SCSI

Chartered property, land and construction surveyors

EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK FOR THE SURVEYING PROFESSION 2026-2029

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This report was undertaken on an independent basis by Dr Róisín Murphy.

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Foreword

Ireland is at a defining moment in the evolution of its built and natural environment. The delivery of housing, critical infrastructure, and the transition to a low-carbon economy are no longer abstract ambitions, they are national imperatives. The surveying profession has a critical role to play in delivering on these ambitions.

This fourth report in the *Employment Opportunities and Future Skills Needs for Surveying Professionals* series provides a timely, independent and evidence-based assessment of the capacity of the surveying profession to respond to demands over the period 2026-2029. For the first time, the report incorporates the perspectives of Career Guidance Counsellors and Senior Cycle students. This significantly enriches the insights presented and strengthens the relevance of the recommendations.

Demand for surveying professionals remains strong across all pathways and, in some cases, has increased, most notably in Building Surveying and Land Surveying. Even under moderate economic growth assumptions, supply is projected to fall short of demand, with shortages particularly acute at mid-career and senior levels. These findings echo earlier reports in this series, reinforcing the reality that skills gaps within the profession are structural, not cyclical, and require sustained, co-ordinated intervention.

It is important to acknowledge the progress that has been made. Since the first report was published in 2014, significant capacity-building measures have been implemented. The number of surveying programmes at third level has greatly expanded. Alternative routes such as part-time, flexible study options and apprenticeship programmes are either available or in development, and overall student enrolments have grown substantially. These actions demonstrate the impact of collaboration between the SCSI, education providers and employers.

However, this report also highlights that increased supply at entry level alone will not be sufficient. Legacy gaps arising from the post-2008 downturn continue to affect the availability of experienced surveyors, placing pressure on mentoring capacity, which is essential for leadership development and succession planning, and the path to Chartered Membership for future leaders. The profession must therefore focus not only on attracting new talent, but also on professional development and career progression.

The research also underscores a shift in the skills profile required of surveyors. While technical competence remains fundamental, employers consistently identify transversal skills such as communication, critical thinking, leadership and collaboration as pressing needs. At the same time, rapid technological change is reshaping professional practice. Digital competence, data-driven decision-making and emerging tools such as AI, drones and sensor-based measurement are no longer optional; they are integral to any future-ready practice, ensuring that these tools enhance professional judgement rather than displacing it.

Encouragingly, the inclusion of Career Guidance Counsellors and students in this research reveals a receptive audience. While awareness of surveying careers is uneven, particularly in more 'niche' pathways, there is strong interest to engage with the profession. Students demonstrate a thoughtful, pragmatic approach to career choice, presenting a clear opportunity to align outreach with the factors that matter most to future entrants.

The recommendations set out in this report emphasise the need to continue to position surveying as a diverse, impactful and future-focused profession. Continued strong engagement between industry, education and schools, targeted support for guidance counsellors, and continued investment in education, professional development and research are key. No single stakeholder can address these challenges alone. Collaboration is critical.

The SCSI remains committed to working collaboratively with students, members, educators, employers, policymakers and other stakeholders to ensure that the surveying profession is equipped not only to meet future demand, but to shape Ireland's built environment in a sustainable, resilient and inclusive way.

Gerard O'Toole
President, SCSI

Executive Summary

This report is the fourth in the *SCSI Employment Opportunities and Future Skills Needs* series and provides an evidence-based analysis of the surveying labour market in Ireland for the period 2026-2029.

The report establishes projected demand and supply across construction, land and property surveying pathways, identifies critical skills requirements, and incorporates perspectives from three stakeholder groups, namely SCSI members, Career Guidance Counsellors (CGCs) and Senior Cycle secondary students.

The report is set against a backdrop of geopolitical uncertainty, in addition to ongoing housing and climate emergencies; however, Government capital investment through the reviewed National Development Plan (NDP), technological innovation and regulatory reform are intended to counteract market instability and strengthen economic resilience.

Findings from the research demonstrate persistent and, in some cases, widening shortages, despite augmented awareness initiatives and an overall increase in educational enrolments on surveying programmes nationwide since the original *Employment Opportunities and Skills Requirements for Construction and Property Surveying 2014-2018* report. Demand for qualified surveyors is projected to continue to outpace supply under a median scenario of economic growth of 2.5% p.a. between 2026 and 2029, with a clear skills gap at higher levels of experience impacting mentorship capacity and future leader development.

The research **projects a shortage of over 2,200 surveyors**, which represents a conservative estimate given the research does not include opportunities that arise for qualified surveyors outside of the built environment sector, student attrition, or people who choose to work overseas upon graduation.

Perspectives of both CGCs and secondary students regarding careers in surveying were garnered for the first time within this report. Findings demonstrate modest awareness and understanding of the surveying profession from both stakeholder groups.

CGCs highlight gaps in resource availability and insufficient profession-specific knowledge to provide informed advice to second-level students on surveying careers. Despite these gaps, participants expressed a positive sentiment towards surveying and an appetite to deepen their understanding of the profession, indicating a receptive audience for engagement initiatives.

Students demonstrate informed judgement in their career decision-making process, aligning employment opportunities with personal interests, and the majority intend to progress to third-level education upon completion of the Leaving Certificate examination.

Findings from the research demonstrate persistent and, in some cases, widening shortages, despite augmented awareness initiatives and an overall increase in educational enrolments on surveying programmes nationwide since the original Employment Opportunities and Skills Requirements for Construction and Property Surveying 2014-2018 *report.*

A substantial body of work has been undertaken to address recommendations made in previous reports in the series; however, sustained action is required to ensure that the sector has the capacity and capability to deliver on national strategic priorities, including housing supply, infrastructure and a climate-resilient built environment. Drawing on perspectives from a range of stakeholders, this research provides evidence of a persistent surveying skills shortage requiring co-ordinated and collaborative solutions.

Key Findings

209
MEMBER FIRMS PARTICIPATED IN THE RESEARCH

36%
RESPONSE RATE

SHORTAGE OF OVER
2,200
SURVEYORS

41
CAREER GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS PARTICIPATED IN THE RESEARCH

240
SECOND-LEVEL STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN THE RESEARCH

78%
OF STUDENTS WANT TO PROGRESS TO 3RD LEVEL

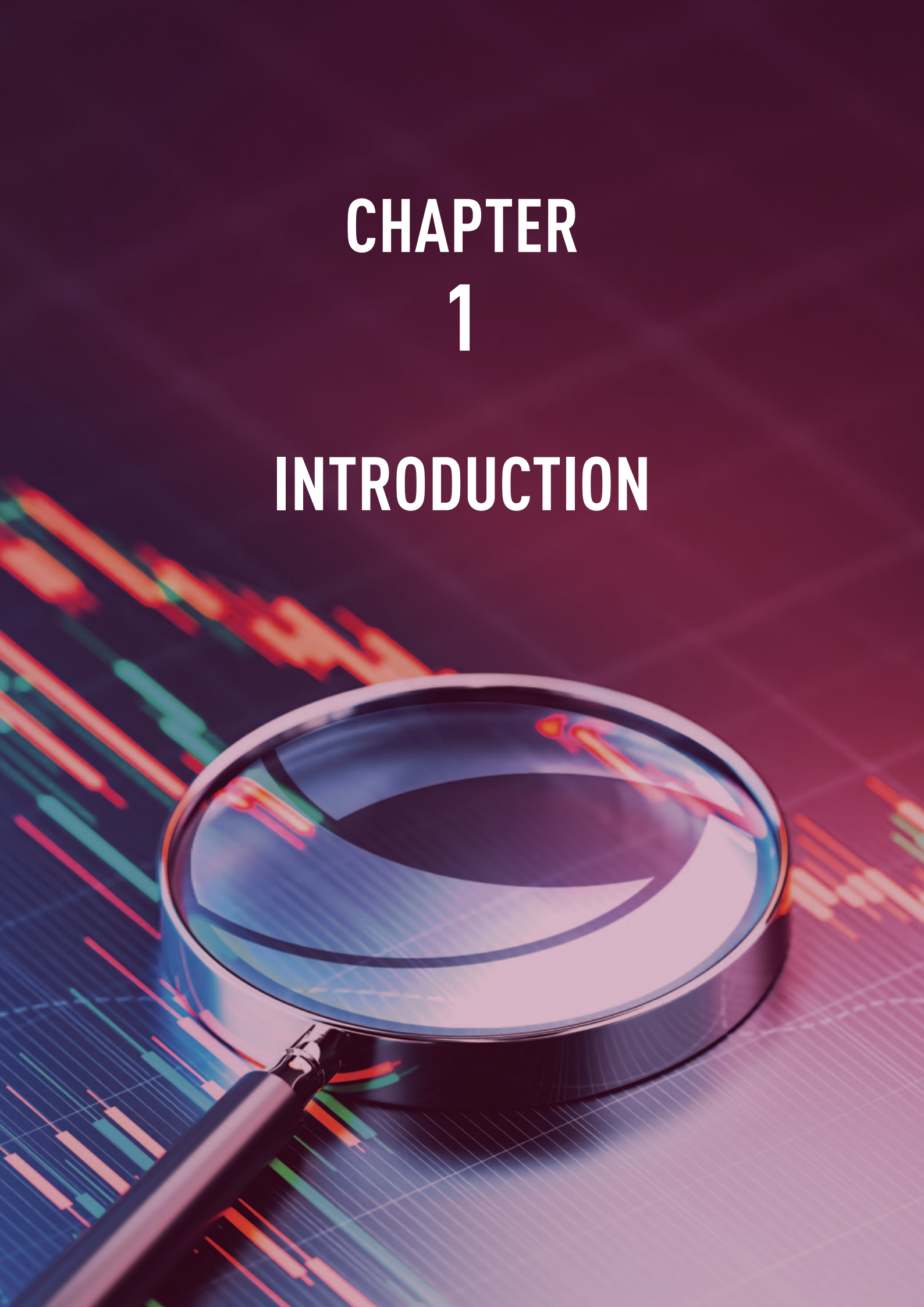
32
PROGRAMMES

8
HEIs

2,382
SURVEYING STUDENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION



1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Context

This report is the fourth in a series of research reports commissioned by the SCSI to examine employment opportunities and skills needs across the profession. Previous reports (2014, 2018, 2023) projected a shortage of surveyors across construction, land and property practice areas. Several of the recommendations have since been implemented to address the capacity gap identified, most notably the inclusion of Quantity Surveying on the Critical Skills Occupations List,[1] development of new surveying programmes and pathways, and a range of promotional initiatives highlighting the range of surveying career opportunities.

This report is set against a backdrop of considerable uncertainty. Although previous reports were also conducted in challenging conditions – including a global financial crisis, the Covid-19 pandemic and a domestic housing crisis – current challenges extend to global geopolitical uncertainty and protectionist economic policy, in addition to the ongoing housing and climate emergencies.

Macroeconomic Context

Ireland is a small open economy dependent on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), therefore highly vulnerable to external events. Despite current challenges, the economy has demonstrated remarkable resilience and is arguably in a stronger position in the face of current uncertainty than when facing previous shocks. Exchequer balances are strong, resulting from high corporate tax receipts, strong domestic demand and prudent fiscal management, but remain vulnerable to global shocks.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) projects that the Irish economy grew by 10.2% in 2025

Previous reports (2014, 2018, 2023) projected a shortage of surveyors across construction, land and property practice areas.

compared to the European average of 1.3%, with growth projected for 2026 of 2.1% and 1.2%,[2] respectively. Growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), estimated at 2.6% in H1 2025, was largely driven by robust export activity and the front-loading of pharmaceutical exports in advance of anticipated tariffs. Domestically, Modified Domestic Demand (MDD) expanded, largely due to strong private consumption and continued capital investment (+2.3% in Q3 2025).

1 Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment, Critical Skills Occupations List, Available online at: https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/what-we-do/workplace-and-skills/employment-permits/employment-permit-eligibility/highly-skilled-eligible-occupations-list/

2 OECD (2026), OECD Economic Outlook (2), Available online at: https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/oecd-economic-outlook-volume-2025-issue-2_9f653ca1-en/full-report/general-assessment-of-the-macroeconomic-situation_981ac2bf.html#chapter-d1e145-8e6872818d

Table 1 Budget 2026 economic and fiscal outlook summary

	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
GNI*	3.3%	3.3%	2.5%	2.4%	2.3%
HICP	1.8%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%
Unemployment	4.6%	4.8%	4.9%	5.0%	5.0%

A more reflective metric of economic growth in Ireland is modified Gross National Income (GNI*) as it removes the distortion of globalisation. GNI* is forecast to increase on an annual basis in the medium term, as presented in **Table 1**. The more modest forecast over time is indicative of Ireland's exposure in terms of its dependency on FDI, the potential impact of tariffs, corporation tax revenue and delayed investment decisions considering US protectionist policy.

Foreign owned Multi-National Enterprises (MNEs) account for a small number of total enterprises in Ireland, but account for 88% of corporate tax revenue.[3]

Continued population growth, net inward migration and solid participation rates all contribute to a larger labour force, with unemployment under 5%. In some sectors, including the construction and built environment sector, labour shortages remain, and the tightening of the labour force has put upward pressure on wage rates.

Harmonised Index of Cosumer Prices (HICP) increased by 3.6% over the 12 months to March 2026; however, the outlook for inflation is conditional on the length and severity of the war in the Middle East, which at the time of writing remains unpredictable.

Estimates for headline economic indicators provided as part of Budget 2026[4] are contained in **Table 1**. This report spans a similar timeline between 2026 and 2029.

Construction and Built Environment Sector Context

The construction and built environment sector plays a pivotal role in the Irish economy in delivering the homes, commercial buildings, infrastructure, and the communities within which we live. The sector is a major driver of economic output and employment with performance closely linked to cycles of public and private sector investment, making it both strategically significant and highly responsive to economic fluctuations.

The ongoing deficit in meeting housing demand on an annual basis has significant consequences for delivery, affordability and homelessness. Building costs, planning, and viability of apartment development are key constraints and exacerbate existing market imbalances in both the owner-occupier and rental sectors.

Targeted interventions have been introduced to address the market failure, including reforms to the rental sector and planning measures aimed at providing more certainty. The long-term effectiveness of the measures remains to be seen.

The €11bn allocation to the Department of Housing as part of Budget 2026 (representing a 20% year-on-year increase) is a welcome announcement, which must now be fully utilised to urgently meet priority needs identified within the newly published *Delivering Homes, Building Communities 2025-2030*[5] plan.

To support the delivery of new residential units, and progressing towards attaining our legally binding climate targets, the reviewed *National Development Plan (NDP)*[6] encompasses total investment of €275bn between 2026 and 2035 prioritising energy, water and transport, which in turn underpin residential development as well as climate targets. In parallel, initiatives to fast-track delivery of critical infrastructure are underway, including the identification of strategically important projects, and introduction of strict statutory timelines to reduce procedural delays and allow for expanded planning exemptions for minor improvements to critical infrastructure.

Surveying professionals play a central role in achieving key strategic objectives and will undoubtedly see increased demand for their services in the delivery of the projected annual expansion of the public capital programme as part of the NDP.

3 Central Bank of Ireland (2026), Signed Article Vol 2025(3), Available online at: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.centralbank.ie/docs/default-source/publications/quarterly-bulletins/quarterly-bulletin-signed-articles/on-the-fault-line-irish-economy-in-a-time-of-geoeconomic-fragmentation.pdf

4 Budget 2026: Economic and fiscal outlook summary, Available online at: https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-finance/publications/budget-2026-economic-and-fiscal-outlook-summary/

5 Government of Ireland, Delivering Homes, Building Communities 2025-2030, Available online at: https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-housing-local-government-and-heritage/campaigns/delivering-homes-building-communities-2025-2030-an-action-plan-on-housing-supply-and-targeting-homelessness/

6 Government of Ireland, National Development Plan Review (2025), Available online at: https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-the-taoiseach/press-releases/government-publishes-updated-national-development-plan/

1.2 Research Aim and Objectives

Surveying professionals work across the entire built and natural environment sector from project feasibility, planning, design and development, construction, asset and property management, and renovation, through to demolition. The construction and built environment sector, in parallel with the wider economy, has undergone a period of considerable change since the last report in this series was published. However, due to the aggregation of the surveying profession with other professions within the Standard Occupational Classification system (SOC 2010), detailed labour market intelligence pertaining specifically to the surveying profession remains limited. Consequently, using readily available national data through the Central Statistics Office (CSO), for example, is insufficient for analysing the effect of market uncertainty and developing mitigating measures. The primary aim of the research is to address this gap. The research objectives are therefore:

- to garner deeper insight into current surveying labour market trends;
- to ascertain factors determining future demand for surveying professions;
- to project the number of additional surveyors required in the timeframe (2026-2029);
- to estimate the number of additional surveyors entering the market; and,
- to compare projected demand and supply, and identify solutions to any surveying labour market imbalance.

The research extends beyond the primary area of focus for the first time to include two other critically important stakeholders, namely second-level Career Guidance Counsellors (CGCs) and Senior Cycle second-level students. The purpose of their inclusion is to determine awareness, understanding and perceptions of the surveying profession to inform recommendations to enhance the visibility and attractiveness of surveying as a career pathway. The following section details the methodology employed for the purposes of the research.

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1.3 Research Methodology

The surveying profession is diverse, incorporating three main pathways, namely construction, land and property, within which are a range of specialist practice areas (see **Figure 1**). Each designation plays a distinct but equally vital role in delivering the built environment, collectively advancing socio-economic goals and legally binding climate targets using data-driven, state-of-the-art technologies.

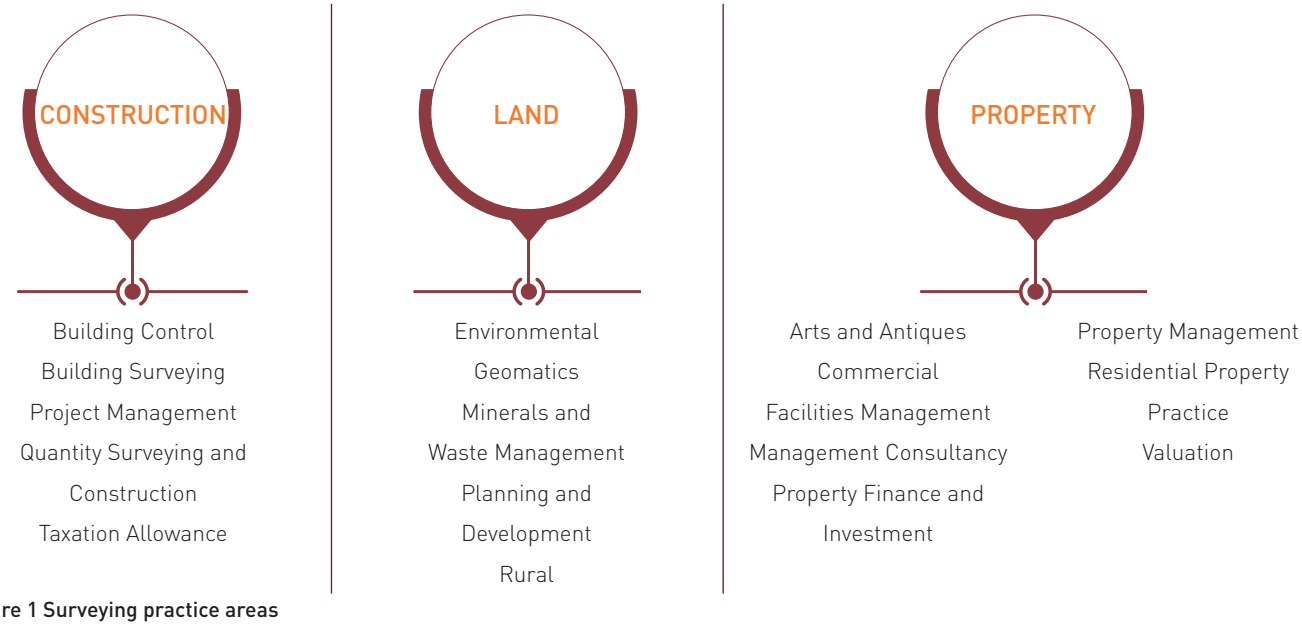


Figure 1 Surveying practice areas

Figure 2 Research phases

To garner insight into the factors influencing the labour market for this multifaceted profession, it is necessary to solicit input from a range of stakeholders. For the purposes of this research, a three-phase approach was adopted involving surveying practitioners, educators and students (see **Figure 2**). The following sections provide an overview of each phase.

1.3.1 Phase 1: Member Survey

To project future demand for surveying professionals, and in the context of the limitation in nationally available statistics, an appropriate strategy is to garner input from senior surveying professionals for their authoritative view.

A single target respondent at a senior level was selected to participate in the research on behalf of their organisation. Participants were selected on the basis that their seniority affords greater insight into strategic objectives and associated recruitment over the period 2026-2029.

An online survey was administered to the target respondent, who responded on behalf of their organisation based on anonymity and an opportunity to discontinue the survey at any point. Participants were asked to project the future demand for additional surveying staff over the time period of the study, and the selection of a single key informant per organisation guards against double counting projected future demand. The total number of respondents and associated response rate are detailed in **Table 2**. A response rate of 36% is considered robust and representative of the overall SCSI membership (see section 2.2 for profile of respondents) and ensures that perspectives from each surveying pathway are captured in the research. Please note that due to rounding, some totals presented throughout the report may not equal 100%.

The projected future supply of surveying professionals is estimated based on the number of students currently enrolled on SCSI-recognised programmes nationwide. For the purposes of this report a qualified surveyor refers to individuals holding a recognised surveying qualification, typically level 8 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).[7]

Table 2 Number of participants and response rates

		No. of target participants	No. of usable responses	Response rate
Construction	Building Surveying	55	26	47%
	Quantity Surveying	200	83	41.5%
Land		44	25	56.8%
Property		283	75	26.5%
OVERALL		**582**	**209**	**36%**

7 Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) (2021), A Brief Guide to the Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), Available online at: https://www.qqi.ie/what-we-do/the-qualifications-system/national-framework-of-qualifications

1.3.2 Phase 2: Career Guidance Counsellors

Career Guidance Counsellors (CGCs) and teachers play a pivotal role in advising on, and often shaping, Senior Cycle student career pathways. The role of CGCs has evolved considerably over time and a holistic process of personal, education and career supports are required to assist students in exploring the myriad of career opportunities available to them.

It is impossible for CGCs to have detailed knowledge of every career possibility; however, until now, the extent of CGC familiarity with surveying professions was unknown. Limited familiarity with the profession could potentially lessen the likelihood of CGCs advising students on opportunities within the profession. Therefore, by establishing CGCs' knowledge of surveying professions, knowledge gaps can be identified to inform a more measured response to address the gaps.

Phase two of this research involved an online survey to a purposive sample of CGCs nationwide, to which **41 usable responses** were obtained. The purposive sample cannot be statistically generalised to the entire population of CGCs; however, the value lies in the novel and distinctive perspective garnered. Results presented within this report provide unique insight and a valuable foundation for understanding levels of awareness of surveying amongst this influential stakeholder group, from which evidence-based actions may be formulated.

1.3.3 Phase 3: Senior Cycle Students

The final phase of research involved the potential future generation of surveyors, specifically, Senior Cycle second-level students. The purpose of this phase was to ascertain the extent of knowledge of surveying professions and to determine the likelihood of participants choosing a career in surveying. In addition, the factors influencing their career choice were ascertained to understand their decision-making process.

This phase of research involved an online survey administered to a purposive sample of Senior Cycle secondary school students via a CGC/teacher within the school. CGCs were provided with an electronic copy of survey questions for information purposes and were invited to share a QR code to the survey with Senior Cycle students as appropriate. Participants had an opportunity to opt out of participating, and were informed that involvement was voluntary and they could exit the survey at any time. Anonymity was guaranteed with no personal or identifying information sought nor received.

In total, **240 usable responses** were obtained and while the results cannot be statistically generalisable, they are enormously informative in revealing the influencing factors of career choices, and the level of awareness of careers across surveying professions. An understanding of students' decision-making can guide stakeholders into identifying the actions needed to effectively promote surveying careers. By recognising what shapes students' choices, tailored solutions can be developed to generate awareness and realisation that surveying offers a varied, diverse, rewarding career with enduring and international opportunity.

The breadth and level of participation across the three phases of research augment the credibility of findings, and provide a strong basis from which meaningful conclusions and recommendations may be derived.

1.4 Structure of the Report

Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter provides context for the report, research aim, objectives and methodology.

Chapter 2 Demand and Supply of Surveying Professionals

This chapter provides a projection of additional demand for surveying professionals across every level of experience for each surveying pathway over the period 2026-2029. The supply of additional qualified surveyors across construction, land and property pathways is determined through the collation of student enrolment figures in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) nationwide. A comparison of the demand versus supply is presented.

Chapter 3 Career Guidance Counsellor Perspectives

This chapter provides the results of an online survey of a purposive sample of CGCs to ascertain their familiarity with surveying careers and to identify supports required to facilitate their role in advising students on career opportunities in surveying.

Chapter 4 Student Perspectives

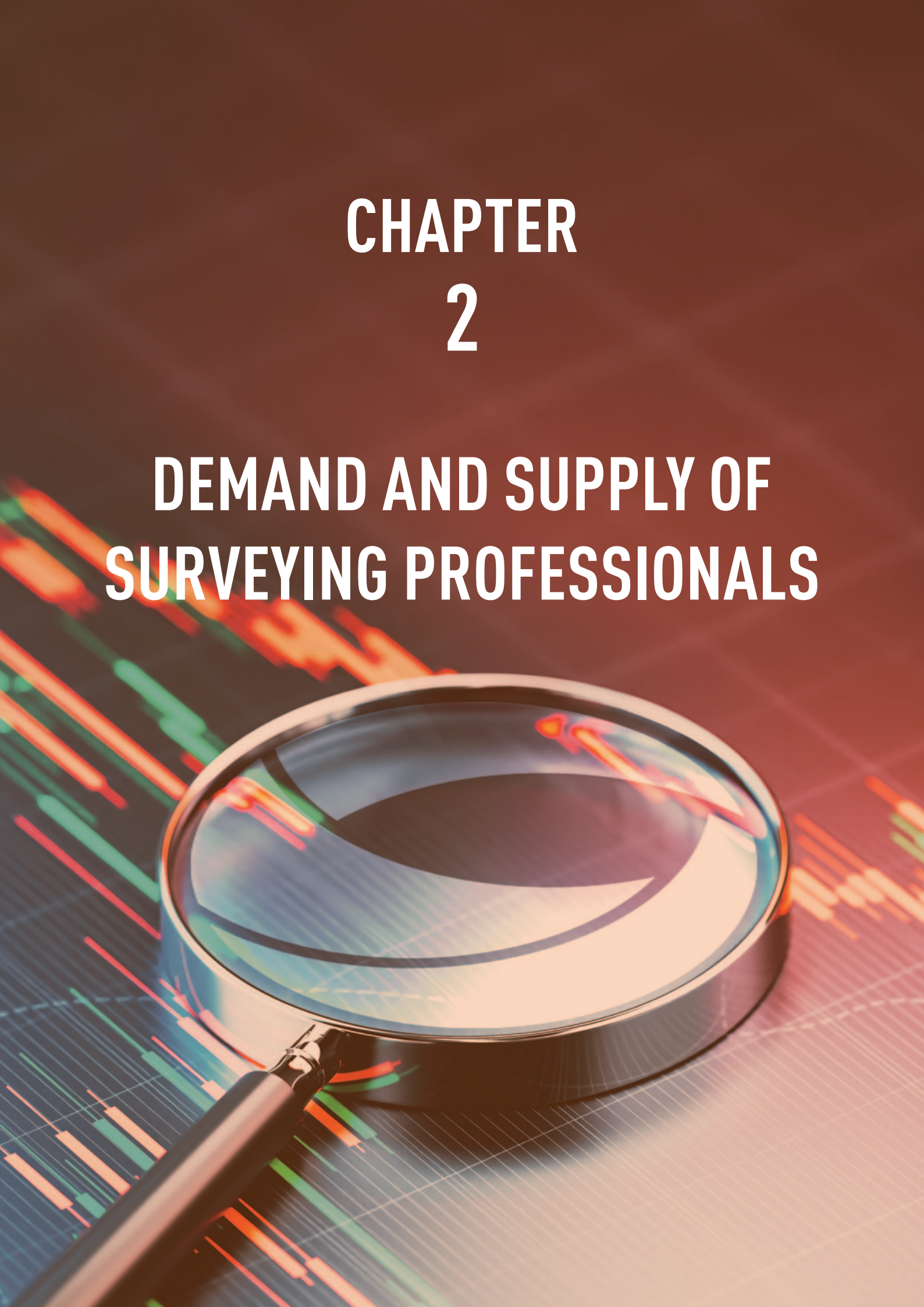
Chapter 4 presents the results of a student survey to determine their awareness of surveying as a career pathway, and factors influencing their career choices.

Chapter 5 Conclusions and Recommendations

The final chapter synthesises the conclusions arising from the three phases of research undertaken, and presents a range of recommendations for various stakeholders.

CHAPTER 2

DEMAND AND SUPPLY OF SURVEYING PROFESSIONALS



2. Demand and Supply of Surveying Professionals

2.1 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to determine future demand and supply of construction, land and property surveying professionals over a four-year period from 2026-2029, and to ascertain key drivers and challenges within the surveying labour market.

The chapter begins with a profile of member survey respondents, establishing the demographic and professional context that underpins subsequent findings.

Building on this foundation, the chapter then examines prevailing surveying labour market sentiment amongst surveying professionals, detailing perspectives of drivers and constraints within the sector.

The focus moves to projections of future demand for surveying professionals at every level of experience based on three scenarios of economic growth over the time period in question.

The scenarios presented to participants were informed by Budget 2026 estimates of annual growth in GNI* between 2026 and 2029. A baseline forecast was taken as 2.5% p.a., with pessimistic and optimistic scenarios set at 1% lower or higher, respectively.

Participants confirmed the projected future demand for surveying professionals at every level of experience in each of the three scenarios.

Projected future demand is then compared to anticipated supply, quantified from the collation of current enrolments on SCSI-accredited construction, land and property programmes nationwide.

The chapter concludes with an examination of the future skills required across the profession, and the preferred mechanism by which they may be acquired.

The focus of this chapter is to determine future demand and supply of construction, land and property surveying professionals over a four-year period from 2026-2029, and to ascertain key drivers and challenges within the surveying labour market.

2.2 Respondent Profile

The research was designed to target a single senior person within each SCSI member practice to participate on behalf of their organisation. Having a single key informant eliminates the risk of double counting projected future demand for surveyors, while providing context and deeper understanding of the findings.

As is illustrated in **Figure 3**, 89% of participants are at Deputy Director level or above, and are therefore appropriately positioned to provide an informed view of the strategic direction of the organisation they represent.

Surveying is a multifaceted profession covering a variety of practice areas across three main pathways, namely construction, land and property (see **Appendix 1** for complete list). Key informants from across all practice areas were invited to participate in the research, and the majority of responses were from construction, with the fewest from land (see **Figure 4**), which reflects the industry profile.

Geographically, over half of organisations represented in the research have their primary place of work in Dublin (see **Figure 5**), with several confirming operations nationally and internationally. The definition of geographic region was guided by a prior SCSI Remuneration & Workplace Survey (2025).

Participants in this research were largely employed within private enterprise (90%), with the remaining from Government or semi-State bodies.

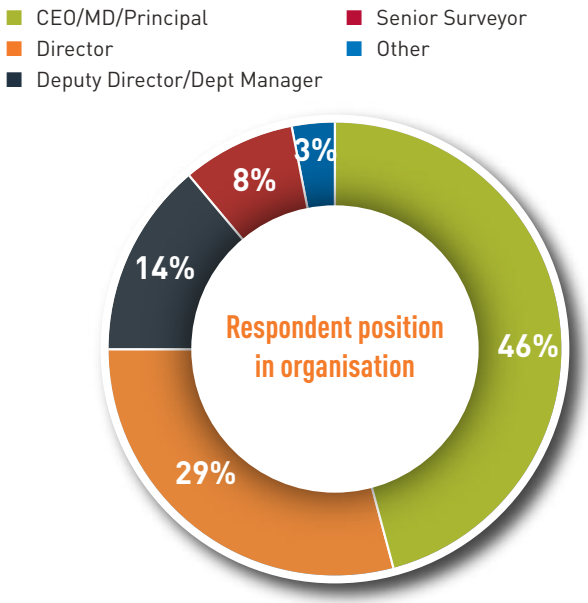


Figure 3 Respondent position within organisation

The research was designed to target a single senior person within each SCSI member practice to participate on behalf of their organisation.

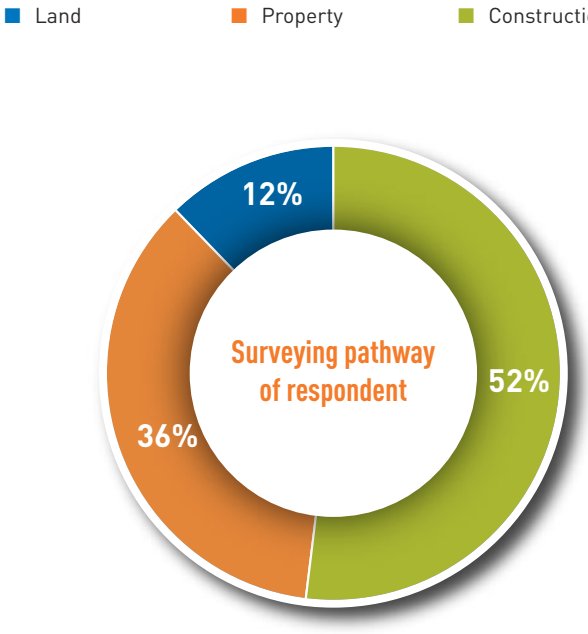


Figure 4 Surveying pathway of respondent

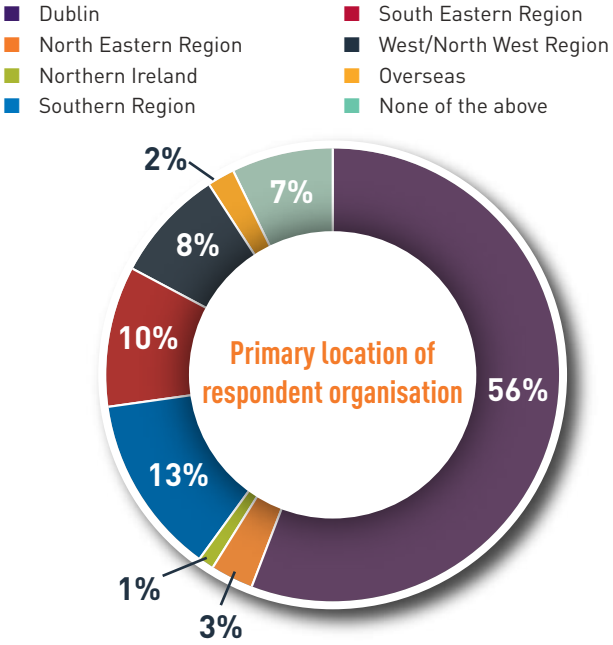


Figure 5 Primary location of respondent organisation

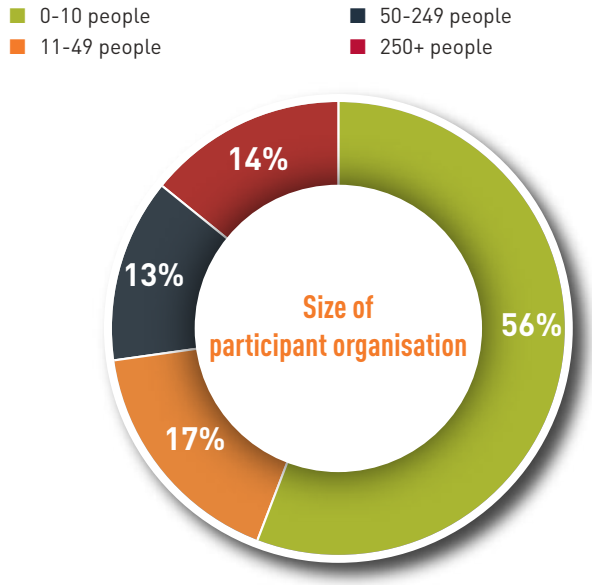


Figure 6 Size of participant organisation

Of those respondents working within a State body, 48% were Quantity Surveyors, with the remainder spread across all other practice areas. This finding is significant, as it reinforces the diverse range of career opportunities for qualified surveyors, but perhaps more importantly, the role of surveyors in the design, development and delivery of projects with national significance. This provides significant opportunity to influence national policy and raise the profile of the surveying profession.

Reflective of the profession, and indeed built environment sector more generally, the majority of organisations represented in the research are Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) employing fewer than 50 people (**Figure 6**).

As is evident from **Figure 6**, the majority of respondents are employed in firms with fewer than 10 people, or micro-firms, which provides important insight into the structure of the profession. Micro-firms typically face differing challenges to larger firms, including, but not limited to, economies of scope or scale, access to finance, exposure to market fluctuation, and digital adoption. Therefore, the concentration of micro-firms within this research provides useful context for consideration.

Interestingly, 14% of participants were employed in large organisations with 250 or more employees, which is a marginal increase from the previous report (2023), 59% of which are private enterprises rather than Government or semi-State agencies, and were primarily within the Quantity Surveying practice area.

2.3 Surveying Labour Market Sentiment

To establish context, a range of general questions to gauge overall sentiment regarding the sector prior to projecting future demand were asked.

Participants were requested to identify the sectors that they believed would drive employment growth, and results indicate strong demand across all major sectors within the built environment. The highest proportion of *"primary"* or *"strong"* drivers is observable across infrastructure, and residential (public and private) (see **Figure 7**).

Please note that due to rounding, some totals may not add to 100%.

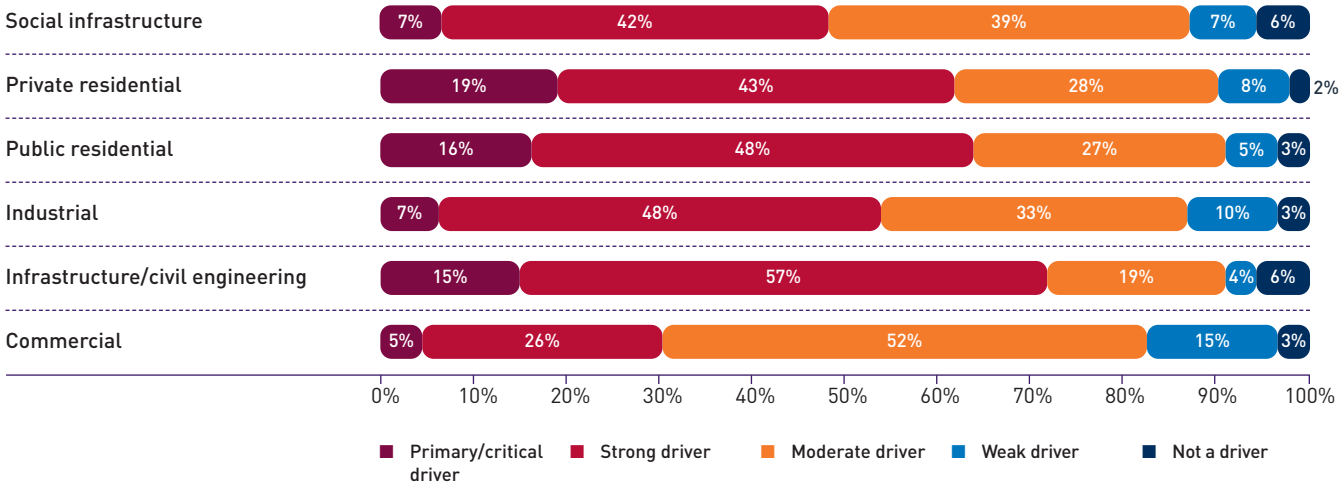


Figure 7 Sectors driving growth

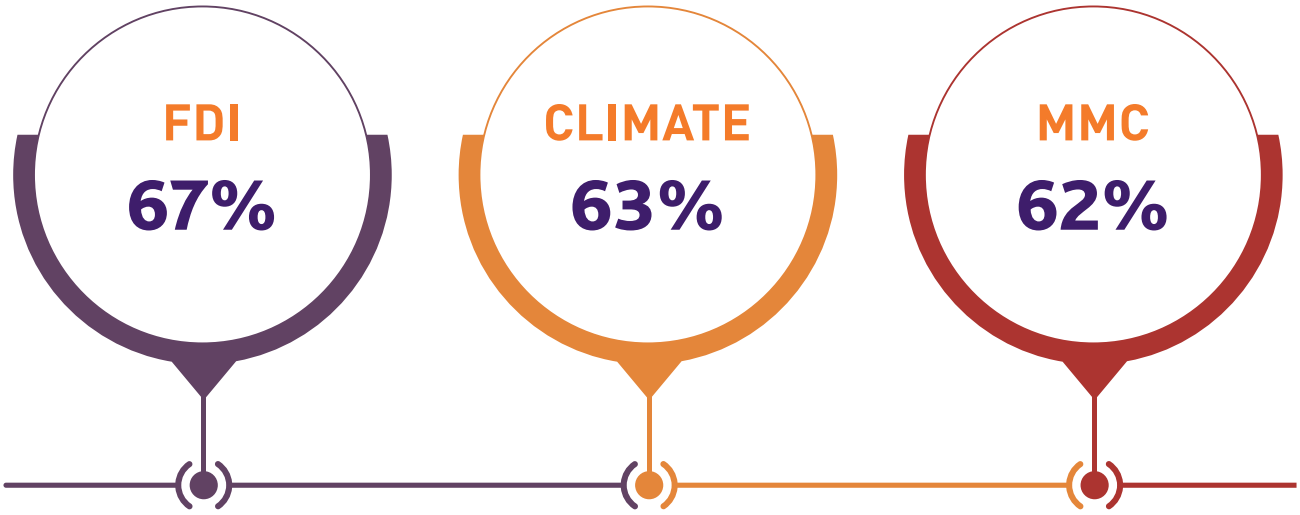


Figure 8 Drivers of employment growth

Evidence indicates that the increased capital expenditure allocation under the reviewed NDP announced in July 2025 has translated to anticipated future employment growth for surveyors. Significantly, there is no divergence across surveying practice areas in this regard, with respondents from each of the three main pathways identifying infrastructure as the leading driver of employment growth, which is particularly pronounced for large (250+ employees) firms. While large firms may have economies of scale and scope to compete for major infrastructure projects, it is possible that smaller firms will be sub-contracted in specialist areas, thereby maintaining strong demand. Furthermore, as larger firms become engaged in high-value capital projects, opportunities may arise at the lower-value end of the market for smaller firms.

The urgent requirement to address the ongoing housing shortage underscores employment growth within the sector, whilst data centres were noted as driving activity within the industrial sector. The commercial sector is predicted to be a more moderate driver of employment growth, with factors such as consumer sentiment, workplace strategy and occupier demand for office space with high Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) credentials impacting activity.

In addition to sectoral demand, participants were asked to confirm their opinion on a range of factors that could potentially act as a driver of or constraint to employment growth, with FDI, climate targets and Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) identified as the top three growth factors (see **Figure 8**). Constraints are believed to stem from global political instability, planning bottlenecks and construction tender price inflation (see **Figure 9**).

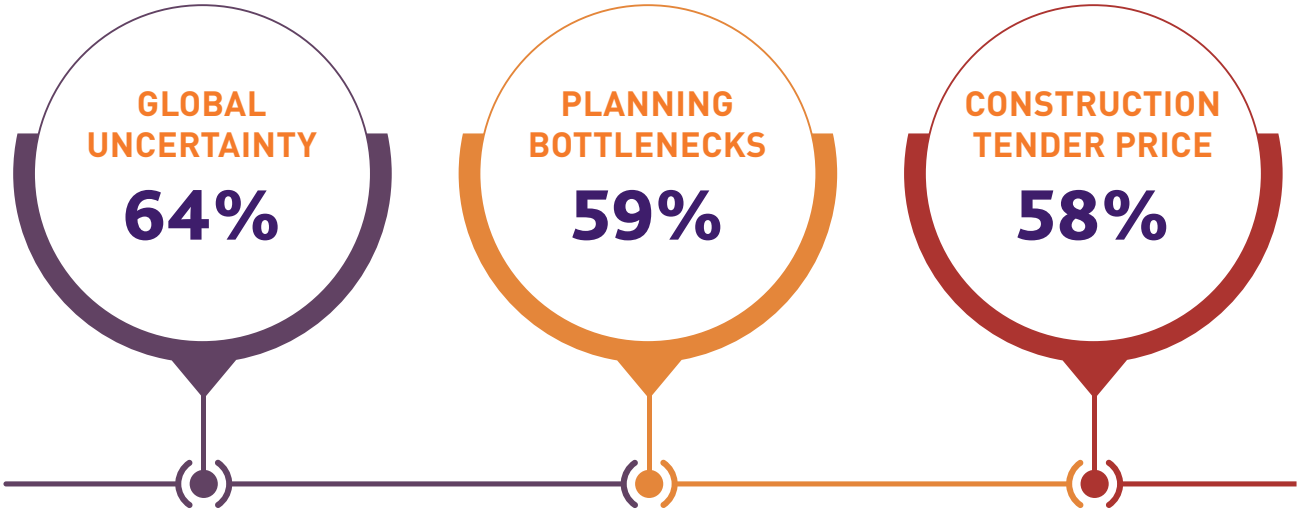


Figure 9 Constraints to employment growth

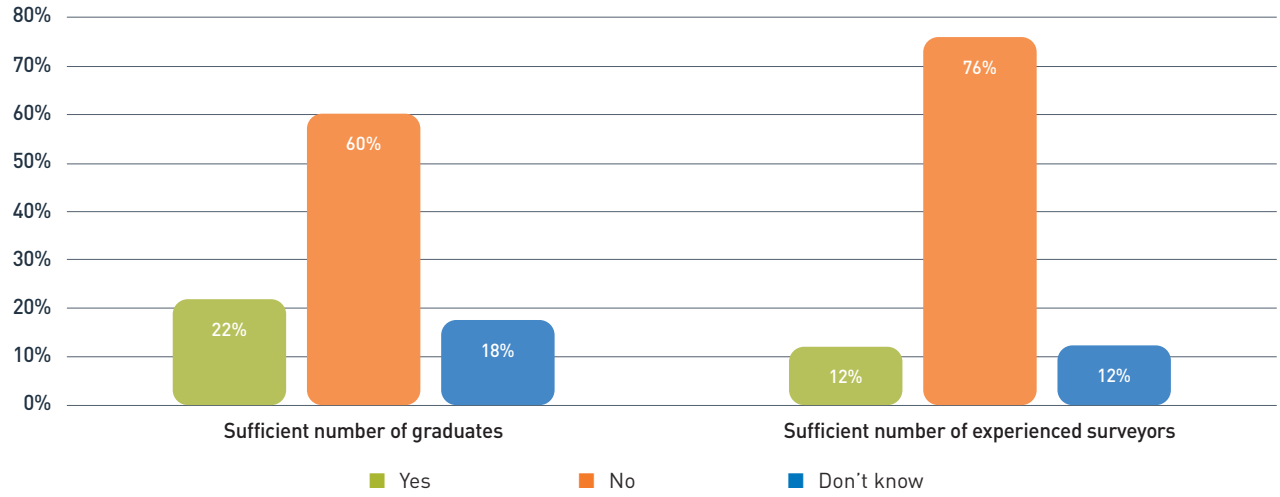


Figure 10 Availability of qualified surveyors

There was no significant divergence between surveying pathways in relation to drivers of and constraints to employment growth.

The research is undertaken at a time of heightened geopolitical instability with downside economic risks. Supply chain disruption and soaring energy costs are critical issues at the time of writing; however, these conditions underscore the strategic imperative of accelerating the transition to renewable energy sources. This is likely to provide opportunities for surveying professionals in assessing viability, financing, retrofitting, valuing and data capture required to inform decisions over the whole life cycle of the asset.

In the context of drivers of and constraints to employment growth across all sectors, participants were asked to provide their perspective on whether there are enough qualified surveying professionals at graduate or experienced levels (see **Figure 10**). The majority of participants perceive a shortage of both graduate and experienced surveying professionals, particularly of those with experience.

On closer examination, 57% of respondents identified a shortage of staff with 2-5 years' experience, and 51% a shortage of staff with greater than six years' experience (see **Figure 11**). A divergence occurs between Quantity Surveying and Property Surveying at the 6+ years level of experience, increasing to 77% for Quantity Surveyors and declining to 28% for Property Surveyors.

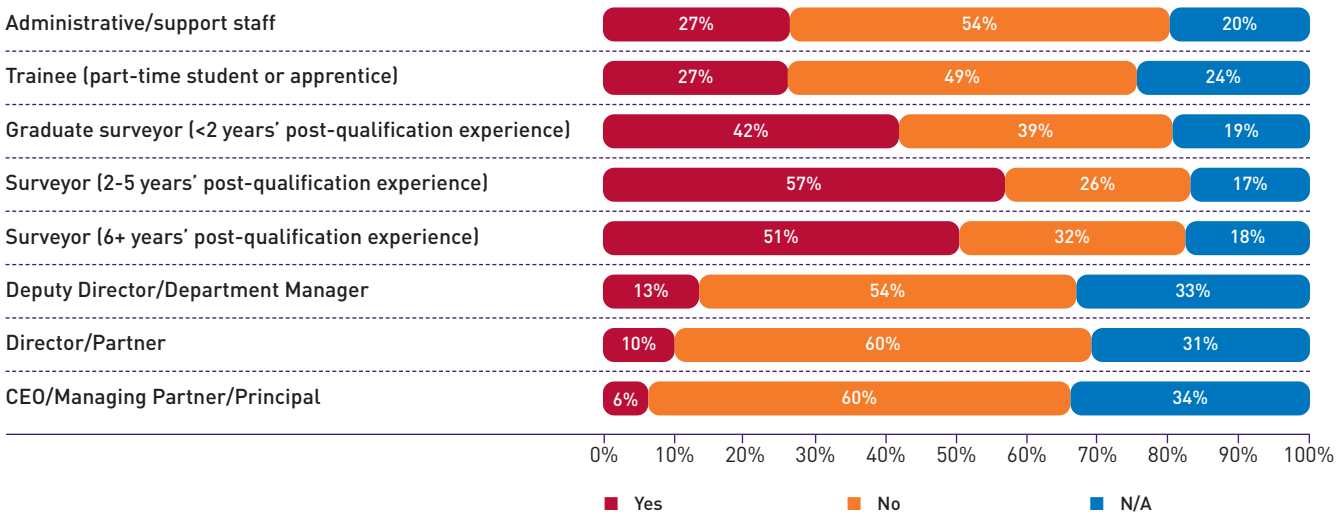


Figure 11 Surveyor shortage at various levels

Participants were asked to confirm if a particular level of staff was not applicable to their organisation (e.g., sole trader), which is also illustrated in **Figure 11**.

Some respondents have explored recruiting from overseas to address shortages; however, delays and complexities in securing visas for international applicants causes ongoing obstacles in this regard.

> *"We have had open positions for Quantity Surveyors across all levels for the past two years. There is insufficient resource across levels in the country. We have brought a number of people from overseas but have experienced significant delays in getting VISA, accreditation from SCSI, driving licences ."*
> Anonymous member survey respondent

At graduate level (with under two years' postgraduate experience), a sizeable shortage is also evident across all surveying pathways. Respondents note that many graduates transition directly to employment, frequently within the company where they have undertaken their work placement or internship. Consequently, for some roles, recruitment of non-surveying staff is the solution but with it comes a steep learning curve.

For some, the issue lies in the perceived quality rather than quantity of graduates, with respondents citing lack of drive, work ethic and communication skills as issues that are perhaps a residual impact of Covid-19.

> *"Quality is important and there is a shortage of high-performance, ambitious surveyors looking to build a career."*
> Anonymous member survey respondent.

The current surveying labour market is tight for experienced professionals, with job retention at this level presenting a challenge, particularly in relation to staff who have completed the Assessment of Professional Competence (APC) to become Chartered. Whilst this is not a new or even unique phenomenon to the surveying profession, it continues to be a significant impediment requiring a targeted response.

2.4 Projecting Future Demand of Surveying Professionals

The previous section of this chapter detailed demographic information pertaining to member respondents and provided broad insight of sentiment of the surveying labour market. A core aim of the research is to project future demand for surveying professionals, which is the focus of this section.

To project future demand for surveying professionals, participants were presented with three possible scenarios of economic growth, as measured by GNI*, and asked to provide the number of additional staff likely to be employed within their organisation between 2026 and 2029 based on the scenarios. As noted previously, a single senior level key informant from each member organisation was selected for this purpose to guard against double counting.

The median scenario presented a GNI* of 2.5% p.a. growth, which broadly reflects the Department of Finance Budget 2026 estimates over the time period. A pessimistic scenario of 1% lower and an optimistic scenario of 1% higher than the median were also presented (see **Figure 12**). It is not possible to predict which scenario is most likely to occur; therefore, a projection of

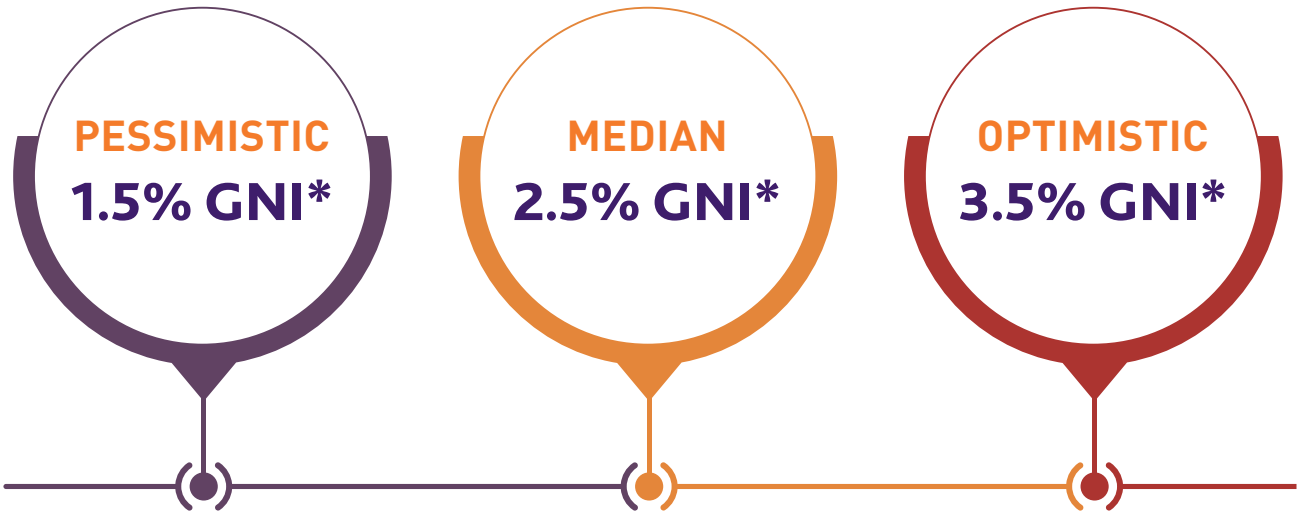


Figure 12 Scenarios of economic growth

Table 3 Projecting future demand multiplier

		No. of target participants	No. of responses to scenario	%	Multiplier
Construction	Building Surveying	55	22	40%	2.5
	Quantity Surveying	200	70	35%	2.9
Land		44	20	45.5%	2.2
Property		283	60	21%	4.8
OVERALL		**582**	**172**	**30%**	

future demand for surveyors for each scenario is analysed. A multiplier was applied to the responses received such that estimates from the sample could be grossed up to the total population. Survey fatigue resulted in the total number of usable responses declining at the latter stages of the survey; consequently, the response rate to the scenario-based questions declined. On that basis the multiplier applied is calculated on a lower response rate than earlier parts of the research and differs between surveying pathways for that reason. The calculation of the multiplier applied to gross-up data collected is detailed in **Table 3**.

Participants in this research confirmed the intention to employ non-surveying staff, such as administrative staff, project managers and Human Resource (HR) specialists; however, determining the required numbers of non-surveying roles is outside the scope of this study.

In the sections to follow, the projected demand for additional surveying staff at every level of experience for each surveying pathway is presented over the four-year period, 2026-2029.

A multiplier was applied to the responses received such that estimates from the sample could be grossed up to the total population.

2.4.1 Construction

The Construction pathway consists of five main practice areas:

- Building Control;
- Building Surveying;
- Project Management;
- Quantity Surveying and Construction; and,
- Taxation Allowance.

The focus of this research is concentrated on Building Surveying and Quantity Surveying due to a limited number of usable responses received from other practice areas.

2.4.1.1 Building Surveying

Building Surveyors are experts in construction technology and building pathology, and provide professional advice in a wide range of areas, including:

- design and construction;
- building measurement and surveys;
- design and building defect analysis;
- asset management and maintenance strategy;
- preparing insurance valuations and claims;
- land ownership, leases, boundary advice;
- project and development monitoring;
- energy audits; and,
- conservation and sustainability advice.

The professional title of Building Surveyor (and Quantity Surveyor) is protected under the Building Control Act 2007, and those wishing to use the title must register with the SCSI as the designated registration body.

Building Surveyors may act as an Assigned Certifier under the terms of the Building Control Amendment Regulations (BCAR), and contribute technical expertise and advice on regulatory requirements in compliance with building regulations.

Building Surveyors perform an important part in the identification, assessment and remediation of building defects, involving carrying out inspections, determining the nature of defects, and reporting on scope-of-work for remediation in line with building regulations.

Figure 13 Building Surveying response rate and multiplier

A total of 55 senior Building Surveying professionals were invited to participate in the research to contribute on behalf of their organisation (see **Figure 13**).

Participants were asked to project how many additional Building Surveying staff were likely to be employed based on three scenarios of economic growth, namely annual increase in GNI* of 1.5%, 2.5% and 3.5%. A multiplier of 2.5 was applied to the responses received, calculated on the response rate (40%) for the scenario-based questions.

Respondents within this pathway are primarily located in Dublin (42%), working in organisations that employ under 50 people (69%), in the private sector (89%). Indications are that strong growth across all sectors will drive demand, with a belief that there is an insufficient number of graduates or experienced staff within the profession.

The number of additional Building Surveyors projected to be employed at each level of experience based on the three scenarios is presented in **Figure 14**.

As is evident from **Figure 14**, considerable demand exists for qualified Building Surveyors at each level of experience, with the largest proportion at the 2-5 years' experience level. Fewer opportunities arise at the most senior level within organisations, as there tends to be less turnover; therefore, it is unsurprising that additional demand at this level is lower.

Of note is that demand for Building Surveyors is significantly higher than in the previous report (2023), indicating a growing need for the skillset reflective of the mounting importance of the profession within the sector.

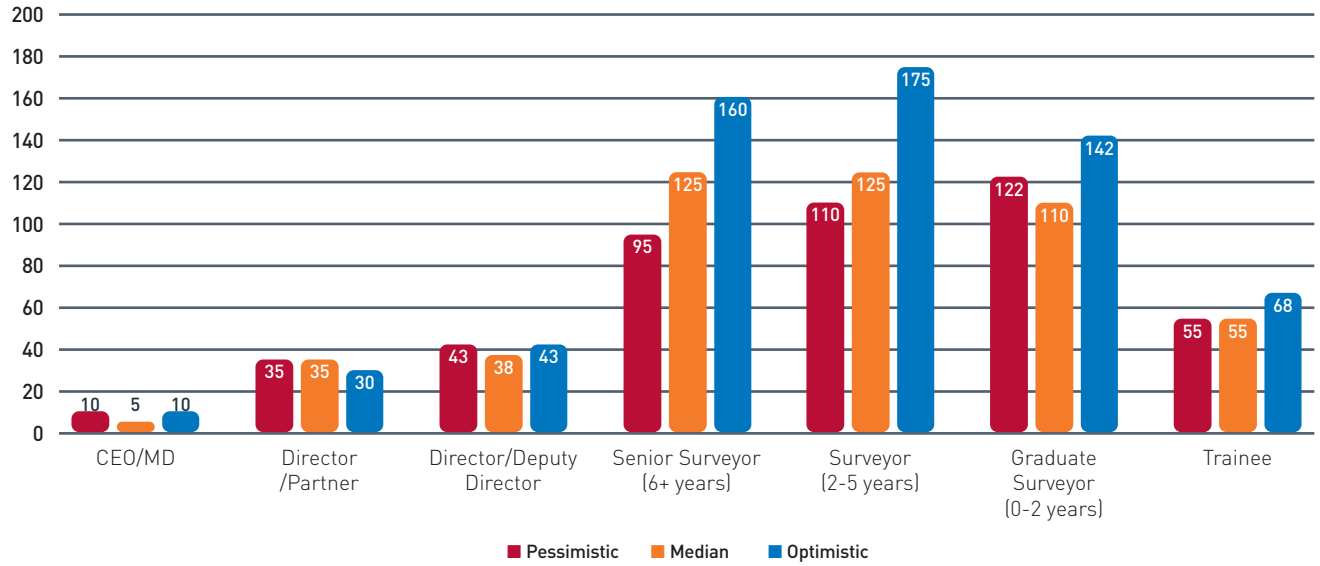


Figure 14 Projected demand for additional Building Surveyors

Figure 15 Quantity Surveying response rate and multiplier

2.4.1.2 Quantity Surveying

Quantity Surveyors are the cost managers of construction, with expertise in costing buildings from conception to completion, and work within a range of organisations from consultant in private practice, to contractor or development within a large organisation in the private (e.g., retailer, utility company) or public sector. Quantity Surveying is a long-established profession and constitutes a large proportion of SCSI membership.
Quantity Surveyors are involved in a range of areas including, but not limited to:

- preparing feasibility studies;
- assessing capital and development expenditure;
- procurement;
- monitoring designed development against planned expenditure;
- value management and engineering;
- risk management;
- preparing contract documentation;
- valuing construction work for interim payments; and,
- advising on the avoidance and settlement of disputes.

For the Quantity Surveying pathway, 200 target participants were identified across SCSI member practices, of which 70 responded to the questions pertaining to additional demand for workers in three scenarios of economic growth. Responses were grossed up to reflect the overall population using a multiplier of 2.9 given the 35% response rate to the scenario questions (see **Figure 15**).
Quantity Surveying respondents were primarily responding on behalf of an enterprise with 10 or fewer employees (54%) and 23% represented large enterprises (250+ employees), with the largest proportion of firms primarily based in Dublin (48%).
The total number of additional Quantity Surveying staff projected based on a pessimistic (1.5%), median (2.5%) and optimistic (3.5%) annual rate of GNI* growth is presented in **Figure 16**.

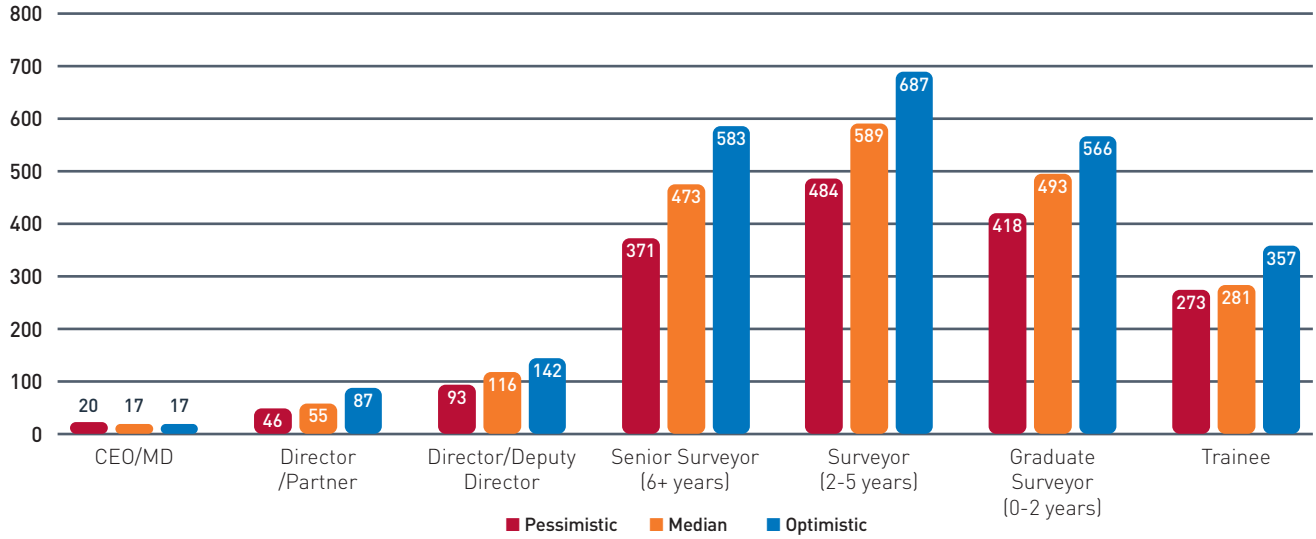


Figure 16 Projected demand for additional Quantity Surveyors

In each scenario presented, sustained demand is projected at every level of experience for additional Quantity Surveyor employees. As senior positions are filled, it is likely that positions at more junior levels may become available; however, at the most senior levels (Director, Partner or CEO) demand is more modest, as is to be expected. With limited opportunities at the highest organisational level, focus is shifting towards mid or early career level Quantity Surveyors to develop a sustainable talent pipeline.
Additional demand for Quantity Surveying professionals is largest for those with between two and five years' experience, with a similar number of graduates demanded as that of senior surveyors of 6+ years' experience. The strong demand for experienced professionals reflects the low outturn of graduates entering the workforce in the years immediately following the financial crises, when registration on construction-related programmes declined – people who would now have reached this level of experience. Furthermore, it limits the capacity of organisations to offer more internships, given the shortage of available mentors for this purpose.
Within this pathway additional demand is more modest than previously has been the case, which may at least in part be due to the severity of the shortages previously reported – thereby the labour market is right sizing – but also due to considerable capacity-building efforts (see section 2.5).
Some participants noted that a structural change has occurred within their organisation through generating efficiencies, digital adoption and sometimes larger international firms leveraging expertise from their affiliate company overseas to a greater extent than heretofore.
Overall, however, demand for Quantity Surveyors remains robust and will continue to do so given the vital role the profession plays across every facet of the sector.

2.4.2 Land

The Land pathway encompasses a variety of practice areas, including:

- Geomatics;
- Minerals and Waste Management;
- Planning and Development; and,
- Land Agent.

Land Surveying professionals play a crucial role within the built environment, with expertise in the planning, development and legal definition of land, which is required to accurately measure and map land to ensure precise data for construction activity. Land Surveyors use advanced equipment and digital technologies to provide authoritative survey data to ensure evidence-based decision-making across the built environment.
All practice areas were included in the research, with the largest proportion of respondents confirmed as Geomatics Surveyors. Whilst it is acknowledged that areas of expertise are varied within this designation, they are grouped in the analysis due to the comparatively low number of respondents. Of the target 44 participants, 20 usable responses were received.
For the purposes of grossing the data obtained up to the entire population a multiplier of 2.2 was applied given the 45.5% response rate to the scenario-based questions (see **Figure 17**).
Land Surveying participants are primarily at CEO or Director level within the organisation for which they were responding (48%); however, this designation had a significant proportion (32%) at Deputy Director/Department Manager level. As is the case across other pathways, the primary location of their business is in Dublin (52%) and the majority employed 10 or fewer people.

Figure 17 Land Surveying response rate and multiplier

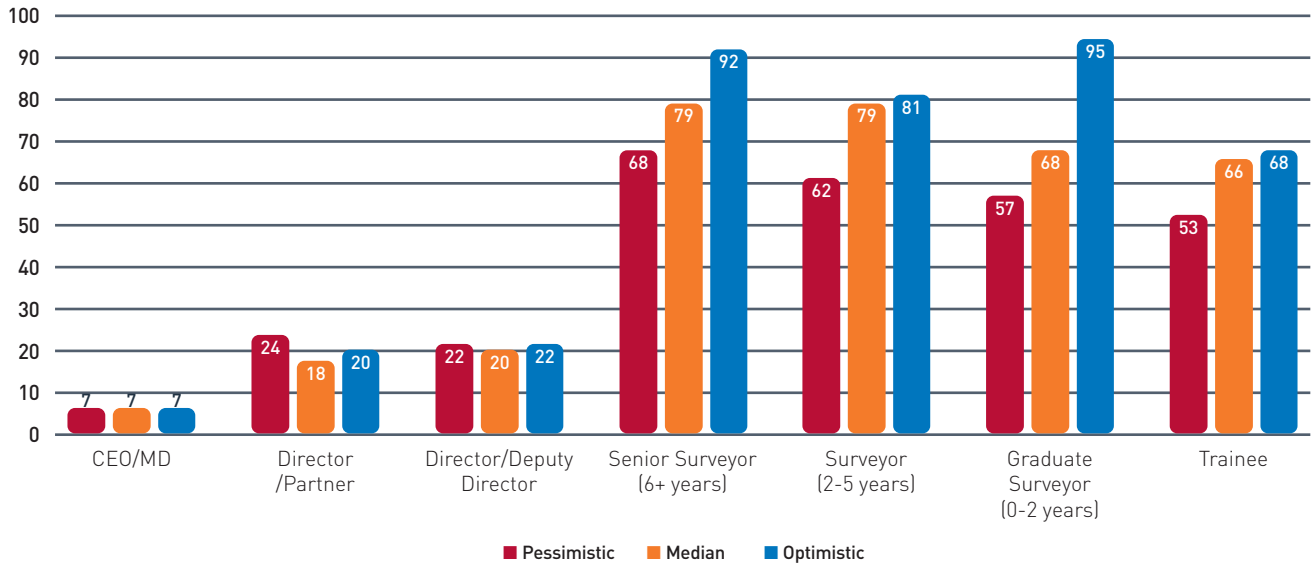


Figure 18 Projected demand for additional Land Surveyors

Three possible scenarios of economic growth as measured by GNI* – 1.5%, 2.5% and 3.5% – were presented to participants, who were asked to project the number of additional staff likely to be employed at varying levels of experience for each scenario. **Figure 18** illustrates the grossed-up totals based on the multiplier applied to responses received.

Strong demand exists at every level of experience for additional Land Surveyors, and is notably higher than determined in the previous (2023) report. This may signal rising demand for professionals with advanced technical skills for data capture, integration, Building Information Modelling (BIM) and digital twins.

Strong demand exists at every level of experience for additional Land Surveyors, and is notably higher than determined in the previous (2023) report.

All levels of experience are likely to grow over the period 2026-2029, with broadly similar numbers anticipated at graduate as at senior surveyor level (six years of experience or more), but a notable proportion of additional staff at trainee level also. As is typically the case, as more senior levels of staff are recruited, potentially through promotion, additional opportunities will become available at lower levels of experience.

2.4.3 Property

Property has the largest number of diverse practice areas, including:

- Arts and Antiques;
- Commercial;
- Facilities Management;
- Management Consultancy;
- Property Finance and Investment;
- Property Management;
- Residential Property Practice; and,
- Valuation.

A single key informant from all practice areas was invited to participate in the research, with the largest proportion of responses received from residential/estate agency (33%), valuation (27%) and commercial agency (23%) surveyors. No notable divergence in findings is observable across the practice areas; consequently, they are aggregated in the analysis to follow.

Figure 19 Property Surveying response rate and multiplier

Of the 283 key informants targeted, a total of 60 usable responses were received to the scenario-based questions. Given a 21% response rate, a multiplier of 4.8 was applied to the data collected to better reflect the overall population of Property Surveying professionals (see **Figure 19**).

The largest proportion of respondents were based in Dublin (69%), which is higher than the overall sample.

The largest proportion of respondents were employed in organisations of 10 or fewer, with only 4% in large organisations (250+ employees). Interestingly, only 4% of participants within this designation worked in the public sector/Government agency and for the small number of respondents within this category, the agency employed between 11 and 249 people. Projected demand for Property Surveyors is robust across all levels of employee in each of the three scenarios of GNI* growth presented (1.5%, 2.5% and 3.5%), most significantly at graduate level (see **Figure 20**). This is the largest reported increase in demand for property surveying professionals since the commencement of this series of research reports in 2014.

The proportion of additional demand projected at graduate level is a notable divergence from other surveying pathways, resulting from a legacy impact of reduced intake onto third-level programmes and the increasing complexity of the sector (e.g., ESG reporting, green finance, rental market reform) requiring specialist expertise.

The significant demand at lower levels of experience will develop the future pipeline of surveying professionals; therefore, graduate recruitment is not only a response to an immediate requirement, but also for future capacity building.

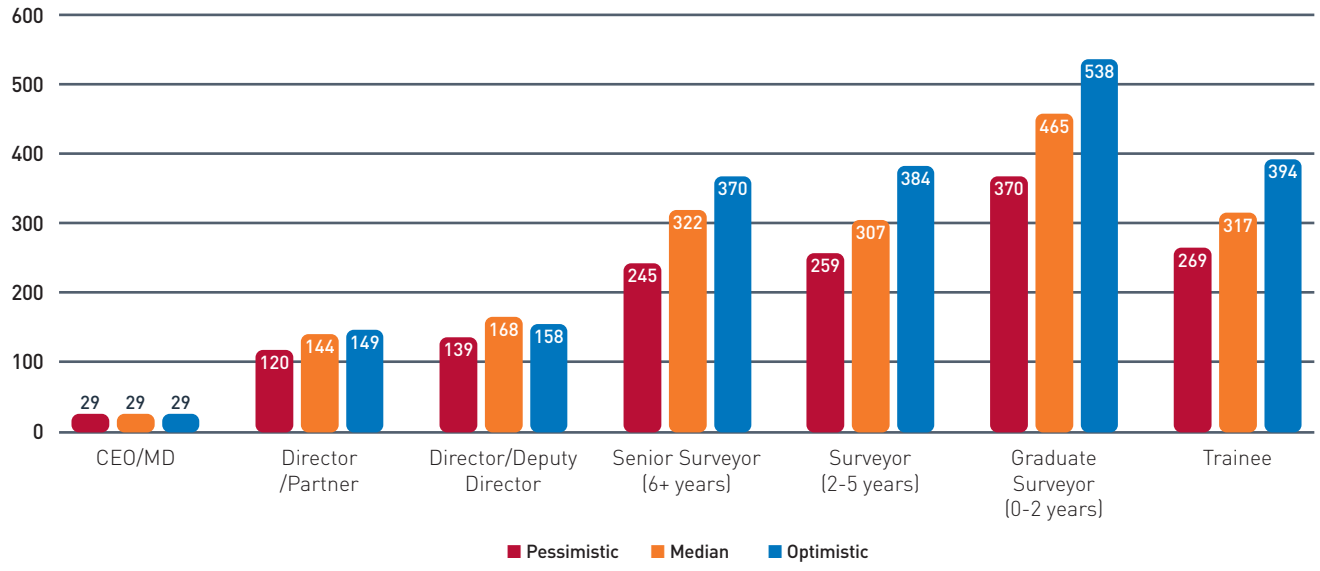


Figure 20 Projected demand for additional Property Surveyors

At higher levels of experience, demand for additional property professionals is more moderate, which may be indicative of a previous skills mismatch at this level that is right sizing. Within this pathway, a notable disparity between the pessimistic and optimistic scenarios is evident, demonstrating labour market sensitivity to variations in economic growth.
Similarly to other pathways, as positions at a higher level of experience are filled through promotion, additional opportunities are likely to become available at lower levels.

2.4.4 Projected Demand for Surveyors Over Time

As noted in previous sections, this report represents the fourth in the series of research publications designed to measure projected future demand for surveying professionals. **Table 4** presents a summary of the projected additional demand for surveyors based on a median scenario of economic growth determined at the time of each publication.
It must be emphasised that the median scenario of economic growth was based on prevailing estimates at the time of each research report, therefore varies over time. Accordingly, the table is not intended to permit direct cross-period comparison but rather to document how expectations were shaped by prevailing economic conditions.
Irrespective of fluctuation in economic expectations, the evidence clearly demonstrates that demand for surveyors remains resilient and continues on an upward trajectory.

2.5 Future Supply of Surveying Professionals

The projected future supply of surveying professionals is estimated based on the number of students currently enrolled on SCSI-recognised programmes. The SCSI currently recognises 32 programmes from level 6 to 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), across eight Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) nationwide. Enrolment data was obtained from relevant HEIs and is presented in the tables to follow. Typically, a level 8 qualification takes an average of four years to complete and is therefore aligned to the period utilised for the scenario-based survey questions completed by SCSI members (2026-2029).
It is acknowledged that a postgraduate qualification (level 9) can be completed in a shorter timeframe (typically under 2.5 years), but this is balanced by the longer duration associated with progression from a level 7 to a level 8 qualification, or for those undertaking a level 8 on a part-time basis. An example of this is the level 7 Auctioneering, Valuation and Estate Agency programme, which, although not accredited by the SCSI, is included in the analysis as many learners progress to complete a level 8 programme.

The projected future supply of surveying professionals is estimated based on the number of students currently enrolled on SCSI-recognised programmes.

Due to the low number of Project Management Surveying respondents to the member survey, it was not possible to project future demand for this designation. Consequently, Construction Management and Construction Project Management enrolment data is excluded from the analysis. At present there are approximately 250 learners enrolled on these programmes. As this designation continues to grow and develop, it is anticipated that future research will capture higher levels of participation.
The SCSI accredits additional programmes; however, participants on specialist programmes, for example Mechanical and Electrical (M&E) Quantity Surveying, are likely to hold a surveying qualification upon commencement, and therefore do not represent *additional* supply of labour and are excluded from the analysis.

Table 4 Projected additional demand for surveyors over time

	2014	2018	2023	2026
Building Surveying	129	210	121	493
Quantity Surveying	506	1,652	1,223	2,024
Land Surveying	*	237	129	337
Property Surveying	459	1,640	689	1,752

**Not measured due to low response at the time*

Table 5 Enrolment on Building Surveying programmes

Title	NFQ Level	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
BSc (Hons) Building Surveying	8	20	22	12	12		66
PG Dip Building Surveying	9	16					16
MSc Building Surveying	9	4	2				6
							88

Table 6 Enrolment on Quantity Surveying programmes

Title	NFQ Level	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
BSc (Hons) Quantity Surveying	8	473	400	370	319	20	1,582
MSc Quantity Surveying	9	87	30				117
							1,699

The estimation of new entrants into the labour market from non-SCSI accredited/recognised programmes (particularly within the real estate sector where alternative routes to obtain a Property Services Regulatory Authority (PSRA) licence are available), remains outside the scope of this research.

Tables 5 to **8** provide the enrolment numbers on surveying programmes nationwide by NFQ level. Some programme titles may vary slightly across HEIs; however, these reflect the discipline areas in question.

As was the case for previous reports, a single HEI offers third-level programmes in Building Surveying in Ireland, and whilst an additional level 9 programme has been developed since the publication of the previous research, it remains within the same HEI (see **Table 5**).

The current concentration of education provision for Building Surveying in one geographic location limits accessibility for learners around the country.

The current concentration of education provision for Building Surveying in one geographic location limits accessibility for learners around the country. The proposed development of an apprenticeship in Building Surveying is a positive step forward; however, it is important that dispersion of delivery nationwide is prioritised.

Accredited Quantity Surveying programmes (see **Table 6**) are long established in Ireland and are available nationwide at undergraduate and postgraduate (conversion) level. There are several routes available to those interested in undertaking a Quantity Surveying degree programme including full-time, part-time (earn-as-you-learn) and apprenticeship.

A limited number of Land Surveying programmes are currently available in Ireland on which the numbers currently enrolled are modest (see **Table 7**). One undergraduate programme has been paused with no new intake for the past two academic years. However, a new consortium-based apprenticeship has been developed, and it is hoped that the first intake will take place during the 2026-2027 academic year. A small number of additional programmes in planning and development-related areas are available in HEIs across the country, but are not accredited by the SCSI and therefore remain outside the scope of the research.

Table 7 Enrolment on Land Surveying programmes

Title	NFQ Level	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
BSc (Hons) Geospatial Surveying	8			8	8	6	22
MSc Geographical Information Systems	9	30					30
MA Planning and Development	9	15					15
							67

Table 8 Enrolment on Property Surveying programmes

Title	NFQ Level	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Higher Cert in Property Services and Facilities Management	6		20		25		45
BSc Auctioneering, Valuation and Estate Agency	7	58	31	28			117
BSc (Hons) Property Economics/Property Valuation	8	73	62	58	66	29	288
MSc Real Estate	9	54	14	10			78
							528

SCSI-recognised Property Surveying programmes are available in a small number of HEIs nationwide from level 6 to level 9 on the NFQ (see **Table 8**). A minimum of a level 6 qualification is required to obtain a PSRA licence; however, a notable proportion progress from level 6 to a higher-level qualification and therefore are included in the estimation of future supply within the research. It would be remiss not to mention that whilst there are a limited number of SCSI-accredited Property Surveying programmes at present, other property-related programmes are recognised by the PSRA for licencing purposes but remain outside the scope of this research. Consequently, the future supply of qualified property professionals is higher than that conveyed herein.

This is the fourth report in the series that first identified a significant shortage in qualified surveyors in 2014. Since the first report, several capacity-building measures have been actioned to generate awareness of the surveying profession as a valued, varied and long-term career choice.

The number of accredited or recognised programmes has increased nationwide, with development of new pathways such as part-time, online and apprenticeship programmes. For Quantity Surveying in particular this has resulted in a significant rise in the number of student enrolments (**Table 9**) to meet industry demand.

2.6 Comparing Projected Demand and Supply of Surveying Professionals

In the previous section the projected demand for surveying professionals was ascertained from a single key informant from each SCSI member practice based on three possible scenarios of economic growth. Economic growth as measured by GNI* is used for this purpose, thereby removing distortion resulting from non-domiciled activity, and three scenarios of GNI* were presented, namely a pessimistic (1.5%), median (2.5%) and optimistic (3.5%) annual growth between 2026 and 2029.

The supply side of the surveying labour market is estimated using the number of learners currently enrolled on SCSI-accredited (or recognised) programmes nationwide given the broad alignment of programme duration and the time period under scrutiny for this research. Due to the lack of reliable data, no attrition rate has been applied to the figures presented, and programmes that are not accredited by the SCSI are outside the scope of this research.

Within the context of international market uncertainty, it is not possible to predict with certainty the likely GNI* growth rate; however, the following sections provide a comparison between projected demand based on varying scenarios and supply, which is less volatile given that it is based on current programme enrolment.

Table 9 Surveying student enrolments 2014-2026

Pathway		2014	2018	2023	2026
Construction	Building Surveying	84	93	77	88
	Quantity Surveying	428	853	1,172	1,699
Land		*	101	99	67
Property		323	530	481	528
TOTAL		**835***	**1,577**	**1,829**	**2,382**

**Data not collected*

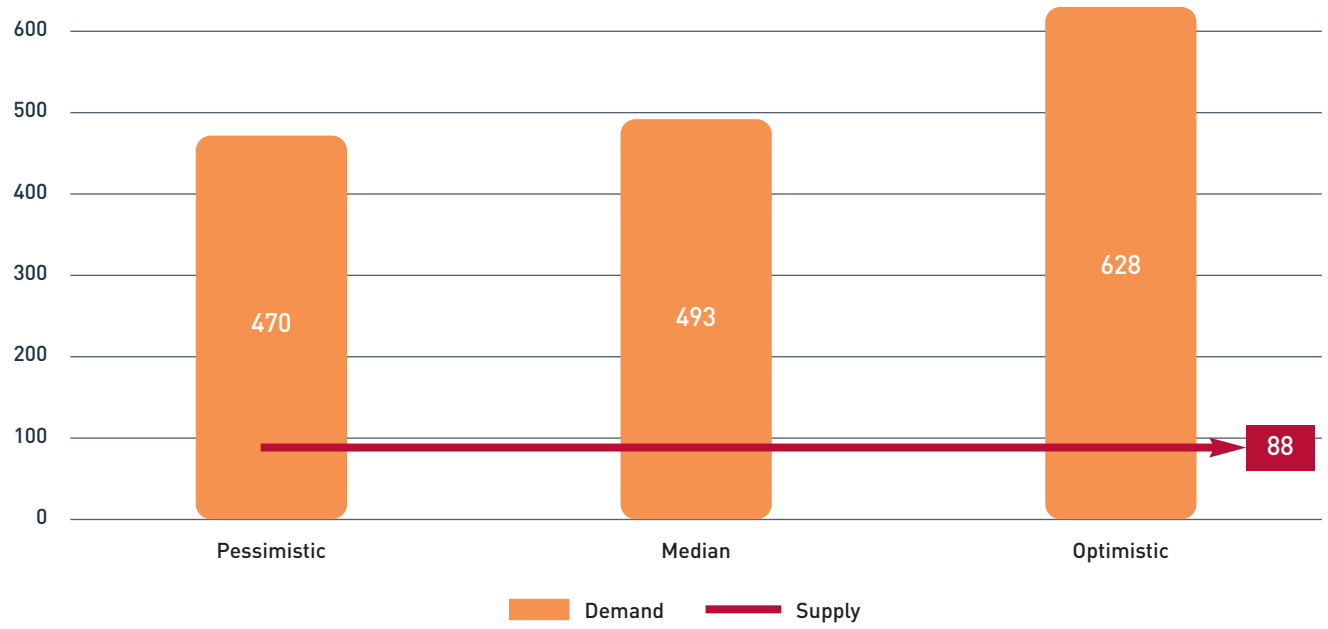


Figure 21 Demand and supply of Building Surveying professionals 2026-2029

2.6.1 Construction

2.6.1.1 Building Surveying

Building Surveyors possess vital expertise in building design, maintenance, retrofit, adaption and reuse, all of which are essential to deliver and upgrade our existing stock of buildings to meet climate targets.

There is a substantial increase in demand for Building Surveying professionals since the previous report, with only a marginal increase in the number of people currently enrolled on education programmes. Findings from this research indicate that a significant shortage is likely to occur over the next four years in any scenario presented, ranging from 382 (pessimistic scenario) to 540 (optimistic scenario) (see **Figure 21**).

The diverse technical skillset of a Building Surveyor makes them well placed to engage in large infrastructure projects, particularly in pre-construction surveys or sub-contracted directly for a client organisation. With the proposed increase in capital expenditure following the review of the NDP, this presents a significant opportunity for the profession. Some participants noted that employment of senior Building Surveyors in the public sector is required to raise the profile and foster a greater understanding of the important contribution the profession makes within the construction and built environment sector.

Building surveyors are educated and practice in engineering-related areas such as design, structural integrity, and building pathology, and in architecture-related areas in understanding design, drawing interpretation and specification over the whole life of an asset. As such, the profession could support other areas currently experiencing shortages such as engineers or architects; however, considering the evidence uncovered within this research, the capacity to do so is likely to be limited. Ultimately, numerous opportunities for Building Surveyors are evident across the entire sector and the urgent need to address the shortage has arguably never been as great.

> ***"A Dublin-based level 8 Building Surveying course is vital to secure the future of Building Surveying in Ireland".***
> Anonymous member survey respondent.

There is a substantial increase in demand for Building Surveying professionals since the previous report, with only a marginal increase in the number of people currently enrolled on education programmes.

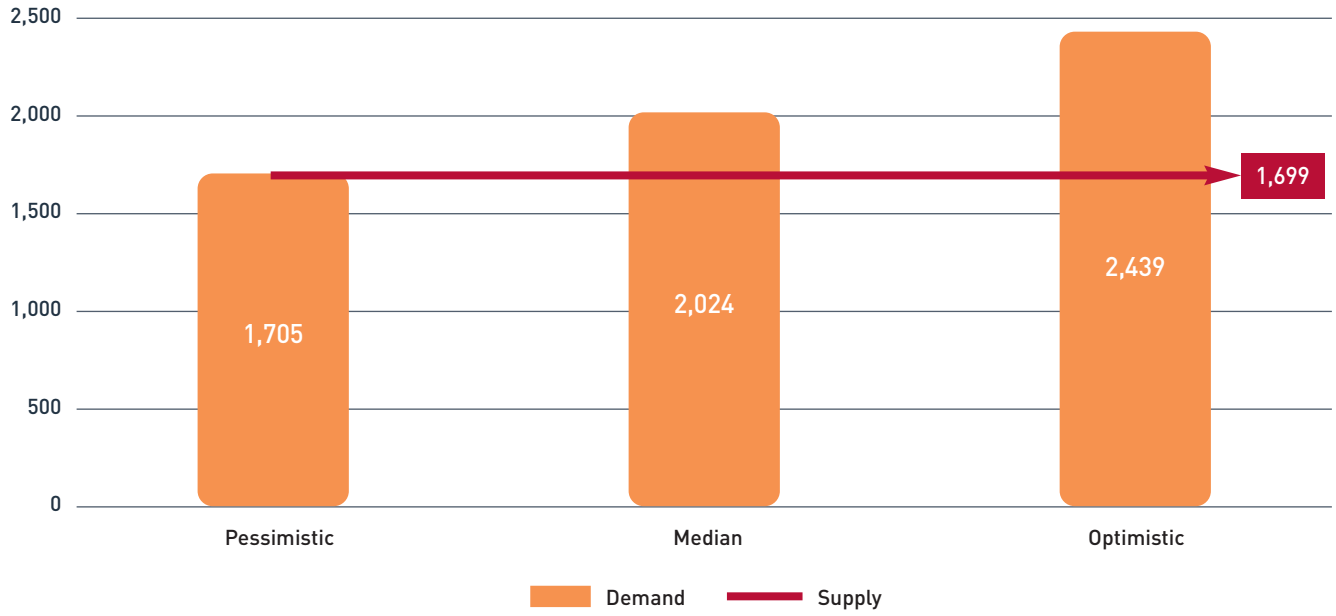


Figure 22 Demand and supply of Quantity Surveying professionals 2026-2029

2.6.1.2 Quantity Surveying

The 2014 report highlighted the severe shortage of Quantity Surveyors, which led to Quantity Surveying being included on the Critical Skills Occupation list. Since then the Quantity Surveying profession has benefited from both ongoing capacity-building initiatives and promotion, the effectiveness of which are evidenced within the research. The number of learners currently enrolled in Quantity Surveying programmes has quadrupled since the original report was published in 2014.

In each scenario of economic growth, strong demand for Quantity Surveyors is evident with a shortage possible in either the median or optimistic scenarios of 325 and 740, respectively.

As is evident from **Figure 22**, under a pessimistic scenario demand may be met by supply, providing labour market stability and signalling demand for those currently undertaking a Quantity Surveying qualification. It should be noted that the projected future supply does not capture attrition within the student population, which may result in an overstatement of the number of additional graduates available over the period.

Quantity Surveyors have a trusted international reputation for excellence built upon expertise developed in a range of sectors, including retail, industrial, data centres and complex infrastructure projects. This results in global opportunities, with many graduates choosing to work overseas. Demand for Quantity Surveyors also extends beyond the construction and built environment sector, with opportunities in non-traditional roles across retail, management consultancy, advisory services and across the public sector.

Quantifying the number of Quantity Surveying graduates who take up employment overseas or in an associated but non-traditional role upon graduation remains outside the scope of this research; consequently, the projected future supply is possibly overstated. It is therefore likely that even under the pessimistic scenario, a shortage will occur.

Evidence from the research clearly demontrates that capacity-building measures recommended in previous research have been effective in increasing the supply of qualified Quantity Surveyors; however, there remains limited capacity to absorb additional demand if required.

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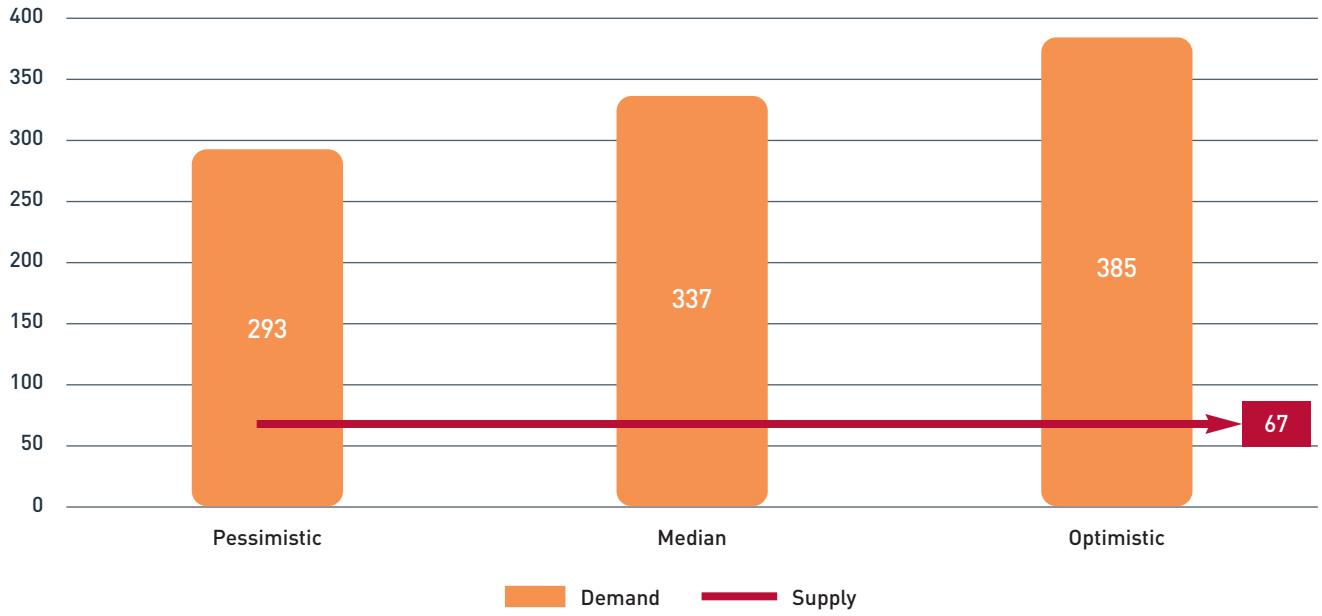

Figure 23 Demand and supply of Land Surveying professionals 2026-2029

2.6.2 Land

The Land Surveying pathway incorporates a range of discipline areas (e.g., geomatics, minerals, planning and development surveyor) and combined, represent the smallest SCSI membership. Whilst the range of discipline areas in this pathway is varied, due to the low number of responses to the research (20 people participated on behalf of their organisation), results are aggregated for analysis.

There remains a limited number of SCSI-accredited third-level programmes within the Land Surveying pathway, with only an additional 67 graduates likely to have completed their programme of study within the time period 2026-2029.

In each scenario of economic growth presented, there is likely to be a substantial shortage of Land Surveyors, with 270 too few at the median level of GNI* growth (see **Figure 23**).

Land Surveyors play a central role in providing accurate spatial data to ensure informed decision-making on how the built environment is mapped, measured, planned, built and managed over time.

The increasing use of drone technology to improve efficiency, safety and data accuracy is transforming how assets are surveyed and managed.

Bridging physical and digital data, Land Surveyors bring specialist knowledge that is vital across every sector; however, oftentimes the profession is poorly understood by the public, and therefore Land Surveying is chosen by few as a career path.

The shortage of qualified Land Surveyors must be addressed as a matter of priority, and targeted intervention is required to bridge the perceptible gap between the demand and supply of qualified personnel within this designation.

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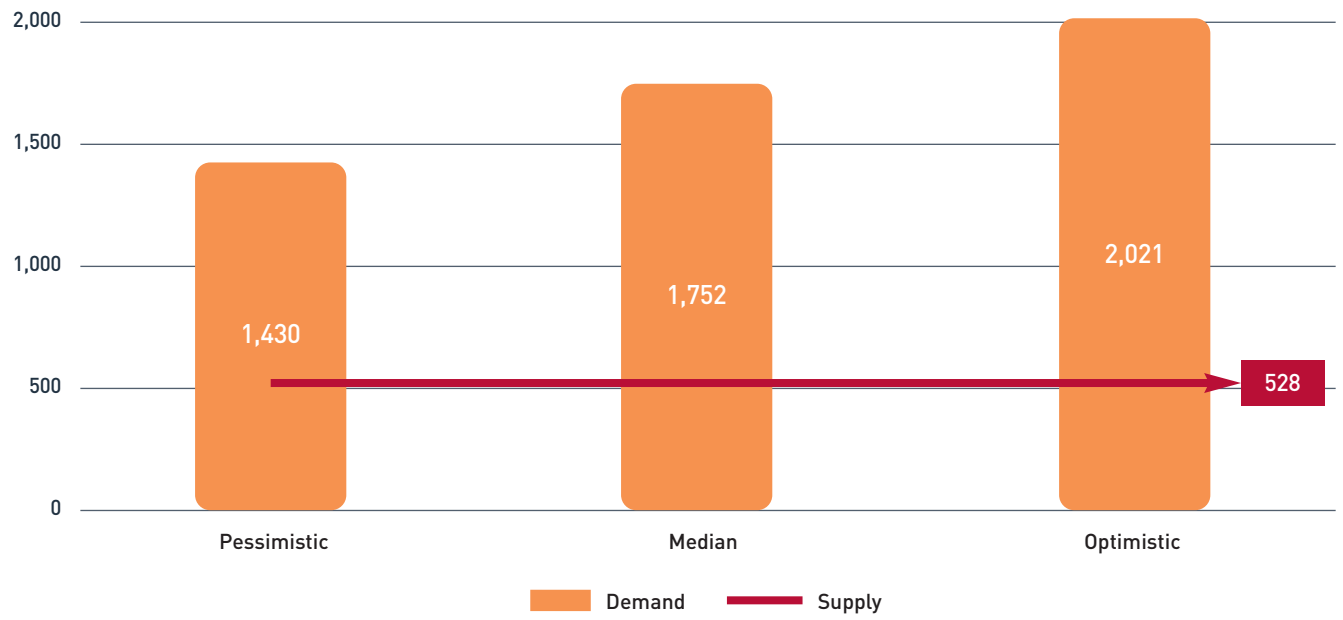


Figure 24 Demand and supply of Property Surveying professionals 2026-2029

2.6.3 Property

The Property Surveying pathway comprises a diverse range of practice areas including commercial, residential, valuations and property/facilities management, from which 60 responses were received for this research to inform the scenario-based questions. The response rate is lower than other pathways, and practice areas are aggregated in the analysis as the number of responses in some practice areas were too small to support reliable analysis.

Estimating future supply of Property Surveyors is calculated primarily based upon current SCSI-accredited programme enrolment, with the addition of the AVEA degree that typically acts as a feeder programme to the level 8 accredited programme. As noted previously, there are several non-SCSI-accredited programmes that are a route to working in the property sector with recognition from the PSRA; however, these programmes remain outside the scope of this research. Consequently, the number of additional property professionals supplied is undoubtedly higher, but is unlikely to be so significant as to undermine the extent of the likely shortage reported herein.

A substantial shortage of Property Surveying professionals is projected to occur under any of the three scenarios of economic growth. Even under a pessimistic economic growth scenario, (together with unquantifiable additional supply noted), there is likely to be over twice the number of property professionals demanded than there are entering the sector. As is evident from **Figure 24**, the shortage of qualified Property Surveying professionals is potentially considerable, and is the largest shortage projected since the series of reports commenced in 2014. The shortage of Property Surveyors could range from 903 people under the pessimistic scenario of economic growth, to 1,494 in an optimistic scenario.

There is a clear need to implement effective capacity-building measures to develop human capital within this surveying pathway to meet increasing demand for Property Surveying professionals. However, in the intervening period the shortfall is likely to impact wage inflation, and increase labour market mobility between organisations, particularly for Chartered Surveyors.

There is a clear need to implement effective capacity-building measures to develop human capital within this surveying pathway to meet increasing demand for Property Surveying professionals.

Finally, one respondent indicated that not all property practice areas are of interest to graduates by stating that:

> ***"A particular issue arising is that Graduates are focused on Agency only, perceiving it as the only sector with glamour, whereas the numbers who are entering the Professional Services sector of the profession is poor. This will adversely impact on the overall profession in the long term."***
> Anonymous member survey respondent

Whilst this is a single comment provided within the survey, it could usefully be explored more fully to ascertain whether it represents a sector-wide concern.

2.7 Future Skills Requirements

The research sought to identify in-demand skills areas over the time period, and a range of skills were presented in the survey from which respondents were asked to rank their priority areas. Across all practice areas transferrable skills are consistently ranked as either the most important, or among the top three skills required. In this context, transferrable skills include communication, project management, critical analysis, problem solving and leadership.
This reflects a universal recognition of the critical importance of intangible skills for the surveying profession, regardless of pathway. Moreover, the consistently higher ranking of transferrable skills over other competencies underscores their significance.

The research sought to identify in-demand skills areas over the time period, and a range of skills were presented in the survey from which respondents were asked to rank their priority areas.

Rapid technological change is reshaping surveying practice, with industry and higher-education research indicating a shift toward data-driven surveying, BIM-enabled workflows, drone and sensor-based measurement, advanced analytical capabilities, and digital project-delivery systems. These trends align with broader labour market projections showing that analytical thinking, technology literacy, and AI-related competencies will be an essential skillset for surveying professionals.
Skills are prioritised differently, with Building Surveyors and Quantity Surveyors placing high importance on digital and legal skills (with digital ranking only marginally below transferrable), whereas Land Surveyors rank digital skills above transferrable skills, reflecting the technical nature of their profession.

> ***"We find it difficult to recruit new staff – especially digitally savvy more junior grades, which we require for BIM mandates, digital ICMS and One-Click LCA sustainability roles. There is a hidden increase in workload in the new carbon-measurement/pricing and LCA roles linked to ICMS, so naturally more staff will be required. If we can't secure surveying staff, we may need to redeploy other technical disciplines."***
> Anonymous member survey respondent.

Respondents noted that the nature of the surveying profession requires human interaction, and that face-to-face communication and staff development requires time spent in the office. This should complement rather than be replaced by technology. Digital literacy is seen as a tool to be used like "*another drill in the toolbox*" rather than depending upon it to undertake tasks that require professional judgement.

Rapid technological change is reshaping surveying practice, with industry and higher-education research indicating a shift toward data-driven surveying, BIM-enabled workflows, drone and sensor-based measurement, advanced analytical capabilities, and digital project-delivery systems.

Of some concern is that some respondents commented that the communication skills of younger professionals have deteriorated since the Covid-19 pandemic. While this is an important observation, further research would be required to assess the prevalence of this across the profession to statistically evaluate significance and impact.

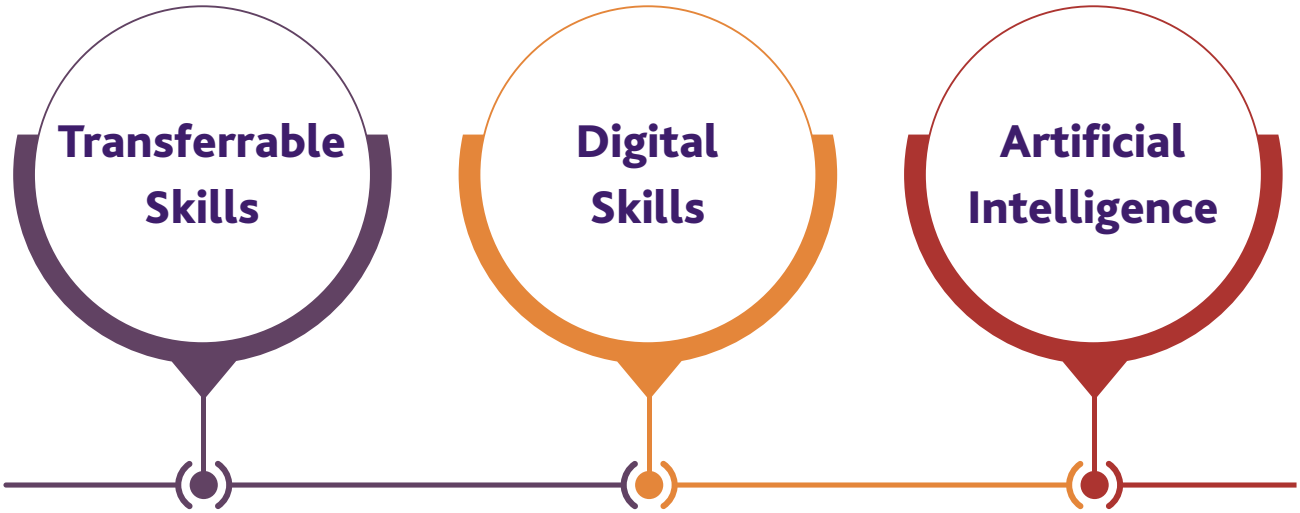


Figure 25 Priority skills

"Across all categories it is becoming increasingly difficulty to get good quality candidates with sufficient experience and drive – notably the pandemic did not help, and junior staff need to be in the office to gain good working habits and communications skills, etc."
Anonymous member survey respondent.

In terms of future development of respondents, the most popular upskilling areas were Transferrable Skills, Digital Skills and AI (in that order) (see **Figure 25**). For most, the preferred training mode was half-day (online or in person), and ultimately short flexible training formats across all skills areas were evident.

The evidence unequivocally shows that, notwithstanding considerable, targeted and sustained interventions aimed at increasing the supply of qualified surveying professionals, demand has consistently outpaced supply.

2.8 Conclusion

Results from the research demonstrate a clear demand for surveying professionals across all surveying pathways, with a shortage occurring at the median level of economic growth as measured by GNI* of in excess of **2,200 people**.

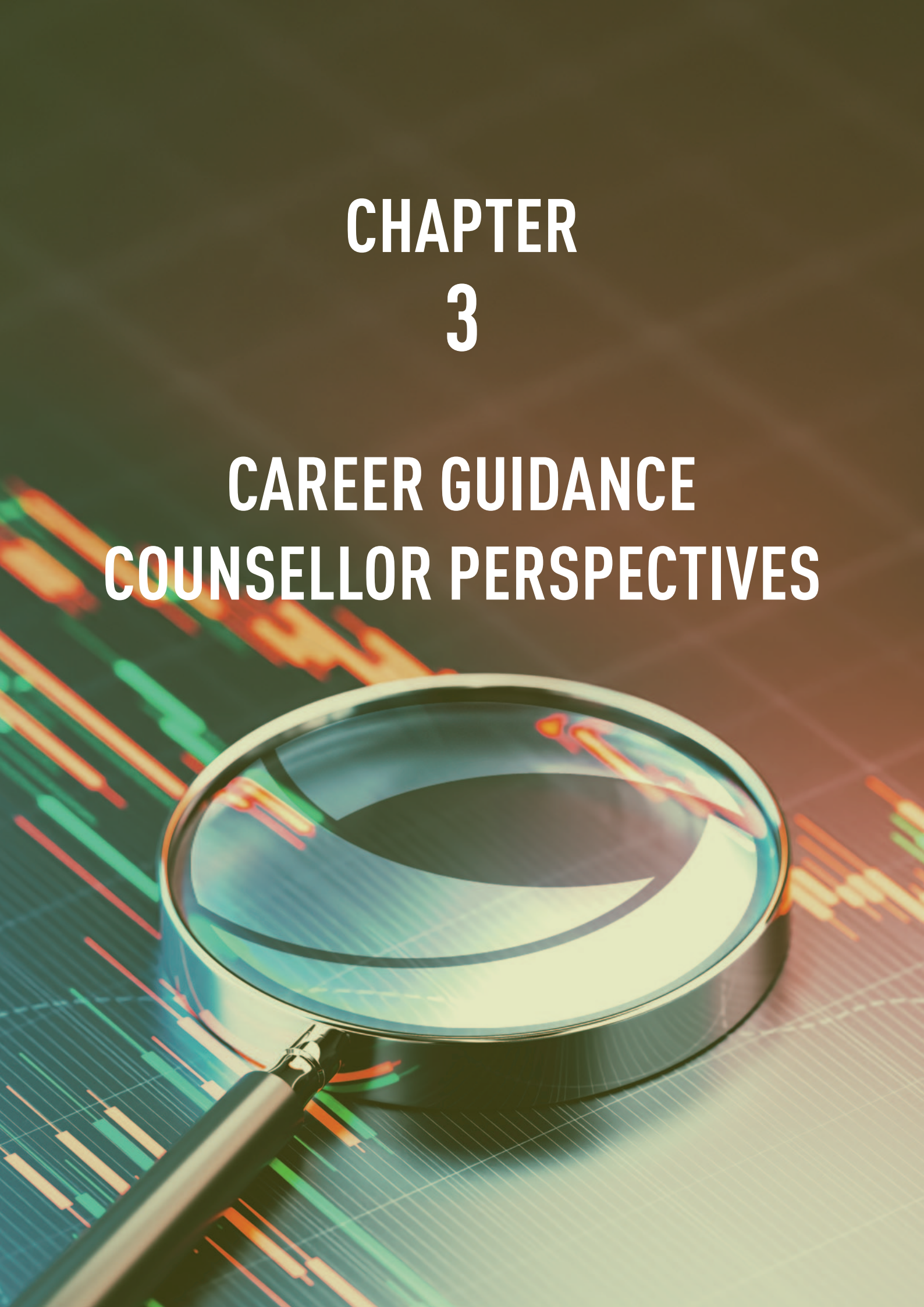
The increase in surveying student enrolments is likely to be insufficient to meet the additional demand being driven through increased activity across the sector, in particular the productive infrastructure and residential sectors.

The shortage identified is pronounced at more experienced levels of staff; however, considerable demand remains across all levels.

The evidence unequivocally shows that, notwithstanding considerable, targeted and sustained interventions aimed at increasing the supply of qualified surveying professionals, demand has consistently outpaced supply, giving rise to continuing workforce shortages that are projected to persist.

CHAPTER 3

CAREER GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR PERSPECTIVES



3. Career Guidance Counsellor Perspectives

3.1 Background and Context

Career Guidance Counsellors (CGCs) perform a critical role within the second-level education system. The traditional role of CGCs, once primarily focused on career choice and progression, has widened to become a more holistic approach to student care and well-being. Over the last number of years, CGCs and secondary school teachers have faced a confluence of complex challenges arising from the Covid-19 pandemic disruption, staff shortages, curriculum change and rapidly evolving labour markets.

CGCs are required to adapt their practices to meet complex student needs, with a recent report by the Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC) noting mental health issues, confidence and absenteeism of students causing additional challenge for CGCs,[8] for which training is required. The IGC report indicates that while 98% of CGCs engage with career decision-making, 95.3% address mental health on a daily or weekly basis.

The ICG report provides valuable insight; however, to date limited evidence exists in relation to CGC familiarity with the surveying profession specifically. Given their role within the education system, a more nuanced understanding of their perspective of surveying careers, and support requirements to enhance guidance on the surveying profession, is warranted.

A purposive sample of CGCs nationwide were invited to participate in an anonymous online survey developed by the author but administered by the SCSI, to which **41 usable responses** were received. It is acknowledged that a small sample size is not statistically generalisable; however, the results generated provide previously unknown insight and must be interpreted in the context of an exploratory investigation.

This chapter commences by presenting demographic information pertaining to participants to provide context for the remainder of the chapter. An analysis of participants' familiarity with surveying pathways is undertaken prior to a discussion of the level of confidence respondents have in advising on careers within the surveying profession overall, and perceptions of career opportunities in construction, land and property.

The final section of the chapter examines the extent to which careers in surveying form part of current career guidance initiatives prior to the identification of supports required to strengthen prominence of surveying within these initiatives.

8 ICG National Survey 2024-2025, Available at: https://igc.ie/igc-national-survey/

3.2 Respondent Profile

Understanding the demographic profile of respondents is important for establishing context in the interpretation of results. Of the 41 participants, 70% have more than five years' experience, thereby bringing depth and credibility to their insight, having experienced the challenges previously noted.

The majority (57%) of respondents are CGCs within mixed schools, with the next largest proportion (28%) employed in a girls-only school (see **Figure 26**). Whether the school is a co-educational or single-sex school may have an impact on the range of subjects offered (or selected), thereby impacting on awareness/choice of career for students. Of the participants, 10% worked in a private fee-paying school, with the overwhelming majority in publicly funded schools.

No inference is made regarding the potential differing quality of guidance, and the observations relating to the school type should not be interpreted as a judgement, but merely for understanding the demographic profile of respondents.

Over half of participants (58%) act in the capacity of CGC alone, with the remainder teaching at least one other subject from the 36 available at Senior Cycle level.[9] This is slightly above the norm reported in the 2024/2025 IGC report wherein 43.6% were exclusively guidance counselling (see **Figure 27**).

The teaching subject of the CGC, where applicable, provides useful context in relation to both the reach to student groups, and awareness and promotion of career pathways pertaining to their subject area(s). None of the research participants taught technology or engineering subjects, and future research could target teachers of these subjects to provide insight as to whether their perspectives differ.

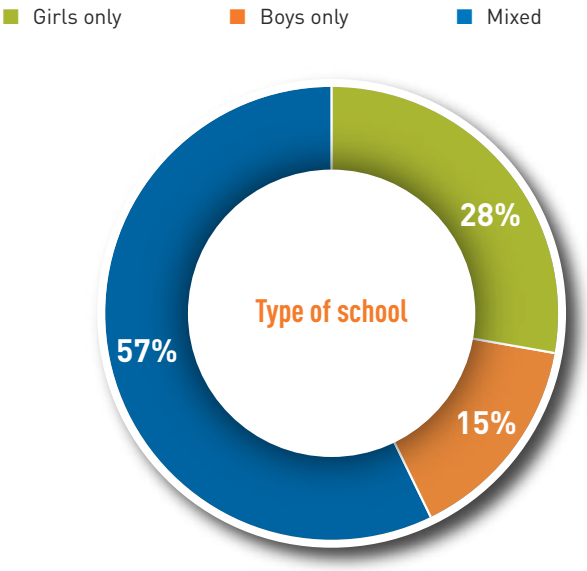


Figure 26 CGC: type of school

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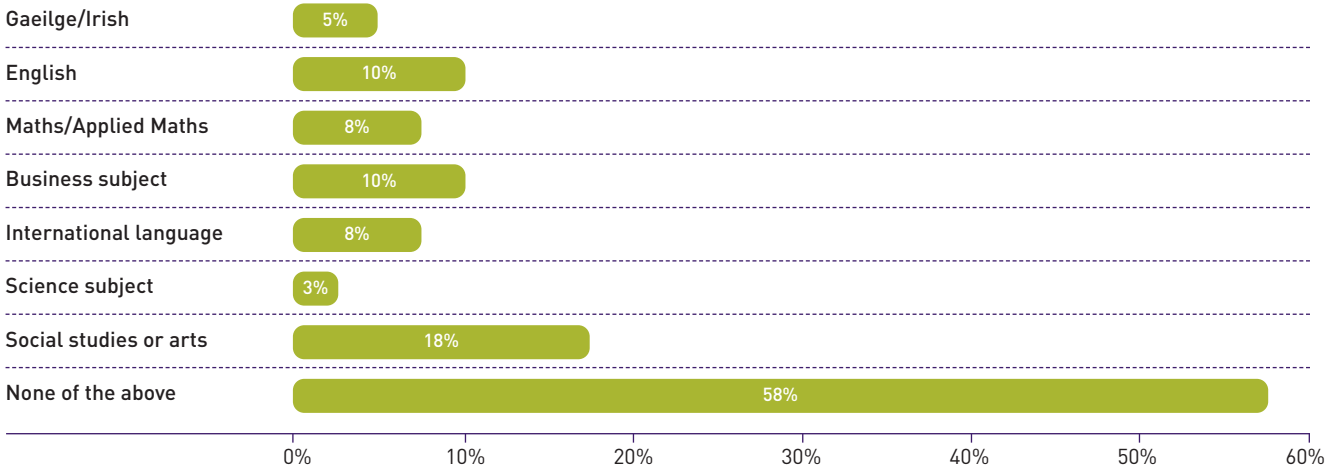

Figure 27 CGC: other Leaving Certificate subjects taught by respondent

9 Curriculum Online (2026), available at: https://www.curriculumonline.ie/senior-cycle/curriculum/

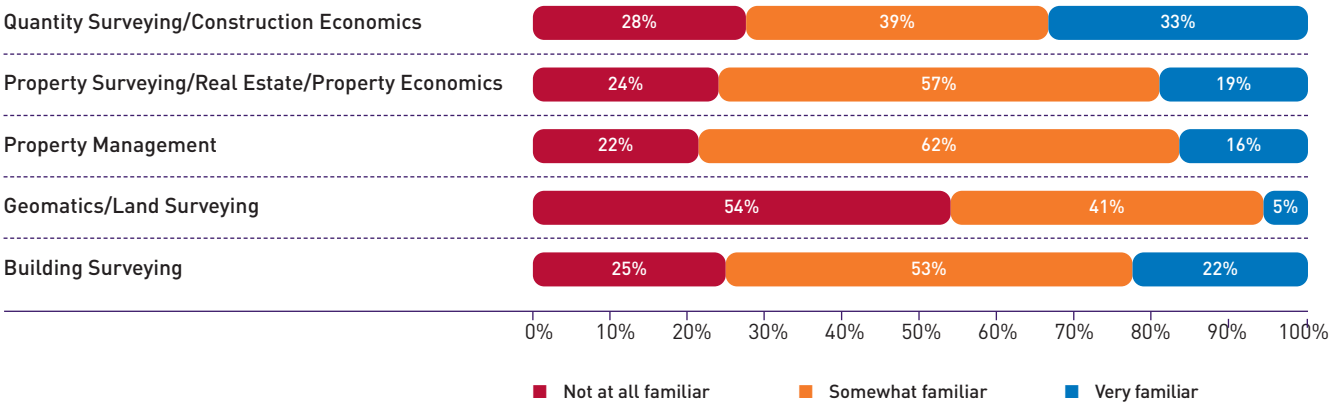

Figure 28 CGC: level of familiarity with surveying professions

3.3 Familiarity with Surveying

CGCs play a central role in helping students navigate education and career choices, providing critical advice to support decision-making. There is an implicit expectation that they are familiar with every career within every sector, but this is not feasible particularly given rapidly changing industries and new career pathways. Therefore, it is vital that CGCs guard against potential bias towards advising on careers with which they are familiar, to ensure students trust the objective advice given. It is also important to dispel traditional or out-of-date perceptions (e.g., construction is "better suited to boys") and continuously engage with new and emerging career opportunities.

This research sought to ascertain the level of familiarity with surveying professions, and **Figure 28** provides an overview of responses in this regard. For the purposes of the display, the brief descriptions provided to respondents have been removed.

The degree of familiarity with surveying professions varies amongst respondents, with the majority at least somewhat familiar with most surveying professions, and with Quantity Surveying being the one with a significant level of familiarity (33% are very familiar). Geomatics/Land Surveying is the profession with which respondents are least familiar, with over half (54%) confirming they are not at all familiar with it. Several respondents commented that the careers sound very interesting and they would like to learn more about them.

Confidence in advising about surveying careers follows a similar pattern to that of familiarity. It is essential that CGC level of awareness is enhanced to ensure that advice to students is not too narrowly focused and can incorporate a wider breadth of possible career opportunities.

However, there is strong belief amongst respondents that careers in the construction, land and property sectors offer strong opportunities for students, but further information and resources to support CGCs are required (see 3.4 to follow) (**Figure 29**).

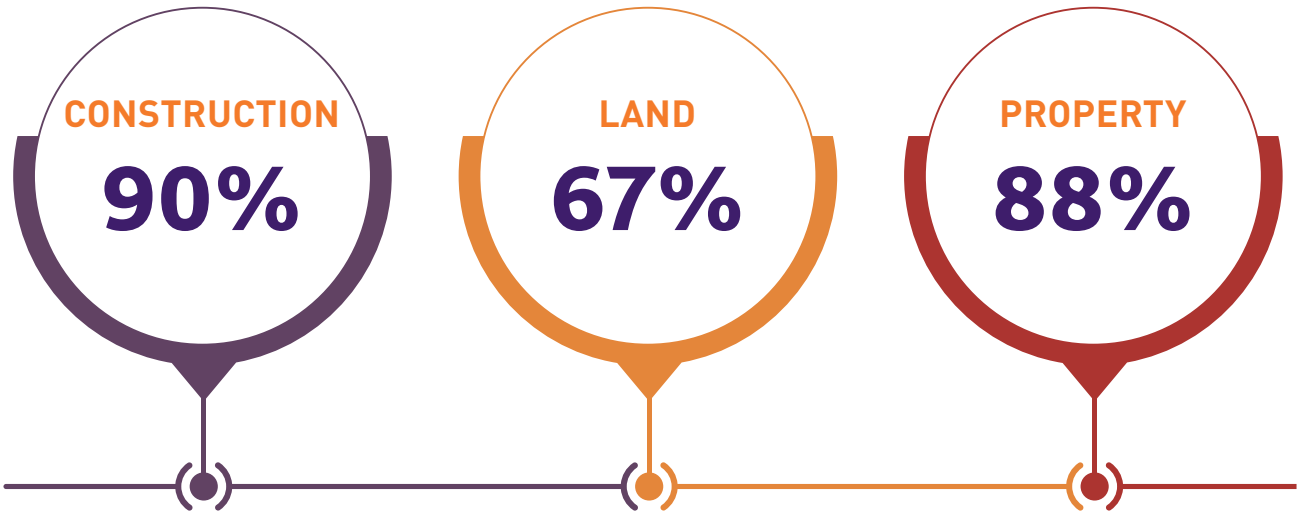

Figure 29 CGC: belief in career opportunities per sector

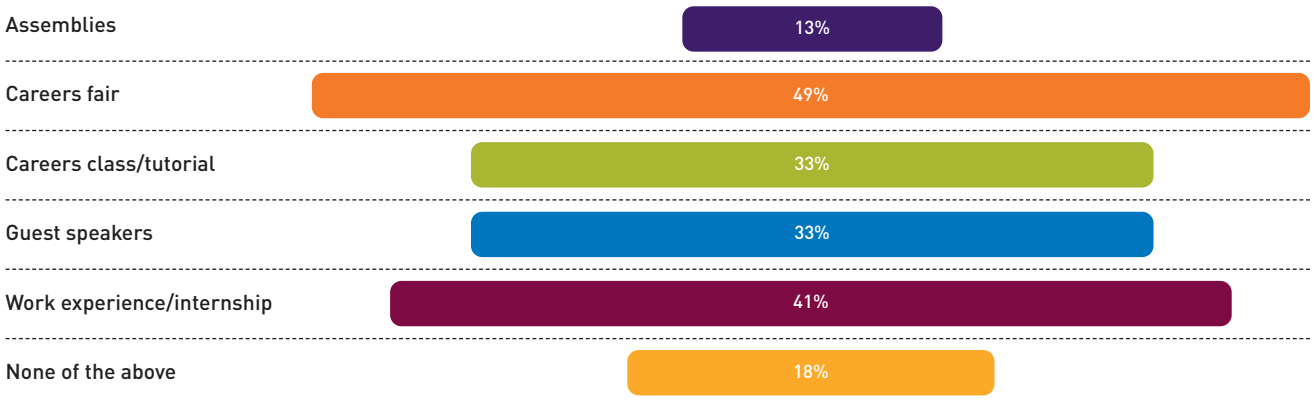

Figure 30 Surveying as part of current career guidance initiatives

Overall, CGCs demonstrate a good level of familiarity with the surveying profession and express strongly positive views about career opportunities across the three main surveying pathways. Consequently, targeted efforts to further support CGCs are highly likely to yield positive outcomes.

3.4 Surveying Career Guidance Initiatives

Understanding current career guidance initiatives, and specifically the determination of where surveying is positioned within them, has a key influence on students making informed career choices. For the purposes of the research, participants were asked to indicate from a range of possible initiatives where surveying is represented within their guidance programme for students. The list provided was not intended to be exhaustive, and opportunity was provided to add comments as appropriate. **Figure 30** provides the detail in this regard.

As is evident, surveying is incorporated into a range of career-focused activities within the schools represented, a significant proportion through careers fairs and work experience, with guest speakers also featured with reasonable prominence.

Surveying is not represented in 18% of schools. Within this cohort of respondents, the level of familiarity with surveying professions was lower than the overall sample. The majority of the cohort confirmed they were *"not at all familiar"* with, and *"not at all confident"* in advising on the surveying professions, except for Property Surveying in which there was a greater level of familiarity and confidence.

As noted previously, it is unfeasible for CGCs to have a detailed knowledge and stay abreast of changes in every potential career pathway. Consequently, it is important to ascertain how they may be effectively supported in collaboration with industry stakeholders. Participants in this research were presented with a range of

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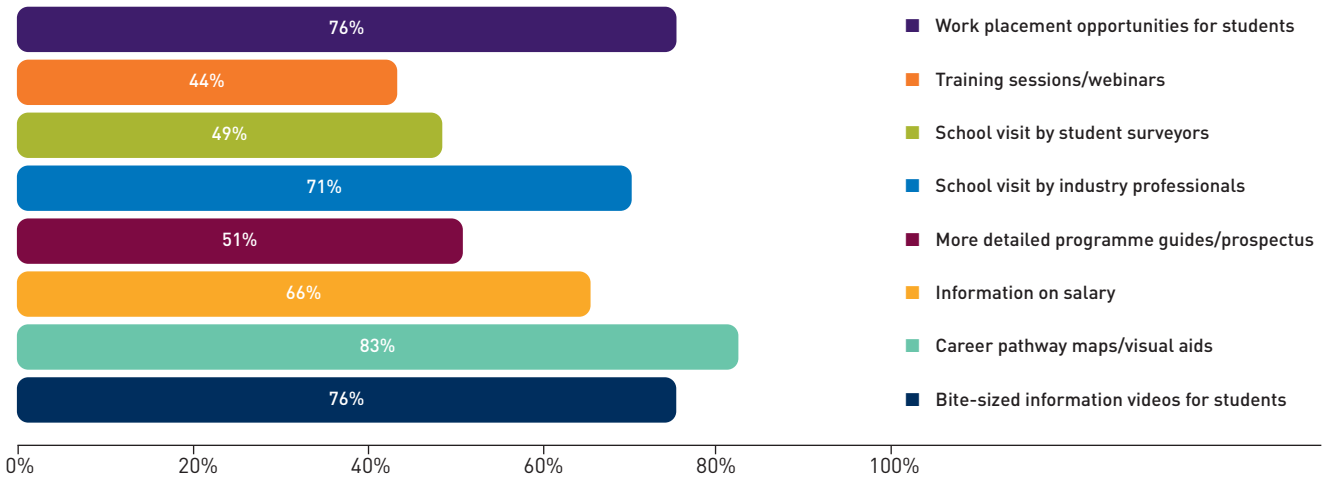


Figure 31 CGC: suggested supporting resources to advise on surveying

mechanisms by which they could be supported (and an opportunity to suggest additional initiatives/comments), the results of which are contained in **Figure 31**.
The research indicates an overwhelmingly positive perception of surveying, with an appetite to learn more for the benefit of students. Several unprompted comments were made by respondents relating to the fact that surveying *"sounds fascinating"* and that CGCs *"would love training/information about these careers"*.

> ***"I think surveying is a great option after school, especially as it is one they can really utilise if they wish to travel in the future with their qualification. But expanding my knowledge and then theirs will be a great first step to help us grow this as a possible route after school – maybe outlining any apprenticeship routes if there are any."***
> Anonymous CGC survey respondent.

It is understood that surveying offers a diverse range of opportunities and to fully engage students (as well as provide further knowledge to CGCs), supporting assets would be beneficial, including bite-sized videos or use of Virtual Reality (VR).

> ***"The more hands-on experience we have, the more clearly and confidently we can relay to the students. Real-life hands-on experiences/VR are hard to beat compared to watching YouTube clips/lesson content."***
> Anonymous CGC survey respondent.

A significant majority of respondents noted that work placement/experience opportunities are beneficial, and a clearer route for obtaining a Safe Pass would be beneficial for those considering a career in construction.

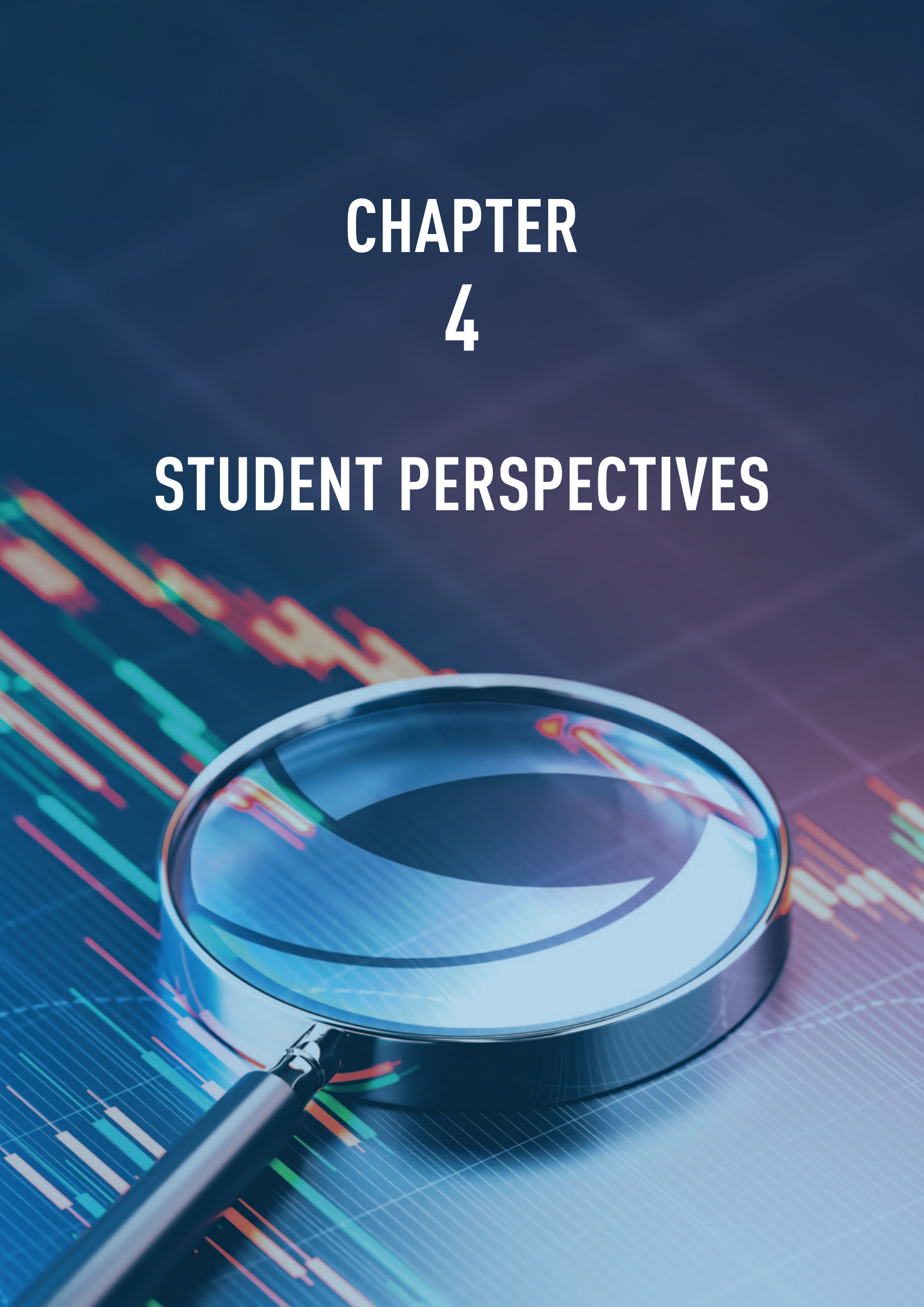
> ***"The link between employers in the construction sector and schools needs to be greatly developed. The apprenticeship route is still being viewed in its traditional sense, with a focus on the trades. Companies need to advertise more, offer to call to schools when it comes to offering engineering/surveying/construction management-type apprenticeships. It's very much on a 'who you know' basis at the minute."***
> Anonymous CGC survey respondent

3.5 Conclusion

This is the first time CGCs have been surveyed specifically in relation to the surveying profession, thereby providing novel insight. While further support and upskilling for CGCs is required, the prevailing sentiment is highly positive amongst research participants, indicating receptive conditions for future development.
Participants noted the requirement for stronger links between industry and schools to more fully inform students about the opportunities available and the varied role of the surveying profession.

CHAPTER 4

STUDENT PERSPECTIVES



4. Student Perspectives

4.1 Background and Context

The final phase of research sought to garner insight regarding secondary students' post-Leaving Certificate preferences, key influencing factors on career choice and their level of familiarity with surveying professions.

Several reports have highlighted the criticality of raising awareness of surveying as a diverse, fulfilling career; however, limited evidence has been gathered directly from students in this regard. It is critically important to understand students' viewpoints as a baseline from which a targeted and measured response may be developed.

A total of **240 responses** were obtained via an online survey (administered by CGCs) to Senior Cycle second-level students based on a purposive sample, which are the focus of analysis in the following sections.

This chapter is presented in four main parts. The first provides the demographic profile of respondents, following which is an overview of their intentions after the Leaving Certificate is complete. Included in this is an examination of the factors influencing their decisions, prior to an examination of respondents' familiarity with surveying professions and likelihood of pursuing a surveying career.

It is not purported that the data presented provides statistically representative results, and as such they are not intended to be generalised. The results must be interpreted in the context of the exploratory nature of the research; however, despite this constraint, the evidence gathered provides valuable, novel insight from students' perspectives, which can lay the groundwork for deeper investigation and a measured response going forward.

Several reports have highlighted the criticality of raising awareness of surveying as a diverse, fulfilling career; however, limited evidence has been gathered directly from students in this regard. It is critically important to understand students' viewpoints as a baseline from which a targeted and measured response may be developed.

4.2 Respondent Profile

The survey was administered to Senior Cycle secondary students nationwide by their CGC; however, usable responses were

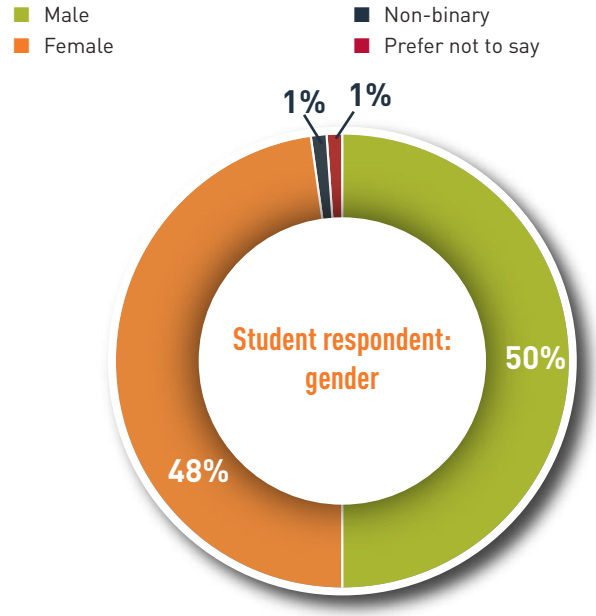


Figure 32 Student respondent: gender

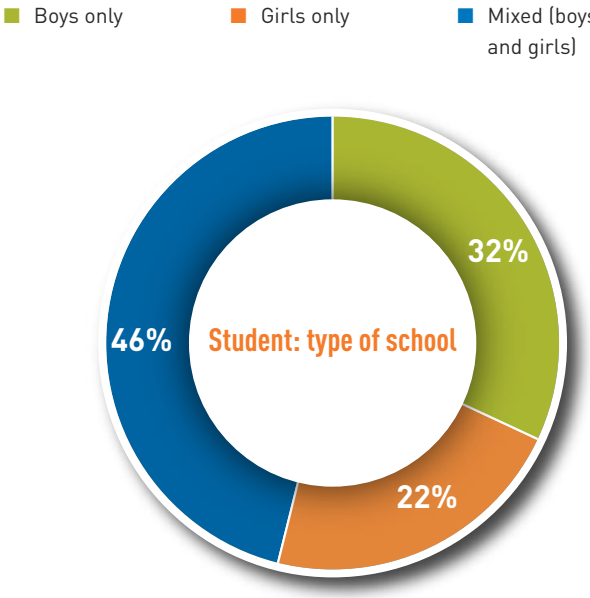


Figure 33 Student: type of school

concentrated in the Leinster region, specifically Dublin, Meath and Westmeath. Neither precise location data nor information on school attended was collected.

The gender distribution of respondents was broadly balanced between male and female participants with only 2% of respondents identifying as non-binary or choosing not to specify their gender (see **Figure 32**).

The largest proportion of respondents were attending a mixed school with a smaller proportion in either a boys-only (32%) or girls-only (22%) school, with a significant majority of participant schools (73%) non-fee-paying (see **Figure 33**).

Understanding student interests provides valuable insight into respondents for context and potentially an indicator of career choices post Leaving Certificate. Respondents were asked to select a single option to represent their most favoured area of interest from groups of Leaving Certificate modules typically undertaken (see **Figure 34**).

The three most prevalent areas of interest confirmed by respondents overall are science, creative/practical and business. Of the 27% of respondents that confirmed their main area of interest lay within creative/practical subject areas, 53% specified engineering or construction studies.

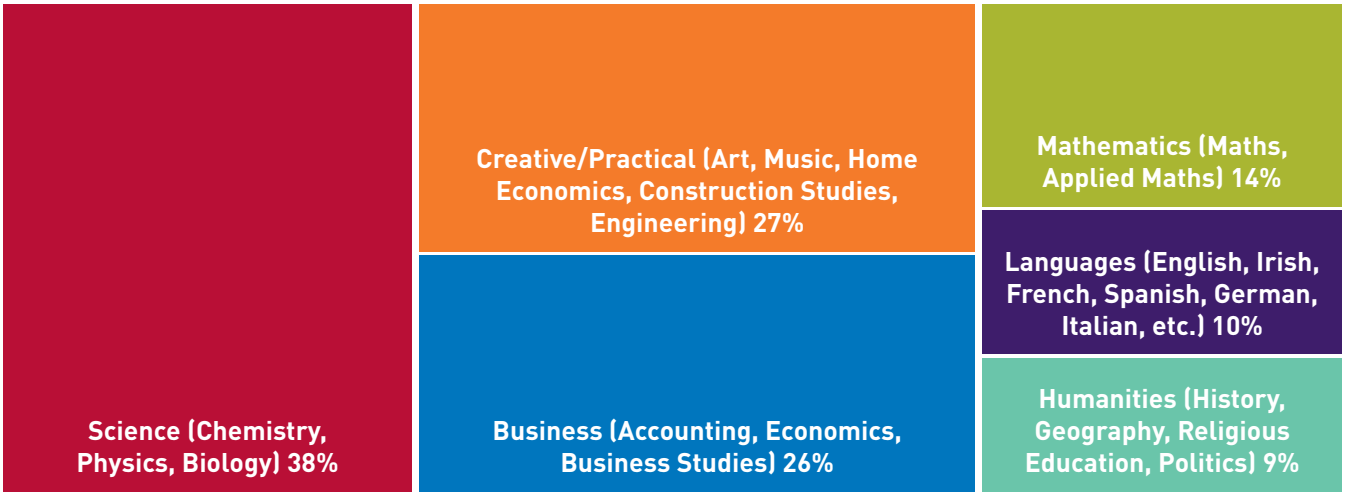


Figure 34 Student: favoured subject areas

Female respondents confirmed a similar order of priority to males; however, they indicated a stronger preference for science (48%) than the overall research population.

Respondents attending fee-paying schools indicated a diverging order of preference, with two clear preferences being business (45%) and science (37%), with maths and creative/practical considerably lower (14%). However, this finding should be interpreted cautiously as it is drawn from a small sample of private schools and may not reflect a general trend. Whilst the finding is therefore not generalisable, it remains interesting as it points to factors that may influence preferences and could warrant further investigation.

4.3 Life After the Leaving Cert

As Senior Cycle students approach the end of their secondary education there are a range of options available to them. Many decide to undertake further or higher education, apprenticeship or take a gap year while they figure out their next steps and career ambitions.

The preferred post-Leaving Certificate options for participants in this research are presented in **Figure 35**.

The largest proportion of participants in this research intend to enter higher education (78%) with an almost even spread across gap year, FET and apprenticeship (5%) upon completion of secondary education. No divergence in preference is evident based on gender, school type (single sex or co-educational), or fee-paying status.

Of the participants that indicate a preference for apprenticeship, all attend public school and are male, with 80% attending a co-educational school. This apparent concentration within a specific demographic grouping is noteworthy, and whilst further detailed analysis is required to determine statistical interdependence or correlation, the finding remains useful in identifying how educational context and gender potentially shape post-Leaving Certificate preferences.

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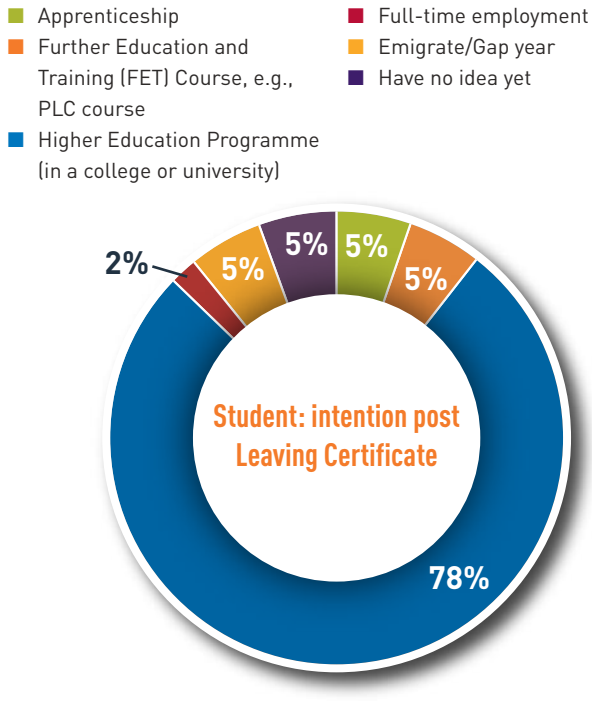


Figure 35 Student: intention post Leaving Certificate

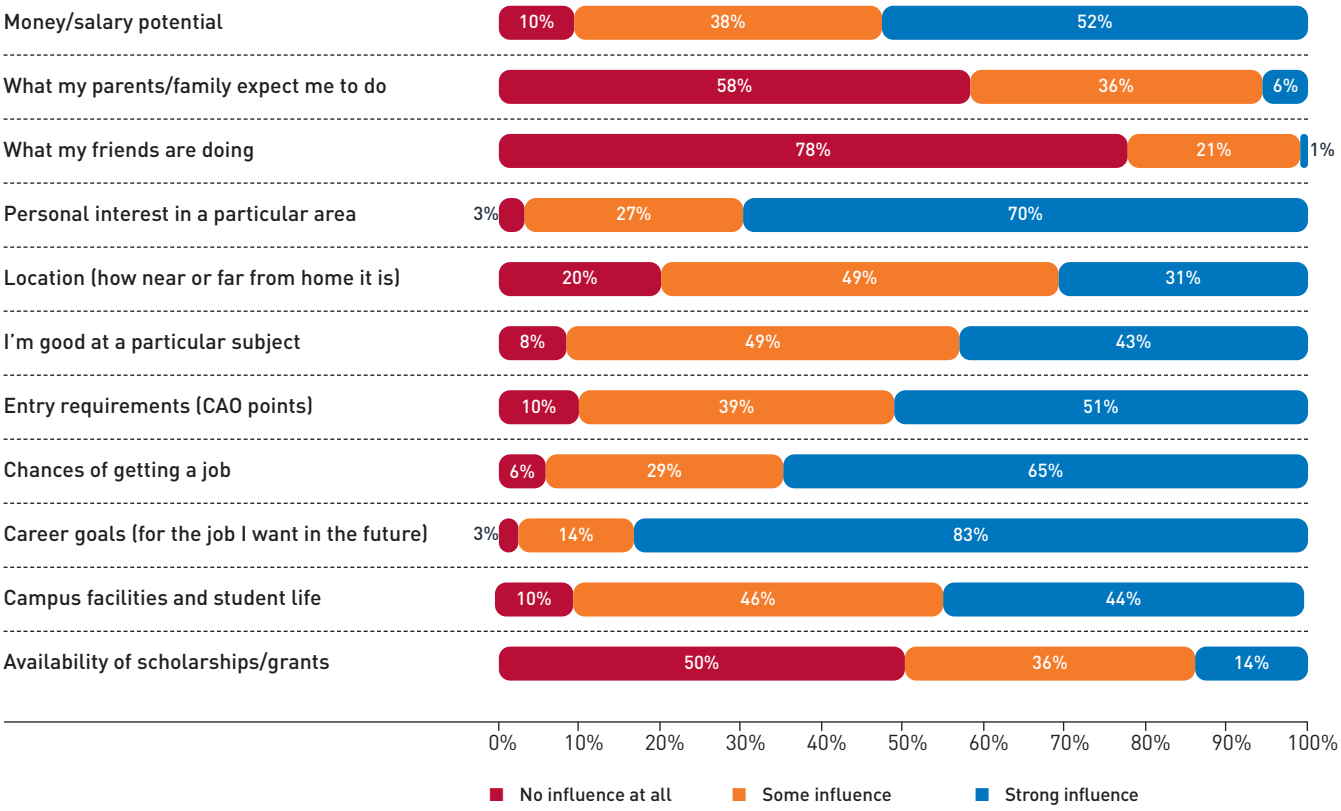


Figure 36 Factors influencing student choice

Respondents to the survey were asked to identify the factors that influence their choice in deciding on their post-secondary school pathway. A range of options were presented from which respondents indicated whether the factor influenced their decision. An opportunity to specify other influences that may not have been listed but were relevant was also possible.

As is evident from **Figure 36**, the factors with the greatest sway, as indicated by the proportion of respondents confirming it as a *"strong influence"*, are career goals (83%), personal interest in an area (70%), chances of getting a job (65%), and salary potential (52%).

From the data it is possible to conclude that students are making considered choices, aligning career goals, in an area of personal interest to them, in cognisance of labour market realities and employability. This reinforces the necessity for targeted interventions to inform second-level students of surveying career opportunities.

Progress has been made in this regard over the last number of years following recommendations made in previous reports, but now the key influences shaping career choice have been ascertained, the evidence must translate into a structured, targeted response to promote career opportunities across surveying professions. Such a response should highlight the diverse, impactful and long-term career prospects across surveying professions both domestically and internationally.

A separate but related question was posed to participants in relation to *"who"* had most influence on their decision and whilst many have some influence, parents or guardians have the strongest influence overall. While this finding may not be unexpected, it retains relevance by substantiating previously anecdotal claims regarding the role of parental influence on student choice. Interestingly, although parents/guardians were identified as the most influential people in shaping the decision, this was confirmed by only 39% of respondents.

Students are making considered choices, aligning career goals, in an area of personal interest to them, in cognisance of labour market realities and employability.

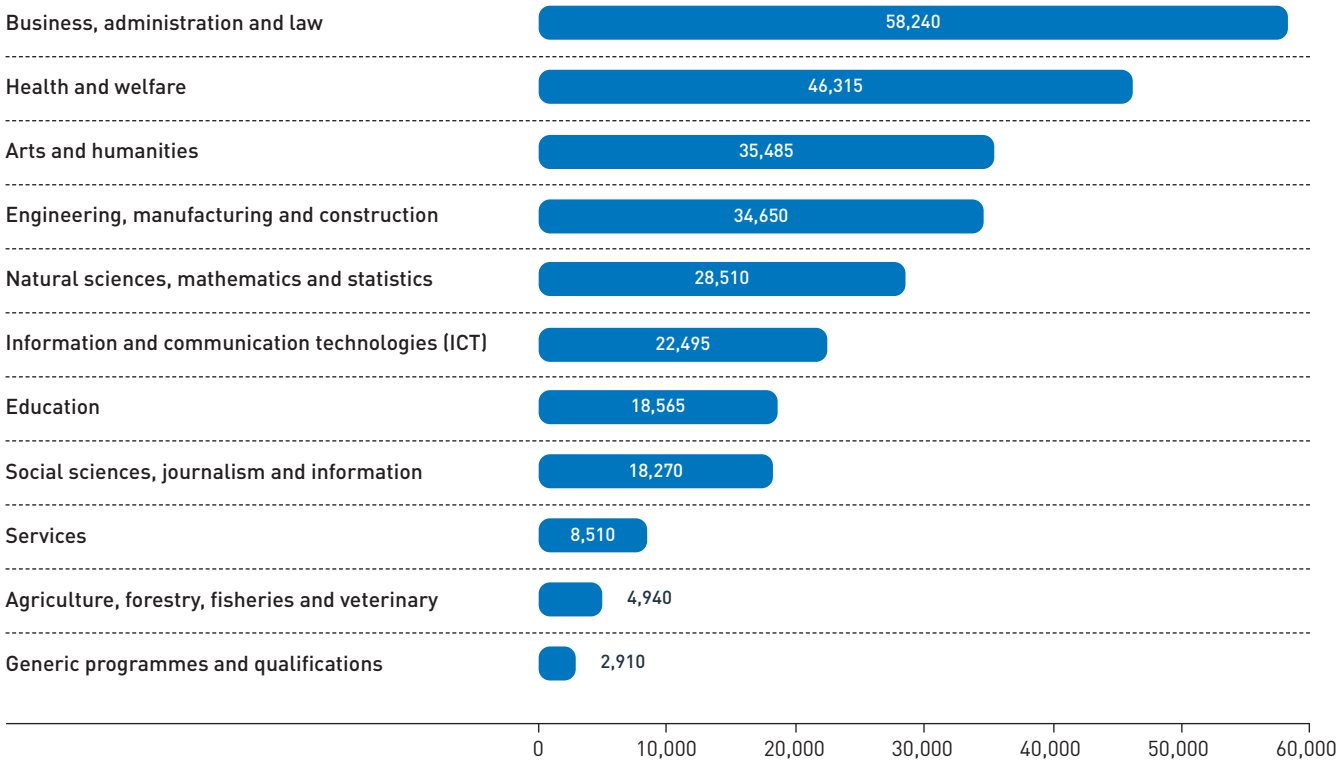


Figure 37 HEA: most common broad fields of study[10]

4.4 Perceptions of Careers in Surveying

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) collects data annually on the areas students are studying across all post-Leaving Certificate programmes including undergraduate and postgraduate. The latest data pertains to the academic year 2024-2025 wherein a total of 278,890 students are registered across all programmes, 12% of whom are studying engineering, manufacturing and construction (see **Figure 37**), and 74% of these are male.

Respondents to this survey were provided with a number of engineering, construction and built environment professions (with brief descriptions) and were asked to confirm whether they had considered a career within each (see **Figure 38**).

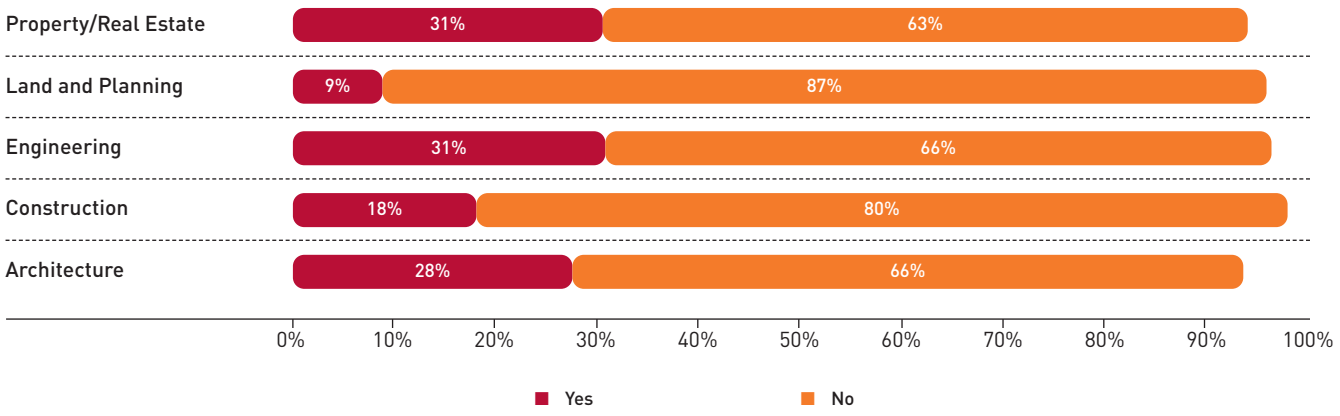


Figure 38 Engineering, construction and built environment career considered

10 HEA (2026), Ireland's publicly-funded Higher Education Institutions, Available online at: https://hea.ie/statistics/data-for-download-and-visualisations/key-facts-figures-report/

Apart from land and planning, the findings demonstrate a higher than national average proportion of students in this study would consider careers in the professions presented, highlighting an opportunity to potentially expand recruitment within the professions.

Gender differences in career consideration are largely negligible, indicating the broad appeal of the professions presented. An exception is evident for engineering, where male interest increases to 44% (compared with 31% in the overall sample) which broadly aligns with established national norms.

Furthermore, the proportion of respondents from boys-only schools that may consider a career in property increases from the overall sample (31%) to 44%, while those attending mixed schools are less likely to consider a career in property (21%). The variation of school type suggests that context and environment may influence choice of property-related career and warrants deeper investigation with a larger sample.

To garner further insight into surveying professions specifically, a list of surveying practice areas together with a brief description was provided to respondents from which they confirmed their extent of familiarity.

The data indicates a limited prior knowledge of surveying, with only a small proportion of respondents confirming they knew a lot about any of the pathways (**Figure 39**).

The findings demonstrate a higher than national average proportion of students in this study would consider careers in the professions presented, highlighting an opportunity to potentially expand recruitment within the professions.

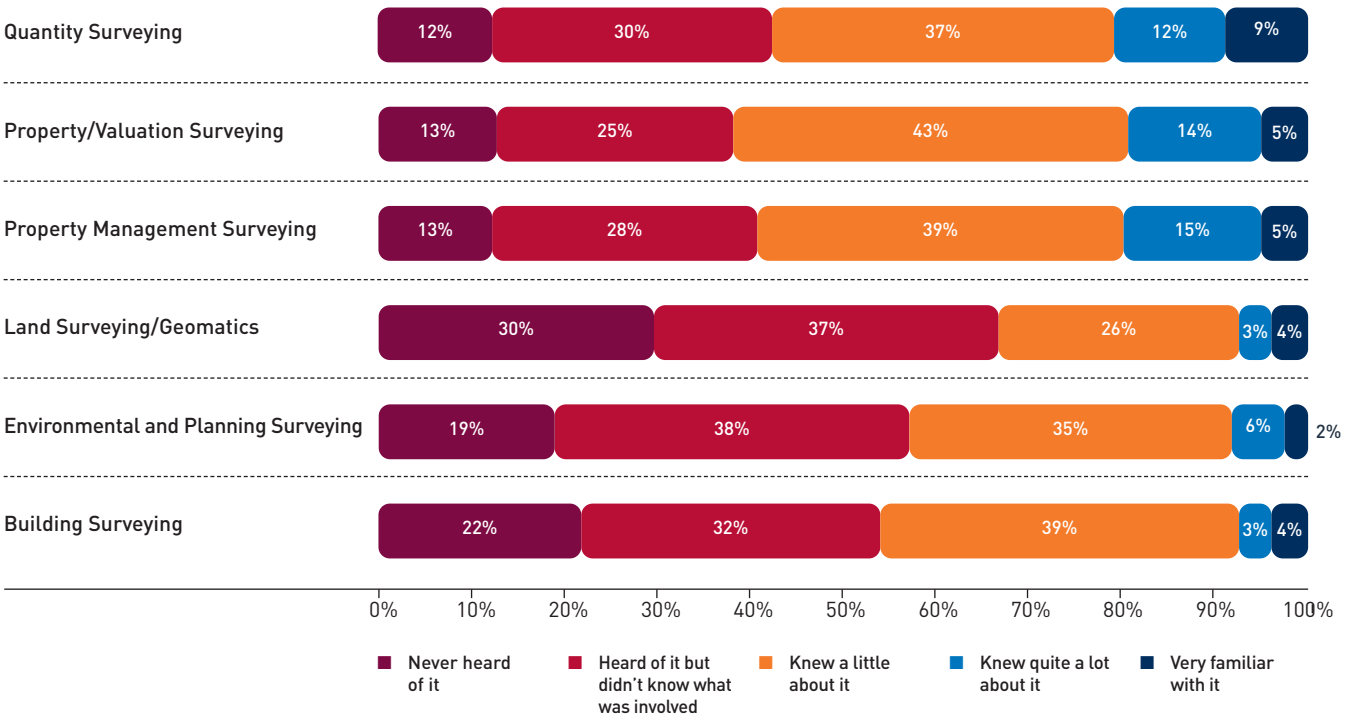


Figure 39 Student: familiarity with surveying practice areas

Evidently considerable scope exists to bring a greater degree of awareness across the full range of surveying disciplines going forward. A positive observation is that in most instances only a small minority of respondents had no awareness of the surveying profession at all.

Unsurprisingly, respondents reporting low levels of familiarity with a surveying pathway are less likely to consider a career in that field. As familiarity increases, there is a corresponding increase in the propensity to consider a career in surveying.

In the case of Quantity Surveying and Property Surveying specifically, the proportion likely or very likely to consider these pathways is in line with national norms (16% and 15%, respectively).

An extensive body of work has been undertaken by way of outreach to secondary students to promote the surveying profession. This research provides a deeper understanding of drivers and influences of career choice that can be used to more closely align promotional efforts with student priorities going forward.

4.5 Conclusion

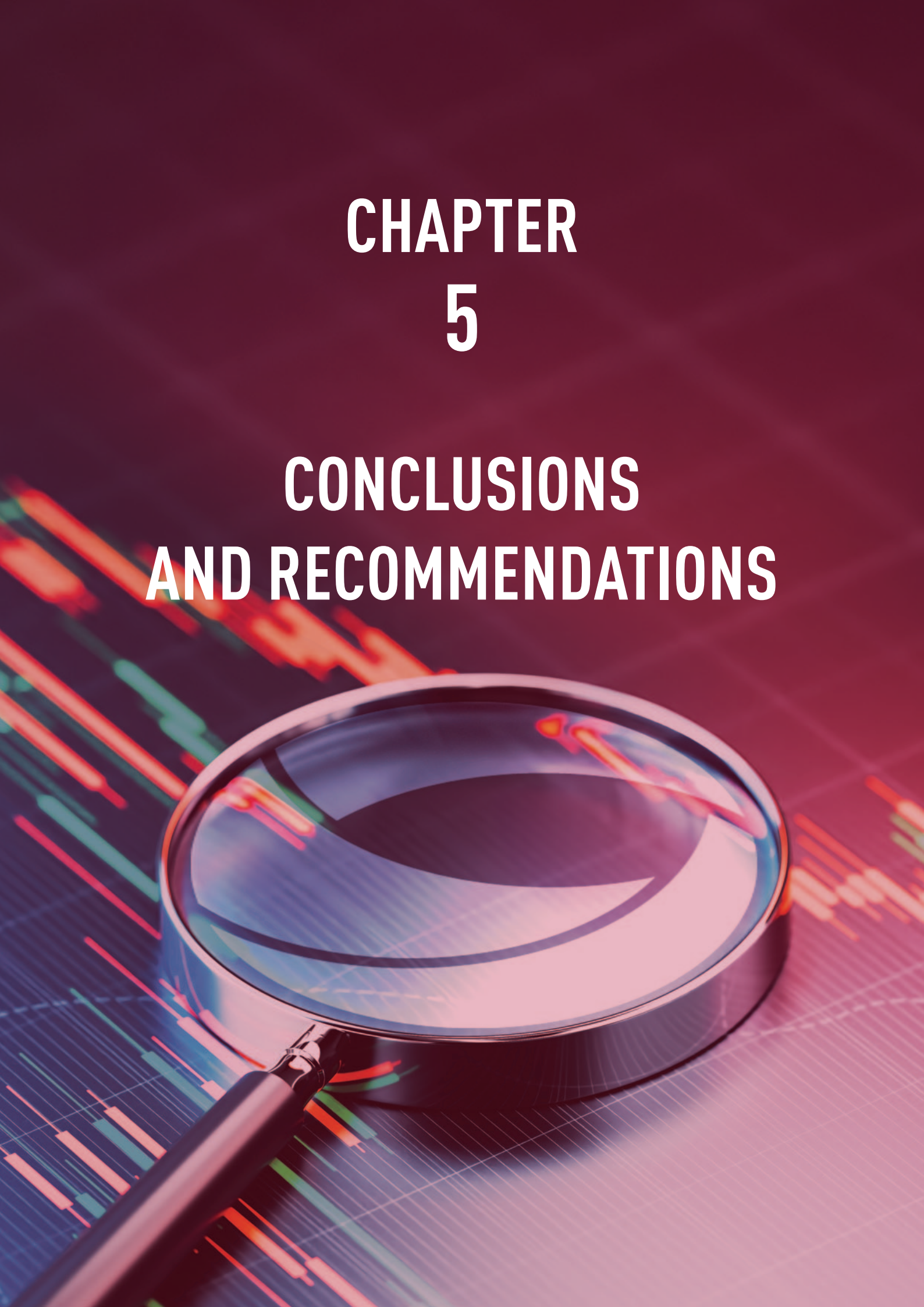
The inclusion of students in the research is a new departure from previous reports in the series but provides hugely informative insight as to the factors influencing student choice upon completion of second-level education.

Evidence suggests that students are making informed career choices based on career prospects, interest in a subject area, and salary potential, and while parents are the most notable influencer in this regard, this was confirmed by fewer than half of participants.

Findings from this research indicate that contextual factors may play an important role in shaping decision-making amongst students. This warrants deeper investigation to inform the development of target strategies aimed at encouraging more diverse new entrants into the profession.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

The primary purpose of the research is to project future demand and supply of qualified surveying professionals across the three main surveying pathways, namely construction, land and property. This was achieved through an online survey of a key informant from each member practice.

Three scenarios of economic growth as measured by GNI* were presented to participants, who were asked to estimate the number of additional surveyors likely to be required at each level of experience over the period 2026-2029.

The data obtained was grossed up by a multiplier determined by response rates to represent the overall population and compared to the total number of additional surveying professionals entering the workforce, estimated on current enrolment on surveying programmes nationwide.

In response to recommendations made to tackle skills shortages in previous reports, targeted capacity-building measures have been implemented, including the provision of additional surveying programmes with varying pathways to completion (e.g., part-time, apprenticeship and conversion). Consequently, the number of students enrolled on surveying programmes has increased significantly since the first report in the series was published in 2014 and now stands at **2,382**.

At the median of 2.5% GNI* annual growth, a shortage of over **2,200** surveying professionals is projected, which could increase to over 3,000 in an optimistic scenario, demonstrating ongoing strong demand across the profession. The demand for a skilled workforce is driven by activity across all built environment sectors, particularly productive infrastructure and residential.

Evidence from the research indicates that the surveying skills shortage is particularly pronounced at the level of 6+ years' experience, reflecting legacy skills gaps stemming from the 2008-2013 economic downturn. Targeted workforce development is critical to building human capital at this level to enable the effective transition of existing staff into senior and leadership roles.

The research clearly demonstrates strong demand for graduate surveyors, and as higher-level positions are filled through promotion, it will in turn drive additional demand for qualified surveyors at lower levels.

There was widespread agreement that the foremost skill requirements across all surveying pathways are transversal skills such as communication, interpersonal, leadership and critical thinking. Respondents identified the need to prioritise the development of transversal skills, particularly for students whose learning experience through Covid may have limited in-person interaction. Increased time spent in an office-based

setting for peer-to-peer interaction and knowledge absorption is considered crucial, with further emphasis on transversal skill development during third-level education suggested.

Targeted workforce development is critical to building human capital at this level to enable the effective transition of existing staff into senior and leadership roles.

Rapid technological change is reshaping professional practice, increasing the value placed on data-driven surveying, BIM-enabled workflows, and drone and sensor-based measurement; therefore, digital and analytical skills are essential to the future of the profession. Some senior participants acknowledge their need to upskill in this area, whilst indicating that early-career surveyors may have a higher level of digital proficiency, thereby adding value upon recruitment. Differing levels of digital proficiency across career stages reflects the variation in experience and exposure to emerging technologies, highlighting the need for tailored professional development.

For the first time in this series of *Employment Opportunities and Future Skills Needs* reports, perspectives of both Career Guidance Counsellors (CGCs) and Senior Cycle secondary students were gathered to ascertain their level of knowledge and familiarity with surveying professions. CGCs confirm a moderate level of awareness of the profession; however, they identified the need for additional support and resources to ensure availability of clear, accessible information and promotional assets (including digital assets), to strengthen the career advice they provide to students relating to the profession.

Student participants in this research were less familiar with surveying professions, indicating the need to augment visibility and existing outreach activities to school-goers to encourage more people to consider a career in surveying. Strengthening industry engagement is noted as important in this regard.

Participants demonstrate a considered, informed and planned approach to their career decision-making process, with the majority indicating their intention to progress to third-level education upon completion of the Leaving Certificate examination. Career prospects, personal interest in an area, and salary potential are the leading factors shaping their choice, with parental or friend-group influence less significant. An understanding of these factors is essential to the development of targeted capacity-building initiatives.

Addressing the persistent surveying skills shortage requires a co-ordinated, sector-wide approach, with ongoing alignment and collaboration between education providers (second and third level), industry and the SCSI.

5.2 Recommendations

A substantial body of work has been undertaken to address the recommendations of previous research reports in the series, including extensive school outreach, CGC conference engagement, strengthened liaison with HEIs, targeted promotion and awareness-raising, and the expansion of programme supply through the development of new academic programmes and pathways to surveying education.

The recommendations to follow, informed by the findings of this multi-stakeholder research, aim to further strengthen and build upon existing momentum to address the ongoing skills shortage across the profession.

5.2.1 Promotion of Surveying Profession

A key outcome from the research is the urgent need to intensify targeted promotional activity to generate greater awareness of the surveying profession. A range of recommendations to do so include:

a) SCSI and member practices collaboratively develop a compelling nationwide communication strategy that positions surveying as a future-focused and purposeful profession. Emphasising:
   - career spanning multiple discipline areas across multiple sectors, and international mobility;
   - employment opportunities across three pathways and multiple practice areas to suit a variety of skillsets and interests;
   - tangible impact in delivering housing, infrastructure and climate-resilient solutions for sustainable communities; and,
   - competitive salary potential.

b) Expand digital media presence:
   - invest in a targeted social media campaign aimed at second-level students, parents and teachers to generate awareness and appeal of the career opportunities across the surveying profession; and,

- produce short-form, bite-sized video content for platforms commonly used by students/younger generation.

c) Utilise immersive technology to further engage second-level students:
   - use Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) to provide an immersive experience to showcase real-world surveying applications. This also reinforces the critical role of digital/technology for the profession.

d) Enhance peer-to-peer exposure:
   - establish a *"Peer Ambassadors"* programme to connect third-level surveying students with secondary school students to bridge the information gap and demystify the surveying profession.

5.2.2 Employers/SCSI Member Firms

Employers face the challenge of staff shortages at various levels of experience; therefore, recommendations are targeted accordingly.

a) Strengthen outreach and engagement with second-level schools to increase visibility of the profession to encourage more people to consider a career in surveying. This includes:
   - increase engagement with second-level students through career talks, facilitation of site visits (where possible), workshops and the collaborative development of promotional assets as outlined in 5.2.1; and,
   - collaborate with HEIs in the development of a surveying-based student competition at a local, regional or national level to provide an applied learning experience for second-level students.

b) Support talent development of third-level surveying students to further strengthen transversal and digital skills:
   - expand provision of work placement and graduate programmes for those enrolled on surveying programmes; and,
   - strengthen collaboration with education providers to support applied learning and authentic assessment to develop the technical and transversal skills required.

c) Develop a strategic talent retention and development strategy for employees and accelerate the development of surveyors to address the mid-level workforce shortage:
   - targeted CPD aligned to organisational requirements through flexible and modular learning in response to organisational and sectoral changes. This can be achieved through collaboration with HEIs (see 5.2.4);
   - support mentoring and knowledge transfer between early and mid-career professionals and senior practitioners; and,
   - invest in retraining professionals from other disciplines transitioning into the surveying profession.

d) Increase public visibility of the profession:
   - strengthen participation in national discussion and media relating to critical issues (e.g., housing, infrastructure, climate).

5.2.3 SCSI

The SCSI must lead a co-ordinated, national approach to awareness, advocacy and professional development. Several recommendations are made in this regard.

a) Lead a national awareness and promotional campaign:
   - lead a co-ordinated campaign with support from Regional Committees, and members to promote career opportunities in the profession nationally; and,
   - develop and share relatable career insights to promote surveying pathways using real-world case examples and, where possible, immersive technology.

b) Co-ordinate the development of centrally administered Transition Year (TY) Work Placement and Surveyors Week programmes to ensure a consistent experience nationwide:
   - collaborate with member practices to establish a centralised TY work placement register through which TY students could apply for opportunities listed; and,
   - collaborate with HEIs nationwide in the development of a structured five-day programme to provide TY participants with exposure to all surveying practice areas, which also provides an experience of college life first-hand.

c) Addressing an ageing surveying workforce alongside a missing middle:
   - develop a suite of CPD offerings to accelerate talent development to address the shortage of experienced professionals. This could involve accredited flexible learning in areas such as leadership, communication and project management skills; and,

- campaign to target mid-career recruitment from outside the built environment that may be working in adjacent sectors, e.g., finance, accounting, management consultancy, or legal.

d) Workforce data analytics:
- develop and maintain on an ongoing basis metrics of first destination data on surveying graduates to ensure promotion of the profession is evidence-based; and,
- extend employment or skills-related research to incorporate insight from surveying professionals at *all* levels of experience to obtain a wider perspective of skills requirements.

e) Collaborate with the Institution of Guidance Counsellors (IGC):
- collaborate with the IGC in determining and developing specific support requirements to upskill CGCs in relation to the surveying profession; and,
- expand research nationwide in collaboration with the IGC, to provide deeper insight into challenges and opportunities for CGCs in relation to surveying career guidance.

f) Leverage international networks:
- further collaborate with the RICS to advocate the truly international nature of a career in surveying, with global recognition and opportunity.

g) Establish pathway ambassadors:
- encourage members from each pathway to liaise with schools, third-level education providers and industry colleagues to promote the profession, with outreach activities and advocacy encouraged as part of CPD requirements.

5.2.4 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

Accredited surveying programmes are available at eight HEIs nationwide, and as such they are an important stakeholder in surveying talent development. HEIs have been responsive to previously identified skills shortage through the expansion of programme offerings; however, several additional recommendations include:

a) Expand programme availability and regional access to high-demand practice areas whereby the shortage identified is particularly pronounced:
- at least one additional Building Surveying programme is urgently required to significantly enhance geographical accessibility;
- an additional property surveying programme, potentially at level 9, targeted at entrants transitioning from other sectors, is also recommended to address the shortage projected;
- in light of the evidence provided within this research, consideration should be given to the reactivation of the previously paused Geospatial Surveying programme. Any recommencement of the programme needs to be coupled with a targeted awareness campaign; and,
- develop flexible, accredited part-time, and micro-credential programmes to rapidly upskill or reskill surveyors in specific areas of industry demand (e.g., transversal, leadership development, technological, AI).

b) Review curriculum content on an ongoing basis:
- review existing curriculum to ensure it meets the technological needs of surveyors of the future (e.g., data analytics, AI/VR, BIM, drone technology).

c) Strengthen industry collaboration:
- embed work placements into third-level programmes where they do not already exist to ensure learners gain real-world experience;
- develop enterprise-led projects for assessment, e.g., enterprise challenge for real world authentic assessment; and,
- expand guest lecture provision and consider potential for open access (online) industry-based lectures nationwide for the benefit of surveying students nationwide.

d) Deepen collaboration between HEIs nationwide involved in surveying education:
- collaborative curriculum design and open access surveying education resource provision;
- develop student-centred activities to foster peer-to-peer learning and insight from another jurisdiction. This could be achieved through nationwide site visits, student exchange, competitions or joint research supervision; and,
- actively seek consortium-based research grant funding for the development of both promotional and learning materials for surveying education.

e) Advance research and data insights:
- undertake research on surveying graduates at a national level to inform promotional activities and support evidence-based workforce planning.

5.2.5 Career Guidance:

CGCs interact with second-level students daily and have identified a need for support to enhance the support and advice they provide for students. The recommendations presented are positioned to support CGCs, rather than recommendations for CGCs, and include:

a) Enhanced and accessible resources for CGCs:
- develop comprehensive user-friendly information resources that clearly map surveying career pathways, entry requirements and career progression routes supported by interactive and immersive technologies such as AR/VR.

b) Continuous Professional Development for CGCs:
- SCSI and IGC collaborate in the development and provision of short, flexible training programmes focused on the surveying profession for CGCs (as per 5.2.3e).

c) Expand experiential learning opportunities to provide students with exposure to real-world practice to develop a practical understanding of the profession and support informed career choice:
- expand work placement opportunities to enable students can gain first-hand experience and insight into the surveying profession (linked to 5.2.3 b);
- collaborate with relevant stakeholders in the development of a nationwide problem-based student competition, enabling students to apply a range of skills in a real-world built environment context; and,
- encourage students to engage in TY surveying week.

5.2.6 Diversity

A diverse and representative surveying workforce depends on the action taken by all stakeholders to encourage diversity at all stages of the profession. Several recommendations are made to address this issue, including:

a) Targeted outreach to under-represented groups, including for example DEIS schools, and consider the feasibility of industry-sponsored scholarships where possible.

b) Embed diversity and inclusion within education and training programmes.

c) Stakeholders such as HEIs, industry and the SCSI collect, monitor and report on diversity data on an ongoing basis.

5.2.7 Monitoring and Evaluation

To ensure the recommendations are implemented effectively and evolve with a changing profession, they should be supported by the development of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in a manner that might track engagement outcomes, student recruitment and regional participation.

About the Author

Dr Róisín Murphy is a Senior Lecturer and researcher in the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Apprenticeship at Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin).

Having completed a joint honours degree in Economics and History from UCD, she obtained a PG Diploma and Master of Business Studies (MBS) from UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School, and an MSc Strategic Focus from Edinburgh Business School, Heriot-Watt University. She was awarded her Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) with research focusing on "Strategic Planning in Irish Quantity Surveying Practices", awarded by Edinburgh Business School, Heriot-Watt University.

Róisín is the lead author of numerous internationally peer-reviewed research publications, and several industry reports, particularly relating to labour market analysis.

She is the lead author of the *Employment Opportunities and Future Skills Requirements for Surveying Professionals* report series (2014, 2018 and 2023) in addition to the *Sustainable Development in the Surveying Profession* (2022) undertaken on behalf of the Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland.

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Many thanks also to Mr Stephen Walsh for technical advice and peer review of the report.

Appendix 1 Surveying Pathways

Construction

- Building Control
- Building Surveying
- Project Management
- Quantity Surveying and Construction
- Taxation Allowance

Land

- Environmental
- Geomatics
- Minerals and Waste Management
- Planning and Development
- Rural

Property

- Arts and Antiques
- Commercial
- Facilities Management
- Management Consultancy
- Property Finance and Investment
- Property Management
- Residential Property Practice
- Valuation

Appendix 2 SCSI-Accredited Programme Providers

Atlantic Technological University (ATU) Galway
ATU Letterkenny
ATU Sligo
Dundalk Institute of Technology
Maynooth University
Munster Technological University (MTU)
South East Technological University (SETU) Carlow
SETU Waterford
University of Galway
Technological University (TU) Dublin
Technological University of the Shannon (TUS) Athlone
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