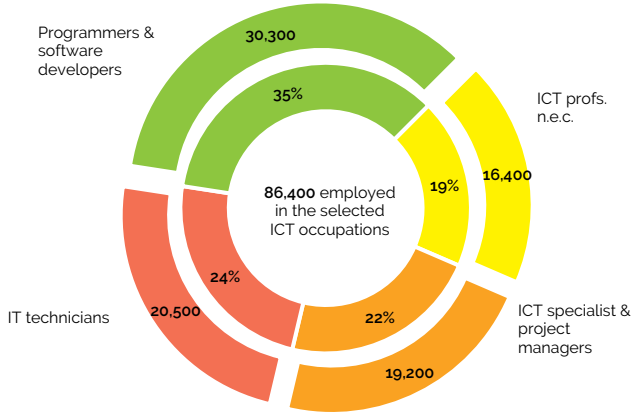
9.2 ICT Occupations

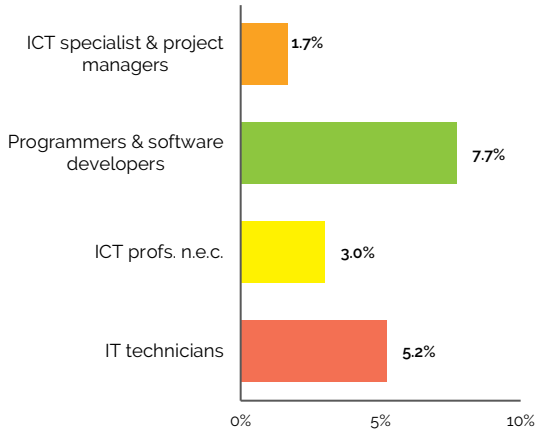
Overall employment: Approximately 86,400 persons (76% male) were employed in the selected ICT occupations, representing 3.8% of the national workforce.

- **Sector:** Two thirds of overall employment was concentrated in the ICT sector, with a further 10% employed in finance and 9% in industry
- **Employment growth (5-year):** Between 2014 and 2019, overall employment increased by 17,800 (4.7% on average annually compared to 3.2% nationally). The strongest rate of employment growth was observed for programmers & software developers (7.7%) during the period
- **Age:** The 25-54 year age group accounted for the majority of persons employed, at 90%.
- **Education:** The share who had attained third level qualifications (87%) was significantly above the national average share (48%), while a further 10% had attained a higher secondary/FET qualification
- **Full-time/part-time:** Over 97% of ICT workers were in full-time employment
- **Nationality:** The share of non-Irish workers was well above the national level of 17%, while 64% of workers were Irish nationals.

Numbers employed, 2019 (annual average)



Average growth rates (%) 2014-2019



Between 2014 and 2019, overall employment increased by 17,800 (4.7% on average annually compared to 3.2% nationally).

Source: SLMRU (SOLAS) analysis of CSO data

Overall Outlook for these Occupations

Growth in employment in ICT occupations over the five-year period was driven primarily by an increase in employment for programmers and software developers. Demand for these skills was strong across all the economic indicators in 2019. The decline in employment in ICT occupations for 2020 (annual average), as a result of COVID-19, is expected to be relatively small in number (at approximately 3,000 persons); while increases in employment may occur for roles such as programmers/developers, this may be offset by declines in lower skilled roles such as technical support. These occupations have a higher share of non-Irish employed compared to the national average and the supply of skills may be impacted from reduced inward migration.

Occupation	Economic summary
ICT specialist & project managers	Employment growth was below the national average for this occupational group over the five-year period. However, over 400 new employment permits were issued for various IT managers in 2019, indicating that employers were unable to source candidates with the skills required from the Irish labour market. These occupations are not thought to have been negatively impacted in terms of employment numbers as a result of COVID-19.
Programmers & software developers	Programmers and developers experienced strong employment growth over the five-year period. These skills were in high demand in 2019, with over 2,000 employment permits issued, a high level of vacancies and frequent mentions in the Recruitment Agency Survey. Although most in this occupation are employed in the ICT sector, demand extends across almost all economic sectors. While supply from the education system has been rising steadily in recent years (1,400 awards at NFQ level 8+ in 2018), an issue may arise with the availability of skills due to reduced inward migration as a result of COVID-19; an increased uptake of remote working, however, may mitigate this difficulty.
ICT profs. n.e.c.	Although employment growth was slightly below the national average over the five-year period, a high demand for jobs (e.g. UX/UI developers/designers, IT architects, and network and security engineers) was evident in 2019 from the employment permits data, the vacancy analysis and the Recruitment Agency Survey. These occupations are not thought to have been negatively impacted in terms of employment numbers as a result of COVID-19, at least initially.
IT technicians	Employment growth was above the national average for IT technicians over the five-year period. Over 40% of those employed were non-Irish nationals, significantly above the national average. The vacancy analysis and employment permit data indicate that language skills were a requirement for many technical support roles. Although employment levels for this occupation were unlikely to have been impacted as a result of COVID-19, the availability of skills through inward migration may become an issue if global travel restrictions persist.

**For detailed table see Appendix A*