

Standard Report
on
Methods and Quality (v1)
for
Adult Educational Survey (AES)

This documentation applies to the reporting period:

2017

Last edited: 29/8/2018

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1 Overview

The main purpose of the Adult Education Survey (AES) is to produce reliable participation rates in further education for the adult population. Data is published on those aged 25 to 64 years old who were not in continuous full-time education.

The survey produces figures on those who participated in further education broken down by gender, region, level of education, age, economic status and sectors and so on. It also explores how people access guidance on educational possibilities. It is also a source of information on the difficulties experienced by the adult population who wish to participate in education.

It is carried out under EC Regulation 452/2008 and Commission Regulation 1175/2014.

2 General Information

2.1 Statistical Category

Primary statistical survey

2.2 Area of Activity

Adult education statistics

2.3 Organisational Unit Responsible, Persons to Contact

The relevant persons are part of the Social and Demographic Statistics Directorate.

The work of the education statistician is part of the Social Analysis division, which is headed by a Senior Statistician, who also has responsibility for other survey areas.

Educational Attainment queries:

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2.4 Objectives and Purpose; History

The main purpose of the AES is to measure the participation of adults in learning, including formal and non-formal education (lifelong learning) and informal education.

Ireland held a Lifelong Learning Survey with 2003 as the reference year. It was conducted as a module of the Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS). A second lifelong learning survey was conducted in a similar fashion in Q3 2008. This contained a subset of questions from the first EU wide AES. It was carried out from 2005 to 2008 under a gentleman's agreement. The second AES was conducted in 2011 under a European legal framework (Ireland participated in the second wave). This 2017 AES is the third iteration of the AES survey and is conducted under EC Regulation 452/2008 and Commission Regulation 1175/2014.

2.5 Periodicity

The AES is generally conducted at five to six-year intervals. The next EU-wide AES is scheduled for 2022.

2.6 Client

Each Member State in the EU must undertake an AES to provide data on adult education rates. The AES is the Irish implementation of the EU-AES.

2.7 Users

- European Union/Eurostat
- Department of Education and Skills
- SOLAS – National Skills Training Agency
- Other research centres and universities involved in education research
- National media
- The general public

2.8 Legal basis

The AES was carried out under EU Council Regulation No 1175/2014¹. While Ireland as a member state is obliged to undertake the AES, participation in the survey is voluntary for respondents.

3 Statistical Concepts, Methods

3.1 Subject of the Statistics

Adult education statistics.

3.2 Units of Observation/Collection Units/Units of Presentation

The survey population is individuals living in private households. It therefore excludes individuals living in institutions or communal accommodation and persons of no fixed abode. The collection units are households containing at least one individual aged 25 to 64 years inclusive who has finished continuous full-time education and for whom it is the main residence. Information is collected on one random individual within a surveyed household. The data in this report is published on an individual level.

The main units of presentation are:

- Demographic variables such as sex, age, citizenship
- Other personal characteristics such as regional classification (NUTS 3²), Highest level of education attained etc.
- Characteristics related to the area e.g. deprivation index, degree of urbanisation
- Industrial activity classification (NACE Rev 2.³)
- Occupation

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014R1175&from=en>

² Nomenclature of Territorial Units – you can find more information here:

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/nuts/background>

³ Nomenclature des Activités de la Communauté Européenne – you can find more information here:

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/nace-rev2>

- Employment status

While the above are the primary presentation units for regular publication the AES can present data according to a wide variety of classifications based on the comprehensive range of questions asked in the survey. Such analysis is often provided on an ad hoc basis following user requests.

3.3 Data Sources

Information is collected via survey from individuals in a private household.

3.4 Reporting Unit/Respondents

All 'usual residents'⁴ in responding households are surveyed. Where a particular individual is not available for interview, information cannot be provided by another member of the household.

Data is reported in percentages (rounded to the nearest percentage point).

3.5 Type of Survey/Process

Sample Survey.

3.6 Characteristics of the Sample/Process

3.6.1 Population and Sampling Frame

The reference population is all individuals living in private households in Ireland aged 25 to 64 years inclusive who have finished continuous full-time education.

It therefore excludes persons with no usual address or those with a usual residence in a public institution, such as hospitals, nursing homes, etc. The sampling frame is all private households in Ireland and based on the Census of population 2016 data.

3.6.2 Sample Design

The AES sample is a multi-stage cluster sample resulting in all households in Ireland having an equal probability of selection. The sample is stratified using administrative county and the Pobal HP (Haase and Pratschke) Deprivation Index (quintile).

A two-stage sample design is used. Firstly, 1,200 blocks are selected using Probability Proportional to Size (PPS) sampling. All occupied households on Census night 2016 within each block were eligible for selection.

Secondly, households within blocks were selected using simple random sampling (SRS) without replacement for inclusion in the survey sample. This ensures each household in the sample frame has an equal probability of selection. A sample size of 11 households per block was allocated for the AES, giving a total sample size of 13,200 households.

One eligible individual within the household was randomly select to participate in the AES. Eligibility for AES participation is based on:

⁴ A person is defined as a "Usual Resident" of a private household if he or she (i) Lives regularly at the dwelling in question and (ii) Shares the main living accommodation (i.e. kitchen, living room or bathroom) with the other members of the household.

- age - only those between 18 and 64 in the household are included in the random person generator
- educational status - only those who are not in continuous fulltime education are included.

3.7 Survey Technique/Data Transfer

AES interviewers visit each household and ask the residents to voluntarily participate in the survey. Data are collected on encrypted tablets using CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing). The survey interviewer transmits the data collected from households to head office using a secure encrypted data tunnel, if not daily, then weekly.

3.8 Questionnaire (including explanations)

The AES questionnaire used was based on a model questionnaire provided by Eurostat⁵.

Aside from background household and individual information, the questions cover participation in education and training, including educational possibilities, formal education, non-formal and informal education, difficulties in participating in formal and/or non-formal education and language knowledge.

Not all questions are asked of all respondents as questions are filtered based on the responses given by the interviewee. An overview of the flow of the questionnaire and the sections involved is given in Figure 1.

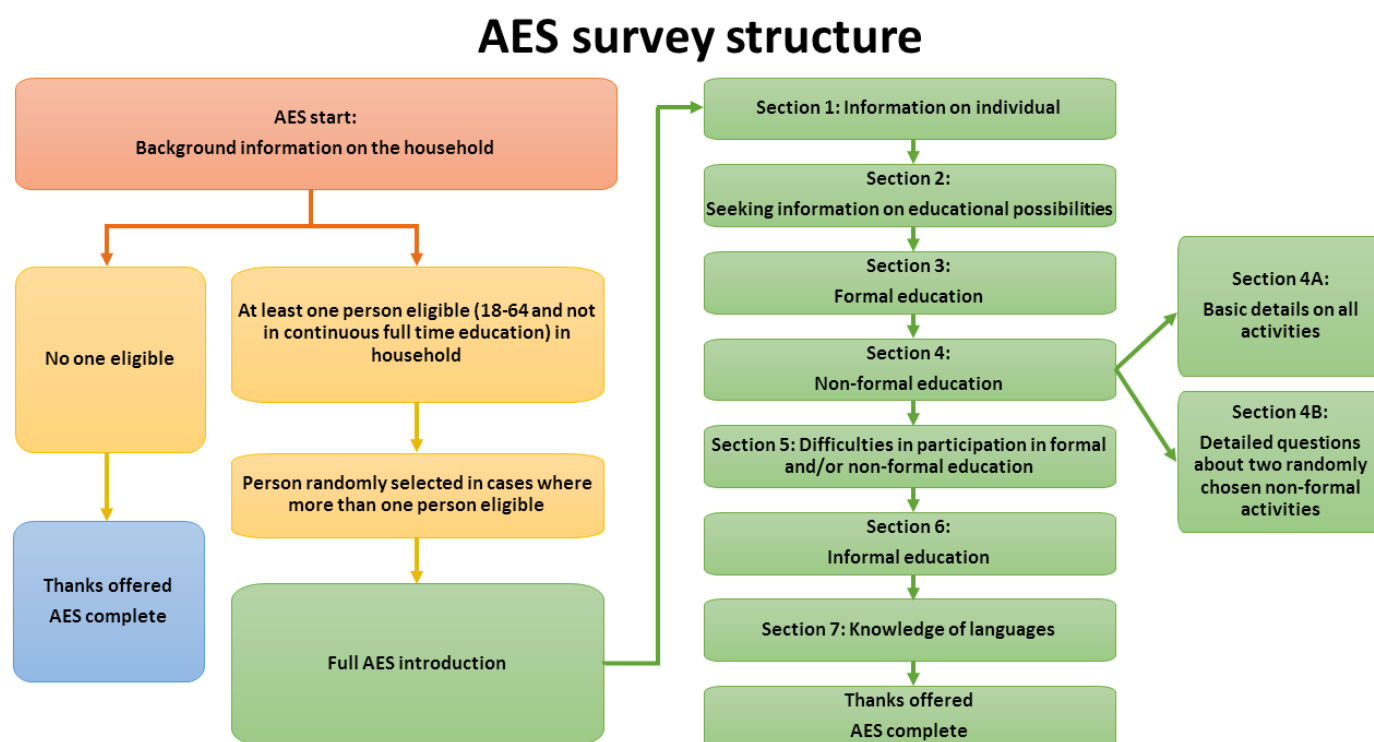


Figure 1 AES questionnaire flow and main survey sections

⁵ https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/a/700a220d-33dc-42d4-a5c4-634c8eab7b26/2016%20AES%20MANUAL%20v3_02-2017.pdf

3.9 Participation in the Survey

Participation in the AES is voluntary.

3.10 Characteristics of the Survey/Process and its Results

The survey is designed to provide information on various aspects of adult educational experience for the State. The data show data based on people aged 25-64 years old classified by various characteristics, including age groups, sex, economic activity, regions and levels of deprivation.

For a full list of published indicators please see the AES release:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/aes/adulteducationsurvey2017/>

3.11 Classifications used

There are several different classifications used in the AES report:

- For this report, the highest level of educational attainment details have been classified by the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) classification. A breakdown of the classification is given in Appendix I.
- Field of education. The fields of education based on the ISCED-F 2013 classification, further information can be found here: <http://uis.unesco.org/en/topic/international-standard-classification-education-isced>. They are as follows:
 - Generic programmes and qualifications
 - Education
 - Arts and humanities
 - Social sciences, journalism and information
 - Business administration and law
 - Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics
 - Information and Communication Technologies (ICT's)
 - Engineering, manufacturing and construction
 - Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary
 - Health and welfare
 - Services
- Economic activity is classified by Principal Economic Status (PES). This is based on a single question in which respondents are asked what is their usual situation regarding employment and given the following response categories:
 - At work
 - Unemployed
 - Student
 - Engaged on home duties
 - Retired
 - Other
- Regional data is coded to NUTS3 as described in Section 3.12
- Degree of Urbanisation. This classification is created from an aggregation of population density estimates derived from the Census of Population. The categories included in each aggregate are:
 - Thinly populated area refers to rural areas
 - Intermediate density area refers to towns and suburbs
 - Densely populated area refers to cities, urban centres and urban areas
- Deprivation. The Pobal Haase-Pratschke Deprivation Index is used to create the

underlying sample and is used to analyse the data. The Index uses Census data to measure levels of disadvantage or affluence in a geographical area. More detailed information on the index can be found here: <https://www.pobal.ie/research-analysis/>. The results are presented by quintiles, five equal-sized groups of households, with the first quintile representing the least deprived/most affluent area and the fifth quintile representing the most disadvantaged areas.

- **NACE Industrial Classification.** The industry in which a person is engaged is determined (regardless of their occupation) by the main economic activity carried out in the local unit in which he or she works. The basis of the industrial classification is, in the case of employees, the business or profession of their employer and in the case of self-employed persons, the nature of their own business or profession.

In the AES, industry is coded using NACE – the General Industrial Classification of Economic Activities within the European Communities. The current version, NACE Rev. 2, is a 4-digit activity classification as defined in Council Regulation (EC) no 1893/2006. Fourteen NACE sub-categories are distinguished in this release.

NACE code description			
Total	All Sectors	K-L	Financial, insurance and real estate activities
B-E	Industry	M	Professional, scientific and technical activities
F	Construction	N	Administrative and support service activities
G	Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	O	Public Administration and defence; compulsory social security
H	Transportation and storage	P	Education
I	Accommodation and food service activities	Q	Human health and social work activities
J	Information and communication	R-S	Arts, entertainment, recreation and other service activities

- **Occupation Classification.** The structured classification for occupations allows for jobs to be grouped together based on their similarity in terms of the skill level and skill specialization required. The CSO uses the UK SOC2010 as the primary classification used in collecting the data. ISCO-08 is then derived from UK SOC2010 for publication. Further information regarding SOC 2010 is available at the following link: <http://www.cso.ie/shorturl.aspx/104>

Detailed data is collected through the interview to allow outputs to be produced according to all the relevant classifications.

3.12 Regional Breakdown of Results

A regional breakdown is provided for the estimated population of the State only. This is published classified by sex and age group and is aggregated to a NUTS 3 classification. This is a geographical classification which identifies Irish regions broken down as follows:

- **Border:** Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan and Sligo
- **Dublin:** Dublin City, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin
- **Mid-West:** Clare, Limerick and Tipperary

- West: Galway, Mayo and Roscommon.
- South-East: Carlow, Kilkenny, Waterford and Wexford.
- Mid-East: Kildare, Meath, Wicklow and Louth.
- Midland: Laois, Longford, Offaly and Westmeath.
- South-West: Cork and Kerry

4 Production of the Statistics, Data Processing, Quality Assurance

4.1 Data Capture

Information is collected in the field by a team of interviewers using tablets (CAPI using a Blaise application) and data is then transmitted to the main processing unit in the CSO.

4.2 Coding

In the AES, interviewers collect a detailed description of the enterprise and occupation from respondents. This information is then coded in-house at the CSO by an automated process which is reviewed by a small dedicated team of coding experts using a series of consistency checks. Field of education data is likewise captured and coded in the field to the relevant classification. The codes assigned are then subsequently checked for quality purposes.

4.3 Data Editing

The majority of questions only allow answers to be entered to a limited set of predefined categories and therefore the number of edits required is limited. Questionnaire routing is used to ensure questions are only asked to relevant respondents e.g. unemployment questions are only asked to those who are unemployed.

4.4 Imputation (for Non-Response or Incomplete Data Sets)

No imputation for non-response currently takes place on the AES either for entirely missing households or missing data for particular individuals.

4.5 Grossing and Weighting

The survey results are weighted to represent the entire population. The process used was as follows:

- Firstly, design weights were calculated for all units selected in the initial sample and are computed as the inverse of the selection probability of the unit. The purpose of design weights is to eliminate the bias induced by unequal selection probabilities.
- Next, these design weights were then adjusted for non-response. This eliminated the bias induced by discrepancies caused by non-response between the initial sample and the achieved sample, particularly critical when the non-responding households are different from the responding ones in respect to some survey variables as this may create substantial bias in the estimates. Design weights are adjusted for non-response by dividing the design weights of each responding unit in the final/achieved sample by the (weighted) response probability of the corresponding group or strata.
- To obtain the final weights for the results, after the previous steps were carried out, the distribution of households by deprivation, NUTS3 region, home ownership, household

size, highest level of educational attainment, sex and age was calibrated to the population of households in Q4 2017 (as derived from the Quarterly National Household Survey). The CALMAR2-macro, developed by INSEE, was used for this purpose and both household and individual external information was used in a single-shot calibration at household level.

4.6 Computation of Outputs, Estimation Methods Used

Output results are aggregated to produce the various totals published. These aggregations are usually produced using key variables such as sex, age group, region, PES status, etc. In general, all aggregations produced are done by way of various SAS procedures. The aggregate results produced for any given set of classifications will be the sum of the individual grossing factors of the valid responses which belong to that set of classifications and no estimates are made unless the data itself has been captured within the survey.

4.7 Other Quality Assurance Techniques Used

A series of field audits are carried out each quarter to verify the quality of the individual data being collected. Interviewers receive regular feedback on the quality of the data they are producing and any unusual trends are highlighted and followed-up. Interviewers undergo training when first employed and regular meetings are held with field coordinators to ensure standards are maintained. Further training is also provided to interviewers where appropriate.

5 Quality

5.1 Relevance

The AES is the primary source for national indicators on participation rates in further education for those aged 25-64. It also includes information on the reasons why adults engage in formal and non-formal education and details the outcomes from that education and training. It is also a national source on the obstacles which adults perceive to engaging in further education.

External users who make use of the AES include, but are not limited to:

- ESRI
- SOLAS
- The Oireachtas
- Department of Education and Skills
- National media organisations

5.2 Accuracy and Reliability

5.2.1. Sampling Effect & representivity

As the AES is a sample survey it is subject to sampling error.

5.2.2. Non-Sampling Effects

In addition to known sampling errors, any survey will be subject to other non-sampling errors (for example measurement errors arising from questions not capturing the desired information accurately). Non-sampling error is far more difficult to measure than sampling error and no formal estimate of non-sampling error is available in the AES.

5.2.2.1 Quality of the Data Sources used (other than survey register)

Not applicable.

5.2.2.2 Register Coverage

The entire stock of private households at the time of the most recent Census of Population in the country represents the full sampling frame for the AES. The sample was based on the 2016 Census.

5.2.2.3 Non-response (Unit and Item)

The table below gives a breakdown of the response to the AES:

Household status	Nos. of Households	% of full sample
Full sample of households	13,200	100.0%
Dropped households ⁶	1,740	13.2%
Surveyed households	11,460	86.8%
% of surveyed households		
Vacant	846	7.4%
Not a housing unit	59	0.5%
Contacted Households	10,555	92.1%
% of contacted households		
Refusal	1,247	11.8%
Uncontactable	1,866	17.7%
Other ⁷	214	2.0%
Interviewed households <i>of which:</i>	7,228	68.5%
Partial interviews	129	1.2%
Completed interviews <i>of which:</i>	7,099	67.3%
Ineligible ⁸ households	2,236	21.2%
Eligible⁹ households	4,863	46.1%

5.2.2.4 Measurement Errors

No formal evaluation of sources of error is available, although measures are in place to minimise error.

- Comprehension errors – An effort is made to ensure that the terms used in the survey are clear and readily understood.
- Clear training - Members of the field staff are fully trained on the questionnaire.
- Governance of field staff - Information on the interviews is collected and analysed to help minimise non-sampling effects (including, for example, when interviews were conducted and their duration). This information is compared across the interview team to ensure no unusual variation in interviewer performance exists. Co-ordinators, as an additional check on the quality of the interviewer's work, call back to around 2% of households to check

⁶ Households are sometimes dropped due to staffing shortages and unforeseen local circumstances.

⁷ Other includes cases where the dwelling was inaccessible, or respondent difficulty with understanding the questionnaire.

⁸ Due to the sample and questionnaire design there were situations where some initial detail was collected but they were not eligible to continue with the full AES. This would include student households or households with only older persons resident.

⁹ Eligible households were those households with individuals between the ages 25-64 who are not in continuous full-time education

the quality of the collected data.

5.2.2.5 Processing Errors

Data capture errors: These errors are minimised by logic checks and limits on values that can be keyed for each question in the electronic questionnaire at the data collection point.

Coding error: Checks are in place to minimise this risk, particularly with respect to Industry and occupational coding. The coding is conducted in-house at the CSO using an automated coding facility which is reviewed by a small team of coding experts. This approach reduces subjectivity and coding error. Overall it increases the quality and standard of coding of these key variables.

5.2.2.6 Model-related Effects

Not applicable.

5.3 Timeliness and Punctuality

5.3.1 Provisional Results

No provisional outputs are published.

5.3.2 Final Results

The AES results were published on the 29/8/2018.

5.4 Coherence

Coherence checks are carried out with auxiliary sources – for example other CSO releases such as lifelong learning reports from 2003 and 2008, other EU member states etc.

Lifelong learning data is also published by SOLAS on an annual basis. It is derived from Labour Force Survey (LFS) data (formally the Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS)). An important difference between this figure and the figure produced by SOLAS is the time period covered. The SOLAS data looks at participation in the last 4 weeks rather than the AES that looks at participation over the last 12 months. Also, the survey aims are different with the AES being specifically centred on educational participation and the LFS concentrating on employment characteristics. The structure of the survey may have an impact also as the AES is a stand-alone survey with a well-defined structure and focused training on the concepts behind the survey delivered to interviewers.

5.5 Comparability

To ensure comparability with other official statistics, standard classifications are used for this report (PES, NUTS3 region, levels of deprivation, etc.). The educational attainment classification aligns with the ISCED 2011 classification which allows for international comparison (see Appendix I).

5.6 Accessibility and Clarity

5.6.1 Assistance to Users, Special Analyses

All publications are available on the CSO website. Information on methodology is also available on the website. The background notes on the publication provide some detail on the survey.

Ad-hoc analysis can also be produced on request.

Access to a Research Microdata Files (RMFs) can be requested from the CSO under the CSO's microdata access policy. For further information see:

<http://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/dissemination/accesstomicrodatarulespoliciesandprocedures/researchaccesstomicrodatafiles/>

5.6.2 Revisions

Not applicable.

5.6.3 Publications

5.6.3.1 Releases, Regular Publications

This is the first publication based on AES data.

Previous publications on lifelong learning are available on the CSO website:

Year published	Period covered	Link to report
2010	Q3 2008	https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/releasespublications/documents/labourmarket/2008/qnhs_lifelonglearningqtr32008.pdf
2004	Q2 2003	https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/releasespublications/documents/labourmarket/2003/qnhs_lifelonglearningqtr22003.pdf

5.6.3.2 Statistical Reports

The AES contributes data to statistical releases such as the CSO Yearbook.

5.6.3.3 Internet

The AES publication is available on the CSO website. In addition, data is made available via the CSO's main databank dissemination tool and is also hosted on the CSO website in Excel format.

General area for educational releases:

<http://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/education/>

Databank tables are available under

<http://www.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/statire/SelectTable/Omrade0.asp?Planguage=0>

- People and Society
- Education
- Adult Education Survey

5.6.4 Confidentiality

The confidentiality of all information provided to the CSO by individual respondents is guaranteed by law under the 1993 Statistics Acts. All CSO office and field personnel become "Officers of Statistics" on appointment and are liable to penalties under this Act if they divulge confidential information to any outside person or body. Extreme precautions are taken to ensure that there are no violations of this principle throughout the AES survey process. The tablets on which the data was collected are encrypted and contain several layers of password protection. Data are only published in aggregate form and care is taken to ensure that the data are aggregated to

avoid the indirect identification of respondents.

6 Additional documentation and publications

Educational data on enrolments and funding of the educational system can be found on the Department of Education and Skills site: www.education.ie

Details on the national educational classification system in Ireland can be found at the Quality and Qualification Ireland site: www.qqi.ie

Further data on the educational system can be found on Statcentral – Ireland’s portal to official statistics: <http://www.statcentral.ie/viewstats.asp?type=Education>

Eurostat publish on educational matters collating data from all EU members. The overview of this area can be found here: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/education-and-training>

The AES data can be found below (along with a screenshot to show where to find the data under the navigation tree structure – red boxes mark the relevant folders):

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/education-and-training/data/database>

The screenshot shows the Eurostat website interface. At the top, there is a header with the Eurostat logo, navigation links (News, Data, Publications, About Eurostat, Help), and a search bar. Below the header, the breadcrumb trail reads: European Commission > Eurostat > Education and training > Data > Database. The main content area is divided into two sections: 'EDUCATION AND TRAINING' and 'DATABASE'. The 'DATABASE' section contains a tree structure of folders and datasets. The 'Participation in education and training (educ_part)' folder is highlighted with a red box. Within this folder, several sub-folders are listed, including 'Participation in education and training (last 12 months) (trng_aes_12m0)', 'Participation in informal learning (last 12 months) (trng_aes_12m4)', 'Access to information on education and training (last 12 months) (trng_aes_12m1)', 'Time spent on education and training (last 12 months) (trng_aes_12m2)', and 'Obstacles to participation in education and training (last 12 months) (trng_aes_12m3)'. The 'Languages (educ_lang)' folder is also highlighted with a red box, containing 'Language learning (educ_uoe_lang)' and 'Self-reported language skills (educ_lang_00)'. The 'Past series (trng_h)' folder is also visible at the bottom of the tree.

Metadata on adult learning statistics can be found here:

https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/a/a58c12f7-4370-460c-b4e3-caa92e9c06f8/REVforCVTS-AL_Metadata_HomePage.htm

Additional metadata on AES can be found here:

https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/a/d3bbb686-e9fe-4448-a74a-a35aeec43703/AL_Metadata_Section1_AES.htm

Appendix I Highest level of education attained classification

This classification is derived from a single question and refers to educational standards that have been attained and can be compared in some measurable way. The question is included in the core QNHS questionnaire on an ongoing basis and is phrased as follows: “What is the highest level of education or training you have attained?”

There are two methods of presenting results for educational attainment; the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) and the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

ISCED: UNESCO developed the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) to facilitate comparisons of education statistics and indicators across countries on the basis of uniform and internationally agreed definitions. The current revision of ISCED used in this release is ISCED 2011 (ISCED11).

For information on the ISCED11 classification, see:

<http://uis.unesco.org/en/topic/international-standard-classification-education-isced>

NFQ: The NFQ was launched in 2003 and it is now the single structure mechanism for recognising all education and training in Ireland. All framework awards now have an NFQ Level, numbered from 1 to 10, which tells you about the standard of learning and an NFQ Award-Type which tells you about the purpose, volume and progression opportunities associated with a particular award. Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) has responsibility to develop, promote and maintain the Irish NFQ.

In this release educational attainment results are presented using a descriptive name and the corresponding NFQ levels.

For information on the NFQ see:

[http://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/National-Framework-of-Qualifications-\(NFQ\).aspx](http://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/National-Framework-of-Qualifications-(NFQ).aspx)

Table A1 Educational qualifications and corresponding ISCED 11 level, NFQ level and Educational attainment level

Education Qualification		ISCED11 Level	NFQ Level	Educational Attainment Level
No formal education or training		000		Primary or below
Pre-primary education/Primary education (or FETAC Certificate at NFQ level 1 or 2)		100	1/2	Primary or below
Lower Secondary	Junior Certificate	200	3	Lower secondary
	Intermediate Certificate	200	3	
	Group Certificate	200	3	
	FÁS Introductory Skills Certificate	200	3	
	NCVA Foundation Certificate	200	3	
	FETAC Certificate at NFQ level 3	200	3	
	Equivalent Qualification at NFQ level 3	200	3	
Transition Year		200		Lower secondary
Higher Secondary	Leaving Certificate (Traditional)	304	4/5	Higher secondary
	Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP)	303	4/5	
	Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA)	303	4/5	
	Equivalent Qualification at NFQ level 4/5	300	4/5	
Technical or Vocational	Secretarial	400	4/5	Post leaving cert
	Certificate in Hotel Operations	400	4/5	
	PLC (Post Leaving Certificate Course)	400	4/5	
	FÁS National Skills Certificate	400	4/5	
	FÁS Specific Skills Certificate	400	4/5	
	FETAC level Certificate at NFQ level 4	400	4	
	FETAC level Certificate at NFQ level 5	400	5	
	Equivalent qualification at NFQ level 4/5	400	4/5	
Advance Certificate	Completed apprenticeships	400	6	Post leaving cert
	Teagasc farming or horticulture Certificate/Diploma	400	6	
	National Craft Certificate	400	6	
	FETAC advanced Certificate at NFQ level 6	400	6	
	Equivalent Qualification at NFQ level 6	400	6	
Higher Certificate	National Certificate (NCEA/DIT/IOT)	500	6	Higher certificate and equivalent
	Cadetship (army, air corps or naval service)	500	6	
	HETAC/DIT Higher Certificate at NFQ level 6	500	6	
	Equivalent qualification at NFQ level 6	500	6	
Diploma	National Diploma (HETAC/NCEA e.g. 3 year diploma)	500	7	Ordinary degree or equivalent
	Bachelor Degree (DIT)	500	7	
	Equivalent qualification at NFQ level 7	600	7	
Ordinary Bachelor Degree at NFQ level 7		600	7	Ordinary degree or equivalent
Honours Bachelor Degree, Graduate Diploma or Higher Diploma at NFQ level 8		600	8	Honours bachelor degree or equivalent
Professional (Honours Bachelor Degree equivalent or higher)		600	8	Honours bachelor degree or equivalent
Post-Graduate (e.g. Post Graduate Diploma or Masters degree at NFQ level 9)		700	9	Postgraduate qualification
Doctorate or higher (e.g. Doctoral Degree/higher Doctorate at NFQ level 10)		800	10	Postgraduate qualification