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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

PARTICIPATION RATES IN HIGHER EDUCATION: ACADEMIC YEARS 1999/2000 - 2005/2006 (Provisional)

INTRODUCTION

1. This Statistical First Release (SFR) provides a historic time series of initial participation rates for 17-30 year old English domiciled first-time participants in Higher Education since 1999/2000.

KEY POINTS

2. The provisional figure for the HEIPR for 2005/06 was 43%, an increase of two percentage points from the provisional figure for 2004/05 of 41%. The figure for 2004/05 was up from 40% in 2003/04.
3. The provisional figure for males for 2005/06 was 38%, an increase of one percentage point from the provisional figure for 2004/05 of 37%. The figure for 2004/05 was up from 36% in 2003/04.
4. For females, the provisional figure for 2005/06 was 48%, an increase of two percentage points from the provisional figure for 2004/05 of 46%. The figure for 2004/05 was up from 45% in 2003/04.
5. The provisional figure for full-time students in 2005/06 was 37%, an increase of two percentage points from the provisional figure for 2004/05 of 35%. The figure for 2003/04 was also 35%.
6. The provisional figure for part-time students was 6% in 2005/06, no change from the provisional figure for 2004/05. The figure for 2003/04 was also 6%.
7. The provisional figures for 2005/06 on the age specific initial

participation rates for males and females show that participation rates for females were higher than those for males for all ages from 17 to 30.

8. Figures for the Higher Education Initial Participation Rate (HEIPR) are rounded to the nearest whole number to reflect the degree of accuracy inherent in the data. As this can conceal changes or trends, figures rounded to the nearest decimal place are also provided in the tables to inform comparisons over time.
9. The figures in this SFR supersede figures released earlier as they have been updated with revised data from all sources.
10. The methodology for calculating the HEIPR has recently been revised, in line with recommendations set out in a National Statistics Quality Review and a recent National Audit Office review. The details of the revisions and their impact on the HEIPR time series have been reported in Statistical First Release 8/2007, "Methodological Revisions to the Higher Education Initial Participation Rate (HEIPR)", which is available at:
<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000714/SFR08-2007.pdf>

TABLES

**Table 1 Higher Education Initial Participation Rate (HEIPR) for English domiciled first time participants in Higher Education Courses at UK Higher Education Institutions and English, Welsh and Scottish Further Education Colleges
1999/00 – 2005/06**

Academic Year	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05 (provisional)	2005/06 (provisional)
HEIPR (male and female) %	39 (39.3)	40 (39.7)	40 (40.2)	41 (41.2)	40 (40.3)	41 (41.3)	43 (42.8)
Initial entrants (thousands)	239	239	244	255	257	268	283
HEIPR (male) %	37 (37.1)	37 (36.7)	37 (36.6)	37 (37.1)	36 (35.6)	37 (36.5)	38 (37.6)
Initial entrants (thousands)	113	111	112	117	116	121	128
HEIPR (female) %	41 (41.4)	43 (42.7)	44 (44.0)	45 (45.4)	45 (45.3)	46 (46.3)	48 (48.2)
Initial entrants (thousands)	125	127	132	138	141	147	155
HEIPR (full-time) %	34 (33.6)	34 (34.4)	35 (35.1)	36 (35.6)	35 (34.6)	35 (35.0)	37 (36.6)
Initial entrants (thousands)	203	205	211	220	222	228	243
HEIPR (part-time) %	6 (5.6)	5 (5.3)	5 (5.2)	6 (5.6)	6 (5.7)	6 (6.3)	6 (6.1)
Initial entrants (thousands)	36	34	33	35	36	40	40

Figures for the HEIPR are rounded to the nearest whole number to reflect the degree of accuracy inherent in the data. As this can conceal changes or trends, figures rounded to the nearest decimal place are also provided to inform comparisons over time. Figures rounded to the nearest decimal place are shown in parentheses. Figures for the counts of initial entrants are rounded to the nearest thousand. Rounding may result in apparent inconsistencies between totals and sums of constituent parts.

**Table 2 Higher Education Initial Participation Rates by Age
2005/2006 (provisional)**

Age	Initial Entrants	Population	Initial Participation Rate (%)
17	2,240	672,810	0.3%
18	141,750	665,350	21.3%
19	64,345	661,435	9.7%
20	17,880	675,010	2.6%
21	9,375	658,235	1.4%
22	7,165	649,940	1.1%
23	6,120	640,135	1.0%
24	5,800	667,315	0.9%
25	5,715	677,855	0.8%
26	5,325	657,840	0.8%
27	4,715	621,095	0.8%
28	4,345	613,080	0.7%
29	4,165	629,065	0.7%
30	4,040	647,605	0.6%
17 - 30 (Overall)	282,985		42.8%

The HEIPR is defined as the sum of the initial participation rates by age over ages 17-30. It has been rounded to one decimal place, the initial participation rates by age have been rounded to one decimal place, and the counts of the initial entrants and the relevant population have been rounded to the nearest 5. Rounding may result in apparent inconsistencies between totals and sums of constituent parts.

**Table 3 Higher Education Initial Participation Rates by Gender and Age
2005/2006 (provisional)**

Age	Males			Females		
	Initial Entrants	Population	HEIPR (%)	Initial Entrants	Population	HEIPR (%)
17	885	346,315	0.3%	1,360	326,490	0.4%
18	63,350	342,095	18.5%	78,400	323,255	24.3%
19	31,265	340,435	9.2%	33,085	321,000	10.3%
20	8,875	348,335	2.5%	9,005	326,675	2.8%
21	4,415	337,780	1.3%	4,960	320,455	1.5%
22	3,055	329,725	0.9%	4,110	320,215	1.3%
23	2,475	319,655	0.8%	3,650	320,480	1.1%
24	2,280	331,535	0.7%	3,520	335,780	1.0%
25	2,195	337,320	0.7%	3,520	340,535	1.0%
26	2,095	328,735	0.6%	3,225	329,105	1.0%
27	1,860	311,610	0.6%	2,850	309,485	0.9%
28	1,690	307,525	0.5%	2,650	305,555	0.9%
29	1,580	316,775	0.5%	2,585	312,290	0.8%
30	1,560	325,970	0.5%	2,480	321,635	0.8%
17-30 (Overall)	127,575		37.6%	155,405		48.1%

The HEIPR is defined as the sum of the initial participation rates by age over ages 17-30. It has been rounded to one decimal place, the initial participation rates by age have been rounded to one decimal place, and the counts of the initial entrants and the relevant population have been rounded to the nearest 5. Rounding may result in apparent inconsistencies between totals and sums of constituent parts.

NOTES TO EDITORS

11. The HEIPR is the National Statistic that the Government uses to measure progress in participation in relation to the Public Service Agreement target: by 2010, increase participation in higher education towards 50% of those aged 18 to 30 and also make significant progress year on year towards fair access, and bear down on rates of non-completion. It roughly equates to the probability that a seventeen year old will participate in higher education by age thirty given the age specific participation rates.
12. In November 2002, the Department for Education and Skills commissioned a National Statistics Quality Review of Higher Education participation statistics. The review was carried out independently and in accordance with Office for National Statistics guidelines and was designed to ensure rigour and transparency. The report on the review was published in July 2003 and is available on the Office for National Statistics website, at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/methods_quality/quality_review/education.asp. The report recommended that the HEIPR be a measure of initial participation in higher education.
13. In August 2004, the Department for Education and Skills commissioned a further review to assess the feasibility of disaggregating the HEIPR by ethnicity, disability, social class and region. The report on this review was published in August 2005 and is available at: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/programmeofresearch/projectinformation.cfm?projectId=14567&keyword=&type=5&resultspage=61>
14. In December 2006, the National Audit Office published a review of the data systems underpinning target measurement in a number of Government Departments, including the Department for Education and Skills. The HEIPR methodology was reviewed as part of this process. The report is available on the National Audit Office website, at: http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/nao_reports/06-07/0607127ii.pdf
15. Professor Ramsden has recently drafted a report on Non-traditional Routes into Higher Education, which includes an estimate of 4,500 English domiciled initial entrants to higher education studying wholly overseas in 2004. In the context of the latest figure for the HEIPR, 42.8% in 2005/06 based on 283,000 English domiciled initial entrants to higher education in the UK, 4,500 additional English domiciled entrants would equate to an increase in initial entrants of 1.6% and could potentially add roughly up to 0.7 percentage points to the HEIPR. Professor

Ramsden concludes that it is not possible on the basis of available data to disaggregate these students by age and therefore to include them in the HEIPR calculation: however they should not be disregarded.

16. The same report suggested that some 900 entrants to private higher education institutions might appropriately be counted within the HEIPR. 900 additional entrants would equate to an increase in initial entrants of 0.3% and could potentially add roughly up to 0.1 percentage points to the HEIPR. Again, it is not possible to disaggregate these students by age and therefore to include them in the HEIPR calculation, but they should not be disregarded.
17. The Annex contains supplementary tables as follows:
 - **Supplementary Table A:** Higher Education Initial Participation Rate for 17-20 year olds (HEIPR20) for English domiciled first time participants in Higher Education Courses at UK Higher Education Institutions and English, Welsh and Scottish Further Education Colleges 1999/00 – 2005/06.
 - **Supplementary Table B:** Higher Education Initial Participation Rate for 17-60 year olds (HEIPR60) for English domiciled first time participants in Higher Education Courses at UK Higher Education Institutions and English, Welsh and Scottish Further Education Colleges 1999/00 – 2005/06.
 - **Supplementary Table C:** Postgraduate Initial Participation Rate (PGIPR) for English domiciled 17-30 year old first time participants in Postgraduate Courses at UK Higher Education Institutions 1999/00 – 2005/06.
18. The figures in these tables have not been published previously. They have been derived using similar methods to the HEIPR. Note that in this terminology the HEIPR30 is the HEIPR itself. The figures for the HEIPR20 are the sums of the age specific initial participation rates for 17 to 20 year olds and are at least as robust as the figures for the HEIPR itself. The figures for the HEIPR60 are the sums of the age specific participation rates for 17 to 60 year olds and are not as robust as the figures for the HEIPR itself because it is not possible to check as thoroughly whether participants aged 31 to 60 are initial participants.

DEFINITIONS

19. The figures in this SFR were derived from data on Higher Education students collected from publicly funded Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the United Kingdom and for the first time in 2004/05 from the University of Buckingham by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), and from Further Education Colleges (FECs) in England by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), in Wales by the National Assembly for Wales, and in Scotland by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). Population estimates were provided by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and population projections by the Government Actuary's Department (GAD), both of which have been converted to an academic year basis by DfES.

20. The HEIPR counts English-domiciled 17-30 year old Higher Education students. Students are counted if they participate for at least six months on a course expected to last for at least six months, except that students are not counted if they have participated in Higher Education previously for at least six months. Students at FECs in England, Scotland and Wales are counted if they are on courses designated as National Vocational Qualification Level 4 or above, or listed as Higher Education.

21. The HEIPR does not count English domiciled Higher Education students (as defined above):

- at FECs in Northern Ireland;
- at privately funded institutions, with the exception of the University of Buckingham from 2004/05 (which makes no practical difference to the figures because of its relatively small number of English-domiciled students aged 18-30);
- at institutions outside the UK.

Information on these students is not currently available to the Department in sufficient detail to be included in the calculations.

22. The HEIPR includes students studying via both Full-time (FT) and Part-time (PT) modes. FT study is defined by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) as attendance at an institution for periods amounting to at least 24 weeks per year, with learning activity amounting to an average of at least 21 hours per week. The PT mode refers to study which is less intensive than this definition. There is no lower limit on the intensity of PT courses for inclusion in the HEIPR.

23. The HEIPR depends on the "entry code" and "new entrant to HE" fields in the HESA and LSC

data respectively. This field determines whether a student is recorded as “New to HE”, “Not new to HE” or “Unknown prior HE”. HEFCE have determined that the field is not entirely accurate and have developed algorithms to correct for students on the HESA Student Record and the LSC Individualised Learner Record declaring themselves as “New to HE” when they actually have prior HE experience. HEFCE have provided DfES with the results of the algorithms that identify and remove any such entrants who have experience of initial study in previous years. Students who do not have records in previous years, but who have “Unknown prior HE”, qualify for the HEIPR on a pro-rata basis in relation to those with known background.

REVISIONS

24. Coverage:

The Department will continue to work with the Department for Employment and Learning in Northern Ireland (DELNI) to gain access to data on English-domiciled Higher Education students at Further Education Colleges in Northern Ireland for incorporation into the HEIPR. These students should be included in the HEIPR but are not because the data are not currently available to the Department. The Department will continue to consider the scope for including data on Higher Education provided privately or overseas.

Updates to the underlying data:

25. The figures for 2004/05 are provisional but only because the figures for English domiciled higher education initial participants at English Further Education Colleges are provisional rather than final. Though the final figures for these students are not expected to be significantly different from the provisional figures, when the final figures are made available then any significant change to the figures for the HEIPR will be released in accordance with the National Statistics Code of Practice.

26. As revisions and updates to the source data from HESA, LSC, SFC, the National Assembly for Wales and the population estimates and projections from ONS and GAD are made available at different times during the year, any revisions to the provisional figures for 2005/06 will be published as soon as the provisional figures for 2006/07 are available. The Department is planning to publish the provisional figures for 2006/07 in March 2008.

ANNEX

Supplementary Table A: Higher Education Initial Participation Rate for 17-20 year olds (HEIPR20) for English domiciled first time participants in Higher Education Courses at UK Higher Education Institutions and English, Welsh and Scottish Further Education Colleges 1999/00 – 2005/06

Academic Year	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05 (provisional)	2005/06 (provisional)
HEIPR20 (male and female) %	31 (31.3)	32 (31.9)	33 (32.5)	33 (32.7)	32 (31.8)	32 (32.1)	34 (34.0)
Initial entrants (thousands)	188	189	194	201	204	209	226
HEIPR20 (male) %	30 (29.7)	30 (29.9)	30 (30.0)	30 (29.9)	29 (28.6)	29 (28.9)	31 (30.5)
Initial entrants (thousands)	90	90	91	94	94	97	104
HEIPR20 (female) %	33 (32.9)	34 (34.1)	35 (35.1)	36 (35.7)	35 (35.3)	36 (35.5)	38 (37.7)
Initial entrants (thousands)	98	100	103	107	110	112	122
HEIPR20 (full-time) %	30 (29.9)	31 (30.6)	31 (31.1)	31 (31.3)	30 (30.4)	31 (30.5)	33 (32.5)
Initial entrants (thousands)	179	181	186	193	195	199	216
HEIPR20 (part-time) %	1 (1.4)	1 (1.4)	1 (1.4)	1 (1.4)	1 (1.4)	2 (1.5)	2 (1.6)
Initial entrants (thousands)	9	8	8	8	9	10	10

Figures for the HEIPR20 are rounded to the nearest whole number to reflect the degree of accuracy inherent in the data. As this can conceal changes or trends, figures rounded to the nearest decimal place are also provided to inform comparisons over time. Figures rounded to the nearest decimal place are shown in parentheses. Figures for the counts of initial entrants are rounded to the nearest thousand. Rounding may result in apparent inconsistencies between totals and sums of constituent parts.

Supplementary Table B: Higher Education Initial Participation Rate for 17-60 year olds (HEIPR60) for English domiciled first time participants in Higher Education Courses at UK Higher Education Institutions and English, Welsh and Scottish Further Education Colleges 1999/00 – 2005/06

Academic Year	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05 (provisional)	2005/06 (provisional)
HEIPR60 (male and female) %	48 (48.2)	48 (48.2)	49 (49.4)	51 (50.7)	50 (49.7)	50 (49.6)	53 (52.6)
Initial entrants (thousands)	302	300	309	324	326	329	354
HEIPR60 (male) %	44 (44.2)	43 (43.2)	43 (43.2)	44 (43.8)	42 (42.1)	42 (42.2)	45 (44.5)
Initial entrants (thousands)	138	135	136	141	140	142	152
HEIPR60 (female) %	52 (52.1)	53 (53.2)	56 (55.6)	58 (57.7)	58 (57.5)	57 (57.2)	61 (60.7)
Initial entrants (thousands)	164	165	173	182	186	187	201
HEIPR60 (full-time) %	35 (35.4)	36 (36.2)	37 (37.1)	38 (37.7)	37 (36.8)	37 (36.6)	39 (38.8)
Initial entrants (thousands)	216	219	226	236	238	240	259
HEIPR60 (part-time) %	13 (12.8)	12 (11.9)	12 (12.2)	13 (13.0)	13 (12.8)	13 (13.0)	14 (13.8)
Initial entrants (thousands)	86	81	83	88	88	89	95

Figures for the HEIPR60 are rounded to the nearest whole number to reflect the degree of accuracy inherent in the data. As this can conceal changes or trends, figures rounded to the nearest decimal place are also provided to inform comparisons over time. Figures rounded to the nearest decimal place are shown in parentheses. Figures for the counts of initial entrants are rounded to the nearest thousand. Rounding may result in apparent inconsistencies between totals and sums of constituent parts.

Supplementary Table C: Postgraduate Initial Participation Rate (PGIPR) for English domiciled 17-30 year old first time participants in Postgraduate Courses at UK Higher Education Institutions 1999/00 – 2005/06

Academic Year	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05 (provisional)	2005/06 (provisional)
PGIPR (male and female) %	8 (8.1)	8 (8.2)	9 (8.6)	9 (9.1)	9 (9.3)	9 (9.0)	9 (9.0)
Initial entrants (thousands)	50	51	54	57	59	58	58
PGIPR (male) %	7 (7.0)	7 (6.8)	7 (7.0)	7 (7.4)	7 (7.4)	7 (7.1)	7 (7.0)
Initial entrants (thousands)	22	21	21	23	23	23	23
PGIPR (female) %	9 (9.3)	10 (9.7)	10 (10.3)	11 (10.9)	11 (11.2)	11 (11.0)	11 (11.0)
Initial entrants (thousands)	29	30	32	34	35	35	35
PGIPR (full-time) %	5 (5.4)	6 (5.6)	6 (5.8)	6 (6.2)	6 (6.3)	6 (6.1)	6 (6.1)
Initial entrants (thousands)	32	34	36	39	40	39	40
PGIPR (part-time) %	3 (2.7)	3 (2.7)	3 (2.8)	3 (2.9)	3 (3.0)	3 (2.9)	3 (2.9)
Initial entrants (thousands)	18	17	18	18	19	18	19

Figures for the PGIPR are rounded to the nearest whole number to reflect the degree of accuracy inherent in the data. As this can conceal changes or trends, figures rounded to the nearest decimal place are also provided to inform comparisons over time. Figures rounded to the nearest decimal place are shown in parentheses. Figures for the counts of initial entrants are rounded to the nearest thousand. Rounding may result in apparent inconsistencies between totals and sums of constituent parts.

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