

# Travel to Work and Labour Catchments in the Western Region

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

## **Swinford**

The Swinford settlement had a population of 1,394 persons recorded in the 2016 Census. Swinford is the 43rd largest settlement within the Western Region and the 217th largest in the State. Since 2006, the population residing within the town of Swinford has decreased by -7.2% (-108). In the five years since Census 2011, the population of the town has decreased by -2.9% (-41). 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 Swinford.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.wdc.ie/publications/reports-and-papers/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://wdcinsights.wordpress.com/2017/06/22/regional-towns-growth-or-decline-can-we-tell/>

## **Swinford 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 Swinford 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 above).

According to POWCAR 2016, the total number of jobs located within Swinford was 926 and accounts for 0.4% 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 Swinford in April 2016. We do this because although some may not be working in Swinford they are living in the catchment from which the Swinford labour supply is drawn and including them provides a more complete assessment of the potential labour supply for Swinford. The Swinford 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 Swinford catchment or locations such as Castlebar, Ballina or Sligo 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 Swinford compared to the Western Region.

### **Profile of the Swinford Labour Catchment**

The Swinford labour catchment is the 37th largest labour catchment in the Western Region with a resident 'at work' population of 1,118 which accounts for 0.4% of the total resident 'at work' population within the Western Region (260,261).

The Swinford labour catchment covers a small area in east Mayo (See Map 1 and 2). In 2016, there were 1,118 people classified as at work and living within the labour catchment. This figure is 181.6% more than the resident 'at work' population within the town boundary (397). The 2016 total is 3% higher than the 2006 total of 1,085.

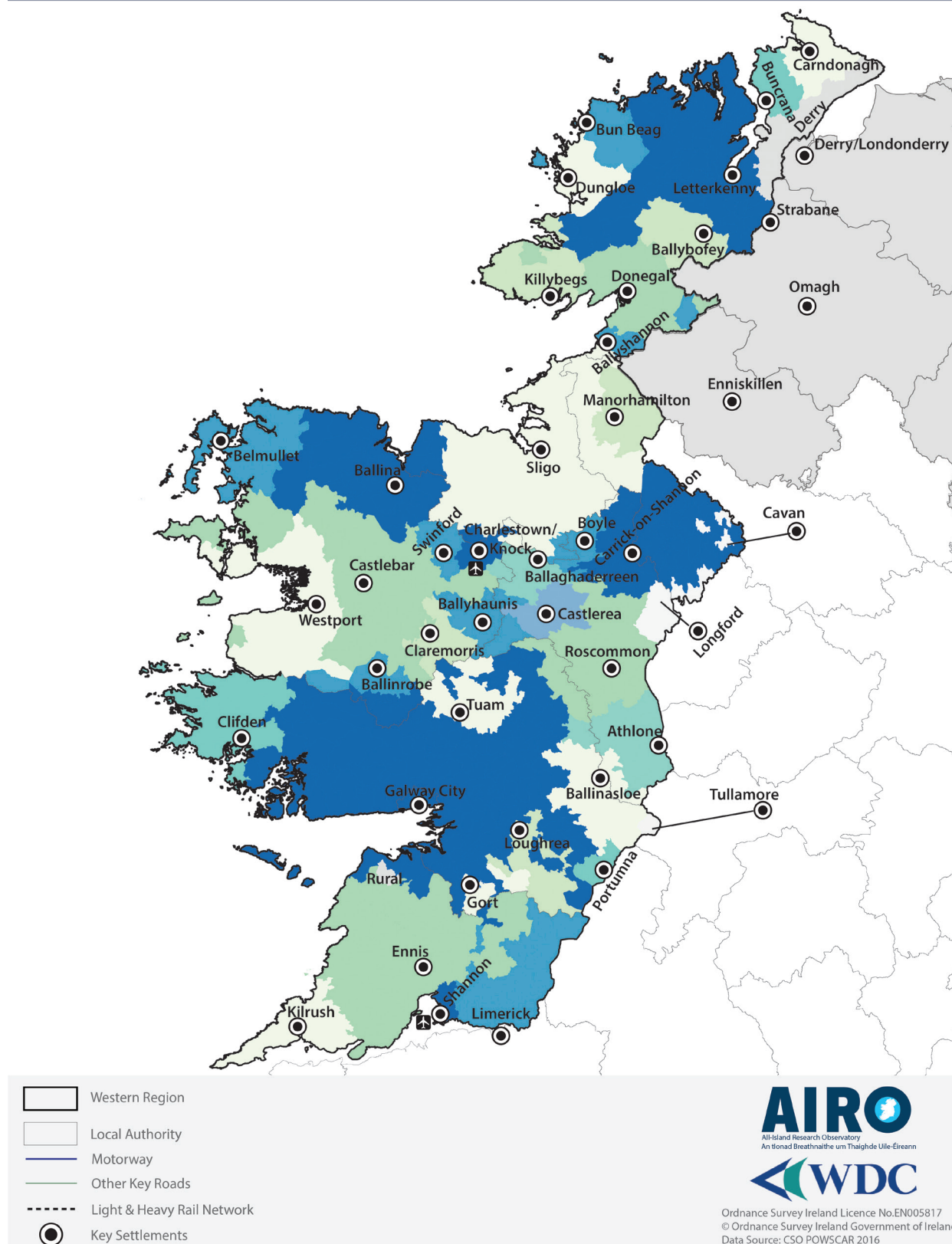
The Swinford labour catchment is constrained by Castlebar to the south-west, Ballina to the north-west, Sligo to the north and Charlestown/Knock to the east. These towns are themselves the most important places for employment for those living in their immediate hinterlands, and therefore constitute separate and quite large labour catchments within the county boundaries of Mayo and Sligo.

## Swinford 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)



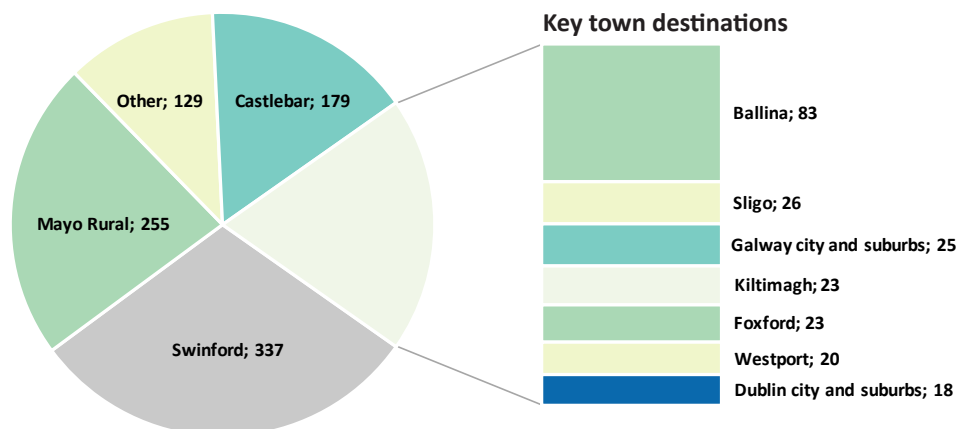
## Swinford Labour Catchment

Map 2: Swinford Labour Catchment, 2016 (WDC &amp; CSO POWCAR)



Of those living in the Swinford labour catchment (total = 1,118), 30.1% (337) are employed within Swinford town and 69.9% (781) are employed outside the town. Key destinations outside the town are Mayo Rural (22.8% or 255), Castlebar (16% or 179) and Ballina (7.4% or 83) – see Figure 1<sup>3</sup> for more details.

Figure 1: Place of work of those living in the Swinford 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 Swinford labour catchment. The characteristics of resident workers in the Swinford labour catchment who are employed in the town of Swinford are compared with those working elsewhere. Following this, there is a comparison between the Swinford labour catchment in 2006 and 2016. Finally, there is comparison between the Swinford labour catchment and the State, and the Swinford 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., Mayo Rural, Sligo Rural, Galway Rural. In the graphic above, 'Other' refer to all other employment destinations (settlements) of those living in the labour catchment.

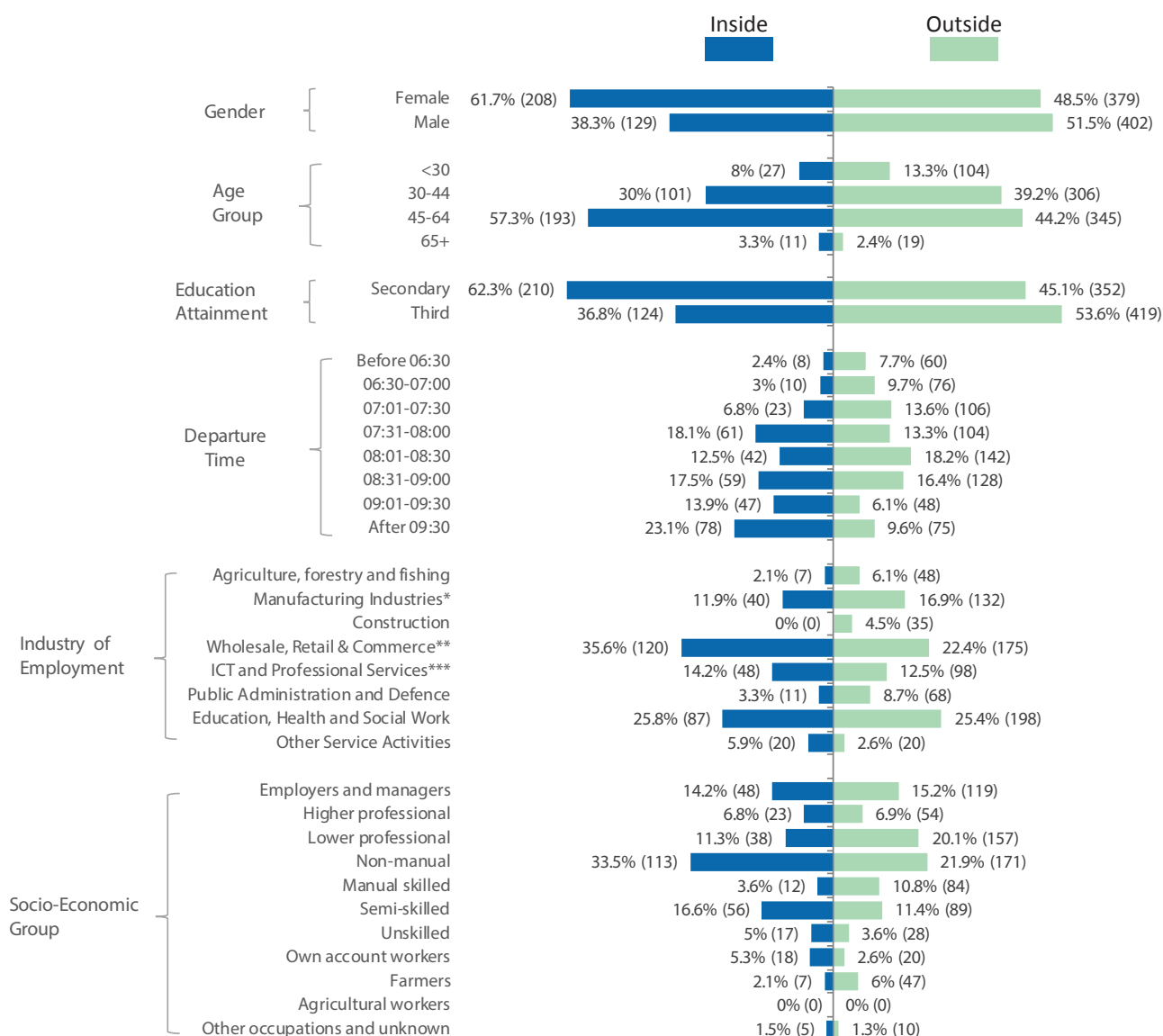


## Swinford Labour Catchment

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

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



Within the Swinford labour catchment, female workers account for 52.5% and male workers account for 47.5%, see Figure 3. Of those working inside Swinford, 61.7% are females whereas 48.5% of those working outside Swinford 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 Swinford labour catchment and working inside Swinford is as follows: <30 years (27 or 8%), 30 to 44 years (101 or 30%), 45 to 64 years (193 or 57.3%) and 65 years plus (11 or 3.3%).

## Swinford Labour Catchment

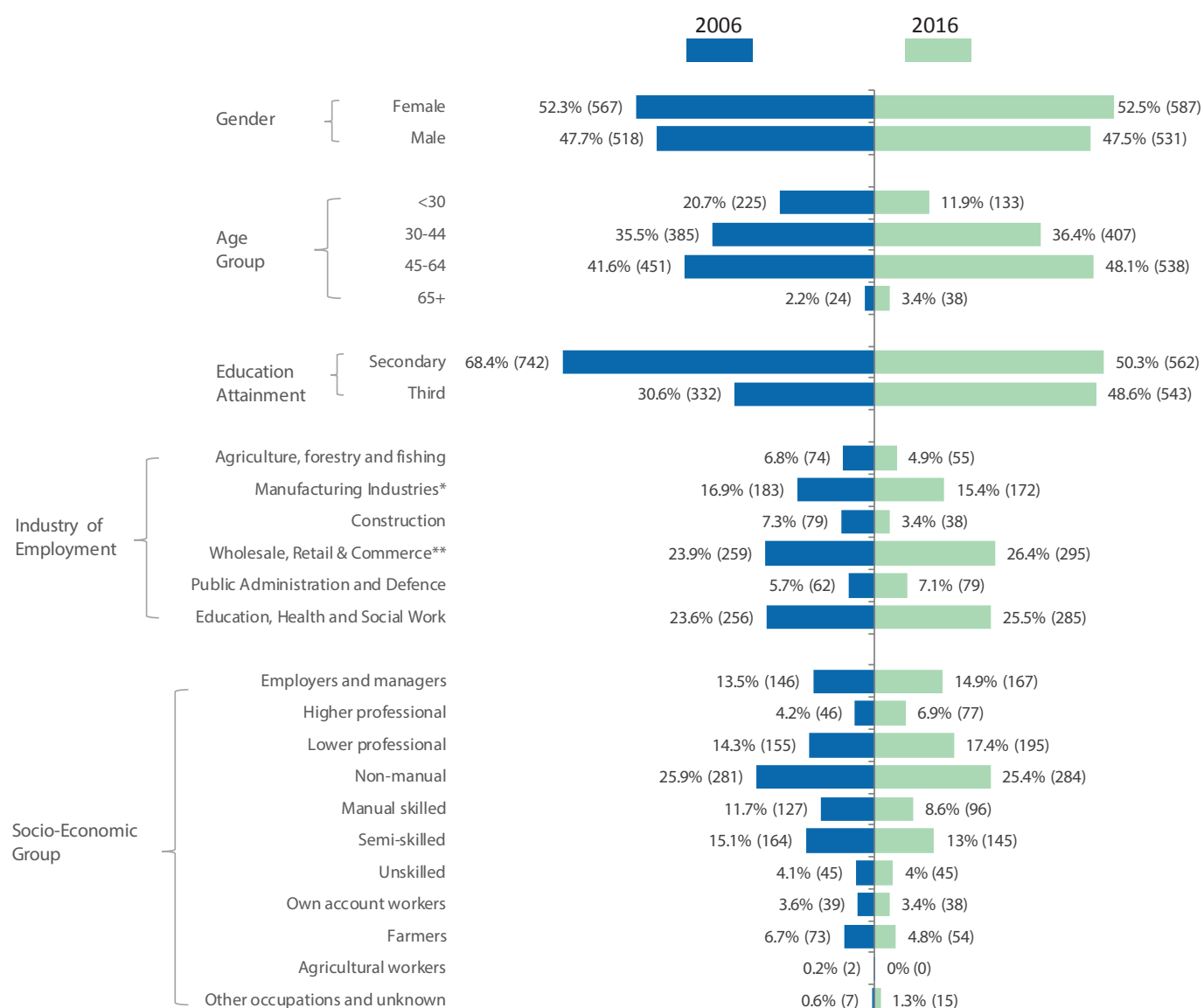
The age profile of those living in the Swinford labour catchment and working outside Swinford is as follows: <30 years (104 or 13.3%), 30 to 44 years (306 or 39.2%), 45 to 64 years (345 or 44.2%) and 65 years plus (19 or 2.4%).

An education profile of the Swinford labour catchment shows the following: Of those working inside Swinford town, 36.8% (124) have 3rd level qualifications compared to 53.6% (419) of those working outside (Figure 2).

### Analysis of change between 2006 and 2016

The graphic below details the change that has occurred across the Swinford 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.

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



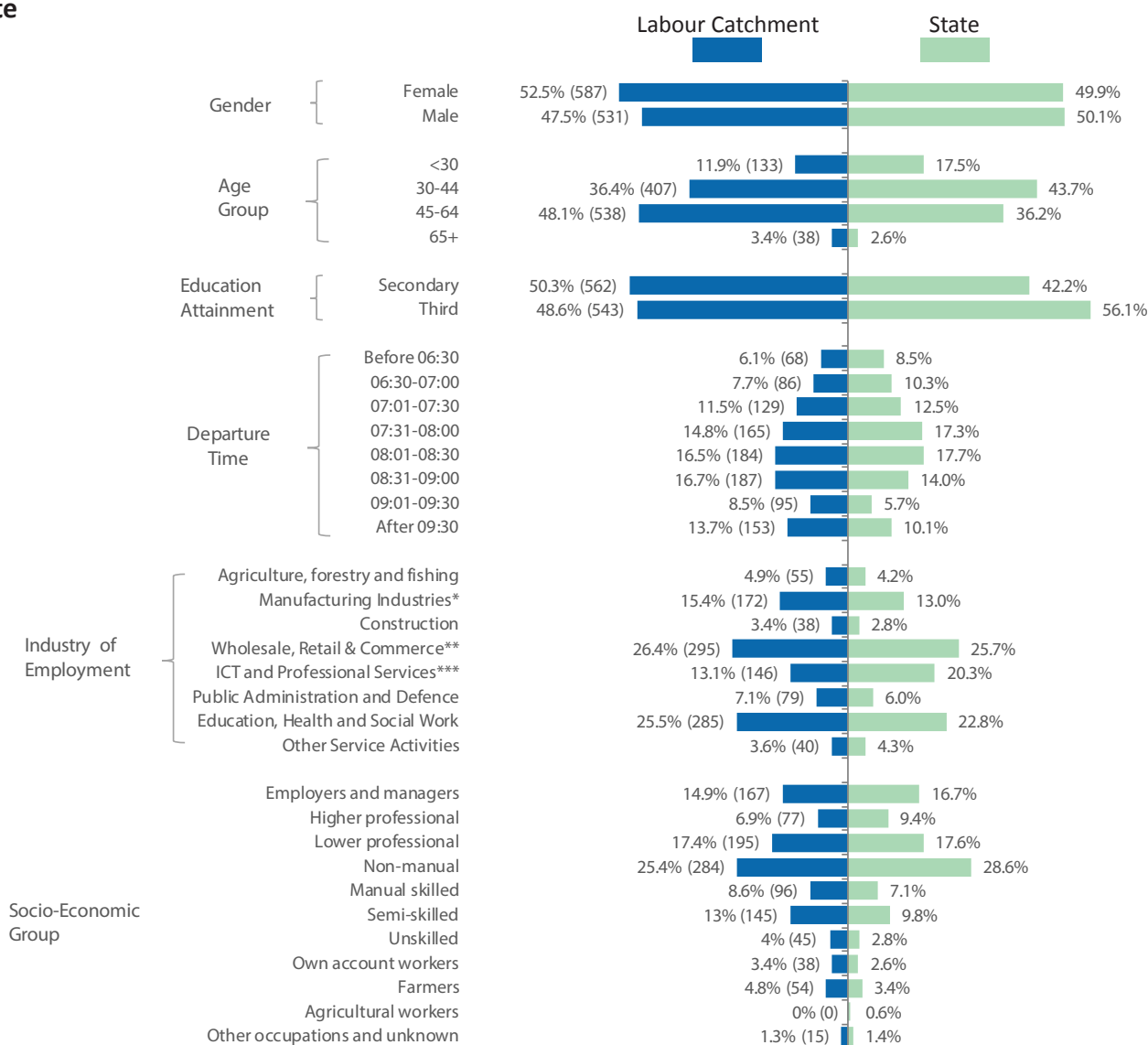


## Swinford Labour Catchment

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

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

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



An age profile of the Swinford labour catchment details the following: Labour Catchment (Total): <30 years (133 or 11.9%), 30 to 44 years (407 or 36.4%), 45 to 64 years (538 or 48.1%) and 65 years plus (38 or 3.4%). 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 Swinford labour catchment shows the following: Those at work and residing in the Swinford labour catchment recorded a third level attainment rate of 48.6% (543). In contrast to this, the national average is 56.1% (Figure 4).

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

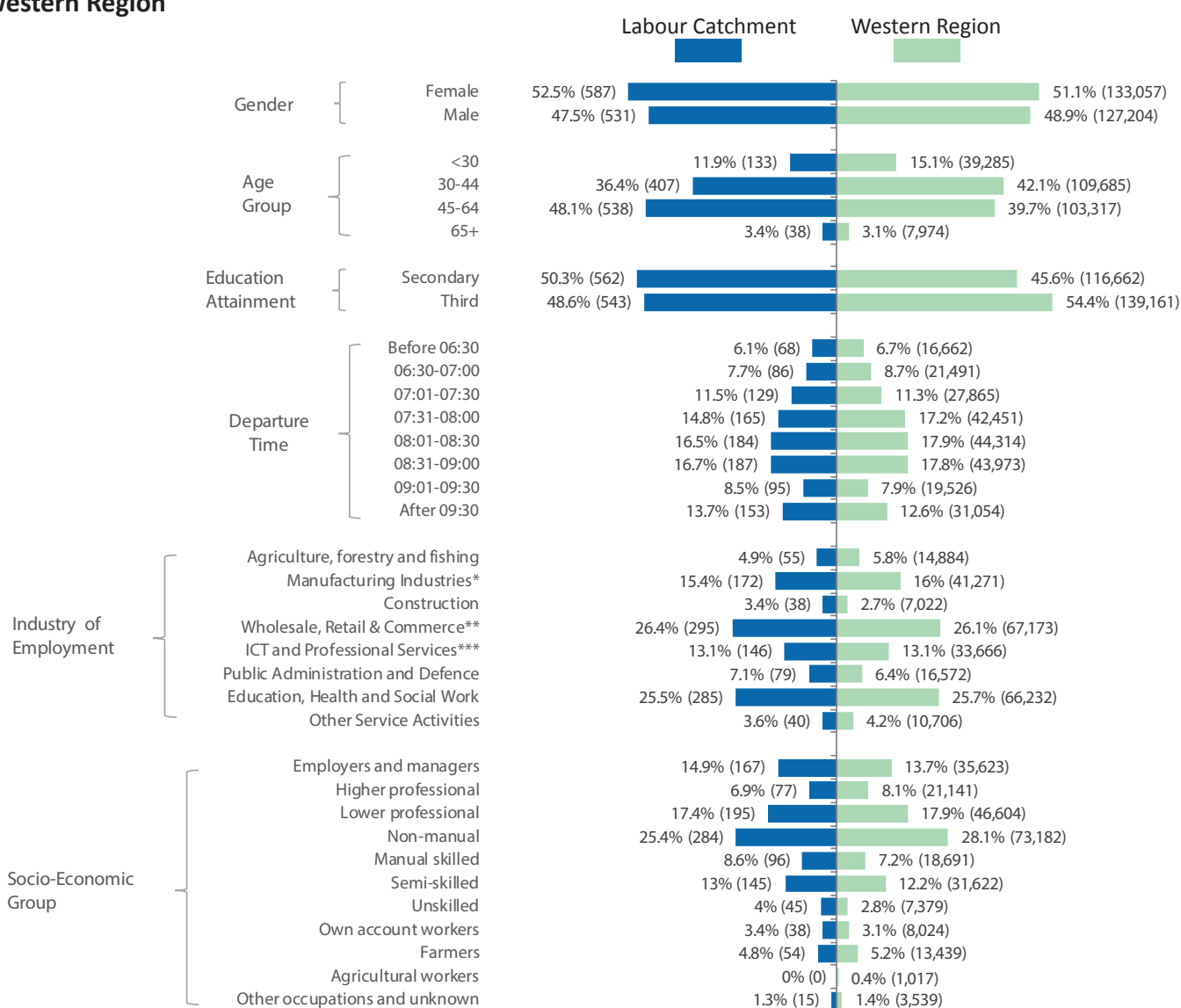
## Swinford Labour Catchment

- The single largest employer is the 'Wholesale, Retail and Commerce' sector and accounts for 26.4% (295) which is marginally higher than the State average (25.7%) (Figure 4).
- The 'Education, Human Health and Social Work' (25.5% or 285) is the second most important employment sector with a higher proportional share than the State average (22.8%) (Figure 4).
- 'Manufacturing Industries' (15.4% or 172) and 'ICT and Professional Services' (13.1% or 146) are the third and fourth most important sectors (Figure 4).

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

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

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

## **Swinford Labour Catchment**

The most notable differences in terms of socio-economic characteristics certainly relate to the education levels amongst resident workers in the Swinford catchment who have a lower rate of 3rd level education attainment than the Western Region. The Swinford catchment industrial profile is very similar to the Western Region with only marginally higher rates in the 'Construction' and 'Public Administration and Defence' sectors. Resident workers in the Swinford catchment also have an older age profile than the Western Region average, in particular the 45-64 year age cohort.

### **Conclusion**

Swinford 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, an additional 3% higher (+33 persons). The Swinford labour catchment increased slightly to the north east, an area previously assigned to the Castlebar labour catchment.

Swinford itself is the most important place of employment, followed by Rural parts of Co. Mayo. Castlebar and Ballina are the next most important places of work and the numbers employed in these centres have not changed much since 2006. Castlebar is much more significant, possibly reflecting the relative ease of accessibility as well as job opportunities there. The centres of Foxford, Westport and Dublin city and suburbs though relatively small, have all increased in significance as places of employment.

The Swinford labour catchment industrial profile is very similar to the Western Region average with the most significant employment sectors being Wholesale, Retail and Commerce followed by Education, Health and Social Work.

## Notes

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