

Participation in Full-time Education and Vocational Training by 16-19 year olds in Northern Ireland 2017/18 to 2021/22

This report presents key details of the participation by 16- to 19-year-olds in full-time education and vocational training in Northern Ireland (NI). In particular, the release considers pupils in Schools, full-time students in Further Education colleges, full-time students in Higher Education Institutions and participants in Other Training within NI.

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Key Points

- The participation rate of all 16 to 19-year-olds in full – time education and vocational training in 2021/22 is 79% (76% for males, 81% for females).
- The age with the highest participation rate is 16, having a participation rate of 94% in 2021/22 (91% for males, 97% for females).
- The age that the participation rate is lowest is at age 18, having a participation rate of 63% in 2021/22 (62% for males, 63% for females).
- Attending School is the most common method of participation in 2021/22 with 30,951 pupils (13,950 males, 17,001 females) representing a participation rate of 34%.

1. Participation Rates

1.1 Participation Rates by Age 2021/22

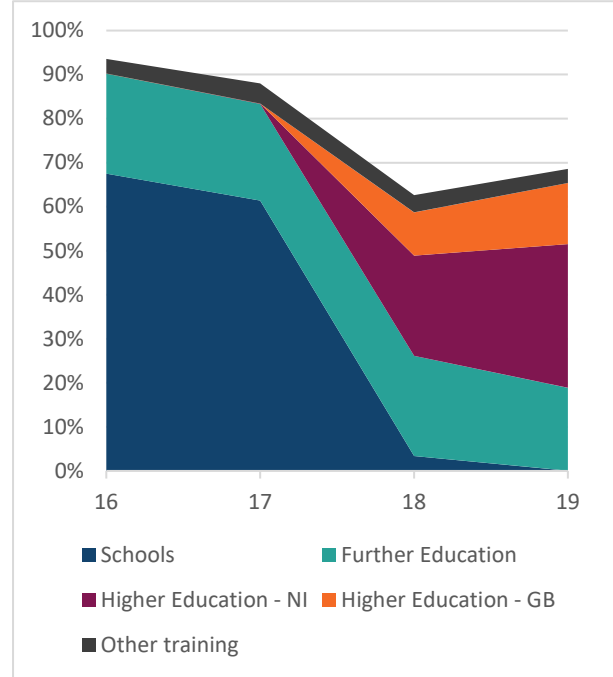
Attending School is the largest source of participation. This is concentrated in pupils aged 16 (68%) and 17 (61%).

After 17, the largest source of participation is attendance at Higher Education Institution courses. The rate of people attending Higher Education is 33% at age 18 and 47% at age 19.

Participation in full-time Further Education is consistently the second most common method of participation varying between 19% and 23%.

Participation in Other Training remains consistent across all ages varying between 3 to 5% (Figure 1).

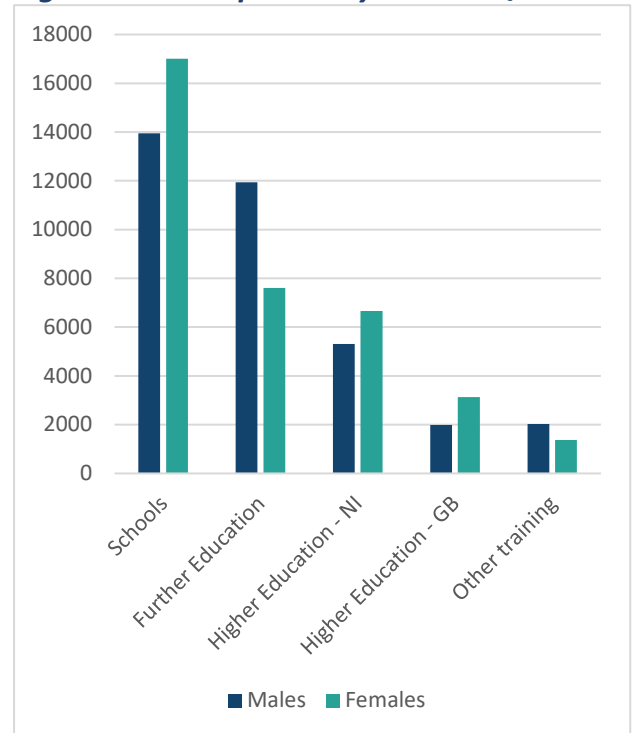
Figure 1. Participation Rates by Age 2021/22



1.2 Participation by Sex in 2021/22

Females have a higher participation rate in Schools, and in Higher Education Institutions. Males have a higher participation rate in both full-time Further Education and in Other Training (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Participation by Sex 2021/22



1.3 Participation Rates 2017/18 to 2021/22

Most sources of participation have had a stable participation rate between 2017/18 and 2021/22.

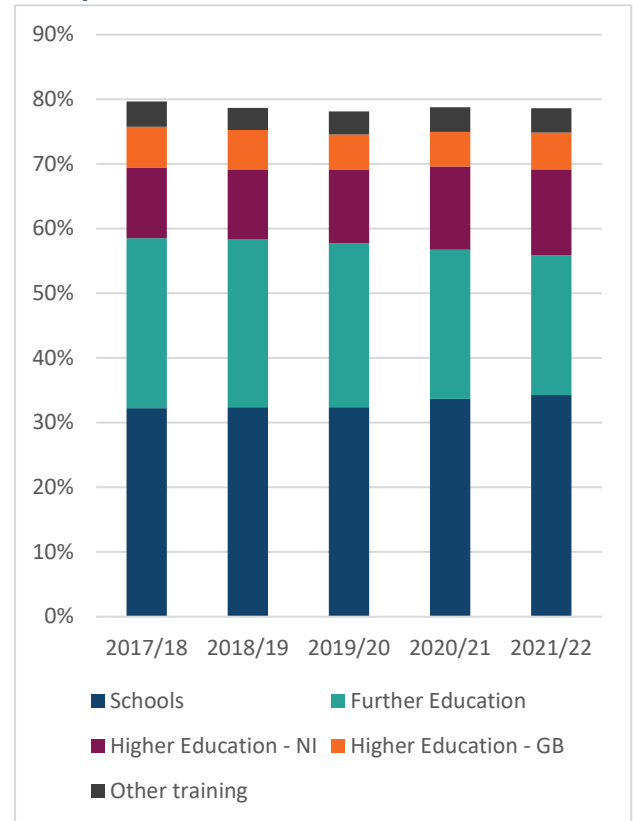
Schools have had a slight rise with the participation rate increasing from 32% in 2017/18 to 34% in 2021/22. Full-time Further Education has had a fall in participation rate from 26% in 2017/18 to 22% in 2021/22.

Participation rate in Higher Education Institutions has risen slightly during the period. The total of all full-time students in Higher Education Institutions has increased from 17% in 2017/18 to 19% in 2021/22. This rise comes from the number of students studying in NI which has increased from 11% in 2017/18 to 13% in 2021/22.

The participation rate for Other Training has remained at either 3% or 4% in all years.

In total, the overall participation rate has fallen slightly, starting at 80% in 2017/18 and falling to 79% in 2021/22 (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Participation Rates 2017/18 to 2021/22

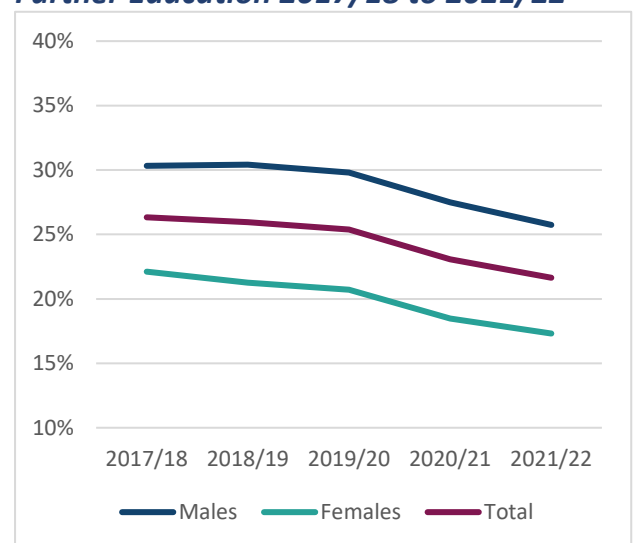


1.4 Participation Rate in Full-time Further Education

Between 2017/18 and 2021/22, the participation rate of full-time students in full-time Further Education has fallen almost 5 percentage points (26% in 2017/18, 22% in 2021/22) (Figure 4).

This trend appears within both the male and female subgroups, with both males and females having a 5 percentage point participation rate reduction during this period.

Figure 4. Participation Rate in Full-time Further Education 2017/18 to 2021/22

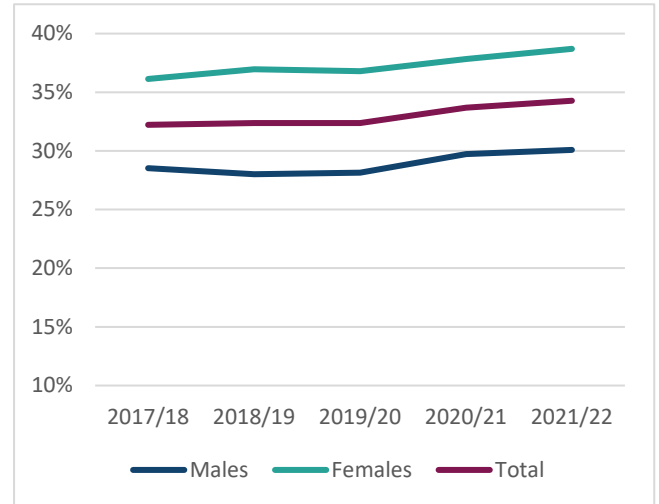


1.5 Participation Rate in Schools

Between 2017/18 and 2021/22, the participation rate of students in School has increased by 2 percentage points (32% in 2017/18, 34% in 2021/22) (Figure 5).

This trend appears within both the male and female subgroups, with males having a 2 percentage point participation increase and females having a 3 percentage point increase.

Figure 5. Participation Rate in Schools 2017/18 to 2021/22

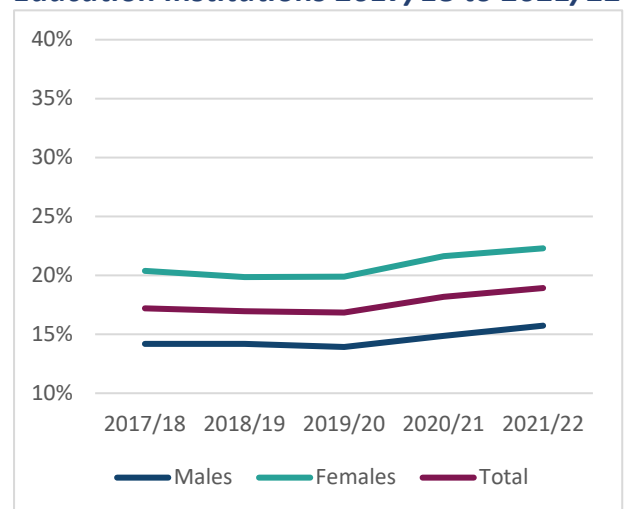


1.6 Participation Rate in Higher Education Institutions

Between 2017/18 and 2021/22, the participation rate of students in Higher Education Institution has increased by 2 percentage points (17% in 2017/18, 19% in 2021/22) (Figure 6).

This trend appears within both the male and female subgroups, with both males and females having a 2 percentage point participation increase.

Figure 6. Participation Rate in Higher Education Institutions 2017/18 to 2021/22



2. Further Information

Further information on School enrolments is available at:

[DE website - school enrolments](#)

Further information on Further Education is available at:

[DfE website - FE college statistics](#)

Further information on Higher Education is available at:

[DfE website - HE enrolments](#)

[DfE website - HE age participation index](#)

Further information on Other Training is available at:

[DfE website - ApprenticeshipNI statistics](#)

[DfE website - TfS statistics](#)

[DfE website - Skills for Life and Work statistics](#)

[DfE website - HLA activity](#)

Further information on Mid-Year Population Estimates is available at:

[NISRA website - mid-year population statistics](#)

3. Footnotes

Schools

Source: NI School Census.

Data is based on pupils enrolled on Census day i.e. The Friday of the first full week in October. (In 2021/22 this was 8 October 2021).

Age is as at 1st July of the previous academic year.

Data relating to independent schools in 17/18 and 18/19 does not include borders as an age breakdown was not available at this time.

Further Education Colleges

Source: Consolidated Data Return.

Age relates to the 1st July prior to the commencement of the academic year.

To prevent the identification of individuals, figures in the attached table are rounded to the nearest 5, with 0, 1, 2 rounded to 0.

To avoid double counting of pupils/students, information relating to Entitlement Framework students (i.e. those whose attendance at a Further Education college is linked to their attendance at a school) have been excluded.

Higher Education

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

Age relates to the 1st July prior to the commencement of the academic year.

To prevent the identification of individuals, figures in the attached table are rounded to the nearest 5, with 0, 1, 2 rounded to 0. Due to rounding the total of Higher Education in Northern Ireland and Higher Education in Great Britain may not sum to the total number of Higher Education students.

Only the Higher Education total is included in the participation percentage rate.

Data do not include the small number of Northern Ireland domiciled students studying Higher Education in the Republic of Ireland. Information on Northern Ireland domiciled students studying in Great Britain Further Education Colleges has also not been included.

Other training

Data include information on ApprenticeshipsNI, Training for Success, Skills for Life and Work; and Higher Level Apprenticeships from the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE).

Data for ApprenticeshipsNI, Training for Success and Skills for Life and Work are extracted from the Department's Client Management System on 1st October 2022.

Data from the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (CAFRE) include anyone enrolled in each respective year.

Age relates to the 1st July prior to the commencement of the academic year.

Data do not include training in Further Education Colleges.

Population

Source: 2022 Mid-year Population Estimates for Northern Ireland.

Mid-year population estimates are taken on the 30th June, prior to the commencement of the academic year.