

Travel to Work and Labour Catchments in the Western Region

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

Loughrea

The Loughrea settlement had a population of 5,556 persons recorded in the 2016 Census. Loughrea is the 13th largest settlement within the Western Region and the 81th largest in the State. Since 2006, the population residing within the town of Loughrea has increased by 22% (+1,024). In the five years since Census 2011, the population of the town has increased by +9.7% (+494). 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 Loughrea.

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/>

Loughrea 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 Loughrea was 2,225 and accounts for 0.91% 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 Loughrea in April 2016. We do this because although some may not be working in Loughrea they are living in the catchment from which the Loughrea labour supply is drawn and including them provides a more complete assessment of the potential labour supply for Loughrea. The Loughrea 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 Loughrea catchment or locations such as Galway City, Ennis or Athlone 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 Loughrea compared to the Western Region.

Profile of the Loughrea Labour Catchment

The Loughrea labour catchment is the 7th largest labour catchment in the Western Region with a resident 'at work' population of 3,070 which accounts for 1.2% of the total resident 'at work' population within the Western Region (260,261).

The Loughrea labour catchment covers a relatively small proportion of south county Galway, primarily to the south of Loughrea town (See Map 1 and 2). In 2016, there were 3,070 people classified as at work and living within the labour catchment. This figure is 33.7% more than the resident 'at work' population within the town boundary (2,95). The 2016 total is 32.8% higher than the 2006 total of 2,311.

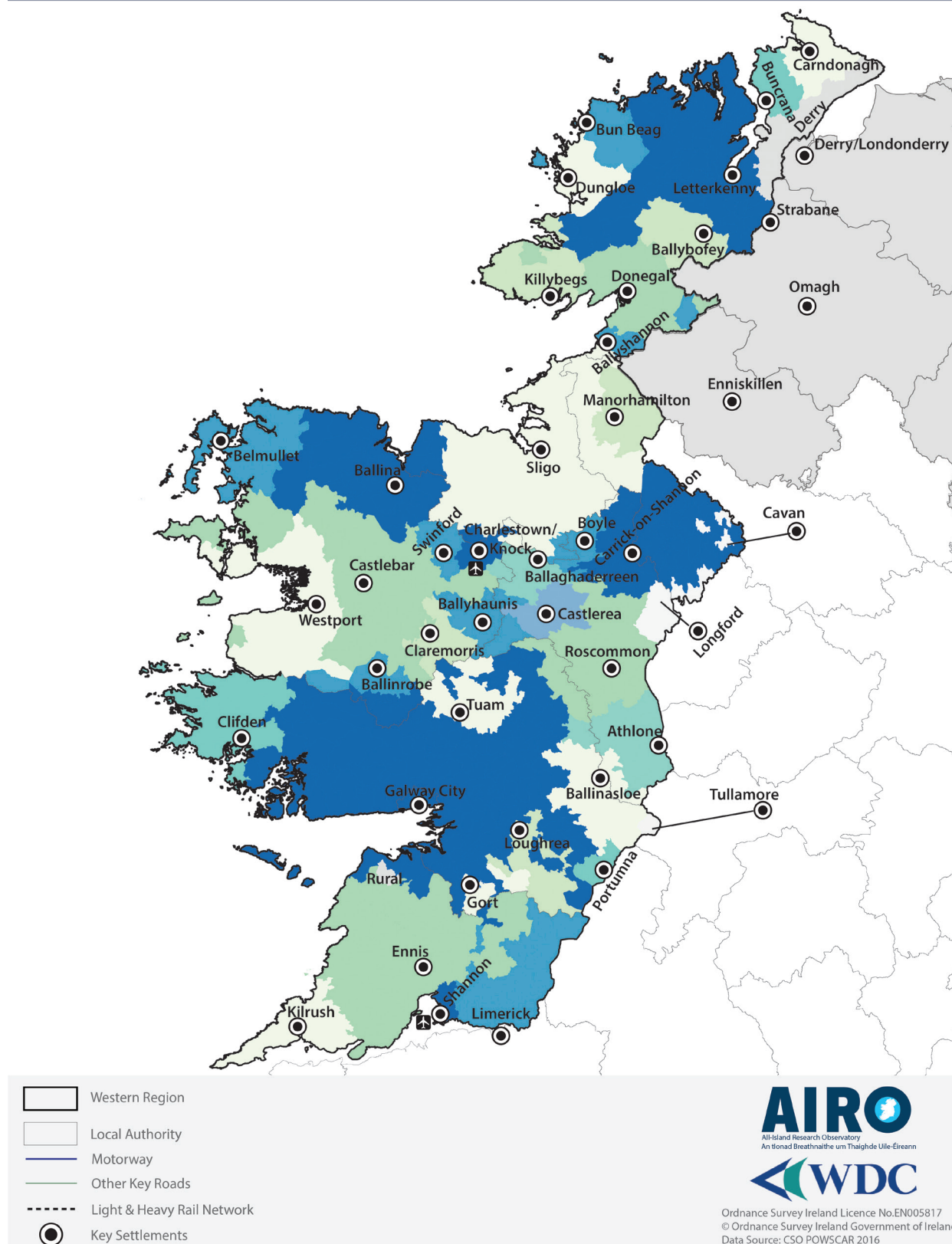
The Loughrea labour catchment is constrained by the influence of Galway City to the north and west, Ennis to the south and Portumna to the east. These towns are themselves the most important places for employment for those living in their immediate hinterlands, and therefore constitute separate and quite large labour catchments within the county boundaries of Galway and Clare.

Loughrea Labour Catchment

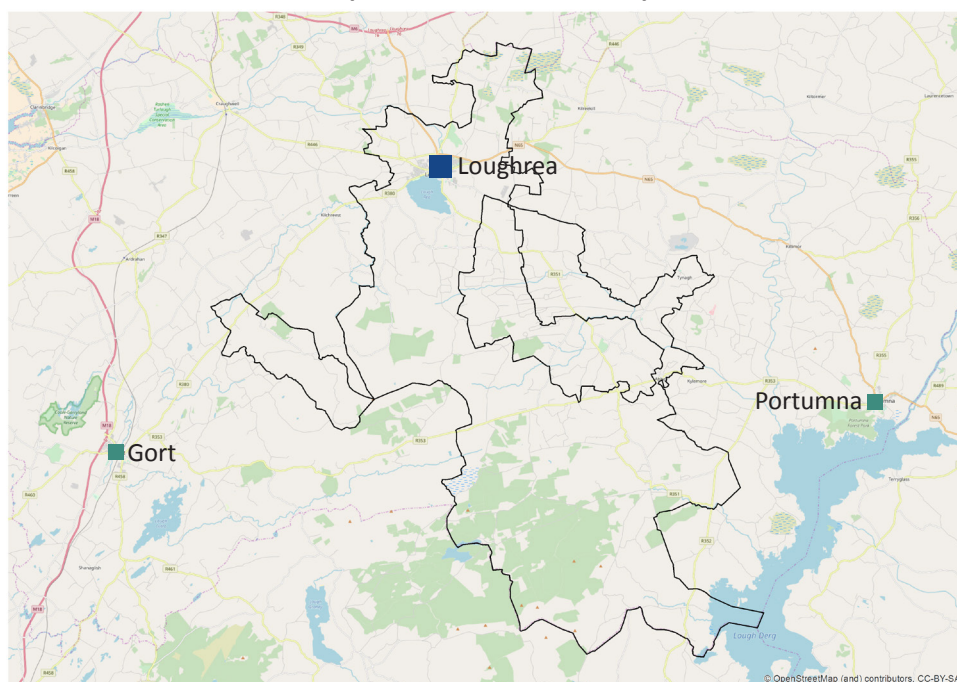
Map 1: Labour Catchments of 42 Towns in the Western Region, 2016 (WDC & CSO POWCAR)

Labour Catchments of 42 Towns in the Western Region, 2016

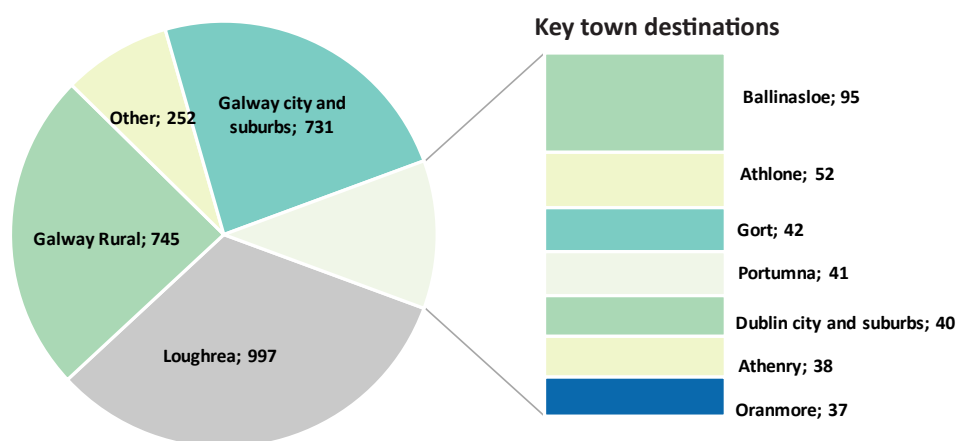
By Electoral Division (ED)



Loughrea Labour Catchment

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

Of those living in the Loughrea labour catchment (total = 3,070), 32.5% (997) are employed within Loughrea town and 67.5% (2,073) are employed outside the town. Key destinations outside the town are Galway Rural (24.3% or 745), Galway City and Suburbs (23.8% or 731) and Ballinasloe (3.1% or 95) – see Figure 1³ for more details.

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

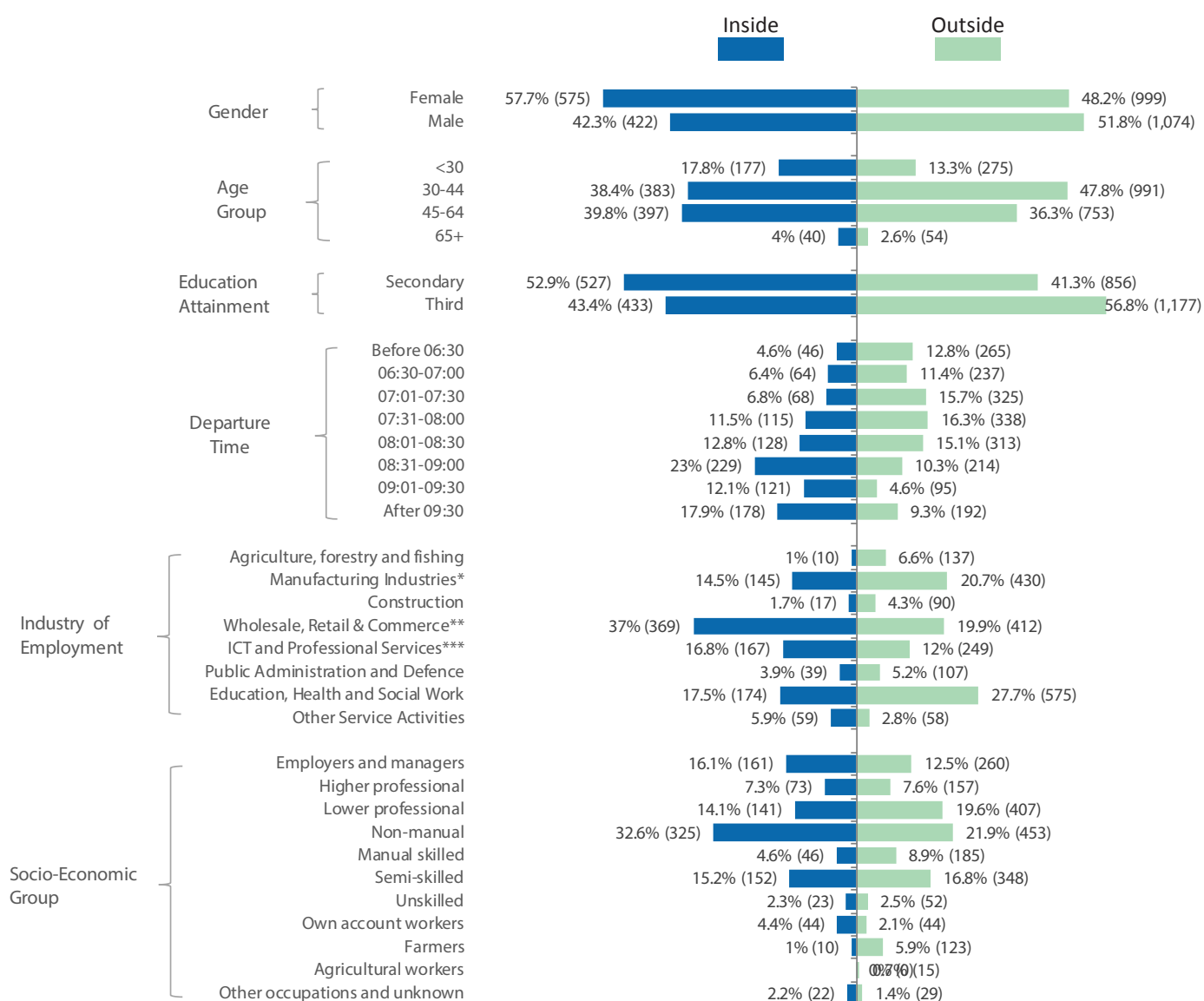
³ The analysis of the labour catchments in the Western Region has highlighted the importance of rural areas as employment locations. Depending on the location of the catchment and the proximity of nearby towns, a large proportion of the labour catchment residents are in fact employed in rural areas.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

Loughrea Labour Catchment

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

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



Within the Loughrea labour catchment, female workers account for 51.3% and male workers account for 48.7%, see Figure 3. Of those working inside Ballina, 57.7% are females whereas 48.2% 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 (177 or 17.8%), 30 to 44 years (383 or 38.4%), 45 to 64 years (397 or 39.8%) and 65 years plus (40 or 4%).

Loughrea Labour Catchment

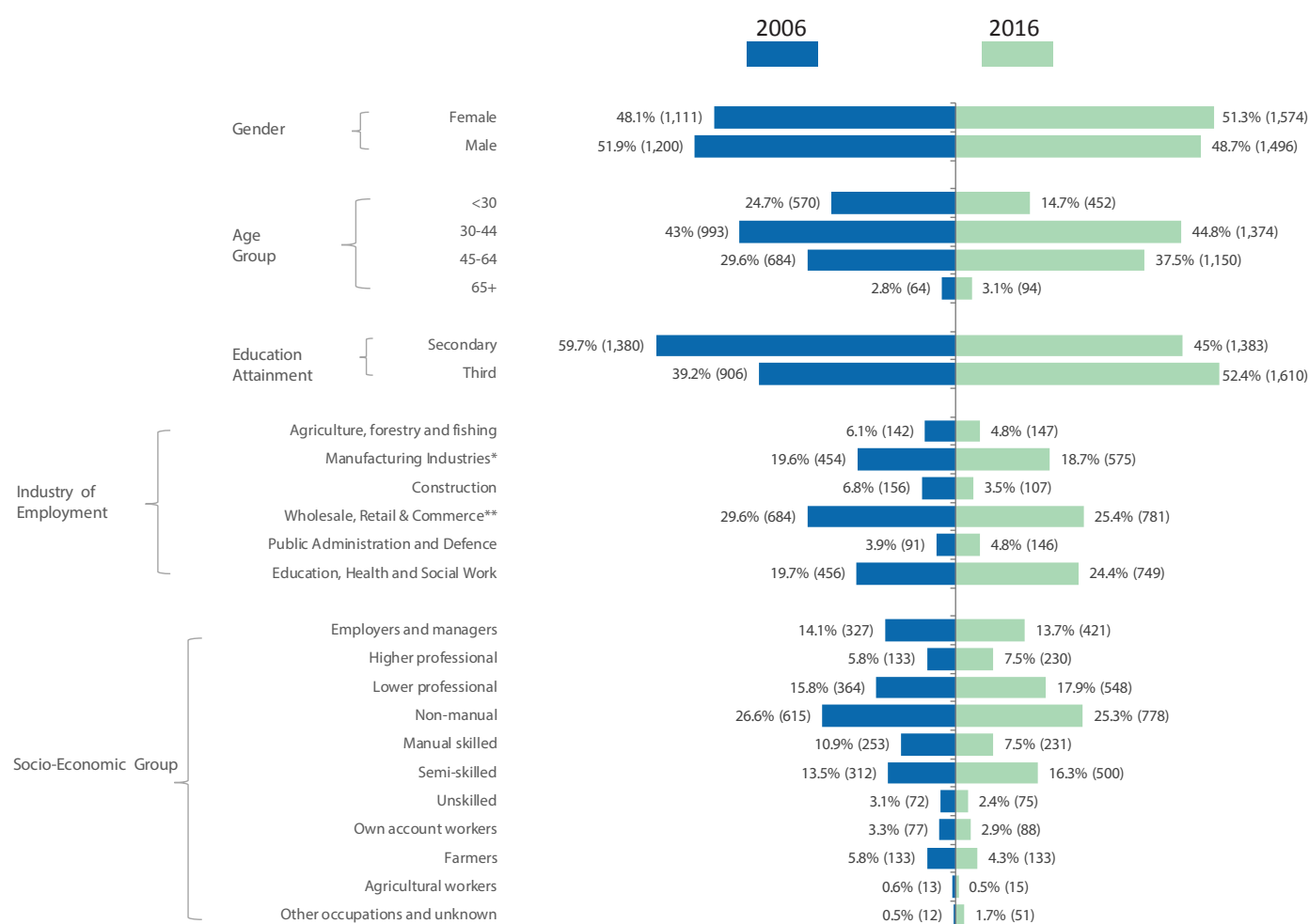
The age profile of those living in the Loughrea labour catchment and working outside Loughrea is as follows: <30 years (275 or 13.3%), 30 to 44 years (991 or 47.8%), 45 to 64 years (753 or 36.3%) and 65 years plus (54 or 2.6%).

An education profile of the Loughrea labour catchment shows the following: Of those working inside Loughrea town, 43.4% (433) have 3rd level qualifications compared to 56.8% (1,177) of those working outside (Figure 2).

Analysis of change between 2006 and 2016

The graphic below details the change that has occurred across the Loughrea 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, a much lower dependence on employment within the Construction sector and increased levels of dependence on both the 'Wholesale, Retail and Commerce' and 'Education, Health and Social Work' sectors.

Figure 3: Analysis of change between 2006 and 2016

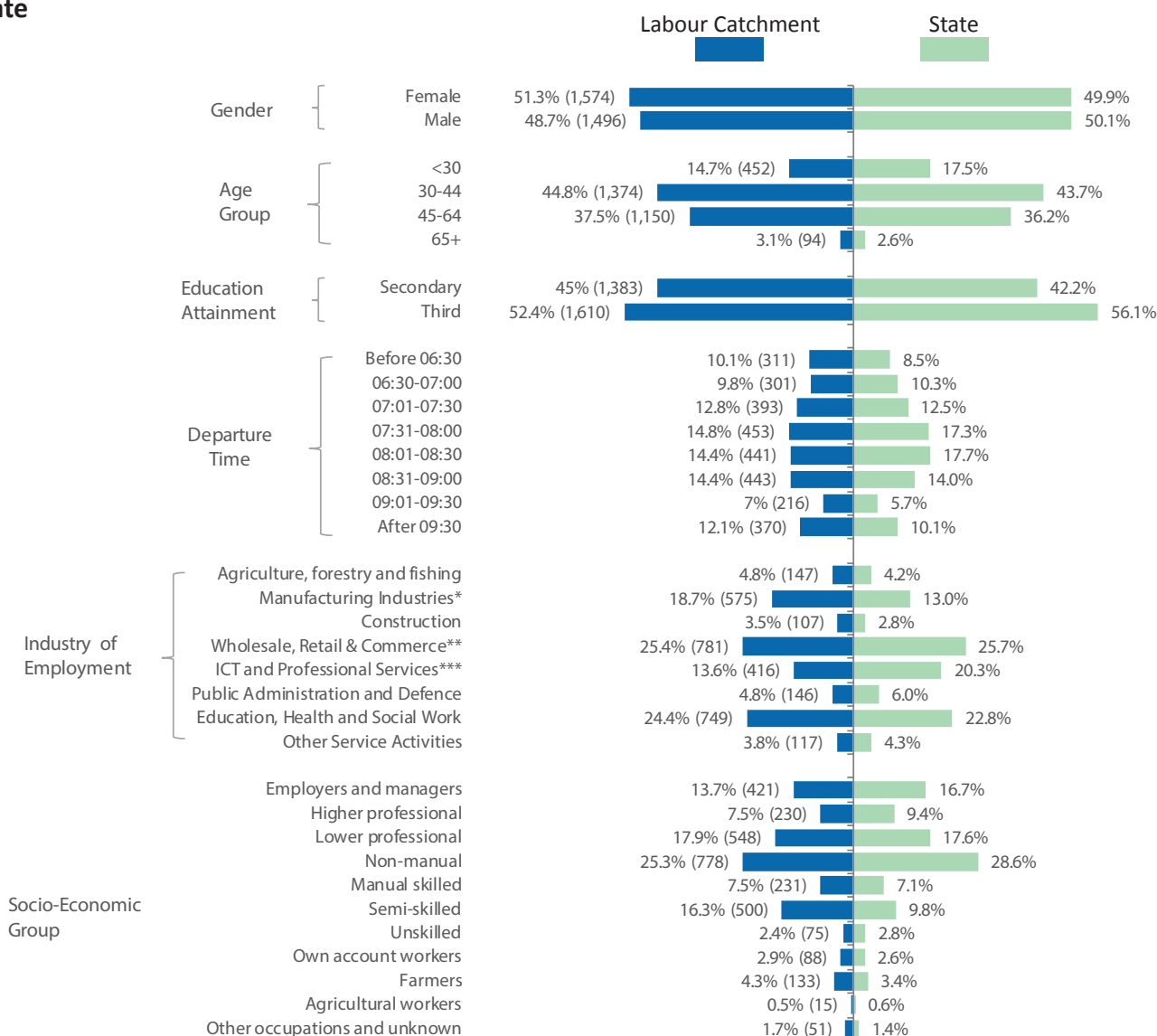


Loughrea Labour Catchment

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

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

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



An age profile of the Loughrea labour catchment details the following: Labour Catchment (Total): <30 years (452 or 14.7%), 30 to 44 years (1,374 or 44.8%), 45 to 64 years (1,150 or 37.5%) and 65 years plus (94 or 3.1%). 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 Loughrea labour catchment shows the following: Those at work and residing in the Loughrea labour catchment recorded a third level attainment rate of 52.4% (1,610). In contrast to this, the national average is 56.1% (Figure 4).

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

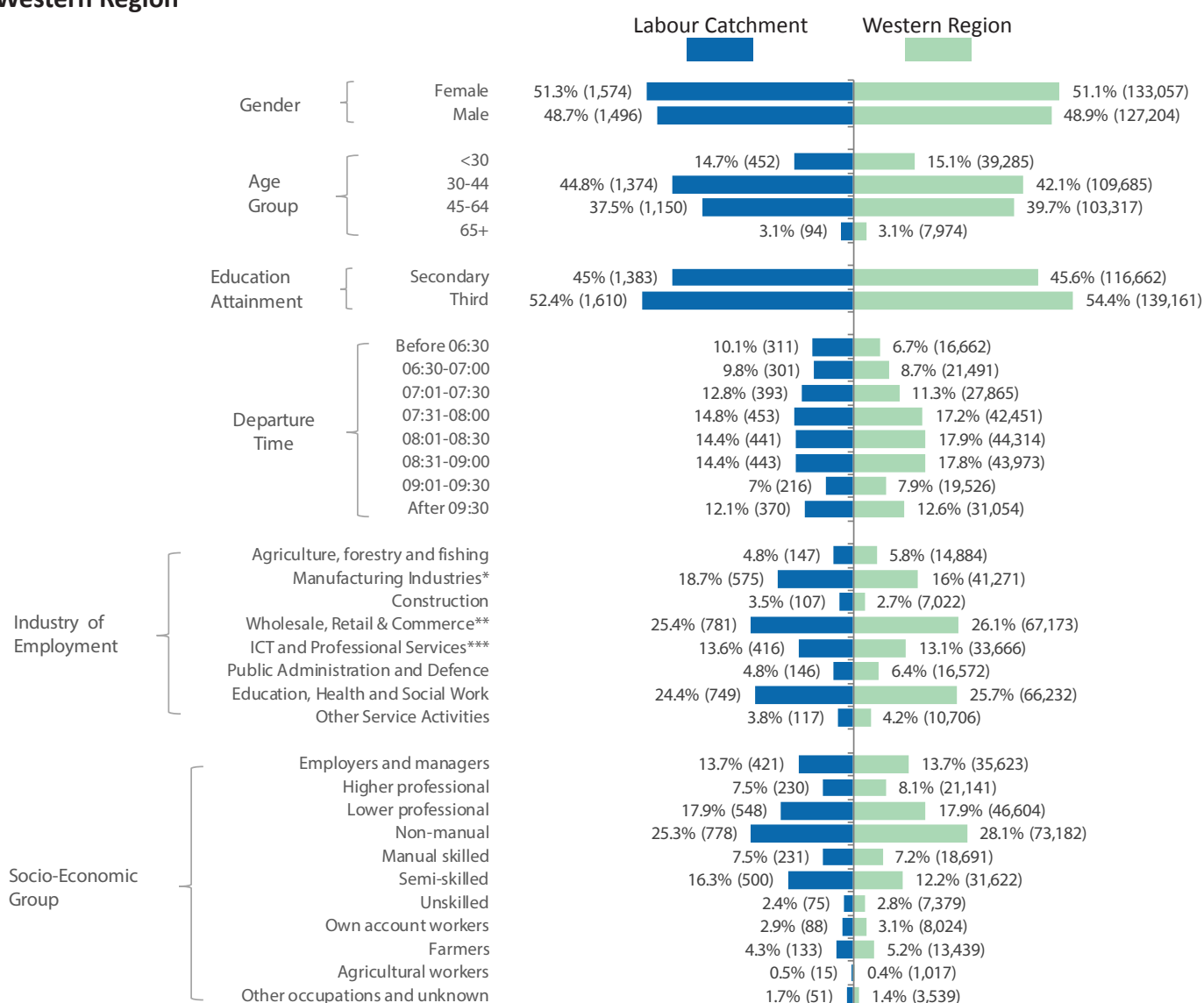
Loughrea Labour Catchment

- The single largest employer is the 'Wholesale, Retail and Commerce' sector and accounts for 25.4% (781) which is higher than the State average (25.7%) (Figure 4).
- Both the 'Education, Human Health and Social Work' (24.4% or 749) and 'Manufacturing Industries' (18.7% or 575) are also important employment sectors with 'Manufacturing Industries' having a higher proportional share than the State average (13%) (Figure 4).
- 'ICT and Professional Services' (13.6% or 416) is the fourth most important sector although much lower than the State average of 20.3% (Figure 4).

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

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

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

Loughrea Labour Catchment

The most notable differences in terms of socio-economic characteristics certainly relate to the education levels amongst resident workers in the Loughrea catchment who have a marginally lower rate of 3rd level education attainment than the Western Region. The Loughrea catchment also has a higher proportion of workers engaged in the 'Manufacturing Industries' and 'Construction' industries. Resident workers in the Loughrea catchment also have a younger age profile than the Western Region average.

Conclusion

Loughrea is one of the 21 labour catchments (of a total of 33) which had an increase in population size in the decade between 2006 and 2016. Loughrea had the fourth highest increase (32.8% or +759). The geographic size of the catchment grew over the period extending further southwards into what was previously the Galway city labour catchment.

Loughrea town itself is the most important employment destination, increasing from 757 workers in 2006 to nearly 1,000 in 2016. Rural parts of county Galway are also important places of work, with only a marginal decline since 2006. The other employment centres such as Galway city, Ballinasloe, Athlone, Gort, Portumna, Dublin city and Athenry and Oranmore have all increased in importance as employment centres for those living in the Loughrea labour catchment.

Manufacturing employment is particularly important for residents in the Loughrea labour catchment. This reflects some of the manufacturing in Galway city, to which residents commute, as well as local manufacturing companies such as Chanelle veterinary pharmaceuticals.

Notes

Western Development Commission
Dillon House, Ballaghaderreen,
Co. Roscommon, Ireland.

Tel: +353 (0) 94 9861441

Fax: +353 (0) 94 9861443

Email: policyanalysis@wdc.ie

Website: www.wdc.ie

Twitter: @WDCInsights

WDC Policy Team Blog:
wdcinsights.wordpress.com

ISBN: 978-0-9576640-3-6

