

Travel to Work and Labour Catchments in the Western Region

A Profile of the Buncrana 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 Buncrana labour catchment, will identify where the residents of the Buncrana 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.

Buncrana

The Buncrana settlement had a population of 6,785 persons recorded in the 2016 Census. Buncrana is the 9th largest settlement within the Western Region and the 69th largest in the State. Since 2006, the population residing within the town of Buncrana has increased by 14.8% (874). In the five years since Census 2011, the population of the town has decreased by -0.8% (-54). 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 Buncrana.

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/>

Buncrana 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 Buncrana 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 Buncrana was 1,988 and accounts for 0.8% 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 Buncrana in April 2016. We do this because although some may not be working in Buncrana they are living in the catchment from which the Buncrana labour supply is drawn and including them provides a more complete assessment of the potential labour supply for Buncrana. The Buncrana 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 Buncrana catchment or locations such as Letterkenny, Derry City, Lifford and Strabane 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 Buncrana compared to the Western Region.

Profile of the Buncrana Labour Catchment

The Buncrana labour catchment is the 18th largest labour catchment in the Western Region with a resident 'at work' population of 2,948 which accounts for 1.1% of the total resident 'at work' population within the Western Region (260,261).

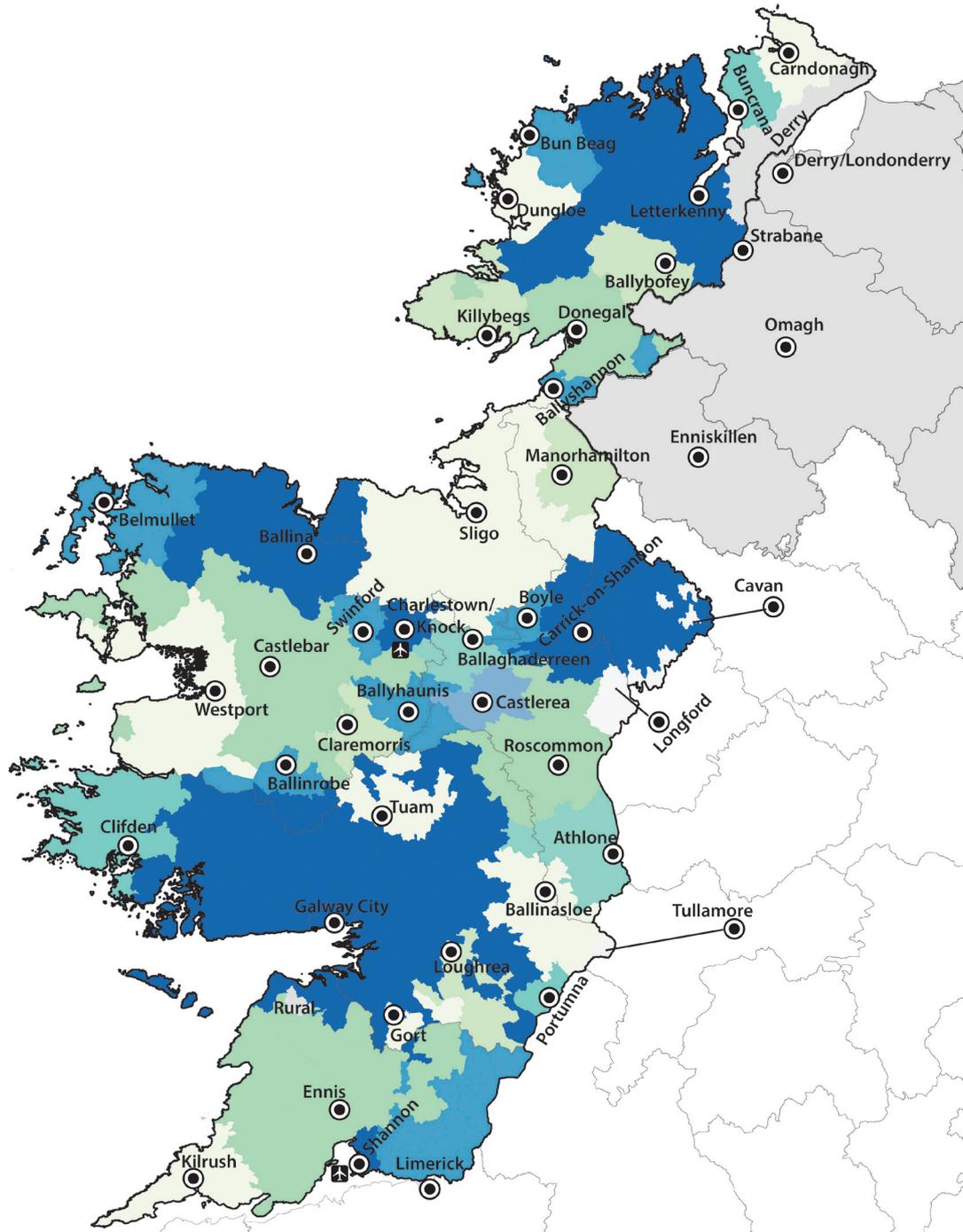
The Buncrana labour catchment covers a relatively small area in north-east Donegal within the Inishowen peninsula (See Map 1 and 2). In 2016, there were 2,948 people classified as at work and living within the labour catchment. This figure is 26.7% more than the resident 'at work' population within the town boundary (2,327). The 2016 total is -1.6% lower than the 2006 total of 2,995.

The Buncrana labour catchment is constrained the Carndonagh labour catchment to the north-east and then the Derry City labour catchment to the south. These locations 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 north-east Donegal.

Buncrana 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)



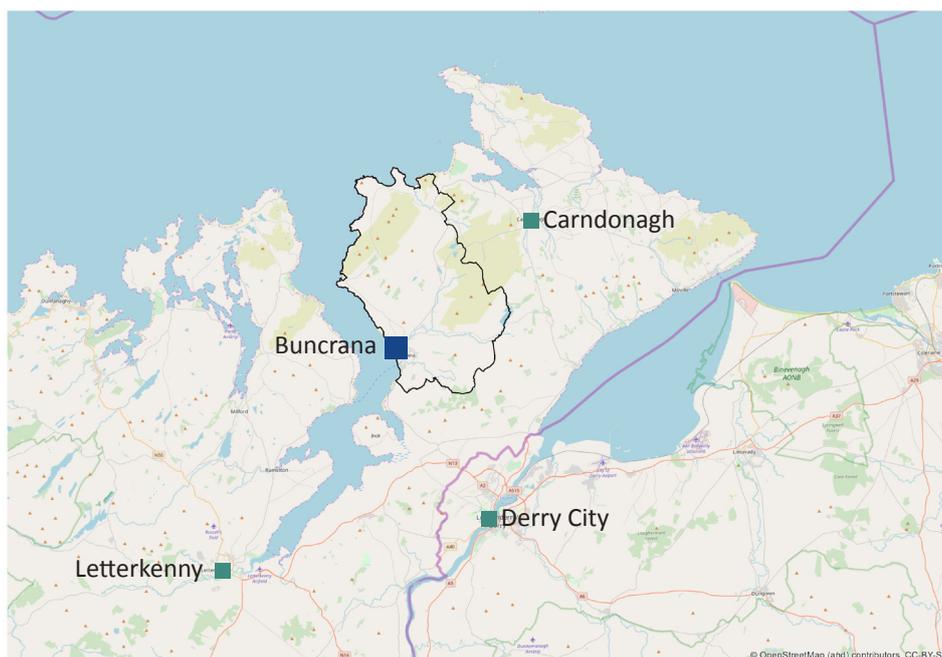
- Western Region
- Local Authority
- Motorway
- Other Key Roads
- Light & Heavy Rail Network
- Key Settlements



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Data Source: CSO POWSCAR 2016

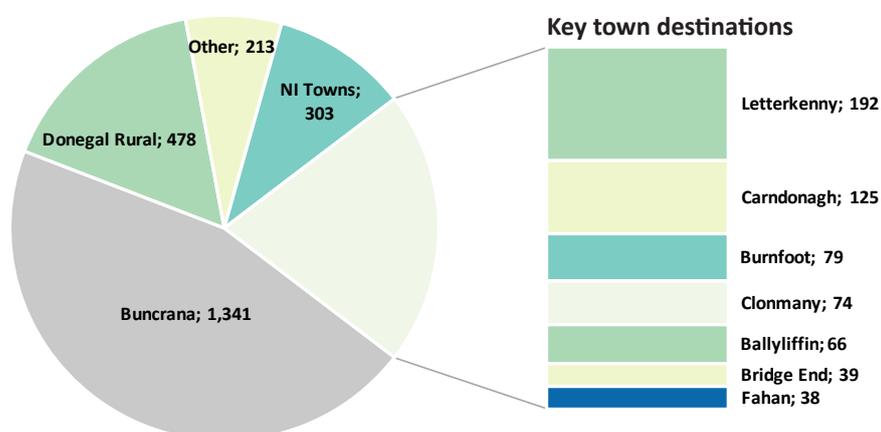
Buncrana Labour Catchment

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



Of those living in the Buncrana labour catchment (total = 2,948), 45.5% (1,341) are employed within Buncrana town and 54.5% (1,607) are employed outside the town. Key destinations outside the town are Donegal Rural (16.2% or 478), NI (10.3% or 303) and Letterkenny (6.5% or 192) – see Figure 1³ for more details.

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

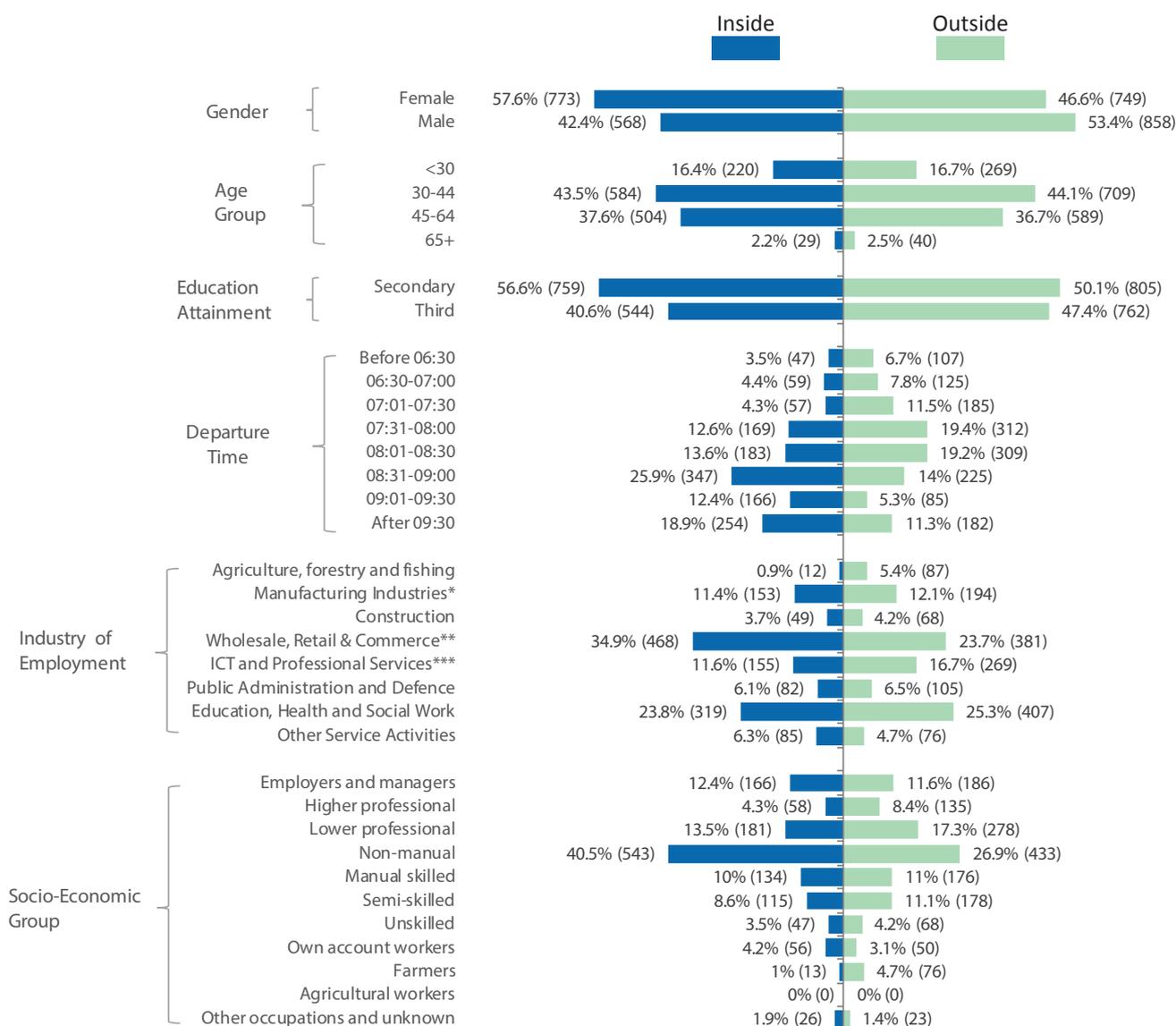
³ The analysis of the labour catchments in the Western Region has highlighted the importance of rural areas as employment locations. Depending on the location of the catchment and the proximity of nearby towns, a large proportion of the labour catchment residents are in fact employed in rural areas.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

Buncrana Labour Catchment

Socio-economic comparison of those employed ‘Inside’ and ‘Outside’ Buncrana town, 2016

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



Within the Buncrana labour catchment, female workers account for 51.6% and male workers account for 48.4%, see Figure 3. Of those working inside Buncrana, 57.6% are females whereas 46.6% of those working outside Buncrana 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 Buncrana labour catchment and working inside Buncrana is as follows: <30 years (220 or 16.4%), 30 to 44 years (584 or 43.5%), 45 to 64 years (504 or 37.6%) and 65 years plus (29 or 2.2%).

Buncrana Labour Catchment

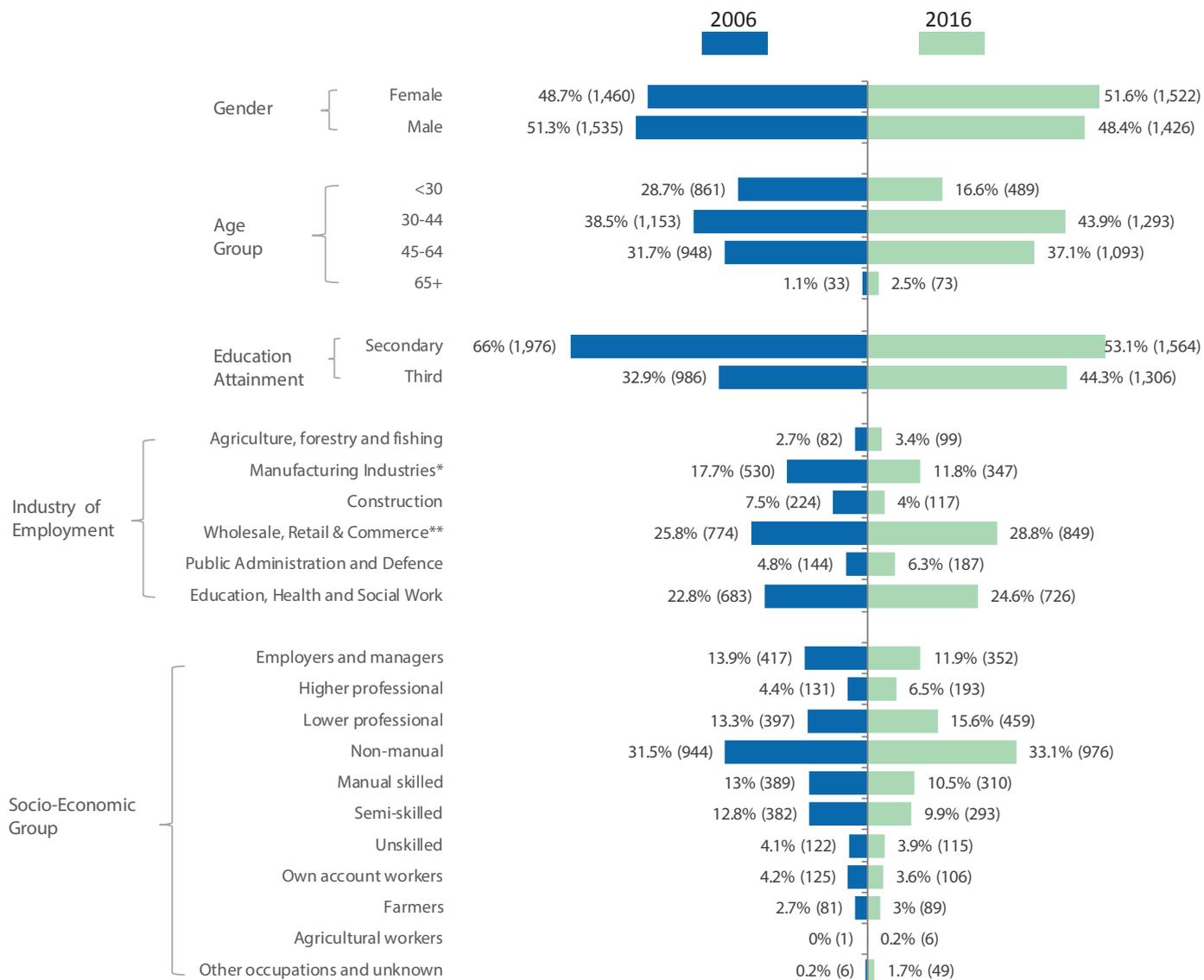
The age profile of those living in the Buncrana labour catchment and working outside Buncrana is as follows: <30 years (269 or 16.7%), 30 to 44 years (709 or 44.1%), 45 to 64 years (589 or 36.7%) and 65 years plus (40 or 2.5%).

An education profile of the Buncrana labour catchment shows the following: Of those working inside Buncrana town, 40.6% (544) have 3rd level qualifications compared to 47.4% (762) of those working outside (Figure 2).

Analysis of change between 2006 and 2016

The graphic below details the change that has occurred across the Buncrana 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 the ‘Manufacturing Industries’ sectors.

Figure 3: Analysis of change between 2006 and 2016

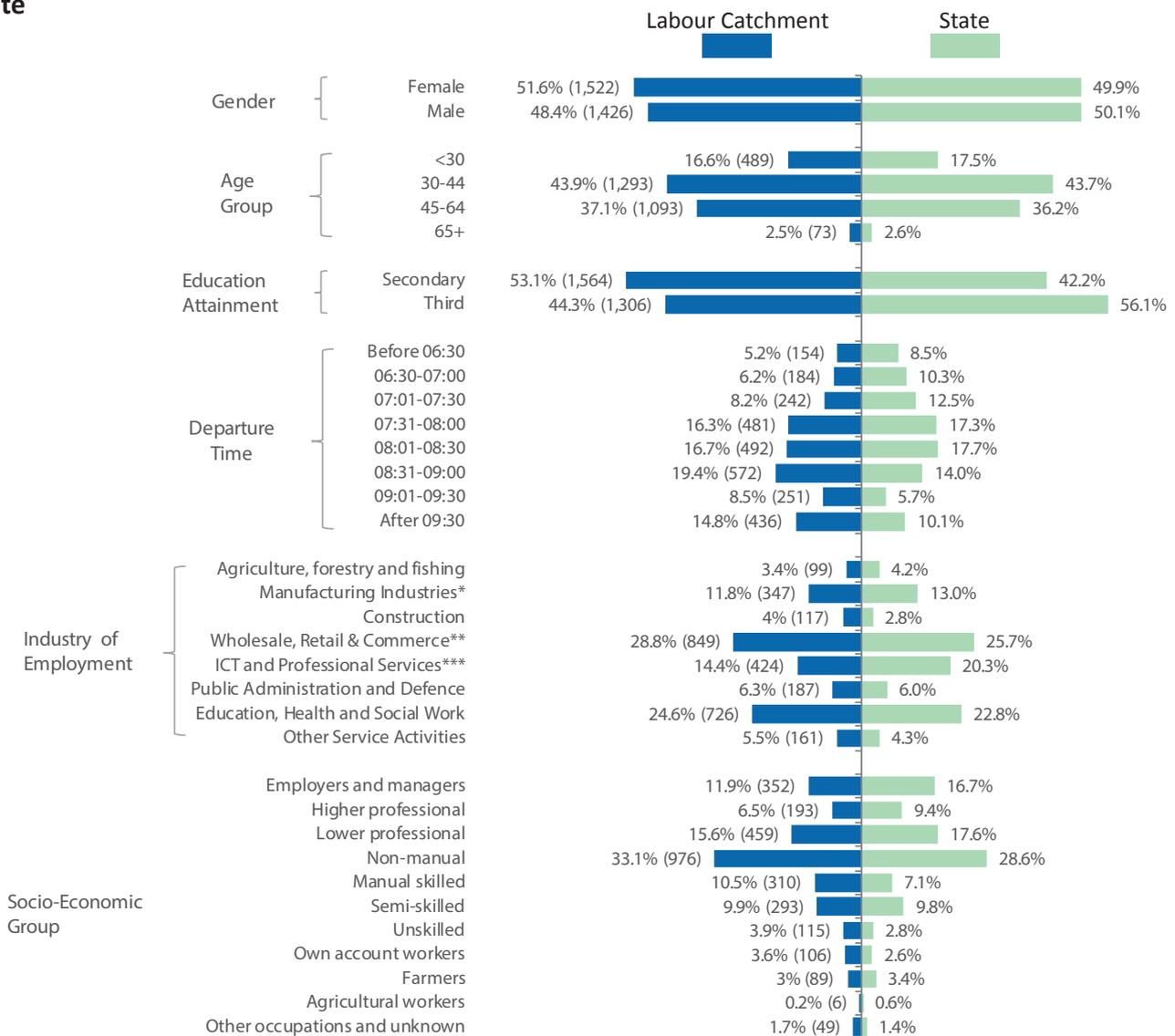


Buncrana Labour Catchment

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

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

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



An age profile of the Buncrana labour catchment details the following: Labour Catchment (Total): <30 years (489 or 16.6%), 30 to 44 years (1293 or 43.9%), 45 to 64 years (1093 or 37.1%) and 65 years plus (73 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 Buncrana labour catchment shows the following: Those at work and residing in the Buncrana labour catchment recorded a third level attainment rate of 44.3% (1306). In contrast to this, the national average is 56.1% (Figure 4).

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

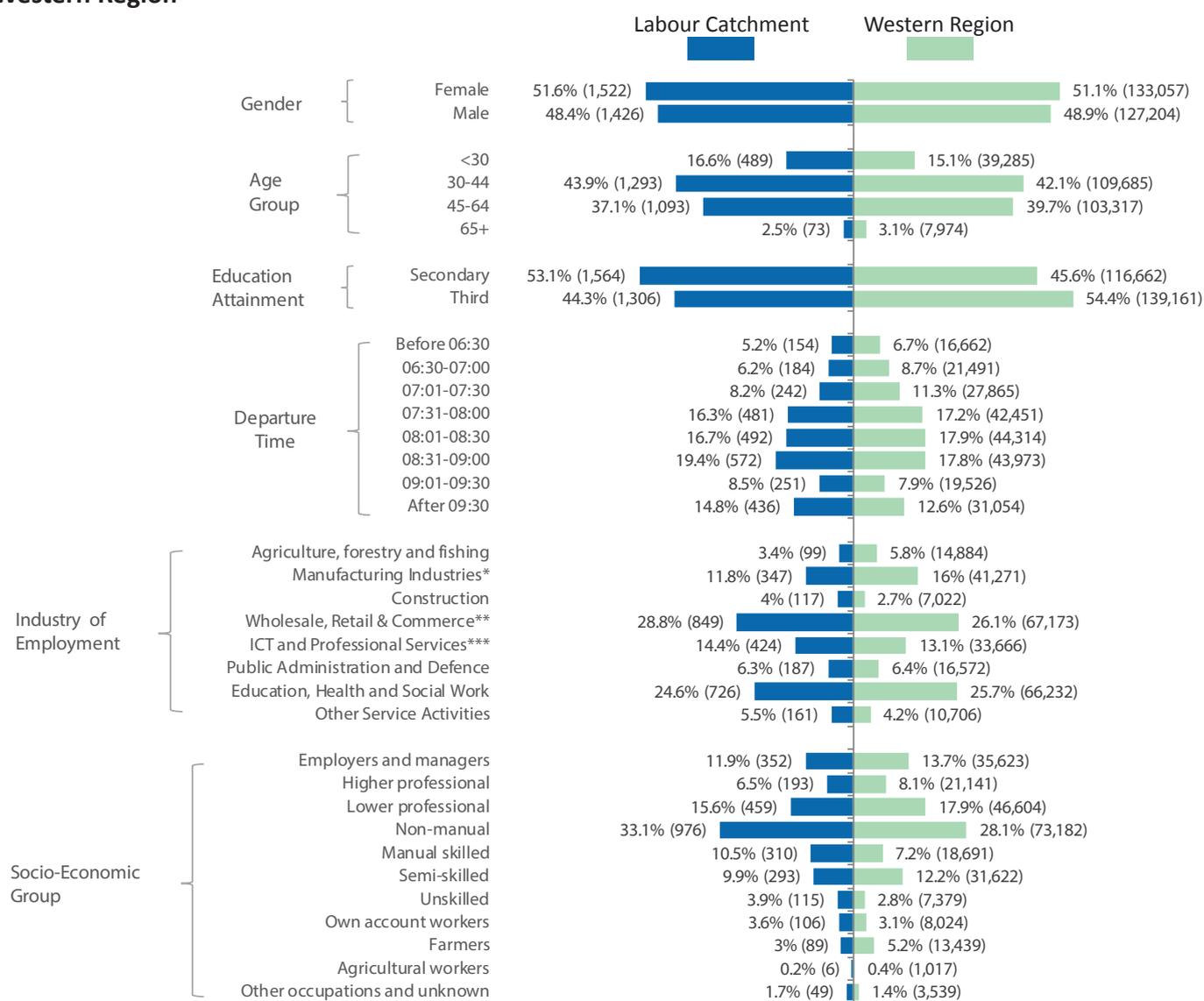
Buncrana Labour Catchment

- The single largest employer is the ‘Wholesale, Retail and Commerce’ sector and accounts for 28.8% (849) which is higher than the State average (25.7%) (Figure 4).
- The ‘Education, Human Health and Social Work’ (24.6% or 726) sector is also an important employment sector and has a higher proportional share than the State average (22.8%) (Figure 4).
- ‘ICT and Professional Services’ (14.4% or 424) is the third most important sector although much lower than the State average of 20.3% (Figure 4).

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

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

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

Buncrana Labour Catchment

The most notable differences in terms of socio-economic characteristics certainly relate to the education levels amongst resident workers in the Buncrana catchment who have a lower rate of 3rd level education attainment than the Western Region. Interestingly, the Buncrana catchment has a higher proportion of workers engaged in the 'ICT and Professional Services' sector which likely relates to the high numbers in the catchment employed within Letterkenny and Derry City. Resident workers in the Buncrana catchment also have a younger age profile than the Western Region average.

Conclusion

Buncrana was one of the 12 labour catchments (of a total of 33) that recorded a decrease in population between 2006 and 2016. There was a decline of -1.6% (47 workers). The geographic size of the catchment decreased slightly.

The place of work has not changed significantly over the period, with the exception of a large decline in the numbers working in Rural parts of County Donegal down from 927 in 2006 to 478 in 2017. The numbers employed in Buncrana has declined very slightly, while the numbers employed in Letterkenny has increased (by just over 60, over the period). The numbers working in Northern Ireland has remained around 300 between 2006 and 2016.

As with many other labour catchments, the single largest employer is the Wholesale, Retail and Commerce sector and accounts for 28.8% (849) which is higher than the State average. This is followed by the Education, Human Health and Social Work sector which is also an important employment sector and has a higher proportional share than the State average.

Unlike many of the smaller rural labour catchments where the age profile is often older than the state average, in Buncrana the age profile is similar to that of the State.

Notes

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