



## FE Statistical Fact Sheet 1

### Further Education Activity in Northern Ireland by Local Government District: 2013/14 to 2017/18

This new statistical fact sheet presents a range of analysis regarding enrolments in the Northern Ireland Further Education Sector covering academic years 2013/14 to 2017/18. The analysis covers all enrolments, regulated enrolments, higher education enrolments as well as qualifications and performance (retention, achievement and success rates) by Local Government District.

The figures in this statistical fact sheet are a full year count of enrolments; however, it should be noted that students may be enrolled on more than one course at a given time and may, therefore, be counted as two or more enrolments. It is our intention to release future editions of this fact sheet annually. The second edition will be released early in 2020. As we want to engage with users of our statistics, we invite you to feedback your comments on this publication to:

[Allan.matthews@economy-ni.gov.uk](mailto:Allan.matthews@economy-ni.gov.uk)

#### Additional Tables

Detailed Additional Tables covering the characteristics of those enrolling in FE colleges and trends across a range of variables, including gender, age, mode of attendance, provision area, level of study, subject area, area of deprivation quintile and performance (retention, achievement and success rates) are available on the DfE web page:

[Further Education Activity in FE Colleges in Northern Ireland by Local Government District 2017/18](#)

**Table 1: All enrolments by Local Government District and FE college in 2017/18**

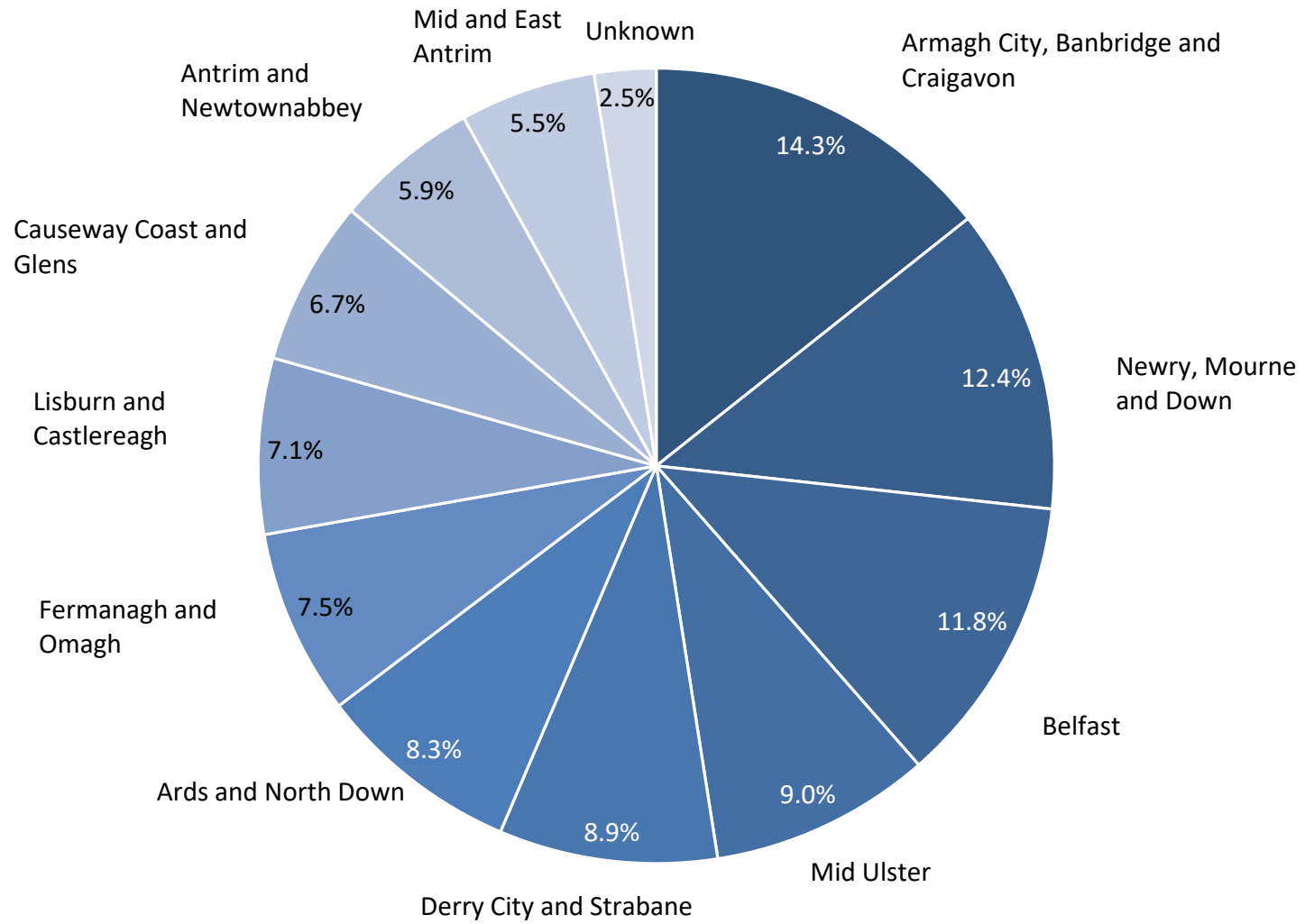
Local Government District	FE college						Total
	Belfast Metropolitan	Northern Regional	North West Regional	South Eastern Regional	Southern Regional	South West	
Antrim and Newtownabbey	3,221	5,059	14	767	49	21	<b>9,131</b>
Ards and North Down	1,898	60	1	10,854	49	28	<b>12,890</b>
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	1,414	44	17	1,882	17,997	908	<b>22,262</b>
Belfast	15,151	661	27	2,438	72	20	<b>18,369</b>
Causeway Coast and Glens	359	5,460	4,465	103	17	46	<b>10,450</b>
Derry City and Strabane	159	34	11,269	88	8	2,239	<b>13,797</b>
Fermanagh and Omagh	189	26	114	60	52	11,284	<b>11,725</b>
Lisburn and Castlereagh	3,722	100	7	6,818	448	17	<b>11,112</b>
Mid and East Antrim	1,709	6,426	20	339	36	69	<b>8,599</b>
Mid Ulster	596	3,876	155	162	764	8,418	<b>13,971</b>
Newry, Mourne and Down	1,143	27	8	6,545	11,342	247	<b>19,312</b>
Unknown	167	64	2,252	131	493	785	<b>3,892</b>
<b>FE Sector Total</b>	<b>29,728</b>	<b>21,837</b>	<b>18,349</b>	<b>30,187</b>	<b>31,327</b>	<b>24,082</b>	<b>155,510</b>

Source: Consolidated Data Return (CDR)

Unknown\*: Postcodes with unassigned LGDs are mainly accounted for by Republic of Ireland (RoI) domiciled student enrolments (70.6%, 2,748).

- In 2017/18, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon LGD had the highest proportion of the 155,510 enrolments, accounting for 14.3% (22,262), and Mid and East Antrim the lowest, with 5.5% (8,599).
- In all eleven LGDs, over half of student enrolments were at one particular college. However, this ranged from Fermanagh and Omagh, where 96.2% of student enrolments were at South West College, to Causeway Coast and Glens, where 52.2% of student enrolments were at Northern Regional College.
- Over a third of enrolments from students residing in either Antrim and Newtownabbey LGD or Lisburn and Castlereagh LGD were at Belfast Metropolitan College (35.3% and 33.5% respectively).
- Notably, in North West Regional College (NWRC) a relatively large number of enrolments did not have an associated postcode (2,252), accounted for mainly by Republic of Ireland (RoI) domiciled students (78.2%, 1,760).

**Figure 1: Proportion of all enrolments by Local Government District and FE college in 2017/18**



Source: Consolidated Data Return (CDR)

**Table 2: All enrolments by Local Government District and academic year**

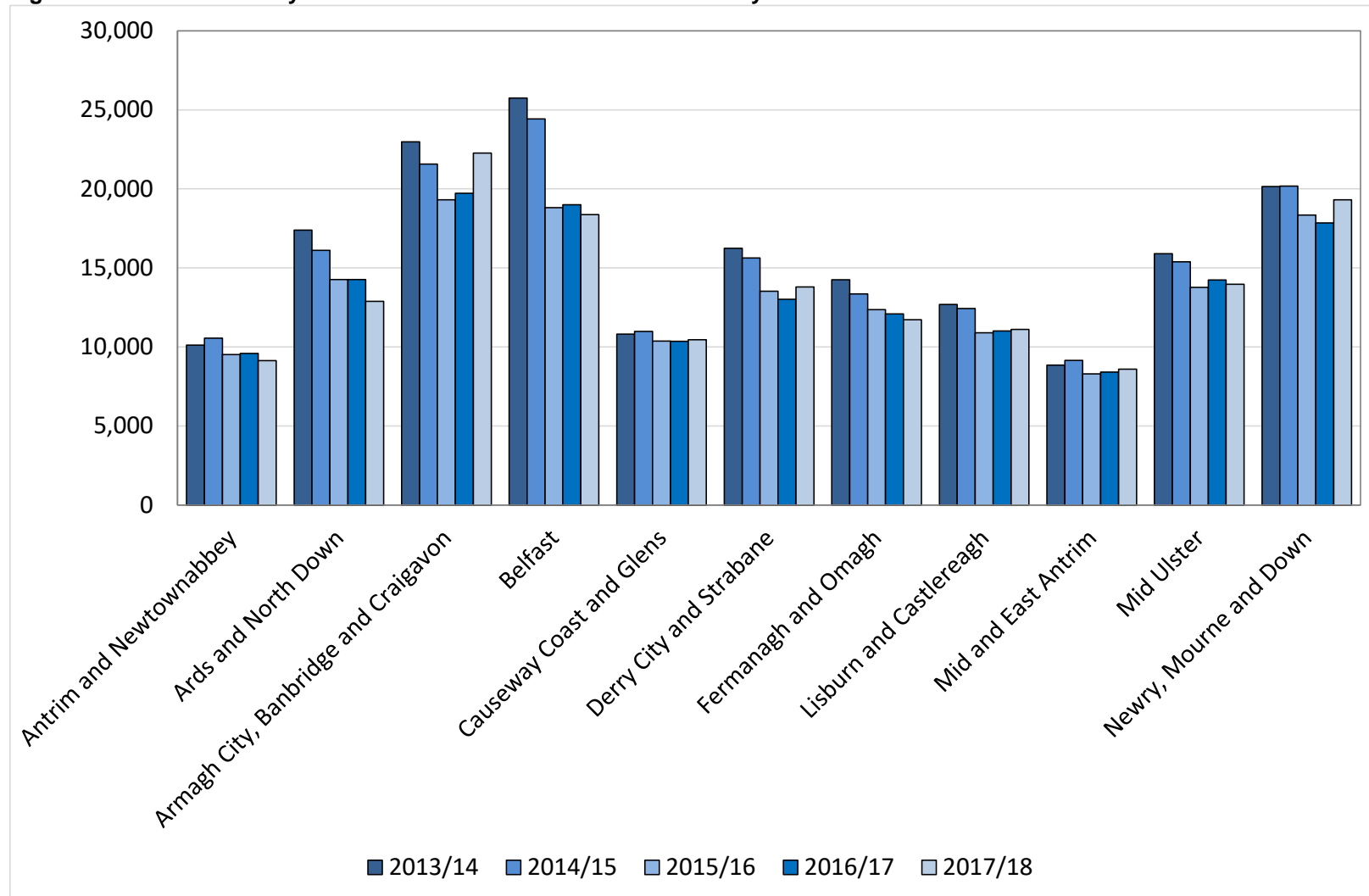
Local Government District	Academic Year				
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Antrim and Newtownabbey	10,118	10,560	9,524	9,586	9,131
Ards and North Down	17,397	16,117	14,267	14,262	12,890
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	22,975	21,573	19,314	19,721	22,262
Belfast	25,746	24,420	18,812	18,998	18,369
Causeway Coast and Glens	10,805	10,982	10,374	10,361	10,450
Derry City and Strabane	16,234	15,630	13,528	13,012	13,797
Fermanagh and Omagh	14,250	13,361	12,357	12,094	11,725
Lisburn and Castlereagh	12,689	12,428	10,902	11,011	11,112
Mid and East Antrim	8,848	9,148	8,294	8,404	8,599
Mid Ulster	15,906	15,388	13,761	14,238	13,971
Newry, Mourne and Down	20,148	20,176	18,349	17,853	19,312
Unknown	5,709	6,035	4,335	3,548	3,892
<b>FE Sector Total</b>	<b>180,825</b>	<b>175,818</b>	<b>153,817</b>	<b>153,088</b>	<b>155,510</b>

Source: Consolidated Data Return (CDR)

Unknown\*: Postcodes with unassigned LGDs are mainly accounted for by Republic of Ireland (RoI) domiciled student enrolments (approximately 70%).

- Total enrolments at FE colleges increased by 1.6% between 2016/17 (153,088) and 2017/18 (155,510); however, they have decreased by a net 14.0% since 2013/14 (180,825).
- Since 2013/14, enrolments have decreased in net terms in each of the 11 Local Government Districts.
- The largest percentage net decrease has been in Belfast (28.7%), from 25,746 in 2013/14 to 18,369 in 2017/18. As a result, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon has taken over from Belfast, with the most enrolments (22,262) in 2017/18.
- The smallest percentage net decrease has been in Mid and East Antrim (2.8%), from 8,848 in 2013/14 to 8,599 in 2017/18.

**Figure 2: All enrolments by Local Government District and academic year**



Source: Consolidated Data Return (CDR)

Please note approximately 3% of all enrolments have unknown postcodes, which are not labelled in the chart but included in Table 2.

**Table 3: Regulated enrolments by Local Government District and academic year**

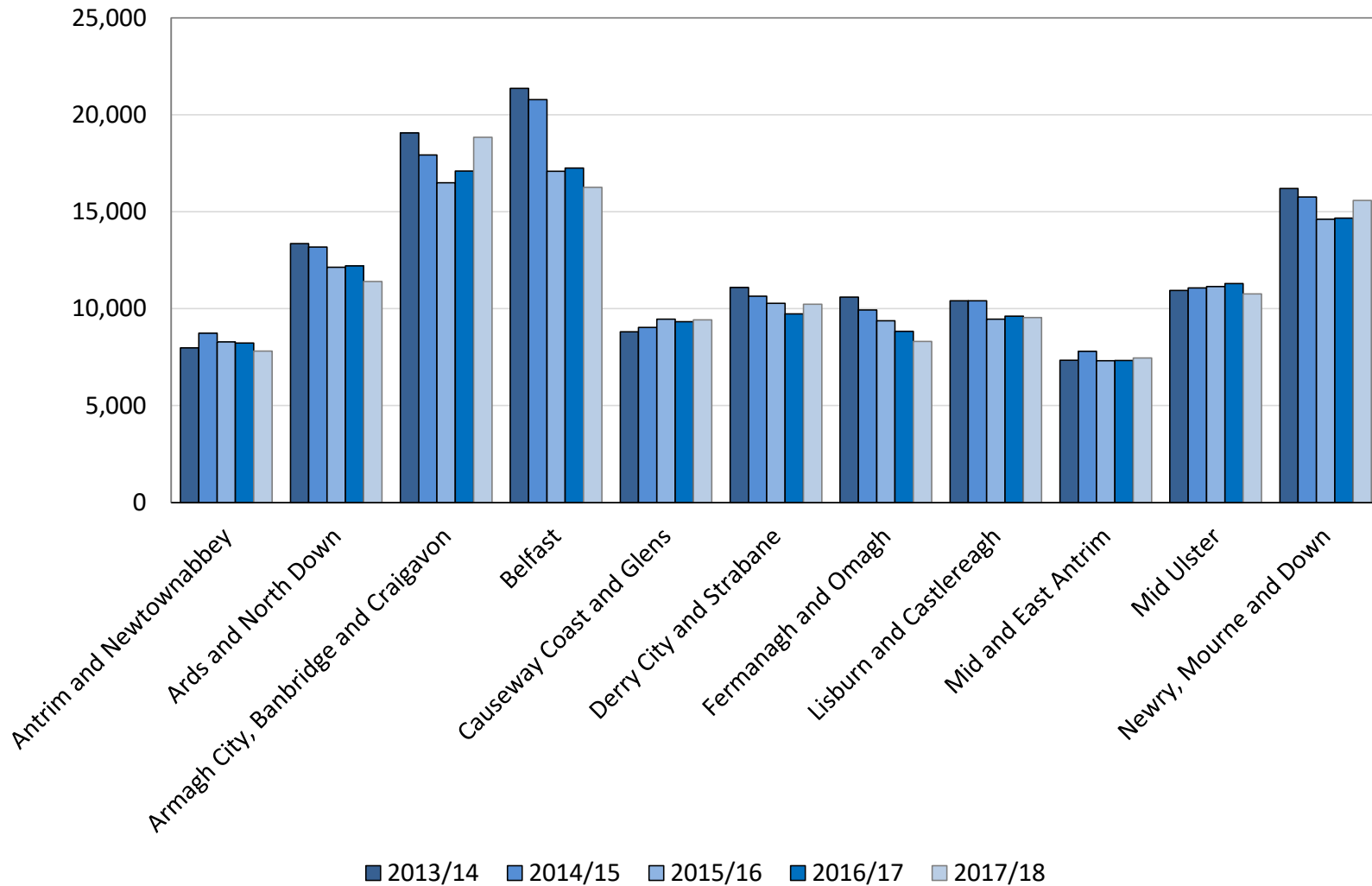
Local Government District	Academic Year				
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Antrim and Newtownabbey	7,984	8,738	8,288	8,222	7,813
Ards and North Down	13,356	13,180	12,134	12,210	11,407
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	19,066	17,922	16,494	17,101	18,841
Belfast	21,367	20,786	17,089	17,258	16,256
Causeway Coast and Glens	8,809	9,033	9,454	9,327	9,429
Derry City and Strabane	11,095	10,643	10,277	9,728	10,229
Fermanagh and Omagh	10,599	9,937	9,376	8,829	8,314
Lisburn and Castlereagh	10,412	10,406	9,464	9,608	9,538
Mid and East Antrim	7,342	7,796	7,315	7,327	7,454
Mid Ulster	10,935	11,070	11,140	11,296	10,760
Newry, Mourne and Down	16,197	15,755	14,606	14,665	15,577
Unknown	4,616	4,871	3,637	3,058	3,436
<b>FE Sector Total</b>	<b>141,778</b>	<b>140,137</b>	<b>129,274</b>	<b>128,629</b>	<b>129,054</b>

Source: Consolidated Data Return (CDR)

Unknown\*: Postcodes with unassigned LGDs are mainly accounted for by Republic of Ireland (RoI) domiciled student enrolments (approximately 70%).

- Regulated enrolments at FE colleges increased by 0.3% between 2016/17 (128,629) and 2017/18 (129,054); however, they have decreased by a net 9.0% since 2013/14 (141,778).
- Since 2013/14, regulated enrolments have decreased in net terms in nine of the eleven Local Government Districts.
- The largest percentage net decrease has been in Belfast (23.9%), from 21,367 in 2013/14 to 16,256 in 2017/18.
- The largest percentage net increase has been in Causeway Coast and Glens (7.0%), from 8,809 in 2013/14 to 9,429 in 2017/18.

**Figure 3: Regulated enrolments by Local Government District and academic year**



Source: Consolidated Data Return (CDR)

Please note approximately 3% of regulated enrolments have unknown postcodes, which are not labelled in the chart but included in Table 3.

**Table 4: Higher Education enrolments by Local Government District and academic year**

Local Government District	Academic Year				
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Antrim and Newtownabbey	655	629	614	643	658
Ards and North Down	806	830	779	744	734
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	1,337	1,302	1,405	1,377	1,849
Belfast	1,543	1,540	1,556	1,475	1,417
Causeway Coast and Glens	687	714	723	672	699
Derry City and Strabane	1,209	1,228	1,190	1,138	1,115
Fermanagh and Omagh	1,000	993	970	932	966
Lisburn and Castlereagh	791	804	782	764	726
Mid and East Antrim	696	701	662	662	583
Mid Ulster	954	1,050	1,056	1,008	1,075
Newry, Mourne and Down	1,277	1,336	1,422	1,365	1,615
Unknown	621	595	472	395	411
<b>FE Sector Total</b>	<b>11,576</b>	<b>11,722</b>	<b>11,631</b>	<b>11,175</b>	<b>11,848</b>

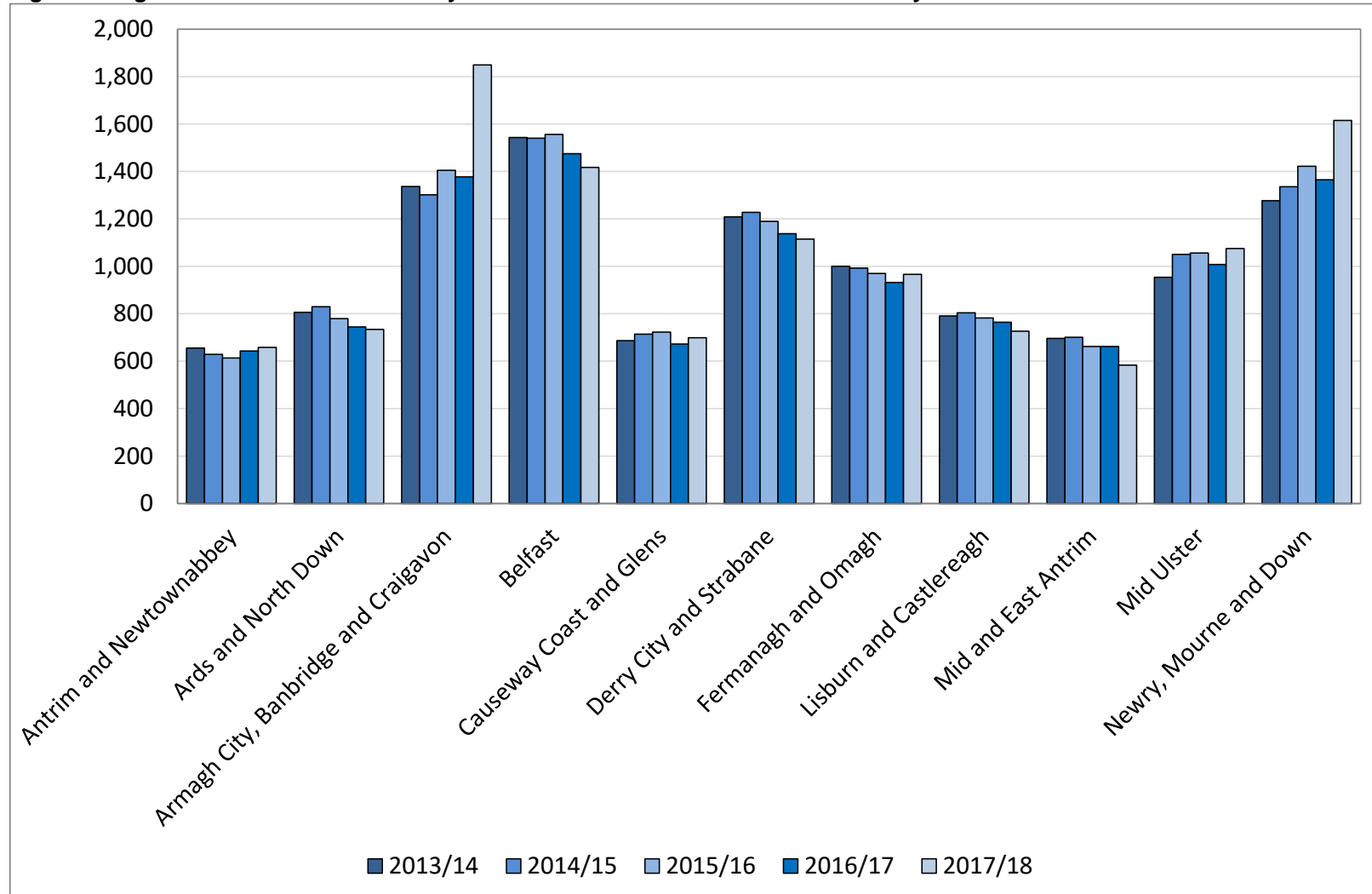
Source: Consolidated Data Return (CDR)

Unknown\*: Postcodes with unassigned LGDs are mainly accounted for by Republic of Ireland (RoI) domiciled student enrolments (approximately 75%).

- Higher Education enrolments at FE colleges increased by a net 2.3% between 2013/14 (11,576) and 2017/18 (11,848).
- Since 2013/14, higher education enrolments have decreased in net terms in six of the eleven LGDs.
- The largest percentage net decrease has been in Mid and East Antrim (16.2%), from 696 in 2013/14 to 583 in 2017/18.
- The largest percentage net increase has been in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon (38.3%), from 1,337 in 2013/14 to 1,849 in 2017/18, making it the LGD with the highest number of HE enrolments in the FE sector, ahead of Newry, Mourne and Down (1,615) and Belfast (1,417).



**Figure 4: Higher Education enrolments by Local Government District and academic year**



Source: Consolidated Data Return (CDR)

Please note approximately 4% of higher education enrolments have unknown postcodes, which are not labelled in the chart but included in Table 4.

**Table 5: Number of qualifications achieved by Local Government District and FE college in 2017/18**

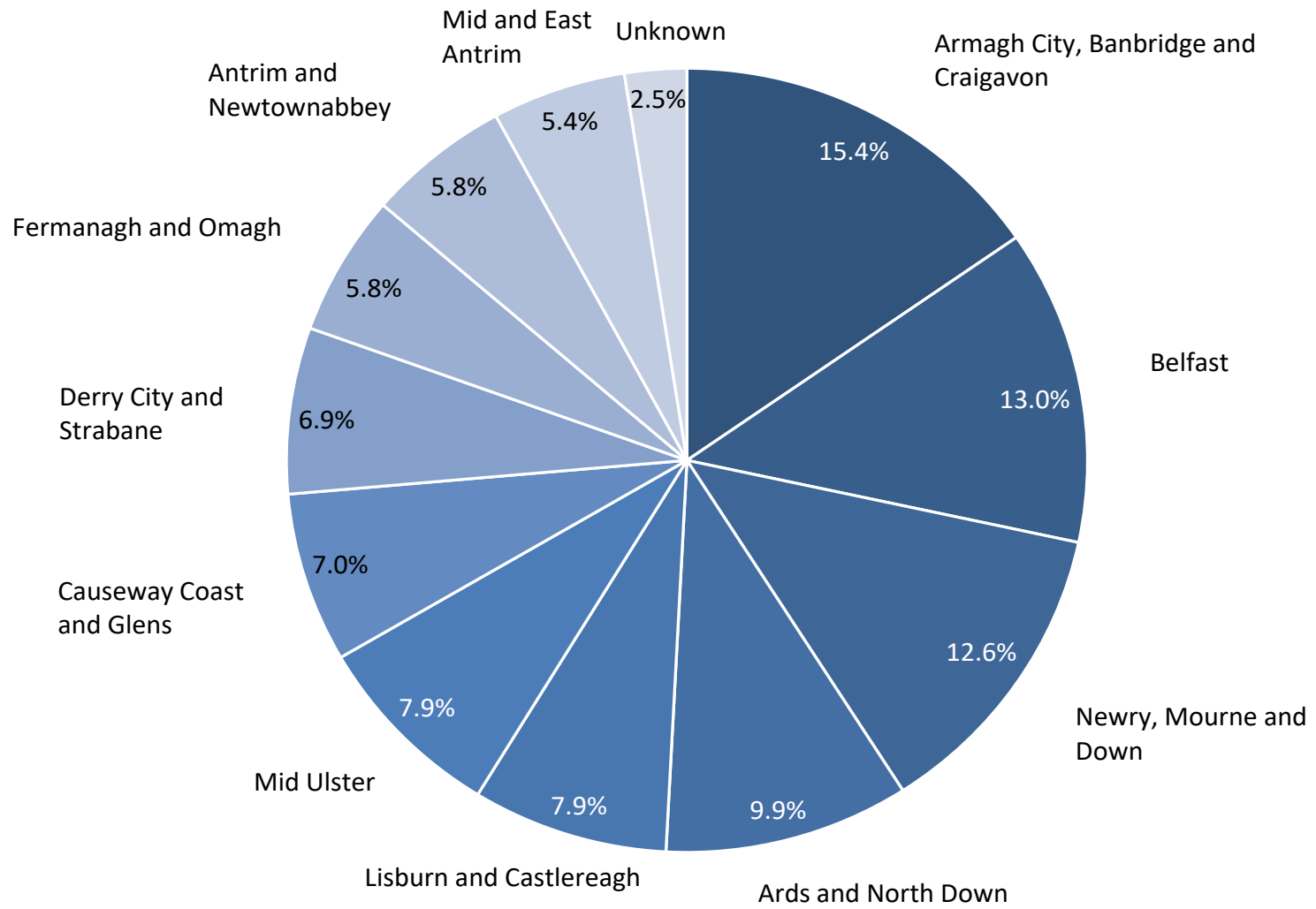
Local Government District	FE college						Total
	Belfast Metropolitan	Northern Regional	North West Regional	South Eastern Regional	Southern Regional	South West	
Antrim and Newtownabbey	1,913	2,414	4	432	23	8	<b>4,794</b>
Ards and North Down	1,107	32	1	7,027	28	0	<b>8,195</b>
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	815	14	4	1,119	10,531	240	<b>12,723</b>
Belfast	8,912	279	6	1,510	28	17	<b>10,752</b>
Causeway Coast and Glens	205	2,958	2,560	59	7	9	<b>5,798</b>
Derry City and Strabane	87	12	4,755	60	3	756	<b>5,673</b>
Fermanagh and Omagh	79	14	45	43	18	4,613	<b>4,812</b>
Lisburn and Castlereagh	2,228	50	0	4,024	238	9	<b>6,549</b>
Mid and East Antrim	1,038	3,194	3	221	8	16	<b>4,480</b>
Mid Ulster	351	1,427	97	93	440	4,104	<b>6,512</b>
Newry, Mourne and Down	600	12	5	3,468	6,306	17	<b>10,408</b>
Unknown	122	37	1,207	95	280	333	<b>2,074</b>
<b>FE Sector Total</b>	<b>17,457</b>	<b>10,443</b>	<b>8,687</b>	<b>18,151</b>	<b>17,910</b>	<b>10,122</b>	<b>82,770</b>

Source: Consolidated Data Return (CDR)

Unknown\*: Postcodes with unassigned LGDs are mainly accounted for by qualifications gained by Republic of Ireland (RoI) domiciled students (69.0%, 1,431).

- In 2017/18, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon had the highest proportion of the 82,770 qualifications achieved, accounting for 15.4% (12,723), and Mid and East Antrim the lowest, with 5.4% (4,480).
- In all eleven LGDs, over half of student qualifications achieved were at one particular college. However, this ranged from Antrim and Newtownabbey, where 50.4% of qualifications were at Northern Regional College, to Fermanagh and Omagh, where 95.9% of qualifications were at South West College.
- Over a third of qualifications achieved by students residing in either Antrim and Newtownabbey LGD or Lisburn and Castlereagh LGD were undertaken at Belfast Metropolitan College (39.9% and 34.0% respectively).
- Notably, in North West Regional College (NWRC), a relatively large number of qualifications awarded did not have an associated postcode (1,207), accounted for mainly by those gained by RoI domiciled students (78.2%, 944).

**Figure 5: Proportion of qualifications by Local Government District in 2017/18**



Source: Consolidated Data Return (CDR)

**Table 6: Number of qualifications achieved by Local Government District and academic year**

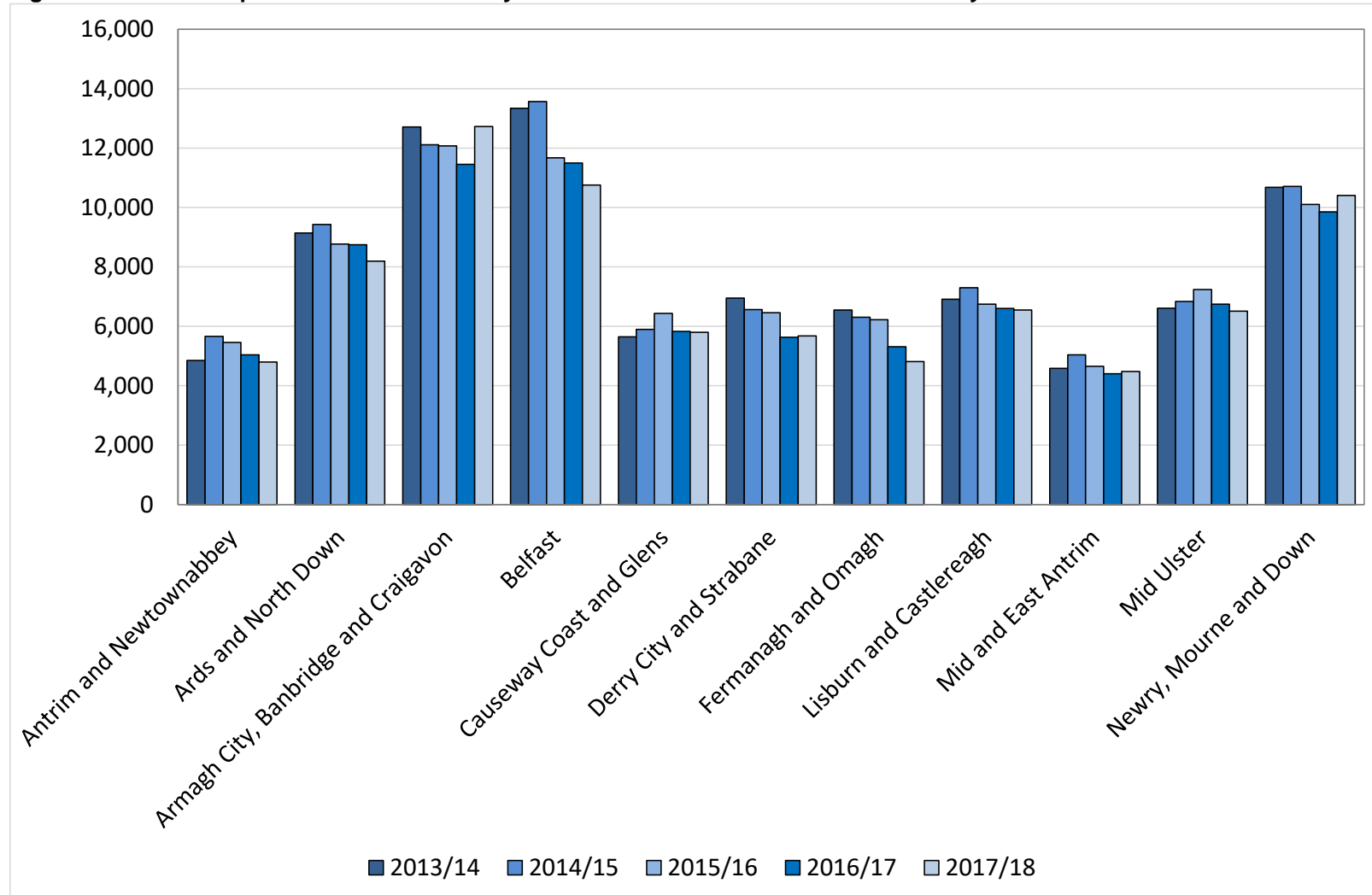
Local Government District	Academic Year				
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Antrim and Newtownabbey	4,846	5,656	5,452	5,041	4,794
Ards and North Down	9,142	9,426	8,765	8,748	8,195
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	12,706	12,107	12,075	11,449	12,723
Belfast	13,339	13,564	11,667	11,496	10,752
Causeway Coast and Glens	5,647	5,895	6,431	5,827	5,798
Derry City and Strabane	6,946	6,563	6,456	5,633	5,673
Fermanagh and Omagh	6,546	6,306	6,217	5,308	4,812
Lisburn and Castlereagh	6,912	7,298	6,747	6,599	6,549
Mid and East Antrim	4,584	5,039	4,652	4,402	4,480
Mid Ulster	6,605	6,836	7,234	6,745	6,512
Newry, Mourne and Down	10,674	10,706	10,102	9,854	10,408
Unknown	2,904	3,083	2,355	1,913	2,074
<b>FE Sector Total</b>	<b>90,851</b>	<b>92,479</b>	<b>88,153</b>	<b>83,015</b>	<b>82,770</b>

Source: Consolidated Data Return (CDR)

Unknown\*: Postcodes with unassigned LGDs are mainly accounted for by qualifications gained by Republic of Ireland (RoI) domiciled students (approx. 70%).

- The number of qualifications achieved at FE colleges decreased by a net 8.9% between 2013/14 (90,851) and 2017/18 (82,770).
- Since 2013/14, the number of qualifications awarded has decreased in net terms in nine of the eleven Local Government Districts.
- The largest percentage net decrease has been in Fermanagh and Omagh (26.5%), from 6,546 in 2013/14 to 4,812 in 2017/18.
- The largest percentage net increase has been in Causeway Coast and Glens (2.7%), from 5,647 in 2013/14 to 5,798 in 2017/18.

**Figure 6: Number of qualifications achieved by Local Government District and academic year**



Source: Consolidated Data Return (CDR)

Please note approximately 3% of all qualifications achieved have unknown postcodes, which are not labelled in the chart but included in Table 6.

**Table 7: Performance rates of final year regulated enrolments by Local Government District in 2017/18**

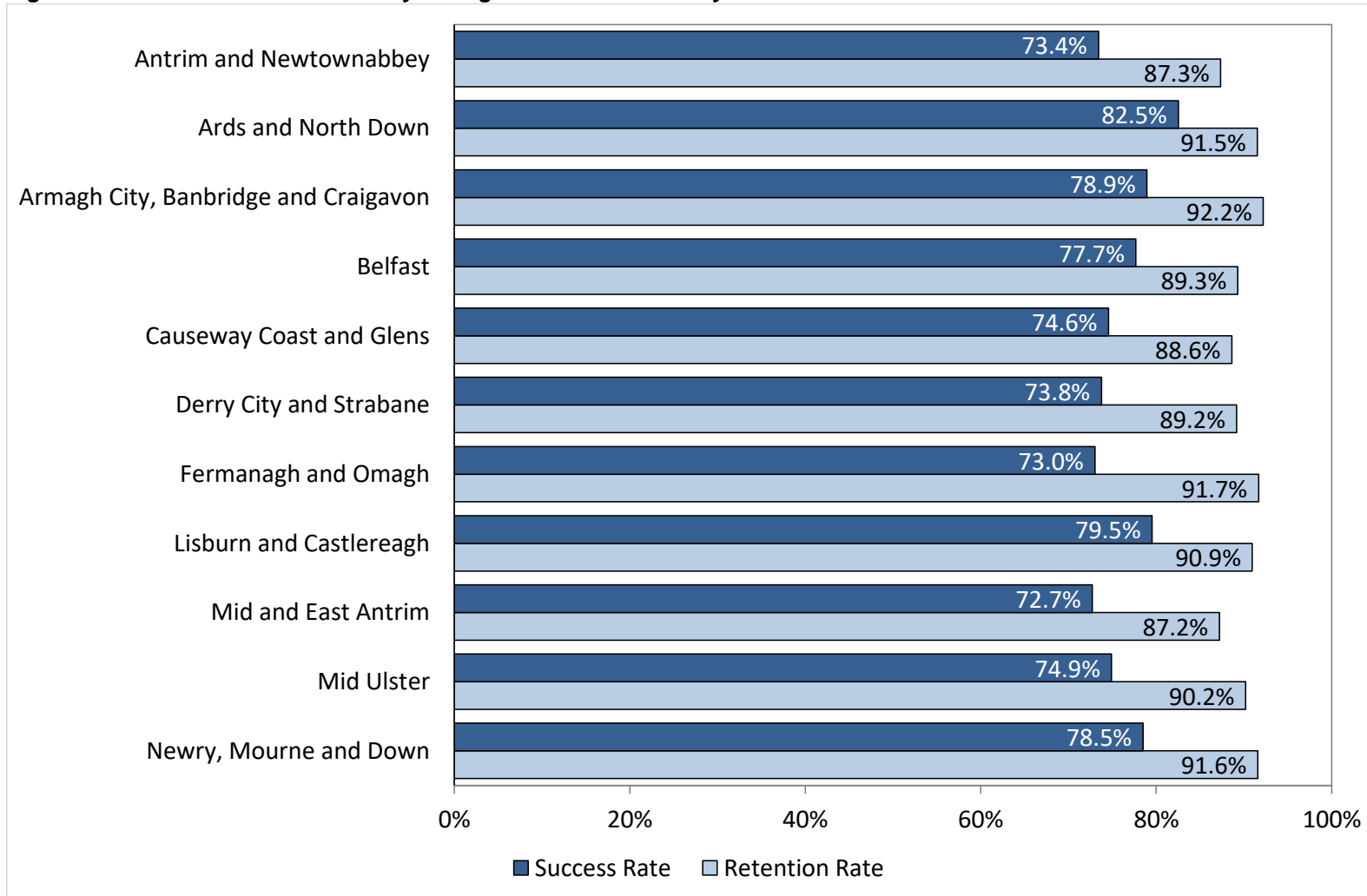
Local Government District	Final Year enrolments	Final Year Completers	Retention Rate	Achievements	Achievement Rate	Success Rate
Antrim and Newtownabbey	6,529	5,703	87.3%	4,794	84.1%	73.4%
Ards and North Down	9,931	9,090	91.5%	8,195	90.2%	82.5%
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	16,119	14,862	92.2%	12,723	85.6%	78.9%
Belfast	13,841	12,359	89.3%	10,752	87.0%	77.7%
Causeway Coast and Glens	7,775	6,890	88.6%	5,798	84.2%	74.6%
Derry City and Strabane	7,691	6,857	89.2%	5,673	82.7%	73.8%
Fermanagh and Omagh	6,590	6,041	91.7%	4,812	79.7%	73.0%
Lisburn and Castlereagh	8,235	7,489	90.9%	6,549	87.4%	79.5%
Mid and East Antrim	6,161	5,373	87.2%	4,480	83.4%	72.7%
Mid Ulster	8,693	7,841	90.2%	6,512	83.1%	74.9%
Newry, Mourne and Down	13,257	12,142	91.6%	10,408	85.7%	78.5%
Unknown	2,653	2,414	91.0%	2,074	85.9%	78.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>107,475</b>	<b>97,061</b>	<b>90.3%</b>	<b>82,770</b>	<b>85.3%</b>	<b>77.0%</b>

Source: Consolidated Data Return (CDR)

Unknown\*: Postcodes with unassigned LGDs are mainly accounted for by final year enrolments/completers and qualifications gained by Republic of Ireland (RoI) domiciled students (approx. 70%).

- The retention rate for the FE sector was 90.3% in 2017/18, while those across the eleven LGDs ranged from 87.2% in Mid and East Antrim to 92.2% in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon.
- While the success rate for the FE sector was 77.0% in 2017/18, the success rates across the eleven LGDs ranged from 72.7% in Mid and East Antrim to 82.5% in Ards and North Down.
- In 2017/18, the success rate in Ards and North Down (82.5%) was 3.0 percentage points higher than the second highest success rate of 79.5% at Lisburn and Castlereagh.

**Figure 7: Performance rates of final year regulated enrolments by Local Government District in 2017/18**



Source: Consolidated Data Return (CDR)

Please note approximately 3% of final year enrolments/completers/achievements have unknown postcodes, which are not labelled in the chart but included in Table 7.

**Table 8: All enrolments in NI FE colleges and NI Population aged 16+ by Local Government District in 2017/18**

Local Government District	Enrolments	% of NI FE sector enrolments	Population aged 16+	% of NI population (aged 16+)
Antrim and Newtownabbey	9,131	5.9%	111,979	7.6%
Ards and North Down	12,890	8.3%	129,981	8.8%
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	22,262	14.3%	164,526	11.1%
Belfast	18,369	11.8%	272,708	18.4%
Causeway Coast and Glens	10,450	6.7%	115,459	7.8%
Derry City and Strabane	13,797	8.9%	117,684	8.0%
Fermanagh and Omagh	11,725	7.5%	91,151	6.2%
Lisburn and Castlereagh	11,112	7.1%	114,044	7.7%
Mid and East Antrim	8,599	5.5%	111,628	7.5%
Mid Ulster	13,971	9.0%	112,481	7.6%
Newry, Mourne and Down	19,312	12.4%	138,509	9.4%
Unknown	3,892	2.5%	n/a	n/a
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>155,510</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,480,150</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

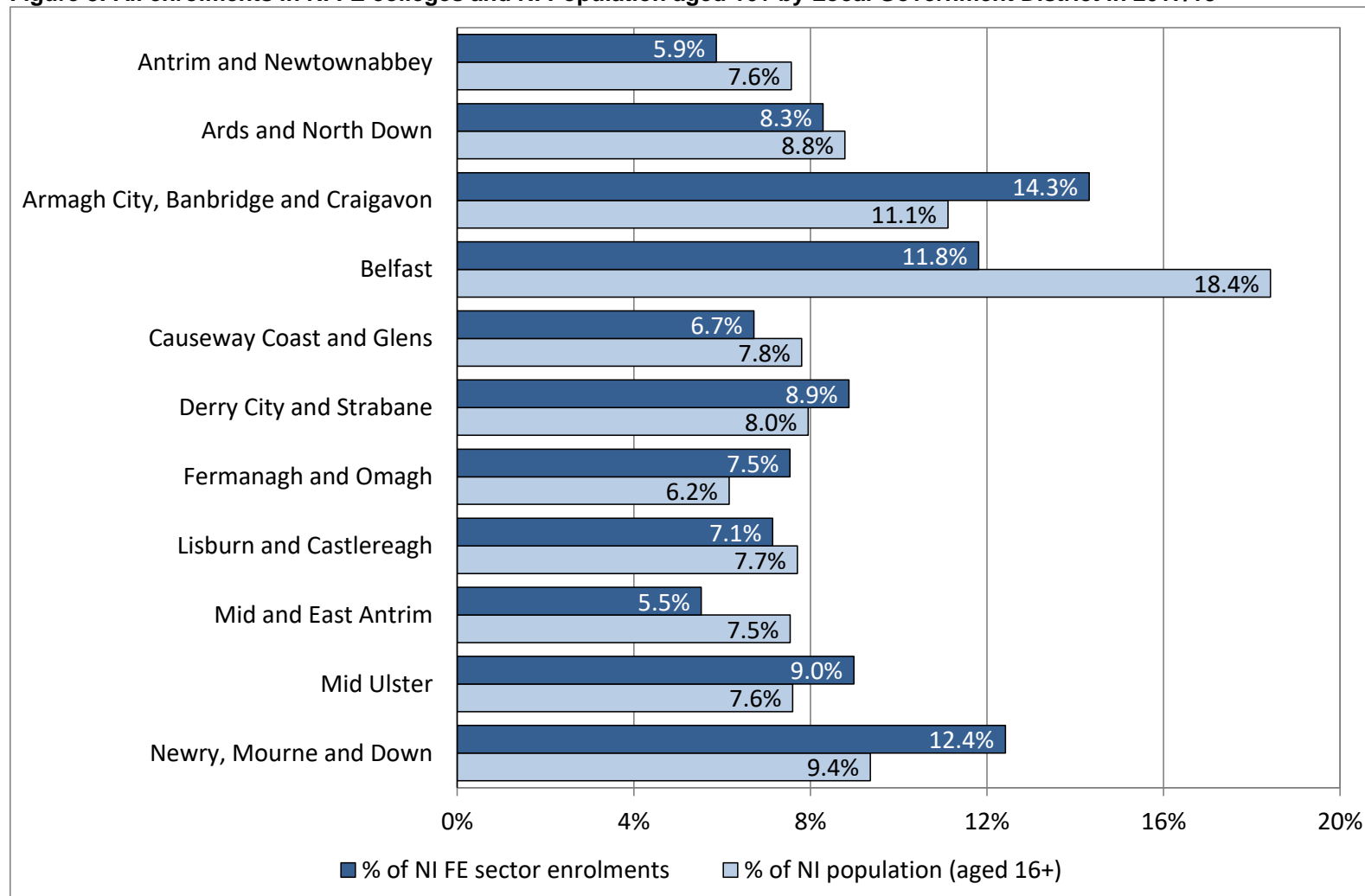
Sources: Consolidated Data Return (CDR) and Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2017

Unknown\*: Postcodes with unassigned LGDs are mainly accounted for by Republic of Ireland (RoI) domiciled student enrolments (70.6%, 2,748).

- In 2017/18, almost a fifth (18.4%) of the NI population (aged 16 and over) lived in the Belfast LGD, whereas, Belfast made up 11.8% (18,369) of the 155,510 enrolments in the NI FE sector
- In contrast, while 11.1% of the NI population (aged 16 and over) lived in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon, this LGD accounted for 14.3% (22,262) of the 155,510 enrolments in the NI FE sector. Similarly, 9.4% of the NI population (aged 16 and over) lived in Newry, Mourne and Down, which accounted for 12.4% (19,312) of the 155,510 enrolments in the NI FE sector.
- When considering the LGD proportions of the NI population against the LGD proportion of NI FE sector enrolments, it should be noted there are no unknown postcodes for population, but there are 2.5% unknown postcodes with regards to FE sector enrolments. Of the 3,892 enrolments with unknown postcodes in the FE sector, 2,748 were RoI domiciled student enrolments, accounting for 1.8% of enrolments within the sector.



**Figure 8: All enrolments in NI FE colleges and NI Population aged 16+ by Local Government District in 2017/18**



Sources: Consolidated Data Return (CDR) and Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2017  
 Please note 2.5% of all enrolments have unknown postcodes, which are not labelled in the chart but included in Table 8.

Source : Consolidated Data Return (CDR)

**Notes:**

1. Figures are correct as at 12th October 2018.
2. The Local Government District is based on the postcode provided by the student at the time of enrolment.
3. The level of study indicates the nationally recognised qualification level of the course.
4. From academic year 2013/14 onwards, 'regulated enrolments' consist of Higher Education courses ('Level 4 or above') and courses at 'Level 3 or below' that appear on either the Register of Regulated Qualifications (RRQ) or DfE's Prescribed List of Approved Qualifications (PLAQ).
5. The dataset was created using the Central Postcode Directory. Approximately 3% of all enrolments are not assigned to a Local Government District due to invalid geo-referencing or non Northern Ireland domicile students.
6. Performance analysis is based on Final Year Enrolments and excludes Transfers.
7. Withdrawals are included where there is an achieved outcome.
8. Those in their final year who have completed the course and subsequently achieved are regarded as final year achievements.
9. Achievements used to calculate achievement rates are final year full and partial achievements.
10. Retention rate is defined as the proportion of the number of enrolments who complete their final year of study to the number of final year enrolments.
11. Achievement rate relates to the percentage of the number of enrolments who complete their final year of study and achieve their qualification to the number of enrolments who complete their final year of study.
12. Success rate is the overall measure of performance, which is the proportion of the number of enrolments who complete their final year of study and achieve their qualification to the number of final year enrolments.
13. Tables for lower geographies, for example, District Electoral Area and Ward are available from NISRA's Neighbourhood Information Service (NINIS) and Open Data NI.

More Further Education statistics are available from:-

<https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/topics/statistics-and-economic-research/further-education-statistics>