

Striking the Balance

Teacher Supply in Ireland:
Technical Working Group
Report



An Chomhairle
Mhúinteoireachta



The Teaching Council



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1 Introduction and background

1.1 Introduction

This Technical Working Group (TWG) was set up following an agreement between the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and the Teaching Council that an analysis of arrangements for the planning of the teacher workforce in Ireland should be undertaken. The Teaching Council under the Teaching Council Acts 2001-2015 has a remit to advise the Minister, *inter alia*, on teacher supply. The full terms of reference for the Group, developed by the Teaching Council in agreement with the DES, are set out in Appendix 1.

The issue of teacher supply has been addressed before, but on an intermittent basis. The sharing of expertise and knowledge among the partners on the TWG, the DES (including the Inspectorate), the Teaching Council and the Higher Education Authority, together with the additional information now available from the Teaching Council Register, has enabled a more coherent and definitive approach. In parallel with the work of the TWG, a Consultative Forum chaired by Professor Áine Hyland, which includes all the relevant educational stakeholders, has also informed the work of the TWG. The members of the TWG are also set out in Appendix 1.

The principal aims of the Group are:

- to develop and pilot a model of teacher supply that would seek to ensure a sufficient supply of teachers to meet demand
- to formulate advice for consideration by the Teaching Council that it may submit to the Minister for Education and Skills on the matter of teacher supply
- to consider the analysis of data held by the Council and the DES in developing the pilot model of teacher supply
- to generate policy recommendations for consideration by the Teaching Council in formulating advice for submission to the Minister of Education and Skills on the matter of teacher supply.

The TWG has collated and combined data on teacher demand available from DES sources with data on teacher supply from the Council Register to help inform a new model seeking to provide the Minister with a well-informed overview of the teaching workforce. The initial concentration of the TWG has been to seek to provide projections for a model for primary teacher supply while outlining the necessary work which will be required to establish a similar model for the more complex work required at post-primary level.

The TWG believes that its work in providing this detailed report, at a time when the quality of teacher education in Ireland is being enhanced through the work of the Teaching Council, will give a complementary impetus to the overall coherence of the teacher workforce across Ireland, now and in the future. It also stresses the importance of not losing momentum in the delivery of this work, a fate which befell some previous initiatives in this same area (cf Section 3).

Ciarán Flynn

Chairperson
Technical Working Group

December 2015

1.2 About the Report of the TWG

This Report represents the views of the TWG on an issue which it considers to be very significant to the quality of future educational provision in Ireland. It follows careful consideration by a group which has now met on 11 occasions, has held three meetings with stakeholders and two additional meetings with providers of teacher education programmes. The Group has also shared a wide range of information by electronic and other means. The TWG wishes to record its thanks and appreciation to all stakeholders who have participated very helpfully in this process.

In approaching its task, the TWG took account of concerns expressed by stakeholders, the reasons for these concerns and a range of suggestions for addressing them; it reviewed the statistics and data held by various agencies and bodies relevant to teacher supply; it considered good practice in Ireland, in other countries and, where relevant, in other professions; and it examined the analyses by the European Commission of work undertaken to address shortages and develop the needs of teaching professions in the countries of the EU.

In December 2014, the Group produced an Interim Report which outlined some provisional findings, while also identifying a list of issues which it wished to consider more carefully. This report was presented to the Minister in January 2015 and was published in June 2015.¹

The TWG has continued to meet regularly to review these and other issues. As its work has developed, it has obtained further information and data from various sources. It has now analysed carefully the data currently held on teacher supply and considered the future needs of schools. As a result, it is ready to provide projections for a model of planning which could inform Government policy and assist the Teaching Council in the discharge of its responsibility.

In presenting this Final Report, the TWG believes that its recommendations can help to sustain and maintain the high standing of teaching as a profession in Ireland and, as a result, to support and develop the quality of pupil learning.

1 The Interim Report of the TWG can be consulted on <http://www.teachingcouncil.ie/latest-news/teaching-council-publishes-interim-report-of-the-technical-working-group-on-teacher-supply-.9739.html>

2 Executive summary

This Report seeks to provide constructive and helpful advice to the Minister for Education and Skills on an issue which has significant implications for the availability of a sufficient supply of teachers to meet the needs of Irish schools.

Section 1 of the Report sets out the **Introduction and background** to the work of the Technical Working Group (TWG) and highlights the opportunity which is currently available to complement work being undertaken by the Teaching Council and others to secure consistently high standards of teacher education and quality in schools.

Section 3 (**Background to teacher workforce planning in Ireland – historical context**) offers an informative review of the historical context within which the work of the TWG should be set. It provides information about the changing nature of teacher education in Ireland and, gives details of previous attempts to regulate teaching supply and of different approaches adopted to secure a balance in the supply of teachers in different sectors. It quotes from a report published in 1965, which recommended that the process of balancing projections of teacher supply and demand should be further developed and used as a foundation on which others might build and it concludes by reaffirming that the importance of setting up an ongoing process for projecting teacher supply and demand cannot be overstated.

Section 4 of the Report (**Projecting teacher supply needs for the primary sector**) is the most significant and the most complete part of the work of the TWG. It examines in considerable detail the data which is currently available to predict future needs in primary schools. Although this work is extensive, the TWG notes that, due to the inherent volatility of some elements of data, the lack of historically robust information collected over a number of years and an ongoing difficulty in accessing data held in different parts of the system, it would be premature to present its current findings as completely reliable. It is therefore important that this work be further developed over the next few years, in order that reliability might become more fully established.

Despite these caveats, this section of the Report does provide significant information about current and future pupil numbers; about the number of primary teachers currently in service, including those available but not working full-time; about age and gender; about those in training; and about where registered teachers are educated and, insofar as this information is available, currently located. It also gives information about the number of teachers who leave the profession, temporarily or permanently. As a result, it can offer guidance, subject to the parameters set out above, about likely future needs.

This section of the Report also raises a number of important issues about current provision. These include the future need for primary teachers, given the anticipated current and likely future number of pupil enrolments; the difficulties associated with substitution; and also the ongoing potential for oversupply (or perhaps, in future, for undersupply) arising from different patterns of teacher education funding – with providers either funded predominantly by the State or, in one case, operating on a fully commercial basis. This disparity leads to a lack of regulated planning, which has consequences for the State's ability to secure an appropriate number of teachers for the future.

Section 5 (**Data collection and the projection of teacher supply needs for the post-primary sector**) addresses similar issues in respect of post-primary schools. The TWG has been able to collate likely future pupil numbers in post-primary schools but has faced greater difficulties than in primary in identifying numbers of teachers and the subjects which they are qualified to teach. This is largely due to the complexity of these issues and to the lack of any coherent and consistent system of recording this data in one central place. Taking this issue with the work completed on the projections for the primary model, the TWG has been convinced of the need to develop a Standing Group to review all of the data it has found and to develop a secure and reliable system for the future planning of teacher supply.

This section of the Report has also identified a number of complex issues which will require to be considered. These include the implications of demographic trends which suggest a need for an increase in post-primary teacher numbers in the period 2018 to 2025; the issue of ensuring sufficient supply of teachers to meet the curricular needs of the system, with shortages being found currently in certain key subjects; the need to establish reliable data about the related issue of “out of field” teaching²; and the question of how to reach agreement with initial teacher education (ITE) providers on securing a balance between the supply of teachers and the curricular needs of the system in future years.

Section 6 of the Report sets out the TWG’s **Conclusions and recommendations**. These reflect the findings identified in Sections 1-5 of the Report and seek to find constructive ways forward which can facilitate both short-term and longer-term solutions to some quite complex and often very sensitive issues. In particular, the TWG is convinced that the work it has initiated cannot now be discontinued. It has opened the way for more detailed surveys by a Standing Group on future teacher supply needs and has put forward a platform of change which can, and must, be built upon to secure an appropriate balance between the supply and demand for teachers in the future.

It is anticipated that the proposed Standing Group will be supported and enabled to provide the Minister with information on which to base future policy decisions. One area in which the TWG suggests that close scrutiny is now particularly necessary is in regard to the question of co-ordination and the management of the provision of teacher supply: it is believed that the absence of any current standing framework for managing numbers is creating significant issues for teacher supply.

The TWG considers that the teaching and learning needs of Irish students require that significant priority should now be given to these matters.

2 The term “out of field” refers to teachers teaching subjects in which they are not specifically qualified.

3 Background to teacher workforce planning in Ireland – historical context

The intake of students to publicly-funded initial teacher education (ITE) programmes for **primary teachers** in colleges of education has been regulated by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) since the foundation of the State in 1922. Until ten years ago, the vast majority of newly-qualified primary teachers were graduates of concurrent programmes from publicly-funded colleges of education.

Historically, the majority of **post-primary teacher** education students were enrolled on consecutive ITE programmes in the university sector (i.e., the Higher Diploma in Education). A relatively small proportion of post-primary teachers (mostly teachers of practical subjects) graduated from concurrent ITE programmes provided by specialised colleges of education. The intake to these concurrent programmes was regulated by the DES. The intake to consecutive programmes, provided by universities, was not regulated, except for a relatively short period between 1994 and the early 2000s, when with the agreement of the universities involved, the number of students entering consecutive higher diploma programmes was limited³.

Within the past two decades, the situation has become more complex. Inward and outward migration of teachers increased as a result of the EU Directive on the mutual recognition of qualifications. Ten years ago, a commercial provider, Hibernia College, which receives no State aid from the DES, introduced a consecutive ITE programme for primary teachers which meets the registration requirements of the Teaching Council. Hibernia is now the largest provider of newly qualified (NQ) primary teachers in the State. In recent years, up to 50% of NQ primary teachers have been graduates of consecutive programmes, more than half of whom are graduates of Hibernia College.

At post-primary level, a number of new providers of ITE programmes have also emerged in the past 15 years. Both Dublin City University (DCU) and the University of Limerick (UL) have developed an extended suite of both concurrent and consecutive programmes and UL is now the biggest provider of NQ post-primary teachers. Some other colleges, e.g., St Patrick's College, Thurles⁴ and GMIT Letterfrack (an institute of technology specialising in wood technology and furniture making) also provide ITE programmes.

Fifty years ago, the report *Investment in Education* contained a model for the supply of and demand for primary, post-primary and vocational teachers. In the case of primary teachers, the supply/demand model took account of the projected number of pupils, the age distribution of the teaching force, the number of untrained teachers in the system, the “outflow” of the teaching force (through emigration, retirement, resignation, and death), the trend in qualified teachers (especially married women) returning to teaching after an absence (the right to maternity leave did not exist in 1965) and class size⁵.

The report noted the “difficulties created by statistical deficiencies and problems inherent in the interpretation of existing historical series” in developing a satisfactory supply/demand model. The main problem noted when projecting supply and demand of post-primary teachers was “not the total number of teachers likely to be available but the numbers and quality of specific categories of teacher, e.g., teachers of modern continental languages.” The position was also complicated by “the employment of large numbers of non-incremental and part-time teachers.” The projection of teachers in the vocational sector was further complicated by factors such as the number of categories involved, with different training and recruitment patterns; the range of courses on which teachers give instruction; the fact that vocational teachers often taught in more than one school; and the fact that part-time teachers were widely employed.

3 In 1994, the NUI universities set up the PAC (Post-graduate Application Centre) to administer a system of applications and admissions to the Honours Diploma in Ed. The PAC operates on a similar basis to the (national) Central Applications Office which relates to undergraduate entry. In recent years, the PAC has expanded to include other post-graduate programmes and other third-level institutions.

4 In September 2015 the Minister for Education and Skills agreed the incorporation of St Patrick's College, Thurles with Mary Immaculate College, Limerick.

5 The model assumed that the Government would accept the recommendation of the Council of Education that there should not be more than 5% of pupils in classes of over 40 pupils.

Notwithstanding the difficulties and shortcomings in the statistics available at that time (some of which still exist today) projections of teacher supply and demand were published in the Investment in Education report in 1965. However, the report emphasised that its findings were “only a beginning – a foundation on which others may build.” It went on to state: “There is no finality about it, nor could there be, for change is perennial and will not stop this year or next.” It recommended that the process initiated in the report “should be regarded as a continuing one.”

The importance of setting up an ongoing process for projecting teacher supply and demand cannot be overstated. Such a process will have to take a long-term as well as a short-term view of educational requirements and be alert to social, cultural and economic factors which affect population patterns and in turn impact on pupil enrolments and concomitant resource needs, including teacher supply. It will need to take account of the fact that teacher supply is as much about quality as quantity; and it must acknowledge that its primary focus should be the teaching and learning needs of all learners in the Irish education system. An analysis of the education system over the past 50 years reminds us of how unexpectedly the population can fluctuate as a result of migration, birth and death patterns which were not foreseen nor factored into “once-off” population projections⁶.

6 The dramatic fall in births in the 1980s (after the unprecedented peak of 1980) resulted in a decision by government to withdraw grants from one of the major colleges of education (Carysfort College) in 1986. Within a few years, the child population increased again and required the expansion of other colleges of education to meet the demand for teachers. More recently (early 2000s), a rapid rise in inward migration created an unexpected strain in meeting the increased demand for school places.

4 Projecting teacher supply needs for the primary sector

4.1 Introduction

The terms of reference for the Teacher Supply Technical Working Group (TWG) set out, *inter alia*:

“that the Group develop and pilot a model of teacher supply that would seek to ensure a sufficient supply of teachers to meet demand. The exact nature of such a model would be a matter for determination by the Working Group, but it should provide a dynamic framework within which the following issues may be addressed:

- i) Analysis of projections of pupil numbers within the chosen period of time.*
- ii) Analysis of relevant data held by the Teaching Council and the Department of Education and Skills.”*

The approach taken by the TWG has been to identify and analyse available data, relationships and historical trends in relation to teacher supply and demand in recent years and to apply or modify these to the projected number of pupils/students in primary and post-primary schools for the years 2016 to 2020.

Analysis of primary school staffing is relatively uncomplicated in that all Irish qualified primary teachers undertake their initial teacher education (ITE) with the objective of developing the competence and skills to teach the primary curriculum. A further simplifying factor is that all primary teachers are paid through the Department of Education and Skills (DES) payroll system. In light of this, the TWG decided to focus its limited resources mainly on the primary sector. Consideration of the more complex post-primary system should be undertaken at a later stage using the knowledge gained from the development of the primary sector projections.

This section of the report will set out the identified datasets and characteristics, key relationships and the initial shorter term projections in the primary sector to the year 2019/2020. A number of issues are identified and recommendations for future development of a sustainable and long-term projection model are also set out.

4.2 The primary sector context

Teachers in the primary sector teach pupils in the 4-12 age group in classes which range from junior infants to sixth class. Summary statistics for this sector for the 2014/15 school year are as follows:

- Number of schools 3,277 (3,137 mainstream schools, 140 special schools)
- Number of pupils (2015) 544,696
- Number of teaching posts 33,613
- Number of registered primary teachers (February 2015) 42,265

4.3 Sources of data

In researching and developing projections for a primary teacher demand and supply model, the TWG drew on three main sources of data.

- a. The key driver for determining teacher demand in the primary system is **the projected number of pupils in the system for each school year**. The projection figures used by the TWG are based on the DES pupil projections. From a number of possible projections, the Department has chosen to use projection M2F1, a scenario encompassing an assumption of medium migration and of gradually declining fertility, as the most likely scenario for the future. The projections cited in this section of the report show a continuing increase in both primary and post-primary enrolments into the future. Primary pupil enrolments, which have already risen substantially in recent years, are projected to rise by 25,000 by 2017 and will continue to rise to a peak of over 574,000 in 2018 before beginning to reduce. This peak figure is reflective of primary enrolment levels last seen in Ireland in the early 1980s, when enrolments rose to a peak of 566,000 pupils in 1985 before beginning to reduce.

Post-primary enrolments are also projected to rise by approximately 15,000 by 2017 and will continue to rise until 2025, at which point enrolments at post-primary level are expected to be in excess of 400,000 pupils for the first time in the history of the State.

In total therefore, for the three years ahead, 40,000 additional pupils are expected to enter the system across first and second level education; and continuing increases at primary level are expected until towards the end of the present decade, and until 2025 at post-primary level.

- b. **The Teaching Council's Register of Teachers** provides significant information in relation to the annual supply of newly-registered teachers⁷ from accredited teacher education programmes in Ireland and from teachers who have qualified abroad. The Register also gives a good picture of the overall number of teachers in the primary sector. There are some limitations to the Teaching Council data prior to the commencement of Section 30 of the Teaching Council Act in January 2014. Section 30 made it mandatory for teachers in receipt of State-funded salaries to be registered teachers. The impact of Section 30 can be judged by the increase in the number of registered teachers on the Teaching Council Register:

i) 27 March 2012 – 73,147

ii) 27 March 2013 – 80,798

iii) 27 March 2014 – 87,243

iv) 27 March 2015 – 90,384

The end of reporting year statistics for 2013, 2014 and the part-year figures for 2015 provide a useful basis for estimating the annual inflows of teachers and the overall supply of registered primary teachers. The Teaching Council believes that, following the implementation of Section 30, the annual figures for entry to the Register provide a stable method of calculating future teacher supply, since these figures relate almost⁸ exclusively to the numbers entering the profession in a given year.

In addition to the Register, the Council also holds data on the number of teacher graduates emanating from Irish higher education institutions. These figures are used for operational purposes and do not constitute part of the Register.

- c. The third source of data used was the information held in the **payroll systems in the DES**. All teachers in the primary sector are paid by the DES and it was possible to establish a clear picture as to the numbers employed and the status of their employment. This data proved essential for the work of the TWG in developing projections that could inform a viable model.

As a result of its analysis, the TWG has identified the following data variables as essential elements in estimating teacher supply and demand:

i) The projected pupil population for the school year.

ii) The projected national pupil-teacher ratio (PTR)⁹.

iii) The categories of teacher absence from schools (illness, maternity, etc.) and the proportion of the permanently appointed teacher cohort absent under these categories and thus requiring substitute or temporary replacement teachers.

iv) The projected numbers of teachers acting as substitutes for absent teachers and the number of substitution days undertaken.

v) The estimated supply of newly registered teachers each year and the number of teachers ceasing to teach due to, for example, retirement, withdrawing from teaching, ill health, etc.

vi) The projected number of registered primary teachers available to teach, i.e. the total number of registered teachers for a given year, taking account of point v) above.

7 It is important to note the difference between a newly qualified teacher and a newly registered teacher. For the purposes of establishing the annual inflow of new teachers, it is only registered teachers who are relevant to estimates of the supply of available teachers. Therefore, historic analyses of the Register contained in this Report are conducted on the basis of the number of teachers joining the Register in a given year, rather than the number of teachers obtaining a qualification in that year.

8 Those re-entering the Register after a lapse in registration, e.g., through non-renewal or career break, will be represented in annual registration figures.

9 The pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) is the total number of pupils divided by the total number of teaching posts (classroom teachers and support teachers). This calculation differs for example from the staffing schedule at primary level which is the basis for allocating classroom teachers to each school based on its enrolments.

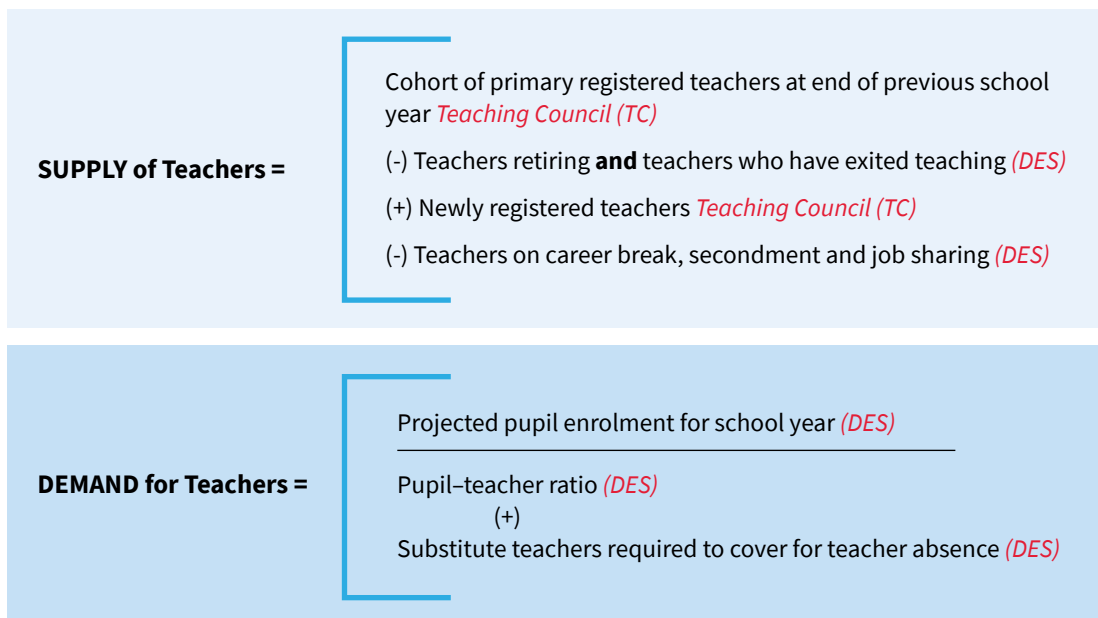
4.4 Teacher supply and demand – data and relationships

The baseline for estimating the number of teachers needed in an educational system is the projected number of pupils divided by the PTR. In the primary system both of these figures are available. Consequently, using pre-determined assumptions, it is a relatively straightforward calculation to estimate the number of teachers (expressed as whole time equivalents or WTE) needed to satisfy the needs of the school system. The complicating factor is the calculation of the number of additional teachers required to cover for teacher absences such as illness, maternity, career break or secondment. While the level of absence can be identified and converted into whole time teacher equivalents, the actual number of teachers required to fill the gaps is not as easily calculated or projected.

4.5 The elements of a teacher supply and demand model

The elements of teacher supply and demand utilised by the TWG for its projections are relatively straightforward and intuitive. These elements are summarised in (Figure 1). (It should be noted that the projected figures are calculated on an annual basis, using a snap-shot of available data.)

Figure 1 – The elements of a teacher supply and demand model



4.6 Teacher supply

To become a qualified primary school teacher in Ireland, a teacher must have completed an appropriate degree (Bachelor of Education or equivalent qualification) or a combination of a degree and post-graduate qualification. The Teaching Council accredits all programmes presented by Irish ITE providers. In cases where teachers have achieved qualifications outside of Ireland, these are assessed in accordance with the EU/EEA Professional Qualifications Directive (Directive 2005/36/EC as amended).

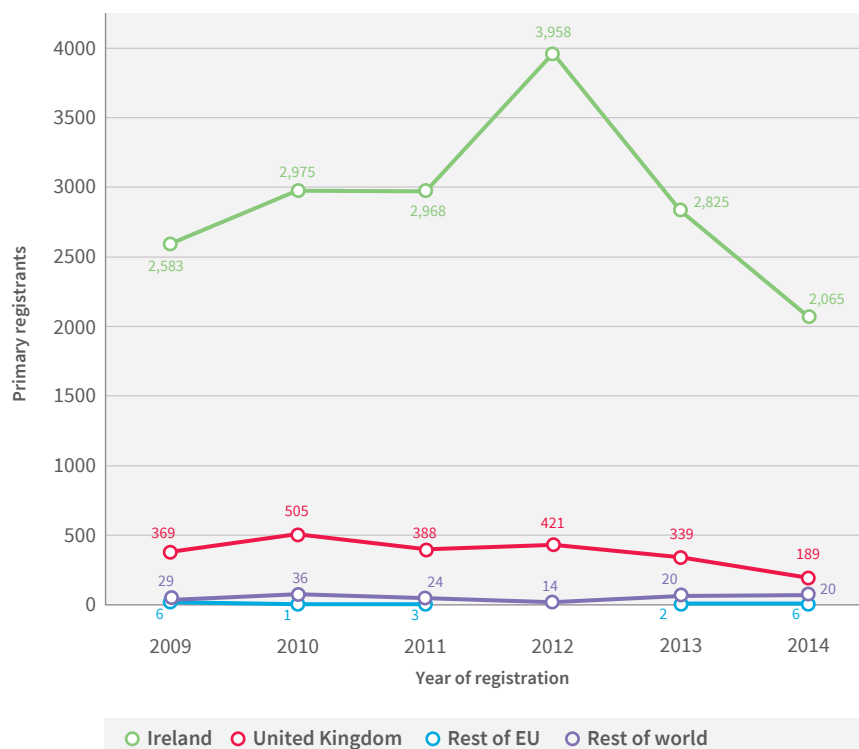
There are a number of sources of teachers for the Irish primary school system and these are set out below. The data used is drawn from an analysis of historical data contained in the Teaching Council's Register of Teachers. Table 1 and Figure 2 on the following page provide a comparative overview of the numbers and trends from 2009 to 2014.

- 4.6.1 The major source of teachers is drawn from the group of six higher education institutions (HEIs) which provide most of the newly qualified teachers recruited into primary schools in Ireland.
- 4.6.2 The balance is largely made up of teachers who have qualified outside of Ireland. These include both Irish citizens and foreign nationals who have completed their teaching qualifications outside of Ireland.
- 4.6.3 A further, but relatively small, category includes teachers who return to teaching having been out of the school system for more than five years¹⁰.

Table 1 - Main sources of new primary teacher registrations 2009 – 2014 (Source – Register of Teachers)

Most recent qualification (origin)	Year of registration					
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Ireland	2,583	2,975	2,968	3,958	2,825	2,065
United Kingdom	369	505	388	421	339	189
Rest of EU	6	1	3	0	2	6
Rest of world	21	34	21	12	17	15
Location not identified	8	2	3	2	3	5
Total primary registrants	2,987	3,517	3,383	4,393	3,186	2,280

Figure 2 - Main Sources of new primary teacher registrations 2009 – 2014 (Source – Register of Teachers)



It is apparent from Table 1 and Figure 2 that Irish HEIs provide almost 90% of teachers in the Irish primary school system. The spike in the numbers recorded in 2012 is probably related to the announcement by the then Minister for Education and Skills, Ruairí Quinn, that he intended to commence section 30 of the Teaching Council Act, thus making it compulsory for teachers whose salary was paid from State funding to be registered with the Teaching Council.

10 Teachers in this category do not include teachers on career break or secondment.

4.6.4 Teachers qualifying in Ireland

There are six HEIs in Ireland which provide primary ITE qualifications which are accredited by the Teaching Council. Five of the institutions are in receipt of State funding and the sixth is a commercially operated HEI. There are two types of teacher education programmes – an undergraduate Bachelor in Education degree leading to a Level 8 award on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and a post-graduate Masters in Education (PME) (Level 9).

Figure 3 and Figure 4 below show the number of teacher graduates anticipated from the six primary teacher education providers for each year until 2019/20. These figures, which were supplied by the HEIs, indicate that there will be no decline in the graduate and post-graduate teacher output from Irish HEIs in the next five years. These figures are therefore a key part of the TWG’s planning process for teacher supply. It is however important to note that these figures are the projected number of graduates from programmes. Most, but not all of these graduates, will register as teachers with the Teaching Council in the year of their qualification; some may choose to work elsewhere but could subsequently return to teaching.

Figure 3 - Primary teacher graduates from Irish HEIs 2014 – 2019

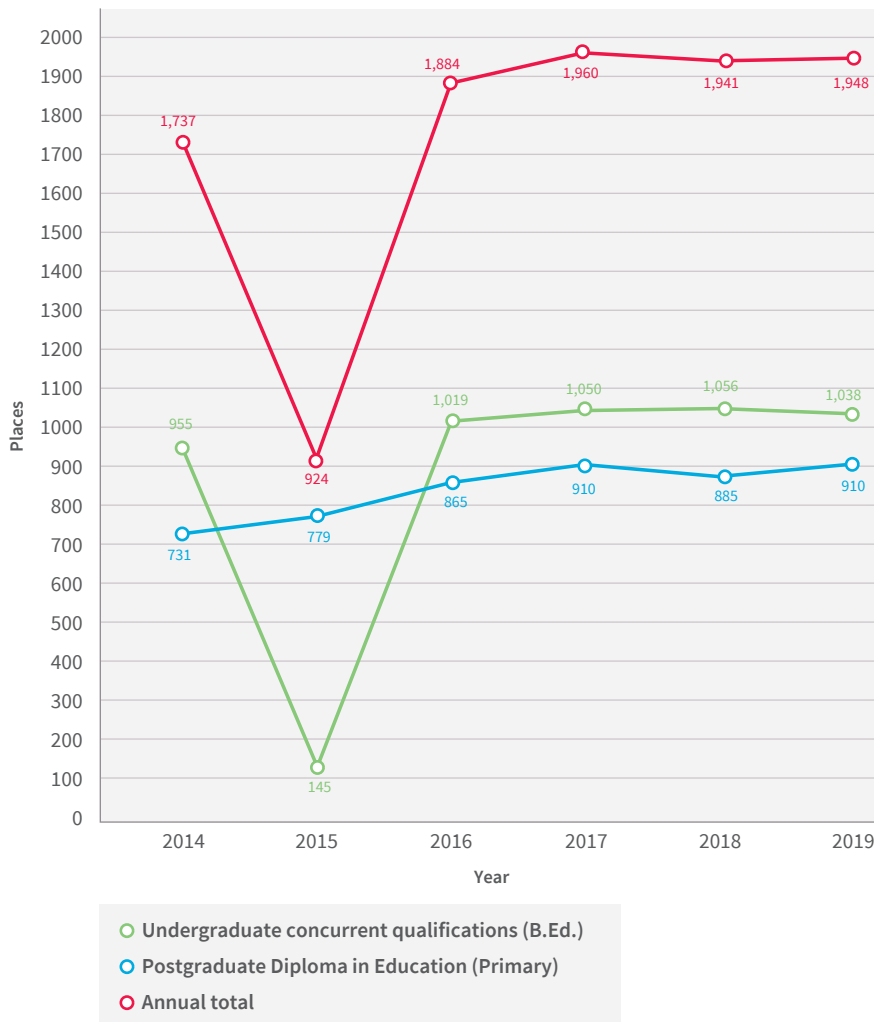


Table 2 - Individual HEI provider projections 2014 – 2019

Primary HEIs Ireland	2014*	2015**	2016	2017	2018	2019
Undergraduate Concurrent Qualifications (B.Ed.)						
Marino Institute of Education	85	0	103	111	116	110
St Patrick's College Drumcondra	390	23	400	420	415	410
Froebel College of Education/Maynooth University	58	60	58	61	67	60
Mary Immaculate College	371	0	400	400	400	400
Mary Immaculate College (B.Ed.h, i.e., Psych)	26	34	30	30	30	30
Church of Ireland College	25	28	28	28	28	28
Undergraduate Sub-total	955	145**	1,019	1,050	1,056	1,038
Postgraduate Diploma in Education (Primary)						
Marino Institute of Education	47	62	85	60	60	60
St Patrick's College Drumcondra	53	66	108	60	100	100
Froebel College of Education/Maynooth University	29	31	47	30	30	30
Mary Immaculate College	58	100	60	60	60	60
Hibernia College of Education	544	520	565	700	635	660
Postgraduate Sub-total	731	779	865	910	885	910
Projected Primary Graduates	1,686	924	1,884	1,960	1,941	1,948

*2014 based on teachers registered who had graduated in 2014 ** 2015 undergraduate numbers reduced as a result of transition from three-year to four-year programme.

The 2014 registration figure has been included in Figures 3 and 4 to demonstrate the low figure for students graduating in 2015, due to changes in the length of teacher education programmes.

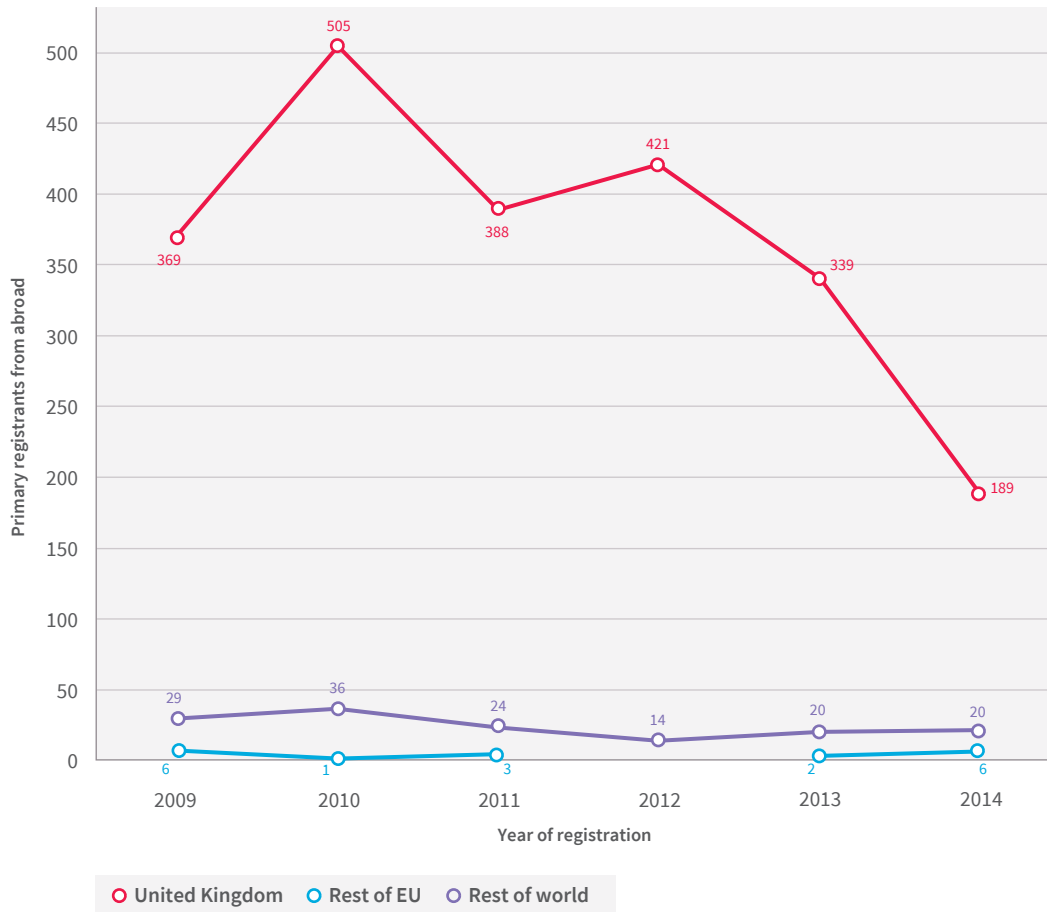
4.6.5 Teachers Qualifying Abroad

Estimating the number of teachers who will qualify abroad and then enter the Irish system is quite difficult. Most teachers in this category are Irish citizens who have completed a teacher education programme and induction/probation period in the UK. Table 1 indicated a distinct decline in the number of teachers entering the Register from abroad since 2011.

There may be various factors which have led to this reduction. For example, the trend may be related to the Teaching Council introducing a requirement that teachers benefitting from the EU Recognition of Professional Qualifications Directive must complete the induction/probation process in the member state where the qualification was completed.

Figure 4 below elaborates on the data provided in Table 1 in relation to teachers qualifying outside of Ireland.

Figure 4 - Analysis by origin of teachers qualified outside of Ireland



For the purposes of the TWG's projections for 2015 – 2019/20, a projected figure of 200 teachers per year from this source has been estimated.

4.7 The current cohort of primary teachers in Ireland

4.7.1 The total number of teachers available for employment in primary schools is an essential baseline figure for estimating the supply of teachers in the coming years. The TWG has taken as its baseline the number of primary teachers recorded on the Register of Teachers on 1 January 2015. Although it has been assumed that the vast majority of registered teachers are either employed or seeking employment as teachers, it is acknowledged that a small proportion may not be actively seeking employment at a given point in time. An approximate reconciliation exercise between the number of primary teachers on the Register and the various salary payment systems in the DES would suggest that this figure is no more than 2% at any given point in time. This implies that the Teaching Council's current Register provides a very reliable picture of the number of active teachers.

Over time, two significant changes occur to the cohort of primary teachers who become available to teach in any given year. Firstly, *new teachers* enter the system (this has been considered in 4.6 above) and secondly, teachers *retire or otherwise leave* teaching on a long-term or permanent basis¹¹.

4.7.2 Teachers retiring from the teaching profession

Teacher retirement trends in recent years have been reviewed with a view to estimating an approximate future annual trend of retirement. This is a particularly difficult task, however, as decisions to retire can be linked to volatility in opportunity (e.g., incentive schemes) and to other developments which are hard to predict. Retirement patterns for the years 2005 to 2014 have however been reviewed (see Table 3 below). The variations shown may reflect the impact of patterns of early retirements during this period and there is a possibility that these patterns might be different in future years. However, for the purpose of estimating the retirement pattern for the years 2016 to 2020, the TWG has agreed to use in its projections an indicative figure of 700 teachers retiring annually.

Table 3 - Annual primary teacher retirements (Source – DES Pensions Section)

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Category – compulsory	85	70	66	75	77	61	43	10	41	34
Category – voluntary										
Age 60 years and over	211	200	244	220	436	275	371	349	170	252
From 55 years but under 60	185	202	196	230	469	324	517	515	211	419
Category – other	165	165	143	169	111	159	158	165	112	121
Total retirements	646	637	649	694	1,093	819	1,089	1,039	534	836

The age profile of teachers has also been considered when arriving at an estimated retirement figure. The age profile of registered teachers is illustrated in Figure 5 on the next page.

4.7.3 Teachers leaving the teaching profession pre-retirement age

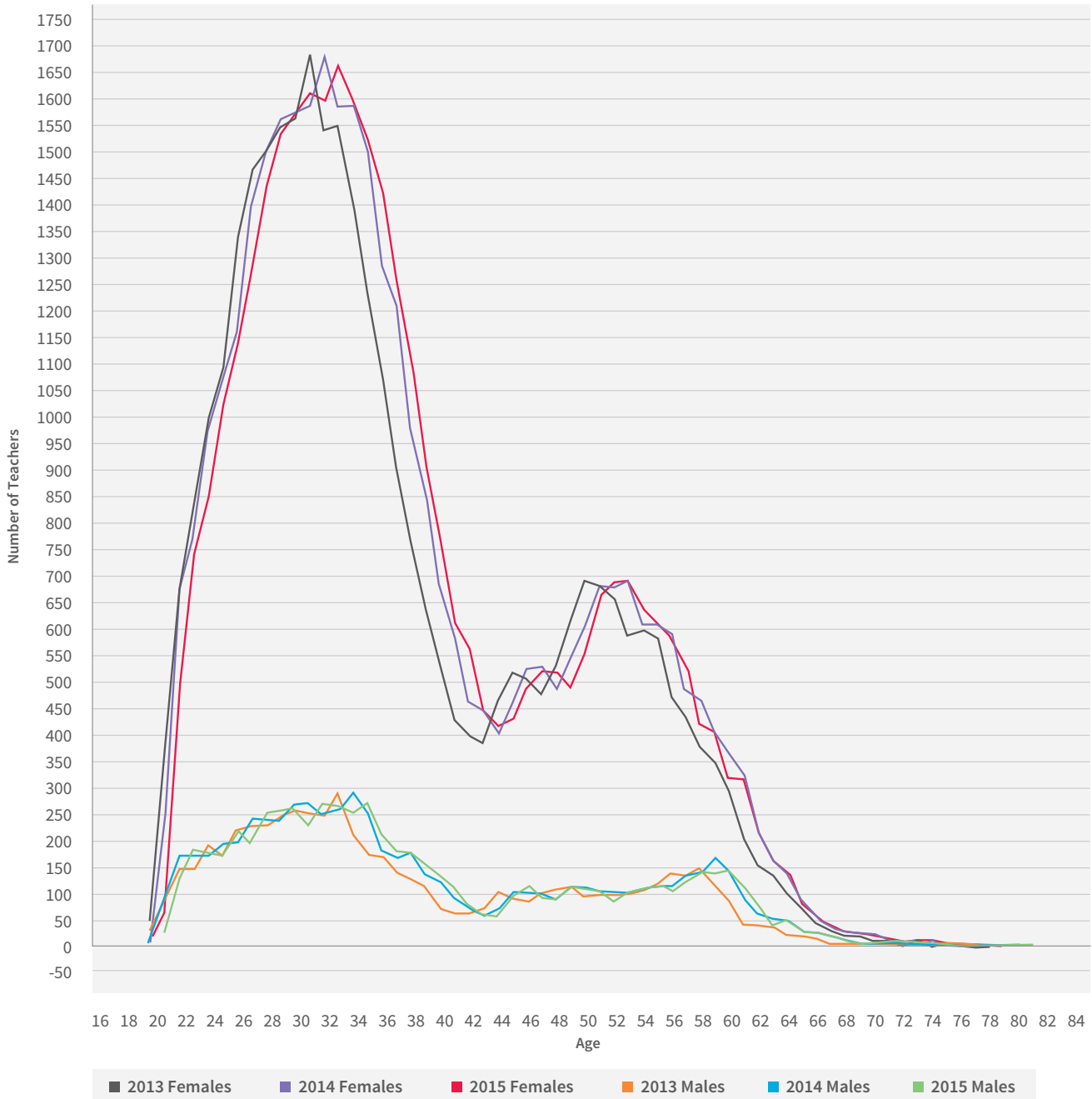
In addition to its review of teachers retiring, the TWG has sought to identify the numbers of teachers leaving the teaching profession before the age when they are entitled to a pension. The age profile reviewed was from 21 to 54 and data was drawn from the DES payroll system. Data on non-retirement leavers indicated that an average of 725 teachers left the payroll between 2010/11 and 2013/14 but did not take a career break or a secondment. It is, of course, possible that some of these teachers may have retained their registration with the Teaching Council in order to leave open the possibility of returning to the profession in the future.

While examining teacher age data from the Teaching Council Register, it was possible to observe a very marked pattern showing a reduction in the number of teachers by age group on the register which occurred within a relatively short age span. This pattern raises a question about whether this is indicative of low recruitment in previous years or of a significant underlying pattern of teachers leaving the profession some 15 to 20 years after qualifying.

11 This cohort refers to teachers exiting the teaching profession and does not include career breaks, maternity leave, secondments, etc.

The primary teacher age profile in Fig 5 below is broken down by gender and indicates a peak in the number of teachers at age 31/33. The number of teachers at each subsequent age reduces significantly until age 41/43 when it stabilises. The cause of the reduction in teacher numbers would appear to be at least in part related to teacher recruitment practices in the 1990s (and this is supported by the sharp decline in teacher numbers moving to the right of the graph with each of the three years shown). However, at least some of this dramatic drop in teachers between ages 31 and 43 is accounted for by teachers leaving the teaching profession.

Figure 5 - Primary teacher age profile (Source - Register of Teachers)



4.7.4 Estimating the available pool of teachers for the years 2015 to 2019

Table 4 (below) sets out the projected number of teachers available in each of the years from 2015 to 2019/2020. It is acknowledged that this teacher supply estimation is largely linear but it does give a reasonable approximation of the available cohort of teachers over the next five years based on current knowledge. This estimate should however be viewed with caution and, consequently, it should not be used to support early changes in policy until more robust data is available.

Table 4 - Estimation of number of primary teachers available (headcount) 2015 to 2020

Projection Factors	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Year start	42,265	41,964	42,623	43,358	44,074	44,797
New entrants – Ireland (NQTs)	924	1,884	1,960	1,941	1,948	1,948
Teachers from outside of Ireland	200	200	200	200	200	200
Sub-total: new entrants	1,124	2,084	2,160	2,141	2,148	2,148
Retirements	700	700	700	700	700	700
Non-retirement departures from teaching	725	725	725	725	725	725
Sub-total: teachers leaving teaching	1,425	1,425	1,425	1,425	1,425	1,425
Teachers not available due to engagement in career break, secondment or job-sharing posts	2,351	2,351	2,351	2,351	2,351	2,351
Year end – teachers available (headcount)	39,613	40,272	41,007	41,723	42,446	43,169

4.8. The demand for teachers

As identified in Figure 1 previously, the demand for primary teachers in each school year is a function of pupil enrolment, the PTR and other teacher allocation mechanisms. In addition to the cohort of teaching positions allocated to schools, a further cadre of teachers is required to cover teacher absences. This cadre represents substitute teachers who are employed on a casual or temporary basis. These demand drivers are considered further below.

4.8.1 Projected pupil enrolment

Projecting future pupil numbers is not an exact science – numbers can be affected by unpredictable changes in, for example, patterns of birth or migration. Since national demographic statistics are reflected in patterns of pupil enrolment and by extension teacher demand, the TWG has drawn on the most reliable figures available to the DES to address this task. On balance, the TWG believes that figures based on planning scenario M2F1 (see 4.3.a.), currently represent an appropriate basis for the projection of teacher demand and can be updated from time to time as more up-to-date information becomes available.

In the case of the primary sector, enrolment for the academic year 2014/2015 shows 544,700 pupils enrolled in primary schools. The projections for future years indicate that the numbers enrolled in primary schools will peak at around 574,500 in 2018 and will then gradually fall off with each subsequent year.

The projected numbers of pupils in primary (including special) schools until 2025 are shown in Table 5 below:

Table 5 - Projected pupil enrolment in primary schools by year (Source – DES statistics)

Year	M1F1	MIF2	M2F1	M2F2	M3F1	M3F2
2015	556133	556133	555134	555134	555134	555134
2016	565459	565459	563093	563093	563093	563093
2017	572844	572844	569562	569562	569076	569076
2018	578453	578489	574469	574464	573054	573054
2019	578498	578557	574011	574002	571333	571333
2020	573764	573659	568495	568288	564793	564597
2021	565549	564890	559785	558990	555305	554519
2022	555553	553915	549577	547770	544563	542759
2023	541568	538543	535514	532289	530204	526969
2024	526582	521780	520502	515468	515124	510064
2025	512403	505445	506372	499152	501081	493812

4.8.2 Projected pupil teacher ratio

The PTR is the key determinant for calculating how many teachers are needed in the primary school system (including special schools). DES figures indicate that the overall PTR in the school year 2014/2015 was 16.2. Table 6 below shows the PTR variance in recent years.

Table 6 - Composite pupil-teacher ratio (primary) 2005-2015 (Source – DES statistics)

2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
16.6	16	16	16	15.9	16	15.7	16.2	16.4	16.3	16.2

Taking the ratio of 16.2 provides a clear current baseline for projecting the demand for teachers (expressed in WTE posts). However, it should be noted that PTR tends to vary over the years as teacher allocation ratios are adjusted in light of particular needs or circumstances. A preliminary analysis of the recent statement (Budget 2016) by the Minister on additional teacher numbers will, for example, have an impact on the PTR in 2016/17.

4.8.3 Substitute/temporary teachers

The annual demand for teachers is increased by the need to employ teachers on a short-term basis to cover for teacher absences arising in schools due to maternity leave, short-term and long-term illness, career breaks, secondments, administrative leave, etc. These patterns are further analysed below.

- i) In the school year 2014/2015 there were 33,613 teaching posts in schools. When this figure is adjusted to take account of those on career breaks, secondments or job-sharing arrangements, the total number of teachers employed was 36,789.
- ii) The TWG reviewed levels of substitution with a view to making a calculation of the number of days of substitution cover which are required at primary level over the course of a year. A review of categories of absence recorded in the Department of Education Online Claims System indicated that around 97% of absences are accounted for by maternity leave, certified illness, other illness, principal release time and other professional development leave. Taking data from records for the years from 2010/11 until 2014/15, the TWG noted that, on average, a need to provide substitution cover of around 915,000 teaching days per year was identified. Since there are 183 days in the primary school year, this equates to a need for around 5,000 teachers (WTE) annually to cover absences.

- iii) Having established the level of demand for substitute teachers, the TWG sought to estimate the supply of substitute teachers. The data from 2010/11 until 2014/15 indicates that schools employed substitute teachers for an annual average of 590,000 days. This is the equivalent of just over 3,200 teacher posts (WTE), based on a school year of 183 days. These figures indicate that only 64% of substitutable absence was actually covered; this aligns with recent reports about substitute teacher availability¹².
- iv) Establishing how many substitute teachers were filling these posts and the number of days per annum the substitute teachers were teaching was then calculated. The relevant data for the most recent year 2014/15 is set out in Table 7 below.
- v) In total, there were 6,942 teachers engaged in substitute teaching. The number of days of substitute teaching per teacher has been banded in Table 7. The largest group of teachers in any one band was the 1,397 teachers (or just over 20% of the cohort¹³) who worked between one and nine days. However, 3,136 teachers (or 45% of the entire cohort) worked between 100 and over 170 days.
- vi) When the age profile of teachers undertaking substitute duties was examined over three years, it was noteworthy that 74% were in the 18-34 year age bracket.

Table 7 - Number of Substitute teachers 2014/15 – number of days worked (Source – DES Payroll Section)

Days worked	Number of substitute teachers	Percentage of cohort
Worked 1 - 9 days	1,397	20.1%
Worked 10-49 days	1,440	20.7%
Worked 50-99 days	969	14.0%
Worked 100-139 days	1,061	15.3%
Worked 140- 169 days	1,039	15.0%
Worked 170 days plus	1,036	14.9%
Total	6,942	100.0%

4.8.4 Calculating an appropriate substitute teacher ratio for projection purposes

Using figures recorded by the DES payroll for the number of teaching posts (33,613) and for the number of teachers undertaking substitution duties (6,942), it can be established that the actual ratio of substitute teacher to allocated teacher posts in the school year 2014/2015 was 20.6%. It must be borne in mind that 41% of the available teachers who undertook substitute cover worked for fewer than 50 days and that only 64% of substitutable absences were filled. Anecdotally, many substitute teachers report difficulty in getting substitute work. Equally, it is regularly reported that school principals have great difficulty locating substitutes¹⁴.

The TWG identified substitution as one of the most difficult areas to address in seeking to project teacher demand levels over the next few years. While the ratio of substitute teacher to employed teacher may seem high, the difficulties that many schools report in hiring substitute teachers and that many potential substitute teachers report in obtaining substitute work indicate that this is a complex and systemic matter and that factors such as location are relevant. It would also suggest that the current informal arrangements for schools to locate substitute teachers are less than effective. The TWG therefore believes that improvements are needed in the school system to provide a more efficient and sustainable substitute recruitment mechanism for both schools and teachers.

12 See article 'Availability of Substitute Teachers' – Irish Primary Principals Network Leadership magazine November 2015 [www.IPPN.ie].

13 It should be noted that, under DES regulations, unregistered persons may be employed by a school for up to five days when all other options have been exhausted.

14 See op cit – Irish Primary Principals Network Leadership magazine Nov 2015.

The TWG found the task of determining a suitable planning figure for substitute teachers in the projection model to be challenging. As noted above (4.8.3ii), the equivalent of 5,000 whole time teacher years (which equates to 14.9% of allocated teaching positions) were needed to fulfil all substitute requirements in the school year 2014/2015. In practice, however, only 3,200 whole time substitute teacher years were provided, and these responsibilities were undertaken by 6,942 teachers. The TWG therefore takes the view that it would be reasonable to use a figure of 5,000 substitute teachers (WTE) per school year as a practical measure for the projection of future demand for teachers. It is implicit in this ratio that not all substitutable absences will be filled and that a more efficient mechanism should be developed for identifying and employing substitute teachers.

4.9. Projecting primary teacher demand until 2019/2020

4.9.1 Initial projections for the demand for primary teachers until 2020

The projected teacher demand figures (expressed as WTE) set out in Table 8 below are based on the following assumptions:

- Pupil projections as set out previously in sub-section 4.8.1 (A)
- The pupil-teacher ratio remaining unchanged (B). [Sensitivity analysis can be undertaken on varying the ratio to establish the level of any change in demand]
- Projected teacher allocations (C) based on figures given in (A) and (B)
- Adjustments made for the use of 5,000 shorter term substitute teacher needs as identified above in 4.8.3 ii (D).

Table 8 - Estimated demand for primary teachers (whole time equivalent) 2015 - 2020

Projected Demand for Teachers from 2015-2020						
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
A. Projected pupil numbers (DES)	555,134	563,093	569,562	574,469	574,011	568,495
B. Pupil-teacher ratio (DES 2014/15)	16.2	16.2	16.2	16.2	16.2	16.2
C. Projected Number of allocated teacher posts (A/B) (wte)	34,268	34,759	35,158	35,461	35,433	35,092
D. Projected demand for substitute teachers (wte)	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Projected total number of teachers required WTE	39,268	39,759	40,158	40,461	40,433	40,092

It is important to note that the figures given in Table 4 are expressed in terms of numbers of teachers, (i.e., headcount), while those in Table 8 are expressed as WTEs of teaching posts. Consequently, the TWG believes that a full reconciliation of both tables will be required before a draft model for primary teacher supply and demand can be fully developed. In addition, a fuller exploration of the make-up and possible trend for the different groups of replacement and substitute teachers needs to be undertaken. This will be a complex task and the need for it highlights the importance of establishing a Standing Group (see 5.3) to oversee and drive forward the work which has been developed by the TWG.

4.9.2 Implications arising from the supply and demand projections in Table 8

The TWGs projections for the years to 2020 indicate the following:

- a. The projected pupil numbers show a steady decline from 2019 onwards. Assuming no change in PTR, this will impact on the number of teachers (WTE) required.
- b. The PTR could change through Government policy. Any significant change could alter the balance between teacher demand and supply.
- c. The planning assumption behind the proportion (or pool) of substitute teachers that should be available to support the allocated and employed teacher cohort is key to any evaluation of whether primary teacher supply and demand may be considered to be roughly in balance or, alternatively, whether the projected supply of teachers will exceed or fail to meet the demand for teachers.

4.9.3 Potential for over or under estimating the system requirements and supply of teachers

The TWG notes that there are a number of variables in the projection of teacher supply and demand over the next five years that could create an oversupply or undersupply of teachers. The most significant variables are changes in the projected number of pupils and changes to teacher allocations. Over a five-year planning period, careful consideration of data in these areas, including scrutiny of the implications of any changes in key elements, for example, in migration rates or policy plans, should allow an accurate estimate of relevant needs to be made.

In respect of teacher supply, the main source of any change would be as a result of adjustments by HEIs to the intake numbers of students on accredited ITE programmes. As has been noted elsewhere in this report, a managed and co-ordinated approach to the number of newly qualified teachers graduating from Irish HEIs is strongly recommended to manage this risk.

It is worth noting that a level of teacher oversupply is far more tolerable in schools than is teacher undersupply. However, a constant situation of oversupply can lead to insufficient employment for teachers, with the risk that some may choose to abandon teaching when unable to earn a sufficient income. When viewed from the perspective of teaching as a profession which can attract and retain new entrants, there are implications for quality and for pupil learning in this risk.

4.10 Related issues and implications

The review to date in this section of the TWG report has focussed on the main drivers of demand and supply for primary teachers in Ireland. Dimensions which also need to be considered include the interaction between teacher supply planning, the HEI ITE providers and the school system where students on such programmes will undertake their school placements.

4.10.1 Teacher supply and initial teacher education providers

A corollary of having a more managed and controlled system which ensures the matching of the supply of teachers with current and future demand is the participation of the HEIs who deliver accredited primary teacher education programmes. There is a two-way impact – (1) for teacher supply and demand planning to be implemented, HEIs need to work within the recommended supply figures; and (2) on the other hand, HEIs need to have a good level of assurance in respect of the number of students to be taken into their accredited programmes in order that they can plan and best utilise their human and physical resources. Both (1) and (2) place a considerable onus on all stakeholders to operate within the agreed (or approved) supply planning system and for that system to be sensitive to the needs of the provider HEIs. In essence, a shared understanding of, and commitment to, enhanced co-ordination and co-operation between all providers of ITE is vital if the attractiveness of teaching as a profession is to be maintained.

4.10.2 Student teachers undertaking school placement in schools

Students on accredited primary teacher education programmes are required to undertake periods of placement in primary schools at various stages of the programme. School placement is recognised as an essential and valuable part of the development process of the student teacher. The placement process relies heavily on the voluntary co-operation of both schools and teachers. Teacher supply planning must therefore be cognisant of the impact of student teacher numbers within the school system and the resource issues that this can cause, particularly within smaller schools.

In the primary sector, the high proportion of small schools within the system which are not as well equipped to support a school placement student can be a significant issue. In turn, this issue places a greater pressure on the larger schools to facilitate student placements.

In addition, a properly managed and supported school placement system as part of the overall teacher supply planning framework is essential (see *Sahlberg Report* p20-22)¹⁵. For such a system to be successful, all HEI providers need to engage and participate.

A similar issue can be identified in respect of the number of newly registered teachers seeking to complete their post ITE teacher induction and the probationary phases of their teacher registration. The active co-operation of the school system is again critical for the successful operation of this important early phase of a teacher's career. It is essential that this co-operation is respected and supported.

4.10.3 Ensuring sustainability and flexibility of teacher supply

A further system-wide issue is the maintenance of sustainability and stability of teacher supply. While the demand for teachers will vary from year to year due to variables previously noted in this section, it is essential that sufficient provider capacity be maintained to cope with the volatility of the needs of the school system and Government decisions on PTRs and teacher allocations. The current four-year B. Ed programmes and two-year (or 120 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)¹⁶ credits or equivalent) postgraduate programmes provide different challenges and opportunities in terms of adjustments to projected teacher supply numbers over a period of time.

It is also desirable that provision of the ITE programmes does not come to be dominated by one provider on the one hand and/or fragmented among many providers on the other. The recommendations included in the *Sahlberg Report*¹⁷, conducted on behalf of the DES and published in July 2012, are instructive in this regard.

As a consequence, for teacher supply planning and implementation to be successful, there will need to be willingness on the part of all HEI teacher providers and the school system to co-operate with the planning framework recommended by the Standing Group on Teacher Supply elsewhere in this report.

4.11 Conclusions

- a. The TWG is of the view that a valid and effective model for projecting teacher demand and supply at primary level can be developed. This section of the Report identifies the main elements and relationships that are essential to the completion of such a model.
- b. The validation and fine-tuning of the projection model will take some years but broad conclusions can be drawn in the shorter term.
- c. A projections model is only as good as the variable inputs and assumptions that have been made. The model, variables and assumptions will need to be reviewed annually.
- d. Successful planning of teacher demand and supply at primary level will require ongoing oversight by the Standing Group on Teacher Supply. This body should have access to appropriate resources and should have responsibility and ownership of the planning model. It should also have a recognised role in assisting the Teaching Council in advising the Minister.
- e. The success of a planning model will be dependent on the timely availability of data. The key sources are the DES data and the Teaching Council's Register of teachers. The work of the TWG relied hugely on informal co-operation from key personnel in both organisations. Data availability will need to be placed on a more formal footing if teacher demand and supply planning is to operate effectively on a long-term basis.

15 *Report of the International Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education Provision in Ireland;* (Sahlberg Report) DES 2012.

16 The ECTS is a credit system designed to establish academic equivalences across Europe.

17 Op cit.

- f. A managed framework involving all Teaching Council accredited teacher education providers working in conjunction with the Teaching Council is required in order to bring coherence and balance to the teacher supply system and to ensure that a sustainable teacher supply system is maintained.
- g. As an interim recommendation, the TWG believes that the supply of newly registered teachers can continue to meet the demand for teachers over the next five years providing that any policy changes which reduce the ratio of pupils to teachers is undertaken in a planned, incremental manner. However, given the complexity of the data presented above, there is a need to ensure the future robustness of this data before making any significant changes to current planning.
- h. On a related aspect, the TWG has significant concerns regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of the current substitute teacher system. The demand in schools for substitute teachers does not appear to be met in a significant number of cases; and, in addition, the level of substitute employment available to many teachers may not provide a sustainable income. Most importantly, there is a risk that this dysfunction can have a negative impact on the quality of pupil learning.
- i. The review of teachers leaving teaching indicates that there is a modest but steady outflow (in the order of 2%) of permanently employed teachers leaving prior to reaching retirement age. Since this pattern adds significantly to the number of posts that need to be filled each year, it warrants further investigation.
- j. Policy decisions and actions related to teacher supply must also take account of wider system impacts, including those affecting ITE providers, schools providing student teacher school placements and the post-registration requirement to complete an induction and probation phase.

5 Data collection and the projection of teacher supply needs for the post-primary sector

5.1 General issues of data collation

In developing projections of teacher supply and demand for the primary sector, the Technical Working Group (TWG) required to gain access to a range of data held across the education system in Ireland. This was a complex task and the TWG recognises the support offered by the Department for Education and Skills (DES), the Teaching Council and other data holders whose generous and constructive co-operation has allowed considerable progress to be made.

Generally, the data required by the group was obtainable somewhere within or across sections of the DES and associated agencies (including the Teaching Council). However, this data, collected by different agencies for different purposes, was not easily accessed and did not always offer the degree of consistency and connectivity which the group might have hoped to find. Data collected in one part of the system, for example, often reflected a snapshot in time, and while the specific time for its collection might meet the needs of one user group, it might be out of date when other data holders undertook their own processes for a different purpose. Ideally, the information required for a teacher supply model should be both readily accessible and digitally connected.

The work to establish projections of supply and demand for primary schools was, however, greatly facilitated by the availability of access to anonymised, aggregated data from the primary payroll of the DES. Since all teachers in recognised primary schools in the State are paid through the DES primary payroll, the TWG was able to gain access to information about teacher numbers which was consistent and comprehensive.

5.2 Data collation and post-primary schools

Although the information necessary to the completion of its task was not always readily available, the TWG has made progress in developing a supply model for the teaching profession in the primary sector (see Section 4 above).

The difficulty of securing data availability, consistency and connectivity in developing primary projections was also relevant to the post-primary sector. In addition, the data required for the post-primary sector is different to that of primary schools, and it is also more complex due to the need to balance both the numbers and the subject qualifications of registered teachers.

In post-primary schools, most teachers are employed by voluntary secondary, or community and comprehensive schools, and arrangements for school management are quite diverse. These schools make up approximately two-thirds of post-primary schools in Ireland, and almost all teachers working in them are paid through the Department's post-primary payroll.

The remaining group of vocational schools and community colleges, representing around one third of post-primary schools, are State-established and administered by Education and Training Boards (ETBs). Teachers working in these schools are employed by ETBs and are paid through ETB payrolls. There are currently 20 payrolls operated by the 16 ETBs and these utilise a number of different payroll systems. Consequently, accessing data similar to that used to develop the primary projections is problematic in ETBs, and, even if it were readily available, the variety of systems in use would make it difficult to ensure data consistency.

Notwithstanding the complex issues set out here, it remains important that the information necessary to develop a teacher supply model in post-primary schools be collated. In summary, the TWG argues that it is important that the future supply of post-primary teachers should be balanced against the likely future needs of Irish schools. Consequently, despite the difficulties experienced to date, the TWG strongly advises that work to collect data relevant to teacher supply planning in all sectors should continue.

5.3 Data collection: next steps

In respect of the wider issue of access to data for the purpose of planning for teacher supply, the TWG Interim Report¹⁸ noted that other countries (e.g., Scotland) have already established systems to address these problems. In addition, the Sahlberg Report had expressed concern about the lack of similar arrangements in Ireland in 2012:

“The Review Panel was surprised and concerned that the issue of teacher supply and demand had not been addressed in Ireland as it has been elsewhere”¹⁹.

To achieve the progress made in the preparation of this Report, the assistance of the DES, the Teaching Council and others has been highly beneficial. However, this assistance has been delivered using a network of informal arrangements and the generous commitment to the project of a small number of individuals who have taken on this work in addition to their normal responsibilities; there are no current arrangements in place to secure similar access to data in future years.

In order to resolve this issue, the TWG believes that steps should be taken to ensure that planning for future teacher supply is based on a more secure foundation. It suggests that a Standing Group be established which allows the Department, Teaching Council and the Higher Education Authority (HEA) to discuss the possible implications of emerging data for teacher supply and to assist the Teaching Council in advising the Minister for Education and Skills on a regular basis. This Group should have access to the data held within and across the educational system and have the power to collect relevant data from agencies and sections within the department and the Teaching Council.

In summary, the TWG believes that it is reasonable to anticipate that those making recommendations on teacher supply (e.g., the proposed Standing Group) should have ready access to data which is already available and, consequently, that every effort should also be made to deliver greater coherence, communication and connectivity between data sets.

It is also appropriate for this data to be shared with HEIs in order that they might have sufficient information on the needs of the system in time to plan for any necessary rebalancing of provision.

5.4 Planning data collection in the post-primary sector

In respect of post-primary planning, therefore, while accepting that each of the different school groups has its own needs and approaches, the TWG considers that, wherever possible, different data sets should be built into a single, coherent system of nationwide teacher supply planning.

Clearly, securing information to support this aim from ETBs will remain challenging for some time. There is, however, a potential solution to this shortfall. An ETB Payroll Shared Services Project is underway and is currently in the design phase, under the auspices of the DES. Its aim is to provide a shared service centre to process payrolls on behalf of ETBs; this would standardise processes and provide management information to ETBs. The TWG notes that the project specification includes a business intelligence solution which should, at least in the longer term, be capable of providing comprehensive and consistent payroll data on ETB teachers.

Notwithstanding the level of complexity involved, the TWG believes that this opportunity to obtain key data should not be lost. The TWG therefore urges that the work currently being undertaken for the support of ETBs should be strengthened to ensure that it will also support the development, implementation and operation of a post-primary model of teacher supply as soon as this is practicable. In seeking to address the challenges of gaining information about those teaching in ETBs, the TWG considers that those responsible for the scoping of this development project should ensure that the configuration of payroll data is undertaken in such a way that it can more easily be collated with the equivalent data drawn from the other two sectors. Clearly, the inclusion of relevant subject information should be part of this process.

While work to produce a new system is continuing, the TWG believes that the possibility should be considered of extrapolating the data which is available from the Department’s post-primary payroll to support the development of an initial model of teacher supply for the post-primary sector, including the ETB sector. The TWG also recommends that the proposed Standing Group liaise with the Shared Services Project Team and the ETBs regarding data on ETB teachers and its availability in the longer term.

18 See note 1 above.

19 *Report of the International Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education Provision in Ireland;* (Sahlberg Report) DES 2102.

5.5 Specific post-primary issues identified by the TWG

Despite complex challenges, the TWG has sought to establish as reliable a data set as it could for the post-primary sector (and has published much of this information in its Interim Report). Because of the various factors already outlined, this has been a very complicated task, with perhaps less certainty about current provision than the group would have preferred. The Teaching Council's data sets, for example, are only now beginning to show what a teacher is currently teaching²⁰; and the lack of historical records may undermine the accuracy of some of the data used. Similar difficulties are to be found in DES files, partly due to the separate tabulation of pupil supply needs and teacher payment records.

From its review and careful scrutiny of available post-primary supply data and from its discussion with stakeholders, the TWG has identified a number of issues which require to be considered in planning for the future. These include:

- a It is projected that pupil enrolments in post-primary will rise steeply in coming years, peaking in 2025.
- b It is anticipated that the number of teachers required to service this bulge in pupil numbers will increase in line with demand.
- c Teachers of certain subjects (e.g., Gaeilge, Home Economics and Modern European Languages) are reported to be in short supply, while others (e.g., History, Geography and English) appear to be over-supplied.
- d There is a clear need to review the accuracy of the belief expressed by some stakeholders that imbalances in subject teacher supply seem to be exacerbating the use of "out of field" teachers.
- e Teacher education providers currently have full autonomy to decide on enrolments of students, including those with subject specialisms which may be already over-supplied, into teacher education programmes. The extent of over (and under) supply may therefore be partly linked to this unregulated (and possibly uninformed) flexibility.
- f The pattern of employment of post-primary teachers is also relevant. A mixed model operates with teachers working on a permanent, contractual and part-time basis. Unlike the general pattern in primary schools, there is regular use of temporary part-time contracts to provide coverage of subject needs and gaps.

All of these issues require to be considered in planning. In particular, the TWG considers that the question of the availability of suitable numbers of appropriately qualified subject teachers should be an issue for future planning. The use of part-time teaching contracts and the impact of shortages or surpluses of teachers in different parts of the country should also be considered.

5.6 Subject teaching trends

Those registered to teach in post-primary schools have achieved academic and professional qualifications linked to criteria for teaching post-primary subjects. Registration is approved for teachers by the Teaching Council when they can demonstrate that they meet the criteria for at least one curricular subject.

To gain a teaching post in a post-primary school, teachers should be qualified in the subject in which the school has declared a vacancy. Once employed in schools, however, they have traditionally been deployed in line with the overall needs of the school itself.

Given the various complexities in data sources, determining reliable indicators of demand for teachers who can meet the curricular needs of learners relative to supply is currently quite difficult in Ireland: the DES's internal payroll data can quantify the number of post-primary teachers paid through the system, but it does not identify the subjects they are currently teaching. More positively, the Department's Inspectorate does gather information from schools every year through *timetable returns* covering teacher deployment and subjects taught. (This data is gathered to aid in planning inspections and is not linked to a unique identifier such as the teacher's Teaching Council registration number.) Therefore, although it is not possible to link in-school deployment to a teacher's qualification, the inspectorate timetable data does indicate the number of teachers teaching each subject within a school.

²⁰ Section 30 of the Teaching Council Act, 2001, commenced on 28 January 2014, makes registration with the Teaching Council compulsory for teachers. While better data is now becoming available, the information entered in registration files is at its most accurate on the day of entry; for example, information about place of employment or even qualifications may change later.

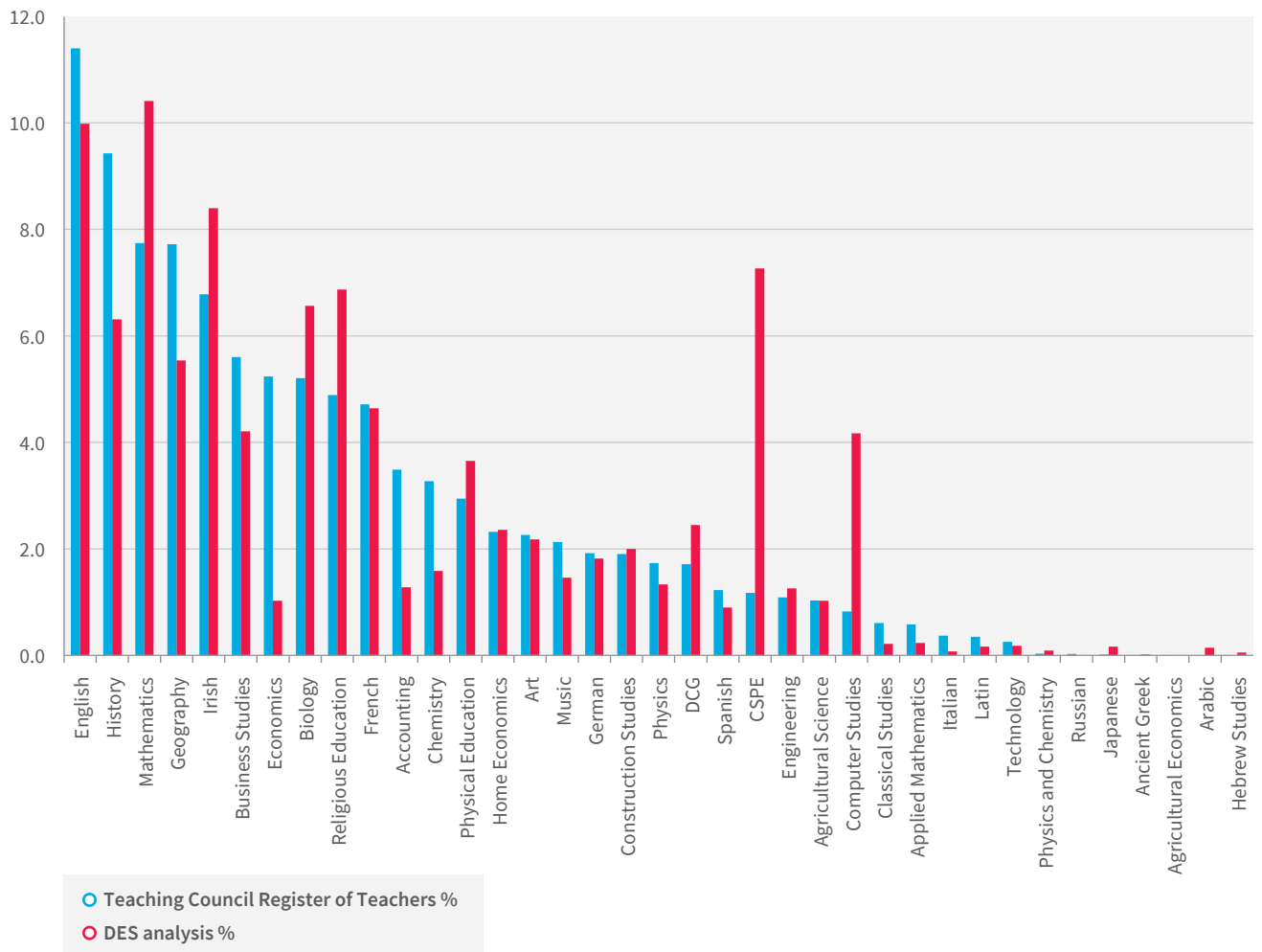
To support its work the TWG, with the support of the Department’s Inspectorate, completed an analysis of 10% (70 schools) of school timetables returned for the school year 2014/15. This analysis suggested, *inter alia*, that:

- generally, teachers teach more than one subject
- there are differences in how teachers are deployed in voluntary secondary, community and comprehensive and ETB schools
- there are some small differences in the geographical demand for teachers of some subjects.

The following graphs illustrate the findings of the analysis of the timetable returns. Also shown, for illustrative purposes, is the DNM analysis of the register of teachers classified by mainstream qualifications.

Figure 6 - Comparative analysis of:

- a. subject teaching in a sample of 70 schools (prepared by the DES Inspectorate – red data)
- b. the Register of Teachers (analysis carried out by DNM Analytics – blue data)



5.7 Subject teaching: the need for management and co-ordination of teacher supply

5.7.1 The TWG believes that learning is most effective when students are taught by skilled, qualified teachers with detailed knowledge of the curriculum and it also acknowledges that curriculum design and assessment are likely to emerge as new priorities for teachers' professional learning in the near to medium-term future.

Ideally, therefore, pupils should be taught by teachers whose qualifications provide them with a sound preparation for teaching the curriculum in the sector in which they work. The forthcoming development of Cosán²¹, the Teaching Council's framework for teachers' learning, will also encourage teachers to use their initial qualifications as an important foundation on which to build the knowledge and skills they will need as they continue to meet the ongoing curricular needs of learners throughout their careers. This approach is consistent with the new subject criteria for the registration of teachers in post-primary curricular subjects, which will come into effect in 2017. It is also in line with previous statements of the Teaching Council that "the quality of teaching is compromised by the deployment of out-of-field teachers".²²

The TWG recognises the significant, practical challenges facing schools in reducing and ultimately removing "out of field" teaching. As current data on "out of field" teaching is less robust than might have been anticipated, work should now be undertaken to define the scale of this issue, the nature of constraints and the implications for schools and for individual teachers of any process of transitional change. In addition, the Teaching Council should support this process by offering advice on the supply of teachers with subject specialisms and should collect ongoing data from providers. This information could inform the national policy framework for teacher supply, and this in turn would aim to clarify expectations and promote an understanding between schools, providers, national agencies and the Department about how the future curricular needs of students in Irish schools can best be met.

In the short term, the TWG notes that the most accessible current data on individual subject teaching in the post-primary sector is that supplied to the Inspectorate as outlined in paragraph 5.6 above. In order for this data to be more easily accessible and useful for the purposes of a teacher supply model, the TWG recommends that it be submitted to the DES in a manner from which relevant, anonymised information on teacher deployment by subject can be more easily extracted.

One relevant and related issue that this TWG Report has identified is that not only will teacher numbers in post-primary school be required to grow in the coming years but also that there is in the current workforce an imbalance between need and availability in certain specialist subjects: certain subjects seem to be in shortage, while others are in oversupply. In the short to medium term, there may be a need to consider novel approaches to increase teacher supply in certain subjects. For example, additional 'top-up' and/or conversion courses for any teachers whose qualifications do not fit the current profile of need could reduce or alleviate any areas of concern. It is worth noting that there is already good experience of this approach in upskilling teachers of Mathematics.

5.7.2 Finally, any discussion of the future subject supply needs of post-primary schools must also address the fact that, in the context of their current unregulated freedom to recruit student teachers, providers do not endeavour to balance provision against the future needs of Irish schools and, importantly, the future needs of Irish learners.

The TWG recognises and respects the right of providers to select students for programmes of teacher education. However, if this results in a shortfall of subject teachers and if some subjects are not recruiting sufficient teachers, there is a need to plan more carefully to ensure that the needs of students in Irish schools can be met.

21 See <http://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/Publications/Teacher-Education/Documents/Cosan-Draft-Framework-for-Teachers-Learning.pdf>.

22 The Continuum of Teacher Education (2012), TCI.

Overall, the TWG believes that the case has been made for an agreement with providers on greater management and co-ordination of teacher supply. While it is clear that further work will certainly be required to develop a model of teacher supply for post-primary, the data reviewed by the TWG, in particular from the Teaching Council's Register of Teachers, would appear to indicate that there are significant imbalances in supply and demand in a number of subject areas (e.g., English, History, sciences and languages). The TWG therefore recommends that HEIs be invited to consult with the DES and the HEA as to what actions they can take in the short term to begin to alleviate such imbalances, based on the best available data.

Inclusive education, and the particular needs of all Irish-medium schools, including those in the Gaeltacht, will merit special attention in this context. The TWG acknowledges that systemic, strategic solutions to the teacher supply requirements of these areas will need to consider the ongoing professional learning requirements of existing teachers. This will happen in the context of the forthcoming framework for teachers' learning from the Teaching Council, Cosán.

- 5.7.3** An analysis of the process used by some providers for the purpose of selection might illustrate the complexity of this issue for providers and for the State. Currently, there are 11 providers of consecutive post-primary initial teacher education (ITE) programmes in Ireland. Traditionally, some 75% of post-primary NQTs have graduated from the universities of the National University of Ireland. The four NUI universities set up the Postgraduate Applications Centre (PAC) about 20 years ago to administer a common system of selecting applicants for their post-graduate programmes. The basic requirement for entry to the PME in those universities is an eligible level 8 primary degree. To be eligible for consideration, one subject studied to degree level must satisfy the Teaching Council subject criteria for post-primary registration.

Applicants are rank-ordered based on a points system which includes:

- performance in an eligible level 8 primary degree
- additional relevant academic qualifications, if any
- relevant professional experience, if any.

The preponderance of marks are allocated to degree performance – for which a maximum of 51 points are available. A further 20 points (maximum) may be awarded for additional relevant postgraduate qualifications and a maximum of five points may be awarded for relevant professional experience.

When the rank order is being drawn up, no distinction is made between subjects, i.e., the points allotted to arts graduates are the same as those allotted to graduates in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) for the same grade award. STEM graduates have argued that this system disadvantages them and that it does not recognise the fact that STEM degrees are usually four-year degrees, whereas arts degrees are usually three-year degrees. By using the same points system and a single rank order for all graduates, regardless of discipline, the system might be seen as militating against STEM graduates in the pool of applicants for PME courses.

Any shortage of STEM graduates on consecutive ITE programmes does not therefore arise because of a shortage of applicants – it arises because the STEM applicants do not score sufficiently highly on a list that ranks all candidates using the same points system, regardless of their academic subject. Since the two-year PME was introduced in 2014, with a significant reduction in the overall annual intake of students, it is even more difficult for STEM graduates to compete with arts graduates. In one NUI university, which accepted a total of over 120 PME students in 2014 and in 2015, only five of these were STEM graduates (compared to an annual average of over 30 in the previous decade). In 2015, there were 19 disappointed STEM applicants for the PME, i.e., they did not score sufficiently on the points system, indicating that the shortage of STEM graduates on the current PME in that university was not the result of a shortage of applicants.

5.8 The way forward

As a result of the complexity of these issues, it has not been possible in the time available to date for the TWG to propose with confidence a reliable model for the planning of teacher supply in the post-primary sector. However, group members are strongly convinced that this work **does** need to be completed. In summary, it is recommended that:

- all relevant information should be collected from all schools and built into a more reliable data set for future planning
- this relevant data should be collected over the next two years to provide a historical context against which to judge the emerging figures provided in this TWG Report and to secure a reliable planning model
- this work should be included as part of the responsibilities of the proposed Standing Group On Teacher Supply, which will operate openly and accountably and thus enable the Teaching Council to offer suitable advice to the Minister on future needs
- the extent of oversupply and undersupply in various subjects, and any consequences for “out of field” teaching, should be clarified as a matter of priority. Thereafter, steps should be taken to ensure that any defined imbalance in post-primary subject supply can be systematically reduced, subject to any new emerging priorities as identified by the standing group in the context of State policies
- the State should work with all relevant stakeholders to ensure that the output from programmes of teacher education will reflect the needs of the system as determined by the ongoing work on teacher supply.

6 Conclusions and recommendations: teacher supply planning for the future

The Technical Working Group (TWG), having given full and detailed consideration to the issues presented in this Report, makes the following recommendations for consideration by the Minister.

6.1 Data collection and analysis

Introductory comment: This Report proposes a way forward in respect of planning for teacher supply in primary schools. The Report also makes suggestions about work which needs to be undertaken to secure a working model for the post-primary sector. However, the TWG has, within the time available, found it difficult to bring together the quite complex data which is needed to plan effectively for the future needs of post-primary schools.

To ensure that planning for future teacher supply is based on a more secure and sustainable foundation, the TWG believes that:

- it is necessary that those making decisions and recommendations for the future have clear access to the data which is held within and across the educational system
- every effort should also be made to deliver greater coherence, communication and connectivity between existing data sets.

The TWG therefore recommends that a Standing Group be established whereby the Department, Teaching Council and HEA can discuss the possible implications of current data for teacher supply and demand and advise the Minister for Education and Skills of these matters on a regular basis. The TWG further believes that this group should have the power to collect relevant data from agencies and sections within the DES and also from the Teaching Council.

Recommendation 1

It is recommended that a Standing Group be established to review the future supply needs of Irish schools. This Group should build its initial work on the basis of the approach adopted by this TWG Report for primary schools, should operate openly and accountably, and should seek to offer suitable advice to the Minister on future needs of students in Irish schools. The Group should be convened by the Teaching Council and established no later than June 2016 in order that the momentum of the work initiated by the TWG can be maintained.

This Group should have the active participation of staff from the DES, HEA and the Teaching Council, and should have terms of reference which are broadly similar to those of the TWG. This should enable the group to:

- a. re-visit the statistical basis of the projections included in the current report and to revise them when necessary to take account of changing demographic patterns and policy directions
- b. gather and collate the information necessary for this purpose
- c. ensure that this information is available digitally to approved users.

For the purposes of openness and accountability, it is recommended that the Standing Group should continue the practice of the TWG by meeting with stakeholders every year.

Recommendation 2

It is recommended that the Standing Group should undertake work relevant to both primary and post-primary schools.

The TWG also recognises that there are specific issues relevant to the supply of teachers in Irish medium schools, in Gaeltacht schools and in Special schools, and recommends that the Standing Group seek to address these issues.

In undertaking these tasks, the Group should be facilitated in gaining access to information held about pupil numbers and about employment patterns in order to allow it to make sound recommendations.

6.2 Data collection and analysis in post-primary schools

Introductory comment: The TWG work on supply and demand for primary schools has been able to draw relevant information from the payroll unit of the DES. However, the TWG notes that arrangements which apply in post-primary schools are more complicated. Firstly, there is limited historically robust data in this sector. Secondly, most post-primary sector teachers are employed by voluntary secondary or community and comprehensive schools (representing approximately two-thirds of Irish schools) and are paid on the Department's post-primary payroll. However, teachers employed by Education and Training Boards (ETBs) in the remaining one-third of post-primary schools are paid on different ETB payrolls which use a number of different payroll systems.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, it is important that the Standing Group is able to gain access to data relevant to its task.

Recommendation 3

In respect of post-primary schools, the TWG believes it is essential that:

- relevant information should be collected from all schools and built into a coherent and reliable data set for future planning
- this relevant data be collected over the next two years to provide a historical context against which to judge the emerging figures provided in this TWG Report and to secure a reliable planning model.

Recommendation 4

The TWG recognises that there are current difficulties in accessing information about ETB schools. In order that this situation can be addressed, the TWG recommends that staff responsible for the Department's ETB Payroll Shared Services Project should ensure that the configuration of ETB payroll data is undertaken in such a way that it can easily be collated with the equivalent data from the other two sectors.

In the meantime, the possibility should be considered of extrapolating the data which is available from the Department's post-primary payroll to support the development of an initial model of teacher supply for the post-primary sector, including the ETB sector. The TWG also recommends that the Standing Group liaise with the Shared Services Project Team and the ETBs regarding data on ETB teachers and its availability in the longer term.

6.3 Resource Needs

Introductory comment: In reaching its conclusions, the TWG has relied on data which it was able to secure due to the ready co-operation of several sections of the DES (Payroll, Statistics, Teacher Education and Inspectorate), of DNM Analytics and of senior staff within the Teaching Council. However, much of this work has been undertaken on a "grace and favour" basis, drawing significantly on the goodwill of people and agencies keen to support progress in this important area. This practice is not sustainable in the longer term, for which a more systemic and structured process is now required.

Recommendation 5

It is recommended that appropriate resources should be approved and allocated to allow the DES and the Teaching Council to develop further the working model and to support the initial years of development by the Group described above. Ideally, this should be for at least an initial period of five years, during which reliable records and systems may be established. The resources allocated should be sufficient to enable the DES and the Teaching Council to address their current and ongoing responsibilities in addition to this work on teacher supply.

6.4 Stability and co-ordination of teacher supply

Introductory comment: The current availability of both publicly-funded and commercial providers in teacher education has led to some difficulties in accurate forecasting of future teacher supply. Concerns about this perceived inequity are keenly felt and often expressed by publicly-funded HEIs. However, these concerns are also relevant to the State in ensuring a balanced supply of teachers for the future; and to schools in meeting the professional needs of large numbers of students on placement. On balance, the TWG considers that there is a risk to the stability of planning if any one provider can recruit an unlimited number of student teachers in any given year. In the event of any change of policy or practice by providers, there is a risk of a future under-provision or over-provision of teachers.

While recognising that independence and operational freedom are key ambitions of all providers of initial teacher education (ITE), the TWG believes that ensuring a sufficient supply of teachers to meet the identified needs of the system on an ongoing basis is of vital importance. Supporting the need for a balanced supply of teachers suited to the needs of the State should therefore be a high priority in both primary and post-primary sectors. In addition, since the State has made a conscious policy choice to ensure that ITE is HEI based and research informed, the TWG believes that a resolution of the complex issues in this aspect of teacher supply must be grounded in a fully collaborative approach between all providers of ITE.

Recommendation 6

It is recommended that future policy on teacher supply should incorporate the placing of a strong priority on the stability of supply and on the collaboration between all providers of ITE. This policy should also recognise Cosán, the Teaching Council's forthcoming framework for teachers' learning, and should acknowledge the opportunities it gives providers, in partnership with stakeholders and with each other, to support teachers' learning throughout the continuum.

The TWG believes that there are advantages in managing the co-ordination of teacher supply but recognises that this is not an easy matter for any Minister to take forward. To this end, the Group which would be established in Recommendation 1 should convene a meeting of all providers no later than October 2016 to agree a process through which a framework for the management and co-ordination of teacher supply would be decided. The Standing Group, having reviewed options, should then submit advice to the Minister for his/her consideration and decision.

In addressing these matters, it is recommended that the Minister, in a context where he/she has approved a national policy framework on teacher supply and demand, might initially consider the following approaches:

- a. asking the Teaching Council to build into its programme accreditation process a responsibility to monitor patterns of recruitment by providers and to report back on trends and concerns which have been identified

AND

- b. setting out annually the expected levels of recruitment of teachers in primary and in post-primary, using information provided by the Standing Group and by the Teaching Council.

Recommendation 7

The TWG further recommends that HEIs be invited to consult with the DES and the HEA as to what actions they can take in the short term to begin to alleviate imbalances in supply, based on the best available data.

6.5 Specific issues in primary schools

Introductory comment: This report's advice on teacher supply and demand for the primary sector is based on extensive work, careful analysis of available data and cautious, informed estimates about future provision. The TWG believes that it offers a suitable basis on which to build in future years.

However, the lack of historical data and the difficulties experienced in engaging with data held by sections within DES, the Teaching Council, schools and ITE providers has led the TWG to consider that there is a need to be cautious about the figures which underpin the primary projections. Consequently, it would be wise to be prudent in the use of this data before agreeing its suitability as a model of demand and supply for the primary sector.

Finally, evidence cited in this report shows that there are significant concerns about the efficiency and effectiveness of the substitute teacher system currently used in primary schools. The TWG believes that early attention to this system is now required.

Recommendation 8

It is recommended that the current substitute teacher system be reviewed with a view to improving its efficiency for schools and for teachers.

Recommendation 9

It is recommended that work to introduce a primary supply model be further developed, with a view to a model being tested in 2016/17 and agreed and implemented in 2017/18.

Recommendation 10

It is recommended that the Standing Group should seek to ensure that the primary supply and demand data provided in section 4 of this report be subjected to robust and continuing scrutiny before any significant changes are made on account of its findings. In particular, there should be a formal peer review of the final model before its use as a planning tool.

6.6 Specific issues in post-primary schools

Introductory comment: In post-primary schools, the initial priority should be to secure access to data and to use this to develop a planning model which builds on the progress made in establishing the primary model projections proposed in this report.

The TWG has anticipated that, as post-primary enrolments rise, there will be a proportionate increase in the number of teachers available to meet the needs of a rising student population across Ireland. The successful achievement of this aspiration will not be without challenges. To secure quality learning, emphasis should be placed on the recruitment of sufficient teachers in subjects which are currently in short supply. Evidence from the Teaching Council database can identify these subjects and this report suggests that in some cases (e.g., STEM subjects) there may be a need to review selection approaches. This is supported by more anecdotal evidence from providers relating to difficulties in recruitment. One possible solution might be the provision of additional 'top-up' and/or conversion courses for teachers whose current qualifications do not fit the profile of need.

The freedom of individual providers to select students for teacher education courses can have implications for the future balance of subject qualifications. Any process of change might also have implications for change in the balance of staffing of providers. As employers, their own staffing ratios are likely to reflect their current recruitment patterns, as opposed to those which may be determined by any review of the future needs of Irish schools.

Finally, there is the related issue of “out of field” teaching in Irish schools. Currently, there is insufficient data to offer accurate advice about the extent of this practice, although it is clear that there is an imbalance of teachers with certain subject qualifications on the register of the Teaching Council.

Recommendation 11

It is recommended that the extent of oversupply and undersupply in various subjects, and any consequences for “out of field” teaching be clarified by the Standing Group as a matter of initial priority.

Recommendation 12

Once the work outlined in Recommendation 11 has been completed, it should inform future policy decisions on the management and co-ordination of teacher supply.

In addition, and subject to any new, emerging priorities as identified by the Standing Group in the context of State policies and changing curricular needs, steps should also be taken to reduce any imbalance in post-primary subject supply.

Recommendation 13

TWG notes that most accessible data on individual subject teaching in the post-primary sector is that supplied to the Inspectorate through individual school timetables from all sectors for all schools. In order for this data to be more easily accessible and useful for the purposes of a teacher supply model, the TWG recommends that it be submitted to the DES in a manner from which relevant, anonymised information on teacher deployment by subject can be more easily extracted.

Recommendation 14

It is recommended that the State should work with all relevant stakeholders to ensure that the output from programmes of teacher education will reflect the needs of the system as determined by the ongoing work on teacher supply.

APPENDIX

Group membership and terms of reference

The membership of the TWG is as follows:		
Ciarán Flynn	Chairman	Former General Secretary of the ACCS and former school principal
Tomás Ó Ruairc		Director, Teaching Council
Brendan O’Dea		Deputy Director, Teaching Council
Eddie Ward Conor McCourt (01/15) Jill Fannin (till 12/14)		Teacher Education Section, Department of Education and Skills
Orlaith O’Connor		Inspectorate, Department of Education and Skills
Fergal Costello		Higher Education Authority
Prof. Áine Hyland	Education advisor	Emeritus Vice-President, University College, Cork
Prof. Anthony Finn	Rapporteur	University of Glasgow, Former CEO, GTCS

Terms of reference for the Technical Working Group on Teacher Supply

This group shall be called the Technical Working Group on Teacher Supply. Its objectives shall be the following:

- a. To develop and pilot a model of teacher supply that would seek to ensure a sufficient supply of teachers to meet demand. The exact nature of such a model would be a matter for determination by the Working Group, but it should provide a dynamic framework within which the following issues may be addressed:
 - i. Analysis of projections of pupil numbers within the chosen period of time.
 - ii. Analysis of relevant data held by the Teaching Council and the DES.
 - iii. Government policy as regards areas of priority need.
 - iv. Schools’ needs and priorities to take account of changes to syllabus and curriculum from time to time.
 - v. Teachers’ professional needs, especially in the context of the National Framework for CPD that will be developed by the Teaching Council.
 - vi. Pupils’ and students’ needs.
 - vii. The impact on accredited HEI programmes and the requirement for adjustment to programme numbers.
 - viii. The impact on schools accepting student teachers and NQTs.
 - ix. The HEIs roles and responsibilities in the context of the continuum of teacher education.
 - x. How numbers may be most effectively projected both for each of the school sectors in the system at a macro level, and also for school subjects at post-primary level. A key challenge in the case of the latter point will be the approval of new subjects from time to time, and how HEIs and schools can best prepare for them.
- b. To formulate advice for consideration by the Teaching Council that it may submit to the Minister of Education and Skills on the matter of teacher supply.
- c. To consider the analysis of data held by the Council and the DES in developing the pilot model of teacher supply.
- d. To generate policy recommendations for consideration by the Teaching Council in formulating advice for submission to the Minister of Education and Skills on the matter of teacher supply. Such advice shall include recommendations in relation to the nature (including membership, terms of reference) of a Standing Forum that would oversee the implementation of the model referred to in a. above.

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