



An Roinn Fiontar,
Turasóireachta agus Fostaíochta
Department of Enterprise,
Tourism and Employment

Report of the Review of the Occupations Lists for Employment Permits 2025

May 2026



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Acknowledgement

The Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment gives sincere thanks to the organisations, representative bodies, employers, and individuals who contributed to the consultation and deliberations under the *2025 Review of the Employment Permits Occupations Lists*. The participation and high standard of submissions received supported the review's evidence base, ensuring that sector-specific challenges, labour market insights, and national trends were fully reflected in the process.

We also acknowledge the valuable engagement of lead Government Departments in relation to their sectors. Their support through assessments, observations, expertise, and constructive collaboration facilitated the reaching of consensus, and progressed balanced recommendations.

Particular thanks are given to the members of the Interdepartmental Group on Economic Migration and the skills-focused Subgroup for their diligent analysis, cross-departmental coordination, and commitment to consensus throughout the review process. This work helps to underpin a responsive, flexible, evidence-driven employment permit system.

The Department extends its gratitude to all stakeholders for the ongoing commitment to ensuring that national economic migration policy, and employment permit system remains responsive, agile, and aligned with national workforce needs.

1. Introduction

The purpose of the Review of the Occupations Lists is to consider the regulations governing the Critical Skills and Ineligible Occupations Lists regarding the shortages and surpluses of occupations in the State in a sustainable manner. The review process determines where adjustments are appropriate based on evidence, while cognisant of the guiding principles¹ of sustainable adjustable economic migration, and supported through the participation and contributions of the Interdepartmental Group (IDG) on Economic Migration Policy.

The 2025 Review of Employment Permits Occupations Lists consisted of an open public consultation inviting submissions for proposed changes, an evaluation process, and the convening of an inter-governmental group for consideration of recommended changes. Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail, Alan Dillon T.D., launched the public consultation on 23rd July 2025. This provided an eight-week period for sector representatives and employers to make evidence-based submissions seeking changes to the lists of eligible occupations. The consultation closed on 19th September 2025.

Over 400 submissions were received through this process from a range of stakeholders including small and medium-sized entities, Government Departments and employment permit users. The submissions cover an extensive number of occupations across a wide range of sectors in the economy.

This report outlines the evaluation process and the changes recommended by the IDG.

The Current Context

In the current context of near full employment, economic migration of third country nationals is essential to the continued growth of the national economy. The expansion of the Occupations Lists governing the State's economic migration framework provides employers greater access to the global talent pool at a time when the global war for talent is becoming more advanced.

It is important to recognise the positive impact migrants have on Ireland's economy and society. For instance, the Department of Finance *Future 40* report shows that migration boosts the number of working-age people which is increasingly important given Ireland's

¹ As established under the 2018 Review of Economic Migration Policy, discussed further under section 2

² [Future Forty - Publications](#)

aging population, and demographic challenges. According to the European Central Bank³ migrant workers have emerged as a vital force behind labour market expansion and economic resilience across the euro area.

Across Europe, foreign workers have helped to expand labour supply, alleviate labour shortages, and support economic growth, particularly in tight labour markets where national employment rates alone could not sustain growth. Migrant workers bring skills and experience that are much needed in the current tight labour market. Their participation in high-skilled roles supports research and innovation which adds to Ireland's prosperity and competitiveness. Migrant workers also bring cultural diversity and richness which greatly benefits Irish society.

The majority of sectors across the domestic economy are competing globally for suitably qualified and skilled professionals. The current Programme for Government has set a target of 300,000 new jobs created by 2030, and there is little doubt that migration will be the main driver of this job growth. In the year to 2025 Q4, overall employment increased by 56,700. Employment of Irish individuals increased by 17,200, employment of non-Irish individuals increased by 39,500. Migrant workers accounted for nearly 70% of employment growth in the past year⁴.

A well-functioning labour market and good working conditions are essential components of sustainable and inclusive growth. They ensure that the labour demands of businesses and needs of workers are met, encourage employment, increase productivity, offer high quality job opportunities and help workers and jobseekers in adapting to change through a balance of security and flexibility.

³ [Foreign workers: a lever for economic growth](#)

⁴ [Labour Force Survey \(LFS\) - CSO - Central Statistics Office](#)

2. Economic Migration Policy

Economic migration is a constant factor in the economic and social landscape of the State and the context within which it happens is constantly evolving. Ireland's employment permit system is robust, and recent reforms through the 2024 Employment Permits Act, the delivery of the new Employment Permits Online system, and wider policy initiatives ensure that the system delivers well for businesses and workers.

Ireland operates a managed employment permit system maximising the benefits of economic migration and minimising disruption to Ireland's labour market. The State's employment permit system is designed to supplement Ireland's skills and labour supply over the short to medium-term by allowing enterprises to recruit nationals from outside the EEA, where such skills or expertise cannot be sourced from within the EEA at that time.

The system is governed by the Employment Permits Act 2024 which came into effect on September 2nd, 2024. This legislation provides the framework for granting employment permits to non-EEA nationals seeking to work in Ireland and outlines the criteria and procedures for employers to follow.

The State's economic migration policy needs to keep pace with rapid labour market changes and be seen to be proactively identifying and addressing shortages as they arise. Standing still could be costly, as both foreign multi-nationals and indigenous enterprises experience skills and labour constraints.

Policy Framework

Economic migration policy is primarily aimed at ensuring a labour and skills supply while also mitigating potential adverse effects. The overarching objective for the State's national economic migration and employment permit system is:

National Economic Migration Policy Objective

The state's employment permit system should help meet, in the short to medium term, the demand for skills and labour in the Irish economy without disrupting the Irish labour market.

To provide the context and framework within which decisions can be made and to provide a rationale for actions taken, this high-level objective is implemented through the following seven guiding principles which were established by the 2018 Review of Economic Migration Policy⁵:

Principle 1: EEA Preference

Principle 2: Labour Market Responsiveness

Principle 3: Skills Shortage

Principle 4: Balanced Approach to Innovation and Labour Market

Principle 5: Net Contributor

Principle 6: Employment Rights

Principle 7: Legislative Framework and Process

In order to maximise the benefits of economic migration it is imperative that an integrated approach be taken to developing economic migration policy. Facilitating migrant workers should never be regarded as a mechanism for obtaining "cheap labour". Rather, when developed and implemented in a strategic, cross-governmental manner it will allow for the importation of talent to support enterprise while ensuring that migrants have access to the building blocks necessary for successful integration into Irish life, namely healthcare, childcare, education, housing and public transport. This approach will also ensure that the employment rights of migrants are promoted and that these potentially vulnerable workers are safeguarded from possible abuses or exploitation.

It is important to stress that the purpose of the employment permit system is to assist economic growth by facilitating the filling of key skills gaps which cannot be met from within the domestic or EEA labour market. The system is designed to support employers in accessing specific expertise on a targeted basis, ensuring that critical roles can be filled where no suitable local candidates are available.

It is not intended to replace investment in the training and development of the existing workforce. Likewise, it is not designed to supply staff for training programmes or to support the recruitment of individuals who require extensive upskilling before they can perform the role.

⁵ [review-of-economic-migration-policy.pdf](#)

Economic Migration and Domestic Skills Development

The employment permit system is one pillar of a wider skills and workforce ecosystem. While economic migration plays a vital role in filling genuine and persistent skills gaps, it complements but cannot replace investment in domestic skills development and domestic training capacity.

The interaction between migration and domestic skills is an important aspect of overarching national economic migration policy. In particular, policy is cognizant that:

- A number of sectors experience acute shortages - such as healthcare, construction, and digital technologies, and face constraints in training infrastructure, accreditation pathways, or placement availability.
- Even in cases where new programmes are introduced, it may take an extended period before graduates enter the workforce. This makes economic migration an essential bridging mechanism.
- Persistent medium term to long term structural shortages may reflect insufficient investment in progression pathways, upskilling, and career development options.
- Under-represented groups (e.g., people with disabilities, lone parents) require targeted activation supports to participate fully in the labour market.

The employment permit system is situated within this wider skills policy area. The Review takes note that economic migration cannot be a substitute for domestic policy but that it is an integral component of a holistic national workforce strategy, which is aware and responsive to macro trends, including demographic challenges.

Strategic Outlook: Anticipating Future Skills Needs

Ireland's labour market is entering a period that will be characterised by demographic change, accelerated technological transformation, and continued investment across critical infrastructure, such as the delivery of the National Development Plan. While the employment permit system is designed to remain responsive to short and medium-term labour market pressures, the structural nature of many emerging shortages requires a more forward-looking analytical approach.

Ireland is expected to face compounding pressures arising from population ageing, increased demand for healthcare and social care services, and the scale of the housing shortages and twin green and just transition programmes. These wider strategic challenges are already influencing labour requirements in sectors with long training lead times such as construction, engineering, healthcare, and digital technologies and will do so more acutely over the medium term.

This Review is important opportunity to examine and frame labour-market responsiveness within a broader context of workforce planning, future skills need, and policy across Government.

Input such as projections from SOLAS, research from the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN), the publications of the European Labour Authority provide a forward-looking analytical lens to ensure that the employment permit system supports economic resilience, productivity growth, and long-term labour-force sustainability.

This strategic orientation is not intended to predetermine future policy decisions. Instead, it provides a structured context in which periodic updates to the Occupations Lists can be understood, ensuring that short-term pressures are assessed alongside medium-term requirements.

Contextualising the Decisions in Wider Government Policy

The decisions arising from this Review reflect not only consideration of the evidence submitted through the public consultation but also wider cross-Government policy priorities including the development of the National Migration and Integration Strategy.

Government reports highlight the scale of labour shortages and skills scarcities in certain key sectors. For example, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has reported significant projected labour requirements to meet national housing and retrofit targets, noting that delivery at scale will require sustained recruitment pipelines, including international recruitment where domestic capacity is insufficient. Similarly, the *Build Report 2025*⁶ identifies construction sector capacity and specialist skills shortages as key risks to timely delivery of the National Development Plan, including major projects such as *MetroLink*.

In the context of demographic change, labour-market insights from the Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment⁷ show continued strong demand for healthcare and community-based services, reflecting population ageing and rising service needs. These trends reinforce the importance of roles such as community eye-care professionals in sustaining capacity across the health system.

Taken together, these cross-Government analyses demonstrate that the additions to the CSOL are not incidental. They are aligned with national priorities in infrastructure delivery, innovation, and healthcare capacity, ensuring that the employment permit system continues to support the State's economic, social, and demographic objectives.

⁶ [Build Report 2025](#)

⁷ [Recent Trends in Migration Flows Impacting the Irish Labour Market](#)

The Review of the Occupations Lists Process

In accordance with EU obligations, economic migration policy is calibrated to encourage the meeting of general labour and skills needs from within the workforce of the European Union (and other EEA countries). Ireland's labour market is part of a much greater EEA labour market which affords a considerable supply of skilled workers. However, where specific skills prove difficult to source within the State and the EEA, the employment permit system offers a path into the Irish labour market for non-EEA nationals who possess those in-demand skills. The system is intended to act as a conduit for key skills which are required to develop enterprise in the State for the benefit of the economy, while simultaneously protecting the balance of the labour market.

A list system for in-demand, highly skilled occupations and those for which a ready source of labour is available (ineligible occupations) is in place, namely the Critical Skills Occupations List (CSOL) and the Ineligible Occupations List (IOL). As demand grows or recedes, the orientation of economic migration is adjusted accordingly through changes to these lists of critically skilled and ineligible occupations.

In order to maintain the relevance of these lists to the needs of the economy, they undergo evidence-based review involving a public consultation, guided by available research undertaken by the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN), and the Skills and the Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU) in SOLAS.

Account is also taken of educational outputs, sectoral upskilling and training initiatives and known contextual factors and their impact on the labour market. Evidence is sought during the review process demonstrating that recruitment difficulties are solely due to genuine shortages across the EEA and not to other factors such as salary and/or employment conditions. Sectors are also required to engage structurally with the public employment service of the Department of Social Protection.

The Occupations Lists

Occupations listed on the CSOL are professional roles that require significant skills and qualifications that are in high demand and are not always available in the domestic labour force. Occupations on this list are eligible for a Critical Skills Employment Permit (CSEP) and include roles in fields such as medicine, ICT, sciences, finance and business.

Ineligible occupations are those where there is evidence that there are more than enough Irish/EEA workers to fill such vacancies. Ineligible occupations are generally lower skilled occupations such as personal services and operatives, and employment permits are not granted for these occupations.

All other jobs in the labour market, where an employer cannot find a worker, are eligible for an employment permit. For these occupations, the employer is required to undertake

a Labour Market Needs Test (LMNT) (i.e., advertise the job for four weeks in Ireland and across the EEA) and if no suitable candidate applies for the job, the employer is free to apply for an employment permit. Occupations such as these are eligible for a General Employment Permit (GEP).

Main Employment Permit Types

Where an occupation is provided with access to employment permits, a range of criteria established under the employment permits legislation will apply to applications depending on the permit type. These include minimum annual remuneration thresholds, the qualifications of the non-EEA national, the tasks required to undertake the role and testing of the local labour market prior to application.

Of the ten permit types available, the CSEP is designed to attract highly skilled people into the labour market in those roles identified on the CSOL with the aim of encouraging them to take up permanent residence and employment in the State. Where the remuneration is at least €40,904, the non-EEA national is required to hold a relevant degree in the field, or, where the remuneration on offer is over €68,911, relevant experience is taken into account. Special “fast-track” conditions attach to this permit-type including the eligibility to apply to the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration (DJHAM) for immigration permission allowing family members to accompany the permit holder immediately; and after two years to apply for permission to work without the requirement for an employment permit.

The GEP is the primary vehicle used by the State to attract third country nationals for occupations where it can be demonstrated, following the application of a range of criteria including the LMNT, that the employer was unable to fill the position from the Irish and EEA labour market and the occupation does not feature on the IOL. The minimum annual remuneration threshold for most occupations for this permit-type is €36,605. The GEP is renewable and after five years the applicant may apply to DJHAM for long-term residency permission.

3. Review Methodology

Ireland has developed policy tools aimed at gearing almost all types of economic migration to identified skills shortages and surpluses through its use of the Critical Skills (CSOL) and Ineligible Occupations (IOL) Lists. Thus, the direct information links that exist between DETE and Skills and Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU, (SOLAS) enable the Department's Economic Migration Policy Unit (EMPU) to measure and report with confidence on the impact of any adjustment to the State's economic migration policy.

The European Migrant Network⁸ (EMN) has found that most EU Member States continue to admit economic migrants without attempting to link their entry to particular shortage occupations. However, it reported that Ireland is ahead in terms of linking market intelligence to economic migration policy.

In addition, the IDG on Economic Migration, which has been in existence since 2018, plays a positive role in the development of policy rationale for the employment permits regime. It supports the monitoring of the guiding principles and operation of the regime on an ongoing basis and oversees the implementation of recommendations of Reviews.

Scope

The scope of the review included all sectors of the economy, and all employment permit types.

The outcome may recommend:

- To grant eligibility to roles previously ineligible for employment permits by removing that role from the IOL and thus become eligible for a GEP;
- To grant eligibility to roles previously ineligible for employment permits by removing that role from the IOL and become eligible for a GEP subject to a quota restriction;
- Extend existing quotas for roles already made eligible for a GEP; or
- add roles to the CSOL and thus become eligible for a CSEP.

Ireland's employment system operates at a granular occupational level. Unlike many jurisdictions which operate a positive eligible occupations list, Ireland operates a finite negative occupations list i.e. the Ineligible Occupations List (IOL). As the State continues with a limited labour market supply and almost full employment, it remains necessary to consider removing a number of lower skilled occupations from the ineligible list. Where an occupation is removed from the ineligible list, the role becomes eligible for the GEP,

⁸ [EMN Ireland - The European Migration Network](#)

the primary permit used by the State to attract migrants to work in the State in roles with a general skills or lower skills requirement. Applications will be assessed on the criteria that apply to the GEP including a lower minimum remuneration threshold than the CSEP, the requirement for the employer to conduct a labour market needs test and varying contracts of employment duration.

Being added to the CSOL signals an evidence-based, economy-wide shortage that cannot be met from within the Irish or EEA labour market. It enables employers to recruit internationally with fewer administrative barriers and offers faster, more secure pathways for non-EEA workers considering long-term employment in the State. For critical sectors, this supports continuity of essential services, strengthens workforce pipelines, and helps ensure that national strategic projects such as housing delivery, innovation-led enterprise growth, and expanded community healthcare can proceed at the necessary scale and pace.

An occupation may be considered for inclusion on the CSOL or removal from the IOL provided that:

- There are no suitable Irish/EEA nationals available to undertake the work;
- Development opportunities for Irish/EEA nationals are not undermined;
- Evidence of genuine skills shortage exists and that the shortage is not a recruitment or retention problem;
- The Government's education, training, employment, and economic development policies are supported;
- The skill shortage exists across the occupation, despite attempts by industry to train and attract Irish/EEA nationals to available jobs.

Collaborative Approach

Following a broad Review of Economic Migration Policy in 2018⁹ the IDG on Economic Migration Policy was devised to oversee the review process and consider the recommendations for changes to the eligibility of occupations for employment permits.

The 2018 review report also recommended that relevant government departments should take the lead with their relevant sector actors for making evidence-based cases for changes to the occupations lists in conjunction with the IDG, with those cases and available evidence considered in preparing the recommendations for Ministerial approval.

The IDG therefore enables collaboration between this Department and other government departments and facilitates an integrated approach to addressing labour

⁹ <https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/publications/review-of-economic-migration-policy.html>

and skills shortages in the longer-term, and, where shortages are clearly evidenced, to provide an employment permit system which is flexible and agile enough to address requirements and pressures in real time.

The advice and decisions of policy makers are based upon the best available evidence from a wide range of sources. All key stakeholders are involved at an early stage and through the policy's development.

The subgroup to the IDG was convened on 06th November to speak to the policy priorities of the specific remits, and to finalise a short list of roles for consideration at the main IDG meeting. The membership of the subgroup covered policy departments and agencies with responsibility for the wider employment and skills agenda of the State i.e., DETE's Economic Migration Policy Unit and Labour Market Skills Unit, as well as SOLAS, and DSP representatives.

The full IDG meeting took place on 10th December 2025 to hear observations on submissions from lead departments, and to agree the list of final recommendations contained in this report. The IDG was attended by all relevant policy departments (see Annex).

Some of the wider issues addressed in this Review have been brought to the Department's attention over a longer period, originating outside the formal scope of this periodic process. These matters have required sustained consideration, cross-departmental engagement, and analysis extending beyond the submissions received in this cycle. Following this longer period of deliberation, the decisions set out in this Review reflect both the accumulated evidence from previous engagements and the structured evaluation and collaboration undertaken through the 2025 Review process. This ensures that the outcomes are not only responsive to current labour-market conditions but are consistent with broader, longer-term policy priorities.

Consensus

Recommendations arise from the IDG where consensus has been reached on the proposed change of the role's eligibility. Where consensus cannot be reached, and a recommendation is not possible from the IDG, the role may be considered in further detail outside of the IDG structure, with the lead department. In such cases, following deep examination, and referral to the IDG subgroup, a recommendation may be made to the Minister through a written procedure.

The final recommendations are detailed in Section 4 and comprise the addition of roles to the CSOL thus becoming eligible for the CSEP, and the removal of roles from the IOL thus becoming eligible for the GEP (with or without quota).

Public Consultation

An eight-week public consultation process ran from 23rd July to 19th September 2025 inviting evidence-based submissions from representative bodies, government departments, agencies, and other interested parties. The exercise aimed to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to explain sector-specific observations detailing evidence of skills and/or labour shortages or surpluses. Evidence submitted by stakeholders included: data on skills or labour shortages, recruitment efforts undertaken by the sector, detail of specific retention difficulties, training incentives, impact of shortages on expansion and sources such as industry surveys or reports.

Research and Evidence

The SOLAS National Skills Bulletin¹⁰ was used as a primary source of information as part of the subgroup and IDG process. The key points of the bulletin were presented, and SOLAS was consulted during the deliberative process. DETE's Labour Market and Skills Unit (LMSU) provided briefing on the key findings of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs in relation to specific sectors. The LMSU also provided observations and input related to specific submissions, based on their expertise, and data sourced from the European Labour Authority's Labour Shortages Report 2022¹¹. This report identifies the most common and severe labour shortages as well as labour surpluses in Europe and explores the main causes of these trends.

The Department of Social Protection (DSP) has a central role in providing access to the labour market for a broad cross-section of society. Officials from that Department attended the subgroup and main IDG meeting to provide information relating to the connection between certain requests and their impact on labour activation (i.e., assisting people coming off the Live Register and back into employment), and community employment schemes. DSP's Employer Relations Division was also consulted in order to ensure alignment with the policy detailed in the National Employment Services Strategy Pathways to Work 2021-2025¹², and its successor strategy.

Evaluation of submissions

Submissions were reviewed and categorised by sector and shared with the lead Government department with policy responsibility for that sector. Lead departments were requested to consider the requests and provide their observations. Submissions, and lead department observations were shared with the IDG subgroup members.

¹⁰ <https://a.storyblok.com/f/70398/x/893ebacfd9/national-skills-bulletin-2025.pdf>

¹¹ [Labour shortages report 2022 - EURES | European Labour Authority \(europa.eu\)](#)

¹² <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/1feaf-pathways-to-work-2021/>

In order to facilitate the subgroup and IDG meetings, the Department carried out an analysis of submissions:

- i. the requests for adjustment,
- ii. the occupations under consideration in the submission,
- iii. the sector-specific evidence provided,
- iv. the impact on the industry,
- v. Lead department observations

This analysis formed the basis for the discussions at the IDG subgroup and contributed to the decisions made at the full IDG meeting.

Validation

Given the significant volume of occupations that were identified in the submissions received, a process was carried out to filter the requests to ensure an efficient and effective management overall.

Requests were considered “**valid**” where they fell within scope and included:

- Occupations to be removed from the Ineligible Occupations list (IOL);
- Occupations to be added to the Critical Skills Occupations List (CSOL).

Requests were considered “**invalid**” where changes were requested which are already in effect e.g., seeking to add a role to the CSOL which is already on the CSOL. Requests were also considered “invalid” where the submission did not contain a specific request for change, of which included the following:

- Where the only request specific to a role was “remain as is”, that role was maintained in its current categorisation.
- Requests seeking an occupation to be added to the CSOL which has never been eligible for another permit type.

4. Recommendations

This report provides a number of recommendations submitted for Ministerial approval based on the examination of submissions received, expert insights and evidence, departmental observations, and deliberations of the IDG on Economic Migration Policy.

This paper takes account of the current economic environment, and the prevailing labour market conditions. The objective of these recommendations is to promote a whole-of-Government, integrated approach to driving responsive economic migration policy and addressing labour and skills shortages as they arise.

Changes to Eligibility by Permit Type

SOC	Occupation	Recommendation
2112	Agronomist	Become eligible for the CSEP
2436	Construction Planner/Scheduler	Become eligible for the CSEP
2214	Community Eye Care Ophthalmic Optician	Become eligible for the CSEP
2419	Intellectual Property Professionals	Become eligible for the CSEP
2434	Geospatial Surveyor (also known as Land Surveyor and Geomatics Surveyor)	Become eligible for the CSEP
3417	Riggers (within the Games Industry)	Become eligible for the CSEP
SOC	Occupation	Recommendation
3217	Pharmaceutical Technicians (Healthcare specific)	Become eligible for the GEP
3218	Dental Hygienist	Become eligible for the GEP
5319	Plastic Lining Technicians	Become eligible for the GEP
5319	Steel Fixers	Become eligible for the GEP
5319	Fencing Operators / Erectors	Become eligible for the GEP
5319	Curtain Wallers	Become eligible for the GEP
5422	Printers	Become eligible for the GEP
8137	Industrial Machine Knitter	Become eligible for the GEP
8229	Concrete Pump Operator	Become eligible for the GEP

Change to Eligibility subject to Quota Restriction

A number of policy areas such as employment, migration, and education intersect on the matter of addressing skills and labour shortages. In recent years DETE has been leveraging the employment permit system to promote an integrated response to addressing the multifaceted nature of such shortages and to ensure a domestic pipeline for future vacancies is established. DETE has achieved this by applying quotas, along with other certain conditions, such as introduction of upskilling to develop future skills needs, where low skilled employments have been removed from the ineligible list.

To ensure judicious use of the employment permit regime in respect of lower skilled workers, an occupation may be removed from the ineligible occupations list subject to a quota restriction on the number of GEPs that may be granted alongside initiatives to develop a domestic supply of labour.

SOC	Occupations	Recommendation	Recommended New Quota
5433	Fish Filleters	Provide new quota allocation	50 GEPs
8111	Seafood Operative	Provide new quota allocation	100 GEPs
SOC	Occupations already eligible under quota	Recommendation	Recommended Quota
1221	Hotel / accommodation managers	Extend current eligibility and quota	100
1223	Restaurant / catering establishment managers	Extend current eligibility and quota	200
1224	Publicans and managers of licensed premises	Extend current eligibility and quota	50
3239	Support Worker	Extend current eligibility and quota	200
5231	HGV/Bus Mechanics	Extend current eligibility and quota	400
5229	Car/ Motor Mechanic, Auto Electrician, Vehicle Technician	Extend current eligibility and quota	1,000
5232	Vehicle Body Builders / Repairers / Body Shop Panel Beaters	Extend current eligibility and quota	100
5234	Vehicle Paint Technicians	Extend current eligibility and quota	100
5231	Vehicle Road Worthiness Tester	Extend current eligibility and quota	400
5431	Butcher	Extend current eligibility and quota	400
5436	Catering and Bar Managers	Extend current eligibility and quota	50
6145	Care Worker and Home Carer	Extend current eligibility and quota	1,000
8111	Meat Processor Operative	Extend current eligibility and quota	1,000 (commenced Dec 2025)
9111	Farm Workers - Dairy Farm Assistants	Extend current eligibility and quota	850 (commenced Dec 2025)
9119	Horticulture Operative	Extend current eligibility and quota	850

Identifying an appropriate quota figure incorporates consideration of accurate up to date data that identifies scale of demand, benchmarking against the number of current vacancies, or the future demand, specific to the occupation concerned. The decision to provide new quotas, or the extension of existing quotas, can be subject to progress being reported by the Department with lead policy responsibility for the sector concerned on various commitments given to ensure there will be a longer-term supply of labour from within the EEA. These commitments include for example:

- Systematic and structured engagement with Department of Social Protection regarding a potential source of labour from the live register and EEA-wide;
- Training/upskilling initiatives;
- Career development structures;
- Commitment to examine the potential of innovation in the sector to ameliorate reliance on a model of low skill, low wage employment.

Looking Forward

The Next Review

The next review of the Occupations Lists is intended to be carried out within the next two years. The approach will follow the established methodology as set out in section 3 and conclude with the Interdepartmental Group on Economic Migration considering proposed changes to eligibility and providing recommendations to the Minister.

Sector Action Plans

The Department is in the process of designing a new work programme focused on **sector specific action plans**. With full cognisance of the retention issues in certain sectors which have a high concentration of GEPs – future provision of employment permit quotas will be contingent on a structured improvement to retention, and terms and conditions across the targeted sector.

These sector action plans will be established in partnership with the relevant lead departments, and in close engagement with the sector social partners. It is the Department's intention to also collaborate with the relevant international bodies with insight into international best practice, such as the International Labour Organisation, and the International Organisation for Migration.

Increase Awareness of Eligible Roles

Through direct sector engagement, based on initial correspondence through submissions made to the consultation, the Department also worked directly with stakeholders to

better understand the nature of certain submissions. It was found that some submissions were made with the objective of improving visibility and operationalisation of certain roles already eligible for employment permits and appearing on the CSOL.

The Department will highlight updates to the occupations lists in order to provide greater clarity on the classification of roles.

Distinguishing Structural & Cyclical Labour Shortages

Recent Occupations List Reviews carried out by this Department cycles have shown that labour shortages do not always manifest uniformly across all sectors in the same way or time periods. Some sectors may experience recurring recruitment difficulties regardless of broader economic conditions, while others face temporary surges in demand linked to cyclical fluctuations. Talent shortages must be considered with due regard to Ireland's demographic direction and the associated challenges. The Department of Finance's Future Forty research reports that as fertility rates continue to decline and the old-age dependency ratio rises; migration is projected to become the sole driver of workforce growth over the coming decades.

A clearer distinction between structural and cyclical shortages would improve the transparency, consistency, and proportionality of employment-permit policy.

- **Structural shortages** may arise where demand is consistently exceeding the domestic and EEA labour market supply. The factors which may impact these shortages include demographic pressures/trends, limited or delayed training capacity, sectoral attrition rates, and the competitiveness of pay and conditions compared to other jurisdictions. This type of shortage can persist across cycles and could require sustained migration pathways combined with domestic training, upskilling and improved retention efforts.
- **Cyclical shortages** may emerge where the national economy is expanding rapidly or when short-term factors temporarily increase demand. These shortages are reported to typically ease as economic conditions stabilise and may require proportionate, time-bound interventions, such as restricted quotas or targeted permit access.

The embedding of this distinction into the analytical framework of future Reviews will support strengthening the evidence base for decisions to update eligibility for employment permits, and would support more predictable, coherent and sector-appropriate policy making.

Annex 1 Public Consultation Submitters

Submissions Received from			
101 barbershop and beauty	Early days creche	Irish hairdressers' federation	Recruitroo Ireland Limited
Accel Lifts Limited	Eden One	Irish Hotels Federation	Rehab Group
ACEI	Edmund Rice Schools Trust	Irish Lift and Escalator Association (ILEA)	Rogerson Reddan
Adrian J McNally Ltd T/A McNally Logistics	Employee Pharmacist Association of Ireland (EPAI)	Irish Road Haulage Association	Roughan & O'Donovan
Affected stakeholder	Engineers Ireland	Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists	Seas Suas
Amazon Ireland	Ernst & Young (EY)	John O'Connell Furniture T/A Coral Berry Ltd	Serosep Ltd
Apple	Farm Solutions Ltd.	Keelings	ServiceNow Ireland Limited
Applus Inspection Services Ireland Ltd	Fethard Equine Hospital/ Fethard Surgical	Keltech	Services Industrial Professional Technical Union (SIPTU)
Archaeological Management Solutions	Financial Services Ireland (FSI), Ibec	Kid Kare Creche & Montessori Preschool Ltd	Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland
Ashurst Supplies Limited ta/ Gerards Deli and Mingles Ice Cream	Fingal Home Care CLG	Laffan Concrete Pumps Ltd.	Software Labs Campus Unlimited Company
Association of Landscape Contractors of Ireland (ALCI)	Fiontar Group	Limerick Childcare Committee	Spectrum Health
ballon meats uc	First Up t/a Master Stonemasons	LYCS	Spice O' Life Limited
Ballycotton Seafood	FODO Ireland, the Association of Eye Care Providers of Ireland	Managed Automotive Repair Network Ltd t/a Collision Experts	Sun Source Natural Foods
Ballygarry Estate Hotel Spa	Forest Industries Ireland, Ibec	Maxi Zoo Ireland	Sunflowers Childcare
Benetel Ltd	Foyle Donegal	Meat Industry Ireland	Teachers' Union of Ireland
Blackhall Properties Ltd., T/A Village Vets	Fragomen Ireland Limited on behalf of the Chiropractic Association of Ireland (CAI)	Mediolanum International Funds Ltd.	Technology Ireland, Ibec
Care About You	Freedom Spinal Health	Mercury Engineering Limited	The Consultative Committee of Accountancy Bodies – Ireland (CCAB-I)
Childhood Services Ireland	Freelance Product Designer	Meta Platforms Inc	The Ink Factory
Coillte CGA	Geoline Ltd.	MHL Event Management Ltd	The OHM Group
Comfort Care Ltd., t/a Comfort Homecare	Glenveagh	MowMyLawn	The Society of the Irish Motor Industry (SIMI)
Construction Industry Federation	Heritage Homecare	Musgrave Ltd.	Thomas J. Crummy Landscaping
Covalen Solutions	Home & Community Care Ireland	MWP	Tigers Childcare

Crewit Resourcing Limited	I2I IRELAND OVERSEAS EMPLOYEES SUPPORT CENTRE CLG	National Rehabilitation Hospital	TII (Transport Infrastructure Ireland)
DAA plc	IFA	North Dublin Home Care	Trane
David W Higgins Economics	IGSL Limited	Nursing Home Ireland	Tusla Child & Family Agency
Deer Park Knitwear Ltd	Imirt - the Irish Gamemaker's Association	Oak Fire Pizza	Unite's Archaeology Branch
Deloitte Ireland LLP - Confidential Submission	Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland (IAI)	Oberstown Children Dentation Campus	Vision Ireland (formerly NCBI)
DFDS Logistics Contracts (Ireland) Limited	Institute of Refrigeration Ireland	Orona Mid-Western Lifts Limited	Wellness Centre Ireland
Dublin Bus	Integrated Project Services (Ireland)	PLÉ Wexford	Whole Village Hiring
Dublin Chamber	Ireland Active	Private citizen	Willis Towers Watson (Ireland) Limited Withheld
Dublin Commuter Coalition	Irish Congress of Trade Union	ProAmpac	
Early childhood education	Irish Dental Association	Property Industry Ireland, Ibec	
Early Childhood Ireland	Irish Fish Processors and Exporters Association (IFPEA)	Purevdulam	

Annex 2 IDG Membership

Interdepartmental Group

Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment

Economic Migration Policy (DETE)

Yvonne White, Assistant Secretary WREM
Division (Chair)
Patrick Rochford
Jamie Kennedy
Garth Clerkin
Miriam Tracey
Bryan Walsh

Employment Permits Unit (DETE)

Emily de Grae
Karl Finnegan

Labour Market Skills Unit (DETE)

Diarmaid Smyth
Linda Kane

Tourism Accommodation and Employment Unit (DETE)

Michelle O'Mahony

SOLAS

Joan McNaboe

Department of Social Protection

Audrey Kilmartin

Department of Education & Youth

Anne Marie Doherty

Department of Justice Home Affairs & Migration

Jensen Byrne

Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage

Eoin Corrigan

Department of Health

Jennifer Greene
Rachel Lai

Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

Kate O'Brien

Department of Finance

Harry Williamson

Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine

Sharon Boylan
Ciara Murphy

Department of Transport

Robert Swan

Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science

Danielle Pugh

Members IDG Subgroup

Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment

Economic Migration Policy (DETE)

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Jamie Kennedy
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Miriam Tracey
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Employment Permits Unit (DETE)

Karl Finnegan

Labour Market Skills Unit (DETE)

Linda Kane

Department of Social Protection

Audrey Kilmartin

SOLAS

Joan McNaboe
Nora Condon