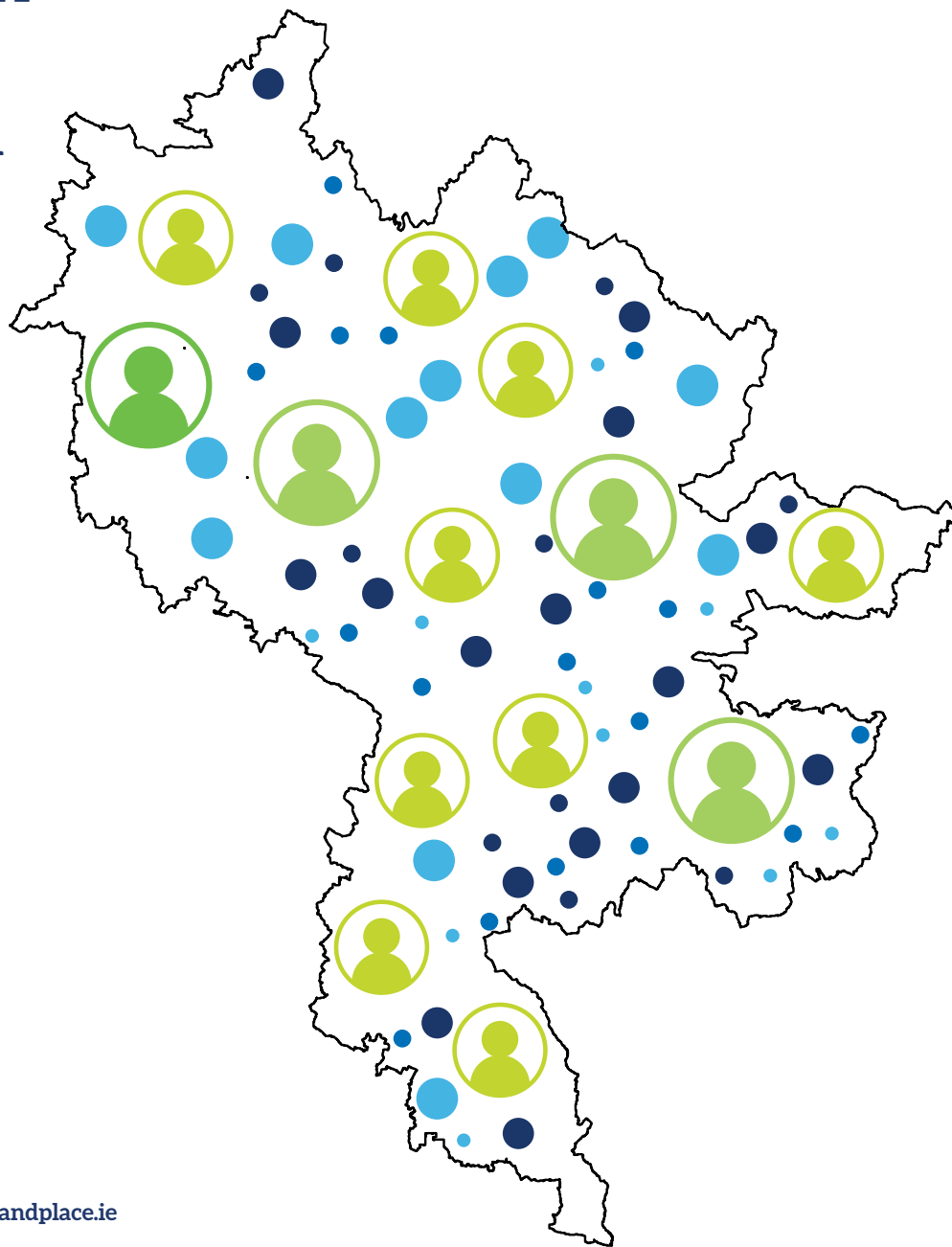


# EU Just Transition Plan Territory

Statistical Analysis and  
Territorial Profile

March 2022





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## About People and Place

People and Place is a Maynooth University spin-out consultancy with links to the Maynooth University Social Science Institute (MUSSI). Established as a multi-disciplinary consulting unit, specialising in collaborative and evidence-informed decision making for social, economic and community development, People and Place is based in Maynooth, Co. Kildare, and has remote hub locations also in Ennis, Co. Clare, Caherciveen, Co. Kerry and Cork City.

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# Introduction

## Introduction

The EU Just Transition Fund (JTF) is a new European Cohesion Policy Fund. Ireland is set to receive up to €84.5 million under the EU JTF over the period 2021-2027. The purpose of the Fund is to assist the most negatively affected territories in transitioning to a low carbon economy and society, in an effective and fair manner. The Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) is the responsible party (the “Member State”) for the Fund and will be supported by a managing authority – the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA). The fund is one of the elements of the wider Just Transition Mechanism for a transition towards climate neutrality; the other two elements are Pillar 2: InvestEU and Pillar 3: Public Sector Loan Facility. The JTF’s single specific objective is ‘enabling regions and people to address the social, employment, economic and environmental impacts of the transition towards the Union’s 2030 target for climate and a climate-neutral economy by 2050, based on the Paris Agreement’.

Through the JTF, the European Commission provides funding to Member States, having identified the territories expected to be the most negatively impacted by the green transition, to support the economic diversification and reconversion of the territories concerned. This means, inter alia, investing strategically in areas and activities such as Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, the creation of new firms, research and innovation, environmental rehabilitation, clean energy, up- and re-skilling of workers, job-search assistance and the transformation of existing carbon-intensive installations.

Work is underway by the EMRA and in the DECC on developing the JTF programme and accompanying territorial just transition plan for approval by the European Commission, so that Ireland can secure access to its EU allocation of funding. As set out in the JTF Regulation, this plan must present Ireland’s proposed investment priorities, identify the most negatively affected territory, assess the transition challenges faced in the territory and set out the development needs to address these. It must also set out the types of operations envisaged and the targeted sectors and regions.

## Evidence-Based Territorial Profile

Previously, the European Commission DG Reform had commissioned a series of reports and consultation documents via the Structural Reform Support Programme (SRSP) to provide support to the preparation of Territorial Just Transition Plans in Ireland. As part of this preparatory work, the D3. Report on the Transition Process Toward Climate Neutrality sets out a territorial analytical methodology to allow an appraisal of the ‘most affected’ territories. While the results of this report identified the ‘most affected’ territory as the Midlands NUTS 3<sup>1</sup> (see note on next page) and county Roscommon, an additional analysis was undertaken by People & Place on behalf of DECC to consider the impact of the Just Transition at the sub-county level in the wider Midlands.

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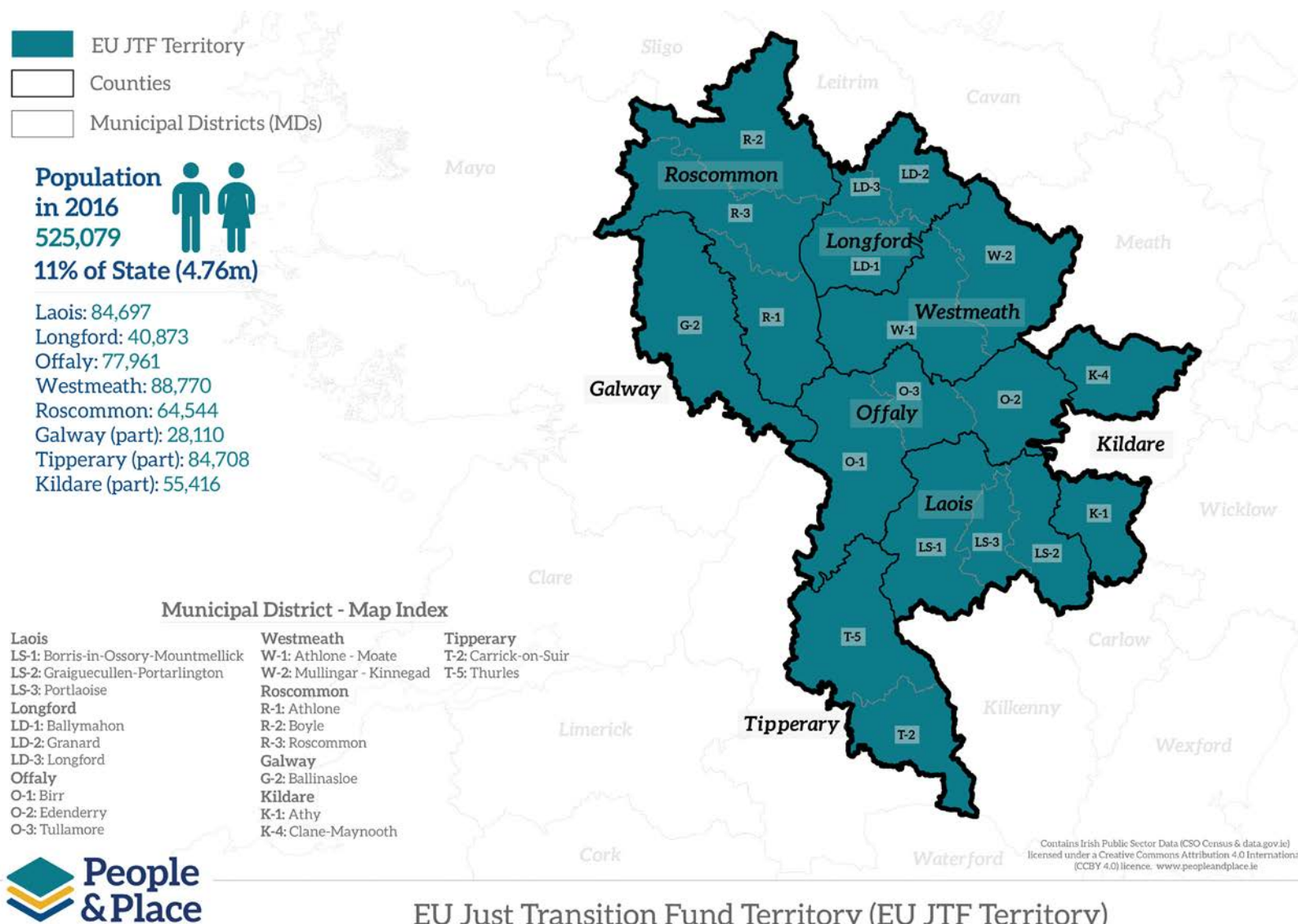
1 The Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS) were created by Eurostat in order to define territorial units for the production of regional statistics across the European Union. Ireland is comprised of three NUTS 2 regions and eight NUTS 3 regions. <https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/revnuts23/>

In line with the imperative for compliance with an intervention logic that is based on the transition away from peat (and ancillary activities), People & Place operationalised a set of key indicators linked to four key strands – social impact, economic impact, demographic impact and environmental impact. Following an analysis of all relevant indicators through this evidence-based and objective assessment process, People & Place recommended the inclusion of five additional Municipal Districts (MDs). The EU JTF Territory recommendation was subsequently reviewed by the EU Commission and DECC with the final territory proposed consisting of counties Laois, Longford, Offaly, Westmeath, Roscommon and the MDs Ballinasloe, Co. Galway, Athy and Clane-Maynooth in Co. Kildare, and Carrick-on-Suir and Thurles in Co. Tipperary. This updated territory will be reflected in the EU JTF Plan and programme, which will be submitted for approval by the European Commission later this year.

To support the work of the DECC, a detailed and comprehensive territorial profile has been prepared – as presented in this report. This territorial profile will serve as the baseline for DECC, EMRA and other stakeholders in understanding the geographical context, thereby ensuring an evidence-based approach to setting out a new vision for the territory and to help in informing the selection of the operations and strategic actions to be supported by the Fund.

Currently, no regional profile exists for the EU Just Transition Fund Territory (EU JTF Territory), as it comprises parts of eight counties which fall into separate NUTS 3 regions and regional assembly boundaries, thus making analysis and comparisons difficult. While EMRA have previously prepared sub-regional profiles for the three constituent Strategic Planning Areas (SPAs), there is a requirement to prepare and make available a profile that will focus on the specific EU JTF Territory (Map 1) – a combination of the four Midlands counties (Offaly, Laois, Westmeath and Longford), County Roscommon (part of the NUTS 3 West SPA) and parts of counties Galway (the Ballinasloe MD), Tipperary (the Thurles and Carrick-on-Suir MDs) and Kildare (the Athy and Clane-Maynooth MDs). The EU JTF Territory has a total population of just over half a million residents (525,079) and accounts for 11% of the State population.

In line with international best practice, local authorities, other public bodies and civil society organisations in Ireland are increasingly moving away from ‘trend planning’ towards ‘vision planning’. Whereas trend planning was generally reactive and involved making decisions on the basis of past trends, modelling and future projections, vision planning is a more proactive process, and it implies setting out a vision for a particular territory or region. Vision planning involves agreeing objectives and strategies to enable places to realise their potential. It involves, in the first instance, taking stock of assets – recognised, latent and potential, setting baselines, identifying gaps that need to be addressed, motivating participation, agreeing targets and leveraging resources. This demographic and socio-economic profile of the EU JTF Territory represents an important contribution to the processes associated with vision planning within and across the overall territory - the Midlands NUTS 3 area, Roscommon and parts of East Galway, North Tipperary and West Kildare.



Map 1: EU Just Transition Fund Territory (EU JTF Territory)



This profile takes stock of many territorial resources. Its primary focus is on the people of the territory, and the document provides extensive and comprehensive data in respect of the composition of its population. This allows the constituent local authorities (n=8, as listed above) and other bodies to identify the issues that affect the people of the territory and to agree, with them and with other relevant stakeholders, the strategies and actions that are required to address issues to enable all parts of the territory to realise their respective potentials. Enabling all places to realise their potential is essential in promoting summative growth, whereby all areas contribute to the overall sustainable development of the territory, thus reducing internal disparities and promoting greater cohesion. To these ends, this profile provides a refined analysis of local-level dynamics and the degree of convergence and divergence within the territory, in respect of almost sixty indicators across four themes – demographic, social, economic and environmental – all relative to the national average.

The profile enhances the evidence base available to all local authorities across the territory and to others in enabling strategic decision-making. Evidence-based decision-making ensures greater efficiencies in the use of scarce resources and enhances the effectiveness of service delivery to citizens and communities. The evidence base, as presented in this profile, also allows for the establishment of baselines and performance indicators, so that actors can set targets and review and monitor progress over time.

This particular profile also distinguishes itself from many others by virtue of its refined and targeted geographical analysis with data collated and shaped to report at State, regional, EU JTF Territory, local authority, municipal district and electoral division (ED) spatial scales. Such micro-level spatial analysis, as opposed to broad regional or NUTS 2/3 analysis, has unearthed data and information that, in some cases, surprised us, and in other cases, confirmed what we had expected. While it may have been tedious, at times, the investment in such a refined level of analysis will prove useful to stakeholders in the territory (local authorities, elected members, agencies, NGOs, members of the public) by providing an enhanced understanding of the territory and a strengthened hand in working with government and others to leverage resources around attaining agreed objectives and delivering on a strategic vision for the territory.

### **About the Profile**

The objectives of this territorial profile are to provide the DECC and EMRA with a wide range of comprehensive and robust socio-demographic, economic and environmental indicators in the form of maps, graphics and summative commentary. The report is set out across four main chapters: (1) Demographic Indicators, (2) Social Indicators, (3) Economic Indicators and (4) Environmental Indicators. The final set of indicators in the profile are considered to be the most relevant for this particular profile and draw on the recently published EC Staff Working Document, the EnvEcon and START reports (<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/47cb8-eu-srsp-reports-to-inform-irelands-territorial-just-transition-plans/>).

Following a collaborative approach between the People & Place project team, the DECC and EMRA, each chapter sets out a series of key indicators in the form of graphical illustrations and maps (at ED level) with an accompanying commentary that introduces each chapter.



Where possible, and depending on data availability, all graphics have been designed using a standardised ‘geographical hierarchy’ methodology.

This methodology provides a view of each indicator using both raw numbers (showing the absolute numbers across the territory) and percentages (useful for comparative analysis), at a range of key comparative geographies for the Just Transition Plan Territory: State, Regional Assembly (3), Strategic Planning Area (Midlands NUTS 3), EU JTF Territory, relevant local authorities (8) and municipal districts (N=19 - full counties and relevant parts). Most of the geographical hierarchy graphics are based on the results from Census 2016. While this information is somewhat dated, it is still the most current and allows for a useful benchmarking and comparative overview of all individual Just Transition Plan Territory sub-areas, and it identifies both areas of convergence and divergence from State, regional and EU JTF Territory norms. For all indicators, graphics have been developed at the most relevant and local geographical scale available for the EU JTF Territory – such as Midlands NUTS 3 region or the eight counties that are connected to the territory. Where possible, time series data has also been included, both past trends and future projections, to detail the performance and future direction of the territory.

The commentary for each chapter provides a general summary of the quantitative and spatial data in respect of each theme (i.e. demographic, social, economic and environmental), and it highlights the main patterns, trends, issues and potential opportunities. The presentation has been structured in a consistent format, to aid the overall ease-of-use of the document and to provide the reader with an accessible and digestible overview of the pertinent information. The commentary notes the headline values in respect of each indicator, and it elucidates the main patterns associated with the distribution of values at local authority, municipal district and community levels.

Thus, the overall territorial profile document can be used as a ‘go-to’ evidence-based reference document where the in-built graphics and data visualisations provide relevant statistical and spatial data and information. Ideally, the report should be viewed as a digital document and one that is capable of being continually adjusted after the release of new and updated datasets from key sources.

The report concludes by identifying ways in which stakeholders can harness the evidence presented here in devising and pursuing informed approaches to the promotion of a just transition.

### Key Data Sources and Methodology

The development of this evidence-based territorial profile has been based on open access to a wide variety of statistical datasets from a number of key and authoritative agencies across Ireland and also from the cooperation of a number of stakeholders linked to DECC and EMRA. The following is a list of key data sources and datasets (including latest date of data available) that were used in developing this profile:

#### *Central Statistics Office (CSO)*

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) provided the vast amount of data within this report and will continue to be the main source for future revisions and any monitoring process that is put in place for DECC and EMRA. The main datasets that were sourced from the CSO were as follows:

- *Census of Population (1991 to 2016)*
- *Labour Force Survey (Q3 2021)*
- *Live Register (M1 2022)*
- *Business Demography (2019)*
- *County Incomes and Regional GDP (2019)*
- *Geographical Profiles of Income (2016)*

Source: <https://data.cso.ie/#>

#### *Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage/ESRI*

The National Policy Objective 37 of the National Planning Framework (NPF) provides for a Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) to be undertaken in each local authority area. To support this work, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage's repository of Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) guidance and source material has been published. A key set of data available within this repository is a series of county level population projections by single year of age from 2020 to 2040. These projections have been prepared and published by the ESRI in their report 'Regional Demographics and Structural Housing Demand at a County Level, 2020'.

For the purposes of this territorial profile the project team have used the Baseline projection scenario. This scenario assumes net international migration declines linearly from +33,700 in 2019 to +15,000 by 2024 and remains constant thereafter. While there are other scenarios available, the key rationale for the use of these projections is to detail the expected population growth of the region but also to highlight the impending major demographic cohort shift coming to Ireland over the next twenty years.

Source: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/ea99-housing-need-and-demand-assessment-hnda/>

### ***POBAL HP Deprivation Index***

The Pobal HP Deprivation Index data is available from the Trutz Haase website. This is the primary dataset on social deprivation in Ireland and is a key indicator for all local authorities (2016).

Source: <http://trutzhaase.eu/>

### ***Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):***

This report has sourced a range of datasets that are available from the EPA and relate to the types of land and land use categorisation (agriculture, residential, commercial, industrial). The project team also used the EPA and Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) funded research project the Environmental Sensitivity Mapping (ESM) Webtool to enable the development of an area-specific environmental sensitivity map for the Just Transition Plan Territory.

- ***CORINE (2018)***

Corine Land Cover 2018 is the latest update of the COPERNICUS pan-European landcover data series. The dataset used in this report is the Irish national CORINE 2018 dataset, covering the Republic of Ireland, which will be integrated into a seamless CORINE 2018 landcover map of Europe. The dataset is based on interpretation of satellite imagery and national in-situ vector data. It is mapped to the standard CORINE classification system and data specifications - minimum mapping unit (mmu) of 25ha and the minimum feature width of 100m.

Source: <https://gis.epa.ie/GetData/Download>

- ***Environmental Sensitivity Mapping (ESM) Tool (2022)***

The Environmental Sensitivity Mapping (ESM) Webtool is a novel decision-support tool for Strategic Environmental Assessment and planning processes in Ireland. It allows users to create area-specific environmental sensitivity maps.

Source: <https://airomaps.geohive.ie/esm/>

- ***National Mapping of GHG and Non-GHG emissions sources - MapEire (2015)***

The project National mapping of GHG and non-GHG emissions sources (MapEire) is funded by the Irish EPA and is part of the Environmental Protection Agency Research Call 2015 on Climate - Air Science under the EPA Research Programme 2014-2020.

Source: <https://projects.au.dk/MapEire>

### ***NATURA 2000 / National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS):***

Natura 2000 is a European network of important ecological sites. The EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) placed an obligation on Member States of the EU to establish the Natura 2000 network. The network is made up of Special Protection Areas (SPAs), established under the EU Birds Directive (79/409/EEC), and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), established under the Habitats Directive itself. Ireland's contribution to Natura 2000 is being created under the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997 (S.I. 94 of 1997 as amended by S.I. 233 of 1998 and S.I. 378 of 2005). These regulations transpose the EU directives into Irish national Law.

Source: <https://www.npws.ie/faq/natura2000>

### ***Municipal Districts:***

This territorial profile provides data at a range of geographical scales across the EU JTF Territory – of key importance are the Municipal Districts (n=19 in EU JTF Territory). Apart from Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal, South Dublin, Dublin City, Cork City and Galway City, all local authority areas are divided into municipal districts with elected councillors simultaneously representing the municipal district and the local authority. In total, there are 95 municipal districts in the country.

Municipal Districts are, in terms of physical and demographic size, more typical of European local government units than are counties. Cognisant of their usefulness as territorial planning units, Irish local authorities have prepared and are preparing MD plans, and MDs have become the units for the elaboration of local area plans. Indeed, since the coming into force of the 2014 Local Government (Reform) Act, they are the geographical basis on which councillors are elected and through which they represent their electors.

### ***Rural Areas:***

For the purposes of this profile, urban areas are defined as all settlements with a population of greater than 1,500 in Census 2016. As such rural area populations are based on all areas outside of such settlements.

All mapping has been produced using ESRI ArcGIS software and contain Irish Public Sector Data ([data.gov.ie](http://data.gov.ie)) licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CCBY 4.0) licence. Data Source: Data.Gov.ie, CSO Census 2016

# Demographic Indicators

## Demographic Indicators - Commentary

This chapter presents a demographic profile of the EU JTF Territory. It maps the distribution of the population at county and municipal district (MD) levels, and it examines population change at all spatial tiers, including at electoral division (ED) level, over recent inter-censal periods. This chapter also presents regional and county population projections over the next twenty years and its notes the implications the anticipated demographic changes will have in respect of the territory's age profile. The chapter provides considerable detail, including at ED level, in respect of the territory's age profile – including age dependency ratios.

### Principal Demographic Features

The EU JTF Territory has a total resident population of 525,079, which is eleven percent of Ireland's total. This population is distributed across eight local authority areas as follows: Westmeath (17%); Kildare (16%); Laois (16%); Offaly (15%); Roscommon (12%); Tipperary (11%); Longford (8%); and Galway County (5%). The area covers nineteen municipal districts (MDs). Their populations range in size from 10,674 in Granard to 58,167 in Clane-Maynooth, and the median population across the MDs is 25,476.

Between 1991 and 2016, the area's population increased by over forty percent, with the fastest inter-censal growth (+11%) occurring between 2011 and 2016. Since the early 2000s, the area's population has increased at a faster rate than that of the State. While all MDs experienced population growth since 2006, rates have been variable; they range from just over three percent in the Thurles MD to nearly forty percent in the Portlaoise MD (+38%). Population growth has been most significant in MDs that are geographically close to the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) and / or have good transport linkages to it. These include Clane-Maynooth, Graiguecullen-Portarlinton, Athy and Edenderry. The Ballymahon MD also performs strongly, in relative terms, albeit from a small population base. The GDA's influence on the EU JTF Territory's demographics is also evident at ED-level, and over the past twenty years, population growth has been most evident in urban, suburban and peri-urban areas, most notably in North Kildare, Portlaoise and its environs, the environs of Athlone and Tullamore and in areas that are close to national primary routes (main roads), including Roscommon-Athlone, Tullamore-Dublin and Portlaoise-Dublin. In contrast, much of West Offaly, and the Ballinasloe, Carrick-on-Suir and Thurles MDs have experienced negligible population growth, while many rural communities, including those with a high level of dependence on the peatlands, have experienced population decline.

Population projections, undertaken by ESRI, indicate that between 2021 and 2040, the EU JTF Territory's population will increase by a further seventeen percent (+86,885 persons) to approximately 642,713. The data also suggest that the populations of Counties Laois, Longford, Offaly and Kildare will grow by at least fifteen percent. Growth in Westmeath is projected at fourteen percent, while lower rates are projected for Roscommon (+13%), the two MDs in County Tipperary (+10%) and the Ballinasloe MD (+9%). Over the next twenty years, the population will age, and the rate of ageing is likely to be greater in the EU JTF Territory than in the State as a whole.

## Demographic Indicators - Commentary

Relative to Ireland, the EU JTF Territory is more rural, and it has a lower population density. Its overall population density is 40.6 persons per km<sup>2</sup>, while the corresponding value for the State is 68.1 persons per km<sup>2</sup>. With the exception of Borris-in-Ossory-Mountmellick, all MDs in Counties Laois, Kildare and Westmeath have a higher population density than the EU JTF Territory as a whole, as do the Tullamore and Longford MDs. All other MDs are less densely populated, with the lowest densities being in the Ballinasloe, Birr and Boyle MDs; these three MDs have densities of under 26 persons per km<sup>2</sup>.

Ireland's Central Statistics Office (CSO) applies a very clear statistical metric to the classification of rural and urban areas. Rural areas comprise the open countryside and settlements with <1,500 inhabitants. Settlements with >1,500 inhabitants are classified as urban. Applying this metric to the EU JTF Territory reveals that it is predominantly rural; almost sixty percent (58.2%) of the population resides in rural areas. This is over twenty percentage points higher than is the case in Ireland as a whole, and it is similar to the Midlands (NUTS 3) Region. Over seventy percent of the population in the following MDs lives rurally: Granard, Athlone (Roscommon), Ballinasloe, Birr, Borris-in-Ossory-Mountmellick and Ballymahon. In contrast the most urbanised MDs i.e. those in which over sixty percent of the population lives in an urban area are as follows: Portlaoise, Longford Town and Tullamore. Much of the Clane-Maynooth MD can be classified as peri-urban.

### Age Profile

The EU JTF Territory has a higher proportion of infants (aged 0-4) and children (aged 5-12) than does the State. Persons in these two age cohorts comprise almost one fifth (19.8%) of the EU JTF Territory's population. The corresponding value for Ireland is 18.5%. Generally, the more urban and peri-urban MDs have higher proportions of infants and children, in their resident populations, than do the more rural MDs. Values are highest in the Clane-Maynooth, Athy, Edenderry, Portlaoise and Graiguecullen-Portarlinton MDs. The ED-level maps presented here reveal high values in and around urban centres, notably Portlaoise and Roscommon Town and across the so-called 'commuter communities' in North Kildare and eastern parts of Counties Westmeath and Offaly.

Young people aged 13-17 comprise just over seven percent of the EU JTF Territory's resident population. This proportion is on a par with that of the Midlands Region (NUTS 3), and it is higher than the corresponding values for the State and the Midlands & Eastern Region (NUTS 2). The MDs with the highest values are Edenderry, Athlone and Athy.

The spatial distribution of persons aged 15-24 is associated with the locations of higher-education institutes, among other factors. These comprise almost twelve percent of the EU JTF Territory's resident population, but values are notably higher in and around Maynooth, Athlone and Thurles. Other locations with high values include Leixlip, Kinnegad and Rochfortbridge. The contrast between these areas, which are predominantly urban, peri-urban and / or within an hour's commute of the Dublin Metropolitan Area, and the more rural parts of the EU JTF Territory, is clearly evident in respect of the 18-24-year-old age cohort. Persons in this cohort comprise over ten percent of the population in the Clane-Maynooth MD and nearly nine percent of the population in the Athlone-Moate MD. In contrast, they constitute



## Demographic Indicators - Commentary

less than seven percent of the population in the Boyle, Athlone (Co. Roscommon), Graiguecullen-Portarlington, Roscommon, Granard and Ballymahon MDs.

In general, the eastern half of the EU JTF Territory has a higher proportion of young people (persons aged 0-18) than is the case in its western half. The locations with the highest proportions of persons aged under 18 are East Offaly, North Kildare, Portlaoise and its environs, eastern parts of County Westmeath and the environs of Roscommon Town, Athlone and rural communities in South County Longford. In contrast, communities in North Roscommon, West Offaly, and rural parts of the Ballinasloe MD have proportionately fewer children and young people.

Persons who are aged 25-44 comprise almost twenty-eight (27.6%) of the EU JTF Territory's resident population. This is almost two percentage points lower than the corresponding value for Ireland, and it is slightly below that of the Midlands Region (NUTS 3). The MDs with the highest proportions of persons in this age cohort are those that have the strongest infrastructural and economic linkages to the Greater Dublin Area, namely Portlaoise and Clane-Maynooth. The MDs with the lowest proportions of persons aged 25-44 are generally the most rural ones, namely Boyle, Ballinasloe, Carrick-on-Suir and Granard. Below MD level, the locations with the highest proportions of persons in this age cohort are Portlaoise and its environs, Athlone and its environs, Leixlip, Athy and its environs, Portarlington, Nurney and Kildangan.

Almost a quarter (24.4%) of the EU JTF Territory's population is aged 45-64, and this is slightly higher than the corresponding level in the State (23.8%). Within the EU JTF Territory, values range from under twenty-three percent in the MDs of Longford, Clane-Maynooth and Portlaoise to over twenty-five percent in the more rural MDs namely, Boyle, Carrick-on-Suir, Roscommon, Birr, Ballymahon and Thurles. The areas with the highest concentrations of persons in this age cohort are predominantly rural – mainly in the west and north of the Boyle and Roscommon MDs.

Just over one in seven (13.4%) persons in the EU JTF Territory is aged over 65. This is equivalent to the State value, and it is slightly higher than in the Midlands (NUTS 3) Region. Within the EU JTF Territory itself, there are considerable spatial variations with respect to the distribution of older persons. County Roscommon and the MDs of Ballinasloe, Birr, Carrick-on-Suir and Thurles have the highest proportions of older persons (aged 65+) in their resident populations, while values are considerably lower in Counties Kildare and Laois. Across the EU JTF Territory's nineteen MDs, values are under ten percent in the Clane-Maynooth and Portlaoise MDs, and they exceed seventeen percent in the Boyle, Ballinasloe and Roscommon MDs. An ED-level visualisation of the proportion of the population aged 65+ reveals a north-west to south east gradient; the highest values are in rural communities in North and West Roscommon – in and around Castlerea, Frenchpark, Boyle, Arigna and Keadew – and the north and south of the Ballinasloe MD – including Glenamaddy, Ballymoe and Eyrecourt. Meanwhile, the lowest values are predominantly in the south and east of the EU JTF Territory - in North Kildare, northern parts of the Athy MD, most of East Offaly, Portlaoise and its environs, Thurles and communities to the east of Mullingar namely Kinnegad, Rochfortbridge, Killucan and Milltownpass. Communities in West Offaly and the two MDs in County Tipperary generally have an above-average proportion of persons aged 65+.



## Demographic Indicators - Commentary

The EU JTF Territory has a higher age dependency rate (persons aged <15 and >65, relative to persons aged 15-64) than the State; the respective values are 56.5 and 52.7. Across the EU JTF Territory's counties, values range for 51.4 in County Kildare to over 60 in Counties Longford and Roscommon. Rurality and distance from Dublin are among the determinants of a higher age dependency rate; the MDs with the highest values are Boyle, Granard and Roscommon, while in contrast, the lowest values are in Clane-Maynooth, Portlaoise and Athlone-Moate.

The EU JTF Territory's old-age dependency rate (persons aged 65+, relative to persons aged 15-64) is slightly higher than that of the State; the respective values are 20.9 and 20.4. The EU JTF Territory's value is two percentage points higher than that of the Eastern and Midlands (NUTS 2) Region. Across the EU JTF Territory's local authority areas, values range from 15.0 in County Kildare to 26.8 in County Roscommon. The range is even greater across the EU JTF Territory's MDs; values are under seventeen in the Clane-Maynooth, Portlaoise and Graiguecullen-Portarlington MDs, and they exceed twenty-eight in the Boyle, Roscommon and Ballinasloe MDs. The ED-level spatial pattern in respect of old-age dependency rates is similar to that observed in respect of the relative distribution of persons aged 65+. The areas with the highest values are in the north and west of County Roscommon, North Longford and the Ballinasloe MD. These are predominantly rural communities. Levels also exceed the EU JTF Territory value in most of West Offaly and the Thurles and Carrick-on-Suir MDs. In contrast, the lowest tier of values is predominantly in areas that are along or adjacent to the main transport arteries between the GDA and Mullingar, Tullamore and Portlaoise.

The EU JTF Territory's youth dependency rate (persons aged <15, relative to persons aged 15-64) is higher than that of the State; the respective values are 35.6 and 32.3. The EU JTF Territory's value is four percentage points higher than that of the Eastern and Midlands (NUTS 2) Region, but it is slightly lower than that of the Midlands (NUTS 3) Region. Across the EU JTF Territory's local authority areas, youth dependency rates range from 33.7 in the two Tipperary MDs to 38.3 in County Laois. As the MD and ED-level data reveal, values are generally lower in rural areas, and they are higher in urban and peri-urban areas. Values of <28 pertain in many rural communities in the north and west of County Roscommon - most notably Castlerea and its environs and the in the most rural parts of the Ballinasloe MD - most notably around Glenamaddy. Values are also low in most of West Offaly, including Cloghan, Ferbane, and Shannonbridge.

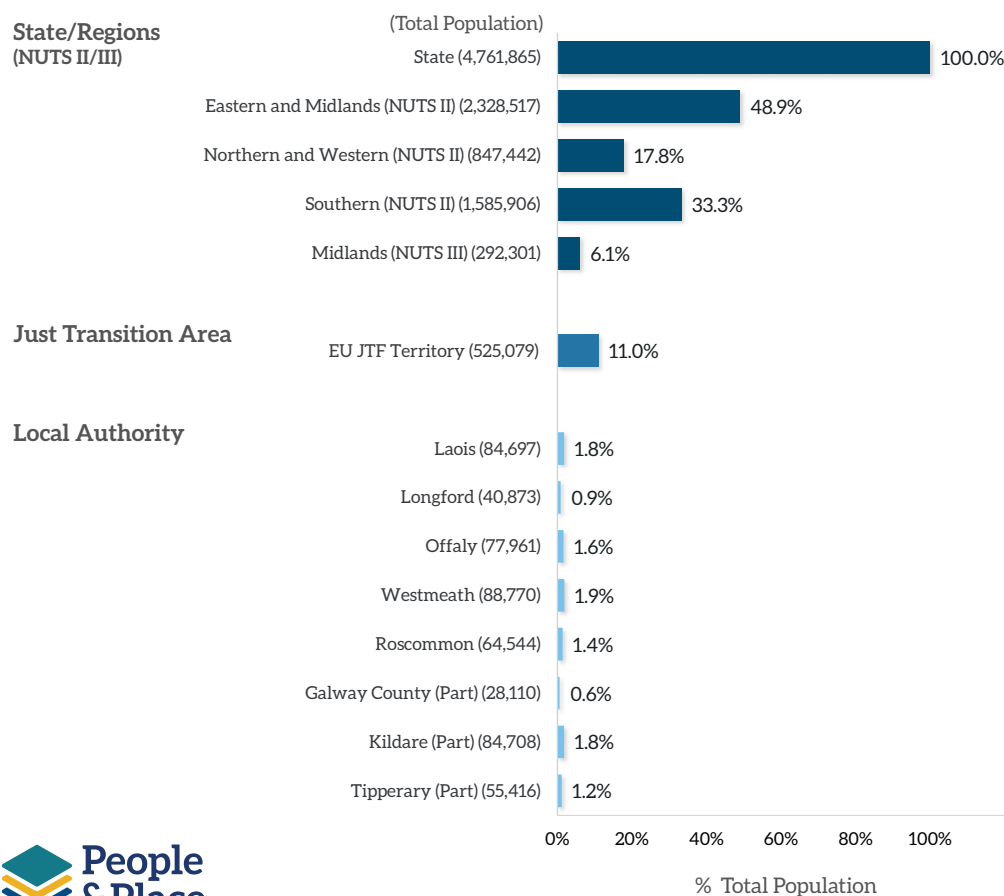


Figure 1.1: State, EU JTF Territory and County Population, 2016

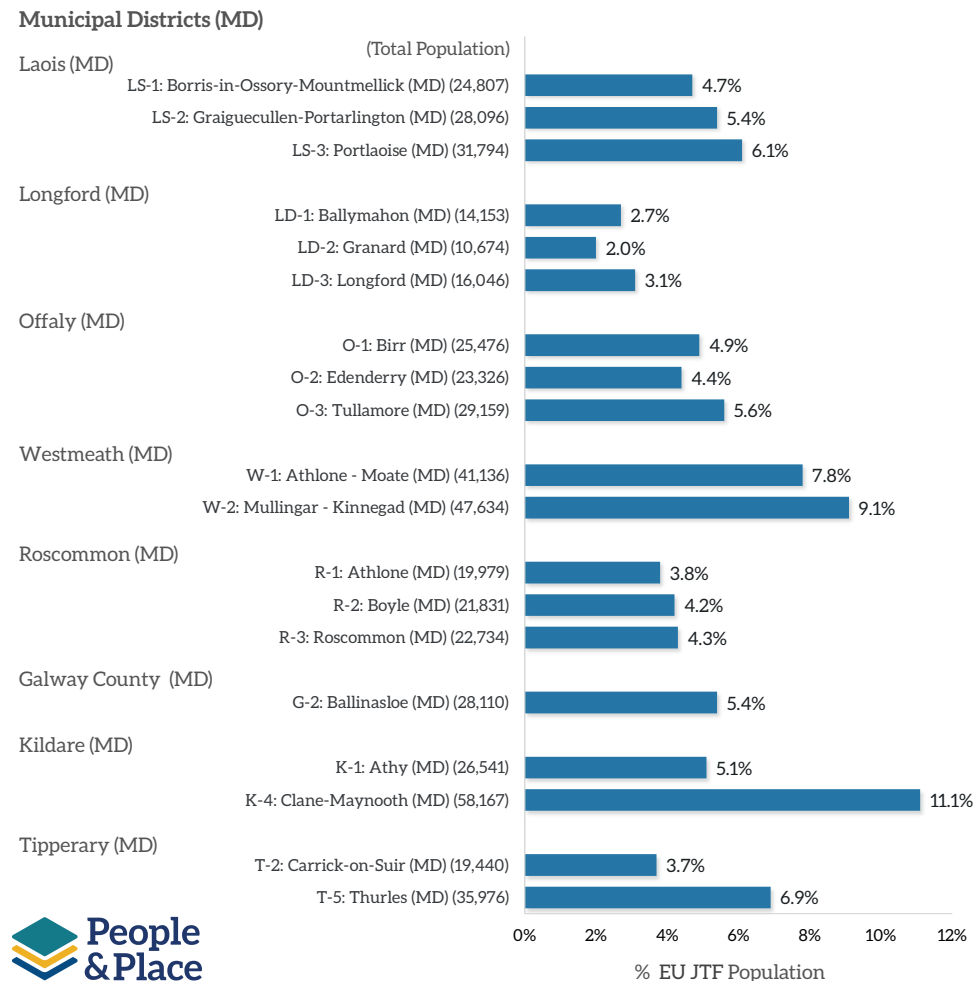


Figure 1.2: Component Municipal District (MD) Population, 2016

## Population Time Series - Change 1991 - 2016

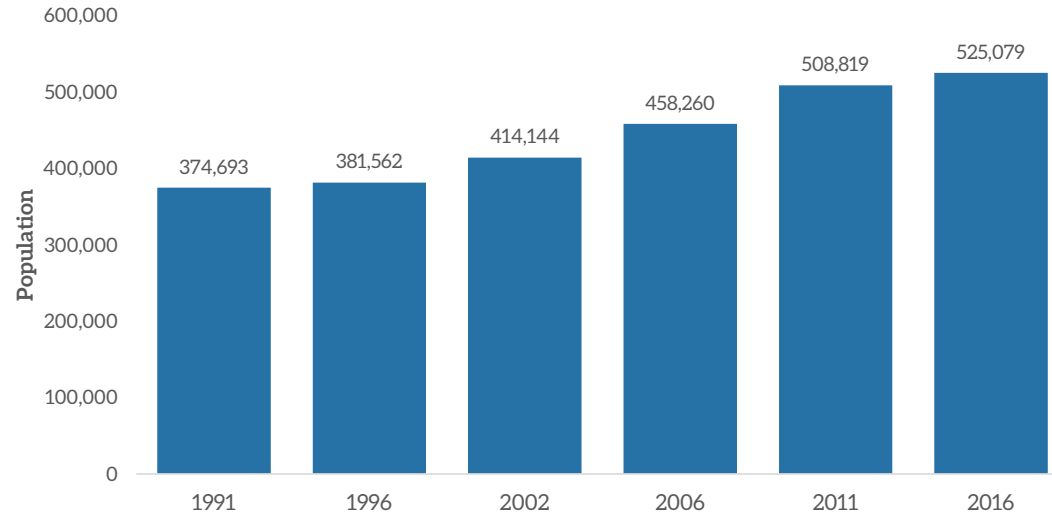


Figure 1.3: EU JTF Territory - Population Change 1991 to 2016

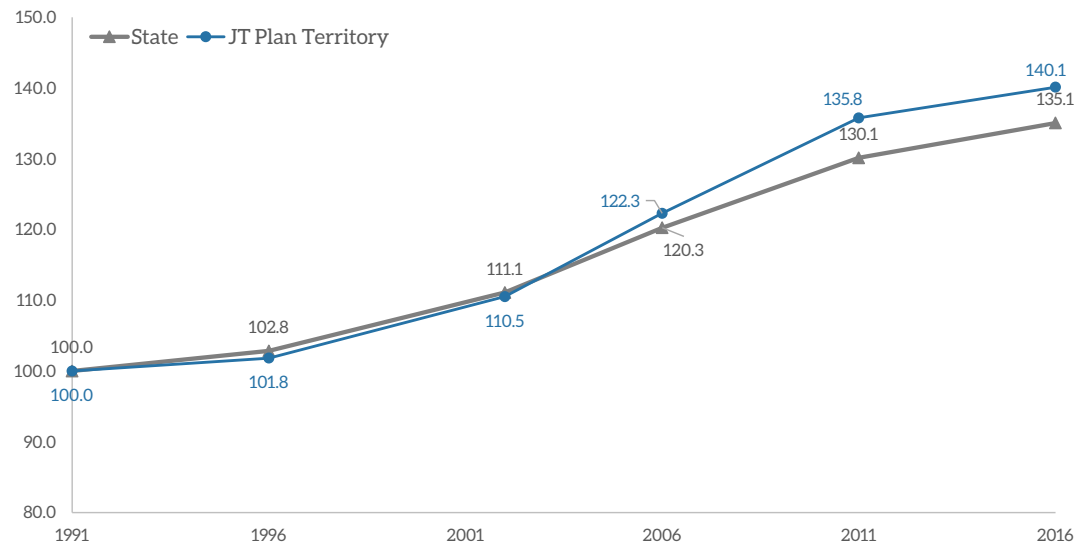


Figure 1.4: EU JTF Territory and State - Population Change 1991 to 2016 (Index - 1991)

Population Time Series - % Change 2006 - 2016

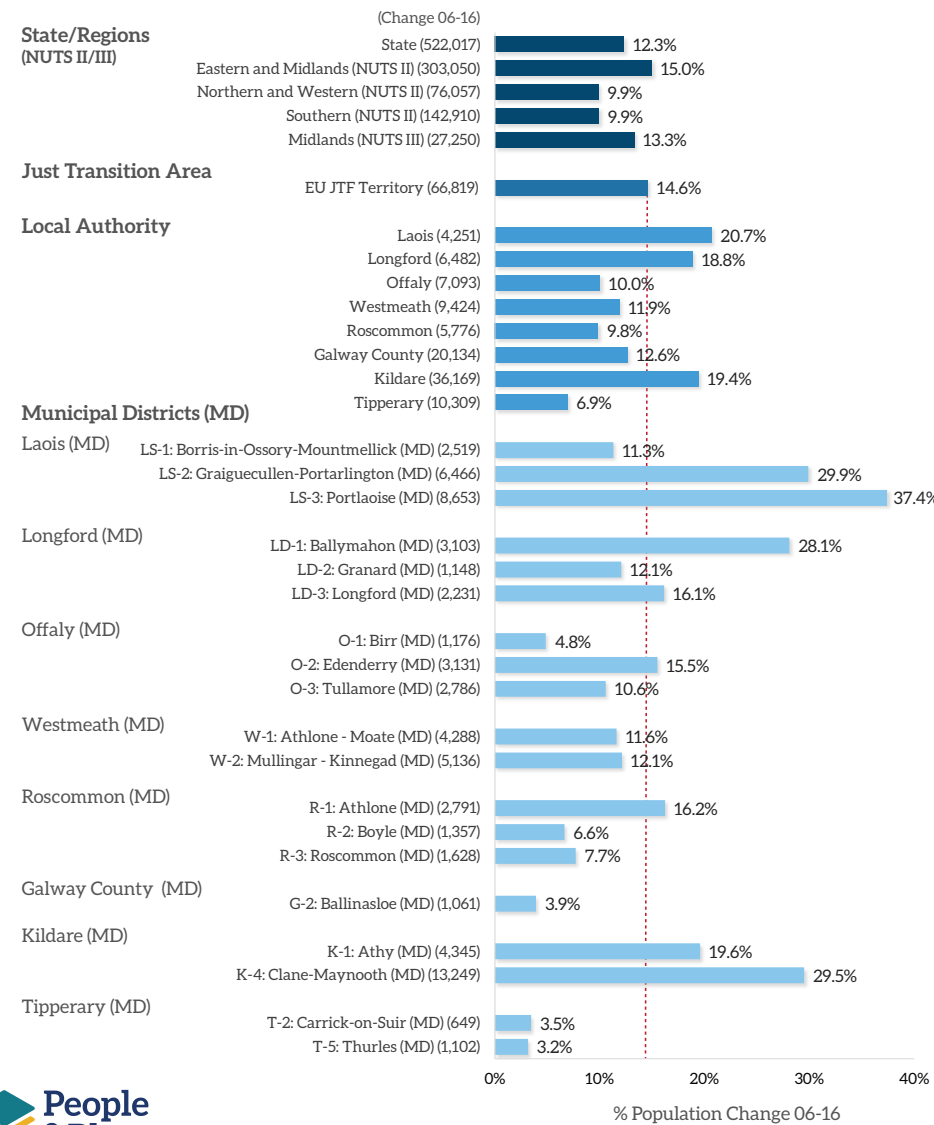







Figure 1.5: State, EU JTF Territory, County and MD Population Change, 2006 to 2016

Population Time Series - % Change 2006 - 2016

-  EU JTF Territory
-  Counties
-  Municipal Districts (MDs)
-  Key Settlements

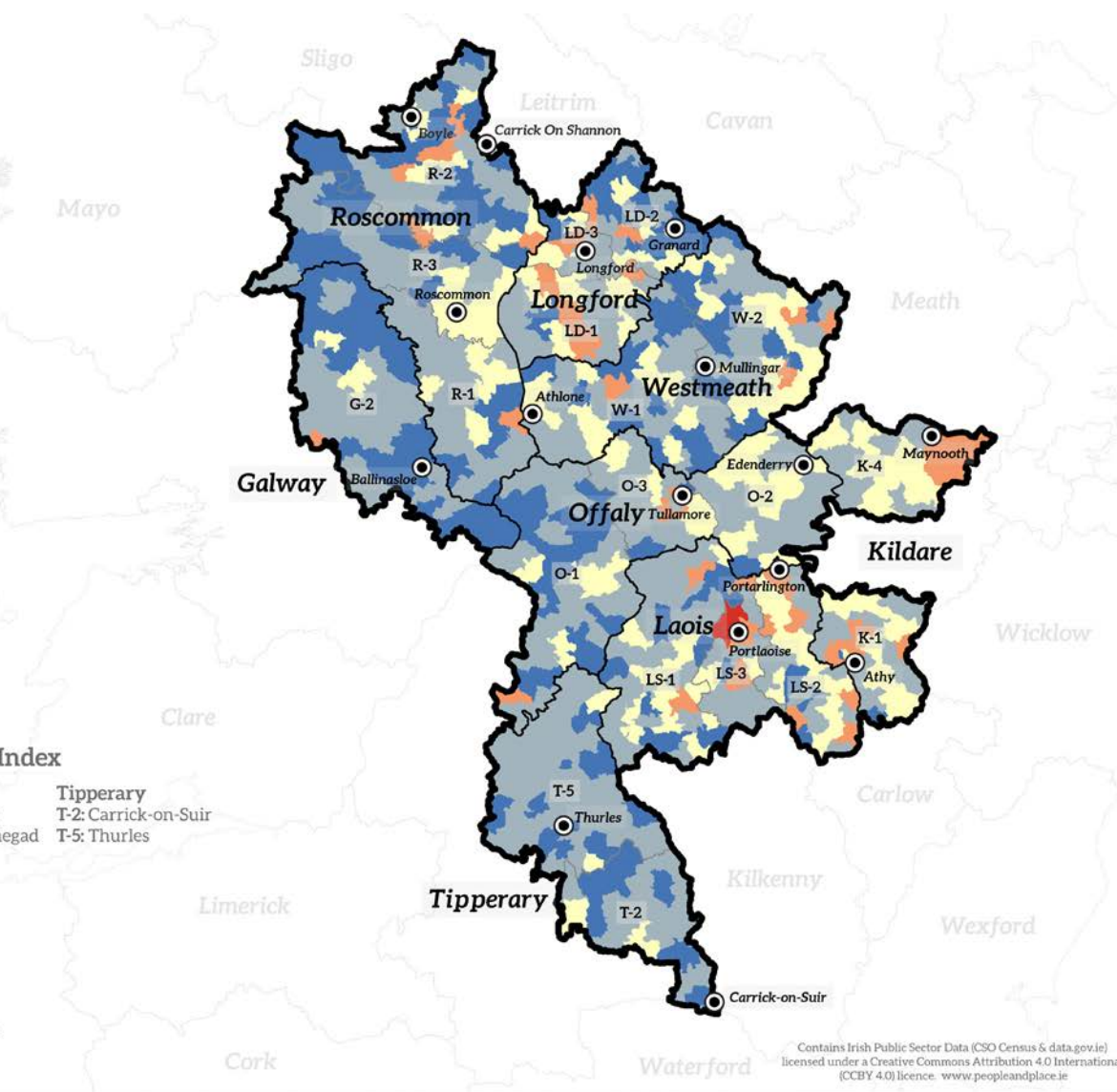
Map Legend

% Population Change 2006-2016

-  < 0%
-  0% to < 15%
-  15% to < 35%
-  35% to < 90%
-  > 90%

Municipal District - Map Index

- |                                     |                           |                      |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Laois</b>                        | <b>Westmeath</b>          | <b>Tipperary</b>     |
| LS-1: Borris-in-Ossory-Mountmellick | W-1: Athlone - Moate      | T-2: Carrick-on-Suir |
| LS-2: Graiguecullen-Portarlington   | W-2: Mullingar - Kinnegad | T-5: Thurles         |
| LS-3: Portlaoise                    |                           |                      |
| <b>Longford</b>                     | <b>Roscommon</b>          |                      |
| LD-1: Ballymahon                    | R-1: Athlone              |                      |
| LD-2: Granard                       | R-2: Boyle                |                      |
| LD-3: Longford                      | R-3: Roscommon            |                      |
| <b>Offaly</b>                       | <b>Galway</b>             |                      |
| O-1: Birr                           | G-2: Ballinasloe          |                      |
| O-2: Edenderry                      | <b>Kildare</b>            |                      |
| O-3: Tullamore                      | K-1: Athy                 |                      |
|                                     | K-4: Clane-Maynooth       |                      |



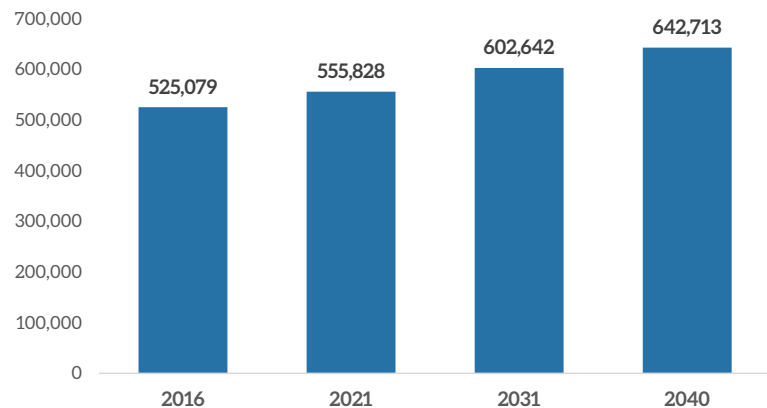
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Population Time Series - % Change 2006 - 2016 (EDs)

Map 1.1: Population Time Series - % Change 2006-2016 (Source: CSO)

## Total Population - Projections to 2040 (Source: ESRI HNDA Population Projections - Baseline Scenario)



Geography	2016	Estimated 2021	Projected 2031	Projected 2040
Laois	84,697	90,780	100,109	108,334
Longford	40,873	43,409	47,265	50,645
Offaly	77,961	82,577	90,259	97,126
Westmeath	88,770	94,161	101,694	107,540
Roscommon	64,544	67,013	71,285	75,838
Galway County (1 MD)	28,110	29,361	31,147	32,127
Kildare (2 MDs)	84,708	90,955	100,383	107,905
Tipperary (2 MDs)	55,416	57,572	60,500	63,197
<b>EU JTF Territory</b>	<b>525,079</b>	<b>555,828</b>	<b>602,642</b>	<b>642,712</b>

Figure 1.6: EU JTF Territory - Projected Population Change, 2016 to 2040

Table 1.1: EU JTF Territory - Projected Population Change, 2016 to 2040 (by County)

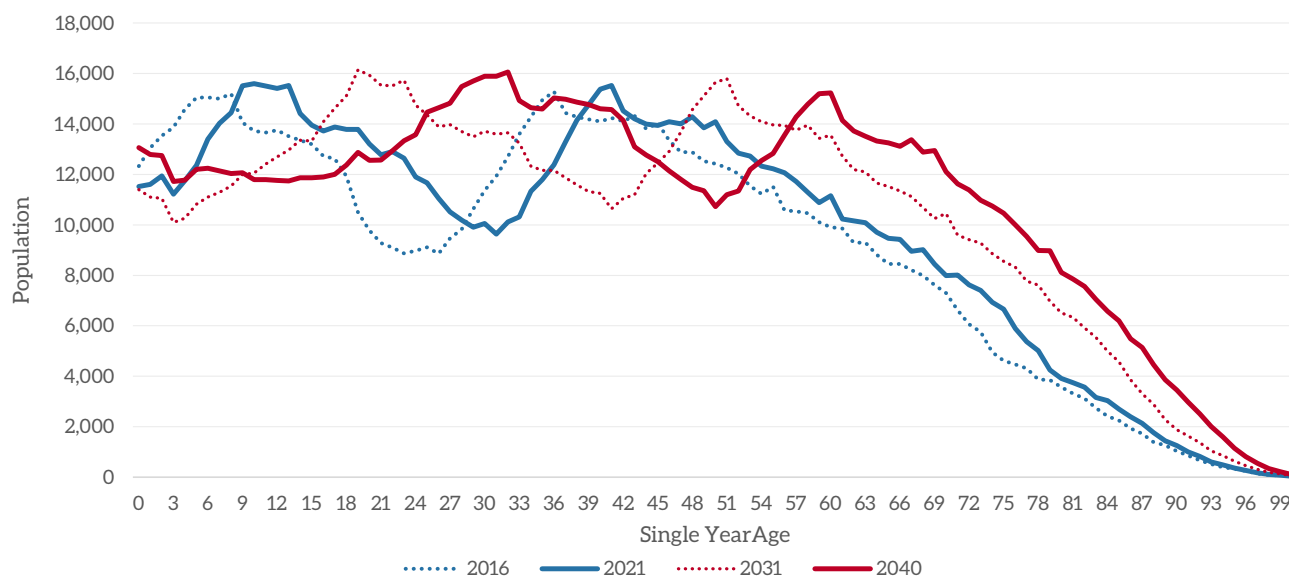


Figure 1.7: EU JTF Territory - Projected Population Cohort Change, 2016 to 2040

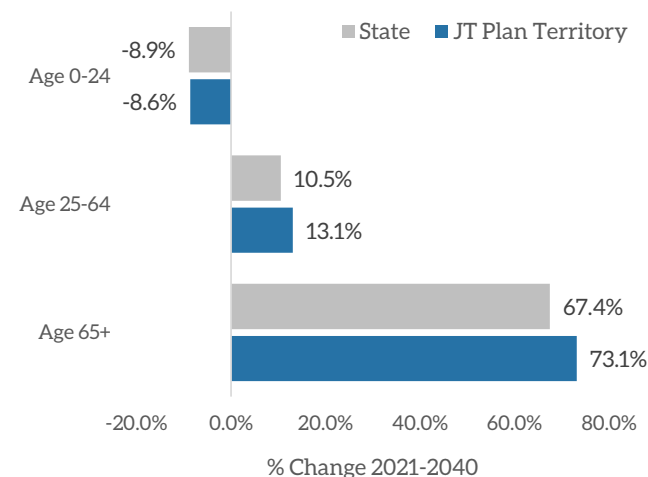


Figure 1.8: EU JTF Territory - Cohort Change, 2021 to 2040

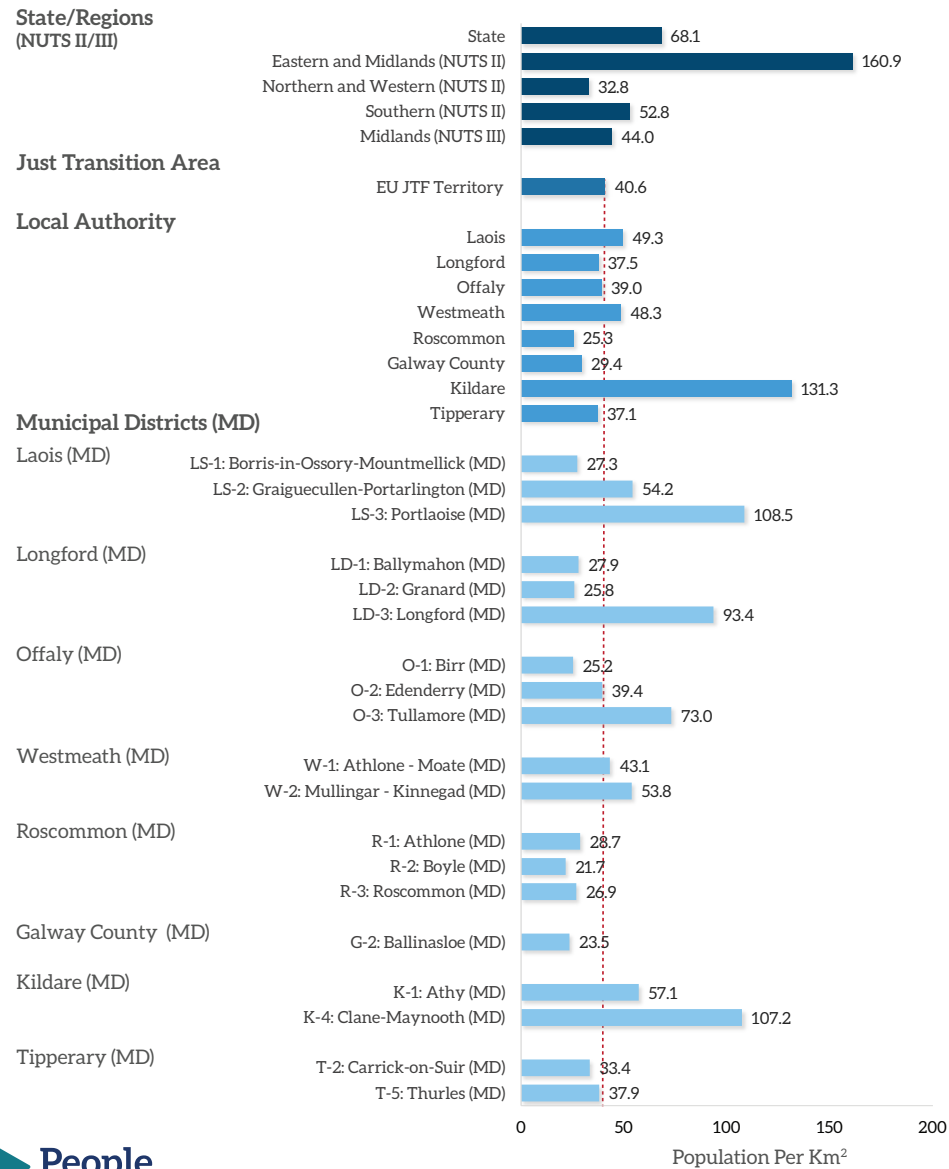


Figure 1.9: Population Density per sq km, 2016

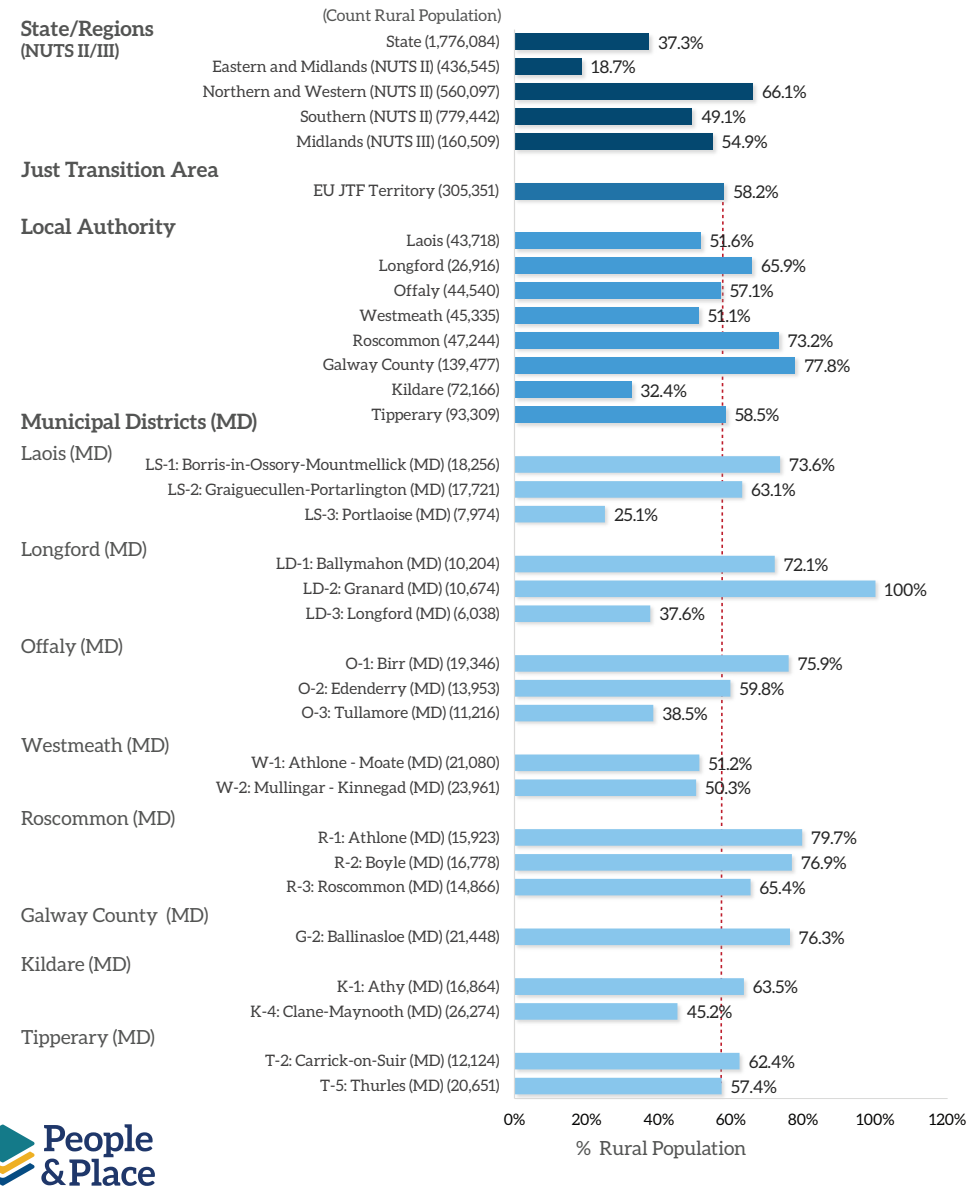


Figure 1.10: % Rural Population (population residing in locations outside settlement  $\geq 1,500$  population), 2016 (Source: CSO)



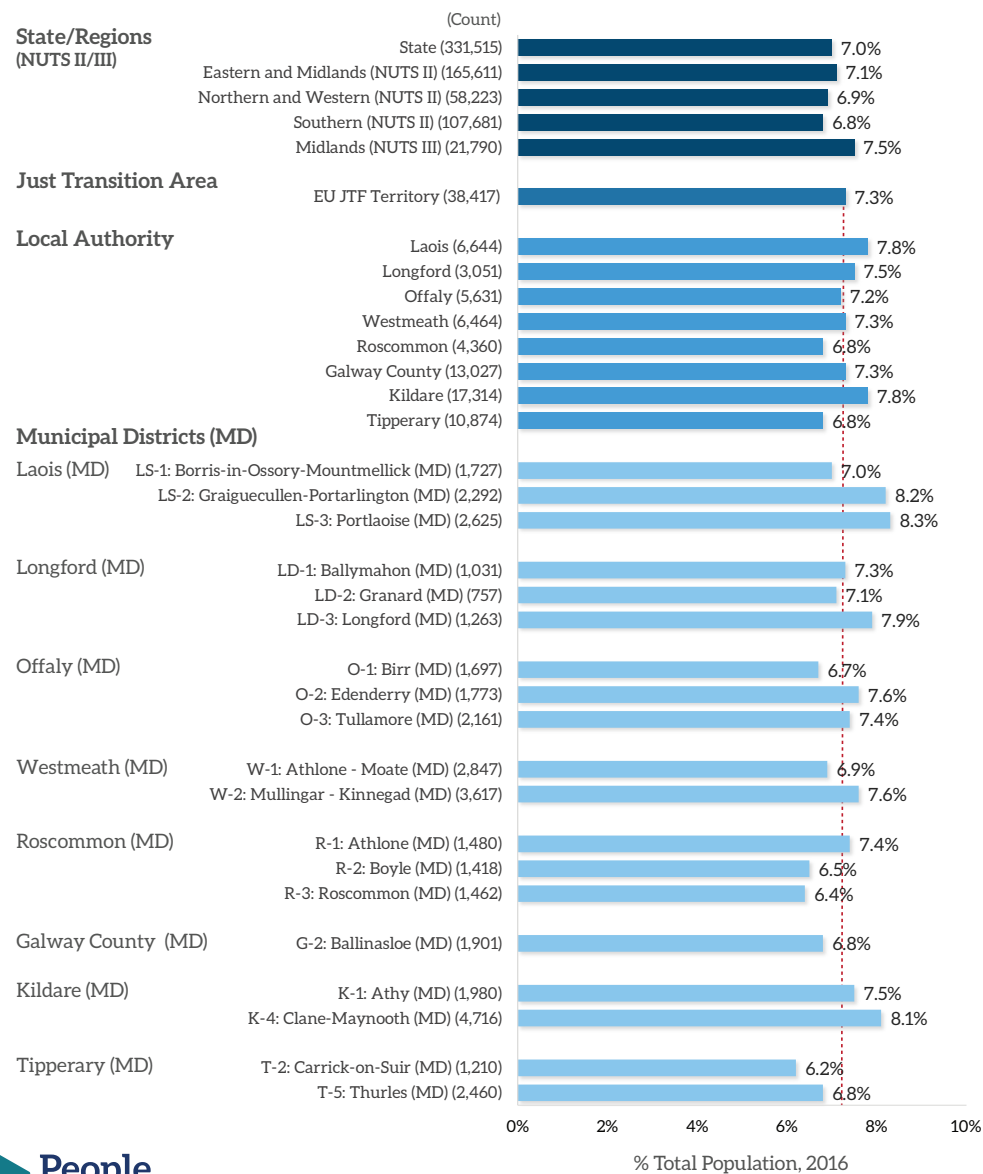
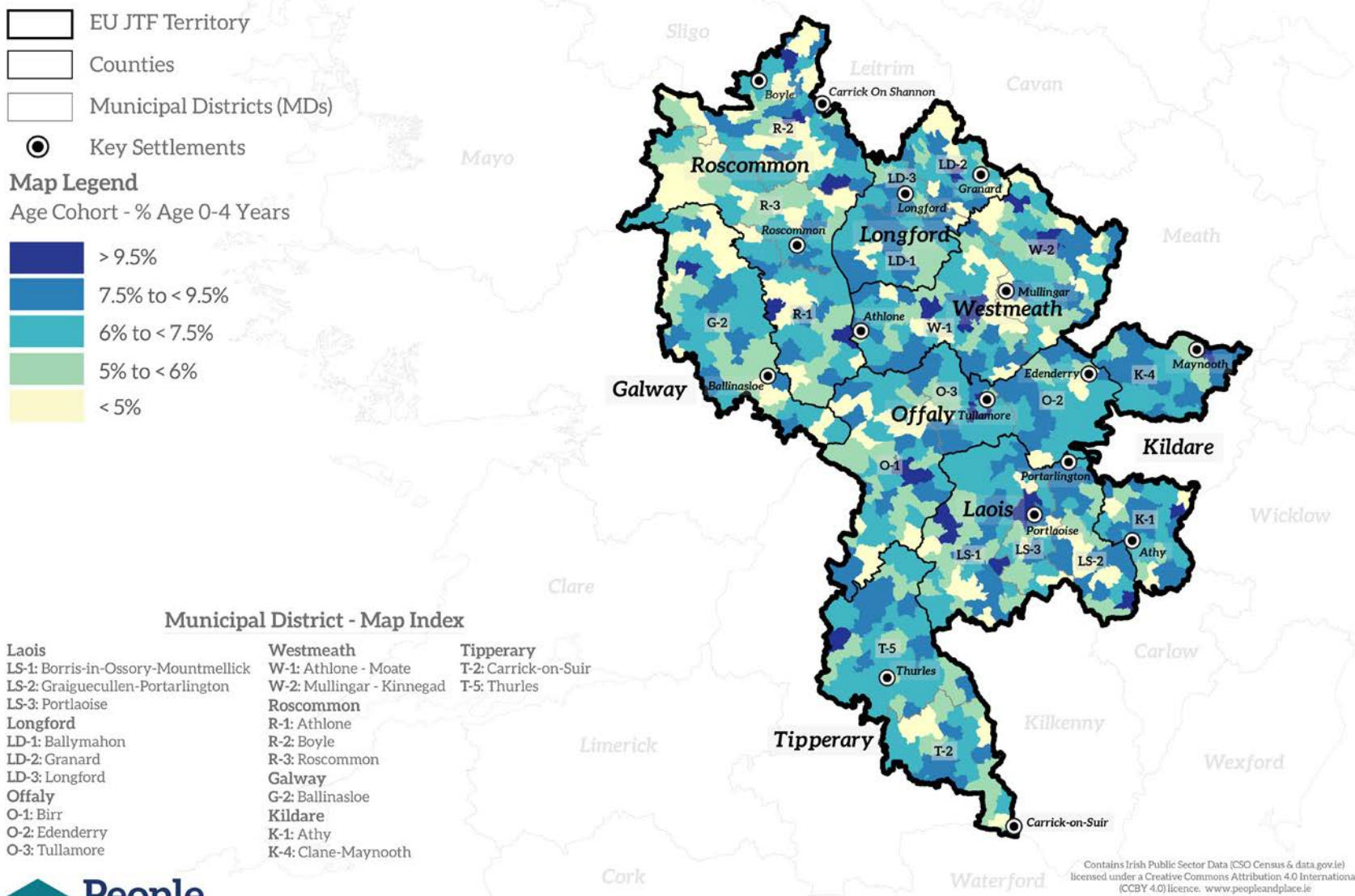


Figure 1.11: Age Cohort - % Age 0-4 Years, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Age Cohort - % Age 0-4 Years, 2016



Age Cohort - % Age 0-4 Years, 2016 (EDs)

Map 1.2: Age Cohort - % Age 0 - 4 Years, 2016 (Source: CSO)

## Age Cohort - % Age 5-12 Years, 2016

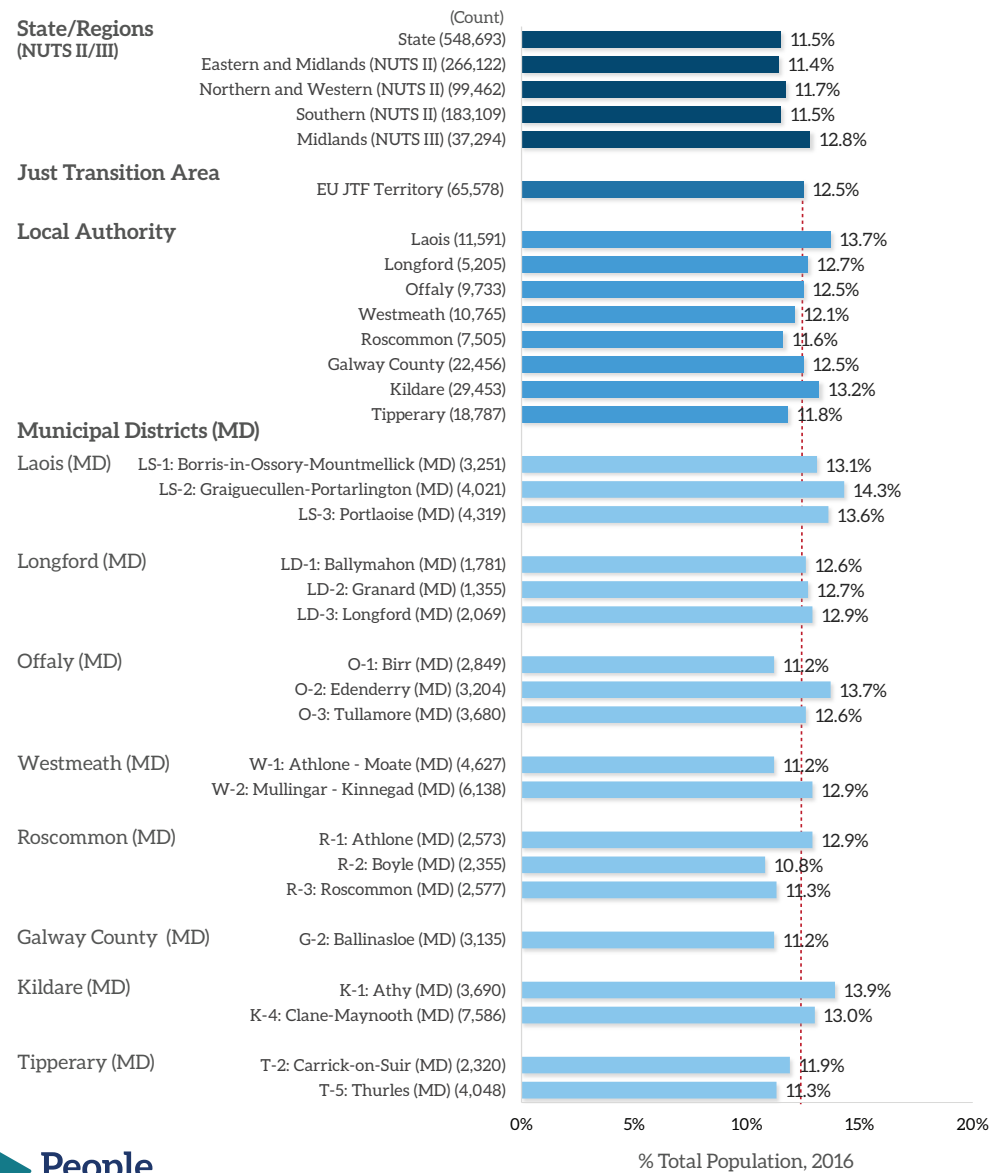
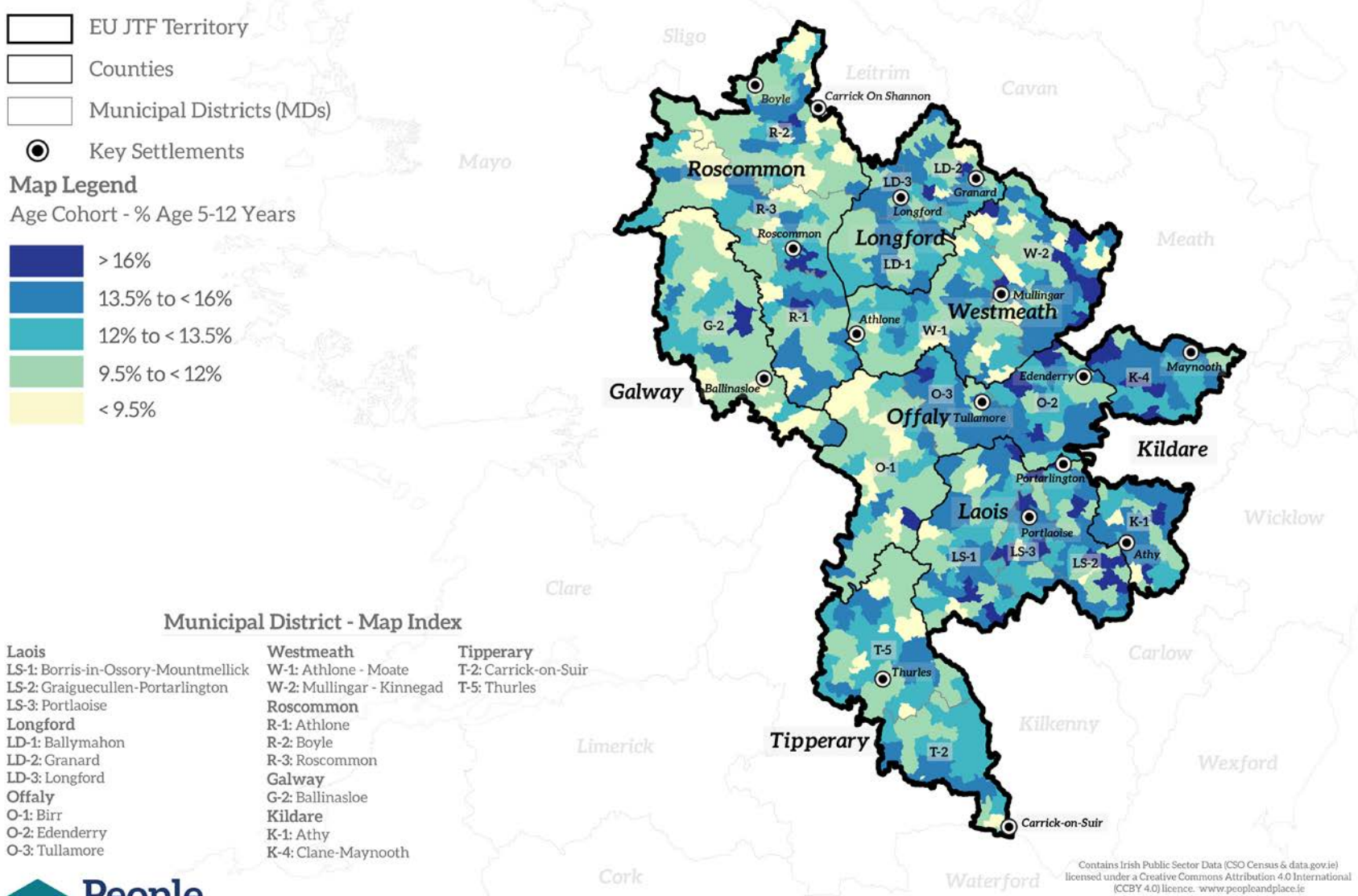


Figure 1.12: Age Cohort - % Age 5-12 Years, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Age Cohort - % Age 5-12 Years, 2016



Age Cohort - % Age 5-12 Years, 2016 (EDs)



Map 1.3: Age Cohort - % Age 5-12 Years, 2016 (Source: CSO)

## Age Cohort - % Age 13-17 Years, 2016

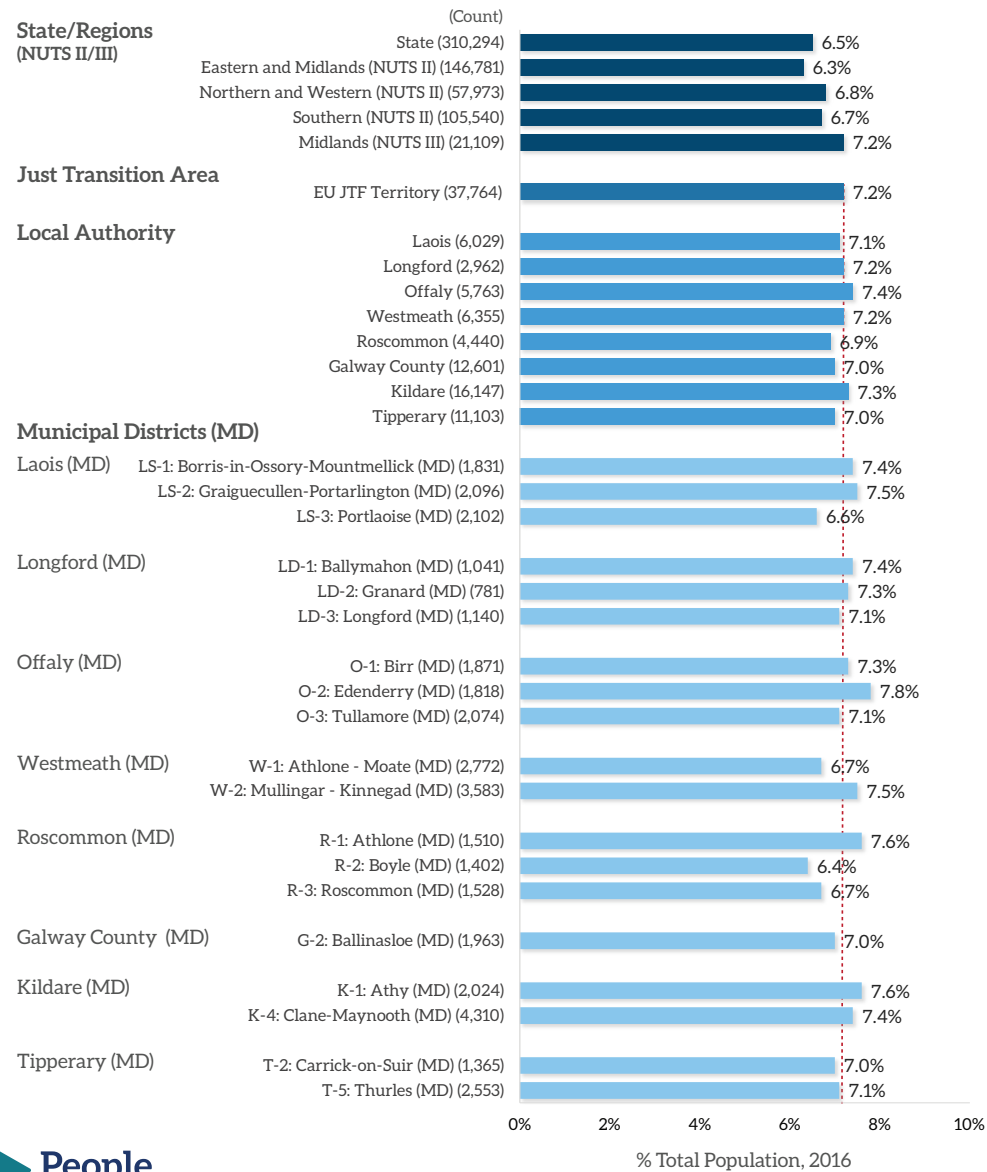
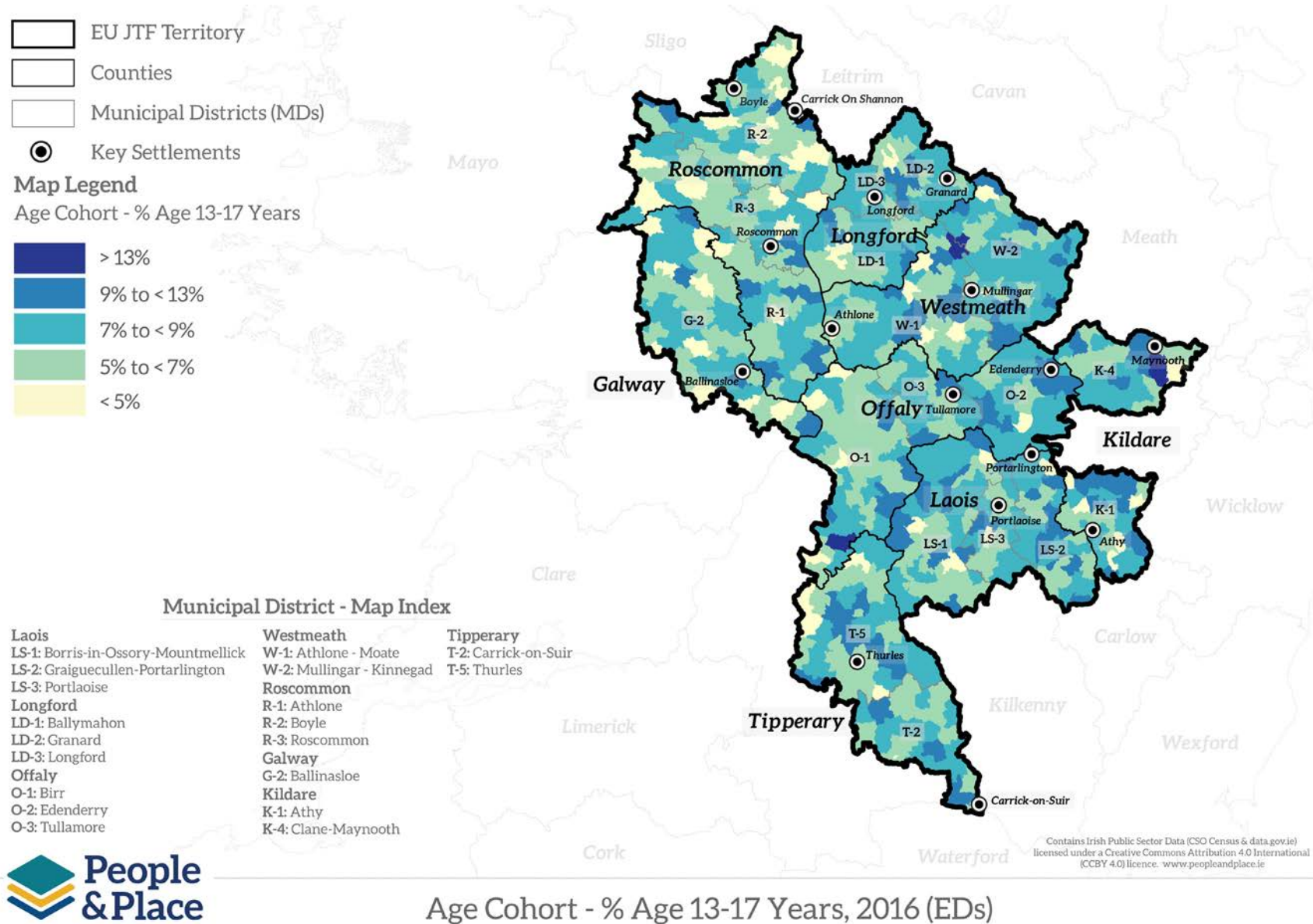


Figure 1.13: Age Cohort - % Age 13-17 Years, 2016 (Source: CSO)



Age Cohort - % Age 13-17 Years, 2016



Map 1.4: Age Cohort - % Age 13-17 Years, 2016 (Source: CSO)

## Age Cohort - % Age 15-24 Years, 2016

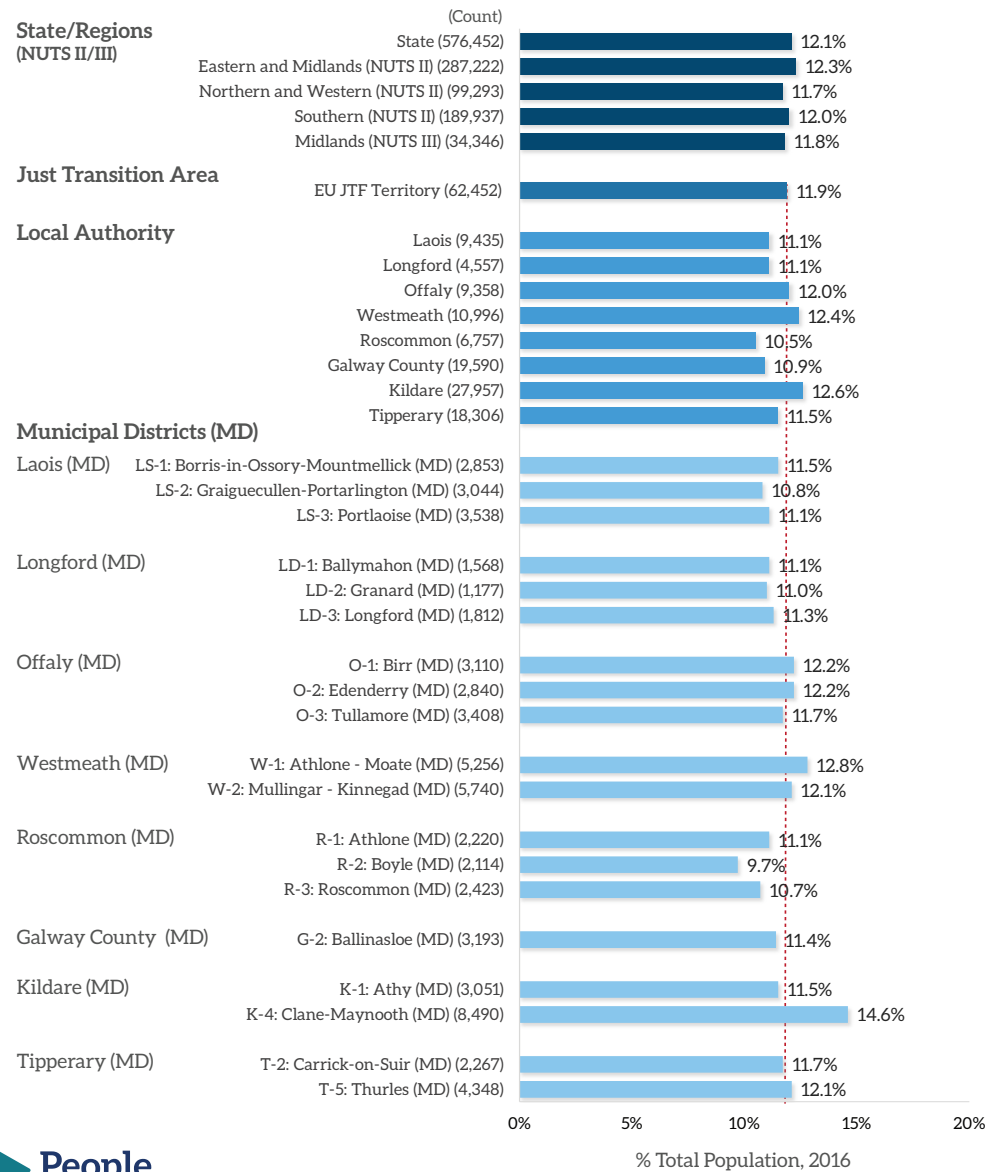
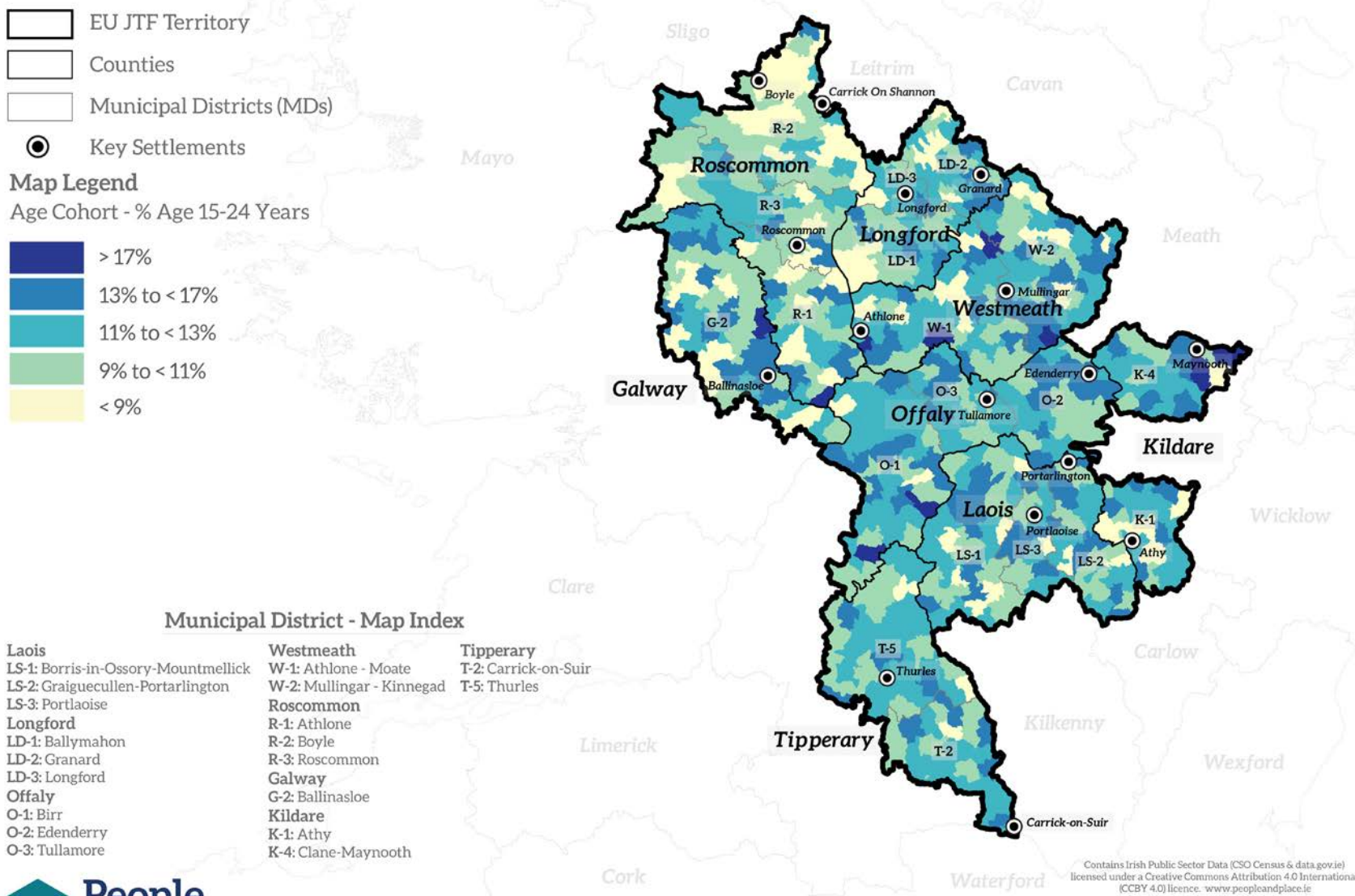


Figure 1.14: Age Cohort - % Age 15-24 Years, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Age Cohort - % Age 15-24 Years, 2016



Age Cohort - % Age 15-24 Years, 2016 (EDs)

Map 1.5: Age Cohort - % Age 15-24 Years, 2016 (Source: CSO)





## Age Cohort - % Age U18 Years, 2016

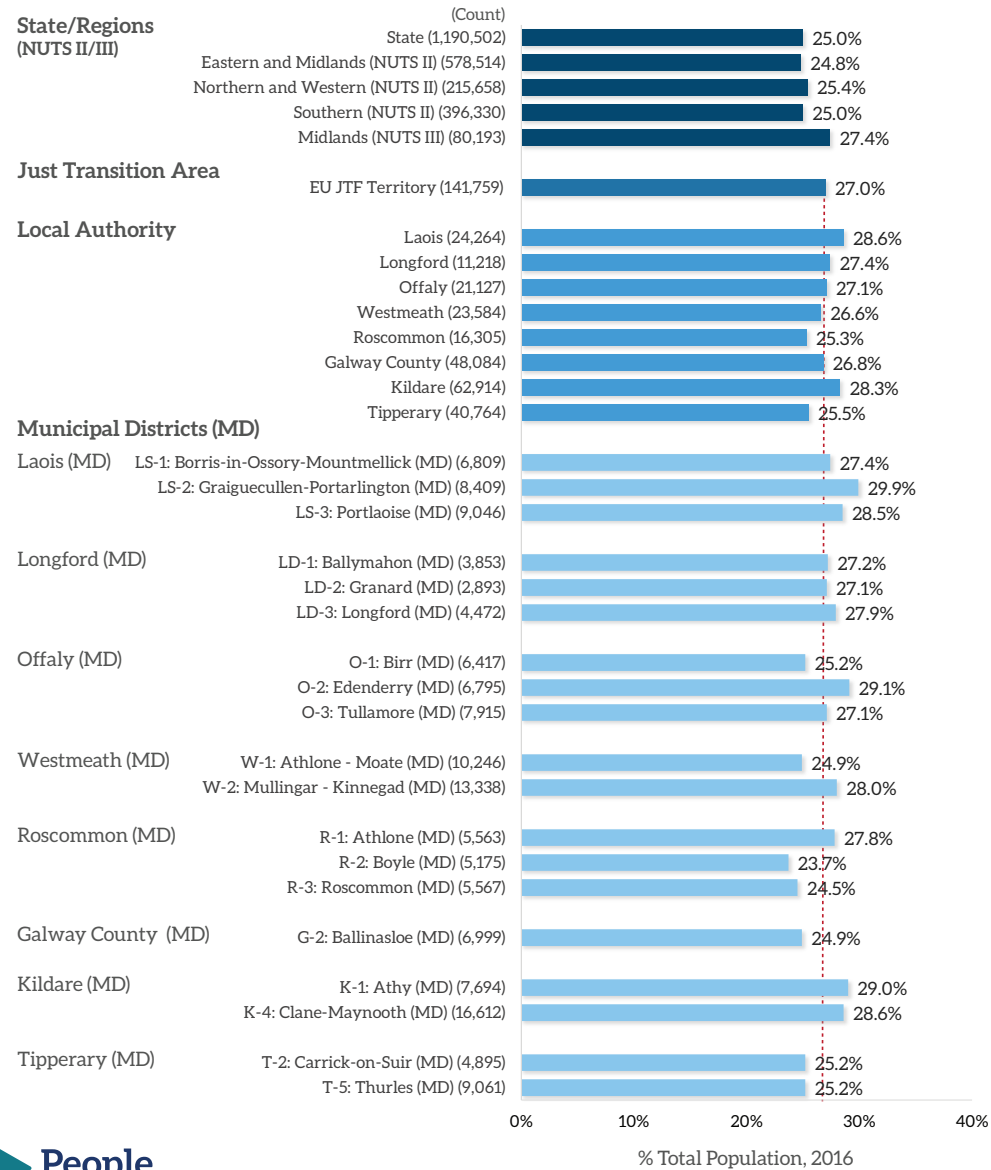
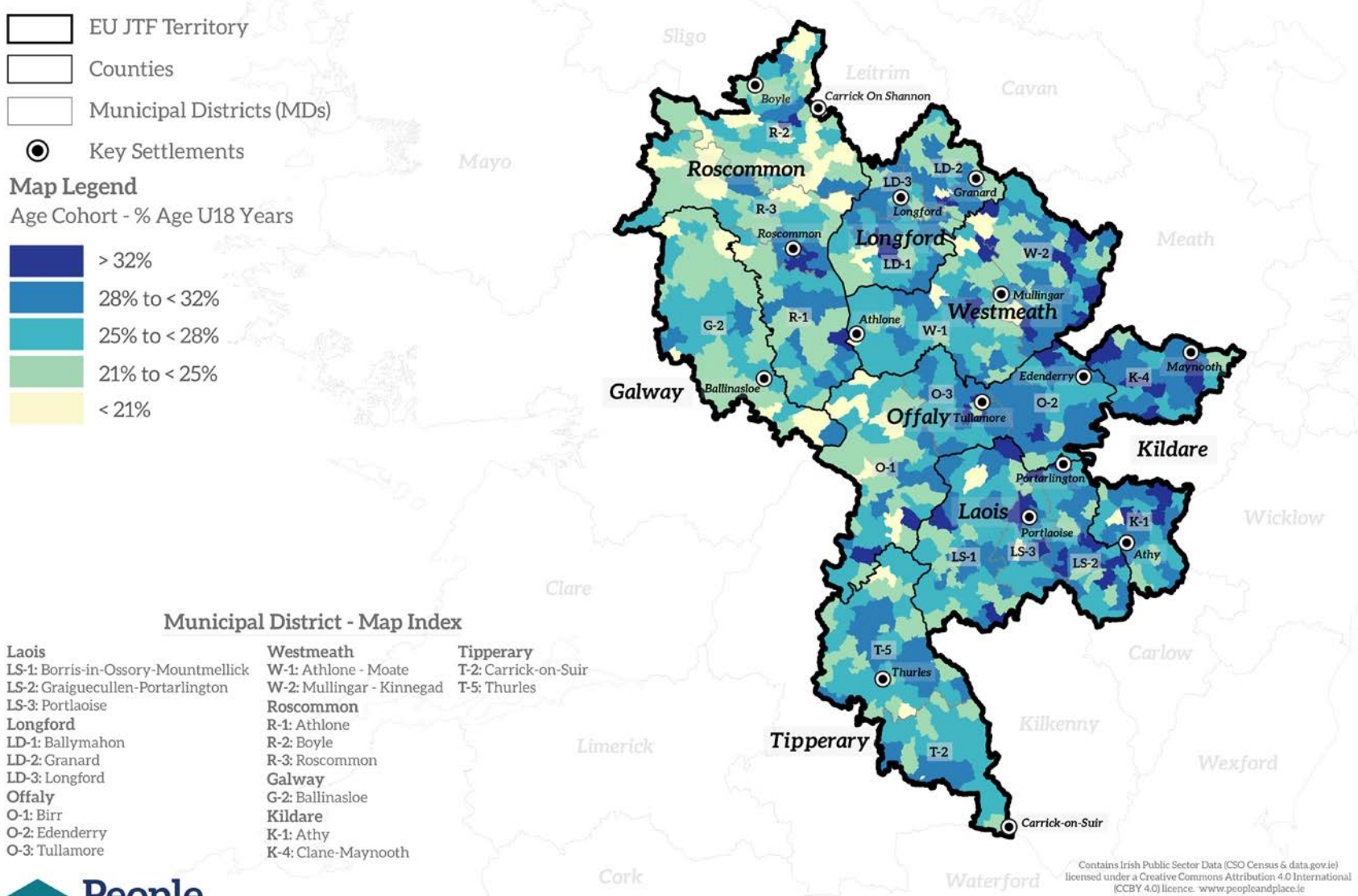


Figure 1.15: Age Cohort - % Age U18 Years, 2016 (Source: CSO)



Age Cohort - % Age U18 Years, 2016 (EDs)

Map 1.6: Age Cohort - % Age U18 Years, 2016 (Source: CSO)

## Age Cohort - % Age 18-24 Years, 2016

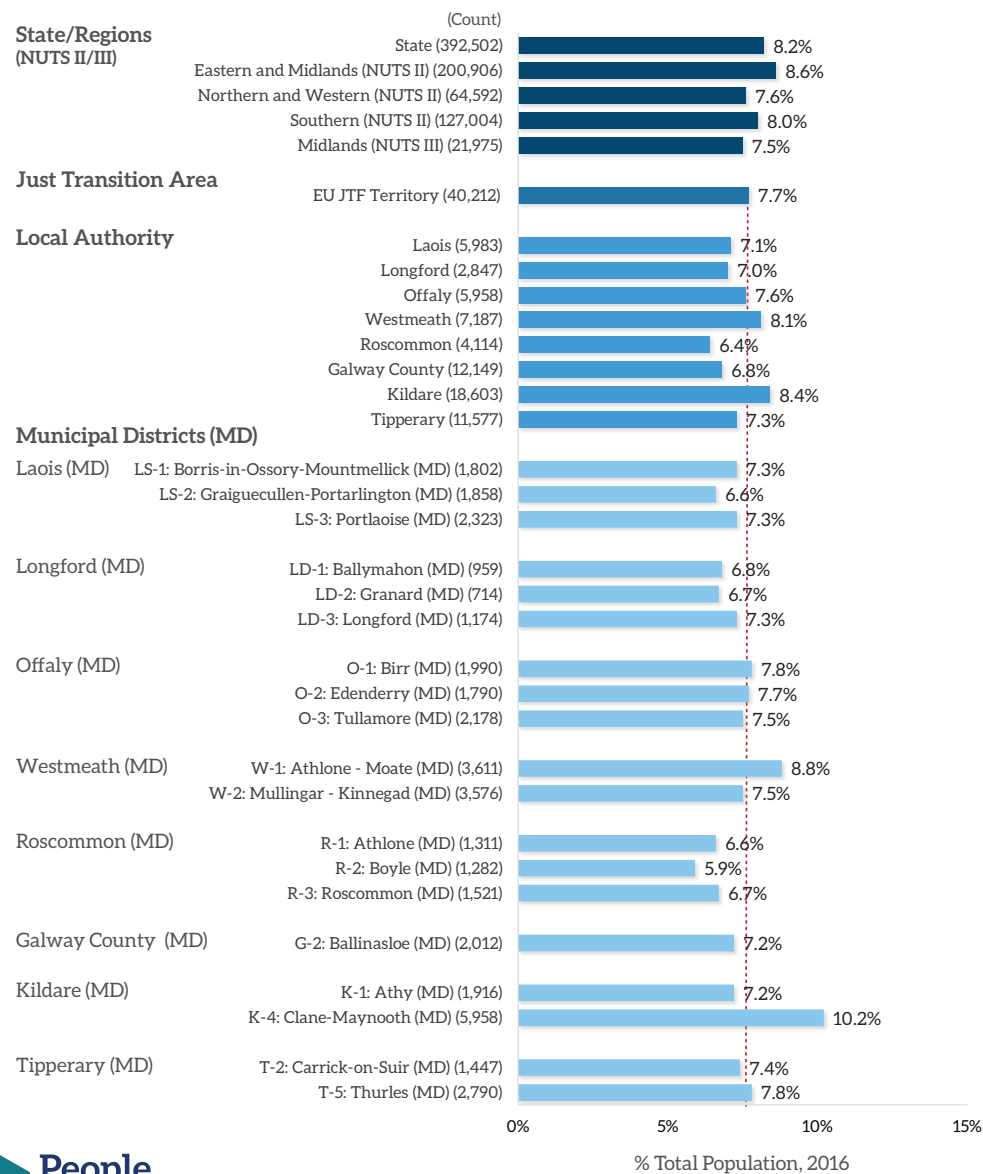
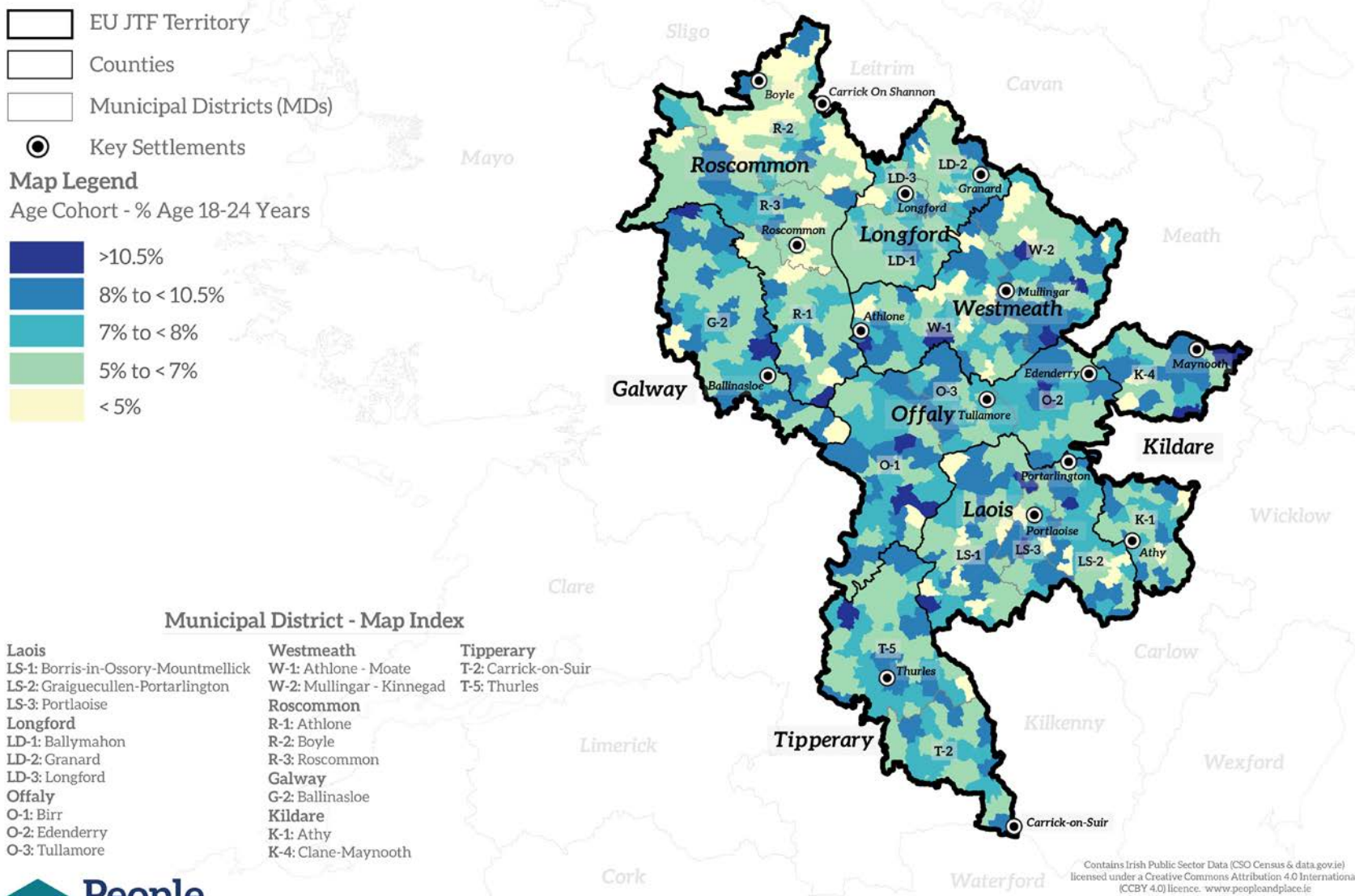


Figure 1.16: Age Cohort - % Age 18-24 Years, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Age Cohort - % Age 18-24 Years, 2016



Age Cohort - % Age 18-24 Years, 2016 (EDs)

Map 1.7: Age Cohort - % Age 18-24 Years, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Age Cohort - % Age 25-44 Years, 2016

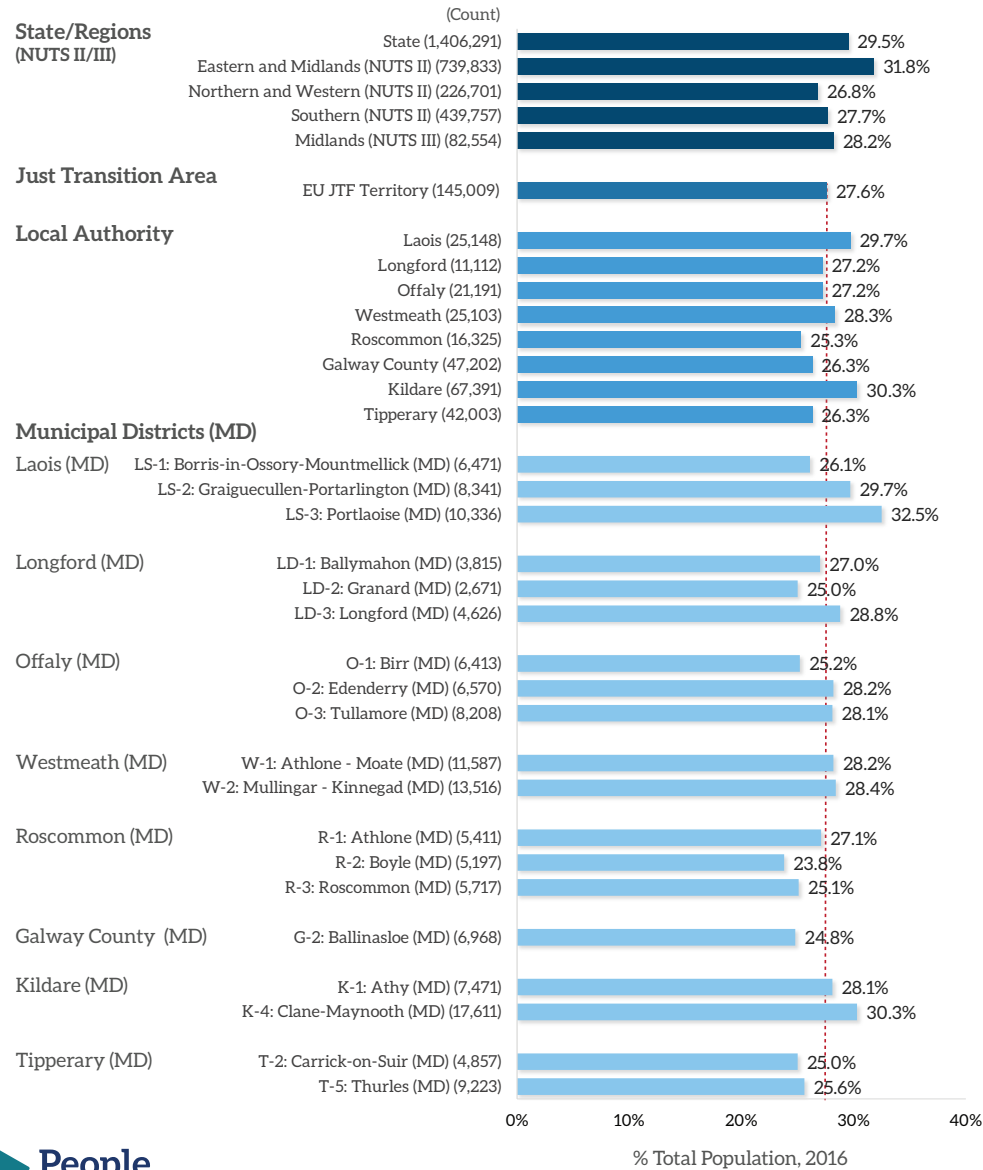
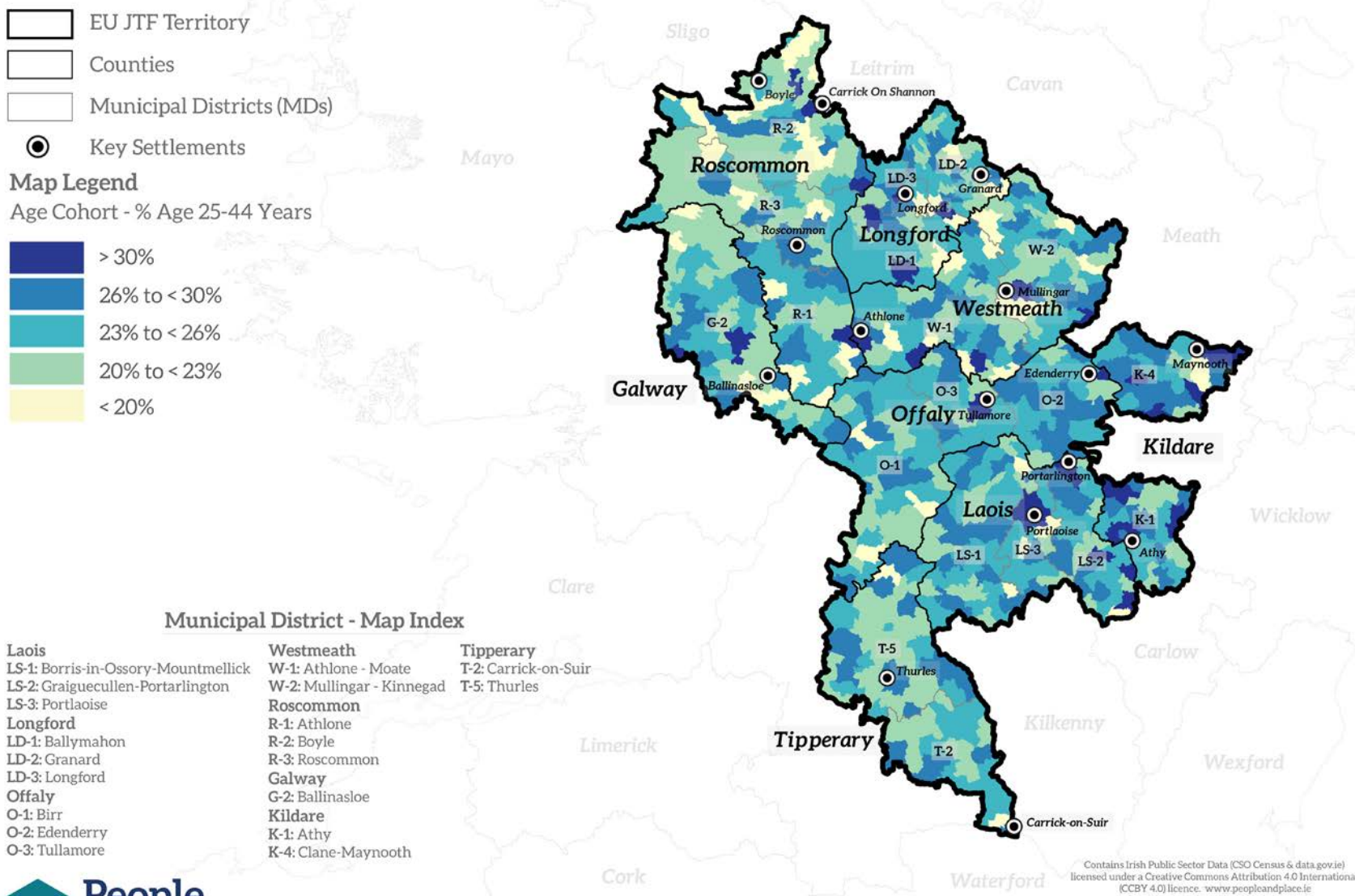


Figure 1.17: Age Cohort - % Age 25-44 Years, 2016 (Source: CSO)



Age Cohort - % Age 25-44 Years, 2016



Age Cohort - % Age 25-44 Years, 2016 (EDs)

Map 1.8: Age Cohort - % Age 25-44 Years, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Age Cohort - % Age 45-64 Years, 2016

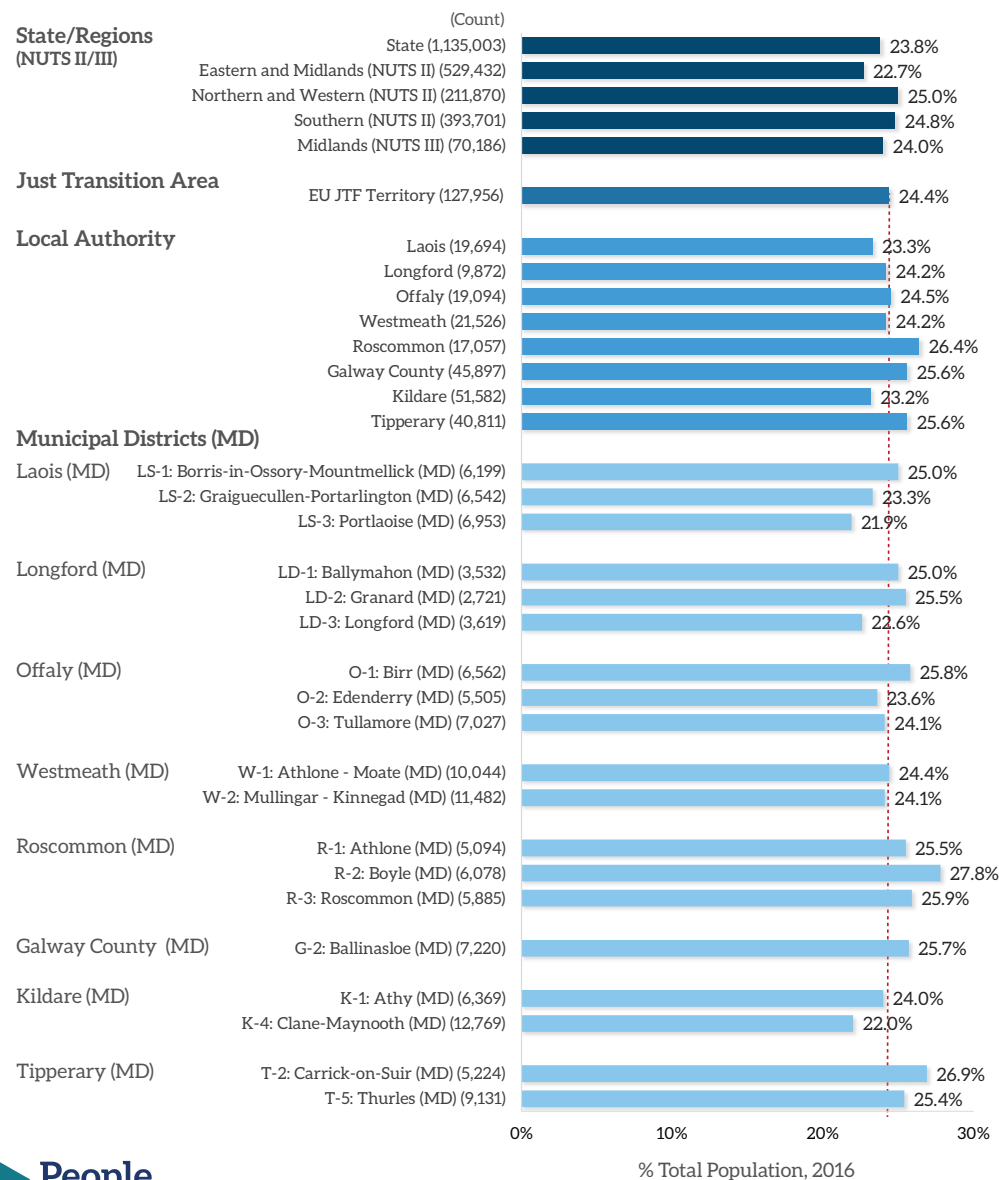
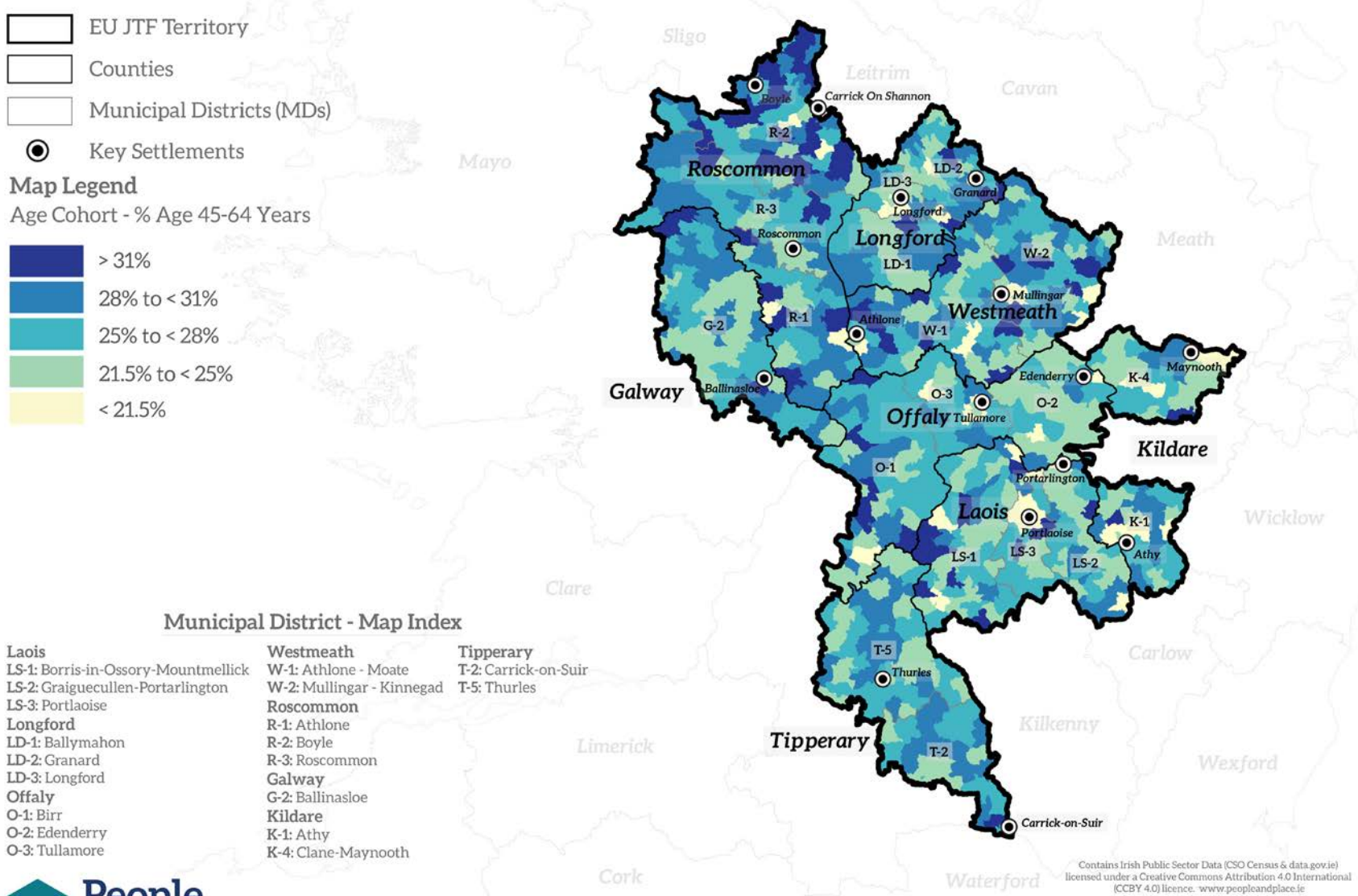


Figure 1.18: Age Cohort - % Age 45-64 Years, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Age Cohort - % Age 45-64 Years, 2016



Age Cohort - % Age 45-64 Years, 2016 (EDs)

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Map 1.9: Age Cohort - % Age 45-64 Years, 2016 (Source: CSO)



Age Cohort - % Age 65 Plus Years, 2016

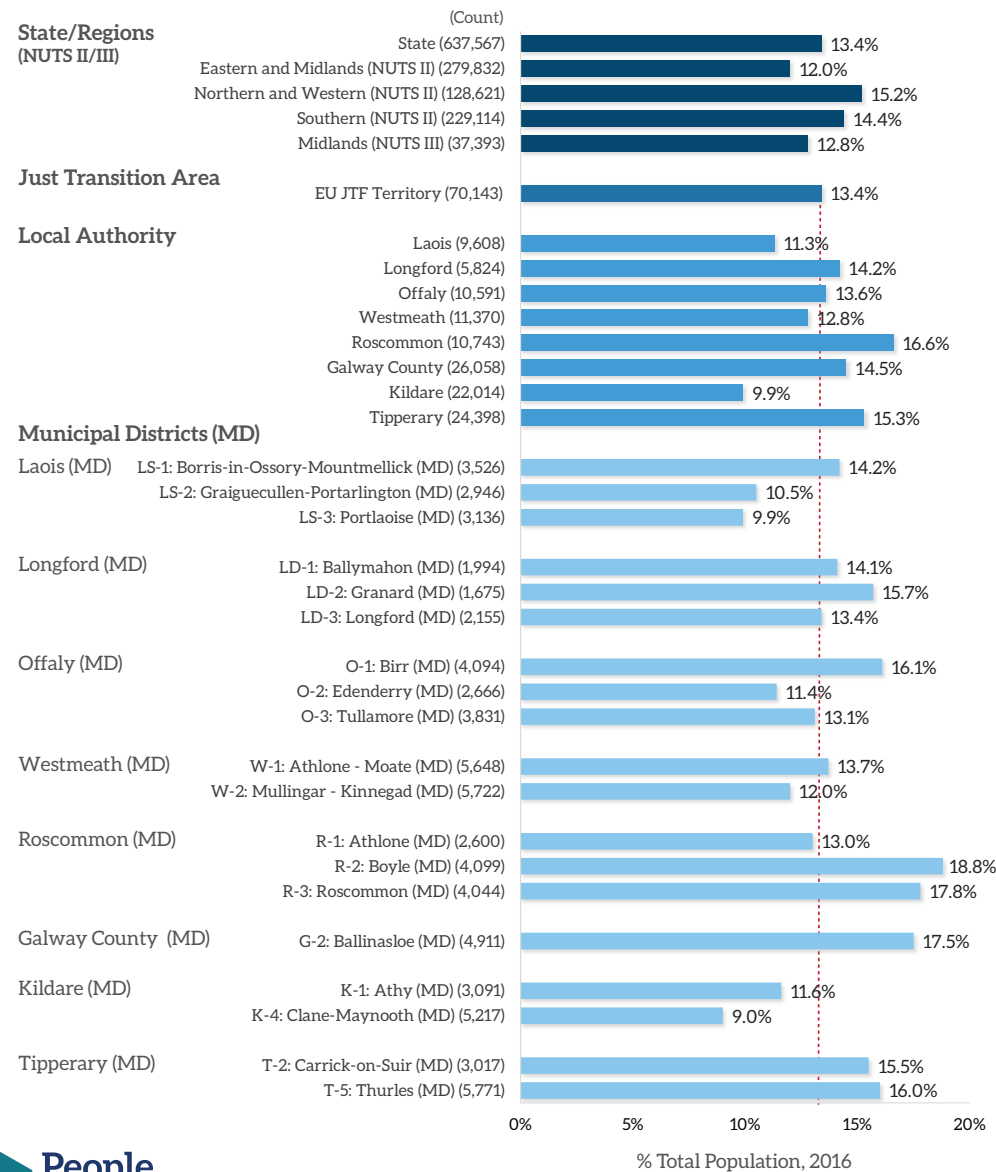
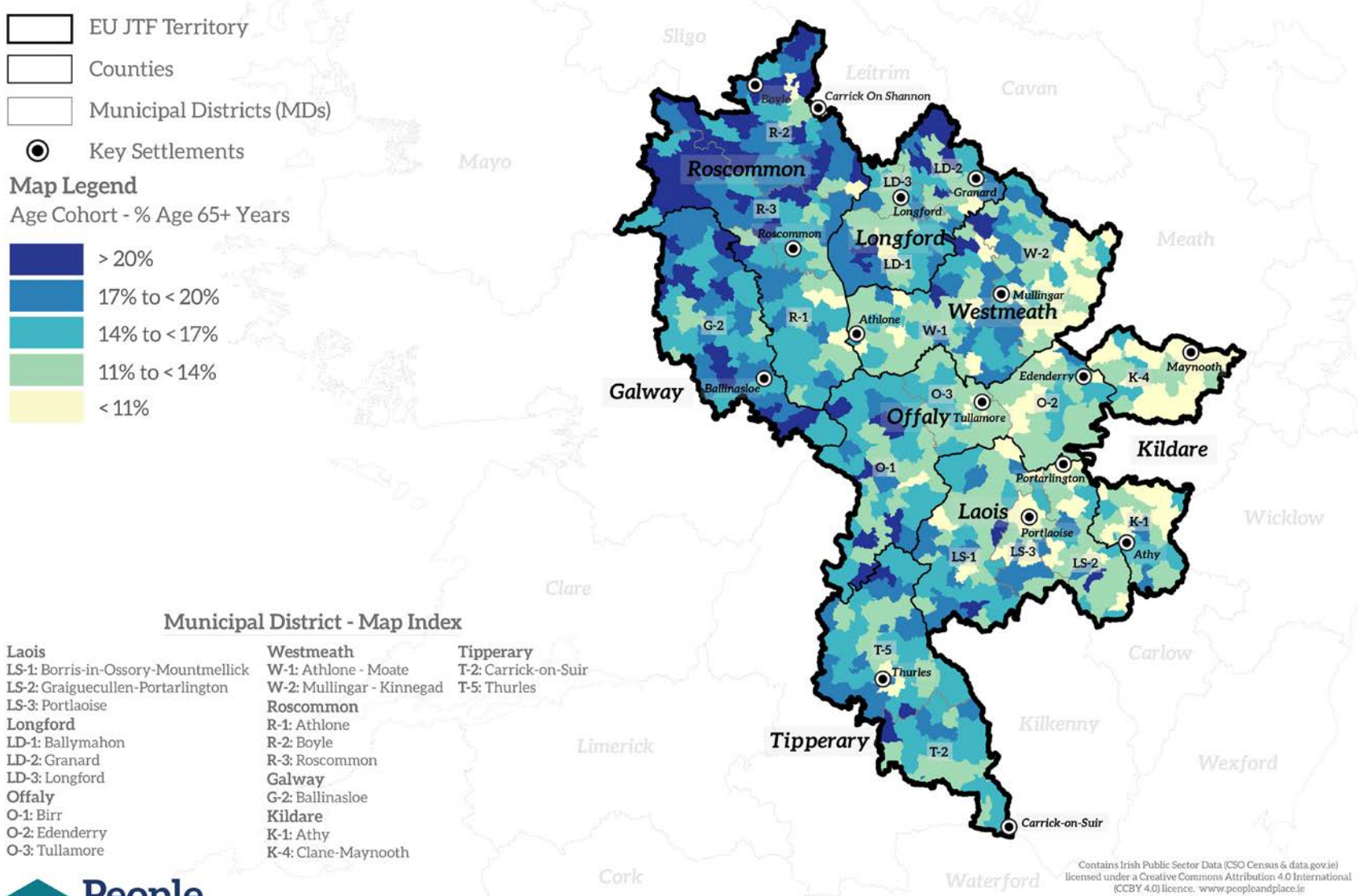


Figure 1.19: Age Cohort - % 65 Plus Years, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Age Cohort - % Age 65 Plus Years, 2016



Age Cohort - % Age 65 Plus Years, 2016 (EDs)

Map 1.10: Age Cohort - % 65 Plus Years, 2016 (Source: CSO)

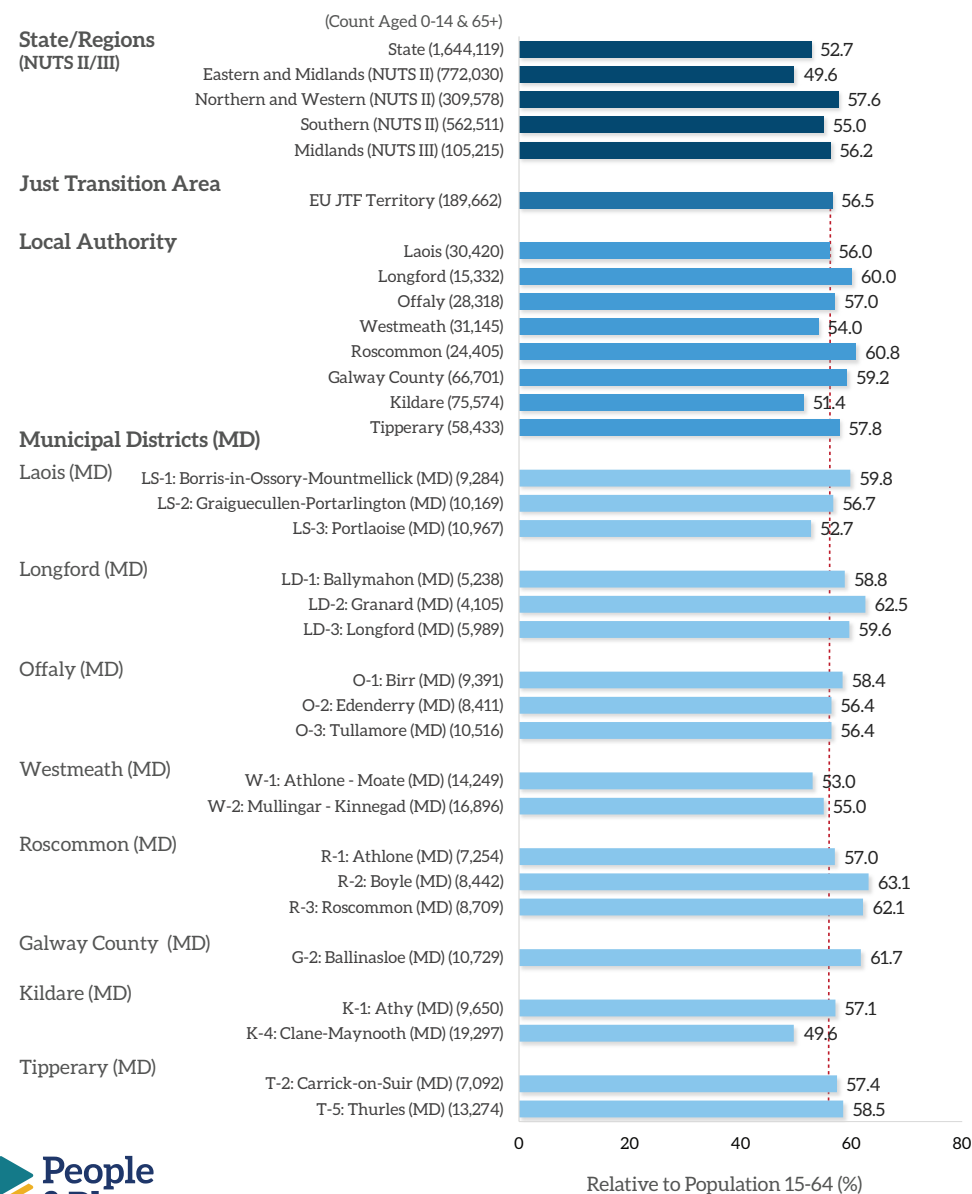
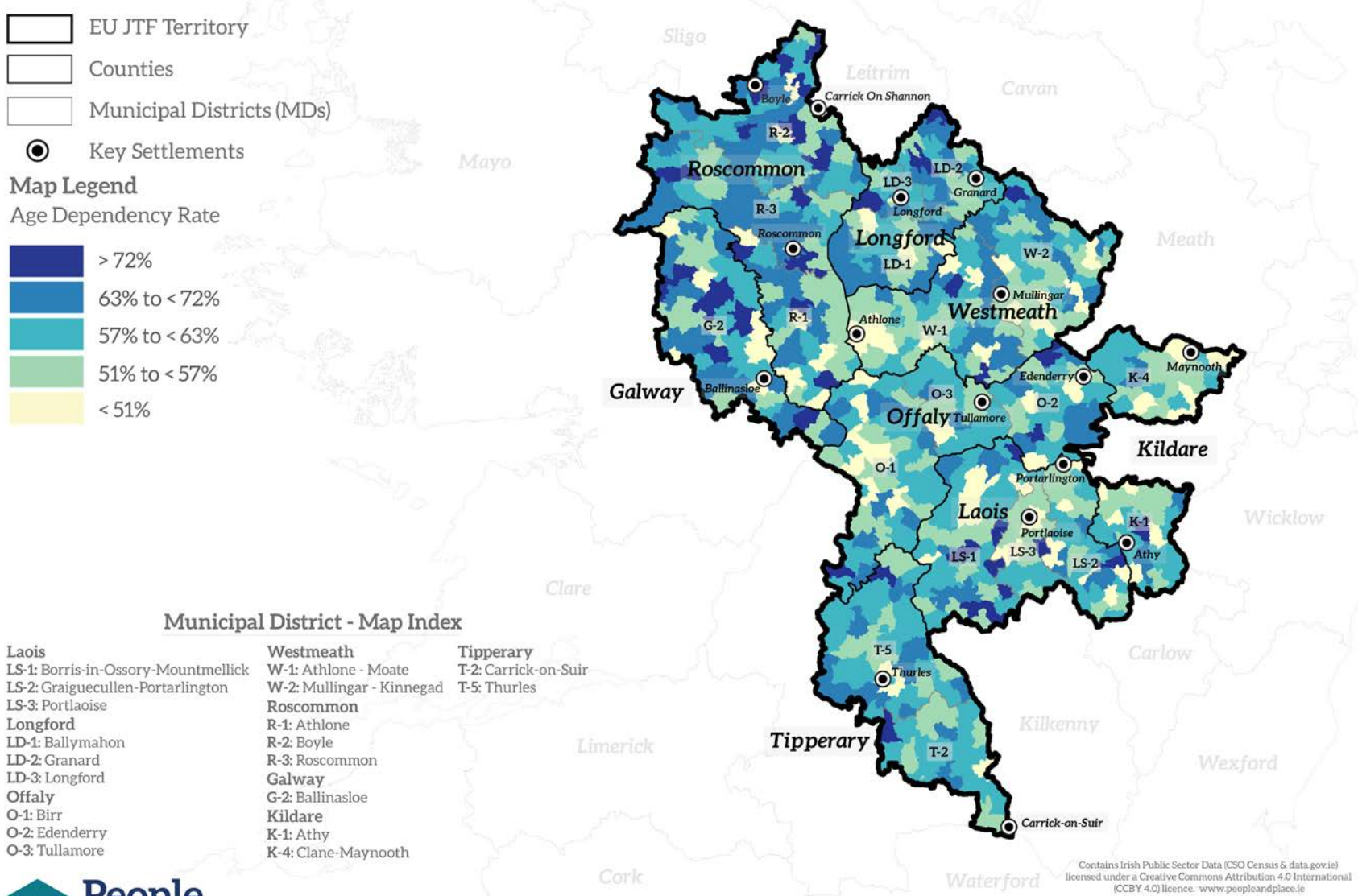


Figure 1.20: Age Dependency Rate, 2016 (Source: CSO)



Population - Age Dependency Rate, 2016 (EDs)

Map 1.11: .Age Dependency Rate, 2016 (Source: CSO)

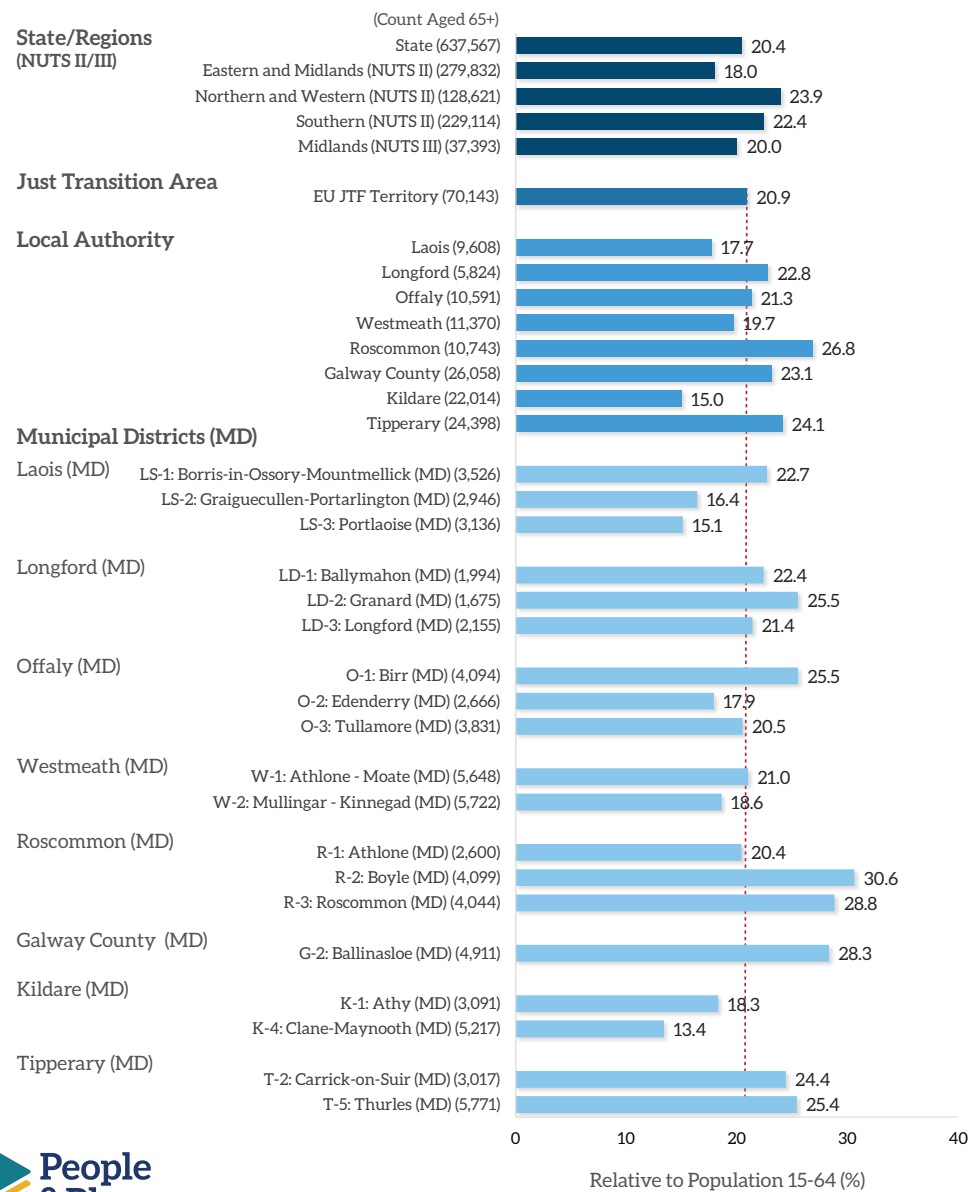
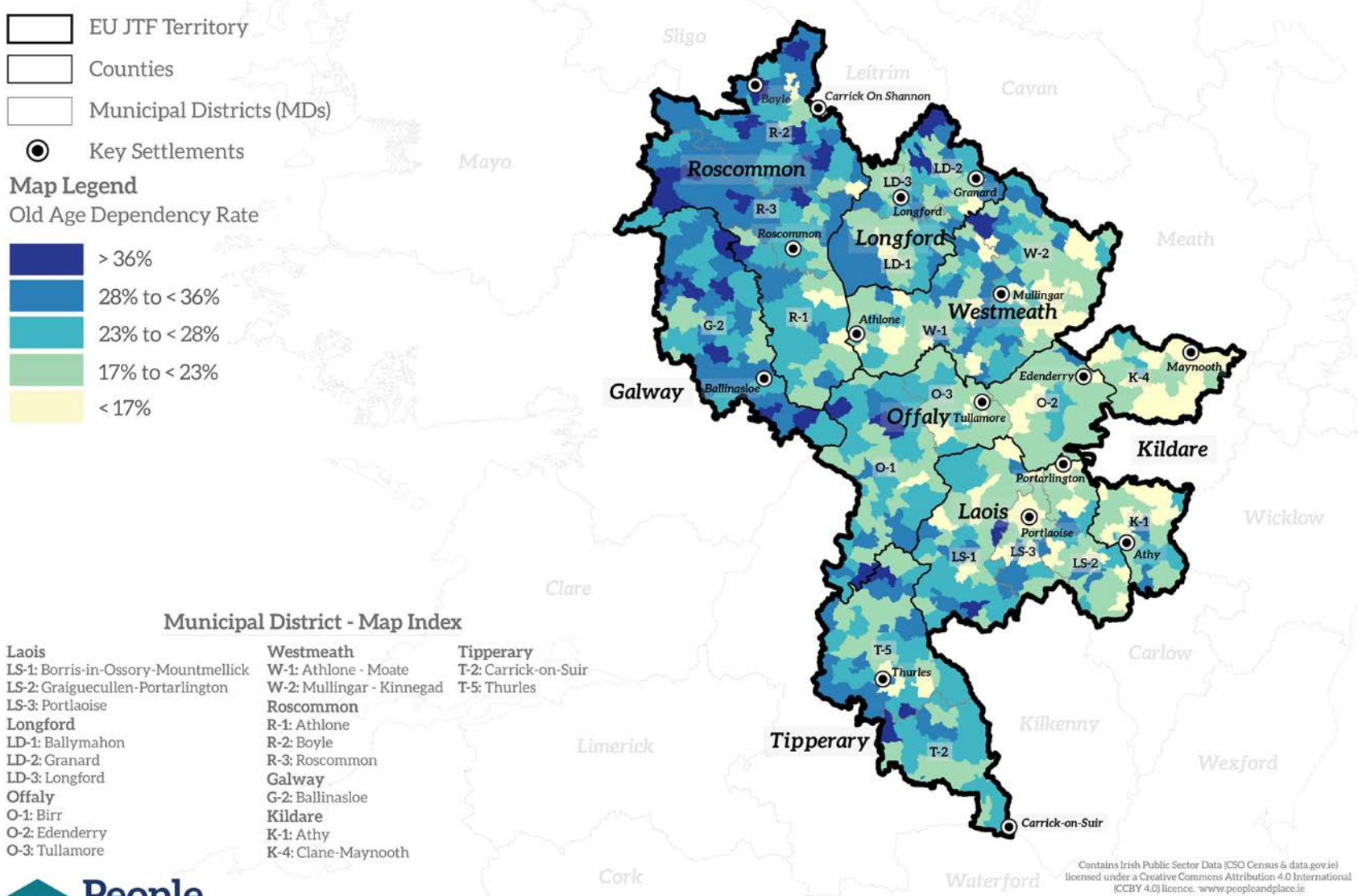


Figure 1.21: Old-Age Dependency Rate, 2016 (Source: CSO)





Population - Old Age Dependency Rate, 2016 (EDs)

Map 1.12: Old-Age Dependency Rate, 2016 (Source: CSO)

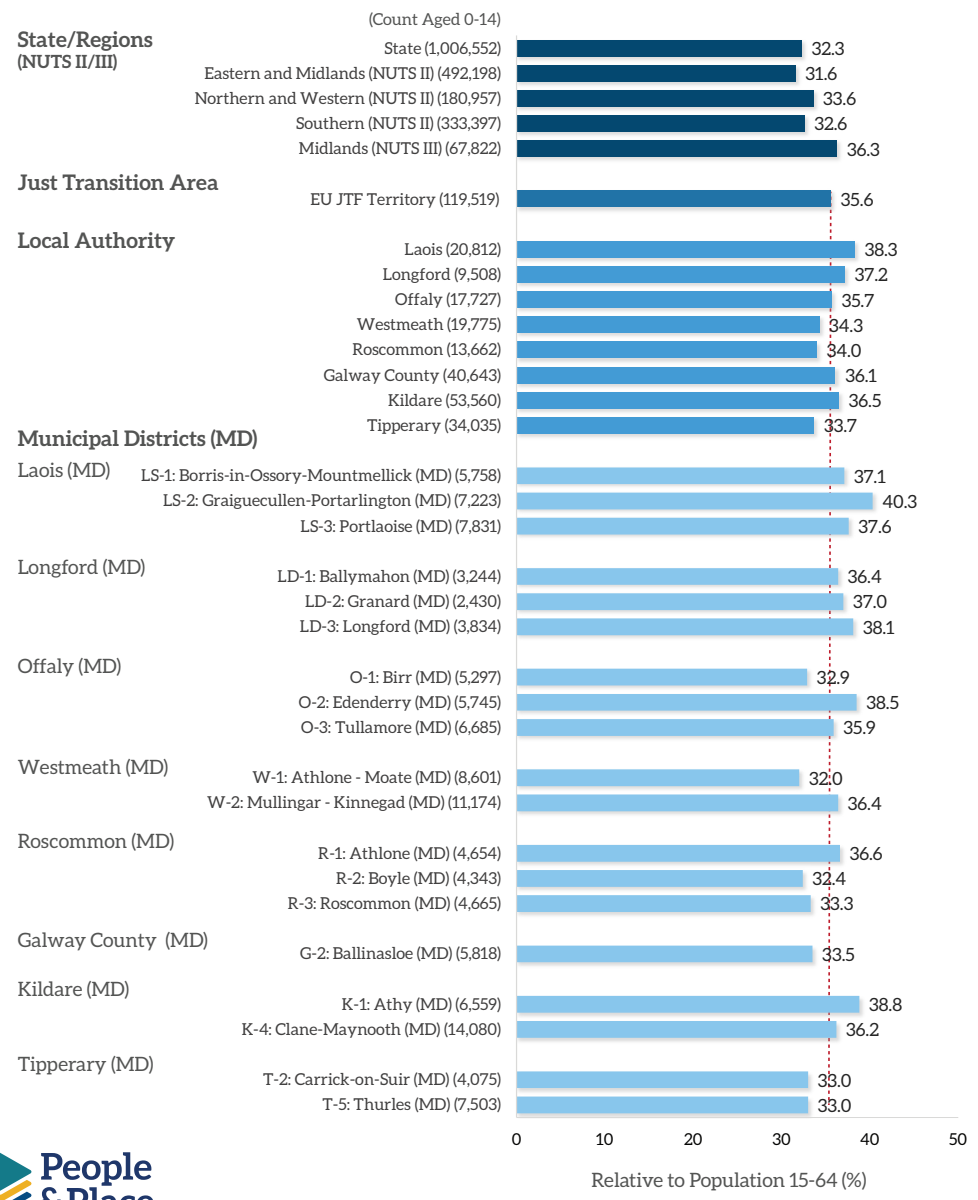
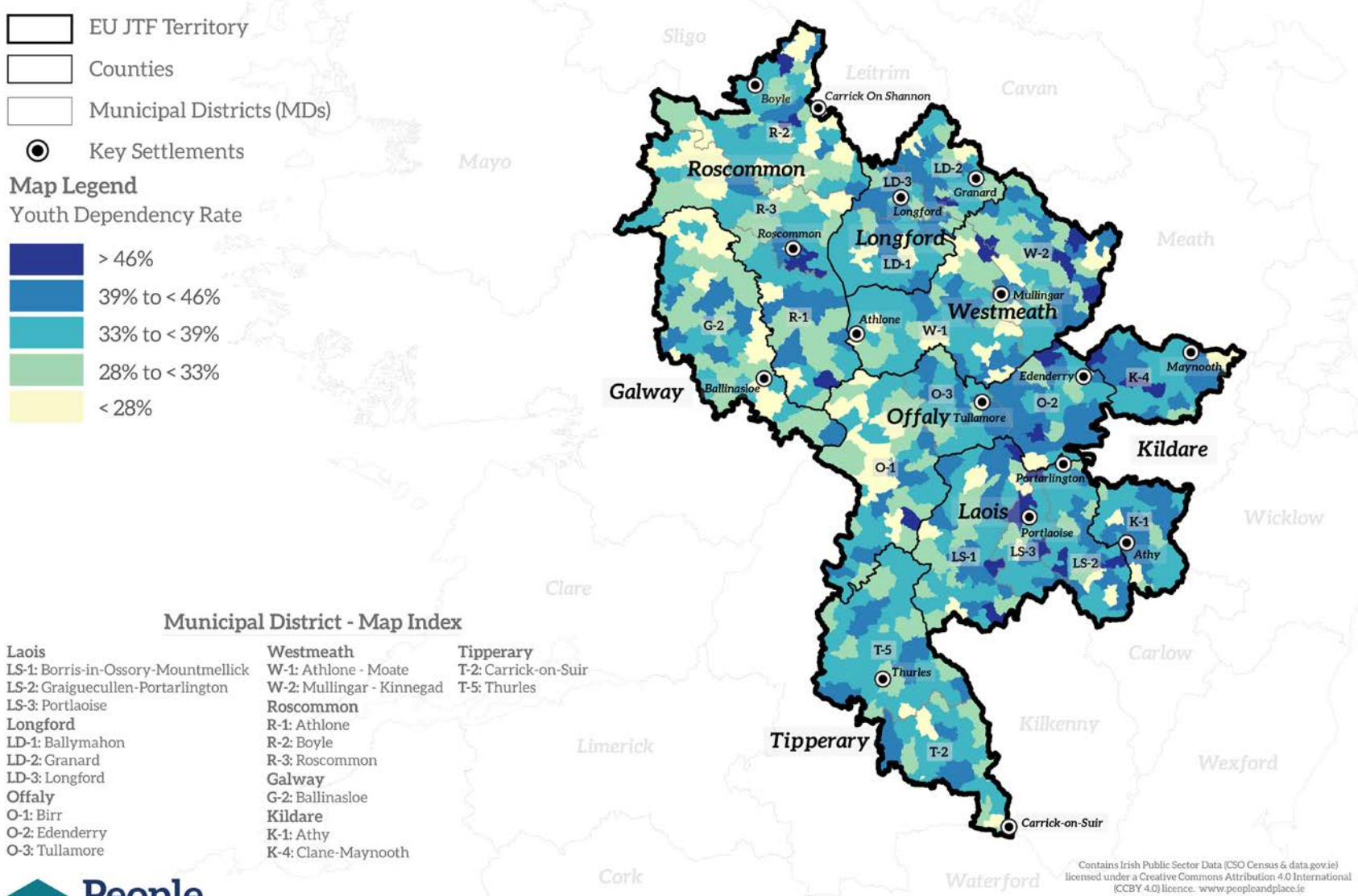


Figure 1.22: Youth Dependency Rate, 2016 (Source: CSO)



Population - Youth Dependency Rate, 2016 (EDs)



Map 1.13: Youth Dependency Rate, 2016 (Source: CSO)



# Social Indicators

## Social Dimensions

This chapter deals with the main features of the EU JTF Territory's human geography, including nationality, affluence and deprivation, educational attainment levels, disability, health, socio-economic groups and household fuel sources.

### Nationality

In respect of nationality, the EU JTF Territory is more homogenous than the State, the Midlands (NUTS 3) and the Eastern and Midlands (NUTS 2) Regions. Just over ninety percent (90.1%) of the EU JTF Territory's population is an Irish national, while the corresponding figure for the Eastern and Midlands Region is almost three percentage points lower (87.2%). The most homogenous local authority areas, in respect of nationality, are County Offaly and the MDs in Counties Galway and Tipperary. Among the local authority areas in the EU JTF Territory, Longford is the most heterogenous in respect of nationality; almost fifteen percent of its resident population has a nationality other than Irish. While County Longford is the most diverse county, there is considerable divergence across its three municipal districts; values range from eight percent in Granard to almost twenty percent in Longford. The Longford MD is the most diverse, in respect of nationality, of the EU JTF Territory's nineteen municipal districts. The second and third-highest levels of diversity are in the Portlaoise and Ballymahon MDs. The least diverse MDs are Birr, Carrick-on-Suir, Athlone and Thurles; all have values of <7.5%. ED-level mapping of persons with a nationality other than Irish reveal that the highest proportions (as a percentage of the resident population) are in the main urban centres, namely Portlaoise, Tullamore, Athlone, Longford, Athy, Mullingar and Maynooth-Celbridge. ED-level data also reveal significant proportions of non-Irish nationals in the more rural and peripheral parts of the EU JTF Territory, particularly the northern half of County Roscommon and South Longford.

### Affluence and Deprivation

The Pobal HP Index provides an objective measure of affluence and deprivation. It is computed on the basis of a basket of socio-economic variables (including employment / unemployment, housing tenure, socio-economic status, lone parenthood, educational attainment levels and population change). The Index reveals that the EU JTF Territory has a higher level of deprivation than does the State. Of the EU JTF Territory's nineteen MDs, only two are more affluent than the State; these are Clane-Maynooth and Athlone (Co. Roscommon). The MDs with the highest levels of deprivation are as follows: Carrick-on-Suir; Longford; Granard and Edenderry. When values on the Pobal HP Index are mapped at Small Area (SA) level, the resulting spatial pattern shows that affluent areas are most prevalent in North Kildare and in the outer suburbs of the EU JTF Territory's main towns, including Tullamore, Portlaoise, Athlone and Mullingar. In contrast, deprivation is most prevalent in structurally weak rural areas, particularly in North Longford, the west of County Roscommon and the west of the Ballinasloe MD. Most of Counties Roscommon, Longford and Offaly (outside of the Tullamore MD), the Ballinasloe MD, northern parts of County Westmeath, the west of County Laois and most of the Carrick-on-Suir MD are classified as 'disadvantaged' on the Pobal HP Index.

## Educational Attainment

Relative to the State, the resident population of the EU JTF Territory is lagging in terms of educational attainment. Data on educational attainment are computed on the basis of persons aged 15+ who have completed full-time formal education. These reveal that, in the EU JTF Territory, almost one third (30.6%) of the population did not progress to the senior cycle of second-level education. This is over three percentage points higher than the State level (27%), and it is considerably above the level in the Eastern and Midlands (NUTS 2) Region (24.5%). Within the EU JTF Territory, low levels of education attainment are generally most prevalent in rural areas and those with an older age profile. These include the following: the west of County Roscommon – including Castlerea and Frenchpark; the north and south of the Ballinasloe MD – including Ballymoe, Glenamaddy and Eyrecourt; north and east Longford – including Granard, Abbeylara, Mostrim, Aughnacliffe and Ballinamuck; West Offaly – most notably Ferbane, Kilcormac and Kinnity; East Offaly – most notably Daingean and around Walshisland; and most of the Carrick-on-Suir MD, particularly communities in the Sliabh Ardagh Uplands.

Persons with a technical, apprenticeship or certificate qualification account for sixteen percent of the population (aged 15+, who have completed formal full-time education). This is almost on a par with the level in the Midlands (NUTS 3) Region (16.2%), and it is above the State level (14.7%). Within the EU JTF Territory, values are generally higher in rural, than in urban, areas, with the highest percentages being in the Ballymahon (17.9%), Edenderry (17.2%) and Birr (17.1%) MDs. The ED-level map in respect of this variable highlights geographical clusters in which values exceed twenty percent. These include northern parts of County Westmeath – including Clonmellon and Castlepollard; western parts of the Ballinasloe MD – including Mountbellew, Menlough and Moylough; West Offaly – including Shannonbridge and Belmont; South Kildare – mainly around Castledermot; and rural parts of County Laois around Mountrath and Borris-in-Ossory.

Just over a quarter (27.5%) of the EU JTF Territory's resident population has a third-level qualification. This is five percentage points below the corresponding value for the State, and it is over nine percentage points below the level in the Eastern and Midlands Region (NUTS 2). Levels of educational attainment, as indicated by the proportion of the population with a third-level qualification are generally highest in the more urbanised MDs and those with younger populations than the regional norm. The highest values are in the Clane-Maynooth and Athlone MDs, while the lowest values are in the following MDs: Carrick-on-Suir; Edenderry; Borris-in-Ossory-Mountmellick; and Granard. When values for this variable are mapped at ED level, the spatial pattern reveals the local-level significance of higher-education institutes (HEIs). The greatest geographical concentrations of high values (>35%) are in and around Maynooth and Athlone. There are also notable geographical concentrations in and around Mullingar, Tullamore and Thurles, as well as in the environs of Boyle and Cortober (Carrick-on-Shannon). The geographical clusters with the lowest values (<20%) are in the Sliabh Bloom Mountains, the Sliabh Ardagh Uplands, rural communities to the north and west of Castlerea and parts of the Ballinasloe MD – including Williamstown and Boyonagh.

## Disability and Health

Almost one in seven persons (13.9%) in the EU JTF Territory has a self-declared disability. This is slightly higher than the State value, and it is associated with the EU JTF Territory having an older age profile among other factors. At MD level, the highest values – all in excess of fifteen percent – are in Carrick-on-Suir, Boyle, Roscommon and Longford. The lowest values – below twelve percent – are in the Athlone and Clane-Maynooth MDs. An ED-level spatial analysis of the proportion of persons with a disability reveals that the communities with the highest values are in and around Ferbane, Portarlington, Athy, Harristown, Templeouhy, Multyfarnham, Abbeylara, Bellanagare and Castlerea.

Health is a useful proxy indicator when assessing levels of social deprivation, as poor health is statistically associated with economic deprivation, as well as with age. The proportion of the EU JTF Territory's population who describe their general health as bad or very bad is the same as in the Midlands (NUTS 3) Region (1.7%), which is slightly higher than the proportion across the State (1.6%). Five of the EU JTF Territory's municipal districts record values that exceed two percent. These are Longford, Boyle, Tullamore, Roscommon and Carrick-on-Suir. At ED-level, the greatest geographical concentrations of persons with bad or very bad health (>3% of the resident population) are in and around Castlerea, Ferbane, Legan, Abbeyshrule and Killenaule.

## Socio-Economic Groups

The CSO assigns people to defined socio-economic groups<sup>1</sup> on the basis of their occupations. Retired and / or unemployed persons aged 15 years or over are classified according to their former occupation and employment status. In the EU JTF Territory, twenty-seven percent of persons are classified as pertaining to socio-economic groups A, B and C. This proportion is slightly higher than in the Midlands Region, and it is notably lower than in the State (32.6%) and the Eastern and Midlands Region (36.9%). The municipal districts with the highest proportions of persons in these three socio-economic groups are Clane-Maynooth, Mullingar-Kinnegad and Athlone, all of which record values in excess of thirty percent. The lowest values are in the Carrick-on-Suir, Granard and Birr MDs. Locally, within MDs, the highest concentrations of persons in socio-economic groups A, B and C are in the suburbs and peri-urban zones around the main employment centres, most notably Maynooth-Celbridge, Tullamore, Mullingar, Athlone, Thurles and Portlaoise and along the main commuter corridors to the Greater Dublin Area.

Just over one in eight households, in the EU JTF Territory, is headed by a person belonging to socio-economic groups D, E and F. This is similar to the proportion in the Midlands (NUTS 3) Region, and it is higher than is the case across the State and the Eastern and Midlands (NUTS 2) Region. In four MDs, the proportion of households in socio-economic groups D, E and F exceeds fifteen percent; these are Edenderry,

<sup>1</sup>A Employers and managers; B Higher professional; C Lower professional; D Non-manual; E Manual skilled; F Semi-skilled; G Unskilled; H Own account workers; I Farmers; J Agricultural workers; Z All others gainfully occupied and unknown

Longford, Ballymahon and Carrick-on-Suir. Locally, within the EU JTF Territory's MDs, the greatest spatial concentrations of persons in these three socio-economic groups are in the following locations: East Offaly and the adjoining parts of North Kildare and the Athy MD; along the Roscommon-Longford county boundary from Roosky to Lanesborough; between Athlone and Clonmacnoise; eastern parts of County Westmeath – from Clonmellon to Tyrrelspass; the environs of Portlaoise; Templemore and Roscrea.

Households that are headed by a person whose occupation is classified as 'unskilled' constitute just under four percent (3.8%) of those in the EU JTF Territory. At MD-level, the highest values are in the Edenderry and Carrick-on-Suir Municipal Districts. While there are no significant geographical concentrations, there are some notable clusters, including in North-West Kildare – around the Bog of Allen, in the Sliabh Bloom Mountains and Sliabh Ardagh Uplands, Clonfert-Eyrecourt-Shannonbridge and rural parts of North Longford – including Ballinamuck and Drumlish.

Own-account workers constitute just under five percent (4.8%) of the heads of household in the EU JTF Territory. This is slightly higher than in the Midlands (NUTS 3) Region, and it is on a par with the State value. The MDs with the highest values (>5%) are Boyle, Granard, Clane-Maynooth, Borris-in-Ossory-Mountmellick, Roscommon and Birr. There are no discernible spatial patterns at ED-level in respect of the distribution of own-account workers, although some villages emerge as having notable numbers (>9% of households). These include Drangan, Kilcolman, Pollagh, Timahoe and Kilmore.

Almost eight percent of households, in the EU JTF Territory, are headed by a farmer. This is higher than in the Midlands (NUTS 3) Region and in the State. The MDs with the highest proportions of households headed by farmers are predominantly west of the Shannon – the Ballinasloe MD and those in County Roscommon. They also include the Birr and Granard MDs. The ED-level distribution of households headed by farmers exhibits a strong west to east gradient; the highest values are in the west of the EU JTF Territory, and they include most of the Ballinasloe MD, the parts of County Roscommon that are west of the town, South Offaly and the western parts of the Thurles MD. Values across most EDs in these parts of the EU JTF Territory exceed twenty percent. Similar values pertain in the south-west of County Laois – notably in Rathdowney and Cullahill – and in the very north of County Westmeath. The lowest values, in contrast, are in the east of the EU JTF Territory, particularly in the Clane-Maynooth MD and around the main urban centres – Athlone, Mullingar, Tullamore and Portlaoise.

One percent of households are headed by agricultural workers, although this figure stands at over three percent in the Carrick-on-Suir MD and at almost two percent in the Edenderry and Birr MDs. Over six percent of households are headed by agricultural workers across much of the Sliabh Blooms and communities in the Carrick-on-Suir MD including Fethard, Moyglass and Drangan.

## Sources of Household Fuel

Throughout much of the EU JTF Territory, peat remains the primary source of home heating. Over a fifth (21.8%) of all households in the EU JTF Territory use peat to heat their homes. This is two percentage points lower than is the case in the Midlands (NUTS 3) Region, but it is almost four times the level across the State. Over forty percent of homes in the Birr, Ballinasloe and Edenderry MDs use peat as their primary source of household fuel. Values are lower (<15%) in both MDs in Counties Kildare and Tipperary as well as in the Longford, Portlaoise and Graiguecullen-Portarlington MDs. Peat use, as the main household fuel, is notably more prevalent in rural areas than in the EU JTF Territory's main towns. Over half of homes in rural West Offaly, most of the Ballinasloe MD, the Sliabh Blooms and most of East Offaly use peat. Throughout most of the rest of County Offaly, South and West Roscommon, South Longford and central parts of County Westmeath, over a third of households rely on peat to heat their homes.

The use of coal, as the primary household fuel, is less prevalent than peat throughout the EU JTF Territory. Fewer than five percent (4.5%) of households burn coal to heat their homes. This is slightly lower than the percentage across the State (5.1%). Locally, however, there are some communities, in the EU JTF Territory, in which coal burning is significant; their distribution is associated with the former coalmines in Arigna, Ballingarry and Castlecomer. Communities in the vicinities of these mines have had a coal-burning tradition, and over one fifth of homes in Arigna continue to use coal as their primary household fuel. Values exceed ten percent of homes in most of the Carrick-on-Suir MD – particularly in rural areas and in the south of County Laois – notably The Swan. Coal use is also associated, in part, with older local authority housing across the EU JTF Territory's towns and villages.

Almost half (48.4%) of households in the EU JTF Territory use oil as their primary source of heating. This is over eight percentage points higher than in the State, as many households in Ireland's main urban centres are connected to the national gas network. The spatial pattern in respect of households' fuel consumption, in the EU JTF Territory, is generally that oil use is greatest in the areas in which peat and coal use is lowest. Thus, the greatest geographical concentrations of households that use oil as their primary heat source are in the Thurles and Athy MDs, North Longford and in the region's main urban centres and their peri-urban fringes.

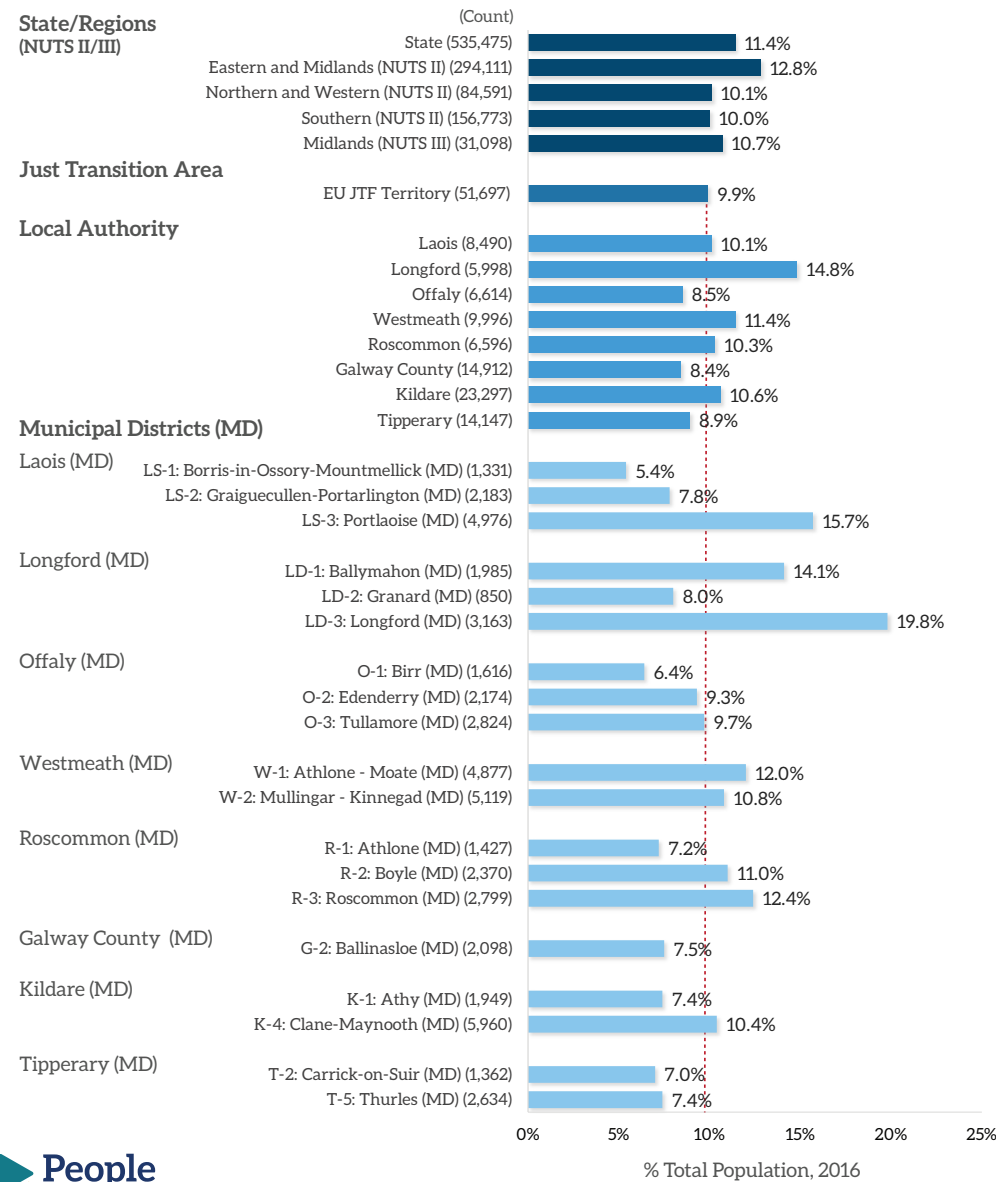







Figure 2.1: Nationality - % Non-Irish, 2016 (Source: CSO)



-  EU JTF Territory
-  Counties
-  Municipal Districts (MDs)
-  Key Settlements

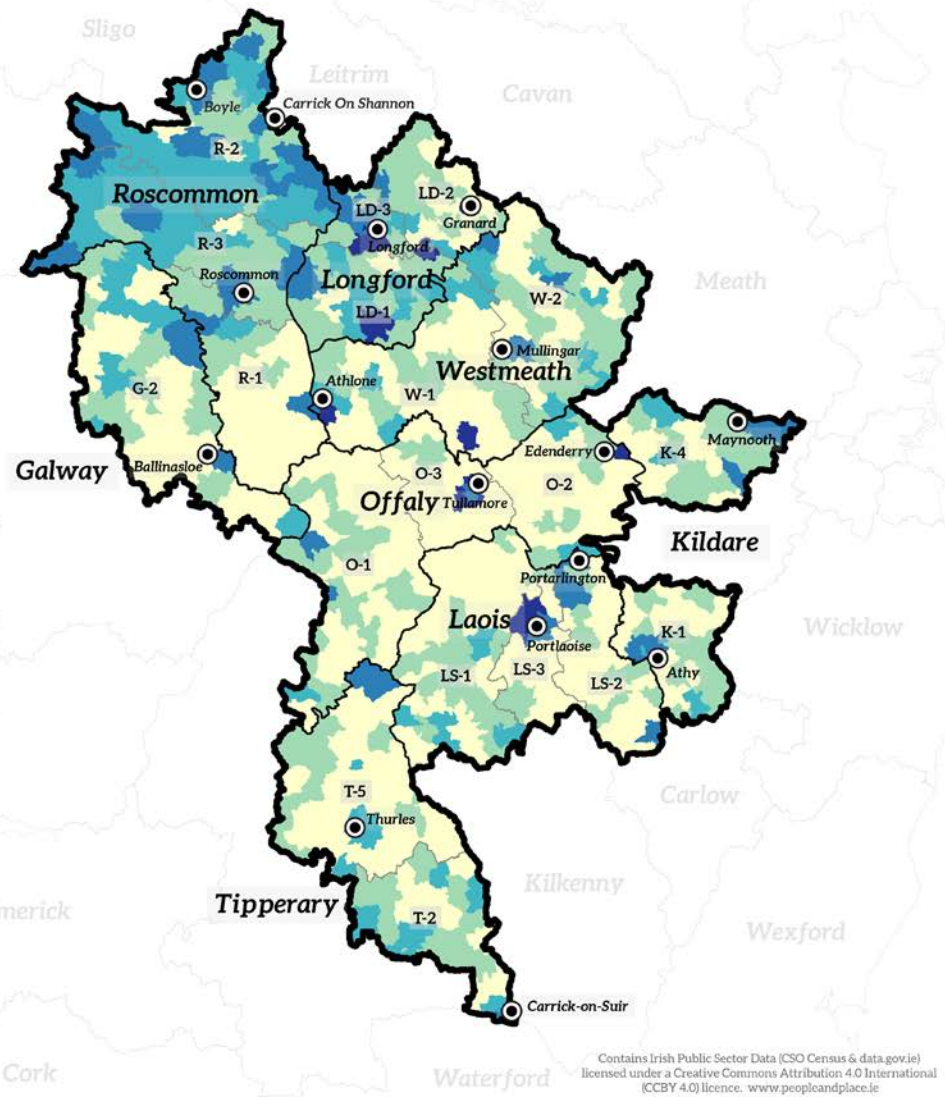
**Map Legend**

% Nationality - Non-Irish Nationals

-  > 20%
-  11% to < 20%
-  7% to < 11%
-  4% to < 7%
-  < 4%

**Municipal District - Map Index**

- |                                     |                           |                      |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Laois</b>                        | <b>Westmeath</b>          | <b>Tipperary</b>     |
| LS-1: Borris-in-Ossory-Mountmellick | W-1: Athlone - Moate      | T-2: Carrick-on-Suir |
| LS-2: Graiguecullen-Portarlinton    | W-2: Mullingar - Kinnegad | T-5: Thurles         |
| LS-3: Portlaoise                    |                           |                      |
| <b>Longford</b>                     | <b>Roscommon</b>          |                      |
| LD-1: Ballymahon                    | R-1: Athlone              |                      |
| LD-2: Granard                       | R-2: Boyle                |                      |
| LD-3: Longford                      | R-3: Roscommon            |                      |
| <b>Offaly</b>                       | <b>Galway</b>             |                      |
| O-1: Birr                           | G-2: Ballinasloe          |                      |
| O-2: Edenderry                      | <b>Kildare</b>            |                      |
| O-3: Tullamore                      | K-1: Athy                 |                      |
|                                     | K-4: Clane-Maynooth       |                      |



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Nationality - % Non-Irish Nationals, 2016 (EDs)

Map 2.1: Nationality - % Non-Irish, 2016 (Source: CSO)



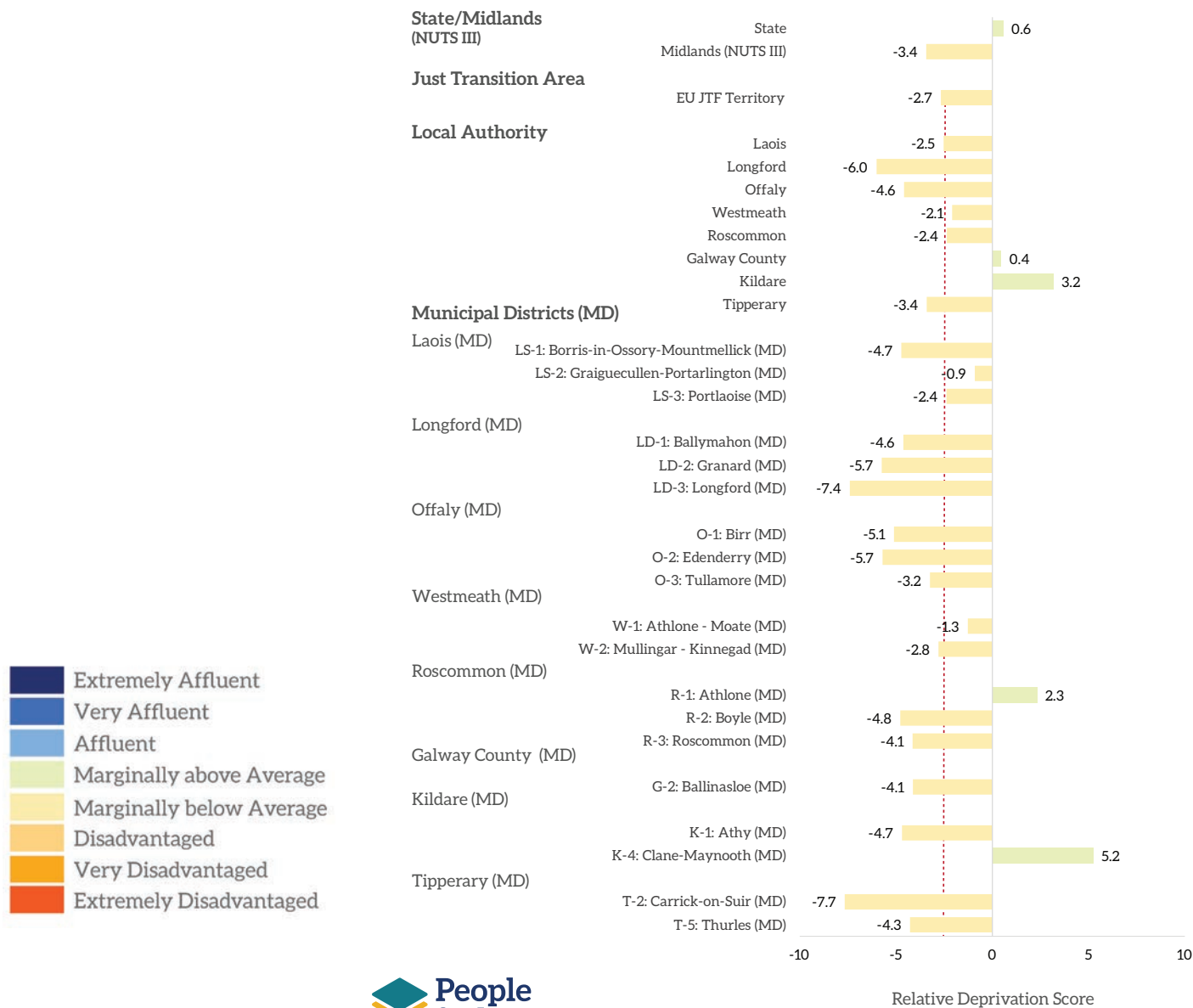


Figure 2.2: Pobal HP Deprivation Index, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Pobal HP Deprivation Index, 2016



Pobal HP Deprivation Index Relative Score, 2016 (SAs)

Map 2.2: Pobal HP Deprivation Index, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Education Attainment - % No Formal/Primary Only, 2016

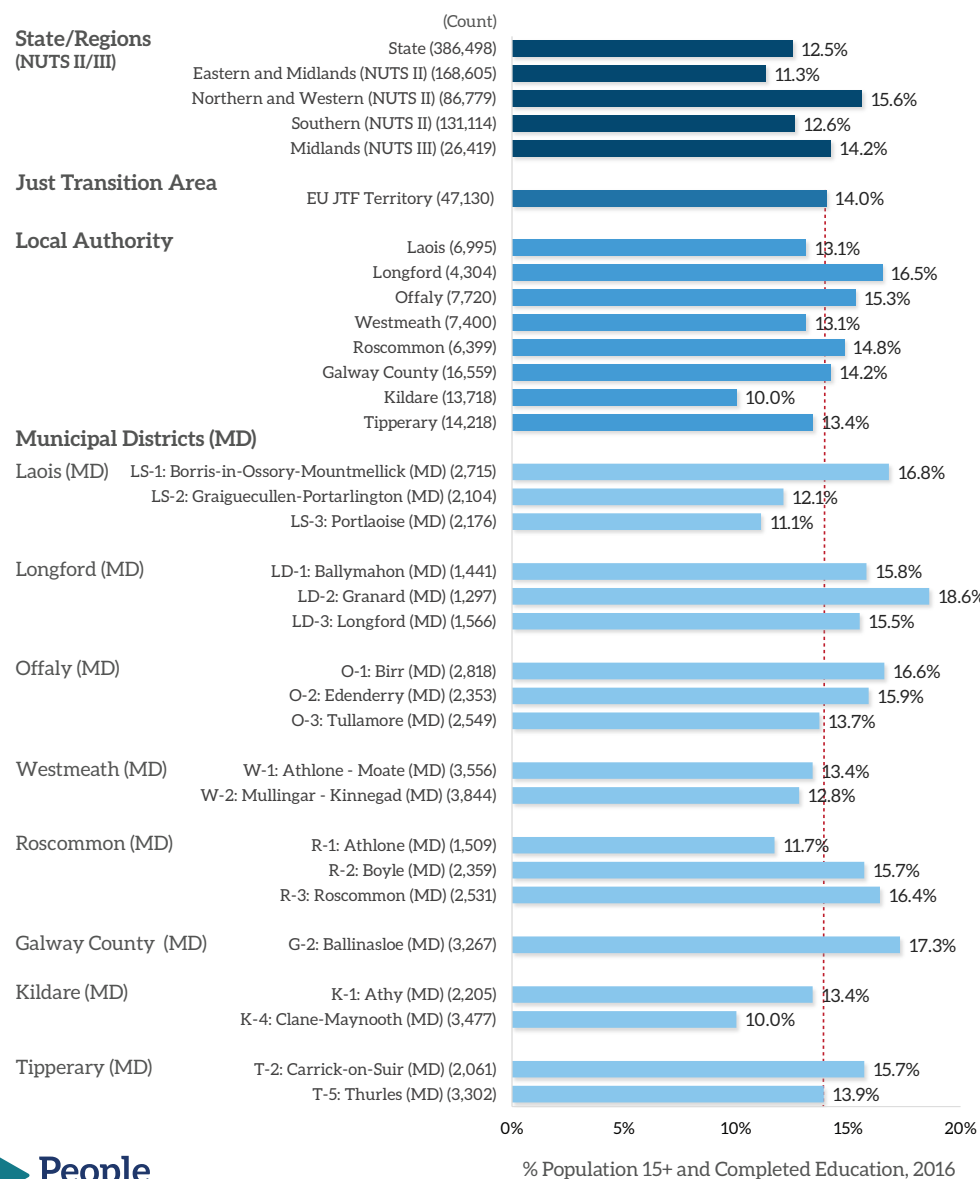
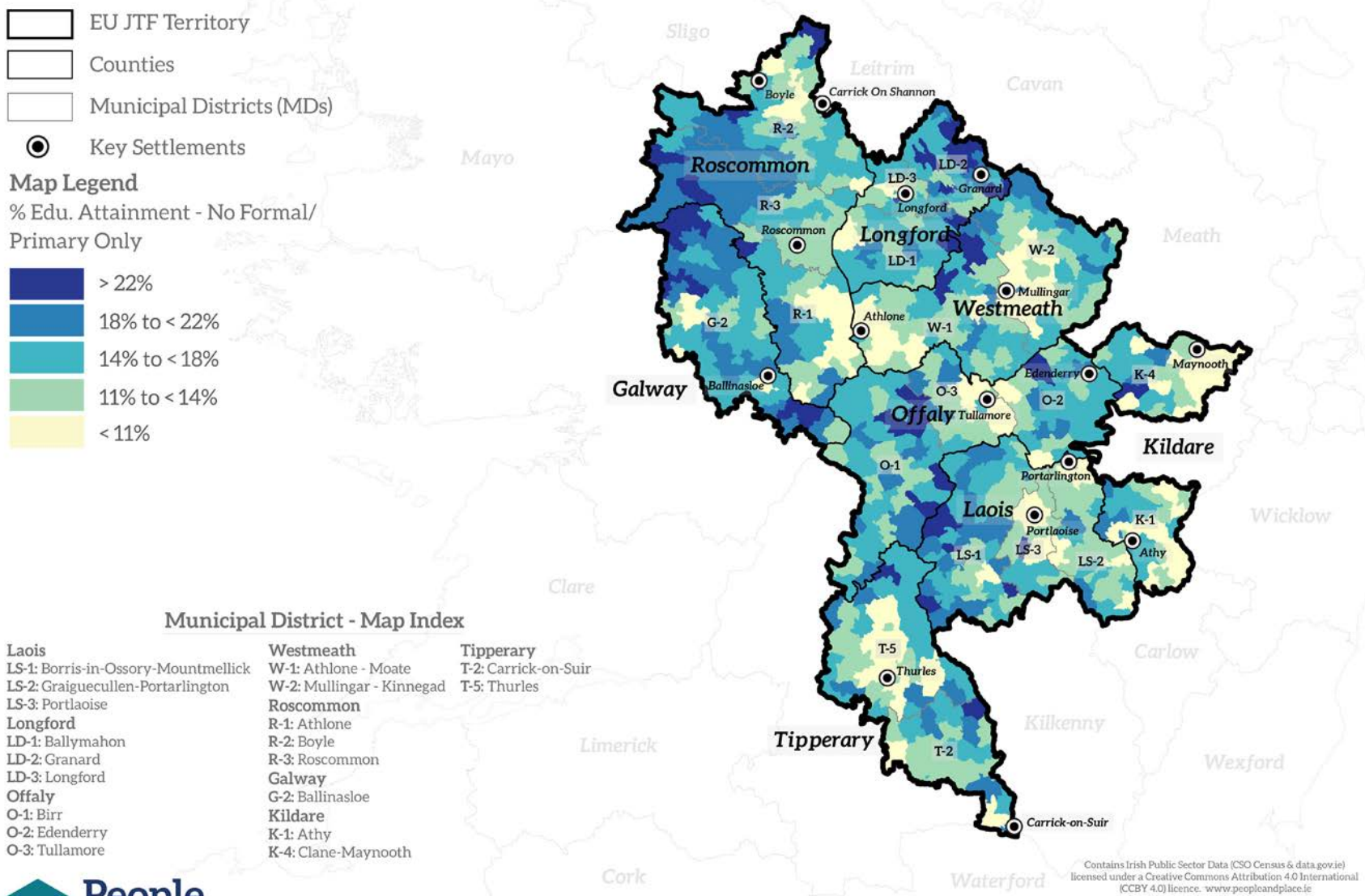


Figure 2.3: Education Attainment - % No Formal/Primary Only, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Education Attainment - % No Formal/Primary Only, 2016



Education Attainment - % No Formal/Primary Only, 2016 (EDs)

Map 2.3: Education Attainment - % No Formal/Primary Only, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Education Attainment - % Lower Secondary, 2016

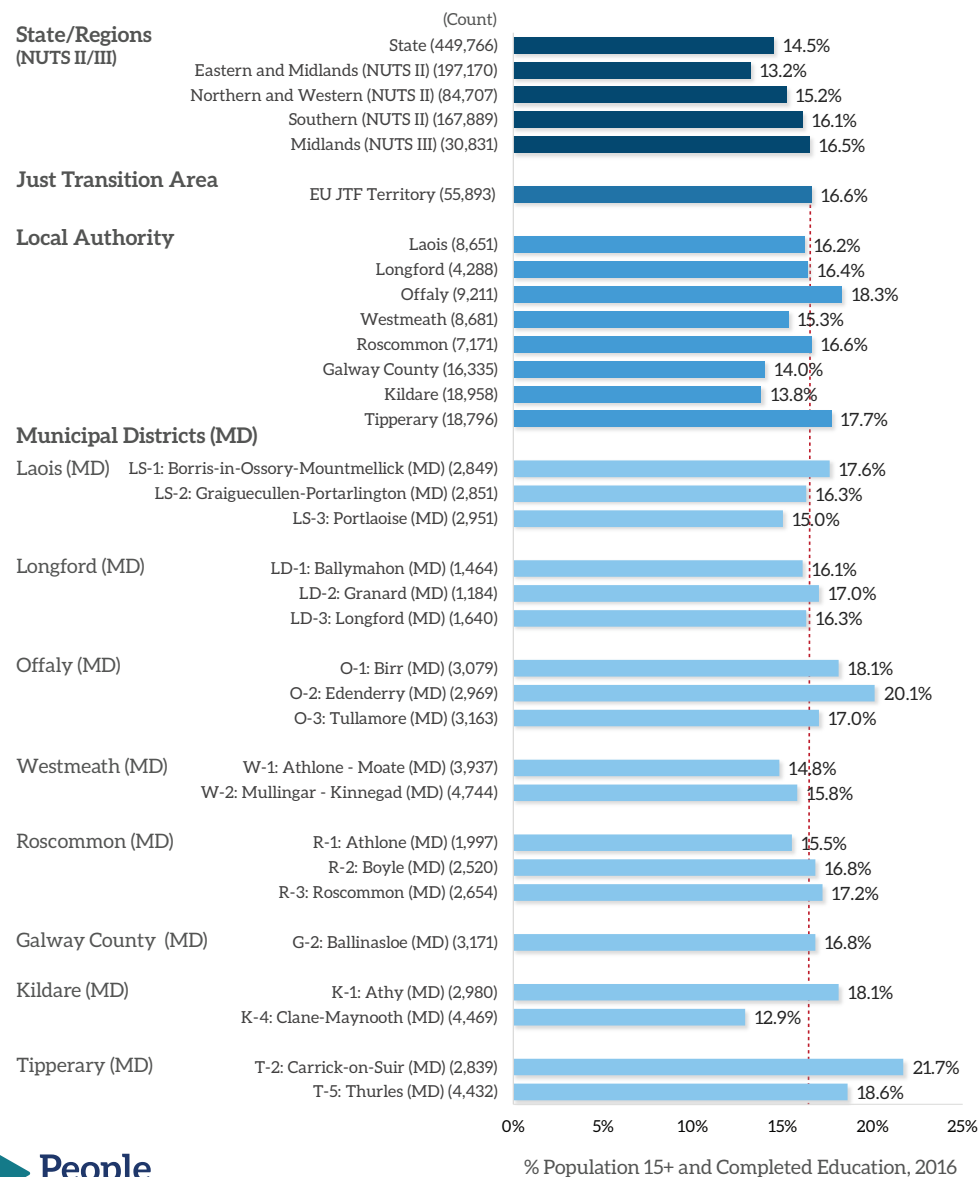
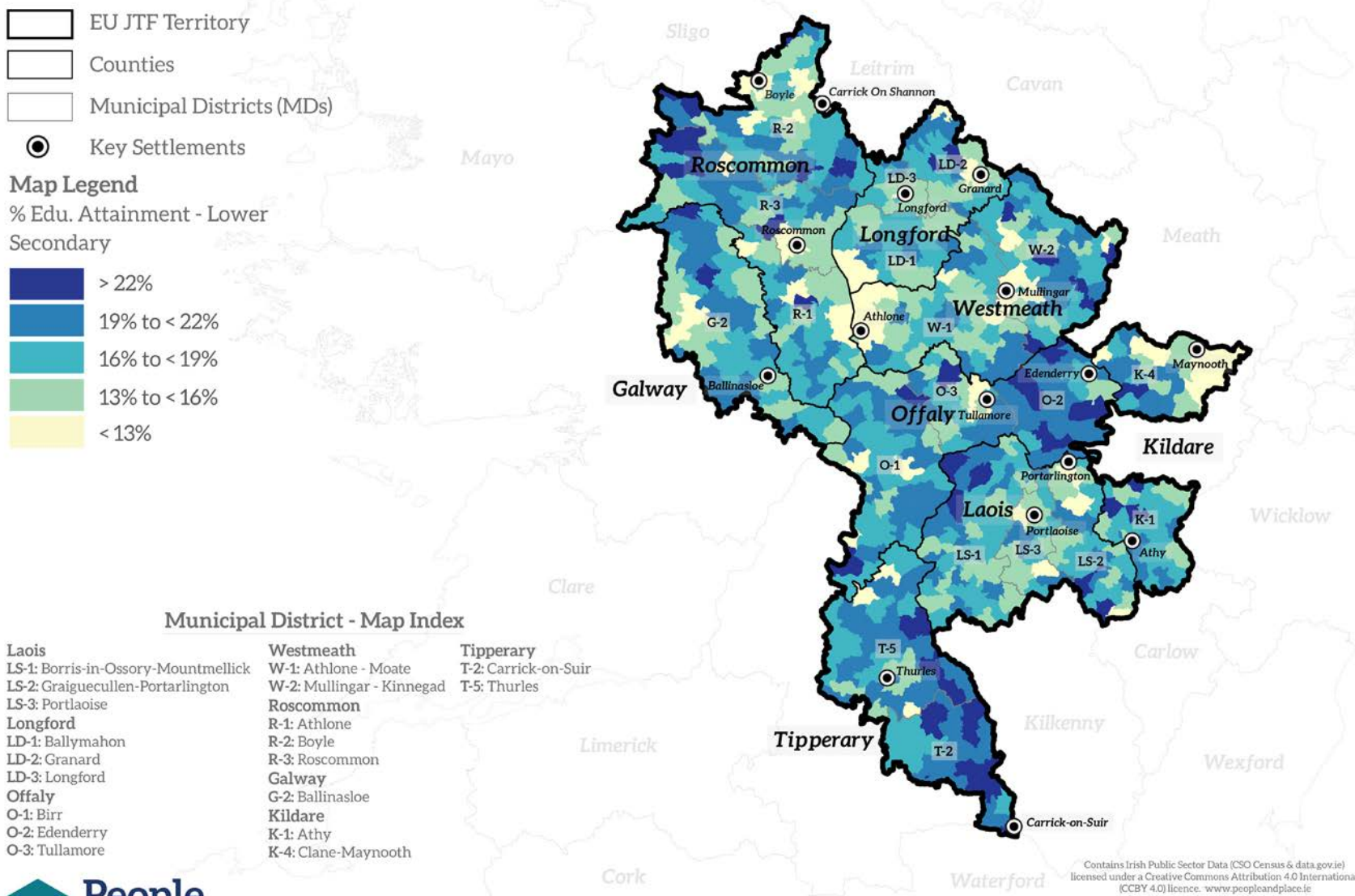


Figure 2.4: Education Attainment - % Lower Secondary, 2016 (Source: CSO)



Education Attainment - % Lower Secondary, 2016



Education Attainment - % Lower Secondary, 2016 (EDs)

Map 2.4: Education Attainment - % Lower Secondary, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Education Attainment - % Higher Secondary, 2016

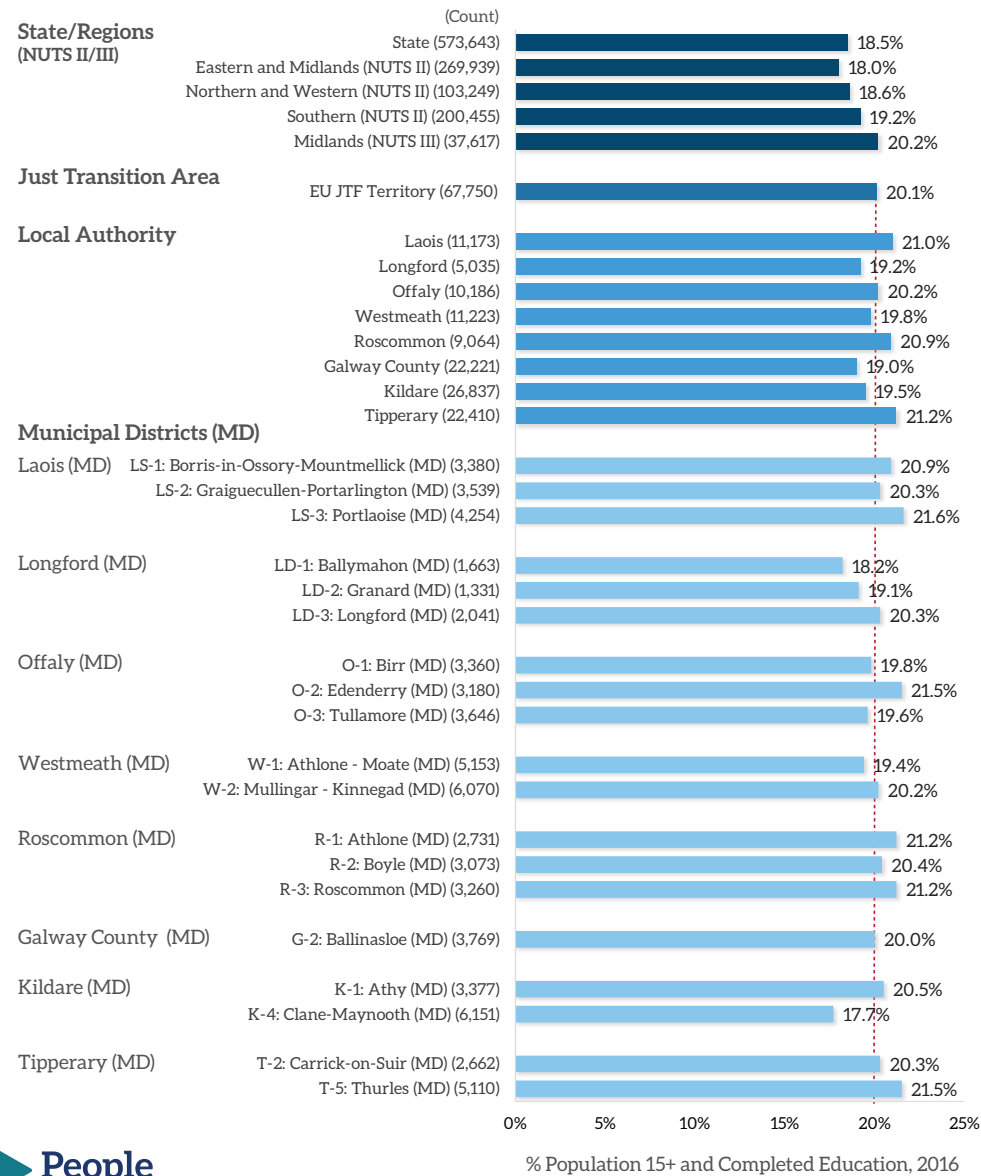


Figure 2.5: Education Attainment - % Higher Secondary, 2016 (Source: CSO)

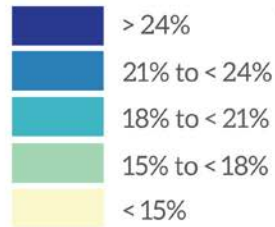


Education Attainment - % Higher Secondary, 2016

-  EU JTF Territory
-  Counties
-  Municipal Districts (MDs)
-  Key Settlements

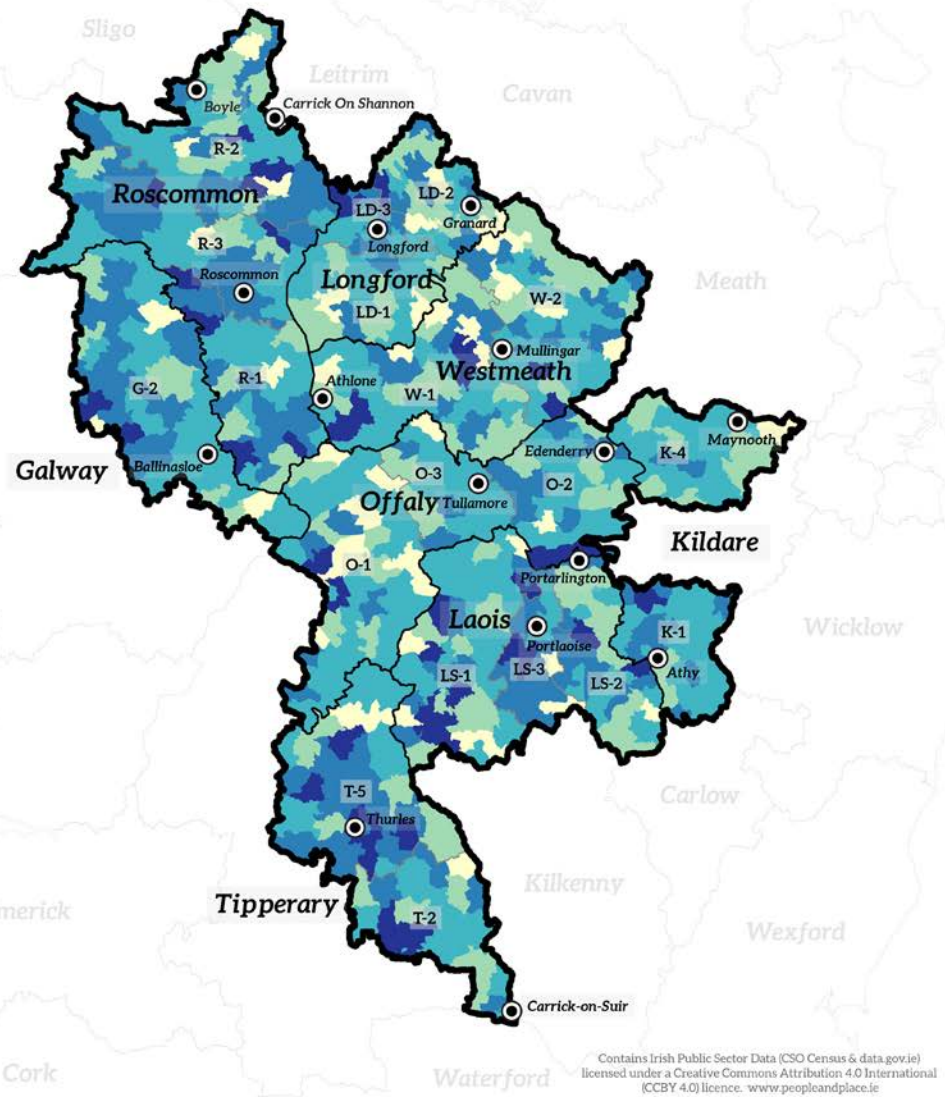
Map Legend

% Edu. Attainment - Higher Secondary



Municipal District - Map Index

- |                                     |                           |                      |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Laois</b>                        | <b>Westmeath</b>          | <b>Tipperary</b>     |
| LS-1: Borris-in-Ossory-Mountmellick | W-1: Athlone - Moate      | T-2: Carrick-on-Suir |
| LS-2: Graiguecullen-Portarlinton    | W-2: Mullingar - Kinnegad | T-5: Thurles         |
| LS-3: Portlaoise                    |                           |                      |
| <b>Longford</b>                     | <b>Roscommon</b>          |                      |
| LD-1: Ballymahon                    | R-1: Athlone              |                      |
| LD-2: Granard                       | R-2: Boyle                |                      |
| LD-3: Longford                      | R-3: Roscommon            |                      |
| <b>Offaly</b>                       | <b>Galway</b>             |                      |
| O-1: Birr                           | G-2: Ballinasloe          |                      |
| O-2: Edenderry                      | <b>Kildare</b>            |                      |
| O-3: Tullamore                      | K-1: Athy                 |                      |
|                                     | K-4: Clane-Maynooth       |                      |



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Education Attainment - % Higher Secondary, 2016 (EDs)

Map 2.5: Education Attainment - % Higher Secondary, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Education Attainment - % Technical/Apprenticeship/Certificate, 2016

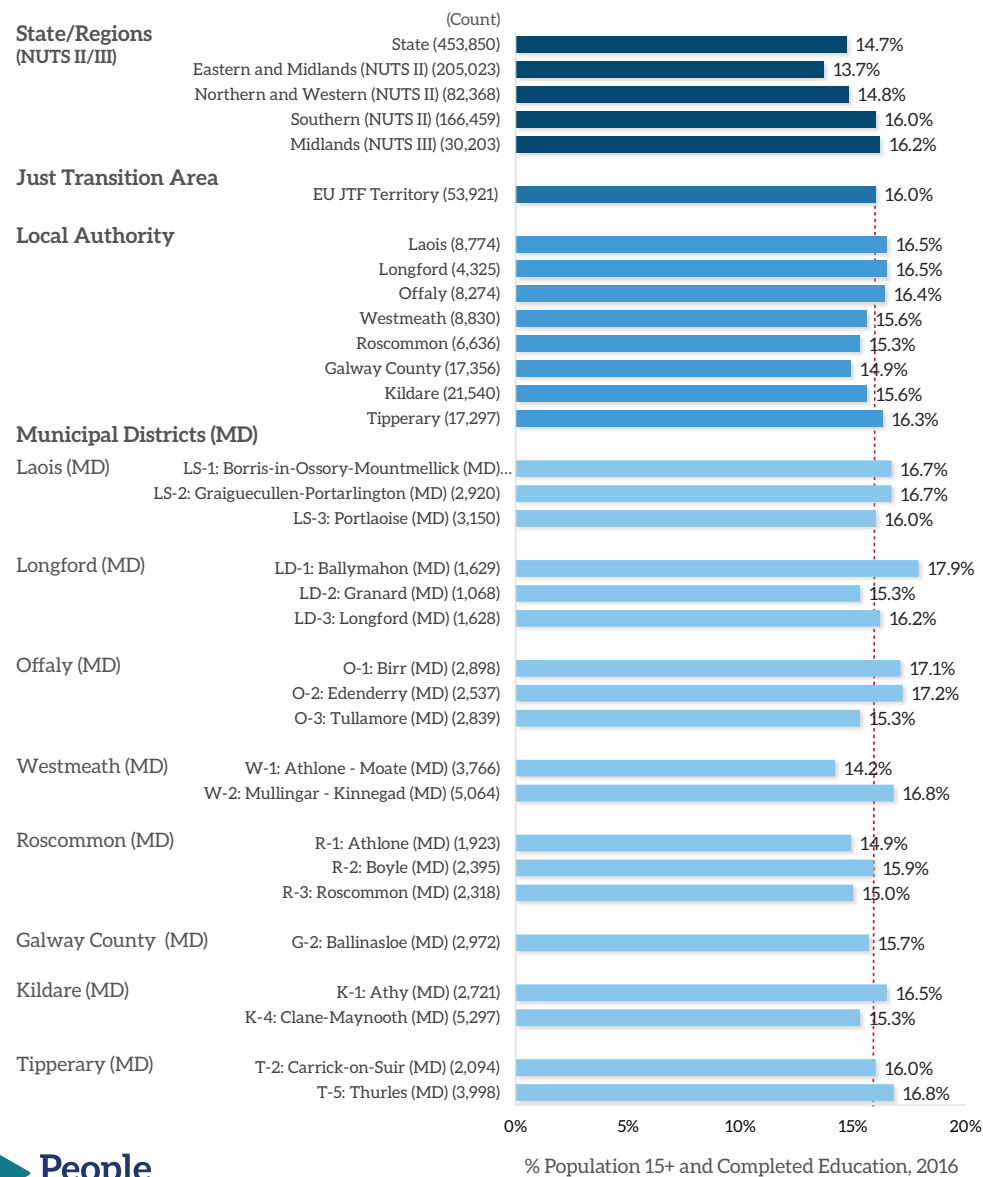


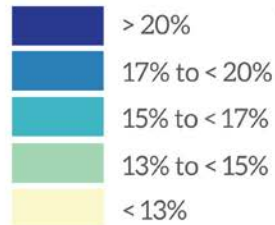
Figure 2.6: Education Attainment - % Technical/Apprenticeship/Certificate, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Education Attainment - % Technical/Apprenticeship/Certificate, 2016

-  EU JTF Territory
-  Counties
-  Municipal Districts (MDs)
-  Key Settlements

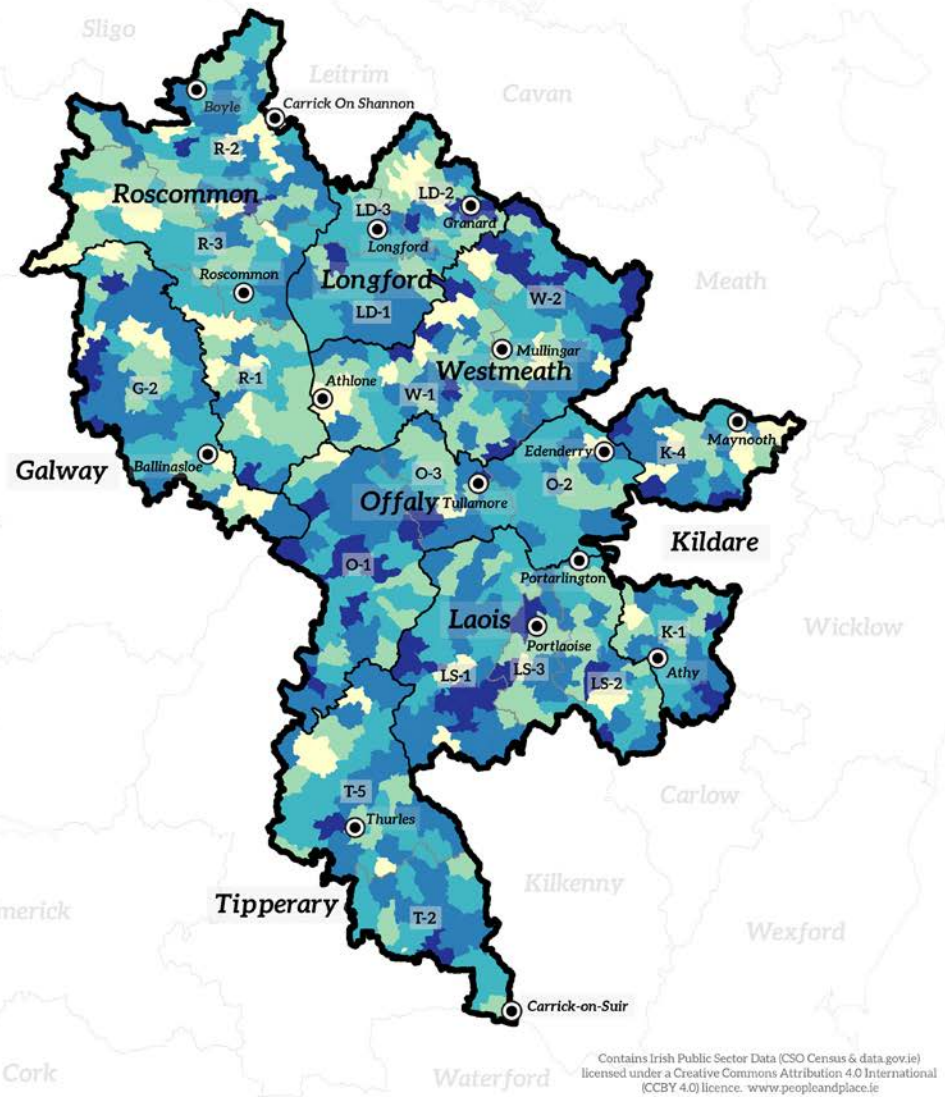
Map Legend

% Edu. Attainment - Technical/  
Apprenticeship/Certificate



Municipal District - Map Index

- |                                     |                           |                      |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Laois</b>                        | <b>Westmeath</b>          | <b>Tipperary</b>     |
| LS-1: Borris-in-Ossory-Mountmellick | W-1: Athlone - Moate      | T-2: Carrick-on-Suir |
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| LS-3: Portlaoise                    |                           |                      |
| <b>Longford</b>                     | <b>Roscommon</b>          |                      |
| LD-1: Ballymahon                    | R-1: Athlone              |                      |
| LD-2: Granard                       | R-2: Boyle                |                      |
| LD-3: Longford                      | R-3: Roscommon            |                      |
| <b>Offaly</b>                       | <b>Galway</b>             |                      |
| O-1: Birr                           | G-2: Ballinasloe          |                      |
| O-2: Edenderry                      | <b>Kildare</b>            |                      |
| O-3: Tullamore                      | K-1: Athy                 |                      |
|                                     | K-4: Clane-Maynooth       |                      |



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Education Attainment - % Technical/Apprenticeship/Certificate, 2016 (EDs)

Map 2.6: Education Attainment - % Technical/Apprenticeship/Certificate, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Education Attainment - % Lower Third Level, 2016

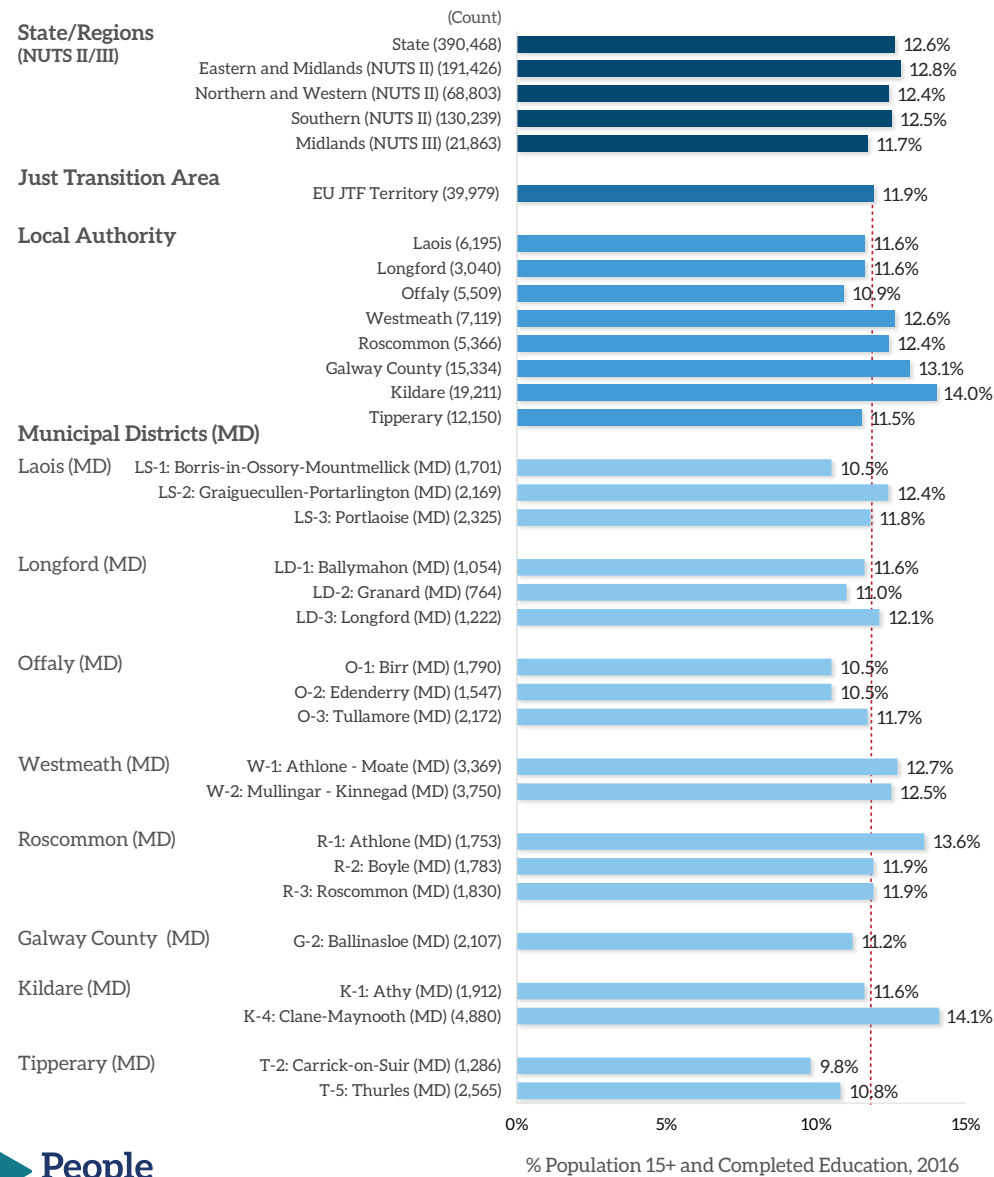
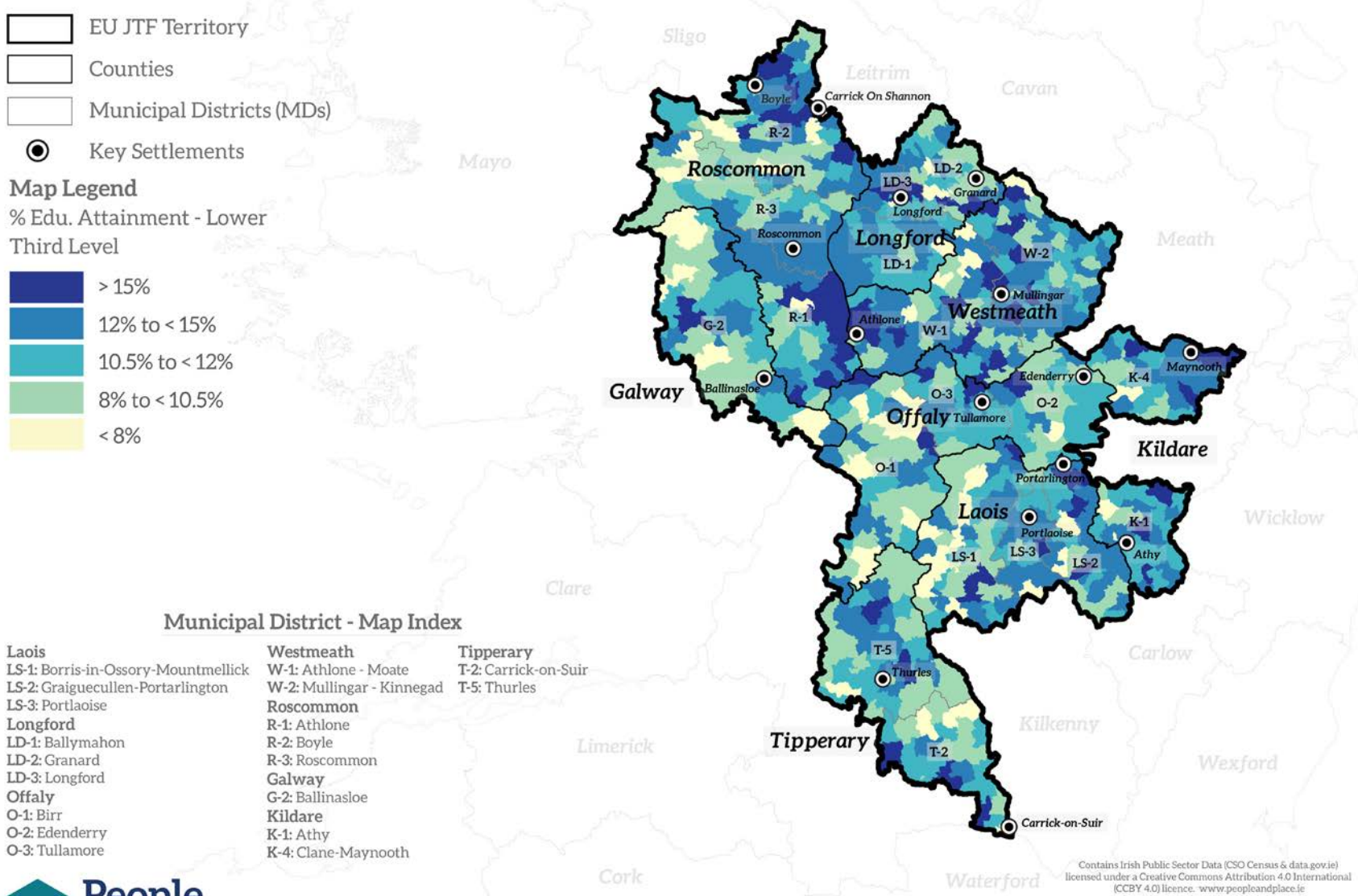


Figure 2.7: Education Attainment - % Lower Third Level, 2016 (Source: CSO)



Education Attainment - % Lower Third Level, 2016



Education Attainment - % Lower Third Level, 2016 (EDs)

Map 2.7: Education Attainment - % Lower Third Level, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Education Attainment - % Higher Third Level, 2016

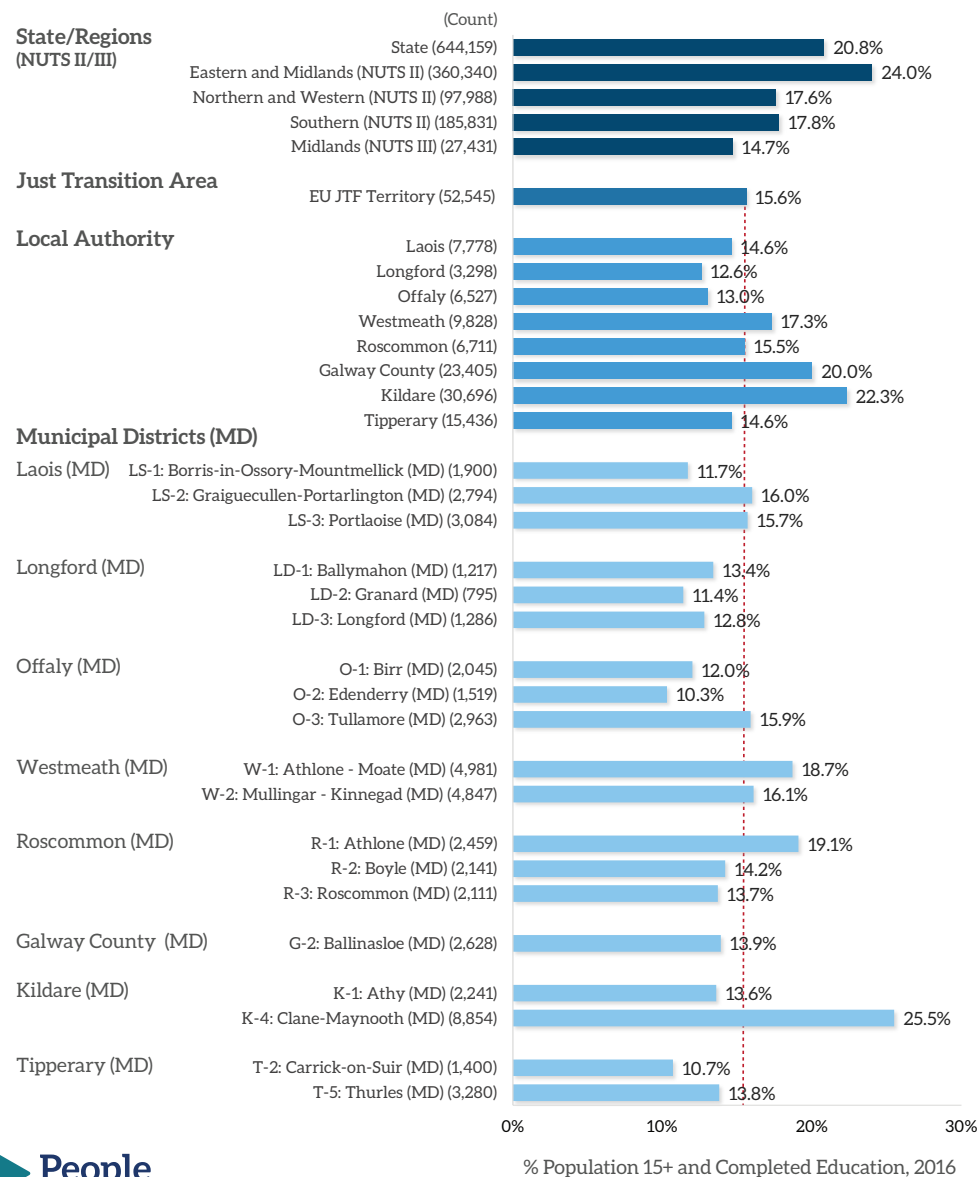


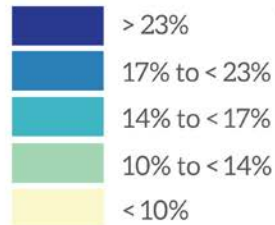
Figure 2.8: Education Attainment - % Higher Third Level, 2016 (Source: CSO)



Education Attainment - % Higher Third Level, 2016

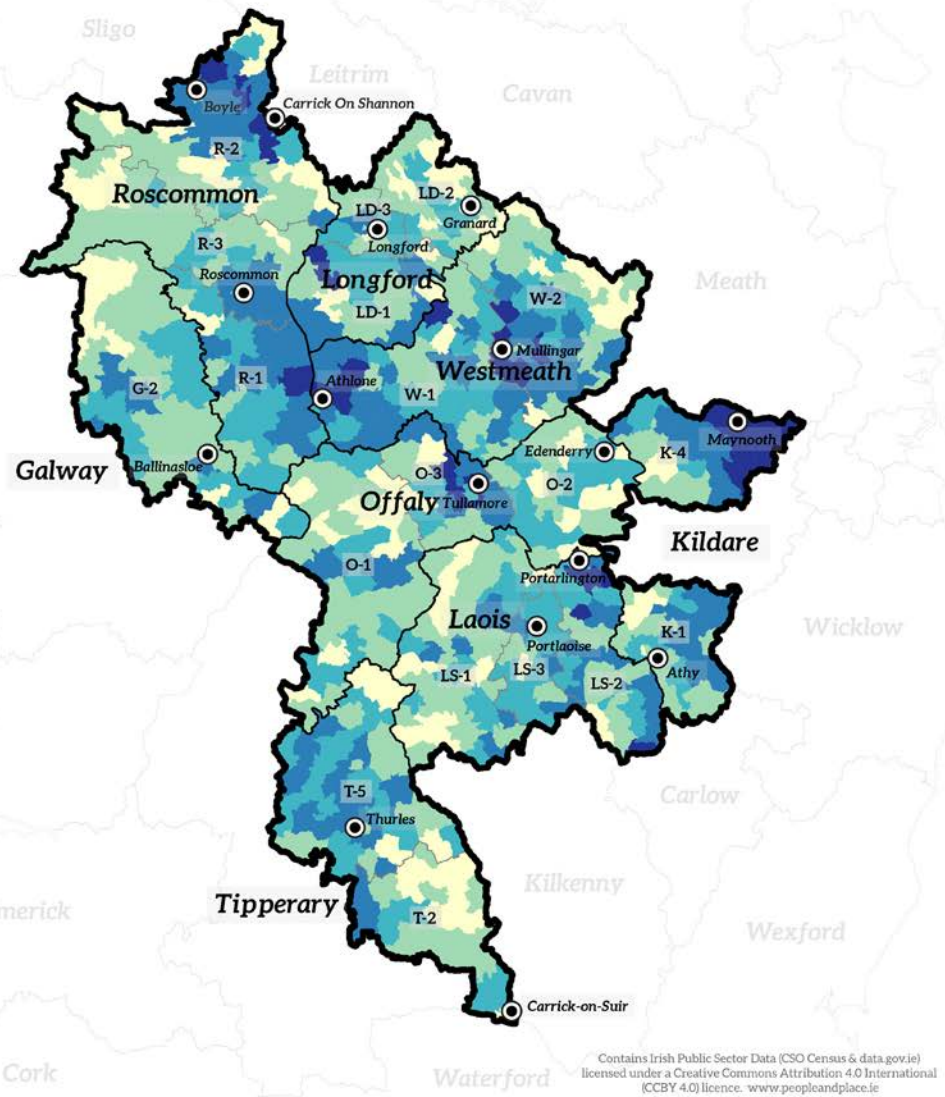
-  EU JTF Territory
-  Counties
-  Municipal Districts (MDs)
-  Key Settlements

**Map Legend**  
 % Edu. Attainment - Higher Third Level



**Municipal District - Map Index**

- |                                     |                           |                      |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Laois</b>                        | <b>Westmeath</b>          | <b>Tipperary</b>     |
| LS-1: Borris-in-Ossory-Mountmellick | W-1: Athlone - Moate      | T-2: Carrick-on-Suir |
| LS-2: Graiguecullen-Portarlinton    | W-2: Mullingar - Kinnegad | T-5: Thurles         |
| LS-3: Portlaoise                    |                           |                      |
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| LD-2: Granard                       | R-2: Boyle                |                      |
| LD-3: Longford                      | R-3: Roscommon            |                      |
| <b>Offaly</b>                       | <b>Galway</b>             |                      |
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| O-2: Edenderry                      | <b>Kildare</b>            |                      |
| O-3: Tullamore                      | K-1: Athy                 |                      |
|                                     | K-4: Clane-Maynooth       |                      |



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Education Attainment - % Higher Third Level, 2016 (EDs)

Map 2.8: Education Attainment - % Higher Third Level, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Education Attainment - % All Third Level, 2016

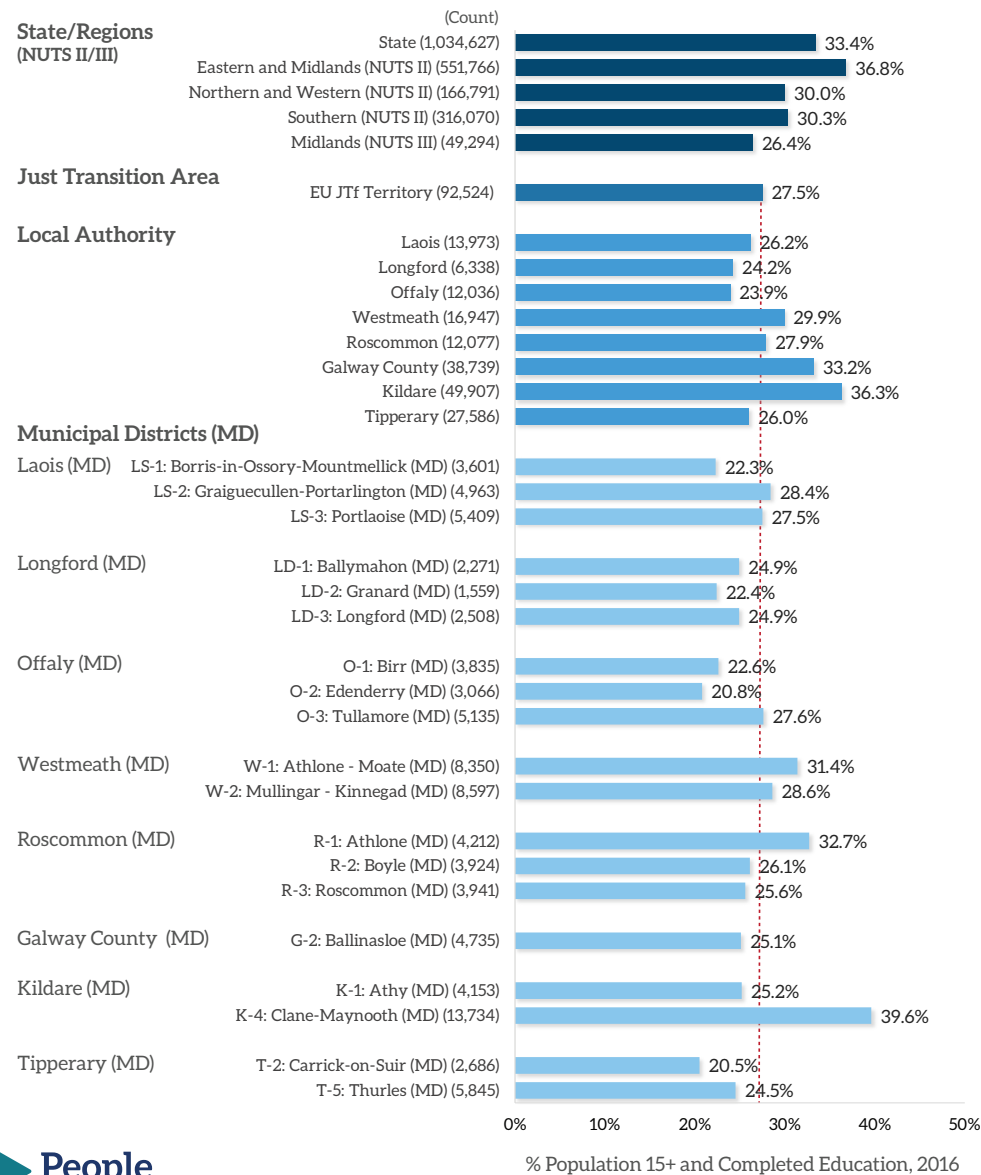
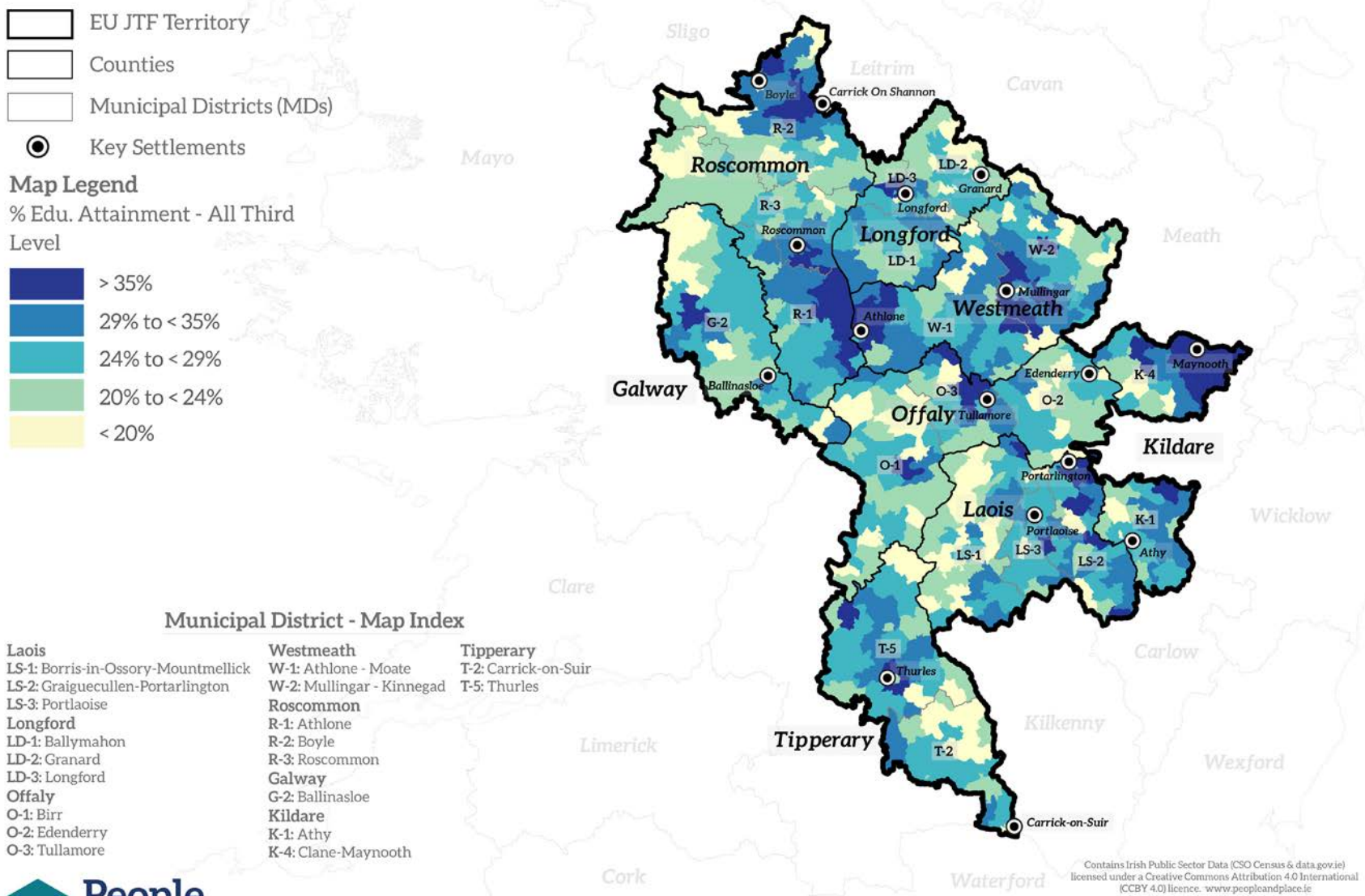


Figure 2.9: Education Attainment - % All Third Level, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Education Attainment - % All Third Level, 2016



Education Attainment - % All Third Level, 2016 (EDs)

Map 2.9: Education Attainment - % All Third Level, 2016 (Source: CSO)

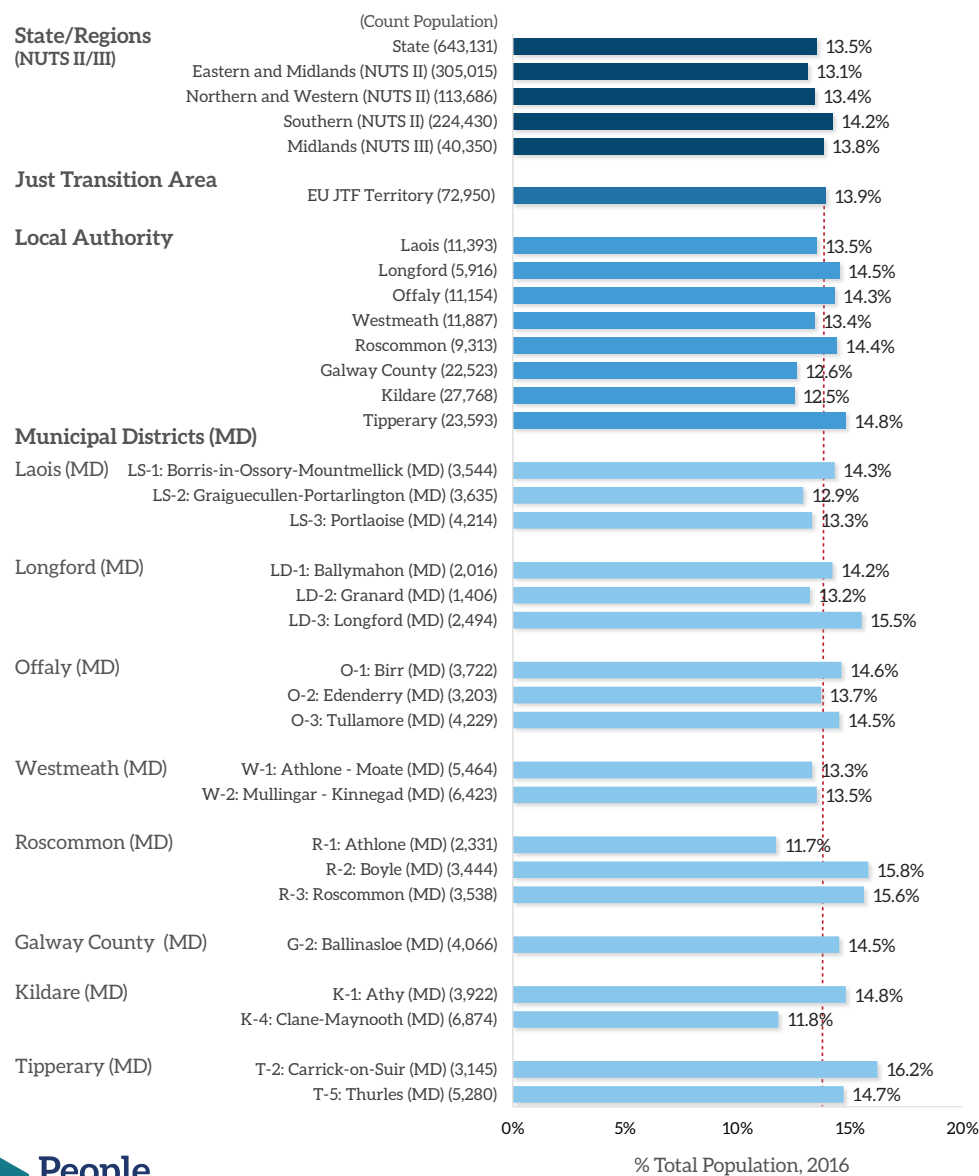
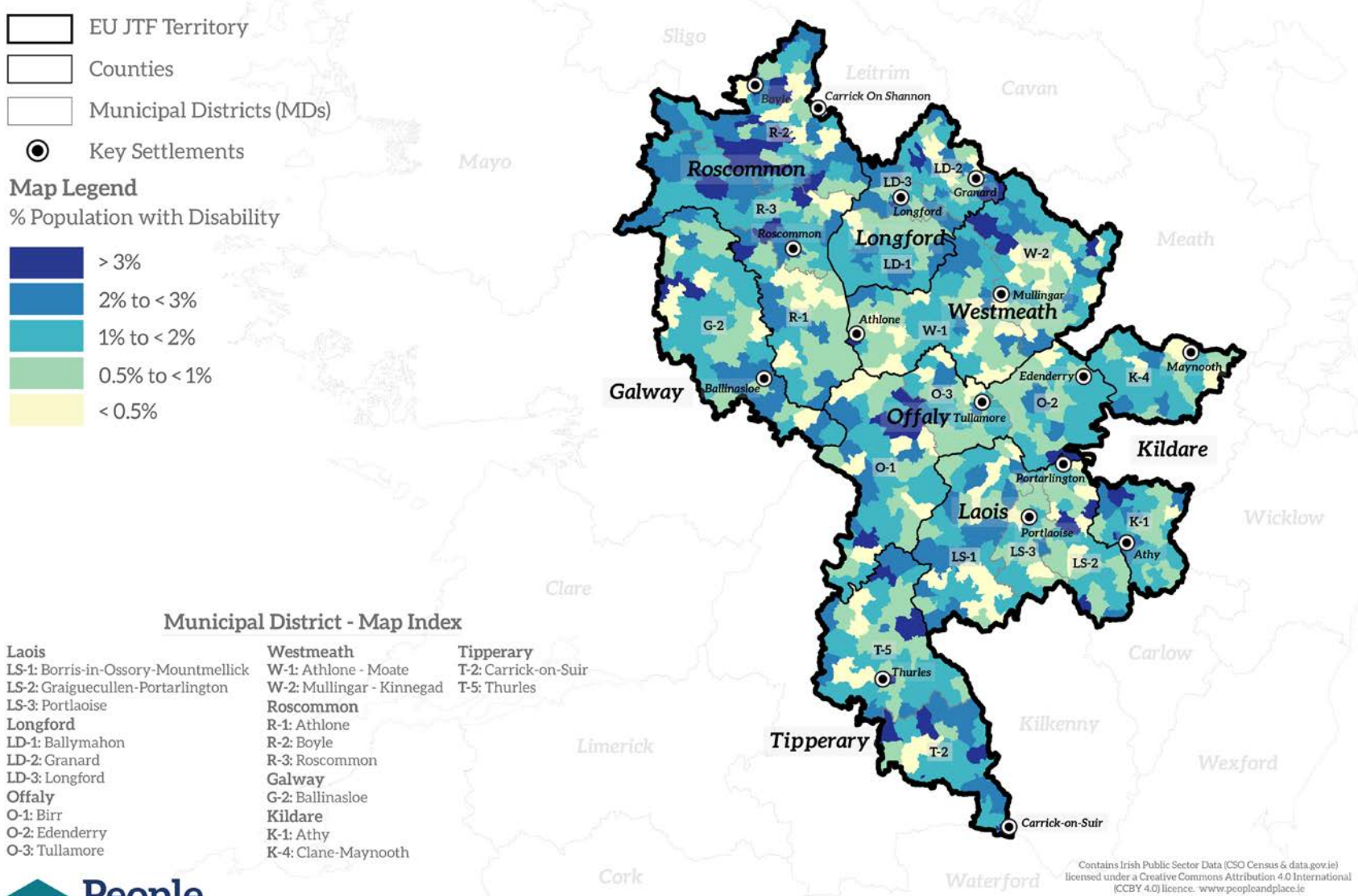


Figure 2.10: % Population with Disability, 2016 (Source: CSO)





Population - % Population with Disability, 2016 (EDs)

Map 2.10: % Population with Disability, 2016 (Source: CSO)

General Health - Bad/Very Bad, 2016

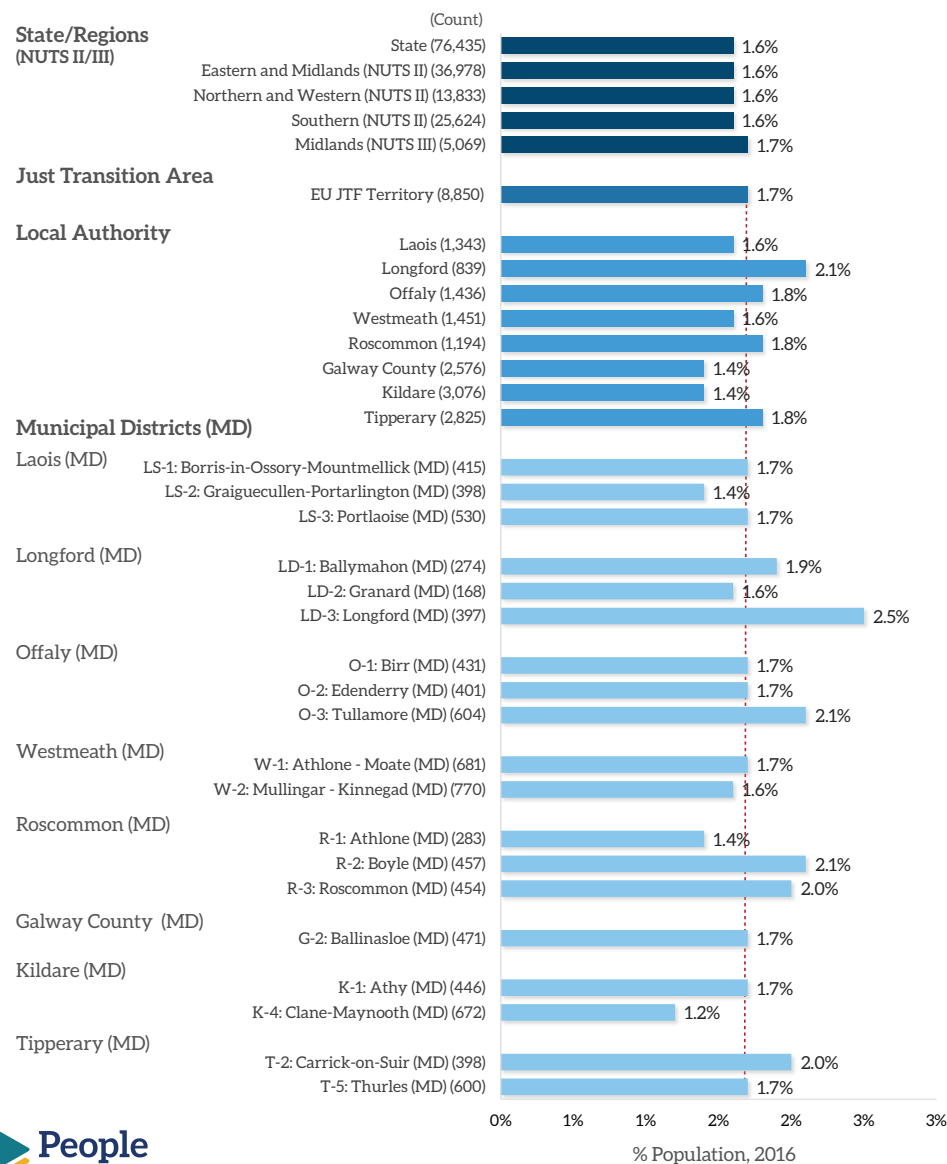
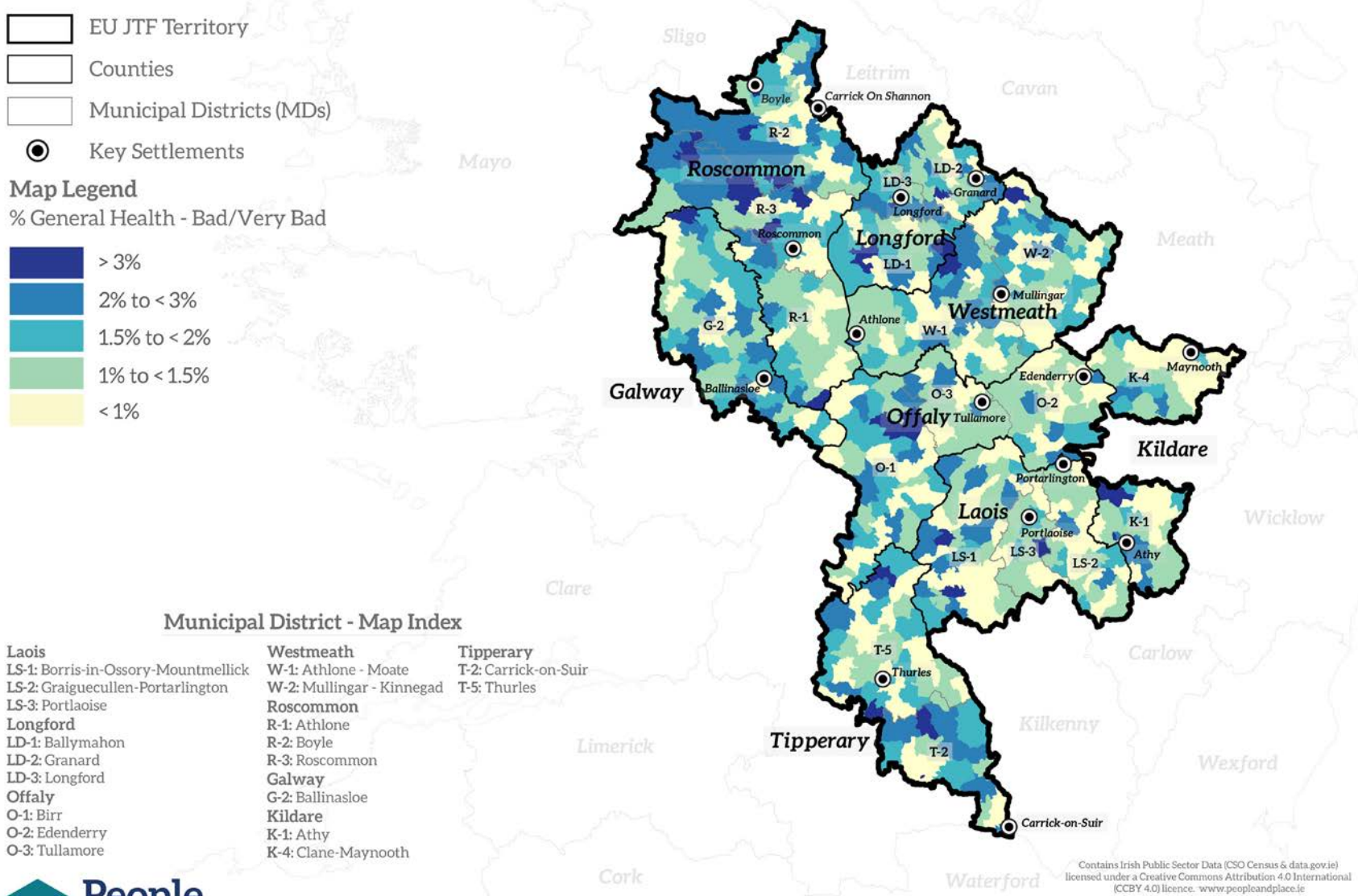


Figure 2.11: General Health - % Bad/Very Bad, 2016 (Source: CSO)



General Health - Bad/Very Bad, 2016



General Health - % Bad/Very Bad, 2016 (EDs)

Map 2.11: General Health - Bad/Very Bad, 2016 (Source: CSO)

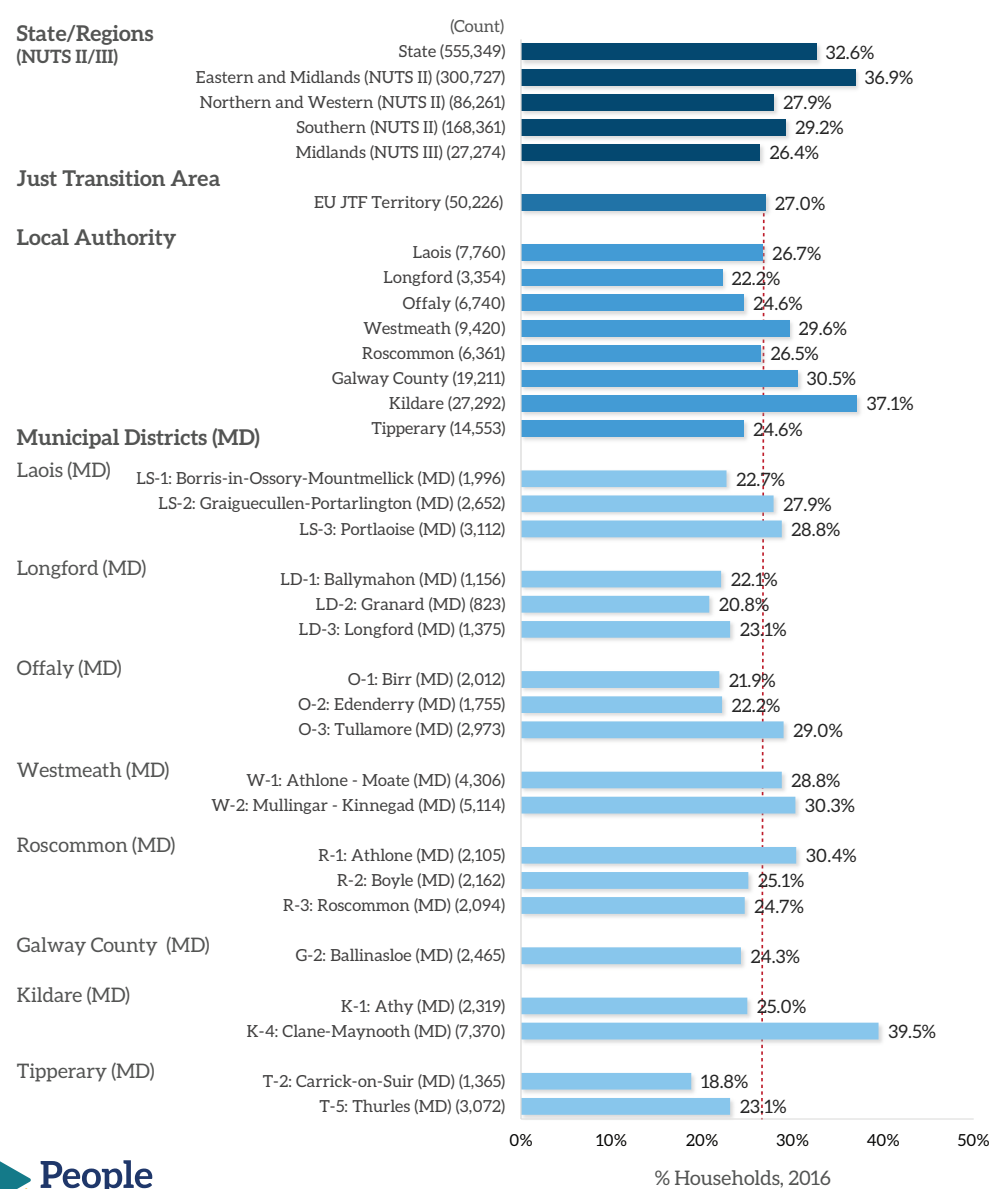
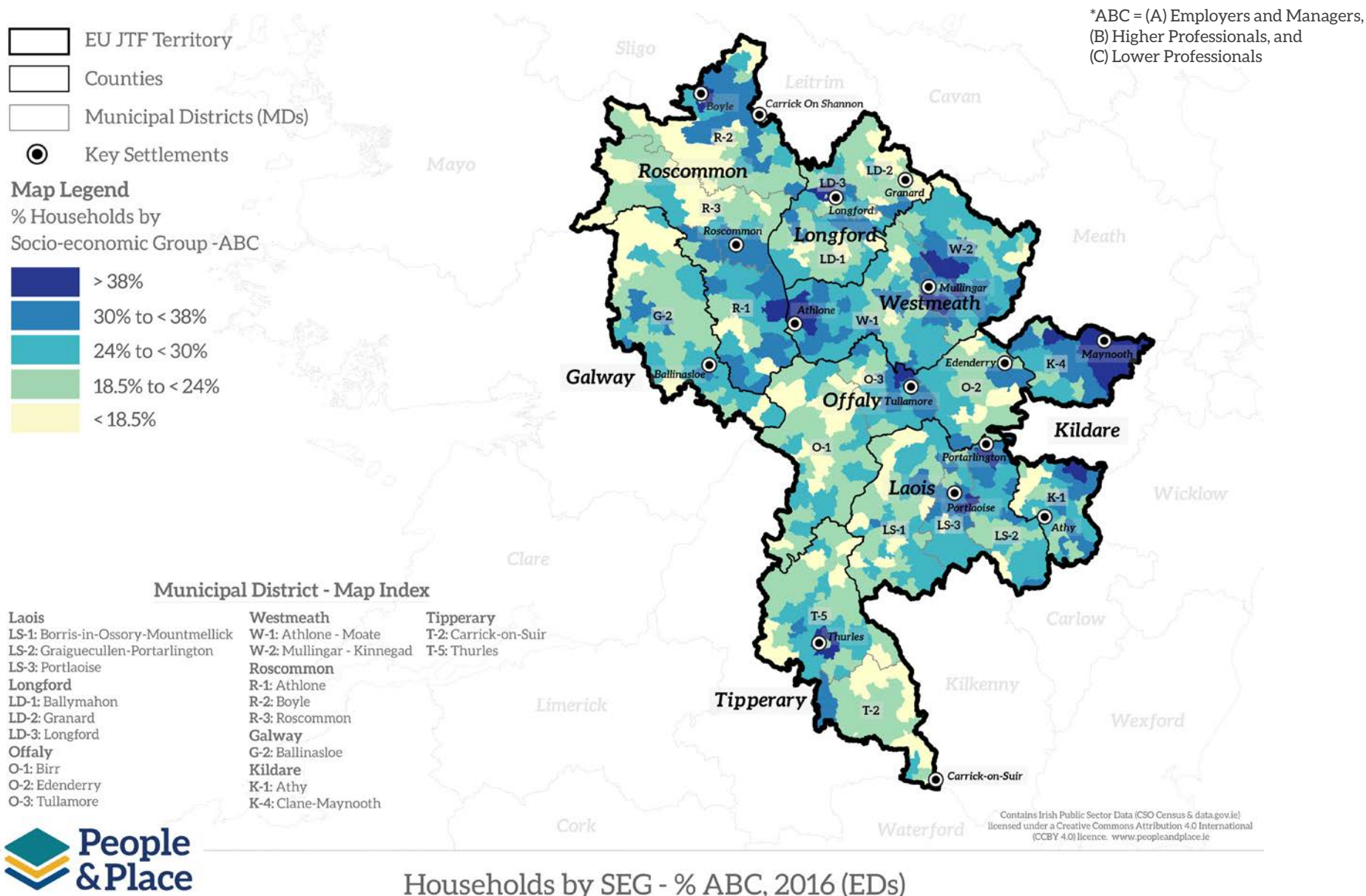


Figure 2.12: Household by Socio-Economic Group - % ABC, 2016 (Source: CSO)



Map 2.12: Household by Socio-Economic Group - % ABC, 2016 (Source: CSO)

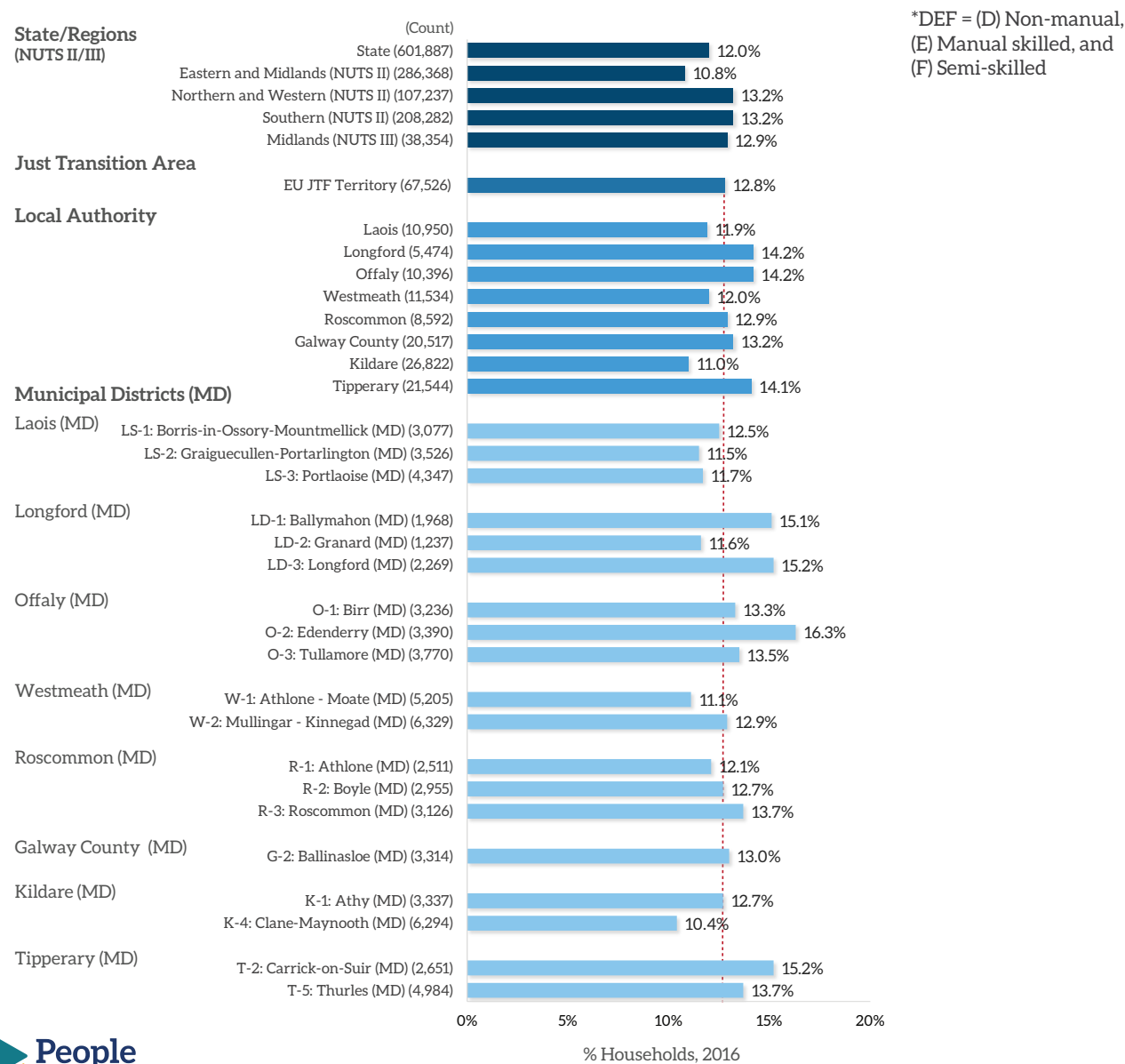
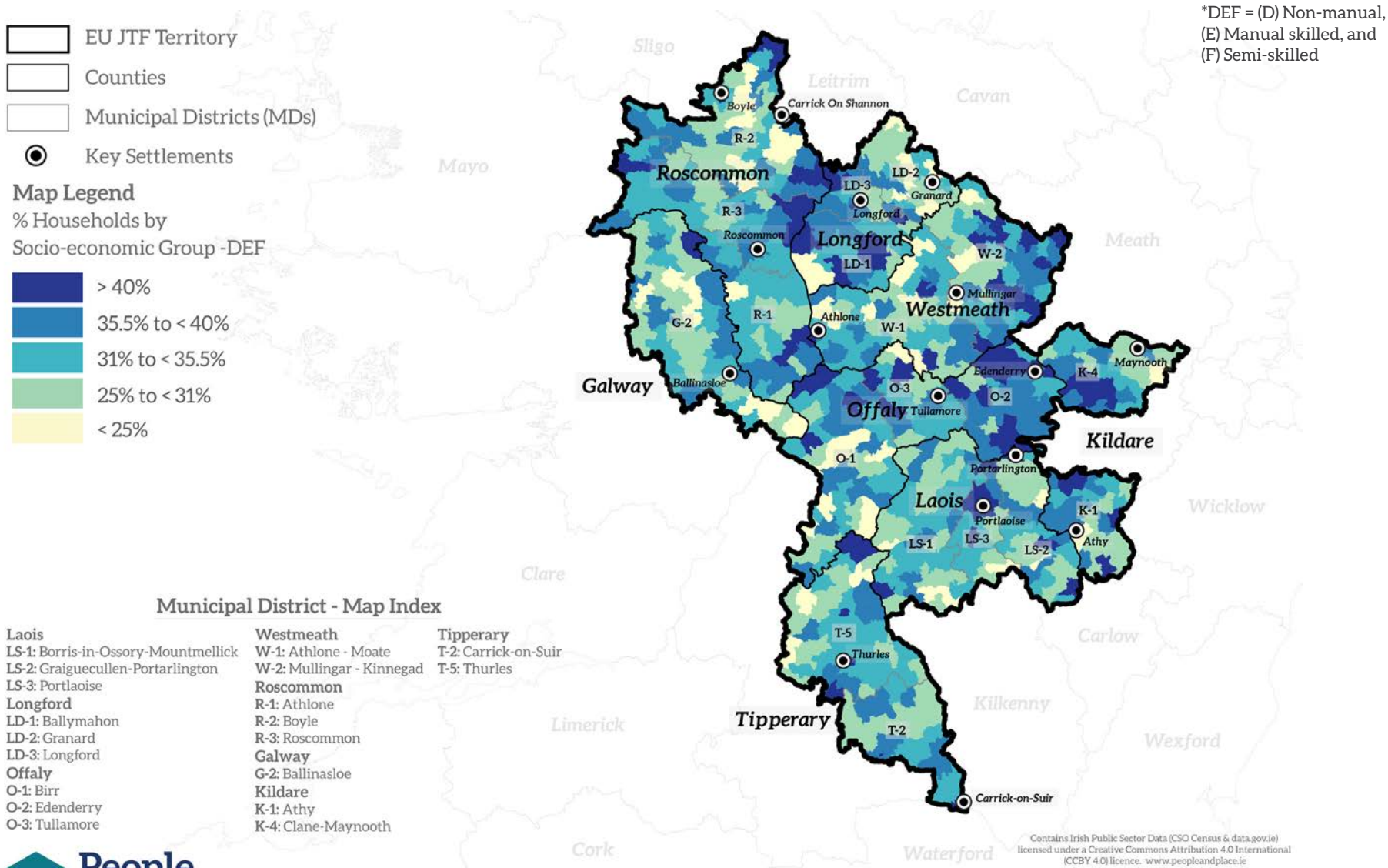


Figure 2.13: Household by Socio-Economic Group - % DEF, 2016 (Source: CSO)





Households by SEG - % DEF, 2016 (EDs)

Map 2.13: Household by Socio-Economic Group - % DEF, 2016 (Source: CSO)

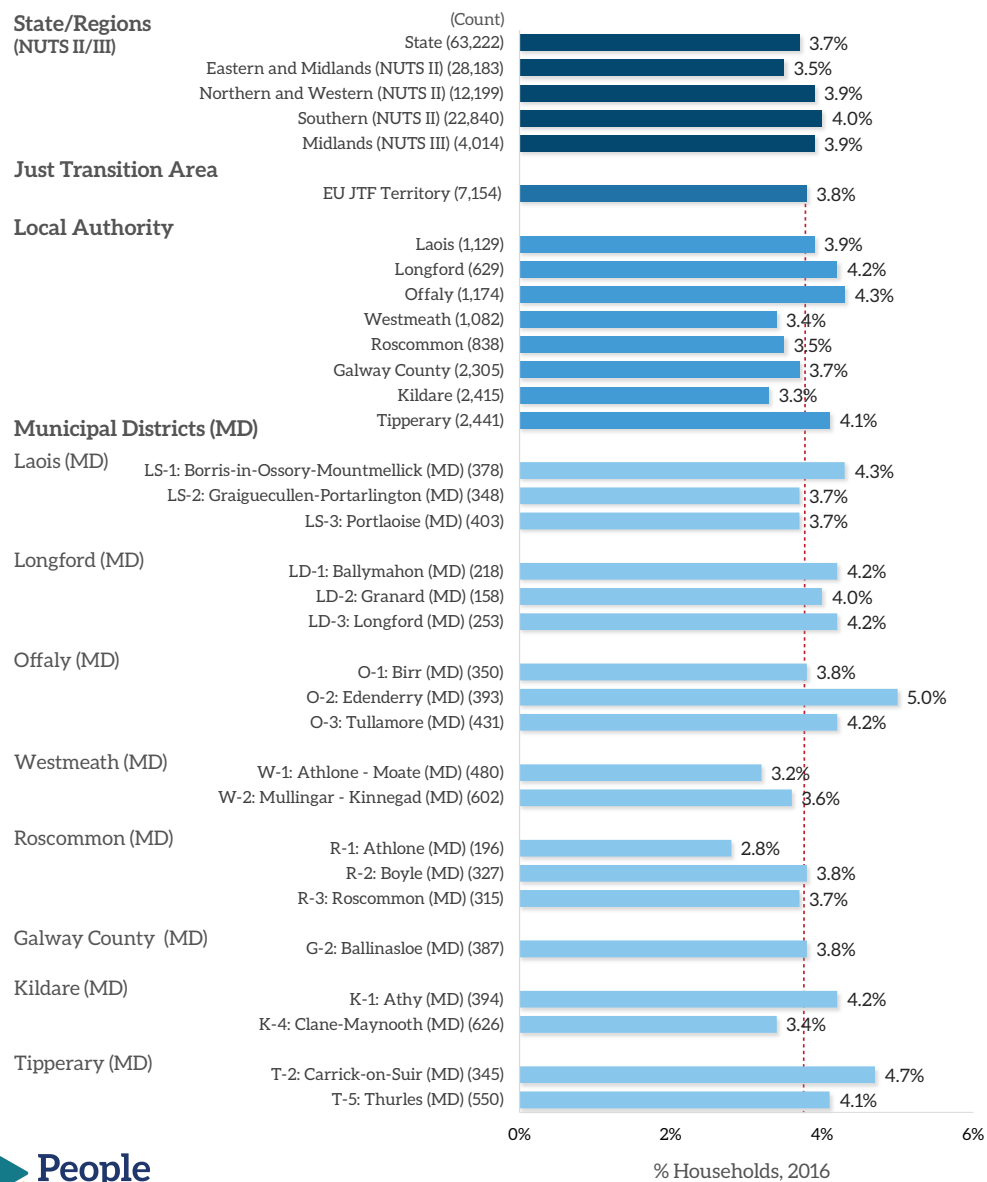
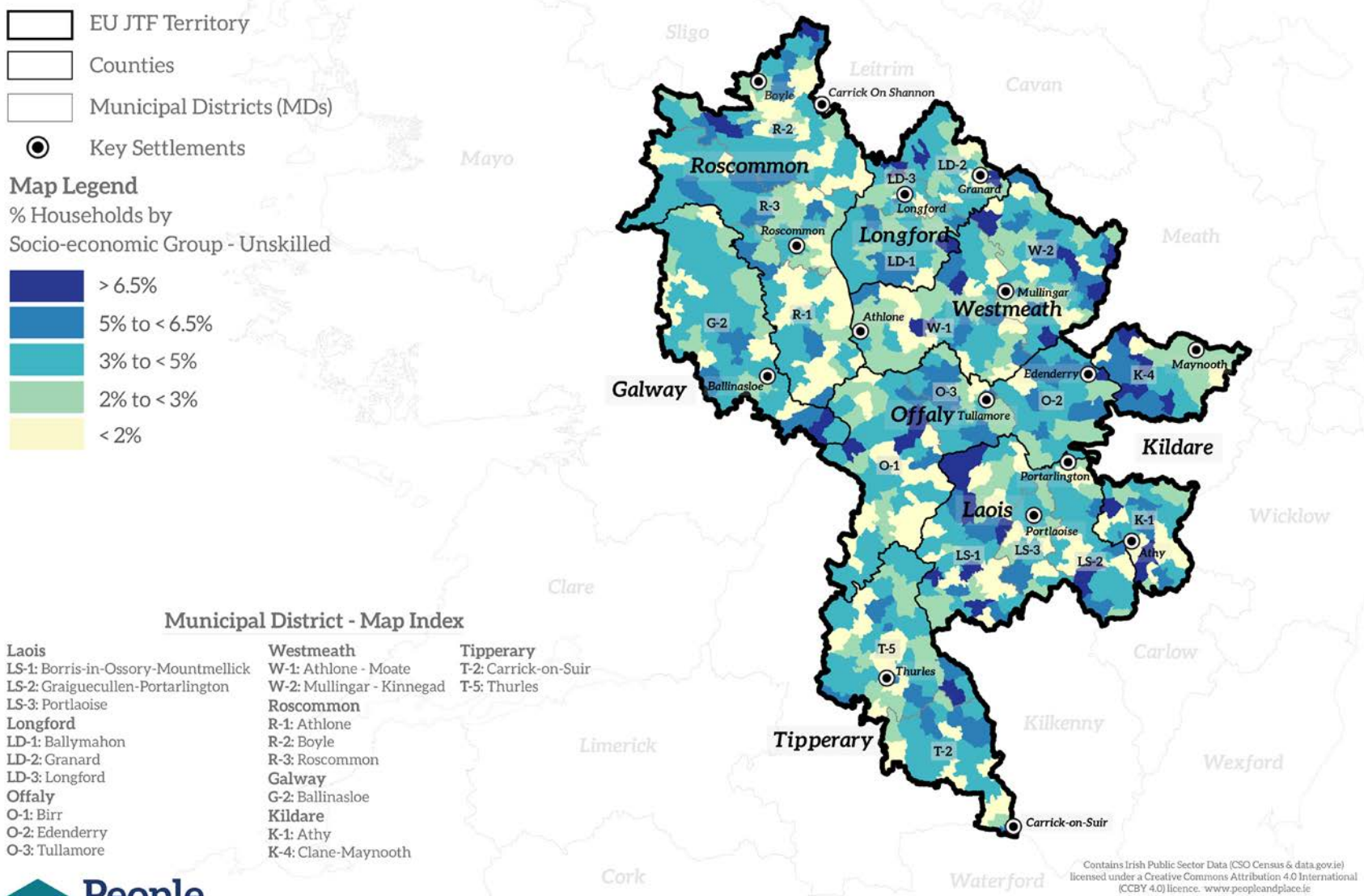


Figure 2.14: Household by Socio-Economic Group - % Unskilled, 2016 (Source: CSO)





Households by SEG - % Unskilled, 2016 (EDs)

Map 2.14: Household by Socio-Economic Group - % Unskilled, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Household by Socio-Economic Group - % Own Account Workers, 2016

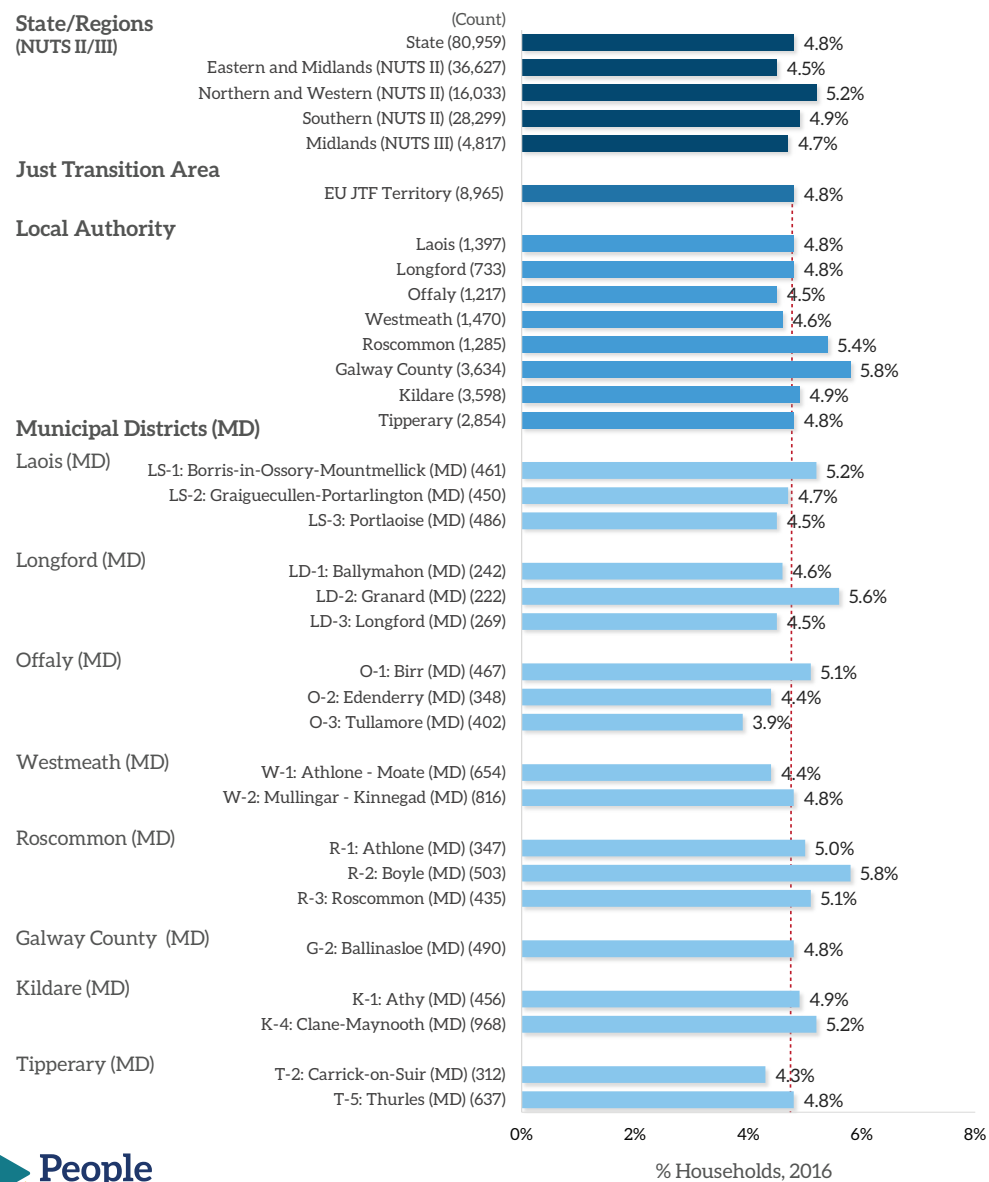


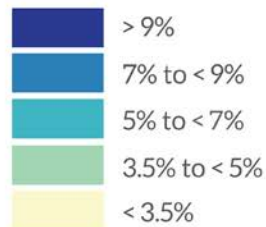
Figure 2.15: Household by Socio-Economic Group - % Own Account Workers, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Household by Socio-Economic Group - % Own Account Workers, 2016

-  EU JTF Territory
-  Counties
-  Municipal Districts (MDs)
-  Key Settlements

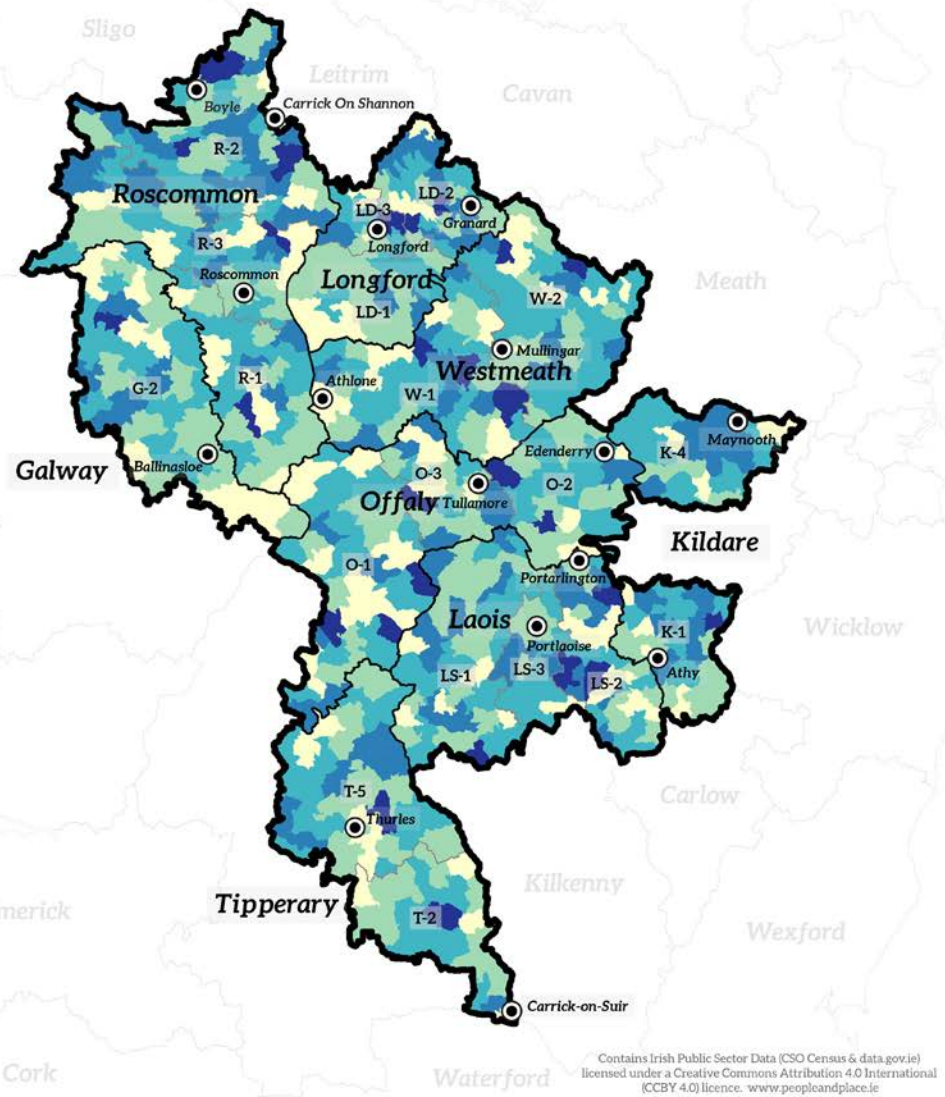
Map Legend

% Households by Socio-economic Group - Own Account Workers



Municipal District - Map Index

- |                                     |                           |                      |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Laois</b>                        | <b>Westmeath</b>          | <b>Tipperary</b>     |
| LS-1: Borris-in-Ossory-Mountmellick | W-1: Athlone - Moate      | T-2: Carrick-on-Suir |
| LS-2: Graiguecullen-Portarlinton    | W-2: Mullingar - Kinnegad | T-5: Thurles         |
| LS-3: Portlaoise                    |                           |                      |
| <b>Longford</b>                     | <b>Roscommon</b>          |                      |
| LD-1: Ballymahon                    | R-1: Athlone              |                      |
| LD-2: Granard                       | R-2: Boyle                |                      |
| LD-3: Longford                      | R-3: Roscommon            |                      |
| <b>Offaly</b>                       | <b>Galway</b>             |                      |
| O-1: Birr                           | G-2: Ballinasloe          |                      |
| O-2: Edenderry                      | <b>Kildare</b>            |                      |
| O-3: Tullamore                      | K-1: Athy                 |                      |
|                                     | K-4: Clane-Maynooth       |                      |



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Households by SEG - % Own Account Workers, 2016 (EDs)

Map 2.16: Household by Socio-Economic Group - % Own Account Workers, 2016 (Source: CSO)

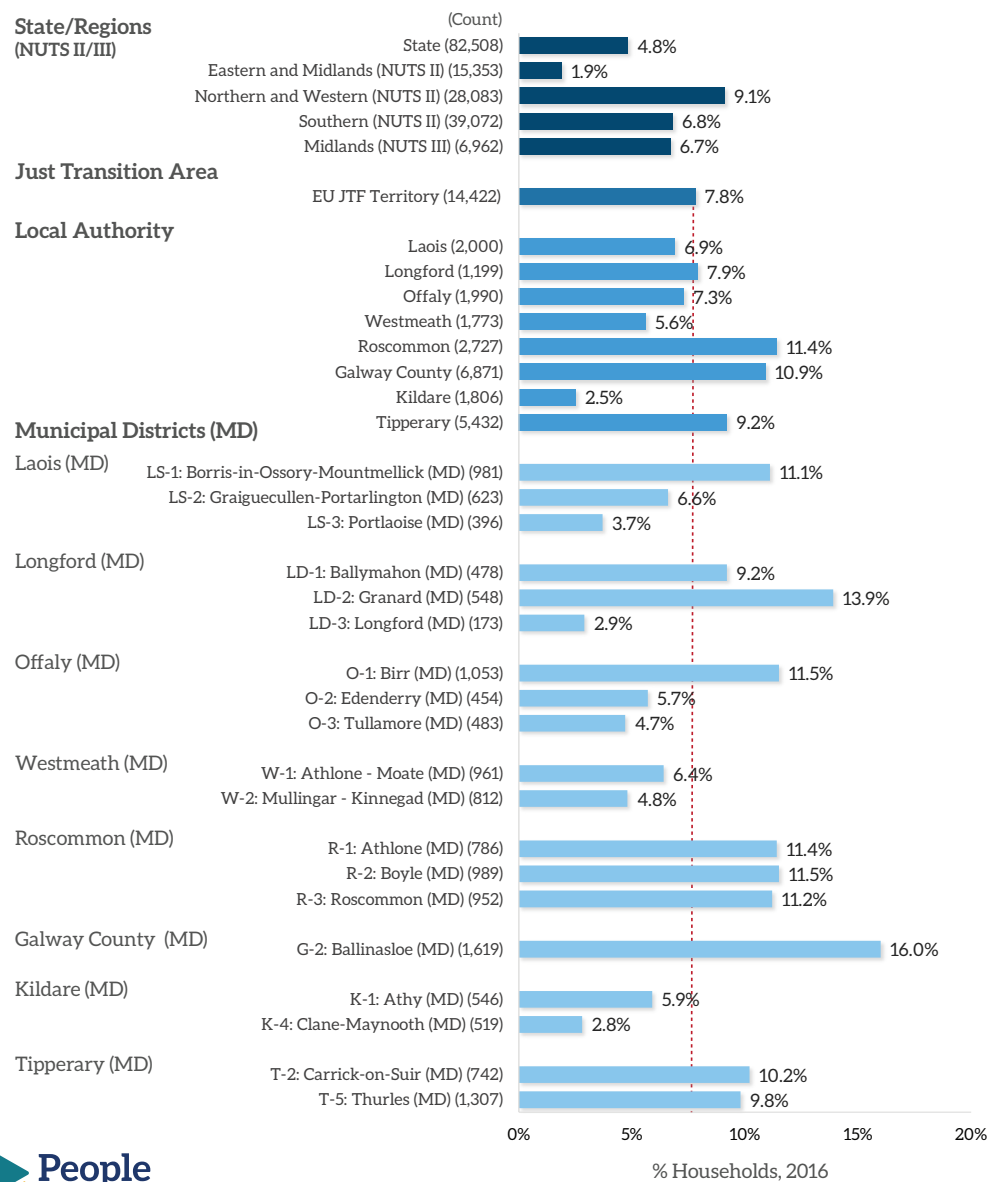
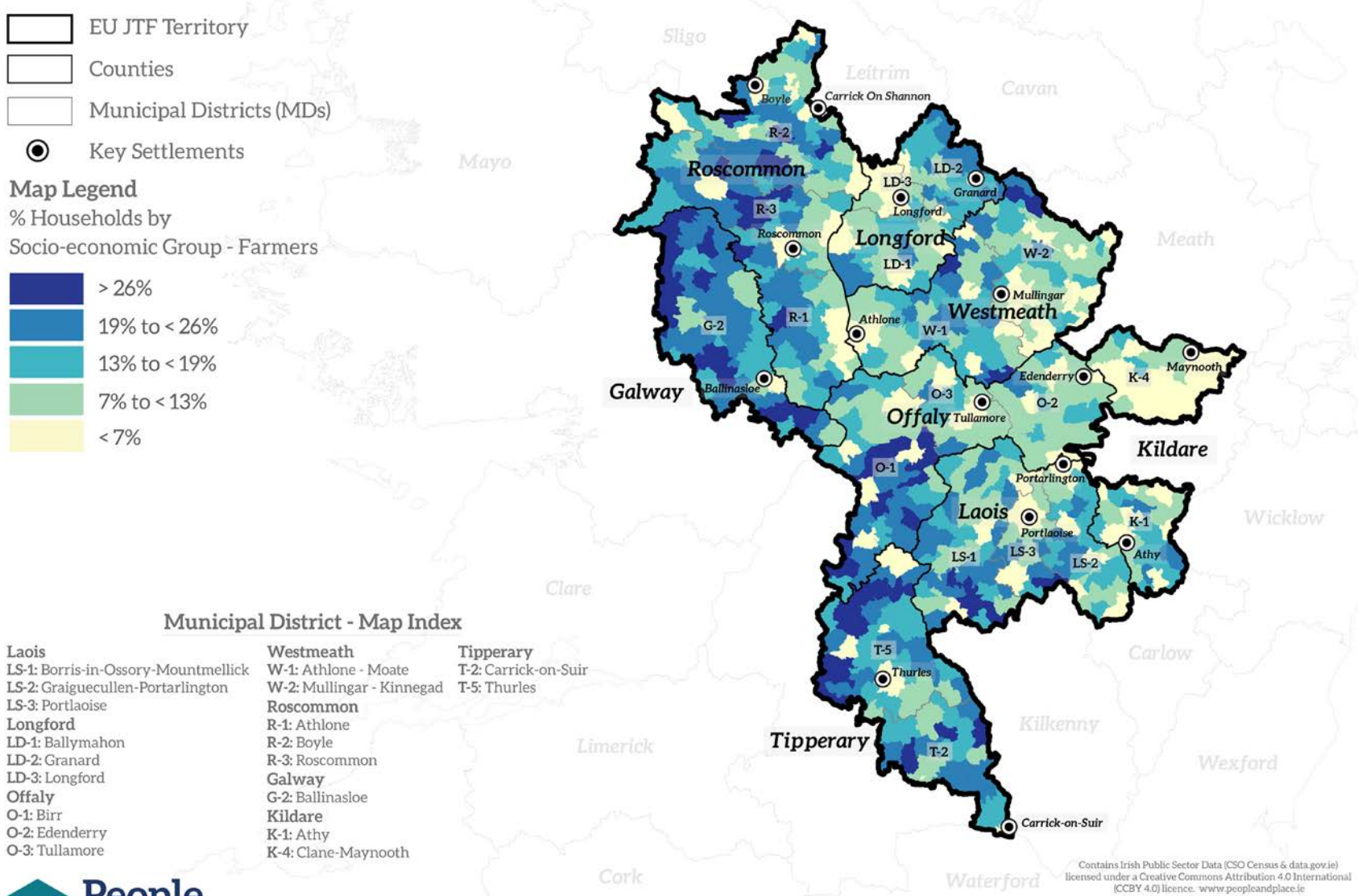


Figure 2.16: Household by Socio-Economic Group - % Farmers, 2016 (Source: CSO)





Households by SEG - % Farmers, 2016 (EDs)

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Map 2.16: Household by Socio-Economic Group - % Farmers, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Household by Socio-Economic Group - % Agricultural Workers, 2016

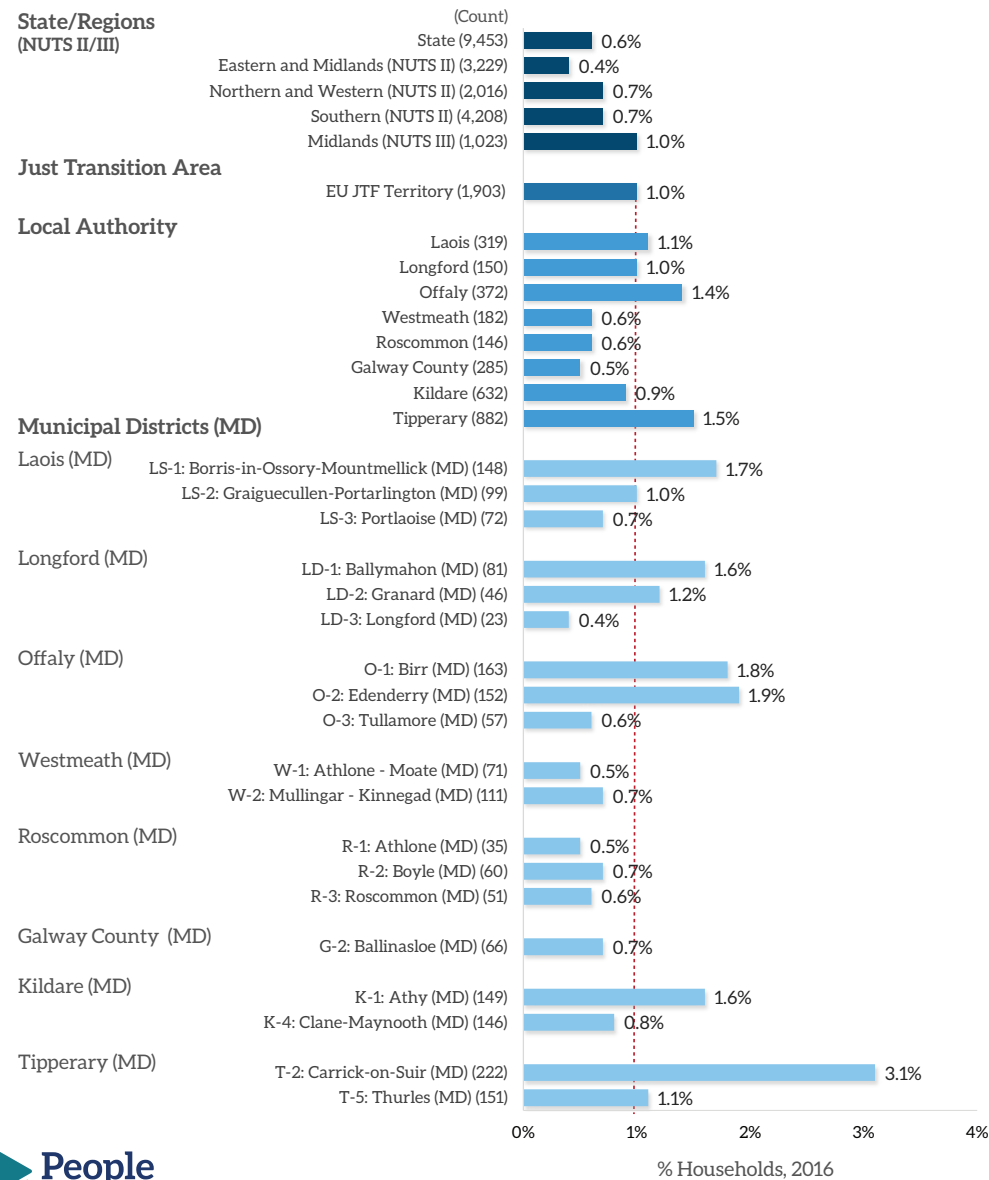
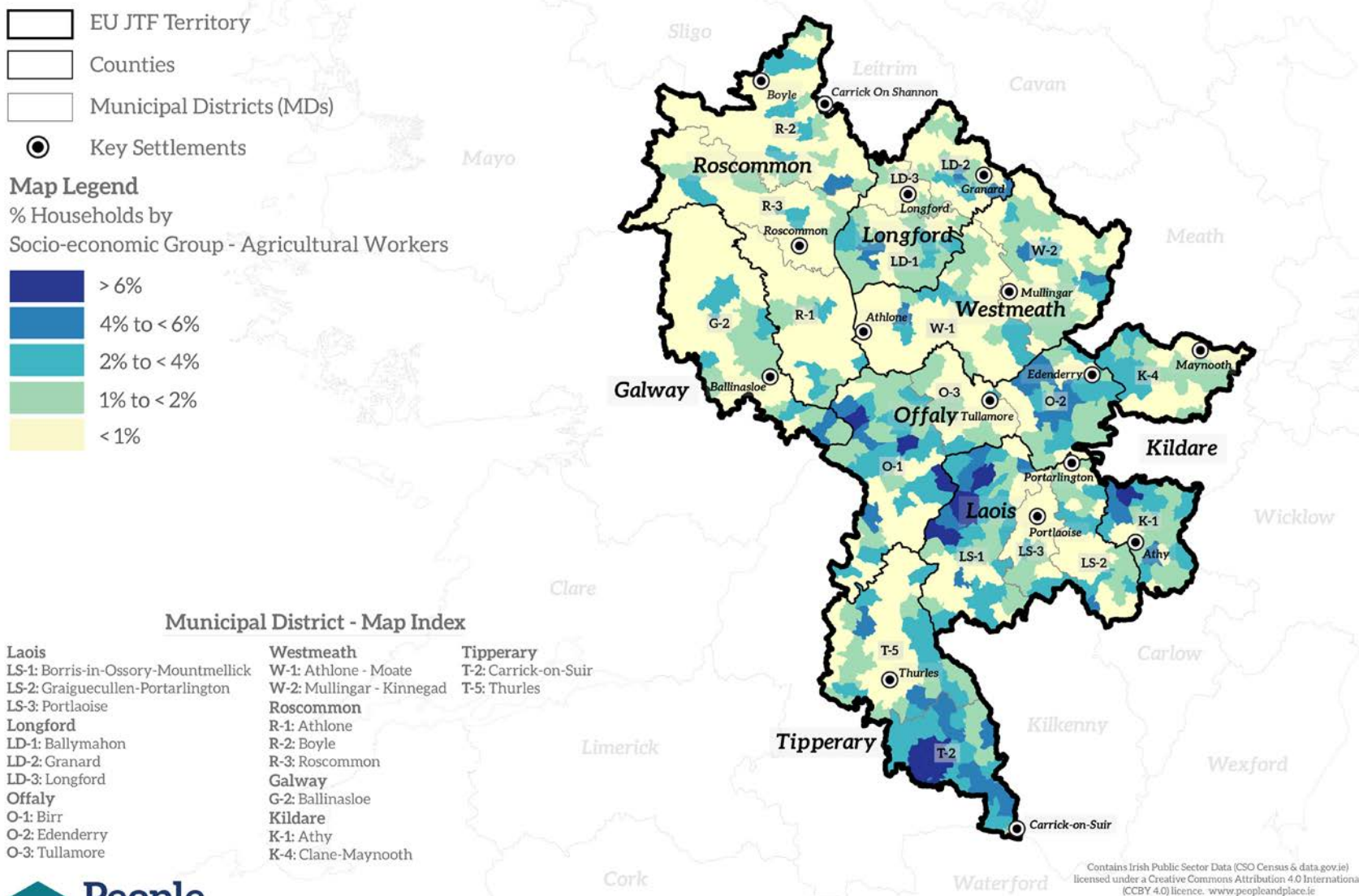


Figure 2.17: Household by Socio-Economic Group - % Agricultural Workers, 2016 (Source: CSO)



Household by Socio-Economic Group - % Agricultural Workers, 2016



Households by SEG - % Agricultural Workers, 2016 (EDs)

Map 2.17: Household by Socio-Economic Group - % Agricultural Workers, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Main Fuel Source for Central Heating - % Peat, 2016

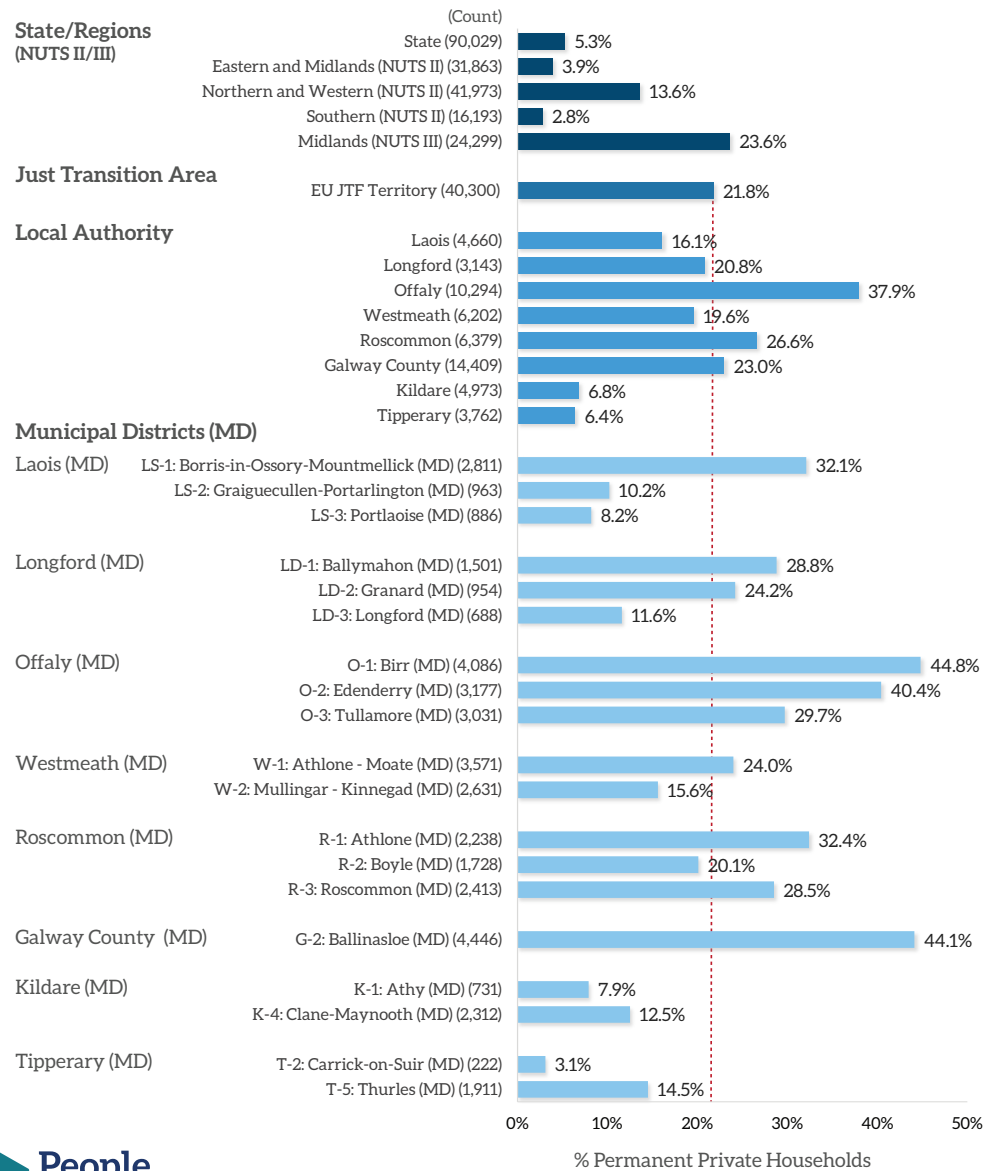
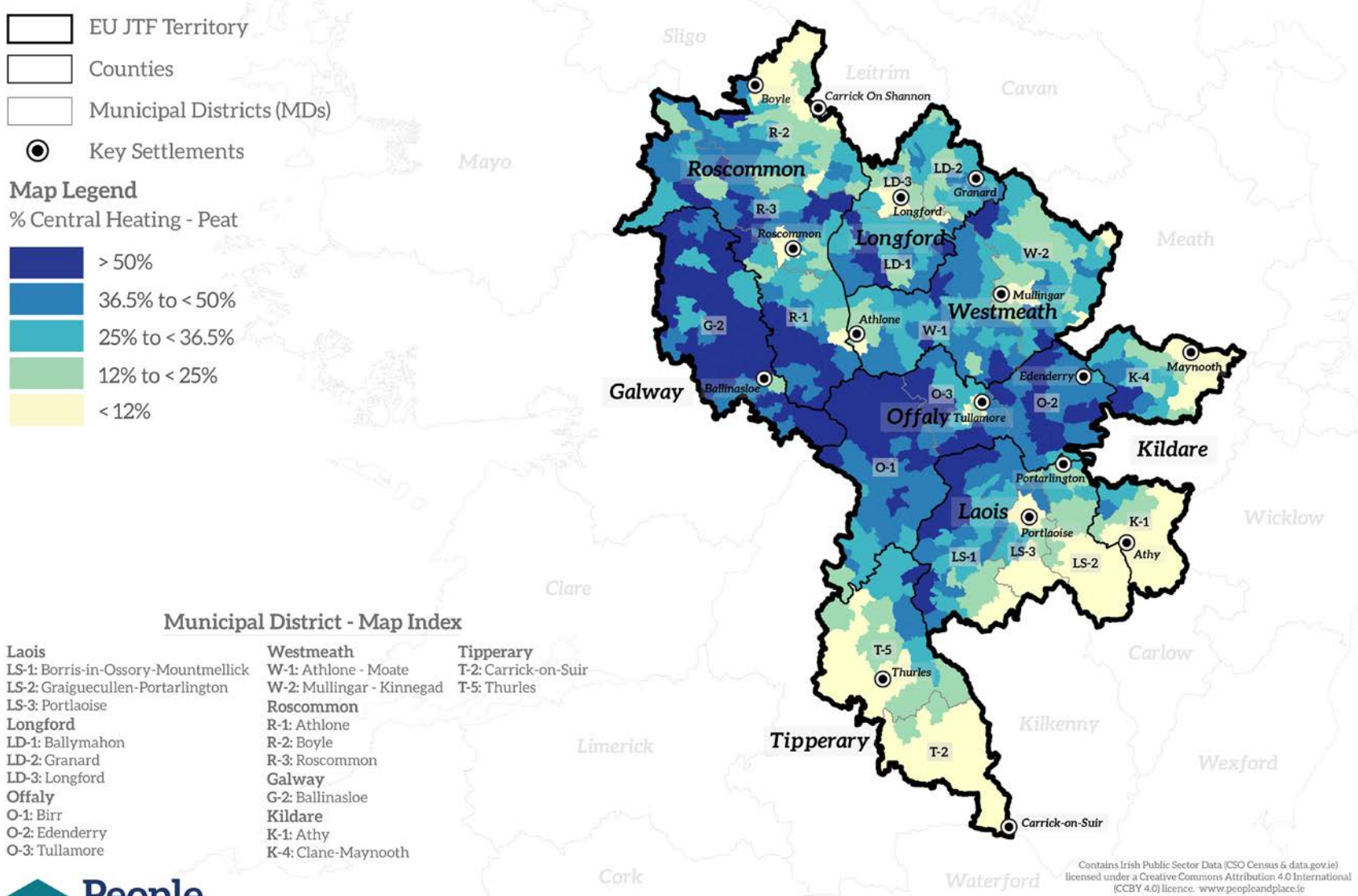


Figure 2.18: Main Fuel Source for Central Heating - % Peat, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Main Fuel Source for Central Heating - % Peat, 2016



Main Fuel Source for Central Heating - % Peat, 2016 (EDs)

Map 2.18: Main Fuel Source for Central Heating - % Peat, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Main Fuel Source for Central Heating - % Coal, 2016

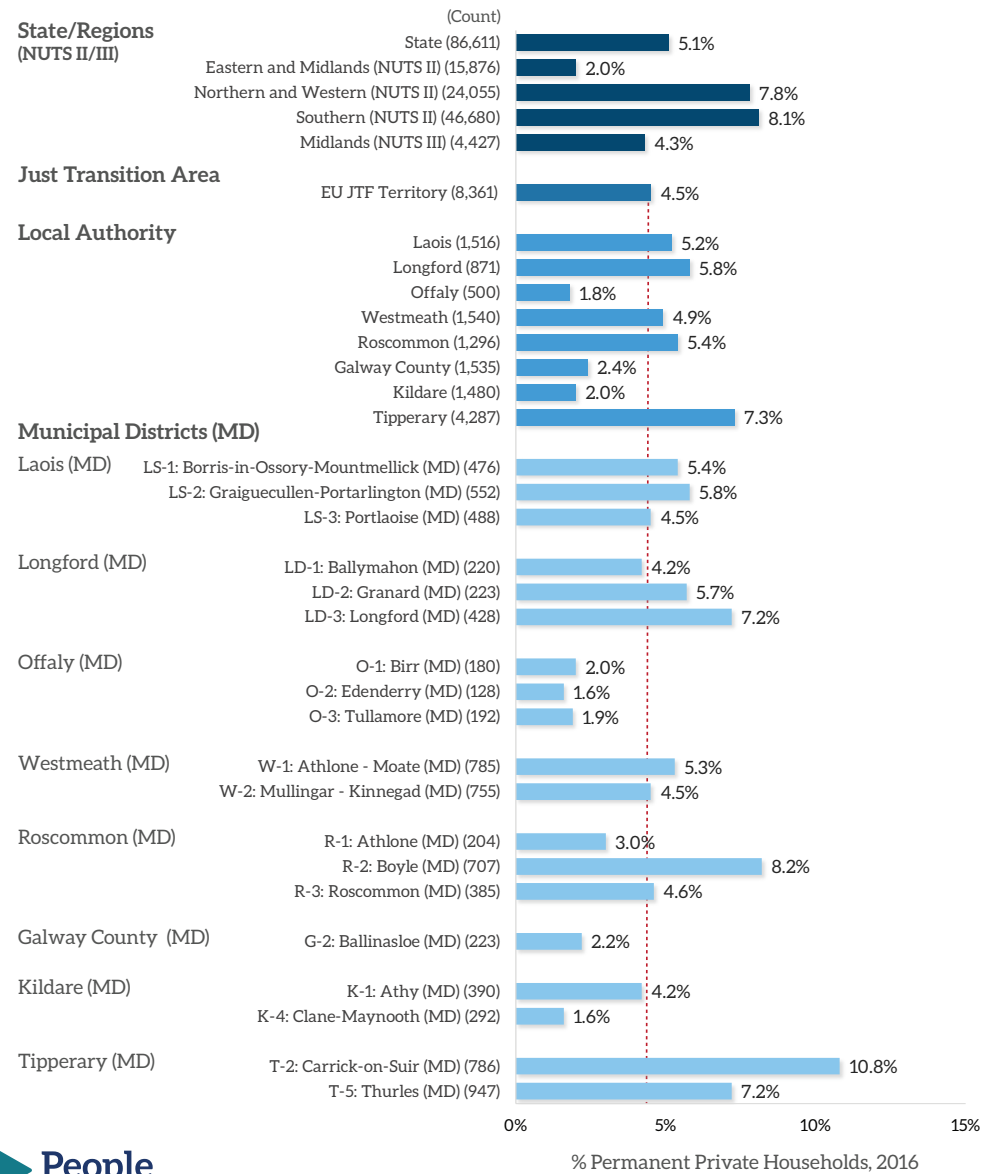
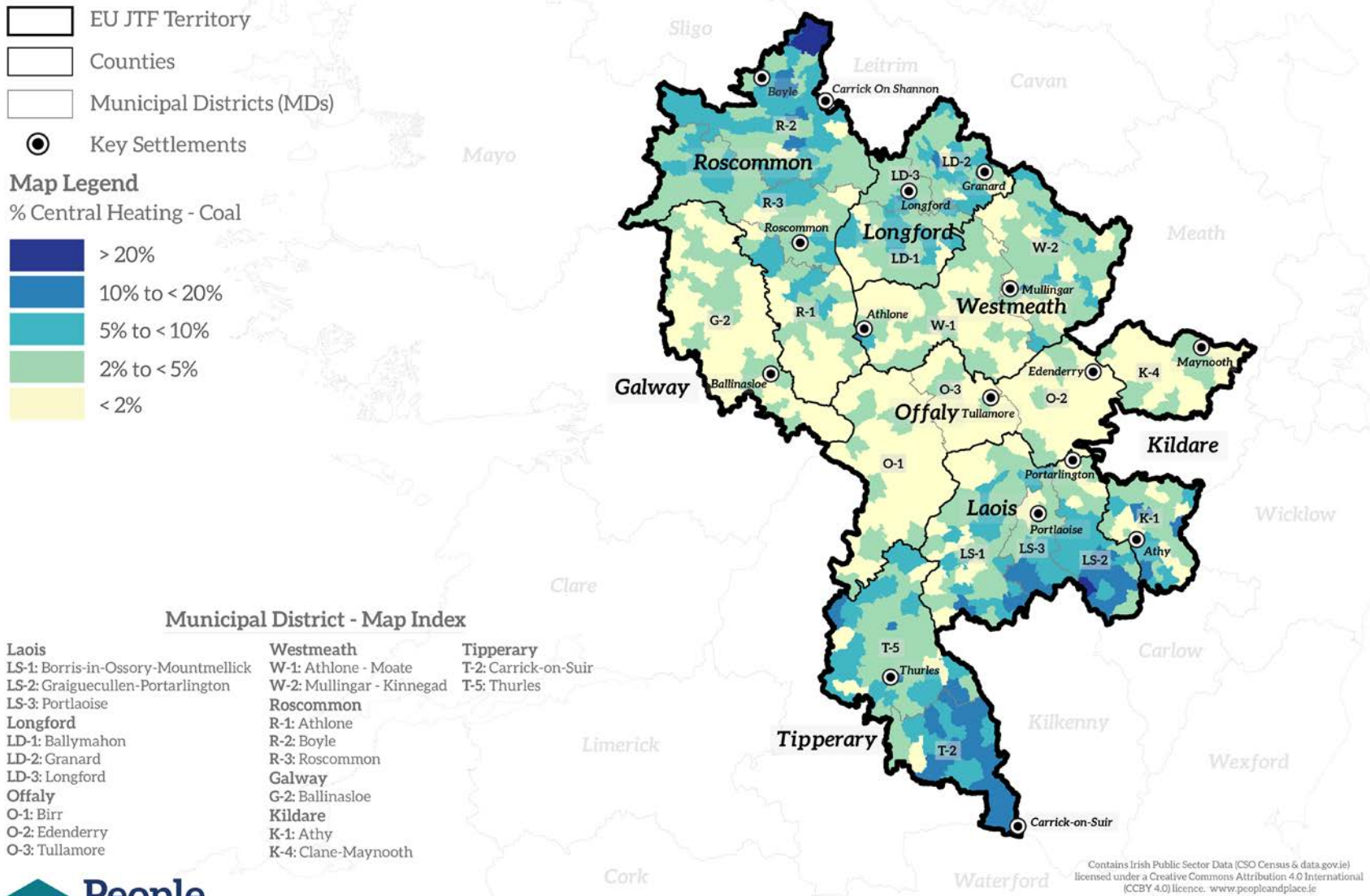


Figure 2.19: Main Fuel Source for Central Heating - % Coal, 2016 (Source: CSO)



Main Fuel Source for Central Heating - % Coal, 2016



Main Fuel Source for Central Heating - % Coal, 2016 (EDs)

Map 2.19: Main Fuel Source for Central Heating - % Coal, 2016 (Source: CSO)



Main Fuel Source for Central Heating - % Oil, 2016

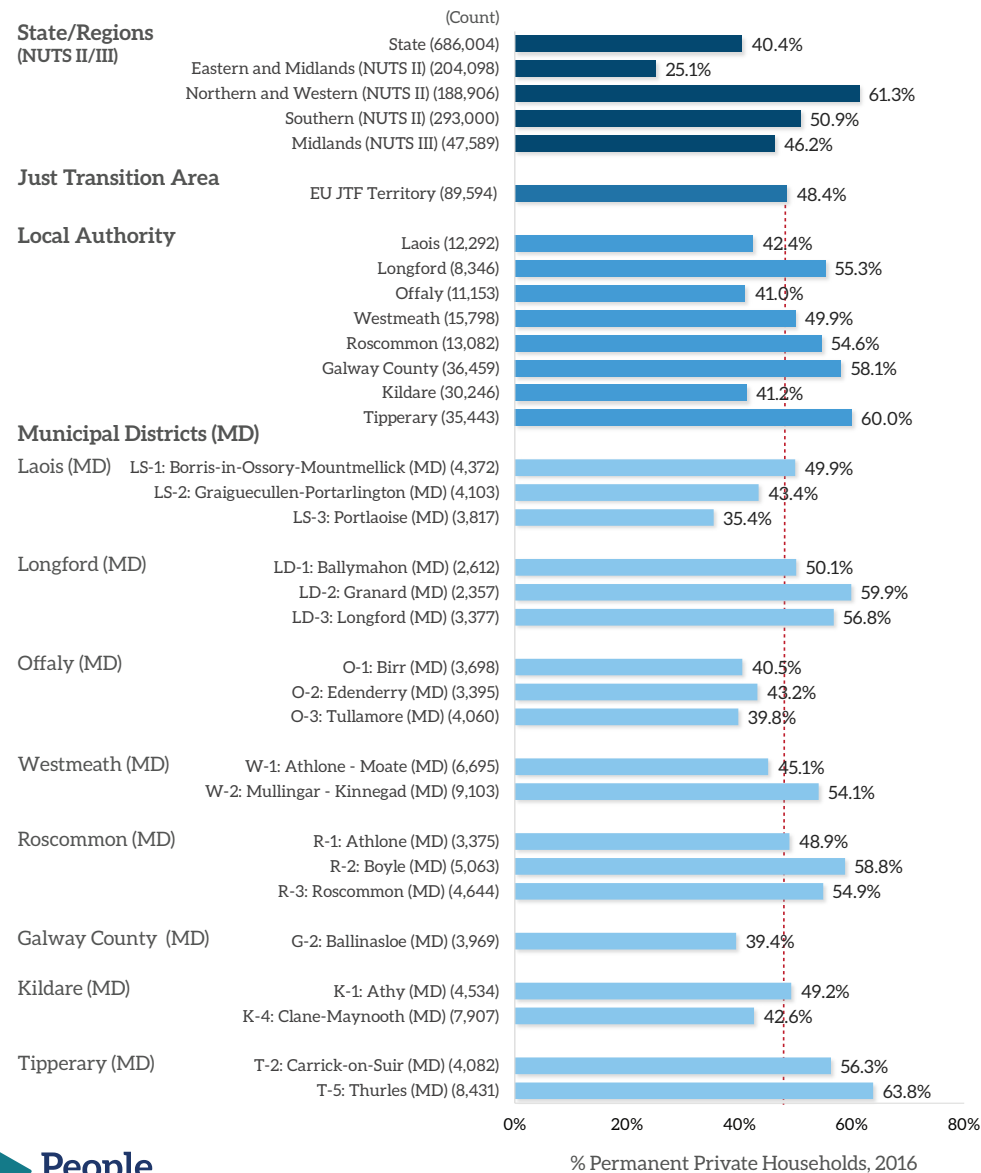
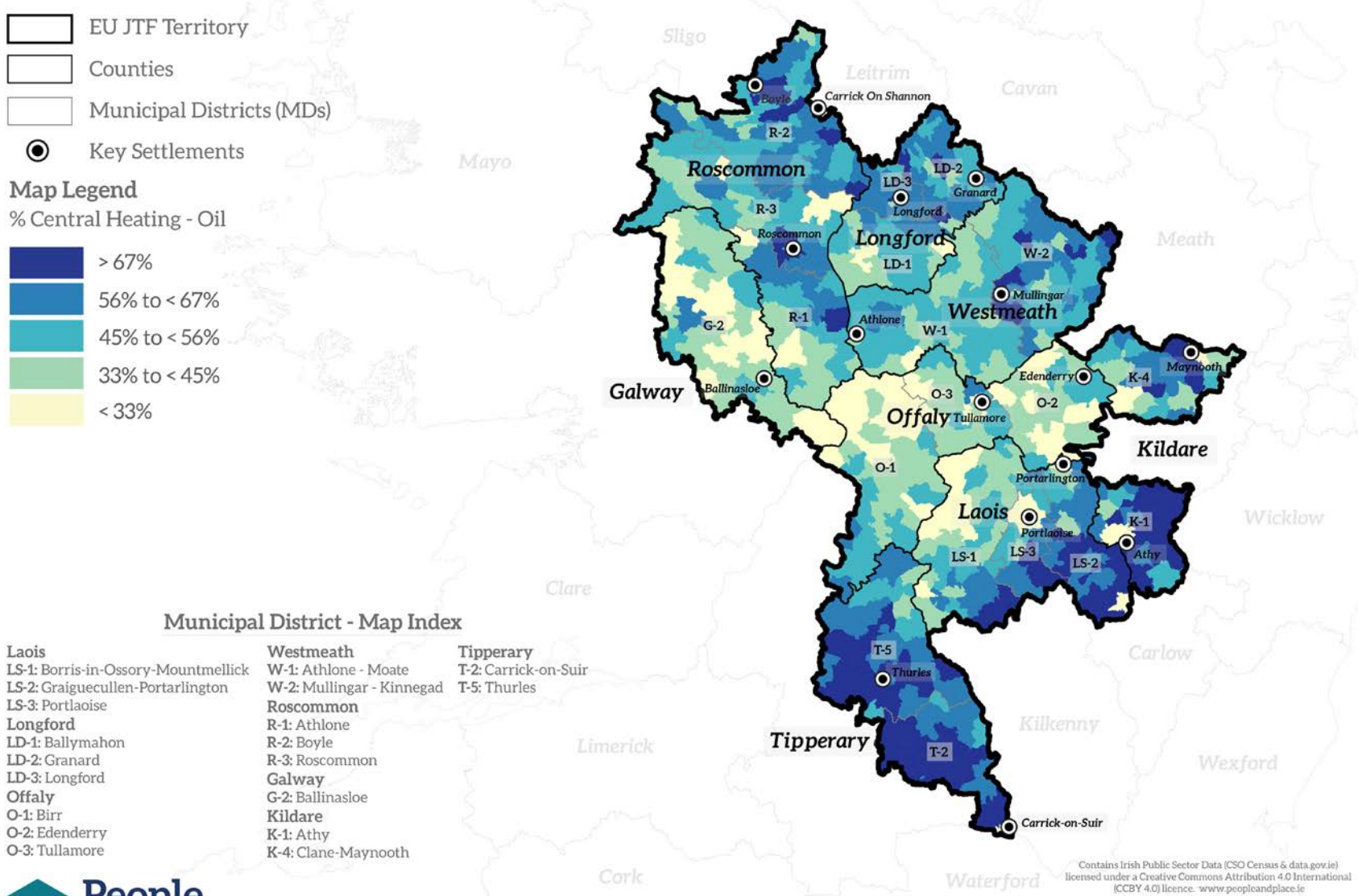


Figure 2,20: Main Fuel Source for Central Heating - % Oil, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Main Fuel Source for Central Heating - % Oil, 2016



Main Fuel Source for Central Heating - % Oil, 2016 (EDs)

Map 2.20: Main Fuel Source for Central Heating - % Oil, 2016 (Source: CSO)

# Economic Indicators

## Economic Indicators - Commentary

### The Regional Economy

This chapter profiles the EU JTF Territory's economic geography. It looks at levels of participation in the workforce, including employment and unemployment, and it examines the workforce's sectoral composition. The data presented here also include details in respect of median household income. This chapter presents a detailed business demography for each county in the EU JTF Territory, which includes data on the employment by sector and the sizes of enterprises.

### The Workforce

84.9% (207,481) of the EU JTF Territory's labour force is classified as being 'at work' (2016). This is lower than the corresponding values in the State and Eastern and Midlands (NUTS 2) Region. While there has been a convergence between males and females in respect of workforce participation rates, over recent decades, the gender gap is greater in the EU JTF Territory than in the State. Workforce participation rates are highest in the parts of the EU JTF Territory that are closest to, and best connected with, the Greater Dublin Area, also they are also relatively high in the west – including in areas in which agriculture remains an important driver of the local economy.

Regional-level data on unemployment reveal that the Midlands (NUTS 3) Region has a higher unemployment rate than the State; the figures are 6.1% and 5.7% respectively. Over the past five years, there has been a gradual decline in the unemployment rates at State and regional levels. Ireland's overall unemployment rate has fallen from almost nine percent (8.8%) to under six percent (5.7%) since 2016Q1. Over the same period, the unemployment rate in the Midlands (NUTS 3) region has declined from almost fourteen percent (13.7%) to just over six percent.

The most recently available data in respect of unemployment at sub-regional and sub-county levels date from 2016. At that point in time, unemployment was more prevalent than is currently the case. These figures reveal that unemployment rates range from under ten percent in the Athlone MD to almost a quarter of the labour force in the Longford MD. While local-level data on unemployment may be dated, they provide a useful indicator of the strength and structure of local economies. ED-level data on unemployment reveal that the highest rates are in urban neighbourhoods that are characterised by inter-generational disadvantage and in structurally weak rural areas. The most significant geographical clusters of EDs in which there are high levels of unemployment are West Roscommon – in and around Castlerea and Ballaghaderreen; Rooskey; Longford Town, Ballinasloe, Athy, Thurles, Portlaoise and their environs; rural communities along the Westmeath-Longford county boundary; Fербane; Carrick-on-Suir and the Sliabh Ardagh Uplands.

Current (January 2022) live register data reveal that there are 3,600 young people (aged <25) who are unemployed in the counties that comprise the EU JTF Territory – either in full or in part. These represent eleven percent of the total number of persons who are on the live register. Longford has the highest proportion of young people (15% of the total on the live register) who are unemployed. Between January 2016 and January 2022, all local authority areas experienced declines in the number of persons on the live register. County Offaly experienced the greatest decline (-59%), while County Longford experienced the least decline (-49%). Downward trajectories, in respect of the number of persons on the live register, are also evident at social welfare offices that serve the EU JTF Territory. Declines range from -64% in Edenderry to -42% in Castlerea.

## Economic Indicators - Commentary

### Income

Gross median household income is lower in the EU JTF Territory than in the State; the respective figures are €43,010 and €45,256. At local authority level, median household incomes are highest in County Kildare (€54,472), and they are lowest in County Longford (€34,892). At MD-level, median household incomes range from under €35k in the Boyle and Longford MDs to over €57k in the Clane-Maynooth MD. At the local level (based on ED-level data), the areas with highest median household incomes are in and around the main urban centres, particularly Athlone and along the main commuter corridors between the GDA and Athy, Portlaoise and Mullingar. Median incomes are generally lowest in the most rural parts of the EU JTF Territory, namely West Roscommon, the north of the Ballinasloe MD, North Longford and parts of the Carrick-on-Suir MD.

The CSO has also published more recent (2019) data on disposable income per person at county level. These figures reveal that County Kildare has, after Dublin, the highest level of disposable income per person among the State's twenty-six counties. Counties Tipperary (entire county) and Galway (including the city) rank in eighth and eleventh positions respectively in respect of the amount of disposable income per person. However, three of the EU JTF Territory's counties are in the bottom four counties in this respect. County Donegal has the lowest level of disposable income per person, while Offaly, Laois and Longford have the second, third and fourth lowest levels respectively. County Roscommon has the sixth-lowest value, while County Westmeath has the ninth-lowest amount of disposable income per person.

Longitudinal regional-level data on disposable income per person reveal that between 2008 and 2011, incomes declined sharply across all regions. While incomes have recovered since then, the rate of recovery has been much slower in the Midlands (NUTS 3) Region than in the State; in 2018 disposable income per person, in the Midlands was ten percent higher than it was in 2011. Meanwhile, in the State as a whole, disposable income per person was twenty-two percent higher. Moreover, there has been a widening of the disposable income gap between the State and the Midlands over this timeframe.

### Employment by Sector

As is the case across Ireland, the two largest sectors, in employment terms, in the EU JTF Territory are 'commerce and trade' and 'professional services'. These account for almost forty-five percent of all jobs. The proportion of the workforce employed in 'commerce and trade' is slightly lower in the EU JTF Territory than in the State, and the EU JTF Territory also has a smaller proportion of persons who are employed in 'transport and communications' and in 'public administration'. Conversely, the EU JTF Territory has larger proportions of its workforce who are employed in the primary and secondary sectors – agriculture, building and construction and manufacturing industries. There are notable county- and sub-county-level divergences from the overall sectoral profile of the EU JTF Territory's workforce. Agriculture is a more significant employer in the parts of Counties Tipperary and Galway that pertain to the EU JTF Territory than is the case in Kildare and Westmeath. Conversely, 'commerce and trade' and 'professional services' are more significant in County Kildare than in more rural counties, most notably Offaly, Longford and Tipperary.



## Economic Indicators - Commentary

There are over fifteen thousand people in the EU JTF Territory who work in the primary sector (agriculture, forestry and fishing). These constitute 7.5% of the workforce – a portion that is more than three percentage points higher than is the case across the State as a whole. Agriculture is an important employer and a driver of the local economy in rural communities and in small towns across the EU JTF Territory. Primary sector employment accounts for over ten percent of all jobs in the MDs of Carrick-on-Suir, Borris-in-Ossory-Mountmellick, Granard, Ballinasloe, Birr, Thurles and Boyle. Agriculture provides one fifth of all jobs in most of South Offaly – including Shinrone and Kinnity; and in the adjoining communities in Counties Laois and Tipperary – including Borris-in-Ossory, Camross, Borrisoleigh and Drom. Similar values pertain in the north of Counties Longford and Westmeath, in rural parts of the Carrick-on-Suir MD – including around Fethard and Moyglass - and in the Sliabh Ardagh Uplands as well as in North Roscommon and the north of the Ballinasloe MD. It is noteworthy that, in the EU JTF Territory, direct employment in agriculture is proportionately more significant in areas with poorer land quality.

Manufacturing is a significant employer in the EU JTF Territory. This sector provides over one in seven jobs (13.4%) of the total, and its significance is greater in the EU JTF Territory than in the State as a whole. Manufacturing employment is particularly important to the economies of Counties Longford and Offaly. Jobs in the manufacturing sector account for over fifteen percent of all jobs in the six MDs that constitute these two counties. The MDs in which manufacturing is less significant, in terms of the local employment base, are Portlaoise, Athy and Clane-Maynooth. An ED-level mapping of the proportion of persons employed in manufacturing clearly illustrates the sector's importance to the rural economies of Counties Offaly and Longford. The two largest geographical clusters in which manufacturing employment accounts for over a fifth of all jobs are as follows: in South Roscommon and West Offaly – from Ballydangan eastwards to Clara and southwards to Birr; and East Offaly – from Rhode to Portarlinton. Similar values pertain throughout much of rural County Longford and in the north of County Westmeath – including Castlepollard.

While the construction sector contracted following the economic crash in 2008/'09, it remains an important employer, accounting for six percent of jobs in the EU JTF Territory and just over five percent (5.1%) across the State. In employment terms, the construction sector is more significant in the Granard, Edenderry and Clane-Maynooth MDs; it provides over seven percent of jobs in these municipal districts. ED-level mapping of the proportion of the workforce employed in construction elucidates a number of geographical clusters in which it provides over ten percent of all jobs. These locations include the following: rural communities to the west of Castlerea; North Longford, notably Ballinamuck, Moyne and Aughnacliffe; and Rhode.

Commerce and trade provide over one fifth (21.3%) of all jobs in the EU JTF Territory. This proportion is lower than in the State as a whole and in the Eastern and Midlands (NUTS 2) Region, and it is slightly higher than the level in the Midlands (NUTS 3) Region. Employment in this sector is generally associated with cities and towns, and accordingly, in the EU JTF Territory, the MDs with the highest percentages of persons employed in commerce and trade are as follows: Clane-Maynooth; Longford; Graiguecullen-Portarlinton; Athy and Portlaoise. ED-level mapping of the proportion of the resident workforce employed in commerce and trade elucidates the significance of the main urban centres and proximity to the GDA; the most notable geographical clusters in which at least a quarter of the workforce is employed in this

## Economic Indicators - Commentary

sector are in County Kildare and in the east of County Westmeath. Other smaller clusters are evident in the environs of Thurles, Longford and Athlone.

Public administration accounts for approximately one in fifteen jobs in the EU JTF Territory. This proportion is on a par with the level across the Midlands (NUTS 3) Region, and it is higher than is the case in the State and in the NUTS 2 regions. The Portlaoise, Athlone and Roscommon MDs have the highest proportions of persons working in public administration; over eight percent of their resident workforces are employed in it. As the ED-level distribution of public administration workers illustrates, they are prevalent across urban and rural areas. This analysis shows the significance of county towns as public administration centres, as evidenced by the relatively high values (as a percentage of all resident workers) in and around Carrick-on-Shannon, Roscommon Town and Tullamore. Public sector employment tends to be less significant, in proportional terms, in areas that have diversified employment profiles, such as North Kildare. Additionally, there are relatively few public administration workers resident in many of the most rural communities in the EU JTF Territory, namely South Offaly, the Ballinasloe MD and the Carrick-on-Suir MD.

Professional services represent the single largest source of employment (in sectoral terms) in the EU JTF Territory. Jobs in this sector account for almost a quarter of all jobs in the EU JTF Territory – a profile that is similar to the State and the Midlands (NUTS 3) Region. Employment in professional services is proportionately most significant in the Ballinasloe, Mullingar-Kinnegad, Roscommon and Tullamore MDs – accounting for over a quarter of all jobs. In contrast, professional services provide less than a fifth of jobs in the Edenderry MD. ED-level mapping of the distribution of the resident workforce employed in professional services shows that while there is no clear overall spatial pattern, there are small clusters in which this cohort of workers is statistically noteworthy. They comprise over thirty percent of the resident workforce in the environs of Ballinasloe, Multyfarnham and in parts of South Roscommon, including Knockcroghery.

Transport and communication provide six percent of the jobs held by workers who reside in the EU JTF Territory. This is notably below the corresponding levels across the State and in the Eastern and Midlands (NUTS 2) Region, and it is associated with the EU JTF Territory being more rural than those geographies. Within the EU JTF Territory itself there are proportionately fewer resident workers employed in transport and communications in rural areas than is the case in urban areas. The MDs with the lowest values are Carrick-on-Suir and Ballinasloe, while the highest values (>7%) pertain in the Clane-Maynooth, Athlone-Moate and Portlaoise MDs. ED-level mapping of the distribution of persons employed in transport and communications illustrates the significance of Athlone as a regional hub. Portlaoise is also significant in this regard, albeit to a lesser extent.

## Business Demography

In the Midlands (NUTS 3) Region, there are 16,903 persons employed (on a permanent and full-time basis) in State-assisted firms. Of these, sixty-three percent are indigenous firms, while the remainder (37%) are foreign owned. County-level data in respect of jobs in companies that

## Economic Indicators - Commentary

are the result of foreign-direct investment (FDI) reveal that such jobs are more likely to be in metropolitan, rather than in rural, areas. FDI-related jobs account for over a fifth of those in County Galway, but fewer than one percent of jobs in County Longford. They account for just under eight percent of jobs in the Midlands (NUTS 3) Region.

Regardless of the provenance of their owners or investors, small and medium enterprises account for the vast majority (>90%) of all firms in the EU JTF Territory and in all counties therein. SMEs with under ten employees provide over one-third of all industrial jobs in Counties Laois (43%), Roscommon (42%), Longford (39%), Offaly (39%), Tipperary (38%) and Westmeath (35%). Large firms (i.e. those with >250 employees) are more significant in Counties Kildare and Galway.

The CSO uses the pan-European classification system for business activities: Nomenclature of Economic Activities (NACE). The associated datasets are published at county level, and this chapter presents the associated statistics for each of the counties that are either wholly or partly in the EU JTF Territory. In each case, the county-level figures are benchmarked against those for the State.

In respect of County Laois, the business demography data reveal that:

- In 2019, there were 3,111 active enterprises – an increase of six percent (n=168) since 2009;
- In 2019, there were 13,097 persons engaged in active enterprises – an increase of twenty-five percent (n=2,641) since 2009;
- The sectors with the largest numbers of firms, by NACE type, are as follows: construction; professional scientific and technical; and manufacturing;
- Over ninety-two percent of firms have under ten employees;
- Over forty-three percent of industrial workers are employed in firms that have fewer than ten employees; and
- Almost a fifth of industrial workers are employed in firms that have between 50 and 249 employees

In respect of County Longford, the business demography data reveal that:

- In 2019, there were 1,961 active enterprises – an increase of two percent (n=39) since 2009;
- In 2019, there were 8,720 persons engaged in active enterprises – an increase of twenty-four percent (n=1,714) since 2009;
- The sectors with the largest numbers of firms, by NACE type, are as follows: construction; wholesale and trade; and professional scientific and technical;
- Over ninety-one percent of firms have under ten employees;
- Almost forty percent of industrial workers are employed in firms that have fewer than ten employees; and
- Almost a fifth of industrial workers are employed in firms that have between 50 and 249 employees.

In respect of County Offaly, the business demography data reveal that:

- In 2019, there were 3,290 active enterprises – an increase of two percent (n=80) since 2009;
- In 2019, there were 15,223 persons engaged in active enterprises – an increase of seventeen percent (n=2,212) since 2009;
- The sectors with the largest numbers of firms, by NACE type, are as follows: construction; wholesale and trade; and professional scientific and technical;
- Over ninety-two percent of firms have under ten employees;
- Almost forty percent of industrial workers are employed in firms that have fewer than ten employees; and
- Fourteen percent of industrial workers are employed in firms that have over 250 employees.

In respect of County Westmeath, the business demography data reveal that:

- In 2019, there were 4,509 active enterprises – a decrease of two percent (n=-70) since 2009;
- In 2019, there were 21,373 persons engaged in active enterprises – an increase of twenty-two percent (n=4,128) since 2009;
- The sectors with the largest numbers of firms, by NACE type, are as follows: construction; wholesale and trade; and professional scientific and technical;
- Over ninety-one percent of firms have under ten employees;
- Over a third (34.7%) of industrial workers are employed in firms that have fewer than ten employees; and
- Almost twelve percent of industrial workers are employed in firms that have over 250 employees.

In respect of County Roscommon, the business demography data reveal that:

- In 2019, there were 3,059 active enterprises – a decrease of two percent (n=-54) since 2009;
- In 2019, there were 11,905 persons engaged in active enterprises – an increase of twenty percent (n=1,946) since 2009;
- The sectors with the largest numbers of firms, by NACE type, are as follows: construction; wholesale and trade; and professional scientific and technical;
- Over ninety-three percent of firms have under ten employees;
- Over forty percent (42.5%) of industrial workers are employed in firms that have fewer than ten employees; and
- Over a quarter (28.1%) of industrial workers are employed in firms that have between 50 and 249 employees.

In respect of County Galway and City combined, the business demography data reveal that:

- In 2019, there were 14,055 active enterprises – an increase of one percent (n=170) since 2009;
- In 2019, there were 77,520 persons engaged in active enterprises – an increase of thirty-four percent (n=19,576) since 2009;
- The sectors with the largest numbers of firms, by NACE type, are as follows: construction; wholesale and trade; and professional scientific and technical;
- Over ninety-one percent of firms have under ten employees;
- Over a quarter (28.4%) of industrial workers are employed in firms that have fewer than ten employees; and
- Almost a quarter (23%) of industrial workers are employed in firms that have more than 250 employees.

In respect of County Kildare, the business demography data reveal that:

- In 2019, there were 10,824 active enterprises – an increase five percent (n=563) since 2009;
- In 2019, there were 59,944 persons engaged in active enterprises – an increase of twenty percent (n=9,984) since 2009;
- The sectors with the largest numbers of firms, by NACE type, are as follows: construction; professional scientific and technical; and wholesale and trade;
- Almost ninety-two percent of firms have under ten employees;
- Almost thirty percent (29.4%) of industrial workers are employed in firms that have fewer than ten employees; and
- Over a quarter (26.1%) of industrial workers are employed in firms that have more than 250 employees.

In respect of County Tipperary, the business demography data reveal that:

- In 2019, there were 7,620 active enterprises – an decrease one percent (n=-68) since 2009;
- In 2019, there were 35,865 persons engaged in active enterprises – an increase of ten percent (n=3,78) since 2009;
- The sectors with the largest numbers of firms, by NACE type, are as follows: construction; wholesale and trade; and professional scientific and technical;
- Over ninety-two percent of firms have under ten employees;
- Almost forty percent (38.1%) of industrial workers are employed in firms that have fewer than ten employees; and
- Almost a fifth (18%) of industrial workers are employed in firms that have more than 250 employees.



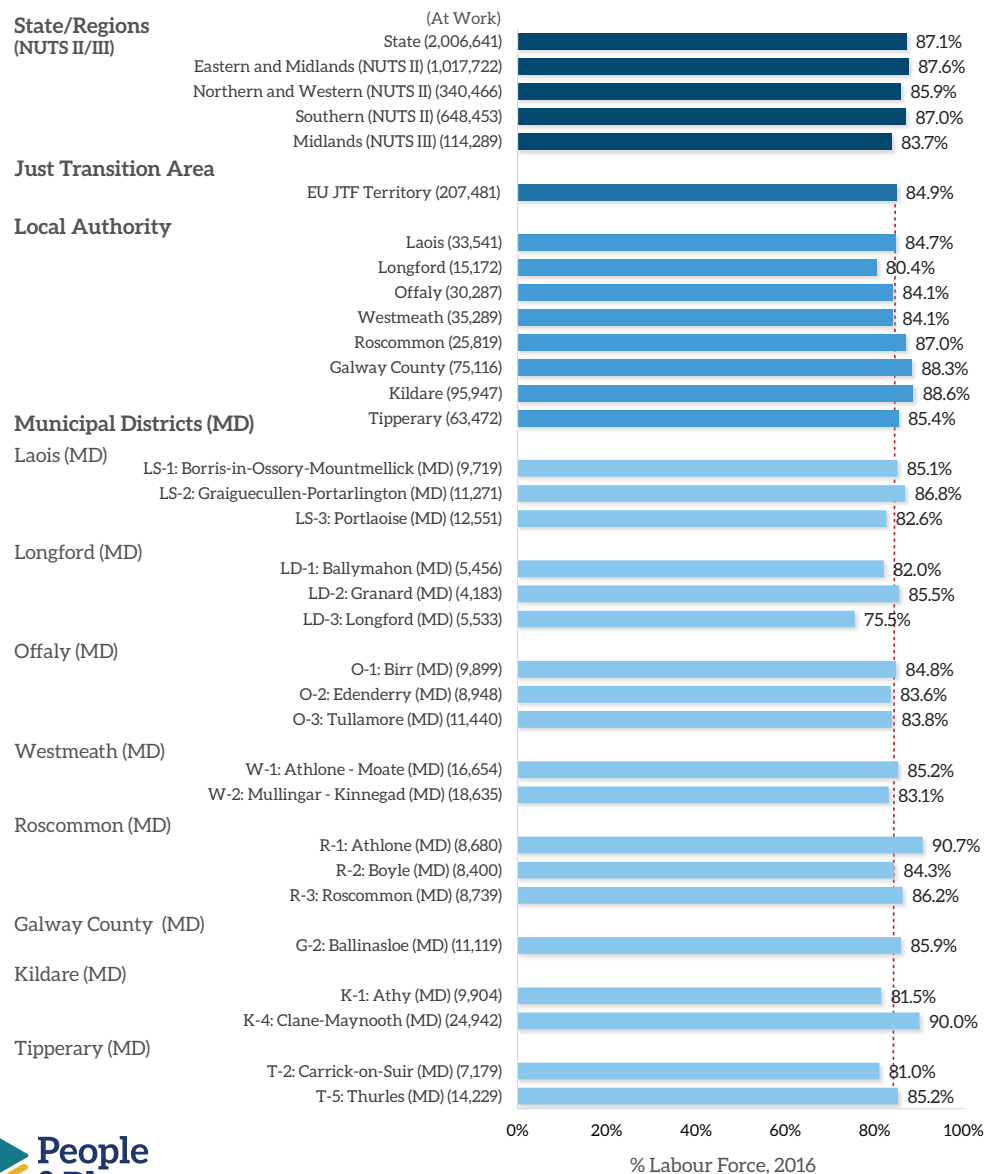
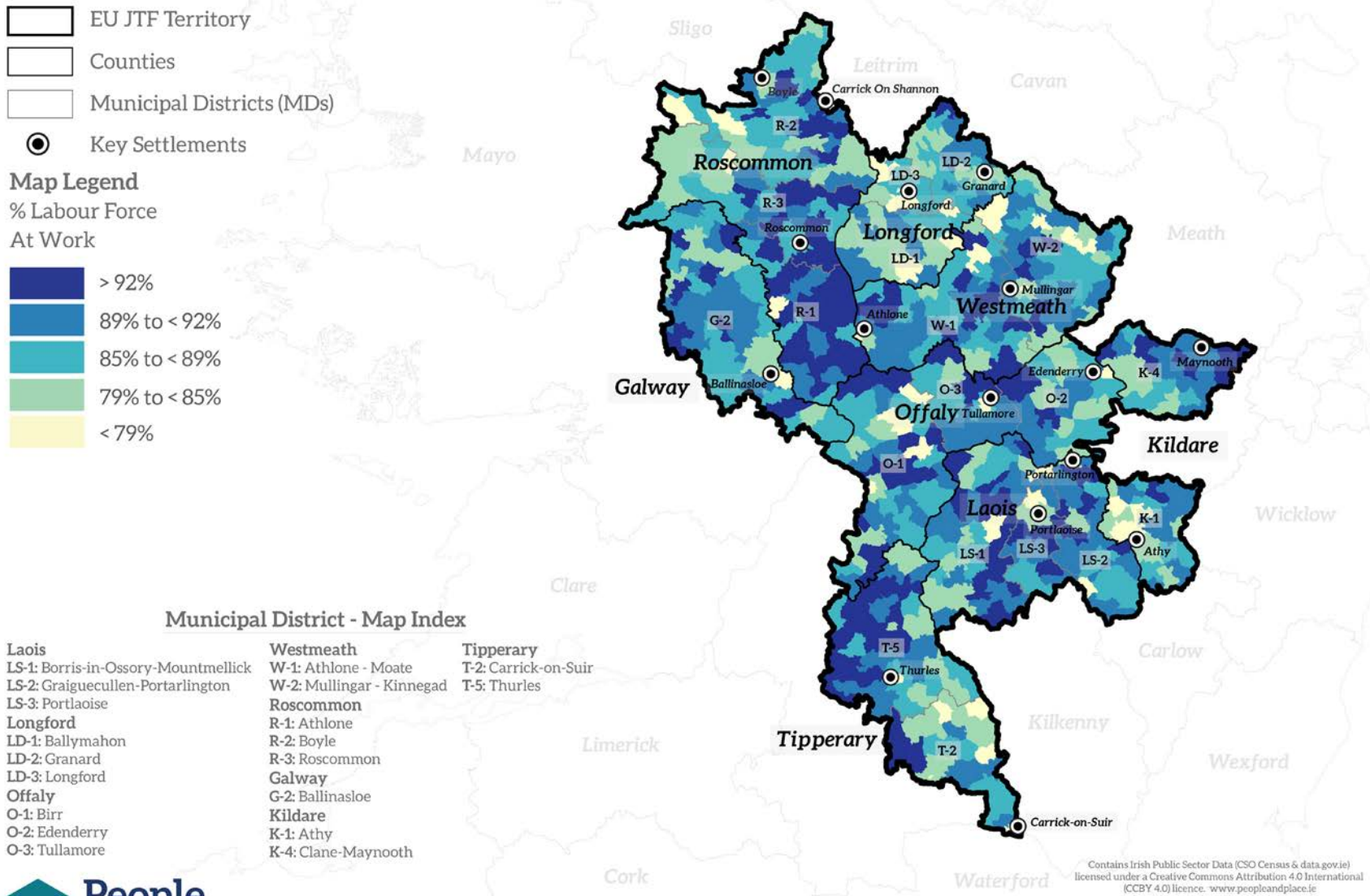


Figure 3.1: Principal Economic Status - % Labour Force At Work, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Principal Economic Status - % Labour Force At Work, 2016 (EDs)



Principal Economic Status - % Labour Force At Work, 2016 (EDs)

Map 3.1: Principal Economic Status - % Labour Force At Work. 2016 (Source: CSO)

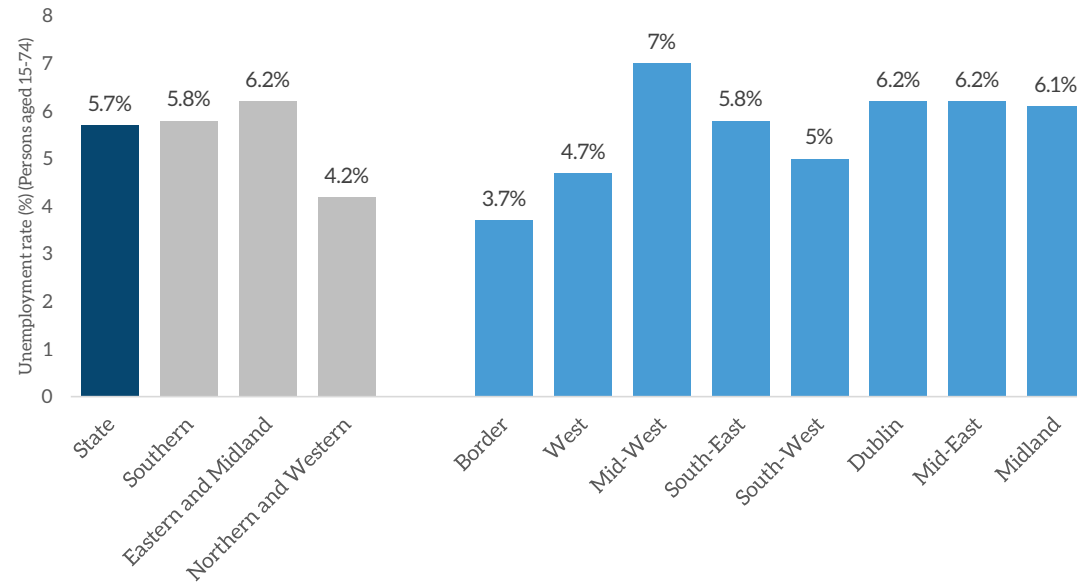


Figure 3.2: State and Regional ILO Unemployment Rate, Q3 2021

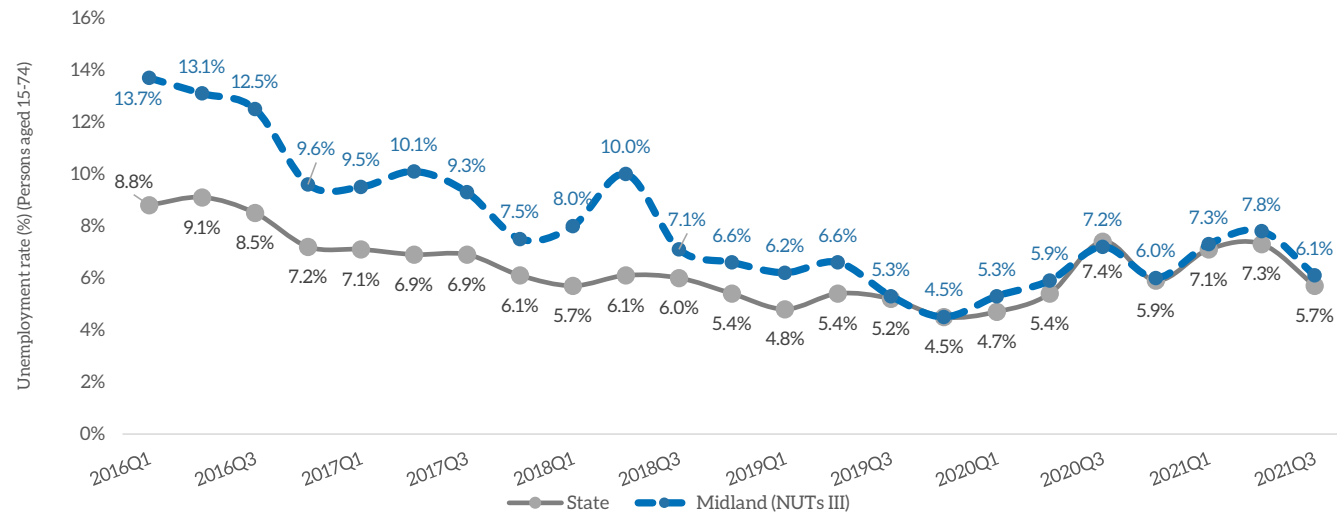


Figure 3.3: State and Midlands ILO Unemployment Rate, Q1 2016 to Q3 2021

Principal Economic Status - % Labour Force Unemployed, 2016

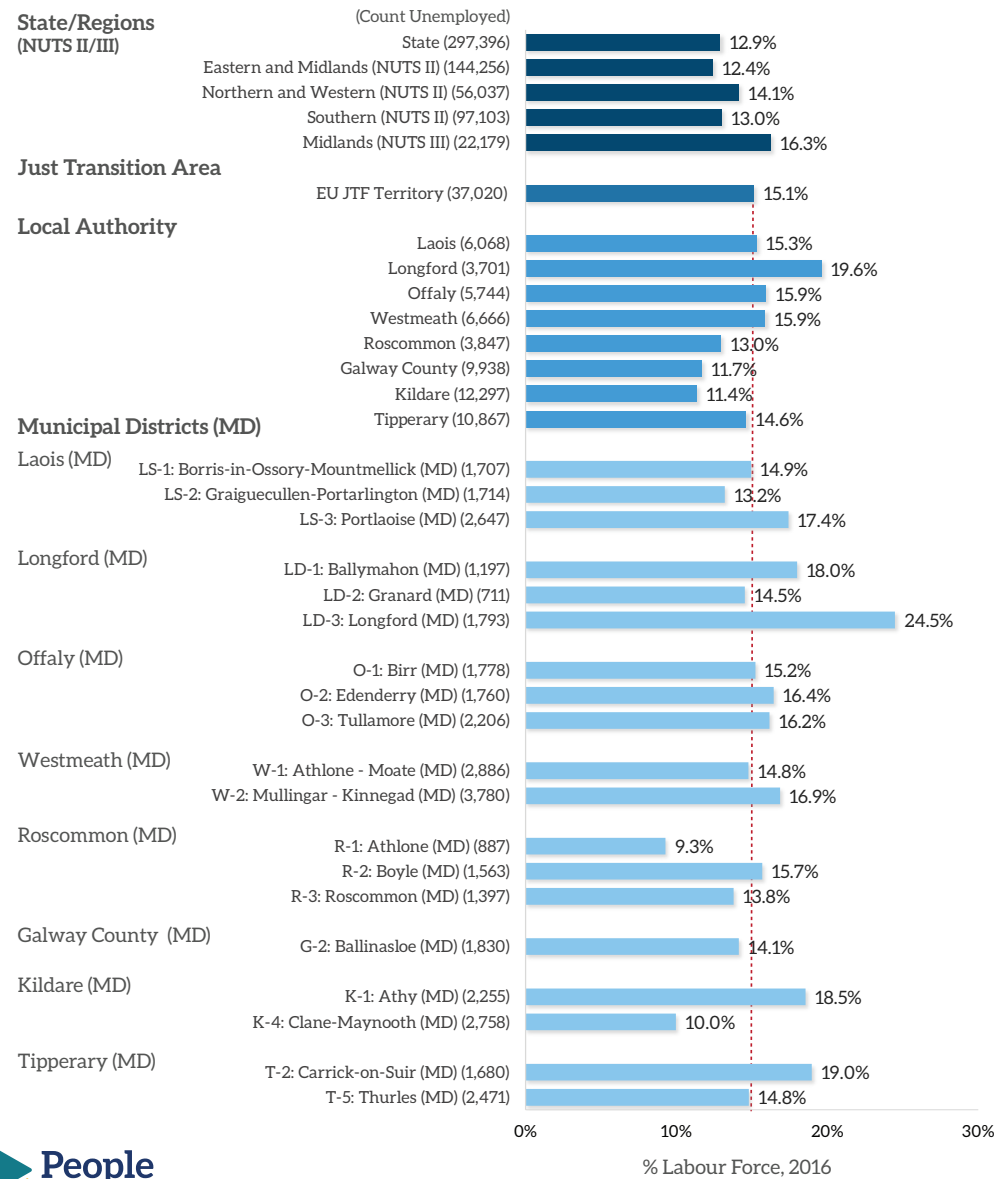


Figure 3.4: Principal Economic Status - % Labour Force Unemployed, 2016 (Source: CSO)





Live Register - Total Recipients by Age Cohort and per Population, M1 2022

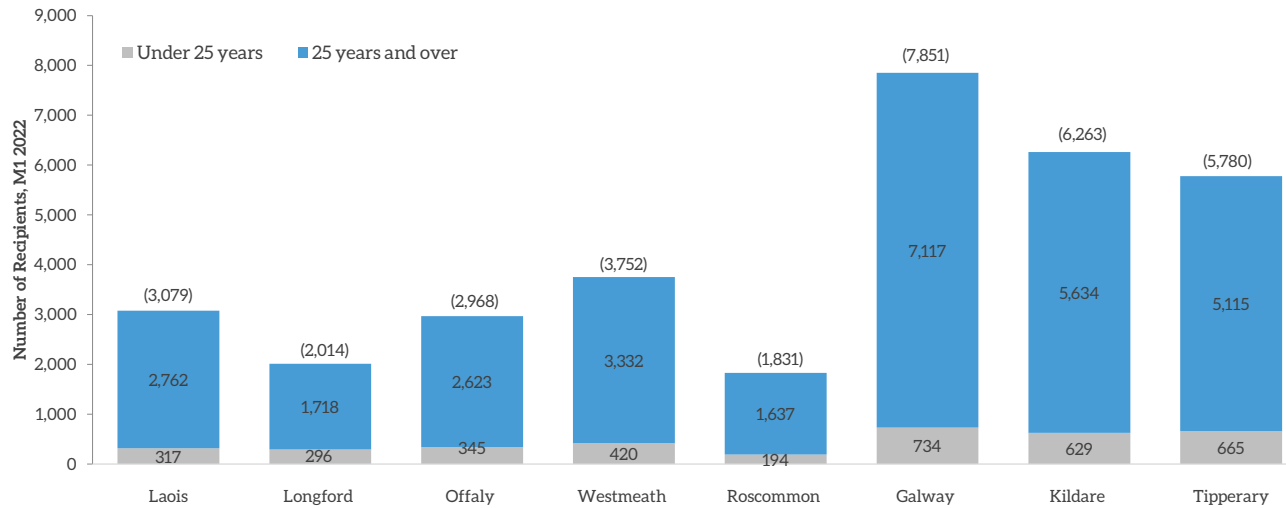


Figure 3.5: Total Live Register recipients by age cohort, M1 2022

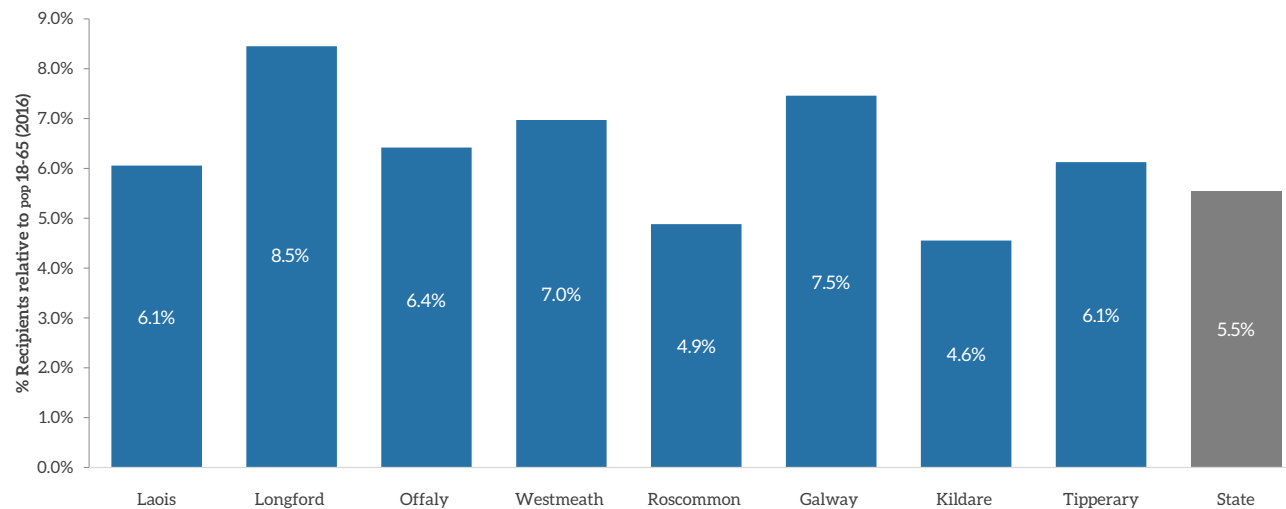


Figure 3.6: Total Live Register recipients (M1, 2022) relative to population aged 18 to 65, (2016)

Live Register - Change in Recipients Numbers, M1 2016 to M1 2022

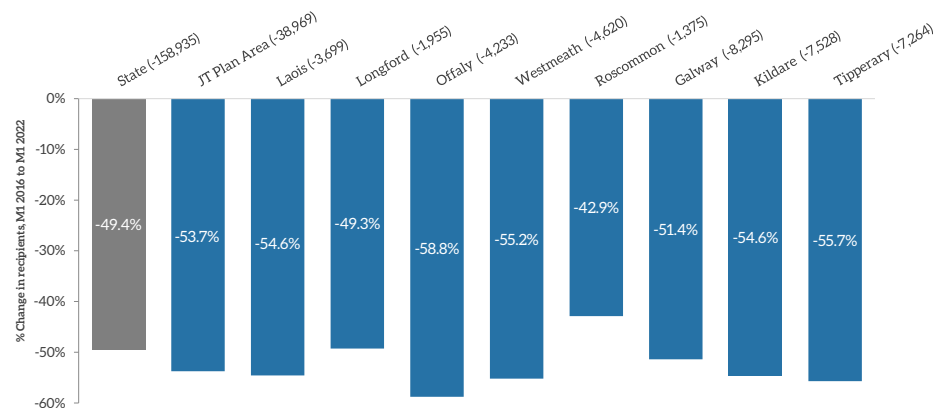


Figure 3.7: Change in Live Register Recipients by Local Authority, M1 2016 to M1 2022

	Social Welfare Office	2016M01	2022M01	Change 16-22	% Change 16-22
Laois	Portlaoise	3,388	1,608	-1,780	-52.5%
	Portarlington	2,427	1,076	-1,351	-55.7%
	Rathdowney	963	395	-568	-59.0%
Longford	Longford	3,969	2,014	-1,955	-49.3%
Offaly	Birr	1,969	1,013	-956	-48.6%
	Edenderry	1,952	704	-1,248	-63.9%
	Tullamore	3,280	1,251	-2,029	-61.9%
Westmeath	Athlone	3,401	1,447	-1,954	-57.5%
	Castlepollard	946	407	-539	-57.0%
	Mullingar	4,025	1,898	-2,127	-52.8%
Roscommon	Boyle	807	439	-368	-45.6%
	Castlerea	1,409	819	-590	-41.9%
	Roscommon	990	573	-417	-42.1%
Galway	Ballinasloe	1,901	904	-997	-52.4%
Kildare	Athy	2,406	1,043	-1,363	-56.7%
	Maynooth	4,512	2,023	-2,489	-55.2%
Tipperary	Carrick-On-Suir	1,545	603	-942	-61.0%
	Roscrea	1,074	523	-551	-51.3%
	Thurles	2,460	1,236	-1,224	-49.8%

Table 3.1: Total Live Register Recipients by Social Welfare Office, M1 2016 to M1 2022

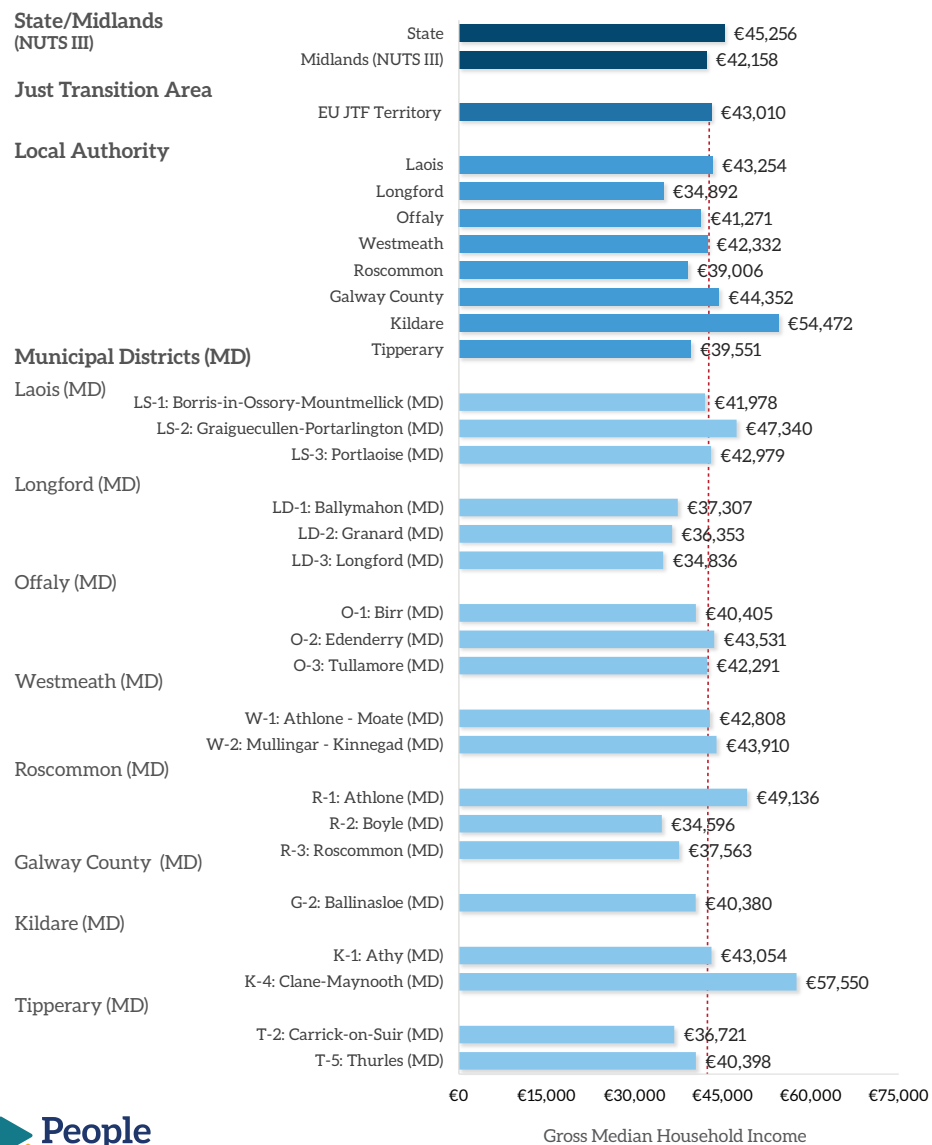
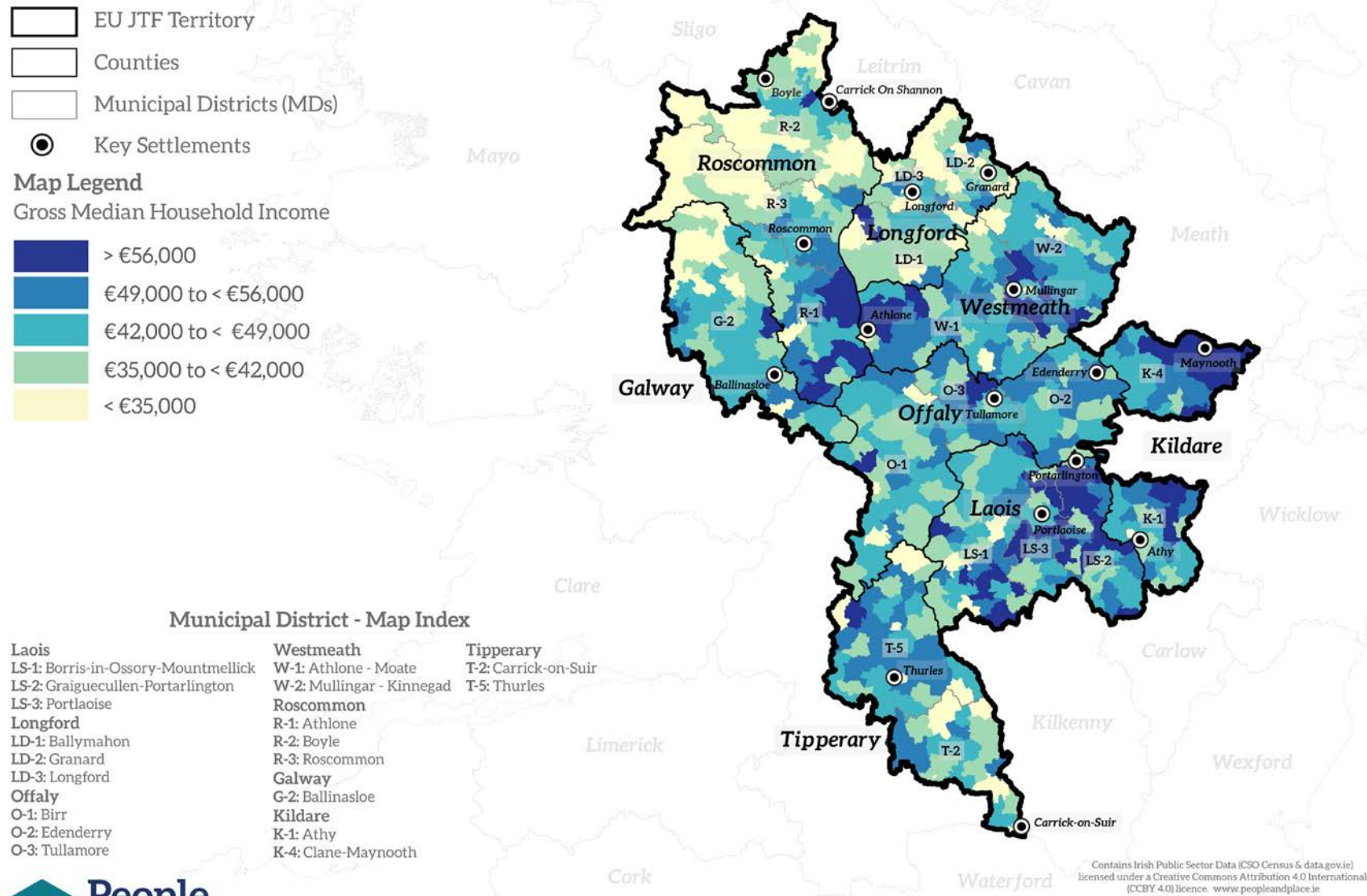


Figure 3.8: Gross Median Household Income, 2016 (Source: CSO)



Gross Median Household Income, 2016 (EDs)

Map 3.3: Gross Median Household Income, 2016 (Source: CSO)

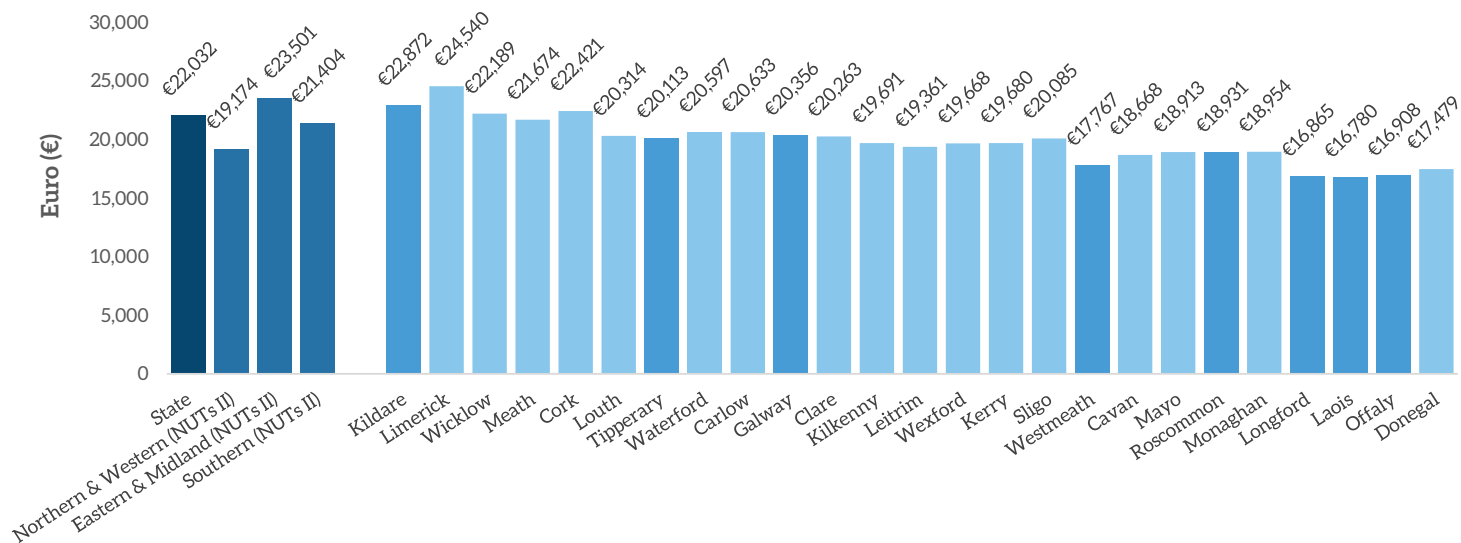


Figure 3.9: Disposable Income per Person, 2019

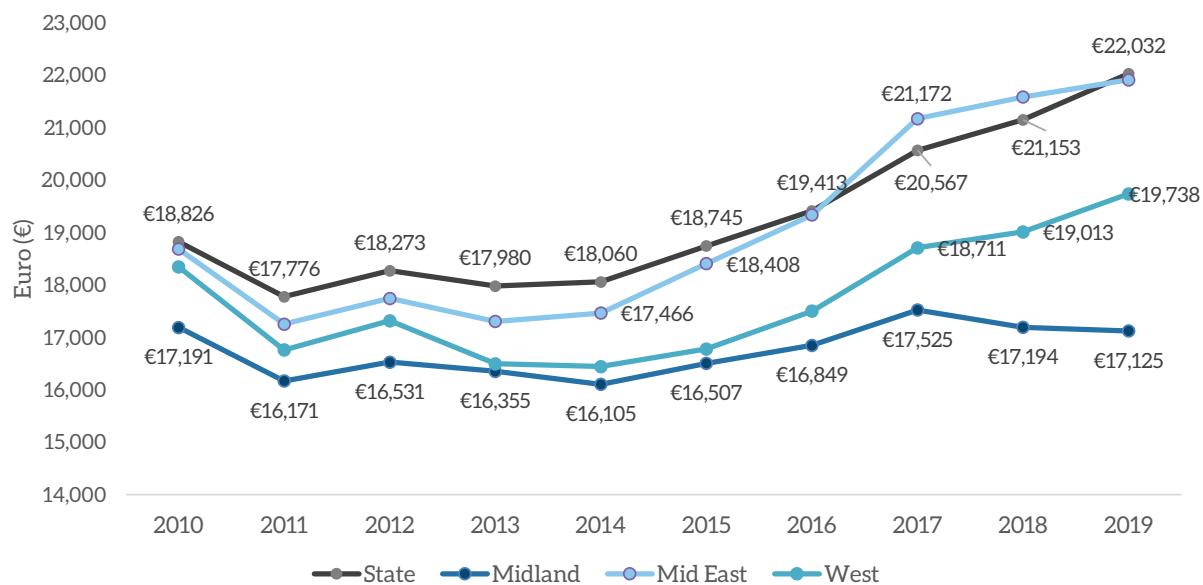


Figure 3.10: State and Regional Disposable Income per Person, 2008 to 2019



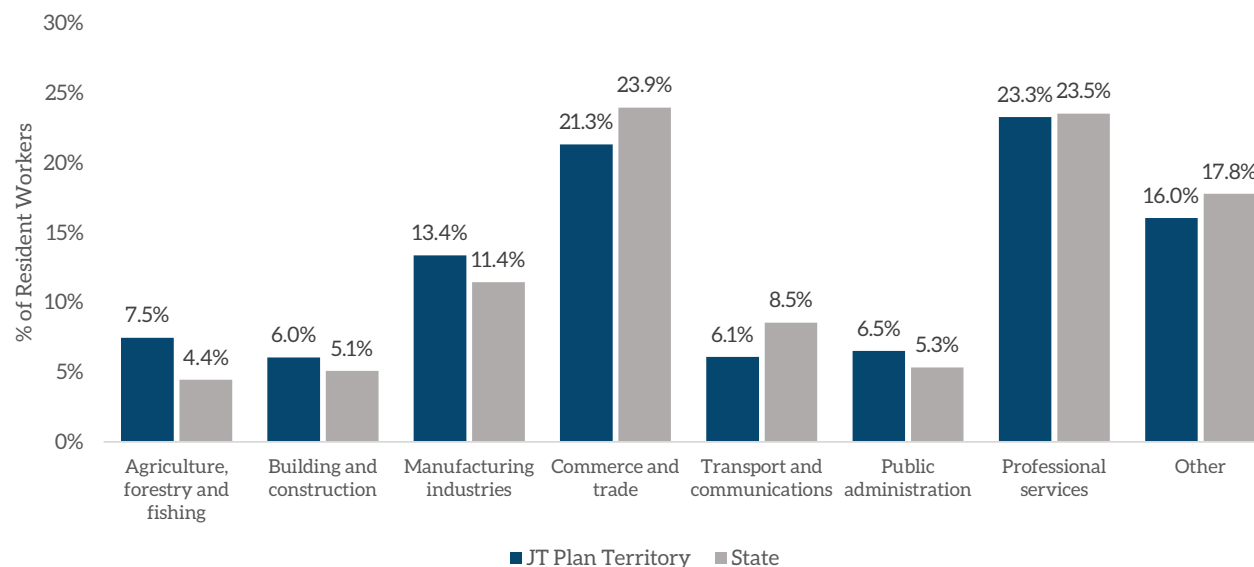


Figure 3.11: Industry of Employment - Just Transition Plan Territory and State, 2016

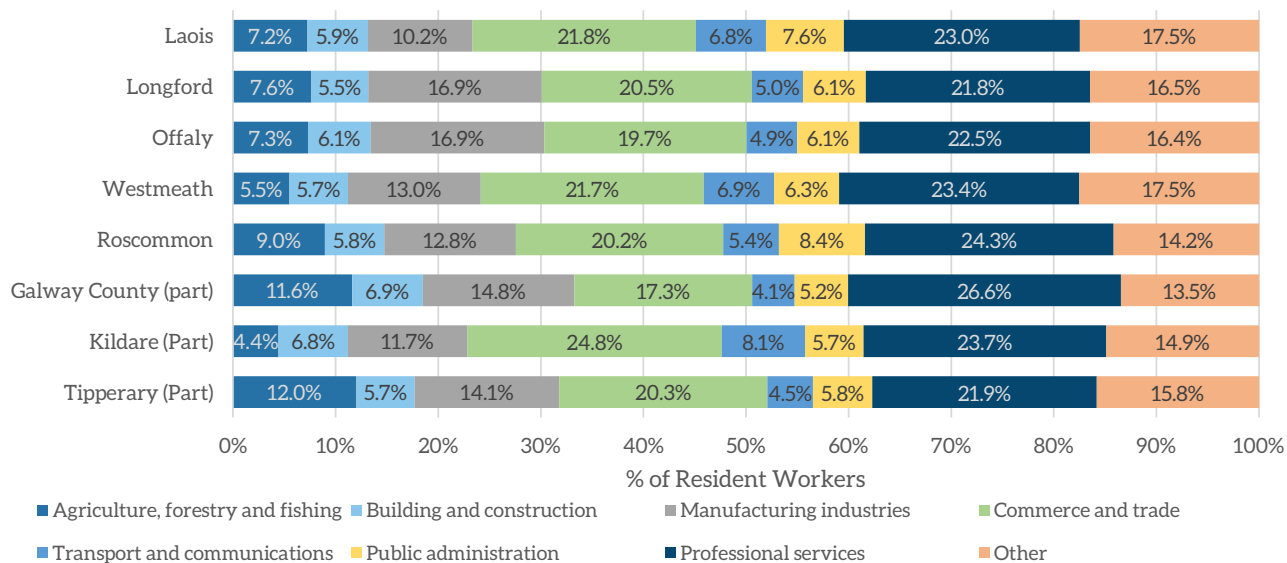


Figure 3.12: Industry of Employment Breakdown - Just Transition Counties, 2016

Industry of Employment - % Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, 2016

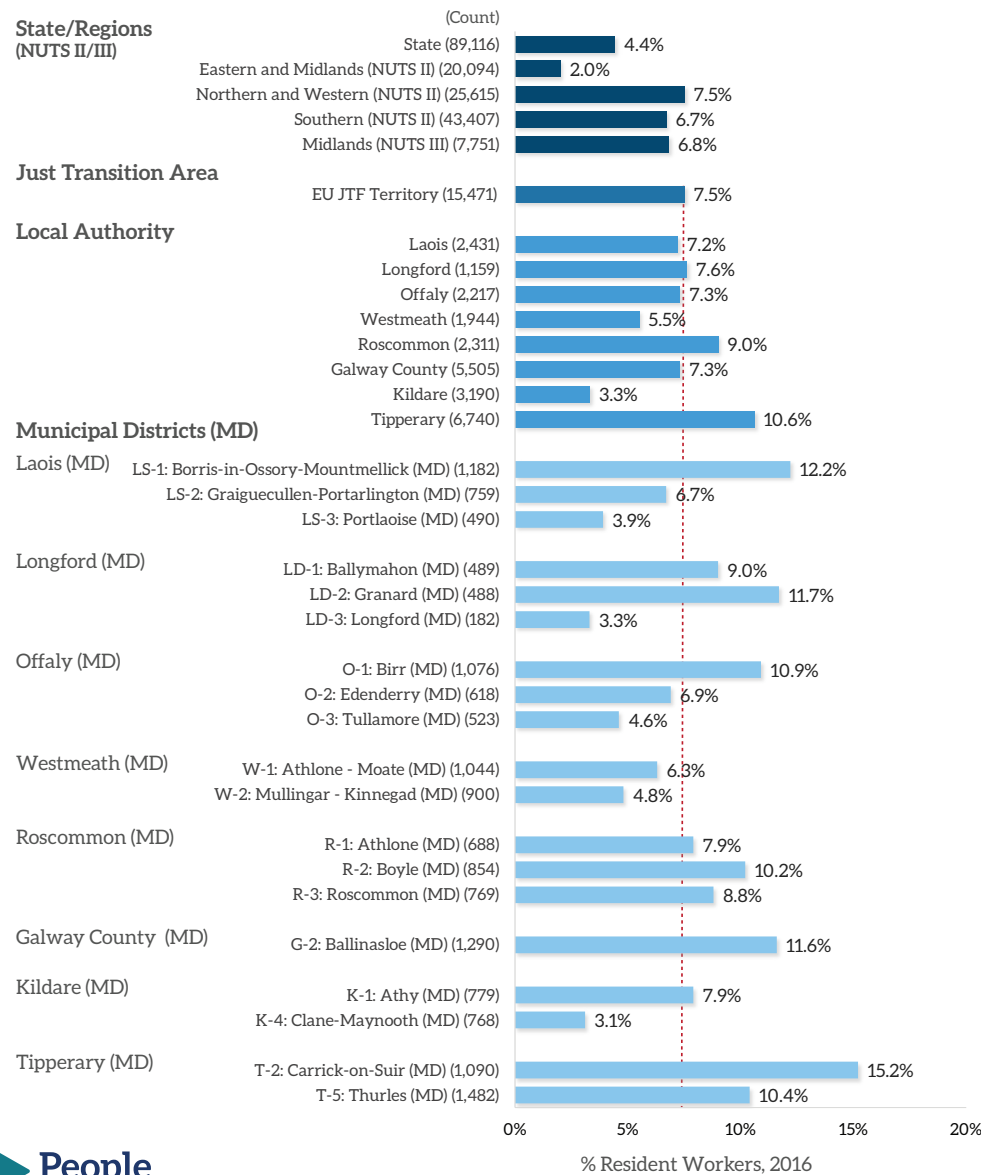
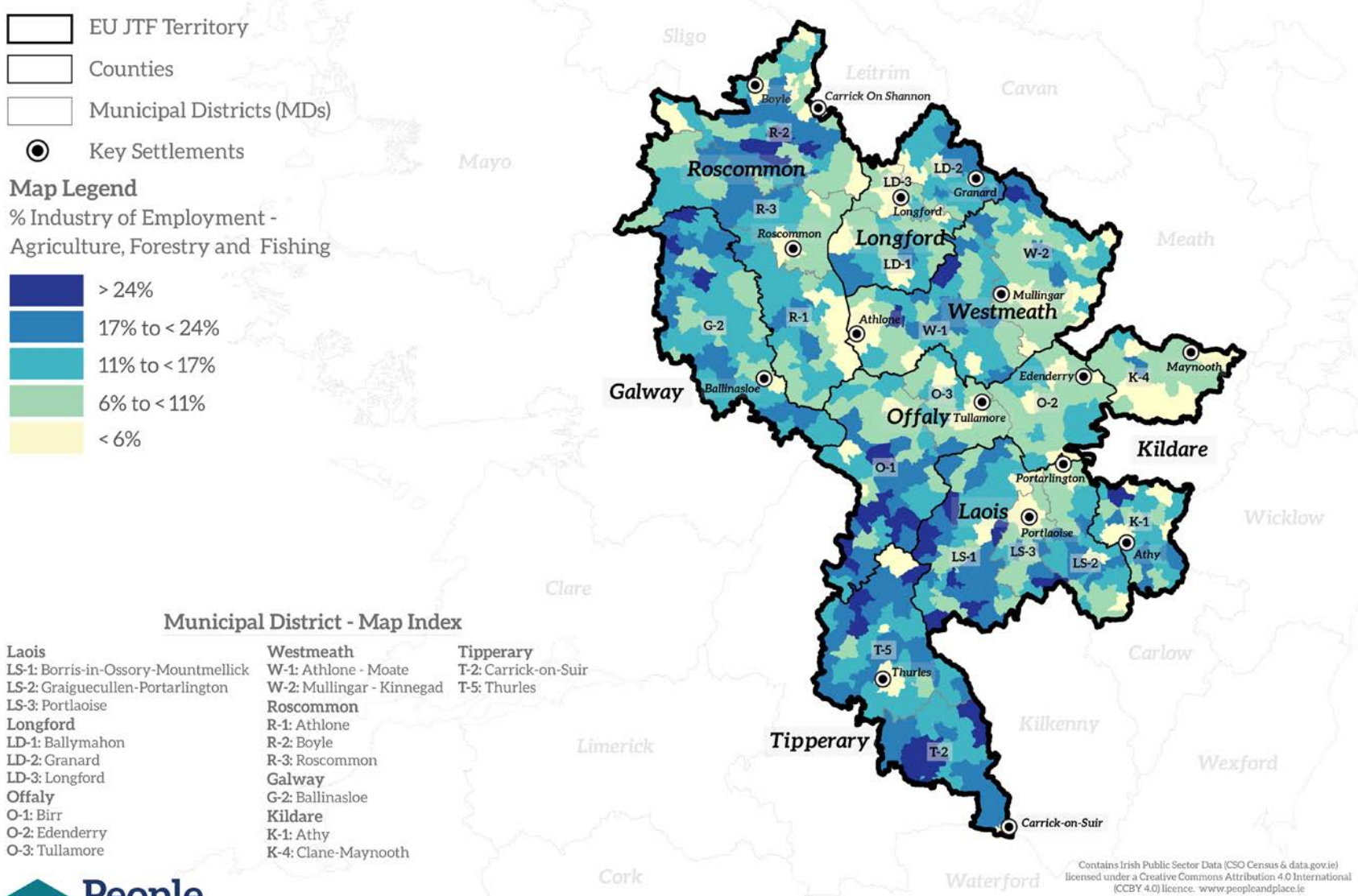


Figure 3.13: Industry of Employment - % Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Industry of Employment - % Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, 2016



Indst. of Employment - % Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, 2016 (EDs)

Map 3.4: Industry of Employment - % Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Industry of Employment - % Manufacturing Industries, 2016

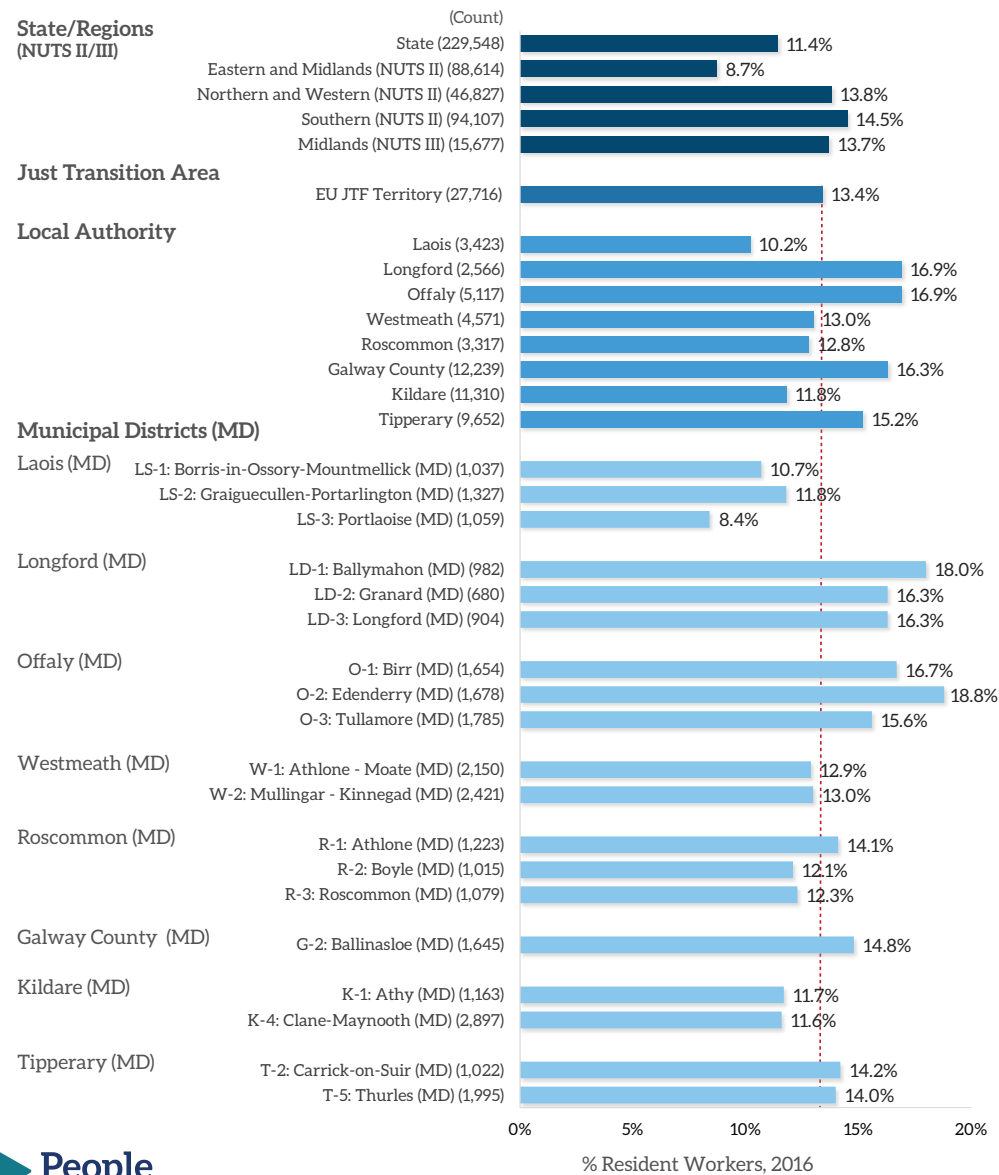
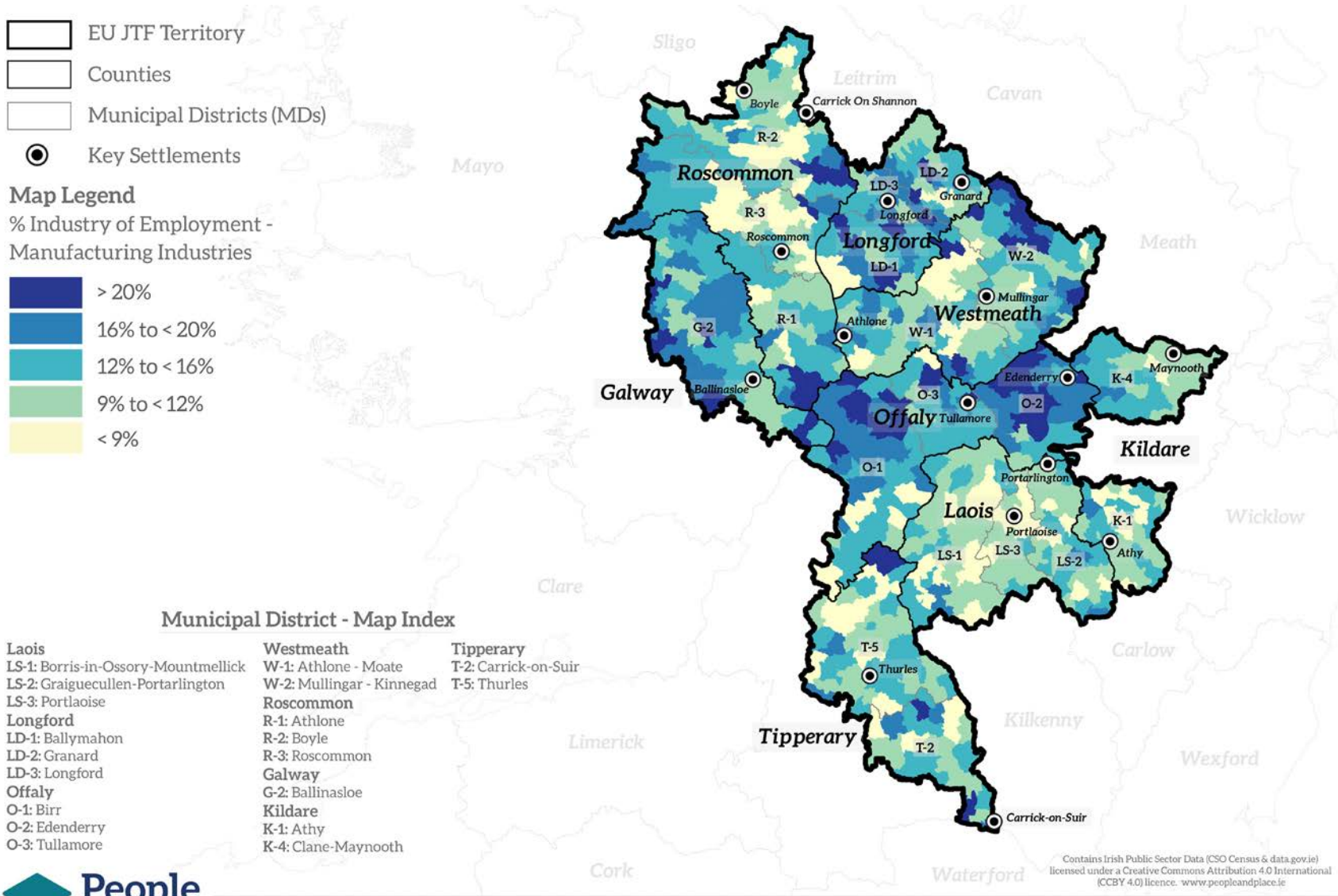


Figure 3.14: Industry of Employment - % Manufacturing Industries, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Industry of Employment - % Manufacturing Industries, 2016



Industry of Employment - % Manufacturing Industries, 2016 (EDs)

Map 3.5: Industry of Employment - % Manufacturing Industries, 2016 (Source: CSO)



Industry of Employment - % Building and Construction, 2016

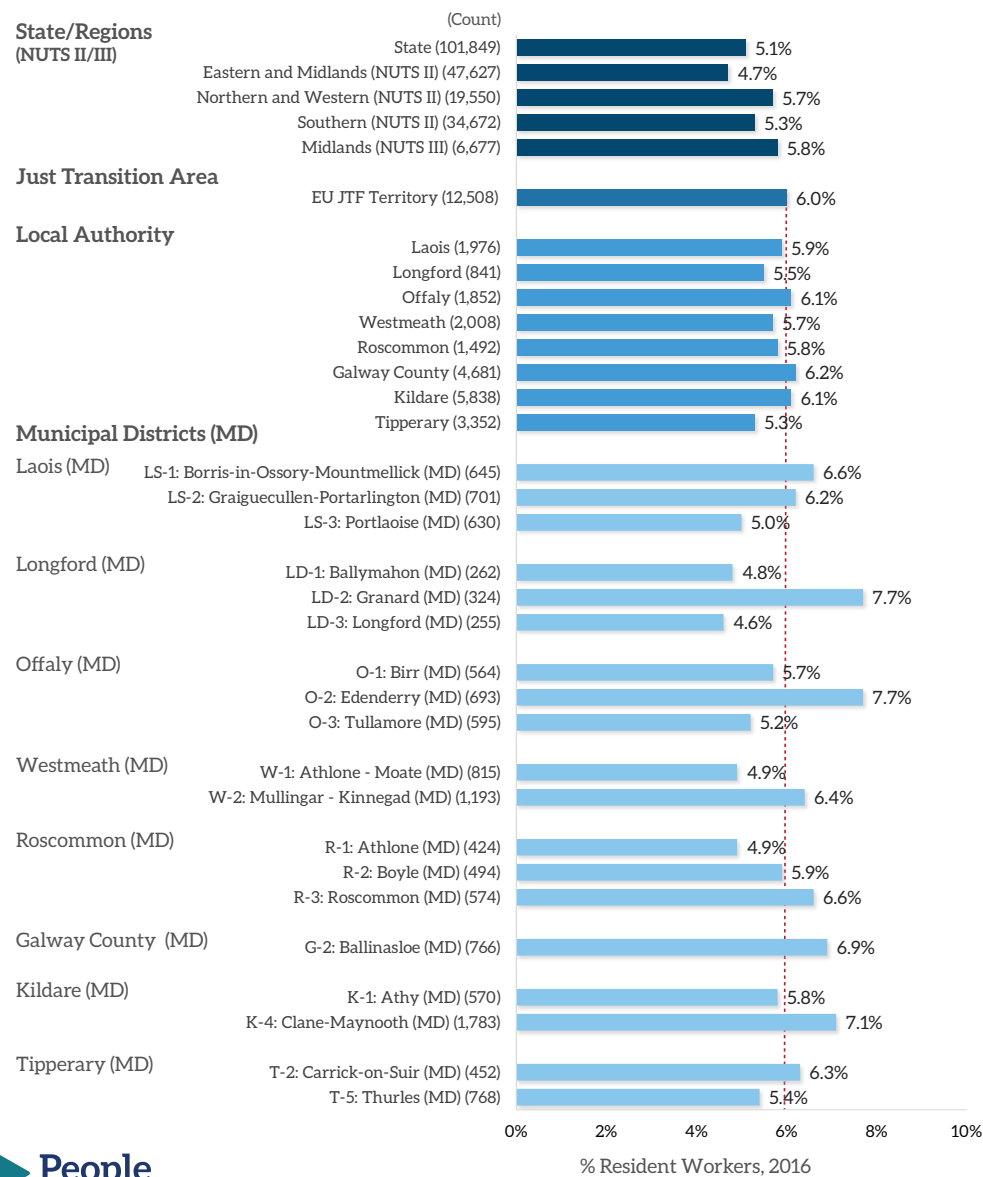
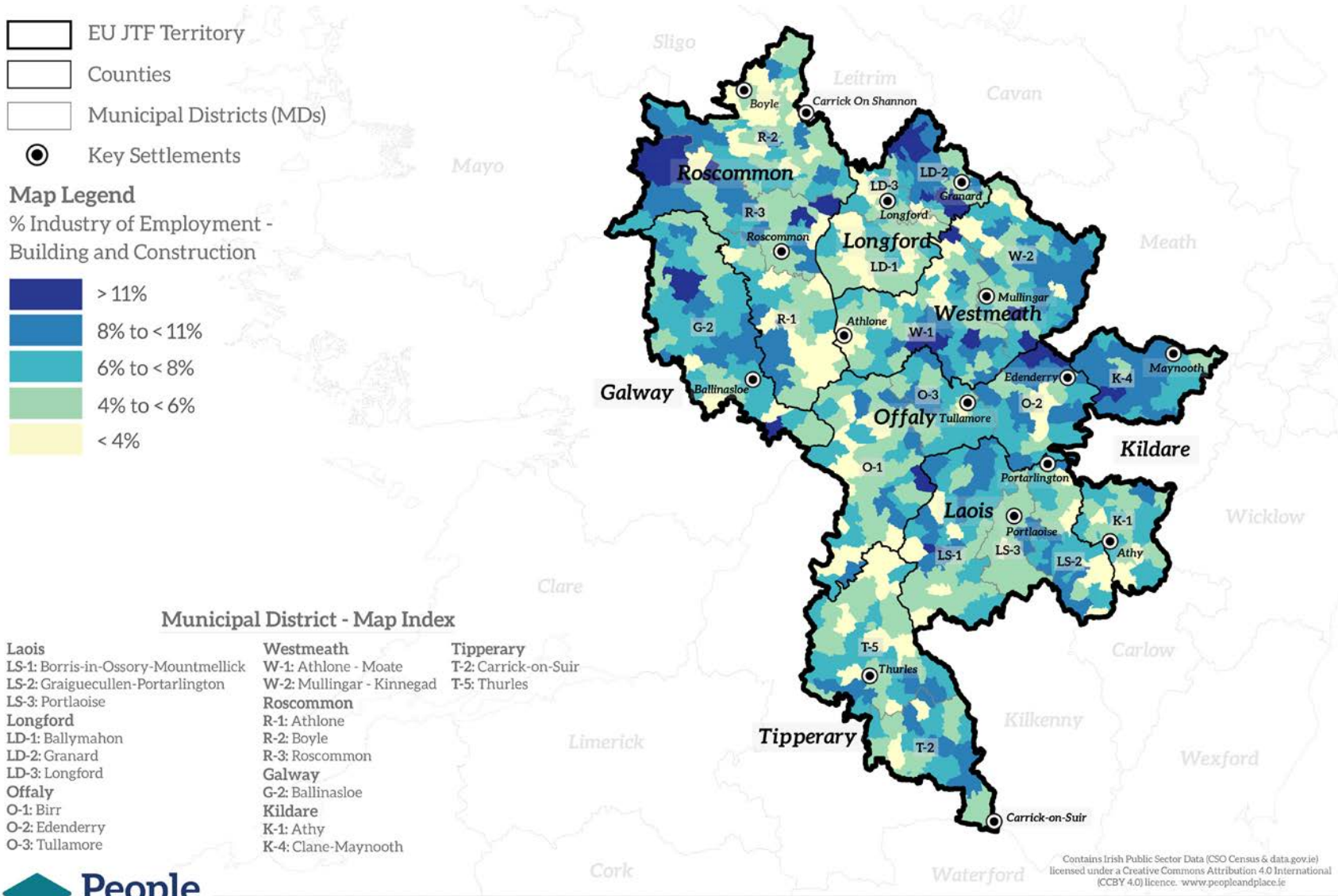


Figure 3.15: Industry of Employment - % Building and Construction, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Industry of Employment - % Building and Construction, 2016



Industry of Employment - % Building and Construction, 2016 (EDs)

Map 3.6: Industry of Employment - % Building and Construction, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Industry of Employment - % Commerce and Trade, 2016

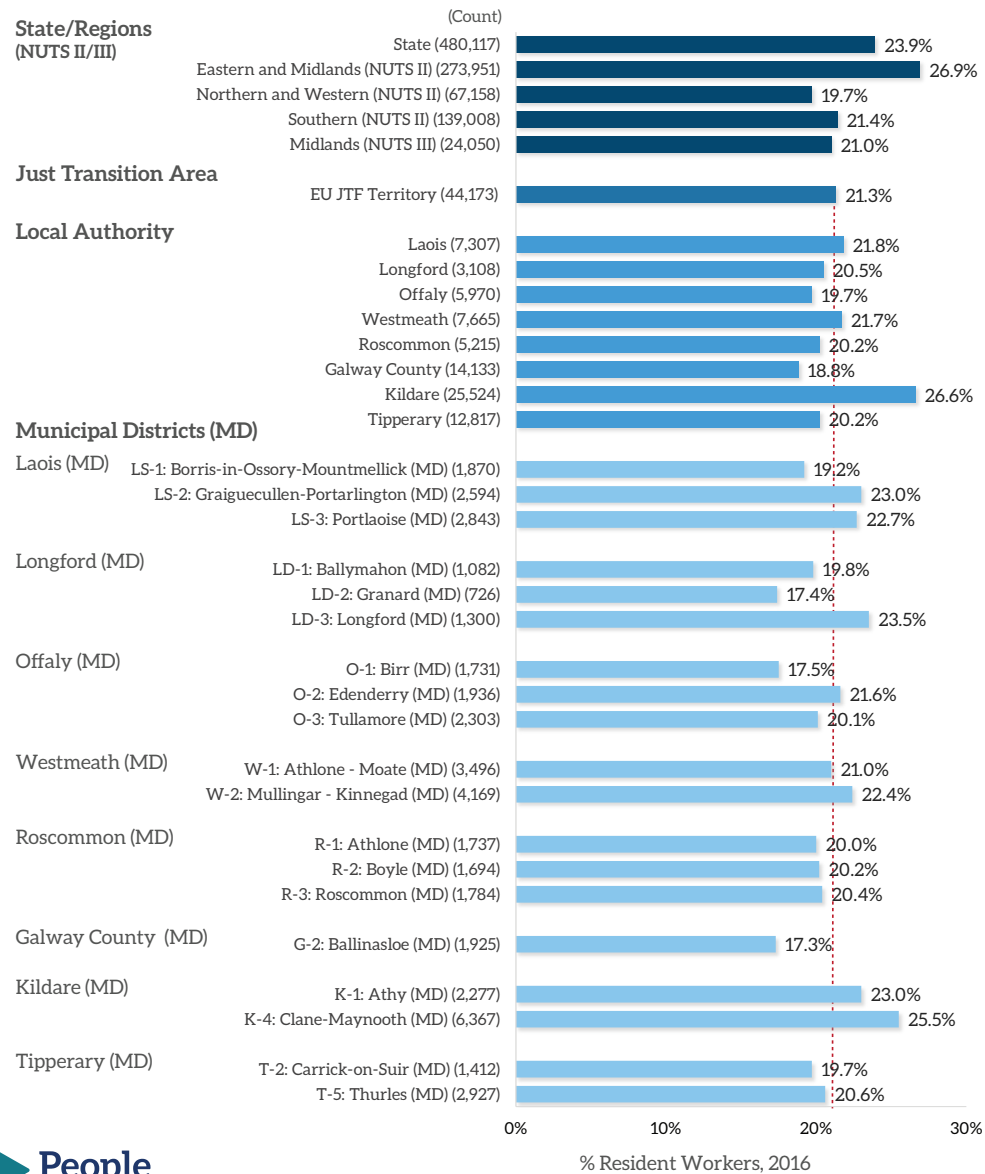
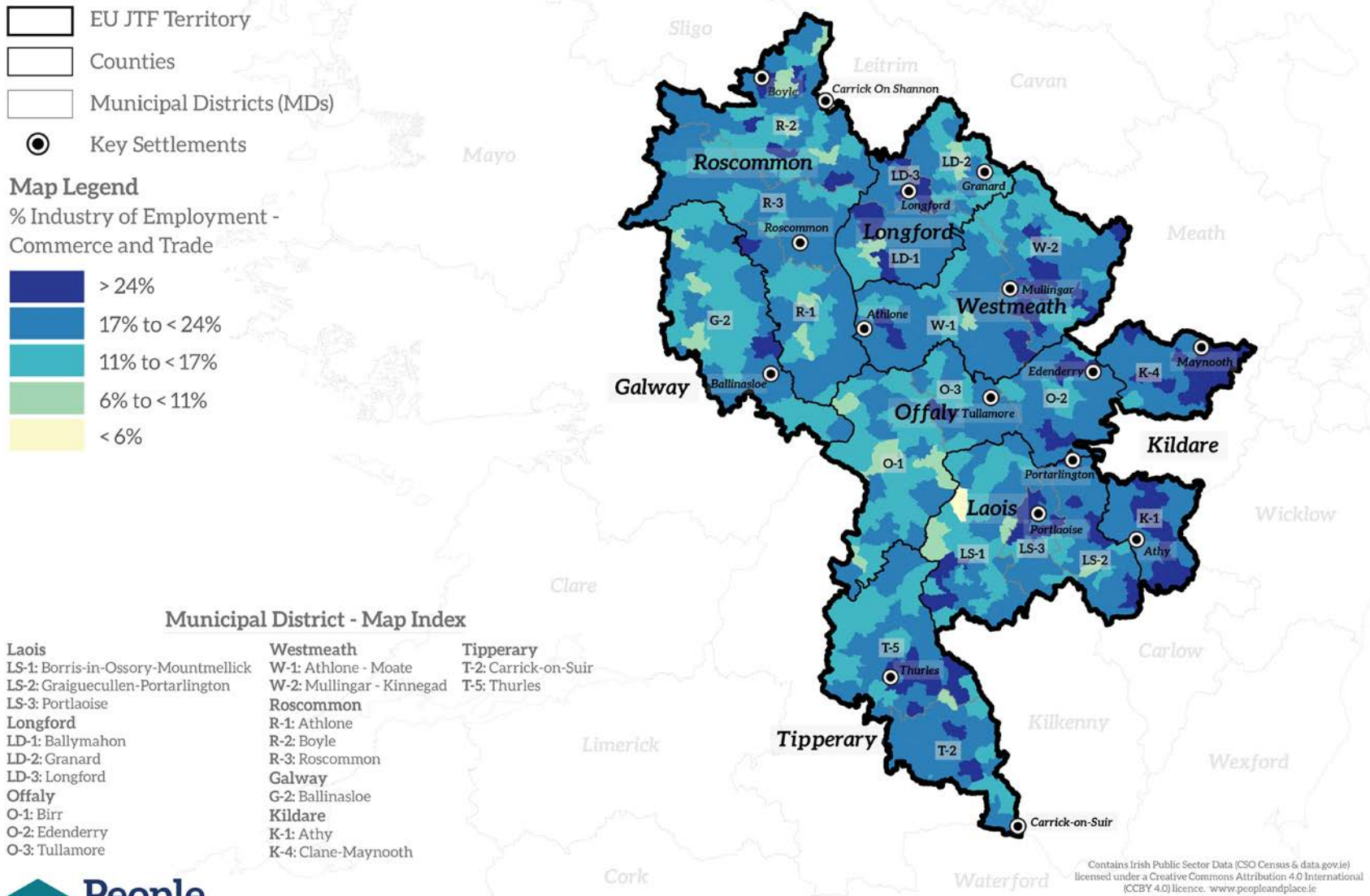


Figure 3.16: Industry of Employment - % Commerce and Trade, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Industry of Employment - % Commerce and Trade, 2016



Industry of Employment - % Commerce and Trade, 2016 (EDs)

Map 3.7: Industry of Employment - % Commerce and Trade, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Industry of Employment - % Public Administration, 2016

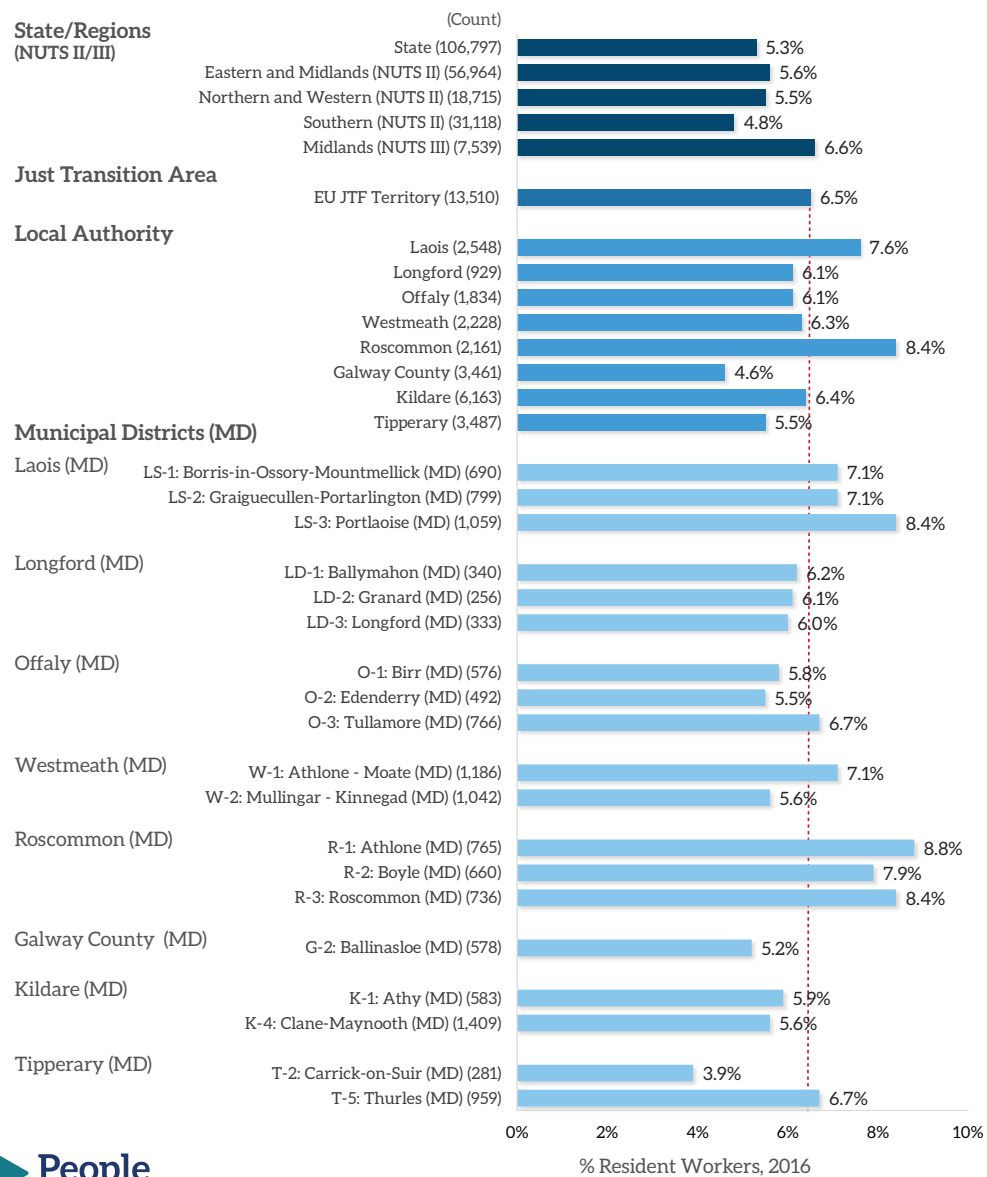
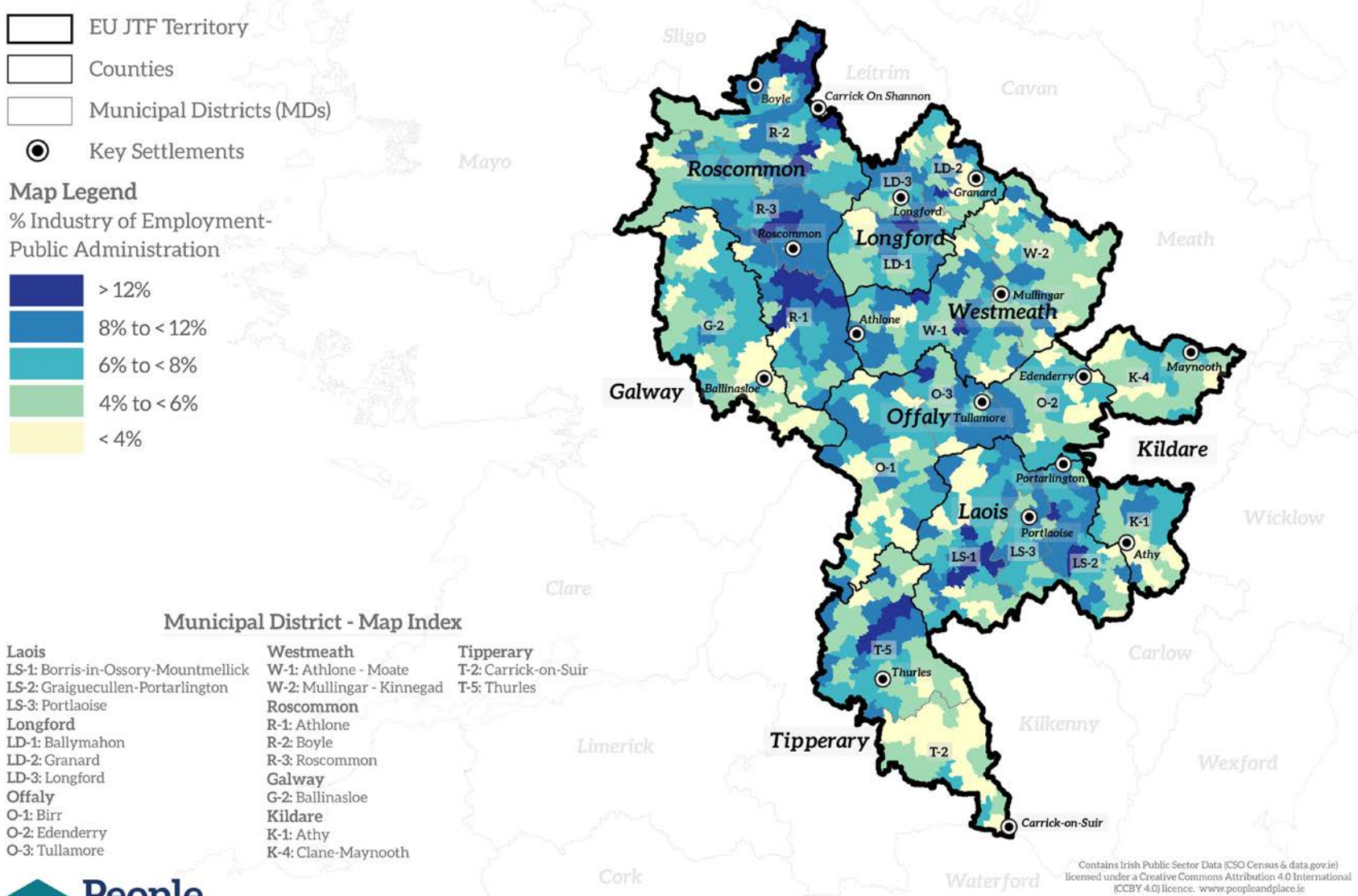


Figure 3.17: Industry of Employment - % Public Administration, 2016 (Source: CSO)



Industry of Employment - % Public Administration, 2016



Industry of Employment - % Public Administration, 2016 (EDs)

Map 3.8: Industry of Employment - % Public Administration, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Industry of Employment - % Professional Services, 2016

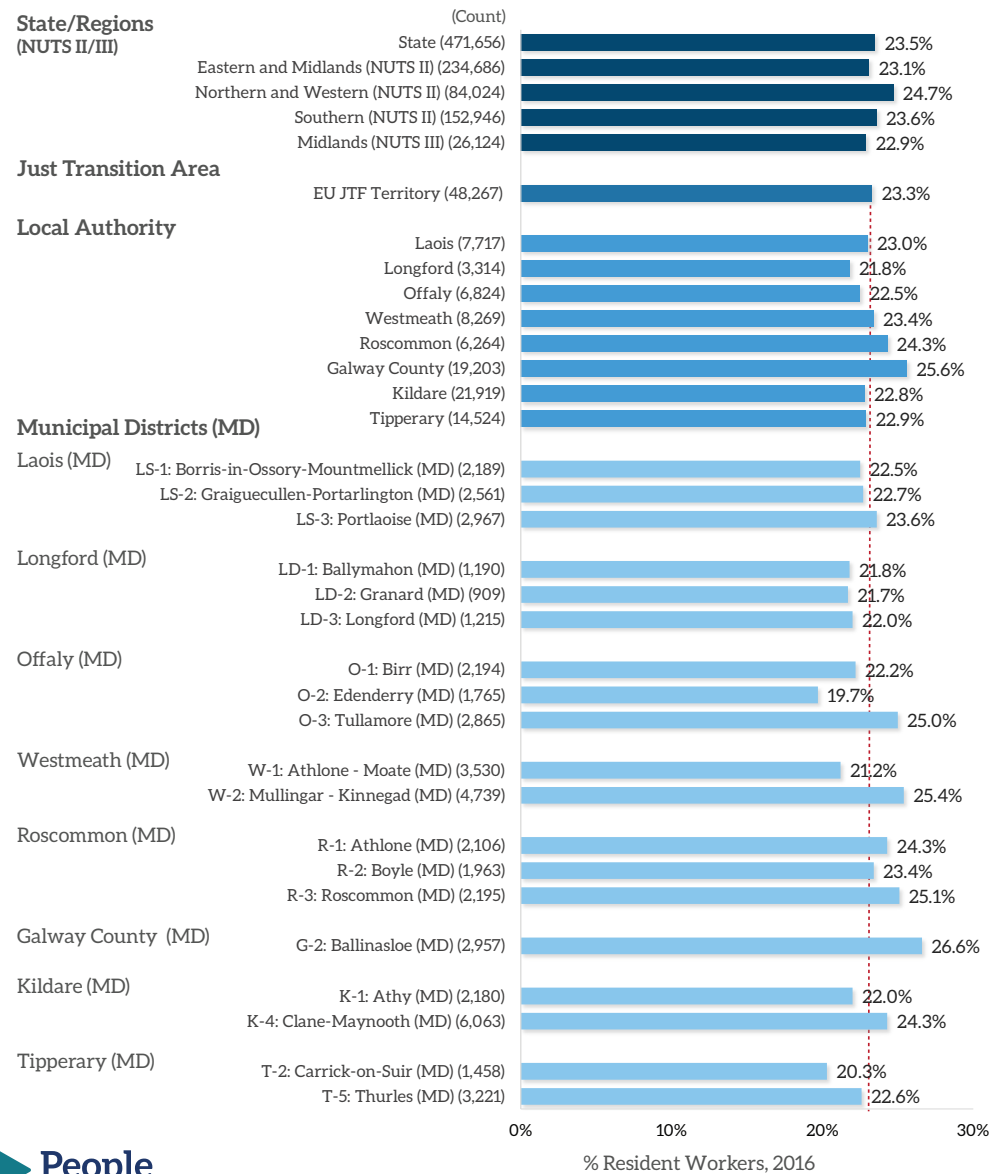
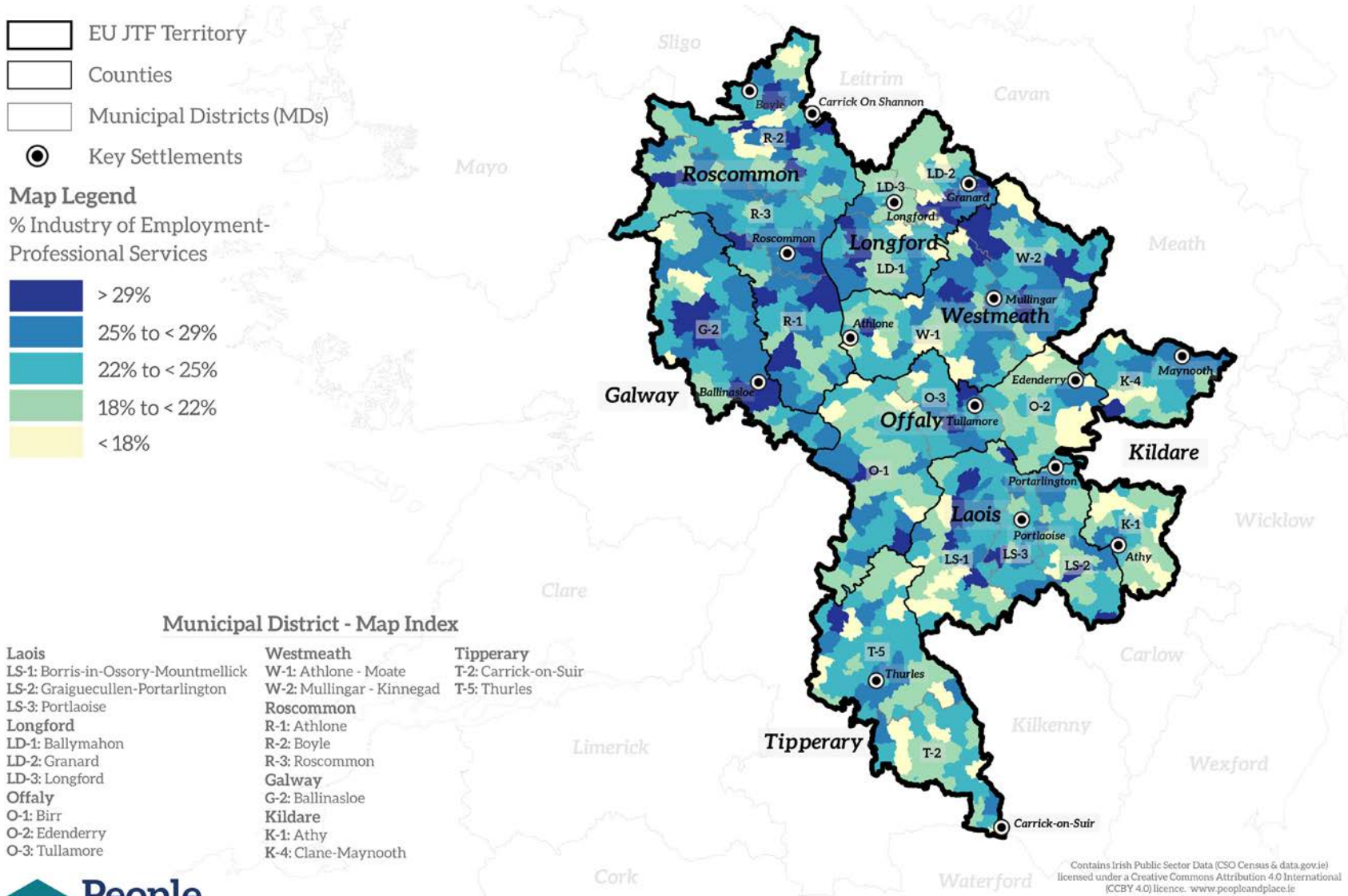


Figure 3.18: Industry of Employment - % Professional Services, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Industry of Employment - % Professional Services, 2016



Industry of Employment - % Professional Services, 2016 (EDs)

Map 3.9: Industry of Employment - % Professional Services, 2016 (Source: CSO)

Industry of Employment - % Transport and Communication, 2016

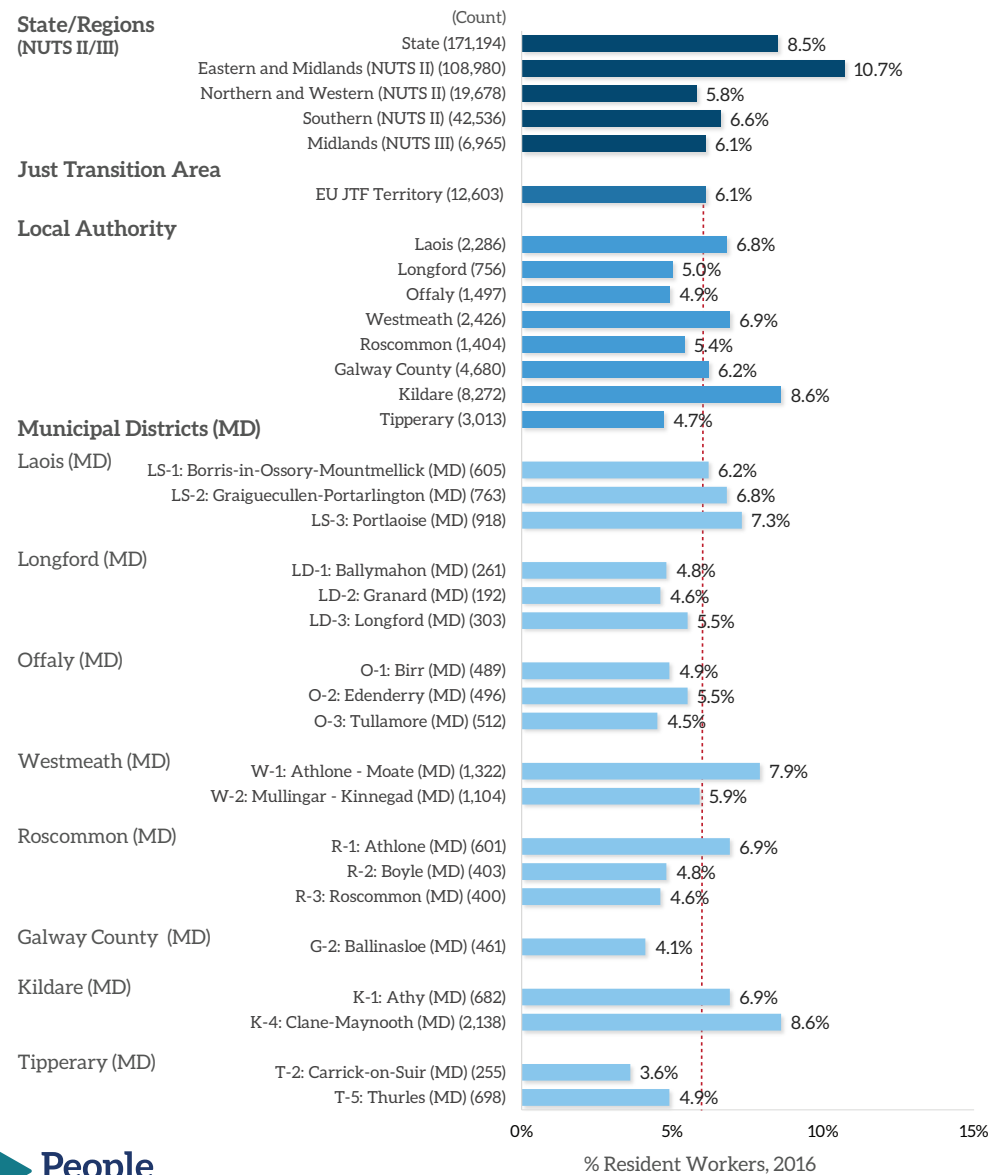
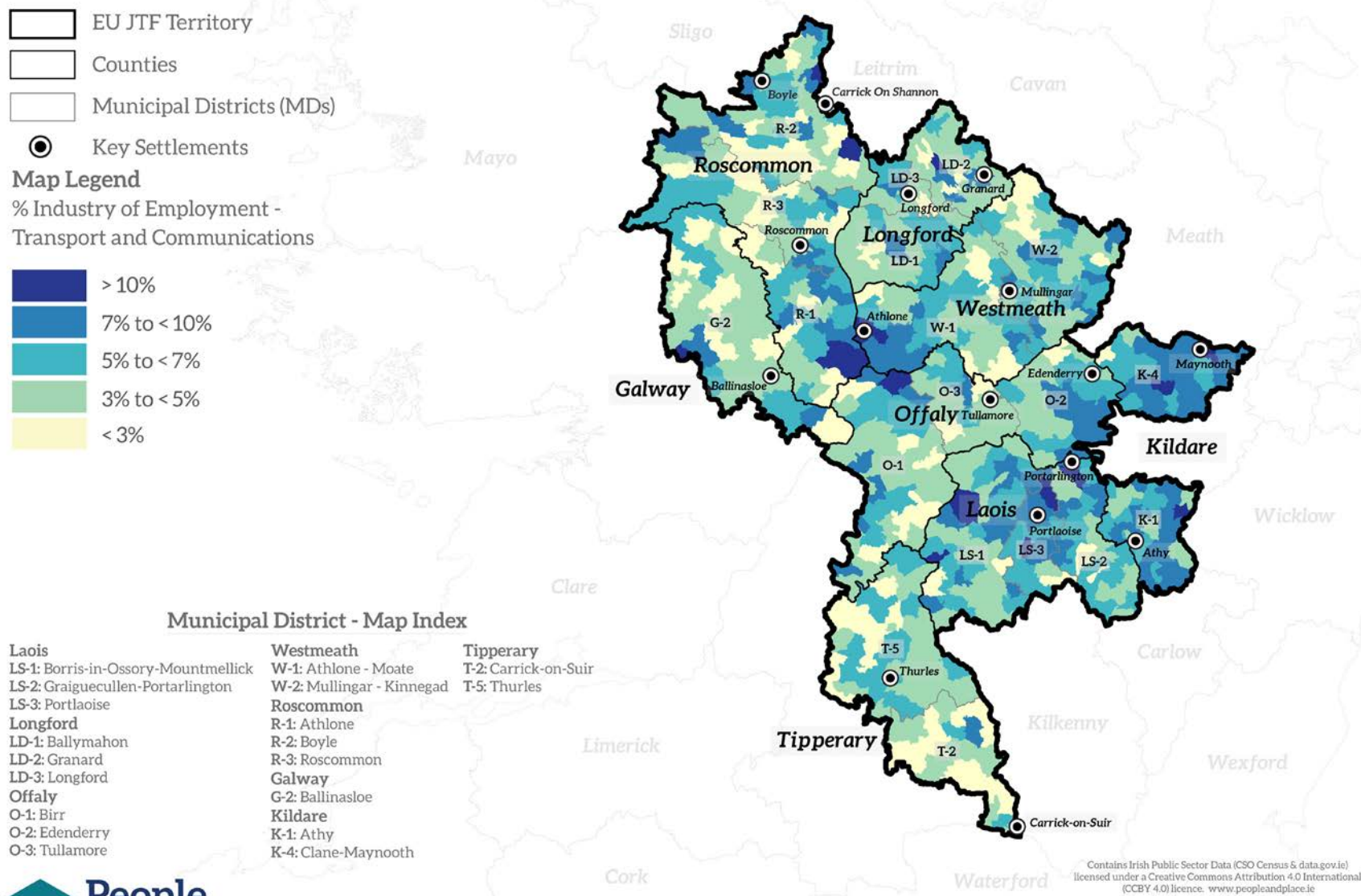


Figure 3.19: Industry of Employment - % Transport and Communication, 2016 (Source: CSO)



Industry of Employment - % Transport and Communication, 2016



Industry of Employment - % Transport and Communications, 2016 (EDs)

Map 3.10: Industry of Employment - % Transport and Communication, 2016 (Source: CSO)



State Assisted Employment (Permanent & Full Time), 2019

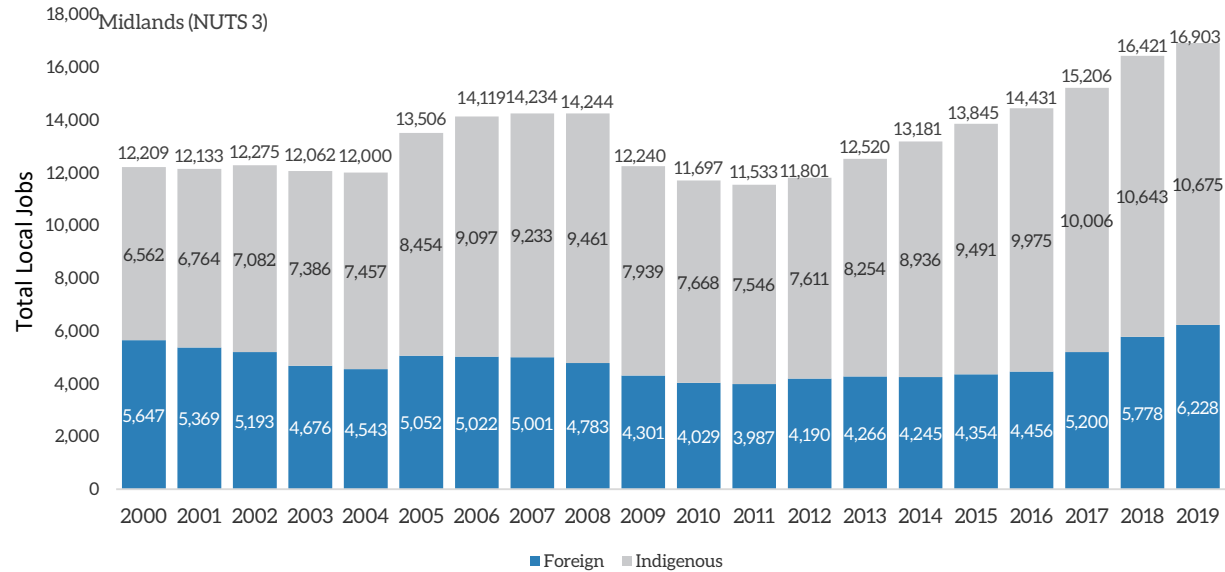


Figure 3.20: State Assisted Employment in Midlands Region (NUTS 3), 2000 to 2019

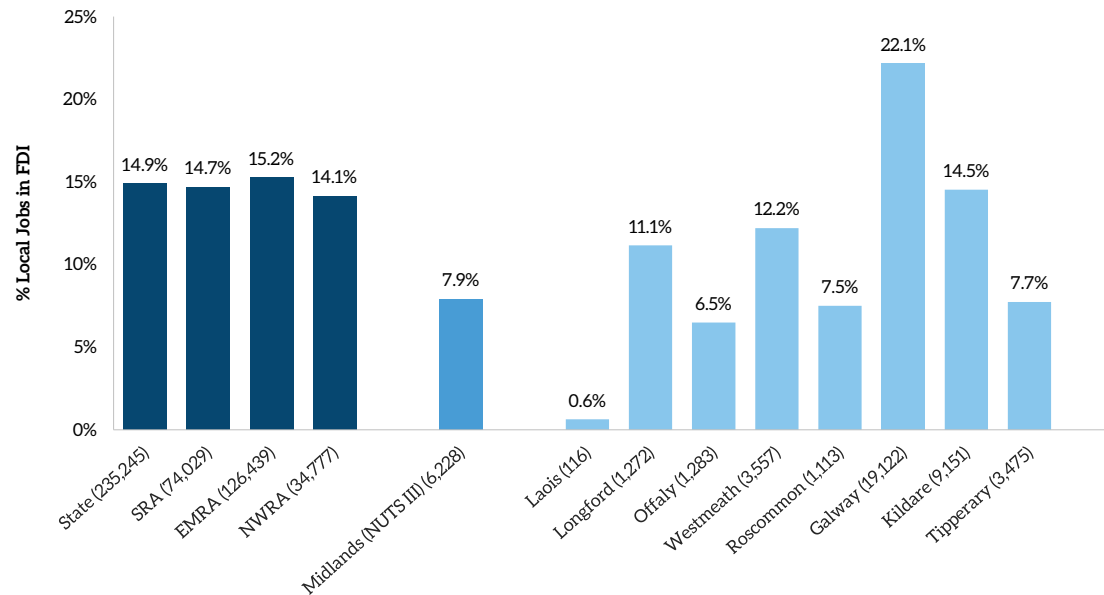


Figure 3.21: % Local Jobs in FDI Supported Companies, 2019

Business Demography - Summary Profile, 2019

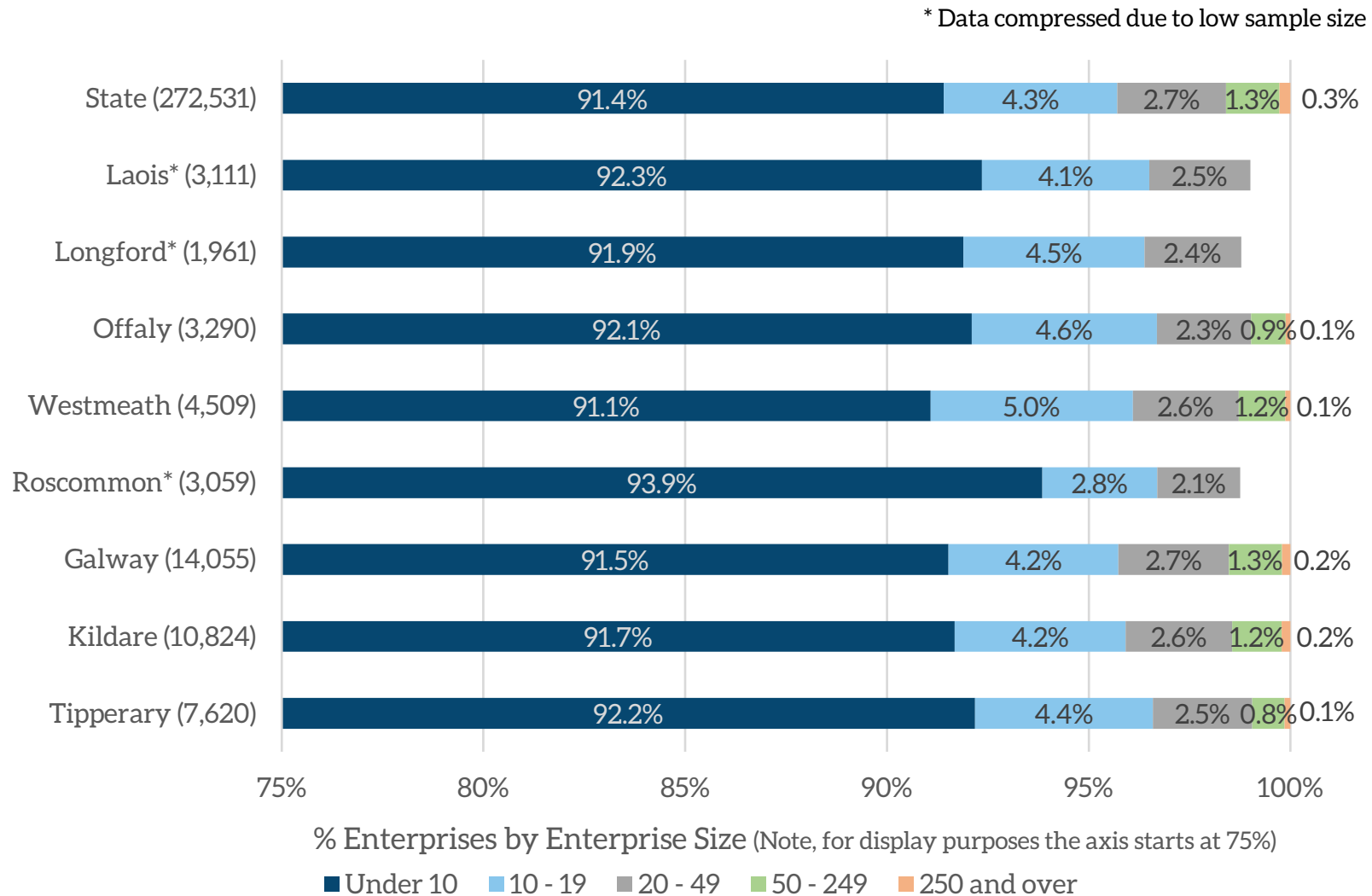


Figure 3.22: Business Demography - Active Enterprises by Enterprise Size, 2019

Business Demography - Summary Profile, 2019

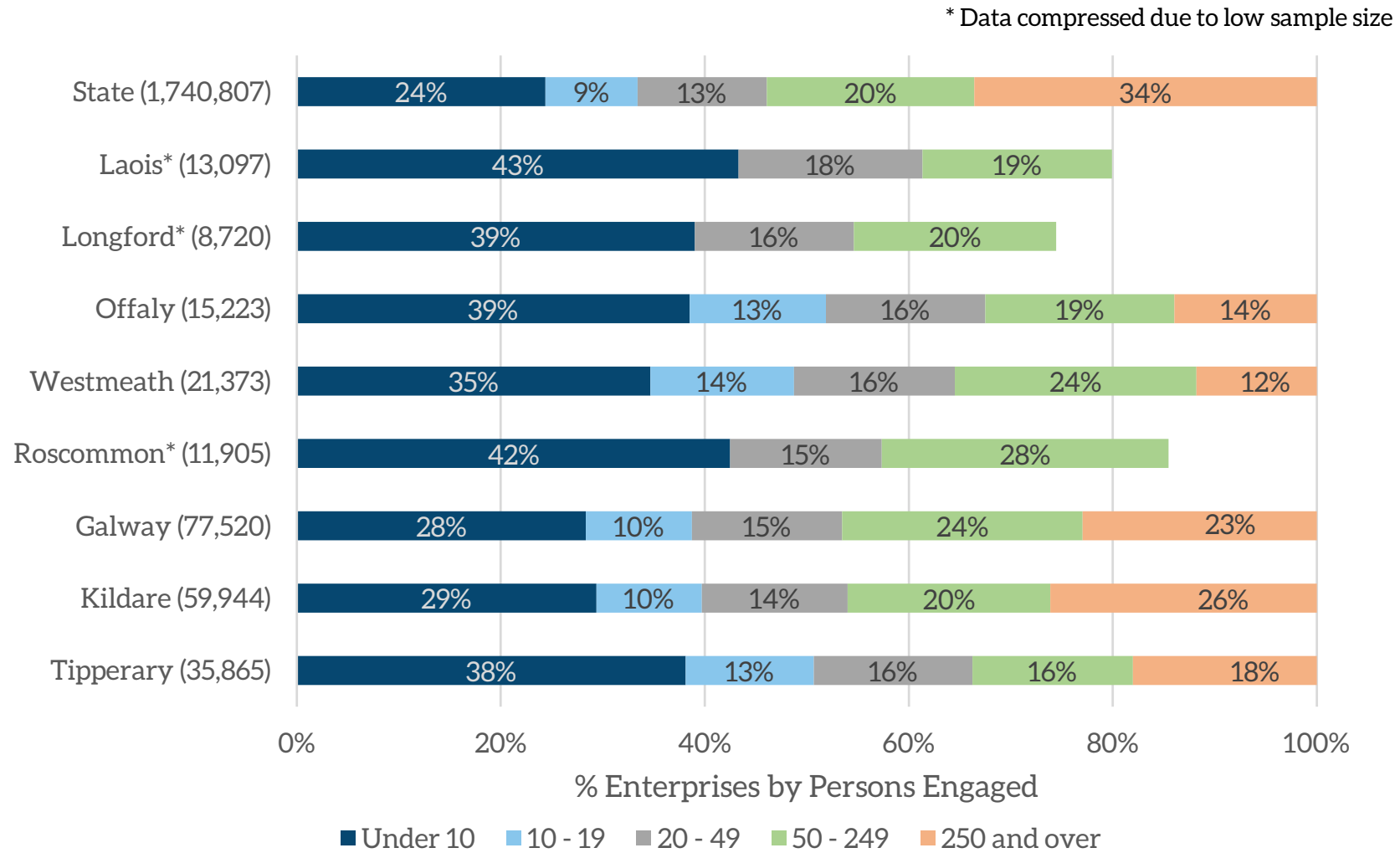


Figure 3.23: Business Demography - Active Enterprises by Persons Engaged, 2019

Business Demography - Laois Profile, 2009 to 2019

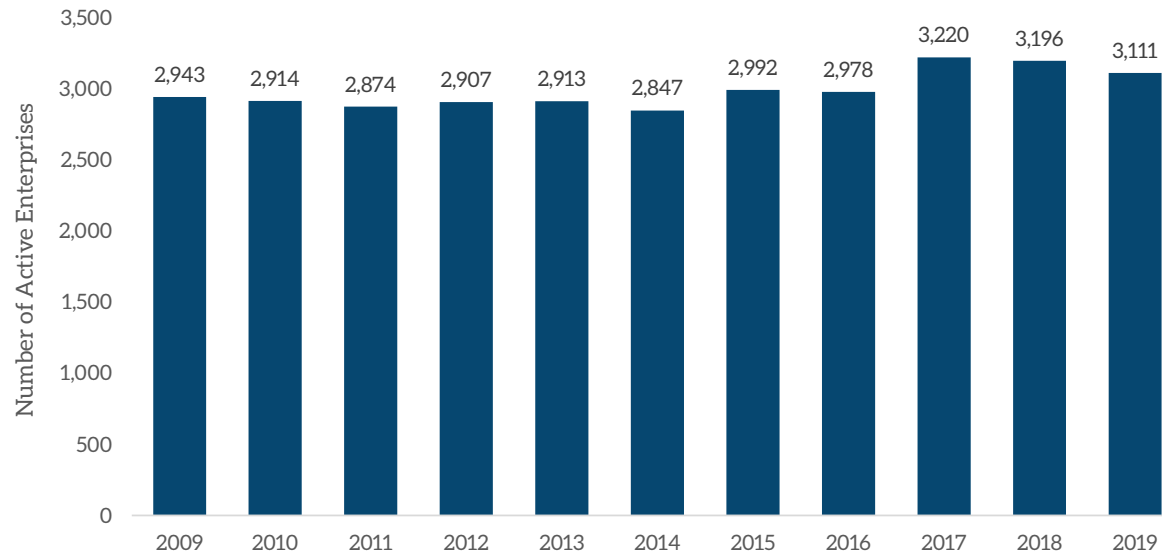


Figure 3.24: Number of Active Enterprises in Laois, 2009 to 2019

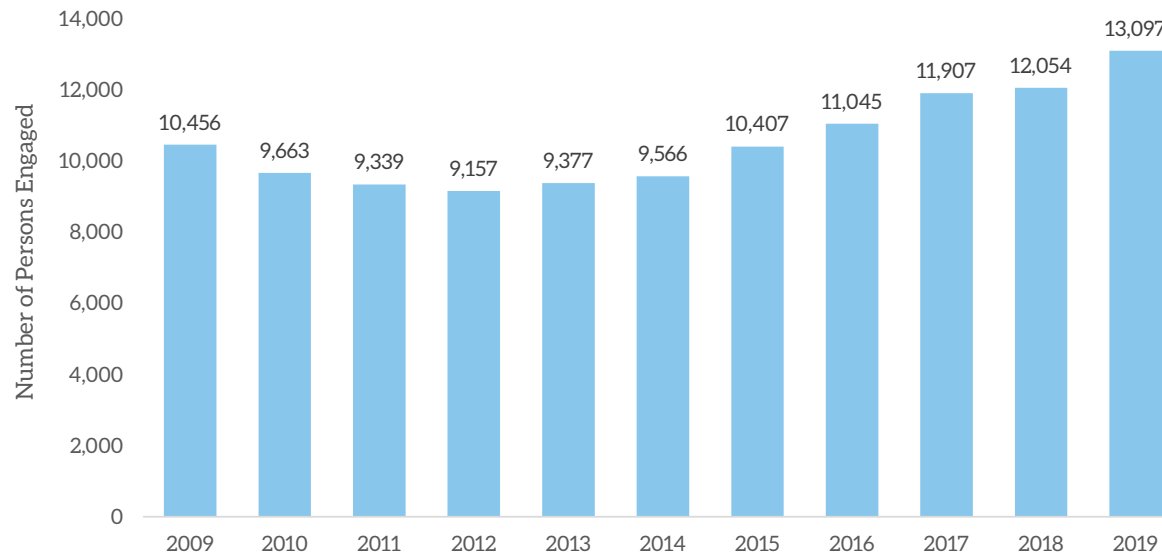


Figure 3.25: Number of Persons Engaged in Active Enterprises in Laois, 2009 to 2019

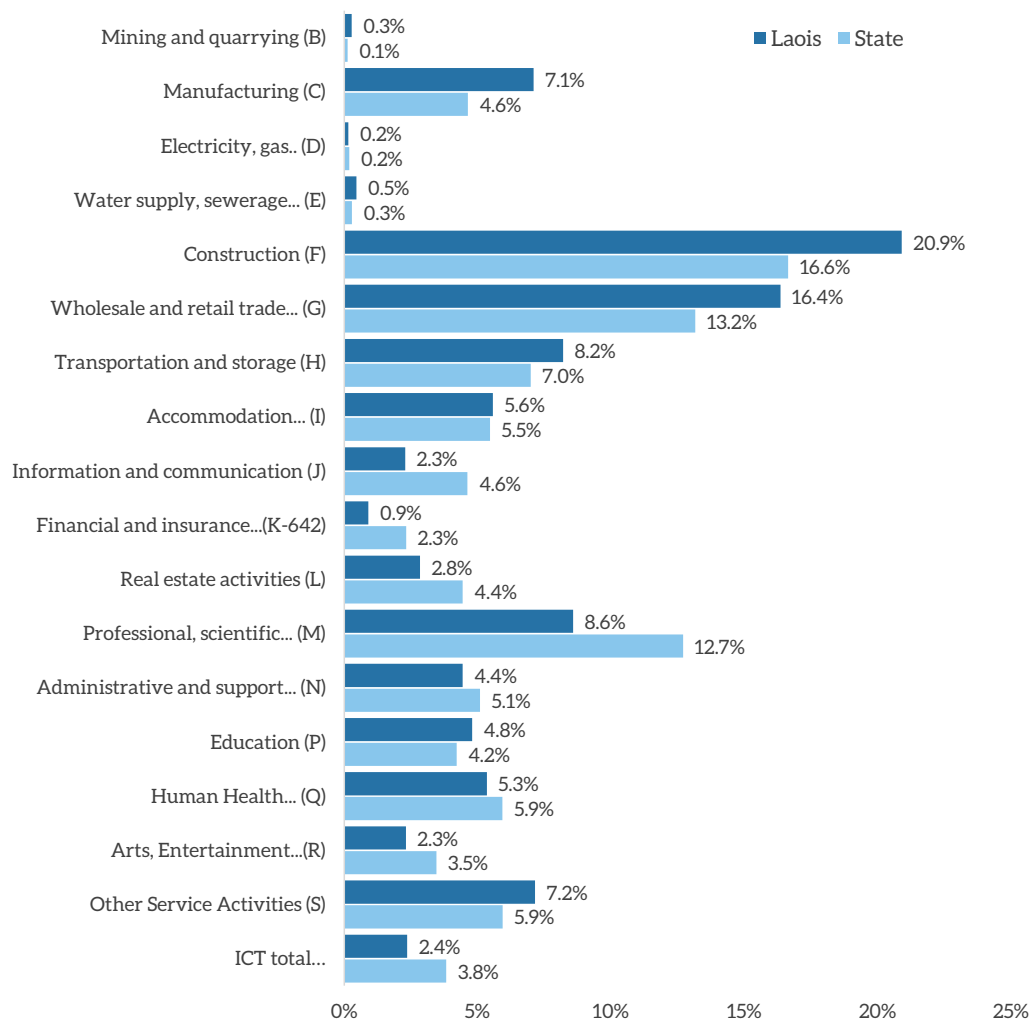


Figure 3.26: % Active Enterprises by NACE Classification Sectors B-N in Laois, 2019

For more on NACE Classifications see: <https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/surveybackgroundnotes/businessdemography/>

Figure 3.27: % Active Enterprises by Size in Laois, 2019

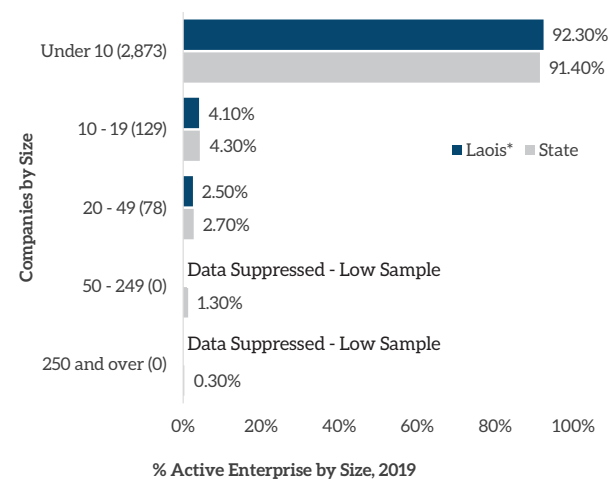
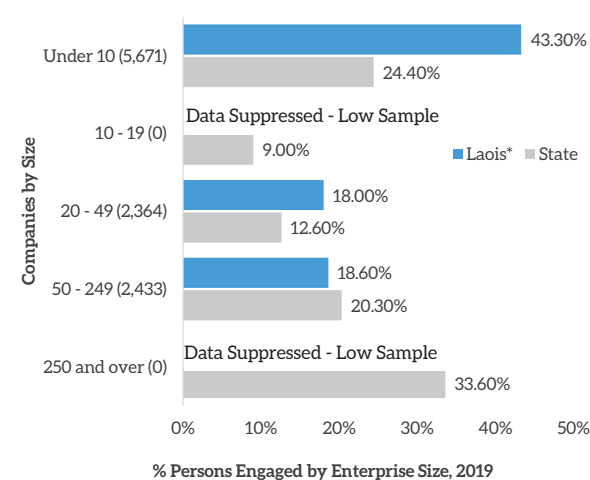


Figure 3.28: % Persons Engaged by Enterprise Size in Laois, 2019





Business Demography - Longford Profile, 2009 to 2019

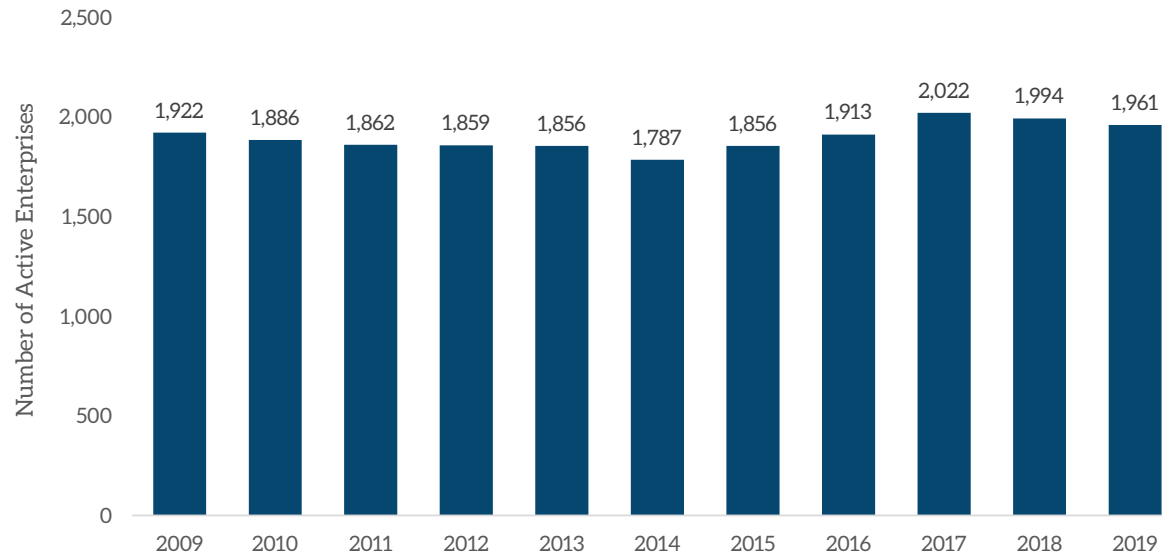


Figure 3.29: Number of Active Enterprises in Longford, 2009 to 2019

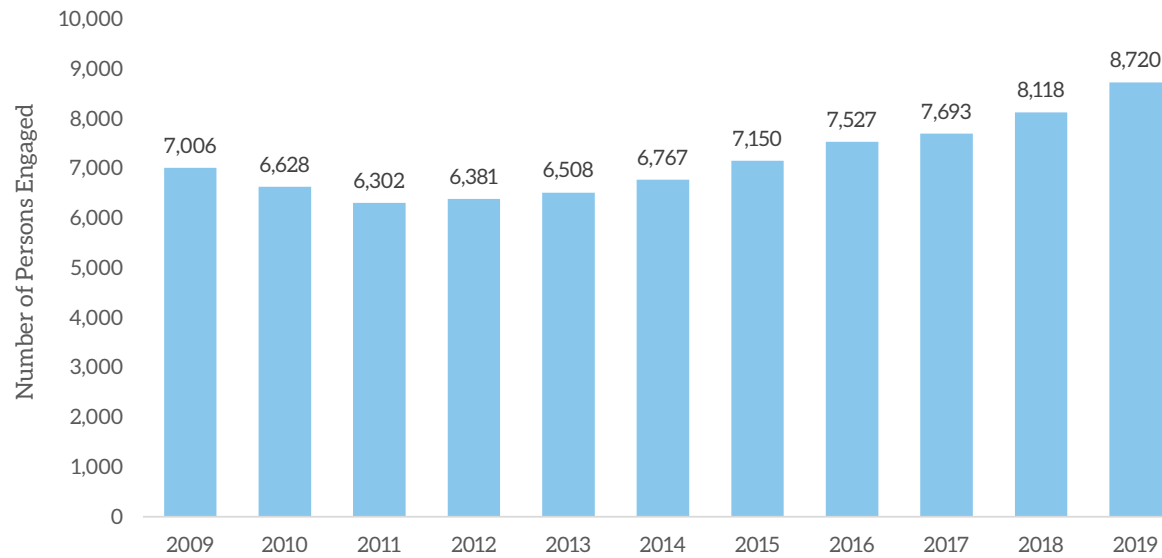


Figure 3.30: Number of Persons Engaged in Active Enterprises in Longford, 2009 to 2019

Business Demography - Longford Profile, 2009 to 2019

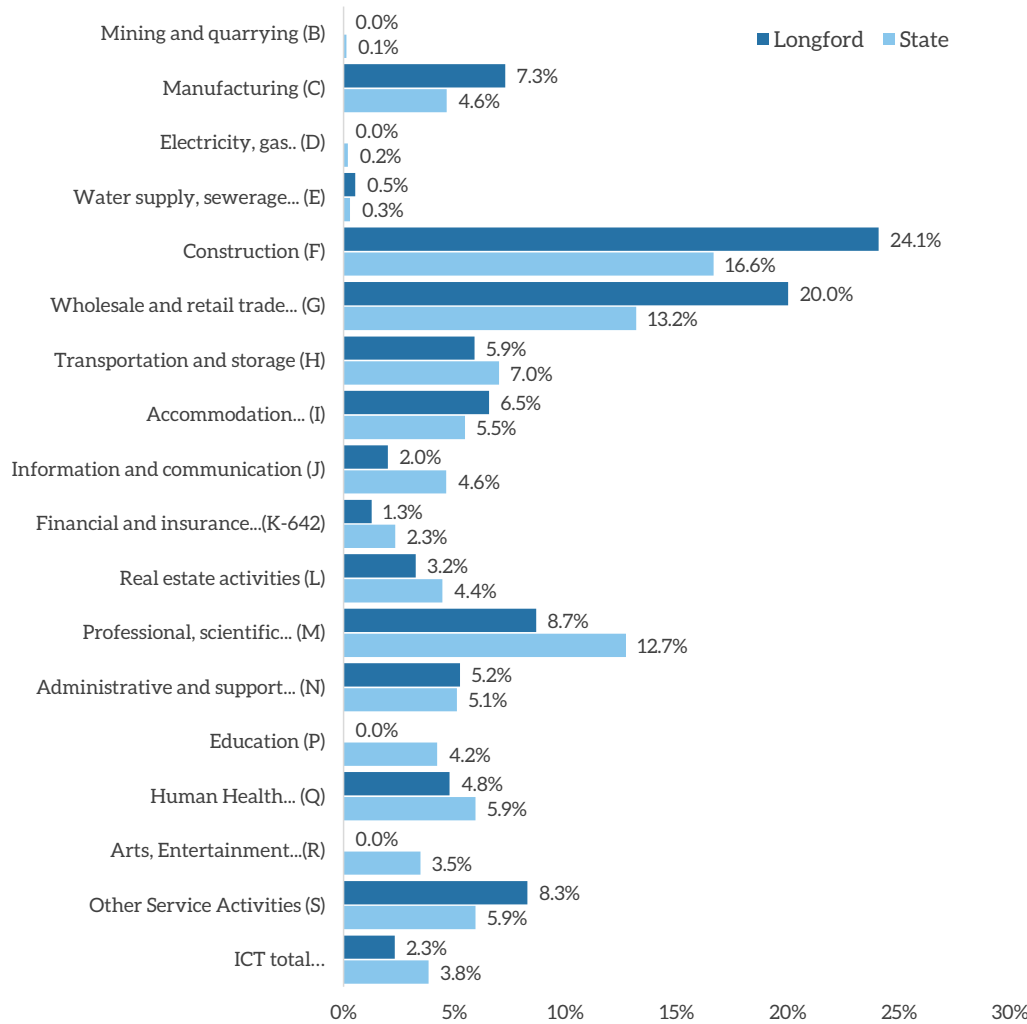


Figure 3.32: % Active Enterprises by Size in Longford, 2019

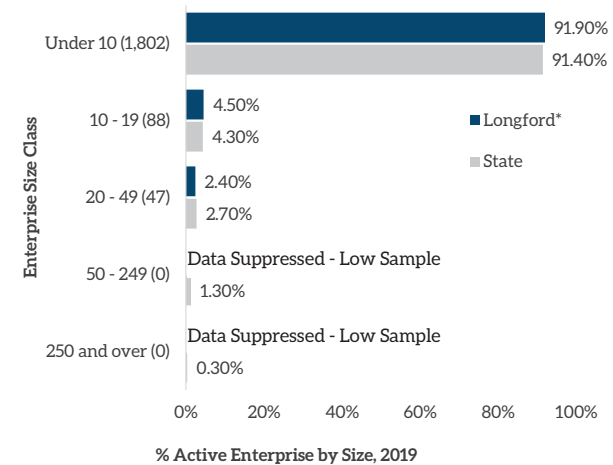


Figure 3.33: % Persons Engaged by Enterprise Size in Longford, 2019

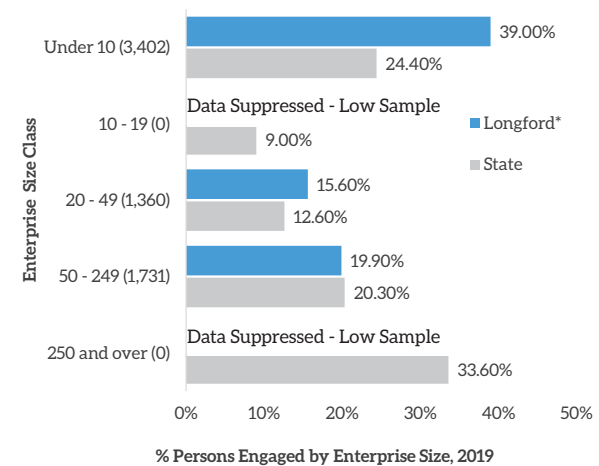


Figure 3.31: % Active Enterprises by NACE Classification Sectors B-N in Longford, 2019

For more on NACE Classifications see: <https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/surveybackgroundnotes/businessdemography/>

Business Demography - Offaly Profile, 2009 to 2019

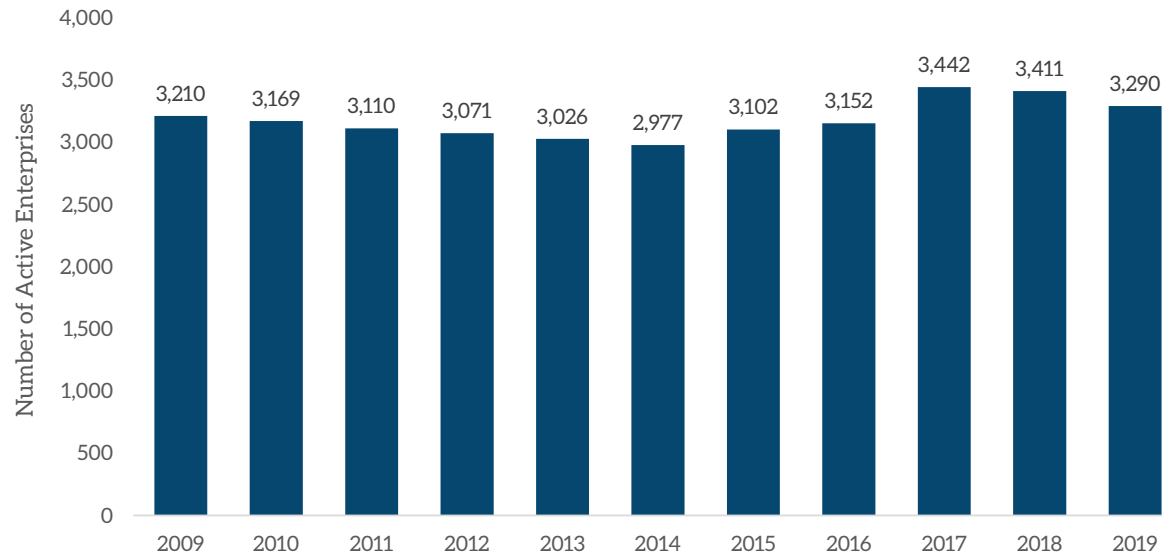


Figure 3.34: Number of Active Enterprises in Offaly, 2009 to 2019

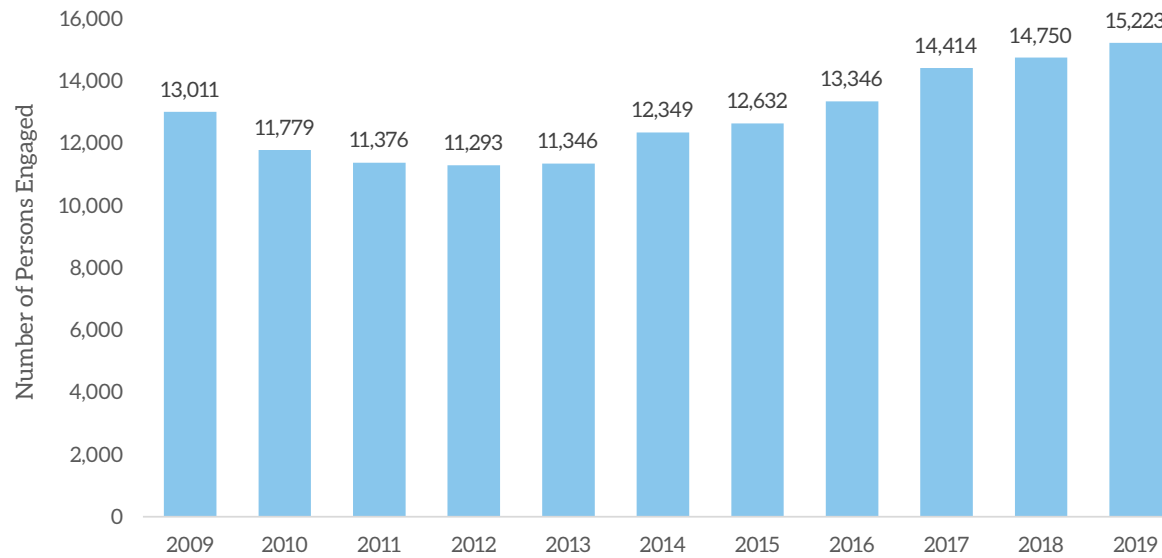


Figure 3.35: Number of Persons Engaged in Active Enterprises in Offaly, 2009 to 2019

Business Demography - Offaly Profile, 2009 to 2019

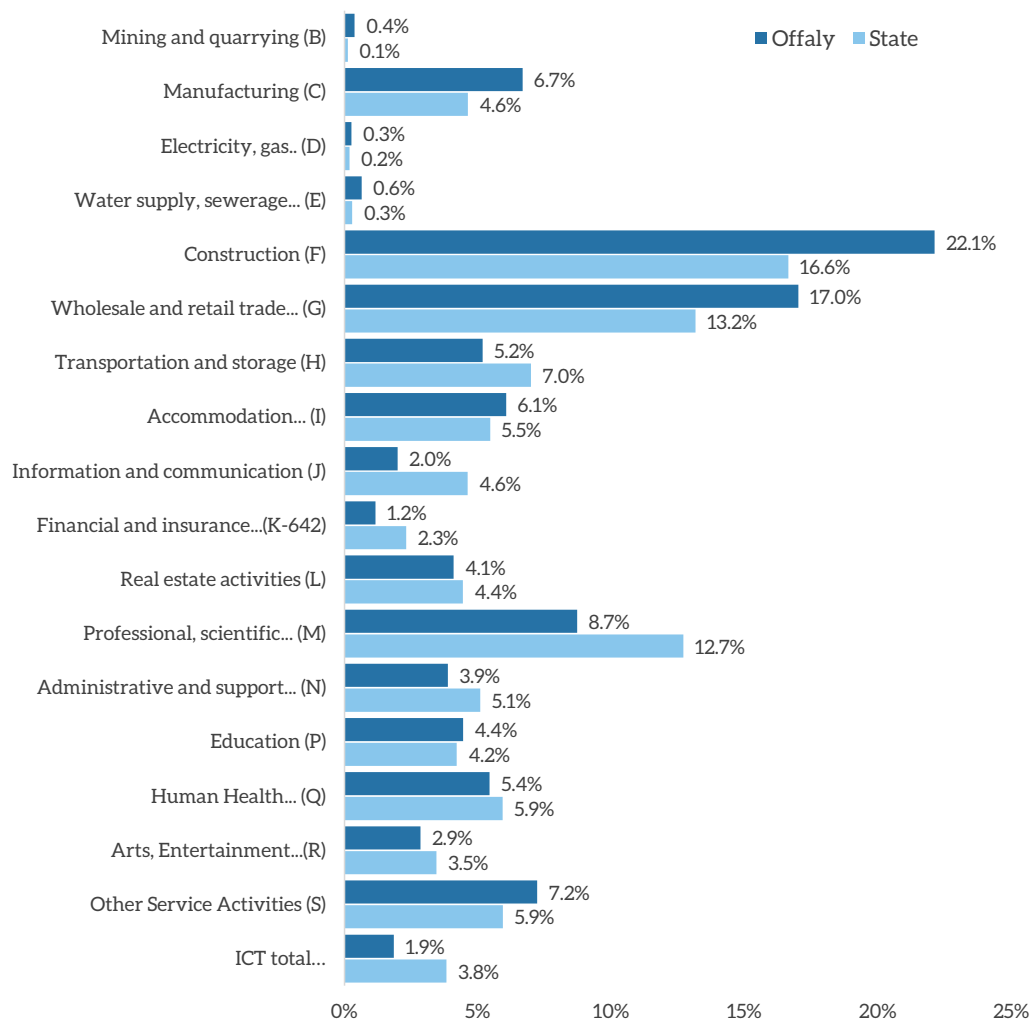


Figure 3.37: % Active Enterprises by Size in Offaly, 2019

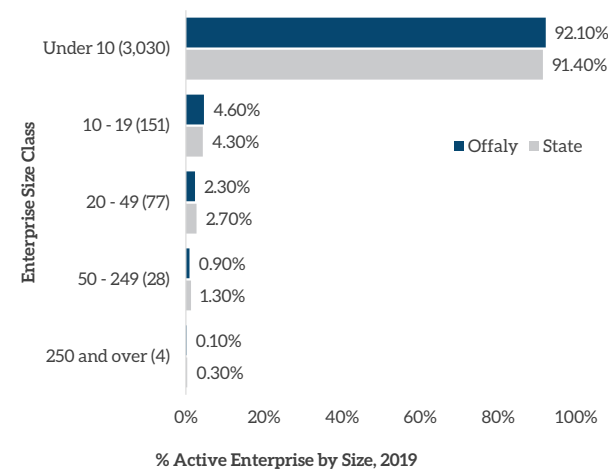


Figure 3.38: % Persons Engaged by Enterprise Size in Offaly, 2019

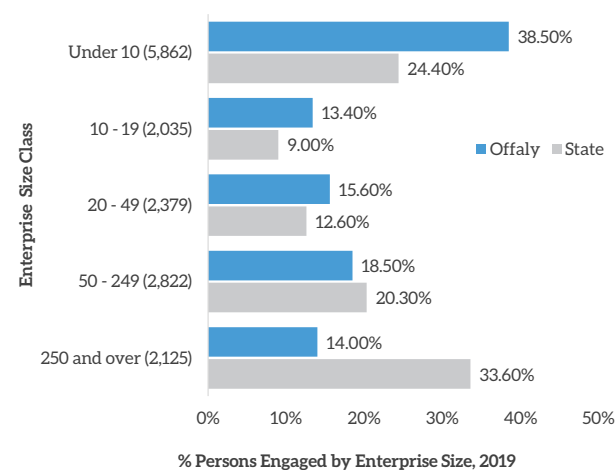


Figure 3.36: % Active Enterprises by NACE Classification Sectors B-N in Offaly, 2019

For more on NACE Classifications see: <https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/surveybackgroundnotes/businessdemography/>

Business Demography - Westmeath Profile, 2009 to 2019

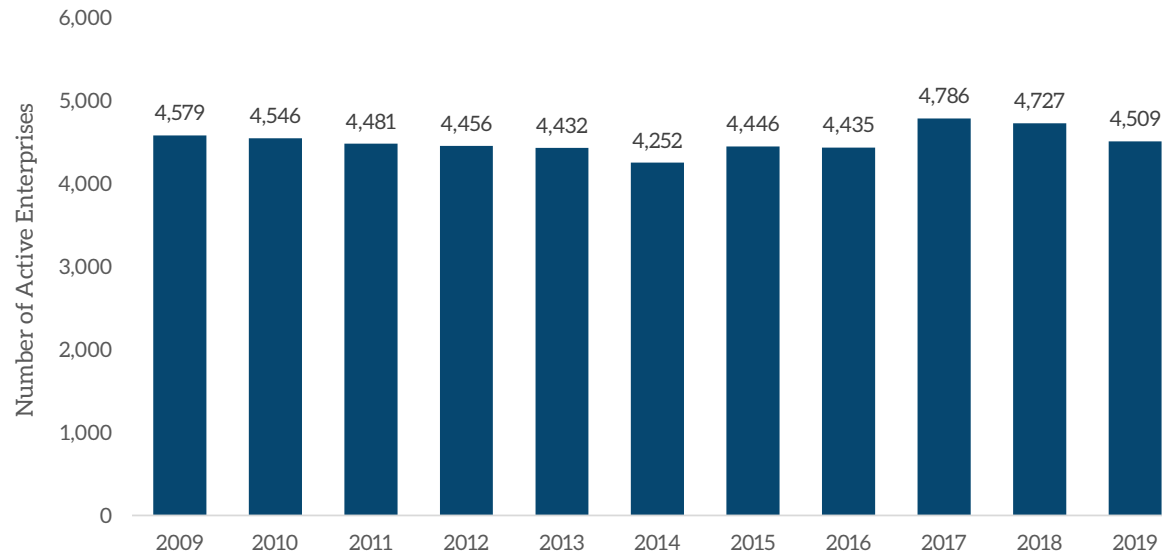


Figure 3.39: Number of Active Enterprises in Westmeath, 2009 to 2019

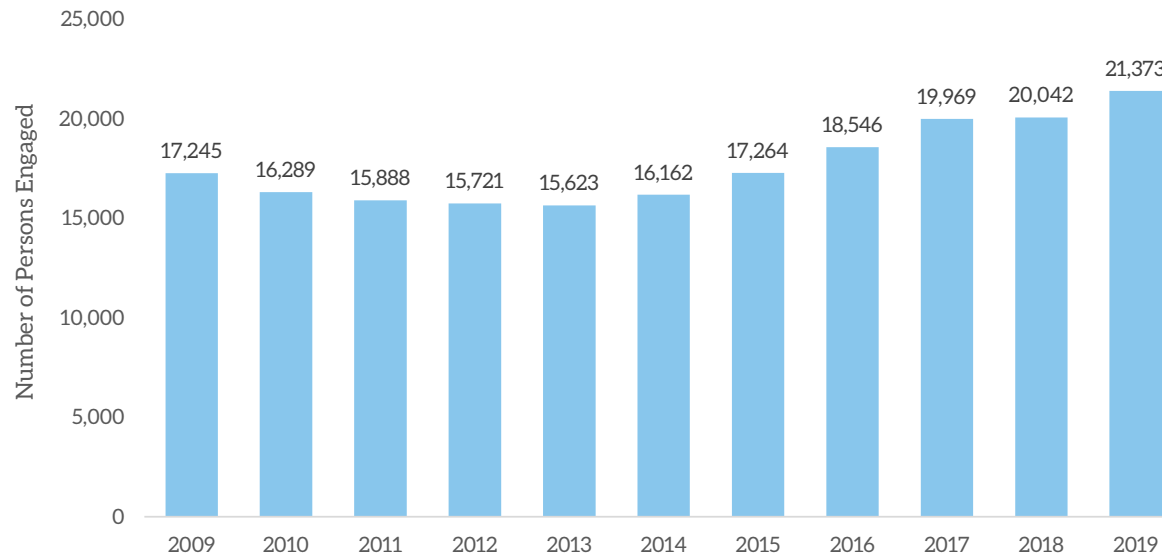


Figure 3.40: Number of Persons Engaged in Active Enterprises Westmeath, 2009 to 2019



Business Demography - Westmeath Profile, 2009 to 2019

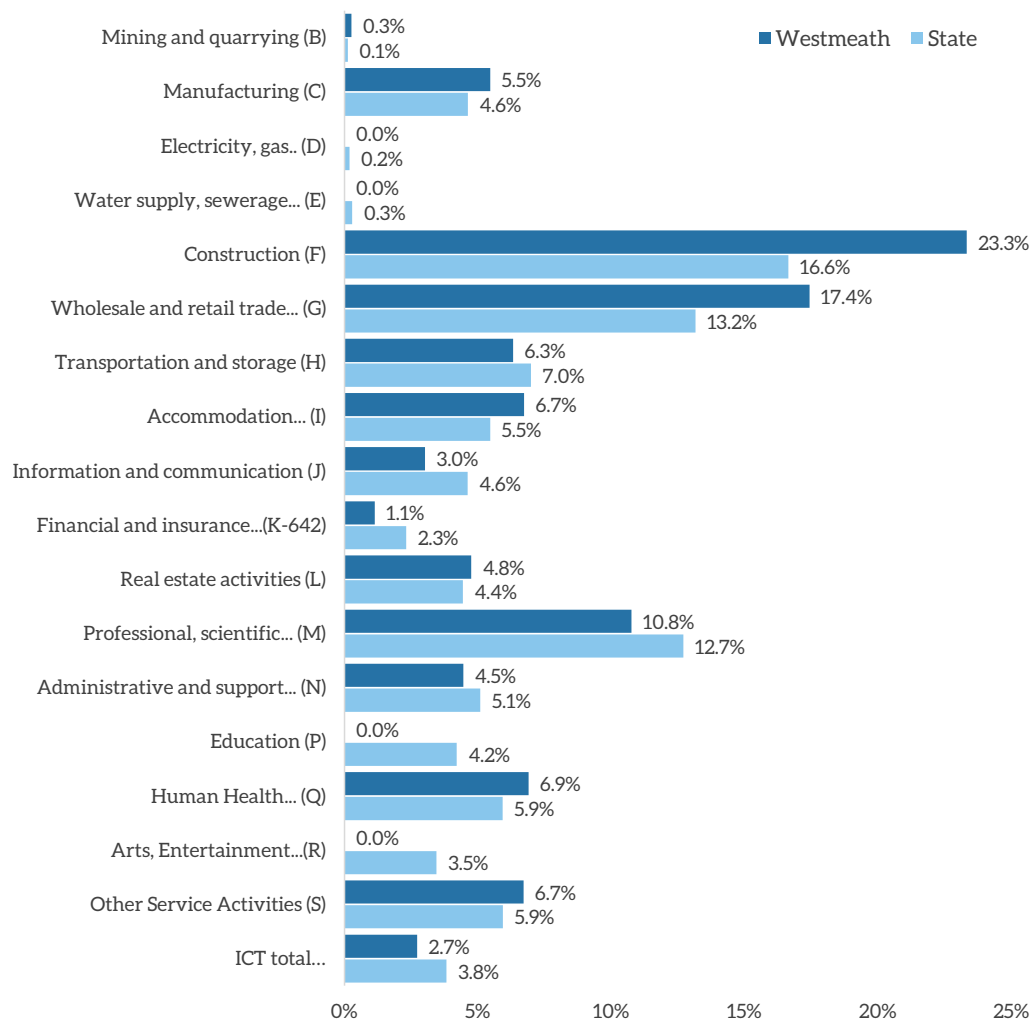


Figure 3.42: % Active Enterprises by Size in Westmeath, 2019

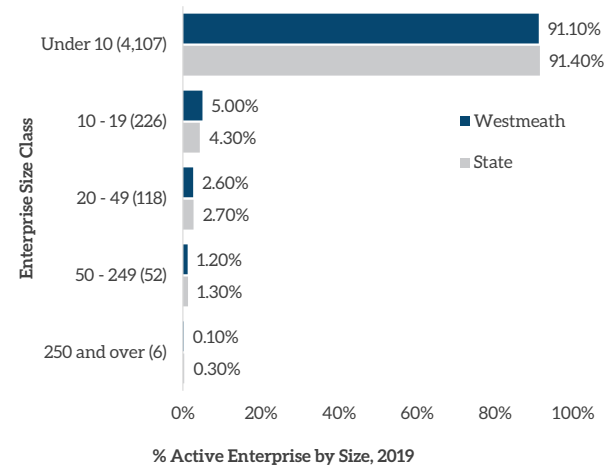


Figure 3.43: % Persons Engaged by Enterprise Size in Westmeath, 2019

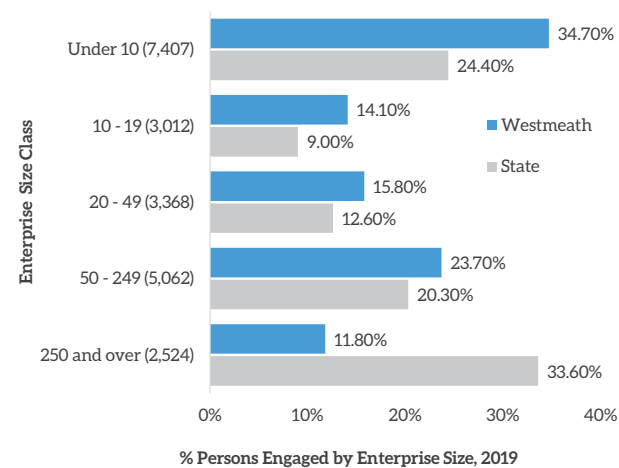


Figure 3.41 % Active Enterprises by NACE Classification Sectors B-N in Westmeath, 2019

For more on NACE Classifications see: <https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/surveybackgroundnotes/businessdemography/>

Business Demography - Roscommon Profile, 2009 to 2019

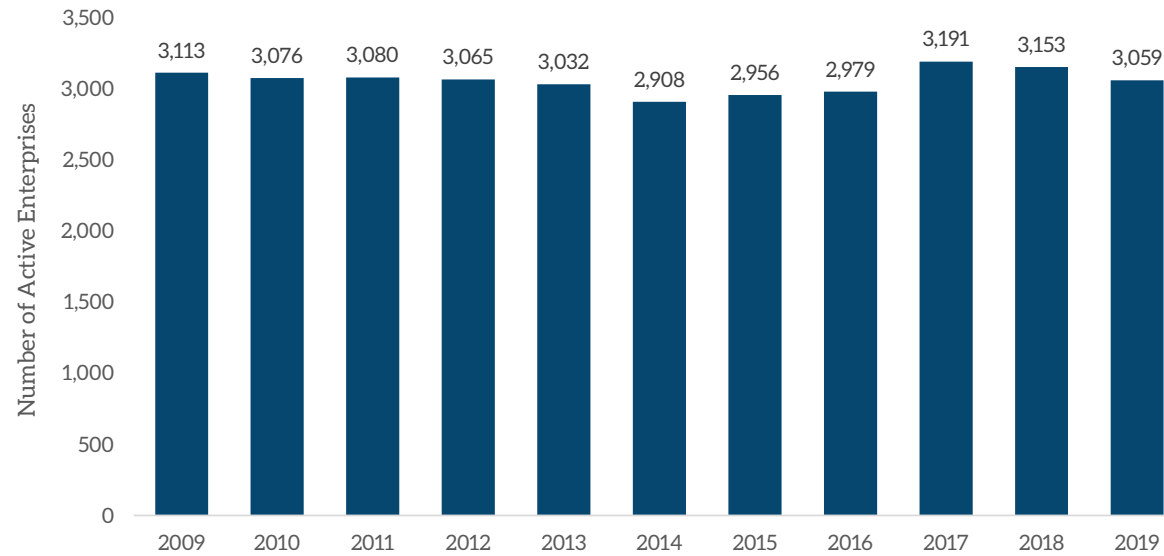


Figure 3.44: Number of Active Enterprises in Roscommon, 2009 to 2019

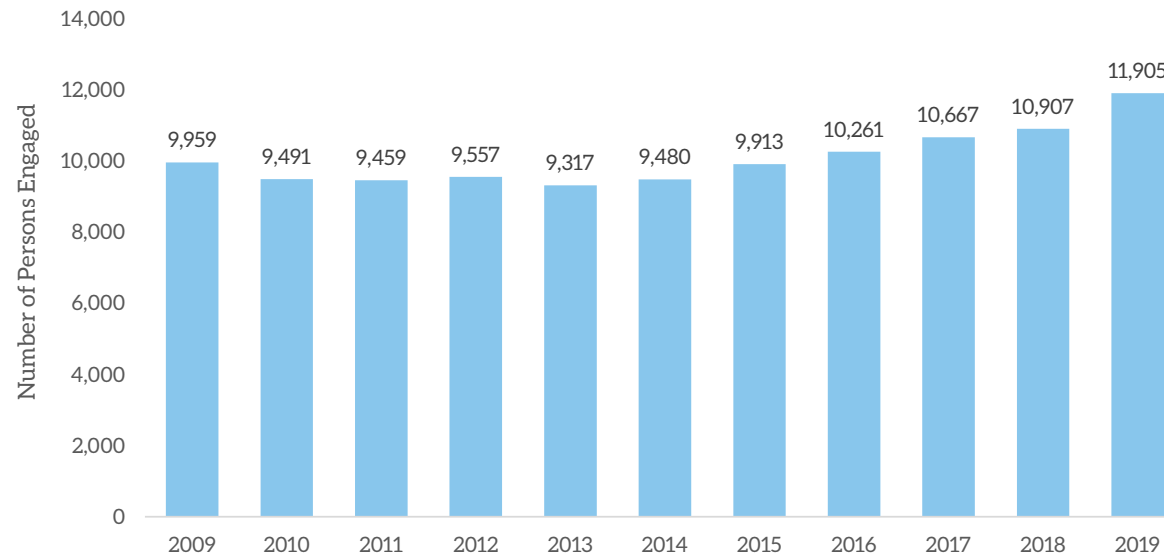


Figure 3.45: Number of Persons Engaged in Active Enterprises in Roscommon, 2009 to 2019

Business Demography - Roscommon Profile, 2009 to 2019

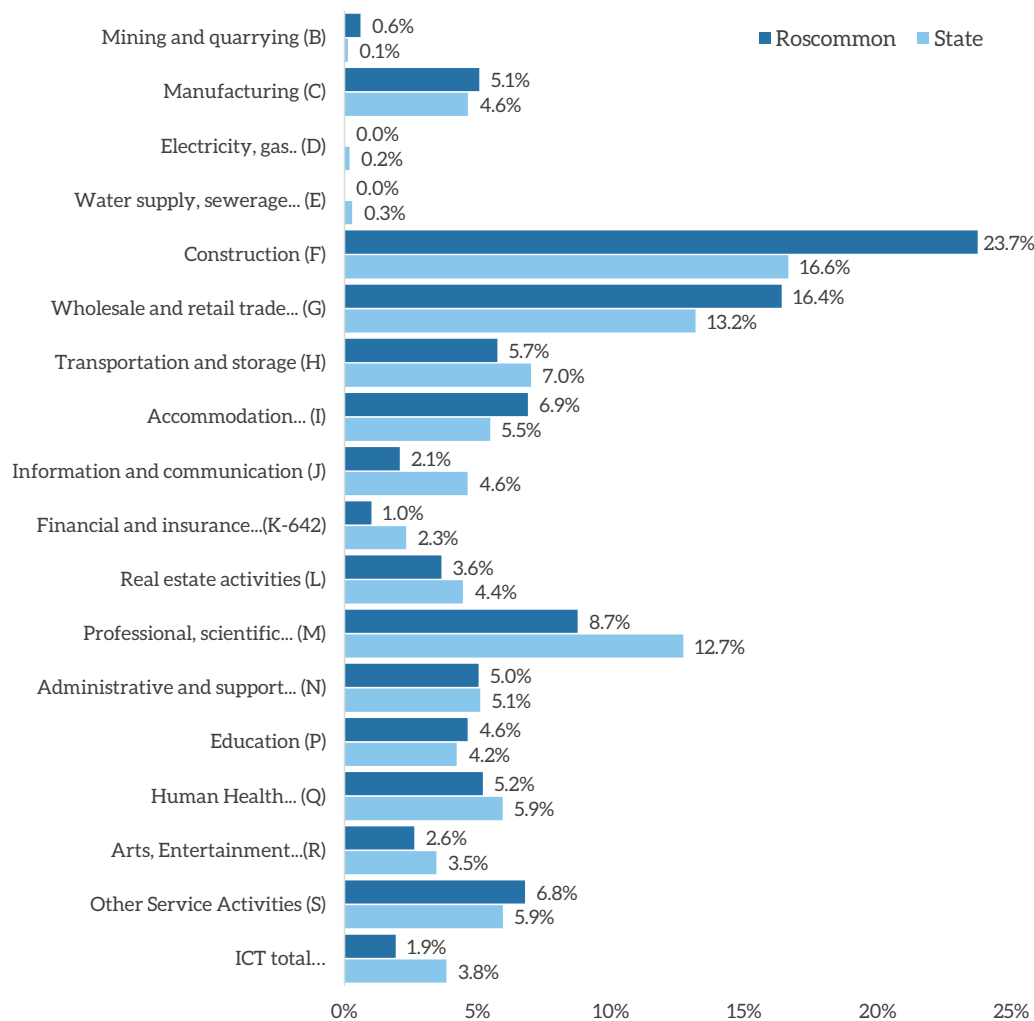


Figure 3.47: % Active Enterprises by Size in Roscommon, 2019

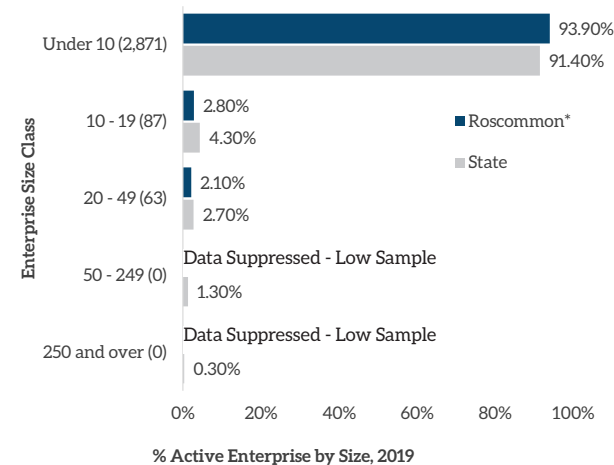


Figure 3.48: % Persons Engaged by Enterprise Size in Roscommon, 2019

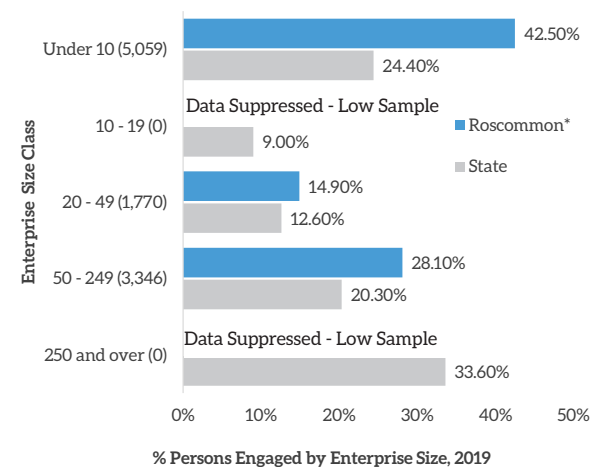


Figure 3.46: % Active Enterprises by NACE Classification Sectors B-N in Roscommon, 2019

For more on NACE Classifications see: <https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/surveybackgroundnotes/businessdemography/>

## Business Demography - Galway\* Profile, 2009 to 2019

\* Data includes Galway City and County

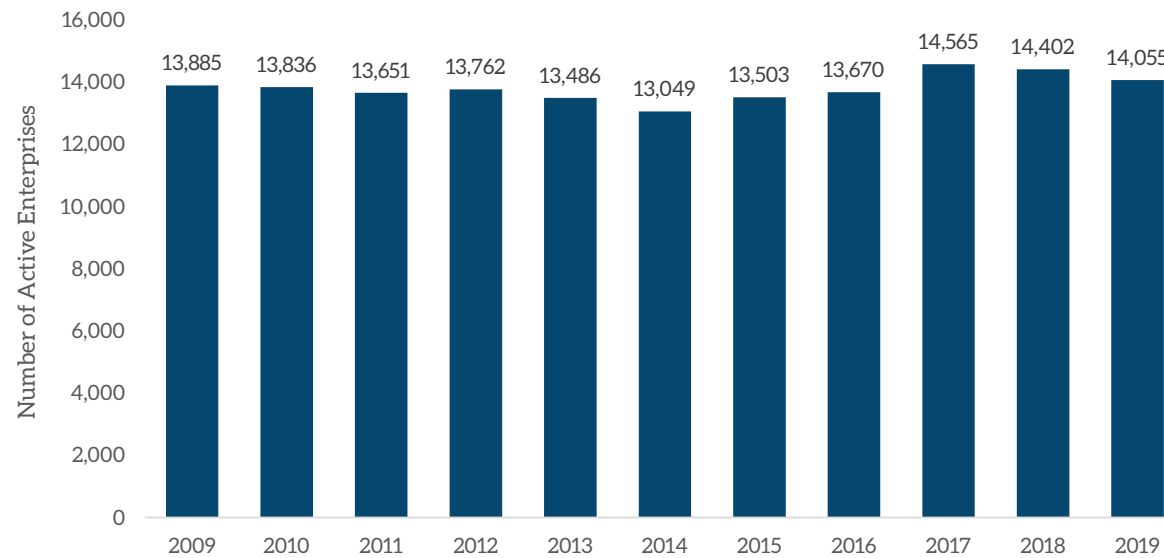


Figure 3.49: Number of Active Enterprises in Galway, 2009 to 2019

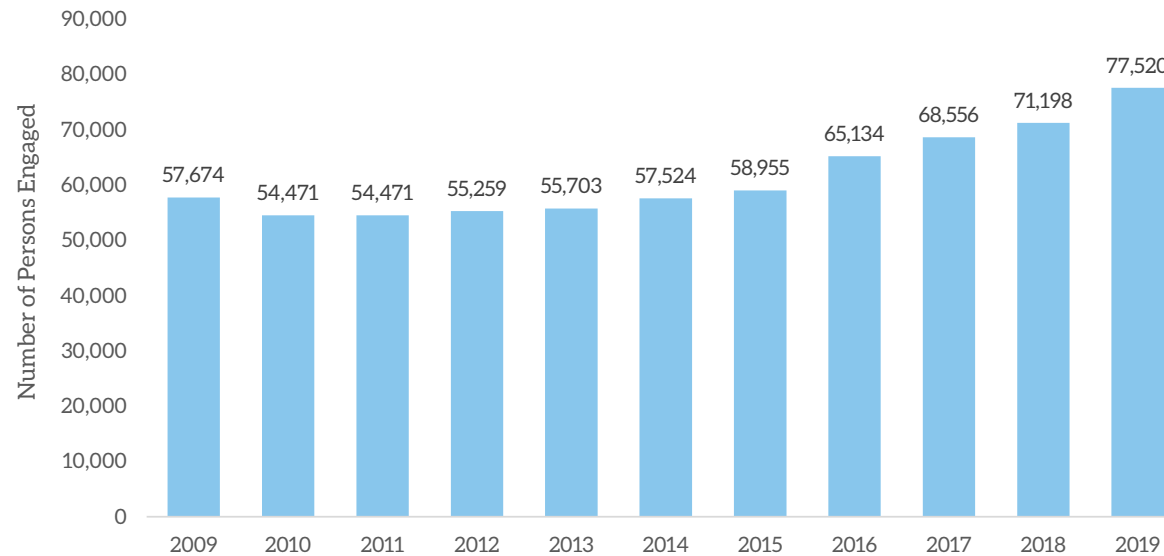


Figure 3.50: Number of Persons Engaged in Active Enterprises in Galway, 2009 to 2019

Business Demography - Galway Profile, 2009 to 2019

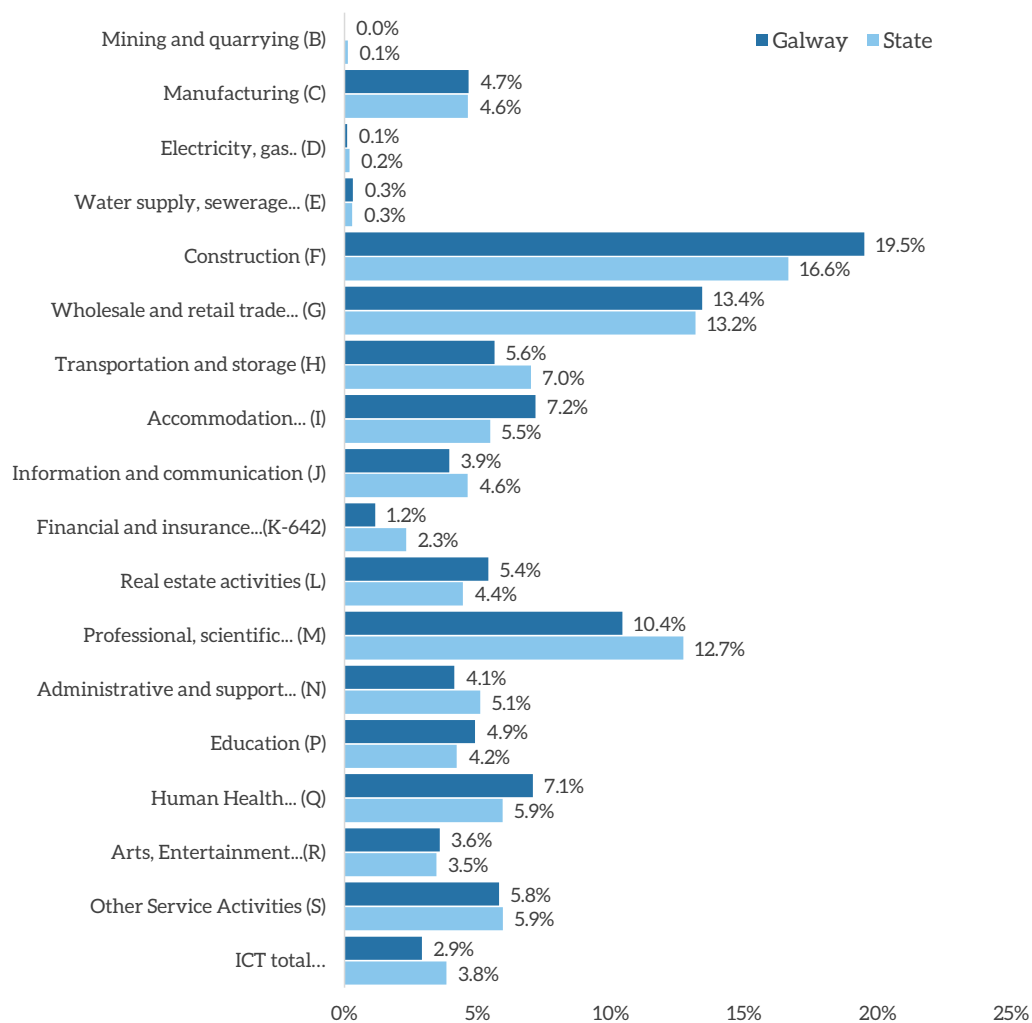


Figure 3.52: % Active Enterprises by Size in Galway, 2019

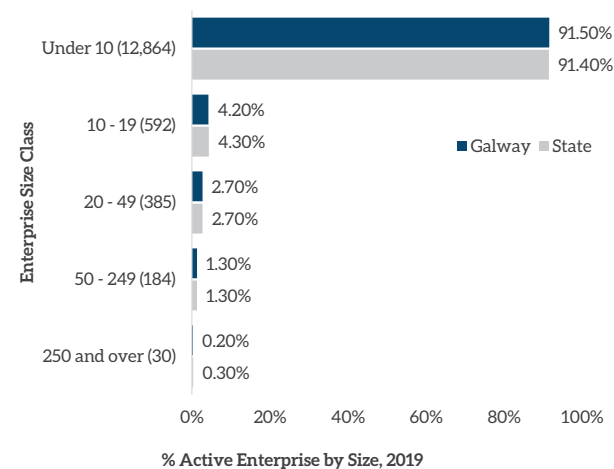
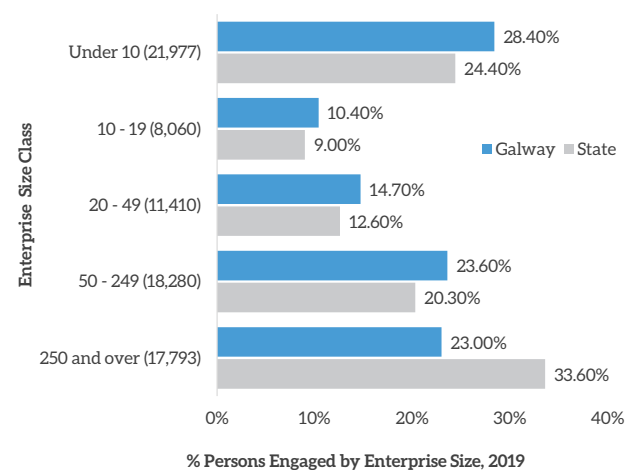


Figure 3.53: % Persons Engaged by Enterprise Size in Galway, 2019



\* Data includes Galway City and County

Figure 3.51: % Active Enterprises by NACE Classification Sectors B-N in Galway, 2019

For more on NACE Classifications see: <https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/surveybackgroundnotes/businessdemography/>



Business Demography - Kildare Profile, 2009 to 2019

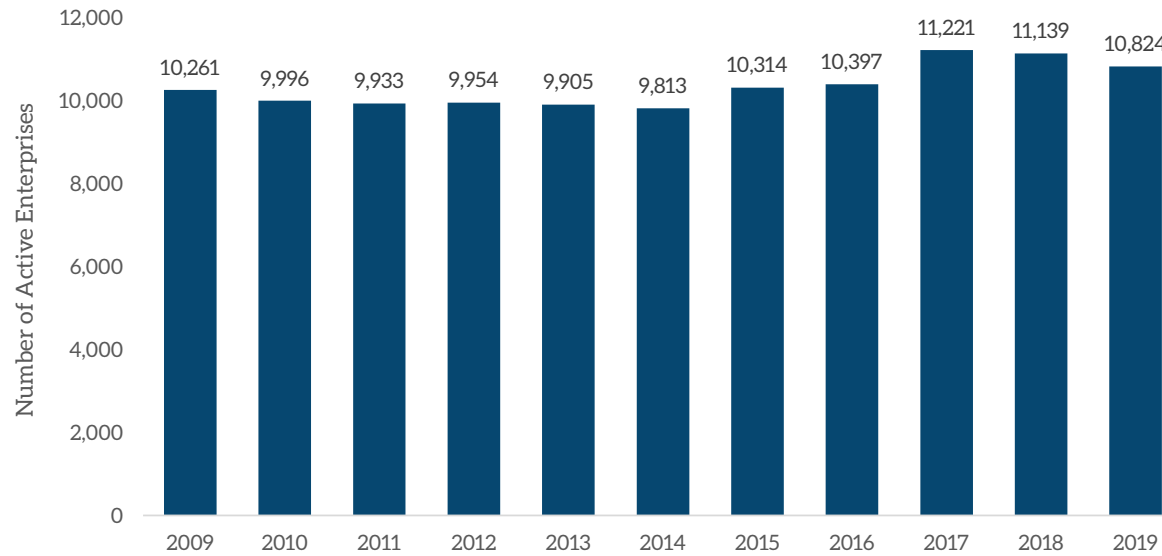


Figure 3.54: Number of Active Enterprises in Kildare, 2009 to 2019

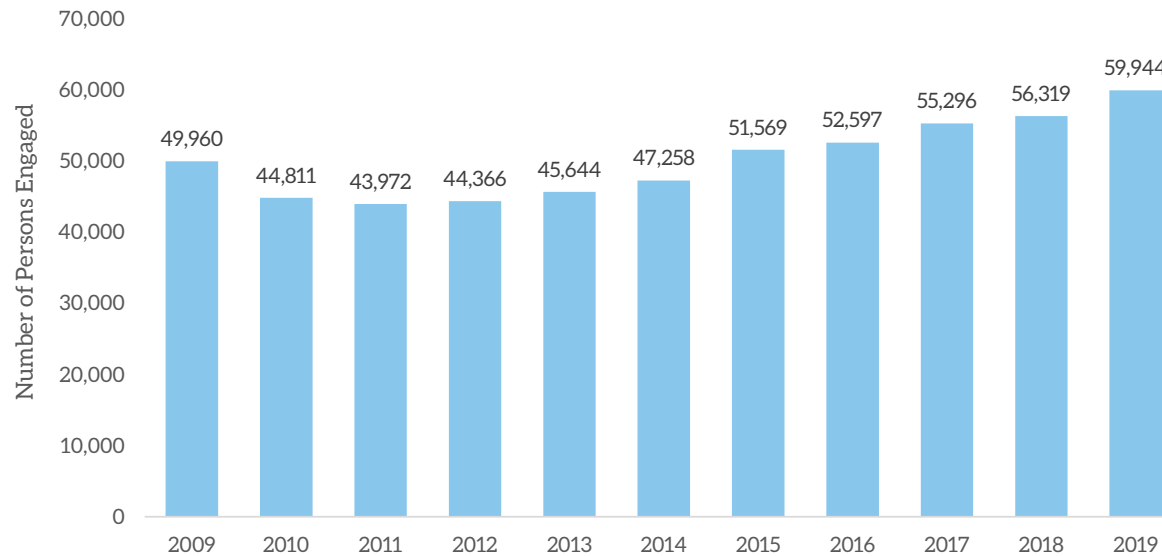


Figure 3.55: Number of Persons Engaged in Active Enterprises in Kildare, 2009 to 2019

Business Demography - Kildare Profile, 2009 to 2019

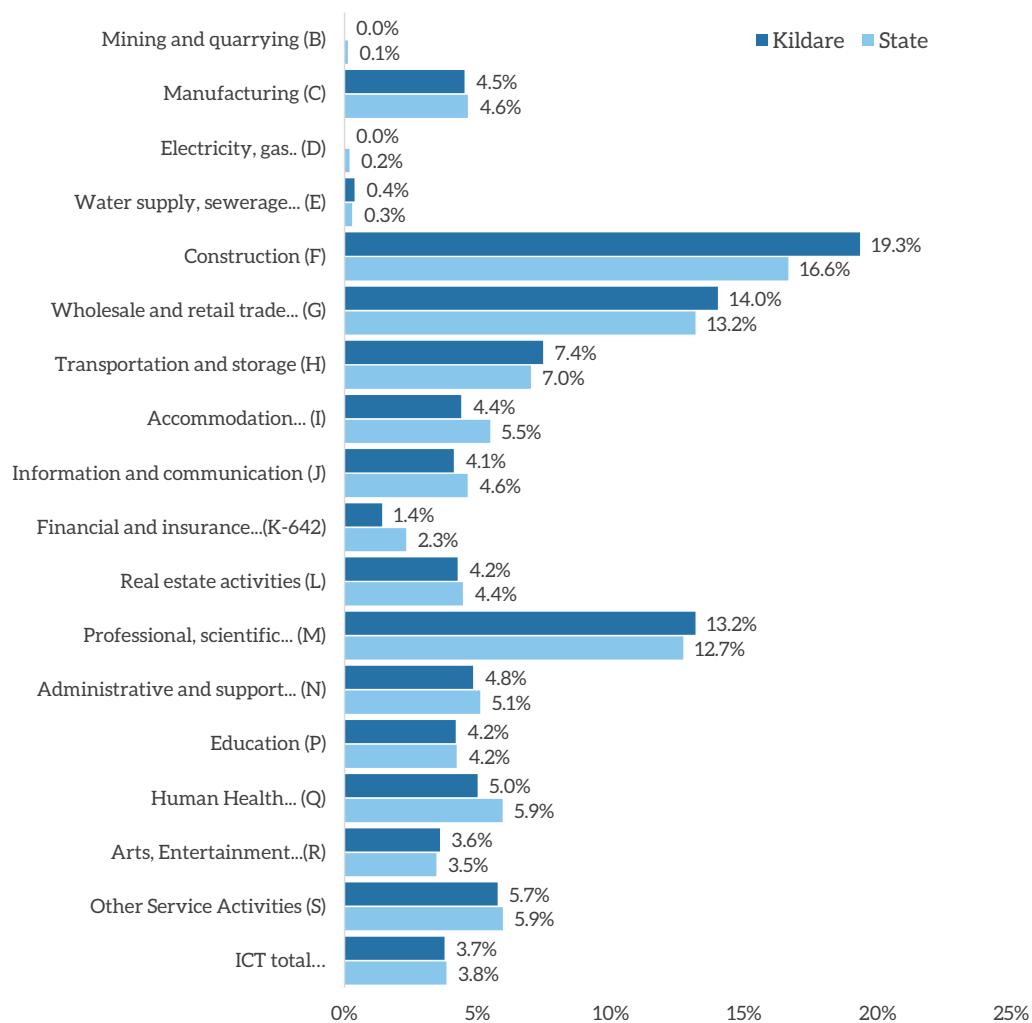


Figure 3.57: % Active Enterprises by Size in Kildare, 2019

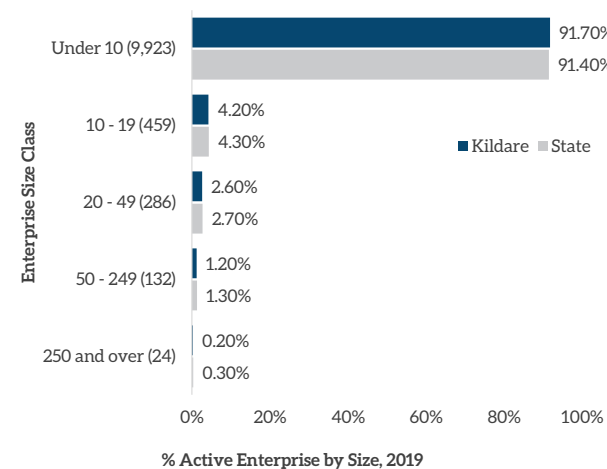


Figure 3.58: % Persons Engaged by Enterprise Size in Kildare, 2019

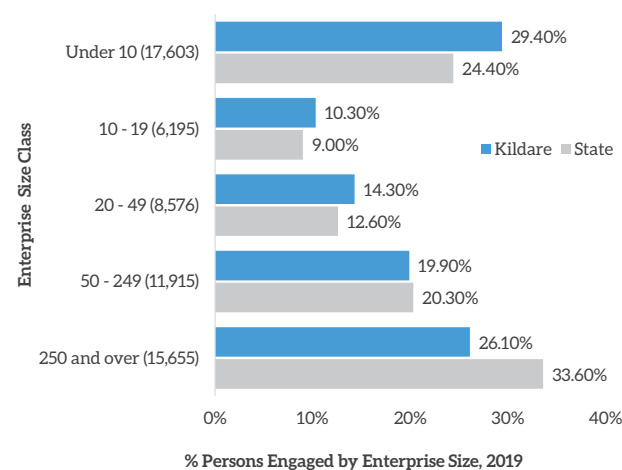


Figure 3.56: % Active Enterprises by NACE Classification Sectors B-N in Kildare, 2019

For more on NACE Classifications see: <https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/surveybackgroundnotes/businessdemography/>

Business Demography - Tipperary Profile, 2009 to 2019

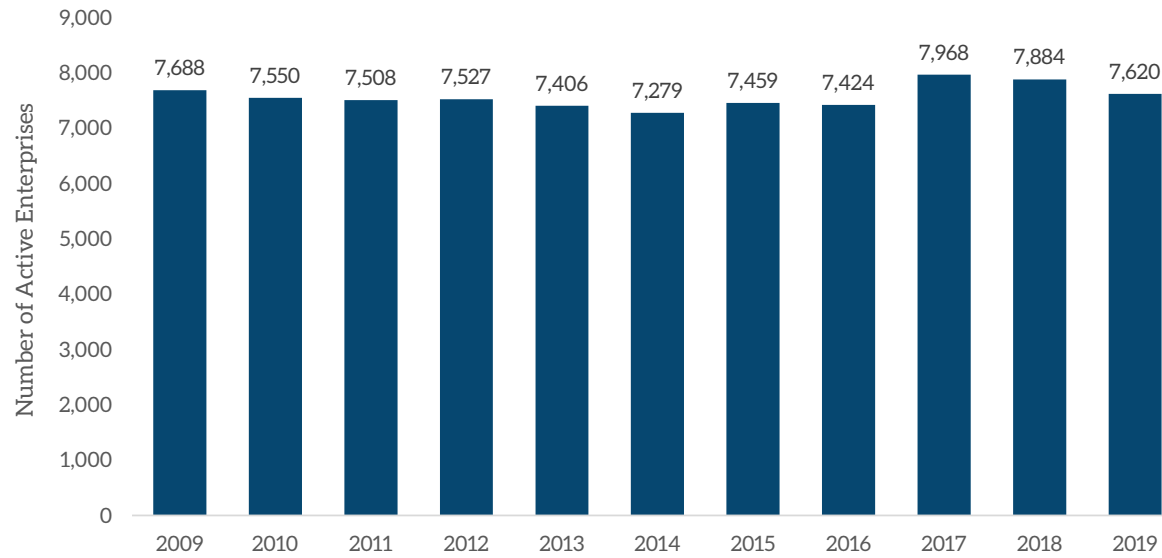


Figure 3.59: Number of Active Enterprises in Tipperary, 2009 to 2019

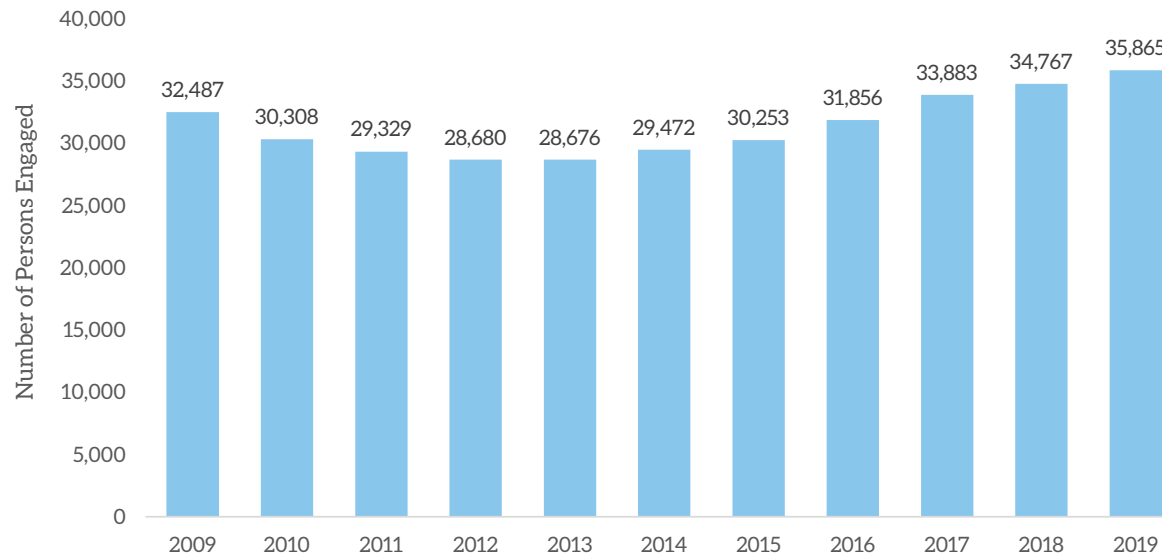


Figure 3.60: Number of Persons Engaged in Active Enterprises in Tipperary, 2009 to 2019

Business Demography - Tipperary Profile, 2009 to 2019

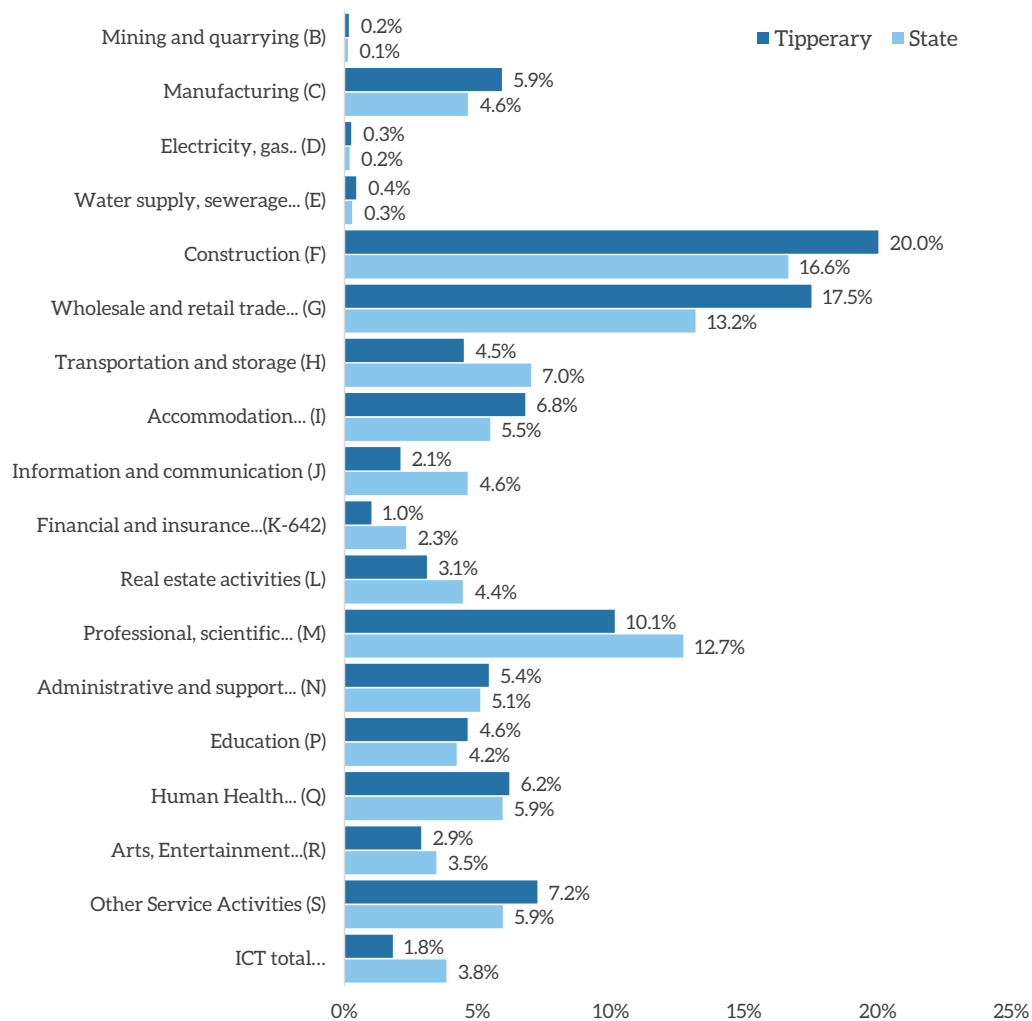


Figure 3.62: % Active Enterprises by Size in Tipperary, 2019

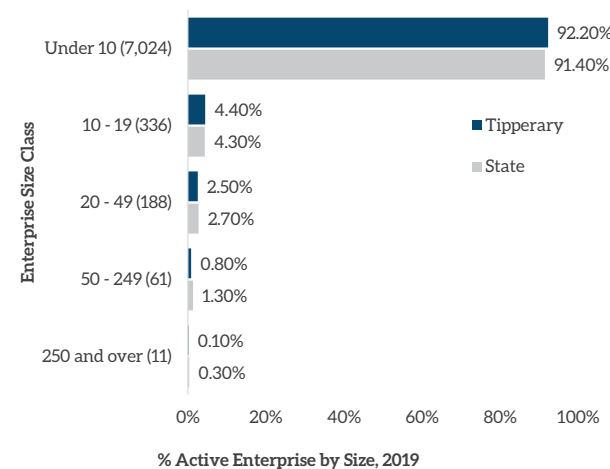


Figure 3.63: % Persons Engaged by Enterprise Size in Tipperary, 2019

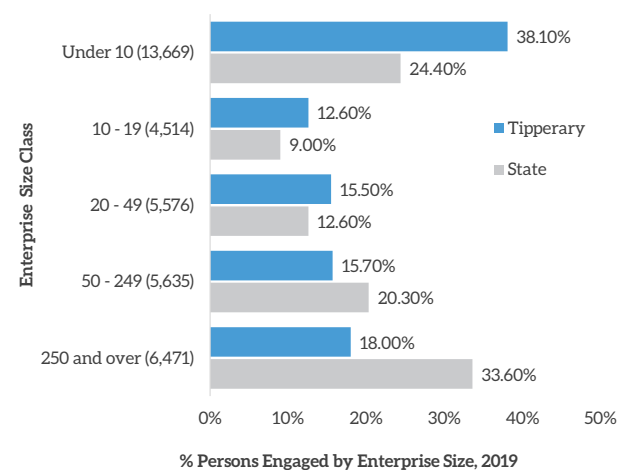


Figure 3.61: % Active Enterprises by NACE Classification Sectors B-N in Tipperary, 2019

For more on NACE Classifications see: <https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/surveybackgroundnotes/businessdemography/>

# Environmental Indicators



## Environmental Features

This chapter presents relevant and emblematic environmental data in respect of the EU JTF Territory. The variables included here are CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, CORINE land cover and designated landscapes / habitats.

### Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions (2015)

The EPA must report on emissions of a wide range of pollutants that come under the scope of the CAFÉ Directive, the Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP) and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. To support this work, the EPA commissioned a research project on national mapping of GHG and non-GHG emissions sources (MapEire) through their Research Call 2015 on Climate - Air Science under the EPA Research Programme 2014-2020. For the purposes of this territorial profile, the emissions map (4.1) and graphic detail national total emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> for the year 2015.

Across most of the EU JTF Territory, annual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per km<sup>2</sup> range between 0 and 0.5Kt . Emission values are higher in the main urban areas and along the principal inter-urban arteries (M/N4, M/N6, M/7, M/N8 and M9) that traverse the region. Values exceed 2Kt per km<sup>2</sup> in urban areas, and they are highest in the most populous locations. They generally range between 0.5 and 1Kt per km<sup>2</sup> along the main transport corridors, due to the emissions from vehicular traffic. Data collated by the EPA, in 2015, record significant emissions from the peat-fuelled and co-firing power plants in Lanesborough, Shannonbridge and Edenderry.

The EU JTF Territory also has significant natural resources that absorb CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere. These are predominantly in upland areas, with the Sliabh Blooms being the single largest repository of bogs (see Map 4.3), woodlands (see Map 4.4), fens and heaths that perform this important ecological service. Other significant areas are in East Offaly and North Roscommon, and they are predominantly undisturbed peatlands and other areas that are not intensively farmed.

Volumes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are driven by several factors including transportation, industry and fuel consumption. When emissions are computed for local authority geographies, County Clare emerges as having the single largest volume. This is due, to a large extent, to the location there of Ireland's largest coal-fired electricity generating station, which is at Moneypoint on the Shannon Estuary. Of the local authority areas that are, either fully or partly, in the EU JTF Territory, Offaly (location of two peat fuelled power plants as of 2015) and Galway emerge as generating the highest volumes of emissions. Among the State's thirty-one local authority areas, they generate the sixth and seventh largest volumes of CO<sub>2</sub> in absolute terms. The volume generated in Longford corresponds to the median value, whilst volumes are below the median in the other EU JTF Territory local authority areas. In absolute terms, Laois generates the smallest volume of CO<sub>2</sub>.

## Environmental Indicators - Commentary

MD-level data on volumes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions point up the significance of peat-burning. Three MDs stand out as producing emissions that far exceed those of other MDs. These are Birr, Ballymahon and Edenderry MDs, and they are the locations of the aforementioned power plants.

### CORINE Land Cover

Data from the CORINE land classification database (2018) show the predominance of pastures across the EU JTF Territory. There are also some significant waterbodies, with Lough Ree (on the River Shannon) being the largest of these. The most afforested areas are the Sliabh Blooms and the Devils Bit. While there are some mixed forests here, coniferous plantations predominate. These upland areas also have some natural grasslands as do parts of North Roscommon. The CORINE database clearly identifies the significance of peatlands / bogs in the EU JTF Territory (see Map 4.3). The most significant boglands are in the following parts of the EU JTF Territory:

- West Offaly – west and south of Clara;
- East Offaly – particularly around Rhode and Edenderry;
- Eastern parts of County Tipperary – from Templeouhy to Killenaule;
- South Roscommon – south of Athlone
- Along the Suck Valley in Counties Galway and Roscommon;
- West Roscommon – particularly in the Castlerea Rural District;
- East Roscommon and West Longford – from Roosky to Keenagh and westward to the shores of Lough Ree;
- East Longford and North Westmeath – from Granard to Castlepollard; and
- North and West Kildare – around Prosperous, Allenwood, Timahoe, Carbury, Rathangan and Kilberry.

Bord na Móna is the single largest owner of bogs, and it has a very significant footprint in the EU JTF Territory, especially in County Offaly (see Map 4.5). Bord na Móna-owned bogs, including cutaway bogs, are clustered around the five main industrial installations associated with peat harvesting, namely the Lough Ree, West Offaly and Edenderry Power Stations and the Littleton and Derrinlough Briquette Factories.

### Designated Landscapes and Habitats

The EU JTF Territory contains a number of sites that have been designated under the Natura 2000 Framework. These include special areas of conservation (SACs), national heritage areas (NHAs) and special protection areas. Designated sites are afforded legal protection in order to protect their ecological functions.

## Environmental Indicators - Commentary

Lough Ree is the single largest designated site. It is a SAC as is the River Shannon and are its channel and floodplain southwards from Athlone. County Westmeath's largest lakes, namely Loughs Ennel and Owell are designated SACs. Among the smaller waterbodies covered by this designation are Errit Lough and Lough Funshinagh (turlough). Several of the EU JTF Territory's bogs and fens – notably in the Sliabh Blooms, West Roscommon and the Ballinasloe MD – are also designated as SACs.

Lough Derravaragh, the River Suck, its callows and some adjoining bogs are designated as NHAs, while all SACs are classified as proposed NHAs. Smaller sites, mainly bogs, fens and heaths in other parts of the EU JTF Territory are also classified as NHAs.

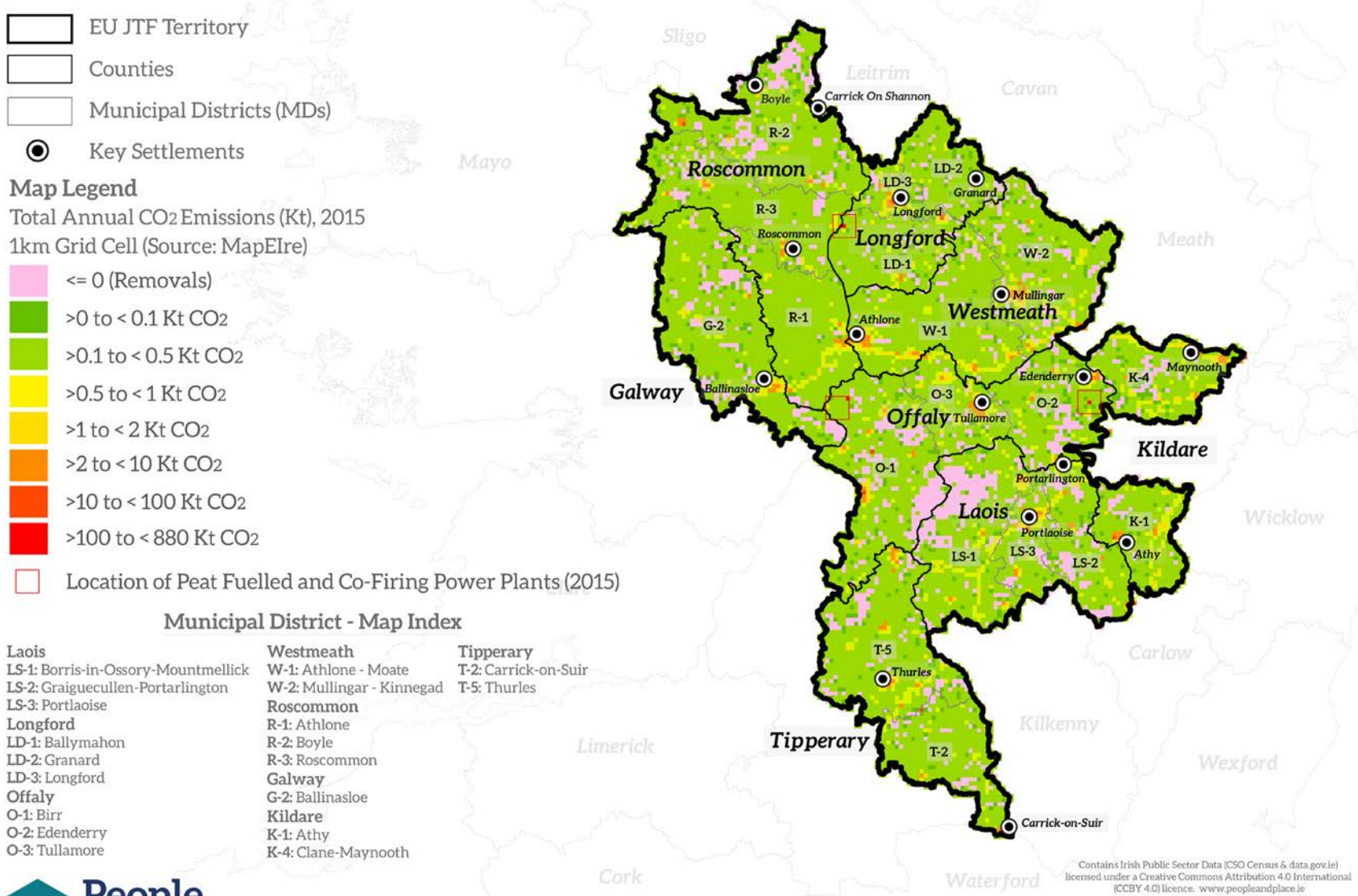
The aforementioned waterbodies and watercourses are also classified as special protection areas, as are most of the Sliabh Blooms.

The designated Natura 2000 sites are among the areas / locations / habitats that the EPA deems to have the highest levels of environmental sensitivity. A number of sites, in the EU JTF Territory, are classified as 'extremely' sensitive. These include the Shannon Callows, several of Lough Ree's bays, Lough Owell and Bellanagare Bog. Among the sites that are classified as having 'very high' sensitivity are the following: the Sliabh Blooms; Lough Ree; Lough Ennel; Lough Forbes; and several boglands – most notably in the Ballinasloe.

### Environmental Sensitivity Mapping (ESM)

In addition to the above data sources, the project team has used the EPA Environmental Sensitivity Mapping (ESM) toolkit. The ESM webtool uses spatial data sets with specific layers attributed a pre-defined scientific score. When these layers are examined together, an environmental sensitivity map is generated for the relevant area. Where more sensitivities are present in an area the colour overlay turns from green to orange to red. The areas of red displayed on the maps (as illustrated in Map 4.10 below) indicate that more consideration of the local environmental sensitivities are required within these areas.

The Environmental Sensitivity Mapping (ESM) Webtool is a novel decision-support tool for Strategic Environmental Assessment and planning processes in Ireland. It allows users to create area-specific environmental sensitivity maps and is available for local use at the following website: <https://airomaps.geohive.ie/esm/>



National Total Annual CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions (Kt), 2015

Map 4.1: Total Annual CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions (Kt), 2015 (Source: MapEIre)

### Local Authorities

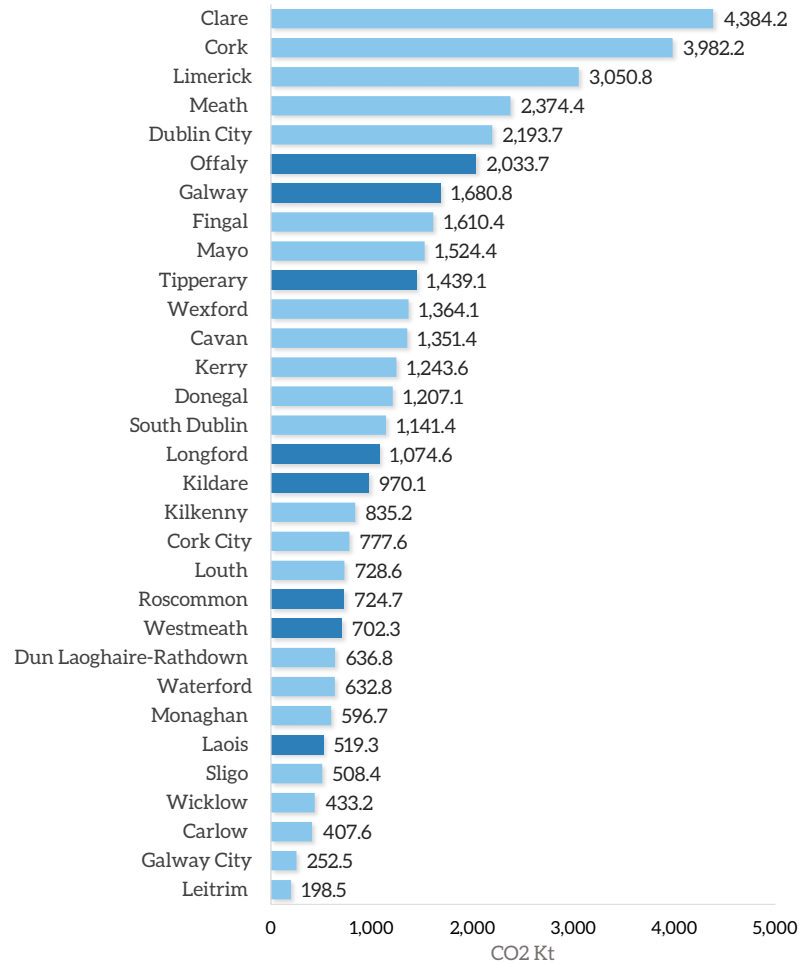


Figure 4.1: Total Annual CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions (Kt) by LA, 2015 (Source: MapEIre)

### Municipal Districts (MD)

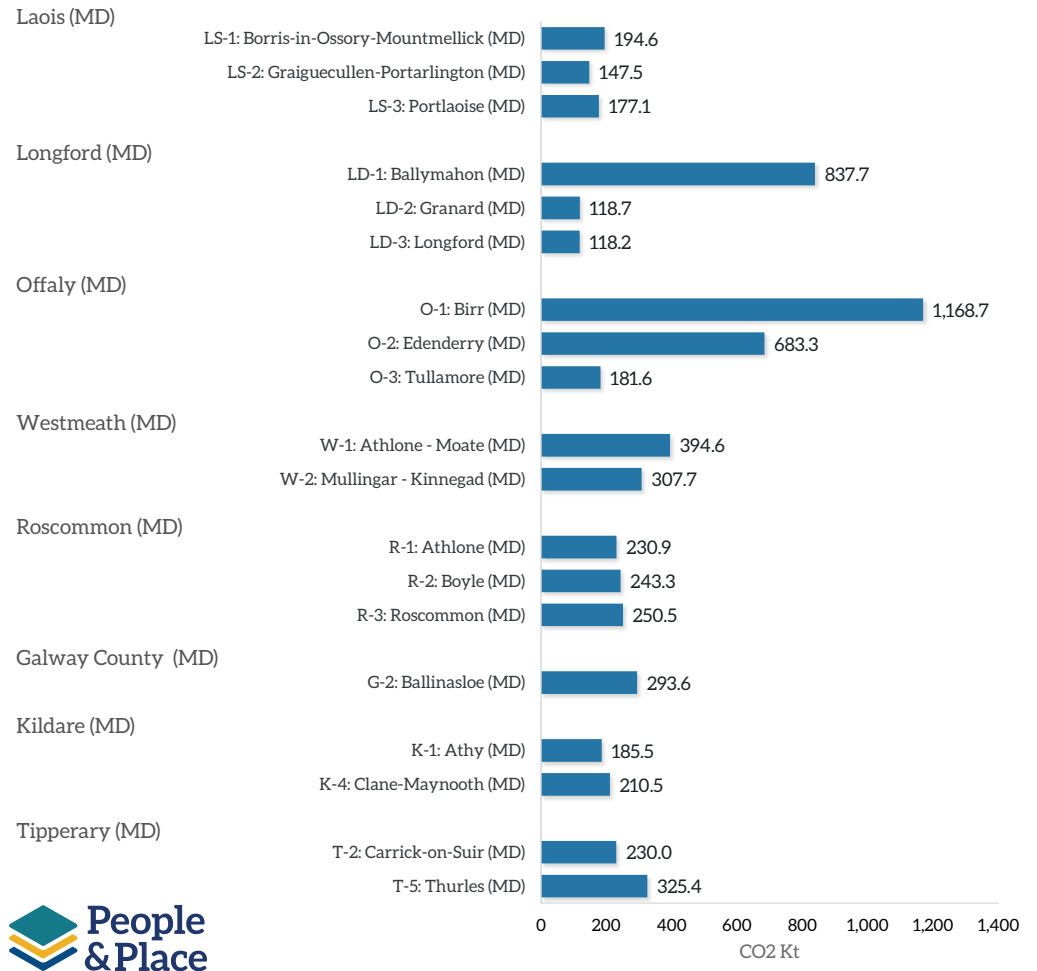
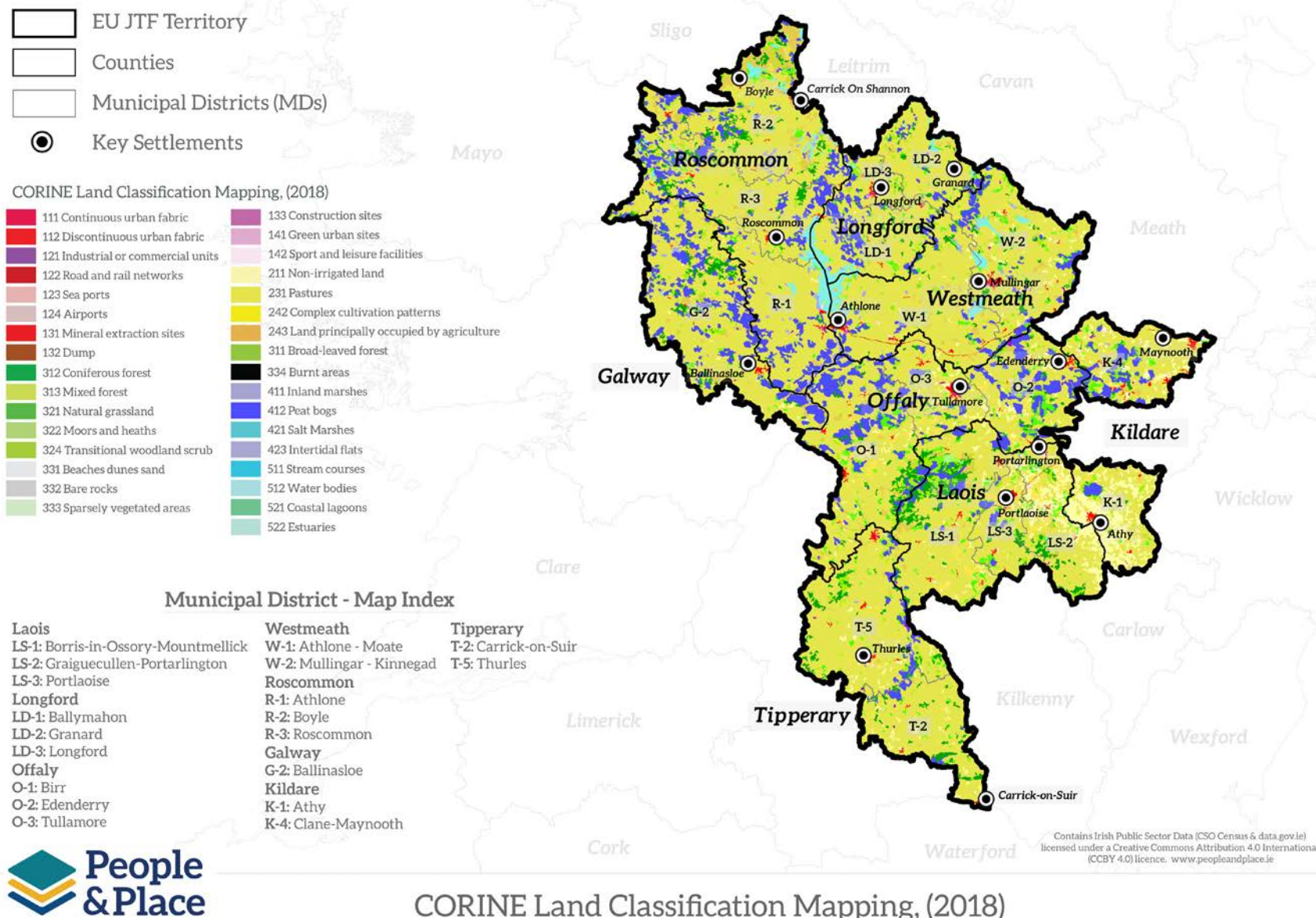


Figure 4.2: Total Annual CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions (Kt) by MD, 2015 (Source: MapEIre)

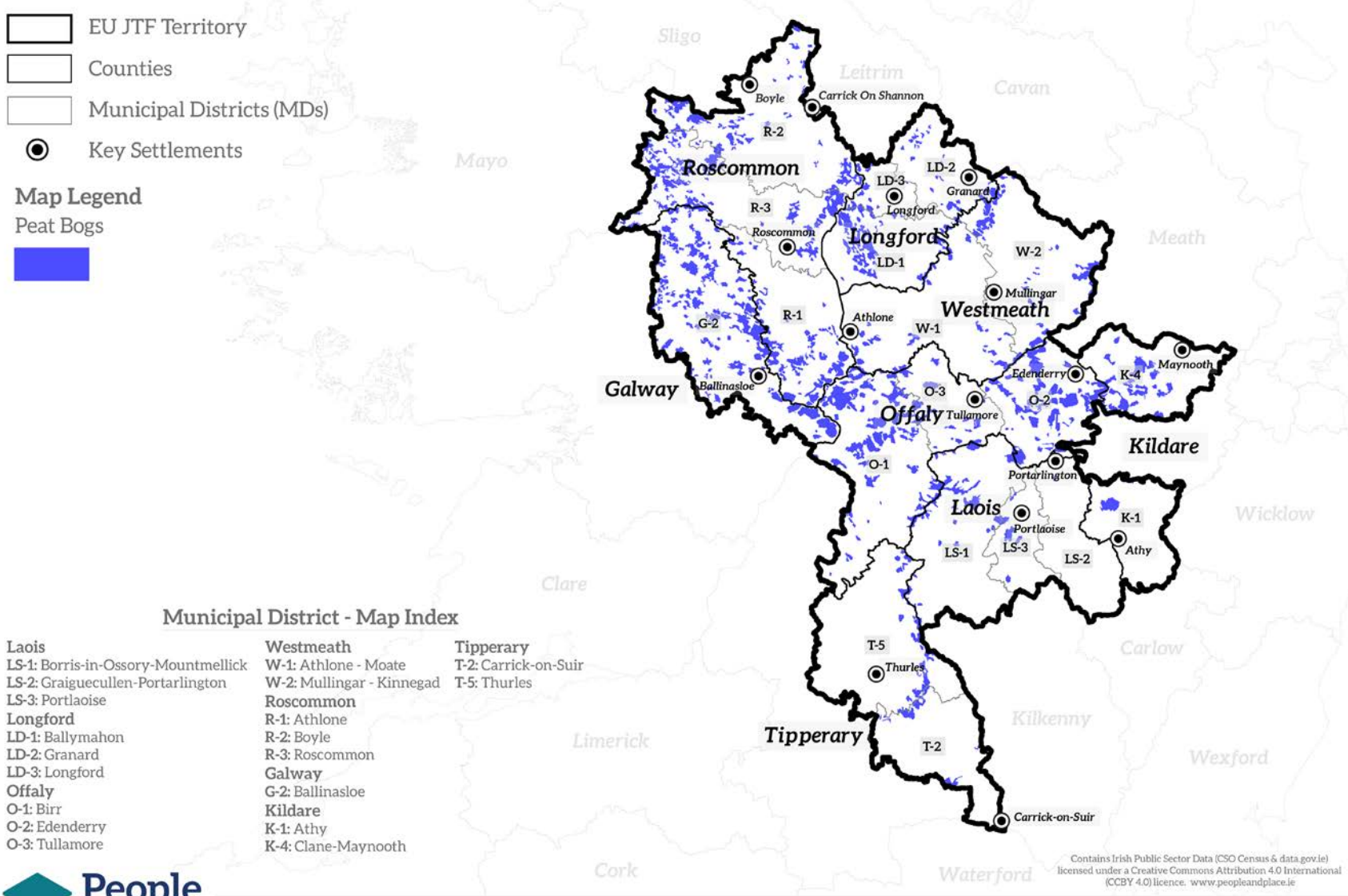






Map 4.2: CORINE 2018 - Land Cover Classification (Source: CORINE 2018)

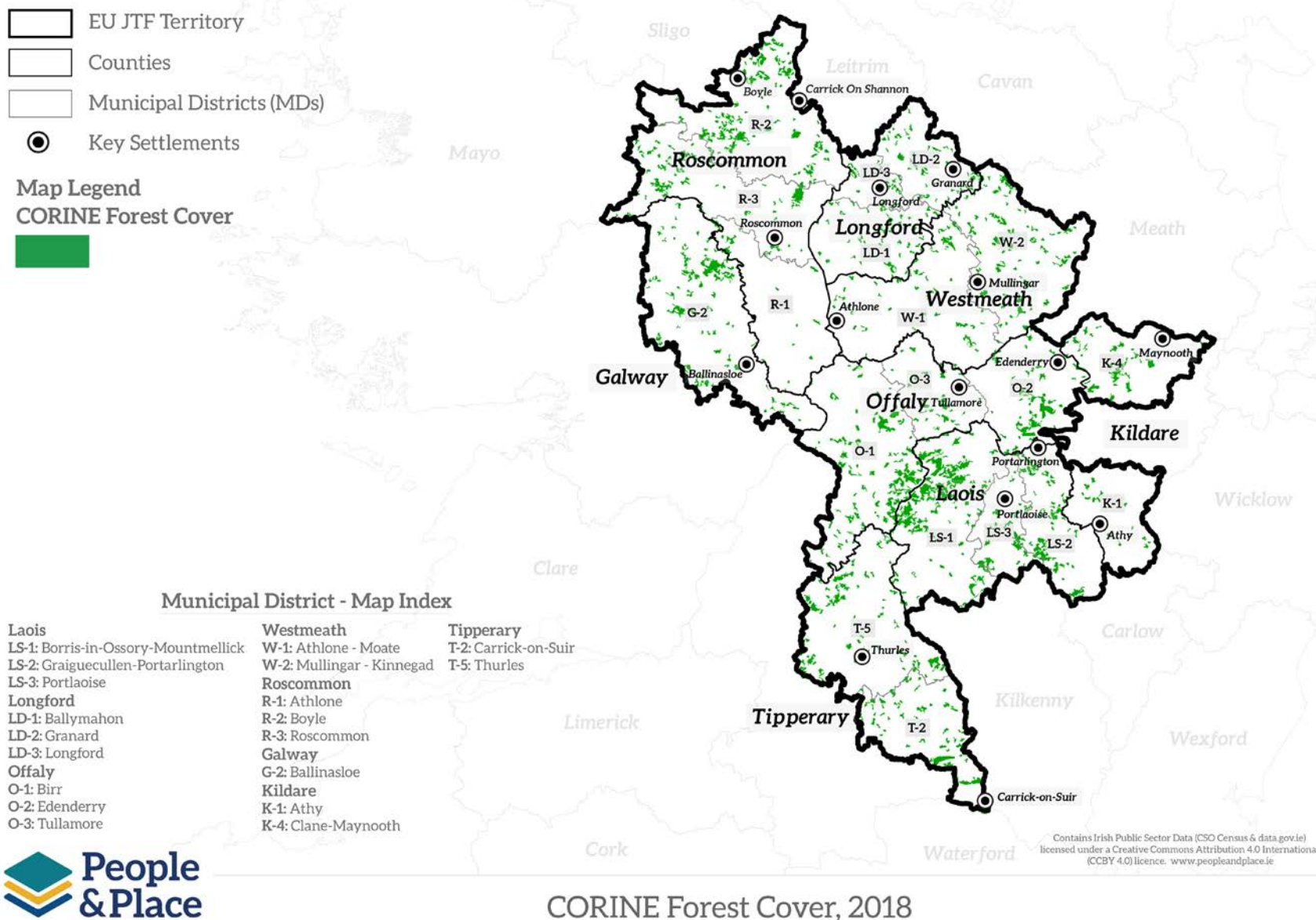




Peat Bogs in the JT Plan Territory

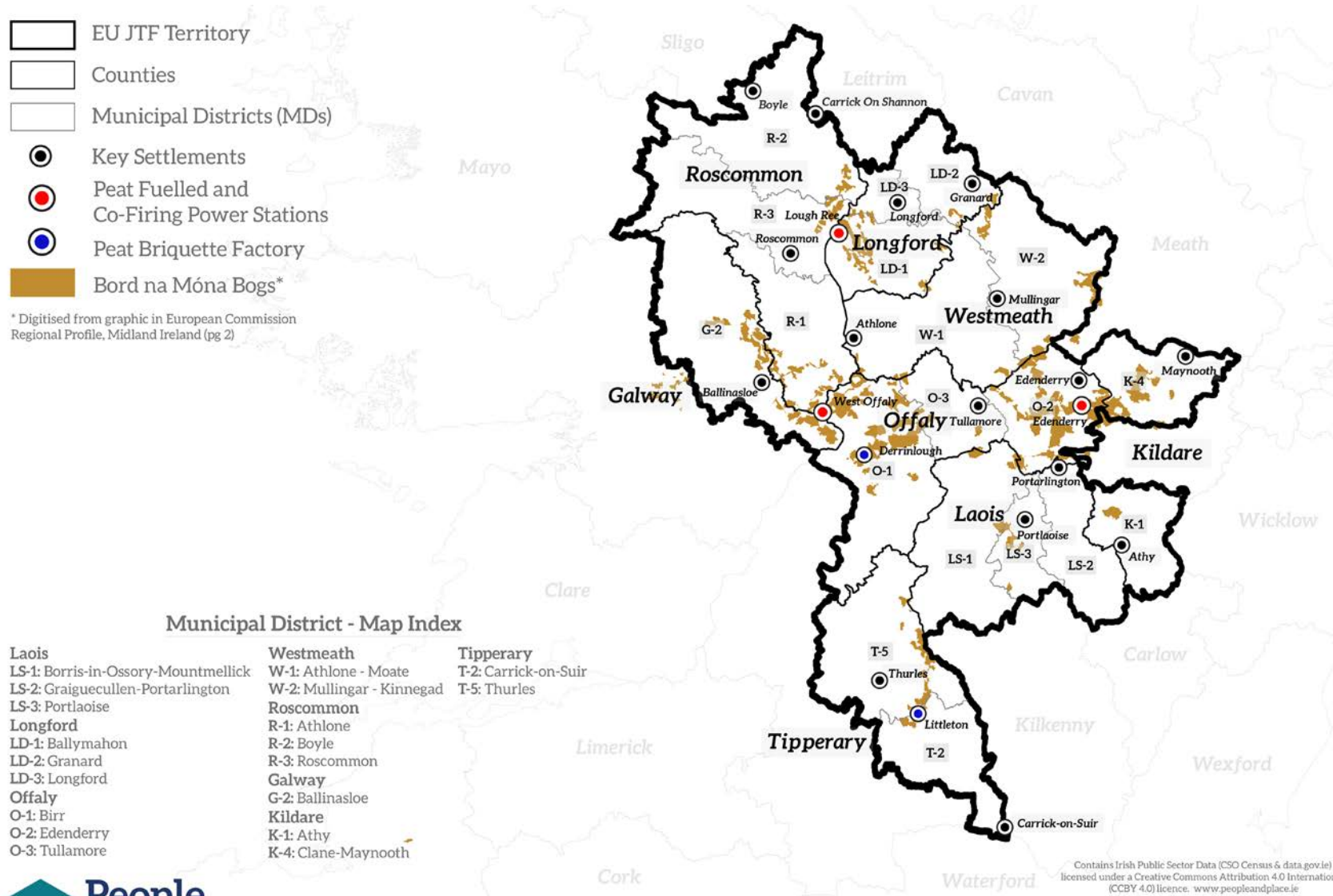
Map 4.3: Location of Peat Bogs - CORINE (Source: CORINE 2018)





Map 4.4: CORINE 2018 - Forest Cover (Source: CORINE 2018)

Bord na Mona Peat Bogs and related industry sites (both operational and closed)



Bord na M6na Peat Bogs and Related Industry Sites

Map 4.5: Location of Bord na Mona Peat Bogs (Source: EC Commission Regional Profile, pg 2)

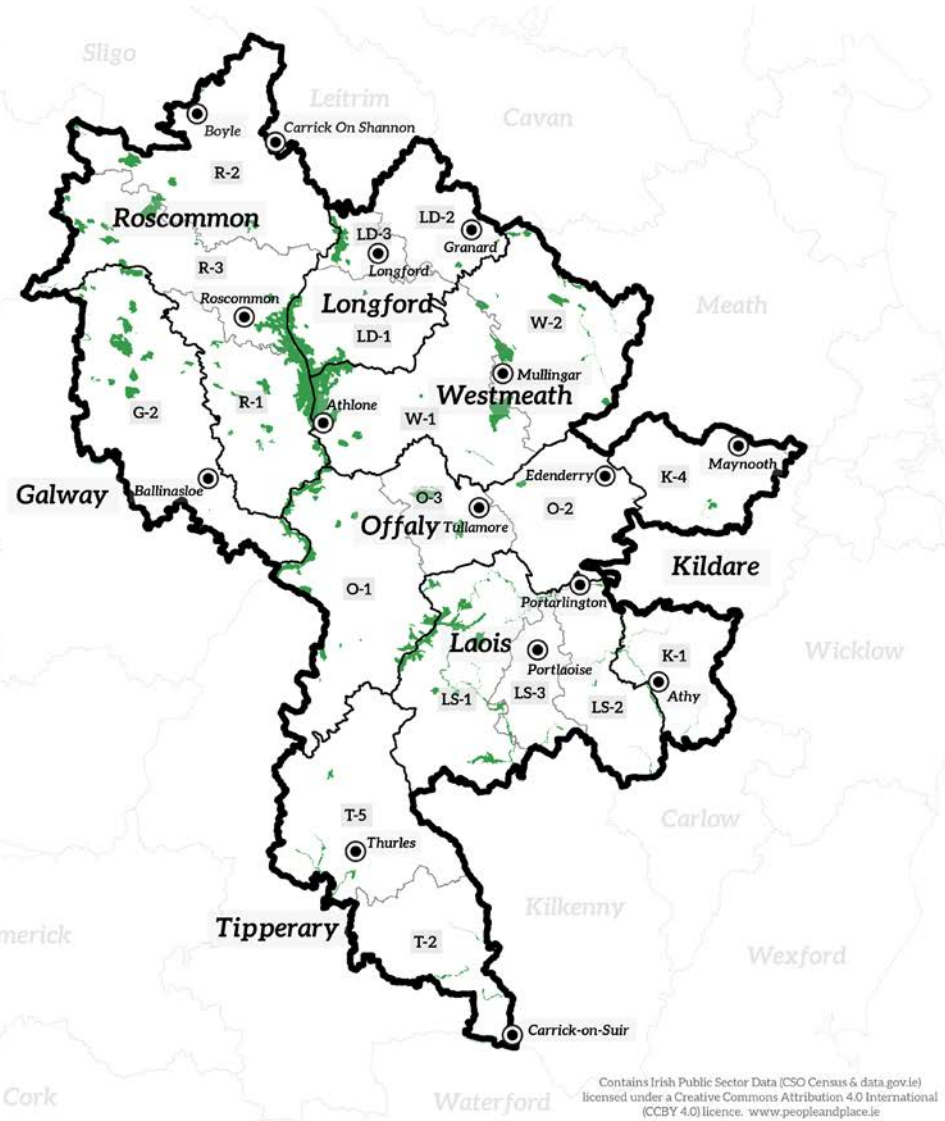


-  EU JTF Territory
-  Counties
-  Municipal Districts (MDs)
-  Key Settlements

**Map Legend**  
 Special Area of Conservation (SAC)  


**Municipal District - Map Index**

- |                                     |                           |                      |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Laois</b>                        | <b>Westmeath</b>          | <b>Tipperary</b>     |
| LS-1: Borris-in-Ossory-Mountmellick | W-1: Athlone - Moate      | T-2: Carrick-on-Suir |
| LS-2: Graiguecullen-Portarlinton    | W-2: Mullingar - Kinnegad | T-5: Thurles         |
| LS-3: Portlaoise                    | <b>Roscommon</b>          |                      |
| <b>Longford</b>                     | R-1: Athlone              |                      |
| LD-1: Ballymahon                    | R-2: Boyle                |                      |
| LD-2: Granard                       | R-3: Roscommon            |                      |
| LD-3: Longford                      | <b>Galway</b>             |                      |
| <b>Offaly</b>                       | G-2: Ballinasloe          |                      |
| O-1: Birr                           | <b>Kildare</b>            |                      |
| O-2: Edenderry                      | K-1: Athy                 |                      |
| O-3: Tullamore                      | K-4: Clane-Maynooth       |                      |

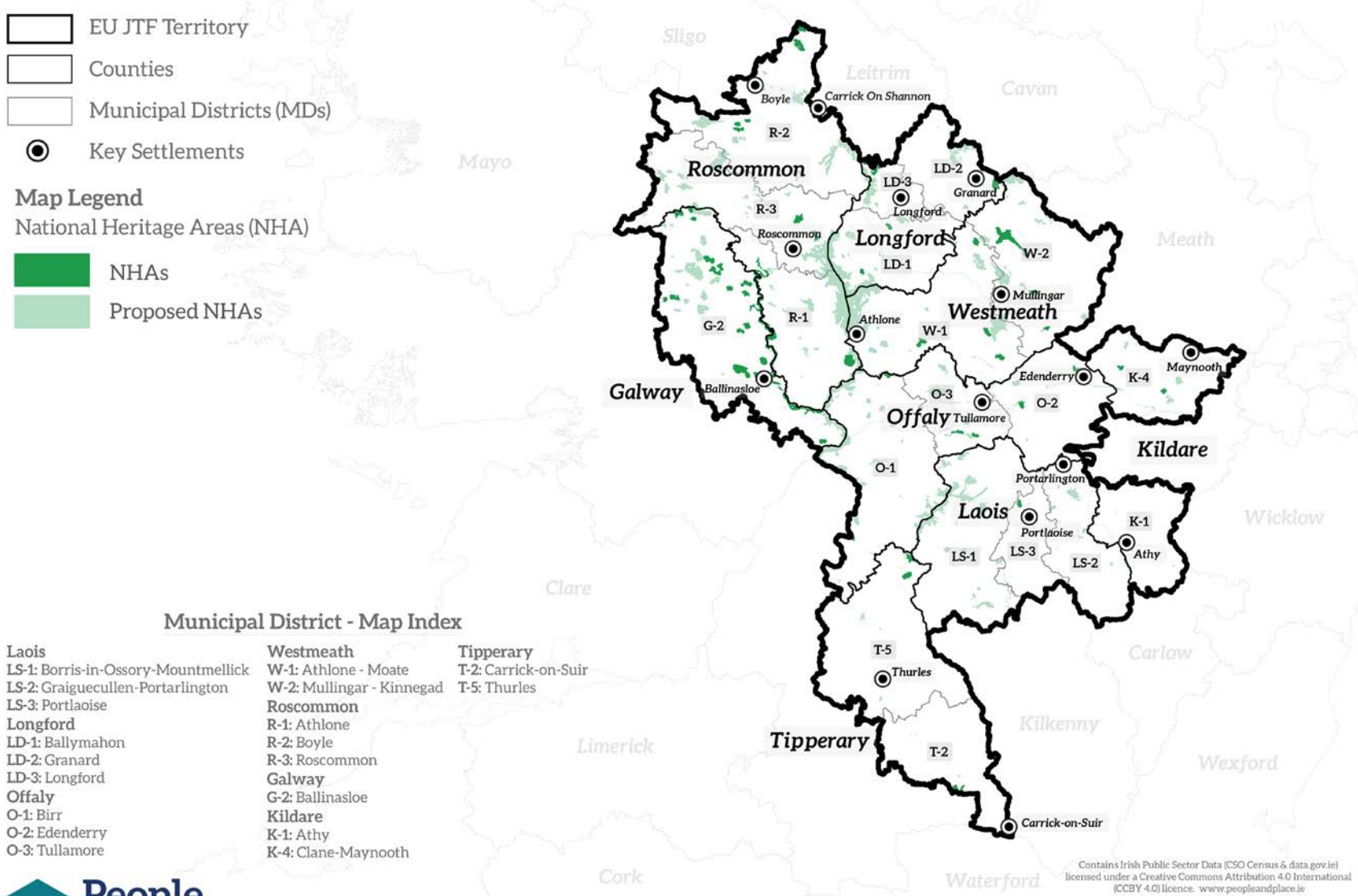


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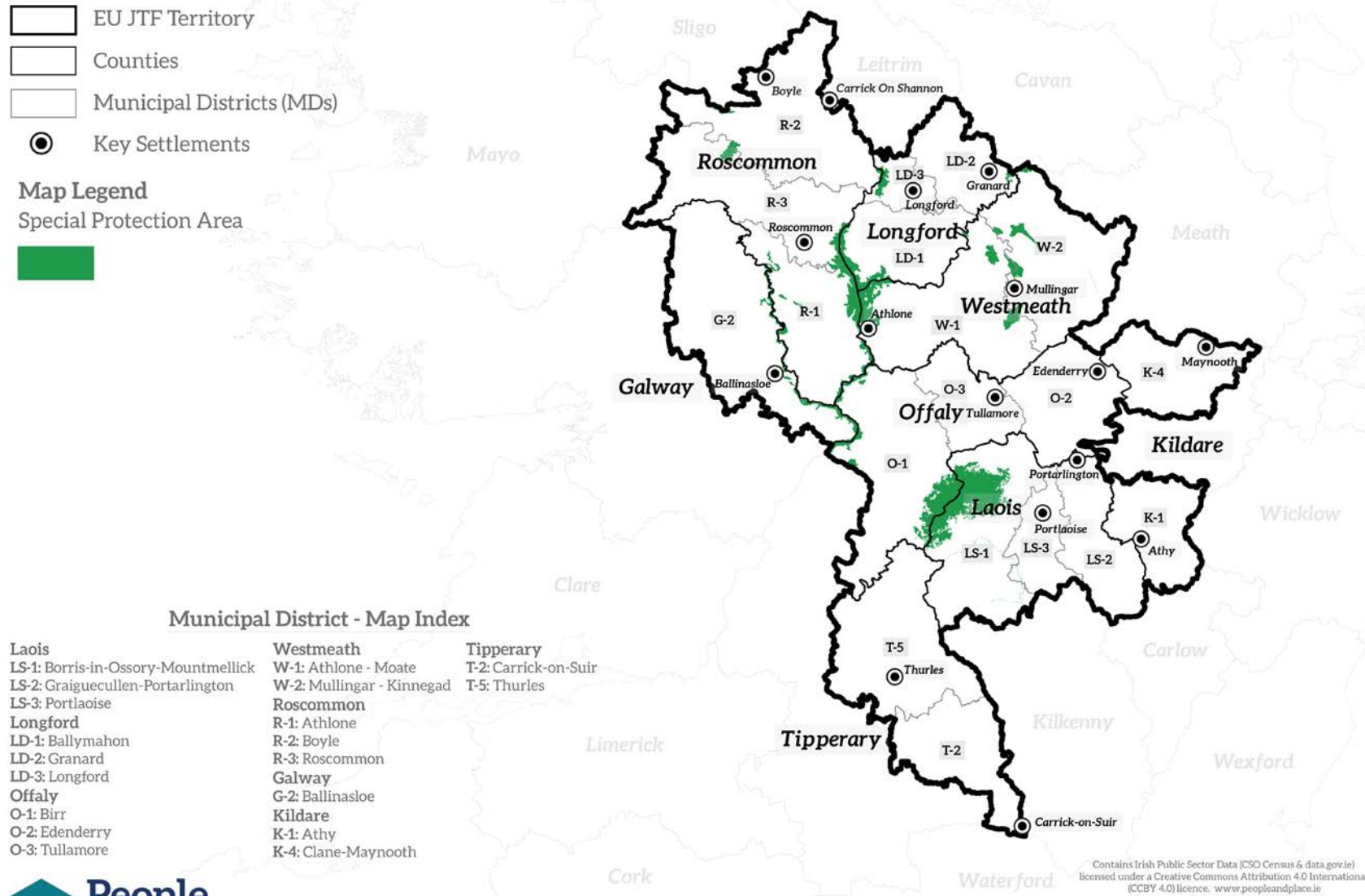
**Special Area of Conservation (SAC)**

Map 4.6: Special Area of Conservation (Source: NPWS)



National Heritage Areas (NHA)

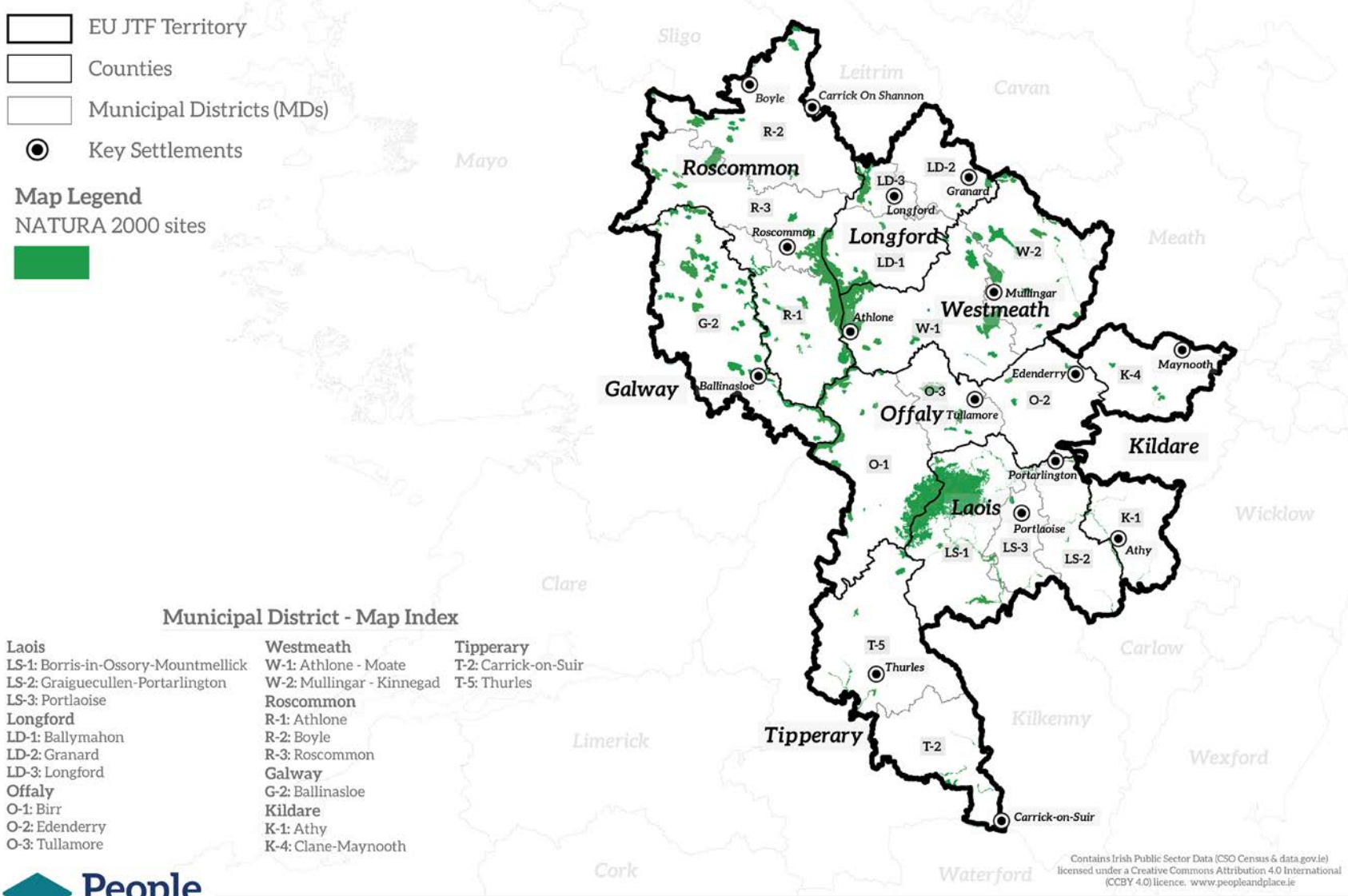
Map 4.7: National Heritage Areas (Source: NPWS)



### Special Protection Area (SPA)

Map 4.8: Special Protection Areas (Source: NPWS)





NATURA 2000 sites

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Map 4.9: NATURA 2000 Sites (Source: NPWS)



# Conclusion



## Conclusion and Next Steps

An evidence-based approach, informed by a comprehensive, policy, statistical and spatial analysis was used to inform the delineation of Ireland's EU Just Transition Fund Territory. That analysis pointed to the appropriateness and usefulness of sub-county units, namely municipal districts, in ensuring the objective, robust and valid designation of the EU JTF Territory's geographical footprint. This territory comprises nineteen municipal districts, all of which have a direct association with Ireland's traditional peat industry and now face similar challenges in transitioning to a post-carbon economy and society.

This report builds on the analysis that was previously done to ensure an independent and objective approach to delineating the EU JTF Territory. It presents demographic, socio-economic and environmental analysis at regional, county, municipal district and electoral division levels, all of which is benchmarked against State values. By presenting and analysing data at this range of spatial tiers, the report provides stakeholders – at the national, regional, local authority and community levels - with frameworks and pointers to enable evidence-based decision-making. Moreover, by providing baseline data, the report can assist stakeholders in setting targets, agreeing indicators and developing a framework for the evaluation and monitoring of strategic actions over the coming years.

While there is commonality, across the EU JTF Territory, in terms of the association with the peat industry, there are intra-territorial variations. This report identifies, quantifies and maps both the commonalities and the variations. Thus, as stakeholders<sup>1</sup> progress to promoting strategic actions associated with a just transition, to a post-carbon milieu, the data presented here will support them in identifying and applying approaches that are either universal, local, targeted and / or bespoke in line with territorial conditions, needs and potential.

The material presented here is largely quantitative and spatial (statistics and maps), and this can be complemented and enriched by qualitative data, based on local knowledge, expertise and insights.

The economic, social and environmental data that are presented here are drawn from a range of reliable and respected institutional sources. The information is as current as possible. In respect of some indicators, however, the data are dated from the most recent Census of Population, which took place in 2016. The next census is scheduled for April 2022, and small-area data are expected to be available in mid-2023, at which point, this report can be refreshed and updated where appropriate. In the meantime, stakeholders have a comprehensive dataset with which to work in formulating and promoting an evidence-based approach to sustainable territorial development.

The evidence presented here provides regional and local stakeholders with useful pointers in respect of the types of strategic actions and geographies on which the EU JTF can focus. The demographic profile (Chapter 2) demonstrates that the territory's population has grown over

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<sup>1</sup> Stakeholders can include the regional assembly, local authorities, state agencies and the totality of actors with responsibility for elements of the Just Transition Plan.

recent decades, and that it is projected to grow by a further seventeen percent up to the year 2040. Up to now, however, growth has been geographically uneven, and while some urban and most peri-urban areas exhibit strong demographic vitality, several parts of the territory have demographic weaknesses and are, therefore, more likely to need supports and investments in order to grow their populations in a sustainable manner. The localities with the most notable demographic challenges, including West Offaly, the Ballinasloe MD and rural parts of North Tipperary, tend to have had the highest levels of dependence on peat-related activities. Thus, they are currently undergoing a multi-faceted set of economic, structural and demographic transitions.

There are considerable variations within the EU JTF Territory in respect of age profiles. Consequently, needs vary in terms of the types of services and investments that are required. There is evidence of an ageing population in several rural communities across the territory, particularly in West Offaly and the adjoining parts of Counties Galway, Roscommon and Tipperary, as well as in North and West Roscommon and parts of County Longford. An older age profile is generally associated with a need for investment in healthcare, local transport and social supports. In contrast, the younger age profiles, in the more urbanised parts of the territory, indicate a need for investments in educational and recreational facilities, housing, childcare and family supports. The territory's age profile also indicates an association between demographic vitality and commuting to the Greater Dublin Area (GDA)<sup>2</sup>, and as part of the transition to a post-carbon society, this points to a need for investment in public transport provision and digital connectivity. The demographic profile indicates that in the east of the territory, there is a need to support a more consolidated pattern of growth within the town centres through measures including active travel, reduction in use of the private car and promotion of the '15 minute town' concept in several locations. The demographic profile also indicates that there are several cross-cutting variables at play in County Longford; many communities – including in rural areas – exhibit an older age profile while also having a relatively high level of diversity. Such a profile underscores the importance of promoting integration and inter-culturalism.

The data on educational attainment reveal performance gaps between the EU JTF Territory and the State. Redressing these gaps – through, for instance, investing in education, training and up-skilling pathways – is essential in enabling the territory to be socially and economically competitive, so that it can harness new and emerging economic opportunities and be more entrepreneurial. The greatest needs, in spatial terms, are generally in the more rural parts of the territory.

The territory's economic profile and the narrower range of economic opportunities therein relative to the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly Area are associated with it having a lower proportion of persons in the three highest socio-economic groups (as defined by the CSO). The data underscore the importance of investing in lifelong and life-wide education, and training and the diversification of the economy, particularly in western and northern parts of the EU JTF Territory.

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<sup>2</sup> The Greater Dublin Area refers to combined areas of Dublin City, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal, Kildare, Meath, South Dublin and Wicklow.



Throughout the JTF Territory, agriculture remains an important element of the territory's economic and social fabric, and the primary sector is particularly significant in areas west of the Shannon and in County Tipperary. The EU Green Deal asserts that the adaptation of farming and land use practices has an important role to play in bringing about carbon neutrality.

Behavioural changes among households are also required as part of the post-carbon transition, as at present, households in the EU JTF Territory are far more likely than are households elsewhere to rely on peat and coal as their primary fuel source. Such changes are likely to require local-level interventions along with the expansion of national-level schemes to enable householders to reduce their carbon footprints. The areas of greatest need, in terms of transitioning to fuels other than peat and turf, are in rural areas and those most associated with peat extraction and coal mining.

The economic indicators, elaborated in Chapter 4, indicate that the EU JTF Territory has a relatively low level of workforce participation and a relatively high level of unemployment. The maps presented here indicate a positive correlation between workforce participation and connectivity to the Greater Dublin Area. This feature points to a need for investment in sustainable transport options for commuters, but more importantly it underscores the need for investment in, and support for, regional and local economic development. The data on household income, which indicate lower levels in the EU JTF Territory than in the Eastern and Midland Region, indicate a need for more high-quality jobs in the territory.

Business demography data reveal the significance of indigenous employment and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) across the region; Irish-owned firms with fewer than ten employees account for the vast majority of firms and they provide the bulk of jobs. North Kildare has a different employment profile to the rest of the EU JTF Territory, due to the presence of large multi-national firms.

Environmental Protection Agency spatial emission model data reveal that the region's inter-urban (main road and motorway) network is associated with elevated CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and lesser air purity. There is also an association between CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and the locations of the peat-fuelled and co-firing power plants in Lanesborough, Shannonbridge and Edenderry (2015 data). While the EU JTF Territory has particular environmental challenges, associated, inter alia, with its traditional reliance on the peat industry, it also has environmental resources and assets, many of which enjoy protection under EU legislation associated with the Natura 2000 framework. Among the main ecological assets are the Sliabh Bloom mountains, whose vegetation and boglands play an important role in carbon sequestration. While several bogs have been cut away, these lands can perform new ecological and biodiversity functions, and there are already some areas that function as both ecological and recreational spaces (e.g. Lough Boora Discovery Park). Thus, while human activity, particularly over the course of the twentieth century, disturbed and depleted much of the territory's ecological resource base, there are opportunities for recovery, re-purposing and renewal.

The totality of the data presented here in respect of demography, society, well-being, economy and ecology reveal that variables are inter-related. Thus, strategic interventions are most effective when they take into account the integrated nature of territorial development and the implications of any set of interventions on all sectors. This territorial profile has identified sectors and geographies with particular needs and potential, and stakeholders can use the evidence presented here to target and refine interventions in line with local needs and contexts. Working at local community and MD levels represents an appropriate strategic response in that regard. Moreover, the spatial analysis presented here reveals that demographic and socio-economic patterns universally transcend county boundaries, thus pointing to the importance of collaborations among municipal districts.

