

Going West: Development and regeneration in the western region

March 9th 2017

Ian Brannigan

CEO (Acting)

Western Development Commission (WDC)



The Western Development Commission

Serving a confident and ambitious Western Region where excellence, innovation and creativity are rewarded, and the rich quality of life, clean environment and unique heritage are valued and safeguarded.

Our Vision

To be the hub for the strategic economic and social development of the Western Region.

Counties in the Western Region

There are seven counties in the Western Region: [Donegal](#), [Sligo](#), [Leitrim](#), [Roscommon](#), [Mayo](#), [Galway](#) and [Clare](#).

The WDC operates under the aegis of DAHRRGA and its remit is to promote, foster and encourage economic and social development in the Western Region



WDC impact on western region

WDC - Regional Development for Regional Business

JOBS

5000 Regional Jobs supported (Direct & Indirect) by WDC



5K

DIRECT + INDIRECT

INVESTMENT

€12.4 M invested in region 2014-16

€12.4 M

For Regional Business

SME ENGAGEMENT

Currently WDC engaged with and supporting >500 regional businesses



MARKETS



PRODUCT
DEVELOPMENT



FINANCE

> **500** REGIONAL
BUSINESSES

WDC - A unique capacity for Western Region

The WDC Organisation

Strategic DEVELOPMENT capacity for region



Growing regional employment and enterprise in the regional economy. E.g. Bio-economy, Creative economy, Niche Tourism etc.



BIO-ECONOMY



**CREATIVE
ECONOMY**



**NICHE
TOURISM**

The WDC Organisation

EU PROJECTS Capacity for region



EU programme implementation capacity for region established

Involving the region in EU growth programs totalling €11M in value (currently employing a team of 3)

€11M



BIO-ECONOMY



CREATIVE
ECONOMY



TOURISM
ECONOMY



SME
SECTOR



The WDC Organisation

Access to Finance for the region



134

BUSINESSES SUPPORTED



€48 M

DISBURSED



€207 M

Leveraged for enterprises



imagination at work

CROSPON™



For the WDC Organisation

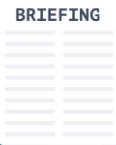
POLICY TEAM



Evolved capacity to analyse and inform on regional dynamics e.g. via the WDC Insights Blogs and Briefing initiative (e.g. Population and workforce analysis), submissions for region on national policy priorities (e.g. Broadband, Rail freight, Energy etc.)



INSIGHTS BLOG



POLICY
BRIEFING



The WDC Organisation



REGIONAL PROMOTION - A proven capacity for region

WWW.Lookwest.ie platform engaged with and accessed by ever increasing numbers. Over a million visits to date and almost 20K citizens engaged via regional social media. National Egov. Award winners 2016.


20K
CITIZENS



LookWest.ie



LookWest.ie: The online guide to Business, Work and Life in the West of Ireland

[About LookWest.ie](#)[Contact Us](#)[Media Credits](#)

Social

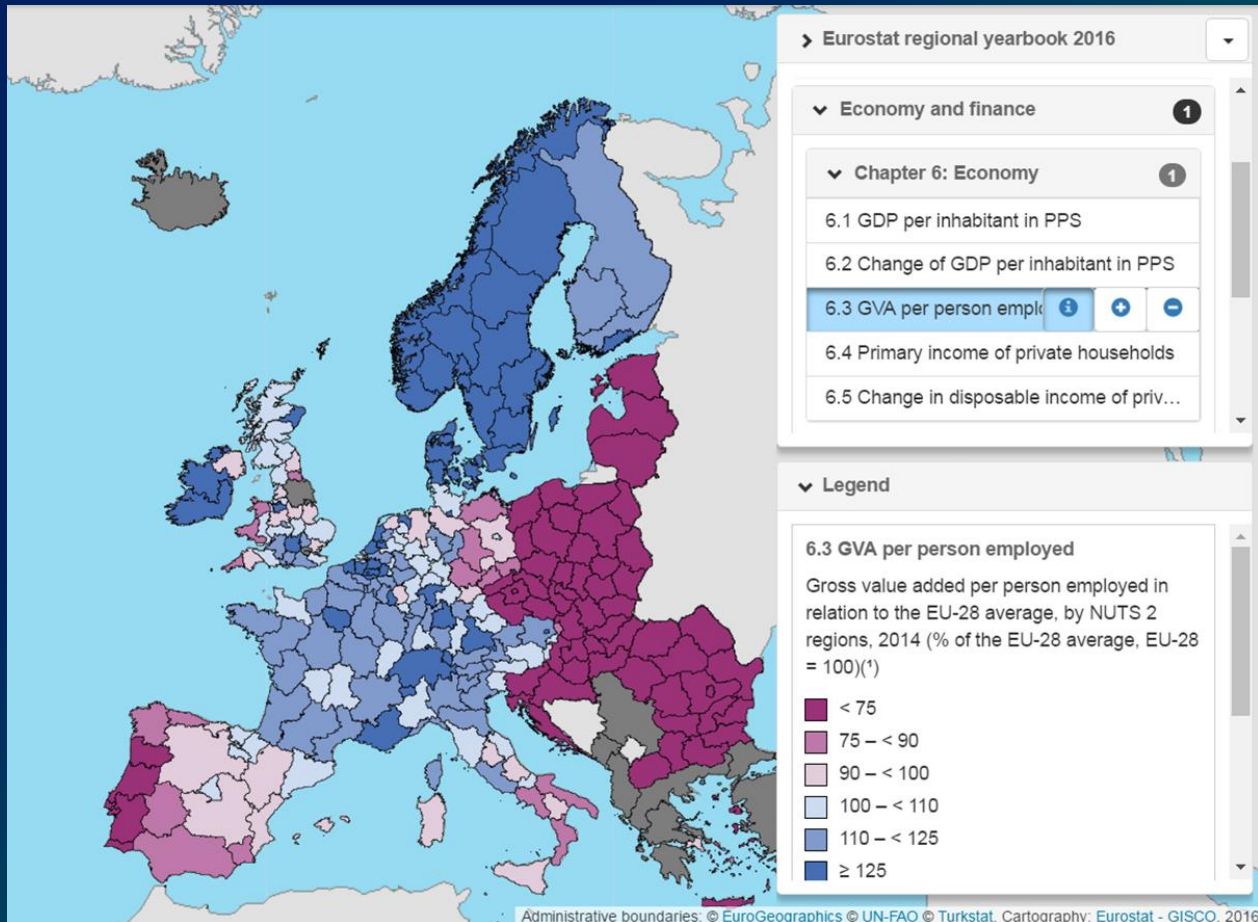
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Western region key points

Western region- Internationally competitive !



West of Ireland well positioned against benchmark regions
- Wales / NI / Highlands etc.

Established and Emerging clusters

"Pramerica Systems Ireland—the largest employer in northwestern Ireland—attributes its success to the talent and commitment of its employees and the quality of the technology services we provide".

Caroline Faulkner, Senior Managing Director and Chief Information Officer Pramerica Systems Ireland.



It takes an extraordinary place to offer a skilled talent pool, excellent quality of life, good infrastructure and accessibility all in one region. The seven counties of Ireland's West offer companies a great place to do business.

Med Tech & Pharma in the West

Already a home to so many household names in the Med Tech and Pharma sectors...



Allergan's Botox is produced mainly in Westport, Co Mayo

Creative Sector in the West



Station House Media

EDEL MacBRIDE

Pat Gillen
Artist/Sculptor/Painter



The Mood Designs
ceramics
Handcrafted in Ireland



studio c
jewellery, art & craft
classes, workshops & parties

gnosh

willow design & publishing
Irish made greeting cards

Martina Hamilton
COLLECTION

IRISHTV
LOCAL STORIES - GLOBAL AUDIENCE

ARO
DIGITAL STRATEGY

Loch Bó Films

DONEGAL TV



Quality of Life

"The West of Ireland provides us with the talent, infrastructure and quality of life that makes our operation a key player in the worldwide Coca-Cola Business System."

John McGowan General Manager, Ballina Beverages



It takes an extraordinary place to offer a skilled talent pool, excellent quality of life, good infrastructure and accessibility all in one region. The seven counties of Ireland's West offer companies a great place to do business.

The Western Region in Numbers



Quality of Life

It all adds up to real potential



1/3 of our Population under 25 (youngest population in the EU)



2/5 3rd level educated (highest rate in western world)



Direct access to EU and US Markets
2 International Airports
+ 3 Ports



Internationally recognised business location



Low cost of Living
High Quality of Life

More than just a wonderful place to invest

From stunning natural beauty, a rich culture and heritage, wonderful festivals, superb sporting facilities and more, we have it all. And when you add in the warm welcome that you'll get, you'll know that the West is more than just a great place to invest.



And it's not just us that say that....

Galway City Europe's Micro City of the Year 2014
FINANCIAL TIMES

5 of top 10 places to visit in Ireland are in the West
HUFFINGTON POST

4 of Top 10 places to visit in Ireland are in the West of Ireland
LONELY PLANET

Westport, Co Mayo voted Best Place to Live 2012
IRISH TIMES

Loop Head, Co Clare voted Best Place to Holiday in Ireland 2013
IRISH TIMES

Erris, Co Mayo voted Best Place to go wild in Ireland 2012
IRISH TIMES

Westport Best Retail Town
RETAIL EXCELLENCE

Human Capital

"One of the key benefits the West of Ireland has to offer is the availability of a skilled and talented workforce."

Conor Murphy, Site Director, Abbott Laboratories



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World-Class Institutions



15,000
Students



8,000
Students



6,000
Students



3,300
Students

One of 'Top 200 Worldwide Universities'



Research Centres





'The Best Place to Live in Ireland' - Westport, Co Mayo

The Irish Times

Unique Communities

LookWest and you will find an amazing place to live and spend your quality time. There are seven counties to explore including Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, Galway and Clare.



Patrick Keeney, Green Golf Travel in Donegal

We speak with Donegal-based Patrick Keeney who set-up golf travel...

January 31, 2017



Case Study: Ciaran Byrne, Martha Kearns, StoryLab Content and PR Agency, Sligo

In our latest case study, we speak to Ciaran Byrne and Martha...

August 31, 2016



Louise Kilbane, Managing Director of Lollipop Lane Creche, Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo

Louise Kilbane is Managing Director of Lollipop Lane Creche Montessori...

July 31, 2016



Mary Rodgers, The Portershed Co-Working Space

Mary Rodgers is the Innovation Community Manager at The PorterShed...

June 27, 2016



Catherine Devlin - Wild Atlantic Way



Tommy Griffith - PEL Waste Reduction



Barry O'Sullivan and Joe Smyth - Altocloud



Maire McKeogh - Sealed with Irish Love

POPULATION IN THE REGION¹

	POPULATION 2016	CHANGE 2011-2016
WESTERN REGION	828,124	+0.9% ▲▼

STATE	4,757,976	+3.7% ▲▼
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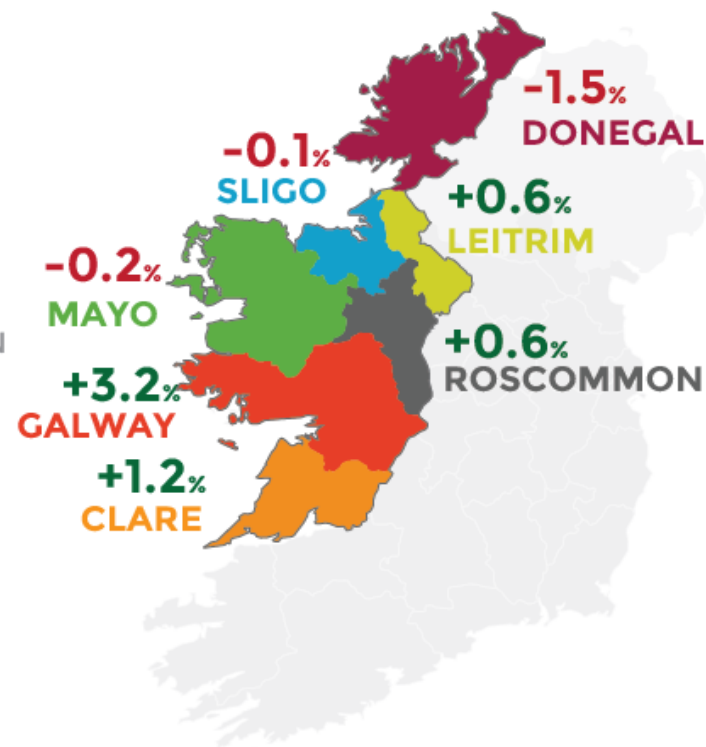
HOUSING ²	VACANCY RATE
20%	22%

OF STATE HOUSING STOCK



17%
OF STATE POPULATION

LAND MASS³
37%
OF STATE



THE WESTERN REGION HAS

EMPLOYMENT⁴
17%
OF PEOPLE AT WORK IN IRELAND

UNEMPLOYMENT⁵
18%
OF UNEMPLOYED IN THE STATE

SELF EMPLOYED⁶
23%
OF PEOPLE AT WORK IN THE REGION

ENTERPRISES⁷
16%
OF ACTIVE ENTERPRISES IN THE STATE

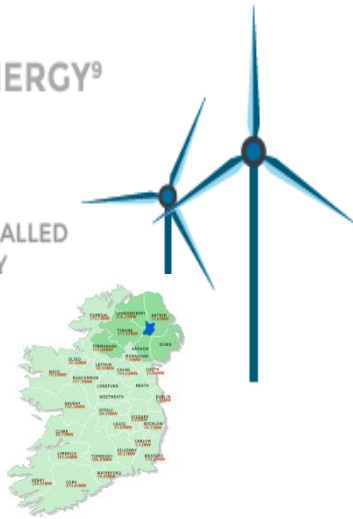
INCOME⁸
92%
OF STATE AVERAGE PER PERSON DISPOSABLE INCOME



WIND ENERGY⁹

28%

OF IRISH INSTALLED
WIND ENERGY
CAPACITY



BROADBAND¹⁰

34%

OF NATIONAL
BROADBAND PLAN
AREA PREMISES



TOURISM¹¹

28%

OF IRELAND'S
REVENUE FROM
OVERSEAS
TOURISTS



VEHICLES¹²

15%

NEW CARS
LICENSED FIRST
TIME IN 2015



RAIL FREIGHT¹³

3/4

OF SERVICES START
OR END IN THE
WESTERN REGION



REPLACING

9,000

ROAD JOURNEYS
PER ANNUM SAVING
2,300 TONNES IN
CARBON EMISSIONS



Western region Summary

- WHAT IS -
- West of Ireland Region offers key competitive advantages - many global (Human Capital, Quality of Life, Relative cost base, Global location, Natural resources)
- West region already choice for significant clusters - Med Tech, Life-science, Tourism
- Emerging sectors on global stage apparent- Marine, Renewable Energy, Creative economy ,
- WHAT COULD BE -
- OECD recommends investment on competitive advantage for Regions
- Quality of life premium in region will be greatly sought after in coming years
- Critical current infrastructure investment gaps for region should not become “embedded”
- Total solution approach to NPF could be considered - Socio-economic implementation capacity for region should be aligned with spatial investment

THANK YOU

History and purpose of the WDC

The WDC was set up in 1998 in the Western counties (Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, Galway and Clare). The recognition that political will and focused attention would increase national economic growth to the benefit of all our citizens. The general functions of the WDC are set out in the Western Development Commission Act 1998 as being:

The WDC – a capability for the region

to promote, foster and encourage economic and social development in the Western Region

The WDC has developed a way of working that delivers a unique and effective response to the development challenges of a predominantly rural region. The WDC is an efficient agency which implements economic development and growth in the Western Region. Furthermore it adds value and regional 'sensitivity' to the work of national and international bodies and actively engages with regional interests through a combination of:

IMPLEMENTATION

Initiation of regional programmes with relevant stakeholders to deliver sustainable development in a largely rural region.

INSIGHT

Development of a robust information base on regional issues which provides an acknowledged valuable input to national policy-making in areas such as energy infrastructure and broadband.

IDENTITY

Promote and build a globally recognised, regional identity through the www.LookWest.ie website which has attracted more than one million visitors, currently engaging more than 17, 000 people through its social media channels. This platform attracts talent and enterprise to our communities in the Western Region.

INVESTMENT

Operating the Western Investment Fund (WIF) as a unique source of risk capital for entrepreneurs in the Western Region.

The Impact of the WDC to date

Investment in regional jobs

Since 2010 the WDC has sourced and directed over €13M in total funding towards regional enterprise and employment development.



Regional Policy and analysis capability

This regional capacity has led to advances in critical infrastructure such as broadband roll out, proliferation of the gas network to towns in the region, showcasing novel growth sectors such as the creative economy and ensuring the region is at the forefront of growing these areas.

Realisation of regional jobs

In recent years approximately 5000 jobs (2700 direct and 2300 indirect), have been significantly supported by the WDC in the region (many through the Western Investment Fund).



Regional capability to access EU programming funds

The WDC now has a regional capacity to develop and deliver significant funding across a range of key growth sectors. The WDC are currently engaged in EU projects with a total value of €6M. In addition, local authorities have access to over €5M in low interest loans. The WDC has developed initiatives in critical regional growth sectors such as Renewables, Bioenergy, The Creative Economy, Cultural Tourism and the Business Sector.

Regional "access to finance" capability

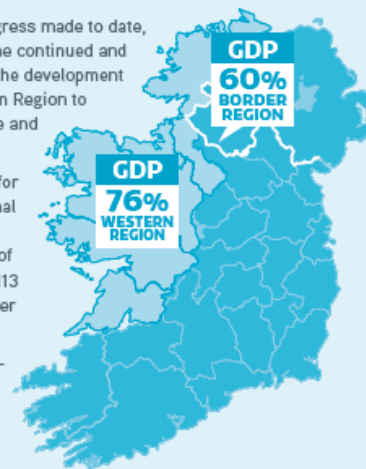
The Irish Government established the WIF to be a unique source of risk funding to businesses and communities in the region. This has increased the regional access to venture capital (VC) funding from 3% of State average to over 7% in the last 10 years.



Building a Future for the Region

However despite the progress made to date, key indicators highlight the continued and critical need to focus on the development and growth of the Western Region to realise its economic place and potential:

- Preliminary statistics for 2014 show that Regional GDP per person in the West region was 76% of that in the State (€28,113 vs. €37,186), the Border region a mere 60%.
- Slower jobs recovery – growth in employment in the Western Region between 2012 and 2015 was just 2.8%, less than half that in the rest of the State at 6.3%.
- Higher youth unemployment – the youth (15-24 yrs) unemployment rate in the Western Region is 30.8%, substantially higher than the 20% in the rest of State (Q1 2015).
- The Border, Midlands and Western Region has a higher consistent poverty rate (10.8%) compared to 7.0% for the Southern & Eastern Region (2014)¹.



Summary

The WDC contributes and makes a significant and measurable difference to the Western Region.

It has sought to establish a capability for future growth both for the region and its citizens.

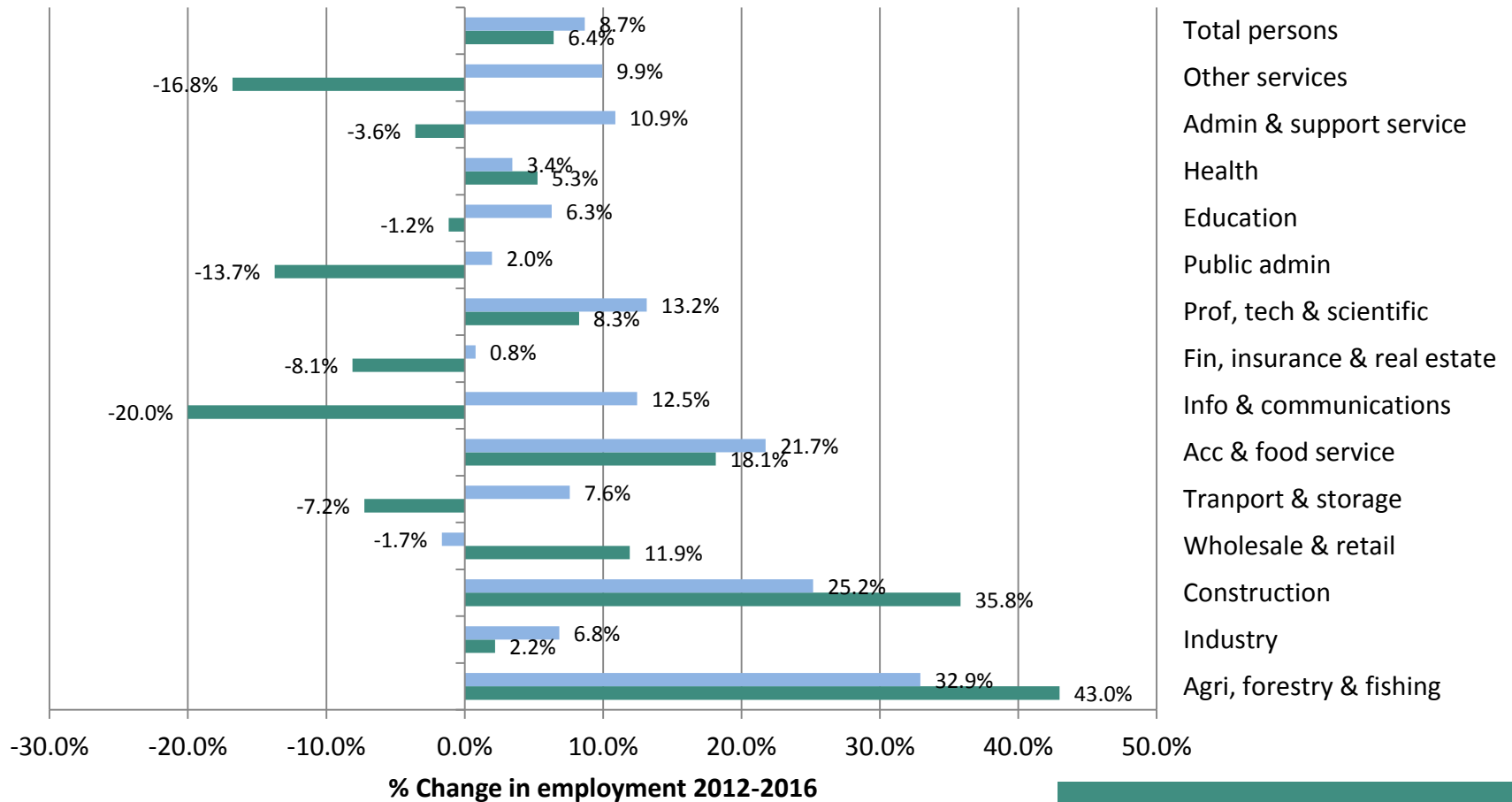
In the process, it has identified and championed new areas of regional strength. It has also sought to deliver a capacity for communities to design, fund and deliver lasting programmes of growth for the Western Region.

Population change

- The Western Region population was 828,124 people in April 2016. it increased by 7,244 people since 2011 (0.9%). The state population was 4,757,976. It increased by 3.7% between 2011 and 2016.
- Three counties in the Western region showed population decline (Donegal, (-1.5%) , Mayo (-0.2%) and Sligo (-0.1%)
- In all counties there was higher growth in the female population than the male population. In the Western Region there was a 1.5% increase in the female population and 0.2% in the male population. For the rest of the state the difference was less (males 4.2%; females 4.4%).
- More EDs in the Western Region experienced population decline (533) than showed population growth (433). 262 EDs had a population decrease of more than 5%. 16 had population decreases of more than 15%



% change in employment by sector in Western Region & Rest of State, 2012-2016



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Rest of State Western Region
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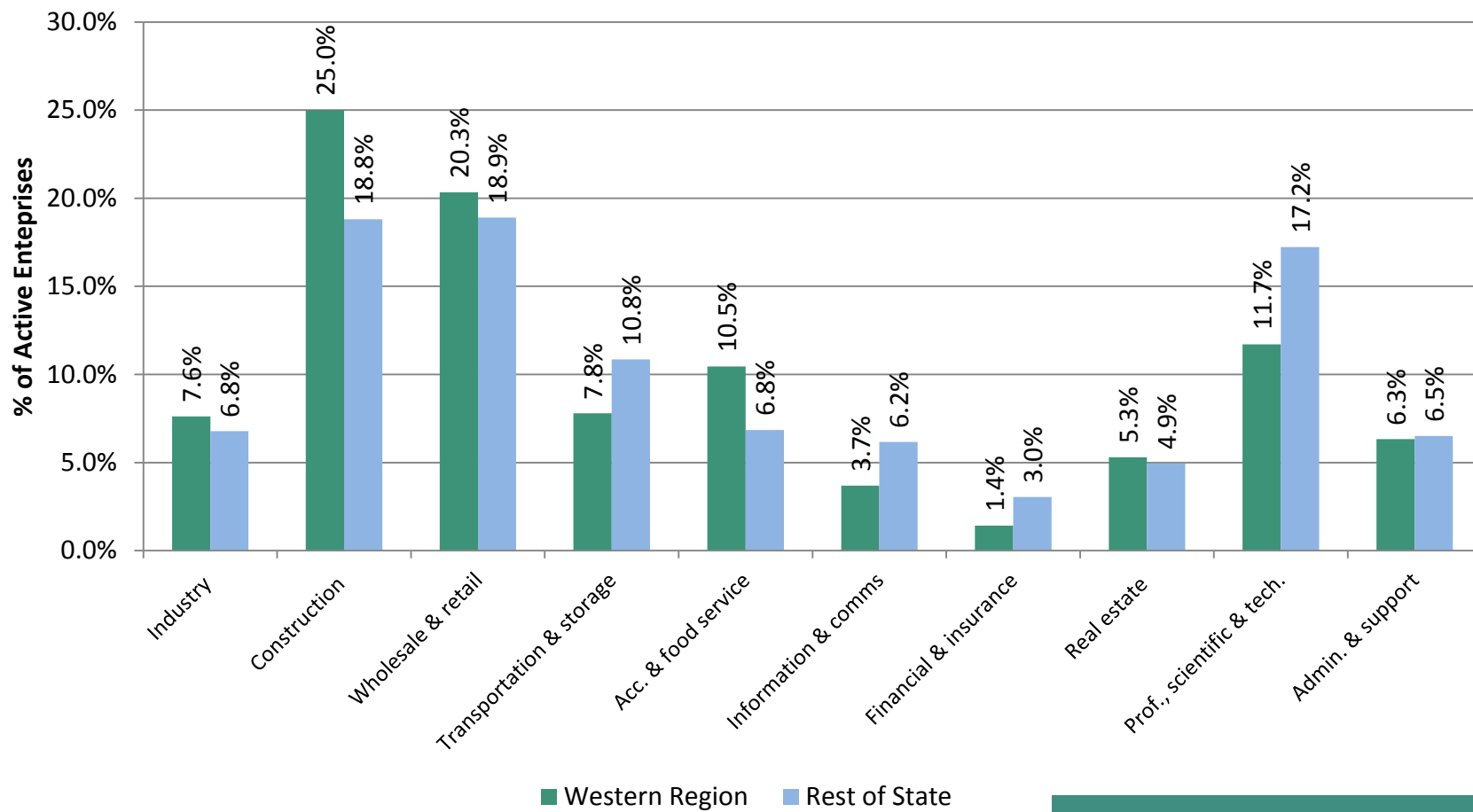


GVA

	Border	Midland	West	Dublin and Mid East	Mid West	South East	South West	State
GVA per person 2013	€21,445	€20,923	€26,839	€46,213	€29,305	€25,092	€40,394	€35,464
<i>GVA per person 2014 (preliminary)</i>	€22,459	€22,002	€28,113	€48,582	€30,695	€26,282	€42,059	€37,186
2013 Index of GVA per person (state=100)	60.5	59.0	75.7	130.3	82.6	70.8	113.9	100.0
2013 Index of GVA per person (EU28=100)	79.8	77.9	99.9	172.0	109.1	93.4	150.3	100.0



% of active enterprises by sector, Western Region & Rest of State, 2014



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Enterprise base differs between more urban and more rural counties

- Construction, Wholesale & Retail largest sectors in all western counties but enterprise base differs
- Highly rural counties of Roscommon, Mayo & Donegal have 34-36% of enterprises in Industry & Construction but in more urban counties of Clare & Sligo it is around 30%.
- Higher share of enterprises in Galway & Sligo in knowledge services sectors, though even Galway below national average
- Over 40% of businesses in Donegal & Leitrim in local services; Galway has smallest share due to more diverse enterprise mix