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AGUS SCILEANNA | A N D S K I L L S

Joint Report by the Department for Employment and Learning and the
Department of Education and Skills

Research Report

An Analysis of Existing Statistics on
Student Flows Between Northern Ireland
and the Republic of Ireland in Higher
Education and Further Education

June 2015

Reader Information

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Foreword

It is recognised that student mobility brings economic, social and cultural benefits to countries and regions; however it is important to understand the impact of such movement on existing populations and the capacity to provide efficient and effective services in both jurisdictions. This joint report on students' flows between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland is a welcome outcome of the co-operation and collaboration between the Department of Education and Skills (ROI) and the Department for Employment and Learning (NI). This report will contribute to the analysis of student flows and help inform policy developments and provision in both jurisdictions. Both Departments will continue to work together for the mutual benefit of our respective stakeholders and we look forward to further collaborations.



Derek Baker
Permanent Secretary
Department for Employment and Learning
Northern Ireland



Seán Ó Foghlú
Secretary General
Department of Education and Skills
Ireland

Executive Summary

Applicant Data

- The number of Republic of Ireland (ROI) domiciled applicants applying to Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions (NI HEIs) has fallen since 2009/10 despite the fact that overall the number of applicants applying to NI HEIs has been increasing. The number of NI domiciled applicants applying to ROI HEIs has been increasing since 2010/11.
- Of all full-time undergraduate applicants in 2013/14 to NI HEIs, 7.4% (1,745) were from ROI, while 1.8% (1,375) of all applicants to ROI HEIs were NI domiciled applicants.
- The percentage of all ROI domiciled applicants to NI HEIs that are female has been increasing over the last five years and reached 70.0% in 2013/14. This is also true for nett acceptances¹; except for in the 2012/13 year in which the percentage that were female was slightly lower than the previous year. The percentage of all NI domiciled applicants to ROI institutions that are female has been increasing since 2010/11, with 61.7% of applicants in 2013/14. Male applicants have also been increasing. Female nett acceptances increased between 2011/12 and 2012/13 and have remained static since at 59.7% while male nett acceptances are in decline since 2012/13.
- The majority of ROI domiciled applicants and nett acceptances who applied to NI HEIs were aged '20 and under'. This has been a continuous trend over the last five years.
- 'Subjects Allied to Medicine' has been by far the most popular subject area for ROI domiciled nett acceptances to NI HEIs over the past five years, and in 2013/14 this subject reached 38.4% of ROI domiciled nett acceptances to NI HEIs. 'Arts/Social Science' nett acceptances have been the most popular for NI domiciled applicants to ROI HEIs with 30.4% of all applicants in 2013/14.
- The majority of ROI domiciled nett acceptances to NI HEIs choose Ulster University (68.5% in 2013/14), with Queen's University Belfast as the second most popular choice. In 2013/14, 79.2% of all NI domiciled full-time undergraduate nett acceptances to the ROI HEIs were to the university sector, decreasing from 83.4% in 2009/10. Nett acceptances to the Institute of Technology sector have grown from 15.6% to 20.3% in the same time period.

¹ Nett acceptance is described as the final acceptance recorded for an applicant. This means that the applicant received one or more offers and accepted at least one. If more than one offer was accepted, the nett acceptance is the last one accepted and the only course the applicant can register on.

Higher Education

General

- ROI domiciled enrolments in NI HEIs decreased by 12.5% from 2008/09 to 2012/13, while during the same period NI domiciled students enrolled in ROI institutions declined by 4.3%.
- ROI domiciled enrolments made up 5.5% of all enrolments to NI HEIs in 2012/13, while NI domiciled enrolments made up 0.5% of all enrolments to ROI HEIs.

Undergraduate

- The number of ROI domiciled students enrolling on undergraduate higher education courses in NI institutions declined by 4.4%, from 1,650 in 2008/09 to 1,575 in 2012/13. Correspondingly, the number of NI domiciled students enrolling on undergraduate higher education courses in the ROI declined by 13.5%, from 870 in 2008/09 to 755 in 2012/13.
- Over half (59.8%) of undergraduate enrolments in NI institutions from the ROI were studying full-time in 2012/13, with 40.2% part-time, while the corresponding figure for NI students studying in the ROI is 86.9% full-time, with 13.1% part-time.
- Females represent 66.3% of all ROI domiciled enrolments in NI institutions at undergraduate level in 2012/13, and this increased from 62.9% in 2008/09, showing a widening of the gender gap over the five year period. The corresponding figure for NI students enrolled in ROI institutions in 2012/13 is 59.0%.
- Just over half (50.9%) of all undergraduate enrolments in NI institutions from the ROI were '25 and over' in 2012/13, while the corresponding figure for NI students enrolled in the ROI is 18.4%, with the highest proportion of NI enrolments in ROI coming from the '20 and under' age group, at 41.9%.
- The most popular subject areas in 2012/13 for ROI domiciled students studying in NI institutions at undergraduate level were 'Business & Administrative Studies' (25.8%) and 'Subjects Allied to Medicine' (22.3%), while the discipline areas are more varied for NI students studying in ROI, with 'Medicine & Dentistry' being the most popular (12.7%), followed by 'Business & Administrative Studies' (11.0%), 'Law' (10.7%) and 'Creative Arts & Design' (9.8%).

- Over three quarters (79.4%) of all undergraduates studying in NI from the ROI were studying at Ulster University in 2012/13 while for NI students studying in ROI the mix was more varied. In 2012/13, 63.5% were studying at Trinity College Dublin and University College Dublin, down from 71.0% in 2008/09. The proportion studying in the Institutes of Technology increased from 10.8% to 23.0% in the five year period, with 89.3% of those studying at IT Sligo, Dundalk IT and Letterkenny IT.

Postgraduate

- The number of ROI domiciled students enrolling in postgraduate courses in NI HEIs declined by 20.9% from 2008/09 to 2012/13, while NI domiciled students taking up postgraduate study in ROI increased by 49.0% (albeit smaller numbers).
- In 2012/13, over five times more ROI students enrolled in NI institutions than NI students in ROI institutions at postgraduate level (1,260 compared to 225).
- Under half (43.1%) of postgraduate ROI students studying in NI were studying full-time in 2012/13, while 48.4% of NI students studying in ROI were studying full-time.
- In 2012/13, 62.4% of postgraduate ROI students studying in NI institutions were female compared to 45.8% of NI students in ROI institutions.
- Almost three quarters (74.3%) of ROI domiciled students enrolled on postgraduate courses at NI HEIs in 2012/13 were aged '25 and over'. Slightly less (67.6%) NI domiciled students enrolled on a postgraduate course in ROI HEIs were aged '25 and over'.
- The most popular subject area for ROI domiciled students enrolled at NI HEIs in 2012/13 was 'Education' with 17.6% of enrolments. Correspondingly, the most popular subject area for NI domiciled students enrolled at ROI HEIs in 2012/13 was 'Business & Administrative Studies' with 23.6% of enrolments.
- Over half (60.1%) of ROI students studying at postgraduate level in NI institutions studied at Ulster University in 2012/13, while 61.8% of NI students chose to study at Trinity College Dublin and University College Dublin.

Further Education

Further Education (inc. Higher Education in Further Education)

- Of all regulated enrolments to NI FECs in 2012/13, 2.9% were from the ROI. Due to the fact that 96.1% of all regulated enrolments to NI FECs were from NI, this makes ROI domiciled enrolments the second highest cohort to attend NI FECs.
- Regulated enrolments of ROI domiciled students to NI FECs has increased by 48.6% between 2008/09 and 2012/13.
- There is a much higher proportion of ROI domiciled student enrolments on part-time regulated courses in NI FECs compared to those studying full-time. In 2012/13, this reached 74.2% (3,408) on part-time regulated courses and 25.8% (1,186) on full-time regulated courses.
- Historically there have been more females than males from ROI enrolling on regulated courses in NI FECs, however the gender gap has been narrowing over the last five academic years. In 2012/13, females accounted for 54.8% of regulated enrolments compared to 45.2% male.
- The highest proportion of ROI domiciled student enrolments on regulated courses in NI FECs are aged '20 and under'. In 2012/13, 47.9% of were aged '20 and under', 16.1% were aged '21-24' and 35.9% were aged '25 and over'.
- The majority of ROI domiciled student enrolments on regulated courses at NI FECs were at the North West Regional College, a recurring trend over the last five academic years. In 2012/13, 57.0% of ROI domiciled regulated enrolments were at North West Regional College.

Higher Education in Further Education

- The number of ROI domiciled student enrolments on a regulated higher education course in an NI FEC has increased by 38.3%, from 486 in 2008/09 to 672 in 2012/13.
- In 2010/11, there was a switch from mostly full-time enrolments to mostly part-time enrolments for ROI domiciled students on a regulated higher education course in a NI FEC. In 2012/13, 27.4% were studying full-time with 72.6% studying part-time.
- Historically there have been more females than males from ROI enrolling on regulated higher education courses in NI FECs. However this changed in 2012/13, where 45.1% of ROI domiciled students were female compared to 54.9% male.

- The highest proportion of ROI domiciled student enrolments on a regulated higher education course in a NI FEC have been '25 and over' in the last five academic years. In 2012/13, 23.5% of ROI domiciled regulated enrolments were aged '20 and under', 14.7% were aged '21-24' and 61.6% were aged '25 and over'.
- The majority of ROI domiciled student enrolments on a regulated higher education course in NI FECs were at the North West Regional College. In 2012/13, 42.7% of regulated enrolments of ROI domiciled students on higher education courses in NI FECs were at the North West Regional College.

SECTION 1 – Introduction

1.1 Overview

Freedom of movement (mobility) is recognised within the EU as contributing economic and social benefits to the Member State. At the same time Member States are increasingly recognising the need to understand the impact of such movements on their existing populations and capacity to deliver services effectively.

The purpose of this report is to examine the nature of student flows in both the higher and further education sectors between the Republic of Ireland (ROI) and Northern Ireland (NI). It presents data on the movements of students over a five year period, 2008/09 to 2012/13 (the last five academic years for which we have available data). This report is a joint North/South report by the Department for Employment and Learning for NI and the Department of Education and Skills for the ROI.

The report is divided into four sections. Section one describes the sector in both jurisdictions. Section two focuses on applicants, both ROI domiciled students applying to full-time undergraduate courses at NI higher education institutions (HEIs), and NI domiciled students applying to full-time undergraduate courses at ROI HEIs. Section three concentrates on higher education enrolments and is split by undergraduate and postgraduate status. Section four focuses on both ROI domiciled students enrolled on courses at NI further education colleges (FECs), and NI domiciled students enrolled on courses at ROI further education institutions.

Appendix 1 shows the profile of a typical student from each jurisdiction.

Further statistics on the NI higher education sector, including enrolments, qualifications gained, destinations of leavers and various higher education fact sheets, can be downloaded from the Department for Employment and Learning website – <http://www.delni.gov.uk/higher-education-stats>

Further statistics on ROI HEIs including enrolments, graduates, destinations can be accessed at on the Higher Education Authority website at the following link www.heai.ie/statistics

1.2 Policy Context

1.2.1 Northern Ireland

Higher Education

Higher education policy in NI is the responsibility of the Minister for Employment and Learning. In April 2012 the Department for Employment and Learning published *Graduating to Success*, the higher education strategy for NI. *Graduating to Success* sets out a long term vision for the higher education sector and has implementation targets spanning from 2013 through to 2020.

The vision is of a higher education sector which is vibrant and of international calibre, one which pursues excellence in teaching and research and plays a pivotal role in the development of a modern, sustainable knowledge-based economy. The vision promotes and supports a confident, shared society which recognises and values diversity.

The strategy has been developed around 4 key themes: responsive to the needs of the economy; a high quality learning experience; a more accessible higher education sector; and a more flexible lifelong learning environment.

The strategy is supported by the Department's widening participation strategy *Access to Success*, which focuses on widening participation in higher education by students from those groups which are currently under-represented, in particular students from disadvantaged backgrounds and those with disabilities and learning difficulties.

The Department's vision for widening participation is that any qualified individual in NI should be able to gain access to higher education, irrespective of their personal or social background. Widening participation in, and ensuring fair access to, higher education is not simply a matter of social justice but is also an economic imperative if NI is to remain competitive in the face of unprecedented economic challenges.

The economic, social and cultural importance of undergraduate mobility and cross-border cooperation between institutions in NI and the ROI are highlighted in *Graduating to Success*. It is recognised that such activity has the potential to drive the growth of the all-island economy, broaden the pool of graduates both North and South and support the ongoing peace process. The Department is committed to supporting cross-border cooperation in teaching and learning and in research and innovation and student mobility, with the aim of increasing understanding, sharing good practice and enabling students to move freely between the two jurisdictions. In response to the *Graduating to Success* implementation plan, a project group has been established to facilitate cross border cooperation and mobility. Membership

includes representatives from the higher and further education sectors in NI and ROI.

Higher education in NI is provided by five higher education institutions: Queen's University Belfast, Ulster University, the Open University, Stranmillis University College and St Mary's University College (focusing mainly on teacher education) and six regionally based FECs.

The Department for Employment and Learning provides annual funding to the higher education sector for teaching, learning and research purposes, and in 2013/14 this totalled £224m.

Students pay an annual tuition fee, and in 2014/15 this is £3,685 per student at undergraduate level for local and EU students and up to £9,000 for those from Great Britain. Separate fees apply to international students (non EU).

NI students can avail of a fee loan and a maintenance loan which are repayable and, in some circumstances, a maintenance grant which is not repayable. The fee loan is also available to EU students.

NI domiciled students enrolled in ROI HEIs can avail of a loan to cover the student contribution and maintenance support.

Further Education

In NI, further education is defined by the Further Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 as post-statutory education that is not delivered in a school and is not higher education. It therefore encompasses vocational education and training for full-time learners who left school at 16, apprenticeships, adult education (including continuing education for people in employment) and leisure courses to support lifelong learning. Most of the focus of further education in NI is on delivering regulated vocational qualifications to learners at levels 2 and 3 (European Qualifications Framework levels 3 and 4, respectively), but a number of providers also deliver qualifications at higher levels, as well as more general qualifications such as essential skills or A-levels.

As well as having a very diverse customer base, further education providers also work closely with employers and with government to ensure that the courses they offer are aligned to economic needs, and with a range of other agencies to fulfil their social remit.

The Department for Employment and Learning is currently preparing a new further education strategy which will build upon the successes of the *Further Education Means Business* strategy (2004). *Further Education Means Business* has had a

transformational impact upon the sector in NI, which is now much more closely attuned to the needs of business and industry and clearly focussed on delivering high quality regulated qualifications to the current and future workforce.

There are currently a number of strategies in development or completed which will have an impact upon the further education sector, most notably (i) the review of apprenticeships which has now entered the implementation phase and (ii) the review of youth training, which has now completed consultation and a final strategy is in preparation.

Given the passage of ten years since *Further Education Means Business*, changes in the economy and new policy developments, the Department is developing a new further education strategy and plans to go out to public consultation on this early in 2015. It is likely to continue the focus on economically relevant education and training and be based upon international research on other further education systems. It is expected that themes such as working more closely with employers to drive up further the relevance of further education to the needs of the economy and improving quality by focussing on teacher education and building data on learner progression and destination into the overall system, will feature strongly in the strategy.

The statutory further education sector in NI comprises six regional multi-campus colleges. These colleges have been recognised by the Department for Employment and Learning as institutions of further education (for the purposes of the 1997 Order) and receive grant funding to deliver 'mainstream further education' to learners – this is further education that is not part of a specific training programme and is typically delivered as a full-time course to 16-19 year-olds. This is the definition of 'further education' used in this report. There are also a large number of part-time learners at all ages, some re-entering education, others in work and further developing their skills and knowledge. Along with the statutory colleges, a number of other providers operate across NI and, collectively, these providers deliver training and apprenticeships to learners under contracted programmes.

Full-time further education in NI is largely provided free by colleges, although fees are charged for part-time study, and many employers who seek to have their staff trained are also typically charged for the cost of delivering the course. Because of European Union treaty obligations, this regime is also applied to learners from other Member States, while learners from further afield are charged fees in respect of any courses they undertake.

1.2.2 Republic of Ireland

Higher Education

In January 2011 the Department of Education and Skills published *A National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030*. The report presents a vision of an Irish higher education sector that can successfully meet the many social, economic and cultural challenges that face us over the coming decades, and meet its key roles for teaching and learning, research, scholarship and engagement with wider society. The document acknowledges that *'in the decades ahead higher education will play a central role in making the Republic of Ireland a country recognised for innovation, competitive enterprise and continuing academic excellence, and an attractive place to live and work with a high quality of life, cultural vibrancy and inclusive social structures'*.

The support for co-operation and the potential for social, economic and cultural benefits that it will bring to the island outlined in the *Graduating to Success* report are echoed by the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030. The Strategy notes that as well as collaboration across the higher education system on a national scale to provide better quality outcomes in teaching, research and innovation, there is also significant potential for institutional collaboration on a North-South basis. This collaboration will advance cross-border regional development and strategically advance Irish higher education on an all-island basis. Among the functions allocated by the National Strategy to the Higher Education Authority (HEA) is the co-operation and engagement with international counterparts and in particular the deepening of co-operation with higher education in NI.

Achieving the shared vision of the two strategies, North and South, is being advanced by structured arrangements for information sharing between senior officials from both the Department of Education and Skills and the HEA which have been ongoing since 2010 as well as institutional co-operation and engagement to increase cross-border student mobility.

Higher education in the ROI is provided mainly by seven Universities, 14 Institutes of Technology, including the Dublin Institute of Technology, and seven Colleges of Education. In addition, a number of other third level institutions provide specialist education in such fields as art and design, medicine, business studies, rural development, theology, music and law.

The Department of Education and Skills provides annual funding to the higher education sector and in 2013/14, excluding student support, this totalled €938.9m. Ireland operates a 'free fees' policy for full-time undergraduate students. Most undergraduate students attending publicly funded third-level courses do not have to pay tuition fees. Under the terms of the [Free Fees Initiative](#), the HEA pays the fees

to the institutions directly. The institutions charge an annual student contribution, formerly called the student services charge. It is also known as a registration fee and it covers student services and examinations. The student contribution rate for the academic year 2014-2015 is €2,750. It will rise to €3,000 for the academic year 2015-16.

NI domiciled students enrolled in ROI HEIs do not pay tuition fees. However, they are obliged to pay registration fees referred to above to the HEI.

Further Education

The Further Education and Training (FET) sector in Ireland has recently undergone significant change. *An Seirbhís Oideachaís Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna* (SOLAS), the new FET authority, was established on 27 October 2013 and became responsible for funding, planning and co-ordinating training and further education programmes to ensure the provision of 21st century high-quality FET programmes to jobseekers and other learners. The sector covers a wide range of provision from early school leavers and post leaving certificate education to community based and adult learning as well as apprenticeships and other vocational training. SOLAS will ensure that funding has regard to outcomes and bring greater coherence, co-ordination and oversight to the FET sector.

The 33 former Vocational Education Committees (VECs), which were the main providers of further education in Ireland, were amalgamated into 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs) on the 1st July 2013. The former FÁS training centres, 19 in total, and their related staff transferred on a phased basis to the appropriate ETB which was based on geographic location. On the 1st January 2014, seven training centres transferred over to ETB's with the remaining 12 training centres transferring to their respective ETB's on the 1st July 2014. FET provision is now the responsibility of the local ETBs, which deliver FET programmes directly and also through contracted services.

These changes to the FET sector paved the way for greater co-ordination of education and training at national, regional and local level in 2014. Programmes will be integrated, flexible, value-for-money and responsive to the needs of learners and the requirements of a changed and changing economy. A five-year national strategy for FET was launched by SOLAS in May 2014 following a consultation process with key stakeholders.

The Further Education and Training Strategy identifies 5 high level strategic goals:

1. Skills for the Economy: to address the current and future needs of learners, jobseekers, employers and employees and to contribute to national economic development

2. Active Inclusion: to support the active inclusion of people of all abilities in society with special reference to literacy and numeracy
3. Quality Provision: to provide high quality education and training programmes and to meet the appropriate national and international quality standards
4. Integrated Planning and Funding: FET provision will be planned and funded on the basis of objective analysis of needs and evidence of social and economic impact
5. Standing of FET: to ensure a valued learning path leading to agreed employment, career, developmental, personal and social options.

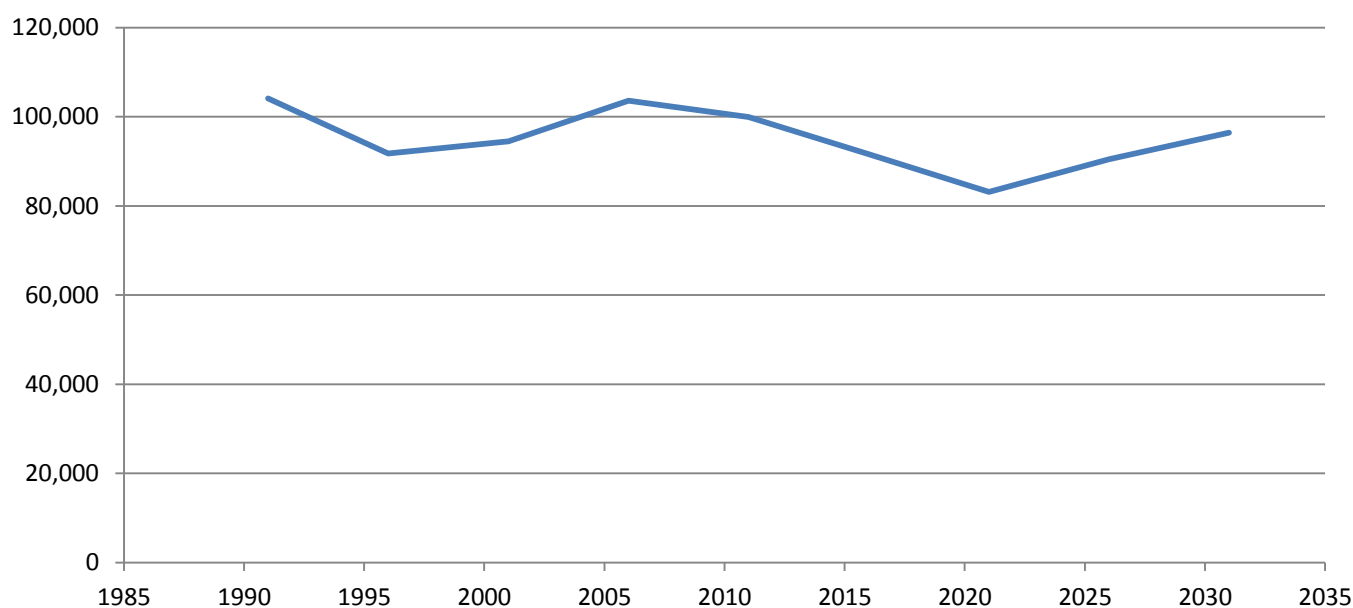
The provision of FET in the ROI is very diverse and is funded through SOLAS and the Department of Education and Skills and managed through a number of agencies and bodies. While provision is primarily organised through the 16 ETBs nationwide; a wide number of community based adult learning and guidance services are also funded. There are also a number of non-ETB schools and colleges which provide opportunities for learners through provision of the Back to Education Initiative and Post Leaving Certificate courses. Courses are provided to a wide variety of learners at Level 1 to Level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) or equivalent. Provision is largely provided free of charge to participants and in certain areas training allowances may be payable. Further education provision is analysed under a number of headings, including career clusters, which are used to facilitate the categorisation of courses and to align these courses to relevant industries.

1.3 Demographics

In the most recent Census in NI (2011) there were 1,810,863 people who usually resided in NI, 99,748 (5.5%) of whom were aged 18-21. This compares to 94,517 (5.6%) 18-21 year olds out of 1,688,838 in 2001 and 104,117 (6.5%) out of 1,607,295 in 1991. The proportion of the population that is aged 18-21 has been decreasing over the past two decades.

Population projections provided by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) indicate that the number of 18-21 year olds in NI will decline in the next decade to 87,133 in 2025, a fall of 12.6%, but will increase again to levels similar to 2011 by 2030 (97,136). This suggests that for the next 6 years, at least, the population of 18-21 year olds in NI will continue to fall, however they predict a rise between 2020 and 2025 which will continue until at least 2030. Figure 1 shows the population estimates and projections for the last 20 years and the next 20 years.

Figure 1: Population Estimates and Projections for 18-21 year olds in Northern Ireland



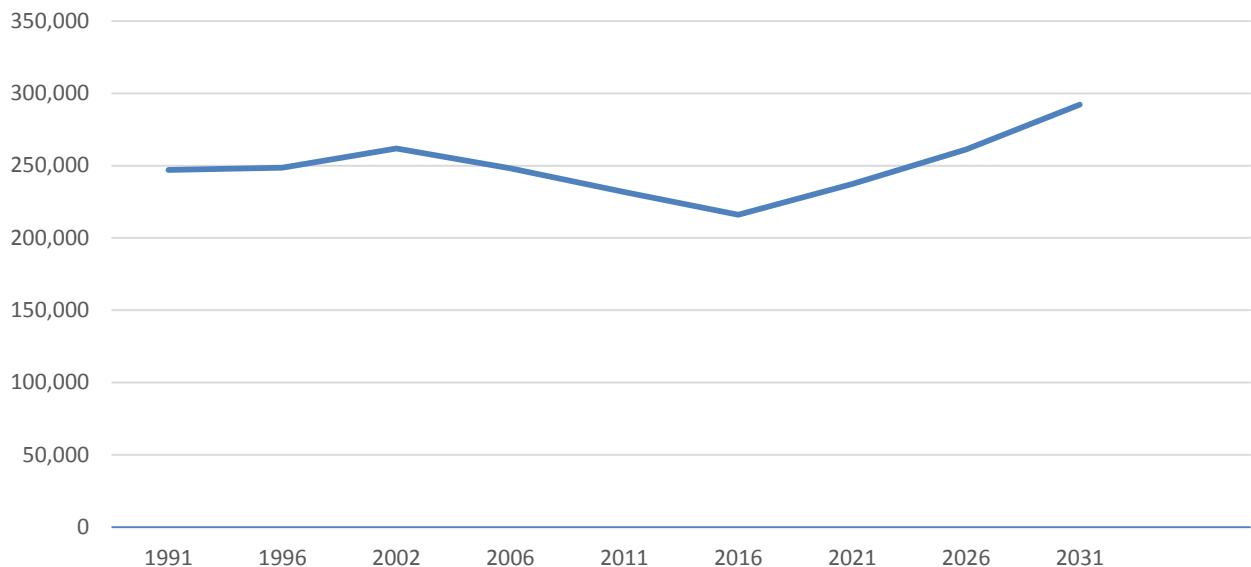
Source: NISRA

Note: The figures for 1991, 2001 and 2011 are Census figures rather than estimates.

According to figures from the most recent Census (2011) there were 4,588,252 people residing in the ROI, 231,784 (5.1%) of whom were aged between 18 and 21 years of age. This compares to 248,229 (5.8%) 18-21 year olds out of 4,588,252 in 2006. It has been argued that the decrease of almost 7% since 2006 is primarily a cohort effect of lower births in the late 1980s compared with earlier years, combined with the effects of migration among this mobile group (CSO, 2012).

Figure 2 shows the population estimates and projections from 1991 to 2031. Population projections provided by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) indicate that the number of 18-21 year olds in the ROI will decrease between 2011 and 2016, from 231,784 to 215,977. However, another increase in 18-21 year olds is predicted to occur between 2016 and 2031, with this young population expected to rise to 292,096 in 2031.

Figure 2: Population Estimates and Projections for 18-21 year olds in the Republic of Ireland



Source: CSO [Note that figures for 1996, 2002, 2006, 2011 are based on actual census figures, while figures from 2015 onwards are based on estimated projections]

Reference: Central Statistics Office (2012) *Profile 2 – Older and Younger*. Dublin: Stationery Office.

The latest projections from the Department of Education and Skills on the demand for full-time third level education in the ROI published in July 2014 (<http://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Statistics/Statistical-Reports/Projections-of-demand-for-Full-Time-Third-Level-Education-2014-2028.pdf>) project increased demand over the period 2014-2028. The projections are of likely demand for Department of Education and Skills aided institutions only and do not include privately funded third level institutions.

SECTION 2 – Applicant data

This section uses data supplied by the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) to provide a descriptive analysis completed by the Department for Employment and Learning on ROI domiciled students who applied to a course at a NI HEI. It also uses data supplied by the ROIs Central Applications Office (CAO) to provide a descriptive analysis on NI domiciled students who applied to a course at a ROI HEI. This section is broken down by age, gender, subject area and institution and gives a five year time series analysis from the academic year 2009/10 to 2013/14.

In NI, through UCAS, an applicant can make up to a total of five choices to higher education institutions, one of which will be a 'firm' choice and another will be an 'insurance' choice. In the ROI however, through CAO, an applicant can make up to a total of ten course choices on both a Level 8 and a Level 6/7 listing. The applicant will be offered their first choice from both lists. The applicant can however only accept one place offered. Due to the difference in the number of choices each applicant can make through the two application systems, it is more useful to look at applicant figures rather than application figures.

The data included in this section focuses on applicants applying to full-time undergraduate courses only. This is due to the fact that most postgraduate and part-time applications for NI and the ROI are not processed through UCAS or CAO. They go directly through the higher education institution in most instances, with a number of cases going through UCAS's UKPASS system or the Postgraduate Applications Centre (PAC) in ROI. However there are some postgraduate applicants included in the UCAS data in this analysis, but they make up less than one percent of applicants to NI HEIs through UCAS. The postgraduate applicants will not be separated or reviewed but will count as part of the applicants applying to NI HEIs.

Figures in this section have been rounded to the nearest '0' or '5' applicants due to the UCAS rounding policies. Percentages are based on the unrounded figures.

2.1 Full-Time Undergraduate Applicants

The number of full-time undergraduate applicants applying to NI HEIs has increased by 22.3% over the last five years, from 19,285 in 2009/10 to 23,585 in 2013/14. Similarly, the number of full-time undergraduate applicants applying to HEIs in the ROI has increased from 74,625 in 2009/10 to 76,950 in 2013/14, an increase of 3.1%.

Most people applying to NI HEIs are NI domiciled (75.9% in 2012/13), which is to be expected. In 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12, students from the ROI were the second highest number of applicants to NI HEIs, with 9.3%, 11.0% and 9.1% of applicants

respectively. However, the number of England domiciled students has been steadily increasing since 2009/10 and in 2012/13 the number of applicants from England to NI HEIs was higher than the number of applicants from the ROI; this is also partly due to a drop in the number of applicants from ROI applying to NI HEIs in both 2012/13 and 2013/14 (Table 1).

ROI domiciled applicants represent the most applicants to ROI institutions, representing 94.7% overall in 2013/14. NI represents the highest proportion of United Kingdom (UK) applicants with 1.8% of all applicants to the CAO in 2013. Since 2009/10 the proportion of all applicants to ROI colleges from NI domiciled students has increased from 1.5% to 1.8% in 2013/14.

Table 1: Full-Time Undergraduate Applicants by Domicile, 2009/10-2013/14

	NI HEIs					ROI HEIs				
	2009/ 10	2010/ 11	2011/ 12	2012/ 13	2013/ 14	2009/ 10	2010/ 11	2011/ 12	2012/ 13	2013/ 14
Northern Ireland	15,010	16,745	17,095	16,835	17,900	1,085	815	980	1,305	1,375
Republic of Ireland	1,785	2,390	2,010	1,810	1,745	71,715	75,265	73,565	72,940	72,845
England	1,450	1,490	1,830	2,135	2,315	630	685	785	900	825
Scotland	165	185	185	180	175	60	70	65	70	85
Wales	85	70	75	90	80	30	25	30	40	25
EU (excl. UK)	175	165	200	230	265	185	195	225	305	240
Non EU	615	635	795	965	1,115	915	1,140	1,100	1,340	1,555
Total	19,285	21,675	22,190	22,250	23,595	74,625	78,200	76,750	76,900	76,950

Source: UCAS data & CAO data

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' applicants.

The number of ROI domiciled students applying to NI HEIs has been decreasing in recent years, however the 2013/14 number is similar to that of 2009/10. Correspondingly, the number of NI domiciled students applying to ROI HEIs has been increasing year on year since 2010/11, to a figure of 1,375 in 2013/14. The number of ROI domiciled students applying to NI HEIs remains higher than the number of NI domiciled students applying to ROI HEIs.

The number of ROI domiciled nett acceptances, while fluctuating over the five year period, has decreased by 10.6%, from 425 in 2009/10 to 380 in 2013/14. Correspondingly, the number of NI domiciled nett acceptances, while fluctuating over the five year period, has increased by 23.2%, from 225 in 2009/10 to 275 in 2013/14. Despite the decrease in ROI domiciled nett acceptances in NI HEIs and the increase in NI domiciled nett acceptances in ROI HEIs, ROI at NI acceptances remain higher than NI at ROI.

2.2 Cross Border Full-Time Undergraduate Applicants

2.2.1 Gender

Historically, there have been more ROI domiciled females than males applying to full-time undergraduate courses in NI HEIs. This is also true for the subsequent nett acceptance² figures.

Over the last five years the gender gap has widened for ROI domiciled students applying to full-time undergraduate courses at NI HEIs. In 2009/10 females accounted for 60.5% (1,080) of ROI students applying to NI HEIs increasing to 70.0% (1,225) in 2013/14. In comparison, males accounted for 39.5% (705) in 2009/10, decreasing to 30.0% (525) in 2013/14.

Table 2: Cross Border Full-Time Undergraduate Applicants and Nett Acceptances by Gender, 2009/10-2013/14

	ROI Domiciled at NI HEIs						NI Domiciled at ROI HEIs					
	Applicants			Nett Acceptances			Applicants			Nett Acceptances		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2009/10	705	1,080	1,785	150	270	425	430	655	1,085	105	120	225
2010/11	920	1,465	2,390	210	290	495	305	510	815	65	115	180
2011/12	705	1,305	2,010	140	240	385	365	615	980	90	125	215
2012/13	635	1,175	1,810	160	240	400	520	785	1,305	120	165	285
2013/14	525	1,225	1,745	135	245	380	525	850	1,375	110	165	275

Source: UCAS data & CAO data

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' applicants.

In 2013/14, females accounted for 64.6% (245) of ROI domiciled nett acceptances to full-time undergraduate courses in a NI HEI, with 35.4% (135) males. The corresponding 2009/10 figures show that females made up 64.3% (270), with 35.7% (150) males.

Of all the ROI domiciled males who applied to NI HEIs in 2013/14, 25.6% accepted a place, this compares to 20.0% of females who applied in the same year. Comparative 2009/10 figures show that 21.4% of males who applied accepted a place, and 25.1% of females who applied accepted a place.

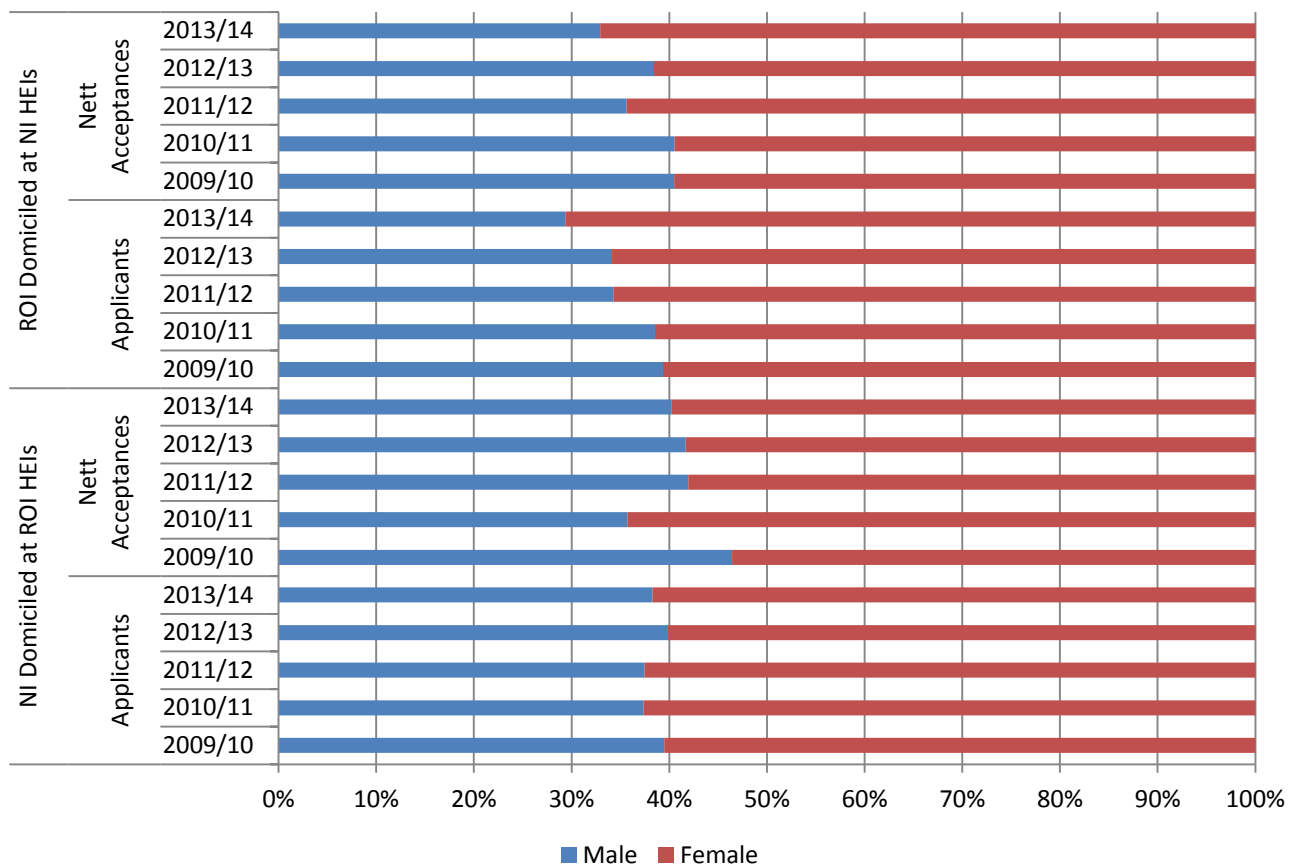
These figures show that a higher proportion of the males that apply are accepting a place than five years previous and also that a lower proportion of females that apply are accepting a place than five years previous.

² Nett acceptance is described as the final acceptance recorded for an applicant. This means that the applicant received one or more offers and accepted at least one. If more than one offer was accepted, the nett acceptance is the last one accepted and the only course the applicant can register on.

The number of nett acceptances from NI students to ROI HEIs has increased by 23.2% from 225 in 2009/10 to 275 in 2013/14, but declined by 2.5% from 285 in 2012/13 to 275 in 2013/14. The proportion of nett acceptances that are male has declined from 46.4% in 2009/10 to 40.2% in 2013/14.

Overall there has been no substantial change in the five year period in the proportion of applicants accepting a place with 20.1% of applicants accepting a place in 2013/14. It is important to note that not all applicants will have been offered a place. A greater proportion of males that applied in 2013/14 accepted an offer with 21.1% accepting a place, while just 19.5% of females that applied accepted in 2013/14. In 2009/10, 24.3% of males that applied accepted while the proportion of females accepting was 18.3%.

Figure 3: Gender Breakdown for Full-Time Undergraduate ROI Domiciled Applicants and Nett Acceptances to NI HEIs, 2009/10 - 2013/14



2.2.2 Age

UCAS data is presented in this section only. Corresponding data is not available from CAO and therefore age data is only provided for ROI domiciled nett acceptances to NI HEIs.

There was an increase in the number of ROI domiciled applicants who were aged '20 and under' in 2010/11 (1,810) compared to 2009/10 (1,290), but this has been steadily decreasing since and has now reached the lowest figure for the last five years (1,275). The number of applicants in the '21-24' age group has declined by 25.1% over the last five years, while the number of applicants aged '25 and over' has increased by more than a third (37.9%) over the same period.

In 2013/14, 73.1% (1,275) of all ROI domiciled students applying to a full-time undergraduate course at a NI HEI were aged '20 and under', 14.8% (260) were in the '21-24' age group and 12.1% (210) were aged '25 and over'. The corresponding figures for 2009/10 show that 72.1% (1,290) were aged '20 and under', 19.4% (345) were in the '21-24' age group and 8.6% (155) were aged '25 and over'.

The number of ROI domiciled nett acceptances to NI HEIs aged '25 and over' has increased over the last five year period, from 35 in 2009/10 to 60 in 2013/14.

Table 3: Cross Border Full-Time Undergraduate Applicants and Nett Acceptances by Age, 2009/10-2013/14

Year	ROI Domiciled at NI HEIs							
	Applicants				Nett Acceptances			
	≤20	21-24	≥25	Total	≤20	21-24	≥25	Total
2009/10	1,290	345	155	1,785	305	85	35	425
2010/11	1,810	355	225	2,390	345	90	55	495
2011/12	1,555	265	195	2,010	260	50	70	385
2012/13	1,335	270	205	1,810	290	50	65	400
2013/14	1,275	260	210	1,745	265	55	60	380

Source: UCAS data

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' applicants.

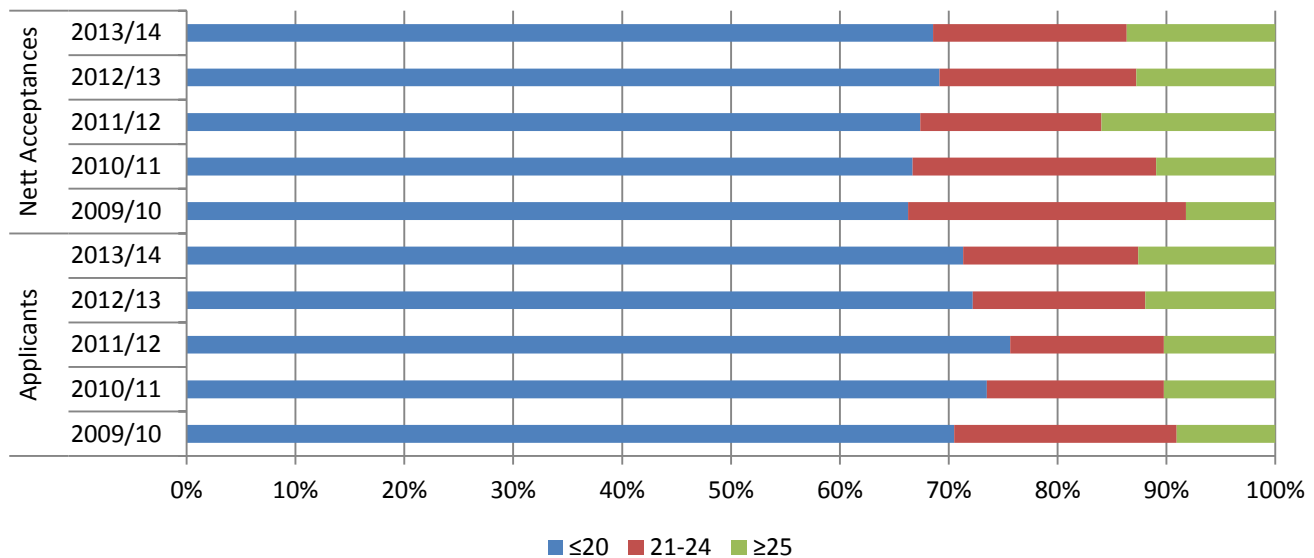
In 2013/14, 70.1% (265) of all ROI domiciled nett acceptances to a full-time undergraduate course at a NI HEI were aged '20 and under', 14.0% (55) were in the '21-24' age group and 15.9% (60) were aged '25 and over'. The corresponding figures for 2009/10 show that 72.6% (305) were aged '20 and under', 19.6% (85) were in the '21-24' age group and 7.8% (35) were aged '25 and over'.

Of all the ROI domiciled students aged '20 and under' who applied to NI HEIs in 2013/14, 20.8% accepted a place. Comparatively, 20.5% of those aged '21-24' who

applied accepted a place, and 28.4% of those aged '25 and over' who applied accepted a place. Corresponding data for 2009/10 show that 23.8% of those aged '20 and under' that applied accepted a place, 24.0% of those aged '21-24' that applied accepted a place, and 21.6% of those aged '25 and over' that applied accepted a place.

These figures show that a much higher proportion of those ROI domiciled students aged '25 and over' that apply to NI HEIs are accepting a place than in 2009/10. Conversely, a lower proportion of those aged '20 and under' or '21-24' are accepting a place than in 2009/10.

Figure 4: Age Breakdown for Full-Time Undergraduate ROI Domiciled Applicants and Nett Acceptances to NI HEIs, 2009/10 - 2013/14



2.2.3 Subject Area

In terms of subject area, figures are presented for nett acceptances only. This is because applicant data is not available by subject area from either UCAS or CAO. Furthermore, due to the fact that UCAS and CAO use different classifications of subject areas, they are presented in separate tables.

The most popular subject areas of nett acceptances of ROI domiciled students to NI HEIs has remained fairly constant over the five year period, with 'Subjects Allied to Medicine' being the most popular subject choice. The 2013/14 breakdown of the most popular subject areas had 'Subjects Allied to Medicine' top with 38.4% (145) of ROI domiciled nett acceptances, followed by 'Biological Sciences' (8.7%, 35) and 'Veterinary Sciences, Agriculture & Related Subjects' and 'Creative Arts & Design' each with 8.5% (30).

Table 4: ROI Domiciled Full-Time Undergraduate Nett Acceptances to NI HEIs by Subject Area, 2009/10-2013/14

Subject Area	Nett Acceptances				
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Medicine & Dentistry	5	15	10	10	5
Subjects Allied to Medicine	110	140	125	130	145
Biological Sciences	45	60	40	55	35
Veterinary Sciences, Agriculture & Related Subjects	40	30	40	25	30
Physical Sciences	15	25	20	15	15
Mathematical Sciences	0	0	0	0	0
Engineering	30	40	20	15	10
Computer Sciences	15	15	15	20	15
Technologies	5	5	5	5	0
Architecture, Building & Planning	15	10	5	5	5
Social Studies	15	15	15	20	10
Law	5	5	5	10	5
Business & Administrative Studies	35	40	30	20	25
Mass Communication & Documentation	10	10	5	0	5
Linguistics, Classics & Related Subjects	10	15	5	5	10
European Languages, Literature & Related Subjects	0	5	0	0	0
Eastern, Asiatic, African, American & Australasian Languages, Literature & Related Subjects	0	0	0	0	0
Historical & Philosophical Studies	15	10	0	10	0
Creative Arts & Design	30	30	30	25	30
Education	5	0	0	0	0
Combined Arts	5	15	5	5	5
Combined Sciences	5	5	5	10	10
Combined Social Sciences	0	0	0	0	0
Sciences Combined with Social Sciences or Arts	0	0	0	0	0
Social Sciences Combined with Arts	5	5	5	5	5
General, Other Combined & Unknown	0	0	0	5	5
Total	425	495	385	400	380

Source: UCAS data

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' applicants.

The highest proportion of acceptances by NI students to ROI institutions is in the discipline area of 'Arts/Social Science' with 30.4% of all NI acceptances in 2013/14. This is followed by 'Engineering/Technology' (12.7%), 'Science/Applied Science' (12.3%) and 'Administration/Business' which accounted for 12.0% of nett acceptances. The discipline choices have remained fairly stable over the last 5 years.

There was an increase of 64.7% in the number of nett acceptances to 'Arts/Social Science' over the five year period, from 50 in 2009/10 to 85 in 2013/14. This

accounts for the majority of the increase in total nett acceptances of NI domiciled students at ROI HEIs over the five year period.

Table 5: NI Domiciled Full-Time Undergraduate Nett Acceptances to ROI HEIs by Subject Area, 2009/10-2013/14

Subject Area	Nett Acceptances of NI at ROI HEIs				
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Arts/Social Science	50	55	75	80	85
Science/Applied Science	25	20	35	45	35
Agriculture/Horticulture	0	0	0	0	0
Education	0	0	0	0	0
Administration/Business	30	25	25	45	35
Engineering/Technology	20	15	15	35	35
Architecture	0	0	0	5	0
Art & Design	0	5	5	5	5
Law	40	25	25	30	30
Human Science	30	20	15	15	20
Veterinary Science	10	10	5	5	10
Dentistry	5	5	5	5	0
Pharmacy	0	0	0	0	0
Physiotherapy	0	0	0	0	0
Nursing	10	0	10	5	15
Other Health Care	0	5	0	5	0
Built Environment	0	0	0	0	0
Total	225	180	215	285	275

Source: CAO data

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' applicants.

2.2.4 Institution

In terms of institution, figures are presented for nett acceptances only. This is because applicant data is not available by institution from either UCAS or CAO.

In 2013/14, 68.5% (260) of nett acceptances of ROI domiciled applicants were to Ulster University, with a further 22.2% (85) to Queen's University Belfast, 8.7% (35) to the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise and 0.5% to Stranmillis University College. The trend of Ulster University having the most nett acceptances of ROI domiciled applicants is a recurring one.

Table 6: ROI Domiciled Full-Time Undergraduate Nett Acceptances at NI HEIs by Institution, 2009/10-2013/14

Institution	Nett Acceptances				
	2009/ 10	2010/ 11	2011/ 12	2012/ 13	2013/ 14
Queen's University Belfast	55	85	65	60	85
Ulster University	325	380	275	305	260
Stranmillis University College	5	5	0	5	0
The College of Agriculture, Food & Rural Enterprise	40	30	40	30	35
Total	425	495	385	400	380

Source: UCAS data

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' applicants.

Table 7 shows that in 2013/14 79.3% of all NI domiciled full-time undergraduate nett acceptances to the ROI HEIs were to the university sector, decreasing from 83.5% in 2009/10. Nett acceptances to the Institute of Technology sector have grown from 15.6% to 20.4% in the same time period.

Table 7: NI Domiciled Full-Time Undergraduate Nett Acceptances at ROI HEIs by Institution, 2009/10-2013/14

Institution	Nett Acceptances				
	2009/ 10	2010/ 11	2011/ 12	2012/ 13	2013/ 14
Universities	185	145	170	220	215
Institutes of Technology	35	30	40	50	55
Colleges of Primary Education	0	0	0	0	0
Other Institutions	0	5	10	10	5
Total	225	180	215	285	270

Source: CAO data

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' applicants.

2.3 Applicant Data Summary

- The number of ROI domiciled applicants applying to NI HEIs has fallen since 2009/10 despite the fact that overall the number of applicants applying to NI HEIs has been increasing. The number of NI domiciled applicants applying to ROI HEIs has been increasing since 2010/11.
- Of all full-time undergraduate applicants in 2013/14 to NI HEIs, 7.4% (1,745) were from the ROI, while 1.8% (1,375) of all applicants to ROI HEIs were NI domiciled applicants.
- The percentage of all ROI domiciled applicants to NI HEIs that are female has been increasing over the last five years and reached 70.0% in 2013/14. This is also true for nett acceptances; except for in the 2012/13 year in which the percentage of nett acceptances that were female was slightly lower than the previous year. The percentage of all NI domiciled applicants to ROI institutions that are female has been continuously increasing since 2010/11 with 61.7% of applicants in 2013/14. Male applicants have also been increasing. Female nett acceptances increased between 2011/12 and 2012/13 and have remained static since at 59.7%, while male nett acceptances have been in decline since 2012/13.
- The majority of ROI domiciled applicants and nett acceptances who applied to NI HEIs were aged '20 and under'. This has been a continuous trend over the last five years.
- 'Subjects Allied to Medicine' has been by far the most popular subject area for ROI domiciled nett acceptances to NI HEIs over the past five years, and in 2013/14 this subject reached 38.4% of ROI domiciled nett acceptances to NI HEIs. 'Arts/Social Science' nett acceptances have been the most popular for NI domiciled applicants to ROI HEIs with 30.4% of all applicants in 2013/14.
- The majority of ROI domiciled applicants and nett acceptances who apply to NI HEIs choose Ulster University, with Queen's University Belfast as the second most popular choice. In 2013/14, 79.2% of all NI domiciled full-time undergraduate nett acceptances to the ROI HEIs were to the university sector, decreasing from 83.4% in 2009/10. Nett acceptances to the Institute of Technology sector have grown from 15.6% to 20.3% in the same time period.

SECTION 3 – HIGHER EDUCATION ENROLMENTS

This section uses data supplied by the UK Higher Education Statistical Agency (HESA) and the ROIs Higher Education Authority (HEA) to provide a descriptive analysis on students enrolled on a full-time or part-time undergraduate or postgraduate course at either a NI HEI or a ROI HEI. The data compares factors such as country of domicile, mode of study, gender, age, subject area and institution and gives a five year time series analysis from the academic year 2008/09 to 2012/13.

This section describes trends over a different five year period than the previous applicant section. Applicant data provides statistics on the number of people applying for the academic year just completed i.e. 2013/14 while enrolment data provides statistics on the academic year previous i.e. 2012/13. This is the most recent data that is available for both sections.

Please note that there is additional higher education provision in Further Education Colleges (FECs) in NI. These figures are not included in the higher education count, but are examined in the further education section (Section 4). All higher education provision in the ROI is confined to their HEIs.

Figures in this section have been rounded to the nearest '5' applicants due to the HESA and HEA rounding policies. Percentages are based on the unrounded figures.

3.1 Total Enrolments to Higher Education Institutions

Although increasing by 7.8% from 48,240 in 2008/09 to 52,000 in 2010/11, enrolments to NI HEIs have remained relatively stable through to 2012/13. The proportion of undergraduates (78.9%) and postgraduates (21.1%) has also remained unchanged over the years.

Enrolments in ROI HEIs have increased by 12.6% in the last five years, from 177,390 in 2008/09 to 199,680 in 2012/13, and are predicted to increase even further. Similar to NI HEIs, the proportion of undergraduates (82.1%) and postgraduates (17.9%) have remained unchanged in the five year timeframe.

Table 8: Total Enrolments to HEIs by Level of Study, 2008/09-2012/13

	NI HEIs			ROI HEIs		
	Undergraduate	Postgraduate	Total	Undergraduate	Postgraduate	Total
2008/09	37,960	10,280	48,240	145,445	31,940	177,390
2009/10	39,855	11,135	50,990	152,945	35,220	188,165
2010/11	40,685	11,315	52,000	158,445	34,740	193,185
2011/12	40,675	11,235	51,905	161,840	34,345	196,185
2012/13	40,780	10,935	51,715	163,850	35,830	199,680

Source: HESA & HEA

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' students.

After NI domiciled students (83.9%), students coming from the ROI (5.5%) account for the highest proportion of all enrolments at NI HEIs. Although fluctuating over the five year period and reaching a high of 4,285 in 2010/11, the number of ROI domiciled students enrolled in NI HEIs has declined by 12.5%, from 3,240 in 2008/09 to 2,835 in 2012/13; and as a proportion of all NI enrolments, ROI domiciled enrolments in NI HEIs declined from 6.7% to 5.5% in 2012/13.

ROI domiciled students make up the largest cohort of students enrolled in ROI HEIs, increasing from 91.3% in 2008/09 to 92.3% in 2012/13. Students from countries outside the UK make up the next highest proportion of enrolments at 6.6% in 2012/13. The number of students enrolling from NI has remained very stable over the last five years and currently stands at just 0.5% of all enrolments.

Table 9: Total Enrolments to HEIs by Domicile, 2008/09-2012/13

Domicile	NI HEIs					ROI HEIs				
	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Northern Ireland	41,700	43,670	43,960	43,260	43,380	1,025	1,170	1,050	985	980
Republic of Ireland	3,240	3,800	4,285	3,520	2,835	161,970	173,860	178,925	183,015	184,395
Other UK	1215	1,245	1,360	1,765	1,960	1,445	1,480	1,480	1,240	1,340
Other	2,085	2,275	2,395	3,360	3,545	12,955	11,655	11,730	10,945	12,965
Total	48,240	50,990	52,000	51,905	51,715	177,390	188,165	193,185	196,185	199,680

Source: HESA & HEA

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' students.

3.2 Cross Border Enrolments to Higher Education Institutions

There has been a decline in both the number and proportion of enrolments to NI HEIs of ROI domiciled students in the last five years. In the 2012/13 academic year, there were 40,780 undergraduate enrolments at NI HEIs, of which 3.9% (1,575) were from the ROI; 11.5% (1,260) of all postgraduate enrolments to NI HEIs were from ROI domiciled students. The comparable figures for 2008/09 show that 4.3% (1,650) of all undergraduate enrolments to NI HEIs were from ROI domiciled students; 15.5% (1,595) of all postgraduate enrolments to NI HEIs were from ROI domiciled students.

In the 2012/13 academic year, 55.5% (1,575) of ROI domiciled enrolments to NI HEIs were on an undergraduate course, with 44.5% (1,260) enrolling on postgraduate courses. The comparable figures for 2008/09 show that 50.8% (1,650) of ROI domiciled enrolments to NI HEIs were on an undergraduate course, with 49.2% (1,595) enrolling on postgraduate courses.

In 2012/13, there were 163,850 undergraduate enrolments in ROI HEIs, of which 0.5% were from NI. Undergraduate enrolments in ROI HEIs from NI domiciled students decreased by 13.5% from 2008/09 to 2012/13, representing a decrease of 120 students. Postgraduate enrolments increased by 49%, an increase of 75 students.

In the most recent year (2012/13), the number of undergraduate ROI domiciled students enrolling in NI HEIs (1,575) was more than double the number of undergraduate NI domiciled students enrolling in ROI HEIs (755). More noticeably, the number of postgraduate ROI domiciled students enrolling in NI HEIs (1,260) was over five times higher than the number of postgraduate NI domiciled students enrolling in ROI HEIs (255).

Table 10: Cross Border Enrolments by Level of Study, 2008/09-2012/13

	ROI at NI HEIs			NI at ROI HEIs		
	Undergraduate	Postgraduate	Total	Undergraduate	Postgraduate	Total
2008/09	1,650	1,595	3,240	870	150	1,025
2009/10	1,945	1,855	3,800	925	250	1,170
2010/11	2,450	1,835	4,285	855	195	1,050
2011/12	2,020	1,500	3,520	770	215	985
2012/13	1,575	1,260	2,835	755	225	980

Source: HESA & HEA

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' students.

3.2.1 Cross Border Undergraduate Enrolments

3.2.1.1 Mode of Study

Despite fluctuating over the five year period, the number of ROI domiciled undergraduate enrolments at NI HEIs decreased from 1,650 in 2008/09 to 1,575 in 2012/13, a decrease of 4.4%. In comparison, NI domiciled undergraduate student enrolments at ROI HEIs also decreased but by 13.5% over the same period, from 870 in 2008/09 to 755 in 2012/13.

The fluctuation in the trend of the total number of undergraduate enrolments of ROI domiciled students in NI HEIs is largely accounted for by changes in the number of part-time enrolments. Between 2008/09 and 2010/11, the number of part-time enrolments of ROI domiciled students in NI HEIs more than doubled, from 590 to 1,430. This same cohort then more than halved to 635 in 2012/13.

Table 11: Cross Border Undergraduate Enrolments by Mode of Study, 2008/09-2012/13

Year	ROI Domiciled at NI HEIs			NI Domiciled at ROI HEIs		
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Total	Full-Time	Part-Time	Total
2008/09	1,060	590	1,650	745	130	870
2009/10	965	980	1,945	790	130	925
2010/11	1,020	1,430	2,450	710	145	855
2011/12	955	1,065	2,020	690	85	770
2012/13	940	635	1,575	655	100	755

Source: HESA & HEA

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' students.

Of the 1,575 ROI domiciled undergraduate students at NI HEIs in 2012/13, over half (59.8%, 940) were studying full-time with 40.2% (635) part-time. This compares to 64.2% (1,060) full-time and 35.8% (590) part-time during 2008/09. These figures show a 4.4 percentage point 'swing' from full-time to part-time over the five year period. Between 2009/10 and 2011/12 there were more ROI domiciled students enrolling on part-time courses in NI HEIs than enrolling on full-time courses.

The comparable figures for NI domiciled undergraduate students at ROI HEIs show that 86.9% (655) studied full-time and 13.1% (100) part-time during the 2012/13 academic year, compared to 85.2% (745) full-time and 14.8% (130) part-time over the 2008/09 academic year – a relatively stable position over the five year period.

3.2.1.2 Gender

Historically, there have been more undergraduate females than males from ROI who enrol on NI HEI courses and also more females from NI who enrol on ROI HEI courses (Table 12 & Figure 5).

In the 2012/13 academic year, females accounted for 66.3% (1,045) of ROI domiciled students enrolled on undergraduate courses in NI HEIs, with 33.7% (530) males. The corresponding 2008/09 figures show that females made up 62.9% (1,035) with 37.1% (610) males. These figures show that, over the five year period, the gender gap has widened for ROI domiciled students enrolled on undergraduate courses in NI HEIs.

Table 12: Cross Border Undergraduate Enrolments by Gender, 2008/09-2012/13

Year	ROI Domiciled at NI HEIs			NI Domiciled at ROI HEIs		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2008/09	610	1,035	1,650	365	505	870
2009/10	710	1,235	1,945	395	530	925
2010/11	800	1,650	2,450	355	500	855
2011/12	665	1,355	2,020	340	435	770
2012/13	530	1,045	1,575	310	445	755

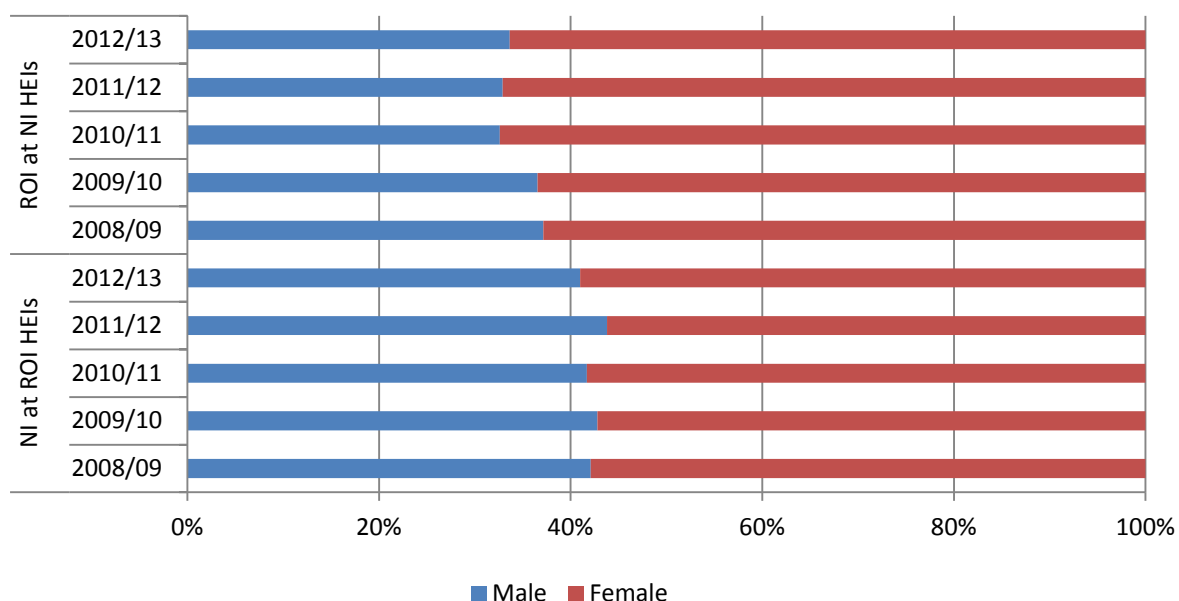
Source: HESA & HEA

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' students.

The gender breakdown for NI domiciled students enrolled on undergraduate courses in ROI HEIs in the 2012/13 academic year was 59.0% (445) female and 41.0% (310) male. The equivalent 2008/09 figures show the gender breakdown as 57.9% (505) female and 42.1% (365) male.

Similar to the ROI domiciled at NI HEIs, but not to the same extent, these figures show the gender gap has widened for NI domiciled students enrolled on undergraduate courses in ROI HEIs. Overall the gender breakdown for undergraduate enrolments in the ROI is 50:50, whereas 56.3% of all undergraduate enrolments to NI HEIs are female.

Figure 5: Gender Breakdown for Undergraduate ROI Domiciled Students at NI HEIs and NI Domiciled Students at ROI HEIs, 2008/09 - 2012/13



3.2.1.3 Age

More ROI domiciled students aged ‘25 and over’ are accessing higher education in NI than five years ago. In the 2012/13 academic year, 28.8% (455) of all ROI domiciled students enrolled on undergraduate courses at NI HEIs were aged ‘20 and under’, 20.4% (320) were in the ‘21-24’ age group and 50.9% (800) were aged ‘25 and over’. The corresponding figures for 2008/09 show that 32.5% (535) were aged ‘20 and under’, 27.4% (450) were in the ‘21-24’ age group and 40.1% (660) were aged ‘25 and over’.

Table 13: Cross Border Undergraduate Enrolments by Age, 2008/09-2012/13

Year	ROI Domiciled at NI HEIs				NI Domiciled at ROI HEIs			
	≤20	21-24	≥25	Total	≤20	21-24	≥25	Total
2008/09	535	450	660	1,650	420	285	170	870
2009/10	490	435	1,020	1,945	400	350	175	925
2010/11	525	420	1,500	2,450	310	375	170	855
2011/12	455	380	1,185	2,020	300	355	115	770
2012/13	455	320	800	1,575	315	300	140	755

Source: HESA & HEA

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest ‘5’ students.

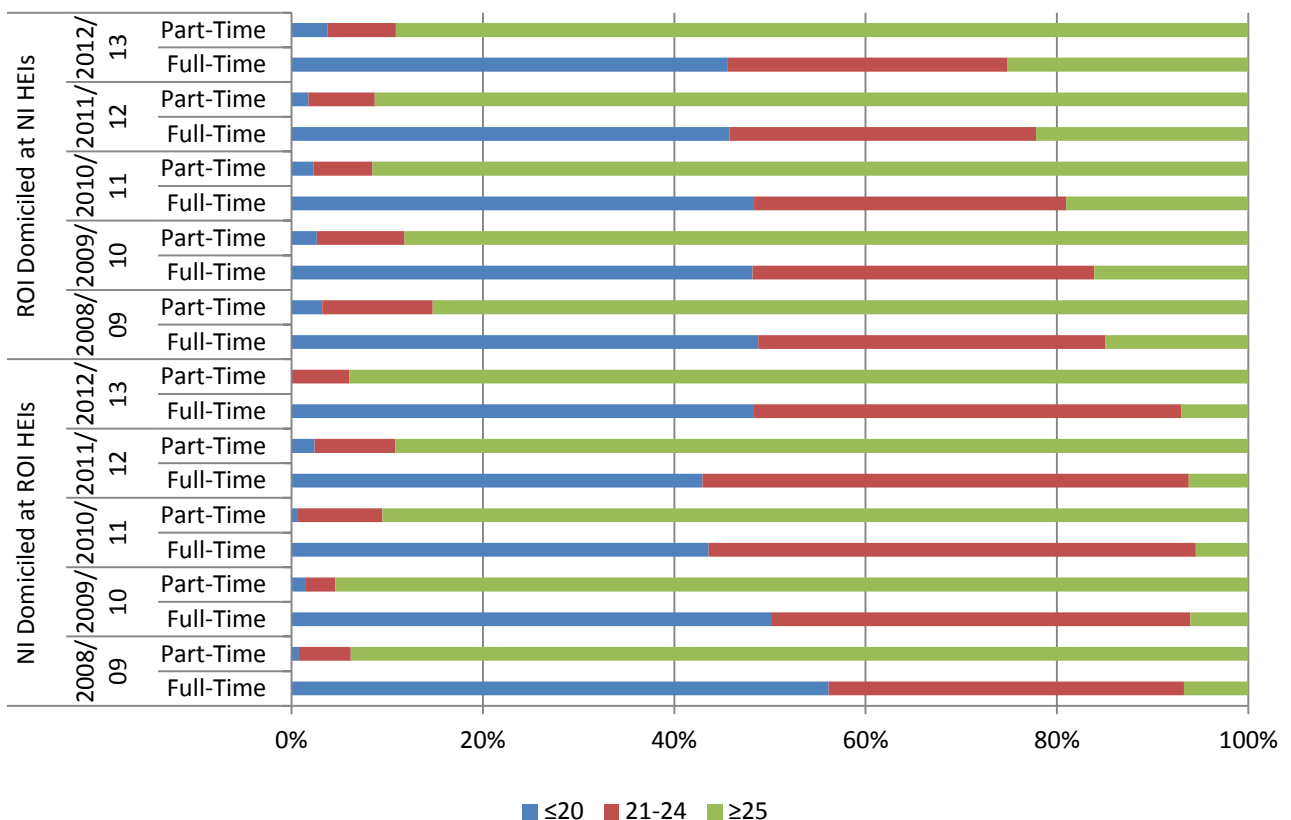
A higher proportion of NI domiciled enrolments at ROI HEIs are aged ‘21-24’ than five years ago. In the 2012/13 academic year, 41.9% (315) of all NI domiciled students enrolled on undergraduate courses at ROI HEIs were aged ‘20 and under’, 39.7% (300) were in the ‘21-24’ age group and 18.4% (140) were aged ‘25 and over’.

The corresponding figures for 2008/09 show that 47.9% (420) were aged '20 and under', 32.5% (285) were in the '21-24' age group and 19.6% (170) were aged '25 and over'.

The data shows substantial difference in the age profile of students from NI attending ROI institutions and students from ROI accessing higher education in NI institutions in 2012/13. The majority of ROI students enrolling in NI HEIs are aged '25 and over' at 50.9% while the highest proportion of NI students enrolling in ROI institutions are aged '20 and under' at 41.9%.

Figure 6 shows that there are substantial differences in the age group breakdown between those studying full-time and those studying part-time. In 2012/13, 25.2% (235) of ROI domiciled students studying full-time at NI HEIs were aged '25 and over'; this compares to 89.1% (565) at part-time. A similar pattern is seen for those travelling from NI to ROI institutions with 7.0% (45) aged '25 and over' studying full-time compared to 93.9% (95) studying part-time who were aged '25 and over'. A further table (Table 13A) for a full-time/part-time split of cross border undergraduate enrolments by age can be found at Appendix 2.

Figure 6: Age Breakdown for Undergraduate ROI Domiciled Students at NI HEIs and NI Domiciled Students at ROI HEIs, 2008/09 - 2012/13



3.2.1.4 Subject Area

The HESA and the HEA both use different classifications of subject areas. To make the two comparable the subject areas had to be re-coded so that both countries could be compared. The re-coding strategy can be found at Annex A.

The 2012/13 breakdown of the most popular subject areas had 'Business & Administrative Studies' top with 25.8% (405) of ROI domiciled undergraduate enrolments, followed by 'Subjects Allied to Medicine' making up 22.3% (350), then 'Biological Sciences' with 8.3% (130) and 'Languages' with 6.2% (95). The fluctuation in the overall figure for ROI domiciled undergraduate enrolments at NI HEIs in the five year period was largely accounted for by the changes in enrolments to 'Business & Administrative Studies' which more than tripled between 2008/09 and 2010/11, from 325 to 1,080; it then more than halved by 2012/13 to 405.

'Engineering & Technology' and 'Architecture, Building & Planning' both saw substantial decreases in enrolments over the five year period for ROI domiciled students enrolling at NI HEIs, and largely account for the overall decrease in enrolments.

Table 14: Cross Border Undergraduate Enrolments by Subject Area, 2008/09-2012/13

Subject Area	ROI Domiciled at NI HEIs					NI Domiciled at ROI HEIs				
	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Medicine & Dentistry	35	35	50	450	50	160	165	150	125	95
Subjects Allied to Medicine	325	335	395	335	350	50	55	150	50	50
Biological Sciences	120	110	115	120	130	15	15	15	20	20
Veterinary Sciences	0	0	0	0	0	50	55	55	55	45
Agriculture & Related Subjects	10	5	10	15	10	5	5	5	5	5
Physical Sciences	45	35	35	35	30	10	15	15	15	15
Mathematical Science	0	0	0	0	5	20	20	15	15	20
Computer Science	35	40	35	40	40	20	15	15	15	15
Engineering & Technology	135	110	110	95	75	30	25	25	30	25
Architecture, Building & Planning	130	100	75	50	30	20	30	50	30	25
Social Studies (ROI Social, Economic & Political Studies)	90	95	100	100	85	55	60	55	65	65
Law	15	20	20	15	20	95	90	80	75	80
Business & Administrative Studies	325	705	1,080	795	405	75	75	75	85	85
Mass Communications & Documentation (ROI Librarianship & Information Science)	20	20	25	20	10	0	0	0	0	0
Languages	135	135	130	110	95	50	40	30	20	25
Historical & Philosophical Studies (ROI Humanities)	30	35	35	35	30	100	35	20	25	20
Creative Arts & Design	115	105	95	80	85	35	45	45	85	75
Education	80	60	130	105	80	10	10	10	5	10
Combined	0	0	0	30	35	0	0	0	5	0
200 Combined Arts & Humanities	0	0	0	0	0	20	95	90	40	65
400 Combined Science, Mathematics & Computing	0	0	0	0	0	10	15	10	10	15
900 Combination across Fields of Education	0	0	0	0	0	5	10	10	0	0
910 Combination of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, Business Law	0	0	0	0	0	40	45	35	0	0
Total	1,650	1,945	2,450	2,020	1,575	870	925	855	770	755

* Due to the different subject classification systems used in the two countries, subject areas may not match exactly. The classification of subject areas used in ROI (ISCED) have been re-coded as best possible to match the UK's JACS subject classification system. This coding system can be found in Annex A.

Source: HESA & HEA

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' students.

The most popular subject areas studied by undergraduate NI domiciled students at ROI HEIs has had slightly more variance over the five year period, however 'Medicine & Dentistry' has remained the most popular subject for NI domiciled undergraduate students at ROI HEIs. The 2012/13 breakdown of the most popular subject areas had 'Medicine & Dentistry' top with 12.7% (95) of NI domiciled undergraduate enrolments, followed by 'Business & Administrative Studies' making up 11.0% (85), 'Law' with 10.7% (80) and 'Creative Arts & Design' with 9.8% (75).

3.2.1.5 Institution

In 2012/13, 79.4% (1,250) of ROI domiciled undergraduate students opting to study in NI chose Ulster University. This trend of Ulster University being the dominant choice with ROI domiciled undergraduate students is consistent over the five year period and has shown growth from 73.5% (1,210) in 2008/09. Queen's University Belfast accounted for 17.9% (280) of ROI domiciled undergraduate enrolments at NI HEIs in 2012/13, down from 23.2% (385) in 2008/09. Stranmillis College and St Mary's College account for a small percentage of the total number of ROI domiciled undergraduate enrolments at NI HEIs, ranging from 1.0% to 2.4% over the five year period.

Table 15: ROI Domiciled Undergraduate Enrolments at NI HEIs by Institution, 2008/09-2012/13

Institution	2008/ 09	2009/ 10	2010/ 11	2011/ 12	2012/ 13
Universities					
Queen's University Belfast	385	270	370	295	280
Ulster University	1,210	1,615	2,010	1,665	1,250
Teacher Training Colleges					
Stranmillis University College	30	30	40	35	25
St Mary's University College	20	30	30	25	15
Total	1,650	1,945	2,450	2,020	1,575

Source: HESA

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' students.

The analysis of the last five years of NI domiciled undergraduate students studying at ROI HEIs shows that the majority of the total number of students go to two universities, namely Trinity College Dublin and University College Dublin. The percentage of the total that went to these two universities has reduced over the five year period with 71.0% (620) attending in 2008/09 dropping to 63.5% (480) in 2012/13. Over the five year period the proportion of undergraduate enrolments attending the Institutes of Technology has increased from 10.8% in 2008/09 to 23.1% in 2012/13. Of these enrolments to Institutes of Technology, 89.4% attended IT Sligo, Dundalk Institute of Technology and Letterkenny Institute of Technology in 2008/09, compared to 78.2% in 2012/13. Dundalk Institute of Technology almost doubled its intake of NI domiciled undergraduate students from 40 in 2008/09 to 80

in 2012/13. Mater Dei Institute of Education enrolled 50 students from NI in 2012/13, all of which are enrolled part-time on the Theology and Lifelong Education Programme.

Table 16: NI Domiciled Undergraduate Enrolments at ROI HEIs by Institution, 2008/09-2012/13

Institution	2008/ 09	2009/ 10	2010/ 11	2011/ 12	2012/ 13
Universities					
Dublin City University	20	0	0	5	0
National University of Ireland, Galway	25	35	60	30	10
National University of Ireland, Maynooth	15	15	10	15	15
Trinity College Dublin	335	335	295	260	245
University College Cork	5	10	5	5	10
University College Dublin	280	295	260	250	235
University of Limerick	10	5	0	5	5
Institutes of Technology					
Dublin Institute of Technology	0	25	25	15	15
Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology	0	0	0	0	0
Dundalk IT	40	40	45	55	80
Cork IT	0	0	0	0	0
Galway-Mayo IT	5	5	0	0	5
IT Blanchardstown	0	0	0	0	0
IT Carlow	0	0	5	5	10
IT Sligo	5	5	5	20	15
IT Tallaght	0	0	0	0	0
Letterkenny IT	35	25	30	25	40
Limerick IT	0	5	0	0	0
Waterford IT	0	0	0	0	5
Tipperary Institute	0	0	0	0	0
Teacher Training Colleges					
Mater Dei Institute, Clonliffe Road, Dublin 3.	65	90	75	35	50
St. Patricks College Drumcondra	0	0	0	0	5
St. Angelas College of Home Economics, Sligo	0	5	0	5	5
Other Colleges					
National College of Ireland	5	5	5	20	0
Royal College of Surgeons	0	5	5	5	0
National College of Art and Design	5	20	20	10	0
Total	870	925	855	770	755

Source: HEA

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' students.

3.2.1.6 County of Origin

Of the 655 full-time undergraduate enrolments of NI domiciled students in ROI institutions in 2012/13, 57.9% came from Counties Down and Antrim. This proportion has increased from 54.6% in 2008/09. (Table 17)

This may not be exactly as we would expect as County Antrim is the county that is furthest away from the border, however it does include Belfast which has a high population density.

Table 17: NI Domiciled Full-Time Undergraduate Enrolments at ROI HEIs by County, 2008/09-2012/13

County	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Antrim (incl. Belfast)	190	210	190	175	165
Armagh	75	60	60	65	55
Derry	90	100	90	85	75
Down	215	230	210	200	210
Fermanagh	60	75	60	65	60
Tyrone	110	115	100	100	90
Total	745	790	710	690	655

Source: HEA

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' students.

An analysis of the subject areas that students from Counties Antrim and Down are enrolling on shows that the majority are enrolled on 'Healthcare', 'Arts and Humanities' and 'Business and Law' courses.

There is no comparable data available from HESA for NI, therefore we are not able to provide tables for ROI domiciled undergraduate enrolments to NI HEIs by county.

3.2.2 Cross Border Postgraduate Enrolments

3.2.2.1 Mode of Study

The number of ROI domiciled postgraduate enrolments in NI HEIs increased from 1,595 in 2008/09 to a high of 1,855 in 2009/10, and then decreased year on year to 1,260 in 2012/13. The number of NI domiciled postgraduate enrolments in ROI HEIs has fluctuated over the years, but overall has increased from 150 in 2008/09 to 225 in 2012/13.

Over the five year period, ROI domiciled enrolments on postgraduate courses in NI HEIs have decreased by 20.9%, while NI domiciled enrolments in ROI HEIs increased by 49.0%, albeit the numbers are much smaller.

Table 18: Cross Border Postgraduate Enrolments by Mode of Study, 2008/09-2012/13

Year	ROI Domiciled at NI HEIs			NI Domiciled at ROI HEIs		
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Total	Full-Time	Part-Time	Total
2008/09	550	1,045	1,595	80	70	150
2009/10	715	1,140	1,855	110	135	250
2010/11	895	940	1,835	90	105	195
2011/12	700	800	1,500	95	120	215
2012/13	545	720	1,260	110	115	225

Source: HESA & HEA

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' students.

Table 18 shows there is a substantial difference in the total number of postgraduate students flowing between the two jurisdictions, with more ROI domiciled postgraduate students at NI HEIs than NI domiciled postgraduate students at ROI HEIs.

Of the ROI domiciled postgraduate students at NI HEIs, 43.1% (545) were studying full-time with 56.9% (720) part-time during the 2012/13 academic year, compared to 34.4% (550) full-time and 65.6% (1,045) part-time for the 2008/09 academic year. These figures show an 8.7 percentage point swing from part-time to full-time over the five year period.

The comparable figures for NI domiciled postgraduate students at ROI HEIs show that 48.4% (110) studied full-time and 51.6% (115) part-time during the 2012/13 academic year, compared to 53.0% (80) full-time and 47.0% (70) part-time for the 2008/09 academic year. This represents a smaller swing of only 4.6 percentage points from full-time to part-time over the five year period. These smaller figures could exaggerate the overall swing, as even a small numerical increase or decrease could have a large effect on the proportions.

3.2.2.2 Gender

The trend of more ROI domiciled females enrolling on postgraduate courses in NI HEIs than males is a recurring one. In the 2012/13 academic year, females accounted for 62.4% (785) of ROI domiciled enrolments on postgraduate courses at NI HEIs, with 37.6% (475) males. The corresponding 2008/09 figures show that females made up 62.1% (990) with 37.9% (605) males, indicating no substantial change over the five year period.

Table 19: Cross Border Postgraduate Enrolments by Gender, 2008/09-2012/13

Year	ROI Domiciled at NI HEIs			NI Domiciled at ROI HEIs		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2008/09	605	990	1,595	80	70	150
2009/10	785	1,065	1,855	125	120	250
2010/11	800	1,040	1,835	95	100	195
2011/12	585	915	1,500	110	105	215
2012/13	475	785	1,260	120	105	225

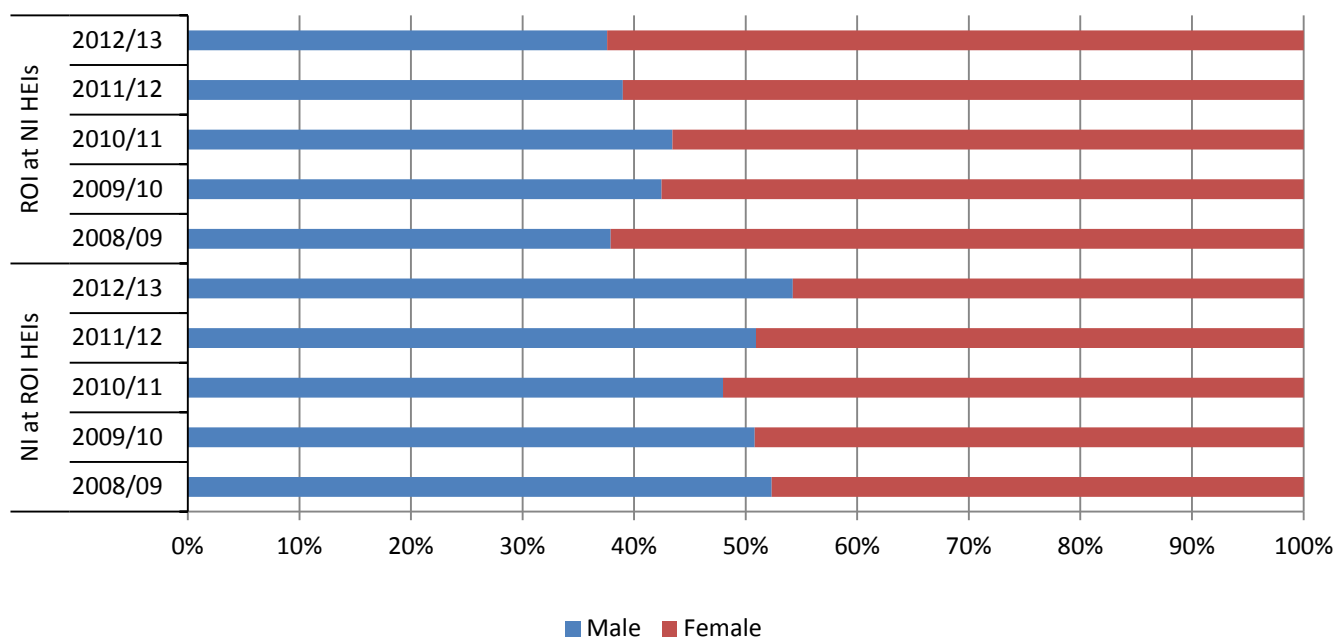
Source: HESA & HEA

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' students.

The gender breakdown for NI domiciled enrolments on postgraduate courses in ROI HEIs in the 2012/13 academic year was 45.8% (105) females and 54.2% (120) males. The corresponding 2008/09 figures show the gender breakdown as 47.7% (70) female and 52.3% (80) male.

The trend of more NI domiciled males enrolling on postgraduate courses in ROI HEIs than females has been consistent over the five years, with the exception of the 2010/11 academic year in which females had 52.0% of enrolments. The data shows that generally more males enrol at postgraduate level than females, while the opposite is true at undergraduate level with 59.0% female and 41.0% male enrolments.

Figure 7: Gender Breakdown for Postgraduate ROI Domiciled Students at NI HEIs and NI Domiciled Students at ROI HEIs, 2008/09 - 2012/13



3.2.2.3 Age

Figures have remained fairly consistent over the five years, with those aged ‘25 and over’ making up about three quarters of ROI domiciled postgraduate enrolments to NI HEIs. In the 2012/13 academic year, 0.4% (5) of all ROI domiciled students enrolled on postgraduate courses at NI HEIs were aged ‘20 and under’, 25.3% (320) were in the ‘21-24’ age group and 74.3% (935) were aged ‘25 and over’. The corresponding figures for 2008/09 show that 0.4% (5) were aged ‘20 and under’, 23.1% (370) were in the ‘21-24’ age group and 76.5% (1,220) were aged ‘25 and over’.

Table 20: Cross Border Postgraduate Enrolments by Age, 2008/09-2012/13

Year	ROI Domiciled at NI HEIs				NI Domiciled at ROI HEIs			
	≤ 20	21-24	≥ 25	Total	≤ 20	21-24	≥ 25	Total
2008/09	5	370	1,220	1,595	0	35	115	150
2009/10	10	550	1,290	1,855	0	60	185	250
2010/11	10	570	1,255	1,835	0	50	150	195
2011/12	15	425	1,060	1,500	0	40	175	215
2012/13	5	320	935	1,260	10	65	150	225

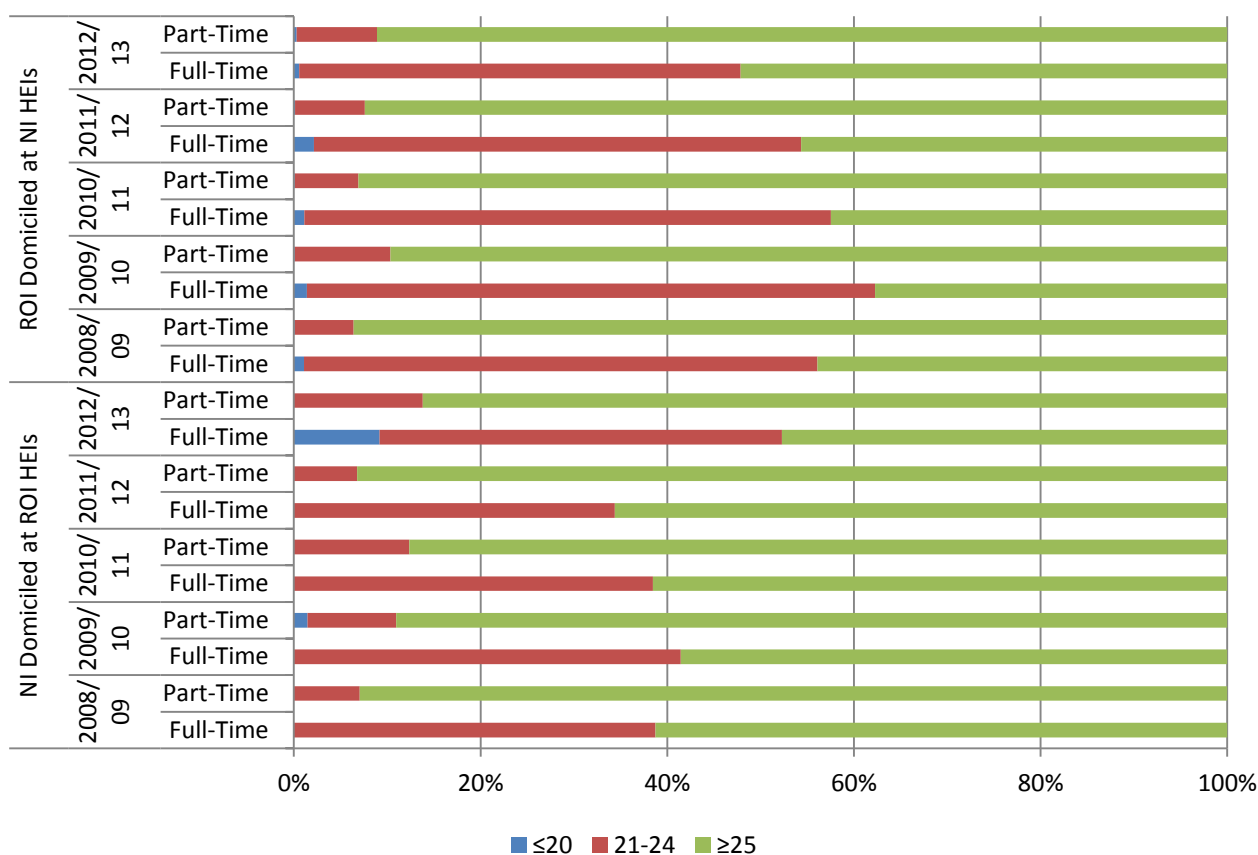
Source: HESA & HEA

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest ‘5’ students.

There have been increases across all age groups of NI domiciled students enrolled on postgraduate courses at ROI HEIs between 2008/09 and 2012/13. In the 2012/13 academic year, 4.4% (10) of all NI domiciled students enrolled on postgraduate courses at ROI HEIs were aged '20 and under', 28.0% (65) were in the '21-24' age group and 67.6% (150) were aged '25 and over'. The corresponding figures for 2008/09 show that none of the NI domiciled postgraduate students at ROI HEIs were aged '20 and under', 23.8% (35) were in the '21-24' age group and 76.2% (115) were aged '25 and over' (Table 20).

Figure 8 shows that there are substantial differences in age group breakdown between those studying full-time and those studying part-time. In 2012/13, 52.1% (285) of ROI domiciled students studying full-time in NI HEIs were aged '25 and over', compared to 91.1% (655) at part-time. A similar pattern is seen for those travelling from NI to ROI institutions with 47.7% (50) aged '25 and over' studying full time, compared to 86.2% (100) studying part-time who were aged '25 and over'. A further table (Table 20A) for a full-time/part-time split of cross border postgraduate enrolments by age can be found at Appendix 3.

Figure 8: Age Breakdown for Postgraduate ROI Domiciled Students at NI HEIs and NI Domiciled Students at ROI HEIs, 2008/09 - 2012/13



3.2.2.4 Subject Area

In 2012/13, the most popular subject area for ROI domiciled students enrolling on a postgraduate course at a NI HEI was 'Education' with 17.6% (220) of enrolments. Second most popular was 'Subjects Allied to Medicine' with 16.1% (205) followed by 'Business & Administrative Studies' with 15.0% (190) and 'Biological Sciences' with 10.0% (125). 'Education' and 'Subjects Allied to Medicine' have remained the two most popular subject areas for ROI domiciled postgraduate students enrolling at NI HEIs throughout the five year period.

ROI domiciled postgraduate enrolments on 'Engineering & Technology' courses declined substantially in 2012/13, where it had only 60 enrolments, compared to 140 in 2008/09 and 230 in 2009/10. There was also a substantial decrease in the number of ROI domiciled postgraduate enrolments on 'Subjects Allied to Medicine' courses over the five year period, from 325 in 2008/09 to 205 in 2012/13.

Table 21: Cross Border Postgraduate Enrolments by Subject Area, 2008/09-2012/13

Subject Area	ROI Domiciled at NI HEIs					NI Domiciled at ROI HEIs				
	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Medicine & Dentistry	15	20	55	20	25	5	10	15	10	10
Subjects Allied to Medicine	325	325	270	245	205	10	15	15	20	15
Biological Sciences	110	135	145	150	125	5	5	5	5	5
Veterinary Sciences	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5
Agriculture & Related Subjects	30	40	20	15	10	5	5	10	5	5
Physical Sciences	115	100	95	80	65	5	5	5	10	10
Mathematical Science	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Computer Science	25	15	15	10	10	5	10	10	5	10
Engineering & Technology	140	230	200	110	60	5	5	5	5	20
Architecture, Building & Planning	80	100	105	45	35	5	5	0	0	0
Social Studies (ROI Social, Economic & Political Studies)	115	155	150	120	120	10	20	10	15	20
Law	45	80	95	70	45	10	10	10	10	5
Business & Administrative Studies	185	205	255	220	190	35	80	45	45	55
Mass Communications & Documentation (ROI Librarianship & Information Science)	35	35	30	25	20	0	0	5	0	0
Languages	35	30	25	20	10	10	10	5	10	5
Historical & Philosophical Studies (ROI Humanities)	25	20	25	25	25	15	25	25	40	35
Creative Arts & Design	70	75	100	100	90	15	15	5	15	15
Education	235	285	255	255	220	5	20	15	5	10
Combined	10	5	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
200 Combined Arts & Humanities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
400 Combined Science, Mathematics & Computing	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
900 Combination across Fields of Education	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	0	0
910 Combination of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, Business Law	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1,595	1,855	1,835	1,500	1,260	150	250	195	215	225

* Due to the different subject classification systems used in the two countries, subject areas may not match exactly. The classification of subject areas used in ROI (ISCED) have been re-coded as best possible to match the UK's JACS subject classification system. This coding system can be found in Annex A.

Source: HESA & HEA

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' students.

The most popular subject areas studied by postgraduate NI domiciled students at ROI HEIs has had slightly more variance over the five year period. 'Business & Administrative Studies' has remained the most popular subject for NI domiciled postgraduate students at ROI HEIs, and 'Historical & Philosophical Studies (ROI Humanities)' has remained second. The other most popular subjects have varied over the five year period.

The 2012/13 breakdown of the most popular subject areas were 'Business & Administrative Studies' accounting for 23.6% (55) of NI domiciled postgraduate enrolments, 'Historical & Philosophical Studies (ROI Humanities)' with 14.7% (35) of NI domiciled postgraduate enrolments, followed by 'Social Studies' and 'Engineering & Technology' each with 8.0% (20).

3.2.2.5 Institution

In 2012/13, 60.1% (760) of all ROI domiciled postgraduate students opting to study in NI chose Ulster University. Ulster University was the primary institution for ROI domiciled postgraduate enrolments over the five year period and has shown a slight decrease from 65.1% (1,035) in 2008/09.

Queen's University Belfast accounted for 37.6% (475) of ROI domiciled postgraduate enrolments at NI HEIs in 2012/13, a higher percentage than that for 2008/09 (34.4%, 550) postgraduate enrolments. Stranmillis College and St Mary's College account for a small percentage of the total number of ROI domiciled postgraduate enrolments at NI HEIs.

Table 22: ROI Domiciled Postgraduate Enrolments at NI HEIs by Institution, 2008/09-2012/13

Institution	2008/ 09	2009/ 10	2010/ 11	2011/ 12	2012/ 13
Universities					
Queen's University Belfast	550	650	760	530	475
Ulster University	1,035	1,200	1,060	950	760
Teacher Training Colleges					
Stranmillis University College	5	5	10	15	15
St Mary's University College	5	5	5	5	10
Total	1,595	1,855	1,835	1,500	1,260

Source: HESA & HEA

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' students.

The analysis of the last five years of NI domiciled postgraduate students studying at ROI HEIs indicates that the majority of enrolments are to two universities, namely Trinity College Dublin and University College Dublin. The percentage of the total that went to these two universities has increased over the five year period, with 51.7% (80) attending in 2008/09 rising to 61.8% (140) in 2012/13.

Table 23: NI Domiciled Postgraduate Enrolments at ROI HEIs by Institution, 2008/09-2012/13

Institution	2008/ 2009	2009/ 2010	2010/ 2011	2011/ 2012	2012/ 2013
Universities					
Dublin City University	5	5	10	5	5
National University of Ireland, Galway	15	15	10	5	5
National University of Ireland, Maynooth	5	10	10	10	5
Trinity College Dublin	40	55	55	65	70
University College Cork	0	5	5	10	10
University College Dublin	40	75	55	65	65
University of Limerick	5	10	5	10	5
Institutes of Technology					
Cork IT	0	0	0	0	5
Dublin Institute of Technology	0	10	15	10	20
Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology	0	0	0	0	0
Dundalk IT	15	5	5	5	5
Galway-Mayo IT	0	0	0	0	0
IT Carlow	0	0	0	0	0
IT Sligo	0	0	0	0	0
IT Tallaght	0	0	0	0	10
IT Tralee	0	0	0	0	0
Letterkenny IT	15	35	25	20	20
Teacher Training Colleges					
Mater Dei Institute, Clonliffe Road, Dublin 3.	0	0	0	0	0
St. Angelas College of Home Economics, Sligo	0	10	0	5	5
St. Patricks College Drumcondra	0	5	0	0	0
Other Colleges					
National College of Art and Design	0	0	0	5	5
Royal College of Surgeons	0	0	0	0	0
Total	150	250	195	215	225

Source: HESA & HEA

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' students.

3.3 Higher Education Summary

General

- ROI domiciled enrolments in NI HEIs decreased by 12.5% from 2008/09 to 2012/13, while during the same period NI domiciled students enrolled in ROI institutions declined by 4.3%.
- ROI domiciled enrolments made up 5.5% of all enrolments to NI HEIs in 2012/13, while NI domiciled enrolments made up 0.5% of all enrolments to ROI HEIs.

Undergraduate

- The number of ROI domiciled students enrolling on undergraduate higher education courses in NI institutions declined by 4.4%, from 1,650 in 2008/09 to 1,575 in 2012/13. Correspondingly, the number of NI domiciled students enrolling on undergraduate higher education courses in the ROI declined by 13.5%, from 870 in 2008/09 to 755 in 2012/13.
- Over half (59.8%) of undergraduate enrolments in NI institutions from the ROI were studying full-time in 2012/13, while the corresponding figure for NI students studying in the ROI is 86.9%.
- Females represented 66.3% of all ROI domiciled enrolments in NI institutions at undergraduate level in 2012/13, and this increased from 62.9% in 2008/09, showing a widening of the gender gap over the five year period. The corresponding figure for NI students enrolled in ROI institutions in 2012/13 was 59.0%.
- Just over half (50.9%) of all undergraduate enrolments in NI institutions from the ROI were '25 and over' in 2012/13, while the corresponding figure for NI students enrolled in the ROI was 18.4%, with the highest proportion of NI enrolments in ROI coming from the '20 and under' age group at 41.9%.
- The most popular subject areas in 2012/13 for ROI domiciled students studying in NI institutions at undergraduate level were 'Business & Administrative Studies' at 25.8%, 'Subjects Allied to Medicine' at 22.3% while the discipline areas were more varied for NI students studying in ROI with 'Medicine & Dentistry' being the most popular at 12.7%, 'Business & Administrative Studies' at 11.0%, Law at 10.7% and 'Creative Arts & Design' at 9.8%.
- Over three quarters (79.4%) of all undergraduates studying in NI from the ROI were studying at Ulster University in 2012/13, while for NI students studying in

ROI the mix is more varied. In 2012/13, 63.5% were studying at Trinity College Dublin and University College Dublin, down from 71.0% in 2008/09. The proportion studying in the Institutes of Technology increased from 10.8% to 23.0% in the five year period, with 89.3% of those studying at IT Sligo, Dundalk IT and Letterkenny IT.

Postgraduate

- The number of ROI domiciled students enrolling in postgraduate courses in NI HEIs declined by 20.9% from 2008/09 to 2012/13, while NI domiciled students taking up postgraduate study in NI increased by 49.0% (albeit smaller numbers).
- In 2012/13, over five times more ROI students enrolled in NI institutions than NI students in ROI institutions at postgraduate level (1,261 compared to 225).
- Under half (43.1%) of postgraduate ROI students studying in NI are studying full-time, while 48.4% of NI students studying in ROI were studying full-time in 2012/13.
- In 2012/13, 62.4% of postgraduate ROI students studying in NI institutions were female compared to 45.8% of NI students in ROI institutions.
- Almost three quarters (74.3%) of ROI domiciled students enrolled on postgraduate courses at NI HEIs in 2012/13 were aged '25 and over'. Slightly less (67.6%) NI domiciled students enrolled on a postgraduate course in ROI HEIs were aged '25 and over'.
- The most popular subject area for ROI domiciled students enrolled at NI HEIs in 2012/13 was 'Education' with 17.6% of enrolments. Correspondingly, the most popular subject area for NI domiciled students enrolled at ROI HEIs in 2012/13 was 'Business & Administrative Studies' with 23.6% of enrolments.
- Over half (60.1%) of ROI students studying at postgraduate level in NI institutions studied at the Ulster University in 2012/13, while 61.8% of NI students chose to study at Trinity College Dublin and University College Dublin.

SECTION 4 – FURTHER EDUCATION ENROLMENTS

This section uses data collected from the Further Education Statistical Record (FESR) to provide a descriptive statistical analysis ROI domiciled student enrolments on both further education level and higher education level courses at NI further education colleges (FECs). The data compares factors such as age, gender and institution and provides a time series analysis from 2008/09 to 2012/13.

There is no reliable data at present on the number of students from NI who attend Further Education and Training (FET) courses in ROI. The data on FET courses in ROI includes the address of each student, but analyses of these addresses by the Department of Education and Skills of participants on the Post-Leaving Certificate courses (i.e. PLC, the largest full time FET course category in ROI) revealed only approximately 20 NI addresses.

This is a small figure and it suggests that many of the students from NI who are attending FET colleges in ROI may be residing in ROI for the duration of their studies. Of course, the address they will give the college at which they are studying is the address at which they can be contacted. As the PLC database does not currently include a contact telephone number, it is not readily possible to derive the number of such students from NI.

The HEA can provide reliable data on the numbers of students from NI studying in higher education colleges in ROI because a question specifically inquiring as to the permanent domicile of each student is included in the registration forms for the sector. The higher education system in ROI attracts a considerable number of students from outside the jurisdiction and it is important from a number of perspectives (financial; capacity etc.) that the education authorities have reliable estimates of the numbers involved.

A similar situation does not apply to the FET system in ROI and traditionally the gathering of data on the domicile of FET students was not dealt with in the same fashion. However, with the creation of SOLAS and a commitment by Government to develop an integrated, transparent and highly effective FET system, in the future a considerably greater volume of data will be systematically collected in respect of all students who attend FET courses in ROI.

A new comprehensive database, the PLSS (Programme and Learner Support System), is currently being developed by SOLAS and it is due to be fully operational in 2017. The PLSS consists of three component databases: the programme database, the course calendar and the learner database. With regard to questions on the domicile of students attending FET courses in ROI, the Learner Database will include the following three questions:

- Nationality defined by citizenship (passport)
- Country of Birth
- Length of residency in the ROI

These are the questions asked by the Central Statistics Office in the ROI Census of Population and it is expected that the answers to these questions will provide comprehensive and reliable data on the number of students from NI participating in FET courses in ROI.

4.1 Total Enrolments to Further Education Colleges

The total number of enrolments in NI FECs, which includes all further education, Essential Skills and higher education in further education irrelevant of whether they are regulated or not, has increased by 7.7% from 176,782 in 2008/09 to 190,344 in 2012/13.

Table 24: Total Enrolments to NI FECs by Domicile, 2008/09-2012/13

Domicile	NI FECs				
	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Northern Ireland	169,662	191,681	180,179	177,896	183,276
Republic of Ireland	3,551	5,137	4,740	5,169	5,260
England	1,778	533	402	200	194
Scotland	14	18	7	17	47
Wales	3	5	0	4	125
Other	1,774	2,203	1,142	1,134	1,442
Total	176,782	199,577	186,470	184,420	190,344

* Domicile is determined from the information supplied by the student at the time of enrolment.

Source: FESR

Under the *Further Education Means Business* strategy, colleges' main priority is to support and strengthen the NI economy. Consequently, colleges' curriculum has a strong economic focus and this has led to an increase in provision of regulated qualifications and a reduction in non-regulated provision.

Regulated enrolments are regarded as those on courses where a qualification is expected. Courses which are excluded from this cohort are typically hobby and leisure, or recreational courses.

Regulated enrolments have fluctuated over the five year period, but remain 10.1% higher in 2012/13 (156,806) than in 2008/09 (142,486).

Table 25: Total Regulated Enrolments to NI FECs by Domicile, 2008/09-2012/13

Domicile	NI FECs				
	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Northern Ireland	136,994	156,637	150,174	147,399	150,716
Republic of Ireland	3,092	4,567	4,142	4,592	4,594
England	773	426	338	178	181
Scotland	6	14	7	15	42
Wales	3	4	0	4	118
Other	1,618	1,702	764	888	1,155
Total	142,486	163,350	155,425	153,076	156,806

Source: FESR

Other than NI domiciled students studying at NI FECs, the largest figure of students coming to NI FECs is that of ROI domiciled students. Similar to the trend of total regulated enrolments to NI FECs, the number of ROI domiciled student enrolments on regulated courses in NI FECs increased by 48.6%, from 3,092 in 2008/09 to 4,594 in 2012/13.

Over the five year period from 2008/09 to 2012/13, ROI domiciled student enrolments have accounted for between 2.2% and 3.0% of the total number of enrolments to NI FECs.

4.2 Cross Border Regulated Enrolments to Further Education (inc. Higher Education in Further Education)

4.2.1.1 Mode of Study

The number of ROI domiciled full-time enrolments on regulated courses in NI FECs has increased year on year to 2011/12 and then decreased in 2012/13, with an overall increase of 26.2%, from 940 in 2008/09 to 1,186 in 2012/13. Correspondingly, the number of part-time enrolments fluctuated, but overall increased by 58.4%, from 2,152 in 2008/09 to 3,408 in 2012/13.

Table 26: Cross Border Regulated Further Education Enrolments to NI FECs by Mode of Study, 2008/09-2012/13

Year	ROI Domiciled at NI FECs		
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Total
2008/09	940	2,152	3,092
2009/10	1,254	3,313	4,567
2010/11	1,301	2,841	4,142
2011/12	1,352	3,240	4,592
2012/13	1,186	3,408	4,594

Source: FESR

Enrolments of ROI domiciled students on both full-time and part-time courses has increased, but enrolments on part-time courses has increased at a higher rate in the last five academic years. Of the 4,594 ROI domiciled student enrolments at NI FECs in 2012/13, just over a quarter (25.8%, 1,186) were studying full-time, with 74.2% (3,408) part-time. This compares to 30.4% (940) full-time and 69.6% (2,152) part-time for 2008/09.

4.2.1.2 Gender

Historically, there have been more females from ROI who enrol in NI FEC courses than males (Table 26 & Figure 9), but over the five year period, the gender gap has narrowed. In the 2012/13 academic year, females accounted for 54.8% (2,518) of ROI domiciled student enrolments on courses in NI FECs, with 45.2% (2,076) males. The corresponding 2008/09 figures show that females made up 61.4% (1,900) with 38.6% (1,192) males.

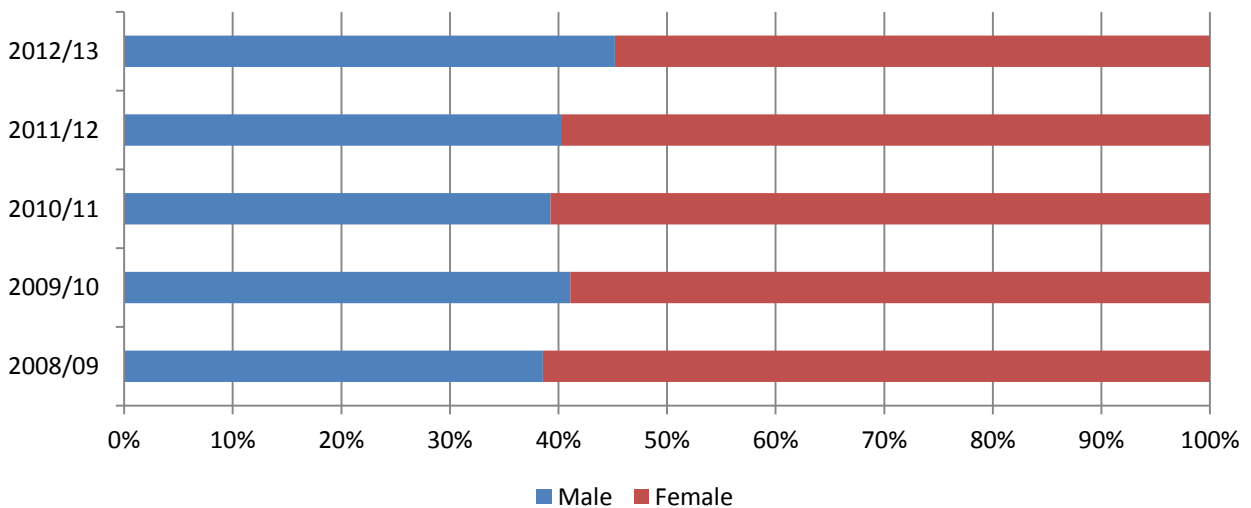
Table 27: Cross Border Regulated Further Education Enrolments to NI FECs by Gender, 2008/09-2012/13

Year	ROI Domiciled at NI FECs		
	Male	Female	Total
2008/09	1,192	1,900	3,092
2009/10	1,876	2,691	4,567
2010/11	1,626	2,516	4,142
2011/12	1,847	2,745	4,592
2012/13	2,076	2,518	4,594

Source: FESR

Both male and female ROI domiciled student enrolments on courses at NI FECs have shown an overall increase over the last five years, with some variation from year to year. The number of ROI domiciled males enrolling on courses in NI FECs has almost doubled over the five academic years, from 1,192 to 2,076.

Figure 9: Gender Breakdown for ROI Domiciled Students on a Further Education Course at NI FECs, 2008/09 - 2012/13



4.2.1.3 Age

In 2012/13, almost half (47.9%, 2,202) of all ROI domiciled student enrolments on courses at NI FECs were aged '20 and under', 16.1% (741) were in the '21-24' age group and 35.9% (1,649) were aged '25 and over'. The corresponding figures for 2008/09 show that 45.1% (1,393) were aged '20 and under', 15.0% (465) were in the '21-24' age group and 39.8% (1,230) were aged '25 and over'. This indicates that more ROI domiciled people aged '20 and under' are accessing further education in NI than five years ago. This is particularly evident between 2008/09 and 2009/10, when enrolments of those aged '20 and under' increased by 57.3%, from 1,393 to 2,191.

Table 28: Cross Border Regulated Further Education Enrolments to NI FECs by Age, 2008/09-2012/13

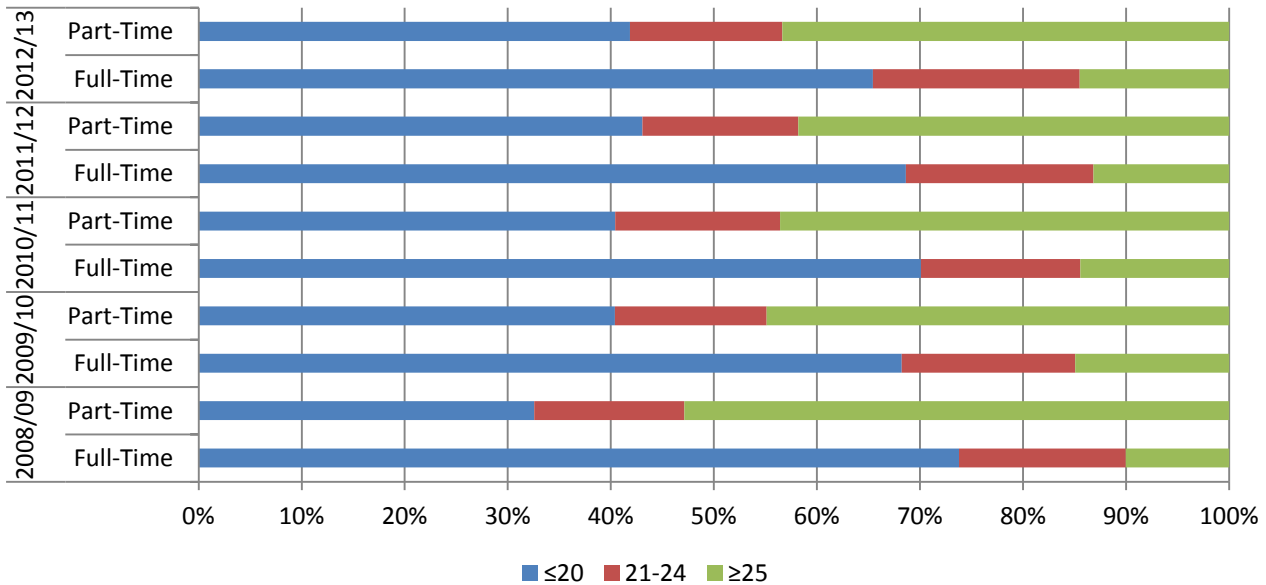
Year	ROI Domiciled at NI FECs				Total
	≤20	21-24	≥25	Unknown	
2008/09	1,393	465	1,230	4	3,092
2009/10	2,191	698	1,672	6	4,567
2010/11	2,059	655	1,425	3	4,142
2011/12	2,322	736	1,531	3	4,592
2012/13	2,202	741	1,649	2	4,594

*There are a few unknown ages because in each year there were students that the date of birth was not provided.

Source: FESR

As we can see from Figure 10, there is a difference between the ages of students who study full-time and part-time. There is a greater proportion of student enrolments that are aged '25 and over' who study part-time compared to full-time. There is also a lower proportion of student enrolments who are aged '20 and under' who study part-time compared to full-time.

Figure 10: Age Breakdown for ROI Domiciled Students at NI FECs, 2008/09 - 2012/13



4.2.1.4 Institution

In 2012/13, the majority (57.0%, 2,620) of ROI domiciled student enrolments were at the North West Regional College. This trend of the North West Regional College being the dominant choice with ROI domiciled students is consistent over the five years, decreasing slightly from 2008/09 (57.4%, 1,774). However, in 2010/11 and 2011/12 the North West Regional College had 73.1% and 67.5% of enrolments respectively, a higher proportion than in other years.

Belfast Metropolitan College, Northern Regional College and South West College have all seen a rise in the number of ROI domiciled student enrolments; however South Eastern Regional College and Southern Regional College have both seen a reduction in the number of ROI domiciled student enrolments. In 2010/11, the proportion of ROI domiciled student enrolments at North West Regional College reached its highest over the five years, with 73.1% of ROI domiciled enrolments.

Table 29: ROI Domiciled Regulated Further Education Enrolments to NI FECs by Institution, 2008/09-2012/13

College	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Belfast Metropolitan	290	709	114	401	580
Northern Regional	9	27	29	73	181
South Eastern Regional	137	71	28	48	19
Southern Regional	546	653	391	390	394
South West	336	454	552	582	800
North West Regional	1,774	2,653	3,028	3,098	2,620
Total	3,092	4,567	4,142	4,592	4,594

Source: FESR

4.2.2 Cross Border Enrolments on Higher Education Courses in Further Education Colleges

In order to be able to distinguish between those enrolled on higher education courses in HEIs and those in FECs we have separated them and analysed them independently. This allows each to be evaluated either individually or can be added to give total higher education figures.

Over the last five academic years, there has been an increasing number of ROI domiciled students accessing higher education courses through NI FECs. In 2012/13, there were 672 ROI domiciled student enrolments on higher education courses in NI FECs, representing an increase of 38.3% from the 2008/09 figure of 486.

There are no higher education courses available in FECs or Training Centres in the ROI funded by SOLAS.

4.2.2.1 Mode of Study

Of the 672 ROI domiciled student enrolments on a higher education course at a NI FEC in 2012/13, just over a quarter (27.4%, 184) were studying full-time with 72.6% (488) part-time. This compares to 50.6% (246) full-time and 49.4% (240) part-time for 2008/09. In 2010/11 there was a shift from mostly full-time enrolments to mostly part-time enrolments for ROI domiciled student enrolments on a higher education course in a FEC in NI.

This change in the proportions studying full-time and part-time is largely accounted for by the number of part-time enrolments doubling over the five year period, from 240 in 2008/09 to 488 in 2012/13. Conversely the number of full-time enrolments decreased from 246 in 2008/09 to 184 in 2012/13.

Table 30: Cross Border Regulated Higher Education Enrolments to FECs by Mode of Study, 2008/09-2012/13

Year	ROI Domiciled at NI FECs		
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Total
2008/09	246	240	486
2009/10	308	210	518
2010/11	230	265	495
2011/12	178	350	528
2012/13	184	488	672

Source: FESR

4.2.2.2 Gender

Historically, there have been more females from ROI who enrol in NI FECs on HE courses than males (Table 30 & Figure 11). However, in 2012/13 there were more ROI domiciled males than females opting to study on a higher education course in a FEC.

Over the five year period, the gender gap has changed direction for ROI domiciled student enrolments on higher education courses in NI FECs. In the 2012/13 academic year, females accounted for 45.1% (303) of ROI domiciled student enrolments on higher education courses in NI FECs, with 54.9% (369) males. The corresponding 2008/09 figures show that females made up 53.5% (260) with 46.5% (226) males.

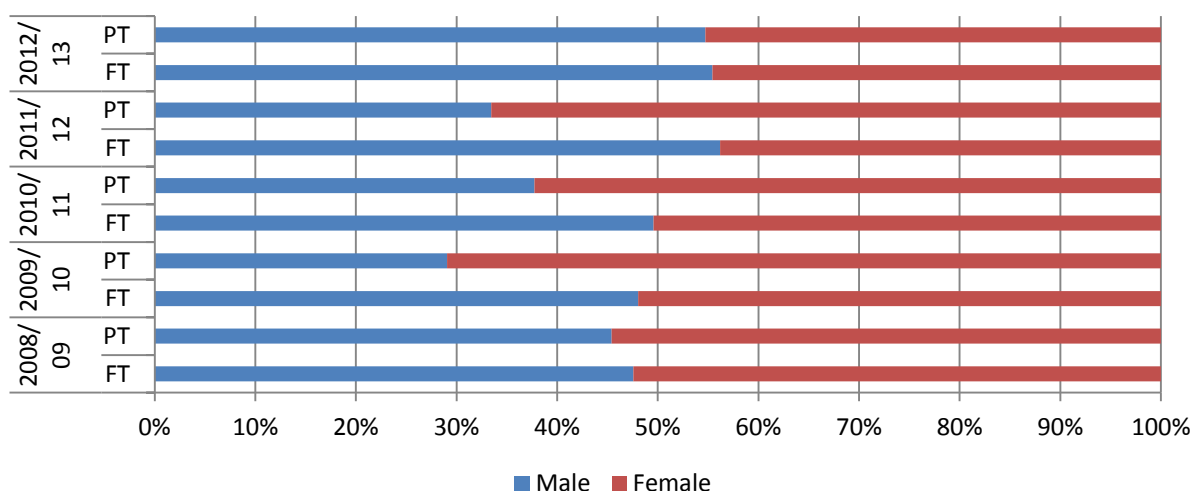
Table 31: Cross Border Regulated Higher Education Enrolments to FECs by Gender, 2008/09-2012/13

Year	ROI Domiciled at NI FECs		
	Male	Female	Total
2008/09	226	260	486
2009/10	209	309	518
2010/11	214	281	495
2011/12	217	311	528
2012/13	369	303	672

Source: FESR

Both male and female ROI domiciled student enrolments on higher education courses at NI FECs have shown an overall increase over the last five years, although there has been some variation from year to year. The overall increase in ROI domiciled enrolments to higher education courses in further education Colleges in NI in 2012/13 is largely a result of a sharp rise in the number of males enrolling.

Figure 11: Gender Breakdown for ROI Domiciled Students on a Higher Education course at NI FECs, 2008/09 - 2012/13



4.2.2.3 Age

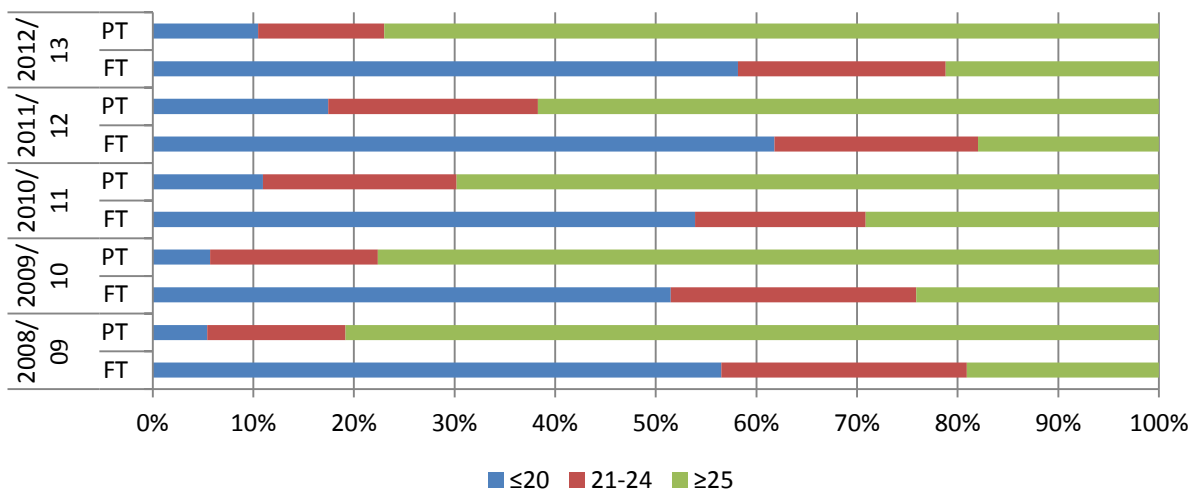
More ROI domiciled students aged '25 and over' are accessing higher education courses in NI FECs than five years ago. In 2012/13, 23.5% (158) of all ROI domiciled student enrolments on higher education courses at NI FECs were aged '20 and under', 14.7% (99) were in the '21-24' age group and 61.6% (414) were aged '25 and over'. The corresponding figures for 2008/09 show that 31.3% (152) were aged '20 and under', 19.1% (93) were in the '21-24' age group and 49.6% (241) were aged '25 and over'. The increase in total enrolments of ROI domiciled students on a higher education course in a FEC in NI has been due to a sharp rise in the number of students aged '25 and over' enrolling.

Table 32: Cross Border Regulated Higher Education Enrolments to FECs by Age, 2008/09-2012/13

Year	ROI Domiciled at NI FECs				
	≤20	21-24	≥25	Unknown	Total
2008/09	152	93	241	0	486
2009/10	170	110	237	1	518
2010/11	153	90	252	0	495
2011/12	171	109	248	0	528
2012/13	158	99	414	1	672

* There are a few unknown ages because in each year there were students that the date of birth was not provided.
Source: FESR

Figure 12: Age Breakdown for ROI Domiciled Students on a Higher Education Course at NI FECs, 2008/09 - 2012/13



4.2.2.4 Institution

In 2012/13, 42.7% (287) of ROI domiciled student enrolments to a higher education course in a NI FEC were at the North West Regional College. This trend of the North West Regional College being the dominant choice with ROI domiciled students is consistent over the five year period, but has fallen from 60.7% (295) in 2008/09. Northern Regional College has seen a substantial increase in enrolments of ROI domiciled students studying a higher education course with 20.5% (138) of enrolments in 2012/13 compared to 0.2% (1) in 2008/09. Despite fluctuations, Belfast Metropolitan College and South West College have shown increases in the number of enrolments over the five year period, while South Eastern Regional College and Southern Regional have remained fairly constant.

Table 33: ROI Domiciled Regulated Higher Education Enrolments to NI FECs by Institution, 2008/09-2012/13

Institution	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Belfast Metropolitan	43	75	23	56	81
Northern Regional	1	1	5	6	138
South Eastern Regional	8	5	4	2	0
Southern Regional	57	49	47	58	50
South West	82	39	62	88	116
North West Regional	295	349	354	318	287
Total	486	518	495	528	672

Source: FESR

4.3 Further Education Summary

Further Education (inc. Higher Education in Further Education)

- Of all regulated enrolments to NI FECs in 2012/13, 2.9% were from the ROI. Due to the fact that 96.1% of all regulated enrolments to NI FECs were from NI, this makes ROI domiciled enrolments the second highest cohort to attend NI FECs.
- Regulated enrolments of ROI domiciled students to NI FECs has increased by 48.6% between 2008/09 and 2012/13.
- There is a much higher proportion of ROI domiciled student enrolments on part-time regulated courses in NI FECs compared to those studying full-time. In 2012/13, this reached 74.2% (3,408) on part-time regulated courses and 25.8% (1,186) on full-time regulated courses.
- Historically there have been more females than males from ROI enrolling on regulated courses in NI FECs, however the gender gap has been narrowing over the last five academic years. In 2012/13, females accounted for 54.8% of regulated enrolments compared to 45.2% male.
- The highest proportion of ROI domiciled student enrolments on regulated courses in NI FECs are aged '20 and under'. In 2012/13, 47.9% of were aged '20 and under', 16.1% were aged '21-24' and 35.9% were aged '25 and over'.
- The majority of ROI domiciled student enrolments on regulated courses at NI FECs were at the North West Regional College, a recurring trend over the last five academic years. In 2012/13, 57.0% of ROI domiciled regulated enrolments were at North West Regional College.

Higher Education in Further Education

- The number of ROI domiciled student enrolments on a regulated higher education course in an NI FEC has increased by 38.3%, from 486 in 2008/09 to 672 in 2012/13.
- In 2010/11, there was a switch from mostly full-time enrolments to mostly part-time enrolments for ROI domiciled students on a regulated higher education course in a NI FEC. In 2012/13, 27.4% were studying full-time with 72.6% studying part-time.
- Historically there have been more females than males from ROI enrolling on regulated higher education courses in NI FECs. However this changed in 2012/13, where 45.1% of ROI domiciled students were female compared to 54.9% male.

- The highest proportion of ROI domiciled student enrolments on a regulated higher education course in a NI FEC have been '25 and over' in the last five academic years. In 2012/13, 23.5% of ROI domiciled regulated enrolments were aged '20 and under', 14.7% were aged '21-24' and 61.6% were aged '25 and over'.
- The majority of ROI domiciled student enrolments on a regulated higher education course in NI FECs were at the North West Regional College. In 2012/13, 42.7% of regulated enrolments of ROI domiciled students on higher education courses in NI FECs were at the North West Regional College.

Notes and Definitions

Notes

1. This statistical bulletin has been produced by both the Department for Employment and Learning, Northern Ireland and the Department of Education and Skills, ROI; using data collected by both the Higher Education Statistics Agency, the Further Education Statistical Record (FESR) and the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service for NI, and data collected by both the Higher Education Authority and the Central Applications Office (CAO) for the ROI.

Applicant data

2. UCAS – The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) provides application services across a range of subject areas and modes of study for UK higher education providers. UCAS is a registered charity that uses their knowledge of higher education policy, funding and regulation to adapt and improve the services they offer to their members, students and their teachers and advisers.
3. UCAS figures by entry year are adjusted to account for deferrals from the previous cycle and those deferring entry to the following year. The ‘year’ field in the supply provided is the cycle applied. Therefore, in this analysis ‘2013/14’ refers to the 2013 UCAS cycle.
4. In the applicant section there are a small number of postgraduate applicants that are processed by UCAS. These are included in the analysis but make up less than 1% of applicants.
5. UCAS is the central organisation that processes applications for full-time undergraduate courses at UK universities and colleges. Queen’s University Belfast, Ulster University, Stranmillis University College and the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise use the UCAS service. St Mary’s University College withdrew from the UCAS application process from the 2006 year onwards.
6. CAO – The Central Applications Office (CAO) have had the task of processing centrally applications to first year undergraduate courses delegated to them by the ROI HEIs. The participating institutions retain the function of making decisions on admissions. CAO is required to deal with applications in an efficient and fair manner. CAO is a not-for-profit company registered in Ireland.

Higher Education

7. HESA – The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) is the official agency for the collection of information on publicly funded HEIs in the UK. It was set up in 1993 following the white paper ‘Higher Education: a new framework’, which called for more coherence in higher education statistics. HEIs include all publicly funded universities. HESA data do not include enrolments at FECs in NI or Great Britain, or enrolments at institutions in the ROI.
8. HESA do not collect enrolment, qualification or destination data on students in the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE).
9. The Higher Education Authority (HEA) is the statutory planning and policy development body for higher education and research in Ireland. HEA is the statutory funding authority for the universities, institutes of technology and a number of other designated institutions and is the advisory body to the Minister for Education and Skills in relation to the higher education sector. HEA performs an advocacy role for higher education to students, Government, employers and the general public. The HEA administers and manages the Student Record System which is the database of students enrolled and graduating from ROI publicly funded higher education Institutions.
10. Quality of higher education statistics – Information on the collection, validation and quality assurance of higher education data and statistics, and the quality guidance used in managing the production of higher education statistics can be accessed from the following link – www.delni.gov.uk/he-statistical-methods.htm

Further Education

11. NI and the ROI have different post-compulsory education systems, particularly in relation to FET. In addition, the qualifications frameworks for both jurisdictions are also different. To assist analysis and make comparisons between provision, the equivalences between qualifications have been set out in the table below.

Northern Ireland – NQF/QCF	Republic of Ireland - NFQ
Entry Level	Level 1 & Level 2
Level 1	Level 3
Level 2	Level 4
Level 3	Level 5
Level 4	Level 6
Level 5	Level 6/7
Level 6	Level 7/8

12. In NI, further education is defined by the *Further Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1997* as post-statutory education that is not delivered in a school and is not higher education. It therefore encompasses vocational education and training for full-time learners who left school at 16, apprenticeships, adult education (including continuing education for people in employment) and leisure courses to support lifelong learning. Most of the focus of further education in NI is on delivering regulated vocational qualifications to learners at levels 2 and 3 (European Qualifications Framework levels 3 and 4, respectfully), but a number of providers also deliver qualifications at higher levels, as well as more general qualifications such as essential skills or A-levels.
13. The statutory further education sector in NI comprises six regional multi-campus colleges. These colleges have been recognised by the Department for Employment and Learning as institutions of further education (for the purposes of the 1997 Order) and receive grant funding to deliver ‘mainstream further education’ to learners – this is further education that is not part of a specific training programme and is typically delivered as a full-time course to 16-19 year olds. There is also a large number of part-time learners at all ages, some re-entering education, others in work and further developing their skills and knowledge. Along with the statutory colleges, a number of other providers operate across NI and, collectively, these providers deliver training and apprenticeships to learners under contracted programmes.

14. Full-time further education in NI is largely provided free by colleges, although fees are charged for part-time study, and many employers who seek to have their staff trained are also typically charged for the cost of delivering the course. Because of European Union treaty obligations, this regime is also applied to learners from other member states, while learners from further afield are charged fees in respect of any courses they undertake.
15. Only regulated courses are included in the analysis of further education. From the academic year 2013/14, only those courses which appear on the Register of Regulated Qualifications (RRQ) or the Department's Prescribed List of Approved Non NQF/QCF Qualification (PLAQ) list (for level 3 and below) or are Higher Education (HE) in further education courses (level 4 and above), will be deemed as 'accredited' by the Department. Anything which falls outside this definition is not considered, in Departmental terms, as 'regulated' regardless of whether it is considered to produce 'outcomes' e.g. internal college certification. This cohort of further education provision is comparable with the previous figures of Professional and Technical.
16. In the past, the vocational education councils (VECs) were the main providers of further education in Ireland. In July 2013, the 33 VECs were abolished and replaced with 16 educational and training boards (ETBs). As set out below the ETBs also merged with 19 former training centres nationwide to create a co-ordinated FET sector. ETBs will be the vehicles for the delivery of co-ordinated education and training programmes across Ireland. The revised 16 ETBs are:
- City of Dublin
 - City of Cork and Co. Cork
 - Co. Dublin and Dun Laoghaire
 - City of Limerick, Co. Limerick and Co. Clare
 - Co. Donegal
 - Co. Kerry
 - Co. Tipperary North and South
 - City of Waterford, Co. Waterford and Co. Wexford
 - City of Galway, Co. Galway and Co. Roscommon
 - Co. Mayo, Co. Sligo and Co. Leitrim
 - Co. Cavan and Co. Monaghan
 - Co. Louth and Co. Meath
 - Co. Longford and Co. Westmeath
 - Co. Laois and Co. Offaly
 - Co. Kildare and Co. Wicklow
 - Co. Kilkenny and Co. Carlow

17. Following legislative reforms, *An Foras Áiseanna Saothair (FÁS)*, the body which had responsibility for training and employment schemes, has been dissolved and new structures have been put in place to take over former programmes administered by FÁS. The Further Education and Training Authority, *An Seirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna (SOLAS)* now has responsibility for planning, funding and driving further education and training in the ROI, whilst the Department of Social Protection has taken over responsibility from FÁS for Community Employment and Employment Services.
18. Former FÁS training centres have transferred to the ETBs, which assumed responsibility for the management of training delivery. This phased handover and was completed during 2014.
19. As the ETBs take over the management of training delivery, SOLAS will focus on funding, planning and co-ordinating a wide range of training and further education programmes. SOLAS works closely with a number of stakeholders including learners, employers, ETBs, Government departments, state bodies, Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), the HEA, Institutes of Technology and representative organisations. The aim of SOLAS is to build 'a clear, integrated pathway to work for learners through further education and training'.

Definitions

Applicant data

20. A nett acceptance is the final acceptance recorded by an applicant. This means the applicant received one or more offers and accepted at least one offer. If more than one offer was accepted (offers are made in rounds meaning that an applicant may receive several offers over the offer season), the nett acceptance is the last one accepted and the only course the applicant can register on.

Higher Education

21. Higher education is defined as a course leading to a qualification above A2 level standard. This includes postgraduate study, first degrees, BTEC Higher National Diploma (HND) and Certificate (HNC) courses, Foundation degrees and a number of professional qualifications. Higher education is NQF/QCF Level 4 (and equivalent) and above. For purposes of the ROI higher education is defined as a course leading to a qualification from Level 6 to Level 10 on the National Framework of Qualifications including Higher Certificates,

University Certificates, Ordinary Bachelors Degree, Honours Bachelor Degree, Higher and Postgraduate Diploma, Masters Degree and Doctorates.

22. Higher education students for the purpose of HESA's data collection are those students on courses for which the level of instruction is above that of level 3 of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) National Qualifications Framework (NQF) (e.g. courses at the level of Certificate of higher education and above).
23. Domicile refers to a student's permanent place of residence prior to enrolment on a higher education course.
24. Mode of study distinguishes students studying full-time or part-time:
- i. *Full-time* includes full-time and sandwich modes plus those writing-up where the mode of study was previously full-time and students changing to dormant status previously full-time.
 - ii. *Part-time* includes those studying part-time, full-time for less than 24 weeks in the academic year, block release or studying during the evenings, plus those writing-up theses and previously part-time.
25. MaSN cap - The NI authorities control the total number of full-time undergraduate places through the so called 'MaSN cap'. This means that each institution is only funded for a set number of full-time undergraduate places. It needs to be stressed that the MaSN cap only applies to full-time undergraduates and that the institutions are free to recruit as many part-time undergraduates (and full-time and part-time postgraduates) as they wish. With tuition fee levels in NI being significantly lower than England and Wales, it is likely that more NI domiciled students will want to remain in NI to study and also more ROI students will see NI HEIs as a cheaper alternative to other UK HEIs. This will create a pressure on student numbers and the Department for Employment and Learning, in recognising the issue, will work closely with higher education providers to facilitate a modest increase in the number of student places to combat the issue. It is likely that any new places will only be in areas of economic relevance, will be phase in over a number of years, and will be reviewed regularly to determine the impact of student flows.

Further Education

26. Further education is defined as NQF/QCF Level 3 (and equivalent) and below.
27. Each academic year period for the further education sector is defined by each FEC and potentially will differ across all 6 colleges. An academic year traditionally starts in August and finishes in July the following year.

28. Regulated enrolments are regarded as those on courses where a qualification is expected. Courses which are excluded from this cohort are typically hobby and leisure, or recreational courses coded as qualification aim = 999.
29. Non-regulated enrolments are those enrolments where a qualification is not expected. These include hobby and leisure, and recreational courses.
30. Domicile refers to a student's permanent place of residence prior to enrolment on a further education course.
31. Age for further education is at 1st July of the previous academic year, based on the start date of the course, e.g. 2012/13 academic year will be the age of the student at 01/07/12.
32. Mode of attendance identifies enrolments studying full-time or part-time:
- a) Full-time enrolments include all enrolments whose attendance is:
- i. Full-time (for at least 15 hours and at least 7 sessions per week, or for more than 21 hours per week, with no sessional requirement)
 - ii. On sandwich courses; or
 - iii. On short courses (single self-contained periods of full-time study of under 4 weeks' duration, within one academic year, which do not have to satisfy the hour and session requirement of i. Above).
- b) Part-time enrolments include all enrolments whose attendance is:
- i. Part-time day;
 - ii. Block release;
 - iii. Evening only
 - iv. Open/distance learning; or
 - v. Linked to their attendance at a school on a full-time basis.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Typical Student Profile

Higher Education Institutions:

A Republic of Ireland domiciled student attending a Higher Education Institution in Northern Ireland is predominantly:

- Female
- Aged 25 and over
- Enrolling at the Ulster University

In particular undergraduate students are mostly studying:

- Full-time
- Business/Medicine

While postgraduate students are mostly studying:

- Part-time
- Education/Medicine

A Northern Ireland domiciled student attending a Higher Education Institution in the Republic of Ireland is predominantly:

- Female
- Aged 20 and under
- Enrolling at the University of Dublin or Trinity College Dublin

In particular undergraduate students are mostly studying:

- Full-time
- Business/Medicine/Dentistry/Law

While postgraduate students are mostly studying:

- Part-time
- Business/Humanities

Further Education Colleges:

A Republic of Ireland domiciled student attending a Further Education College in Northern Ireland is predominantly:

- Part-time
- Female
- Aged 20 and under
- Enrolling at North West Regional College

A Republic of Ireland domiciled student enrolled on a Higher Education course in a Northern Ireland Further Education College is predominantly:

- Part-time
- Male (from 2012/13)
- Aged 25 and over
- Enrolling at North West Regional College

Appendix 2:

Undergraduate and Postgraduate Enrolments by Age and Mode of Study

Table 13A: Cross Border Undergraduate Enrolments by Age, 2008/09-2012/13

Year	ROI Domiciled at NI HEIs								NI Domiciled at ROI HEIs							
	≤20		21-24		≥25		Total		≤20		21-24		≥25		Total	
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
2008/09	515	20	385	70	160	500	1060	590	415	0	275	5	50	120	745	130
2009/10	465	25	345	90	155	865	965	980	395	0	345	5	50	125	790	130
2010/11	490	35	330	90	195	1310	1020	1430	310	0	360	15	40	135	710	145
2011/12	435	20	305	75	210	975	955	1065	295	0	350	5	45	75	690	85
2012/13	430	25	275	45	235	565	940	635	315	0	295	5	45	95	655	100

Source: HESA & HEA

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' applicants.

Appendix 3:

Table 20A: Cross Border Postgraduate Enrolments by Age, 2008/09-2012/13

Year	ROI Domiciled at NI HEIs								NI Domiciled at ROI HEIs							
	≤20		21-24		≥25		Total		≤20		21-24		≥25		Total	
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
2008/09	5	0	300	65	240	980	550	1045	0	0	30	5	50	65	80	70
2009/10	10	0	435	115	270	1025	715	1140	0	0	45	15	65	120	110	135
2010/11	10	0	505	65	380	875	895	940	0	0	35	15	55	90	90	105
2011/12	15	0	365	60	320	740	700	800	0	0	35	10	65	110	95	120
2012/13	5	0	255	60	285	655	545	720	10	0	45	15	50	100	110	115

Source: HESA & HEA

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest '5' applicants.