

# Travel to Work and Labour Catchments in the Western Region

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

## **Westport**

The Westport settlement had a population of 6,198 persons recorded in the 2016 Census. Westport is the 11th largest settlement within the Western Region and the 74th largest in the State. Since 2006, the population residing within the town of Westport has increased by 13.2% (723). In the five years since Census 2011, the population of the town has increased by 2.2% (135). 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, compared with previous computations and this is particularly the case for Westport.

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/>

## **Westport 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 Westport 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 Westport was 4,142 and accounts for 1.7% 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 Westport in April 2016. We do this because although some may not be working in Westport they are living in the catchment from which the Westport labour supply is drawn and including them provides a more complete assessment of the potential labour supply for Westport. The Westport 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 Westport catchment or locations such as Castlebar, Ballina and Sligo town 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 Westport compared to the Western Region.

## **Profile of the Westport Labour Catchment**

The Westport labour catchment is the 10th largest labour catchment in the Western Region with a resident 'at work' population of 6,380 which accounts for 2.5% of the total resident 'at work' population within the Western Region (260,261).

The Westport labour catchment covers a relatively small portion of south-west Mayo (See Map 1 and 2). In 2016, there were 6,380 people classified as at work and living within the labour catchment. This figure is 153.7% more than the resident 'at work' population within the town boundary (2,515). The 2016 total is 31.4% higher than the 2006 total of 4,854.

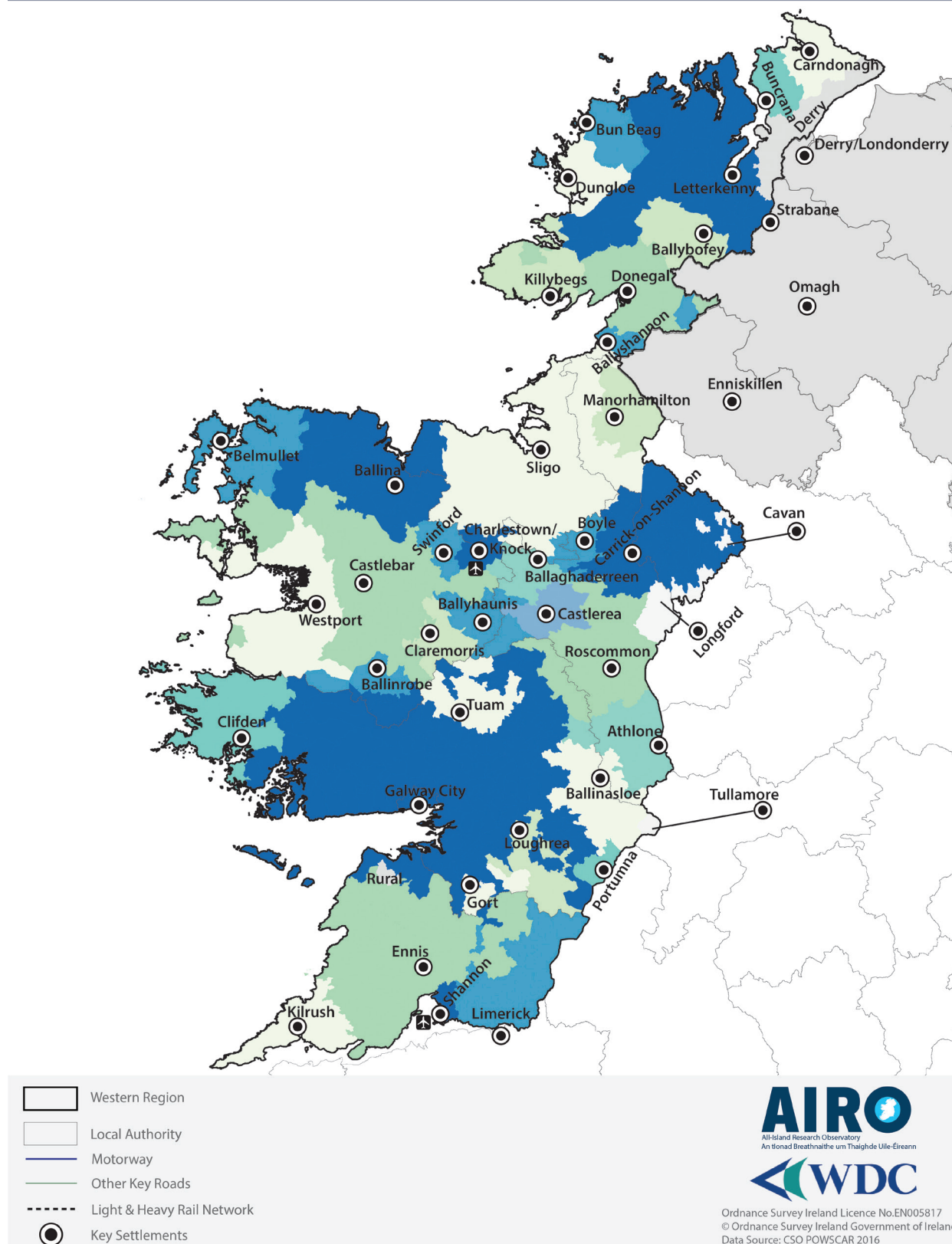
The Westport labour catchment is constrained by the coastal boundary to the west and then primarily the Castlebar catchment to the east and north followed by Clifden and Ballinrobe to a lesser extent on other peripheries. These towns are themselves the most important places for employment for those living in their immediate hinterlands, and therefore constitute separate labour catchments within the county boundaries of Mayo and Galway.

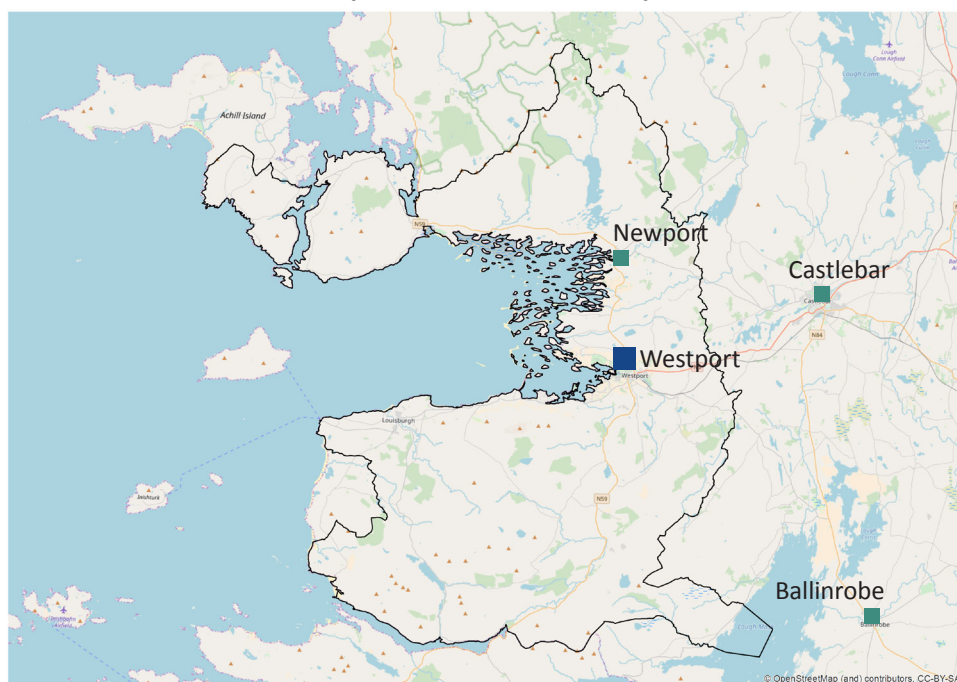
## Westport Labour Catchment

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

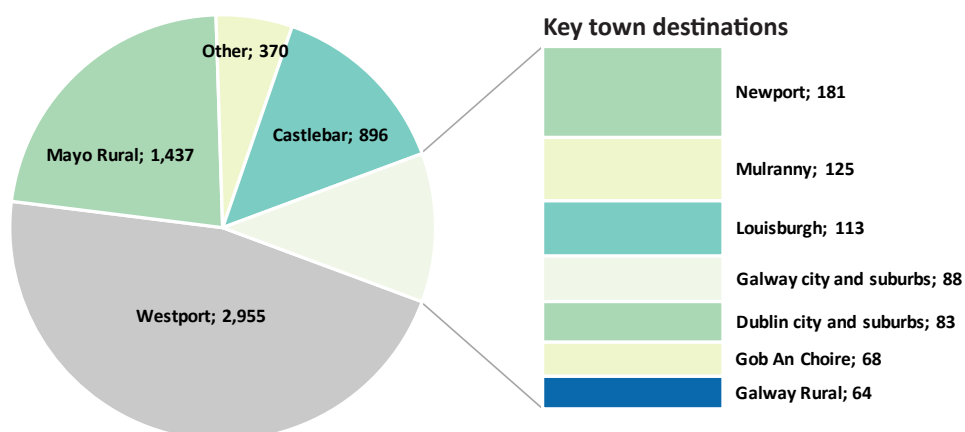
### Labour Catchments of 42 Towns in the Western Region, 2016

By Electoral Division (ED)



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

Of those living in the Westport labour catchment (total = 6,380), 46.3% (2,955) are employed within Westport town and 53.7% (3,425) are employed outside the town. Key destinations outside the town are Mayo Rural (22.5% or 1,437), Castlebar (14% or 896) and Newport (2.8% or 181) – see Figure 1<sup>3</sup> for more details.

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

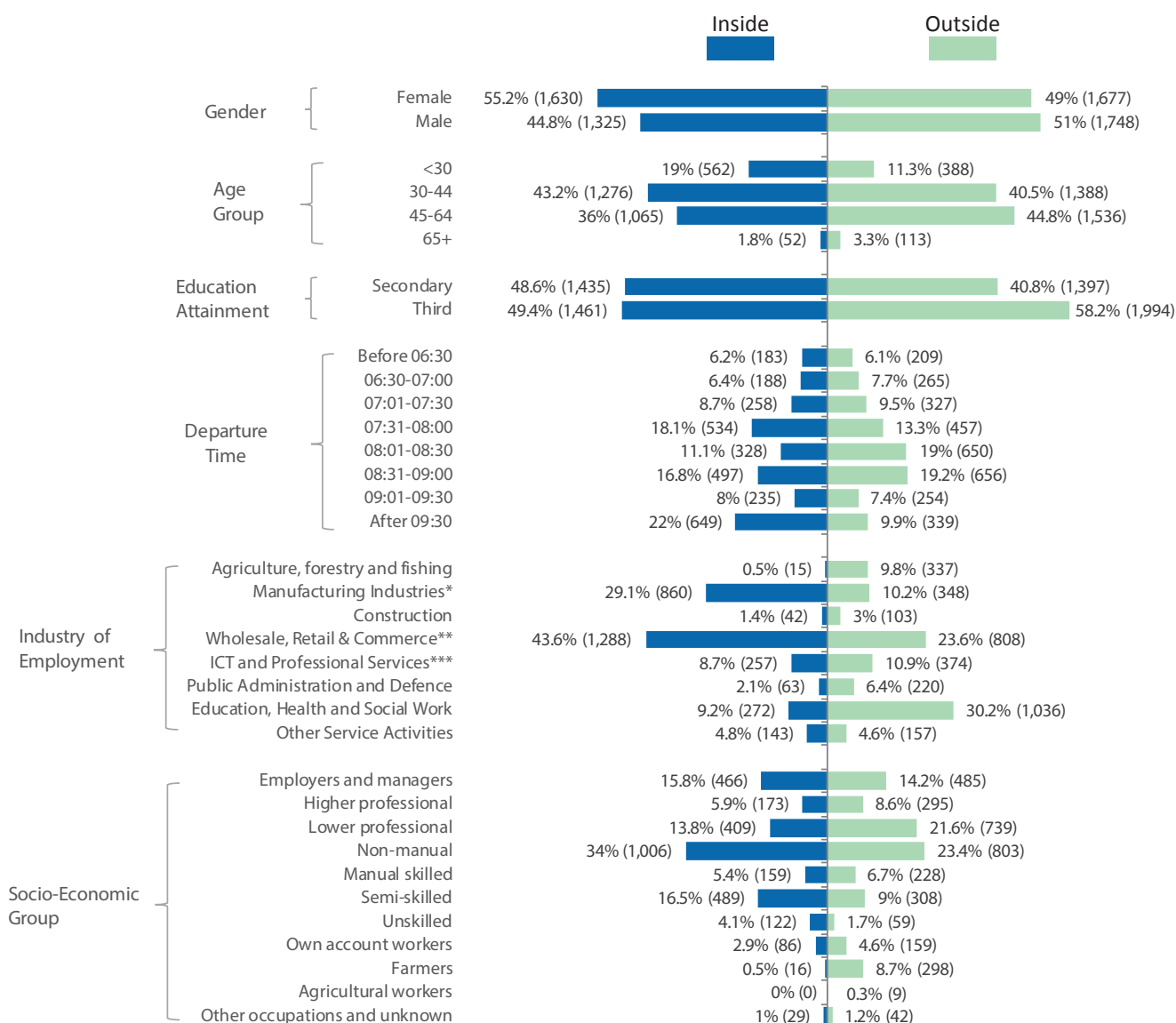


## Westport Labour Catchment

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

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



Within the Westport labour catchment, female workers account for 51.8% and male workers account for 48.2%, see Figure 3. Of those working inside Westport, 55.2% are females whereas 49% of those working outside Westport 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 Westport labour catchment and working inside Westport is as follows: <30 years (562 or 19%), 30 to 44 years (1,276 or 43.2%), 45 to 64 years (1,065 or 36%) and 65 years plus (52 or 1.8%).

## Westport Labour Catchment

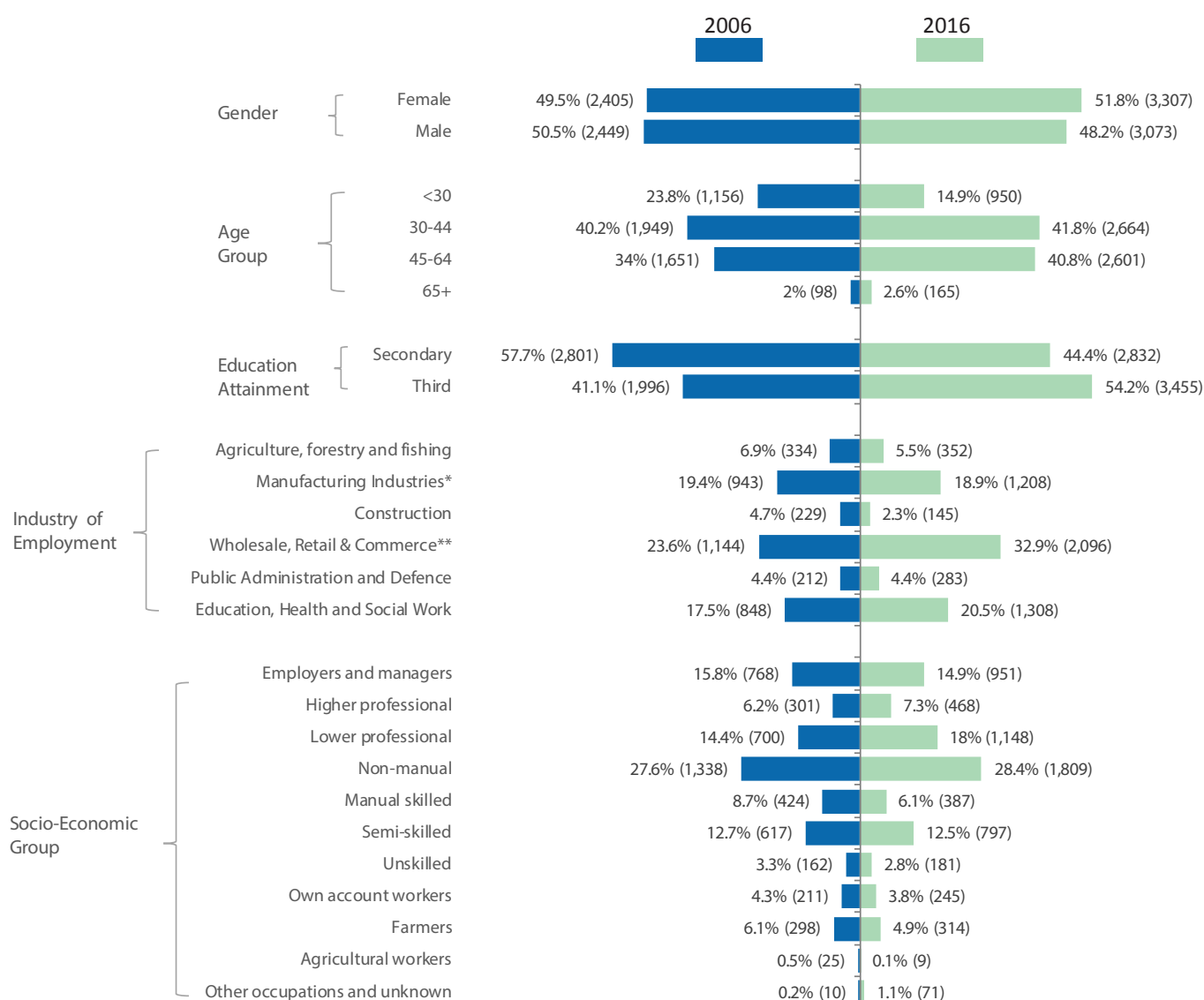
The age profile of those living in the Westport labour catchment and working outside Westport is as follows: <30 years (388 or 11.3%), 30 to 44 years (1,388 or 40.5%), 45 to 64 years (1,536 or 44.8%) and 65 years plus (113 or 3.3%).

An education profile of the Westport labour catchment shows the following: Of those working inside Westport town, 49.4% (1,461) have 3rd level qualifications compared to 58.2% (1,994) of those working outside (Figure 2).

### Analysis of change between 2006 and 2016

The graphic below details the change that has occurred across the Westport 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 increased level of employment in the 'Wholesale, Retail and Commerce' sectors.

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



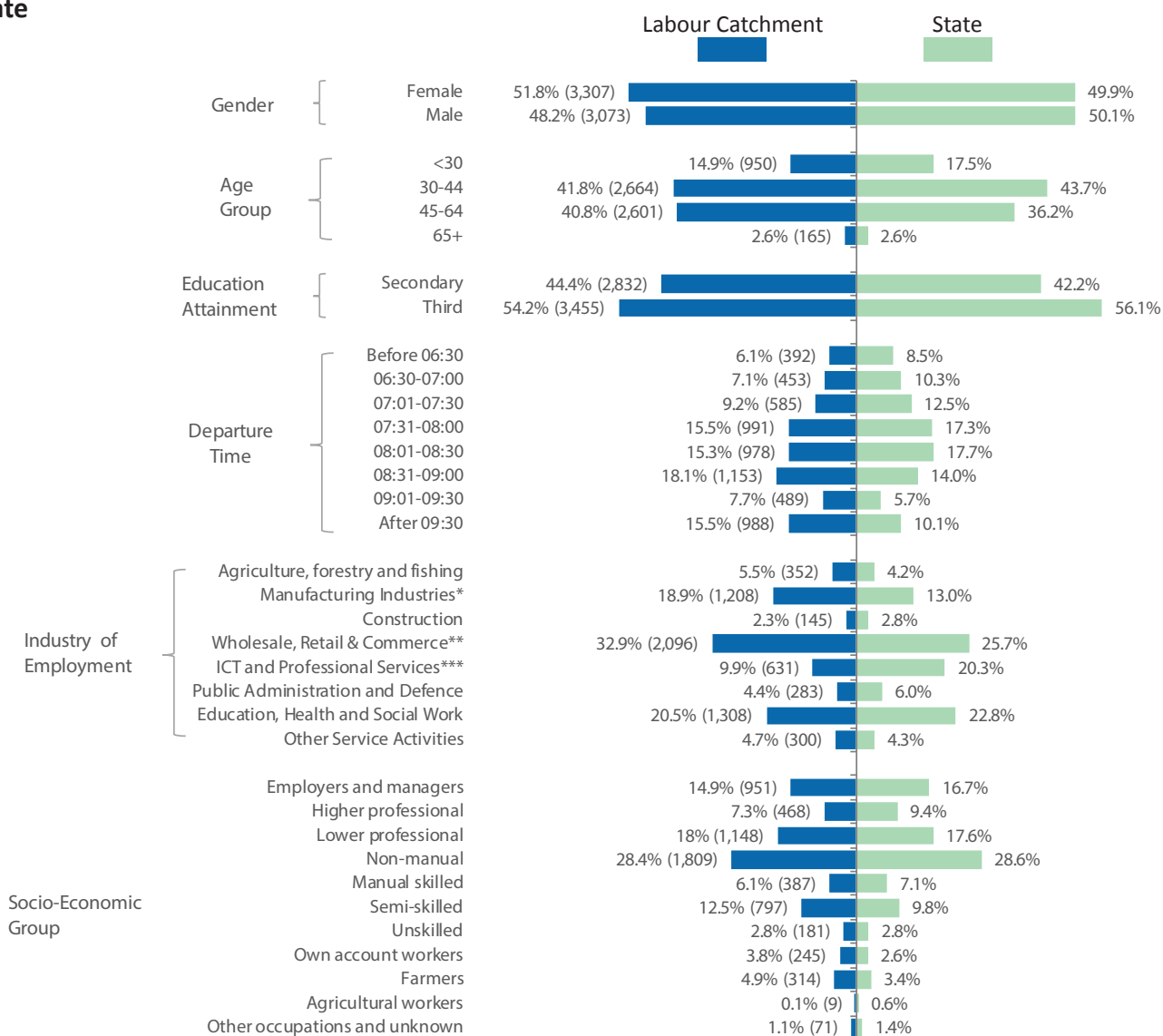


## Westport Labour Catchment

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

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

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



An age profile of the Westport labour catchment details the following: Labour Catchment (Total): <30 years (950 or 14.9%), 30 to 44 years (2,664 or 41.8%), 45 to 64 years (2,601 or 40.8%) and 65 years plus (165 or 2.6%). 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 Westport labour catchment shows the following: Those at work and residing in the Westport labour catchment recorded a third level attainment rate of 54.2% (3,455). In contrast to this, the national average is 56.1% (Figure 4).

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

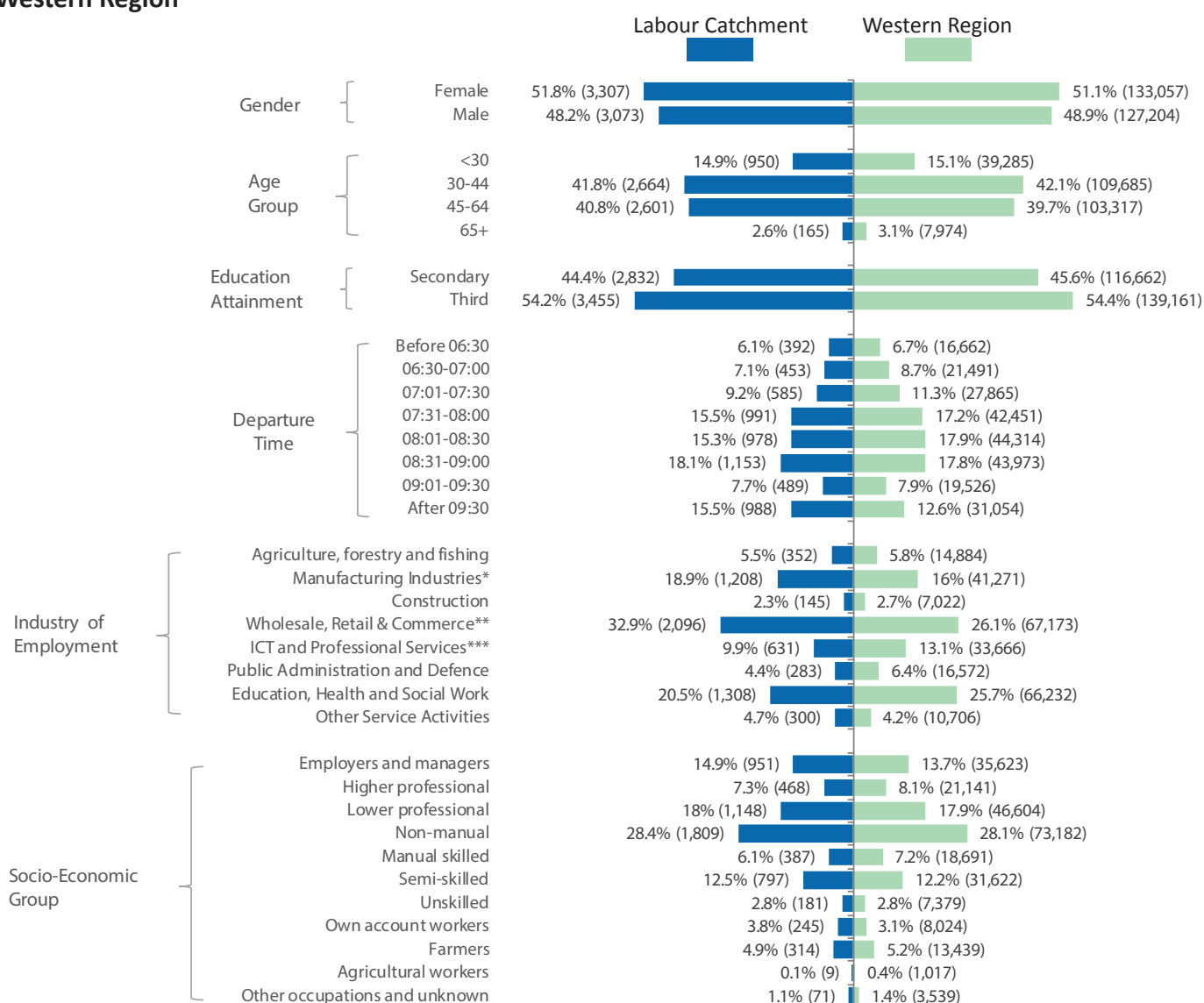
## Westport Labour Catchment

- The single largest employer is the 'Wholesale, Retail and Commerce' sector and accounts for 32.9% (2,096) which is higher than the State average (25.7%) (Figure 4).
- Both the 'Education, Human Health and Social Work' (20.5% or 1,308) and 'Manufacturing Industries'\* (18.9% or 1,208) are also important employment sectors with 'Manufacturing Industries' having a higher proportional share than the State average (13%) (Figure 4).
- 'ICT and Professional Services'\* (9.9% or 631) is the fourth most important sector although more than half the State average of 20.3% (Figure 4).

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

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

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

## Westport Labour Catchment

The Westport labour catchment and the Western Region as a whole have a very similar socio-economic profile. There are very strong commonalities within the gender, age and education profiles of both areas. Most notable differences certainly relate to the industry profile with a higher dependence on 'Manufacturing Industries' and the 'Wholesale, Retail and Commerce' sectors in the Westport labour catchment than the Western Region average.

### Conclusion

Westport 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 31.4% higher (+1,526 persons). This is the sixth highest rate of increase and is in part accounted for by an increase in geography, where EDS previously assigned to Castlebar to the west and north are now assigned to Westport.

Westport is the most significant employment centre, followed by Rural parts of Co. Mayo and this has not changed significantly in the last 10 years. The numbers engaged in Castlebar have increased from 640 in 2006 to 896 in 2016.

Interestingly in 2006, neither Newport, Mulranny nor Louisburg featured at all as places of employment in 2006 and are now important centres for residents in the Westport Labour catchment. Both Galway and Dublin city and suburbs have also increased in importance as employment centres over the 10 year period. The single largest employer is the Wholesale, Retail and Commerce sector and accounts for 32.9% (2,096) which is higher than the State average (25.7%) and includes tourism and accommodation, a significant sector in the catchment.

Both the Education, Human Health and Social Work (20.5% or 1,308) and Manufacturing Industries (18.9% or 1,208) are also important employment sectors with Manufacturing Industries having a higher proportional share than the State average (13%) reflecting the presence of over 1,000 employees within one multinational manufacturing site there.

## Notes

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