



Representing the best in electrical engineering and building services



Mr Kevin Foley
Chairman
The Labour Court
Lansdowne House
Lansdowne Road
Dublin 4



7 May 2024

Re : **Section 14 of the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2015**
Joint application by the Electrical Contractors Association (ECA) and the Association of Electrical Contractors of Ireland (AECl) for a request to examine the terms and conditions of employment for electricians, electrical apprentices, chargehands and foremen in the electrical contracting sector

Dear Mr Foley

Please find attached application forms from the ECA and AECl for a request to examine the terms and conditions of employment for electricians, electrical apprentices, chargehands and foremen in the electrical contracting sector. ECA is a constituent Association of the Construction Industry Federation.

Also attached are two Statutory Declaration Forms in accordance with the Statutory Declarations Act 1938, together with an independent report supporting number (6) on the Statutory Declaration forms.

This application is being made jointly by ECA and AECl as the employer representative bodies on the Electrical National Joint Industrial Council (ENJIC). Connect Trade Union, who represent electrical workers on the ENJIC, is also part of this joint application. Connect Trade Union has completed a separate application form and Statutory Declaration.

ECA and AECl are making this application on behalf of our respective members. A further submission will be made in accordance with the legislation at a later date. However, if you require any further information, please feel free to contact the undersigned.

Yours sincerely

Jean Winters
Director
CIF / ECA

Chris Lundy
Executive Secretary
AECl



THE LABOUR COURT

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS (AMENDMENT) ACT 2015

APPLICATION FOR A REQUEST TO EXAMINE THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT IN A SECTOR

Name of applicant:	ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION (ECA)
Address:	CONSTRUCTION HOUSE, CANAL RD, DUBLIN 6
Contact Number:	01-4066000
Email Address:	jwinters@cif.ie
Sector:	ELECTRICAL CONTRACTING (APPENDIX 1)
Class, type or group of workers to which the request relates:	ELECTRICIANS AND ELECTRICAL APPRENTICES (APPENDIX 2)
Please enter details of the arrangements (if any) by which terms and conditions relating to remuneration and any sick pay scheme or pension scheme, of the workers in the sector to which the request relates are determined:	RATES OF PAY, PENSIONS, SICK PAY AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT ARE DETERMINED AT THE ELECTRICAL NATIONAL JOINT INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL (ENSIC)
Where the applicant is a trade union of workers, please enter the name and address of any other trade union of workers that is representative of workers in the sector to which the request relates:	
Where the applicant is a trade union of workers, please enter the name and address of any trade union of employers or organisation of employers that is representative of employers in the sector to which the request relates:-	

APPENDIX 1

DEFINITION OF THE ELECTRICAL CONTRACTING SECTOR

Sector Definition:

The application for a request to the Labour Court to examine the terms and conditions of employment in a sector relates to all electricians and electrical apprentices, and their employers and all electrical contractors engaged in the industry.

An electrical contractor is defined as the proprietor of a business whose main activity is the performance of electrical work on a contract or sub-contract basis for any third party.

The work carried out within the electrical contracting industry is defined as:

“The installation, repair, commissioning or maintenance of electrical and electronic equipment, including the marking off and preparing for the wiring (whether temporary or permanent) of all electrical and/or electronic appliances and apparatus, fitting and erecting all controllers, switches, junction section distribution and other fuseboards, and all electrical communications, bells, telephone, radio, telegraph, x-ray, computer and data cabling, instrumentation, fibre optics, and kindred installations; fitting and fixing of metallic and other conduits, perforated cable tray and casing for protection of cables, cutting away of walls, floors and ceilings, etc, for same, erection, care and maintenance of all electrical plant, including generators, motors, oil burners, cranes, lifts, fans, refrigerators and hoists, adjustments of all controls, rheostats, coils and all electrical contacts and connections, wiring of chassis for all vehicles, erection of batteries and switchboards, erection of crossarms, insulators, overhead cables (LT and HT), fitting of staywires, brackets, lightning arrestors, etc, and underground mains having regard to any advances in technology and equipment used within the industry”.

This application for an SEO will not apply to:

- State employees and semi-state employees who are engaged in similar activities and are covered by other agreements.
- Electricians and apprentices who are employed directly by manufacturing companies for the maintenance of those companies' plants only.

APPENDIX 2

DEFINITION OF CLASS, TYPE OR GROUP OF WORKES TO WHICH THE REQUEST RELATES

The work in the electrical contracting sector is carried out by highly skilled Electricians and Apprentices who are trained to standards which are governed by the minimum educational qualifications associated with the Statutory Apprenticeship system.

1. Electricians

An electrician must have successfully completed the Statutory apprenticeship and, therefore, hold a National Craft Certificate (or equivalent).

These qualifications may be required in order for an employer to establish his/her status as an "Electrical Contractor".

Qualified electricians who are employed as chargehands and foremen should also come within the scope of the Order. For the avoidance of doubt, a chargehand is an electrician who is in charge of two but not more than six electricians, and a foreman is an electrician on site who is in charge of more than six electricians.

2. Apprentice Electricians

The apprentice must be registered with Solas within two weeks of commencing employment as an apprentice and must complete 7 phases of training (on the job and academic studies combined) over a minimum period of 4 years in training. Upon successful completion of the apprenticeship training the individual will receive the national Craft Certificate or equivalent.

**STATUTORY DECLARATION
IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE STATUTORY DECLARATIONS ACT 1938**

1. I, Jean Winters, do solemnly and sincerely declare that I make this Statutory Declaration in relation to a request to the Labour Court to examine the terms and conditions relating to the remuneration, sick pay and pensions of workers in the electrical contracting sector, made pursuant to Section 14(1) of the Industrial Relations Act, 2015 by the Electrical Contractors Association.
2. I am authorized by the Electrical Contractors Association to make this Statutory Declaration on their behalf.
3. I am Director of Industrial Relations and Employment Services with the Construction Industry Federation. The Electrical Contractors Association is a constituent Association of the Construction Industry Federation.
4. The address of the Electrical Contractors Association is Construction House, Canal Road, Dublin 6.
5. The number of Electricians and Electrical Apprentices who are employed by members of the Electrical Contractors Association is 4,500.
6. The number of Electricians and Electrical Apprentices to which the request relates who are normally employed in the electrical contracting sector is 12,883.
7. My knowledge as to the number of Electricians and Electrical Apprentices referred to at (5) above derives from a survey of members of the Electrical Contractors Association.
8. My knowledge as to the number of Electricians and Electrical Apprentices referred to at (6) above derives from independent research conducted by Ernst & Young, Building Advisory Services, Harcourt Centre, Harcourt Street, Dublin.

I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and by virtue of the Statutory Declarations Act 1938.

DECLARED by the said **JEAN WINTERS**

on this the 10th day of May 2024
at 8 Cleave St
in the County of Dublin

Before me a Practising Solicitor and

(a) the Declarant is personally known to me or;

(b) the Declarant has been identified to me by *ROE*
who is personally

known to me or;

Jean Winters

(c) the identity of the Declarant has been established by reference to a relevant document containing a photograph

Document Type: Passport

Issue/Reference No: PV 786 0847

Ruth O'Connor
Solicitor
O'Connor LLP
8 Clare Street
Dublin D02 E021



**COMMISSIONER FOR OATHS/
PRACTISING SOLICITOR**

I,

certify that I know the Declarant



THE LABOUR COURT

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS (AMENDMENT) ACT 2015

APPLICATION FOR A REQUEST TO EXAMINE THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT IN A SECTOR

Name of applicant:	ASSOCIATION OF ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS	Ireland
Address:	WOODVIEW CENTRE, MAIN ST., CELBRIDGE, CO. KILDARE	
Contact Number:	01-6102715	
Email Address:	INFO@AECCI.IE	
Sector:	ELECTRICAL CONTRACTING SECTOR	(SEE APP. 1)
Class, type or group of workers to which the request relates:	WORKER EMPLOYED AS ELECTRICIANS OR APPRENTICES WORKING IN THE SECTOR. (SEE APP. 2)	
Please enter details of the arrangements (if any) by which terms and conditions relating to remuneration and any sick pay scheme or pension scheme, of the workers in the sector to which the request relates are determined:	MEETINGS UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE NATIONAL JOINT INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL AT THE WORKPLACE RELATIONS COMMISSION. - ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION - CONNECT TRADE UNION.	
Where the applicant is a trade union of workers, please enter the name and address of any other trade union of workers that is representative of workers in the sector to which the request relates:	Not Applicable.	
Where the applicant is a trade union of workers, please enter the name and address of any trade union of employers or organisation of employers that is representative of employers in the sector to which the request relates:-	- ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION CONSTRUCTION HOUSE, CANAL ROAD, D. 8. - CONNECT TRADE UNION 6, GARDINER ROW, D. 1.	

Where the applicant is a trade union of employers or an organisation of employers, please enter the name and address of any other trade union of workers that is representative of workers in the sector to which the request relates:-

CONNECT TRADE UNION
6, GARDINER ROW
DUBLIN 1.

Signature of Applicant: Chris Runcy Date: 22 APRIL 2024

Note: Please see overleaf important notes for completion of the form.

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The work carried out within the electrical contracting industry is defined as:

“The installation, repair, commissioning or maintenance of electrical and electronic equipment, including the marking off and preparing for the wiring (whether temporary or permanent) of all electrical and/or electronic appliances and apparatus, fitting and erecting all controllers, switches, junction section distribution and other fuseboards, and all electrical communications, bells, telephone, radio, telegraph, x-ray, computer and data cabling, instrumentation, fibre optics, and kindred installations; fitting and fixing of metallic and other conduits, perforated cable tray and casing for protection of cables, cutting away of walls, floors and ceilings, etc, for same, erection, care and maintenance of all electrical plant, including generators, motors, oil burners, cranes, lifts, fans, refrigerators and hoists, adjustments of all controls, rheostats, coils and all electrical contacts and connections, wiring of chassis for all vehicles, erection of batteries and switchboards, erection of crossarms, insulators, overhead cables (LT and HT), fitting of staywires, brackets, lightning arrestors, etc, and underground mains having regard to any advances in technology and equipment used within the industry”.

This application for an SEO will not apply to:

- State employees and semi-state employees who are engaged in similar activities and are covered by other agreements.
- Electricians and apprentices who are employed directly by manufacturing companies for the maintenance of those companies' plants only.

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1. Electricians

An electrician must have successfully completed the Statutory apprenticeship and, therefore, hold a National Craft Certificate (or equivalent).

These qualifications may be required in order for an employer to establish his/her status as an "Electrical Contractor".

Qualified electricians who are employed as chargehands and foremen should also come within the scope of the Order. For the avoidance of doubt, a chargehand is an electrician who is in charge of two but not more than six electricians, and a foreman is an electrician on site who is in charge of more than six electricians.

2. Apprentice Electricians

The apprentice must be registered with Solas within two weeks of commencing employment as an apprentice and must complete 7 phases of training (on the job and academic studies combined) over a minimum period of 4 years in training. Upon successful completion of the apprenticeship training the individual will receive the national Craft Certificate or equivalent.

**STATUTORY DECLARATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE STATUTORY DECLARATIONS ACT
1938**

1. I, Chris Lundy, do solemnly and sincerely declare that I make this Statutory Declaration in relation to a request to the Labour Court to examine the terms and conditions relating to the remuneration, sick pay and pensions of workers in the electrical contracting sector, made pursuant to Section 14(1) of the Industrial Relations Act, 2015 by the Electrical Contractors Association.
2. I am authorized by the Association of Electrical Contractors Ireland to make this Statutory Declaration on their behalf.
3. I am the Executive Secretary of AECl (Association of Electrical Contractors Ireland).
4. HQ : Woodview Centre, Main Street Celbridge, County Kildare.
5. The number of Electricians and Electrical Apprentices who are employed by members of the Association of Electrical Contractors Ireland is 2,648.
6. The number of Electricians and Electrical Apprentices to which the request relates who are normally employed in the electrical contracting sector is 12,883.
7. My knowledge as to the number of Electricians and Electrical Apprentices referred to at (5) above derives from a survey of members of the Association of Electrical Contractors Ireland.
8. My knowledge as to the number of Electricians and Electrical Apprentices referred to at (6) above derives from independent research conducted by Ernst & Young, Building Advisory Services, Harcourt Centre, Harcourt Street, Dublin.

I make this solemn declaration in accordance with the Statutory Declarations Act 1938.

Signed: Chris Lundy
Chris Lundy

Date: 21-4-2024

Chris Lundy
Christopher Lundy

DECLARED before me by the said Christopher Lundy at Main Street, Leixlip, Co. Kildare on this the 8th day of May 2024 and I know the declarant

Sheila Feeney
COMMISSIONER FOR OATHS/
PRACTISING SOLICITOR

SHEILA FEENEY
SOLICITOR
6 THE MALL
LEIXLIP
CO. KILDARE

Electrical Contracting Sector Employment assessment

4 April 2024

Final Report

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1. Introduction

The Association of Electrical Contractors of Ireland (AECI), the Electrical Contractors Association (ECA), and Connect Trade Union wish to apply for a Sectoral Employment Order (SEO) for electricians, apprentices, electrical chargehands and electrical foremen working in the electrical contracting sector. The ECA is a constituent Association of the Construction Industry Federation. In accordance with the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2015 the applicants for an SEO are required to demonstrate that they are “substantially representative” in the sector to which the Order is to apply.

Accordingly, the AECI, ECA and the Connect Trade Union, wish to make a joint application for a SEO and have asked EY to prepare a report which sets out the following:

1. A definition of the electrical contracting sector
2. The number of electricians employed in the sector, based on publicly available data sources
3. The number of electricians (and apprentices) who are members of the above two employer groups and the Connect Trade Union
4. Separate estimates for the number of electricians employed in the State, semi-state (including local authorities) and manufacturing sectors, which are to be excluded from the figures derived under (2) above.

1.1 Electrical Contracting Sector in Ireland

The electrical contracting sector installs various electrical systems in buildings and civil structures, including lighting, alarms, and wiring for power and communication. As was the case with many industries, Covid-19 had a significant impact on the sector, especially due to its work in the construction industry. The Covid-19 pandemic led to increased costs and reduced profitability for the sector due to supply chain problems and lockdown measures. However, a high demand for these services due to a boost in residential and non-residential construction, post Covid, has seen a strong demand for electricians across the board.

2. Background

2.1 Sectoral Employment Order

A Registered Employment Agreement (REA) was previously in place for employees of Electrical Contractors until Part 3 of the Industrial Relations Act, 1946 was found to be unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in May 2013. The ECA, AECl and the Connect Trade Union now wish to apply to the Labour Court for a Sectoral Employment Order (SEO), which will apply to all electricians and electrical apprentices who are engaged in the general electrical contracting industry.

SEOs are Sectoral Employment Orders made by Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment on the recommendation of the Labour Court and may set out minimum pay rates as well as pension and sick pay schemes for an economic sector, and are approved by resolution of both Houses of the Oireachtas. SEOs set out the minimum rates of remuneration and the minimum pension and sick pay entitlements of workers of a particular class, type or group within a specified economic sector.

In order to show that the applicants for an SEO are substantially representative of the workers and employers in the electrical contracting sector, it is necessary to establish the number of workers employed by members of the AECl and ECA in the class, type or group to which the SEO is to apply, and the number of members of the Connect Trade Union in the class, type or group to which the SEO is to apply.

The economic sector which is the subject of the application is the electrical contracting sector. This sector can be defined as:

'the installation, repair, commissioning or maintenance of electrical and electronic equipment, including the marking off and preparing for the wiring (whether temporary or permanent) of all electrical and/or electronic appliances and apparatus, fitting and erecting all controllers, switches, junction section distribution and other fuseboards, and all electrical communications, bells, telephone, radio, telegraph, x-ray, computer and data cabling, instrumentation, fibre optics, and kindred installations; fitting and fixing of metallic and other conduits, perforated cable tray and casing for protection of cables, cutting away of walls, floors and ceilings etc., for same; erection, care and maintenance of all electrical plant, including generators, motors, oil burners, cranes, lifts, fans, refrigerators and hoists; adjustments of all controls, rheostats, coils and all electrical contacts and connections; wiring of chassis for all vehicles; erection of batteries and switchboards; erection of crossarms, insulators, overhead cables (LT and HT); fitting of staywires, brackets, lighting arrestors etc. and underground mains having regard to any advances in technology and equipment used within the industry.'

The SEO will apply to:

- ✓ Electricians
- ✓ Electrical Foreman
- ✓ Chargehands, and
- ✓ Apprentices

The SEO will not apply to

- Employees in state and semi-state companies who are engaged in similar activities and are covered by other agreements (e.g., ESB)
- Electricians and apprentices employed directly by manufacturing companies for the maintenance of those companies' plants only.

In recognition of these exclusions, it is therefore necessary to ascertain the size of the sector to which the SEO will apply. This is addressed in the next Section.

2.1.1 Definition of a Worker

In the 1990 Industrial Relations Amendment Act, "worker" has the following meaning:

"any person aged 15 years or more who has entered into or works under a contract with an employer, whether the contract be for manual labour, clerical work or otherwise, whether it be expressed or implied, oral or in writing, and whether it be a contract of service or of apprenticeship or a contract personally to execute any work or labour".

For the purpose of this definition apprentice and apprenticeship has the same meaning as it has in the Industrial Training Act 1967.

2.1.2 Scope

It is intended that the SEO applies to the following categories of worker who are directly employed or employed through an employment agency within the meaning of the Employment Agency Act 1971 and/or the Protection of Employees (Temporary Agency Work) Act 2012 in the electrical contracting sector:

- Workers employed as qualified electricians and registered apprentice electricians working in the sector.

Qualified electricians who are employed as chargehands and foremen should also come within the scope of the Order. For the avoidance of doubt, a chargehand is an electrician who is in charge of two but not more than six electricians and a foreman is an electrician on site who is in charge of more than six electricians.

3. Size of the electrical contracting sector

We ascertain the numbers of electricians, electrical apprentices, electrical chargehands and foremen employed by electrical contractors to establish the representative nature of the ECA, the AECl, and Connect Trade Union. To do this it is necessary to first establish the overall size of the electrical contracting sector. Specifically, there is no published data which accurately measures employment in the sector. As such, a number of sources (presented below) have been consulted to ascertain reasonable estimates. Some published figures provide data on the whole industry, including many workers which would not be covered by the SEO but are presented in any case to provide additional transparency to the estimate.

3.1 Census of Population

The Census of Population provides data on the occupational breakdown of the Irish labour force. The occupations of relevance are the following:

- Electrical and electronics technicians
- Electricians and electrical fitters
- Electrical and electronic trades (not elsewhere classified)

The above occupations are assumed to represent the number of persons working as electricians across the whole economy. The total workforce in the above three occupations was 30,321 in the 2022 Census. Of this total, 29,256 were in work, implying that 1,065 were unemployed. A further breakdown shows that there were 24,344 employees and 4,912 self-employed, of which 2,738 (56%) had no employees.

It is noteworthy that the total labour force of electricians rose sharply over the six years by 6,584 or by 27.7%. Unemployment amongst electricians also fell sharply over the same period by nearly 50%. When looking at construction specifically, the number of electricians rose by over 30% or 3,048.

When looking at the number of self-employed, the number with paid employees (2,174) increased by 31% over the six years, while the number without paid employees (2,738) declined by 19% over the same period.

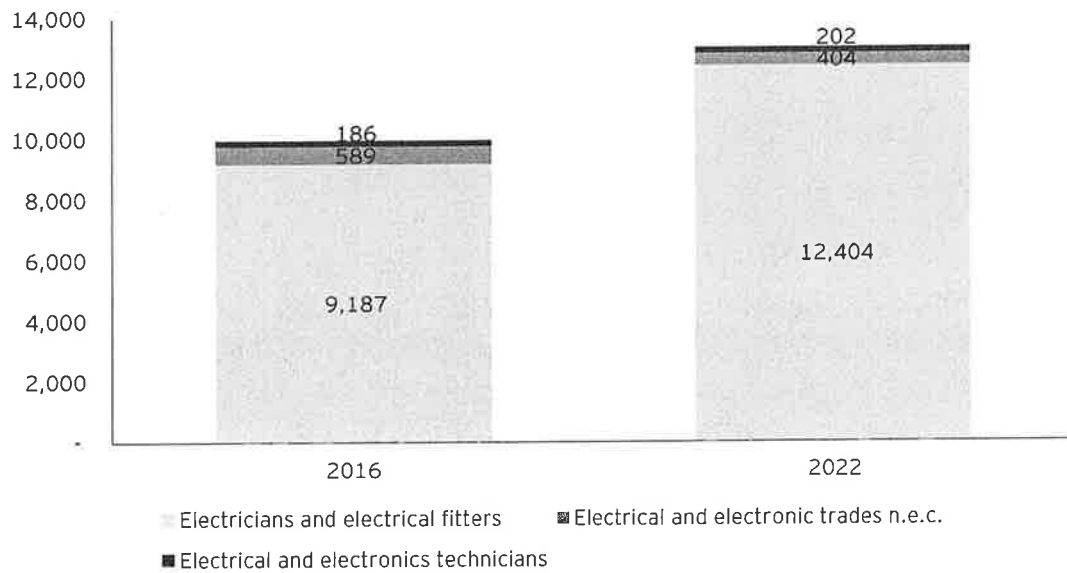
Table 1: Total Workforce and Employment by Occupation across Whole Economy

	2016	2022	% change	2016-2022 Change
Total Occupations in Labour Force	2,304,037	2,531,099	9.9	227,062
<i>of which</i>				
Electrical and electronics technicians	2,334	3,141		
Electricians and electrical fitters	17,295	23,187		
Electrical and electronic trades n.e.c.	4,108	3,993		
Sub-total	23,737	30,321	27.7	6,584
Total Occupations at Work	2,006,641	2,320,297	15.6	313,656
<i>of which</i>				
Electrical and electronics technicians	2,150	3,051		
Electricians and electrical fitters	15,560	22,327		
Electrical and electronic trades n.e.c.	3,920	3,878		
Sub-total	21,630	29,256	35.3	7,626
Total Occupations in Construction	101,849	134,482	32.0	32,633
<i>of which</i>				
Electrical and electronics technicians	186	202		
Electricians and electrical fitters	9,187	12,404		
Electrical and electronic trades n.e.c.	589	404		
Sub-total	9,962	13,010	30.6	3,048
Total Unemployed by Occupation	297,396	210,802	-29.1	-86,594
<i>of which</i>				
Electrical and electronics technicians	184	90		
Electricians and electrical fitters	1,735	860		
Electrical and electronic trades n.e.c.	188	115		
Sub-total	2,107	1,065	-49.5	-1,042
Total Occupations at Work - employee	1,688,549	2,008,774	19.0	320,225
<i>of which</i>				
Electrical and electronics technicians	1,977	2,902		
Electricians and electrical fitters	11,375	18,202		
Electrical and electronic trades n.e.c.	3,212	3,230		
Sub-total	16,564	24,334	46.9	7,770
Total Occupations at Work - self-employed, without paid employees	200,000	190,326	-4.8	-9,674
<i>of which</i>				
Electrical and electronics technicians	125	105		
Electricians and electrical fitters	2,763	2,227		
Electrical and electronic trades n.e.c.	503	406		
Sub-total	3,391	2,738	-19.3	- 653
Total Occupations at Work - self-employed, with paid employees	113,404	118,349	4.4	4,945
<i>of which</i>				
Electrical and electronics technicians	48	44		
Electricians and electrical fitters	1,409	1,889		
Electrical and electronic trades n.e.c.	205	241		
Sub-total	1,662	2,174	30.8	512

Source 2016 and 2022 Censuses of Population, CSO. n.e.c. = not elsewhere classified

The CSO provides more detailed information for the population at work by broad industrial group for the same occupations set out above. Thus, the total number of persons at work in the above three occupations in the Construction sector is available. Of the 29,256 electricians employed across the whole economy in 2022, 13,010 or 44% were working in the Construction sector. This is up from 9,962 or by 30.6% since 2016.

Figure 1: Population of Electricians at Work in 2016 and 2022



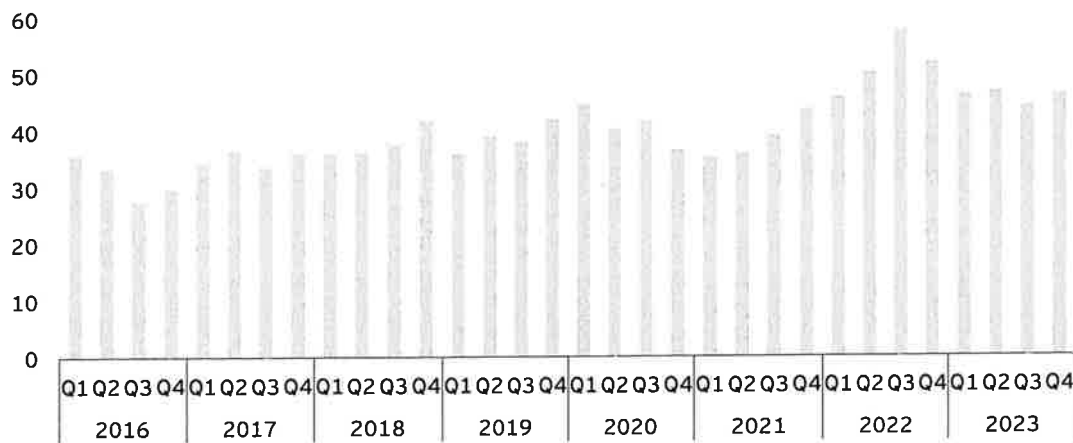
Source: 2016 and 2022 Censuses of Population.

There is a separate classification available from the Census which provides labour force data by detailed industrial group. One such group is Electrical Installations, which had a workforce of 17,399 in 2022, up by 31.4% on the corresponding 2016 Census figure. It is important to note that these persons would not just work in Construction.

3.2 Labour Force Survey

More up to date data is available from the CSO's Labour Force Survey (LFS) which is published on a quarterly basis. It provides a breakdown by occupational groups in the labour force. The occupation group of interest is "Electrical and Electronic Trades". The data below captures the total employed in this occupation group in the economy as a whole.

Figure 2: Numbers in Occupational Group - Electrical and Electronic Trades - in Economy (000's)

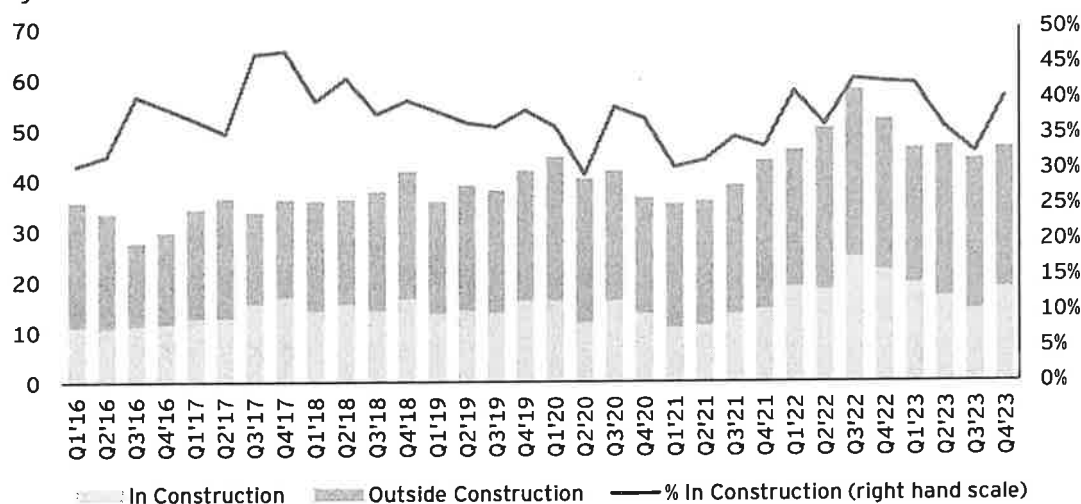


Source: CSO

The 2022 Census figure of 29,256 Electricians working in the whole economy compares with the corresponding LFS figure for Q2 2022 (to account for the Census taking place in April 2022) of 50,100 for Electrical and Electronic Trade workers, suggests there were an additional 20,844 Electronic Trade workers classified in Q2 2022 using the LFS definition. This is a substantial difference between the Census figure and the LFS figure for the number of Electronic Trade workers in the whole economy, which has proved difficult to explain, following consultations with a number of sources.

As with the Census data, the CSO data separately provides the numbers employed in Construction. The number of Electrical and Electronic Trade workers in the Construction sector had been steadily growing since Q1 2016 before dropping during Covid and slowly increasing again (Figure 3). According to the Labour Force Survey, the number of Electrical and Electronic Trade workers in the Construction sector peaked in Q3 2022 at 24,700, which corresponded to 42.8% of the total employed in that occupational group across the economy as a whole (57,700). Of note is the consistent decline since Q3 2022 in the number of Electrical and Electronic Trade workers in the Construction sector to 14,300 in Q3 2023, albeit the number recovered in Q4 2023 to 18,600, or 40% of the total employed in that occupational group across the economy as a whole.

Figure 3: Electrical and Electronic Trade Workers in Construction (000s)

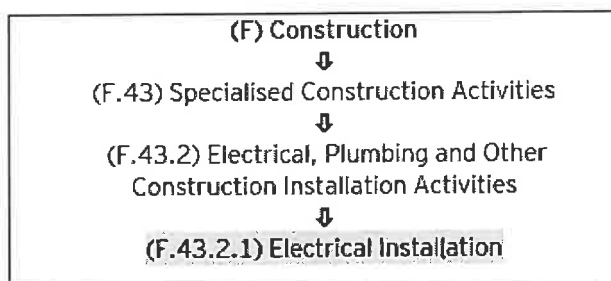


Source: CSO

3.3 Building and Construction Inquiry

The Building and Construction Inquiry (BCI) is a third CSO data source which captures persons employed according to a classification of enterprises. The survey captures a range of data about enterprises in the construction sector with 10 or more persons engaged, whilst also covering a sample of private firms with less than 10 persons engaged.

The data is published according to NACE Rev 2 Codes. NACE is a business classification of enterprises across the economy and covers around 13 broad business sectors that can be broken down further into subcategories. Electrical contractors fall under the code for Construction (NACE Code 43: Section F) which can be broken down as follows:



Source: NACE Rev.2 Codes.

The main enterprises captured under Electrical Installation are as follows:

"Aerial erection (domestic) , Aerials and residential antennas installation of, Burglar alarm systems installation of, Electric products manufacture sign erection and maintenance, Electrical contractor (construction), Electrical wiring (buildings), Electrician, Fence contractor (not on agricultural sites), Fire alarms installation of, Installation of illumination and signalling systems for airports and harbours, Installation of illumination and signalling systems for roads and railways, Lightning conductor installation, Local authority street lighting, Telecommunications wiring, Telephone line installations, Electrical wiring and fittings installation of, Satellite dishes installation of, Lighting systems installation of, Street lighting and electrical signals construction of, Airport runway lighting installation of, Computer network and cable television wiring, including fibre optic installation of,"
<http://www.cso.ie/px/u/NACECoder/NACEItems/4321.asp>

The following table sets out the data from the most recent BCI which is for 2021. As of 2021, there were 70,459 construction enterprises, up 12.4% from the year before.

Table 2: Construction and Electrical Installation Enterprises and Numbers Employed

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Construction						
Construction Enterprises	51,568	57,255	57,626	59,175	62,664	70,459
Persons Engaged	120,341	137,239	144,521	158,227	157,349	170,446
Employees	84,956	97,902	106,047	118,924	115,911	122,754
<i>of which</i>						
Electrical Installation						
Persons Engaged	17,653	20,612	21,798	24,100	23,989	26,851

Source: CSO, Building and Construction Inquiry, 2021.

The BCI provides figures on the number of persons engaged which include all full-time and part-time employees. It also includes proprietors, partners and family members who work for an enterprise. It excludes agency workers. A total of 26,851 persons were engaged by Electrical Installation enterprises in 2021, according to the BCI.

3.4 Employer Groups

Data is also available from membership of the main employer groups, which comprise the following:

- ▶ The Electrical Contracting Association (ECA) is a constituent Association of the CIF. It is a trade association representing the interests of contractors who design, install, inspect, test and maintain electrical and electronic equipment and services. The Association has 40 member firms that employ 4,500 electricians, apprentices and electrical chargehands and foreman.

- The Association of Electrical Contractors of Ireland (AECI) which is an unincorporated body of electrical contractors, currently has 209 members and approximately 2,648 employees. The AECI is made up mainly of smaller and medium sized employers.

3.5 Connect Trade Union

The Connect Trade Union, which is an amalgamation of the Technical, Engineering and Electrical Union (TEEU) and the Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians, was formally launched in January 2018. It represents 10,806 workers (Electricians & Apprentices) to whom the Sectoral Employment Order would apply. It is important to note that the figures provided by the Connect Trade Union include electricians in the construction industry only and excludes those electricians and apprentices that are not covered by the SEO as outlined at Section 3.7 below.

3.6 Apprenticeships

The SEO also covers apprentices employed by electrical contractors. The apprentice must be registered with Solas within two weeks of commencing employment as an apprentice and must complete seven phases of training over a minimum period of four years in training. The current electrical craft apprenticeship programme is of four years duration, distributed over seven phases of "on the job" and "off the job" training, with phases 2, 4 and 6 acting as "off-the-job" while phases 1, 3, 5 and 7 are "on-the-job" with an employer.

3.7 Electricians not covered by the SEO

The SEO does not apply to the following:

1. Electricians and apprentices employed in the State, semi-state (including local authorities) and manufacturing sectors, or
2. Self-employed electricians who have no employees

In calculating an estimate for the number of electricians, it is important to exclude the above. The census figure of 13,010 for the number of electricians in the construction sector in 2022 already excludes these workers. Based on consultations with the electrical contracting industry, we have excluded all of those classified as electrical and electronic technicians and half of those classified as electrical and electronic trades not elsewhere classified, to calculate a closer estimate of the total number of electricians in the construction sector. The adjusted figure is 12,606. Applying the percentage change between Q2 2022 (to account for the Census taking place in April 2022) and Q4 2023 of 2.2% to the Census figure, results in an estimate for the total number of electricians employed in Construction of 12,883 in Q4 2023. This compares with the LFS survey figure for Q4 2023 of 18,600 Electrical and Electronic Trade workers working in construction.

3.8 Representation of the Sector

The following Table summarises the data gathered above regarding the size of the electrical contracting sector.

Table 3: Summary of Employed Workers in the Electrical Contracting Industry

	2016	2018	2020	2021	2022	2023
Census of Population - Total Labour Force - Whole Economy (Industrial Grouping data)						
Electrical Installation Industry	13,242				17,399	
Census of Population Employment - Whole Economy (Occupation data)						
<i>of which</i>						
Electrical and electronics technicians	2,150				3,051	
Electricians and electrical fitters	15,560				22,327	
Electrical and electronic trades n.e.c.	3,920				3,878	
Total	21,630				29,256	
<i>of which</i>						
Self-employed, without paid employees	3,391				2,738	
Census of Population Employment - Construction						
Electrical and electronics technicians	186				202	
Electricians and electrical fitters	9,187				12,404	
Electrical and electronic trades n.e.c.	589				404	
Total Occupations in Construction	9,962				13,010	
<i>of which</i>						
Electricians Only*	9,482*	13,745**			12,606*	12,883***
Labour Force Survey - Employment Electrical and Electronic Trades in Q4						
Whole Economy	29,700	41,700	36,500	43,700	51,900	46,300
Construction	11,500	16,600	13,600	14,500	22,000	18,600
Building and Construction Inquiry - Electrical Installations						
Construction Enterprises	51,568	57,626	62,664	70,459	N/A	N/A
Persons Engaged	17,653	21,798	23,989	26,851	N/A	N/A
Employer Groups - no. of employees						
ECA		4,044				4,500
AECI		2,250				2,648
Connect Trade Union - no. of members		9,871				10,806
Market Share						
ECA and AECI Combined		46%				55%
Connect Trade Union		72%				84%

Source: CSO, Employer Groups and Connect Trade Union.

* Excluding half of the Electrical and Electronic trades (not elsewhere classified) and all of the Electrical and Electronic technicians, as these would not be subject to an SEO.

**Previous 2018 report estimates

***Estimated by applying the percentage change as in the Labour Force Survey between Q2 2022 (Census quarter) and Q4 2023 of +2.2%.

The purpose of what follows is to use the above data to estimate the actual number of electricians, electrical foreman, chargehands and apprentices working in the Construction sector and employed by electrical contractors in Ireland.

3.9 Conclusions

We base the analysis on the Census 2022 adjusted estimate of 12,606 Electricians working in the Construction sector. It is assumed that this figure excludes electrical workers employed by the ESB in electrical power supply and distribution and in other semi-state and manufacturing companies. Applying the change in the Labour Force Survey between Q2 2022 and Q4 2023 of 2.2% would result in an estimate for the total number of electricians employed in Construction in Q4 2023 of 12,883 (12,606 * 1.022).

Therefore, based on this methodology and the figure of 12,883 as representative of the total supply of electricians, the ECA and the AECl combined membership of 7,148 represents 55% of the total persons working in construction in the electrical contracting sector.

Using the same base figures, the Connect Trade Union, with 10,806 members working in the construction sector, represents 84% of the total persons working in construction in the electrical contracting sector.

Based on these figures, it can be concluded that the ECA, the AECl, and Connect Trade Union are substantially representative¹ of the workers in the economic sector to which the Sectoral Order is to apply.

¹ It should be noted that as Connect is a trade union, and ECA and AECl are employer bodies, it is possible that someone could be a member of Connect and either of ECA/AECl. As a result there is the potential for a double count, however based on our discussions with the 3 bodies, and the results of our analysis, it would not appear that this issue could substantively change the conclusion of our analysis.

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