

# National Social Monitor 2016

## RURAL DEVELOPMENT

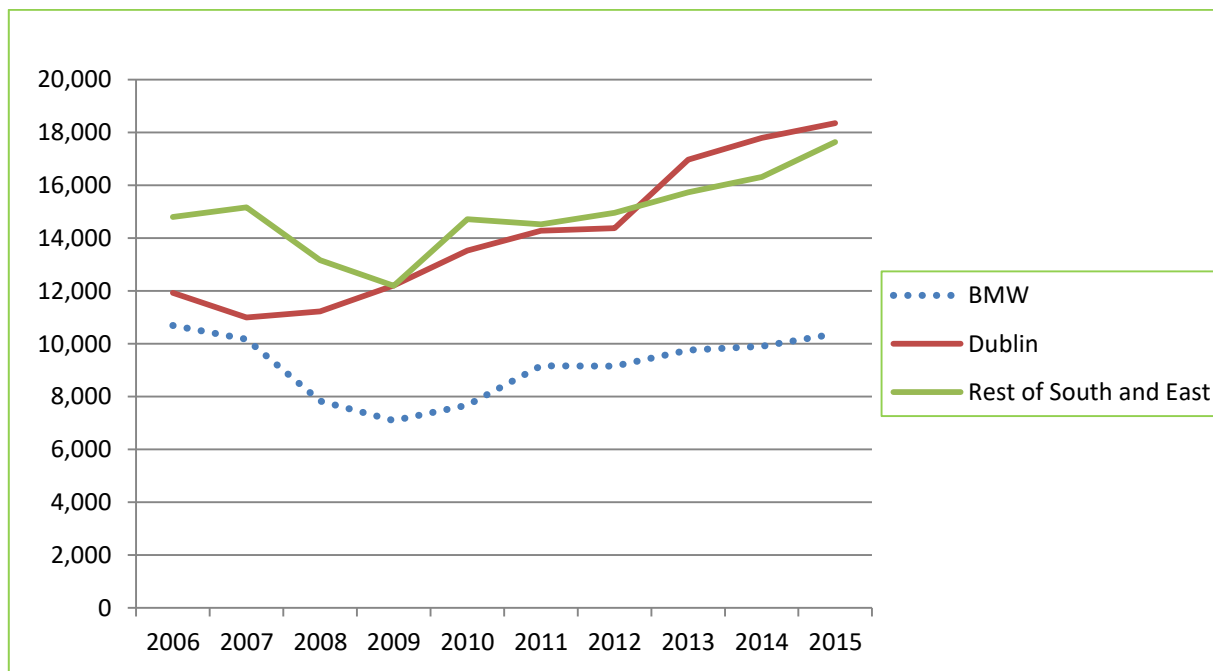


**Table 1: Agency Assisted\* Full-time Employment by region, 2006-2015**

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	% Change 06 - 15
<b>BMW</b>	<b>74,969</b>	<b>75,687</b>	<b>73,686</b>	<b>65,924</b>	<b>64,044</b>	<b>65,079</b>	<b>66,462</b>	<b>68,860</b>	<b>71,910</b>	<b>74,840</b>	<b>-0.2%</b>
Midlands	14,753	14,816	14,853	12,777	12,211	12,039	12,334	13,074	13,598	14,249	-3.4%
Border	31,706	32,100	30,800	27,085	25,763	25,878	26,423	27,016	28,382	29,607	-6.6%
West	28,510	28,771	28,033	26,062	26,070	27,162	27,705	28,770	29,930	30,984	7%
<b>Dublin</b>	<b>107,650</b>	<b>110,865</b>	<b>109,872</b>	<b>101,032</b>	<b>98,199</b>	<b>100,120</b>	<b>104,210</b>	<b>108,393</b>	<b>116,831</b>	<b>125,898</b>	<b>17.0%</b>
<b>Rest of South &amp; East</b>	<b>137,605</b>	<b>138,088</b>	<b>134,952</b>	<b>120,192</b>	<b>118,794</b>	<b>119,761</b>	<b>122,732</b>	<b>125,660</b>	<b>132,189</b>	<b>140,340</b>	<b>2.0%</b>
Mid East	30,912	30,154	28,715	25,798	26,104	25,786	26,389	27,269	28,779	30,128	-2.5%
Mid West	30,004	29,962	28,438	23,724	22,966	22,730	22,933	23,423	24,506	25,696	-14.4%
South East	30,932	32,250	31,591	28,270	27,646	26,705	26,717	26,676	27,767	28,889	-6.6%
South West	45,757	45,722	46,208	42,400	42,048	44,540	46,693	48,292	51,137	55,627	21.6%
<b>All Regions</b>	<b>320,224</b>	<b>324,640</b>	<b>318,510</b>	<b>287,148</b>	<b>281,037</b>	<b>284,960</b>	<b>293,404</b>	<b>302,913</b>	<b>320,930</b>	<b>341,078</b>	<b>6.5%</b>

Source: DJEI Annual Employment Survey 2015 \* Employment supported by IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and Údarás na Gaeltachta

**Chart 1: Agency Assisted\* Temporary, Part-time Employment by Region, 2006-2015**



Source: DJEI Annual Employment Survey 2015 \* Employment supported by IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and Údarás na Gaeltachta

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### Introduction

The economic recession and restructuring of agriculture and subsequent decline in off farm employment has led to a narrowing of the economic base in rural areas. The prevalence of low-paid, part-time and seasonal work is a continual trend in rural employment.

With the on-going challenges facing traditional rural sectors, including agriculture, the future success of the rural economy is inextricably linked with the capacity of rural entrepreneurs to innovate and to develop new business opportunities that create jobs and income in rural areas.

A feature of rural areas continues to be the out migration of young people to gain employment elsewhere in Ireland or overseas. There is a need to prioritise high quality jobs in the regions to prevent this outward flow.

### Broadband

The provision of quality broadband to rural areas must be a priority if rural development is to be facilitated in a meaningful manner. Lack of quality broadband in rural areas is a considerable barrier to the diversification and growth of the rural economy in Ireland. State intervention must be prioritised in order to prevent the two-tier digital divide that has developed between urban and rural areas growing any wider.

### Employment

Approximately 90 per cent of enterprises in the regions employ ten people or less and underemployment and flat career structures are particular features of rural areas that require attention. The lack of quality broadband is a significant barrier to job creation and economic development in the regions. The IDA made a welcome commitment to focus on employment generation outside Dublin in 2015. Details of agency assisted employment are set out in table

1 and chart 1. There has been a welcome increase in job creation in all regions, yet some areas still lag behind, particularly the Border, Midlands and West (BMW) region. The lack of an integrated transport network, services such as childcare and infrastructure such as quality broadband present a major barrier to developing and accessing agency assisted employment across the regions.

### Income

Rural areas consistently have higher poverty rates and lower median incomes than urban areas. There is significant variation within these figures and within each region. The BMW region has the highest poverty rates and the lowest median income in the State. However there is significant variation within the regions.

Supporting rural households to ensure that they have sufficient incomes will be crucial to the future of rural Ireland. This requires both social and economic supports, and broader skills and economic development strategies. About two-thirds of farm families require off-farm income to remain sustainable, and while recent gains in agriculture-based incomes have had an impact on the most commercial farms, solutions to the wider income problems require a broader approach, both for farm and non-farm rural families.

### Policy Priorities

- Frontload investment in rural broadband.
- Ensure finance and credit schemes for rural entrepreneurs, micro-enterprises and SMEs.
- Publish a long-term rural and regional economic and social development policy. This strategy should make up a part of a new national spatial strategy.