


Graduate Outcomes Survey Ireland

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Higher Education Authority

HEIRNETWORK

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONAL
RESEARCH NETWORK



**GRADUATE
OUTCOMES**
WHERE TO NEXT?

In this presentation...


Graduate Outcomes Survey operation

What do we do with the data?

Review of the Graduate Outcomes
Survey (2024)

HEIRNETWORK

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONAL
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**GRADUATE
OUTCOMES**
WHERE TO NEXT?



Higher Education Authority

The HEA is the state agency for higher education in Ireland.

Responsible for:

- Strategic development of higher education system
- Policy advice to Minister
- Funding
- Governance and accountability
- Equity of access and equality
- International (e.g. Erasmus)
- Teaching and learning
- Research policy
- Statistics and data analytics

Graduate Tracking in Ireland

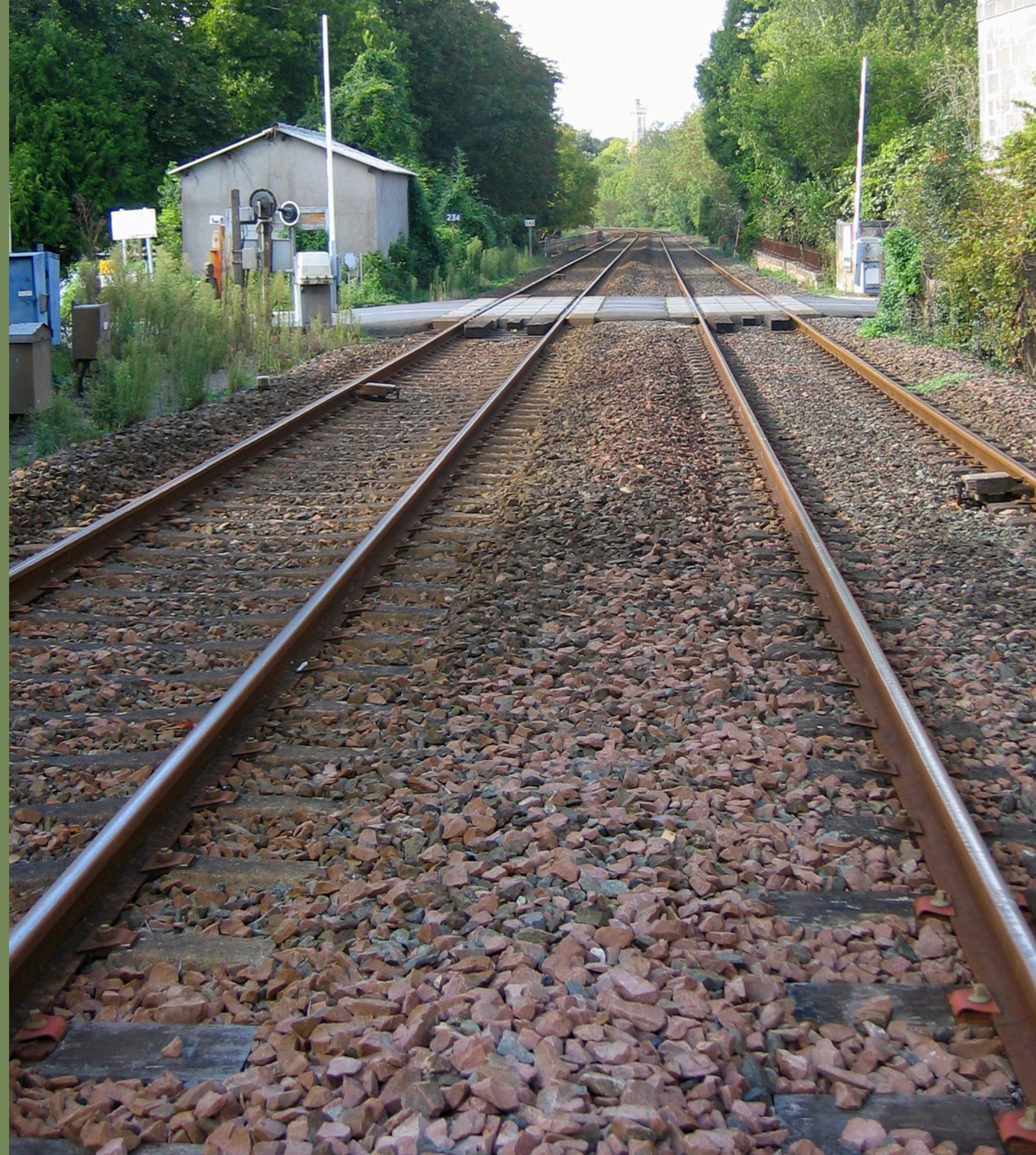
Ireland gathers data on its graduates in two ways:

The Graduate Outcomes Survey

- Since 2017, annual survey
- Universities, TUs, IoTs, Colleges
- NFQ Levels 6 (Short UG) - 10 (Doctorate)
- 9 months after graduation

Administrative data in Central Statistics Office (CSO)

- Uses PPSNs (Personal Public Service Numbers - unique individual identifiers) to track graduates over time
- 10 years of longitudinal data



Graduate Outcomes Survey

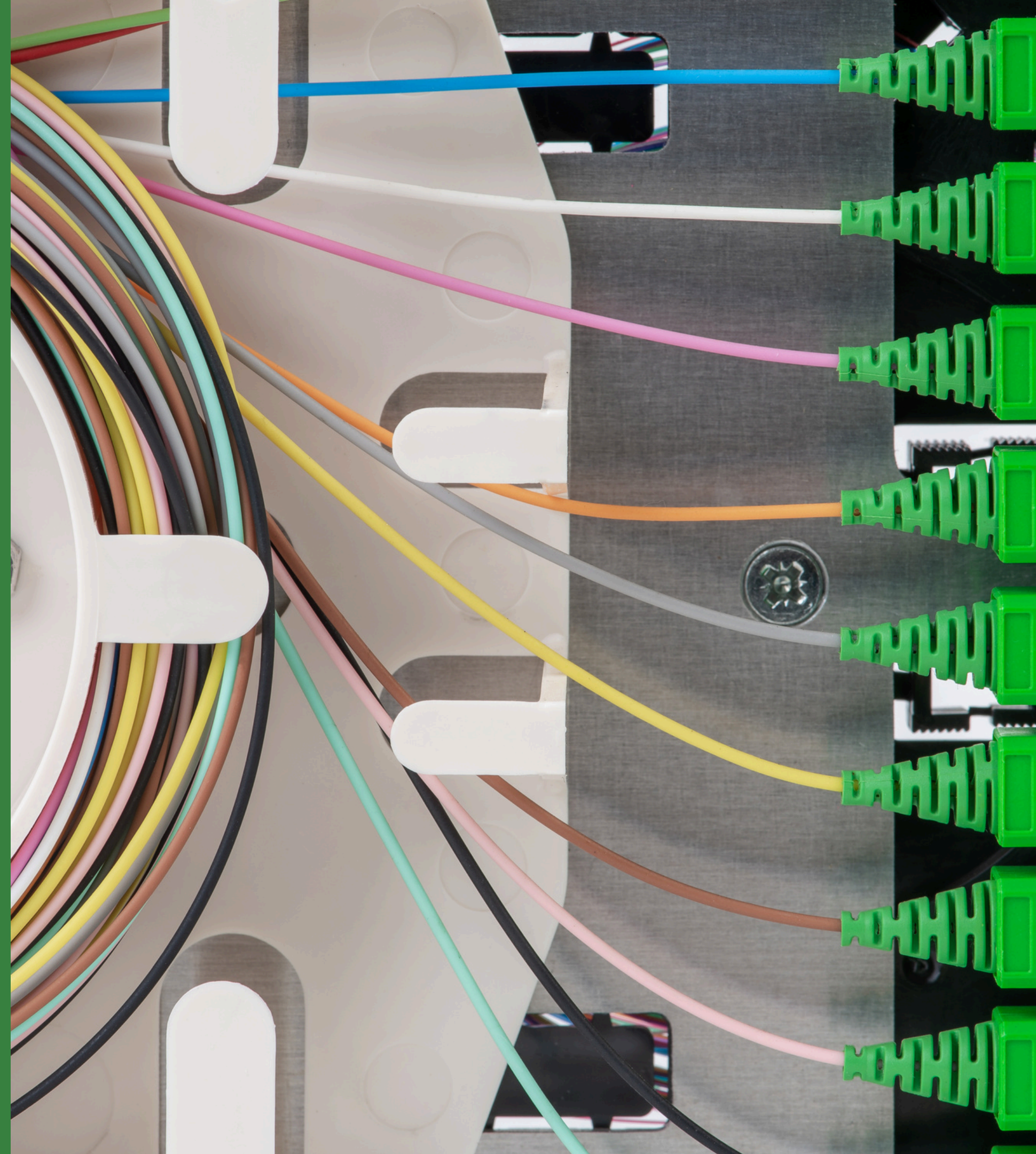
Distributed approach to data collection:

Universities: University College Dublin, University College Cork, University of Galway, Maynooth University, Trinity College Dublin, University of Limerick, Dublin City University

Technological Universities: TU Dublin (3), Munster TU (2), South-East TU (2), Atlantic TU (3), TU Shannon (2)

Institutes of Technology: Dundalk IT, Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology

Colleges: National College of Art and Design, Mary Immaculate College, Dublin Business School



Survey operation

Census date is 31 March of each year.

Each HEI decides on its own fieldwork window.

- Usually about six weeks, generally three weeks for emails and three weeks for calls.
- Some start in March, others run up to August.

Data comes into the HEA by early September, with two weeks to resolve any identified issues with the data.

HEA publishes the national report by year end.

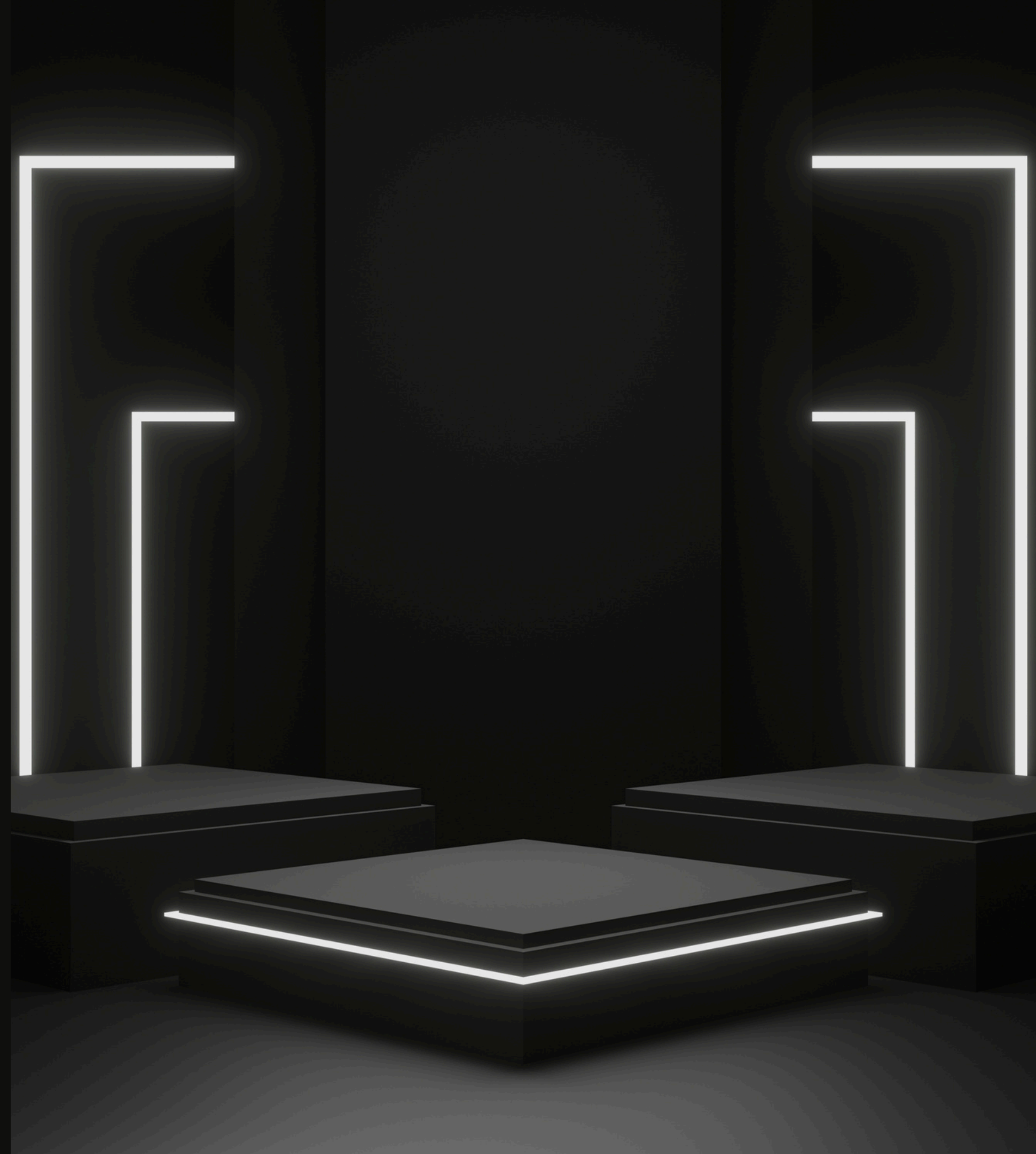
Response rate nationally is around 50%.



Platforms used:

- Qualtrix
- Verint
- MS Forms
- Banner
- Formstack
- Survey Monkey

Most HEIs carry out in-house, some outsource.





Incentives

Varying approaches:

Vouchers

Donation to Student Assistance Fund

GoPros/Weekend away

HEA is trialling use of vouchers this year.



What do we do with the data?



The data is for the public!

Technological university graduates more likely to be employed after leaving college

Within nine months of graduating 80% of graduates are employed, with most earning up to €40,000 a year

Expand



Higher

Carl C

Thu Di

Fewer than one in 10 graduates in 2020 from disadvantaged backgrounds



On average, female graduates were less affluent than males, albeit the gap was relatively small.

THU, 16 FEB, 2023 - 06:00

JESS CASEY, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT



Fewer than one in 10 graduates from the class of 2020 were from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The finding is included in the Graduate Outcomes for Various Socio-Economic Groups published on Thursday by the Higher Education Authority (HEA).

LATEST STORIES >

Police in Gran Canaria issue appeal for information on missing Irish woman

Workers in 'slavery-like conditions' found at BYD factory site in Brazil

Lorry driver dies in single-vehicle crash in Co Tyrone

Man charged with murder after allegedly setting woman on fire inside New York subway

Twelve people killed in explosives factory blast in Turkey

CLASSROOM CENTRAL

Revealed: graduates with disabilities are less likely to be employed – and are paid less



Equality of opportunity is the goal. Photo: Getty Images



Katherine Donnelly

Irish Independent

IRELAND'S BEST-SELLING NEWSPAPER



Let's talk about sexual health
Health & Living
Eight pages inside

P27-34



Limerick rise to challenge of being champions
Eamon Sweeney - Sport

Independent.ie

Monday, February 18, 2019

€2.20 (€1.50 in Northern Ireland) C



SADDLERS: Jockey Stephen Connor (left) joins company with Oger Wells while Tommy Lowe and Fildier of Dooney also fall at the last fence at Punchestown's point-to-point meeting yesterday. All were unscathed in their falls. PHOTO: HARRY RAYNE/RACING SPORT, PAGES 44-45

A hard Border means violence, report warns

Karin Doyle

GROUP POLITICAL EDITOR

ARE TURNS to violence on the island of Ireland inevitable if a hard border emerges, "with the only issue being on what scale", a stark new report warns.
Young people will be "groomed into violent activity", according to the influential report from Union officials. It also warns that rushing into a referendum on a united Ireland would result in conflict.
A problem identified by Professors Mark Brennan and Pat Dooley is that the (Good Friday) Agreement generation has no memory of the harm caused by decades of bloodshed.
Meanwhile, with the Brexit deal five years less than six weeks away, France has denied reports that President Macron has offered concessions on the backstop to end the stalemate in negotiations.

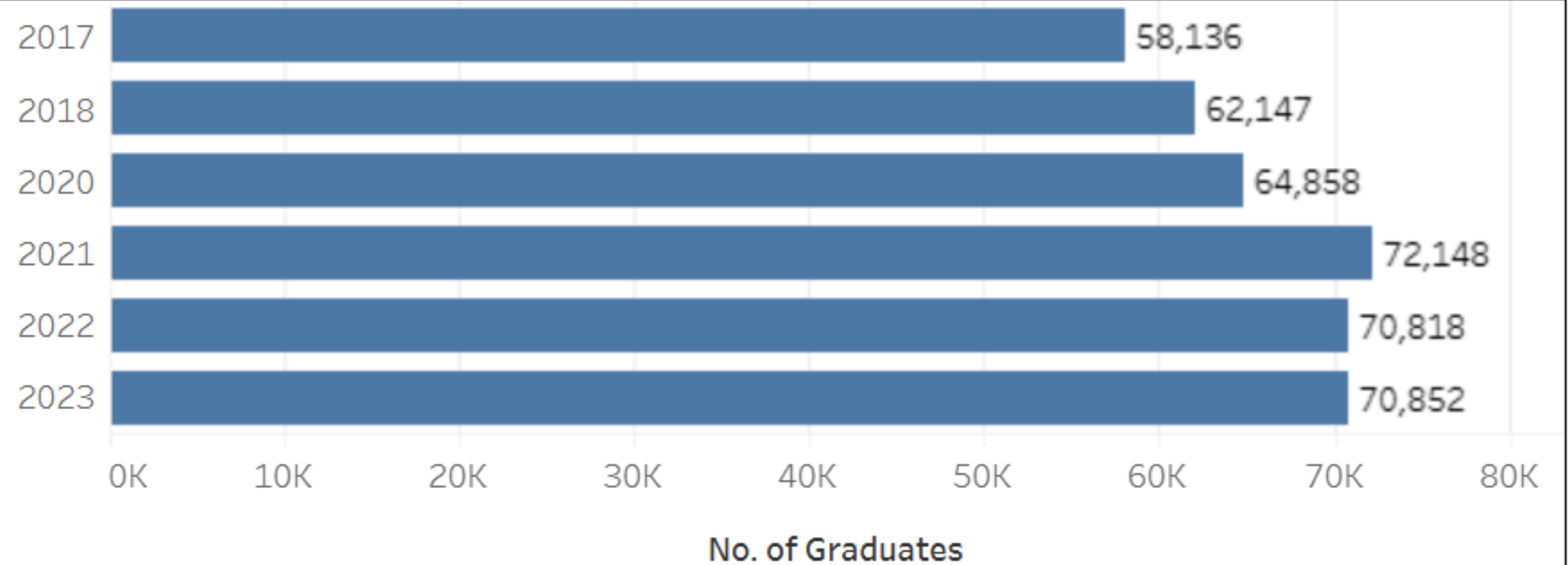
Full report: Page 45

Teachers top pay league for our recent graduates





70,852
Graduates





80.2%
in Employment

10.9%
in Further Study

2.5%
in Other Activity

6.5%
seeking employment

52% in
professional
occupations



64% on
permanent contracts



57% have
completed
internships



Undergraduate Degrees

3% self-
employed/freelance



92% working
in Ireland



41% working
in Dublin



59% earn
between €30k
and €50k



2 in 3 would study
the same course
again

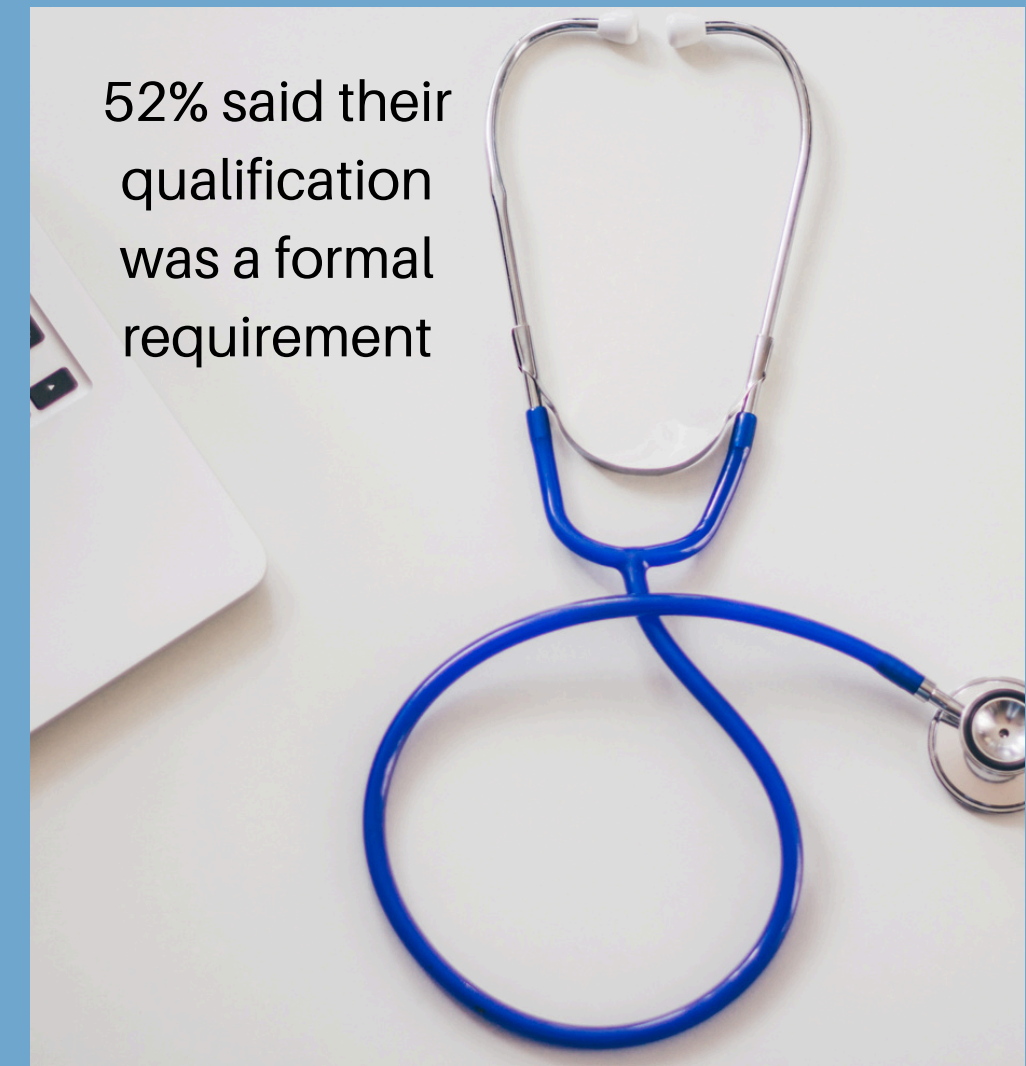
Undergraduate Degrees

63% said their course is
relevant or very relevant
to their job



18% found
their job
through
personal
contacts

52% said their
qualification
was a formal
requirement



Background

Overview

Employment

Further Study

Gender

Degree

Field of Study

Domicile

Year

Highest employment rates by detailed field of study

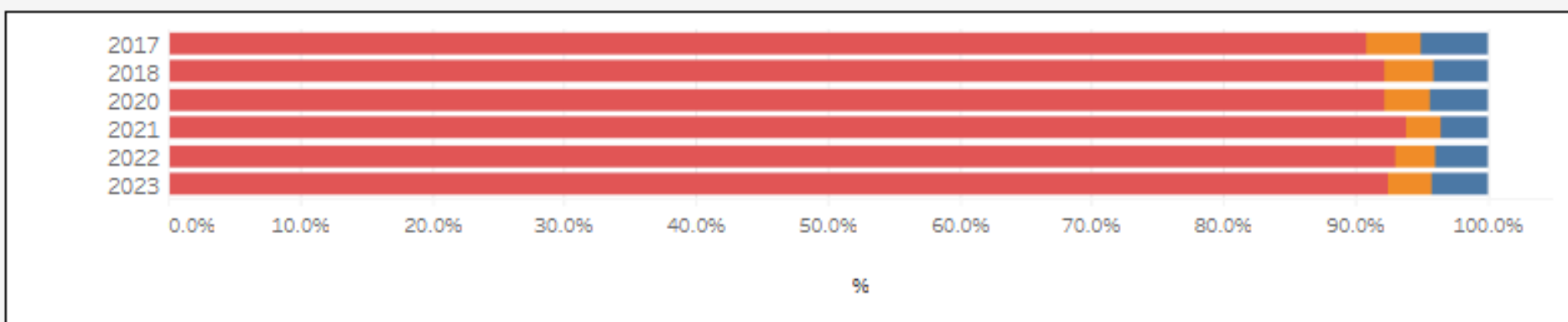
Protection of persons and property	100.0%
Interdisciplinary programmes an..	100.0%
Environmental protection technol..	100.0%
Care of the elderly and of disable..	100.0%
Military and defence	98.7%
Materials (glass, paper, plastic an..	97.3%
Teacher training without subject ..	97.2%
Occupational health and safety	96.5%
Work skills	95.5%
Architecture and construction not..	94.1%

Top 100 Graduate Employers

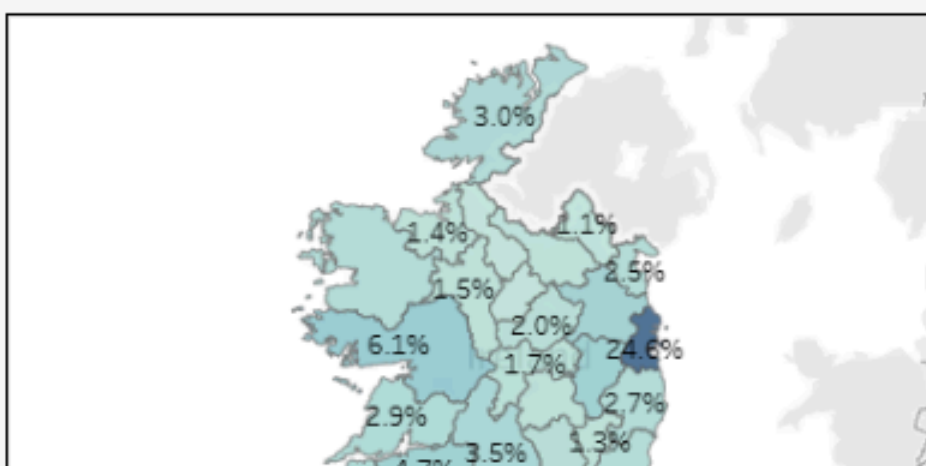
N/A	2,188
Schools	1,189
HSE	987
Department of Education	436
Defence Forces	238
PwC	225
Freelance/Self-Employed	219
KPMG	207

* Of graduates who responded (49.3% response rate). Total count is unweighted. Companies with <10 graduates are excluded.

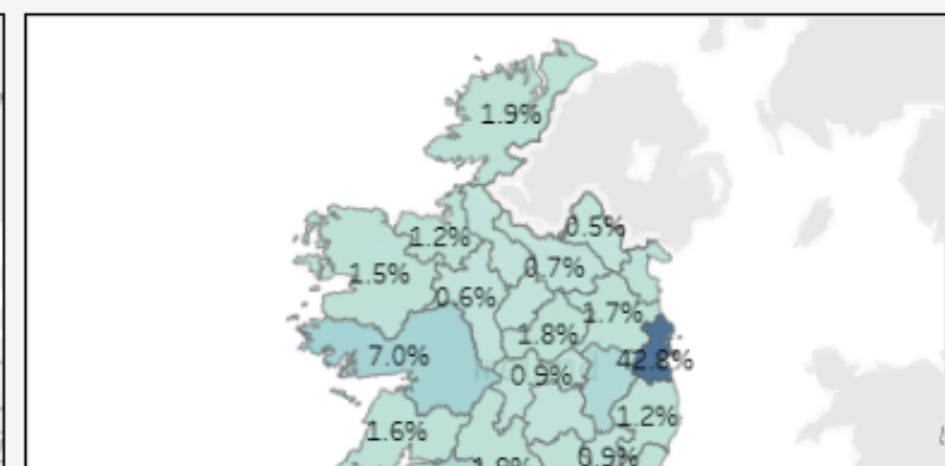
Employment Type



Where are graduates from?



Where do graduates work?



Background

Overview

Employment

Further Study

Gender

Degree

Field of Study

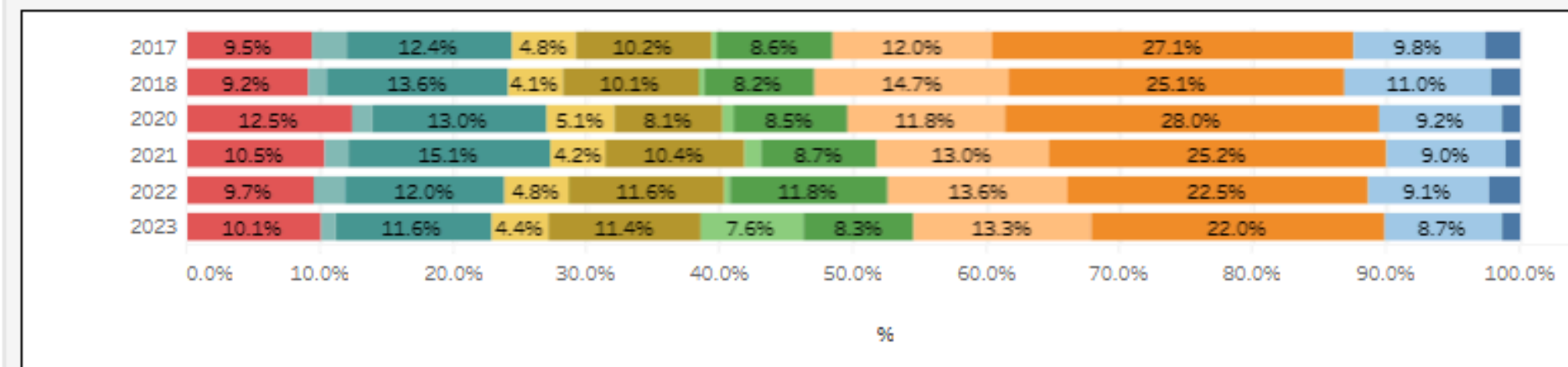
Domicile

Year

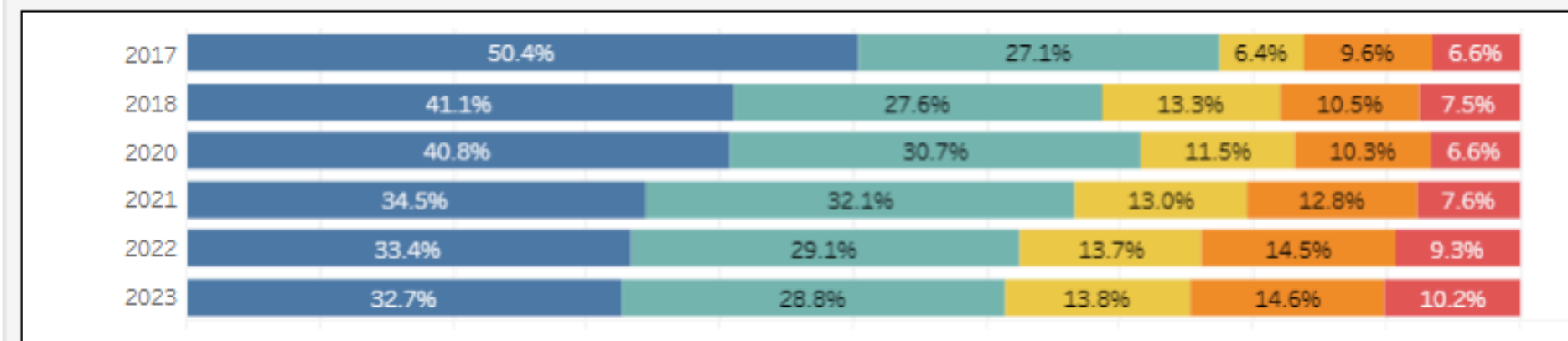
Highest further study rates by detailed field of study

Interdisciplinary programmes and qualifications involving arts and humanities	36.6%
Arts not further defined or elsewhere classified	35.5%
Humanities (except languages) not further defined or elsewhere classified	29.3%
Interdisciplinary programmes and qualifications involving natural sciences, mat..	28.1%
Interdisciplinary programmes and qualifications involving Information and Com..	25.8%
Physical sciences not further defined or elsewhere classified	24.8%
Languages not further defined or elsewhere classified	22.9%
Biological and related sciences not further defined or elsewhere classified	22.0%
Physics	21.5%
Sports	19.1%

Further Field of Study



Would you study the same qualification again?





The data is for HEIs!

Note that higher education institutions have strong say into the content of the Graduate Outcomes Survey - the survey is designed in collaboration with higher education institutions and other stakeholders (e.g. career guidance, disability, employers, students, state).

HEIs use data for career guidance, programme review, quality assurance, marketing, employer engagement etc.



What does the HEA use the data for?

Performance reporting in Irish higher education is assessed through the Higher Education System Performance Framework:

The *System Performance Framework 2023-2028* sets out parameters under which HEIs identify their contribution to the achievement of institutional and national strategy, as appropriate to their mission, scale, location, and strategic plan.

The HEA and HEIs meet in person to develop their multi-annual performance agreements, and an annual review takes place.

Performance Objective 1

To integrate Transversal skills (TS) in curriculum delivery and University processes for an expanded set of undergraduate Programmes across five Faculties.

DCU Performance Agreement 2024–2028

Indicators and targets for Performance Objective 1

No.	Indicator	Data source	Data type	Baseline	Benchmark	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	Cumulative target
1.1	Percentage of students from relevant programmes engaging with the platform to evidence TS	Unihub	Quantitative	0% of relevant students engaging with the platform	N/A - no benchmark available at present	20%	40%	60%	80%	80%
1.2	Proportion (%) of relevant ² students that report valuing transversal skills as part of their education	Institutional Student Survey on TS	Quantitative and qualitative	Baseline to be established.	N/A - no benchmark available at present	5%	20%	35%	50%	50 %
1.3	Proportion (%) of relevant Students who perceive transversal skills as important to their employability	Institutional Student Survey on TS	Quantitative and qualitative	Baseline to be established.	N/A - no benchmark available at present	20%	40%	60%	80%	80%
1.4	Proportion (%) of Employers reporting ‘excellent’ or ‘very good’ across a range of transversal skills (on average)	INTRA Employer survey	Quantitative	Baseline to be established.	N/A - no benchmark available at present	30%	45%	60%	75%	75%



What does the HEA use the data for?

Graduate Outcomes Survey data is key national data metric and informs the evidence base for higher education.

It is not used for allocation of funding.

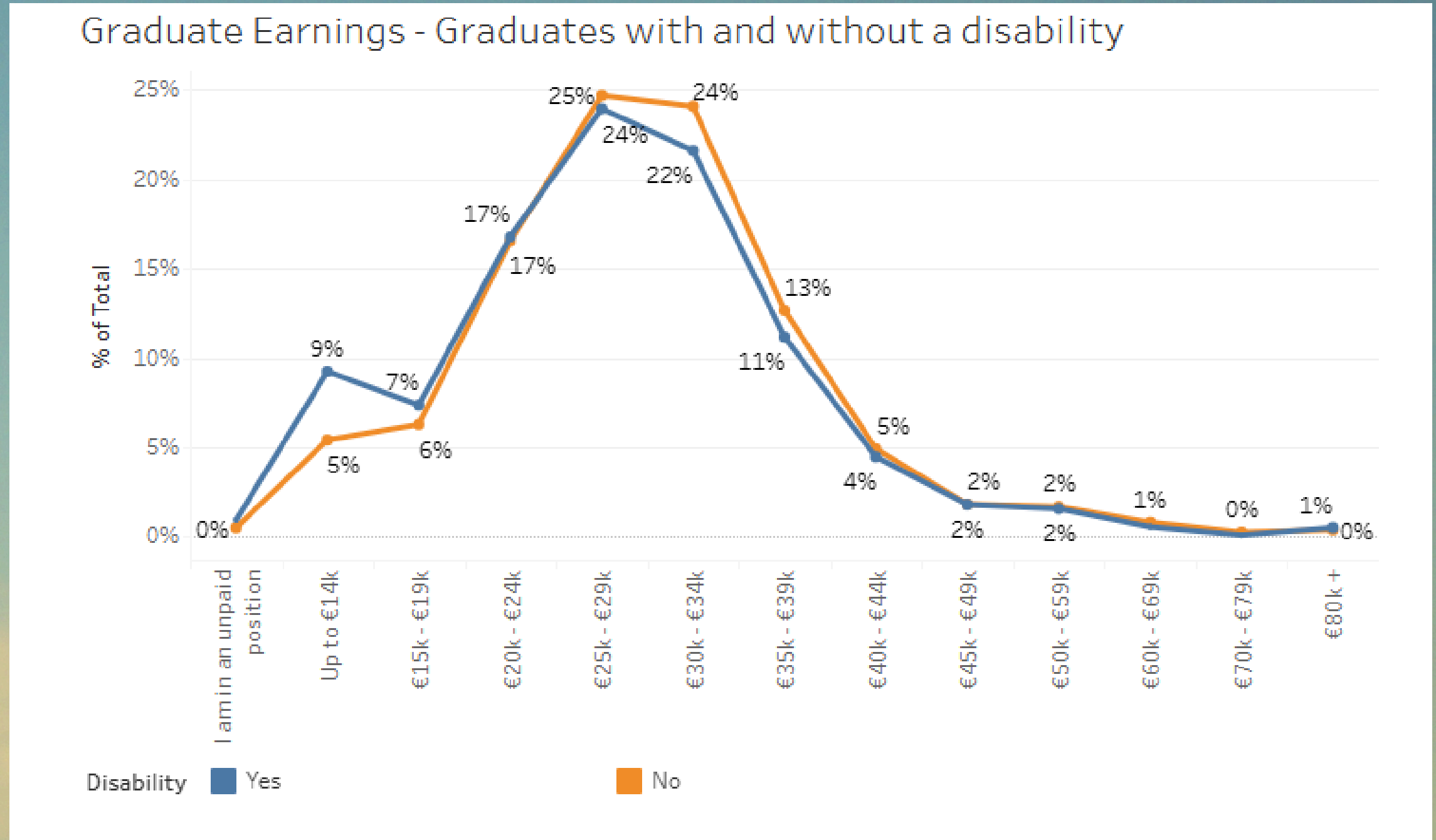
Data is generally produced at national level.

- Institutional data is available, but not presented with the aim of direct HEI-to-HEI or course-to-course comparison.
- Specific statistical reports with HEI comparisons have focussed on the need to consider HEIs' levels and fields of study and make-up of their student population.

Enriching the evidence base e.g. Access

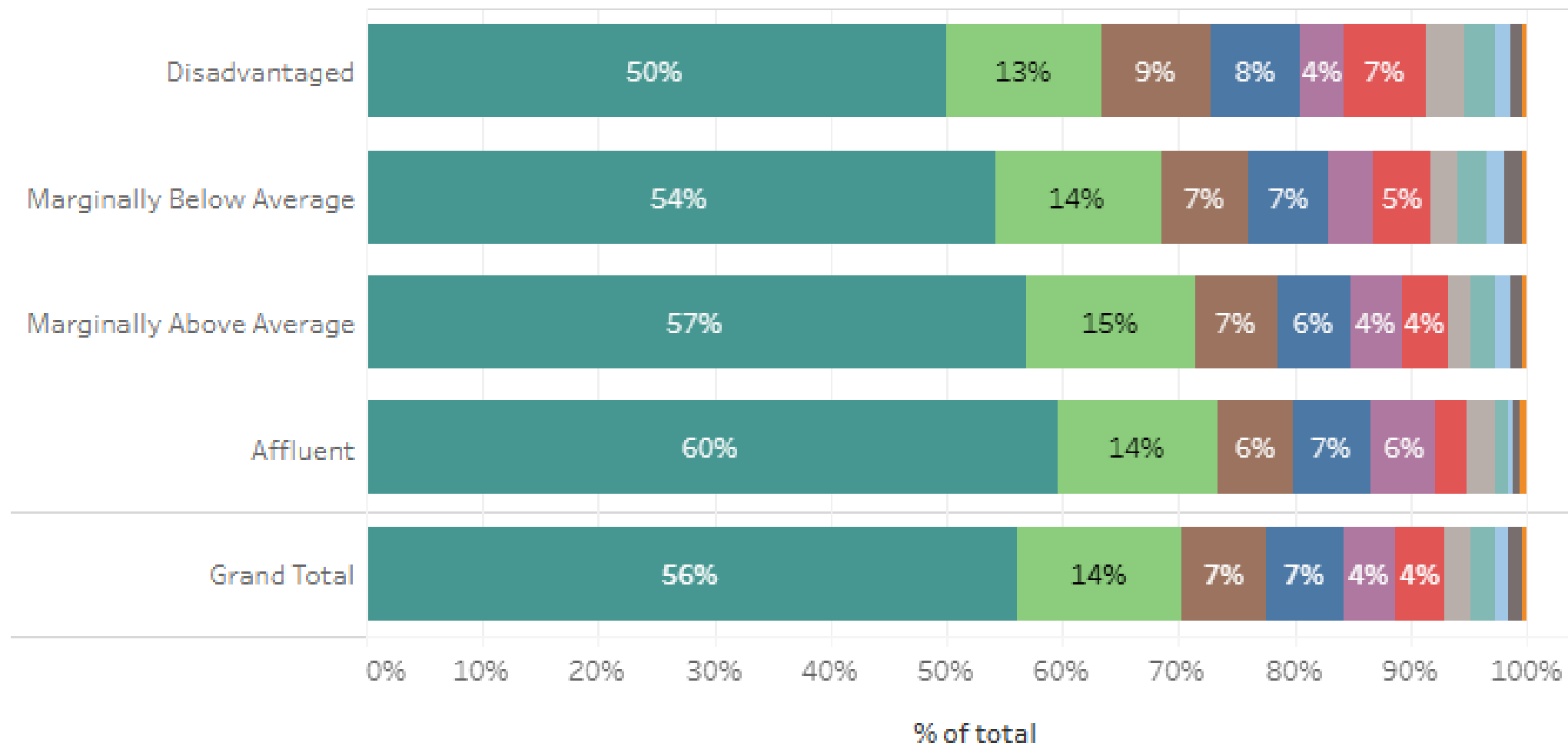
We have linked our Graduate Outcomes Survey data with **disability data** collected through the Equal Access Survey, and this gives an insight into the post-graduation outcomes of students with a disability.

This then feeds into national policy objectives in the area of Access - particularly the National Access Plan 2022-2028.



Enriching the evidence base e.g. Access

Share of employed graduates by: Occupational Group



We have linked our Graduate Outcomes Survey data with **address data** collected through our main student record, so we can look at graduate outcomes through the lens of socio-economic status.

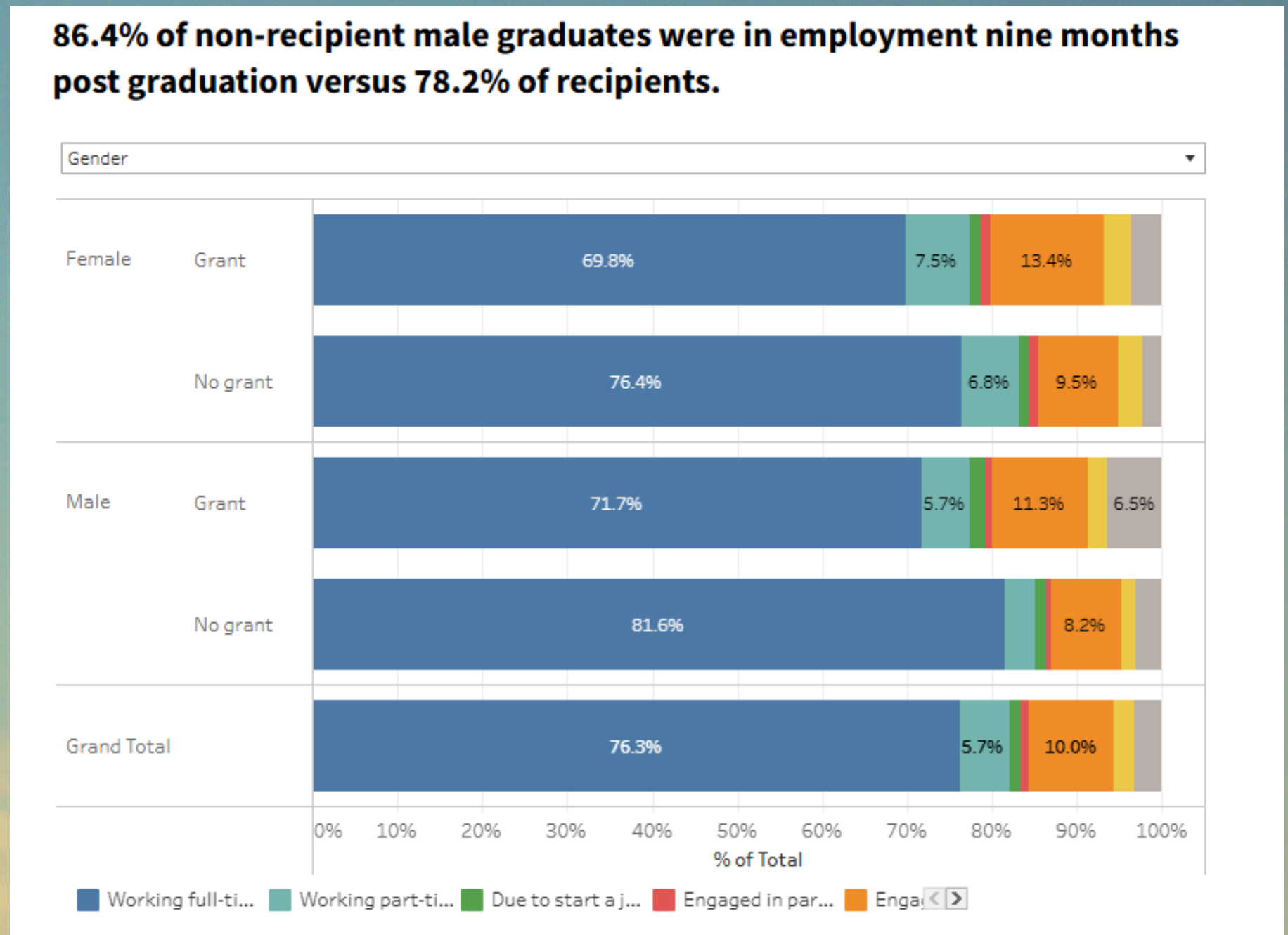
This also allows us to measure progress in the National Access Plan 2022-2028.



Enriching the evidence base e.g. Access

Most recently, we have collaborated with the state agency for student grants (SUSI) to consider graduate outcomes for those in receipt of a grant.

We are developing data sharing agreements with other agencies in order to expand on what we know about our students and graduates.



Graduate Outcomes Survey Review

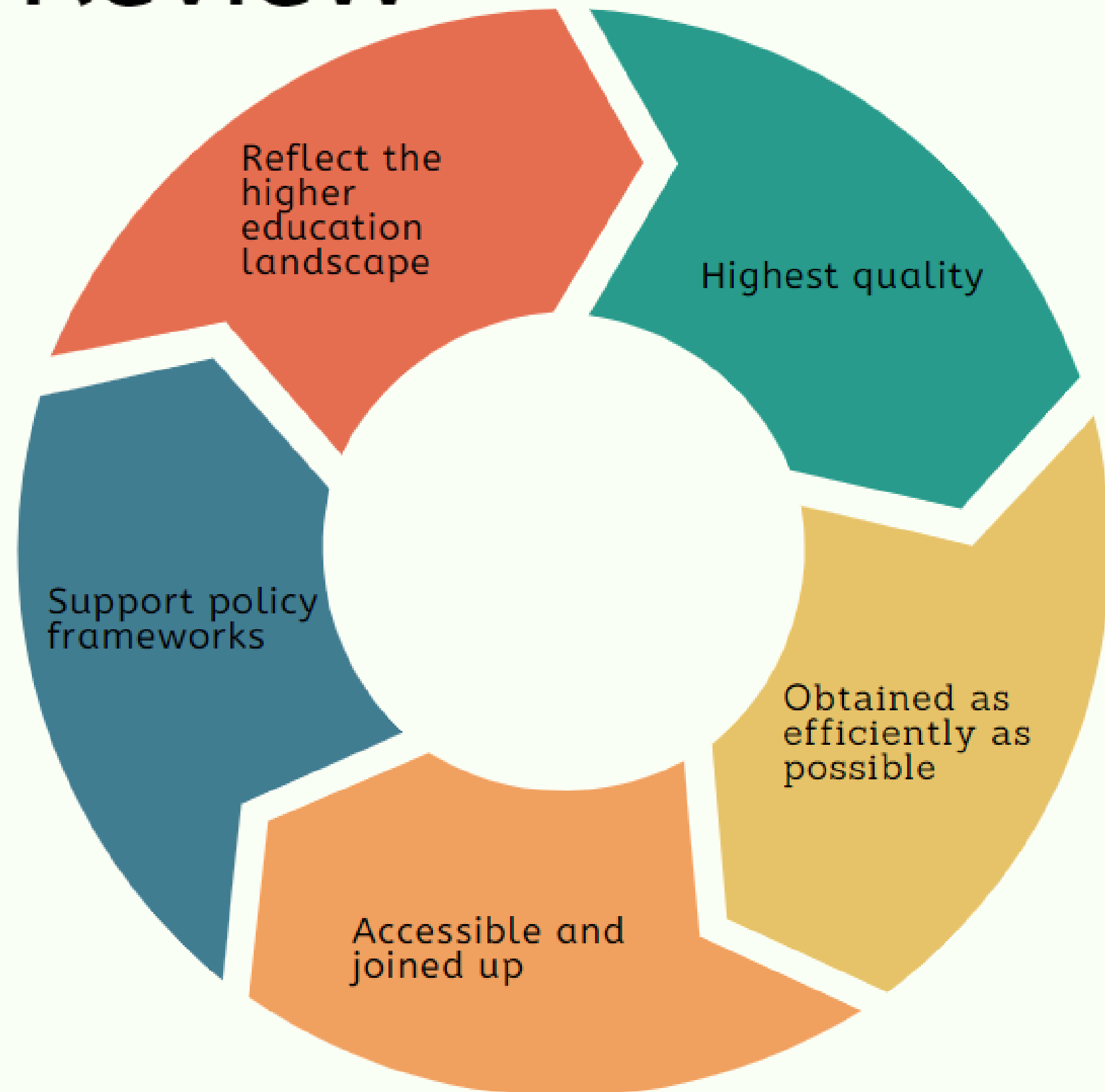
THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM CONTINUES TO EVOLVE AND GRADUATE TRACKING SHOULD BE FUTURE-PROOFED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

IRELAND SHOULD CONTINUE TO LEAD INTERNATIONALLY BY EXPANDING ON A RELIABLE AND ACCURATE EVIDENCE BASE FOR POLICY MAKERS, HEIS, PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS.

THE METHODOLOGY AND OPERATION OF GRADUATE SURVEYING SHOULD BE FIT-FOR-PURPOSE AND EFFICIENT, ENABLING HIGH VALUE, WELL STRUCTURED, TIMELY AND ROBUST DATA TO BE COLLECTED.

THOSE INTERESTED IN GRADUATE DATA SHOULD BE ENABLED TO OBTAIN INFORMATION THAT IS FREELY AVAILABLE AND EASY TO UNDERSTAND, TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE RANGE OF DATA SOURCES WITHIN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM.

GRADUATE SURVEY DATA SHOULD SUPPORT THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK AND OTHER NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORKS.

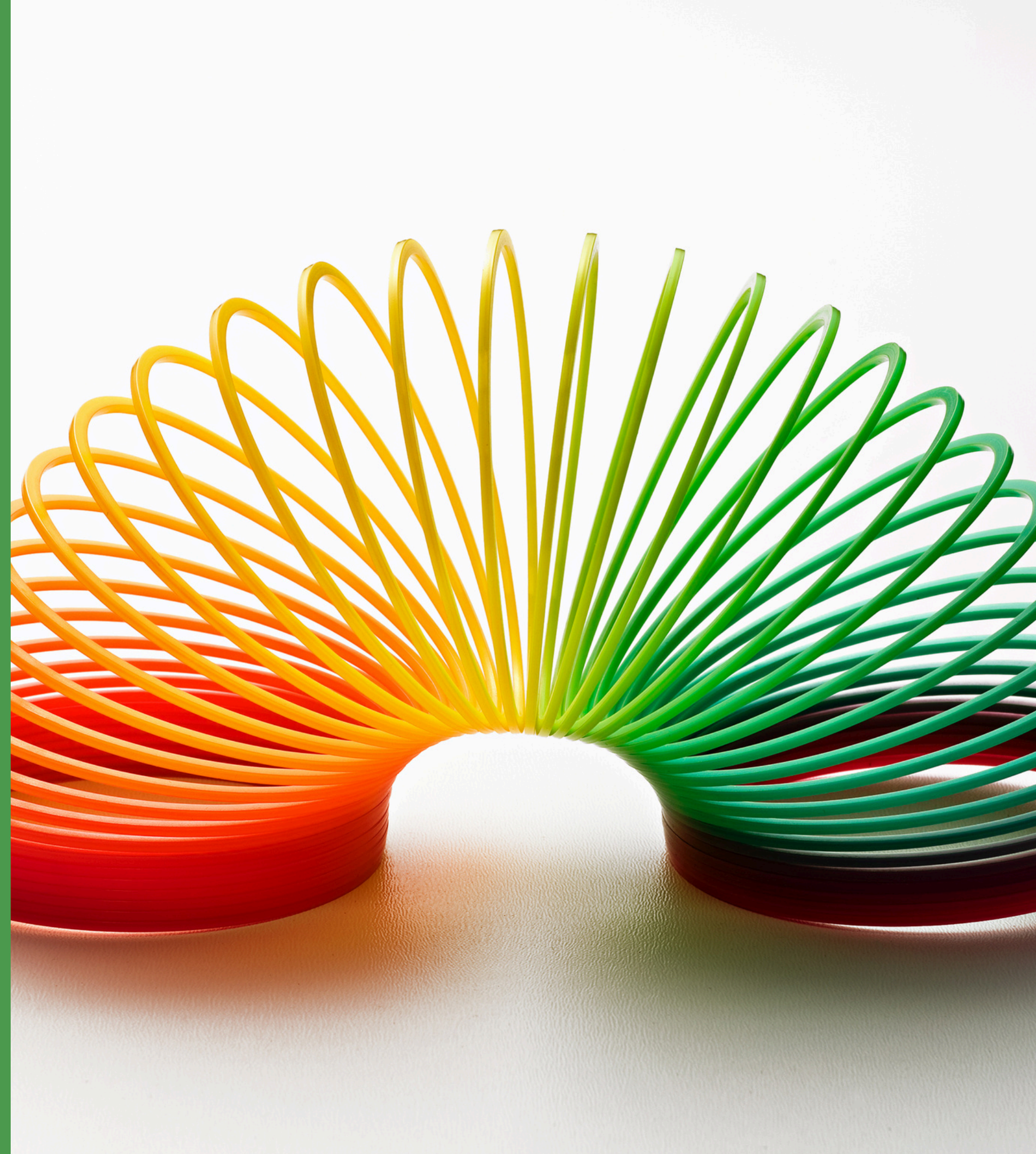


Findings/Recommendations

Top level finding:

“Our overall finding is that the HEA is delivering a robust and efficient survey of third-level graduate outcomes.

“The survey generates high-quality data, while also delivering a strong response rate, ensuring flexibility in the methodology for institutions to collect meaningful response rates.”



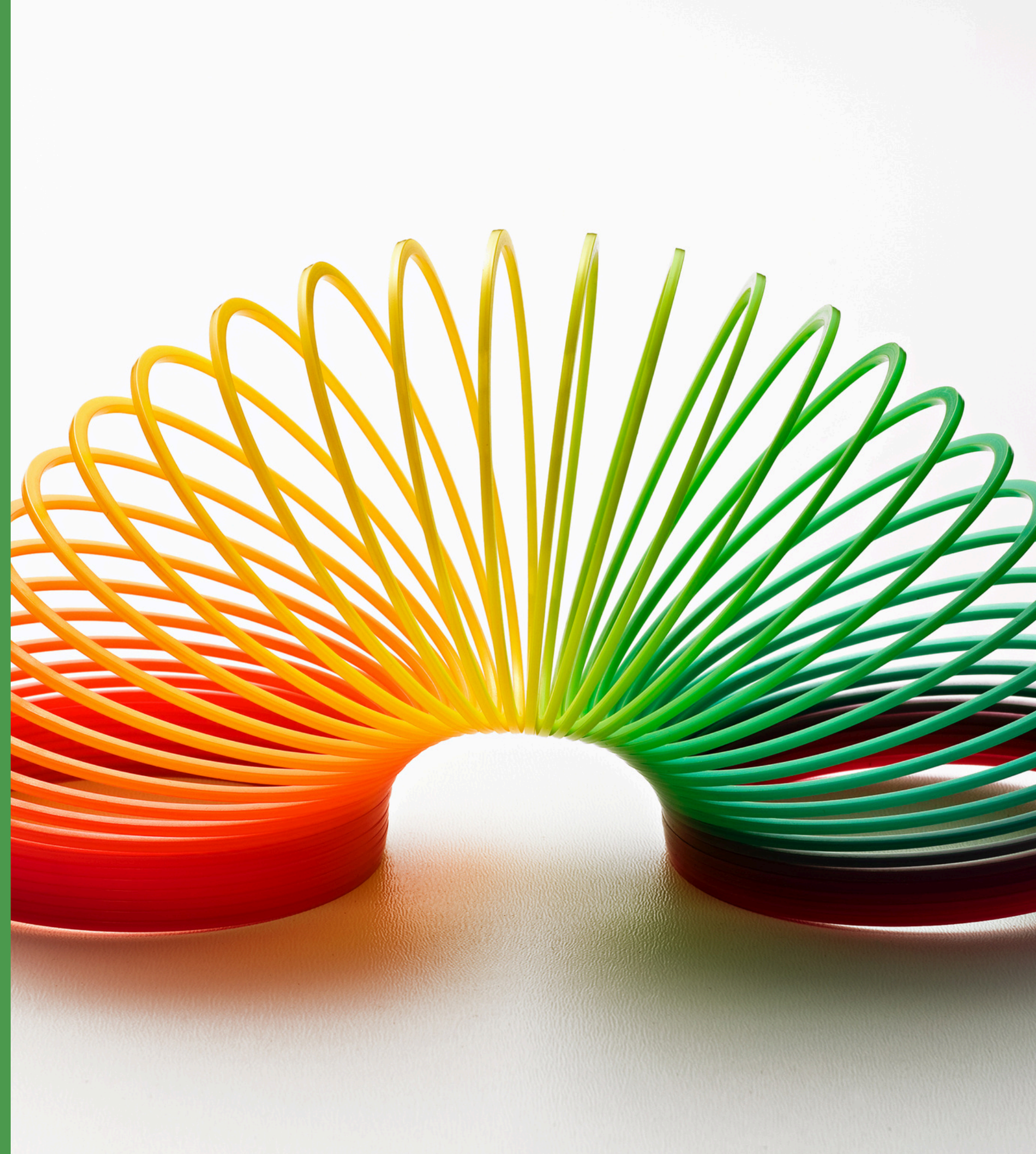
Findings/Recommendations

Census date and distributed approach to data collection both stand.

Recommendations for:

- Survey questions
- Cohort to be included
- Promotions
- Accessibility
- Communications

Changes will be in place for 2026.



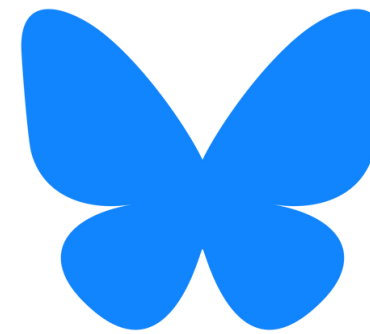


GRADUATE OUTCOMES

WHERE TO NEXT?



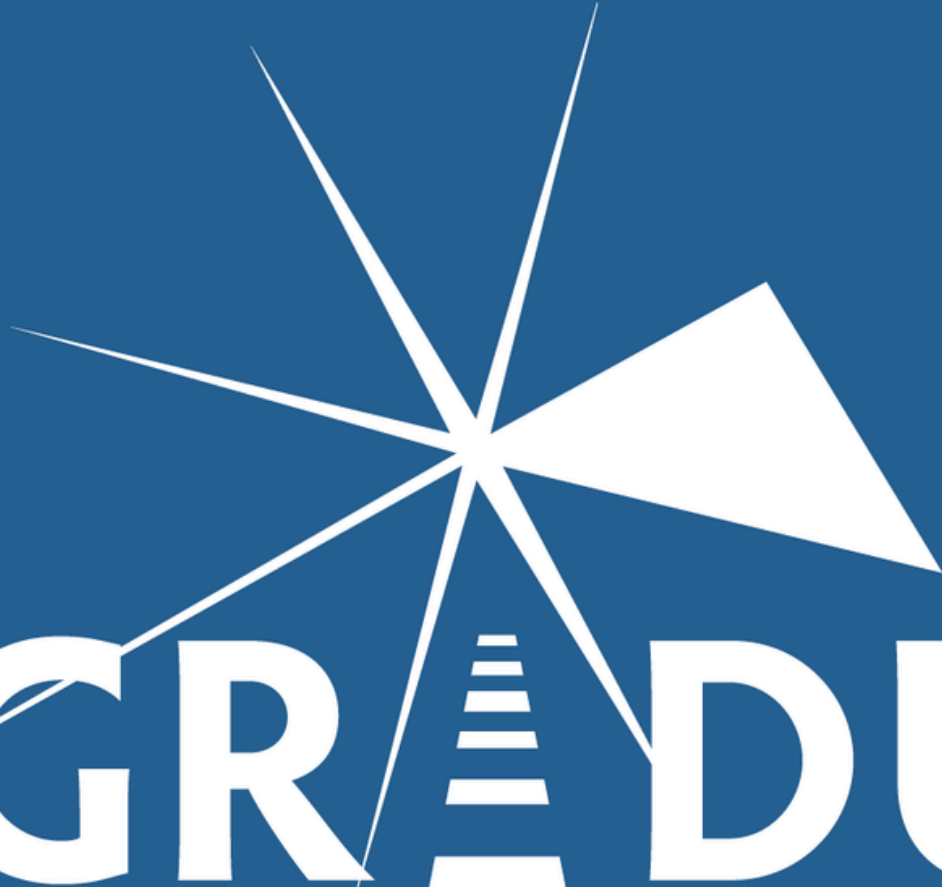
www.graduateoutcomes.ie



[@heastatisticsirl.bsky.social](https://bsky.social/heastatisticsirl)



[hea-graduate-outcomes](https://www.linkedin.com/company/hea-graduate-outcomes)



GRADUATE OUTCOMES

WHERE TO NEXT?

Thank you!