

This is FET

Facts and Figures

2025

A Report by the
Data Analytics Unit
July 2026

Authors

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All data is sourced from the Programme and Learner Support Systems (PLSS) database. PLSS collects and processes the personal data of the FET learners who are enrolled in SOLAS funded programmes. This report excludes apprenticeship and eCollege provision.

The Data Analytics Unit would like to acknowledge the assistance of the ETB staff involved in submitting data to SOLAS.

All FET Facts and Figures data can be downloaded in accessible formats, (csv, Json-stat, PX, and XLSX) on the CSO's PxStat Open Data Platform: <https://data.cso.ie/product/SOL>.

FET Statistics

Enrolments

224,676



Learner Completions

170,983



Learner Certified Completions

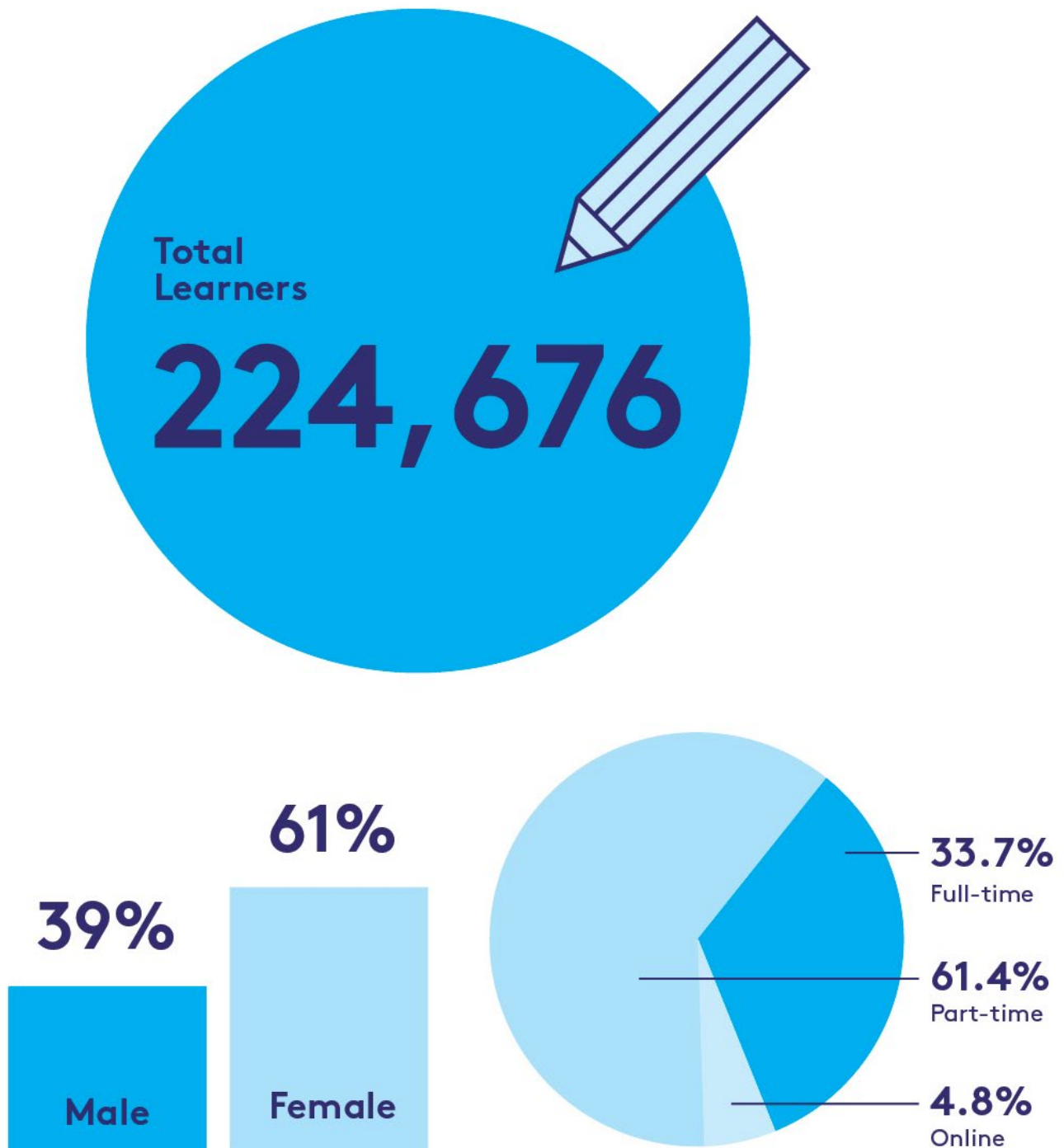
103,773

In 2025, 224,676 unique learners were enrolled in FET courses. Of these enrolments, 170,983 learners partially or fully completed their course(s). Of the 170,983 learner completions, 103,773 of these learner completions were on certified courses.

Enrolments

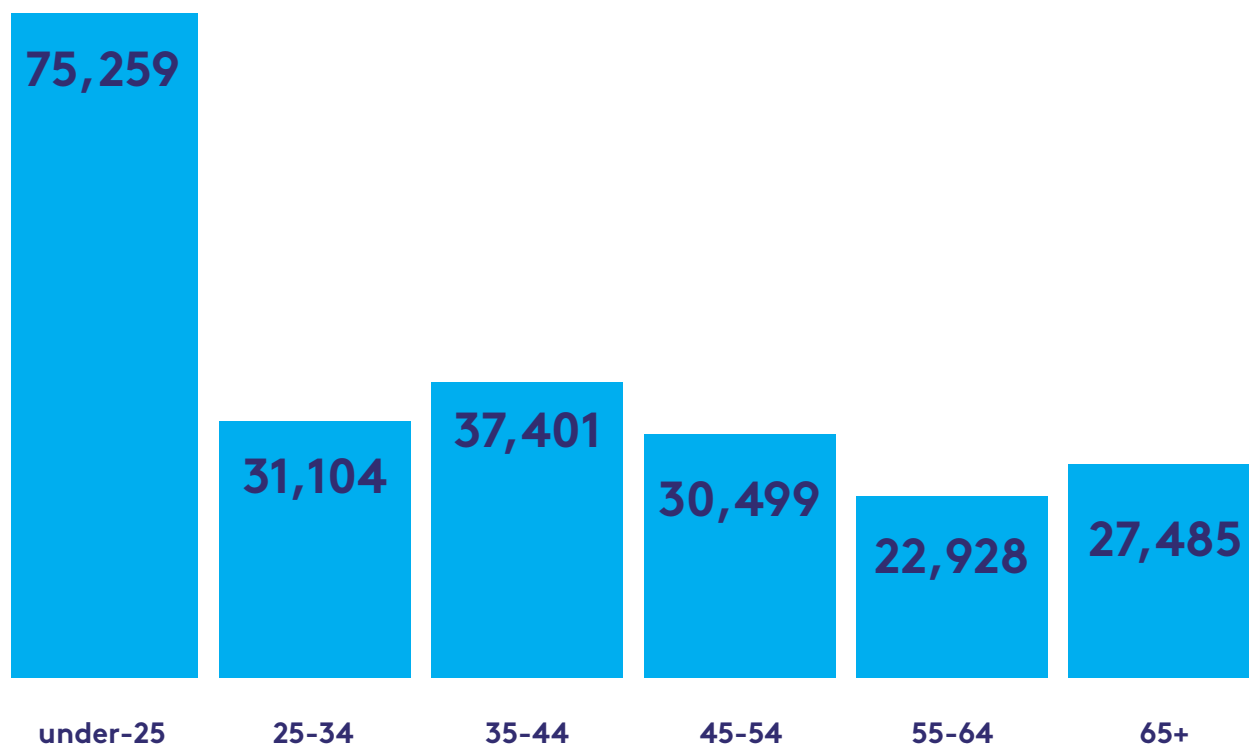


Enrolments



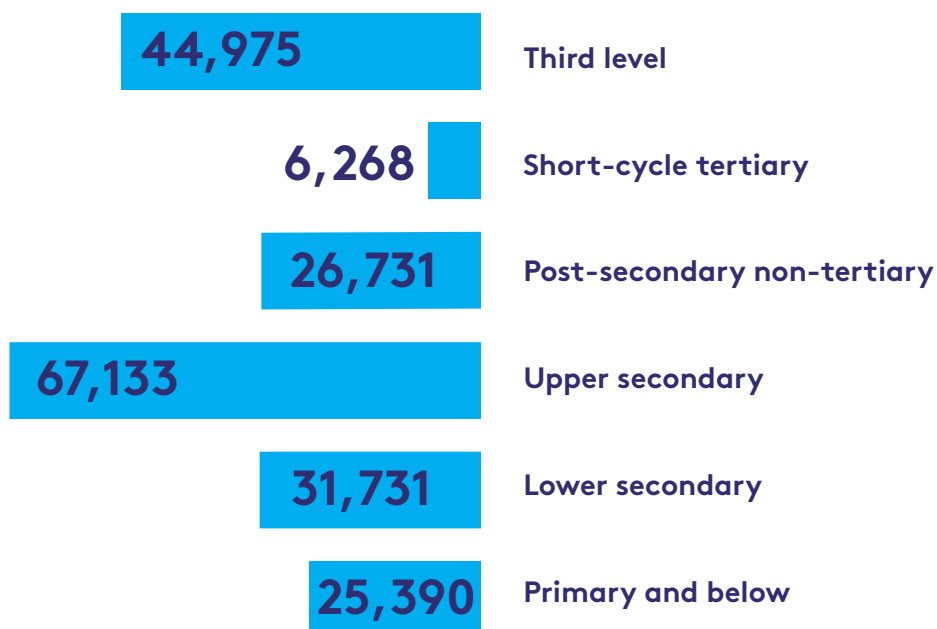
In 2025, there were 224,676 learner enrolments. Of these learner enrolments, 61% were female and 39% were male. The distribution of enrolments was higher among part-time courses (61.4%), than full-time courses, with a small percentage (4.8%) also undertaking online courses.

Start Age



Enrolments were primarily concentrated among the under-25s, representing over one third of all enrolments in 2025.

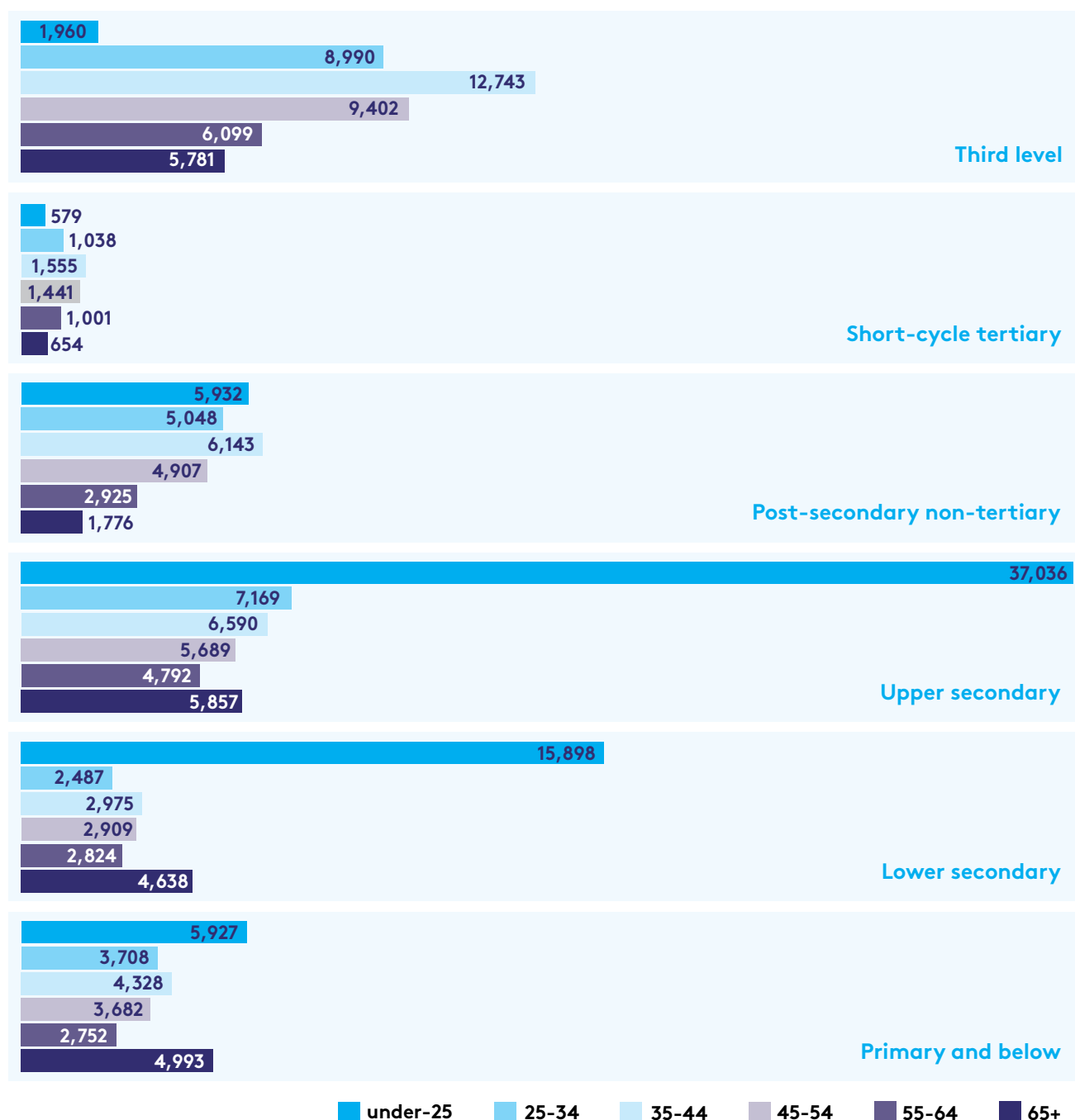
Highest Level of Formal Education¹



In 2025, 57,121 (28.3%) of learners had a lower secondary education or below when enrolling in an FET course, whereas 67,133 (33.2%) learners had an upper secondary education. The figure also shows that 26,731 (13.2%) of learners had a post-secondary non-tertiary education, an education group primarily comprised of individuals enrolled in FET level 5-6 and non-certified courses (e.g. Post Leaving Certificate, Community Education, ESOL and Back to Education Initiative). In addition, the figure shows that 6,268 (3.1%) learners had a short-cycle tertiary education and 44,975 (22.2%) learners had a third level degree education.

¹ It should be noted that this calculation is an estimate and includes only those cases where previous levels of education were captured.

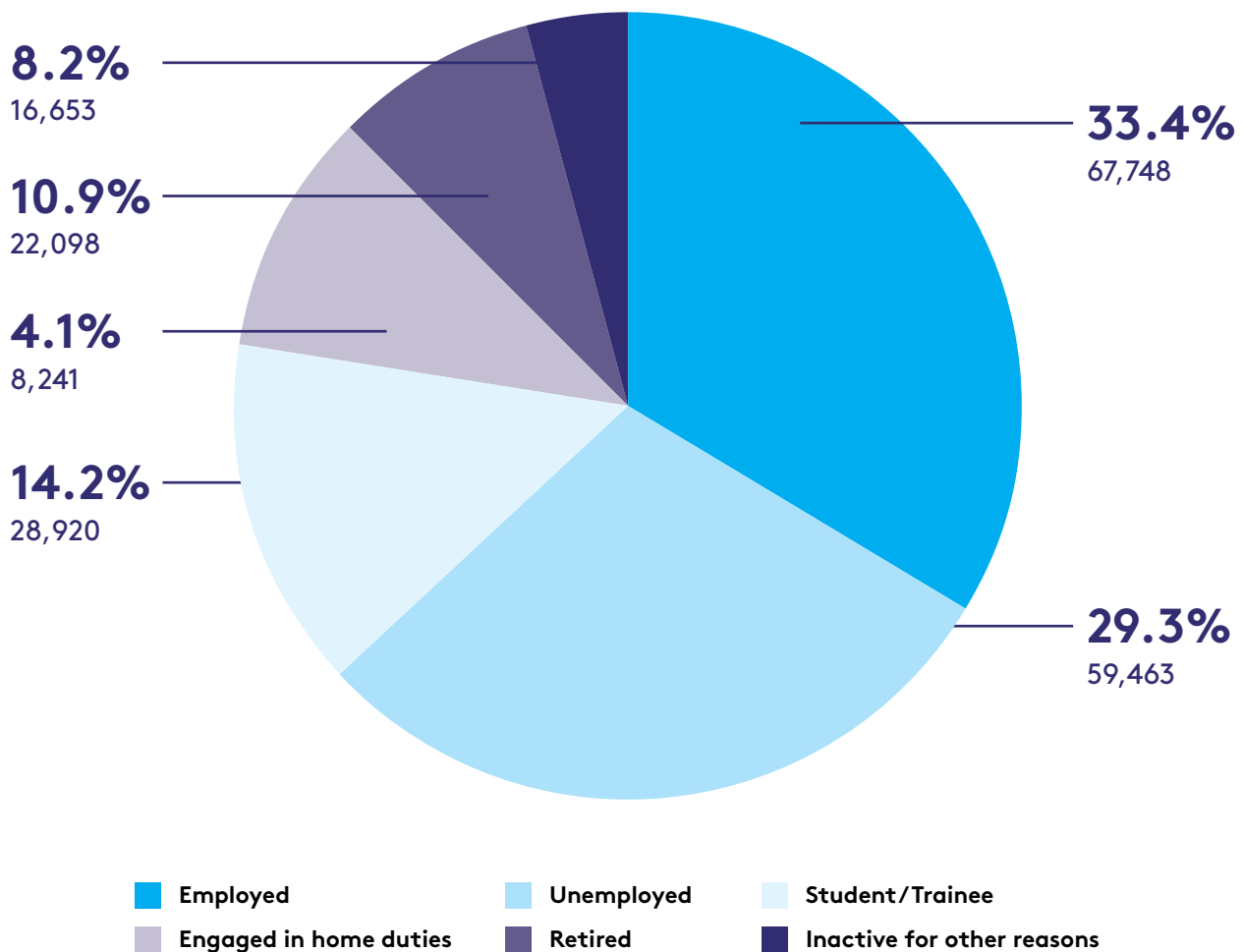
Highest Level of Formal Education by Start Age²



The under-25 age group had the highest concentration among upper secondary, lower secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary levels of education prior to enrolment, whereas the 35-44 age group had the highest concentration among those learners with third level education. For short-cycle tertiary non-degree education, the age groups were distributed relatively evenly.

² It should be noted that this calculation is an estimate and includes only those cases where previous levels of education and age were captured.

Principal Economic Status³



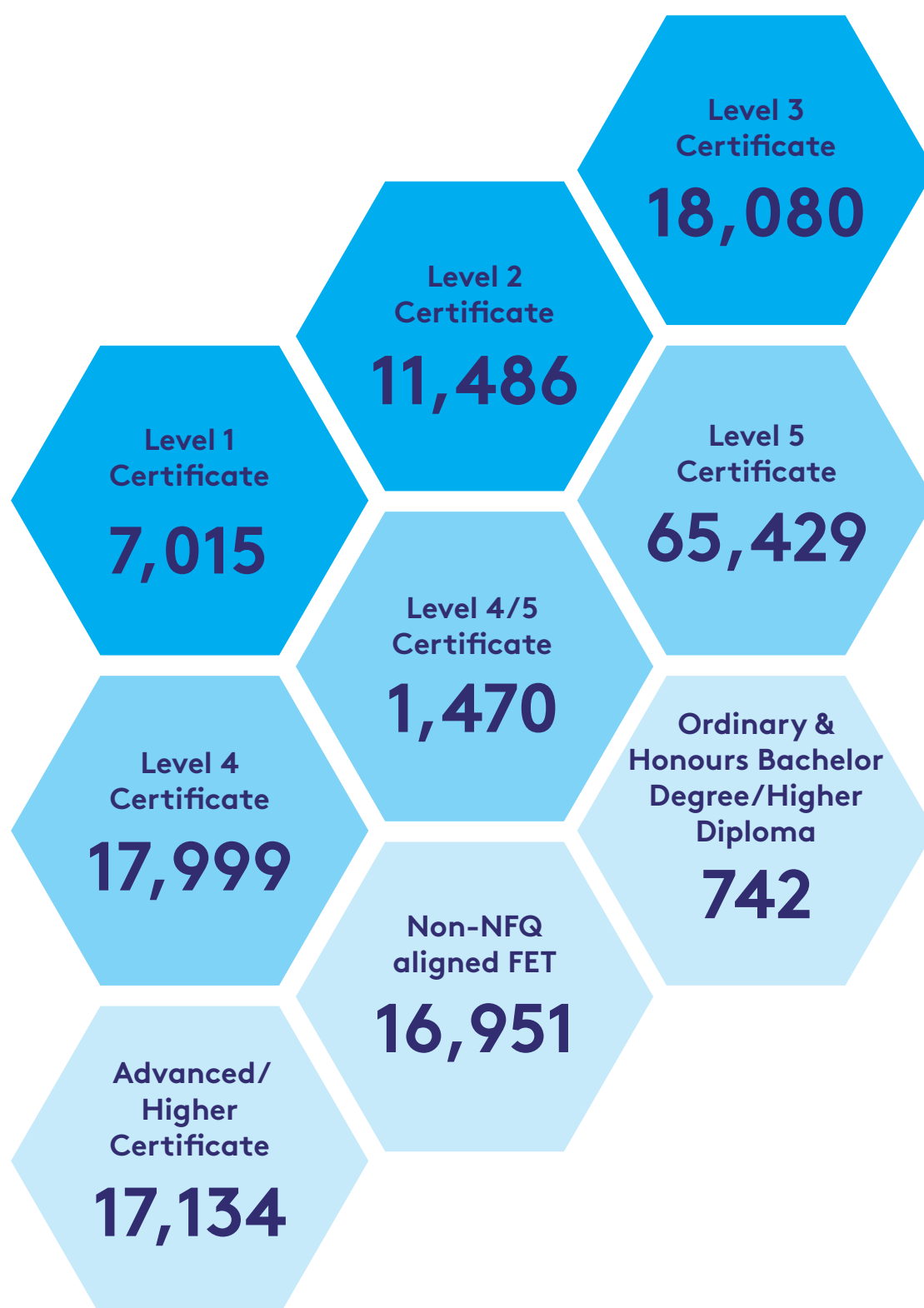
In 2025, 29.3% of learners were unemployed prior to enrolment, while 33.4% were employed. The remaining 37.3% of learners were inactive prior to enrolment.

Of those learners who were unemployed, 48.1% were long-term unemployed.⁴

³ It should be noted that this calculation is an estimate and includes only those cases where previous principal economic status was captured. The principal economic status response rate for learner enrolments was 90.4%.

⁴ It should be noted that this only captures those cases where the previous start date of principal economic status was captured.

Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) or Equivalent⁵



⁵ This excludes learners enrolled in courses that do not lead to an award through a recognised awarding body.

Programme Category

Programme Category ⁶	Learners
Adult Literacy Groups	33,285
Blended Training	233
Bridging and Foundation Training	1,966
BTEI Groups	23,983
Community Education	45,438
Community Training Centres	2,407
eCollege ⁷	3,587
e-Learning	1,578
ESOL	30,640
Evening Training	9,732
FET Cooperation Hours	2,439
FET Pathways from School	6,792
ITABE	374
Justice Workshop	143
Local Training Initiatives	1,526
Other Funding	3,588
PLC ⁸	50,043
Recognition of Prior Learning	169
Refugee Resettlement	80
Skills to Advance ⁹	16,519
Skills for Work	1,872
Specialist Training Providers	2,742
Specific Skills Training	11,907
Tertiary ¹⁰	731
Traineeship Employed	672
Voluntary Literacy Tuition	203
Traineeship Training	2,695
VTOS Core ¹¹	2,299
Youthreach	4,632

Among full-time programmes, enrolments increased by 5% compared to 2024 in Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses, whereas there was a 13% decrease in Specific Skills Training and 5% decrease in Youthreach programmes. For part-time programmes, enrolments in ESOL decreased by 20%, increased in BTEI Groups by 6%, and by 22% in FET Pathways from School.

⁶ Learners here are unique within programmes, but not necessarily across programmes.

⁷ Only includes learners who were referred to eCollege by an ETB.

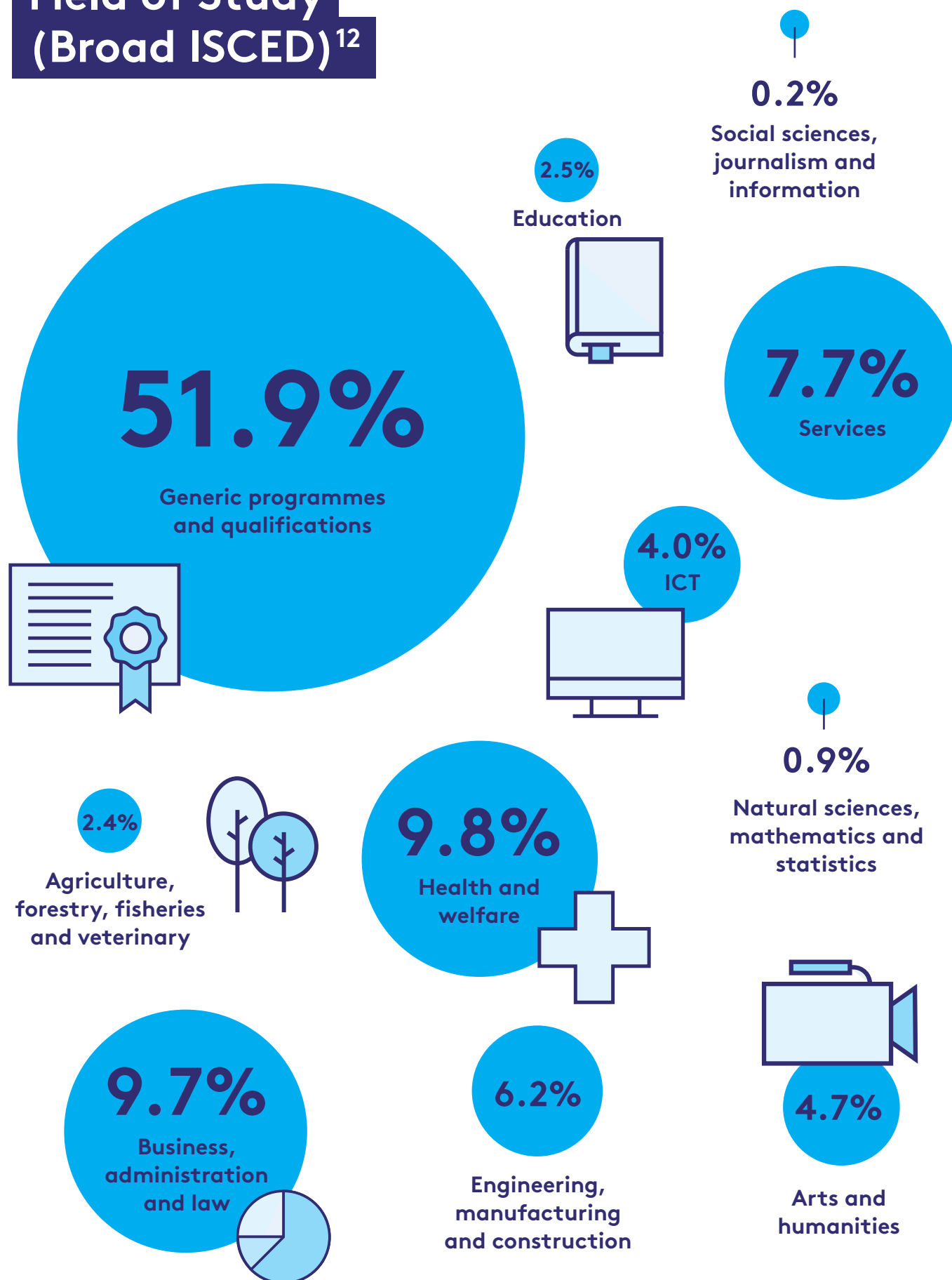
⁸ PLC courses run on an academic year, whereas this figure includes two groups of starters from two academic years. Therefore, this figure for PLC courses is higher than that of a normal academic year.

⁹ This only includes learner enrolments in Skills to Advance direct provision.

¹⁰ For further detail on tertiary degrees see: <https://nto.heai.ie/about/>, contact info@nto.ie.

¹¹ This only includes learner enrolments in VTOS Core direct provision.

Field of Study (Broad ISCED)¹²



¹² Field of study is defined according to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED).

Field of study (Broad ISCED)	Examples of courses
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary	Animal care
	Horticulture
Arts and humanities	Art, craft and design
	Animation (creative media)
Business, administration and law	Business studies
	Business administration
Education	Early learning and care
	Special needs assisting
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	Construction - NZEB/retrofit
	Environmental sustainability awareness
Generic programmes and qualifications	Yoga
	Art
	English language skills
	Cookery
ICT	Software development
	Computer science
Health and welfare	Applied social studies
	Nursing studies
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	Pre-University biomedical and pharmaceutical science
	Pre-University science
Services	Beauty therapy
	Barista skills
Social sciences, journalism and information	Cultural and heritage studies
	Journalism, digital relations, and public relations

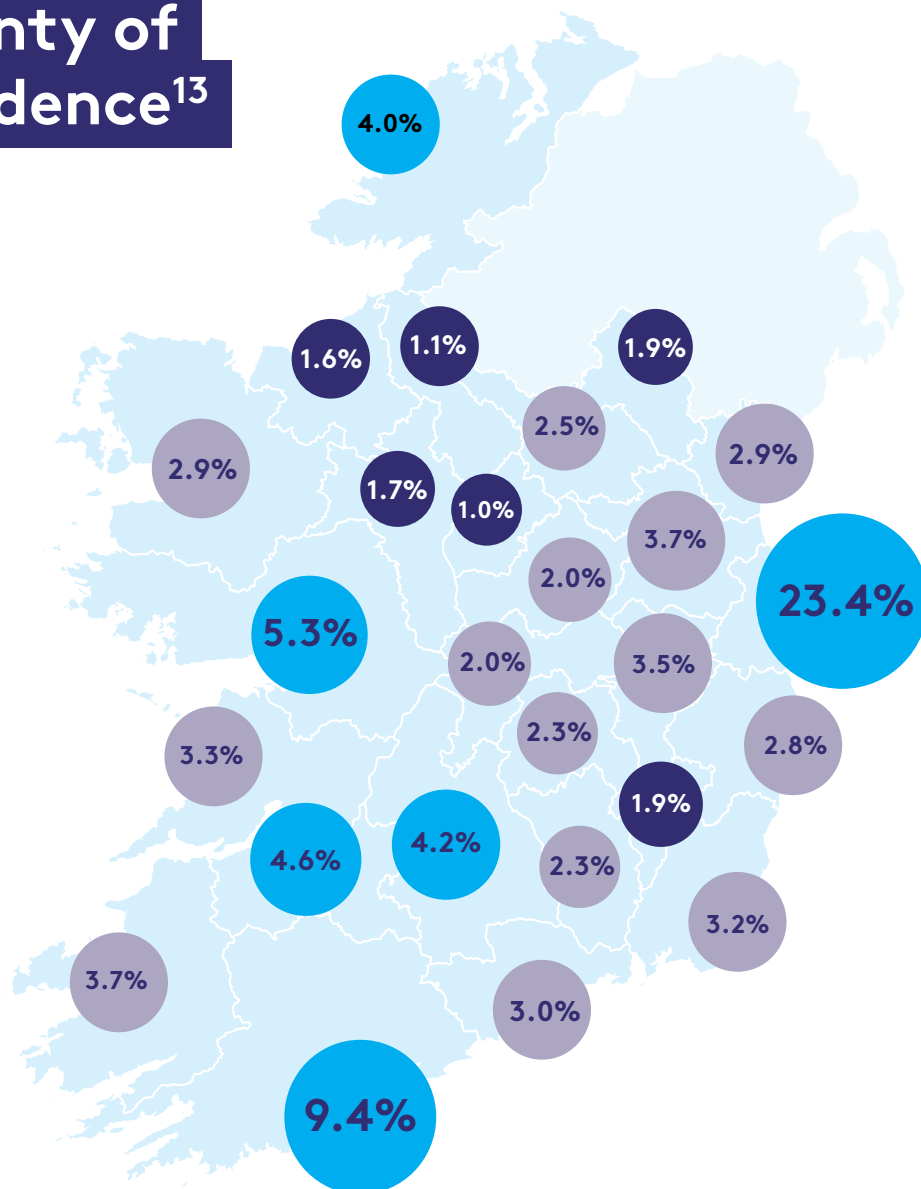
Field of Study (Broad ISCED) by Delivery Type

	Full-time	Part-time	Online	Total
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary	4,090	1,270	0	5,360
Arts and humanities	9,203	1,360	0	10,563
Business, administration and law	9,457	8,873	3,379	21,709
Education	2,941	2,555	165	5,661
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	7,629	5,655	696	13,980
Generic programmes and qualifications	12,089	101,772	2,732	116,593
Health and welfare	12,660	9,065	345	22,070
ICT	3,877	2,389	2,692	8,958
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	1,577	88	401	2,066
Services	11,815	4,958	442	17,215
Social sciences, journalism and information	458	43	0	501
Total	75,796	138,028	10,852	224,676

Overall, enrolments were primarily concentrated among the generic programmes and qualifications ISCED field of study, representing over half (52%) of all enrolments in 2025. This was followed by health and welfare (10%), business, administration and law (10%) and services (8%).

For full-time learner enrolments, generic programmes and qualifications and health and welfare had the highest numbers of learners. In addition, services and business administration and law also had high numbers of full-time enrolments. For part-time learner enrolments, generic programmes and qualifications had the highest numbers of learners. This was followed by health and welfare and services. Among online learner enrolments, business, administration and law had the highest number of learners. This was followed by generic programmes and qualifications and information and communication technologies (ICT).

County of Residence¹³

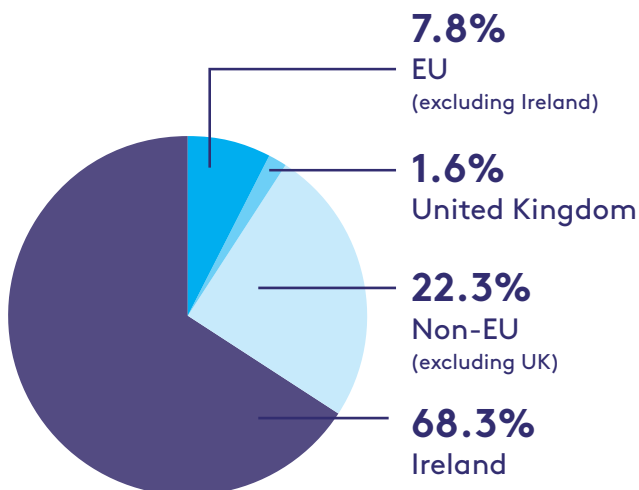
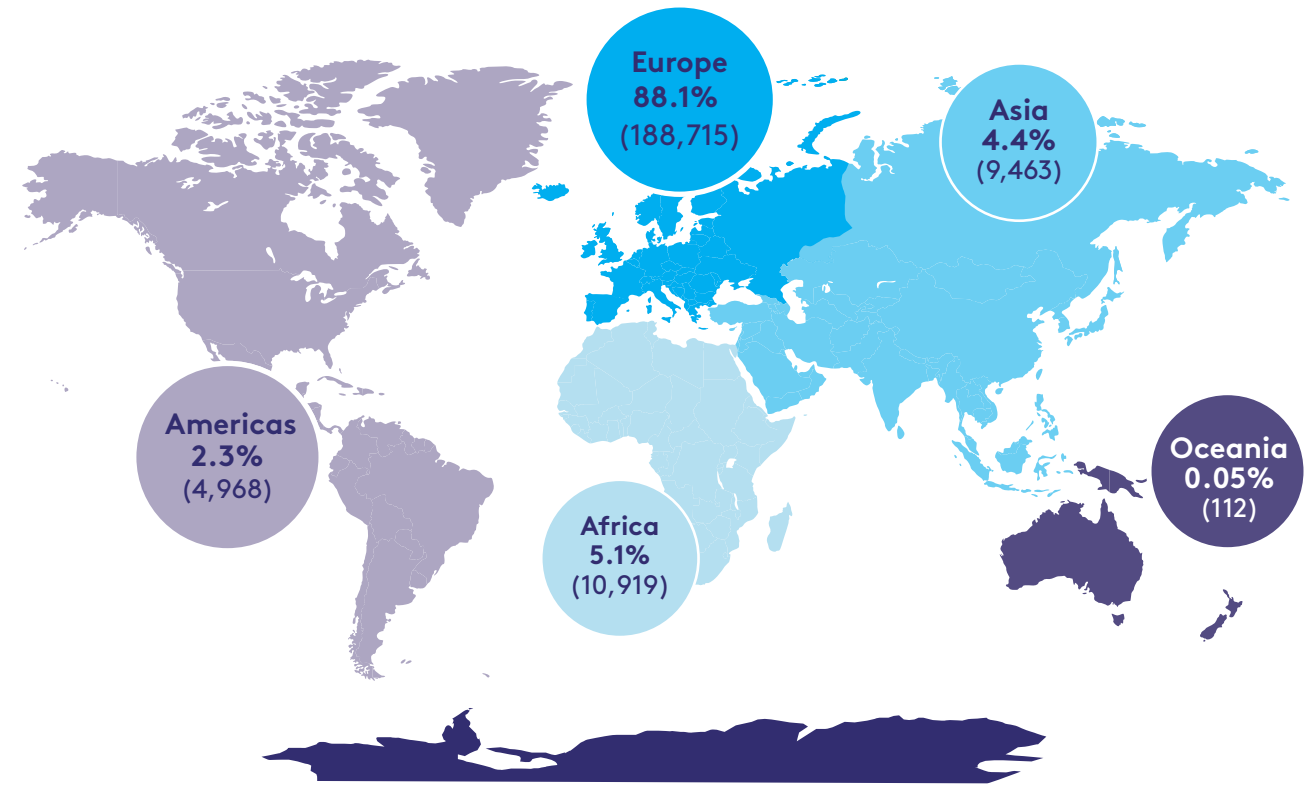


Carlow	4,304	1.9	Longford	2,137	1.0
Cavan	5,539	2.5	Louth	6,507	2.9
Clare	7,304	3.3	Mayo	6,534	2.9
Cork	21,016	9.4	Meath	8,272	3.7
Donegal	8,971	4.0	Monaghan	4,270	1.9
Dublin	52,383	23.4	Offaly	4,573	2.0
Galway	11,766	5.3	Roscommon	3,801	1.7
Kerry	8,354	3.7	Sligo	3,479	1.6
Kildare	7,830	3.5	Tipperary	9,314	4.2
Kilkenny	5,215	2.3	Waterford	6,696	3.0
Laois	5,180	2.3	Westmeath	4,460	2.0
Leitrim	2,496	1.1	Wexford	7,124	3.2
Limerick	10,393	4.6	Wicklow	6,168	2.8
Total				224,086	100

¹³ It should be noted that this calculation is an estimate and excludes non-responses, unknown responses and those learners with a county of residence in Northern Ireland.

Nationality¹⁴

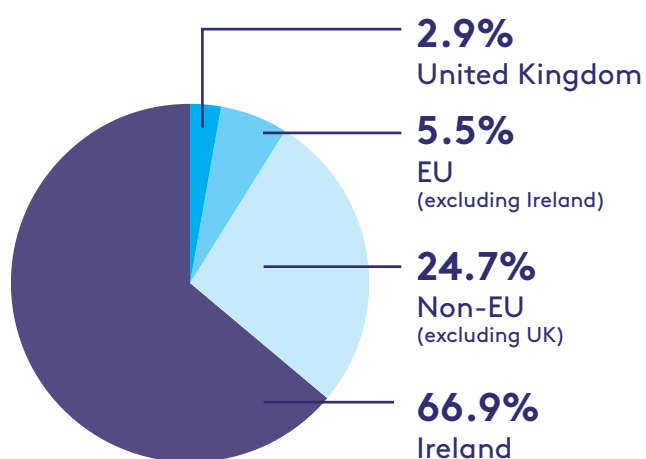
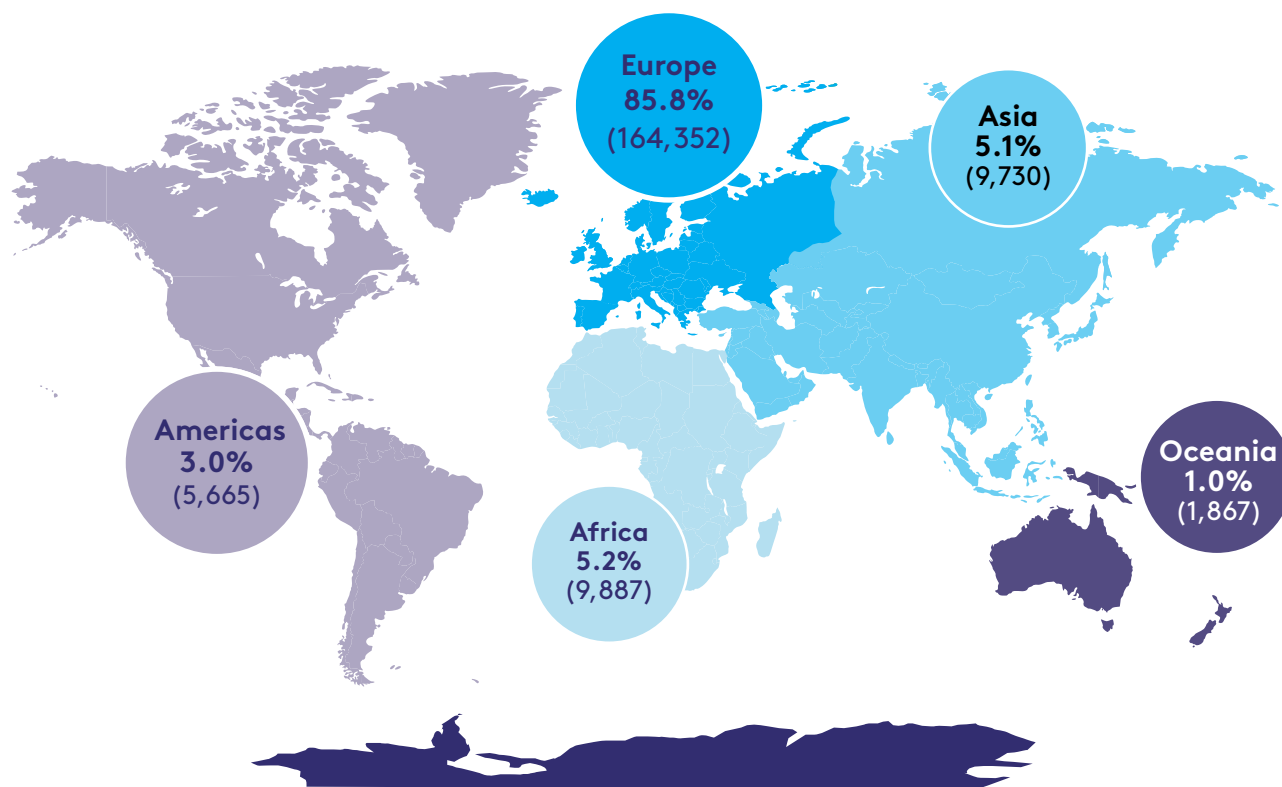
In 2025, there were **206 different** nationalities enrolled in FET.



The highest percentage of learner enrolments were nationals of Europe (88.1%). This was followed by Africa (5.1%), Asia (4.4%), the Americas (2.3%) and Oceania (0.05%). The majority of unique learners were nationals of Ireland (68.3%), followed by the Non-EU (22.3%), the EU (7.8%) and the United Kingdom (1.6%).

¹⁴ It should be noted that this calculation is an estimate and includes only those cases where nationality was captured.

Country of birth¹⁵



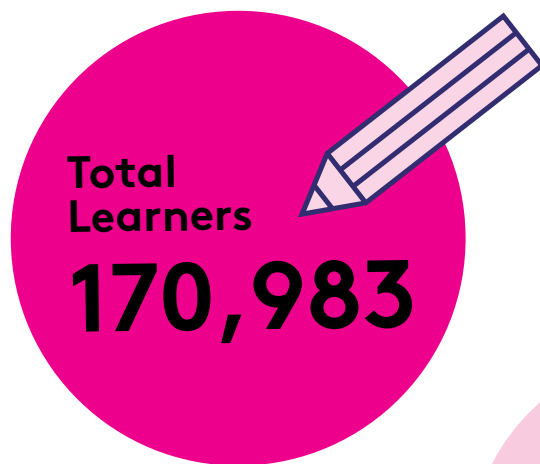
The highest percentage of unique learner enrolments were born in Europe (85.8%). This was followed by Africa (5.2%), Asia (5.1%), the Americas (3.0%), and Oceania (1.0%). The majority of learners were born in Ireland (66.9%), followed by Non-EU (24.7%), the EU (5.5%) and the United Kingdom (2.9%).

¹⁵ It should be noted that this calculation is an estimate and includes only those cases where country of birth was captured.

Completions

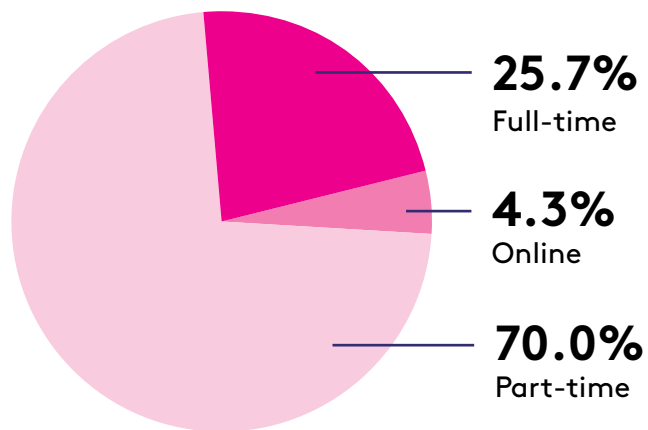


Completions

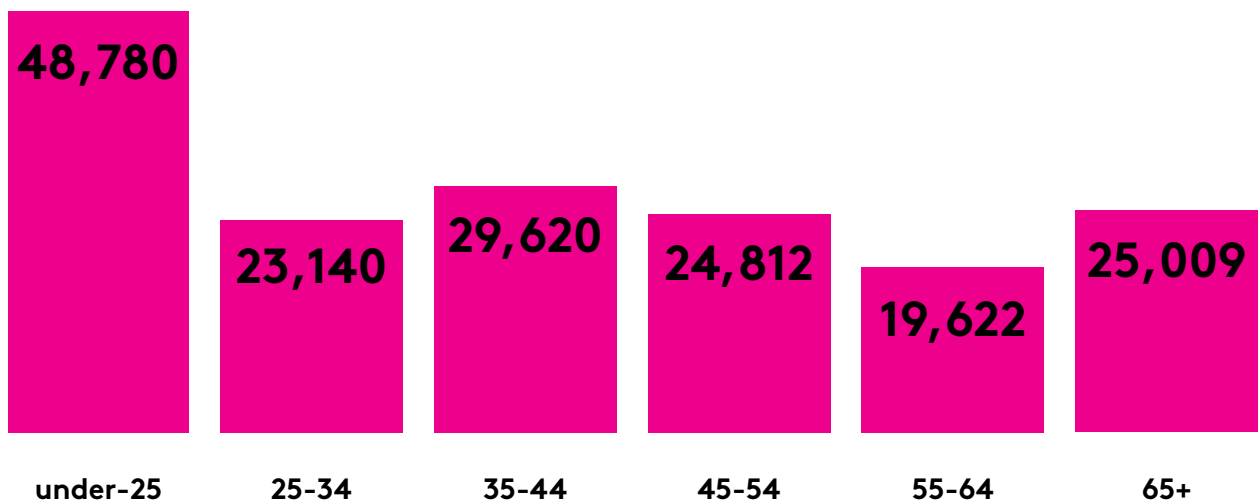


Male **38.9%**

Female **61.1%**

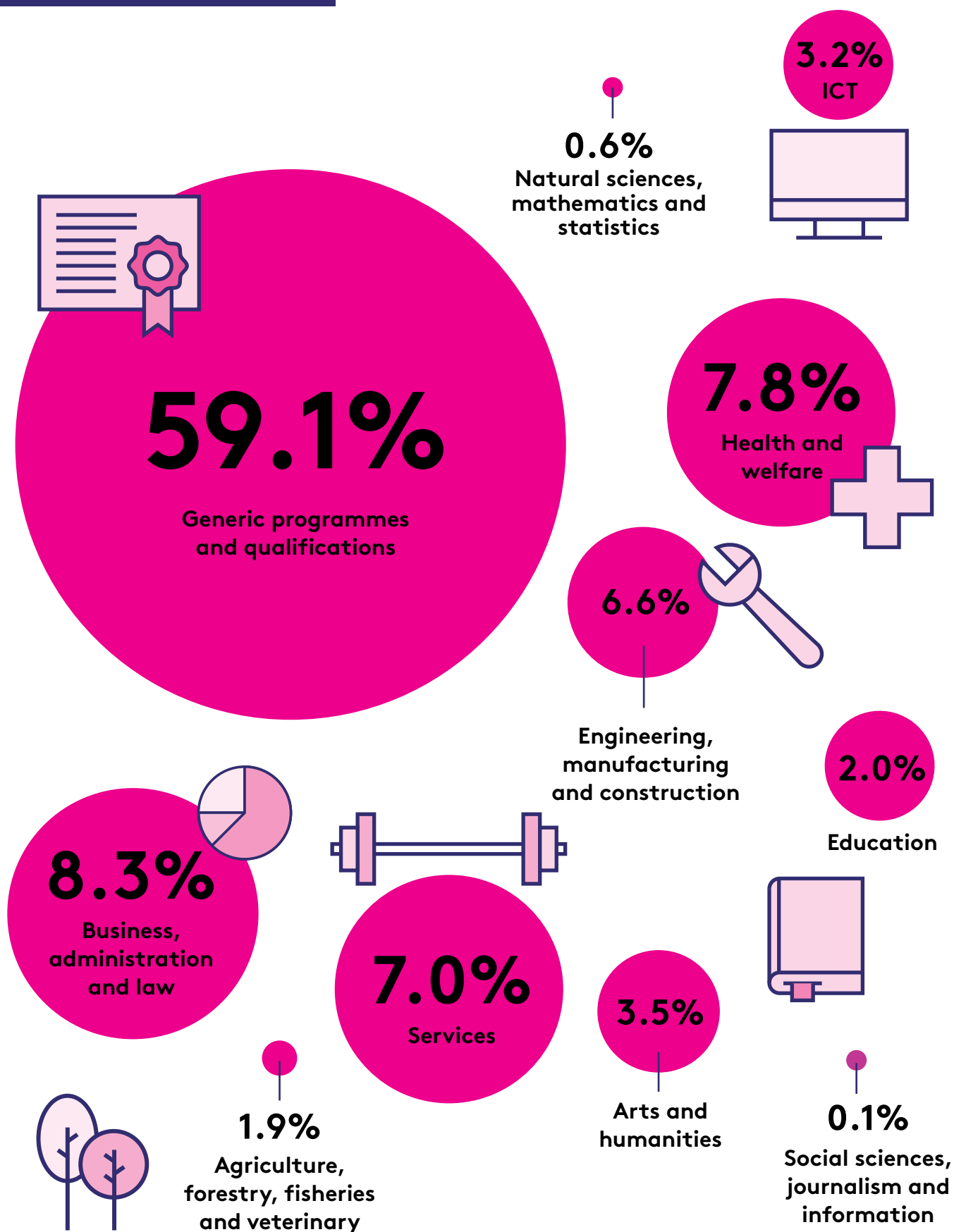


Start Age



In 2025, there were 170,983 learner completions. Of these learner completions, 61.1% were female and 38.9% were male. The learner completions were distributed somewhat similarly to the enrolments, with 25.7% of completions in full-time delivery, 70% in part-time and 4.3% in online courses.

Field of Study (Broad ISCED)



Field of Study (Broad ISCED)	Examples of courses
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary	Animal science
	Animal care
Arts and humanities	Art, craft and design
	Animation (creative media)
Business, administration and law	Business administration
	Business studies
Education	Early learning and care
	Special needs assisting
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	Handling F-Gas mobile air conditioning systems in certain motor vehicles
	Construction - NZEB/Retrofit
Generic programmes and qualifications	Yoga
	Reading, writing, maths and computer skills
	Cookery
	Art
Health and welfare	Applied psychology (community health studies)
	Nursing studies
ICT	Software development
	Computer science
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	Introduction to validation for the pharmaceutical industry
	Pre-University science
Services	Barista skills
	Beauty therapy
Social sciences, journalism and information	Cultural and heritage studies
	Pre-University arts (cultural and heritage studies)

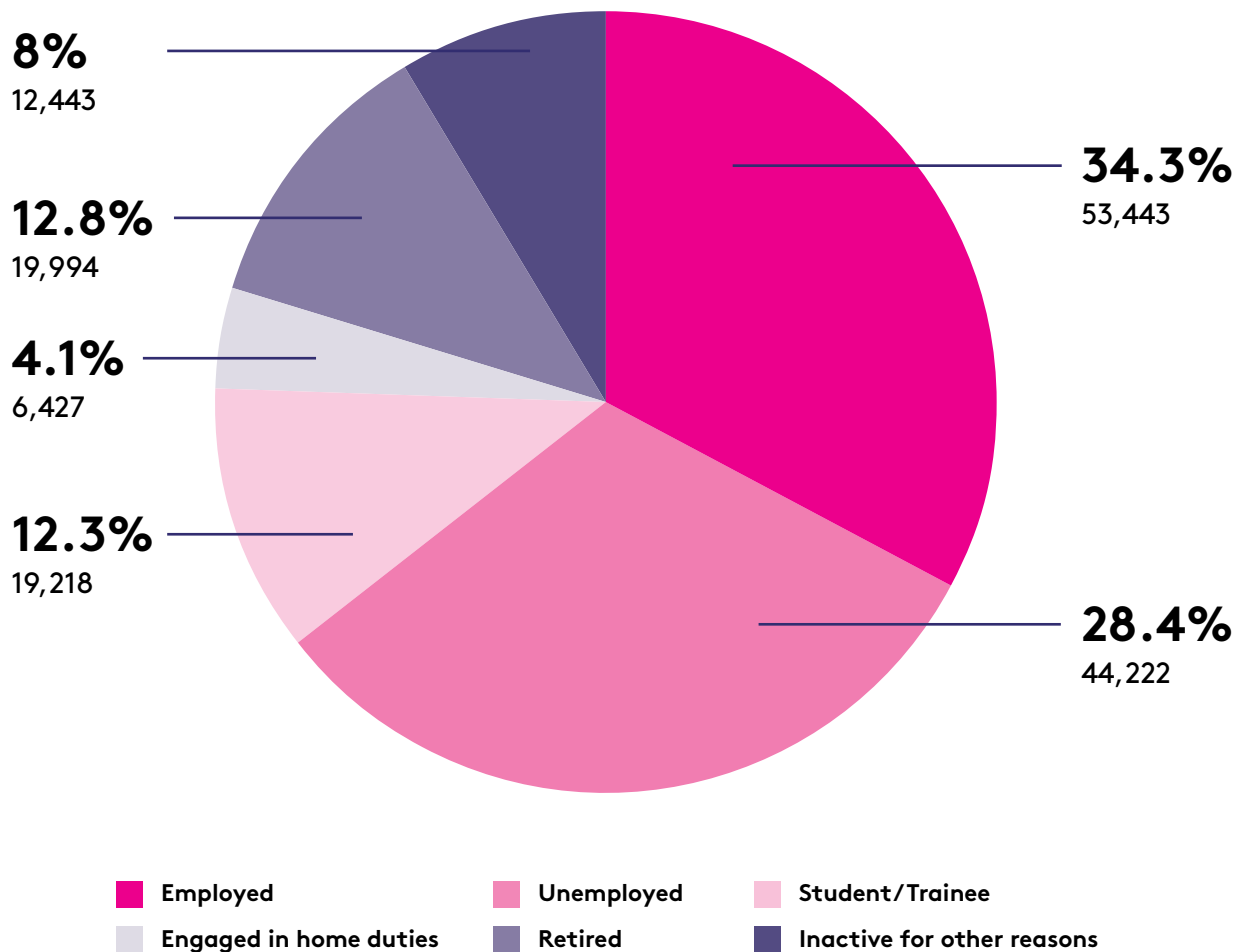
Field of Study(Broad ISCED) by Delivery Type

	Full-time	Part-time	Online	Total
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary	2,245	983	0	3,228
Arts and humanities	5,070	942	0	6,012
Business, administration and law	4,883	6,897	2,365	14,145
Education	1,478	1,744	112	3,334
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	5,277	5,400	613	11,290
Generic programmes and qualifications	8,887	90,100	1,999	100,986
Health and welfare	5,973	7,001	307	13,281
ICT	2,142	1,955	1,311	5,408
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	708	63	312	1,083
Services	7,013	4,593	395	12,001
Social sciences, journalism and information	184	31	0	215
Total	43,860	119,709	7,414	170,983

Overall, generic programmes and qualifications had the highest numbers of learners, with 59.1% of learner completions in this field of study. This was followed by business, administration and law (8.3%) and health and welfare (7.8%).

For full-time learner completions, generic programmes and qualifications and services had the highest numbers of learners. In addition, health and welfare, engineering, manufacturing and construction, and arts and humanities also had high numbers of full-time completions. For part-time completions, generic programmes and qualifications accounted for 75.3% of all part-time completions. This was followed by business, administration and law, engineering, manufacturing and construction, and services. Among online completions, business, administration and law had the highest number of completions. This was followed by information and communication technologies and generic programmes and qualifications.

Principal Economic Status¹⁶



In 2025, 28.4% of learners were unemployed prior to completion, while 34.3% were employed. The remaining 37.3% of learners were inactive prior to completion.

¹⁶ It should be noted that this calculation is an estimate and includes only those cases where previous principal economic status was captured. The principal economic status response rate for learner completions was 91.1%.

Certified Completions

Certified Completions by Outcomes¹⁷

	Learners	Percent
Fully certified	69,732	67.2%
Partially certified	11,462	11.1%
No certification achieved	19,311	18.6%
Waiting for certification details	3,268	3.2%
Total	103,773	100%

In 2025, the certification rate (full + partially certified) was 78.2%. Of the remaining certified learner completions, 3.2% were waiting for certification details, and 18.6% did not achieve certification.

Certified Completions by Award Level

	Learners	Percent
Non-NFQ Aligned FET ¹⁸	10,758	13.3%
Level 1 Certificate	3,337	4.1%
Level 2 Certificate	6,334	7.8%
Level 3 Certificate	9,726	12%
Level 4 Certificate	10,000	12.3%
Level 4/5 Certificate	706	0.9%
Level 5 Certificate	31,516	38.8%
Advanced Certificate/Higher Certificate	8,563	10.6%
Honours Bachelor Degree/Higher Diploma	254	0.3%
Total	81,194	100%

In 2025, 38.8% of certified completions were at level 5, whereas 10.6% were at an advanced or higher certificate level, 12.3% were at level 4 and 12% were at level 3. In addition, 13.3% of certified completions were non-NFQ aligned FET awards.

¹⁷ This excludes completions where the course did not have an award through a recognised awarding body.

¹⁸ This includes full and partial learner completions that gained an award through a recognised awarding body, but the awards were not aligned with the NFQ.

Certified Completions by Field of Study (Broad ISCED), Award Level and Outcomes (Learner Activity)¹⁹

	Fully Certified	Partially Certified	Total
Advanced Certificate/Higher Certificate			
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary	367	73	440
Arts and humanities	1,022	291	1,313
Business and administration and law	2,752	252	3,004
Education	1,504	108	1,612
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	1,066	14	1,080
Generic programmes and qualifications	23		23
Health and welfare	597	79	676
Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	292	51	343
Services	789	132	921
Social sciences, journalism and information	17	*	**
Total	8,429	**	**
Level 1 Certificate			
Generic programmes and qualifications	4,614	255	4,869
Total	4,614	255	4,869
Level 2 Certificate			
Generic programmes and qualifications	7,895	1,272	9,167
Total	7,895	1,272	9,167
Level 3 Certificate			
Arts and humanities	5		5
Business and administration and law	19		19
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	556	114	670
Generic programmes and qualifications	10,618	1,832	12,450
Health and welfare	61		61
Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	20		20
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	43		43
Services	104	39	143
Total	11,426	1,985	13,411

¹⁹ Learner activity refers to the sum of instances of learner full and partial completions that gained an award through a recognised awarding body in 2025. For example, a learner may be enrolled and attain a certified completion in multiple courses (e.g. an ESOL course and an evening training course).

Certified Completions by Field of Study (Broad ISCED), Award Level and Outcomes (Learner Activity)

	Fully Certified	Partially Certified	Total
Level 4 Certificate			
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary	680	129	809
Business and administration and law	1,649	385	2,034
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	1,490	34	1,524
Generic programmes and qualifications	4,705	1,345	6,050
Health and welfare	72		72
Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	616	203	819
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	5	5	10
Services	1,715	171	1,886
Total	10,932	2,272	13,204

Level 4/5 Certificate			
Generic programmes and qualifications	575	221	796
Total	575	221	796

Level 5 Certificate			
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary	1,893	285	2,178
Arts and humanities	2,512	934	3,446
Business and administration and law	6,686	1,053	7,739
Education	1,376	149	1,525
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	2,213	448	2,661
Generic programmes and qualifications	1,133	258	1,391
Health and welfare	12,553	1,692	14,245
Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	937	314	1,251
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	474	142	616
Services	2,739	937	3,676
Social sciences, journalism and information	128	36	164
Total	32,644	6,248	38,892

Certified Completions by Field of Study (Broad ISCED), Award Level and Outcomes (Learner Activity)

	Fully Certified	Partially Certified	Total
Non-NFQ Aligned FET			
Arts and humanities	268	5	273
Business and administration and law	1,007	49	1,056
Education	27		27
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	2,467	94	2,561
Generic programmes and qualifications	4,202	13	4,215
Health and welfare	205	13	218
Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	1,905	402	2,307
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	40		40
Services	2,040	347	2,387
Total	12,161	923	13,084

Ordinary & Honours Bachelor Degree/Higher Diploma			
Arts and humanities	116	13	129
Business and administration and law	36	*	**
Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	35	6	41
Health and welfare	40	*	**
Services	*		*
Total	**	**	255

*Please note that any learner activity count less than 5 is replaced by an asterisk in this table.

*Please note a double asterisk is used when a column/row total could reveal a low cell count in that column/row.

Certified Completions by Field of Study (Detailed ISCED) and Award Level (Learner Activity)

	Non-NFQ Aligned FET	Level 1 Certificate	Level 2 Certificate	Level 3 Certificate	Level 4 Certificate	Level 4/5 Certificate	Level 5 Certificate	Advanced /Higher Certificate	Ordinary & Honours Bachelor Degree/Higher Diploma	Total
Accounting and taxation	701			19			475	383		1,578
Agriculture							1,009	103		1,112
Architecture and town planning	32			7	25		162	116		342
Arts							529			529
Audio-visual techniques and media production							1,343	558	129	2,030
Basic programmes and qualifications	4,192	4,630	9,149	8,863	4,907	796	1,391			33,928
Biological and related sciences							573			573
Building and civil engineering	138			15	930		520	13		1,616
Business and administration							2,298	630	*	2,930
Care of the elderly and of disabled adults					53		15			68
Child care and youth services							187			187
Community sanitation	58							15		73
Computer use	1,717			*			256	67		2,044
Crop and livestock production								24		24
Database and network design and administration	391						401	83	7	882
Dental studies								13		13
Domestic services					103					103
Education	27						5	700		732
Education and Training not elsewhere classified							195			195
Education science								490		490
Electricity and energy	485				175		253	501		1,414
Electronics and automation	182				14		23	407		626
Engineering and engineering trades				55	118		575			748
Engineering, manufacturing and construction				564						564
Environment				43						43
Environmental protection technology				23	90		140	26		279
Fashion, interior and industrial design							571	98		669
Finance, banking and insurance	183						6			189
Fine Arts							478	328		806
Food processing				6	38		75			119
Generic programmes and qualifications				12						12
Hair and beauty services	95			77	385		1,766	322		2,645
Handicrafts							199	5		204
Health	84			61			2,125	292	13	2,575
Horticulture					779		271	58		1,108
Hotel, restaurants and catering	289			66	1,054		373	37		1,819
Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	106				809			12	9	936
Journalism and reporting							47			47

Certified Completions by Field of Study (Detailed ISCED) and Award Level (Learner Activity)

	Non-NFQ Aligned FET	Level 1 Certificate	Level 2 Certificate	Level 3 Certificate	Level 4 Certificate	Level 4/5 Certificate	Level 5 Certificate	Advanced /Higher Certificate	Ordinary & Honours Bachelor Degree/Higher Diploma	Total
Language acquisition	273									273
Law							408			408
Literacy and numeracy				996						996
Management and administration	143				23		2,633	1,626	35	4,460
Manufacturing and processing	19									19
Marketing and advertising	24						228	15		267
Materials (glass, paper, plastic and wood)							135	17		152
Mathematics	40									40
Mechanics and metal trades	1,593				94		87			1,774
Medical diagnostic and treatment technology	134									134
Motor vehicles, ships and aircraft	112				40		684			836
Music and performing arts				5			317	324		646
Natural environments and wildlife							43			43
Natural sciences,mathematics and statistics					10					10
Nursing and midwifery							7,391		13	7,404
Occupational health and safety	39									39
Personal skills and development	23	239	18	2,574	1,143			23		4,020
Philosophy and ethics							9			9
Protection of persons and property					227		73			300
Secretarial and office work					1,763		1,575	294		3,632
Social and behavioural sciences							8	18		26
Social work and counselling							1,773	271	18	2,062
Sociology and cultural studies							109			109
Software and applications development and analysis	93						587	181	25	886
Sports	275				108		1,113	273		1,769
Teacher training without subject specialisation				21						21
Textiles (clothes, footwear and leather)							7			7
Therapy and rehabilitation							22	68		90
Traditional and complementary							31			31
Training for pre-school teachers							1,325	422		1,747
Transport services	1,631									1,631
Travel, tourism and leisure					9		351	274	*	638
Veterinary					30		898	255		1,183
Welfare					19		2,701	32		2,752
Wholesale and retail sales	5				248		116			369
Work skills								56		56
Total	13,084	4,869	9,167	13,411	13,194	796	38,885	9,430	255	103,091

*Please note that any learner activity count less than 5 is replaced with an asterisk in this table.

Definition of Terms

Activity

The sum of learners multiplied by the number of courses which they have been enrolled in or completed within a programme or across different programmes, or providers during 2025.

Certified Completions

In the FET sector, not all learner completions lead to an award through a recognised awarding body in the FET sector. Therefore, certified completions refer only to the total number of certified completions in 2025.

Certification Rate

The proportion of full and partial learner completions who achieved certification to all learners who completed a certified course in 2025.

Completions

Completions include the total number of learners who fully or partially completed their course during 2025. Completions exclude those learners who may have left their course early (e.g. early leavers).

Enrolments

Enrolments are defined as learners who are on course or have completed a course during 2025.

Field of Study

This is defined and categorised by the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). Both broad (2-digit) and detailed (4-digit) fields of study are used for categorising Further Education and Training course fields of study.

Full Completions

Learners who have completed 90 per cent or more of the course and its requirements in 2025.

Inactive

This term is used according to the Eurostat and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition which defines inactive as individuals who are neither employed nor unemployed and are not working and not available or looking for work. Inactive in this report includes those learners engaged in home duties, retired, student/trainees, and those inactive for other reasons.

Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)

This is a framework through which all learning achievements may be measured and related to each other in a coherent way. The many different types and sizes of qualifications included in the NFQ are organised based on their level of knowledge, skill and competence. In some cases, where awards have not been placed on the Irish NFQ, equivalent levels are assigned based on the document 'Qualifications can cross boundaries' and the level assigned to the award on the relevant country's framework (e.g. Cf. Ofqual, Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework, etc.).

Learner

A unique individual who has progressed onto a course in the application process. The total number of learners is the sum of all unique individuals in Further Education and Training in 2025.

Long-term Unemployed

This refers to any person who is unemployed for 12 months or more.

Non-NFQ Aligned courses

This includes completions with certification not aligned with the NFQ.

On Course

This refers to those learners who were still on course as of 31 December 2025.

Partial Completions

Learners who have completed more than 25 percent but less than 90 percent of a course and its requirements in 2025.

Post-secondary Non-tertiary

This refers to Post Leaving Certificate NFQ Level 4 or 5, Advanced Certificate NFQ Level 6, other non-NFQ aligned FET, Certificate NFQ Level 4, or Certificate NFQ Level 5.

Short-cycle Tertiary

This refers to third level non-degree courses and includes higher certificate NFQ level 6 courses and diploma NFQ level 7 courses. These courses are usually of one year in duration and are often vocational in nature.

Third Level

This refers to Ordinary Bachelor degree, Honours Bachelor degree, Professional, Post-Graduate, Doctorate or Higher degree courses.



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