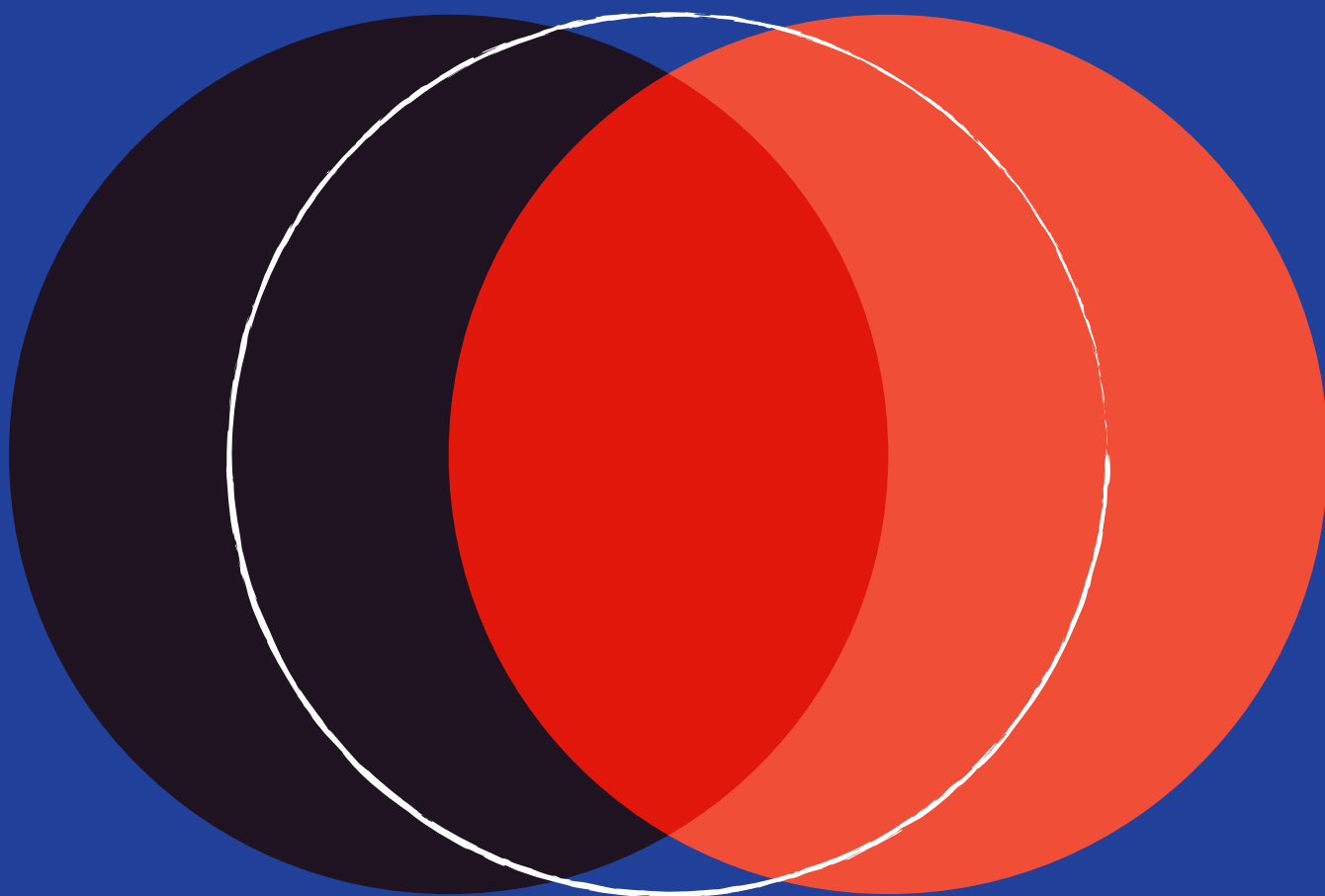


The 2015 Further Education and Training Services Plan



SOLAS

An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna
Further Education and Training Authority

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Foreword

Following the enactment of the legislation effecting the transformation of the sector – the dissolution of FÁS, the establishment of SOLAS together with the establishment of the 16 ETBs, and the completion of the phased transfer of the FÁS training centres in July 2014 – a new strategic framework emerged for the Further Education and Training Sector (FET) in 2014 with the launch of the first ever Strategic Plan for the further education and training sector.

The Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019 (FET Strategic Plan) sets out a vision to transform the FET sector in the five year period 2014 – 2019 and provides the focus for annual funding and investment priorities.

The FET Services Plan 2014 sought to bring together for the first time in one document detail of all the further education and training provision. It was a summary of further education and training provision at programme level. No fundamental change to the legacy approaches to planning took place in the development of the 2014 Plan.

The **2015 FET Services Plan** is the second FET services plan to be developed by SOLAS. It is however, the first attempt at developing an integrated services plan for further education and training.

Informed by the overarching framework of the FET strategy, the relevant funding priorities for the Services Plan 2015 include:

- Provision of FET programmes to skill, re-skill or up-skill unemployed persons as well as other job seekers to find a job and/or progress to higher/further education and training that will equip them to compete in the labour market.
- Provision of FET programmes to support a diverse range of individuals seeking personal, social and developmental skills to enable them to engage or re-engage in learning, or to enable them to make a meaningful contribution to society and to their communities, or to progress to further education and training.
- Priority cohorts such as the Long Term Unemployed and unemployed youth were identified, and target participation rates across FET provision were agreed with DES. In that regard, the target for people who have been unemployed for a long time remains at the 2014 level of 52,666 places.

This 2015 FET Services Plan sets out high level detail of the FET provision to be funded by SOLAS, who will deliver it, when and where it will be delivered, how much it will cost, and the estimated outputs in terms of completion and certification rates, or progression to higher education and placement into employment.

The 2015 FET Services Plan provides for a total budget allocation of €643.5m (€3m carried forward from 2014), to be made available for SOLAS funded further education and training provision in 2015. It is estimated that 369,523 places will be made available for learners to benefit from SOLAS funded FET programmes and services in 2015 (341,726 places in 2014). This figure includes 231,234 new entrants expected to participate in FET provision in 2015 (215,929 new entrants in 2014).

Approximately 60% of all provision in 2015 will be for individuals that require introductory level courses/ supports (across FET programmes up to level 4 on NFQ or equivalent) to assist them with progression back to employment over a longer timeframe. The overall population of apprentices at various stages of their apprenticeship in 2015 is estimated to be 7,400.

The early identification of FET-related skill needs and skill deficits was an essential aspect in informing the 2015 FET Services Plan and in particular management and staff in FET centres/locations that have direct contact with learners, employers and other stakeholders. This was facilitated by the SOLAS internal resource namely the SLMRU and its National Skills Database (NSD). A series of regional briefings were held, during which senior staff from the SOLAS SMLRU provided details of the labour market demographics relating to each ETB and statistical profiles on unemployment, employment, industry profile, vacancies etc.

These regional profiles are published each year by SOLAS/Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) and act as key resource for ETBs and other education and training providers and policy makers. Other relevant sources of labour market intelligence include: research by the SOLAS/EGFSN and national and international research on future skill needs; national, regional and local labour market intelligence; the legislative and regulatory environment; government policy; and direct contact with employers by both ETBs and by SOLAS.

Funding Allocations Requests (FARs) provided a coherent mechanism through which funding could be requested by publicly-funded FET sector providers in relation to all their proposed FET provision. In addition, FARs supported the collection of the required quantitative, qualitative, and financial data for collation and vetting by SOLAS. The FARs process involved working back and forth with the publicly-funded FET sector providers to ensure a common understanding prior to seeking approval for the FET funding allocations from the SOLAS Board.

Funding Allocations Requests and Reporting (FARR) system was developed for utilisation in the 2015 planning and funding process. FARR is a web application linked to a database which has the capacity to capture quantitative data in a questionnaire format. A SOLAS/ETB FARR planning group was established under the auspices of SOLAS where a series of SOLAS-led discussions with ETB representatives assisted SOLAS in developing, compiling and populating the database. In addition, a number of definitions were agreed with the ETBs so that a unified understanding of required data inputs could be developed, thus enabling a more coherent analysis of information to inform funding allocation decisions.

The FARs process and the FARR database have enabled significant improvements to be introduced to the planning and funding allocations process for 2015. These changes included working to a fixed funding allocation set by SOLAS and the ETBs and other stakeholders requesting their funding through the Funding Allocations Requests process for submission to SOLAS.

ETBs funding requests including activity and budget were submitted to the SOLAS Planning Unit for review. The Planning Unit assessed each submission in line with 2014 requests and outturns. Depending on the profile of provision and funding application received from an ETB, the SOLAS Planning Unit then engaged in a systematic dialogue - both formal and informal - to support the ETB in addressing the requirements of the funding parameters set by SOLAS.

In 2014 the FET sector achieved 96% of its planned target for Beneficiaries of the FET planned provision. Table 3.14 below shows the details of Starters, Completions and Beneficiaries on FET Full Time, Part Time & Community Education Provision. This is the starting point for 2015 planning.

The table below provides detail of the actual data reported by ETBs and SOLAS National Programmes for their 2014 provision.

The SOLAS FET Strategy Programme Office also commenced a joint SOLAS/ETB pilot initiative, with the aim of increasing existing strategic planning capability within SOLAS and the ETB sector. The aim of the pilot is to articulate an agreed set of agreed strategic expectations between SOLAS and each of the three ETBs involved in the pilot. It is the first step in the process of moving towards a more strategic outcomes-based funding and planning model for the whole of the ETB sector.

SOLAS recognises that there may be significant challenges and risks presenting for ETBs in moving to a more strategic planning process. Data collection validation and analysis remains a challenge. SOLAS is currently developing a 'fit for purpose' data infrastructure (Programme and Learner Support System – PLSS), which will provide a platform for reporting on further education and training outputs and outcomes in the future.

When fully operational, PLSS is expected to provide a data infrastructure for linking with other administrative data sets (e.g. HEA, DSP, Revenue etc.) to allow for follow-up of learners upon course completion, and measurement of course impact on learners' socio-economic status (including longitudinal and counterfactual analyses). It will also provide a student population for follow up surveys (e.g. for assessment of wider benefits of learning). Reporting using a fully operational PLSS is expected to commence towards the latter part of 2017.

Table 3.14: Detail of the actual data reported by ETBs and SOLAS National Programmes for their 2014 provision.

2014 FET PROVISION OUTTURN										
Provision Type	2014 FET Plan			2014 FET Actual			Analysis of 2014 FET Provision			
	Starters During 2014	Beneficiaries during 2014	Completions during 2014	Starters in 2014	Completions in 2014	Beneficiaries in 2014	Beneficiary Variance	Actual Starters v 2014 Plan	Actual Completions v 2014 Plan	Actual Beneficiaries v 2014 Plan
Full-Time FET Provision	76,747	131,245	70,704	66,781	60,355	121,279	-9,966	87%	85%	92%
Part-Time FET Provision	87,069	139,029	93,259	92,019	82,939	143,979	4,950	106%	89%	104%
Community Education	52,113	71,452	52,014	42,130	40,715	61,469	-9,983	81%	78%	86%
Total	215,929	341,726	215,977	200,930	184,009	326,727	-14,999	93%	85%	96%

In summary, over the lifetime of the FET Strategy ETBs will, with support from SOLAS, transform how they plan their FET provision and associated services, taking into account local/regional/national economic and social trends, Government policy and learner feedback; demonstrate how they are meeting Government economic and social policies as set out in the Action Plan for Jobs including the regional action plans; how they are supporting the Pathways to Work initiative; and how they intend to become more locally responsive, flexible and autonomous in deciding the optimum profile of FET provision to meet employer, community and learner skill needs.

Acknowledgements

The SOLAS Further Education and Training Stakeholder Engagement & Operational Planning Unit wishes to acknowledge the feedback and support received in the development of the Further Education and Training (FET) Services Plan 2015 from:

The Department of Education and Skills

The Department of Education and Skills, Further Education Section

The Department of Education and Skills, ESF & EGF Policy and Operations Unit

The Department of Social Protection

Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI)

The SOLAS/ETB Planning Group

The SOLAS Units as follows:

Finance Unit

IT Unit

The FARR Database Development Team

Communications Unit

FET Strategy and Evaluation Unit

National Programme Innovation, CPD and Workforce
Development Units

National Programmes Units

FET Programme Improvement Unit

Apprenticeship Unit

Construction Skills Unit

EGF Unit

SOLAS Head Office Services (Print Services)

We would also like to acknowledge the contributions submitted by stakeholders for inclusion in the 2015 Further Education and Training Services Plan. Our thanks to:

The sixteen Education and Training Boards

- Cavan and Monaghan Education and Training Board
- Cork Education and Training Board
- City of Dublin Education and Training Board
- Donegal Education and Training Board
- Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board
- Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board
- Kerry Education and Training Board
- Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board
- Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board
- Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board
- Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board
- Longford and Westmeath Education and Training Board
- Louth and Meath Education and Training Board
- Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board
- Tipperary Education and Training Board
- Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board

The Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools (VSCCS)

- St Joseph's Secondary School, Spanish Point, Co. Clare
- Mary Immaculate Secondary School, Lisdoonvarna, Co. Clare
- Scoil Mhuire, Ennistymon, Co. Clare
- North Presentation Secondary School, Farranree, Cork
- Sacred Heart Secondary School, Clonakilty, Co. Cork
- Nagle Rice Secondary School, Doneraile, Co. Cork
- Central College, Sexton Street, Limerick
- Sancta Maria College, Louisburgh, Co. Mayo
- Nagle Centre Presentation Secondary School, Cannon Street, Waterford
- Donahies Community School, Streamville Road, Dublin 13
- Scoil Bernadette, Montenotte, Cork
- St Michaels, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon.

The Schools/Colleges to which Grants are allocated through the DES Post-Primary Payment Section

- Ballyhaunis Community School, Co. Mayo
- Cabinteely Community School, Cabinteely, Dublin 18
- Castlerea Community School, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon
- Castlecomer Community School, Co. Kilkenny
- Central College, Sexton Street, Limerick.
- Clifden Community School, Co. Galway
- Coláiste Mhuire, Ballygar, Co. Galway
- Dunmore Community School, Co. Galway
- Gorey Community School, Gorey, Co. Wexford
- Glenamaddy Community School, Co. Galway
- Kilrush Community School, Co. Clare
- Kinsale Community School, Kinsale, Co. Cork
- Moate Business College, Moate, Co. Westmeath
- Mary Immaculate Secondary School, Lisdoonvarna, Co. Clare
- Mean Scoil Mhuire, Newtownsmith, Galway
- St. Joseph's College, Summerhill, Athlone, Co. Westmeath
- Our Lady's Secondary School, Belmullet, Co. Mayo
- Jesus & Mary Secondary School, Enniscrone, Co. Sligo
- Mercy College, Sligo
- Ramsgrange Community School, New Ross, Co. Wexford
- Sancta Maria College, Louisburgh, Co. Mayo
- St. Aidan's Community School, Brookfield, Tallaght, Dublin 24
- St Cuan's College, Castleblakeney, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway
- St Joseph's Secondary School, Ballybunion, Co. Kerry
- St. Joseph's Secondary School, Spanish Point, Co. Clare
- St Louis Community School, Kiltimagh, Co. Mayo
- St. Patrick's Comprehensive School, Shannon, Co. Clare
- St. Tiernan's Community School, Parkvale, Sandyford, Dublin 16
- Scoil Phobail Mhic Dara, Carna, Co. Galway
- The Donahies Community School, Streamville Rd, Dublin 13
- Tullow Community School, Co. Carlow

Other Providers

The Irish Deaf Society

Agencies and Bodies

Adult Education Guidance Association of Ireland (AEGAI)

Adult Literacy Organisers Association (ALOA)

Age Action Ireland

AONTAS

Community Education Facilitators Association

Dyslexia Association of Ireland

Education and Training Boards Ireland – ITABE
Co-ordinator

European Agenda for Adult Learning
(funding to AONTAS)

Fast Track Into Information Technology

FET – Lifelong Learning Opportunities

Irish Association of Community Training Organisations
(IACTO)

Irish Countrywomen's Association

Léargas EPALE element of Erasmus+

National Adult Literacy Agency

National Association of Adult and Community
Education Directors

National Association of VTOS Coordinators

National Association of Youthreach Coordinators

National Centre for Guidance in Education

People's College

WIT/NALA

WIT/REGSA

Working for Work Publication (Irish National
Organisation for the Unemployed)

Executive Summary

Section 1

Introduction

The Further Education and Training (FET) Services Plan for 2015 provides information on the planning cycle and process, funding allocations, programmes, services and supports and projected programme inputs, outputs and outcomes for the period January to December 2015.

The overall aim of the 2015 FET Services Plan is to provide detail on how the State's investment in Education and Training will be applied across the Further Education and Training sector in the context of Education and Training provision, and the supports and services that will be funded by SOLAS and delivered by the Education and Training Boards, the Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools, and support agencies and bodies in 2015. Planning estimates for FET Provision in 2015 indicate that potentially 369,523 beneficiaries will participate in FET programmes/courses and that subject to demand, potentially 231,234 will be new starters.

Section 2

FET Planning and Funding – 2015

FET Service Plan Development

The 2015 FET Services Plan is the second services plan to be developed by SOLAS. However it is the first integrated services plan for further education and training. This 2015 FET Services Plan sets out high level detail of the FET provision to be funded by SOLAS, who will deliver it, when and where it will be delivered, how much it will cost, and the estimated outputs in terms of completion and certification rates, or progression to higher education and placement into employment.

Investment Priorities for SOLAS

The Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019 provides a focus for SOLAS annual funding and investment priorities. The relevant priorities for 2015 are reflected in the 2015 FET Services Plan. These are:

- Provision of FET programmes to skill, re-skill or up-skill unemployed persons as well as other job seekers to find a job and/or progress to higher/ further education and training that will equip them to compete in the labour market.

- Provision of FET programmes to support a diverse range of individuals seeking personal, social and developmental skills to enable them to engage or re-engage in learning, or to enable them to make a meaningful contribution to society and to their communities, or to progress to further education and training.
- Priority cohorts such as the Long Term Unemployed and unemployed youth and target participation rates across FET provision agreed with DES. The target for people who have been unemployed for a long time remains at the 2014 level of 52,666.

Skills for Employment

The early identification of FET-related skill needs and skill deficits was an essential aspect in informing the 2015 FET Services Plan and in particular management and staff in FET centres/locations that have direct contact with learners, employers and other stakeholders. This was facilitated by the SOLAS internal resource, the SLMRU Unit and its National Skills Database (NSD). Other relevant sources include research by the SOLAS/Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) and national and international research on future skill needs, national, regional and local labour market intelligence, the legislative and regulatory environment, government policy and direct contact with employers by ETBs and by SOLAS.

The skill needs of the economy are a priority for the 2015 planned FET provision and were facilitated through the following activity: e.g:

- The EGFSN Research and Implications for SOLAS report.
- The SOLAS EGFSN National Skills Bulletin 2014.
- The findings of the HEA/SOLAS/QQI commissioned National Employer Survey of employers'
- The placement and monitoring survey of learners who participated in training programmes provided in the ETB training centre network commissioned by SOLAS.
- SOLAS parameters and guideline documents.
- Local labour market intelligence garnered by the ETBs.

Skills in Employment

The key provision in relation to Skills in Employment is provided through the Apprenticeship Programme and the Skills 4 Work Programme (allocation circa €36m in 2015). In terms of workforce development,

SOLAS in conjunction with DES, is developing a policy position to address the challenges of up-skilling in the wider workforce.

Supports for 2015 FET Provision

A number of projects are underway which will support FET provision in 2015. These projects relate to e.g. learner surveys, apprenticeship registration, the establishment of a skills fora and a pilot initiative related to building strategic planning capability.

Equity/Inclusion

The FET Services Plan for 2015 has focused on the active inclusion of people of all abilities. In the context of literacy and numeracy and community based education provision, the funding has been maintained in 2015 as per the FET Strategy.

The FET Strategy also seeks to increase levels of active inclusion through the provision of high quality, more accessible and flexible education, training and skill development interventions and the associated supports suited to the individual. Each ETB has been requested by SOLAS to set out its provision and supports in this regard, for example in the area of provision for persons with a disability, as part of service planning process for 2015.

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement was a key aspect of the 2015 planning and funding process. Views were sought from a range of stakeholders, such as government departments, a number of individual ETBs, the Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools representative groups, agencies and bodies in receipt of funding within the FET Sector, and Units within SOLAS.

Significant Changes to the Planning and Funding Allocations Process for 2015

Significant changes to the planning and funding allocations process has been introduced for 2015. These include:

- Consideration (for the purpose of funding) of FET provision in its entirety rather than programme by programme.
- Stakeholders working to a fixed funding allocation set by SOLAS.
- The requirement that the ETBs and other stakeholders request funding through compilation of a Funding Allocations Requests (FARs) for submission to SOLAS.
- Utilisation of the Funding Allocation Request and Reporting (FARR) database by the ETBs.

Data – Quality, Interpretation and Collection

The overall long-term goal is to develop a fit-for-purpose Planning, Funding and Reporting process for Further Education and Training. Key to successful planning is the availability of reliable data. While the 2015 FET Services Plan represents a significant move forward in terms of embedding a new planning model/process, data yielded at this point are estimates from the professionals in the field without the aid of comprehensive IT Systems for FET. Planned developments related to ICT systems will support the availability of data locally at individual level, and these developments will assist and improve the estimation process in the context of future planning.

Improvement in the Planning Process – SOLAS/ETB Pilot Initiative 2015

The SOLAS FET Strategy Unit has commenced a pilot initiative, with the aim of increasing existing strategic planning capability within SOLAS and the ETB sector. This is a joint ETB/SOLAS collaborative project.

The External Environment

In the development of the 2015 FET Services Plan the external environment was considered at both European and national level in the context of: EU2020 Strategy, National Reform Programme Targets, the labour market, the economy, industries where job opportunities have been identified, etc.

Section 3

Top Level Analysis of 2015 Funding Allocations and Provision

This section of the FET Services Plan provides top level analysis of the 2015 grant allocations for FET and analysis of the 2015 projected FET provision, **inputs**, **outputs** and **outcomes**.

No single metric can describe the overall picture of FET provision. For the purpose of this document the term “Beneficiary” is used to describe the total number of interventions provided for through the FET budget, from which individuals will benefit in a given year irrespective of whether they are present at the start of the year or join a course during the year. Consideration must be also given to the degree of the participation: some learners will partake in a full-time academic course of 33 weeks while others may participate in a five-hour-a-week part-time literacy course, yet both scenarios are considered equally when the term beneficiary is used. In the future FET planning processes will encompass analysis of data to determine full-time equivalents within FET provision. This will facilitate a broader picture of the capacity of FET provision.

The 2015 FET Services Plan provides for a total budget allocation of €643.5m (€3m carried forward from 2014), to be made available for SOLAS-funded further education and training provision in 2015. The total amount allocated to SOLAS in 2015 is €637.485m, including capital of €3.0m. This is comprised of €335.769m in Exchequer funding and €301.716m from the National Training Fund. Estimated other income of €3.015m and funding brought forward from 2014 will allow a budget of circa €643.5m to be set. The available funding to SOLAS for FET grants and the source of this funding is set out below.

- The Department of Education and Skills will continue to fund the PLC and Co-Operation Hours Provision (Teacher Pay and Student Capitation). This is estimated at €186m for 2015.
- It is estimated that 369,523 places will be made available for learners to benefit from SOLAS-funded FET programmes and services in 2015 (341,726 places in 2014). This figure will include 231,234 new entrants (215,929 new entrants in 2014) expected to participate in FET provision in 2015.
- Approximately 60% of all provision in 2015 will be for individuals who require introductory level courses/supports (across FET programmes up to Level 4 on NFQ or equivalent) to assist them with progression back to employment over a longer timeframe.
- 7,096 apprentices will benefit from phase 2, 4 & 6 training provision in 2015 (5,096 in 2014) The overall population of apprentices at various stages of their apprenticeship in 2015 is estimated to be 7,400.

Analysis of Data Submitted through the Funding Allocations Requests and Reporting (FARR) Mechanism

FARR was developed for utilisation in the 2015 planning and funding process. FARR is a web application linked to a database which has the capacity to capture quantitative data in a questionnaire format. Data available through the FARR database has been collated and presented in table form as follows:

- **Table 3.3 Education and Training Board and other Provider View of Provision Inputs and Outputs 2015**
Breakdown of beneficiary numbers and grant allocations by ETB and other providers for 2015. Estimated numbers of starters, completers and certification rates by ETB and other providers is also presented (pg. 27/28).

- **Table 3.4 ETBs without a Training Centre – Training Provision**

The position in relation to the management of the training provision within the ETB areas where there is no training centre. This arrangement will remain in place until the phase 3 transfers between the ETBs concerned is concluded (pg. 29).

- **Table 3.5 Programmatic View of Provision Inputs and Outputs**

Information related to provision inputs and outputs on a programme by programme basis (pg. 30).

- **Table 3.6 Estimate of Change to FET Programme Provision in 2015 from 2014 on a Plan-to-Plan basis**

Information on changes that ETBs and other providers indicated in their plans as likely to occur during 2015 in relation to FET beneficiary/participant numbers: e.g. it is expected that apprenticeship numbers will rise considerably in 2015. The information provided is presented in relation to full-time, part-time and unaccredited provision across FET programmes (pg. 31).

- **Table 3.7 Estimate of Change to FET Cluster Provision in 2015 from 2014 on a Plan-to-Plan basis**

Information on changes that the ETBs and other providers have indicated in their plans that are likely to occur during 2015 in relation to FET beneficiary/participant numbers in the context of movement across career clusters (pg. 32).

- **Table 3.8 General Learning Cluster – Key Contributors**

The main contributors to the general learning cluster (pg. 33).

- **Table 3.9 New Programmes/Courses to be offered in 2015**

Examples provided by the ETBs in relation to planned new programmes/courses for 2015 (pg. 34).

- **Chart 3.1 Estimated Number of Beneficiaries expected to Participate in FET Programmes in 2015**

Information on the estimated numbers of beneficiaries that will participate in FET Programmes in 2015 (pg. 35).

- **Chart 3.2 Estimate of Outcomes in the Context of Completion/Exit for Beneficiaries Participating in FET Provision 2015**

Information presented in percentage terms in relation to estimated participation by beneficiaries in full-time, part-time, and Community Education programmes (pg. 35).

— **Chart 3.3 Estimate of Outcomes in the Context of Progression for Beneficiaries Completing FET Provision 2015**

Information on estimate of progression outcomes (pg. 36).

— **Table 3.10 Estimates for Specific Target Groups Participating in FET Provision in 2015**

Estimated detail related to learners reported as Long Term Unemployed and learners reported as persons with a disability participating in FET provision in 2015 (pg. 38).

— **Table 3.11 Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools BTEI Grant Allocations**

A list of Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools that will receive grant allocations through SOLAS during 2015 for the purpose of BTEI provision (pg. 40).

— **Table 3.12 Voluntary Secondary & Community and Comprehensive Schools Approved PLC Places**

Detail of the total number of Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools approved PLC places for 2015 (pg. 40).

— **Table 3.13 Grant Allocations in 2015 for Additional Provision**

Grant detail related to the services provided by the Irish Deaf Society e.g. provision of literacy courses for the deaf community through the medium of Irish Sign Language (the deaf community first/ preferred language), (pg. 40).

— **Table 3.14**

Details of the 2014 provision; actual data is the reported data from ETBs and SOLAS National Programmes for their 2014 outturn (pg. 40).

— **Table 3.15**

Details of the comparison of the 2014 actual position for FET provision to the 2015 FET planned provision (pg. 41).

SOLAS Grant Allocations to Agencies and Bodies in the Further Education and Training Sector

Tables 3.16 to 3.21 provide detail pertaining to grant allocations to agencies and bodies in the Further Education and Training Sector as follows:

— **Table 3.16** FET – Support Organisations (pg. 43).

— **Table 3.17** FET – Lifelong Learning Opportunities (pg. 43).

— **Table 3.18** FET–Staff Representative Organisations, these Associations Support Practitioners in the FET Sector (pg. 44).

— **Table 3.19** FET – CPD Provision (pg. 44).

— **Table 3.20** EU and Specific Projects details (pg. 44).

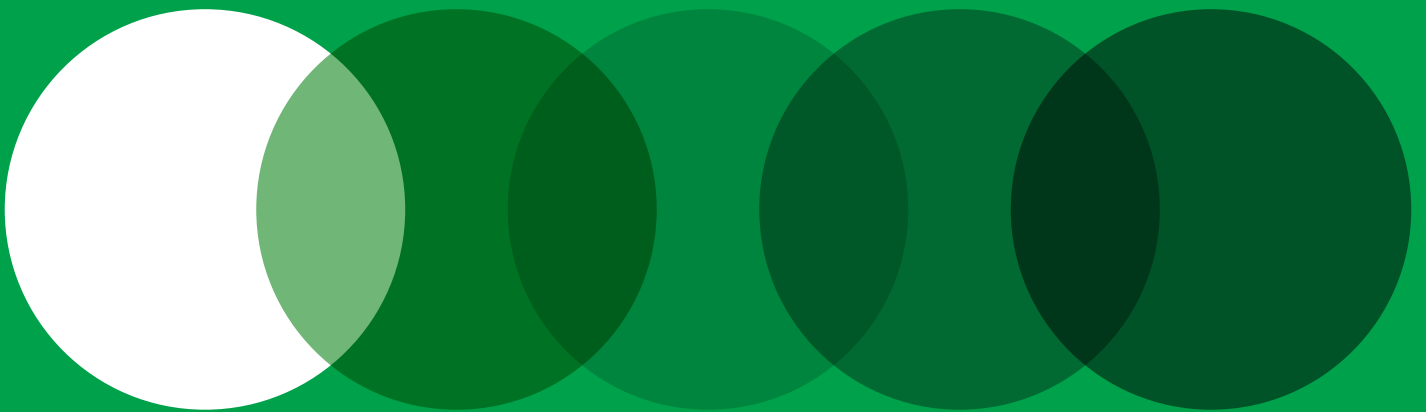
— **Table 3.21** Overall Summary Total of Specific Budget Allocations for 2015 (pg. 44).

Section 4
Appendices

Lists of Tables and Charts etc. are located in the Appendices section of the document.

Section 1

Introduction



Introduction

The Further Education and Training (FET) Services Plan for 2015 sets out the range and volume of provision that will be provided by the FET sector in 2015 within the grant allocated to SOLAS by the Department of Education and Skills.

The development of the *Programme for Government*, and the subsequent development and publication of the *Public Service Reform Plan 2014 to 2016*, set the agenda for pervasive reform across all areas of the public sector. In the context of the Further Education and Training (FET) sector, the reform agenda has resulted in the:

- Enactment of the Further Education and Training Act 2013.
- Enactment of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013.
- Amalgamation of the Vocational Education Committees (VECs) to establish sixteen Education and Training Boards.
- Dissolution of FÁS.
- Establishment of SOLAS.
- Integration of the further education and training sectors through the transfer of responsibility for training to the 16 new Education and Training Boards.
- Establishment of Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI).
- Review of Apprenticeship and the establishment of the Apprenticeship Council.
- Development of the first five year Further Education and Training Strategy 2014 to 2019 – published by SOLAS in 2014.
- Development of the first Further Education and Training Services Plan – published by SOLAS in 2014.

Reform of the FET sector is on-going. The goals set in relation to the FET sector within the *Public Service Reform Plan 2014 to 2016*, and reflected in the *FET Strategy 2014 – 2019* for the FET sector, will build incrementally to shape the FET sector of the future. Achievement of these goals by the FET sector will provide a solid basis on which to contribute to a knowledge society, support a recovering economy, and will also play a substantial part in sustaining future economic growth.

The Overall Aim of the 2015 Further Education and Training Services Plan

The overall aim of the 2015 FET Services Plan is to provide detail on how the State's investment in Education and Training will be applied across the Further Education and Training sector in the context of education and training provision; and in relation

to the supports and services that will be funded by SOLAS and delivered by the Education and Training Boards, the Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools, and support agencies and bodies in 2015.

The FET Services Plan 2015 provides information on the planning cycle and process, funding allocations, programmes, services and supports and projected programme inputs, outputs and outcomes for the period January to December 2015.

This Further Education and Training Services Plan 2015 has been prepared by the SOLAS Executive in partnership with ETB Boards and other providers, and has involved interaction and collaboration with various stakeholders: e.g. the Department of Education and Skills (DES), SOLAS, the Education and Training Boards (ETBs), the Department of Social Protection (DSP), the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (D-PER), Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation (DJEI), Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI), and management and staff across all the FET providers and FET sector planning and representative groups as appropriate.

How information will be presented

Information will be presented through two media:

- 1 Through this publication, which contains high level information in relation to:
 - The approach to funding and planning for 2015 and the external environment at the time the document was drafted.
 - Top level analysis of 2015 Funding Allocations and Provision.
 - Analysis of Data Submitted through the Funding Allocations Requests and Reporting (FARR) Mechanism.

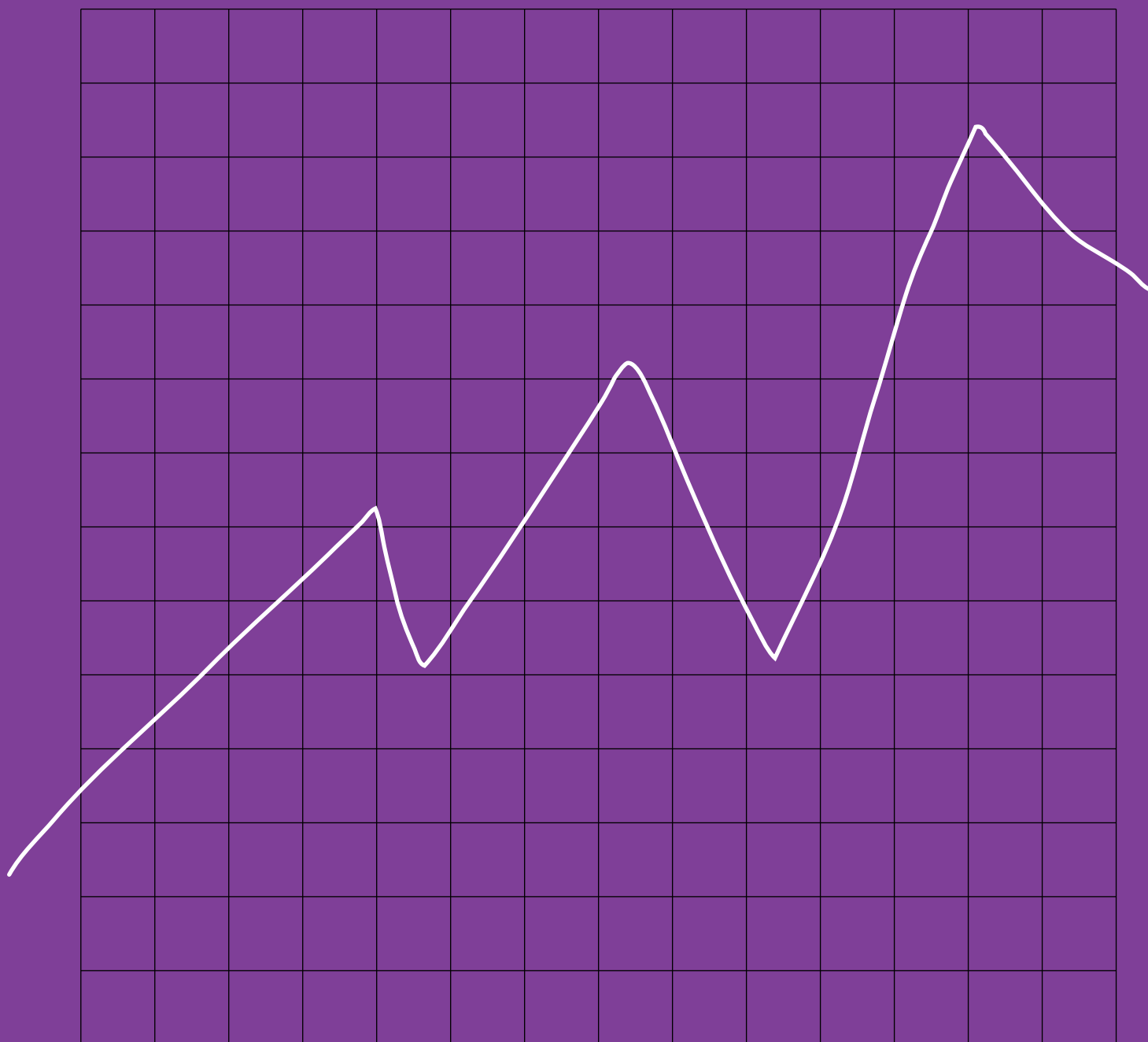
Appendices to the document include:

- List of Tables and Charts.
- Summary of the Further Education and Training (FET) Support Organisations Planned Activities for 2015.
- List of Schools and Colleges in receipt of PLC Grants.
- FET Supports Provided for Further Education and Training Learners.
- Business Sector – identification of Skills Needs.
- List of Definitions.
- List of Acronyms.

- 2 On the SOLAS website through the following link: solas.ie/servicesplan where an e copy of this publication and additional information and statistics are available.

Section 2

FET Planning and Funding 2015



SOLAS Strategic Funding Approach

FET is part of the national education infrastructure. It focuses on contributing to both the collective good (social) and the economy, and recognises that the success of one is often dependent on, and contributes directly to, the success of the other. Both the learner and the economy are viewed as part of an integrated perspective that sees FET contributing to the wellbeing of society as a whole by meeting the needs of the individual, communities, employers and the economy.

The Planning Process for FET Provision 2015

SOLAS (An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna) was formally established on 27th October 2013 and from that time, operating under the aegis of the Department of Education and Skills, became responsible for planning and funding allocations related to the Further Education and Training (FET) sector. Funding allocations for 2014 FET provision were agreed by the Department of Education and Skills in advance of the establishment of SOLAS. The 2015 FET planning and funding process is therefore the first to be carried out entirely by SOLAS.

FET Service Plan Development

The 2015 FET Services Plan is the second services plan to be developed by SOLAS. However it is the first integrated services plan for further education and training. This plan provides a 'national snapshot' of the type and volume of estimated FET programmes and services that will be provided by ETBs, (the primary providers of SOLAS-funded FET), and by a small number of Voluntary Secondary, Community and Comprehensive schools and colleges. It also provides a snapshot of the range of FET-related services provided by other agencies and bodies, within the funding allocated by SOLAS, having taken into account:

- On-going reforms of the FET sector.
- Implementation of the FET Strategy 2014-2019 (development of a new outcomes-based funding and planning model).
- The economic, employment and social inclusion priorities of Government.
- The volume and range of programmes and services to be provided.

This FET Services Plan sets out high level detail of the FET provision to be funded by SOLAS, who will deliver it, when and where it will be delivered, how much it will cost, and the estimated outputs in terms of completion and certification rates, or progression to higher education and placement into employment.

Key Considerations

The 2015 planning process identified and considered a number of key developments and emerging needs which have the potential to impact on FET provision in 2015 and beyond which included:

- EU2020 Strategy.
- The 2013 Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC).
- Key priorities and challenges for Ireland as set out in the National Reform Programme 2011.
- Publication of the Further Education and Training Strategy 2014 -2019 which provides a roadmap for the FET sector.
- The need to focus on progressing the relevant FET Strategy actions under Strategic Goal 1, Skills for the Economy; Goal 2, Active Inclusion and Literacy and Numeracy; Goal 3, Quality Provision; Goal 4, Integrated Planning and Funding; and Goal 5, Standing of FET as set out in the Detailed SOLAS Implementation Plan.
- Progressing the FET Strategy through implementation of the new strategic planning process.
- The changing landscape as a result of the economy entering a period of recovery and a return to growth.
- The needs of the individual learner in the context of the advent of a recovering economy.
- Meeting the needs of employers and the Long Term Unemployed (LTU)
- Ensuring targets and commitments in the context of the Long Term Unemployed (LTU) etc. are progressed.
- The ability to meet labour market skill needs, while at the same time meeting the goal of active inclusion.
- The Government's Action Plan for Jobs 2015.
- Pathways to Work 2015.
- The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (D-PER) circular 13/2014 September 2014.
- Progressing an outcomes based funding model.
- Implementing the literacy and numeracy strategy.
- Ensuring commitments/targets relating to ETBs and SOLAS in the 2013 National Disability Strategy are progressed.
- Support initiatives and roll out of the Government Youth Guarantee (YG).

Investment Priorities for SOLAS

The Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019 provides a focus for SOLAS' annual funding and investment priorities. The relevant priorities for 2015 are reflected in the FET Services Plan. These are:

- Provision of FET programmes to skill, re-skill or up-skill unemployed persons as well as other job seekers to find a job and/or progress to higher/further education and training that will equip them to compete in the labour market.
- Provision of FET programmes to support a diverse range of individuals seeking personal, social and developmental skills to enable them to engage or re-engage in learning, or to enable them to make a meaningful contribution to society and to their communities, or to progress to further education and training.
- Priority cohorts identified, such as the Long Term Unemployed and unemployed youth, and target participation rates across FET provision agreed with DES. The target for people who have been unemployed for a long time remains at the 2014 level of 52,666.

Skills for Employment

The early identification of FET-related skill needs and skill deficits was an essential aspect in informing the 2015 FET Services Plan and in particular management and staff in FET centres/locations that have direct contact with learners, employers and other stakeholders. This was facilitated by the SOLAS SLMRU Unit and through its National Skills Database (NSD). Other relevant sources include research by the SOLAS/Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) and national and international research on future skill needs, national, regional and local labour market intelligence, the legislative and regulatory environment, government policy and direct contact with employers by ETBs and by SOLAS.

The skill needs of the economy are a priority for the 2015 planned FET provision, and are facilitated through the following activity:

- SOLAS parameter/guidelines documentation issued to ETBs, the Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools, and support agencies and bodies with regard to the development of the 2015 planned FET provision, supports and services set out a requirement - among others - to consider employment, skill shortages and vacancy trends in the labour market to inform FET education, training and skill provision for 2015. In addition a briefing in that regard was provided by the SLMRU Unit to ETBs on request.
- The SOLAS, SLMRU Unit, prepared the EGFSN Research and Implications for SOLAS document (Jan 2015) which outlines existing and emerging skills shortages identified in the National Skills Bulletin 2014 and provides an easy to read summary of that analysis. The analysis points to

the transitory nature of employment in relation to a number of occupations, and focuses on selected recommendations by the EGFSN regarding policy responses to address issues with supply of skills across economic sectors (for example manufacturing, retail, ICT, logistics, marine) with a particular focus on the recommendations pertaining to ETBs and to SOLAS. This too was incorporated into the labour market briefings provided by SOLAS.

- SOLAS published an annual regional labour market profile to assist ETBs in the annual business planning process as well as a range of education and other bodies and government departments with regard to aligning related provision and supports in their immediate catchment areas to the labour market.
- Local labour market intelligence was garnered by the ETBs themselves who are best positioned to respond to skill needs through their own local and regional employer networks. This is a critical element in providing an overall high quality labour market intelligence infrastructure, especially when it merges local and regional data with national trends and is utilised in the planning process.
- Through the agreed FET service planning parameters documentation issued to the ETBs and other bodies, SOLAS requested that specific examples of relevant new programmes to be developed/offered in 2015 (and in subsequent years) to meet identified local, regional and national skill needs and job opportunities relating to specific business sectors, be highlighted. The outcomes of ETB deliberations in this regard are detailed in the 2015 FET Services Plan.
- SOLAS independently commissioned a placement and monitoring survey of learners who participate on training programmes that are currently provided in the ETB training centre network. The most recent such survey was published in 2014. The majority of survey participants were on the Live Register prior to taking up their course. The survey identified outcomes that were largely positive in a challenging economic environment, with a high level of relevance of technical and soft skills imparted on a range of employment-led courses mentioned by those who were surveyed.
- SOLAS is supporting the ETBs in new programme development based on the needs of the economy, where a targeted number of national Career Traineeships have been identified. Career Traineeships involve partnerships between ETBs and local companies to offer work-based learning as part of programmes focused on specific career pathways. Programmes are being piloted by a

number of ETBs to meet identified employer FET needs in the hospitality, horticulture and manufacturing/engineering sectors.

- SOLAS/ETB work is progressing to develop processes and systems called the Programme and Learner Support System (PLSS) which will incorporate a national FET course database, a national FET course calendar and a national FET learner database that will enable SOLAS, among other things, to access real time data on outputs and outcomes from all SOLAS-funded FET programmes and services.
- The FET provision and the services plan is also informed by a bottom-up approach where the emphasis by ETBs is on capturing local education, training and skill needs identified through their own local/regional employer and community networks.

Skills in Employment

The key provision in relation to Skills in Employment (allocation circa €36m in 2015) is provided through the Apprenticeship Programme (circa €33m) and the Skills 4 Work Programme (circa €3m). In terms of workforce development, SOLAS in conjunction with DES is developing a policy position to address the challenges of up-skilling in the wider workforce.

Other related developments

A number of projects are underway which will support FET provision in 2015, e.g:

- A 2015 survey relating to learners who completed training programmes in 2014 is being finalised.
- Preparatory SOLAS discussions with the ETB and HEIs with regard to managing the increase in new apprentice registrations for existing designated trades, as well as the development and roll-out of new employer-led apprenticeship proposals that will be evaluated/approved by the newly established National Apprenticeship Council from May 2015 onwards.
- The Department of Education and Skills (DES) proposal to establish regional structures for engagement between DES providers (ETBs, Institutes of Technology, Universities, Skillnets), employers and other stakeholders on skills and related issues is well advanced. The process to establish the regional skills fora is being supported by SOLAS and the SLMRU Unit in particular, together with the HEA and Skillnets. This work will also inform a planned review of the national skills infrastructure. This review will be undertaken as part of the development of the new Skills Strategy, and the new regional and national infrastructure, and will be set out in the new Skills Strategy when it is published during 2015.

- Commencement in 2015 of a pilot initiative by SOLAS in collaboration with the ETB sector to build on existing strategic planning capability in the FET sector. Please refer to page 20: Improvement in the Planning Process – SOLAS/ETB Pilot Initiative 2015.

Equity/Inclusion

In relation to the 2013 Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC), (where Ireland performed below average across a range of indicators), the Services Plan for 2015 has focused on the active inclusion of people of all abilities, including access to a job and relevant and meaningful education and training. Within this, the objective of promoting numeracy and literacy across FET provision is very important as part of the implementation of a Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, and the 'how to' part of implementing such a strategy is clearly articulated in the FET Strategy itself.

In that regard:

- The funding for both literacy and numeracy provision and for community-based education has been maintained in 2015 as per the FET Strategy, and will remain in place until an agreed strategic inputs/outcomes-based funding model has been trialled and tested on other types of FET provision.
- The FET Strategy also seeks to increase levels of active inclusion through the provision of high quality, more accessible and flexible education, training and skill development interventions and the associated supports suited to the individual. Each ETB has been requested by SOLAS to set out its provision and supports in this regard; for example in the area of provision for persons with a disability as part of service planning process for 2015.

Supporting Quality Provision through the Professional Development of FET Personnel

The professional development of personnel working in Further Education and Training has been acknowledged by the OECD and the EU Commission amongst others, as a key measure to improve the quality of learning at all levels.

In line with the above, SOLAS intends to work closely with the ETBs and other partners to develop supports and structures for the professional development of FET Practitioners in Ireland.

SOLAS intends working closely with ETBs to:

- Develop a Skills Profile Project to report on the existing skill-base of the ETB workforce involved in the provision of FET programmes.
- Develop, in consultation with the FET sector, a strategy for the Continuing Professional Development of FET staff, informed by the outputs

of the Skills Profile Project.

- Support DES-led consultations on the development of a qualifications pathway for the FET personnel.

Stakeholder Engagement

To gain insight into the identified and emerging needs of our stakeholders, the planning and funding process for 2015 prioritised engagement with stakeholders to seek their views. e.g. government departments, individual ETBs, the Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools representative groups, agencies and bodies in receipt of funding within the FET Sector and Units within SOLAS,

The planning process also involved the formal establishment of the SOLAS/ETB representative group whose contribution to planning for 2015 was invaluable. In addition, links with the Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools' representative groups were established, and liaison with all stakeholders is on-going.

New Funding and Governance Developments for 2015

Historically, funding allocations were agreed by the Department of Education and Skills on a programme-by-programme basis with individual VECs/ETBs. Given the significant structural reforms that have taken place across the FET sector it has become necessary to review, in its totality, the approach to agreement of grant allocations.

The Further Education and Training Strategy commits to the replacement of the legacy funding formula through development of a strategic input/outcomes based funding model for all FET provision. This new funding model will evolve over time and will be informed by feedback on existing funding models, relevant stakeholders, and by national and international best practice.

Significant Change to the Planning and Funding Allocations Process for 2015

Significant change to the planning and funding allocations process has been introduced for 2015. The 2015 strategic approach to planning and funding was to consider FET provision in its entirety rather than programmatically. The aim of this approach was to facilitate the identification of gaps and overlaps in provision, and also to identify where provision met the provision need as required. In 2015 stakeholders in receipt of funding will operate within their fixed funding allocation as set by SOLAS. The ETBs and other stakeholders requested funding for 2015 through compilation of a Funding Allocations Requests (FARs) for submission to SOLAS.

Funding Allocations Requests (FARs)

The purpose of the Funding Allocations Requests system is:

- To provide a coherent mechanism through which funding can be requested by the ETBs, Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools, and agencies and bodies for all proposed FET provision and funded supports and services.
- To provide a coherent mechanism through which Funding Allocations Requests can be presented for approval to the SOLAS Board.
- To ensure that required statistical information/data related to FET provision is available for collation by SOLAS to inform future planning and for provision to other stakeholders (e.g. DES, DSP, DPER etc.).

To support the compilation and submission of 2015 Funding Allocations Requests, stakeholder-specific Overarching Planning and Funding Parameters and Guidelines documents were developed for the following:

- Education and Training Boards (ETBs).
- Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools.
- Agencies and bodies in receipt of funding.

In addition the Funding Allocation Request and Reporting database (FARR) was developed to assist in the recording of required data. Information on the overarching planning and funding parameters and guidelines and support mechanisms was disseminated by SOLAS to the relevant stakeholder groups through provision of seminars, briefings and training as appropriate.

FET providers have access to the new FARR (Funding Allocation Request and Reporting) database through which provision is assembled on a course type and programme basis. This has culminated in the completion of a summary Funding Allocations Requests submitted by each provider, which must not exceed the fixed funding total. A fundamental part of the 2015 Funding and Planning Cycle included the need for providers to plan within a fixed funding ceiling set by SOLAS.

The key principle in the planning process is that the grantee (ETB or other FET organisation) will review and build upon their FET services provision. ETBs will take cognisance of local and national education and training and labour market needs, and work to SOLAS' Overarching Planning and Funding Parameters and Guidelines and to the total grant allocation set by SOLAS for planning purposes. Providers will also take cognisance of learners' and employers' education and

training requirements, and will have demonstrated value for money in their Funding Allocations Requests.

Data – Quality, Interpretation and Collection

The overall long-term goal is to develop a fit-for-purpose Planning, Funding and Reporting process for Further Education and Training. The planning process for 2015 is the first year of a three-year cycle in developing a new planning and funding model. It seeks to learn from the 2014 process and to embark on a collaborative journey, working with the ETBs and the Voluntary Secondary and the Community and Comprehensive Schools to achieve this goal. Planned developments related to ICT systems will support the availability of data locally at individual level, and these developments will assist and improve the estimation process in the context of future planning.

Key to successful planning is the availability of reliable data. While the 2015 FET Services Plan represents a significant move forward in terms of embedding a new planning model/process, the data yielded at this point are estimates from the professionals in the field without the aid of comprehensive IT System for FET. The funding allocations in Section 3 of this document are based on estimates from the professionals in the field. The capability to estimate will be improved greatly over the coming years through the rollout of the Programme and Learner Support System (PLSS) and its linkage to the FARR database.

Improvement in the Planning Process – SOLAS/ETB Pilot Initiative 2015

The SOLAS FET Strategy Unit has commenced a pilot initiative, with the aim of increasing existing strategic planning capability within SOLAS and the ETB sector. This is a joint SOLAS/ETB collaborative project. SOLAS is working with three ETBs namely, Cork ETB, Laois Offaly ETB and Donegal ETB to develop a model for consideration by the ETB sector as a whole, to enable the effective implementation across the ETB sector of the Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy. In this regard, additional support will be provided to the three ETBs by the Strategy Programme Office in SOLAS. It is intended that the results of the pilot initiative will be considered by the ETB sector, SOLAS and DES and will subsequently inform the 2016 FET planning process which is due to commence during the latter part of 2015.

The External Environment

In the development of the 2015 Further Education and Training Services Plan, the external environment was considered at both European and National level. The following information was provided by the ESF and EGF and Operations Unit within the Department of Education and Skills via the SOLAS Finance Unit.

The European Perspective

EU2020 Strategy

Europe 2020 is the European Union's ten-year growth and jobs strategy that was launched in 2010. It is about overcoming the crisis from which our economies are now gradually recovering, addressing the shortcomings of our growth model, and creating the conditions for a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Five headline targets have been set for the EU to achieve by the end of 2020. These cover employment; research and development; climate/energy; education; social inclusion and poverty reduction.¹

National Reform Programme Targets

The key priorities and challenges for Ireland have been set out in the National Reform Programme 2011. Principal among the targets set in that primary national strategy, framed in the context of achieving the EU2020 objectives, are targets central to the ESF mission and objectives. These are:

Target 1. Employment Ireland's Headline Target

*"To raise to 69-71% the employment rate for women and men aged 20-64, including through the greater participation of young people, older workers and low-skilled workers, and the better integration of legal migrants, and to review the target level of ambition in 2014 in the context of a proposed mid-term review of the Europe 2020 Strategy."*²

Target 4. Education Ireland's Headline Target

*"To reduce the percentage of 18-24 year olds with at most lower secondary education and not in further education and training to 8%; to increase the share of 30-34 year olds who have completed tertiary or equivalent education to at least 60%."*³

Target 5. Poverty Ireland's Revised Headline Targets

*"To reduce consistent poverty to 4% by 2016 (interim target) and to 2% or less by 2020, from the 2010 baseline rate of 6.3%. The Irish contribution to the Europe 2020 poverty target is to reduce by a minimum of 200,000 the population in combined poverty (either consistent poverty, at-risk-of-poverty or basic deprivation)."*⁴

Role of the ESF in achieving the NRP and national policy targets in employment and inclusion

From the foregoing, one can see clearly that the key

1 Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014-2020 (Supported by the European Social Fund)

2 Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014-2020 (Supported by the European Social Fund)

3 Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014-2020 (Supported by the European Social Fund)

4 Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014-2020 (Supported by the European Social Fund)

priorities for Ireland are: *reducing unemployment (in particular long term and youth unemployment) through increasing skills levels relevant to the labour market opportunities, improving education levels and progressing towards social inclusion objectives.*⁵

As outlined, the mission and role of the ESF is directly relevant to the delivery of the necessary interventions to help get our unemployed workforce up-skilled and re-skilled in order to be able to avail of emerging employment opportunities. The emergence of jobs in new sectors and the skills profile required to meet that demand in the labour market pose challenges for Ireland. The sectoral nature and skills profile of those new jobs must be matched by the training, education and up-skilling offers from the systems that are producing the people to fill them. The areas where identified skills shortages exist must be targeted by relevant education, training and work experience programmes, including labour market activation programmes. Evidence of growth in self-employment and entrepreneurship must also be supported through relevant up-skilling and re-skilling opportunities for those seeking to follow that path.⁶

The ESF Thematic Objectives are well-suited to accommodate investment that will tackle the needs identified for the Irish labour market recovery. These are:

- Promoting Sustainable and Quality Employment and Supporting Labour Mobility.
- Promoting Social Inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination.
- Investing in Education, Training and Vocational Training in social enterprises and the social and solidarity economy in order to facilitate access to employment.⁷

The National Perspective

Targeted Education and Training Initiatives

As part of the Government's Action Plan for Jobs and Pathways to Work, the Department of Education and Skills will continue to develop high quality education and training to support unemployed people to return to employment by accessing reskilling.⁸

The external environment in the context of the recovering economy and labour market skill requirements was also considered as part of the

planning and funding process for 2015. All stakeholders preparing a Funding Allocations Request for submission to SOLAS were asked to consider the external environment in the context of the following:

Labour Market Considerations

Economy

Between 2013 and 2014, a growth of 3.3% was recorded for the Gross National Product (GNP), while the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased by 0.2%. In 2014 however, GDP is estimated to have grown by 5.1%, compared with the growth in GNP of 3.9%. The difference between the two measures is usually attributed to the net factor income payments to the rest of the world, with unusually large impact attributed to the export growth observed in 2014 arising from contract manufacturing outside the State.⁹

Further improvements in macroeconomic indicators are expected for 2015 and 2016:

- GDP is projected to grow by 3.7% in 2015 and a further 3.7% in 2016.
- GNP is expected to grow by 3.3% and 3.5% in 2015 and 2016 respectively.
- Employment is expected to grow by approximately 2% in 2015 and in 2016.
- Unemployment is expected to average 10.4% in 2015 and 9.3% in 2016.¹⁰

Labour Market

At the time planning of the 2015 FET provision commenced, almost all indicators for 2013 pointed toward improvements in the labour market. Thus between 2012 and 2013:

- The labour force grew by 10,000, or 0.4%. The labour force participation rate increased by 0.3 percentage points to 60.2%.
- Employment increased by 43,300 and the employment rate by 1.4 percentage points to 60.5%.
- Unemployment levels declined by almost 34,000. There were also declines in the unemployment rate (to 13.1%), the long term unemployment rate, and the broad unemployment measure (combining unemployed and part-time underemployed persons).
- Redundancies declined from 33,072 to 13,628.

5 Programme for Employability inclusion and Learning 2014-2020 (Supported by the European Social Fund)

6 Programme for Employability inclusion and Learning 2014-2020 (Supported by the European Social Fund)

7 Programme for Employability inclusion and Learning 2014-2020 (Supported by the European Social Fund)

8 "National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030", published January 2011

9 Contract manufacturing can occur when an Irish-resident firm (not necessarily Irish-owned) contracts a manufacturer abroad to produce a good for supply to an end-client abroad; CSO Balance of Payments & Trade Statistics; Irish Fiscal Advisory Council, (November 2014) Fiscal Assessment Report; Central Bank of Ireland, Quarterly Bulletin, January 2015.

10 Assuming a continuation of the labour market trend observed in 2014; Central Bank of Ireland, Quarterly Bulletins April 2014 and January 2015; Department of Finance, A Strategy for Growth 2014-2020, December 2013.

The most recent data available (Q3 2014) at the time of planning 2015 FET provision indicated that most of the improvements highlighted above continued during 2014. Employment had increased for eight consecutive quarters (to Q3 2014), albeit showing signs of moderation when compared to 2013. Nevertheless, there was an annual increase in employment of 1.5% or 27,700 in the year to the third quarter of 2014. At the same time, there was a decrease in unemployment by approximately 37,500 (in the year to Q3 2014), with a decrease in long term unemployment accounting for a considerable share of the decrease. Finally, the youth unemployment rate decreased from 26.5% to 23.2% year-on-year (to Q3 2014).¹¹

However, a number of issues persist

- In quarter 4 2013, the unemployment rate continued to be high for certain segments of the labour market: e.g. persons previously employed in construction (30%); persons aged under 25 (24.2%); persons holding less than higher secondary education (18%); and persons previously employed in elementary occupations (15%).
- While there was a decline (of 1,300) in net outward migration between 2012 and 2013, the net number of Irish emigrants increased.
- Labour force is estimated to have contracted in 2014 by almost 10,000 persons. It is estimated that emigration contributed to this contraction; in Q3 2014 this negative demographic effect contributed 13,000 persons to the overall decline in the labour force. This negative demographic effect is exclusively concentrated in the 20-24 and 25-34 age groups.

Job Opportunities

Job opportunities can arise due to replacement demand, turnover or expansion demand.

- **Replacement demand** refers to the skills demand arising from retirements and other exits from employment (excluding vacancies arising from turnover within an occupation).
- **Turnover** refers to the demand arising from people changing employers or occupations within the labour market.
- **Expansion demand** refers to the demand for skills as a result of employment growth.

Job opportunities arise continuously due to the attrition of the existing workforce, as persons leave employment due to retirements, illness, emigration or withdrawal from the labour force to home duties, study and other reasons. Although attrition results in job openings in all occupations, in absolute terms the replacement demand is greater in occupations in which large numbers of persons are employed.

The Irish labour market is flexible, with large volumes of movements observed annually between unemployment, employment and inactivity.¹² In addition, there is a large volume of movements associated with changes of occupations and employers. These movements - usually referred to as turnover - while not associated with a net increase in the number of jobs available, still create opportunities to compete in the labour market. They also provide opportunities for vertical movements along the skills scale for those in employment.

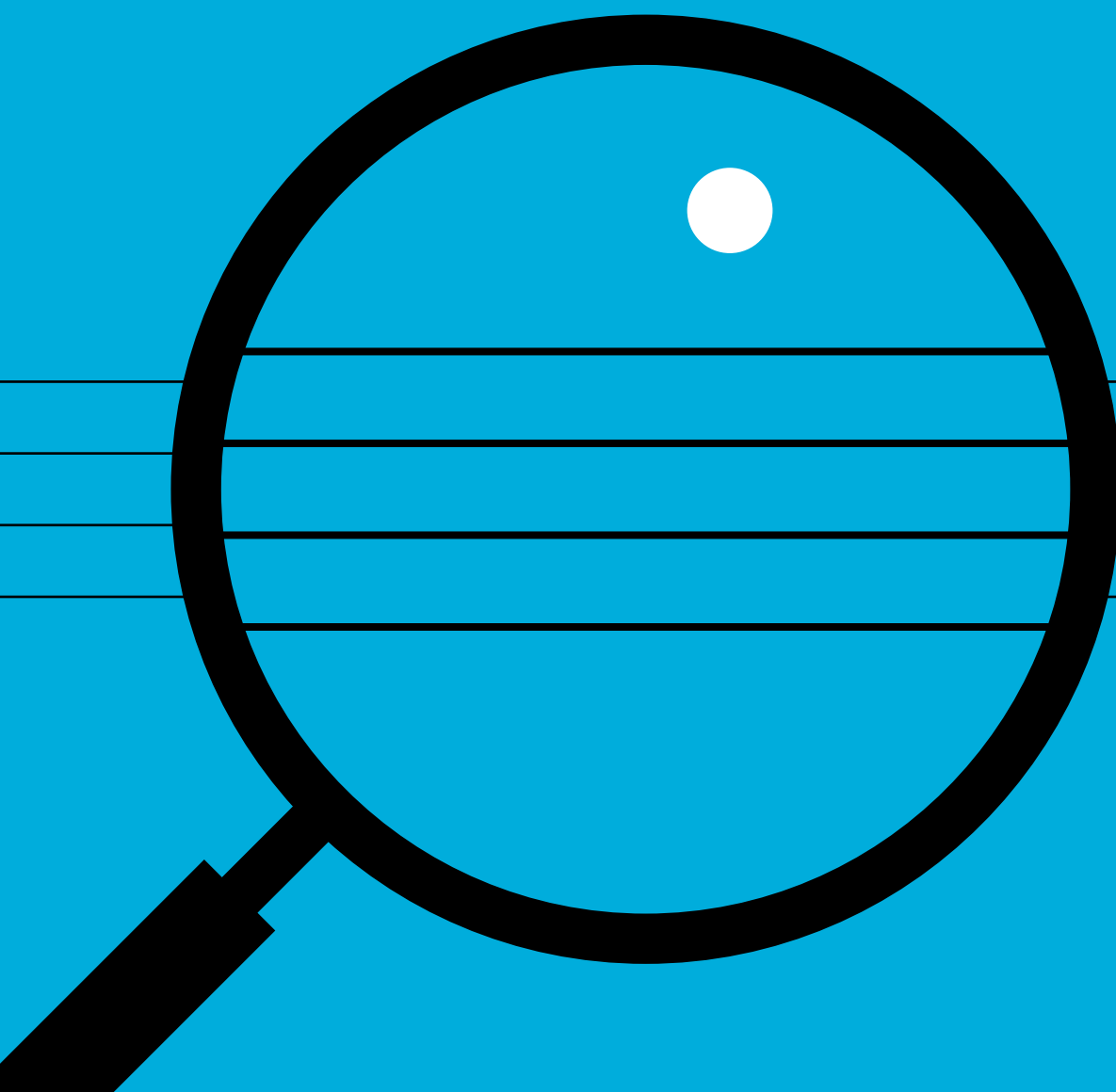
A significant majority of vacancies advertised over the last five years have been associated with replacement and turnover demand. During this period there were very few areas in which job opportunities arose due to expansion demand. Recent developments in the economy suggest that job opportunities arising from expansion demand might be on the rise. (See Appendix 5 for additional information.)

¹¹ CSO, QNHS (Q3 2014).

¹² The information presented here is based on the transitions analysis published in the National Skills Bulletin 2014, Expert Group on Future Skills Needs. The analysis used the CSO Quarterly National Household Survey data to follow the movements of individuals from one labour market status to another (i.e. transitions between employment, unemployment and inactivity), as well as between and within occupations. Replacement demand is estimated as exits to inactivity plus net exits due to inter-occupational movements.

Section 3

Top Level Analysis of
2015 Funding Allocations
and Provision



This section of the FET Services Plan provides top level analysis of the 2015 grant allocations for FET and analysis of the 2015 projected FET provision, inputs, outputs and outcomes. No single metric can describe the overall picture of FET provision. For the purpose of this document the term beneficiary is used to describe the total number of interventions provided for through the FET budget from which individuals will benefit in a given year irrespective of whether they are present at the start of the year or join a course during the year. Consideration must be also given to the degree of the participation: some learners will partake in a full-time academic course of 33 weeks, while others may participate in a five-hour-a-week part-time literacy course, yet both scenarios are considered equally when the term beneficiary is used. In the future, FET planning processes will encompass analysis of data to determine full-time equivalents within FET provision. This will facilitate a broader picture of the capacity of FET provision.

Budget Allocations

The 2015 FET Services Plan provides for a total budget allocation of €643.5m (€3m carried forward from 2014), to be made available for SOLAS-funded further education and training provision in 2015.

- The Department of Education and Skills will continue to fund the PLC and Co-Operation Hours Provision (Teacher Pay and Student Capitation) estimated at €186m for 2015.
- It is estimated that 369,523 places will be made available for learners to benefit from SOLAS-funded FET programmes and services in 2015 (341,726 places in 2014). This figure will include the 231,234 new entrants (215,929 new entrants in 2014) expected to participate in FET provision in 2015.
- Approximately 60% of all provision in 2015 will be for individuals requiring introductory level courses/ supports (across FET programmes up to Level 4 on NFQ or equivalent) to assist them with progression back to employment over a longer timeframe.
- 7,096 apprentices will benefit from phase 2, 4 & 6 training provision in 2015 (5,096 in 2014). The overall population of apprentices at various stages of their apprenticeship in 2015 is estimated to be 7,400.

Budget Availability for 2015 FET Grants

The total amount allocated to SOLAS in 2015 is €637.485m, including capital of €3.0m. This comprises €335.769m in Exchequer funding and €301.716m from the National Training Fund. Estimated other income of €3.015m and funding brought forward from 2014 will allow a budget of circa €643.5m to be set. Details of the available funding to SOLAS for FET grants and the source of this funding is set out below.

SOLAS will be responsible for the distribution of a total of €643.5m across the FET sector (includes SOLAS costs) while the Department of Education and Skills will continue to be responsible for payment of teachers' salaries and certain other costs related to FET provision.

Funding Allocations

Tables 3.1 and 3.2 below provide summary details of the SOLAS grant allocation and how the grant allocation will be utilised in terms of grants to:

- Education and Training Boards.
- Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools.
- Other FET Organisations funded by SOLAS.

Table 3.2 also details the funding that will be retained centrally and other cash resources to be utilised in funding the full FET provision and services for 2015.

Grant Allocations and Expenditure

SOLAS Grant Allocation 2015

Overall Grant Allocation Detail	Total
2015 Total Grant Allocation 2015	€640,500,000
Funding B/F from 2014	€3,000,000
Total	€643,500,000

Table 3.1

Total Projected Expenditure Breakdown 2015

SOLAS costs (including EGF & capital funding)	€75,280,000
ETB FET Grants Provision 2015	€557,491,559
Reserved Funding (apprenticeship, Refugee Programme, VS/C&C Schools, LDA Payments)	€1,322,255
Other Organisations	
Grants	€5,926,104
Voluntary Secondary & Community and Comprehensive Schools (BTEI) programme	€409,490
Irish Deaf Society	€214,157
Balance not yet profiled	€356,435
FET Capital costs	€2,500,000
Total Grant Allocation for Distribution by SOLAS	€643,500,000

Table 3.2

Analysis of Data Submitted through the Funding Allocations Requests and Reporting (FARR) Mechanism

Funding Allocations Requests and Reporting (FARR) was developed for utilisation in the 2015 planning and funding process. FARR is a web application linked to a database which has the capacity to capture quantitative data in a questionnaire format. The FARR mechanism facilitated the upload of quantitative data by the Education and Training Boards (ETBs) to support their 2015 Funding Allocations Requests. The Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools (VSCCS) will, in the future, have access to FARR. However, for 2015 the information provided by the VSCCS was uploaded on their behalf by SOLAS.

Set out below is a list of tables which reflect the information obtained through the FARR database and Funding Allocations Requests submissions.

- **Table 3.3:** Education and Training Board and other Provider View of Provision Inputs and Outputs
- **Table 3.4:** ETBs without a Training Centre – Training Provision
- **Table 3.5:** Programmatic View of Provision Inputs and Outputs
- **Table 3.6:** Estimate of Change to FET Programme Provision in 2015
- **Table 3.7:** Estimate of Change to FET Cluster Provision in 2015
- **Table 3.8:** General Learning Cluster - Key Contributors
- **Table 3.9:** New Programmes/Courses to be offered in 2015
- **Chart 3.1:** Estimate Number of Beneficiaries completing Studies/Programmes in 2015
- **Chart 3.2:** Estimate of Outcomes for Learners Completing FET Provision 2015
- **Table 3.10:** Estimates for Specific Target Groups Participating in FET Provision in 2015
- **Table 3.11:** Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools BTEI Grant Allocations
- **Table 3.12:** Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools Approved PLC Places
- **Table 3.13:** Grant Allocations in 2015 for Additional Provision

Set out below are explanatory notes related to the output and outcome headings presented in the tables that follow.

In order to contextualise FET outputs and outcomes, a number of concepts related to retention and completion need to be considered to gain

understanding of the anticipated output and outcome values in the Tables that follow.

FET Outputs

FET Retention

For the purpose of this document the concept of retention is used, as opposed to the more common concept of dropout. The concept of retention captures the positive reality of learners progressing through their studies while also acknowledging the reality that some learners will drop off the course early.

In this document the term retention describes of the number of learners who it is estimated will start their course in 2015 and will be retained past 20% of the course duration (i.e. have not dropped off the course early). In the Tables that follow, the percentage for retention is calculated as follows: the number of course starters completing more than 20% of the course duration divided by the total number of course starters. (See Table 3.3 below.)

FET Completion

To understand the population base for the outputs and outcomes values from FET provision in 2015 it is necessary to establish the number of learners retained on courses that are scheduled to finish (complete) in 2015. The concepts of *scheduled course completion* and *individual learner completion* on these courses needs to be considered.

FET courses can span a two-year period. In relation to scheduled course completion:

- Some of the courses funded in 2015 will have commenced in 2014 and will complete in 2015.
- Some of the courses funded in 2015 will commence in 2015 and will complete in 2015.
- Some courses funded in 2015 will commence in 2015 and be scheduled to complete/finish in 2016.

Only courses that are scheduled to complete/finish in 2015 will be considered in the calculation of completion values for 2015.

In relation to individual learner completion on the courses scheduled to complete in 2015, the following must be considered:

- The learners who will fully complete their course of study.
- The learners who will partially complete their course of study (i.e. have not dropped off the course early but left/exited the course prior to its completion, and may have some success level in terms of outputs and outcomes).
- The learners who will complete their course in

2016 and will therefore not be included in the 2015 completion values.

In the Tables that follow, the percentage for completion is calculated as follows: the number of beneficiaries (learners) on courses scheduled to finish/complete in 2015 less the number of learners who have left their course early.

Taking cognisance of the completion statistics is important as they form the population base for determining all the other output and outcomes values for 2015 FET provision.

FET Accreditation

For the purpose of this document the term *accreditation* describes the number of beneficiaries (learners) on courses scheduled to finish in 2015 who will achieve certification by the end of their course.

The percentage certification rates are calculated from the number of beneficiaries (learners) on accredited programmes who it is estimated will achieve certification of either full awards or component awards, divided by the number of beneficiaries (learners) who will complete their course of study in 2015.

FET Outcomes

FET into Employment

For the purpose of this document the term *into employment* describes the number of beneficiaries (learners) who will enter employment post course-participation. The percentage is calculated by the numbers of beneficiaries (learners) who will complete their course in 2015 and it is estimated will then go on to enter into employment on a fulltime/part-time/self-employment basis – not including Apprenticeship completers (already employed) and Community Education completers (not an active employment FET programme) – divided by the number of beneficiaries (learners) who will complete their course of study in 2015.

FET Progressing to another Course in FET or HET

For the purpose of this document the term *Progressing to another Course* in FET or HET describes the number of beneficiaries (learners) who will complete their course and progress to an FET or HET course post their 2015 FET course participation. The percentage numbers of beneficiaries (learners) progressing to another course in FET or HET is divided by the number of beneficiaries (learners) who will complete their course of study in 2015.

FET Personal Progression

For the purpose of this document the term *Personal Progression* describes the number of beneficiaries (learners) who complete their course and progress on a personal level, e.g. through either voluntary work or an employment scheme. The percentage numbers of beneficiaries (learners) achieving personal progression is calculated without the inclusion of Apprenticeship completers by dividing the number of learners achieving a personal progression by the number of beneficiaries (learners) who will complete their course of study in 2015.

Table 3.3 is presented across the following two pages and provides estimated data for FET provision inputs and outputs for 2015.

Table 3.3: Education and Training Board and other Provider View of Provision Inputs and Outputs 2015

(*see page 25 for explanatory notes.)

FET PROVISION IN 2015 <i>Note PLC costs represent SOLAS costs only</i>	Provision Type	Estimate of inputs into FET provision in 2015			Estimate of Outputs from FET Provision in 2015			
		Number of Learners			Funding	Retention	Completion	FET Accreditation
		Enrolled / Started 1st January	Starting courses during 2015	Beneficiaries of FET provision in 2015	Funding for FET provision in 2015	*The percentage of starters retained on their course during 2015	*The percentage of retained learners / beneficiaries participating on courses scheduled to finish / complete in 2015	*The accreditation rate for the learners/ beneficiaries on courses who will finish /complete in 2015
Cavan Monaghan ETB	Fulltime	4023	2716	6739	€10,844,551	85%	54%	93%
	Part Time	4435	5320	9755	€2,424,650	93%	74%	24%
	Community Education	147	1322	1469	€394,000	100%	97%	0%
	ETB FET Operational Costs including Guidance Services				€36,799			
		8,605	9,358	17,963	€13,700,000			
City of Dublin ETB	Fulltime	10,806	13,670	24,476	€64,277,373	91%	55%	78%
	Part Time	4207	22,670	26,877	€10,551,431	94%	78%	39%
	Community Education	1744	5,536	7,280	€1,628,000	94%	94%	6%
	ETB FET Operational Costs including Guidance Services				€11,543,196			
		16,757	41,876	58,633	€88,000,000			
Cork ETB	Fulltime	10,020	9,231	19,251	€37,959,032	81%	65%	94%
	Part Time	10,050	9,572	19,622	€5,342,608	85%	50%	59%
	Community Education	3,571	7,384	10,955	€953,000	85%	72%	0%
	ETB FET Operational Costs including Guidance Services				€8,245,360			
		23,641	26,187	49,828	€52,500,000			
Donegal ETB	Fulltime	1,138	1,403	2,541	€15,956,471	94%	74%	95%
	Part Time	1,854	2,268	4,122	€2,570,832	85%	77%	65%
	Community Education	161	4,694	4,855	€500,000	86%	87%	4%
	ETB FET Operational Costs including Guidance Services				€3,672,697			
		3,153	8,365	11,518	€22,700,000			
Dublin Dun Laoghaire ETB	Fulltime	6,287	8,574	14,861	€43,360,320	90%	72%	90%
	Part Time	6,750	8,033	14,783	€10,128,363	87%	73%	46%
	Community Education	2,779	3,764	6,543	€1,750,000	81%	63%	4%
	ETB FET Operational Costs including Guidance Services				€13,361,317			
		15,816	20,371	36,187	€68,600,000			
Galway Roscommon ETB	Fulltime	3,468	4,062	7,530	€23,433,892	83%	86%	83%
	Part Time	4,114	5,573	9,687	€4,718,183	90%	81%	30%
	Community Education	387	3,895	4,282	€525,000	100%	3%	73%
	ETB FET Operational Costs including Guidance Services				€4,622,925			
		7,969	13,530	21,499	€33,300,000			
Kerry ETB	Fulltime	1,653	2,058	3,711	€18,413,221	81%	83%	79%
	Part Time	1,552	3,953	5,505	€2,827,248	91%	93%	53%
	Community Education	0	2,900	2,900	€418,000	91%	91%	0%
	ETB FET Operational Costs including Guidance Services				€2,965,483			
		3,205	8,911	12,116	€24,623,952			
Kildare Wicklow ETB	Fulltime	2,321	2,522	4,843	€23,535,948	77%	58%	86%
	Part Time	4,227	4,181	8,408	€3,356,318	78%	80%	42%
	Community Education	26	2,235	2,261	€589,000	100%	99%	2%
	ETB FET Operational Costs including Guidance Services				€318,734			
		6,574	8,938	15,512	€27,800,000			
Kilkenny Carlow ETB	Fulltime	1,979	1,990	3,969	€12,704,895	86%	69%	93%
	Part Time	1,238	2,144	3,382	€2,787,005	86%	79%	42%
	Community Education	11	1,994	2,005	€317,000	100%	100%	2%
	ETB FET Operational Costs including Guidance Services				€691,100			
		3,228	6,128	9,356	€16,500,000			
Laois Offaly ETB	Fulltime	839	1,036	1,875	€10,963,974	82%	99%	100%
	Part Time	2,529	3,838	6,367	€2,193,009	80%	86%	47%
	Community Education	139	624	763	€295,715	94%	93%	3%
	ETB FET Operational Costs including Guidance Services				€413,909			
		3,507	5,498	9,005	€13,866,607			

Table 3.3 (continued below) (It should be noted that data related to provision presented above represents projected estimated figures as provided by the ETBs and SOLAS National Programmes for 2015.)

Table 3.3 (continued): Education and Training Board and other Provider View of Provision Inputs and Outputs 2015 (*see page 25 for explanatory notes.)

FET PROVISION IN 2015 <i>Note PLC costs represent SOLAS costs only</i>	Provision Type	Estimate of inputs into FET provision in 2015				Estimate of Outputs from FET Provision in 2015		
		Number of Learners			Funding	Retention	Completion	FET Accreditation
		Enrolled / Started 1st January	Starting courses during 2015	Beneficiaries of FET provision in 2015	Funding for FET provision in 2015	*The percentage of starters retained on their course during 2015	*The percentage of retained learners / beneficiaries participating on courses scheduled to finish / complete in 2015	*The accreditation rate for the learners/ beneficiaries on courses who will finish /complete in 2015
Limerick Clare ETB	Fulltime	3,475	4,558	8,033	€34,806,985	92%	64%	77%
	Part Time	4,432	13,883	18,315	€6,195,628	87%	68%	44%
	Community Education	1,064	4,549	5,613	€840,000	89%	91%	1%
	ETB FET Operational Costs including Guidance Services				€8,157,387			
		8,971	22,990	31,961	€50,000,000			
Longford Westmeath ETB	Fulltime	1,333	2,117	3,450	€16,600,938	92%	77%	92%
	Part Time	2,140	2,304	4,444	€3,141,304	85%	65%	68%
	Community Education	52	613	665	€292,000	100%	97%	0%
	ETB FET Operational Costs including Guidance Services				€4,865,758			
		3,525	5,034	8,559	€24,900,000			
Louth Meath ETB	Fulltime	4,205	4,351	8,556	€21,951,486	91%	68%	85%
	Part Time	2,528	8,531	11,059	€3,921,273	88%	74%	41%
	Community Education	208	2,647	2,855	€620,816	83%	90%	13%
	ETB FET Operational Costs including Guidance Services				€3,706,425			
		6,941	15,529	22,470	€30,200,000			
Mayo Sligo Leitrim ETB *	Fulltime	3,440	3,696	7,136	€23,065,960	81%	70%	85%
	Part Time	4,976	3,232	8,208	€3,252,894	97%	36%	81%
	Community Education	1,264	834	2,098	€574,000	100%	69%	10%
	ETB FET Operational Costs including Guidance Services				€3,807,146			
		9,680	7,762	17,442	€30,700,000			
Tipperary ETB	Fulltime	1,678	1,580	3,258	€11,806,701	94%	44%	86%
	Part Time	1,082	2,552	3,634	€2,362,489	87%	70%	64%
	Community Education	8	1,772	1,780	€347,195	93%	95%	0%
	ETB FET Operational Costs including Guidance Services				€483,615			
		2,768	5,904	8,672	€15,000,000			
Waterford Wexford ETB	Fulltime	3,781	4,080	7,861	€33,715,354	87%	93%	80%
	Part Time	2,820	4,621	7,441	€4,191,396	91%	88%	52%
	Community Education	712	1,547	2,259	€538,100	100%	69%	2%
	ETB FET Operational Costs including Guidance Services				€6,656,150			
		7,313	10,248	17,561	€45,101,000			
Total ETB provision		131,653	216,629	348,282	€557,491,559			
Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools	Fulltime	1,873	1623	3496	€0	71%	83%	88%
	Part Time	845	992	1837	€409,490	93%	62%	24%
		2,718	2,615	5,333	€409,490			
Irish Deaf Society	Fulltime	90	130	220	€214,157			
Total Other Providers provision		2,808	2,745	5,553	€623,647			
eCollege	Part Time	1,688	8000	9688	€2,000,000	81%	80%	30%
Momentum	Fulltime	2,140	3860	6000	€12,100,000	79%	77%	83%
Total national programmes provision		3,828	11,860	15,688	€14,100,000			
FET Provision totals	Fulltime	64,549	73,257	137,806	€415,711,259	86%	68%	
	Part Time	61,467	111,667	173,134	€72,374,121	88%	72%	
	Community Education	12,273	46,310	58,583	€10,581,826	91%	77%	
	ETB FET Operational Costs including Guidance Services				€73,548,000			
		138,289	231,234	369,523	€572,215,206			

Table 3.3 (It should be noted that data related to provision presented above represents projected estimated figures as provided by the ETBs and SOLAS National Programmes for 2015.) The table provides a breakdown of beneficiary numbers and grant allocations by ETB and other providers for 2015. Estimated numbers of starters, completers and certification rates full-time, part-time and unaccredited provision by ETB and other providers are also presented.

Funding values do not include the full cost of PLC provision: please refer to Budget Allocations on page 24.

Please note that the funding values in Table 3.3 are inclusive of allowances in lieu of income support for Learners who qualify for a DSP allowances. The overall value of these allowances in this Services Plan is circa €200m.

ETBs without a Training Centre – Training Provision

ETBs have developed an integrated plan for the FET provision in 2015 within their area and submitted this through the Funding Allocation Request process. Table 3.4 sets out the position in relation to the management of the training provision within the ETB areas where there is no training centre. This arrangement will remain in place until the phase 3 transfers between the ETBs concerned is concluded.

ETBs without a training centre	FET grant allocation which includes the training element in brackets	The ETB managing this training provision on behalf of the ETB without a training centre	Amount of grants to the ETB managing the training provision on behalf of the ETB
Cavan Monaghan ETB	€13,700,000 (€6,785,336)	Louth Meath ETB	Up to €6,785,336
Kildare Wicklow ETB	€27,800,000 (€10,180,604)	Dublin Dun Laoghaire ETB / Longford Westmeath ETB / Waterford Wexford ETB	Up to €10,180,604
Kilkenny Carlow ETB	€16,500,000 (€8,341,999)	Waterford Wexford ETB	Up to €8,341,999
Laois Offaly ETB	€13,866,607 (€5,919,055)	Longford Westmeath ETB	Up to €5,919,055
Tipperary ETB	€15,000,000 (€7,192,220)	Waterford Wexford ETB / Limerick Clare ETB	Up to €7,192,220

Table 3.4

The grants related to training provision referred to in the table above will be:

- Deducted from the overall grant allocation of the ETB without a training centre.
- Disbursed as a separate supplemental grant to the ETB managing training provision on behalf of the ETB without a training centre.

Initial Observations on:

Non-accredited Learning

There is a clear distinction between FET provision that has no accreditation by design e.g. community education, and FET provision that has a low certification rate by its nature e.g. adult literacy. Non-accredited learning is concentrated in community education, arts education and literacy services (including co-operation hours, which include a high level of prisoner education). 150,000+ individuals will engage annually in this type of FET provision i.e. circa 40% of all FET beneficiaries.

The Department of Education and Skills endorses a general principle that while accredited learning options should be provided through BTEI or the adult literacy service, non-accredited provision provided through many adult education programmes facilitates adult learners to re-engage in the learning process at their own pace.

This is an important enabling condition to facilitate individuals explore their full potential in order to contribute to the social, cultural and economic development of their area. SOLAS supports the policy that adult literacy learners have a right to attend such programmes for personal, family or other reasons without working towards a formal qualification, while also ensuring that the option of accreditation is also provided to all learners.

The uptake of accreditation learning options at Levels 1-3 including single modules remains particularly low. In 2015 ETBs supported by SOLAS are facilitating a higher take-up of full or modular awards at Levels 1-3 on non-accredited provision because it empowers and enables some of the most vulnerable FET learners to build up qualifications and skills, and where appropriate, to access higher levels of further education and training options to address career and employment aspirations.

Programmatic View of Provision Inputs and Outputs

Table 3.5 (overleaf) presents information related to provision inputs and outputs on a programme by programme basis (*see page 25 for explanatory notes).

FET PROVISION IN 2015	Estimate of inputs into FET provision in 2015				Estimate of Outputs from FET Provision in 2015		
	Number of Learners			Funding	Utilisation	Completion	FET Certification
Fulltime provision	Enrolled / Started 1st January	Starting courses during 2015	Beneficiaries of FET provision in 2015	SOLAS Funding for FET provision in 2015	*Percentage of courses Starters retained on courses during 2015	*Percentage of Beneficiaries completing course in 2015 (Full & Partial)	*Accreditation rate for Beneficiaries completing their course in 2015
Apprenticeship Training	2,201	4,895	7,096	€33,044,782	99%	70%	N/A
PLC (adjusted for SUSI) & SOLAS Costs Only, DES funds Teacher Pay & student capitation	33,350	33,350	66,699	€6,746,077	83%	50%	84%
VTOS Core	5,448	5,414	10,862	€77,822,028	91%	58%	83%
Youthreach including Advocacy	5,309	2,919	8,228	€68,464,861	83%	77%	50%
Specific Skills Training	7,037	12,671	19,708	€62,982,976	92%	67%	83%
Blended Learning (Training)	129	402	531	€328,690	93%	93%	59%
Traineeship Training	2,661	3,068	5,729	€30,367,698	92%	62%	92%
Bridging & Foundation Training	371	2,036	2,407	€5,763,598	89%	88%	70%
Community Training Centres	1,601	846	2,447	€36,926,829	77%	63%	85%
Justice Workshop	125	120	245	€1,194,264	68%	47%	96%
Local Training Initiatives	2,316	2,231	4,547	€29,720,474	90%	54%	92%
Specialist Training Providers	1,771	1,315	3,086	€50,034,825	90%	52%	71%
Fulltime Provision Total	62,409	69,397	131,805	€403,397,102	87%	68%	83%
Part-time provision							
BTEI Groups (inc Breacadh & Innovation Projects)	17,966	23,914	41,880	€27,127,047	86%	69%	67%
Adult Literacy Groups (inc DEIS & Deaf Literacy)	20,025	27,729	47,754	€25,208,745	88%	73%	34%
Voluntary Literacy Tuition	707	2,290	2,997	€2,000	90%	89%	1%
ITABE	1,062	2,965	4,027	€1,955,234	86%	78%	47%
ESOL	7,699	10,781	18,480	€789,779	83%	66%	38%
Skills 4 Work	828	2,406	3,234	€2,800,000	95%	84%	39%
Refugee Resettlement (where known)	29	111	140	€90,559	90%	75%	90%
Evening Training	5,102	17,187	22,289	€5,847,432	91%	71%	56%
Libraries Training	331	447	778	€196,674	95%	66%	92%
FET Cooperation Hours (DES funds Teacher Pay)	6,030	15,837	21,867	€0	95%	70%	26%
Part-time Provision Total	59,779	103,667	163,446	€64,017,470	89%	71%	45%
Part-time unaccredited provision							
Community Education	12,273	46,310	58,583	€10,581,826	91%	77%	3%
Total Part-time Unaccredited Provision	12,273	46,310	58,583	€10,581,826	91%	77%	3%
National Programmes Provision							
eCollege (online & blended learning, part-time)	1,688	8,000	9,688	€2,000,000	81%	80%	30%
Momentum (fulltime)	2,140	3,860	6,000	€12,100,000	79%	77%	83%
National programmes Provision Total	3,828	11,860	15,688	€14,100,000	80%	79%	50%
FET Programme Provision Totals	138,289	231,234	369,523	€492,096,398			
Adult Guidance Service				€6,661,367			
Funding not profiled by ETBs				€5,652,450			
ETB FET Staff & Operational				€67,804,992			
FET Funds Retained*				€1,322,255			
FET Funds not Profiled by SOLAS*				€356,435			
FET Programme Provision Totals	138,289	231,234	369,523	€573,893,897			

Table 3.5 (It should be noted that data related to provision presented above represents projected estimated figures as provided by the ETBs and SOLAS National Programmes for 2015). Please note that FET Funds Retained and FET Funds not Profiled by SOLAS are not included in table 3.3 as they have not yet been profiled into ETBs allocations.

Estimate of Change to FET Programme Provision in 2015 from 2014 on a Plan-to-Plan basis

Table 3.6 (below) provides information on changes that ETBs and other providers indicated in their plans as likely to occur during 2015 in relation to FET beneficiary/participant numbers: e.g. it is expected that apprenticeship numbers will rise considerably in 2015. The information provided is presented in relation to full-time, part-time and unaccredited provision across FET programmes.

This table also indicates that the estimated overall total number of beneficiaries of FET provision for 2015 will be circa **369,523** at a total cost of €574,154,684. The estimated overall beneficiary number of **369,523** is comprised of **138,289** enrolled/started learners on 1st January 2015 and **231,234** learners projected to start programmes during 2015. This table also provides information on the estimated **Retention**, **Completion** and **Accreditation** rates across the Education and Training Boards and other providers by programme for 2015.

FET PROVISION IN 2015	Estimate of changes in FET programme provision in 2015			
	Number of Learners			
Fulltime Provision	Enrolled /Started 1st January 2015	Starting courses during 2015	Beneficiaries of FET provision in 2015	*Change in Beneficiary Numbers from 2014 plan
Apprenticeship Training	2,201	4,895	7,096	2,000
PLC (Numbers adjusted for SUSI) & SOLAS Costs Only included, DES continues to fund Teacher Pay & student capitation	33,350	33,350	66,699	-2,363
VTOS Core	5,448	5,414	10,862	2,615
Youthreach including Advocacy	5,309	2,919	8,228	2,254
Specific Skills Training	7,037	12,671	19,708	3,786
Blended Learning (Training)	129	402	531	316
Traineeship Training	2,661	3,068	5,729	1,022
Bridging & Foundation Training	371	2,036	2,407	166
Community Training Centres	1,601	846	2,447	-799
Justice Workshop	125	120	245	-88
Local Training Initiatives	2,316	2,231	4,547	184
Specialist Training Providers	1,771	1,315	3,086	-291
Fulltime Provision Total	62,409	69,397	131,805	9,022
Part-time Provision				
BTEI Groups (inc Breacadh & Innovation Projects)	17,966	23,914	41,880	4,653
Adult Literacy Groups (inc DEIS & Deaf Literacy)	20,025	27,729	47,754	
Voluntary Literacy Tuition	707	2,290	2,997	-45,868
ITABE	1,062	2,965	4,027	
ESOL	7,699	10,781	18,480	5,793
Skills 4 Work	828	2,406	3,234	3,234
Refugee Resettlement (where known)	29	111	140	140
Evening Training	5,102	17,187	22,289	6,029
Libraries Training	331	447	778	-116
FET Cooperation Hours (DES funds Teacher Pay)	6,030	15,837	21,867	10,599
Part-time Provision Total	59,779	103,667	163,446	-15,536
Part-time unaccredited provision				
Community Education	12,273	46,310	58,583	-12,869
Part-time unaccredited provision Total	12,273	46,310	58,583	-12,869
National Programmes Provision				
eCollege	1,688	8,000	9,688	-2,118
Momentum	2,140	3,860	6,000	-1,860
National Programmes Provision Total	3,828	11,860	15,688	-3,978
FET Programme Provision Totals	138,289	231,234	369,523	-23,361

Table 3.6

*Changes in Beneficiary are approximate due to changes in the programme structure in 2015 from 2014

(It should be noted that data related to provision presented above represents projected estimated figures as provided by the ETBs and SOLAS National Programmes for 2015).

Estimate of Change to FET Cluster Provision in 2015 from 2014 on a Plan-to-Plan basis

Table 3.7 (below) provides information on changes that the ETBs and other providers have indicated in their plans that are likely to occur during 2015 in relation to FET beneficiary/participant numbers in the context of movement across career clusters.

ESTIMATE OF CHANGES TO FET PROVISION IN 2015	Estimate of changes to FET provision in 2015			
	Number of Learners			
	Enrolled /Started 1st January 2015	Starting courses during 2015	Beneficiaries of FET provision in 2015	Change in Beneficiary Numbers from 2014 plan
Agriculture, Horticulture and Mariculture	1,527	2,817	4,344	65
Animal Science	949	1,062	2,011	165
Art, Craft and Media	10,405	16,724	27,129	-9,505
Built Environment	2,915	6,319	9,234	1,763
Business, Admin & Management	13,896	21,769	35,665	1,856
Financial Services	1,019	1,620	2,639	-1,495
Food and Beverage	1,400	1,701	3,101	-1,475
General Learning	60,255	100,880	161,135	44,803
Hairdressing, Beauty and Complementary Therapies	4,949	6,019	10,968	2,472
Health, Family other Social Services	23,392	30,246	53,638	-831
Information Technology	12,122	24,454	36,576	7,615
Manufacturing	3,087	5,844	8,931	1,390
Natural Resources	368	534	902	-372
Sales & Marketing	773	1,574	2,347	-187
Sampling Skills	1,572	2,621	4,193	-10,923
Science and Technology	978	1,686	2,664	135
Tourism and Sport	4,590	4,605	9,195	6,243
Transport, Distribution & Logistics	1,619	3,119	4,738	3,079
Not Assigned	847	1,053	1,900	-5,211
Programmed FET Provision*	138,289	231,234	369,523	

Table 3.7

(It should be noted that data related to provision presented above represents projected estimated figures as provided by the ETBs and SOLAS National Programmes for 2015)

General Learning

The ETBs have indicated that the numbers engaging in general learning is likely to increase by an estimated 44,803. Mining the FARR database indicates there is a definition issue, in that a considerable number of beneficiaries classified as general learning could be redistributed across the clusters. The increase is somewhat offset by a considerable reduction (10,923) in the number of beneficiaries engaging in sampling skills in 2015.

General Learning - Data obtained through the FARR Database

The main contributors to the general learning cluster are presented in Table 3.8. below.

General Learning Cluster – Key Contributors

FET Programme	Beneficiary Numbers
Youthreach	7,040
BTEI	17,582
Adult Literacy	43,629
ESOL	18,436
FET Co-operation hours	19,413
Community Education	33,075

Table 3.8

Art, Craft and Media

The Art, Craft and Media cluster provision projection of 27,129 has reduced by 9,505.

Increases in Provision in Clusters in Line with the Labour Market and EFGN Forecast

The following projected provision in clusters that show an increase in 2015 over 2014 provision are as follows:

- Built environment projected provision of 9,234, increased by 1,763.
- Business Administration and Management projected provision of 35,665 increased, by 1,856.
- Information technology projected provision of 36,576 has an increase of 7,615.
- Manufacturing projected provision of 8,931 has an increase of 1,390.
- Tourism and Sport projected provision of 9,195 has an increase of 6,243.
- Transport, Distribution and Logistics projected provision of 4,738 has an increase of 3,079.

FET Provision Supporting Skills for the Economy and Employment

FET Strategy 2014–2019 identifies the need for stakeholders – e.g. SOLAS and the ETBs – to enter into a dialogue with employers to establish the short-to-medium-term skill needs of their companies.

The ETB FARs submissions provided qualitative data related to identification of emerging skills needs. The information submitted was based on local labour market intelligence which was obtained by the ETBs through their interaction with local and regional employer networks, other educational institutions, relevant organisations and community groups. The ETBs also indicated that, as part of their 2015 planning process, consideration was given to the information provided in the following SOLAS publications:

- The Expert Group on Future Skills Needs National Skills Bulletin 2014.
- The Expert Group on Future Skills Needs Monitoring Ireland's Skills Supply, Trends in Education and Training Outputs (August 2014).
- The Expert Group on Future Skills Needs Regional Labour Markets Bulletin 2014.

Based on local labour market intelligence the ETBs have identified the following Business Sectors (from a local/regional perspective) as most likely to require additional employees with the required knowledge, skill competence and qualifications to support the economy as it moves through the recovery period and beyond.

ETB Identification of Business Sectors likely to Require Additional Employees

ETB Funding Allocation Requests have indicated that the following sectors in their localities are likely to require additional employees over the coming year:

- Construction (apprenticeships e.g. electrician, plumbing, welding)
- Healthcare, Childcare, Care of the Elderly
- Engineering and Medical Devices
- Machine Operators
- Transport, Logistics, Road Haulage
- The Creative Arts Industry – Film and Television
- Tourism/Hospitality/Catering
- Digital Marketing & Entrepreneurship
- Retail
- Pharmacy and Bio-pharma
- IT, Programming & Software Development, App Design & Development, Software Development, Visual Communications: Graphic Design

- Renewable Energy/Sustainable Energy
- Gym & Fitness Instructor
- Animal Care
- Business, Administration, Accounting

FET Provision to address Emerging Skill Needs

FET provision already supports the Business Sectors highlighted above through provision of the wide range of existing programmes and courses. The ETBs are currently reviewing existing provision in the context of matching capacity with potential demand for specific programmes/courses e.g. apprenticeship, engineering, entrepreneurship, IT etc., and for the purpose of realignment of course provision to meet identified skills shortages through the inclusion of additional/alternative modules in existing courses e.g. entrepreneurship.

In addition, as requested through the agreed FET service planning parameters documentation issued by SOLAS, the ETBs have highlighted specific examples of relevant new programmes/courses to be offered in 2015 (and in subsequent years) to meet identified local, regional and national skill needs and job opportunities relating to specific business sectors. Table 3.9 sets out some examples of the planned new programmes/courses for 2015 in this regard. The list below should not be considered definitive as it is presented for the purpose of example only.

New Programmes/Courses to be offered in 2015

Business Sectors	Programmes/ Courses
Healthcare, Childcare, Care of the Elderly	Delivery of programmes urgently required by sectors to meet new legislative requirements, e.g. Level 6 Childcare required for a leadership role and to access The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme.
Information Technology	Piloting of the ICT Associate Professional Course in two locations as part of the national pilot programme.
	Piloting of a new Social Media for Business course.
	Introduction of a number of training programmes in Networking, PC Maintenance Software Development, Java Programming and e-business.
Sustainable Energy	Collaboration and partnership resulting in the development and delivery of the Retrofit for Sustainable Energy Industry.
The Creative Arts Industry (Film and Television)	Introduction of Creative Media Course to replace an existing Art, Craft and Design course.
	Introduction of Cartoon Animation Course.
Engineering and Medical Device	Introduction of a new industry Medical Device Design certified course.

Table 3.9

ETB Collaborative Projects

In addition to the new courses planned for delivery in 2015, a large volume of collaborative work is currently being undertaken by the ETBs for the purpose of development of new courses to support various local business sector needs. Examples are:

- Collaboration with INTREO for the purpose of informing development of local area action plans, identification of skills shortages and recruitment to FET programmes/courses.
- Collaboration with the Department of Social Protection in relation to the Youth Development Internship.
- Collaboration with companies at local level e.g. companies involved in engineering, haulage, software development, hospitality, tourism, healthcare, for the purpose of development of traineeships and, in some cases, work-based programmes.

- Collaboration with FIT and local companies in relation to the introduction of the newly launched Associate Professional Programme.
- Collaboration with third level colleges to identify clear progression routes from Further Education and Training to Higher Education and Training (HET) provision. (Agreements have already been established between a number of ETBs, IOTs and Universities).

(The list above should not be considered definitive as it is presented for example purposes only.)

FET Provision and Outcomes for 2015

A central theme in the feedback received by SOLAS from the ETBs in the context of the 2014 planning process was that, given the diverse nature of Further Education and Training programmes, summarising the data for all these programmes together can lead to inadvertent mis-interpretation of datasets. Furthermore, information related to key strengths and weaknesses of the provision are, in some instances, not readily visible. The consensus was that consideration should be given to a new approach to summarising programme outcome-related data in particular, and changes made in this regard are reflected in the charts and tables that follow.

Estimated Number of Beneficiaries expected to Participate in FET Programmes in 2015

Chart 3.1 provides overall data in percentage terms in relation to the estimated number of beneficiaries expected to participate in FET programmes in 2015 on a fulltime, part-time basis and through Community Education.

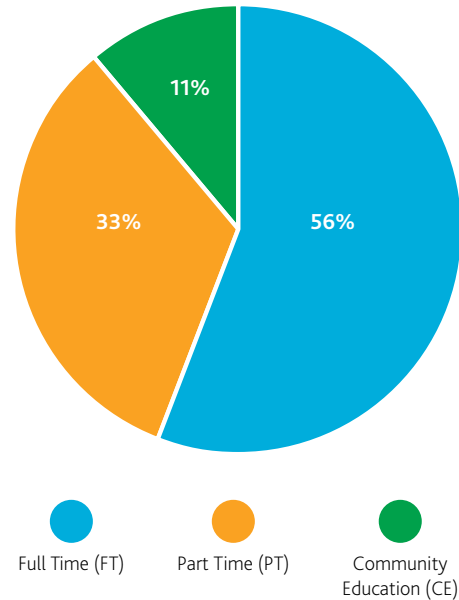


Chart 3.1 (It should be noted that data related to provision presented above represents projected estimated figures as provided by the ETBs and SOLAS National Programmes for 2015.)

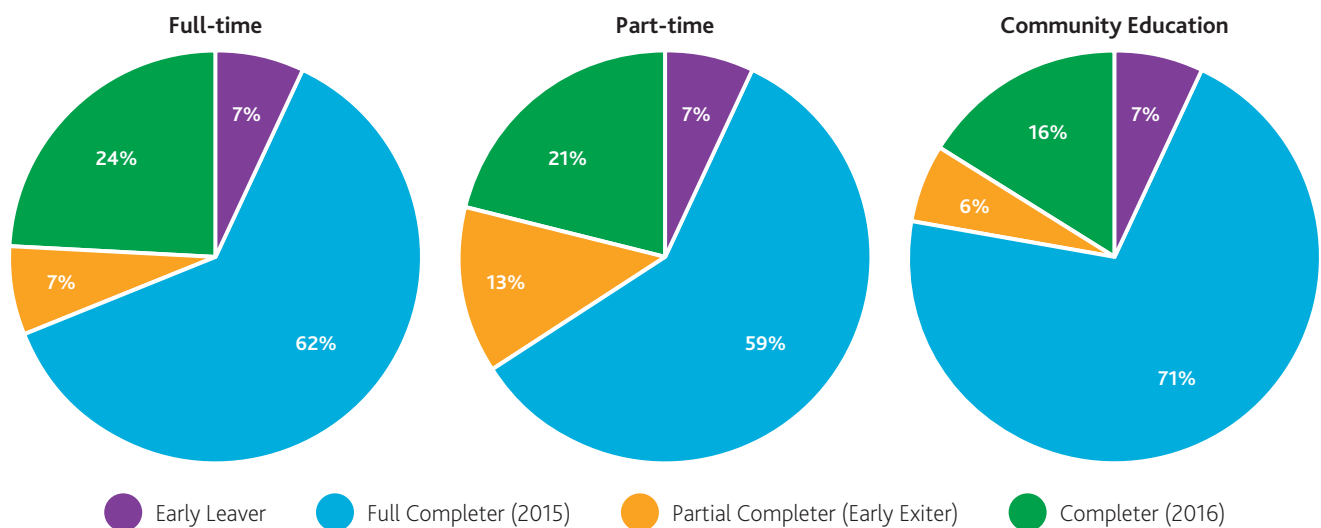


Chart 3.2

Estimate of Outcomes in the Context of Completion/Exit for Beneficiaries Participating in FET Provision 2015

Chart 3.2 presents a breakdown in percentage terms in relation to estimated participation by beneficiaries in full-time, part-time, and Community Education programmes.

This data indicates that across the three programme duration types an average of :

- 64% of beneficiaries will be *Full Completers*.
- 9% of beneficiaries will be *Partial Completers (exitors)*.
- 7% of beneficiaries will be *Early Leavers*.
- 20% of beneficiaries will complete in 2016.

Estimate of Outcomes in the Context of Progression for Beneficiaries Completing FET Provision 2015

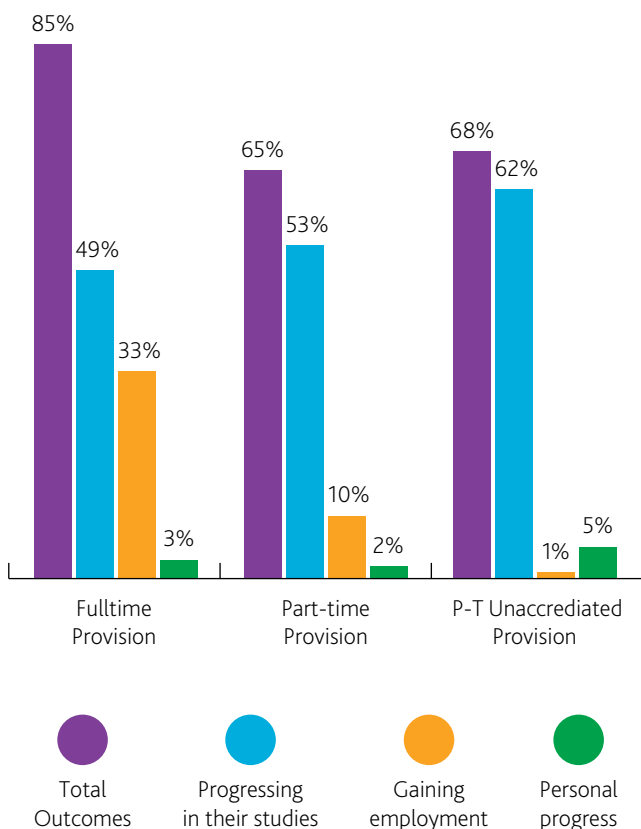


Chart 3.3 (It should be noted that data related to provision presented above represents projected estimated figures as provided by the ETBs and SOLAS National Programmes for 2015.)

Chart 3.3 provides an estimate of progression outcomes in the context of full-time, part-time and part-time unaccredited provision in 2015. It also provides summary detail and a breakdown of the expected outcomes for learners completing their studies in 2015 as follows:

- Learners gaining employment.
- Learners progressing in their studies /learning.
- Learners' personal progression.

The Wider Benefits of Learning

Participation in FET programmes can result in the learner gaining accreditation, qualifications on the NFQ, employment, and opportunities to participate in higher level FET and HET programmes. The wider benefits of learning are internationally recognised as having the capacity to contribute to a social return on FET investment. Some of the wider benefits of learning have been identified as:

- Promoting active inclusion and reducing isolation - particularly in rural areas.
- Building knowledge skill and competence that, in the future, may support learner progression.
- Addressing skill gaps in the context of IT for utilisation in every-day life and in employment.
- Increasing self-confidence particularly for those seeking a return to work.
- Providing opportunities for inclusion through assisting learners in keeping up with an ever-changing society.

FET Provision for Literacy and Numeracy

The significance of literacy and numeracy skills in the context of supporting participation in employment, the ability to function within society, and to function on a personal level on a daily basis has long been established. The first national literacy report was published in 1973 and since then a number of both national and international studies pertaining to Ireland have been published. In 2013 DES published a review of adult literacy provision. This report contains 32 recommendations which were subsequently encompassed in the FET Strategy 2014-2019.

The FET Strategy 2014 to 2019 states:

FET provision will support the active inclusion of people of all abilities with special reference to literacy and numeracy.¹

In 2015 the funding for literacy and numeracy provision will be sustained as per the FET Strategy and will remain in place until an agreed strategic inputs/ outcomes-based funding model has been trialled and tested on other types of FET provision.

In the context of FET literacy and numeracy provision, the indications are that the majority of ETBs intend increasing and expanding the promotion and delivery of literacy and numeracy learner centred tuition in 2015.

Promoting Adult Literacy Services

The ETBs identified a number of links that they consider to be key to raising awareness of literacy and numeracy issues and the promotion of the Adult Literacy and Numeracy Services at individual and the wider public levels. Examples include:

- The Department of Social Protection (DSP).
- The Adult Education and Guidance Information Service (AEGIS).
- Community and voluntary groups.
- Schools.
- Youth groups etc.

¹ FET Strategy 2014-2019 pg. 135

To reach a wider audience the ETBs have indicated that they are considering utilisation of the following communications mechanisms in 2015 for the purpose of creating additional communication channels. Examples include:

- Advertising on social networking sites and in local newsletters and magazines.
- Information fairs.
- Hosting and participating in open days to distribute material relating to upcoming programmes.

In addition, a number of ETBs stated their intention to increase the range of programmes available and are considering the:

- Provision of taster-type courses.
- Provision of themed literacy programmes.
- Provision of access programmes that allow learners with literacy or numeracy difficulties to access Level 5 programmes in the future.
- Piloting of new approaches to family learning.
- Utilisation of distance learning, blended learning, virtual learning environments etc (e.g. NALA Write On system).
- Continued delivery of intensive English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) courses for priority target groups.

Estimates for Specific Target Groups Participating in FET Provision in 2015

Set out in Table 3.10 (overleaf) is estimated detail related to learners reported as long term unemployed and learners reported as persons with a disability participating in FET provision in 2015.

FET Provision for the Long Term Unemployed (LTU)

Unemployment levels declined by almost 34,000 during 2013. Available data suggests that this decline continued in 2014 with a decrease of approximately 37,500 (in the year to Q3 2014). The Long Term Unemployed accounted for a considerable share of the decrease.

The 2015 target FET provision participation rate for people who have been unemployed for a long time remains in 2015 at the 2014 level of 52,666. As part of the planning process for 2015, ETBs identified a number of strategies as having the potential to support the Long Term Unemployed in the context of access to and participation in FET provision. For example:

- Strengthening of existing relationships with the DSP (INTREO offices) to ensure officers are aware of all services and courses on offer in order to increase referrals.

- Continued collaboration with relevant stakeholders such as local and regional businesses, community groups, disability services, trade unions, chambers of commerce etc. to continually develop access and progression pathways for learners.
- The prioritisation of the Long Term Unemployed on programmes such as VTOS/BTEI
- Provision of career planning/Deciding Your Future courses.
- Delivery of new apprenticeship and traineeship programmes.
- Clearly define links between course provision and local employment opportunities.
- Identification of skills shortages at local and regional levels and provision of sector specific education and training programmes to address identified needs.
- Provision of taster programmes with flexible delivery to provide the LTU with the option of a gradual re-entry to education and training.
- Increased provision of level 3 courses to enable learners to gain the basic literacy, numeracy and ICT skills to create a solid basis from which to progress.
- Increased provision of Level 4 vocational courses in areas such as horticulture, ICT, healthcare and retail.
- Increased ESOL provision.
- Seek to increase progression from Level 5 and 6 courses into employment or further education and training.
- Development of employer engagement strategies.

Additional information related to FET supports for further education and training learners' can be found in Appendix 4.

FET Provision for Persons with a Disability

SOLAS through the FET planning process and in conjunction with the FET sector, DES, DSP/INTREO and the disability sector supports the implementation of the high level goal related to supporting active inclusion set out in the The National Disability Strategy Implementation Plan (2013 to 2015), and which is reflected in the SOLAS FET Strategy 2014–2019.

Detail of how the FET sector will support the active inclusion of persons with disability in 2015 is set out below:

- FET programmes are available to all learners including persons with a disability who meet the eligibility criteria and the guidelines provided for each FET programme.

FET PROVISION IN 2015	Estimate for Specific Target Groups participating in FET provision in 2015 (Note no targets set at this point in relation to provision for Learners – Reported as having an ability issue)						
Fulltime Provision	Learners – reported as Long Term Unemployed and were enrolled on the 1st January 2015	Learners – reporting as Long Term Unemployed starting courses during 2015	Long Term Unemployed Beneficiaries of FET provision in 2015	Targets for learners starting FET courses in 2015 who have been unemployed for a long time	Learners – Reported as having an ability issue who were enrolled on the 1st January 2015	Learners – Reporting as having an ability issue starting courses during 2015	Learners – Reported as having an ability issue and benefiting from FET provision in 2015
Apprenticeship Training	0	6	6	0	0	2	2
PLC	4,280	4,880	9,160	4,800	1,501	1,622	3,123
VTOS Core	70	2,439	2,509	2,300	181	229	410
Youthreach including Advocacy	337	2,582	2,919	0	250	302	552
Specific Skills Training	1,004	4,209	5,213	7,500	65	218	283
Blended Learning (Training)	20	170	190	180	0	3	3
Traineeship Training	485	840	1,325	1,000	30	81	111
Bridging & Foundation Training	62	583	645	300	7	74	81
Community Training Centres	41	28	69	0	32	7	39
Justice Workshop	13	26	39	0	2	3	5
Local Training Initiatives	566	1,124	1,690	1,220	179	20	199
Specialist Training Providers	88	88	176	150	1,502	868	2,370
Fulltime Provision Total	6,966	16,975	23,941	17,450	3,749	3,429	7,178
Part-time Provision							
BTEI Groups (inc Breacadh & Innovation Projects)	4,404	7,288	11,692	6,150	1,089	1,649	2,738
Adult Literacy Groups (inc DEIS & Deaf Literacy)	4,287	10,248	14,535	7,650	785	1,622	2,407
Voluntary Literacy Tuition	177	570	747	500	30	131	161
ITABE	173	1,247	1,420	500	16	157	173
ESOL	1,785	4,538	6,323	4,000	79	199	278
Skills 4 Work	0	0	0	0	0	21	21
Refugee Resettlement (where known)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Evening Training	50	2,626	2,676	2,500	4	274	278
Libraries Training	40	81	121	50	0	10	10
FET Cooperation Hours (DES funds Teacher Pay)	366	852	1,218	600	1,834	1,117	2,951
Part-time Provision Total	11,282	27,450	38,732	21,950	3,837	5,180	9,017
Part-time unaccredited Provision							
Community Education	1,196	9,983	11,179	8,750	479	5,837	6,316
Part-time Unaccredited Provision Total	12,478	37,433	49,911	30,700	4,316	11,017	15,333
National Programmes Provision							
eCollege	101	480	581	700	50	420	470
Momentum	2,140	3,860	6,000	3,860	0	0	0
National Programmes Provision Total	2,241	4,340	6,581	4,560	50	420	470
FET Programme Provision Totals	26,001	69,223	95,224	52,710	8,115	14,866	22,981

Table 3.10

(It should be noted that data related to provision presented above represents projected estimated figures as provided by the ETBs and SOLAS National Programmes for 2015.)

- Specific FET programmes are provided for persons with a disability through Specialist Training providers (STPs) and Community Education.
- ETBs intend increasing the range and number of programmes available at NFQ Levels 1, 2 and 3, as well as non-accredited programmes, as appropriate, for persons with a disability.
- The HEA Fund for Students with Disabilities can provide support for students with a disability. This fund allocates funding to further and higher education colleges for the provision of services and supports to full-time students with disabilities. The fund aims to ensure that students can participate fully in their academic programmes and are not disadvantaged by reason of a disability.
- Young learners who have completed their Leaving Certificate and are seeking to continue their education and training through participation in PLC for the purpose of identification of a career path and/or progression to higher education.
- Learners, many of whom were early school leavers, seeking second chance education opportunities.
- Learners seeking up-skilling to enhance their skill base and facilitate a change in career path.
- Learners seeking support in their endeavours to return to work.
- People who have been Long Term Unemployed
- Learners with a disability.

Set out below is summary detail of the supports available to persons with a disability (as appropriate) as outlined by the ETBs:

- Assisted technology.
- Visual aids.
- Sign language services.
- Staff supports/staff development.
- Accessibility.
- Personal assistants/small group support.
- Student 'buddy' system.
- Transport (where necessary/appropriate).
- Psychological/counselling supports/guidance.
- Reasonable accommodation.
- Specialist training providers.
- Inclusive environment, based on strong equality policy.
- Community education which assists learners with a disability to participate in FET provision by enabling adaption of course content, resources and teaching methodologies to suit learner abilities/needs.
- Participation in the HSE New Direction Group, with a view the mainstream inclusion of people with disabilities.

Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools (VSCCS)

The Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools will have a key role to play in supporting the economic recovery, by ensuring the availability of appropriate education and training interventions to meet immediate and emerging skill needs through provision of Post Leaving Cert courses (PLC) and the Back to Education initiative (BTEI).

FARs submissions received from the VSCCS categorise the learners participating in PLC and BTEI programmes as:

The VSCCS outlined the role they play in their community and stated in many instances the importance of the service they provide to rural areas in the context of being a cost-effective option for learners wishing to engage in FET. The VSCCS also stated that the service they provide has the capacity to support the local community and local business through the retention of young people particularly in rural areas, and the generation of revenue locally. In addition, the VSCCS stated that they have the capacity to support local business through the identification of the skills needs and the provision of courses to match these needs.

Examples of the courses listed and being provided by the VSCCS are set out below. This list should not be considered definitive:

- Nursing Studies
- Applied Social Studies
- Early Childhood Education and Care Skills
- Community Health
- Business Studies
- Business Administration
- Interior Design
- E-business
- Information Technology
- Maths
- Languages e.g. French, German etc.
- Engineering Technology

Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools Grant Allocations

Grant allocations will be provided to 12 Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools in 2015. The grant allocations will be used for the purpose of provision of the Back to Education Initiative (BTEI). Table 3.11 lists Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools receiving grant allocations during 2015.

Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools BTEI Grant Allocations

Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools	Programme	Funding Arrangements & Proposals
St Joseph's Secondary School, Spanish Point, Co Clare	BTEI	€41,000
Mary Immaculate Secondary School, Lisdoonvarna, Co Clare	BTEI	€39,390
Scoil Mhuire, Ennistymon, Co Clare	BTEI	€12,500
North Presentation Secondary School, Farranree, Cork	BTEI	€69,000
Sacred Heart Secondary School, Clonakilty, Co Cork	BTEI	€39,000
Nagle Rice Secondary School, Doneraile, Co Cork	BTEI	€17,300
Central College, Sexton Street, Limerick	BTEI	€54,000
Sancta Maria College, Louisburgh, Co Mayo	BTEI	€12,800
Nagle Centre Presentation Secondary School, Cannon Street, Waterford	BTEI	€32,500
Donahies Community School, Streamville Road, Dublin 13	BTEI	€52,500
Scoil Bernadette, Montenotte, Cork	BTEI	€11,500
St Michaels, Castlerea, Co Roscommon	BTEI	€28,000
Total		€409,490

Table 3.11

The Department of Education and Skills will continue to fund all PLC and Co-Operation Hours Provision (Teacher Pay and Student Capitation). This is estimated at €186m for 2015.

SOLAS will have responsibility for payments related to Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools Enhanced Capitation and Locally Devised Assessments (LDAs). SOLAS will also have responsibility for approval of the BTEI and PLC programmes.

Table 3.12 shows the total number of Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools approved PLC places for 2015. Detail of the schools and colleges that will receive grant allocations through the DES Post-Primary Payment Section in 2015 can be found in Appendix 3 of this document.

Voluntary Secondary & Community and Comprehensive Schools Approved PLC Places

Programme	Total Number of Approved Places for 2015
PLC	1,662

Table 3.12

Due to the nature of the services provided by the Irish Deaf Society e.g. provision of literacy courses for the Deaf community through the medium of Irish Sign Language (the deaf community first/preferred language) this provision has been included in the programme Tables 3.3 and 3.4.

Grant Allocations in 2015 for Additional Provision

2015 Grant Allocations to other Providers	Programme	Funding Arrangements & Proposals
Irish Deaf Society	Adult Literacy	€214,157

Table 3.13

2014 FET Provision Outturn

In 2014 the FET sector achieved 96% of its planned target for beneficiaries of the FET planned provision. Table 3.14 (below) provides detail of **Starters**, **Completions** and **Beneficiaries** on FET full-time, part-time & Community Education Provision.

Detail of the actual data reported by ETBs and SOLAS National Programmes for their 2014 provision.

2014 FET PROVISION OUTTURN										
Provision Type	2014 FET Plan			2014 FET Actual			Analysis of 2014 FET Provision			
	Starters During 2014	Beneficiaries during 2014	Completions during 2014	Starters in 2014	Completions in 2014	Beneficiaries in 2014	Beneficiary Variance	Actual Starters v 2014 Plan	Actual Completions v 2014 Plan	Actual Beneficiaries v 2014 Plan
Full-Time FET Provision	76,747	131,245	70,704	66,781	60,355	121,279	-9,966	87%	85%	92%
Part-Time FET Provision	87,069	139,029	93,259	92,019	82,939	143,979	4,950	106%	89%	104%
Community Education	52,113	71,452	52,014	42,130	40,715	61,469	-9,983	81%	78%	86%
Total	215,929	341,726	215,977	200,930	184,009	326,727	-14,999	93%	85%	96%

Table 3.14

Estimate of Change to FET Programme Provision in 2015 from 2014 on a Plan to Actual Basis

Table 3.15 (below) compares 2014 actual position for FET provision to the 2015 FET planned provision.

Table 3.15: Analysis of the Increase in 2015 FET Provision Plan Compared to the 2014 FET Provision Plan and Outturn

FET PROVISION IN 2015	Estimate of inputs into FET provision for 2015 Plan v 2014 Actual								
	Number of Learners 2015			Number of Learners 2014			Differences 2014 v 2015		
Fulltime Provision	Enrolled / Started 1st January	Starting courses during 2015	Beneficiaries of FET provision in 2015	Enrolled / Started 1st January	Starting courses during 2015	Beneficiaries of FET provision in 2015	Enrolled / Started 1st January	Starting courses during 2015	Beneficiaries of FET provision in 2015
Apprenticeship Training	2,201	4,895	7,096	869	4,262	5,131	1,332	633	1,965
PLC (adjusted for SUSI) & SOLAS Costs Only, DES funds Teacher Pay & student capitation	33,350	33,350	66,699	31,844	30,437	62,281	1,506	2,913	4,418
VTOS Core	5,448	5,414	10,862	4,378	4,212	8,590	1,070	1,202	2,272
Youthreach including Advocacy	5,309	2,919	8,228	3,483	2,619	6,102	1,826	300	2,126
Specific Skills Training	7,037	12,671	19,708	4,104	12,341	16,445	2,933	330	3,263
Blended Learning (Training)	129	402	531	0	258	258	129	144	273
Traineeship Training	2,661	3,068	5,729	2,139	2,703	4,842	522	365	887
Bridging & Foundation Training	371	2,036	2,407	266	2,519	2,785	105	-483	-378
Community Training Centres	1,601	846	2,447	2,012	1,181	3,193	-411	-335	-746
Justice Workshop	125	120	245	174	97	271	-49	23	-26
Local Training Initiatives	2,316	2,231	4,547	2,139	2,618	4,757	177	-387	-210
Specialist Training Providers	1,771	1,315	3,086	1,970	1,449	3,419	-199	-134	-333
Fulltime Provision Total	62,319	69,267	131,585	53,378	64,696	118,074	8,941	4,571	13,511
Part-time Provision									
BTEI Groups (inc Breacadh & Innovation Projects)	17,966	23,914	41,880	17,239	22,564	39,803	727	1,350	2,077
Adult Literacy Groups (inc DEIS & Deaf Literacy)	20,115	27,859	47,974	20,887	31,891	52,778	-772	-4,032	-4,804
Voluntary Literacy Tuition	707	2,290	2,997	0	0	0	707	2,290	2,997
ITABE	1,062	2,965	4,027	0	0	0	1,062	2,965	4,027
ESOL	7,699	10,781	18,480	5,079	7,283	12,362	2,620	3,498	6,118
Skills 4 Work	828	2,406	3,234	0	0	0	828	2,406	3,234
Refugee Resettlement (where known)	29	111	140	0	0	0	29	111	140
Evening Training	5,102	17,187	22,289	258	13,311	13,569	4,844	3,876	8,720
Libraries Training	331	447	778	147	562	709	184	-115	69
FET Cooperation Hours (DES funds Teacher Pay)	6,030	15,837	21,867	5,473	8,251	13,724	557	7,586	8,143
Part-time Provision Total	59,869	103,797	163,666	49,083	83,862	132,945	10,786	19,935	30,721
Part-time unaccredited provision									
Community Education	12,273	46,310	58,583	19,711	42,824	62,535	-7,438	3,486	-3,952
Part-time unaccredited provision Total	12,273	46,310	58,583	19,711	42,824	62,535	-7,438	3,486	-3,952
National Programmes Provision									
eCollege	1,688	8,000	9,688	2,505	7,403	9,908	-817	597	-220
Momentum	2,140	3,860	6,000	1,120	2,145	3,265	1,020	1,715	2,735
National Programmes Provision Total	3,828	11,860	15,688	3,625	9,548	13,173	203	2,312	2,515
FET Programme Provision Totals	138,289	231,234	369,523	125,797	200,930	326,727	12,492	30,304	42,795
Adult Guidance Service									
Funding not profiled by ETBs									
ETB FET Staff & Operational									
FET Funds Retained									
FET Funds not Profiled by SOLAS									
FET Programme Provision Totals	138,289	231,234	369,523	125,797	200,930	326,727	12,492	30,304	42,795

Table 3.15

(It should be noted that data related to provision presented above represents projected estimated figures as provided by the ETBs and SOLAS National Programmes for 2015). The table provides detail of the actual data reported by ETBs and SOLAS National Programmes for their 2014 provision.

Table 3.15 provides analysis of inputs achieved for 2014 v 2015 FET planned provision in terms of full-time, part-time, and unaccredited provision. The view presented shows the beneficiaries enrolled at the start of the year and the additional starters enrolling throughout the year.

The actual increase in planned beneficiaries for 2015 over 2014 is recorded as 42,796. However, when figures are adjusted to take into account a carryover from 2014 into 2015 of 12,492, the actual figure for additional starters in 2015 is 30,304. The key question in the context of capacity of the FET system to deliver the 2015 plan relates to the planned increase for starters (30,304) in 2015 over the actual number of starters in 2014 (200,930).

It is estimated that there will be an increase of 4,571 starters on full-time courses in 2015 as follows:

- 633 on the Apprenticeship programmes.
- 2,913 on PLC programmes.
- The balance is accounted for across a number of programmes on the basis of plus and minus numbers in terms of starters on programmes.

It is estimated that there will be an increase of 3,456 starters on unaccredited courses (community education) in 2015 as follows:

- 3,456 increase in starters on the “Community Education Programme”, However, this increase in starters would seem to be achievable given that the number of beneficiaries in 2015 is planned to be 3,592 less than 2014, and taking into account that the carryover into 2015 is 7,066 less than 2014.

It is estimated that there will be an increase of 2,312 starters on National Programmes in 2015 as follows:

- 2,312 increase in starters are on national programmes. These programmes taken together have a similar carryover from 2014. The main increase relates to Momentum, which was expected for 2015.

It is estimated that there will be an increase of 19,935 starters on part-time programmes in 2015 as follows:

- 19,935 increase in starters are related to part-time programmes, 3,967 on evening courses and the balance of 15,968 on part-time FE programmes. The evening courses increase in starters is reasonably spread over the ETBs.

Of the 15,968 increase in starters on the FE part-time programmes, the following should be noted:

- 2,406 starters are on the Skills for Work

Programme, which was not included in either the 2014 plan or outturn.

- 111 starters are on the Refugee Resettlement Programme which did not run in 2014.
- 7,556 starters relate to additional Co-Operation Hours Programme which were not included in either the 2014 plan or outturn.
- 3,495 starters are on the ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages). This provision increase results for local demand and requests by DSP at local level.
- The balance of the 2,400 increase in starters relates to changes within the literacy provision. It should be noted the parameters document did ask for an increase in the intensive literacy provision, in line with the FET strategy. This can be seen in the increase in intensive literacy provision.

SOLAS Grant Allocations to Agencies and Bodies in the Further Education and Training Sector

A portion of the funding that SOLAS will receive from the Department of Education and Skills during 2015 will be allocated to a number of agencies and bodies who support and provide services to the FET sector.

To facilitate funding in 2015 SOLAS developed the *Overarching Parameters and Guidelines Document for 2015 Grant Allocations by SOLAS to Agencies and Bodies in the FET Sector*. The document was issued to a range of agencies and bodies whose organisational objectives have been traditionally funded by the DES, and are closely aligned to the Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019. The document sets out the protocols and procedures for grant allocations in 2015. Each agency and body was requested to state their proposed activities for 2015 with reference to: the FET Strategy; the expected outcomes; and the grant requested.

SOLAS evaluated the submissions received and the grants requested. Grants were approved based on the alignment of planned activities to the overall FET Strategy. Table 3.16 to Table 3.21 provides a list of the agencies and bodies, grouped according to the type of activities planned for 2015, and the grants approved. Table 3.20 identifies a number of EU and specific projects which will be co-funded/grant-supported in 2015. Additional information on the 2015 planned activities for which grants have been approved is provided later in this document. Table 3.21 provides a summary of the specific grant allocations for 2015.

FET – Support Organisations

This group of organisations provide a support role within the FET sector.

Agency/ Body	Illustration of Key Activities Planned for 2015	2015 Grant €
AONTAS	Advocacy organisation for learners in the formal and non-formal adult and community education sector. Develop a National Adult Learners Forum in collaboration with the ETBs and other key stakeholders as part of the new FET Strategy.	1,028,511 (935,750 +up to 92,761 for Learner Voice Forum)
Dyslexia Association of Ireland	Provide services and supports to people with dyslexia to access further education and training.	129,680
Fast Track into Information Technology	Provide activation and employment supports for marginalised job seekers and placement and industry engagement.	1,144,000 (902,500 + 241,500)
National Adult Literacy Agency	Work in partnership with a range of organisations to influence policy and practice to support people in developing their literacy and numeracy skills. Support the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy and the promotional strategy as set out in the FET Strategy 2014-2019.	1,807,080 (1,602,080 + 205,000)
National Centre for Guidance in Education	Support and develop guidance practice in education and informs policy. Provide the Adult Education Guidance (AEG) programme for guidance practitioners.	178,999
WIT/REGSA	Provide an educational guidance service for adults in Waterford area.	150,983
	Sub-Total	4,439,253

Table 3.16

FET – Lifelong Learning Opportunities

These organisations assist people undertake new learning experiences.

Agency/Body	Illustration of Key Activities Planned for 2015	2015 Grant €
Age Action Ireland	Provide lifelong learning opportunities through its education programme – The University of the Third Age (U3A) and Generations Together.	66,500
The Educational Trust	Provide support to ex-prisoners and ex-offenders to access education and training.	18,050
Irish Countrywomen's Association	Provides support, personal development, education and lifelong learning opportunities.	20,900
People's College	Supports the provision of lifelong learning to adults through a wide range of courses.	92,150
	Sub-Total	197,600

Table 3.17

FET–Staff Representative Organisations

These Associations support practitioners in the FET sector.

Agency/Body	Illustration of Key Activities Planned for 2015	2015 Grant €
Adult Education Guidance Association of Ireland (AEGAI)	Represent the views of members and work with members and agencies in the development and implementation of the FET Guidance Strategy.	4,750
Adult Literacy Organisers Association (ALOA)	Assist members develop their professional competencies in Adult Literacy and share knowledge and experience through networking.	12,920
Community Education Facilitators Association	Promote community education and support members through CPD and networking activities.	4,750
National Association of Adult and Community Education Directors	Provide a support structure and networking arrangement for Directors of Adult and Community Education within the Community and Comprehensive School Sector.	4,000
National Association of VTOS Coordinators	Raise awareness of the developmental needs of adult learners and share best practice among coordinators	9,500
National Association of Youthreach Coordinators	Raise the profile of Youthreach through its website, publications and social media.	19,000
	Sub-Total	54,920

Table 3.18

FET – CPD Provision

The WIT/NALA Accreditation Project provides higher education qualifications to those working in the national adult literacy service.

Agency/Body	Illustration of Key Activities Planned for 2015	2015 Grant €
Waterford Institute of Technology (to support the WIT/NALA Project)	Provide third level CPD programmes for adult literacy practitioners.	494,000
	Sub-Total	494,000

Table 3.19

EU and Specific Projects details

The projects listed below assist adults, practitioners, policy makers and others with accessing information appropriate to the further education and training sector.

Organisation	2015 Grant €
AONTAS (EU project co-funding requested by DES for the European Agenda for Adult Learning Project).	150,000
Education and Training Board Ireland – ITABE Co-ordinator (Co-ordinate a range of projects on further education and training and QQI initiatives).	50,000
FIT Associate Professional* - two year dual education pilot project comprising a number of software development or computer systems networking courses delivered by a number of ETBs.	315,000
IACTO*- support the CTC Boards of Management in human resource advisory services, industrial relations and board of management support.	140,000
Léargas – EU project co-funding requested by DES for the EPAL element of Erasmus+	35,329
Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC-related fee)	30,002
Irish National Organisation for the Unemployed (INOUE) for the publication Working for Work 2015.	20,000
Sub-Total	740,331

Table 3.20

*Approved by SOLAS Board in 2014

Overall Summary Total of Specific Budget Allocations for 2015

	2015 Grant Allocation €
FET Support Organisations	4,439,253
FET – Lifelong Learning Opportunities	197,600
FET Staff Representative Organisations	54,920
FET – CPD Provision	494,000
EU and Specific Projects	740,331
TOTAL	5,926,104

Table 3.21

Additional Programme Information

Apprenticeship Programme

SOLAS has statutory responsibility for the coordination and control of designated apprenticeships under the Industrial Training Act 1967 and the Labour Services Act 1987. Apprenticeship is a demand-driven educational and training programme for employed people, aimed at:

- Developing the knowledge, skills and competence of the apprentice to perform effectively as a craftsperson in industry, to respond appropriately to technical change, and to provide a basis for progression in education and training.

SOLAS has developed the apprenticeship programmes in partnership with employers, trades unions, the Department of Education and Skills, and the Institutes of Technology (public higher education institutions).

In May 2013, the then Minister for Education and Skills, Ruari Quinn T.D., announced a review of apprenticeship in Ireland. The Review of Apprenticeship was published in December 2013 and outlined a broad range of recommendations. One key recommendation of the Review of Apprenticeship, with the aim of underpinning a new apprenticeship system, was the establishment of the Apprenticeship Council. On the 18th November 2014, the Minister for Education and Skills, Jan O'Sullivan T.D., launched the new Apprenticeship Council.

Contracted Training

In addition to the FET provision already detailed in this document the ETBs can utilise Contracted Training to address identified needs. Contracted training can be utilised to:

- Support innovation.
- Facilitate responsiveness in the context of acting quickly to/address local, regional, hard to predict, and specific needs.
- Provide flexibility in programme delivery.

The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF)

The EGF fund was established in December 2006 to support workers made redundant as a result of major changes in global trade patterns to assist them back into employment as soon as possible. Information provided by the ETBs indicates that the EGF initiative has been used in the past to support learners who have become unemployed (e.g. former Dell employees), and that a number of learners are currently benefitting from this initiative through the Anderson Ireland EGF programme, the Anderson NEET programme, and the Lufthansa EGF programme.

Momentum

MOMENTUM is a SOLAS initiative for people who are a year or more unemployed and who are looking for help to get their careers moving. MOMENTUM provides people with an opportunity to get jobs in sectors of the economy that are growing and are in need of skilled employees. The initiative funds the running of free training courses, which include skills training, certification, work placement and after-course supports for participants. http://www.momentumskills.ie/docs/momentum_suppliment_2015.pdf

CSCS, QSCS and SAFE Pass Programmes

CSCS

SOLAS is responsible for governance of the national CSCS, QSCS and Safe Pass programmes.

The CSCS programme provides for the training, assessment, certification and registration of non-craft operatives within the construction sector, and is covered under the provisions of Schedule 5 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013.

QSCS

The QSCS programme provides for the training, assessment, certification and registration of non-craft operatives within the construction sector, and is covered under the provisions of Schedule 1 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Quarry) Regulations 2008.

SAFE Pass Programmes

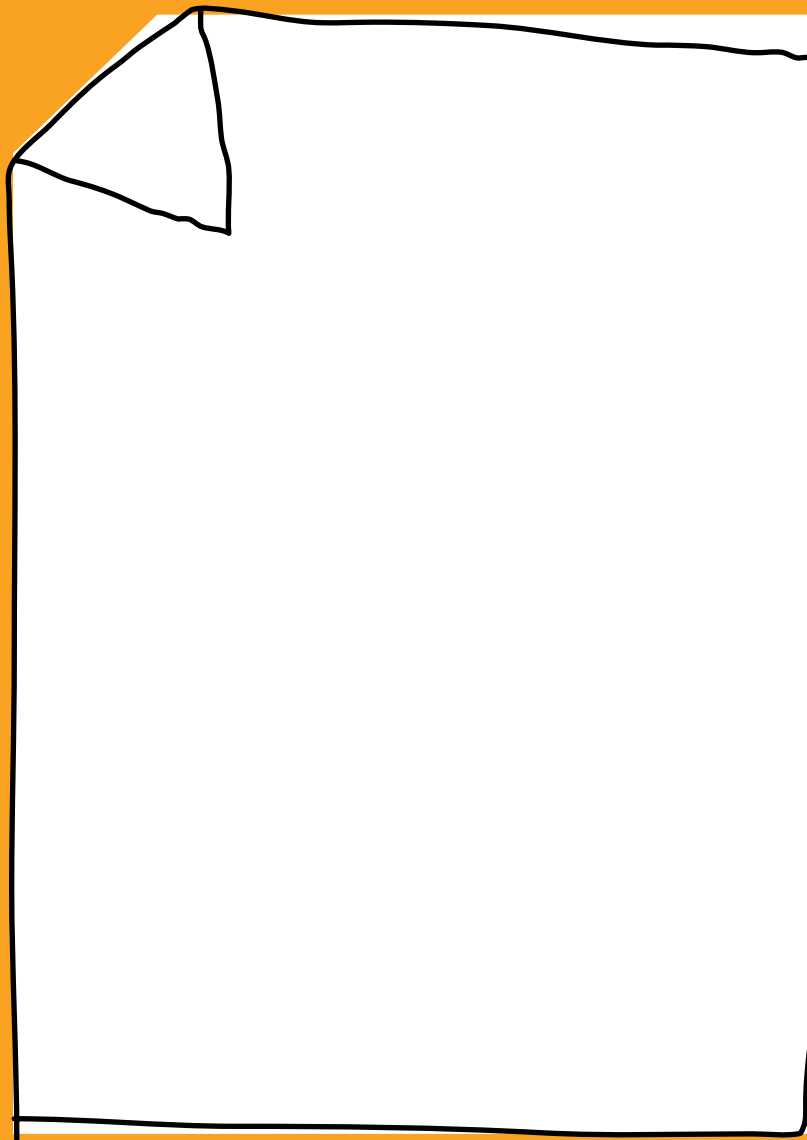
The Safe Pass Programme is a one-day Health and Safety awareness training programme aimed primarily at construction sector workers, including new entrants. The Safe Pass programme is covered under the provisions of Schedule 4 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013.

E college

E college is the National Online Learning service. It delivers free of charge training to approximately 10,000 unemployed learners, and on a fee paying basis to 700 employed learners annually. With flexible start and finish dates, learners can work online at their own pace and achieve industry-recognised certification in occupations in demand by employers. Learners have access to tutor support and all the content and resources needed to achieve certification. In early 2015 a new tutoring support service was launched, increasing the number of courses available and providing higher levels of support. www.eCollege.ie.

Section 4

Appendices



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Appendix 2

Summary of the Further Education and Training (FET) Support Organisations Planned Activities for 2015

Set out below are details of the activities planned for 2015 by the agencies and bodies in receipt of SOLAS Funding.

FET Support Organisations

Agency / Body	2015 Planned Activities
<p>AONTAS</p> <p>A nationwide umbrella membership organisation with over 550 members from the formal and non-formal adult and community education sector. The membership profile includes statutory, voluntary and community organisations as well as individual members, including; adult learners, tutors, facilitators, organisers and advocates of adult learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Advocate and lobby for the development of a quality service for adult learners. — Organise the Adult Learners Festival. — Build on its Learner Support Strategy to develop a National Adult Learners Forum in collaboration with the ETBs and other key stakeholders as part of the new Further Education and Training Strategy. — Continue to deliver a web-based information service for adults and to further develop this promotional project as a part of the Further Education and Training Strategy.
<p>Dyslexia Association of Ireland</p> <p>Works with and for people affected by dyslexia by providing information, offering appropriate support services, engaging in advocacy and raising awareness of dyslexia.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Provide a target of 40 subsidised educational psychology assessments and support for disadvantaged adults which will support unemployed and low-paid young people to access further education and training. — Provide an information service and outreach programme on adult dyslexia. — Design, develop and distribute an information leaflet and poster to raise awareness of adult dyslexia and the supports available. — Provide specialist literacy tuition for learners attending at the Career Paths Centre.
<p>Fast Track Into Information Technology (FIT)</p> <p>Promotes an inclusive Smart Economy by creating a fast track to marketable technical skills for those at risk of unemployment long term. Works in collaboration with government, education and training providers and disadvantaged communities to enable greater access to employment for marginalised job seekers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Initiate recruitment and selection programmes and promote digital literacy/foundational training as part of wider mobilisation/community engagement interventions. — Engage with employers and review industry skill needs surveys to identify curriculum development opportunities responsive to employment/growth opportunities. — Liaise with employers with regard to employment and work experience opportunities.

FET Support Organisations

Agency / Body	2015 Planned Activities
<p>National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA)</p> <p>Works in partnership with a range of organisations to influence policy and practice to support people in developing their literacy and numeracy skills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Support the implementation of policies affecting people with literacy and numeracy difficulties. — Improve the quality of teaching, learning and information provision. — Build public awareness of the importance of strong literacy and numeracy skills.
<p>National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE)</p> <p>Operates under the aegis of Léargas – The Exchange Bureau. The Centre supports and develops guidance practice in all areas of education and informs the policy of the Department of Education and Skills in the field of guidance. NCGE hosts the EU funded Euroguidance Centre Ireland and is the representative for Ireland/DES at the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Continue provision of the Adult Education Guidance Initiative (AEGI) support programme for guidance practitioners in the education sector. — Review and up-date NCGE's Adult Guidance Management System to improve monitoring and report generation. — Re-launch the AEGI on-line Handbook for wider Adult Guidance Sector. — Co-ordinate and provide Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for guidance practitioners.
<p>Waterford Institute of Technology/ Regional Educational Guidance Service for Adults</p> <p>The WIT/REGSA service provides an educational guidance service for adults, especially those at risk of social exclusion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Provide an educational guidance service for adults and expand the number of adult education groups the service is engaging with and increase the number of new clients attending guidance appointments. Negotiate a formalised referral procedure from INTREO case managers. — Conduct surveys to establish clients' experience of the service to include a longitudinal survey of former clients from the 2008/2009 period; an exit survey with approximately 50 clients to capture their experience immediately after the service; the annual postal survey to capture information on whether clients start a course. — Hold guidance workshops to support clients in accessing third level education. — Purchase equipment to support the work of the service. — Contribute to the setting-up of a joint guidance website with the guidance services under the Waterford Wexford ETB.

FET – Lifelong Learning Opportunities

Agency / Body	2015 Planned Activities
<p>Age Action Ireland</p> <p>Has 3,393 members and is made up of people of all ages, statutory bodies, NGOs and private/commercial bodies. The organisation engages with a variety of people who have an interest in the ageing sector and work with Government departments, universities, health care professionals, private commercial bodies, banks and insurance companies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Prioritise the needs of unemployed people of all ages and socially excluded groups in the two strands of the organisation's education programme – The University of the Third Age (U3A) and Generations Together. — Strengthen activities that promote numeracy and literacy with socially excluded people of all ages through the U3A and Intergenerational programmes. — Promote the benefits and raise the profile of lifelong learning with learners and employers.
<p>Irish Countrywomen's Association</p> <p>The largest membership organisation of women in Ireland. The Association's Adult Education College An Grianán plays a key role in the education of the ICA's members and the wider public.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Provide members and non-members with support, personal development, education and life-long learning opportunities.
<p>Irish Deaf Society</p> <p>Provides literacy classes to empower deaf adults to meaningful participation in society through the medium of the deaf/hard of hearing community's preferred language of Irish Sign Language and/or lip-reading.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Increase the number of classes to 40 which will accommodate between 220 and 250 students nationwide. — Introduce workshops for students unable to attend weekly classes. The workshops will give students a taster of courses provided. — Provide in-service training and staff training.
<p>People's College</p> <p>Provides lifelong learning opportunities for trade unionist, their families and the public in general. Courses include languages, politics, economics etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Support the provision of Lifelong Learning to adults through a wide range of courses.
<p>The Educational Trust</p> <p>A charitable trust providing access to further education and training for ex-prisoners and ex-offenders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Payment of fees/costs relating to study/training undertaken by ex-prisoners and ex-offenders. — Provide advice/guidance to ex-prisoners and ex-offenders.

FET – Staff Representative Organisations

Agency / Body	2015 Planned Activities
<p>Adult Education Guidance Association of Ireland (AEGAI)</p> <p>Supports guidance co-ordinators, guidance counsellors and information officers employed by the Adult Education Guidance Services within the Education and Training Boards (ETBs) and the Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT). AEGAI represents the views of members to ensure the continued development of professional adult guidance services in Ireland.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Work with members and the agencies involved in the development and implementation of the FET Guidance Strategy to ensure that the AEGI experience and model of guidance is included in underpinning the above strategy. — Host the AEGAI Annual General Meeting. — Update the website and advance social media engagement. — Hold regular Executive meetings to collect regional reports and issues.
<p>Adult Literacy Organisers Association (ALOA)</p> <p>Professional representative body for Adult Literacy Organisers' managing adult literacy and basic education services throughout the Republic of Ireland as part of an integrated Education and Training Boards Adult Education Service. The Association comprises of an Executive Committee and six Regional Committees. The Association's aim is to enhance the status of Adult Literacy provision within the Adult Education system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Host an annual forum for Adult Literacy Organisers to share, network and gain knowledge and skills to support their work. — Assist members develop their professional competencies. 65 ALOs will have the opportunity to participate in CPD training. ALOA will facilitate CPD for literacy practitioners to ensure more reliable screening and assessment systems are in place. — Create a positive public awareness of the needs and benefits of Adult Literacy. The Association will support and provide guidance for the Community Education Facilitators Association (CEFA) in assisting them to integrate literacy and numeracy into Community Education programmes. — Influence Government departments and their bodies in developing adult literacy policies. The twelve members of the Executive Committee will represent ALOA in a range of national fora and will contribute to the development of policies and procedures in collaboration with the ETBI Literacy Numeracy and Basic Education Forum. — Update ALOA's website.
<p>Community Education Facilitators Association (CEFA)</p> <p>Represents Community Education facilitators employed in the ETBs. CEFA's aim is to influence policy and share/develop good practice in community education and promote the professional development of Community Education facilitators.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Organise the CEFA Annual General Meeting and a two day National Training/Networking event in November 2015 for Community Education facilitators. — Initiate pilot phase for the implementation of the Limerick ETB WBL in some ETBs. Review outcome of process before year end and produce a report on the pilot phase.

Agency / Body	2015 Planned Activities
<p>National Association of Adult and Community Education Directors</p> <p>Provides a support structure and networking arrangement for directors of Adult and Community Education within the Community and Comprehensive School sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Organise a two day National Conference in November 2015 for Member Schools to provide CPD for directors and Associate Directors. — Hold three National Executive Planning Meetings.
<p>National Association of VTOS Coordinators</p> <p>Provides a forum for VTOS co-ordinators to promote a greater understanding and awareness of the development needs of adult learners and to support coordination and development of services and facilities for participants.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Organise a national conference. — Organise eight regional meetings and four Executive meetings. — Maintain the organisation's website. — Participate at meetings organised by ETBI, DES.
<p>National Association of Youthreach Coordinators</p> <p>Represents its members at national meetings and provides a contact point for Youthreach Co-ordinators. Promotes the work of Youthreach by utilising social media channels and provides a platform for members to share best practice and engage in relevant CPD.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Raise the profile of Youthreach through upgrading the national website, produce a minimum of four runs of the Youthreach Newsletter for distribution to all Youthreach centres, and develop a national social media strategy to link in with national and international education programmes. — Hold five Executive and regional representative meetings. — Organise the National Youthreach Student Soccer Competition.

FET – CPD Provision

Agency / Body	2015 Planned Activities
<p>Waterford Institute of Technology (to support the WIT/NALA Project)</p> <p>The WIT/NALA Adult Literacy Accreditation Project provides third level programmes to practitioners in the adult literacy field e.g. managers, tutors, organisers, resource workers. It collaborates with stakeholder groups to heighten awareness of the value of adult literacy and the CPD needs of practitioners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Provide third level CPD programmes for adult literacy practitioners. — Collaborate with stakeholders to promote awareness about adult literacy, numeracy, FET and CPD for practitioners. — Conduct research into adult literacy, adult basic education and further education.

EU and Specific Projects

Agency / Body	2015 Planned Activities
<p>AONTAS/European Agenda for Adult Learning</p>	<p>AONTAS is the national co-ordinator for the EAAL promotional project, co-ordinated by DES, on delivering a web-based information service on FET services to assist adults navigate the resources and services available to them online, including via ETBs and other organisations.</p>
<p>Education and Training Board Ireland – ITABE Co-ordinator</p>	<p>Co-ordinate a range of projects on further education and training and QQI initiatives.</p>
<p>FIT – ICT Associate Professional</p>	<p>The ICT Associate Professional initiative is designed as a two-year dual education pilot project in which 200 learners will participate on a number of software development or computer systems networking courses delivered by particular Education and Training Boards.</p>
<p>Irish Association of Community Training Organisations (IACTO) Representative body for boards of management of CTCs. The board of directors of IACTO operates in a voluntary capacity.</p>	<p>IACTO will provide support and advice to the CTC boards of management with regard to human resource advisory support; industrial relations and board of management support.</p>
<p>Léargas, co-funding for EPALE element of Erasmus+ Léargas is the National Support Service for EPALE in Ireland.</p>	<p>The Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe (EPALE) is a multilingual on-line community funded by the European Commission. It is designed to assist teachers, trainers, researchers, academics and policy makers and those with an interest in adult learning.</p>
<p>Central Statistics Office – Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) CSO is the national statistical office and provides statistical information to Government for the formation and monitoring of policy and programmes at a national/regional/local level and also serves the needs of the wider national and international community.</p>	<p>International survey of adult skills conducted in 33 countries which measures cognitive and workplace skills needed for individuals to participate in society and for economies to prosper. The results of the survey assist educators, policy makers and labour economists to develop economic, education and social policies that will enhance the skills of adults.</p>
<p>Working for Work 2015 Publication (Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed) The INOU is a federation of unemployed people, unemployed centres, unemployed groups, community organisations and trade unions. The INOU promotes and campaigns for policies to achieve full employment for all and for an acceptable standard of living for unemployed people and their dependents.</p>	<p>The INOU will produce and distribute 25,000 copies of Working for Work to individual unemployed people, INOU member organisations, ETBs, DSP Intreo and local offices, Citizen Information Centres, MABS and a wide range of other organisations such as Springboard, FIT, Skillsnet, LES and Jobs Clubs. The provision of quality information to jobseekers and other social welfare recipients, on their education and training options, supports the 'skills for the economy and active inclusion' initiative.</p>

Appendix 3

List of Schools/Colleges for which Grants are allocated through Post-Primary Payment Section

Schools/Colleges for which Grants are allocated through Post-Primary Payment Section	Programmes	2015 Places	Funding Arrangements & Proposals
Ballyhaunis, Community School, Co. Mayo	PLC	20	Post Primary Payments
Cabinteely, Community School, Dublin 18	PLC	40	As above
Castlecomer, Community School, Co. Kilkenny	PLC	28	As above
Castlerea Community School, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon	PLC	16	As above
Central College, Sexton Street, Limerick	PLC	240	As above
Clifden Community School, Clifden, Co. Galway	PLC	18	As above
Coláiste Mhuire, Ballygar, Co Galway	PLC	16	As above
Donaghies, Community School, Streamville Road, Dublin 13	PLC	30	As above
Dunmore, Community School, Co. Galway	PLC	20	As above
Glenamaddy Community School, Co. Galway	PLC	50	As above
Gorey Community School, Gorey, Co. Wexford	PLC	96	As above
Jesus & Mary Secondary School, Enniscrone, Co. Sligo	PLC	75	As above
Kilrush, Community School, Co. Clare	PLC	20	As above
Kinsale Community School, Kinsale, Co. Cork	PLC	20	As above
Mary Immaculate Secondary School, Lisdoonvarna, Co. Clare	PLC	40	As above
Mean Scoil Mhuire, Newtownsmith, Galway	PLC	34	As above
Mercy College, Sligo	PLC	60	As above
Moate Business College, Moate, Co. Westmeath	PLC	430	As above
Our Lady's Secondary School, Belmullet, Co. Mayo	PLC	16	As above
Ramsgrange Community School, New Ross, Co. Wexford	PLC	24	As above
Sancta Maria College, Louisburgh, Co. Mayo	PLC	30	As above
St Cuan's College, Castleblakeney, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway	PLC	38	As above
St. Joseph's College, Summerhill, Athlone, Co. Westmeath	PLC	34	As above
St Louis Community School, Kiltimagh, Co. Mayo	PLC	145	As above
St Joseph's Secondary School, Ballybunion, Co. Kerry	PLC	32	As above
St. Tiernan's Community School, Parkvale, Sandyford, Dublin 16	PLC	24	As above
Scoil Phobail Mhic Dara, Carna, Co. Galway	PLC	16	As above
Tullow Community School, Carlow	PLC	50	As above
Total		1662	

Appendix 4

FET Supports Provided for Further Education and Training Learners

A number of supports are provided for learners engaging in further education and training programmes. These examples should not be considered definitive.

- The Adult Education Guidance and Information Service (AEGIS) provides nationwide guidance for learners before, during and after they participate in BTEI, Adult Literacy, Community Education or VTOS programmes. This service also supports the provision of quality AEGS guidance and information services to people aged 16+.
- Participants in Youthreach, VTOS, or BTEI are eligible for low-cost childcare under the Childcare in Education and Training Scheme (CETS), operated by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA).
- The HEA fund for students with disabilities can provide support for students with a disability. It allocates funding to further and higher education colleges for the provision of services and supports to full-time students with disabilities. It aims to ensure that students can participate fully in their academic programmes and are not disadvantaged by reason of a disability.
- The Guidance, Counselling and Psychological Service in Youthreach and Community Training Centres is in the main used for the provision of counselling for young people on these programmes.
- The INTREO service administered by the Department of Social Protection provides a single point of contact for all employment and income supports and also provides employment services and supports for both jobseekers and employers.
- The Advocacy Service which provides a network of full-time advocates whose role is to support participants on the Youthreach programme in decision-making, referral, progression and placement. Advocates are also instrumental in organising work experience and monitoring students while on work experience.

Appendix 5

Business Sector – Identification of Skills Needs

The job opportunities detailed below are a summary of a number of publications produced by the SLMRU Unit in SOLAS, namely:

- The Expert Group on Future Skills Needs National Skills Bulletin 2014
- Occupational Employment Projections 2020
- Vacancy Overview 2014
- The Expert Group on Future Skills Needs Regional Labour Markets Bulletin 2014

Agriculture, Horticulture, and Mariculture

Agricultural employment has experienced significant growth in recent years. It should be noted however, that the CSO states that estimates of employment in this sector have been shown to be sensitive to sample changes over time and particular caution is warranted in the interpretation of the trend in this sector at this time. Although agricultural output is expected to increase in the coming years, due to changes in the EU Common Agricultural Policy (removal of milk quota) and domestic policy (Harvest 2020) this is not expected to lead to an increase in employment. Instead, the sector is expected to become more capital and less labour intensive.

Mariculture has been identified by Government as a niche sector with significant additional employment potential. This is particularly true of aquaculture, especially fish farming and research.

Art, Craft and Media

With employment growth in this sector expected to be broadly in line with the national employment, no skill shortages have been identified in the areas of art, craft and media.

Business Admin and Management

In terms of future outlook, employment growth is expected to grow above average for business analysts and consultants and to decline for administrative occupations.

Occupations in business administration and management for which shortages have been identified include:

- Management consultants with expertise in organisational change (e.g. takeovers), resource planning (e.g. ERP) and performance management (e.g. Oracle and Hyperion, key performance indicators, dashboards).
- Multilingual clerks (accounts payable, credit control).

Built Environment

Strong growth is expected in the construction sector as this sector emerges from the lows to which it had fallen following the financial crisis and the bursting of the housing bubble. While the skills overhang from the recessionary period is sufficient to meet current demand, shortages may emerge in the medium term. Indeed, there are already some indications of shortages of construction and property surveyors. High replacement and turnover rates were identified for a number of construction occupations including for construction labourers, some construction trades (carpenters in particular) and civil engineers.

The skills mix of the construction sector is expected to shift slightly further towards managers, so-called 'non-wet' trades (e.g. electricians, fitters, plumbers and welders) and construction operatives, and away from some wet trades (e.g. bricklayers, plasterers) to reflect a greater balance between residential and other construction activities than that observed during the housing bubble.

The main areas of activity in the coming years are expected to arise from the expansion of the fast growing sectors such as ICT, pharmaceuticals and medical devices, upgrades associated with the energy infrastructure (traditional and renewable) and the management of water and waste. Residential building and residential repair and maintenance are also expected to expand as the economy recovers. Demand for skills will also change as a result of the development and implementation of new construction materials and technology (e.g. volumetric 'pods', panels, component assembly, timber and steel frames, pre-cast concrete, cladding systems).¹

¹ A Review of the Employment and Skills Needs of the Construction Industry in Ireland, Expert Group on Future Skills Needs, 2008.

Financial Services

Financial services occupations for which shortages have been identified include:

- Quantitative analysts, such as financial analysts, statisticians, economists, actuaries, risk analysts with expertise in data analysis, quantitative modelling, data visualisation, big data, web analytics, forecasting, evaluation and reporting.
- Accountants (financial, tax, compliance, solvency and rationalisation).
- Multilingual financial clerks in credit control/debt recovery.

The financial services employment is projected to grow above average, with employment expected to exceed the 2007 levels by 2020. Within financial services, the occupational distribution is projected to move away from administrative occupations and towards a greater share of business analysts (business and investment) and financial accounts managers.

Food and Beverage

While no shortages of meat processing skills have been identified, it is recognised that many food processing companies are experiencing difficulty in attracting and retaining skilled butchers/de-boners. High replacement and turnover rates have been identified for catering staff including chefs, waiters, kitchen assistants and restaurant managers.

IT

Shortages of ICT skills have been identified in the following areas:

- Software development (programming languages, technologies and frameworks, cloud, web/mobile content management, IT project management and business analysis, testing and troubleshooting).
- Databases/big data.
- Specific product knowledge.
- IT security.
- Technical support.
- Networking and infrastructure.

The ICT sector is projected to grow strongly, with rates well above average; as a result, employment is expected to significantly exceed the 2007 level, with numbers projected to double by 2020. The occupation mix of the IT sector is projected to change slightly towards managers, programmers and sales executives and away from IT technicians.

Health/Family/Care/Other Personal Services

Although employment opportunities for healthcare workers remain limited, reflecting the Government's continued efforts to reduce public expenditure in the healthcare sector, skills shortages continue to persist for the following occupations:

- Doctors: general practitioners (GPs) and non-consultant hospital doctors: this shortage should be alleviated once the additional supply of medical graduates, stemming from the implementation of the Fottrell Report² (2006), emerges from the education system.
- Nurses: advanced nurse practitioners and specialist nurses in the areas of intensive care, theatre, oncology, paediatrics and geriatric care.
- Radiographers: computed tomography (CT), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and sonography.

While there are no shortages of carers at present, it is recognised that some employers may be experiencing difficulty in attracting and retaining qualified care and child-care workers. Nurses have been identified as having a high rate of replacement demand and turnover.

Future growth in the healthcare sector is expected to be below average.

Hairdressing/Beauty and Complimentary Therapies

No shortages have been identified in occupations relating to hairdressing/beauty and complimentary therapies although high replacement and turnover rates have been identified for hairdressers.

Manufacturing/Engineering

In terms of future growth, while the value of manufacturing output is expected to increase in the coming years, numbers employed are not expected to grow primarily due to expected further technological changes and continuing labour-capital substitution. Within the food processing sector, the occupational distribution is expected to shift slightly, with the share of food processing operatives increasing and the share of elementary occupations (process plant and construction labourers) declining. Within the traditional manufacturing sector, the share of functional managers, sales executives and operatives is projected to increase, while the share of labourers is expected to decrease.

All manufacturing activities are expected to continue to implement leaner manufacturing through the

² Medical Education in Ireland: A New Direction, Department of Health, 2006.

automation of activities and business processes, and to rely increasingly on data analytics. As a result, an increasing number of enterprises in traditional manufacturing are replacing traditional manufacturing processes with high-technology. These changes are expected to sustain the demand for the following skills:

- Trades/technicians (tool makers, polymer, mechanic, electronic, lean technologies).
- Super operatives (e.g. CNC machining and programming, lean technologies).
- Engineers and scientists (design, automation, lean technologies, product and process development, quality, cross discipline, data analytics).
- Shared services (business, IT, sales, legal, regulation, customer care, prototyping, finance, supply chain, intellectual property management).³

Shortages in manufacturing and engineering have been identified in the areas of:

- Production and process engineering (automation, process safety and system control).
- Quality and validation.
- Product development and design (in the areas of chemicals, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, ICT, food and medical devices).
- Precision engineering (tool making and design for automotive, pharmaceutical and medical devices sectors).
- Energy (power generation and transmission).
- Telecommunications (mobile telephony).
- Project management and production planning.
- Tool makers – recent developments in tool making technology have enabled many Irish based companies to successfully compete for contracts previously outsourced to low cost locations. This, accompanied with the strong performance of the medical devices and pharmaceutical sectors, has created demand for tradespersons with expertise in making highly complex, regulated and precise tools. This has also been illustrated in the increase in the recruitment of apprentices in this craft.
- Welders (tungsten inert gas (TIG) and metal inert gas (MIG)): specialised welding skills are required across many sectors, including utilities, high tech and traditional manufacturing as well as construction activity associated with the expansion of facilities for high technology sectors.

3 Future Skills Requirements of the Manufacturing Sector to 2020, Expert Group on Future Skills Needs, 2013; Future Skills Requirements of the Food and Beverage Sector, Expert Group on Future Skills Needs, 2009; Future Skills Requirements of the Biopharma-Pharmachem Sector, Expert Group on Future Skills Needs, 2010.

While there is currently no shortage of operatives in general⁴, it is recognised that some manufacturing companies in engineering, medical devices and pharmaceuticals are experiencing difficulty in sourcing operatives with CNC skills.

Natural Resources

The green economy is expected to grow in the coming years driven by the domestic, EU and wider global initiatives to improve the environmental sustainability of human activities. This will create opportunities in a variety of areas including; renewables, energy efficiency, water treatment, waste management, green ICT, environmental consulting etc.⁵

Sales and Marketing

In terms of future growth in this sector, above average growth is expected for sales occupations, although they remain vulnerable to a potential failure by domestic policy to resolve outstanding issues with the Irish banking sector and the associated flow of credit throughout the economy.

Shortages in sales and marketing were reported in the following areas:

- Market research and product strategy.
- Digital sales and marketing (e.g. 'pay per click').
- Business to business (B2B) and business to consumer (B2C) technical sales in the areas of ICT, healthcare, medical devices and pharmaceuticals
- Multilingual customer support (Nordic languages, German and French).

Replacement and turnover rates have been identified in sales occupations, particularly sales assistants, customer care workers, business sales executives and other sales workers.

Science and Technology, Animal Science

Shortages in scientists and scientific technicians have been identified in the areas of microbiology, product development, active pharmaceutical ingredients (API) and pharmacovigilance (product validation (PV), drug safety etc.). While very small in numbers, addressing these shortages is crucial, as they concern high-level expertise in critical roles within companies.

4 National Skills Bulletin 2014 (EGFSN 2014), Future Skills Requirements of the Manufacturing Sector to 2020 (EGFSN 2013)

5 Future Skills Needs of Enterprise within the Green Economy in Ireland, Expert Group on Future Skills Needs 2010.

Transport Distribution/Logistics

The distribution sector is projected to grow broadly in line with the economy and to fully recover to the pre-recession employment levels by 2020. However, this sector remains particularly vulnerable to the availability of credit for households and businesses. Within distribution, the skill mix is expected to shift slightly, with gains for managers and customer service occupations and losses for administrative occupations.

The sector will change as a result of the increasing emphasis on efficient customer response, branding and marketing and vertical integration with suppliers. Technology will also play an important role in the changing demand for skills in the distribution sector as it provides platforms for improved payment processes, data mining and supply chain management.

Skills required to drive trade and export sales across sectors include international management, marketing (multilingual, e-commerce etc.), sales (multilingual), customer service and support (multilingual) and incorporation of client feedback into design and development of products and services.⁶

Shortages in transport/logistics have been identified for:

- Multilingual supply chain and logistics managers and clerks with specific industry expertise (e.g. medical devices), foreign language skills, and/or an ability to manage international customer relations.
- Heavy goods vehicle drivers (with E+ and C1 licence).
- Forklift drivers (with very narrow aisle (VNA) and/or turret licence; Reach Truck, Stand-up and Electrical Pallet Jack Operators).

Tourism and Sport

Sports and tourism occupations are expected to grow broadly in line with the national employment.

⁶ Key Skills for Enterprise to Trade Internationally, Expert Group on Future Skills Needs, 2012.

Appendix 6

List of Definitions

Full-time Further Education and Training Programmes

Post Leaving Certificate (PLC)	
Starter Definition	The counting of each learner in this category, on the date the learner commenced tuition on their course of study (typically in September/October).
Completer Definition	The counting of each learner in this category, on the date the learner finished their course of study (typically in May).
Note	In the case of multi-year PLC programmes, each year is a standalone year and should be considered independently. (If the course crosses the calendar year this has no impact.)
The Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)	
Starter Definition	The counting of each learner in this category, on the date the learner commenced tuition on their course of study.
Completer Definition	The counting of each learner in this category, on the date the learner finished their course of study.
Note	In the case of multi-year VTOS programmes, each year is a standalone year and should be considered independently. (If the course crosses the calendar year this has no impact.)
Youthreach	
Starter Definition	The counting of each learner in this category, on the date the learner commenced tuition on their course of study.
Completer Definition	The counting of each learner in this category, on the date the learner finished their course of study
Note	Youthreach is organised on an academic year/semester basis therefore: Completion of the summer programme should be considered as the completion of the year. Resumption of the Youthreach programme post-summer break should be considered as the start of the next year. (If the course crosses the calendar year this has no impact.)
Bridging, Foundation, Specific Skills Training (SST), Traineeship Programmes, Local Training Initiatives (LTIs), Apprenticeship	
Starter Definition	The counting of each learner in this category, on the date the learner commenced tuition on their course of study.
Completer Definition	The counting of each learner in this category, on the date the learner finished their course of study.
Note	If the course crosses the calendar year this has no impact.

Community Training Centres (CTCs)	
Starter Definition	The counting of each learner in this category, on the date the learner commenced tuition on their course of study.
Completer Definition	The counting of each learner in this category, on the date the learner finished their course of study.
Note	If the course crosses the calendar year this has no impact. The commencement of subsequent years occurs on the anniversary date of the learner's initial registration on the course.

Part-time Further Education and Training Programmes

The Back to Education Initiative (BTEI)	
Starter Definition	The counting of each learner in this category, on the date the learner commenced tuition on their course of study.
Completer Definition	The counting of each learner in this category, on the date the learner finished their course of study.
Note	The course of study is whatever the learner sets out to complete, i.e. this could be 1 module or any number of modules.
Adult Literacy (including ITABE, ESOL and DEIS, Skills for Work initiatives)	
Starter Definition	The counting of each learner in this category, on the date the learner commenced tuition on their course of study.
Completer Definition	The counting of each learner in this category, on the date the learner finished their course of study.
Note	On completion of their course (perhaps involving only one module), the learner is considered to have progressed and is therefore considered to be a starter at the beginning of any additional course undertaken.
FET Co-operation Hours	
Starter Definition	The counting of each learner in this category, on the date the learner commenced tuition on their course of study.
Completer Definition	The counting of each learner in this category, on the date the learner finished their course of study.
Note	In the case of multiyear programmes, each year is a standalone year and should be considered independently.
Evening Courses, Online Learning and Blended Courses	
Starter Definition	The counting of each learner in this category, on the date the learner commenced tuition on their course of study.
Completer Definition	The counting of each learner in this category, on the date the learner finished their course of study.
Note	If the course crosses the calendar year this has no impact.

Community Education Provision	
Starter Definition	The counting of each learner in this category, on the date the learner commenced tuition on their course of study.
Completer Definition	The counting of each learner in this category, on the date the learner finished their course of study.
Note	On completion of their course (perhaps involving only one module) the learner is considered to have progressed and is therefore considered to be a starter at the beginning of any additional course undertaken. If the course crosses the calendar year this has no impact.

Appendix 7

Acronyms/Glossary

AEGI	Adult Education Guidance Initiative
AEGIS	Adult Education and Guidance Information Service
ALCES	Adult Literacy and Community Education Scheme
BTEI	Back to Education Initiative
CETS	Childcare in Education and Training Scheme
CSCS	Construction Skills Certification Scheme
CSO	Central Statistics Office
CTCs	Community Training Centres
DCYA	Department of Children and Youth Affairs
DEIS	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools
DES	Department of Education and Skills
DJEI	Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation
DPER	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
DSP	Department of Social Protection
EGF	European Globalisation Adjustment Fund
EGFSN	The Expert Group on Future Skills Needs
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
ESF	European Social Fund
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
ETB	Education and Training Board
FAR	Funding Allocations Requests
FET	Further Education and Training
FIT	Fast Track Into Information Technology
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
HET	Higher Education and Training
INTREO	DSP Service, offering a single point of contact for all employment and income supports
IOT	Institute of Technology
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
ITABE	Intensive Tuition in Adult Basic Education
LEO	Local Enterprise Office
LTI	Local Training Initiative
LTU	Long Term Unemployed
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training

NFQ	National Framework of Qualifications
PLC	Post Leaving Certificate
P-POD	Post-Primary Online Database
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
QSCS	Quarry Skills Certification Scheme
SLMRU	Skills and Labour Market Research Unit
SOLAS	An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna (Further Education and Training Authority)
SST	Specific Skills Training
STP	Specialist Training Providers
SUSI	Student Universal Support Ireland
VTOS	Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme
VSCCS	Voluntary Secondary & Community and Comprehensive Schools
YDI	Youth Development Internship
YG	Youth Guarantee

SOLAS

An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna
Further Education and Training Authority