

Census of Population 2002, Education and Qualifications

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Summary

The document looks at the Education situation within Wexford as part of the Census of Population 2002 and compares the County, South East region and State across various areas including Educational attainment, Age at which education ceased and the Subject areas of those who are qualified to Third Level.

- The highest level of educational attainment for most of Wexford's, the South East's and the States' population is Upper Secondary. In 1996, the highest level for Wexford's population was Primary level.
- There has been a high increase in the percentage of the County's population with a Third Level qualification
- Although the proportion of Wexford's population whose highest educational attainment is Upper secondary and Third Level: non Degree is almost equivalent to the Region and State, there is a marked difference in the relative proportion qualified to Third level: Degree level.
- Compared to 1996 figures, there is a marked decrease in the proportion of the population who ceased their education before 17 years and an increase in those who ceased their education after 18 years. The most common age to leave school in the county is still under 15 years, the Region 18 years and the State 16 years.
- Of those qualified to Third Level standard, the most common subject area to be qualified in the county and region is the Medical or a related discipline. The most common discipline to be qualified in the State are the Social Sciences, Business or Law area.

Wexford appears to be developing in a positive direction, with increases in the proportion of the population who are qualified to higher levels than previous Census have shown. However, when compared to the South East region and the State as a whole, Wexford still has some work to do.

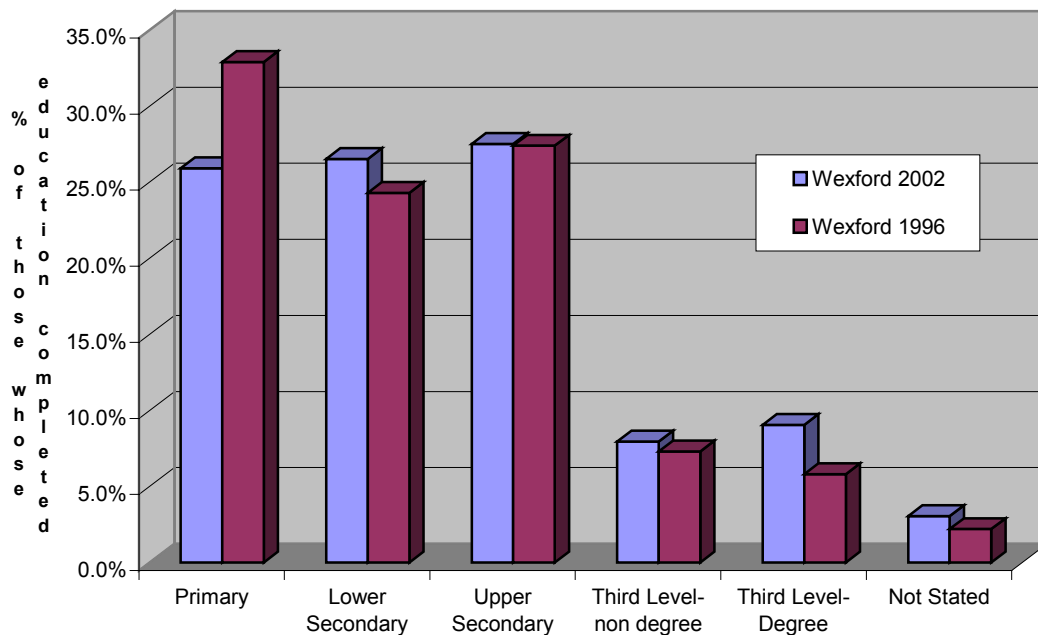
Introduction

This document is the fourth in the series of reports based on statistics derived from the Census of Population 2002. This report is a synopsis of the report titled: 'Education and Qualifications' and can be sourced from the Central Statistics Office, Dublin.

Level of Educational attainment

Wexford's educational attainment is increasing at a steady rate of progress. As reported in Census 2002 Socio-Economic results, the most common highest level of Educational attainment for the County, Region and indeed the State is Upper Secondary level. For Wexford, this shows that there have been some improvements made in increasing the educational attainment of the county. In 1996, the most common highest level of educational attainment was by far Primary level, at 32.9% of the Population whose education had ceased. This now has decreased to 25.9% of the population whose education has ceased. The following Chart illustrates the increases made. Also, the Chart shows the major increase in the proportion of the population with education to Degree level, expressed as a proportion of those whose education has ceased.

Highest Level of Educational attainment 1996 & 2002

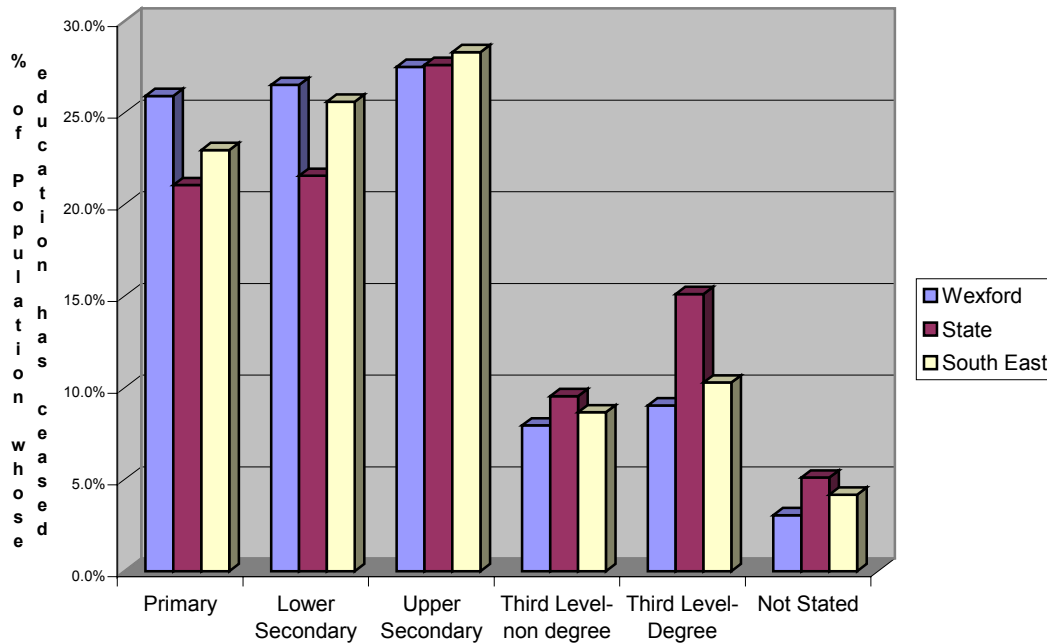


Highest level of Education attained – County Wexford 1996 and 2002

	Primary	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary	Third Level-non degree	Third Level-Degree	Not Stated
Wexford 2002	25.9%	26.5%	27.5%	7.9%	9.0%	3.1%
Wexford 1996	32.9%	24.3%	27.4%	7.3%	5.8%	2.2%

The following chart shows that although the rate of educational attainment is improving, there is still some work to be done in bringing the level of Educational attainment up to the Regional and State average.

Highest Level of Education attained Wexford, South East, State 2002



Highest level of Education attained, Wexford, South East and State 2002

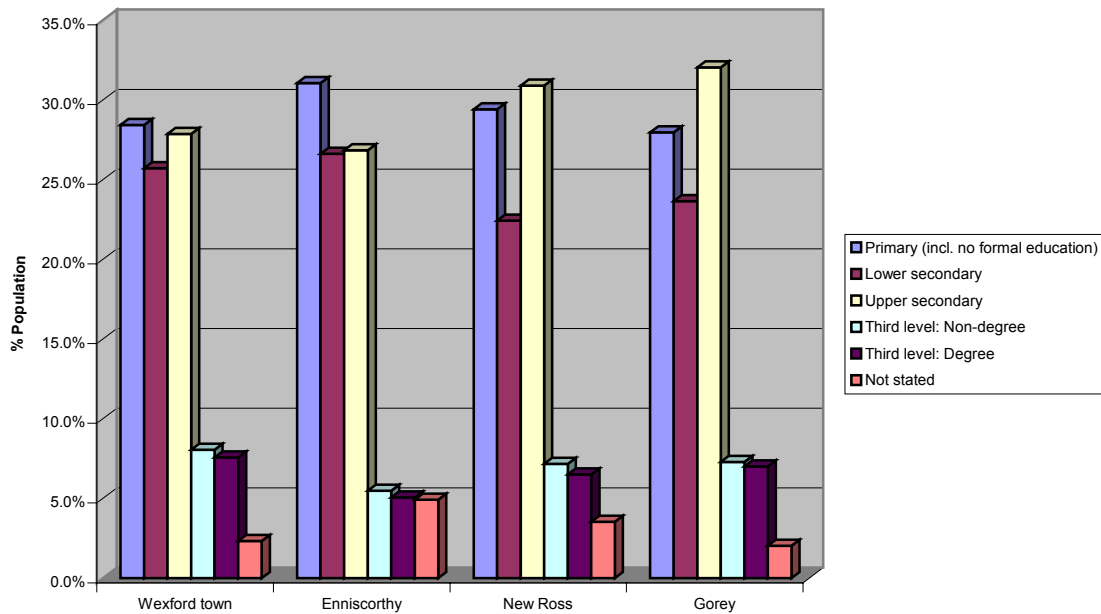
	Primary	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary	Third Level-non degree	Third Level-Degree	Not Stated
Wexford	25.9%	26.5%	27.5%	7.9%	9.0%	3.1%
State	21.1%	21.6%	27.6%	9.5%	15.1%	5.1%
South East	23.0%	25.6%	28.3%	8.7%	10.3%	4.2%

The chart shows that the highest level of educational attainment for the region, State and County in 2002 was Upper Secondary. Looking in particular at the proportion of those

whose highest educational attainment was Upper Secondary and Third Level: non-degree level, Wexford is almost at a par with the State and the South East region, based on the percentage of the population whose education has ceased. However, the gap between the educational attainment of the population of County, Region with the State widens when we look at the proportion of the population who have attained Third Level: degree status. This statistic perhaps adds further weight to the argument that the proximity to a University has an effect on the educational attainment of the population of an area.¹

Highest level of Education completed :Wexford Towns

Highest level of education completed in each town 2002



Highest Level of educational attainment, Wexford Towns 2002

	Primary (incl. no formal education)	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Third level: Non-degree	Third level: Degree	Not stated
Wexford town	28.4%	25.7%	27.9%	8.1%	7.6%	2.3%
Enniscorthy	31.1%	26.6%	26.8%	5.5%	5.1%	4.9%
New Ross	29.4%	22.4%	30.9%	7.2%	6.5%	3.5%
Gorey	28.0%	23.7%	32.0%	7.3%	7.0%	2.0%

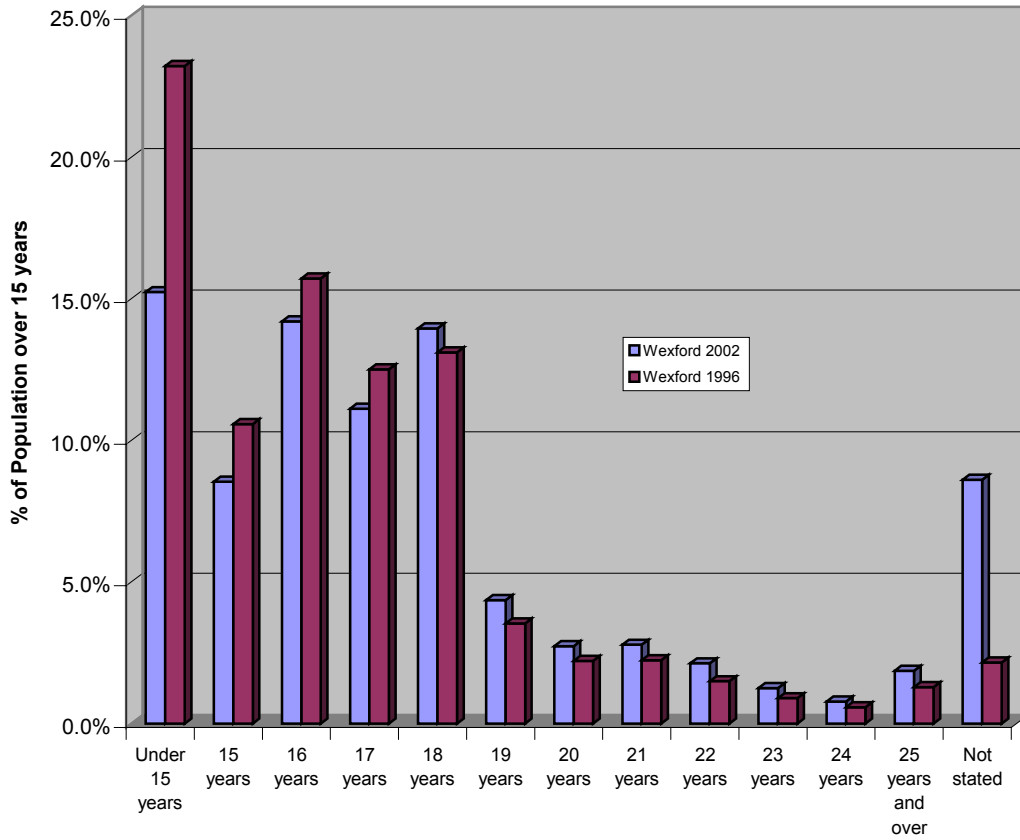
¹HEA (2001) College Entry in Focus: A Fourth National survey of Access to Higher Education

From the chart and table above, we can see that Enniscorthy town has the highest percentage of population over 15 years who have solely Primary Education, with 31.1% falling into that category. Enniscorthy town also has the highest percentage population whose highest education attained was Lower Secondary education with 26.6% of the population over 15 years in that category. Gorey town has the highest percentage population whose highest level attained was Upper Secondary at 32.0% of the population reaching that level. Wexford town meanwhile has the highest % Population over 15 years with Third Level education, both at Degree and Non-degree level.

Age at which education ceased

The following chart compares the age at which the population of the County ceased their education in 1996 and 2002, expressed as a proportion of the population aged 15 years or over. The chart shows a positive development of a decrease in the proportion of those who ceased their education at 17 years or under and an increase in those who have ceased their education at 18 years or over.

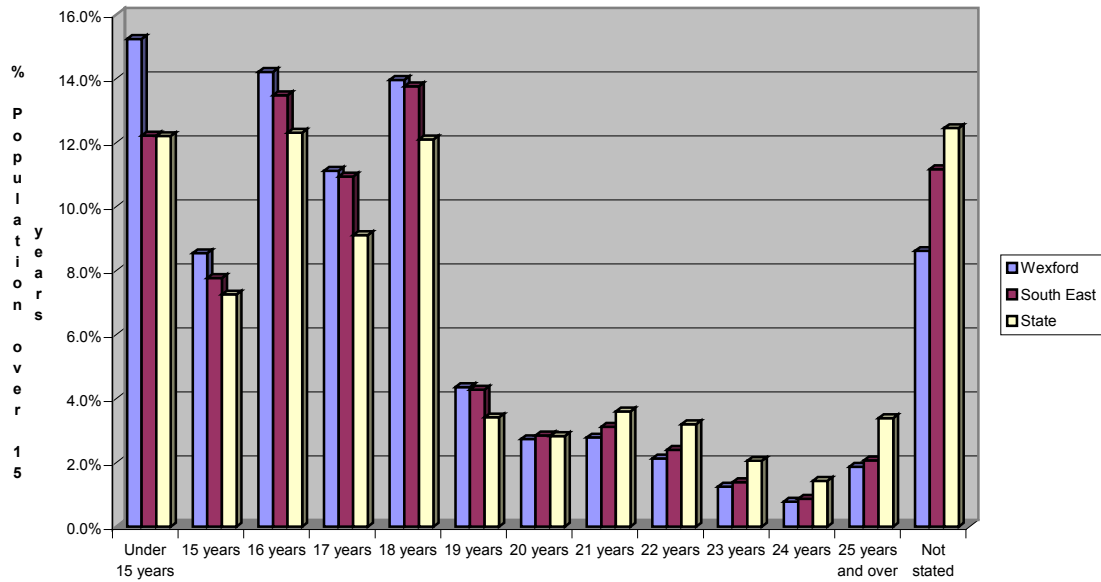
Age at which Education ceased :Wexford 1996 and 2002



However, as the following chart shows, despite the decrease in those who say they left school before 18 years, Wexford’s population still ceased their education at an earlier age than the population of the South East region or the State.

This chart shows the age at which the Population of Wexford, South East and the State ceased their education, expressed as a proportion of the total number of those who have ceased their education. Wexford’s population ceased their education at an earlier age than the population of the Region and the State with the largest proportion of the county’s population leaving school before the age of 15 years. The most common age to cease education in the South East region was 18 years and in the State, 16 years.

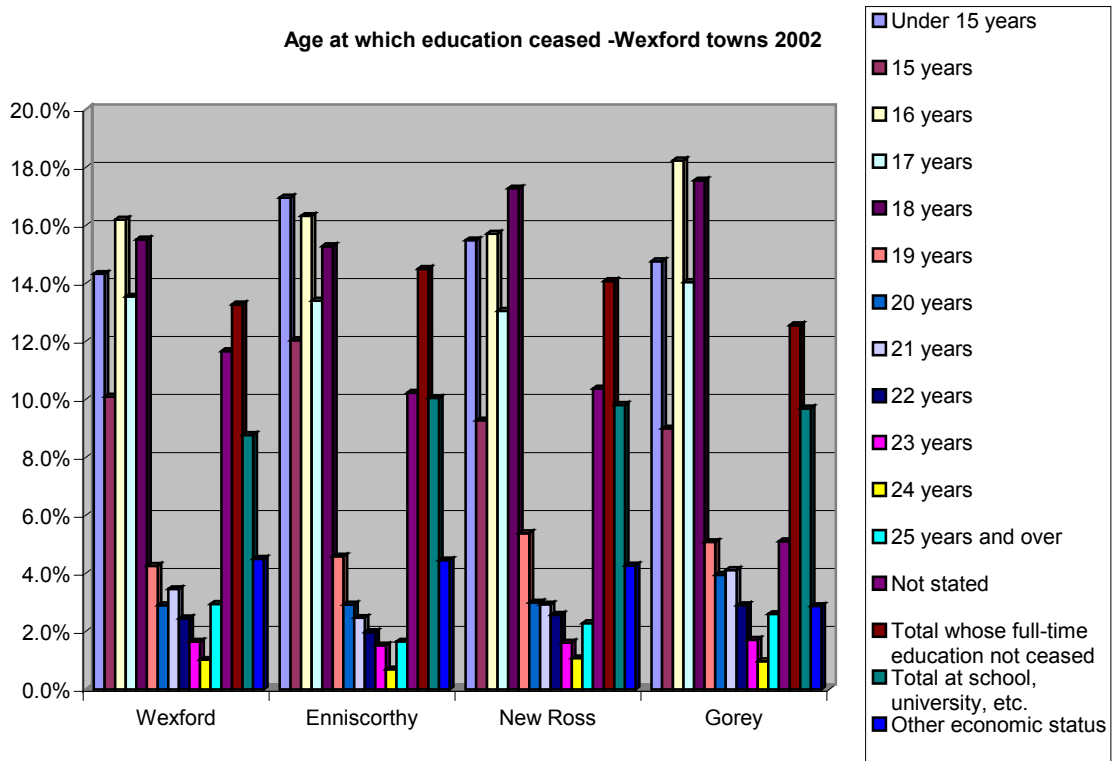
Age at which Education ceased 2002



Age at which education ceased: Wexford Towns

Looking more specifically at Wexford’s towns, the following chart compares the age at which the population ceased their education in Enniscorthy, Wexford, New Ross and Gorey.

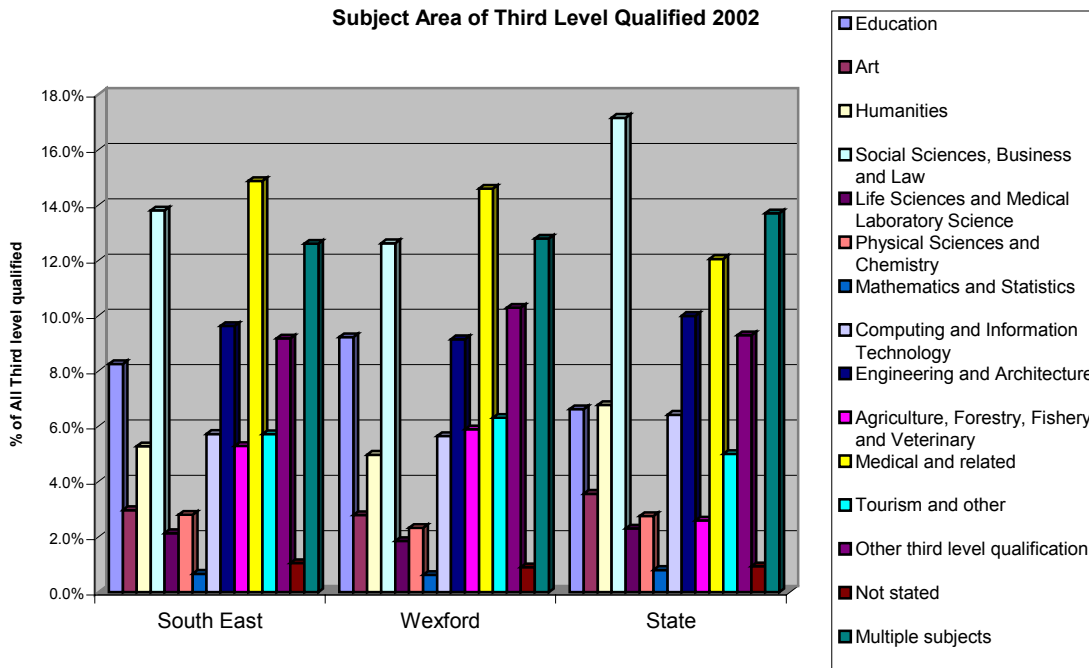
While Enniscorthy town has the highest proportion of population in the county who left school at 15 years and under, it also has the highest proportion population whose full time education hasn’t ceased and in turn, the highest proportion of population at school or University.



It is interesting to note that for those who have left school, 16 years was the most common age for leaving school in Gorey town and Wexford town. 18 years was the most common age for those leaving school in New Ross town with a high proportion of the population also leaving school at this age in Gorey Town.

Subject area of those who have a Third Level qualification

The following Chart shows the subject area of those who have Third Level qualifications, in the County, Region and State 2002. The highest proportion of population in the county and the Region, of those with a Third Level qualification, are qualified in a Medical or related discipline while the largest proportion of the Population of the State are qualified in the Social Sciences, Business and Law disciplines. The South East region and Wexford County also have a high proportion qualified in these disciplines. Wexford County appears to have a higher proportion of graduates with qualifications in the Education area than the Region or the State. Wexford has also a marginally higher population proportion qualified in Agriculture related and Tourism related areas.

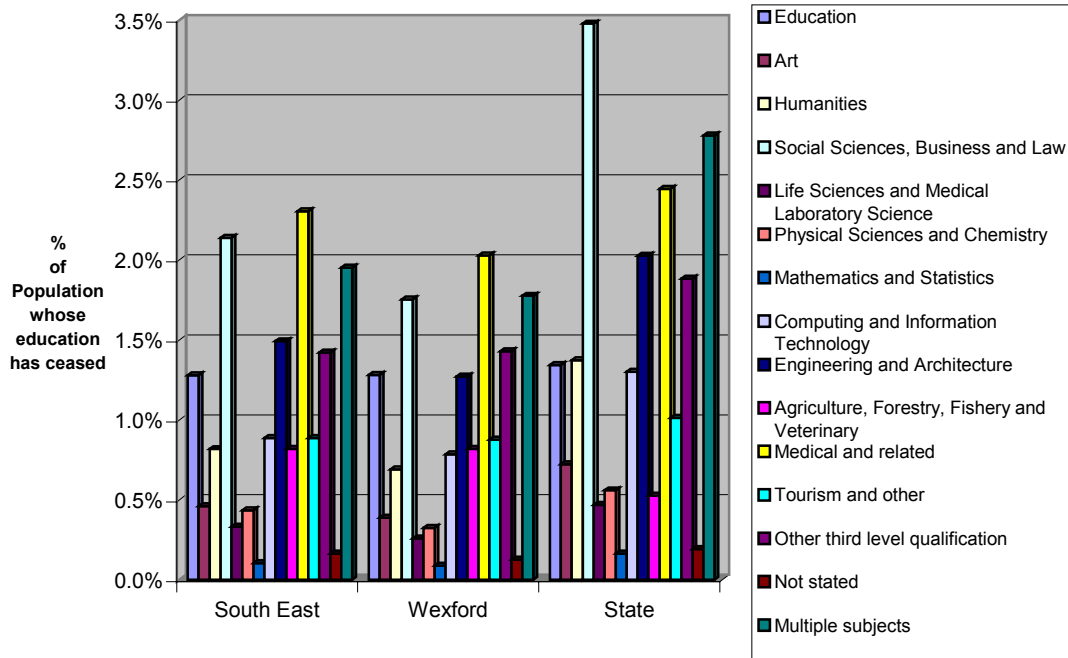


As opposed to the above chart which compares the subject area of all those qualified to Third level, the following chart compares the subject area of those with a Third Level qualification as a percentage of all those whose education has ceased, across the County, Region and State. The purpose of this is to compare the *rate* of educational attainment to Third Level *across subject areas* within the County, South East region and State.

The Chart below gives marginally different results to the above Chart. The difference between the proportion of Wexford graduates and State graduates qualified within the Social Sciences, Business and Law disciplines is the most pronounced difference with a much lower percentage of the county's population qualified in these disciplines. In the previous chart, the county appeared to have a higher proportion of Education graduates, the Chart shows that as a percentage of all those whose education has ceased, this is almost at a par with the region and the State. Also, the proportion of Medical and related graduates, although high is still below the State and region average.

One other point of note is that a lower proportion of Wexford's graduates are qualified in multiple subject areas than in the Region or state. This may have repercussions in times of high unemployment with Wexford's graduates perhaps not as adaptable as their regional or national counterparts.

**Subject area of those Third Level qualified as a % of those whose Education has ceased
2002**



Subject areas of those with a Third Level qualification in Wexford's towns

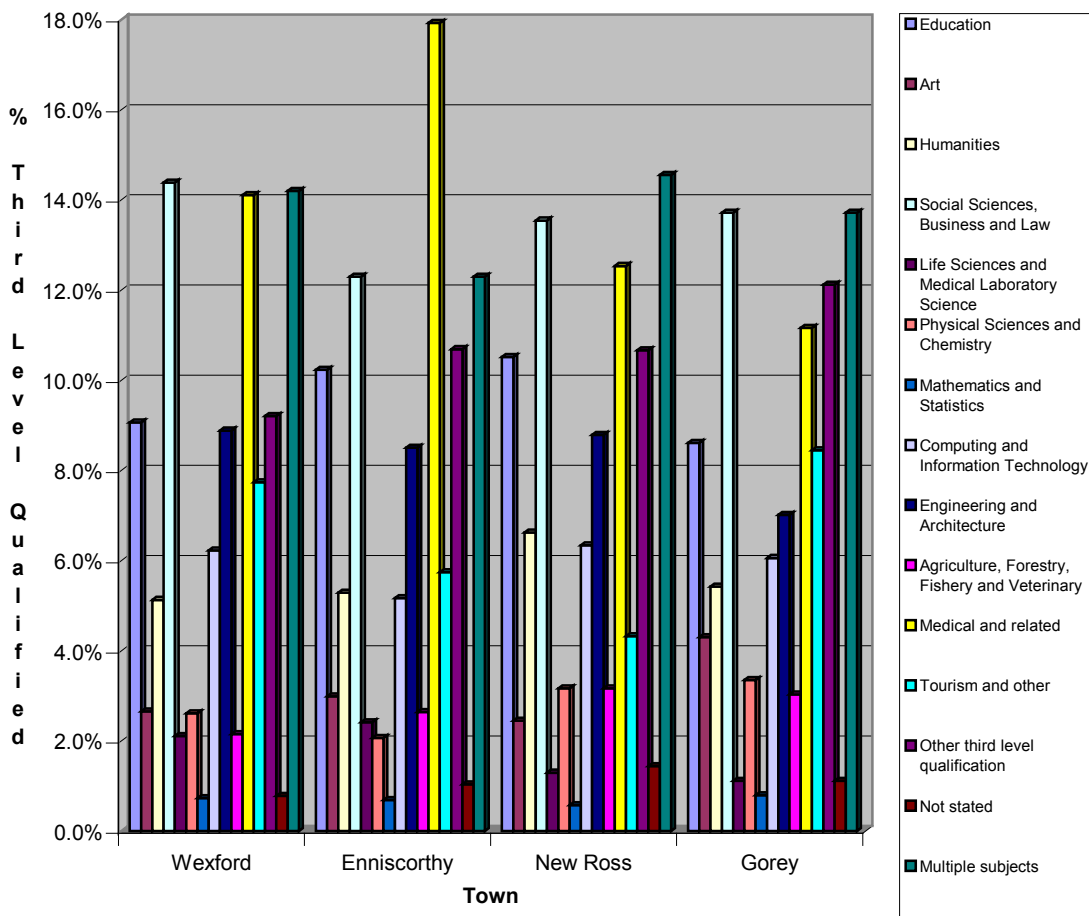
Finally, the following chart looks at the differing subject areas of those with a Third Level qualification in Wexford's towns. The chart compares these as a proportion of all those Third Level qualified within each town.

Looking more closely at the Population of Wexford towns and their relative Third Level qualifications, Enniscorthy has a high percentage population with Medical and related qualifications (almost 18% of Population with a Third Level qualification) due in no small part to the existence of medical related company within the area. This subject area is also popular in Wexford town.

Following on from the high proportion of those with an educational qualification in the county, New Ross has the highest proportion of those with an Education related Third Level qualification. The 'Multiple Subject' areas are one of the most common subject areas in all of the towns.

The Social Sciences, Business and Law areas are the most common individual subject areas of qualification for the population of the other Wexford towns of Gorey, New Ross and Wexford. Expressed as a percentage of all those qualified to Third Level, New Ross has the highest percentage population qualified in multiple subject areas. New Ross also appears to have the highest proportional employment in education of the four towns at over 10% of those qualified to Third Level. The Tourism and related area appears to be another popular subject area, particularly in the Gorey and Wexford town areas.

Subject Area of Third Level attainees 2002



Conclusion

The document looks at the education situation within Wexford and compares the county, South East region and State across various areas including Educational attainment, age at which education ceased and the subject areas of those who are qualified to Third Level.

- The highest level of educational attainment for most of Wexford's, the South East's and the States' population is Upper Secondary. In 1996, the highest level for Wexford's population was Primary level.
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- Of those qualified to Third Level standard, the most common subject area to be qualified in the county and region is the Medical or a related discipline. The most common discipline to be qualified in the State are the Social Sciences, Business or Law area.

As previous reports have indicated, Wexford appears to be developing in a positive direction, with increases in the proportion of the population who are qualified to higher levels than previous Census have shown. However, when compared to the South East region and the State as a whole, Wexford still has some work to do.