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Internet<http://stats.bis.gov.uk>**PARTICIPATION RATES IN HIGHER EDUCATION: ACADEMIC YEARS
2006/2007 - 2008/2009 (Provisional)****INTRODUCTION**

1. This Statistical First Release (SFR) provides the latest provisional initial participation rates for 17-30 year old English domiciled first-time participants at UK Higher Education Institutions, English, Welsh and Scottish Further Education Colleges, alongside a historical time series.
2. As noted last year, due to a change in the underlying data, a discontinuity was introduced in 2006/07. The latest figures (for 2006/07 to 2008/09) are therefore not comparable to the historical time series (see Supplementary table A). A new methodology was introduced last year, and details of the methodology changes can be found in the Revisions section.

KEY POINTS

3. The provisional figure for the HEIPR for 2008/09 was 45%, up from the final figure for 2007/08 of 43%.
4. The provisional figure for males for 2008/09 was 40%, up from the final figure for 2007/08 of 38%.
5. For females, the provisional figure for 2008/09 was 51%, up from the final figure for 2008/09 of 49%.
6. The provisional figure for full-time students in 2008/09 was 39%, up from the final figure for 2006/07 of 37%.
7. The provisional figure for part-time students was 6% in 2008/09, no change from the final figure for 2007/08.
8. The provisional figures for 2008/09 on the age specific initial participation rates for males and females show that participation rates for females were higher than those for males for all ages from 17 to 30.

9. Initial entrants of all ages (with the exception of 25 year olds) have seen an increase in age specific initial participation rates between 2007/08 and 2008/09. 18 year old initial entrants show the highest growth with an increase of 0.8 percentage points.

10. Figures for the Higher Education Initial Participation Rate (HEIPR) are rounded to the nearest whole number to reflect the degree of accuracy inherent in the data. As this can conceal changes or trends, figures rounded to the first decimal place are also provided in the tables to inform comparisons over time.

11. The figures in this SFR supersede figures released earlier as they have been updated with revised data from all sources.

TABLES

Table 1 Higher Education Initial Participation Rate (HEIPR) for English domiciled first time participants in Higher Education Courses at UK Higher Education Institutions and English, Welsh and Scottish Further Education Colleges: 2006/07 to 2008/09

Academic Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09 (Provisional)
HEIPR (male and female) %	42 (42.0)	43 (43.4)	45 (45.5)
Initial entrants (thousands)	285	296	313
HEIPR (male) %	37 (36.5)	38 (37.9)	40 (40.0)
Initial entrants (thousands)	127	133	141
HEIPR (female) %	48 (47.8)	49 (49.1)	51 (51.2)
Initial entrants (thousands)	158	163	172
HEIPR (full-time) %	35 (35.3)	37 (37.0)	39 (39.0)
Initial entrants (thousands)	240	252	268
HEIPR (part-time) %	7 (6.8)	6 (6.4)	6 (6.4)
Initial entrants (thousands)	45	44	45

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

**Table 2 Higher Education Initial Participation Rates by Age
2007/08 (final) and 2008/09 (provisional)**

Age	2007/08			2008/09		
	Initial Entrants	Population	Initial Participation Rate (%)	Initial Entrants	Population	Initial Participation Rate (%)
17	2,720	673,700	0.4%	2,985	677,600	0.4%
18	141,900	673,500	21.1%	149,335	682,600	21.9%
19	69,835	693,000	10.1%	73,225	685,400	10.7%
20	19,440	688,500	2.8%	22,850	705,800	3.2%
21	11,205	692,700	1.6%	11,920	703,900	1.7%
22	8,445	714,500	1.2%	8,985	711,000	1.3%
23	6,950	704,500	1.0%	7,430	732,900	1.0%
24	6,225	694,200	0.9%	6,430	721,000	0.9%
25	5,885	677,500	0.9%	5,900	706,000	0.8%
26	5,555	694,600	0.8%	5,510	686,900	0.8%
27	5,230	699,700	0.7%	5,190	702,200	0.7%
28	4,685	674,900	0.7%	5,090	706,000	0.7%
29	4,170	638,800	0.7%	4,530	679,900	0.7%
30	3,710	626,900	0.6%	3,760	642,800	0.6%
17-30 (overall)	295,955		43.4%	313,140		45.5%

The HEIPR is defined as the sum of the initial participation rates by age over ages 17-30. In this table the overall initial participation rate and the rates by age have been rounded to one decimal place, the counts of the initial entrants have been rounded to the nearest 5 and the counts of the relevant population have been rounded to the nearest 100. Rounding may result in apparent inconsistencies between totals and sums of constituent parts.

**Table 3 Higher Education Initial Participation Rates for Males by Age
2007/08 (final) and 2008/09 (provisional)**

Age	2007/08			2008/09		
	Initial Entrants	Population	Initial Participation Rate (%)	Initial Entrants	Population	Initial Participation Rate (%)
17	1,110	347,100	0.3%	1,165	349,400	0.3%
18	63,550	345,900	18.4%	66,595	351,000	19.0%
19	33,455	356,500	9.4%	35,160	350,800	10.0%
20	9,585	355,100	2.7%	11,310	362,000	3.1%
21	5,275	353,500	1.5%	5,725	361,800	1.6%
22	3,660	366,200	1.0%	3,930	361,600	1.1%
23	2,875	362,700	0.8%	3,150	374,900	0.8%
24	2,400	357,300	0.7%	2,625	370,800	0.7%
25	2,235	342,900	0.7%	2,325	364,600	0.6%
26	2,020	350,800	0.6%	2,180	349,200	0.6%
27	1,975	353,000	0.6%	1,985	356,200	0.6%
28	1,740	338,900	0.5%	1,910	357,600	0.5%
29	1,480	320,600	0.5%	1,765	342,700	0.5%
30	1,385	315,200	0.4%	1,390	323,100	0.4%
17-30 (overall)	132,745		37.9%	141,215		40.0%

The HEIPR is defined as the sum of the initial participation rates by age over ages 17-30. In this table the overall initial participation rates and the rates by age have been rounded to one decimal place, the counts of the initial entrants have been rounded to the nearest 5 and the counts of the relevant population have been rounded to the nearest 100. Rounding may result in apparent inconsistencies between totals and sums of constituent parts.

**Table 4 Higher Education Initial Participation Rates for Females by Age
2007/08 (final) and 2008/09 (provisional)**

Age	2007/08			2008/09		
	Initial Entrants	Population	Initial Participation Rate (%)	Initial Entrants	Population	Initial Participation Rate (%)
17	1,615	326,600	0.5%	1,820	328,300	0.6%
18	78,340	327,700	23.9%	82,735	331,500	25.0%
19	36,370	336,600	10.8%	38,055	334,700	11.4%
20	9,845	333,400	3.0%	11,535	343,800	3.4%
21	5,920	339,200	1.7%	6,195	342,100	1.8%
22	4,780	348,300	1.4%	5,055	349,400	1.4%
23	4,070	341,800	1.2%	4,275	358,100	1.2%
24	3,815	336,900	1.1%	3,800	350,200	1.1%
25	3,640	334,500	1.1%	3,580	341,400	1.0%
26	3,535	343,800	1.0%	3,325	337,700	1.0%
27	3,255	346,600	0.9%	3,205	346,100	0.9%
28	2,940	335,900	0.9%	3,180	348,400	0.9%
29	2,690	318,100	0.8%	2,765	337,200	0.8%
30	2,325	311,700	0.7%	2,370	319,700	0.7%
17-30 (overall)	163,140		49.1%	171,895		51.2%

The HEIPR is defined as the sum of the initial participation rates by age over ages 17-30. In this table the overall initial participation rates and the rates by age have been rounded to one decimal place, the counts of the initial entrants have been rounded to the nearest 5 and the counts of the relevant population have been rounded to the nearest 100. Rounding may result in apparent inconsistencies between totals and sums of constituent parts.

NOTES TO EDITORS

12. The HEIPR is the National Statistic that the Government uses to measure progress in participation in relation to the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 target to “increase participation in Higher Education towards 50 per cent of those aged 18 to 30 with growth of at least a percentage point every two years to the academic year 2010-11.” This forms part of the Public Service Agreement to “improve the skills of the population, on the way to ensuring a world-class skills base by 2020.”
13. The HEIPR roughly equates to the probability that a seventeen year old will participate in higher education by age thirty given the age specific participation rates.
14. In November 2002, the Department for Education and Skills commissioned a National Statistics Quality Review of Higher Education participation statistics. The review was carried out independently by Professor Ramsden in accordance with Office for National Statistics guidelines and was designed to ensure rigour and transparency. The report on the review was published in July 2003 and is available on the Office for National Statistics website, at:
http://www.statistics.gov.uk/methods_quality/quality_review/education.asp. The report recommended that the HEIPR be a measure of initial participation in higher education.
15. In August 2004, the Department for Education and Skills commissioned a further review to assess the feasibility of disaggregating the HEIPR by ethnicity, disability, social class and region. This review was also carried out by Professor Ramsden. The report on this review was published in August 2005 and is available at:
<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/programmeofresearch/projectinformation.cfm?projectId=14567&keyword=&type=5&resultspage=61>
16. In December 2006, the National Audit Office published a review of the data systems underpinning target measurement in a number of Government Departments. The HEIPR methodology was reviewed as part of this process. The report is available on the National Audit Office website, at:
http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/0607/third_validation_compendium_re.aspx
17. The methodology for calculating the HEIPR was revised in 2007, in line with recommendations set out in the National Statistics Quality Review and the recent National Audit Office review. The details of the revisions and their impact on the HEIPR time series were reported in Statistical First Release 8/2007,

“Methodological Revisions to the Higher Education Initial Participation Rate (HEIPR)”, which is available at: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000714/SFR08-2007.pdf>

18. The methodology for calculating the HEIPR was further revised in 2009 due to a change in the underlying data. Details of the revisions were reported in the Statistical First Release 02/2009, “Participation Rates in Higher Education: Academic Years 1999/00 to 2007/08 (Provisional)” which is available at: <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000839/SFR02-2009webversion1.pdf> . Details of the impact of the revisions on the HEIPR time series were detailed in an appendix to the main Statistical First Release which is available at: <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000839/SFR02-2009appendix.pdf>.
19. Professor Ramsden drafted a report on “Non-traditional Routes into Higher Education”, which included an estimate of 4,500 English domiciled initial entrants to higher education studying wholly overseas in 2004. In the context of the latest figure for the HEIPR, 45.5% in 2008/09 based on 313,000 English domiciled initial participants in higher education in the UK, 4,500 additional English domiciled entrants would equate to an increase in initial entrants of 1.4% and could potentially add roughly up to 0.7 percentage points to the HEIPR. Professor Ramsden concludes that it is not possible on the basis of available data to disaggregate these students by age and therefore to include them in the HEIPR calculation: however they should not be disregarded.
20. The same report suggested that some 900 entrants to private higher education institutions might appropriately be counted within the HEIPR. 900 additional entrants would equate to an increase in initial entrants of 0.3% and could potentially add roughly up to 0.1 percentage points to the HEIPR. Again, it is not possible to disaggregate these students by age and therefore to include them in the HEIPR calculation, but they should not be disregarded.
21. The Annex contains supplementary tables as follows:
 - **Supplementary Table A:** Higher Education Initial Participation Rate (HEIPR) for English domiciled first time participants in Higher Education Courses at UK Higher Education Institutions and English, Welsh and Scottish Further Education Colleges: 1999/00 to 2006/07 (based on old methodology).
 - **Supplementary Table B:** Higher Education Initial Participation Rate for 17-20 year olds (HEIPR20) for English domiciled first time participants in Higher Education Courses at UK Higher Education Institutions and English, Welsh and Scottish Further Education Colleges, 2006/07 and 2007/08

- **Supplementary Table C:** Higher Education Initial Participation Rate for 17-60 year olds (HEIPR60) for English domiciled first time participants in Higher Education Courses at UK Higher Education Institutions and English, Welsh and Scottish Further Education Colleges, 2006/07 and 2007/08.
- **Supplementary Table D:** Postgraduate Initial Participation Rate (PGIPR) for English domiciled 17-30 year old first time participants in Postgraduate Courses at UK Higher Education Institutions 1999/00 – 2007/08.

22. The figures in Table A show the historical HEIPR time series, prior to the methodology change in 2006/07. These figures are not comparable to the figures in Table 1.

23. The figures in Tables B, C and D have been derived using similar methods to the HEIPR. The figures for the HEIPR20 are the sums of the age specific initial participation rates for 17 to 20 year olds and are at least as robust as the figures for the HEIPR itself. The figures for the HEIPR60 are the sums of the age specific participation rates for 17 to 60 year olds and are not as robust as the figures for the HEIPR itself because it is not possible to check as thoroughly whether participants aged 31 to 60 are initial participants.

DEFINITIONS

24. The figures in this SFR were derived from data on Higher Education students collected from publicly funded Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the United Kingdom and from the University of Buckingham (from 2004/05) by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), and from Further Education Colleges (FECs) in England by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), in Wales by the National Assembly for Wales, and in Scotland by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). Population estimates were provided by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), which have been converted to an academic year basis by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

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

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

- at FECs in Northern Ireland;
- at privately funded institutions, with the exception of the University of Buckingham from 2004/05 (which makes no practical difference to the figures because of its relatively small number of English-domiciled students aged 17-30);
- at institutions outside the UK.

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

27. The HEIPR includes students studying via both Full-time (FT) and Part-time (PT) modes. FT study is defined by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) as attendance at an institution for periods amounting to at least 24 weeks per year, with learning activity amounting to an average of at least 21 hours per week. The PT mode refers to study which is less intensive than this definition. There is no lower limit on the intensity of PT courses for inclusion in the HEIPR.
28. In order to ensure that only initial participants are counted in the HEIPR in a given year, algorithms are applied to match back over 12 years for HE data and 11 years for FE data. This method looks back over the previous years' HE and FE datasets and checks whether a student appears in these datasets, recorded as studying at HE level for a minimum period of six months. If so, they are eliminated from the calculations as they are not initial participants in the current year. The FE datasets available to BIS start from the 1997/98 academic year, therefore the final additional year of matching for 2008/09 students is not available. Matching the 2008/09 figures back over 12 years ensures that any 30 year old in the dataset, who has at least six months' prior HE experience, can be detected all the way back to when they were 18 years old. The algorithms are provided to BIS by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).
29. 2007/08 was the first year for which this approach was possible (as 12 years' worth of HE data is available up to that point). In order to provide some time series comparison, and to demonstrate the impact of this change, the 2006/07 figure was also calculated using this methodology – although this used one fewer year of matching due to early data availability. It is estimated that the 12th year of matching could detect up to 35 additional students who have at least six months' prior HE experience. This would not affect the 2006/07 HEIPR to the level of accuracy quoted.

REVISIONS

30. Updates to the underlying data:

As revisions and updates to the source data from HESA, LSC, SFC, the National Assembly for Wales and the population estimates and projections from ONS and GAD are made available at different times during the year, any revisions to the provisional figures for 2008/09 will be published as soon as the provisional figures for 2009/10 are available. The Department is planning to publish the provisional figures for 2009/10 in March 2011.

ANNEX

Supplementary Table A: Higher Education Initial Participation Rate (HEIPR) for English domiciled first time participants in Higher Education Courses at UK Higher Education Institutions and English, Welsh and Scottish Further Education Colleges: 1999/00 to 2006/07 (based on old methodology).

Academic Year	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
HEIPR (male and female) %	39 (39.2)	40 (39.6)	40 (40.2)	41 (41.1)	40 (40.3)	40 (40.1)	42 (42.4)	40 (39.8)
Initial entrants (thousands)	238	238	244	255	258	261	281	270
HEIPR (male) %	37 (37.0)	37 (36.6)	36 (36.5)	37 (36.9)	35 (35.5)	35 (35.4)	37 (37.4)	35 (34.9)
Initial entrants (thousands)	113	111	112	117	117	118	127	122
HEIPR (female) %	41 (41.4)	43 (42.6)	44 (44.0)	46 (45.6)	45 (45.5)	45 (45.0)	47 (47.3)	45 (45.0)
Initial entrants (thousands)	125	127	131	138	142	143	153	148
HEIPR (full-time) %	34 (33.6)	34 (34.4)	35 (35.0)	36 (35.6)	35 (34.6)	34 (34.4)	37 (36.6)	34 (34.0)
Initial entrants (thousands)	202	205	211	220	222	224	243	231
HEIPR (part-time) %	6 (5.6)	5 (5.2)	5 (5.1)	6 (5.6)	6 (5.8)	6 (5.7)	6 (5.9)	6 (5.9)
Initial entrants (thousands)	36	33	33	35	37	37	39	39

Figures in this table are not comparable to the later figures shown in table 1

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

Supplementary Table B: Higher Education Initial Participation Rate for 17-20 year olds (HEIPR20) for English domiciled first time participants in Higher Education Courses at UK Higher Education Institutions and English, Welsh and Scottish Further Education Colleges 2006/07 – 2008/09

Academic Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09 (Provisional)
HEIPR20 (male and female) %	33 (32.8)	34 (34.4)	36 (36.2)
Initial entrants (thousands)	223	234	248
HEIPR20 (male) %	29 (29.3)	31 (30.8)	32 (32.5)
Initial entrants (thousands)	103	108	114
HEIPR20 (female) %	37 (36.5)	38 (38.2)	40 (40.2)
Initial entrants (thousands)	120	126	134
HEIPR20 (full-time) %	31 (31.1)	33 (32.6)	34 (34.4)
Initial entrants (thousands)	211	222	236
HEIPR20 (part-time) %	2 (1.7)	2 (1.8)	2 (1.8)
Initial entrants (thousands)	12	12	13

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

Supplementary Table C: Higher Education Initial Participation Rate for 17-60 year olds (HEIPR60) for English domiciled first time participants in Higher Education Courses at UK Higher Education Institutions and English, Welsh and Scottish Further Education Colleges 2006/07 – 2008/09

Academic Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09 (Provisional)
HEIPR60 (male and female) %	52 (52.4)	53 (53.0)	55 (54.6)
Initial entrants (thousands)	360	365	378
HEIPR60 (male) %	44 (43.8)	45 (44.6)	47 (46.7)
Initial entrants (thousands)	153	157	165
HEIPR60 (female) %	61 (61.2)	62 (61.7)	62 (62.8)
Initial entrants (thousands)	207	209	213
HEIPR60 (full-time) %	38 (37.4)	39 (39.1)	41 (41.2)
Initial entrants (thousands)	256	268	284
HEIPR60 (part-time) %	15 (15.0)	14 (13.9)	13 (13.4)
Initial entrants (thousands)	104	97	94

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

Supplementary Table D: Postgraduate Initial Participation Rate (PGIPR) for English domiciled 17-30 year old first time participants in Postgraduate Courses at UK Higher Education Institutions 2006/07 – 2008/09 (no methodology change)

Academic Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09 (Provisional)
PGIPR (male and female) %	9 (8.8)	9 (8.7)	9 (9.4)
Initial entrants (thousands)	59	60	66
PGIPR (male) %	7 (6.8)	7 (6.8)	8 (7.5)
Initial entrants (thousands)	23	24	27
PGIPR (female) %	11 (10.8)	11 (10.7)	12 (11.6)
Initial entrants (thousands)	36	36	40
PGIPR (full-time) %	6 (5.9)	6 (5.7)	6 (6.0)
Initial entrants (thousands)	40	40	42
PGIPR (part-time) %	3 (2.9)	3 (3.0)	3 (3.4)
Initial entrants (thousands)	19	20	24

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

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