



Comhairle Chontae Liatroma
Leitrim County Council



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Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim
Education and Training Board

Strategy for 2026 - 2036

SHAPING LEITRIM PLACE-BASED ECONOMIC & SKILLS

In partnership with the Economic Forum Leitrim County Council

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Executive Summary

Shaping Leitrim 2026–2036 is the county's first integrated Economic Development and Skills Strategy. Led by Leitrim County Council's Economic Development Unit and developed in partnership with the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) Leitrim, the Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board (MSLETB), the Atlantic Technological University (ATU) and a wide range of enterprise, education, community and State stakeholders, it sets a shared, long-term direction for the county. Its purpose is to sustain balanced economic growth and to ensure an adequate supply of appropriately skilled labour to support that growth out to 2036 and beyond.

County Leitrim is a county on the move. Its population has grown to 36,300 - a 9.7% increase between 2018 and 2024, the fourth-highest rate in the State - and Carrick-on-Shannon has established itself as a designated Key Town and a net importer of employment whose labour catchment extends well beyond the county's boundaries. At the same time, Leitrim carries the structural challenges common to rural border counties: a micro-enterprise economy in which 95% of firms employ fewer than ten people, disposable income and wages around 17% below the national average, an ageing demographic profile, and a dispersed settlement pattern that shapes how skills and services can be delivered.

Evidence base

The strategy is grounded in a robust socio-economic and sectoral analysis combined with extensive consultation. The evidence base draws on Central Statistics Office data from 2011 to 2024, national and regional skills-shortage data, and detailed profiling of population, enterprise, education, transport and housing. This is complemented by direct

stakeholder engagement through an online survey, one-to-one interviews and thematic workshops spanning local government, private-sector employers, education and training providers, representative bodies and State agencies. The recommendations that follow are drawn directly from this evidence and reflect the priorities of the county's businesses, educators and communities.

What the evidence shows

Leitrim has real and measurable strengths. Quality of life was rated the county's single greatest asset by 84% of stakeholders. The economy is anchored by genuine sector clusters - MedTech and life sciences (medical devices alone account for 4.1% of persons in employment), financial and professional services (with indigenous companies such as Avant Money and Payac operating at national scale), an internationally recognised artisan food and drink cluster centred on Drumshanbo, advanced manufacturing (11.6% of employment), and an active green-economy and innovation base led by Future Cast in Manorhamilton. This is supported by a growing network of enterprise and digital hubs, the Carrick Business Campus, the new Leitrim College of FET, a self-employment rate above the national average, and the nationally endorsed Hidden Heartlands brand.

These strengths are held back by clear challenges. Housing availability was the lowest-rated dimension in the consultation and the single most-cited barrier to growth, with employers turning away senior candidates for want of accommodation. Transport is constrained - the North-West is the only Irish region without motorway access and 85% of workers commute by car. The county has no third-level institution, third-level attainment sits below the national average, and a structural skills mismatch means local training provision



is weighted toward general and community learning rather than the accredited, technical and trade pathways the economy increasingly requires. Underlying all of this, strong employers operate as isolated anchors rather than networked clusters.

Strategic direction

Five conclusions frame the strategy's response:

- Isolation is the central problem. The county's strengths exist but do not yet connect; interventions that build connective tissue between them address the root cause of underperformance.
- Housing and transport are prerequisites, not background conditions. Where they lie beyond the strategy's delivery reach, they are pursued as active advocacy priorities at national level.
- The talent proposition is real but invisible. Leitrim's case to returning graduates and location-flexible professionals is credible but needs a visible career narrative, diaspora links and a stronger ATU presence to be made legible.
- Building on what exists is more powerful than creating new structures. Many of the supports Leitrim businesses need already exist regionally; the county's role is awareness, navigation and access rather than duplication.
- Governance discipline will determine delivery. A restructured Economic Forum

with private-sector co-ownership, a dedicated coordinator and transparent reporting is the precondition for everything else.

Action framework

The strategy translates this direction into eight pillars of concrete action. Five address economic development - Enterprise Supports, Branding, Governance, Sector Focus, and Talent Attraction, Retention and Activation - and three address skills and talent: Skills System Misalignment, Sector-Specific Labour Shortages, and Skills Gaps and Capability Deficit. Every action carries a named lead, a delivery phase and a measurable target, with delivery led principally by the LCC Economic Development Unit, MSLETB and LEO Leitrim working alongside regional and national partners.

Delivery runs across three phases - 2027-2029, 2030-2032 and 2033-2036 - and is overseen by the Leitrim Economic Forum, supported by a designated senior Economic Development Coordinator. Progress will be reviewed quarterly and reported in an Annual Strategy Progress Report, with a formal midpoint review in 2031 to recalibrate the plan for its second half. Taken together, the research, consultation findings, sectoral analysis and action framework provide a solid, evidence-based foundation from which County Leitrim can meet its skills needs and support sustainable, balanced economic growth over the decade ahead.



Foreword

Shaping Leitrim, a place-based response to economic and skills development

We are delighted to introduce Shaping Leitrim 2026–2036, County Leitrim's first Place-Based and Place-Driven Economic Development and Skills Strategy. Conceived through the leadership of the Leitrim Economic Forum, this strategy reflects a shared commitment to the county's future and provides a roadmap for strengthening our economy, developing our workforce and creating sustainable opportunities over the coming decade.

The Leitrim Economic Forum brings together the key organisations and leaders shaping economic and skills development across the county and wider region. It includes representatives from enterprise and business, major employers, education and training providers, development agencies, local government and community stakeholders. Through this collaborative approach, the strategy reflects a shared understanding of both the opportunities and challenges facing Leitrim and a collective commitment to delivering meaningful change.

Leitrim is a county with strong foundations and growing confidence. We have experienced significant population growth in recent years, welcomed new residents and businesses, and strengthened our reputation as a place that offers an exceptional quality of life, a strong

sense of community, and the opportunity to live and work in a vibrant rural county. Our economy is supported by resilient indigenous enterprise, entrepreneurs and multi-national companies trading globally.

We also recognise the challenges that must be addressed if we are to realise our full potential. Housing availability, transport connectivity, workforce development and retention, skills shortages and demographic change all influence our future competitiveness. This strategy responds by focusing on practical, achievable actions that support enterprise growth, strengthen the talent pipeline, encourages innovation, and stimulates greater collaboration across the county and region.

Above all, this strategy is about people. It is about creating opportunities for our young people, supporting businesses to grow, attracting talent, and ensuring that the benefits of economic success are shared across Leitrim's towns, villages and rural communities.

We would like to sincerely thank everyone who contributed to the development of this strategy. We look forward to working with our partners through the Leitrim Economic Forum to deliver this shared vision for a more connected, skilled, resilient and prosperous Leitrim.



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Cathaoirleach, Leitrim,
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Comhairle Chontae Liatroma
Leitrim County Council



1

Introduction

1 Introduction

County Leitrim is a county on the move. Over the last decade it has recorded one of the strongest rates of net inward migration in the State, its population has grown steadily to 36,300, and Carrick-on-Shannon has established itself as a functional employment centre whose labour catchment extends well beyond the county's own boundaries. Leitrim combines an exceptional quality of life, a distinctive natural and cultural landscape, and a growing enterprise base with the connectivity, hubs and educational infrastructure needed to compete for talent and investment in the years ahead.

At the same time, Leitrim faces the structural challenges common to rural border counties: a predominantly micro-enterprise economy in which 95% of businesses employ fewer than ten people, an ageing demographic profile, lower lifelong-learning participation than the national average, and a dispersed settlement pattern that shapes how skills and services can be delivered. Realising the county's potential will therefore depend on a clear, evidence-based and coordinated approach to economic development and skills.

Shaping Leitrim 2026–2036, the Leitrim Economic Development and Skills Strategy, has been developed to meet exactly this need. Led by Leitrim County Council and its Economic Development Unit, and shaped in partnership with the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) Leitrim, the Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board (MSLETB), the Atlantic Technological University (ATU) and a wide range of enterprise, community and State stakeholders, the strategy sets out a shared, long-term direction for the county. It seeks to ensure that Leitrim can sustain balanced economic growth, and that there is an adequate supply of appropriately skilled labour to support that growth, out to 2036 and beyond.

Development and Focus

The strategy has been developed from a robust socio-economic and sectoral analysis combined with an extensive consultation process. The

evidence base draws on Central Statistics Office (CSO) data from 2011 to 2024, national and regional shortage data, and detailed profiling of the county's population, enterprise base, education provision, transport and housing market. This quantitative analysis is complemented by direct engagement with stakeholders through an online survey, a series of one-to-one interviews, and workshops involving local government, private sector companies, education and training providers, representative and trade union groups, and State bodies.

Bringing these strands together, the strategy examines Leitrim's skills profile from both sides – the occupational demand revealed by the county's workforce and the education and training supply available to meet it – and identifies where the two align or diverge. It then profiles a set of priority industries selected based on employment weight, growth potential, strategic importance, and alignment with regional and national policy. The recommendations that follow are, as a result, grounded directly in the evidence and reflective of the views and priorities put forward by the businesses, educators and communities of County Leitrim.

Overview of the Strategy

The strategy consists of the following chapters:

- Chapter 2 sets out the policy context, mapping the national, regional and local policies and strategies – across both economic development and skills — that frame and inform this strategy.
- Chapter 3 provides a socio-economic profile of County Leitrim, covering population, employment, enterprise, education, transport and commuting, and the housing market, establishing a baseline understanding of the county.
- Chapter 4 summarises the stakeholder consultation, describing the survey,



interviews and workshops undertaken and the key findings drawn from them.

- Chapter 5 analyses skills demand and supply, examining the county's occupational profile, the further and higher education provision available, and the resulting skills mismatch.
- Chapter 6 profiles the key industries in Leitrim, taking a strategic lens to the sectors that offer the clearest opportunities for employment and growth.
- Chapter 7 presents a SCOT analysis, distilling the evidence into the county's Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Threats and synthesising the strategic implications.
- Chapter 8 sets out the Action Framework: eight pillars - spanning economic development and skills and talent - with each action carrying a named lead, a delivery phase and a measurable outcome.

Taken together, the socio-economic research, the consultation findings, the sectoral analysis and the resulting action framework provide a solid, evidence-based foundation from which County Leitrim can address its skills needs and support sustainable, balanced economic growth over the period to 2036.



An aerial photograph of a large lake, likely Lough Erne, surrounded by rolling green hills and dense forests. The sky is a deep, dark brown, suggesting twilight or dusk. The water reflects the dim light from the sky. The hills in the foreground are covered in thick green trees, and the lake's shoreline is visible in the middle ground.

2

Policy Context

2 Policy Context

Shaping Leitrim 2026–2036, the Leitrim Economic Development and Skills Strategy, was developed within a comprehensive

framework of national, regional and local policies. These policies set the direction for economic growth, skills development, digital

transformation, and sustainability across Ireland.

This strategy aligns with and actively contributes to the objectives set out in these frameworks. This chapter maps the key policies and strategies at each geographic level, distinguishing between economic development and skills policy where relevant.

National Policy

Economic Development

Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework (NPF)

The NPF designates the Northern and Western Region as requiring particular focus due to historically low urbanisation, border proximity and the imperative of balanced development. Carrick-on-Shannon features in NPF data as a functional employment centre with a jobs-to-resident-workers ratio above 1.5. Three National Strategic Outcomes are directly relevant to Leitrim: NSO1 (Compact Growth, including the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, the mechanism used to acquire Carrick Business Campus); NSO2 (Enhanced Regional Accessibility, specifically N4 upgrades and Atlantic Economic Corridor development); and NSO3 (Strengthened Rural Economies, including broadband, rural transport and economic diversification).

National Development Plan (NDP) 2021–2030

The NDP commits €165 billion to deliver the NPF. For Leitrim, relevant investment streams include N4 road upgrades, rural broadband, further and higher education investment, and enterprise support infrastructure. The NDP's Enterprise Innovation objectives, such as supporting entrepreneurialism, building competitive clusters and sustaining talent in all regions, provides a direct mandate for investment in assets like Carrick Business Campus and for skills development across the county.

Enterprise Ireland Strategy: Delivering for Ireland, Leading Globally

Enterprise Ireland's strategy prioritises scaling indigenous businesses through innovation, sustainability, and internationalisation, working in tandem with Local Enterprise Offices as the frontline support for micro and small enterprises. For Leitrim, with its micro-enterprise base concentrated in agri-food, engineering and emerging technology, Enterprise Ireland supports — particularly LEO-mediated export-readiness pathways, the Green Transition Fund and management development grants — represent underleveraged opportunities. Carrick Business Campus could strengthen Leitrim's connectivity to Enterprise Ireland's regional innovation infrastructure.

National Smart Specialisation Strategy (S3) for Innovation 2022–2027

The S3 places the Northern and Western Region in a stark position: classified by the European Commission as a Transition Region, Lagging Region and Moderate Innovator, with GDP per capita at 78% of the EU average and high-tech employment at just 5% of the regional workforce. It should be noted that this classification has since changed: the European Commission has



confirmed that the region will be reclassified as a "More Developed Region" for the 2028–2034 funding period, reflecting the region's improved economic performance in recent years. The strategy identifies AgriFood and AgriTech, advanced manufacturing, renewable energy and the creative sector as the NWR's priority innovation domains. Leitrim is explicitly named within the Border Region Manufacturing Cluster initiative, which targets Industry 4.0 adoption among SMEs across Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan, Monaghan and Louth. The Hidden Heartlands brand, covering Leitrim, is identified as an economic asset for the region.

Skills

Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025

Ireland's National Skills Strategy sets a vision for a well-educated, skilled and adaptable workforce, with six strategic objectives centred on lifelong learning, employer engagement, quality teaching, active inclusion and growing skills supply. For Leitrim, three objectives are particularly pressing: increasing lifelong learning participation among those in employment (Leitrim's rate lags the national average); supporting active inclusion for economically inactive and disadvantaged groups; and enhancing SME capability through skills development, given that 95% of Leitrim enterprises employ fewer than ten people.

Ibec Skills Report 2025

With 95% of Leitrim enterprises employing fewer than 10 people, the Ibec findings on SME training disadvantage are directly applicable. Only 46% of small firms have a dedicated training budget, and SMEs invest at roughly half the rate of large firms in digital and Artificial Intelligence (AI) skills. Financial supports to cover direct training costs are the primary ask from small employers nationally, a structural barrier Leitrim's micro-enterprise economy faces acutely. Apprenticeship uptake among small firms is also low, pointing to an underleveraged talent pipeline locally.

The National Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy 2026–2030

Delivered locally through Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board (MSLETB), the FET Strategy's Enterprise Connect initiative, a one-stop-shop for business skills support, directly addresses Leitrim's dispersed SME base. Commitments to micro-qualifications, eCollege expansion, and blended learning reduce the access barriers rural learners face. Green skills and construction priorities align with Leitrim's retrofit demand and renewable energy potential. The Strategy's smart specialisation focus explicitly includes the Donegal–Sligo–Leitrim–Cavan–Monaghan–Louth manufacturing cluster as a target for Industry 4.0 investment.

Harnessing Digital: The Digital Ireland Framework

Harnessing Digital sets national targets with direct bearing on Leitrim: 90% of SMEs at basic digital intensity by 2030, and 80% of adults with basic digital skills, both challenging benchmarks given Leitrim's predominantly micro-enterprise base and below-average educational attainment. The framework's rural connectivity commitments such as gigabit coverage by 2028 and 5G by 2030 underpin Leitrim's remote working potential. Its explicit commitment to ensuring no community is left behind in the digital transition provides a direct mandate for investment in digital skills and SME supports across the county.

Connecting Government 2030: A Digital and ICT

Connecting Government 2030 sets a national target of 90% of applicable public services consumed online by 2030, requiring all public bodies,



Strategy for Ireland's Public Service

Skills for Zero Carbon: Demand for Renewable Energy, Retrofit and EV Skills to 2030

including local authorities, to embed digital skills at every level of the workforce. For Leitrim County Council, a small authority with limited in-house ICT capacity, this means prioritising digital upskilling of staff, adopting shared services and common platforms rather than building standalone solutions, and designating clear digital leadership within the organisation to drive delivery against national obligations.

Ireland faces significant labour and skills shortages across retrofit craft occupations, renewable energy engineering, and EV maintenance, shortfalls that will intensify mid-decade as Climate Action Plan targets peak. For Leitrim, with its large rural housing stock presenting substantial retrofit demand and strong potential in onshore wind, solar and biomass, these national gaps translate directly into local opportunity. Expanding FET and apprenticeship provision in green skills is both a national obligation and a pipeline for Leitrim's emerging green economy.

Regional Policy

Economic Development

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) 2020–2032 — Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NWRA)

NWRA Corporate Plan 2025–2029

North-West Regional Economic Briefing 2024

The RSES is the statutory spatial and economic planning framework for the NWRA region. The RSES designates Carrick-on-Shannon as one of eight Key Towns in the region, identifying it as a priority for investment, compact growth and service provision. Leitrim's rural character and cross-border location are recognised as both a structural challenge and a distinctive asset. The RSES prioritises the blue and green economy, digital connectivity, and rural regeneration as growth levers for counties like Leitrim. Delivery of the Atlantic Economic Corridor ambitions and strengthening of cross-border economic links with Northern Ireland are statutory obligations that Shaping Leitrim must actively support.

The NWRA Corporate Plan translates the RSES into corporate priorities through three themes — Better Places, Enabling and Collaboration. Its focus on advancing Key Towns, low-carbon transition and EU-funded programmes (ERDF, Interreg) directly supports Shaping Leitrim's ambitions for Carrick-on-Shannon, enterprise infrastructure and green skills. As the body monitoring Leitrim's regional performance, the NWRA provides both the strategic alignment and the funding pathways this strategy depends on.

The NWRA Regional Economic Briefing shows Leitrim with an average disposable income of €24,960, the third lowest in the region and 17% below the national average of €30,139. Income growth of just +3.4% was the weakest of all counties, against a national rate of +7.7%. With 13,620 persons employed (by place of work), Leitrim has the smallest employment base in the region and recorded a -2.4% decline in employment in 2024 making it the only county in the NWRA to record a fall, against a regional average of +0.9% and national growth of +2.7%. This data signals a county requiring targeted economic intervention.



OECD: Rethinking Regional Attractiveness in the Northern and Western Region of Ireland

The OECD report finds the NWRA region lags behind other Irish and EU regions in GDP per capita and GVA per worker. Internet download speeds run approximately 20% below the national average; transport connectivity falls well below EU norms; and the regional poverty rate stands at approximately 19%. Key strengths identified by the OECD include 74% of electricity from renewables, among the highest in the OECD, and strong social cohesion. The OECD recommends that NWRA counties prioritise digital infrastructure investment, green economy development, talent attraction strategies, and stronger multi-actor governance to improve regional competitiveness.

Skills

SOLAS Regional Skills: Border Region Infographics (Q2 2025)

The SOLAS Border Region Infographic (Q2 2025) shows a labour force participation rate of 63.3%, below the national average of 66.4% (2025), with female participation particularly low at 57% versus 61.3% nationally (data from 2025). Only 48% of the working-age population hold third-level qualifications, against 57% nationally. The Border region has the lowest share of high-skilled occupations of any Irish region (35.6% versus 46% nationally) and the lowest rate of remote working (24.1% versus 35.9% nationally). Health is the fastest-growing employment sector (+28%). Of 1,415 new employment permits issued in the Border region in 2024, agriculture and health dominated, reflecting persistent labour shortages in both sectors.

Local Policy

Economic Development

Leitrim Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)

The LECP establishes a county ambition of being "connected, inclusive and sustainable... a great place to live, visit, work, invest and grow." Goals 4 and 5 are most directly relevant to Shaping Leitrim: Goal 4 targets educational attainment, digital skills and training; Goal 5 focuses on economic diversification, investment attraction and enterprise support. Key baseline data: 95% of enterprises employ fewer than 10 people; labour force participation is 52.8% against 56.1% nationally (Estimated Population 2022); third-level attainment at 35.4% trails the national 39.3%; and workforce availability was identified as the primary constraint on growth.

Leitrim County Council Corporate Plan 2024–2029

The Corporate Plan sets a vision of "an ambitious, thriving, vibrant, sustainable and connected Leitrim with opportunity for everyone." Its "Grow Businesses and Economy" strategic goal is most directly relevant to Shaping Leitrim, committing Leitrim County Council to promoting business start-up and expansion, achieving full occupancy of Carrick Business Campus, developing a new Digital Strategy, exploring third-level education provision, and



Digital Placemaking: A Strategy for a Connected Leitrim

expanding sectoral supports in food, craft, engineering and tourism. The Corporate Plan explicitly acknowledges housing shortages, absence of third-level facilities and workforce attraction as the county's primary barriers to economic growth.

The strategy identifies Leitrim as a county with growing potential as a destination for remote workers and digital enterprises, underpinned by expanding high-speed connectivity. It sets out a framework for smart town initiatives, digital enterprise supports and remote working infrastructure, recognising that realising this potential requires active investment rather than passive connectivity provision.

Carrick-on-Shannon Town Centre First (TCF) Plan

The TCF Plan sets out place-based actions to revitalise Carrick-on-Shannon town centre, improve the public realm, attract enterprise and retail investment, and strengthen the town's role as a regional service centre. As the county's primary economic hub, the vitality of Carrick-on-Shannon is directly linked to the wider economic health of Leitrim.

Carrick Business Campus 5-Year Development Strategy

The KPMG strategy sets out the investment case for Leitrim's primary enterprise campus. The 112,000 sq ft facility currently operates at 35% occupancy. A €7.76 million capital programme, including energy retrofit and fabric upgrade, is planned, with a target of 90% occupancy by 2028 (needs revision). Total projected income across 2024–2029 is €9.7 million, with operating profit of €2.76 million. The proposed Atrium Technology Platform, to be funded through Enterprise Ireland's Smart Regions Fund, could provide a regional innovation facility for the northwest and midlands.

Travel to Work and Labour Catchments in the Western Region: Carrick-on-Shannon Labour Catchment (WDC)

The Western Development Commission's 2024 analysis finds 3,145 jobs located within Carrick-on-Shannon out of all jobs in County Leitrim. The town's labour catchment extends across most of south Leitrim and into northern Roscommon, with 6,600 resident workers, yet over 70% of these work outside the town. The catchment's workforce is relatively well-educated (62.2% third-level), older than the national average, and almost entirely car-dependent, with public transport usage at just 1.4%.



A scenic landscape of a lake with a forested hill and a small boat in the distance. The sky is blue with scattered clouds. The water is calm, reflecting the sky and the surrounding greenery. A small boat is visible on the water. In the foreground, there are some wooden posts and a small wooden structure. The overall mood is peaceful and serene.

3

Socio-Economic Profile

3 Socio-Economic Profile

This chapter provides a socio-economic overview of County Leitrim. CSO data from 2011-2024 has been utilised to illustrate the socio-economic characteristics of the County including the county's population change and composition, regional settlement pattern, and longer-term population projections, as well as employment, industrial and enterprise structure, educational attainment, transport and commuting, and the housing market. Together, these indicators establish a baseline understanding of how different socio-economic factors could potentially influence the economic development, labour force and availability of skills into the future.

growth was driven mainly by migration rather than natural increase. The county recorded an average annual net inward migration of 11 persons per 1,000 population, the third-highest rate nationally, behind only Longford and Meath. Natural increase remained comparatively low, at 789 persons over the period, reflecting the county's ageing profile. This underscores migration as the primary driver of Leitrim's recent population growth.

Population

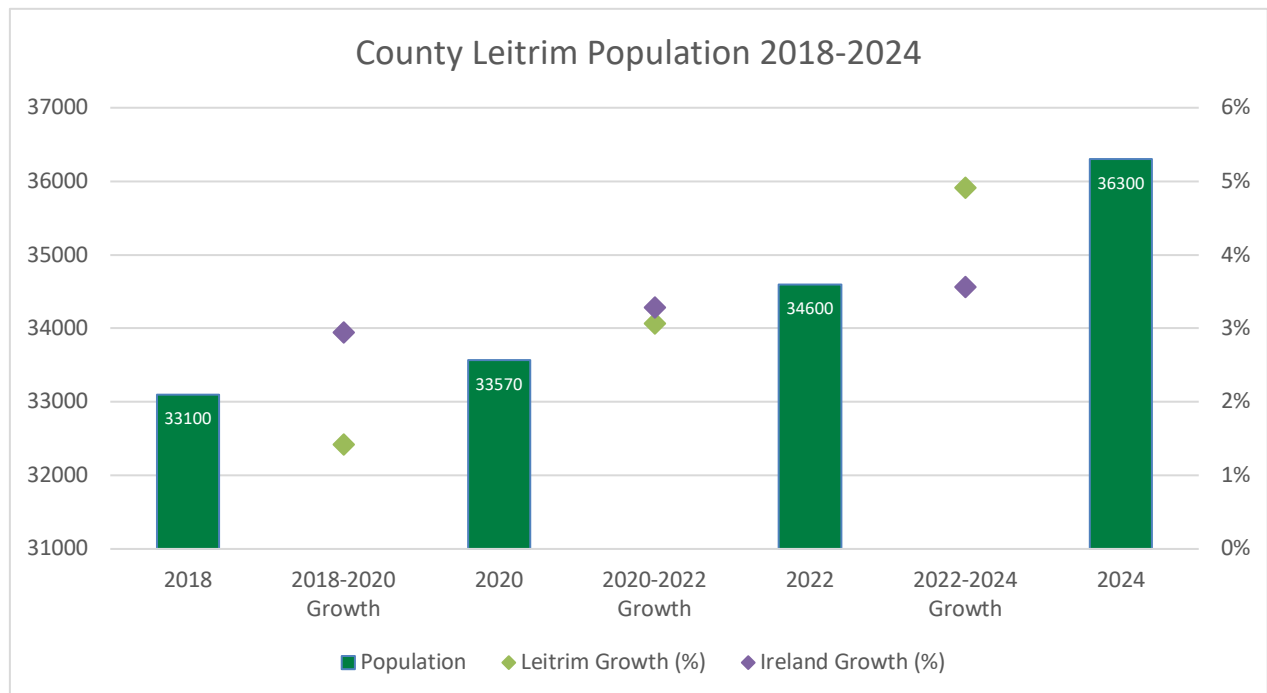
Population Change

Similar to the state average, County Leitrim is characterised by a growing population (i.e., net natural change, positive net migration) with gradually decreasing birth rates and increasing death rates. As the average age increases, so does the share of retired and age-dependent persons. The County's population is heavily concentrated in and around the towns Carrick-on-Shannon, Manorhamilton, Drumshanbo, Kinlough, Ballinamore, and Mohill.

As illustrated in Figure 1, County Leitrim's population grew from 33,100 in 2018 to 33,570 in 2020, representing a growth rate of 1.42%. The population increased further to 34,600 in 2022 and to 36,300 in 2024, equating to growth rates of 3.07% and 4.91% respectively over the 2020–2022 and 2022–2024 periods. While growth in the earlier period was more modest and below the national average, more recent trends indicate a strengthening rate of population increase within the county. Over the full period from 2018 to 2024, Leitrim has experienced steady population expansion. According to CSO Census data, between 2016 and 2022, Leitrim's population



Figure 1



Data Source: CSO Ireland 2018-2024, Estimated Population in April

Note: Figures in this chart are drawn from the CSO's Population and Migration Estimates (April series), which are modelled between census years. Census 2022 recorded an actual population of 35,199 for County Leitrim, which differs from the April 2022 estimate

(34,600) shown above. Estimates and census counts are compiled using different methodologies and are not directly comparable; the estimates series has been retained here to preserve a consistent basis for the 2018-2024 trend.

Population Composition

County Leitrim's population is ageing and skews slightly female. In 2022, the average age stood at 40.7 years, up from 39.8 in 2016 and above the national average of 38.8. The county recorded 99 males for every 100 females, reflecting a minor female majority. The over-65 population grew 22% between 2016 and 2022 to reach 6,573 people, broadly matching national growth in this age group and reinforcing the shift towards an older population base.

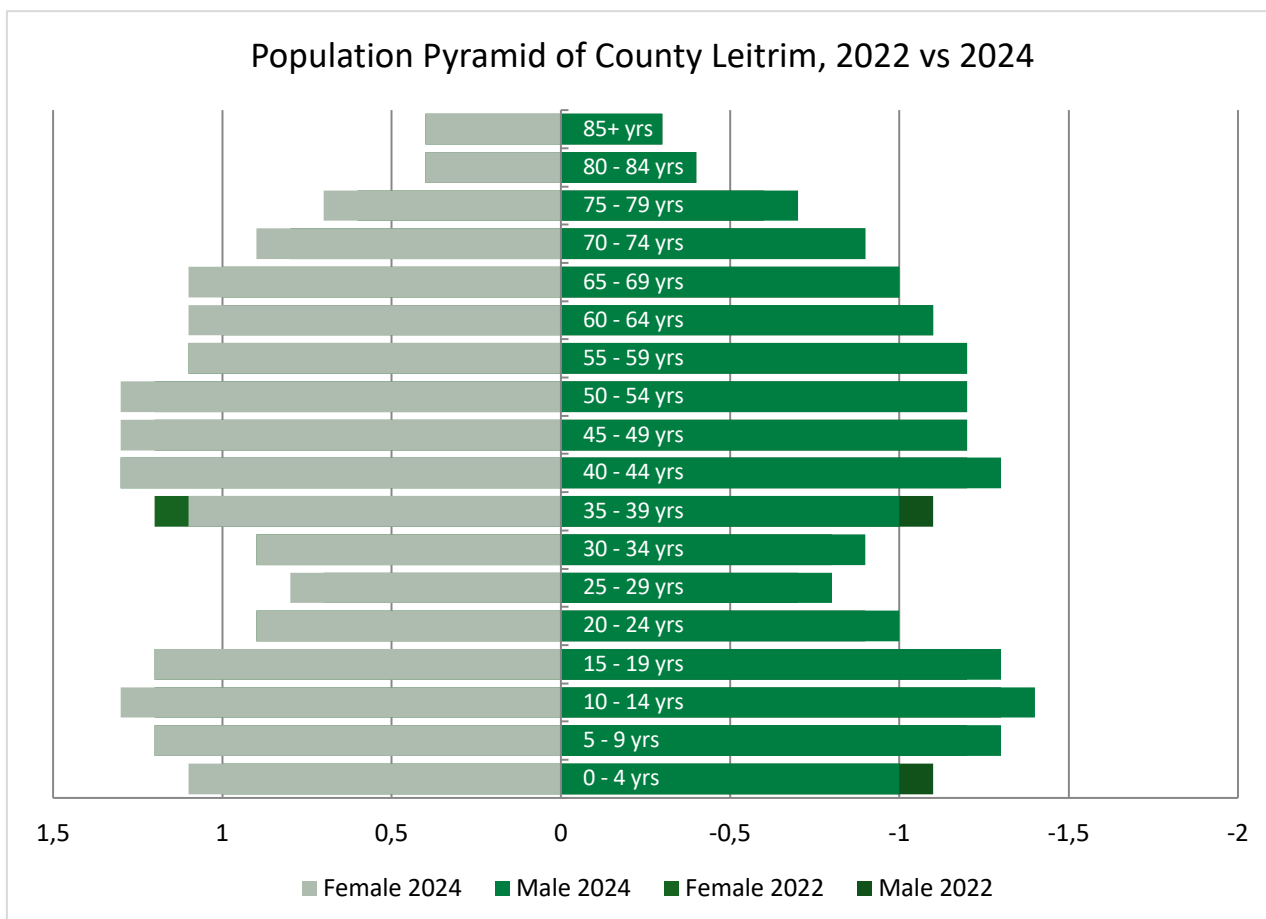
This age structure is shaped by two opposing forces: an established, ageing core of working-age adults who settled in the county during the residential expansion of the 1990s and 2000s and have aged in place, and a persistent shortfall of people in their twenties, a group prone to leaving rural counties for education and employment

elsewhere. This imbalance has direct implications for labour supply, housing demand, and long-term workforce renewal.

Figure 2 illustrates this pattern, comparing the estimated resident population in 2022 and 2024 by five-year age cohort and sex. It shows continued growth concentrated in the 45-64 bands, broad stability among children aged 0-9, and the 20-24 and 25-29 cohorts remaining the narrowest of all. The sex balance stays broadly even through working-age groups, widening into a female surplus from age 65 onward, consistent with national and international patterns of female longevity.

Sustaining current growth will depend on retaining and attracting the 20-24 and 25-29 cohorts, through continued investment in employment, housing affordability, and local amenities.

Figure 2



Data Source: CSO Ireland 2022-2024, Estimated Population in April

Regional Distribution

According to analysis by the Western Development Commission, County Leitrim covers a land area of 158,885 hectares, around 2.26% of the state, with a population density of just 22.15 persons per km² in 2022, one of the lowest in Ireland and reflective of its rural, dispersed settlement pattern. Of the county's 35,199 residents, only a minority live in built-up areas of any scale. Carrick-on-Shannon is by far the largest centre, with 4,743 residents, followed by Manorhamilton (1,667), Drumshanbo (1,240), Kinlough (1,196), Ballinamore (1,112), and Mohill (1,027). Smaller centres including Dromahair, Dromod, and Leitrim Village each have populations under 1,000. This settlement structure means the bulk of the county's population lives outside these named centres, spread across smaller villages and rural townlands rather than concentrated in a small number of towns.

The pattern reinforces the importance of regional and local road networks, and of maintaining services across a wide geographic footprint rather than a handful of urban hubs.

Population Projections for 2036

Looking ahead, population growth in County Leitrim is expected to moderate over the medium to long term. While not available on a county level, based on CSO Regional Population Projections to 2036, Leitrim forms part of the Border Region, which is projected to experience significantly lower population growth compared to the national average, with some scenarios indicating the potential for stagnation or slight decline. This reflects broader demographic trends in more rural and peripheral areas, including lower levels of inward migration and an ageing population profile. As such, while recent growth trends are positive, sustaining population levels in the longer term will present challenges,

particularly in relation to maintaining balanced settlement patterns, supporting local services, and ensuring the viability of smaller towns and rural communities.

Employment

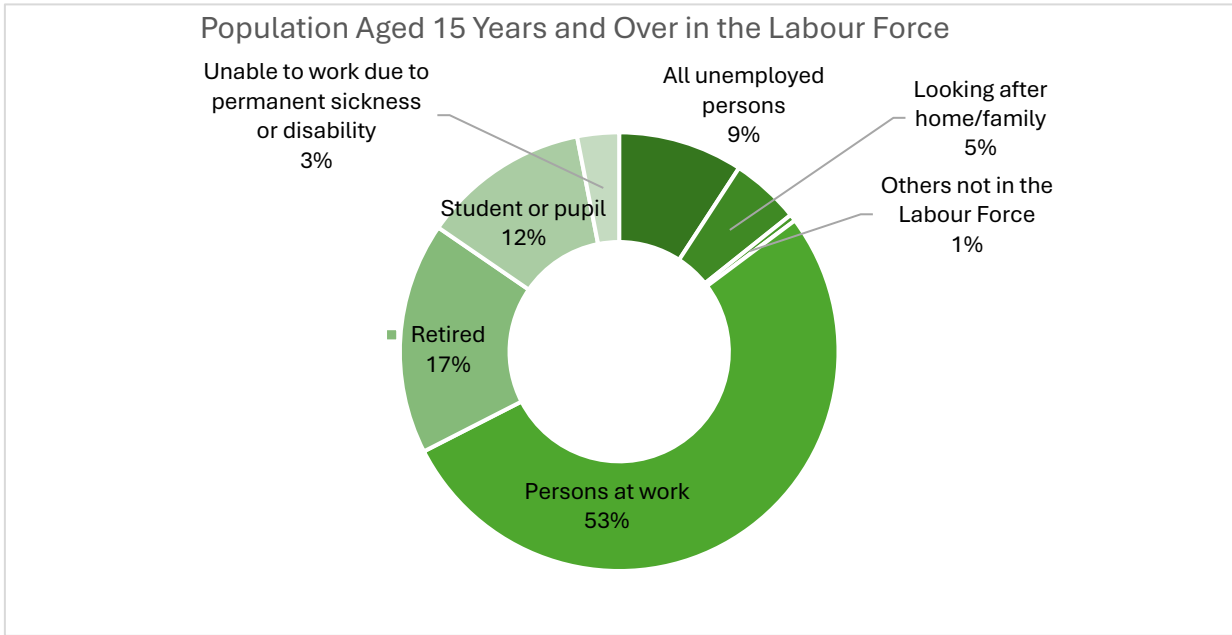
Labour Force Participation

Leitrim county's labour force participation trails the national picture, standing at 58% in 2022 compared with 61% nationally (Census 2022). The female participation rate remains lower (54% in Leitrim versus 56% nationally) than the male rate (63% in Leitrim versus 67% nationally).

Employment has grown strongly since 2016. More than 28,000 people living in the county in April 2022 were aged 15 and over and of these over 14,800 people were at work, up 16% on 2016, in line with national growth. Unemployment fell over the same period, down 30% to just over 1,500 people, bringing the county's unemployment rate from 15% to 9%. Most workers are in full-time roles, with over 11,000 in full-time employment against 2,400 part-time.

Figure 3 sets out the economic status of the population aged 15 and over in County Leitrim (Estimated Population). People at work make

up the largest share, at 53%, followed by those who are retired (17%) and students (12%). The unemployed account for 9%, while those looking after their home or family represent about one in twenty (5%). Very small shares are unable to work due to illness or disability (3%) or fall into other categories outside the labour force (1%).



Data Source: CSO Ireland 2022, Estimated Population

Note: Figures in this chart are drawn from the CSO's Population and Migration Estimates (April series), which might differ from the CSO 2022 Census figures. The Industries and Key Industries chapters use the Census 2022 figure of 14,045 persons in

employment; the two are compiled on different bases.

Industries in Leitrim County

Of Leitrim County's recorded total labour force (16,329 in Census 2022), 14,045 were employed across identifiable industries, 1,513 were unemployed (unemployment rate: 9.3%), and 771 did not state an industry. Table 1 sets out the industry profile, broken down by Detailed Industrial Group (DIG) which is in line with the

EU's NACE Rev. 2 classification system. Leitrim's employment is spread across public services, traditional land-based industries, and a smaller private sector. Health, education, and public administration together account for roughly a third of all employed persons. Wholesale and retail trade and manufacturing are the largest private-sector employers. Agriculture, forestry, and fishing also employ a significant share of the workforce.

Table 1

Employment by Industry 2022		
Industry	Persons	% Employed
Health & Social Work	1,860	13.2%
Wholesale & Retail Trade	1,722	12.3%
Manufacturing	1,629	11.6%
Education	1,547	11.0%
Public Administration & Defence	1,436	10.2%
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	1,008	7.2%
Construction	925	6.6%
Accommodation & Food Services	800	5.7%
Professional, Scientific & Technical	697	5.0%
Administrative & Support Services	432	3.1%
Other Services	387	2.8%
Information & Communication	386	2.7%
Financial & Insurance Activities	382	2.7%
Transport & Storage	358	2.5%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	187	1.3%
Energy, Water & Utilities	168	1.2%
Mining & Quarrying	63	0.4%
Real Estate	58	0.4%
TOTAL EMPLOYED	14,045	100.0%

Data Source: CSO Ireland, Census 2022

Note: CSO census data uses DIG, which map onto EU NACE Rev. 2 classifications. See Appendix 2 for the full concordance table.

The 18 industries are elaborated below, from largest to smallest, highlighting some of the specific DIG's in each sector.

- Health & Social Work: Residential care and social work (901); other human health activities (429); hospital activities (377).
- Wholesale & Retail Trade: Retail sale in non-specialised stores, food/beverage/tobacco (393); retail trade (383); motor trades (227).
- Manufacturing: Medical and dental instruments and supplies (572); basic pharmaceutical products (130); wood and wood products (120).
- Education: Primary education (510); secondary education (462); pre-primary education (226).
- Public Administration & Defence: Public administration and compulsory social security (1,278); public order and safety (124); defence activities (34).
- Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing: Farming of animals; mixed farming (887); forestry and logging (58).
- Construction: Construction of buildings (444); building completion and finishing (145); electrical installation (140).
- Accommodation & Food Services: Hotels and similar accommodation (262); restaurants and mobile food service activities (248); beverage serving activities (196).
- Professional, Scientific & Technical: Architectural and engineering activities (186); accounting, bookkeeping and tax consultancy (117); legal activities (107).
- Administrative & Support Services: Services to buildings and landscape activities (124); renting and leasing activities (118); office administrative and support activities (64).
- Other Services: Hairdressing and other beauty treatment (156); activities of membership organisations (145).
- Information & Communication: Computer programming, consultancy and information service activities (247); telecommunications (75).
- Financial & Insurance Activities: Financial service activities, except insurance (145); activities auxiliary to financial services (130); insurance, reinsurance and pension funding (92).
- Transport & Storage: Freight transport by road (105); postal and courier activities (97); other passenger land transport (75).
- Arts, Entertainment & Recreation: Sports, amusement and recreation activities (87); creative, arts and entertainment activities (58).
- Energy, Water & Utilities: Electric power generation, transmission and distribution (90); sewerage, waste management and remediation (40); water collection, treatment and supply (37).
- Mining & Quarrying: Other mining and quarrying (59).
- Real Estate: Real estate activities (58).

Chapter 6 provides a more in-depth analysis of the county's most strategically relevant industries.

Enterprise

Business Demography

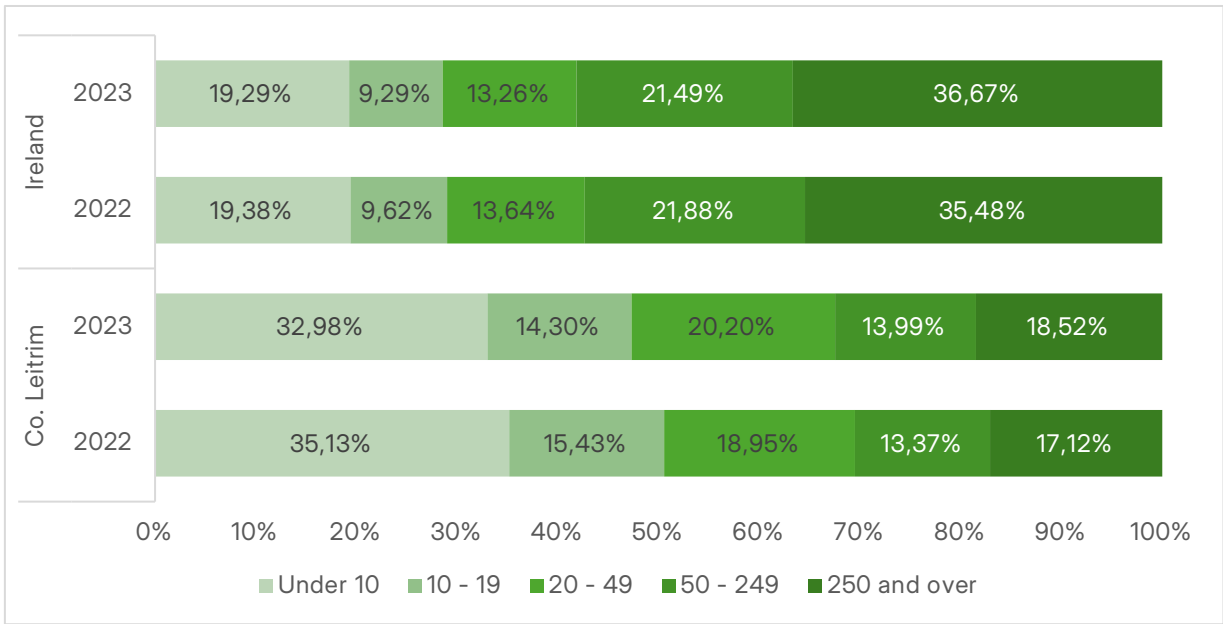
Leitrim's business base is dominated by micro-enterprises. Firms with fewer than 10 employees account for over a third of the county's workforce, compared with around 20% nationally. Small and medium-sized firms (10–49 employees) also make up a larger share of employment than the national average. At the other end of the scale, large enterprises (250 or more employees) account for less than a fifth of Leitrim's workforce, compared with over a third



nationally. This pattern held consistently across 2022 and 2023, with only marginal year-on-year change. Figure 4 illustrates this

distribution, comparing the share of employees by firm size in Leitrim and nationally across both years.

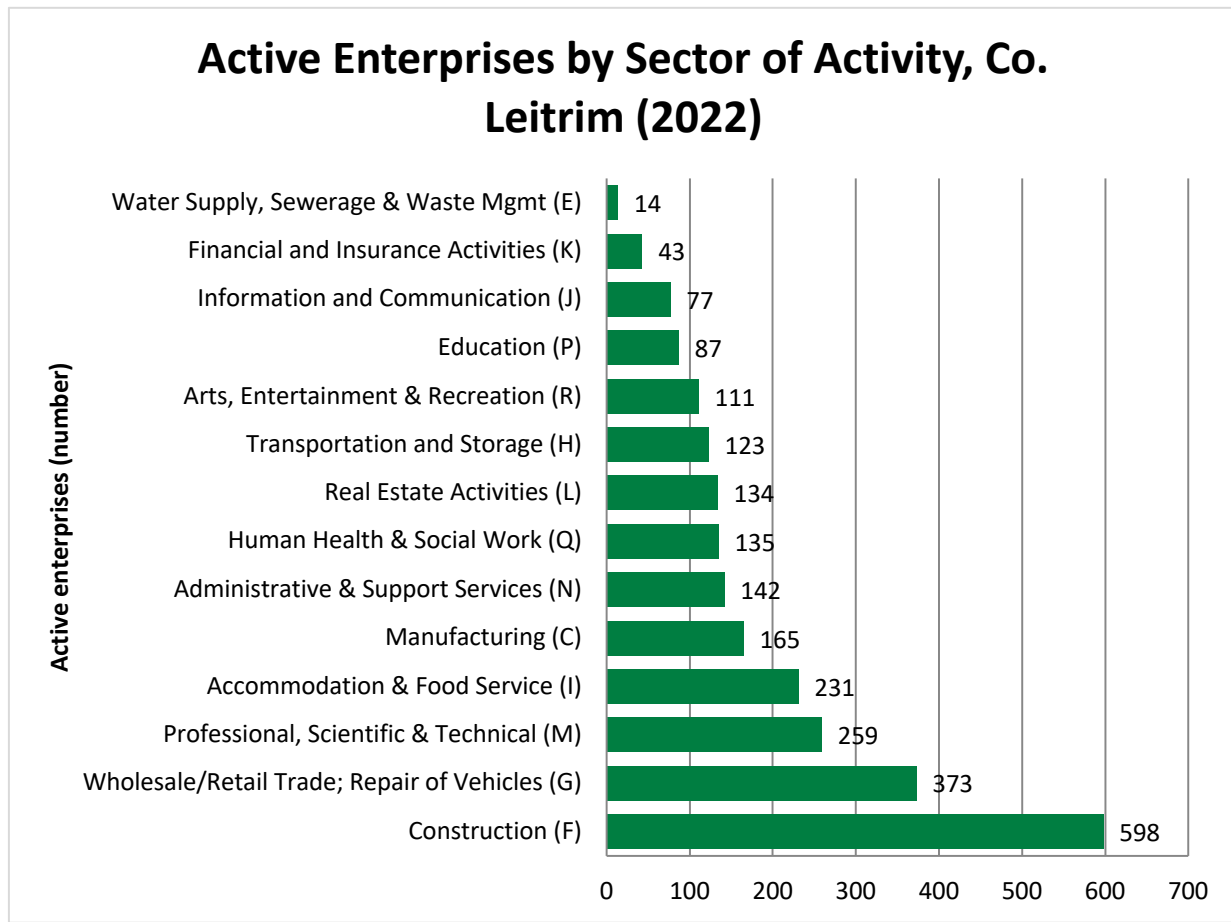
Figure 4



Data Source: CSO Ireland 2022-2023

Figure 5 shows the number of active enterprises in County Leitrim by sector of activity in 2022, classified under the NACE Rev. 2 system. Construction accounts for the largest share, with 598 enterprises (24.0% of the county total), followed by Wholesale/Retail Trade (15.0%) and Professional, Scientific & Technical Activities (10.4%). Accommodation & Food Service and Manufacturing follow, each above 6% of the total. The remaining sectors, including Human Health & Social Work, Real Estate, Transportation, Arts & Recreation, Education, Information & Communication, Financial & Insurance, and Water Supply & Waste Management, each account for less than 6% individually.

Figure 5



Data Source: CSO Ireland 2022

Note. Mining and Quarrying, and Electricity, Gas, Steam & Air Conditioning Supply are suppressed in the 2022 source data due

to small-cell non-disclosure and are excluded from the figures shown. Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing is not covered by this dataset.

Enterprise & Digital Hubs

Leitrim has developed a geographically dispersed network of enterprise and digital hubs, part of the national Connected Hubs platform, which supports remote working and start-ups across the county (see Figure 6). Facilities typically offer hot desks, private offices, meeting rooms, high-speed broadband, and video conferencing.

The Hive in Carrick-on-Shannon is the county's technology enterprise centre with 24-hour, seven-day access. In Manorhamilton, the W8 Centre houses the Future Cast Innovation, Education and R&D Centre, offering courses in robotics, artificial intelligence, software development, virtual reality, and 3D printing, while manorHUB serves creative and remote professionals in

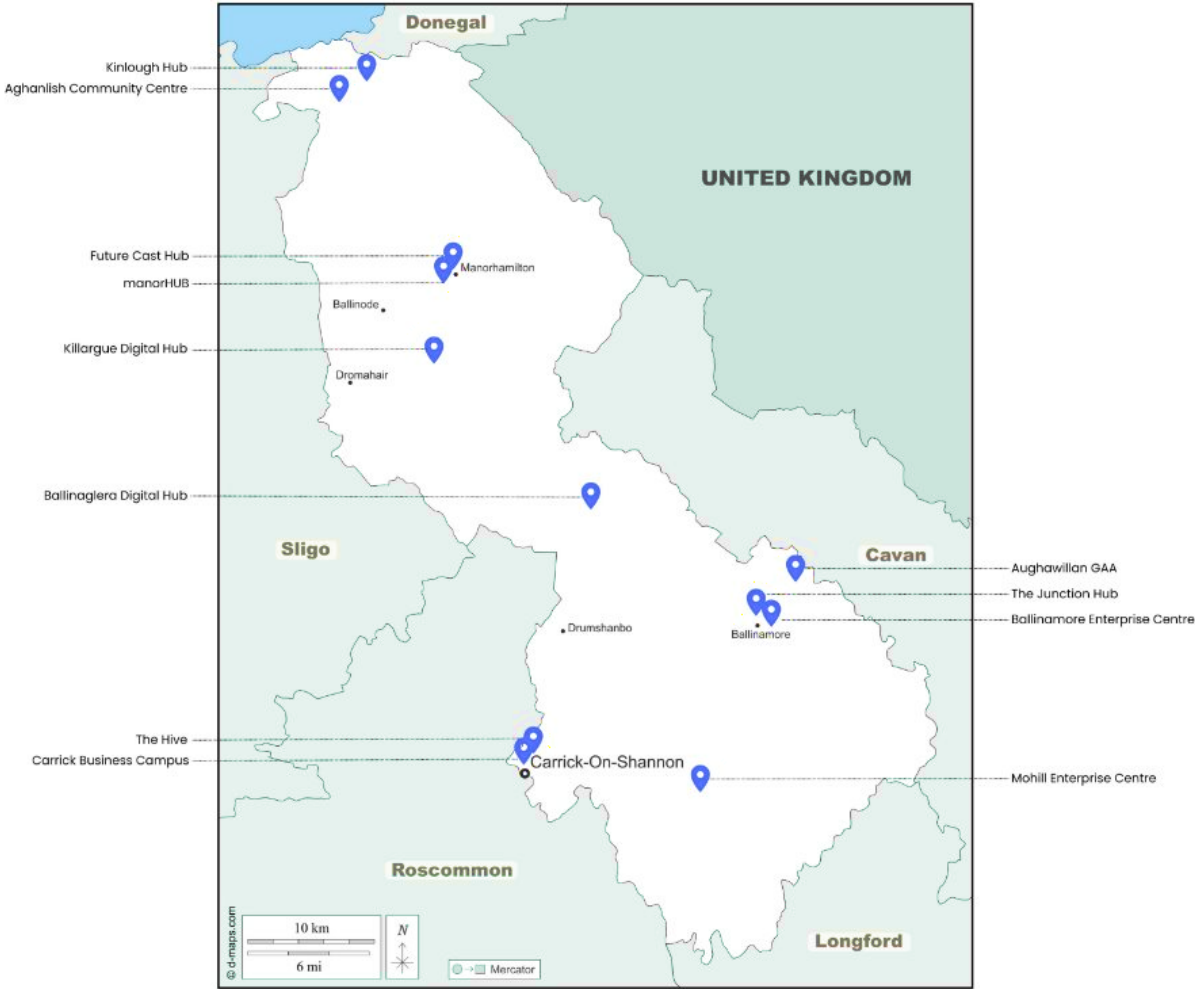
the north of the county. The Junction in Ballinamore provides 20 desks alongside serviced offices, complementing the separate Ballinamore Enterprise Centre.

Smaller community-based hubs extend coverage into rural areas. Mohill Enterprise Centre delivers training and upskilling courses in partnership with the local education and training board, and hubs at Kinlough, Drumshanbo, Killargue, Ballinaglera, and Aghanish provide flexible workspace in outlying villages. Several of these operate as Broadband Connection Points under the National Broadband Plan; the county has eleven such points in total.

Together, these facilities anchor Carrick-on-Shannon as the county's commercial focal point while distributing digital access across Leitrim's dispersed settlement pattern.



Figure 6



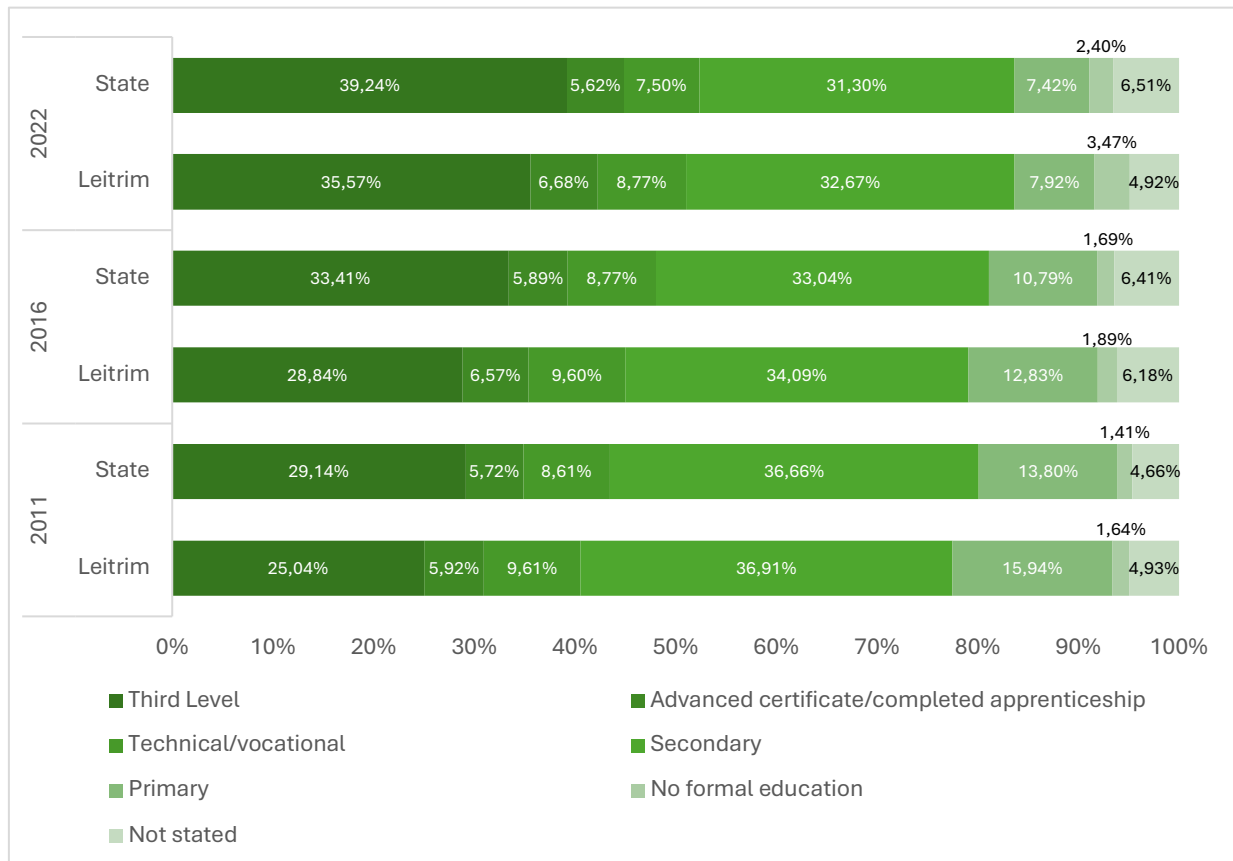
Education

Education level

Between 2011 and 2022, Leitrim's educational profile improved considerably. As shown in Figure 7 the share of the population aged 15 and over with third-level qualifications grew from around a quarter to over a third, while the proportion whose

highest attainment was primary level more than halved. Secondary education remained the largest single category throughout, and technical, vocational, and apprenticeship qualifications accounted for a stable share across all three census years. Despite this progress, Leitrim continued to trail the national average in 2022, with a third-level attainment rate roughly four percentage points below the State figure.

Figure 7



Data Source: CSO Ireland, Census 2011, 2016, 2022

Educational attainment in Leitrim also varies within the county, reflecting differences between its more urbanised and more rural areas. Attainment tends to be higher around the main population centres and lower in the more remote west and south, a pattern consistent with the county's dispersed settlement structure and its position within the Border region, where around 6% of people have primary-only or no formal education which is roughly double the rate in most other parts of the country.

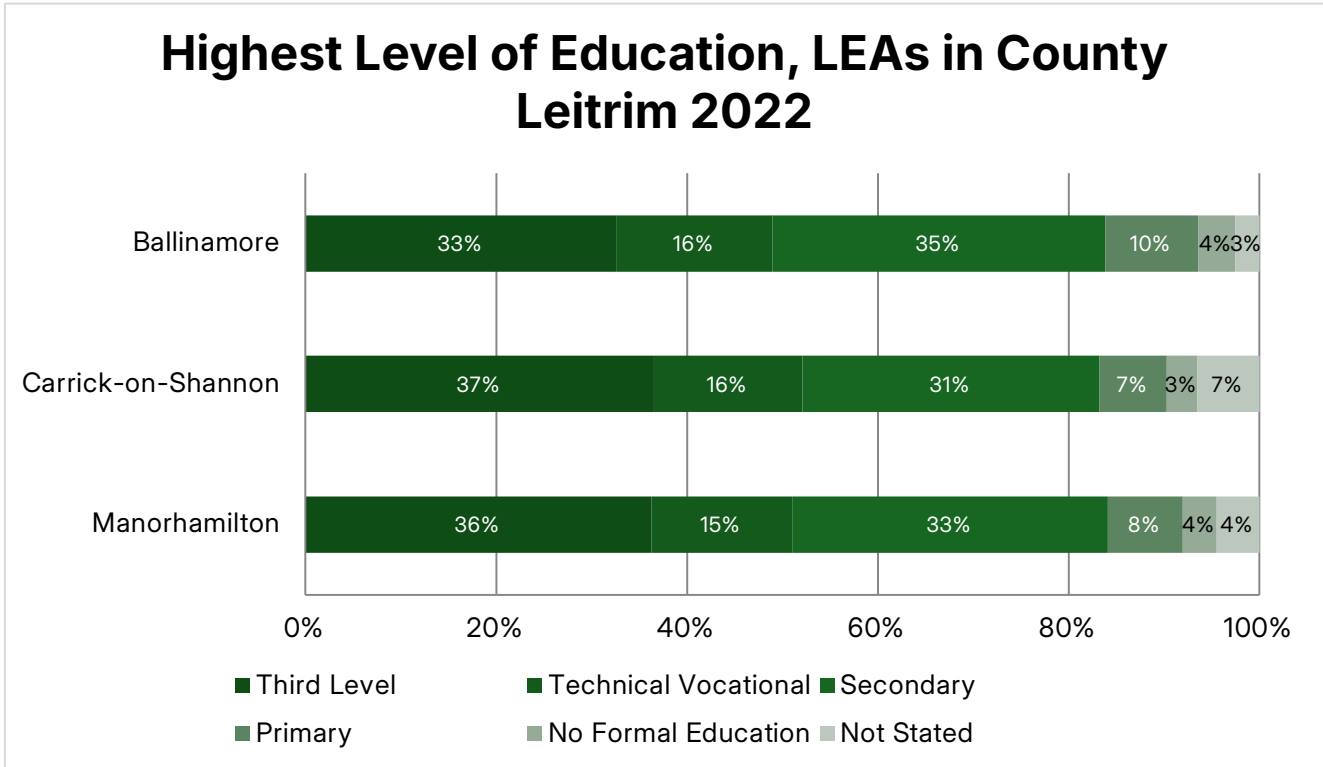
Figure 8 illustrates this internal variation across the county's three Local Electoral Areas (LEAs). Third Level education is the most common attainment in all three, ranging from 33% in Ballinamore to 36% in Manorhamilton and 37% in Carrick-on-Shannon, with Secondary education the second largest category throughout. Manorhamilton and Carrick-on-Shannon show broadly similar profiles, while Ballinamore records a slightly lower share of Third Level attainment and a higher



proportion of Primary education. Across all three LEAs, Not Stated and No Formal

Education account for small but notable shares of the population.

Figure 8



Data Source: CSO Ireland, Census 2022

Transport and commuting

Current Transport Profile

Private Motorised Transport

County Leitrim's road network is served by two national primary routes. The N4, which runs from Dublin to Sligo, is the county's principal arterial route and provides the main connection to the national motorway network. It enters Leitrim from County Roscommon in the south, passing through Roosky and Dromod before continuing northwest through Carrick-on-Shannon and onwards to County Roscommon and Sligo. The N4 provides onward connections to Sligo, with the M6 to Galway and N5 to Westport diverging at Kinnegad and Longford respectively. The N16 serves the northern part of the county. The N16 National Primary

Route links Northern Ireland with the Republic of Ireland, and more specifically links Leitrim and its hinterland in the north-west with Belfast and Dundalk on the east coast of Ireland. Travelling northeast from Sligo, the N16 passes through Manorhamilton and Glenfarne in County Leitrim before reaching Blacklion in County Cavan at the Northern Ireland border, where it becomes the A4 road towards Enniskillen. Beyond these two national routes, the county is served by an extensive network of regional and local roads, most notably the R280, which runs for 74 km linking Bundoran in County Donegal to Carrick-on-Shannon, passing through Kinlough, Manorhamilton and Drumkeeran en route. The dispersed and mountainous character of much of the county as well as several lakes and waterways mean that regional and local roads carry a significant proportion of daily trips, particularly in areas not served by the national network.

National Public Transport — Rail

County Leitrim is served by the Dublin Connolly to Sligo InterCity rail line operated by Iarnród Éireann. The service runs ten times a day from Dublin Connolly to Sligo, covering the distance in just under three hours, threading through the Irish midlands and stopping at key towns including Mullingar, Longford and Carrick-on-Shannon. Two stations fall within or immediately adjacent to the county. Dromod railway station serves the village of Dromod in County Leitrim and nearby Roosky in County Roscommon and is a stop on the Dublin Connolly to Sligo InterCity service. Carrick-on-Shannon railway station serves the county town; whilst the town itself is in County Leitrim, the station lies across the border in the neighbouring County Roscommon townland of Cortober. Services run from morning to evening in both directions, on average approximately every two hours. The remainder of the county, including Manorhamilton and the northern and eastern areas, has no direct rail access.

National Public Transport — Coach

Carrick-on-Shannon is served by Bus Éireann's Expressway Route 23, which runs from Busáras in Dublin to Sligo via the M4 motorway, passing through Dublin Airport, Maynooth, Longford and Carrick-on-Shannon. A number of Bus Éireann rural and commuter routes also provide connections to towns within and adjacent to the county, including Route 462 (Sligo–Carrigallen), Route 464 (Carrigallen–Enniskillen), Route 465 (Carrigallen–Cavan), Route 468 (Strokestown–Carrick-on-Shannon), Route 469 (Sligo–Longford), Route 470 (Sligo–Glenfarne) and Route 480 (Sligo–Derry). However, service frequencies on these routes are limited, and most settlements in the county are not directly served by national coach services.

Local Bus Services

Rural bus connectivity within the county is provided primarily through TFI Local Link Donegal Sligo Leitrim, operating under the

National Transport Authority's Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan. The network includes Regular Rural Service routes 564 (Ballinamore/Dromod/Mohill/Carrick-on-Shannon), 566 (Dowra/Drumkeeran/Dromahair/Sligo), 567 (Drumshanbo/Leitrim Village/Carrick-on-Shannon), 567A (Carrick-on-Shannon/Manorhamilton), 572 (Ballinamore/Drumshanbo/Keadue/Sligo), 573 (Carrigallen/Drumshanbo), 983 (Kinlough/Bundoran/Ballyshannon) and 983A (Kinlough/Manorhamilton). These services operate on fixed timetabled routes and are designed to connect smaller settlements to key towns and onward rail or bus services. Recent enhancements under the Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan have improved connectivity to villages and areas including Dromahair, Drumkeeran, Arigna, Dowra and Leitrim Village. Notwithstanding these improvements, service frequencies remain low across much of the network, and large parts of the county's rural hinterland remain without any scheduled public transport provision.

Current Commuting Profile

Commuting

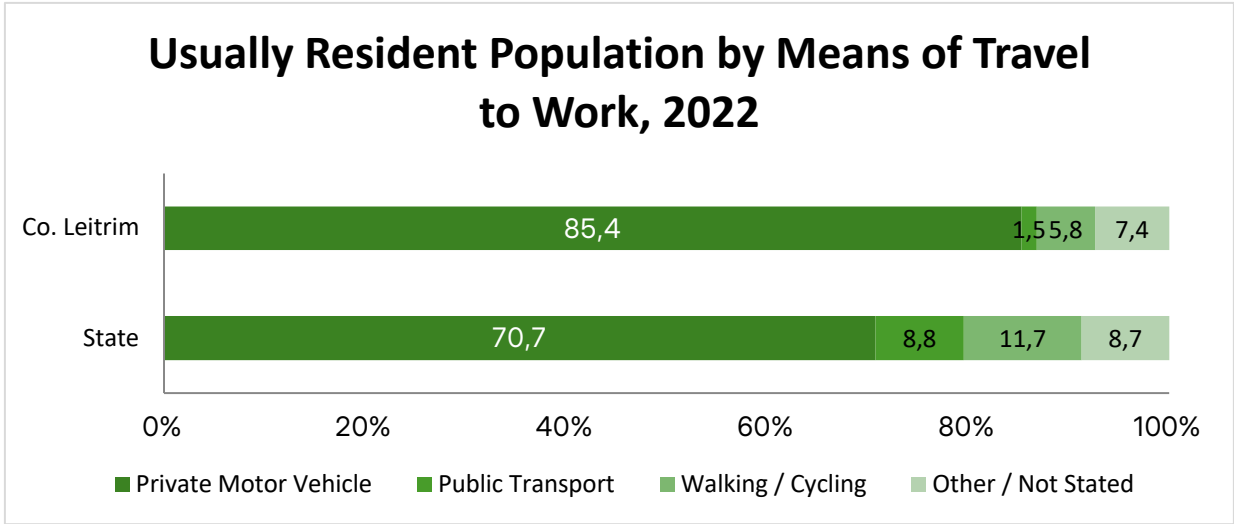
According to Census 2022 data, County Leitrim exhibits a pronounced dependence on private motor vehicles for commuting, with 85.4% of the resident working population travelling to work by car, van, or motorcycle, significantly above the national average of 70.7% (see Figure 9). This reflects the county's dispersed rural settlement pattern, where the distances between homes, employment centres, and services make car travel a practical necessity for most workers. Public transport accounts for just 1.5% of commuter journeys in Leitrim, compared to 8.8% nationally, highlighting the limited provision and accessibility of bus and rail services across the county. Active travel modes i.e. walking and cycling account for 5.8% of commutes, again falling well below the State average of 11.7%, which is consistent with the longer journey distances



typical of rural counties. These figures point to a significant structural challenge for sustainable mobility in Leitrim: the county's commuting profile is heavily weighted towards single-occupancy car use, with very limited uptake of more sustainable

alternatives. Addressing this imbalance will require targeted investment in public transport connectivity and the creation of conditions that make active travel viable for short-distance trips, particularly within and between the county's key settlements.

Figure 9



Data Source: CSO Ireland, Census 2022

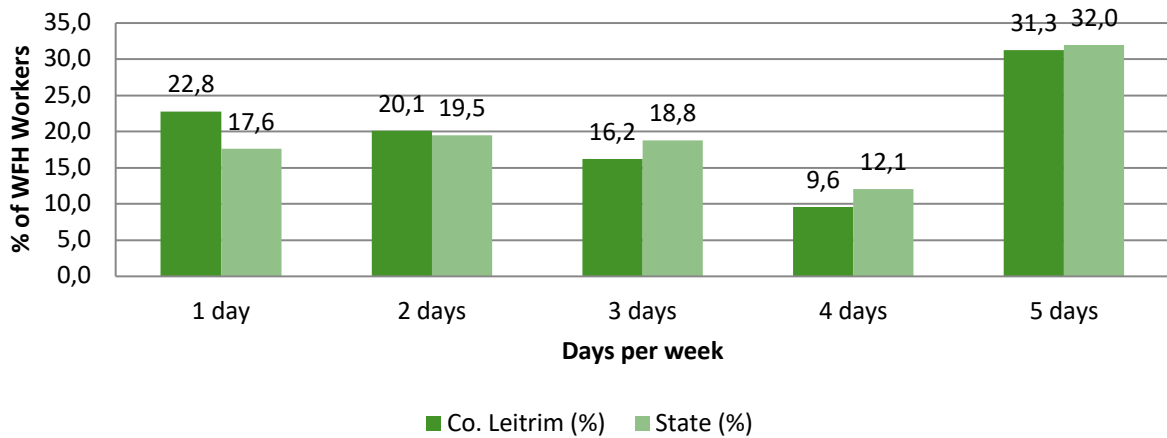
Remote Working

According to Census 2022 data, 4,079 people in County Leitrim worked from home, representing a significant cohort of the county's working population. Among those whose working pattern was recorded, full-time remote working was the most common arrangement in Leitrim, accounting for 31.3% of all WFH workers, broadly in line with the national figure of 31.9% (see Figure 10). Hybrid working patterns were also prevalent, with 1-day (22.8%) and 2-day (20.1%) arrangements the next most common, both slightly above their respective national

averages of 17.6% and 19.5%. This suggests that part-week remote working is somewhat more prevalent in Leitrim than elsewhere, which may reflect the county's rural character and the longer commute distances involved in travelling to urban employment centres. Overall, the data indicates that remote working has become an established feature of employment in County Leitrim. This has significant implications for transport demand, town centre vitality, and the potential of rural areas to attract and retain workers who are no longer tied to a fixed workplace location five days a week.

Figure 10

Days Working from Home per Week — Co. Leitrim vs. State (Census 2022, %)



Data Source: CSO Ireland, Census 2022

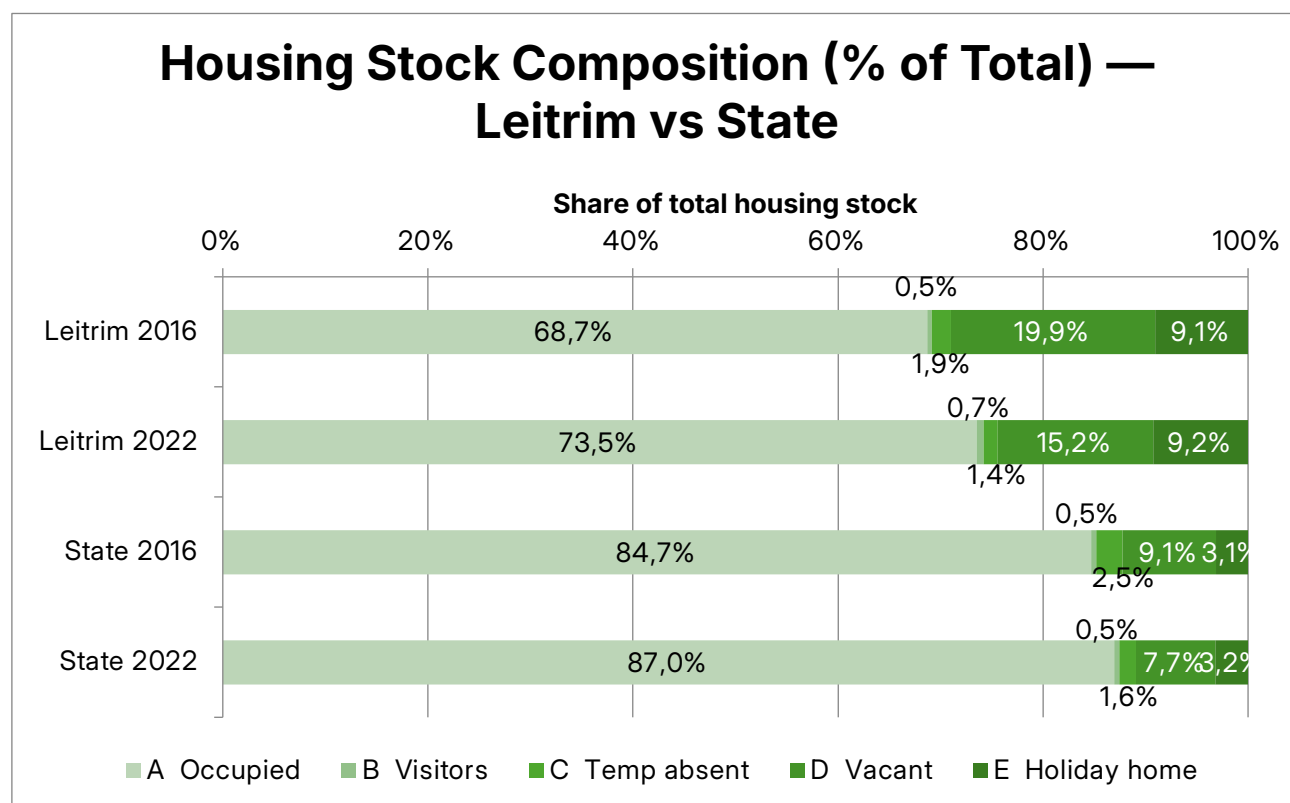
Housing Market

Housing Stock and Vacancy

County Leitrim's housing profile reflects its rural character, marked by elevated vacancy, a significant holiday-home component, and a housing stock growing more slowly than its population. Between 2016 and 2022, the county's stock grew by just 2%, from 18,051 to 18,482 dwellings, below the national rate of around 5%. Over the same period the number of occupied dwellings rose faster than the total stock — the share of dwellings occupied by usual residents increased from 68.7% to 73.5% — while the county's population grew by almost 10%.

Figure 11 illustrates this composition, comparing the share of dwellings that are occupied, vacant, temporarily absent, or used as holiday homes in Leitrim against the national average across both census years. The share of dwellings occupied by usual residents rose from 68.7% in 2016 to 73.5% in 2022, though it remained well below the State figures of 84.7% and 87.0%. Vacancy, correspondingly, fell but stayed high: the number of vacant dwellings dropped 22%, from 3,589 to 2,807, reducing the vacant share of total stock from 19.9% to 15.2% which reflects nearly double the national rate and is among the highest in the country. Holiday homes accounted for a further 9.2% of stock in 2022 (1,704 dwellings), up 4% on 2016 and a share roughly three times the national average, underscoring the county's recreational appeal.

Figure 11



Data Source: CSO Ireland, Census 2016 – 2022

Average Rent in Leitrim

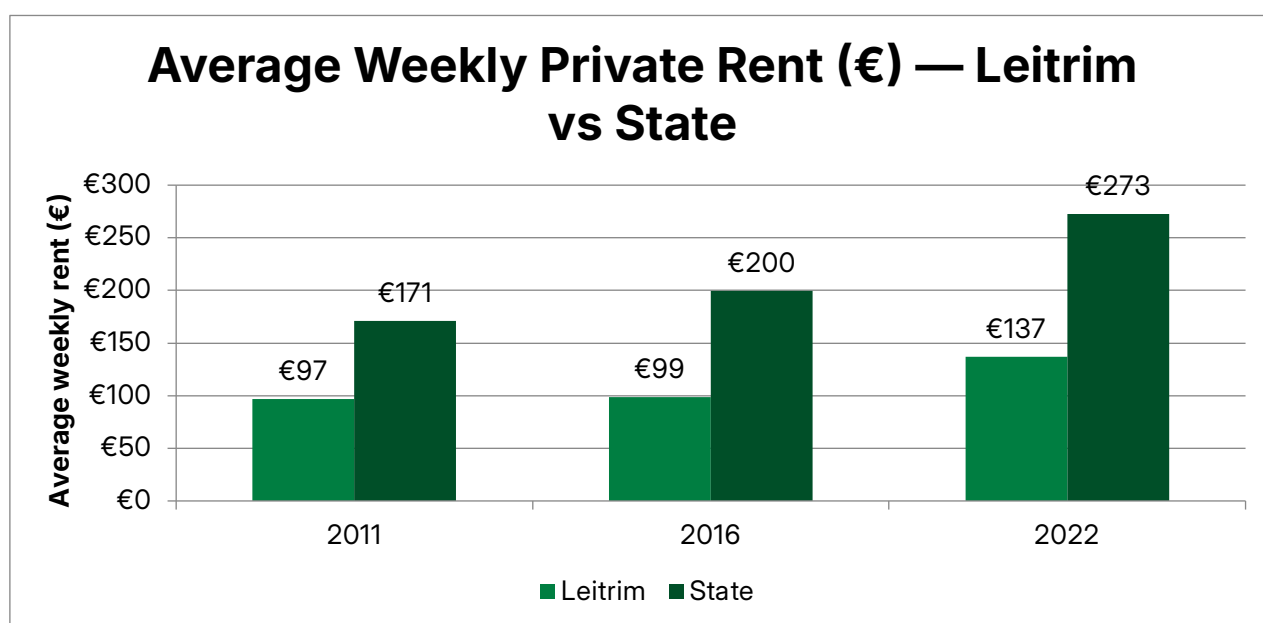
County Leitrim has among the lowest private rents in Ireland but has seen sharp increases in line with the national trend, and a marked shift of renters into higher rent brackets. In April 2022, the average weekly rent paid to a private landlord in Leitrim was €137, which is the second-lowest in the State, ahead of only Donegal (€134) and well below the national average of €273. Despite this low base, rents have risen steeply: Leitrim's average rent increased 38.4% between 2016 and 2022, broadly in line with the national rise of 37%.

This growth reflects both rising costs and a rental sector that, while small, is expanding. The number of homes rented from private landlords markets nationally, its renters have faced cost pressures comparable in pace to the rest of the country.

rose 13%, from 1,773 to 2,002, and the increase was especially pronounced among older tenants: the number of over-65s renting privately rose 91% to 166. These shifts have occurred against a national backdrop of falling home-ownership rates and growing reliance on the private rented sector.

Figure 12 places the average weekly rent in Leitrim alongside the State across all three census years. It shows both rising in parallel — Leitrim from €97 (2011) to €99 (2016) and €137 (2022), and the State from €171 to €200 and €273 — with the absolute gap between the two widening over time, from €74 in 2011 to €136 in 2022. This confirms that while Leitrim remains among the most affordable rental

Figure 12

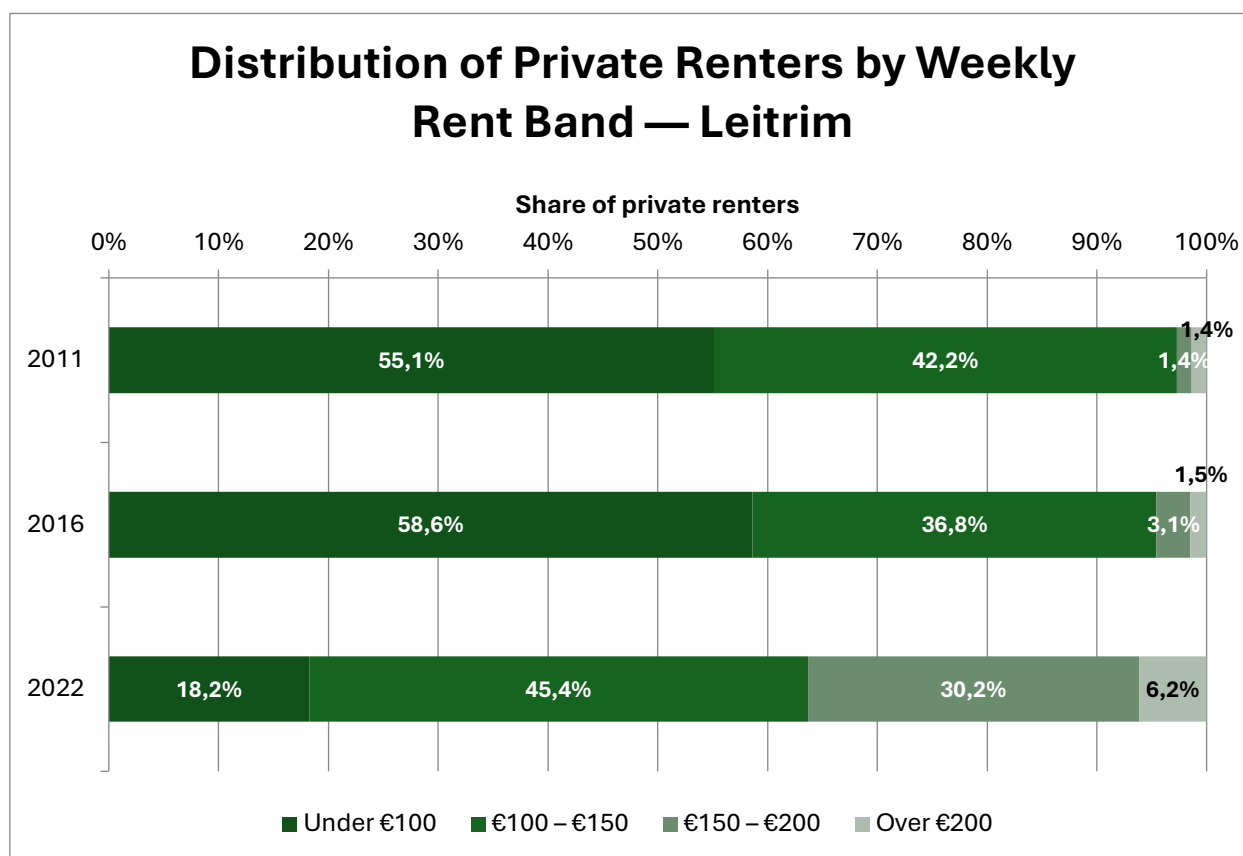


Data Source: CSO Ireland, Census 2011, 2016, 2022

Figure 13 moves beyond the average to illustrate how the distribution of private renters across weekly rent bands in Leitrim shifted between 2011 and 2022. In 2011, 55% of private renters in Leitrim paid less than €100 per week, with a further 42% in the €100–€150 band. By 2022 the profile had changed substantially: the share paying under €100 had fallen to 18%, while the proportion in the €150–€200 band rose from 1% to 30%, and the share paying over €200

increased from 1% to 6%. The €100–€150 band became the single largest category in 2022, accounting for 45% of private renters, overtaking the under-€100 band that had been the most common in 2011. Taken together, the two charts illustrate both the scale of rent increases in Leitrim over the period and the extent to which renters have moved into higher-cost brackets across successive censuses.

Figure 13



Data Source: CSO Ireland, Census 2011, 2016, 2022



4

Stakeholder
Consultation

4 Stakeholder Consultation

As part of the consultation process for this strategy: Shaping Leitrim Place-Based Economic and Skills Strategy for 2026-2026, various stakeholders were engaged in one-to-one and group consultations. These stakeholders were from diverse backgrounds including:

- Local Government;
- Private sector companies;
- Education providers;
- Representative and trade union groups; and
- State bodies.

The consultation process sought to identify broader economic development priorities and opportunities shaping Leitrim's future growth, including factors influencing business development and investment, sectoral strengths, innovation and entrepreneurship, infrastructure and connectivity needs, employment trends, and opportunities to enhance economic resilience and competitiveness. Recognising that economic growth and workforce development are closely interconnected, the consultation also explored skills demands, the local skills pipeline, and potential means to expand and strengthen Leitrim's talent pool to support emerging opportunities and long-term economic development objectives. A summary of key findings is contained below.

Survey

An online survey was conducted to gather the views of a broad range of stakeholders on the

county's economic situation, skills priorities, and future development needs. A total of 89 responses were received from individuals representing diverse backgrounds across the county.

Respondent Profile

Respondents were predominantly based in the Carrick-on-Shannon area (30%), with significant representation from rural Leitrim outside the main towns (16%), the Drumshanbo, Ballinamore, and Manorhamilton areas (approximately 12% each), and from those who live outside Leitrim but work or do business in the county (12%). A small cohort were based in the Mohill and Kinlough areas.

The largest age cohort was 45–54 year-olds (34%), followed by those aged 55–64 (26%) and 35–44 (21%). Respondents aged 65 and over accounted for 13%, while those aged 25–34 made up a smaller share (6%), reflecting the age profile of the county more broadly.

In terms of professional background, public sector employees were the largest group (44%), followed by business owners and the self-employed (26%), and private sector employees (11%). Education and training providers, retired individuals, and community and voluntary representatives also participated. Of the business owners who provided sector information, the most represented sectors were manufacturing and industrial production, financial and professional services, agriculture, forestry and fishing, and arts, culture and recreation.

The majority of respondents (74%) spent most of their working or study time in Leitrim, with a further 12% working on a hybrid or remote basis, and 10% working outside the county.

Economic Outlook

Asked to describe Leitrim's economic situation today, just over half of respondents (51%) characterised it as stable, while almost a quarter (24%) felt the county was struggling. A more



optimistic 16% described the economy as strong and improving, and a further 10% were unsure.

When looking ahead over a ten-year horizon, views on Leitrim's capacity for sustainable job growth were cautiously optimistic but divided. Around 55% were confident or somewhat confident in the county's ability to create economic opportunities, compared to roughly 24% who expressed some level of doubt and 21% who were neutral. Open-ended responses highlighted recurring themes: the expansion of remote working as a structural opportunity, the potential of small enterprises and entrepreneurship, persistent concerns around housing availability and population decline, and the risk of outmigration of young people constraining longer-term economic development.

Business Conditions and Recruitment

Among the 23 business owners and self-employed respondents, growth expectations were generally positive: 35% anticipated significant growth over the next three years and a further 30% expected moderate growth, with only one respondent planning to downsize.

Recruitment, however, remains a significant challenge. Of those who answered the recruitment question, almost half indicated that recruiting staff locally was either difficult or very difficult, with only one respondent finding it easy. The skill sets currently hardest to recruit locally included digital and IT/data skills (most frequently cited), technical and engineering skills, construction trades, management and supervisory skills, and sales and marketing. Looking ahead three to five years, respondents anticipated that AI and data capabilities, green and energy transition skills, and digital automation would become increasingly critical to their businesses.

The most commonly cited barriers to business growth were lack of skilled staff, housing availability (directly linked to the ability to attract workers), and the high costs of operating in the county. Individual respondents also highlighted

the burden of regulation and the difficulty of securing investment.

Leitrim's Strongest Assets

Respondents were asked to identify up to three of Leitrim's strongest assets. Quality of life and community was by far the most widely recognised strength, cited by 84% of respondents. Tourism potential and the natural environment were cited by approximately 47% and 46% respectively. Remote working potential was identified by 36% of respondents as a key asset, reflecting the growing importance of digital connectivity and the county's appeal as a base for location-flexible workers. Proximity and connectivity to other regions was cited by 24%, while cultural and creative strengths were recognised by 20% of respondents.

Key Barriers to Economic Growth

Respondents were asked to select up to three of the biggest barriers limiting Leitrim's economic growth and job creation. Housing availability and affordability emerged as the single most cited barrier, selected by 64% of respondents. Transport connectivity was identified by 52%, and limited local job opportunities by 43%, the latter creating a reinforcing dynamic where the absence of well-paid local employment and the absence of people are mutually sustaining challenges. Weak town centres (24%) and limited youth opportunities (18%) were also prominent concerns, alongside fragmented coordination, bureaucratic and regulatory hurdles, access to finance, and skills shortages.

The primacy of housing and transport is striking: these two structural issues were cited more than any other barriers, and recurred consistently across open-ended responses, where respondents described the difficulty of attracting and retaining workers without adequate accommodation and the practical challenges of living in a rural county without frequent and reliable public transport.



Perceptions Requiring Change

Respondents were asked which perceptions about Leitrim most need to change. The dominant narrative to be challenged was the sense that young people must leave Leitrim to succeed, cited by 58% of respondents. The second most common perception targeted was that Leitrim is too remote or poorly connected (45%), followed by the view that there are limited job opportunities in the county (29%). Around one in four respondents also highlighted the need to address the perception that Leitrim lacks modern infrastructure (24%) or ambition and investment (15%).

Taken together, these results suggest a significant tension between the county's lived reality with its quality of life, community and growing enterprise base, and its external image, which respondents feel continues to underrepresent what Leitrim has to offer.

Career Opportunities

Reflecting the ambiguity of the broader economic picture, views on career opportunities were mixed. When asked whether they believed there were good career opportunities locally, 45% said "somewhat", 27% said "not really", 12% said "yes", and 10% said "no". Just 6% were unsure. This suggests that while some opportunities exist, there is a widespread sense that the range, quality, and accessibility of local employment are insufficient, particularly for young people and those seeking career progression.

Skills Priorities for Leitrim's Future

Respondents were asked to identify up to four skills areas they considered most important for the county's future. Hospitality and tourism was the top priority, cited by 66% of respondents, reflecting the sector's existing importance and its significant growth potential. Business and entrepreneurship skills were identified by 52%, recognising the central role of the SME sector in Leitrim's economy. Retrofit, energy and green skills and digital skills (including software, data,

AI, and cyber) were each cited by approximately 48% of respondents, reflecting awareness of both the green transition and the digital economy as key future drivers. Construction trades were also seen as critical by 47% of respondents, linked to the urgent need for housing delivery. Other important areas included agri-food innovation (39%), manufacturing and engineering (31%), creative and media/design skills (25%), and health and care (20%).

When asked what would best support people in Leitrim to access and progress into sustainable, well-paid employment, respondents most commonly pointed to greater availability of apprenticeships (37%) and more higher-paying job opportunities locally (31%). Improved transport (29%) and the establishment of a Higher Education Institution (HEI) in Leitrim (22%) also featured prominently, alongside calls for stronger employer–education links and expanded local training options.

Quality of Life and Infrastructure

Respondents were asked to rate a range of local quality of life and infrastructure dimensions. The results reveal a striking contrast between Leitrim's social and community strengths and deficiencies in its physical and economic infrastructure.

Overall quality of life received the strongest rating, with an average score of 4.0 out of 5, and no respondent rated it "very poor". Broadband and mobile reliability (3.6/5) and community facilities and social life (3.5/5) were also rated reasonably positively. Enterprise and workspace availability achieved a moderate score (3.3/5), while access to training and education was broadly average (3.0/5).

By contrast, the weakest-performing areas were housing availability (2.3/5), where no respondent rated provision as "excellent" and 54% rated it "very poor" or "poor"; transport options (2.5/5), with 55% giving a "very poor" or "poor" rating; and access to childcare (2.6/5). Town centre vitality received a below-average score of 2.8/5, pointing to concerns about the health and vibrancy of Leitrim's urban centres.



These ratings reinforce the qualitative responses: the county's exceptional quality of life and community spirit are genuine assets, but they are undermined by structural deficits in housing, transport and childcare that limit Leitrim's ability to attract, accommodate and retain workers and families.

Strategic Priorities

Respondents were asked to select exactly three priorities for Leitrim to focus on over the next three years. Housing delivery and regeneration was the overwhelming choice, selected by 62% of all respondents. Transport and connectivity improvements (42%) and investment attraction and business growth (40%) were the second and third most commonly selected priorities. Youth retention and career pathways (31%), tourism development (30%), and town centre revitalisation (24%) also featured strongly. Green economy projects, employer-aligned training and upskilling, and digital infrastructure upgrades were each identified by between 11% and 19% of respondents.

Sectors for Growth

When asked which sectors should be prioritised for growth by 2035, sustainable tourism was the clear frontrunner, selected by 61% of respondents. Agri-food innovation and value-add (42%), the digital and remote work economy (39%), manufacturing and engineering (35%), and the green economy (33%) were the next most commonly cited. Creative industries (31%) and social enterprise and the community economy (30%) also featured prominently, reflecting the breadth of economic opportunity respondents see for the county.

On the question of Leitrim's future identity, respondents described a county known for lifestyle qualities and quality of life, sustainable tourism, creative excellence, green innovation, and its potential as a hub for remote work and rural enterprise. There was a consistent aspiration for Leitrim to be recognised nationally as a model for balanced, sustainable regional development, a place where economic opportunity and exceptional quality of life are mutually reinforcing rather than in tension.

Interviews

As part of the stakeholder consultation process, 20+ targeted interviews were conducted between February and May 2026 with key organisations representing enterprise, economic development, education and training, regional governance, and community development. Interviewees included representatives from Enterprise Ireland, the IDA, Atlantic Technological University (ATU), MSLETB, SOLAS, the WDC, the Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NWRA), Leitrim Development Company, Future Cast, Retail Ireland Skillnet, Teagasc and a number of significant private-sector employers based in the county. Interviews were conducted on a confidential basis and findings are reported in aggregate below, organised thematically across the principal areas explored.

Economic Character and Strengths

Interviewees consistently described Leitrim as a rural, polycentric county with a dispersed economic base anchored around Carrick-on-Shannon in the south and, to a lesser degree, Manorhamilton in the north. While small in absolute terms the county has experienced significant demographic growth since 2016, with several interviewees noting that this growth has been driven in part by remote working trends and an influx of people seeking a better quality of life away from urban centres.

The county's key economic strengths were identified across several distinct areas. Financial and professional services were consistently highlighted as a sector of genuine depth, rooted in the legacy of the MBNA/Bank of America operation at Carrick-on-Shannon, which at its height employed over 1,000 people. That labour pool of individuals experienced in financial services, compliance, operations and customer management, continues to represent a valuable local asset. Two fintech companies operating in the county, Avant Money and Payac, were regularly cited by interviewees as success stories that have built directly on this legacy.

Medical devices and manufacturing were identified as another area of significant strength, with Freudenberg Medical, and Motion Controls International (Manorhamilton) collectively employing substantial numbers across the county. Interviewees in the enterprise support space noted that Leitrim accounts for a disproportionate share of medical device manufacturing within the border region relative to its population. Food innovation centred on Drumshanbo was also consistently identified as a cluster with growing national and international recognition, anchored by the Drumshanbo Gunpowder Irish Gin and the food hub model, with the new Leitrim Food Zone representing a further expansion of this capability.

Construction, manufacturing and green technology are emerging areas, with Future Cast in Manorhamilton operating as a nationally and internationally recognised innovation and research centre in this space, running 14 European projects and pursuing college status.

Despite these genuine strengths, interviewees from regional and national bodies noted that Leitrim lacks the critical mass and sectoral concentration typical of higher-performing counties. Unlike Galway, which has an established medtech cluster, or Donegal, where financial services have developed around Letterkenny, Leitrim's economy is characterised by strong but isolated employers who do not yet form the kind of interconnected ecosystems that drive compounding economic growth. Freudenberg, described as the county's single largest employer, was noted by several interviewees as operating as a largely closed system, not yet integrated into the broader regional enterprise or academic ecosystem which is a significant missed opportunity for cluster development.

Infrastructure: The Primary Constraint

Across almost every interview, infrastructure emerged as the single greatest structural constraint on Leitrim's economic development, with three issues raised most frequently.

Transport connectivity was described as a critical weakness. Interviewees described the Northwest as the only region in Ireland without motorway access, and noted that the N4, while reasonable by comparison to other routes, falls short of the connectivity standard expected by FDI investors. The IDA was explicit that the absence of motorway infrastructure places Leitrim at a disadvantage relative to other locations competing for investment. The rail line between Carrick-on-Shannon and Dublin was acknowledged as a genuine asset, but interviewees noted that the service is too slow and too infrequent to serve as a competitive transport option: the journey takes longer now than it did thirty years ago due to underinvestment, trains operate as little as every two hours, and there are no early morning services connecting Carrick to Sligo. Within the county, transport between Manorhamilton and Carrick-on-Shannon is difficult, and people living in rural areas are highly dependent on private cars.

The Carrick-on-Shannon bypass was raised by virtually every stakeholder engaged with the county's business environment. Traffic congestion through the town centre was described as strangling economic activity and deterring further investment. Interviewees were explicit that a strategic bypass plan must anticipate what comes after, ensuring that any reduction in through traffic is compensated by deliberate efforts to draw visitors and consumers into the town centre, rather than simply routing traffic around it.

Water and wastewater infrastructure were identified by regional bodies as a foundational constraint on development, with Irish Water's capacity limitations in several parts of the county preventing meaningful housing and commercial development. Similarly, the electrical grid in and around Carrick-on-Shannon was noted as being at or close to capacity, limiting the county's ability to attract energy-intensive enterprises and to capitalise on renewable energy opportunities. These utility infrastructure gaps were described as issues requiring national-level intervention, with the local authority largely dependent on advocacy

to central government and statutory bodies to achieve progress.

Housing: The Defining Barrier to Talent Attraction

Housing emerged across interviews not merely as a challenge but as the central structural barrier preventing Leitrim from realising its economic potential. Interviewees from the private sector were particularly direct: companies actively trying to attract talent from Dublin and other urban centres are finding that candidates who are genuinely interested in the quality of life Leitrim offers, cannot find adequate accommodation. One employer noted turning down multiple well-qualified applicants for senior roles because they could not secure housing in the area.

The root of the problem was identified as multifaceted. The growth of the weekend economy in Carrick-on-Shannon, while commercially valuable, has contributed to a tightening of the long-term rental market, with limited availability and rising costs putting pressure on those seeking to live and work in the county. Interviewees also pointed to the high cost of new construction which is driven by materials, professional fees, and Irish Water and ESB connection charges, as well as planning constraints and a slow-moving process for those with rural land connections, as compounding factors.

Leitrim continues to record one of the highest residential vacancy and dereliction rates in the State, a longstanding challenge for the county. This has been on a downward trend in recent years, however – the county's Census-based vacancy rate fell from 29.1% in 2011 to 16.1% in 2022, and the most recent CSO data (based on metered electricity consumption) shows Leitrim's vacancy rate falling from 8.6% in Q4 2023 to 7.8% in Q4 2024, though it remains the highest rate of any local authority in the State. This improvement can be attributed in part to strong local uptake of the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant: since the scheme launched in July 2022, Leitrim County Council

has received 321 applications, approved 240, and paid out €4.74m in grants, bringing 92 previously vacant or derelict properties back into use.

The Third-Level Education Gap

The absence of a HEI within the county was raised as a structural challenge by several stakeholders interviewed. While Leitrim is geographically close to ATU Sligo (approximately 45 minutes from Carrick-on-Shannon) and within commuting distance of ATU Galway, UL, Maynooth and other institutions, interviewees noted that the absence of a physical campus in the county creates a perception problem that is as damaging as the practical reality.

For businesses considering locating in Leitrim, the lack of a university presence signals a limited innovation and research ecosystem. For European funding applications and collaborative research projects, having no HEI in the county is often a prerequisite gap. For young people completing secondary school, the absence of local third-level options means leaving the county, and the data consistently shows that many do not return. The county's out-migration of young talent after secondary school was described as creating a reinforcing cycle: fewer young people remaining means fewer potential employees, fewer consumers, fewer new businesses, and ultimately fewer reasons for others to stay.

Interviewees from ATU noted that the university does have a presence in the county through the Hive, through its chairing of the Future Cast board, and through online and hybrid programme delivery. However, the prevailing view among other stakeholders was that this engagement, while valued, falls short of constituting a meaningful physical presence. There was a discussion around the recommendation that ATU establish even a modest physical base in Leitrim, for example a classroom, a named presence in the county, that could be claimed as a campus footprint. This was seen as achievable without major

investment and disproportionately valuable in terms of signalling, funding eligibility, and perception. The relationship between ATU and MSLETB was also identified as an area for strengthening, with the Donegal model, where ATU and the ETB operate in a symbiotic and coordinated way, cited as a benchmark Leitrim could learn from.

Skills: Demand, Supply and Alignment

Interviewees from skills and education bodies provided a nuanced picture of Leitrim's skills landscape. MSLETB, which recently established Leitrim College of FET to consolidate FET under a unified brand, described a region where the skills most urgently in demand such as digital and AI capabilities, green and retrofit skills, healthcare and care roles, and engineering technicians, are also those where supply is most constrained. A particular frustration noted by skills providers is the lag between identifying employer needs and being able to respond with accredited provision, which can take 12 to 18 months to develop, validate and deliver. By the time courses are available, employer priorities have often shifted.

Key skills challenges identified across interviews included:

Digital and AI skills were cited as the most universally pressing gap across sectors. From financial services companies upgrading to digital-first operations, to manufacturing firms embracing automation and data analytics, to SMEs struggling with basic digital business tools, interviewees from employers, training bodies and enterprise support organisations were aligned in identifying AI readiness, data capability, and digital transformation skills as urgent short-term priorities. Importantly, interviewees from Retail Ireland Skillnet and MSLETB noted that this is not just a graduate pipeline issue but an incumbent workforce upskilling challenge, and many Leitrim businesses are not yet aware of the training available to them.

Green and retrofit skills were identified as an emerging priority with a strong structural

tailwind. The national commitment to retrofit half a million homes by 2030 represents a significant market opportunity, and the opening of the Energy Build Centre of Excellence in Sligo (managed by MSLETB) provides regional capacity for Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZEB) and retrofit training. A national shortfall of approximately 30,000 workers in the retrofit sector was noted, representing a genuine employment opportunity that Leitrim could position to capture. Future Cast's forthcoming green skills programme, including offshore wind, solar and drone inspection training, further strengthens the region's capacity in this area.

Engineering, technical and construction skills remain in strong demand, particularly from medtech employers and manufacturing companies. Tool-making skills, which Sligo was historically known for producing in large numbers before a decline in the 1990s, have not recovered to meet current demand. CNC operators, welders, electricians, and plumbers were cited as consistently hard to recruit locally, with many skilled tradespeople leaving after training. Business acumen and management skills were described by several interviewees as a hidden but pervasive gap. SMEs in Leitrim were characterised as technically capable but often lacking in the strategic business development capabilities, for example sales, marketing, financial management, internationalisation, needed to scale. The tendency of SME owners to focus on immediate operations rather than strategic development was identified as a structural barrier to growth, and the limited number of peer role models and networks was seen as a compounding factor. Healthcare and social care skills were flagged as an increasingly important workforce challenge given Leitrim's ageing population profile, with interviewees noting that training provision in health and care is available but uptake from young people is insufficient to meet projected demand. A recurring observation across interviews was that the skills provision landscape is fragmented and difficult to navigate. Multiple providers such as ETBs, ATU, Skillnets, Enterprise Ireland, LEO, offer overlapping programmes, sometimes with

duplicated content and without visible progression pathways between levels. Employers, particularly SMEs without dedicated HR or learning and development functions, are largely unaware of what is available and how to access it. Several interviewees proposed the development of a consolidated skills platform or one-stop-shop that would map all available provision, indicate funding options, and create clear pathways between short courses, micro-qualifications and full qualifications. This was consistently seen as a relatively low-cost intervention with potentially high impact.

Enterprise Ecosystem: Strengths, Gaps and Opportunities

The enterprise ecosystem in Leitrim was described as genuine but underdeveloped in terms of the coordination, collaboration and shared infrastructure that enable businesses to grow faster together than they would alone.

The Hive in Carrick-on-Shannon was consistently praised as a well-managed incubation and co-working facility. The Drumshanbo Food Hub was cited as one of the county's genuine success stories, a community-led initiative that has grown into a cluster of seven food businesses employing over 200 people, with the new Leitrim Food Zone providing additional capacity. Future Cast in Manorhamilton was acknowledged as punching well above its weight nationally and internationally in construction and manufacturing innovation. Carrick Business Campus, the former MBNA building, was identified repeatedly as an underutilised strategic asset with significant potential but requiring a coherent enterprise and identity strategy to realise its potential as a scale-up hub.

IDA Ireland noted that Leitrim has four client companies generating strong employment growth relative to county size, but acknowledged that the county faces structural challenges in attracting new FDI: the lack of motorway infrastructure, limited population density, the absence of a ready-built IDA property (a planning permission exists on IDA-owned land, but no building), and the relative

weakness of the brand as an enterprise location. The most realistic FDI opportunities were identified as financial services, medtech and medical engineering, and mixed business services, sectors where the county already has reference points and some depth of talent.

Enterprise Ireland noted that while Leitrim's indigenous SMEs hold considerable potential, many face barriers to scaling rooted in leadership capability, access to finance, reluctance to export, and limited peer networks. The 10X North-West Entrepreneurship Exchange (10xNW), a joint Northwest initiative pairing ambitious SMEs with experienced mentors, was highlighted as a promising model. Several interviewees stressed that Leitrim's success stories need to be told more loudly and more strategically: companies like Avant Money, Payac, Cora Systems, and Freudenberg represent genuine growth trajectories that could inspire other entrepreneurs and signal to external investors that enterprise can thrive in the county.

Interviewees from across the enterprise support spectrum identified the absence of meaningful networking and clustering infrastructure as a genuine structural gap. While Carrick-on-Shannon has a Chamber of Commerce, Leitrim lacks a county-wide Chamber structure with a strong, coordinated enterprise agenda of the kind found in larger centres, and the Economic Forum, while a positive development, is currently oriented primarily around public sector actors. The consistent recommendation was that the private sector needed to be brought meaningfully into governance and strategy structures, not simply consulted, and that industry-led clusters, modelled on examples from Donegal and Galway, could provide valuable platforms for coordinating skills development, market positioning and investment attraction around specific sectors.

Talent Attraction, Retention and the Diaspora

Talent retention and attraction was identified as a strategic priority across interviews, with a consistent view that Leitrim's quality of life

proposition is genuinely compelling but insufficiently communicated and undermined by structural deficits, primarily housing and transport.

Interviewees from private sector companies described a labour market that is increasingly competitive for specialist skills. Companies like Payac and Avant Money noted that while entry-level and operational roles can generally be filled locally, roles requiring specialist digital, analytical, risk, or compliance skills are significantly harder to recruit for in Leitrim than in urban centres. This is expected to worsen as the county's AI and digital capabilities develop and as employers compete for a smaller regional pool of advanced-skills graduates.

The pattern of young people leaving Leitrim after secondary school, attending college outside the county, and not returning was described as the central talent challenge. Interviewees were broadly consistent in identifying three levers: creating a more visible pipeline of local career opportunities so that young people can see a future in the county; establishing a physical HEI so that some proportion of students stay for their undergraduate years; and addressing the housing and lifestyle infrastructure that would enable returning graduates and working-age adults to settle sustainably.

The potential of the diaspora, particularly Irish-Americans and Irish people working abroad who have connections to the county, was identified by the IDA as an underutilised lever. Professional diaspora engagement was noted as having generated some of the most significant FDI outcomes elsewhere in the region, and a more structured approach to engaging Leitrim-connected professionals abroad was recommended.

Remote working was identified as both an opportunity and a partial solution to the talent challenge. Several interviewees noted that the post-COVID shift to hybrid and remote work had already delivered a demographic dividend, with families and professionals relocating to Leitrim from Dublin and elsewhere. Positioning Leitrim as Ireland's leading remote-work county,

building on existing broadband infrastructure, the hub network, and quality of life credentials, was suggested as a realistic strategic differentiation that could attract talent without requiring large-scale FDI wins.

Governance, Coordination and Strategic Leadership

A recurring theme across interviews was the complexity and fragmentation of the economic development governance landscape in Leitrim. Multiple agencies such as the County Council, LEO, Enterprise Ireland, the IDA, MSLETB, ATU, the Western Development Commission, the NWRA, Leitrim Development Company and others play roles in supporting economic and skills development, but coordination between them was described as largely ad hoc, with limited shared data, overlapping programmes, and insufficient mechanisms for joint decision-making.

The establishment of the Leitrim Economic Forum was consistently cited as a positive development and an important platform for alignment. However, interviewees noted that the forum's current composition is predominantly public-sector and agency-led, and that meaningful private sector participation from employers, entrepreneurs, and industry bodies will be essential to its effectiveness. The quadruple helix model, which brings together government, industry, higher education, and civil society/community in structured collaboration, was referenced as a framework worth adopting more explicitly.

Interviewees from national and regional bodies drew comparisons with counties that have achieved stronger coordination outcomes: Limerick 2030 was cited as an example of a long-term, publicly-accountable economic vision that has brought public and private sector actors together effectively; Galway's Greater Galway Forum was referenced as a model for broader stakeholder convening; and Donegal was noted repeatedly for its effective collaboration between the local authority, ATU, and enterprise bodies, particularly in financial services and ICT.

A consistent recommendation from across interviews was that Leitrim's strategy must be accompanied by a clear governance framework that assigns specific responsibilities for actions, sets measurable KPIs, and ensures accountability for delivery. Strategies that lack these elements, interviewees noted, tend to stall once the energy of the initial process dissipates. Private sector actors were identified as particularly important anchors for sustained momentum: unlike public sector participants, engaged private sector champions are driven by commercial self-interest in the county's success and tend to persist through changes in political leadership or staffing.

Branding and Strategic Positioning

A final theme that emerged strongly across interviews, particularly from enterprise support bodies and private sector employers, was the relative weakness of Leitrim's brand as an enterprise location. While the county has developed a clear and attractive identity around quality of life, tourism and natural amenity, its profile as a place where businesses succeed and careers are built is far less developed.

The IDA noted that Leitrim needs to project a clearer and more confident enterprise narrative, one that draws on the credibility of existing success stories, to be competitive in attracting investment. Enterprise Ireland similarly observed that the region's indigenous business successes are not adequately celebrated or leveraged for their signalling value. Interviewees from Leitrim Development Company noted that the county has historically allowed its strongest assets, including Glencar Waterfall and Tullaghan, to be claimed by neighbouring counties' marketing, and drew a parallel with a broader tendency to undersell what the county has to offer.

Interviewees were consistent in recommending that any branding effort be sector-specific and evidence-based rather than generic. Positioning Leitrim broadly as "great for business" was seen as insufficient; positioning it as a genuine location for financial services and fintech, or for medtech and precision engineering, or for food innovation and agri-tech — with credible case studies, identifiable employers and visible

career pathways — was seen as significantly more likely to generate traction with target audiences. Critically, interviewees stressed that the brand story must be grounded in reality: the structural challenges around housing, transport and third-level education cannot be resolved through marketing alone, and any strategy that attempts to project a more attractive image without addressing these fundamentals risks credibility.

Workshops

Two thematic workshops were held in June 2026 to validate and prioritise the preliminary action framework developed through the survey and interview process. A Skills, Talent and Future Workforce workshop (15 June) brought together representatives from ATU, Freudenberg Medical, the NWRA, MSLETB, the Local Enterprise Office, and Leitrim County Council. An Enterprise Growth and Competitiveness workshop (18 June) included representatives from the Western Development Commission, Leitrim County Council, and individuals with experience in enterprise development, media, and regional policy. Both sessions used a structured prioritisation exercise to assess proposed actions against impact and deliverability, and to surface gaps, risks and implementation concerns.

Across both workshops, a consistent theme was the importance of building on what exists rather than creating new structures. Participants noted that many of the training programmes, apprenticeship pathways, and enterprise supports relevant to Leitrim are already in place at regional level, and that the more pressing need is awareness, coordination and access. Related to this, participants emphasised additionality, meaning actions should deliver something meaningfully beyond what regional or national programmes already provide, and should avoid duplicating existing coordination bodies or clusters.

The regional dimension of delivery was raised repeatedly, with participants observing



that several actions would be more impactful and realistic if implemented at a sub-regional rather than county level, given the mobility of Leitrim's workforce and the scale of its employer base. On governance, both workshops pointed to the existing Economic Forum and its working groups as the natural home for strategy oversight, with regular review points built in to allow adaptation over the ten-year period.

The Enterprise Growth workshop surfaced an important tension in economic branding: Leitrim's established identity around lifestyle, culture and outdoor amenity, while a genuine strength, has not translated into visibility as an enterprise destination. Participants favoured building an economic narrative from that existing identity, anchored in authentic employer success stories, rather than a standalone campaign. The question of housing also returned as a cross-cutting concern calling for the constraint to be recognised and for advocacy on the policy changes needed to enable progress.

Following the workshops, three Action Confirmation sessions were held with Leitrim County Council, MSLETB, and the Local Enterprise Office to agree the scope, ownership, KPIs and timelines for the refined action shortlist. These sessions were supplemented by further individual follow-ups with other agencies, including IDA Ireland and ATU, to inform the same process. Together, these engagements directly informed the implementation framework set out in Chapter 8.

A scenic landscape featuring a coastal town, a large mountain in the background, and a stone tower in the foreground. The town consists of numerous small, colorful houses (white, blue, red) nestled in a green field. A large, flat-topped mountain dominates the background under a cloudy sky. In the foreground, a stone tower with battlements sits on a grassy cliff overlooking a rocky beach and the sea.

5

Skills Demand
and Supply
Analysis

5 Skills Demand and Supply Analysis

This chapter examines Leitrim's skills profile from both sides: the occupational demand revealed by the county's workforce and national shortage data (5.1), the education and training supply available to meet it, spanning both FET and higher education provision (5.2), and where the two align or diverge (5.3).

Skills Demand

This chapter examines the occupational make-up of Leitrim's labour force to understand which skills the local economy currently depends on. Skills-level data is not available at county level, so occupation is used as a close proxy, in line

with the same approach SOLAS takes nationally in the National Skills Bulletin. Mapping the workforce across Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) 2010 groups (Census 2022) shows where employment is concentrated locally. Comparing this profile against national skills shortage data then reveals which of these same occupations Ireland is already struggling to fill nationally. Together, these two lenses show not just what skills Leitrim relies on, but how exposed the county is to national supply pressures, pointing to where local training and retention efforts are likely to matter most.

Occupations in Leitrim County

Of 16,329 people in the labour force, 14,905 were assigned to a specific SOC group, with 1,424 recorded as "Other/not stated". In addition to the industrial structure (see Section 3.2.1) the SOC groups give further insights into the skill composition and workforce profile of the county. Table 2 sets out the resulting breakdown across the nine SOC major groups, ranked by size, together with the "Other/Not Stated" total.

Employment by SOC Occupational Group

Table 2

SOC Major Group	Persons	% of Labour Force
Professional Occupations (2)	3,025	18.5%
Skilled Trades Occupations (5)	2,760	16.9%
Administrative & Secretarial (4)	1,694	10.4%
Associate Professional & Technical (3)	1,669	10.2%
Caring, Leisure & Other Service (6)	1,384	8.5%
Process, Plant & Machine Operatives (8)	1,238	7.6%
Elementary Occupations (9)	1,212	7.4%
Managers, Directors & Senior Officials (1)	1,018	6.2%
Sales & Customer Service (7)	905	5.5%
Other/Not Stated	1,424	8.7%
TOTAL LABOUR FORCE	16,329	100.0%

Data Source: CSO Ireland, Census 2022

Note. Occupations are classified using the UK Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) 2010, as applied by the CSO in Census 2022. 'Other/Not Stated' covers persons whose occupation was not sufficiently detailed for classification. Table 1 counts persons in employment (14,045); Table 2 classifies the labour force by occupation (14,905), including unemployed persons by their last job.

The nine SOC groups are elaborated below, from largest to smallest, highlighting the specific detailed occupations driving each total.



- **Professional Occupations:** The largest group. Driven by healthcare and education: nurses and midwives (490), primary teachers (407), and secondary teachers (366). Accountants (164), architects and town planners (97), programmers (93), and engineering professionals (83, plus civil, mechanical, and electrical engineers) round out a broad professional base.
- **Skilled Trades Occupations:** Farmers (920) dominate, the single largest detailed occupation in the county, confirming Leitrim's agricultural identity. Construction trades follow: carpenters (205), electricians (158), vehicle mechanics (159), plumbers (83), and painters (50) reflect an active built-environment sector. Chefs (183) are the largest non-construction trade in the group, reflecting the place of hospitality in the local economy.
- **Administrative & Secretarial:** National government admin (478), 'other administrative' (407), and local government admin (181) drive this category, demonstrating a large public administration footprint. Personal assistants (179) and receptionists (67) also contribute.
- **Associate Professional & Technical:** Sales accounts/business development managers (131) and business sales executives (119) are the standout roles, pointing to a meaningful private commercial and business-services presence. Police officers (108) anchor the protective services contingent. Youth and community workers (61) and public services associate professionals (53) reflect a sizeable public and community-sector footprint, while laboratory technicians (58) echo the pharmaceutical and medtech link seen elsewhere in this section. Vocational and industrial trainers and instructors (51) point to the county's training infrastructure, and artists (50) are a notable presence for a rural county, hinting at Leitrim's creative and cultural sector.
- **Caring, Leisure & Other Service:** Dominated by care and early years work. Care workers and home carers (308) and nursing auxiliaries and assistants (328) together account for nearly half the group, underlining the scale of Leitrim's care economy alongside its formal health sector. Childminders (170) and educational support assistants (143) add a significant early years and SEN dimension. Hairdressers and beauticians (176) are the largest non-care occupation in this group.
- **Process, Plant & Machine Operatives:** A revealing window into Leitrim's manufacturing and logistics base. Large goods vehicle drivers (177) lead, reflecting road freight as a key rural employment mode. Chemical and related process operatives (144) align with the pharmaceutical and medtech manufacturing identified previously. Assemblers of vehicles and metal goods (107) and plant/machine operatives (83) confirm a meaningful factory-floor workforce, while agricultural machinery drivers (6) and mobile machine drivers (99) add a rural operational dimension.
- **Elementary Occupations:** Elementary construction operatives (259) form the largest component, followed by kitchen and catering assistants (161), cleaners and domestics (158), waiters and waitresses (102), and elementary storage occupations (94). These roles span construction, hospitality, and cleaning/logistics support work, consistent with the Construction and Hospitality industries identified previously.

- **Managers, Directors & Senior Officials:** Retail and wholesale is the most managed sector locally, with 198 managers and directors. Production managers in manufacturing (105) reflect the county's medtech and industrial base, while shopkeepers and proprietors (69) point to a significant owner-operated business culture. Hospitality management (restaurant/catering: 58, hotel: 51) confirms the importance of tourism-adjacent activity. Production managers in construction (40) are worth noting given Leitrim's active housing and infrastructure pipeline and the persisting national shortage in construction management.
- **Sales & Customer Service:** Sales and retail assistants (616) completely dominate this group, more than two-thirds of it, making them the single largest elementary-to-intermediate occupation outside of farmers. Customer service roles (94) and sales-related occupations (58) account for most of the remainder. The scale of retail assistant employment directly mirrors the strong Wholesale & Retail industry performance from the

shortages or prescribe policy responses; establishing the cause, magnitude, and appropriate response to each shortage requires further dedicated research.

Table 3 sets out 20 occupation categories across nine occupational groups where employer demand is currently outpacing the supply of suitably skilled workers. Two types of shortage are distinguished in the table. A skills shortage means there are enough workers overall, but not enough with the right qualifications or experience; this applies to most categories shown, including scientists, engineers, technicians, ICT professionals, medical practitioners, nurses, teachers, construction professionals and trades, welders, HGV and bus drivers, and chefs. A labour shortage, seen only for care workers and home carers, means there are too few workers of any kind to fill available roles. Plumbers and electricians are marked with a potential future skills shortage: supply currently meets demand, but rising demand for retrofitting and renewable energy work is expected to outpace training output in the coming years.

Each occupational group is linked to a primary driver of demand. Science & Engineering and ICT shortages are driven by pharmaceutical, medtech, and life sciences growth, the green energy transition, digitalisation, and AI adoption. Healthcare and Social & Care shortages stem mainly from Ireland's ageing population and the rollout of Sláintecare, alongside high job churn in care roles. Education shortages reflect demographic growth and the expansion of special education provision. Construction and Other Craft shortages are driven by housing supply targets, National Development Plan infrastructure, retrofitting programmes, and offshore wind development. Transport & Logistics shortages stem from an ageing driver workforce and ongoing replacement demand, while the Hospitality shortage in chefs is linked to tourism recovery and a decline in culinary training uptake.

Outlooks are mostly classified as persisting, meaning shortages are expected to continue at

National Skills Shortage

This analysis draws on the National Skills Bulletin 2025 (SOLAS/SLMRU, October 2025), Ireland's primary annual assessment of occupational demand and labour market shortages. The Bulletin analyses employment trends, online job advertisements, employment permit data, recruitment agency surveys, and education and training output to identify where supply of workers falls short of employer demand. Occupations are classified using the SOC 2010, the system also used by the CSO for the Labour Force Survey. The purpose of this chapter is solely to identify occupations for which shortages exist across occupational groups, which are then mapped in Chapter 5.3 to the training and skills priorities most relevant for County Leitrim. It does not quantify those



similar levels; Healthcare and Social & Care are intensifying, reflecting a growing gap as the population ages.

Table 3 Overview of national occupational shortages

<i>Occupational Group</i>	<i>Occupations in Shortage</i>	<i>Shortage Type & Roles in Shortage</i>	<i>Primary Driver</i>	<i>Outlook</i>
<i>Science & Engineering</i>	Scientists	Skills shortage: Analytical, process, & medical scientists	Pharma, medtech & life sciences growth; green energy transition	Persisting
	Production, design & QC engineers	Skills shortage: Quality control/ assurance, process, and design engineers		
	Other engineering professionals	Skills shortage: Engineers (mechanical, electrical, automation)		
	Science & Engineering technicians	Skills shortage: Maintenance/ manufacturing /lab technicians		
<i>ICT</i>	Programmers & software developers	Skills Shortage: Software developers/ engineers	Digitalisation; AI adoption; cyber security demand	Persisting
	ICT professionals n.e.c.	Skills shortage: IT analysts/ engineers		
<i>Healthcare</i>	Medical practitioners	Skills shortage: Medical practitioners	Ageing population; Sláintecare implementation	Intensifying
	Nurses & midwives	Skills shortage: Nurses		
<i>Education</i>	Secondary teachers	Skills shortage: Subject-specific secondary teachers	Demographic growth; special education expansion	Persisting
<i>Social & Care</i>	Care workers, home carers, etc.	Labour shortage: Care workers	Ageing population; high job churn	Intensifying
	Other caring services	Skills shortage: Healthcare assistants		
<i>Construction</i>	Civil engineers & construction project managers	Skills shortage: Civil engineers & construction project managers	Housing supply targets; NDP infrastructure; retrofitting	Persisting
	Architects & town planners, architectural technologists, & surveyors	Skills shortage: Quantity surveyors		
	Plumbers	Potential future skills shortage: Plumbers*		

	Carpenters & joiners	Skills shortage: Carpenters		
Other Craft	Welders & fabricators	Skills shortage: Welders/fabricators	Offshore wind; renewables; industrial maintenance	Persisting / Emerging
	Electrical & electronic trades, etc.	Potential future skills shortage: electricians*		
Transport & Logistics	Large goods vehicle drivers	Skills shortage: HGV drivers	Ageing workforce; replacement demand	Persisting
	Other drivers & transport operatives	Skills shortage: Bus and coach drivers		
Hospitality	Chefs & cooks	Skills shortage: Chefs	Tourism recovery; declining culinary training uptake	Persisting

Data Source: National Skills Bulletin 2025, SOLAS/SLMRU, October 2025.

* Supply currently adequate but demand expected to outpace pipeline.

Note. Leitrim-specific assessments are indicative and should be read alongside local employer demand data, CSO regional employment statistics, and the priorities set out in Leitrim's Local Economic and Community Plan.

Skills Supply

This chapter maps the FET and HEI landscape accessible to Leitrim learners, with a focus on MSLETB's and ATU's programme portfolio,

before analysing where gaps and mismatches between supply and demand are most pronounced.

MSLETB

381 Courses Delivered in 2025	2157 Learner Engagements in 2025
129 Courses Active in 2026 (to May 2026)	1,018 Learner Engagements (to May 2026)

Data Source: MSLETB 2025-2026

MSLETB was established under the Education and Training Boards Act 2013. It is one of sixteen ETBs nationally in the Republic of Ireland and the main public provider of FET in County Leitrim with its courses delivered through colleges and various outreach centres. Its head office is in Castlebar, County Mayo, and it also has an administrative office at St. George's Terrace in Carrick on Shannon. MSLETB is managed through three directorates: Schools; FET; and Organisational Support and Development.

FET offers a wide range of lifelong learning options for people over the age of 16. These include Apprenticeships, Traineeships, PLC courses, Community Education and Training, Youthreach, Community Training Centres and Adult Basic Education. FET is for any learner who wants to gain new skills or build on existing ones, whether the goal is personal development, employment, or progression to further or higher education. MSLETB also offers a free FET guidance and information service, including one to one session.

In 2025, MSLETB established Leitrim College of Further Education and Training. Going forward, FET programmes across the county are

delivered under the umbrella of the college or in conjunction with it. Full time programmes include PLC courses, Local Training Initiatives, Youthreach, Community Training Centres and the new apprenticeships. Part time options include the Adult Literacy Service — numeracy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) — the Back to Education Initiative (BTEI), Community Education, Specific Skills Training and the Carrick on Shannon Digital Skills Centre.

In 2025, MSLETB delivered 381 courses across Leitrim, generating 2157 learner engagements over the full academic year. By May 2026, 129 courses were active with 1,018 learner engagements recorded. The 2026 figures cover provision only up to May and so represent part of the full programme year.

The Apprenticeship, Enterprise and Skills Unit (AESU) was established by MSLETB in 2025. Its mission is to strengthen engagement between MSLETB, employers and key regional stakeholders across Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim. The Unit is focused on developing and sustaining strategic partnerships with industry, economic development bodies and regional enterprise support organisations to ensure that education and training provision is aligned with current and emerging workforce needs. Through

the delivery of apprenticeships, Skills to Advance, Skills for Work and other responsive training initiatives, the AESU supports workforce development, regional competitiveness and economic growth while enhancing opportunities for both employers and learners. By combining employer engagement with labour market intelligence, strategic partnerships and flexible training solutions, the AESU helps ensure that training provision remains relevant, accessible and responsive to the evolving needs of enterprise across the region. Through this collaborative approach, the Unit contributes to building a highly skilled workforce capable of supporting sustainable economic and social development.

Programme Categories

In 2025 MSLETB's provision was recorded across ten programme categories, set out in Table 4. The descriptions below run from the largest category to the smallest.

Community Education was the largest category, with 874 learner engagements, or 40.5% of the 2025 total. Community Education is adult learning that generally takes place outside the formal education sector. It is community based, with local groups helping to organise courses and shape their content. Programmes are usually short and mostly non accredited, and they often serve older adults, women's groups, disability organisations, men's sheds and community development groups. Topics include digital skills, practical skills, personal development, sustainability, arts and crafts, wellbeing, exercise and social inclusion.

ESOL was the second largest category, with 513 engagements, or 23.8%. English for Speakers of Other Languages provides accredited English language tuition at QQI Levels 1 to 6 for learners whose first language is not English, including migrants, refugees and people in international protection. Provision ranges from beginner, non accredited classes through to advanced,

professional level accredited courses. The scale of this provision reflects strong and growing demand for English language tuition in Leitrim, driven by inward migration and resettlement.

BTEI accounted for 329 engagements, or 15.3%. The Back to Education Initiative offers part time, accredited programmes at QQI Levels 3 to 6 for adults who want to gain qualifications alongside work or family commitments. Subjects include ICT, business administration, bookkeeping, social care, healthcare support, early learning and childcare, and horticulture.

Adult Literacy Groups accounted for 172 engagements, or 8.0%. These programmes help adults with lower literacy or numeracy levels to build reading, writing, maths and digital skills. Provision ranges from one-to-one tuition and accredited QQI general learning courses to community-based computer skills and family learning. Closely related is **Intensive Tuition for Adults with Basic Education Needs** (ITABE), a more structured and sustained support for adults with the most significant literacy needs, involving a higher level of one to one or small group tutor contact. ITABE is recorded as a separate line in Table 4 (12 engagements, 0.6%).

PLC Groups accounted for 112 engagements, or 5.2%. Post Leaving Certificate courses are full time, practical programmes that help learners gain job ready skills and recognised QQI Level 5 or Level 6 qualifications. They combine classroom learning with hands on training and work experience in sectors such as healthcare, business, equine, food science, music, tourism, and outdoor sport and recreation. PLCs also offer strong progression routes into apprenticeships, further FET study or higher education. The 2025/2026 year was the first year that the new Leitrim College offered full time PLC courses, and three more full time courses will be introduced in September 2026. The

College operates from campuses in Drumshanbo and Carrick on Shannon, and MSLETB is seeking a more central hub in Carrick on Shannon for its PLC provision.

Local Training Initiatives (LTI) accounted for 67 engagements, or 3.1%. These are community based vocational programmes for unemployed adults, particularly those facing barriers to work. They are usually full time and accredited, and cover practical areas such as horticulture, culinary arts and workplace digital skills.

Youthreach accounted for 29 engagements, or 1.3%. Youthreach is a full time programme for young people (aged 15 to 20) who have left mainstream school early with few or no qualifications. Leitrim Youthreach has 25 places and is currently based in Drumshanbo, with a planned move to Mohill in 2027. It offers small class sizes and a mix of practical, academic and personal development learning, together with work experience and taster programmes. Learners can gain QQI awards at Levels 1 to 4 and the Leaving Certificate Applied.

Community Training Centres accounted for 26 engagements, or 1.2%. A Community Training Centre provides full time training and general learning for young early school leavers aged 16 to 23 who are not in

employment, education or training. Programmes lead to QQI awards at Levels 2 and 3 and are delivered in a supported, community based setting. Leitrim has 20 such places.

New Generation Apprenticeships accounted for 23 engagements, or 1.1%. New generation apprenticeships combine on the job training with off the job learning, and lead to nationally recognised QQI qualifications at Levels 5 to 10. They are designed with industry to meet real workforce needs and to create clear career pathways. MSLETB's apprenticeship provision is set to grow (see Wider Services and Funding below).

MSLETB is expanding its apprenticeship provision. It has been appointed lead education provider for the National Business and Operations Apprenticeship, a practical two year programme that gives existing and aspiring staff the skills to excel in a modern business environment. It leads to a QQI Advanced Certificate at Level 6, and sixty apprentices are due to start in the third quarter of 2026. MSLETB also delivers the Sales Apprenticeship, an "earn and learn" programme designed with a consortium of sales industry partners. Apprentices learn in a supportive, practical setting while working towards a QQI Major Level 6 award. It is open to employers of all sizes and sectors across the country.

Learner Engagements by Programme Category in 2025

Table 4

Programme Category	Courses	Total Learners	% Share
Community Education	165	874	40.5
ESOL	77	513	23.8
BTEI	67	329	15.3
Adult Literacy Groups	46	172	8.0
PLC Groups	10	112	5.2
Local Training Initiatives	4	67	3.1
Youthreach	4	29	1.3

Community Training Centres	2	26	1.2
New Generation Apprenticeships	2	23	1.1
ITABE	4	12	0.6
TOTAL	381	2,157	100.00

Data Source: MSLETB 2025

Specific Skills Training and the Digital Skills Centre

Specific Skills Training is short, employment focused training in particular occupational skills. In Leitrim it is delivered mainly through the Carrick on Shannon Digital Skills Centre, which offers online and blended courses. These include Certiport certification, Microsoft Office Specialist, and IT Specialist qualifications in areas such as cybersecurity, networking, Python, Java, databases and software development. Basic digital literacy is also supported. Accredited courses in bus driving, HGV, transport, warehousing and security are delivered through this strand as well.

FET Guidance Service

The FET Guidance Service offers free, impartial, one to one guidance and information. It helps adults make informed choices about education, training and career pathways, and supports learners at every stage, from before they enrol through to planning their next step. In 2025 the service supported 1,273 beneficiaries.

Standard Based (Craft) Apprenticeships

Standard Based (Craft) Apprenticeships Standard Based (Craft) Apprenticeships comprise 26 traditional apprenticeship programmes across five sectors: Construction, Electrical, Engineering, Motor and Print. They combine paid, on-the-job training

with structured off-the-job learning and lead to an Advanced Certificate – Craft at Level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). There are currently 207 craft apprentices in County Leitrim, employed by 51 employers. Training takes place

over 208 weeks and seven phases. Phases 1, 3, 5 and 7 are completed with the employer, while Phases 2, 4 and 6 are delivered

off the job by the ETB and technological university sectors.

MSLETB Training Centres in Ballina, Collooney and Sligo deliver Phase 2 training in Carpentry and Joinery, Electrical, Electrical

Instrumentation, Instrumentation, Mechanical Automation and Maintenance Fitting (MAMF), Metal Fabrication, Toolmaking and Vehicle Body Repair (VBR).

Craft apprenticeships make an important contribution to regional skills development by supporting local recruitment,

addressing employer skills needs and providing accessible pathways into skilled employment. Continued employer engagement

and timely access to off-the-job training will be essential to sustaining and expanding participation in Leitrim.



Tertiary Programmes

MSLETB is developing tertiary education provision in collaboration with Atlantic Technological University (ATU). A tertiary programme in Food Science is currently being offered through this partnership, providing a local progression route from further

education into higher education.

The programme demonstrates the potential for closer integration between FET and higher education in response to learner, employer and regional skills needs. Subject to demand, resources and continued collaboration with ATU, MSLETB hopes to develop an extended range of tertiary degree programmes in Leitrim the future.

This approach would improve access to degree-level education for learners in Leitrim, strengthen progression opportunities and support the development of a skilled workforce aligned with the needs of the regional economy.

Wider Services and Funding

Each year MSLETB allocates REACH funding to community and voluntary organisations to address educational disadvantage in community settings. In 2026, twenty thousand euros were allocated to eight groups, supporting over 175 beneficiaries.

Staff and learners also take part each year in Erasmus+ funded activities and mobilities. Many learners spend around two weeks in mainland Europe, often working in a vocational area of their choice.

For learners under the age of 18, MSLETB delivers the Music Generation programme, a national partnership that provides music tuition and performance opportunities. The Board also runs a Youth Services function that supports, coordinates and quality assures youth work across the three counties.



Geographic Distribution of Provision

MSLETB delivers FET across many communities in County Leitrim. Delivery is concentrated in Carrick on Shannon, which hosts the BTEI centre, the Adult Literacy Service hub, the Digital Skills Centre and the Community Training Centre, and which also delivers some of the new full time PLC

courses. As Table 5 shows, 160 of the 381 courses, around 42%, are hosted in Carrick on Shannon, reflecting demand in the county town. The remaining 58% are delivered across eleven other locations, which shows MSLETB's commitment to accessible, outreach-based provision in rural Leitrim.

Table 5

Course Provision by Location in 2025

Location	Courses
Carrick-on-Shannon	160
Manorhamilton	46
Cloone & Dowra	2
Ballinamore	27
Mohill	33
Drumshanbo	37
Drumkeerin	9
Carrigallen	8
Dromahair	21
Rossinver/Kiltyclogher	30
Kinlough/Tullaghan	3
Glenfarne	5
TOTAL	381

Data Source: MSLETB 2025

Atlantic Technology University

(ATU)

Accessibility

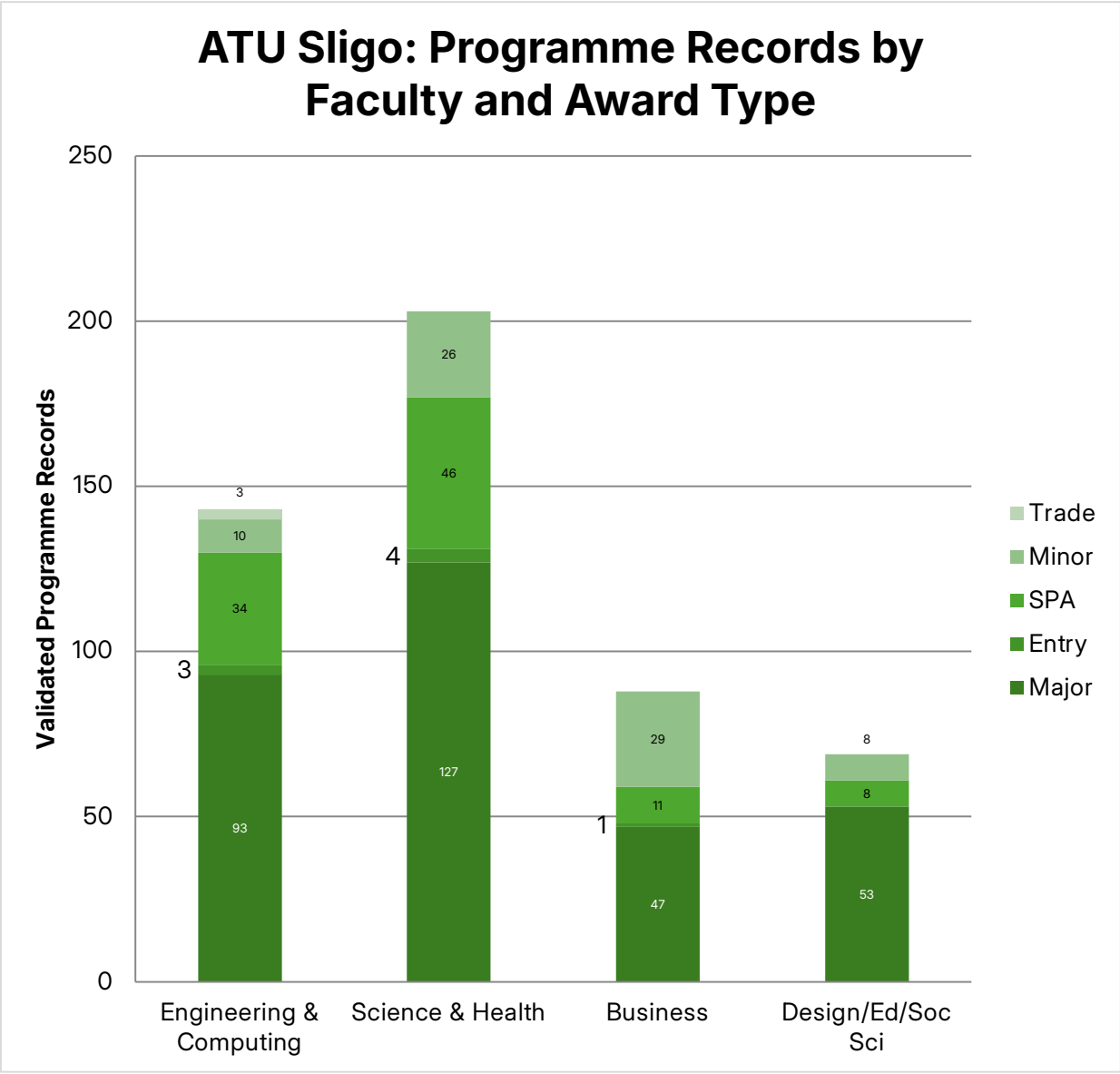
ATU is the primary HEI serving the north-west and west of Ireland and constitutes the most accessible university pathway for learners from County Leitrim. ATU operates across nine campus sites each with a distinct programme portfolio and geographic catchment. The realistic accessibility of each campus varies considerably depending on where in County Leitrim a learner lives. The two ATU campuses in Sligo, Ballinode and St Angela's College, are accessible to the majority of Leitrim's population on a daily commute basis. Learners from Carrick-on-Shannon can reach Sligo in approximately 60 minutes by train, and students from the south of the county in approximately 45-60 minutes by car. From Manorhamilton the journey is approximately 30 minutes by bus, and from the rest of north Leitrim, the journey is approximately 30 minutes by car, well within a typical commuting threshold. The remaining campuses, while reachable from parts of Leitrim, often require journey times that effectively preclude daily in-person attendance for most learners. The analysis of on-campus programme provision in this chapter therefore focuses on the two campuses in Sligo (hereinafter referred to collectively as ATU Sligo), which together offer the full range of provision realistically accessible to Leitrim learners on a day-to-day basis.

Programme Offering ATU Sligo

ATU Sligo records 503 validated programme records across all award types and NFQ levels. These span four faculties and 17 departments, ranging from NFQ 6 Higher Certificates through to NFQ 10 Doctoral programmes. As shown in Figure 14, in terms of award type, 320 records are Major awards, the primary substantive qualifications at each level, with a further 99 Special Purpose Awards (SPAs) and 73 Minor awards constituting the short-course and micro-credential offering. Entry awards (8 records) provide gateway routes into longer programmes, and three Trade awards reflect SOLAS apprenticeship provision.

The Faculty of Science and Health is the largest, with 203 records (40.4%), reflecting particular depth in Life Sciences, Environmental Sciences, Health and Nutritional Sciences, Nursing and Healthcare, and Pharmacy. The Faculty of Engineering and Computing accounts for 143 records (28.4%), covering Civil Engineering and Construction, Mechatronics, Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering, Computing and Electronic Engineering, and Architecture. The Faculty of Business contributes 88 records (17.5%), and the Faculty of Design, Education and Social Science 69 records (13.7%), the latter incorporating Home Economics and Education teacher-training programmes, delivered at St Angela's College alongside the Yeats Academy of Design and Arts, and the Social Sciences department at Ballinode.

Figure 14

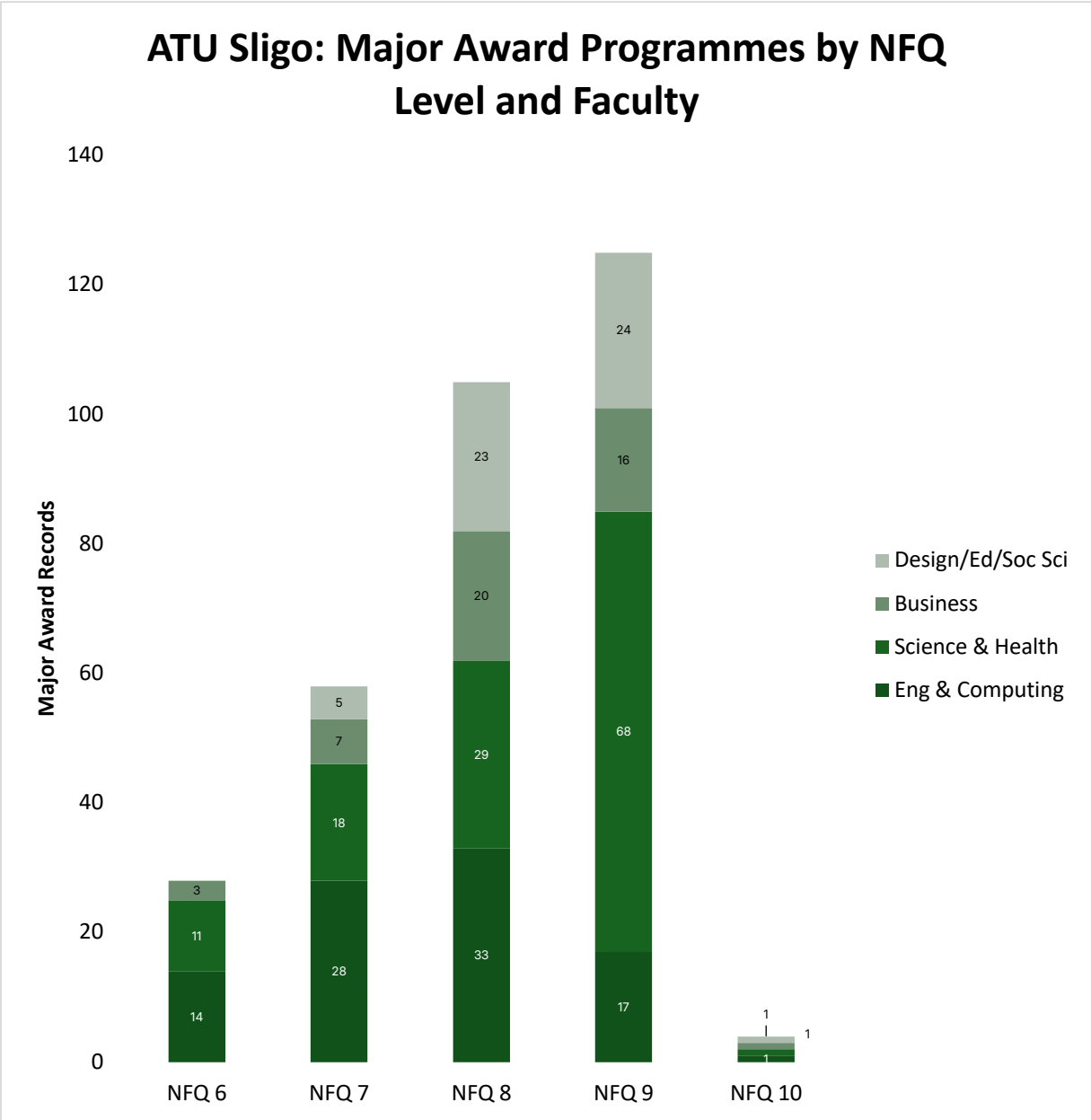


Note. Figures reflect ATU's validated programme portfolio (all approved awards), not the programmes offered in a given year. They indicate the breadth of approved provision rather than currently enrollable programmes.

Data Source: ATU May 2026

Figure 15 shows that, considering Major awards, NFQ 9 (Masters and Postgraduate Diploma level) is the largest band, accounting for 125 records (39.1%), driven primarily by the extensive postgraduate provision in Science and Health (68 records at NFQ 9). NFQ 8 (Honours Bachelor Degree) accounts for 105 records (32.8%) and NFQ 7 (Ordinary Degree) for 58 records (18.1%), together constituting the core undergraduate offering. NFQ 6 (Higher Certificate) provides 28 access-level Major awards, and four PhD-level records complete the portfolio at NFQ 10.

Figure 15



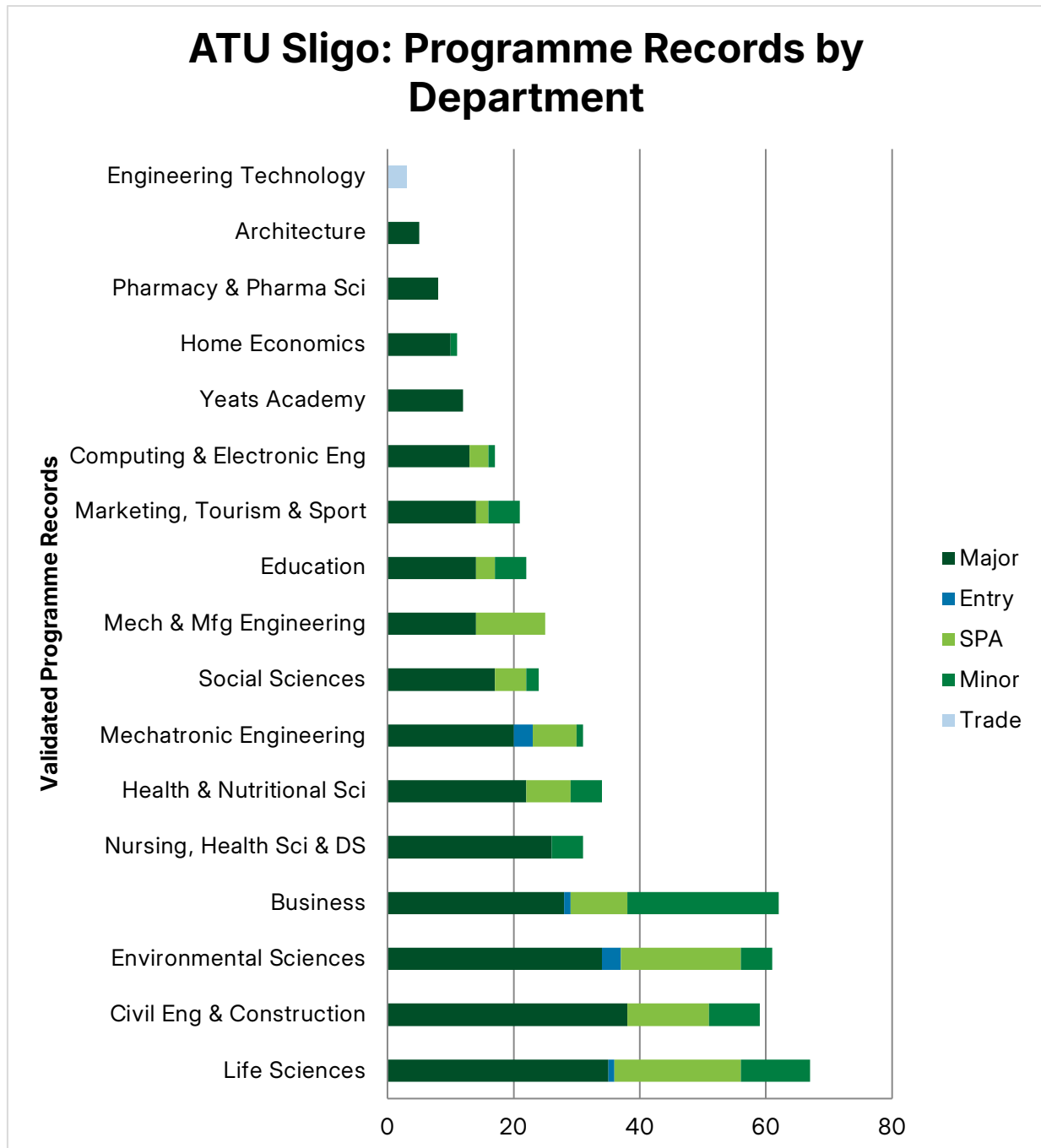
Data Source: ATU May 2026

Note: Figure shows Major awards only ($n = 320$). Short courses and stackable awards (SPA, Minor, Entry, Trade) are counted by award type in Figure 14.

As shown in Figure 16, at department level, Life Sciences (67 records), Business (62 records) and Environmental Sciences (61 records) are the three largest departments, closely followed by Civil Engineering and Construction (59 records). The Nursing, Health Sciences and Disability Studies

department (31 records) and Mechatronic Engineering (31 records) are also significant. This profile reflects an institution with particular strength in science, health, engineering and construction disciplines, areas closely aligned with the skills needs of County Leitrim's economy.

Figure 16



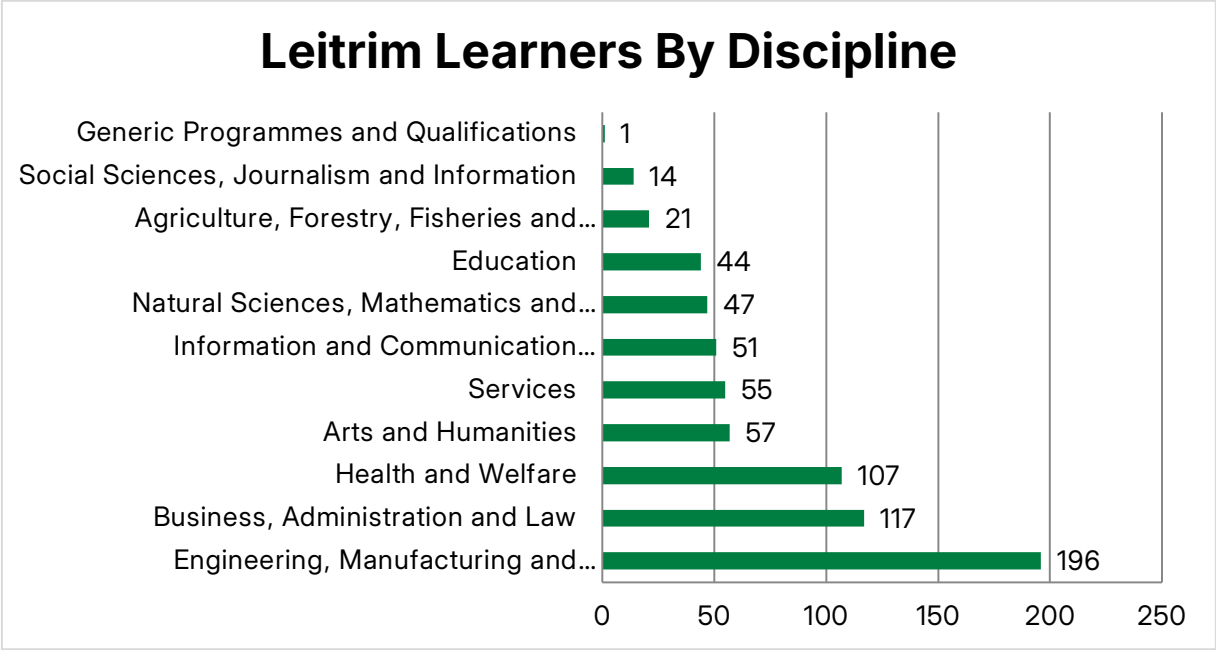
Data Source: ATU May 2026

Leitrim learners at ATU

As of March 2026, a total of 710 Leitrim learners are enrolled at ATU across all campuses, levels and modes of study. Figure 17 shows, Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction is the largest discipline, accounting for 196 students (27.6% of total).

Business, Administration and Law (117 students, 16.5%) and Health and Welfare (107 students, 15.1%) are the next largest disciplines, together with Engineering accounting for nearly 60% of all Leitrim enrolments.

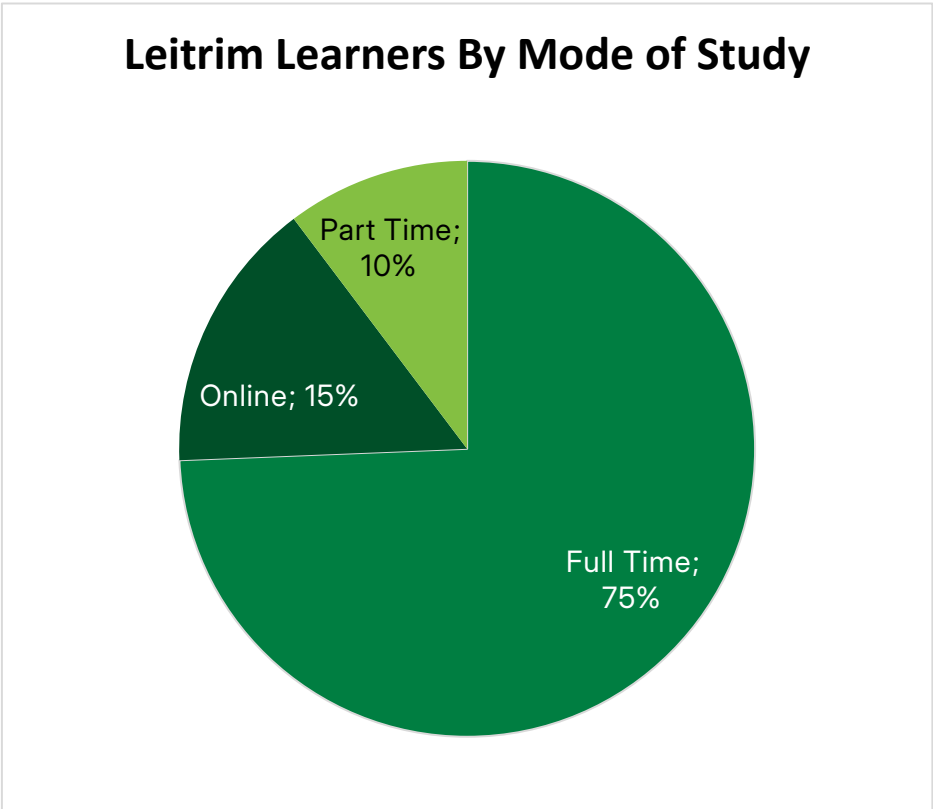
Figure 17



Data Source: ATU March 2026

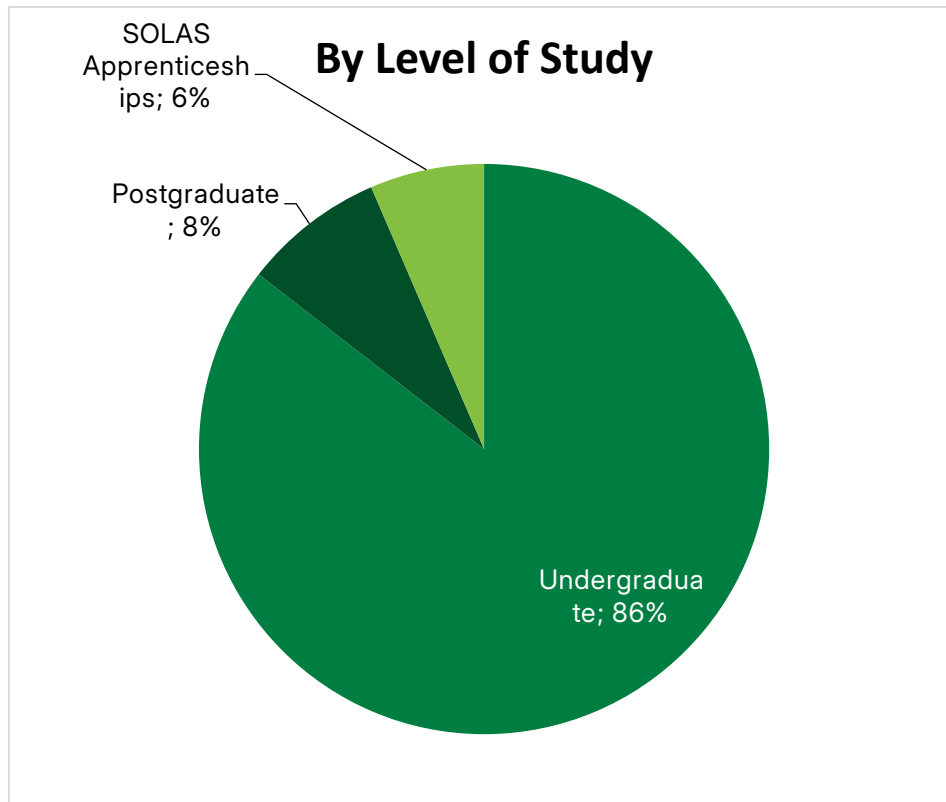
Figure 18 illustrates Leitrim learners by mode of study, 528 students (74.4%) attend full-time, 73 (10.3%) part-time, and 109 (15.4%) online. Online participation of Leitrim learners increased from 2024/2025 (104 students) to 2025/2026 (109 students) by 4.8%.

Figure 18



Data Source: ATU March 2026

Figure 19



Data Source: ATU March 2026

The relatively high full-time share reflects the dominance of undergraduate enrolments (607 students, 85.5%) in the overall Leitrim ATU population, as visible in Figure 19. Postgraduate students (57, 8%) and apprentices (46, 6.5%) make up the remainder.

Skills Mismatch Analysis

Leitrim's labour force is concentrated in two areas: professionals (18.5%, among them nurses and teachers) and skilled trades (16.9%, led by farmers and construction workers such as carpenters, electricians and plumbers), alongside a sizeable care workforce (8.5%, e.g. care workers and nursing auxiliaries). Many of these same occupations appear on the national shortage list. Healthcare is the clearest example: rural GP access is already a known concern, and

demand for nurses, care workers and healthcare assistants will keep rising as the population ages, with care work being the one occupation nationally in labour shortage rather than a skills shortage. Construction shortages affect the county directly, from the council's own infrastructure and housing projects to rural repair and new build activity, with plumbers and electricians flagged as future shortages tied to SEAI retrofit and renewable energy work, including offshore wind along the Atlantic coast. The teaching shortage hits rural schools hardest, particularly in maths, science and Irish; HGV and bus driver shortages threaten rural supply chains and public transport; and chefs, a substantial local trade (183 workers), are central to tourism across the Shannon-erne, Lough Allen and Wild Atlantic Way areas. ICT shortages are less locally concentrated, but remote work gives Leitrim a route to that demand without relocation.

On the supply side, the county's two main providers pull in different directions. MSLETB's FET provision is weighted toward general and community-based learning: Community Education (40.5% of learner engagements) and ESOL (23.8%) together make up nearly two thirds of activity, reflecting strong demand for inclusion, literacy and language support. Accredited, employment ready pathways are smaller by comparison: BTEI (15.3%, QQI Levels 3 to 6 across ICT, business, healthcare support and childcare), PLC courses (5.2%, full time QQI Levels 5 and 6, now delivered through the newly established Leitrim College) and apprenticeships (1.1% of engagements).

ATU Sligo's provision aligns with Leitrim's priority sectors: Science and Health (40.4% of the validated programme portfolio) and Engineering and Computing (28.4%) are its two largest faculties, covering exactly the medtech, healthcare and construction areas the county is most exposed to. This shows in enrolments too, with Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction the largest discipline among Leitrim's ATU learners (27.6%) and Health and Welfare the third (15.1%). Yet uptake of the apprenticeship route remains small, at just 46 Leitrim learners (6.5%), despite trades being among the areas most exposed to national shortages.

Taken together, demand is concentrated in healthcare, construction trades, care work and haulage, areas where national shortages mean local training alone cannot fully close the gap, since these roles also compete for workers nationally. MSLETB's broad, community rooted provision already plays a vital role in the county, particularly in literacy, language and inclusion, and the recent establishment of Leitrim College and the expansion of its apprenticeship offering position it well to raise awareness of and grow accredited provision in trades, care and technical skills as local demand rises. ATU's portfolio is well matched to the county's priority sectors, pointing to a clear

opportunity to expand participation by Leitrim learners in accredited, employment focused provision, and to strengthen progression routes from MSLETB into ATU's engineering, construction and health programmes. Because many of these shortages are demand driven, reflecting an ageing population, sustained construction activity and pharma/medtech expansion, continued investment in these priority areas, coupled with efforts to retain graduates locally, would help align the skills Leitrim's workforce is building with the skills its economy needs.



6

Key Industries in
Leitrim

6 Key Industries in Leitrim

While Chapter 3.2.2 set out the full industrial base of Leitrim County at NACE Rev. 2 section level, this chapter takes a strategic lens. It profiles the priority industries selected for in-depth analysis on the basis of employment weight, growth potential, strategic importance, and alignment with regional and national policy, drawing on stakeholder

engagement and the presence of anchor employers in the county alongside the census data.

All employment figures are drawn from CSO Census 2022 Detailed Industrial Group (DIG) data, expressed as a percentage of the 14,045 persons in employment to remain consistent with Chapter 3.2.2. DIG categories map onto the EU's Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the European Community (NACE) Rev. 2 classification; the full concordance is set out in Appendix 2. Each profile below states the NACE sections and DIG categories it comprises.

Professional & Business Services

1,955

persons employed

13.9%

of persons in employment

CSO Ireland, Census 2022

Professional & Business Services is the largest of Leitrim's priority industries by employment. It is a composite of five NACE sections reported separately in Chapter 3.2.2:

- Professional, Scientific & Technical Activities (697);
- Administrative & Support Services (432);
- Information & Communication (386);
- Financial & Insurance Activities (382); and
- Real Estate Activities (58).

This is the county's largest priority industry, and its scale reflects a strong indigenous enterprise culture: self-employment stands at 10.3% of the labour force against *CSO Ireland, Census 2022*

8.3% nationally, and the post-2020 remote-working shift has drawn location-flexible professionals to the county, supported by the hub network, with The Hive in Carrick-on-Shannon consistently praised in consultation. Moreover, 95% of the county's enterprises employ fewer than ten people, underlining the centrality of micro-enterprise and the SME sector.

A recurring theme across interviews, however, was a pervasive business-development gap. SMEs were described as technically capable but often lacking the sales, marketing, financial-management and internationalisation skills needed to scale, compounded by thin peer networks. Growing this sector will require skills in digital services, financial technology, project management, and business development.



ICT & Digital

386

persons employed

2.7%

of persons in employment

CSO Ireland, Census 2022

The Information & Communication component (386) spans several activities, the largest of which are computer programming, consultancy and information service activities (247) and telecommunications (75), with the remainder distributed across smaller information-service and publishing-related activities. For a rural county this is a notable concentration of knowledge-economy employment, anchored by Cora Systems in Kilclare which is an indigenous enterprise software company with an international client base in project portfolio management, cited across consultation interviews as evidence that knowledge-based enterprise can thrive in the county.

Digital and AI skills emerged as the single most universally pressing gap across the

consultation. Employers, training bodies and enterprise support organisations aligned in identifying software development, data capability, AI readiness and digital transformation as urgent priorities. Critical is also the incumbent-workforce upskilling challenge, not only a graduate-pipeline one, with many businesses unaware of the training already available. The National Skills Bulletin 2025 records a persisting national shortage of software developers and IT professionals, driven by digitalisation, AI adoption and cyber-security demand. Digital skills were joint-third (48%) among the survey's future priorities, and the Carrick-on-Shannon Digital Skills Centre provides existing regional capacity.

Financial & Insurance Services

382

persons employed

2.7%

of persons in employment

CSO Ireland, Census 2022

The Financial & Insurance component records 382 persons in 2022. The largest contributors are financial service activities (145), activities auxiliary to financial services (130), and insurance and pension funding (92), with the balance made up of smaller related sub-activities. This current figure understates the industry's strategic weight, which is better understood as a legacy-and-latent-potential

story. Consultation interviews traced a genuine depth in financial and professional services to the former MBNA / Bank of America operation in Carrick-on-Shannon, which at its peak employed over 1,000 people. That closure dispersed but did not erase a substantial local talent pool experienced in financial services, compliance, operations and customer



management, a pool that continues to represent a valuable and distinctive regional asset.

Two fintech companies, Avant Money and Payac, both based in Carrick-on-Shannon, were repeatedly cited as success stories building directly on that legacy. IDA Ireland identified financial services as one of only three realistic FDI targets for the county, alongside medtech

and mixed business services, precisely because of this existing reference point and depth of talent. The strategic opportunity is therefore to reactivate latent capacity rather than build from a standing start, though interviews noted that specialist digital, analytical, risk and compliance roles remain significantly harder to recruit locally than in urban centres.

Health and Social Work

1,860

persons employed

13.2%

of persons in employment

CSO Ireland, Census 2022

Health & Social Work corresponds directly to the NACE section and is the county's second-largest priority industry. It spans residential care and social work activities (901, the single largest detailed industrial group in Leitrim), other human health activities (429), hospital activities (377), and medical and dental practice (approximately 153).

Its scale reflects both Leitrim's demographic profile of a notably higher share of older residents than the national average, with 18.1% of adults classified as retired compared with 14.5% nationally, and the broader public investment in healthcare delivery across the northwest (Census 2022). The HSE is among the region's largest collective employers, operating community health centres and supporting the delivery of primary and community care across Leitrim, including Our Lady's Hospital in Manorhamilton. Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, is also a significant

employer. Sligo University Hospital, while located outside the county boundary, serves as the regional acute care centre and draws significantly on the Leitrim healthcare workforce.

Demand for healthcare and social care workers is projected to grow over the strategy period, driven by demographic trends, the expansion of community-based care models, and the implementation of Sláintecare health reform. The skills required span a wide range of professions and roles: nursing, healthcare assistance, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, social care work, early childhood care and education, and specialist dementia and disability support. Workforce retention and the development of clear career pathways within the sector are as significant a skills challenge as initial recruitment.

(Advanced) Manufacturing

1,629

persons employed

11.6%

of persons in employment

CSO Ireland, Census 2022



Manufacturing corresponds to the NACE Manufacturing section and is the county's third-largest priority industry, notable for both scale and diversity. It encompasses a mix of internationally owned facilities, significant indigenous manufacturers, and a range of sub-sectors from food processing to precision engineering. MedTech & Life Sciences is profiled as a distinct cluster within Manufacturing.

Among the county's most significant manufacturing employers are Masonite Ireland, one of Ireland's largest manufacturing facilities processing wood waste and residue to manufacture moulded door skins in Carrick-on-Shannon; MCI (Motion Controls International), an actuator supplier providing smart solutions for the automotive industry in Manorhamilton; Merenda Limited, a specialist manufacturer of wood veneer components for the furniture industry, based in Manorhamilton; and the indigenous PRIOR PLM Medical, based in Carrick-on-Shannon and cited in interviews as a homegrown growth story. Beyond these anchor employers, the sector's wider base includes wood and wood products (120), fabricated metal products (93), plastics (66), furniture (44) and motor-vehicle components (42).

The term "advanced manufacturing" reflects the direction of travel for this sector over the strategy period. Automation, robotics, digital process control, lean manufacturing methods, and quality management systems are increasingly standard requirements across manufacturing operations regardless of sub-sector. The skills challenge is not simply one of volume, recruiting sufficient numbers of production operatives, but of capability. Interviews identified CNC operators, welders and toolmakers as persistently hard to recruit, noting that the regional tool-making capacity for which Sligo was historically known collapsed after the 1990s and has not recovered. The National Skills Bulletin 2025 corroborates this, recording persisting national shortages of welders and fabricators, and of production, design and quality-control engineers. Equipping the existing and incoming workforce with the technical competencies to operate in increasingly technology-intensive production environments is necessary. Apprenticeships, workplace-based upskilling, and strong links between manufacturers and the further and higher education sectors will be central to this. Future Cast in Manorhamilton, a nationally and internationally recognised construction- and manufacturing-innovation centre, represents regional R&D capacity this industry can draw on.

MedTech & Life Sciences

702 persons employed	5.0% of persons in employment
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CSO Ireland, Census 2022

Consultation interviews identified medical devices and manufacturing collectively as one of Leitrim's areas of genuine strength, with the county accounting for a disproportionate share of medical-device manufacturing in the border region relative to its population such as medical and dental instruments (572) and basic pharmaceuticals (130).

The anchor employer is Freudenberg Medical, formerly known as VistaMed, a global medical device manufacturer with production facilities in Carrick-on-Shannon and Drumsna. Freudenberg Medical is supported by IDA Ireland and is one of the county's most significant foreign direct investment employers. The company's expansion announced in 2024/2025, involving

250 new roles, underlines the strength of the existing cluster and investor confidence in Leitrim as a MedTech location. The IDA Ireland Annual Employment Survey confirms that financial services, engineering/manufacturing, and medical devices have historically been the three sectors in which IDA-supported companies in Leitrim operate, with the medical devices segment now clearly the most dynamic.

The skills implications of this cluster are specific and well-defined. MedTech manufacturing in a regulated environment requires competencies in

quality assurance and quality management systems, regulatory affairs (including EU MDR compliance), precision manufacturing, process engineering, and cleanroom operations. These are specialist skills that are not easily interchangeable with other sectors, and their supply within the county and region is a matter of strategic importance. The MedTech cluster's concentration in the Carrick-on-Shannon corridor also has implications for the education and training pipeline, which will be examined in the skills demand and supply chapters of this strategy.

Agri-Food & Innovation

1,253

persons employed

8.9%

of persons in employment

CSO Ireland, Census 2022

Agri-Food combines the whole Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing section (1,008) with the food and drink manufacturing DIGs within Manufacturing (245), capturing the full value chain; the food-and-drink element overlaps with the manufacturing total in Section 6.3. Cattle and mixed farming (887) dominates, reflecting a wet upland county suited to livestock, with forestry and logging (58) also notable. Farmers are the single largest detailed occupation in the entire county (920). The food and drink component includes meat (56), bakery (55), dairy (44) and beverages (42).

The strategic opportunity is innovation and value-add, in line with the LECP's emphasis on food and organic farming. Interviewees consistently identified food innovation centred on Drumshanbo as a cluster of growing national

and international recognition, anchored by The Shed Distillery (Drumshanbo Gunpowder Irish Gin) and the community-led Drumshanbo Food Hub — now seven food businesses employing over 200 people — with the new Leitrim Food Zone adding capacity. This demonstrates how artisan production, branding and tourism reinforce one another. Against this, the underlying farm sector faces structural pressure: beef and sheep systems dominate, farm numbers are declining, and over a quarter of farmers are aged 65 or older, sharpening the succession and sustainability challenge. The skills profile is shifting accordingly — agri-environment practice, precision agriculture, carbon accounting and food-science/product innovation — supported by provision such as the Green Cert and the National Organic Training Skillnet.

Tourism & Hospitality

987

7.0%



persons employed	of persons in employment
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CSO Ireland, Census 2022

Tourism and Hospitality comprise the NACE categories of:

- Accommodation & Food Services (800);

These are linked to the visitor economy. Hotels and similar accommodation account for 262 persons, while restaurants (248) and beverage serving activities (196) together reflect a hospitality sector concentrated around Carrick-on-Shannon as a regional leisure destination, alongside dispersed activity across the county's towns and villages.

Leitrim's tourism proposition is built on distinctive natural assets: the Shannon–Erne Waterway, Lough Allen, Leitrim's coastline on Donegal Bay in the north, and a network of trails, blueways and greenways that includes the SLNCR Greenway, the Iron Mountain trail system, and the Carrick-on-Shannon to Battlebridge Blueway. These assets support a growing outdoor, active, and experiential tourism market that is increasingly attractive to domestic and international visitors.

The Shed Distillery in Drumshanbo stands out as one of the county's most internationally recognised tourism assets as well as an indigenous enterprise success story. The

- Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (187).

producer of Gunpowder Irish Gin and Drumshanbo Single Pot Still Irish Whiskey, The Shed draws visitors as part of a craft-led experience that demonstrates the link between artisan food and drink production, storytelling, and tourism.

Consultation placed tourism at the centre of the county's future: survey respondents ranked hospitality and tourism the top future skills priority (66%) and sustainable tourism the leading growth sector for 2035 (61%), and interviewees identified slow-adventure and outdoor tourism as the county's core offer. The National Skills Bulletin 2025 records a persisting shortage of chefs, linked to tourism recovery and declining culinary-training uptake. Furthermore, the seasonality of employment in this sector remains a structural challenge, and the strategy period will require investment in skills around hospitality service, visitor experience design, language capability, and digital marketing.

Creative Industries

134 persons employed	1.0% of persons in employment
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CSO Ireland, Census 2022

Defined by creative arts and entertainment (58), libraries, archives and museums (24), publishing (25), and film, video, television and music production (27), the Creative Economy is an estimated 134 persons in formal employment. While this figure is modest in employment terms, the sector's strategic significance in Leitrim is strong as Leitrim has a long and deeply

embedded tradition of creative and cultural production. The county's literary heritage, associated above all with the late John McGahern, one of Ireland's most celebrated novelists, draws writers and readers to Leitrim as a place of creative resonance, expressed most visibly through the annual Iron Mountain Literature Festival and the associated John

McGahern Award. A vibrant traditional music culture, a strong visual arts and craft community, and a network of active community arts organisations are all part of a creative ecology that Leitrim Arts Office and the Creative Ireland programme actively support and invest in. Music Generation Leitrim, Leitrim Youth Arts, and the Creative Heartlands film bursary programme are among the infrastructure supporting emerging creative practitioners.

Consultation confirmed the sector's growth potential, with survey respondents identifying creative industries among the priority growth sectors (31%) and the LECP treating the creative economy as a distinct sector for development. The opportunity for the strategy period lies in the digitally-enabled creative economy, digital content creation, film and screen media, animation and games design, and in connecting Leitrim's strong cultural identity both to those contemporary tools and to the visitor economy its culture helps sustain.

Construction & Green Skills

925

persons employed

6.6%

of persons in employment

CSO Ireland, Census 2022

Construction corresponds directly to the NACE Construction section. Its sub-sector mix shows a broad range of trades and technical skills: construction of buildings (444), building completion and finishing (145), electrical installation (140), plumbing, heat and air-conditioning installation (66) and civil engineering (51).

Demand in construction is expected to remain strong across the strategy period, driven by housing delivery requirements, public infrastructure investment, and the built environment works associated with town and village regeneration across Leitrim's network of settlements. At a national level, Government commitments to accelerate housing output place increased pressure on the construction labour supply, with rural counties such as Leitrim facing competition for skilled tradespeople from larger urban centres. The sector is also facing a significant green transition: the demand for energy efficiency retrofitting, heat pump installation, and sustainable construction methods is generating

new skills requirements that overlap with the Renewable Energy sector. Skills in the electrical, plumbing and heating trades, site supervision and management, and green building practices are among the most in-demand in this sector. For example, the national commitment to retrofit half a million homes by 2030 represents a major opportunity, with a national shortfall of roughly 30,000 retrofit workers that Leitrim could position to capture.

Regional supply-side capacity is building through the Energy Build Centre of Excellence in Sligo (MSLETB-managed) and Future Cast's green-skills programme. The National Skills Bulletin 2025 places plumbers and electricians on a potential future skills shortage specifically because retrofit and renewable demand is expected to outpace training output. The binding constraint is labour supply: interviewees reported that skilled tradespeople are hard to recruit and often leave after training, with rural counties competing against larger urban centres.

Renewable Energy

90

persons employed

0.6%

of persons in employment

CSO Ireland, Census 2022

Renewable Energy currently accounts for a modest direct footprint, however it is included as a key industry based on its strategic growth potential and its significance within national and regional policy frameworks. Leitrim has considerable natural assets for onshore wind energy generation, particularly across the county's upland areas, with an installed wind and hydro capacity of around 93 MW.

At a national level, Ireland's Climate Action Plan sets ambitious renewable electricity targets, and the delivery of these targets will require substantial investment in onshore wind, solar, and grid infrastructure, generating demand for construction, engineering, environmental, and operational skills that counties like Leitrim are positioned to supply. For example, the National Skills Bulletin 2025 identifies offshore wind and renewables as a named driver of the persisting shortage in welders and fabricators. Carrick-on-Shannon's designation as a Decarbonising

Zone, and Leitrim's active network of Sustainable Energy Communities, reflect an emerging local infrastructure for energy transition activity. Over the 2026–2036 period, the strategy anticipates meaningful growth in the skills and employment footprint of the renewable energy sector in Leitrim, and the education and training pipeline should be positioned accordingly. Future Cast's planned green-skills programme includes offshore wind and solar training which is regional infrastructure this industry can build on.

The renewable energy and green transition agenda intersects with several other priority sectors in this strategy, most notably Construction (energy efficiency retrofitting and heat pump installation), Agri-Food (agri-environment and sustainable land management), and Professional Services (engineering consultancy and project management).





7

SCOT Analysis

7 SCOT Analysis

This chapter distils evidence from the policy context (Ch. 2), the socio-economic profile (Ch. 3), the stakeholder consultations (Ch. 4), the Skills Demand and Supply analysis (Ch. 5), and the key industry analysis (Ch. 6) into four analytical quadrants: Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Threats. Strengths and Challenges describe internal conditions: what the county currently has and what is currently holding it back. Opportunities and Threats describe external conditions: what the county can capitalise on and what may limit progress regardless of local action.

Strengths

Anchor sectors and proven clusters

- Medical devices manufacturing, the largest component of the MedTech & Life Sciences cluster, accounts for 4.1% of persons in employment (572 persons, Census 2022), a concentration that is disproportionately high relative to the county's population and would be notable in any Irish county. A significant cluster expansion announced in 2024/25 confirms that investor confidence in Leitrim as a MedTech location is active and growing, not historical.
- Financial and professional services represent a sector of genuine depth, anchored by a talent pool built over decades of financial services employment in the county. The presence of indigenous companies operating at national scale, Avant Money and Payac in Carrick-on-Shannon, demonstrates that knowledge-economy enterprise can be established and retained in a rural county context.
- Artisan food and drink is an internationally recognised cluster centred on Drumshanbo, with the Leitrim Food Zone expanding capacity beyond the original hub model. The sector is notable for integrating production, branding and tourism in a way that distinguishes Leitrim from comparable rural counties. The Shed Distillery is among the county's most internationally visible enterprise success stories.
- Advanced manufacturing is the third largest employment sector in the county (1,629 persons, 11.6% of persons in employment, Census 2022), spanning precision engineering, wood products, automotive components and pharmaceuticals. Several internationally owned facilities operate alongside significant indigenous manufacturers. Among the county's most significant manufacturing employers are Masonite Ireland, one of Ireland's largest manufacturing facilities processing wood waste and residue to manufacture moulded door skins in Carrick-on-Shannon; MCi (Motion Controls International), an actuator supplier providing smart solutions for the automotive industry in Manorhamilton; Merenda Limited, a specialist manufacturer of wood veneer components for the furniture industry, based in Manorhamilton; and the indigenous PRIOR PLM Medical, based in Carrick-on-Shannon and cited in interviews as a homegrown growth story. Beyond these anchor employers, the sector's wider base includes wood and wood products (120), fabricated metal products (93), plastics (66), furniture (44) and motor-vehicle components (42).

- A nationally and internationally active innovation centre in Manorhamilton is currently running 14 European-funded research projects and pursuing college status. Future Cast's forthcoming green skills programme covering offshore wind, solar and drone inspection adds a specialist pipeline directly relevant to the county's renewable energy potential.

Enterprise and digital infrastructure

- Carrick Business Campus is a 112,000 sq ft facility on the N4 corridor with a capital investment programme of €7.76m underway and a projected operating profit of €2.76m across 2024 to 2029. Carrick-on-Shannon is designated a Key Town in the RSES and carries a jobs-to-resident-workers ratio above 1.5, indicating its role as a net importer of employment across the sub-region.
- A geographically dispersed network of enterprise and digital hubs spans the county from Kinlough in the north to Carrick-on-Shannon in the south, including facilities in Manorhamilton, Ballinamore, Mohill and Drumshanbo. The Hive in Carrick-on-Shannon was consistently praised across stakeholder interviews for the quality and accessibility of its supports. The quality of the offering varies across the network, however, and bringing all hubs to a consistent standard of office space would strengthen the county's appeal to larger employers looking to place remote workers in a professional hub setting rather than at the kitchen table, a distinct proposition from the individual remote worker attraction case set out in Section 6.3.
- Leitrim's self-employment rate of 10.3% exceeds the national average of 8.3% (Census 2022), reflecting an active indigenous enterprise culture.

The Leitrim County Enterprise Fund and an active Local Enterprise Office provide accessible grant, mentoring and development supports for micro-enterprises. 95% of county enterprises employ fewer than ten people, underlining the centrality of the SME sector.

Skills and education provision

- MSLETB delivered 381 courses and 2,157 learner engagements in 2025, with provision across twelve locations. The establishment of Leitrim College of FET in 2025 consolidates further education and training under a unified brand. In 2026, 129 courses are active with 1,018 learner engagements recorded year-to-date (MSLETB, 2026).
- 710 Leitrim learners were enrolled at ATU in March 2026. ATU chairs the Future Cast board and delivers programmes through the Hive and online, establishing an existing institutional relationship that provides a foundation for developing a more formal county presence. The Donegal model, where ATU and the ETB operate in a coordinated and symbiotic way, is a directly replicable benchmark.
- The Carrick-on-Shannon Digital Skills Centre is delivering IT and digital certifications with 35 completions recorded in 2026 year-to-date. The Energy Build Centre of Excellence in Sligo, managed by MSLETB, provides green and retrofit skills capacity for the sub-region.

Quality of life and place assets

- Quality of life and community was identified as a top-three asset by 84% of stakeholders surveyed, receiving an average satisfaction



rating of 4.0 out of 5, the highest of all dimensions assessed and the only category where no respondent rated provision as very poor. This is a genuine and measurable differentiator, not an aspiration.

- The Shannon-Erne Waterway, Lough Allen, the Iron Mountain trail network and the SLNCR Greenway provide a distinctive natural recreation infrastructure. Carrick-on-Shannon holds Purple Flag status for its evening and night-time economy. 35.7% of Leitrim rivers are rated high quality, compared to 20.5% nationally (EPA).
- The Hidden Heartlands brand is explicitly recognised in the National Smart Specialisation Strategy as a regional economic asset (S3 2022 to 2027), providing a nationally endorsed platform for tourism and place-marketing that most comparable rural counties do not have.

Demographic and workforce momentum

- Population grew from 33,100 to 36,300 between 2018 and 2024, a 9.7% increase and the fourth highest growth rate in the state over this period (CSO, 2024). Growth accelerated, with the 2022 to 2024 rate of 4.91% exceeding the national average, suggesting the post-COVID inward migration trend is strengthening rather than fading.
- Approximately 28% of the Leitrim workforce work from home at least part of the week. The Carrick-on-Shannon labour catchment contains 6,600 resident workers, 62.2% of whom hold third-level qualifications, with over 70% currently working outside the town, a large, highly qualified workforce whose skills are being exported to other economies

but which could be redirected into local employment as the county's enterprise base develops (WDC, 2024).

Challenges

Housing: the defining barrier to growth

- Housing availability received the lowest satisfaction rating of any dimension assessed in the stakeholder survey, at 2.3 out of 5, with no respondent rating provision as excellent and 54% rating it very poor or poor. It was also the single most cited barrier to economic growth, selected by 64% of respondents. Employers are actively declining candidates for senior roles because suitable accommodation cannot be found, a constraint that enterprise promotion cannot offset (stakeholder interviews, 2026).
- A vacancy rate of 15.2%, nearly double the national figure of 7.7% (Census 2022), alongside a holiday home proportion three times the national average, points to a structural paradox: a large total housing supply coexisting with a tight functional market. Average weekly private rent rose 38.4% between 2016 and 2022. In the context of wages that are 17% below the national average, this compression of affordability is a direct barrier to workforce retention and inward migration.

Transport and physical infrastructure

- The Northwest is the only region in Ireland without motorway access. IDA Ireland was explicit in stakeholder



interviews that the absence of motorway infrastructure places Leitrim at a disadvantage relative to competing locations for inward investment. Transport connectivity was cited as a barrier to growth by 52% of survey respondents and rated very poor or poor by 55% when assessing local provision.

- 85.4% of the resident working population commute by car, compared to a national average of 70.7%. Public transport accounts for just 1.5% of commuter journeys versus 8.8% nationally (Census 2022). The Carrick-on-Shannon bypass was raised by virtually every stakeholder engaged on business environment issues, with a consistent warning that a bypass without a town centre activation strategy risk diverting trade rather than generating it.
- Electrical grid capacity is constrained in the Carrick-on-Shannon area, alongside water and wastewater infrastructure at or near capacity in several locations, together limiting the scale of new housing and commercial development the county can support. This is a direct constraint on the renewable energy opportunity set out in Section 6.3: without grid reinforcement, Leitrim's onshore wind, solar and biomass potential cannot be brought to market at scale.
- Access to childcare was rated 2.6 out of 5, with cost and availability identified as barriers to workforce participation, particularly for women, whose labour force participation in the Border region stands at 57% versus 61.3% nationally (SOLAS, Q2 2025).

Skills, education and human capital

- There is no third-level institution in the county. Stakeholder interviews described this as creating a perception problem as damaging as the practical reality: for businesses assessing locations, the absence of a university signals a limited innovation and research ecosystem; for young people completing secondary school, it is a structural push factor. Third-level attainment in Leitrim stands at 35.4%, compared to 39.3% nationally. The Border region has the lowest share of high-skilled occupations of any Irish region, at 35.6% versus 46% nationally (SOLAS, Q2 2025).
- The process of identifying a skills need and delivering an accredited course typically takes 12 to 18 months. Business acumen and management skills represent a hidden but pervasive gap in the county's SME base, technically capable but frequently lacking in the sales, marketing, financial management and internationalisation capabilities needed to scale. Only 46% of small firms nationally have a dedicated training budget, and SMEs invest at roughly half the rate of large firms in digital and AI skills (Ibec, 2025).
- Analysis of local skills supply against demand reveals a structural mismatch. MSLETB's further education provision is weighted toward general and community-based learning, with Community Education (40.5% of learner engagements) and ESOL (23.8%) together accounting for nearly two-thirds of activity. Accredited, employment-ready pathways are proportionally smaller: BTEI at 15.3%, PLC courses at 5.2%, and apprenticeships at just 1.1% of engagements. At ATU Sligo, the apprenticeship route is similarly underused, with only 46 Leitrim learners (6.5%) enrolled as



apprentices despite skilled trades being among the occupations most exposed to national shortages. The provision that exists is valuable, but its balance does not yet match the accredited, technical and trade skills the county's economy increasingly requires.

than comparable counties. The county does not have a Chamber of Commerce with an active enterprise development function. The Leitrim Economic Forum, while a positive development, is predominantly public-sector in composition; private sector actors are consulted rather than governing.

Economic structure and fragmentation

- Leitrim recorded an employment decline of 2.4% in 2024, the only county in the NWRA to fall against a regional average of +0.9% and national growth of +2.7%. Disposable income per person stands at €24,960, the third lowest in the region and 17% below the national average. The economy is characterised by strong but isolated employers who do not yet form the kind of interconnected ecosystems that drive compounding economic growth.
- Public sector employment encompasses approximately 34% of all employment, proportionally higher

Brand and strategic positioning

- Leitrim has a clear quality-of-life identity but an underdeveloped enterprise identity. 84% of stakeholders rate quality of life as a top strength, yet 37% say career opportunities are not really or not good, and 55% were only somewhat or not confident in the county's capacity for job growth. 58% of survey respondents identified the perception that young people must leave Leitrim to succeed as the narrative most in need of change.

Note: disposable income of €24,960 appears in both Strengths and Challenges. As a lower cost of living relative to the Dublin corridor it is an asset for talent attraction; as an income gap 17% below the national average it reflects the structural weakness of the wage economy. Both readings are valid and analytically distinct.

Opportunities

Carrick Business Campus as county enterprise anchor

- The campus is operating at 35% occupancy against a 2030 target of 75%, with a €7.76m capital programme underway. The Carrick-on-Shannon labour catchment

contains 6,600 resident workers, 62.2% of whom hold third-level qualifications, yet over 70% currently work outside the town. The campus is the primary vehicle for redirecting this skilled, locally resident workforce into local employment, an opportunity that does not require attracting people to the county, only connecting them to enterprises within it.

Remote working as a structural talent strategy



- 28% of the Leitrim workforce already works remotely. The gap between this rate and the national average of 35.9% (SOLAS Q2 2025) represents both a measure of unrealised potential and a realistic near-term target. Closing that gap would add approximately 1,300 additional remote workers to the county's residential workforce. Legislation providing the right to request remote working, combined with completion of the National Broadband Plan, creates a structural tailwind that favours rural counties with quality-of-life assets. Broadband and mobile reliability was rated 3.6 out of 5 in the stakeholder survey, indicating the digital connectivity foundation is already largely in place.

MedTech cluster deepening and regional networks

- A sector expansion announced in 2024/25 confirms active investor confidence. The opportunity over the strategy period is to transition from isolated employers toward a genuine cluster with supply chain depth and shared skills infrastructure. Critically, Leitrim is better positioned to connect its employers to existing regional clusters in the Northwest than to build county-level clusters independently, a more realistic and more impactful model at the county's scale. The Border Manufacturing Cluster Initiative (Enterprise Ireland) and NWR Smart Specialisation priorities in advanced manufacturing create a co-funded pathway for Industry 4.0 adoption across the corridor.

Green economy and renewable energy

- Leitrim has confirmed investor interest in onshore wind, meaningful solar and biomass potential, and a

designated Decarbonising Zone in Carrick-on-Shannon. A national shortfall of approximately 30,000 retrofit workers to 2030 creates sustained demand that Leitrim-based workers could help meet. The green skills programme in Manorhamilton, the MSLETB Energy Build Centre of Excellence in Sligo, and the FET Green Skills 2030 national strategy together provide a funded and coordinated pipeline.

Diaspora, talent attraction and graduate connection

- IDA Ireland identified structured diaspora engagement as one of the most productive FDI levers available to peripheral counties. Leitrim-connected professionals in financial services, technology and life sciences represent a credible pipeline that is currently unstructured. The quality-of-life proposition is evidenced and compelling, 84% asset citation, 4.0 satisfaction rating, but needs a structured career narrative to convert it from a lifestyle case to a professional choice.
- ATU's alumni office and careers service represent an underutilised channel for graduate connection with Leitrim employers. Engaging ATU careers services to promote Leitrim employment opportunities to graduating students, particularly those with Leitrim connections, offers a low-cost, high-potential talent pathway.

Higher education presence

- ATU has expressed interest in establishing a physical presence in the county. Even a modest footprint, a classroom, a named campus, would



carry significance disproportionate to its cost: signalling to investors and young people, opening EU and national research funding streams that require a HEI in the consortium, and reducing the structural push factor at age 18. With 710 Leitrim students enrolled at ATU in March 2026, the relationship is active and growing.

Aligning skills provision with priority sectors

- ATU Sligo's programme portfolio is strongly aligned with Leitrim's priority sectors: Science and Health (40.4% of the validated programme portfolio) and Engineering and Computing (28.4%) are its two largest faculties, covering precisely the medtech, healthcare and construction areas the county is most exposed to. This alignment already shows in enrolment, with Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction the largest discipline among Leitrim's ATU learners (27.6%) and Health and Welfare the third (15.1%). The opportunity is to expand Leitrim participation in this accredited, employment-focused provision and to strengthen progression routes from MSLETB into ATU's engineering, construction and health programmes.
- The establishment of Leitrim College of FET and the expansion of its apprenticeship offering position MSLETB to grow accredited provision in trades, care and technical skills as local demand rises. Because many of the county's shortages are demand-driven, reflecting an ageing population, sustained construction activity and pharma and medtech expansion, targeted investment in these priority provision areas, coupled with graduate retention, offers a direct route to closing the

gap between the skills Leitrim's workforce is building and the skills its economy needs.

Digital economy, skills system modernisation and cross-border links

- Digital and AI skills were identified as the most universally cited gap across all eight priority sectors, primarily as an incumbent workforce upskilling challenge. The Enterprise Connect initiative within the FET Strategy 2026 to 2030 proposes a one-stop-shop for business skills support, a consolidated gateway to the regional skills landscape was consistently described in stakeholder interviews as a relatively low-cost, high-impact intervention. Skillnet Ireland networks are underutilised in a county where most SMEs do not have a dedicated training budget.
- Cross-border economic links offer access to funding and partnerships not available within the Republic alone. Leitrim's border geography, historically framed as a constraint, is a funding eligibility advantage through PEACEPLUS and InterTradelreland, and the Northern Ireland labour market represents an additional talent pool for county employers. Food, agri-food and creative industries are additional opportunity areas aligned with NWR Smart Specialisation priorities.

Threats

Regional economic divergence

- The Northern and Western Region is the only Irish region classified simultaneously as a Transition Region, a Lagging Region and a



Moderate Innovator by the EU (S3, 2022 to 2027). Median household disposable income fell to 80% of the state median in 2023, from 84% in 2020. Leitrim's income growth of 3.4% in 2024 against a national rate of 7.7%, combined with a 2.4% employment decline that made it the only county in the NWRA to fall, signals that the structural gap is not self-correcting. This dynamic is set to shift from 2028: the European Commission has confirmed the region will reclassify as a "More Developed Region" for the 2028 to 2034 funding period, reflecting recent economic convergence. This is a double-edged development for Leitrim: it validates the region's recent progress, but it will also reduce the county's access to Transition Region-level EU structural funding just as the housing, transport and skills investment set out in this strategy is most needed, making national co-funding commitments more critical over that period.

Demographic pressures

- While recent population growth is positive, CSO projections indicate that the Border Region may experience significantly lower growth or potential stagnation over the medium to long term. The current demographic dividend is partly a post-COVID relocation effect whose sustainability cannot be assumed. The 75 to 79 cohort grew by 40% between 2018 and 2024, while the 35 to 39 cohort declined by 13% (CSO, 2024). Healthcare and social care are already the largest employment sector (1,860 persons, 13.2% of persons in employment) and national shortages in healthcare occupations are intensifying.

Competition for investment and talent

- Neighbouring counties including Sligo, Roscommon and Cavan have larger populations, more developed enterprise brands and, in some cases, university infrastructure. IDA Ireland has a planning permission on its Leitrim land holding but no ready-built property, meaning the county cannot compete on standard FDI location criteria used for most investment decisions. Ireland faces intensifying international competition for FDI in financial services and life sciences, the two sectors where Leitrim has the strongest credentials. At the county's scale, ecosystem coherence, the connective tissue between anchor employers, skills providers and academic institutions, is the critical competitive differentiator.

Housing market failure and infrastructure investment competition

- Employers have directly attributed candidate losses to housing unavailability. High construction costs and utility connection charges mean that developer-led housing supply is not viable without public intervention. Investment in N4 upgrades, the Carrick-on-Shannon bypass, rail improvement and water and wastewater infrastructure all require national capital allocation decisions where Leitrim competes with counties that have larger populations and stronger political representation. Electrical grid capacity limitations in the Carrick-on-Shannon area could become a binding constraint on the energy-intensive enterprise the county is otherwise positioned to attract.



Skills pipeline sustainability and sectoral transition

- National shortages in occupations critical to medical devices and advanced manufacturing, quality engineers, regulatory affairs professionals, CNC operators and welders, are intensifying and assessed as persisting over the medium term (National Skills Bulletin, 2025). Demand is concentrated in healthcare, construction trades, care work and haulage, areas where national shortages mean local training alone cannot fully close the gap, since these roles compete for workers nationally. The 12 to 18 month lag between identifying a skills need and delivering accredited provision means the skills system will persistently trail employer demand unless the balance of local provision shifts toward accredited technical and trade pathways and structural reform occurs at national level.
- Agriculture employs 7.2% of persons in employment and faces income and structural pressure from climate policy, CAP reform and emissions reduction requirements. Retail and hospitality together account for over 17% of employment and face ongoing structural adjustment from e-commerce and changing consumer behaviour, together nearly a quarter of the county's jobs in sectors facing sustained structural headwinds.

Governance risk

- Stakeholder interviews drew explicit comparisons with prior county-level strategies that stalled once the energy of the initial launch dissipated, noting that the pattern is most common when governance structures lack private

sector accountability and measurable KPIs. Only 24.1% of Border region workers are currently working remotely, compared to 35.9% nationally (SOLAS, Q2 2025), suggesting structural factors, limited broadband in some areas, limited childcare, car dependency, may constrain how far the remote working dividend closes without targeted intervention.

Strategic Synthesis

Five strategic implications follow from this analysis:

1. **Isolation is the central structural problem.** Leitrim has genuine sector strengths in MedTech, financial services, food and green economy, but they operate as isolated anchors rather than networked clusters. Every intervention that creates connective tissue between these strengths addresses the root cause of underperformance rather than its symptoms.
2. **Housing and transport are prerequisites, not background conditions.** Enterprise promotion, talent attraction and brand investment will underdeliver so long as candidates cannot find accommodation and workers cannot access the county without a car. Strategy must name these challenges honestly and maintain active advocacy for national-level resolution.
3. **The county's talent proposition is real but invisible.** Quality of life, cost of living, growing knowledge economy employers, Leitrim's case to returning graduates and location-flexible professionals is credible. What is missing is the infrastructure to make that proposition legible: a visible career narrative, a diaspora connection programme, a careers



pathway for young people, and an ATU presence that signals the county as a place where enterprise and higher education coexist.

4. **Building on what exists is more powerful than creating new structures.** Both thematic workshops reached the same conclusion: the regional training programmes, apprenticeship pathways, Skillnet networks, cluster initiatives and enterprise supports that Leitrim businesses need already exist at regional level. The county's role is awareness, navigation and access, connecting its employers and workers to what is available, not duplicating it at county level.

5. **Governance discipline will determine whether this strategy delivers.** Comparable strategies have stalled when governance lacked private sector accountability and measurable milestones. The Economic Forum, restructured with private sector co-ownership, a dedicated coordinator, a live data dashboard and an annual public accountability report, is the mechanism that keeps this strategy live beyond the launch period. This is not an administrative detail, it is the precondition for everything else.





8

Action
Framework

8 Action Framework

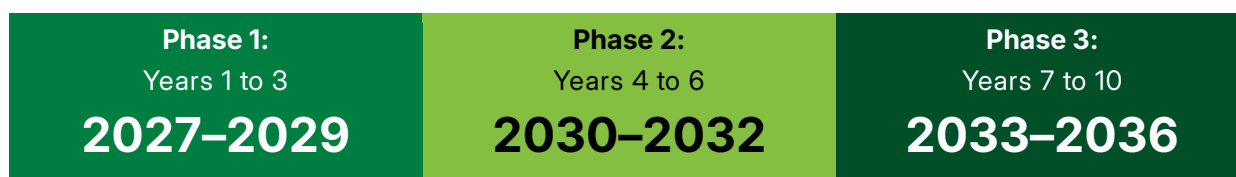
This chapter is where the strategy becomes action. The earlier chapters set out the evidence and the direction; this one turns that into firm commitments. The eight pillars, and the actions sitting under each of them, emerged from a thematic analysis of the consultation findings, tested in sequence against three criteria: that the issue is directly evidenced by the consultation or the county's socio-economic profile; that it is a structural issue the strategy can realistically address and one the named lead has the current or near-term capacity to deliver, as established in alignment meetings with partners; and that the response is additional to what is already being done.

The second criterion is why some issues raised in the consultation do not appear here. Matters such as housing supply and national transport infrastructure were judged to lie beyond the strategy's realistic delivery capacity — they depend on decisions by national bodies or on capital outside its reach, and so were noted as advocacy priorities rather than actions in the framework.

Every action has a named lead, a delivery phase, and a measurable target. The point is

accountability: in any year, it should be clear what is being done, who is doing it, and whether it is working. The lead organisations have signed off on delivering their actions within the agreed timeframe. The main delivery leads are the Leitrim County Council Economic Development Unit (through the Economic Forum), MSLETB and LEO Leitrim. On commencing, the Leitrim County Council Economic Development Unit will designate a senior Economic Development Coordinator with a clear mandate to coordinate delivery across all eight pillars, manage the quarterly Forum agenda and action tracker, and act as the primary point of contact for action leads and partners. MSLETB and LEO Leitrim are encouraged to designate their own senior coordinators for their assigned actions.

Delivery is overseen by the Leitrim Economic Forum, which retains its current monitoring group and is the body through which actions are reviewed and adjusted over the ten-year life of the strategy. The Forum will review progress quarterly and publish an Annual Strategy Progress Report, covering the status of all actions in RAG (Red, Amber, Green) format, KPI performance against baselines and targets, and a forward look for the year ahead. The other action leads will support this. The first public annual report will be published in February 2028 (reporting on Year 1), and a formal midpoint review shall be carried out in 2031 that recalibrates the strategy for Years 6 to 10.



Economic Development Pillars

The first five pillars focus on the county's economy: how enterprise is supported, how Leitrim is positioned to investors and its own businesses, how delivery is governed, which sectors offer the clearest opportunity, and how talent is attracted, retained and put to work. Pillars 1 to 5 – Enterprise Supports,

Branding, Governance, Sector Focus, and Talent Attraction, Retention and Activation – are led primarily by the LCC Economic Development Unit (through the Economic Forum) and LEO Leitrim, working with enterprise agencies and the private sector.

P1 Enterprise Supports

Phase	No.	Action	Lead	Partners	KPI and target	Status
1 to 3	1.1	Promote Leitrim Business Navigator Service Build on and brand the existing LEO-led service as the first point of contact for any Leitrim business, especially micro-businesses and SMEs across the pre-start, start and grow stages. Maintain the hybrid, mobile delivery model (in-person at Carrick-on-Shannon, online via Teams, and outreach clinics in Kinlough, Manorhamilton and Drumshanbo), backed by a simple online form/booking facility, giving a first response within a set number of working days and connecting the business to the right support (e.g. LEO, MSLETB, Enterprise Ireland, LDC, Enterprise Hub etc.) Maintain and promote the online platform hosting the booking facility and an up-to-date directory of provision across support organisations and services, letting businesses self-assess needs and route to support. Ongoing consistent communication, co-led by LEO and LCC, to promote the service and secure consistent signposting on the LCC website and from partner agencies.	LEO Leitrim	LCC Economic Development, MSLETB, ATU, Skillnet Ireland, Regional Skills Forum, NWRA	i. Number of businesses navigated per quarter ii. Proportion successfully connected to a relevant support iii. Online platform live and directory reviewed quarterly iv. Signposting adoption by the other agencies → 80% of navigated businesses routed to at least one support → platform with booking facility and provision directory live by Q2 2027, directory reviewed quarterly → LCC website live referral in place and 2+ partner agencies signposting by end Year 1	In progress
1 to 3	1.2	Build on the Regional Peer Mentoring and Business Scaling Network Build on the established 10xNW, now in its second year, pairing growth-stage Leitrim SMEs with experienced mentors. Continue delivering at regional level with partner agencies, reviewing programme structure after each cycle. Rotate or alternate senior mentors year-to-year to avoid overcommitting volunteers, and draw on local operators, returning diaspora entrepreneurs and anchor-employer staff.	North West Rep Manager LEO Leitrim	LEO Donegal, LEO Sligo, Enterprise Ireland, Udaras, Enterprise Ireland	Number of businesses in mentoring programme per year reporting added benefit	In progress



1 to 3	1.3	Raise Awareness and Uptake of Finance Access Supports for Leitrim SMEs Build on existing LEO-led finance supports by raising awareness and uptake through existing online webinars, local print, radio and active signposting. Also implement finance-themed success stories, briefings for trusted intermediaries (accountants, banks), campaigns timed to scheme openings, and finance slots embedded in existing events. Clearly communicate the different eligibility criteria for each scheme so businesses can identify the right funding route. LEO leads on Enterprise Ireland grants, Microfinance Ireland, SBCI and council schemes, providing eligibility guidance and mentoring through application. Partner with LEADER, who lead on delivering their own funding information.	LEO Leitrim (with LEADER co-leading on own funding information)	Enterprise Ireland, Microfinance Ireland, SBCI	i. Number of businesses supported to apply aggregated over different schemes ii. Number of cross referrals	In progress
1 to 3	1.4	Activate Carrick Business Campus to 75% Occupancy by 2030 Grow occupancy at Carrick Business Campus from 35% to 75% by 2030, delivered alongside the €7.76m upgrade now underway. Implement an occupancy activation with sector-focused tenant recruitment in financial services (incl. FinTech) and ICT as the primary lever, and open campus space for businesses from other industries (e.g. EdTech & RegTech) as well as training and events with MSLETB and ATU.	LCC Economic Development Unit	LEO, Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland	Campus occupancy rate (quarterly) → 55% occupancy by end Year 2	In progress (capital programme underway)
1 to 3	1.5	Deliver a Town Centre Business Support Programme Fill empty commercial units in Carrick-on-Shannon, Manorhamilton and Drumshanbo. Building on LEO's existing "Enterprise Space in Co Leitrim" audit of available retail, office and industrial units, Leitrim County Council will, together with LEO Leitrim, maintain and promote a vacant premises register, market the Rates Incentive Scheme to new occupiers, and actively push the existing dereliction and "above the shop" grants to bring upper floors and empty buildings back into business use.	LEO Leitrim	Finance Leitrim, Town Regeneration	i. Number of vacant premises brought back into business use per year ii. Number of new occupiers taking up the Rates Incentive or dereliction/"above the shop" grants per year	In progress

P2 Branding

Phase	No.	Action	Lead	Partners	KPI and target	Status
1	2.1	Build a Unified Leitrim Economic Identity Explore a Leitrim economic identity (i.e. a positioning line, visual identity and core narrative) that builds on the county's existing place and tourism brand rather than competing with it, presenting Leitrim as a place where higher-value enterprise thrives alongside a high quality of life. Ground it in the county's real enterprise anchors in MedTech, financial services, food, and green economy. Validate it with private sector employers before launch.	LCC Economic Development Unit	Corporate Department, LEO Leitrim, LDC, IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, Private Sector	Identity toolkit adopted by all partner organisations → <i>Identity launched Q3 2027</i>	Not started
1 to 3	2.2	Launch a Leitrim Enterprise Success Story Programme Run an ongoing programme profiling real Leitrim businesses and hubs across digital, media and events channels, profiles spanning sectors, company sizes and geography, including anchor employers. Favour authentic, first-person stories told by business owners themselves over produced promotional pieces. Anchor the programme with a Leitrim Business Showcase, bringing together local businesses, students and visitors, and generating the main annual media moment for the county's enterprise narrative.	LCC Economic Development Unit	LEO Leitrim	Number of profiles/ campaigns published per year → <i>5 profiles per Year</i>	Not started
1 to 2	2.3	Strengthen Enterprise Linkages and Global Sourcing Opportunities Support and strengthen collaboration between multinational companies, indigenous enterprises and other regional stakeholders to identify global sourcing opportunities, enhance participation in international value chains and support the development of a competitive regional enterprise ecosystem. Proposed IDA Role: Share relevant insights from client engagement, facilitate connections where appropriate and collaborate with Enterprise Ireland and regional stakeholders to identify opportunities that strengthen enterprise linkages and regional competitiveness.	LCC Economic Development Unit and IDA Ireland/ North West co-leading	IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland	At least three structured engagement convened annually with IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland from 2028 → <i>3 engagements per year from 2028</i>	Not started



to 3	2.4	Host a Biennial Leitrim Investment Forum Host a Leitrim Investment Forum in Carrick-on-Shannon every two years, with existing Leitrim investors sharing their experience, sector panels, and investor meetings arranged in advance with IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland, held where practical.	Economic Forum and IDA Ireland/ North West co-leading	IDA Ireland, LCC Economic Development Unit, Enterprise Ireland, LEO, LDC, private sector anchor employers	Number of investor meetings facilitated → <i>First forum Q1 2030</i>	Not started
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P3 Governance

Phase	No.	Action	Lead	Partners	KPI and target	Status
1	3.1	Restructure the Leitrim Economic Forum with a Private Sector Co-Chair Maintain the Leitrim Economic Forum but restructure it to include a private sector co-chair appointed through a transparent, open process. In the forum, aim for at least 40% private sector membership from anchor employers and SMEs.	LCC Economic Development Unit	Existing Economic Forum members, private sector employers	Private sector attendance rate at quarterly meetings → <i>Private sector co-chair appointed Q1 2027</i>	Not started
1 to 3	3.2	Increase representation of Leitrim's Voice in Regional Economic and Skills Structures Ensure Leitrim's active representation on the regional bodies which shape investment and skills such as the Northern and Western Regional Assembly, the Regional Enterprise Plan, the Regional Skills Forum and relevant North-West of Ireland sector networks. Use these seats to draw down regional funding and projects for Leitrim and to bring proven practice from larger counties back home, reporting what is secured to the Economic Forum each year.	LCC Economic Development Unit	NWRA, Regional Skills Forum, Skillnet Ireland, NW Sector networks	Number of regional funding bids and projects Leitrim is part of each year → <i>Representation confirmed on all named bodies by Q2 2027</i>	In progress
1 to 3	3.3	Develop and publish a Leitrim Economic Data Dashboard A publicly available online dashboard, hosted on the LCC website, displaying quarterly updated key economic indicators: employment levels, campus occupancy, hub utilisation, business starts and closures, skills completions, and strategy action status.	LCC Economic Development Unit	LEO, MSLETB, LDC, SOLAS	Dashboard updated quarterly without lapse → <i>Dashboard live Q2 2027</i>	Not started
1 to 3	3.4	Encourage a Shared Referral between Local Agencies A shared referral process between LEO, LDC, MSLETB, ATU etc., setting out how businesses are passed between agencies and how programmes are checked for overlap. Manage it through the Economic	Economic Forum	LEO Leitrim, ATU, LDC, MSLETB	Number of quarterly meetings held → <i>Standing item on agenda at meetings, four per year</i>	Not started



		Forum's existing quarterly cycle rather than new meetings				
1 to 3	3.5	Formalise Cross-Border Economic Development Links Build on the cross-border partnerships already developed through PEACEPLUS and Shared Island with Fermanagh and Omagh and Derry City and Strabane District Councils. Working with InterTradelreland, seek new opportunities for cross-border growth and submit at least one joint funding application, targeting supply chains, trade and shared infrastructure that benefit Leitrim businesses.	LCC Economic Development Unit	Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, Derry City and Strabane District Council, InterTradelreland, LEO Leitrim	Number of joint cross-border projects or applications progressed each year <i>→ At least one joint application submitted by Q2 2028</i>	Not started

P4 Sector Focus

Phase	No.	Action	Lead	Partners	KPI and target	Status
1 to 3	4.1	Connect Leitrim Native Businesses to North West Regional Sector Clusters Connect Leitrim's anchor employers, SMEs and micro enterprises into established clusters on a regional level in the North West in medical devices, engineering (e.g. cluster in Donegal) and precision manufacturing, and ICT. LEO identifies active regional clusters matching Leitrim's strengths, make introductions, and cover practical barriers. Prioritise connecting under-represented native employers to regional networks.	LEO Leitrim	LCC Economic Development Unit, LDC, ATU	Number of Leitrim businesses connected to and actively participating in regional clusters per year <i>→ Capture businesses connected to regional clusters per Year</i>	In progress
1 to 3	4.2	Develop the Leitrim Food Zone into a Nationally Recognised Agri-Food Cluster Work with Leitrim Food Zone businesses and Enterprise Ireland to deepen the agri-food cluster in Leitrim and aligning it to the county economic brand. Build on the Taste Leitrim brand. Develop the sector into a nationally recognised identity, extending it across food producers, hospitality operators and wider agri-food strengths.	LEO Leitrim	Enterprise Ireland, Leitrim Food Zone businesses	Number of Zone businesses in export readiness programme <i>→ Cluster plan published Q2 2027</i>	In progress (Food Zone established)



1 to 2	4.3	Develop a Sustainable Tourism Programme Aligned to Leitrim's Natural Assets Develop a Leitrim sustainable tourism product development plan with Fáilte Ireland, activating the Hidden Heartlands brand and identifying the county's priority visitor experience investments.	LCC Economic Development Unit/ Tourism	Leitrim Tourism Department, Fáilte Ireland, LDC, tourism businesses	Number of tourism businesses completing the development programme → Tourism product plan agreed Q1 2028	Not started
1 to 3	4.4	Position Leitrim for Green Economy Investment Through Targeted Development Use Carrick-on-Shannon's Decarbonising Zone to grow local green-economy firms (e.g. retrofit contractors, renewable installers and green-build businesses) so the work created by the energy transition is won locally. Partner with Future Cast for wider reach.	LCC Economic Development Unit/ Climate Action	SEAI, Future Cast, MSLETB, Sustainable Energy Communities, LDC, Sligo Leitrim Energy Agency, renewable energy developer	Number of businesses completing energy audit programme	Not started

P5 Talent Attraction, Retention and Activation

Phase	No.	Action	Lead	Partners	KPI and target	Status
1 to 2	5.1	Launch a Leitrim Diaspora and Talent Attraction Programme Run a programme reaching Leitrim-connected professionals abroad and in urban Ireland, focused on those in their late twenties and thirties most likely to consider returning. Build a simple, curated digital presence showcasing real Leitrim career opportunities, employers and returner stories, and keep in regular contact with those who have left, sharing openings as they arise.	LCC Economic Development Unit	Regional Skills Forum	Number of enquiries from prospective returners → Digital presence live Q3 2027	Not started
1 to 3	5.2	Continue positioning Leitrim as a leading remote work destination Continuously run campaigns (such as "Most Definitely Leitrim") aimed at people with portable, higher-value jobs who could live in Leitrim and work from home or a local hub. Include support for residents already here to access remote roles with employers elsewhere. Partner with organisations such as "Grow Remote" and other national and regional remote work advocates for wider reach.	LCC Economic Development Unit	LEO, LDC, Connected Hubs, Grow Remote	i. Campaigns published ii. Hub occupancy rates across county	Not started



1 to 3	5.3	Develop a Live and Work in Leitrim Programme for Young People Run an annual programme connecting Leitrim secondary and ATU students to local employers through school and campus visits, a Leitrim Careers Fair, and a digital map of local roles and career paths. Feature real stories from local businesses and recent returners showing the good-quality careers available in the county.	LCC Economic Development Unit	MSLETB, ATU, private sector employers, secondary schools	Number of students engaged annually → 500 students engaged in Year 2	Not started
1 to 3	5.4	Support Graduate Retention through ATU and Employer Links Work with ATU's Alumni and Careers Office and local employers to keep more graduates working in Leitrim. Act as a connector: signpost graduates to local opportunities, invite ATU careers and alumni staff to meet Leitrim employers, and give employers, especially SMEs and micro-enterprises, an easy route to offer placements and roles. For example, pair each placement with a parallel qualification (e.g. upskilling via MSLETB, or a post-graduate award with ATU) to create a clear progression pathway. Where funding such as Grad Start or Enterprise Ireland schemes becomes available, use it to support paid placements, on a cross-border or multi-county basis where useful.	LEO Leitrim and LCC Economic Development Unit co-leading	ATU (Careers Office), MSLETB, private sector employers	i. Number of graduates connected to Leitrim's main employers each year ii. Signposting opportunities available	Not started

Skills and Talent Pillars

The final three pillars turn to skills and talent, the constraint most consistently raised in the consultation. They tackle the mismatch between the training on offer and what employers actually need, the acute labour shortages in specific sectors, and the wider gaps in business capability that hold firms back. Pillars 6 to 8 – Skills System

Misalignment, Sector-Specific Labour Shortages, and Skills Gaps and Capability Deficit – are led primarily by MSLETB and LEO Leitrim with regional and national partners such as ATU, Skillnet Ireland and the Regional Skills Forum, ensuring provision is planned around real local demand.

P6 Skills System Misalignment

Phase	No.	Action	Lead	Partners	KPI and target	Status
1 to 3	6.1	Implement Coordinated Annual Employer Skills Alignment Surveys Run annual employer skills surveys, delivered separately by LEO and MSLETB to reflect their different training remits with LEO capturing SME owner-manager needs for short workshops and mentoring and MSLETB capturing demand for accredited and certified courses through its enterprise and employer engagement office. LCC supports with coordinating timing and combining the two sets of results into a single shared summary of county-wide employer skills needs and gaps, published annually for training providers and agencies to plan provision around real local demand.	MSLETB, LEO Leitrim, and LCC Economic Development Unit co-leading	Regional Skills Forum, ATU, Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, anchor employers	Number of employers surveyed annually <i>→ 60 employers surveyed Year 2 by LEO Leitrim + MSLETB (120 total)</i>	Not started
1 to 3	6.2	Increase Leitrim SME Participation Across Skill Supply Ireland Networks LEO and MSLETB co-lead a local promotion campaign, signposting skill supply organizations events and programmes through their channels and client intersections, directing interested organizations to the relevant network, raising Leitrim SME uptake of such networks.	LEO Leitrim and MSLETB co-leading	Skillnet Ireland	i. Businesses signposted to skill supply ii. Resulting uptake <i>→ 30 Leitrim businesses referred/signposted to a relevant network per year</i>	Not started
1 to 3	6.3	Promote Micro-Qualification Options Across Leitrim Businesses, Prioritising Key Sectors Build on the established MSLETB employer engagement teams whose role is the visibility, promotion and delivery of short, stackable micro-qualifications ("stacks"). Work with FET stakeholders (e.g. ATU and Skillnet Ireland) to promote take-up across all Leitrim businesses, with emphasis on priority areas: MedTech quality and regulatory skills, digital and AI for business, and retrofit and green construction. Each stack builds in stages (e.g. AI fundamentals, applying AI in the business, strategically integrating AI). Deliver targeted promotion and enrolment support matched to available funding, helping SMEs and individuals find and sign up.	MSLETB	ATU, Skillnet Ireland, Regional Skills Forum, LEO, SOLAS	i. Number of micro-qualification options ("stacks") live ii. Number of SME employees participating in upskilling per year (baseline to be established) Number of stacks/micro-qualification options live iii. Employer testimonials / qualitative feedback captured <i>→ First stack accredited and live Q4 2027</i>	In progress



P7 Sector-Specific Labour Shortages

Phase	No.	Action	Lead	Partners	KPI and target	Status
1 to 3	7.1	Strengthen the MedTech and Advanced Manufacturing Talent Pipeline Work with organisations on strengthening the local MedTech and advanced manufacturing talent pipeline as part of wider promotion of vocational and emerging-skills programmes in Leitrim post-primary schools, including STEM and MedTech awareness. Promote to students and parents the existing apprenticeships and traineeships available in the sector co-developed through MSLETB and ATU. Provide workplace exposure for students through site visits, transition-year placements and summer shadowing, hosted by participating employers through MedTech enterprise champion arrangements (to be confirmed). Coordinate industry involvement in the classroom through collaboration between all partners, sharing the effort required to engage schools.	MSLETB, ATU, LEO Leitrim co-leading	LCC Economic Development Unit, Regional Skills Forum, Skillnet Ireland, IDA, Enterprise Ireland, AIM Centre, participating employers	i. Number of students engaged in school awareness programme; ii. Number of students progressing to MedTech or advanced manufacturing apprenticeships, traineeships, or related ATU programmes within 2 years of engagement; iii. Number of employer site visits and workplace placements hosted per year → <i>STEM programme in at least one school with 30 students engaged in Year 1; enterprise champion arrangement confirmed Q2 2027; first cohort progression measured Year 3</i>	Not started
1 to 3	7.2	Increase Awareness and Uptake of Construction and Retrofit Trainings and Apprenticeships Increase in-county training uptake in construction trades and retrofit, specifically those necessary for housing delivery, infrastructure investment, and the green retrofit transition from MSLETB and ATU through: - An annual Leitrim Training & Apprenticeship Fair bringing together employers, training providers, and prospective learners/ apprentices in one venue. - Year-round communications to second-level students and parents through schools and MSLETB, ATU and LEO channels, promoting the full mapping of construction and retrofit routes available locally and the firms hosting them. - Active engagement with Leitrim construction firms not currently registered as apprenticeship employers. Promote relevant SEAI initiatives supporting the	MSLETB and ATU co-leading	LCC Economic Development Unit, Regional Skills Forum, SOLAS, LEO Leitrim, Future Cast, SEAI	i. Number of construction employees and companies participating in retrofit/construction upskilling and training annually; ii. Number of Leitrim employers newly registered as approved apprenticeship employers; iii. Attendance at the annual training and apprenticeship fair → <i>Fair held Q3 2027 with 10 employer stands and 150 attendees; 5 new Leitrim firms registered as approved apprenticeship employers in Year 1</i>	Not started



		retrofit transition, given the Decarbonising Zone overlap. d) Advocate at regional and national level for the funding and recognition of a dedicated retrofit and modern-methods-of-construction apprenticeship.				
1 to 3	7.3	Strengthen the Healthcare and Social Care Workforce Pipeline Promote healthcare and social care career pathways in Leitrim secondary schools, positioning the sector as an attractive career destination and addressing the gap between course participation and transition into healthcare employment. Build on Leitrim College of FET provision from Carrick. Strengthen linkages between education providers and healthcare and social care employers through paid work placements and deeper employer engagement in training, delivered in partnership with HSE and HSE Community Healthcare. Promote the qualification routes available through ATU and MSLETB and use the annual Leitrim College open event to connect providers, students and training.	MSLETB	HSE, HSE Community Healthcare, ATU, LCC Economic Development Unit, LEO, SOLAS, Tusla, private care providers	i. Number of students engaged in healthcare careers pathway awareness in secondary schools ii. Number of FET healthcare/social care learners transitioning into healthcare or social care employment iii. Number of paid work placements secured with healthcare and social care providers per year → 200 students in healthcare careers pathways Year 1	In progress

P8 Skills Gaps and Capability Deficit

Phase	No.	Action	Lead	Partners	KPI and target	Status
1 to 3	8.1	Scale and Coordinate Digital and AI Upskilling for Leitrim SMEs Grow Leitrim SME uptake of digital and AI upskilling across two coordinated streams. LEO delivers practical, non-accredited support — Digital for Business consultancy, the Grow Digital voucher, AI workshops and webinars, and a refreshed programme helping earlier Trading Online Voucher businesses adopt current tools, AI marketing and SEO. MSLETB delivers accredited AI certification through Skills to Advance. Operate active signposting between streams so a business can move from a short LEO workshop to accredited MSLETB training, or to other supports such as the ATU-led Data to Sustain project, according to need.	LEO Leitrim & MSLETB co-lead	LDC, Skillnet Ireland, Regional Skills Forum, ATU ("Data to Sustain"), DS3	i. LEO stream: Number of Leitrim SMEs enrolling in any LEO digital/AI support per year (<i>aligned with annual LEO targets set by Enterprise Ireland</i>) ii. MSLETB stream: Number of Leitrim SME employees completing accredited AI/digital certification per year (<i>target to be set by MSLETB</i>) iii. Coordination: Number of businesses signposted between LEO and MSLETB (or to ATU "Data to Sustain") per year	Not started



1 to 3	8.2 Promote Existing Business Acumen and Leadership Development Programmes for Leitrim SMEs Increase uptake of existing leadership and management development programmes across two streams with distinct audiences: a LEO regional stream aimed at SMEs positioned to scale and export, and an accredited MSLETB stream. Drive uptake through active promotion and by offering short baseline courses as an accessible stepping stone, giving owners and emerging leaders a low-commitment introduction before enrolling in fuller programmes. Position these opportunities as open to all. Maintain a Leitrim alumni network to keep participants connected and build a local pool willing to take on enterprise leadership roles.	LEO Leitrim & MSLETB co-lead	LDC, Enterprise Ireland, Skillnet Ireland	i. LEO stream: Number of Leitrim participants completing leadership/management programmes annually <i>(aligned with annual LEO targets set by Enterprise Ireland)</i> ii. MSLETB stream: Number of participants completing accredited MSLETB leadership programmes annually <i>(target set by MSLETB)</i> iii. Uptake mechanism: Number of baseline/stepping-stone courses delivered and participants progressing from a baseline course to a fuller programme per year iv. Alumni: Number of active alumni network members; number of alumni appointed to cluster working groups, Economic Forum sub-groups or other governance roles	Not started
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Skills and Talent Pillars

The actions in Sections 7.1 and 7.2 are not delivered by any single organisation. Each carries a named lead, but almost every action also names partners, and in several cases leadership is shared. This section sets out how those organisations work together, and how delivery is coordinated, reviewed and reported across the ten-year life of the strategy.

The approach follows from one of the strategy's central conclusions. Many of the supports Leitrim businesses and workers need already exist at regional and national level, so the county's role is frequently one of awareness, navigation and access rather than direct provision. The strength of this framework therefore rests on the quality of its working relationships as much as on the actions themselves.

Table 8 Principal delivery roles

Organisation	Role in delivery
Leitrim County Council	Responsible for the strategy as a whole. Leads on economic identity and positioning, governance and regional representation, the county's evidence base, cross-border relationships and talent attraction. Carries the coordinating function and services oversight.
LEO Leitrim	The primary point of contact for the county's enterprise base, leading the supports that reach it directly. With 95% of Leitrim enterprises employing fewer than ten people, LEO's client relationships are in practice the channel through which most of the strategy reaches the businesses it serves.
MSLETB	Leads on skills provision and its alignment to employer demand, through Leitrim College of FET and its employer engagement teams. Holds both the provision and the employer relationships through which shifts in demand become visible.
ATU	Co-leads where higher education provision and progression are required, particularly the sectoral talent pipelines and graduate retention, and is a partner in the county's longer-term ambition for a third-level presence.

Roles within the partnership

Where two organisations are named as co-leads, both are accountable for delivery and both report against the action. Co-leadership arises most often where an action spans enterprise and skills, or where county-level activity depends on provision held regionally or nationally.

What the wider partnership contributes

Delivery also draws on a wider group of partners who hold provision, funding and market intelligence at regional and national level. These relationships are what make the strategy's approach of building on what already exists both practical and effective.



Table 9 Contribution of wider delivery partners

Partner	What the partnership depends on them for
Enterprise Ireland	Scaling and export supports, cluster development including the Leitrim Food Zone, and the investment case work through which the county's sectors are presented to mobile investment.
Leitrim Development Company	Community and social enterprise, LEADER funding and rural development, and reach into parts of the county and enterprise base that agency channels do not consistently reach.
Regional Skills Forum	Brokerage between employers and providers, labour market intelligence, and the route through which Leitrim employer demand enters regional skills planning.
Skillnet Ireland	Enterprise-led network training for SMEs, and the principal means of raising participation in structured workforce development without duplicating provision locally.
IDA Ireland	Foreign direct investment, sector investment cases, the Investment Forum, and insight from client engagement on how Leitrim is positioned to mobile investment.
SOLAS	National further education and training policy, funding and occupational shortage analysis, on which the sectoral pipeline actions depend.
Northern and Western Regional Assembly	RSES implementation, regional funding programmes, and the structures through which the county's regional representation is exercised.
Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland	Retrofit and energy efficiency programmes, the Decarbonising Zone, and the demand signal underpinning green skills provision.

Further organisations contribute where their remit is specific, including LEO Donegal, LEO Sligo and Udaras na Gaeltachta on regional peer mentoring; Microfinance Ireland and the SBCI on finance access; Failte Ireland on tourism; Connected Hubs and Grow Remote on remote work; the HSE, Tusla and private care providers on the healthcare pipeline; and Fermanagh and Omagh, Derry City and Strabane and InterTradelreland on cross-border development.

Private sector employers are full partners in this framework. The consultation placed particular value on employer insight, and their continued involvement in both delivery and

oversight keeps the strategy grounded in the conditions businesses are working in.

Coordination

It is recommended that Leitrim County Council designate a senior Economic Development Coordinator with a mandate across all eight pillars. Delivery is shared across organisations that each have their own governance, funding cycles and reporting obligations, and much of the strategy's value lies in the connections between actions. A single coordinating point makes those connections easier to build and gives partners a clear route into the framework as a whole.



The recommended mandate covers coordination across all eight pillars and maintenance of the action tracker; convening the quarterly oversight meeting and drafting the annual report; acting as first point of contact for action leads and partners; maintaining the county's shared evidence base; and identifying stalling actions before they reach the point of failure.

This is a defined role rather than necessarily a new post, and may be a new position, a redefined existing role or a designated share of one. It is further recommended that LEO Leitrim and MSLETB each designate a coordinator for their own actions, so that It is further recommended that the Forum build on its current role, with a private sector co-chair appointed through an open process alongside the local authority chair, bringing employer perspective directly into oversight; substantial private sector membership drawn from anchor employers, growth-stage companies and representative bodies; a quarterly meeting cycle with a standing agenda covering delivery status, emerging issues and the forward look; and a published annual account of progress.

each principal delivery organisation has a named counterpart in the others. Much of the coordination this strategy needs is day to day rather than formal, and named counterparts make it straightforward.

Oversight

It is recommended that oversight rests with the Leitrim Economic Forum. The Forum already exists, already convenes the relevant agencies, and was identified in the consultation workshops as the natural home for oversight. Retaining it avoids adding a structure to a county whose delivery organisations are already small.

The Forum's function is oversight rather than delivery, complementing the accountability each lead already carries within its own governance. Its particular value is holding the whole framework in view, giving partners a shared vantage point on progress across all eight pillars.

The restructure of the Forum is delivered through Action 3.1. Its composition, the co-chair appointment process and its terms of reference would be settled by the Forum and Leitrim County Council following adoption of this strategy.

How the partnership works in practice

- **A shared route through the support system.** Businesses typically encounter the support system through whichever agency they reach first. A shared referral protocol between LEO Leitrim, LDC, MSLETB and ATU sets out how businesses are connected onward and how partners keep sight of each other's programmes, so that a business approaching any partner reaches the support best suited to it regardless of where it started.
- **A quarterly cycle of review and support.** Leads report status against the tracker before each quarterly meeting using a red, amber and green rating. Where an action is moving more slowly than planned, or depends on something outside the lead's control such as a funding decision or a partner dependency, the Forum can direct support to it, adjust sequencing or bring in additional partners. The cycle is designed to keep progress visible and to give leads a route to collective help early.

- **A single shared evidence base.** The Leitrim Economic Data Dashboard gives all partners the same quarterly indicators covering employment, enterprise activity, campus and hub utilisation, skills completions and action status, removing the need for each organisation to assemble its own baseline before acting.
- **Adjustment over the life of the strategy.** Ten years is a long horizon, and the framework is built to evolve. The Forum may recommend that an action be re-phased, that additional partners be brought in where new capability would strengthen delivery, or that an action be updated as circumstances develop. New partners may join over the strategy period as sectoral development, cross-border programmes and national provision change.

Reporting

Table 10 Review and reporting cycle

Cycle	Activity
Quarterly	Leads submit status against the tracker. The Forum reviews progress, discusses actions moving more slowly than planned, and agrees where support or adjustment is needed.
Annually	An Annual Strategy Progress Report is published, covering the status of all actions in RAG format, performance against baselines and targets, and a forward look. The first public report is proposed for February 2028.
2031	A formal midpoint review recalibrates the strategy for Years 6 to 10 against changes in the county's position and in national and regional policy.



A large, bold, white number '9' is centered on the left side of the page. The background is a landscape photograph of a body of water with reeds in the foreground and a line of trees and hills in the distance under a blue sky with clouds. The number '9' is the primary visual element, indicating the page number.

9

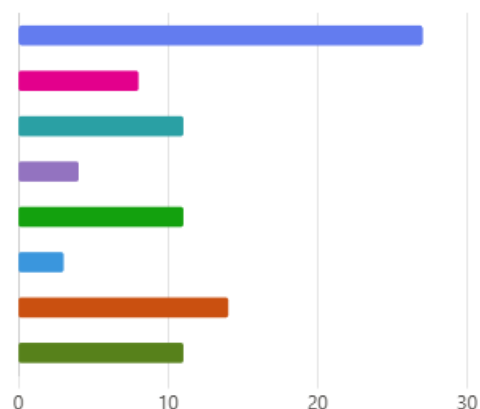
Appendices

9 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Survey Charts

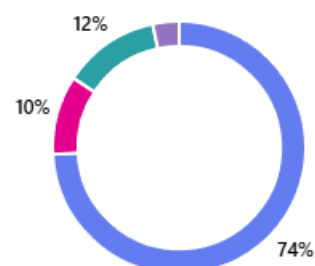
Q1. Where are you based in Leitrim?

● Carrick-on-Shannon area	27
● Manorhamilton area	8
● Ballinamore area	11
● Mohill area	4
● Drumshanbo area	11
● Kinlough area	3
● Rural Leitrim (outside main towns)	14
● I live outside Leitrim but work/do business there	11



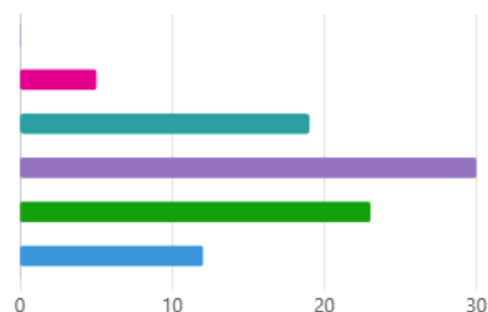
Q2. Where do you currently spend most of your working or studying time?

● In Leitrim	66
● Outside Leitrim	9
● Hybrid/remote	11
● Not currently working/studying	3



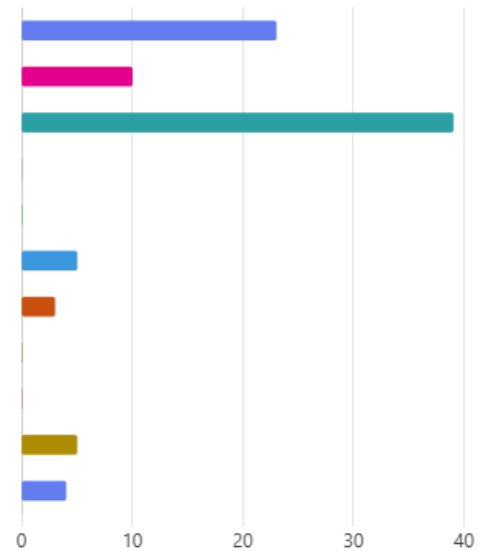
Q3. Please select the relevant age category.

● 16-24	0
● 25-34	5
● 35-44	19
● 45-54	30
● 55-64	23
● 65+	12



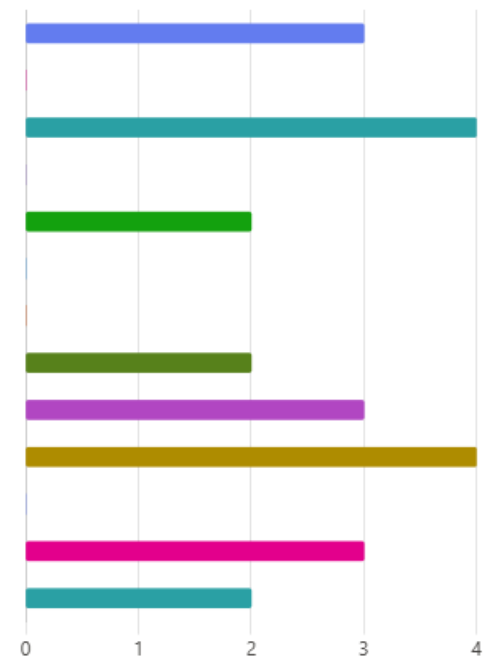
Q4. Which of the following best describes you?

Business owner / self-employed	23
Employee (private sector)	10
Employee (public sector)	39
Farmer	0
Agri business	0
Education / training provider	5
Community / voluntary organisation	3
Student (16–24)	0
Unemployed / seeking work	0
Retired	5
Other	4



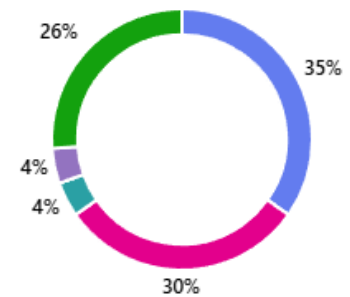
Q5. What sector are you in?

Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	3
Mining & Quarrying	0
Manufacturing & Industrial Production	4
Energy, Utilities & Waste Management	0
Construction	2
Wholesale & Retail Trade	0
Transport & Logistics	0
Tourism, Hospitality & Food Services	2
Information & Communication (ICT, Digital, Media)	3
Financial & Professional Services	4
Public Services (Public Administration, Education, Health)	0
Arts, Culture, Recreation & Other Services	3
Other	2



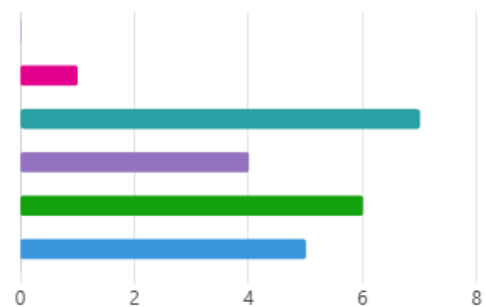
Q6. Over the next 3 years, do you expect your business to grow?

Yes significantly	8
Yes moderately	7
Stay stable	1
Downsize	1
Unsure	6



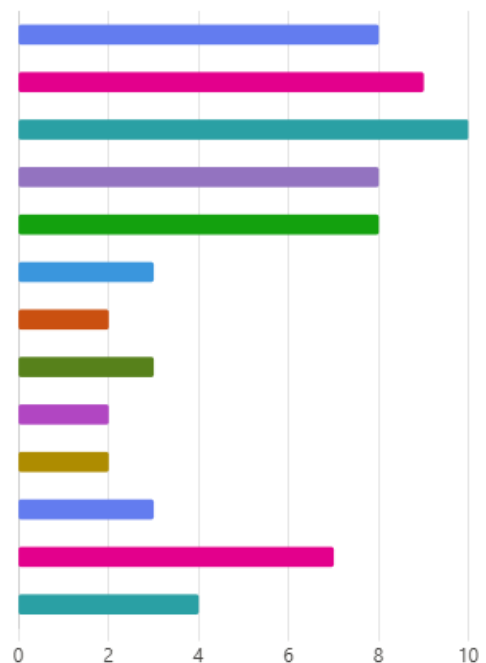
Q7. How difficult is it to recruit staff in County Leitrim currently?

Very easy	0
Easy	1
Neutral	7
Difficult	4
Very difficult	6
Not recruiting	5

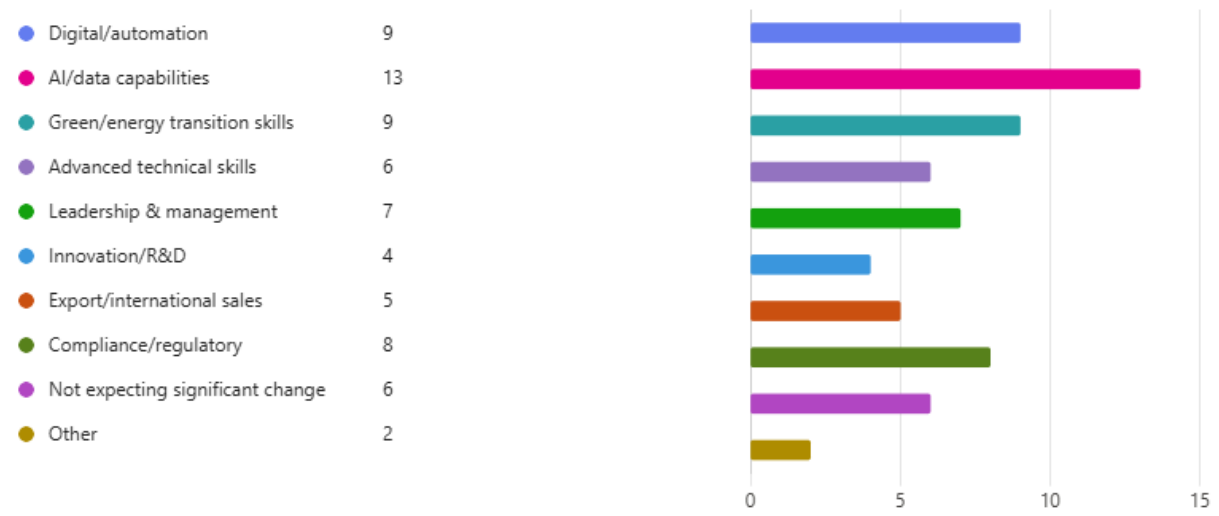


Q8. What skill sets are currently most difficult for your business to recruit for **locally**? (Select up to 3)

Construction trades	8
Technical/engineering skills	9
Digital/IT/ Data skills	10
Management/supervisory skills	8
Sales & marketing	8
Administrative/office skills	3
Hospitality/service skills	2
Care/health roles	3
Agri-tech/food production skills	2
Green/retrofit/energy skills	2
General entry-level staff	3
No significant skills shortages	7
Other	4



Q9. Looking ahead 3–5 years, which skill sets will become more important for your business? (Select up to 3)



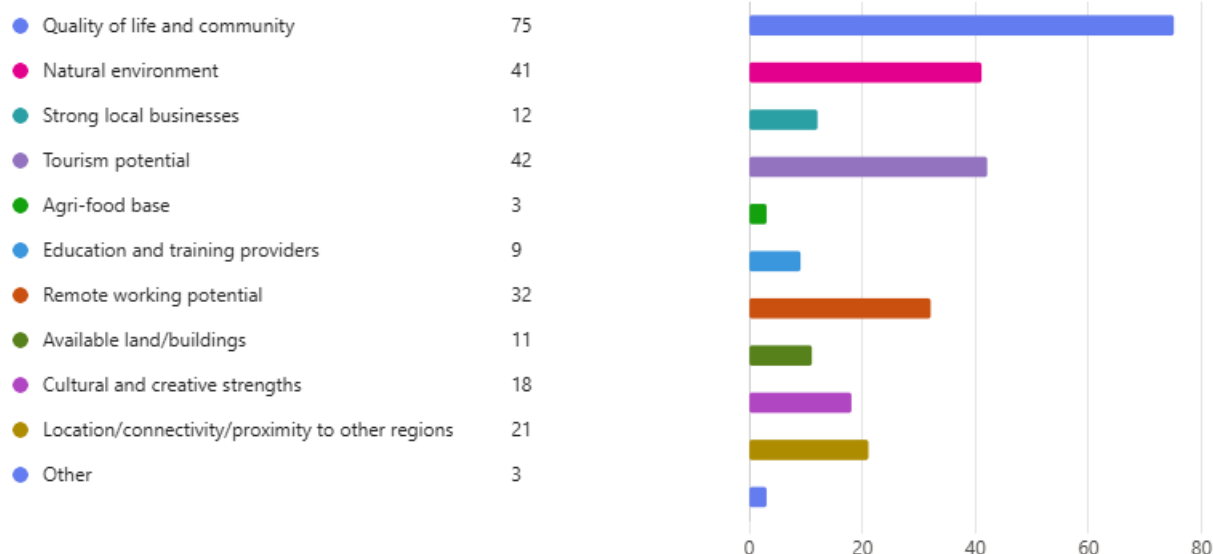
Q12. Overall, how would you describe Leitrim’s economic situation today?



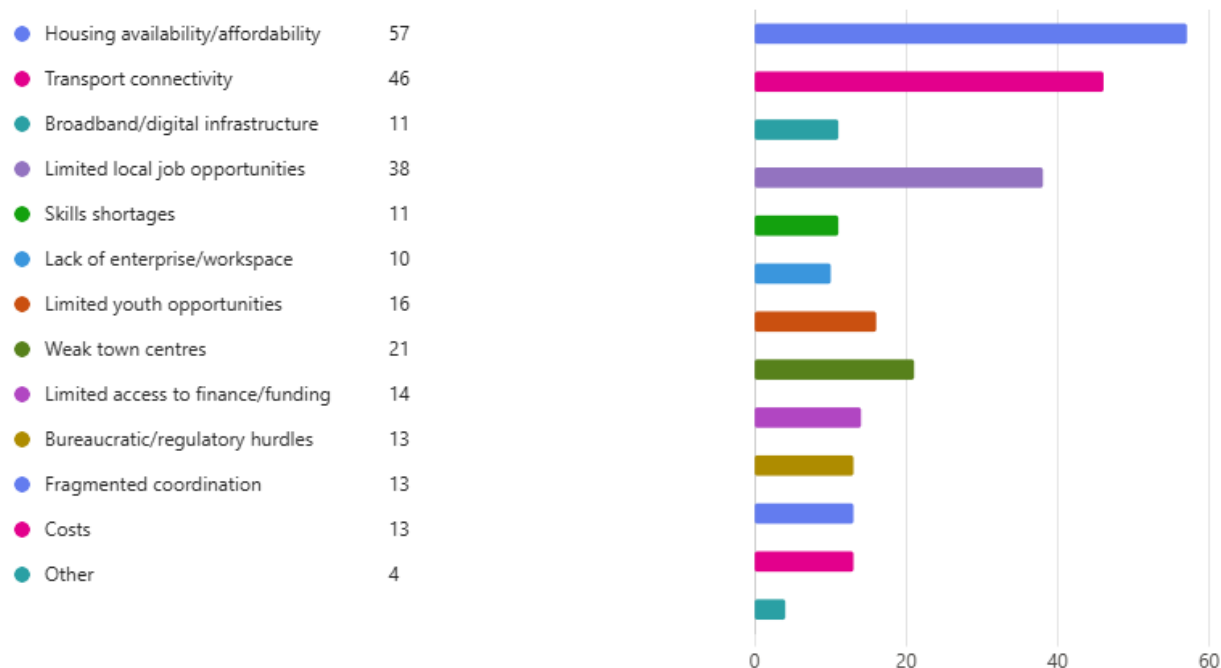
Q13. How confident are you about Leitrim’s ability to create sustainable job growth and economic opportunities over the next 10 years?



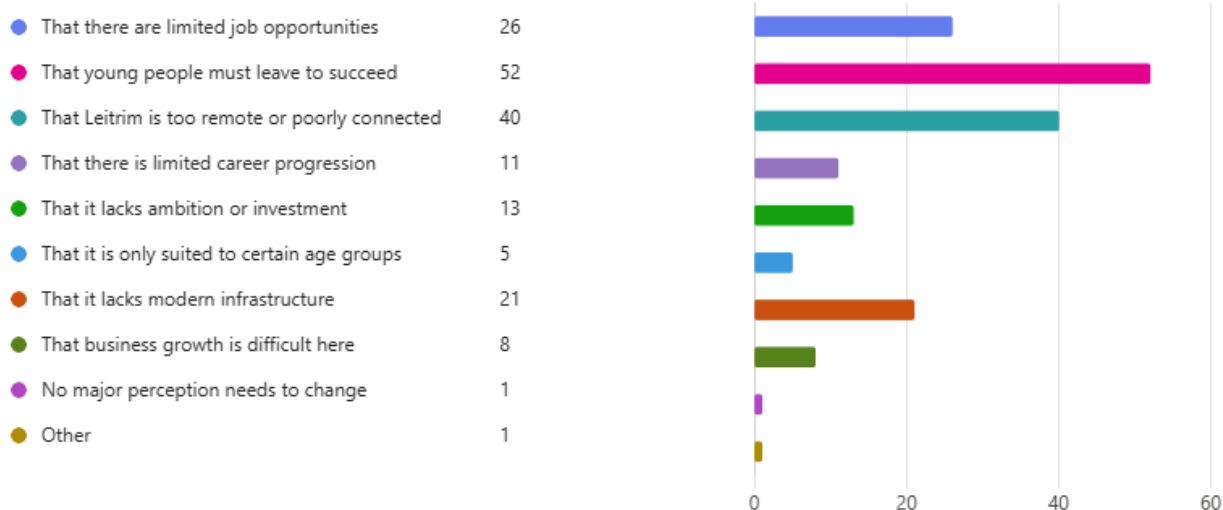
Q15. What do you consider Leitrim's strongest assets? (Pick up to 3)



Q16. What do you consider to be the biggest barriers limiting Leitrim's economic growth and job creation? (Pick up to 3)



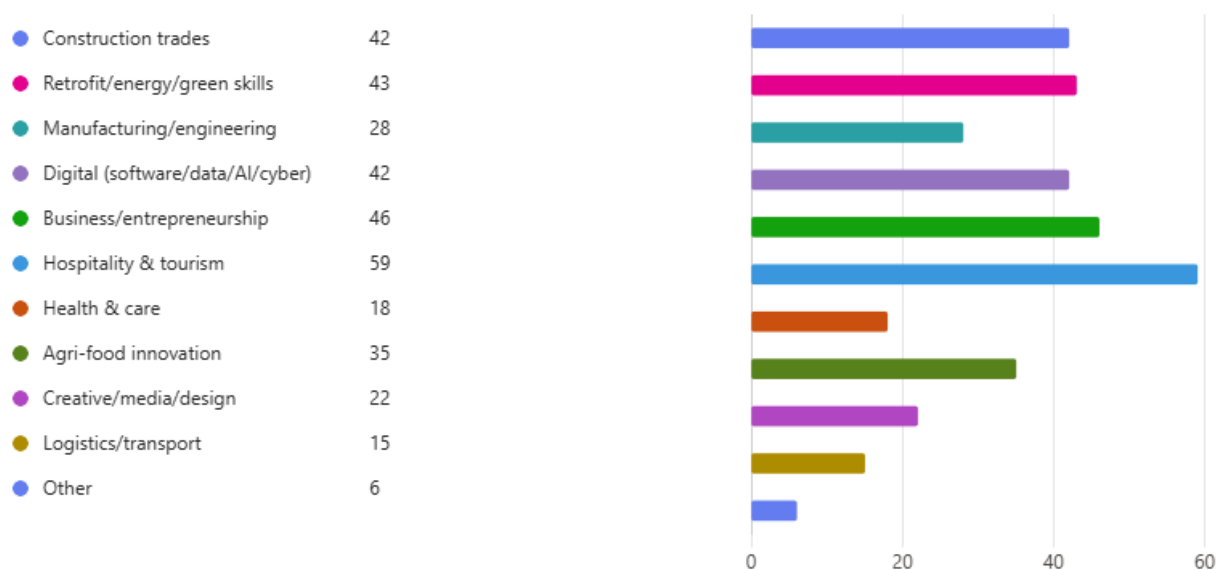
Q17. In your opinion, which perceptions about Leitrim most need to change to support its future growth and success? (Pick up to 2)



Q18. Do you believe there are good career opportunities locally?

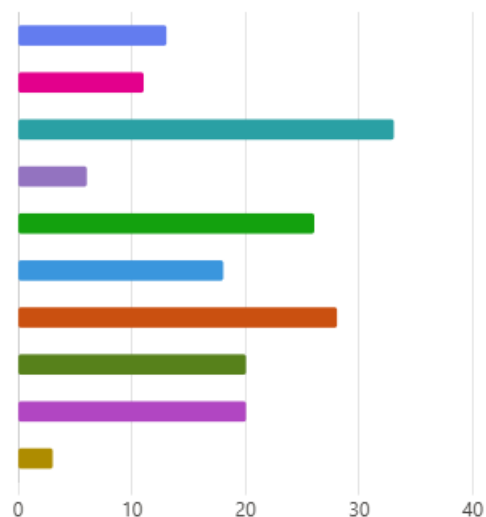


Q19. In your opinion, which skills areas are most important for Leitrim's future? (Pick up to 4)



Q20. In your opinion, what would support people in Leitrim most to access and progress into sustainable, well-paid employment locally? (Pick up to 2)

More local training options	13
Flexible/evening courses	11
Availability of apprenticeships	33
Clearer career guidance	6
Improved transport	26
Affordable childcare	18
Higher-paying job opportunities locally	28
Stronger employer-education links	20
Higher Education Institution in Leitrim	20
Other	3



Q21. How would you rate the following in your area?

Excellent Good Fair Poor Very poor

Housing availability

Transport options

Broadband/mobile reliability

Access to training/education

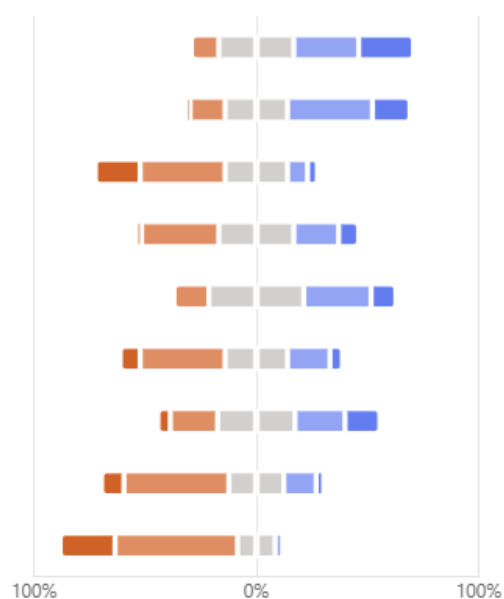
Access to childcare

Enterprise/workspace availability

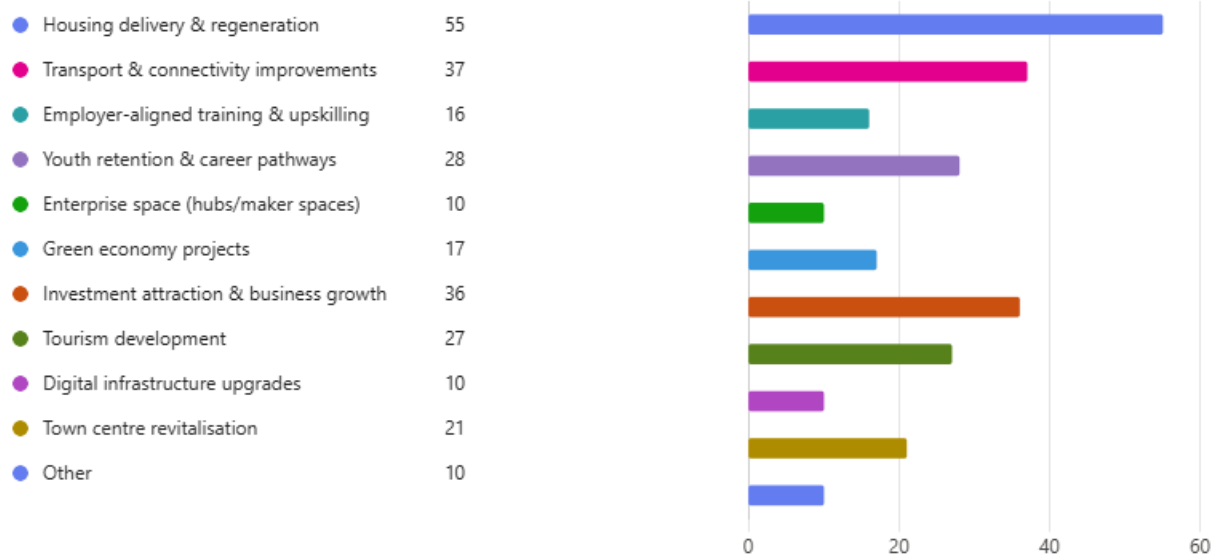
Town centre vitality

Community facilities & social life

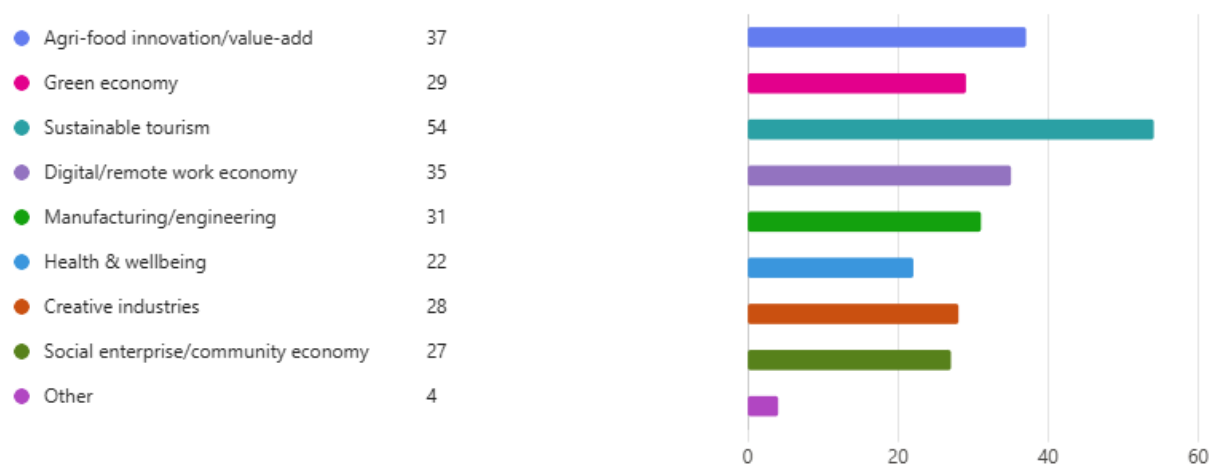
Overall quality of life



Q24. If Leitrim could focus on ONLY THREE priorities over the next 3 years, what do you believe they should be? (Pick exactly 3)



Q25. In your opinion, which sectors should be prioritised for growth in Leitrim by 2035? (Pick up to 3)



Appendix 2 – DIG classification

Industry in the Census is coded using NACE, the General Industrial Classification of Economic Activities within the European Communities. The current version, NACE Rev. 2, is a 4-digit hierarchical activity classification with 88 Divisions at 2-digit level, 272 Groups at 3-digit level, and 615 Classes at 4-digit level.

The industry in which a person is engaged is determined by the main economic activity of the local unit in which they work, regardless of their occupation. Where a local unit

provides an ancillary service to another unit within the same business (e.g. administration or storage), staff in that unit are classified to the industry of the unit they service.

Industrial classification therefore reflects the ultimate purpose of the unit or its end product, not the specific nature of the work an individual performs.

The below table outlines each of the classifications used in this report and what is included as part of these codes.

Table A.1: Detailed list of industries (NACE Rev 2)

Code	Industry
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	
0190	Farming (Farming of animals, mixed farming)
0191	Growing of crops, fruits, plants, flowers and vegetables
0192	Other agricultural activities and agricultural activities n.e.c
0200	Forestry and Logging
0300	Fishing and Aquaculture
0400	Horseracing Activities
Mining and Quarrying	
0500	Mining and quarrying of coal and lignite
0600	Extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas
0700	Mining of metal ores
0800	Other mining and quarrying
0892	Extraction and agglomeration of peat
0900	Mining support service activities
Manufacturing	
1010	Production, processing and preserving of meat, meat products and poultry
1020	Processing and preserving of fish and fish products
1030	Processing and preserving of fruit and vegetables
1040	Manufacture of vegetable and animal oils and fats
1050	Manufacture of dairy products
1060	Manufacture of grain mill products, starches and starch products
1070	Manufacture of bakery and farinaceous products
1080	Manufacture of other food products n.e.c
1090	Manufacture of prepared animal feeds
1100	Manufacture of beverages



1200	Manufacture of tobacco products
1300	Manufacture of textiles
1400	Manufacture of clothes; dressing and dyeing of fur
1500	Manufacture of leather and related products
1600	Manufacture of wood and products of wood and cork, except furniture; Manufacture of articles of straw and plaiting materials
1700	Manufacture of pulp, paper and paper products
1800	Printing activities and reproduction of recorded media
1900	Manufacture of coke and refined petroleum products
2000	Manufacture of chemicals and chemical products
2100	Manufacture of pharmaceuticals, medicinal chemicals and botanical products
2210	Manufacture of rubber products
2220	Manufacture of plastic products
2310	Manufacture of glass and glass products
2360	Manufacture of articles of concrete, plaster and cement
2380	All other manufacture of other non-metallic mineral products
2400	Manufacture of basic metals
2500	Manufacture of fabricated metal products, except machinery and equipment
2610	Manufacture of electronic components and boards
2620	Manufacture of computers and peripheral equipment
2690	Manufacture of other computer, electronic and optical products
2700	Manufacture of electrical equipment
2800	Manufacture of machinery and equipment n.e.c
2900	Manufacture of motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers
3000	Manufacture of other transport equipment
3100	Manufacture of furniture
3250	Manufacture of medical and dental instruments and supplies
3280	All other manufacturing n.e.c
3300	Repair and installation of machinery and equipment
Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply	
3510	Electric power generation, transmission and distribution
3520	Manufacture of gas; distribution of gaseous fuels through mains
3530	Steam and air conditioning supply
Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	
3600	Water collection, treatment and supply
3700	Sewerage
3800	Waste collection, treatment and disposal activities, materials recovery
Construction	
4110	Development of building projects
4120	Construction of residential and non-residential buildings



4200	Civil Engineering
4310	Demolition and site preparation
4321	Electrical installation
4322	Plumbing, heat and air-conditioning installation
4329	Other construction installation
4330	Building completion and finishing
4390	Other specialised construction activities
Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	
4500	Wholesale and retail trade and repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles
4630	Wholesale of food, beverages and tobacco
4640	Wholesale of household goods
4673	Wholesale of wood, construction materials and sanitary equipment
4680	All other wholesale trade and commission trade and wholesale not specified
4710	Retail sale in non-specialized stores with food, beverages or tobacco predominating
4720	Retail sale of food, beverages or tobacco in specialised stores
4730	Retail sale of automotive fuel in specialised stores
4740	Retail sale of information and communication equipment in specialised stores
4751	Retail sale of textiles in specialised stores
4752	Retail sale of hardware, paints and glass in specialised stores
4754	Retail sale of electrical household appliances in specialised stores
4759	Retail sale of furniture, lighting equipment and household articles n.e.c.
4760	Retail sale of cultural and recreation goods in specialised stores
4771	Retail sale of clothing in specialised stores
4772	Retail sale of footwear and leather goods in specialised stores
4795	Retail trade n.e.c.
Transportation and Storage	
4932	Taxi Operations
4935	Other Passenger land transport
4940	Freight transport by road
4950	Transport via pipeline
4980	Transport via railways
5000	Water transport
5100	Air transport
5229	Activities of other transport agencies
5280	Warehousing, storage and Cargo Handling
5290	Service activities related to land, water and air transportation
5300	Post and courier activities
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	
5510	Hotels and similar accommodation
5580	Other provision of short-stay accommodation



5610	Restaurants and mobile food service activities
5620	Event catering and food service activities
5630	Beverage serving activities, including bars and coffee shops
Information and Communication Activities	
5810	Publishing of books, newspapers, magazines and other publishing services
5820	Software publishing
5900	Movie, video and television programme production, sound recording and music publishing activities
6000	Programming and broadcasting activities
6100	Telecommunications
6200	Computer programming, consultancy and related services
6300	Information service activities
Financial and Insurance Activities	
6400	Financial service activities, except insurance and pension funding
6500	Insurance, reinsurance and pension funding, except compulsory social security
6610	Activities auxiliary to financial intermediation, except insurance and pension funding
6620	Activities auxiliary to insurance and pension funding
6630	Fund Management Activities
Real Estate Activities	
6800	Real Estate Activities
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	
6910	Legal Activities
6920	Accounting, book-keeping and auditing activities; tax consultancy
7000	Activities of head offices; management consultancy services
7110	Architectural and engineering activities and related technical consultancy
7120	Technical testing and analysis
7200	Scientific research and development
7300	Advertising and market research
7400	Other professional, scientific and technical activities
7500	Veterinary activities
Administrative and Support Service Activities	
7700	Rental and leasing activities
7800	Employment activities
7900	Travel agency, tour operator and other reservation service and related activities
8000	Security and investigation activities
8100	Services to buildings and landscape activities
8200	Miscellaneous office and business activities
Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	
8422	Defence Activities
8424	Garda Síochána



8490	All other public administration; compulsory social security
Education	
8510	Pre-Primary Education
8520	Primary Education
8530	Secondary Education
8540	Higher Education
8590	Adult and Other Education not elsewhere classified
Human Health and Social Work Activities	
8610	Hospital Activities
8623	Dental practice activities
8629	Medical practice activities
8690	Other human health activities
8700	Residential Care activities
8800	Social work activities
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	
9000	Creative arts and entertainment activities
9100	Libraries, archives, museums and other cultural activities
9200	Gambling and betting activities
9300	Sports activities and amusement and recreation activities
Other Service Activities	
9400	Activities of membership organisations
9500	Repair of computers and personal and household goods
9601	Washing and dry-cleaning of textile and fur products
9602	Hairdressing and other beauty treatment
9603	Funeral and related activities
9604	Physical well-being activities
9609	Other service activities n.e.c.
Activities of Households as Employers	
9700	Private households with employed persons
Activities of Extra-territorial Organisations and Bodies	
9900	Extra-territorial organisations and bodies
Not Stated	
9999	Industry not stated



Appendix 3 – Breakdown of Occupational Groups

Source: National Skills Bulletin 2025, SOLAS. Occupations are classified using the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC 2010).

Occupational Group	Occupation	SOC Description
	Chemical, biological & physical scientists	Physical scientists
		Social and humanities scientists
		Biological scientists and biotechnicians n.e.c.
		Research and development managers
	Environmental/conservation specialists	Conservation and environmental associate professionals
		Conservation professionals
		Environment professionals
		Production managers and directors in mining and energy
		Waste disposal and environmental services managers
		Environmental health professionals
	Health and safety officers	Health and safety officers
	Production, design & QC engineers	Production and process engineers
		Design and development engineers
		Quality control and planning engineers
		Quality assurance and regulatory professionals
	Other engineering professionals	Mechanical engineers
		Electrical engineers
		Electronics engineers
		Engineering professionals n.e.c.
	Science & engineering technicians	Laboratory technicians
		Electrical and electronic technicians
		Engineering technicians
		Quality assurance technicians
		Planning, process and production technicians
		Science, engineering and production technicians n.e.c.
	Production managers in manufacturing	Production managers and directors in manufacturing
ICT Occupations	ICT specialist & project managers	Information technology and telecommunications directors
		IT specialist managers
		IT project and programme managers
	Programmers & software developers	Programmers and software development professionals
	ICT professionals. n.e.c.	IT business analysts, architects and systems designers
		Web design and development professionals
		Information technology & telecommunications professionals n.e.c.
	IT technicians	IT operations technicians
		IT user support technicians
Business & Financial Occupations	Accountants & tax experts	Chartered and certified accountants and taxation experts
	Mgt. consultants, business analysts & project managers	Management consultants and business analysts
		Business and financial project management professionals
	Actuaries, economists & statisticians; other business professionals	Actuaries, economists and statisticians
		Business and related research professionals
		Business, research and administrative professionals n.e.c.
	Financial analysts & insurance underwriters	Brokers
		Insurance underwriters
		Finance and investment analysts and advisers



Healthcare Occupations	Other business associate professionals	Estimators, valuers and assessors
		Importers and exporters
		Financial and accounting technicians
		Business and related associate professionals n.e.c.
		Legal associate professionals
	Financial accounts managers	Financial accounts managers
	Financial managers & directors	Financial managers and directors
		Financial institution managers and directors
	Financial administrative occupations	Credit controllers
		Book-keepers, payroll managers and wages clerks
		Bank and post office clerks
		Finance officers
		Financial administrative occupations n.e.c.
	HR managers & officers	Pensions and insurance clerks and assistants
		Human resource managers and directors
	Other healthcare professionals	Human resources and industrial relations officers
		Psychologists
		Pharmacists
		Opticians (including dispensing opticians)
		Dental practitioners
		Veterinarians
		Medical radiographers
		Podiatrists
		Health professionals n.e.c.
		Health services and public health managers and directors
		Social services managers and directors
		Health care practice managers
	Medical practitioners	Medical practitioners
	Therapy professionals	Physiotherapists
		Occupational therapists
		Speech and language therapists
Education Occupations	Nurses & midwives	Therapy professionals n.e.c.
		Nurses and midwives
	Health associate professionals	Paramedics
		Pharmaceutical technicians
		Medical and dental technicians
		Health associate professionals n.e.c.
		Dispensing opticians
	Higher & further education teaching professionals	Dental nurses
		Further and higher education teaching professionals
		Secondary education teaching professionals
		Primary and nursery education teaching professionals
	Secondary teachers	Senior professionals of educational establishments
		Special education teaching professionals
		Education advisers and school inspectors
		Teaching, special needs, & other educational professionals n.e.c.
	Primary & nursery teachers	Teaching assistants
		Educational support assistants
	Teaching & other educational professionals	Vocational and industrial trainers and instructors
		Careers advisers and vocational guidance specialists
		Driving instructors
	Educational support assistants	Youth and community workers
	Trainers & instructors, career guidance	



Social & Care Occupations	Welfare & housing associate professionals	Child and early years officers
		Housing officers
		Counsellors
		Welfare and housing associate professionals n.e.c.
	Childminders etc.	Nursery nurses and assistants and playworkers
		Childminders and related occupations
		Playgroup leaders
	Other caring services	Nursing auxiliaries and assistants
		Ambulance staff (excluding paramedics)
		Undertakers, mortuary and crematorium assistants
	Social workers & welfare professionals	Social workers
		Probation officers
		Clergy
		Welfare professionals n.e.c.
		Houseparents and residential wardens
		Care workers and home carers
		Residential, day and domiciliary care managers and proprietors
		Senior care workers
		Care escorts
Legal & Security Occupations	Barristers, judges, solicitors & related professionals	Barristers and judges
		Solicitors
		Legal professionals n.e.c.
	Police officers (e.g. Gardaí)	Senior police officers
		Police officers (sergeant and below)
	Other protective service occupations	Officers in armed forces
		Senior officers in fire, ambulance, prison and related services
		NCOs and other ranks
		Fire service officers (watch manager and below)
		Prison service officers (below principal officer)
		Police community support officers
	Security guards	Protective service associate professionals n.e.c.
		Security guards and related occupations
		Parking and civil enforcement occupations
		School midday and crossing patrol occupations
Construction Occupations	Civil engineers & construction project managers	Elementary security occupations n.e.c.
		Civil engineers
		Construction project managers and related professionals
	Architects & town planners, architectural technologists & surveyors	Production managers and directors in construction
		Architects
		Quantity surveyors
		Town planners
		Chartered surveyors
	Construction related technicians	Chartered architectural technologists
		Building and civil engineering technicians
		Architectural and town planning technicians
	Bricklayers & plasterers	Draughtspersons
		Bricklayers and masons
	Plumbers	Plasterers
	Carpenters & joiners	Plumbers and heating and ventilating engineers
	Painters & decorators	Carpenters and joiners
	Other construction trades	Painters and decorators
		Steel erectors



		Roofers, roof tilers and slaters
		Glaziers, window fabricators and fitters
		Construction and building trades n.e.c.
		Floorers and wall tilers
		Construction and building trades supervisors
		Elementary construction occupations
	Construction operatives & elementary	Scaffolders, staggers and riggers
		Road construction operatives
		Rail construction and maintenance operatives
		Construction operatives n.e.c.
	Other metal-related trades	Smiths and forge workers
		Moulders, core makers and die casters
		Sheet metal workers
		Metal plate workers, and riveters
		Air-conditioning and refrigeration engineers
		Metal machining setters and setter-operators
		Tool makers, tool fitters and markers-out
		Precision instrument makers and repairers
		Pipe fitters
	Welding and fabricators	Welding trades
		Metal working production and maintenance fitters
	Vehicle trades	Vehicle technicians, mechanics and electricians
		Vehicle body builders and repairers
		Vehicle paint technicians
		Aircraft maintenance and related trades
		Boat and ship builders and repairers
		Rail and rolling stock builders and repairers
	Electrical & electronic trades etc.	Electricians and electrical fitters
		Telecommunications engineers
		TV, video and audio engineers
		IT engineers
		Electrical and electronic trades n.e.c.
		Skilled metal, electrical and electronic trades supervisors
	Other skilled trades	Weavers and knitters
		Upholsterers
		Footwear and leather working trades
		Tailors and dressmakers
		Textiles, garments and related trades n.e.c.
		Pre-press technicians
		Printers
		Print finishing and binding workers
		Glass and ceramics makers, decorators and finishers
		Furniture makers and other craft woodworkers
		Florists
		Other skilled trades n.e.c.
	Butchers, fishmongers, bakers etc.	Butchers
		Bakers and flour confectioners
		Fishmongers and poultry dressers
	Managers in horticulture, agriculture & fishing	Managers and proprietors in agriculture and horticulture
		Managers and proprietors in forestry, fishing and related services
		Managers and proprietors in horse-racing and related industries
	Farmers	Farmers



Hospitality Occupations	Horticultural, agricultural & fishing trades n.e.c.	Horticultural trades
		Gardeners and landscape gardeners
		Groundsmen and greenkeepers
		Skilled workers in horse racing and related industries
		Agricultural and fishing trades n.e.c.
	Animal carers	Veterinary nurses
		Pest control officers
		Veterinarians
		Animal care services occupations n.e.c.
	Elementary agriculture occupations	Farm workers
		Forestry workers
		Elementary occupations in horse racing and related industries
		Fishing and other elementary agriculture occupations n.e.c.
Arts, Sports & Tourism Occupations	Hospitality managers	Hotel and accommodation managers and proprietors
		Restaurant and catering establishment managers and proprietors
		Publicans and managers of licensed premises
	Chefs & cooks	Chefs
		Cooks
	Catering & bar managers	Catering & bar managers
	Kitchen & catering assistants	Kitchen and catering assistants
	Waiters & waitresses	Waiters and waitresses
	Bar staff	Bar staff
	Housekeepers etc.	Housekeepers and related occupations
		Cleaning and housekeeping managers and supervisors
Arts, Sports & Tourism Occupations	Media profs. & librarians	Librarians
		Archivists and curators
		Journalists, newspaper and periodical editors
		Public relations professionals
		Advertising account managers and creative directors
	Artistic, literary & media associate professionals	Artists
		Authors, writers and translators
		Actors, entertainers and presenters
		Dancers and choreographers
		Musicians
		Arts officers, producers and directors
		Photographers, audio-visual and broadcasting equipment operators
		Graphic designers
		Product, clothing and related designers
	Sports & fitness occupations	Leisure and sports managers
		Sports players
		Sports coaches, instructors and officials
		Fitness instructors
	Leisure & travel service occupations	Sports and leisure assistants
		Travel agents
		Air travel assistants
		Rail travel assistants
		Leisure and theme park attendants
		Travel agency managers and proprietors
		Leisure and travel service occupations n.e.c.
	Hairdressers & beauticians, etc.	Hairdressers, barbers, beauticians and related occupations
		Hairdressing and beauty salon managers and proprietors



Transport & Logistics Occupations	Managers & directors in transport & logistics	Managers and directors in transport and distribution Managers and directors in storage and warehousing
	Stock control, transport & distribution administrative occupations	Stock control clerks and assistants Transport and distribution clerks and assistants
	Large goods vehicle drivers	Large goods vehicle drivers
	Mobile machine drivers & operatives	Crane drivers Fork-lift truck drivers Agricultural machinery drivers Mobile machine drivers and operatives n.e.c.
	Taxi/cab drivers & chauffeurs	Taxi and cab drivers and chauffeurs
	Other drivers & transport operatives	Marine and waterways transport operatives Air transport operatives Rail transport operatives Bus and coach drivers Train and tram drivers Van drivers Other drivers and transport operatives n.e.c.
	Aircraft pilots, ship officers, air traffic controllers	Air traffic controllers Aircraft pilots and flight engineers Ship and hovercraft officers National government administrative occupations
Administrative & Secretarial Occupations	Government administrative occupations	Local government administrative occupations Officers of non-governmental organisations
	Other administrators	Records clerks and assistants Library clerks and assistants Human resources administrative occupations Sales administrators Other administrative occupations n.e.c.
	Office managers & supervisors administrative occupations	Office managers Office supervisors
	PAs & other secretaries, etc.	Medical secretaries Legal secretaries Personal assistants and other secretaries Typists and related keyboard occupations
	Receptionists	Receptionists
	Elementary administrative	Postal workers, mail sorters, messengers and couriers Elementary administration occupations n.e.c.
Sales & Customer Service Occupations	Advertising, marketing & sales directors	Marketing and sales directors Purchasing managers and directors Advertising and public relations directors
	Managers & directors in retail & wholesale	Managers and directors in retail and wholesale
	Business sales executives	Business sales executives
	Sales accounts & business development managers	Sales accounts and business development managers
	Other sales & marketing associate professionals	Buyers and procurement officers Marketing associate professionals Estate agents and auctioneers Conference and exhibition managers and organisers Property, housing and estate managers
	Sales assistants	Sales and retail assistants, cashiers and checkout operators Retail cash desk and check-out operators Telephone salespersons



Operatives & Elementary Occupations n.e.c.		Pharmacy and other dispensing assistants
		Vehicle and parts salespersons and advisers
	Sales related occupations	Collector salespersons and credit agents
		Debt, rent and other cash collectors
		Roundspersons and van salespersons
		Market and street traders and assistants
		Merchandisers and window dressers
		Sales related occupations n.e.c.
		Sales supervisors
		Call and contact centre occupations
	Customer service occupations	Telephonists
		Communication operators
		Market research interviewers
		Customer service occupations n.e.c.
		Customer service managers and supervisors
	Food, drink & tobacco operatives	Food, drink and tobacco process operatives
	Chemical & related process	Chemical and related process operatives
	Other process operatives & process plant occupations	Glass and ceramics process operatives
		Textile process operatives
		Rubber process operatives
		Plastics process operatives
		Metal making and treating process operatives
		Electroplaters
		Process operatives n.e.c.
		Industrial cleaning process occupations
		Packers, bottlers, canners and fillers
		Elementary process plant occupations n.e.c.
	Plant & machine operatives	Paper and wood machine operatives
		Coal mine operatives
		Quarry workers and related operatives
		Energy plant operatives
		Metal working machine operatives
		Water and sewerage plant operatives
		Printing machine assistants
		Plant and machine operatives n.e.c.
	Assemblers & routine operatives	Assemblers (electrical and electronic products)
		Assemblers (vehicles and metal goods)
		Routine inspectors and testers
		Weighers, graders and sorters
		Tyre, exhaust and windscreen fitters
		Sewing machinists
		Assemblers and routine operatives n.e.c.
	Cleaning	Window cleaners
		Street cleaners
		Cleaners and domestics
		Launderers, dry cleaners and pressers
		Refuse and salvage occupations
		Vehicle valeters and cleaners
		Elementary cleaning occupations n.e.c.
	Sales, storage & services	Shelf fillers
		Elementary sales occupations n.e.c.
		Elementary storage occupations
		Hospital porters



		Other elementary services occupations n.e.c.
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Appendix 4 – List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
AEGS	Apprenticeship Employer Grant Scheme
AgriFood	Agriculture and Food
AgriTech	Agricultural Technology
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AIM Centre	Advancing Innovation in Manufacturing Centre
ATU	Atlantic Technological University
BEDF	Border Enterprise Development Fund
BTEI	Back to Education Initiative
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CNC	Computer Numerical Control
COVID	Coronavirus Disease
CSO	Central Statistics Office
CTC	Community Training Centre
DIG	Detailed Industrial Group
DS3	Digital Services, Supports, and Spaces Project
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESB	Electricity Supply Board
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
ETB	Education and Training Board
EU	European Union
EV	Electric Vehicle
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FET	Further Education and Training
FinTech	Financial Technology
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GP	General Practitioner
GVA	Gross Value Added
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
HR	Human Resources
HSE	Health Service Executive
Ibec	Irish Business and Employers Confederation (orphan acronym)
ICT	Information and Communications Technology



Abbreviation	Meaning
IDA	Industrial Development Authority Ireland
INTERREG	Interregional Cooperation Programme (European Territorial Cooperation)
ITABE	Intensive Tuition for Adults with Basic Education Needs
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
KPMG	Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler (professional services firm)
LCC	Leitrim County Council
LDC	Leitrim Development Company
LEA	Local Electoral Areas
LEADER	Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale (EU rural development programme)
LECP	Leitrim Local Economic and Community Plan
LEO	Local Enterprise Office
LTi	Local Training Initiative
MBNA	Maryland Bank National Association (MBNA / Bank of America)
MCI	Motion Controls International
MDR	Medical Device Regulation
MedTech	Medical Technology
MSLETB	Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board
MW	Megawatt
NACE	Nomenclature of Economic Activities (EU industry classification)
NDP	National Development Plan
NFQ	National Framework of Qualifications
NPF	National Planning Framework
NSO	National Strategic Outcome
NWR	Northern and Western Region
NWRA	Northern and Western Regional Assembly
NZEB	Nearly Zero Energy Building
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PEACEPLUS	PEACEPLUS Programme (EU cross-border funding programme)
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PLC	Post-Leaving Certificate
PLM	PLM Medical (medical device manufacturer)
QC	Quality Control
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
RAG	Red, Amber, Green (status rating)
RSES	Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy
S3	National Smart Specialisation Strategy
SBCI	Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland



Abbreviation	Meaning
SCOT	Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Threats
SEAI	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEO	Search Engine Optimisation
SLMRU	Skills and Labour Market Research Unit
SLNCR	Sligo, Leitrim and Northern Counties Railway
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
SOC	Standard Occupational Classification
SOLAS	An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna (Further Education and Training Authority)
SPA	Special Purpose Award
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
TCF	Town Centre First
TFI	Transport for Ireland
UK	United Kingdom
UL	University of Limerick
WDC	Western Development Commission
WFH	Working From Home

