

Spring Skills Bulletin 2022

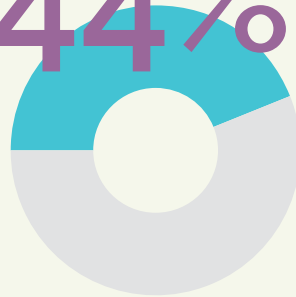
Moving on up: Better aligning existing skills levels with Ireland's labour market needs, Q3 2021

1.09m persons



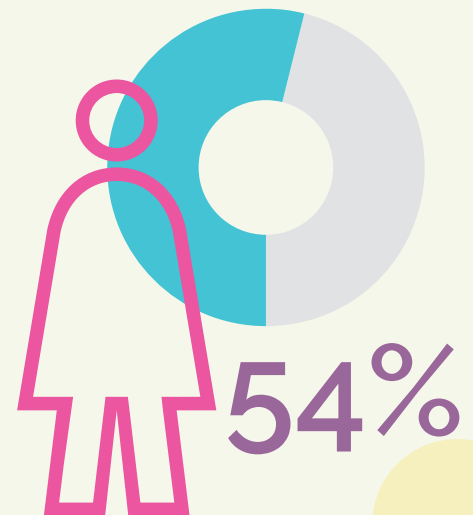
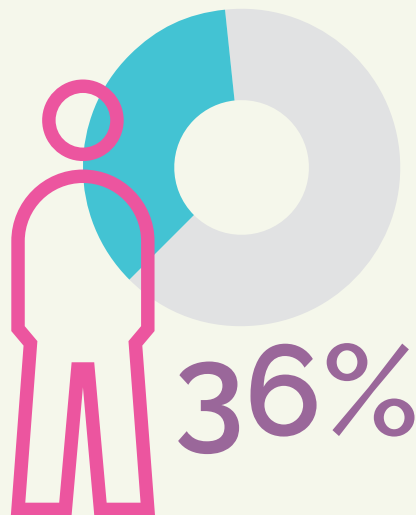
Number working in lower and mid-lower skilled occupations.

44%

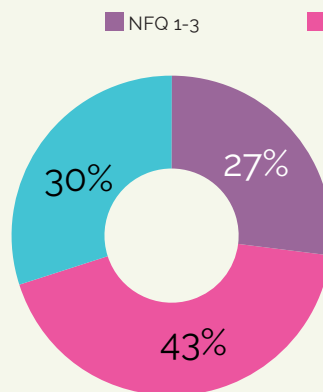


Share of Ireland's workforce in lower and mid-lower skilled occupations, down from 47% in quarter 3 2011, and 46% in quarter 3 2019 (pre-Covid).

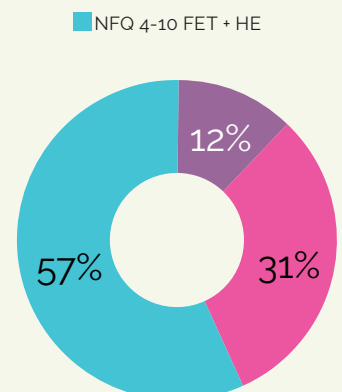
The majority of females in employment worked in lower or mid-lower skilled occupations (54%), but just over a third of employed males worked in these occupations.



Persons with at most a Leaving Cert qualification made up 70% of those working in lower skilled occupations and 43% of those in mid-lower skilled occupations...



Lower skilled occupations



Mid-lower skilled occupations

336,000

...but approximately 336,000 persons (who were not students) in mid-lower and lower skilled occupations held third level qualifications, suggesting that there is scope for mobility into higher level occupations for some, allowing Ireland's economy to better align skills with labour market needs.



>250,000

Conversely, more than a quarter of a million persons employed in high and mid-higher skilled occupations held relatively low qualification levels, highlighting the possibility of progression, even for those without third level qualifications, perhaps through interventions such as the acquisition of micro-credentials and/or career guidance.

Impact of COVID (Q3 2019 vs Q3 2021) on those working in lower & mid-lower skilled occupations

Overall: more than four fifths (87%, or 126,100 persons) of all employment growth over this period was for high and mid-higher skilled occupations, indicating that workers in these occupations benefited most from the economic recovery with little or no growth in employment for those in lower and mid-lower occupations

Gender: females accounted for all of the overall increase in employment in lower and mid-lower occupations, with the number of males employed in these occupations falling over the period.

Age: for workers aged 25 years and over, employment shifted away from lower skilled occupations towards mid-higher and high skilled occupations. Young people (aged less than 25 years) accounted for most of the growth in employment levels for lower and mid-lower skilled occupations, offsetting the declines observed in the number of workers aged 25 years and over in these occupations.

NFQ level: over this period, the employment growth in high, mid-higher and mid-lower skilled occupational groups was confined to those holding either FET or higher education qualifications. While persons with low qualification levels made up nearly a fifth of those working in high and mid-higher skilled occupations in quarter 3 2021, they suffered strong declines in employment, while their counterparts with qualifications at higher levels of the NFQ actually rose.

Sector: while the employment growth in lower/mid-lower skilled occupations was greater than that observed for high/mid-higher skilled occupations for certain sectors (e.g. education, PAD, construction), employment in most other sectors was stronger for high/mid-higher skilled occupations, notably for admin/support services, transport and industry, where employment in lower/mid-lower skilled occupations declined strongly.