



Work in the West

**Presentation to Western
Oireachtas Members
04 Feb 2010
Pauline White, Policy Analyst, WDC**

Outline of Presentation

1. Labour Market: Employment & Unemployment
2. Western Region's Top 3 Employment Challenges
 - ▶ *Adjusting to the Decline in Construction*
 - ▶ *Return of the Brain Drain?*
 - ▶ *Delivery of Education & Training*

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Western Development Commission



- ▶ 7-county Western Region (WR)
- ▶ State body under DCRAGA
- ▶ WDC Act 1998
- ▶ *'... foster and promote the economic and social development of the Western Region'*

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4 Work Areas

1. Analysing key **social & economic issues**
2. Promoting benefits of living, working & doing business in West – **LookWest.ie**
3. Supporting sustainable development of **rural economy** – renewable energy, tourism, creative
4. Providing risk capital to SMEs & social enterprises – **WDC Investment Fund**

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WDC Actions on Employment


- ▶ *Travel to Work and Labour Catchments in the Western Region: A profile of seven town labour catchments (Sept 2009)*
- ▶ *Work in the West: The Western Region's Employment & Unemployment Challenge (Dec 2009)*
- ▶ *Engagement with national & regional stakeholders & input to national policy on Recommendations – early 2010*

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Work in the West: The Western Region's Employment & Unemployment Challenge



Work in the West
The Western Region's Employment
& Unemployment Challenge

December 2009

WDC
WESTERN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
COMMISSION DÉVELOPPEMENT OUEST
COMISSÃO DE DESENVOLVIMENTO OESTE

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Guide to Work in the West

- ▶ **Executive Summary & Recommendations**
- ▶ **Chp 1:** Introduction
- ▶ **Chp 2:** Western Region's Labour Market
- ▶ **Chp 3:** Challenges Created by WR's Employment Profile
- ▶ **Chp 4:** Adjusting to the Decline in Construction
- ▶ **Chp 5:** Return of the Brain Drain?
- ▶ **Chp 6:** Delivery of Education & Training
- ▶ **Chp 7:** Positioning the Region for the Future
- ▶ **Annex:** Detailed Analysis of WR Labour Market

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Western Region's Labour Market – Some Positives

(Chp 2 + Annex)

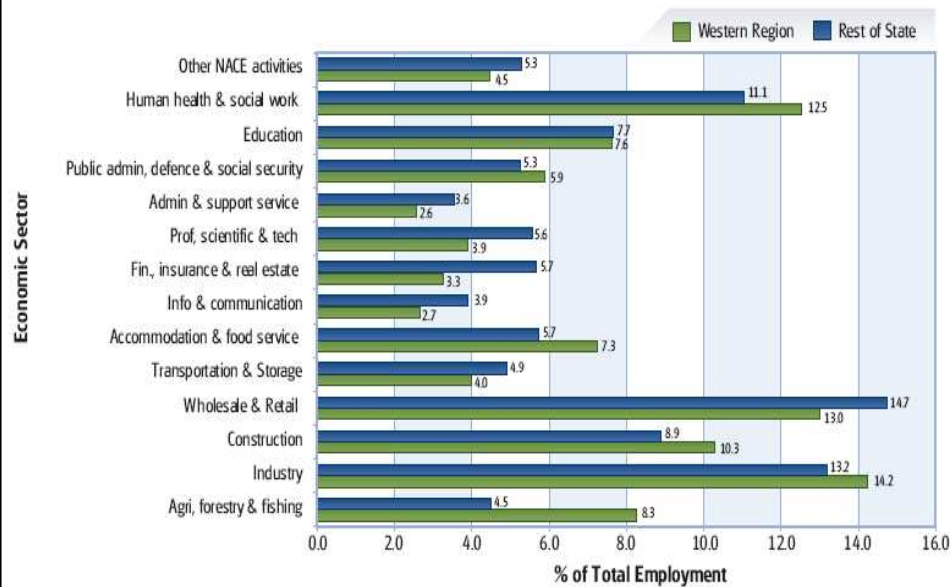
- ▶ +8% in Western Region **population** (2002-06)
- ▶ High inward **migration**
- ▶ +26% in numbers **at work** (2000-09)
- ▶ Percentage of workforce with **3rd level** – 19% to 28% (2002-08)
- ▶ Percentage of new **graduates** from Western Region finding first job in region – 40% to 47% (2002-07)

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Fig 2: Share of employment in the Western Region and rest of state by industrial sector, Q1 2009



Source: CSO, Quarterly National Household Survey, Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) 2009, special data run for the WDC

Western Region's Current Employment Profile

(Chp 2 + 3 + Annex)

▶ Top employment sectors 2009

- ▶ Public Sector (26%)
- ▶ Industry (14%)
- ▶ Wholesale & Retail (13%)
- ▶ Construction (10%)
- ▶ Agriculture (8%)

▶ Sectors WR has **lower share** (knowledge sectors)

- ▶ Professional, scientific & technical (4%)
- ▶ Financial, insurance & real estate (3%)
- ▶ Info & communications (3%)

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Region's Current Employment Profile

(Chp 2 + 3 + Annex)

▶ Gender patterns

- ▶ 32% of **men** in construction + agriculture
- ▶ 43% of **women** in public sector (education, health, public admin)

▶ Assisted Employment

- ▶ 50,934 in assisted employment (-7% from 2000)
- ▶ High share **medical devices**; Low in **financial & international services**
- ▶ High churn in employment – **sectors**
- ▶ Different **locations** – urban v rural

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Live Register (Chp 2 + Annex)

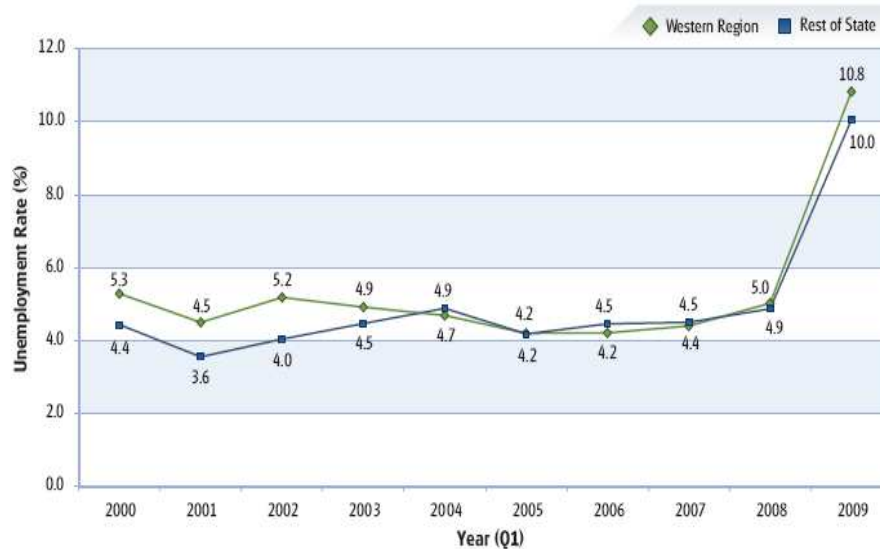
County	Live Register (Dec 2009)	% change (Dec 08-09)
Donegal	20,748	+36%
Sligo	4,992	+41%
Leitrim	3,600	+44%
Roscommon	3,820	+42%
Mayo	12,736	+45%
Galway	22,722	+38%
Clare	10,404	+39%
Western Region	79,022	+39%

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Fig 9: Unemployment rate in the Western Region and rest of state, 2000-2009



Source: CSO, Quarterly National Household Survey, Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) 2009, special data run for the WDC

Challenge 1: Adjusting to the Decline in Construction

(Chp 4)

- ▶ 2007 – **1 in 4 men** in Western Region worked in construction
- ▶ **16,400 jobs lost** in Region in 2yrs
- ▶ Higher dependence in Region, esp **rural economy**
- ▶ Lower **education levels among men**
- ▶ Loss of apprenticeships, alternative training?
- ▶ Viability of farming/ rural economy
- ▶ Options for professionals – further education, own business, emigration?

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Challenge 2: Return of the Brain Drain?

(Chp 5)

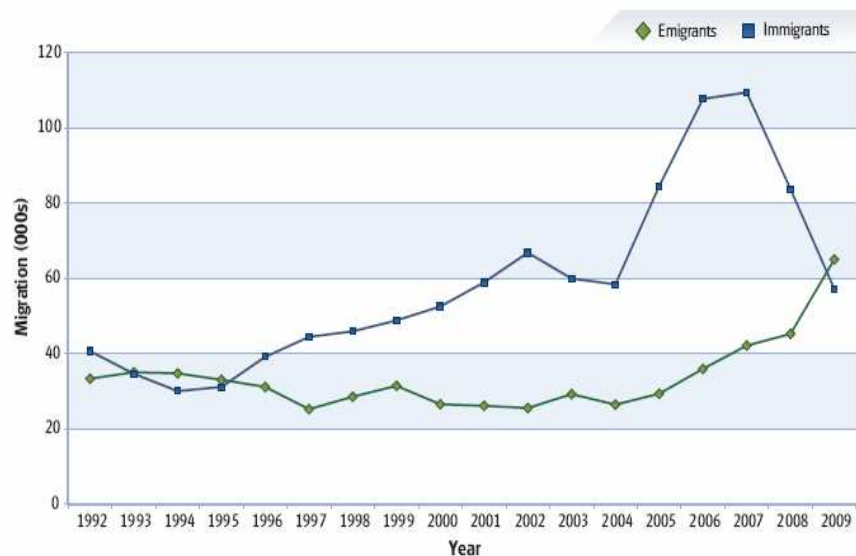
- ▶ Major improvement in Western Region's **human resource** – inward migration, education, pop. growth
- ▶ Return to **large scale emigration?**
- ▶ 2009 first net emigration since 1995
- ▶ Loss of human resource – professionals, graduates
- ▶ **Capacity for economic recovery** undermined – access to labour pool

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Fig 5.2: Estimated population migration to and from Ireland, 1992-2009



Source: CSO (2009), Population and Migration Estimates

Challenge 3: Delivery of Education & Training (Chp 6)

- ▶ Up-skilling & re-skilling key challenge
- ▶ New unemployed mainly **lower skilled**
- ▶ **Re-training construction workers** (young men, p/t farmers)
- ▶ Delivery to **rural residents** is a challenge, but IT options (distance education, broadband?)
- ▶ Growth areas must be focus of skills re-training – regional approach

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Positioning the Region for the Future (Chp 7)

- ▶ Lower share in financial & international services, high-tech manufacturing
- ▶ 'Smart Economy' focus on sectors where WR currently weak
- ▶ Role of rural areas? City focus?
- ▶ Enterprise support
- ▶ Research & innovation capacity
- ▶ Infrastructure capacity (broadband; road, rail, air access; energy)

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Future Growth Areas for WR (Chp 7)

- ▶ Medical devices
- ▶ Software, Financial & International services
- ▶ Creative sector
- ▶ Green economy (renewable energy, energy efficiency)
- ▶ Caring sector
- ▶ Food
- ▶ Tourism
- ▶ Marine

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Recommendations: General

1. National economic strategy to encourage growth in smaller centres & rural areas
2. Investment in critical infrastructure needed – transport, broadband, energy
3. Initiatives (jobs, training, business supports) to retain skilled people in the region

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Education & Training

4. Revise education & training system to meet needs of job seekers & employed
5. Framework for local flexibility & joint actions
6. Targeted strategies for workers with lower education
7. Coherent strategy to re-skill construction workers
8. Programme for young men in rural areas unemployed from construction
9. Expand distance education to meet rural needs & broadband availability & capacity

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Job Creation

10. Identify & target priority growth areas for WR
11. Strategy for green economy inc. re-training construction workers & investment in RE
12. Best practice in elder care, inc. training
13. Enterprise support for locally-trading micro-enterprises in rural areas
14. Support for process innovation as well as product innovation esp. in regions with weak innovation capacity

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Discussion

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