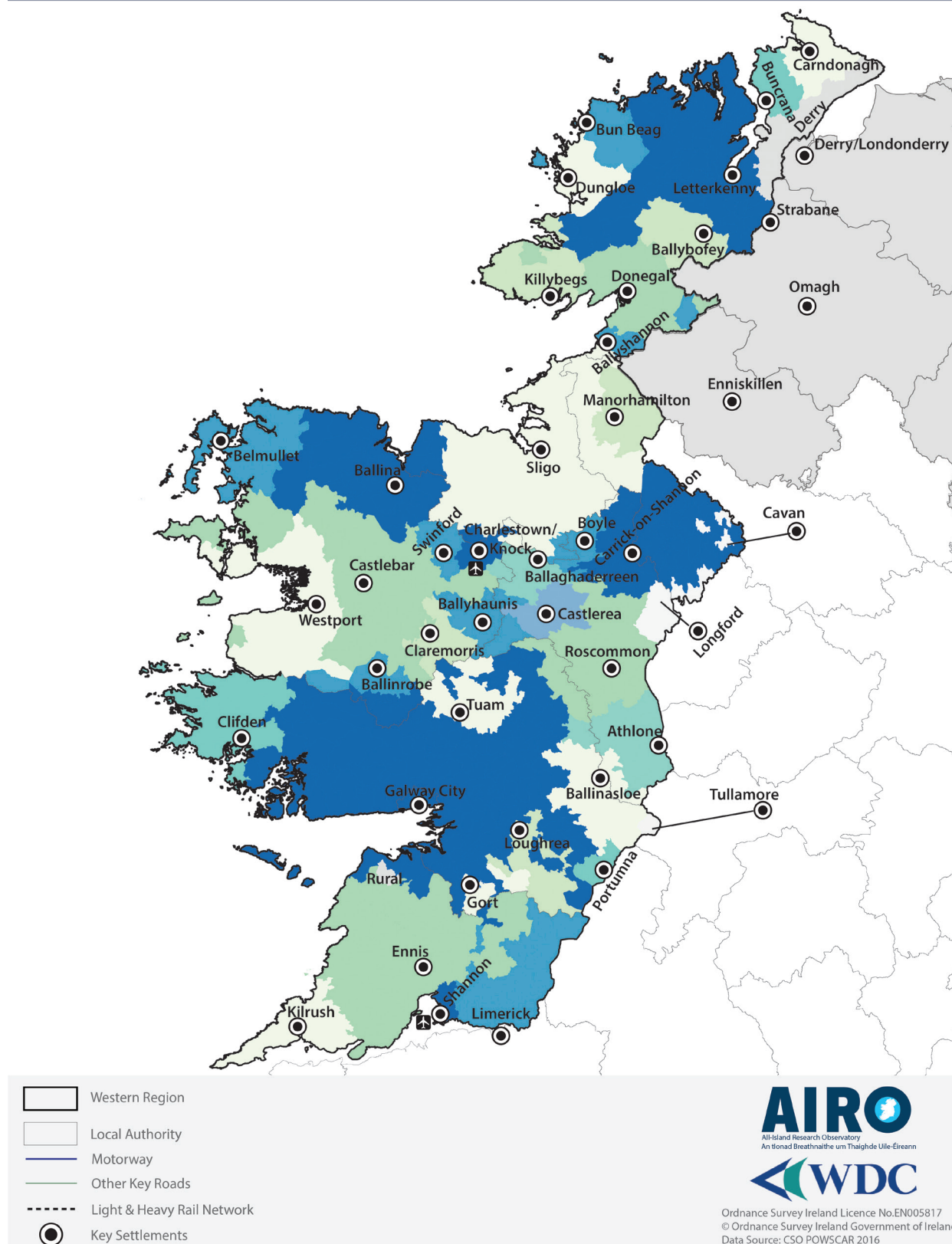
The Belmullet labour catchment is constrained by the Ballina labour catchment to the east and the Castlebar labour catchment to the south. These towns are themselves the most important places for employment for those living in their immediate hinterlands, and therefore constitute separate and quite large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

Belmullet Labour Catchment

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

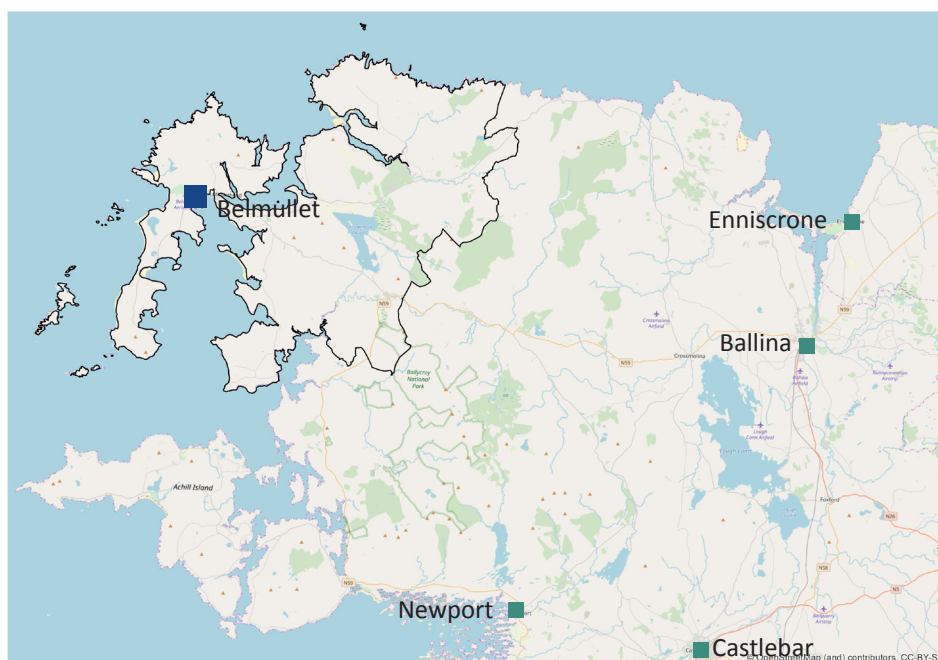
Labour Catchments of 42 Towns in the Western Region, 2016

By Electoral Division (ED)



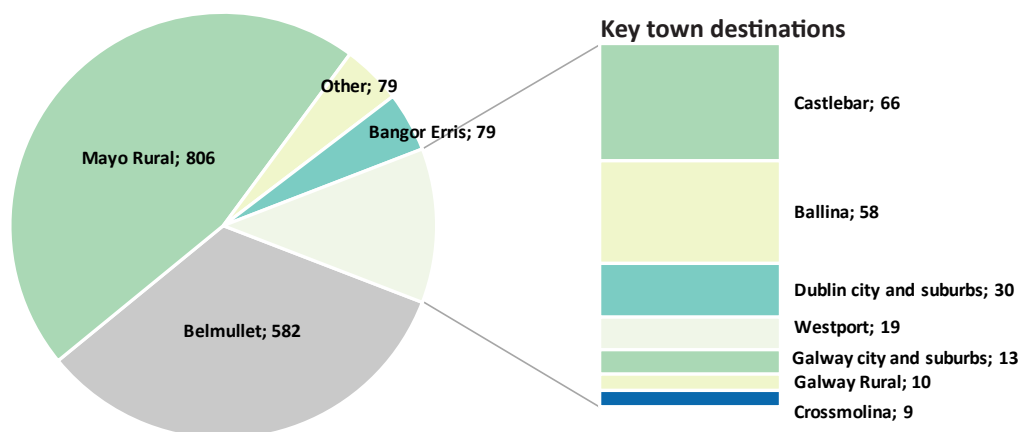
Belmullet Labour Catchment

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



Of those living in the Belmullet labour catchment (total = 1,751), 33.2% (582) are employed within Belmullet town and 66.8% (1,169) are employed outside the town. Key destinations outside the town are Mayo Rural (46% or 806), Bangor Erris (4.5% or 79) and Castlebar (3.8% or 66) – see Figure 1³ for more details.

Figure 1: Place of work of those living in the Belmullet 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 Belmullet labour catchment. The characteristics of resident workers in the Belmullet labour catchment who are employed in the town of Belmullet are compared with those working elsewhere. Following this, there is a comparison between the Belmullet labour catchment in 2006 and 2016. Finally, there is comparison between the Belmullet labour catchment and the State, and the Belmullet labour catchment and the Western Region.

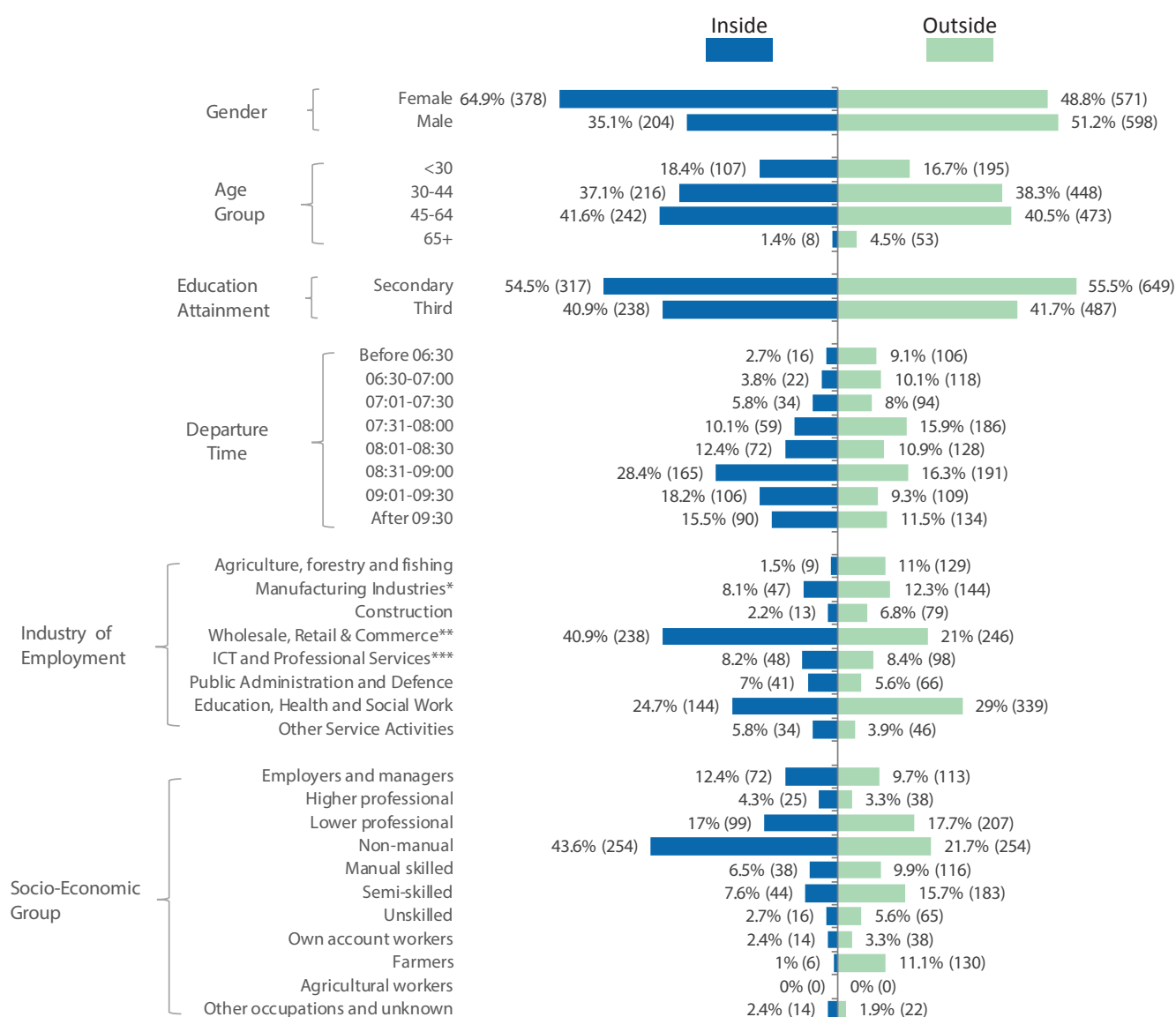
³ The analysis of the labour catchments in the Western Region has highlighted the importance of rural areas as employment locations. Depending on the location of the catchment and the proximity of nearby towns, a large proportion of the labour catchment residents are in fact employed in rural areas. 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.

Belmullet Labour Catchment

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

The graphic below details the socio-economic characteristics of resident workers living within the Belmullet labour catchment who are employed within Belmullet town (Inside) and those that are employed outside Belmullet 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' Belmullet



Within the Belmullet labour catchment, female workers account for 54.2% and male workers account for 45.8%, see Figure 3. Of those working inside Belmullet, 64.9% are females whereas 48.8% of those working outside Belmullet 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 Belmullet labour catchment and working inside Belmullet is as follows: <30 years (107 or 18.4%), 30 to 44 years (216 or 37.1%), 45 to 64 years (242 or 41.6%) and 65 years plus (8 or 1.4%).

Belmullet Labour Catchment

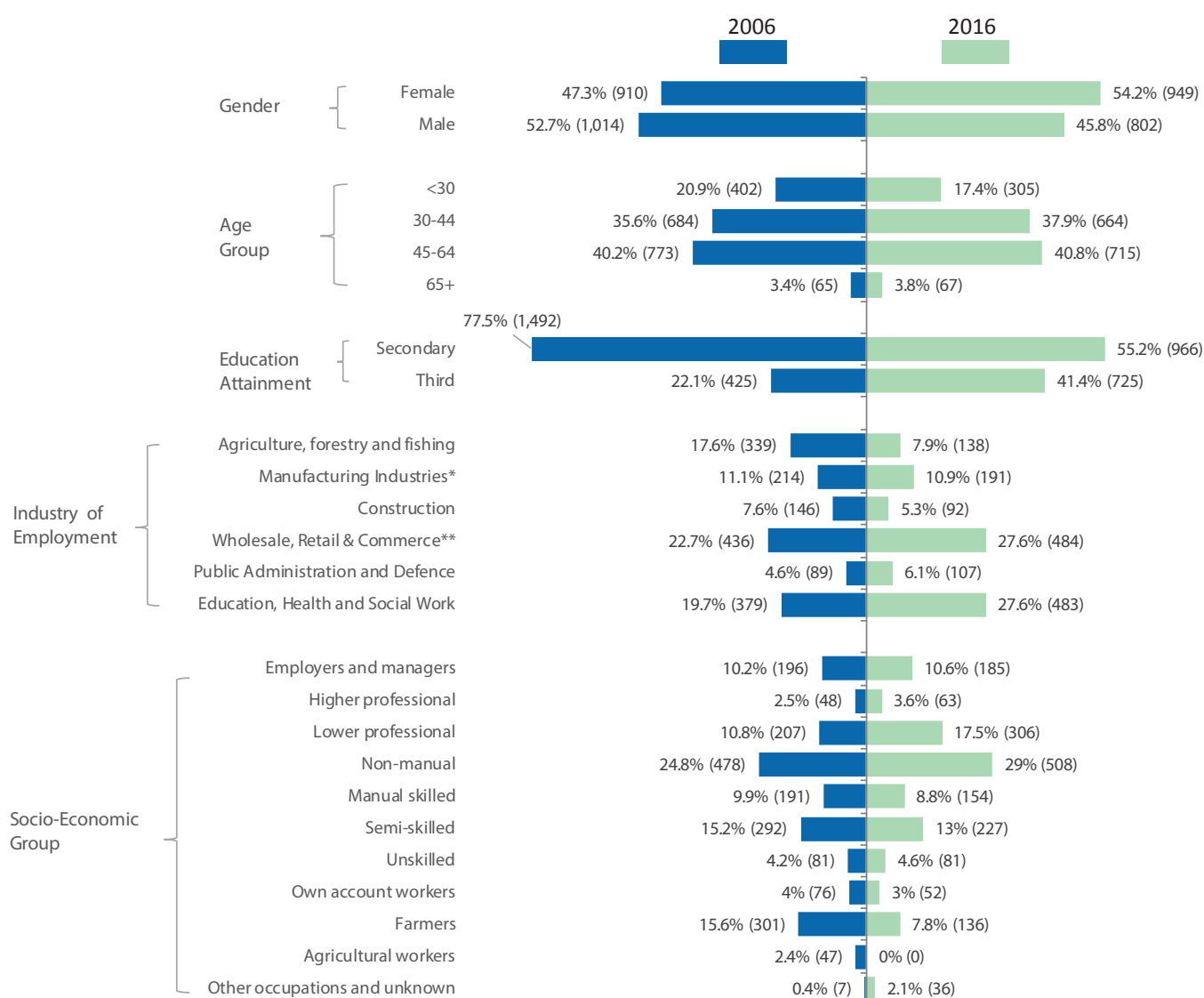
The age profile of those living in the Belmullet labour catchment and working outside Belmullet is as follows: <30 years (195 or 16.7%), 30 to 44 years (448 or 38.3%), 45 to 64 years (473 or 40.5%) and 65 years plus (53 or 4.5%).

An education profile of the Belmullet labour catchment shows the following: Of those working inside Belmullet town, 40.9% (238) have 3rd level qualifications compared to 41.7% (487) of those working outside (Figure 2).

Analysis of change between 2006 and 2016

The graphic below details the change that has occurred across the Belmullet labour catchment between 2006 and 2016. The most notable changes in terms of socio-economic characteristics certainly relate to the rate of third level attainment (22.1% to 41.4%) and much lower dependence on employment within the 'Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing' sector and increased dependence on both the 'Wholesale, Retail and Commerce' and 'Education, Health and Social Work' sectors.

Figure 3: Analysis of change between 2006 and 2016

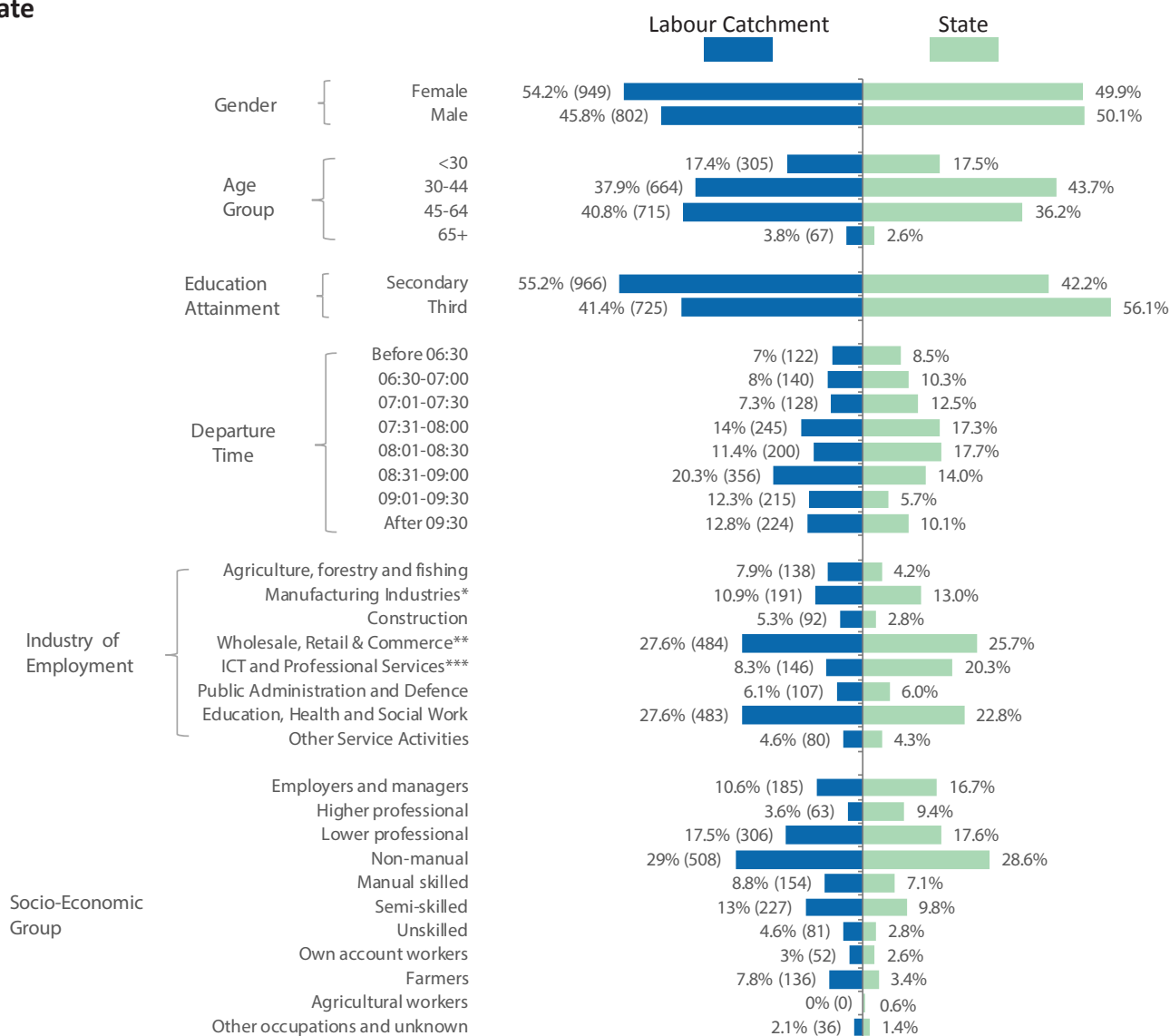


Belmullet Labour Catchment

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

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

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



An age profile of the Belmullet labour catchment details the following: Labour Catchment (Total): <30 years (305 or 17.4%), 30 to 44 years (664 or 37.9%), 45 to 64 years (715 or 40.8%) and 65 years plus (67 or 3.8%). 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 Belmullet labour catchment shows the following: Those at work and residing in the Belmullet labour catchment recorded a third level attainment rate of 41.4% (725). In contrast to this, the national average is 56.1% (Figure 4).

Analysis of the profile of the industry of employment within the Belmullet labour catchment shows the following⁴:

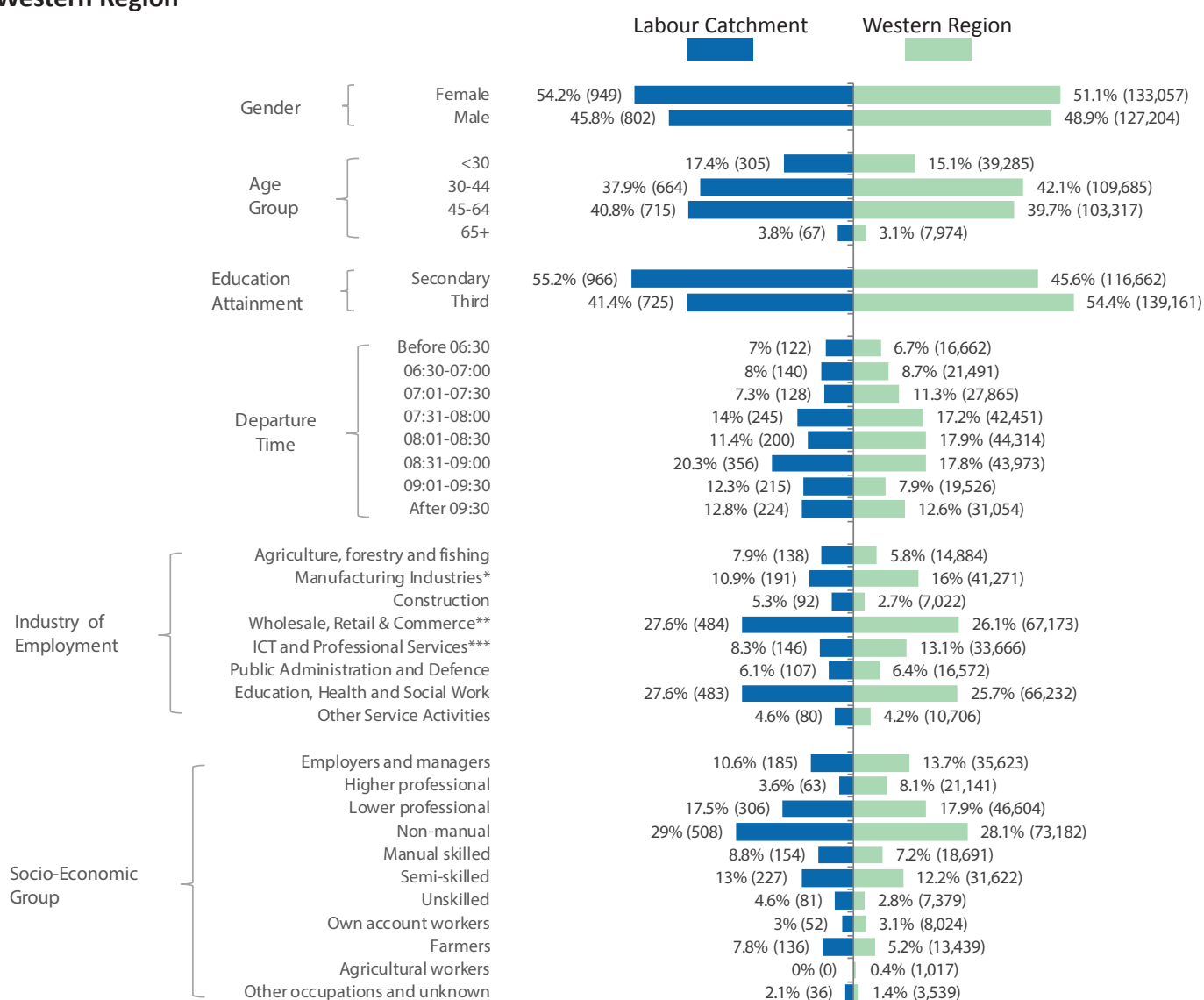
Belmullet Labour Catchment

- The joint largest employer is the 'Wholesale, Retail and Commerce' (484) and 'Health, Education and Social Work' (483) sectors with both accounting for 27.6% which is higher than the State average for both sectors, 25.7% and 22.8% respectively (Figure 4).
- 'Manufacturing Industries' (10.9% or 191) is the third largest sector although it has a lower proportional share than the State average (13%) (Figure 4).
- 'ICT and Professional Services' (8.3% or 146) is the fourth most important sector although much lower than the State average of 20.3% (Figure 4).

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

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

Figure 5: Socio-economic comparison of resident workers living in Belmullet 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)

Belmullet Labour Catchment

The most notable differences in terms of socio-economic characteristics certainly relate to the education levels amongst resident workers in the Belmullet catchment who have a lower rate of 3rd level education attainment than the Western Region. The Belmullet catchment also has a higher proportion of workers engaged in the 'Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing' and 'Construction' sectors. Resident workers in the Belmullet catchment also have a marginally older age profile than the Western Region average.

Conclusion

Belmullet labour catchment is one of the 12 (of a total of 33) that recorded a decrease in population size between 2006 and 2016, decreasing by -9% (-173). The area of the labour catchment decreased slightly over the period.

Rural parts of County Mayo are the most important place of work for residents of the Belmullet labour catchment, though there has been a decline in numbers since 2006 when over a 1,000 were employed there (now 806). Belmullet itself has also declined in importance down from 672 workers to 582 in 2016. Despite its distance, Dublin city and suburbs is the sixth most important place of work, more important than the closer centres of Westport and Galway city and suburbs.

Sectorally much of the decline in employment has been in Agriculture, Forestry and fishing and construction. Over the period employment in the largely public sectors of Education, health and social work and public administration and defence has increased over the period.

Notes

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