

# Economic Profile Results: Business in South Dublin in 2014

The **Sustainable Business Initiative** is a collaborative programme between South Dublin Chamber and South Dublin County Council that commenced in 2011, to support and sustain business in the County. The innovative collaboration included the creation and filling of the unique post of a Sustainable Business Executive for South Dublin; Ms Andrea Carroll.

An important recent project under the Programme was an **Economic Profile and Survey of South Dublin County**, funded under County Council Budget 2014. The aim of this survey was to get a full and clear understanding of the economic make up and environment for business in South Dublin.

There were 2 elements to this project:

1

On the ground research, involving 3 professional surveyors calling to every business premises in the county

2

An online survey, open to every business owner in the County to respond

This brochure sets out the findings from the Economic Profile and Survey and indicates key areas of action for the future of Economic Development in South Dublin.

Sectoral Breakdown

Business Locations

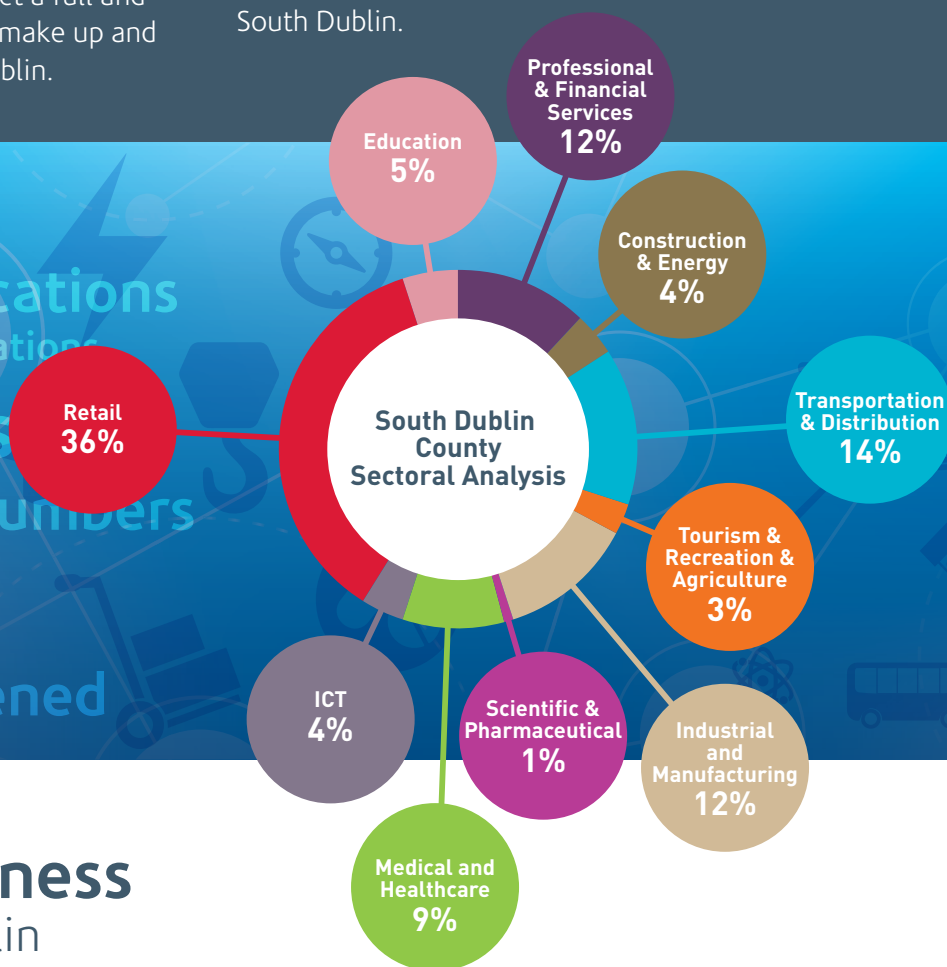
Activity Clusters & Locations

Training Needs

Employee Numbers

Exporting

Year opened



## Analysis of Sectors of Business in South Dublin

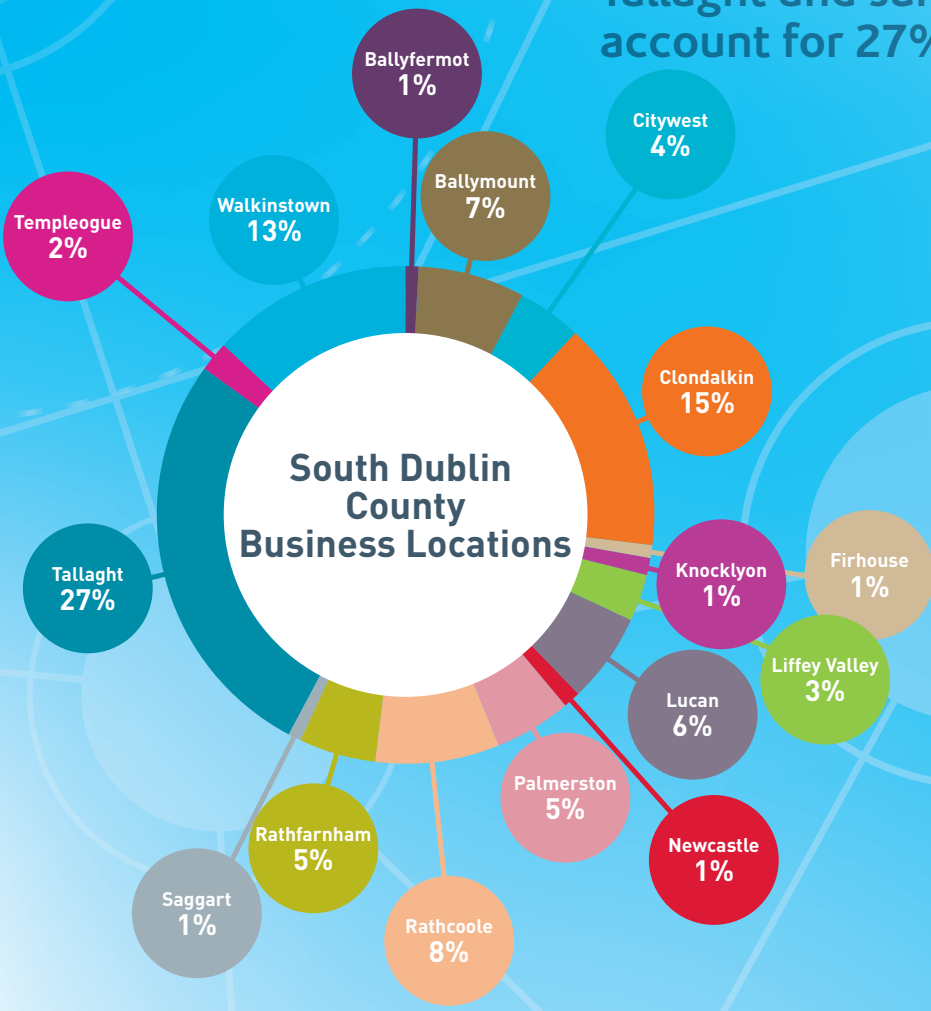
Retailing is the most significant sector in the county, with over 36% of businesses identified in this category. Transportation and Distribution accounts for over 14% of business in the county, and Industrial and Manufacturing account for 12% of business in South Dublin, indicating the importance of our industrial and business parks in supporting local business.

The high quality and level of education and staffing available in South Dublin is reflected in the fact that over 12% of business in the County are in the Professional and Financial Services sector.

The Medical and Pharmaceutical sectors also account for 9% of the businesses identified – supporting the concept that South Dublin may develop as a hub for Medical and Healthcare related businesses in Ireland, and the establishing of the Medical Quarter in around Tallaght Hospital as part of the strategic economic development of our county.

Currently the construction sector accounts for approximately 3% of businesses in the county. Given the recent recession it is not surprising that it remained low during summer 2014.

# Tallaght and surrounding areas account for 27% of business premises



## Business Locations

Tallaght and surrounding areas account for 27% of business premises in the county. Clondalkin (15%) and Walkinstown (13%) are also significant business locations locally. Areas which are primarily residential include: Saggart, Ballyfermot, Firhouse, Knocklyon and Newcastle.

Unsurprisingly there were a number of locations identified as **Key Hubs for business in South Dublin**, many of these being existing successful business parks, including Grange Castle, Greenogue (Rathcoole), Ballymount, Citywest and Liffey Valley business area.

## Activity Clusters & Locations

This map demonstrates the clusters of activities and their locations in the County. Although the size of the activity cluster can vary widely (Retail being the most significant sector, and agriculture being the smallest), it is important to recognise the location of the clusters in order to understand and develop sustainable clusters of economic activity in the future.

**Tallaght and the Tallaght area** provide the location for a number of clusters (including Distribution, Education, Energy, Industrial and Manufacturing, ICT, Professional Services, Recreation and Retail).

Clondalkin is also an active centre, with clusters of Financial Services and Tourism.

The Rathcoole/Newcastle area as a cluster of Construction and Scientific enterprise.

There are a number of centres with focussed clusters of business sectors including Palmerston (**Medical and Healthcare cluster**), Citywest (**Pharmaceutical cluster**) and Walkinstown (**Transportation cluster**).

While professional services are a growing aspect of economic activity in the County, the continued support for Science and Technology to encourage growth in this sector is required in the County.



# Training Needs

As part of the online survey, respondents were asked to comment on the skills requirements of their businesses. They identified both current and future skills needs. In general the top skills required were identified as business related skills both now and into the future.

**Current skills required by companies in South Dublin are:**



**Skills identified for the future were similar, identified as:**



The fact that Clerical Skills are highest on the current agenda indicates that businesses currently **require help in the general running of their business**. However many companies identify Sales as the highest future skills requirements, indicating **their intention to prioritise growth for the future**.

# Employee Numbers

As part of the online survey businesses were asked to identify the number of employees in their business. Only 2% of respondents identified as sole traders, with only a small minority having just one employee (8%). However the survey did identify that the micro-enterprise sector is very significant in South Dublin (with 70% of businesses in this category (under 10 employees)). 20% of business have between 11 and 40 employees.

The survey indicates that the **SME sector accounts for the largest proportion of businesses in South Dublin County**.

| Employees    | %  |
|--------------|----|
| Sole Traders | 2  |
| 1            | 8  |
| 2 to 5       | 41 |
| 6 to 10      | 21 |
| 11 to 20     | 15 |
| 21 to 40     | 8  |
| 41 to 100    | 4  |
| 101+         | 1  |

**70% of business have less than 10 Employees**

# Year Opened

Participants in the online survey were asked to identify the year that their business opened. Although there was a very small number of businesses that opened pre 1960, a large number of businesses opened since 2000. Over 38% of businesses opened between 2000 and 2008, during the Celtic Tiger years.

However almost 24% of businesses in the county have opened since the Recession in Ireland began (2009 – 2014) indicating **resilience in the local economy and the entrepreneurial spirit locally**.

| Years        | %  |
|--------------|----|
| Pre 1940     | 1  |
| 1941 to 1969 | 2  |
| 1970 to 1989 | 14 |
| 1990 to 1999 | 20 |
| 2000 to 2008 | 38 |
| 2009 to 2014 | 24 |

**24% of business opened since 2009**

# Exporting

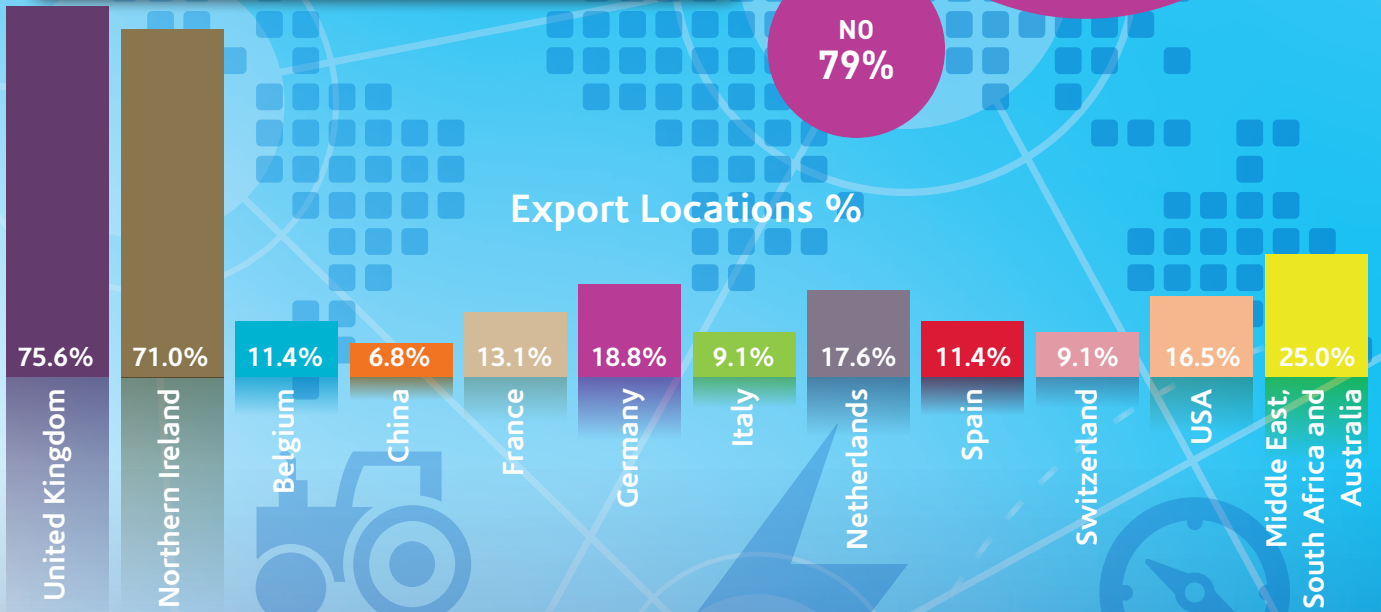
As part of the survey carried out and the analysis from surveyors, **approximately 21% of businesses are exporting**, capitalising primarily on the opportunities to grow their business by exporting to **Northern Ireland (71%) and the UK (75%)**.

The successful Manchester Trade mission carried out by the Chamber and County Council in 2014, supported the fact that the UK is one of the most popular and successful export partners for Irish Business. However many businesses also identified exporting to **Europe** (Germany (18%) and **the Netherlands** (18%)), **the USA** (17%) as well as the **Middle East, South Africa and Australia** being important export locations.



NO  
79%

## Export Locations %



# Conclusions

During April – August 2014, 3 professional surveyors were employed to visit all business premises in South Dublin. They visited over 4500 operational business premises during this time. The surveyors successfully made contact with over **90% of the business owners** in these premises. Of the businesses called to, the surveyors identified the business name and publicly available details, activity and location. This allowed for the creation of a database of businesses in South Dublin County, as well as information collected in areas such as:

- Business Sentiment
- Activities
- Economic Development Priorities

Business owners were also encouraged to complete the related survey online, and where eligible could apply for a **Business Support Grant**, funded by the Council budget 2014, to support SMEs directly. Over 20% of businesses completed the survey online, providing valuable information on their business – on areas such as: Exporting, Sector of Operation and Skills Requirements for Future Business Growth. All this information will be invaluable in making South Dublin County the best possible location for business, and planning for a prosperous and sustainable future

Download the report at [www.sdchamber.ie](http://www.sdchamber.ie) or [www.sdcc.ie](http://www.sdcc.ie)

Further details and proposed actions are available from South Dublin Chamber:

Contact Andrea Carroll, Sustainable Business Executive on 01-4622107.7