

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

July 2022

Research Info-Byte
2022 Series



METHODOLOGY



DATA SOURCE

The data in this Info-Byte comes from the HEA's Student Record System. This consists of annual records on the students returned by the higher education institutions in Ireland.

DEFINITION

An International student is defined as a student who is Internationally-domiciled. The definition used here aligns with the definition used for the annual Key Facts & Figures. Note that this excludes Erasmus, and Other Exchange students.

A student's domicile is the country of permanent address prior to entry to their programme of study. If the student is residing in Ireland for 3 of the 5 years previous to registering for their current course, then their domicile is considered to be Ireland.

Note that a student's domiciliary should not change during the period of their studies.

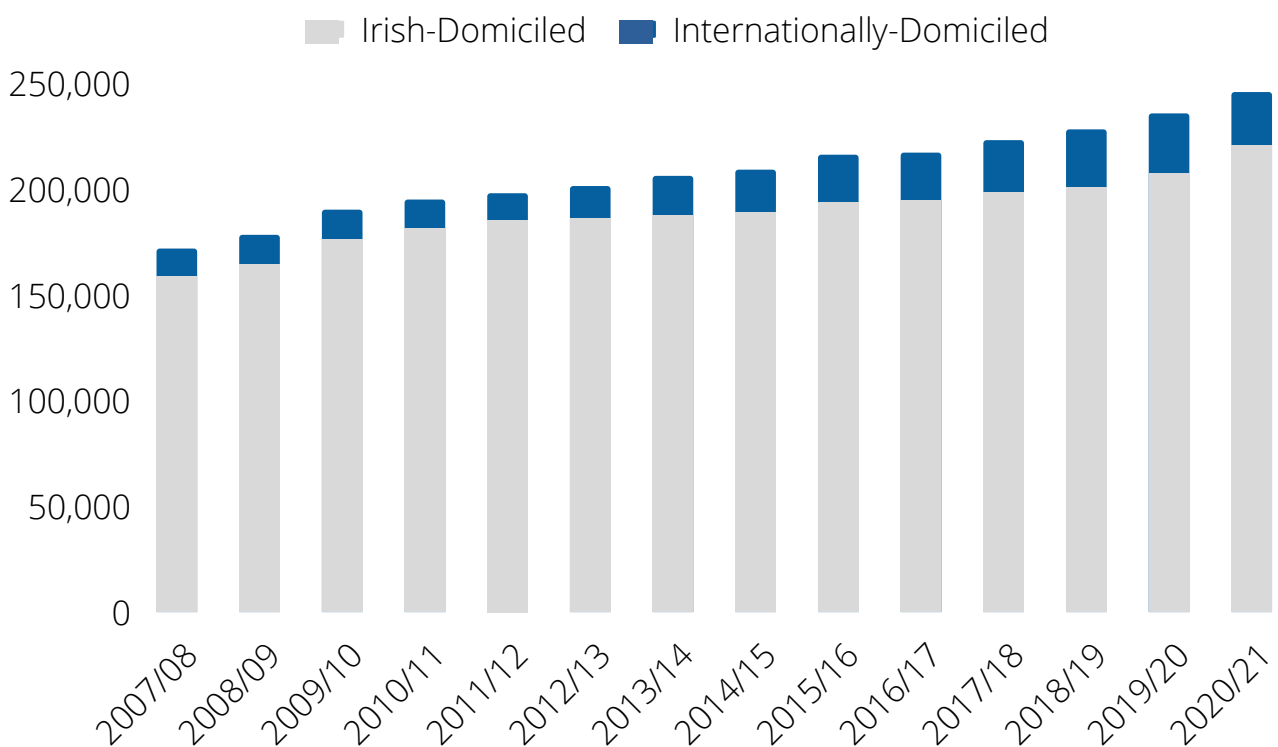


BACKGROUND

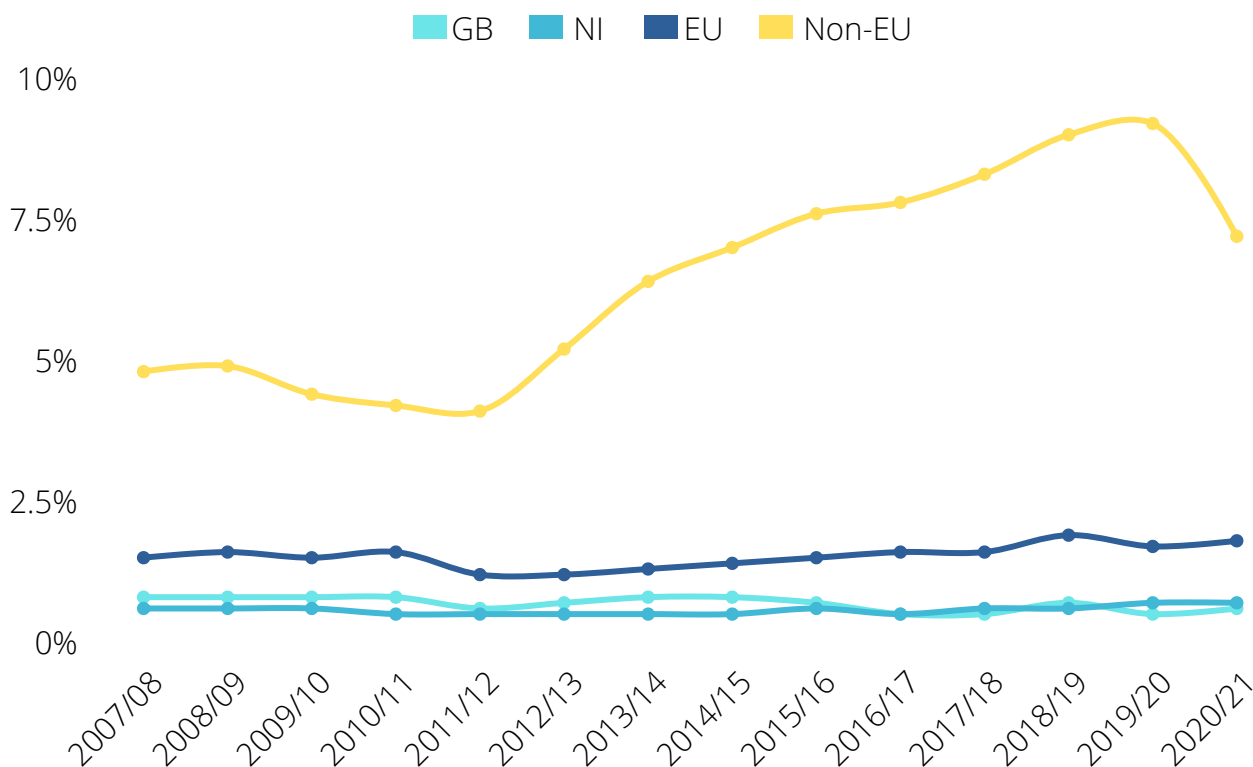
In 2020/21, there were more than 245,000 students enrolled in higher education in Ireland. This has risen by **43%**, from just under 172,000 students in 2007/08.

During the same period, the number of International students has also risen dramatically, from just over 13,000 students in 2007/08, to more than **25,000 International students today** in 2020/21. This represents an increase of nearly **90%**.

This Info-Byte seeks to explore the evolution across time, key demographical information, and answer some interesting questions!



EVOLUTION



The proportion of Non-EU students has increased across time, most notably between 2011/12 and 2019/20, from **4%** of students in Ireland to **9%** in 2019/20. In 2020/21, with the onset of COVID-19, this dropped slightly to **7%**.

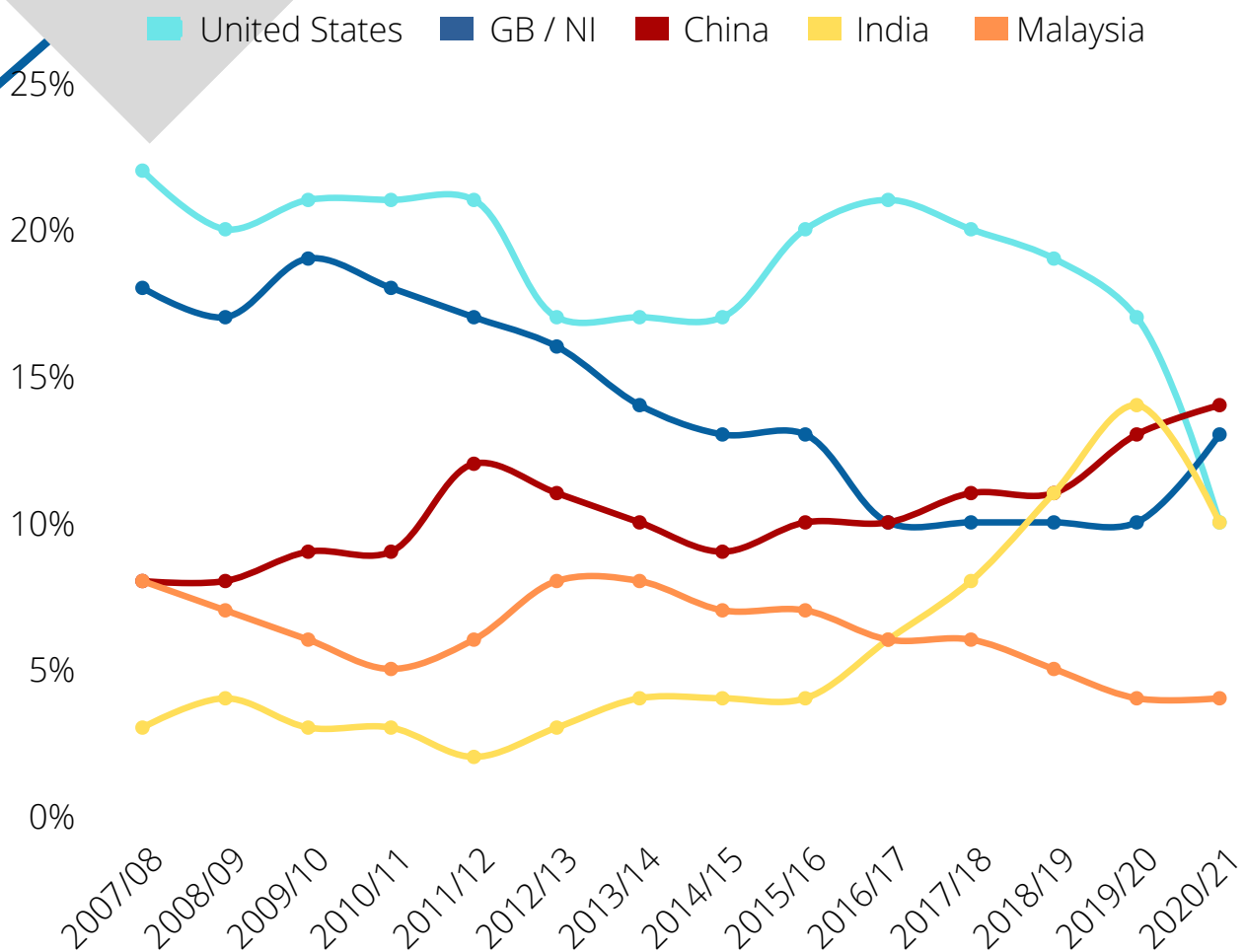
Non-EU students make up the largest proportion of International students in Ireland.



Did you know?

In 2020/21, across 22 HEIs, **12%** of Full-Time students today are International students. In 1977, across 7 HEIs, only **5%** of Full-Time students were International students! The most common country of origin was the US, accounting for **21%** of all International Full-Time students!

TOP 5 COUNTRIES



Of the International students, most come from the United States, GB / NI, China, India, and Malaysia. The largest increase across time has been seen from India - from representing **3%** of International students in 2007/08, slowly rising and peaking at **14%** in 2019/20.

Meanwhile, the largest drop has been seen in GB / NI students, from **18%** in 2007/08 to **10%** in 2019/20. However, note that this rose to **13%** in 2020/21 during the pandemic.

DEMOGRAPHICS



2020/21

WHAT AGE ARE STUDENTS?

In 2020/21, **49%** of all International students in Ireland were over the age of 24. This is **34%** for Irish-domiciled students.

The median age of an International graduate is 25 years old. For Irish-domiciled graduates, this is 24 years old.

IS THERE A GENDER DIFFERENCE?

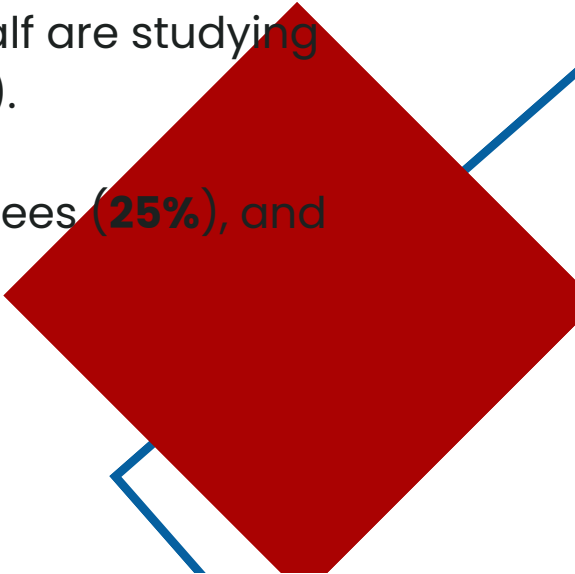
For both Irish-domiciled and International students, **54%** of students identify as female.

WHAT DO STUDENTS STUDY?

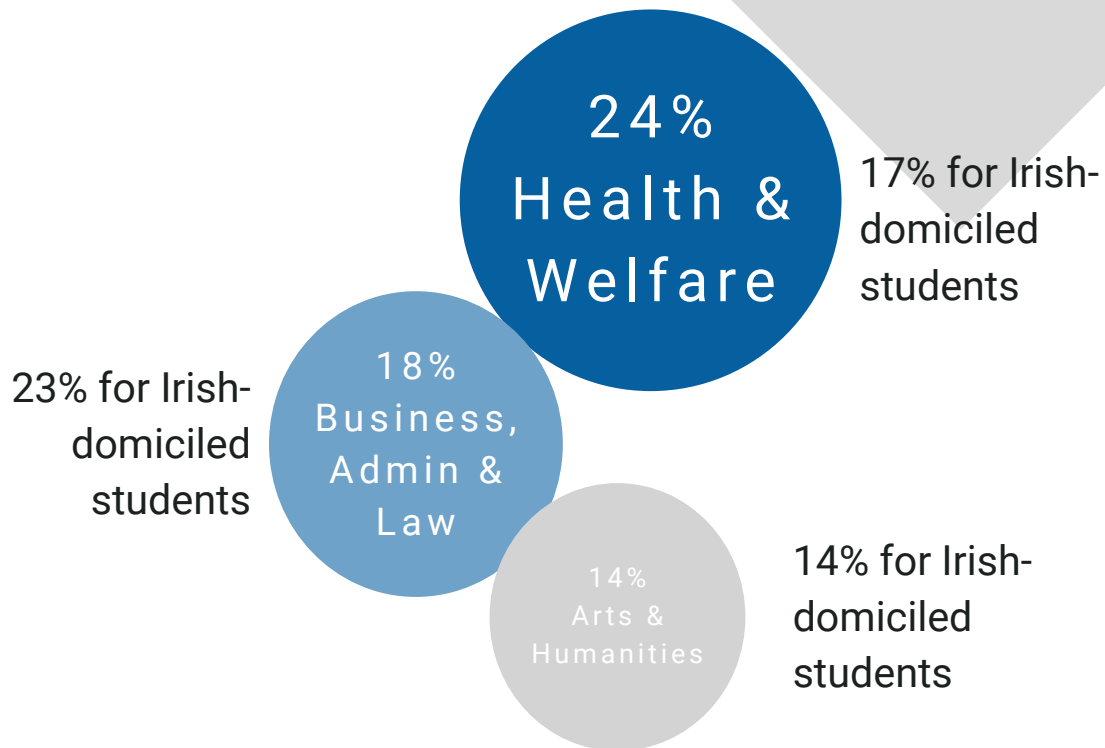
The most common programme type for Irish-domiciled students is Undergraduate Honours Degree (**62%**), followed by Masters Taught programmes (**9%**), and Undergraduate General Degrees (**8%**).

For International students, just under half are studying Undergraduate Honours Degrees (**47%**).

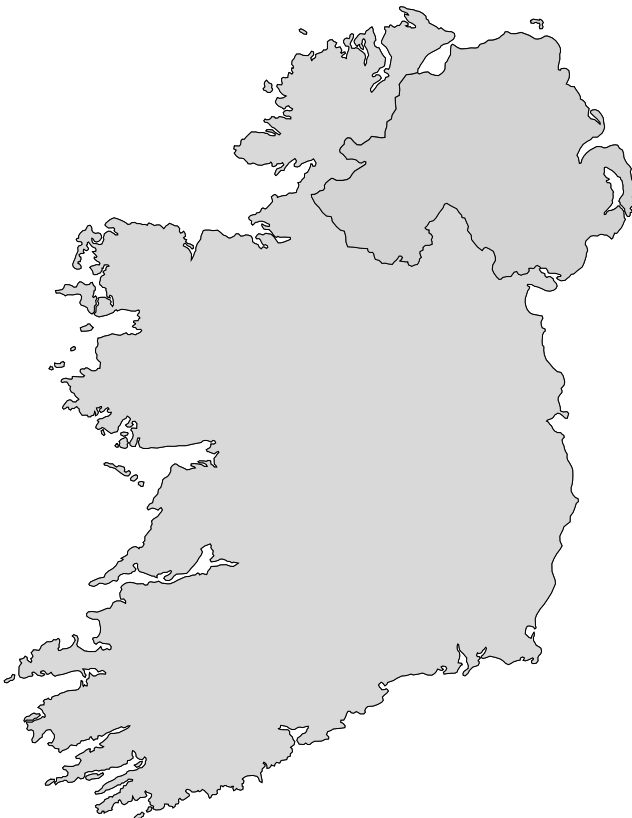
1 in 4 are pursuing Masters Taught degrees (**25%**), and **14%** are enrolled on PhD programmes.



WHAT ARE COMMON FIELDS OF STUDY?



WHERE DO THEY STUDY?



More than half of International students choose to study in a Dublin-based institute (**56%**). This is followed by the South-West (**12%**) and West (**11%**).

In comparison, **39%** of Irish-domiciled students study in Dublin-based institutes.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:



Visit Statistics at www.hea.ie

For more information on International students, visit the annual Key Facts & Figures report [here](#).

For more information on International graduates, explore the most recent Graduate Outcomes Survey national report [here](#).

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