

1. Number of solicitors who applied to be admitted to the Roll of Solicitors in 2019?

Generally, the number of applicants and the number being admitted match up. There may be a small number of applicants who apply in late December and are admitted in January of the following year. Given that all applicants are admitted, we keep statistics on admissions but not on applications.

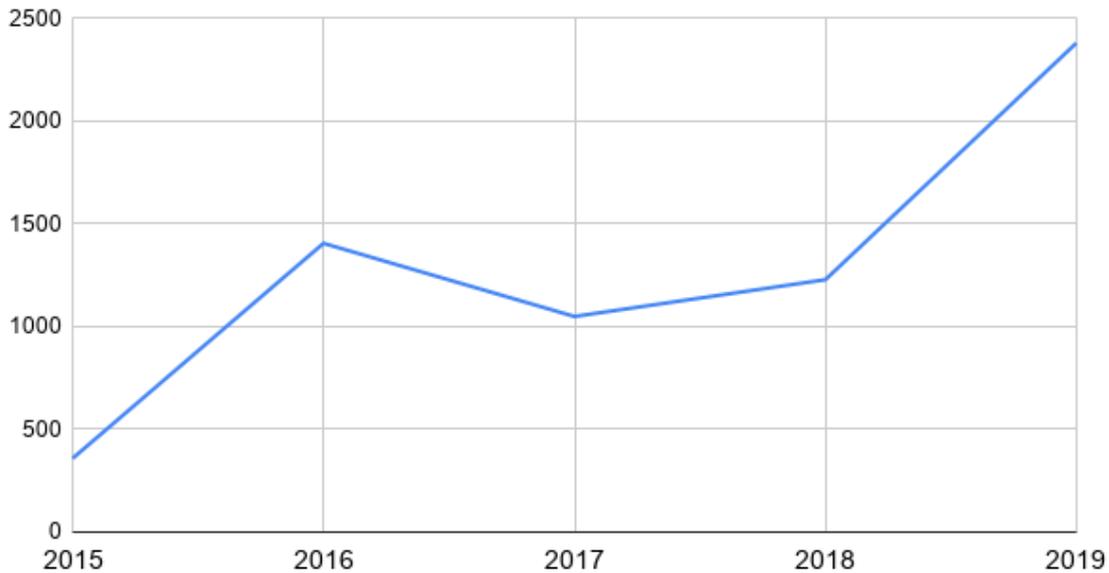
2. Number of solicitors admitted to the Roll of Solicitors in 2019?

2,381 solicitors were admitted to the Roll of Solicitors in 2019. The below table sets out the numbers admitted to the Roll of Solicitors over the last five years:

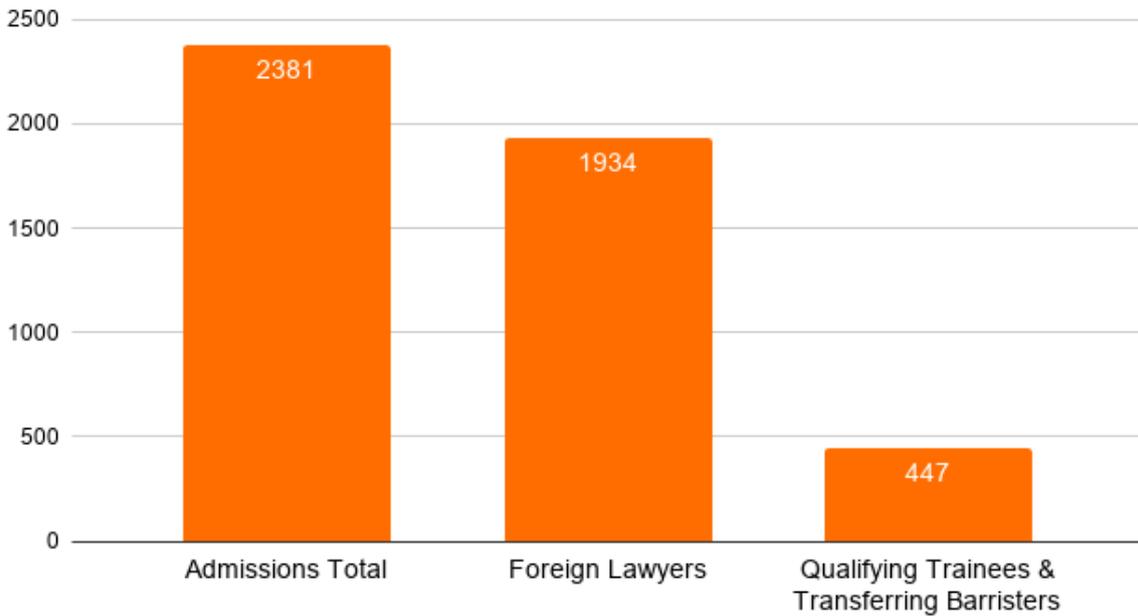
2015 -2019 Numbers admitted to the Roll of Solicitors

Year	Admissions	Qualifying Trainees & Transferring Barristers	Foreign Lawyers	Total Admissions
2015	359	248	111	359
2016	1,406	559	847	1,406
2017	1,050	456	594	1,050
2018	1,229	473	756	1,229
2019	2,381	447	1,934	2,381

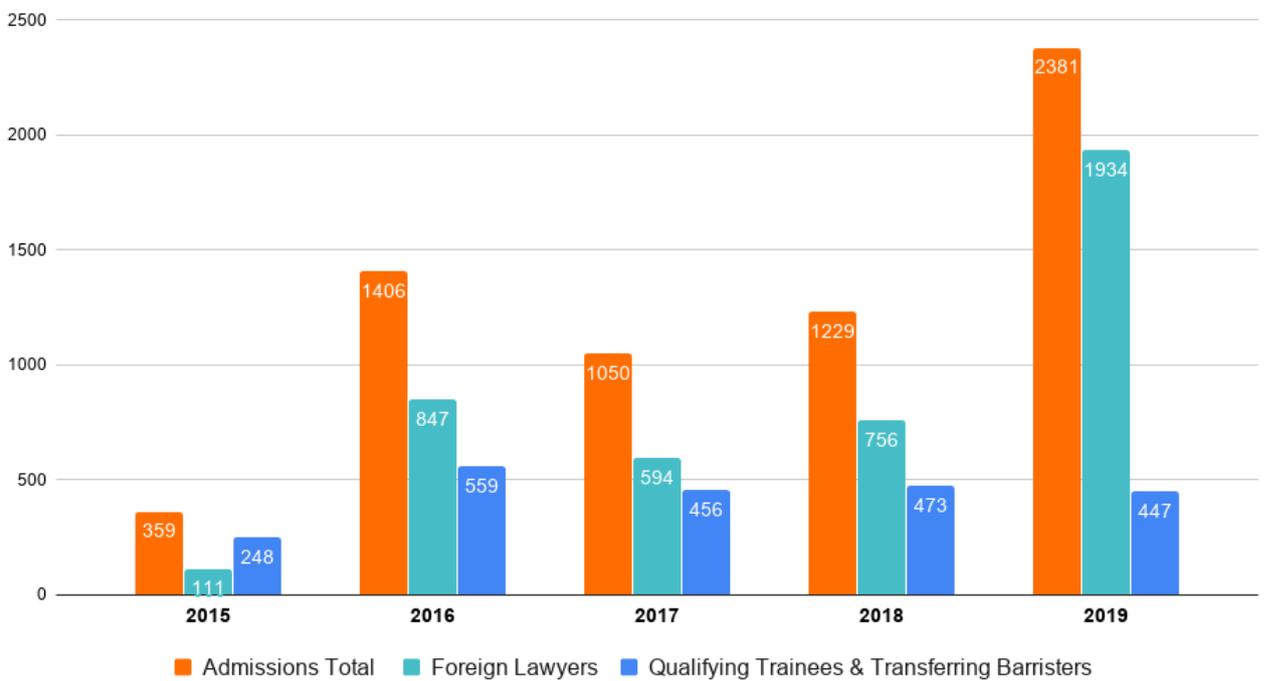
2015 - 2019 Increasing Admissions to the Roll of Solicitors



2019 Admissions to the Roll of Solicitors



2015 - 2019 Admissions to the Roll of Solicitors



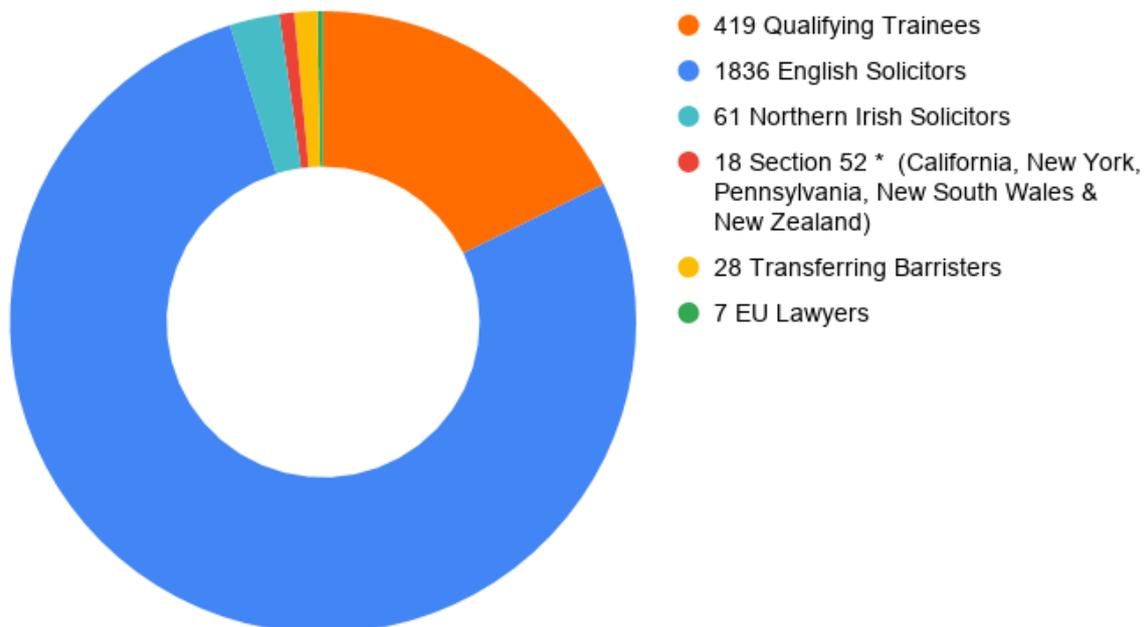
The below table sets out a further breakdown by category of applicant admitted to the Roll of Solicitors over the last five years:

2015 – 2019 Breakdown by category of applicant admitted to the Roll of Solicitors

Year	Qualifying Trainees	English Solicitors	Northern Irish Solicitors	Section 52*	Transferring Barristers	EU Lawyers
2015	233	70	30	7	15	4
2016	525	806	27	13	34	1
2017	423	547	29	12	34	5
2018	443	609	43	16	30	4
2019	419	1,836	61	18	28	7

* Section 52 refers to California, New York, Pennsylvania, New South Wales & New Zealand.

2019 Breakdown by category of applicant



3. Number of solicitors who applied to be removed from the Roll of Solicitors in 2019?

Six solicitors applied to be removed from the Roll in 2019.

4. Number of solicitors who were struck-off the Roll of Solicitors in 2019?

Five solicitors were struck off the Roll in 2019.

5. Number of practising certificates issued by the Law Society in 2019?

11,982 practising certificates were issued in 2019.

6. Number of practising certificates cancelled in 2019?

80 practising certificates were “surrendered” and cancelled by the Society in 2019.

7. Number of practising certificates suspended in 2019?

Three practising certificates were suspended in 2019.

8. Where or not, in the view of the Law Society, the number of persons admitted to practise as solicitors in 2019, having regard to the demand for the services of practising solicitors and the need to ensure an adequate standard of education and training, is consistent with the public interest in ensuring the availability of legal services at a reasonable cost?

Sourcing, training and developing quality individuals, is the key to ensuring the availability of legal services at a reasonable cost. Training solicitors to meet any and all challenges they will face in their careers is some of the most important work the Law Society carries out. The Law Society’s education model is deeply rooted in the public interest and focussed on the future. Today’s client is more knowledgeable and tech-savvy than ever before. The Law Society’s vision is to train 21st century solicitors who will meet and exceed the exacting requirements of their clients and their firms.

From the time a trainee solicitor begins the professional practice course (PPC) they are usually qualified and admitted to the Roll of Solicitors within about 2.5 years. This incorporates in-office training and seminar-based training here at Blackhall Place.

Our training programme is unique in that classes are almost all delivered by practising solicitors who are experts in their own areas of practice. Our associate faculty includes solicitors from large commercial firms, solicitors working for the State, general practitioners and in-house lawyers. We currently have in the region of 1,200 solicitors teaching for us; that means that more than 10% of all practising solicitors are involved in education the next generation of the profession. Over 60% of all education is provided in small tutorial or skills groups of between 4 and 15 trainees working on legal or skills problems together. This interactive model of education requires students to prepare in advance and direct their own learning.

There are now more names than ever on the Roll of Solicitors in Ireland and the profession has changed substantially in recent years. Changes in the profile of our trainees have been at the forefront of the changing face of the profession generally. The Society is committed to increasing access to the profession for trainees across diverse educational, professional and socio-economic backgrounds. In 2019 we have launched many new innovations including the PPC Hybrid, accelerated access to the FE-1 and an increase in funding to the Access Scholarship Programme.

The middle of 2019 marked the entry of 20,000 names on the Roll of Solicitors in Ireland – the first time this figure has been reached. Approximately 20% of all of the names on the Roll of Solicitors in this jurisdiction are now practitioners who originally qualified in England and Wales. 2019 was a record year for Brexit admissions to The Roll of Solicitors, with solicitor entrants from England and Wales up 163% on new entrants in 2018. There is a sense that this trend will settle down in 2020.

The demand for legal services is growing with law firms continuing to grow staff numbers, but the pace of growth is slowing. Over the last three years there has been a marked decline in the percentage of top 20 firms reporting an increase in staff numbers from 89% of firms in 2017 to 66% in 2019. .

Dublin firms generally report a slowing rate of increase from 58% in 2017 to 48% of firms in 2019. However, we can see continuing growth in staff numbers among regional firms (44%). This may suggest some reluctance to grow overall staff numbers amid an uncertain economic environment, but also an increasing focus on employee and partner retention in a competitive market.

Ireland is running at full employment and the demand for skilled, qualified professionals is at an all-time high. 93% of top 20 firms report that they have vacancies.

Over the past 12 months 29% of firms reported increasing trainee numbers compared to 32% in the previous year. Top 20 firms increased their trainee headcount in 53% of cases with 40% keeping their intake the same as 2018. Looking ahead, while one in four firms expect to increase their number of trainee solicitors in the next 12 months, 60% of Dublin firms and 77% of firms outside Dublin expect their trainee numbers to remain unchanged.

Three in four firms reported that the level of trainees retained post qualification was unchanged compared to the previous 12 months. Vacancies levels fell from 2018 to 2019 - 48% of firms report having vacancies in 2019, down from 57% in 2018. Only 19% of regional firms are reporting that they have vacancies, a significant decrease of 22% on last year's reported figure of 41%.

Information on firm recruitment sourced from Smith and Williamson, Annual Survey of Irish Law Firms, 2019/2020: <https://smithandwilliamson.com/en/campaigns/law-firm-survey-2019/>

9. Number of solicitors holding valid professional indemnity insurance in 2019?

8,171 solicitors had valid Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII) during 2019 (of which 8,056 held a Practising Certificate as at 31 December 2019). In-house solicitors are not required to hold PII.

10. The number of solicitors working in-house?

2,496 solicitors working in-house of which 2,182 held a Practising Certificate (PC), as at 31 December 2019. Solicitors in the full-time service of the State are not required to hold a PC.

11. The number of solicitors classified as being in the full-time service of the State in 2019?

385 solicitors were classified as being in the full-time service of the State in 2019.

12. The number of admissions to the Roll from solicitors based outside Ireland in 2019 (i.e. the so-called Brexit refugee admissions) under the European Communities (Lawyers' Establishment) Regulations 2003 (S.I. No. 732 of 2003) ("the Establishment Regulations") and whether you consider that this trend is likely to continue?

In 2019, 11 foreign lawyers were admitted on foot of the Establishment Directive. These applicants were all Spanish qualified abogados. The Brexit intake all qualified under the 2017 Regulations. In 2019, 1,836 English solicitors were admitted, 61 from Northern Ireland and 4 from Scotland. This was the largest number qualifying from the United Kingdom ever. We are forecasting lower numbers this year, but it is likely that there will still be a much higher number of UK admissions in 2020 than in a pre-Brexit year. During the transition period, all the current EU rules on mutual recognition remain in place. Draft statutory instruments have been submitted to the Department of Justice to continue a regime of mutual recognition with England & Wales and Northern Ireland and mutual recognition (subject to examination) with

Scotland. When these enter into force the current system of recognition will continue indefinitely. In turn the Solicitors Regulatory Authority, the Law Society of Northern Ireland and the Law Society of Scotland have introduced or are introducing new regulations to continue to recognise Irish solicitors, post Brexit.

13. We would also welcome your opinion as to whether you consider it is likely that such solicitors will take out practising certificates and practise in this jurisdiction in the short to mid-term?

It is unlikely in the short-term as the transition period for Brexit is in place until December 2020. In the medium term, it is expected that there will be an increase in UK firms opening Irish offices to gain access to the EU market. It should be noted that an Irish practising certificate only permits the holder to provide Irish and EU legal services while situate in Ireland, except as provided by the EU Services Directive. As such, if UK solicitors wish to provide legal services in Ireland or the EU through an Irish office, they must be physically situate in Ireland. In addition, Irish offices must have a substantive presence, and virtual or “brass plate” offices are not permitted.

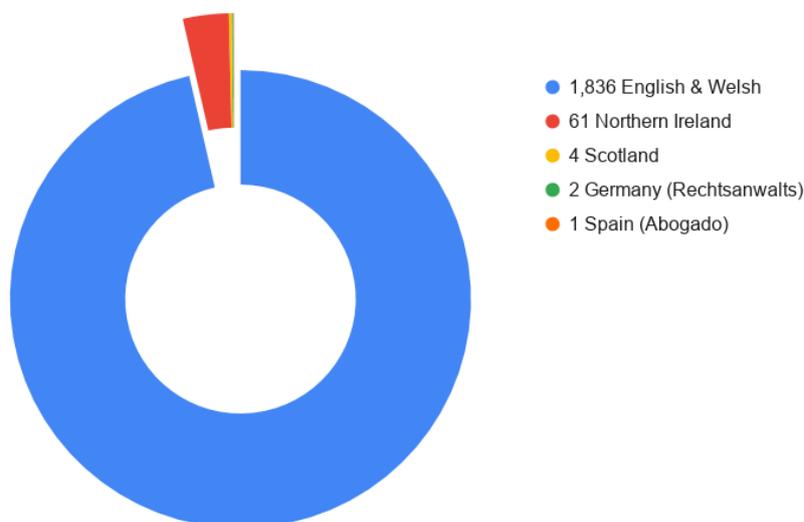
14. The number of applications by EU qualified solicitors made in 2019 under the European Communities (Freedom to Provide Services) (Lawyers) Regulations (S.I. No. 58 of 1979) (“the FPS Regulations”)?

No application for permission is required for this. Such solicitors are just required to work in conjunction with a solicitor or barrister in this jurisdiction. As such, the Society does not have this information.

15. The number of applications by EU qualified solicitors made in 2019 under the European Union (Recognition of Professional Qualifications) Regulations 2017 (S.I. No. 8 of 2017) (“the Professional Qualifications Regulations”)?

The bulk of the 2019 applications fall in this category. 1,904 lawyers were admitted on foot of these regulations. This consists of 1,836 English & Welsh solicitors, 61 solicitors from Northern Ireland, 4 solicitors from Scotland, 2 Rechtsanwalts from Germany and 1 Abogado from Spain.

2019 applications by EU qualified solicitors under "the Professional Qualifications Regulations"



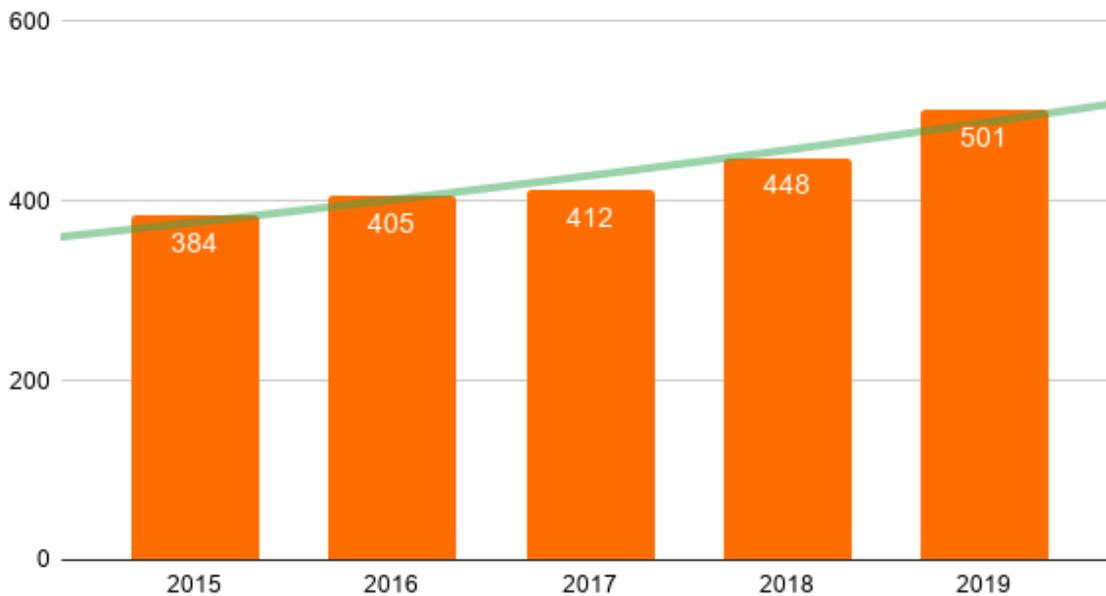
16. The number of trainee solicitors enrolled on the Professional Practice Courses in 2019 and the estimated number of trainee solicitors expected to avail of the new hybrid course commencing December 2019 and any trends in enrolment the Law Society have observed in 2019?

501 trainees enrolled on the Professional Practice Course (PPC) in 2019 with 47 of those attending the new PPC Hybrid. The main statistical trends over the last five years are set out in the below tables:

2015 – 2019 Breakdown of Professional Practice Course Demographics

Year	Total Enrolment	Male	Female	% Under 30 years	% Over 30 years	% Law Degree	% Other Degree	Non Graduate
2015	384	160	224	86%	14%	80%	20%	
2016	405	169	236	87%	13%	78%	21%	1%
2017	412	169	243	90%	10%	84%	14%	2%
2018	448	180	268	89%	11%	78%	20%	2%
2019	501	206	295	88%	12%	78%	20%	2%

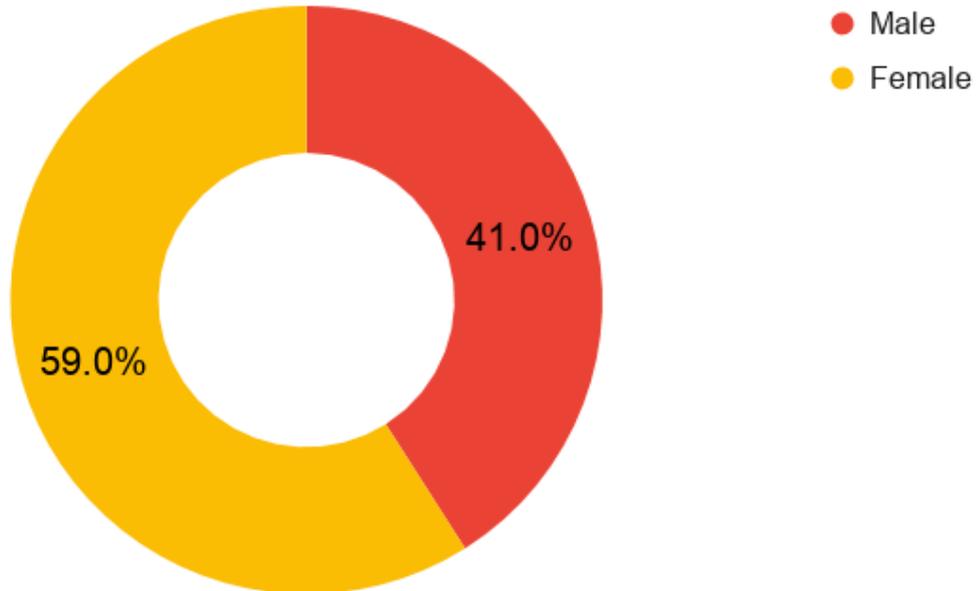
2015 - 2019 Increasing enrollment on the Professional Practice Course



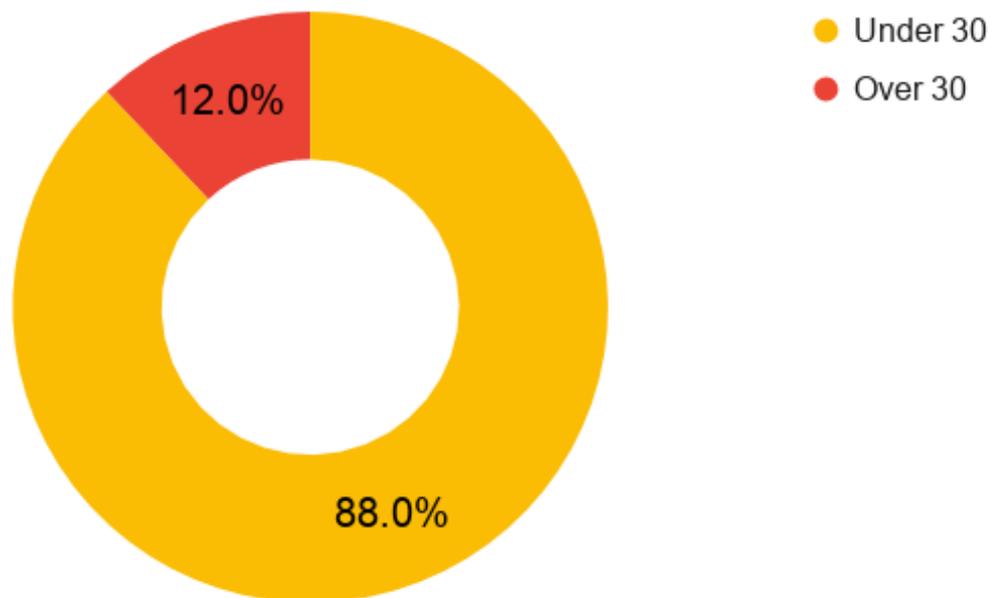
2019 Breakdown of Professional Practice Course Demographics

Year	Total Enrolment	Male	Female	% Under 30 years	% Over 30 years	% Law Degree	% Other Degree	Non Graduate
2019	501	205	295	88%	12%	78%	20%	2%

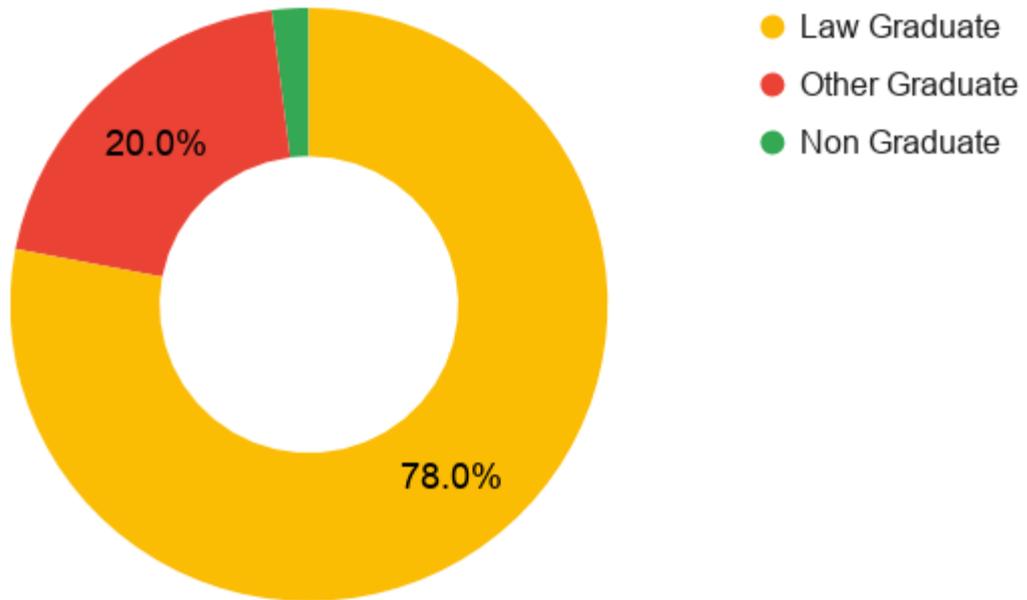
2019 PPC Gender



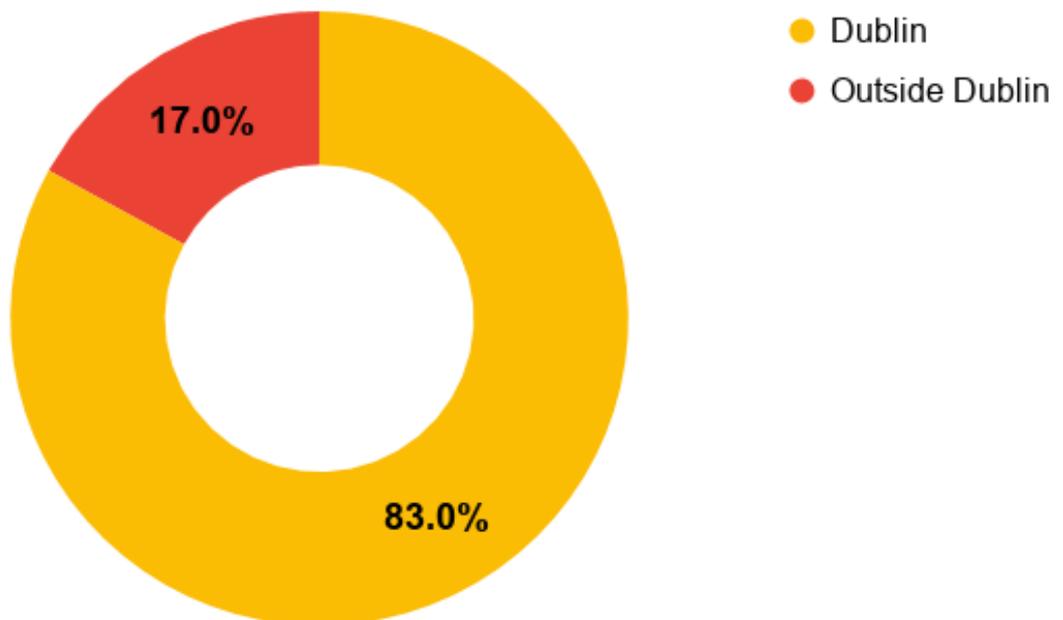
2019 PPC Age



2019 PPC Background



2019 PPC Location



2015-2019 Geographical Location of Training Firms

County	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Dublin	323 (84%)	335 (83%)	341 (83%)	387 (86%)	416 (83%)
Cork	17	20	21	22	24
Galway	8	5	13	7	8
Limerick	10	7	8	5	8
Kerry	0	1	1	7	3
Kildare	2	4	1	2	4
Clare	2	1	2	3	3
Wicklow	3	3	2	1	2
Donegal	0	4	3	1	0
Tipperary	1	3	4	3	4
Mayo	3	0	1	0	1
Louth	4	1	2	1	2
Meath	2	1	3	2	1
Sligo	0	6	1	1	6
Waterford	2	1	0	1	2
Westmeath	1	2	2	3	4
Wexford	0	0	0	1	0
Monaghan	0	3	0	1	1
Cavan	1	0	2	1	2
Offaly	0	0	0	0	0
Roscommon	1	1	1	1	1
Leitrim	0	1	0	0	0
Kilkenny	2	1	2	1	2
Longford	0	0	1	1	2
Carlow	2	3	1	0	2
Laois	0	0	0	0	2

- 17. The demand for the services of solicitors in 2019 including key indicators that you may have**
- 18. Any other issues that you believe are pertinent to the preparation of our report under section 33.**