

End of cycle report

2017

Patterns by geography



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Acceptances by country of provider and domicile

Each year, over half a million people from across the UK are accepted to higher education through UCAS. Most are accepted onto courses at providers located in the same country to that in which they are domiciled, but a substantial number are accepted to providers located elsewhere in the UK. Political, social, and economic differences across the countries of the UK, combined with differences in the education systems, and HE funding and student support arrangements, will tend to inform the relative patterns of applications to HE across UK countries. These patterns are investigated through acceptances by domicile groups to providers in each of the four countries of the UK.

Acceptances to providers in England from outside the EU increase, but falls from other domicile groups

Figure 4.1 shows the number of acceptances to providers in England by domicile. Around 85 per cent (84 per cent in 2017) of all acceptances to providers in England are from applicants domiciled in England. As such, the number of acceptances from England is shown on a separate scale to acceptances from other domiciles.

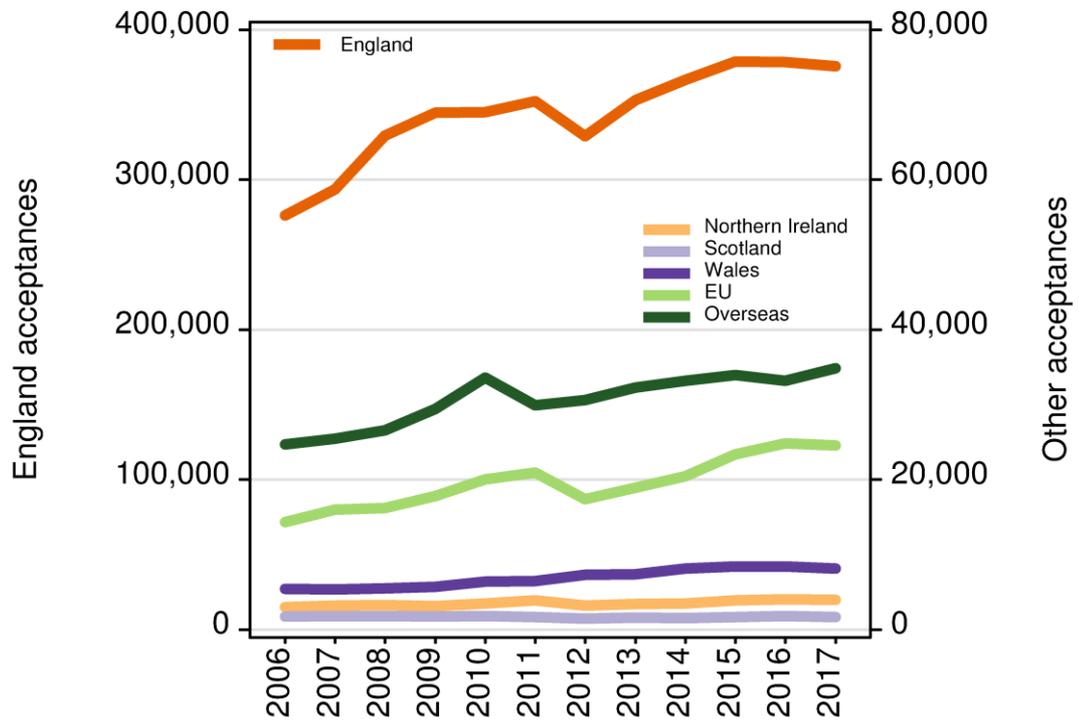
In 2017, there were 448,480 acceptances to providers in England, 0.5 per cent lower than in 2016, a fall of 2,065. The number of acceptances from applicants domiciled in England was 375,410, a fall of 2,900 (-0.8 per cent), but still the third highest on record.

Acceptances from outside the EU accounted for 7.8 per cent of all acceptances in 2017, making them the second largest domicile group in terms of the share of acceptances to English providers. This year, 34,805 applicants from outside the EU were accepted to providers in England, the highest on record. This was an increase of 1,625 (+4.9 per cent), more than overturning the fall in 2016. The increase this year brings the number to a level consistent with the longer term trend.

The EU is the third largest domicile group in terms of acceptances to providers in England. There were more acceptances to providers in England from the EU than from Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales combined. After increasing every year since 2012, the number of acceptances from the EU fell this year by 270, to 24,565. This was a fall of 1.0 per cent, but around 8 per cent lower than what might have been expected given the trend of year-on-year increases that began in 2013.

Around 3 per cent of acceptances to providers in England are from Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. This year, there were 8,150 acceptances from Wales, 3,925 from Northern Ireland, and 1,625 from Scotland.

Figure 4.1 Acceptances to providers in England by domicile



Highest number of Scottish applicants accepted to providers in Scotland

Figure 4.2 shows the number of acceptances to providers in Scotland split by domicile. Due to the small number of applicants from Wales that are accepted to providers in Scotland (typically fewer than 150 each year), the numbers for Wales are not shown.

In 2014, there were fewer very late acceptances to some providers in Scotland, which means the number reported in that year could be underestimated by up to 2,000. In 2015, around 120 courses at Scottish providers which were previously part of the UCAS Teacher Training scheme, moved into the UCAS Undergraduate scheme. As such, the number of applicants and acceptances to Scottish providers in 2015 recorded through UCAS will include those which were previously part of UCAS Teacher Training. Taken together, this means comparing numbers in the 2014 and 2015 cycles with other cycles may not give an accurate representation of change.

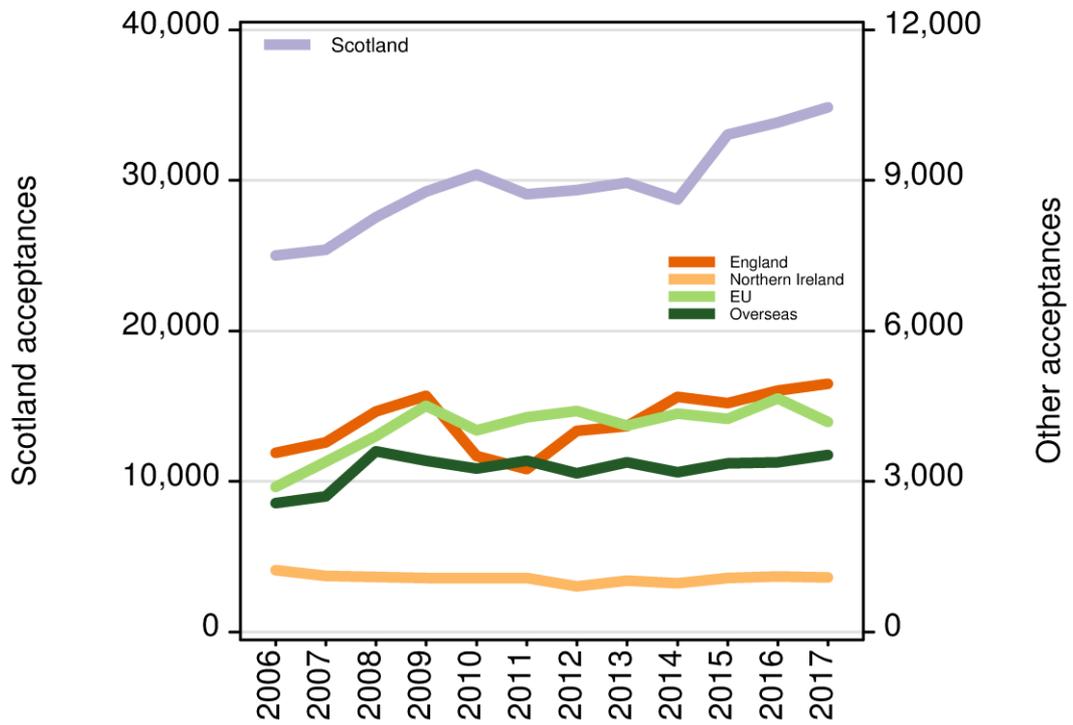
Around 70 per cent (72 per cent in 2017) of acceptances to providers in Scotland are typically from applicants domiciled in Scotland (only 5 per cent of Scottish applicants who are accepted through UCAS are accepted to providers outside of Scotland). The number of acceptances in 2017 was 34,830, an increase of 1,005 (+3.0 per cent) on 2016, and the highest on record.

Except for a slight fall in 2015, the number of acceptances from England to providers in Scotland increased every year since 2011. In 2017, there were 4,945 acceptances to Scottish providers from England, the highest on record and an increase of 2.8 per cent (+135 acceptances) on 2016.

The number of acceptances from the EU (excluding the UK), and from outside of the EU, remained broadly constant across the reporting period. This year, the number from the EU fell by 470 (-10 per cent) to 4,175, while the number from outside the EU increased to 3,520 (+145, +4.3 per cent).

Since 2006, the number of acceptances from Northern Ireland to providers in Scotland has varied between 900 and 1,200. This year, the number accepted stood at 1,080.

Figure 4.2 Acceptances to providers in Scotland by domicile



Note: Due to the small number of acceptances, the pattern for Wales is not shown.

Acceptances from Wales to providers in Wales increase, but acceptances from England to providers in Wales fall

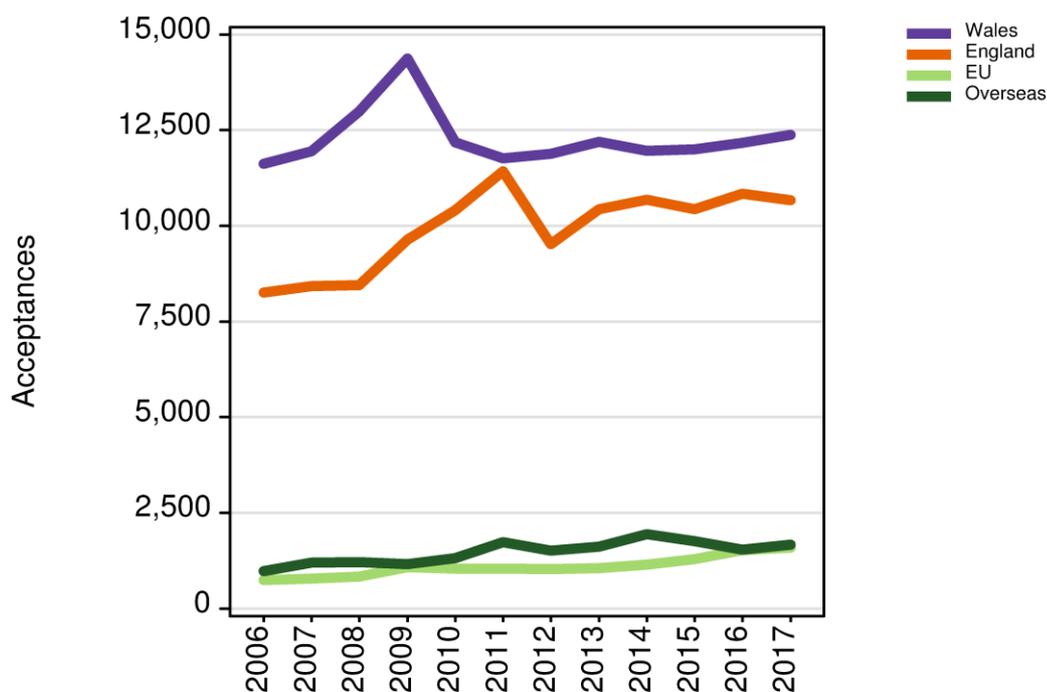
Figure 4.3 shows the number of acceptances to providers in Wales for each of the domicile groups. Due to the small number of applicants from Northern Ireland and Scotland that are accepted (which typically total fewer than 250 each year) patterns for these countries are not shown.

In total, there were 26,520 acceptances to providers in Wales in 2017, a 0.9 per cent increase compared to 2016, equating to an additional 230 acceptances.

Substantial proportions of acceptances to providers in Wales come from applicants domiciled in England and applicants domiciled in Wales. In 2017, 47 per cent of acceptances to providers in Wales were from applicants domiciled in Wales, while 40 per cent were from England. The number of acceptances from Wales to providers in Wales has increased every year since 2014, and this year reached 12,375, an increase of 205 (+1.7 per cent). This is the highest number since 2009.

The number accepted from England fell this year to 10,660, by 170 (-1.6 per cent). There were 1,590 acceptances from the EU to providers in Wales this year (+70, +4.6 per cent), and 1,670 acceptances from outside the EU (+135, +8.7 per cent). This is the highest number of acceptances from outside the EU, and also the highest number of acceptances from outside the UK on record.

Figure 4.3 Acceptances to providers in Wales by domicile



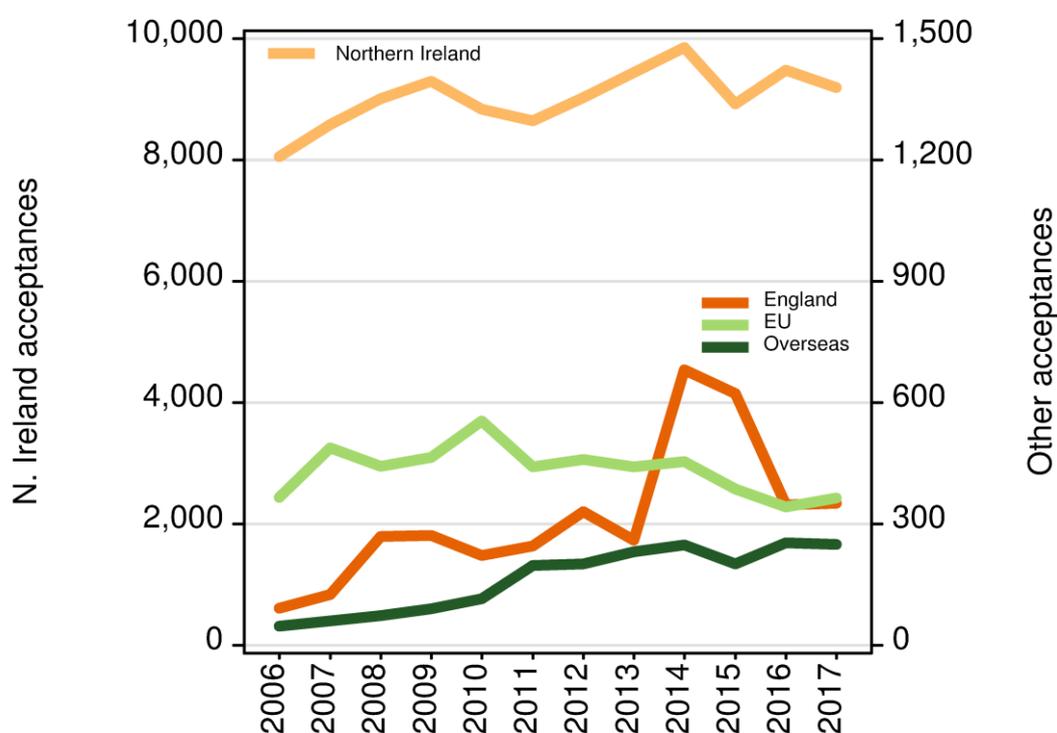
Note: Due to the small number of acceptances, the patterns for Northern Ireland and Scotland are not shown.

Nine out of every ten acceptances to providers in Northern Ireland are domiciled in Northern Ireland

Figure 4.4 shows the number of acceptances to providers in Northern Ireland split by domicile. Due to the small number of applicants from Scotland and Wales (which typically total fewer than 50 each year) patterns for these countries are not shown. There were 10,205 acceptances to providers in Northern Ireland in 2017, the lowest number for providers in any of the four UK countries.

Most acceptances to providers in Northern Ireland were from those domiciled in Northern Ireland. This year, there were 9,195 acceptances from Northern Ireland – accounting for 90 per cent of all acceptances to providers in this country. This was 285 fewer than in 2016, a fall of 3 per cent. Acceptances from England (350), the EU (365), and non-EU (250) were broadly unchanged from 2016.

Figure 4.4 Acceptances to providers in Northern Ireland by domicile



Note: Due to the small number of acceptances, the patterns for Scotland and Wales are not shown.

Entry rates by region

Acceptances across UK geographies can be reported using entry rates. Two types of entry rates are used, the 18 year old entry rate (defined as the proportion of the 18 year old population accepted into higher education aged 18), and the cohort entry rate (defined as the proportion of the 18 year old population accepted by the age of 19). These entry rates account for the size of the underlying population, and so give an accurate measure of the probability that a young person will enter HE from a particular area, in a particular year.

18 year olds from London more likely to enter HE compared to elsewhere in the UK

Figure 4.5 shows the geographical pattern of 18 year old entry rates in 2017 on a map designed so that the size of each area approximates the size of its population, and their arrangement approximates the geographical locations of the areas.

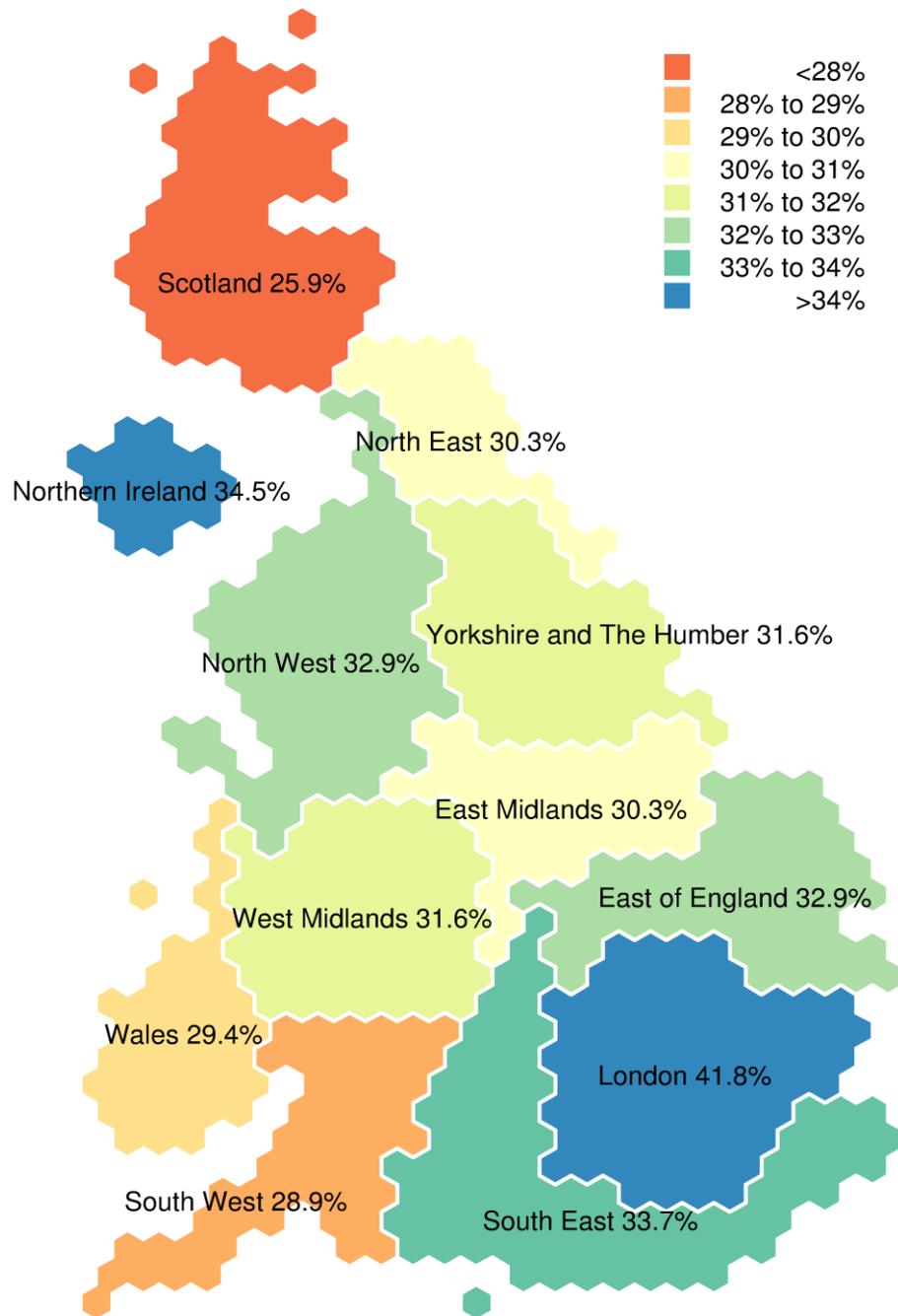
In 2017, the highest entry rate was in London, where 41.8 per cent of the 18 year old population was accepted to HE. This means 18 year olds from London were more likely than 18 year olds anywhere else in England (and the UK more generally) to be accepted into higher education this year. In England, the region with the second highest entry rate was the South East, where 33.7 per cent of 18 year olds entered HE this year.

London and the South East were the only regions in England where the entry rates were higher than the entry rate for the country as a whole, which in 2017 was 33.3 per cent. All other regions of England had entry rates lower than that for England. However, every region, except the South West – which had the lowest entry rate of all English regions at 28.9 per cent – had an entry rate greater than 30 per cent.

The differences in entry rate across regions meant that, in 2017, 18 year olds from London, the region with the highest entry rate, were 44 per cent more likely to enter HE than those from the South West, the region with the lowest entry rates.

Elsewhere in the UK, Northern Ireland had the second highest entry rate in the UK, of 34.5 per cent. The entry rate in Wales was 29.4 per cent, while in Scotland it was 25.9 per cent (though not all higher education in Scotland is recorded by UCAS – see the note at the end of this report for further details).

Figure 4.5 Entry rates in 2017 for UK 18 year olds by region and country



Entry rates have increased in all regions of England to the highest recorded levels

The trends in entry rates for regions in England are shown in Figure 4.6. Since 2012 (when entry rates fell), the entry rates in all regions increased each year, and reached their highest ever levels in 2017.

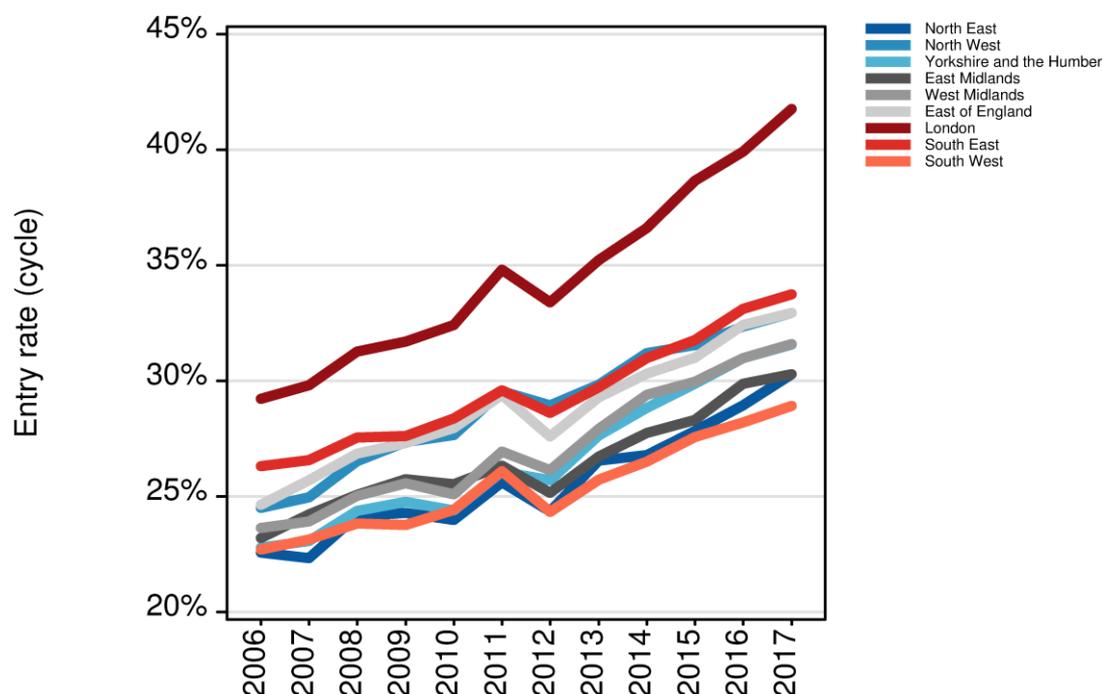
Along with the North East, London had the biggest increase in entry rate this year. In London the entry rate increased by 1.8 percentage points, and in the North East it increased by 1.3 percentage points. This meant 18 year olds in both of these regions were 4.6 per cent more likely to be accepted into HE this year compared to last year. The region with the smallest increase in entry rate this year was the East Midlands, which had an entry rate of 30.3 per cent, an increase of 0.4 percentage points, meaning 18 year olds from this region were 1.4 per cent more likely to enter HE compared to 2016.

Entry rates in the other English regions increased by between 0.5 and 0.7 percentage points, meaning 18 year olds were between 1.6 and 2.6 per cent more likely to be accepted into HE this year, compared to 2016.

Between 2006 and 2017, entry rates in all regions increased by more than a quarter. The biggest increase was in London, where 18 year olds were 43 per cent more likely to be accepted into HE in 2017 than they were 11 years before. 18 year olds in Yorkshire and the Humber were 39 per cent more likely to be accepted than they were in 2006, while those in the North East, North West, West Midlands, and the East of England were over a third more likely. Across England as a whole, 18 year olds were 35 per cent more likely to enter HE this year than they were in 2006.

Since 2012, the growth in entry rates in London has been among the largest in England. In 2017, 18 year olds in London were, on average, 25 per cent more likely to enter HE than across England as a whole.

Figure 4.6 Trend in 18 year old entry rates by English region



Over half of young people in London enter HE by the age of 19

Entry rates for single age groups do not account for changes in the age at which they enter, and can make it difficult to interpret whether young people are becoming more or less likely to enter higher education. One measure that is less influenced by changes in age of entry is a cohort-based entry rate, which combines entry into higher education for applicants aged 18 and 19.

It has the advantage that it is unaffected by changes in the choice to apply and be accepted at age 18 or 19. It has the disadvantage that it cannot yet report a complete rate for the cohort aged 18 in 2017, since they are yet to have the opportunity to apply aged 19. Figure 4.7 shows the proportion of a young cohort (referenced by the year the cohort would be 18) that is accepted for entry aged either 18 or 19 for each region in England.

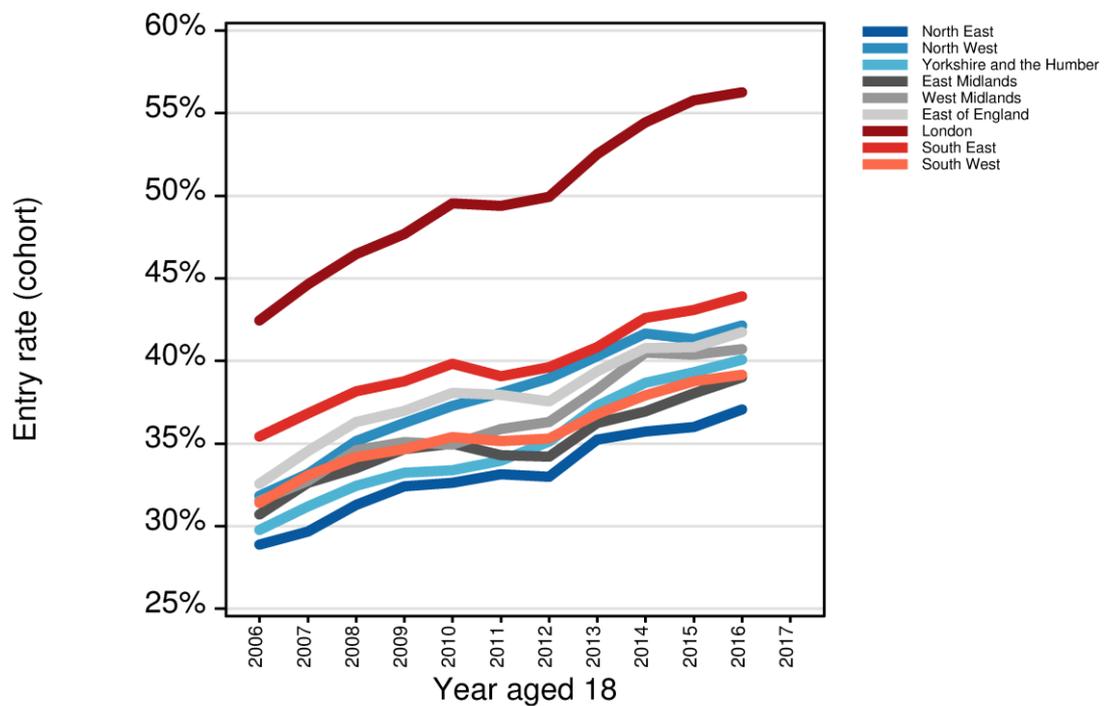
For all regions, the cohort entry rates were higher at the end of the reporting period than at the beginning, with increases in most years. Throughout the period, young people from London were the most likely to enter HE by the age of 19, with an entry rate of 56.3 per cent for those aged 18 in 2016.

The South East had the second highest cohort entry rate throughout the reporting period, reaching 43.9 per cent for those aged 18 in 2016. Entry rates for the other regions ranged between 42.2 per cent for the North West, through to 37.1 per cent for the North East, which had the lowest cohort entry rate throughout the period.

As with entry aged 18, the cohort entry rates show a large gap between London and the other English regions. For those aged 18 in 2016, the cohort entry rate for London was 12.4 percentage points (28 per cent) higher than for the South East. This difference is bigger than the gap between the rest of the regions, with the cohort entry rate for the South East being 6.8 percentage points (18 per cent) higher than for the North East.

Furthermore, the gap between London and the other English regions has grown across the period. At the start of the period, young people from London were 27 per cent more likely to enter HE by the age of 19 compared to young people from England as a whole (which had a cohort entry rate of 33.4 per cent). By the end of the period, young people from London were 30 per cent more likely to enter HE than for England as a whole (cohort entry rate for England was 43.3 per cent for those aged 18 in 2016).

Figure 4.7 Trend in cohort entry rates by English region



Entry rates by parliamentary constituency

There are 650 parliamentary constituencies in the UK (533 in England, 59 in Scotland, 40 in Wales, and 18 in Northern Ireland). Parliamentary constituencies are much smaller than regions, with 18 year old populations of typically just over 1,000, and are designed to have a more uniform population size than other geographies. This makes them a particularly suitable geographical unit for reporting entry rates.

Entry rates of 18 year olds vary across constituencies from 15 to 62 per cent

Figure 4.8 shows all the parliamentary constituencies in the UK. In this map, each parliamentary constituency is shown as a circle, where the size of each circle approximates the size of the constituency population, and their arrangement approximates the geographical locations of the constituencies.

The proportion of 18 year olds in a constituency who enter higher education through UCAS varied from 15 per cent to 62 per cent in 2017. Young people living in the constituencies with the highest entry rates were four times more likely to enter higher education than those living in constituencies with the lowest rates.

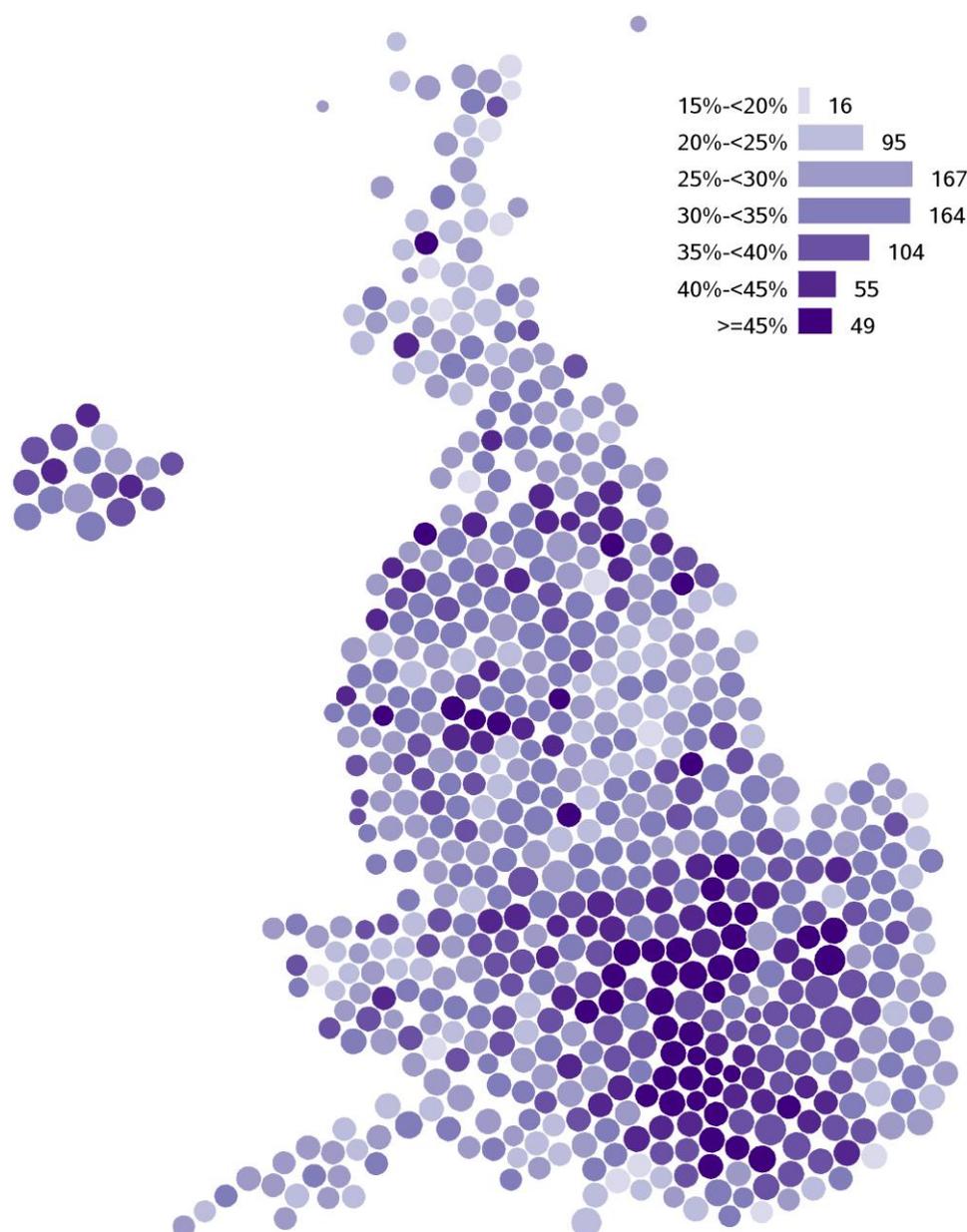
Entry rates also vary between constituencies within a region. In the South East (the region with the most variation in entry rates in 2017), entry rates ranged from 16 per cent in the constituency with the lowest entry rate, to 57 per cent in the constituency with the highest entry rate. This was a 40 percentage point range in entry rates within the region, with 18 year olds in the constituency with the highest entry rate in the region being almost three and a half times more likely to enter higher education than those in the constituency with the lowest entry rate. In the North East, the English region with the least variation, entry rates ranged from 23 to 42 per cent, a range of 19 percentage points, meaning those in the constituency with the highest rate were 82 per cent more likely to enter HE than those in the constituency with the lowest rate.

Similar variation was seen among parliamentary constituencies outside of England. In Wales, entry rates ranged between 19 per cent and 43 per cent, while in Northern Ireland, they ranged between 21 per cent and 42 per cent.

In Scotland, entry rates ranged between 15 per cent and 47 per cent. Around one third of young entrants in Scotland will be studying higher education at a further education college in Scotland which is not recorded through UCAS. The proportion studying in further education colleges in some constituencies can be higher, at around half. This means UCAS entry rates in these constituencies will understate total HE entry rates, including HE in further education colleges, by up to one half in certain cases.

Just over half of parliamentary constituencies had 18 year old entry rates that fall within a 10 percentage point band between 25 per cent and 35 per cent. There were 16 constituencies that had entry rates lower than 20 per cent, and 49 constituencies with rates of 45 per cent or higher.

Figure 4.8 Entry rates in 2017 for UK 18 year olds by parliamentary constituency



Entry rates have increased in over 95 per cent of constituencies since 2006

The relatively small population of constituencies means that changes in entry rates from one cycle to the next can have a high ratio of random variation, compared to the level of underlying annual change. Looking at changes over a longer period, where underlying changes may be greater, can reduce this.

In 2006, the entry rates were lower than in 2017 for most constituencies, with most constituencies (over 80 per cent) having entry rates of between 15 and 35 per cent. Between 2006 and 2017, entry rates increased in the majority of constituencies. In 24 constituencies (4 per cent), the entry rate in 2017 was lower than the entry rate in 2006. In contrast, the entry rates in 135 constituencies (one in five of all

constituencies), increased by 50 per cent proportionally during the same period, and in 13 constituencies, it doubled.

Figure 4.9 Entry rates in 2006 for UK 18 year olds by parliamentary constituency

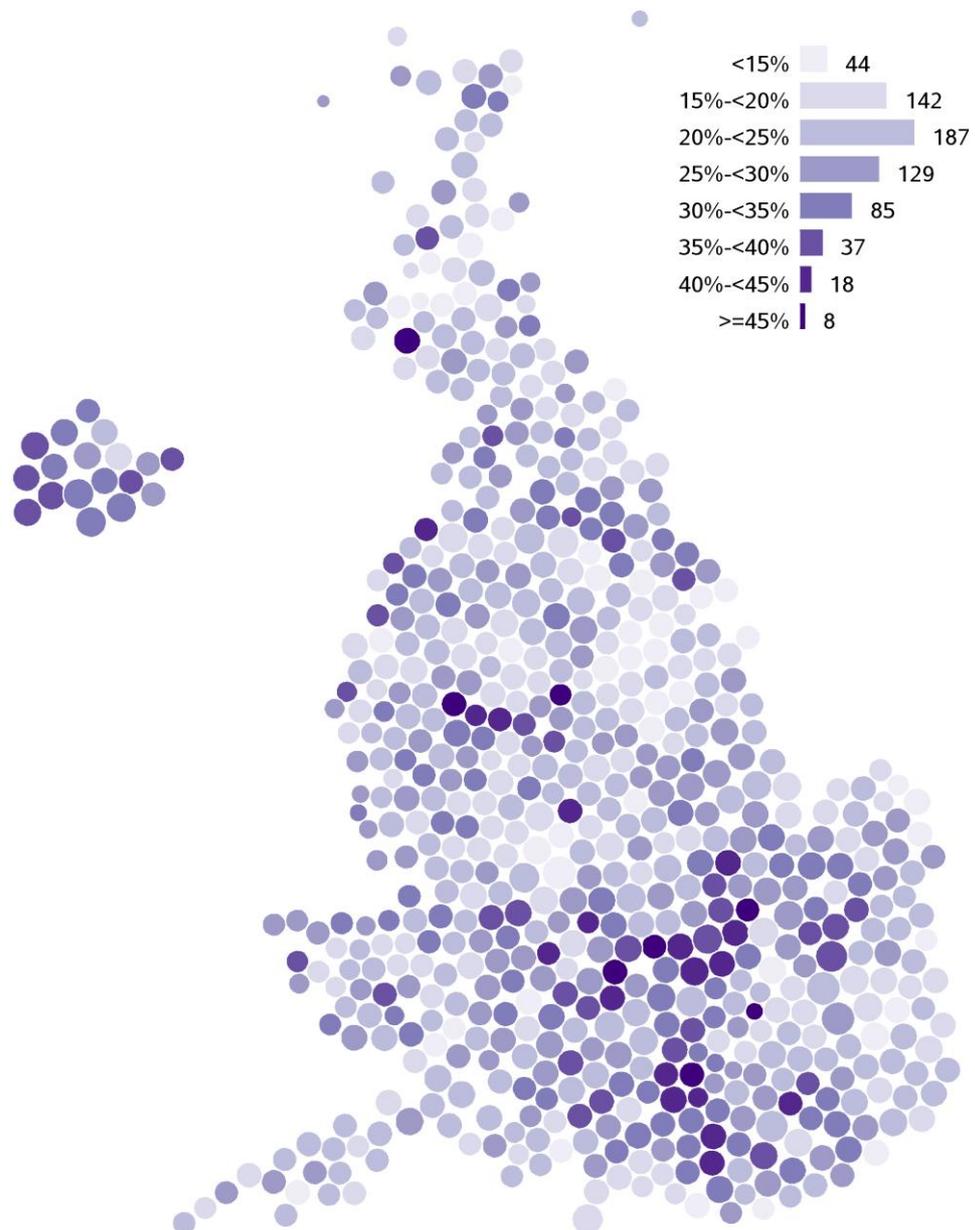
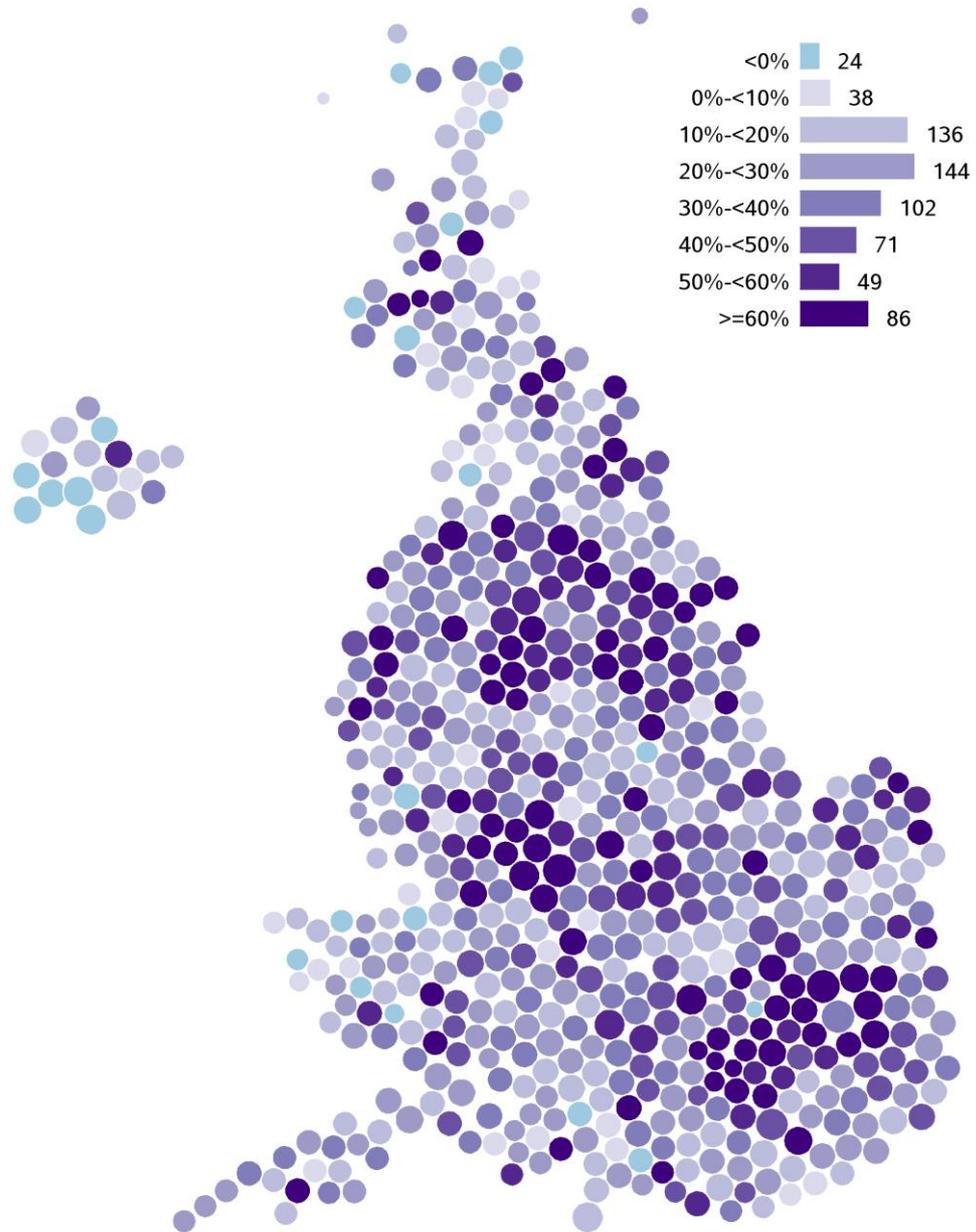


Figure 4.10 Proportional change in 18 year old entry rates between 2006 and 2017 by parliamentary constituency



In 2017, one in five parliamentary constituencies in the UK have cohort entry rates of 50 per cent or more

Figure 4.11 shows the cohort entry rates in 2016 by parliamentary constituency. Due to their smaller size, young people are more likely to move between parliamentary constituencies between the ages of 18 and 19, than they are to move between larger geographical units, such as UK countries or English regions. This means cohort entry rates at parliamentary constituency level are more sensitive to internal migration. However, comparisons with cohort entry rates based on administrative school pupils in England¹ linked at an individual level to UCAS admissions data showed a similar pattern of cohort entry rates across England.

In 2016, the cohort entry rates were between 18.7 per cent and 80.6 per cent, a difference of nearly 62 percentage points from the constituencies with the highest and lowest entry rates.

This varies between UK countries, with England having the largest variation, followed by Scotland, then Wales, and Northern Ireland having the least variation.

In England, entry rates varied from 22.1 per cent to 80.6 per cent, a difference of 58.5 percentage points. Cohort entry rates varied between regions in England, with the highest entry rates typically being in London. Entry rates in London ranged from 38.3 per cent to 80.6 per cent, with a mean entry rate of 56.8 per cent. The lowest entry rates tended to be around the North East, with these ranging from 28.8 per cent to 53.5 per cent, averaging at 37.0 per cent.

The North East was the region with the least variation in entry rates in 2016, with a 24.7 percentage point difference between the constituencies with the highest and lowest entry rates. The East of England had the largest range in entry rates, of 45.5 percentage points (between 23.4 per cent and 68.9 per cent).

In Scotland, the cohort entry rates ranged between 18.7 per cent, and 55.2 per cent, a difference of 36.5 percentage points. However, due to the volume of Scottish applicants accepted to HE through means other than UCAS, this could understate the entry rates by up to one half in certain constituencies.

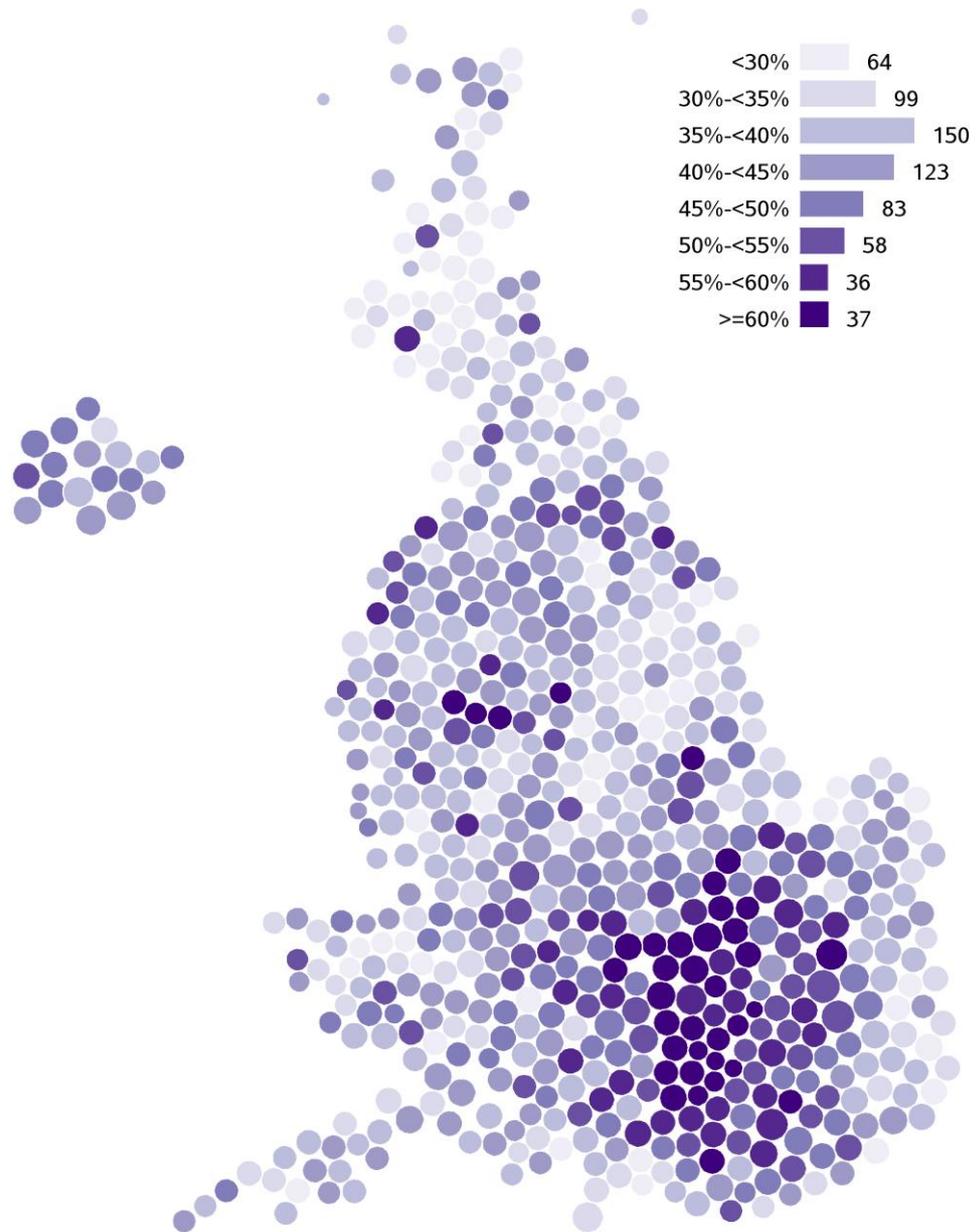
In Wales, cohort entry rates ranged between 25.5 per cent and 54.9 per cent, a difference of 29.3 percentage points.

Northern Ireland had the lowest variation in cohort entry rates of all UK countries, at 18.6 percentage points, ranging between 32.1 per cent and 50.7 per cent.

In 2017, the cohort entry rates in 131 UK parliamentary constituencies were 50 per cent or higher. This meant that, in a fifth of all constituencies, over half of young people entered HE through UCAS this year.

¹ National Pupil Database, The Department for Education

Figure 4.11 Cohort entry rates for those aged 18 in 2016, by parliamentary constituency



Acceptance and entry rate patterns from Europe

Fewer applicants and acceptances from European countries in 2017, but an increase in the acceptance rate

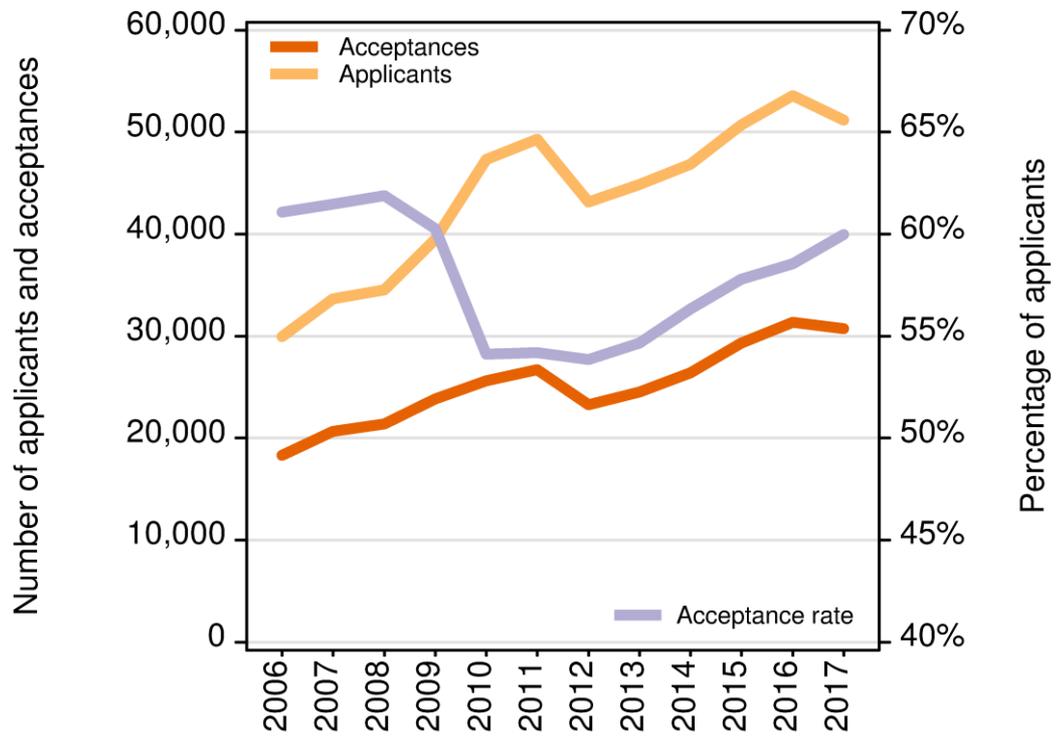
Figure 4.12 shows the trends in numbers of applicants and acceptances, along with the acceptance rate (the proportion of applicants who are accepted), for non-UK EU domiciles.

Since 2006, the number of non-UK EU applicants has grown. In 2006, there were 29,930 EU applicants. In 2017, there were 51,180 EU applicants, a proportional increase of 71 per cent over the period. However, the number of EU applicants in 2017 was 4.4 per cent lower than the number in 2016 (53,560, the highest recorded), equating to 2,380 fewer EU applicants this year.

The number of non-UK EU acceptances is lower than the number of applicants, but follows a similar pattern. During the period, the number of EU acceptances grew by 68 per cent, from 18,280 in 2006 to 30,700 in 2017. However, the number of EU acceptances in 2017 was 2.1 per cent lower than in 2016, when there were 31,350 acceptances, the highest recorded. Both the number of applicants and the number of acceptances from the EU in 2017 are around 10 per cent lower than what might be expected given the longer-term trends.

The acceptance rate for non-UK EU applicants increased each year since 2012, reaching 60 per cent in 2017, the highest since 2009. This means EU applicants were more likely to be accepted this year than they have been in any of the previous seven years.

Figure 4.12 Applicants, acceptances, and the acceptance rate for non-UK EU



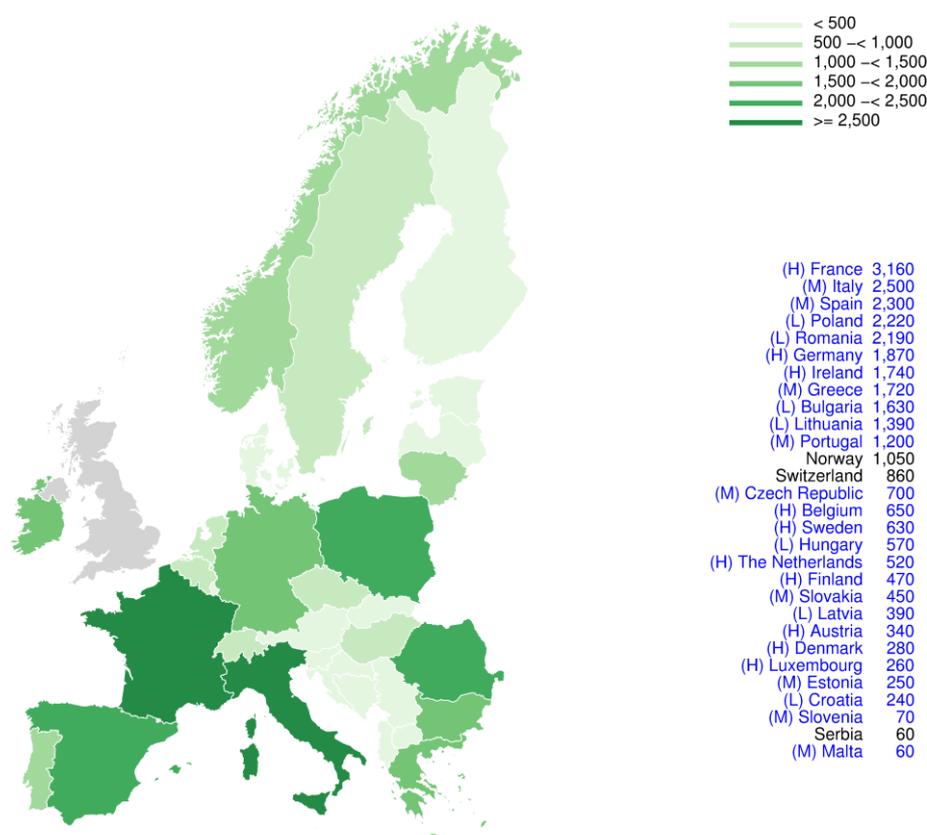
Acceptances from most European countries fall in 2017, but large increases from Portugal, Lithuania, Poland, and Spain

There were 30,700 acceptances from applicants domiciled in the EU (excluding the UK), 650 fewer than in 2016, a fall of 2 per cent. This is the first fall in acceptances from the EU since 2012, with numbers being the second highest on record.

Figure 4.13 shows the number of acceptances for selected countries in the EU, plus Norway, Switzerland, and Serbia. Figure 4.13 shows the change in acceptances from the previous cycle in each country.

Those domiciled in France had the largest number of acceptances of any European country in 2017, with 3,160 placed through UCAS. There were also large numbers of acceptances from applicants domiciled in Italy, Spain, Poland, and Romania, with over 2,000 applicants placed through UCAS this year.

Figure 4.13 Acceptances in 2017 by selected European country (with GDP per capita group – H = higher GDP, M = medium GDP, L = lower GDP)



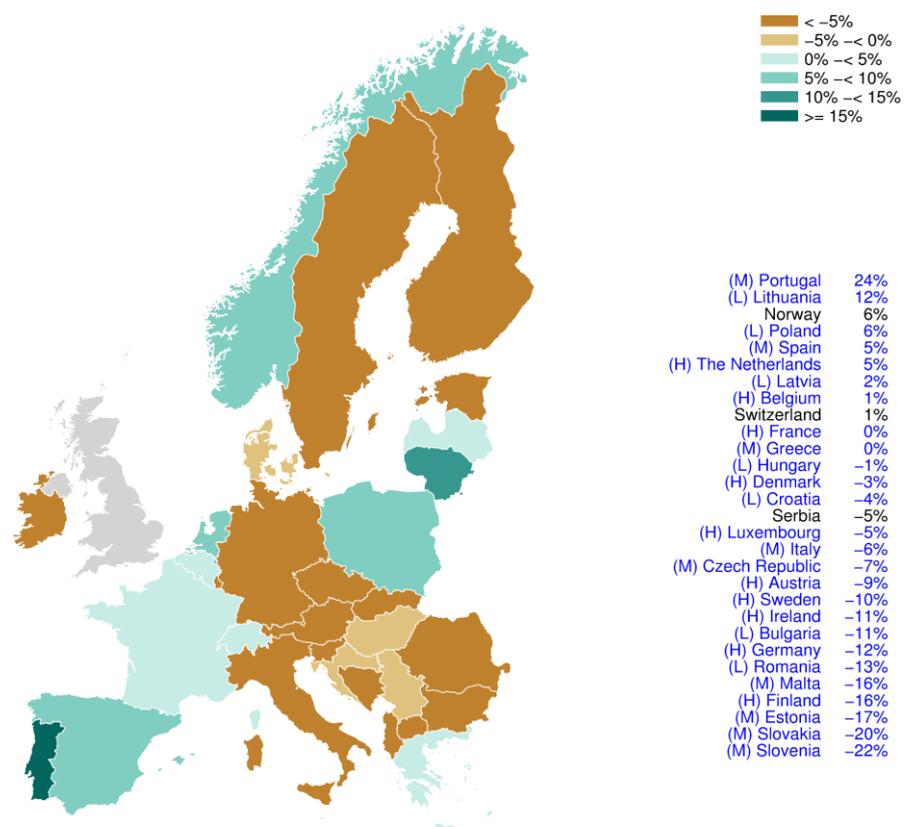
The fall in acceptances from the EU this year as a whole is not reflected in all countries – acceptances from some EU countries increased this year compared to last. In 2017, there were an additional 230 acceptances from Portugal, a 24 per cent increase on 2016. There were also notable increases from Lithuania (+150, +12 per cent), Poland (+120, +6 per cent) and Spain (+110, +5 per cent).

However, the number of acceptances fell for most EU countries. Slovakia and Slovenia had the largest proportional falls this year, with acceptances from applicants domiciled in these countries down by 20 per cent or more compared to last year.

The largest absolute falls in acceptances were for Romania (-325, -13 per cent), Germany (-255, -12 per cent), Ireland (-215, -11 per cent), and Bulgaria (-205, -11 per cent). Compared to last year, there were over 1,000 fewer acceptances from across these countries in 2017. There were also 100 fewer acceptances in 2017 from Italy and Slovakia, compared to last year.

Despite the falls, for most EU countries, the number of acceptances remains substantially higher than in earlier years. Since 2012, the number of acceptances from Portugal has trebled, while the numbers from Spain, Poland, and the Czech Republic have doubled.

Figure 4.14 Changes in acceptances for 2017 relative to 2016, by selected European country (with GDP per capita group – H = higher GDP, M = medium GDP, L = lower GDP)



Number of acceptances from European countries varies by GDP

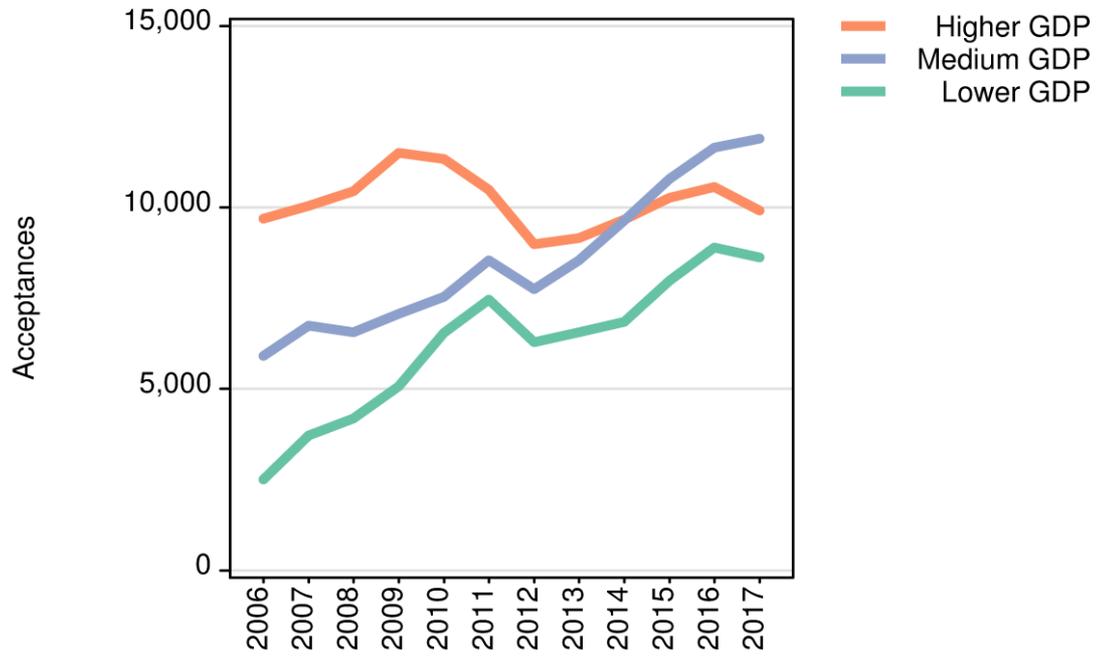
Figure 4.15 shows the number of acceptances from non-UK EU applicants split by the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita of their country of home domicile (source: The World Bank: World Development Indicators). Countries are grouped into three categories, referred to as 'GDP groups' – countries with a GDP per capita of \$0 – \$15,000 were assigned to the lower GDP group, countries with a GDP per capita of >\$15,000 – \$30,000 were assigned to the medium GDP group, and countries with a GDP per capita of >\$30,000 were assigned to the higher GDP group. Countries that entered the EU during the reporting period (Romania and Bulgaria in 2007, and Croatia in 2013) have their acceptance numbers included only once they became EU members.

Between 2012 and 2016, the number of acceptances increased each year for each GDP group. In 2017, the number of acceptances continued to increase for medium GDP countries, though by an amount lower than had been typical during the previous four years. The number of acceptances from medium GDP countries in 2017 was 11,900, 2.2 per cent higher than in 2016.

In contrast, the number of acceptances from higher and lower GDP countries fell, the first reductions since 2012. The number of acceptances from higher GDP countries in 2017 was 9,900, a proportional fall of 6.1 per cent compared to 2016. The number of acceptances from lower GDP countries was 8,600, a proportional fall of 3.0 per cent.

For each GDP country group, the number of acceptances is lower than what might have been expected given the trend since 2012. Extending the 2012 to 2016 trend forwards and comparing observed acceptances in 2017, suggests that acceptance numbers in 2017 are around 10 per cent lower than what might have been expected for higher and lower GDP countries, and 6 per cent lower for medium GDP countries.

Figure 4.15 Non-UK EU acceptances by GDP group of EU country



Cohort entry rates for most European countries unchanged from last year

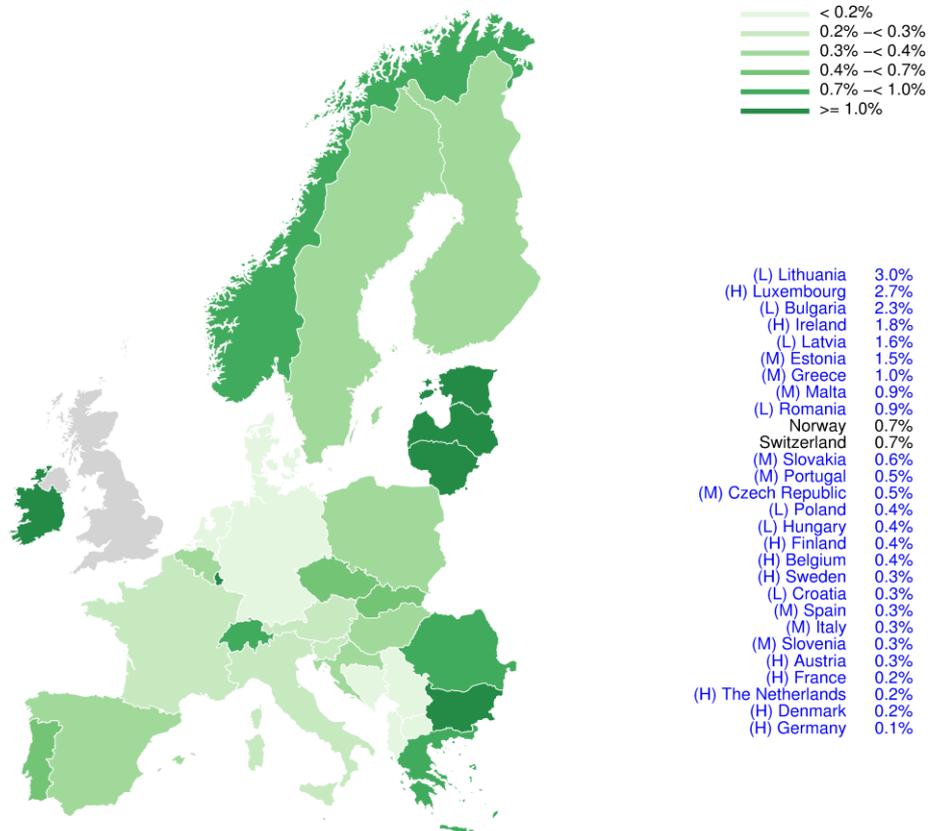
Figure 4.16 shows the estimated cohort entry rate from countries across Europe, for young people aged 18 in 2016. The cohort entry rate is the proportion of the population accepted to UK higher education through UCAS either at age 18 or age 19.

The cohort entry rate for those aged 18 in 2015 varied from 0.1 per cent of the young population from Germany, to 3.0 per cent of the young population from Lithuania.

For most European countries, the cohort entry rates in 2017 were the same as last year. For example, despite a 6 per cent increase in acceptances in 2017, the cohort entry rate for Poland was unchanged at 0.4 per cent. Similarly, cohort entry rates from Germany (0.1 per cent) and Romania (0.9 per cent) were unchanged despite proportional falls in acceptances of 12 and 13 per cent respectively.

The cohort entry rate has changed in some countries. The biggest change was for Lithuania, which had the highest cohort entry rate in 2017 of 3.0 per cent, up from 2.6 per cent in 2016.

Figure 4.16 Young cohort entry rate by selected European country (with GDP per capita group – H = higher GDP, M = medium GDP, L = lower GDP)



A note on numbers in Scotland

UCAS covers the overwhelming majority of full-time undergraduate provision for people living in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, so the statistics on acceptances or entry rates can be taken as being very close to all recruitment to full-time undergraduate higher education. In Scotland, there is a substantial section of higher education provision not included in UCAS' figures. This is mostly full-time higher education provided in further education colleges, which represents around one third of young full-time undergraduate study in Scotland, and this proportion varies by geography and background within Scotland. Accordingly, figures on entry rates or total recruitment in Scotland reflect only the part of full-time undergraduate study that uses UCAS.

In 2014, there were fewer very late acceptances than in other cycles recorded in the UCAS data for some Scottish providers. These changes may mean the number of applicants and acceptances to Scottish UCAS providers in 2014 recorded through UCAS could be understated by up to 2,000, compared to how applicants and acceptances have been reported in recent cycles. This means that comparing 2014 applicants and acceptances for Scottish providers (or those from Scotland) to other cycles, may not give an accurate measure of change.

In 2015, around 120 courses at Scottish providers which were previously part of the UCAS Teacher Training scheme, moved into the UCAS Undergraduate scheme. As such, the number of applicants and acceptances to Scottish providers in 2015 recorded through UCAS will include those which were previously part of UCAS Teacher Training. This means that comparing 2015 applicants and acceptances for Scottish providers (or those from Scotland, particularly those aged 21 or over) to previous cycles, may not give a like-for-like measure of change.

Glossary

Acceptance	An applicant who, at the end of the cycle, has been placed for entry into higher education.
Age	This analysis uses country-specific age definitions that align with the cut-off points for school and college cohorts in the different administrations of the UK. For England and Wales, ages are defined on 31 August, for Northern Ireland on 1 July, and for Scotland on 28 February the following year. Defining ages in this way matches the assignment of children to school cohorts. For applicants outside the UK, a cohort cut-off of 31 August has been used.
Applicant	A person who has made an application in the UCAS system. Counts of applicants include those applying through the main scheme, late applicants direct to Clearing, and Records of Prior Acceptance (RPAs).
Base population estimate	<p>The population estimates for the UK are based on Office for National Statistics mid-year estimates, and national population projections (published in June 2015). For 16 to 20 year olds, the estimates are obtained by ageing 15 year olds from the appropriate number of years earlier. This approach avoids the estimates being susceptible to changes in net migration (including overseas students) during these ages. Older ages are obtained from the mid-year estimates, and national population projections without ageing. In both cases, the estimates are adjusted from age at mid-year to age on the country-specific reference dates using the monthly distribution of births. Analysis of application and entry rates by area-based background are supported through small area population estimates, available from the Office for National Statistics, National Records for Scotland, and the Northern Ireland Statistics Research Agency. These small area population estimates have been revised to be consistent with the national level population estimates.</p> <p>Population estimates used to report cohort entry rates for European countries are taken from the World Bank: Health Nutrition and Population Statistics: The United Nations Population Division's World Population Prospects, and World Bank's estimates from World Bank's population projections.</p>
Clearing	An acceptance route available late in the application cycle.
Cohort	A group of the population all born in the same academic year, who are therefore, for example, all aged 18 on a particular reference date.
Domicile	Declared area of permanent residence.
Entry rate	Number of acceptances from a UCAS application cycle divided by the estimated base population.

GDP	Gross Domestic Product – a measure of economic growth based on goods and services within a period of time.
HE	Higher education.
Higher tariff provider	A provider that belongs to the higher tariff group, from the grouping of providers based on the average levels of attainment of their UK 18 year old accepted applicants (summarised through UCAS Tariff points) in recent cycles. The other two groups are medium tariff providers and lower tariff providers. Each group of providers accounted for around a third of all UK 18 year old acceptances in recent cycles.
Main scheme	The main UCAS Undergraduate application scheme through which up to five course choices can be applied for. This opens in September, and closes to new applications on 30 June the following year.
Non-EU	Countries outside the European Union, including the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.
Provider	A higher education provider – a university or college.
Tariff	A numerical summary of qualification level.
UK	United Kingdom. Excludes the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.