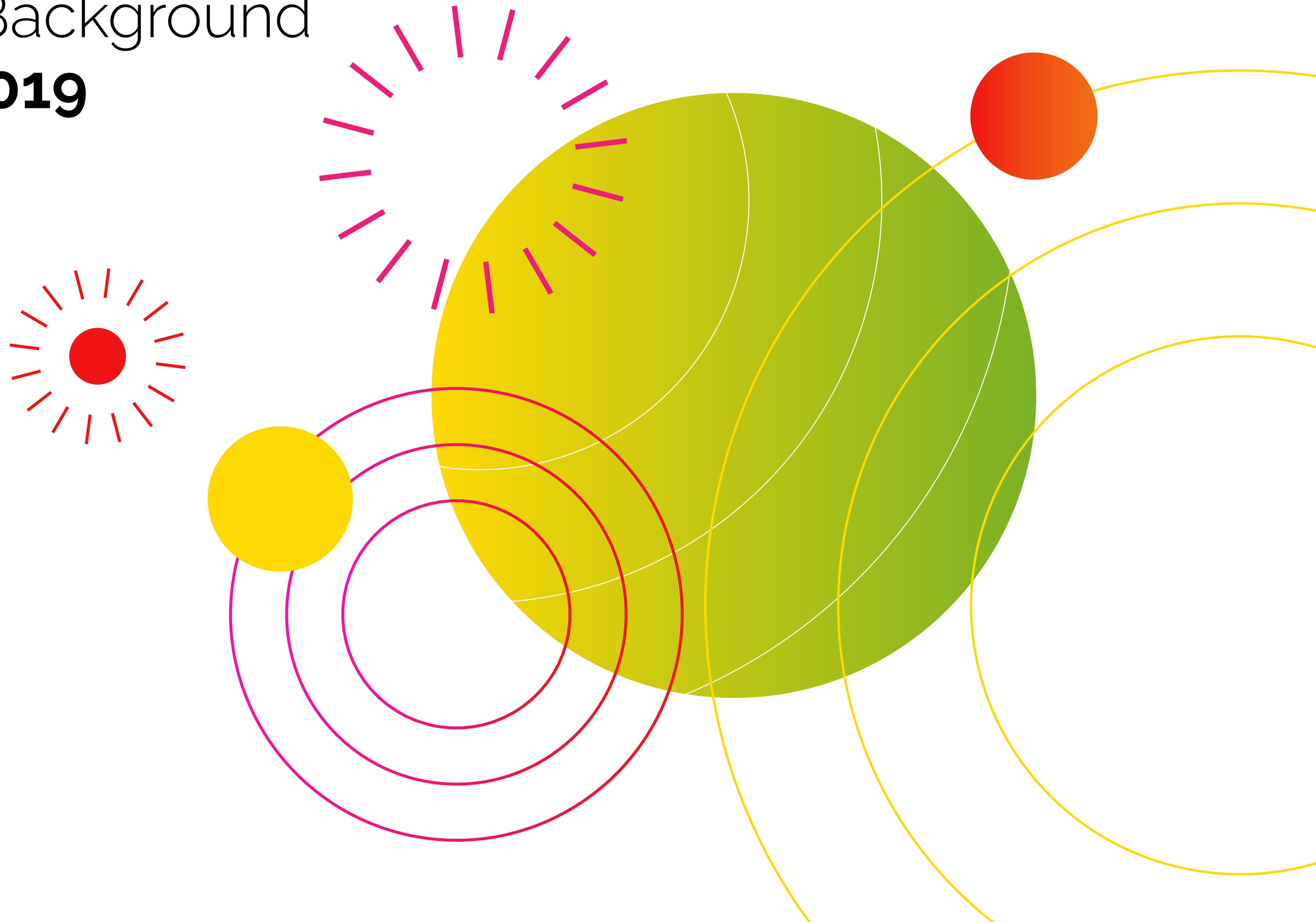


Key Insights into the Socio-Economic Background of FET Learners **2019**



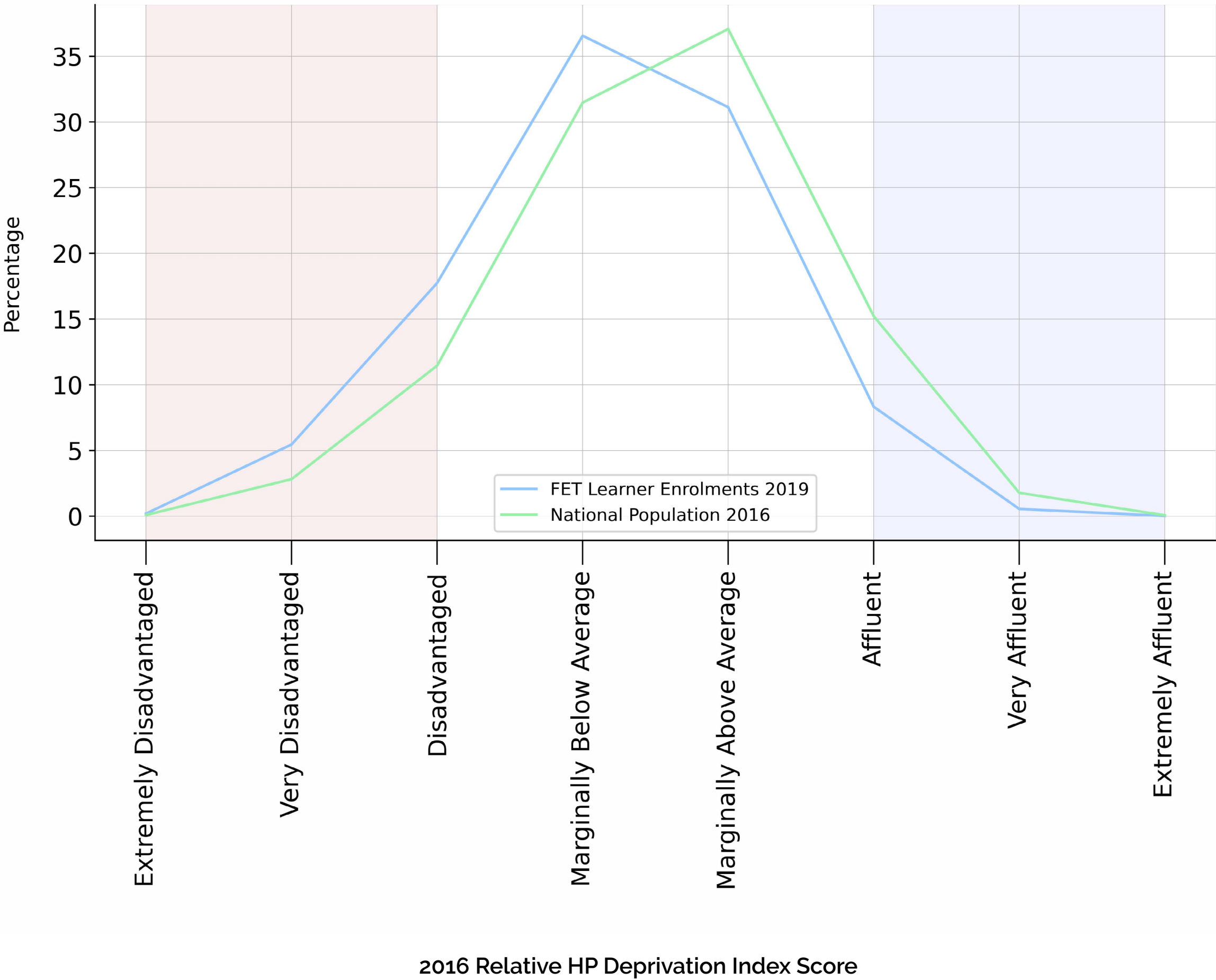
Key Insights into the socio-economic background of FET Learners, **2019**

This report uses information from the Programme and Learner Support System (PLSS) that is linked with the POBAL HP Deprivation index to offer insights about the socio-economic background of the FET learners. The Pobal HP Deprivation index is Ireland's most widely used social gradient metric, which scores each small area (circa 100 households) in terms of affluence or disadvantage, using information from Ireland's census, such as employment, age profile and educational attainment, to calculate this score.

The annual FET Facts and Figures reports published by the Data Analytics Unit in SOLAS serve as important statistical publications, providing a comprehensive overview of the Further Education and Training (FET) outcomes using data from PLSS. This study introduces a novel approach to our reporting as it links PLSS enrolments with the Pobal HP Deprivation Index using learner addresses that were geocoded. This report infers that a learner residing in a small area that is deemed as disadvantaged is likely also to be from a disadvantaged background. Thereby we use the index as a proxy for the socio-economic background of a learner and would like to underscore the need for cautious interpretation and consideration of the limitations of this approach .



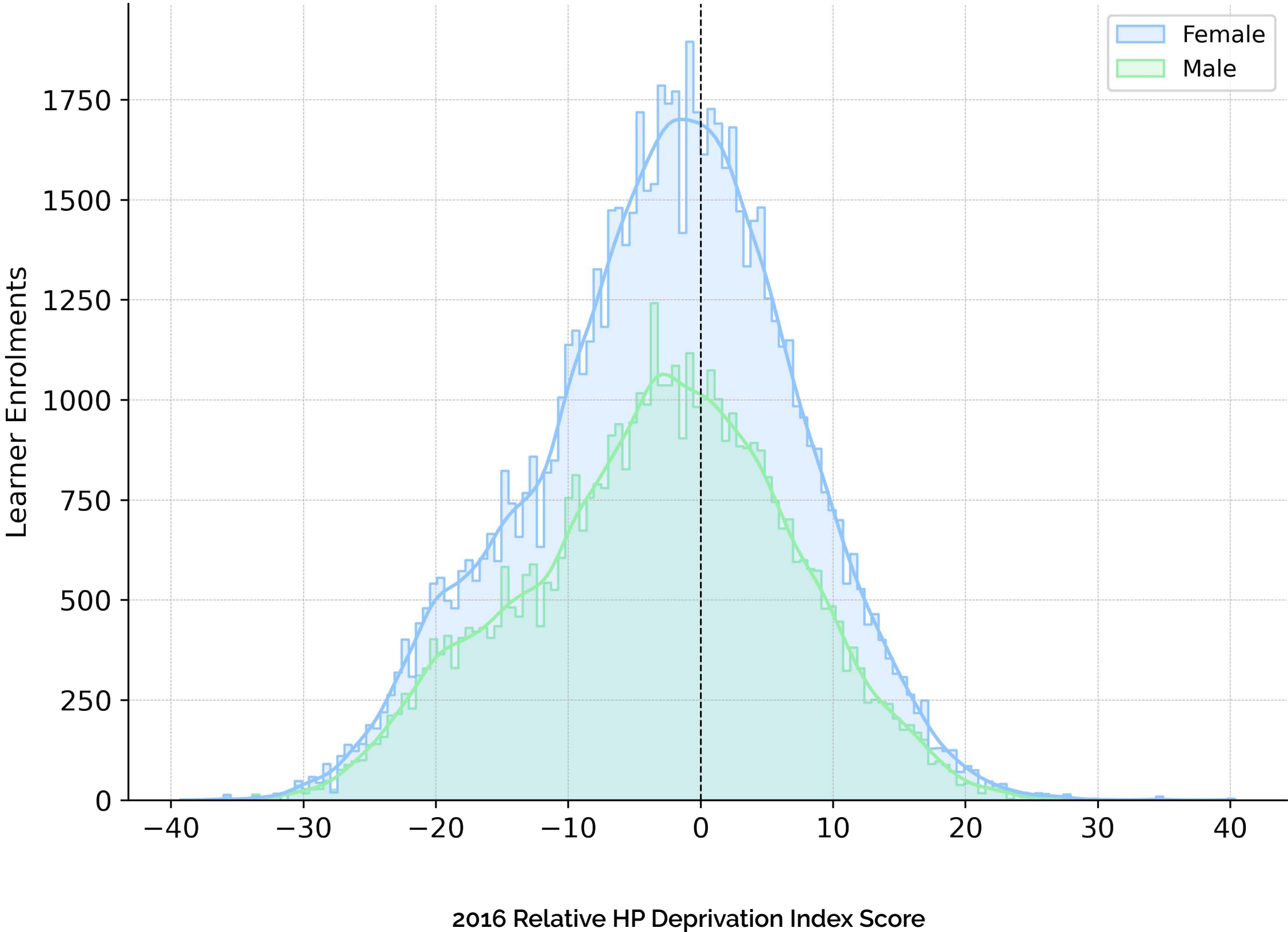
Comparing the National Population (2016) and the FET Learner Enrolments (2019)



	National Population 2016 (%)	FET Learner Enrolments 2019 (%)
Extremely Affluent	0.07	0.02
Very Affluent	1.78	0.55
Affluent	15.23	8.33
Marginally Above Average	37.08	31.13
Marginally Below Average	31.48	36.57
Disadvantaged	11.46	17.75
Very Disadvantaged	2.82	5.46
Extremely Disadvantaged	0.09	0.2

A comparison between the relative affluence or disadvantage of the FET learners and the national population of Ireland indicate that FET attracts a significantly higher percentage share of its learners from the disadvantaged population, when compared to the 2016 CSO Census national statistics. The FET learner enrolments have a smaller percent share of extremely affluent (0.02%), very affluent (0.55%), affluent (8.33%) and marginally above average (31.13%) population. Notably, the FET population have a higher share of learners from extremely disadvantaged (0.2%), very disadvantaged (5.46%), disadvantaged (17.75%) and marginally below average (36.57) socio-economic backgrounds.

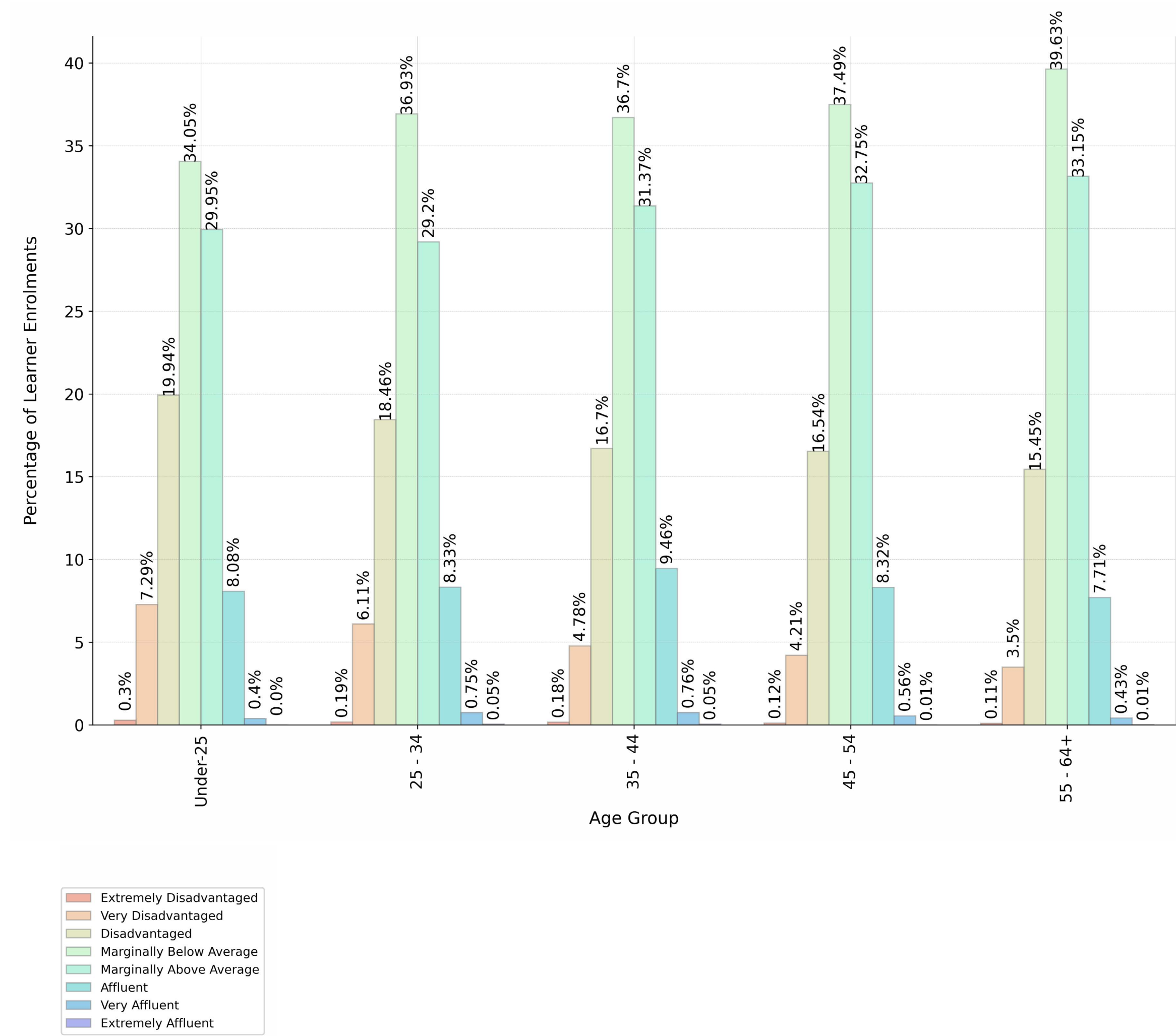
Gender



	Male FET 2019 (%)	Female FET 2019 (%)
Extremely Affluent	0.01	0.03
Very Affluent	0.54	0.55
Affluent	8.23	8.4
Marginally Above Average	30.4	31.6
Marginally Below Average	36.2	36.8
Disadvantaged	18.6	17.2
Very Disadvantaged	5.8	5.25
Extremely Disadvantaged	0.2	0.18

The gender distribution of the FET learner enrolments in 2019 was 61% female and 39% male. As the above graph and table show, the comparison of the socio-economic background of the learners broken down by gender shows close similarity, with males exhibiting only slightly higher levels of disadvantage. As expected, learners in the [-10, 10] range represent the majority, indicating learners are clustered around the mean however, the peak for males and females are both skewed negatively on the 2016 Relative Deprivation Index Score (disadvantaged). The share of male learners coming from extremely disadvantaged (0.2%), very disadvantaged (5.8%) and disadvantage (18.6%) socio-economic backgrounds is higher when compared to the female learners. In contrast, the share of extremely affluent, very affluent and affluent is higher among female learners.

Age Group

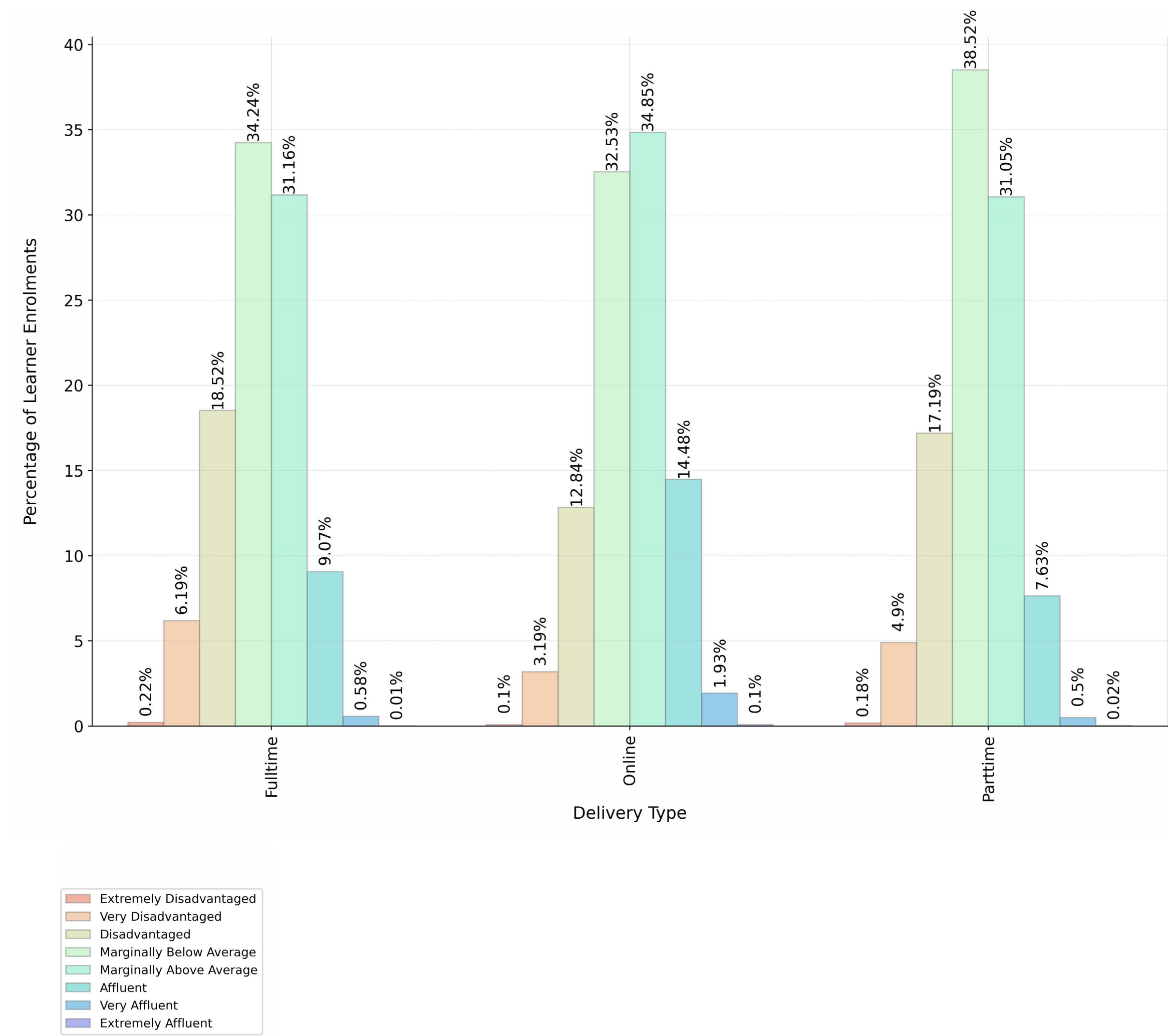


In this study, learners who are 25 and younger have the highest percentage share of overall enrolments (32.3%). Across all age groups this age group have the highest percent share of extremely disadvantaged (0.3%), very disadvantaged (7.29%), and disadvantaged (19.9%). However, this is mostly driven by learners who are enrolled in Youthreach and CTCs, as these two cohorts tends to come from disproportionately more disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds compared to those learners who are 25 and younger but enrolled in other programme categories. The age group 35 – 44 have the highest percent share of learners from affluent (9.46%), very affluent (0.75%) and extremely affluent (0.05%).

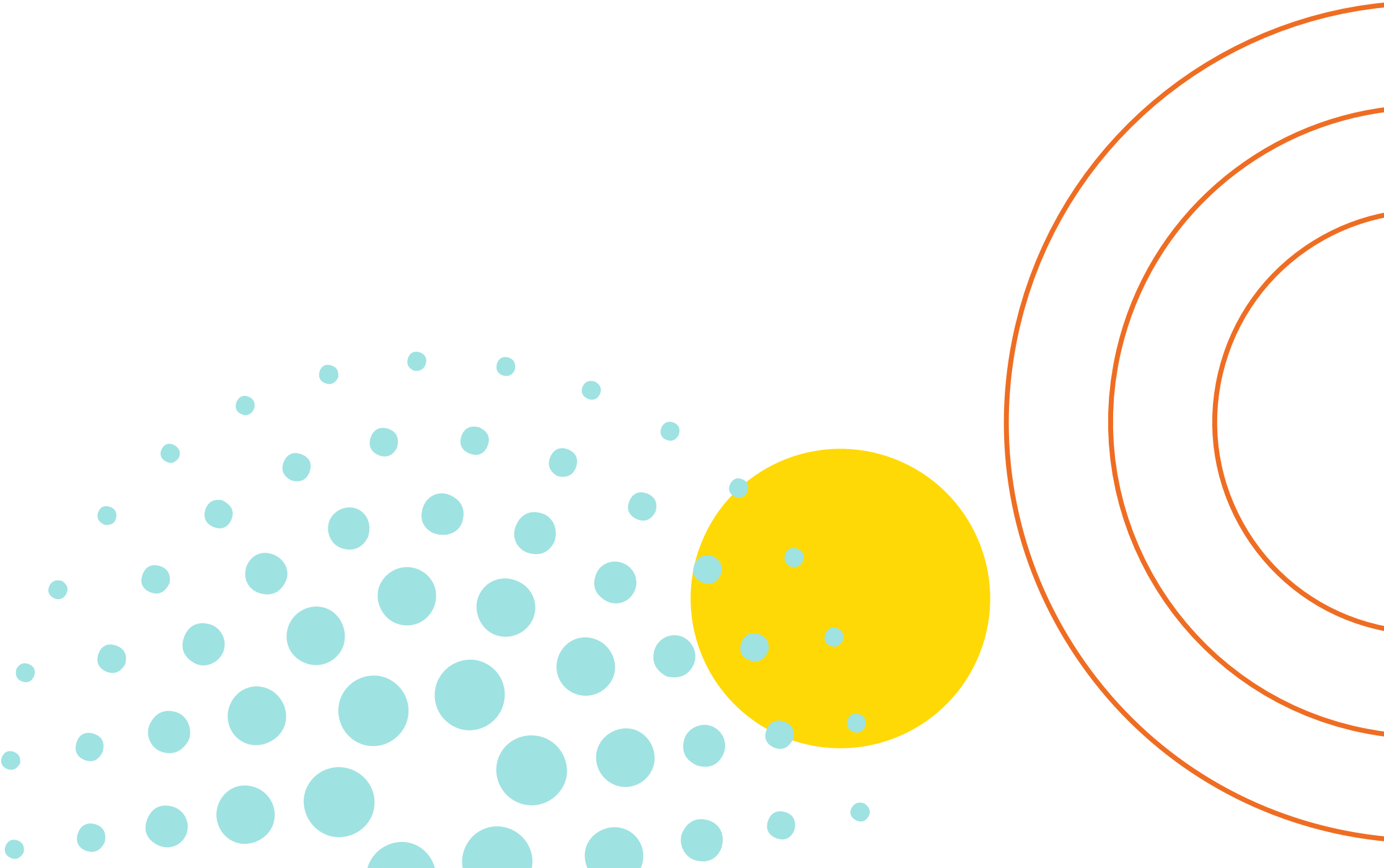
Note

Youthreach and Community Training Centres represent close to 10% of the 25 and younger learner enrolments in this study when learners are analysed uniquely at programme category level. Youthreach and Community Training Centres learners are more disadvantaged than learners on other programme categories and they are primarily younger than 25 (see Programme Category analysis).

Delivery Type



In this study, a breakdown of course provision by delivery type highlight how courses delivered 'Online' have the highest percent share of marginally above average learners (34.85%) and affluent learners (14.48%). This suggests that a pronounced concentration of affluent learners opted for online delivery of education. Full-time and part-time showcase right-skewed distributions, featuring higher percentages of learners from extremely disadvantaged, very disadvantaged, and disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds.



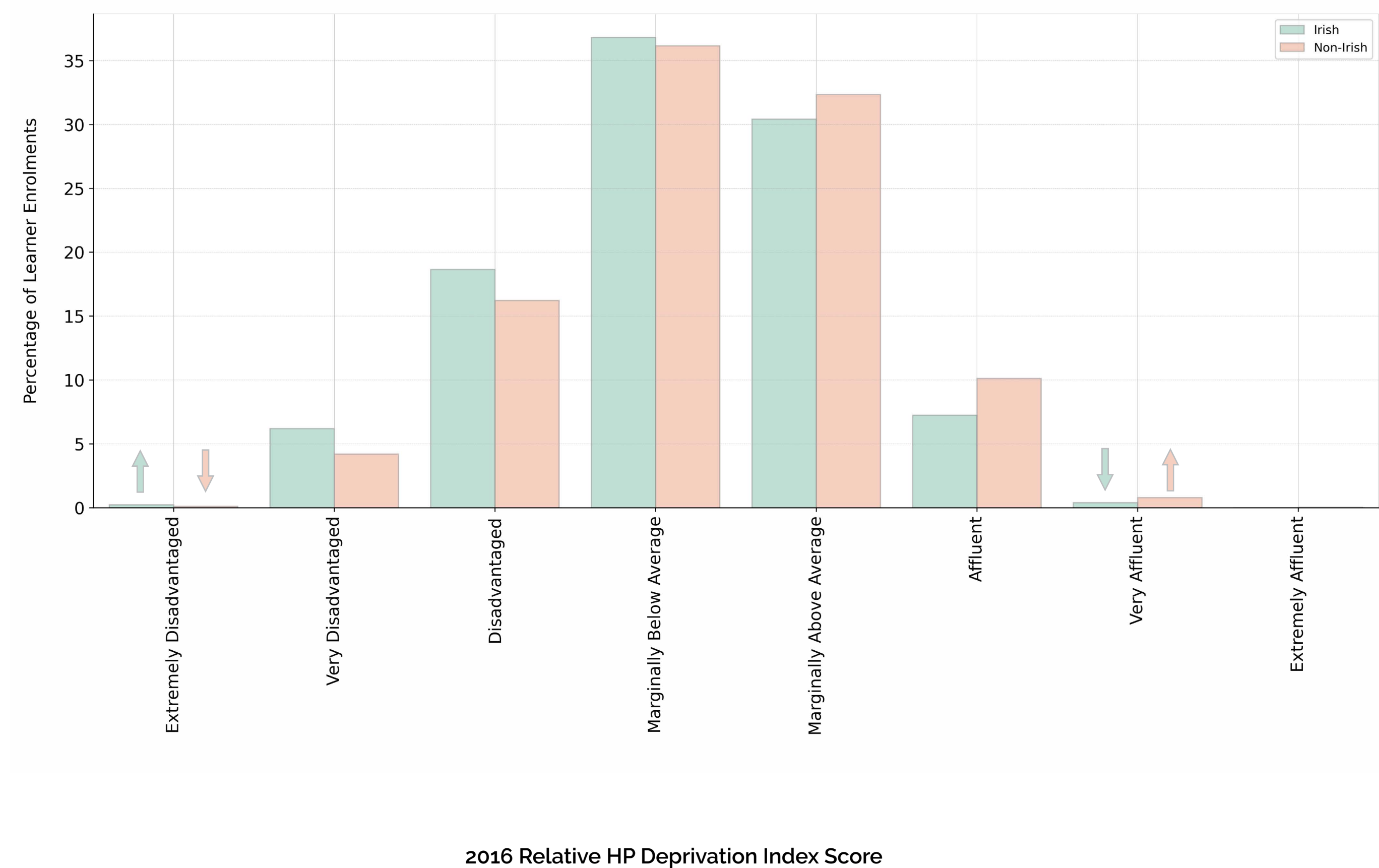
Field of Study (Broad ISCED)

	2016 Relative HP Deprivation Index Score							
	Extremely Disadvantaged	Very Disadvantaged	Disadvantaged	Marginally Below Average	Marginally Above Average	Affluent	Very Affluent	Extremely Affluent
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary	0.19%	4.14%	16.37%	39.36%	31.39%	8.28%	0.27%	
Arts and humanities	0.05%	3.18%	14.11%	32.15%	36.49%	13.22%	0.75%	0.05%
Business and administration and law	0.16%	4.08%	15.22%	33.28%	34.46%	11.83%	0.93%	0.03%
Education	0.16%	5.83%	18.60%	38.51%	30.46%	6.08%	0.35%	
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	0.24%	5.43%	17.48%	36.66%	31.65%	8.04%	0.50%	
Generic programmes and qualifications	0.26%	5.80%	18.37%	37.91%	29.99%	7.19%	0.46%	0.03%
Health and welfare	0.12%	5.81%	18.82%	37.37%	30.02%	7.34%	0.50%	
Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	0.05%	4.17%	15.88%	34.20%	33.85%	11.03%	0.78%	0.03%
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	0.12%	3.44%	12.42%	31.37%	39.61%	11.93%	0.98%	0.12%
Services	0.21%	7.24%	19.94%	35.89%	28.80%	7.48%	0.45%	
Social sciences, journalism and information		3.44%	14.33%	26.07%	36.96%	18.05%	1.15%	

By examining the percentage distributions of learner enrolments by ISCED fields of learning, in the provided table, notable patterns emerge. Natural Sciences, mathematics and statistics, exhibits a well-balanced distribution, with a predominant portion of the learners' scores falling into the marginally above average (39.61%) and affluent (11.93%) deprivation index categories. In contrast, services showcases a distinct concentration in very disadvantaged (7.24%) and disadvantaged (19.94%) deprivation index categories. For social sciences, journalism and

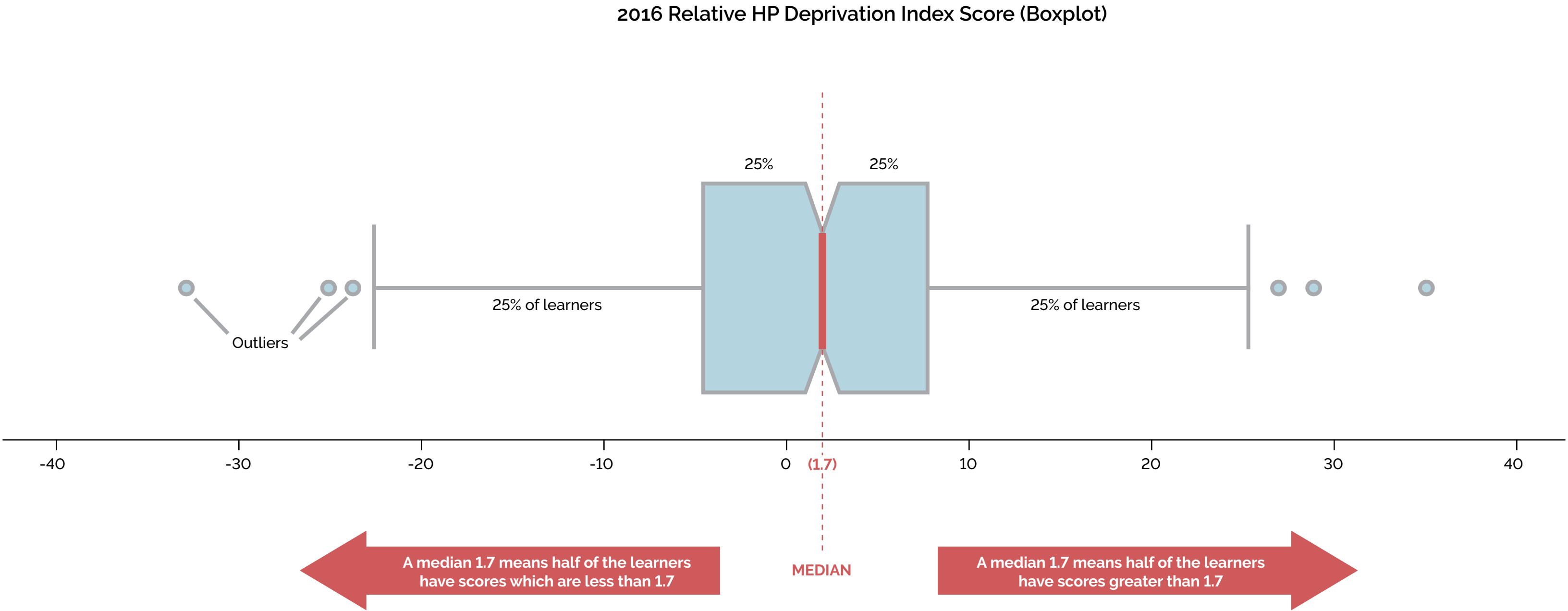
information, there is a marked absence of any learner enrolments who are extremely disadvantaged, which is further informed by the concentration of learner enrolments who are marginally above average (36.96%) and affluent (18%).

The Irish and Non-Irish

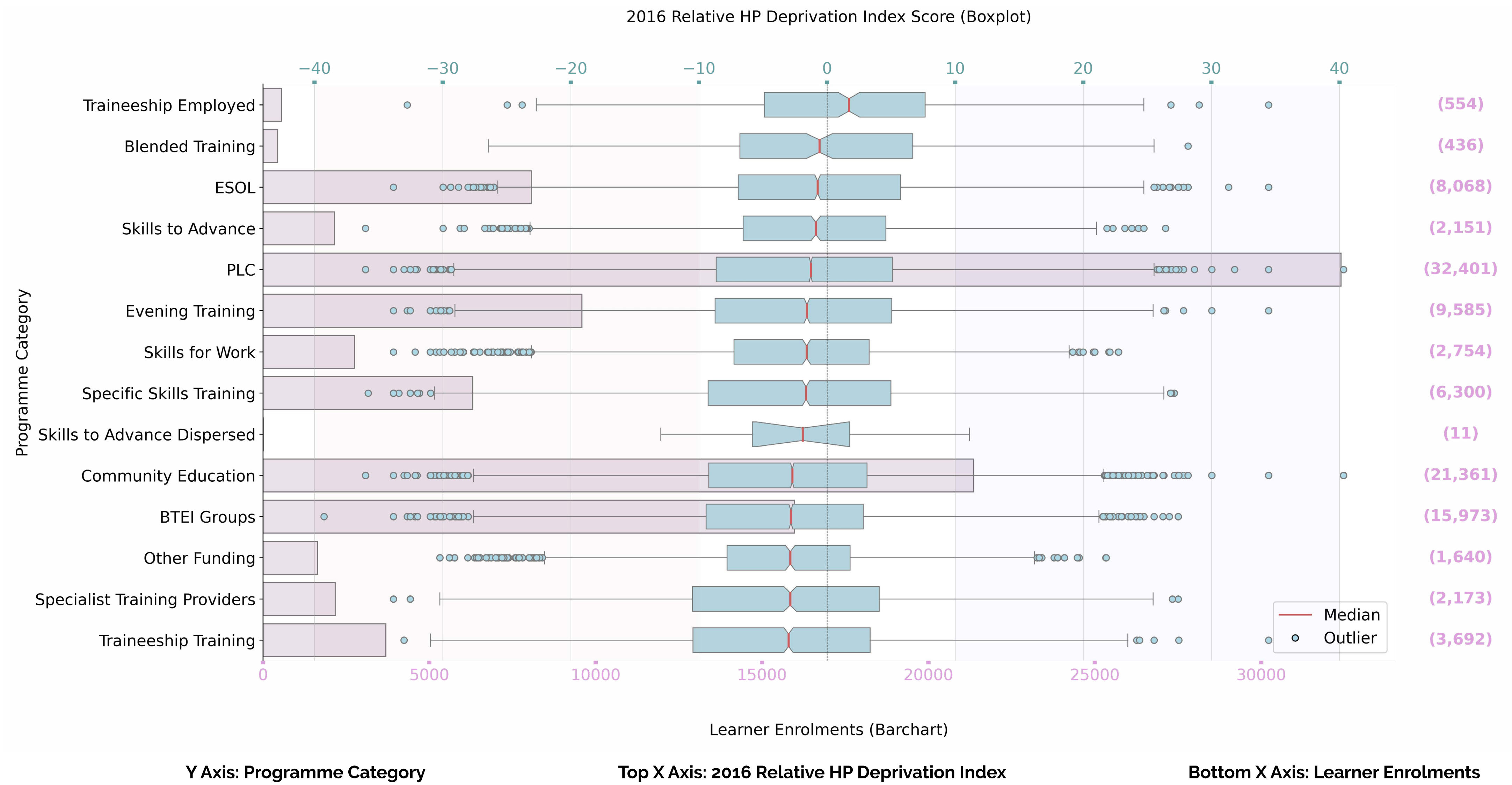


In this study, there are discernible socio-economic disparities between the Irish and non-Irish cohorts. Notably, the Irish cohort displays higher proportions of disadvantage across deprivation index score categories, including extremely disadvantaged (0.24% vs. 0.12%), very disadvantaged (6.2% vs. 4.2%), and disadvantaged (18.7% vs. 16.2%), in comparison to the non-Irish cohort. Conversely, the non-Irish cohort exhibits a higher prevalence of affluence, surpassing the Irish cohort in the affluent (10.1% vs. 7.3%), very affluent (0.79% vs. 0.4%), and extremely affluent (0.04% vs 0.01%) score ranges, underscoring the socio-economic differences between the two cohorts.

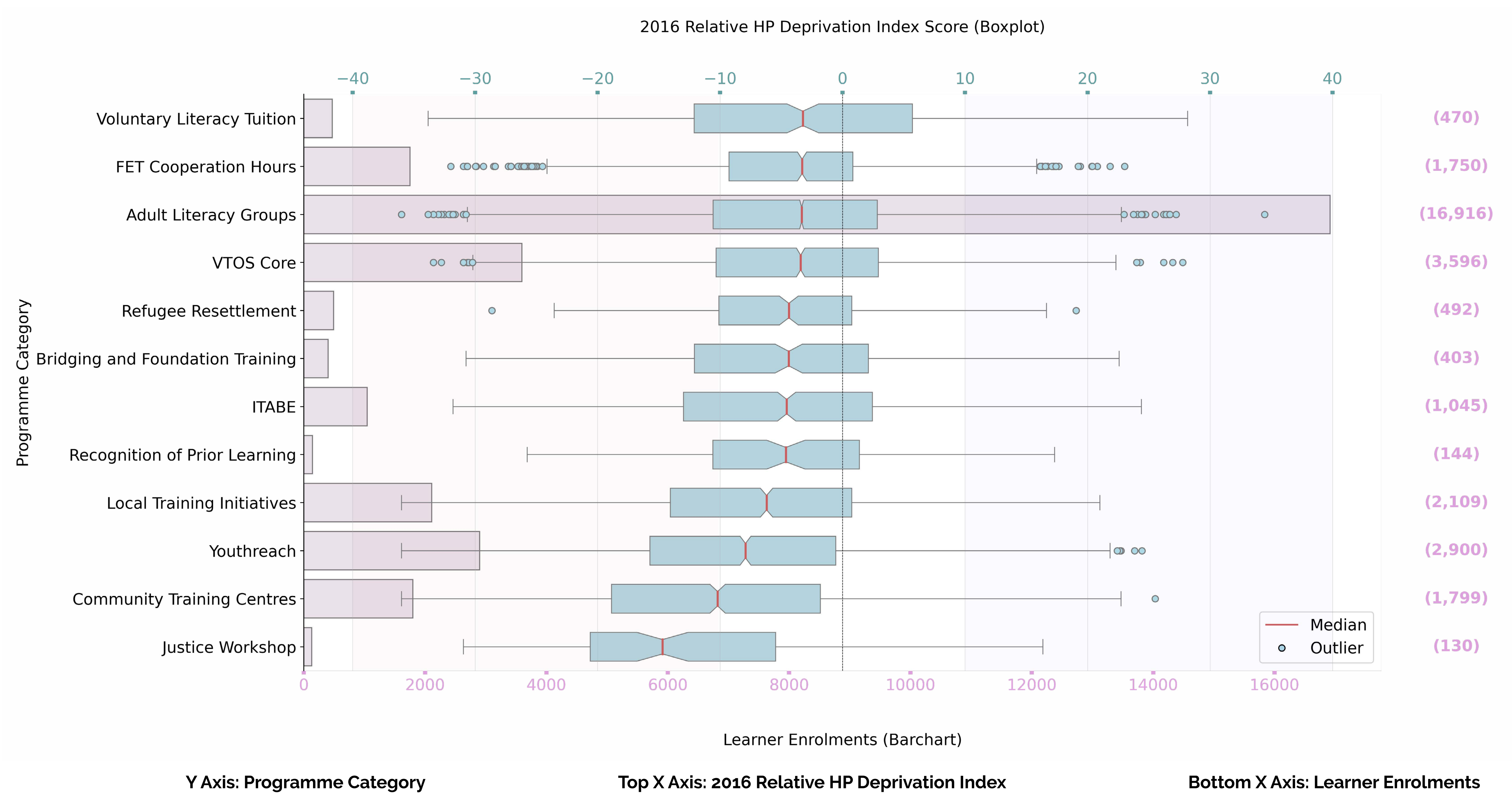
How to read Box Plots Section



Programme Category

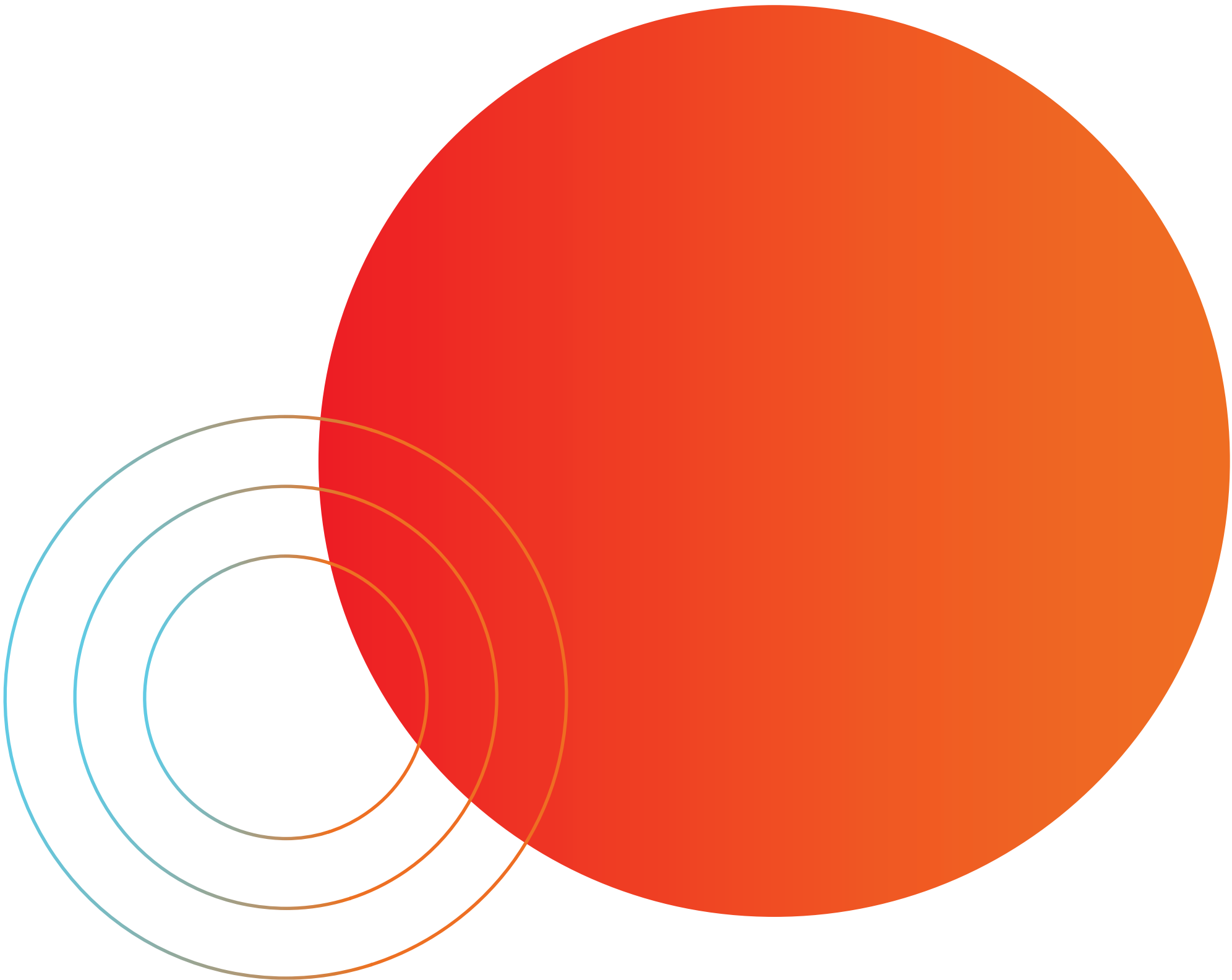


Programme Category



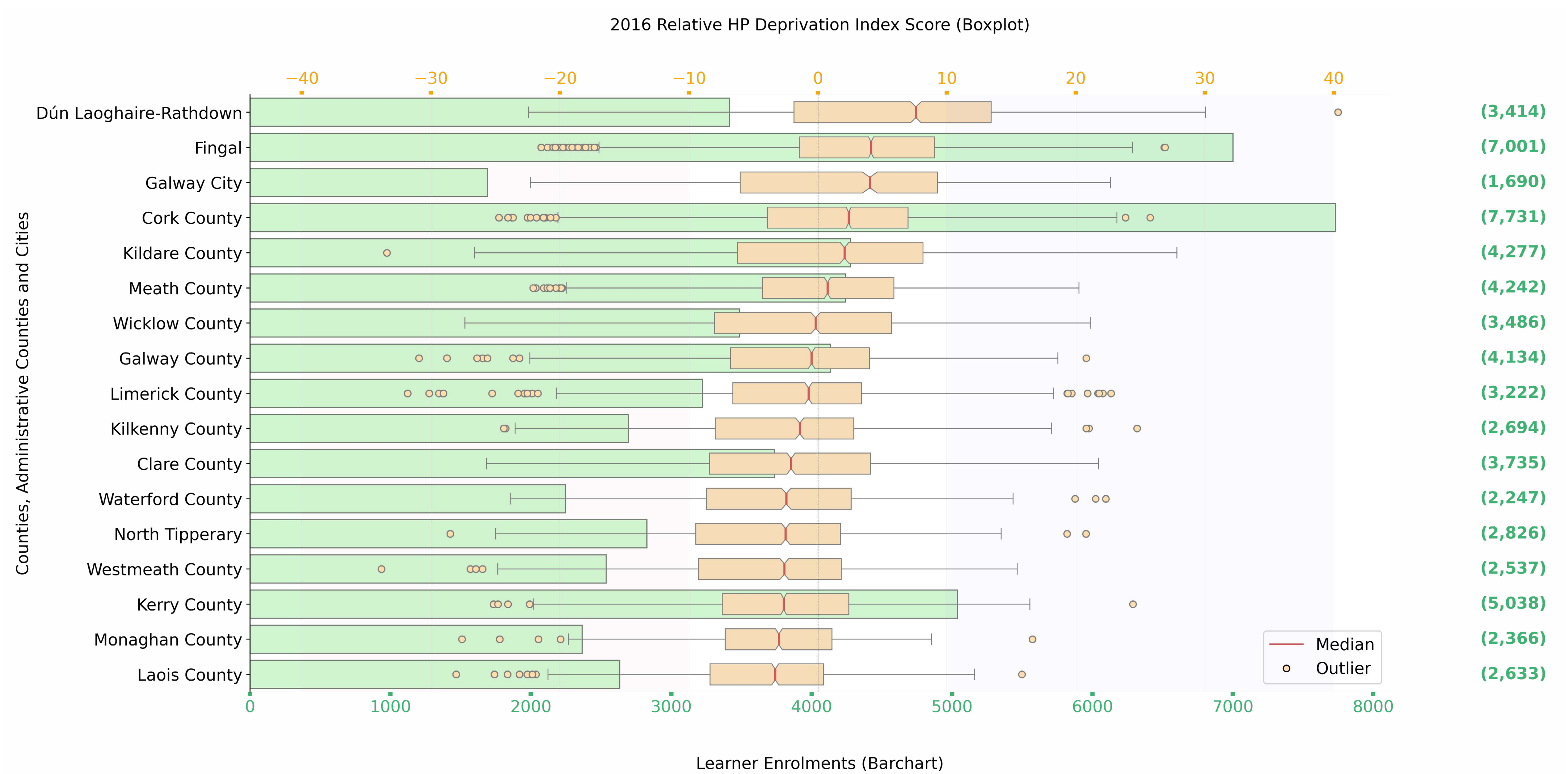
Among this study cohort, 32,401 learner enrolments are in a PLC course¹. In total, 21.5% of PLC learners are either extremely disadvantaged, very disadvantaged or disadvantaged². In contrast, 11.1% of PLC learners are either extremely affluent, very affluent and affluent³. Community Education is the second largest programme category by learner enrolments (21,361) of which 22.5% of learners are either extremely disadvantaged, very disadvantaged or disadvantaged, whereas 7.7% of learners in Community Education are extremely affluent, very affluent, or affluent.

The three Programme Categories with the highest percentage share of extremely disadvantaged, very disadvantaged, or disadvantaged learners are Justice Workshops (63%), Community Training Centres (50.9%) and Youthreach (43.17%). In contrast Justice Workshops (1.5%), Community Training Centres (3.95%) and Youthreach (4.7%) have a small proportion of extremely affluent, very affluent, and affluent learners.



¹ 47,884 learner enrolments were reported in PLC in 2019 (FET Facts and Figures, 2019).
² Extremely disadvantage, very disadvantage and disadvantage categories are combined in this calculation.
³ Extremely affluent, very affluent and affluent categories are combined in this calculation.

Counties, Administrative Counties & Cities

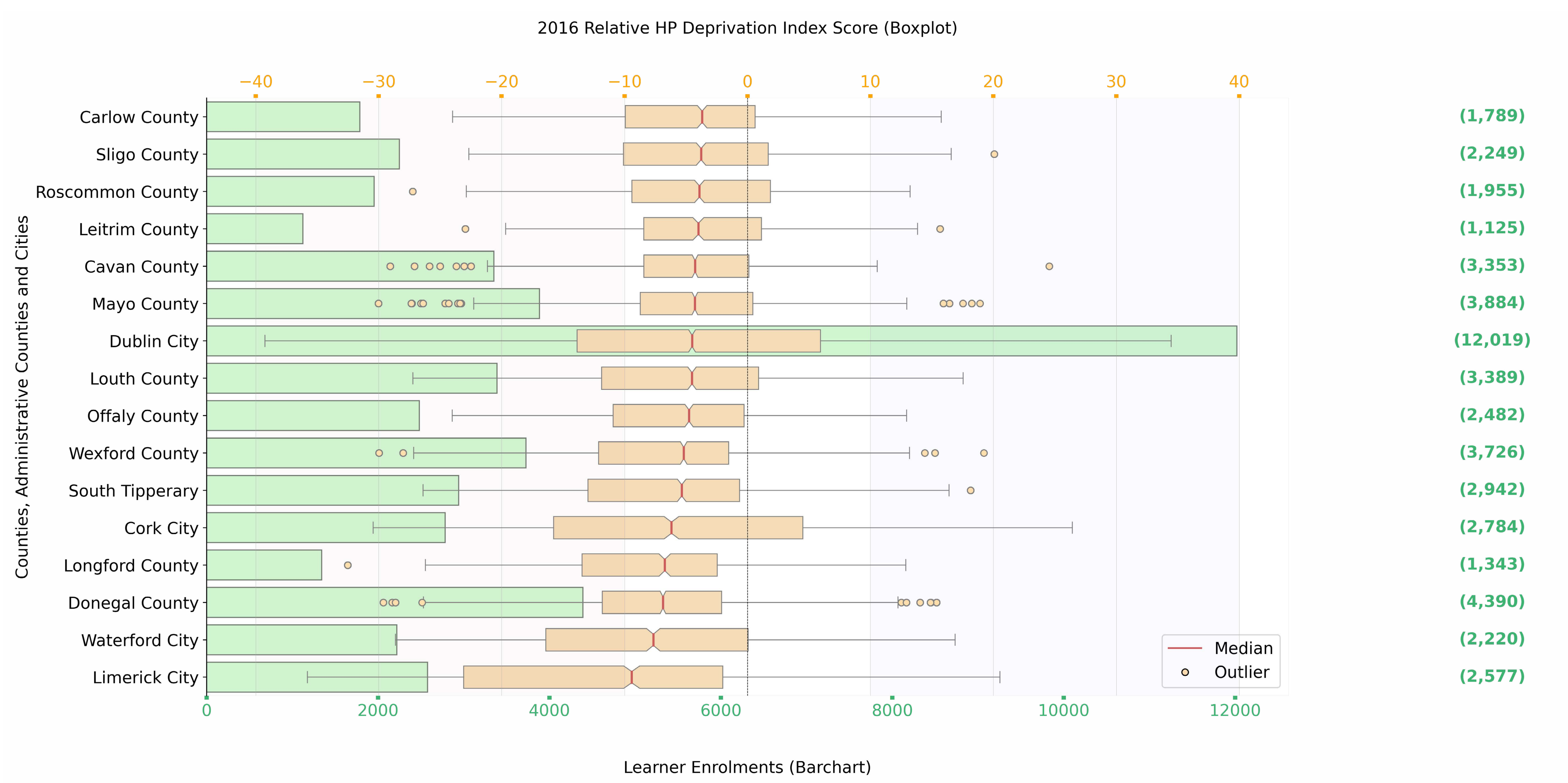


Y Axis: Counties, Administrative Counties and Cities

Top X Axis: 2016 Relative HP Deprivation Index

Bottom X Axis: Learner Enrolments

Counties, Administrative Counties & Cities

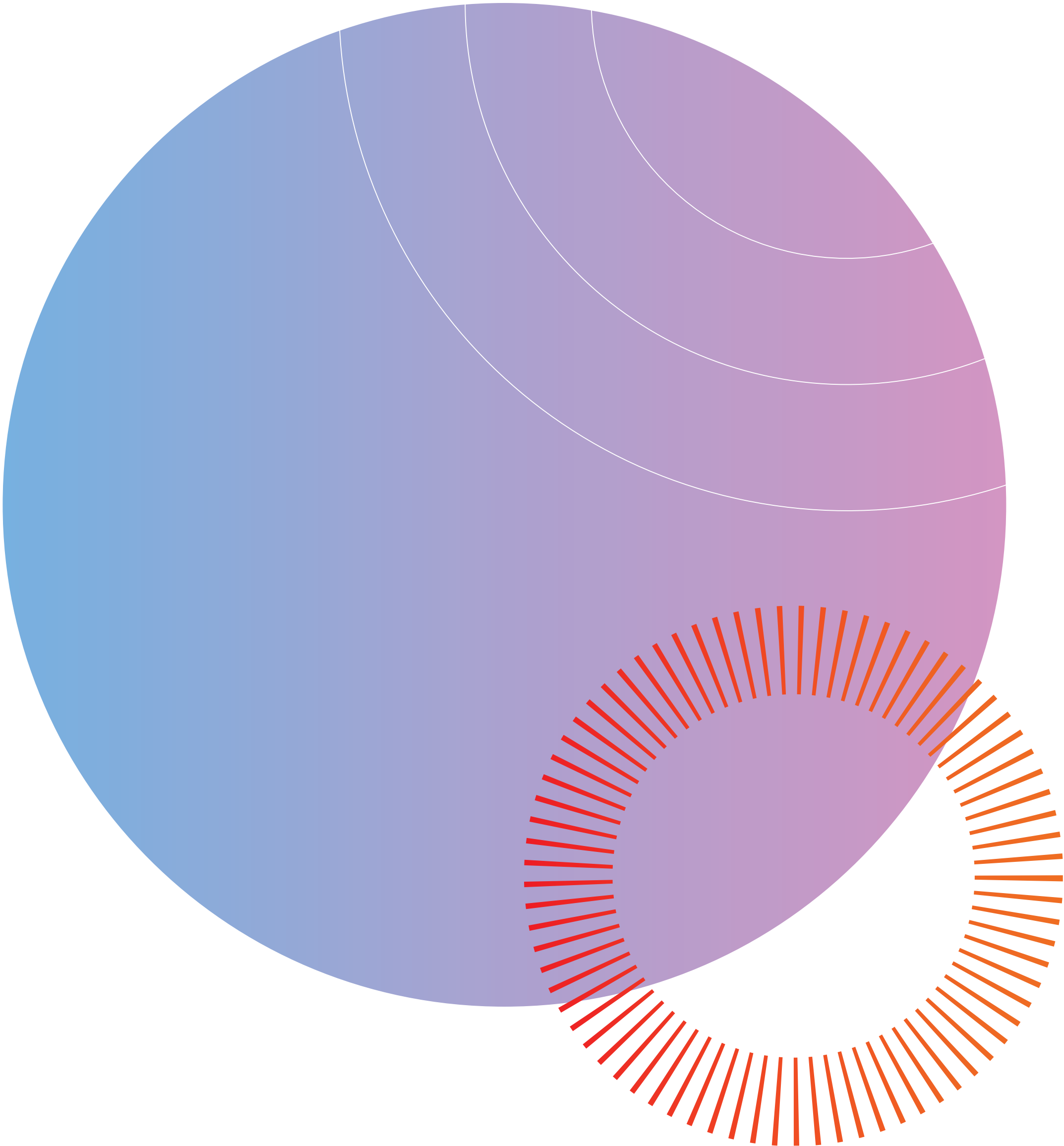


Y Axis: Counties, Administrative Counties and Cities

Top X Axis: 2016 Relative HP Deprivation Index

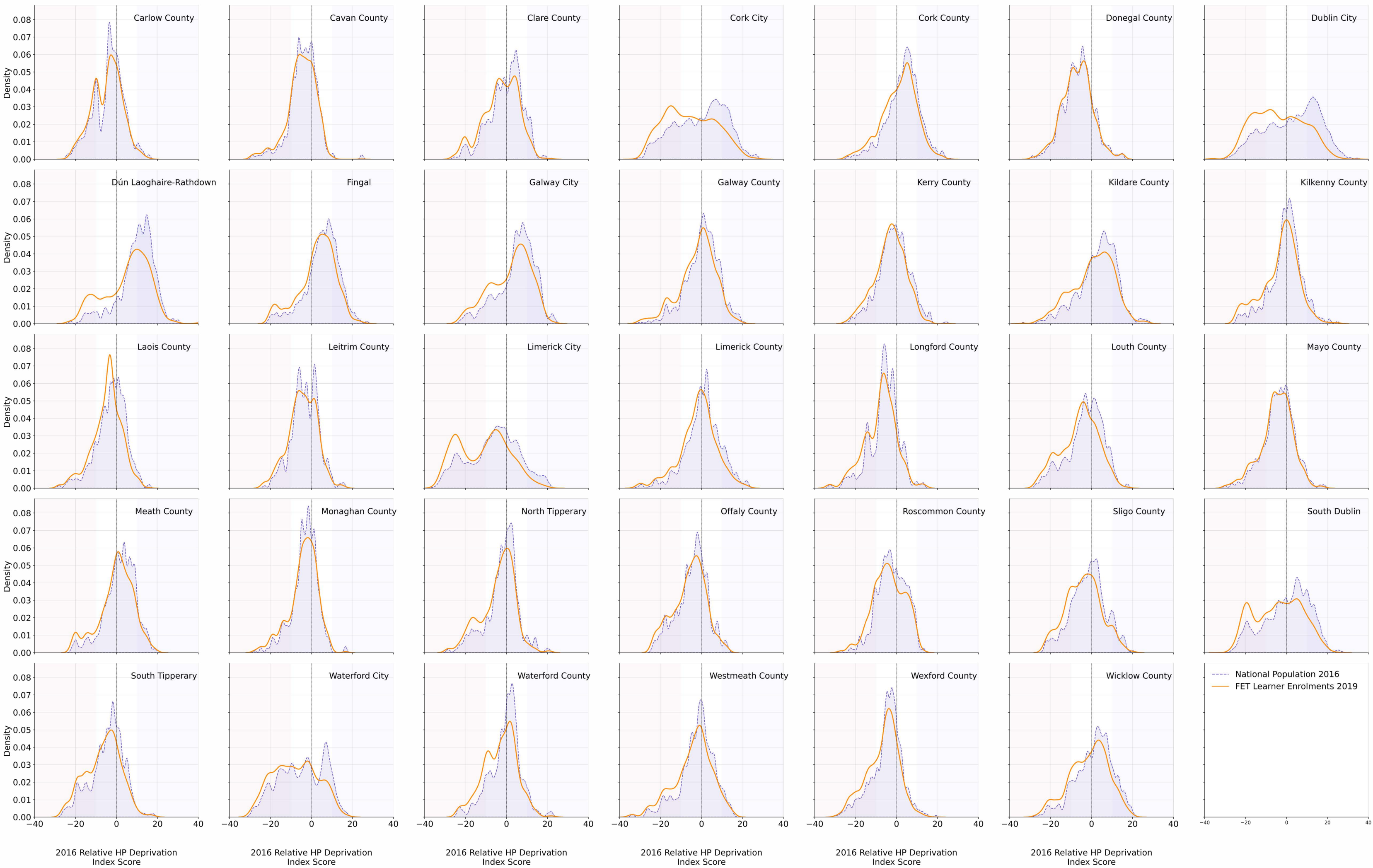
Bottom X Axis: Learner Enrolments

Dublin City is notable as primary source of residence for the learner enrolment population in FET 2019, contributing approximately 9.8% to the national enrolments, followed by Cork City with 6.3%. Kerry County, Fingal, and South Dublin contribute approximately 4.1%, 5.7%, and 5.79%, respectively. Analysis reveals the areas with highest proportion of learners from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds are Limerick City (48.8%)⁴ and Waterford City (43.8%). In contrast, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown stands out with the highest percentage of learners from affluent socio-economic backgrounds (40%)⁵, followed closely by Galway City and Fingal (21.6% and 20.4%, respectively).



4 Extremely disadvantage, very disadvantage and disadvantage cateories are combined in this calculation.
5 Extremely affluent, very affluent and affluent cateories are combined in this calculation.

Comparing the distribution of the national population and FET by Counties, Administrative Counties & Cities.

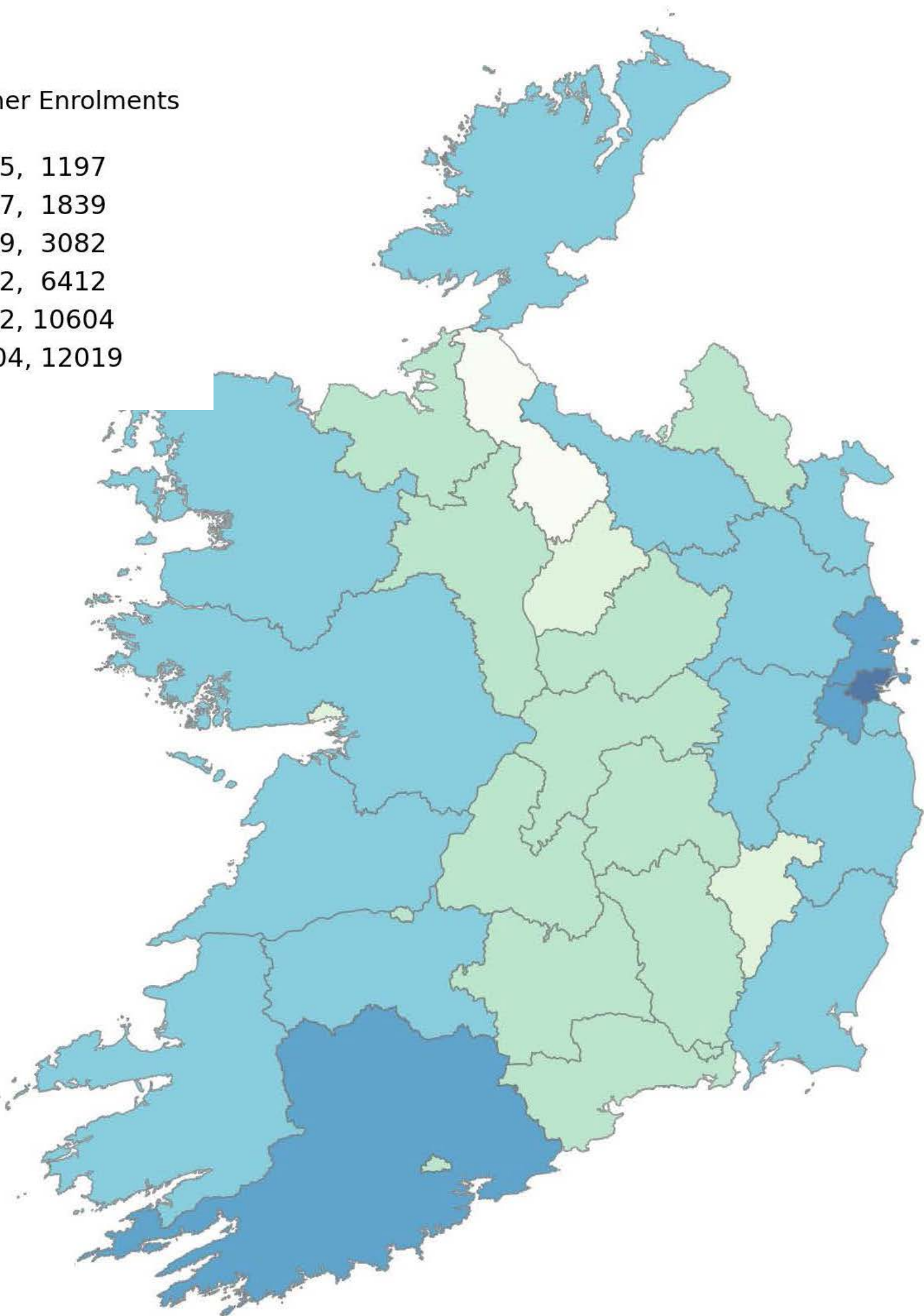


This illustrates a comparison of population distributions among Irish counties, administrative counties, and cities, using national population statistics 2016 and FET learner enrolment data in 2019. The graph aims to provide insights into the demographic variations across different geographical entities by representing the distribution of each population using the deprivation index. Key drivers of the disparity between FET and the national population are cities. As shown in the graph, there are clear divergences between the characteristics of the national population and the Learner Enrolment population in FET.

Learner Enrolments Across Ireland

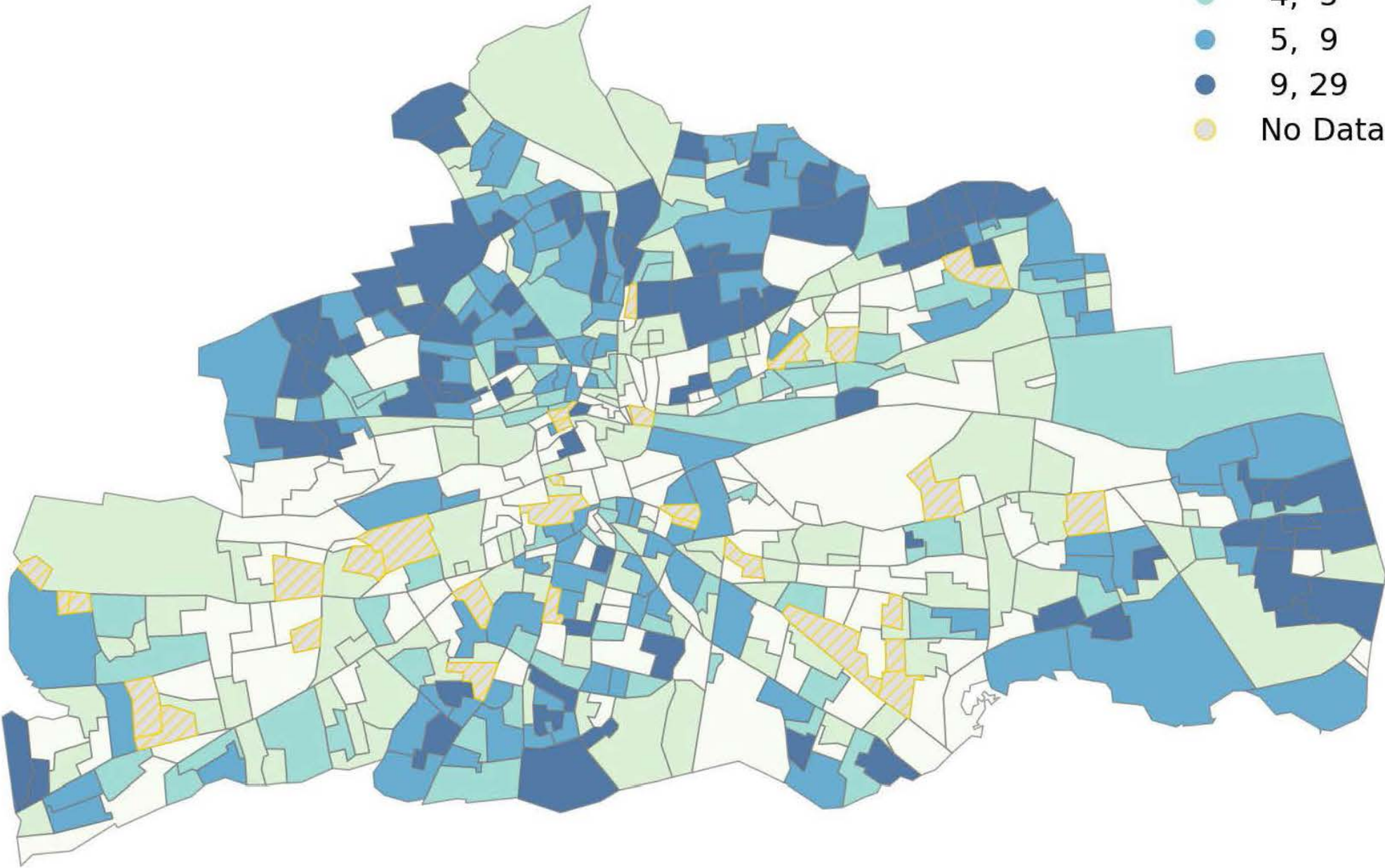
FET 2019 Learner Enrolments

- 1125, 1197
- 1197, 1839
- 1839, 3082
- 3082, 6412
- 6412, 10604
- 10604, 12019

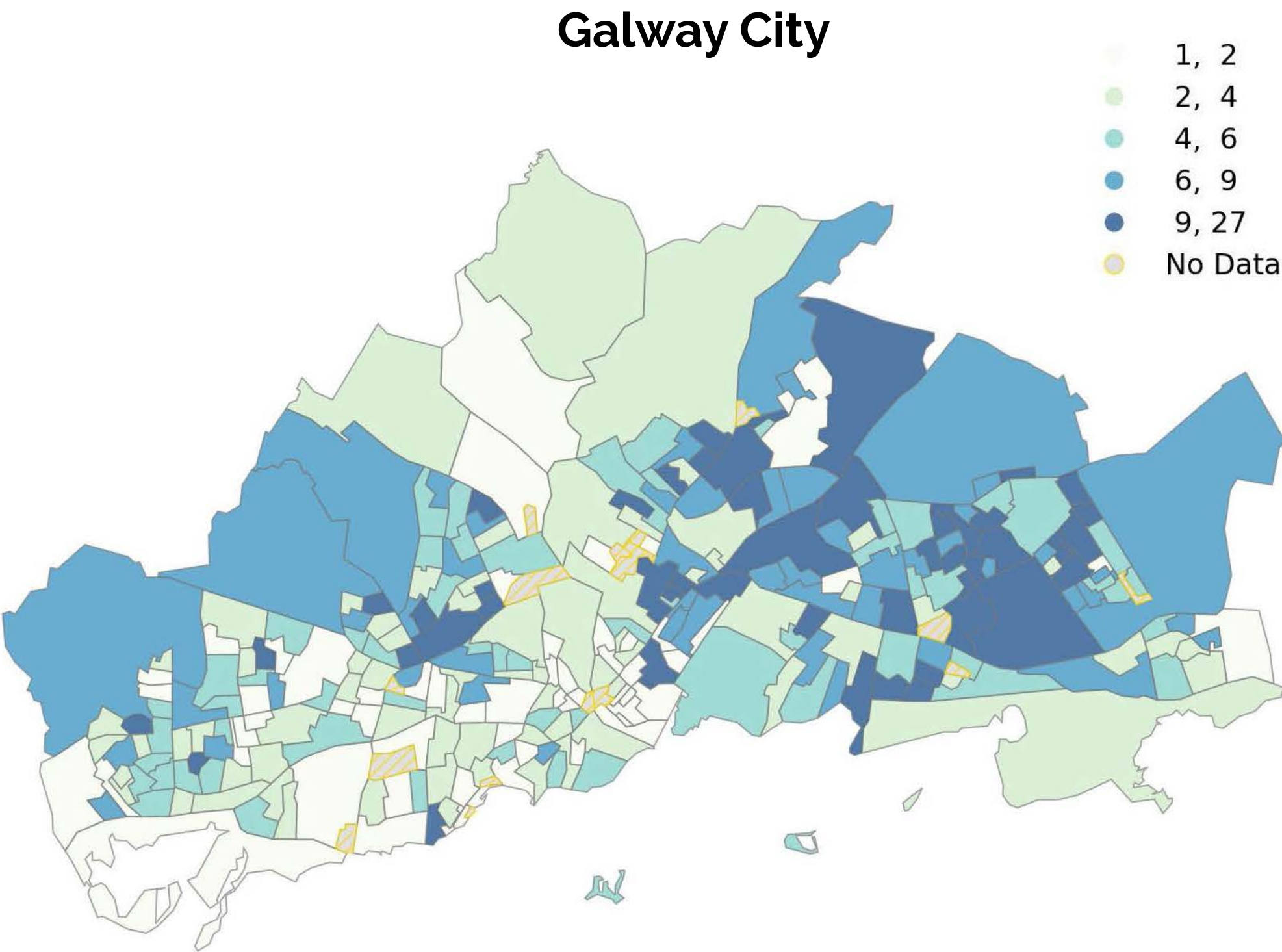
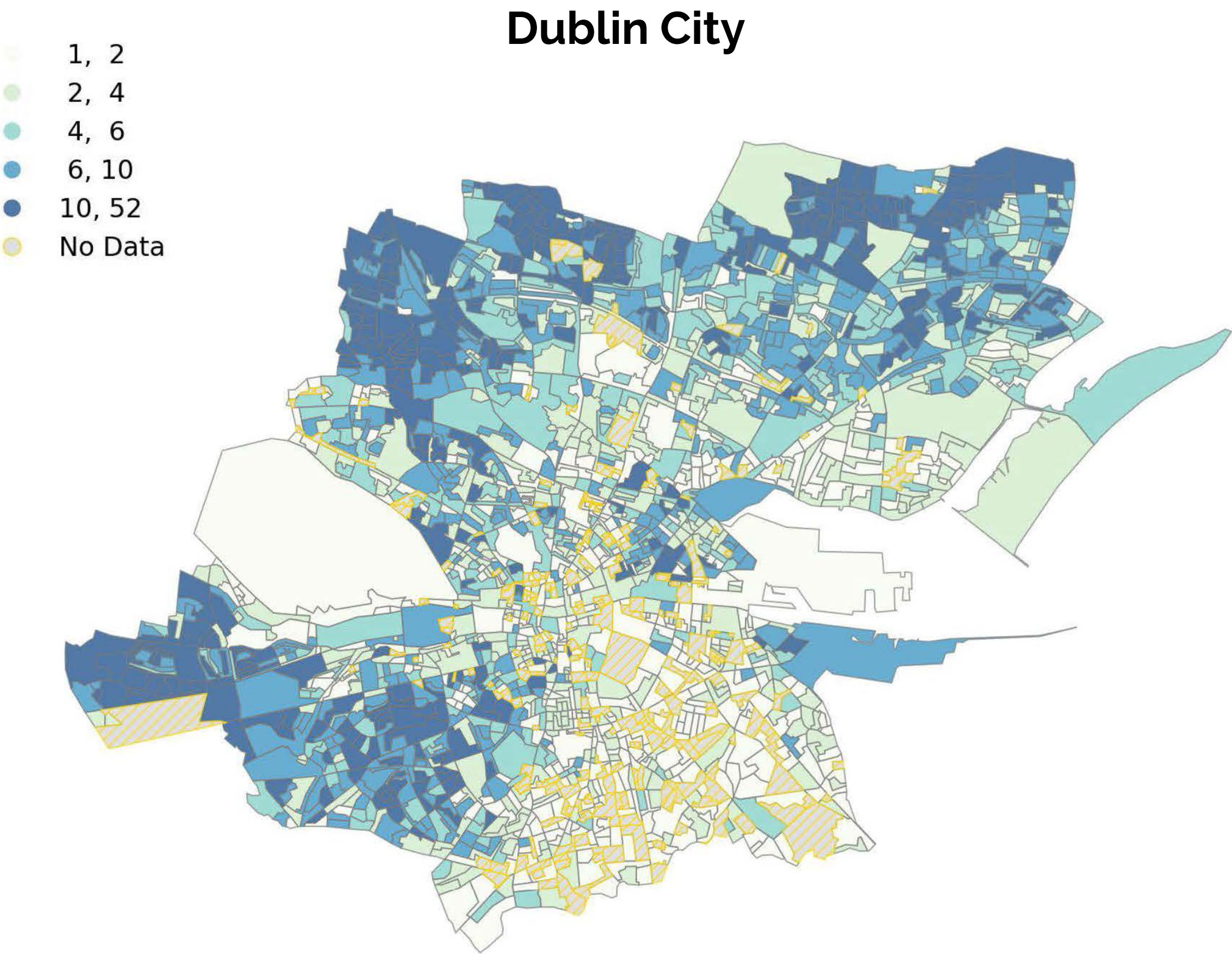


Cork City

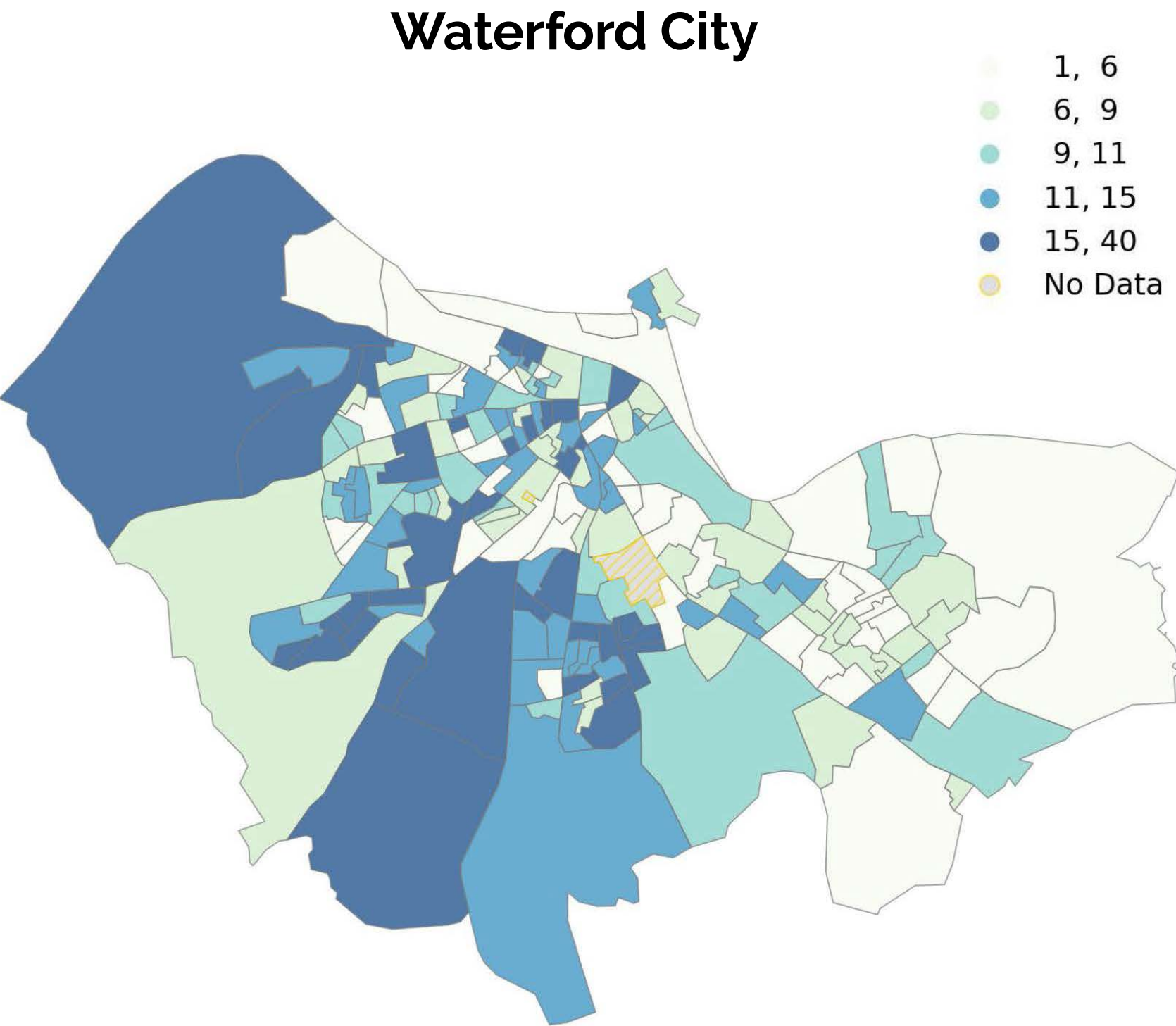
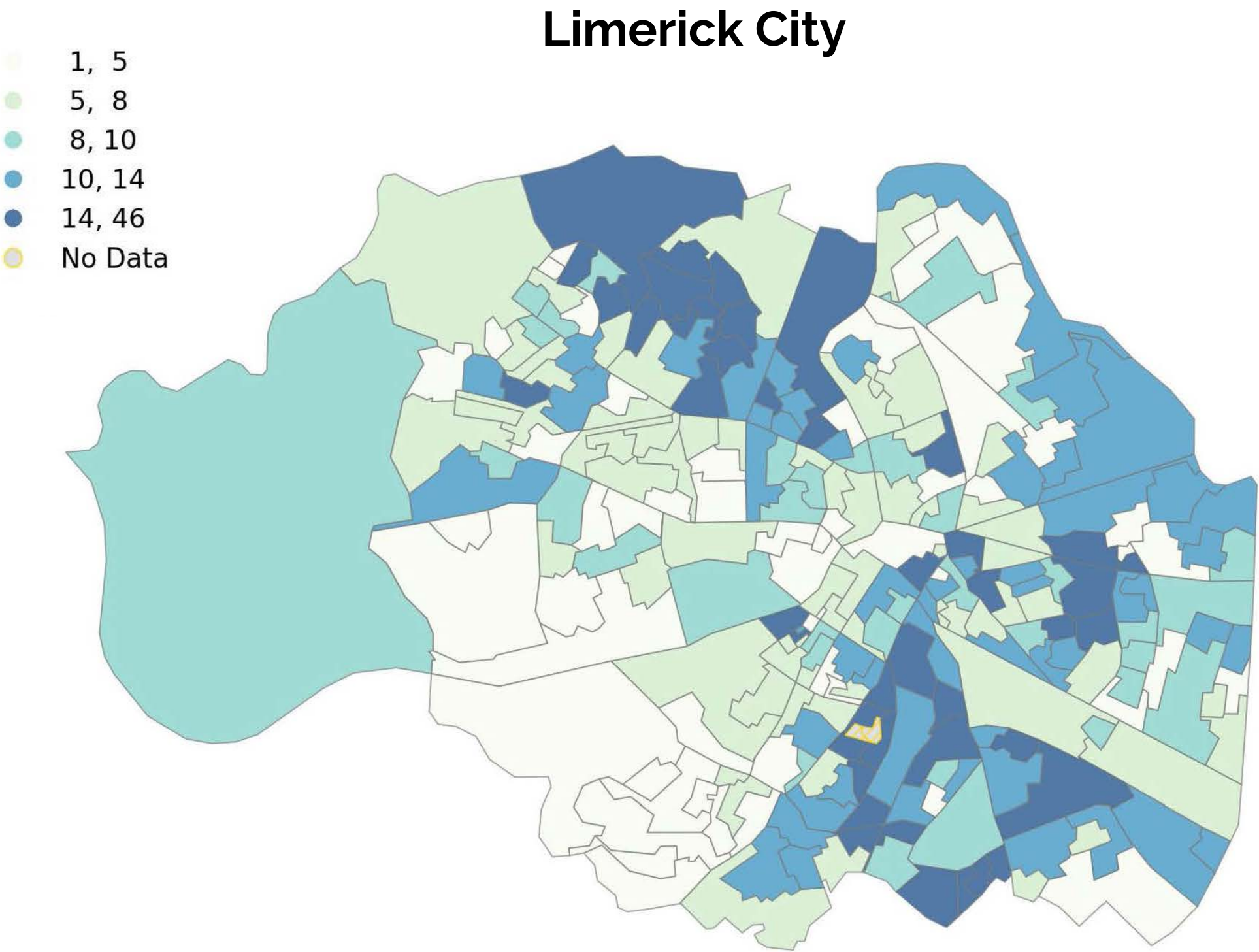
- 1, 2
- 2, 4
- 4, 5
- 5, 9
- 9, 29
- No Data

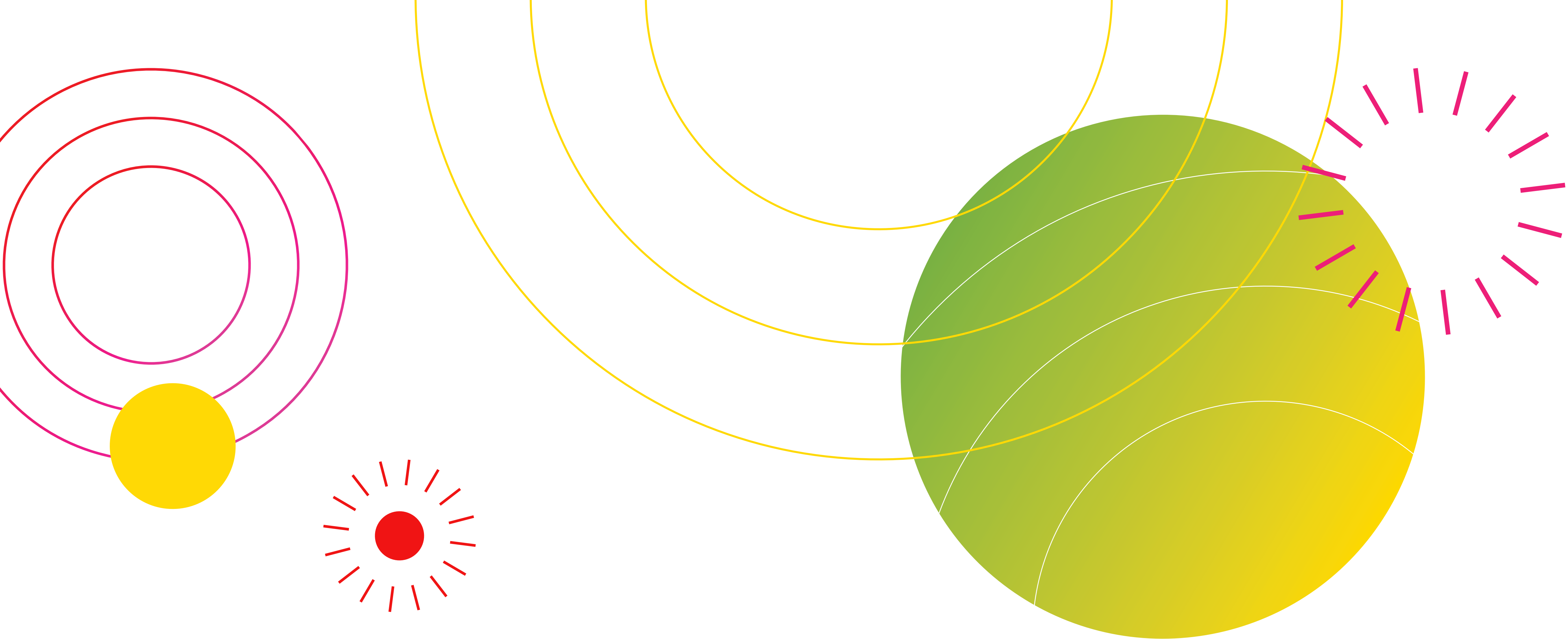


Learner Enrolments Across Ireland



Learner Enrolments Across Ireland





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