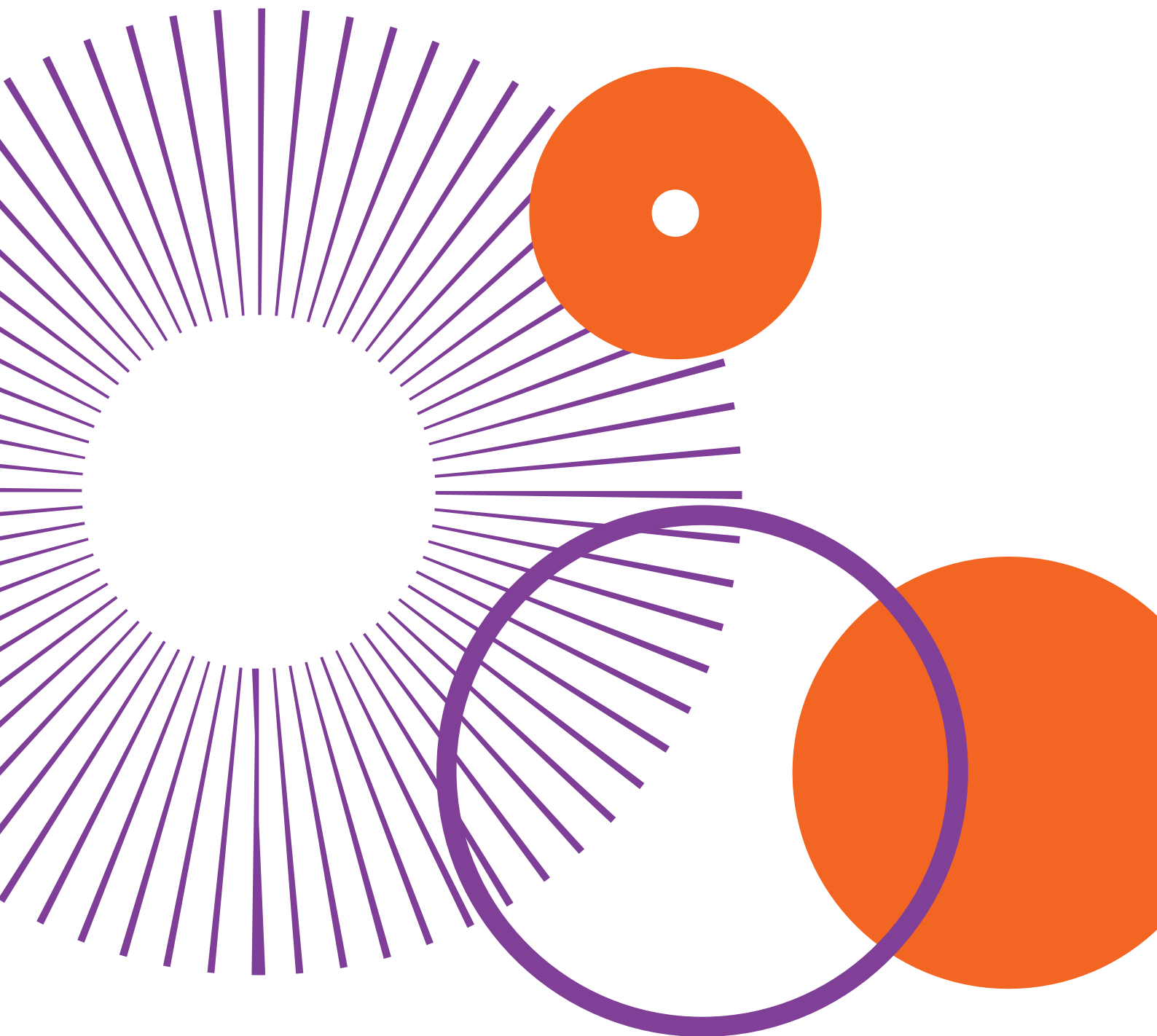


The 2020 Further Education and Training (FET) Services Plan



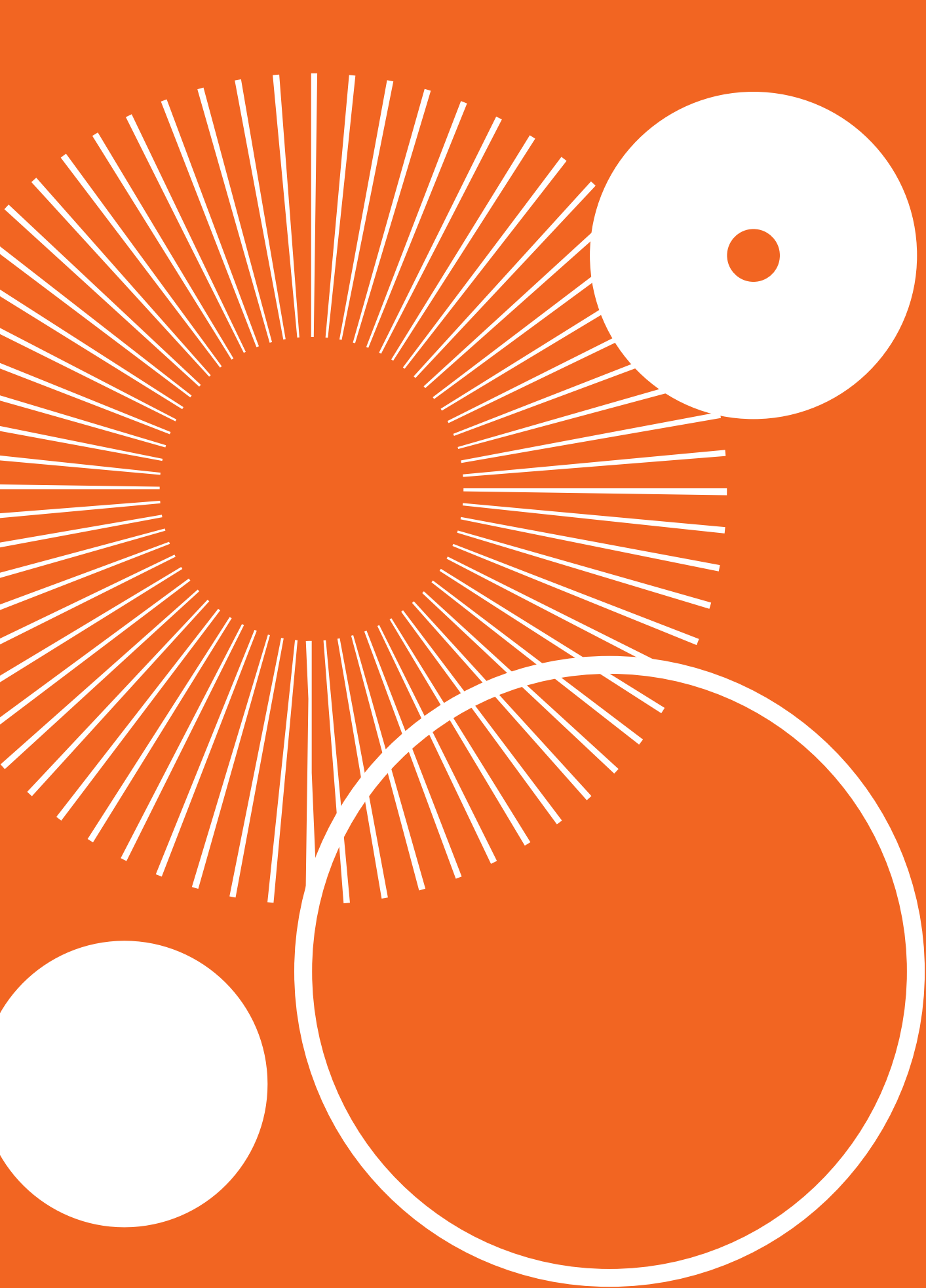


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- Longford and Westmeath ETB
- Louth and Meath ETB
- Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim ETB
- Tipperary ETB
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The Voluntary Secondary Schools and Community and Comprehensive Schools (VSCCS):

- Donahies Community School, Streamville Road, Dublin 13
- Gorey Community School, Gorey, Co. Wexford
- Mary Immaculate Secondary School, Lisdoonvarna, Co. Clare
- Nagle Rice Secondary School, Doneraile, Co. Cork
- North Presentation Secondary School, Farranree, Co. Cork
- St Joseph's Secondary School, Spanish Point, Co. Clare
- St Michaels, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon
- Sancta Maria College, Louisburgh, Co. Mayo
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- Ballyhaunis Community School, Co. Mayo
- Cabinteely Community School, Johnstown Road, Dublin 18
- Castlerea Community School, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon
- Central College, Sexton Street, Limerick
- Coláiste Chiaráin, Summerhill, Athlone, Co. Roscommon
- Coláiste Mhuire, Ballygar, Co. Galway
- Donahies Community School, Streamville Road, Dublin 13

- Glenamaddy Community School, Co. Galway
- Gorey Community School, Gorey, Co. Wexford
- Jesus and Mary Secondary School, Enniscrone, Co. Sligo
- Kilrush Community School, Co. Clare
- Mary Immaculate Secondary School, Lisdoonvarna, Co. Clare
- Mercy College, Sligo
- Moate Business College, Moate, Co. Westmeath
- Our Lady's Secondary School, Belmullet, Co. Mayo
- St Cuan's College, Castleblakeney, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway
- St Louis Community School, Kiltimagh, Co. Mayo
- Sancta Maria College, Louisburgh, Co. Mayo
- Scoil Phobail, Clifden Community School, Clifden, Co. Galway
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Further Education and Training - Support Organisations:

- AHEAD
- AONTAS
- Dyslexia Association of Ireland
- Fast Track into Technology (FIT)
- National Adult Literacy Agency
- National Centre for Guidance in Education

Further Education and Training – Lifelong Learning Opportunities:

- Age Action Ireland
- An Cosán
- Irish Countrywomen's Association
- People's College
- Third Age

Further Education and Training – Staff Representative Organisation:

- National Association of Adult and Community Education Directors

Further Education and Training – Professional Development Project:

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- CSO Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)
- Irish Association of Community Training Organisations (IACTO)
- Irish National Organisation for the Unemployed (Working for Work 2020 Publication)

Further Education and Training Organisations – FET Support Projects:

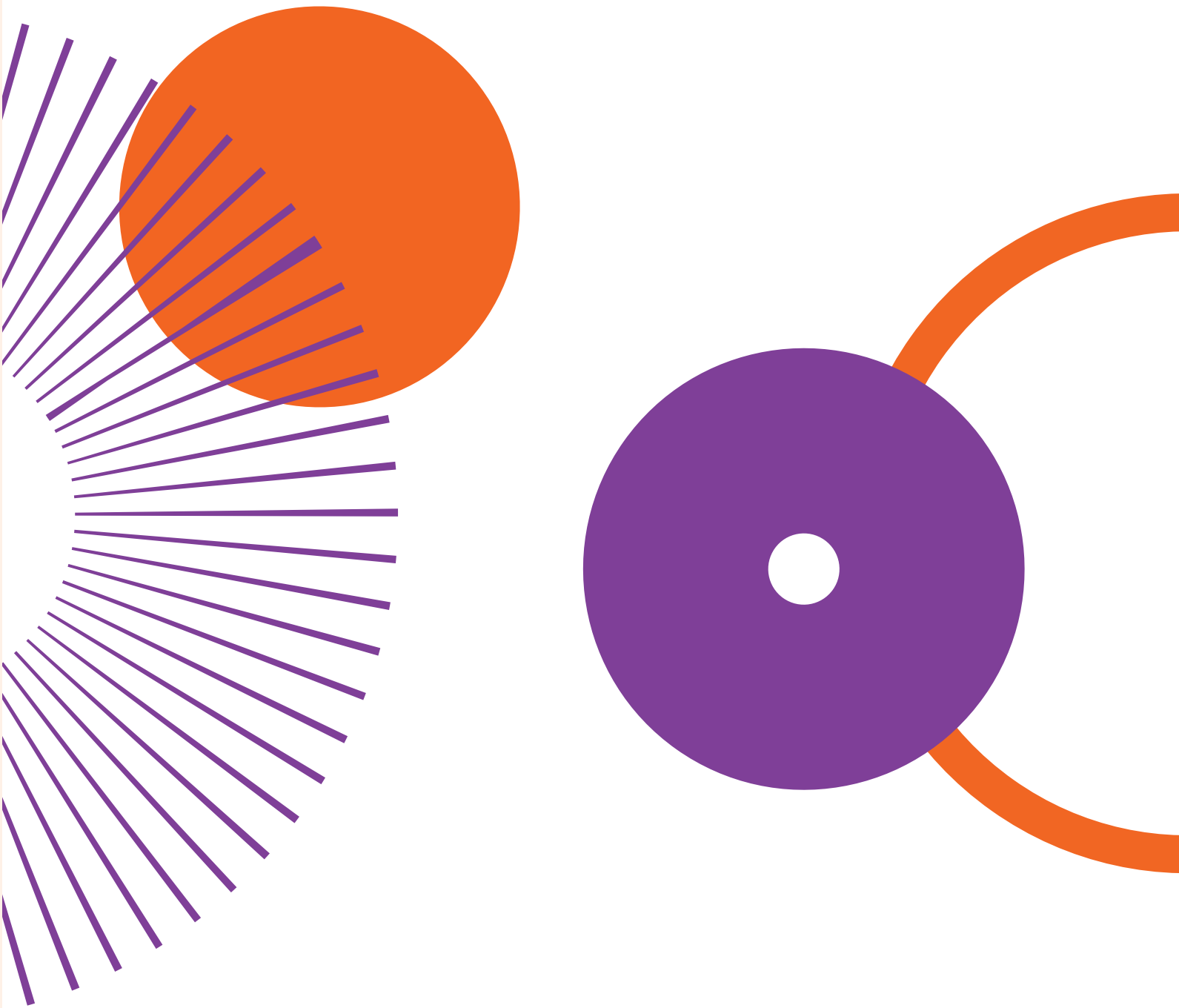
- Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI)
- ACCS/JMB Further Education Support Unit (FESU)

Further Education and Training Organisations – 2016+ Apprenticeship:

- Accounting Technicians Ireland
- Fast Track into Technology (FIT)
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Further Education and Training Organisations – Other FET Providers:

- Irish Deaf Society (IDS)
- Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities (TCPID)



The purpose of the 2020 FET Services Plan is to set out how the State's investment in FET will be deployed across the ETBs, VSCCS and support agencies and bodies in 2020, and the outputs and outcomes that this investment is expected to deliver.

Executive Summary

Section 1: Introduction

The 2020 Further Education and Training (FET) Services Plan was prepared by SOLAS in consultation with Education and Training Boards (ETBs), Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools (VSCCS), and other partner agencies and bodies funded, or part funded, by SOLAS. The purpose of the plan is to set out how the State's investment in FET will be deployed across the ETBs, VSCCS and support agencies and bodies in 2020, and the outputs and outcomes that this investment is expected to deliver.

Following years of work to establish effective organisations, structures, processes, systems and infrastructure since SOLAS and the ETBs were created in 2013, the sector is at the beginning of a new phase in the development of further education and training in Ireland. The publication of a new *FET Strategy 2020 – 2024, Future FET: Transforming Learning* will set out a vision for FET's development based around three key priorities: **Skills, Pathways and Inclusion**, and provide the framework for the continuing transformation of the sector.

The 2020 FET Services Plan is published in the shadow of the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. While the challenges presented by this development are many, there is confidence that the agile nature as well as the flexible planning and funding mechanisms of FET leaves the sector well placed to meet them.

Section 2: Economy and labour market trends impacting FET

Both Ireland's economy and labour market performed well in 2019, leading to strong economic forecasts for 2020 and the detail of the 2020 Services Plan, outlined in Section 4, was generated in this climate. However, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 resulted in a major shock for economies world-wide, including Ireland and its trading partners. Consequently, forecasts for economic growth have been revised and public health measures, both nationally and internationally, have resulted in a sharp contraction in employment and a significant rise in the number of people in receipt of income supports from the State. Forecasts for demands in certain skills have also been affected with large number of businesses not operational from just before quarter 2 2020, meaning that skills shortages originally identified in the National Skills Bulletin will, for the most part, not be expected to arise in the remainder of 2020.

These developments will significantly change the nature of the demand for FET. There is the potential that the number of people out of work will double during 2020, and so a new initiative called Skills to Compete will be introduced to upscale and refocus existing provision to meet this change. *Skills to Compete* will address the upskilling requirements of those who lose their jobs specifically because of the pandemic.

Notwithstanding the above, in 2020 SOLAS will continue its commitment to lifelong learning; which must form an essential part of every person's working life if they are to keep up to date with the rapid pace of technological change in relation to job tasks and skills. SOLAS will provide support through the *Skills to Advance* and *Skills for Work* programmes to identify and address the skills needs of employees, especially those who are in the older age cohorts, those with lower educational attainment and those working in jobs at risk of obsolescence due to automation.

Apprenticeship and traineeship development as set out in the Action Plan to Expand Apprenticeship and Traineeship in Ireland 2016-2020 will continue. In partnership with ETBs and the Higher Education Authority (HEA), SOLAS is proactively working to support a successful expansion of the national apprenticeship system to 2020. New traineeships and apprenticeships continue to be developed as part of a collaboration between education and training providers and industry to address current and emerging skill shortages.

Section 3: Policy and strategic framework underpinning FET provision

2020 will see the introduction of a new FET strategy which sets a transformation agenda for the period 2020-2024. In addition to building on the acknowledged success of its predecessor, *Future FET: Transforming Learning* aims to grow the FET contribution to a more collaborative and cohesive tertiary education system for Ireland. This new strategy sets out a vision for FET's development over the next 5 years, based around three strategic priorities: skills, pathways and inclusion. In this regard, although SOLAS service planning for 2020 will continue to be influenced by the strategic priorities set out in the original FET Strategy, this plan has been primarily guided by the requirements of the next phase of FET development. A number of key national policies and Government sectoral strategies, focusing on areas including rural and regional development, climate change, job creation, active inclusion and workforce development also inform the **Overarching Planning** and **Funding Parameters and Requirements** that are provided to all SOLAS grantees at the beginning of the annual planning cycle.

2020 also sees the culmination of the three year Strategic Performance Agreements. These agreements include associated FET system targets and were entered into by SOLAS and each individual ETB in 2018. An interim review of the Strategic Performance Agreements, conducted in the final quarter of 2019, has indicated that the objective of creating a transparent and dynamic relationship between SOLAS and the ETBs that reflects Government and sectoral strategies has been realised. It also highlighted that the benefits of advances in data gathering methods will greatly increase this transparency when discussions in relation to the next three-year cycle begin in the second half of this year.

Section 4: Top level analysis of 2020 funding allocations and provision

The budget available for SOLAS funded further education and training provision in 2020 will amount to €799.5m. This commitment, which includes a capital allocation of €17.5m, is a considerable increase on the 2019 budget due to ETB PLC and FET Co-operation Hours teacher pay and capitation grants, which was devolved from Dept. of Education and Skills to SOLAS for the first time in 2020.

Through the Funding Allocations Requests and Reporting (FARR) system, FET Providers estimate that there will be 333,893 beneficiaries of the 2020 further education and training budget. This represents a relatively slight overall increase of approximately 2% in 2020 compared to the reported outturn for 2019. However, the 2020 plan projects a significant move towards full time provision with an increase of approximately 13% forecasted across the combined ETB network when compared to the 2019 outturn.

The Services Plan provides comprehensive analysis for estimated retention, completion and accreditation rates by programme for the Education and Training Boards and other providers for 2020. Analysis is also provided on planned participation rates for the priority groups of the long term unemployed, refugees, disabled learners and learners in need of literacy and numeracy skills.

Section 5: FET provision supporting skills for the economy and employment

FET provision is informed by consultation with employers and other stakeholders to identify short to medium-term skills needs that can be addressed through FET provision. The extent of this influence is demonstrated through a mapping function within PLSS, the learner database, that links each of the individual courses delivered by FET providers to one of 33 skills clusters. Twenty-eight of these are linked to the labour market which places an enterprise-focused lens on FET data, and also facilitates analysis of how this provision corresponds to national skills shortages. The remaining five are linked to transversal skills development.

The Services Plan also provides practical examples of how FET provision reflects these consultations. Included are instances of new and innovative programmes being developed in collaboration with stakeholders, events where infrastructural capacity to support business is being increased, and occasions where delivery mechanisms are being adapted to maximise support for the economy and employment during the pandemic.

Section 6: FET Supports

A number of national systems, services and strategies that support the development of a strong FET sector are administered or co-ordinated by SOLAS. Among these are the national Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS), Quarrying Skills Certification Scheme (QSCS) and Safe Pass programmes. A dedicated Quality Assurance Services (QAS) Unit is operated to manage a systematic monitoring service that validates the effectiveness of the SOLAS quality assurance systems for CSCS and QSCS programmes as well as pre-2016 apprenticeship programmes.

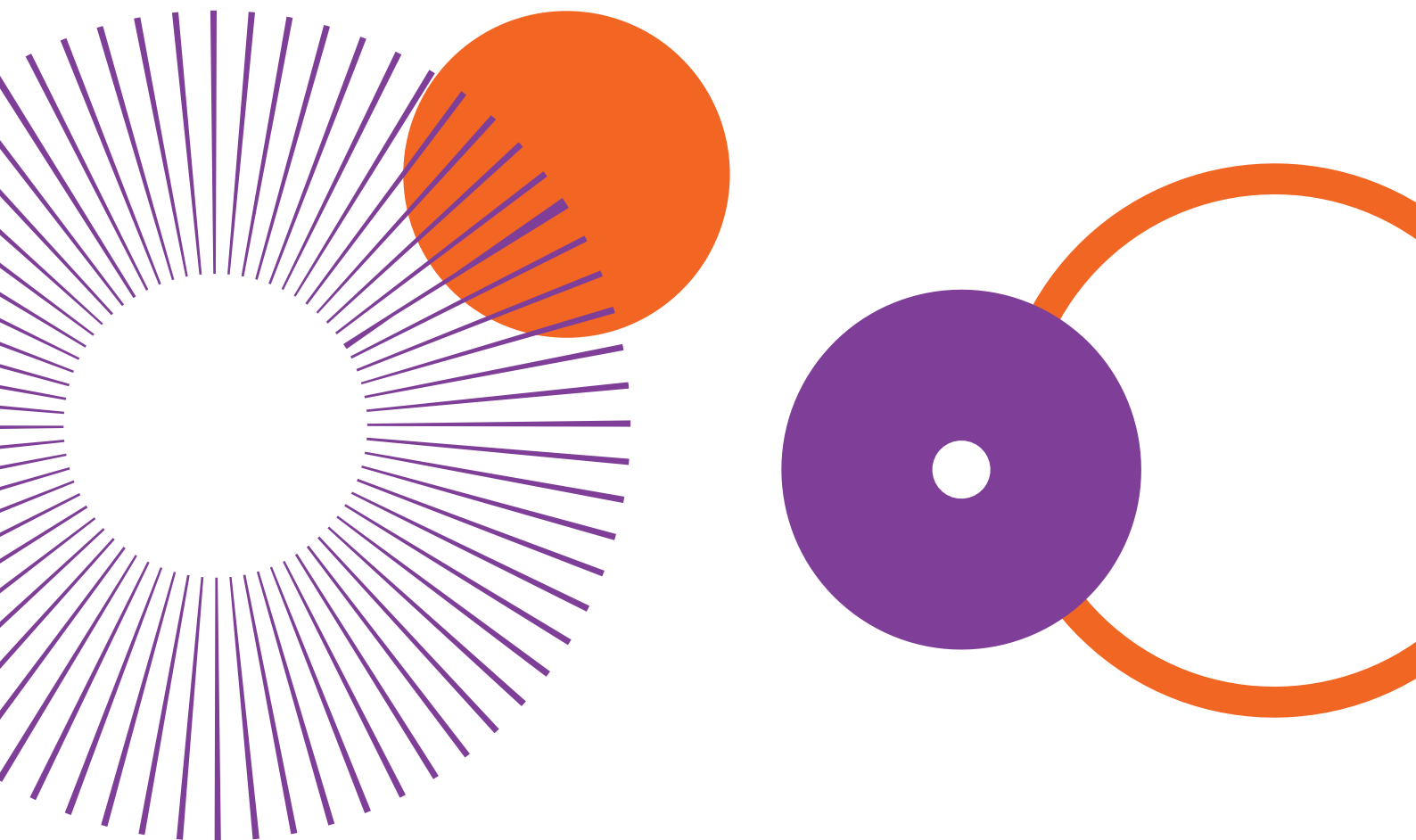
SOLAS co-ordinates implementation of the *FET Professional Development Strategy*, published in 2016, which aims to enhance the skills of those involved in the delivery, administration and management of FET programmes through strategically targeted and consistent training and development. SOLAS is also developing a new *Professional Development Strategy Statement 2020-2024* and Implementation Plan in collaboration with the sector.

In 2020, SOLAS is maintaining its focus on lifelong learning by funding the SOLAS eCollege online learning service. Separately, as an immediate response to COVID-19, SOLAS is temporarily making eCollege courses available to those who have been adversely affected by the pandemic. Additionally, as part of a new phase of work in relation to digital transformation across the FET sector highlighted in the new *FET Strategy 2020-2024*, the SOLAS Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) Support Unit will continue to work closely with the sector on embedding technology within FET provision.

In response to the unique circumstances of 2020 and the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, an agile FET response is being implemented. This involves a targeted initiative to bring together and build upon existing FET expertise and resources. The aim is to provide recently unemployed people with the Skills to Compete to support their re-entry into sustainable work.

During 2020, SOLAS will continue to develop and refine the Programme and Learner Support System (PLSS) which provides detailed information to support ETBs in their planning and scheduling at a local level. Since 2018, SOLAS has used formal data sharing agreements with other Government agencies to collect robust data on progression rates, certification and employment outcomes which is used to support FET investment decisions.

The FET sector's initial responses to the COVID-19 pandemic highlight one of the key strengths of ETBs and the FET system in its agility and ability to reply to the changing economic and social environment.



Section 1 Introduction

The purpose of this services plan is to set out how state investment in FET will be deployed across ETBs, VSCCS, and support agencies and bodies in 2020, and the outputs and outcomes that this investment is expected to deliver. SOLAS annual service planning is informed by national policies, strategies and evidence-based analyses of skills demand and labour supply, balanced against the funding allocated to the FET sector.

This report:

- Sets out the evolving economic, social and labour market context in which FET is being provided during 2020 (Section 2)
- Highlights the policy and strategic framework within which FET provision is planned, and the multi-annual approach to strategic planning and performance (Section 3)
- Provides an overview of projected FET provision in 2020 with detailed analysis on the focus and nature of that provision via a series of tables and charts (Section 4)
- Discusses some of the qualitative aspects of provision to offer further insight into the role of FET across learners, enterprises and communities (Section 5)
- Summarises some of the other supports and programmes that contribute to the effective delivery of FET (Section 6)

The FET sector is continuing to change. Following years of work to establish effective organisations, structures, processes, systems and infrastructure since SOLAS and the ETBs were created in 2013, the sector is at the beginning of a new phase in the development of further education and training in Ireland. While the previous phase, carried out under the auspices of the *FET Strategy 2014 – 2019*, involved building partnerships, strengthening fundamentals and formulating roadmaps, this phase will be about steadily transforming the way in which FET services are structured, funded and delivered.

In this respect, 2020 is a landmark year for FET with two notable milestones scheduled:

- The publication of a new *FET Strategy 2020 – 2024*. Future FET: Transforming Learning will set out a vision for FET's development based around three key priorities: **Skills, Pathways and Inclusion**.
- The final year of the first multi-annual Strategic Performance Agreements and their associated performance targets.

In addition, work will progress in 2020 on ongoing initiatives which will be instrumental to realising the vision and direction included in the above strategic documents. These include a review of the current funding model by an expert panel, the piloting of new approaches to programme structure by individual ETBs and the continuing leverage of information available from the linking of PLSS, the FET learner database, with other government datasets.

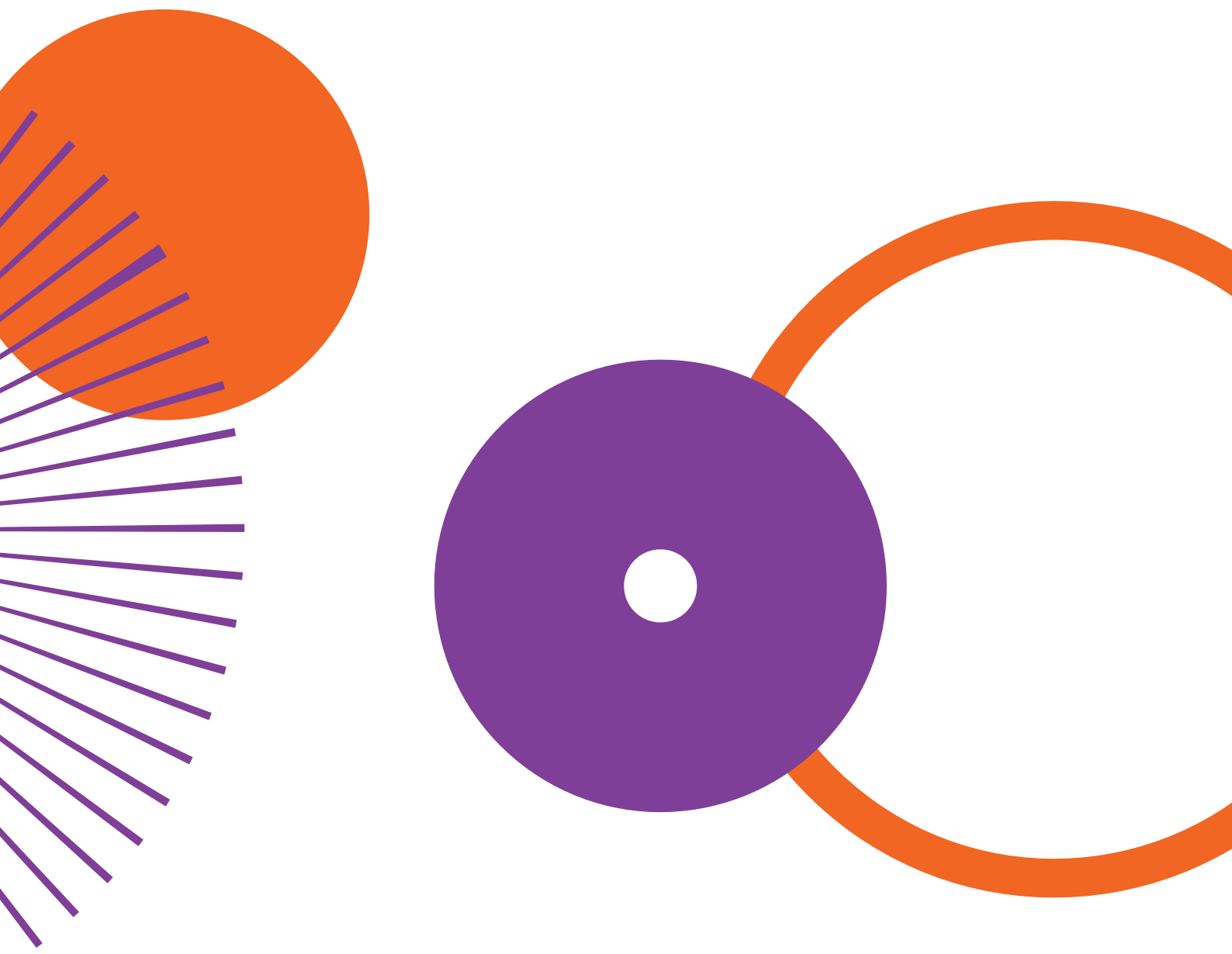
However, the 2020 FET Services Plan is being published in the shadow of the unprecedented global COVID-19 pandemic. The sudden shock presented by the arrival of COVID-19 is probably best encapsulated in the observation that the detail of the 2020 plan, presented in Section 4, was generated pre-pandemic while much of the narrative contained in other sections, compiled just weeks later, were written in its midst. This is how abruptly things changed and how quickly the sector had to make initial responses to the radically different climate.

The challenges presented by the pandemic, while numerous in their aspects, essentially fall into two categories; the need to adapt the delivery methods to lockdown and social distancing and the requirement to amend the nature of the provision itself in response to the economic effects of COVID-19. The upscaling of provision through the medium of online learning is one example of how the sector has responded to the delivery challenges, while a targeted initiative, "Skills to Compete", is being implemented to address the evolving labour market conditions.

These responses highlight one of the key strengths of ETBs and the FET system in its agility and ability to reply to the changing economic and social environment. In this regard, while the background is unrecognisable, the underlying commitment to supporting the Learner, Enterprise and the Community continues to guide the day-to-day work of the sector and this approach will also apply to the ongoing plans to transform FET.

All the above developments demonstrate how the annual planning and funding process continues to facilitate the strategic advancement and transformation of FET while also ensuring that operational requirements that effect the business capacity of the sector are readily accommodated. These inherent characteristics inspire confidence that while the unique circumstances of 2020 will undoubtedly test the sector, it is well placed to meet that challenge.

In terms of aligning skills provision with the needs of the economy, the demand for FET is expected to remain strong.



Section 2

Economy and Labour Market

Trends Impacting FET

General economic outlook for the Irish Economy and the labour market

Ireland's economy continued to perform strongly in 2019; Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by 5.5%, well above the EU average (1.5%), and although growth was expected to slow thereafter, underlying economic activity was expected to remain strong (due to household consumption and a growing construction sector) and GDP to remain positive at in excess of 3%¹. However, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 resulted in a major shock for economies world-wide, including Ireland and its trading partners. Consequently, forecasts for economic growth have been revised, with the European Commission projecting a contraction of almost 8% for Ireland in 2020 followed by growth of over 6% in 2021². Nonetheless, there is a high degree of uncertainty in such forecasts due to uncertainty surrounding the possible duration of the pandemic and the extent to which the easing of containment measures will lead to a complete economic recovery in the foreseeable future.

Employment and unemployment

Ireland's labour market performed strongly throughout 2019: employment continued to grow, reaching 2.32 million on average for 2019, and unemployment declined to less than 5% by end of 2019, the lowest level since before the Great Recession. However, the impact of the COVID-19 crisis and the necessary public health measures taken as a result, both nationally and internationally, have resulted in a sharp contraction in employment and a significant rise in the number of people in receipt of income supports from the State. The Central Bank³ estimates that unemployment could reach almost 25% in quarter 2 2020, and although expected to improve somewhat in the latter half of 2020, the unemployment rate is still forecasted at approximately 10% by the end of the year (double what it was prior to the onset of the crisis). Following an initial sharp decline, the number of persons in employment is also expected to begin to partially

recover by the end of 2020, although remaining lower than the levels observed in quarter 4 2019.

Employment and unemployment by sector

Between quarter 4 2018 and quarter 4 2019, the number of people working in Ireland grew by 80,000 persons, with growth recorded across almost all economic sectors (except wholesale/retail). In quarter 4 2019, wholesale/retail, health and industry were the largest sectors, with 310,200 persons, 294,300 persons and 286,300 persons employed respectively; combined, these sectors accounted for more than a third of total national employment. The accommodation/food and construction sectors were also major employers, accounting for 179,200 persons and 147,100 persons employed respectively (or 8% and 6% of the workforce).

However, the onset of the COVID-19 crisis has had a profound impact on employment, with the number of people in Ireland seeking income supports from the State reaching unprecedented levels (significantly higher than what was observed during the Great Recession, which began in 2008). While an economic recovery is expected to ensue once restrictions are lifted and people return to work, it is as yet unclear which sectors will be exposed to the greatest long-term effects; this is very much dependent on the length and severity of the restrictions, as well as the situation amongst Ireland's key trading partners.

Not all sectors of the economy were impacted equally by the impact of COVID-19. The closure of hotels, bars and restaurants since March 2020 resulted in almost all those previously employed in the accommodation/food sector seeking income supports from the State by April 2020. While some subsectors within wholesale/retail (such as food retail) saw an increase in activity (and with some even recruiting staff), this was not sufficient to off-set the job losses that occurred in other subsectors; it is estimated that 58% of all those who had been employed in wholesale/retail were accessing State income supports by April 2020⁴. Employment in construction accounted for 6% of overall employment for the State in the last quarter of 2019. By April 2020, over 80% of those previously employed were thought to be receiving income supports from the State.

- ¹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-performance-and-forecasts/economic-forecasts/autumn-2019-economic-forecast-challenging-road-ahead_en#economic-forecast-by-country
- ² https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-performance-and-forecasts/economic-forecasts/spring-2020-economic-forecast-deep-and-uneven-recession-uncertain-recovery_en
- ³ <https://www.centralbank.ie/docs/default-source/publications/quarterly-bulletins/qb-archive/2020/quarterly-bulletin---q2-2020.pdf?sfvrsn=8>

- ⁴ Based on SLMRU calculations derived from DEASP and CSO (LFS) data

Skills demand

The National Skills Bulletin 2019, produced by the SOLAS Skills and Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU) on behalf of the National Skills Council, identified skills shortages across many occupations and sectors in the economy. However, with the COVID-19 crisis, and large number of businesses not operational from just before quarter 2 2020, these shortages are, for the most part, not expected to arise for the remainder of 2020 (e.g. chefs, construction workers, etc). Even the high skilled areas in ICT, while still in demand (especially in areas such as security and online sales), are dependent on a functioning economy. Without a fully functioning business environment these areas are likely to see some of the existing shortages alleviated, at least in the short-term. Demand persists, however, for healthcare workers (e.g. doctors, nurses, carers etc).

The demand for FET

In terms of aligning skills provision with the needs of the economy, the demand for FET is expected to remain strong.

FET for the employed: the demand for reskilling and upskilling opportunities for those in employment is expected to continue across many areas, including those whose jobs are at risk of automation. The changing world of work, with its increasing digitisation and automation as well as a shift towards a service economy, means that both soft skills and digital/technical skills will be in demand for workers across a range of job types, including those whose jobs involve caring for others, managing new technologies, communication (including sales) and the green economy⁵.

It is likely that the COVID-19 crisis has accelerated the implementation of changes in the world of work which had previously been identified as likely to occur as a result of the impact of Industry 4.0. The crisis has already resulted in a significant change in work practices for many including: businesses adapting to a new operational environment and finding ways of facilitating remote working, the shift from physical to digital sales, and the security implications of conducting business online. If such business practices persist even once the crisis has eased, the demand for digital skills in a range of specialised areas will arise (e.g. e-commerce, delivery of online training).

FET for the unemployed: the COVID-19 crisis is expected to generate an increase in the demand for training for the unemployed. While the lifting of restrictions and the phased return to work will gradually reduce the number of unemployed in the short-term, it is likely that without some training intervention a number of people will struggle to find employment, particularly those in the some of the hardest-hit sectors

⁵ http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Jobs_of_Tomorrow_2020.pdf

(e.g. accommodation/food) where the education attainment and skills of the workforce tend to be lower than average.

FET for other vulnerable cohorts: in the longer term, assuming a recovery (even if incomplete initially) and a return to growth in the numbers employed, the demand for FET is also likely to extend to specific cohorts of the population. These cohorts include older workers (who may need upskilling in order to remain in the workforce), non-Irish workers (who seem to be more highly educated but have a larger share working in low skilled occupations compared to Irish workers), younger people (who have been more adversely affected by the COVID-19 crisis), and economically inactive females (who may wish to avail of training opportunities to assist in a return to the labour market).

Lifelong learning

In the future, lifelong learning will become an increasingly important part of every person's working life to enable them to keep up to date with the rapid pace of technological change in job tasks and skills. In 2019 the share of adults aged 25 - 64 years who had participated in lifelong learning was 12.6%. This is higher than the target for 2020 of 10% set in the National Skills Strategy, and almost at the 15% set for 2025. Nonetheless, lower participation rates have been observed for certain groups, namely older people (less than 9% for 55-64 year-olds), those with low educational attainment (4.2%), and those working in low-skilled occupations, for example, operatives (almost 6%).

While Ireland's lifelong learning participation rate in 2019, at 12.6% was slightly higher than the EU-28 average (11.3%), the gap was narrower for the employed (less than one percentage point). Once the economy begins to recover from the COVID-19 crisis and people return to work, employers, in particular SMEs, will continue to require support to identify and address the skills needs of employees, especially those who are in the older age cohorts, those with lower educational attainment and those working in jobs at risk of obsolescence due to automation.

Work-based learning

The expansion of apprenticeship provision continues as per the Action Plan for Apprenticeship and Traineeship in Ireland 2016 – 2020. By the end of 2019 there were 54 apprenticeships available, 25 craft and 29 consortia-led apprenticeships. This activity aims to establish work-based learning as a core contributor to skills development, employment and economic growth.

Apprenticeship

SOLAS has statutory responsibility for the co-ordination and oversight of the national apprenticeship system under the Industrial Training Act, 1967. Apprenticeship provides structured training in the workplace and off-

the-job, leading to an award on the National Framework of Qualifications. Apprentices are employed for the duration of their apprenticeship.

In addition to its statutory role, SOLAS is the designated co-ordinating provider for the development, delivery and maintenance of 25 craft-based apprenticeships. These apprenticeships are modular in structure, and generally comprise seven alternating phases of on-the-job and off-the-job training. On successful completion of a craft-based apprenticeship apprentices receive a QQI Advanced Certificate – Craft (Major Award Level 6). The standing and value of this certificate is recognised nationally and internationally. A total of 1,826 apprentices were awarded an Advanced Certificate Craft in 2019.

Throughout 2019, SOLAS registered 6,177 apprentices for training, of which 5,271 were registered on craft-based apprenticeships. This was an increase of 8.5 per cent on the number of registrations in 2018. The impact of the COVID-19 emergency on the registration of apprentices will be monitored through the remainder of 2020. The dual aspect of apprenticeship, with learning on and off-the-job, creates some unique challenges. The actions of employers, education and training providers and apprentices will be central to the COVID-19 response, solution, and recovery phase.

Following the 2013 review of Apprenticeship Training in Ireland and publication of the Action Plan to Expand Apprenticeship and Traineeship in Ireland 2016 - 2020, apprenticeships are being developed in new industry areas, leading to awards from Levels 5 to 10 on the National Framework of Qualifications. A national Apprenticeship Council oversees the development work. SOLAS is represented on the Council and provides secretariat support. In 2019, new apprenticeships commenced in 12 occupations: Cybersecurity, Engineering Services Management, CGI Technical Artist, Geo Driller, Hairdressing, Lean Sigma Manager, OEM Engineer, Retail Supervision, Sous Chef, Supply Chain Manager, Supply Chain Specialist, and Telecommunications and Data Network Technician. A further 20+ apprenticeships are scheduled to launch in 2020 and 2021.

As part of its statutory function, SOLAS is responsible for the creation of Industrial Training Orders (ITOs) to designate specific industrial activities for apprenticeship. Five new ITOs were created in 2019 (Process analytics industry, Geoscience industry, Hairdressing industry, Digital production industry, and Sales industry). SOLAS also provides the funding to all consortia for development of their apprenticeships. In parallel with the development of new apprenticeships, the governance and administrative arrangements for all apprenticeships and the validation and accreditation processes necessary to support new and existing apprenticeships are being supported and enhanced.

In partnership with ETBs and the HEA, SOLAS is proactively working to support a successful expansion

of the national apprenticeship system in accordance with the Action Plan to 2020. A new Action Plan for apprenticeship post-2020 is being commissioned by the Department of Education and Skills.

Traineeship

Traineeships have been a key feature of the Irish education and training system for decades, serving the needs of all stakeholders including industry, employers and learners. Their primary aim is to provide learning in partnership with employers, improve employment outcomes for participants and increase retention and productivity within industry.

ETBs, in partnership with employers and employer representative bodies, have developed traineeships in areas such as engineering, ICT, hospitality, construction, retail, business, logistics, sports and leisure, fashion and beauty, and finance. New traineeships are developed on an ongoing basis in response to identified skill needs. Such collaboration between education and training providers and industry enhances the performance of programmes and ensures the skill needs of industry are being met, as well as maintaining Ireland's competitiveness, underpinned by a highly skilled workforce.

The key features of a traineeship in Ireland are that they:

- respond to identified industry skills need
- lead to an award at Levels 4 – 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications, or equivalent
- are between 6 – 20 months' duration
- have at least 30 per cent of learning on the job;
- combine transversal and technical skills development
- are designed for flexible delivery: online, face-to-face, blended learning
- provide open access to prospective trainees, including people in employment.

Twelve new traineeship programmes were notified to SOLAS in 2019 in areas such as Barista and Bartending Skills, Cleanroom and Packaging Operations, Engineering Technology, Greenkeeping, Health Service Skills, Local and National Tour Guiding, Machine Tool Operations, and Youth Work. A total of 3,543 trainees started on traineeship programmes in 2019.

Workforce development

In 2020 SOLAS will continue to provide support through the Skills to Advance and Skills for Work programmes to identify and address the skills needs of employees, especially those who are in the older age cohorts, those with lower educational attainment, and those working in jobs at risk of obsolescence due to automation.

Skills to Advance

In late 2018, the FET Policy Framework on employee development was launched as Skills to Advance (STA). This is a policy initiative to enable targeted skills

development for vulnerable employees in the Irish workforce. It is designed to reach those who have lower skills levels and who need more opportunities to advance in their working lives and careers, to sustain their employment and to avoid displacement or to avail of emerging job opportunities. A dedicated strand also supports small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) who need some assistance to invest in and develop their workforce. Skills to Advance primarily targets employees who need upskilling to Level 5 and 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

The policy draws on a vision of the workplace in Ireland where upskilling during one's working life is considered normal practice and has a direct correlation with enhanced job security, higher earnings and autonomy at work for employees. The focus is to assist those facing changes in their work due to technology advances, changing work practices and market diversification.

Further education and training opportunities offered through STA incorporate digital, socio-emotional and technical skills development to enhance employee skills and support increased productivity and competitiveness in Irish SMEs.

Now more than ever, initiatives such as Skills to Advance are critical to allow us to respond effectively to the external challenges such as those arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. The structure of our workforce is changing dramatically and will continue to evolve as we progress to a new business environment.

This new environment will be one which requires a workforce that is highly adaptable and flexible. To ensure that workers can achieve this agility there is a real need for continuous upskilling and reskilling, not only to perform their current tasks, but also to take on additional tasks which will allow them to sustain and grow business.

A significant introduction during 2019 was the Innovation through Collaboration Fund, launched in June. Under this funding mechanism, proposals were sought from ETBs working together and with enterprise to embed innovation in the delivery of Skills to Advance initiatives under five headings:

- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- Information and Outreach
- Design and Delivery of Programmes
- Regional and Sectoral Approaches
- Enterprise Engagement.

Following a rigorous three step appraisal process by a panel of internal and external experts, ten projects were recommended for funding. Projects began in January 2020 with an estimated total budget of up to €3.5 million over 2020 and 2021.

eCollege is available to participants in Skills to Advance where they can access online learning options in a range of digital, programming and business skill areas. ETBs have also converted face-to-face and blended programmes to online delivery to facilitate access to flexible learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Equally, new programme content has been developed by ETBs, for example, Managing Remote Workers to respond to current requirements.

Targeted sectoral or regional initiatives are also being developed under Route 3 in Skills to Advance. For example, the Supervisory Management initiative in the North East and North West provides a customised programme to equip businesses in these regions with the right skills for their front-line management teams. Due to COVID-19, Brexit and other external challenges, the need for leadership in teams is crucial. Managing people in the current business climate, taking into consideration digital and remote working, motivating teams to perform and leading the teams through change poses a challenge for many businesses. All of these critical skills are covered by the programme to maximise a company's ability to deal with these emerging challenges and opportunities.

Having piloted the programme in Donegal ETB, Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim ETB, Cavan and Monaghan ETB and Louth and Meath ETB, it is being rolled out across the country to enhance frontline management capability in Irish business. The programme was developed by SOLAS and the ETBs in collaboration with companies and enterprise agencies including IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and the Regional Skills Fora.

The overall target for Skills to Advance participation in 2020 is 6,500 participants based on a budget allocation of €17.3m, including Innovation through Collaboration funding. A significant drive is planned to maximise participation, including strengthening stakeholder engagement, increasing programme specific ETB capacity and raising awareness of the opportunities available to both employers and employees.

Skills for Work

Skills for Work is a national programme that aims to provide employees with skills training to meet the basic needs of the workplace. ETBs participating in the programme develop budgets for their planned provision in line with the Funding Allocation Request process. The 2020 budget allocation for Skills to Work is €4.04m, and 5,346 beneficiaries are planned for 2020.



FET provision considers the sector's role in contributing to national challenges such as job creation and climate change, and also reflects wider education and skills policy including the National Skills Strategy and successive Action Plans for Education.

Section 3

Policy and Strategic Framework

Underpinning FET Provision

The Policy Context

SOLAS annual service planning is informed by national policies, strategies and evidence-based analyses of skills demand and labour supply, all of which are considered within the constraints of the funding allocated to the FET sector.

In this regard, FET provision considers the sector's role in contributing to national challenges such as job creation and climate change, and also reflects wider education and skills policy including the National Skills Strategy and successive Action Plans for Education. Furthermore, it is guided by an overarching FET Strategy, formulated in consultation with sector stakeholders, as well as national system targets, agreed with the Minister for Education and Skills.

FET Strategy

The first Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy 2014-2019 was approved by the Minister for Education and Skills and published by SOLAS in 2014. The strategy has provided direction and focus for the setting of investment priorities, and for the establishment and development of a strong integrated FET sector that meets the needs of the learner, enterprise and the community. Under the auspices of this strategy, significant progress has been achieved in embedding systems and processes to support planning, funding and gathering of learner data. The independent progress review of the FET Strategy 2014 - 2019 acknowledged achievements made in establishing a FET 'system', the successful development of ICT, operational and governance infrastructures and the value of FET.

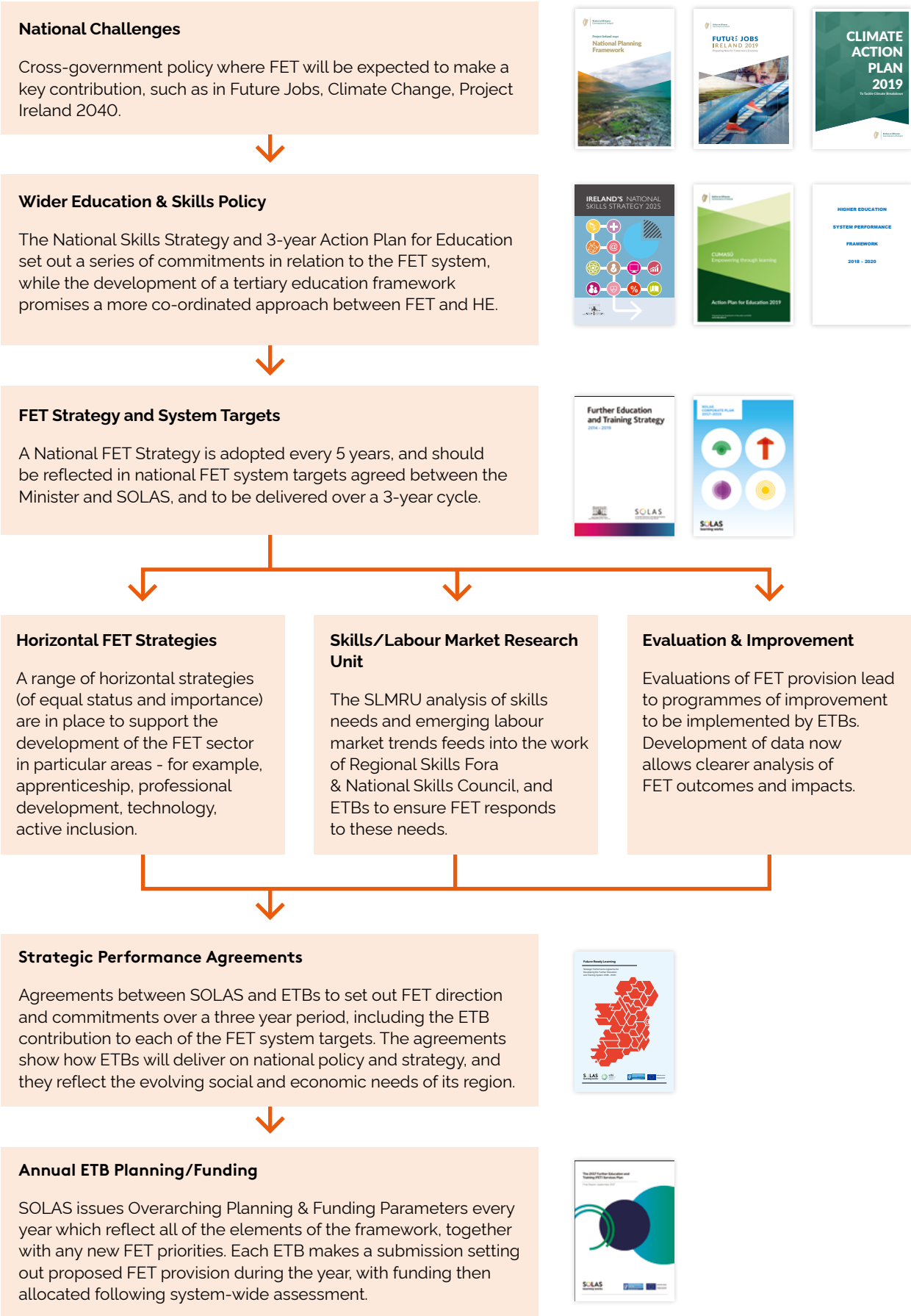
The first FET Strategy concluded in December 2019; its' successor *Future FET: Transforming Learning*, which covers the period 2020 - 2024, was informed by an extensive consultation process. Engagement with stakeholders was wide ranging and included bi-lateral meetings, regional workshops and a public 'call for submissions'. Strategy development also involved articulating an understanding of the policy context, the evolving environment and the nature of FET provision in Ireland; and then benchmarking this against other international approaches to further and vocational education and training. Testing of key theories and priorities was carried out through regional ETB and national multi-stakeholder workshops, as well as a social media 'think-in' which engaged a mass audience in discussing #FutureFET.

There is an opportunity to grow the FET contribution to a more collaborative and cohesive tertiary education system for Ireland. The strategy aims to do this by simplifying the FET structure, improving access to it, supporting its learners consistently and building its provision around a distinct, diverse and vibrant community-based FET college of the future. The FET Strategy 2020 - 2024 sets out a vision for FET's development over the next 5 years, based around three strategic priorities: Skills, Pathways and Inclusion. The strategy also recognises that in order to realise this future FET vision there are challenges to be addressed and these are represented by four key enabling themes; staffing, capabilities and structures; learner and performance centred, digital transformation of FET and capital infrastructure.

SOLAS Corporate Plan

The SOLAS Corporate Plan 2017 - 2019 aligned FET provision with the needs of the labour market, the promotion of economic growth and social inclusion. The Plan also took account of the needs of those seeking to enter the labour market in sectors that are experiencing skills shortages, or where significant employment opportunities exist. SOLAS has developed a one-year SOLAS Corporate Plan for 2020 which references both the FET Strategy 2020 - 2024 and COVID-19 in order to guide the work of the organisation through uncertain and unprecedented times. National targets agreed between the Minister for Education and Skills and SOLAS within the Corporate Plan 2017 - 2019, used as a foundation in the development of Strategic Performance Agreements with the 16 ETBs, have been carried over to 2020. A three-year Corporate Plan will be developed for the period 2021 - 2023.

Figure 3.1 Strategic Framework for FET



The Strategic Planning Process

As the collaboration between SOLAS and FET providers has strengthened and evolved, a number of key factors have become self-evident in relation to the strategic planning process:

- The value of the availability of relevant regional and national data which offers providers information on applicable local and sectoral trends as well as the performance and impact of previous FET interventions.
- The appropriateness of a target-based philosophy designed to drive the sector and incrementally re-focus FET provision.
- The suitability of a multi-annual approach to planning and investment with particular regard to the role that strategic planning can play in implementing the transformation agenda of the sector.
- The importance of the Overarching Planning and Funding Parameters and Requirements that guide and provide direction to grantees when formulating annual or multi-annual strategic plans.

Data Capture

SOLAS and its partners have established systems, protocols and agreements that facilitate the data capture process. Information on FET participant numbers, retention rates, certification outputs and immediate learner outcomes are captured through the PLSS Learner Database and the Funding Allocations Requests and Reporting (FARR) Database. To enable identification of medium and long-term outcomes of FET learners, SOLAS has entered data sharing agreements with both the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP) and the Higher Education Authority (HEA). Quantitative data on both employment and unemployment episodes of a learner is available through the DEASP maintained Jobseekers Longitudinal Database (JLD), while the HEA enrolments database provides relevant information on FET-HE transitions. SOLAS also has in place a statistical collaboration agreement with the Central Statistics Office (CSO). Under this agreement, established in 2018, a SOLAS researcher has access to Revenue, QQI and Educational Longitudinal Outcomes Database (ELD) data through the CSO Administrative Database Centre.

These respective arrangements allow capture of all pertinent FET learner inputs, outputs and outcomes, providing robust data on key performance indicators, including progression rates and employment outcomes. This data is available to ETBs and used to evaluate performance and inform future FET investment decisions.

Additionally, SOLAS has access to the Labour Force Survey (LFS) published by the CSO which includes the official measures of employment and unemployment in the State, at detailed occupational level. Analysis of this data, published by SOLAS, informs the sector of both regional and national level skills gaps. From 2020

SOLAS also intends to make POBAL Deprivation Index data available to ETBs to assist the outreach to learners from disadvantaged areas.

Key National Further Education and Training (FET) Sector Targets 2018 - 2020

The targets agreed between the Minister for Education and Skills and SOLAS have been used as a foundation for the development of strategic performance agreements with the 16 ETBs, and have provided support for ETBs when planning for a rebalancing of provision over the period 2018 - 2020.

The national targets set for the FET sector are as follows:

- 10% more learners will secure employment from FET provision that primarily serves the labour market.
- 10% more learners will progress to other further or higher education programmes from provision that is primarily focused on this purpose.
- 10% increase in the rate of certification on FET programmes primarily focused on transversal (social mobility) skills development.
- 10% increase of adults, who are seeking FET level provision, engaging in lifelong learning interventions (this target could be subject to upward revision following the benchmarking process).
- From 2018, for three years to 2020, an average increase of 10,000 learners every year securing relevant qualifications (for example, special purpose awards) in sectors where employment growth exists or skills needs have been identified.
- 30,500 new apprentice and trainee registrations in the period 2017 - 2019 which will represent an increase in registrations from about 6,000 in 2016 to about 12,400 in 2019.

SOLAS recognises that some ETBs will contribute more than others to the achievement of national FET Sector Targets, and this will be a feature of new SOLAS funding arrangements for FET. This approach reflects and takes into account local conditions over which the ETB has no control, such as different socio-economic profiles within individual ETB catchment areas; different FET learner profiles; different levels and type of unemployment; different types and scale of industry and occupations. SOLAS will collate the individual responses to assess whether, in aggregate, national objectives will be met and will mediate if required.

Strategic Performance Agreements

In 2018, the first Strategic Performance Agreements between SOLAS and each of the 16 ETBs were established. These agreements set out the context, strategic priorities and individual ETB contributions to the achievement of key national FET sector targets over the period 2018 - 2020. They also articulate each ETBs commitment to supporting the implementation of a range of national policies and strategies relevant

to FET provision. Furthermore, they identify the key risks and challenges that must be mitigated and addressed in order to ensure successful delivery of these agreements. The agreements are the product of extensive dialogue and engagement between SOLAS and each ETB, with independent input and validation from a panel of experts who have an understanding of Irish and international good practice in FET systems.

The 16 individual Strategic Performance Agreements cumulatively aspire to achieve the overall national FET sector targets. Each individual agreement:

- reflects the unique characteristics and needs of the area served by the ETB
- sets out the resources and infrastructure available to the ETB to meet these needs
- summarises the baseline in terms of FET provision
- sets out the ETBs strategic priorities for FET over a three-year period
- identifies the challenges and risks in the context of providing FET
- highlights the contribution to be made by the ETB to deliver on national policies and strategies and individual FET strategy objectives
- identifies and agrees performance estimates and provision targets that take local demographics into account, and supports the achievement of national targets
- identifies planned changes to provision to reflect the evolving needs of the area.

The Strategic Performance Agreement process encompasses an Interim Review at the mid-point of the agreement. These reviews were conducted in autumn 2019 and involved original members of the independent panel of experts as well as senior SOLAS and ETB executives.

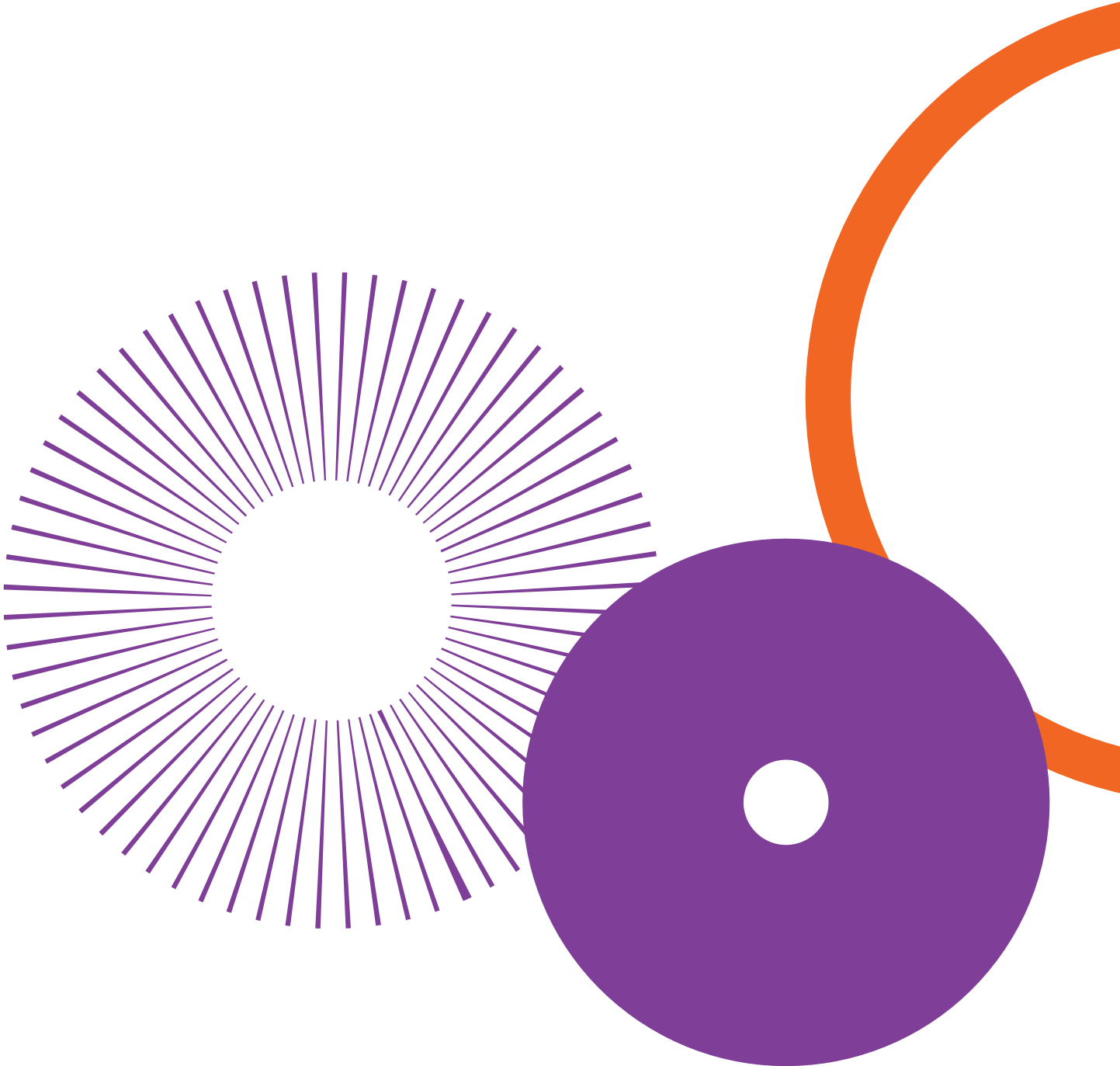
The review process established that the strategic objective of implementing Strategic Performance Agreements individually with each ETB has been achieved and that much progress has already been made in achieving our targets. It also observed that the full implementation of PLSS, the linkage to CSO data sets and the recent Data Sharing Agreement with the HEA has heralded a revolution in the data tools available since the target baselines were set in 2017. These developments, along with advances in sector data analysis capacity, will allow the new targets for the next round of Strategic Performance Agreements to be better informed as well as facilitating progress to be accurately tracked in real time. Initial discussions in preparation for these new Strategic Performance Agreements, scheduled to begin next year, will take place in the second half of 2020.

Overarching Planning and Funding Parameters and Requirements

The requirements of the core strategic policy documents referenced earlier are complemented by a series of FET relevant Government and sectoral strategies, focusing on areas including rural and regional development, active inclusion, professional development and workforce upskilling. SOLAS translates these requirements into the comprehensive Overarching Planning and Funding Parameters and Requirements document that is provided to all SOLAS grantees. This document is the method by which all the relevant strategic elements are combined to shape FET provision, and its importance is reflected in both the 16 ETB Strategic Performance Agreements and the annual Funding Allocations Requests (FAR) process. The FAR process facilitates the submission, by FET providers, of qualitative, quantitative and financial data in support of their funding applications.

Outlook

The development and evolution of the policy and framework underpinning FET provision processes that commenced in 2014 will continue to evolve. A review of the current funding model by an expert panel is ongoing, new approaches to programme structure by individual ETBs are being piloted and the advent of the FET Strategy 2020 – 2024 will provide renewed focus and direction. Equally, the next round of Strategic Performance Agreements and the associated strategic dialogue process will continue to ensure that there is an effective, transparent and dynamic relationship between SOLAS and the ETBs. This background and relationship can provide a platform for an agile FET sector, maximising its impact on the economy and society over the period to 2024.



The 2020 Further Education and Training Services Plan provides for a total budget allocation of €799.5m which will be made available for SOLAS funded further education and training provision in 2020.



Section 4

Top Level Analysis of 2020 Funding Allocations and Provision

This section provides top-level analysis of the 2020 FET **grant allocations** and projected FET provision relating to **inputs, outputs** and **outcomes**. Details of the 2020 funding allocations are presented first followed by the 2020 FET provision estimates and reported outturn for 2019.

Budget allocations

The 2020 FET Services Plan provides for a total budget allocation of €799.5m which will be made available for SOLAS funded further education and training provision in 2020.

- The Department of Education and Skills will continue to fund the PLC (teacher pay and student capitation) for the Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools (circa €3.86m in 2020)
- For 2020, it is envisaged that some 333,893 beneficiaries (329,293 beneficiaries were planned for in 2019) will benefit from SOLAS funded FET programmes and services with 249,363 new entrants (247,855 new entrants were planned for in 2019) expected to participate in FET courses.

Budget availability for 2020 FET grants

The total amount allocated to SOLAS in 2020 is €864.5m. This is comprised of €577.376m in Exchequer funding, €282.342m from the National Training Fund and SOLAS income of €4.782m. The available funding to SOLAS for FET grants and the source of this funding is set out below.

Funding allocations

Tables 4.1 and 4.2 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 (ETBs)
- Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools (VSCCS)
- Other FET organisations funded by SOLAS.

Grant allocations and expenditure

Table 4.1 shows the funding allocation to SOLAS and other cash resources to be used in funding the full FET provision and services for 2020.

Table 4.1 SOLAS grant allocation for 2020

SOLAS Grant Allocation for 2020	
Grant Allocation Detail	Amount €m
SOLAS Grant allocation for 2020	€859.718m
SOLAS Income	€4.782m
Total	€864.500m

Table 4.2 indicates the projected expenditure for the full FET provision and services for 2020 and the funding retained centrally.

Table 4.2 **Total projected expenditure for FET provision for 2020**

Total projected expenditure for FET provision 2020	
Description	€
Budget available to SOLAS	€864,500,000
SOLAS Direct costs (including eCollege & EGF Funding)	€64,500,000
SOLAS Capital	€500,000
Total SOLAS Costs and Capital	€65,000,000
Budget available after SOLAS direct costs	€799,500,000
ETB FET Grants for Provision	€767,031,292
ETB FET Grants for Capital	€17,500,000
Total ETB FET Grants for Provision and Capital	€784,531,292
FET Grants for FET Specific Projects	
Other FET Providers	€2,317,973
FET Support Organisations	€4,994,089
FET Lifelong Learning Opportunities	€646,871
FET Staff Representative Organisations	€81,400
FET CPD Provision	€525,900
EU and Specific Projects	€1,282,000
Organisation - FET Support Projects	€1,051,304
2016+ Apprenticeships (Consortia, Lead/Coordinating Provider)	€1,607,365
Total FET Grants for FET Specific Projects (non-ETB)	€12,506,902
Apprenticeship Consortia yet to be allocated	€1,450,000
Retained funding yet to be allocated	€1,011,806
Total FET Provision Grants - Yet to be allocated	€2,461,806
Total FET Grants Allocations	€799,500,000
Total FET Grant Allocations and SOLAS costs	€864,500,000

2020 Capital funding

Project Ireland 2040 recognises that the way in which skills and talent are nurtured, developed, deployed and retained is central to both national and regional ambitions. Under National Strategic Outcome 5, *A Strong Economy supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills*, there is a commitment to commence a capital upgrade programme in the FET sector, with an allocation of €300m over the decade of the National Development Plan (2018 - 2027). This investment represents the first time a dedicated capital budget has been made available for the FET sector. Within the FET sector, the medium-term priorities are to secure and consolidate FET provision in modern, fit for purpose facilities and for the expansion, upgrade and renewal of facilities and equipment required to meet growing demands. Further expansion of FET facilities will be informed by the population and job growth objectives of the National Planning Framework, and will focus on enabling the delivery of high quality integrated programmes.

During 2020 SOLAS and the Department of Education and Skills (DES) entered into an Oversight Agreement that details arrangements for governance of DES-

funded Capital Projects in the FET sector. This agreement defines the roles and responsibilities of the Department, SOLAS and the ETBs in meeting the requirements of the Public Spending Code and Capital Works Management Framework. Under this agreement the Department of Education and Skills acts as overall Approving Authority and is responsible for approving the overall funding allocations. SOLAS will support the Department of Education and Skills in discharging its role as Approving Authority, and Education and Training Boards will fulfil their role of Sponsoring Agency in relation to capital projects. From 2020 onwards, the Department is responsible for approving the overall funding allocations based on a recommendation from SOLAS. Once approved, capital projects are overseen by SOLAS and are governed by the Public Spending Code and a Multistage Capital Project Agreement Document (MCPAD) which sets out the roles and responsibilities of SOLAS and the ETBs in managing capital projects.

In addition to the SOLAS/DES Capital Oversight Agreement, SOLAS will commence a FET Capital Estates Project which will ascertain the current stock of FET capital buildings across the ETB network and assess their condition at a high level. This will inform

future capital investment decisions to support improved outcomes and greater efficiency in the distribution of the capital budget.

Capital budget

In line with the commitment outlined in the National Development Plan 2018 - 2027 the SOLAS capital budget for 2020 has been increased to €18m. SOLAS capital costs are €0.5m. The remaining €17.5m is available for distribution to support 2020 capital investment across ETBs. In line with a more strategic approach to planning and funding, and in recognition

of the fact that ETBs are best placed to identify and respond to the most pressing capital needs within their regions, each ETB will receive a dedicated devolved capital funding allocation in 2020. The devolved capital funding allocations for each ETB totalling €5.55m are determined using three funding bands reflecting their overall scale. ETBs with overall funding provision grants of up to €30m will receive a devolved capital funding allocation of €300,000; ETBs with overall funding provision grants in excess of €30m but less than €50m will receive €350,000; and ETBs with overall funding provision grants in excess of €50m will receive €400,000.

Table 4.3 **2020 Devolved capital allocations**

Devolved capital funding bands	Devolved capital	ETB	Funding
Overall Funding Provision less than €30m	€0.3m	Cavan and Monaghan ETB Donegal ETB Kilkenny and Carlow ETB Laois and Offaly ETB Longford and Westmeath ETB Tipperary ETB	€1.8m
Overall Funding Provision in excess of €30m but less than €50m	€0.35m	Galway and Roscommon ETB Kerry ETB Kildare and Wicklow ETB Louth and Meath ETB Mayo Sligo and Leitrim ETB	€1.75m
Overall Funding Provision in excess of €50m	€0.4m	City of Dublin ETB Cork ETB Dublin and Dún Laoghaire ETB Limerick and Clare ETB Waterford and Wexford ETB	€2.0m
Total 2020 Devolved capital funding allocations			€5.55m

Following the provision for devolved capital funding allocations, the remaining €11.95m is allocated based on applications received from ETBs for capital funding. Earlier this year applications were analysed and prioritised by SOLAS based on funding requirements for emergency health and safety building works, apprenticeship training equipment, non-apprenticeship training equipment, non-training equipment and other projects. The restrictions that were introduced in March 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic have resulted in considerable disruption to the commencement and completion of capital construction projects across the ETB network, however SOLAS is working closely with the Department of Education and Skills to progress all capital construction projects as soon as possible.

Analysis of data submitted through the Funding Allocations Requests and Reporting (FARR) system

The following section provides top-level analysis of the 2020 FET grant allocations and projected FET provision relating to inputs, outputs and outcomes.

Throughout this section the term 'course' is used to describe a specific training event, and the term 'programme' is used to define several courses that are aligned or related to particular activities, for example the Apprenticeship Programme, the Skills for Work Programme or the Traineeship Programme. No single metric can describe the overall picture of FET provision. To aid analysis, the term 'beneficiary' is used to describe the total number of individuals who will benefit from interventions provided through FET funding 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 also be given to the degree of participation, as some learners will partake in a full-time course – for example, a 42-week course delivered over an academic year – while others may participate in a part-time course delivered over a number of weeks for five hours a week. Both examples are considered equally when the term 'beneficiary' is used. It is intended that 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 Funding Allocations Requests and Reporting (FARR) system was used to capture planning data for 2020 to support the planning and funding process. FARR is a browser-based application linked to a database that captures quantitative data in a questionnaire format. The FARR system, which is now integrated with the PLSS, facilitated the capture of quantitative data by the ETBs to support their 2020 Funding Allocations Requests. The Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools (VSCCS) and other FET providers quantitative planning data is also captured in FARR for 2020.

Data available through the FARR database was collated and is set out in a series of tables as detailed later in this section. This analysis shows that 2020 planned FET provision is expected to cater for 333,893 beneficiaries (also referred to as learners), which is 2% more (6,422) than the reported number in 2019 (327,471). ETBs will cater for nearly all of the increase in planned beneficiary numbers in 2020 with an overall increase of 2.6% (8,111).

The main changes relating to ETBs are in full-time provision, with plans for an estimated 13,599 more beneficiaries in 2020 (12.8% increase) compared to the 2019 reported outturn. ETB part-time provision is expected to decrease by 1.6% or 2,378 beneficiaries and Community Education is expected to decrease by 3,110 or 6% less beneficiaries, compared to 2019 reported outturn. For full-time provision, compared to 2019 reported outturn, 2016+ Apprenticeships and Traineeships are planning for increased beneficiary numbers respectively of 522 (57.2%) and 747 (13.4%). The influence of the Skills to Advance programme is apparent, with initiatives for workforce upskilling embedded across many programmes, together with 798 additional numbers in dedicated full-time courses in response to enterprise and regional skills development needs, an increase of 74%. Other planned increases in beneficiary numbers are Adult Literacy courses provided by the Irish Deaf Society by almost 57% (206), VTOS core by almost 20% (1,247) and Youthreach by 11% (756).

The response to PLC Evaluation recommendations continues to be evident in PLC planning for 2020. PLC courses that are clearly defined as having an employment orientation are expected to cater for 40% (14,235) of the planned PLC starters and progression-oriented courses to cater for 52% (18,343) of the starters. The overall PLC planned beneficiary numbers are higher than the 2019 reported outturn both for ETBs and VSCCS by almost 16% (8,491). This is reflected in the planned starter numbers of 35,348 which is a 22.9% (6,584) increase on the reported starters for 2019. PLC schools and colleges tend to plan for additional courses that are aimed and marketed at potential beneficiaries who may avail of student grant support through Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI). To ensure inclusion in the SUSI system, planned PLC starters numbers are assigned to these courses, giving rise to the almost

23% increase in starters numbers compared to the 2019 outturn. The number of PLC places approved for the 2020/2021 academic year is 30,000.

For part-time provision, compared to the 2019 reported outturn, the main increases in beneficiary numbers are for Skills to Advance Route 1 – Direct 59.2% (1,279); Skills for Work 16.5% (759), Adult Literacy 13.1% (5,184), and Voluntary Literacy Tuition 9.2% (86).

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

Index of Tables
<p>Table 4.4: Overview of 2020 funding allocated and estimates of provision inputs and outputs for Education and Training Boards and other FET providers. The table provides a breakdown of beneficiary numbers by ETB and other providers for 2020 as entered in the FARR system. Estimated numbers of starters, completers and accreditation rate by ETBs and other providers and the funding allocation is presented. The information on provision is presented in relation to full-time, part-time and Community Education, and the funding information in addition to above is presented for ETBs in relation to innovation projects, provision supports, FET operational costs including staff pay and overheads and guidance services. This table is presented over 5 pages.</p>
<p>Table 4.5: Overview of 2020 funding allocated and estimates of provision inputs and outputs by programme for Education and Training Boards and other FET providers. The table presents information related to estimated inputs and funding allocated by programme provided by the ETBs, Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools, National Adult Literacy Association, Irish Deaf Society, Trinity Centre for People with Disabilities and eCollege, for 2020. This table is presented over 3 pages.</p>
<p>Table 4.6: Estimate of changes in FET Programme provision planned for 2020 compared to 2019 reported outturn. Table 4.6 provides information on changes that ETBs and other providers indicated in their plans as likely to occur during 2020 compared to 2019 in relation to FET beneficiary numbers. Comparative funding allocations for 2020 and 2019 is also provided. The information is presented in relation to full-time and part/variable-time provision across FET programmes. This table is presented over 3 pages.</p>

<p>Chart 4.1: Estimated percentages of beneficiaries expected to participate in FET programmes in 2020 by provision type. This chart provides overall data in percentage terms in relation to the estimated number of beneficiaries expected to participate in FET programmes in 2020 on a full-time and part-time basis and through community education.</p>
<p>Chart 4.2: Estimate of FET outputs for beneficiary completions/exits during 2020 by provision type. This chart provides a breakdown, in percentage terms, of estimated completers both full and partial in addition to early leavers and those continuing their studies into next year. The data is presented by provision type; full-time, part-time and Community Education (variable time).</p>
<p>Chart 4.3: Estimate of FET employment and progression outcomes for completers in 2020. This chart provides a breakdown, in percentage terms, of estimated beneficiaries completing courses with either an employment or progression outcome during 2020 across all FET provision types.</p>
<p>Chart 4.4: Estimate of outcomes for beneficiaries completing FET provision during 2020. This chart provides a breakdown, in percentage terms, of estimated beneficiaries completing courses with either an employment or progression outcome during 2020 across all FET provision types.</p>
<p>Table 4.7: Estimate of specific target groups participating in FET provision in 2020. The table provides estimates related to learners reported as long-term unemployed and learners reported as persons with a disability starting a FET course in 2020. This table is presented over 2 pages.</p>
<p>Table 4.8: Estimated beneficiary numbers full-time equivalence by skills cluster and programme category for 2020. This table presents the data relating to 2020 estimates for beneficiaries using a full-time equivalent measure. Data is presented by programme and skills cluster.</p>
<p>Table 4.9: BTEI grant allocations for Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools for 2020. 2020 grant allocations for BTEI provision to Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools is presented in this table.</p>
<p>Table 4.10: Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools 2020 approved PLC places. The approved PLC (Post leaving Certificate) course places for Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools is presented in this table.</p>

<p>Table 4.11: Other FET providers grant for additional provision in 2020. This table sets out the details of grants in respect of additional provision which are made to the Irish Deaf Society, National Adult Literacy Agency, Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities and Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools (VSCCS). Detail of this provision is also included in Tables 4.4 to 4.6 and in Table 4.9 relating to VSCCS BTEI grants. Included in this table are 2020 grant details to Fast Track into Technology and Retail Ireland Skillnet (IBEC) for additional provision as 2016+ Apprenticeship collaborating providers.</p>
<p>Table 4.12: 2019 FET provision reported outturn compared to 2019 planned provision. This table provides an overview of the planned starters, completions and beneficiaries on FET full-time, part-time and community education provision for 2019 provision, compared with the reported outturn for 2019.</p>
<p>Table 4.13: FET provision reported outturn compared to the revised outturn at mid-year for 2019. This table provides analysis of the mid-year revised forecasted outturn for FET provision against the 2019 FET reported outturn. The data is presented by full-time, part-time and community education provision for 2019.</p>
<p>Table 4.14: Grant allocations to organisations that provide support within the FET sector. This table provides an outline of the key activities planned for 2020 and the grant allocation for the organisation listed in the table; AHEAD, AONTAS, Dyslexia Association of Ireland, Fast Track into Technology (FIT), National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE) and National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA).</p>
<p>Table 4.15: Grant allocations FET staff representative organisations (ETBI administered). This table provides an overview, of the grant allocation to FET Staff Representative associations and their activities. This grant is administered by ETBI to the following associations; Adult Education Guidance Association of Ireland (AEGAI), Adult Education Officers Association, Adult Literacy Organisers Association (ALOA), Community Education Facilitators Association, National Association of VTOS Coordinators and National Association of Youthreach Coordinators.</p>
<p>Table 4.16: Grant allocations FET staff representative organisations (SOLAS administered). This table provides an overview of the grant allocation administered by SOLAS to the National Association of Adult and Community Education.</p>

Table 4.17: Grant allocations to organisations supporting lifelong learning opportunities within the FET sector. This table provides an overview of the key activities planned for 2020 and the grant allocation for the organisations listed in the table; Age Action Ireland, An Cosán, Irish Countrywomen's Association, The People's College and Third Age.

Table 4.18: Grant allocations for continuous professional development provision. This table provides an outline of the key activities planned for 2020 and the grant allocation to Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) in regard to the WIT/NALA project.

Table 4.19: Grant allocations to for EU and specific projects. This table provides details of the key activities planned for 2020 and the grant allocation for the organisations listed in the table; Irish Association of Community Training Organisations (IACTO), Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed (INOU) and CSO PIAAC.

Table 4.20: Grant allocations for organisations/ FET support projects. This table provides details of the organisations and activity/projects planned for 2020 and the grant allocation to Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) and the Further Education Support Unit (FESU).

Table 4.21: Grant allocations for 2016+ Apprenticeship consortia, lead/coordinating non-ETB providers. This table outlines the grant allocation in 2020 to non-ETB organisations supporting 2016+ Apprenticeship delivery through consortia or as a lead/co-ordinating provider. Grant allocation details relate to the organisations listed in the table; Accounting Technicians Ireland (ATI), Fast Track into Technology (FIT) and Retail Ireland Skillnet.

Table 4.22: Summary of 2020 FET specific grant allocations. This table provides a summary of grant allocations under the specific categories that the planned activities, projects and supports were approved under.

Further education and training outputs and outcomes

To support understanding of the concept of outputs and outcomes, explanatory notes are presented below.

Further education and training outputs

FET retention

In this plan the concept of 'retention' captures the positive reality of learners progressing through their studies while also acknowledging the reality that some learners will leave the course early without completing a significant portion of the course.

The term retention describes those who are estimated to be retained past 25% of the course duration (i.e. excludes those that have left the course early) in 2020. In the tables that follow, the percentage retention for beneficiaries is calculated as follows: the number of course beneficiaries completing more than 25% of the course duration and content, divided by the total number of course beneficiaries.

FET completion

To understand the population base for the outputs and outcomes values from FET provision in 2020, it is necessary to establish the number of learners retained on courses that are scheduled to finish (complete) in 2020. The concepts of both 'scheduled course completion' and 'individual learner completion' on these courses need to be considered.

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

- Some of the courses funded in 2020 commenced prior to 2020 and will complete in 2020
- Some of the courses funded in 2020 will commence in 2020 and will complete in 2020
- Some courses funded in 2020 will commence in 2020 and will complete after 2020.

Only learners that are estimated to complete/finish in 2020 will be considered in the calculation of completion values for 2020.

In relation to 'individual learner completion' in 2020, 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 completed a significant portion of the course 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 after 2020 and, therefore, will not be included in the 2020 completion values.

Where the tables in Section 4 refer to the percentage for completion, it is calculated by: the number of learners/beneficiaries estimated to finish/complete in 2020, less the estimated number of learners that have left their course early in 2020.

Taking 'completion statistics' into account is important as they form the population base for determining all the other output and outcomes values for 2020 FET provision.

FET accreditation

The term 'accreditation' describes the number of beneficiaries (learners) which are estimated to complete courses and achieve certification during 2020. The

percentage certification rates are calculated based on the above number of beneficiaries (learners) on accredited provision that are estimated/expected to achieve certification, either QQI full or component awards and/or other awarding body (non-QQI) awards, divided by the number of beneficiaries (learners) that will complete their accredited course of study in 2020.

Further Education and Training outcomes

FET outcomes include employment, progression to another course in FET or HET and personal progression, details outlined below:

FET into employment

The term 'into employment' describes the number of beneficiaries (learners) who will enter employment post-course participation. The percentage is calculated by: the number of beneficiaries (learners) who will complete their course in 2020 and are estimated/expected to enter employment on either a full-time, part-time or self-employment basis, (excluding apprenticeship completers, as they are already employed and community education completers, as the programme is not an active FET employment programme), divided by the number of beneficiaries (learners) that will complete their course of study in 2020.

FET progressing to another course in FET or HET

The term 'progressing to another course in FET or HET' describes the number of beneficiaries (learners) who complete their course and progress to a Further Education and Training (FET) or Higher Education and Training (HET) course, post their 2020 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) that will complete their course of study in 2020.

FET personal progression

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 are calculated without the inclusion of apprenticeship completers by dividing the number of learners achieving a personal progression by the number of beneficiaries (learners) that will complete their course of study in 2020.

Notes

Tables 4.4 and 4.5 are views of the data pertaining to projected provision for 2020 by FET providers and programmes respectively. The data is presented on a full-time, part-time and community education basis. The data also includes the number of projected starters and beneficiaries and percentage analysis of projected data relating to retained starters and completers.

Table 4.4 is presented over 5 pages and provides estimated data for FET provision inputs and outputs for 2020. The table provides detail relating to funding allocated and estimated numbers provided by the Education and Training Boards (ETBs), Voluntary Secondary Schools, Community Schools and Comprehensive Schools (VSCCS), National Adult Literacy Association (NALA), Irish Deaf Society (IDS), Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities (TCPID) and eCollege, for 2020. The data is presented by provider on a part-time and full-time basis.

Table 4.4 **Overview of 2020 funding allocated and estimates of provision inputs and outputs for Education and Training Boards and other FET providers**

Overview of 2020 funding allocated and estimates of provision inputs and outputs for Education and Training Boards and other FET providers								
FET Provision in 2020		Estimate of Inputs in 2020				Estimate of Outputs for Beneficiaries in 2020		
		Number of Beneficiaries			Funding	Retention	Completion	Accreditation
Provider	Provision Type	Enrolled/ Started on 1st January 2020	Starting Courses During 2020	Total for FET Provision in 2020	Funding for FET Provision in 2020	Percentage retained on courses during 2020	Percentage scheduled (of retained) to finish courses in 2020	Accreditation rate for course completions in 2020
Cavan and Monaghan ETB	Full-time	1,677	2,549	4,226	€16,526,822	92%	54%	96%
	Part-time	1,018	4,771	5,789	€3,876,528	79%	90%	82%
	Community Education	64	1,633	1,697	€476,932	78%	100%	100%
	ETB Innovation Projects				€366,098			
	ETB Provision Supports				€832,101			
	ETB FET operational costs, staff pay & overheads				€3,253,544			
	ETB Guidance Services				€446,975			
	Total	2,759	8,953	11,712	€25,779,000			
City of Dublin ETB	Full-time	8,591	13,319	21,910	€83,050,000	92%	57%	95%
	Part-time	5,768	18,968	24,736	€18,115,000	91%	69%	73%
	Community Education	1,912	6,912	8,824	€2,360,000	95%	85%	62%
	ETB Innovation Projects				€1,390,000			
	ETB Provision Supports				€395,000			
	ETB FET operational costs, staff pay & overheads				€10,420,000			
	ETB Guidance Services				€550,000			
	Total	16,271	39,199	55,470	€116,280,000			
Cork ETB	Full-time	4,875	9,738	14,613	€51,798,276	76%	53%	91%
	Part-time	2,324	9,627	11,951	€6,847,340	85%	85%	83%
	Community Education	92	4,858	4,950	€1,321,948	88%	85%	100%
	ETB Innovation Projects				€284,302			
	ETB Provision Supports				€1,322,500			
	ETB FET operational costs, staff pay & overheads				€9,302,644			
	ETB Guidance Services				€465,990			
	Total	7,291	24,223	31,514	€71,343,000			
Donegal ETB	Full-time	720	1,308	2,028	€14,973,674	89%	63%	91%
	Part-time	1,238	3,672	4,910	€2,785,819	78%	77%	83%
	Community Education	138	4,063	4,201	€365,000	100%	98%	100%
	ETB Innovation Projects				€30,000			
	ETB Provision Supports				€724,670			
	ETB FET operational costs, staff pay & overheads				€4,974,837			
	ETB Guidance Services				€330,000			
	Total	2,096	9,043	11,139	€24,184,000			

Table 4.4 ctd

Overview of 2020 funding allocated and estimates of provision inputs and outputs for Education and Training Boards and other FET providers								
FET Provision in 2020		Estimate of Inputs in 2020				Estimate of Outputs for Beneficiaries in 2020		
		Number of Beneficiaries			Funding	Retention	Completion	Accreditation
Provider	Provision Type	Enrolled/ Started on 1st January 2020	Starting Courses During 2020	Total for FET Provision in 2020	Funding for FET Provision in 2020	Percentage retained on courses during 2020	Percentage scheduled (of retained) to finish courses in 2020	Accreditation rate for course completions in 2020
Dublin and Dun Laoghaire ETB	Full-time	4,707	9,280	13,987	€49,947,382	86%	67%	84%
	Part-time	2,105	9,955	12,060	€8,252,687	85%	90%	84%
	Community Education	54	5,264	5,318	€1,757,299	88%	100%	70%
	ETB Innovation Projects				€0			
	ETB Provision Supports				€675,797			
	ETB FET operational costs, staff pay & overheads				€13,635,053			
	ETB Guidance Services				€746,782			
	Total	6,866	24,499	31,365	€75,015,000			
Galway and Roscommon ETB	Full-time	2,420	4,384	6,804	€31,232,168	82%	61%	73%
	Part-time	2,806	9,221	12,027	€10,403,124	82%	74%	71%
	Community Education	38	4,014	4,052	€525,000	77%	98%	70%
	ETB Innovation Projects				€200,000			
	ETB Provision Supports				€1,350,000			
	ETB FET operational costs, staff pay & overheads				€5,015,000			
	ETB Guidance Services				€450,000			
	Total	5,264	17,619	22,883	€49,175,292			
Kerry ETB	Full-time	1,576	2,572	4,148	€21,460,217	87%	58%	88%
	Part-time	726	4,017	4,743	€1,568,116	84%	88%	55%
	Community Education	320	1,044	1,364	€205,283	89%	88%	
	ETB Innovation Projects				€170,000			
	ETB Provision Supports				€1,220,745			
	ETB FET operational costs, staff pay & overheads				€8,414,030			
	ETB Guidance Services				€192,609			
	Total	2,622	7,633	10,255	€33,231,000			
Kildare and Wicklow ETB	Full-time	2,308	3,816	6,124	€27,158,882	89%	55%	93%
	Part-time	1,157	6,358	7,515	€4,611,928	88%	64%	80%
	Community Education	93	880	973	€529,558	88%	87%	80%
	ETB Innovation Projects				€30,000			
	ETB Provision Supports				€650,395			
	ETB FET operational costs, staff pay & overheads				€2,935,566			
	ETB Guidance Services				€573,671			
	Total	3,558	11,054	14,612	€36,490,000			

Table 4.4 ctd

Overview of 2020 funding allocated and estimates of provision inputs and outputs for Education and Training Boards and other FET providers								
FET Provision in 2020		Estimate of Inputs in 2020			Estimate of Outputs for Beneficiaries in 2020			
		Number of Beneficiaries			Funding	Retention	Completion	Accreditation
Provider	Provision Type	Enrolled/ Started on 1st January 2020	Starting Courses During 2020	Total for FET Provision in 2020	Funding for FET Provision in 2020	Percentage retained on courses during 2020	Percentage scheduled (of retained) to finish courses in 2020	Accreditation rate for course completions in 2020
Kilkenny and Carlow ETB	Full-time	1,749	2,649	4,398	€19,837,918	89%	62%	73%
	Part-time	776	3,973	4,749	€2,574,312	90%	87%	67%
	Community Education	9	1,299	1,308	€196,691	89%	100%	83%
	ETB Innovation Projects				€100,000			
	ETB Provision Supports				€112,500			
	ETB FET operational costs, staff pay & overheads				€2,528,579			
	ETB Guidance Services				€650,000			
	Total	2,534	7,921	10,455	€26,000,000			
Laois and Offaly ETB	Full-time	1,033	1,823	2,856	€16,800,000	85%	68%	98%
	Part-time	3,098	6,391	9,489	€6,213,000	69%	68%	78%
	Community Education	103	393	496	€198,000	89%	100%	71%
	ETB Innovation Projects				€0			
	ETB Provision Supports				€183,000			
	ETB FET operational costs, staff pay & overheads				€4,719,000			
	ETB Guidance Services				€200,000			
	Total	4,234	8,607	12,841	€28,313,000			
Limerick and Clare ETB	Full-time	2,850	4,787	7,637	€43,507,556	93%	55%	85%
	Part-time	1,947	12,656	14,603	€9,179,068	85%	85%	75%
	Community Education	5	4,493	4,498	€946,348	87%	99%	
	ETB Innovation Projects				€85,000			
	ETB Provision Supports				€3,183,201			
	ETB FET operational costs, staff pay & overheads				€10,387,682			
	ETB Guidance Services				€711,145			
	Total	4,802	21,936	26,738	€68,000,000			
Longford and Westmeath ETB	Full-time	896	2,452	3,348	€18,716,463	64%	48%	75%
	Part-time	1,268	2,516	3,784	€3,342,956	83%	78%	71%
	Community Education	0	328	328	€238,700	98%	102%	
	ETB Innovation Projects				€0			
	ETB Provision Supports				€275,000			
	ETB FET operational costs, staff pay & overheads				€4,139,209			
	ETB Guidance Services				€362,672			
	Total	2,164	5,296	7,460	€27,075,000			

Table 4.4 ctd

Overview of 2020 funding allocated and estimates of provision inputs and outputs for Education and Training Boards and other FET providers								
FET Provision in 2020		Estimate of Inputs in 2020			Estimate of Outputs for Beneficiaries in 2020			
		Number of Beneficiaries			Funding	Retention	Completion	Accreditation
Provider	Provision Type	Enrolled/ Started on 1st January 2020	Starting Courses During 2020	Total for FET Provision in 2020	Funding for FET Provision in 2020	Percentage retained on courses during 2020	Percentage scheduled (of retained) to finish courses in 2020	Accreditation rate for course completions in 2020
Louth and Meath ETB	Full-time	3,393	6,172	9,565	€37,040,058	82%	56%	74%
	Part-time	1,308	9,170	10,478	€4,123,774	82%	75%	67%
	Community Education	95	2,724	2,819	€421,890	99%	88%	99%
	ETB Innovation Projects				€1,945,158			
	ETB Provision Supports				€1,304,096			
	ETB FET operational costs, staff pay & overheads				€4,766,595			
	ETB Guidance Services				€398,429			
	Total	4,796	18,066	22,862	€50,000,000			
Mayo Sligo and Leitrim ETB	Full-time	2,010	3,710	5,720	€29,384,058	91%	62%	89%
	Part-time	827	6,317	7,144	€4,349,934	84%	92%	75%
	Community Education	31	4,001	4,032	€576,494	97%	92%	94%
	ETB Innovation Projects				€50,000			
	ETB Provision Supports				€1,542,000			
	ETB FET operational costs, staff pay & overheads				€5,616,469			
	ETB Guidance Services				€481,045			
	Total	2,868	14,028	16,896	€42,000,000			
Tipperary ETB	Full-time	1,417	2,032	3,449	€20,784,189	88%	63%	93%
	Part-time	1,418	3,978	5,396	€4,013,813	84%	74%	66%
	Community Education	0	2,168	2,168	€635,000	63%	61%	75%
	ETB Innovation Projects				€0			
	ETB Provision Supports				€590,000			
	ETB FET operational costs, staff pay & overheads				€2,774,998			
	ETB Guidance Services				€306,000			
	Total	2,835	8,178	11,013	€29,104,000			
Waterford and Wexford ETB	Full-time	2,938	6,367	9,305	€47,261,376	80%	66%	90%
	Part-time	3,237	4,933	8,170	€5,530,543	94%	75%	66%
	Community Education	323	1,089	1,412	€674,634	100%	99%	7%
	ETB Innovation Projects				€494,610			
	ETB Provision Supports				€1,986,222			
	ETB FET operational costs, staff pay & overheads				€8,689,535			
	ETB Guidance Services				€405,080			
	Total	6,498	12,389	18,887	€65,042,000			

Table 4.4 ctd

Overview of 2020 funding allocated and estimates of provision inputs and outputs for Education and Training Boards and other FET providers								
FET Provision in 2020		Estimate of Inputs in 2020				Estimate of Outputs for Beneficiaries in 2020		
		Number of Beneficiaries			Funding	Retention	Completion	Accreditation
Provider	Provision Type	Enrolled/ Started on 1st January 2020	Starting Courses During 2020	Total for FET Provision in 2020	Funding for FET Provision in 2020	Percentage retained on courses during 2020	Percentage scheduled (of retained) to finish courses in 2020	Accreditation rate for course completions in 2020
Total ETB Provision		77,458	238,644	316,102	€767,031,292			
VSCCS ¹	Full-time ²	992	1,254	2,246	€329,664	93%	47%	94%
	Part-time	302	452	754	€340,545	97%	47%	77%
	Total	1,294	1,706	3,000	€670,209			
IDS ³	Full-time	91	479	570	€452,461	80%	88%	36%
TCPID ⁴	Full-time	0	20	20	€160,000	100%	0%	0%
NALA ⁵	Part-time	1,330	1,200	2,530	€272,396	50%	99%	86%
Total Additional Provision		1,421	1,699	3,120	€884,857			
eCollege ⁶	Part-time	4,357	7,314	11,671	€2,164,000	70%	57%	33%
Total National Programmes Provision		4,357	7,314	11,671	€2,164,000			
Summary FET provision totals	Full Time	44,243	78,711	122,954	€530,421,164	86%	59%	87%
	Part Time	37,010	125,489	162,499	€98,564,883	85%	78%	71%
	Community Education	3,277	45,163	48,440	€11,428,777	90%	92%	71%
	Provider Type Summary	Enrolled/ Started on 1st January 2020	Starting Courses During 2020	Total for FET Provision in 2020	Funding for FET Provision in 2020			
	VSCCS	1,294	1,706	3,000	€670,209			
	Other FET Providers ⁷	5,778	9,013	14,791	€3,048,857			
	ETB Provision Total	72,662	220,578	293,240	€636,695,758			
	ETB Innovation Projects				€5,145,168			
	ETB Provision Supports				€16,347,227			
	ETB FET operational costs, staff pay & overheads				€101,572,741			
	ETB Guidance Services				€7,270,398			
Total		84,530	249,363	333,893	€770,750,358			

1 VSCCS - Voluntary Secondary, Community and Comprehensive Schools
2 VSCCS PLC enhanced capitation/LDAs only
3 IDS - Irish Deaf Society
4 TCPID - Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities
5 NALA - National Adult Literacy Agency
6 eCollege funded through SOLAS allocation. eCollege starters include a portion of enrolled learners due to transition to PLSS
7 Other FET Providers: eCollege, Irish Deaf Society, National Adult Literacy Agency and Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities

Table 4.5 is presented over 3 pages and provides information on funding allocated and provision inputs and outputs on a programme basis. The information is presented by programme in relation to full-time, part and variable-time provision. The table provides an overview of the planned numbers relating to FET Provision for 2020 for Education and Training Boards (ETBs), Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools (VSCCS), National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA), Irish Deaf Society (IDS), Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities (TCPID) and eCollege. This table indicates that the estimated overall total number of beneficiaries of FET provision for

2020 will be **333,893** at a total cost of **€770,750,358**. The estimated overall beneficiary number of **333,893** includes the projected number of starters in 2020 of **249,363**. This table also provides information on the estimated retention, completion and certification rates across the ETBs and other providers by programme for 2020. Certification percentage is calculated based on the estimated number of completers achieving certification divided by the total number of completers for all courses in 2020. The percentage analysis of beneficiaries retained and completers achieving accreditation is based on the planning data entered in FARR.

Table 4.5 Overview of FET 2020 funding allocated and estimates of provision inputs and outputs by programme for ETBs and other FET Providers

Overview of FET provision: Estimates of inputs, outputs and funding allocation for 2020							
	Planned beneficiary inputs			Funding	Output analysis		
Programme	Enrolled as @ 1st January 2020	Projected Starters during 2020	Total Projected for 2020	2020 Funding Allocation	Projected % of Beneficiaries Retained on all Courses	Projected % of Retained Beneficiaries Completing Courses in 2020	Projected % Completers on all Courses achieving Certification
2016+ Apprenticeships	446	988	1,434	€7,779,632	94%	58%	85%
Apprenticeship Phases 2/4/6	1,572	10,396	11,968	€88,749,828	79%	82%	
Apprenticeship Phase 7	925	2,157	3,082	€0	98%	94%	100%
Blended Training	209	279	488	€414,032	77%	65%	77%
Bridging & Foundation Training	98	452	550	€841,648	87%	91%	63%
Community Training Centres	1,276	1,547	2,823	€31,465,315	80%	63%	67%
Employment ¹	0	366	366	€0	80%	10%	100%
Justice Workshops	88	118	206	€729,001	62%	67%	58%
Local Training Initiatives	1,332	1,851	3,183	€20,368,314	83%	61%	80%
PLC ²	93	56	149	€119,646,760	69%	96%	100%
PLC - Employment Oriented	9,634	13,832	23,466		84%	48%	88%
PLC - Pre-Apprenticeship	185	590	775		87%	32%	87%
PLC - Progression Oriented	13,597	17,588	31,185		90%	50%	94%
PLC - Not determined	2,484	2,028	4,512		86%	54%	87%
Progression ¹	0	43	43		79%	6%	0%
Specialist Training Providers	1,509	2,032	3,541	€44,955,462	85%	65%	62%
Specific Skills Training	1,481	7,727	9,208	€32,623,001	85%	83%	79%
STA Route 2 - Enterprise	181	1,354	1,535	€3,307,318	90%	95%	76%
STA Route 3 - Regional & Sectoral	46	289	335	€2,780,832	96%	101%	63%
STA - Open Call	0	0	0	€2,110,147			
Traineeship Training	2,100	3,495	5,595	€38,260,191	86%	56%	86%
Traineeship Employed	219	487	706	€1,130,845	92%	64%	86%

Table 4.5 ctd

Overview of FET provision: Estimates of inputs, outputs and funding allocation for 2020							
	Planned beneficiary inputs			Funding	Output analysis		
Programme	Enrolled as @ 1st January 2020	Projected Starters during 2020	Total Projected for 2020	2020 Funding Allocation	Projected % of Beneficiaries Retained on all Courses	Projected % of Retained Beneficiaries Completing Courses in 2020	Projected % Completers on all Courses achieving Certification
VTOS Core	2,800	4,768	7,568	€66,573,520	84%	48%	83%
Youthreach	2,885	4,515	7,400	€67,743,193	82%	58%	68%
ETB Full-Time Total	43,160	76,958	120,118	€529,479,039	86%	59%	74%
Adult Literacy	9,070	33,280	42,350	€24,569,894	86%	78%	38%
BTEI Groups	9,425	24,598	34,023	€23,535,301	84%	76%	77%
Core Skills ¹	0	0	0	€3,063,335			
ESOL	4,792	15,525	20,317	€3,418,012	82%	80%	29%
Evening Training	691	13,837	14,528	€5,786,739	85%	97%	62%
FET Co-Operation Hours	5,460	17,515	22,975	€23,299,210	82%	62%	24%
ITABE	70	2,194	2,264	€1,367,468	81%	95%	46%
RPL	12	113	125	€141,532	94%	94%	99%
Refugee Resettlement	259	903	1,162	€2,567,432	90%	81%	19%
Skills for Work	757	4,589	5,346	€4,042,011	87%	83%	47%
STA Route 1 - Direct	326	3,112	3,438	€3,997,008	92%	93%	74%
STA Route 1 - Dispersed ³	0	0	3,578	€1,903,089			
Voluntary Literacy Tuition	159	857	1,016	€0	79%	83%	3%
Community Education (Variable Time)	3,277	45,163	48,440	€11,428,777	90%	92%	4%
ETB Part-time/ Variable-time Total	34,298	161,686	195,984	€107,216,719	86%	82%	35%
VSCCS PLC ²	0	0	0	€329,664			
VSCCS PLC - Employment Oriented	326	403	729		90%	48%	97%
VSCCS PLC - Progression Oriented	554	755	1,309		95%	45%	95%
VSCCS PLC - Not determined	112	96	208		98%	55%	80%
VSCCS Full-time Total	992	1,254	2,246	€329,664	93%	47%	94%
VSCCS BTEI	302	452	754	€340,545	97%	47%	77%
VSCCS Part-time Total	302	452	754	€340,545	97%	47%	77%
All PLC Total	26,985	35,348	62,333	€119,976,424	87%	49%	91%
All BTEI Total	9,727	25,050	34,777	€23,875,846	85%	75%	77%

1 New Programme categories
2 PLC funding relates to all PLC programme orientations
3 Skills to Advance - Dispersed route 1 - presented and not included in total

Table 4.5 ctd

Overview of FET provision: Estimates of inputs, outputs and funding allocation for 2020							
	Planned beneficiary inputs			Funding	Output analysis		
Programme	Enrolled as @ 1st January 2020	Projected Starters during 2020	Total Projected for 2020	2020 Funding Allocation	Projected % of Beneficiaries Retained on all Courses	Projected % of Retained Beneficiaries Completing Courses in 2020	Projected % Completers on all Courses achieving Certification
Irish Deaf Society	91	479	570	€452,461	80%	88%	55%
TCPID	0	20	20	€160,000	100%	0%	
Other Providers Full-time Total	91	499	590	€612,461	81%	85%	55%
All Full-time Total	44,243	78,711	122,954	€530,421,164	86%	59%	74%
NALA 'Write on'	1,330	1,200	2,530	€272,396	50%	99%	86%
eCollege	4,357	7,314	11,671	€2,164,000	70%	57%	32%
Other Providers Part-time Total	5,687	8,514	14,201	€2,436,396	66%	63%	44%
All Part-time/Variable-time Total	40,287	170,652	210,939	€109,993,660	85%	81%	36%
Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools				€670,209			
Other FET Providers (IDS, TCPID, NALA, eCollege)				€3,048,857			
ETB Provision Total				€636,695,758			
ETB Innovation Projects				€5,145,168			
ETB Provision Supports				€16,347,227			
ETB FET Operational Costs, Staff Pay & Overheads				€101,572,741			
ETB Guidance Service				€7,270,398			
Total All Programmes	84,530	249,363	333,893	€770,750,358			

4 eCollege starters include a portion of enrolled learners due to transition to PLSS

Notes

Data relating to Skills to Advance funding of €2.1 million for special initiatives is presented in Table 4.5. During the policy development phase for Skills to Advance, it was acknowledged that a major step up was needed in the sector to meet the challenges of upskilling and reskilling those in employment. The policy signalled that a competitive call would be issued to promote innovation and performance. This was launched as the Innovation Through Collaboration Fund in June 2019, attracting 18 responses by the closing date in September. Projects were invited under five innovation categories:

- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- Information and Outreach
- Design and Delivery of Programmes
- Regional and Sectoral Approaches
- Enterprise Engagement

Following a rigorous three step appraisal process by a panel of internal and external experts, ten projects were

recommended for funding in the range of €200,000 to €500,000 per project. Projects began in January 2020 with an estimated total budget of up to €3.5m over 2020 and 2021. The Open Call/Innovation Through Collaboration Fund projects are funded from the dedicated Skills to Advance budget which is financed by the National Training Fund. The projects approved for funding include:

- Advanced Manufacturing Skills: Development of Curricula and Flexible Delivery Methods
- AquaFarm: Innovative Game Based approach to delivering Further Education and Training in Aquaculture
- Development of Innovative Delivery Modes for Existing and Future NZEB Curricula
- Driving Success with Technology
- Employment Engagement CRM for the FET Sector
- M4-CPD (Manufacturing 4.0 - CPD)
- RPL Framework for the Irish Hospitality Sector
- Step Up and Grow Management Development

- Upskilling the Food Sector for the future through action learning
- Validating Competencies of Care Sector Employees (VCCSE)

Data relating to the funding of €3.06m in the new programme category, Core Skills, is presented in Tables 4.5 and 4.6. The provision relating to this funding encompasses some of the provision profiled under Adult Literacy, ITABE and BTEI. Existing systems are being modified to capture both the planning and reporting detail relating to the Core Skills programme category.

Table 4.6 provides analysis of inputs reported for 2019 versus 2020 FET planned provision in full-time and part-time provision. At programme level, starter and beneficiary numbers projections for 2020 and reported actuals for 2019 are provided, as well as the funding amounts that were allocated in the respective years.

In relation to inputs, it is estimated that there will be a relatively slight overall increase in beneficiary numbers of approximately 2% in 2020 compared to the reported outturn for 2019. However, the 2020 Plan

projects a significant move towards full time provision with an increase of approximately 13% forecasted across the combined ETB network when compared to the 2019 outturn. Projected increases at full time programme level include: Traineeship Training (16%), 2016+ Apprenticeships (57%), Post Leaving Certificate (16%), Skills to Advance (74%) and VTOS (20%). Projected decreases in part-time provision in ETBs include BTEI (-6%), Evening Training (-5%) and FET Co-Operation Hours (-21%). In relation to FET Co-Operation Hours, the process for planning and reporting on programme participants has changed for 2020 and this may have contributed to the projected decrease. It should be noted that despite the overall decrease in projected part-time provision there are some notable increases at programme level in this area too, including Adult Literacy (11%).

Regarding funding allocations, in 2020 there is an overall increase of 29% when compared to 2019. The increase relates to ETB PLC and FET Co-operation Hours teacher pay and capitation grants, which were devolved from the Department of Education and Skills to SOLAS for 2020.

Table 4.6 **Estimate of changes in FET Programme provision planned for 2020 compared to 2019 reported outturn**

Estimate of changes in FET provision planned for 2020 compared to 2019 outturn									
All Providers	Planned Inputs 2020		Reported Outturn 2019		Funding Allocation		Percentage Analysis Of Variance		
Programme	2020 Projected Starters 2020	2020 Total Projected Beneficiaries	2019 Reported Starters Outturn	2019 Total Reported Beneficiaries Outturn	2020 Funding Allocation	2019 Initial Funding Allocation	% Variance of Planned 2020 Starters V 2019 Reported Outturn	% Variance of Planned 2020 Beneficiaries V 2019 Reported Outturn	% Variance of 2020 V 2019 Funding Allocations
Full-time Provision									
2016+ Apprenticeships	988	1,434	693	912	€7,779,632	€7,014,241	43%	57%	11%
Apprenticeship Phases 2/4/6	10,396	11,968	9,623	11,076	€88,749,828	€75,273,964	8%	8%	18%
Apprenticeship Phase 7	2,157	3,082	2,112	2,689	€0	€0	2%	15%	0%
Blended Training	279	488	376	594	€414,032	€558,563	-26%	-18%	-26%
Bridging and Foundation Training	452	550	449	590	€841,648	€1,009,370	1%	-7%	-17%
Community Training Centres	1,547	2,823	1,535	2,950	€31,465,315	€33,966,632	1%	-4%	-7%
Employment ¹	366	366			€0	€0	0%	0%	0%
Justice Workshops	118	206	121	223	€729,001	€768,066	-2%	-8%	-5%
Local Training Initiatives	1,851	3,183	1,779	3,179	€20,368,314	€21,354,979	4%	0%	-5%
PLC ²	56	149	108	23,848	€119,646,760	€7,921,488	-48%	-99%	1410%
PLC - Employment Oriented	13,832	23,466	10,221	10,369			35%	126%	
PLC - Pre-Apprenticeship	590	775	220	229			168%	238%	
PLC - Progression Oriented	17,588	31,185	14,487	14,567			21%	114%	
PLC - Not determined	2,028	4,512	2,642	2,642			-23%	71%	

Estimate of changes in FET provision planned for 2020 compared to 2019 outturn									
All Providers	Planned Inputs 2020		Reported Outturn 2019		Funding Allocation		Percentage Analysis Of Variance		
Programme	2020 Projected Starters 2020	2020 Total Projected Beneficiaries	2019 Reported Starters Outturn	2019 Total Reported Beneficiaries Outturn	2020 Funding Allocation	2019 Initial Funding Allocation	% Variance of Planned 2020 Starters V 2019 Reported Outturn	% Variance of Planned 2020 Beneficiaries V 2019 Reported Outturn	% Variance of 2020 V 2019 Funding Allocations
Progression ¹	43	43			€0	€0	0%	0%	
Specialist Training Providers	2,032	3,541	1,909	3,705	€44,955,462	€45,032,290	6%	-4%	0%
Specific Skills Training	7,727	9,208	7,603	9,355	€32,623,001	€33,124,066	2%	-2%	-2%
STA Route 2 – Enterprise	1,354	1,535	891	921	€3,307,318	€3,755,311	52%	67%	-12%
STA Route 3 – Regional & Sectoral	289	335	146	146	€2,780,832	€3,200,506	98%	129%	-13%
STA – Open Call (Special Initiatives)	0	0	5	5	€2,110,147	€0	-100%	-100%	0%
Traineeship Training	3,495	5,595	2,924	4,824	€38,260,191	€36,353,742	20%	16%	5%
Traineeship Employed	487	706	619	730	€1,130,845	€734,493	-21%	-3%	54%
VTOS Core	4,768	7,568	3,435	6,321	€66,573,520	€69,784,551	39%	20%	-5%
Youthreach	4,515	7,400	3,964	6,644	€67,743,193	€66,944,529	14%	11%	1%
ETB Full-time Total	76,958	120,118	65,862	106,519	€529,479,039	€406,796,792	17%	13%	30%
Part-time Provision									
Adult Literacy	33,280	42,350	30,634	38,194	€24,569,894	€25,201,424	9%	11%	-3%
BTEI Groups	24,598	34,023	26,920	36,163	€23,535,301	€24,902,206	-9%	-6%	-5%
Core Skills ¹	0	0			€3,063,335				
ESOL	15,525	20,317	16,112	19,408	€3,418,012	€3,619,471	-4%	5%	-6%
Evening Training	13,837	14,528	14,658	15,215	€5,786,739	€5,295,392	-6%	-5%	9%
FET Co-Operation Hours	17,515	22,975	21,516	29,162	€23,299,210	€0	-19%	-21%	0%
ITABE	2,194	2,264	2,397	2,468	€1,367,468	€1,595,775	-8%	-8%	-14%
RPL	113	125	256	262	€141,532	€167,000	-56%	-52%	-15%
Refugee Resettlement	903	1,162	1,205	1,374	€2,567,432	€2,581,007	-25%	-15%	-1%
Skills for Work	4,589	5,346	4,363	4,587	€4,042,011	€2,743,625	5%	17%	47%
STA Route 1 – Direct	3,112	3,438	2,147	2,159	€3,997,008	€0	45%	59%	0%
STA Route 1 – Dispersed ³	0	0	2,416	2,433	€1,903,089	€2,728,751	-100%	-100%	-30%
Voluntary Literacy Tuition	857	1,016	751	930	€0	€0	14%	9%	0%
Community Education (Variable-time)	45,163	48,440	49,932	51,550	€11,428,777	€10,878,953	-10%	-6%	5%
ETB Part-time/ Variable-time Total	161,686	195,984	170,891	201,472	€107,216,719	€76,984,853	-5%	-3%	39%

Table 4.6 ctd

Estimate of Changes in FET Provision planned for 2020 compared to 2019 reported outturn									
All Providers	Planned Inputs 2020		Reported Outturn 2019		Funding Allocation		Percentage Analysis Of Variance		
Programme	2020 Projected Starters 2020	2020 Total Projected Beneficiaries	2019 Reported Starters Outturn	2019 Total Reported Beneficiaries Outturn	2020 Funding Allocation	2019 Initial Funding Allocation	% Variance of Planned 2020 Starters V 2019 Reported Outturn	% Variance of Planned 2020 Beneficiaries V 2019 Reported Outturn	% Variance of 2020 V 2019 Funding Allocations
VSCCS Provision									
VSCCS PLC ²	0	0	11	1,112	€329,664	€326,400	-100%	-100%	1%
VSCCS PLC - Employment Oriented	403	729	357	357			13%	104%	
VSCCS PLC - Progression Oriented	755	1,309	598	598			26%	119%	
VSCCS PLC - Not determined	96	208	120	120			-20%	73%	
VSCCS Full-time Total	1,254	2,246	1,086	2,187	€329,664	€326,400	15%	3%	1%
VSCCS BTEI	452	754	437	713	€340,545	€372,511	3%	6%	-9%
VSCCS Part-time Total	452	754	437	713	€340,545	€372,511	3%	6%	-9%
Total VSCCS Provision	1,706	3,000	1,523	2,900	€670,209	€698,911	12%	3%	-4%
National Programmes									
Online Learning (eCollege) ⁴	7,314	11,671	6,806	14,714	€2,164,000	€1,850,000	7%	-21%	17%
National Programmes Part-time Total	7,314	11,671	6,806	14,714	€2,164,000	€1,850,000	7%	-21%	17%
Other Programmes Provision									
Irish Deaf Society	479	570	203	364	€452,461	€317,144	136%	57%	43%
NALA' Write on'	1,200	2,530	1,502	1,502	€272,396	€200,000	-20%	68%	36%
TCPID ⁵	20	20			€160,000				
Other Programme Provision Total	1,699	3,120	1,705	1,866	€884,857	€517,144	0%	67%	71%
Part-time Provision									
Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools Total					€670,209	€698,911			
Other FET Providers (IDS, NALA, TCPID, eCollege) Total					€3,048,857	€2,367,144			
ETB Provision Total					€636,695,758	€483,781,645			
ETB Innovation Projects Total					€5,145,168	€3,232,427			
ETB Provision Supports Total					€16,347,227	€11,274,920			
ETB FET Operational Costs, Staff Pay & Overheads Total					€101,572,741	€89,602,866			
ETB Guidance Service Total					€7,270,398	€6,702,372			
ETB Profiled but unallocated Total					€0	€136,316			
Total All Further Education & Training	249,363	333,893	246,787	327,471	€770,750,358	€597,796,601			

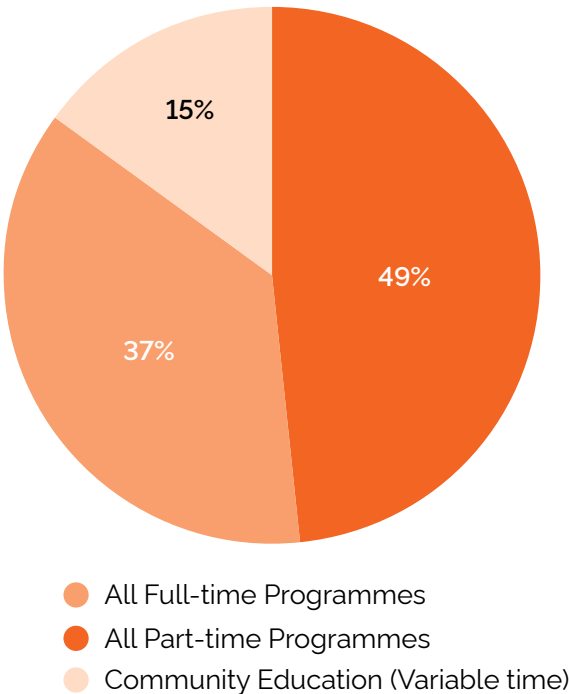
1 New Programme categories
2 PLC funding relates to all PLC programme orientations
3 Skills to Advance - Dispersed Route 1 - presented and not included in total
4 eCollege starters include a portion of enrolled learners due to transition to PLSS
5 TCPID (Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities) is a new provider in 2020

FET provision and outcomes estimates for 2020

The charts below provide information on FET provision outcomes with a focus on estimates related to beneficiary completion/exit and progression outcomes for 2020.

Chart 4.1 provides overall data in percentage terms in relation to the estimated number of beneficiaries expected to participate in FET programmes in 2020 on a full-time and part-time basis and through community education.

Chart 4.1 Estimated percentages of beneficiaries expected to participate in FET programmes in 2020 by provision type



Note: The data represents the estimated figures provided by FET providers for 2020.

Estimate of FET outputs for beneficiaries during 2020

Chart 4.2 presents a breakdown, in percentage terms, of estimated completers both full and partial and early leavers of total beneficiaries across all FET provision duration types. Data is also presented relating to the number of beneficiaries continuing their studies into next year. The data available indicates that for all provision, an average of:

- 51% of beneficiaries will be 'full completers'
- 11% of beneficiaries will be 'partial completers'
- 15% of beneficiaries will be 'early leavers'
- 23% of beneficiaries will not complete in 2020 and will continue their studies into 2021

Chart 4.2 Estimate of FET outputs for beneficiary completions/exits during 2020 by Provision Type

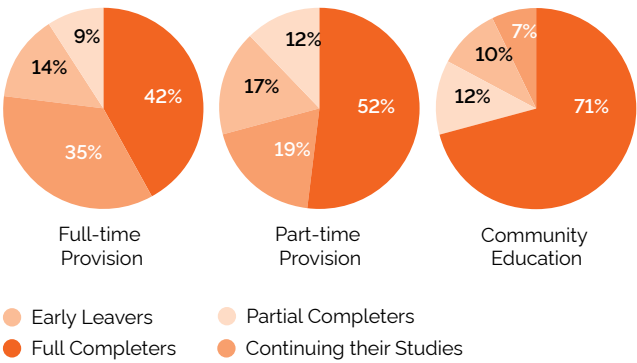


Chart 4.3 provides an estimate of beneficiaries completing courses with either an employment or progression outcome during 2020 across all FET provision types. The data indicates that the estimated outcomes for those completing FET courses during 2020 is for 49% to progress to other courses at the same or higher level, and 17% to enter employment.

Chart 4.3 Estimate of FET employment and progression outcomes for completers in 2020

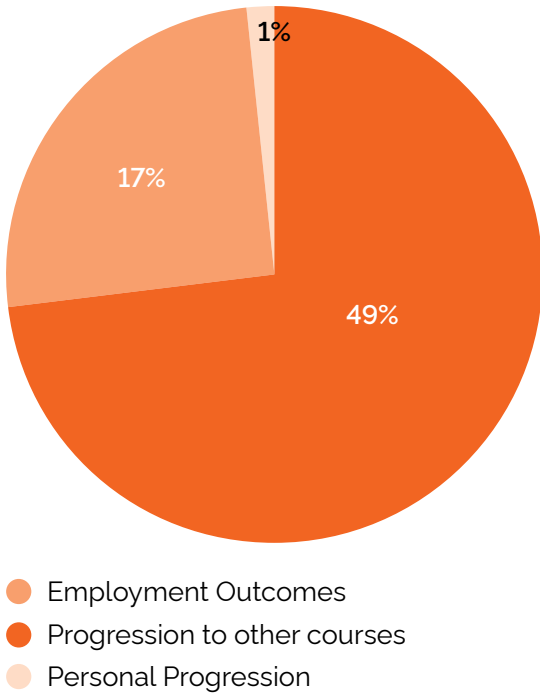
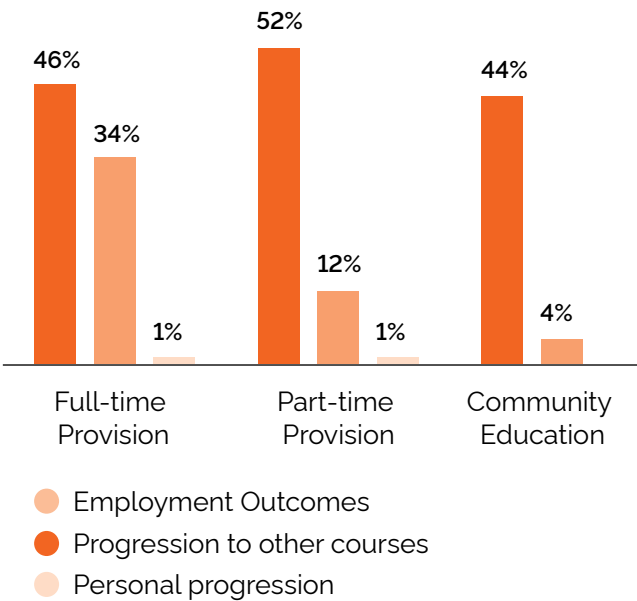


Chart 4.4 provides an estimate of outcomes in the context of full-time, part-time and community education provision in 2020 for beneficiaries:

- Gaining employment
- Progressing to further studies/learning
- Personal progression

Chart 4.4 **Estimate of outcomes for beneficiaries completing FET provision during 2020**



FET provision for literacy, numeracy, language and digital skills

The delivery and enhancement of provision for literacy, numeracy, language and digital skills in the FET sector will be driven by the new Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy 2020 – 2024 *Future FET: Transforming Learning*. This strategy builds on work undertaken in the previous FET Strategy which, *inter alia*, called for the encouragement, promotion and development of literacy and numeracy.

Notable areas for continued attention in 2020 will include:

- The annual literacy and numeracy awareness-raising campaign 'Take the First Step' which has run each year since 2016.
- Supporting ETBs in the use of:
 - Initial and Ongoing Assessment of Adult Literacy and Numeracy at NFQ levels 1-3: Guidelines Toolkit and Research Report
 - English language provision and language assessment for low-skilled and unemployed migrants Recommendations for good practice at NFQ levels 1-3 in ETBs
 - Guidelines on the Inclusion of Learners with Intellectual Disabilities in Adult Literacy Services
- Publication of:
 - Screening and Assessment of Literacy and Numeracy for FET programmes at NFQ levels 4, 5 and 6 Guidelines, Toolkit and Research Report
 - Initial and Ongoing Assessment of English Language Competency of Migrant Learners in Further Education and Training at NFQ Levels 1 to 3

- Good Practice Guidelines for Integrated and Standalone Numeracy Provision for Adults with Low Qualification Levels
- Enabling Intergenerational Learning: Background Report on Family Literacy Practices in Irish Education and Training Boards (ETBs)
- Family Literacy in ETBs: Good Practice Guidelines, Case Studies and Recommendations
- Case Studies and Research Report on the Inclusion of People with Intellectual Disabilities in Adult Literacy Services
- Development of:
 - Briefing papers relating to cross-cutting themes in the exploration of literacy, numeracy, language and digital skills
 - Position paper and theoretical framework on Access, Participation, Achievement and Progression in Further Education and Training

SOLAS will continue to work with our partners and stakeholders to encourage, develop and promote literacy, numeracy, language and digital literacy and will work with our partners to support the realisation of commitments emphasised in the FET Strategy 2020 - 2024.

Funding for literacy, numeracy, language and digital skills will be sustained 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.

FET Provision for the Long-Term Unemployed (LTU)

The number of unemployed continued to decrease in 2019 with a reduction of 18,300⁶ in the year to Quarter 4 of 2019.

The long-term unemployment rate decreased from 2.1% to 1.6% over the year to Quarter 4 of 2019. However, high levels of long-term unemployment persist⁷. It is estimated that just under 21% of starters on FET provision in 2020 will be long-term unemployed.

Table 4.7 provides estimates relating to planned starters reporting as long-term unemployed and learners with a disability that are expected to participate in FET provision in 2020. The overall planned starter numbers are also included in the table. The data is presented by programme category.

Refugee Resettlement Programme

The Refugee Resettlement Programme began following an announcement in July 2015 by the Tánaiste and Minister for Justice and Equality which confirmed that a total of 1,040 Syrian refugees would be selected for resettlement in Ireland. In December 2019, Ireland committed to supporting the relocation

⁶ CSO Labour Force Survey (LFS) Quarter 4 2019.
⁷ Long-term Unemployed accounted for 35% of total unemployment in Q4 2019.

of up to a further 2,900 refugees between 2020 and 2023 through a combination of resettlement and the new community sponsorship initiative. The Adult Refugee Resettlement Programme strives to effectively enable those with refugee status to integrate into Irish society through the provision of English language and orientation training. In 2020 SOLAS will provide funding of €2.57m to ETBs for the delivery of this programme.

Participation in the Programme is available for a period of up to 1 year, 20 hours per week. Adults are expected to attend classes for the duration of their orientation (8-10 weeks approx.). On relocation to their new homes, regardless of location, all adult refugees are provided with access to ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) training to enable them to achieve the levels of English fluency required to progress to further education or employment.

FET provision for people with a disability

SOLAS, through the SOLAS/ETB Strategic Performance Agreements & Planning Framework 2018 - 2020, and in conjunction with the Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection/Intreo, support the achievement of the goal of active inclusion as set out in the SOLAS FET Strategy 2014 - 2019. Fostering active inclusion will remain a central pillar of the next FET Strategy 2020 - 2024. In relation to disability, the National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017 - 2021 and the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015 - 2024 shape the actions taken by the FET sector. In 2019, as part of a series of reports focussing on priority cohorts in FET, SOLAS published the report "FET in Numbers 2018 - Learners with Disabilities" outlining Programme Learner Support System (PLSS) data in relation to the engagement of learners with disabilities with FET in 2018. Looking ahead, the availability of this data "year-on-year" will represent a key milestone in forming an evidence base on the engagement of people with a disability with FET and informing policy and practice in this regard.

The FET sector supports the active inclusion of learners with disabilities in the following ways:

- FET programmes are available to all learners, including those with a disability who meet the eligibility criteria and the guidelines provided for each FET programme
- Specific FET programmes are provided for persons with a disability, who require more intensive support, through Specialist Training Providers (STPs)
- Community Education, which assists learners with a disability to participate in FET provision by adapting course content, resources and teaching methodologies to suit their abilities.

In accordance with the relevant legislation, all FET providers offer reasonable accommodation to learners

with disabilities. The nature of those accommodations varies depending on the identified needs of individual learners. For those learners with disabilities on PLC programmes, funding for specific supports can be obtained via the "Fund for Students with Disabilities", which allocates funding to further and higher education colleges for the provision of services and supports to full-time students with disabilities. Responsibility for the administration of the further education element of this fund is planned to transfer from the Higher Education Authority to SOLAS in 2020.

As part of efforts to increase inclusion and the consistency of learner supports across FET, SOLAS, working with AHEAD, ETBI, Education and Training Boards (ETBs), and other stakeholders, has developed and published a Conceptual Framework of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) for the FET sector. UDL is a key concept for further enhancing inclusion across FET, and FET providers will be asked to consider the principles of UDL in the planning of their 2021 provision. Following the release of the Conceptual Framework, it is envisaged that a set of good practice UDL guidelines for FET will be developed in co-operation with the FET sector.

Estimate for specific target groups participating in FET provision in 2020

Table 4.7 details the estimated number of long-term unemployed beneficiaries and beneficiaries with a disability expected to start a FET programme in 2020. Table 4.7 is presented over 2 pages.

Table 4.7 **Estimates for specific target groups participating in FET provision in 2020**

Estimates of specific target groups participating in FET provision in 2020			
Projected Beneficiaries Starting Courses During 2020			
Programme	All Starters	Number for Long-term Unemployed persons	Number of persons with a disability
Full-time Provision			
2016+ Apprenticeships	988	16	6
Apprenticeship Phases 2/4/6	10,396		106
Apprenticeship Phase 7	2,157		32
Blended Training	279	24	8
Bridging and Foundation Training	452	224	20
Community Training Centres	1,547	251	74
Employment	366	183	18
Justice Workshops	118	52	12
Local Training Initiatives	1,851	926	111
PLC (pre-2019)	56	0	0
PLC - Employment Oriented	13,832	1,343	882
PLC - Pre-Apprenticeship	590	51	32
PLC - Progression Oriented	17,588	1,543	1,042
PLC - Not determined	2,028	363	134
Progression	43	9	4
Specialist Training Providers	2,032	631	1,381
Specific Skills Training	7,727	2,943	361
STA Route 2 - Enterprise	1,354	0	22
STA Route 3 - Regional & Sectoral	289	0	3
STA - Open Call (Special Initiatives)	0	0	0
Traineeship Training	3,495	1,007	141
Traineeship Employed	487	16	17
VTOS Core	4,768	2,452	481
Youthreach	4,515	122	221
Full-time Provision Total	76,958	12,156	5,108

Table 4.7 ctd

Estimates of specific target groups participating in FET provision in 2020			
Projected Beneficiaries Starting Courses During 2020			
Programme	All Starters	Number for Long-term Unemployed persons	Number of persons with a disability
Part-time Provision			
Adult Literacy	33,280	9,203	4,629
BTEI Groups	24,598	6,779	1,614
ESOL	15,525	4,704	684
Evening Training	13,837	3,624	626
FET Co-Operation Hours	17,515	3,654	1,476
ITABE	2,194	820	244
RPL	113	7	2
Refugee Resettlement	903	134	17
Skills for Work	4,589	310	164
STA Route 1 - Direct	3,112	14	62
Voluntary Literacy Tuition	857	343	93
Part-time Provision Total	116,523	29,591	9,611
Community Education Provision			
Community Education	45,163	8,210	7,348
Community Education Provision Total	45,163	8,210	7,348
VSCCS Provision			
VSCCS PLC - Employment Oriented	403	116	27
VSCCS PLC - Progression Oriented	755	108	72
VSCCS PLC - Not determined	96	13	7
VSCCS BTEI	452	120	48
VSCCS Provision Total	1,706	358	154
National Provision			
Online Learning (eCollege)	7,314	0	0
National Provision Total	7,314	0	0
Other Provision			
Irish Deaf Society (Adult Literacy)	479	168	240
Trinity Centre for People with Disabilities	20	6	20
NALA Write on (Adult Literacy)	1,200	36	240
Other Provision Total	1,699	210	500
All Provision Total	249,363	50,524	22,720

Full-time equivalence

The Full-Time Equivalency (FTE) measure provides a different lens to view planned provision. The planned beneficiary numbers for 2020 are 333,893 and the full-time equivalence for this beneficiary number is 115,056. The FTE measure takes account of the learner participation hours in 2020 for each course. Part-time provision on programmes such as Adult Literacy and Community Education have respectively planned

beneficiary numbers of 45,450 and 48,440, however when calculated the full-time equivalence for these programmes are 2,541 and 2,041 respectively. The full-time equivalence is based on the PLC norm of 735 tuition hours per annum. Table 4.8 sets out the calculated FTE for each programme category and skills cluster based on the beneficiary number and planning data provided.

Table 4.8 **Estimated beneficiary numbers full-time equivalence by skills cluster and programme category for 2020**

Estimated beneficiary numbers full-time equivalence by skills cluster and programme category for 2020					
Skills Cluster	Planned Beneficiary Number	FTE	Programme Category	Planned Beneficiary Number	FTE
Agriculture, Horticulture and Mariculture	3,064	1,361	2016+ Apprenticeship	1,434	1,436
Animal Science	2,586	1,622	Adult Literacy Groups	45,450	2,541
Arts & Crafts	7,461	4,151	Apprenticeship Phase 7	3,082	3,419
Built Environment	7,175	4,530	Apprenticeship Phases (2,4,6)	11,968	8,923
Business, Administration	22,463	10,592	Blended Training	488	335
Core ICT	11,935	5,323	Bridging & Foundation Training	550	222
Core Personal	98,596	17,440	BTEI Groups	34,777	4,722
Engineering	1,174	625	Community Education	48,440	2,041
Engineering (Electrical)	6,670	4,788	Community Training Centres	2,823	4,532
Engineering (IT)	267	179	Employment	366	252
Engineering (Mechanical)	4,283	2,318	ESOL	20,317	1,793
Engineering (Transport)	3,902	3,097	Evening Training	14,528	947
Entrepreneurship	726	122	FET Co-Operation Hours	22,975	5,803
Financial Services	1,586	907	ITABE	2,264	223
Food and Beverage	3,660	2,192	Justice Workshop	206	327
General Learning	70,828	12,441	Local Training Initiatives	3,183	3,166
Hairdressing, Beauty and Complementary Therapies	7,142	4,407	PLC	149	90
Health, Family other Social Services	38,460	14,137	PLC - Employment Oriented	24,195	13,586
Information Technology	8,150	5,871	PLC - Not determined	4,720	2,692
Language	0	0	PLC - Pre-Apprenticeship	775	578
Management	3,539	1,476	PLC - Progression Oriented	32,494	18,925
Manufacturing	1,335	724	Progression	63	39
Media Graphics Communications	7,031	4,799	Refugee Resettlement	1,162	325
Natural Resources	16	2	RPL	125	16
Research and Education-Training	947	197	Skills for Work	5,346	340
Sales & Marketing	4,479	2,963	Specialist Training Providers	3,541	6,202
Science and Technology	1,724	971	Specific Skills Training	9,208	3,892
Security, Guarding & Emergency Services	1,423	361	STA Route 1 – Direct	3,438	292
Skills Sampling	1,049	426	STA Route 2 - Enterprise	1,535	154
Sport and Leisure	5,053	3,474	STA Route 3 - Regional	335	24
Tourism	3,054	1,650	Traineeship Employed	706	398
Transport, Distribution & Logistics	2,915	1,095	Traineeship Training	5,595	5,408
Web Development & Design	1,200	825	Voluntary Literacy Contribution	1,016	126
			VTOS Core	7,568	5,104
			Youthreach	7,400	6,566
			On-Line Learning (eCollege)	11,671	9,627
Total for all Skills Clusters	333,893	115,066	Total for all Programmes	333,893	115,066

Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools (VSCCS)

Grant allocations will be provided to nine Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools (VSCCS) in 2020. The grant allocations will be used for the purpose of provision of the Back to Education Initiative (BTEI). Table 4.9 outlines the VSCCS that will be in receipt of grant allocations for the provision of BTEI during 2020.

Table 4.9 **BTEI grant allocations for Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools for 2020**

2020 BTEI Grants to Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools For 2020	
VSCCS School/College	Grant Allocation 2020
Donahies Community School, Streamville Road, Dublin 13	€58,206
Gorey Community School, Gorey, Co. Wexford	€23,889
Mary Immaculate Secondary School, Lisdoonvarna, Co. Clare	€58,075
Nagle Rice Secondary School, Doneraile, Co. Cork	€19,574
North Presentation Secondary School, Farranree, Co. Cork	€76,235
Sancta Maria College, Louisburgh, Co. Mayo	€14,423
Scoil Mhuire, Ennistymon, Co. Clare	€13,908
St Joseph's Secondary School, Spanish Point, Co. Clare	€45,329
St Michaels, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon	€30,906
Total	€340,545

Summary of Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools PLC approved places

The Department of Education and Skills will continue to fund the PLC (teacher pay and student capitation) for the VSCCS (circa €3.86m in 2020). Details of the schools and colleges that will receive grant allocations through the DES Post-Primary Payment Section in 2020 is set out in Appendix 3. SOLAS will have responsibility for Enhanced Capitation and Locally Devised Assessments (LDAs) payments for VSCCS. Table 4.10 summarises the approved PLC places for 2020 for VSCCS.

Table 4.10 **Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools 2020 Approved PLC places**

Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools 2020 Approved PLC Places	
Approved PLC Places	1,346

Table 4.11 sets out the detail of grants in respect of additional provision, which are made to the Irish Deaf Society, National Adult Literacy Agency, Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities and Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools (VSCCS). Detail of this provision is also included in Tables 4.4 to 4.6 and in Table 4.9 relating to VSCCS BTEI grants. Included in this table are 2020 grant details to Fast Track into Technology and Retail Ireland Skillnet (IBEC) for additional provision as 2016+ Apprenticeship collaborating providers.

Table 4.11 **Other FET providers grant for additional provision in 2020**

Other FET Providers Grant for additional provision in 2020		
Additional FET Provision	Programme	2020 Grant Allocation
Irish Deaf Society	Literacy	€452,461
National Adult Literacy Association (NALA) ¹ 'Write On' Provision	Literacy	€272,396
Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities ¹	Progression	€160,000
Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools – BTEI ²	BTEI	€340,545
Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools Profiled for PLC - Not Allocated: Enhanced Capitation and LDAs (Locally Devised Assessments)	PLC	€329,664
Other FET Provision Supports		
National Adult Literacy Association (NALA) 'Write On' Development	Literacy	€58,059
FET Provision Collaborating providers		
Fast Track into Technology (FIT) 2016+ Apprenticeship on the Job Assessments	2016+ Apprenticeship	€121,000
Retail Ireland Skillnet (IBEC)	2016+ Apprenticeship	€583,848
Total		€2,317,973

1 Provision detail included in tables 4.4 to 4.6
2 Detail of allocations included in table 4.9

2019 Further Education and Training provision reported outturn

In 2019, the SOLAS funded FET provision set out to cater for 329,293 beneficiaries. The 2019 plan for full-time programmes, when compared to the reported

outturn, shows that 90% of the planned beneficiary numbers were attained, whereas the outturn for part-time shows that the plan was exceeded by over 6%. Community education shows that 99% of the planned numbers were achieved. In 2019 there were 327,471 reported beneficiaries that availed of FET, of which 307,991 availed of FET provision through ETBs. Approaching 215,000 beneficiaries completed courses in 2019 of which almost 207,000 completed courses

delivered through ETBs. Comparative analysis of the 2019 reported outturn compared to 2019 revised mid-year forecasted outturn is set out in Table 4.13.

Table 4.12 provides an overview of planned starters, completions and beneficiaries on FET full-time, part-time and community education provision for 2019 planned provision, compared with the reported outturn for 2019.

Table 4.12 **2019 FET provision reported outturn compared to 2019 planned provision**

2019 FET provision reported outturn compared to 2019 planned provision									
Summary	Planned inputs			Reported inputs			Analysis of 2019 reported outturn v plan		
Provision Type	Starters During 2019	Completers During 2019	Total Planned Beneficiaries for 2019	Starters in Year 2019	All Completers	Total Reported Beneficiaries for 2019	Reported Starters V 2019 Plan	Reported Completers V 2019 Plan	Reported Beneficiaries V 2019 Plan
Full-time Provision	77,187	64,653	122,271	67,151	57,796	109,070	87%	89%	89%
Part-time Provision	121,559	98,300	155,865	129,704	110,122	166,851	107%	112%	107%
Community Education	49,109	42,264	51,157	49,932	46,765	51,550	102%	111%	101%
Total	247,855	205,217	329,293	246,787	214,683	327,471	100%	105%	99%

2019 FET provision reported outturn versus revised mid-year forecasted outturn

The FET planning process includes a mid-year review by FET providers and SOLAS, which can result in

revisions to planned activity. The revised forecasted outturn is subject to the Board of SOLAS approval. Table 4.13 provides analysis of the mid-year revised forecasted outturn for FET provision against the 2019 FET reported outturn.

Table 4.13 **FET Provision reported outturn compared to revised outturn at mid-year for 2019**

FET provision reported outturn compared to the revised outturn at mid-year for 2019					
Summary	Revised mid-year plan for 2019		Reported outturn for 2019		Analysis
Programme	Revised Planned Starters	Total Revised Planned Beneficiaries	Reported Starters	Total Reported Beneficiaries	Beneficiary Variance: Reported Outturn V Revised Planned Outturn
Full-time FET Provision	73,390	115,309	67,151	109,070	-6,239
Part-time FET Provision	115,147	152,294	129,704	166,851	14,557
Community Education	47,584	49,202	49,932	51,550	2,348
Total all FET provision	236,121	316,805	246,787	327,471	10,666

SOLAS grant allocations to agencies and bodies in the FET sector

A portion of the 2020 funding that SOLAS receives from the Department of Education and Skills (DES) is allocated to a number of agencies and bodies that support and provide services to the FET sector.

SOLAS developed the *Overarching Parameters and Guidelines Document for 2020 Grant Allocations by SOLAS to Agencies in the FET Sector* to support the funding process. The document was issued to a range of Agencies whose organisational objectives are closely

aligned to the FET Strategy 2014-2019. The Agencies were asked to outline their proposed activities for 2020 with reference to the FET Strategy 2014-2019, and to list the expected outcomes and the grant required. The guideline document sets out the protocols and procedures for grant allocations in 2020.

SOLAS evaluated the submissions received and the grants requested from agencies and bodies. Grants were approved based on the alignment of planned activities to the overall FET Strategy details of which are set out in the following series of tables 4.14 to 4.22.

FET - Support Organisations

Table 4.14 provides an outline of the key activities planned for 2020 and the grant allocation for the

organisation listed in the table; AHEAD, Aontas, Dyslexia Association of Ireland, Fast Track into Technology (FIT), National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE) and National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA).

Table 4.14 **Grant allocations to organisations that provide support within FET sector**

Grant allocations to organisations that provide support within the FET sector		
Organisation	Key Activities Planned for 2020	2020 Grant Allocation
AHEAD	Supporting the implementation of guidelines on Universal Design for Learning within the FET Sector.	€136,000
AONTAS	Extending advocacy and representation for learners across the FET sector. Co-ordinating and supporting national and European projects. Promoting the value and benefits of adult learning. Providing an information and referral service to adult learners.	€1,018,068
	The National Further Education and Training Learner Forum (NFLF) is a large-scale qualitative project that is designed to document learner views on current FET services.	€334,608
Dyslexia Association of Ireland	Providing specialist support to learners with dyslexia to improve access to and opportunities in further education and employment. Providing information and advice to learners, educators, employers and communities.	€130,500
Fast Track into Technology (FIT) (core grant)	Developing market orientated curricula in response to the needs of client groups and industry. Providing information and guidance for marginalised job seekers. Supporting programme participants through preparation for employment, placement opportunities and supporting progression into further education and training. Supporting local organisations within disadvantaged communities through "Train the Trainer" and e-inclusion programmes. Carrying out research to inform ICT skills development policy and practice.	€1,127,368
National Centre for Guidance in Education	Promoting the implementation of best practice in guidance counselling in formal and non-formal FET settings. Advising on policy and strategies for the promotion of a continuum of guidance in the context of lifelong learning. Providing advice, support and resources for guidance counselling in FET. Advising on initial guidance counselling education and training and providing continuing professional development for practitioners. Providing advice on guidance counselling provision and practice through the Euro Guidance Centre.	€278,000
National Adult Literacy Agency	Leading innovation in adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills development. Advocating for further investment in literacy skills.	€1,619,545
	Building awareness of the importance of literacy in society.	€200,000
	Support the implementation of the findings from 'Family Literacy' research. Guidelines on 'Inclusion of People with Intellectual Disabilities in Adult Literacy Service' research.	€150,000
Total		€4,994,089

FET – Staff Representative Organisations (ETBI Administered)

Since 2017, to support the critical contribution of FET Professional Associations within the ETB sector and as part of the implementation of the FET Strategy, funding for FET Professional Associations has been channelled through ETBI. This approach reflects the changing structures, new governance requirements and emerging demands on the FET sector. Table 4.15 provides an overview, of the grant allocation

to FET Staff Representative associations and their activities. This grant is administered by ETBI to the following associations; Adult Education Guidance Association of Ireland (AEGAI), Adult Education Officers Association, Adult Literacy Organisers Association (ALOA), Community Education Facilitators Association, National Association of VTOS Coordinators and National Association of Youthreach Coordinators.

Table 4.15 Grant allocations to FET staff representative organisations (ETBI administered)

Grant allocations to FET staff representative organisations (ETBI administered)	
Association	Illustration of key activities planned for 2020
Adult Education Guidance Association of Ireland (AEGAI)	Representing the views of members and working with relevant stakeholders in the implementation of a FET guidance service as outlined in the FET Guidance Strategy.
Adult Education Officers' Association	Providing continuous professional development for members and representing their views at a national level.
Adult Literacy Organisers Association (ALOA)	Assisting members to develop their professional competencies in adult literacy and sharing knowledge and experience through networking.
Community Education Facilitators Association	Promoting community education and supporting members through CPD and networking activities.
National Association of VTOS Coordinators	Raising awareness of the developmental needs of adult learners and sharing best practice among coordinators.
National Association of Youthreach Coordinators	Raising the profile of Youthreach through its website, publications and social media.
Total Grant amount	€60,400

FET staff representative organisations (SOLAS administered)

SOLAS will continue to administer FET grants to the FET Staff Representative Association detailed in table 4.16 the National Association of Adult and Community Education.

Table 4.16 Grant allocations to FET staff representative organisations (SOLAS administered)

Grant allocations to FET staff representative association (SOLAS administered)		
Association	Key Activities Planned for 2020	2020 Grant Allocation
National Association of Adult and Community Education	Providing continuing professional development, networking opportunities and other support services for members. Increasing awareness of access to, and participation in, Adult Education programmes.	€21,000
Total		€21,000

FET - Lifelong learning opportunities

Table 4.17 provides an overview of the key activities planned for 2020 and the grant allocation for the organisations listed in the table; Age Action Ireland, An Cosán, Irish Countrywomen's Association, The People's College and Third Age.

Table 4.17 Grant allocations to organisations supporting lifelong learning opportunities within the FET sector

Grant allocations to FET staff representative association (SOLAS administered)		
Association	Key Activities Planned for 2020	2020 Grant Allocation
Age Action Ireland	Promoting the active involvement of older people in lifelong learning through the development of personal, social and related skills in areas ranging from computer training classes to physical activity programmes. Supporting the nationwide U3A network to signpost members to the literacy, IT and exercise programmes run by Age Action which facilitate older people to remain engaged with and contribute to their own community.	€66,500
An Cosán	Rolling out a Digital Pathways learning project aimed at decreasing the individual digital divide for low skilled learners and workers at risk of displacement due to technological advances.	€299,596
Irish Countrywomen's Association	Providing members and non-members with support, personal development, education and life-long learning opportunities.	€21,000
The People's College	Supporting the provision of lifelong learning to adults through a wide range of courses.	€112,000

Grant allocations to FET staff representative association (SOLAS administered)		
Association	Key Activities Planned for 2020	2020 Grant Allocation
Third Age	Providing English language support to new migrants, refugees and those in direct provision using trained tutors in a student centred, welcoming and inclusive manner, involving older volunteers and recognising their skills, expertise and contribution to the community.	€147,775
Total		€646,871

FET – Professional development provision

The Waterford Institute of Technology/NALA Accreditation Project provides higher education qualifications to those working in the national adult literacy service, the detail is set out in Table 4.18.

Table 4.18 Grant allocations for continuous professional development provision

Grant allocations to FET staff representative association (SOLAS administered)		
Association	Key Activities Planned for 2020	2020 Grant Allocation
Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT/NALA Project)	Designing and delivering nationally recognised qualifications that offer flexible models of study, progression routes and innovative modes of delivery for adult and further education practitioners with a focus on adult literacy and numeracy support.	€525,900
Total		€525,900

EU and specific projects details

The EU and specific projects assist adults, practitioners, policy makers and others to access information about the FET sector. Table 4.19 provides details of the key activities planned for 2020 and the grant allocation for the organisations listed in the table; Irish Association of Community Training Organisations (IACTO), Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed (INOU) and CSO PIAAC.

Table 4.19 Grant allocations for EU and specific projects

Grant allocations for EU and specific projects		
Organisation	Overview of Activity /Project	2020 Grant Allocation
Irish Association of Community Training Organisations	Providing advice and support to Community Training Centre (CTC) Boards of Management in their employer function. Representing CTC Boards in collective negotiations. Providing management services to promote and enhance the delivery of quality training outcomes.	€162,000
Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed (INOU)	Producing and distributing the publication 'Working for Work' which publicises and promotes access to and availability of initiatives and supports for jobseekers and others distant from the labour market. Information regarding practical supports detailed in Working for Work assists and empowers jobseekers to positively engage with and access education, training and re-skilling opportunities to support their return to employment.	€20,000
CSO PIAAC	Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). (This is a new campaign which will involve the survey stage in 2020).	€1,100,000
Total		€1,282,000

Agency/Body - FET support projects

Table 4.20 provides details of the organisations and activity/projects planned for 2020 and the grant allocation to Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) and the Further Education Support Unit (FESU).

Table 4.20 Grant allocations for Organisations/FET support projects

Grant allocations for organisation/FET support projects			
Organisation	Overview of Activity/Project		2020 Grant Allocation
Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI)	National representative body for the 16 Education and Training Boards. ETBI provide collective representation, training and a range of additional FET related supports to ETBs.		€879,122
	Breakdown of allocation:		ETBI have a cash balance from 2019 with the difference of €879,122 coming from 2020 funding.
	FET Social inclusion and equity implementation - support personnel	€230,000	
	FET Quality Assurance implementation - support personnel	€339,000	
	FET Work-based learning implementation - support personnel	€339,000	
	FET Strategy and policy implementation (General support)	€109,655	
	FET ICT Systems and digital librarian	€272,900	
	Professional Associations (see table 4.15)	€60,400	
Further Education Support Unit (FESU) Formerly known as the Joint Further Education Representative Group (JFERG)	Supporting the Further Education Support Unit for Voluntary Secondary and Community Comprehensive Schools engaged in FET. The service ensures that provision in these schools aligns with the FET Strategy 2014-2019 with particular reference to ensuring active collaboration with SOLAS and other FET providers in each area to minimise duplication of services and to align courses with identified skill needs.		€172,182
Total			€1,051,304

Non-ETB organisations – 2016+ Apprenticeship consortia, lead/co-ordinating provider

Table 4.21 outlines the grant allocation in 2020 to non-ETB organisations supporting 2016+

Apprenticeship delivery through a consortium or as a lead/co-ordinating provider. Grant allocation details to the organisations are listed in the table; Accounting Technicians Ireland (ATI), Fast Track into Technology (FIT) and Retail Ireland Skillnet.

Table 4.21 Grant allocations for 2016+ Apprenticeship consortia, lead/co-ordinating non-ETB providers

Grant allocations for 2016+ apprenticeship consortia, lead/coordinating non-ETB providers	
Organisation	2020 Grant Allocation
ATI (Accounting Technicians Ireland)	€714,000
FIT (Fast Track into Technology)	€634,500
Retail Ireland Skillnet	€258,865
Total	€1,607,365

Summary of specific grant allocations for 2020

Set out in table 4.22 is a summary of specific grant allocations for 2020 by classification of the grants.

Table 4.22 Summary 2020 FET specific Grant allocations

Summary of proposed 2020 FET Specific Grants	
FET Specific Grants	2020 Grant Allocation
2016+ Apprenticeships (Collaborating Providers) (see table 4.11)	€704,848
Other FET Provision Supports (see table 4.11)	€58,059
Additional FET Provision (see table 4.11)	€1,555,066
FET Support Organisations (see table 4.14)	€4,994,089
FET Staff Representative Associations (ETBI administered) (see table 4.15)	€60,400
FET Staff Representative Associations (SOLAS administered) (see table 4.16)	€21,000
FET Lifelong Learning Opportunities (see table 4.17)	€646,871
FET CPD Provision (see table 4.18)	€525,900
EU and Specific Projects (see table 4.19)	€1,282,000
Organisation - FET Support Projects (see table 4.20)	€1,051,304
2016+ Apprenticeships (Consortia, Lead/Coordinating Provider) (see table 4.21)	€1,607,365
Total	€12,506,902

Successive FET Strategies have highlighted the importance for stakeholders to collaborate with employers to identify short to medium term skill needs that can be addressed through FET provision.

Section 5

FET Provision Supporting Skills for the Economy and Employment

Stakeholder consultation and liaison at national and local level is considered an essential component of the FET planning process.

It is therefore crucial that when planning FET provision, SOLAS and FET providers are fully aware of:

- the needs of their stakeholders
- reductions or increases in unemployment at local and national level
- changes in the needs of enterprise, when planning FET provision.

Successive FET Strategies have also highlighted the importance for stakeholders to collaborate with employers to identify short to medium term skill needs that can be addressed through FET provision. Additionally, FET provision is also guided and informed by the following national and EU policy initiatives, strategies and circulars:

National Policies and Strategies - Education and Employment

- SOLAS Overarching Planning and Funding Parameters and Requirements for FET Provision
- EGFSN Addressing the Skills Needs Arising from the Potential Trade Implications of Brexit
- Action Plan for Jobless Households
- National Skills Strategy 2015 - 2025: Ireland's Future
- Pathways to Work 2016 - 2020
- Strategy for Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) in FET 2016 - 2019
- EGFSN High Level ICT Demand Forecast 2017 - 2022
- The FET Professional Development Strategy 2017 - 2019
- Action Plan for Jobs 2018
- Action Plan for Education 2019
- FET Policy Framework for Skills Development of People in Employment 2018 - 2021

National Policies and Strategies - Active Inclusion

- National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017 - 2021
- Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015 - 2024
- Social Inclusion - National Action Plan
- National Positive Ageing Strategy
- National Youth Strategy 2015 - 2020
- National Strategy for Women and Girls 2017 - 2020
- National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017 - 2021, including the *Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion*

- Migrant Integration Strategy
- Carers' Strategy
- EGFSN Monitoring Ireland's Skills Supply, Trends in Education and Training Outputs (June 2019)
- EGFSN Vacancy Overview 2018 (June 2019)

Skills for the economy and labour market

skills clusters

FET provision supports business sectors by providing a wide range of programmes. All programmes that are provided by FET providers are tracked within PLSS and mapped to a skills cluster using Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes. There is a total of 33 skills clusters, 28 of which are linked to the Labour Market. The remaining five are linked to transversal skills and these clusters are general and personal in direction. This classification system enables the mapping of each scheduled course against a particular programme to be categorised by a skills cluster. The breakdown of projected 2020 beneficiaries of FET provision between labour market and transversal skills is 45% and 55% respectively. This compares to 46% labour market skills and 54% transversal skills focus in the 2019 plan. The number of beneficiaries in the total labour market clusters is broadly similar to last year's plan, while there is an increase of approximately 5,000 beneficiaries projected for total transversal skills clusters.

Table 5.1 provides information on the estimated number of beneficiaries both already enrolled and due to start in 2020 by skills cluster, and the percentage proportion of beneficiaries by skills cluster. The table also provides an analysis of the changes in skills cluster participation from the 2019 reported outturn compared to 2020 plan. The following commentary concentrates on some of the labour market clusters where the most significant of the changes referred to above have occurred. It also provides observations on how these changes align to the findings of the National Skills Bulletin 2019⁸.

Information Technology

The Information Technology skills cluster makes up approximately 5% of the overall planned beneficiary count for labour market skills clusters for 2020. The projected numbers in this cluster show an increase of 8% in beneficiary numbers from the 2019 reported outturn.

The National Skills Bulletin⁹ highlights the continued growth in this area with overall employment

⁸ SOLAS (November 2019). National Skills Bulletin
⁹ Ibid., P.84.

representing 3.7% of the national workforce. Information Technology skills are in demand across many sectors, skills sets are continually evolving and competition for these skills continues to result in shortages. Provision in this area provides skills relating to several Information Technology roles including Support, Software and Network functions.

Engineering

There are five Engineering clusters in the skills cluster categories: Engineering, Engineering (Electrical), Engineering (IT), Engineering (Mechanical) and Engineering (Transport). 11% of the total projected beneficiaries relating to labour market focused skills clusters is planned to be offered across these five engineering clusters, with an increase of over 1,400 beneficiaries from last year’s reported outturn.

As in 2019, the largest proportion continue to be in the areas of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering with 69% of projected Engineering beneficiaries for 2020 spanning these two skills clusters. In the case of Engineering (Electrical), the projected number of beneficiaries is almost entirely driven by participation in the Apprenticeship programme (over 90% of beneficiaries in this cluster). The National Skills Bulletin¹⁰ has identified significant employment opportunities in the area of electricians and electronic trades and this is reflected in the increase in apprentices in this cluster.

The planned beneficiary count for the Engineering (Mechanical) skills cluster also has a significant Apprenticeship element (over 40%). However, the remainder of courses making up this cluster, while also tending to be predominately craft focused, are targeted at unemployed jobseekers and the upskilling of existing employees.

Built Environment

The Built Environment cluster represents a significant focus with 5% of total labour market focused cluster beneficiaries participating in this area. This represents a 13% increase when compared to the 2019 outturn.

In recent years, the construction sector has grown considerably with most of the growth in the commercial sector as cited by the National Skills Bulletin¹¹. It also recognises shortages in on-site trades, along with off-site occupations.

Apprenticeship is again a considerable driver here with approximately in excess of 50% of the projected beneficiaries in 2020 participating in Apprenticeship programmes. The balance of provision in this sector is mainly targeted at jobseekers and offers an extensive and diverse suite of courses for learners seeking employment in both the commercial and residential sectors.

Health, Family other Social Services

This cluster continues to contribute the largest number of beneficiaries to the overall labour market cluster total. Approximately 25% of the total labour market focused cluster beneficiaries are participating on courses in this area with a projected increase of 5% beneficiaries planned for 2020 in comparison with the 2019 reported outturn.

According to the National Skills Bulletin¹², the demand for care workers will continue to grow as our population ages, and there is a churn element that is constant in these caring professions. The Bulletin also cites changing demographics which may influence the numbers of children in a childcare setting, and it expects that Government commitments to improving the quality of childcare will off-set this decline.

Provision in this area is largely centred on this demand for healthcare and childcare skills. Full-time FET provision in this cluster is chiefly delivered through the PLC Programme while part-time provision is mainly focused on the BTEI Programme. Together, these two programmes account for over 75% of planned provision for 2020 in this area.

Hairdressing, Beauty and Complementary Therapies

Planned participation in the Hairdressing, Beauty and Complementary Therapies cluster shows an 11% increase when compared to the 2019 reported outturn.

While the National Skills Bulletin¹³ does not cite skills shortages in this area, it does observe that employment growth is above the national average and that job churn is also occurring in this sector. PLC options are by far the biggest contributor, beneficiary wise, to this cluster with approximately 70% of the total planned for 2020.

Business Administration

Projected beneficiary numbers in the Business Administration skills cluster predict an increase of 4% in 2020 compared to the 2019 reported outturn. Overall, the Business Administration cluster represents 15% of the total beneficiaries planned for 2020 in labour market skills clusters.

Skills shortages in the general administrative area are not identified in the National Skills Bulletin¹⁴, however, as in previous clusters, it observes a significant churn factor. It also predicts that job opportunities will continue to arise here due to retirements, given the size of the sector. Furthermore, the Bulletin¹⁵ cites significant recent job hires in the financial administration area.

The FET sector delivers a broad suite of programmes in this cluster including general administration, secretarial, office skills and accounts/payroll courses.

Table 5.1 FET planned provision for 2020 by skills cluster

Further Education and Training Planned Provision For 2020 by skills cluster						
All providers	Projected Inputs			Analysls		
Skills Cluster	Beneficiaries Enrolled/ Started as @ 1st January 2020	Beneficiaries Startling Courses during 2020	Total Number of Beneficiaries of FET Provision during 2020	Percentage Proportion of 2020 Projected Beneficiaries by Skills Cluster Focus	Percentage Proportion of Beneficiaries Projected to Complete Courses In 2020 by Skills Cluster	Percentage Change In 2020 Projected Beneficiaries Compared to 2019 Reported Outturn
Agriculture, Horticulture and Mariculture	907	2,157	3,064	2%	57%	-3%
Animal Science	1,082	1,504	2,586	2%	41%	7%
Arts & Crafts	3,100	4,361	7,461	5%	45%	0%
Built Environment	1,264	5,911	7,175	5%	66%	13%
Business, Administration	7,629	14,834	22,463	15%	52%	4%
Engineering	443	731	1,174	1%	45%	6%
Engineering (Electrical)	1,068	5,602	6,670	4%	75%	12%
Engineering (IT)	69	198	267	0%	53%	12%
Engineering (Mechanical)	517	3,766	4,283	3%	73%	1%
Engineering (Transport)	820	3,082	3,902	3%	64%	12%
Entrepreneurship	65	661	726	0%	78%	-6%
Financial Services	728	858	1,586	1%	53%	-83%
Food and Beverage	997	2,663	3,660	2%	58%	2%
Hairdressing, Beauty and Complementary Therapies	2,786	4,356	7,142	5%	47%	11%
Health, Family other Social Services	12,903	25,557	38,460	25%	57%	5%
Information Technology	2,797	5,353	8,150	5%	47%	8%
Management	975	2,564	3,539	2%	62%	1%
Manufacturing	349	986	1,335	1%	64%	-4%
Media Graphics Communications	2,798	4,233	7,031	5%	45%	9%
Natural Resources	0	16	16	0%	88%	100%
Research and Education-Training	117	830	947	1%	74%	3%
Sales & Marketing	1,465	3,014	4,479	3%	47%	15%
Science and Technology	692	1,032	1,724	1%	40%	19%
Security, Guarding & Emergency Services	202	1,221	1,423	1%	67%	-7%
Sport and Leisure	2,140	2,913	5,053	3%	45%	9%
Tourism	1,182	1,872	3,054	2%	47%	10%
Transport, Distribution & Logistics	425	2,490	2,915	2%	68%	2%
Web Development & Design	417	783	1,200	1%	48%	1%
Total Labour Market Skills Focus	47,937	103,548	151,485			5%

10 Ibid., P99.
11 Ibid., P96-97.

12 Ibid., P98-99.
13 Ibid., P106.
14 Ibid., P108.
15 Ibid., P93.

Further Education and Training Planned Provision For 2020 by skills cluster						
All providers	Projected Inputs			Analysls		
Skills Cluster	Beneficiaries Enrolled/ Started as @ 1st January 2020	Beneficiaries Startling Courses during 2020	Total Number of Beneficiaries of FET Provision during 2020	Percentage Proportion of 2020 Projected Beneficiaries by Skills Cluster Focus	Percentage Proportion of Beneficiaries Projected to Complete Courses In 2020 by Skills Cluster	Percentage Change In 2020 Projected Beneficiaries Compared to 2019 Reported Outturn
Core ICT	3,138	8,797	11,935	7%	58%	14%
Core Personal	23,415	75,181	98,596	54%	64%	1%
General Learning	9,882	60,946	70,828	39%	74%	-5%
Language	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%
Skills Sampling	158	891	1,049	1%	73%	-58%
Total Transversal Skills Focus	36,593	145,815	182,408			-1%
Total All Skills Clusters	84,530	249,363	333,893			2%

Course innovation and expanded delivery in 2020

In addition to the skills cluster analysis, the 2020 funding allocations requests process sought information from ETBs in relation to FET plans for new innovative developments that reflect stakeholder consultation at a local level. Set out below are instances of new and innovative programmes being developed in collaboration with stakeholders, events where infrastructural capacity to support business is being increased and occasions where delivery mechanisms are being adapted to maximise support for the economy and employment during the pandemic.

Cavan and Monaghan ETB

CMETB has partnered with local company Entekra to upgrade the Level 5 Architectural Technology (CAD) traineeship in Monaghan Institute to a Level 6 award in Architectural Technology and Computer Aided Design. This has been a hugely successful initiative with 8-10 positions offered to the first intake, who complete in June 2020, by the partner company. This Traineeship is scheduled to run again in September 2020, adhering to the Government restrictions and COVID-19 prevention measures, and will include a blend of classroom, work placement and online learning.

City of Dublin ETB

Colaiste Dhulaigh will offer a Pathways to Apprenticeship programme starting in the second half of 2020 which is called 'Neurodiversity access to IT' and targets students on the ASD spectrum who may wish to progress to IT based apprenticeships and other IT employment opportunities. The college will work in partnership with a local social enterprise called 'Not so Different' in supporting the students on this programme in work-based settings.

Cork ETB

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, CETB are adapting their plans to deliver training to the care sector. The original plan to deliver a pilot programme

to train carers through classroom and workplace learning is being temporarily postponed, however, the programme is being adjusted to provide for online delivery through a blended approach. As part of this adjustment, the Quality Assurance department at Cork ETB is designing new assessments, appropriate to online/blended delivery, for both Infection Prevention and Disease Control, and Certified Health Related Cleaning Skills. These new assessments will facilitate delivery online with tutor support, as well as in a virtual classroom setting. This is an excellent example of the flexibility that exists within the sector to reallocate resources and delivery mechanisms in response to rapidly changing circumstances.

Donegal ETB

In collaboration with Údarás na Gaeltachta and Pramerica, Donegal ETB are delivering a Traineeship in Automated Software Testing within the GTeic Centre in Gaoth Dobhair. The purpose of this Traineeship is to provide suitably skilled staff for the recently opened Pramerica Outreach Centre in Gaoth Dobhair, thus enabling people to train and work locally. Following on from this programme, a request was submitted to upskill a cohort of current employees within Pramerica from Manual to Automated Software Testers. A programme is currently being developed under the Skills to Advance initiative which, due to working restrictions as a result of COVID-19, will be delivered remotely.

Dublin and Dún Laoghaire ETB

A new PLC course leading to a Level 5 award in Sustainable Applied Ecology will be offered by DDLETB. The focus of this award is to analyse, quantify and report on the physical and biological diversity of an eco-system in order to provide sustainable goals and changes. It expands existing provision in sustainability and offers a new progression-focused provision to meet the changing requirements of both the skills cluster and higher educational institutes.

Galway and Roscommon ETB

In 2020 GRETB will deliver the AQUAFARM Project with funding provided through the Innovation and Collaboration Fund Skills to Advance. This project will develop a range of TEL resources to be used to upskill people working in the Aquaculture Industry and to support the delivery of QQI accredited programmes in Aquaculture. The Aquaculture Award itself was designed in collaboration with BIM and The Marine Institute. The resources will include Game Based Applications and a Simulated Fish Farm. The initiative is very industry focused and provides excellent up-to-date information and skills to all of those participating.

Kerry ETB

To ensure the relevance of training to apprentices, Kerry ETB has identified a need to incorporate training in electric vehicle repair and maintenance for all apprentices. As Ireland moves towards a greener economy, such training will prove invaluable to apprentices. The facility will also allow for existing tradespersons to upskill to become proficient in the maintenance and repair of electric vehicles. Kerry ETB will be extending the existing garage space to allow for this new training space. Electric vehicle charging points will also be installed, allowing for apprentices to receive the full breadth of training. Such installation will also prove valuable to Electrical Apprentices.

Kildare and Wicklow ETB

KWETB have developed the Professional Artisan Bakery Traineeship in response to industry needs. The absence of a Bakery Apprenticeship has seen the bakery industry struggle to recruit and retain staff, in particular for smaller artisan bakers. Scheduled for September, the programme has been designed to incorporate transversal skills that are common across multiple sectors, including functional maths, literacy and workplace skills and attitudes. The programme responds to the skills gaps identified within the artisan bakery industry and enjoys the support of the Bretzel Bakery, drawing on their vast knowledge and two production units where work experience and classroom elements will be hosted.

Kilkenny and Carlow ETB

KCETB have partnered with other ETBs to launch Global Hospitality Certification by City and Guilds. The Certification sets a global benchmark for job roles across culinary, food and beverage, front of house, and housekeeping. Employees will be awarded with Digital Badges that will be mapped to industry recognised skill competencies. Through funding provided by the Skills to Advance, SOLAS Innovation Fund, the Digital Badges will be used as a benchmarking tool to identify and support eight local employers during 2020/21 to introduce and measure the competencies of their staff. This tool will support employers to identify areas for growth and development across all functions including staff development and FET accredited training.

Laois and Offaly ETB

LOETB has developed a Peatland Rehabilitation Employed Traineeship for Bord Na Mona employees that is focused on those employees who may be redeployed by Bord Na Mona in peatland rehabilitation projects over the next 3-4 years. Recently, the company announced 210 redeployment opportunities in this area. This work will also contribute to Ireland's carbon commitments under the Paris Agreement and ensure the peatlands are not only rehabilitated, but also repurposed to benefit the quality of life within peatland communities, and contribute to tourism and business opportunities locally as part of the Midlands Just Transition Process.

Limerick and Clare ETB

A new traineeship that is currently in development in LCETB and will commence in September 2020 is a Robotic Welding Operator Traineeship. This traineeship is being developed in conjunction with a company that specializes in automation, Automation Design Pro, based in Rathkeale. It is an example of how LCETB are collaborating with companies within the region that are in a position to offer specialised training. The advantages for LCETB in this arrangement is that course set-up costs are avoided, closer links are built with the sector and it can offer specialised training that otherwise could not be offered.

Longford and Westmeath ETB

Following on from the opening of a hugely successful digital training hub in Athlone which offers a number of courses through blended online delivery, LWETB plan to establish a similar enterprise in Longford in 2020. This will complement the Pearson Vue Test Centre which caters for people in the midlands and will provide a mechanism for learners to study online and complete online exams to meet industry standard certification.

Louth and Meath ETB

LMETB plan to commence the establishment of a Centre of Excellence in 2020. The Centre will aim to provide for employer identified sector specific advanced manufacturing and technological skills needs, services and supports to current and future workers in the Manufacturing and Technological growth sectors in the North East and Border region initially. Training courses planned will include: Collaborative Robotics, Additive Manufacturing and 3D Printing, Augmented and Virtual Reality, and Metallurgy. The centre will use innovative flexible modes of delivery, which include: online, blended, virtual and 3D.

Mayo Sligo and Leitrim ETB

To meet specific upskilling needs in the HGV sector in Ireland, MSLETB have designed a Smart Eco driving programme. Over a 2-year period, it will be delivered to around 300 professional HGV drivers. The programme

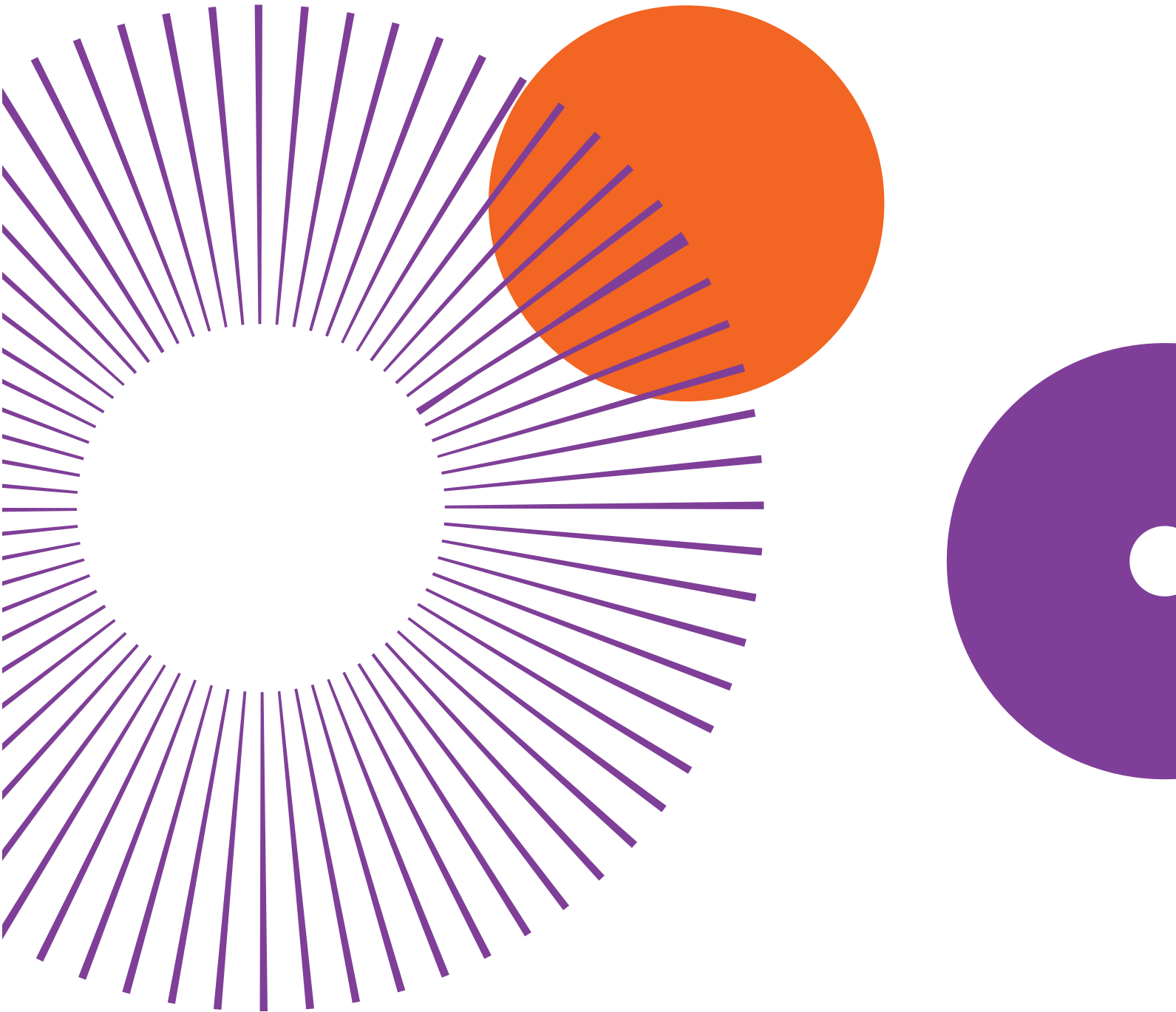
will then be mainstreamed across the FET sector making it more widely available to existing professional HGV drivers, including HGV drivers returning to the sector and to participants on HGV traineeships. The focus of the programme includes upskilling drivers in Eco-driving behaviour, Digital technology (In-cab and hand-held devices etc.), Safe Driving and Drivers Health and Well-being, SMART DRIVING behaviour along with the adoption of new truck safety and efficiency technologies, has the potential to lower CO2 emissions, reduce fuel usage, increase productivity, enhance driver well-being and improve driver and road user safety.

Tipperary ETB

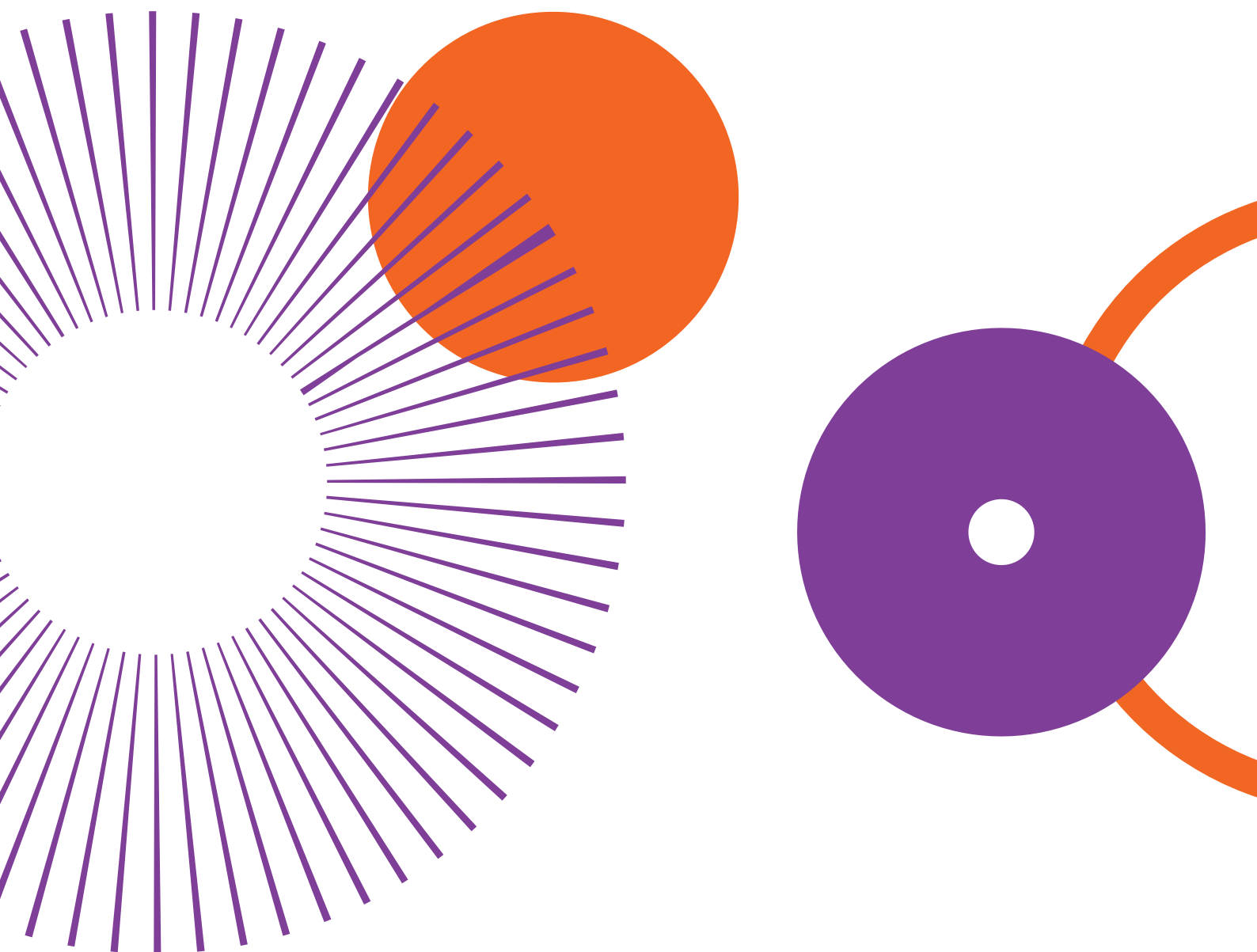
TETB plan to offer a Music Performance and Audio Engineering course leading to the QQI Major Award - Music (5M2011). This programme is designed to nurture instrumentalists and singers of every level – from the complete novice to the more experienced musician. It enables students to follow the practical side of performance, while also providing a strong foundation in Music Theory. The programme builds on partnerships with well-established community-based local music groups and promotes continued professional development for local musicians and music performers, and recognises the diversity and breadth of all music traditions. This course is also an ideal preparation for 3rd Level courses in music and careers in the music industry in areas such as music performance and production, event production and audio engineering.

Waterford and Wexford ETB

Building on the success of a corresponding initiative in Enniscorthy Training Centre, WWETB through its BTEI programme has initiated a FAB LAB in New Ross to support innovation and invention in SMEs in the South Wexford area. This centre will provide access to 3D printers, laser cutting machines, and design packages such as Inventor (Manufacturing) and Revit (Architectural/Structural), to staff from small business who will partake of courses there on a part-time basis. There is also a 3D modelling service available to assist in prototyping for local designers/engineers.



SOLAS coordinates and administers a number of activities that support the development of a strong FET sector.



Section 6 FET Supports

This section provides an overview of national systems, services, strategies and initiatives that support the development of a strong FET sector.

National construction schemes and the Safe Pass programme

SOLAS is responsible for the governance of the national Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS), Quarrying Skills Certification Scheme (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 to 2019.

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 and 2019.

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 to 2019.

SOLAS is responsible for the maintenance of the national database and the processing of applications for Safe Pass, CSCS and QSCS cards. Participants who successfully complete their respective programmes are registered on the relevant database and are issued with their cards. In 2019, a total of 25,538 CSCS cards, 1,070 QSCS cards and 112,186 Safe Pass cards were issued.

SOLAS will continue to maintain the mutual recognition agreement with Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) UK, Construction Employers Federation (CEF) NI, and process applications for recognition of qualifications, in compliance with S.I. No. 8 of 2017 regulations.

SOLAS Quality Assurance Services Unit

As an approved Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) co-ordinating Provider of pre-2016 apprenticeships programmes, Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) and Quarry Skills Certification Scheme (QSCS), SOLAS is required by its governance obligations to undertake comprehensive independent monitoring and evaluation of programme delivery, including assessment processes and associated services.

Accordingly, SOLAS has identified the monitoring of collaborating providers as a priority objective. In this regard, SOLAS established a dedicated Quality Assurance Services (QAS) Unit in early 2019.

The QAS Unit operates and manages a systematic monitoring service that validates the effectiveness of the SOLAS quality assurance systems for pre-2016 Apprenticeship programmes, CSCS and QSCS programmes. The objective of systematically monitoring is to provide public confidence in SOLAS programmes by ensuring quality assurance safeguards are being adhered to by both SOLAS and its assigned collaborating provider networks. Monitoring also promotes best practices and continuous improvements which identify and address areas needing improvement or correction. The proposed type and number of monitoring events to be undertaken in 2020 are outlined below:

Apprenticeship	
Monitoring Type	Monitoring Events
Process	89
Observational	10

Construction	
Monitoring Types	Monitoring Events
Process	81
Observational	81

The QAS Unit is committed to employing a consistency of approach and equity of treatment in the operation of monitoring activities. All monitoring activities are independent, transparent and traceable, while monitoring outcomes and determinations are evidence based.

The QAS Unit ensures all quality assurance monitoring activities are conducted by trained, competent and experienced SOLAS authorised monitors. SOLAS authorised monitors exercise their professional judgment when engaging in monitoring activities, and will balance the need for consistent monitoring with the flexibility needed to respond to the uniqueness of each circumstance.

eCollege

eCollege is a fully online learning service which delivers training on a continuous intake basis. eCollege courses are aligned to professional and industry certifications and are particularly suited to continuous professional development and lifelong learning objectives. Courses are free to jobseekers and to eligible employed individuals under the Skills to Advance initiative.

eCollege courses are available anytime, anywhere. This model means no waiting lists and flexible programme duration. Learners are given access to a virtual learning environment (Moodle) and remote tutor support. These 'tutors' support the learner every step of the way, from activating accounts, to setting and correcting assignments. The tutors also help learners going forward for certification to identify their most convenient test centre, and support progression to further education, training or employment.

As an immediate response to COVID-19, SOLAS are temporarily making eCollege courses available to those who have been adversely affected by the pandemic. eCollege was opened to online applications from March 24th, 2020 and had over 18,000 new starters in the first four months of its operation on an online application basis.

A development plan for eCollege is a key element of the digital transformation agenda in the new FET Strategy 2020 - 2024 to ensure that there is an expanded portfolio of online and blended learning opportunities available to FET learners.

FET professional development strategy

The FET Professional Development (PD) Strategy, including a three-year implementation plan, was published by SOLAS and ETBI in November 2016. The aim of the strategy is to enhance the skills of those involved in the delivery, administration and management of FET programmes through strategically targeted and consistent training and development. Implementation is ongoing, and significant progress has been made across all three strategic goals: creation of infrastructure and delivery systems, capability development and sustainable funding.

A national PD planning and budget allocation process and increased resourcing of PD coordination have been put in place to ensure a strategic and consistent approach across the sector. Working in collaboration, SOLAS, ETBI and ETBs have developed, piloted and mainstreamed a range of blended and online national PD initiatives in the following critical areas identified for the FET sector:

- Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL)
- Leadership and Management (L&M)
- Quality Assurance (QA)
- Enterprise Engagement (EE)

A range of delivery methods, including peer learning, mentoring and cascading have been deployed to maximise the reach and impact of these professional development initiatives at local level. A new FET Practice Framework has been developed collaboratively to assist in identifying the individual development needs of FET practitioners, managers and support staff in a consistent, transparent manner. It also provides a basis for sourcing and creating targeted initiatives to enhance practitioner confidence

and capability to deliver flexible and high-quality FET provision. The Practice Framework comprises practice statements that provide a structure to inform the development of PD initiatives; and to provide a self-reflective resource for FET staff. This framework will guide the development of a range of formal and informal professional development opportunities.

A new Professional Development Strategy Statement 2020 - 2024, including high level actions, has been developed in alignment with the new FET Strategy 2020 - 2024 and in collaboration with the sector. Informed by background research and consultation with the sector, it provides strategic direction of professional development for all those working in the sector over the next four years – management, learning practitioners, support and administration personnel.

TEL Strategy

The SOLAS Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) team worked closely with the further education and training sector in supporting the implementation of each ETB's TEL Strategy 2016 - 2019. ETBs have completed an action planning process targeting funding at specific TEL activities focused around the four areas identified in the TEL Strategy: ICT infrastructure; professional development; learning content; and organisational structure. The TEL Action Support Group identifies the supports required to achieve the ambitions of the sector, by facilitating collaboration, avoiding duplication and supporting a common approach to the adoption of TEL into existing activities.

As part of a new phase of work in relation to digital transformation across the FET sector highlighted in the new FET Strategy 2020-2024, work will continue on the embedding of technology in combination with innovative pedagogical approaches to enhance the learner experience, with consequent changes in the delivery of FET. In particular, the potential of online and blended learning will be activated to transform the way in which learning is designed and delivered to a diverse learner profile.

Skills to Compete

FET has long played a critical role in labour market activation and in upskilling and reskilling people in response to economic downturns. The FET sector, together with partners across the wider tertiary education system, have planned carefully around how the large base of people experiencing unemployment as a result of COVID-19 will be given the education, training and support that many will require to re-enter employment.

In this regard, an agile FET response is being implemented. This involves a targeted initiative to bring together and build upon existing FET expertise and resources to provide recently unemployed people with the Skills to Compete which can support their re-entry into sustainable work. This initiative will combine and

ramp up three existing strands of FET provision:

- transversal skills development to help employability
- building the digital capabilities now required for almost every job
- specific Level 4-6 courses targeting growth sectors and occupations

Linking these strands to *tailored advice and support*, facilitates an immediate and powerful labour market activation response.

This approach will harness, refocus and build on current FET provision and utilise the knowledge and expertise across SOLAS and ETBs in activation-linked reskilling and upskilling. It will work in tandem with external resources and structures such as Intreo offices, the Regional Skills Fora, and Enterprise Ireland to effectively target individuals in need and prospective employers. Responses will be adapted to reflect regional needs, based on local ETB understanding and labour market intelligence drawn from sources including the Skills and Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU), DEASP Activation and Employment Policy Unit, Expert Group on Future Skills Needs and the ESRI.

The initiative has been developed in partnership with ETBI, the Education and Training Boards and the Department of Education and Skills, and with input from DEASP, DBEI and industry representatives.

Programme and Learner Support System

The Programme and Learner Support System (PLSS) is a joint initiative between SOLAS and ETBI. It is an ICT system which provides a suite of tools for FET providers to manage and administer the programmes they offer. ETBs can also use the PLSS system to completely manage the applicant and learner lifecycle.

Within PLSS there are three major components:

- The National Programme Database (NPD)
- The National Course Calendar (NCC)
- The Learner Database

The system went live in 2017 and is widely used across the FET sector. This system is constantly evolving to meet the needs of the sector, including introducing new functionality to improve the data collection and user experience. Geocoding functionality has been introduced to the system in 2020 allowing detailed geographical reporting on learners within an ETB, as well as other mapping opportunities.

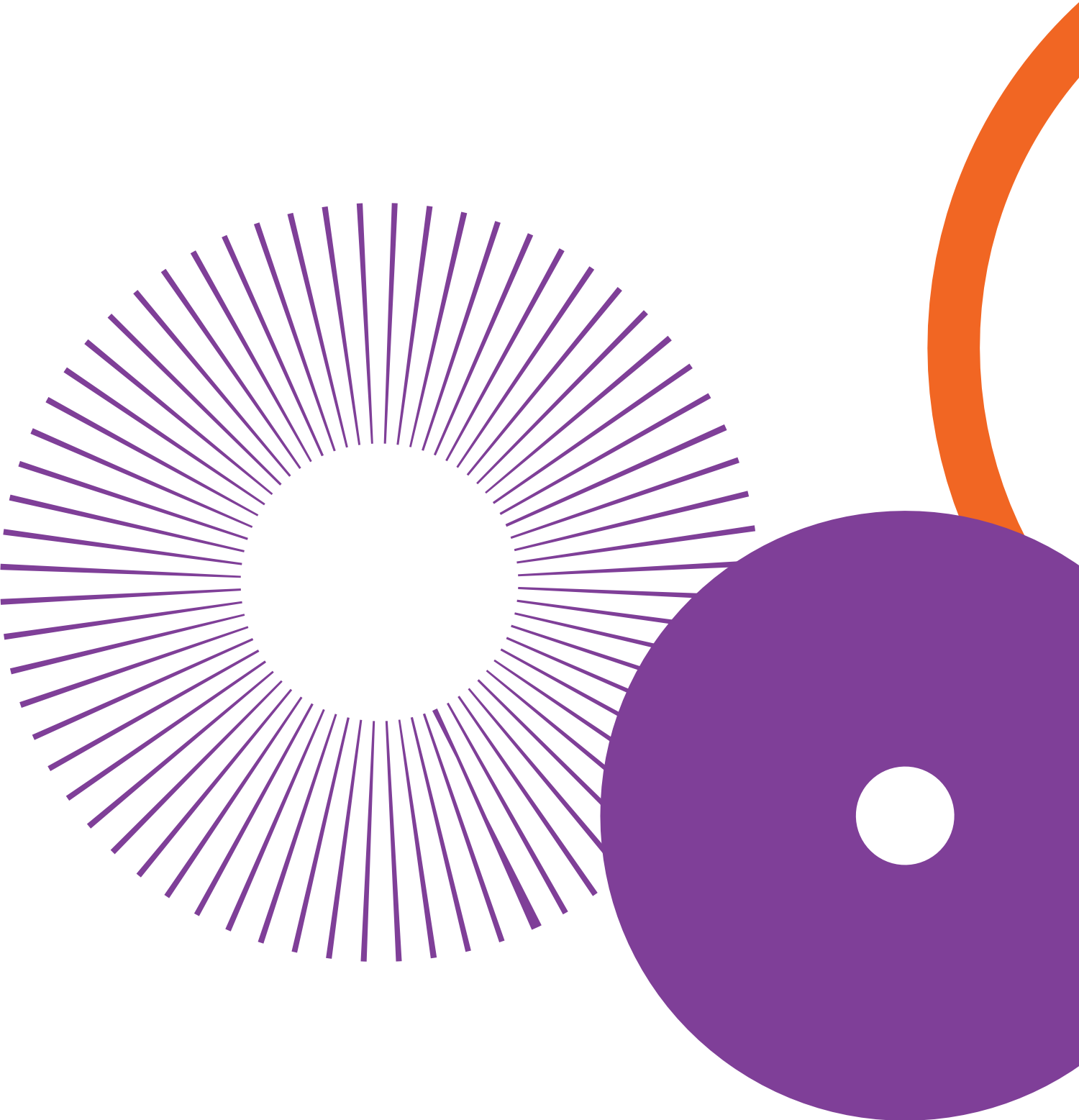
A PLSS Management Information System (MIS) is now live for all ETBs. This reporting tool allows local management to query the data in PLSS and use filtering tools similar to those available in Excel to manipulate their data. A new reporting tool, Tableau, is currently being rolled out to the sector which will allow more visual reports to be generated at a local ETB level,

supporting their local business decision making processes.

PLSS also provides secure web interfacing facilities for inter-operability with third party systems. DEASP can refer clients directly into the application process of FET programmes and learners. Developments to link PLSS to eCollege have recently been completed, allowing learners to be transferred to the eCollege platform from PLSS.

The import and export facilities in the PLSS allow third party systems to load and extract data to and from the PLSS. This facilitates the export of the PLC October returns data to the Department of Education and Skills (DES). This functionality also provided the groundwork for the eCohesion programme, which the ETBs use to submit their ESF returns. PLSS also integrates with the Funding Allocations Requests and Reporting (FARR) planning process.

Fetchcourses.ie is the Further Education and Training Course Hub, which is fully integrated with PLSS. During 2019, there were over 875,000 visits to the site, of which about 393,000 were unique users. FET providers now have the option to accept online applications via fetchcourses.ie. Learners can apply for a diverse range of programmes run by different FET providers all through a single website, and can completely manage their application process online. Functionality to provide an online payment facility for the Fetchcourses.ie site is ongoing.



Section 7

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Appendix 2: Summary of the Further Education and Training support organisations planned activities for 2020

FET - Support Organisations

Table 1. provides an overview of support Agencies and Bodies in receipt of SOLAS funding along with the details of the activities planned for 2020 for the following Agencies and Bodies; National Adult Literacy Agency, Dyslexia Association of Ireland, AONTAS, Fast Track into Technology, National Centre for Guidance in Education and Association for Higher Education Access and Disability.

Table 1 FET - Support Organisations

Agency/Body	2020 Planned Activities
<p>National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA)</p> <p>An independent charity working in partnership with government departments, organisations, tutors and learners to advance adult literacy policy. Ensuring that adults with literacy and numeracy difficulties can fully take part in society and access learning opportunities that meet their needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Roll out the new eLearning platform which will facilitate accreditation for 1,000 adult literacy and numeracy learners leading to the achievement of 3,300 minor awards at Level 2 and 600 minor awards at Level 3.• Engage with 250 learners through the Distance Learning Service.• 175 learners to avail of Student Development Days and 1,500 learners to participate in student development activities.• Engage and collaborate with individual ETBs, ETBI, SOLAS, AONTAS and other stakeholders.• Provide CPD and training events for 1,500 practitioners.• Support the implementation of the findings from 'Family Literacy Research and Guidelines on Inclusion of People with Intellectual Disabilities in Adult Literacy Service' Research.• Increase participation in training and events, and the numbers availing of the student development fund.• Increase use of the Write On service by centres and individual learners.• Roll out national awareness campaigns to promote learning opportunities available through NALA.
<p>Dyslexia Association of Ireland</p> <p>Membership based association representing over 2,000 families and individuals affected by dyslexia all over Ireland. Membership also includes teachers, psychologists and other professionals. Advocates and raises awareness on behalf of people affected by dyslexia. DAI has a nationwide network of 37 branches and workshops providing information, assessment, training and support services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide subsidised educational psychology assessments for 70 disadvantaged adults.• Roll out training on assessment of learning needs to 80 FET staff across 8 ETBs.• Engage with ETBI on development of national policy and practice regarding dyslexia in FET.• Ongoing support and provision of information seminars for ETBs, employers, community groups and state organisations.• Provide a free specialist information service on adult dyslexia, including helpline, drop-in service and information seminars and access to NCBI alternative format library.• Launch new website including new blog feature.• Deliver eight webinars and podcast episodes discussing adult dyslexia.• Continue to engage with the FET sector, employers and policy makers to drive policy and new initiatives for learners with dyslexia including Erasmus project 'Dyslexia@Work'.

Agency/Body	2020 Planned Activities
AONTAS Non-governmental voluntary membership organisation with over 500 members from the formal and non- formal adult and community education sector and the lifelong learning spectrum. Advocating and lobbying for the development of a quality service for adult learners, promoting the value and benefits of adult learning and broadening participation in lifelong learning, ensuring quality learning opportunities are offered to those who are educationally disadvantaged. Ensuring adult learners are central to adult learning policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver an accessible information service on adult learning opportunities to potential learners through the One Step Up service. • Use the AONTAS website and social media, blogs, twitter etc to promote the work of AONTAS nationally. • Develop 'Learners as Leaders' programme as part of EAAL project. • Develop tools and resources to promote effective learner voice engagement. • Advocate for learners through representation and submissions to public consultations at national and European level. • Develop a five nations network for adult learning. • Engage in and disseminate FET policy related research. • Support and co-ordinate the work of the Community Education Network (CEN) including a pilot national community education census. • Publish and disseminate the Adult Learner Journal. • Organise and promote the 2020 National Learners Festival and AONTAS STAR awards.
Fast Track into Technology (FIT) Industry-led, not-for-profit organisation that develops and promotes technology-based programmes and career development opportunities for job seekers. Works in collaboration with government, education and training providers and disadvantaged communities to improve access to employment for marginalised job seekers and those at risk of long-term unemployment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote courses to over 50,000 potential learners. • Engage directly with 5,000 potential learners and provide information sessions and aptitude assessments for 3,500 learners. • Agree the provision of 3,500 FIT supported course places across 270 ETB courses. • Provide 'preparation for work' supports for 3,200 learners. • Research and pilot FET courses in areas of emerging demand, including technology pre-apprenticeship courses. • Organise job placements for 540 trainees. • Provide access to Accenture and Salesforce supported programmes for 1,350 learners. Roll out Digital Skills for Citizens programme to benefit 1,000 learners in 2020. • Pilot digital literacy training for employees in the HSE. • Carry out research into and support the implementation of FET responses to technology skills shortages.
National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE) Agency of the Department of Education and Skills, under the aegis of Léargas, responsible for supporting and developing guidance practice in all areas of education and informing the guidance policy of the DES. Hosts the Euroguidance Centre Ireland and represents Ireland/DES at the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with DES and SOLAS regarding guidance policy issues and the development of the FET Integrated Guidance Strategy. • Complete GDPR agreements with ETBs for the current AGMS. • Develop proposal for the revised FET Guidance Management System. • Deliver CPD to FET based guidance staff. • Promote appropriate resources, materials and guidelines for cohesive, quality guidance practice. • Promote mobility across FET in collaboration with Euroguidance. • Liaise with QQI regarding the development of appropriate guidelines for the role of guidance in FET. • Establish a pilot project with DDLETB to develop guidelines for guidance practice in supporting migrants with EAL needs. • Review all strategic activities in the context of the Indecon Career Guidance Review.

Agency/Body	2020 Planned Activities
AHEAD - Association for Higher Education Access and Disability Non-profit organisation working to promote full access to and participation in further and higher education for students with disabilities and to enhance their employment prospects on graduation. Providing information on disability issues in education to students and graduates with disabilities, teachers, guidance counsellors and parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete guidelines on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) for FET. • Identify opportunities and challenges to achieve buy-in and implementation across the sector. • Provide supported roll out of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) guidelines across the FET system. • Identify and document good implementation practice within the FET sector.

FET - Lifelong Learning Opportunities

Table 2 provides a list of Agencies and Bodies in receipt of SOLAS funding relating to lifelong learning opportunities, along with the details of the activities planned for 2020 for the following Agencies and Bodies; Age Action Ireland, An Cosán, Irish Countrywomen's Association, Peoples College and Third Age.

Table 2 FET - Lifelong Learning Opportunities

Agency/Body	2020 Planned Activities
Age Action Ireland National non-governmental, membership-based organisation concerned with ageing and older people. With 3,660 members it acts as a network of organisations and individuals including older people and carers of older people. Age Action is a development agency promoting better policies and services for older people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of University of the Third Age (U3A) groups nationally to 36 by the end of 2020. • Over 12,000 attendees at U3A meetings throughout the year. • Organise 250 community-based events throughout the country during Positive Ageing Week. • 50 older volunteers will work with pupils of DEIS schools to improve literacy and numeracy levels through the Age Action/Suas literacy volunteer programme. • Participate in Year 2 of an EU LGBT+ programme, culminating in the publication of a training manual and series of training sessions in each partner country.
An Cosán Community based provider of alternative paths back to education for a wide range of individuals and organisations, offering basic, further and higher education through blended learning. Programmes are delivered through a personalised model of online learning combining live virtual classroom activities with access to online resources, tasks, assignments, face-to-face workshops, mentoring, and academic support, all at a pace that suits the learner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a programme advisory council, in partnership with ETBs, Microsoft and Accenture, to oversee and guide the roll out of the 'Digital Stepping Stones' programme to 1,000 learners across ETBs, CTC's and community education providers and the roll out of 'Digital Path to the Future' to 50-60 learners as a part time bridging programme. • Develop a digital skills assessment tool, Digital Competence Framework and associated curriculum. • Develop a tutor manual and train the trainer programme to support the implementation of the programme. • Establish an online Digital Competence 'Community of Practice' for educators. • Raise awareness around digital competence through a national communications campaign. • Establish progression paths and links to employment opportunities for learners from the Digital Path programme.

Agency/Body	2020 Planned Activities
Irish Countrywomen's Association The Association is 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 Association's members and the wider public providing access to a broad range of courses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide administrative support to 6,000 learners facilitating access to and participation in education and personal development programmes of learning
The People's College Voluntary body that provides general adult education, personal development and communication skills to trade unionists, their families and the general public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote new and existing courses and continue to grow the student base for 2020 with the aim of reaching 1,500 beneficiaries. • Expand the range and times of daytime courses available, moving to six days a week provision. • Carry out research regarding future areas of educational interest. • Promote the impact of participation in the personal development opportunities offered through the college. • Continue to work with local libraries to promote courses to people in their areas. • Support the outreach centre in Wexford. • The Choir, Debating and Drama groups will continue to represent and promote the College with performances and European cultural visits. • Continue to liaise with Unions and organisations such as Age Action & NALA to develop courses to suit the needs of their learners and clients. • Continue to reach out to communities in areas of social deprivation to promote intercultural activities and learning opportunities.
Third Age National voluntary organisation celebrating the third age in life. Third Age provides opportunities for lifelong learning, volunteering, community development, and social inclusion for older people. Fáilte Isteach is a Third Age community project with 137 branches throughout Ireland involving predominantly older volunteers welcoming migrants through conversational English classes and providing supports for migrants both seeking and in employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the Fáilte Isteach programme to reach 150 groups and 4,400 learners by the end of 2020. • Increase online support to tutors through the development of online training modules, improved responsiveness to learner needs and the identification of innovative approaches to complement existing service.

FET – Staff Representative Organisations

Table 3 provides a list of Staff Representative Organisations in receipt of SOLAS funding along with the details of the activities planned for 2020.

Table 3 FET – Staff Representative Organisation

Agency/Body	2020 Planned Activities
National Association of Adult and Community Education Directors Voluntary, membership-based organisation that provides support and networking for Directors of Adult Education in Community and Comprehensive schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide high quality information to the 26,000 learners accessing Adult Education Programmes. • Provide continuous professional development (CPD) for Adult Education Directors. • In conjunction with FESU, support the pilot delivery of QQI Level 4 certified ESOL training for 120 Adults in 10 Community/Comprehensive schools. • In conjunction with FESU, support the pilot delivery of QQI Level 5 certified Entrepreneurship and Personal Effectiveness training to 40 women to improve their employment opportunities and/or level of participation in the workforce.

FET – Professional Development Project

Table 4. provides detail of a professional development project in receipt of SOLAS funding along with the details of the activities planned for 2020.

Table 4 FET – Professional Development Project

Agency/Body	2020 Planned Activities
Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT/NALA Adult Literacy Accreditation Project) The Adult Literacy Accreditation Project provides third level programmes for practitioners in the field of adult literacy. The centre collaborates with stakeholder groups to heighten awareness of the value of adult literacy and the CPD needs of practitioners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver 36 modules across five Adult and Further Education programmes, offering flexible models of study, progression routes and innovative modes of delivery. • Increase the number of blended learning modules available. • Deliver 10 outreach CPD modules, designed to meet the individual needs of ETBs covering areas such as integrating literacy, curriculum development and Teaching English to Students of Other Languages. • Increase the use of Technology Enhanced Learning to improve the learner experience. • Promote the continued use of RPL to facilitate advanced entry onto programmes. • Continue to use collaborative teaching models across programmes. • Ongoing updating of curriculum, resources and assessments across programmes. • Promote, encourage and disseminate findings from postgraduate research into Literacy in FET. • Contribute to research projects and partnerships with national and EU partners.

FET – EU and Specific Projects

Table 5. provides detail of projects in receipt of SOLAS funding along with the details of the activities planned for 2020.

Table 5 FET – EU and Specific Projects

Project/Agency/Body	2020 Planned Activities
<p>Irish Association of Community Training Organisations (IACTO)</p> <p>IACTO is the representative body for Boards of Management of Community Training Centres</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide collective advice and consultancy services to 32 Community Training Centres (CTCs) and their voluntary Board Directors.• Support CTCs engagement with ETBI and ETBs at a local level to collaborate on continuous improvement in the delivery of FET services.• Develop 'New Workplace Entrants' pilot programme, consisting of a range of supports for learners progressing to the labour market.• Provide four workshops on Relationship Building Skills as part of CPD 'Leadership and Conflict Resolution'.• Pilot and continue to roll out the 'Quality Framework Initiative' pilot.• Support the implementation of collective bargaining procedures and IR related agreements.• Represent the sector at local and national level with ETBs, ETBI, SOLAS & DES.
<p>CSO - Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)</p> <p>PIAAC is co-ordinated in Ireland by the Central Statistics Office (CSO). CSO provide statistical information to Government for the formation and monitoring of policy and programmes at a national, regional and local level and serve the needs of the wider national and international community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participate in an international survey of adult skills measuring cognitive and workplace skills necessary 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>Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed (Working for Work 2020' Publication)</p> <p>Federation of 216 member groups including community-based resource centres, Citizens Information Services, Money Advice and Budgetary Services, national NGOs, trade unions and unemployed people. Promotes and campaigns for policies to achieve full employment for all and for an acceptable standard of living for unemployed people and their dependants.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Produce and distribute 25,000 copies of Working for Work to individual unemployed people, INOU member organisations, Education and Training Boards, DEASP Intreo and local offices, Citizens Information Centres, MABS and a wide range of other organisations and groups closely associated with education and training support services, including: Springboard, FIT, Skillnet, LES (Local Employment Services), Jobs Clubs and colleges and universities.• Support the ongoing development of the online version of Working for Work.

FET Organisations – FET Support Projects

Table 6. provides detail of support Organisations in receipt of SOLAS funding along with the details of the activities planned for 2020.

Table 6 FET Organisations – FET Supports Projects

Agency/Body	2020 Planned Activities
<p>Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI)</p> <p>National Representative body for the 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs). Provides collective representation, training and a range of additional FET related supports to ETBs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop an operational ETB model for shared curriculum and programme development in line with QQI policy.• Develop a platform for joint development and sharing of assessments.• Create an ETB External Authentication directory including an online Community of Practice.• Develop a QQI approved model and supports for Self-Evaluation and Statutory Review.• Establish a FET Digital Library providing access for learners to subject specific, general reference and training and development resources.• Support the development of work-based learning programmes and the enhancement of apprenticeship programmes and services.• Support the integration of literacy and numeracy support, screening and assessment tools and RPL options across FET courses.• Support the implementation of recommendations identified through programme reviews.• Promote the FET brand and courses nationally, through the establishment of a FET Communications Working Group.• Embed PLSS, associated business processes and other FET systems to ensure a robust, evidenced based, dataset is available for local and national policy making, planning, reporting and analysis.
<p>Further Education Support Unit (FESU)</p> <p>A strategic partnership between the Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools (ACCS) and the Joint Managerial Body (JMB), the Further Education Support Unit (FESU) represents schools from both sectors in negotiations with the Department of Education and Skills, SOLAS, QQI, FESS and ETBI.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Co-ordinate and support the re-engagement of the five pilot Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools (VSCCS) with QQI.• Provide support to VSCCS providers in the use of PLSS, FARR and Fetchcourses.ie.• Establish ETBI/FET VSCCS National and Regional groups.• Support the realignment of PLC and BTEI courses in VSCC schools.• Organise and deliver CPD for VSCCS providers.

FET Training Organisations – 2016+ Apprenticeship

Table 7. provides a list of organisations in receipt of SOLAS funding as 2016+ Apprenticeship Consortia and Lead/Coordinating Providers.

Table 7 FET Organisations – 2016+ Apprenticeship

Agency/Body	2020 Planned Activities
Accounting Technicians Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Co-ordinating Provider supporting the 2016+ Apprenticeship Scheme for Accounting Technicians.
FIT (Fast Track into Technology)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Co-ordinating Provider supporting the 2016+ Apprenticeship Scheme for ICT Associate Software Developer, ICT Associate Network Engineer and Cybersecurity.
Retail Ireland Skillnet	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Co-ordinating Provider supporting the 2016+ Apprenticeship Scheme for Retail Supervision.

FET Organisations – Other FET Providers

Table 8. provides a list of other FET Providers in receipt of SOLAS funding along with details of activities planned for 2020.

Table 8 FET Organisations – Other FET Providers

Agency/Body	2020 Planned Activities
Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities (TCPID) Situated within the School of Education, Trinity College Dublin, TCPID aims to promote the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in education and society. TCPID enables people with an intellectual disability to develop their potential through a combination of high-quality research, dissemination of new knowledge, lifelong learning and professional training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Deliver 36 modules across five Adult and Further Education programmes, offering flexible models of study, progression routes and innovative modes of delivery.Increase the availability of blended learning modules.Deliver 10 outreach CPD modules, designed to meet the individual needs of ETBs covering the areas such as integrating literacy, curriculum development and teaching English to students of other languages.Increase the use of Technology Enhanced Learning to improve the learner experience.Promote the continued use of RPL to facilitate advanced entry onto programmes.Continue to use collaborative teaching models across programmes.Update curriculum, resources and assessments across programmes.Promote, encourage and disseminate findings from postgraduate research into Literacy in FET.Contribute to research projects and partnerships with national and EU partners..
Irish Deaf Society The Society seeks to achieve equality for and promote the rights of Deaf people in Ireland and to achieve full access to citizenship and society for the Deaf community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Implement a QQI re-engagement plan.Expand QQI level 5 and level 6 accredited provision, including the validation of Irish Sign Language courses.Deliver training to 400 Deaf Adult beneficiaries and provide support for the delivery of Irish Sign Language training to 600 ISL beneficiaries.Commence the Deaf Education Online project, delivering QQI validated online training at a national level.Establish an academic council and engage a permanent QQI registrar.Develop links to employer networks to ensure provision is in line with employment opportunities.

Appendix 3: List of Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools that grants are allocated to through the Department of Education and Skills post-primary section for the PLC programme

PLC programme grant allocations through the Department of Education and Skills (post primary section) to Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools	
Schools/Colleges	Approved Places for 2020
Ballyhaunis Community School, Co. Mayo	20
Cabinteely Community School, Dublin 18	40
Castlerea Community School, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon	9
Central College, Sexton Street, Limerick	236
Coláiste Chiaráin, Summerhill, Athlone, Co. Westmeath	39
Coláiste Mhuire, Ballygar, Co. Galway	15
Donahies Community School, Streamville Road, Dublin 13	11
Glenamaddy Community School, Co. Galway	50
Gorey Community School, Gorey, Co. Wexford	89
Jesus & Mary Secondary School, Enniscrone, Co. Sligo	50
Kilrush Community School, Co. Clare	20
Mary Immaculate Secondary School, Lisdoonvarna, Co. Clare	37
Mercy College, Sligo	45
Moate Business College, Moate, Co. Westmeath	430
Our Lady's Secondary School, Belmullet, Co. Mayo	16
Sancta Maria College, Louisburgh, Co. Mayo	17
Scoil Phobail (Clifden Community School), Clifden, Co. Galway	15
St Cuan's College, Castleblakeney, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway	40
St Louis Community School, Kiltimagh, Co. Mayo	136
Tullow Community School, Carlow	31
Total	1,346

Appendix 4: Supports provided for FET learners

- A number of supports are provided for learners engaging in FET programmes. The following examples are not definitive:
- The Adult Education Guidance and Information Service (AEGIS), which 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 and over.
 - 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 Fund for Students with Disabilities (FSD) can provide support for students with a disability. This fund allocates funding to further education colleges for 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.
 - The Guidance, Counselling and Psychological Service in Youthreach and Community Training Centres mainly provide 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. It also offers employment services and supports for both jobseekers and employers.
 - The Advocacy Service provides a network of full-time advocates whose role is to support Youthreach participants in decision-making, referral, progression and placement. Advocates are also instrumental in organising work experience and monitoring students on work experience.

Appendix 5: Definitions

Definitions	
Full-time FET programmes	
Post Leaving Certificate (PLC)	
Starter definition	The counting of each learner in this category on the date the learner commenced tuition on their programme of study (typically in September/October).
Completer definition	The counting of each learner in this category on the date the learner finished their programme 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 programme 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 programme of study.
Completer definition	The counting of each learner in this category on the date the learner finished their programme of study.
Note	In the case of multi-year VTOS programmes, each year is a standalone year and should be considered independently. If the programme 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 programme of study.
Completer definition	The counting of each learner in this category on the date the learner finished their programme of study.
Note	Youthreach is organised on an academic year/semester basis therefore: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completion of the summer programme should be considered as the completion of the year• Resumption of the Youthreach programme after summer break should be considered as the start of the next year• If the programme 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 programme of study.
Completer definition	The counting of each learner in this category on the date the learner finished their programme of study.
Note	If the programme 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 programme of study.
Completer definition	The counting of each learner in this category on the date the learner finished their programme of study.
Note	If the programme 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 programme.
Specialist Training Providers	
Starter definition	The counting of each learner in this category, on the date the learner commenced tuition on their programme of study.
Completer definition	The counting of each learner in this category on the date the learner finished their programme of study.
Note	If the programme 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 programme.

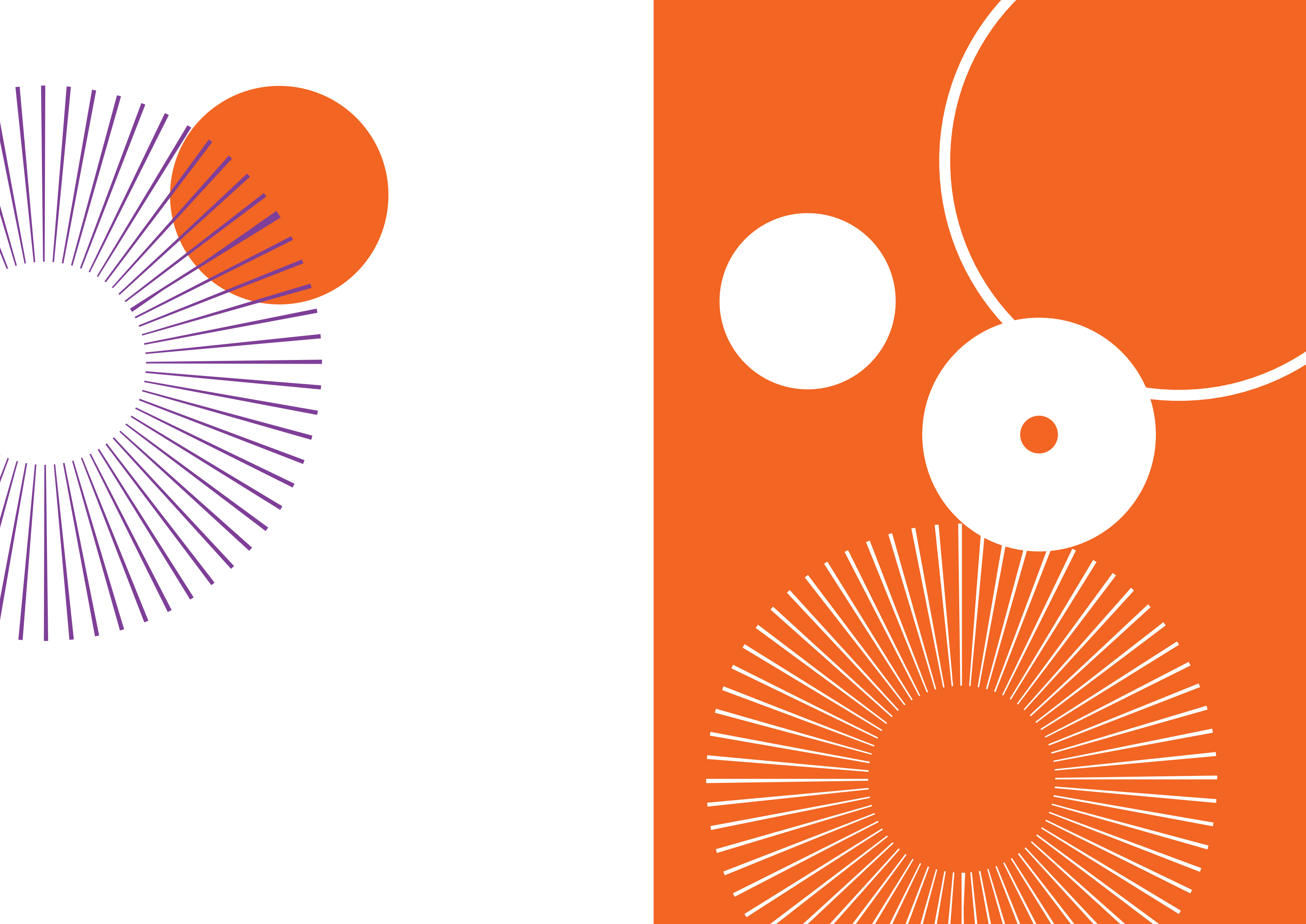
Acronyms

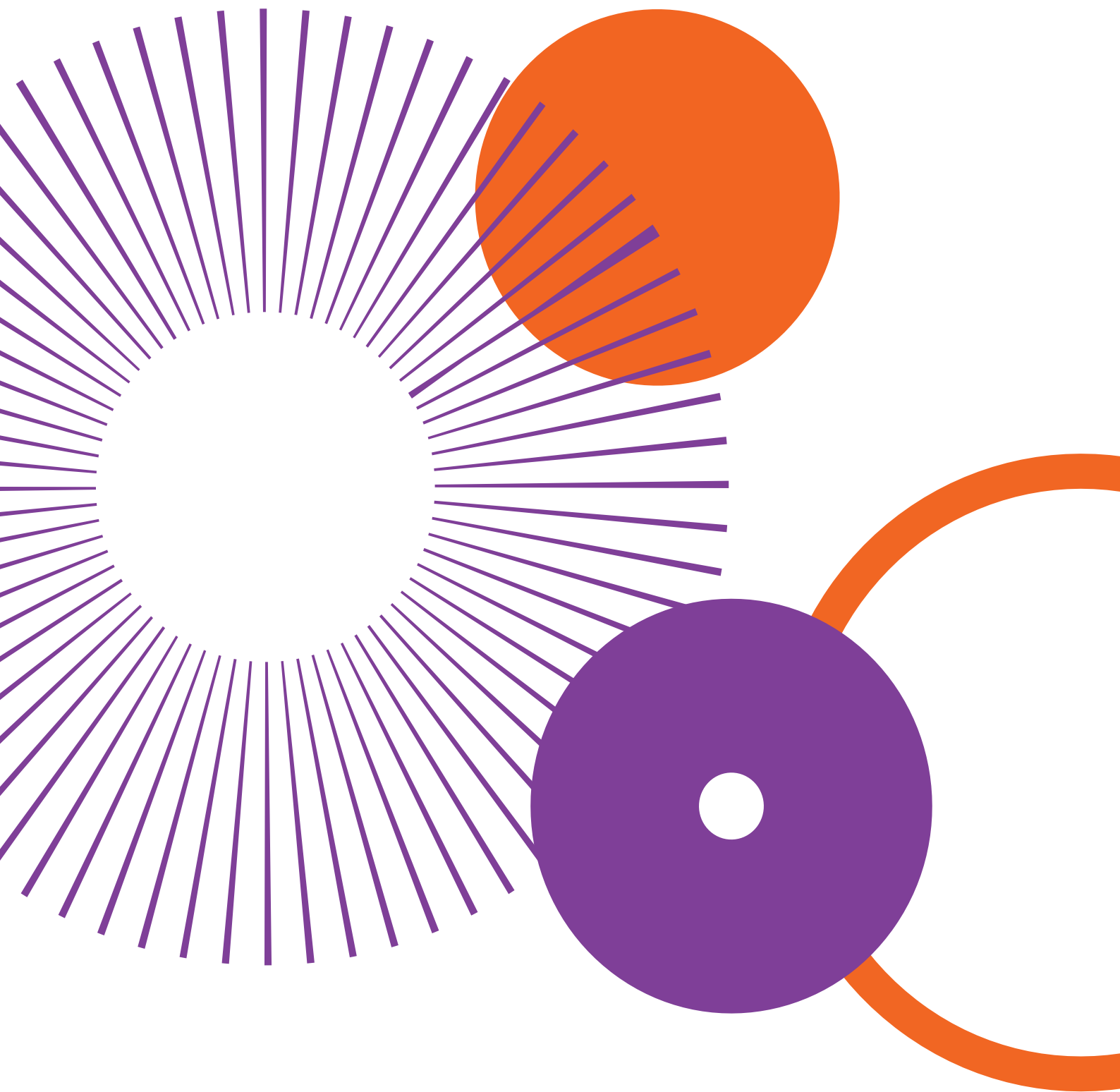
Acronyms	
ACCS	Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools
AEGAI	Adult Education Guidance Association of Ireland
AEGIS	The Adult Education Guidance and Information Service
AGMS	Adult Guidance Management System
AHEAD	Association for Higher Education Access and Disability
ALOA	Adult Literacy Organisers Association
ATI	Accounting Technicians Ireland
BIM	Bord Iascaigh Mhara
BTEI	Back to Education Initiative
CDETB	City of Dublin Education and Training Board
CE	Community Education
CEF	Construction Employers Federation
CEN	Community Education Network
CETB	Cork Education and Training Board
CETS	Childcare in Education and Training Scheme
CITB	Construction Industry Training Board
CMETB	Cavan and Monaghan Education and Training Board
CPD	Continuing Professional Development

CSCS	Construction Skills Certification Scheme
CSO	Central Statistics Office
CTC	Community Training Centre
DAI	Dyslexia Association of Ireland
DBEI	Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation
DCYA	Department of Children and Youth Affairs
DDLETB	Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board
DEASP	Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
DEIS	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools
DES	Department of Education and Skills
DETB	Donegal Education and Training Board
EAAL	European Agenda for Adult Learning
EGFSN	Expert Group on Future Skills Needs
ELD	Educational Longitude Database
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
ETB	Education and Training Board
ETBI	Education and Training Boards Ireland
FAR	Funding Allocations Requests

FARR	Funding Allocations Requests and Reporting
FESS	Further Education Support Service
FESU	Further Education Support Unit
FET	Further Education and Training
FIT	Fast Track into Technology
FSD	Fund for Students with Disabilities
FTE	Full time Equivalent
GRETB	Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board
HE	Higher Education
HEA	Higher Education Authority
HSE	Health Service Executive
IACTO	Irish Association of Community Training Organisations
IBEC	Irish Business and Employers Confederation
ICA	Irish Countrywomen's Association
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IDA	Industrial Development Authority
IDS	Irish Deaf Society
INOUE	Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed
ITABE	Intensive Tuition in Adult Basic Education
ITO	Industrial Training Order
JLD	Jobseekers Longitudinal Database
JMB	Joint Managerial Body
KCETB	Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board
KETB	Kerry Education and Training Board
KWETB	Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board
LCETB	Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board
LDA	Locally Devised Assessments
LES	Local Employment Services
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LMETB	Louth and Meath Education and Training Board
LOETB	Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board
LTI	Local Training Initiatives
LWETB	Longford and Westmeath Education and Training Board
MABS	The Money Advice and Budgeting Service
MCPAD	Multistage Capital Project Agreement Document
MSLETB	Mayo Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board

NALA	National Adult Literacy Agency
NCBI	National Council for the Blind of Ireland
NCC	National Course Calendar
NCGE	National Centre for Guidance in Education
NPD	National Programme Database
NFLF	National Further Education and Training Learner Forum
NZEB	Nearly Zero Energy Buildings
PIAAC	Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies
PLC	Post Leaving Certificate
PLSS	Programme and Learner Support System
QAS	Quality Assurance Services
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
QSCS	Quarrying Skills Certification Scheme
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SLMRU	Skills and Labour Market Research Unit
SME	Small or Medium sized Enterprise
SOC	Standard Occupational Classification
SOLAS	An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna (Further Education and Training Authority)
SST	Specific Skills Training
STA	Skills to Advance
STP	Specialist Training Provider
SUSI	Student Universal Support Ireland
TCPID	Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities
TEL	Technology Enhanced Learning
TETB	Tipperary Education and Training Board
U3A	University of the Third Age
UDL	Universal Design for Learning
VSCCS	Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools
VTOS	Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme
WIT	Waterford Institute of Technology
WWETB	Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board





SOLAS

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