



Law Society
of Ireland

Snapshot of the Solicitors' Profession in Ireland **2025**

Introduction

The legal landscape continues to evolve and solicitors are practising in an environment of increasing complexity and uncertainty. However, against this backdrop, the legal profession continues to grow and diversify with demand for legal service and expertise. Additionally, solicitors are playing an integral role in shaping the future of the legal system. Their responsibilities extend beyond providing legal advice and representation; they are also key advocates for reforms that enhance public access to justice.

This report provides valuable insights into the profession today, its shape and future trajectory. It sheds a light on the career pathways of newly qualified solicitors of 2025 and Professional Practice Course (PPC) trainees, as well as the ever-increasing accessibility of the profession itself.

In 2025, the number of practising solicitors continued to grow, with 12,961 registered with the Law Society at year end. This was a 100% increase on the number of practitioners since 2000. Of these practitioners, 27% now work in-house, comprising 2,911 solicitors working in-house in the private sector and 531 solicitors working in-house with State or public bodies. In addition, 781 newly qualified solicitors were added to the Roll of Solicitors, of which 583 came into practice in 2025.

12,961



practising solicitors registered at year end 2025.

A 100% INCREASE ON THE NUMBER OF PRACTITIONERS SINCE 2000

OF THESE, 27% NOW WORK IN-HOUSE

3,442

IN-HOUSE

2,911

PRIVATE SECTOR

531

STATE BODIES



2025 snapshot

12,961

Practising certificates at year end

A 100% increase on the number of practitioners since 2000

25,364

ON THE ROLL OF SOLICITORS
(AS OF 31 DEC 2025)

781

ADMITTED TO THE ROLL OF
SOLICITORS IN 2025

8,827 (68%)

PRACTISING CERTIFICATES
HELD IN DUBLIN

4,134 (32%)

PRACTISING CERTIFICATES
HELD OUTSIDE DUBLIN

3,442

IN-HOUSE SOLICITORS

2,911

PRIVATE SECTOR

531

STATE BODIES

Where were practising solicitors based in 2025?

With 12,961 practising solicitors issued with practising certificates by the Law Society of Ireland at the end of 2025, the profession is growing. The majority of practitioners are in Dublin, followed by urban centres of Cork, Galway and Limerick.

COUNTY	TOTAL
Dublin	8827
Cork	965
Galway	388
Limerick	327
Kildare	201
Kerry	168
Tipperary	155
Donegal	148
Louth	146
Wicklow	138
Antrim	127
Mayo	126
Waterford	125
Meath	122
Clare	120
Westmeath	109
Wexford	106
Kilkenny	93
Sligo	88
Offaly	64
Carlow	54
Cavan	53
Roscommon	53
Monaghan	47
Longford	42
Leitrim	40
Laois	39
Derry	23
Down	19
Tyrone	11
Armagh	5
Fermanagh	3
n/a	28
	12961



8,827

IN DUBLIN

4,134

OUTSIDE DUBLIN

Top 20 employers of practising solicitors

As of 31 December 2025

#	FIRM / ORGANISATION	COUNT
1	A&L Goodbody LLP	399
2	Matheson LLP	370
3	Arthur Cox LLP	344
4	Mason Hayes & Curran LLP	328
5	McCann FitzGerald LLP	289
6	William Fry LLP	220
7	Chief State Solicitor's Office	208
8	Byrne Wallace Shields LLP	205
9	Legal Aid Board	144
10	Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions	128
11	Central Bank of Ireland	117
12	RDJ LLP	115
13	Beauchamps LLP	105
14	Philip Lee LLP	102
15	Maples and Calder (Ireland) LLP	97
16	Allied Irish Banks plc	95
17	Addleshaw Goddard (Ireland) LLP	86
18	Dillon Eustace LLP	84
19	DLA Piper Ireland LLP	79
19	Fieldfisher Ireland LLP	79

Age representation

Age profile

The average age of a solicitor is 45. In 2025, the largest cohort of solicitors (33.2%) were aged between 40–49 years. This compares to 2015, when the largest cohort (38%) were aged between 30–39 years, reflecting the maturing of that generation within the profession.

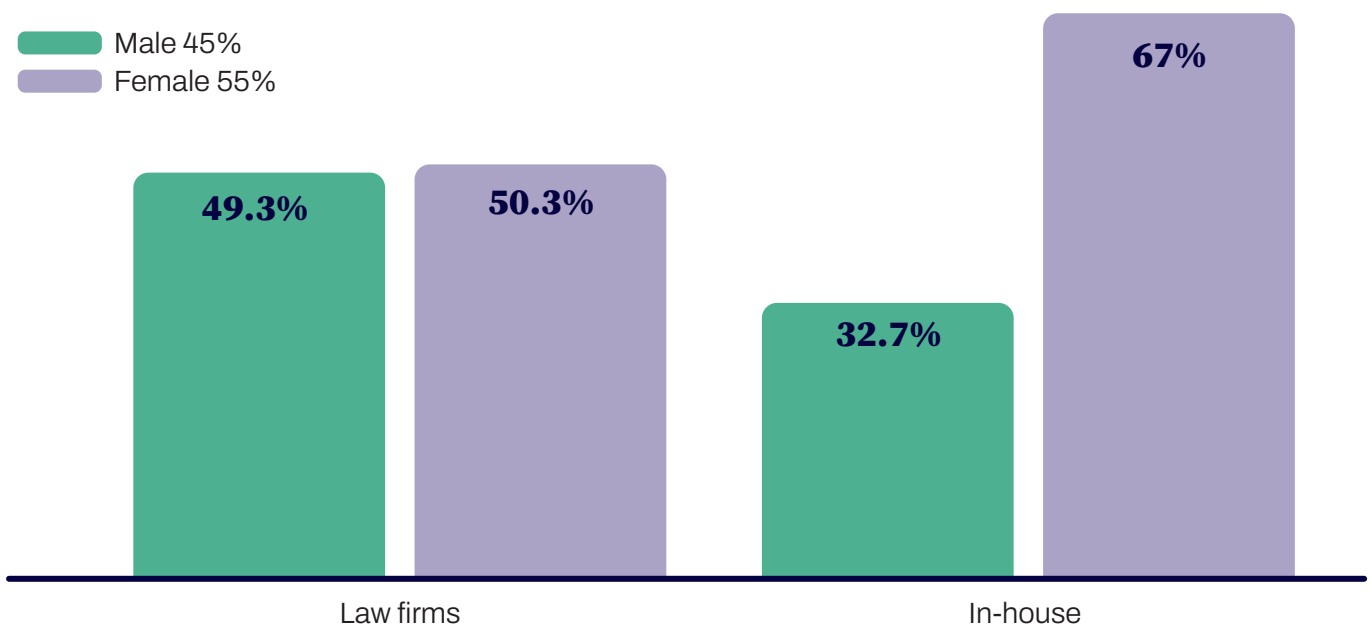
Solicitor Age	2025
20-29	5.80%
30-39	26.00%
40-49	33.20%
50-59	20.30%
60-69	9.90%
70-79	3.60%
80 +	0.50%
N/A	0.60%

Decade of birth	No of practising solicitors	% of practising solicitors
2000s & 1990s	2,733	21%
1980s	4,123	32%
1970s	3,391	26%
1960s	1,657	13%
1950s	815	6%
1940s & 1930s	159	1%
N/A	83	1%

Gender composition in different firm types

Breakdown across whole of profession:

Male 45%
Female 55%



Routes to the profession

At 581, the intake of trainee solicitors in 2025 represented a 17-year high. Almost one in five (18%) new solicitor trainees opted for the part-time Professional Practice Course (PPC) Hybrid route, indicating real uptake from those who needed greater flexibility.

In order to better meet public demand and ensure the representativeness of the general public in the profession, the Law Society consistently supports a variety of learning models, offering part-time and remote routes into law. We are currently examining a solicitor apprenticeship model as a new route to qualification for school leavers. This should help address the shortage of solicitors in regional areas. By offering apprenticeship opportunities, we hope to continue to lower entry barriers, particularly for students who might not have access to the traditional academic pathways into law.

Commencing in December 2026, the Modular PPC will be introduced to allow trainees to complete their training over a longer timeframe in a manner that best suits their own individual needs. This will be a new form of the PPC and will run alongside the full-time PPC and the PPC Hybrid. For those undertaking the Modular PPC, the training will be divided into three standalone modules, with examinations occurring at the end of each module.



581

trainees commenced the Professional Practice Course (PPC) in 2025

THE HIGHEST INTAKE IN **17 YEARS**

476

FULL-TIME PPC
September 2025

105

PPC HYBRID
December 2025

Almost one in five (18%) new trainees chose the flexible hybrid route

Entry into the profession

THE FINAL EXAMINATION — FIRST PART (FE-1)

The path to qualification begins with the FE-1 entrance examination. This consists of eight papers on core legal subjects: Company Law, Constitutional Law, Law of Contract, Criminal Law, European Union Law, Equity, Law of Property, and Law of Tort. The exam ensures that trainee solicitors commencing their practical training do so with a consistent standard of knowledge across these eight subjects.

566

UNDER ACCELERATED
ACCESS SCHEME

2

EXAMINATION SITTINGS
(MARCH & OCTOBER)

EXAMINATION SITTING	NO OF CANDIDATES
March 2025	1,997
October 2025	2,460

MARCH 2025 — EXAM RESULTS

MARCH 2025								
	Company Law	Constitutional Law	Law of Contract	Criminal Law	Law of the EU	Equity	Property Law	Law of Torts
Attended	541	437	579	569	487	583	627	508
Passed	324	357	321	384	395	398	342	365
% Passed	60%	82%	55%	67%	81%	68%	55%	72%

OCTOBER 2025 — EXAM RESULTS

OCTOBER 2025								
	Company Law	Constitutional Law	Law of Contract	Criminal Law	Law of the EU	Equity	Property Law	Law of Torts
Attended	725	530	788	730	738	697	776	586
Passed	474	363	408	513	599	462	437	444
% Passed	65%	68%	52%	70%	81%	66%	58%	76%

Entry into the profession

UNDERGRADUATES SITTING THE FE-1s

A total of 566 undergraduate students sat Final Examination – First Part (FE-1s) in 2025 under the ‘accelerated access’ scheme. Introduced in 2020, this enables future solicitors to take the FE-1s earlier in their studies. They can sit fewer exams at their first attempt and have an extended timeframe to complete all eight core subjects. The introduction of this more flexible pathway to qualification reduces barriers and improves access to the profession for trainees from diverse educational, professional and socio-economic backgrounds.

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMME	NO OF CANDIDATES
Bachelor of Civil Law	228
Bachelor of Law	186
Bachelor of Arts	107
Bachelor of Business and Law	25
Bachelor of Science	11
Bachelor of Business Studies	6
Bachelor of Social Science	3
Total	566

* The undergraduate data relates only to candidates who currently have the status of undergraduate and does not include those who started sitting the FE-1s as undergraduates but subsequently provided the Law Society with evidence of graduation.

Trainee solicitors

THE PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE COURSE (PPC)

The Law Society offers a structured training programme for aspiring solicitors – the Professional Practice Course (PPC). This includes mentorship and formal training with comprehensive support throughout the training period. There is a full-time in-person course and a part-time hybrid course.

Who are the class of 2025?

581 PPC trainee solicitors

	FULL-TIME PPC 476 trainees	PPC HYBRID 105 trainees																				
GENDER	<p>299 FEMALE</p> <p>177 MALE</p>	<p>77 FEMALE</p> <p>28 MALE</p>																				
AGE	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Age Group</th><th>Count</th></tr> <tr><td>18-25</td><td>310</td></tr> <tr><td>26-30</td><td>98</td></tr> <tr><td>31-39</td><td>48</td></tr> <tr><td>40+</td><td>20</td></tr> </table>	Age Group	Count	18-25	310	26-30	98	31-39	48	40+	20	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Age Group</th><th>Count</th></tr> <tr><td>18-25</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr><td>26-30</td><td>26</td></tr> <tr><td>31-39</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr><td>40+</td><td>19</td></tr> </table>	Age Group	Count	18-25	30	26-30	26	31-39	30	40+	19
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DEGREE	<p>476</p> <p>416 HOLD A LAW DEGREE</p>	<p>105</p> <p>77 HOLD A LAW DEGREE</p>																				

Trainee locations

The PPC course requires candidates to secure a training contract with an eligible solicitor. The table below highlights where trainee solicitors held contracts in 2025. Three counties had no trainees.

Where were trainee solicitors based in 2025?

581 TRAINEE CONTRACTS
26 COUNTIES

479

IN DUBLIN

102

OUTSIDE DUBLIN



Employers and Workplaces

Of the 581 trainee solicitors, 557 hold contracts in law firms, 12 in-house and 12 in State bodies. The two largest firms taking on PPC Hybrid trainee solicitors are Ennis & Associates, Dublin (three trainee solicitors) and O'Flynn Exhams, Cork (three trainee solicitors).

The top 20 law firms by highest PPC trainee intake in 2025

Of the 581 trainees:
557 have their
 contracts in law firms
24 in-house

FIRM NAME	2024 TRAINEE INTAKE	2025 TRAINEE INTAKE
Arthur Cox LLP	45	63
Matheson LLP	47	56
McCann FitzGerald LLP	46	47
A&L Goodbody LLP	41	40
William Fry LLP	24	35
Eversheds Sutherland Ireland	19	19
Mason Hayes & Curran LLP	20	16
RDJ LLP	13	14
Byrne Wallace Shields LLP	16	12
Maples & Calder LLP	9	12
Dillon Eustace LLP	7	8
Philip Lee LLP	3	8
Addleshaw Goddard (Ireland) LLP	7	7
DLA Piper LLP	9	7
Fieldfisher LLP	5	6
Kennedys Solicitors LLP	5	6
Beauchamps LLP	6	5
Comyn Kelleher Tobin LLP	1	5
Chief State Solicitor's Office	5	5
Hayes Solicitors LLP	9	5



Newly qualified solicitors in 2025

Newly qualified solicitors in 2025

583 were admitted to the Roll of Solicitors and came into practice



Female 64%
Male 35%
Not classified 1%



Under 30 70%
Over 30 30%



WHERE THEY WORK



556 law firms 24 in-house private 3 public

Flexible routes into the solicitors' profession

PPC HYBRID

The Law Society has been innovative in providing alternative routes into the profession. The introduction of the PPC Hybrid model – a flexible, part-time Professional Practice Course – has been one of the most notable initiatives in this regard. The most recent iteration of PPC Hybrid course launched in December 2025 with 105 trainees. This route allows trainees to work while completing their studies, reducing financial burdens and increasing access for those with family or other commitments. This innovative approach is particularly relevant for mature students or those from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, helping to diversify the profession and ensure that a wider range of prospective clients are represented in the legal system.

Almost one in five (18%) new solicitor trainees opted for the part-time PPC Hybrid route in 2025 – indicating real uptake from those who need greater flexibility.

Impact in 2025

- Almost one in five (18%) new solicitor trainees opted for the part-time PPC Hybrid route.
- 105 trainees started in December 2025, with 60% training outside Dublin.
- Hybrid trainees are older: over a third are 30 years of age or above.
- Risk of relocation or loss of income is reduced through remote and flexible delivery.
- From 2026, a new modular PPC will be available over an extended timeframe.

PROFESSIONAL SOLICITOR APPRENTICESHIP PATHWAY

The Law Society is currently examining a solicitor apprenticeship model as a new route to qualification for school leavers and law clerks/legal executives. New *Professional Solicitor Apprenticeship Regulations* are being drafted, requiring approval ultimately by the Minister for Justice.

Anticipated impact

- Apprenticeships will open the profession to people who do not follow the traditional university route.
- A broader uptake of apprenticeships could help regional legal services supply by enabling trainees to remain in their communities during training.
- There will be reduced financial barriers for those for whom full-time study is not viable.

ADDITIONAL ACCESS INITIATIVES

Access Scholarship Programme

Since 2001, the Access Scholarship has reduced socio-economic barriers by providing financial and practical assistance from FE-1 exams through to qualification. There are currently 212 individuals participating in the Access Scholarship Programme.

Small Practice Traineeship Grant

This grant supports small and rural practices to provide training opportunities and contracts for trainee solicitors, strengthening the regional solicitor pipeline and sustaining community-based legal services. There have been 32 recipients of this grant since it was introduced in 2020.

School Outreach Programme

The Law Society's long-standing engagement with schools introduces the variety of legal careers to school students. With a particular focus on students from underrepresented backgrounds, the programme aims to expand awareness and interest among those who may not typically consider a career as a solicitor. Thousands of young people participate in Law Society legal education programmes each year.

25 

years of the Law Society Access Scholarship Programme

Since 2001, it has reduced socio-economic barriers by providing financial and practical assistance.

212 INDIVIDUALS CURRENTLY PARTICIPATING



**Law Society
of Ireland**

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