

No return is made giving the number of pupils commencing a post-primary course who in the previous year gained a proficiency certificate as pupils in a public school. It will be observed, however, that the great majority of pupils who enter post-primary schools do so from public schools.

To arrive at some approximate estimate as to the extent to which the gaining of a proficiency certificate influences the question as to whether a post-primary course is to be followed or not, the following figures have been grouped as a basis for comparison.

It will be observed that the number of pupils who commence a post-primary course expressed as a percentage of the pupils who pass for a proficiency certificate in a previous year is variable, the factors contributing to this variation no doubt being the availability of suitable avenues of employment for boys, especially on completion of their primary-school course.

Year of commencing post-primary course ..	1930.	1931.	1932.	1933.	1934.
Number of proficiency passes in previous year in public primary schools and intermediate schools and departments	17,465	17,372	14,128	16,549	16,633
Number of pupils who commenced a post-primary course in State schools and who came from public primary schools or intermediate schools and departments	12,506	12,055	11,019	11,637	12,143
Percentage	72	69	78	70	73

The ages at which pupils commenced their post-primary course are given in the following table:—

TABLE N.—AGES AT WHICH PUPILS COMMENCE POST-PRIMARY COURSE.

	Age at which Post-primary Course commenced.										Total Numbers commencing Post-primary Education.	
	Under 12 Years.		12 Years.		13 Years.		14 Years.		15 Years and over.			
	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.
Secondary ..	48	63	576	739	1,267	1,146	596	482	216	83	2,703	2,513
Combined ..	5	13	67	85	162	156	120	55	58	13	412	322
Technical ..	28	21	395	414	1,035	918	720	472	254	122	2,432	1,947
District high ..	26	28	260	319	532	550	274	211	96	61	1,188	1,169
Totals—1934 ..	107	125	1,298	1,557	2,996	2,770	1,710	1,220	624	279	6,735	5,951
1933 ..	118	130	1,474	1,537	2,610	2,371	1,722	1,161	629	300	6,553	5,499
Difference ..	-11	-5	-176	+20	+386	+399	-12	+59	-5	-21	+182	+452

In 1933 27 per cent. and in 1934 24 per cent. of those commencing a post-primary course did so under the age of thirteen years.