

This is FET Facts and Figures 2022



SOLAS
learning works



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Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

**Further
Education
& Training**

A Report by the
Data Analytics Unit in SOLAS
June 2023

Authors

Amelia Dulee-Kinsolving
Selen Guerin

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.

FET Statistics

Enrolments

186,740



Learner Completions

136,807



Learner Certified Completions

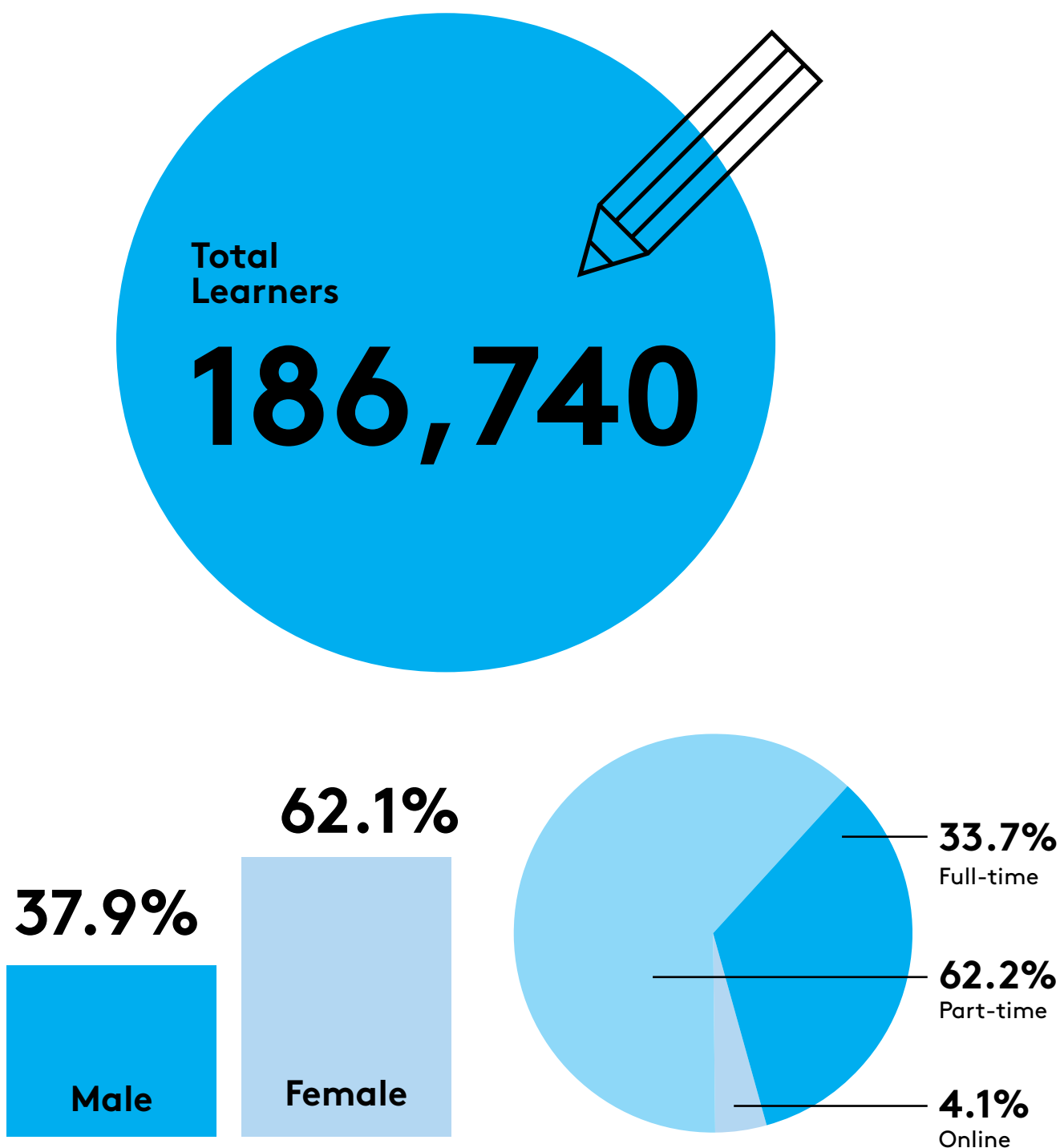
79,955

In 2022, 186,740 unique learners were enrolled in FET courses. Of these enrolments, 136,807 learners partially or fully completed their course(s). Of the 136,807 learner completions, 79,955 of these learner completions were certified.

Enrolments

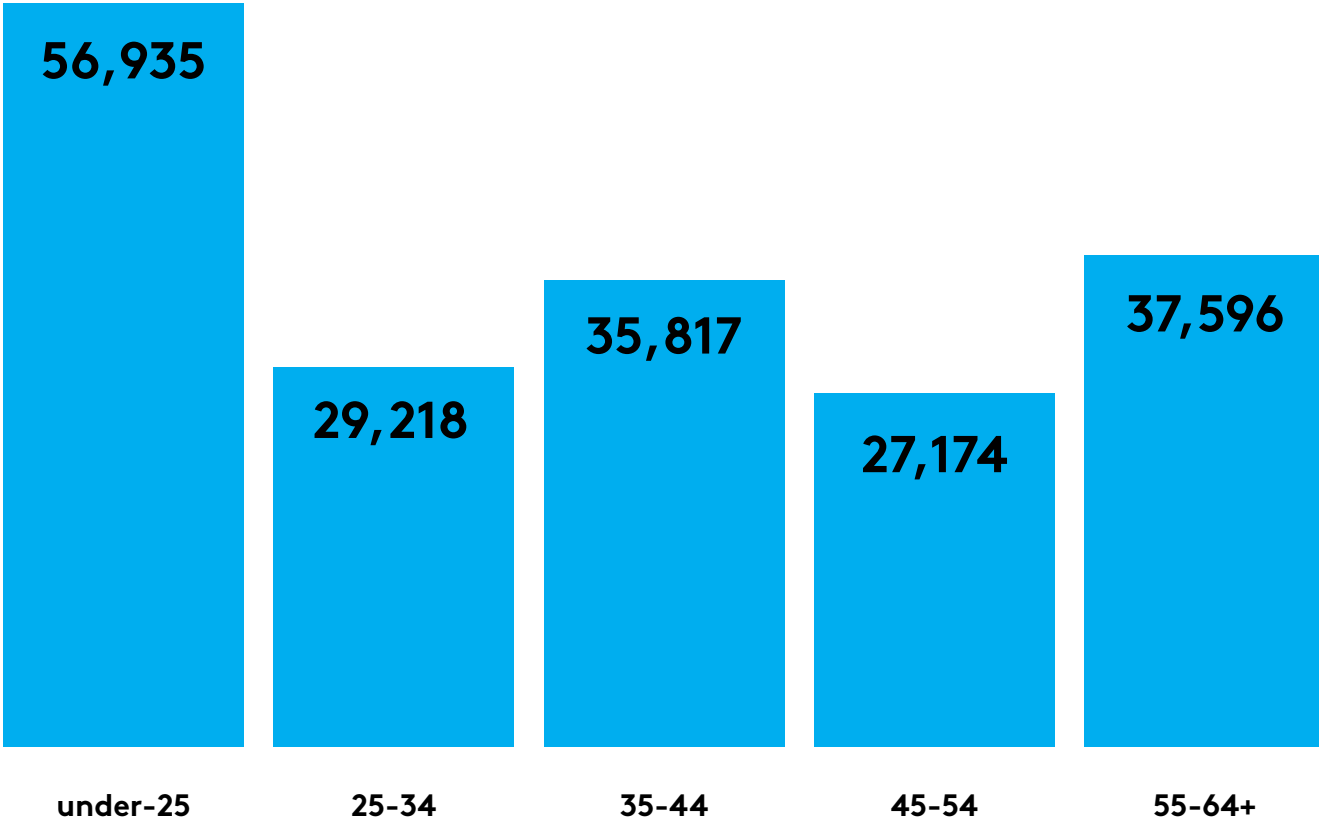


Enrolments



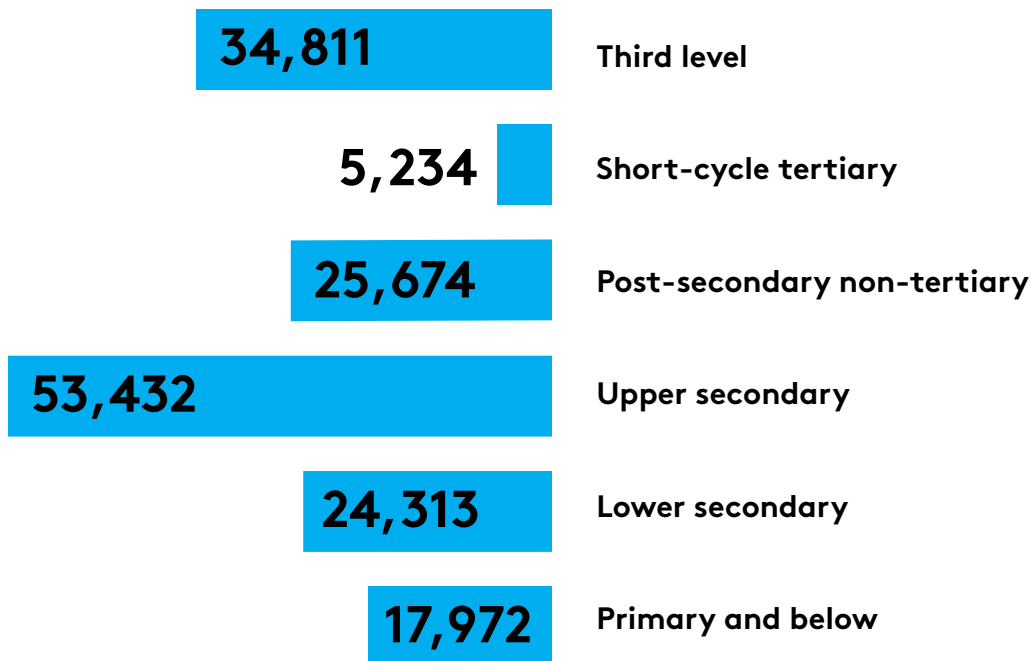
In 2022, there were 186,740 learner enrolments. Of these learner enrolments, 62.1% were female and 37.9% were male. The distribution of enrolments was higher among part-time courses (62.2%), than full-time courses (33.7%), with a small percentage (4.1%) also undertaking online courses.

Start Age



Enrolments were primarily concentrated among the under-25s, representing over one third of all enrolments in 2022.

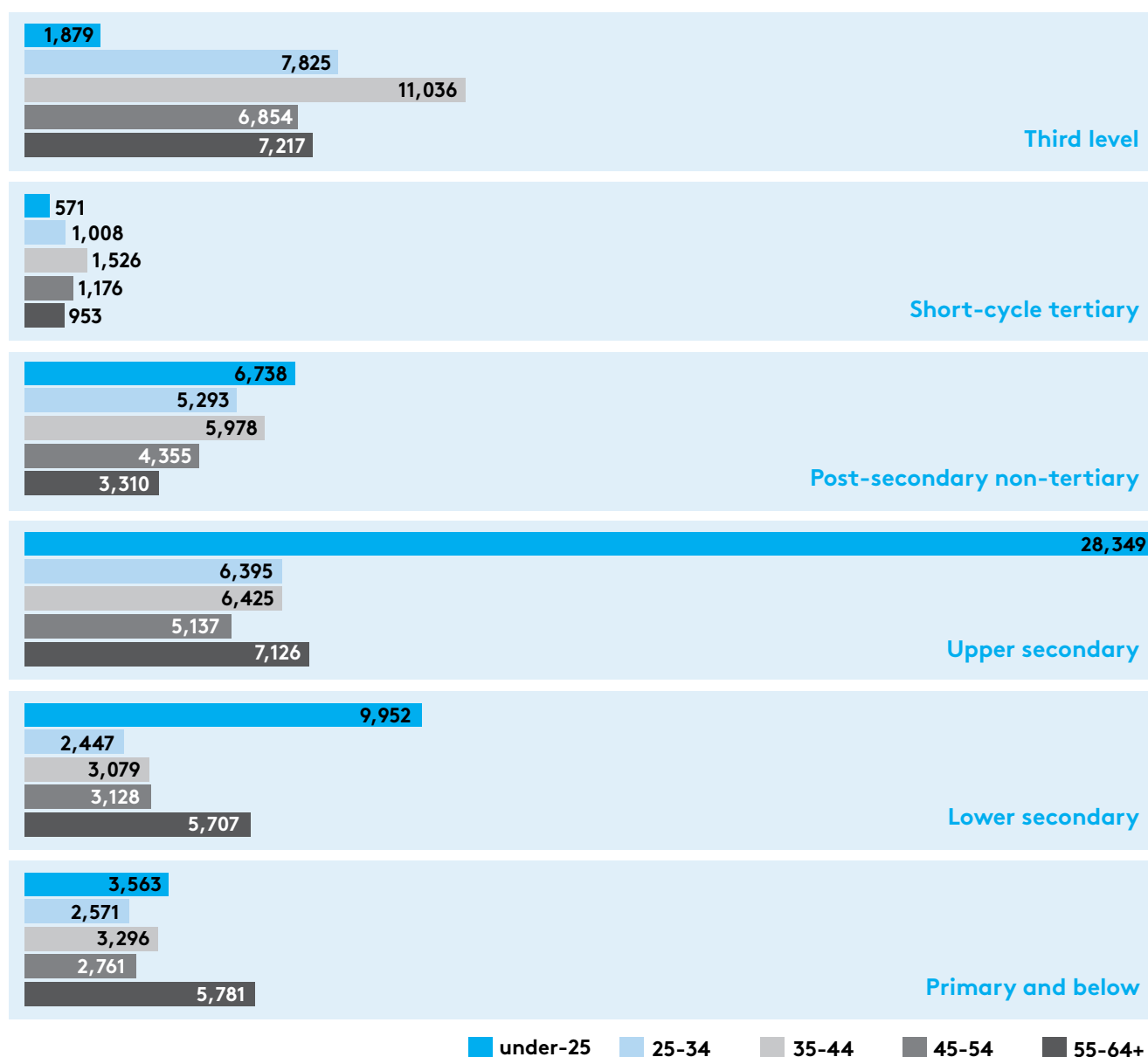
Highest Level of Formal Education¹



In 2022, 42,285 (26.2%) of learners had a lower secondary education or below when enrolling in a FET course, whereas 53,432 (33.1%) learners had an upper secondary education. The figure also shows that 25,674 (15.9%) of learners had a post-secondary non-tertiary education, an education group primarily comprised of individuals enrolled in FET level 4-6 courses (e.g. Post Leaving Certificate and Back to Education Initiative). In addition, the figure shows that 5,234 (3.2%) learners had a short-cycle tertiary education and 34,811 (21.6%) 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.

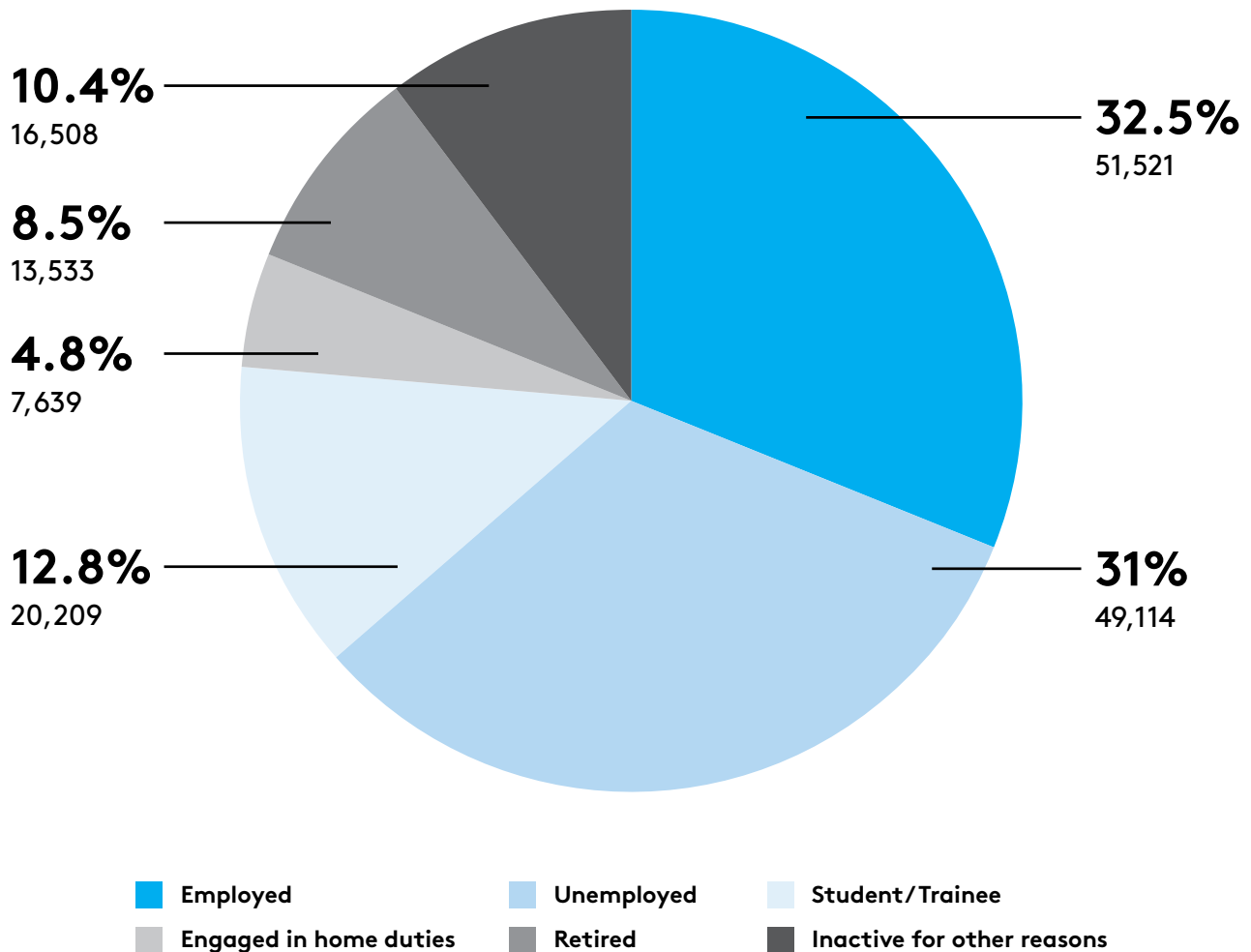
Highest Level of Formal Education by Start Age²



The under-25 age group had the highest concentration among lower secondary, upper secondary, and post-secondary non-tertiary levels of education prior to enrolment, whereas the 55-64+ age group had the highest concentration among those learners with primary and below education. For short-cycle tertiary non-degree education and third level degree education, the age groups were distributed relatively evenly, with the exception of the under-25 age group among those learners with a third level degree education.

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



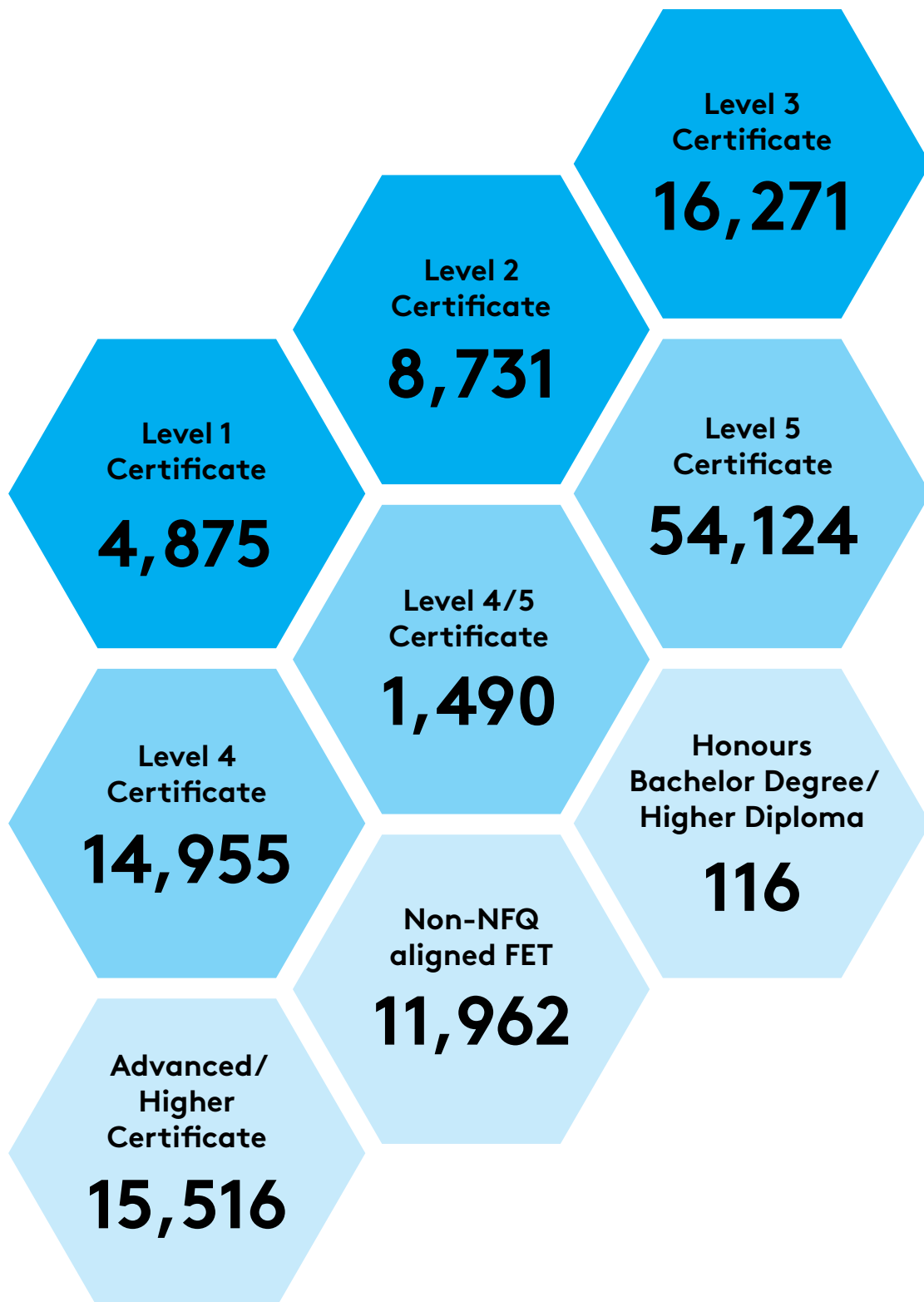
In 2022, 31% of learners were unemployed prior to enrolment, while 32.5% were employed. The remaining 36.5% of learners were inactive prior to enrolment.

Of those learners who were unemployed, **38.2% 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 84.9%.

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
Full-time	Blended Training	699
	Bridging and Foundation Training	630
	Community Training Centres	2,060
	Justice Workshop	149
	Local Training Initiatives	1,847
	PLC ⁷	40,714
	Specialist Training Providers	2,815
	Specific Skills Training	9,031
	Traineeship Employed	1,279
	Traineeship Training	3,058
	VTOS Core	3,189
	Youthreach	4,236
Part-time	Adult Literacy Groups	26,089
	BTEI Groups	18,158
	Community Education	35,460
	ESOL	29,354
	Evening Training	7,439
	FET Cooperation Hours	2,537
	FET Pathways from School	1,752
	ITABE	1,107
	Libraries Training	30
	Other Funding	3,833
	Recognition of Prior Learning	243
	Refugee Resettlement	1,901
	Skills for Work	2,688
	Voluntary Literacy Tuition	175
Part-time & Full-time	Skills to Advance	11,734
Online	e-Learning	9
	Online College*	578

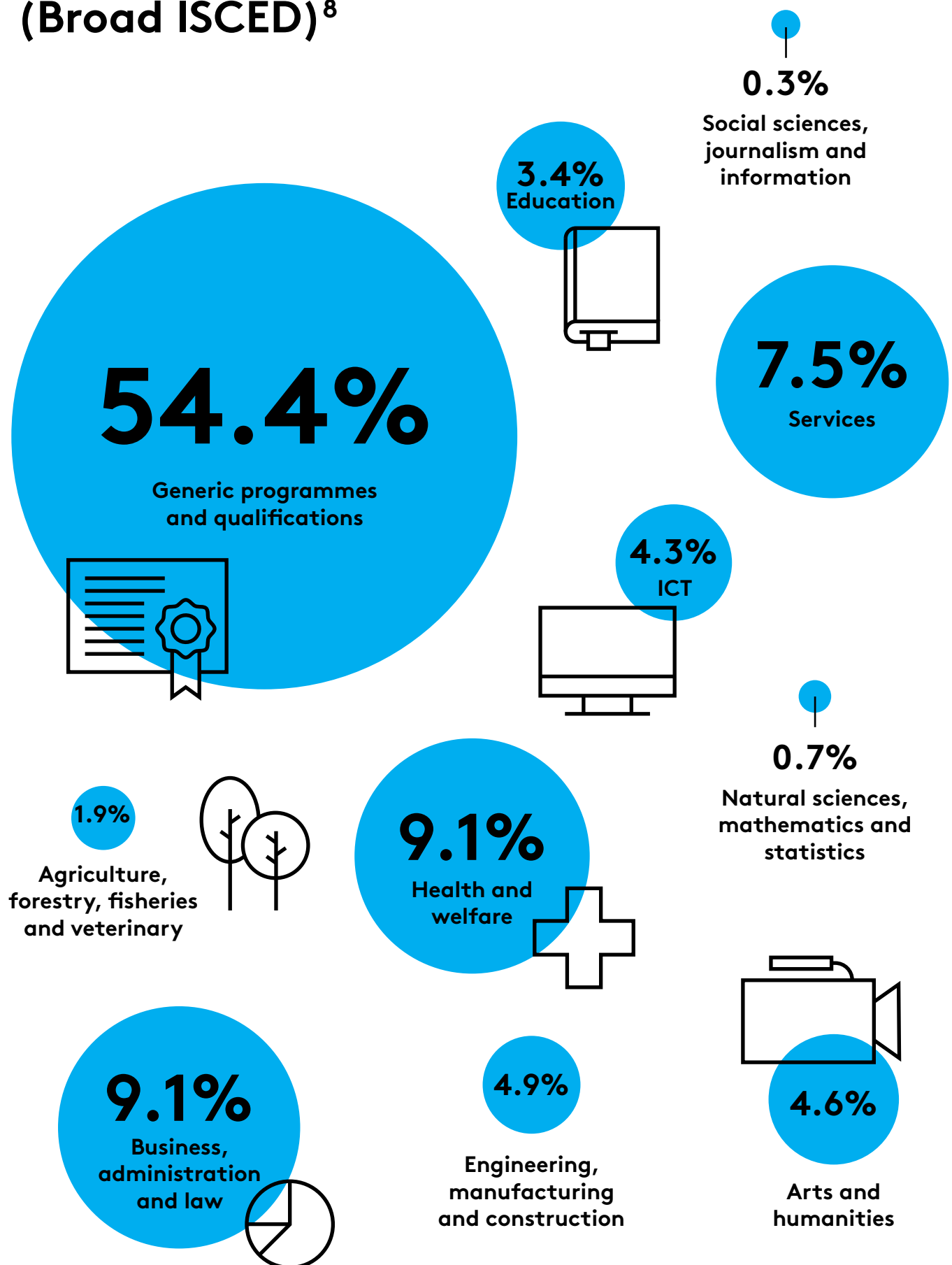
*Please note this only includes learners who were referred to eCollege by an ETB.

Among full-time programmes, enrolments were concentrated among Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses, Specific Skills Training and Youthreach programmes. For part-time programmes, enrolments were concentrated among Community Education, ESOL, and Adult Literacy Groups. In addition, there were 11,734 learners enrolled in the mixed, full-time and part-time, programme Skills to Advance, as well as 587 enrolled in e-Learning and Online eCollege online courses.

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

⁷ 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.

Field of Study (Broad ISCED)⁸



⁸ 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
	Interior architecture and design
Business, administration and law	Business administration
	Business studies
Education	Early childhood care and education
	Special needs assisting
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	Engineering technology
	Solar PV
Generic programmes and qualifications	Art
	English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL)
	Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZEB) fundamental awareness
	Reading, writing, maths and computers
Health and welfare	Applied social studies
	Nursing studies
ICT	Cyber security analyst
	Software development
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	Applied science/laboratory techniques
	Pre-university science
Services	Beauty and body therapy
	Hairdressing
Social sciences, journalism and information	Arts, culture and history
	Journalism

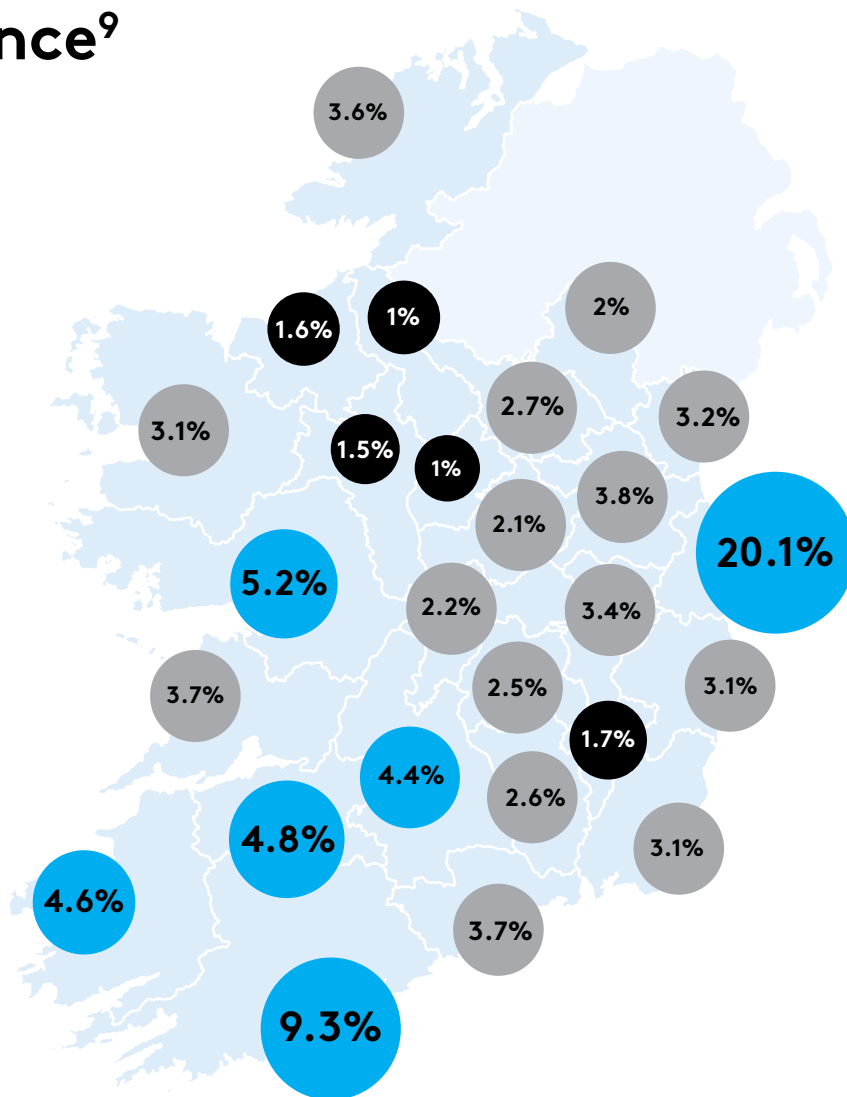
Field of Study (Broad ISCED) by Delivery Type

	Full-time	Part-time	Online	Total
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary	2,582	3,554	293	6,429
Arts and humanities	7,712	840	0	8,552
Business, administration and law	410	57	0	467
Education	8,221	5,499	3,219	16,939
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	1,224	13	72	1,309
Generic programmes and qualifications	10,782	89,579	1,303	101,664
Health and welfare	3,527	2,384	2,033	7,944
ICT	5,096	3,779	256	9,131
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	2,544	905	0	3,449
Services	10,890	5,711	290	16,891
Social sciences, journalism and information	9,869	3,884	212	13,965
Total	62,857	116,205	7,678	186,740

Overall, enrolments were primarily concentrated among the generic programmes and qualifications ISCED field of study, representing over half (54.4%) of all enrolments in 2022. This was followed by business, administration and law (9.1%), health and welfare (9.1%), and services (7.5%).

For full-time learner enrolments, services and generic programmes and qualifications had the highest numbers of learners. In addition, social sciences, journalism and information and education also had high numbers of full-time enrolments. For part-time enrolments, generic programmes and qualifications had the highest numbers of learners. This was followed by services, education and social sciences, journalism and information. Among online enrolments, education had the highest number of learners. This was followed by health and welfare and generic programmes and qualifications.

County of Residence⁹

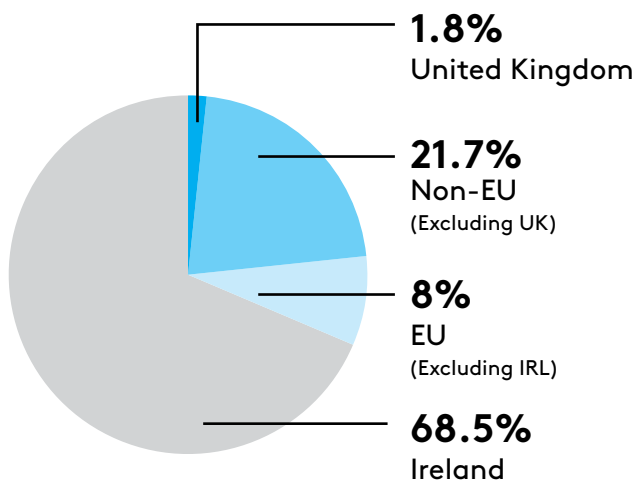
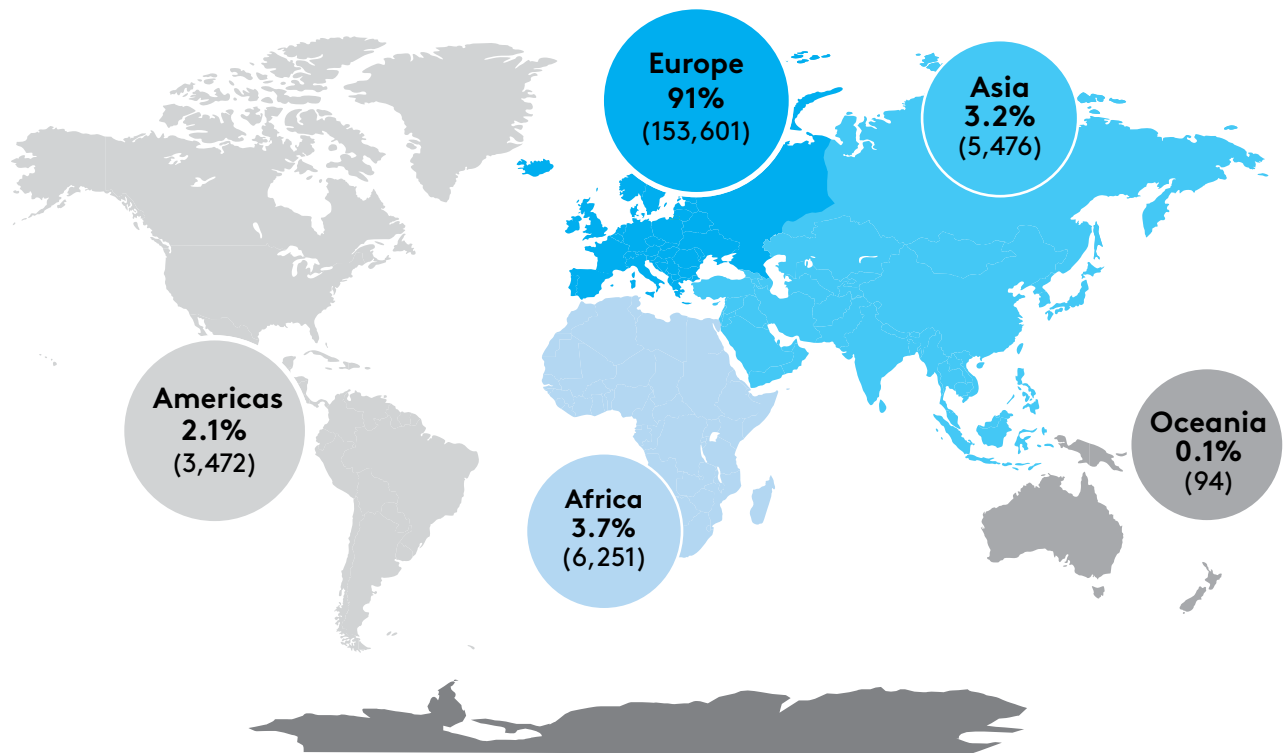


Carlow	3,099	1.7%	Longford	1,849	1%
Cavan	4,811	2.7%	Louth	5,661	3.2%
Clare	6,554	3.7%	Mayo	5,594	3.1%
Cork	16,463	9.3%	Meath	6,771	3.8%
Donegal	6,368	3.6%	Monaghan	3,614	2%
Dublin	35,674	20.1%	Offaly	3,915	2.2%
Galway	9,244	5.2%	Roscommon	2,660	2.2%
Kerry	8,145	4.6%	Sligo	2,765	1.6%
Kildare	6,013	3.4%	Tipperary	7,751	4.4%
Kilkenny	4,670	2.6%	Waterford	6,602	3.7%
Laois	4,395	2.5%	Westmeath	3,677	2.1%
Leitrim	2,086	1.2%	Wexford	5,537	3.1%
Limerick	8,483	4.8%	Wicklow	5,473	3.1%
Total				177,874	100%

⁹ 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.

Nationality¹⁰

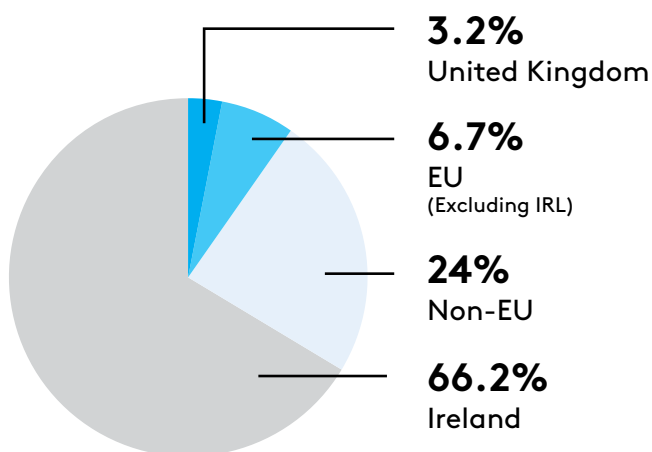
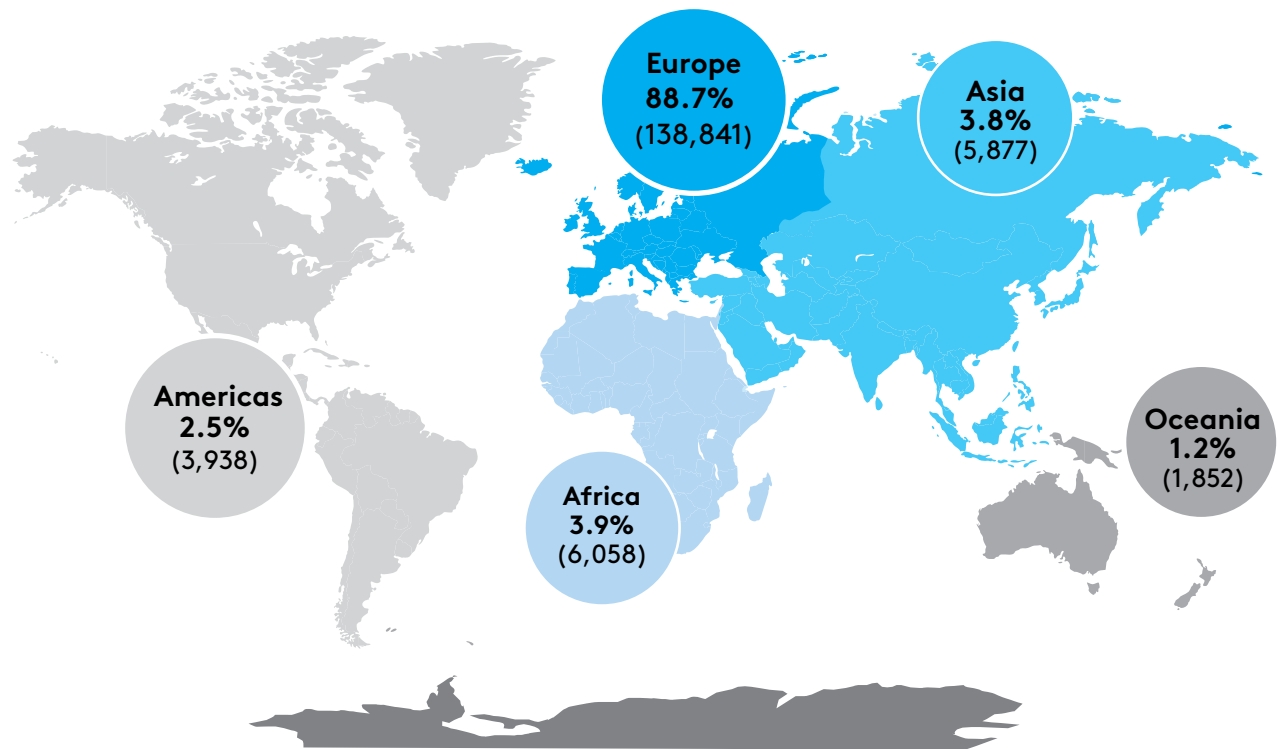
In 2022, there were **195 different** nationalities enrolled in FET.



The highest percentage of learner enrolments were nationals of Europe (91%). This was followed by Africa (3.7%), Asia (3.2%), the Americas (2.1%) and Oceania (.1%). The majority of unique learners were nationals of Ireland (68.5%), followed by the Non-EU (21.7%), the EU (8%) and the United Kingdom (1.8%).

¹⁰ It should be noted that this calculation is an estimate and includes only those cases where nationality was captured.

Country of birth¹¹



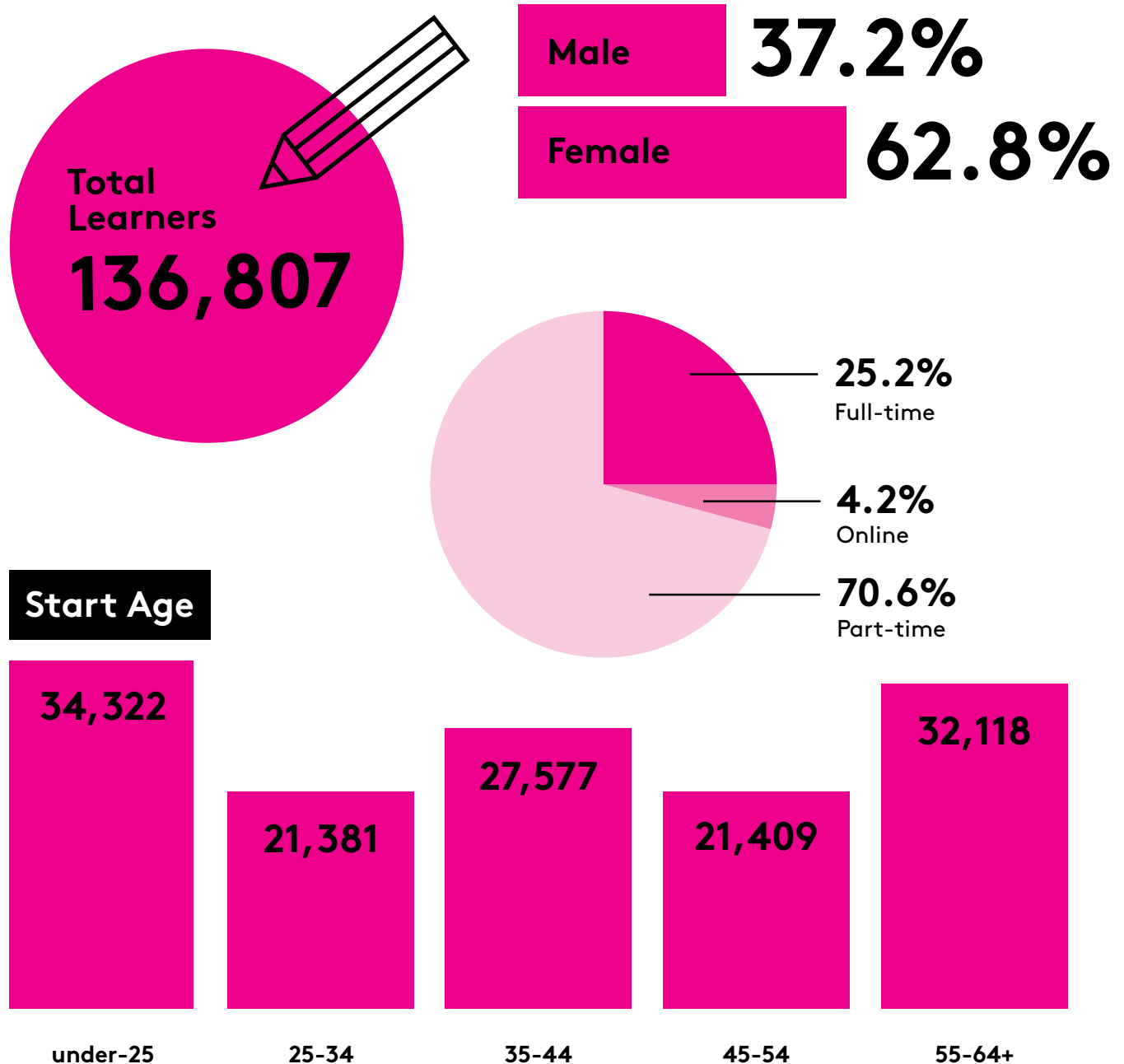
The highest percentage of unique learner enrolments were born in Europe (88.7%). This was followed by Africa (3.9%), Asia (3.8%), the Americas (2.5%), and Oceania (1.2%). The majority of learners were born in Ireland (66.2), followed by the Non-EU (24%), the EU (6.7%) and the United Kingdom (3.2%).

¹¹ It should be noted that this calculation is an estimate and includes only those cases where country of birth was captured.

Completions

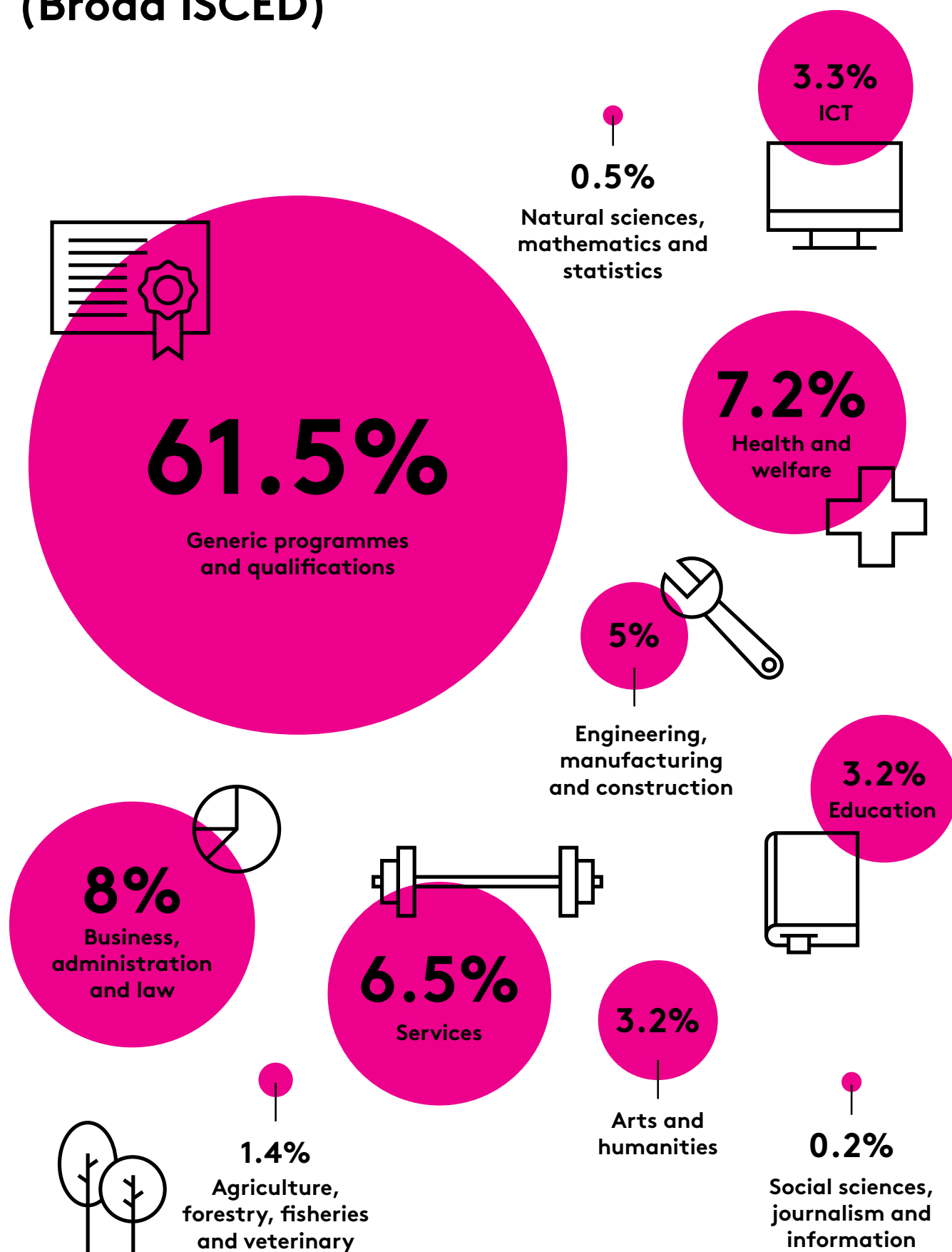


Completions



In 2022, there were 136,807 learner completions. Of these learner completions, 62.8% were female and 37.2% were male. The distribution of completions was higher among part-time courses (70.6%), than full-time courses (25.2%), with a small percentage (4.2%) completing online courses. Approximately half of all completions were among the under-25 and 55-64+ age groups.

Field of Study (Broad ISCED)



Field of Study (Broad ISCED)	Examples of courses
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary	Animal care
	Horticulture
Arts and humanities	Art, craft and design
	Interior architecture and design
Business, administration and law	Business studies
	Office administration
Education	Early childhood care and education
	Special needs assisting
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	Solar PV
	Welding
Generic programmes and qualifications	Arts and crafts
	English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
	Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZEB) fundamental awareness
	Reading, writing, maths and computers
Health and welfare	Applied social studies
	Nursing studies
ICT	Computer science
	Cyber security analyst
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	Applied science/laboratory techniques
	Pre-university science
Services	Barista skills
	Hairdressing
Social sciences, journalism and information	Arts, culture and history
	News and media in a digital age

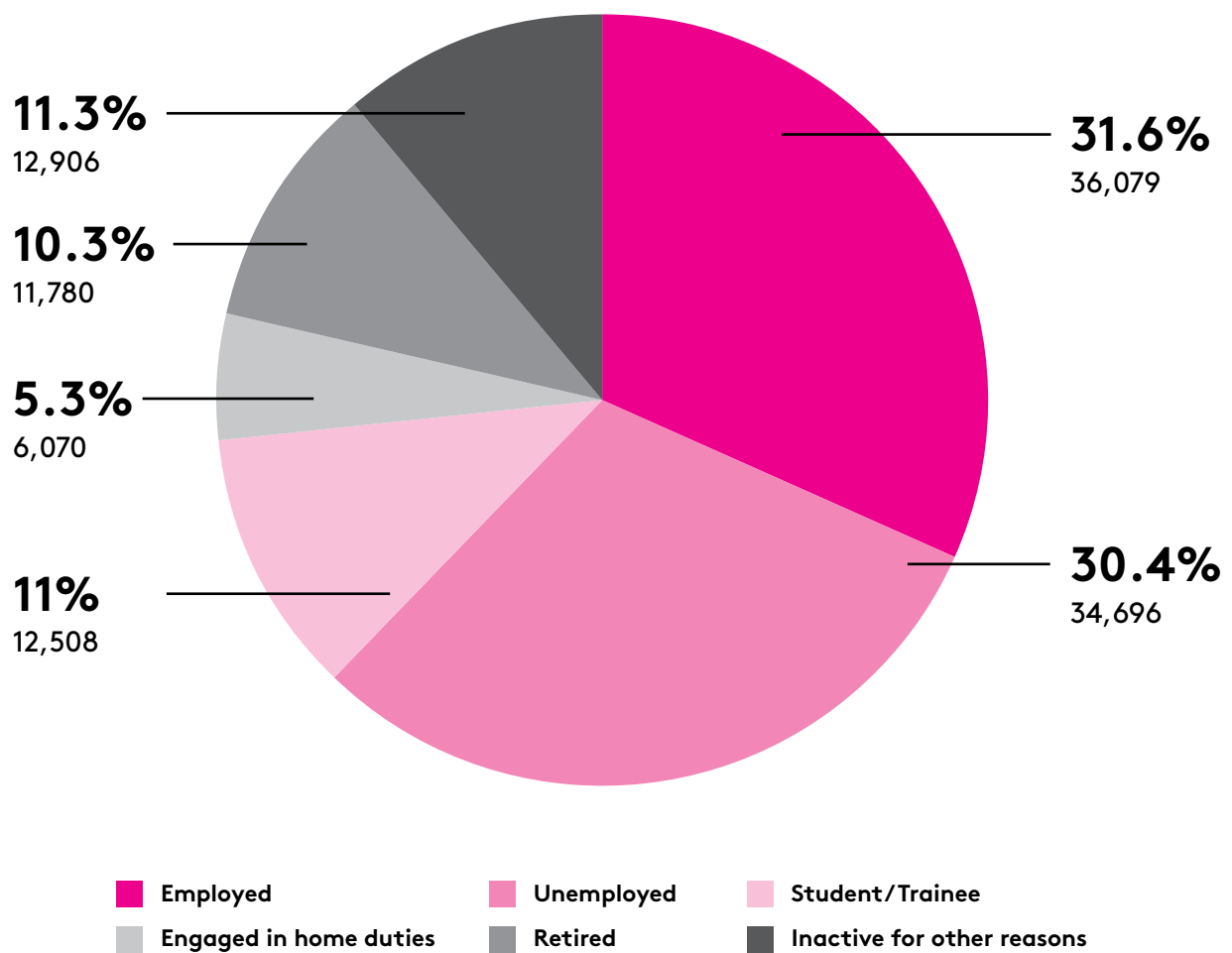
Field of Study(Broad ISCED) by Delivery Type

	Full-time	Part-time	Online	Total
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary	1,320	581	0	1,901
Arts and humanities	3,967	447	0	4,414
Business, administration and law	4,272	4,315	2,371	10,958
Education	1,528	2,673	218	4,419
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	3,274	3,401	188	6,863
Generic programmes and qualifications	7,073	75,608	1,422	84,103
Health and welfare	5,239	4,391	246	9,876
ICT	1,637	1,745	1,079	4,461
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	559	3	73	635
Services	5,451	3,353	140	8,944
Social sciences, journalism and information	203	30	0	233
Total	34,523	96,547	5,737	136,807

Overall, generic programmes and qualifications had the highest numbers of learners, with 61.5% of learner completions in this field of study. This was followed by business, administration and law (8%), health and welfare (7.2%), and services (6.5%).

For full-time learner completions, generic programmes and qualifications and services had the highest numbers of learners. In addition, health and welfare, and business, administration and law also had high numbers of full-time completions. For part-time completions, generic programmes and qualifications accounted for 78% of all part-time completions. This was followed by health and welfare, business, administration and law, and engineering, manufacturing and construction. Among online completions, business, administration and law had the highest number of learners. This was followed by generic programmes and qualifications and information and communication technologies (ICTs).

Principal Economic Status¹²



In 2022, 30.4% of learners were unemployed prior to completion, while 31.6% were employed. The remaining 37.9% of learners were inactive prior to completion.

¹² 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 83.4%.

Certified Completions

Certified Completions by Outcomes¹³

	Learners	Percent
Fully certified	45,014	56.3%
Partially certified	12,023	15%
No certification achieved	20,616	25.8%
Waiting for certification details	2,302	2.9%
Total	79,955	100%

In 2022, the certification rate (full + partially certified) was 71.3%. Of the remaining certified learner completions, 2.9% were waiting for certification details, and 25.8% did not achieve certification.

Certified Completions by Award Level

	Learners	Percent
Non-NFQ Aligned FET ¹⁴	7,069	12.4%
Level 1 Certificate	1,027	1.8%
Level 2 Certificate	2,982	5.2%
Level 3 Certificate	6,091	10.7%
Level 4 Certificate	7,374	12.9%
Level 4/5 Certificate	646	1.1%
Level 5 Certificate	24,202	42.4%
Advanced Certificate/Higher Certificate	7,618	13.4%
Honours Bachelor Degree/Higher Diploma	28	0.1%
Total	57,037	100%

In 2022, 42.4% of certified completions were at level 5, whereas 13.4% were at an advanced or higher certificate level, 12.9% were at level 4 and 10.7% at level 3. In addition, 12.4% of certified completions were non-NFQ aligned FET awards.

¹³ This excludes completions where the course did not have an award through a recognised awarding body.

¹⁴ 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)¹⁵

	Fully Certified	Partially Certified	Total
Non-NFQ aligned FET			
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary	2		2
Arts and humanities	69	8	77
Business, administration and law	963	91	1,054
Education	59		59
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	2,062	115	2,177
Generic programmes and qualifications	1,619		1,619
Health and welfare	223	17	240
Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	1,245	569	1,814
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	18		
Services	1,440	408	1,848
Total	7,700	1,208	8,908
Level 1 Certificate			
Generic programmes and qualifications	1,276	101	1,377
Total	1,276	101	1,377
Level 2 Certificate			
Generic programmes and qualifications	3,389	794	4,183
Total	3,389	794	4,183
Level 3 Certificate			
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	77	2	79
Generic programmes and qualifications	5,733	1,885	7,618
Health and welfare	26		26
Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	40	12	52
Services	61	13	74
Total	5,937	1,912	7,849

¹⁵ Learner activity refers to the sum of instances of learner full and partial completions that gained an award through a recognised awarding body in 2022. 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	541	182	723
Business, administration and law	790	430	1,220
Education	36	10	46
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	835	52	887
Generic programmes and qualifications	2,604	1,390	3,994
Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	516	173	689
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	2	1	3
Services	1,510	220	1,730
Total	6,834	2,458	9,292

Level 4/5 Certificate			
Generic programmes and qualifications	445	255	710
Total	445	255	710

Level 5 Certificate			
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary	688	334	1,022
Arts and humanities	1,788	723	2,511
Business, administration and law	4,465	1,036	5,501
Education	2,251	510	2,761
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	1,528	323	1,851
Generic programmes and qualifications	847	206	1,053
Health and welfare	8,027	2,206	10,233
Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	567	325	892
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	378	94	472
Services	1,780	869	2,649
Social sciences, journalism and information	137	44	181
Total	22,456	6,670	29,126

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

	Fully Certified	Partially Certified	Total
Advanced Certificate/Higher Certificate			
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary	232	49	281
Arts and humanities	785	182	967
Business, administration and law	1,897	399	2,296
Education	2,310	347	2,657
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	794	19	813
Health and welfare	374	184	558
Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	189	54	243
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	1	2	3
Services	677	175	852
Social sciences, journalism and information	20		20
Total	7,279	1,411	8,690
Honours Bachelor Degree/Higher Diploma			
Arts and humanities	28		28
Total	28		28

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	Honours Bachelor Degree/Higher Diploma	Total
Accounting and taxation	713						11	367		1,091
Agriculture							36	28		64
Architecture and town planning	20			5	69		112	37		243
Arts							457	7		464
Audio-visual techniques and media production							926	351	28	1,305
Basic programmes and qualifications	1,628	1,320	4,183	5,196	2,954	710	1,053			17,044
Biological and related sciences							433			433
Biology							1			1
Building and civil engineering	69			9	379		387			844
Business and administration							1,464	551		2,015
Child care and youth services							174			174
Computer use	1,345			37			195	36		1,613
Crop and livestock production								2		2
Database and network design and administration	309						326	51		686
Education	59							471		530
Education and training not elsewhere classified	34						53	10		97
Education science							14	69		83
Electricity and energy	132				163		339	542		1,176
Electronics and automation	5				32		10	206		253
Engineering and engineering trades	44			36	51		376			507
Engineering, manufacturing and construction				29						29
Environmental protection technology							78	6		84
Fashion, interior and industrial design							394	102		496
Finance, banking and insurance	53						14			67
Fine Arts							393	314		707
Fisheries							12			12
Food processing					11		58			69
Generic programmes and qualifications				38						38
Hair and beauty services	92			21	457		1,099	220		1,889
Handicrafts							93	9		102
Health	54			26			1,631	231		1,942
Horticulture					723		358	63		1,144
Hotel, restaurants and catering	337			53	1,113		309	44		1,856
Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	124			15	689					828
Journalism and reporting							63			63

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	Honours Bachelor Degree/Higher Diploma	Total
Language acquisition	77									77
Law							251			251
Literacy and numeracy				884						884
Management and administration	207						2,112	1,054		3,373
Manufacturing and processing	28									28
Marketing and advertising	80						128			208
Materials (glass, paper, plastic and wood)							107	22		129
Mathematics	18									18
Mechanics and metal trades	1,784				124		28			1,936
Medical diagnostic and treatment technology	152									152
Motor vehicles, ships and aircraft	95				58		348			501
Music and performing arts							236	196		432
Natural environments and wildlife							39			39
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics					3			3		6
Nursing and midwifery							5,978			5,978
Occupational health and safety							7			7
Personal skills and development		57		1,500	1,022					2,579
Pharmacy							19			19
Philosophy and ethics							12			12
Protection of persons and property					23		110	65		198
Secretarial and office work					978		1,365	297		2,640
Social and behavioural sciences								20		20
Social work and counselling							1,086	222		1,308
Sociology and cultural studies							118			118
Software and applications development and analysis	37						367	156		560
Sports	52				109		833	248		1,242
Textiles (clothes, footwear and leather)							8			8
Therapy and rehabilitation								53		53
Training for pre-school teachers					46		2,719	2,121		4,886
Transport services	1,358						4			1,362
Travel, tourism and leisure					6		247	237		490
Veterinary	2				40		656	209		907
Welfare							1,319	43		1,362
Wholesale and retail sales					242		160			402
Work skills								27		27
Total	8,908	1,377	4,183	7,849	9,292	710	29,126	8,690	28	70,163

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 2022.

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 2022.

Certification Rate

The sum of only full and partial learner completions that gained an award through a recognised awarding body in 2022.

Completions

Total number of learners who have a finish date of a course (regardless of whether the course is certified or not) in 2022. Completions include partial and full completers, but exclude early leavers.

Enrolments

Enrolments are defined as learners who are on course or have completed a course during 2022.

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 2022.

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 2022.

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 December 31st, 2022.

Partial Completions

Learners who have completed more than 25 percent but less than 90 percent of a course and its requirements in 2022.

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.

For further information, please contact:

Helen Garner
Data Analytics Unit, SOLAS
Block 1, Castleforbes House
Castleforbes Road, Dublin 1
helen.garner@solas.ie

SOLAS.ie