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SCHOOL LEAVERS' SURVEY REPORT 2006

Selina McCoy, Elish Kelly and Dorothy Watson



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May 2007





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The Economic and Social Research Institute & Department of Education and Science

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# CONTENTS

Page

	<i>List of Tables</i>	iii
	<i>List of Figures</i>	vi
	<i>Executive Summary</i>	ix
<b>1.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>SECOND-LEVEL EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND EXPERIENCES</b>	<b>5</b>
	2.1 Second-Level Attainment Levels	5
	2.2 Early School Leaving	9
	2.3 Examination Performance	11
	2.4 Participation in Transition Year	15
	2.5 Part-Time Employment While at School	16
	2.6 Attendance at School	21
	2.7 Attitudes Towards School	23
<b>3.</b>	<b>POST-SCHOOL EDUCATION AND TRAINING</b>	<b>29</b>
	3.1 Participation in PLC Courses	29
	3.2 Participation in State-Sponsored Training	31
	3.3 Participation in Higher Education	33
	3.4 Participation in Any Form of Post-School Education or Training	36
<b>4.</b>	<b>ECONOMIC STATUS OF SCHOOL LEAVERS</b>	<b>41</b>
	4.1 Introduction	41
	4.2 Economic Status of School Leavers One Year After Leaving School	42
	4.3 Economic Status and Level of Educational Attainment	43
	4.4 Changes in Economic Status in the Year Since Leaving School	64
	4.5 School Leavers' Economic Status and Socio-Economic Background	66
	Appendix A: Chapter Four Supplementary Tables	70

# CONTENTS

Page

<b>5.</b>	<b>EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCES</b>	<b>89</b>
5.1	Introduction	89
5.2	Industrial Sector	89
5.3	Occupational Distribution	92
5.4	Earnings	96
5.5	Other Employment Characteristics	98
5.6	Relationship Between Education/Training and Job	106
5.7	Satisfaction with Present Economic Situation	112
	Appendix B: Chapter Five Supplementary Tables	118
<b>6.</b>	<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>127</b>
6.1	Level of Educational Attainment	127
6.2	Post-School Education and Training	127
6.3	Economic Status of School Leavers	128
6.4	Employment Characteristics	128
6.5	Policy Discussion	129
<b>7.</b>	<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>APPENDIX C: Sample Design, Weighting and Sampling Errors</b>	<b>137</b>



## LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
2.1a	Initial Level of Education Attained by Socio-Economic Background (2006) – Father’s Occupation	7
2.1b	Initial Level of Education Attained by Socio-Economic Background (2006) – Mother’s Occupation	8
2.2	Stage Left School by Father’s Socio-Economic Background (2006)	9
2.3a	Junior Cert Examination Results by Socio-Economic Background (2006) – Father’s Occupation	14
2.3b	Leaving Cert Examination Results by Socio-Economic Background (2006) – Father’s Occupation	15
2.4a	Leaving Cert Examination Results by Participation in Transition Year (2006)	15
2.4b	Participation in Transition Year Among those who Completed Leaving Cert by Father’s Socio-Economic Group (2006)	16
2.5	Participation in Part-Time Work While in School, all School Leavers (2006)	17
2.6	Participation in Part-Time Work and Weekday Work While in School by Father’s and Mother’s Socio-Economic Group, Leaving Cert Leavers (2006)	18
2.7	Participation in Weekday Work While in School by Socio-Economic Group and Gender (2006)	19
2.8	Perceived Usefulness of Education/Training in Work and Life (2006)	26
3.1	Completion and Certification of PLC Courses and Receipt of Grant by Gender	29
3.2	Completion and Certification of PLC Courses and Receipt of Grant by Father’s Socio-Economic Background	30
4.1	Labour Market Participation, Employment and Unemployment Rates among School Leavers, 1999, 2002, 2004 and 2005 (Percentage)	49
4.2	Labour Force Participation, Employment and Unemployment Rates Among School Leavers by Level of Education (Percentage)	58
4.3	Employment and Unemployment Rates of Male and Female School Leavers in the Labour Market by Level of Education (2005)	58
A1	Economic Status of 2000/2001, 2002/2003 and 2003/2004 School Leavers One Year After Leaving School (Percentage)	70
A2a	Economic Status of 2000/2001, 2002/2003 and 2003/2004 School Leavers One Year After Leaving School by Educational Attainment (Percentage)	71
A2b	Economic Status of 2000/2001, 2002/2003 and 2003/2004 Male School Leavers One Year After Leaving School by Educational Attainment (Percentage)	72

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
A2c Economic Status of 2000/2001, 2002/2003 and 2003/2004 Female School Leavers One Year After Leaving School by Educational Attainment (Percentage)	73
A3 Labour Market Status of 2003/04 School Leavers by Outcome of Last Examination Sat, 2005	74
A4 Changes in Economic Status of 2000/2001, 2002/2003 and 2003/2004 School Leavers During the Year Since Leaving School	75
A5a Changes in the Economic Status of 2000/2001, 2002/2003 and 2003/2004 School Leavers During the Year Since Leaving School by Educational Attainment	76
A5b Changes in the Economic Status of 2000/2001, 2002/2003 and 2003/2004 Male School Leavers During the Year Since Leaving School by Educational Attainment	78
A5c Changes in the Economic Status of 2000/2001, 2002/2003 and 2003/2004 Female School Leavers During the Year Since Leaving School by Educational Attainment	80
A6a Economic Status of 2003/04 School Leavers by Socio-Economic Status of Father, 2005	82
A6b Economic Status of 2003/04 Male School Leavers by Socio-Economic Status of Father, 2005	83
A6c Economic Status of 2003/04 Female School Leavers by Socio-Economic Status of Father, 2005	84
A7 Labour Market Participation, Employment and Unemployment Rates of 2003/04 School Leavers by Socio-Economic Status of Father	85
5.1 Average Gross Hourly Earnings of School Leavers in Employment by Level of Education, 2002, 2004 and 2005 (€)	96
5.2 Average Gross Weekly Earnings of School Leavers in Employment by Level of Education, 2002, 2004 and 2005 (€)	97
5.3 Percentage Satisfied with their Present Economic Situation by Level of Education, 2006	113
5.4 Percentage Satisfied with their Present Economic Situation by Socio-Economic Background, 2006	115
B1a Sectors in which School Leavers with Full-Time Jobs were Working One Year After Leaving School (Percentage)	118
B1b Sectors in which Male School Leavers with Full-Time Jobs were Working One Year After Leaving School (Percentage)	119
B1c Sectors in which Female School Leavers with Full-Time Jobs were Working One Year After Leaving School (Percentage)	120
B2a Type of Work Undertaken by School Leavers with Full-Time Jobs One Year After Leaving School (Percentage)	121

## LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
B2b	Type of Work Undertaken by Male School Leavers with Full-Time Jobs One Year After Leaving School (Percentage)	122
B2c	Type of Work Undertaken by Female School Leavers with Full-Time Jobs One Year After Leaving School (Percentage)	123
B3	Average Gross Hourly Earnings of School Leavers in Employment by Outcome of Last Examination Sat	124
C1	Estimated Numbers of School Leavers Under Age 25 in Various Categories and Details of Sample	138
C2	Illustrative Sampling Errors By Self-Reported Highest Qualification of School Leavers Age 25 and Under	139



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page	
2.1a	Qualification Level of School Leavers, 1980 – 2006	5
2.1b	Second-Level Qualifications by Gender (2006)	6
2.2a	Stage at Which Leavers with No Formal Qualifications Left School (2006)	10
2.2b	Reasons for Leaving School Prior to Leaving Cert (2006)	11
2.3a	Outcome of Last Examination Sat, All Leavers, 2006	12
2.3b	Outcome of Last Examination Sat - Males	13
2.3c	Outcome of Last Examination Sat - Females	13
2.4a	Percentage of those with Part-Time Jobs Working 15+ Hours Per Week by Father's Socio-Economic Group	20
2.4b	Participation in Part-Time Work and Performance in Final Exam at School	20
2.5a	Prevalence of Skipping School During Last Year At School, 2006	21
2.5b	Prevalence of Missing School (Illness, Holidays etc.) During Last Year At School, 2006	22
2.6	Average Number of School Days Missed Due to Illness, Holidays etc, During Last Year At School, 2006	22
2.7	Percentage with Negative Views of the Support They Got From Teachers While At School	23
2.8	Percentage with Positive Views of the Extent of Order in Their Class While at School	24
2.9	Percentage Who Felt Their 'School Work Was Worth Doing'	24
3.1	Proportion who Participated in a PLC Course by Performance in Leaving Cert	31
3.2	Participation in Any Form of State-Sponsored Training (including FÁS Apprenticeship and Youthreach)	32
3.3	Participation in Any Form of State-Sponsored Training by Father's Socio-Economic Group	33
3.4	Rates of Progression to Higher Education, 2006	34
3.5	Rates of Progression to Higher Education by Performance in Leaving Cert, 2006	34
3.6	Rates of Progression to Higher Education (those who completed second-level) by Father's Socio-Economic Group, 2006	35
3.7	Rates of Progression to Higher Education (those who completed second-level) by Parental Education, 2006	35
3.8	Percentage Participating in Some Form of Post-School Education or Training	37
3.9	Percentage of those who Completed Leaving Cert Participating in Some Form of Post-School Education or Training by Parents' Education	37

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
4.1	Economic Status of 2000/01, 2002/03 and 2003/04 School Leavers One Year After Leaving Second-Level Education – May 2002, 2004 and 2005	42
4.2	Economic Status of 2000/01, 2002/03 and 2003/04 Male and Female School Leavers One Year After Leaving Second-Level Education – May 2002, 2004 and 2005	44
4.3a	Economic Status of Male School Leavers	46
4.3b	Economic Status of Female School Leavers	47
4.4a	Long-Term Trends in School Leavers' Employment and Unemployment Rates	50
4.4b	Long-Term Trends in Male School Leavers' Employment and Unemployment Rates	51
4.4c	Long-Term Trends in Female School Leavers' Employment and Unemployment Rates	51
4.5	Economic Status of 2003/04 School Leavers One Year After Leaving School by Level of Education	52
4.6	Unemployment Rates by Educational Attainment	60
4.7	Unemployment Rate Ratios – Unqualified versus Leaving Certificate School Leavers	61
4.8a	Employment and Unemployment Rates of School Leavers by Outcome of Last Exam, 2005	62
4.8b	Employment and Unemployment Rates of Male School Leavers by Outcome of Last Exam, 2005	63
4.8c	Employment and Unemployment Rates of Female School Leavers by Outcome of Last Exam, 2005	63
4.9	Changes in the Economic Status of 2003/04 School Leavers in the Year Since Leaving School	64
5.1	Sectors in which School Leavers with Full-Time Jobs were Working One Year After Leaving School, 2002, 2004 and 2005	90
5.2	Sectors in which 2003/04 Male and Female School Leavers with Full-Time Jobs were Working One Year After Leaving School, May 2005	91
5.3	Type of Work Undertaken by School Leavers with Full-Time Jobs One Year After Leaving School, 2002, 2004 and 2005	93
5.4	Type of Work Undertaken by 2003/04 Male and Female School Leavers with Full-Time Jobs One Year After Leaving School, May 2005	95
5.5	Trade Union Membership of School Leavers in Employment at the Time of the Survey, 2006	99
5.6	Trade Union Membership of School Leavers in Employment at the Time of the Survey by Level of Education, 2006	99
5.7	Extent to Which School Leavers in Employment at the Time of the Survey Feel Secure in their Job, 2006	100
5.8	Extent to Which School Leavers in Employment at the Time of the Survey Feel Secure in their Job by Level of Education, 2006	101

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
5.9	Extent to Which School Leavers in Employment at the Time of the Survey Feel Secure in their Job According to Type of Job, (Part-time versus Full-time), 2006	102
5.10	Extent to Which School Leavers in Employment at the Time of the Survey Feel Secure in their Job by Socio-Economic Background, 2006	103
5.11	Employer-Provided Education/Training Received by School Leavers in Employment at the Time of the Survey, 2006	104
5.12	Employer-Provided Education/Training Received by School Leavers in Employment at the Time of the Survey, 2006 - Continuing or Complete	105
5.13	Employer-Provided Education/Training Specific to Current Job or General	106
5.14	Extent to Which Knowledge and Skills Acquired in Course of Education and Training is Used in Current Job, 2006	107
5.15	Extent to Which Knowledge and Skills Acquired in Course of Education and Training is Used in Current Job by Level of Education, 2006	108
5.16	Extent to Which Knowledge and Skills Acquired in Course of Education and Training is Used in Current Job by Work Sector, 2006	109
5.17	Extent to Which Current Job is Appropriate to Level of Education, 2006	110
5.18	Extent to Which Current Job is Appropriate to Level of Education by Education Level, 2006	110
5.19	Extent to Which Current Job is Appropriate to Level of Education by Work Sector, 2006	111
5.20	Percentage Satisfied with their Present Economic Situation, 2006	112
5.21	Percentage Satisfied with their Present Economic Situation by Employment Status, 2006	114

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents a descriptive account of the experiences of young people as they leave second-level education (which includes Post Leaving Certificate courses). It provides valuable insights into the school and post-school experiences of school leavers, and places particular focus on their position one year after leaving school. For those engaged in education and labour market policy the survey highlights emerging and continuing patterns in terms of how young people fare within second-level schooling, their levels of progression to further study and training and labour market integration processes. The report is based on the 2006 School Leavers' Survey, which was carried out by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) for the Department of Education and Science.

The survey finds no improvement in levels of second-level completion, which continue to remain at levels found in the early 1990s, despite much policy focus and considerable resources allocated towards combating early school leaving and educational under-achievement. Socio-economic differences in second-level completion and performance remain wide. This has serious implications for the life chances of large groups in society (particularly those from unemployed backgrounds), both in the short-term in terms of accessing further education and training opportunities and in terms of longer-term labour market and social outcomes. Indeed, the immediate labour market experiences of young people leaving school early have in fact worsened and they now face greater difficulty in securing employment. We will continue to monitor the extent to which competition with other groups in the labour market, such as women returning to the labour market, students working part-time and immigrant groups, may be playing a role in the more difficult labour market environment for less qualified young people.

The survey also reveals wide gender differences in educational choices and pathways. Upon leaving school, females continue to dominate entry to the Post Leaving Certificate sector, while a higher proportion of young males participate in Apprenticeship programmes. Within school, males continue to be over-represented among early school leavers. The higher levels of early school leaving among males has particular implications for their labour market prospects, which is further reinforced by males becoming increasingly concentrated within narrow sectors in the economy making them potentially more vulnerable in the event of an economic downturn.

Results show continuing growth in higher education entry with a majority of school leavers now progressing to third level education. In addition, greater numbers of early school leavers are accessing alternative education/training opportunities outside the official second-level system, such as Youthreach and FETAC courses.



# 1 ■ INTRODUCTION







# 1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents a descriptive account of the experiences of young people leaving the second-level educational system. It is based on the findings of the 2006 School Leavers' Survey, which is carried out by the ESRI for the Department of Education and Science. The School Leavers' Survey provides an insight into the position, experiences, and attitudes of school leavers approximately one year after leaving second-level education. For those engaged in education and labour market policy this survey highlights emerging and continuing patterns and trends regarding the progression of school leavers one year on. The School Leavers' Survey ran consecutively from 1980 through to 1999 and in 2002 and 2004 thus enabling the analysis of both short-term and long-term trends<sup>1</sup>.

School leavers who exited the second-level system in the 2003/04 academic year (between September 2003 and the end of August 2004), provide the reference cohort for this study. As in previous years this report presents data from the most current survey, alongside data from the two previous surveys conducted, in this case, the 2002 and 2004 surveys<sup>2</sup>.

The School Leavers' Surveys are based on a stratified random sample<sup>3</sup> of those leaving the official second-level system, which includes the Post Leaving Certificate sector (PLC). Respondents were interviewed between 20 and 26 months after leaving school. The interview period for the 2006 survey was April - September 2006. The effective sample size of the current survey is 1,999 respondents.

The principal focus of this research is to establish the economic status of school leavers one year on. By economic status we mean whether they are i) employed, ii) unemployed, iii) a student, iv) unavailable for work, or v) have emigrated. In the course of this report we focus on a number of aspects of the economic and related circumstances of school leavers one year after leaving the full-time educational system. In particular we examine the relationship between the stage at which the former student left education and their subsequent situation in the labour market or further education as appropriate.

The report is divided into six main chapters, which are all based on bivariate analysis. Chapter 2 examines the second-level educational experiences of school leavers. Among the issues examined are their performance in public examinations, early school leaving, attitudes towards their schooling, participation in Transition Year

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<sup>1</sup> The School Leavers' Survey was not carried out in the years 2000, 2001 or 2003.

<sup>2</sup> Analysis contained in this report excludes those aged over 25 years, except the results for 2002 (when the Annual Report was based on the analysis of school leavers of all ages).

<sup>3</sup> Because the statistics contained in this report are based on a sample, they are consequently subject to usual sampling error variances.

and engagement in paid employment while at school. Chapter 3 focuses on the post-school educational and training experiences of school leavers, exploring the levels of participation in PLC courses, state-sponsored training and higher education. The report switches attention to the labour market experiences of school leavers in Chapter 4. Here, rates of labour market entry are examined, along with discussion of their relative 'success' in labour market integration. Chapter 5 examines the employment experience of school leavers to include distribution by industrial sector, occupation and earnings. A selection of other labour market characteristics, not analysed in previous reports, are also examined in this chapter. This includes trade union membership, job security and employer-provided education/training. School leavers' satisfaction ratings with their economic situation are also presented here. Finally, the key findings are outlined in Chapter 6.

# **2.** SECOND-LEVEL EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND EXPERIENCES





## 2. SECOND-LEVEL EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND EXPERIENCES

This chapter considers the second-level educational experiences of school leavers. Among the issues explored are rates of retention at second-level, performance in state exams, participation in Transition Year and the range of Leaving Cert programmes, engagement in paid employment outside school, attendance and school leavers' subjective experiences of their schooling.

### 2.1 Second-Level Attainment Levels

The extent to which school leavers persisted in school to complete the Leaving Cert (or its equivalent) is the focus of Figure 2.1a. Three categories of educational attainment are referred to: i) those who left with no qualifications, ii) those who left after Junior Certificate and iii) those who left after having completed the Leaving Certificate (or its equivalent). In aggregate, 82 per cent of school leavers in 2006 completed the Leaving Certificate, 14 per cent completed the Junior Certificate, while 4 per cent left with no qualifications (never completing any official second-level exam).

**Figure 2.1a: Qualification Level of School Leavers 1980-2006**

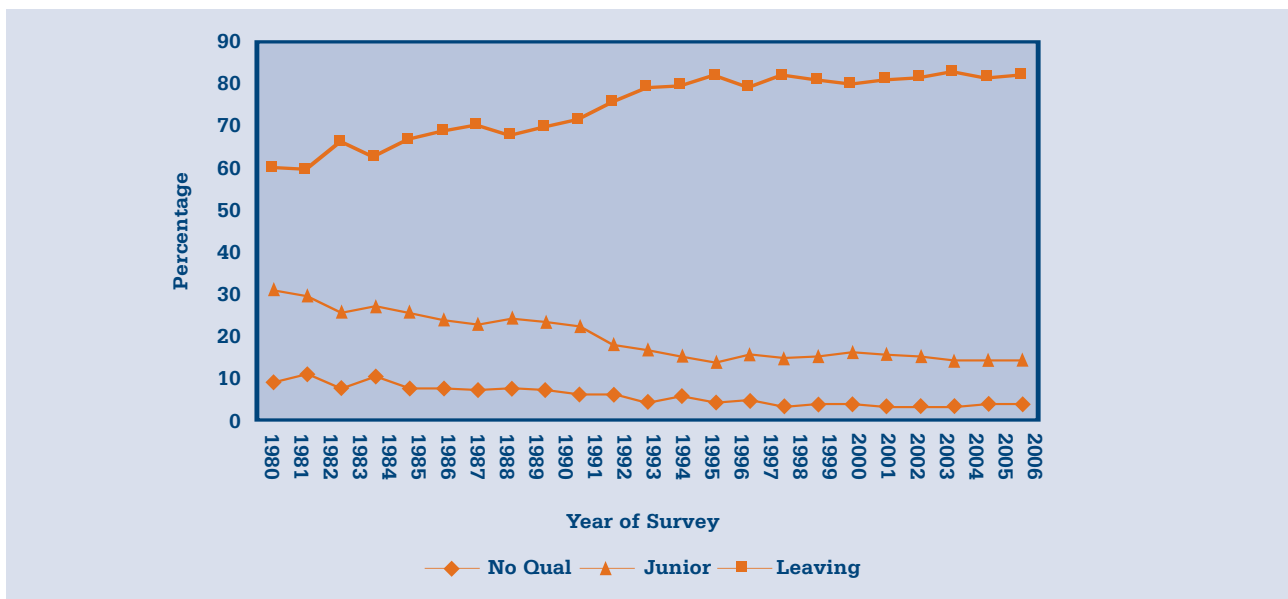
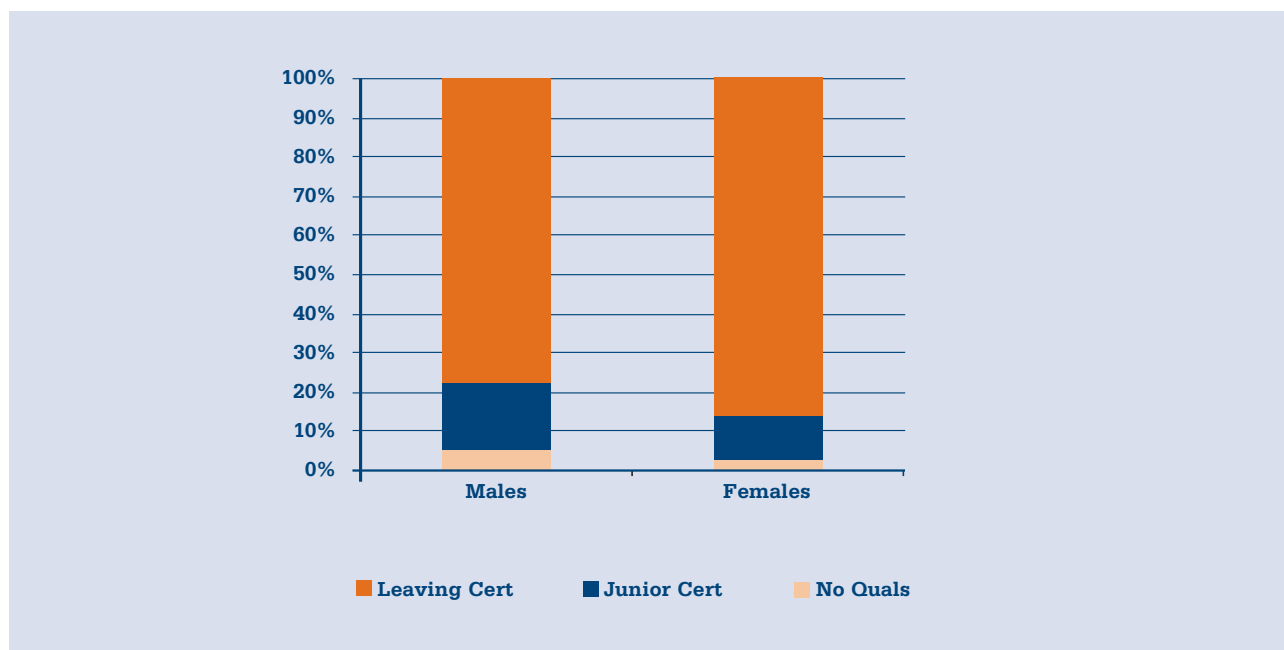


Figure 2.1a also illustrates longer-term trends in the qualification levels of school leavers since 1980. One can see from the graph that the percentage of those leaving school without the Leaving Certificate has fallen steadily. In 1980, 9 per cent of students left with no qualifications and 31 per cent left after the Junior Cycle. By 2006, the corresponding figures had dropped to 4 per cent and 14 per cent, respectively, so that the proportion leaving school with the Leaving Certificate had risen from 60 per cent to 82 per cent. The percentage of school



leavers remaining in school to complete their second-level education has remained relatively stable at 79-82 per cent since 1991; this is despite the fact that there has been considerable policy attention over recent years focused on boosting second-level retention rates<sup>4</sup>. However, it should also be noted that while the proportions leaving school early have remained unchanged, some of these early leavers are pursuing alternative educational courses such as through FETAC<sup>5</sup> (Level 4, 5 and 6 courses), Youthreach, Community Training Centres and Senior Traveller Training. Hence, while they have left the official second-level system before completion, they may still be located within the wider educational system.

**Figure 2.1b: Second-Level Qualifications by Gender (2006)**



Gender differences in the educational attainment of male and female leavers continue to be apparent - throughout the years, the school leavers' survey has shown that males exhibit a greater tendency towards early school leaving than their female counterparts. As illustrated in Figure 2.1b, in 2006 5 per cent of males as compared to 3 per cent of females left school without any qualifications. A greater proportion of females than males obtain Leaving Certificate qualifications, 86 per cent relative to 77 per cent. The proportion of males exiting the second-level system without sitting the Leaving Certificate is 9 percentage points higher than for females.

<sup>4</sup> The Government's most recent target regarding second-level retention rates is to ensure that the proportion of the population aged 20-24 completing upper second-level education, or its equivalent, will exceed 90 per cent by 2013 (see the *National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016: Building an Inclusive Society* for more information on this).

<sup>5</sup> Further Education and Training Awards Council.

In the following sections we examine whether socio-economic background (in relation to father's and mother's socio-economic status) has a bearing on the stage at which the school leaver left school.

Tables 2.1a and 2.1b detail the relationship between the school leaver's gender, educational attainment and their parent's socio-economic status. A strong correlation between level of qualification and socio-economic background emerges. Both male and female school leavers from professional, employer/manager and agricultural backgrounds have significantly greater chances of obtaining Leaving Certificate qualifications. Those from manual and, most notably, unemployed backgrounds have a considerably higher probability than other groups of leaving before the Leaving Certificate stage. Rates of retention in second-level vary quite widely between those not providing their father's occupation relative to those with mothers in this category. This relates to the larger relative size of this group among mothers (32 per cent relative to 9 per cent of fathers), which reflects the larger number of women in home duties. School leavers not indicating their mother's occupation have retention rates close to the average, whereas those with fathers in this category have significantly lower than average retention.

Overall, parental occupation appears to have a stronger effect on the level of educational attainment of males than on that of females, which partly reflects the greater levels of early school leaving among males. There are particularly noteworthy differences in the educational attainments of males and females whose fathers are unemployed – which suggests that where family resources are limited and the main breadwinner is out-of-work, male teenagers face greater pressure to leave school early to take up employment than their females counterparts. A similar pattern holds where the mother is unemployed, although the gender differences are less dramatic.

**Table 2.1a: Initial Level of Education Attained by Socio-Economic Background (2006) – Father's Occupation\***

	Male				Female				Total
	No Quals	Junior Cert	Leaving Cert	Total (Col %)	No Quals	Junior Cert	Leaving Cert	Total (Col %)	Col%
Farmer/Agriculture	1.9	9.8	88.3	10.1	1.2	7.9	90.9	10.7	<b>10.4</b>
Higher/Lower professional	0.2	8.7	91.1	10.7	0.4	8.8	90.8	11.4	<b>11.0</b>
Employer/manager	1.7	10.6	87.7	5.5	0.4	12.5	87.1	7.7	<b>6.6</b>
Intermediate non-manual	3.1	16.6	80.3	23.9	3.2	9.4	87.4	21.8	<b>22.8</b>
Skilled/semi/unskilled manual	4.7	18.4	76.9	35.9	1.7	9.8	88.5	33.2	<b>34.6</b>
Unemployed	19.6	44.5	35.9	4.8	15.9	16.2	67.9	6.0	<b>5.4</b>
Other/unknown	13.2	28.2	58.6	9.1	8.3	17.0	74.7	9.3	<b>9.2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>77.4</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>86.2</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Est. No. in category</b>	<b>1614</b>	<b>5870</b>	<b>25585</b>	<b>33069</b>	<b>1059</b>	<b>3522</b>	<b>28535</b>	<b>33116</b>	<b>66185</b>

\*Note: Row percentages for each level of education; column percentages for total

**Table 2.1b: Initial Level of Education Attained by Socio-Economic Background (2006) -  
Mother's Occupation \***

	Male				Female				Total
	No Quals	Junior Cert	Leaving Cert	Total (Col %)	No Quals	Junior Cert	Leaving Cert	Total (Col %)	Col%
Farmer/Agriculture	9.2	16.0	74.8	0.5	11.0	15.0	74.0	0.4	<b>0.4</b>
Higher/Lower professional	0.5	4.7	94.8	14.0	0.3	4.7	95.1	14.5	<b>14.3</b>
Employer/manager	4.7	22.8	72.5	2.0	1.1	16.6	82.3	3.0	<b>2.5</b>
Intermediate non-manual	2.3	17.6	80.0	42.9	2.1	10.6	87.3	38.9	<b>40.9</b>
Skilled/semi/unskilled manual	7.9	27.7	64.4	10.0	3.2	14.4	82.4	8.4	<b>9.2</b>
Unemployed	32.8	30.3	36.9	0.7	12.8	31.6	55.6	0.9	<b>0.8</b>
Other/unknown	8.8	20.1	71.1	29.8	5.5	11.2	83.3	33.8	<b>31.8</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>77.4</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>86.2</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Est. No. in category</b>	<b>1614</b>	<b>5870</b>	<b>25586</b>	<b>33070</b>	<b>1058</b>	<b>3521</b>	<b>28533</b>	<b>33112</b>	<b>66182</b>

**\*Note:** Row percentages for each level of education; column percentages for total

Table 2.2 below presents further details on the qualification levels at which school leavers left the education system by father's socio-economic background. In particular it focuses on the three types of Leaving Certificate i.e. the established Leaving Certificate, the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme and the Leaving Certificate Applied. Looking at different outcomes by father's socio-economic background, school leavers from unemployed backgrounds are most likely to leave with no qualifications (18 per cent) while the percentage of those from farming, professional, employer/manager, intermediate non-manual or manual backgrounds who do so is 2 per cent or lower. There is also a clear class differential in terms of the probability of leaving at the Junior Certificate level (including those who drop out before sitting the Leaving Certificate), between those from unemployed backgrounds (29 per cent) and leavers from other socio-economic groups (9 – 15 per cent).

When distinguishing between the different types of Leaving Certificate, the established Leaving Certificate, Vocational Programme and Leaving Certificate Applied, we see a clear class differentiation in the case of the established Leaving Certificate and the Leaving Certificate Applied but a more mixed pattern for the Vocational Programme. While three-quarters of students from professional and employer/manager backgrounds leave school having taken the established Leaving Certificate, the figure is one-third of students from unemployed backgrounds, 45 per cent of students from farm backgrounds and 55 per cent of those from manual backgrounds. On the other hand, less than 2 per cent of students from professional and managerial backgrounds left school having taken the Leaving Certificate Applied, a rate one-third lower than the average for all groups. The Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme was taken by 19 per cent of school leavers but with substantially higher figures for those from farm backgrounds (37 per cent) and lower figures for those from employer/manager backgrounds (11 per cent).

**Table 2.2: Stage Left School by Father's Socio-Economic Background (2006)\***

	No Quals	Junior Cert	LC Traditional	LC Applied	LC Vocational
Farmer/Agriculture	1.6	10.5	44.8	6.0	37.1
H/L professional	0.3	8.8	76.2	1.7	13.1
Employer/manager	0.9	11.8	76.2	0.4	10.7
Intermediate non-manual	3.2	13.6	58.9	7.2	17.1
Skilled/semi/unskilled manual	3.3	14.8	55.0	6.9	20.0
Unemployed	17.5	28.8	32.5	7.5	13.7
Other/unknown	10.7	23.0	49.0	5.3	11.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>56.8</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>18.6</b>

\***Note:** Row percentages for each socio-economic background.

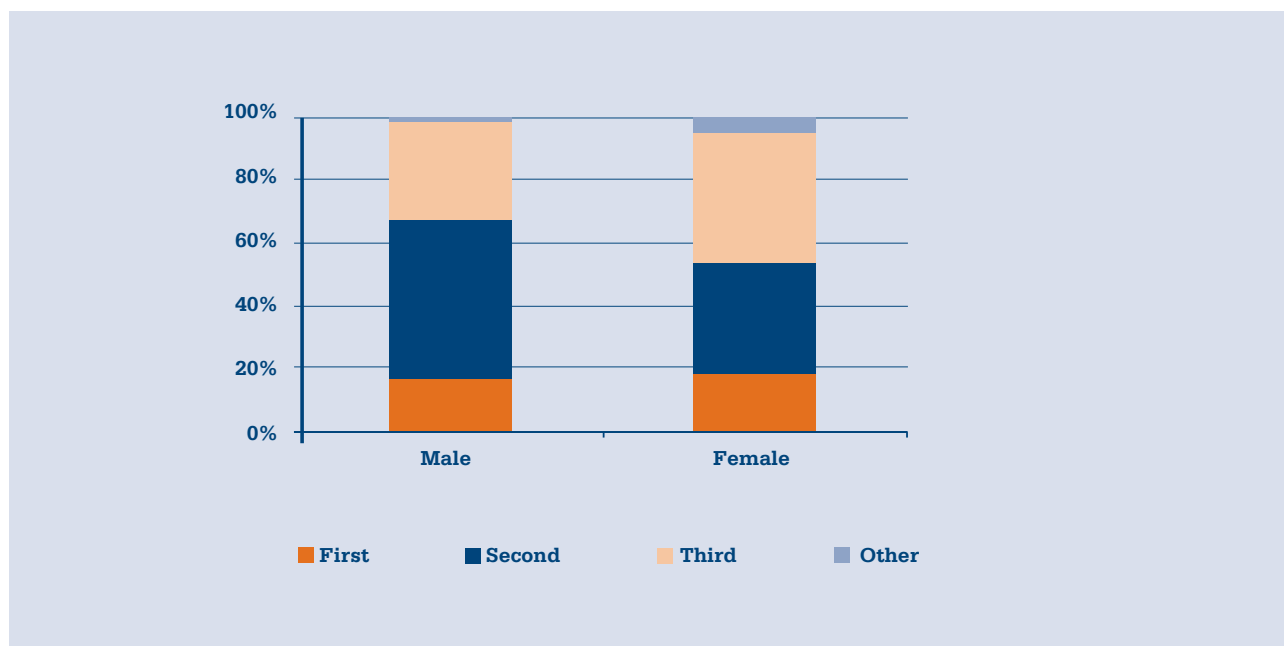
## 2.2 Early School Leaving

Figure 2.2a shows a breakdown of those who left school<sup>6</sup> with no formal qualifications by the stage at which they left and gender. As discussed earlier, males (60 per cent) are more strongly represented than females among those who leave school without any qualifications. In aggregate, 18 per cent of school leavers exit in their first year of secondary school, a fall of 2 per cent on 2004 figures. The percentage departing in their second year has increased on 2004 figures (45 per cent in 2006 relative to 43 per cent in 2004) and accounts for the highest single proportion of school leavers. There has been a similar increase of 2 percentage points from 2004 in the proportion leaving during their third year, representing 35 per cent of school leavers in 2006.

In terms of gender differentials, a significant shift is notable from the pattern, which emerged in 2004, when more males (37 per cent) than females (27 per cent) left school during third year. In 2006, 42 per cent of females left school in third year displaying a marked increase of 15 percentage points from 2004, while for males just 31 per cent left during this year, representing a decrease of 6 percentage points on 2004 figures.

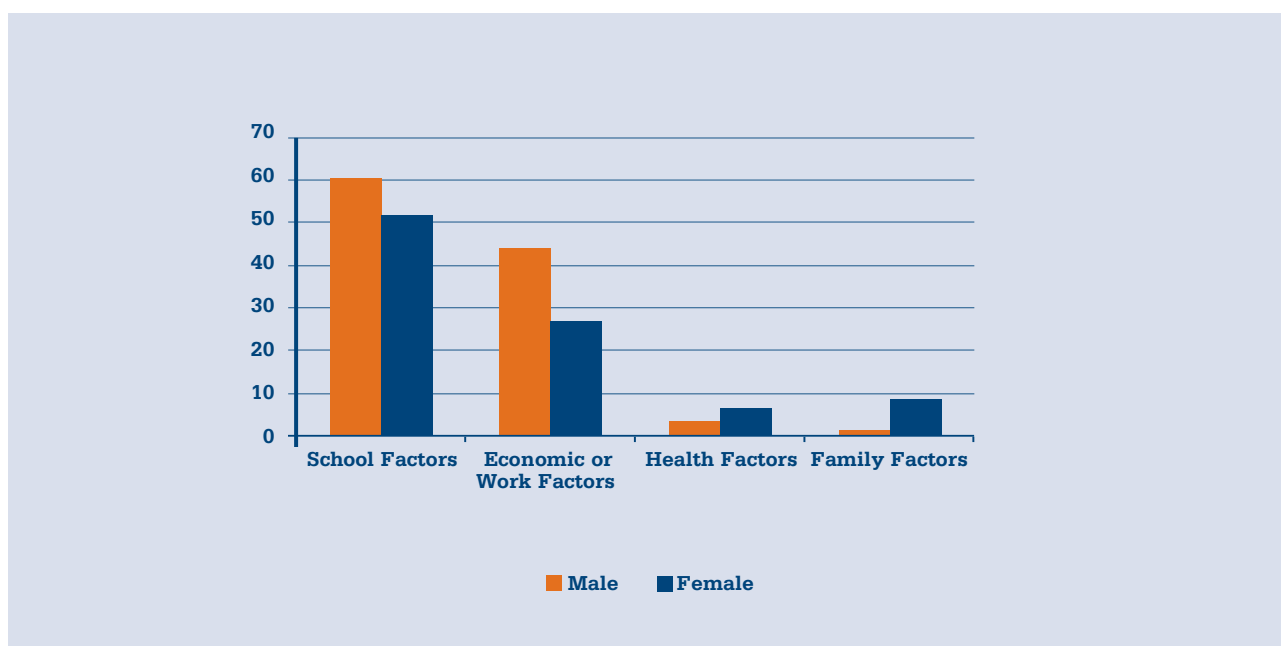
<sup>6</sup> It should be noted that this data is concerned with departure from the official second-level system; some of these early leavers are actually in alternative educational settings, such as FETAC courses and the Youthreach programme.

**Figure 2.2a: Stage at Which Leavers with No Formal Qualifications Left School (2006)**



*Factors Influencing Respondents to Leave*

A question was added to the 2004 survey whereby respondents who left school prior to sitting the Leaving Certificate/Leaving Certificate Applied were asked to indicate the main factors influencing their decision to leave. The choices provided were school factors, economic or work factors, family factors, health factors and other factors. In aggregate, it is clear that the overriding factors influencing students to leave school relate to ‘school factors’ (58 per cent), followed by ‘economic or work factors’ (38 per cent), ‘health factors’ (4 per cent) and ‘family factors’ (4 per cent). When concentrating on gender differentials, Figure 2.2b shows a clear distinction can be drawn with respect to family factors – with more females citing this factor, while males are likely to cite economic/work or school factors behind their decision to leave school.

**Figure 2.2b: Reasons for Leaving School Prior to Leaving Cert (2006)**

### 2.3 Examination Performance

Eight categories of school leavers' educational attainment are used throughout this chapter, based on school leavers' performance in their final official exam as follows:

- No qualifications – no formal examinations taken;
- Junior Certificate – less than 5Ds;
- Junior Certificate – 5 or more Ds, but no Cs or better on higher level papers;
- Junior Certificate – 1 or more Cs (or better) on higher level papers;
- Leaving Certificate – less than 5Ds;
- Leaving Certificate – 5 or more Ds, but no Cs (or better) on higher level papers;
- Leaving Certificate – 1 to 3 Cs (or better) on higher level papers;
- Leaving Certificate – 4 or more Cs (or better) on higher-level papers.

Students who took the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) programme are excluded from these analyses, due to the different grading system utilised in the LCA and the small numbers of respondents who took this programme.

Figures 2.3a, 2.3b, and 2.3c present the results for those for whom we have exam results. From Figure 2.3a we see that the results for the Junior Certificate remain relatively constant with those presented in the 2004 report.



At Leaving Certificate level, there has been a slight reduction in the percentage achieving 1-3 'honours' (from 24 to 21 per cent), with a commensurate increase in the numbers attaining 5 or more 'passes' with no 'honours'.

We saw earlier that more females than males complete the Leaving Certificate (Figure 2.1b), and among those who leave school before the Junior Cert, females are more likely to remain in school until their third year. Compared to 2004 the proportion of males achieving 'honours' in their Leaving Cert (54 per cent) has fallen by 6 percentage points, while for females the proportion remains stable at 57 per cent. Perhaps most notable, females continue to outnumber males in terms of the proportion achieving 4 or more 'honours' in their Leaving Cert (by 9 percentage points), and this differential has increased by 3 percentage points since 2004.

**Figure 2.3a: Outcome of Last Examination Sat, All Leavers, 2006**

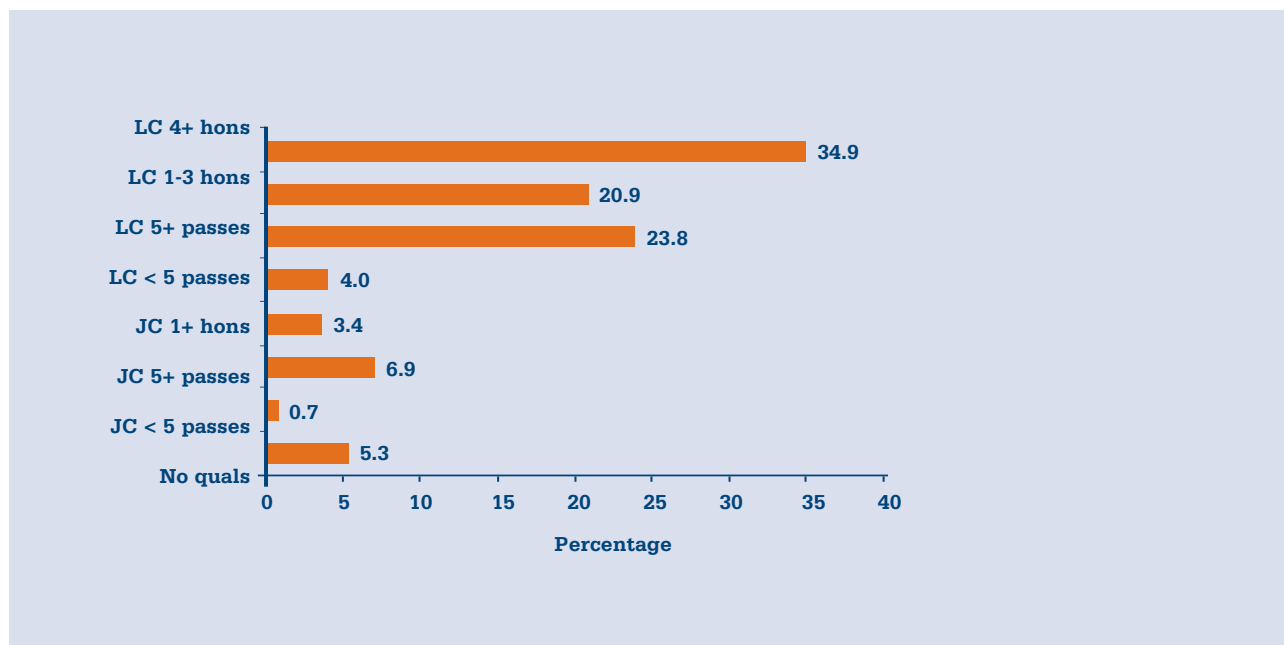


Figure 2.3b: Outcome of Last Examination Sat - Males

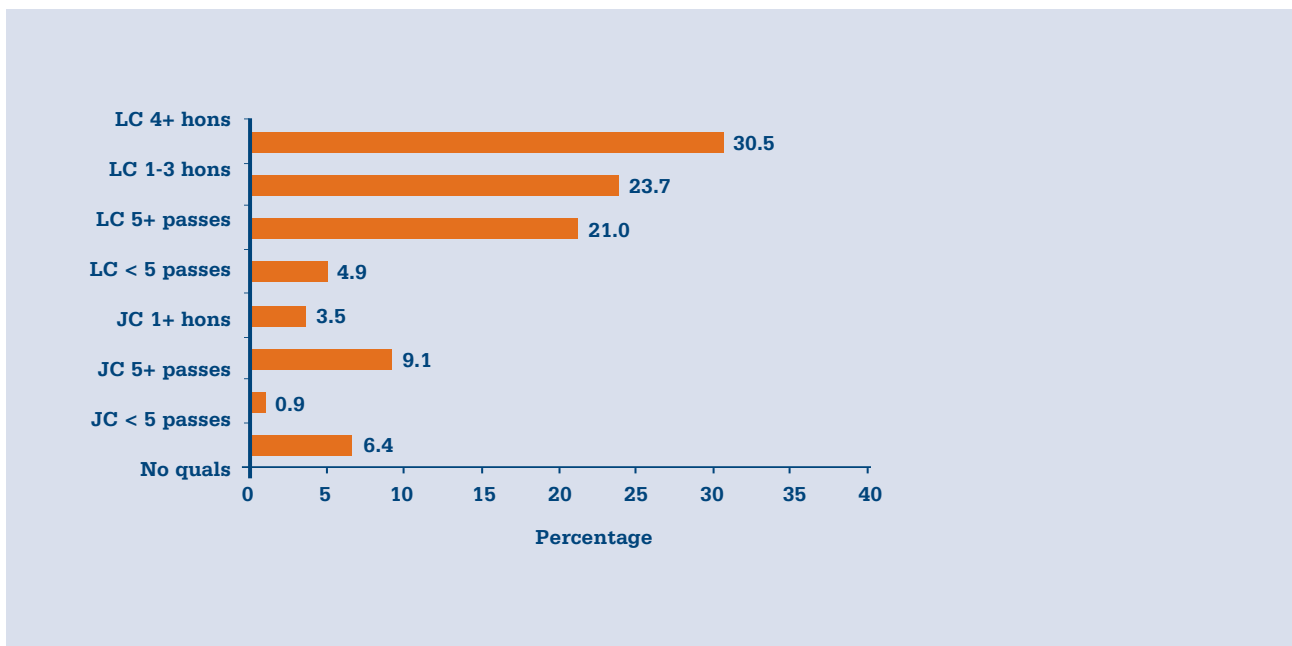


Figure 2.3c: Outcome of Last Examination Sat - Females

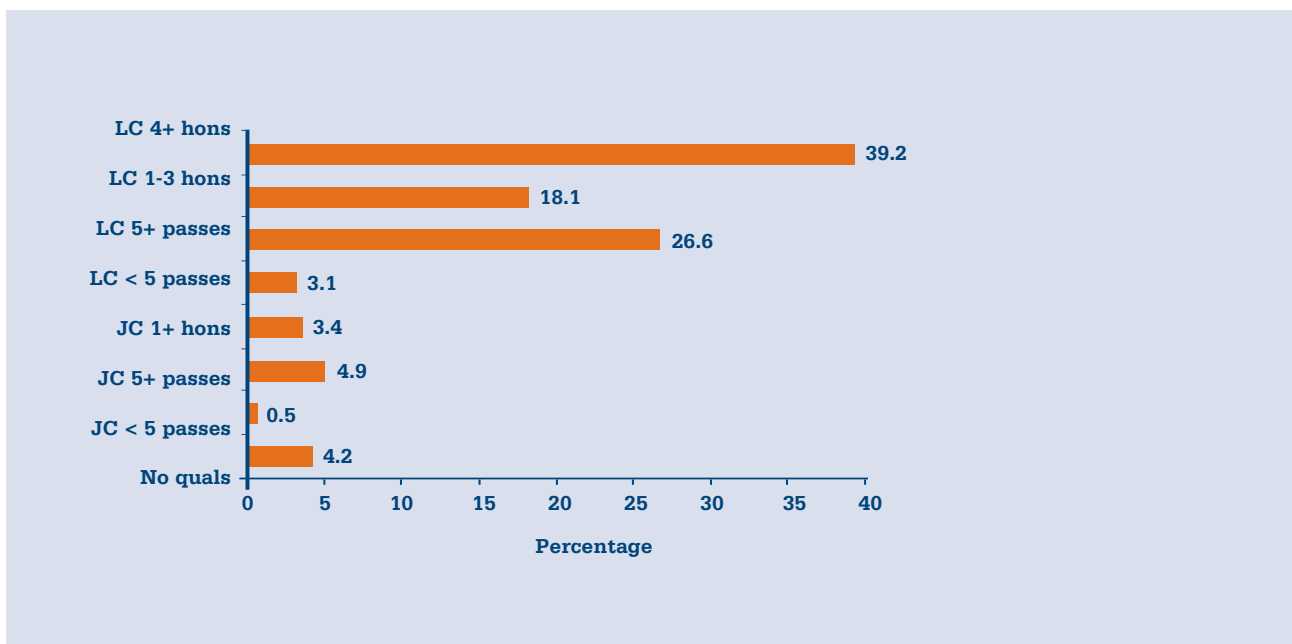


Table 2.3a below provides details on the exam results obtained by socio-economic background for those school leavers (for whom we have results) whose last official exam was the Junior Certificate. Junior Certificate results are broken into 3 categories: less than 5 'passes', 5 or more passes with no 'honours' and 1 or more 'honours'. Nearly two-thirds of students who leave at this stage achieve 5 or more passes, while a further 31 per cent achieve 1 or more 'honours'. Those from employer/manager and professional backgrounds who leave after the Junior Certificate stand out as being most likely to achieve strong results: 70 and 56 per cent, respectively, achieve at least one 'honour', compared to 31 per cent overall.

**Table 2.3a: Junior Cert Examination Results by Socio-Economic Background (2006) –  
Father's Occupation \***

	<5 Ds	5+ Ds, No Cs	1+ Cs
Farmer/Agriculture	6.8	52.8	40.4
H/L professional	9.6	34.1	56.2
Employer/manager	0.0	29.9	70.1
Intermediate non-manual	5.6	64.7	29.7
Skilled/semi/unskilled manual	5.8	69.7	24.5
Unemployed	8.2	70.4	21.4
Other/unknown	11.1	75.1	13.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>62.5</b>	<b>30.9</b>

\***Note:** Row percentages for each socio-economic background.

Table 2.3b below presents the Leaving Certificate exam results of school leavers (for whom we have the results). Leaving Certificate results are divided into four categories: i) less than 5 'passes', ii) 5 or more passes with no 'honours', iii) 1-3 'honours' and iv) 4 or more 'honours'. Overall, of those who sit the Leaving Certificate, about one in 20 achieve less than 5 'passes', 29 per cent achieve 5 or more 'passes' (but no 'honours'), one quarter attain 1-3 'honours' and 42 per cent achieve 4 or more 'honours'. Again, students from professional and employer/manager backgrounds stand out as having stronger results, with 63 and 58 per cent achieving 4 or more 'honours', considerably greater than the average and over three times the proportion of students from unemployed backgrounds who do so.

While in 2004 it was noted that those students from manual backgrounds who sit the Leaving Certificate tend to do better than their counterparts from intermediate non-manual backgrounds, this pattern has reversed in 2006. Over 67 per cent of those from intermediate non-manual backgrounds who sit the Leaving Cert attain at least one 'honour', relative to 64 per cent of those from manual backgrounds.

**Table 2.3b: Leaving Cert Examination Results by Socio-Economic Background (2006) – Father's Occupation\***

	< 5 Ds	5+ Ds, No Cs	1-3 Honours	4+ Honours
Farmer/Agriculture	5.6	20.4	23.5	50.5
H/L professional	0.6	19.8	17.2	62.5
Employer/manager	2.2	30.2	9.3	58.2
Intermediate non-manual	4.6	28.0	28.7	38.7
Skilled/semi/unskilled manual	5.8	30.5	30.1	33.6
Unemployed	0.0	62.7	20.8	16.5
Other/unknown	17.0	38.7	24.2	20.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>28.5</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>41.7</b>

\***Note:** Row percentages for each socio-economic background.

## 2.4 Participation in Transition Year

We first consider the relationship between participation in Transition Year and performance in the Leaving Certificate exam and notable patterns are apparent (Table 2.4a). In aggregate, the majority of students do not participate: 61 per cent as opposed to 39 per cent, participation rates largely in line with 2004. As was the case in 2004, those who achieved four or more 'honours' are markedly more likely to have participated in the programme (51 per cent compared to 27-29 per cent for the other groups).

**Table 2.4a: Leaving Cert Examination Results by Participation in Transition Year (2006)**

LC Results	Participated in TY	Did not Participate in TY
< 5 passes	42.6*	57.4*
5+ passes	27.4	72.6
1-3 Honours	29.2	70.8
4+ Honours	51.4	48.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>38.6</b>	<b>61.4</b>

\***Note:** Small numbers failing to achieve 5 or more 'passes' in their Leaving Certificate make these results unreliable.

While these performance differences may reflect the potential impact of the programme on grades, they also reflect the selective nature of participants. Table 2.4b shows participation in the Transition Year programme among those who completed second-level by socio-economic background. Clearly levels of participation are significantly higher among those from more affluent backgrounds – young people from professional and employer/manager backgrounds are significantly more likely to have participated in Transition Year than other groups.

**Table 2.4b: Participation in Transition Year Among those who Completed Leaving Cert by Father's Socio-Economic Group (2006)**

	Participated in TY	Did not Participate in TY
Farmer/Agriculture	38.6	61.4
H/L professional	48.8	51.2
Employer/manager	54.5	45.5
Intermediate non-manual	38.8	61.2
Skilled/semi/unskilled manual	29.7	70.3
Unemployed	13.1	86.9
Other/unknown	35.7	64.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>36.8</b>	<b>63.2</b>

## 2.5 Part-Time Employment While at School

Table 2.5 below presents information on the prevalence of part-time work among students before leaving school. Information on overall participation rates is given as well as the school year in which pupils engaged in the work and the days of the week they worked. Few students who worked while at school worked on weekdays only, so the figure for weekday work includes those who worked on weekdays as well as on weekends.

In aggregate, 45 per cent of school leavers participated in part-time work while at school, slightly below the figure of 53 per cent for 2004. In line with earlier years, employment rates are highest during fifth year. Of those who worked while in second-level, over three quarters worked in fifth year. The majority of this work takes place over the weekend, although a sizeable proportion of part-time workers engage in paid work during the week (40 per cent). Gender differences are small, with females slightly more likely to work while in school (49 compared to 41 per cent) but, among those who work, males are more likely to work on weekdays (44 compared to 37 per cent) and to work at a younger age.

**Table 2.5: Participation in Part-Time Work While in School, all School Leavers (2006)\***

		Male	Female	Total
Held part-time job?	No	59.0	51.5	55.2
	Yes	41.0	48.5	44.8
Year job held	6th year	59.9	57.4	58.5
	5th year	71.1	80.7	76.3
	4th year	35.0	43.3	39.5
	3rd year	38.2	35.7	36.8
	2nd year	22.2	14.7	18.2
	1st year	12.8	7.7	10.1
Days worked	Weekends only	55.4	62.1	59.0
	Weekdays	43.5	36.7	39.8

**\*Note:** Few work only on weekdays so most of those working weekdays also work weekends

The proportion who work while at school reflects both the propensity to work in any given school year as well as how long someone stays in the school system. To provide a clearer examination of the relationship between part-time employment and social background, we examine the prevalence of part-time work for those who completed their second-level education.

Table 2.6 provides a breakdown of those who worked part-time and also those who worked weekdays by socio-economic status of both parents. The relationship between the likelihood of participation in part-time work while at school and parent's socio-economic background is notable. Turning first to father's occupation, the highest participation rate is found among those from an intermediate non-manual background (54 per cent), and for those from manual backgrounds, where over half worked while at school. The participation rate among those whose father is in a professional occupation is lower than average, as is the rate for those from unemployed backgrounds. When we consider mother's occupation, the highest participation in work while at school is found among those whose mother is in a manual or an intermediate non-manual occupation and the lowest among those whose mothers are unemployed or in professional or employer/manager occupations (43 per cent).



**Table 2.6: Participation in Part-Time Work and Weekday Work While in School by Father's and Mother's Socio-Economic Group, Leaving Cert Leavers (2006)**

	Held Part-time Job	Worked Weekdays
<b>Father's Occupation</b>		
Farmer/other agriculture	48.1	9.8
Higher/Lower Professional	37.0	14.8
Employer/Manager	49.6	20.5
Intermediate/other non-manual	54.1	23.8
Skilled/semi-/unskilled manual	52.7	19.4
Unemployed	36.4	9.4
Unknown	32.5	19.7
<b>Mother's Occupation</b>		
Farmer/other agriculture	92.4*	0.0*
Higher/Lower Professional	42.8	15.7
Employer/Manager	43.3	19.7
Intermediate/other non-manual	53.2	21.0
Skilled/semi-/unskilled manual	55.6	24.5
Unemployed	43.0	7.3
Unknown	42.3	15.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>48.3</b>	<b>18.5</b>

**\*Note:** Small numbers of mothers employed in farming make these results unreliable.

Those whose fathers are in intermediate non-manual or employer/manager occupations are most likely to have worked during the week (24 and 21 per cent respectively), while those whose fathers are in farming (10 per cent) or are unemployed (9 per cent) are least likely to do so. In terms of mother's occupation, those whose mothers are unemployed have the lowest rate of weekday working (7 per cent), while those whose mothers are in manual or intermediate non-manual occupations (25 and 21 per cent) have the highest rates.

Table 2.7 focuses on those who worked weekdays while at school broken down by gender and their parent's socio-economic group. In line with 2004 results, the highest levels of weekday working are found among males whose fathers are in employer/manager and intermediate non-manual occupations. The highest rates among females are found among those whose fathers are in intermediate non-manual occupations or whose mothers are employed in manual occupations. The lowest rates among males are for those whose fathers or mothers are in farming occupations or are unemployed. The lowest rates for females are found for those whose fathers are unemployed or in farming occupations or whose mothers are in farming, unemployed or professional occupations. Overall, there is a tendency for weekday working while at school among females to be more class differentiated in the expected direction (i.e. more prevalent among the lower socio-economic groups) than is

the case for males. Further, the differentiation by mother's occupation appears to be at least as great as the differentiation by father's occupation.

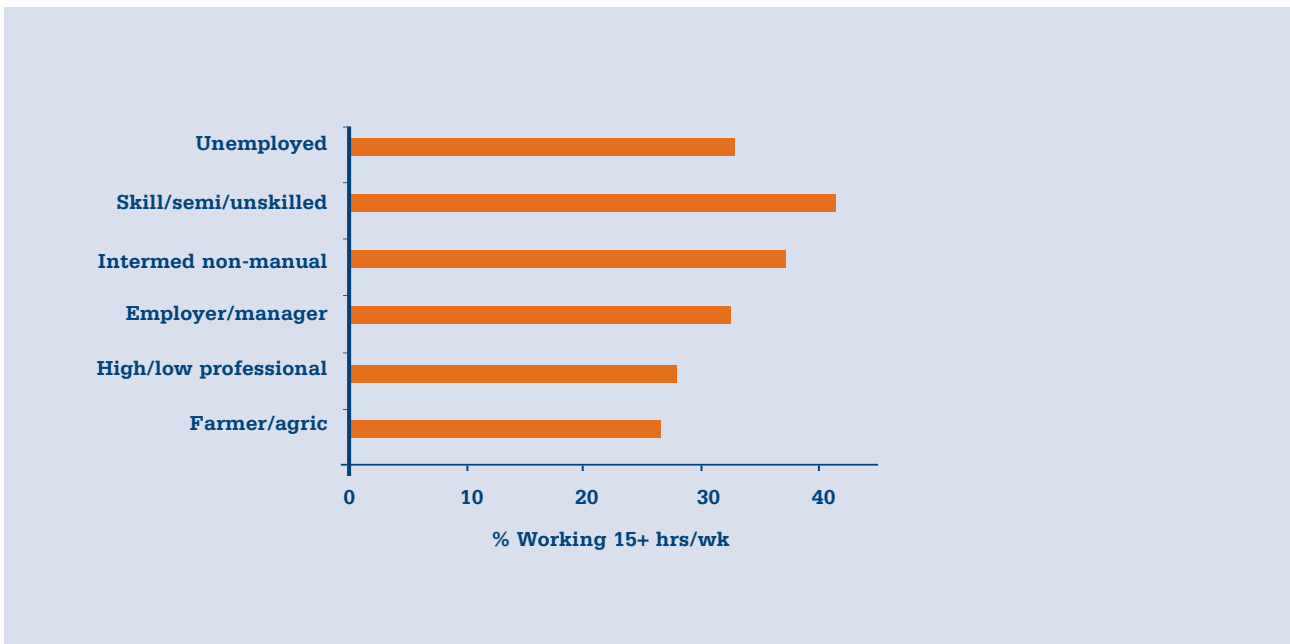
**Table 2.7: Participation in Weekday Work While in School by Socio-Economic Group and Gender (2006)**

	Male	Female
<b>Father's Occupation</b>		
Farmer/other agriculture	8.5	11.0
Higher/Lower Professional	13.9	15.7
Employer/Manager	26.0	16.5
Intermediate/other non-manual	25.0	22.7
Skilled/semi-/unskilled manual	18.3	20.5
Unemployed	0.0	13.3
Unknown	20.1	19.4
<b>Mother's Occupation</b>		
Farmer/other agriculture	0.0*	0.0*
Higher/Lower Professional	14.4	17.0
Employer/Manager	20.2	19.4
Intermediate/other non-manual	21.9	20.1
Skilled/semi-/unskilled manual	24.2	24.8
Unemployed	0.0	11.0
Unknown	13.8	16.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>18.4</b>	<b>18.6</b>

**\*Note:** Small numbers of mothers employed in farming make these results unreliable.

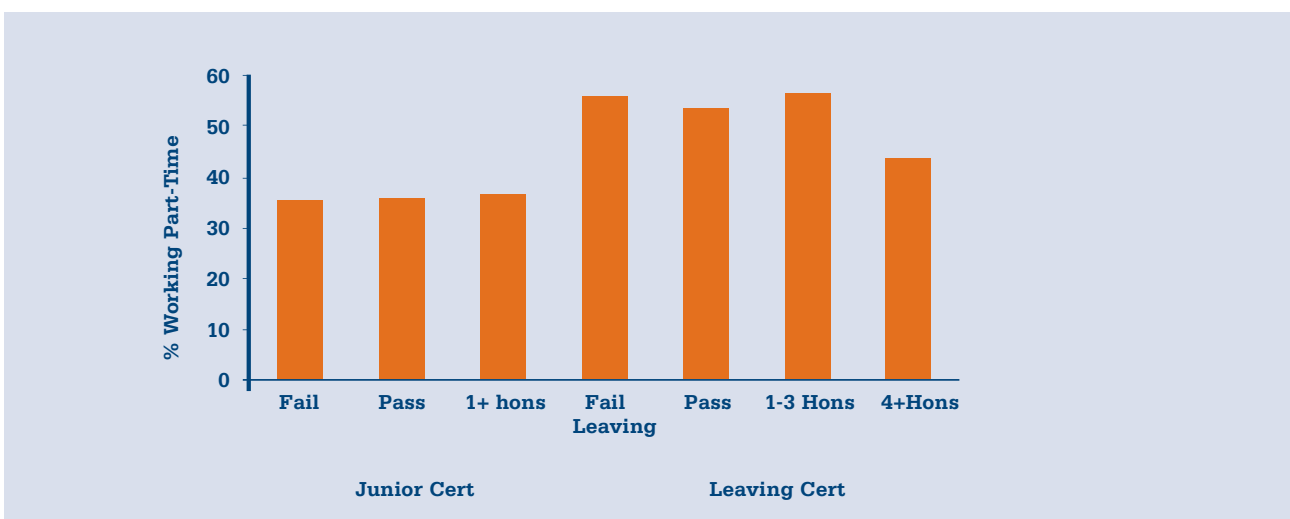
Figure 2.4a shows the proportion of workers who are engaged in more intensive jobs (15 or more hours per week) by father's socio-economic group. While the patterns of participation in part-time work across socio-economic groups were notable, it emerges that participation in more time-intensive jobs is also clearly structured by social background factors. Less than one-third of 'workers' from professional, employer/manager and farming backgrounds worked 15 or more hours per week, a considerably smaller share than students from manual and non-manual backgrounds (42 and 37 per cent).

**Figure 2.4a: Percentage of Those with Part-Time Jobs Working 15+ Hours Per Week by Father's Socio-Economic Group**



While the earlier analysis looked at the school employment patterns of those who completed second-level, the following examine school leavers who left school at some point after the Junior Cert exam. Figure 2.4b shows no clear pattern regarding examination performance at Junior Cert level and part-time work while at school. However, among those leaving school after the Leaving Cert exam, those who performed highly in the exam had lower rates of participation in part-time work.

**Figure 2.4b: Participation in Part-Time Work and Performance in Final Exam at School**



## 2.6 Attendance at School

School leavers participating in the 2006 survey were asked to indicate the extent to which they had missed school during their last year at school. Questions were asked about their engagement in 'truancy' (the extent to which they had 'skipped school') and the extent to which they missed school for other reasons, including illness, disability and holidays. Figure 2.5a shows variation in the extent of truancy by last examination sat. Clearly, persistent truancy (skipping several days or weeks at a time) is much more prevalent among those leaving school prior to completion of the Leaving Cert and is particularly apparent among those leaving school prior to the Junior Cert. A similar pattern emerges in relation to missing school for reasons of illness or taking holidays (Figure 2.5b). Patterns of absenteeism are also differentiated according to performance in the Junior and Leaving Cert exams. Figure 2.6 indicates higher levels of absenteeism due to ill health and term-time holidays among those who performed poorly in these exams.

The data also shows a greater level of truancy among males (47 per cent of males had 'skipped school' compared to 36 per cent of females), while missing school for reasons of ill health or term-time holidays is equally prevalent among males and females. Neither forms of non-attendance shows any clear relationship to socio-economic background.

**Figure 2.5a: Prevalence of Skipping School During Last Year At School, 2006**

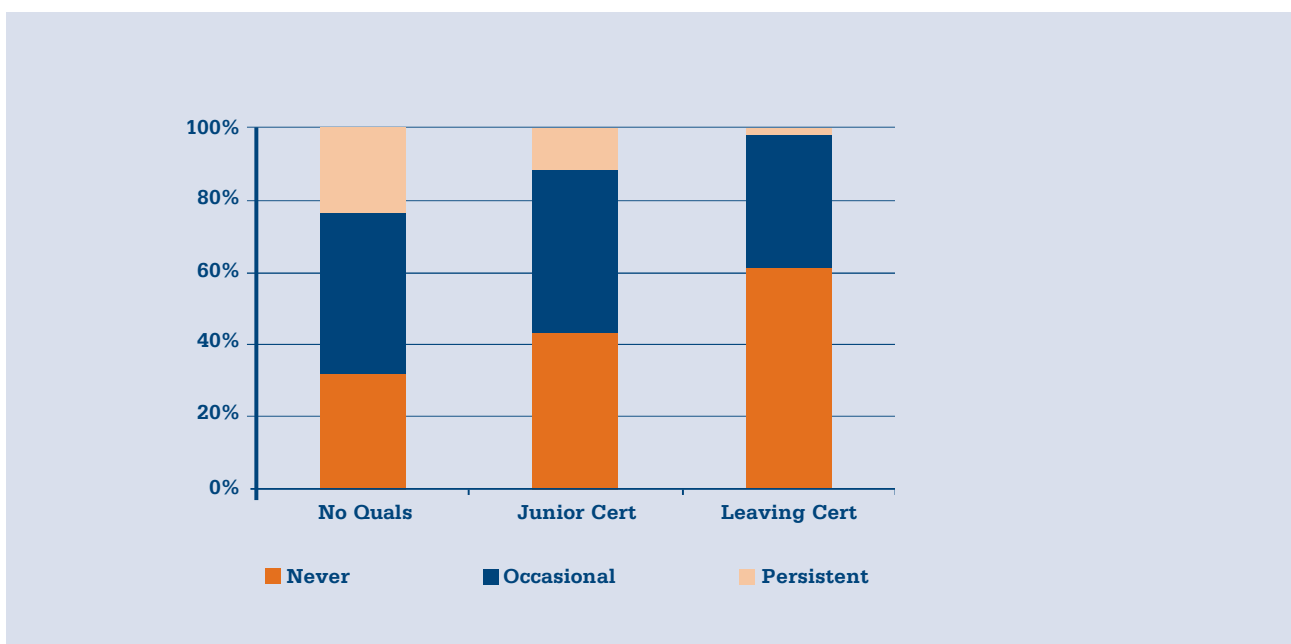


Figure 2.5b: Prevalence of Missing School (Illness, Holidays etc.) During Last Year At School, 2006

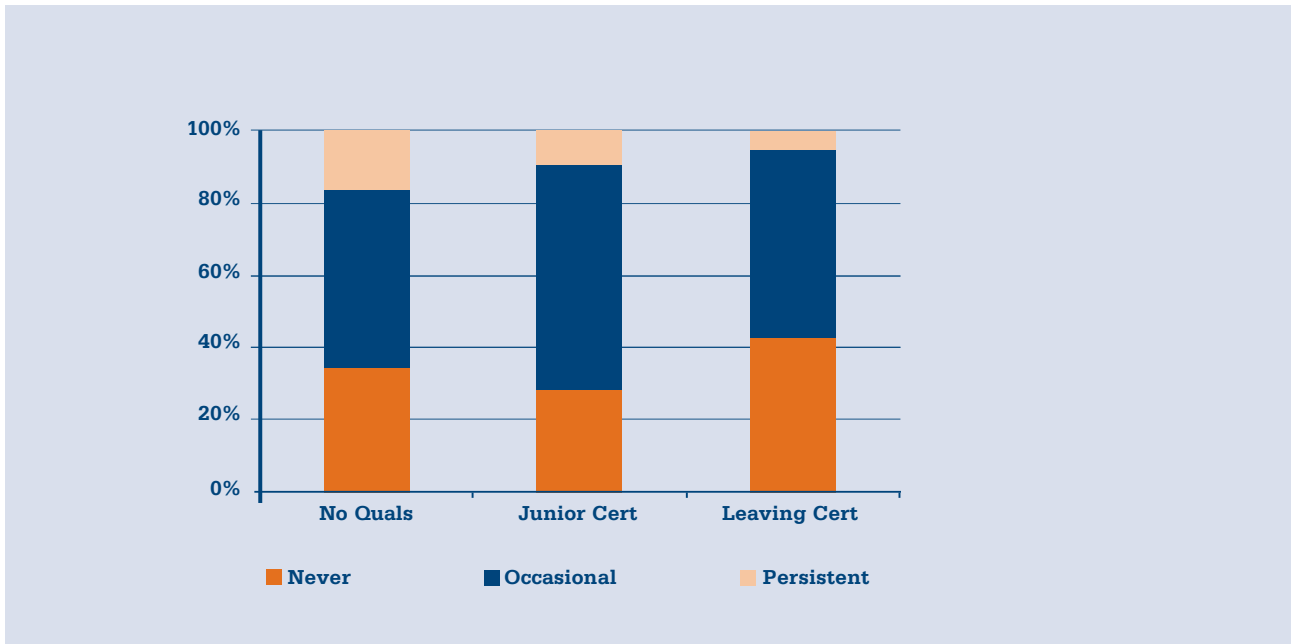
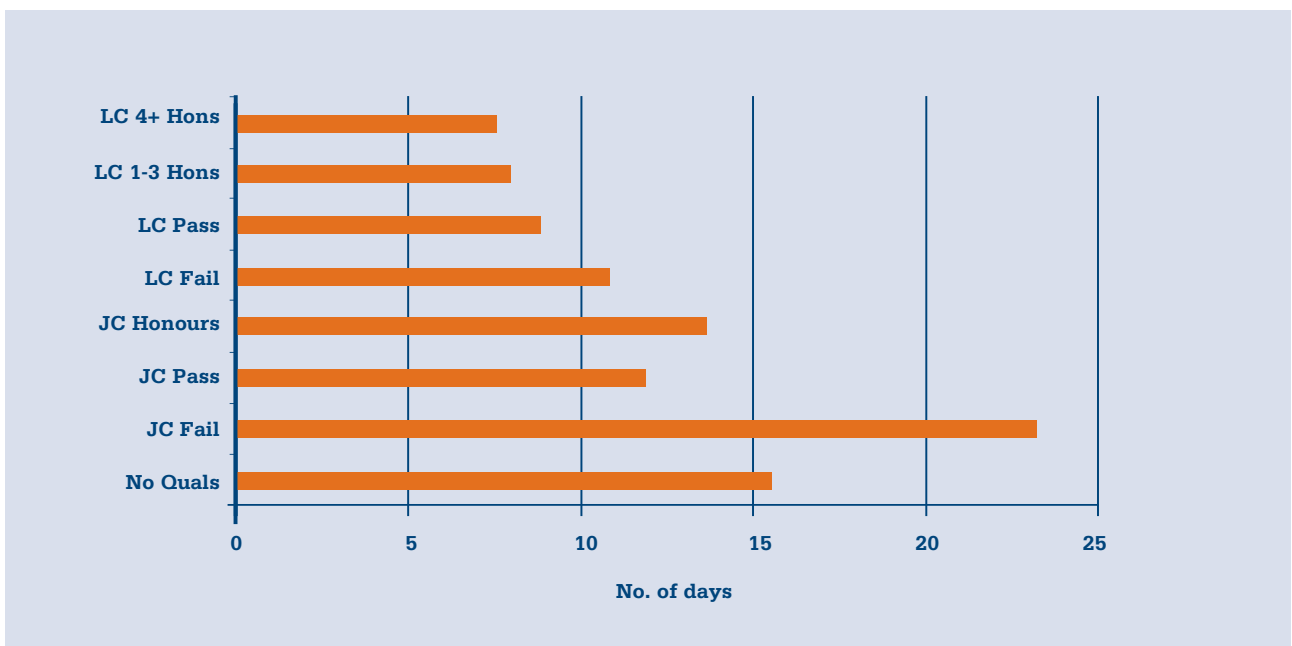


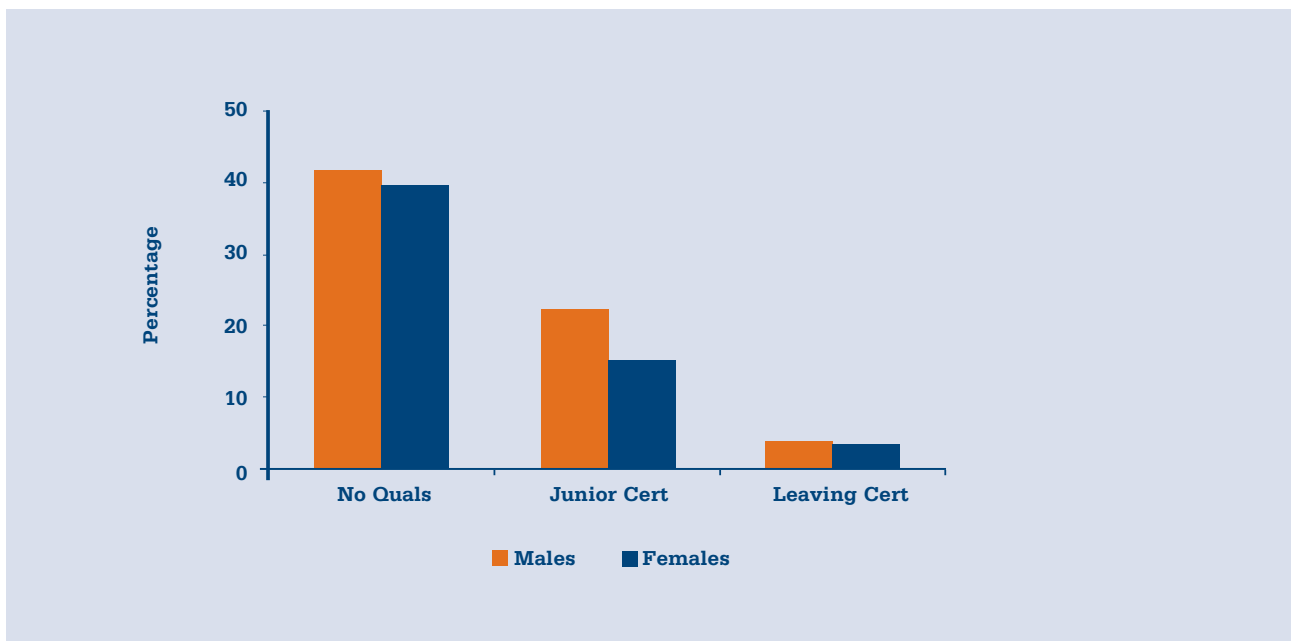
Figure 2.6: Average Number of School Days Missed Due to Illness, Holidays etc., During Last Year At School, 2006



## 2.7 Attitudes Towards School

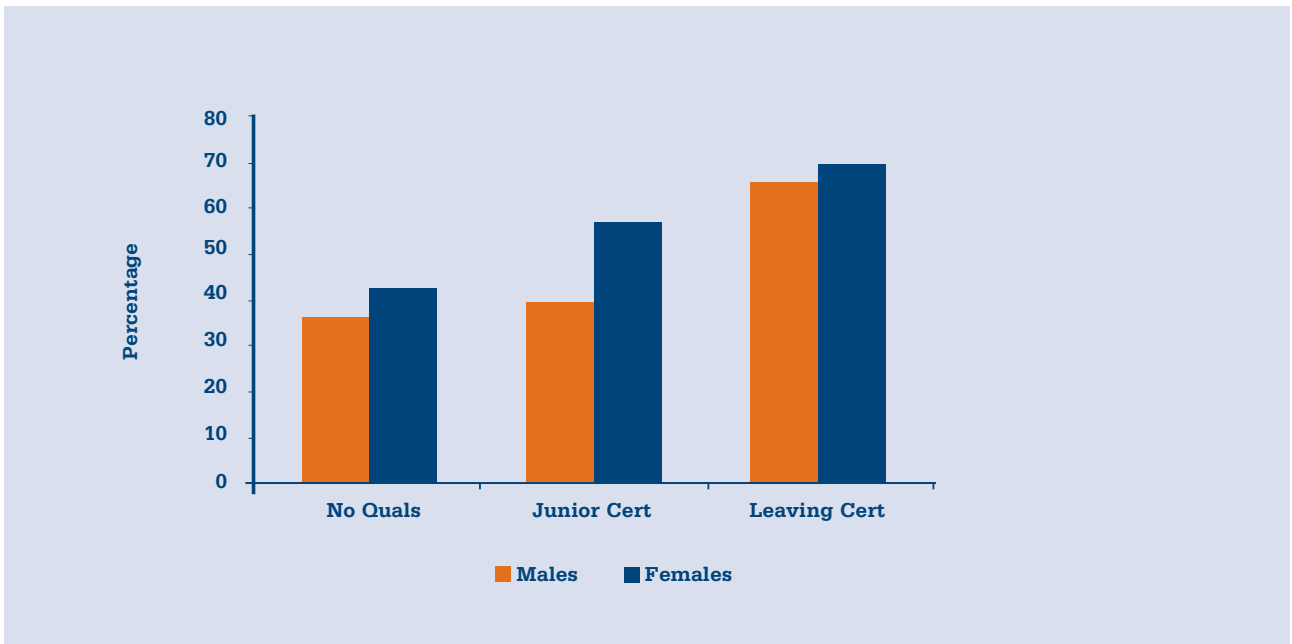
School leavers were asked to reflect on their subjective experiences of school and asked the extent to which they agreed with a series of statements about their school, teachers and peers. Drawing on these statements, we constructed two scales, each combining a number of statements. The first, termed 'support from teachers' amalgamates whether the respondent agreed 'teachers helped me to do my best'; 'teachers listened to my views and ideas'; 'if I had a problem there was always a teachers I could talk to'; and 'my teachers didn't care about me' (reversed). The second, referred to as 'order in their class', draws on responses to statements on 'there were too many troublemakers in my classes' and 'teachers could not keep order in class'. Figures 2.7 and 2.8 reveal sharp variations in views across educational attainment levels – school leavers completing their second-level education were far less likely to have negative views of the support they got from their teachers and considerably more likely to consider their classroom environment as orderly. An additional question was asked about whether the school leavers had felt their school work was 'worth doing' (Figure 2.9). Again results are strongly patterned across educational groups, with those who left school prior to sitting the Junior Cert exam least likely to have considered their school work as 'worth doing'.

**Figure 2.7: Percentage with Negative Views of the Support They Got From Teachers While At School\***



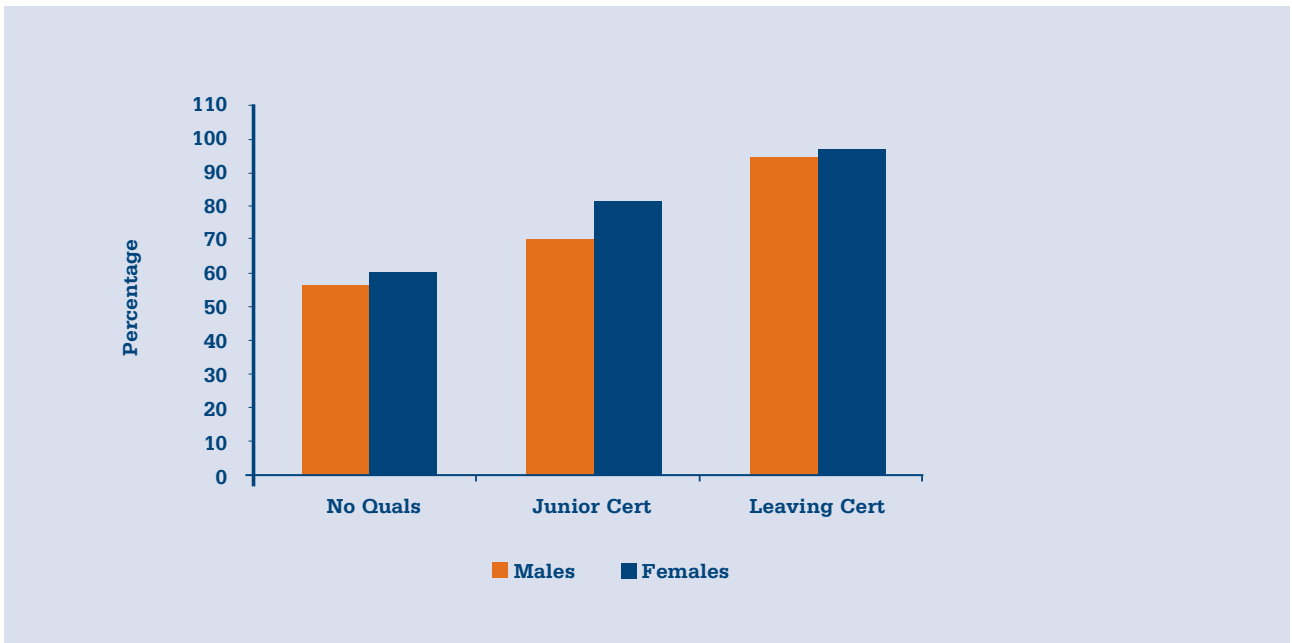
**\*Note:** Scale based on whether respondent agreed 'teachers helped me to do my best'; 'teachers listened to my views and ideas'; 'if I had a problem there was always a teachers I could talk to'; 'my teachers didn't care about me' (reversed). Alpha .71

**Figure 2.8: Percentage with Positive Views of the Extent of Order in Their Class While at School\***



*\*Note: Scale based on whether respondent agreed 'there were too many troublemakers in my classes' and 'teachers could not keep order in class'. Alpha .53*

**Figure 2.9: Percentage Who Felt Their 'School Work Was Worth Doing'**



The respondents were also asked how useful they felt the education and training they had received had been in preparing them for work and life in four areas: (i) interpersonal communications, (ii) computer skills/ability, (iii) the work experience it provided before leaving school, and (iv) the subjects/disciplines taken as a preparation for life skills. Table 2.8 presents the proportions who found their education/training useful or very useful to these areas of work and life.

The vast majority consider their education/training useful for interpersonal communications, with high percentages recorded for both males (87 per cent) and females (91 per cent). This perception is more prevalent with increasing educational level: rising from 51 per cent for those with no qualifications to 92 per cent for those with the Leaving Certificate. There is little gender variation in views of the usefulness of education/training received for interpersonal communications.

A greater proportion of females (77 per cent) than males (69 per cent) consider the education/training they received as being useful to their computer skills/ability. The proportions holding such positive views rises from 40 per cent among those with no qualifications through to three-quarters among those with the Leaving Certificate, with females more likely to consider their education/training useful at all levels of attainment.

The proportion of school leavers who consider their education/training as useful for the work experience it provided is somewhat lower at 64 per cent. Females are, again, more positive than males with 67 per cent regarding their education as useful in terms of the work experience it provided compared to a figure of 61 per cent for males. When focusing on qualification level we see a steady increase in perceived usefulness as educational attainment increases.

Nearly four out of five school leavers indicate that their education/training was useful in terms of the subjects/disciplines taken as preparation for life skills. Proportions indicating such a favourable response can be seen to increase as qualification level increases. While 42 per cent of those with no qualifications hold this view, the figure is double (84 per cent) for those who completed second-level.



**Table 2.8: Perceived Usefulness of Education/Training in Work and Life (2006)**

	No Qualifications			Junior Certificate			Leaving Certificate or Equivalent			All Levels		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
<b>"% where Education/Training (Very) Useful in:</b>												
Interpersonal Communications	49.3	52.8	50.7	76.9	76.3	76.7	90.9	93.6	92.3	86.6	90.5	88.5
Computer Skills/Ability	37.2	44.1	39.9	52.9	71.4	60.2	74.2	79.2	76.8	69.0	77.3	73.2
Work Experience It Provided	21.3	30.6	25.1	53.3	58.9	55.6	64.4	69.5	67.1	60.8	67.3	64.1
Subjects Taken As Preparation For Life Skills	40.0	45.0	42.0	64.9	66.4	65.5	83.8	83.6	83.7	78.6	80.6	79.6

# 3. POST-SCHOOL EDUCATION AND TRAINING





### 3. POST-SCHOOL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

#### 3.1 Participation in PLC Courses

Table 3.1 provides a breakdown of Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) course participation, completion, certification and receipt of grants by gender. One can see that a greater proportion of females than males participate in PLC courses: 24 per cent and 10 per cent respectively. In total over three quarters of those who participate complete their courses. Completion rates are slightly higher for females than males (79 compared to 71 per cent), which is consistent with the pattern apparent in 2004. Overall certification is presented to three-quarters of those participating. Again a higher proportion of females receive certification than males (78 compared to 67 per cent). FETAC/NCVA<sup>7</sup> is the certification received by almost nine out of ten participants, a substantial improvement on 2002 levels when just three-quarters received such certification. Overall, 46 per cent of participants receive a grant, an increase of 11 percentage points on 2004 levels. A substantially higher proportion of females (51 per cent) receive grants, relative to males (33 per cent). This reflects the much higher proportion of females entering PLC courses while males are far more likely to enter apprenticeships. In particular, females from less advantaged manual backgrounds are far more likely to enter PLC courses, while their male counterparts pursue apprenticeships (Watson et al., 2006). This results in greater numbers of female entrants to the PLC sector being eligible for grants.

**Table 3.1: Completion and Certification of PLC Courses and Receipt of Grant by Gender**

	% Participate	% Complete	% Certification	% Grant	Source of Cert/Diploma		
					FETAC/NCVA	Other	Don't Know
<b>Male</b>	9.6	71.4	67.4	33.0	92.1	7.3	0.6
<b>Female</b>	23.6	78.5	78.4	51.1	85.7	5.5	8.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>16.6</b>	<b>76.5</b>	<b>75.3</b>	<b>46.2</b>	<b>87.3</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>6.8</b>

Table 3.2 below provides a further breakdown of PLC course participation, completion, certification and receipt of grant by father's socio economic status. The relationship between participation and socio-economic status is largely in line with that found in 2004. In 2004, compared to the average level of participation, those from professional backgrounds were 0.6 times as likely to participate while those from manual backgrounds were 1.1 times more likely. In 2006, the corresponding figures are 0.4 times as likely for those from professional

<sup>7</sup> The Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC), which is a new single national awarding body for the further education and training sector (established in 2001), now awards certificates that were previously awarded by the National Council for Vocational Awards (NCVA).

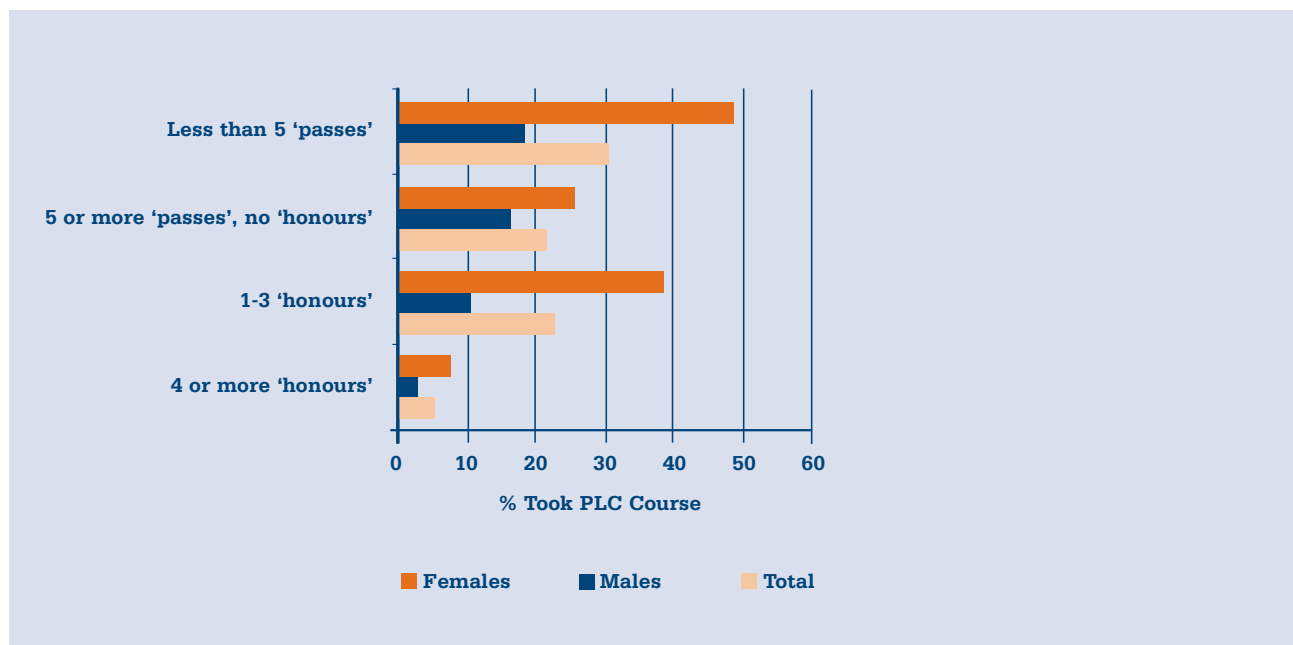
backgrounds and 1.06 times as likely for those from manual backgrounds. It is interesting to note high levels of participation in PLC courses among those from intermediate non-manual backgrounds – this group actually display the highest levels of participation in further education in 2006.

Some class patterns also emerge with regard to completion of, and receipt of certification from, Post Leaving Certificate courses. Those from unemployed, intermediate non-manual and manual backgrounds are somewhat less likely to complete and receive certification than the other groups, while those from farming, employer/manager and professional backgrounds appear better placed with regard to both completion and certification. Of those who received certification, those from unemployed backgrounds account for the lowest percentage in receipt of FETAC/NCVA certification (76 per cent compared to an average of 87 per cent). The percentage in receipt of a grant is highest for those whose father is unemployed (81 per cent), followed by those from farming backgrounds (68 per cent) and lowest for those from employer/manager backgrounds (14 per cent).

**Table 3.2: Completion and Certification of PLC Courses and Receipt of Grant by Father's Socio-Economic Background**

	% Participate	% Complete	% Certification	% Grant	Source of Cert/Diploma		
					FETAC / NCVA	Other	Don't Know
Farmer/Agriculture	11.2	91.5	90.6	68.1	84.5	5.2	10.3
H/L professional	6.6	84.7	77.7	34.0	96.0	0.0	4.0
Employer/manager	15.4	89.8	89.8	14.4	85.9	8.3	5.8
Intermediate non-manual	19.6	72.7	70.2	36.3	86.0	4.0	9.9
Skilled/semi/skilled manual	17.6	74.3	74.7	48.4	84.7	8.9	6.5
Unemployed	16.9	57.8	57.8	80.8	76.1	0.0	10.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>16.6</b>	<b>76.5</b>	<b>75.3</b>	<b>46.2</b>	<b>87.3</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>6.8</b>

Examining the profile of those taking PLC courses, Figure 3.1 shows the levels of participation in further education according to performance in the Leaving Cert exam. Participants are overwhelmingly drawn from those who performed poorly or moderately in the Leaving Cert. Among those performing very well in the Leaving Cert, few enter PLC courses, but rather the bulk of these school leavers progress to higher education as shown in Section 3.3. Among those securing 1-3 'honours' in the Leaving Cert, females have particularly high rates of entry into PLC courses.

**Figure 3.1: Proportion who Participated in a PLC Course by Performance in Leaving Cert**

### 3.2 Participation in State-Sponsored Training

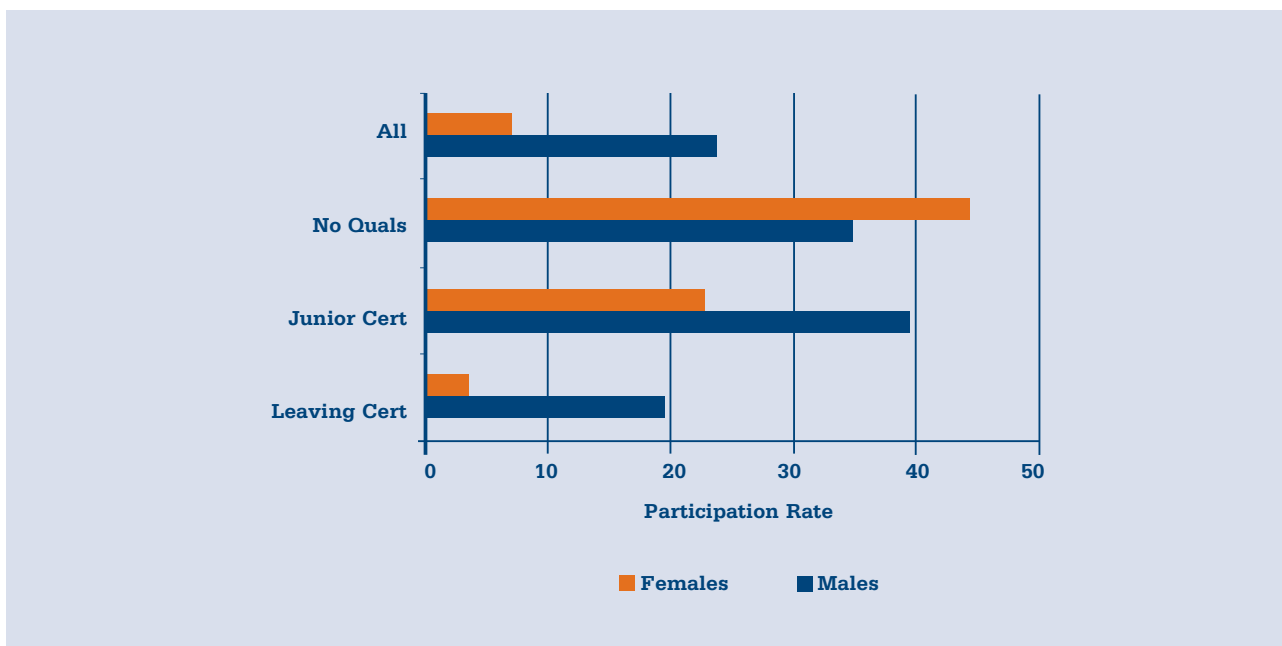
Figure 3.2 displays patterns of participation in state-sponsored training courses, according to gender and educational attainment. State-sponsored training courses include apprenticeships with FÁS, FÁS Specific Skills Course, Fáilte Ireland Courses<sup>8</sup>, Bord Iascaigh Mhara Training in Fishing and Teagasc Certificate in Farming. In line with earlier years, patterns of participation are strongly gender biased – with males accounting for 78 per cent of all participants in 2006. Overall participation levels have increased, however, with 24 per cent of males and 7 per cent of females now participating, relative to 15 and 5 per cent respectively in 2002 and 2004. Participants are predominantly drawn from those who left school prior to completion of the Leaving Cert. Females who leave school prior to the Junior Cert have particularly high levels of participation (nearly 45 per cent), while males departing after the Junior Cert have similarly high levels of progression to state training (almost 40 per cent).

Among those pursuing state training after completion of second-level, males are much more highly represented. This may well relate to the high levels of progression to PLC courses among females, as shown in Section 3.1. While one-in-five males participate in state-sponsored training after completing school, one quarter of females who similarly completed second-level progress to further education. Conversely, just 4 per cent of

<sup>8</sup> Fáilte Ireland courses were previously known as CERT courses. CERT, however, merged with Bord Fáilte to form Fáilte Ireland. This organisation is the National Tourism Development Authority and all the hospitality and tourism courses formerly run by CERT are now under its remit.

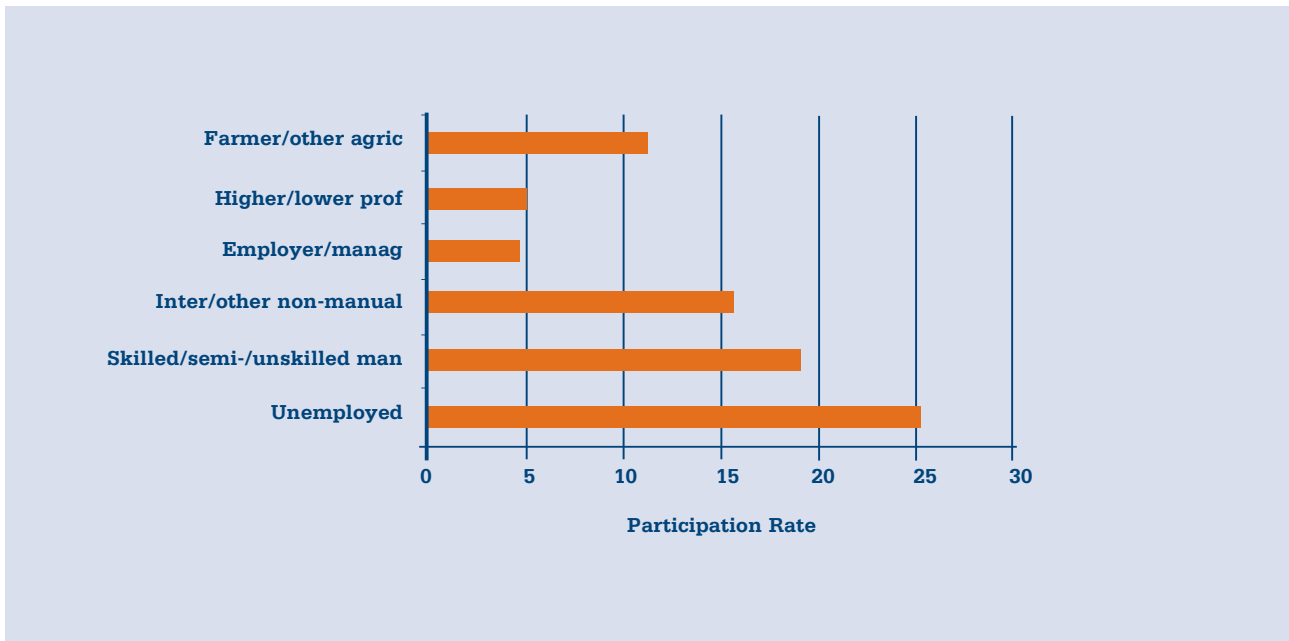
males completing second-level enter further education and one-in-ten females leaving school at this stage participate in state-sponsored training. State-sponsored training and further education seem to be fulfilling similar roles for males and females respectively.

**Figure 3.2: Participation in Any Form of State-Sponsored Training (including FÁS Apprenticeship and Youthreach)**



It is also interesting to note clear social class patterns in participation in state-sponsored training. As shown in Figure 3.3, school leavers from professional and employer/manager backgrounds are considerably less likely to pursue such training, while those from intermediate non-manual, manual and, most notably, unemployed backgrounds are significantly over-represented among participants. One-quarter of those from unemployed backgrounds and one-fifth of those from manual backgrounds have undertaken some state-sponsored training. Conversely, less than 5 per cent of those with fathers' employed in professional and managerial occupations have similarly taken such courses.

**Figure 3.3: Participation in Any Form of State-Sponsored Training by Father's Socio-Economic Group**



### 3.3 Participation in Higher Education

Just under half of all those leaving second-level education, including the PLC sector, during the 2003/04 academic year had progressed to higher education (on a full- or part-time basis) during the following 18-month period. Overall, females have slightly higher rates of progression to higher education (see Figure 3.4). When we focus attention on those leaving school having completed their Leaving Cert (or equivalent), given the entry requirements for most third-level courses, we find an overall progression rate of 57 per cent in 2006, in this case slightly higher among males. Progression to higher education continues to strongly reflect performance in the Leaving Cert examination as shown in Figure 3.5. While 92 per cent of those securing 4 or more 'honours' in the Leaving Cert progressed to higher education, just 40 per cent of those who did not achieve any honours similarly participated. Social class patterns in progression are also apparent, as illustrated in Figure 3.6. Among school leavers who have completed the Leaving Cert (or equivalent), 86 per cent of those from professional backgrounds participate in higher education, comparing favourably to 71 per cent of those from employer/manager backgrounds, 69 per cent of those from farming backgrounds, 54 per cent of those from intermediate/other non-manual backgrounds, 47 per cent of those from manual backgrounds and 43 per cent of those from unemployed backgrounds. Similar differentiation in higher education entry is apparent when examining parental educational attainment (Figure 3.7). While 87 per cent of those whose mothers had completed a degree course entered higher education, the rate of entry for those whose mothers had left school prior to the Junior Cert (or equivalent) is just 28 per cent.



Figure 3.4: Rates of Progression to Higher Education, 2006

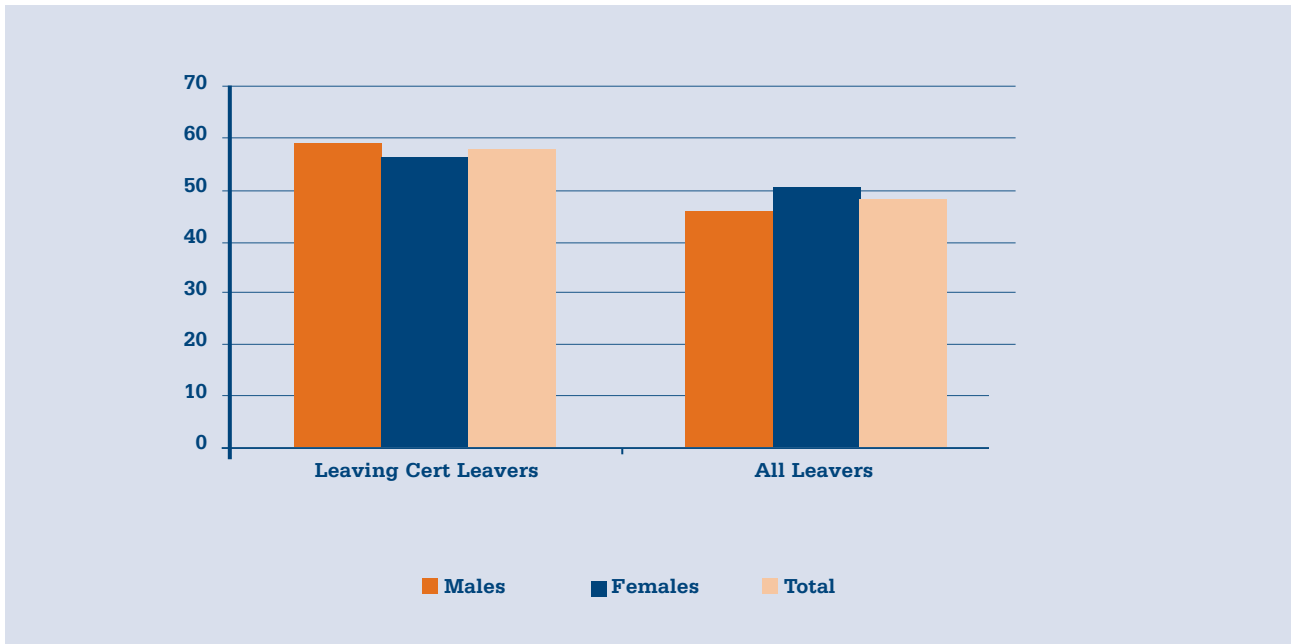
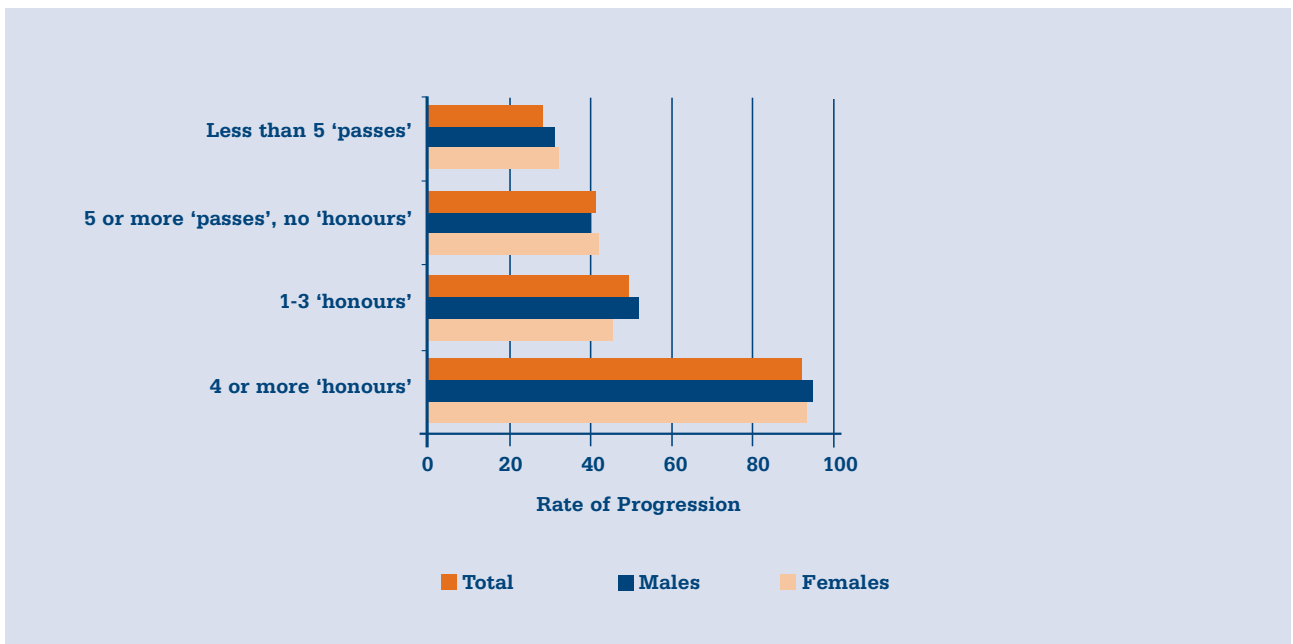
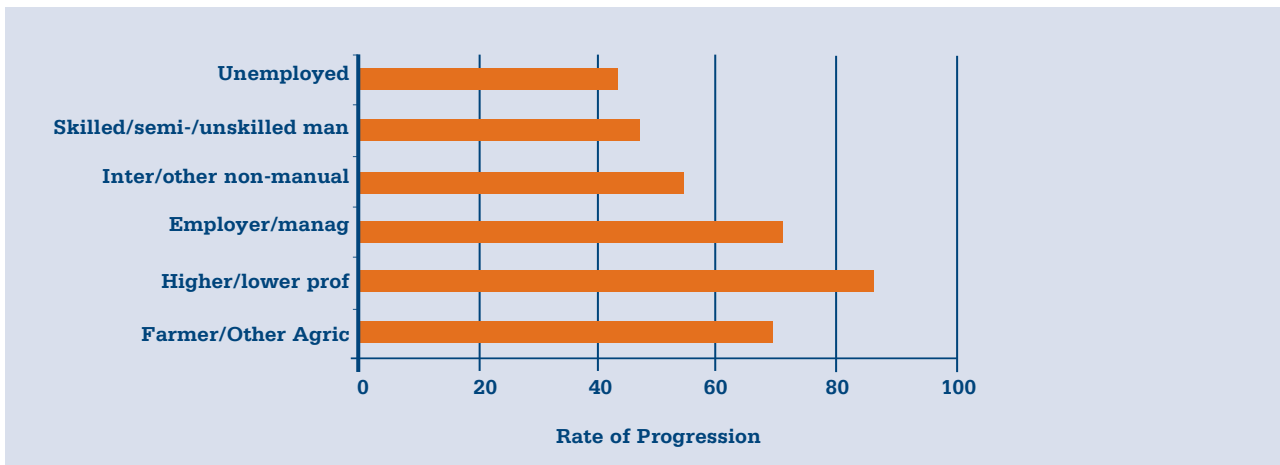


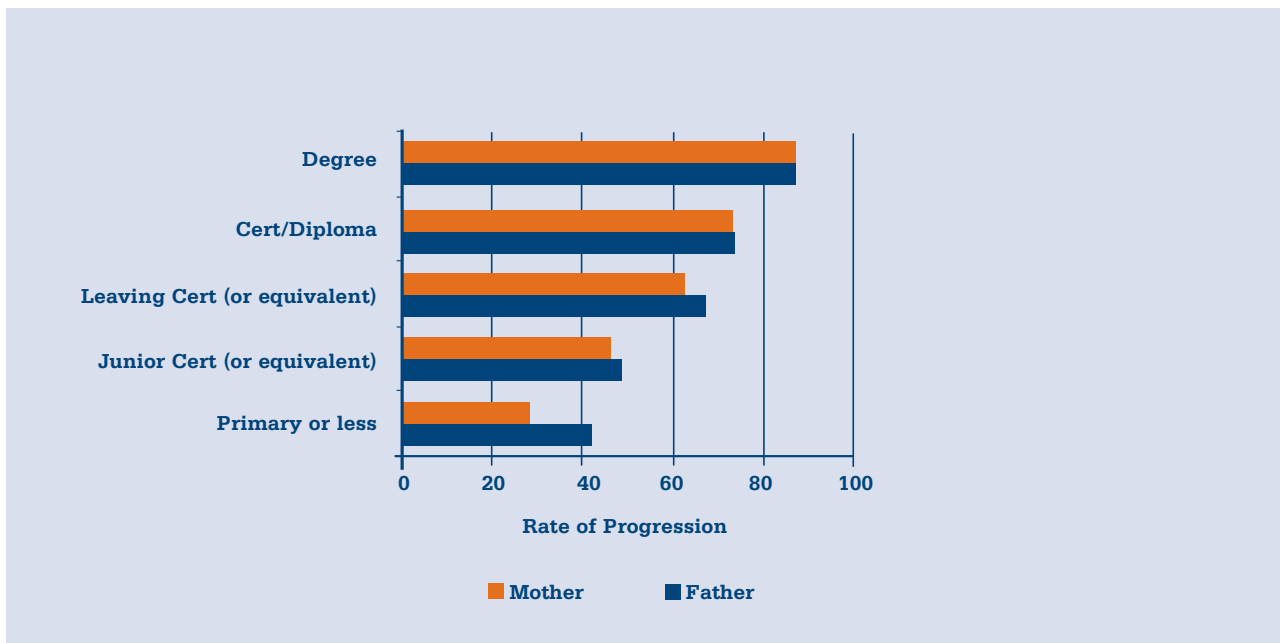
Figure 3.5: Rates of Progression to Higher Education by Performance in Leaving Cert, 2006



**Figure 3.6: Rates of Progression to Higher Education (those who completed second-level) by Father's Socio-Economic Group, 2006**



**Figure 3.7: Rates of Progression to Higher Education (those who completed second-level) by Parental Education, 2006**

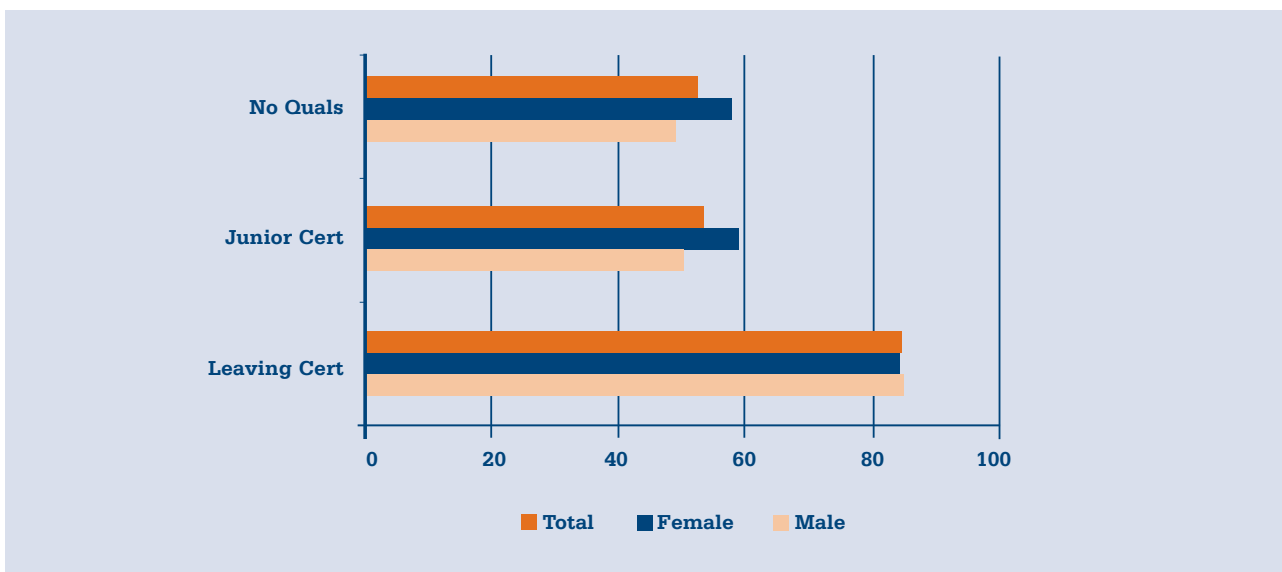


### 3.4 Participation in Any Form of Post-School Education or Training

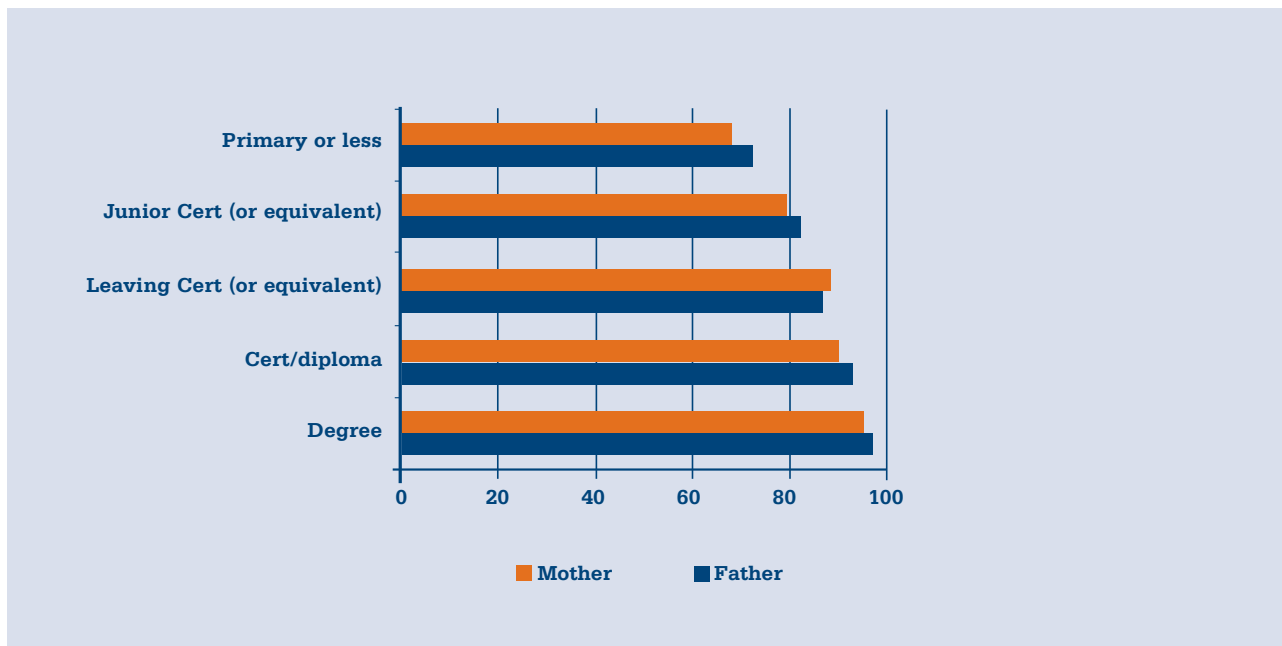
Figure 3.8 provides details on school leavers' participation rates in post second-level education and training according to the result of their last second-level exam. Post second-level education and training refers to participation in any form of education or training subsequent to leaving second-level. This includes PLC courses, state sponsored training programmes (such as FÁS, CERT, etc.) and third-level courses. While rates of participation are strongly related to second-level educational attainment, the major difference appears to be between those who have achieved Leaving Cert standard and those who have not (Figure 3.8). While 85 per cent of those completing the Leaving Cert go on to pursue some form of post-school education or training, just 53 per cent of those leaving prior to the Leaving Cert similarly progress to post-school education or training. This reflects, to a large extent, the minimum entry requirements for most higher education courses and indeed many further education and apprenticeship opportunities also. It is interesting to note that females leaving school prior to the Leaving Cert appear to be more successful in accessing education and training courses than their male counterparts: while 59 per cent of females leaving after the Junior Cert go on to post-school education or training, just 50 per cent of males leaving school at this stage do so. It can also be noted that there is little difference between unqualified and Junior Cert leavers in their rates of progression to further study/training, suggesting that these groups are equally in need of policy attention to maximise their educational opportunities and attainments.

As in earlier analyses, patterns of entry to post-school education and training are strongly related to social class background and parental educational attainment. As shown in Figure 3.9, among those completing second-level, 96 per cent of those with mothers educated to degree-level go on to some form of post-school education and training, compared to just two-thirds of respondents whose mother's left school prior to the Junior Cert examination (or equivalent).

**Figure 3.8: Percentage Participating in Some Form of Post-School Education or Training**



**Figure 3.9: Percentage of those who Completed Leaving Cert Participating in Some Form of Post-School Education or Training by Parents' Education**





# 4. ECONOMIC STATUS OF SCHOOL LEAVERS





## 4. ECONOMIC STATUS OF SCHOOL LEAVERS

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the economic status of school leavers *one year after leaving* second-level education, specifically 2003/04 school leavers' economic situation in May 2005<sup>9</sup>. School leavers are classified into one of seven economic status categories:

1. Employed (working for payment)
2. Unemployed, after loss of job
3. Unemployed, seeking first job
4. Training (FÁS/Fáilte Ireland courses)
5. Student (further studies)
6. Unavailable for work (engaged in home duties or disabled)
7. Emigrated

The first point to note in this chapter is that the economic status categories employed in previous reports have been revised in this year's report. The main modification is that 'training' is now distinguished as an individual economic status category. In previous reports individuals on training schemes were divided between the two 'unemployed' categories. However, given that the number of students undertaking training courses on completion of their second-level education has increased significantly in the last few years it was felt that 'training' should now be recognised as a significant economic status category in its own right. As a result of this alteration, the data from the two previous surveys included in this report, 2002 and 2004, have been updated to reflect this new economic status classification system. This means the results presented in this report (in the text, tables and figures) for these two years will differ from previous reports.

This chapter is structured as follows. Section 4.2 examines the economic status of 2003/04 school leavers, overall and by gender. An analysis of long-term trends (1980-2005) and school leavers' labour market participation rates are examined in this section as well. Section 4.3 concentrates on differences in economic status by educational attainment, again overall and by gender. Other labour market characteristics by educational attainment are also presented in this section. Section 4.4 considers 2003/04 school leavers circumstances at different periods throughout the year after which they left second-level education, while Section 4.5 concludes by highlighting variations in the economic status of school leavers according to their socio-economic background, specifically their father's socio-economic status.

<sup>9</sup> As indicated in Chapter 1, individuals aged over 25 are excluded from the analysis contained in this report for the 2002/03 and 2003/04 school leaver cohorts.



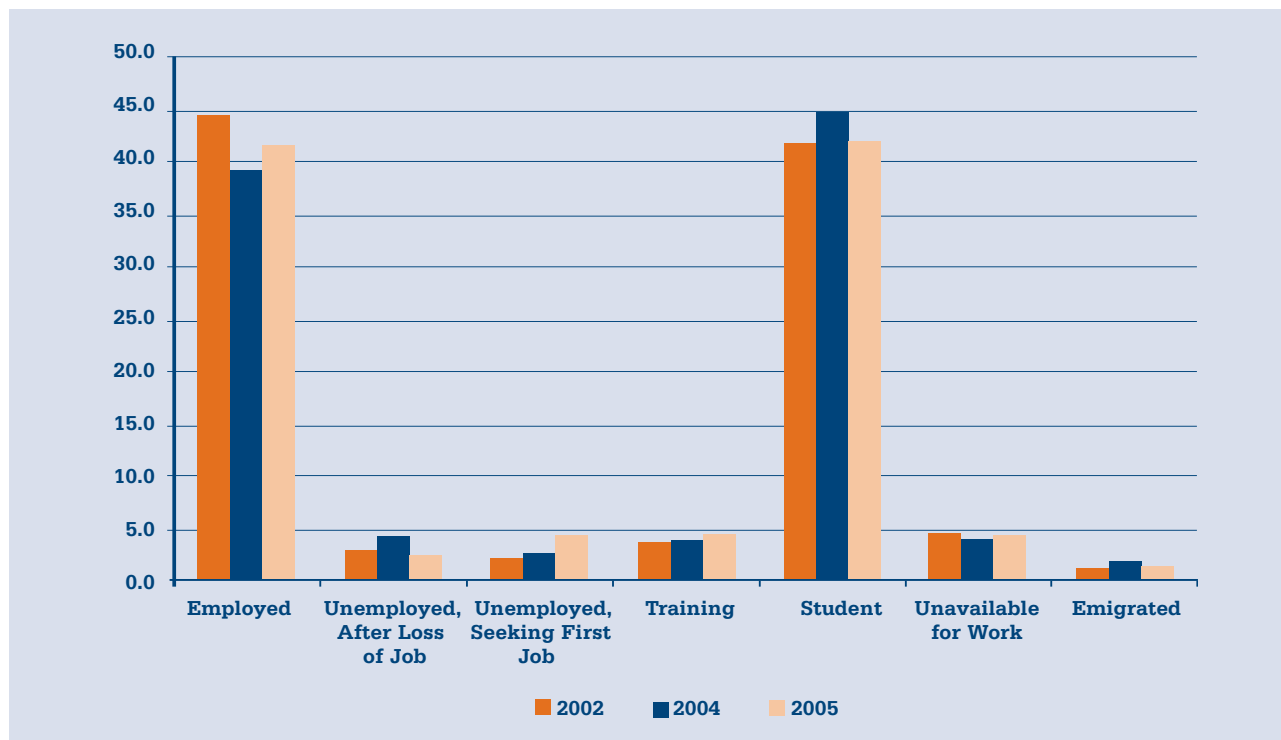
## 4.2 Economic Status of School Leavers One Year After Leaving School

### 4.2.1 2005 Results: Overall Results and Comparisons with 2002 and 2004

Table A1 in Appendix A presents information on the economic status of school leavers in the month of May in the year after which they left second-level education for three cohorts of school leavers; 2000/01, 2002/03 and 2003/04 school leavers. This information is also illustrated in Figure 4.1.

In relation to the most recent cohort, 42 per cent were employed one year after leaving school while almost 7 per cent were unemployed. Taken together this implies that approximately 48 per cent of 2003/04 school leavers were in the labour market one year after leaving school, which is 2 percentage points higher than the 2002/03 school leaver cohort and one percentage point lower than the 2000/01 group. Of those who were unemployed, one-third were in this situation as a result of the loss of a previous job while two-thirds were still seeking their first job. In aggregate, 46 per cent of school leavers in 2005 were engaged in further study/training (42 per cent and 4 per cent respectively), which is a slightly smaller proportion to that participating in the labour market. Of the remaining 2003/04 school leavers' cohort, one per cent had emigrated one year after leaving school while 4 per cent were unavailable for work.

**Figure 4.1: Economic Status of 2000/01, 2002/03 and 2003/04 School Leavers One Year After Leaving Second-Level Education – May 2002, 2004 and 2005**



When compared with the 2000/01 and 2002/03 school leaver cohorts, one can see from Table A1 that the employment level of school leavers declined between 2002 and 2004 from 45 per cent to 39 per cent but increased slightly in 2005 to 42 per cent. Unemployment levels, on the other hand, increased by 2 percentage points between 2002 and 2004 to 7 per cent and have remained at this level in 2005<sup>10</sup>. A break down of this figure indicates that the unemployment level for those who are unemployed as a result of the loss of a previous job fell by 2 percentage points between 2004 and 2005 to 2 per cent, whereas the unemployment level for those seeking their first job has increased gradually since 2002, going from 2 per cent then to 3 per cent in 2004 to 4 per cent in 2005. The percentage participating in further studies rose from 42 per cent in 2002 to 45 per cent in 2004 but fell back again to 42 per cent in 2005. Between 2002 and 2005, those engaged in training has remained relatively stable at 4 per cent. The figure for those unavailable to work has also remained at 4 per cent during this time period. Emigration increased by one percentage point between 2002 and 2004 to 2 per cent but fell back to one per cent in 2005.

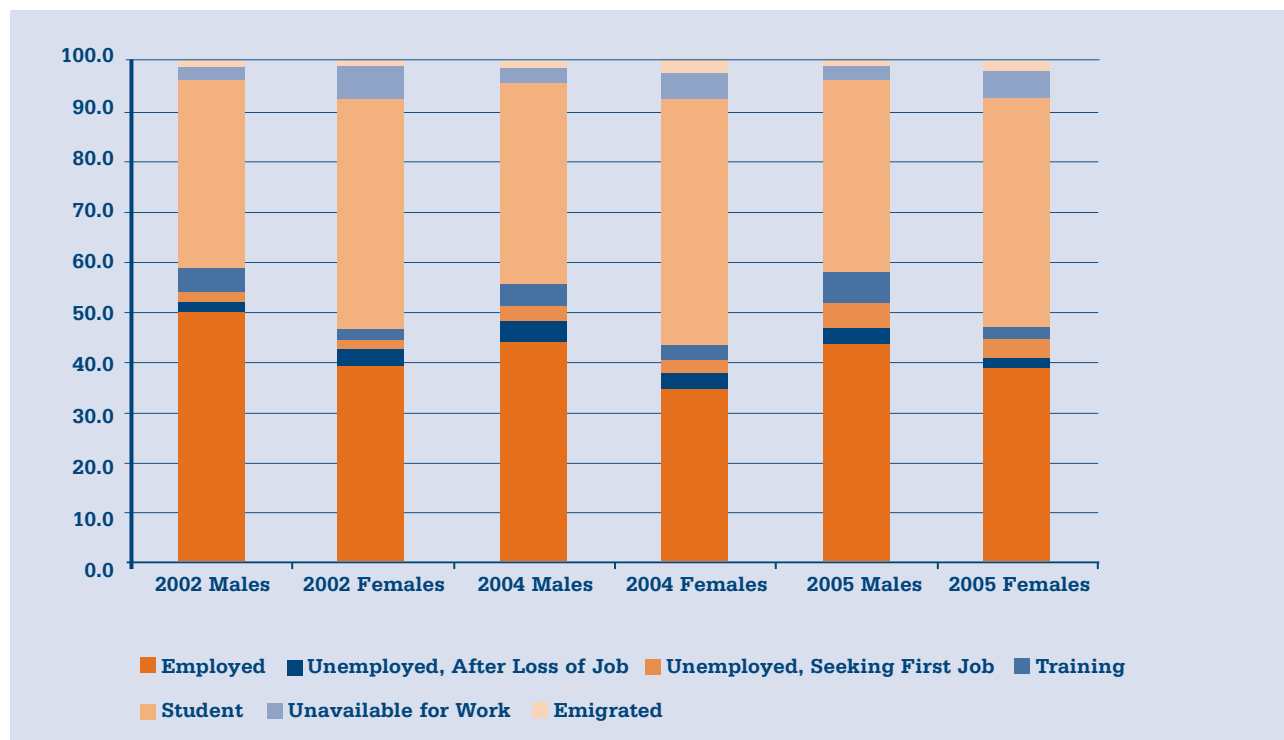
#### **4.2.2 Gender Variations**

Data on the economic status of school leavers by gender is also presented in Table A1 in Appendix A, while the results are shown graphically in Figure 4.2. Forty-four per cent of male school leavers in 2005 were employed one year after leaving school, the same level as in 2004 but 6 percentage points lower than 2002. This compares to 39 per cent of female school leavers in 2005 being employed, which is 4 percentage points higher than 2002/03 female school leavers and the same as the 2000/01 cohort. This gender comparison reveals the existence of a gender difference in employment. Although this disparity has existed for some time, the gap appears to be narrowing as the difference has dropped from 11 percentage points in 2002 to 9 percentage points in 2004 to only 5 percentage points in 2005.

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<sup>10</sup> In this report, the term unemployment level refers to the percentage of all school leavers who are unemployed, while unemployment rate captures the percentage of school leavers in the labour market who are unemployed. The unemployment rate will always be greater than the unemployment level because the former excludes from the base those who are not in the labour market (e.g. students, those who are unable to work etc).

**Figure 4.2: Economic Status of 2000/01, 2002/03 and 2003/04 Male and Female School Leavers One Year After Leaving Second-Level Education – May 2002, 2004 and 2005**



While males are more likely than females to be in employment one year after leaving school, there is a higher probability that females will continue to study. This trend holds up in the 2005 data where 38 per cent of males (decrease of 2 percentage points on 2004) as compared to 46 per cent of females (4 percentage point decline on 2004) are classified as 'student'. This gender difference in participation in further studies has only declined by one percentage point since 2002. A higher proportion of males, however, partake in training; 6 per cent of male school leavers in 2005 (2 percentage point increase on 2004) as compared to 3 per cent of females (same as 2004).

With regard to unemployment, 8 per cent of male school leavers were unemployed in 2005 as compared to 6 per cent of females, the same as 2004 for both groups. Focussing on males, 3 per cent were unemployed as a result of the loss of a previous job (2 percentage points lower than 2004) whereas 5 per cent were seeking their first job (up 2 percentage points on 2004). For females, 2 per cent were unemployed after losing a job (2 percentage points lower than 2004) and 4 per cent were seeking their first (up 2 percentage points on 2004)<sup>11</sup>. Overall, male

<sup>11</sup> Given that the number of male and female school leavers 'unemployed as a result of the loss of a previous job' fell by 2 percentage points a piece between 2004 and 2005 and the numbers 'unemployed because they were seeking their first job' increased by 2 percentage points one might expect that these two unemployment type results are not valid and that a mistake has been made in allocating male and female school leavers between the two unemployment type categories. However, the trends for these two unemployment type categories have been analysed at different points in time since the school leavers' left school, for both 2004 and 2005, and the results (for male and female school leavers) are genuine. Confirmation of this can be found in Table A4 in Appendix A where the trends for these two unemployment type categories, along with the other economic status categories, are presented in detail at four different time points since the school leavers' left school, for 2000/01, 2002/03 and 2003/04 school leavers.

school leavers' unemployment levels have increased by 4 percentage points between 2002 and 2005 and females by one percentage point. An interesting point to note, however, is that the unemployment level of those seeking their first job has increased at a faster rate than that of those who are unemployed as a result of losing their job. In 2002, the percentage of males unemployed as a result of losing their job was 2 per cent, the same level as for those seeking their first job. This figure only increased to 3 per cent in 2005 whereas the unemployment level of male school leavers' seeking their first job increased to 5 per cent in 2005. For females, the unemployment level of those unemployed as a result of losing their job actually fell from 3 per cent in 2002 to 2 per cent in 2005 but the unemployment level of those seeking their first job increased from 2 per cent to 4 per cent. This indicates a slower integration of school leavers into the labour market, especially among the less qualified (this is discussed further in Section 4.3).

In relation to those who are unavailable for work, this level has remained stable at 3 per cent for male school leavers between 2002 and 2005, while for females it has fallen by one percentage point to 5 per cent. Male school leavers' emigration level has also remained stable between 2002 and 2005, at one per cent, whereas for females it has increased by one percentage point to 2 per cent.

#### **4.2.3 Long-Term Trends: 1980 to 1999 and 2002 to 2005<sup>12</sup>**

Figures 4.3a and 4.3b illustrate changes in the economic status of male and female school leavers from 1980 to 1999 and then again from 2002 to 2005<sup>13</sup>. Both male and female school leavers experienced a significant drop in employment in the early to mid-1980s. The employment level of male school leavers fell from a high of 68 per cent in 1980 to a low of 41 per cent in 1985. During the same time period female school leavers' employment level fell from 69 per cent to 44 per cent. For the rest of the 1980s, however, there was an improvement for both groups, with females averaging slightly higher employment levels to males. A significant drop in male and female school leavers' employment levels occurred again in the first half of the 1990s, bottoming out in 1994 at 34 per cent for males and 35 per cent for females. Ever since this male school leavers have experienced higher employment levels to females, peaking at 55 per cent in 1998/99. The highest employment level females have had since 1994 was 41 per cent in 1999, a gap of 14 percentage points on male school leavers' peak level. Between 2002 and 2004 male school leavers' employment level fell by 6 percentage points to 44 per cent and it has remained at this level since. Female school leavers' employment level also fell between 2002 and 2004, from 39 per cent to 34 per cent. However, it increased again in 2005 to 39 per cent, which is the level it was at before the fall in 2004 and is just 5 percentage points less than males.

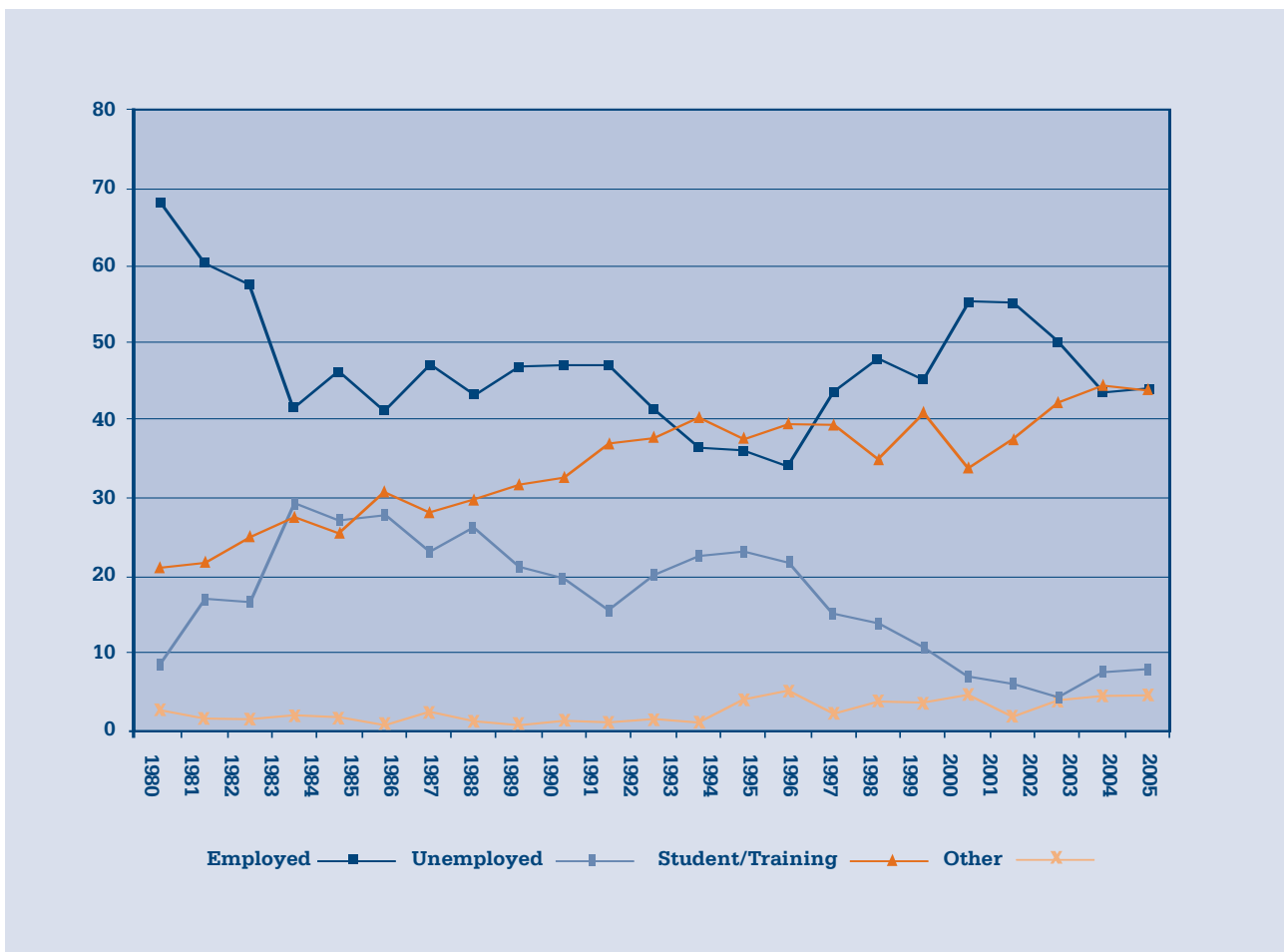
<sup>12</sup> There is no data for the years 2000, 2001 or 2003, as the School Leavers' Survey was not carried out in these years.

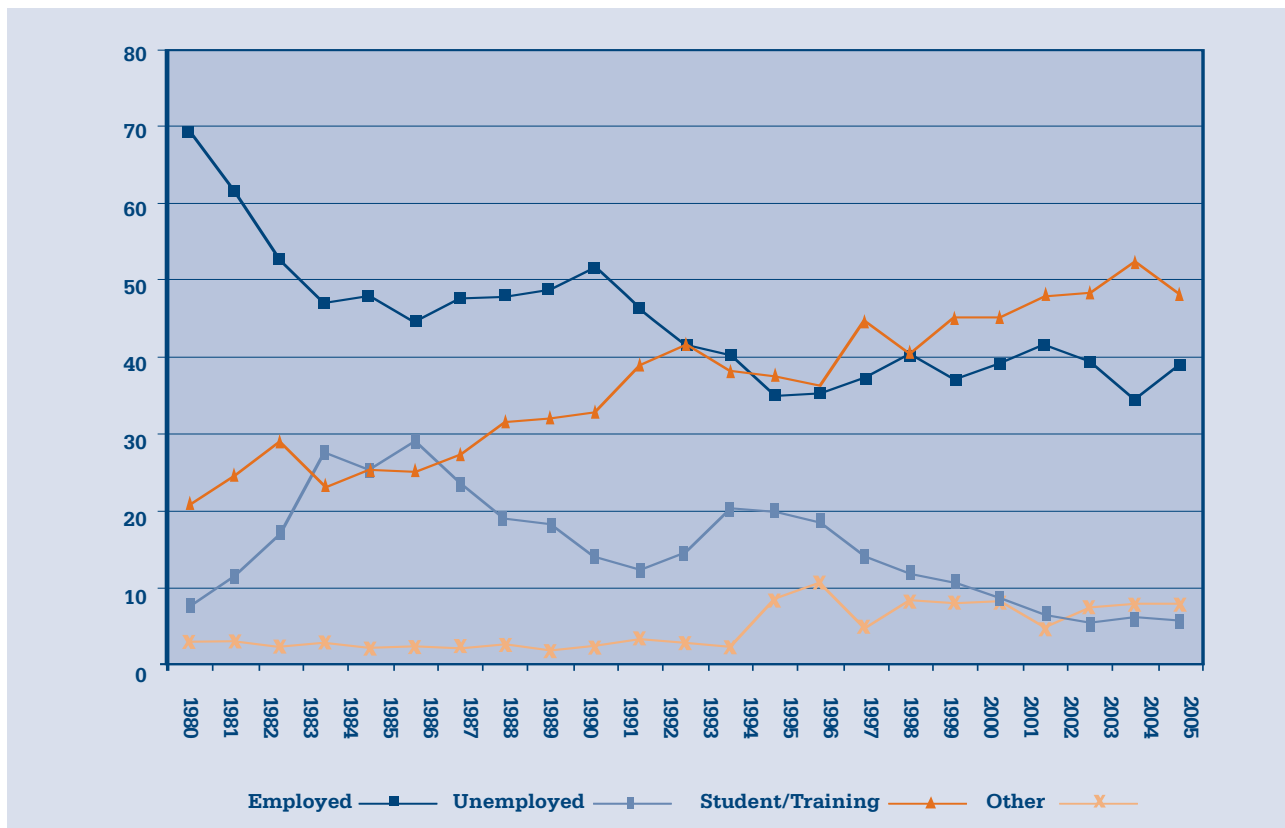
<sup>13</sup> Emigrants are excluded from this analysis. 'Unemployed' includes those who are unemployed as a result of the loss of a previous job and those seeking their first job, while 'other' consists of those who are unavailable for work. For the years 1980 to 1999 the 'student/training' economic status category consists of students only. This is because 'training' was only introduced as an economic status category in the 2002 School Leavers Survey.

The highest unemployment level male school leavers experienced was 29 per cent in 1983. It then fell gradually throughout the remainder of the 1980s and by 1990 stood at 15 per cent. Their unemployment level increased again in the early 1990s, peaking at 23 per cent in 1993. After this it descended and reached a low of 5 per cent in 2002. Between 2002 and 2004, however, male school leavers' unemployment level increased by 4 percentage points to 8 per cent and it has remained at this level since.

Twenty-nine per cent was also the highest unemployment level female school leavers experienced, and this occurred in 1985. After this their unemployment level followed a similar pattern to males: decreased during the rest of the 1980s and levelled off in 1990. It increased then up to 1993 before trending downwards until 2002. As with males, female school leavers' unemployment level increased between 2002 and 2004, rising from 5 to 6 per cent, with no change in 2005. The increase in female school leavers' unemployment level in this time period, however, was not as large as it was for males.

**Figure 4.3a: Economic Status of Male School Leavers**



**Figure 4.3b: Economic Status of Female School Leavers**

Part of the male and female school leavers' employment and unemployment level patterns just presented can be explained by the economic climate that existed in the country at the time: recessionary period in the early to mid 1980s; slight improvement in the late 1980s, after the introduction of strict budgetary policies around 1986/87; a downturn again in economic growth at the beginning of the 1990s; and the acceleration that took place from the mid 1990s until the present day (except for the slight blip around 2001/02), the period that is termed the 'Celtic Tiger' years. However, trends in the country's economic growth performance is not the full story because while male and female school leavers' unemployment levels have surpassed the low level they were at in 1980 during the 'Celtic Tiger' years, their employment levels have not. The reason for this is because of the increase in the number of male and female school leavers entering further study and training as opposed to the labour market, something that can be seen clearly in Figures 4.3a and 4.3b<sup>14</sup>. The proportion of male and female school leavers entering further study and training has been increasing since 1980. There have been some fluctuations in both groups' participation levels over time. Overall, however, male school leavers' participation level has increased from around 27 per cent in the mid 1980s to a peak of 44 per cent in 2004/05, while female school leavers' participation level has grown from approximately 27 per in the mid 1980s to a peak

<sup>14</sup> Increasing participation levels in further/higher education and training has been an explicit aim of the Government, in order to increase the education and skill levels of the country's population to help achieve and maintain high economic growth rates and a well functioning society.

of 52 per cent in 2004. The proportion of females participating in further study and training fell in 2005, decreasing by 4 percentage points to 48 per cent. One cannot verify, however, if this is a once off deviation or the start of a downward trend until the next School Leavers Survey is completed.

#### ***4.2.4 Labour Market Participation: Short-Term and Long-Term Trends***<sup>15</sup>

Table 4.1 provides a breakdown of labour market participation rates for the years 1999, 2002, 2004 and 2005<sup>16</sup>. Before beginning this analysis it is important to clarify that the school leaver employment rate discussed in this section, and in the report in general, differs from the official employment rate definition. In this report the employment rate is calculated as “the number of school leavers who are employed as a proportion of the population of school leavers who entered the labour market”. The standard employment rate, on the other hand, is calculated as “the number of people employed as a proportion of the population of working age”. The school leaver unemployment rate that is used in this report, however, is calculated in the same way as the standard unemployment rate: the percentage of school leavers in the labour market who are unemployed<sup>17</sup>.

It can be seen in Table 4.1 that since 1999, when the labour market participation rate of school leavers stood at 56 per cent, less than 50 per cent of school leavers have been participating in the labour market. Initially the rate fell by 7 percentage points in 2002 to 49 per cent. It then fell by another 3 percentage points in 2004 to 46 per cent. However, there was a slight recovery in 2005 when the labour market participation rate increased to 48 per cent.

Focussing on those who are in the labour market, in terms of whether they are employed or unemployed, it can be seen from Table 4.1 that the percentage employed reached 90 per cent in 2002. Since this though there has been a drop in employment with the rate standing at 86 per cent in 2005, which is one percentage point higher than 2004. Conversely, school leavers' unemployment rate was at its lowest level in 2002, 10 per cent. It then increased to 15 per cent in 2004 before falling back marginally to 14 per cent in 2005.

Figure 4.4a illustrates long term trends in school leavers' employment and unemployment rates, from 1980 to 1999 and then from 2002 to 2005. The employment rate of school leavers' was at its lowest ever in 1985; then it stood at 60 per cent. Conversely, the highest unemployment rate they ever experienced was also in this year (40 per cent). After 1985 school leavers' employment rate increased, reaching a high of 77 per cent in 1990. At the same time their unemployment rate fell, falling to 23 per cent by 1990. After this the trends reversed with

<sup>15</sup> Emigrants are excluded from the analysis contained in this section.

<sup>16</sup> There is no data for the years 2000, 2001 or 2003, as the School Leavers' Survey was not carried out in these years. The 2002 and 2004 results have been adjusted on the basis of the new economic status classification system introduced in this year's report, therefore, the results presented for these years in this report will be different to previous reports.

<sup>17</sup> The standard unemployment rate is calculated as the percentage of people in the labour market who are unemployed.

school leavers' employment rate decreasing and their unemployment rate increasing. This happened up until 1993; then their employment rate stood at 62 per cent and unemployment rate at 38 per cent. After this, however, school leavers' employment rate increased significantly until 2002, and equally their unemployment rate decreased. In 2002, their employment rate stood at 90 per cent and unemployment rate at 10 per cent, the same as 1980 rates. Between 2002 and 2004, however, the trends reversed again with school leavers' employment rate falling to 85 per cent and their unemployment rate increasing to 15 per cent. Their employment rate increased again slightly in 2005 to 86 per cent and their unemployment rate fell to 14 per cent. Overall, since 1994 school leavers' employment rate has been significantly high and their unemployment rate low.

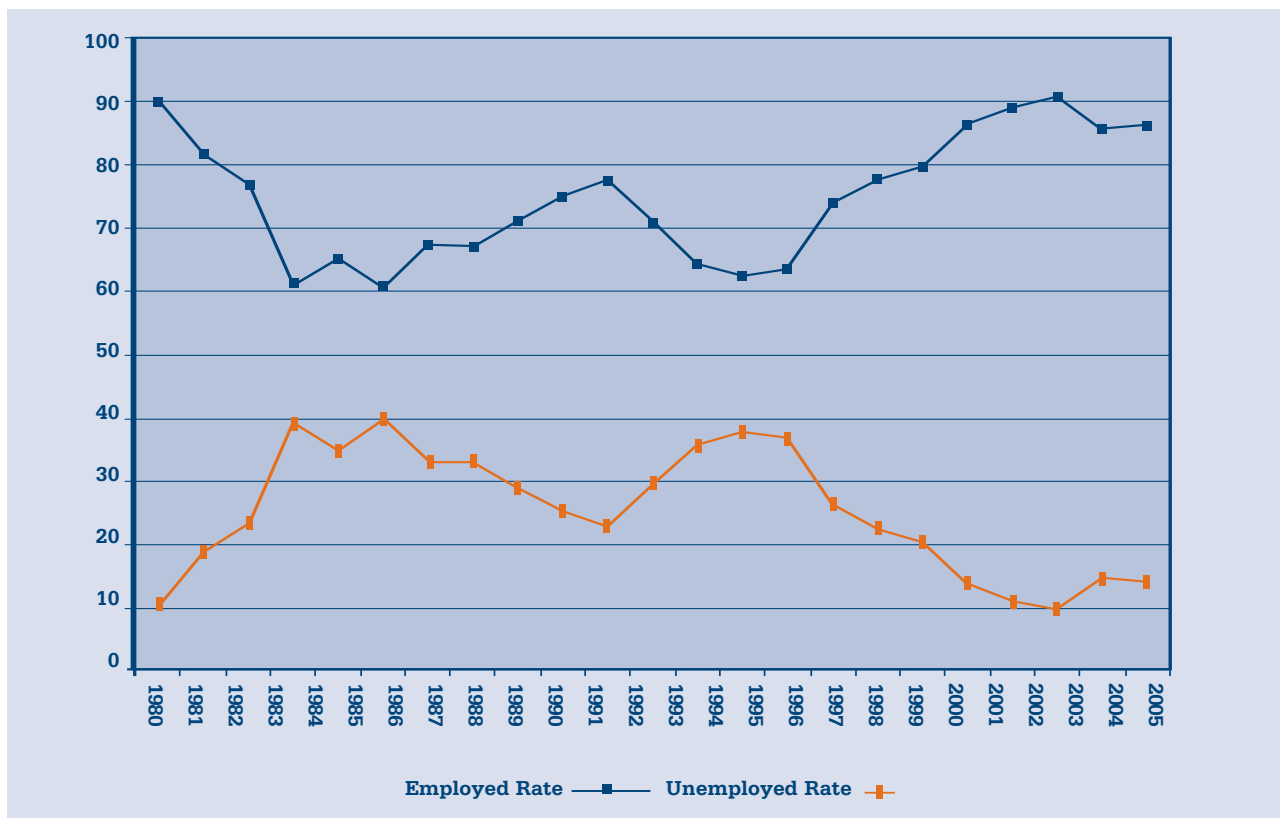
**Table 4.1: Labour Market Participation, Employment and Unemployment Rates among School Leavers, 1999, 2002, 2004 and 2005 (Percentage)\***

	1999	2002	2004	2005
LM Participation Rates of which:	55.5	49.2	45.6	48.0
Employed	89.0	90.4	85.3	86.0
Unemployed	11.0	9.6	14.7	14.0

\***Note:** *Emigrants are excluded from this analysis*



Figure 4.4a: Long-Term Trends in School Leavers' Employment and Unemployment Rates



Figures 4.4b and 4.4c illustrates differences in the employment and unemployment rates of male and female school leavers from 1980 to 1999 and from 2002 to 2005. It can be seen clearly from these two figures that both genders have experienced similar employment and unemployment rate patterns. Up until 1995 female school leavers had, on average, a slightly higher employment rate to males, and conversely a lower unemployment rate. Between 1995/96 and 2002 this trend changed and male school leavers experienced somewhat higher employment rates (lower unemployment rates) to females. In 2004, though, the employment rate of both groups was the same (85 per cent). In 2005, however, females once again emerge as having a slightly higher employment rate, 87 per cent compared to 85 per cent for males, and equally a lower unemployment rate, 13 per cent versus 15 per cent. Both genders employment rates peaked in 2002, 92 per cent for males and 88 per cent for females. Their employment rates then declined in 2004, with males experiencing a slightly larger fall to females. In 2005, female school leavers' employment rate increased again but the male employment rate remained unchanged.

Figure 4.4b: Long-Term Trends in Male School Leavers' Employment and Unemployment Rates

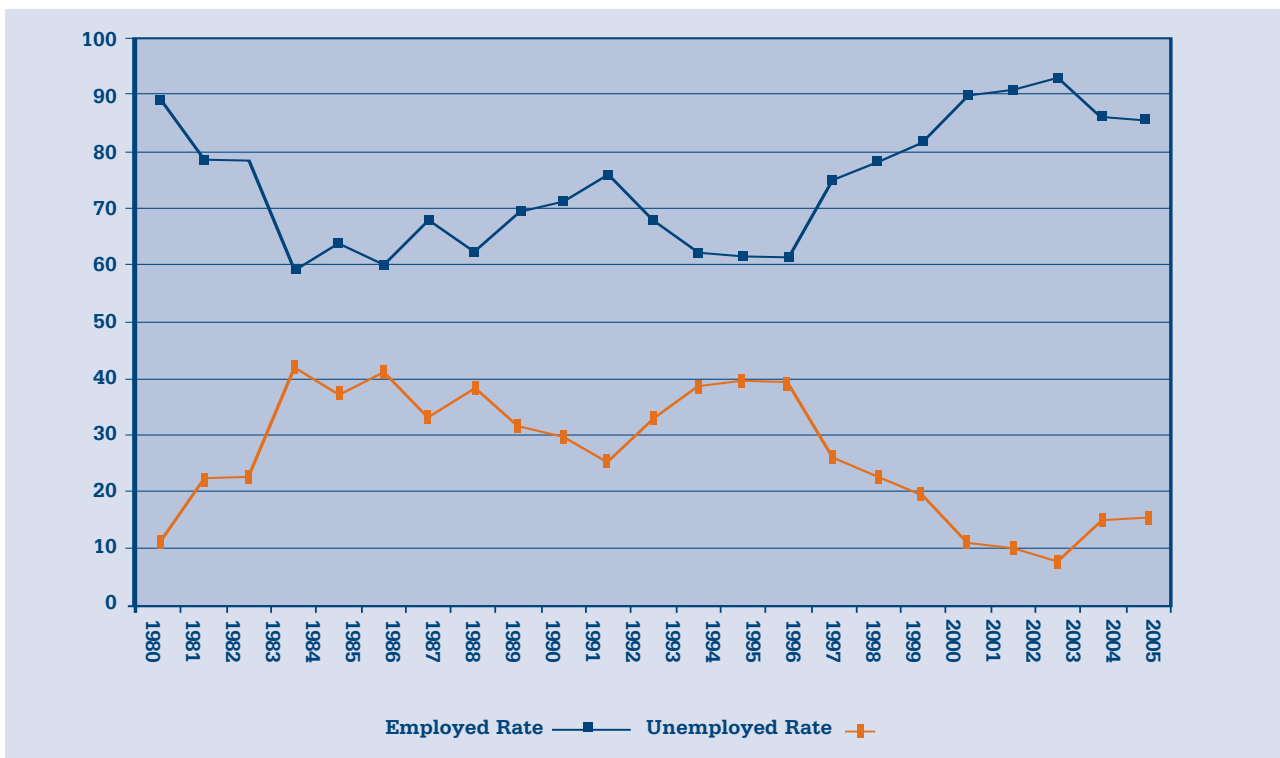
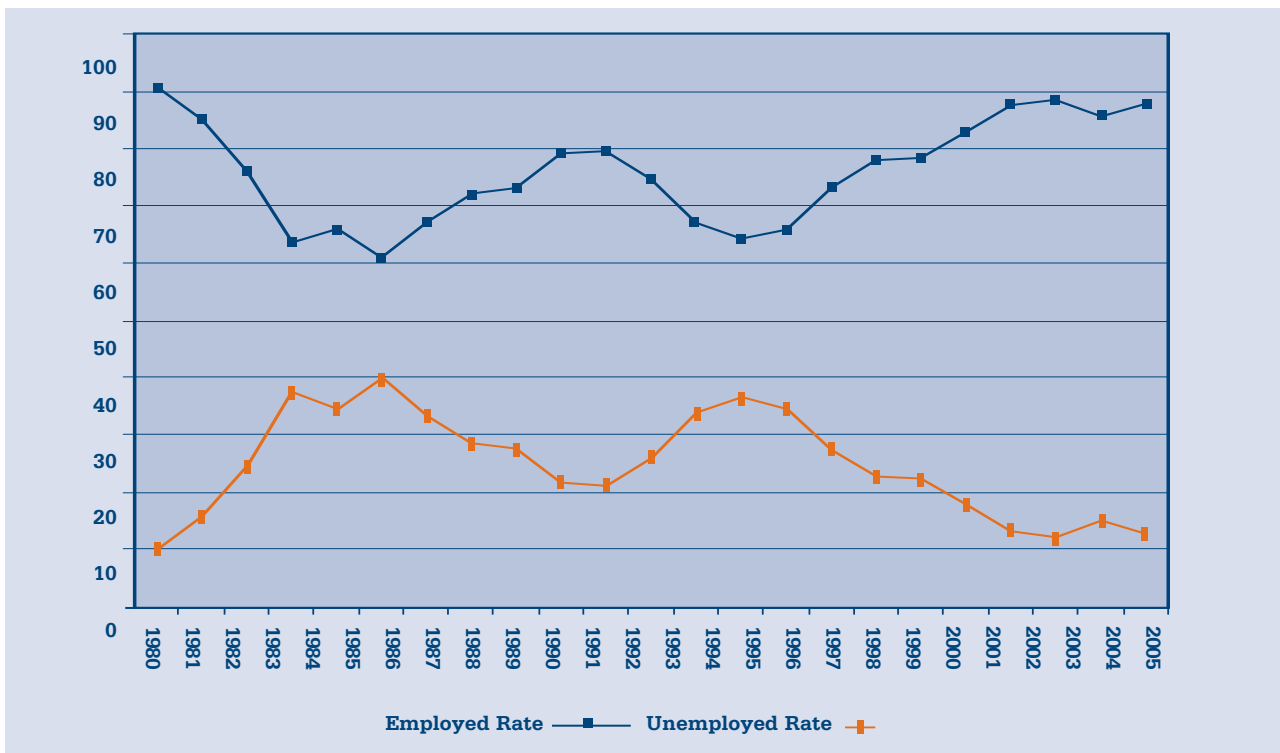


Figure 4.4c: Long-Term Trends in Female School Leavers' Employment and Unemployment Rates

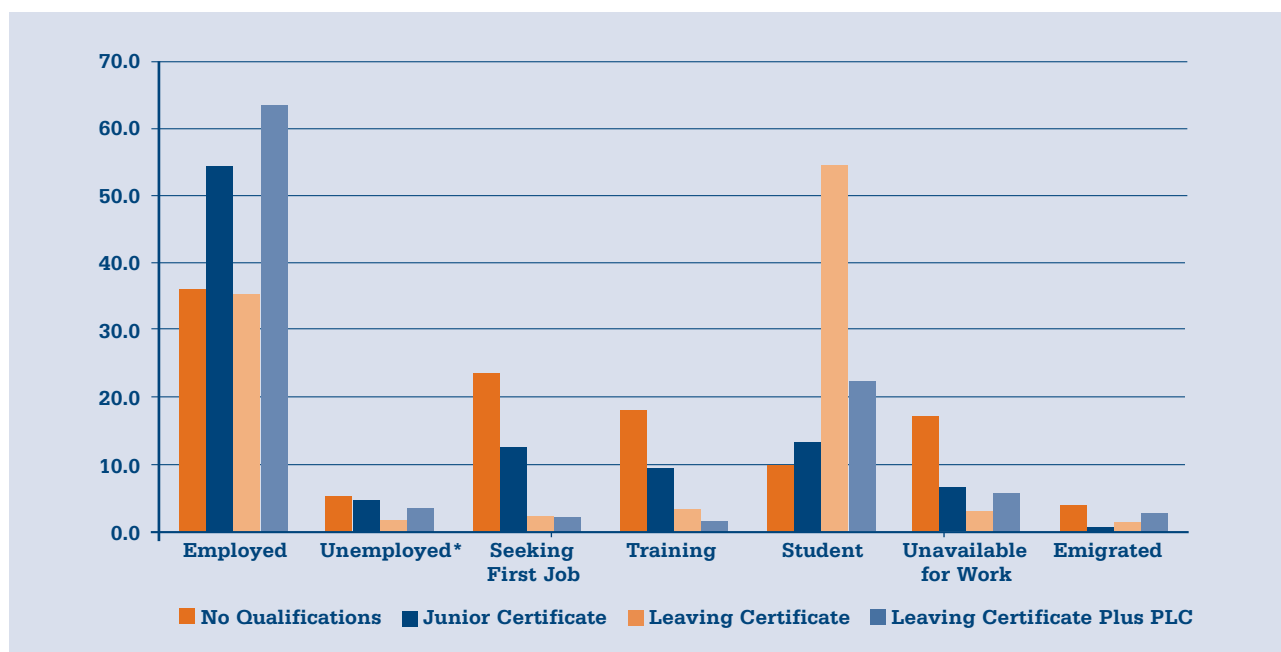


### 4.3 Economic Status and Level of Educational Attainment

#### 4.3.1 2005 Results: Overall Results and Comparisons with 2002 and 2004

Table A2a in Appendix A provides information on the economic status of school leavers according to their level of educational attainment on leaving school<sup>18</sup>. The information presented is for three cohorts of school leavers - 2000/01, 2002/03 and 2003/04. Four categories of educational attainment are referred to: i) no qualifications, ii) Junior Certificate, iii) Leaving Certificate, and iv) Leaving Certificate plus Post-Leaving Certificate (PLC) programme. Figure 4.5 presents the most recent school leaver cohort's, 2003/04 school leavers, economic status by level of educational attainment.

**Figure 4.5: Economic Status of 2003/04 School Leavers One Year After Leaving School by Level of Education**



**\*Note:** This 'Unemployed' category refers to school leavers who are unemployed as a result of the loss of a previous job.

The main picture emerging from this table is that a strong relationship persists between educational attainment and economic status. For instance, when one focuses on school leavers who are unemployed, either as a result of the loss of a previous job or because they are seeking their first job, it can be seen that the proportion classified as such decreases as the level of education qualification increases. In 2005, school leavers

<sup>18</sup> The economic status information presented in this table relates to the month of May in the year after which the school leaver left second-level education.

who were unemployed as a result of the loss of a previous job who had no qualifications recorded unemployment levels of 5 per cent (down 10 percentage points on 2004). This fell to 4 per cent for those who had completed the Junior Cert (down 4 percentage points on 2004), while those who had completed the Leaving Certificate (with or without PLC) recorded unemployment levels of 2-3 per cent (down one percentage point on 2004). The same pattern exists for those unemployed because they were seeking their first job: 24 per cent of 2003/04 school leavers who left school with no qualifications were looking for their first job one year after leaving school (increase of 10 percentage points on 2004), falling to 12 per cent for those who left with a Junior Certificate qualification (5 percentage point increase on 2004) and to 2 per cent for those who completed the Leaving Certificate (one percentage point increase on 2004).

In relation to employment, 23 per cent of the 2003/04 school leavers cohort who left school with no qualifications were in employment one year after leaving school (one percentage point less than 2004). This rose to 54 per cent for those with a Junior Certificate (5 percentage points less than 2004) and to 63 per cent for those with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC (3 percentage points higher than 2004). This 63 per cent employment level for those with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC contrasts sharply with those who sat the Leaving Certificate but undertook no PLC programme; only 35 per cent of these individuals were in employment one year after leaving school (4 percentage points higher than 2004). This result, however, can be explained by this cohort's higher propensity to continue their education, 54 per cent as compared to only 22 per cent of those who undertook a PLC programme (4 percentage points less than 2004 for both qualifications). It may also suggest that participation in a PLC course plays a role in the transition into the labour market and confers valuable labour market skills on participants.

In general, it can be seen from Figure 4.6 that those with higher educational attainment on leaving school are more likely to continue studying. For 2005, this goes from 10 per cent for those with no qualification on leaving school (3 percentage point increase on 2004) to, as just mentioned, 54 per cent for those with a Leaving Certificate. The reverse relationship, however, emerges between educational attainment and those who undertake training; the percentage participating in training one year after leaving school decreases with level of education qualification on leaving school. In 2005, 18 per cent of those who had no qualifications were training one year after leaving school (4 percentage points less than 2004). This fell to 9 per cent for those who had completed the Junior Certificate (same as 2004), while those with a Leaving Certificate recorded training levels of one per cent (plus PLC) to 3 per cent (no PLC).

When comparing the relationship between economic status and education qualification on leaving school for 2003/04 school leavers with earlier cohorts one can see that there has been a significant fall in employment for those leaving school with no qualifications, decreasing from 37 per cent in 2002 to 23 per cent in 2005. There

has also been a fall in employment for those with Junior Certificate (from 61 per cent in 2002 to 54 per cent in 2005) and Leaving Certificate qualifications (from 37 per cent in 2002 to 35 per cent in 2005). However, the falls are not as large as it is for those leaving school with no qualifications.

With regards to unemployment, between 2004 and 2005 there has been a fall in the unemployment level of those who are unemployed as a result of the loss of a previous job for all categories of educational attainment. For those leaving school with no qualifications, this unemployment level has fallen from 15 per cent in 2004 to 5 per cent in 2005. School leavers leaving school with a Junior Certificate qualification have seen a 4 percentage point decline in this unemployment level during this time period, while those leaving school with Leaving Certificate qualifications, with or without PLC, have experienced a one percentage point decline in their unemployment level. At the same time that this unemployment level has fallen, there has been a complementary increase in the proportions still seeking their first job. An analysis of Table A2a indicates that between 2002 and 2005 there has been a significant increase in this unemployment level for those leaving school with lower education qualifications. For instance, for those leaving school with no qualifications the percentage seeking their first job has increased from 13 per cent in 2002 to 24 per cent in 2005, while for those leaving school with a Junior Certificate qualification this number has increased from 5 per cent in 2002 to 12 per cent in 2005.

While there has been a significant increase between 2002 and 2005 in the number of school leavers with lower education qualifications who are unemployed because they are seeking their first job there has also been a significant increase in the percentage of these school leavers who have gone on to further study during this time period: the proportion of school leavers with no qualifications on leaving school that are classified as 'student' has increased from 4 per cent in 2002 to 10 per cent in 2005, while those going on to further study with a Junior Certificate qualification has increased from 9 per cent in 2002 to 13 per cent in 2005. This reflects participation in alternative educational and training settings among such early leavers, such as the Youthreach programme and Community Training Centres. In contrast to this, the number of school leavers with a Leaving Certificate qualification staying on to study fell between 2004 and 2005 from 58 per cent to 54 per cent, as did the number of those with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC qualification, from 26 per cent to 22 per cent.

With regards to emigration, Table A2a shows that overall the percentage of school leavers emigrating fell slightly from 2 per cent in 2004 to one per cent in 2005, which is the same level emigration stood at in 2002. There is, however, some variation in emigration numbers according to educational attainment. School leavers who left school with no qualifications experienced the largest increase in emigration between 2002 and 2005, rising from one per cent to 4 per cent. There has also been a slight increase in the number of school leavers with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC emigrating, increasing from one per cent in 2002 to 3 per cent in 2005, but

no change for those leaving school with Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate qualifications.

Overall, there has been no change in the labour market withdrawal level between 2004 and 2005; 4 per cent of school leavers continue to be unavailable to work in 2005. There are, however, differences in withdrawal by educational attainment. In 2005, school leavers who left school with no qualification recorded the highest labour market withdrawal level, 17 per cent, (an increase of 2 percentage points on 2004). This figure fell to 6 per cent for those with a Junior Certificate qualification (one percentage point increase on 2004), to 5 per cent for those with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC qualification (one percentage point increase on 2004), and to 3 per cent for those with a Leaving Certificate qualification (same as 2004).

### **4.3.2 Gender Variations**

Gender differences in the economic status of school leavers by level of educational attainment on leaving school are presented in Tables A2b and A2c in Appendix A. An analysis of the results reveals that males who leave school with low levels of educational attainment record higher employment levels to comparable female school leavers. For instance, in 2005 28 per cent of males who left school with no qualifications were employed (5 percentage point increase on 2004) compared to only 16 per cent of females (8 percentage point decrease on 2004), and 66 per cent of male school leavers who left with a Junior Certificate qualification were employed (2 percentage point decline on 2004) compared to only 34 per cent of females (12 percentage point decline on 2004). On the other hand, females who leave school with low levels of educational attainment have lower unemployment levels compared to males with similar qualifications. In 2005, 22 per cent of females who left school with no qualifications were unemployed (6 percentage point decline on 2004) compared to 33 per cent of males (4 percentage point increase on 2004), while 16 per cent of females who left with a Junior Certificate qualification were unemployed (one percentage point decline on 2004) compared to 17 per cent of males (3 percentage point increase on 2004). The reason, however, why these female school leavers record lower unemployment levels to similar males is because more of these females are unavailable for work. For example, in 2005 27 per cent of female school leavers with no qualifications were unavailable for work compared to only 10 per cent of comparable male school leavers, while 15 per cent of females with a Junior Certificate qualification were unavailable for work compared to one per cent of males.

In relation to further study, a significantly higher proportion of females who leave school with a Junior Certificate qualification participate in further study compared to males who leave with this qualification. In 2005, 27 per cent of females who left school with a Junior Certificate qualification went on to further study (increase of 10 percentage points on 2004) whereas only 5 per cent of males with the same qualification participated in further study (decrease of one percentage point on 2004). This gender gap was much smaller in 2002, 11 per cent of females compared to 8 per cent of males, but it has increased significantly since then. In 2002 and 2004 the same pattern existed for those who left school with no qualifications. However, in 2005 a

slightly higher proportion of males than females who left school with no qualifications participated in further study, 10 per cent compared to 9 per cent. The gender differences in going on to further study are much narrower for those with a Leaving Certificate qualification (with or without PLC).

In relation to training, in 2005 more females who left school with no qualifications went on to train, 22 per cent (3 percentage point increase on 2004) compared to 15 per cent of males (10 percentage point decrease on 2004). However, in 2002 and 2004 the opposite result held. Since 2004 a slightly higher proportion of males who leave school with a Junior Certificate qualification go on to train compared to females with the same qualification. For each of the school leaver cohorts analysed in this table, more males than females who leave school with a Leaving Certificate qualification also go on to train, but a similar level of males and females who leave school with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC go into training.

Overall, a higher proportion of females are unavailable to work compared to males. This applies across all education qualification categories and in particular, as indicated earlier, for those who leave school with low levels of educational attainment. Emigration levels are similar for males and females across all educational attainment levels except for Leaving Certificate plus PLC. In 2005, 6 per cent of males who left school with this qualification emigrated (increase of 3 percentage points on 2004) compared to only one per cent of females (2 percentage point decrease on 2004).

#### ***4.3.3 Labour Market Characteristics by Educational Attainment***

##### *Labour Market Participation: Short-Term Trends*

This section focuses on school leavers who entered the labour market according to their education qualification on leaving school. Table 4.2 begins this analysis by examining the labour market participation rates, and employment and unemployment rates, of three cohorts of school leavers one year after leaving school.

Overall, labour market participation rates are the highest among school leavers who leave school with a Junior Certificate qualification while they are the lowest among those who leave with a Leaving Certificate. This labour market participation rate divergence can be largely explained by both groups rate of entry into further study; those with a Leaving Certificate qualification have the highest rate of entry while those with a Junior Certificate have, in general, the second lowest. It is interesting to note that between 2004 and 2005 there was a 4 percentage point decline in the labour market participation rate of school leavers who left school with a Junior Certificate qualification, while at the same time their rate of entry into further study increased by 2 percentage points. This reflects their participation in alternative educational opportunities such as through FETAC and Youthreach. On the other hand, the labour market participation rate for those who left with a Leaving

Certificate qualification increased by 4 percentage points and their entry into further study fell by an equivalent amount.

Among those in the labour market, employment rates are significantly lower among those who leave school with no qualifications and consequently their unemployment rates are much higher. In 2005, the employment rate of school leavers who left school with no qualifications stood at 45 per cent, the same as 2004 but 15 percentage points less than 2002. Those who leave school with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC qualification have, on the other hand, the highest employment rate and thus the lowest unemployment rate. In 2005, the employment rate for this group equalled 93 per cent, 2 percentage points higher than 2004 but one percentage point lower than 2002. School leavers who leave school with a Leaving Certificate qualification have the next highest employment rate; this rate stood at 91 per cent in 2005, an increase of 2 percentage points on 2004.



**Table 4.2: Labour Force Participation, Employment and Unemployment Rates Among School Leavers by Level of Education (Percentage) \***

	No Qualifications			Junior Certificate			Leaving Certificate			Leaving Certificate (Plus PLC)			Total		
	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005
<b>LF Participation Rates of which:</b>															
Employed	61.2	51.4	51.6	73.9	74.3	70.4	39.7	35.1	38.5	67.0	65.8	68.4	49.2	45.6	48.0
Unemployed	59.6	45.1	44.8	82.7	79.3	76.5	94.3	88.8	90.5	93.8	91.4	92.5	90.4	85.3	86.0
	40.4	54.9	55.2	17.3	20.7	23.5	5.7	11.2	9.5	6.2	8.6	7.5	9.6	14.7	14.0

**\*Note:** Emigrants are excluded from this analysis

**Table 4.3: Employment and Unemployment Rates of Male and Female School Leavers in the Labour Market by Level of Education (2005) \***

	Male		Female		Total	
	Employed	Unemployed	Employed	Unemployed	Employed	Unemployed
<b>Education Qualification:</b>						
No Qualifications	46.4	53.6	41.1	58.9	44.8	55.2
Junior Certificate	79.6	20.4	67.8	32.2	76.5	23.5
Leaving Certificate **	90.6	9.4	91.5	8.5	91.1	8.9
Total (Percentage)	84.9	15.1	87.3	12.7	86.0	14.0
<b>Total in Category</b>	<b>14,501</b>	<b>2,572</b>	<b>12,846</b>	<b>1,865</b>	<b>27,347</b>	<b>4,437</b>

**\*Note:** Emigrants are excluded from this analysis

**\*\*Note:** School leavers with and without a PLC programme combined

Gender differences in employment and unemployment rates by level of education are presented in Table 4.3 for the most recent cohort of school leavers one year after they left second-level education, May 2005. Overall, female school leavers participating in the labour market emerge as having a slightly lower unemployment rate and consequently a higher employment rate than males; 13 per cent unemployed (87 per cent employed) compared to 15 per cent of males (85 per cent employed). However, an analysis of the gender employment and unemployment rates by level of education reveals a different picture. In 2005, females who left school with no qualifications recorded a higher incidence of unemployment, and thus lower employment, than males who left school with no qualifications, 59 per cent unemployed compared to 54 per cent for males. Females who left with a Junior Certificate qualification also registered a higher unemployment rate than males who left with this qualification, 32 per cent versus 20 per cent. Both genders, however, had similar unemployment and employment rates for those who left school with a Leaving Certificate qualification.

#### *Unemployment Rates: Long-Term Trends*

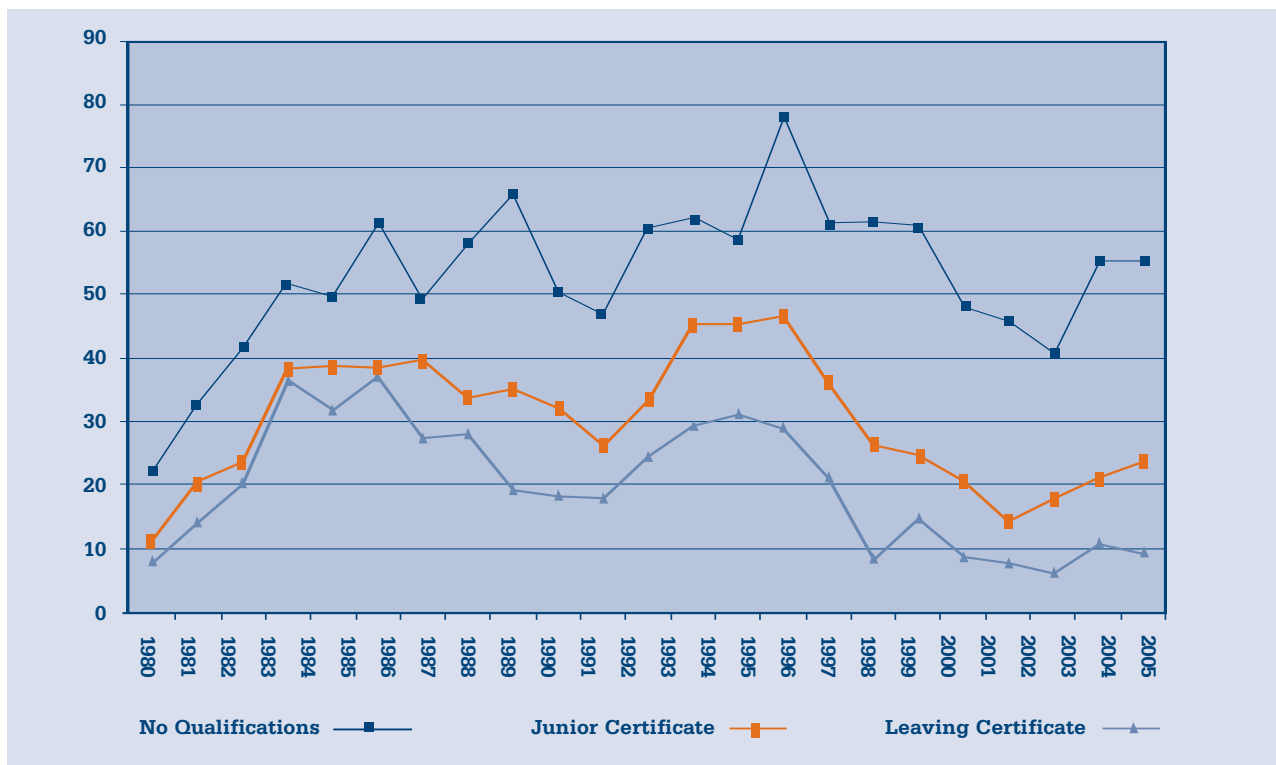
Figure 4.6 illustrates the unemployment rates of school leavers according to education qualification level from 1980 to 1999 and from 2002 to 2005. Three education qualification categories are referred to here: i) no qualifications, ii) Junior Certificate and iii) Leaving Certificate<sup>19</sup>.

It can be seen clearly from this figure that since 1980 there has been a persistent gap in the unemployment rate of those who leave school without qualifications and those who leave on completion of the Leaving Certificate, and this gap has grown over time. In 1980 the unemployment rate among those with no qualifications was 14 percentage points higher than for those with a Leaving Certificate. By 2005, however, this differential had exceeded 46 percentage points.

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<sup>19</sup> The 'Leaving Certificate' category combines school leavers with and without a PLC programme together.

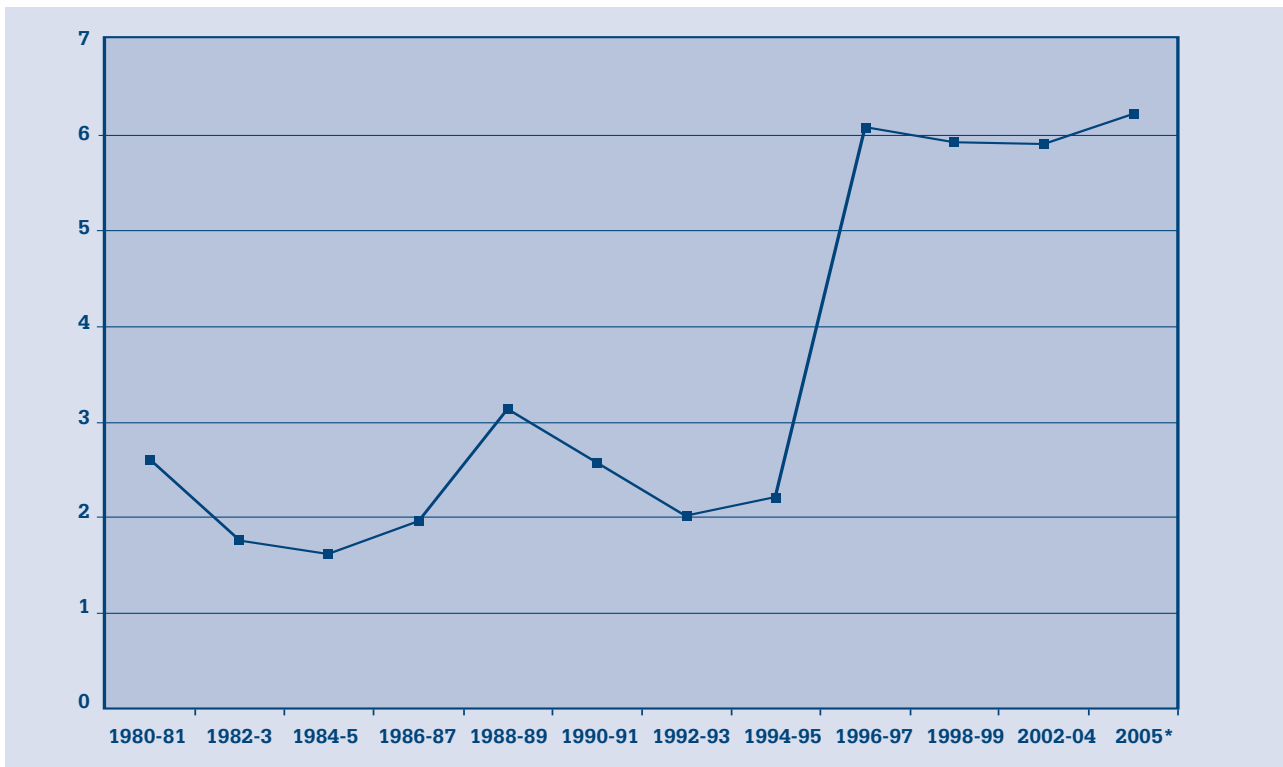
**Figure 4.6: Unemployment Rates by Educational Attainment**



There has also been a consistent gap in the unemployment rates of those who leave school with a Junior Certificate qualification and those who leave after completing the Leaving Certificate, a gap that has also grown over time but not by as much as the unemployment rate gap between those who leave with no qualifications and those who leave school with a Leaving Certificate. In 1980 those who left school with a Junior Certificate qualification had an unemployment rate of 11 per cent, 3 percentage points higher than the unemployment rate of those who left with a Leaving Certificate qualification. By 2005, the unemployment rate of those who left school with a Junior Certificate qualification had grown to 24 per cent, 15 percentage points higher than the unemployment rate of those who left with a Leaving Certificate qualification. An interesting point to note is that up until 1999 the unemployment rate of school leavers who leave school with a Junior Certificate has more or less followed the same pattern as the unemployment rate of those who leave with a Leaving Certificate. However, since 1999, the unemployment rate paths of both of these school leaver groups have been diverging; the unemployment rate of school leavers with a Junior Certificate qualification has started to trend upwards, whereas the unemployment rate of those with a Leaving Certificate qualification has remained relatively low and stable, averaging around 8 per cent between 1999 and 2005. Clearly, since around 1999 having the Junior Certificate is no longer sufficient in accessing many employment opportunities and for many jobs the Leaving Certificate is now a minimum requirement.

Figure 4.7 illustrates the relative unemployment risk differential between those who leave school with no qualifications and those who leave with a Leaving Certificate. Viewed in terms of ratios, this figure clearly shows the declining relative position of the least qualified school leavers, particularly since 1996/97. While school leavers who left school with no qualifications were 2 to 3 times more likely to be unemployed than those who left with a Leaving Certificate in the early 1990s, this differential has grown to over 6 times by 2005, a slight increase on 2002/04.

**Figure 4.7: Unemployment Rate Ratios – Unqualified versus Leaving Certificate School Leavers**



\*Note: One year of data only

#### *Labour Market Status by Outcome of Last Exam*

Table A3 in Appendix A details the labour market status – employed, unemployed and not in the labour force – of the most recent cohort of school leavers one year after they left second-level education (May 2005) by outcome of last exam (eight exam result categories are specified). The results in this table clearly show the strong and positive relationship between labour market status and, not alone level of attainment, but also outcome of last exam within each level. In particular, it can be seen that the level of unemployment decreases favourably as the level of educational attainment, in terms of last exam results, increases<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> In Table A3 in Appendix A employment and unemployment level results that have emerged for the 'Junior Certificate, less 5 passes' and 'Junior Certificate, 1 + honours' exam outcomes need to be interpreted with caution. The results are more than likely erroneous because of small sample sizes. The same applies to the results presented for these exam outcomes in Figures 4.8a to 4.8c.

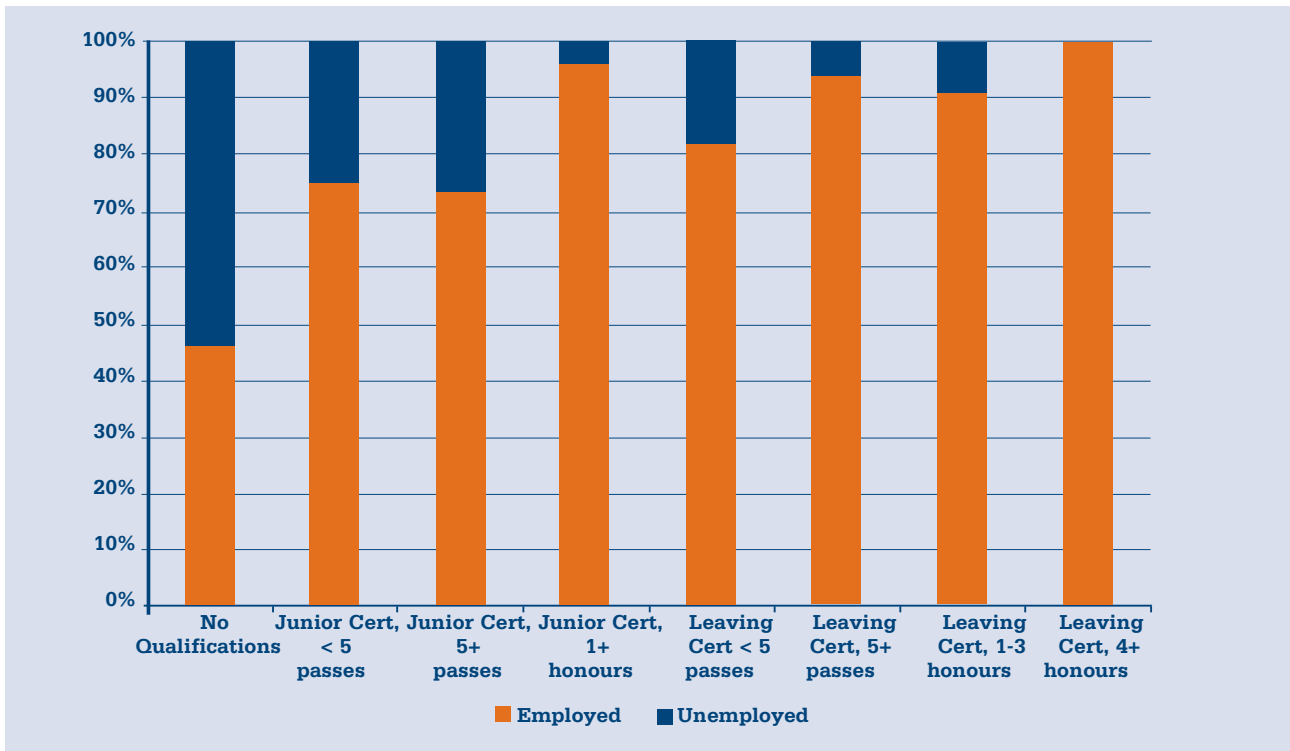
Figures 4.8a to 4.8c present employment and unemployment rates by outcome of last exam for the same group of school leavers, overall and separately for males and females. Again these figures illustrate that the incidence of unemployment decreases as educational success, specifically in terms of outcome of last exam, increases. For instance, in 2005 thirty-eight per cent was the unemployment rate of those whose last exam was the Junior Certificate and who got less than five passes, whereas the unemployment rate for those who completed the Leaving Certificate and got four or more honours was only one per cent. It is also interesting to note that those securing a 'good' Junior Certificate actually fare better than those performing poorly in the Leaving Certificate.

**Figure 4.8a: Employment and Unemployment Rates of School Leavers by Outcome of Last Exam, 2005**

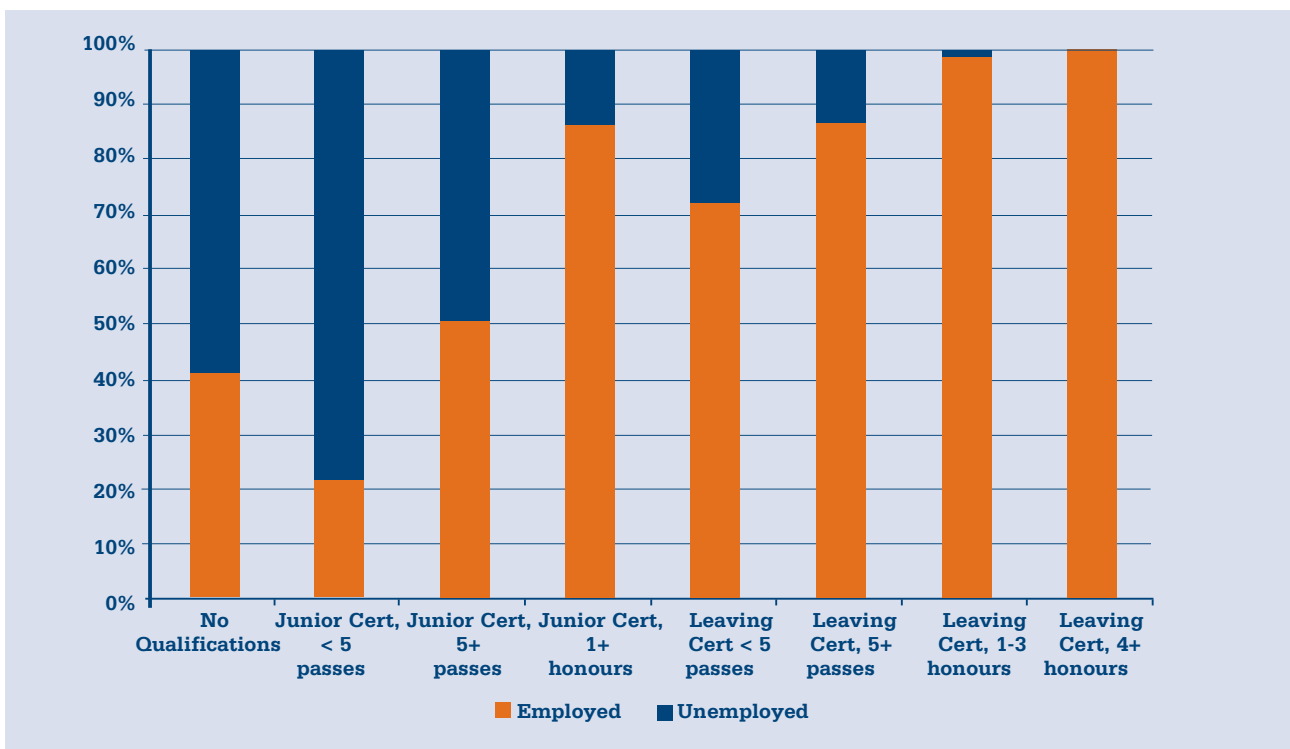


In relation to gender variations, one of the most interesting results to emerge is that females who left school with a Junior Certificate and who got less than five passes had a considerably higher unemployment rate in 2005 compared to similarly educated male school leavers, 78 per cent compared to 25 per cent. The gender employment and unemployment rate results for the other exam categories, however, are broadly similar.

**Figure 4.8b: Employment and Unemployment Rates of Male School Leavers by Outcome of Last Exam, 2005**



**Figure 4.8c: Employment and Unemployment Rates of Female School Leavers by Outcome of Last Exam, 2005**

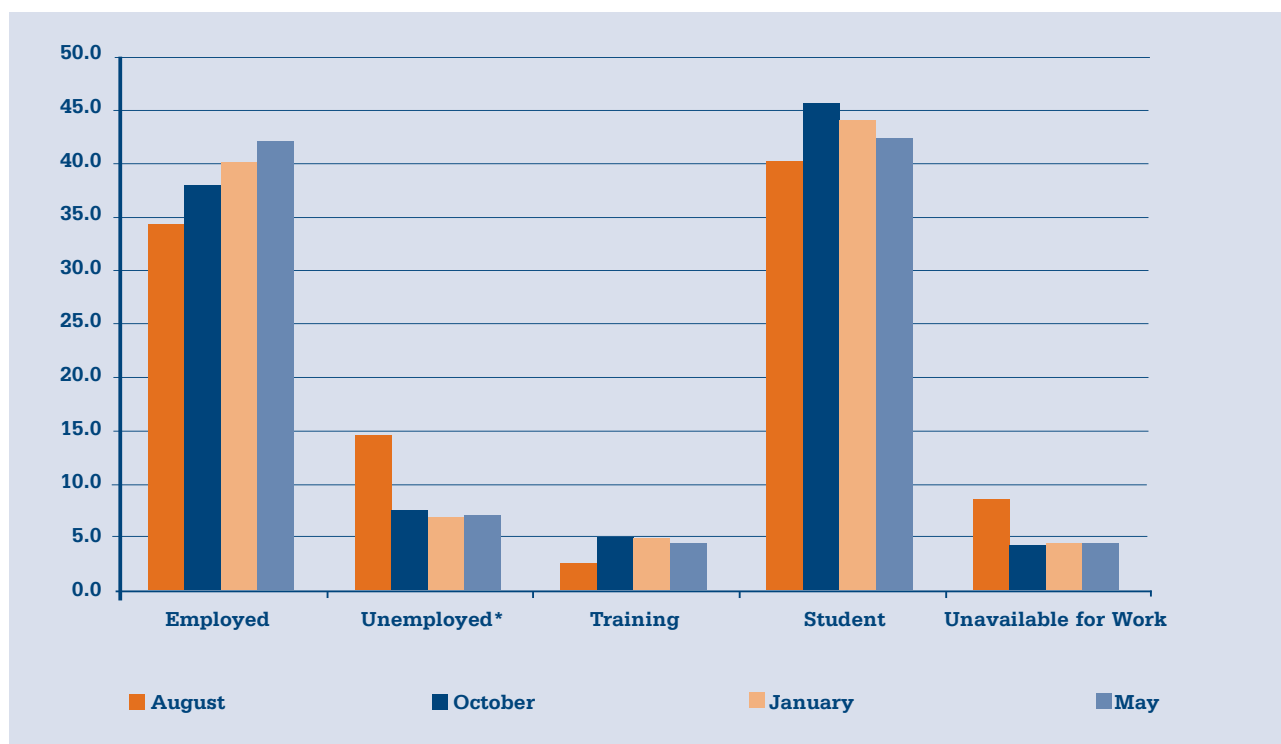


#### 4.4 Changes in Economic Status in the Year Since Leaving School

The analysis so far has focussed on the economic status of school leavers at one point in time, approximately one year after having left second-level education (i.e. May 2005 for the most recent cohort of school leavers). In this section specific time periods within those 12 months, namely August 2004, October 2004, January 2005 and May 2005, are investigated. These results are presented in Table A4 in Appendix A and are illustrated in Figure 4.9.

In aggregate, it can be seen in Figure 4.9 that 2003/04 school leavers' employment levels increased gradually over the year after which they left school; going from 34 per cent in August 2004 to 38 per cent in October, then 40 per cent in January 2005 and 42 per cent by the following May after which they had left school, May 2005.

**Figure 4.9: Changes in the Economic Status of 2003/04 School Leavers in the Year Since Leaving School**



*\*Note: This 'unemployed' category includes those who are unemployed as a result of the loss of a previous job and those seeking their first job.*

This school leaver cohort's unemployment level was at its highest level in the August after which they left school; then it stood at 15 per cent<sup>21</sup>. However, it declined after this and by January 2005 it had fallen to 7 per cent, the level it continued to be at a year after which they left school, May 2005.

The proportion in training was at its highest level in the October/January period (5 per cent), while the percentage classified as 'students' peaked in October (46 per cent). This latter result, which is identical to previous school leaver cohort results, corresponds with the beginning of the academic year in most Further and Higher Education institutions. The percentage of 2003/04 school leavers' unavailable for work fell from 8 per cent in August 2004 to 4 per cent by October 2004, a result that captures those who start further study/training courses in October.

Table A4 also presents changes in the economic status of 2003/04 school leavers over the year after which they left school separately for male and female school leavers. The trends emerge to be similar for both genders and are more or less the same as the overall pattern.

Tables A5a to A5c in Appendix A present changes in the economic status of school leavers during the year since leaving school by educational attainment, overall and by gender. The overall results for each of the educational attainment categories for the most recent cohort of school leavers (2003/04), presented in Table A5a, more or less reflect the trends in Table A4 in Appendix A: employment increases for school leavers in each of the educational attainment categories over the year after which they left school while unemployment declines. School leavers who left school with no qualifications, however, experienced a slight increase in their unemployment level between the January (2005) and the May (2005) after which they left school - their unemployment level increased from 28 per cent to 30 per cent.

Some gender variations can be observed in Tables A5b and A5c. In 2005, male school leavers who left school with no qualifications had much higher unemployment levels than females in the August (2004) after they finished school, 44 per cent compared to 30 per cent of females. Both groups unemployment levels fell over the year but by the following May (2005) after which they had left school, exactly one year, females who had left school with no qualifications still had much lower unemployment levels compared to similar males, 23 per cent compared to 34 per cent. The same gender variation exists for those who left school with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC qualification.

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<sup>21</sup> Of this, 3 per cent were unemployed as a result of the loss of a previous job while 12 per cent were seeking their first job.



## 4.5 School Leavers' Economic Status and Socio-Economic Background

This section examines the impact a school leaver's socio-economic background, specifically their father's socio-economic status, has on their i) economic status one year after leaving school and ii) labour force participation rate.

### 4.5.1 School Leavers' Economic Status by Father's Socio-Economic Status

Table A6a in Appendix A details the relationship between father's socio-economic status and the economic status of the most recent cohort of school leavers, 2003/04, one year after leaving school<sup>22</sup>.

As indicated previously, 7 per cent of the 2003/04 school leaver cohort are classified as unemployed one year after school, in May 2005. It can be seen from Table A6a that those from unemployed backgrounds continue to face great difficulty in accessing employment, with three-in-ten unemployed. This compares to only one per cent of school leavers from both professional and employer/manager backgrounds being unemployed.

The largest group of 2003/04 school leavers in employment came from backgrounds where the father is skilled/semi-skilled/unskilled manual, 52 per cent, while the smallest employed school leaver group was that where the father was a professional worker, 19 per cent.

Although the fewest employed school leavers come from professional backgrounds, it is from this socio-economic background that the highest proportion of 2003/04 school leavers who went on to further study were drawn, 74 per cent. Just over a half of school leavers from employer/manager and agricultural backgrounds also went on to further study, 53 per cent and 51 per cent respectively. However, only 20 per cent of 2003/04 school leavers from backgrounds where the father is unemployed went on to further study; a figure that is 20 percentage points less than the average school leaver participation level. In contrast to this, the highest proportion of 2003/04 school leavers who went on to train came from unemployed backgrounds. The lowest group, on the other hand, came from professional backgrounds, one per cent.

### 4.5.2 Labour Market Participation by Father's Socio-Economic Status

Table A7 in Appendix A details the relationship between father's socio-economic status and 2003/04 school leavers' labour force participation rates, and also their employment and unemployment rates.

In terms of 2003/04 school leavers' labour force participation rates, the highest participation rates belong to those from unemployed (58 per cent), skilled/semi-skilled/unskilled manual (57 per cent) and intermediate/other

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<sup>22</sup> Results are presented separately for males and females in Tables A6b and A6c in Appendix A.

non-manual (51 per cent) backgrounds. The participation rates of these three socio-economic groups are all above the average 2003/04 school leavers' participation rate, which is 48 per cent. School leavers' with the lowest labour force participation rates come from professional (21 per cent), employer/manager (35 per cent) and agricultural (42 per cent) backgrounds.

Focussing specifically on those who participate in the labour market, the highest unemployment rate is recorded for those school leavers where the father is unemployed, 49 per cent. This socio-economic group's unemployment rate is significantly higher than any of the other socio-economic groups' unemployment rates and also the average unemployment rate for the 2003/04 school leaver cohort, which is 14 per cent. The school leaver group with the next highest unemployment rate come from intermediate/non-manual backgrounds; their unemployment rate is 13 per cent. The lowest unemployment rates go to those from employer/manager (one per cent) and professional (6 per cent) backgrounds. Conversely, it is school leavers' from these socio-economic groups that have the highest employment rates, 99 per cent and 94 per cent respectively.



# 4. ■ APPENDIX A



## APPENDIX A: TABLES

Table A1: Economic Status of 2000/01, 2002/03 and 2003/04 School Leavers One Year After Leaving School (Percentage)

	MALE			FEMALE			TOTAL		
	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005
<b>Economic Status:</b>									
Employed	49.8	43.9	44.1	39.3	34.5	39.0	44.5	39.1	41.5
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	2.0	4.7	2.9	3.3	3.6	1.9	2.7	4.1	2.4
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	2.1	2.9	5.0	2.0	2.3	3.7	2.0	2.6	4.4
Training	4.9	4.4	6.1	2.3	3.2	2.5	3.6	3.8	4.3
Student	37.4	40.2	38.1	45.9	49.3	45.6	41.7	44.7	41.9
Unavailable for Work	2.6	2.8	3.1	6.2	4.9	5.4	4.4	3.8	4.3
Emigrated	1.1	1.2	0.7	1.0	2.3	1.9	1.1	1.8	1.3
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Total (Number)</b>	<b>35,299</b>	<b>33,719</b>	<b>32,856</b>	<b>35,948</b>	<b>34,171</b>	<b>32,972</b>	<b>71,247</b>	<b>67,890</b>	<b>65,828</b>

**Table A2a: Economic Status of 2000/01, 2002/03 and 2003/04 School Leavers One Year After Leaving School by Educational Attainment (Percentage)**

	NO QUALIFICATIONS			JUNIOR CERT			LEAVING CERT			LEAVING CERT PLUS PLC			TOTAL		
	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005
<b>Economic Status:</b>															
Employed	36.5	23.5	23.2	61.1	59.1	54.2	37.4	31.4	35.0	62.8	60.2	63.3	44.5	39.0	41.5
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	12.0	14.8	5.1	7.4	8.3	4.4	1.3	2.7	1.6	2.5	4.3	3.2	2.7	4.2	2.4
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	12.7	13.8	23.5	5.4	7.1	12.2	0.9	1.3	2.1	1.6	1.3	1.9	2.0	2.6	4.4
Training	19.7	22.2	17.9	9.3	8.7	9.2	2.1	2.2	3.1	1.1	1.6	1.4	3.5	3.8	4.3
Student	3.8	7.4	9.8	8.6	10.6	13.2	53.9	57.9	54.4	25.3	25.9	22.3	41.7	44.9	41.9
Unavailable for Work	14.5	15.1	16.9	7.4	5.3	6.3	3.1	2.9	2.8	5.8	3.6	5.4	4.5	3.8	4.3
Emigrated	0.8	3.3	3.7	0.9	0.9	0.4	1.2	1.6	1.0	0.9	3.1	2.5	1.1	1.7	1.3
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Total (Number)</b>	<b>2,238</b>	<b>2,488</b>	<b>2,664</b>	<b>9,893</b>	<b>9,739</b>	<b>9,340</b>	<b>47,462</b>	<b>46,133</b>	<b>43,860</b>	<b>10,378</b>	<b>9,151</b>	<b>9,963</b>	<b>69,971</b>	<b>67,511</b>	<b>65,827</b>
<b>Per cent in Category</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>14.4</b>	<b>14.2</b>	<b>67.8</b>	<b>68.3</b>	<b>66.6</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>13.6</b>	<b>15.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table A2b: Economic Status of 2000/01, 2002/03 and 2003/04 Male School Leavers One Year After Leaving School by Educational Attainment (Percentage)**

	NO QUALIFICATIONS			JUNIOR CERT			LEAVING CERT			LEAVING CERT PLUS PLC			TOTAL		
	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005
<b>Economic Status:</b>															
Employed	41.9	23.0	28.3	70.2	67.9	66.3	43.6	37.5	37.9	60.2	56.0	57.6	49.7	43.8	44.1
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	11.0	13.9	4.2	5.1	7.2	5.1	0.9	3.5	1.8	1.7	5.4	5.6	2.1	4.7	2.9
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	12.9	15.3	28.5	4.4	7.2	11.8	0.7	1.2	1.8	4.1	2.1	2.8	2.1	2.9	5.0
Training	22.6	25.1	15.1	8.6	9.0	10.5	3.0	2.6	5.0	3.9	1.0	1.4	4.8	4.4	6.1
Student	1.9	5.2	10.1	7.5	6.1	5.0	48.2	51.8	50.6	28.4	30.7	22.0	37.6	40.2	38.1
Unavailable for Work	9.0	15.0	10.3	3.8	1.8	1.2	2.2	2.4	2.8	0.0	1.9	5.1	2.6	2.8	3.1
Emigrated	0.6	2.6	3.5	0.5	0.7	0.0	1.3	1.1	0.0	1.7	3.0	5.6	1.1	1.2	0.7
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Total (Number)</b>	<b>1,254</b>	<b>1,333</b>	<b>1,606</b>	<b>6,331</b>	<b>5,818</b>	<b>5,840</b>	<b>24,378</b>	<b>23,497</b>	<b>22,629</b>	<b>2,648</b>	<b>2,944</b>	<b>2,782</b>	<b>34,611</b>	<b>33,592</b>	<b>32,857</b>
<b>Per cent in Category</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>18.3</b>	<b>17.3</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>70.4</b>	<b>69.9</b>	<b>68.9</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table A2c: Economic Status of 2000/01, 2002/03 and 2003/04 Female School Leavers One Year After Leaving School by Educational Attainment (Percentage)**

	NO QUALIFICATIONS			JUNIOR CERT			LEAVING CERT			LEAVING CERT PLUS PLC			TOTAL		
	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005
<b>Economic Status:</b>															
Employed	29.5	24.1	15.5	44.8	46.0	33.8	30.9	25.1	32.0	63.8	62.2	65.5	39.4	34.2	39.0
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	13.4	15.8	6.4	11.6	9.9	3.3	1.8	1.9	1.3	2.8	3.8	2.3	3.3	3.6	1.9
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	12.5	12.0	15.8	7.1	6.9	12.9	1.1	1.3	2.4	0.7	1.0	1.6	1.9	2.3	3.7
Training	16.1	19.0	21.9	10.5	8.3	7.2	1.1	1.9	1.1	0.1	1.9	1.4	2.3	3.2	2.5
Student	6.2	9.9	9.4	10.7	17.3	26.9	60.0	64.3	58.3	24.2	23.6	22.4	45.7	49.6	45.6
Unavailable for Work	21.4	15.2	26.9	13.7	10.4	14.9	4.0	3.4	2.8	7.7	4.5	5.5	6.3	4.8	5.4
Emigrated	0.9	4.2	4.1	1.6	1.2	1.0	1.1	2.1	2.0	0.6	3.1	1.4	1.0	2.2	1.9
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Total (Number)</b>	<b>984</b>	<b>1,155</b>	<b>1,059</b>	<b>3,558</b>	<b>3,918</b>	<b>3,501</b>	<b>23,086</b>	<b>22,636</b>	<b>21,231</b>	<b>7,728</b>	<b>6,209</b>	<b>7,182</b>	<b>35,356</b>	<b>33,918</b>	<b>32,973</b>
<b>Per cent in Category</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>11.6</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>65.3</b>	<b>66.7</b>	<b>64.4</b>	<b>21.9</b>	<b>18.3</b>	<b>21.8</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>



Table A3: Labour Market Status of 2003/04 School Leavers by Outcome of Last Examination Sat, 2005\*

	Male			Female			Total		Total in Category
	Not in LF	Employed	Unemployed	Not in LF	Employed	Unemployed	Employed	Unemployed	
<b>Outcome of Last Exam Sat:</b>									
No Qualifications	39.3	28.1	32.5	62.3	15.5	22.2	48.4	23.1	28.4
Junior Cert, less 5 passes	16.5	62.7	20.8	51.1	10.5	38.3	29.0	43.9	27.1
Junior Cert, 5+ passes	17.3	60.7	22.0	54.7	23.0	22.3	30.5	47.4	22.1
Junior Cert, 1+ honours	21.3	75.6	3.1	62.0	32.8	5.2	41.7	54.2	4.1
Leaving Cert, less 5 passes	26.3	60.2	13.5	27.6	52.4	20.0	26.8	57.1	16.1
Leaving Cert, 5+ passes	37.0	59.3	3.7	44.5	48.0	7.5	41.2	53.0	5.8
Leaving Cert, 1-3 honours	45.7	49.5	4.8	49.5	49.8	0.7	47.4	49.6	3.0
Leaving Cert, 4+ honours	82.8	17.2	0.0	80.7	19.1	0.2	81.6	18.3	0.1
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>50.1</b>	<b>42.9</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>61.0</b>	<b>33.8</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>55.6</b>	<b>38.3</b>	<b>6.1</b>
<b>Total in Category</b>	<b>12601</b>	<b>10779</b>	<b>1749</b>	<b>15513</b>	<b>8610</b>	<b>1319</b>	<b>28112</b>	<b>19390</b>	<b>3068</b>

\*Note: Note in LF = Not in Labour Force

**Table A4: Changes in the Economic Status of 2000/01, 2002/03 and 2003/04 School Leavers During the Year Since Leaving School**

	MALE			FEMALE			TOTAL		
	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005
<b>August (2001, 2003, 2004):</b>									
Employed	44.1	37.4	36.7	32.9	29.4	31.9	38.4	33.4	34.3
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	2.0	5.3	3.3	3.0	4.9	1.8	2.5	5.1	2.6
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	5.9	10.3	12.2	6.3	7.6	11.7	6.1	8.9	11.9
Training	2.4	2.4	3.7	1.4	1.2	1.3	1.9	1.8	2.5
Student	33.5	36.9	37.1	39.8	45.9	43.4	36.6	41.4	40.2
Unavailable for Work	12.1	7.8	7.0	16.5	11.0	9.9	14.3	9.4	8.4
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>October (2001, 2003, 2004):</b>									
Employed	47.0	40.6	39.8	36.6	31.6	36.1	41.7	36.1	38.0
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	1.7	3.5	2.1	2.7	2.9	1.4	2.2	3.2	1.7
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	2.6	4.4	6.2	3.2	4.3	5.2	2.9	4.4	5.7
Training	4.4	3.9	6.0	1.8	3.1	3.6	3.1	3.5	4.8
Student	41.4	44.5	42.8	51.3	53.2	48.4	46.4	48.9	45.6
Unavailable for Work	3.0	3.1	3.1	4.5	4.9	5.2	3.7	4.0	4.2
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>January (2002, 2004, 2005):</b>									
Employed	47.1	42.1	42.9	37.5	32.5	37.2	42.2	37.3	40.0
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	2.5	3.7	2.2	3.2	3.3	2.3	2.9	3.5	2.3
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	2.4	3.5	5.2	2.4	3.0	3.8	2.4	3.2	4.5
Training	4.4	4.1	6.6	1.9	3.6	3.2	3.1	3.9	4.9
Student	40.6	43.8	40.2	50.2	53.1	47.8	45.5	48.5	44.0
Unavailable for Work	3.0	2.7	2.9	4.8	4.5	5.7	3.9	3.6	4.3
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>May (2002, 2004, 2005):</b>									
Employed	50.4	44.4	44.4	39.7	35.3	39.7	45.0	39.8	42.1
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	2.0	4.7	2.9	3.4	3.7	1.9	2.7	4.2	2.4
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	2.1	2.9	5.0	2.0	2.4	3.8	2.0	2.6	4.4
Training	4.9	4.5	6.2	2.3	3.3	2.5	3.6	3.9	4.4
Student	37.9	40.7	38.4	46.4	50.4	46.5	42.2	45.6	42.4
Unavailable for Work	2.6	2.8	3.1	6.3	5.0	5.5	4.5	3.9	4.3
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Estimated No. in Category</b>	<b>34,905</b>	<b>33,303</b>	<b>32,637</b>	<b>35,592</b>	<b>33,393</b>	<b>32,360</b>	<b>70,497</b>	<b>66,696</b>	<b>64,997</b>

**Table A5a: Changes in the Economic Status of 2000/01, 2002/03 and 2003/04 School Leavers During the Year Since Leaving School by Educational Attainment**

	NO QUALIFICATIONS			JUNIOR CERT			LEAVING CERT			LEAVING CERT PLUS PLC			TOTAL		
	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005
<b>August (2001, 2003, 2004):</b>															
Employed	35.9	19.2	16.6	58.0	49.2	44.7	31.1	26.7	28.0	52.8	53.8	57.6	38.3	33.3	34.3
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	8.9	15.5	5.7	5.1	7.0	3.3	1.5	4.4	2.2	3.0	3.2	2.6	2.5	5.0	2.6
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	18.5	24.8	32.6	12.6	16.3	26.5	4.2	6.5	8.3	5.7	8.7	9.0	6.1	8.9	11.9
Training	14.4	11.0	9.6	6.2	5.8	5.0	0.5	0.6	2.1	1.2	0.9	0.4	1.9	1.8	2.5
Student	3.8	7.2	8.8	9.1	13.0	11.9	46.7	52.3	51.6	26.1	26.7	24.5	36.9	41.5	40.2
Unavailable for Work	18.6	22.2	26.5	9.0	8.6	8.6	15.9	9.5	7.8	11.2	6.7	6.0	14.3	9.4	8.4
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>October (2001, 2003, 2004):</b>															
Employed	37.1	19.7	16.8	62.7	55.8	52.5	34.5	28.5	30.8	55.0	57.0	61.7	41.6	35.9	38.0
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	8.8	15.2	4.7	5.1	6.9	2.7	0.7	1.8	1.3	4.3	3.2	1.9	2.1	3.2	1.7
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	14.0	17.1	25.1	8.3	10.7	14.4	1.5	2.2	3.1	1.7	4.8	3.8	2.9	4.3	5.7
Training	18.8	23.1	18.9	8.0	8.2	10.5	1.7	1.9	3.5	1.2	1.3	1.4	3.1	3.5	4.8
Student	4.2	8.3	12.5	10.0	12.8	15.1	59.4	62.6	58.4	32.1	30.1	26.2	46.6	49.0	45.6
Unavailable for Work	17.1	16.6	22.0	6.0	5.6	4.8	2.2	3.1	2.8	5.8	3.6	5.1	3.8	4.0	4.2
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Table A5a: Continued

	NO QUALIFICATIONS			JUNIOR CERT			LEAVING CERT			LEAVING CERT PLUS PLC			TOTAL		
	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005
<b>January (2002, 2004, 2005):</b>															
Employed	34.6	21.6	21.0	61.7	58.2	54.6	35.2	29.3	33.6	57.2	58.4	59.9	42.2	37.1	40.0
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	11.3	16.6	4.9	7.1	7.9	4.0	1.7	1.9	1.1	2.9	3.8	5.0	2.9	3.5	2.3
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	14.7	15.0	23.5	6.6	8.6	12.1	1.2	1.5	2.3	1.6	2.7	2.2	2.4	3.2	4.5
Training	18.4	23.5	19.6	8.8	8.8	10.3	1.6	2.1	3.6	1.3	2.3	1.5	3.1	3.9	4.9
Student	4.2	7.5	11.5	9.1	11.3	13.4	58.2	62.4	56.5	31.1	29.8	26.0	45.5	48.6	44.0
Unavailable for Work	16.8	15.9	19.4	6.7	5.2	5.6	2.2	2.8	2.9	5.9	3.0	5.4	3.9	3.7	4.3
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>May (2002, 2004, 2005):</b>															
Employed	36.7	24.3	24.1	61.6	59.6	54.4	37.9	31.9	35.4	63.4	62.1	64.9	45.0	39.7	42.1
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	12.1	15.3	5.3	7.5	8.4	4.4	1.4	2.7	1.6	2.6	4.5	3.3	2.7	4.2	2.4
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	12.8	14.3	24.4	5.4	7.2	12.3	0.9	1.3	2.1	1.6	1.4	2.0	2.0	2.6	4.4
Training	19.9	23.0	18.6	9.4	8.8	9.3	2.1	2.3	3.1	1.1	1.6	1.4	3.6	3.9	4.4
Student	3.9	7.6	10.2	8.7	10.7	13.3	54.6	58.9	54.9	25.5	26.7	22.9	42.1	45.7	42.4
Unavailable for Work	14.6	15.6	17.6	7.4	5.3	6.4	3.1	3.0	2.8	5.8	3.8	5.5	4.5	3.9	4.3
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Estimated No. in Category</b>	<b>2,222</b>	<b>2,407</b>	<b>2,566</b>	<b>9,804</b>	<b>9,648</b>	<b>9,305</b>	<b>46,909</b>	<b>45,414</b>	<b>43,417</b>	<b>10,286</b>	<b>8,872</b>	<b>9,711</b>	<b>69,221</b>	<b>66,341</b>	<b>64,999</b>

**Table A5b: Changes in the Economic Status of 2000/01, 2002/03 and 2003/04 Male School Leavers During the Year Since Leaving School by Educational Attainment**

	NO QUALIFICATIONS			JUNIOR CERT			LEAVING CERT			LEAVING CERT PLUS PLC			TOTAL		
	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005
<b>August (2001, 2003, 2004):</b>															
Employed	43.5	19.9	21.6	66.4	56.5	55.4	37.3	31.8	31.1	51.7	51.7	52.4	44.0	37.4	36.7
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	4.6	15.3	4.9	3.7	6.9	3.7	1.2	4.2	2.8	3.5	3.9	5.7	1.9	5.1	3.3
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	19.5	25.0	38.6	8.7	17.6	25.4	4.5	7.6	7.3	5.9	10.8	8.8	5.9	10.3	12.2
Training	14.3	14.3	7.1	6.5	5.8	5.3	0.6	1.2	3.4	2.4	0.5	1.5	2.3	2.4	3.7
Student	3.2	6.4	8.9	8.4	9.2	7.1	42.5	46.9	47.8	28.9	25.7	28.1	33.8	36.9	37.1
Unavailable for Work	14.9	19.1	18.9	6.4	4.0	3.0	13.9	8.2	7.6	7.6	7.5	3.6	12.1	7.9	7.0
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>October (2001, 2003, 2004):</b>															
Employed	42.2	20.8	21.8	69.9	64.4	62.1	40.6	34.2	33.4	49.9	53.3	56.5	46.8	40.6	39.8
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	6.5	13.8	3.4	4.2	7.4	3.1	0.6	1.9	1.4	1.7	3.4	4.4	1.6	3.4	2.1
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	14.3	17.7	30.3	6.0	10.8	15.7	1.1	2.1	2.3	2.4	5.1	4.4	2.6	4.5	6.2
Training	20.1	25.2	16.8	7.9	8.3	10.6	2.7	2.0	4.7	4.2	1.0	1.5	4.4	3.9	6.0
Student	3.2	6.0	13.4	8.7	6.9	7.6	52.7	57.2	55.6	38.3	34.9	28.1	41.7	44.5	42.8
Unavailable for Work	13.6	16.5	14.4	3.3	2.2	0.8	2.3	2.7	2.7	3.5	2.3	5.1	3.0	3.1	3.1
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Table A5b: Continued

	NO QUALIFICATIONS			JUNIOR CERT			LEAVING CERT			LEAVING CERT PLUS PLC			TOTAL		
	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005
<b>January (2002, 2004, 2005):</b>															
Employed	37.7	21.0	28.2	69.9	67.0	66.2	40.8	35.3	36.4	51.2	55.4	55.1	46.9	42.0	42.9
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	11.1	15.8	3.8	5.2	6.6	4.5	1.6	2.4	1.0	1.7	3.4	7.4	2.6	3.8	2.2
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	14.9	15.5	28.3	5.2	8.9	12.0	1.1	1.4	2.1	2.4	3.9	2.9	2.4	3.5	5.2
Training	20.1	25.7	18.0	7.9	9.2	10.7	2.6	2.1	5.0	4.7	1.0	4.4	4.4	4.1	6.6
Student	3.2	6.0	10.9	7.7	6.5	5.3	51.7	56.4	52.8	38.3	34.4	26.6	40.8	43.9	40.2
Unavailable for Work	13.0	15.9	10.8	4.1	1.8	1.2	2.2	2.4	2.7	1.7	1.8	3.6	2.9	2.7	2.9
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>May (2002, 2004, 2005):</b>															
Employed	42.2	23.6	29.3	70.5	68.4	66.3	44.2	37.9	37.9	61.2	57.7	61.0	50.3	44.3	44.4
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	11.1	14.3	4.3	5.1	7.3	5.1	0.9	3.5	1.8	1.7	5.6	5.9	2.1	4.8	2.9
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	13.0	15.7	29.5	4.4	7.3	11.8	0.8	1.2	1.8	4.1	2.1	2.9	2.1	2.9	5.0
Training	22.7	25.7	15.7	8.6	9.1	10.5	3.1	2.6	5.0	4.0	1.0	1.5	4.9	4.5	6.2
Student	1.9	5.3	10.5	7.5	6.1	5.0	48.8	52.3	50.7	28.9	31.7	23.3	38.0	40.7	38.4
Unavailable for Work	9.1	15.4	10.7	3.8	1.9	1.2	2.3	2.4	2.8	0.0	2.0	5.4	2.6	2.8	3.1
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Estimated No. in Category</b>	<b>1,247</b>	<b>1,298</b>	<b>1,550</b>	<b>6,303</b>	<b>5,775</b>	<b>5,840</b>	<b>24,067</b>	<b>23,246</b>	<b>22,621</b>	<b>2,603</b>	<b>2,856</b>	<b>2,627</b>	<b>34,220</b>	<b>33,175</b>	<b>32,638</b>

**Table A5c: Changes in the Economic Status of 2000/01, 2002/03 and 2003/04 Female School Leavers During the Year Since Leaving School by Educational Attainment**

	NO QUALIFICATIONS			JUNIOR CERT			LEAVING CERT			LEAVING CERT PLUS PLC			TOTAL		
	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005
<b>August (2001, 2003, 2004):</b>															
Employed	26.2	18.4	9.2	42.9	38.4	26.6	24.7	21.3	24.5	53.2	54.8	59.5	32.8	29.3	31.9
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	14.4	15.7	7.0	7.5	7.2	2.6	1.9	4.5	1.5	2.8	2.8	1.4	3.0	4.9	1.8
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	17.1	24.6	23.4	19.8	14.4	28.2	3.9	5.4	9.3	5.6	7.7	9.0	6.3	7.5	11.7
Training	14.4	7.1	13.5	5.8	5.8	4.6	0.5	0.1	0.6	0.7	1.2	0.0	1.4	1.2	1.3
Student	4.5	8.2	8.8	10.3	18.8	19.9	51.0	58.0	55.9	25.1	27.2	23.2	40.0	46.1	43.4
Unavailable for Work	23.4	25.9	38.2	13.6	15.4	18.1	18.0	10.8	8.1	12.5	6.3	6.9	16.5	11.0	9.9
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>October (2001, 2003, 2004):</b>															
Employed	30.6	18.4	9.2	49.6	43.0	36.4	28.0	22.4	28.0	56.7	56.7	63.6	36.5	31.3	36.1
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	11.7	16.8	6.7	6.7	6.2	1.9	0.8	1.6	1.3	5.1	3.1	0.9	2.7	2.9	1.4
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	13.5	16.4	17.1	12.3	10.6	12.2	1.9	2.3	4.1	1.5	4.6	3.5	3.2	4.2	5.2
Training	17.1	20.6	22.1	8.3	8.0	10.4	0.7	1.8	2.3	0.1	1.5	1.4	1.8	3.1	3.6
Student	5.4	11.0	11.2	12.4	21.5	27.7	66.4	68.3	61.5	30.0	27.8	25.5	51.3	53.5	48.4
Unavailable for Work	21.6	16.8	33.7	10.7	10.7	11.5	2.2	3.5	2.8	6.6	4.2	5.1	4.5	4.9	5.2
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Table A5c: Continued

	NO QUALIFICATIONS			JUNIOR CERT			LEAVING CERT			LEAVING CERT PLUS PLC			TOTAL		
	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005
<b>January (2002, 2004, 2005):</b>															
Employed	30.6	22.2	10.1	46.9	45.1	34.9	29.2	22.9	30.5	59.2	59.8	61.7	37.6	32.2	37.2
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	11.7	17.5	6.7	10.6	9.7	3.2	1.7	1.3	1.3	3.3	4.0	4.2	3.2	3.3	2.3
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	14.4	14.4	16.0	9.1	8.2	12.4	1.3	1.7	2.4	1.4	2.1	1.8	2.4	2.9	3.8
Training	16.2	20.8	22.1	10.6	8.2	9.5	0.5	2.2	2.2	0.1	2.9	0.5	1.9	3.6	3.2
Student	5.4	9.3	12.3	11.6	18.6	27.1	65.1	68.6	60.5	28.7	27.7	25.7	50.1	53.4	47.8
Unavailable for Work	21.7	15.8	32.7	11.3	10.3	12.8	2.2	3.3	3.1	7.3	3.6	6.0	4.8	4.6	5.7
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>May (2002, 2004, 2005):</b>															
Employed	29.7	25.1	16.1	45.6	46.5	34.2	31.2	25.6	32.7	64.1	64.1	66.4	39.8	35.0	39.7
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	13.5	16.4	6.7	11.7	10.0	3.3	1.9	1.9	1.4	2.8	3.9	2.3	3.4	3.7	1.9
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	12.6	12.6	16.4	7.2	7.0	13.0	1.1	1.3	2.4	0.7	1.0	1.6	2.0	2.3	3.8
Training	16.2	19.8	22.8	10.7	8.4	7.2	1.2	1.9	1.2	0.1	1.9	1.4	2.3	3.3	2.5
Student	6.3	10.3	9.8	10.8	17.5	27.2	60.6	65.7	59.5	24.3	24.3	22.7	46.2	50.7	46.5
Unavailable for Work	21.6	15.8	28.1	14.0	10.5	15.1	4.1	3.5	2.8	7.8	4.6	5.6	6.4	4.9	5.5
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Estimated No. in Category</b>	<b>974</b>	<b>1,108</b>	<b>1,016</b>	<b>3,502</b>	<b>3,871</b>	<b>3,465</b>	<b>22,842</b>	<b>22,168</b>	<b>20,796</b>	<b>7,683</b>	<b>6,016</b>	<b>7,083</b>	<b>35,001</b>	<b>33,163</b>	<b>32,360</b>



Table A6a: Economic Status of 2003/04 School Leavers by Socio-Economic Status of Father, 2005

	Farmer / Other Agriculture	Higher/Lower Professional	Employers/ Managers	Intermediate / Other Non-Manual	Skilled / Semi-Skilled / Unskilled Manual	Unemployed	Unknown	Total (Percentage)	Estimated No. in Category
<b>Economic Status:</b>									
Employed	37.1	19.3	35.0	44.6	51.6	29.6	39.6	41.5	27,346
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	1.6	1.0	0.0	3.1	2.5	5.0	2.9	2.4	1,567
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	3.0	0.3	0.5	3.3	3.1	23.6	9.7	4.4	2,870
Training	1.6	0.9	3.0	2.9	5.6	13.9	5.6	4.3	2,841
Student	51.0	73.9	53.4	42.0	33.0	19.6	30.6	41.9	27,560
Unavailable for Work	4.3	2.6	3.8	2.8	3.8	8.4	10.0	4.3	2,810
Emigrated	1.5	2.0	4.4	1.4	0.4	0.0	1.5	1.3	831
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>65,825</b>

**Table A6b: Economic Status of 2003/04 Male School Leavers by Socio-Economic Status of Father, 2005**

	Farmer / Other Agriculture	Higher/Lower Professional	Employers/ Managers	Intermediate / Other Non-Manual	Skilled / Semi-Skilled / Unskilled Manual	Unemployed	Unknown	Total (Percentage)	Estimated No. in Category
<b>Economic Status:</b>									
Employed	39.0	20.8	38.4	48.8	54.4	30.2	34.9	44.1	14,500
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	3.2	0.6	0.0	4.5	2.6	4.2	2.7	2.9	938
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	1.9	0.2	1.1	3.3	4.1	29.3	11.7	5.0	1,633
Training	2.0	1.8	1.1	4.0	9.5	12.8	7.9	6.1	2,018
Student	51.1	70.8	49.9	37.9	26.8	20.5	32.8	38.1	12,528
Unavailable for Work	2.5	5.4	7.3	1.4	2.3	3.1	6.8	3.1	1,019
Emigrated	0.4	0.4	2.2	0.1	0.5	0.0	3.1	0.7	219
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>32,855</b>

**Table A6c: Economic Status of 2003/04 Female School Leavers by Socio-Economic Status of Father, 2005**

	Farmer / Other Agriculture	Higher/Lower Professional	Employers / Managers	Intermediate / Other Non-Manual	Skilled / Semi-Skilled / Unskilled Manual	Unemployed	Unknown	Total (Percentage)	Estimated No. in Category
<b>Economic Status:</b>									
Employed	35.3	17.9	32.7	39.9	48.6	29.2	44.1	39.0	12,847
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	0.0	1.4	0.0	1.6	2.4	5.6	3.0	1.9	629
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	4.0	0.4	0.0	3.3	2.1	19.0	7.7	3.8	1,237
Training	1.2	0.0	4.3	1.6	1.5	14.7	3.5	2.5	823
Student	50.9	76.8	55.9	46.5	39.8	18.9	28.6	45.6	15,034
Unavailable for Work	5.9	0.0	1.3	4.3	5.4	12.6	13.1	5.4	1,791
Emigrated	2.7	3.5	5.9	2.9	0.3	0.0	0.0	1.9	611
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>32,972</b>

**Table A7: Labour Market Participation, Employment and Unemployment Rates of 2003/04 School Leavers by Socio-Economic Status of Father**

	Farmer / Other Agriculture	Higher/Lower Professional	Employers / Managers	Intermediate / Other Non-Manual	Skilled / Semi-Skilled / Unskilled Manual	Unemployed	Unknown	Total (Percentage)	Estimated No. in Category
LM Participation Rates of which:									
Employed	41.6	20.6	34.9	50.7	57.2	58.1	50.4	48.0	31,782
Unemployed	89.0	93.6	98.7	87.4	90.1	50.9	76.0	86.0	27,346
	11.0	6.4	1.3	12.6	9.9	49.1	24.0	14.0	4,436
<b>Total in Category (Percentage)</b>	<b>10.4</b>	<b>11.0</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>22.8</b>	<b>34.6</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>66,182</b>



# 5. EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCES AND OTHER LABOUR MARKET CHARACTERISTICS





## 5. EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCES AND OTHER LABOUR MARKET CHARACTERISTICS

### 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter a detailed analysis is undertaken on school leavers who are in employment one year after leaving school. Section 5.2 examines the allocation of this cohort across eight industrial sectors, while Section 5.3 focuses on their occupational distribution. In both analyses the overall distributions and variations by both educational attainment and gender are examined. Section 5.4 considers this school leaver cohort's earnings one year out, in terms of average gross weekly earnings and hourly earnings. Differences by education qualification and gender are also discussed. A selection of other labour market characteristics are explored in Section 5.5, specifically trade union membership, job security and employer-provided education/training, for those school leavers that were in employment at the time the survey was conducted. Section 5.6 investigates 2003/04 school leavers' perceptions of the relationship between their education and training and their job. Section 5.7 concludes by examining for all school leavers in the 2003/04 cohort, not just those in employment, their levels of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with their present 'economic situation'.

### 5.2 Industrial Sector

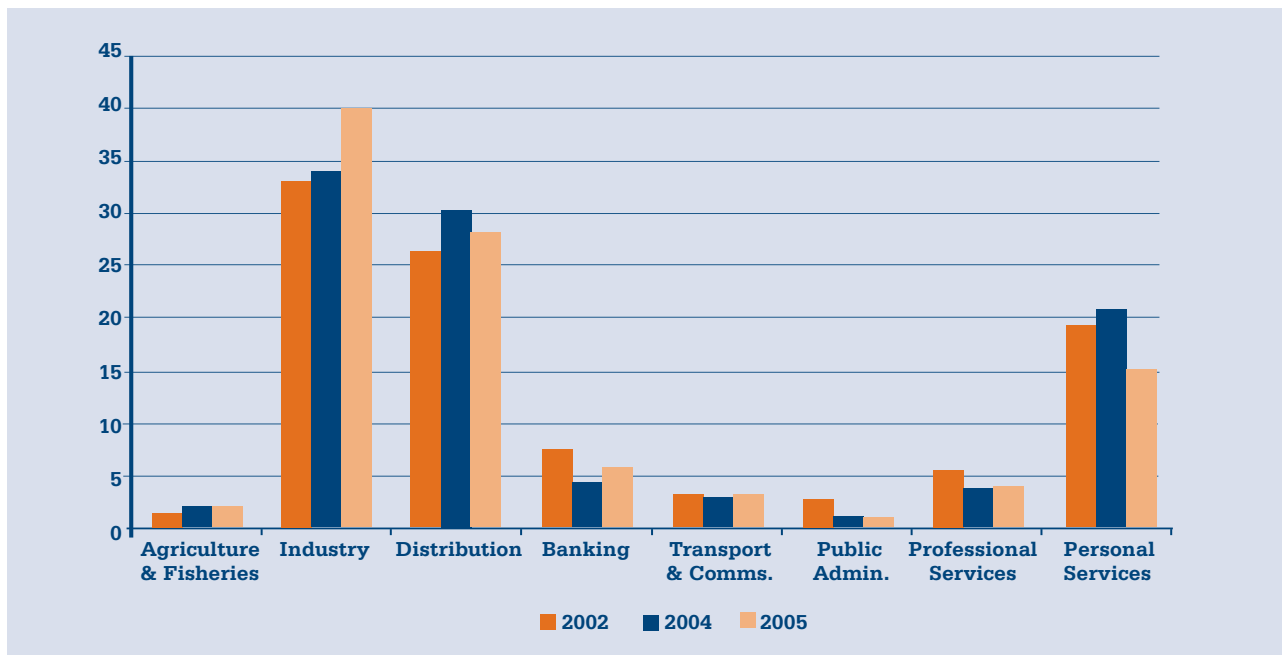
Table B1a in Appendix B details the distribution of school leavers in employment (one year after leaving school) by industrial sector for three cohorts of school leavers, 2000/02, 2002/03 and 2003/04. The eight sectors specified are: i) agriculture and fisheries, ii) industry, iii) distribution, iv) banking, v) transport and communications, vi) public administration, vii) professional services and viii) personal services.

#### 5.2.1 Overall Results

The only industrial sectors that recorded significant changes in the distribution of employed school leavers between 2004 and 2005 are industry and personal services. There was a 6 percentage point increase in the proportion of school leavers employed in industry during this time period while the number employed in personal services fell by an equivalent amount. Slight modifications were also noted in banking and distribution; the percentage of school leavers employed in banking increased by 2 percentage points whereas there was an identical fall in the proportion employed in distribution. The overall pattern in 2005 mirrors previous years; the industry sector continues to be the largest employer of school leavers (40 per cent), followed by distribution (28 per cent) and then personal services (15 per cent). Public administration and agriculture and fisheries, on the other hand, continue to be the sectors that employ the least number of school leavers, one per cent and 2 per cent respectively in 2005. These results are illustrated in Figure 5.1 below.



**Figure 5.1: Sectors in which School Leavers with Full-Time Jobs were Working One Year After Leaving School, 2002, 2004 and 2005**



### 5.2.2 Variation by Educational Attainment

The results in Table B1a in Appendix B clearly illustrate that variations exist in the distribution of school leavers across industrial sectors by educational attainment. Firstly, a significantly higher proportion of school leavers who leave school with a Leaving Certificate qualification (with or without PLC) are employed in banking and professional services. In 2005, 10 per cent of school leavers who left school with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC qualification and 6 per cent who left with a Leaving Certificate were employed in banking compared to only 2 per cent of those who left school with a Junior Certificate qualification and less than one per cent of those who left with no qualifications. In relation to professional services, 5-6 per cent of those who left school with a Leaving Certificate qualification (a 3 percentage point decrease on 2004 for those with Leaving Certificate plus PLC qualification and a 2 percentage point increase for those with a Leaving Certificate) were employed in this sector in 2005 whereas less than one per cent of those with a Junior Certificate qualification (2 percentage point decrease on 2004) and one per cent of those with no qualifications were employed in this sector (2 percentage point decrease on 2004). Up until 2004 a significantly higher proportion of school leavers who left school with a Leaving Certificate qualification (with or without PLC) were also employed in distribution. However, in 2005 the proportion of school leavers with no qualifications employed in this sector increased significantly and currently equals the percentage of those with a Leaving Certificate employed in the sector (28 per cent) and is only 8 percentage points less than those with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC qualification (36 per cent).

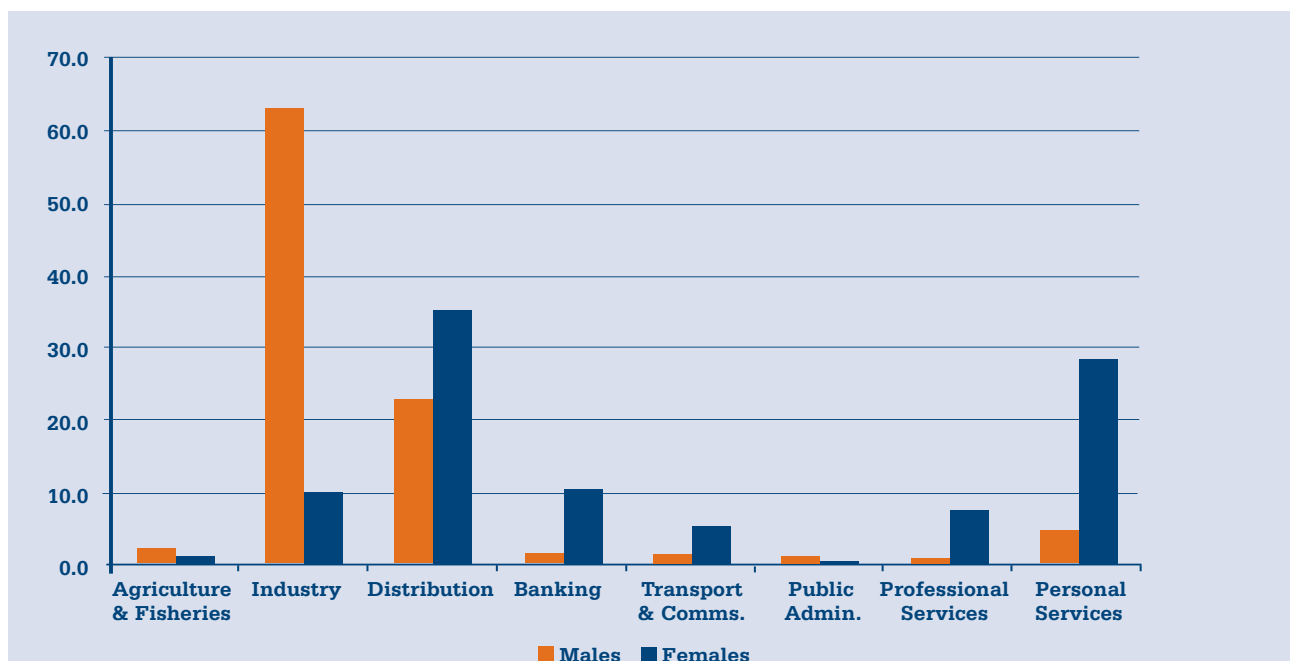
In 2005, transport and communications emerged as being an important employment sector for school leavers who left school with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC qualification; 6 per cent of this group were employed in this sector (up 3 percentage points on 2004) compared to 3 per cent of those with a Leaving Certificate qualification (one percentage point less than 2004), only one per cent of those with a Junior Certificate qualification (one percentage point less than 2004) and less than one per cent of those with no qualifications (3 percentage points less than 2004).

As in recent years, the industry sector is the main employer of those who leave school without Leaving Certificate qualifications. In 2005, 55 per cent of school leavers who left school with no qualifications were employed in this sector (15 percentage point increase on 2004) while 57 per cent of those who left with a Junior Certificate qualification were employed in industry (6 percentage point increase on 2004). This compares to 18 per cent of those who left school with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC qualification being employed in industry (6 percentage point increase on 2004) and 42 per cent of those with a Leaving Certificate (7 percentage point increase on 2004).

### 5.2.3 Gender Variations

Gender variations in the distribution of school leavers in employment across industrial sectors are presented in Tables B1b and B1c in Appendix B, with the results for the most recent cohort of school leavers, 2003/04, illustrated in Figure 5.2.

**Figure 5.2: Sectors in which 2003/04 Male and Female School Leavers with Full-Time Jobs were Working One Year After Leaving School, May 2005**



The most dramatic gender differential relates to entry into the industry sector and it is a gender differential that appears to be getting wider over time. In 2005, 63 per cent of male school leavers entered jobs in this sector, an increase of 11 percentage points on 2004, relative to only 10 per cent of females, a one percentage point increase on 2004. On the other hand, a larger proportion of female school leavers enter jobs in the distribution sector; 35 per cent of females were employed in a job in this sector in 2005 (2 percentage point decline on 2004) compared to 23 per cent of males (2 percentage point decline also on 2004). Banking is another major employer of female school leavers; 11 per cent of females were employed in this sector in 2005 (3 percentage point increase on 2004) compared with only 2 per cent of males (same as 2004). A significantly higher proportion of female school leavers are also employed in personal services, 28 per cent in 2005 (5 percentage point decline on 2004) relative to only 5 per cent of males (7 percentage point decline on 2004).

Overall, the main picture emerging from this analysis is that employment of male school leavers is becoming increasingly concentrated in one sector, specifically industry, whereas female school leavers are more evenly spread across a range of sectors – distribution, banking, industry, professional services and, to a less extent, transport and communications. There are certain segments of Ireland's industry sector that are particularly vulnerable to a downturn in the economy. Thus, this in turn makes male school leavers more exposed to the negative consequences of such a downturn compared to female school leavers, specifically in terms of job losses.

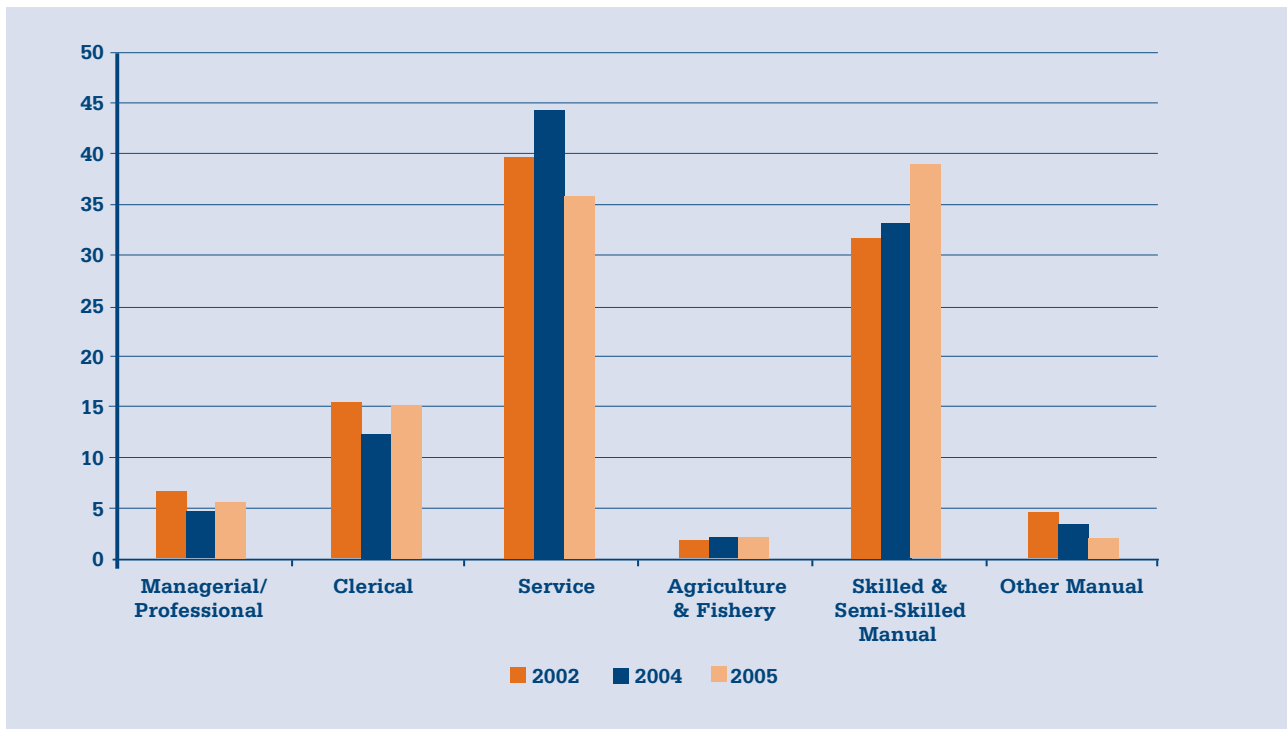
### **5.3 Occupational Distribution**

The occupational distribution of school leavers in employment is presented in Table B2a in Appendix B. Six occupational categories are defined here i) managerial/professional, ii) clerical, iii) service, iv) agriculture and fishery, v) skilled and semi-skilled manual and vi) other manual.

#### **5.3.1 Overall Results**

In 2002 and 2004 service occupations emerged as the profession in which the majority of school leavers were employed one year after leaving school. However, in 2005 the main sector in which school leavers are employed is the skilled and semi-skilled manual sector; 39 per cent of this school leaver cohort was engaged in this occupational sector, an increase of 6 percentage points on 2004. Services was the next most important occupational category with 36 per cent of 2003/04 school leavers employed in these jobs, a decrease of 8 percentage points on 2004. Following this is clerical occupations; 15 per cent of school leavers worked in these types of jobs in 2005, an increase of 3 percentage points on 2004. These results are presented in Figure 5.3 below.

**Figure 5.3: Type of Work Undertaken by School Leavers with Full-Time Jobs One Year After Leaving School, 2002, 2004 and 2005**



### 5.3.2 Variation by Educational Attainment

Variations in the occupational distribution of school leavers by educational attainment are evident in Table B2a in Appendix B. As in recent years, skilled and semi-skilled manual occupations are the jobs in which the majority of 2003/04 school leavers who left school without Leaving Certificate qualifications were employed. In 2005, 58 per cent of this school leaver cohort that left school with no qualifications and 63 per cent of those who left with a Junior Certificate qualification were employed in these types of professions, an increase of 15 percentage points and 8 percentage points respectively on 2004. However, increasing proportions of school leavers with Leaving Certificate qualifications are now also obtaining these types of jobs. In 2005, 40 per cent of school leavers with a Leaving Certificate qualification were employed in skilled and semi-skilled manual jobs while 15 per cent of those who left with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC qualification worked in this occupation sector, an increase of 7 percentage points and 4 percentage points respectively on 2004.

A significantly higher proportion of school leavers who leave school with a Leaving Certificate qualification are employed in managerial/professional occupations. In 2005, 5 per cent of those who left school with a Leaving Certificate qualification (no change on 2004) and 11 per cent of those who left with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC qualification (2 percentage point increase on 2004) were employed in managerial/professional occupations

compared to only 2 per cent of those with a Junior Certificate qualification (one percentage point increase on 2004) and one per cent of those with no qualifications (3 percentage point decrease on 2004). The likelihood of taking up a clerical job is also significantly higher for those with a Leaving Certificate qualification.

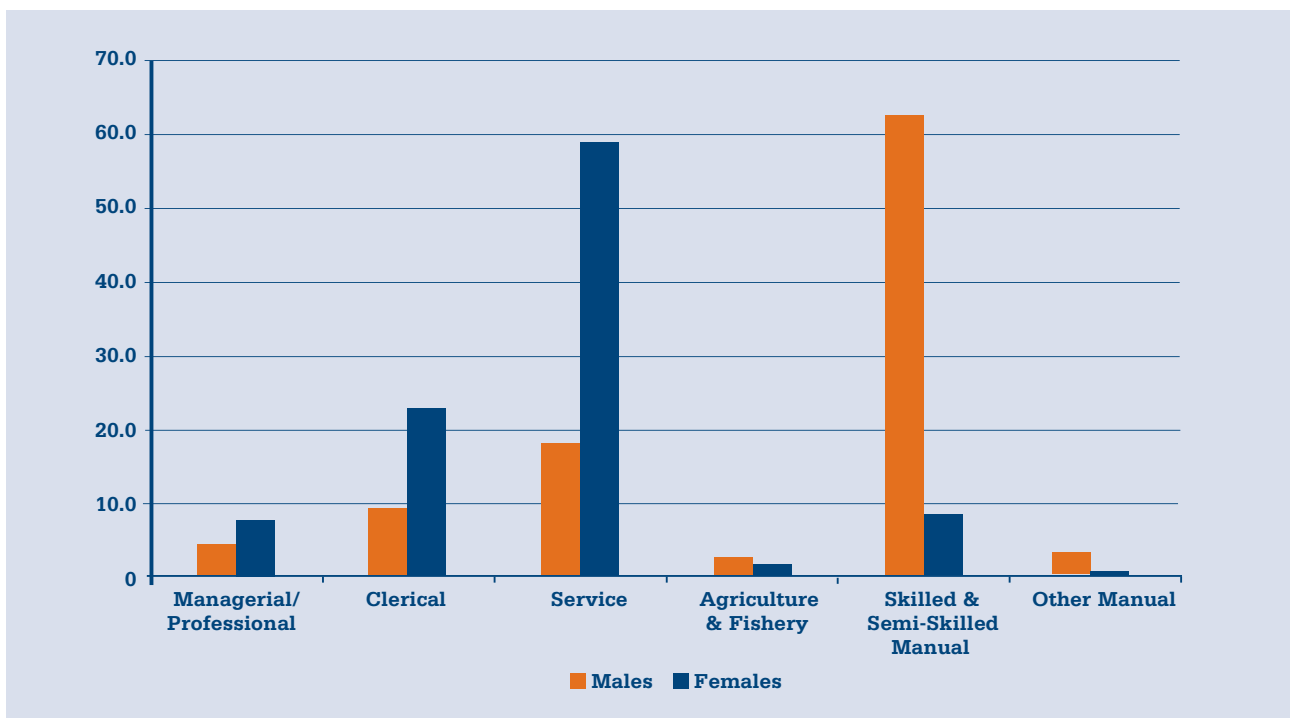
Entry into agricultural and fishery jobs has tended to be higher among school leavers with no qualifications or Junior Certificate. However, the proportion of school leavers with these qualifications entering jobs in this area has fallen in recent times, in particular for those with no qualifications, and in 2005 the levels are the same as for those who left school with a Leaving Certificate qualification.

Traditionally, over a third of school leavers in each educational cohort have been employed in service occupations. However, the proportions have fallen between 2004 and 2005, with significant declines noted for school leavers with a Junior Certificate qualification (decrease of 12 percentage) and those with a Leaving Certificate qualification (decrease of 9 percentage points).

### **5.3.3 Gender Variations**

Gender differences in the occupational distribution of school leavers are presented in Tables B2b and B2c in Appendix B, and the results for 2003/04 and the results for 2003/04 school leavers are illustrated in Figure 5.4. An analysis of these gender results indicate that male school leavers are over-represented in skilled and semi-skilled manual jobs, 63 per cent relative to 8 per cent of females, whereas females are over-represented in services, 59 per cent compared to 18 per cent of males. Although the proportion of female school leavers in skilled and semi-skilled manual jobs increased between 2004 and 2005 (by 3 percentage points), the percentage of males increased also, and by a larger amount (9 percentage points); thus, this gender occupation gap is widening over time instead of contracting (increased by 2 percentage points between 2004 and 2005). The same is true in relation to the gender gap in services jobs: between 2004 and 2005 the proportion of female school leavers in services jobs fell (by 8 percentage points) but so too did the percentage of males, and by a larger amount (10 percentage point decline); thus the gender gap in this occupational sector is continuing to expand over time as well. Female school leavers are also over-represented in clerical jobs, 23 per cent compared to 9 per cent of males. Although the proportion of females entering clerical jobs declined between 2002 and 2004, from 27 per cent to 21 per cent, there was a slight increase again in 2005 to 23 per cent.

**Figure 5.4: Type of Work Undertaken by 2003/04 Male and Female School Leavers with Full-Time Jobs One Year After Leaving School, May 2005**



Male school leavers have tended to account for significantly higher proportions entering other manual occupations. However, the percentage of males entering these occupations has been declining over time and currently stands at 3 per cent, which is only 2 percentage points higher than the proportion of females entering other manual jobs.

In 2004, males and females were employed in managerial/professional jobs in equal proportions, 5 per cent a piece. However, in 2005 a significantly higher percentage of females were employed in these types of jobs, 8 per cent compared to 4 per cent of males.

## 5.4 Earnings

### 5.4.1 Gross Hourly Earnings

Table 5.1 records school leavers' (in employment) average gross hourly earnings one year after they left school. The overall results are presented along with variations by gender and educational attainment. Before beginning this analysis it is important to emphasise that because of small sample numbers (largely deriving from a failure to report earnings and also the small proportion comprising these categories) these earnings results, and those presented later in this section, need to be interpreted with caution.

**Table 5.1: Average Gross Hourly Earnings of School Leavers in Employment by Level of Education, 2002, 2004 and 2005 (€)**

	Males			Females			Total		
	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005
<b>Qualification:</b>									
No Qualification	6.18	6.42	7.17	6.45	7.48	7.80	6.28	6.83	7.34
Junior Cert	6.24	9.37	7.39	6.26	7.02	7.48	6.24	8.56	7.41
Leaving Cert	6.91	7.93	7.74	7.82	8.00	8.34	7.25	7.95	8.03
Leaving Cert, Plus PLC	9.55	9.03	9.50	8.49	9.08	8.95	8.75	9.07	9.09
<b>Yearly Average</b>	<b>6.98</b>	<b>8.39</b>	<b>7.83</b>	<b>7.88</b>	<b>8.18</b>	<b>8.46</b>	<b>7.37</b>	<b>8.30</b>	<b>8.14</b>
<b>Total (Number)</b>	<b>8,967</b>	<b>7,430</b>	<b>8,089</b>	<b>6,832</b>	<b>5,373</b>	<b>7,902</b>	<b>15,799</b>	<b>12,803</b>	<b>15,991</b>

In 2005, the average gross hourly income for school leavers was €8.14, a slight decline on 2004 when it was €8.30 but higher than 2002 when it stood at €7.37. In terms of gender variations, females recorded higher hourly earnings than males in 2005, €8.46 compared to €7.83. This is a reversal on 2004 when males registered higher hourly earnings, €8.39 relative to €8.18 for females. Overall, male school leavers' average gross hourly earnings increased significantly between 2002 and 2004 but then declined between 2004 and 2005, going from €8.39 to €7.83. Females' hourly earnings, on the other hand, expanded further in 2005, going from €7.88 in 2002 to €8.18 in 2004 and €8.46 in 2005.

Focussing on gross average hourly earnings by educational attainment it can be seen in Table 5.1 that hourly earnings rise as educational attainment increases. In 2005, those who left school with no qualifications received €7.34 an hour (increase from €6.83 in 2004) whereas those who left school with a Leaving Certificate earned €8.03 an hour (€7.95 in 2004) and those who left with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC qualification earned €9.09 an hour (€9.07 in 2004).

Table B3 in Appendix B attempts to capture the effects of school leavers' performance in their last exam on their hourly earnings as well as educational attainment. As with educational attainment, the overall pattern reflected here is that of increasing earnings with higher levels of examination performance. In 2005, those with a Junior Certificate with less than five passes earned, on average, €7.58 per hour (increase of €1.29 on 2004), while those with a Leaving Certificate with four or more honours earned, on average, €8.36 per hour (approximately the same as in 2004). In general, this relationship between examination performance and average gross hourly earnings also holds by gender.

#### 5.4.2 Gross Weekly Earnings

School leavers' average gross weekly earnings are presented in Table 5.2, again overall, by gender and educational attainment. Between 2002 and 2004 there was a €31 increase in school leavers' average gross weekly earnings, going from €274 to €305. However, between 2004 and 2005 their average gross weekly earnings fell by €19 euro to €286.

**Table 5.2: Average Gross Hourly Earnings of School Leavers in Employment by Level of Education, 2002, 2004 and 2005 (€)**

	Males			Females			Total		
	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005
<b>Qualification:</b>									
No Qualification	233	245	258	226	289	181	231	262	237
Junior Cert	264	307	292	242	243	251	258	285	281
Leaving Cert	269	313	293	255	281	265	264	302	279
Leaving Cert, Plus PLC	356	352	339	306	334	303	318	340	312
<b>Yearly Average</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>286</b>
<b>Total (Number)</b>	<b>9,134</b>	<b>7,516</b>	<b>8,170</b>	<b>6,997</b>	<b>5,480</b>	<b>8,034</b>	<b>16,131</b>	<b>12,996</b>	<b>16,205</b>



As with hourly earnings, average gross weekly earnings also rise as educational attainment increases. In 2005, school leavers who left school with no educational qualification earned, on average, €237 a week (fall of €25 from 2004), while those who left with a Leaving Certificate earned €279 (fall of €23 from 2004) and those who left with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC qualification earned €312 per week (fall of €28 from 2004).

On average, males receive higher weekly earnings than females<sup>23</sup>. In 2005, their average gross weekly earnings were €296 compared to €275 for females. This gender wage gap increased sharply between 2002 and 2004, going from €3 to €23, but it fell slightly between 2004 and 2005 to €21. Gender differences in gross weekly earnings are evident across all educational attainment levels, with males earning more than females for all levels.

## 5.5 Other Employment Characteristics

Participants in the 2006 School Leavers' Survey were asked a number of additional labour market characteristic questions that have not been asked in previous surveys. In particular, they were asked about: i) trade union membership, ii) job security and iii) employer-provided education/training.

### 5.5.1 Trade Union Membership

Overall, 15 per cent of the 2003/04 school leaver cohort that were in employment at the time the survey was conducted were members of a trade union. As the results in Figure 5.5 illustrate, there is no gender variation in trade union membership among this school leaver cohort.

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<sup>23</sup> This result is most likely due to the number of hours worked by both genders.

**Figure 5.5: Trade Union Membership of School Leavers in Employment at the Time of the Survey, 2006**

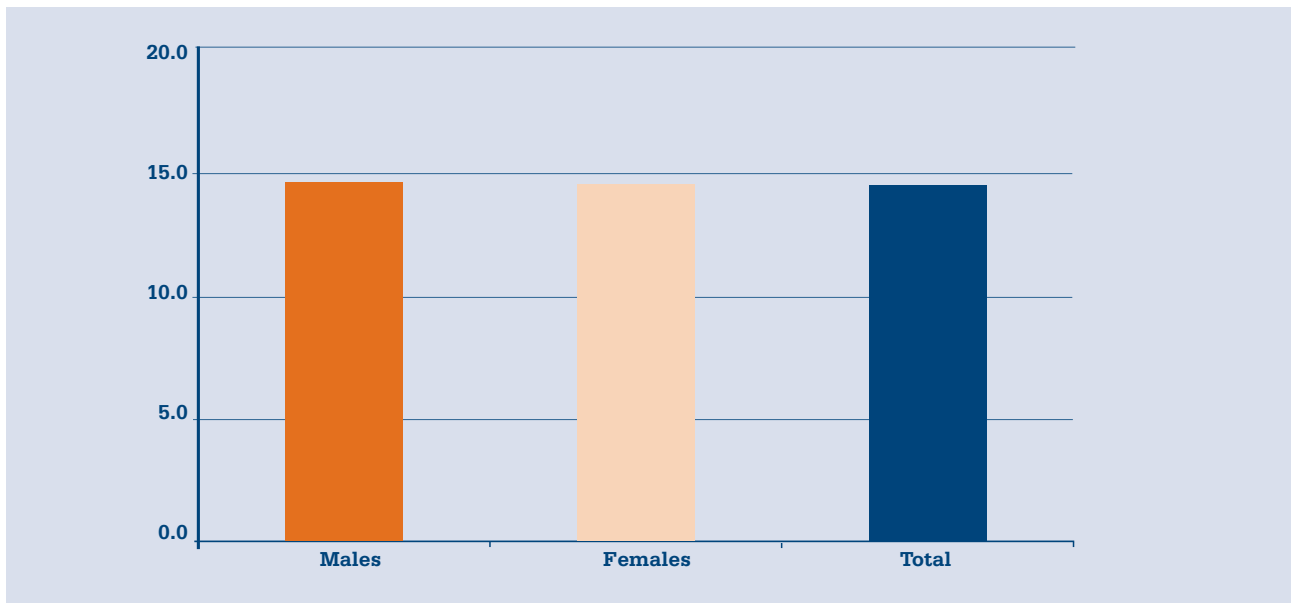


Figure 5.6 presents trade union membership according to level of education. Those who left school in 2003/04 with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC qualification that were in employment at the time of the survey emerge as having the highest trade union membership rate, 23 per cent, while those who left with no qualifications had the lowest, 11 per cent.

**Figure 5.6: Trade Union Membership of School Leavers in Employment at the Time of the Survey by Level of Education, 2006**



### 5.5.2 Job Security

In relation to the question regarding job security, 47 per cent of the 2003/04 school leaver cohort who were in employment at the time of the survey indicated that they felt 'very secure' in their job. This compares to 45 per cent feeling 'fairly secure' and 8 per cent feeling 'insecure'. Thus, on the whole, the majority of 2003/04 school leavers' who were in employment when the survey was carried out in 2006 felt secure in their job. A slightly higher proportion of female school leavers, however, felt insecure, 9 per cent compared to 7 per cent of males. These results, overall and by gender, are illustrated in Figure 5.7.

**Figure 5.7: Extent to Which School Leavers in Employment at the Time of the Survey Feel Secure in their Job, 2006**

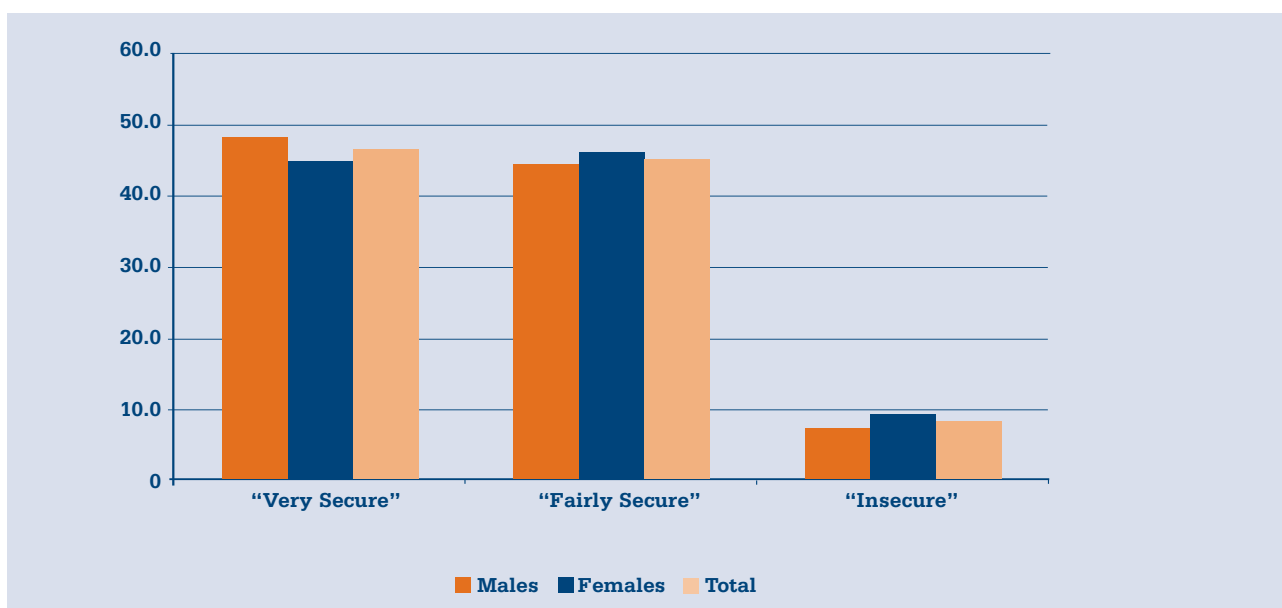


Figure 5.8 shows differences in school leavers' feelings of job security according to educational attainment. Those who left school with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC qualification are the group most likely to feel 'very secure' in their job, 52 per cent, while those who left school with no qualifications are least likely (43 per cent). A slightly higher proportion of school leavers who left school with a Junior Certificate qualification felt 'very secure' in their job compared to those with a Leaving Certificate, 48 per cent compared with 45 per cent.

As well as being most likely to feel 'very secure' in their job, those who left school with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC qualification are also the educational attainment category with the highest level of feeling 'insecure' in their job, 11 per cent. This compares with 9 per cent of school leavers who left school with no qualifications, 8 per cent of those who left with a Leaving Certificate and 7 per cent of those who left with a Junior Certificate qualification.

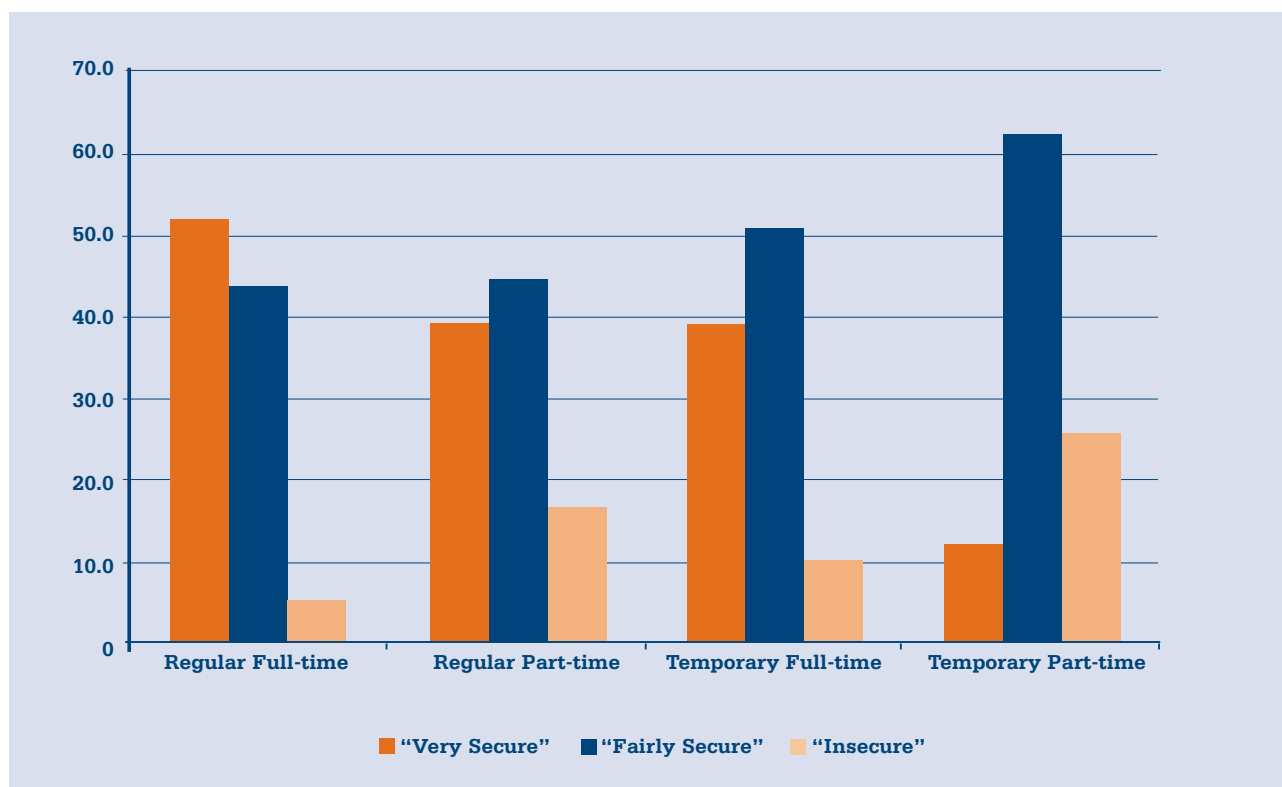
**Figure 5.8: Extent to Which School Leavers in Employment at the Time of the Survey Feel Secure in their Job by Level of Education, 2006**



Figure 5.9 illustrates job security according to job type, specifically full-time versus part-time, both regular and temporary. In 2006, school leavers with regular full-time jobs recorded the highest level of feeling 'very secure' in their job, 52 per cent, which is a result one might have expected a priori. This result compares to 39 per cent of school leavers with regular part-time jobs and temporary full-time jobs feeling 'very secure' in their jobs. These three job type results, however, contrast sharply with that for school leavers with temporary part-time jobs; only 12 per cent of this school leaver group felt 'very secure' in their jobs.

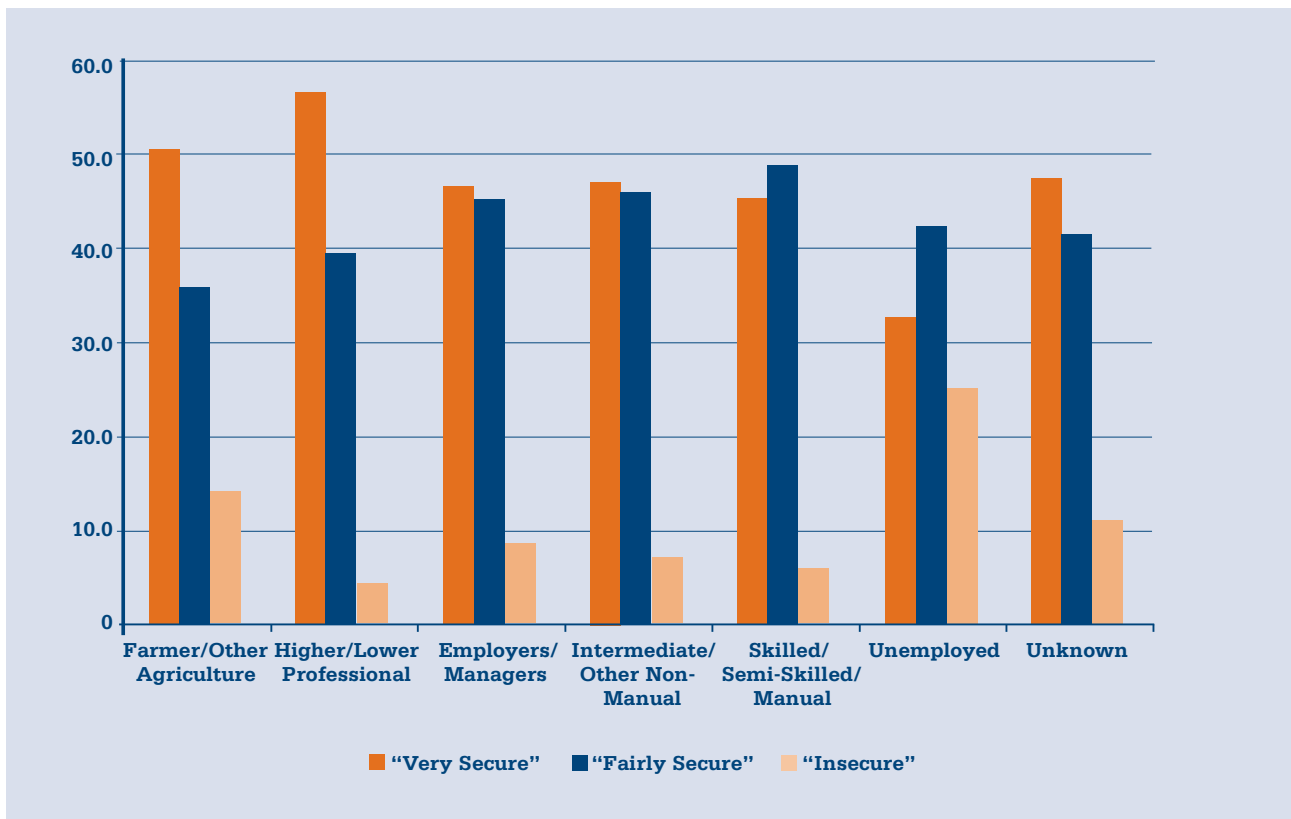
In 2006, school leavers in part-time jobs, both regular and temporary, had the highest levels of job insecurity, 26 per cent for those in temporary part-time jobs and 17 per cent for those in regular part-time jobs. Conversely, those in full-time jobs, both regular and temporary, had lower levels of job insecurity. School leavers in regular full-time jobs, however, recorded much lower levels of job insecurity than those in temporary full-time jobs, 5 per cent compared to 10 per cent.

**Figure 5.9: Extent to Which School Leavers in Employment at the Time of the Survey Feel Secure in their Job According to Type of Job, (Part-time versus Full-Time), 2006**



Finally, Figure 5.10 shows the 2003/04 school leaver cohort’s feelings of job security according to their socio-economic background, specifically their father’s socio-economic status. In 2006, school leavers from professional and agricultural backgrounds recorded the highest levels of feeling ‘very secure’ in their job, 56 per cent and 50 per cent respectively. However, school leavers from agricultural backgrounds also recorded higher levels of job insecurity, 14 per cent. School Leavers from unemployed backgrounds reported the highest levels of job insecurity (25 per cent) and conversely the lowest levels of feeling ‘very secure’ in their job (32 per cent).

**Figure 5.10: Extent to Which School Leavers in Employment at the Time of the Survey Feel Secure in their Job by Socio-Economic Background, 2006**

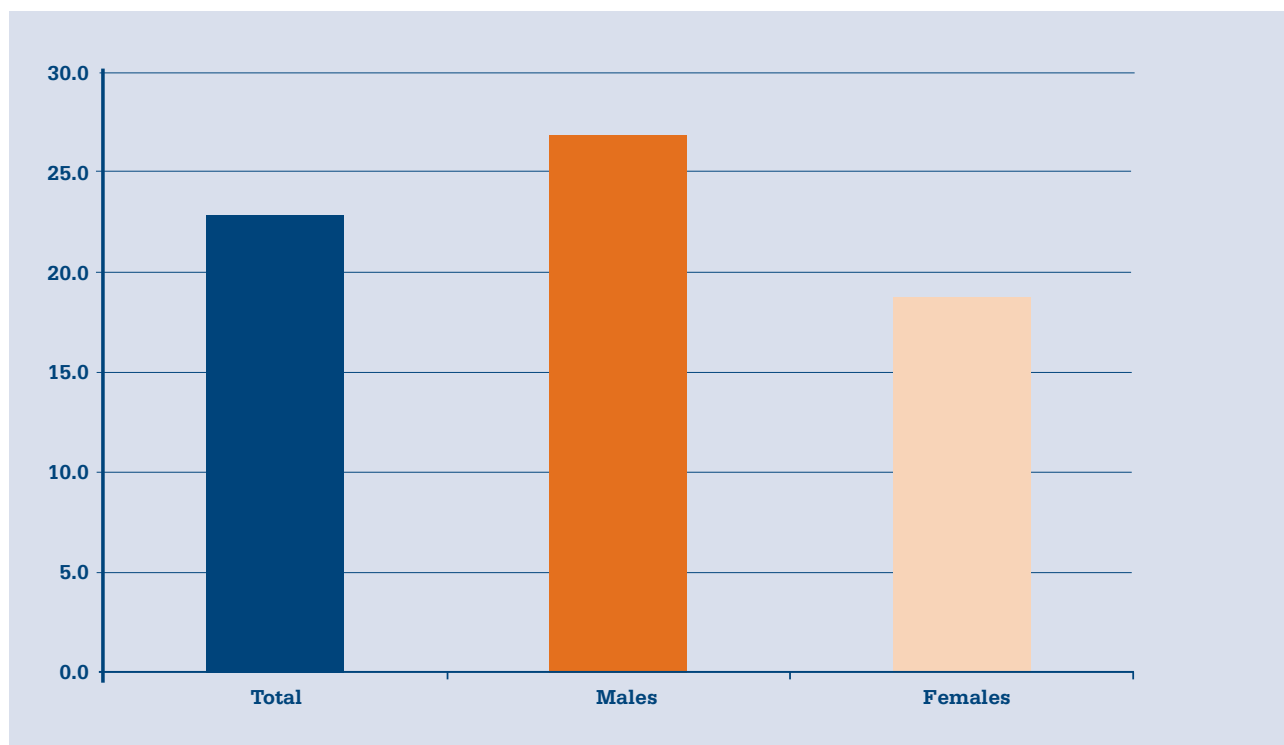


### 5.5.3 Employer-Provided Education/Training

Almost a quarter (23 per cent) of the 2003/04 school leaver cohort who were in employment at the time the survey was conducted indicated that they had received (paid) employer-provided education/training in the last year in their job<sup>24</sup>. Gender variations emerge with a significantly higher proportion of male school leavers having received employer-provided education/training, 27 per cent compared to 19 per cent of females. These results are illustrated in Figure 5.11. There also emerges to be variation in employer-provided education/training by level of education. A higher proportion of those who left school with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC qualification or with a Junior Certificate who were in employment at the time the survey was conducted received employer-provided education/training (26 per cent apiece) compared to those who left school with a Leaving Certificate (21 per cent) and those who left with no qualifications (18 per cent).

<sup>24</sup> School leavers were asked to specify the duration of the education/training that they received. It is not possible, however, to present results on their response to this question as the respondents could answer in terms of days, weeks or months and the numbers in each of these three time categories are too small for meaningful analysis.

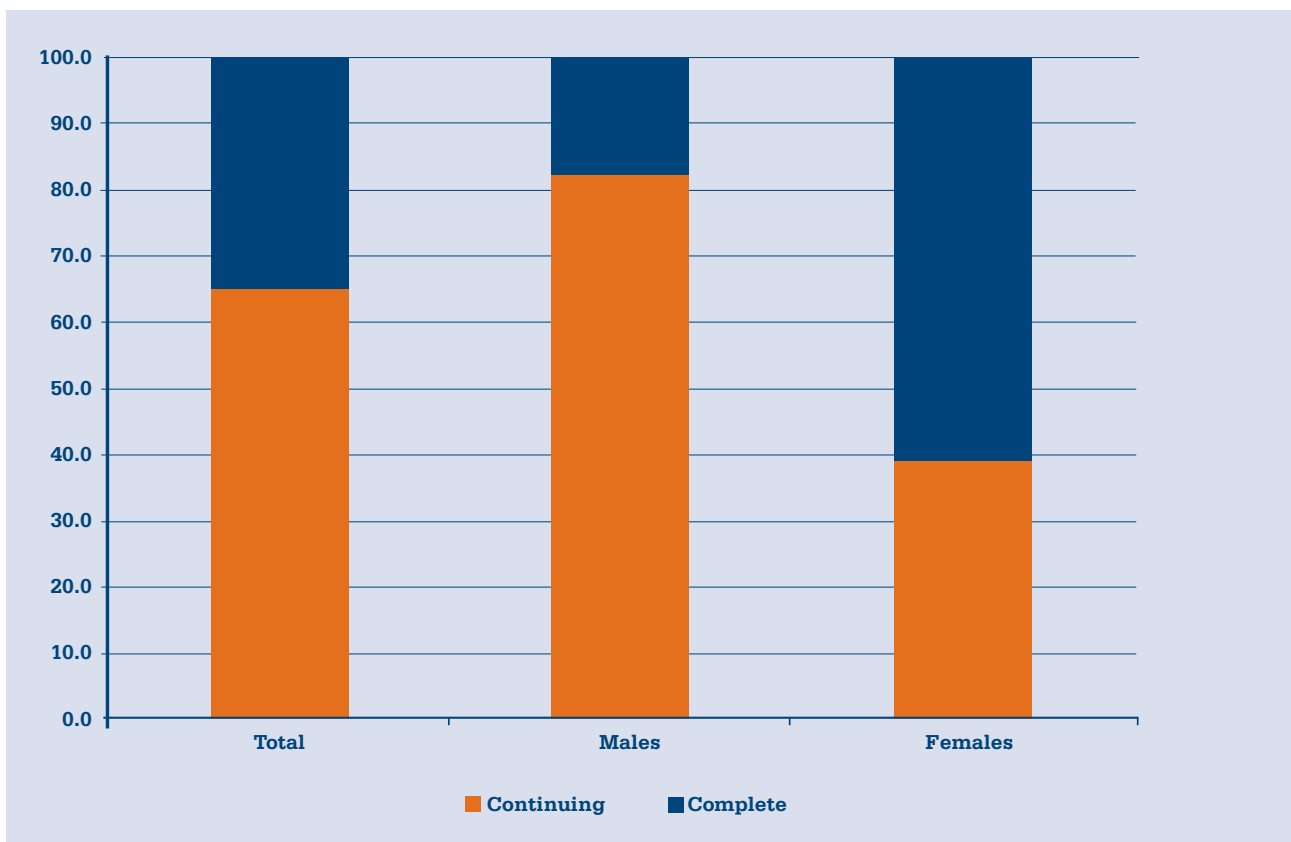
**Figure 5.11: Employer-Provided Education/Training Received by School Leavers in Employment at the Time of the Survey, 2006**



Of the 2003/04 school leaver cohort who received employer-provided education/training, 35 per cent indicated it was complete at the time the School Leavers' Survey was administered (Spring/Summer 2006) while 65 per cent said it was still continuing. Again, significant variation exists between male and female school leavers regarding this question of completion versus continuance; 82 per cent of male school leavers indicated that their employer-provided education/training was still continuing at the time of the survey compared to only 39 per cent of females. This gender differential can be seen clearly in Figure 5.12

The majority of those school-leavers who received employer-provided education/training perceived it to be useful in carrying out their current job, 96 per cent, with a slightly higher proportion of female school leavers finding it useful, 98 per cent compared to 95 per cent of males.

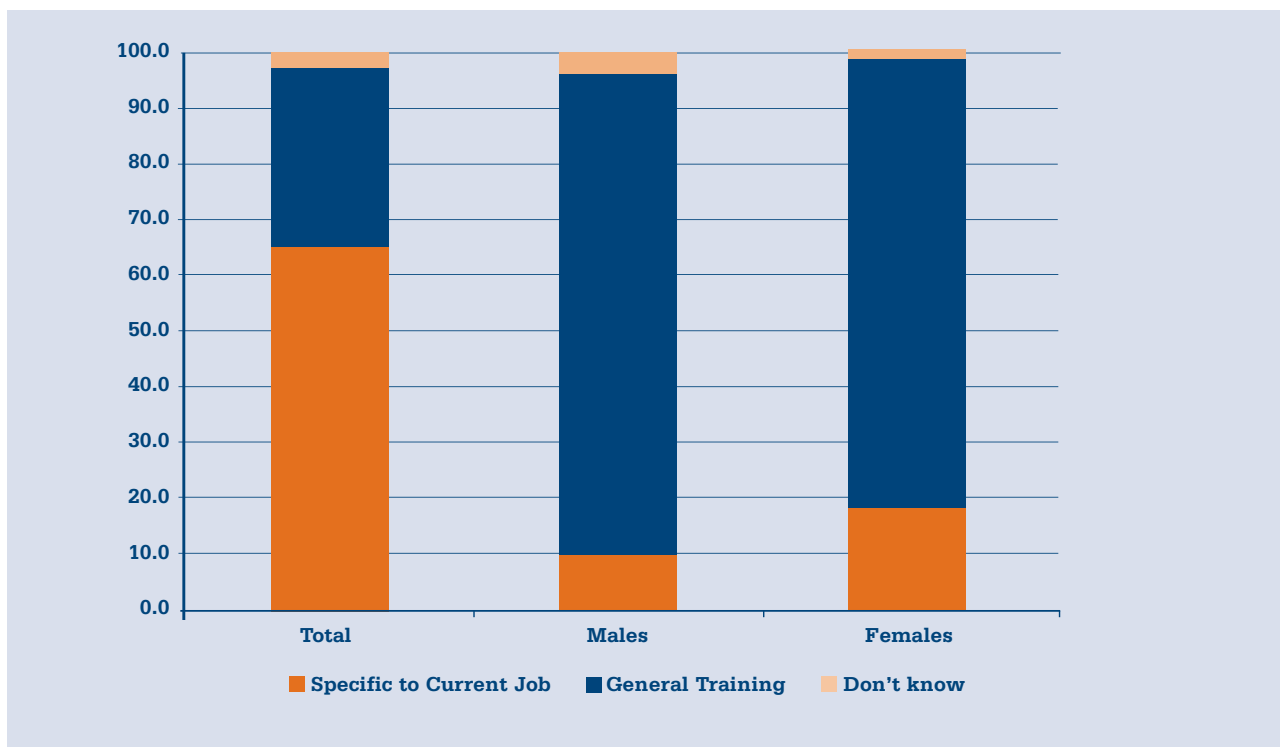
**Figure 5.12: Employer-Provided Education/Training Received by School Leavers in Employment at the Time of the Survey, 2006 - Continuing or Complete**



Those respondents who received employer-provided education/training were asked if they felt the knowledge and skills that they had acquired during the course of their education/training was of use to them in their current job only or whether it would be of use to them in getting a job with another employer. In the labour economics literature on employer-provided education/training the former type of education/training is referred to as 'specific' and the latter 'general', thus, this is the terminology that is used here in discussing the results of this analysis.

Of the 2003/04 school leaver cohort who received employer-provided education/training, just over four-fifths (83 per cent) felt their education/training was general and therefore of use to them in getting a job with another employer, while 14 per cent felt their education/training was specific to their current job (see Figure 5.13). A higher proportion of female school leavers felt the education/training that they had received was specific to their current job, 19 per cent compared to 11 per cent of males.



**Figure 5.13: Employer-Provided Education/Training Specific to Current Job or General**

## 5.6 Relationship Between Education/Training and Job<sup>25</sup>

In the 2006 School Leavers' Survey respondents were asked some questions about the relationship between their education and training and their current job, specifically i) to what extent they felt they used the knowledge and skills they had acquired in the course of their education and training in their current job and ii) the extent to which they felt their current job was appropriate to their level of education. The responses to these questions, which are analysed and presented in this section, relate specifically to school leavers from the 2003/04 school leaver cohort who were in employment at the time the survey was conducted.

### 5.6.1 Use of Knowledge and Skills Acquired During Education and Training in Current Job

Just over two-fifths (41 per cent) of the 2003/04 school leaver cohort who were in employment at the time of the survey felt that they used the knowledge and skills they had acquired during the course of their education and training in their current job 'to a great extent', while 26 per cent felt they used it 'to some extent' and 33 per cent 'not much at all'. A slightly higher proportion of female school leavers felt that they were using the knowledge and skills they had developed in their education and training in their current jobs 'to a great extent', 42 per cent compared to 40 per cent of males. These results, overall and by gender, are illustrated in Figure 5.14.

<sup>25</sup> Emigrants, which make up 1.3 per cent of the 2003/04 school leaver cohort, are included in the analysis in this section.

**Figure 5.14: Extent to Which Knowledge and Skills Acquired in Course of Education and Training is Used in Current Job, 2006**

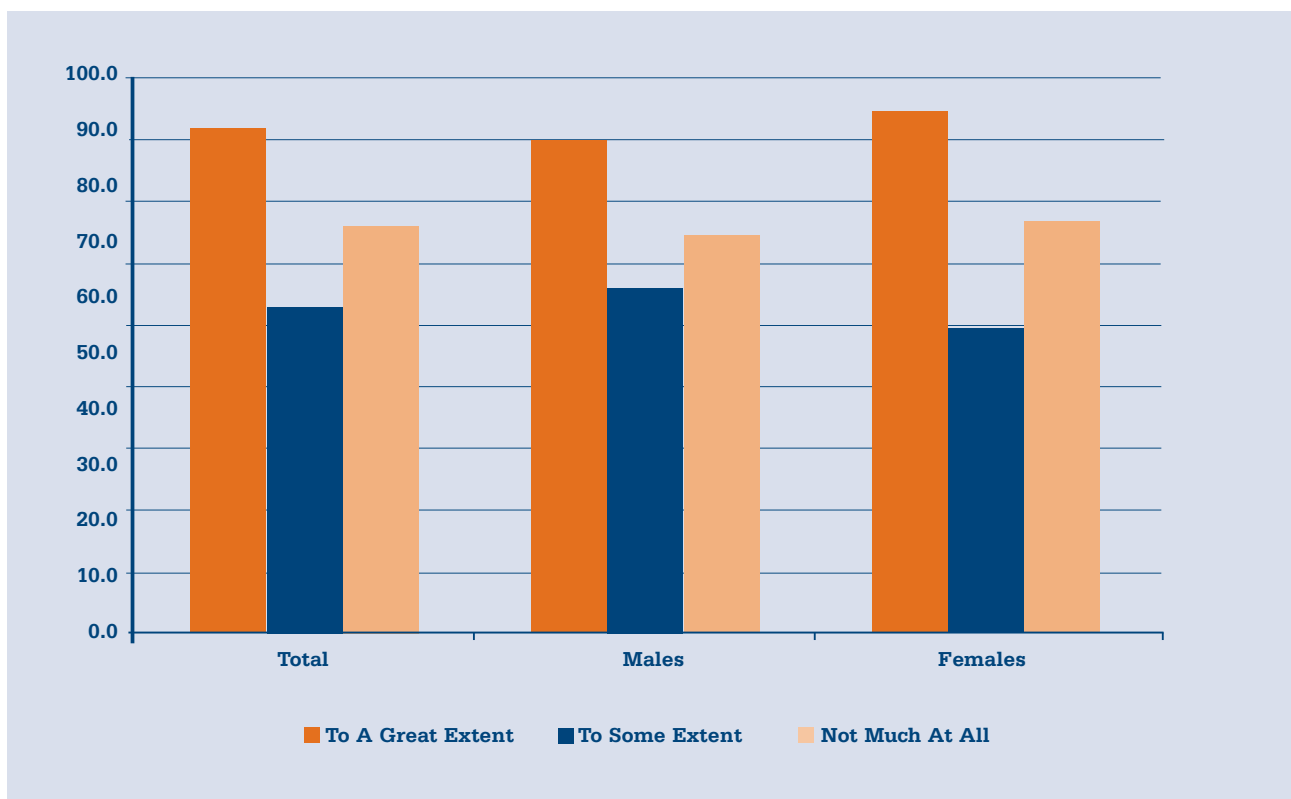


Figure 5.15 shows the extent to which the 2003/04 school leaver cohort used the knowledge and skills they developed during the course of their education and training in their current job according to level of education. Fifty-four per cent of those who left school with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC qualification reported using the knowledge and skills they developed during the course of their education and training in their current job 'to a great extent'. This compares to 43 per cent of those who left with a Junior Certificate qualification, 37 per cent of those who left with a Leaving Certificate and only 24 per cent of those who left with no official qualifications. Not surprisingly, almost 50 per cent of this school leaver cohort who left school with no official qualifications felt that they did not use the knowledge and skills they developed during the course of their education and training in their current job much at all.

**Figure 5.15: Extent to Which Knowledge and Skills Acquired in Course of Education and Training is Used in Current Job by Level of Education, 2006**

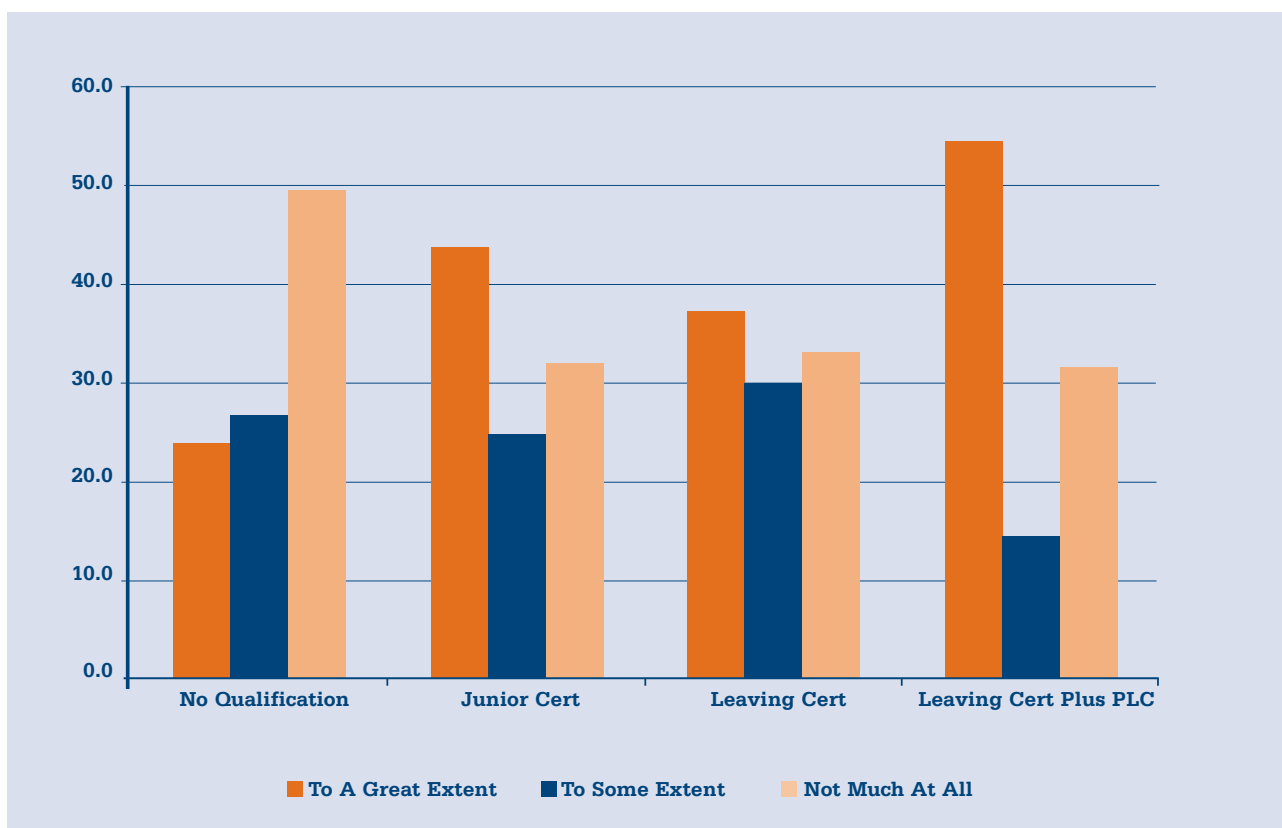
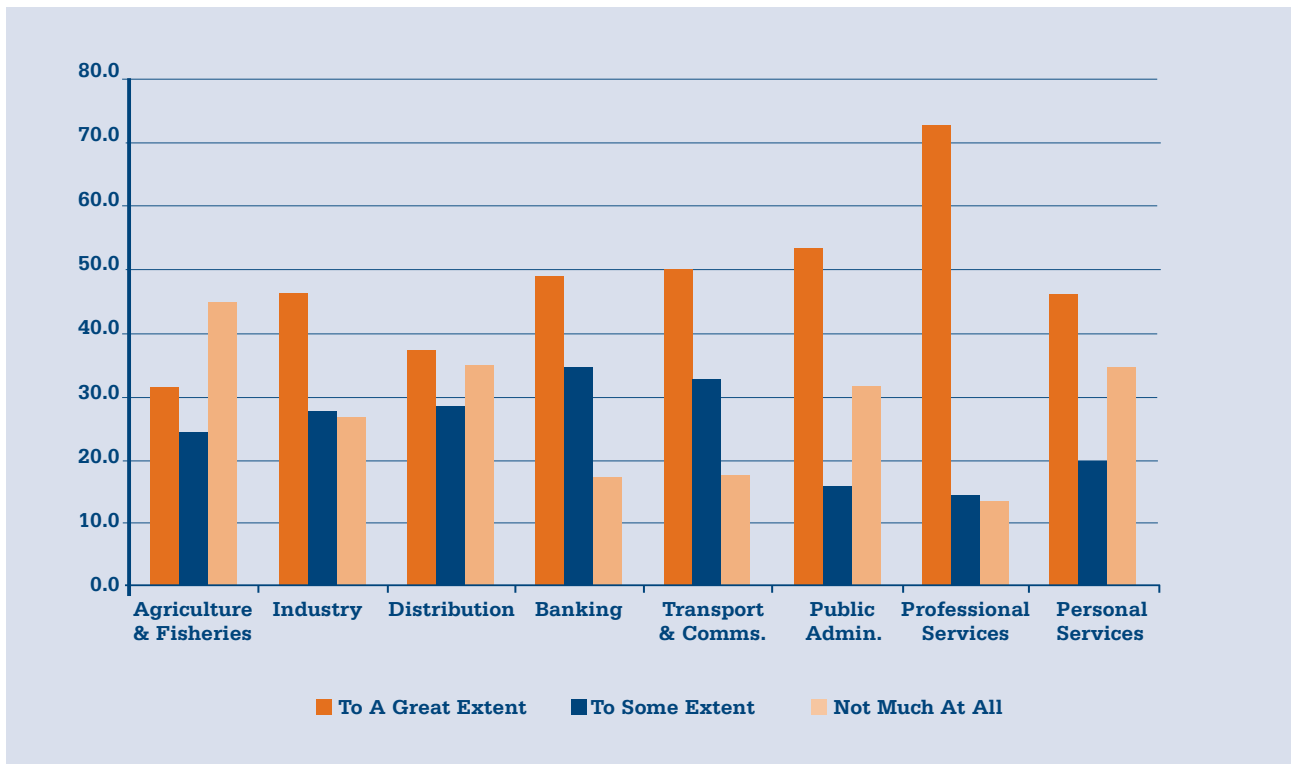


Figure 5.16 presents variation in the 2003/04 school leaver cohort's use of the knowledge and skills they developed during the course of their education and training in their current job according to the sector they work in. Those working in professional services emerge as the group who use the skills they developed through their education and training in their current job to the greatest extent, 73 per cent. Following this are those working in public administration (53 per cent), transport and communications (50 per cent) and banking (49 per cent). School leavers from the 2003/04 cohort who are least likely to use the skills and knowledge they developed during the course of their education and training in their current job are those working in agriculture and fisheries, distribution and personal services.

**Figure 5.16: Extent to Which Knowledge and Skills Acquired in Course of Education and Training is Used in Current Job by Work Sector, 2006**



### 5.6.2 Appropriateness of Current Job to Level of Education

Just over two-fifths (41 per cent) of the 2003/04 school leaver cohort who were in employment at the time of the survey felt that their current job was very appropriate to their level of education. Thirty-five per cent, on the other hand, felt their current job was not very appropriate to their level of education, while 24 per cent felt it was 'to some extent'. A higher proportion of female school leavers felt their current job was not very appropriate to their level of education than males, 39 per cent compared to 31 per cent of males. These results are presented in Figure 5.17 below.

Interestingly enough, a higher proportion of school leavers who left school with a Leaving Certificate qualification felt their current job was not very appropriate to their education level (39 per cent) compared to those who left with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC qualification, (31 per cent), Junior Certificate (23 per cent) and those who left with no qualifications (21 per cent). These results can be seen in Figure 5.18.

Figure 5.17: Extent to Which Current Job is Appropriate to Level of Education, 2006

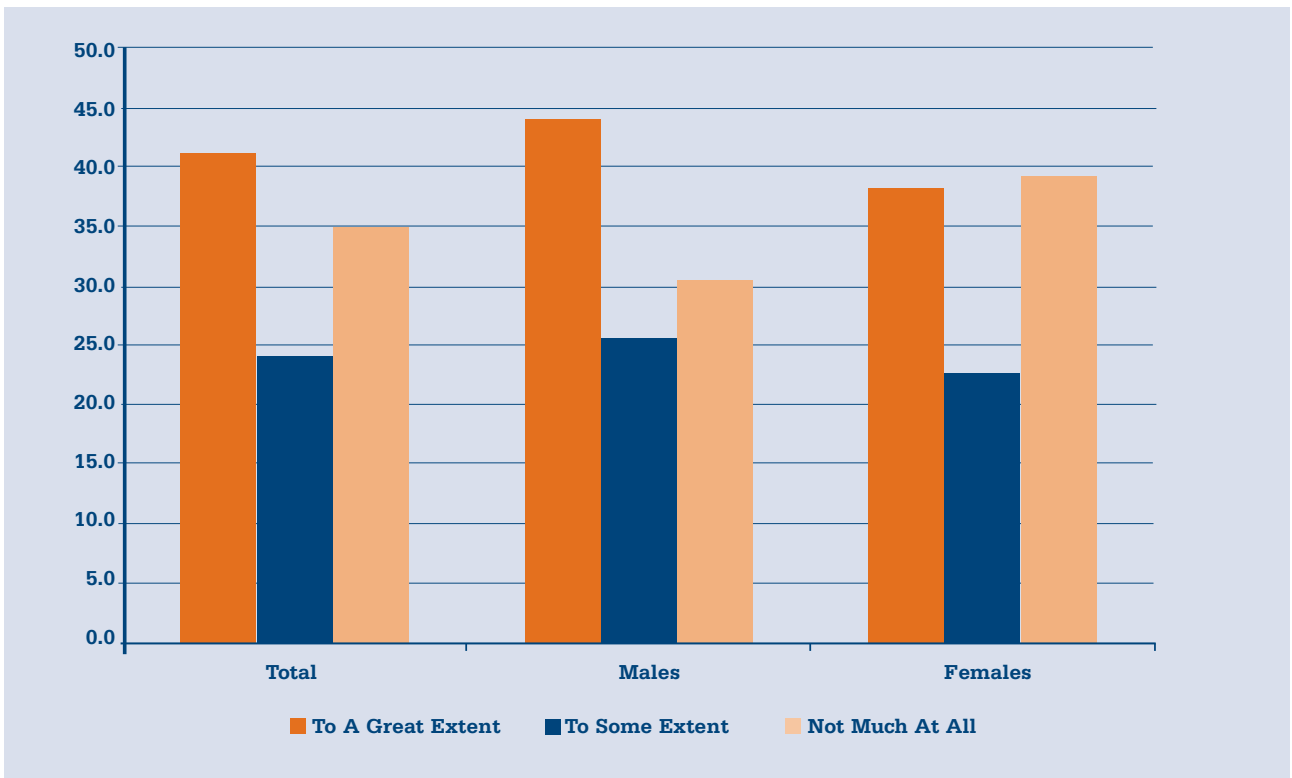


Figure 5.18: Extent to Which Current Job is Appropriate to Level of Education by Education Level, 2006

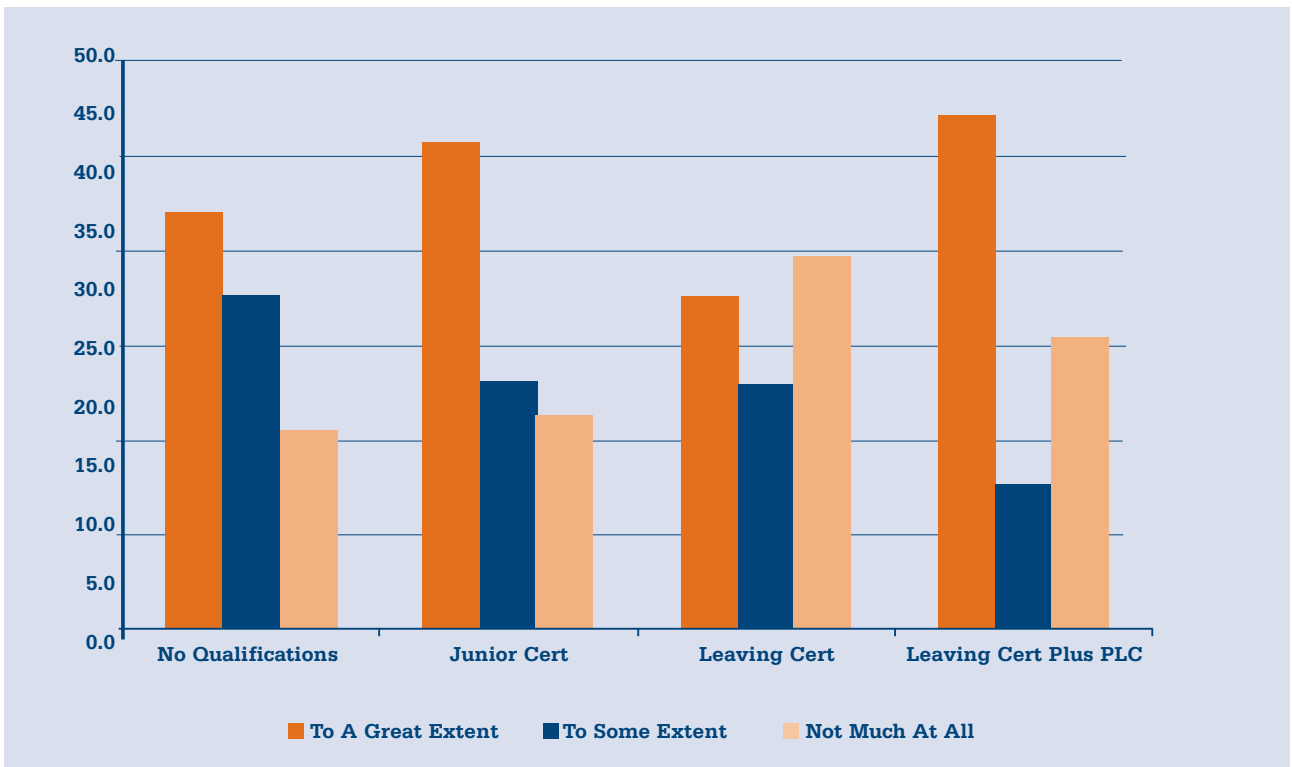
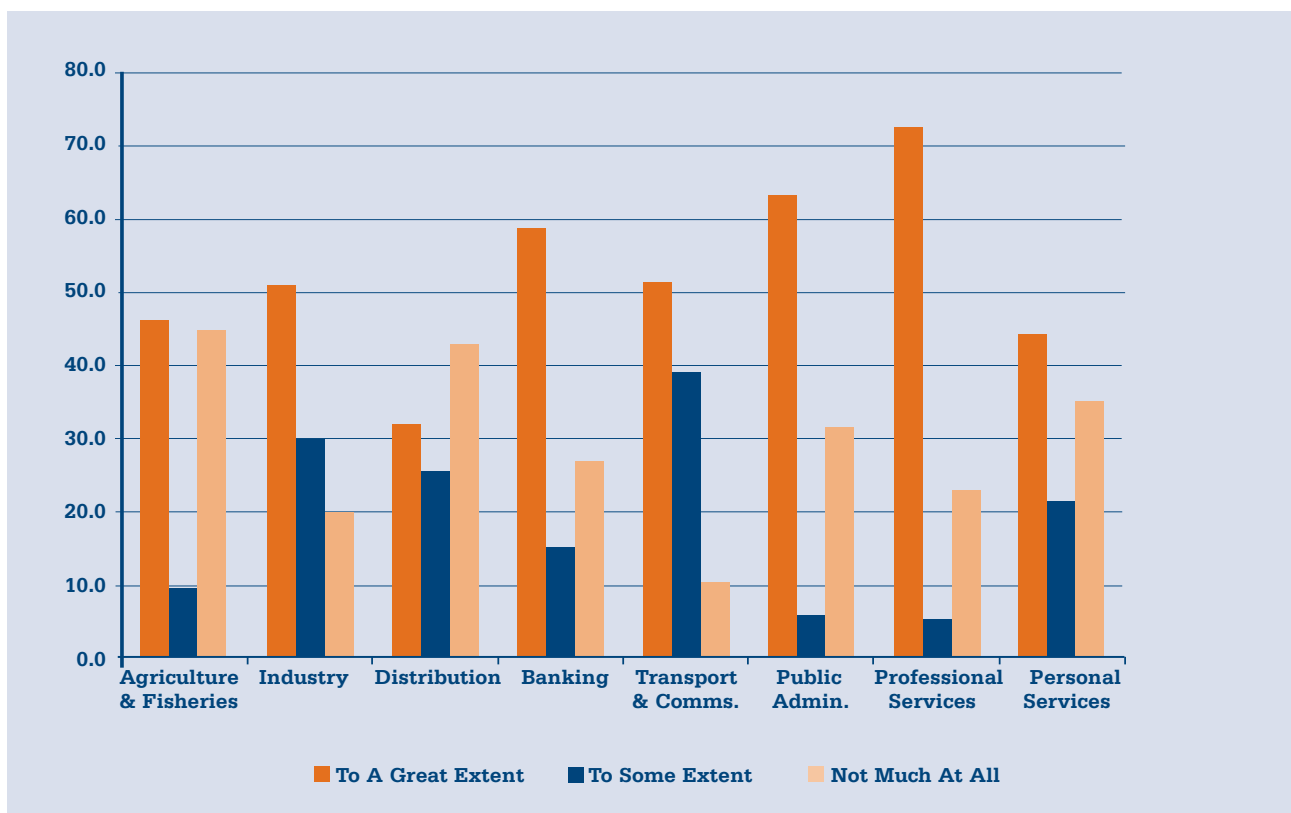


Figure 5.19 illustrates variation in school leavers' views on the appropriateness of their current job to their level of education by work sector. School leavers working in professional services were the group that emerged as having the strongest belief that their current job was very appropriate to their level of education (72 per cent). Next to this were those working in public administration (63 per cent) and banking (58 per cent). Those working in agriculture and fisheries and distribution, on the other hand, were the school leavers who most felt that their current job was not very appropriate to their level of education (45 per cent and 43 per cent respectively).

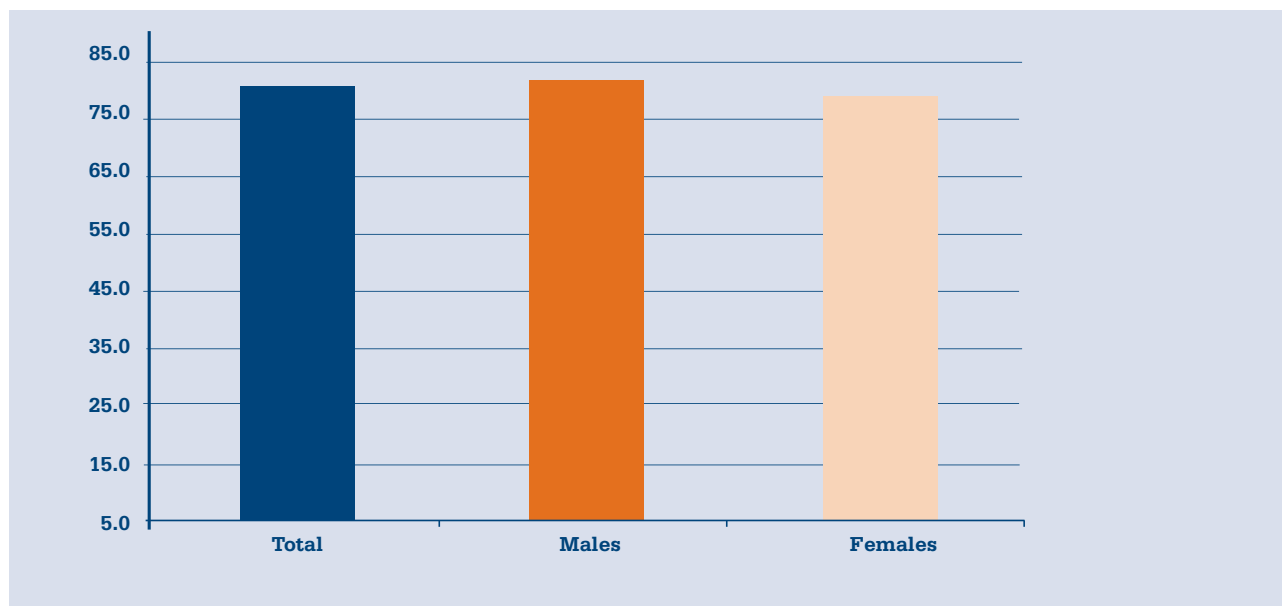
**Figure 5.19: Extent to Which Current Job is Appropriate to Level of Education by Work Sector, 2006**



### 5.7 Satisfaction with Present Economic Situation<sup>26</sup>

In the 2006 School Leavers' Survey respondents were asked about how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with their present 'economic situation'. The findings are illustrated in Figure 5.20. Overall, four out of five of 2003/04 school leavers indicated that they were satisfied with their present economic situation. Male school leavers emerged to be slightly more satisfied, 82 per cent satisfied compared to 79 per cent of females.

**Figure 5.20: Percentage Satisfied with their Present Economic Situation, 2006**



When examined according to educational attainment, the results of which are presented in Table 5.3, the proportion of school leavers satisfied with their present 'economic situation' increases with attainment level up to Leaving Certificate qualification. The proportion of school leavers with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC qualification satisfied with their economic situation, however, is lower than for those with Leaving Certificate and Junior Certificate qualifications. This overall trend holds for male school leavers also but is slightly different for females: the proportion of female school leavers with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC qualification who are satisfied with their present economic situation is also less than those with a Leaving Certificate qualification (84 per cent) but is not as low as those with a Junior Certificate qualification, 74 per cent compared to 64 per cent. The proportion of female school leavers who left school with a Junior Certificate qualification who are dissatisfied with their present economic situation is greater than any of the other educational attainment categories. For male school leavers, those who left school with no qualifications are the group who are most dissatisfied with their present economic situation. However, males who left with a Leaving Certificate plus PLC qualification are not far behind (42 per cent compared to 39 per cent).

<sup>26</sup> All school leavers from the 2003/04 cohort are included in the analysis presented in this section, except for emigrants.

**Table 5.3: Percentage Satisfied with their Present Economic Situation by Level of Education, 2006**

	Male	Female	Total
<b>Qualification:</b>			
No Qualification	57.6	66.6	61.2
Junior Cert	77.5	64.3	72.5
Leaving Cert	86.7	83.7	85.2
Leaving Cert, Plus PLC	61.1	74.4	70.9
<b>Total (Percent)</b>	<b>81.6</b>	<b>79.1</b>	<b>80.3</b>

Figure 5.21 shows satisfaction levels with present economic situation by current employment status<sup>27</sup>. Just over three-quarters of those school leavers in employment recorded being satisfied with their present economic situation as opposed to just over half of those who were unemployed. A higher proportion of male school leavers in employment were satisfied with their present economic situation than females, 84 per cent compared to 79 per cent. In relation to gender differences for those who were unemployed, a slightly higher proportion of male school leavers who were unemployed were dissatisfied with their present economic situation than unemployed female school leavers.

<sup>27</sup> Only school leavers from the 2003/04 cohort who were either employed or unemployed one year after leaving school (May 2005) are included in this analysis.



**Figure 5.21: Percentage Satisfied with their Present Economic Situation by Employment Status, 2006**

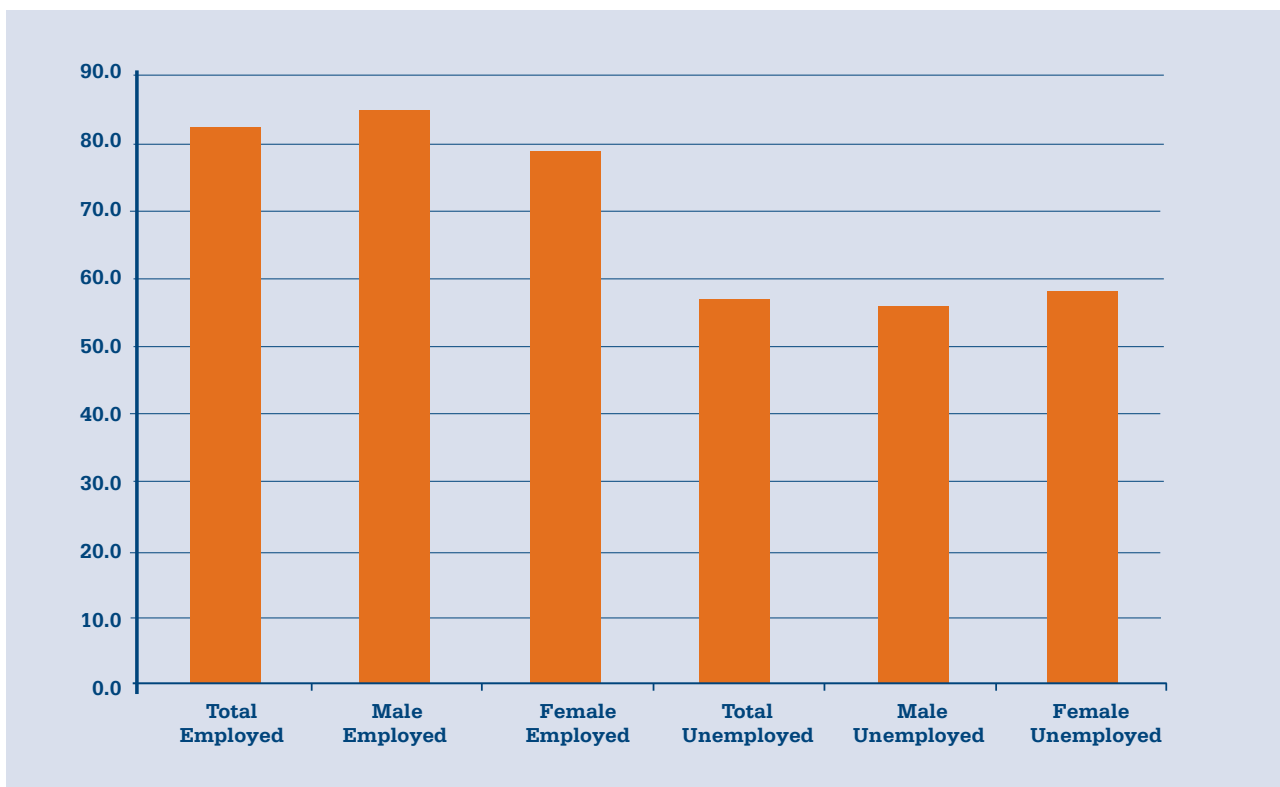


Table 5.4 presents school leavers' satisfaction with their present economic situation by socio-economic background. Overall, school leavers from agricultural backgrounds had the highest levels of satisfaction with their present economic situation (90 per cent). Following this are those from professional (88 per cent) and employer/managerial (83 per cent) backgrounds. School leavers from unemployed backgrounds, on the other hand, recorded the highest levels of dissatisfaction with their present economic situation (32 per cent). Next to this were school leavers from intermediate/non-manual backgrounds (21 per cent dissatisfied).

**Table 5.4: Percentage Satisfied with their Present Economic Situation by Socio-Economic Background, 2006**

	Male	Female	Total
<b>Socio-Economic Status of Father:</b>			
Farmer/Other Agriculture	88.9	91.5	90.3
Higher/Lower Professional	92.0	84.4	88.1
Employers/Managers	88.1	79.3	83.0
Intermediate/Other Non-Manual	77.6	81.1	79.3
Skilled/Semi-Skilled/Unskilled Manual	82.0	79.3	80.7
Unemployed	63.2	71.7	67.9
Unknown	76.1	57.9	66.2
<b>Total (Percent)</b>	<b>81.6</b>	<b>79.1</b>	<b>80.3</b>
<b>Total (Number)</b>	<b>26,028</b>	<b>25,419</b>	<b>51,447</b>

Slight gender variations emerged in this analysis. In relation to male school leavers, those from professional backgrounds were the most satisfied with their present economic situation (92 per cent) followed by those from agricultural (89 per cent) and employer/managerial (88 per cent) backgrounds. Female school leavers from agricultural backgrounds, on the other hand, emerged as being the most satisfied with their present economic situation, 92 per cent. Next to this were those from professional (84 per cent) and intermediate/other non-manual backgrounds (81 per cent). In terms of dissatisfaction, similar trends exist for male school leavers as the overall trends - male school leavers from unemployed backgrounds were the most dissatisfied with their present economic situation (37 per cent), followed by those from intermediate/other non-manual (22 per cent) and manual backgrounds (18 per cent). Female school leavers from unemployed backgrounds were also the most dissatisfied with their present economic situation, 28 per cent. This was followed, however, by those from employer/managerial and manual backgrounds, 21 per cent each.



# 5. ■ APPENDIX B



## APPENDIX B: TABLES

Table B1a: Sectors in which School Leavers with Full-Time Jobs were Working One Year After Leaving School (Percentage)

Sector:	NO QUALIFICATIONS			JUNIOR CERT			LEAVING CERT			LEAVING CERT PLUS PLC			TOTAL		
	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005
Agriculture & Fisheries	5.4	3.8	4.2	2.9	4.1	3.5	1.5	1.9	2.4	0	0.8	0.5	1.6	2.2	2.2
Industry	46.4	39.6	54.8	52.2	50.8	57.4	33.4	35.2	42.3	12.8	12.2	18.2	33.2	33.9	40.0
Distribution	15.8	19.0	28.2	22	20.4	19.1	27.5	32.6	28.3	28.5	34.6	35.8	26.4	30.4	28.3
Banking	2.4	3.0	0.0	2.8	0.8	1.9	6.9	3.5	5.7	14.5	10.8	9.8	7.5	4.4	5.8
Transport & Communications	1.1	2.9	0.0	1.9	1.8	0.5	3.4	3.5	3.1	5.2	3.3	6.4	3.4	3.1	3.3
Public Administration	1.1	4.4	0.0	0.5	0.4	2.2	2.8	1.4	0.5	5.5	1.5	2.2	2.9	1.3	1.2
Professional Services	2.4	2.5	1.4	0.9	1.7	0.4	4.8	2.9	4.6	13.3	9.4	6.4	5.7	3.9	4.1
Personal Services	25.4	24.8	11.5	16.8	20.0	14.9	19.6	18.9	13.2	20.3	27.2	20.7	19.4	20.9	15.2
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Total (Number)</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>6,216</b>	<b>5,593</b>	<b>5,198</b>	<b>20,013</b>	<b>16,982</b>	<b>15,534</b>	<b>6,465</b>	<b>5,534</b>	<b>6,179</b>	<b>33,434</b>	<b>28,634</b>	<b>27,415</b>

**Table B1b: Sectors in which Male School Leavers with Full-Time Jobs were Working One Year After Leaving School (Percentage)**

	NO QUALIFICATIONS			JUNIOR CERT			LEAVING CERT			LEAVING CERT PLUS PLC			TOTAL			
	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	
<b>Sector:</b>																
Agriculture & Fisheries	8.1	6.6	5.1	2.7	4.3	4.1	2.1	2.0	2.6	0	0.0	0.0	2.2	2.4	2.8	
Industry	62.3	66.0	64.5	62.3	69.6	70.3	47.9	49.8	62.9	12.7	23.5	40.9	48.8	52.1	62.7	
Distribution	14.8	8.6	23.4	20.9	15.7	16.4	22.0	27.3	23.7	36.1	38.3	35.7	22.8	25.4	23.0	
Banking	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.2	1.8	6.1	2.1	1.2	23.9	6.9	6.8	6.3	2.1	1.9	
Transport & Communications	1.6	5.0	0.0	2.5	1.1	0.0	2.2	3.9	2.5	5.5	6.2	2.4	2.5	3.5	1.8	
Public Administration	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.3	2.8	2.8	0.9	0.9	0.0	2.7	2.4	2.0	1.0	1.5	
Professional Services	0.0	4.3	1.7	1.2	1.1	0.5	2.6	0.9	2.0	13.6	6.9	0.0	3.1	1.7	1.4	
Personal Services	11.5	9.6	5.4	8.4	7.6	4.1	14.3	13.0	4.3	8.2	15.6	11.7	12.3	11.9	5.0	
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Total (Number)</b>	<b>494</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>4,731</b>	<b>3,976</b>	<b>4,118</b>	<b>12,345</b>	<b>10,592</b>	<b>9,396</b>	<b>1,664</b>	<b>1,766</b>	<b>1,609</b>	<b>19,234</b>	<b>16,637</b>	<b>15,534</b>	

**Table B1c: Sectors in which Female School Leavers with Full-Time Jobs were Working One Year After Leaving School (Percentage)**

	Farmer / Other Agriculture	Higher/Lower Professional	Employers / Managers	Intermediate / Other Non-Manual	Skilled / Semi-Skilled / Unskilled Manual	Unemployed	Unknown	Total (Percentage)	Estimated No. in Category
<b>Economic Status:</b>									
Employed	35.3	17.9	32.7	39.9	48.6	29.2	44.1	39.0	12,847
Unemployed, After Loss of Job	0.0	1.4	0.0	1.6	2.4	5.6	3.0	1.9	629
Unemployed, Seeking First Job	4.0	0.4	0.0	3.3	2.1	19.0	7.7	3.8	1,237
Training	1.2	0.0	4.3	1.6	1.5	14.7	3.5	2.5	823
Student	50.9	76.8	55.9	46.5	39.8	18.9	28.6	45.6	15,034
Unavailable for Work	5.9	0.0	1.3	4.3	5.4	12.6	13.1	5.4	1,791
Emigrated	2.7	3.5	5.9	2.9	0.3	0.0	0.0	1.9	611
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>32,972</b>

**Table B2a: Type of Work Undertaken by School Leavers with Full-Time Jobs One Year After Leaving School (Percentage)**

	NO QUALIFICATIONS			JUNIOR CERT			LEAVING CERT			LEAVING CERT PLUS PLC			TOTAL		
	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005
<b>Occupation:</b>															
Managerial/Professional	3.3	4.2	1.4	0.9	0.9	1.8	6.7	4.6	4.9	12.5	8.8	11.2	6.7	4.7	5.7
Clerical	4.7	10.9	1.6	3.8	3.8	6.4	13.8	11.6	15.7	34.2	23.0	22.1	15.5	12.3	15.1
Service	31.8	35.3	33.3	29.8	34.5	22.5	42.3	44.1	35.0	42.2	55.2	49.5	39.7	44.2	35.8
Agriculture & Fishery	7.6	3.8	2.8	2.0	3.5	2.8	2.4	2.1	2.6	0.0	0.5	1.1	2.0	2.1	2.3
Skilled & Semi-Skilled Manual	47.1	43.3	58.1	57.9	54.9	63.0	30.1	32.9	39.9	8.8	11.3	14.9	31.6	33.2	39.0
Other Manual	5.5	2.5	2.8	6.2	2.4	3.6	4.7	4.6	2.0	2.3	1.1	1.2	4.5	3.5	2.1
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Total (Number)</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>6,338</b>	<b>5,593</b>	<b>5,198</b>	<b>20,117</b>	<b>16,981</b>	<b>15,688</b>	<b>6,552</b>	<b>5,557</b>	<b>6,180</b>	<b>33,755</b>	<b>28,655</b>	<b>27,570</b>

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**Table B2b: Type of Work Undertaken by Male School Leavers with Full-Time Jobs One Year After Leaving School (Percentage)**

	NO QUALIFICATIONS			JUNIOR CERT			LEAVING CERT			LEAVING CERT PLUS PLC			TOTAL		
	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005
<b>Occupation:</b>															
Managerial/Professional	3.2	2.0	1.7	1.2	0.7	1.2	6.4	4.6	4.0	24.6	12.9	14.4	6.6	4.5	4.3
Clerical	0.0	2.0	1.9	2.4	1.5	5.4	6.5	6.9	10.4	24.6	10.8	14.1	6.9	6.0	9.2
Service	17.7	12.3	20.9	16.5	14.7	8.8	32.7	30.2	20.2	30	44.4	28.5	28.1	27.7	18.1
Agriculture & Fishery	11.4	6.6	3.4	2.0	4.2	3.2	3.4	2.4	2.9	0.0	0.8	0.0	3	2.7	2.7
Skilled & Semi-Skilled Manual	61.4	72.8	68.6	70.5	76.0	77.1	44.7	49.6	59.6	14.7	27.6	40.5	48.9	54.0	62.5
Other Manual	6.4	4.3	3.4	7.4	2.9	4.3	6.3	6.3	2.9	6.1	3.5	2.4	6.5	5.2	3.3
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Total (Number)</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>4,798</b>	<b>3,976</b>	<b>4,116</b>	<b>12,497</b>	<b>10,592</b>	<b>9,464</b>	<b>1,664</b>	<b>1,765</b>	<b>1,608</b>	<b>19,461</b>	<b>16,634</b>	<b>15,599</b>

**Table B2c: Type of Work Undertaken by Female School Leavers with Full-Time Jobs One Year After Leaving School (Percentage)**

	NO QUALIFICATIONS			JUNIOR CERT			LEAVING CERT			LEAVING CERT PLUS PLC			TOTAL		
	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005
<b>Occupation:</b>															
Managerial/Professional	3.7	7.2	0.0	0.0	1.2	4.0	7.2	4.7	6.4	8.4	6.9	10.1	6.8	5.0	7.6
Clerical	14.2	22.6	0.0	5.5	9.5	10.2	25.8	19.4	23.6	37.4	28.6	25.0	27.4	21.0	22.7
Service	60.6	66.5	88.2	71.4	83.1	74.3	58.1	67.2	57.4	46.4	60.3	56.9	55.6	67.1	59.0
Agriculture & Fishery	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.9	1.7	1.0	0.6	1.7	2.0	0.0	0.4	1.4	0.5	1.3	1.7
Skilled & Semi-Skilled Manual	17.9	3.6	11.8	18.6	3.2	9.5	6.2	5.2	10.0	6.9	3.7	5.9	8.0	4.5	8.4
Other Manual	3.7	0.0	0.0	2.7	1.2	1.0	2.1	1.8	0.5	0.9	0.0	0.7	1.8	1.1	0.6
<b>Total (Percentage)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Total (Number)</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>1,541</b>	<b>1,617</b>	<b>1,082</b>	<b>7,621</b>	<b>6,391</b>	<b>6,223</b>	<b>4,888</b>	<b>3,792</b>	<b>4,571</b>	<b>14,296</b>	<b>12,021</b>	<b>11,969</b>

**Table B3: Average Gross Hourly Earnings of School Leavers in Employment by Outcome of Last Examination Sat**

	Males			Females			Total		
	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005	2002	2004	2005
<b>Outcome of Last Exam Sat:</b>									
No Qualifications	6.18	6.42	7.17	6.45	7.48	7.80	6.28	6.83	7.34
Junior Cert, less 5 passes	5.88	6.79	7.93	3.75	7.40	5.26	5.67	6.89	7.58
Junior Cert, 5+ passes	6.27	7.55	6.89	6.49	7.60	7.44	6.33	7.57	6.96
Junior Cert, 1+ honours	6.16	7.74	7.21	5.48	6.38	6.88	6.07	7.11	7.10
Leaving Cert, less 5 passes	6.89	8.14	8.02	7.14	8.77	5.19	7.01	8.43	7.52
Leaving Cert, 5+ passes	7.56	7.58	8.13	8.15	7.96	8.45	7.83	7.79	8.30
Leaving Cert, 1-3 honours	6.96	7.73	7.61	7.86	8.54	8.72	7.35	7.99	8.09
Leaving Cert, 4+ honours	7.93	8.41	8.12	11.11	8.61	8.49	9.74	8.49	8.36
<b>Average (Mean)</b>	<b>7.02</b>	<b>7.75</b>	<b>7.70</b>	<b>8.09</b>	<b>8.05</b>	<b>8.38</b>	<b>7.47</b>	<b>7.88</b>	<b>8.01</b>
<b>Total (Number)</b>	<b>7,542</b>	<b>5,639</b>	<b>6,404</b>	<b>5,422</b>	<b>4,068</b>	<b>5,334</b>	<b>12,964</b>	<b>9,707</b>	<b>11,737</b>

# 6. ■ SUMMARY





## 6. SUMMARY

This report presented the key findings from the 2006 Annual School Leavers' Survey. The main purpose of this survey is to examine the educational and labour market experiences of school leavers one year after leaving school. This final chapter serves to summarise the main findings of the 2006 School Leavers' Survey.

### 6.1 Level of Educational Attainment

The trends in educational attainment show little change on more recent surveys: a total of 82 per cent of school leavers obtained the Leaving Certificate, while for 14 per cent the Junior Certificate represented the last official second-level examination sat. In total, four per cent of school leavers left school without qualifications. As in previous rounds of the survey, males tend to be over-represented among those who leave school pre-Leaving Certificate, with 86 per cent of females relative to 77 per cent of male school leavers completing their second-level education. Among those leaving school prior to sitting the Junior Cert exam, males are also more likely to leave school earlier in junior cycle, while females are more likely to leave during the final year of junior cycle. Both males and females are most likely to cite school-related factors behind their decision to leave school early.

Educational retention continues to strongly mirror social background, while type of leaving certificate programme followed (established Leaving Cert, Leaving Cert Applied and Leaving Cert Vocational Programme) also shows social class differentiation. Participation in the Transition Year programme is highest among those who perform well in the Junior Cert exam and, in line with this participant profile, Leaving Cert results are also found to be higher among those who had participated in the programme.

Part-time work remains a prominent activity among second-level students, with employment rates peaking in 5th year. A considerable minority of school leavers had worked during the school week, while males were more likely to work on weekdays and to work at a younger age. Levels of participation in highly time-intensive jobs are also structured by social background.

### 6.2 Post-School Education and Training

Participation in the PLC programme continues to be considerably higher among females, with participants less likely to come from 'advantaged' backgrounds and more likely to come from intermediate/other non-manual, manual or unemployed backgrounds. The typical entrant to the PLC programme performed poorly to moderately in the Leaving Cert exam, with females achieving 1-3 'honours' in this exam particularly likely to pursue a PLC course.

Males continue to dominate entry to state-sponsored training courses, accounting for three-quarters of participants. While participants are predominantly drawn from those who completed second-level, females leaving school prior to the Junior Cert have relatively high levels of participation, as do males who left after the Junior Cert.

A total of 57 per cent of those who completed second-level education (any form of Leaving Cert exam), progressed to higher education. Differentiation across social groups remains apparent, with school leavers from professional, managerial and farming backgrounds having much higher rates of progression.

### **6.3 Economic Status of School Leavers**

While overall levels of progression to further study and training have grown over time, the experiences of those entering the labour market after leaving school remains a central interest in the school leavers' survey. The 2006 survey results have seen a shift in the nature of unemployment among school leavers with a fall in unemployment following the loss of a job, but a commensurate rise in the proportions still seeking their first job one year after leaving school. Unemployment rates continue to strongly mirror educational attainment and examination performance, with particularly high unemployment levels among those leaving school prior to the Junior Cert exam; over half of which are either unemployed or still seeking their first job one year after leaving school. Unemployment rates are also high among those who left after the Junior Cert exam, with almost one-quarter of those who enter the labour market not in employment one year later. This suggests serious difficulties in terms of labour market integration for those failing to complete their second-level education, with particular concerns for males given their high representation among such early leavers.

### **6.4 Employment Characteristics**

In terms of the sector in which school leavers are employed, industry is now the main employer of school leavers, followed by distribution. Males are particularly highly represented in the industry sector, while females are spread across a range of sectors – distribution, personal services and banking. With regard to occupational sector, manual employment accounts for the largest proportion of school leavers in employment, with increasing proportions across all educational levels now being employed in this sector.

The 2006 survey incorporated a new question on job security and the results indicate that only a small proportion of those in employment feel insecure in their job. Almost a quarter of school leavers in employment are receiving employer-provided training, with a higher proportion of males both being provided with such training and still undergoing such training at the time of the survey. Overall four out of five school leavers are generally satisfied with their present economic situation.

## 6.5 Policy Discussion

The findings raise a number of important issues for policy. Firstly, policy attention must address the fact that there has been no improvement in levels of school completion, with particularly high levels of early leaving among males. Young people themselves cite school factors behind their reason to leave early, although broader cultural and economic factors are also at play. The pull of part-time work, or the necessity to secure income, is a particular issue for those from lower socio-economic backgrounds who are more likely to engage in more intensive part-time jobs, which have been shown to be detrimental to educational retention and examination performance (McCoy and Smyth, 2005).

The price paid for educational failure is, if anything, becoming greater over time<sup>28</sup>, further highlighting the need to address the issue with urgency. Young people leaving school prior to Leaving Cert standard are facing increasing difficulty in securing employment and experience slower integration into the labour market today than in recent years. At the same time, however, it appears that greater numbers of these individuals are accessing alternative educational and training programmes (such as Youthreach), which appear to be playing an important role in assisting these young people to successfully integrate into the labour market.

Secondly, it appears attention must also focus on what appears to be increasing competition in the labour market for school leavers, who may be competing with women retuning to the labour market after a period of absence, students in part-time jobs and immigrants. Future surveys must continue to monitor the extent to which school leavers are facing difficulties in this regard.

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<sup>28</sup> For more discussion on this see *Tomorrow's Skills: Towards a National Skills Strategy, 5th Report* (Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (2007)).





# 7 ■ REFERENCES





## 7. REFERENCES

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# 8 ■ APPENDIX C





## 8. APPENDIX C

### SAMPLE DESIGN, WEIGHTING AND SAMPLING ERRORS

#### *Sample Design*

Each Annual School Leavers Survey is based on a national stratified random sample of school leavers, who are interviewed approximately one year to 18 months after leaving school. A school leaver is defined as someone who left full-time education in an official secondary, vocational, community or comprehensive school in the course of the previous academic year, i.e., the period September of t-3 to August of t-2 where t is the year the survey is being carried out. The present survey, conducted in 2006, covers those who left the second-level system between September 2003 and August 2004.

The sample design used in 2006 was considerably modified and improved compared with that utilised in earlier years. A stratified (by programme) random sample of school leavers was selected from a database provided for this purpose by the Department of Education and Science<sup>29</sup>.

Stratification was based on programme code and programme year. As in previous years, the non-Leaving Cert group was over-sampled to provide a higher number of cases for analysis of their early labour market experiences.

Rows 1 and 2 of Table C1 below show the estimated numbers of leavers in each stratum and the size of the target field sample selected. Only those under age 25 are included, as this is the group to which the present report refers<sup>30</sup>.

#### *Fieldwork and Response*

Trained interviewers, who were fully instructed on the survey, attempted to contact and interview these selected school leavers throughout the country. The final row of Table C1 show the response achieved by these interviewers. Overall, the response rate achieved was 46 per cent. The response rate varied from 60 per cent among Leaving Cert students to 24 per cent among those who left before the Junior Cert. The low response rate in the latter category is mainly due to the large numbers of leavers and their families who had left the area and left no forwarding address (36 per cent).

<sup>29</sup> In previous years, a two stage, random stratified design was used, with selection of schools at the first stage and pupils from the selected schools in the second stage. The schools were then requested to provide the contact details for the selected students.

<sup>30</sup> Apart from PLC leavers, very few students are over age 25.

This is the proportion selected for the field sample, before those ineligible were identified and excluded.



The fifth row of Table C1 shows the sampling fraction in each stratum, i.e., the proportion of pupils sampled in each sub-group<sup>31</sup>. This varies from 59 per cent of leavers with no qualifications to 3 per cent of those leaving with the Leaving Certificate. All the tables in the report have been re-weighted taking account of these sampling fractions to give unbiased estimates of the relevant population percentages, averages and totals.

**Table C1: Estimated Numbers of School Leavers Under Age 25 in Various Categories and Details of Sample**

	Before Junior Cert year	Junior Cert Program year	LC program, year 1	LC program, year 2	PLC program	Total
No. in Population	1733	3752	7193	40034	13587	66299
Total Field Sample	1018	1251	891	1057	965	5182
Not eligible*	341	202	129	70	134	876
Eligible Field Sample	677	1049	762	987	831	4306
Sampling Fraction	59%	33%	12%	3%	7%	8%
Achieved Sample	165	459	385	589	401	1999
Response Rate	24%	44%	51%	60%	48%	46%

\***Note:** Excludes those over age 25 and VTOS students. Ineligible=deceased, address while at school outside Ireland, left school outside the reference period, still in school. Note that the stratum refers to the programme and year in which the person left school: the examination might not have been taken.

#### *Margin of Errors for Key Statistics*

Given the nature of the sample design, the calculation of sampling errors is quite complex. It was also felt that the presentation of the margin of error for all the figures given in the report would make it difficult to read. In order to give the reader an appreciation of the likely magnitude of the sampling errors involved, we carried out calculations for a number of the key percentages presented in the text and these are shown in Table C2. In the first of these examples, we show the margin of error (at the 95 per cent confidence interval) for the hypothetical case of a variable which was observed to have a value of 50 per cent in each stratum. The overall confidence interval is seen to be plus or minus 2 percentage points, i.e., given the observed value of 50 per cent in each stratum of the sample, there is a 95 per cent probability that the true value (in the population) lies in the range 48 to 52 per cent. The confidence interval is, of course, wider in the strata where the sample is smaller. Thus, the margin of error is 4 per cent in the stratum "Junior Cert" where only 714 respondents were interviewed.

The other lines of Table C2 show similar figures for actual percentages observed in the survey. The first of these is the percentage of all leavers unemployed in May 2005. Here the margin of error varies from 1 per cent for the sample as a whole to 6 per cent for those leaving with no qualifications. The other three variables considered

<sup>31</sup> This is the proportion selected for the field sample, before those ineligible were identified and excluded.

are based on sub-groups of the sample (those in the labour force, those at work and situations where the school leaver personally responded to the survey). Note that for sub-groups such as these the sampling errors tend to be larger. In general, readers should bear in mind that the sample size is relatively small for such subgroups and that figures based on small sub-groups of the sample must be treated with great caution.

**Table C2: Illustrative Sampling Errors By Self-Reported Highest Qualification of School Leavers Age 25 and Under\***

Illustrative Sampling Errors	No Quals	Junior Cert	Leaving Cert	PLC	Total
Illustrative Observed Percentage	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%
Number of cases	255	714	739	291	1999
Margin of error at 95% Confid. Level	6%	4%	4%	6%	2%
Unemployment Level	29%	16%	5%	5%	12%
N cases, all economic statuses	255	714	739	291	1999
Margin of error at 95% Confid. Level	6%	3%	2%	3%	1%
Unemployment Rate	55%	22%	11%	8%	20%
N cases in labour market	132	508	340	200	1180
Margin of error at 95% Confid. Level	8%	4%	3%	4%	2%
Percentage Employed in Manufacturing	56%	59%	34%	15%	42%
N cases employed	63	437	384	208	1092
Margin of error at 95% Confid. Level	12%	5%	5%	5%	3%
Percentage in Professional Services sector	3%	2%	4%	11%	4%
N cases employed full-time	63	437	384	208	1092
Margin of error at 95% Confid. Level	4%	1%	2%	4%	1%
Percentage Sat. with Emp. Sit.	61%	74%	84%	72%	76%
N cases responding	245	700	722	287	1954
Margin of error at 95% Confid. Level	6%	3%	3%	5%	2%

**\*Note:** Self-reported qualification may differ from stage left if the person did not take the exam at the end of the period. Unemployment level refers to the percentage of all leavers who are unemployed; unemployment rate refers to the percentage of leavers in the labour market who are unemployed.

In terms of undertaking the School Leavers' Survey in the future, challenges in terms of doing face-to-face interviews have emerged in recent years. Declining response rates and escalating fieldwork costs have created a more difficult environment for undertaking traditional face-to-face interview surveys, the approach this survey has adopted since its inception in 1980. Researchers are increasingly adopting multi-mode approaches, utilising two or more of the following methods: web-based interactive, postal, telephone interview and face-to-face interview. These multi-mode approaches offer numerous advantages, including respondent choice, increased flexibility, increased response rates and the opportunity to target the resource intensive face-to-face mode on non-respondent groups (with early school leavers, for example, traditionally more difficult to contact). It is recommended that the use of a multi-mode approach is fully explored in the next School Leavers' Survey in 2007.