

## 9.8 Construction Occupations

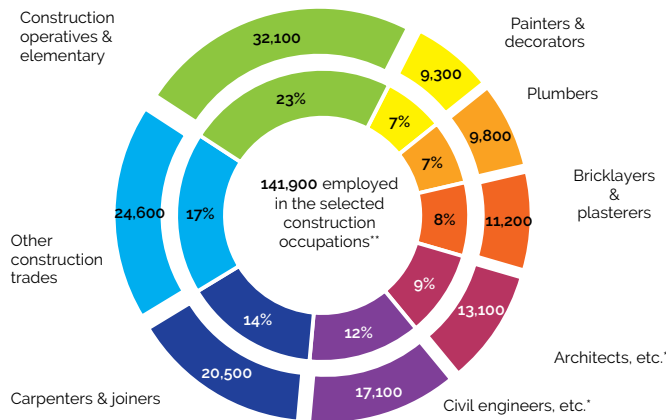
Overall employment: Approximately 141,900 persons (94% male) were employed in the selected construction occupations, representing 6.3% of the national workforce

- **Sector:** 69% of overall employment was concentrated in the construction sector
- **Employment growth (5-year):** Between 2013 and 2018, overall employment increased by 34,000 (5.6%) on average annually (compared to 3.1% nationally). The strongest rate of employment growth was observed for civil engineers, etc. (10.6%) during the period.
- **Age:** The 25-54 age group accounted for the majority of persons employed, at 76%. The share of employees aged 55 and over was in line with the national average of 17%.
- **Education:** The share of persons employed in the selected construction occupations who had attained higher secondary/FET qualifications was 46%, above the national average share of 37%. Those who had attained third level qualifications (27%) was well below the national average share (48%).
- **Full-time/part-time:** Over 90% of construction workers were in full-time employment
- **Nationality:** The share of non-Irish workers was slightly below the national average of 16%, while 86% of workers were Irish nationals

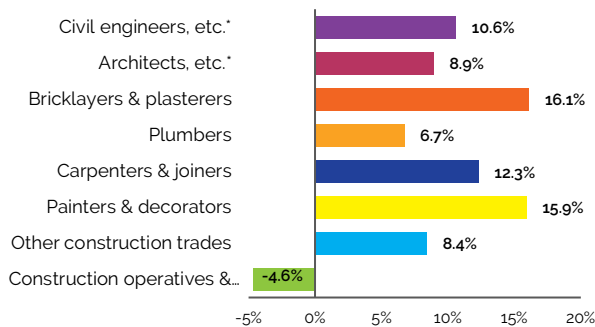
### Overall outlook for these occupations:

Construction employment has grown strongly in recent years; most of the growth related to commercial sector activity. The skills mix in this sector is evolving with the increased use of off-site construction methods and other technology advances. The government's Climate Action Plan will increase demand for some occupations such as carpenters due to plans for significant retrofitting of homes. Future demand for skills will depend on a number of factors including the roll out of the Climate Action Plan and increased activity in both the residential and commercial sectors.

#### Numbers employed, 2018



#### Average growth rates (%) 2013-2018



↑ Between 2013 and 2018, overall employment increased by 34,000 (5.6% on average annually compared to 3.1%)

Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data

\*See detailed occupation description in table overleaf

\*\*Construction related technicians included in total but numbers too small to report

Occupation	Economic summary	Shortage	Occupation shortage details
Civil engineers & construction project managers	Employment growth was strong in this occupation. Shortages are emerging although the numbers required are likely to be small. With declining output from the education and training system, the number of graduates is not expected to be enough to meet growing demand. These shortages could therefore be exacerbated in future years.	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Civil engineers</li> <li>— Construction project managers</li> </ul>
Architects & town planners, architectural technologists, & surveyors	Overall demand for these skills is likely to be limited in volume due to the small size of this occupational group. However, employers have indicated that they are experiencing difficulty in sourcing quantity surveyors.  In addition, there is a strong demand for those with building information modelling (BIM) skills.	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Quantity surveyors</li> </ul>
Bricklayers & plasterers	Although beginning to grow, the number of new apprentice registrations remains relatively small compared to the boom years and difficulties could emerge in the medium term should residential activity increase significantly. On the other hand, the employment permit system has been opened (since 2019) to both bricklayers and plasterers, and there remain a significant number of job ready job seekers who were previously employed in these occupations. The high employment growth rate should be treated with caution <sup>30</sup> .	●	
Plumbers	The growth observed in employment in this occupation has been driven by commercial sector activity. Any increase in residential construction activity will lead to further demand for plumbers. Apprenticeship registrations are growing steadily (doubling over the last four years).	●	
Carpenters & joiners	Employment has grown strongly annually since 2013, primarily related to commercial activity. The number of new apprentice registrations has continued to grow, although this is unlikely to be sufficient to meet demand. Shortages are likely to persist as increased demand for carpenters in residential activity is expected (both new builds and retrofitting activities).	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Carpenters</li> </ul>
Painters & decorators	While this occupation has experienced employment growth, there is no evidence of shortages, with a large number of job ready jobseekers who were previously employed as painters.	●	
Other construction trades	Growth in employment has been driven by commercial sector activity with employment growing strongly since 2014; there are indications that employers are finding it difficult to fill vacancies for certain roles.	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Glaziers</li> <li>— Steel erectors/fixers</li> <li>— Curtain wallers</li> </ul>
Construction operatives & elementary	Most employment for these roles relates to labourers. Overall employment levels have fallen steeply in recent years. There remains a high share of job ready job seekers who were previously employed in this occupation and there are signs of a high level of turnover. However, demand for scaffolders and pipe layers is evident although numbers employed are too small to report.	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Scaffolders</li> <li>— Pipe layers</li> </ul>

*\*For detailed table see Appendix A*

<sup>30</sup> Any annual change may relate to the break in series in the LFS data that occurred in quarter 3, 2017, and should therefore be treated with caution.