



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Pupils from the Traveller Community

2016–20

May 2023

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Introduction

This report is the second publication related to statistics of pupils who are members of the Traveller community in mainstream classes. The previous publication covered the period from 2011 to 2015, representing five academic years. This publication is a continuation covering the next five-year period, from 2016 to 2020. The last publication relied on the National School Annual Censuses for counts of Traveller pupils in primary school, which was replaced in the 2016–17 academic year by the Primary Pupil Returns from the Primary Online Database (POD). This new database, similar to the Post-Primary Online Database (P-POD), collects the data electronically and is the source of the data. The information on Traveller ethnicity is collected by parental or guardian consent under General Data Protection Regulation for statistical purposes, and Traveller supports. The figures referenced are available online.

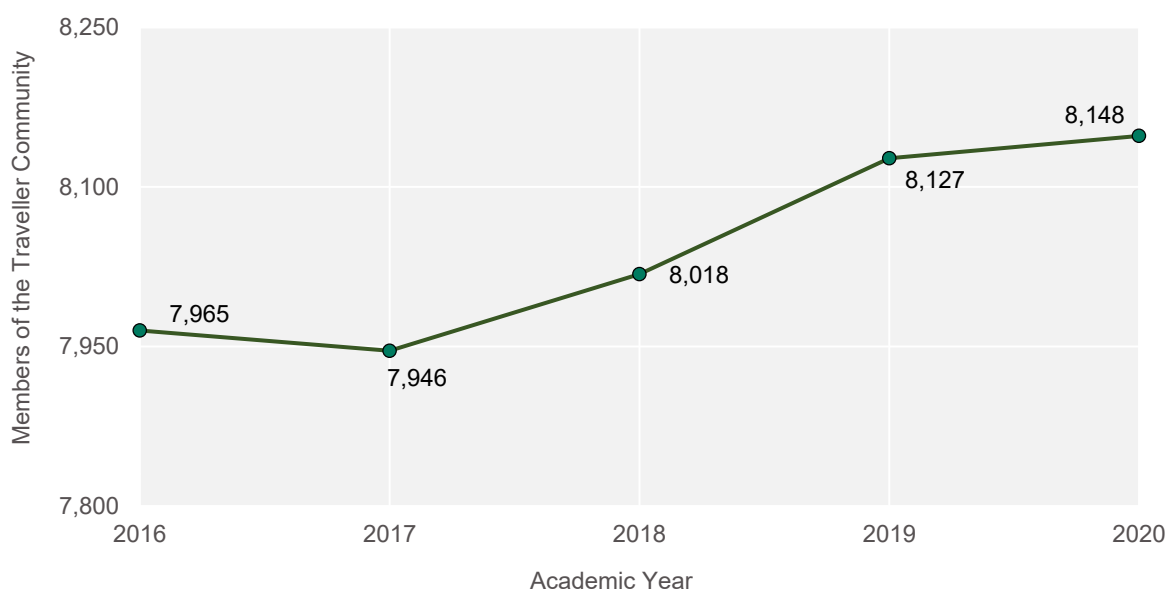
Summary

- Primary Traveller pupils have increased from 7,965 in 2016–17 to 8,148 for the 2020–21 academic year.
- Primary Traveller pupils consistently attended schools with DEIS status in more significant numbers than non-DEIS schools.
- The highest number of 3,292 Traveller pupils in post-primary schools was recorded for the 2020–21 academic year.
- The highest number of Traveller pupils, 412, participating in the Leaving Certificate programme was recorded for the 2020–21 academic year.
- The retention rate for Traveller pupils to the Leaving Certificate from the 2015 cohort was 27.1 per cent.

Primary

Since the 2016–17 academic year, Traveller pupil enrolments in primary mainstream classes have risen gradually from 7,965 to 8,148 (Figure 1). The 2020–21 enrolments represent 1.5 per cent of the total mainstream class pupils (545,493). This growth was counter to mainstream enrolments, which peaked in the 2018–19 academic year.

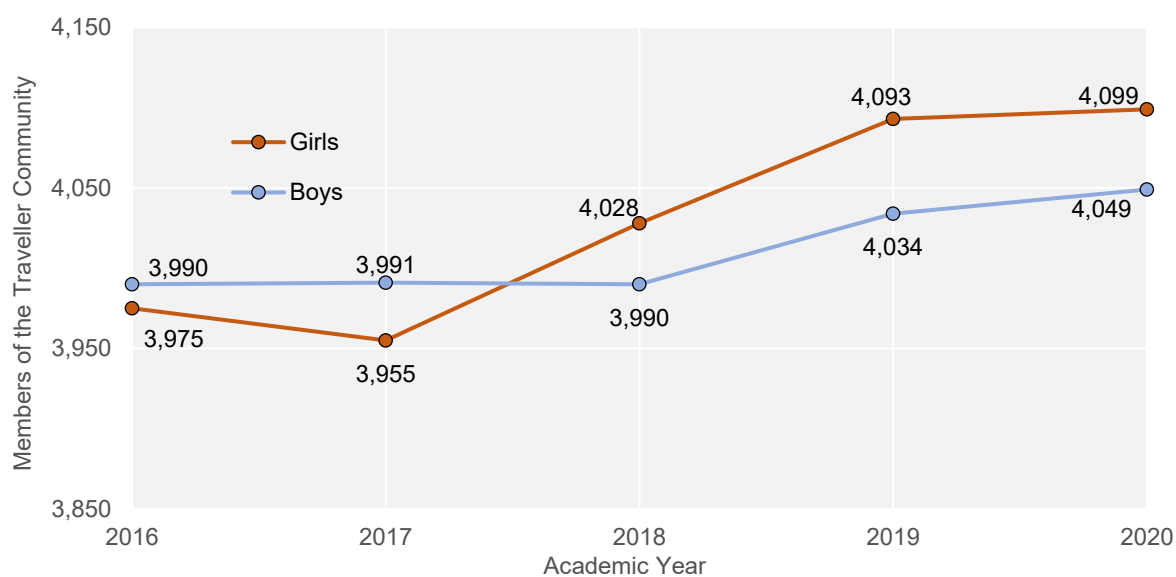
Figure 1 Traveller primary pupils in mainstream classes, 2016–20



Gender

For 2016–17, 3,975 girls and 3,990 boys were enrolled (Figure 2). Five years later, for the 2020–21 academic year, there were 4,099 girls and 4,049 boys, with the gap between genders remaining low and stable.

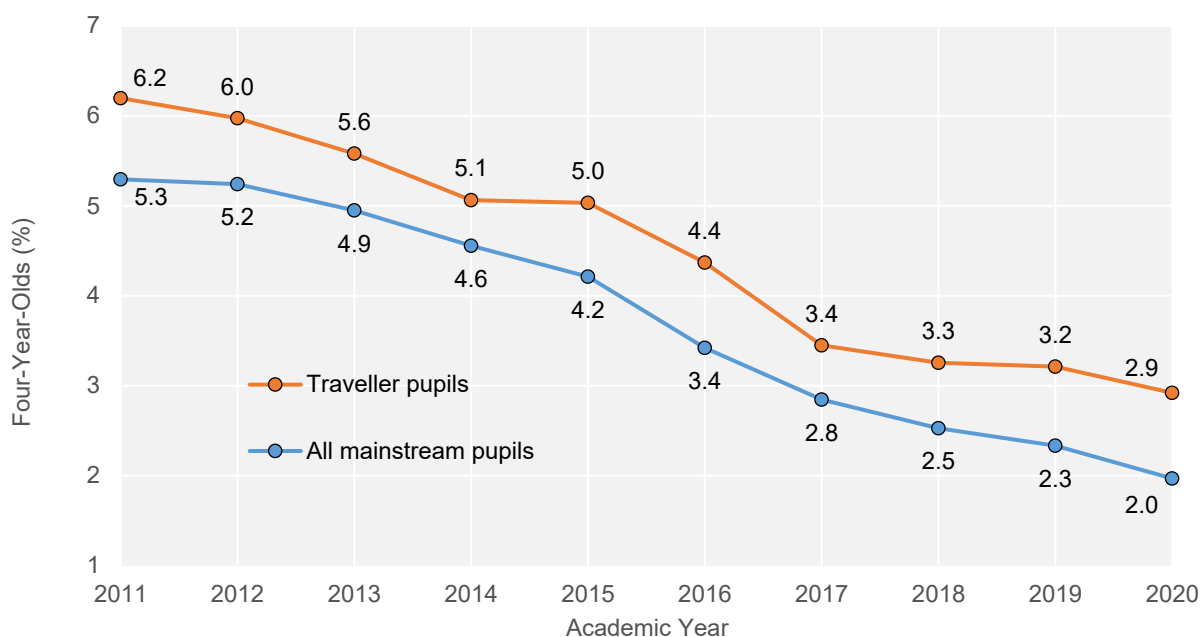
Figure 2 Traveller primary pupils in mainstream classes, by gender, 2016–20



Age

The previous pattern identified in the [first publication](#) is maintained throughout the five-year analysis period. This pattern identifies a higher proportion of Traveller pupils aged four enrolling in school compared to all mainstream pupils (Figure 3). This proportion has halved in the past ten years from 6.2 per cent to 2.9 per cent.

Figure 3 Percentage of four-year-olds, 2011–20



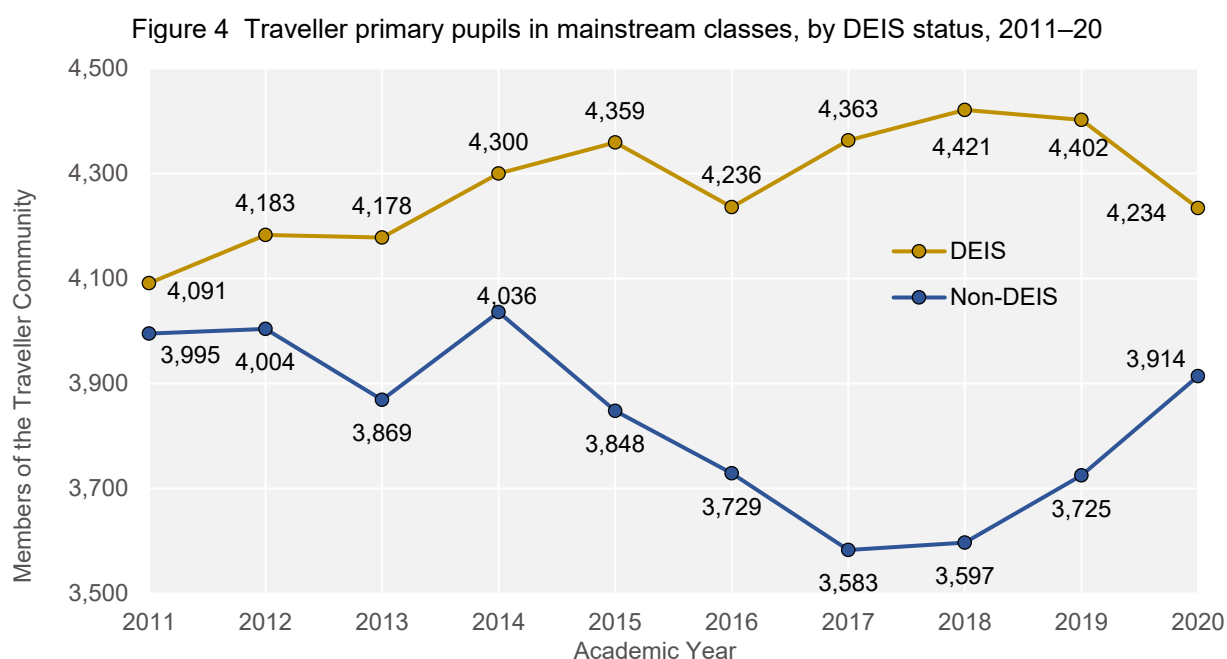
The higher enrolment of four-year-olds is balanced with a lower proportion of Traveller pupils aged five years old enrolled compared to mainstream pupils (Table 1). Furthermore, a higher proportion of 13-year-olds are also present, but the number of pupils is relatively small.

Table 1 Traveller pupils in primary mainstream classes, by age, 2020–21

| Pupil's age on the 1st of January | 2020–21 | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | Mainstream Pupils | of which are Traveller Pupils | Mainstream Pupils (%) | of which are Traveller Pupils (%) |
| 4 | 10,741 | 238 | 2.0 | 2.9 |
| 5 | 63,867 | 879 | 11.7 | 10.8 |
| 6 | 66,758 | 1,019 | 12.2 | 12.5 |
| 7 | 68,348 | 1,039 | 12.5 | 12.8 |
| 8 | 70,127 | 1,013 | 12.9 | 12.4 |
| 9 | 71,786 | 1,061 | 13.2 | 13.0 |
| 10 | 72,192 | 1,028 | 13.2 | 12.6 |
| 11 | 72,355 | 1,058 | 13.3 | 13.0 |
| 12 | 48,181 | 725 | 8.8 | 8.9 |
| 13 and over | 1,138 | 88 | 0.2 | 1.1 |
| Total | 545,493 | 8,148 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

DEIS

Traveller pupils have consistently attended primary schools with DEIS status more significantly than non-DEIS schools. For the academic year 2020–21, 4,234 Traveller pupils attended schools with DEIS status compared to 3,914 in non-DEIS status schools (Figure 4).



These numbers are relatively even in percentages, with 52.0 per cent in DEIS schools and 48.0 per cent in non-DEIS schools. However, these enrolments are uneven compared to all pupils in mainstream classes, with 80.5 per cent attending non-DEIS status schools and only 19.5 per cent attending DEIS schools (Table 2). During the analysis period, Traveller primary students are 2.5 times more likely to benefit from the supports available under the DEIS Programme relative to their peers. These figures reflect the representation of Travellers in DEIS schools before the extension of the DEIS programme in March 2022. The refined DEIS identification model ([available online](#)) considered the number of students who self-identified as Travellers or Roma. As a result, the percentage of Travellers in DEIS primary schools is 71.9 per cent for the 2022–23 academic year.

Table 2 Traveller pupils in primary mainstream classes, by DEIS status, 2020–21

| DEIS Status | 2020–21 | | | |
|-------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | Mainstream Pupils | of which are Traveller Pupils | Mainstream Pupils (%) | of which are Traveller Pupils (%) |
| Non-DEIS | 439,384 | 3,914 | 80.5 | 48.0 |
| DEIS | 106,109 | 4,234 | 19.5 | 52.0 |
| Total | 545,493 | 8,148 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

County

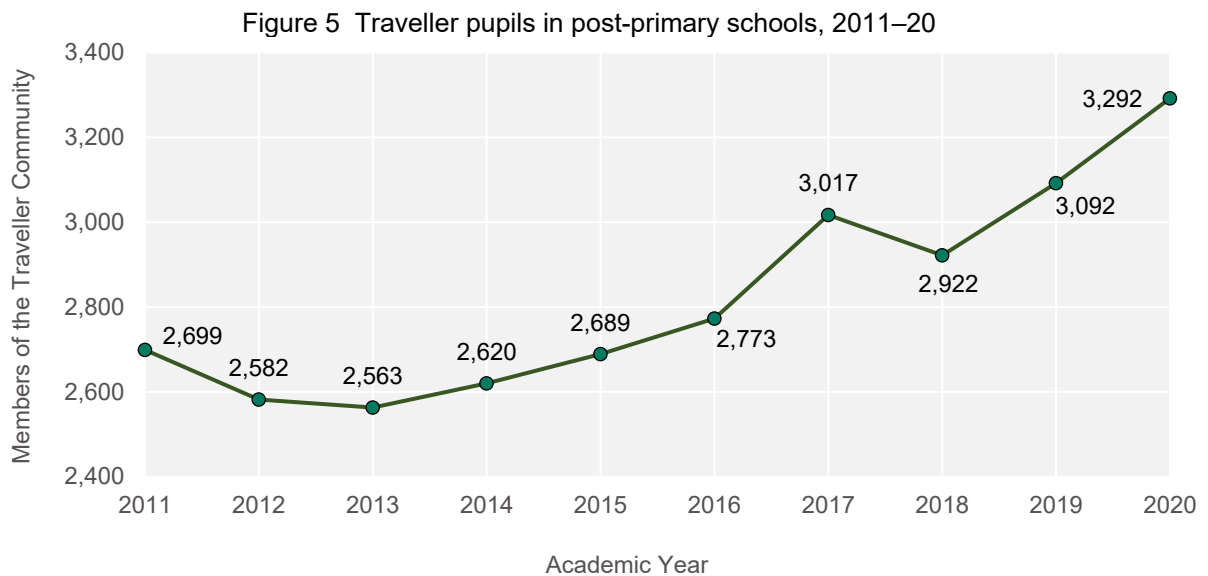
The highest number of Traveller pupils in primary mainstream classes are located in County Galway, with 624, followed by Dublin City (593) and Galway City (514) (Table 3). The smallest number of Traveller pupils were in Monaghan, with 37, Waterford (40) and Dún Laoghaire Rathdown (52).

Table 3 Traveller pupils in primary mainstream classes, by local authority, 2020–21

| Local Authority | 2020–21 | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | Mainstream Pupils | of which Traveller Pupils | Mainstream Pupils (%) | of which are Traveller Pupils (%) |
| Carlow | 7,424 | 145 | 1.4 | 1.8 |
| Cavan | 9,690 | 105 | 1.8 | 1.3 |
| Clare | 12,988 | 303 | 2.4 | 3.7 |
| Cork City | 13,554 | 255 | 2.5 | 3.1 |
| Cork | 48,149 | 288 | 8.8 | 3.5 |
| Donegal | 18,075 | 100 | 3.3 | 1.2 |
| Dublin City | 46,317 | 593 | 8.5 | 7.3 |
| Dún Laoghaire Rathdown | 20,254 | 52 | 3.7 | 0.6 |
| Fingal | 37,602 | 270 | 6.9 | 3.3 |
| Galway City | 7,276 | 514 | 1.3 | 6.3 |
| Galway | 22,446 | 624 | 4.1 | 7.7 |
| Kerry | 15,398 | 287 | 2.8 | 3.5 |
| Kildare | 29,128 | 255 | 5.3 | 3.1 |
| Kilkenny | 11,029 | 106 | 2.0 | 1.3 |
| Laois | 10,987 | 176 | 2.0 | 2.2 |
| Leitrim | 3,699 | 59 | 0.7 | 0.7 |
| Limerick City | 6,539 | 106 | 1.2 | 1.3 |
| Limerick | 15,731 | 381 | 2.9 | 4.7 |
| Longford | 5,254 | 289 | 1.0 | 3.5 |
| Louth | 16,898 | 193 | 3.1 | 2.4 |
| Mayo | 14,224 | 362 | 2.6 | 4.4 |
| Meath | 26,757 | 231 | 4.9 | 2.8 |
| Monaghan | 7,743 | 37 | 1.4 | 0.5 |
| Offaly | 9,175 | 278 | 1.7 | 3.4 |
| Roscommon | 7,713 | 131 | 1.4 | 1.6 |
| Sligo | 7,394 | 102 | 1.4 | 1.3 |
| South Dublin | 35,250 | 511 | 6.5 | 6.3 |
| Tipperary | 18,067 | 415 | 3.3 | 5.1 |
| Waterford City | 6,098 | 135 | 1.1 | 1.7 |
| Waterford | 7,920 | 40 | 1.5 | 0.5 |
| Westmeath | 11,157 | 260 | 2.0 | 3.2 |
| Wexford | 17,987 | 387 | 3.3 | 4.7 |
| Wicklow | 17,570 | 158 | 3.2 | 1.9 |
| Total | 545,493 | 8,148 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

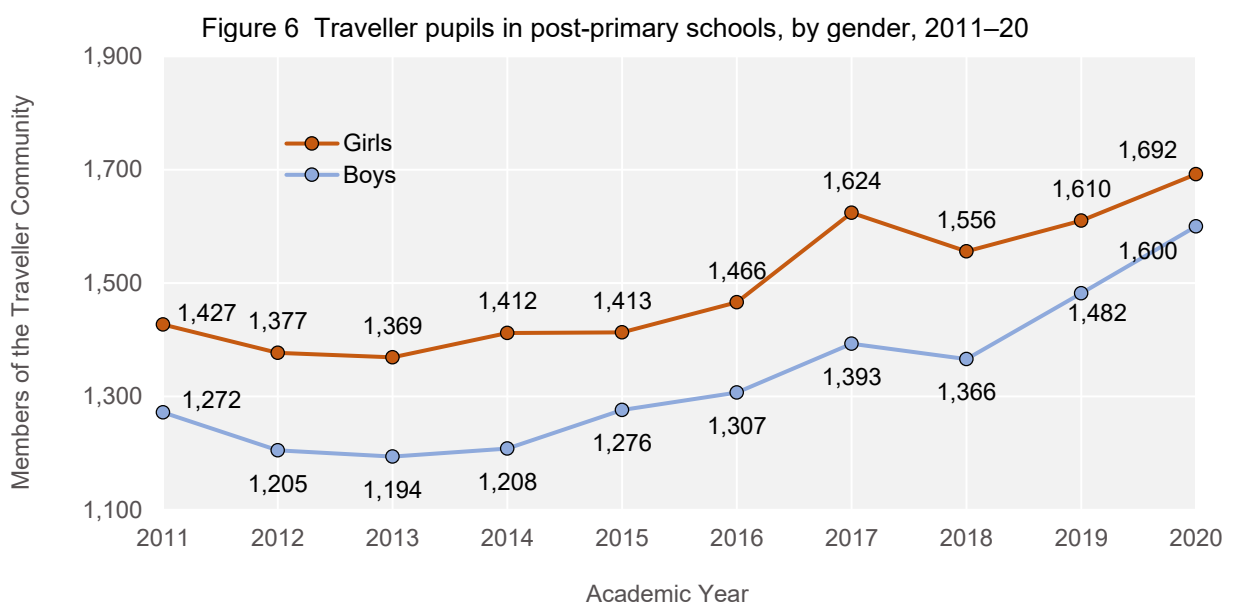
Post-Primary

Since the 2013–14 academic year, Traveller pupil enrolments in post-primary schools have climbed steadily from 2,563 to 3,292 (Figure 5). The growth represents the highest number of Traveller pupils in post-primary schools since ethnicity has been recorded on P-POD. The enrolments represent 0.9 per cent of the total post-primary pupils (379,180) for the 2020–21 academic year.



Gender

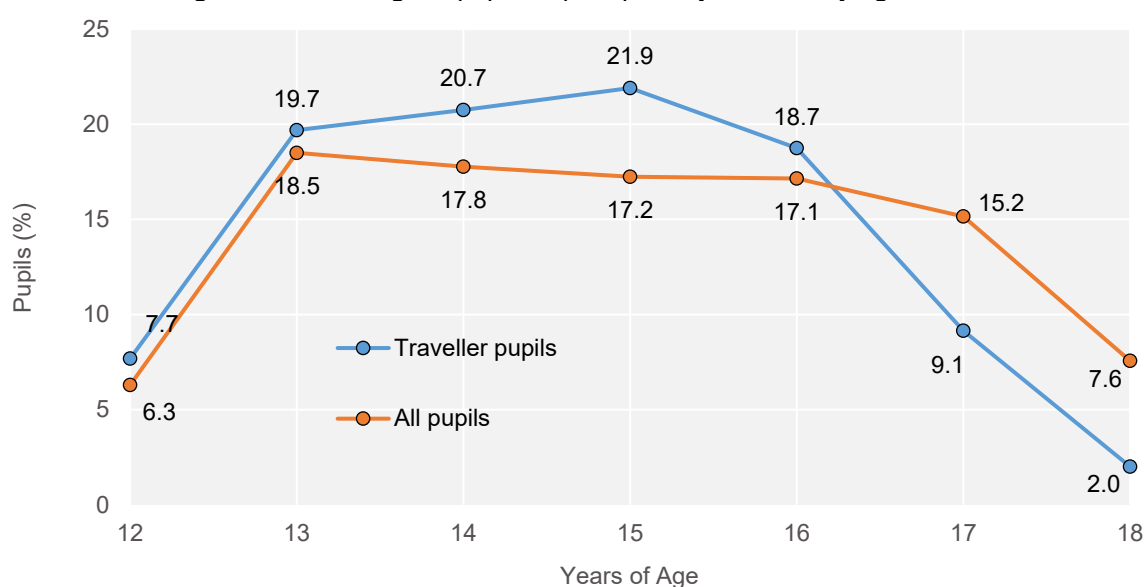
For the academic year 2013–14, there were 1,369 girls and 1,194 boys. Seven years later, for the 2020–21 academic year, there were 1,692 girls and 1,600 boys. The gap between genders is currently at its lowest (92 pupils) for the analysis period (Figure 6).



Age

Traveller pupils are mainly within the range of 13 to 16 years of age in post-primary schools. They comprise 81.0 per cent of total Traveller pupils compared to 70.6 per cent of all post-primary pupils who remained in more significant numbers after 16 years of age in the 2020–21 academic year (Figure 7).

Figure 7 Percentage of pupils in post-primary schools, by age, 2020–21



The difference results in only 11.2 per cent of all Traveller pupils over 16 years of age compared to 23.0 per cent of all post-primary pupils (Table 4).

Table 4 Traveller pupils in post-primary schools, by age, 2020–21

| Pupil's age on the 1st of January | 2020–21 | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|
| | All Pupils | of which are Traveller Pupils | All Pupils (%) | of which are Traveller Pupils (%) |
| 12 and younger | 23,861 | 253 | 6.3 | 7.7 |
| 13 | 70,136 | 647 | 18.5 | 19.7 |
| 14 | 67,386 | 682 | 17.8 | 20.7 |
| 15 | 65,372 | 721 | 17.2 | 21.9 |
| 16 | 65,028 | 617 | 17.1 | 18.7 |
| 17 | 57,460 | 301 | 15.2 | 9.1 |
| 18 | 28,692 | 66 | 7.6 | 2.0 |
| 19 and over | 1,245 | 5 | 0.3 | 0.1 |
| Total | 379,180 | 3,292 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

DEIS

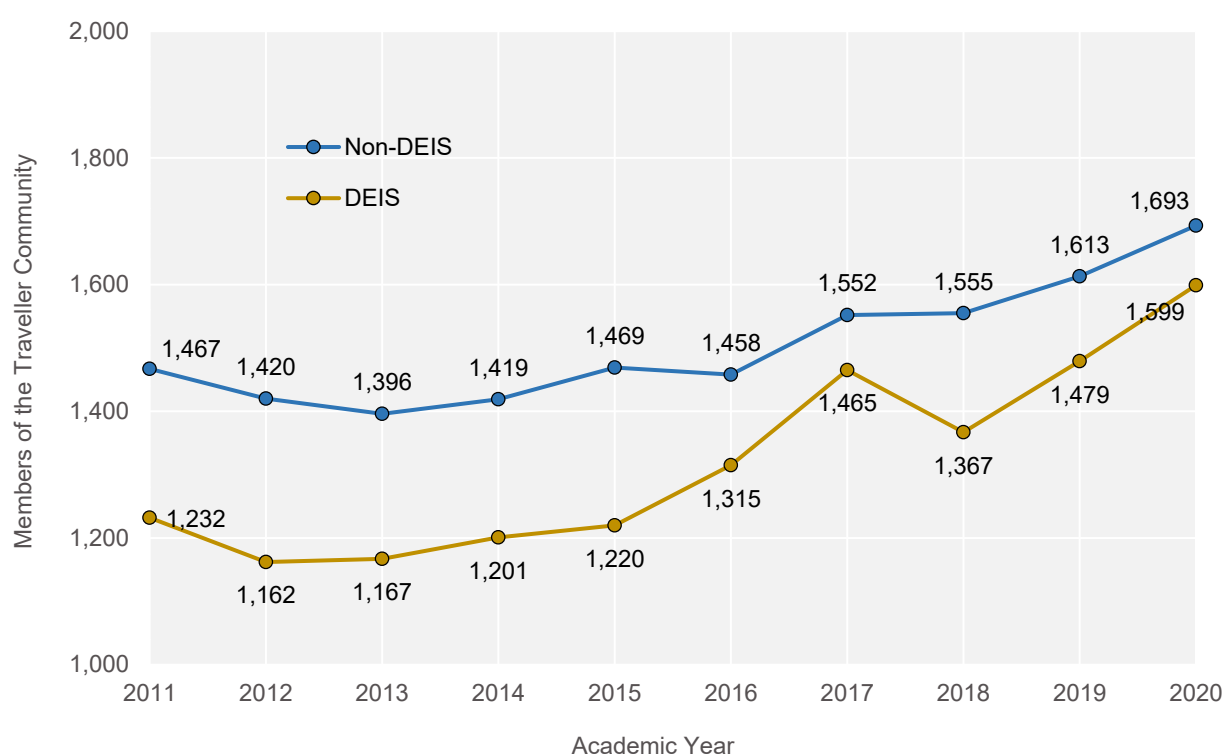
The attendance of Traveller pupils, with 51.4 per cent in non-DEIS post-primary schools and 48.6 per cent in DEIS post-primary schools, is disproportional compared to all total pupils in the 2020–21 academic year (Table 5). Comparatively, only 20.5 per cent of all total post-primary pupils attend DEIS schools, with 79.5 per cent attending non-DEIS schools (Table 5).

Table 5 Traveller pupils in post-primary schools, by DEIS status, 2020–21

| DEIS Status | 2020–21 | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | Total Pupils | of which are Traveller Pupils | Total Pupils (%) | of which are Traveller Pupils (%) |
| Non-DEIS | 301,428 | 1,693 | 79.5 | 51.4 |
| DEIS | 77,756 | 1,599 | 20.5 | 48.6 |
| Total | 379,184 | 3,292 | 100 | 100 |

The enrolment gap between DEIS and non-DEIS schools at the post-primary level is only four pupils for the 2020–21 academic year. Travellers have attended DEIS or non-DEIS post-primary schools in relatively equal numbers, which has been the trend for the past five years (Figure 8). The most significant enrolment gap was 258 pupils for the 2012–13 academic year. The refined DEIS identification model, implemented in 2022, included Traveller ethnicity as a variable. The refined model increased Travellers pupils in DEIS post-primary schools to 55.0 per cent for the 2022–23 academic year.

Figure 8 Traveller pupils in post-primary schools, by DEIS status, 2011–20



County

The highest number of Traveller pupils in post-primary schools are located in the county of Galway, with 324, followed by Galway City (258) and Dublin City (243) (Table 6). The least Traveller pupils were in Leitrim with six, followed by Waterford (17) and Monaghan (24).

Table 6 Traveller pupils in post-primary schools, by county, 2020–21

| Local Authority | 2020–21 | | | |
|------------------------|------------|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|
| | All Pupils | of which Traveller Pupils | All Pupils (%) | of which are Traveller Pupils (%) |
| Carlow | 6,076 | 44 | 1.6 | 1.3 |
| Cavan | 5,919 | 31 | 1.6 | 0.9 |
| Clare | 8,660 | 118 | 2.3 | 3.6 |
| Cork City | 11,637 | 111 | 3.1 | 3.4 |
| Cork | 31,964 | 103 | 8.4 | 3.1 |
| Donegal | 13,240 | 62 | 3.5 | 1.9 |
| Dublin City | 30,383 | 243 | 8.0 | 7.4 |
| Dún Laoghaire Rathdown | 15,673 | 45 | 4.1 | 1.4 |
| Fingal | 25,084 | 99 | 6.6 | 3.0 |
| Galway City | 5,481 | 258 | 1.4 | 7.8 |
| Galway | 15,184 | 324 | 4.0 | 9.8 |
| Kerry | 11,143 | 117 | 2.9 | 3.6 |
| Kildare | 20,216 | 92 | 5.3 | 2.8 |
| Kilkenny | 8,069 | 61 | 2.1 | 1.9 |
| Laois | 6,262 | 69 | 1.7 | 2.1 |
| Leitrim | 2,700 | 6 | 0.7 | 0.2 |
| Limerick City | 7,568 | 32 | 2.0 | 1.0 |
| Limerick | 8,814 | 179 | 2.3 | 5.4 |
| Longford | 4,052 | 68 | 1.1 | 2.1 |
| Louth | 13,216 | 78 | 3.5 | 2.4 |
| Mayo | 10,517 | 157 | 2.8 | 4.8 |
| Meath | 15,713 | 99 | 4.1 | 3.0 |
| Monaghan | 5,615 | 24 | 1.5 | 0.7 |
| Offaly | 6,413 | 79 | 1.7 | 2.4 |
| Roscommon | 4,069 | 40 | 1.1 | 1.2 |
| Sligo | 5,209 | 26 | 1.4 | 0.8 |
| South Dublin | 23,441 | 189 | 6.2 | 5.7 |
| Tipperary | 13,878 | 156 | 3.7 | 4.7 |
| Waterford City | 4,930 | 56 | 1.3 | 1.7 |
| Waterford | 4,621 | 17 | 1.2 | 0.5 |
| Westmeath | 8,334 | 66 | 2.2 | 2.0 |
| Wexford | 13,235 | 149 | 3.5 | 4.5 |
| Wicklow | 11,864 | 94 | 3.1 | 2.9 |
| Total | 379,180 | 3,292 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Programme

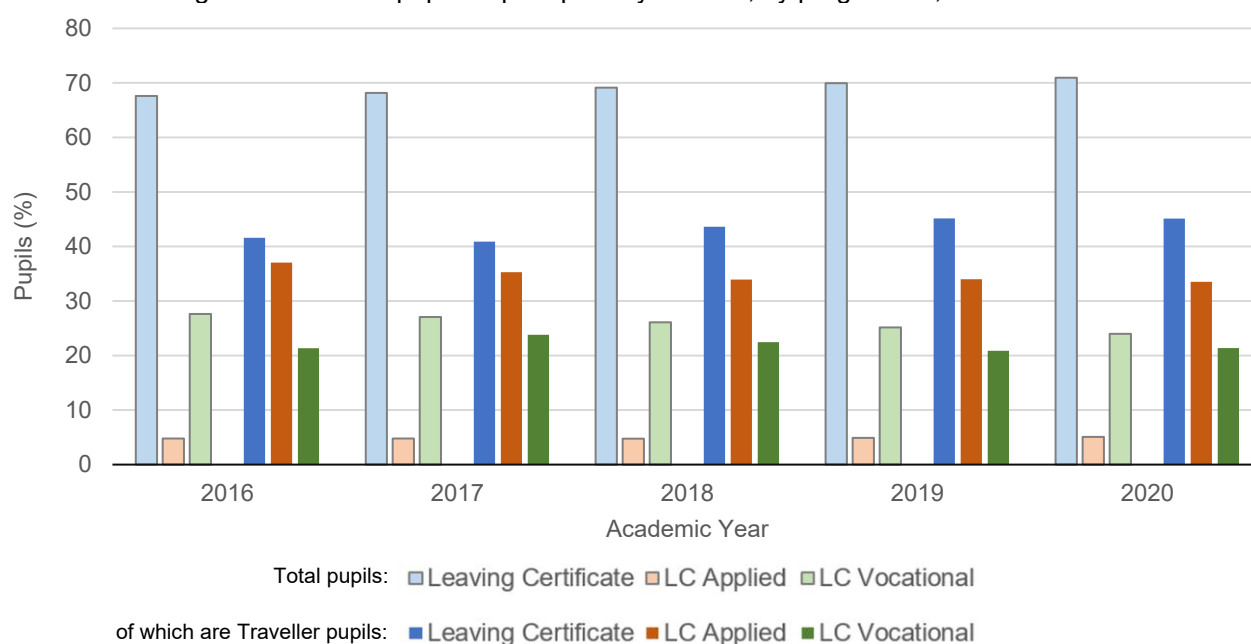
Of the 3,292 Traveller pupils in post-primary schools for the 2020–21 academic year, 2,181 were in the junior cycle. Of these, 984 were enrolled in the Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP), with the remainder in the Junior Cycle programme. These enrolments show 45.1 per cent of all Traveller pupils in JCSP compared to 10.3 per cent of all post-primary pupils (Table 7).

Table 7 Traveller pupils in post-primary schools, by programme, 2020–21

| Programme | 2020–21 | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | Total Pupils | of which are Traveller Pupils | Total Pupils (%) | of which are Traveller Pupils (%) |
| Junior Certificate Schools Programme | 21,236 | 984 | 10.3 | 45.1 |
| Junior Cycle | 184,835 | 1,197 | 89.7 | 54.9 |
| Total Junior Cycle | 206,071 | 2,181 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Transition Year | 47,544 | 198 | 27.5 | 17.8 |
| Leaving Certificate | 88,908 | 412 | 51.4 | 37.1 |
| Leaving Certificate Applied | 6,609 | 306 | 3.8 | 27.5 |
| Leaving Certificate Vocational | 30,048 | 195 | 17.4 | 17.6 |
| Total Senior Cycle | 173,109 | 1,111 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Focusing on the senior cycle, Traveller pupils have increasingly enrolled in the Leaving Certificate Programme since the 2016–17 academic year (Figure 9, blue). Enrolment in Leaving Certificate Applied (orange) has remained disproportionately higher for Traveller pupils, with 33.5 per cent compared to 5.0 per cent for all pupils in 2020–21.

Figure 9 Traveller pupils in post-primary schools, by programme, 2016–20



Retention

The progression and retention rates of Traveller pupil cohorts through milestones in post-primary schools and their participation in further education and training (FET) are presented in Table 8. A cohort is labelled based on the year a pupil enters the first academic year.

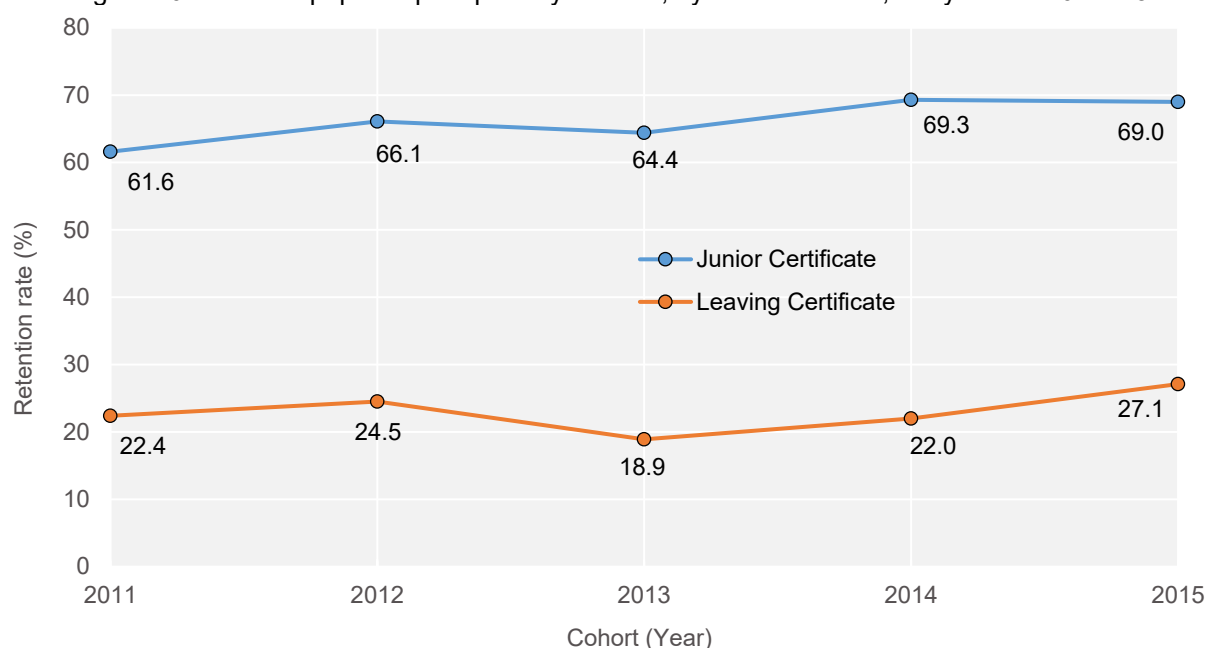
Table 8 Traveller pupil cohorts in post-primary schools and further education and training, by retention rates, by milestones, 2011–15 cohorts

| Milestone | 2011 | | 2012 | | 2013 | | 2014 | | 2015 | |
|---------------------|----------|------|----------|------|----------|------|----------|------|----------|------|
| | <i>n</i> | % | <i>n</i> | % | <i>n</i> | % | <i>n</i> | % | <i>n</i> | % |
| Entry Cohort | 558 | 100 | 534 | 100 | 523 | 100 | 551 | 100 | 571 | 100 |
| Junior Cycle Year 2 | 523 | 93.7 | 515 | 96.4 | 494 | 94.5 | 531 | 96.4 | 552 | 96.7 |
| Junior Cycle Year 3 | 482 | 86.4 | 465 | 87.1 | 461 | 88.1 | 504 | 91.5 | 514 | 90.0 |
| Junior Certificate | 344 | 61.6 | 353 | 66.1 | 337 | 64.4 | 382 | 69.3 | 394 | 69.0 |
| Transition Year | 78 | 14.0 | 85 | 15.9 | 82 | 15.7 | 110 | 20.0 | 103 | 18.0 |
| Senior Cycle Year 1 | 316 | 56.6 | 326 | 61.0 | 310 | 59.3 | 355 | 64.4 | 383 | 67.1 |
| Senior Cycle Year 2 | 205 | 36.7 | 204 | 38.2 | 194 | 37.1 | 221 | 40.1 | 253 | 44.3 |
| Leaving Certificate | 125 | 22.4 | 131 | 24.5 | 99 | 18.9 | 121 | 22.0 | 155 | 27.1 |
| In FET | 234 | 41.9 | 278 | 52.1 | 252 | 48.2 | 262 | 47.5 | 212 | 37.1 |
| - who sat JC | 186 | 33.3 | 223 | 41.8 | 184 | 35.2 | 197 | 35.8 | 144 | 25.2 |
| - with no JC | 48 | 8.6 | 55 | 10.3 | 68 | 13.0 | 65 | 11.8 | 68 | 11.9 |
| - who sat LC | 87 | 15.6 | 92 | 17.2 | 66 | 12.6 | 67 | 12.2 | 60 | 10.5 |
| - with no LC | 147 | 26.3 | 186 | 34.8 | 186 | 35.6 | 195 | 35.4 | 152 | 26.6 |

Junior Cycle

The analysis of retention data shows a steady increase in progression and retention rates in the Junior Cycle, with increasing percentages of students sitting the Junior Certificate. The retention rate for the Junior Certificate measures the percentage of pupils who entered post-primary schools' first academic year and sat the then Junior Certificate examination, usually three years later. Of those who entered post-primary school in 2011, 61.6 per cent completed the Junior Certificate examination. The retention rate for the Junior Certificate for the 2014 cohort was 69.3 per cent, a 7.7 percentage point increase. For the 2015 cohort, 90.0 per cent of Travellers progressed to third year (Junior Cycle Year 3), with 69.0 per cent sitting the Junior Certificate examination (Figure 10).

Figure 10 Traveller pupils in post-primary schools, by retention rates, entry cohort 2011–15



Gender

Traveller pupils, analysed by gender, showed that females have the highest retention rate for the Junior Certificate examination, with a five-year average of 69.1 per cent (Table 9). A five-year average rate represents the community more than an individual year, which can fluctuate due to the relatively small number of Traveller pupils. For males, the five-year average was 63.1 per cent. The trend amongst Traveller boys is an increased retention rate for the Junior Certificate, with 57.1 per cent in the 2011 cohort growing to 67.2 per cent in the 2015 cohort.

Table 9 Junior Certificate retention rates for Traveller pupils in post-primary schools by gender, 2011–15 cohorts

| Cohort year | Entry Cohort | | | Retention rates (%) | | |
|-------------|--------------|------|-------|---------------------|------|-------|
| | Female | Male | Total | Female | Male | Total |
| 2015 | 281 | 290 | 571 | 70.8 | 67.2 | 69.0 |
| 2014 | 276 | 275 | 551 | 72.1 | 66.5 | 69.3 |
| 2013 | 269 | 254 | 523 | 66.2 | 62.6 | 64.4 |
| 2012 | 273 | 261 | 534 | 70 | 62.1 | 66.1 |
| 2011 | 276 | 282 | 558 | 66.3 | 57.1 | 61.6 |
| Average | 275 | 272 | 547 | 69.1 | 63.1 | 66.1 |

DEIS

This growth is further amplified in DEIS schools (Table 10), with the five-year average for Traveller males at 65.0 per cent. The main pattern is repeated, with Traveller females having the highest five-year average Junior Certificate retention rates of 70.6 per cent and 68.1 per cent for DEIS and non-DEIS schools, respectively.

Table 10 Junior Certificate retention rates for Traveller pupils in post-primary schools by gender, by DEIS status, 2011–15 cohorts

| Cohort year | Female | | | | Male | | | |
|-------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| | DEIS | | Non-DEIS | | DEIS | | Non-DEIS | |
| | Entry Cohort | Retention rate (%) | Entry Cohort | Retention rate (%) | Entry Cohort | Retention rate (%) | Entry Cohort | Retention rate (%) |
| 2015 | 103 | 72.8 | 178 | 69.7 | 145 | 73.8 | 145 | 60.7 |
| 2014 | 114 | 76.3 | 162 | 69.1 | 154 | 74.0 | 121 | 57 |
| 2013 | 94 | 67.4 | 175 | 65.5 | 142 | 59.9 | 112 | 66.1 |
| 2012 | 99 | 66.7 | 174 | 71.8 | 148 | 60.1 | 113 | 64.6 |
| 2011 | 99 | 69.7 | 177 | 64.4 | 159 | 57.2 | 123 | 56.9 |
| Average | 102 | 70.58 | 173 | 68.1 | 150 | 65.0 | 123 | 61.1 |

Senior Cycle

The highest levels of early school leaving occur within the senior cycles for all pupils. Although the absolute number of students opting for transition year and entering fifth year has increased (Table 8), only 44.3 per cent of the 2015 cohort students enter sixth year (Senior Cycle year 2). The retention rate for the Leaving Certificate measures the percentage of pupils who entered post-primary schools' first academic year and sat the Leaving Certificate examination five or six years later. The national five-year average was 91.6 per cent for the 2011 to 2015 cohorts. For Traveller pupils, the comparative five-year average was 23.0 per cent. Of these, 155 pupils received a calculated grade in 2020 or sat the Leaving Certificate exam in 2020 or 2021, generating a 27.1 per cent retention rate (Figure 10).

Gender

Genderwise, the Traveller entry cohorts have had similar numbers for the past five years (Table 11), with the most significant difference of 15 pupils in the 2013 cohort. The retention rate is generally higher among girls, except in the recent 2015 cohort, where boys had a higher retention rate than girls, with a 4.4 percentage point difference. The average percentage point difference for the past five years was 3.9, with girls having a higher retention rate.

Table 11 Leaving Certificate retention rates for Traveller pupils in post-primary schools, by gender, 2011–15 cohorts

| Cohort year | Entry Cohort | | | Retention rates (%) | | |
|-------------|--------------|------|-------|---------------------|------|-------|
| | Female | Male | Total | Female | Male | Total |
| 2015 | 281 | 290 | 571 | 24.9 | 29.3 | 27.1 |
| 2014 | 276 | 275 | 551 | 26.1 | 17.8 | 22.0 |
| 2013 | 269 | 254 | 523 | 20.4 | 17.3 | 18.9 |
| 2012 | 273 | 261 | 534 | 27.5 | 21.5 | 24.5 |
| 2011 | 276 | 282 | 558 | 25.7 | 19.1 | 22.4 |
| Average | 275 | 272 | 547 | 24.9 | 21.0 | 23.0 |

DEIS

Female Traveller pupils in DEIS schools have had a similar average retention rate (25.0%) to Traveller girls in non-DEIS status schools (25.1%) for five years. On average, there has been a significant difference of 5.7 percentage points for boys over the same period, with DEIS schools having a lower retention rate of 18.6 per cent compared to 24.3 per cent for non-DEIS schools (Table 12). However, due to the small numbers, the retention rates observed in DEIS and non-DEIS schools can vary significantly between cohort years.

Table 12 Leaving Certificate retention rates for Traveller pupils in post-primary schools, by gender, by DEIS status, 2011–15 cohorts

| Cohort year | Female | | | | Male | | | |
|-------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| | DEIS | | Non-DEIS | | DEIS | | Non-DEIS | |
| | Entry Cohort | Retention rate (%) | Entry Cohort | Retention rate (%) | Entry Cohort | Retention rate (%) | Entry Cohort | Retention rate (%) |
| 2015 | 103 | 20.4 | 178 | 27.5 | 145 | 29.6 | 145 | 29.0 |
| 2014 | 114 | 29.8 | 162 | 23.4 | 154 | 19.5 | 121 | 15.7 |
| 2013 | 94 | 24.5 | 175 | 19.7 | 142 | 13.4 | 112 | 22.9 |
| 2012 | 99 | 25.2 | 174 | 28.7 | 148 | 14.2 | 113 | 30.9 |
| 2011 | 99 | 25.3 | 177 | 26 | 159 | 16.4 | 123 | 22.8 |
| Average | 102 | 25.0 | 173 | 25.1 | 150 | 18.6 | 123 | 24.3 |

Further Education

Traveller post-primary cohorts, matched against data from SOLAS, showed a five-year average of 45.4 per cent engaged in FET courses (Table 8). Of these, 48 pupils from the 2011 cohort (8.6%) had no Junior Certificate examination but were enrolled in FET courses. The number of Traveller early school leavers without a Leaving Certificate examination but in FET increases to 147 (26.3%) for the 2011 cohort. The compulsory school attendance age of 16 in post-primary schools may be a factor for Traveller pupils entering FET courses.

Appendix: Methodology and Technical Notes

Representation

Written parental or guardian consent is required for schools to count a student as a member of the Traveller community based on ethnicity. Therefore, the number of Traveller students may be underestimated if the question is unanswered. However, the reported numbers align with the 2016 National Census conducted by the Central Statistics Office.

Primary

The question on membership of the Traveller community was first included in the 2011–12 National School Annual Census. This question is necessary for statistical purposes and the continued allocation of the Traveller Capitation Grant for individual schools. Since 2016–17, Traveller ethnicity has been collected on the Primary Online Database (POD).

Post-Primary

The Post-Primary Online Database (P-POD) contains information on whether an application for Traveller Support has been made for a pupil. Additional teaching hours are provided for children who are members of the Traveller community. This information was first sought in the Post-Primary Pupil Database data collection in 2009–10.

Further Education and Training

The matching from P-POD to further education is based on data from the Programme Learner Support System database and apprenticeship data, administered by the An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna (SOLAS), who are responsible for further education and training (FET). The students were matched using Personal Public Service Number (PPSN) where available. Undercounting in FET may occur due to PPSN coverage not being fully validated or limited usage. Due to possible future enrolments, Traveller pupil participation from individual cohorts, especially the 2015 cohort, may increase over the coming years.