



Access to HE Applicants to Higher Education, 2009 entry

Anne Marie Watson, UCAS

Introduction

This report investigates applicants and accepted applicants holding an Access to HE qualification in the UCAS 2009 cycle (applicants for 2009-10 academic year). A range of applicant characteristics are analysed, including age, gender, ethnicity, and Index of Multiple Deprivation decile.

UCAS data includes applicants to full-time degree, foundation degree, DipHE, HND or HNC courses at UCAS member institutions. There were 306 member institutions in the UCAS scheme in 2009 entry cycle (applicants for 2009-10 academic year). Only applicants with an area of permanent residence of England or Wales are included in this report as Scotland and Ireland have alternative Access to HE schemes. For the purposes of this report Access to HE applicants are defined as any applicant who held a QAA recognised Access to HE qualification, regardless of other qualifications held.

All tables in this report are based on UCAS applicant or accepted applicant data.

1) Overview

Table 1A shows the number, and proportion, of applicants and accepted applicants who held an Access to HE qualification. 18,215 applicants held an Access to HE qualification in 2009, representing 3.7% of all UCAS applicants. Overall, 72.8% of applicants with an Access to HE qualification were accepted compared with 79.4% of applicants without an Access to HE qualification.

TABLE 1A – UCAS applicants and accepted applicants by qualifications held, 2009

Qualification held	Applicants	%	Accepted applicants	%
Access to HE only	11,735	2.4%	8,425	2.2%
Access to HE and other	6,480	1.3%	4,840	1.3%
<i>Access to HE subtotal</i>	18,215	3.7%	13,265	3.5%
Other	468,150	96.3%	367,165	96.5%
Total	486,370	100.0%	380,430	100.0%

2) Age and gender profile

Table 2A illustrates the difference in the age profile of Access to HE applicants compared with that of non-Access to HE applicants. Over half (51.2%) of all Access to HE applicants were aged between 21 and 29 years. Only 13.3% of Access to HE applicants were aged under 21. In contrast, 74.7% of non-Access to HE applicants were aged under 21. Access to HE applicants accounted for 11.8% of all mature UCAS applicants in England and Wales.

TABLE 2A - Applicants and accepted applicants by age, 2009

Age	Applicants					Accepted applicants				
	Access to HE	%	Other	%	Total	Access to HE	%	Other	%	Total
Under 21	2,415	13.3%	349,870	74.7%	352,285	1,675	12.6%	290,565	79.1%	292,240
21-24	5,600	30.7%	54,725	11.7%	60,325	4,010	30.2%	37,435	10.2%	41,445
25-29	3,725	20.4%	25,090	5.4%	28,810	2,770	20.9%	15,620	4.3%	18,390
30-34	2,415	13.2%	13,570	2.9%	15,985	1,795	13.5%	8,135	2.2%	9,930
35-39	1,925	10.6%	10,220	2.2%	12,145	1,440	10.8%	6,205	1.7%	7,645
40 or over	2,140	11.8%	14,670	3.1%	16,815	1,580	11.9%	9,210	2.5%	10,785
Total	18,215	100.0%	468,150	100.0%	486,370	13,265	100.0%	367,165	100.0%	380,430

Table 2B gives the gender profile of Access to HE applicants by age. 72.9% of Access to HE applicants were female. Female Access to HE applicants dominate each of the age ranges shown in table 2B, increasingly so in the older age bandings. Table 2C provides the same data for accepted applicants.

TABLE 2B – Applicants by age and gender, 2009

Age	Access to HE					Other				
	Male	%	Female	%	Total	Male	%	Female	%	Total
Under 21	820	16.6%	1,595	12.0%	2,415	158,380	76.9%	191,490	73.0%	349,870
21-24	1,890	38.2%	3,710	28.0%	5,600	24,740	12.0%	29,985	11.4%	54,725
25-29	980	19.8%	2,745	20.7%	3,725	9,805	4.8%	15,285	5.8%	25,090
30-34	465	9.4%	1,950	14.7%	2,415	4,980	2.4%	8,590	3.3%	13,570
35-39	365	7.4%	1,560	11.7%	1,925	3,455	1.7%	6,770	2.6%	10,220

40 or over	430	8.7%	1,710	12.9%	2,140	4,590	2.2%	10,080	3.8%	14,670
Total	4,945	100.0%	13,270	100.0%	18,215	205,955	100.0%	262,200	100.0%	468,150

TABLE 2C – Accepted applicants by age and gender, 2009

Age	Access to HE					Other				
	Male	%	Female	%	Total	Male	%	Female	%	Total
Under 21	590	16.0%	1,085	11.3%	1,675	132,590	80.3%	157,970	78.2%	290,565
21-24	1,410	38.2%	2,600	27.2%	4,010	18,045	10.9%	19,390	9.6%	37,435
25-29	760	20.5%	2,015	21.0%	2,770	6,535	4.0%	9,085	4.5%	15,620
30-34	355	9.6%	1,440	15.1%	1,795	3,075	1.9%	5,060	2.5%	8,135
35-39	270	7.3%	1,170	12.2%	1,440	2,120	1.3%	4,085	2.0%	6,205
40 or over	310	8.4%	1,270	13.2%	1,580	2,860	1.7%	6,350	3.1%	9,210
Total	3,695	100.0%	9,575	100.0%	13,270	165,220	100.0%	201,945	100.0%	367,165

3) Ethnic origin

Ethnic origin data is requested from UK domiciled applicants through the UCAS application process, although provision of the information is not compulsory.

Tables 3A provide the proportional ethnic breakdown of Access to HE applicants compared with non-Access to HE applicants by gender. A higher proportion of Access to HE applicants (33.6%) were from non-white backgrounds compared to their non-Access to HE (22.8%) counterparts. The proportion of Access to HE applicants from a Black background was over two and a half times higher than the non-Access to HE applicant proportion. There was a lower proportion of white male Access to HE applicants (59.7%) compared to white female Access to HE applicants (68.9%) and a much higher proportion of Asian male applicants (11.1%) compared to Asian female Access to HE applicants (6.2%).

TABLE 3A – Applicants by qualification, gender and ethnicity*, 2009

Ethnic Group	Access to HE			Other		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Asian	540	810	1,350	23,195	24,315	47,510
Black	1,055	2,500	3,555	14,385	20,060	34,450
Mixed	240	595	835	6,895	9,115	16,015
Other	130	190	320	2,325	2,815	5,140
White	2,910	9,065	11,970	150,315	197,850	348,160
Total	4,875	13,155	18,030	197,115	254,155	451,270

Ethnic Group	Access to HE			Other		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Asian	11.1%	6.2%	7.5%	11.8%	9.6%	10.5%
Black	21.6%	19.0%	19.7%	7.3%	7.9%	7.6%
Mixed	4.9%	4.5%	4.6%	3.5%	3.6%	3.5%
Other	2.7%	1.4%	1.8%	1.2%	1.1%	1.1%
White	59.7%	68.9%	66.4%	76.3%	77.8%	77.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

*Excluding applicants with unknown ethnicity

TABLE 3B – Accepted applicants by qualification, gender and ethnicity*, 2009

Ethnic Group	Access to HE			Other		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Asian	380	575	950	18,160	18,860	37,020
Black	730	1,660	2,390	9,840	12,725	22,565
Mixed	165	405	575	5,295	6,925	12,225
Other	85	125	215	1,670	2,080	3,750
White	2,285	6,725	9,005	122,055	153,990	276,040
Total	3,645	9,490	13,135	157,020	194,580	351,605

Ethnic Group	Access to HE			Other		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Asian	10.4%	6.0%	7.2%	11.6%	9.7%	10.5%
Black	20.0%	17.5%	18.2%	6.3%	6.5%	6.4%
Mixed	4.6%	4.3%	4.4%	3.4%	3.6%	3.5%
Other	2.4%	1.3%	1.6%	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%
White	62.7%	70.8%	68.6%	77.7%	79.1%	78.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

*Excluding applicants with unknown ethnicity

4) Subject group

As applicants can apply for to up to five courses which can be across different subject groups, table 4A uses the overall preferred subject group. Where applicants apply to subjects in more than one group, the group listed most frequently on the application form is counted (preferred subject). For some subject groups, such as physical sciences, this can create the impression that there are more people accepted than applied. Where a preferred subject group cannot be established, the applicant is categorised as belonging to the 'No preferred subject group'.

Table 4A gives the preferred subject group of Access to HE and non-Access to HE applicants, together with a percentage breakdown. The most popular subject group for Access to HE applicants was subjects allied to medicine, with 38.1% of Access to HE applicants applying for this area. Access to HE applicants accounted for 11.3% of all applicants to this subject group. The second most popular subject group for Access to HE applicants was social studies with 13.5%.

TABLE 4A – Applicants by preferred subject group, 2009

Subject Group	Access to HE		Qualification			
		%	Other	%	Total	%
A Medicine and dentistry	135	0.7%	15,390	3.3%	15,525	3.2%
B Subjects allied to medicine	6,940	38.1%	54,650	11.7%	61,585	12.7%
C Biological sciences	1,215	6.7%	32,220	6.9%	33,430	6.9%
D Veterinary sciences, agriculture and related subjects	60	0.3%	5,090	1.1%	5,155	1.1%
F Physical sciences	240	1.3%	13,690	2.9%	13,930	2.9%
G Mathematical and computer sciences	560	3.1%	21,580	4.6%	22,140	4.6%
H Engineering	185	1.0%	15,305	3.3%	15,490	3.2%
J Technologies	15	0.1%	1,850	0.4%	1,865	0.4%
K Architecture, building and planning	95	0.5%	7,610	1.6%	7,705	1.6%
L Social Studies	2,465	13.5%	32,910	7.0%	35,375	7.3%
M Law	815	4.5%	16,705	3.6%	17,520	3.6%
N Business and administrative studies	990	5.4%	42,715	9.1%	43,705	9.0%
P Mass communications and documentation	135	0.8%	9,575	2.0%	9,710	2.0%
Q Linguistics, Classics and related studies	295	1.6%	12,845	2.7%	13,140	2.7%
R European languages, literature and related studies	15	0.1%	4,110	0.9%	4,120	0.8%
T Non-European languages and related studies	35	0.2%	1,105	0.2%	1,140	0.2%
V Historical and philosophical studies	325	1.8%	14,705	3.1%	15,030	3.1%
W Creative arts and design	660	3.6%	56,550	12.1%	57,215	11.8%
X Education	1,085	6.0%	17,120	3.7%	18,205	3.7%
Z No preferred subject group	1,085	5.9%	59,365	12.7%	60,445	12.4%
1 Combined sciences	75	0.4%	2,630	0.6%	2,705	0.6%
2 Combined social sciences	80	0.4%	2,395	0.5%	2,475	0.5%
3 Combined arts	275	1.5%	9,080	1.9%	9,355	1.9%
4 Sciences combined with social sciences or arts	275	1.5%	10,665	2.3%	10,940	2.2%
5 Social sciences combined with arts	145	0.8%	6,840	1.5%	6,985	1.4%
6 General, other combined and unknown	30	0.2%	1,455	0.3%	1,485	0.3%
Total	18,215	100.0%	468,150	100.0%	486,370	100.0%

The subject group of the course onto which applicants were accepted is shown in Table 4B. Over a third of accepted Access to HE applicants gained a place on a course within the subjects allied to medicine group - Access to HE applicants accounted for 11.1% of all accepted applicants in this group. Other subject groups for which large proportions of Access to HE applicants were accepted were social studies, biological sciences and education.

TABLE 4B – Accepted Applicants by subject group, 2009

Subject Group	Access to HE		Qualification			
		%	Other	%	Total	%
A Medicine and dentistry	35	0.2%	6,995	1.9%	7,025	1.8%
B Subjects allied to medicine	4,605	34.7%	36,950	10.1%	41,555	10.9%
C Biological sciences	1,080	8.1%	29,725	8.1%	30,800	8.1%
D Veterinary sciences, agriculture and related subjects	45	0.3%	4,310	1.2%	4,355	1.1%
F Physical sciences	205	1.6%	13,720	3.7%	13,930	3.7%
G Mathematical and computer sciences	425	3.2%	21,515	5.9%	21,945	5.8%
H Engineering	160	1.2%	14,750	4.0%	14,910	3.9%
J Technologies	10	0.1%	2,475	0.7%	2,485	0.7%
K Architecture, building and planning	95	0.7%	7,035	1.9%	7,125	1.9%
L Social Studies	1,710	12.9%	27,215	7.4%	28,925	7.6%
M Law	690	5.2%	15,770	4.3%	16,460	4.3%
N Business and administrative studies	745	5.6%	38,940	10.6%	39,690	10.4%
P Mass communications and documentation	125	0.9%	8,915	2.4%	9,040	2.4%
Q Linguistics, Classics and related studies	280	2.1%	11,235	3.1%	11,515	3.0%
R European languages, literature and related studies	15	0.1%	3,715	1.0%	3,730	1.0%
T Non-European languages and related studies	35	0.2%	1,210	0.3%	1,240	0.3%
V Historical and philosophical studies	305	2.3%	12,880	3.5%	13,185	3.5%
W Creative arts and design	505	3.8%	44,790	12.2%	45,295	11.9%
X Education	760	5.7%	13,630	3.7%	14,385	3.8%
1 Combined sciences	180	1.3%	5,860	1.6%	6,040	1.6%
2 Combined social sciences	110	0.8%	3,990	1.1%	4,100	1.1%
3 Combined arts	350	2.7%	11,360	3.1%	11,710	3.1%
4 Sciences combined with social sciences or arts	475	3.6%	16,400	4.5%	16,875	4.4%
5 Social sciences combined with arts	230	1.7%	9,525	2.6%	9,755	2.6%
6 General, other combined and unknown	95	0.7%	4,265	1.2%	4,360	1.1%
Grand Total	13,265	100.0%	367,165	100.0%	380,430	100.0%

5) Participation of Local Areas

For the 2009 application cycle UCAS is not using socio-economic classification in statistical reporting has adopted POLAR2 as an alternative. The POLAR2 (Participation of Local Areas 2) classification groups small areas across the UK into five quintile groups according to their rate of young participation in higher education in the early 2000s. In quintile 1 less than 1 in 5 young people enter higher education compared to well over half in quintile 5. Each quintile represents around 20 percent of the young population. Further information on the POLAR2 classification can be found on the HEFCE website (www.hefce.ac.uk/widen/polar/polar2/).

The POLAR2 Young Participation Rate (QYPR) classification has been applied (by using the recorded home postcode of the applicant) to UK domiciled applicant and accepted applicant data for those aged 19 and under and shows within the different quintiles who has applied and been accepted into a higher education institution. The POLAR2 Adult Higher Education (QAHE) classification has been applied using the same method for those aged 20 and over. QAHE is based on the proportion of HE-qualified adults within an area.

From Table 5A, for those aged 19 and under there were 18.1% applicants with Access to HE qualifications living in areas with the lowest young participation rate compared to 11.2% of those with

other qualifications. From Table 5B it can be seen that for those aged 20 and above 43.7% with Access to HE qualifications lived in areas identified as being in the two lowest quintiles areas for HE-qualified adults. This compares with only 35.5% of those with other qualifications.

TABLE 5A – QYPR* of applicants and accepted applicants aged 19 and under by qualification held, 2009

QYPR	Applicants				Accepted Applicants			
	Access to HE	%	Other	%	Access to HE	%	Other	%
1	85	18.1%	34,550	11.2%	50	15.7%	28,120	10.9%
2	110	23.6%	49,700	16.1%	75	24.2%	41,120	15.9%
3	105	22.1%	61,000	19.8%	75	23.6%	50,750	19.7%
4	105	21.5%	72,320	23.5%	70	22.3%	60,970	23.6%
5	70	14.7%	90,770	29.4%	45	14.2%	77,080	29.9%
Unknown	5	-	3,090	-	5	-	2,520	-
Total	480		311,425		320		260,560	

*Percentages are based on applicants with known QYPR only

TABLE 5B – QAHE* of applicants and accepted applicants aged 20 and over by qualification held, 2009

QAHE	Applicants				Accepted Applicants			
	Access to HE	%	Other	%	Access to HE	%	Other	%
1	3,985	22.8%	25,950	16.9%	2,890	22.6%	17,610	16.9%
2	3,650	20.9%	28,555	18.6%	2,700	21.1%	19,240	18.4%
3	3,155	18.0%	30,110	19.6%	2,275	17.8%	20,790	19.9%
4	3,195	18.2%	32,620	21.2%	2,360	18.5%	22,550	21.6%
5	3,515	20.1%	36,540	23.8%	2,550	20.0%	24,270	23.2%
Unknown	235	-	2,955	-	170	-	2,150	-
Total	17,735		156,730		12,945		106,605	

*Percentages are based on applicants with known QAHE only

6) IMD profile

Tables 6A and 6B compare the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) profile of Access to HE applicants against non-Access to HE applicants. These have been appended to UCAS data using home postcodes to identify Lower Layer Super Output Areas (November 2009 National Statistics Postcode Directory), IMD rankings for England were allocated using the 2007 IMD (Source: Department of Communities and Local Government) and IMD rankings for Wales were allocated using the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2008 (Source: Local Government Data Unit Wales). IMD decile 1 denotes those living in the most deprived areas.

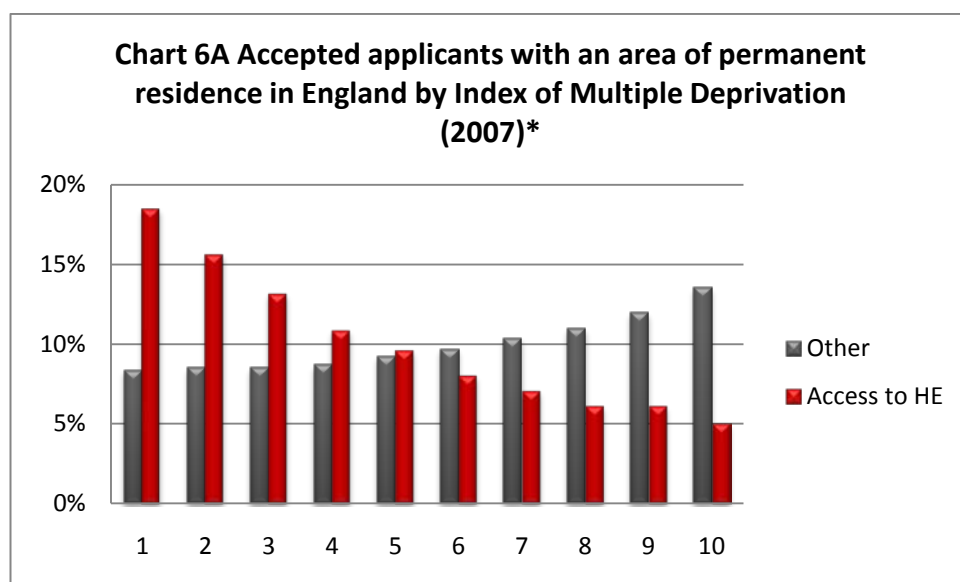
For both England and Wales, there were lower proportions of Access to HE applicants within the least deprived areas and higher proportions within the most deprived areas than their non-Access to HE counterparts.

Charts 6A and 6B graphically illustrate the difference in IMD deciles between Access to HE and non-Access to HE accepted applicants for those with areas of permanent residence in England and Wales.

TABLE 6A – Applicants and accepted applicants with an area of permanent residence in England by IMD decile*, 2009

IMD Decile	Applicants				Accepted Applicants			
	Access to HE	%	Other	%	Access to HE	%	Other	%
1	3,280	19.2%	39,360	9.0%	2,300	18.5%	28,785	8.4%
2	2,780	16.3%	39,885	9.1%	1,945	15.6%	29,310	8.5%
3	2,280	13.3%	39,150	8.9%	1,640	13.2%	29,295	8.5%
4	1,860	10.9%	39,400	9.0%	1,355	10.9%	29,970	8.7%
5	1,625	9.5%	40,850	9.3%	1,195	9.6%	31,805	9.2%
6	1,325	7.8%	42,275	9.6%	1000	8.0%	33,330	9.7%
7	1,160	6.8%	44,830	10.2%	880	7.1%	35,735	10.4%
8	990	5.8%	47,090	10.7%	760	6.1%	37,965	11.0%
9	1000	5.8%	50,450	11.5%	760	6.1%	41,190	12.0%
10	785	4.6%	56,410	12.8%	625	5.0%	46,690	13.6%
Unknown	130	-	4,520	-	100	-	3,605	-
Total	17,210		444,215		12,555		347,680	

*Percentages are based on applicants with known IMD decile only

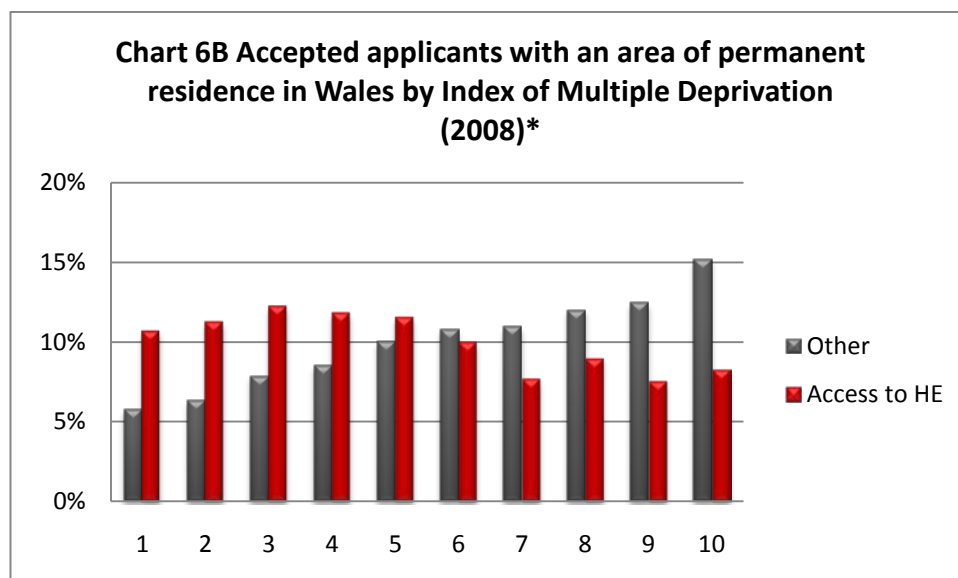


*Percentages are based on applicants with known IMD decile only

TABLE 6B – Applicants and accepted applicants with an area of permanent residence in Wales by IMD decile*, 2009

IMD Decile	Applicants				Accepted Applicants			
	Access to HE	%	Other	%	Access to HE	%	Other	%
1	115	11.5%	1,460	6.2%	75	10.7%	1,115	5.8%
2	115	11.5%	1,545	6.5%	80	11.3%	1,225	6.3%
3	120	11.9%	1,950	8.2%	85	12.3%	1,520	7.9%
4	115	11.4%	2,055	8.7%	85	11.8%	1,645	8.5%
5	115	11.7%	2,375	10.0%	80	11.5%	1,935	10.0%
6	110	10.9%	2,540	10.7%	70	10.0%	2,080	10.8%
7	75	7.6%	2,580	10.9%	55	7.7%	2,115	11.0%
8	85	8.4%	2,800	11.8%	65	9.0%	2,315	12.0%
9	70	6.8%	2,910	12.3%	55	7.5%	2,410	12.5%
10	85	8.4%	3,495	14.7%	60	8.3%	2,935	15.2%
Unknown	15	-	230	-	10	-	195	-
Total	1,010		23,940		710		19,485	

*Percentages are based on applicants with known IMD decile only



*Percentages are based on applicants with known IMD decile only

7) Distance travelled

Data for distance travelled by an applicant is calculated as the direct distance between an applicant's home and the institution at which they were accepted. The location of an institution is derived from the postcode of the main campus published at www.ucas.com.

Table 7 gives the distance travelled to the accepting institution using grouped distance bands. This table clearly shows Access to HE applicants on the whole attend an institution closer to their home than non-Access to HE applicants. This may also be an effect of the older age profile of Access to HE applicants – older applicants do generally study closer to home. Just under three-quarters of Access to HE accepted applicants travelled less than 25 miles from their home to their accepting institution. Over 20% of non-Access to HE applicants travelled 100 miles or more to their accepting institution, the equivalent figure for Access to HE applicants 9.0%.

TABLE 7 – Distance travelled to institution by accepted applicants

Distance (miles)	Qualification		
	Access to HE	Other	Total
>0 and <= 24 miles	73.4%	41.1%	42.2%
>=25 and <= 49 miles	11.5%	16.3%	16.1%
>=50 and <= 74 miles	3.8%	11.3%	11.0%
>=75 and <= 99 miles	2.2%	8.8%	8.6%
>=100 and <=124 miles	1.6%	6.4%	6.2%
>=125 and <=149 miles	0.9%	3.8%	3.7%
>=150 and <=174 miles	0.9%	3.5%	3.4%
>=175 miles	1.7%	5.4%	5.3%
Unknown	3.9%	3.4%	3.4%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%