

# Travel to Work and Labour Catchments in the Western Region

## A Profile of the Bunbeg 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 website<sup>1</sup>.

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 Bunbeg labour catchment, will identify where the residents of the Bunbeg 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.

## **Bunbeg**

The Bunbeg settlement had a population of 1,491 persons recorded in the 2016 Census. Bunbeg is the 38th largest settlement within the Western Region and the 201st largest in the State. Since 2006, the population residing within the town of Bunbeg has increased by 9.7% (132). In the five years since Census 2011, the population of the town has decreased by -4% (-62). 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 criteria<sup>2</sup>. 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 Bunbeg.

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/>

### **Bunbeg 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 Bunbeg 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 Bunbeg was 633 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 Bunbeg in April 2016. We do this because although some may not be working in Bunbeg they are living in the catchment from which the Bunbeg labour supply is drawn and including them provides a more complete assessment of the potential labour supply for Bunbeg. The Bunbeg 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 Bunbeg catchment or locations such as Letterkenny and Donegal town 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 Bunbeg compared to the Western Region.

### **Profile of the Bunbeg Labour Catchment**

The Bunbeg labour catchment is the 31st largest labour catchment in the Western Region with a resident 'at work' population of 1,493 which accounts for 0.6% of the total resident 'at work' population within the Western Region (260,261).

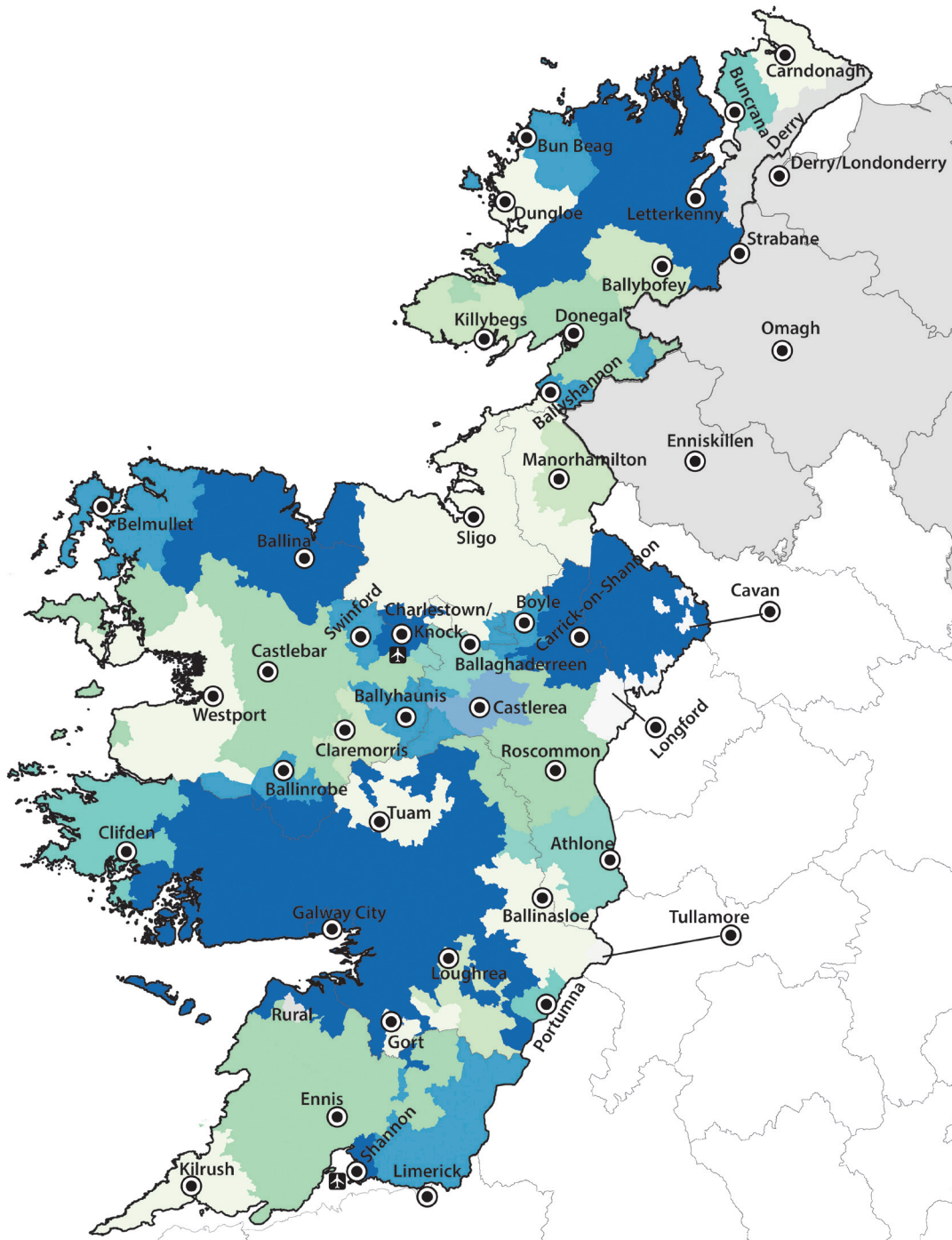
The Bunbeg labour catchment covers a relatively small area in north-west Donegal (See Map 1 and 2). In 2016, there were 1,493 people classified as at work and living within the labour catchment. This figure is 228.1% more than the resident 'at work' population within the town boundary (455). The 2016 total is -23% lower than the 2006 total of 1,939.







The Bunbeg labour catchment is constrained by the Letterkenny labour catchment to the east and the Dungloe 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 Donegal.

Bunbeg 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

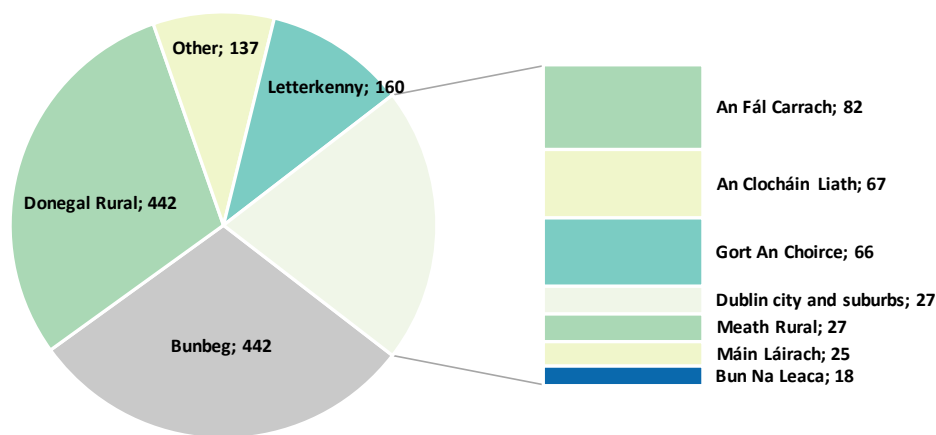
**Bunbeg Labour Catchment**

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



Of those living in the Bunbeg labour catchment (total = 1,493), 29.6% (442) are employed within Bunbeg town and 70.4% (1,051) are employed outside the town. Key destinations outside the town are Donegal Rural (29.6% or 442), Letterkenny (10.7% or 160) and An Fál Carrach (5.5% or 82) – see Figure 1<sup>3</sup> for more details.

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

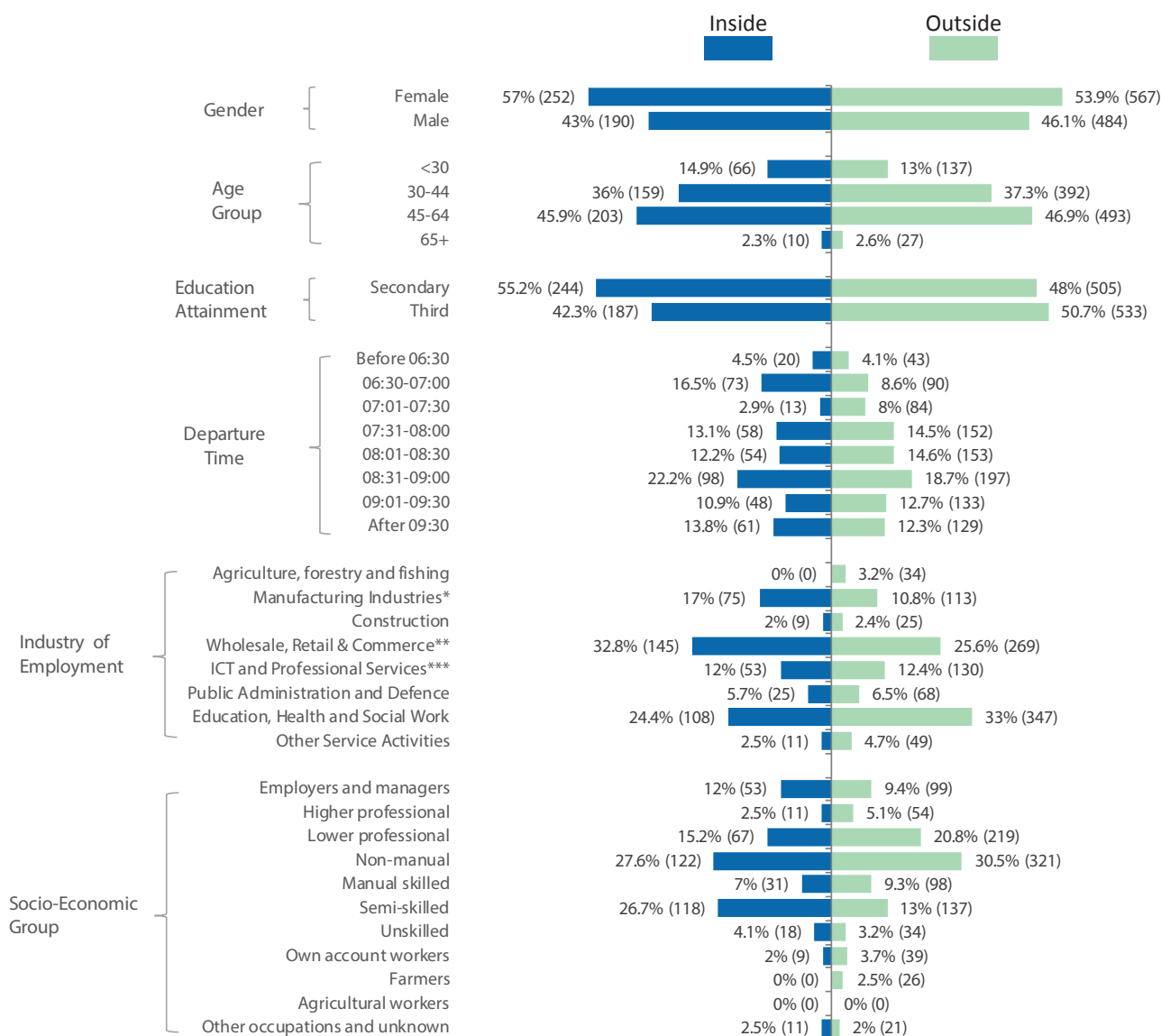
<sup>3</sup> The analysis of the labour catchments in the Western Region has highlighted the importance of rural areas as employment locations. Depending on the location of the catchment and the proximity of nearby towns, a large proportion of the labour catchment residents are in fact employed in rural 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., Donegal Rural, Sligo Rural, Mayo Rural. In the graphic above, 'Other' refer to all other employment destinations (settlements) of those living in the labour catchment.

**Bunbeg Labour Catchment**

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

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



Within the Bunbeg labour catchment, female workers account for 54.9% and male workers account for 45.1%, see Figure 3. Of those working inside Bunbeg, 57% are females whereas 53.9% of those working outside Bunbeg 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 Bunbeg labour catchment and working inside Bunbeg is as follows: <30 years (66 or 14.9%), 30 to 44 years (159 or 36%), 45 to 64 years (203 or 45.9%) and 65 years plus (10 or 2.3%).

## Bunbeg Labour Catchment

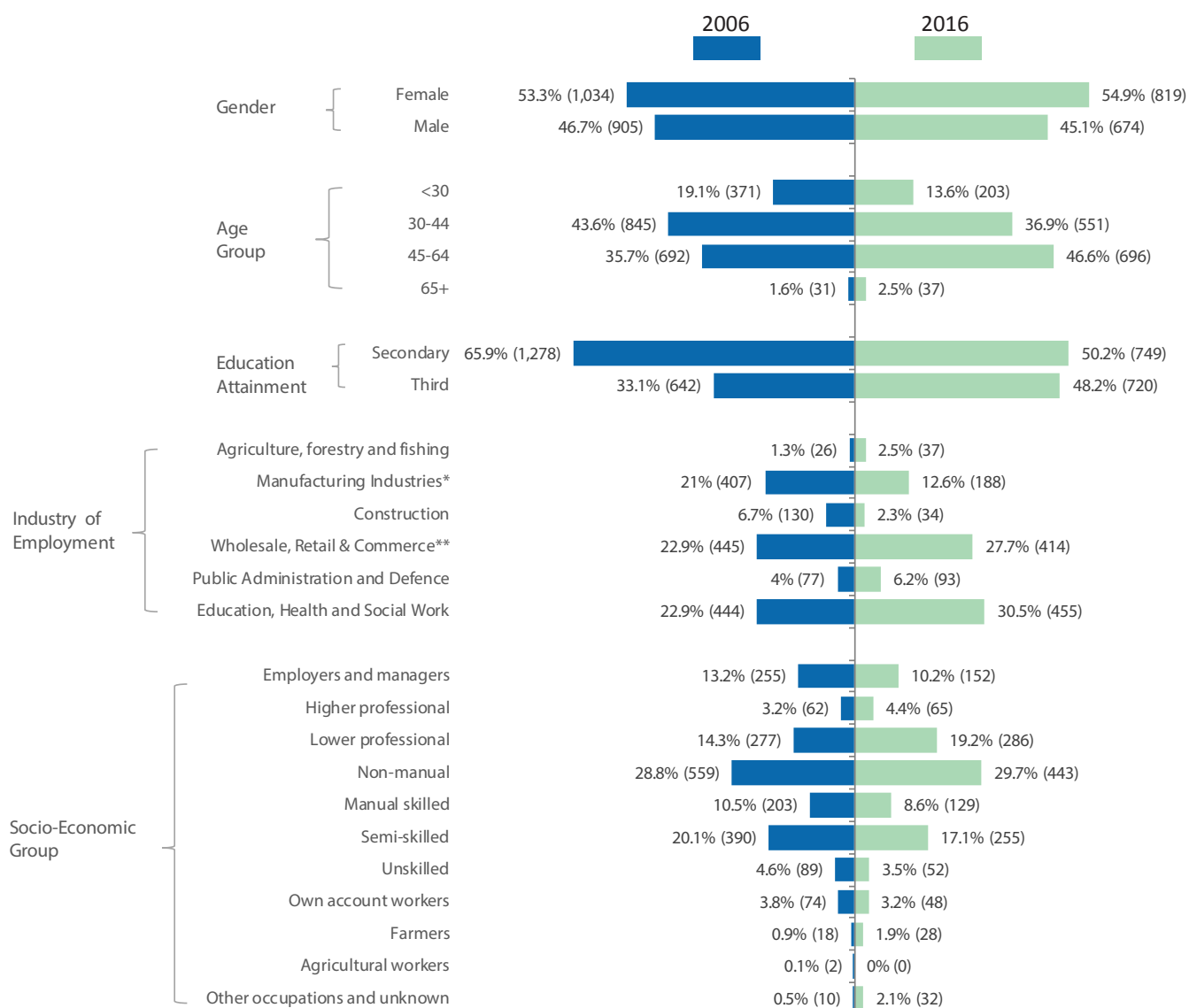
The age profile of those living in the Bunbeg labour catchment and working outside Bunbeg is as follows: <30 years (137 or 13%), 30 to 44 years (392 or 37.3%), 45 to 64 years (493 or 46.9%) and 65 years plus (27 or 2.6%).

An education profile of the Bunbeg labour catchment shows the following: Of those working inside Bunbeg town, 42.3% (187) have 3rd level qualifications compared to 50.7% (533) of those working outside (Figure 2).

### Analysis of change between 2006 and 2016

The graphic below details the change that has occurred across the Bunbeg 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' and 'Manufacturing Industries' and increased dependence in the 'Wholesale, Retail and Commerce' and 'Education, Health and Social Work' sectors.

**Figure 3: Analysis of change between 2006 and 2016**



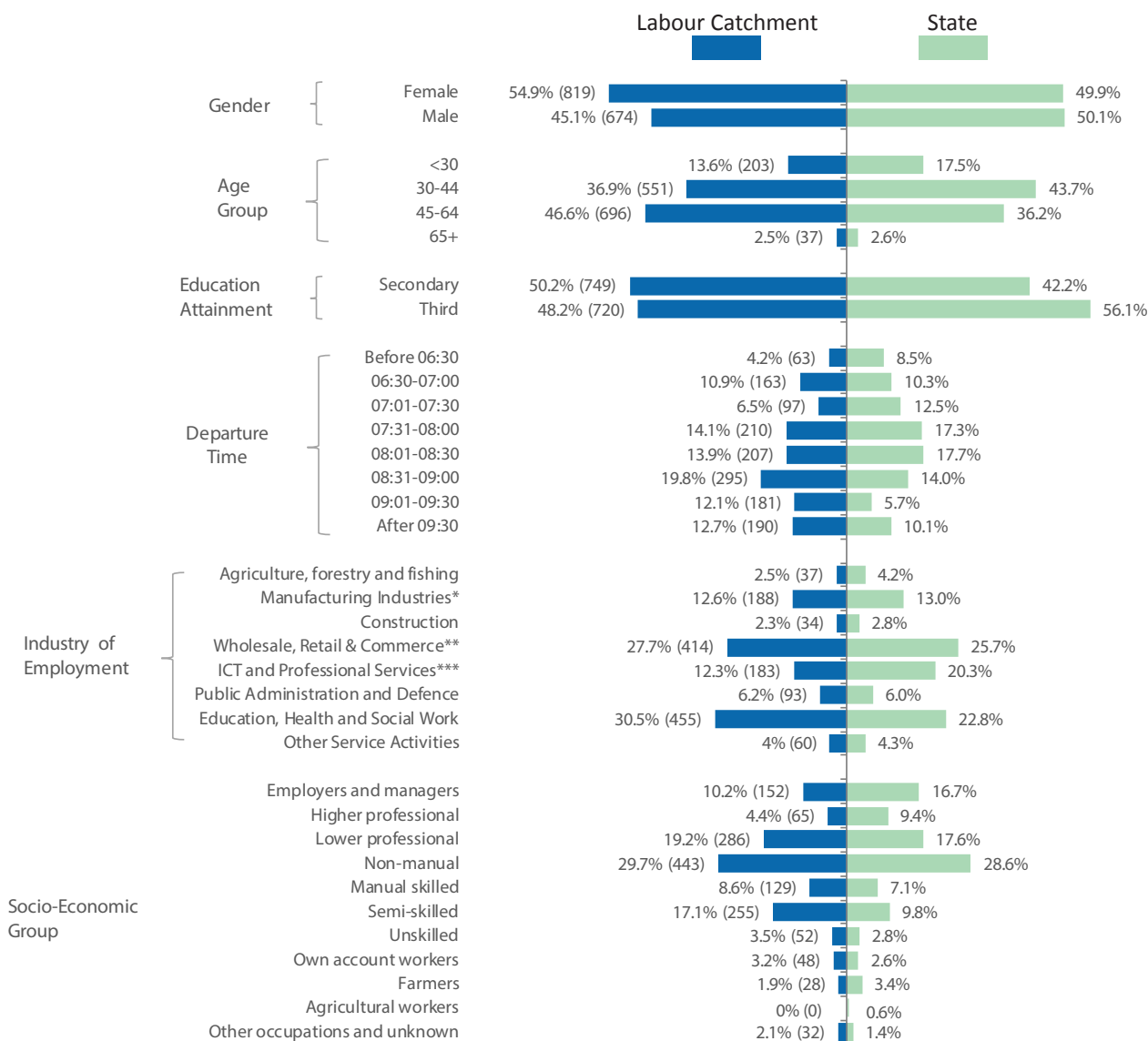


**Bunbeg Labour Catchment**

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

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

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



An age profile of the Bunbeg labour catchment details the following: Labour Catchment (Total): <30 years (203 or 13.6%), 30 to 44 years (551 or 36.9%), 45 to 64 years (696 or 46.6%) and 65 years plus (37 or 2.5%). In contrast to this, the national average (Figure 4) is as follows: <30 years (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 Bunbeg labour catchment shows the following: Those at work and residing in the Bunbeg labour catchment recorded a third level attainment rate of 48.2% (720). In contrast to this, the national average is 56.1% (Figure 4).

Analysis of the profile of the industry of employment<sup>4</sup> within the Bunbeg labour catchment shows the following:

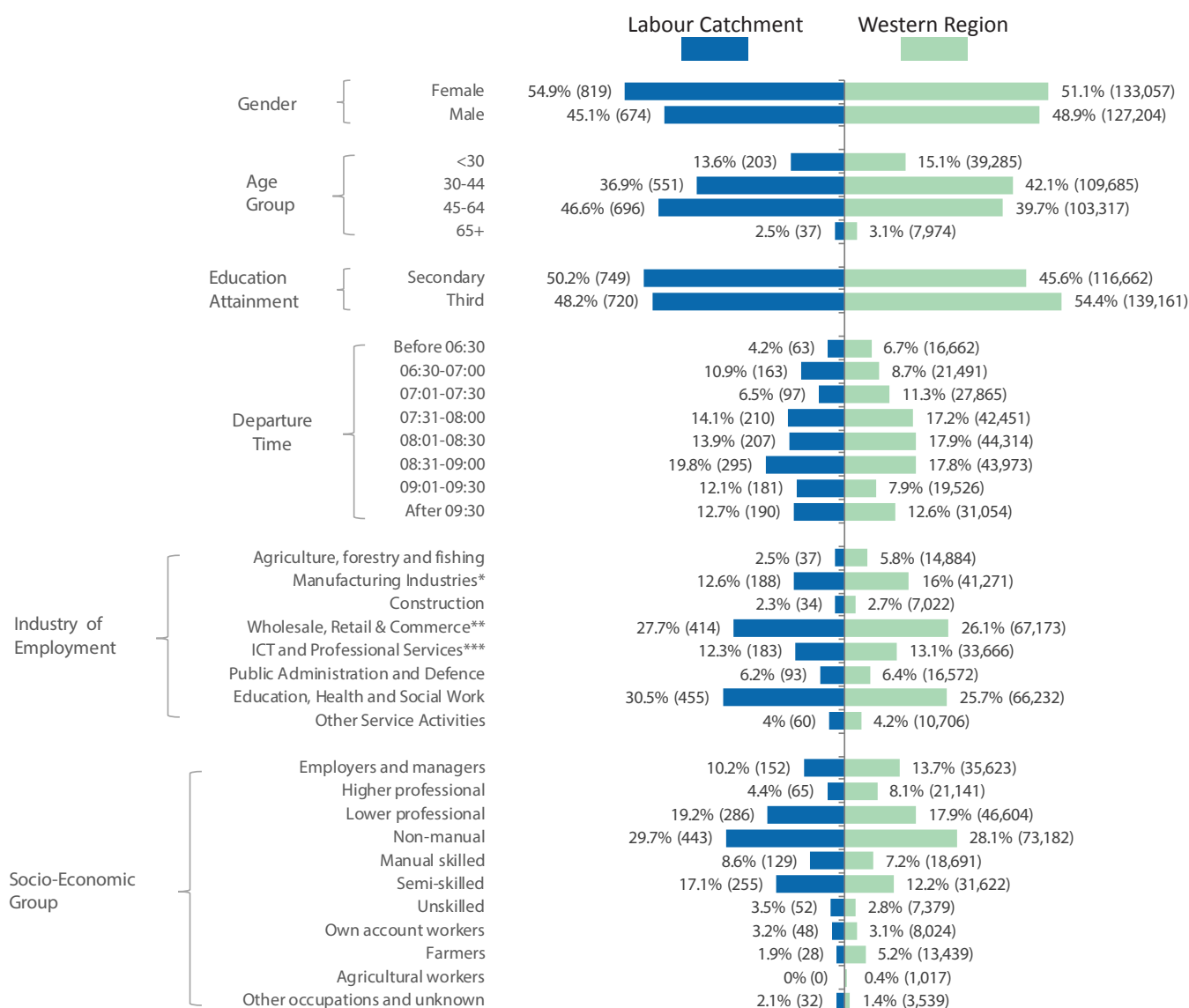
## Bunbeg Labour Catchment

- The single largest employer is the 'Education, Health and Social work' sector and accounts for 30.5% (455) which is higher than the State average (22.8%) (Figure 4).
- The 'Wholesale, Retail and Commerce' sector (27.7% or 414) is also important employment sector and has a higher proportional share than the State average (25.7%) (Figure 4).
- 'ICT and Professional Services' (12.3% or 183) is the third most important sector although much lower than the State average of 20.3% (Figure 4).

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

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

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

## Bunbeg Labour Catchment

The most notable differences in terms of socio-economic characteristics certainly relate to the education levels amongst resident workers in the Bunbeg catchment who have a lower rate of 3rd level education attainment than the Western Region. The Bunbeg catchment also has a higher proportion of workers engaged in the 'Education, Health and Social work' sector. Resident workers in the Bunbeg catchment also have an older age profile (45-64 years) than the Western Region average.

### Conclusion

Bunbeg is one of the 12 labour catchments (of a total of 33) which recorded a decrease in the number of workers living there, down by nearly a quarter (-23%), from 1,939 in 2016 to 1,493 in 2006. The geographic size of the labour catchment increased slightly over the period.

Bunbeg is the most important employment destination (442), but this is down from over 600 in 2006. Employment in Rural Donegal has also decreased significantly from over 1,000 in 2006 to 442 now. The employment destinations of Letterkenny and Dublin city and suburbs have both increased in importance highlighting a shift from rural to urban based employment.

The Education, Health and Social work sector is the most important accounting for 30.5% (455) which is considerably higher than the State average (22.8%) and the Western Region average and highlights the importance of public sector employment in rural areas.

## Notes

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