

Summary of Demand from Industry for Skills / Training – December 2021

The SERSF has compiled the following information from feedback from industry, industry clusters/associations and data available from the Skills and Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU) of SOLAS. It is presented for a number of key economic sectors that are of vital economic importance to the region.

In addition to the identified skills shortages / training needs, sectors have an ongoing need for a wide variety of other training which is being met by the various education and training bodies within and outside the region, internal training and private contracted training providers.

Hospitality – 24,800 employed

This sector includes a variety of employers with the following estimates of employment including:

- Hotels & Accommodation & Food Service – 18,500 employed (CSO QLF Q3 2021)
- Recreation – Visitor attractions, Arts & Ent, Sports, outdoor activities – 3,000 employed (pre Covid)
- Travel & Tourism – Air, Ferries, Rail, Buses, Taxis, Vehicle Hire, Bikes – 3,300 employed

There is approximately 90 hotels, 300 guesthouses and bed & breakfast accommodation, 500 restaurants / takeaways and possibly 750 pubs located throughout the South East (SERSF estimate from own Database & www.business.ie and Google searches). The vast majority of hotels, guesthouses and B&Bs, restaurants and pubs are privately owned and family run businesses.

The public health crisis continues to impact significantly on employment in this sector as restrictions continue to be imposed and adjusted in response to public health concerns. Nonetheless, this is a vitally important sector to the economy of the South East and will endeavour to recover as quickly as possible once pandemic restrictions are discontinued. It is characterised by indigenous SME and micro enterprises widespread throughout the region.

The **hospitality sector** is a significant employer of culinary personnel, waiting and housekeeping, sales and marketing personnel and hotel and restaurant management staff. Employers are concerned about the departure of many skilled staff from the sector due to the current closure of the sector. Measures are required to retain and develop staff so that this vital sector can recover as quickly as possible.

Roles in demand within the region are likely to include:

- Chefs and Cooks
- Waiting & Banqueting Staff
- Restaurant / Catering Managers
- Bar Staff

- Sales & Marketing staff (with strong digital skills)
- Hotel & Restaurant Managers

Identified skills shortages and a need to upskill staff in the following disciplines has been identified by employers:

- Chefs – upskilling in specific areas eg pastry, menu planning & costing, sustainability
- Kitchen / Catering Staff: HACCP Refresher, Customer Service, Train the Trainer
- Restaurant/Catering/Bar Staff & Managers: Revenue Management, Bar Cost Savings, Customer Service, Train the Trainer, Supervisory Practice, Health & Safety Management
- Waiting & Banqueting Staff: Waiting skills, Customer Service, Selling to the Customer.
- Front of House: Customer Service, HotSoft PMS system training.
- Sales & Marketing & Events: Social Media & Online Marketing, Customer Service, Revenue Management
- Senior Managers: Management Development, Revenue Management, Energy Efficiency / Sustainability, Health & Safety Management

The SERSF ***‘South East Hospitality Industry Training & Education Review with Recommendations’*** dated December 2021, collated feedback from industry and the education and training providers within the South East. To make the sector more attractive to employees, the sector has acknowledged the need to improve its image as an employer by providing all staff with training and upskilling opportunities in line with clear career pathways. Employers are willing to support and implement an array of education and training for staff as well as provide more acceptable working conditions.

Recommendations to achieve this include a new regional stakeholders committee to oversee progress, promotion of a Quality Employer Programme, better utilisation of specialised training facilities and closer cooperation with education and training providers across the region.

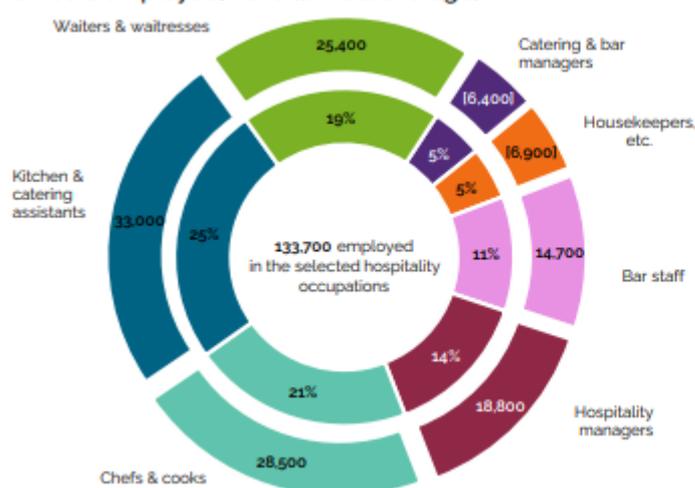
Extracts from the National Skills Bulletin 2021 – see [here](#).

10.11 Hospitality Occupations

Overall employment: approximately 133,700 persons (52% female) were employed in the selected hospitality occupations, representing 5.8% of the national workforce.

- **Sector:** 88% of overall employment was concentrated in the accommodation and food sector
- **Employment growth (5-year):** between 2015 and 2020, there was no change in overall employment
- **Age:** the 25-54-year age group accounted for the majority of persons employed, at 62%. The share of workers under 25 years was 26%, significantly above the national average of 10%
- **Education:** the share of persons employed in the selected hospitality occupations who had attained higher secondary/FET qualifications was 55%, well above the national average share of 35%. Those who had attained third level qualifications (28%) was well below the national average share (51%)
- **Full-time/part-time:** two thirds of those employed in the selected hospitality occupations were in full-time employment, the lowest share of all the occupational groups
- **Nationality:** the share of non-Irish workers, at 35%, was significantly above the national average of 17%, while 65% of workers were Irish nationals.

Numbers employed, 2020 (annual average)



Overall Outlook for these Occupations

Employment fell across all occupations in this group between 2019 and 2020 with the pandemic continuing to cause significant disruption to employment. While overall employment numbers fell sharply in the accommodation and food sector (where the majority were employed) in the year since 2019, this may not be the full extent of the fall. Of those who were classified as employed in this sector, approximately 40% were 'away from work' in quarter 4 2020, compared to 11% in quarter 1 2020, indicating that the 2020 figures do not reflect the full impact of COVID-19. This is borne out in the fact that the accommodation and food sector also accounted for the highest share of persons in receipt of income support payments (both EWSS and PUP). The increase in average hourly earnings for this sector (as detailed in Section 1) indicates that the lower paid roles were most impacted as a result of COVID-19.

Future demand for these occupations will depend on the speed and extent of the recovery in this sector along with increased international travel.

Occupation	Economic summary
Hospitality managers	Employment in this occupation fell by 7% between 2019 and 2020; this was the smallest relative fall in employment across the hospitality occupations. The largest decline (based on quarter 4 data) related to restaurant managers. At 27%, the share of those aged 55 years and older was above the national average in quarter 4 2020; the share of non-Irish nationals was also above the national average, at 30%. Although least affected, the continued restrictions in the sector and the gradual return of international visitors will continue to limit demand for this occupation.
Chefs & cooks	<p>Prior to the onset of the pandemic, employment was growing strongly for chefs. Numbers employed, however, declined in the year since 2019. Despite this, new employment permits continued to be issued in 2020, with numbers higher than in 2019. As a result, non-Irish nationals now account for a higher share of chefs than Irish nationals. The number of new registrations on chef apprenticeships remains small and output from the education and training system is declining.</p> <p>Many businesses were able to adjust their business models in order to continue trading during lockdown periods, retaining employment for some chefs and cooks; further recovery for this occupation will depend on a full easing of restrictions and a return of international travel.</p>
Catering & bar managers	Numbers employed in this occupation are too small to allow for analysis.
Kitchen & catering assistants	<p>The numbers employed in these occupations fell by almost a quarter between 2019 and 2020, with the decline likely to be larger if those employed but 'away from work' were also included. However, employment in these three occupations combined continued to account for over a half of all employment in this occupational group in 2020. Advertisements for these vacancies had one of the largest declines year on year. Despite this, there was a high volume of recent job hires in 2020, indicating that a significant amount of rehiring for these roles occurred as restrictions eased during the year. These occupations had a high share employed who were non-Irish (40% for kitchen and catering assistants), young (over half of waiters and bar staff were aged under 25 years) and working in part-time roles, particularly in the case of waiting staff.</p> <p>The impact of COVID-19 has been severe for these occupations; while some recovery has occurred as restrictions have eased, a full recovery is unlikely in the short-term as a result of reduced capacity and limited international travel. Furthermore, these occupations may experience reduced demand in the longer term, as they have been identified as being at high risk of automation.</p>
Waiters & waitresses	
Bar staff	
Housekeepers & caretakers, etc.	The decline in employment in this occupation between 2019 and 2020 has resulted in the numbers being too small to allow for analysis. The reduced occupancy in hotels due to restrictions and the fall-off in international tourism will likely impact the recovery for this occupation.

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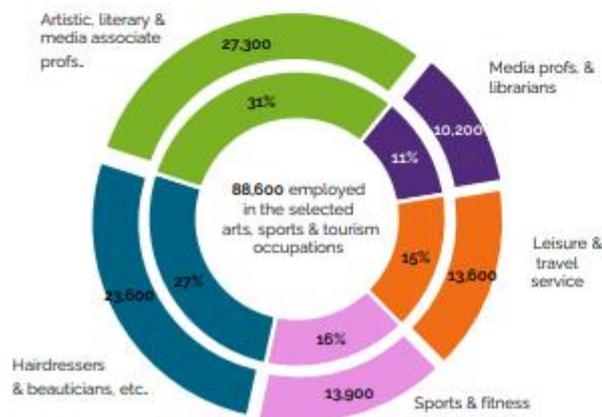
Bulletin description	Number Employed, 2020 (Annual Average)	Annualised Employment Growth Rate, 2015-2020	% Female (Q4 2020)	% Full-Time (Q4 2020)	Aged 55 years and over (Q4 2020)	% Irish Nationals (Q4 2020)	% Third Level Graduates (Q4 2020)	New Employment Permits Issued, 2020 (Number)	SLMRU Recruitment Agency Survey, Oct 2020
Hospitality managers	18,800	-0.1%	[49%]	88%	[27%]	70%	[48%]	1	
Chefs & cooks	28,500	2.1%	35%	76%	-	48%	[36%]	570	
Catering & bar managers	[6,400]	[6.7%]	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Kitchen & catering assistants	33,000	2.1%	53%	56%	-	59%	-	-	
Waiters & waitresses	25,400	-2.1%	74%	[44%]	-	79%	-	-	
Bar staff	14,700	-7.1%	-	[66%]	-	85%	-	-	
Housekeepers & caretakers, etc.	[6,900]	[4.9%]	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total	133,700	0.0%	52%	66%	12%	65%	28%	571	

10.12 Arts, Sports & Tourism Occupations

Overall employment: approximately 88,600 persons (63% female) were employed in the selected arts, sports and tourism occupations, representing 3.9% of the national workforce.

- **Sector:** 47% of overall employment was concentrated in the arts, entertainment and other services sector, with the ICT and professional services sectors combined accounting for a further 28%
- **Employment growth (5-year):** between 2015 and 2020, overall employment increased by 7,300 (1.7% on average annually compared to 2.2% nationally). The strongest rate of employment growth was observed for leisure and travel service occupations (6.7%) during the period
- **Age:** the 25-54-year age group accounted for the majority of persons employed, at 73%. The share of workers aged 55 years and over was 15%, below the national average of 19%
- **Education:** the share of persons employed in the selected arts, sports and tourism occupations who had attained higher secondary/FET qualifications was in line with the national average share of 35%. Those who had attained third level qualifications (57%) was above the national average share (51%)
- **Full-time/part-time:** 71% of those employed were in full-time roles
- **Nationality:** the share of non-Irish workers was slightly above the national average of 17%, while 81% of workers were Irish nationals.

Numbers employed, 2020 (annual average)



Overall Outlook for these Occupations

Employment for these occupations was growing broadly in line with the national average in recent years but declined by 7% in the year since 2019 as a result of the pandemic. Due to the restrictions faced by those working in these roles, including the closure of beauty/hair salons, leisure centres, entertainment venues and the limited foreign travel, there was a significant share of persons working in the arts, entertainment and other services sector who were in receipt of income support payments (both PUP and EWSS). The pace of recovery for many of these occupations will be dependent on the relaxing of social distancing requirements and the lifting of restrictions on overseas travel.

Occupation	Economic summary
Media profs. & librarians	Employment numbers in this occupation have seen little change since 2015 and the impact of COVID-19 is not evident. The numbers employed across the individual occupations were too small to allow for any meaningful analysis.
Artistic, literary & media associate profs.	Employment levels have been stable in recent years, with employment in these roles across a number of sectors including professional activities, IT and the arts and entertainment sector. Vacancies in 2020 were for interpreters, graphic designers and animators (including FX artists and 3D). Employment permits issued in 2020 were primarily related to animators, while vacancies for animators were mentioned as difficult-to-fill by employers in the Skills for Growth data.
Shortage: Animators	The outlooks for this occupation differ depending on the job involved; for some, such as actors and musicians, the impact has been severe due to the closure of event spaces and recovery will be dependent on the easing of social distancing requirements. Others, such as graphic designers and animators, were less disrupted by COVID-19 restrictions and as such, employment is expected to continue to grow.
Sports & fitness occupations	Overall employment levels for sports and fitness occupations have remained relatively unchanged since 2017, although employment numbers declined in the second half of 2020. This is most likely as a result of the closure of fitness centres and restrictions on sporting events due to COVID-19. Employment permits issued for this group related to professional sports players. The number employed in this occupation who were working part-time was far higher than the national average (37% compared to 19% nationally). The recovery in employment will be dependent on the lifting of restrictions and relaxation of social distancing requirements.
Leisure & travel service occupations	The strong five-year growth rate for this occupation masks the decline in employment that occurred in the year since 2019. These occupations have been significantly impacted by COVID-19, particularly air travel assistants and those directly employed in the travel and leisure industry. Employment recovery will be slow and dependent on the lifting of restrictions both nationally and internationally.
Hairdressers & beauticians, etc.	The negative growth rate for this occupation was largely due to the fall in the numbers employed between 2019 and 2020 as a result of COVID-19 related restrictions. While some recovery in employment occurred in the latter half of 2020, it was not to the levels seen prior to the onset of the pandemic; further closures at the start of 2021 would have further impacted these occupations. The slow recovery in international travel may impact the recovery for beauticians/spa therapists employed in hotels etc.

10.12 Arts, Sports & Tourism Occupations

Bulletin description	Number Employed, 2020 (Annual Average)	Annualised Employment Growth Rate, 2015-2020	% Female (Q4 2020)	% Full-Time (Q4 2020)	Aged 55 years and over (Q4 2020)	% Irish Nationals (Q4 2020)	% Third Level Graduates (Q4 2020)	New Employment Permits Issued, 2020 (Number)	SLMRU Recruitment Agency Survey, Oct 2020
Media profs. & librarians	10,200	14%	61%	87%	-	87%	89%	24	
Artistic, literary & media associate profs.	27,300	0.6%	53%	76%	17%	77%	76%	144	
Sports & fitness occupations	13,900	3.8%	-	63%	-	77%	51%	28	
Leisure & travel service occupations	13,600	6.4%	64%	54%	-	86%	-	-	
Hairdressers & beauticians, etc.	23,600	-0.3%	91%	69%	-	84%	33%	-	
Total	88,600	1.7%	63%	71%	15%	81%	57%	196	

Compiled by SERSF
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