



WESTERN
DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION



People
& Place

Travel to Work and Labour Catchments in the Western Region



Sligo town Labour Catchment

4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

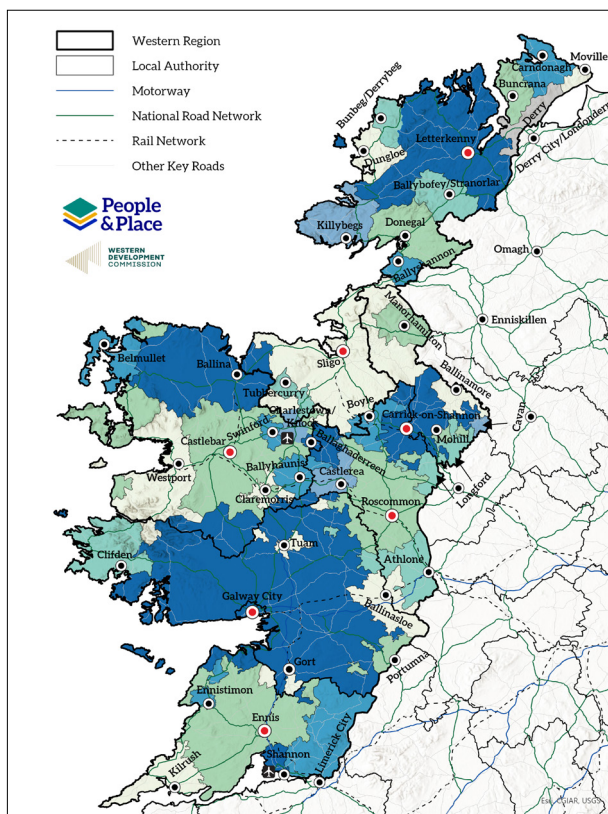
4.1 Introduction

The Western Development Commission (WDC) continues its series of regional labour market analyses with this new publication, *Travel to Work and Labour Catchments in the Western Region: A Profile of Seven Town Labour Catchments*. Based on Census of Population 2022 (POWSCCAR)¹ data, it provides unique insights into the key labour market centres in the Western Region through an analysis of the travel to work patterns of workers living in the Western Region. This is the third time the WDC has undertaken this analysis, previous reports based on 2006 Census data is available [here](#) and 2016 Census data is available [here](#).

This work is particularly timely given developments in government policy such as the National Planning Framework (NPF) and NPF Revision (2024), which sets out regional targets for where population and jobs growth should occur and associated plans and policies such as the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES), County and City Development Plans (CDPs), Local Economic and Community Plans (LECPs) and Climate Action Plans for the seven local authorities within the Western Region.

The report and analysis identify the town labour catchments for the Western Region, comprising counties Clare, Donegal, Galway, Leitrim, Mayo, Roscommon and Sligo (see Map 4.1 below). The town labour catchment is the area from which a town draws most of its' workforce. At a regional level, the report also assists with the identification of the key employment centres in the Western Region and identifies changes since 2016. It maps and visualises the size and scale of employment based commuting patterns, highlights the potential labour supply available for future growth and, as such, provides important insights for employers and policymakers - nationally, regionally and locally.

Map 4.1: Labour Catchments in the Western Region, 2022



Source: CSO POWSCCAR

4.2 About this Profile - Sligo town

As part of its remit in promoting the economic and social development of the Western Region, the WDC is interested in examining the nature and extent of economic and labour market activity at the regional and sub-regional level. The full report presents an overview of all 43 labour catchments in the Western Region with subsequent sections focusing on the main seven towns/city catchments.

This section examines the town of Sligo as an employment destination for resident workers in the Western Region and provides detailed mapping and descriptive analysis of the Sligo town labour catchment. Following a discussion on Sligo town data in 2022 (Section 4.3) and the impact of working from home (Section 4.4), the profile presents the following:

¹ Census 2022 Place of Work, School, College or Childcare - Census of Anonymised Records (POWSCCAR).

4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

1. A graphical illustration of travel to work patterns and commuting flows (Section 4.5) and the overall labour catchment of the town (Section 4.6);
2. A detailed discussion of the labour market characteristics of all the people at work who are living in the labour catchment – place of work, industry of employment, socio-economic group, education attainment, age, gender, means of travel and time of departure (Section 4.7); and
3. Summary graphics that detail the labour catchment changes that have taken place since 2016 (both geographical and socio-economic) and socio-economic comparisons with the State and the other six key towns/city in the Western Region (Carrick-on-Shannon, Castlebar, Ennis, Galway City, Letterkenny and Roscommon town) (Section 4.8-4.12).

4.3 The importance of Sligo town as a place of work

The official CSO settlement of Sligo town had a population of 20,608 persons recorded in the 2022 Census. Sligo town is the fourth largest urban centre within the Western Region (Galway City is the largest, followed by Ennis and Letterkenny respectively) and the 24th largest in the State. Since 2006, the population residing within the town of Sligo has increased by +6.2% (+1,206)².

Population

In the most recent intercensal period 2016 to 2022, the population of Sligo town has increased by +7.3% (+1,409). This rate of growth is less than the State (+8.1%) and similar to the Western Region (+7%) between 2016 and 2022. A number of other towns across Sligo County have seen significant population growth since 2016 with the highest rates in Tubbercurry (+16%), Strandhill (+13%) and Collooney (+12%).

Labour Force

Since Census 2016 there has been an increase in the numbers living in Sligo town that are in the labour force (those at work and unemployed) and those classed as being at work. Between 2016 and 2022, the labour force in Sligo town has increased by +12.1% (from 8,815 to 9,883). The number of residents at work has increased by +22.7% (from 7,133 to 8,752). Conversely, the number classed as unemployed has decreased by -32.8% (from 1,682 to 1,131). The +22.7% increase in those at work in Sligo town is significantly higher than the change in the State (+15.6%), the Western Region (+14.6%) and County Sligo (+16.8%).

Daytime Working Population

According to POWSCCAR 2022, the total number of jobs located within the Sligo town boundary was 13,562 and this accounted for 5% of all jobs located within the Western Region (272,860)³. Of all cities and towns in Ireland, Sligo town has the 10th highest number of jobs located within the town boundary and this accounted for 56.2% of all jobs located within County Sligo (24,120). Relative to the six other main towns/city in this report, Sligo town has the second highest number of jobs with higher numbers in Galway City (51,211) and lower numbers in Letterkenny (13,109), Ennis (10,628), Castlebar (9,911), Roscommon town (4,315) and Carrick-on-Shannon (3,145). The ratio of local jobs in Sligo town (13,562) to resident workers (8,544) in the town is 1.59 indicating the importance of the town to the regional labour market.

² Demographic comparisons between urban centres tend to be difficult due to intercensal boundary changes. In preparation for Census 2022 the CSO developed a new settlement (town) geography for Ireland called Built Up Area (BUAs) - these geographies are slightly different from the town boundaries used in the enumeration of Census 2016. As such, the new boundaries in 2022 can include additional residential areas and employment locations (local jobs) that were not part of the boundary area in 2016.

³ This is called 'the daytime working population', (the number of jobs in an area) and represents the number of people working and residing in an area plus the number of workers commuting into the area of work, in this case the town of Sligo.

4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

Between 2016 and 2022, there was an increase of +4.1% (+538) jobs located in Sligo town. This was the lowest increase of the seven main towns/city within this report with the highest rate of jobs growth in Galway City (+15.4%), Letterkenny (+15%), Roscommon town (+10.2%), Carrick-on-Shannon (+9.7%), Castlebar (+9.6%) and Ennis (+4.5%)⁴. Over the same period, the number of jobs in County Sligo increased by +14.5% (+3,046) and the Western Region as a whole by +12.4% (+30,148) from 242,712 to 272,860. Sligo town accounted for 17.7% of the total new jobs in County Sligo since 2016.

4.4 The impact of Working from Home on labour catchments

Since COVID-19, remote and hybrid working practices are much more extensive and this has reshaped the landscape of labour markets. With a substantial increase in individuals now working wholly or partly from home, the traditional concept of labour catchments centred around towns has undergone a notable transformation compared to previous analyses. In Census 2022, the CSO captured more data on working from home.

Remote work practice, wholly or partly, has been supported by government, through legislation⁵. This paradigm shift allows individuals to work from home locations while mitigating traditional constraints associated with commuting to employment locations typically in urban centres. This has resulted in large numbers of the workforce working from home and not commuting as was the traditional practice. Remote and hybrid work practices may also enable more longer distance commuting, where people commute further distances to their place of work but on a more infrequent basis.

The impact of the widespread adoption of working from home is clearly identified in the results from Census POWSCCAR 2022 and 2016. The number of people who recorded that they worked mainly from home in Ireland increased by +133%, from 111,744 workers in 2016 (5.7%) to 260,821 in 2022 (11.4%)⁶. Working **mainly** from home is considered 3+ days out of a typical 5 day week. Within the Western Region, the number who worked mainly from home in 2022 was recorded at 40,461, an increase of +75.6% (+17,420) since Census 2016. As such, the proportion of Western Region resident workers who work mainly from home has increased from 7.1% in 2016 to 10.7% in 2022. This does not capture those working from home in hybrid patterns, for example 1-2 days per week.

In County Sligo a total of 3,601 (12.1%) resident workers were recorded as mainly working from home in Census 2022. This represents a +109.7% (+1,884) increase from the number in 2016 (1,717 or 6.7% of resident workers).

Resulting from the increased incidence in working from home, the employment base in Sligo town is now characterised by a more dispersed and decentralised workforce. This, in turn, will have implications for urban planning, infrastructure development and policymaking aimed at supporting economic growth and workforce mobility.

4 | 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.

5 | The Work Life Balance and Miscellaneous Provision Act 2023 provides for all employees the right to request remote working arrangements.

6 | In April 2022, government COVID work from home guidelines had been lifted but many still continued the practice.

4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

4.5 Employment based commuting patterns to Sligo town

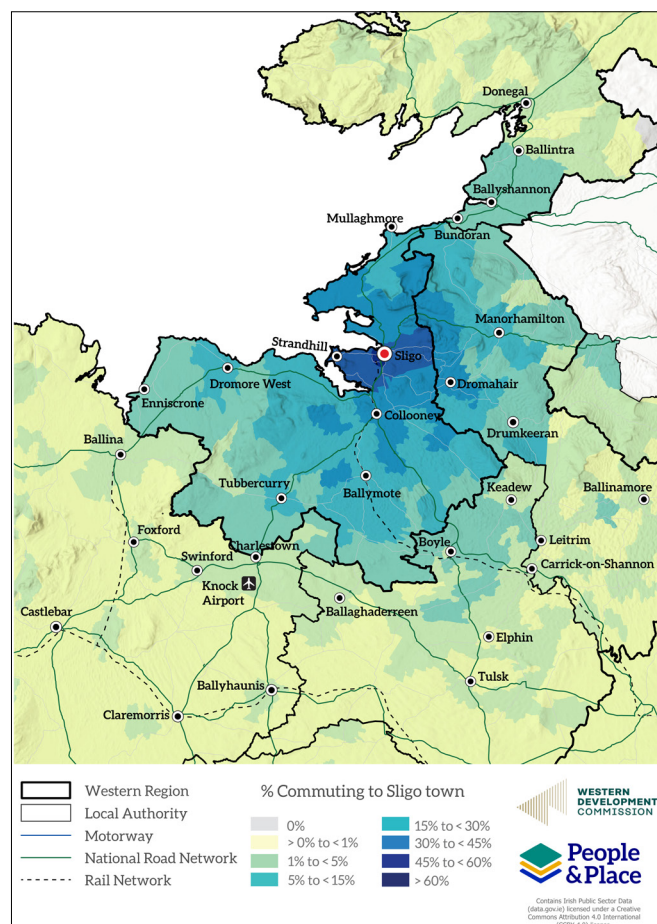
Map 4.2 shows the extent of commuting flows to Sligo town for work opportunities. The colours represent the proportions of people at work who live in each ED and travel to work in Sligo town.

Definition - Commuting Flows

Commuting flows are expressed as the percentage of resident workers in an Electoral Division (ED) that commute to a particular destination (i.e. Sligo town, Galway City etc.) for employment.

A high commuting rate (i.e., > 60%) means that the town is a work destination for > 60% of residents in that ED.

Map 4.2: Commuting Flows into Sligo town, 2022



As expected, the EDs closest to Sligo town have the highest proportion working in the town and this is indicated by the darker shades of blue in and around the perimeter (30% to >60%). Beyond these areas, the proportion travelling to the town gradually declines and is illustrated on the map; graduating from the darker green areas (Mullaghmore, Manorhamilton, Ballymote, Tubbercurry and Dromore West) where between 15% and 30% of resident workers in those EDs work in Sligo town, through to medium green (Bundoran, Ballyshannon, Drumkeeran, Boyle, Charlestown and Enniscrone) where between 5% and 15% of resident workers in those EDs commute to work in Sligo town. There is only one ED in the county that is below 5%.

4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

4.6 Identifying the Sligo town labour catchment

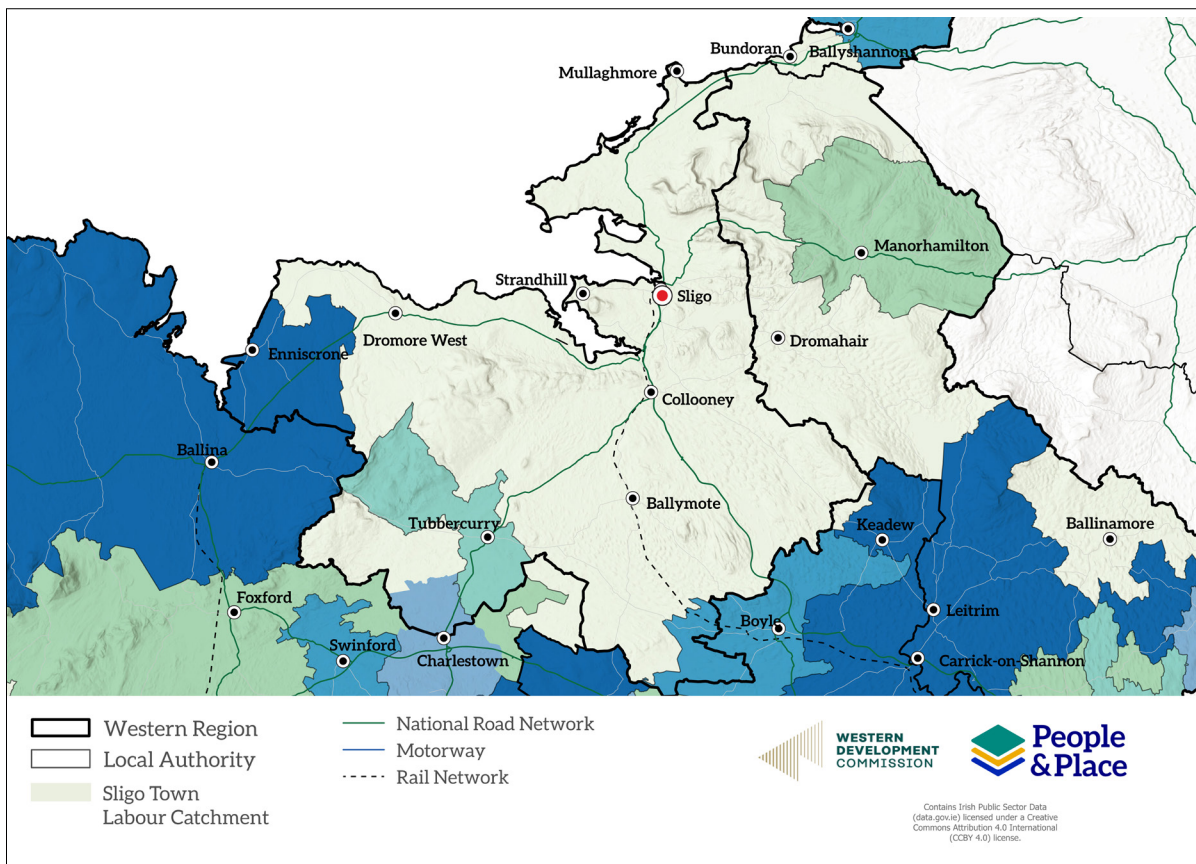
While Map 4.2 shows EDs from where even one person commuted to Sligo town, all of these EDs are not included in the Sligo town labour catchment. The Sligo town labour catchment is based on only those EDs for which Sligo town is the most popular work destination for resident workers. Other EDs, whose commuters travel in greater numbers to other towns, are assigned to the labour catchments of those towns.

Definition - Labour Catchments

The town labour catchment is the area from which a town draws most of its labour supply. Each catchment is based on the inclusion of Electoral Divisions (EDs) that are assigned to the town. An ED is assigned to the town's labour catchment if it is the most popular work destination for the resident workers in the ED⁷.

Map 4.3 shows the Sligo town labour catchment as depicted by the cream colour. The labour catchment extends to the majority of the county, except for EDs in the southeast that are part of the Boyle labour catchment in County Roscommon and EDs in the west that are part of both the Tubbercurry and Ballina labour catchments. Since 2016, Tubbercurry is now its own labour catchment rather than part of the larger Sligo town labour catchment. Large parts of northern Leitrim, with the exception of the Manorhamilton labour catchment, also form part of the Sligo town labour catchment.

Map 4.3: Sligo town labour catchment, 2022



Source: CSO POWSCCAR

⁷ For a more detailed explanation of the methodology, see [Appendix](#).

4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

In summary, Sligo town remains the dominant labour catchment for the majority of Sligo County, extending into northern Leitrim and a small part of southern Donegal (Bundoran). In particular, Sligo town is the key economic driver for the immediate areas surrounding the town, central County Sligo (Collooney, Ballymote etc.) and then the west coastal areas stretching from Dromore West to Mullaghmore (see Section 4.9).

In 2022, there were 24,382 people classified as at work and living within the Sligo town labour catchment (8.3% of all Western Region resident workers). The Sligo town labour catchment is the second largest in the Western Region with only Galway City (88,253) with a higher resident workforce. The Sligo town labour catchment has a population at work 2.9 times larger than the town of Sligo (24,382 to 8,544 respectively). The geographical size of the Sligo town labour catchment has changed slightly - and now includes larger areas around Manorhamilton but has declined in the Tubbercurry area (see Section 4.9). The total resident workers residing in the labour catchment has increased by +11.7% since 2016 (from 21,834) and by +20% since 2006 (from 20,321).

4.7 Profile of the Sligo town labour catchment

Map 4.3 above identified the Sligo town labour catchment (in cream). In the following section we examine 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 Sligo town in April 2022. This is important as including those who live in the labour catchment and work elsewhere provides a more complete assessment of the potential labour supply for Sligo town.

The Sligo town labour catchment is therefore composed of those who live in and are employed within the town (**Working in Sligo town**) and those who live in the labour catchment but work outside the town e.g. other towns such as Bundoran, rural areas and locations outside the Western Region such as Dublin City etc. (**Working elsewhere in Ireland**)⁸.

This profile is further supported by an analysis of changes in the labour catchment between 2016 and 2022 (Section 4.8 and Section 4.9), both in terms of geography and socio-economic characteristics, a comparison profile of the Sligo town labour catchment relative to the State (Section 4.10), a comparison profile of those 'Working in Sligo town' and 'Working elsewhere in Ireland' (Section 4.11) and a comparison profile of the Sligo town labour catchment and the six other main towns/city within the Western Region (Section 4.12).

4.7.1 Place of Work

The Sligo town labour catchment can be seen to include most of County Sligo with the exception of the Manorhamilton and Tubbercurry labour catchments in the east and west respectively. In Figures 4.1 and 4.2 the main work locations for those who live in the Sligo town labour catchment are set out. Those who work mainly from home in the Sligo town labour catchment (n=3,762)⁹ are coded with their home location as their place of work i.e., a resident worker from Sligo town who works mainly from home is coded with their place of work as Sligo town.

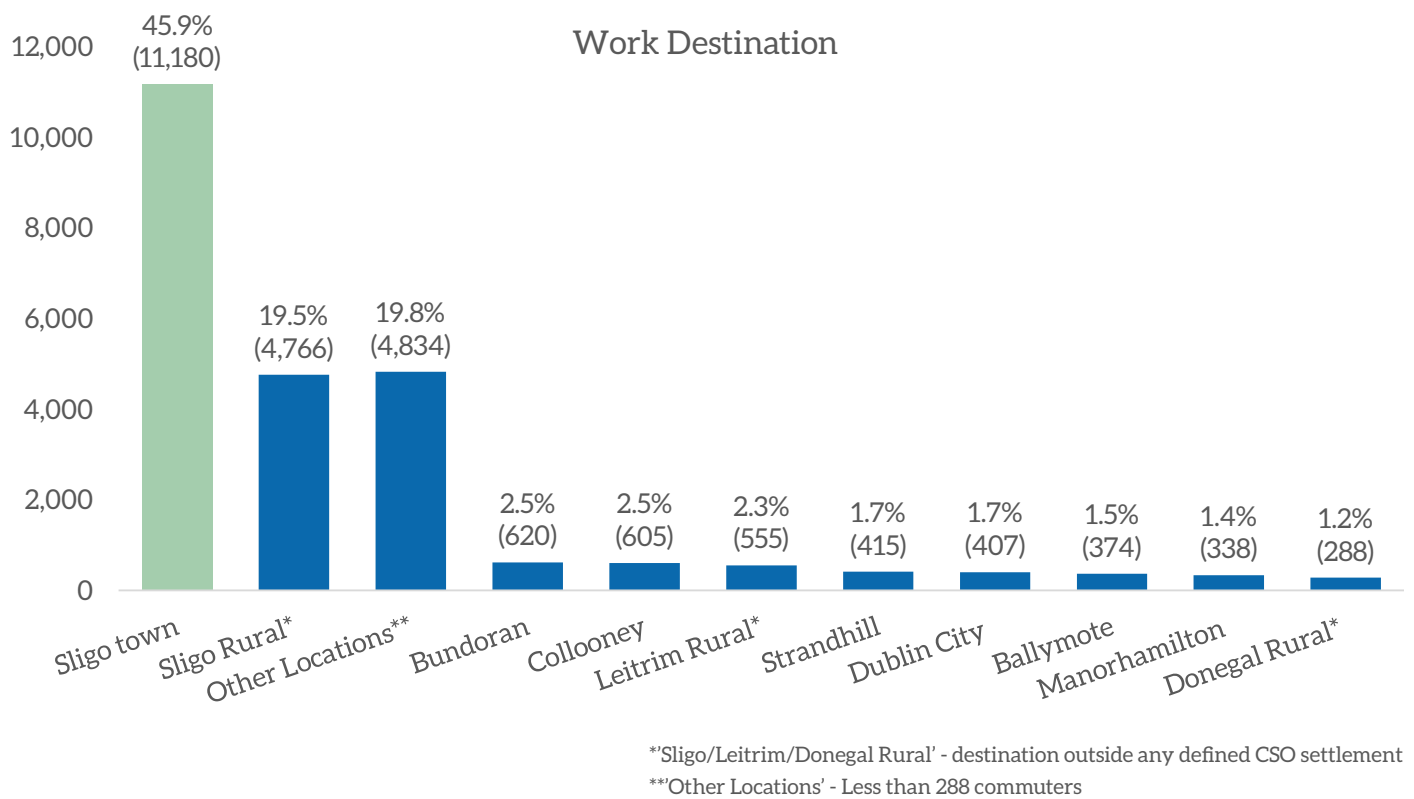
8 | Note: 'Working elsewhere in Ireland' refers to working anywhere beyond the town boundary, which could include suburbs outside the town boundary to more distant locations such as Dublin City.

9 | Of the 3,762 coded as working from home in the Sligo town labour catchment, 818 are coded as both living in and working in the Sligo town settlement.

4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

As expected, Sligo town is the principal place of employment for those living in the labour catchment, accounting for 11,180 (45.9%) of all employment - although this share has declined since 2016 (51%). Of the seven labour catchments reviewed here, the Sligo town labour catchment has the third highest proportion of resident workers commuting to its' centre, with only Galway City and Letterkenny higher at 51.5% and 46.6% respectively. Higher rates indicate that the town/city is a particularly attractive employment centre to the resident workers in the labour catchment. Conversely, lower rates suggest that alternative employment locations play a more important role than the key town/city (i.e., Sligo town). Employment in 'Sligo Rural' (destination outside any defined CSO settlement) is the next most popular destination and this accounted for just under a fifth of all resident workers (19.5% or 4,766). Since 2016, flows to 'Rural' destinations have increased by +4.5% (possibly due to higher numbers classed as working mainly from home in rural and peripheral parts of the county) (see Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.1: Key Destinations of resident workers in the Sligo town labour catchment, 2022



The other large employment destinations for residents within the Sligo town labour catchment are towns in close proximity to Sligo town; Bundoran, Collooney, Strandhill, Ballymote and Manorhamilton.

Both 'Sligo Rural' (4,766 or 19.5%) and 'Leitrim Rural' (555 or 2.3%) are also highlighted as key destinations for Sligo town labour catchment residents. Both rural destinations have increased in prominence as employment destinations with over +45.3% and +42.7% increase in resident workers since 2016 respectively (as illustrated in Figure 4.2)

4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

In summary, the Sligo town labour catchment comprises nearly half (45.9% or 11,180) of resident workers who are employed in Sligo town with the remaining 54.1% employed in locations outside of the town.

Figure 4.2: Key Destinations in 2022 and change since 2016

Work Destination	Resident Workers	Change 2016-2022	% Change 2016-2022	Proportional Share 2022	Proportional Share Change 2016-2022
Sligo town	11,180	51	0.5%	45.9%	-5.1%
Sligo Rural*	4,766	1,486	45.3%	19.5%	4.5%
Other Locations**	4,834	772	N/A	19.8%	N/A
Bundoran	620	181	41.2%	2.5%	0.5%
Collooney	605	55	10.0%	2.5%	0.0%
Leitrim Rural*	555	166	42.7%	2.3%	0.5%
Strandhill	415	148	55.4%	1.7%	0.5%
Dublin City	407	78	23.7%	1.7%	0.2%
Ballymote	374	-54	-12.6%	1.5%	-0.4%
Manorhamilton	338	23	7.3%	1.4%	-0.1%
Donegal Rural*	288	17	6.3%	1.2%	-0.1%
Total	24,382	2,548	11.7%		

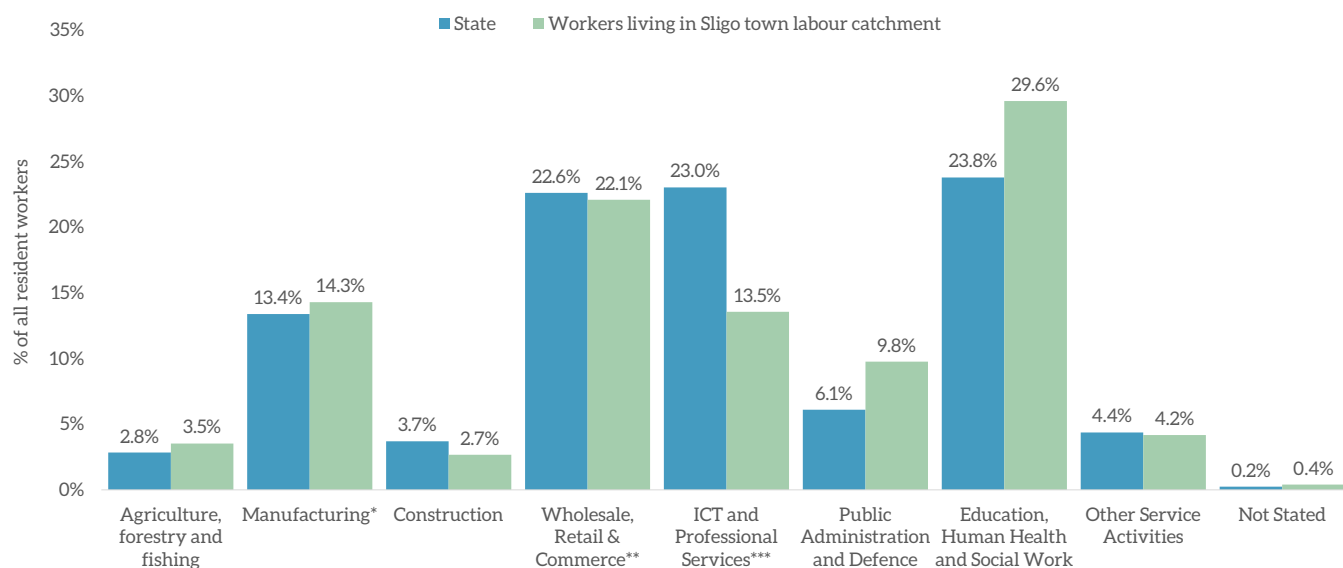
4.7.2 Employment by Industrial Group

An analysis of the profile of employment by industrial group provides an indication of the structure of the local economy and the type of employment that it sustains, as well as the skills profile of the labour catchment. It is particularly instructive to compare the profile of a region or local area to that of the State average as it can highlight differences as well as strengths and weaknesses of the local economic base.

Employment by industrial group for all those living in the Sligo town labour catchment is shown in Figure 4.3. The 'Education, Human Health and Social Work' sector is the most important employer and this accounted for almost a third of all resident workers (29.6%). The 'Wholesale, Retail Trade, Transportation and Storage, Accommodation and Food Service Activities' sector accounted for just over a fifth of resident workers (22.1%) in the Sligo town labour catchment. The 'Manufacturing, mining and quarrying, Electricity, Gas, Water supply and Waste Management' sector (14.3%) and 'Information and Communication, Financial, Real Estate, Professional, administration and support service activities' sector (13.5%) are the next biggest sectors in the labour catchment with all other sectors accounting for 10% or less.

4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

Figure 4.3: Industrial Profile of the Sligo town labour catchment and the State, 2022



Relative to the national picture, the ‘Education, Human Health and Social Work’ and ‘Manufacturing’ sectors play a more important role in the overall employment base. The ‘Education, Human Health and Social Work’ sector’s share of employment (29.6%) is 5.8 percentage points higher than the State average (23.8%) and the ‘Manufacturing’ sector (14.3%) is 0.9 percentage points higher than the State average (13.4%). The ‘ICT and Professional Services’ sector recorded a rate of 13.5% whereas the State average was 23% - 9.5 percentage points lower¹⁰.

Across the seven labour force catchments, Sligo town has the second highest proportion in the ‘Education, Human Health and Social Work’ sector, the third lowest proportion employed in the ‘Manufacturing’ sector and the third lowest in the ‘ICT and Professional Services’ sector.

As seen in Figure 4.4 below, the industrial groups which saw the largest proportional increases between 2016 and 2022 were the ‘ICT and Professional Services’ (+2.8 percentage points), ‘Manufacturing’ (+0.4 percentage points) and the ‘Education, Human Health and Social Work’ (+0.5 percentage points) sectors. In contrast, the largest proportionate declines have been in the ‘Agriculture, forestry and fishing’ sector (-1.7 percentage points) and the ‘Wholesale, Retail & Commerce’ sector (-2.8 percentage points). These declines also occurred nationally with Agriculture, Retail and Wholesale sectors all witnessing the largest declines in employment share.

¹⁰ | Note: with only nine classifications available, industrial classifications in POWSCCAR are less detailed than normal classifications in other Census outputs.
 *Manufacturing = Manufacturing, mining and quarrying, Electricity, Gas, Water supply and Waste Management
 **Wholesale, Retail etc. = Wholesale, Retail Trade, Transportation and Storage, Accommodation and Food Service Activities
 ***ICT and Professional Services = Information and Communication, Financial, Real Estate, Professional, administration and support service activities.

4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

Figure 4.4: Industrial Profile of the Sligo town labour catchment in 2016 and 2022

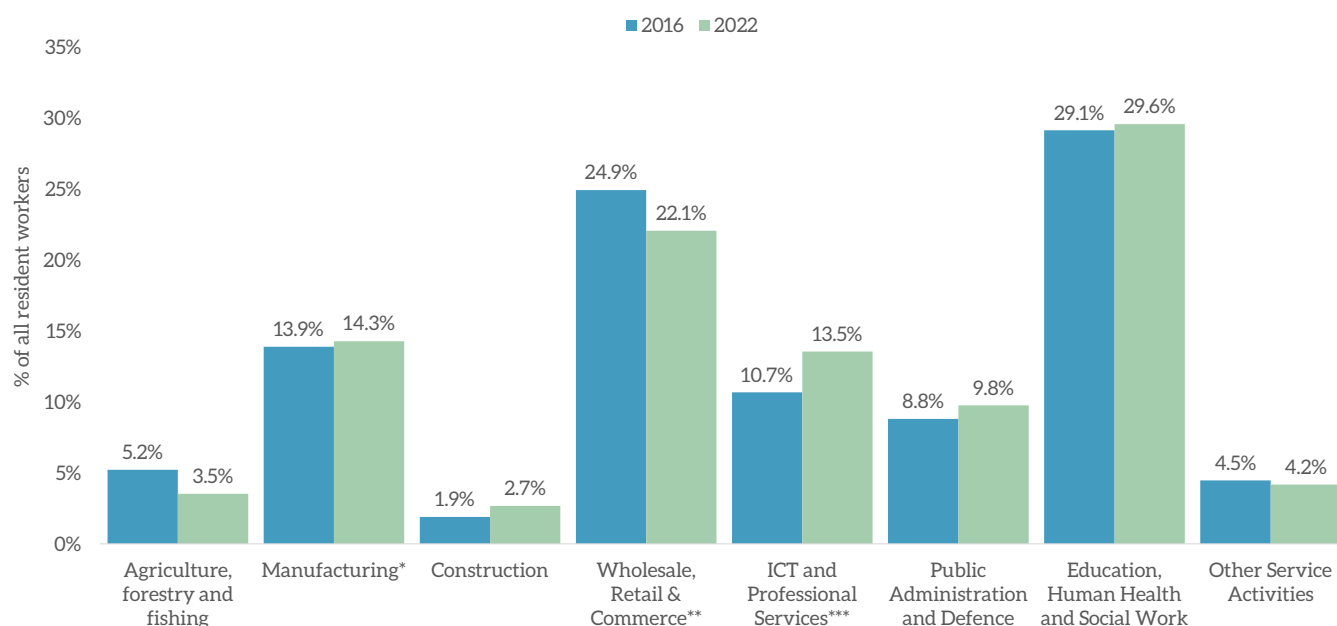


Figure 4.5 below details the industry of employment of the Sligo town labour catchment by the location of employment – working within Sligo town or working elsewhere. Employment in the ‘Education, Human Health and Social Work’ (35%) and ‘Manufacturing’ (16.7%) sectors are more dominant among those employed within Sligo town. The ‘Wholesale, Retail & Commerce’ (23.6%) and ‘Agriculture, forestry and fishing’ (6.1%) sectors have a higher share of employment outside the town than within.

Figure 4.5: Industrial Profile of the Sligo town labour catchment, 2022

Industry	Workers living in the Sligo town labour catchment							
	Total		Working in Sligo town				Working elsewhere in Ireland	
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	860	3.5%	86	0.7%	774	6.1%		
Manufacturing*	3,482	14.3%	1,963	16.7%	1,519	12.0%		
Construction	651	2.7%	167	1.4%	484	3.8%		
Wholesale, Retail & Commerce**	5,380	22.1%	2,394	20.4%	2,986	23.6%		
ICT and Professional Services***	3,303	13.5%	1,570	13.4%	1,733	13.7%		
Public Administration and Defence	2,378	9.8%	998	8.5%	1,380	10.9%		
Education, Human Health & Social Work	7,213	29.6%	4,108	35.0%	3,105	24.6%		
Other Service Activities	1,017	4.2%	439	3.7%	578	4.6%		
Not Stated	98	0.4%	18	0.2%	80	0.6%		
Total	24,382	100%	11,743	100%	12,639	100%		

4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

4.7.3 Socio-Economic Group

The socio-economic structure of employment in the Sligo town labour catchment is set out in Figure 4.6. The socio-economic group (SEG) is determined by occupation and employment status and aims to classify those on the basis of comparable skill and education levels. Occupational categories are not available in POWSCCAR. Socio-economic group is a useful indicator of the type of employment and skills available within labour catchments and is particularly informative when compared to the national socio-economic structure¹¹.

The socio-economic structure of the labour catchment of Sligo town is broadly similar to that of the State with the largest group by far being 'Non-manual'¹² (53.6%), although this grouping is 4.1 percentage points higher than the State average at 49.5%. As with the State, the next largest grouping in the Sligo town labour catchment is 'Employers and Managers' at 11.3%. Relative to the other six key labour catchments, the Sligo town labour catchment recorded the second smallest proportion of resident workers classed as 'Employers and Managers' (Galway City labour catchment is the highest at 13.3%). Following these, the three groupings of 'Semi-skilled', 'Manual-skilled' and 'Lower professional' all account for approximately 6-10% of the resident workforce. 'Farmers and Agricultural Workers' account for 3.5% of all resident workers in the labour catchment.

Figure 4.6: Socio-Economic Group (SEG) Profile of the Sligo town labour catchment and the State, 2022

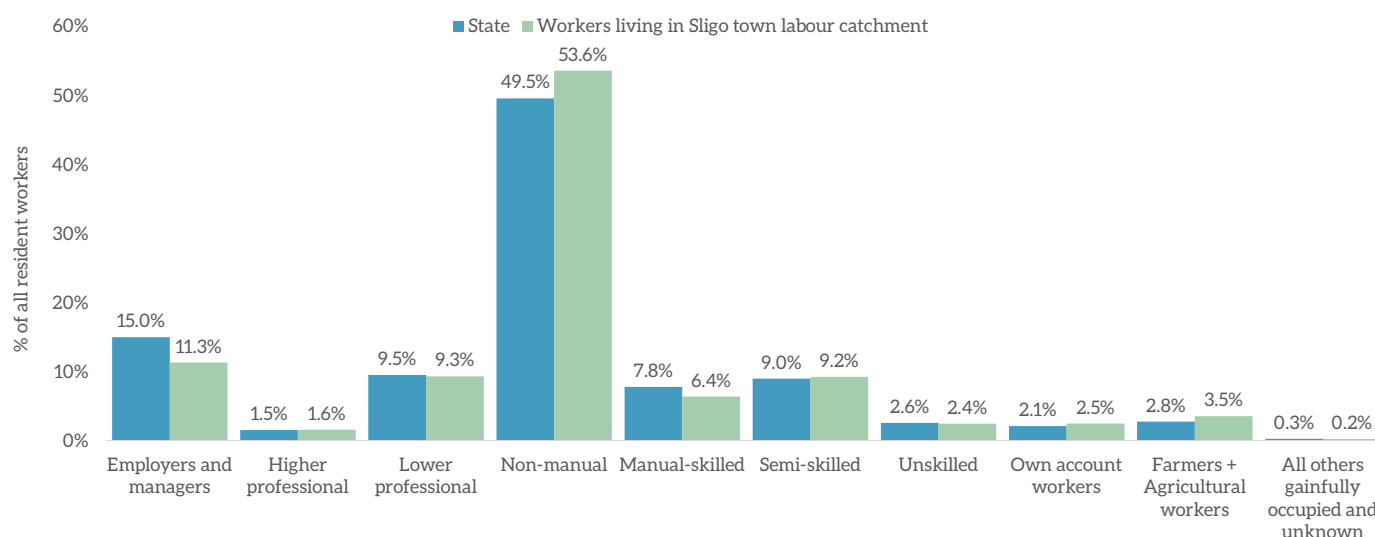


Figure 4.7 below details the socio-economic structure breakdown for those working within Sligo town and those working outside Sligo town. The largest difference between the 'town' and 'elsewhere' group is within the 'Non-manual' group (57.1% in Sligo town vs 50.3% in job locations outside Sligo town) which relates to persons working in retail, government, banking and other areas fulfilling administrative roles. Those working outside Sligo town, in mostly rural areas, also have a higher proportion of workers as part of the 'Farmers and Agricultural workers' grouping (6.2% working outside the town vs 0.7% working in the town).

11| A break in the time series from the CSO has occurred for socio-economic group between Census 2022 and previous census results. Although the categories remain the same, it is important to note the break in time series when comparing historical tables to Census 2022 results. The biggest change that occurred across the State was the shift between the 'Higher Professional' and 'Lower professional' groups to 'Non-manual'. For instance, in 2011 and 2016 the proportion of the workforce with SEG classed as 'Non-manual' was approximately 25% and in the 2022 this proportion was 43.2%. In contrast, 'Higher Professional' groupings declined from approximately 8% in 2011 and 2016 to 1.5% in 2022 (based on full Census results including both Mobile and Uncodable workers).

12| The 'Non-manual' sector is a diverse group which relates to persons working in retail, government, banking and other areas fulfilling administrative roles.

4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

Figure 4.7: Socio-Economic Group (SEG) Profile of the Sligo town labour catchment, 2022

Socio-Economic Group (SEG)	Workers living in the Sligo town labour catchment							
	Total		Working in Sligo town			Working elsewhere in Ireland		
Employers and managers	2,754	11.3%	1,175	10.0%	1,579	12.5%		
Higher professional	383	1.6%	165	1.4%	218	1.7%		
Lower professional	2,265	9.3%	1,374	11.7%	891	7.0%		
Non-manual	13,061	53.6%	6,702	57.1%	6,359	50.3%		
Manual-skilled	1,554	6.4%	550	4.7%	1,004	7.9%		
Semi-skilled	2,250	9.2%	1,225	10.4%	1,025	8.1%		
Unskilled	596	2.4%	293	2.5%	303	2.4%		
Own account workers	603	2.5%	160	1.4%	443	3.5%		
Farmers + Agricultural workers	860	3.5%	79	0.7%	781	6.2%		
All others gainfully occupied and unknown	56	0.2%	20	0.2%	36	0.3%		
Total	24,382	100%	11,743	100%	12,639	100%		

4.7.4 Education

As a whole, overall education levels in Ireland for those at work have increased dramatically since 2006 with the proportion of the national population at work having completed education with a third level qualification (excludes those with a mobile or blank destination) increasing from 43% in 2006 to 56.1% in 2016 to 63.1% in 2022.

Figure 4.8 details the average education profile among those resident workers in the Sligo town labour catchment with 63.2% having completed third level education - this is similar to the rate of 63.1% for workers nationally. The rate for the Western Region was recorded at 61%. Relative to all seven labour catchments, Sligo town has the second most educated workforce with only Galway City (67.6%) having a higher rate. This can be partly attributed to the presence of a third level institute (ATU Sligo)¹³.

¹³ | At the local authority level, Galway City recorded the second highest rate in the State at 72%. The rate for County Sligo resident workers was recorded at 63.1%, the ninth highest rate in the State. It is important to note that this is based on workers with a known work destination only and excludes those with Blank or Mobile work destination (only 32% of those coded blank or mobile in the State have third level qualifications).

4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

Figure 4.8 below details the education attainment levels for all workers, those employed within the town and those employed elsewhere. There is a small difference between the education attainment of those who are employed within Sligo town (65.6% with third level) and those employed elsewhere (61% with third level). This relates to the industry profile of the jobs available within Sligo town (both public sector and 'Manufacturing' jobs in IDA supported industries).

Figure 4.8: Education Attainment Profile of the Sligo town labour catchment, 2022

Education Attainment	Workers living in the Sligo town labour catchment								
	Total			Working in Sligo town			Working elsewhere in Ireland		
Secondary	8,844	36.3%		3,981	33.9%		4,863	38.5%	
Third	15,418	63.2%		7,704	65.6%		7,714	61.0%	
Not Stated	120	0.5%		58	0.5%		62	0.5%	
Total	24,382	100%		11,743	100%		12,639	100%	

Relative to the other main labour catchments, Sligo town has the second highest level of third level attainment of those employed within the town. With a recorded rate of 65.6% with third level education employed in Sligo town, only Galway City (71.1%) labour catchment has a higher rate of highly educated workers. This reflects the type of employment opportunities in the city i.e., third level education institutes, major hospitals and IDA business parks with higher levels of foreign direct investment companies who tend to employ more third level graduates.

4.7.5 Age













In general, there is a major difference in the age of the resident workforce in urban and rural areas across the State. For instance, the urban local authorities of Galway City (25%), Dublin City (24.4%) and Cork City (21.6%) all have a resident workforce where more than a fifth are aged less than 30 years. In contrast, more rural and peripheral local authorities have a much older resident workforce. This is indeed the case for Western Region local authorities with the average rate for the region at 17.3%, aged under 30 years. Five of the ten local authorities with the lowest rates of young resident workers are Western Region local authorities - Galway County recorded the lowest rate across the State at 13.2%, at 15.3% Sligo County recorded the third highest rate in the Western Region with other local authorities as follows: Roscommon County (13.7%), Leitrim (13.9%), Mayo (13.9%), Clare (15%) and Donegal (16%).

The age profile of those at work and over 15 years who live in the Sligo town labour catchment is shown in Figure 4.9. The proportion of young workers (<30 years) residing within the Sligo town labour catchment (15.5%) is lower than the overall State average of 17.6%. This is higher only in the Galway City (17.2%) and Letterkenny (16.4%) labour catchments. The relatively young age profile in Sligo town labour catchment could be explained by the presence of a third level institute within the town (ATU Sligo), similar to the Galway City and Letterkenny labour catchments.

4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

The age profile is marginally higher for those employed within Sligo town than those employed elsewhere and is evident in the data presented in Figure 4.9 below. A total of 16.9% (up from 13.9% in 2016) of all Sligo town labour catchment workers employed in Sligo town are aged 'less than 30 years' whereas the rate for workers elsewhere is 14.3% (down from 15.1% in 2016).







Figure 4.9: Age Profile of the Sligo town labour catchment, 2022

Age	Workers living in the Sligo town labour catchment								
	Total			Working in Sligo town			Working elsewhere in Ireland		
<30	3,786	15.5%		1,984	16.9%		1,802	14.3%	
30-45	9,033	37.0%		4,379	37.3%		4,654	36.8%	
45-64	10,710	43.9%		5,079	43.3%		5,631	44.6%	
65+	853	3.5%		301	2.6%		552	4.4%	
Total	24,382	100%		11,743	100%		12,639	100%	

4.7.6 Gender

The gender composition of residents in the Sligo town labour catchment is shown below. Within the Sligo town labour catchment, female workers account for a larger proportion of the total workforce than their male counterparts with rates of 51.7% and 48.3% respectively. The rates in the Western Region are broadly similar with males accounting for 49% and females accounting for 51% of all workers. The national picture is slightly different with males (50.3%) accounting for a marginally higher rate than females (49.7%).

Figure 4.10: Gender Profile of the Sligo town labour catchment, 2022

Gender	Workers living in the Sligo town labour catchment								
	Total			Working in Sligo town			Working elsewhere in Ireland		
Female	12,616	51.7%		6,497	55.3%		6,119	48.4%	
Male	11,766	48.3%		5,246	44.7%		6,520	51.6%	
Total	24,382	100%		11,743	100%		12,639	100%	

There is a variation between males and females in terms of the location of their work. A larger proportion of those residing in the Sligo town labour catchment and employed in Sligo town are female and account for 55.3% of all resident workers (Figure 4.10).

4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

In contrast to this, those residing in the Sligo town labour catchment and employed elsewhere are more likely to be males - accounting for 51.6% of all resident workers. This, in part, reflects traditional employment patterns where agricultural employment in rural areas accounted for a higher male employment rate outside of the town. In addition, employment sectors which are traditionally female sectors are concentrated in the town, for example retail, banking, finance, public administration and tourism.

An important point to note here is the fact that this analysis excludes all workers who reported not having a fixed place of employment i.e., those with a blank or uncodable place of work and those with a place of work classed as 'mobile' (81,661 Blank and Mobile workers in the Western Region or 21.7% of all resident workers).

4.7.7 Means of Travel

Nationally in 2022, commuting to work by car in Ireland was still the most popular means of travel, with 59% driving and a further 4% travelling as a passenger in a car. The proportion commuting by car did however fall slightly from 66% in 2016 to 63% in 2022. The second most popular way of getting to work was on foot, with 8.8% of commuters walking in 2022, down from 9.3% in 2016 and 11.5% in 2006. Commuting by bike remained at the same level as in 2016 (3%). The proportion of workers travelling by train, DART or LUAS remained at the same level as in 2011 (3%). Commuting by bus was at a similar level as in 2016 (6%), down from 6.4% in 2006.

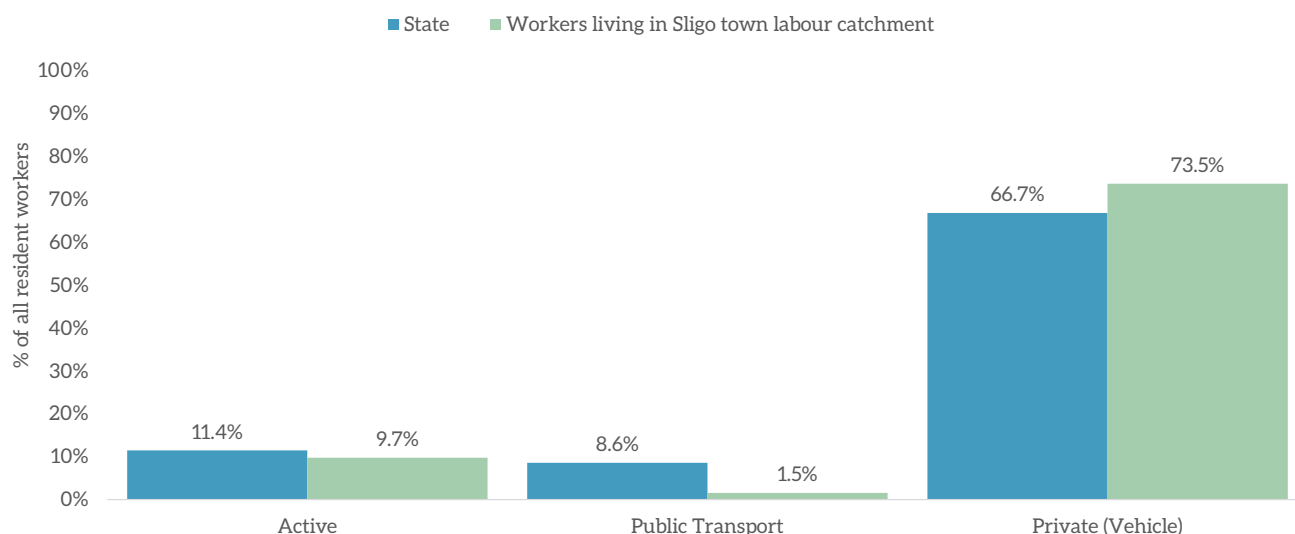
As with the State trend, commuting to work by car (driver and car passenger) is by far the most dominant means of travel across the Western Region (71%). In fact, six of the eight Western Region local authorities are within the top ten highest rates across the State - Galway County (74.8%), Roscommon (74.3%), Clare (73.8%), Leitrim (73.2%), Mayo (72.6%) and Donegal (71.5%). This is unsurprising given the relative lack of public transport choices. The rate in Sligo is marginally lower at 69.8% with Galway City recording the third lowest rate in the State at 52.7%.

By grouping the modes of transport to work into three categories of 'Active' (walking and cycling), 'Public' (bus, train, DART/LUAS) and 'Private' (Car driver and passenger etc.) it is possible to develop a simple overview of the main modes of transport within and across the seven labour catchments (excluding Mobile and Uncodable workers).

Within the Sligo town labour catchment, a total of 9.7% (2,372) used 'Active' modes, 1.5% (377) used 'Public' modes and 73.5% (17,916) used 'Private' modes of transport to employment destinations. This is the second lowest rate amongst the seven labour catchments, see Figures 4.11 and 4.12 below.

4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

Figure 4.11: Means of Travel for Resident Workers, 2022



As expected, there is a big variation in the modes used by resident workers who are employed in Sligo town and those employed elsewhere. Those employed in Sligo town have a much higher propensity to use ‘Active’ modes (13.7%) as opposed to those employed elsewhere (6%).

Figure 4.12: Means of Travel for Resident Workers - Working in the town vs elsewhere, 2022

Means of Travel	Workers living in the Sligo town labour catchment								
	Total			Working in Sligo town			Working elsewhere in Ireland		
Active	2,372	9.7%		1,613	13.7%		759	6.0%	
Public Transport	377	1.5%		167	1.4%		210	1.7%	
Private (Vehicle)	17,916	73.5%		9,084	77.4%		8,832	69.9%	
Total	20,665	84.8%		10,864	92.5%		9,801	77.5%	

Note: The percent columns above do not sum to 100% as the data only relates to Active, Public and Private modes of transport and excludes figures on those Working from Home or Not Stated.

4.7.8 Travel Departure Times

In a change from the previous POWSCCAR publications since the 2016 Census, only the commuting details on the travel time departure of resident workers are provided and not distance travelled¹⁴. Figure 4.13 below details the overall ‘travel time departure’ distribution of all Sligo town labour catchment resident workers.

The most common travel time departures are within the ‘07:01-08:30’ band and this accounted for 49.8% of all resident workers in the labour catchment. The next most popular departure time is ‘Before 07:00’ - recorded at just over one in five of all workers respectively 21% in the Sligo town labour catchment and just over one in four, 25.8% in the State.

¹⁴ | Results from distance travelled variables have included a large element of ‘noise’ with a documented low level of correlation between recorded ‘distance travelled’ and actual physical home to work distances. As such, the travel indicator is based on the travel departure times of resident workers.

4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

Figure 4.13: Departure Times for Resident Workers, 2022¹⁵

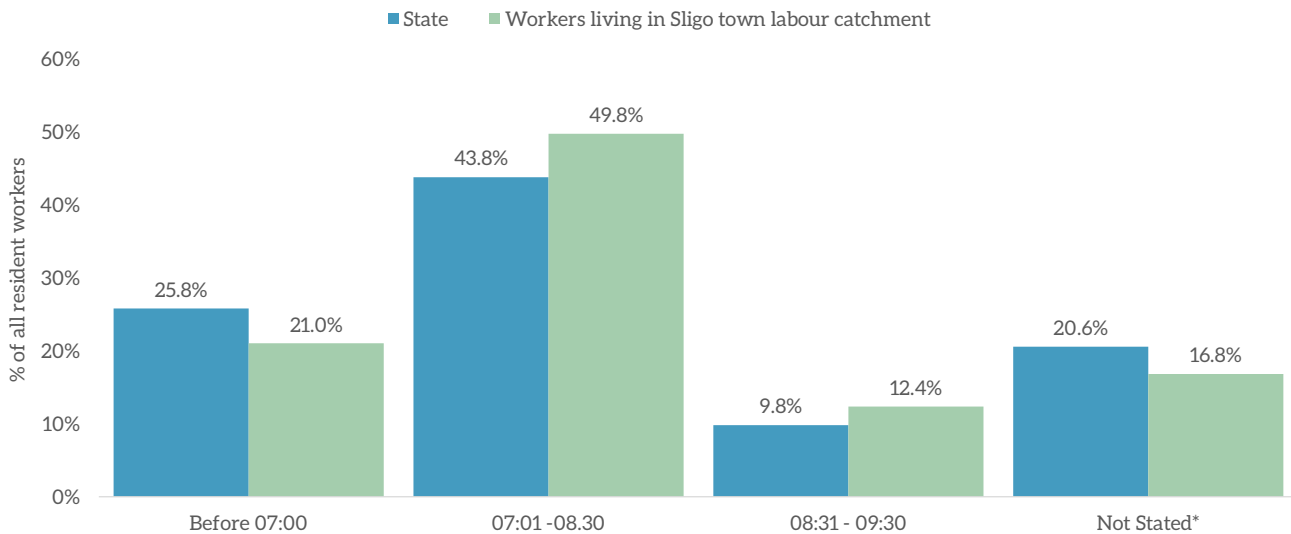


Figure 4.14 below shows a comparison of the ‘travel-time departures’ of those working in Sligo town and those working elsewhere. Comparing these two groups there are some differences across the departure times. There is a higher share commuting to Sligo town between ‘07:01-08:30’ than those commuting elsewhere. A total of 22.2% of Sligo town bound workers residing in the labour catchment depart for work ‘Before 07:00’, higher than the rate for workers travelling to other destinations (20%). These are as a result of the large geographical area the Sligo town labour catchment covers with commuters travelling from all parts of the county and as far as south Donegal and central Leitrim.

Figure 4.14: Departure Times for Resident Workers - Working in the town vs elsewhere, 2022

Departure Time	Workers living in the Sligo town labour catchment							
	Total		Working in Sligo town		Working elsewhere in Ireland			
Before 07:00	5,130	21.0%	2,608	22.2%	2,522	20.0%		
07:01-08:30	12,135	49.8%	6,245	53.2%	5,890	46.6%		
08:31-09:30	3,013	12.4%	1,527	13.0%	1,486	11.8%		
Not Stated*	4,104	16.8%	1,363	11.6%	2,741	21.7%		
Total	24,382	100%	11,743	100%	12,639	100%		

When viewing this table, caution should be advised as there is a high number included in the Not Stated category which includes those travelling after 9:30 (see Figure 4.14 above).

¹⁵ | In POWSCCAR 2022, those travelling after 09:30 are included within the Not Stated category. This differs from previous reports in this series and in the full Census dataset where they are categorised separately.

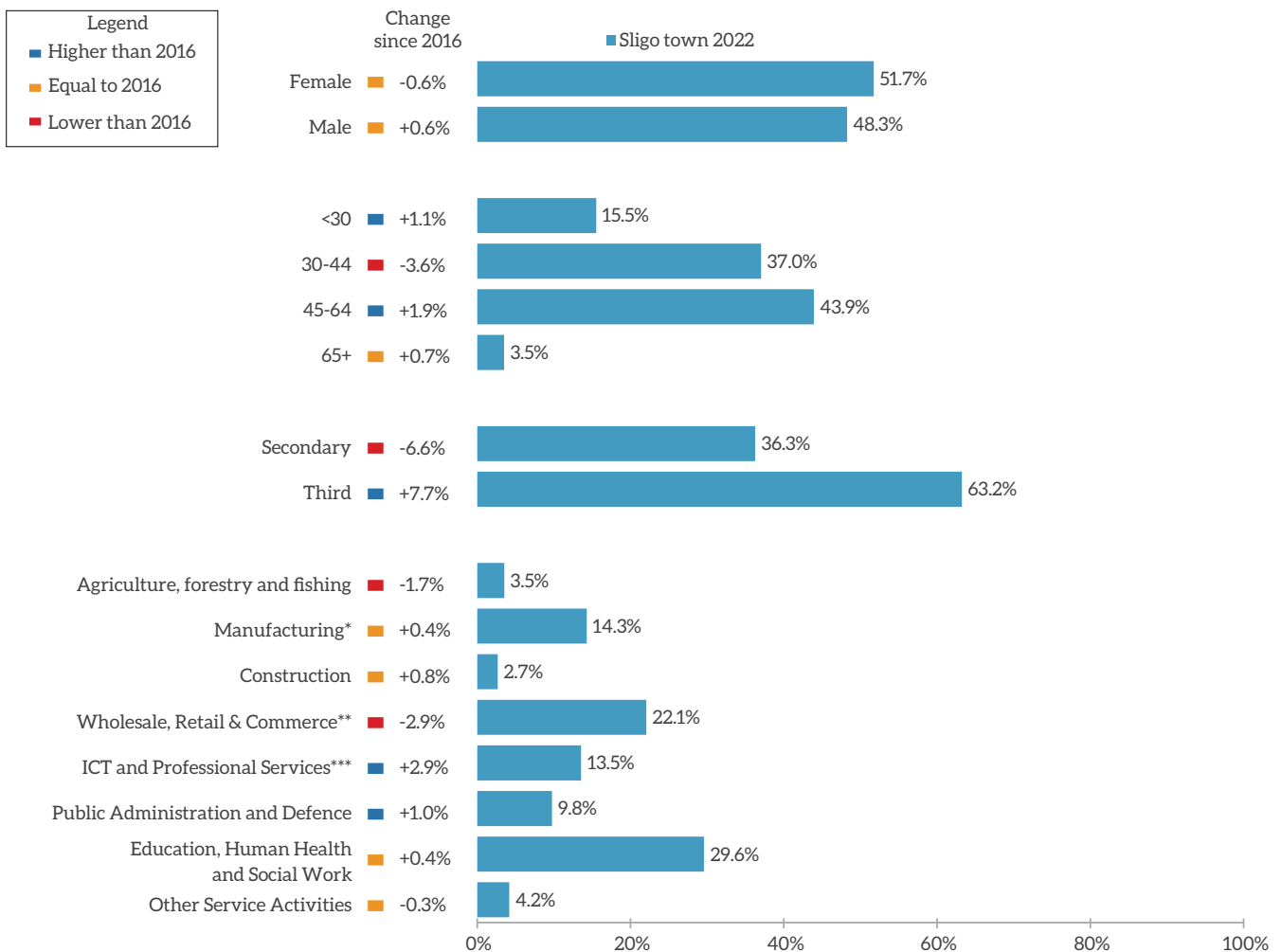
4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

4.8 Analysis of change between 2016 and 2022

The graphic below details the change that has occurred across the Sligo town labour catchment between 2016 and 2022. This is reviewed in the context of geographical changes and the socio-economic characteristics of those residing within the overall labour catchment. As already noted, the Sligo town labour catchment is still the dominant labour catchment for large parts of the county. The geographical size of the Sligo town labour catchment has changed slightly - and now includes larger areas around Manorhamilton but no longer includes the Tubbercurry area, see maps in Section 4.9. The total resident workers residing in the labour catchment has increased to 24,382 from 21,834 in 2016 (+11.7% or +2,548) and from 20,321 in 2006 (+20% or +4,061).

Most notable changes in terms of socio-economic characteristics relate to the age of resident workers (increase in age 45-64), a more educated workforce (increase in third level attainment) a higher share engaged in the 'Public Administration and Defence' and in particular 'ICT and Professional Services' related industries. As with the changing State profile, the Sligo town labour catchment has also seen a decline in employment in 'Agriculture, forestry and fishing' and 'Wholesale, Retail & Commerce'.

Figure 4.15: 2022 Profile indication of change in key indicators since 2016 (comparison of % rates)



Note: with only nine classifications available, industrial classifications in POWSCCAR are less detailed than normal classifications in other Census outputs.

Manufacturing = Manufacturing, mining and quarrying, Electricity, Gas, Water supply and Waste Management

**Wholesale, Retail etc. = Wholesale, Retail Trade, Transportation and Storage, Accommodation and Food Service Activities

***ICT and Professional Services* = Information and Communication, Financial, Real Estate, Professional, administration and support service activities.

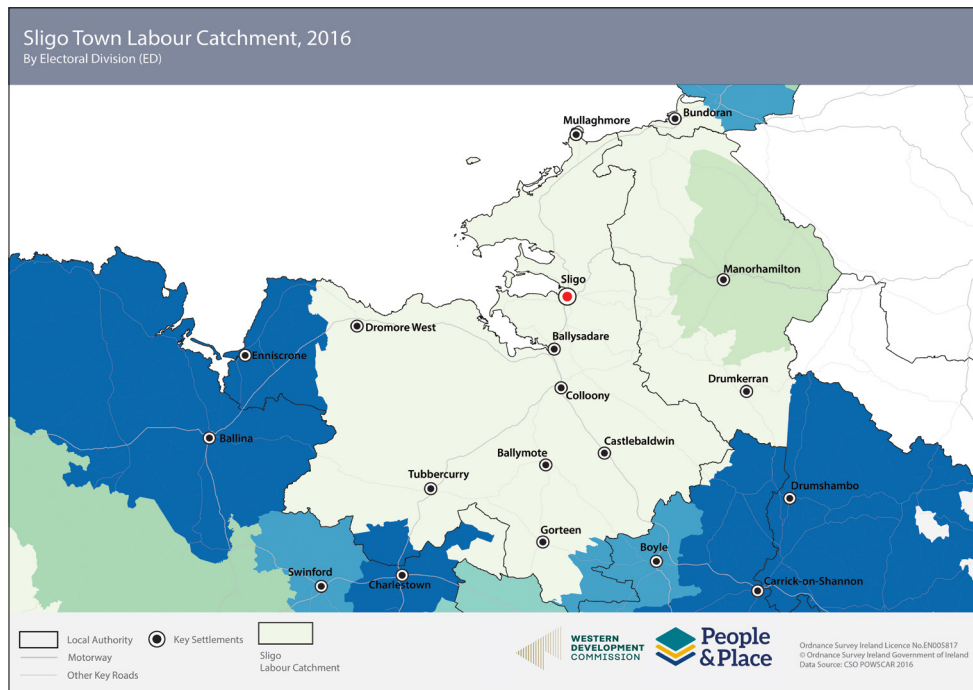
*For some percentage change figures there may be very minor rounding issues (0.1%) due to the fact that the graphic displays data at one decimal point only.

4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

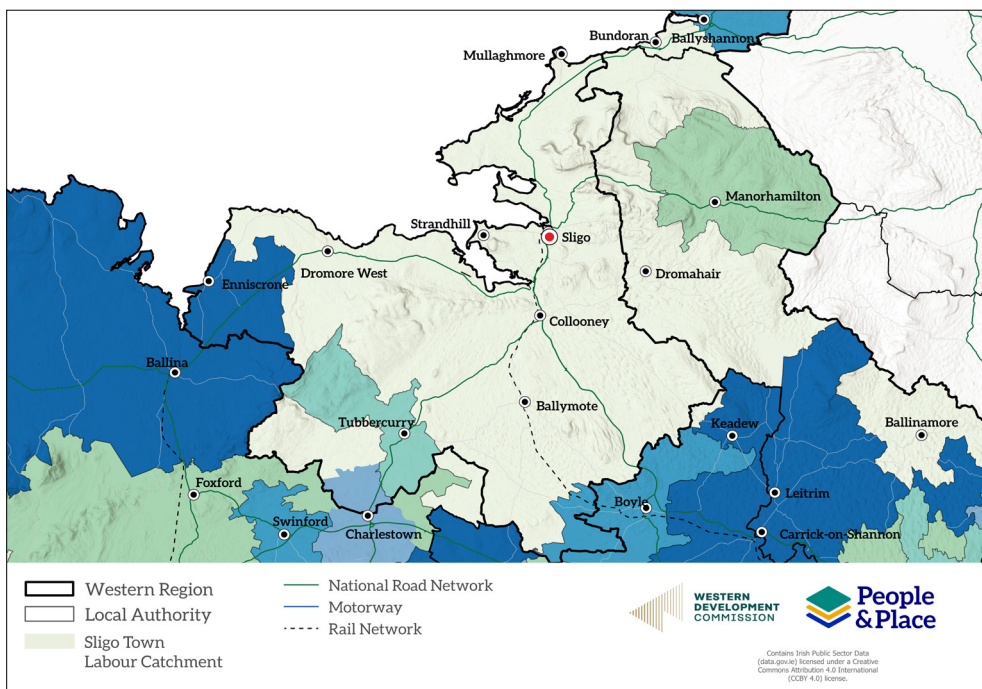
4.9 Analysis of labour catchment change between 2016 and 2022

The maps below detail the geographical changes that have taken place within the Sligo town labour catchment and neighbouring labour catchments between 2016 and 2022. The Sligo town labour catchment extends to the majority of the county, except for EDs in the southeast that are part of the Boyle labour catchment in County Roscommon and EDs in the west that are part of both the Tubbercurry and Ballina labour catchments. Since 2016, Tubbercurry is now its own labour catchment rather than part of the larger Sligo town labour catchment. Large parts of northern Leitrim, with the exception of the Manorhamilton labour catchment, also form part of the Sligo town labour catchment.

Map 4.4: Sligo town labour catchment, 2016



Map 4.5: Sligo town labour catchment, 2022

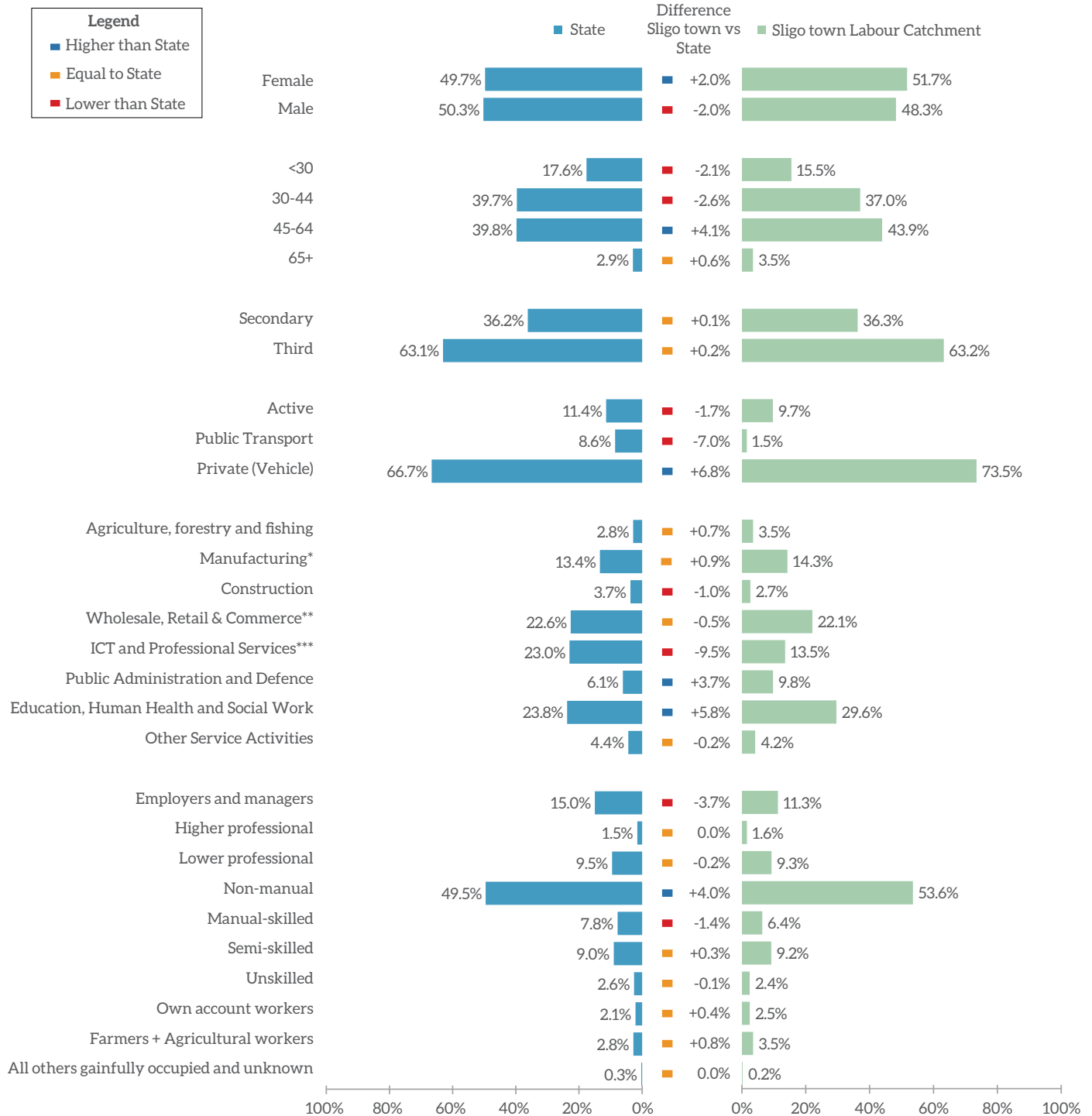


4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

4.10 Sligo town labour catchment comparison with the State, 2022

The graphic below details the socio-economic characteristics of resident workers within the Sligo town labour catchment and provides a comparison with resident workers in the State (excludes those with a mobile or blank destination).

Figure 4.16: Comparison between State and Sligo town labour catchment data for selected indicators



Note: with only nine classifications available, industrial classifications in POWSCCAR are less detailed than normal classifications in other Census outputs.

*Manufacturing = Manufacturing, mining and quarrying, Electricity, Gas, Water supply and Waste Management

**Wholesale, Retail etc. = Wholesale, Retail Trade, Transportation and Storage, Accommodation and Food Service Activities

***ICT and Professional Services = Information and Communication, Financial, Real Estate, Professional, administration and support service activities.

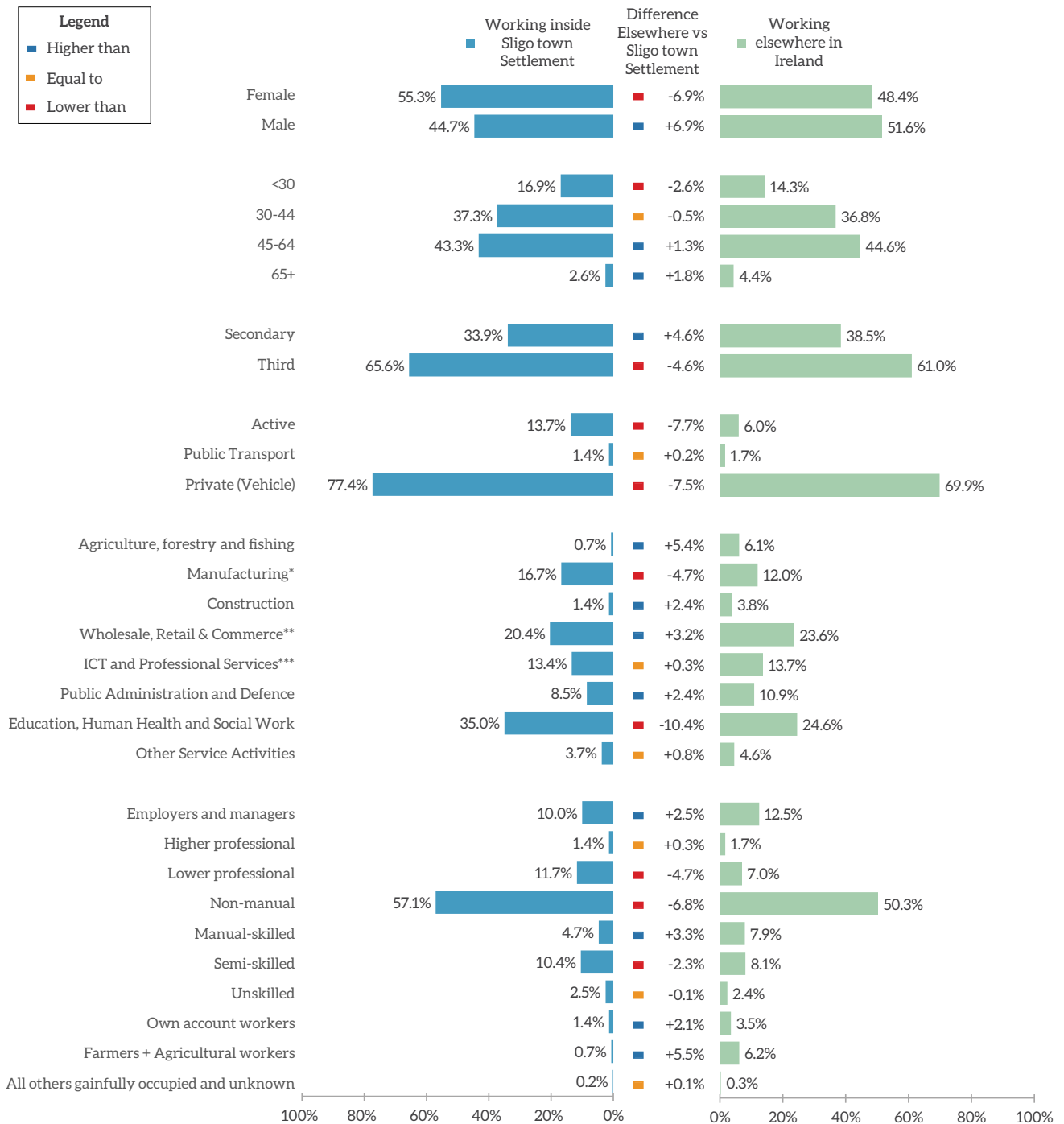
*For some percentage change figures there may be very minor rounding issues (0.1%) due to the fact that the graphic displays data at one decimal point only.

4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

4.11 Sligo town labour catchment - Employed within Sligo town and elsewhere in Ireland comparison

The graphic below details the socio-economic characteristics of resident workers within the Sligo town labour catchment who are employed in Sligo town and those that are resident within the Sligo town labour catchment but employed outside Sligo town and elsewhere in Ireland.

Figure 4.17: Comparison between those working within Sligo town and elsewhere in Ireland, 2022



Note: with only nine classifications available, industrial classifications in POWSCCAR are less detailed than normal classifications in other Census outputs.

*Manufacturing = Manufacturing, mining and quarrying, Electricity, Gas, Water supply and Waste Management

**Wholesale, Retail etc. = Wholesale, Retail Trade, Transportation and Storage, Accommodation and Food Service Activities

***ICT and Professional Services = Information and Communication, Financial, Real Estate, Professional, administration and support service activities.

*For some percentage change figures there may be very minor rounding issues (0.1%) due to the fact that the graphic displays data at one decimal point only.

4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

4.12 Socio-Economic comparison of all seven labour catchments

The graphic below details the socio-economic characteristics of resident workers within the Sligo town labour catchment and the other six main labour catchments in the Western Region; Carrick-on-Shannon, Castlebar, Ennis, Galway City, Letterkenny and Roscommon town. These graphics allow comparisons of theme variables across all seven main labour catchments and the State. For instance, the graphic below on education attainment reveals that the Galway City labour catchment has the highest proportion of resident workers with a third level qualification (67.6%) whereas the rate within the Sligo town labour catchment is 63.2%.

4.12.1 Industry of Employment

Labour catchment	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	Manufacturing*	Construction	Wholesale, Retail & Commerce**	ICT and Professional Services***
Carrick-on-Shannon	3.9%	14.9%	3.6%	22.7%	15.5%
Castlebar	3.5%	15.8%	4.3%	24.7%	11.5%
Ennis	3.5%	17.6%	3.9%	22.2%	15.3%
Galway City	2.6%	19.2%	3.2%	21.0%	18.0%
Letterkenny	4.5%	8.7%	3.0%	23.6%	17.6%
Roscommon town	5.2%	13.8%	4.3%	21.7%	12.8%
Sligo town	3.5%	14.3%	2.7%	22.1%	13.5%
State	2.8%	13.4%	3.7%	22.6%	23.0%

Note: with only nine classifications available, industrial classifications in POWSCCAR are less detailed than normal classifications in other Census outputs.

*'Manufacturing' = Manufacturing, mining and quarrying, Electricity, Gas, Water supply and Waste Management

**Wholesale, Retail etc. = Wholesale, Retail Trade, Transportation and Storage, Accommodation and Food Service Activities

***'ICT and Professional Services' = Information and Communication, Financial, Real Estate, Professional, administration and support service activities.

Labour catchment	Public Administration and Defence	Education, Human Health and Social Work	Other Service Activities	Not Stated
Carrick-on-Shannon	10.9%	23.9%	4.3%	0.3%
Castlebar	8.0%	27.9%	4.1%	0.3%
Ennis	8.1%	25.0%	4.0%	0.3%
Galway City	4.9%	27.3%	3.6%	0.2%
Letterkenny	7.9%	29.9%	4.4%	0.4%
Roscommon town	11.0%	27.2%	3.7%	0.2%
Sligo town	9.8%	29.6%	4.2%	0.4%
State	6.1%	23.8%	4.4%	0.2%

4.12.2 Education Attainment

Labour catchment	Secondary	Third
Carrick-on-Shannon	37.0%	62.2%
Castlebar	41.2%	58.1%
Ennis	37.0%	62.5%
Galway City	31.8%	67.6%
Letterkenny	42.2%	57.2%
Roscommon town	41.9%	57.0%
Sligo town	36.3%	63.2%
State	36.2%	63.1%

4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

4.12.3 Socio-Economic Group (SEG)

Labour catchment	Employers and managers	Higher professional	Lower professional	Non-manual	Manual-skilled
Carrick-on-Shannon	12.1%	1.5%	8.2%	51.6%	7.7%
Castlebar	12.0%	1.3%	8.0%	50.0%	8.4%
Ennis	13.0%	1.5%	8.5%	50.0%	8.3%
Galway City	13.3%	1.5%	11.7%	48.2%	6.4%
Letterkenny	10.7%	1.3%	7.0%	55.9%	7.0%
Roscommon town	11.3%	1.4%	6.4%	50.1%	10.4%
Sligo town	11.3%	1.6%	9.3%	53.6%	6.4%
State	15.0%	1.5%	9.5%	49.5%	7.8%

Labour catchment	Semi-skilled	Unskilled	Own account workers	Farmers + Agricultural workers	All others gainfully occupied and unknown
Carrick-on-Shannon	9.2%	2.4%	3.1%	4.0%	0.2%
Castlebar	11.2%	2.9%	2.5%	3.5%	0.2%
Ennis	9.3%	2.7%	2.9%	3.7%	0.2%
Galway City	11.7%	2.3%	2.1%	2.6%	0.2%
Letterkenny	8.4%	2.8%	2.3%	4.2%	0.3%
Roscommon town	9.9%	2.4%	2.4%	5.4%	0.4%
Sligo town	9.2%	2.4%	2.5%	3.5%	0.2%
State	9.0%	2.6%	2.1%	2.8%	0.3%

4.12.4 Means of Travel

Labour catchment	Active	Public Transport	Private (Vehicle)
Carrick-on-Shannon	6.8%	1.4%	80.0%
Castlebar	7.1%	0.9%	82.4%
Ennis	6.1%	1.2%	80.8%
Galway City	10.1%	4.4%	72.0%
Letterkenny	6.4%	1.1%	77.2%
Roscommon town	5.8%	1.4%	83.7%
Sligo town	9.7%	1.5%	73.5%
State	11.4%	8.6%	66.7%

4. Sligo town Labour Catchment

4.12.5 Age Profile

Labour catchment	<30	30-44	45-64	65+
Carrick-on-Shannon	13.9%	39.1%	43.4%	3.6%
Castlebar	13.5%	37.5%	45.4%	3.6%
Ennis	14.1%	37.1%	45.6%	3.3%
Galway City	17.2%	39.1%	40.8%	2.9%
Letterkenny	16.4%	39.3%	41.7%	2.5%
Roscommon town	13.5%	38.4%	44.3%	3.8%
Sligo town	15.5%	37.0%	43.9%	3.5%
State	17.6%	39.7%	39.8%	2.9%

4.12.6 Gender Profile

Labour catchment	Female	Male
Carrick-on-Shannon	51.2%	48.8%
Castlebar	51.1%	48.9%
Ennis	51.4%	48.6%
Galway City	50.9%	49.1%
Letterkenny	51.4%	48.6%
Roscommon town	50.0%	50.0%
Sligo town	51.7%	48.3%
State	49.7%	50.3%

4.12.7 Time of Departure

Labour catchment	Before 07:00	07:01-08:30	08:31-09:30	Not Stated*
Carrick-on-Shannon	21.7%	48.8%	11.0%	18.4%
Castlebar	23.0%	47.9%	12.8%	16.3%
Ennis	24.6%	47.6%	9.9%	17.9%
Galway City	24.7%	43.4%	12.0%	19.9%
Letterkenny	19.6%	51.6%	11.8%	17.0%
Roscommon town	21.8%	50.1%	10.1%	17.9%
Sligo town	21.0%	49.8%	12.4%	16.8%
State	25.8%	43.8%	9.8%	20.6%

*In POWSCCAR 2022, those travelling after 09:30 are included within the Not Stated category. This differs from previous reports in this series and in the full Census dataset where they are categorised separately.



**WESTERN
DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION**



**People
& Place**



Western Development Commission
Dillon House, Ballaghaderreen,
Co. Roscommon, Ireland.
Tel: +353 (0) 94 9861441
Email: info@wdc.ie

www.westerndevelopment.ie