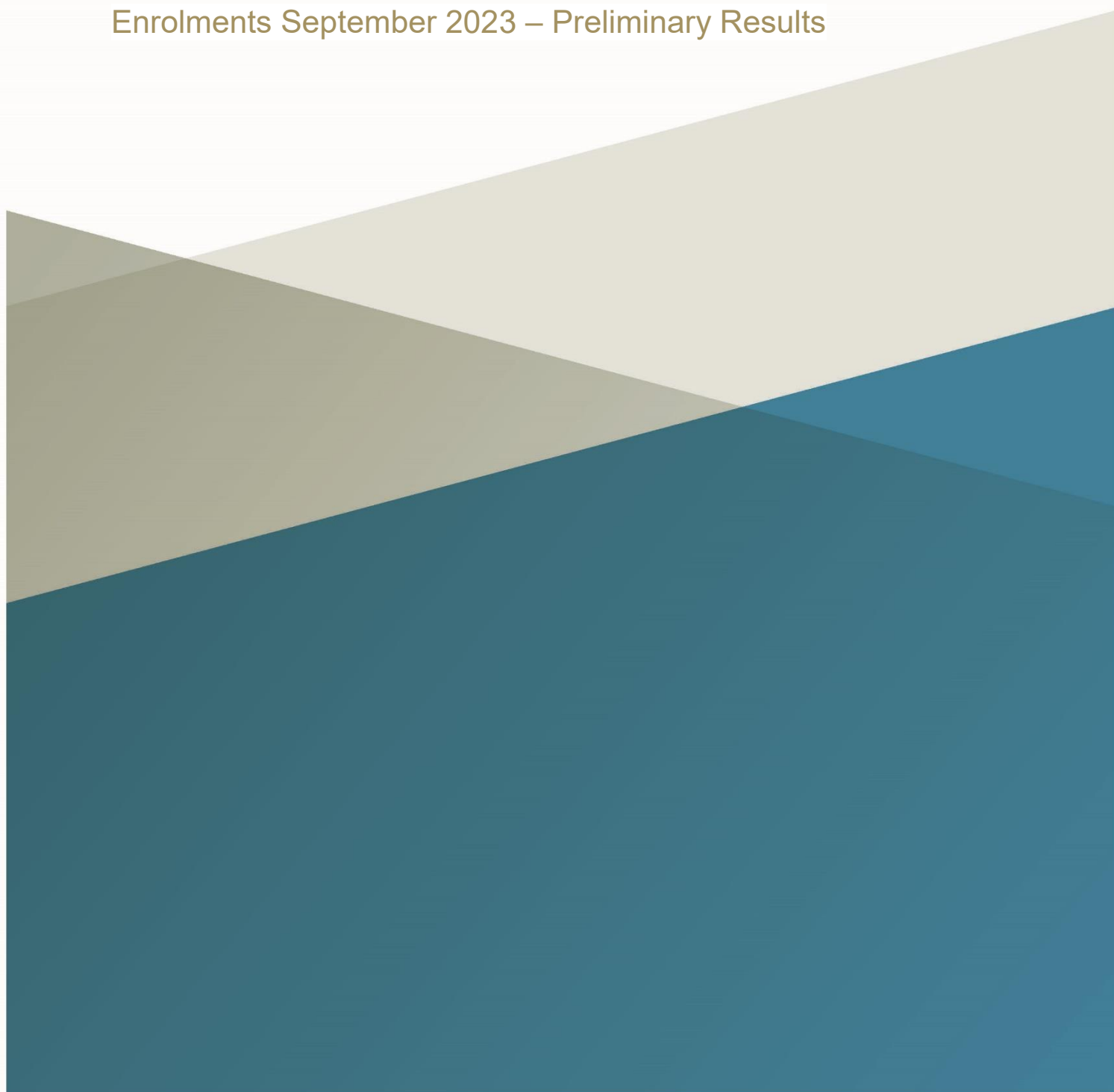




An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Statistical Bulletin

Enrolments September 2023 – Preliminary Results



December 2023

This report may be accessed at:

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Statistics@education.gov.ie

Enrolments September 2023 – Preliminary Results

This Statistical Bulletin presents first results on enrolments in mainstream primary and post-primary schools on 30th September 2023. The data is preliminary in nature, final data will be published in June 2024. Please note that enrolment data includes enrolments of Ukrainian children. Further data on Ukrainian enrolments can be found in the appendix to this document.

Primary: Total enrolments in mainstream primary schools stood at 546,787 in September 2023, a decrease of 2,411 pupils, or 0.4 per cent, on September 2022 (549,198). Enrolments in primary schools have been falling since 2018 and the recent increase in 2022 was driven by Ukrainian enrolments which stood at 10,558 (mainstream pupils) in September 2023. Excluding Ukrainian pupils, the enrolments stood at 536,229 a fall of 5,577 on September 2023. This change is reflected in enrolments by school ethos, administrative county, etc.

All further analysis in this Bulletin includes Ukrainian pupils.

The number of girls decreased by 1,127 pupils, from 268,313 to 267,186, and the number of boys decreased by 1,284 from 280,885 to 279,601.

Figure 1 presents percentage of total enrolments by school ethos. Total enrolments in Catholic schools stood at 484,577 in September 2023, representing 88.6 per cent of all pupils, down from 88.9 per cent in 2022. Enrolments in multi-denominational schools stood at 44,254, accounting for 8.1 per cent of the total (up from 7.8% in 2022), while Church of Ireland schools had enrolments of 16,032 representing 2.9 per cent of all pupils. Other faiths accounted for 1,924 pupils, or 0.4 per cent.

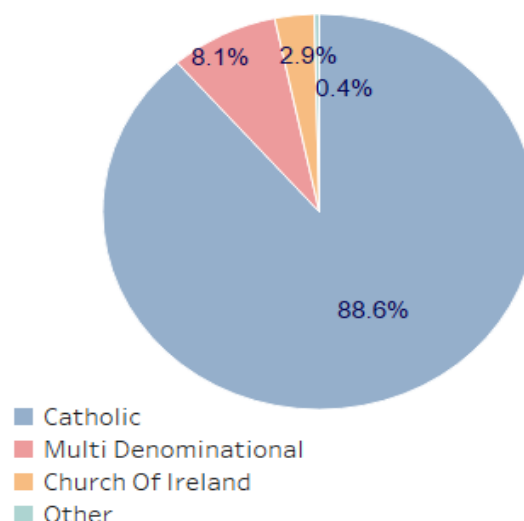


Figure 1. Enrolments in mainstream primary schools by school ethos, September 2023

Figure 2 presents the absolute and percentage change by ethos. The fastest growing category in both, percentage and absolute terms, was multi-denominational schools which increased by 3.0 per cent with an additional 1,273 pupils. This compares with Catholic schools which decreased by 0.7 per cent, or 3,507 pupils. *Note: the category multi-denominational includes inter-denominational schools.*

Figure 2. Absolute and percentage change in enrolment in mainstream schools, by ethos, 2022, 2023

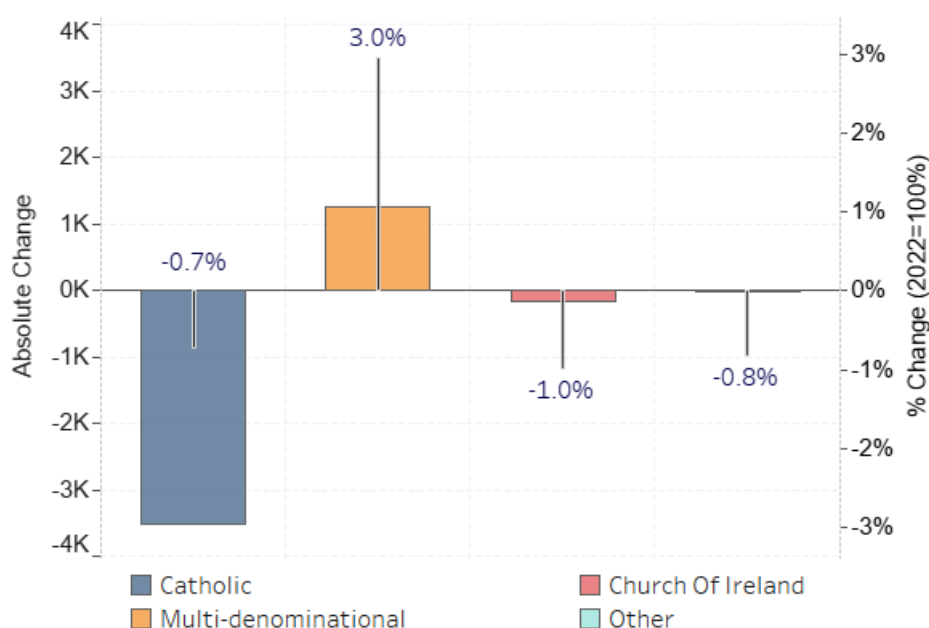


Table 1 presents schools by ethos from 2012 to 2023. Between 2018 and 2023, the number of schools with a Catholic ethos fell by 45, from 2,776 to 2,731, while those with a multi-denominational¹ ethos rose by 32, from 136 to 168. As illustrated in Figure 3, this is a part of a longer-term trend with the number of Catholic schools falling by 126 in the last eleven years, while the number of multi-denominational schools has risen from 97 to 168, an increase of 73.2 per cent.

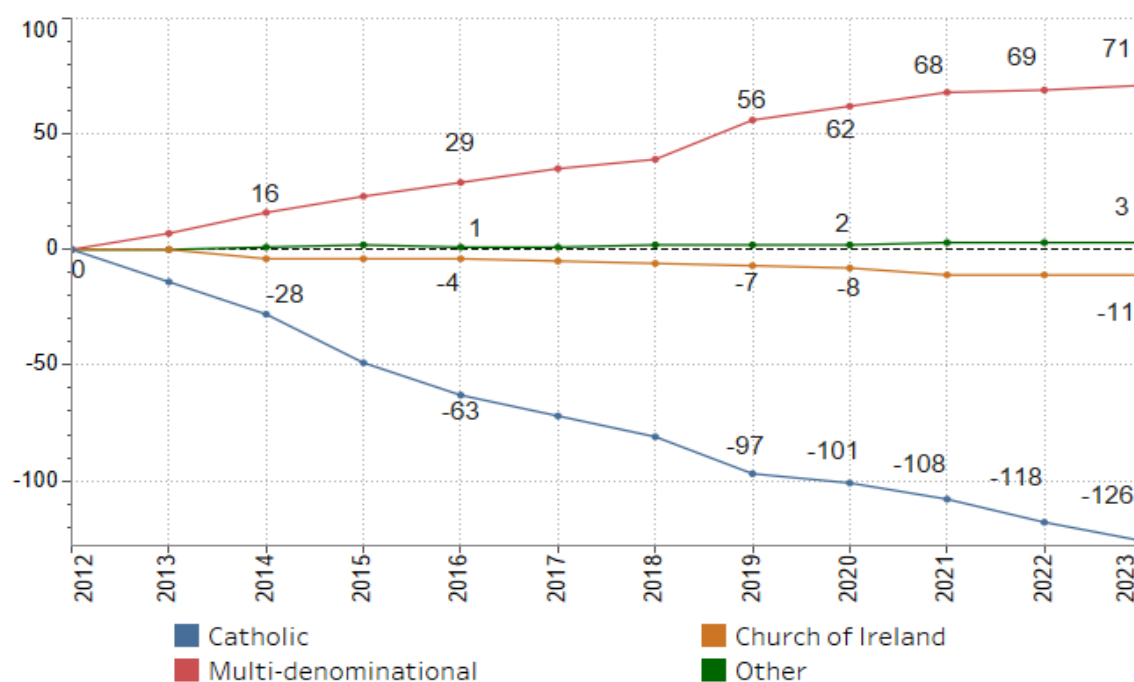
Table 1. Mainstream primary schools by ethos, 2012 – 2023

	<i>Catholic</i>	<i>Church of Ireland</i>	<i>Multi-denominational¹</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
2023	2,731	168	168	22	3,089
2022	2,739	168	166	22	3,095
2021	2,749	168	165	22	3,104
2020	2,756	171	159	21	3,107
2019	2,760	172	153	21	3,106
2018	2,776	173	136	21	3,106
2017	2,785	174	132	20	3,111
2016	2,794	175	126	20	3,115
2015	2,808	175	120	21	3,124
2014	2,829	175	113	20	3,137
2013	2,843	179	104	19	3,145
2012	2,857	179	97	19	3,152

¹ The category multi-denominational includes inter-denominational schools.

These trends in closures, amalgamations and openings have led to a gradual decline overall in the number of primary schools. Despite these changes, Catholic schools still comprise the vast majority of mainstream primary schools, with 88.4 per cent of schools having a Catholic ethos in 2023.

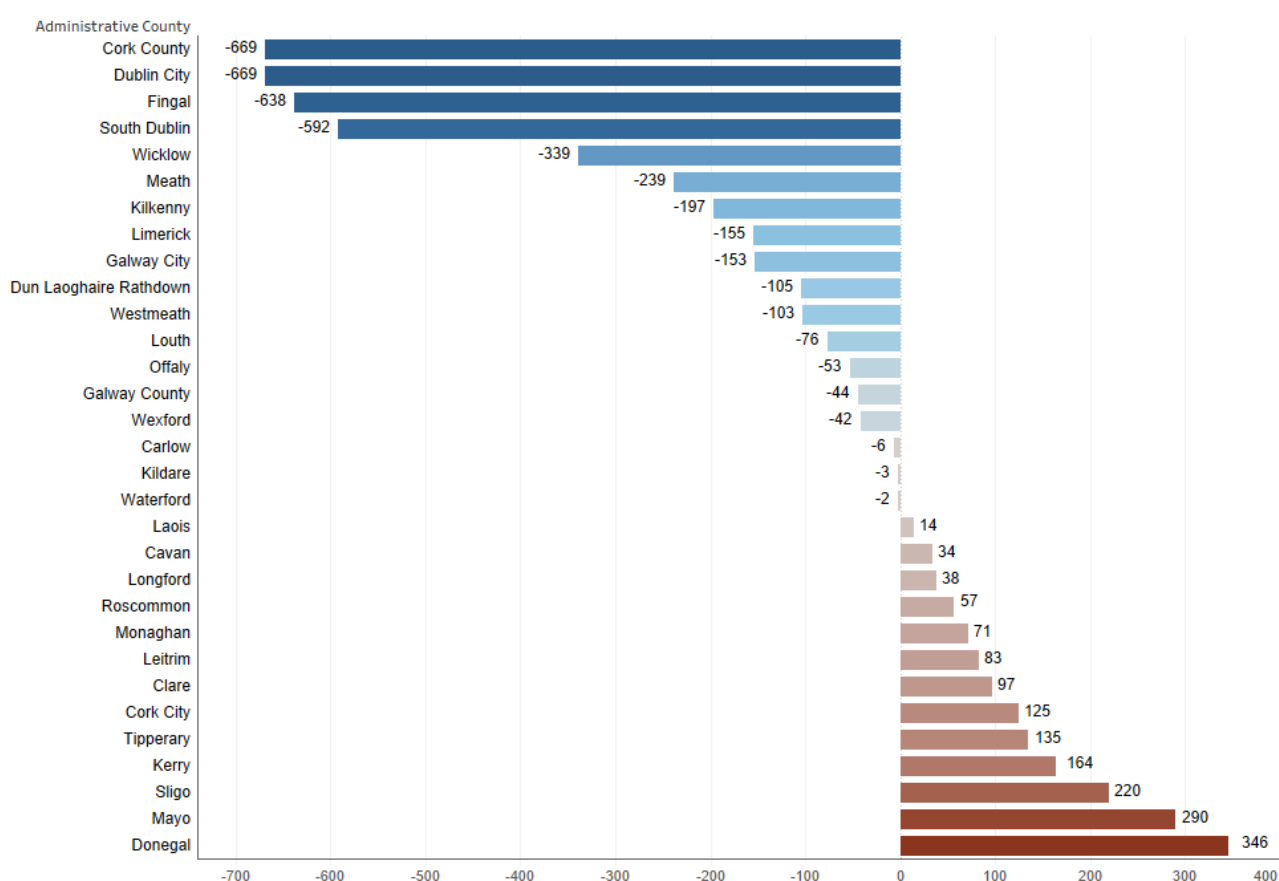
Figure 3. Absolute change in school numbers by ethos since 2012



Change by administrative county

When the change in enrolments since 2022 by administrative county is examined, the data shows that the largest decrease in enrolments occurred in Cork County and Dublin City (669). Some counties showed an increase in enrolments as a result of enrolment of Ukrainian pupils, with a major increases in Donegal (346) and Mayo (290).

Figure 4. Absolute change in enrolments by administrative county, 2022, 2023



Post-primary: Total enrolments in post-primary schools stood at 416,631 at September 2023, an increase of 10,239 pupils, or 2.5 per cent, on September 2022 (406,392). This includes enrolments of 6,846 Ukrainian pupils (in September 2023), and excluding these pupils the enrolments increased by 7,782. The number of girls stood at 206,150 while the number of boys stood at 210,481.

Figure 5 presents percentage of total enrolments by school ethos. Multi-denominational schools² dominated, with 201,102 pupils. There were 199,292 pupils in Catholic schools and 12,416 in Church of Ireland schools. Figure 6 shows the absolute and percentage change by ethos. Pupils in multi-denominational schools increased by 4.0 per cent (7,747 pupils) over the twelve months, which was ahead of the rise in Catholic schools which saw their numbers rise by 1,519 (0.8%). Other faiths accounted for 765 pupils, or 25.0 per cent. Church of Ireland schools saw an increase in enrolments, by 208 (1.7%).

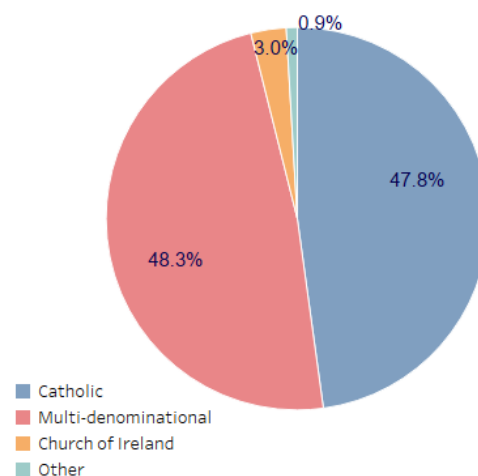
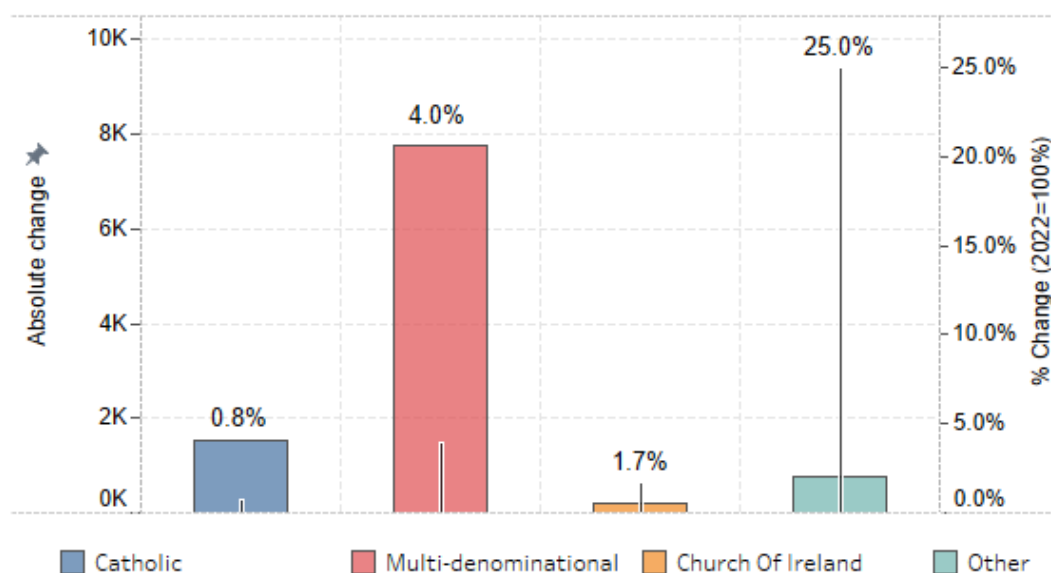


Figure 5. Enrolments in post-primary schools by school ethos, September 2023

Figure 6. Absolute and percentage change in enrolment in post-primary schools, by ethos, 2022, 2023



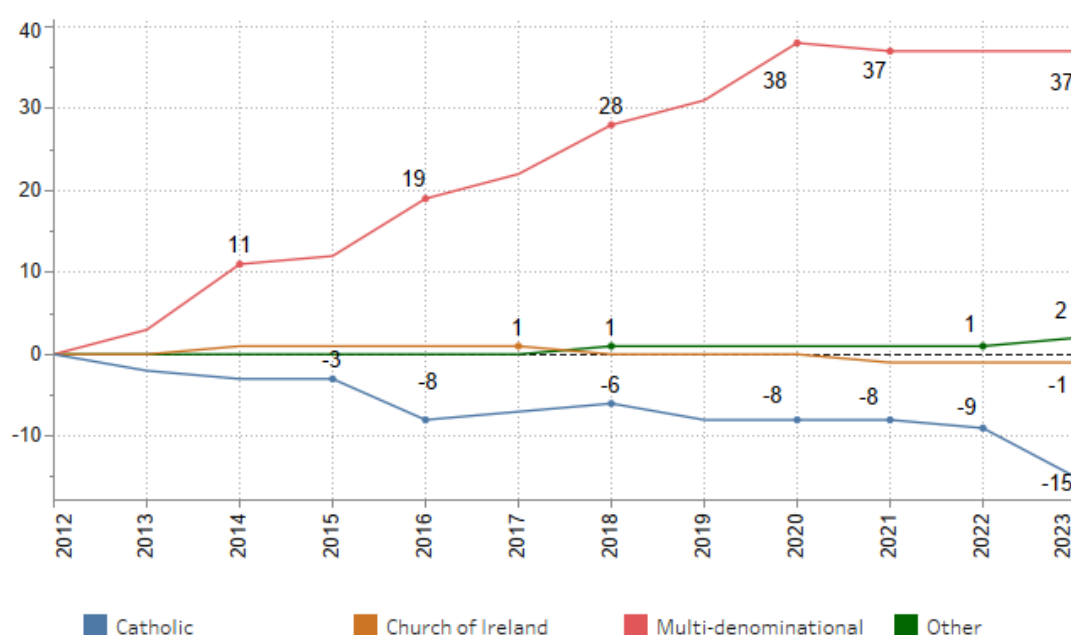
² The majority of schools under the patronage of the Education and Training Boards (ETBs) were categorised as inter-denominational up to 2018. 181 schools have since changed their description to multi-denominational but for the purpose of this report inter-denominational are combined with multi-denominational schools. For a full list of schools by ethos see the list of individual schools on the Department's website.

The number of post-primary schools has been gradually rising for the last number of years, going from a low of 699 in 2012 to 730 in 2020. As can be seen in Table 2, this growth has been led by multi-denominational schools, which have increased by 11.5 per cent in the last eleven years from 321 in 2012 to 358 in 2023. In the same period the number of Catholic schools has decreased by 4.3 per cent, from 352 to 337.

Table 2. Post-primary schools by ethos, 2012 – 2023

	<i>Catholic</i>	<i>Church of Ireland</i>	<i>Multi-denominational³</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
2023	337	21	358	6	722
2022	343	21	358	5	727
2021	344	21	358	5	728
2020	344	22	359	5	730 ⁴
2019	344	22	352	5	723
2018	346	22	349	5	722
2017	345	23	343	4	715
2016	344	23	340	4	711
2015	349	23	333	4	709
2014	349	23	332	4	708
2013	350	22	324	4	700
2012	352	22	321	4	699

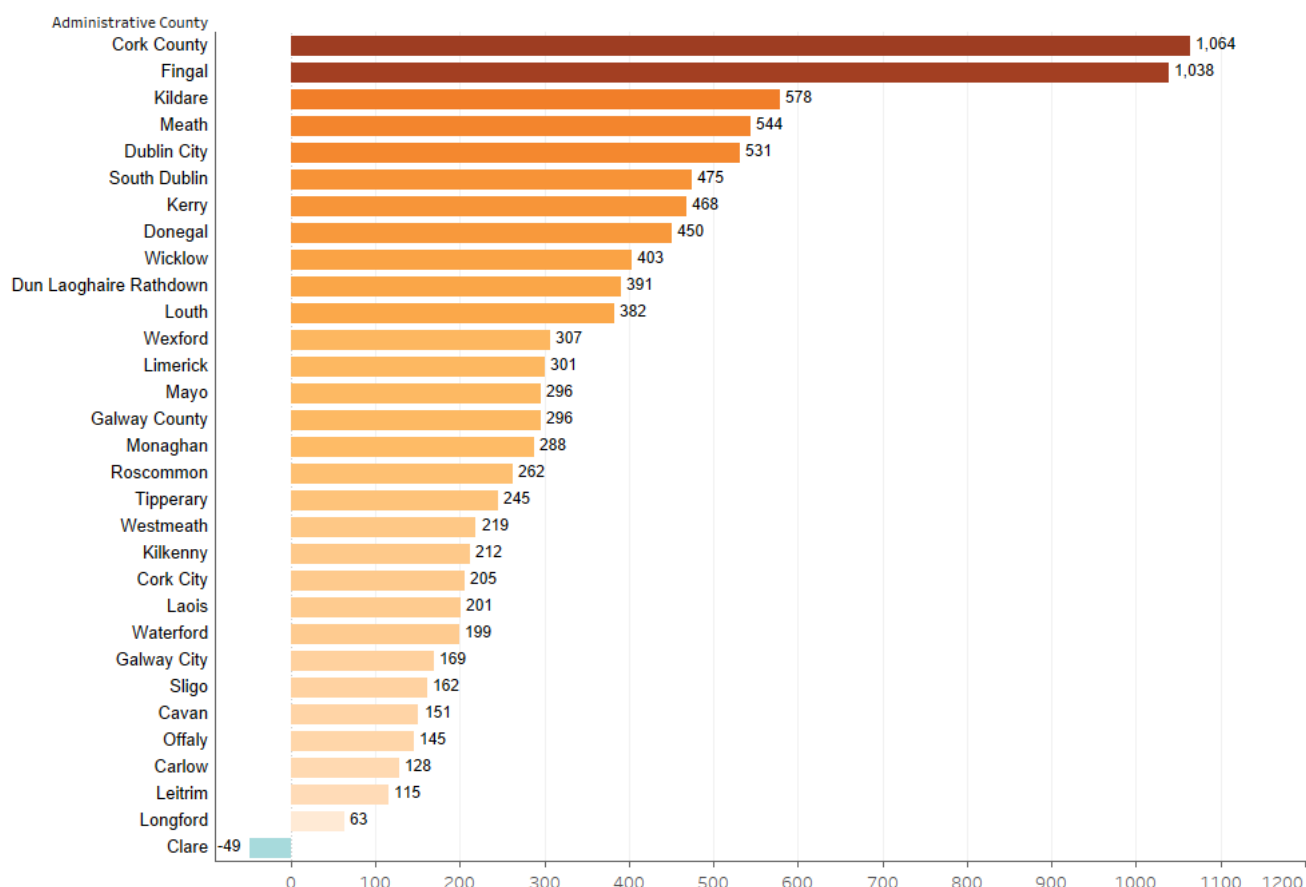
Figure 7. Absolute change in post-primary school numbers by ethos since 2012



Change by administrative county

Figure 8 shows the change in enrolments by administrative county since 2022. Cork County and Fingal show the largest increases, i.e., 1,064 and 1,038 pupils, respectively. The smallest increase occurred in Longford (63) and the only decrease occurred in Clare (49).

Figure 8. Absolute change in enrolments by administrative county, 2022, 2023



All schools

Table 3 shows the primary and post-primary enrolments by schools ethos for years 2022 and 2023, and percentage change on 2022. As can be seen, the largest increase in enrolments in both sectors combined occurred in multi-denominational schools with rises of 9,020 (3.8%) between 2022 and 2023, followed by an increase in other school ethos, i.e., a rise of 749 (15%).

Table 3. Primary and post-primary schools enrolments by school ethos, 2022, 2023

	<i>Ethos/Religion</i>	<i>2022</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>Difference (2022 = 100%)</i>
<i>Primary</i>	Catholic	488,084	484,577	-0.7
	Church of Ireland	16,193	16,032	-1.0
	Multi-denominational	42,981	44,254	3.0
	Other	1,940	1,924	-0.8
<i>Post-primary</i>	Catholic	197,773	199,292	0.8
	Church of Ireland	12,208	12,416	1.7
	Multi-denominational	193,355	201,102	4.0
	Other	3,056	3,821	25.0
<i>Primary & Post-primary</i>	Catholic	685,857	683,869	-0.3
	Church of Ireland	28,401	28,448	0.2
	Multi-denominational	236,336	245,356	3.8
	Other	4,996	5,745	15.0

Background Notes:

The source for this data is the Annual Census for 2023/2024, which is returned via the Primary/Post-Primary Online Database (POD/P-POD). The primary level data is reporting enrolments in mainstream schools only. Data is anchored on the census data of 30th September 2023. Note that only schools aided by the Department of Education are included in this report.

This data is provisional and was published in December 2023. Final data will be published in June 2024. The final data will replace the provisional data.

Queries should be sent to statistics@education.gov.ie or by phone at 01-889 2311.

The detailed Excel data tables for previous years can be downloaded here:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/63363b-data-on-individual-schools/>

Appendix: Ukrainian pupils' enrolments

The enrolment data shown below provides insights into Ireland's response to the Ukrainian crisis, particularly, the primary and secondary school pupils' enrolments who arrived from Ukraine since the start of Russian invasion of Ukraine, i.e., 24 February 2022.

A.1 Primary

As of 21st December 2023, there were 11,165 Ukrainian pupils enrolled in primary level, i.e., an increase by 1,024 (10.1%) since 12th June 2023 (10,141). Table A.1.1 shows enrolment by standards with the highest enrolment in third class (13.8%).

Table A.1.1 Ukrainian pupils' enrolment in primary schools by standard

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Total to date</i>	<i>%</i>
Junior Infants	1,282	11.5%
Senior Infants	1369	12.3%
First Class	1,207	10.8%
Second Class	1,315	11.8%
Third Class	1,544	13.8%
Fourth Class	1,511	13.5%
Fifth Class	1,439	12.9%
Sixth Class	1,386	12.4%
Special Class	112	1.0%
Total	11,165	100.0%

In total there were 1,656 primary schools where Ukrainian pupils were enrolled, of which 359 schools had 10 or more pupils and 244 schools had 10% or more Ukrainians enrolled in (Tab A.1.2).

Table A.1.2 Primary schools with Ukrainian pupils' enrolment

<i>Primary Schools</i>	<i>No.</i>
Schools with enrolments	1,656
Schools with 10 or more Ukrainian Pupils	359
Schools with 10% or more Ukrainian Pupils	244

The enrolment distribution by County is shown in Tab A.1.3 where it can be seen that Cork has the highest per cent of Ukrainian enrolments (10.3%) with Dublin being the second (10.1%).

Table A.1.3 Ukrainian pupils' enrolment in primary schools by County

<i>County</i>	<i>Total to date</i>	<i>%</i>
Cork	1,153	10.3%
Dublin	1,131	10.1%
Kerry	1,099	9.8%
Donegal	950	8.5%
Wexford	605	5.4%
Clare	597	5.3%
Mayo	595	5.3%
Galway	588	5.3%
Wicklow	376	3.4%
Tipperary	368	3.3%
Limerick	365	3.3%
Sligo	335	3.0%
Meath	333	3.0%
Waterford	302	2.7%
Cavan	272	2.4%
Louth	247	2.2%
Leitrim	245	2.2%
Westmeath	234	2.1%
Offaly	233	2.1%
Roscommon	222	2.0%
Laois	203	1.8%
Kilkenny	179	1.6%
Carlow	169	1.5%
Kildare	169	1.5%
Longford	107	1.0%
Monaghan	88	0.8%
Total	11,165	100.0%

A.2 Post-primary

As of 21st December 2023, there were 6,838 Ukrainian pupils enrolled in post-primary level, i.e., an increase by 1,354 (24.7%) since 12th May 2023 (5,484). Table A.2.1 shows enrolment by programme with the highest enrolment in JC2 (23.1%).

Table A.2.1 Ukrainian pupils' enrolment in post-primary schools by programme

<i>Programme</i>	<i>Total to date</i>	<i>%</i>
JC1	1,533	22.4%
JC2	1,581	23.1%
JC3	1,192	17.4%
TY	599	8.8%
LC1	1,185	17.3%
LC2 (incl. rep.)	748	10.9%
Total	6,838	100.0%

In total there were 593 post-primary schools where Ukrainian pupils were enrolled, of which 227 schools had 10 or more pupils and 36 schools had 10% or more Ukrainians enrolled in (Tab A.2.2).

Table A.2.2 Primary schools with Ukrainian pupils' enrolment

<i>Post-Primary Schools</i>	<i>No.</i>
Schools with enrolments	593
Schools with 10 or more Ukrainian Pupils	227
Schools with 10% or more Ukrainian Pupils	36

The post-primary schools enrolment distribution by County is shown in Tab A.2.3 where it can be seen that, similar to the primary schools distribution, Dublin and Cork have the highest per cent of Ukrainian enrolments, i.e., 10.9% and 10.2%, respectively, with Kerry being the third (9.7%).

Table A.2.3 Ukrainian pupils' enrolment in post-primary schools by County

<i>County</i>	<i>Total to date</i>	<i>%</i>
Dublin	746	10.9%
Cork	697	10.2%
Kerry	664	9.7%
Donegal	612	8.9%
Galway	391	5.7%
Clare	339	5.0%
Mayo	337	4.9%
Wexford	310	4.5%
Limerick	289	4.2%
Tipperary	241	3.5%
Waterford	208	3.0%
Louth	200	2.9%
Wicklow	200	2.9%
Sligo	189	2.8%
Leitrim	176	2.6%
Meath	168	2.5%
Kilkenny	145	2.1%
Westmeath	138	2.0%
Cavan	134	2.0%
Kildare	123	1.8%
Laois	104	1.5%
Carlow	103	1.5%
Roscommon	95	1.4%
Offaly	91	1.3%
Longford	75	1.1%
Monaghan	63	0.9%
Total	6,838	100.0%