

# Travel to Work and Labour Catchments in the Western Region

## A Profile of the Donegal town 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 from 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 Donegal labour catchment, will identify where the residents of the Donegal 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.

## **Donegal Town**

The Donegal town settlement had a population of 2,618 persons recorded in the 2016 Census. Donegal town is the 22nd largest settlement within the Western Region and the 135th largest in the State. Since 2006, the population residing within the town of Donegal town has increased by 11.9% (279). In the five years since Census 2011, the population of the town has increased by 0.4% (11). 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 Donegal town.

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/>

## **Donegal Town 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 Donegal town 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 Donegal town was 1,673 and accounts for 0.7% 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 Donegal town in April 2016. We do this because although some may not be working in Donegal town they are living in the catchment from which the Donegal town labour supply is drawn and including them provides a more complete assessment of the potential labour supply for Donegal town. The Donegal town 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 Donegal town catchment or locations such as Sligo town, Killybegs and Letterkenny 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 Donegal town compared to the Western Region.

### **Profile of the Donegal Town Labour Catchment**

The Donegal town labour catchment is the 16th largest labour catchment in the Western Region with a resident 'at work' population of 3,908 which accounts for 1.5% of the total resident 'at work' population within the Western Region (260,261).

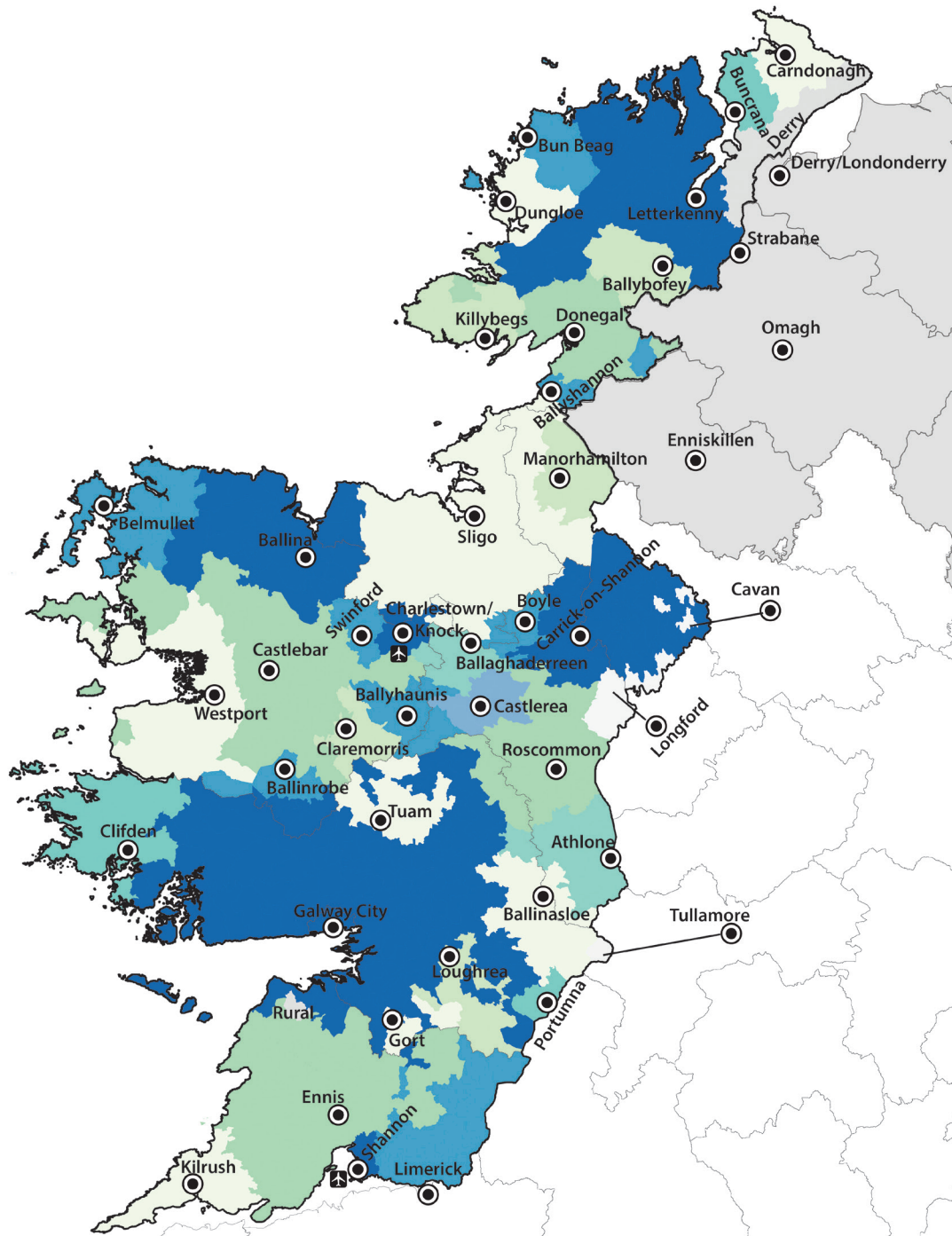
The Donegal labour catchment covers a relatively small proportion of south county Donegal (See Map 1 and 2). In 2016, there were 3,908 people classified as at work and living within the labour catchment. This figure is 292.4% more than the resident 'at work' population within the town boundary (996). The 2016 total is 12.1% higher than the 2006 total of 3,487.

The Donegal labour catchment is constrained by the influence of Killybegs to the west, Ballybofey to the north and Ballyshannon 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 Donegal. There are also two non-contiguous parts of the catchment (individual EDs) located just north of Killybegs and to the north-east of Pettigo. The border with Northern Ireland also has a clear influence along the eastern side of the catchment.

### Donegal Town 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)

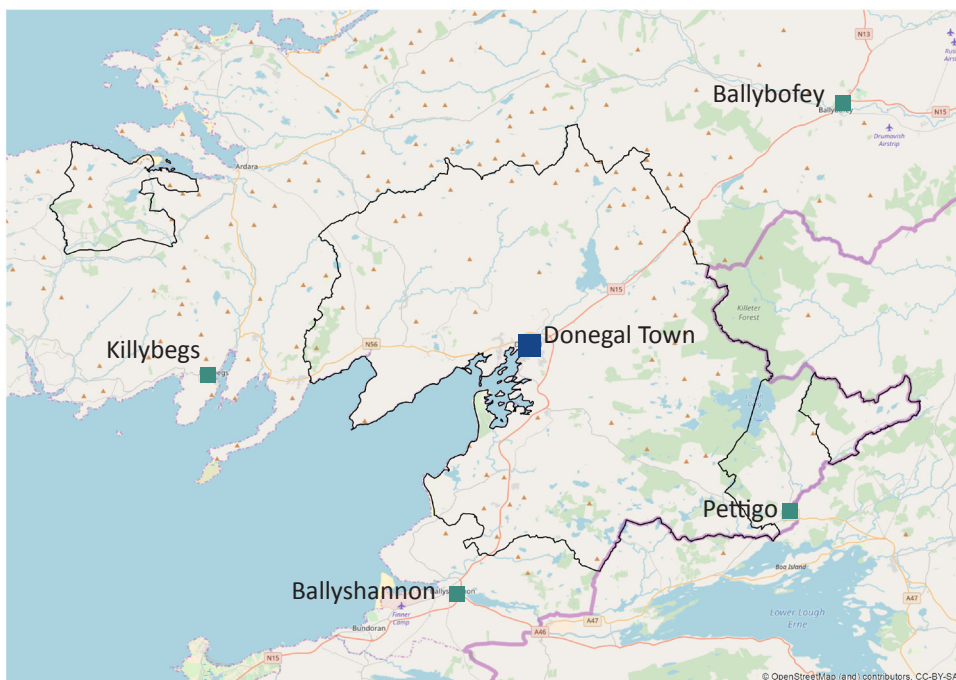


- Western Region
- Local Authority
- Motorway
- Other Key Roads
- Light & Heavy Rail Network
- Key Settlements



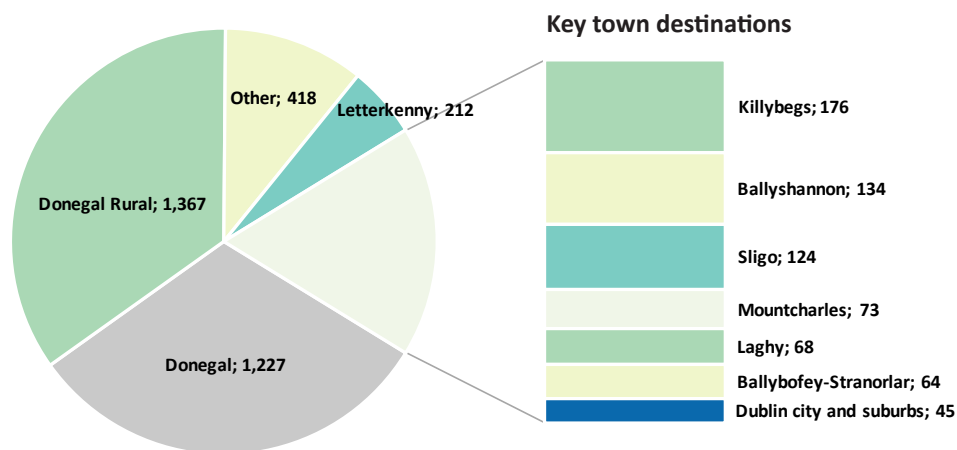
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Data Source: CSO POWSCAR 2016

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



Of those living in the Donegal town labour catchment (total = 3,908), 31.4% (1,227) are employed within Donegal town and 68.6% (2,681) are employed outside the town. Key destinations outside the town are Donegal Rural (35% or 1,367), Letterkenny (5.4% or 212) and Killybegs (4.5% or 176) – see Figure 1<sup>3</sup> for more details.

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

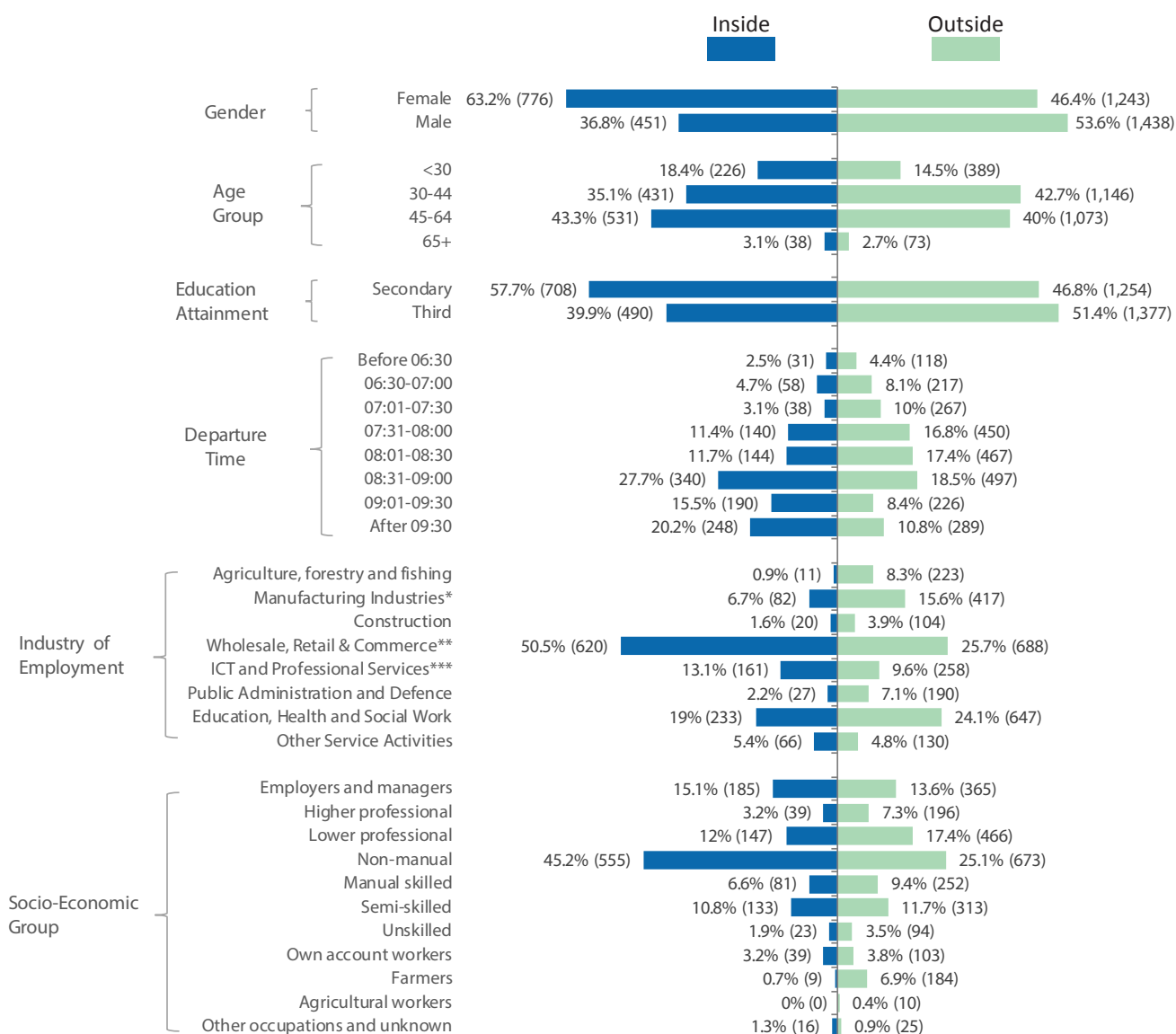
<sup>3</sup> The analysis of the labour catchments in the Western Region has highlighted the importance of rural areas as employment locations. Depending on the location of the catchment and the proximity of nearby towns, a large proportion of the labour catchment residents are in fact employed in rural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

Donegal Town Labour Catchment

Socio-economic comparison of those employed 'Inside' and 'Outside' Donegal Town, 2016

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



Within the Donegal town labour catchment, female workers account for 51.7% and male workers account for 48.3%, see Figure 3. Of those working inside Donegal town, 63.2% are females whereas 46.4% of those working outside Donegal town 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 Donegal town labour catchment and working inside Donegal town is as follows: <30 years (226 or 18.4%), 30 to 44 years (431 or 35.1%), 45 to 64 years (531 or 43.3%) and 65 years plus (38 or 3.1%).

## Donegal Town Labour Catchment

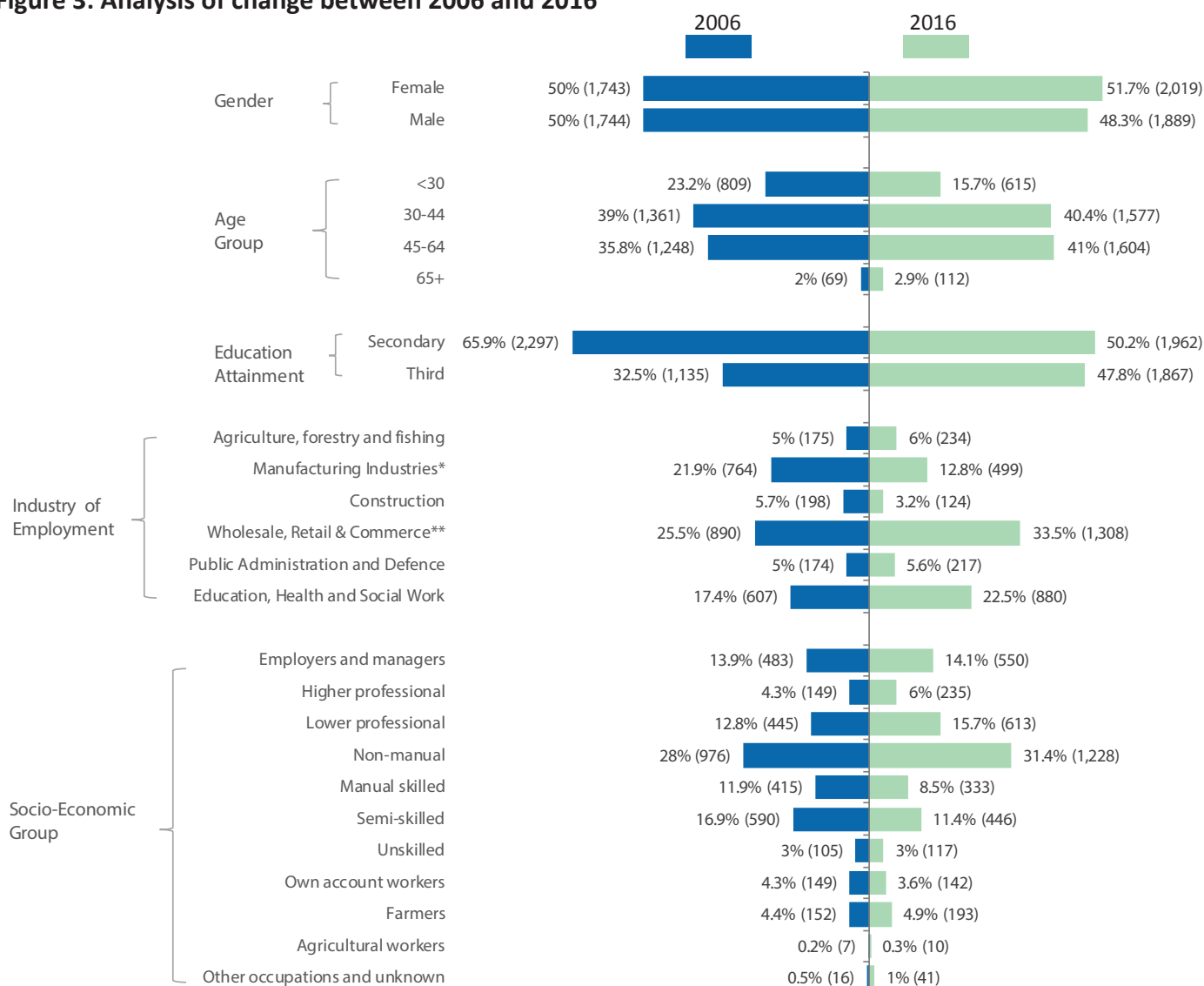
The age profile of those living in the Donegal town labour catchment and working outside Donegal town is as follows: <30 years (389 or 14.5%), 30 to 44 years (1,146 or 42.7%), 45 to 64 years (1,073 or 40%) and 65 years plus (73 or 2.7%).

An education profile of the Donegal town labour catchment shows the following: Of those working inside Donegal town, 39.9% (490) have 3rd level qualifications compared to 51.4% (1,377) of those working outside (Figure 2).

### Analysis of change between 2006 and 2016

The graphic below details the change that has occurred across the Donegal town 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 and 'Manufacturing Industries'.

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



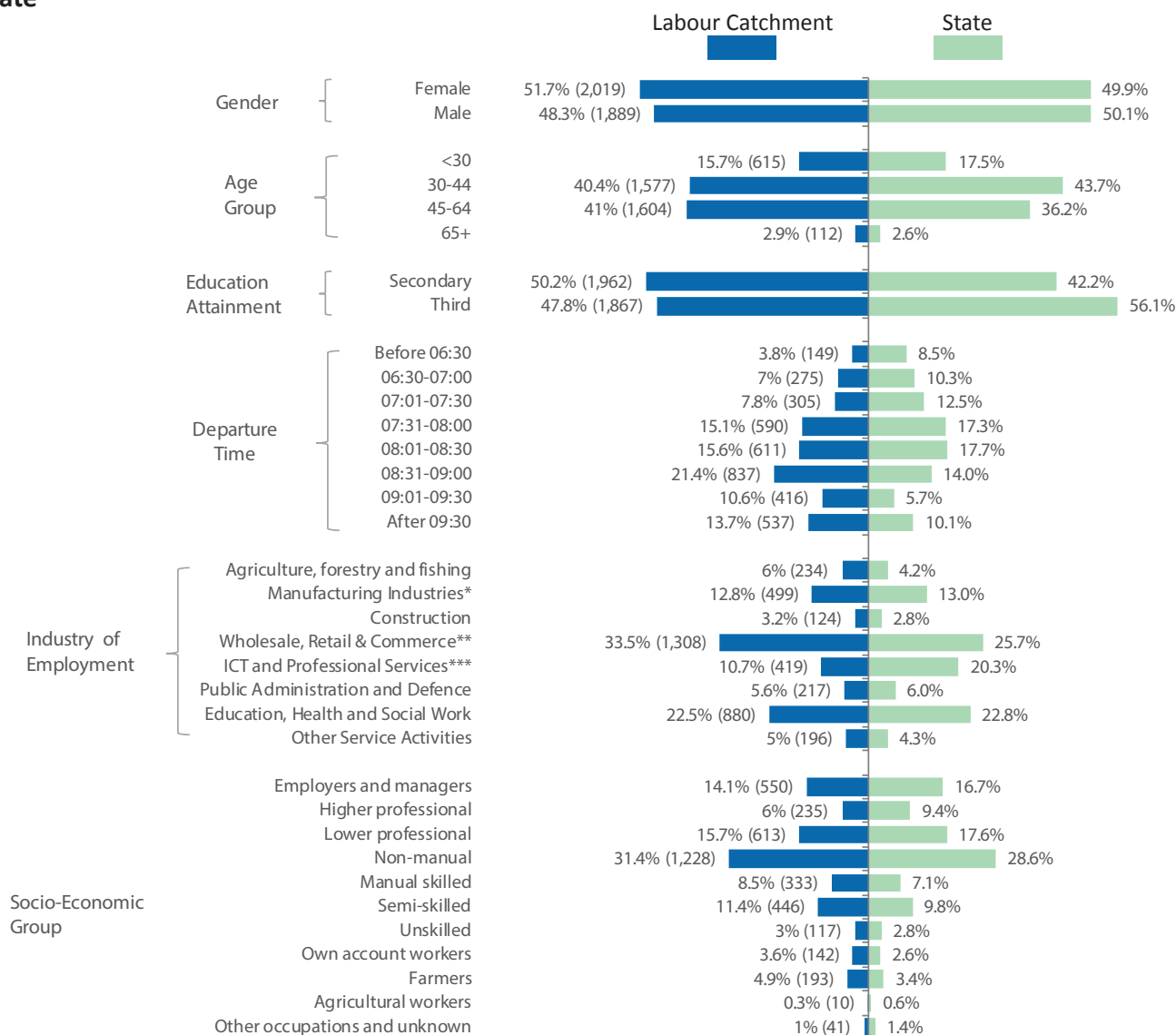


## Donegal Town Labour Catchment

### Socio-economic comparison of the Donegal Town Labour Catchment and the State, 2016

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

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



An age profile of the Donegal town labour catchment details the following: Labour Catchment (Total): <30 years (615 or 15.7%), 30 to 44 years (1,577 or 40.4%), 45 to 64 years (1,604 or 41%) and 65 years plus (112 or 2.9%). 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 Donegal town labour catchment shows the following: Those at work and residing in the Donegal town labour catchment recorded a third level attainment rate of 47.8% (1,867). 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 Donegal town labour catchment shows the following:

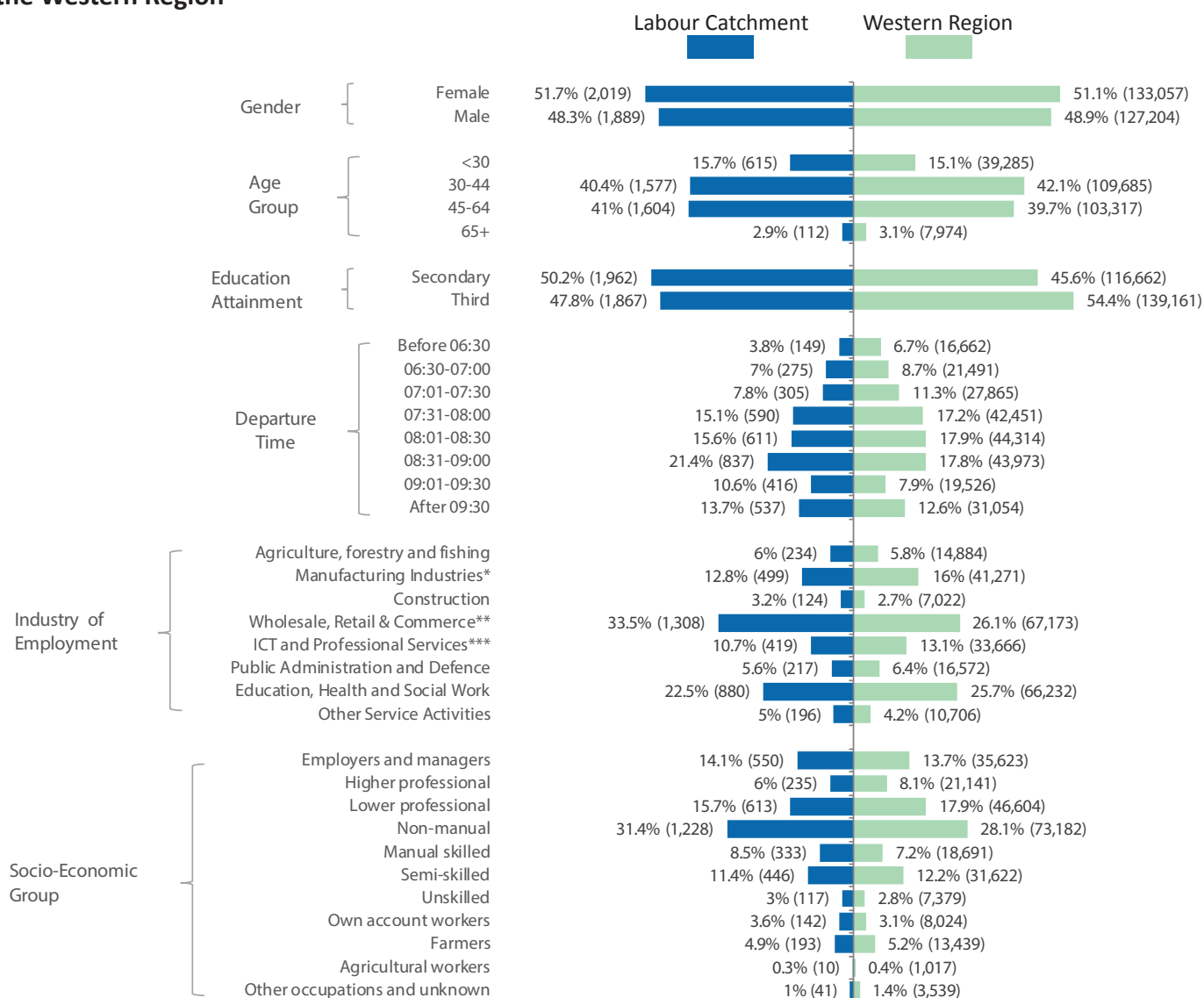
## Donegal Town Labour Catchment

- The single largest employer is the ‘Wholesale, Retail and Commerce’ sector and accounts for 33.5% (1,308) which is higher than the State average (25.7%) (Figure 4).
- The ‘Education, Human Health and Social Work’ (22.5% or 880) is the next most important sector and although marginally lower than the State average (22.8%) (Figure 4).
- ‘Manufacturing Industries’ (12.8% or 499) ‘ICT and Professional Services’ (10.7% or 419) are the third and fourth most important sectors with ‘ICT and Professional Services’ only half the State average of 20.3% (Figure 4).

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

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

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

## Donegal Town Labour Catchment

The most notable differences in terms of socio-economic characteristics certainly relate to the education levels amongst resident workers in the Donegal town catchment who have a lower rate of 3rd level education attainment than the Western Region. The Donegal town catchment also has a much higher proportion of workers engaged in the 'Wholesale, Retail and Commerce' sector. Resident workers in the Donegal town catchment have a broadly comparable age profile with the Western Region averages.

### Conclusion

Donegal is one of the 21 labour catchments (of a total of 33) which had an increase in population size in the ten year period between 2006 and 2016, an additional 421 resident workers or by 12.1%. The Donegal labour catchment increased slightly in size, gaining EDs at the expense of Fermanagh (Pettigo) and Killybegs over the 10 year period.

Rural County Donegal is the most significant employment destination, followed closely by Donegal town. The centres of Letterkenny, Killybegs, Ballyshannon and Sligo are the next most important employment centres, highlighting the importance of urban centres in the North west as employment centres. Dublin city and suburbs (45) features in the top ten employment destinations, up from 15 in 2006.

The single largest employer is the Wholesale, Retail and Commerce sector and accounts for 33.5% (1,308) which is higher than the State average (25.7%). This includes the Tourism and Accommodation sector.

The Education, Human Health and Social Work (22.5% or 880) is the next most important sector and although marginally lower than the State average (22.8%). Employment within manufacturing has decreased over the decade to 2016, from 21.9% or 764 people to 12.8% (499), similar now to the state average of 13%.

## Notes

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