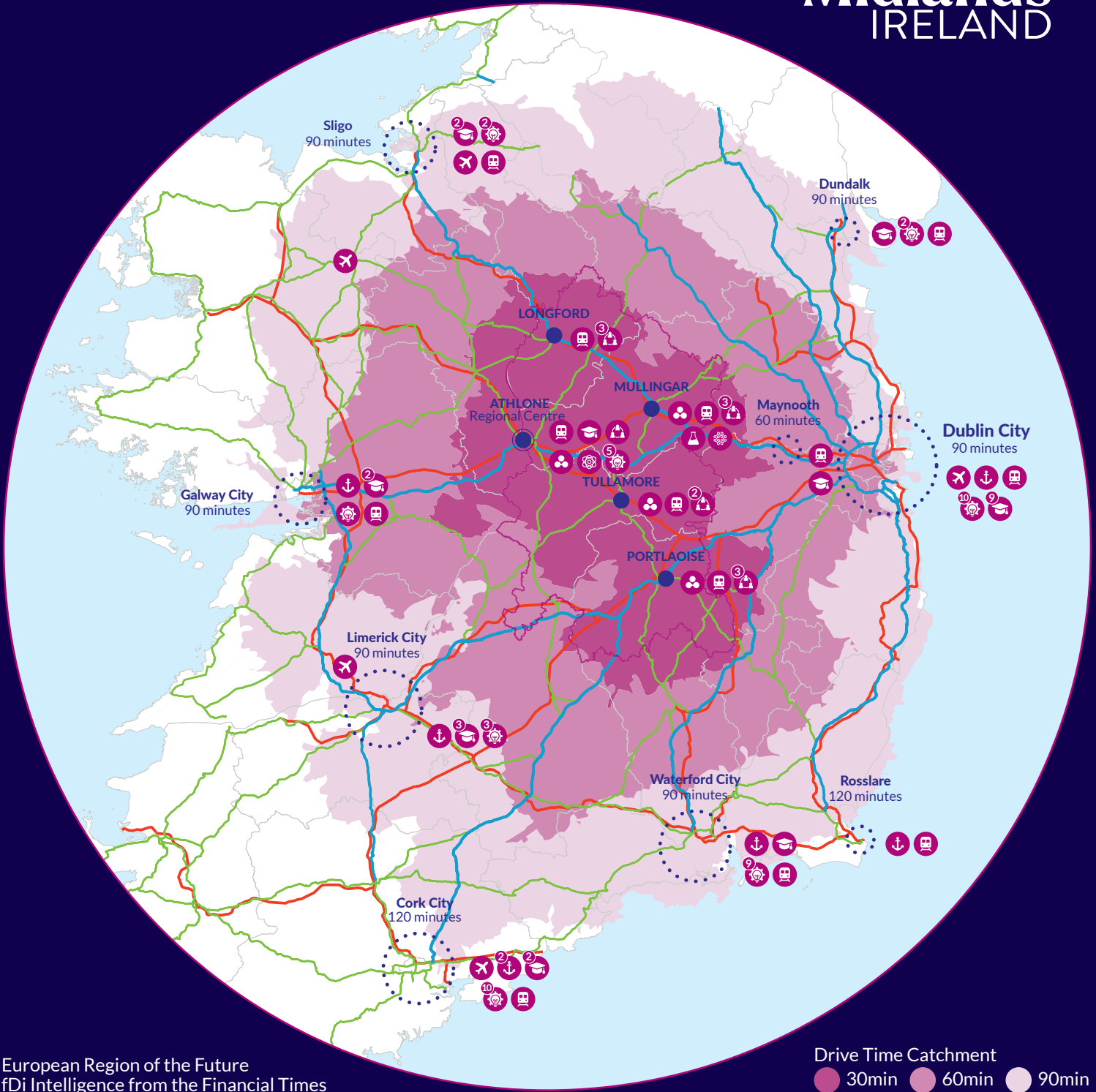


Midlands Region



European Region of the Future
fDi Intelligence from the Financial Times

Drive Time Catchment
● 30min ● 60min ● 90min

Who's within reach*	% Increase 30 mins (2016-2022)	Census 2022		
		30 mins	60 mins	90 mins
Population	+8.6%	467,064	2,316,658	4,055,174
Labour Force	+10.7%	222,677	1,160,118	2,010,295
Student	+11.2%	38,325	203,971	364,939
3rd Level or Postgraduate	+36.1%	81,721	490,744	908,331

Legend

- Athlone (Regional Centre)
- International Sea Port
- Key town
- 3rd Level Institutions
- Motorways
- Midlands Network Co-Working Hubs
- National Roads
- Irish Manufacturing Research
- Railroad
- Research & Innovation Centres
- Midlands Region
- IDA Business & Technology Park
- Railway Station
- National Science Park
- International Airport
- Enterprise Ireland Technology Gateway

* Based on Resident Population of underlying Census 2022 Electoral Division data and assessed travel-time catchments by car from 5 major settlements.

Midlands – Where Everything Connects

The Midlands Region of Ireland, recognised as a 'European Region of the Future' by the Financial Times' fDi Intelligence ranking, encompasses the counties of Laois, Offaly, Longford, and Westmeath, covering 6,500km² with a population of 324,600 people. Bordering five of the six other regions in the State, the Midlands is Ireland's best-connected region. As a gateway of connectivity, the region offers robust infrastructure on the M4, M6, M7, M8, and M9 motorways, as well as an extensive network of railway lines and regular bus services, providing excellent links to major urban areas throughout Ireland, including Dublin, Galway, Cork, and Limerick, as well as ports, airports and logistics hubs. The principal towns of Athlone, Longford, Mullingar, Tullamore, and Portlaoise serve as a driving force of economic activity and employment in the region and have grown and developed substantially in recent years.

An authentic, accessible and dynamic region, the Midlands has successfully nurtured a healthy balance between its urban and rural environment. The existing enterprise base, founded on access to a highly educated workforce, cutting edge clusters, and high value investment opportunity, continues to fuel a vibrant and innovative economy across numerous high potential industries. Importantly, this commercial strength is complemented by a regional offering that affords residents the scope to pursue fulfilling careers whilst also benefiting from lower living costs, strong community bonds and an unrivalled proximity to nature. The Midlands is the ideal location for businesses and families to thrive.

Midlands Region – Amenities

 National Science Park	 4 IDA Business & Technology Parks	 5 Research & Innovation Centres	 Enterprise Ireland Regional Office	 IDA Ireland Regional Office	 4 Local Enterprise Offices
 8 Community Enterprise Centres	 Technological University of the Shannon	 TUS Athlone Campus	 FET Colleges (each principal town)	 National Construction Training Centre	 Midlands Skills Centre
 2 Gbps Fibre Broadband Speeds	 Midlands Network of 26 Co-Working Facilities	 252 Primary Schools & 44 Secondary Schools	 3 Regional Hospitals	 Restaurants, Cafés & Bars	 Sports & Recreation Facilities
 Theatres & Galleries	 Center Parcs Longford Forest	 Slieve Bloom Mountain Bike Trail & Walking	 St. Mel's/Mullingar Cathedrals	 5 Greenways, Blueways & Cycle Trails spanning 473km	 Historic Houses, Castles & Gardens

Business Activity & Clustering

Key Clusters - Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering, ICT, Life Sciences, Food & Drink.

The Midlands has fostered the establishment and growth of multiple high-value and high-potential clusters in the fields of Engineering, Advanced Manufacturing, Life Sciences, ICT, and Food & Drink. These clusters include industry giants such as Novo Nordisk, Abbott, Ericsson, Medtronic, William Grant and Tirlán, whose presence and investment in the region are a testament to the high-quality attributes of the workforce, the multi-faceted attractiveness of the region, and access to the requisite infrastructure.

Furthermore, the presence of the Technical University of the Shannon (TUS) in the region serves to deliver a conveyor belt of talented human capital, complemented further by specialist training (National Construction Training Centre) and research (Irish Manufacturing Research) facilities across the Midlands. The Midlands region boasts numerous substantial employers such as Mergon, Midland Steel and Grant Engineering in the Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering space, Medtronic, Thermofisher Scientific and Steris in the Life Sciences sector, Ericsson, Global Logic and Zinkworks in the fast growing fields of Software and Cloud Based Business Solutions in the ICT sector, and indeed a host of established household names in the Food & Drink industry such as Pat the Baker, Tullamore DEW, Odlums and Glenisk.

Business Supports

The Midlands region thrives as a dynamic business environment, bolstered by comprehensive support from key agencies including Enterprise Ireland (EI), Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs), IDA Ireland, and numerous Chambers of Commerce. In 2023, businesses supported by Enterprise Ireland employed 25,000 individuals, while Local Enterprise Offices assisted 7,167 companies, significantly enhancing regional employment. Annual results from IDA Ireland confirm the Midlands as the strongest performing region in Ireland for job growth in 2023. The expansion of IDA Business Parks in Portlaoise and Athlone, along with Advanced Buildings in Mullingar and Athlone, highlight the region's commitment as a prime location for international business and investment.

The Midlands Regional Enterprise Office plays a pivotal role in driving cooperation by bringing together stakeholders from industry, academia, and government. This collaborative effort is evident through the establishment of industry-specific clusters such as Engenuity, atim Cluster and the Midlands ICT Cluster, which focus on key high-growth sectors including Advanced Manufacturing, ICT, Engineering, and Food & Drink. The region is also home to national-scale research centres like the Irish Manufacturing Research (IMR), FactoryXChange, PRISM, APT, COMAND, and First Polymer Skillnet. These centres are crucial for regional development, supporting advanced technological research and fostering innovation across various sectors.



INVEST – Discover a connected region to build your business

- **Youthful Population:** 44.2 % of people within 30 mins are under 35.
- **Labour Expansion:** 10.7 % increase in Labour Force within 30 mins from 2016 to 2022.
- **Educational Excellence:** 33.8% (25-64 yrs) within 30 mins hold a Degree or Postgraduate Degree.
- **Qualification Strength:** 59.6% (25-64 yrs) within 30 mins hold a Postsecondary qualification.
- **R&D Clusters:** Notable in Life Sciences, ICT/Tech, Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering, Robotics, Low Carbon/Green Enterprise.
- **Ports:** Access to Ports in Dublin, Drogheda, Dundalk, Rosslare, Waterford, Galway, Limerick, Cork & Sligo.

STUDY – Discover your future, wherever you want to go

- **Graduate Growth:** 11.2 % increase in student population within 30 mins from 2016 to 2022.
- **University Access:** Under 60 minutes access to Universities and Institutes in Dublin, Galway, Sligo and Limerick.
- **Education Synergy:** Comprehensive regional network of educational institutes, from TUS Athlone's state-of-the-art research facilities to Tullamore's industry-focused training centres.
- **Specialised Studies:** Elevating regional expertise in sectors like manufacturing and technology in Longford and Mullingar. In Portlaoise, educational partnerships with SETU further broaden regional opportunities.

LIVE – Discover a new pace & more space

- **Healthy Living:** 88% of residents within 30 mins are in 'good or very good health'.
- **Green Commutes:** 10.1% increase in walking and cycling from 2016 to 2022.
- **Schools:** 252 Primary Schools and 44 Secondary Schools
- **Activity Options:** Over 160 recreation and sports facilities (including gyms, swimming, golf clubs) within 30 mins.
- **Retail Range:** Over 1300 retail options within 30 mins for every product and service.
- **Family First:** Over 110 childcare facilities within 30 mins.
- **Motorway Gateway:** Travel to Dublin and Dublin Airport via the N4/M4 & Galway City via the N63, connecting to the M6 motorway.
- **On the Move:** 5 major railroad routes with major interchanges at urban hubs in Athlone, Mullingar and Portarlington. Bus stations interlinking urban centres in Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick and Sligo.

VISIT – Discover open spaces & thrilling activities

- **Explore:** Lough Ree & the Shannon Blueway, Grand Canal Greenway, Galway to Dublin Greenway, Old Rail Trail, Corlea Bog Trackway, Slieve Bloom Mountains, Arts Centres, Cathedrals, Clonmacnoise, Birr Castle Demesne, Athlone Castle, Belvedere House and Gardens, Emo Court, Tullamore Dew Distillery and Centre Parcs.
- **Stay in Style:** 40 hotels within 30 mins offer a warm welcome.
- **Explore More:** Over 150 Fáilte Ireland attractions within 30 mins invite you to discover walks, wildlife and tours.
- **Taste the Region:** Savour the local flavour with Fáilte Ireland recognised food and drink destinations tempting every palate.

WORK – Discover opportunities to grow & develop

- **Speed Unleashed:** Blazing 2 Gbps connectivity for all business, commercial and residential.
- **Hub Network:** A thriving ecosystem of 26 co-working spaces within 30 mins.
- **Commute Efficiency :** 66% of people enjoy a sub-30-minute commutes.
- **Remote Rise:** 91% increase in remote working from 2016 to 2022.

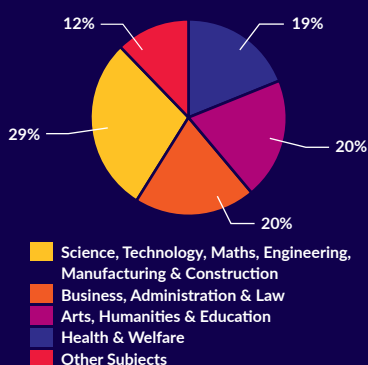
Green Economy Leadership

The Midlands Region is at the forefront of Ireland’s transition towards a sustainable future, building on its long history in power generation. At the heart of this transformation is the restoration of the peatlands, vital for carbon sequestration and biodiversity enhancement. The region’s shift to sustainable practices is underscored by substantial investments in low carbon technologies such as wind, solar, hydrogen, biogas, power storage, and improved grid connections. These collective efforts highlight the Midlands’ dedication to renewable energy and its commitment to sustainability.

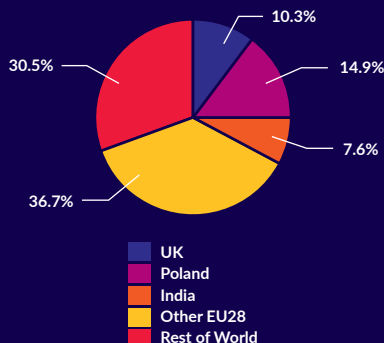
The investments in renewable energy are creating opportunities across the region for co-location in green energy park developments. These developments harness green energy to power sectors such as manufacturing, technology, data centres, and life sciences. As the region champions major renewable projects and innovations, it is establishing itself as a leader in the green economy. This leadership is supported by initiatives such as The Cube Low Carbon Centre of Excellence and Bord na Móna’s Accelerate Green programme.

The green credentials of the region are further supported by continuing investments in active travel, with hundreds of kilometres of Greenways traversing the region, and key towns significantly improving walking and cycling infrastructure, with Athlone also being home to Ireland’s first fully electric urban bus service.

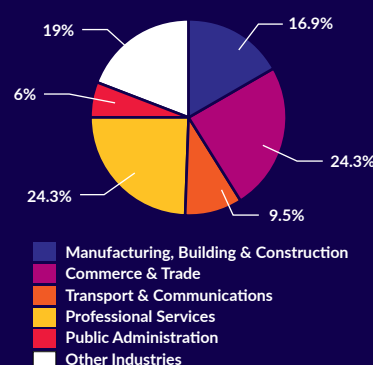
Graduate Fields (HEA) 2022/23



Resident Population by Citizenship (Excluding Ireland)



Industry of Employment



Education, Training & Skills

The main education, training and skills offerings in the Midlands include Technological University of the Shannon TUS Athlone Campus; two Education and Training Boards covering Laois Offaly and Longford Westmeath, each with Further Education and Training Colleges in each principal town, as well as centres of regional and national significance including the National Construction Training Centre, the Midlands Skills Centre, Ferbane Food Campus and the recently announced National Centre of Excellence in Electric Vehicle Repair and Maintenance. Central to aligning these educational resources with regional and national economic demands is the Midlands Regional Skills Forum. This body plays a pivotal role in ensuring that the training and skills provided reflect the current and future needs of enterprises across various sectors, fostering a collaborative approach among all regional stakeholders to adapt and thrive in an evolving marketplace.

Education in the Midlands is actively aligning with future career paths, fostering a partnership between businesses, educational institutions, and local governments. Initiatives include introducing Computer Science as a Leaving Cert subject in all Longford secondary schools, with support from

the Council, Microsoft, and Ericsson to upskill teachers and equip classrooms with modern ICT tools like Micro:bit and Microsoft Dreamspace Academy.

STEAM education is also a priority, emphasising early integration across schools. At 3rd level, Technological University of the Shannon (TUS) has significantly enhanced the region’s educational and economic capacity. It offers over 200 industry-focused courses and hosts three research centres and two technology gateways, covering disciplines from software engineering to advanced manufacturing. These centres actively collaborate with local businesses, boosting regional economic connectivity and innovation.

Further Education and Training Colleges provide diverse upskilling opportunities through the Education and Training Boards (ETBs) in each principal town. Key facilities like the National Construction Training Centre and the upcoming National Centre for Electric Vehicle Repair highlight the region’s commitment to advanced training in key growth sectors. The Midlands is committed and has the capacity to develop both individuals and industries. The Midlands means business.