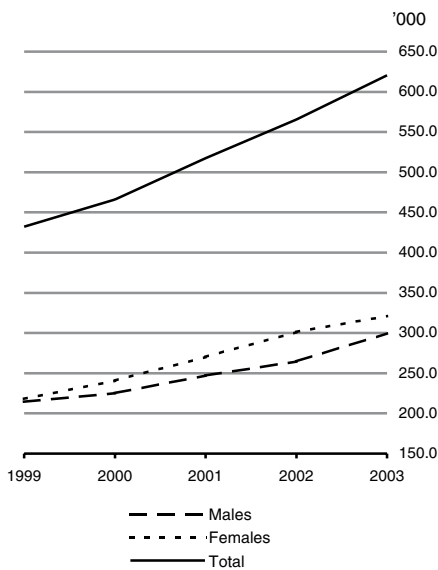


**Based on the 1996 Census of Population figures.
For figures based on the 2002 Census of
Population see the revised module figures.**

29 January 2004

Quarterly National Household Survey *Educational Attainment* 1999 to 2003

**Persons aged 15 to 64 years with a
third level qualification**



Almost one in four have a third level qualification

In the second quarter of 2003, almost one in four (23.1%) persons aged 15-64 had a third level qualification which compares to just over one in six (17.3%) persons four years previously (Q2 1999). Almost 300,000 males and 321,000 females reported having a third level qualification representing increases of 40% and 47% respectively over the same period. When 15 to 24 year olds are excluded (i.e. the age group most likely to be still in education), almost 27% reported having a third level qualification, compared to just 20% in the second quarter of 1999. *See tables 1a, 1b & graph.*

This increase in the number of persons with a third level qualification is evident in all age categories but particularly in the 25-44 age category where the numbers have jumped from 258,400 in 1999 to 384,700 in 2003. Further analysis of this sub-category shows that some 55,000 of this increase can be attributed to those aged 25-34 with third level degree or above qualifications. *See table 4.*

Fall in numbers with at most primary education

The number of persons aged 15-64 with at most a primary education stood at 464,900 (17.3%) in the second quarter of 2003 representing a decrease of 9% over the figure reported one year previously and a decrease of just over 12% on the 1999 figure. An examination of the 2003 data by gender reveals that a higher proportion of males (18.5%) have an education level of 'primary or below' compared to females (16.2%). *See table 1a.*

The overall fall in the number of persons reporting that their highest level of education attained was primary or below was again evident in all age groups with the exception of the 55-59 age category which showed an increase from 74,000 in 1999 to 81,700 in 2003. The most significant fall (-31,700) was evident in the 45-54 age bracket. *See table 4.*

Participation and unemployment rates correlated with education

In the second quarter of 2003 the labour force participation rate for persons with a degree or higher was 89.2%, which compares to a participation rate of just 50.0% for persons whose highest educational attainment level was primary or below. Conversely the unemployment rate for those aged 25 to 64 with a degree or above was just 2.1%, compared with 7.3% for persons whose highest attainment level was primary or below. *See tables 3a, 3b & graphs.*

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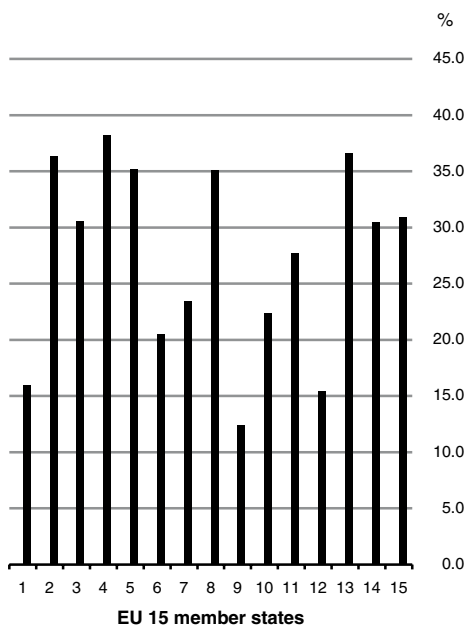
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Ref 17/2004

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Persons aged 25 to 34 in EU member states with third level education, second quarter 2002



Country Key.

- 1 - Austria
- 2 - Belgium
- 3 - Denmark
- 4 - Finland
- 5 - France
- 6 - Germany
- 7 - Greece
- 8 - Ireland**
- 9 - Italy
- 10 - Luxembourg
- 11 - Netherlands
- 12 - Portugal
- 13 - Spain
- 14 - Sweden
- 15 - United Kingdom

Third level attainment ranks fifth highest in Europe

The latest available figures for all EU member states showed that in the second quarter of 2002, 26.4% of all 25 to 34 year olds had obtained a third level qualification. The corresponding figure for Ireland was 35.1%, fifth only to Finland, Spain, Belgium and France. The most recent figure for Ireland relates to the second quarter of 2003 and reflects an increase over the 2002 figure to 37.2%. No comparable EU data is available for 2003. *See tables 5a & 5b.*

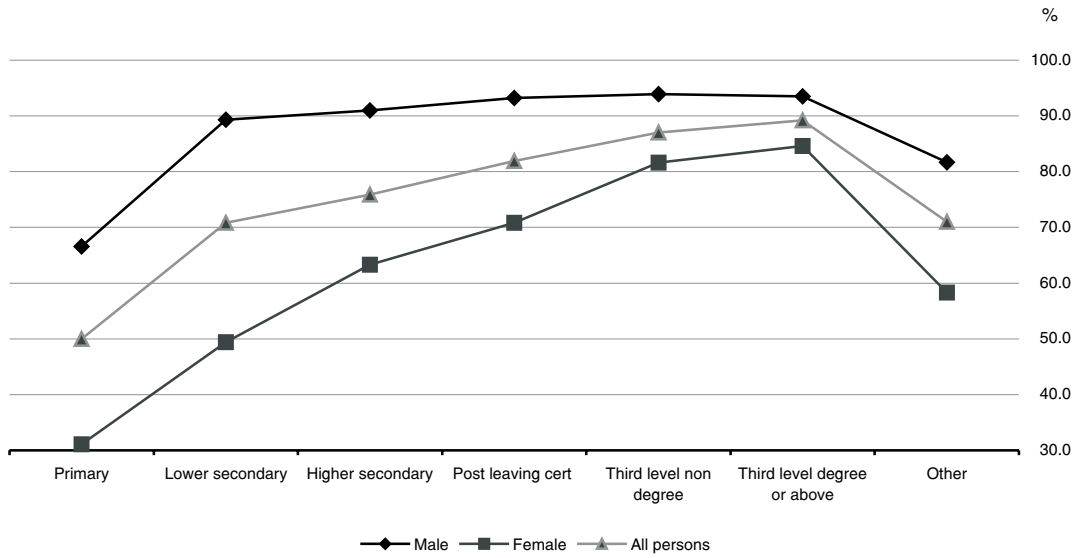
Number of students on the increase

The proportion of persons aged 18 to 24 describing themselves as students increased from 35.4% to 39.0% over the five years from the second quarters of 1999 to 2003. This increase was evident for each single year of age but was particularly evident for 20 and 21 year olds where the proportions of students increased from 38.7% and 32.9% to 50.3% and 41.8% respectively. *See table 8.*

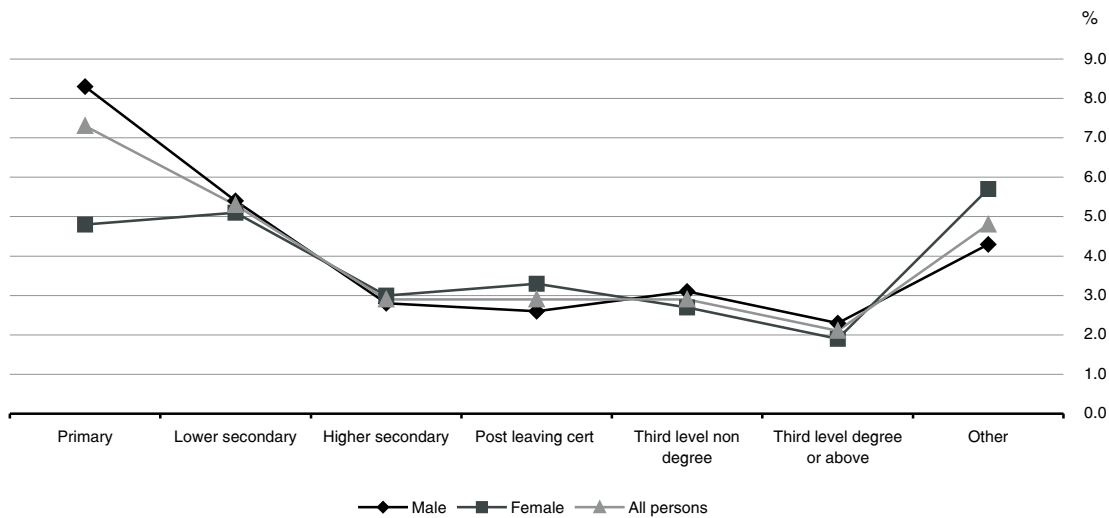
Almost 10% of adult population are life long learners

In the second quarter of 2003, just under 10% of all persons aged 25 to 64 were defined as life long learners (i.e. persons in receipt of education through the regular education system or through organised learning activities outside regular education, in the four weeks prior to the survey). Almost 75% of these were in employment with a further 2.7% unemployed (possibly up-skilling in an attempt to gain employment) and the balance of 22.7% not economically active. *See tables 9a, 9b, 9c and background notes.*

Participation rate of persons aged 25 to 64 by the highest level of education attained, March-May 2003



Unemployment rates of persons aged 25 to 64 by the highest level of education attained, March-May 2003



**Table 1a Persons aged 15 to 64 classified by the highest level of education attained¹,
March-May 1999 to March-May 2003**

| | '000 | | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Highest education level attained ¹ | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 |
| Males aged 15 to 64 | | | | | |
| Primary or below | 279.4 | 276.6 | 279.7 | 271.0 | 248.6 |
| Lower secondary | 311.7 | 295.5 | 285.1 | 288.3 | 302.3 |
| Higher secondary | 312.6 | 303.6 | 318.3 | 325.5 | 335.6 |
| Post leaving cert | 109.6 | 145.8 | 141.0 | 141.1 | 131.9 |
| Third level non degree | 73.6 | 76.9 | 92.2 | 92.6 | 104.6 |
| Third level degree or above | 140.7 | 148.5 | 155.1 | 172.1 | 194.9 |
| Other | 23.9 | 27.6 | 28.6 | 34.2 | 27.6 |
| Total | 1,251.6 | 1,274.4 | 1,299.9 | 1,324.7 | 1,345.5 |
| Females aged 15 to 64 | | | | | |
| Primary or below | 250.2 | 244.6 | 249.3 | 239.2 | 216.2 |
| Lower secondary | 277.8 | 267.5 | 251.2 | 253.4 | 263.4 |
| Higher secondary | 348.1 | 337.5 | 350.5 | 355.6 | 374.9 |
| Post leaving cert | 124.1 | 148.6 | 142.5 | 137.1 | 138.3 |
| Third level non degree | 90.2 | 104.5 | 119.8 | 126.2 | 132.8 |
| Third level degree or above | 127.7 | 136.2 | 150.4 | 174.9 | 188.4 |
| Other | 24.1 | 25.3 | 24.6 | 28.6 | 23.9 |
| Total | 1,242.2 | 1,264.2 | 1,288.4 | 1,315.0 | 1,337.9 |
| All persons aged 15 to 64 | | | | | |
| Primary or below | 529.6 | 521.2 | 529.1 | 510.2 | 464.9 |
| Lower secondary | 589.5 | 563.0 | 536.3 | 541.6 | 565.7 |
| Higher secondary | 660.8 | 641.0 | 668.7 | 681.1 | 710.5 |
| Post leaving cert | 233.7 | 294.4 | 283.6 | 278.2 | 270.2 |
| Third level non degree | 163.8 | 181.4 | 212.0 | 218.8 | 237.4 |
| Third level degree or above | 268.4 | 284.6 | 305.5 | 346.9 | 383.3 |
| Other | 48.0 | 52.9 | 53.2 | 62.8 | 51.5 |
| Total persons aged 15 to 64 | 2,493.8 | 2,538.6 | 2,588.4 | 2,639.7 | 2,683.4 |

¹ See Background Notes.

**Table 1b Persons aged 25 to 64 classified by the highest level of education attained¹,
March-May 1999 to March-May 2003**

| | '000 | | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Highest education level attained ¹ | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 |
| Males aged 25 to 64 | | | | | |
| Primary or below | 226.5 | 224.1 | 224.7 | 216.6 | 200.9 |
| Lower secondary | 195.9 | 186.7 | 180.3 | 185.8 | 200.4 |
| Higher secondary | 195.1 | 183.1 | 194.3 | 199.8 | 210.0 |
| Post leaving cert | 92.8 | 124.1 | 122.5 | 122.7 | 114.5 |
| Third level non degree | 60.0 | 64.3 | 77.1 | 78.8 | 86.9 |
| Third level degree or above | 126.1 | 133.9 | 140.3 | 155.1 | 176.3 |
| Other | 20.3 | 22.7 | 24.9 | 29.0 | 22.7 |
| Total | 916.7 | 938.9 | 964.1 | 987.7 | 1,011.7 |
| Females aged 25 to 64 | | | | | |
| Primary or below | 206.1 | 201.0 | 202.6 | 194.9 | 177.2 |
| Lower secondary | 177.3 | 168.8 | 163.2 | 166.7 | 173.9 |
| Higher secondary | 233.7 | 223.2 | 230.8 | 234.6 | 251.0 |
| Post leaving cert | 100.2 | 123.0 | 118.0 | 113.6 | 115.7 |
| Third level non degree | 73.3 | 86.5 | 99.2 | 104.5 | 110.6 |
| Third level degree or above | 107.8 | 116.0 | 128.6 | 149.7 | 163.6 |
| Other | 20.7 | 21.3 | 21.1 | 23.3 | 19.1 |
| Total | 919.2 | 939.8 | 963.5 | 987.3 | 1,011.2 |
| All persons aged 25 to 64 | | | | | |
| Primary or below | 432.7 | 425.1 | 427.3 | 411.4 | 378.1 |
| Lower secondary | 373.2 | 355.5 | 343.5 | 352.4 | 374.4 |
| Higher secondary | 428.8 | 406.3 | 425.1 | 434.5 | 461.0 |
| Post leaving cert | 193.0 | 247.1 | 240.6 | 236.3 | 230.2 |
| Third level non degree | 133.3 | 150.8 | 176.3 | 183.3 | 197.4 |
| Third level degree or above | 233.9 | 249.9 | 269.0 | 304.8 | 339.9 |
| Other | 41.1 | 43.9 | 45.9 | 52.3 | 41.8 |
| Total persons aged 25 to 64 | 1,835.9 | 1,878.6 | 1,927.6 | 1,975.0 | 2,022.8 |

¹ See Background Notes.

Table 2a Persons aged 25 to 64 in employment classified by the highest level of education attained¹, March-May 1999 to March-May 2003

| | '000 | | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Highest education level attained ¹ | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 |
| Males in employment | | | | | |
| Primary or below | 141.6 | 142.6 | 144.1 | 138.3 | 122.7 |
| Lower secondary | 164.8 | 161.1 | 157.4 | 158.9 | 169.3 |
| Higher secondary | 174.5 | 164.8 | 176.5 | 178.7 | 185.7 |
| Post leaving cert | 83.8 | 114.9 | 113.8 | 112.0 | 104.0 |
| Third level non degree | 55.3 | 59.4 | 71.8 | 71.6 | 79.0 |
| Third level degree or above | 117.2 | 125.8 | 130.3 | 141.9 | 161.0 |
| Other | 16.3 | 17.7 | 20.6 | 24.1 | 17.7 |
| Total | 753.5 | 786.3 | 814.5 | 825.7 | 839.4 |
| Females in employment | | | | | |
| Primary or below | 53.9 | 55.4 | 60.9 | 58.7 | 52.5 |
| Lower secondary | 77.9 | 77.0 | 75.2 | 78.9 | 81.5 |
| Higher secondary | 141.3 | 134.9 | 143.7 | 146.9 | 154.2 |
| Post leaving cert | 65.2 | 85.9 | 80.4 | 79.9 | 79.2 |
| Third level non degree | 56.2 | 68.7 | 77.2 | 83.1 | 87.7 |
| Third level degree or above | 91.3 | 97.0 | 108.6 | 126.0 | 135.8 |
| Other | 12.7 | 13.1 | 12.1 | 14.5 | 10.5 |
| Total | 498.6 | 532.1 | 558.1 | 587.9 | 601.4 |
| All persons in employment | | | | | |
| Primary or below | 195.5 | 198.0 | 205.0 | 197.0 | 175.2 |
| Lower secondary | 242.6 | 238.1 | 232.6 | 237.8 | 250.8 |
| Higher secondary | 315.8 | 299.7 | 320.2 | 325.6 | 339.9 |
| Post leaving cert | 149.1 | 200.9 | 194.1 | 191.9 | 183.2 |
| Third level non degree | 111.5 | 128.1 | 149.1 | 154.7 | 166.7 |
| Third level degree or above | 208.6 | 222.8 | 238.8 | 267.9 | 296.8 |
| Other | 29.0 | 30.8 | 32.7 | 38.7 | 28.3 |
| Total in employment | 1,252.1 | 1,318.4 | 1,372.6 | 1,413.6 | 1,440.8 |

¹ See Background Notes.

Table 2b Persons aged 25 to 64 unemployed classified by the highest level of education attained¹, March-May 1999 to March-May 2003

| | '000 | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Highest education level attained ¹ | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 |
| Males unemployed | | | | | |
| Primary or below | 19.2 | 15.0 | 11.4 | 12.3 | 11.1 |
| Lower secondary | 11.9 | 8.7 | 6.7 | 7.5 | 9.8 |
| Higher secondary | 6.0 | 4.0 | 4.2 | 5.7 | 5.3 |
| Post leaving cert | 3.1 | 2.4 | 2.1 | 2.3 | 2.7 |
| Third level non degree | 1.1 | 1.0 | 1.4 | 1.8 | 2.5 |
| Third level degree or above | 1.6 | 1.9 | 1.6 | 2.9 | 3.8 |
| Other | 0.7 | 0.6 | 0.3 | 0.6 | 0.8 |
| Total | 43.6 | 33.5 | 27.9 | 33.1 | 36.0 |
| Females unemployed | | | | | |
| Primary or below | 6.0 | 4.7 | 3.7 | 3.6 | 2.6 |
| Lower secondary | 7.2 | 4.9 | 4.0 | 4.1 | 4.4 |
| Higher secondary | 5.2 | 3.9 | 4.2 | 4.6 | 4.8 |
| Post leaving cert | 3.0 | 2.7 | 2.2 | 2.6 | 2.7 |
| Third level non degree | 1.8 | 1.5 | 1.6 | 1.5 | 2.5 |
| Third level degree or above | 1.1 | 1.4 | 1.3 | 1.9 | 2.6 |
| Other | 0.5 | 0.3 | * | 0.5 | 0.6 |
| Total | 24.8 | 19.4 | 17.0 | 18.7 | 20.2 |
| All persons unemployed | | | | | |
| Primary or below | 25.2 | 19.7 | 15.2 | 15.8 | 13.7 |
| Lower secondary | 19.2 | 13.6 | 10.7 | 11.6 | 14.1 |
| Higher secondary | 11.2 | 7.9 | 8.4 | 10.2 | 10.1 |
| Post leaving cert | 6.1 | 5.1 | 4.3 | 4.8 | 5.4 |
| Third level non degree | 3.0 | 2.5 | 3.0 | 3.3 | 5.0 |
| Third level degree or above | 2.7 | 3.3 | 2.8 | 4.8 | 6.4 |
| Other | 1.2 | 0.9 | 0.6 | 1.1 | 1.4 |
| Total unemployed | 68.4 | 52.9 | 44.9 | 51.8 | 56.2 |

¹ See Background Notes.

* Sample occurrence too small for estimation.

Table 3a Labour force participation rate of persons aged 25 to 64 classified by the highest level of education attained¹, March-May 1999 to March-May 2003

| | % | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Highest education level attained ¹ | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 |
| Male participation rate | | | | | |
| Primary or below | 71.0 | 70.3 | 69.2 | 69.5 | 66.6 |
| Lower secondary | 90.2 | 90.9 | 91.0 | 89.6 | 89.3 |
| Higher secondary | 92.5 | 92.2 | 93.0 | 92.3 | 91.0 |
| Post leaving cert | 93.6 | 94.5 | 94.6 | 93.1 | 93.2 |
| Third level non degree | 94.2 | 94.1 | 95.0 | 93.3 | 93.9 |
| Third level degree or above | 94.2 | 95.3 | 94.0 | 93.4 | 93.5 |
| Other | 83.7 | 80.7 | 84.1 | 85.3 | 81.7 |
| Total | 87.0 | 87.3 | 87.4 | 86.9 | 86.5 |
| Female participation rate | | | | | |
| Primary or below | 29.1 | 29.9 | 31.9 | 31.9 | 31.1 |
| Lower secondary | 48.0 | 48.5 | 48.5 | 49.8 | 49.4 |
| Higher secondary | 62.7 | 62.2 | 64.1 | 64.5 | 63.3 |
| Post leaving cert | 68.1 | 72.0 | 69.9 | 72.6 | 70.8 |
| Third level non degree | 79.1 | 81.1 | 79.4 | 80.9 | 81.6 |
| Third level degree or above | 85.7 | 84.9 | 85.4 | 85.5 | 84.6 |
| Other | 63.5 | 63.0 | 58.6 | 64.6 | 58.3 |
| Total | 56.9 | 58.7 | 59.7 | 61.4 | 61.5 |
| All persons participation rate | | | | | |
| Primary or below | 51.0 | 51.2 | 51.5 | 51.7 | 50.0 |
| Lower secondary | 70.2 | 70.8 | 70.8 | 70.8 | 70.8 |
| Higher secondary | 76.3 | 75.7 | 77.3 | 77.3 | 75.9 |
| Post leaving cert | 80.4 | 83.3 | 82.5 | 83.2 | 81.9 |
| Third level non degree | 85.9 | 86.6 | 86.2 | 86.2 | 87.0 |
| Third level degree or above | 90.3 | 90.5 | 89.9 | 89.5 | 89.2 |
| Other | 73.5 | 72.1 | 72.4 | 76.1 | 71.0 |
| Total participation rate | 71.9 | 73.0 | 73.5 | 74.2 | 74.0 |

¹ See Background Notes.

Table 3b Unemployment rate of persons aged 25 to 64 classified by the highest level of education attained¹, March-May 1999 to March-May 2003

| | % | | | | |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Highest education level attained ¹ | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 |
| Male unemployment rate | | | | | |
| Primary or below | 11.9 | 9.5 | 7.4 | 8.2 | 8.3 |
| Lower secondary | 6.8 | 5.1 | 4.1 | 4.5 | 5.4 |
| Higher secondary | 3.3 | 2.4 | 2.3 | 3.1 | 2.8 |
| Post leaving cert | 3.6 | 2.0 | 1.8 | 2.0 | 2.6 |
| Third level non degree | 2.0 | 1.7 | 1.9 | 2.5 | 3.1 |
| Third level degree or above | 1.3 | 1.5 | 1.2 | 2.0 | 2.3 |
| Other | 4.3 | 3.3 | 1.7 | 2.3 | 4.3 |
| Total | 5.5 | 4.1 | 3.3 | 3.9 | 4.1 |
| Female unemployment rate | | | | | |
| Primary or below | 10.0 | 7.8 | 5.8 | 5.7 | 4.8 |
| Lower secondary | 8.5 | 6.0 | 5.0 | 4.9 | 5.1 |
| Higher secondary | 3.5 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| Post leaving cert | 4.4 | 3.1 | 2.6 | 3.1 | 3.3 |
| Third level non degree | 3.1 | 2.1 | 2.0 | 1.7 | 2.7 |
| Third level degree or above | 1.2 | 1.5 | 1.1 | 1.5 | 1.9 |
| Other | 3.4 | 2.1 | * | 3.4 | 5.7 |
| Total | 4.7 | 3.5 | 3.0 | 3.1 | 3.3 |
| All persons unemployment rate | | | | | |
| Primary or below | 11.4 | 9.0 | 6.9 | 7.4 | 7.3 |
| Lower secondary | 7.3 | 5.4 | 4.4 | 4.7 | 5.3 |
| Higher secondary | 3.4 | 2.6 | 2.6 | 3.0 | 2.9 |
| Post leaving cert | 3.9 | 2.5 | 2.2 | 2.5 | 2.9 |
| Third level non degree | 2.6 | 1.9 | 2.0 | 2.1 | 2.9 |
| Third level degree or above | 1.3 | 1.5 | 1.2 | 1.8 | 2.1 |
| Other | 3.9 | 2.8 | 1.7 | 2.7 | 4.8 |
| Total unemployment rate | 5.2 | 3.9 | 3.2 | 3.5 | 3.8 |

¹ See Background Notes.

* Sample occurrence too small for estimation.

Table 4 Persons aged 15 to 64 classified by the highest level of education attained¹, and age group, March-May 1999 to March-May 2003

| Age Group | Primary or below | Lower secondary | Higher secondary | Post leaving cert | Third level | | Other ² | Total |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| | | | | | non degree | degree or above | | |
| March-May 1999 | | | | | | | | |
| All persons | 529.6 | 589.5 | 660.8 | 233.7 | 163.8 | 268.4 | 48.0 | 2,493.8 |
| 15-19 | 80.6 | 176.8 | 78.4 | 4.5 | 0.8 | 0.4 | 1.4 | 343.0 |
| 20-24 | 16.3 | 39.6 | 153.6 | 36.1 | 29.6 | 34.1 | 5.6 | 314.9 |
| 25-34 | 43.8 | 105.9 | 162.2 | 77.5 | 57.4 | 95.0 | 13.6 | 555.4 |
| 35-44 | 82.0 | 122.2 | 139.4 | 57.3 | 38.8 | 67.2 | 11.0 | 517.8 |
| 45-54 | 152.3 | 96.4 | 83.7 | 38.1 | 24.8 | 45.6 | 9.8 | 450.7 |
| 55-59 | 74.0 | 28.9 | 25.7 | 12.0 | 7.2 | 15.8 | 4.2 | 167.8 |
| 60-64 | 80.6 | 19.8 | 17.8 | 8.1 | 5.2 | 10.3 | 2.5 | 144.3 |
| March-May 2000 | | | | | | | | |
| All persons | 521.2 | 563.0 | 641.0 | 294.4 | 181.4 | 284.6 | 52.9 | 2,538.6 |
| 15-19 | 79.6 | 168.3 | 78.7 | 4.5 | 1.0 | * | 1.7 | 333.9 |
| 20-24 | 16.5 | 39.2 | 156.0 | 42.8 | 29.6 | 34.7 | 7.2 | 326.1 |
| 25-34 | 44.8 | 103.0 | 140.9 | 97.7 | 64.1 | 103.9 | 15.9 | 570.3 |
| 35-44 | 77.6 | 114.3 | 134.0 | 74.2 | 44.2 | 69.2 | 11.7 | 525.1 |
| 45-54 | 146.6 | 91.3 | 86.1 | 50.2 | 27.6 | 50.1 | 9.7 | 461.6 |
| 55-59 | 76.6 | 28.5 | 25.2 | 14.9 | 8.8 | 15.8 | 3.7 | 173.5 |
| 60-64 | 79.5 | 18.3 | 20.2 | 10.1 | 6.1 | 10.9 | 3.0 | 148.0 |
| March-May 2001 | | | | | | | | |
| All persons | 529.1 | 536.3 | 668.7 | 283.6 | 212 | 305.5 | 53.2 | 2588.4 |
| 15-19 | 86.4 | 157.6 | 76.4 | 3.2 | 0.8 | * | 1.3 | 325.9 |
| 20-24 | 15.4 | 35.2 | 167.3 | 39.8 | 34.9 | 36.3 | 5.9 | 334.8 |
| 25-34 | 48.4 | 92.4 | 151.2 | 91.0 | 75.2 | 117.0 | 16.9 | 592.2 |
| 35-44 | 76.9 | 111.5 | 136.3 | 73.9 | 49.4 | 72.7 | 11.6 | 532.3 |
| 45-54 | 142.1 | 90.8 | 90.1 | 49.5 | 34.1 | 52.7 | 9.9 | 469.2 |
| 55-59 | 80.3 | 29.9 | 28.4 | 15.8 | 10.5 | 15.3 | 4.2 | 184.3 |
| 60-64 | 79.7 | 18.8 | 19.0 | 10.3 | 7.1 | 11.2 | 3.3 | 149.6 |
| March-May 2002 | | | | | | | | |
| All persons | 510.2 | 541.6 | 681.1 | 278.2 | 218.8 | 346.9 | 62.8 | 2,639.7 |
| 15-19 | 83.8 | 149.8 | 77.7 | 3.6 | 0.9 | 0.8 | 1.7 | 318.4 |
| 20-24 | 15.0 | 39.4 | 169.0 | 38.2 | 34.7 | 41.3 | 8.8 | 346.3 |
| 25-34 | 46.3 | 90.2 | 154.5 | 87.6 | 80.5 | 135.4 | 20.3 | 614.8 |
| 35-44 | 72.5 | 110.7 | 134.7 | 74.3 | 51.2 | 80.9 | 12.7 | 537.0 |
| 45-54 | 132.2 | 97.0 | 95.1 | 48.7 | 34.2 | 56.9 | 12.0 | 476.1 |
| 55-59 | 82.4 | 33.2 | 30.3 | 15.6 | 10.5 | 19.6 | 4.1 | 195.7 |
| 60-64 | 77.9 | 21.3 | 19.9 | 10.1 | 6.9 | 12.0 | 3.1 | 151.3 |
| March-May 2003 | | | | | | | | |
| All persons | 464.9 | 565.7 | 710.5 | 270.2 | 237.4 | 383.3 | 51.5 | 2,683.4 |
| 15-19 | 74.3 | 154.2 | 74.7 | 2.9 | 1.4 | 0.4 | 1.3 | 309.1 |
| 20-24 | 12.5 | 37.1 | 174.8 | 37.2 | 38.5 | 43.0 | 8.4 | 351.5 |
| 25-34 | 36.8 | 93.1 | 161.1 | 90.6 | 86.1 | 150.3 | 18.1 | 636.2 |
| 35-44 | 62.7 | 110.8 | 141.8 | 67.7 | 56.6 | 91.7 | 10.5 | 541.7 |
| 45-54 | 120.6 | 107.8 | 103.1 | 44.7 | 36.4 | 62.9 | 7.5 | 482.8 |
| 55-59 | 81.7 | 38.5 | 31.9 | 16.1 | 11.2 | 21.3 | 3.7 | 204.4 |
| 60-64 | 76.3 | 24.3 | 23.1 | 11.0 | 7.2 | 13.8 | 2.0 | 157.7 |

¹ See Background Notes.

* Sample occurrence too small for estimation.

Table 5a Number and percentage of persons aged 25 to 34 with third level qualifications classified by sex, March-May 1999 to March-May 2003

| | '000 | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 |
| Males | | | | | |
| Third level | 74.8 | 79.8 | 90.1 | 98.1 | 110.2 |
| Total | 276.9 | 286.3 | 298.2 | 309.1 | 320.1 |
| % of male population aged 25-34 with third level qualifications¹ | 27.0 | 27.9 | 30.2 | 31.7 | 34.4 |
| Females | | | | | |
| Third level | 77.6 | 88.2 | 102.1 | 117.8 | 126.2 |
| Total | 278.5 | 284.0 | 294.0 | 305.7 | 316.0 |
| % of female population aged 25-34 with third level qualifications¹ | 27.9 | 31.1 | 34.7 | 38.5 | 39.9 |
| All persons | | | | | |
| Third level | 152.4 | 168.0 | 192.2 | 215.9 | 236.5 |
| Total | 555.4 | 570.3 | 592.2 | 614.8 | 636.2 |
| % of population aged 25-34 with third level qualifications¹ | 27.4 | 29.5 | 32.5 | 35.1 | 37.2 |

¹ See Background Notes.

Table 5b Percentage of persons aged 25 to 34 in EU member states with third level education, classified by sex, LFS second quarter 2002

| | % | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Country | Males | Females | Total |
| EU 15 (European Union) | 24.7 | 28.1 | 26.4 |
| Austria | 15.6 | 16.4 | 16.0 |
| Belgium | 31.7 | 41.0 | 36.3 |
| Denmark | 24.9 | 35.7 | 30.6 |
| Finland | 30.3 | 46.5 | 38.2 |
| France | 32.4 | 38.0 | 35.2 |
| Germany | 21.7 | 19.3 | 20.5 |
| Greece | 20.2 | 26.5 | 23.4 |
| Ireland | 31.7 | 38.5 | 35.1 |
| Italy | 10.8 | 14.1 | 12.4 |
| Luxembourg | 24.2 | 20.6 | 22.4 |
| Netherlands | 26.1 | 29.4 | 27.7 |
| Portugal | 10.6 | 20.4 | 15.4 |
| Spain | 33.1 | 40.2 | 36.6 |
| Sweden | 27.1 | 34.0 | 30.5 |
| United Kingdom | 30.5 | 31.4 | 30.9 |

Source: Eurostat.

Note: Trends in some member states may be affected by changes in methodology.

Note: Data for France for Q2 2002 is unchanged from Q2 2001 as updated detail is not available at present.

Table 6a Number and percentage of persons aged 20 to 24 with at least upper secondary level education¹, classified by sex, March-May 1999 to March-May 2003

| | '000 | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 |
| Males | | | | | |
| Higher secondary or above | 123.1 | 127.2 | 134.4 | 135.2 | 140.9 |
| Total | 158.8 | 164.0 | 168.5 | 173.5 | 175.9 |
| % of male population aged 20-24 with at least-upper secondary level education¹ | 77.5 | 77.6 | 79.8 | 77.9 | 80.1 |
| Females | | | | | |
| Higher secondary or above | 130.4 | 135.9 | 143.9 | 148.0 | 152.6 |
| Total | 156.1 | 162.1 | 166.4 | 172.8 | 175.6 |
| % of female population aged 20-24 with at least-upper secondary level education¹ | 83.5 | 83.8 | 86.5 | 85.6 | 86.9 |
| All persons | | | | | |
| Higher secondary or above | 253.5 | 263.1 | 278.3 | 283.2 | 293.5 |
| Total | 314.9 | 326.1 | 334.8 | 346.3 | 351.5 |
| % of population aged 20-24 with at least-upper secondary level education¹ | 80.5 | 80.7 | 83.1 | 81.8 | 83.5 |

¹ See Background Notes.

Note: This is a new indicator and hence EU comparable data is not yet available.

Table 6b Percentage of persons aged 20 to 24 with at least upper secondary level education¹, in EU member states and acceding states, classified by sex, LFS second quarter 2003

| | % | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Country | Males | Females | Total |
| EU 15 (European Union) | 71.4 | 76.6 | 74.0 |
| EU 15 + ACC (European Union + 10 acceding states) | 74.3 | 79.4 | 76.8 |
| Austria | 85.6 | 84.4 | 85.0 |
| Belgium | 77.6 | 84.7 | 81.1 |
| Denmark | 72.6 | 76.2 | 74.4 |
| Finland | 81.9 | 90.4 | 86.2 |
| France | 78.9 | 83.4 | 81.1 |
| Germany | 72.6 | 73.8 | 73.3 |
| Greece | 76.5 | 86.9 | 81.7 |
| Ireland | 80.1 | 86.9 | 83.5 |
| Italy | 66.4 | 73.4 | 69.9 |
| Luxembourg | 74.0 | 65.5 | 69.8 |
| Netherlands | 70.0 | 76.7 | 73.3 |
| Portugal | 40.4 | 54.1 | 47.2 |
| Spain | 57.1 | 70.1 | 63.4 |
| Sweden | 84.1 | 87.1 | 85.6 |
| United Kingdom | 78.2 | 78.1 | 78.2 |
| Acceding states | | | |
| Czech Republic | 92.7 | 91.4 | 92.0 |
| Estonia | 78.5 | 84.2 | 81.4 |
| Cyprus | 76.1 | 87.8 | 82.2 |
| Latvia | 68.5 | 79.7 | 74.0 |
| Lithuania | 78.3 | 85.8 | 82.1 |
| Hungary | 83.9 | 86.1 | 85.0 |
| Malta | 39.6 | 46.0 | 42.8 |
| Poland | 86.1 | 91.5 | 88.8 |
| Slovenia | 87.4 | 94.2 | 90.7 |
| Slovakia | 94.1 | 94.2 | 94.1 |

Source: Eurostat.

Note: Trends in some member states may be affected by changes in methodology.

Table 7a Early school leavers¹ classified by sex, March-May 2002 to March-May 2003

| | 2002 | | 2003 | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | '000 | % | '000 | % |
| Male early school leavers | 43.2 | 18.0 | 35.1 | 14.7 |
| Female early school leavers | 24.8 | 10.6 | 21.3 | 9.0 |
| Total early school leavers | 68.0 | 14.3 | 56.4 | 11.9 |

¹ Early school leavers are defined as persons aged 18 to 24 whose highest level of education attained is lower secondary or below and have not received education (either formal or non formal) in the four weeks prior to the survey. See Background Notes.

Table 7b Early school leavers in EU member states and acceding states classified by sex, LFS second quarter 2003

| Country | Males | Females | Total |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| EU 15 (European Union) | 20.3 | 15.9 | 18.1 |
| EU 15 + ACC (European Union + 10 acceding states) | 17.9 | 13.9 | 15.9 |
| Austria | 8.8 | 10.3 | 9.5 |
| Belgium | 14.9 | 9.9 | 12.4 |
| Denmark | 10.3 | 9.6 | 10.0 |
| Finland | 12.6 | 7.3 | 9.9 |
| France | 15.0 | 11.6 | 13.3 |
| Germany | 12.6 | 12.6 | 12.6 |
| Greece | 19.6 | 11.0 | 15.3 |
| Ireland | 14.7 | 9.0 | 11.9 |
| Italy | 27.9 | 21.3 | 24.6 |
| Luxembourg | 14.4 | 19.6 | 17.0 |
| Netherlands | 15.7 | 14.3 | 15.0 |
| Portugal | 48.3 | 33.8 | 41.1 |
| Spain | 36.1 | 23.4 | 29.8 |
| Sweden | 9.8 | 8.2 | 9.0 |
| United Kingdom | 17.0 | 16.4 | 16.7 |
| Acceding states | | | |
| Czech Republic | 5.2 | 6.8 | 6.0 |
| Estonia | 16.1 | 9.6 | 11.8 |
| Cyprus | 20.2 | 11.0 | 15.1 |
| Latvia | 22.7 | 13.4 | 18.1 |
| Lithuania | 14.9 | 8.9 | 11.8 |
| Hungary | 12.4 | 11.1 | 11.8 |
| Malta | 49.5 | 46.6 | 48.1 |
| Poland | 7.8 | 4.7 | 6.3 |
| Slovenia | 6.2 | 2.3 | 4.3 |
| Slovakia | 5.2 | 4.7 | 4.9 |

Source: Eurostat.

Note: Trends in some member states may be affected by changes in methodology.

Note: Data for Estonia for females is unchanged from Q2 2002 as updated detail is not available at present.

**Table 7c All persons aged 18 to 24 and early school leavers, classified by ILO employment status
March-May 2002 to March-May 2003**

'000

| | 2002 | | 2003 | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|
| | Early School Leaver | Total | Early School Leaver | Total |
| Males | | | | |
| In employment | 30.5 | 151.0 | 25.0 | 151.8 |
| Unemployed | 6.5 | 14.0 | 5.3 | 13.5 |
| Not economically active | 6.2 | 74.5 | 4.8 | 74.2 |
| Total | 43.2 | 239.5 | 35.1 | 239.5 |
| Females | | | | |
| In employment | 11.8 | 127.2 | 9.5 | 130.8 |
| Unemployed | 2.0 | 8.5 | 2.0 | 9.0 |
| Not economically active | 11.0 | 99.0 | 9.8 | 96.6 |
| Total | 24.8 | 234.8 | 21.3 | 236.4 |
| All persons | | | | |
| In employment | 42.3 | 278.3 | 34.5 | 282.5 |
| Unemployed | 8.5 | 22.5 | 7.3 | 22.4 |
| Not economically active | 17.2 | 173.5 | 14.7 | 170.9 |
| Total | 68.0 | 474.3 | 56.4 | 475.8 |

* Sample occurrence too small for estimation.

Table 8 Students as a proportion of population aged 18 to 24 classified by single year of age and sex, March-May 2002 to March-May 2003

%

| Year of age | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Male students | | | | | |
| 18 | 60.8 | 61.3 | 61.0 | 62.3 | 64.2 |
| 19 | 45.5 | 46.8 | 45.9 | 51.2 | 48.3 |
| 20 | 32.9 | 37.1 | 41.5 | 41.0 | 43.8 |
| 21 | 31.5 | 29.9 | 32.2 | 34.1 | 39.5 |
| 22 | 22.4 | 23.2 | 21.8 | 24.9 | 25.9 |
| 23 | 13.8 | 12.5 | 15.4 | 15.3 | 16.8 |
| 24 | 9.2 | 8.3 | 6.4 | 11.3 | 13.5 |
| Total | 32.2 | 32.7 | 32.9 | 34.5 | 35.8 |
| Female students | | | | | |
| 18 | 76.3 | 78.5 | 78.7 | 78.7 | 78.9 |
| 19 | 59.7 | 63.5 | 64.1 | 65.0 | 63.0 |
| 20 | 44.5 | 50.0 | 53.0 | 56.5 | 56.7 |
| 21 | 34.5 | 42.4 | 41.2 | 44.3 | 44.5 |
| 22 | 27.5 | 26.8 | 28.7 | 25.5 | 29.3 |
| 23 | 15.4 | 13.1 | 14.7 | 17.4 | 15.2 |
| 24 | 6.3 | 7.9 | 11.3 | 9.9 | 10.8 |
| Total | 38.8 | 41.7 | 42.8 | 42.5 | 42.3 |
| All students | | | | | |
| 18 | 68.2 | 69.6 | 69.6 | 70.3 | 71.3 |
| 19 | 52.6 | 54.7 | 54.8 | 57.9 | 55.4 |
| 20 | 38.7 | 43.4 | 47.4 | 48.7 | 50.3 |
| 21 | 32.9 | 36.4 | 36.7 | 39.3 | 41.8 |
| 22 | 25.0 | 25.0 | 25.2 | 25.2 | 27.5 |
| 23 | 14.6 | 12.8 | 15.1 | 16.2 | 16.0 |
| 24 | 7.8 | 8.1 | 8.6 | 10.6 | 12.2 |
| Total | 35.4 | 37.1 | 37.8 | 38.5 | 39.0 |

**Table 9a Life long learners¹ classified by sex,
March-May 2002 to March-May 2003**

| | '000 | |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Receipt of education or training in the past four weeks | 2002 | 2003 |
| Males | | |
| Received | 64.1 | 84.2 |
| Did not receive | 919.3 | 926.4 |
| Not stated | 4.3 | 1.0 |
| Total | 987.7 | 1,011.7 |
| % male life long learners | 6.5 | 8.3 |
| Females | | |
| Received | 86.5 | 110.9 |
| Did not receive | 897.5 | 898.9 |
| Not stated | 3.2 | 1.3 |
| Total | 987.3 | 1,011.2 |
| % females life long learners | 8.8 | 11.0 |
| All persons | | |
| Received | 150.7 | 195.2 |
| Did not receive | 1,816.8 | 1,825.4 |
| Not stated | 7.5 | 2.3 |
| Total | 1,975.0 | 2,022.8 |
| % total life long learners | 7.7 | 9.7 |

¹ Life long learners are defined as persons aged 25 to 64 in receipt of education (either formal or non formal) in the four weeks prior to the survey. See Background Notes.

**Table 9b Life long learners¹ in EU member states and acceding states
classified by sex, LFS second quarter 2003**

| Country | Males | Females | Total |
|--|------------|-------------|------------|
| EU 15 (European Union) | 8.8 | 10.3 | 9.6 |
| EU 15 + ACC (European Union + 10 acceding states) | 8.2 | 9.6 | 8.9 |
| Austria | 7.6 | 7.4 | 7.5 |
| Belgium | 6.8 | 6.3 | 6.5 |
| Denmark | 16.0 | 22.0 | 18.9 |
| Finland | 14.9 | 20.3 | 17.6 |
| France | 7.2 | 7.7 | 7.4 |
| Germany | 6.1 | 5.5 | 5.8 |
| Greece | 3.5 | 3.8 | 3.7 |
| Ireland | 8.3 | 11.0 | 9.7 |
| Italy | 3.8 | 4.6 | 4.2 |
| Luxembourg | 8.9 | 6.4 | 7.7 |
| Netherlands | 16.2 | 17.0 | 16.5 |
| Portugal | 3.4 | 3.9 | 3.6 |
| Spain | 5.3 | 6.3 | 5.8 |
| Sweden | 31.3 | 37.3 | 34.2 |
| United Kingdom | 17.6 | 25.3 | 21.3 |
| Acceding states | | | |
| Czech Republic | 5.1 | 5.7 | 5.4 |
| Estonia | 5.2 | 7.1 | 6.2 |
| Cyprus | 7.1 | 8.5 | 7.9 |
| Latvia | 5.7 | 10.2 | 8.1 |
| Lithuania | 3.3 | 5.7 | 4.5 |
| Hungary | 5.4 | 6.5 | 6.0 |
| Malta | 4.9 | 3.6 | 4.2 |
| Poland | 4.5 | 5.5 | 5.0 |
| Slovenia | 13.9 | 16.3 | 15.1 |
| Slovakia | 4.9 | 4.7 | 4.8 |

Source: Eurostat.

Note: Trends in some member states may be affected by changes in methodology.

**Table 9c Life long learners¹ classified by employment status,
March-May 2002 to March-May 2003**

| | '000 | |
|--|--------------|--------------|
| Employment Status in the past four weeks | 2002 | 2003 |
| Males | | |
| In employment | 52.9 | 68.6 |
| Unemployed | 1.2 | 2.3 |
| Not economically active | 10.0 | 13.2 |
| Total | 64.1 | 84.2 |
| Females | | |
| In employment | 64.5 | 77.1 |
| Unemployed | 1.9 | 2.8 |
| Not economically active | 20.2 | 31.0 |
| Total | 86.5 | 110.9 |
| All persons | | |
| In employment | 117.4 | 145.7 |
| Unemployed | 3.0 | 5.2 |
| Not economically active | 30.2 | 44.3 |
| Total | 150.7 | 195.2 |

¹ Life long learners are defined as persons aged 25 to 64 in receipt of education (either formal or non formal) in the four weeks prior to the survey.
See Background Notes.

Background Notes

| | |
|---|---|
| Reference period | Questions on educational attainment are included in the core QNHS on an ongoing basis. |
| Purpose of survey | While the primary purpose of the QNHS is to collect information on employment and unemployment, it also includes different modules on social topics of interest on a quarterly basis. |
| Questionnaire | The questions on educational attainment were asked to persons aged 15 to 64 in years 1999 to 2001, and asked to persons aged 15 and over in subsequent years. |
| Highest level of education attained | <p>This classification is derived from a single question and refers to educational standards that have been attained and can be compared in some measurable way. Therefore ‘successfully’ means that any tests, exams, dissertations, thesis etc. must be taken or submitted, and passed.</p> <p>For example, to have completed the leaving certificate syllabus but not to have actually sat and passed the leaving certificate exams is not considered for our purposes to be ‘successfully completed’.</p> <p>The category primary includes persons with no formal education attainment, or whose highest educational attainment is pre-primary. The category others includes a small number of not stated responses to the educational attainment question.</p> |
| Early school leavers | Early school leavers are defined as persons aged 18 to 24 whose highest level of education attained is lower secondary or below and have not received education (either formal or non formal) in the four weeks prior to the survey. Note that this indicator is not strictly comparable over 2002 and 2003 as modifications to the questionnaire in 2003 increased capture of information on receipt of education in the four weeks prior to the survey. |
| Life long learners | Life long learners are defined as persons aged 25 to 64 in receipt of education (either formal or non formal) in the four weeks prior to the survey. For issues regarding comparability see paragraph above. |
| ILO Economic Status | <p>The ILO Economic Status used in these results distinguishes the following main subgroups of the population aged 15 and over:</p> <p>In Employment: Persons who worked in the week before the survey for one hour or more for payment or profit, including work on the family farm or business and all persons who had a job but were not at work because of illness, holidays etc. in the week.</p> <p>Unemployed: Persons who, in the week before the survey, were without work and available for work within the next two weeks, and had taken specific steps, in the preceding four weeks, to find work.</p> <p>Inactive Population (not in labour force); All other persons</p> <p>The labour force comprises persons employed plus unemployed</p> |
| Principal Economic Status classification | The Principal Economic Status (PES) classification used in these results is based on a single question in which respondents are asked what is their usual situation with regard to employment and given the following response categories: |
| Economic status | <p>The Principal Economic Status (PES) classification used in these results is based on a single question in which respondents are asked what is their usual situation with regard to employment and given the following response categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At work • Unemployed • Student • Engaged on home duties • Retired • Other |

Regions The regional classifications in this release are based on the NUTS (Nomenclature of Territorial Units) classification used by Eurostat. The NUTS3 regions correspond to the eight Regional Authorities established under the Local Government Act, 1991 (Regional Authorities) (Establishment) Order, 1993, which came into operation on 1 January 1994. The NUTS2 regions, which were proposed by Government and agreed by Eurostat in 1999, are groupings of the NUTS3 regions. The composition of the regions is set out below.

**Border, Midlands and
Western NUTS2 Region**

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Border | Cavan Donegal Leitrim Louth Monaghan Sligo |
| Midland | Laoighis Longford Offaly Westmeath |
| West | Galway City Galway County Mayo Roscommon |

**Eastern and Southern
NUTS2 Region**

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Dublin | Dublin Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown Fingal South Dublin |
| Mid-East | Kildare Meath Wicklow |
| Mid-West | Clare Limerick City Limerick County North Tipperary |
| South-East | Carlow Kilkenny South Tipperary Waterford City Waterford County Wexford |
| South-West | Cork City Cork County Kerry |