

# Irish University Sector Perspectives

International Summer  
Leadership Academy,  
UCD

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# About IUA

- Representative body for Ireland's seven universities
- Point of contact between the Irish public and private sector administration and the universities
- Policy development and shared services
- Private company, owned by universities
- 16 employees

# The Irish higher education system

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- ❑ 7 universities: 125,000 students
- ❑ 14 institutes of technology: 90,000 students
- ❑ Colleges of education & smaller institutions: 11,000 students
- ❑ Private HE providers
- ❑ ***National Strategy for Higher Education***

# Overview of last 10 years...

- Financial crisis and related funding challenges
- 18% increase in new Bachelor students 2008-2016
- 10% decrease in staff FTEs in same period
- Overall funding / student fell 22% from 2008 – 2015
- Staff/student ratio increased from 1:15,5 to 1:19,5 (this is c. 1:23 in the university sector)
- “More with Less” discourse...
- General focus on efficiency and reform

Level of quality maintained, according to employer satisfaction surveys

# Political/Public expectations

- Higher Education and Research & Innovation as basis for sustainable economic growth and social development
- Improved educational outcomes for traditional and non-traditional populations
- Strong engagement by HE in social and economic renewal, including for new groups of students
- “Enhanced relevance and quality”
- Enhanced collaboration with economic, social and cultural partners
- Enhanced inter-HEI collaboration in R+I and T+L

# Main University Focus Areas

- Excellence in Teaching, Learning and the Student Experience
  - Investment in staff, students and facilities
  - Flexible learning opportunities
  - International classroom and experience
- Building a World Class Research Capacity
  - Increase investment to at least 2.0% of GDP
  - Increase industry engagement in knowledge transfer and innovation



# Main University Focus Areas

- Enhancing Student Access, and Engagement with Communities and Industry
  - Increase student access from most disadvantaged schools and communities
  - Work with communities through engaged learning opportunities, engaged research and student volunteering
  - Deepen linkages with industry partners in both the research and skills development areas

# Main Enabling Measures

- Sustainable Funding model and Investment plan
- Developing the Potential of our Staff and Increasing Equality
  - Professional development for academic and support staff
  - Researcher Career Development and Employment Framework
  - Gender Equality issues
- Flexible and Accountable Structures
  - Revised Code of Governance for Irish Universities
  - Ensure university autonomy in line with the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030



Thank you!

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