

# UCAS' NEXT CHAPTER

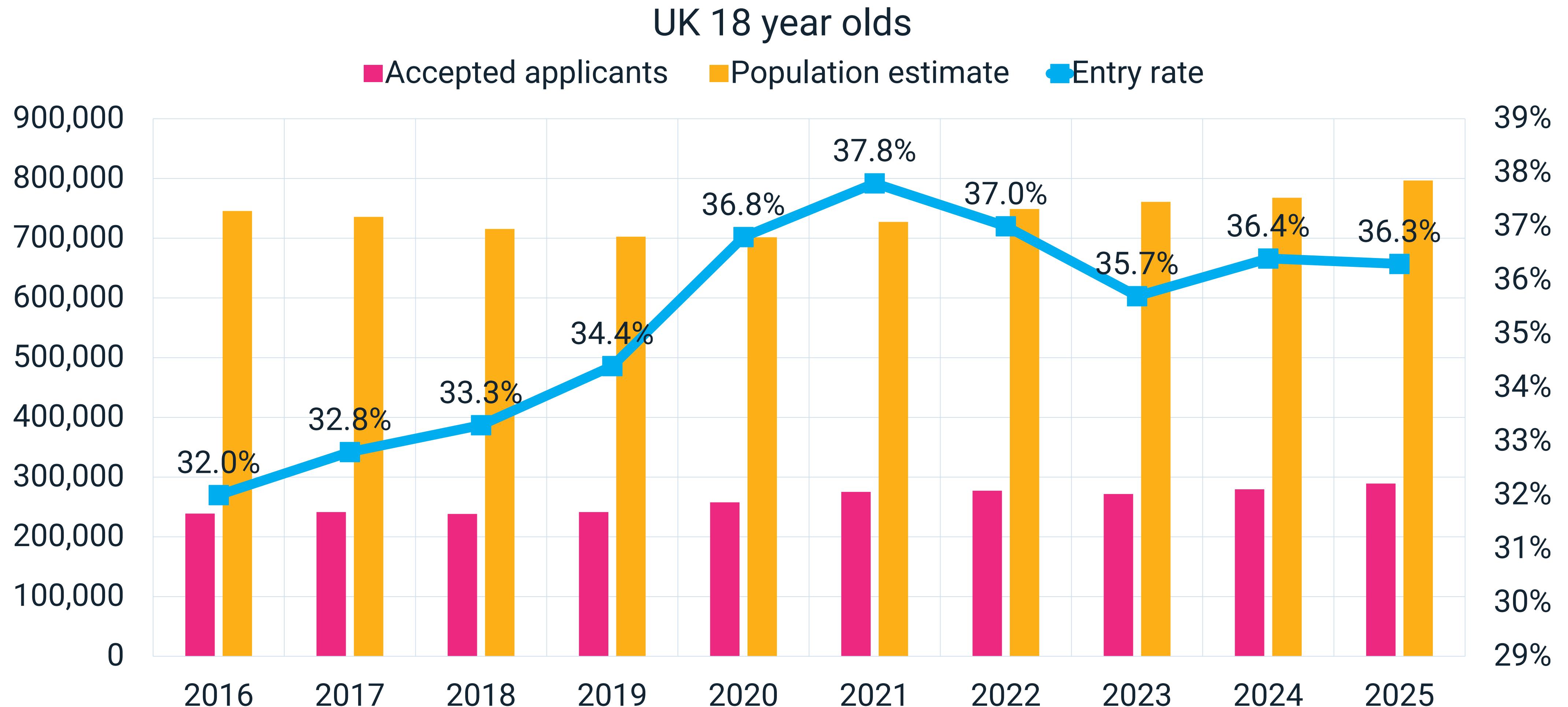
Genia Garrity, Director of IAG

Ben Jordan, Director of Strategy

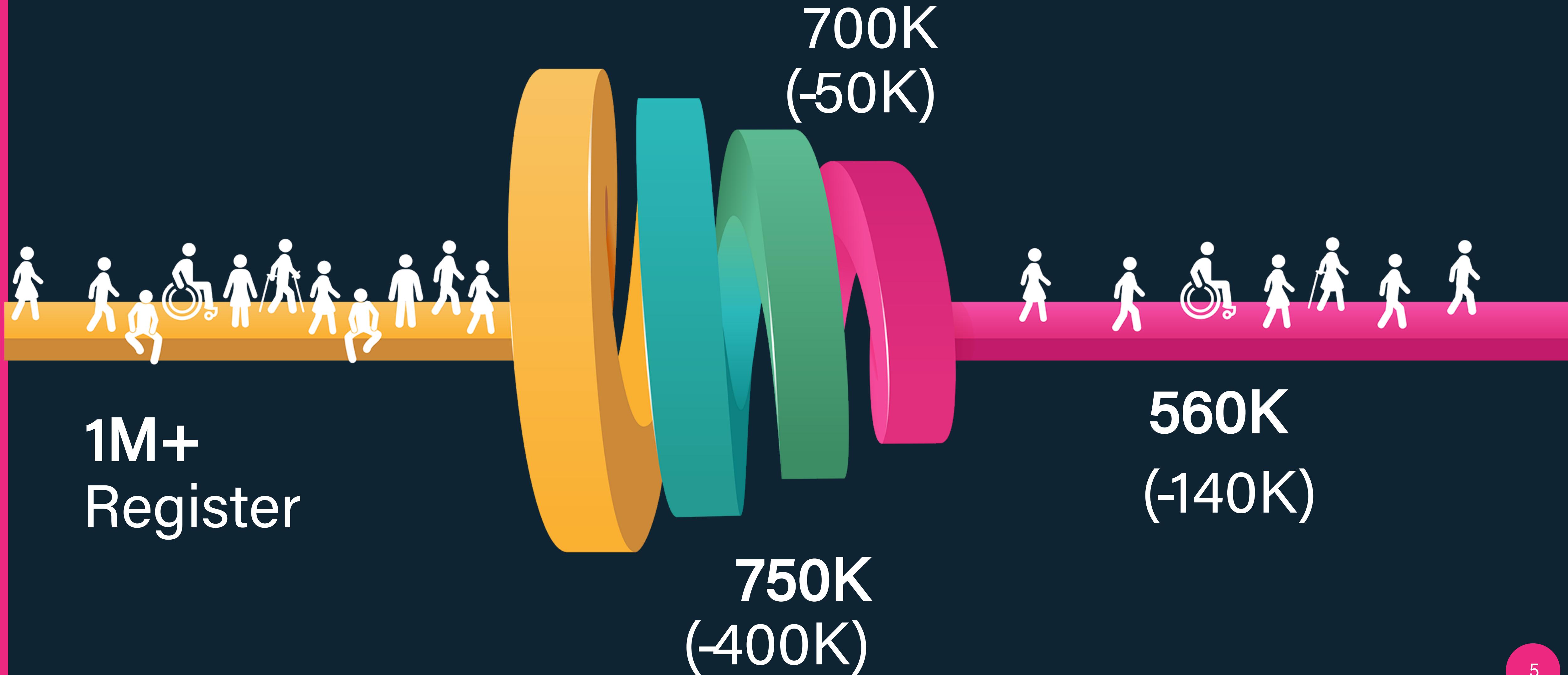


# THE STORY OF 2025

# PROPORTION OF UK 18-YEAR-OLDS ACCEPTED TO HE



# BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS TO HIGHER EDUCATION



# Acceptances at end of cycle 2025



**+2.3%**



**+3.5%**



**-3.3%**



**+6.8%**

**TOTAL**  
577,725

564,940 in 2024

**UK 18 YEAR OLDS**  
289,200

279,550 in 2024

**UK 21 AND OVER**  
106,120

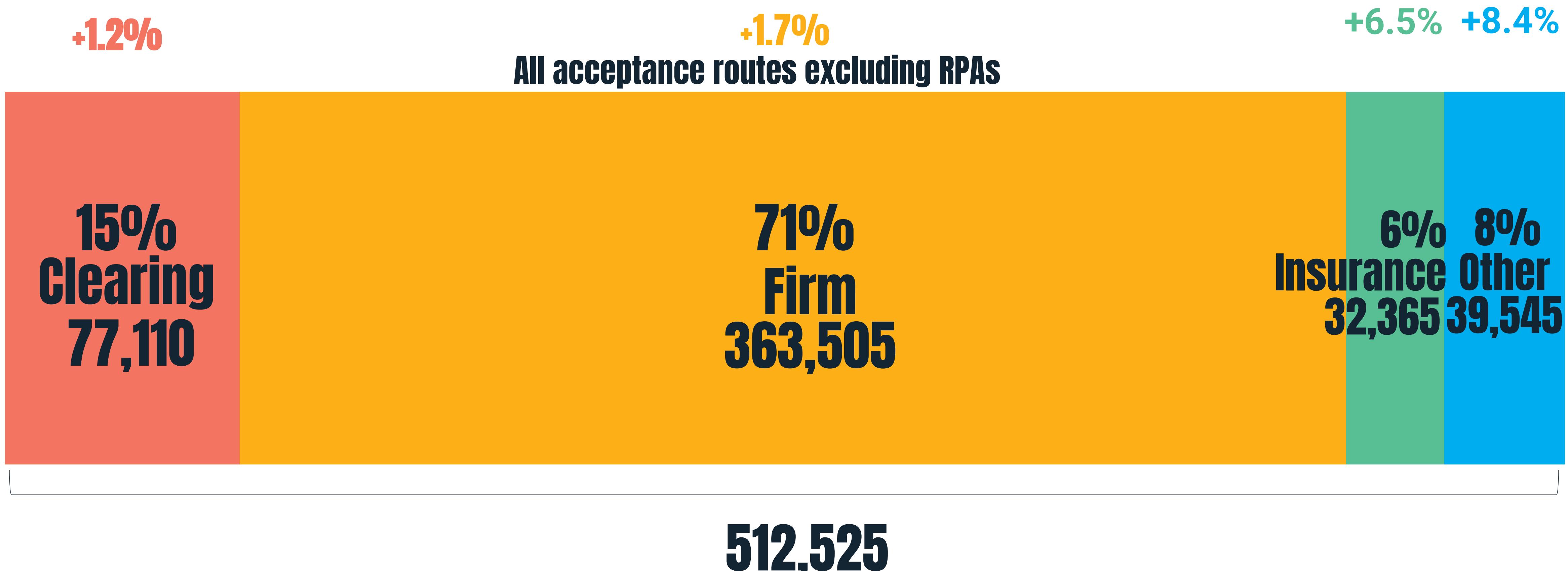
109,780 in 2024

**INTERNATIONAL**  
74,660

69,905 in 2024

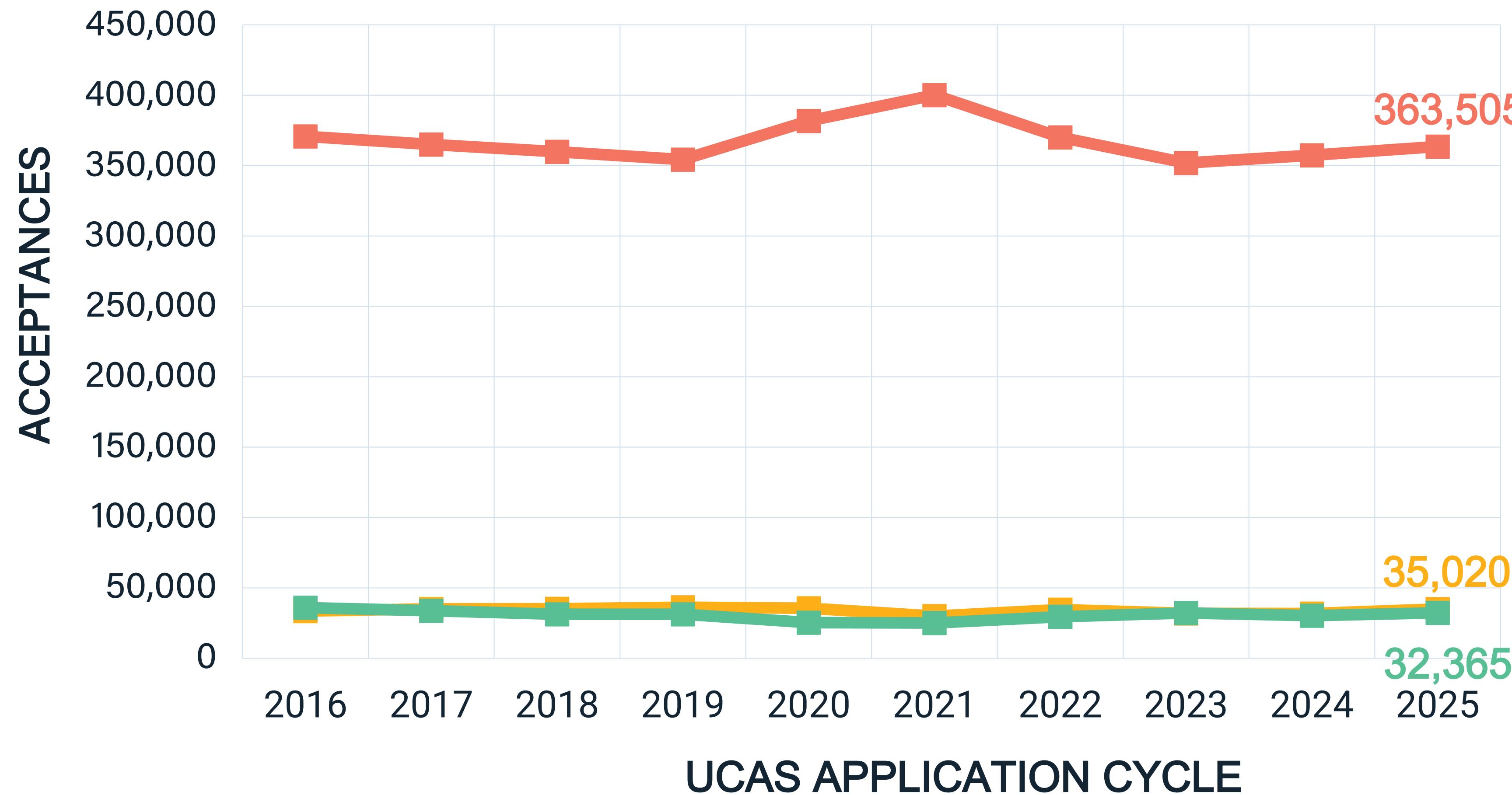
# ACCEPTANCE ROUTES

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# MAIN SCHEME ACCEPTANCE ROUTES

Accepted applicants by main scheme acceptance route

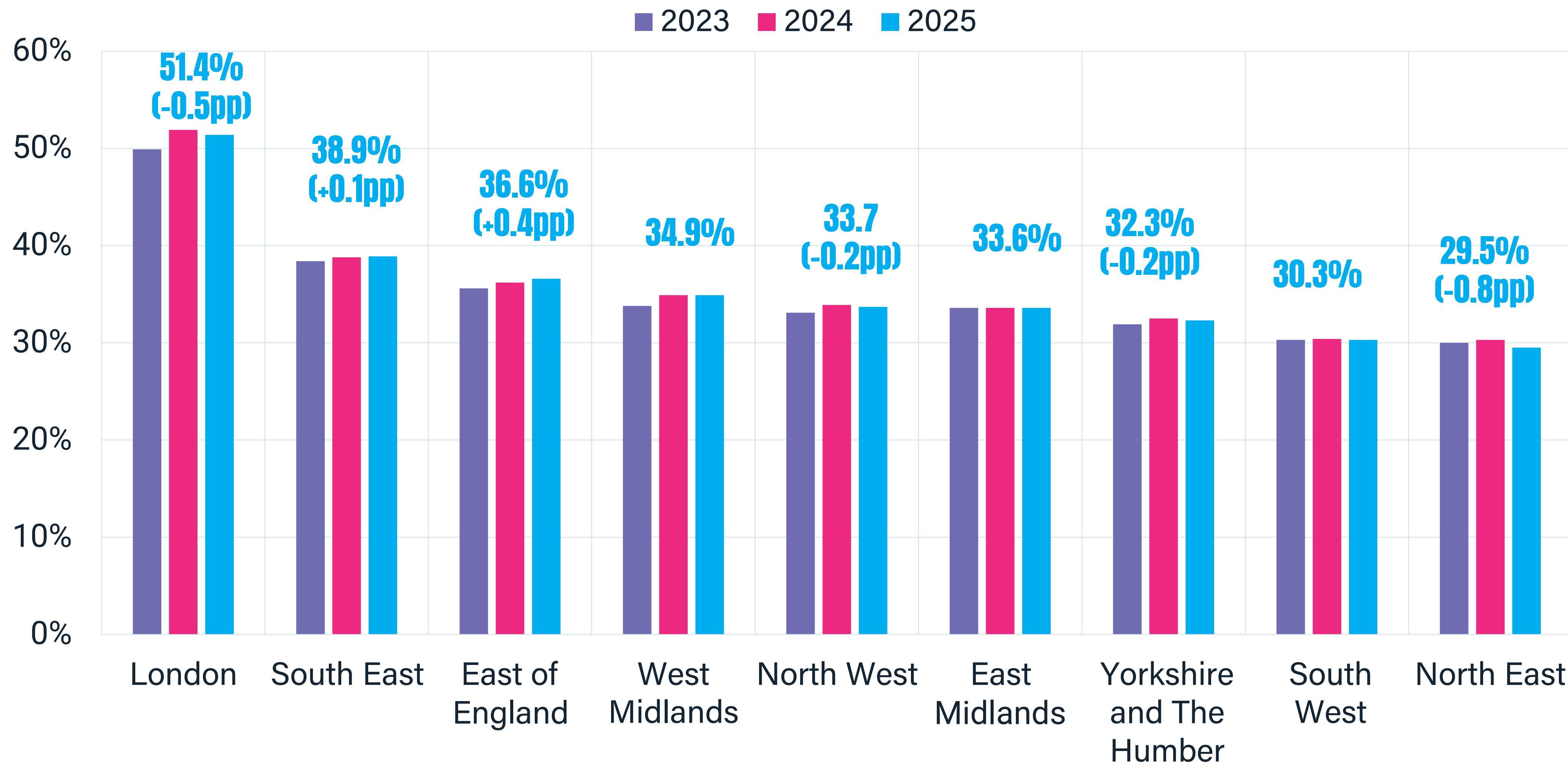


- Main scheme firm choice**  
63% of acceptances  
363,505 vs 357,330 in 2024 (+6,180)
- Other main scheme choice**  
6% of acceptances  
35,020 vs 31,865 in 2024 (+3,155)
- Main scheme insurance choice**  
6% of acceptances  
32,365 vs 30,385 in 2024 (+1,980)

# ENTRY RATES

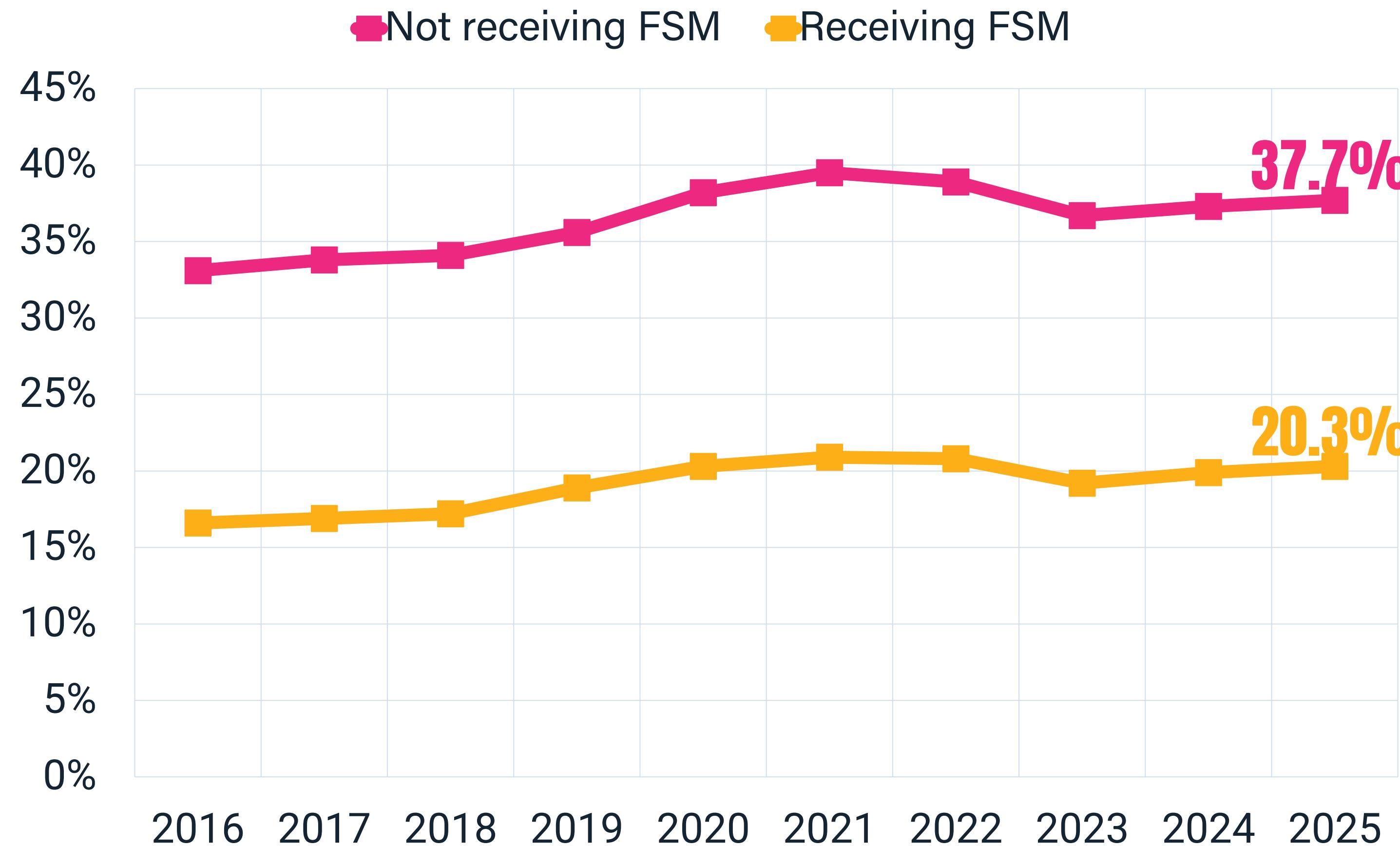
# REGIONAL ENTRY RATE GAPS PERSIST

18-year-old entry rate by English region



# NPD FREE SCHOOL MEALS

English 18-year-old entry rate by FSM status



2% increase in not receiving  
FSM 182,575 from 178,430

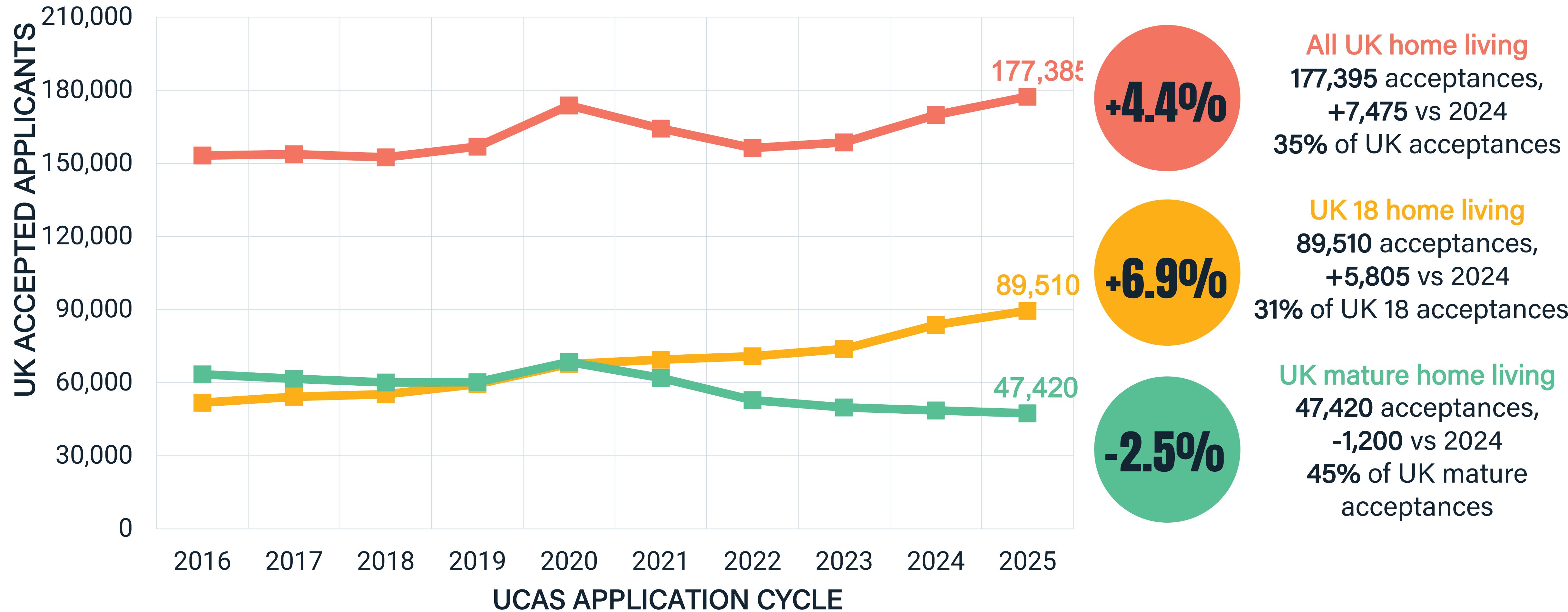
15% increase in FSM  
acceptances to 28,490 from  
24,830

Both entry rates have increased  
by 0.4pp

# LIVING AT HOME

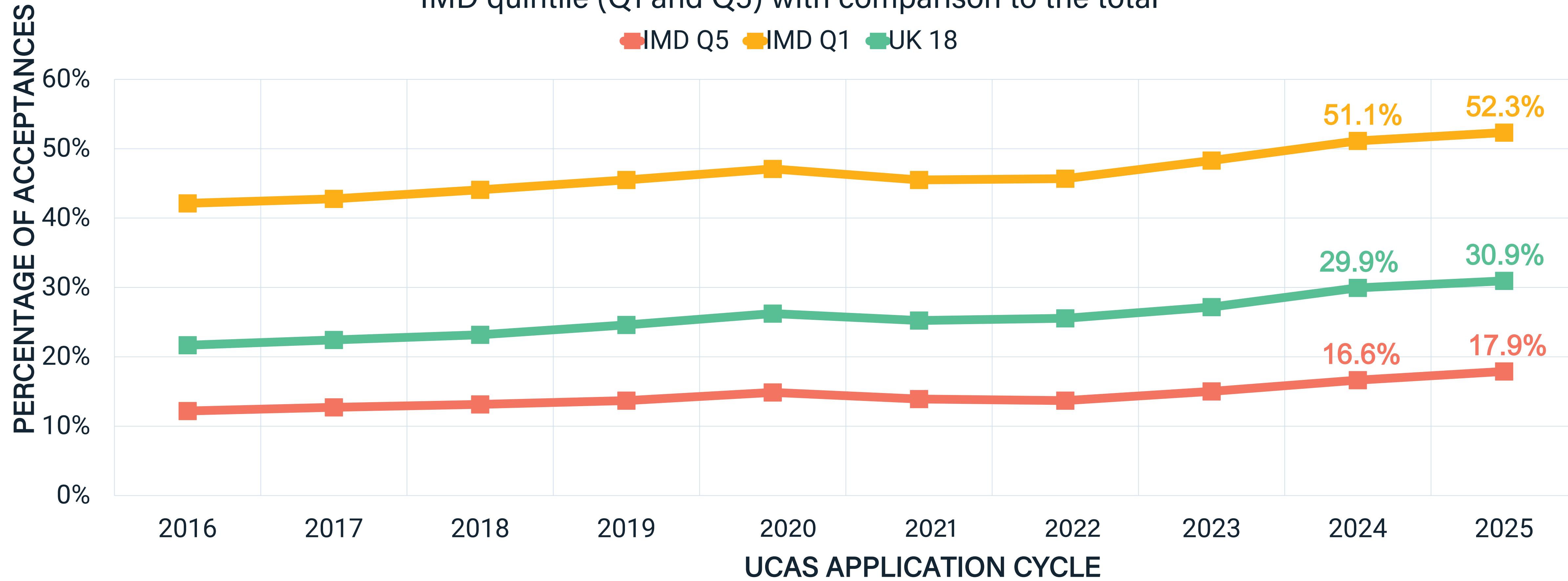
# INTENTION TO LIVE AT HOME

UK acceptances declaring their intention to live at home

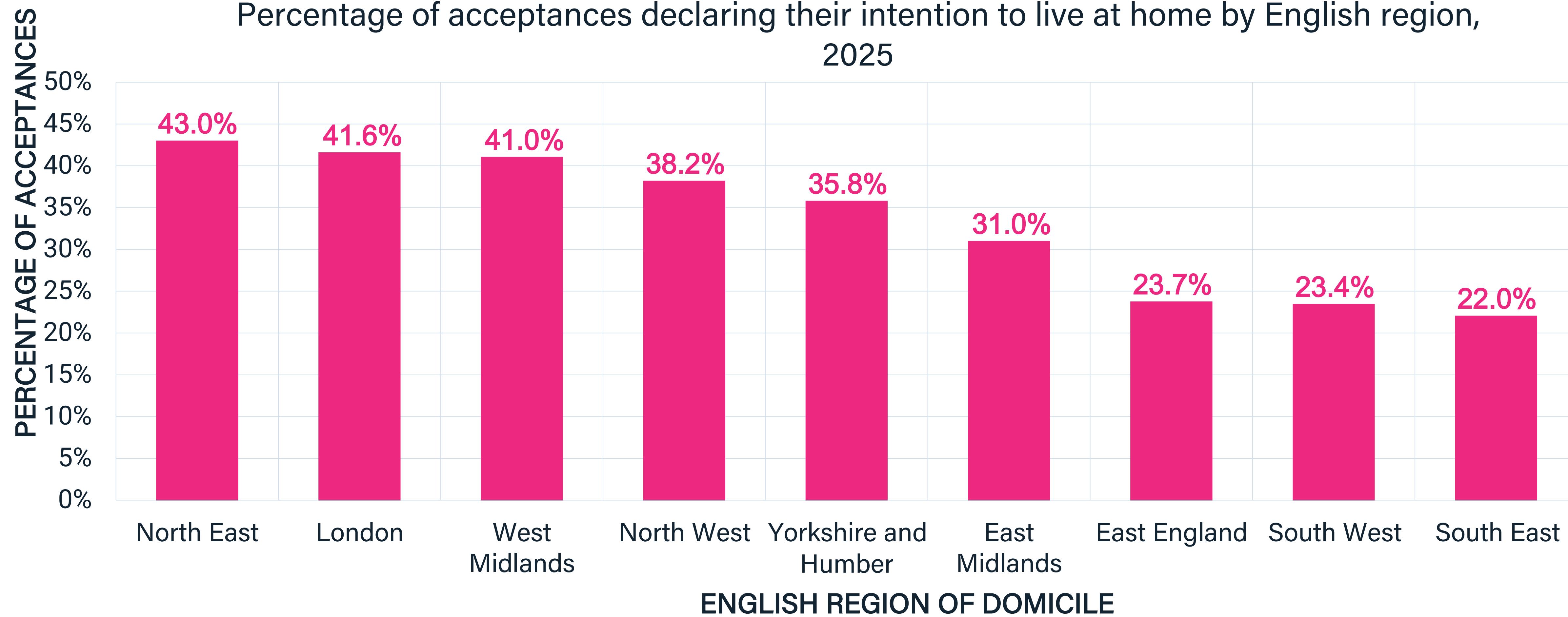


# INTENTION TO LIVE AT HOME BY IMD QUINTILE

Percentage of UK 18-year-old acceptances declaring intention to live at home by combined IMD quintile (Q1 and Q5) with comparison to the total



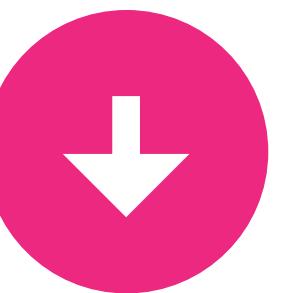
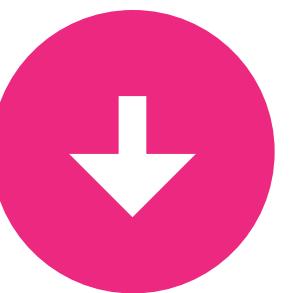
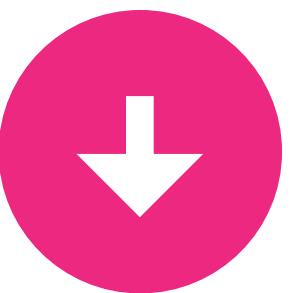
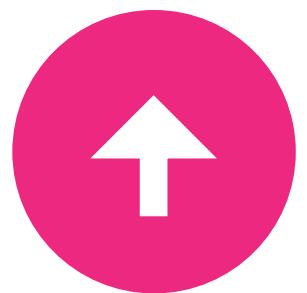
# INTENTION TO LIVE AT HOME BY ENGLISH REGION



# DETAILED SUBJECT GROUPS

# SUBJECTS WITH THE BIGGEST CHANGES SINCE 2024

Detailed subject categories (CAH3 grouping) with the biggest increases and decreases in acceptances since 2024



## LAW

CAH 16-01-01  
Law  
+2,610  
accepts

## ECONOMICS

CAH 15-02-01  
Economics  
+1,320  
accepts

## MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

CAH 10-01-02  
Mechanical  
Engineering  
+1,315  
accepts

## SOCIOLOGY

CAH 15-01-02  
Sociology  
-515 accepts

## COMPUTER SCIENCES

CAH 11-01-01  
Computer  
Sciences  
-2080  
accepts

## BUSINESS STUDIES

CAH 17-01-02  
Business  
Studies  
-2640 accepts

# INTERNATIONAL

# INTERNATIONAL MARKET REVIEW

## Top 5 biggest International markets

-  CHINA (19,480 accepts)
-  INDIA (5,295)
-  HONG KONG (2,870)
-  USA (2,775)
-  IRELAND (2,455)

## Biggest GROWTH markets

- ↑ CHINA (+2,415 an increase of 14%)
- ↑ NEPAL (+1,210 an increase of 133%)
- ↑ PAKISTAN (+940 an increase of 70%)
- ↑ BANGLADESH (+410 an increase of 103%)
- ↑ TURKEY (+375 an increase of 26%)

## DECLINING markets

- ↓ INDIA (-510 a decrease of 9%)
- ↓ MALAYSIA (-305 a decrease of 11%)
- ↓ HONG KONG (-225 a decrease of 7%)
- ↓ THAILAND (-110 a decrease of -16%)
- ↓ KUWAIT (-100 a decrease of -9%)

# DECLINE MY PLACE

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**5.8%**

## USED DMP

5.8% of all applicants used Decline My Place

**43,810**

+1.4% since 2024



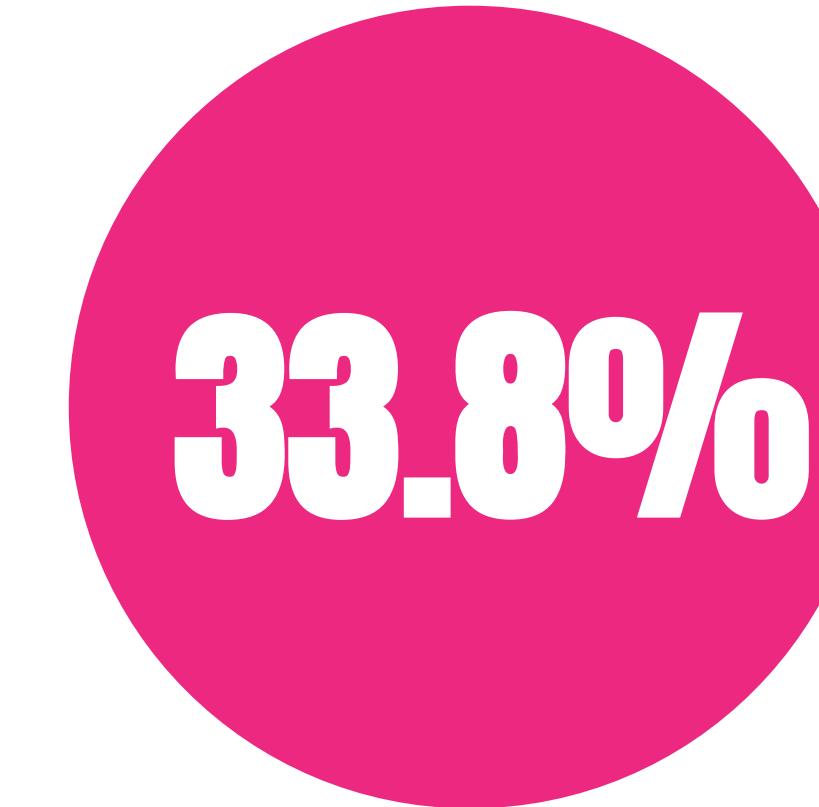
**59.5%**

## DMP USERS PLACED

59.5% of those who used Decline My Place were placed at the end of the cycle

**26,085**

+2.9% since 2024



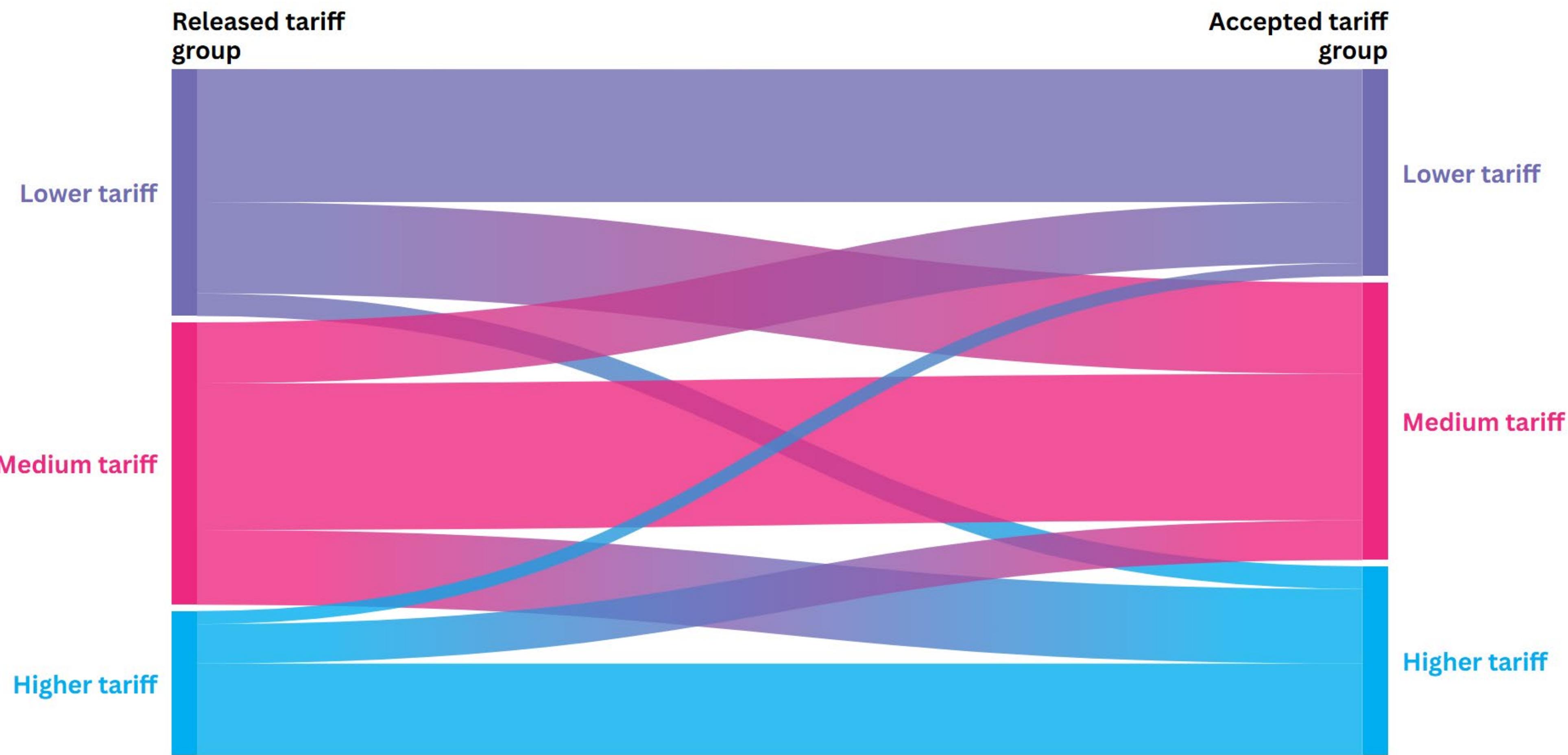
**33.8%**

## CLEARING USED DMP

33.8% of people placed in Clearing were Decline My Place users

**33.3% in 2024**

# MOVEMENT BETWEEN PROVIDER TARIFF THROUGH DECLINE MY PLACE



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Accepted applicants who used DMP		Accepted tariff group		
		Lower tariff	Medium tariff	Higher tariff
Declined tariff group	Lower tariff	5,145	3,540	875
	Medium tariff	2,365	5,675	2,895
	Higher tariff	505	1,530	3,560

# Our IAG Response

1

Connecting

2

Widening horizons

3

Empowerment for all

# Connecting: The Challenge

1 million prospective students sign up on UCAS

A quarter of young people are worried about not knowing what they want to do in the future

Over 1 in 5 of unplaced students wanted more information from UCAS to help them feel supported

The volume of choices feels overwhelming

# Action: Personalisation

# Widening Horizons: The Challenge

1 in 5 students miss out on courses due to earlier choices – more likely among disadvantaged students

Limited awareness of financial IAG, driven by perceptions of student debt:

- 48% of young people believe their post-18 choices are restricted by a lack of money
- 47% of non-applicants are saving up before going to university

# COURSE CONTENT LEADS, BUT COST MATTERS MORE THAN BEFORE

## Factors important when researching/shortlisting universities

- A course with content that is perfectly suited to me
- Financial support available while studying
- The cost of living support offered by universities
- Universities that are close to home e.g. in my closest city
- Universities/ courses with high graduate employment rates
- Positive reviews from students
- Universities with low cost accommodation
- Mental health support while studying
- Universities with a great social scene
- Universities with good quality accommodation

Year-on-year rank importance

2022 rank	2023 rank	2024 rank
1	1	1
4	4	2
12	10	3
9	5	4
3	2	5
2	3	6
13	12	7
8	11	8
7	7	9
5	8	10

Source: UCAS Cost of Living survey 2024 with UK 2025 entry prospective applicants  
 Respondents: 2024 (940), 2023 (2,182), 2022 (3,102)

# Action: Tools and resources to overcome barriers and challenge misconceptions

1

Scholarship, bursary and grants tool

2

Budget calculator

3

Improved course search

4

Revised information & advice

5

In-event engagements

6

Exploring AI for student support

# Empowerment for all: The Challenge

Spending on school pupils' career development falling from £159 per pupil in 2009 to £68 in 2023.

Teachers reporting that administrative tasks, marking, and planning consume significant time, limiting their ability to offer personalised guidance to students

# Action

## Adviser Portal for Discovery

All-in-one solution for delivering expert advice, tracking progress, applications and helping students make informed decisions across all pathways.

- Displays registration data
- View activities and achievements
- Events integration
- Access to IAG resources

**Student Hub Activity**  
Elderglen Secondary School | 99999

Hi Anthony  
Name of centre | 123456

Switch Centre | Customise portal

**Student stats**

Total number of students	187
Students in 2026 cohort	79
Students in 2026 cohort	73
Students in 2027 cohort	36
Students interested in apprenticeships	52
Students interested in Conservatoires	6

**Subject insights** See more

Study next tool completions 161/187

**Popular favoured subjects**

Business and management studies	45 students
Computer science	38 students
Health and social care	32 students
Art and Design	24 students
Education and Training	22 students

**Careers insights**

Quiz completions 146/187

**Top careers quiz pathways**

Business, Administration, and Law	45 students
Information Technology	32 students
Sales, Hospitality, and Services	26 students
Art, Media, and Publishing	24 students
Health, Public Services, and Care	24 students

**Chat to students**

Students active	24
Active chats	32
Number of universities/colleges	41
Number of different subjects	27

**Subject tasters**

Students active	48
Active Subject tasters	73

Search for students Cohort ▾ Study type ▾

30 students out of 47

First name	Last name	Cohort	Application types	Subjects of interest	Chat to students	Events Booked	Events Attended	Subject tasters In progress	Subject tasters Complete	Virtual Work Experiences In progress	Virtual Work Experiences Complete	Last sign in
Becca	Jones	2024	Undergraduate, Apprenticeship	Trigonometry, Art, Chemistry	✓	○	○	1	1	1	1	30/04/2023
Maximilian	Campbell-Howard	2025	Undergraduate	Mathematics, History, Biology	✓	✓	○	2	1	2	1	30/04/2023
Hannah	Abbott	2023	Apprenticeship	Computer Science, Law, History	○	○	✓	1	1	1	1	07/05/2023

# Action

Adviser clicks on a students name

First name	Last name	Cohort	Application types	Subjects of interest	Chat to students	Events	Subject tasters	Virtual Work Experiences	In progress	Complete	In progress	Complete	Last sign in
Becca	Jones	2024	Undergraduate, Apprenticeship	Trigonometry, Art, Chemistry	✓	○	○	1	1	1	1	1	30/04/2023
Maximilian	Campbell-Howard	2025	Undergraduate	Mathematics, History, Biology	✓	✓	○	2	1	2	1	1	30/04/2023
Hannah	Abbott	2023	Apprenticeship	Computer Science, Law, History	○	✓	✓	1	1	1	1	1	07/05/2023

...to see a details of their discovery interactions to guide careers conversations

**Becca Jones**  
Last signed in: 4th July 2025 1 day ago

Year of application: 2026  
Application type: Undergraduate

**2 Subject tasters**  
2 in progress

**3 Virtual work experiences**  
2 in progress, 1 complete

[Email student](#)

[Overview](#) [Back to student activity](#)

**Additional information**

Email addresses  
student.name@school.ac.uk  
We recommend <name> adds a personal email address to their account.

Student is considering:

- ✓ Studying outside the UK
- ✓ A gap year

Student would like further information on:

- ✓ Apprenticeships

**Key tasks**

**What to study next tool**  
Student has used this tool

**Careers quiz**  
Student has completed the careers quiz

**Subject tasters**  
Student has 2 in progress

**Virtual Work Experiences**  
Student has completed 1  
Student has 2 in progress

**Events**  
Attended an event  
Booked on an event

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# Working together

# Admissions Consultation 2026

This will act as the vehicle for revisiting and resolving some of the perennial topics related to the mechanics of the admissions cycle

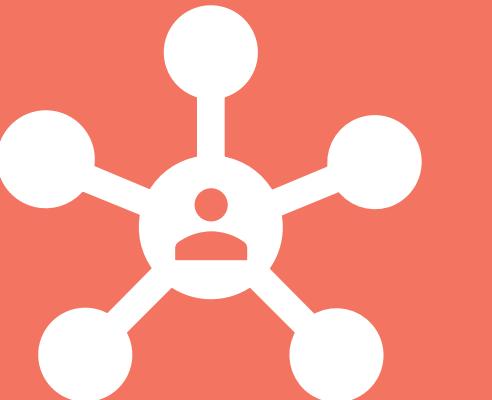
# In scope



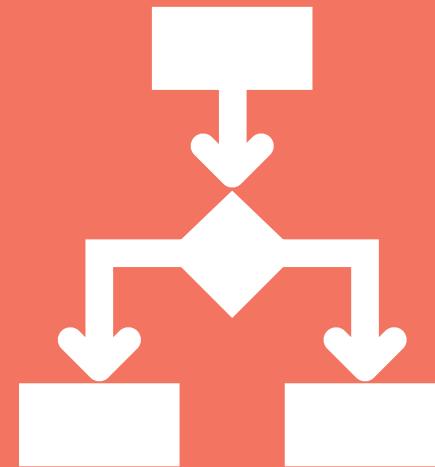
The rules of engagement for the October deadline



The timing of the Equal Consideration Date (ECD) and associated dates



The number of choices an applicant can initially make



How students manage their choices, including the use of firm and insurance choices

# Admissions Consultation 2025-26



**October 25**

Sector Wide engagement and focus groups begin



**Feb 26 -Apr 26**

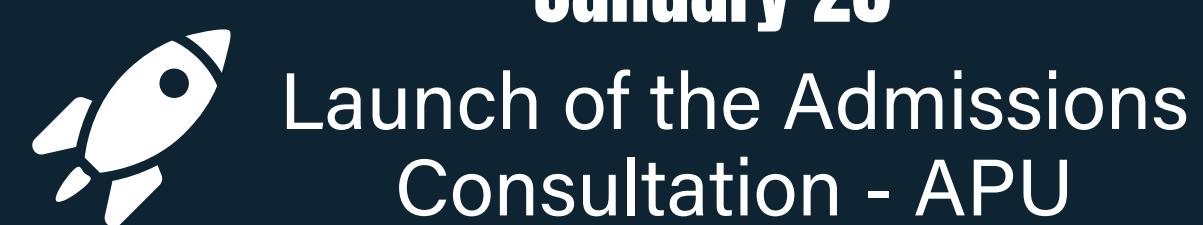
Formal Consultation Period

**November 25**

Evidence Analysis - feedback from focus groups



**January 26**



Launch of the Admissions Consultation - APU



**May 26**

Analysis and presentation of outcomes – Admissions conference



**July 26**

UCAS Board Review

# Questions?