

Doctoral Education and Research Policies in Ireland

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Outline

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- The higher education and research landscape in Ireland
- Ireland – a broad context
- Key Actors: Higher education institutions and government agencies

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- The road to a National Framework for Doctoral Education in Ireland
- International and national developments
- The National Strategy for Higher Education

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- Where are we now and the future?
- Current status
- Ongoing policy developments

Ireland in context

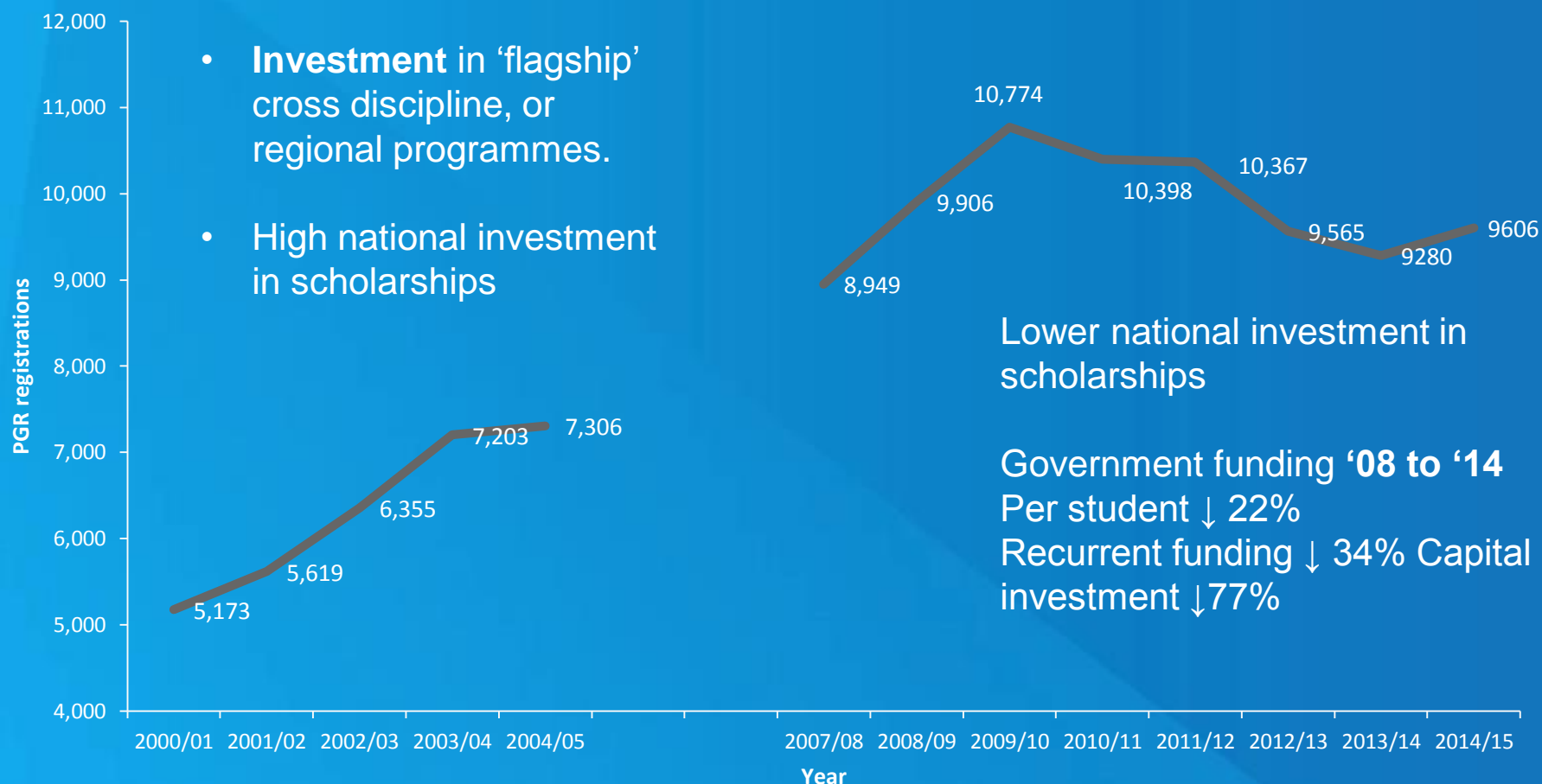
- Ireland was the fastest growing OECD economy since the mid-1990s.
- GDP per capita growth averaged close to 5% from 1995 to 2007.
- Over a decade, living standards increased by one-third.
- Employment growth was spectacular and drew in large numbers of foreign-born workers. Workers from the then EU accession countries rose to 8% of the labour force.
- The peak-to-trough fall in GNP was close to 13% according to OECD data.
- Unemployment went from 4% to 13% in less than two years (2007-2009).



Higher Education and research – in context

- Quality of skills a major determinant of future economic competitiveness and wider social cohesion
- Rapidly changing labour market today (ESRI and other labour forecasts out of date within short periods)
- Clear that demand for skills has recovered sharply and will rise into the future
- Demographic structure of the country provides clear competitive edge for Ireland
- Rising demand from school leavers for educational opportunities; demographic trend that will continue for next 15 years

Policy Context – Funding and expectations



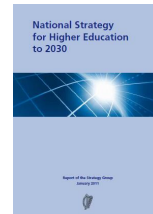
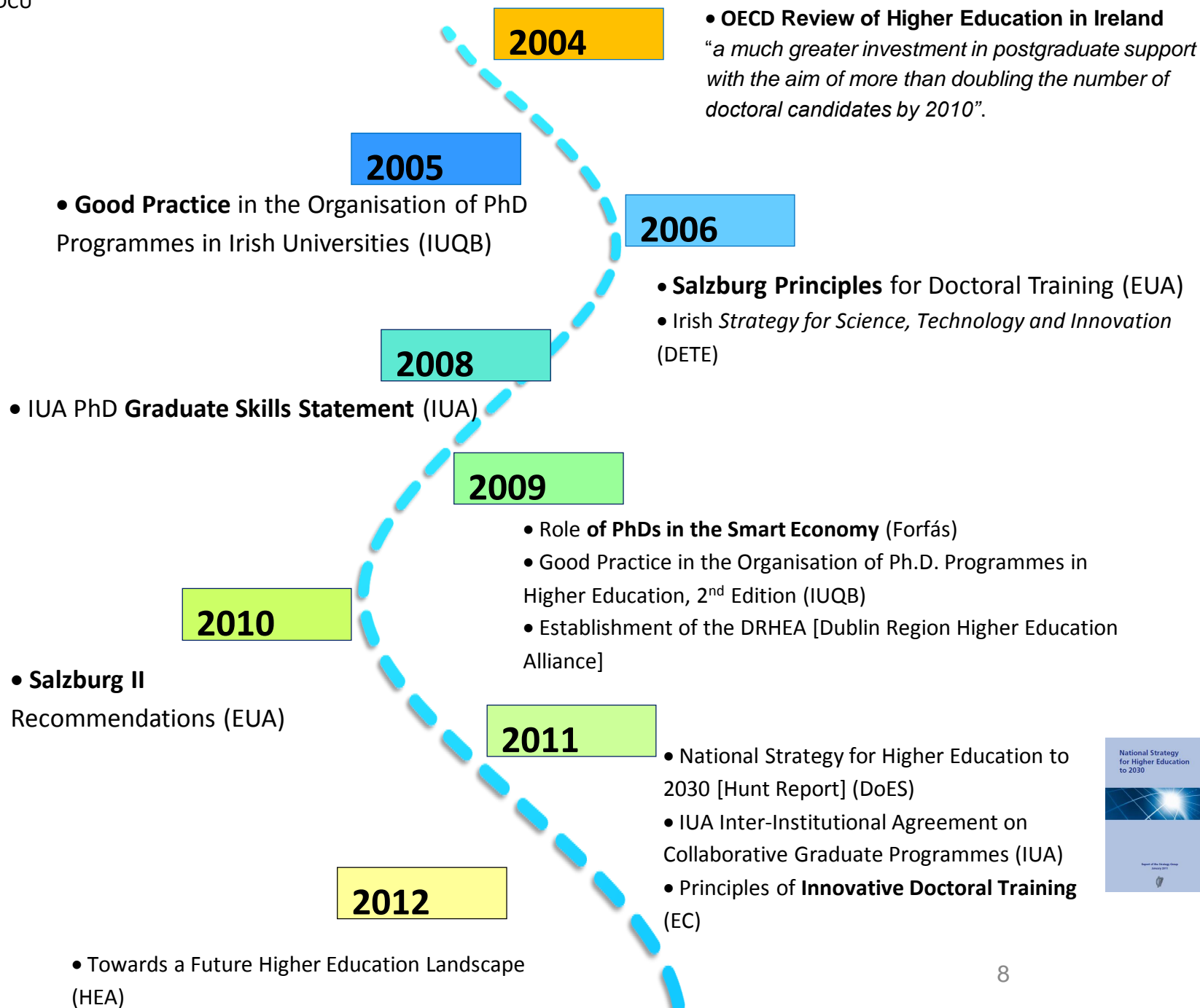
Higher Education Institutions

There are more than 40 higher education institutions in Ireland, including:

- 7 Universities
- Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT)
- 13 Institutes of Technology
- 6 Colleges of Education
- A number of (Partly) publicly-funded small colleges and private third-level colleges



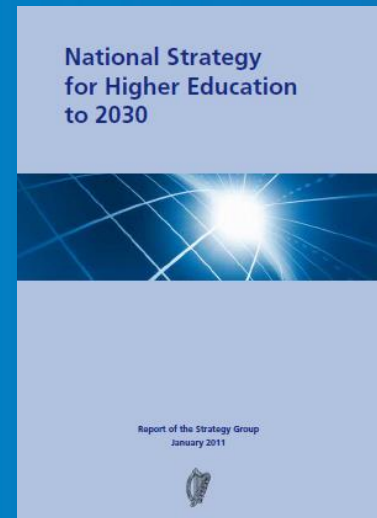
Government Departments and Agencies	
Department of Education and Skills	
Policy advice and implementation Development of a focused, differentiated and coherent system Assessment of System Performance Core funding for higher education institutions	Higher Education Authority
Excellence based individual awards across all career stages; particular focus on early stage career researchers – all disciplines	Irish Research Council
Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation	
Focus national priorities – economic impact; large programmatic, centres, and teams awards; industry facing collaborations;	SFI
Funds commercialisation and knowledge transfer; also nearer market innovation partnerships HEIs/private sector	EI
Other Government Departments	
Funds strategic research areas (economic and public good) e.g. Health, Agriculture, Marine, Environment	HRB, DAFF, DOE
'Problem solving'/sectoral research	Others



National Strategy for Higher Education (2011)

**Improved System Performance and Accountability through a
System Governed & Funded to Support Improved
Performance**

- Landscape of HEIs Optimally Configured
- Autonomy, Coherence, Mission Clarity, Complementarity, Collaboration, Consolidation, Regional Clusters
- Strategic Dialogue & Performance Funding
- Annual Published Report on Performance & System Outputs



Purpose of the Framework - I

- A consistent quality framework should be developed for Irish PhD education, based on critical mass'
- 'A demanding framework that meets or exceeds international standards for PhD education should be applied consistently across all higher education institutions....'
- _____
- Bring together national, European and international policies and guidelines e.g. Salzburg II recommendations
- To provide for a common understanding of doctoral education in Ireland to be applied consistently across all higher education institutions



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Purpose of the Framework - II

- To ensure for doctoral students that there is clarity as to the structure of their education, training and personal development, on enrolment
- To set out standards and requirements for higher education institutions for doctoral education
- To enable the provision of greater consolidation and collaboration among providers to facilitate stronger offerings for students
- To ensure that all relevant international standards are met or exceeded in order to uphold the reputation of Irish doctoral education



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Actors involved – Key conversations

- Higher Education Institutions
- Higher Education Authority
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland
- Funding Agencies
- Employer Groups
- Student Groups



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PhD Graduates – the trajectory

A recent DES report on *Education At A Glance 2015 OECD Indicators*, notes that ‘the graduation rate of 2.2% at PhD level in Ireland was well above the OECD average of 1.7%’.

Education At A Glance 2015: A Country Profile for Ireland, p. 6.

PhD Graduates

- In 1997 = 443 (universities)
- In 2004 = 720
- In 2008 = 1,048 (all HEIs)
- This represents a 2.3 fold increase

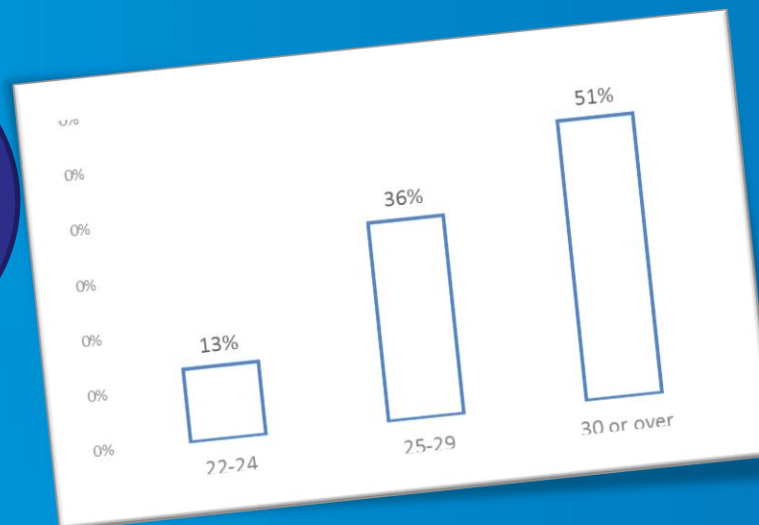


PhD Enrolments (2014/15) Key Facts – where we are now....

89% Uni
3% Colleges
8% IoTs

8,158 FT
& PT PhD
Enrolments

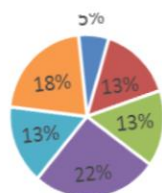
83% FT
17% PT



50 50%



25%
International



- Education
- Arts and humanities
- Social sciences, journalism and information
- Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics
- Engineering, manufacturing and construction
- Health and welfare

75%
Irish



Future Policy - Innovation 2020

- Increase the enrolment of postgraduate researchers to address demand in the economy
- Enhance existing support for the bi-lateral flow of researchers between academia and industry by increasing awards under relevant programmes
- Enhance innovation and entrepreneurship related skills
- Develop a coherent national policy on structure progression for researchers
- Ensure career support for PhDs and postdocs



NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR DOCTORAL EDUCATION

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AN tSúilias um Ard-Oideachas

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UNIVERSITIES
ASSOCIATION**

ICTI
Institúití Teicneolaíochta Éireann

 **IRISH RESEARCH COUNCIL**
An Chomhairle um Thaiscú in Éirinn


DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AN tArd-Údair

 **An Roinn Post, Fiontar agus Nuálaíochta**
Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation

 **sfi**

 **RIA**

 **HRB**
Health Research Board

 **ENTERPRISE
IRELAND**
where innovation meets business

 **eGASC**
Association For Doctoral Research