



Industrial & Warehousing

2026 Salary Guide, Ireland

Industrial & Warehousing Market Overview

Ireland's industrial and logistics ecosystem stayed resilient through 2025: unemployment stayed low by historical standards (hovering in the mid-4% range), logistics property fundamentals were steady with prime Dublin warehouse rents holding around €13.00 psf and select deals pushing above that, and take-up recovered toward long-run averages. That resilience continues into 2026 - but with tighter margins for employers as Minimum Wage, PRSI, and Pension costs rise.

2026 Outlook: What's Happening In The Market?

Hiring market: tight, ageing, and skills-shifting:

- **Full employment dynamics persist.** CSO estimated that throughout late 2025, unemployment was around 4 - 5%, keeping candidate supply tight for entry-level warehousing, drivers and experienced supervisors. The industry can expect continued competition for reliable temporary and permanent hires throughout 2026.
- **Driver pipeline pressure.** Government-backed "Logistics & Supply Chain Skills Week" and the HGV/Logistics apprenticeships expanded in 2025, but Ireland's driver workforce remains older (31% of HGV drivers 55+) keeping replacement demand high in 2026.
- **Automation tilts demand.** Large operators continue investing in robotics, Autonomous Mobile Robots (AMRs), and data-driven Warehouse Management Systems (WMS). Ireland's robotics market expanded again in 2025, nudging demand toward mechatronics maintenance, controls, and data roles inside the warehouse. It's important to note that automation isn't replacing people in this industry, but it is changing what employers value - with strong demand for adaptable workers who can combine hands-on experience with basic technical or digital know-how.

Cost pressures that matter for 2026 budgets:

- **Minimum wage:** Rising to €14.15/hour from 1 January 2026 (up from €13.50). USC bands have been adjusted to keep full-time minimum-wage earners within the lower USC rate.
- **PRSI:** Employer PRSI will increase by 0.15% on October 1st 2026 (standard rate 11.40%, lower rate 9.15%), after 0.10% hikes in 2024 and 2025. What's emerging is a twice-yearly squeeze on payroll costs - January brings minimum-wage and threshold changes, while October delivers PRSI rate hikes, often timed just days before the Budget. Is this the new norm?
- **Statutory sick pay:** The planned step-up was paused in 2025, leaving entitlement at five days (paid at 70% of salary, capped at €110/day).
- **Pension auto-enrolment:** Launching 1 January 2026, with employees, employers, and the State each contributing 1.5% initially. However, unlike traditional schemes, it offers no tax relief or rebate, making it less tax-efficient than existing occupational pensions.

These cumulative cost pressures are tightening margins, particularly for industrial and warehousing SMEs, forcing employers to balance higher payroll costs with competitive pay to attract scarce labour. For employees, this may mean higher entry-level pay but slower progression, as firms manage budgets under pressure. Both sides will need to adapt - employers through efficiency and retention, and workers through upskilling to remain competitive in a more cost-conscious environment.



Key Trends Still Shaping the Industry in 2026

- Digitalisation and Automation
- E-commerce and Last-Mile Delivery
- Green Logistics
- Improved Employee Benefits Packages
- Increased Flexibility for The Temporary Workforce

In-Demand Roles for 2026:

- **High volume / essential ops:** HGV Drivers (C/CE) & Last-Mile Van Drivers - ageing workforce + apprenticeship ramp-up still leaves gaps; firms paying for licensing/CPC and offering fixed-route rosters will hire faster. Warehouse Operatives (with tech fluency) - RF scanners, voice/vision pick, basic WMS reporting; premium for night shifts and cold-chain experience.
- **Skilled technical:** Maintenance Technicians (electro-mechanical), PLC/Controls Techs, Mechatronics Engineers - to keep automation uptime high. WMS/OMS Superusers & Data Analysts - SQL/BI literacy to improve pick rates, slotting, and labour planning.
- **Leadership & compliance:** Warehouse/Operations Managers & Shift Leads - throughput, safety, labour efficiency; experience commissioning automation a plus. EHS/ESG Coordinators - carbon data capture, ESRS familiarity, contractor management. Customs/Trade Compliance Specialists - BTOM/SPS know-how, food safety chains, GB-IE-EU routings.

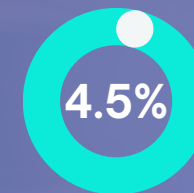
Looking Ahead To 2026

Despite rising labour costs and tightening margins, Ireland's industrial and warehousing sector is set to remain resilient in 2026. Demand continues to be driven by sustained e-commerce activity, nearshoring trends, and growing investment in automation and green logistics. However, one of the most significant shifts in the past year has been the sharp increase in the national minimum wage. While entry-level pay has risen, many higher-tier salaries have remained largely stagnant, creating compression across wage bands and new challenges for employers. Drivers - from forklift and truck drivers to entry-level general operatives remain in exceptionally high demand, yet supply continues to fall short. These roles should command wages above the new minimum, but escalating labour costs are making it increasingly difficult for businesses to maintain that balance. The result is growing nervousness around the overall cost of employment, with some employers hesitant to expand headcount or invest in large-scale recruitment.

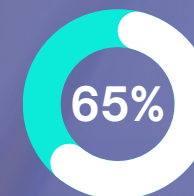
As hiring becomes more expensive, there's a growing risk that companies – particularly SMEs will look abroad or outsource to manage costs. While multinational firms benefit from significant tax incentives, Ireland must ensure that small and indigenous businesses aren't left behind. We can't lose sight of the local haulage firm or the operator with ten trucks on the road – they are vital to the backbone of Ireland's logistics network and deserve meaningful support.

The year ahead will reward companies that can strike the right balance between cost control, innovation, and workforce development. Upskilling, digital literacy, and technical training will remain key differentiators as automation reshapes traditional roles and creates new opportunities for skilled technicians, supervisors, and data-driven professionals. Non-monetary incentives such as predictable shift patterns, training pathways, and enhanced benefits will also play a crucial role in attracting and retaining talent in a tight labour market.

Having a trusted recruitment partner who understands these evolving challenges can make all the difference. With a database of over 150,000 candidates and a temporary workforce exceeding 9,000, Excel Recruitment offers the scale, speed, and sector expertise to help your business stay agile, well-staffed, and ready for the opportunities ahead in 2026.



Ireland remains at or near full employment, with unemployment holding around 4.5% into late 2025. This underlines the ongoing talent scarcity in warehousing, logistics, and manufacturing roles - especially for experienced drivers and warehouse managers.



According to the Department of Enterprise's 2025 Logistics & Supply Chain Skills Survey, 65% of employers in transport, logistics, and warehousing reported moderate to severe skills shortages, particularly in HGV driving, maintenance, and digital operations. This reinforces the growing need for upskilling and technical training as automation and digitalisation reshape the sector.



Ireland's robotics and smart manufacturing investment grew sharply in 2025, with recruitment demand for mechatronics, automation, and controls technicians up around 50% year-on-year, based on national job postings and industry data, it highlights a shift toward tech-enabled roles and the premium now placed on technically skilled talent across industrial operations.

Industrial & Warehousing Salary Guide	Salary 1 Years Exp +	Salary 3 Years Exp +	Salary 5 Years Exp +
Warehouse Manager	€40k	€45K - €50k	€55k - €70k
Assistant Warehouse Manager	€31k -€35k	€40K - €45k	€50k - €60k
Warehouse/General Operative/Production Operative	€14.15 ph	€14.15 ph - €15.50 ph	€15.50 ph - €16.00 ph
Voice Picker	€14.15 ph	€15.50 ph	€17.00 ph
Forklift - Counterbalance Operative	€14.50 ph	€15.00 ph	€16.00 ph
Forklift Reach Operative	€14.50 - €14.80 ph	€15.00 ph - €16.00 ph	€17.00 ph
Forklift Bendi Operative	€15.00 ph	€16.25 ph	€17.00 ph
Forklift - VNA Operative	€15.00 ph	€16.00 ph	€17.00 ph
PPT Operative	€14.15 ph	€15.50 ph	€16.50 ph
Handballer	€14.15 ph	€14.15 ph - €15.00 ph	€16.00 ph
Rigid Truck Driver	€18.00 ph	€19.00 ph - €21.00 ph	€22.00 ph - €24.00 ph
Artic Truck Driver	€20.00 ph	€21.00 ph - €22.00 ph	€24.00 ph
Van Driver	€15.00 ph	€16.00 ph	€17.00 ph
C1 Driver	€16.00 ph	€17.00 ph - €17.50 ph	€18.00 ph
Bus Driver	€17.00 ph	€18.00 ph	€20.00 ph - €22.00 ph
Transport Manager	€40k - €45k	€45k - €50k	€50k - €60k
Transport Planner	€35k - €40k	€40k - €45k	€45k - €50k
Transport Coordinator	€33k	€35k	€40k
Operations Manager	€60k - €70k	€70k - €80k	€80k - €100k
Supply Chain Director	€90k - €100k	€100k - €120k	€120k - €150k
Supply Chain Manager	€70k - €80k	€80k - €90k	€90k - €100k
Supply Chain Specialist	€40k - €45k	€45k - €50k	€50k - €60k
Planning Manager	€70k - €80k	€80k -€85k	€85k - €90k
Demand Planner	€40k - €45k	€45k - €50k	€50k - €60k
Freight Specialist	€40k - €45k	€45k - €50k	€50k - €60k
Customs Specialist	€40k - €45k	€45k - €50k	€50k - €60k
Customs Administrator	€30k - €32k	€32k - €38k	€38k - €42k
EHS Manager	€70k - €80k	€80k - €90k	€90k - €100k
EHS Specialist	€40k - €45k	€45k- €50k	€50k - €60k
EHS Officer	€40k- €45k	€45k - €50k	€50k - €60k



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