



Annual Report and Accounts

2020

Pursuant to Section 32 (1) of the Further Education and Training Act 2013, An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna (SOLAS) herewith presents to the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, its Annual Report and Financial Statements for the 12-month period from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020.

This Annual Report is published simultaneously in each of the official languages.

SOLAS, the Further Education and Training Authority, is responsible for funding, planning and co-ordinating Further Education and Training (FET) programmes. All programmes are either funded or co-funded by the Irish Government. Some programmes are co-funded by the European Union under the Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014–2020.

SOLAS – An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna

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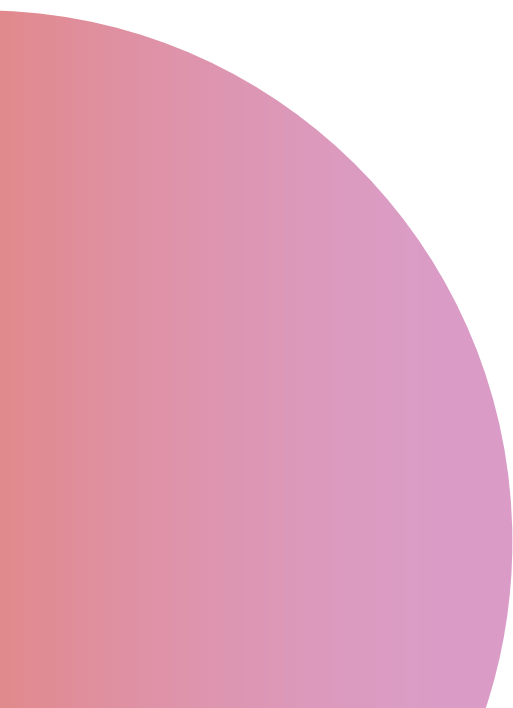
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Chairperson's Foreword

I am pleased to submit SOLAS' seventh Annual Report, covering the period from 1st January to 31st December 2020.

2020 proved to be a difficult year for everybody. We are however extremely proud of the sectoral response to the Covid-19 pandemic. SOLAS, Education and Training Boards (ETBs) and the wider sector have managed to continue to provide Further Education and Training (FET) during extraordinary circumstances. There has been a concerted effort to move learning online, ensure a safe return to physical centres in many cases, and generally to support learners in every possible way. A key priority for the Board of SOLAS was to ensure that FET learners, particularly marginalised learners, had continued access to learning opportunities throughout the pandemic.

I would like to salute the work of everybody across the sector but especially my fellow Board members who give of their services 'pro bono' and have shown great adaptability to digital collaboration during the pandemic. In 2020, we moved Board business fully online with effect from our April meeting and have successfully continued to carry out our mandate virtually. On behalf of the Board, I wish to express my thanks also to Sinéad McCluskey, who resigned in 2020, for all her hard work as a Board member over the previous three years.

In addition to the great many changes we all endured and overcame in 2020, SOLAS successfully launched the second Further Education and Training strategy: *Future FET: Transforming Learning 2020-2024*. This followed SOLAS' transition from working under the aegis of the Department of Education and Skills to the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science. The Future FET strategy was launched by yourself on our

behalf in July 2020. It sets out an ambitious roadmap for the direction of the sector over the next five years. The strategy, along with the Strategic Performance Agreements and the anticipated revision to the FET funding model, will see the FET sector continue to implement reform and performance improvement. Its all part of a process of achieving a more strategic and integrated FET system. It will be crucially important as we emerge from the pandemic that the FET sector responds to those who have been most affected by it. We must ensure an agile response will be made across the board which will enable learners to re-engage and develop the skills needed for the post Covid economy.

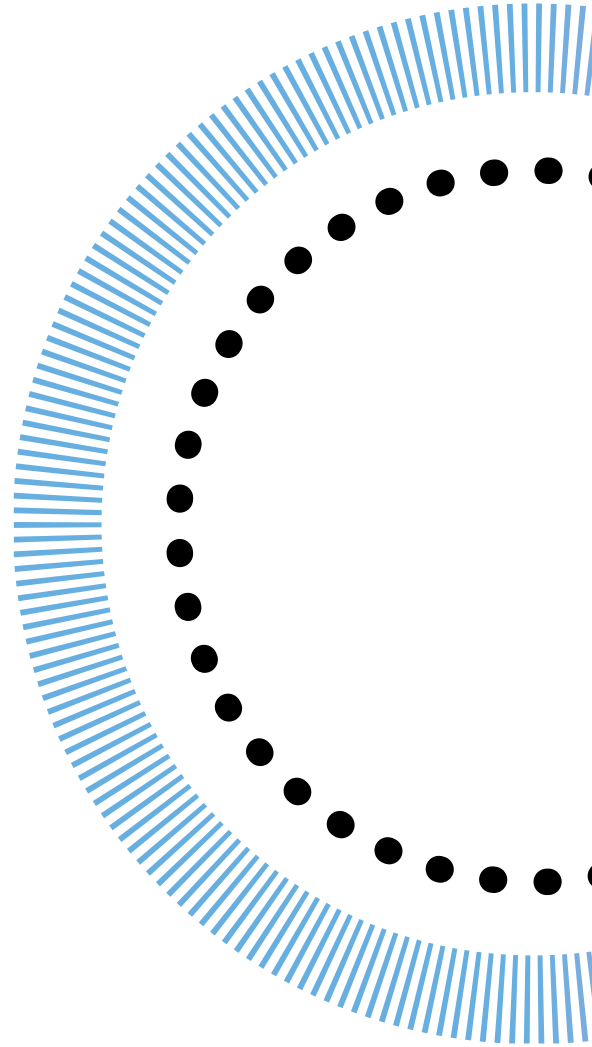
The new strategy incorporates a synchronised, sectoral response to the Covid-19 pandemic with a focus on flexible learning and future-proofing our workforce for the challenging years to come. I very much look forward to working with the SOLAS executive and the wider FET sector to implement this ambitious strategy.

I would like to thank you Minister and your Minister of State colleague, Niall Collins TD, as well as the officials from the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science for their guidance and support throughout 2020. I would also like to acknowledge the work of the SOLAS CEO, Andrew Brownlee, SOLAS staff, ETBI, the Education and Training Boards, Government agencies and bodies, and all our other partners across the FET sector, who have shown great resilience in challenging times and who continue to strive for excellence in provision of further education and training.

On behalf of the Board, we look forward to guiding and supporting SOLAS in a strategic way in the coming years. We will continue to strive to provide strategic direction to SOLAS

throughout the implementation of the *Future FET Strategy 2020-2024*, as well as the continued improvements to the sector overall.

During these uncertain times, it is our collective duty to continue to empower a sector that can truly support learners, industry, and communities across Ireland in the months and years ahead.



Seán Aylward

Chairperson of the Board



CEO's Foreword

2020 has been a year like no other, a year in which we all faced significant and unprecedented challenges both in our personal lives and in the way in which we work and operate as a society. Our ways of working and our ways of accessing and engaging in learning have fundamentally changed during the course of the year, and it seems increasingly likely that permanent change will be a lasting legacy, even if the threat from COVID-19 diminishes over time. The initial shock of the pandemic in March 2020 meant that changes had to be implemented very suddenly, with all FET activity moved online. The core aim of SOLAS, ETBs and other FET providers was to ensure that the learner was protected and that, as far as possible, they could continue to access learning and support throughout this period, with alternative assessment approaches quickly put in place to allow them to complete their course and receive certification. In March 2020, access to eCollege was expanded to provide free online learning service to assist those impacted by Covid-19. The popularity for the online training grew among learners looking to upskill and reskill in key areas such as project management, digital and business skills resulting in over 30,000 learners availing of the service.

SOLAS and the sector worked closely with Government and all our relevant stakeholders to coordinate an effective emergency response.

If anything, this past year has shown just how resilient the FET sector truly is, with an in-built flexibility that means it can respond to unexpected situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrating in the process how FET will be key to economic and societal recovery in the months and years to come.

However, every crisis also presents an opportunity and I believe that FET is now in a

strong position to lead the recovery for Ireland. The second Further Education and Training Strategy, *Future FET: Transforming Learning 2020-2024* was launched in July 2020, setting out a clear, focussed and agile approach by FET to meet the rapidly evolving requirements of work, enterprise, society and our communities. Never was this need more apparent than at the onset of a pandemic, which has severely constrained levels of social and economic activity, in addition to changing forever the traditional means of delivering learning. FET had an imperative to respond to the impact of COVID-19 to ensure that those left unemployed were given the upskilling and reskilling support to find a pathway back into sustainable work. This imperative was built into the short-term response by SOLAS, ETBs and other FET providers, but is reflected throughout the *Future FET* strategy, with its emphasis on simplified pathways, easier access, consistent learner experience, and a stronger identity. The launch of the strategy came shortly after the formation of the new Government, and the exciting creation of a new Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS). The dedicated focus on all of tertiary education, bringing together both FET and HE, offers real potential for FET and Apprenticeships to grow their profile and contribution in meeting Ireland's future skills needs. Minister Simon Harris TD, appointed to lead the new Department, was quick to assert its commitment to a dual focus of facilitating both economic progress and social cohesion. With Minister Niall Collins appointed as Minister of State with a specific remit to look at further education and skills issues, the establishment of DFHERIS represented a real endorsement of the three-pronged approach that characterises FET: skills, pathways and inclusion.

The pandemic has brought into focus the need for transformation in the way we learn. The way that ETBs, other FET providers, agencies and bodies have responded to the challenges of 2020 underlines their commitment to shape and lead this next critical phase of development, and I would like to thank them for their continued excellent work. Some of the highlights of 2020 include the successful rollout of key initiatives, including:

- **Skills to Compete:** Additional investment under the Government's July Stimulus package and the Budget for 2021 to establish Skills to Compete, an initiative delivered by ETBs to upskill and reskill those left unemployed by COVID-19. Targeting the initial delivery of 4,000 full-time and 15,000 part-time places, with the potential to ramp-up to 50,000 in line with demand, the initiative combines employability support, providing the digital skills required for every future career, as well as courses targeting growth sectors and occupations to provide a pathway back into sustainable work.
- **Mitigating against Educational Disadvantage Fund** was announced as part of Budget 2021. The purpose of the fund is to support community education provision targeted at adult learners, who have the highest level of need with a strong focus on building the digital infrastructure of community education providers to increase the capacity to deliver online learning. Over 500 Community education projects throughout Ireland received funding from an overall fund of €5.8 million. The fund is administered by SOLAS, the Further Education and Training Authority and the 16 local Education and Training Boards.
- **Reform and Expansion of Apprenticeships:** The process to further expand and reform the Apprenticeship system is ongoing, with a new action plan expected in early 2021. This will herald a new more cohesive and consistent approach across the traditional craft and the newer 2016-plus apprenticeship programmes, providing a platform to deliver on the Programme for Government ambition to reach 10,000 annual registrations by 2024. It will also look at an enhanced system of incentivising employers to engage in the apprenticeship system. This builds on the launch of the Apprentice Employer Incentive Scheme that was launched in August 2020 and provides funding directly to employers to recruit and retain apprentices.
- **A New Approach to Literacy, Numeracy and the Digital Divide:** SOLAS has been tasked to coordinate the development of a new integrated 10 year literacy, numeracy and digital literacy strategy. While FET has always played a key role in this area, investing circa €30m per annum, the strategy is intended to underpin a more integrated cross-Government, cross-society and cross-economy approach. It will be published in the first quarter of 2021.
- **Developing Green Skills:** SOLAS is expanding a network of Near-Zero Energy Buildings (NZEB) training centres across Ireland, with WWETB and LOETB already offering a range of retrofitting courses to support the upskilling and reskilling needs in delivering this national programme. FET will also develop green skills and environmental awareness across all FET provision, with plans to develop

common modules to equip learners with the knowledge and tools to drive future change.

- **Pathways from School into FET and Apprenticeships:** Both the Future FET strategy and Programme for Government shared an objective of developing links between FET and second-level schools to improve vocational options and pathways. SOLAS is working with ETBs and the NCCA to consider how such pathways could be developed, including TY apprenticeship modules, Level 5 and Level 6 modules that could be an integrated part of a redeveloped senior cycle, and links from schools into FET colleges.

In addition to major changes and success in the wider sector, SOLAS has successfully adapted to our new ways of working during the COVID-19 crisis. SOLAS matured from a paper-based organisation to a digitised one practically

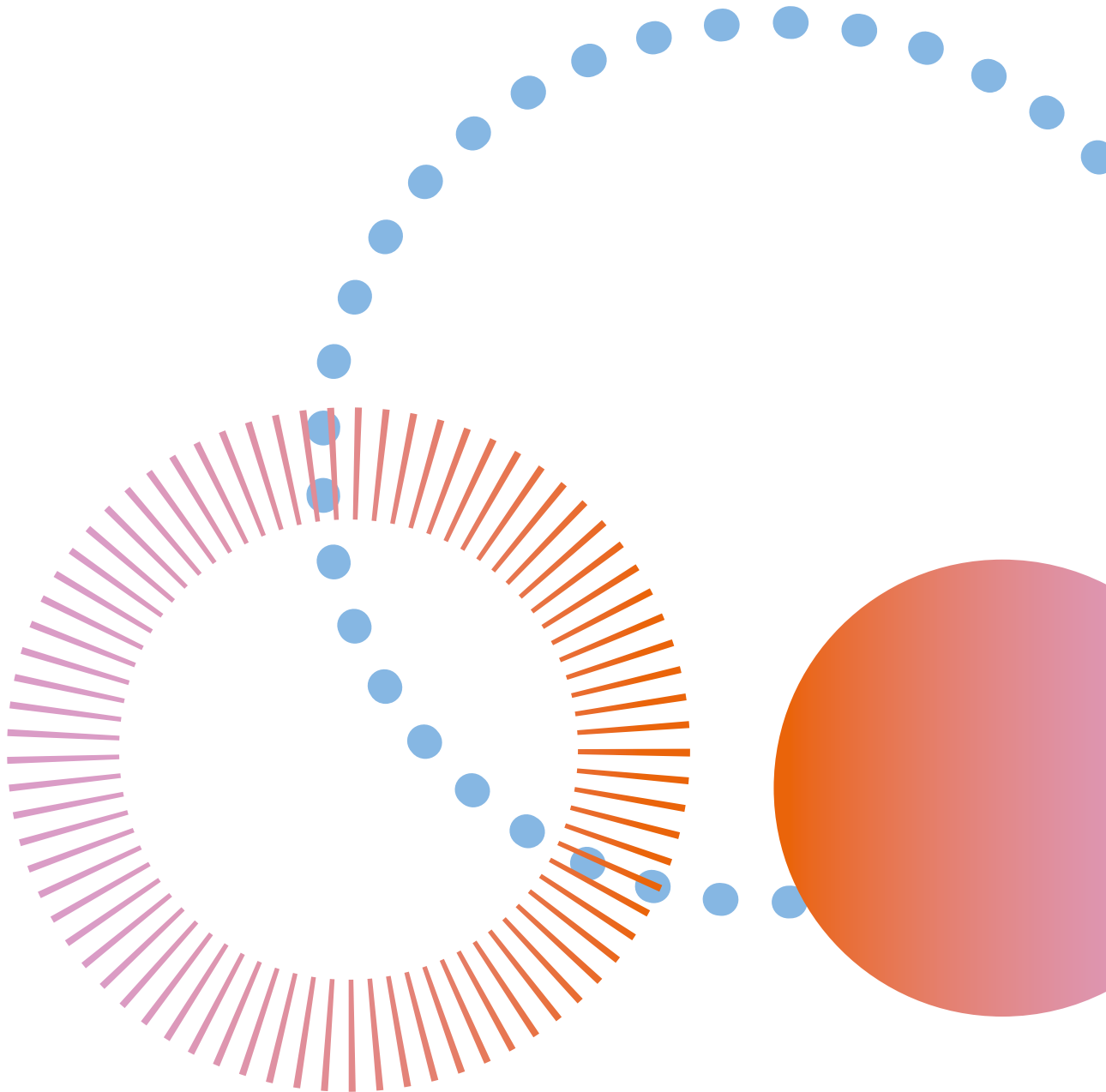
overnight. With the support of our IT and Digital team, SOLAS has managed to continue business as usual with all staff working remotely, meaning there was no interruption of service throughout 2020. Key paper-based systems such as procurement, Safepass applications, and HR documentation have now all been transferred to online systems, reducing our paper usage by over 80%. Additionally, SOLAS staff have managed to stay connected via a series of virtual staff events held throughout the year, including the rollout of our new SOLAS TRIBE values using the LIFT leadership programme, a virtual all staff event, and regular learning events.

Reflecting on what was an extremely tough year for everyone, I am truly proud and inspired by the resilience and innovation shown both by SOLAS staff and by the wider FET sector. The *Future FET* strategy provides us with a roadmap for the future, allowing us to lead the recovery following the COVID-19 crisis and to ensure that we can get Ireland back to work in the year ahead.



Andrew Brownlee
CEO







People are our inspiration. Future FET is our ambition. Transformation is our promise.

SOLAS in 2020

> How did we do?

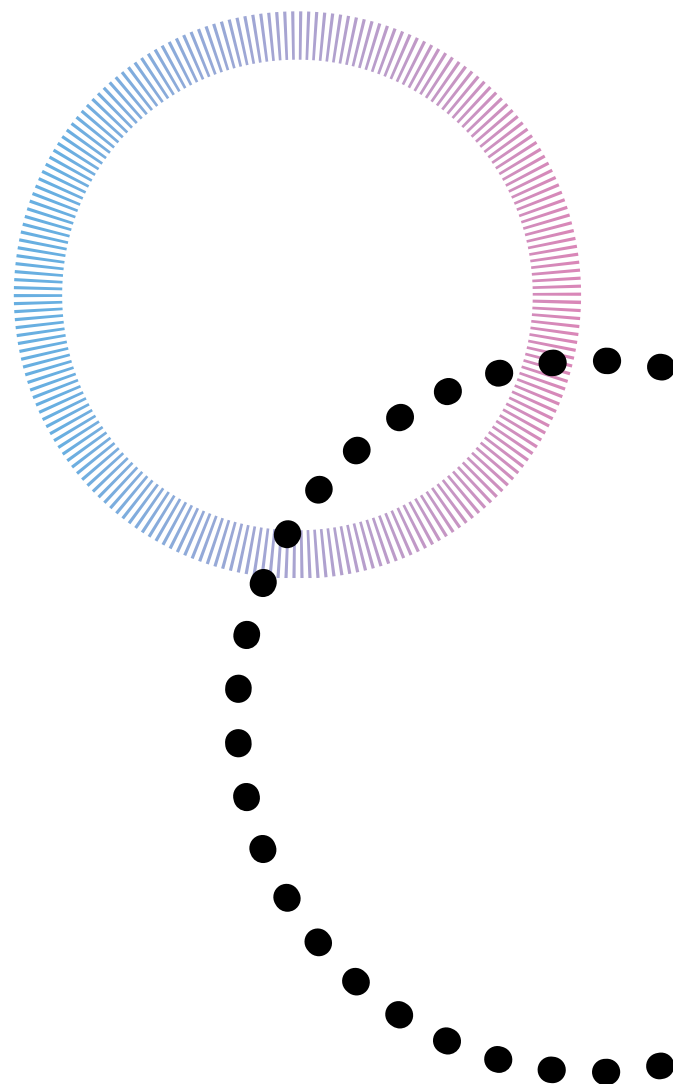
2020 is a memorable year for many reasons, not least the chaos and tragedy wrought by Covid-19. Despite this, 2020 has been a pivotal year for the Further Education and Training sector.

Since we were founded in 2013, SOLAS has been tasked to lead-out on the delivery of a world class Further Education and Training sector in Ireland. 2020 was a turning point for SOLAS in achieving this goal – it was the year our progress to date and our vision for FET became a public point of conversation.

This was in part thanks to the establishment of a new Department dedicated to further and higher education, but also thanks to the launch of our strategy for the next five years, Future FET: Transforming Learning.

The challenges brought about by Covid-19 highlighted the need for a strategic, agile and responsive FET system and highlighted greater societal needs. SOLAS rose to the challenge, opening up our eCollege online learning courses free of charge enhancing our Skills to Advance offering, launching the Mitigating against Educational Disadvantage Fund, and kickstarting the Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy Consultation Process.

While the way we work, learn and communicate has dramatically changed, one thing remained the same throughout 2020 – our commitment to ensuring that the needs of the FET learner remains at the heart of everything SOLAS does.



Our Highlights

1 new strategy
Future FET: Transforming
Learning 2020-2024

€17.3m

in funding for Skills to Advance

€789m

disbursed to the FET Sector

9,000

beneficiaries supported
by ETB Adult Literacy
Services (ALS)

€5.8m

granted to 16 ETBs for community
education under the **Mitigating against
Educational Disadvantage Fund**

over

30,000

eCollege learners

Launch of consultation process for
the development of a new
**10-Year Adult Literacy,
Numeracy and Digital Literacy
Strategy** for Ireland

1,017

female apprentices,
up from 60 in 2016

Finance incentive of

€3,000

made available to employers
hiring apprentices

over

7,000

apprentice employers

A total of
19,630
apprentices

73,892
Safe Pass cards issued

29%
increase in Twitter followers

1 Sustainable Business
Impact award for
SOLAS Workplace Choir

6,497
Safe Pass Courses

6
stakeholder
events

2,366
Construction and Quarry
Skill assessment events

1 Lift our TRIBE
campaign

18,784 Construction and
Quarry skill cards

Evaluating 2020 – strategies and research at SOLAS

> Research, Data and Strategic Engagement

Research and data forms the backbone of all our work at SOLAS. By engaging and investing in research, strategy implementation and understanding the data, we ensure that all of our activities are working towards both SOLAS' corporate goals as well as achieving the national targets for the FET system.

In 2020, following the publication of Future FET: Transforming Learning 2020-2024 Strategy, we commenced an initial phase of implementation planning. This will progress further in 2021 with the planned publication of the FET Strategy Implementation Plan.

As part of our work in 2020 the Research, Data and Strategic Engagement team also supported:

- The ongoing transformation of how we track the performance of FET by measuring outcomes for learners who participated in Post-Leaving Certificate (PLC) provision.
- The roll-out and effective digital transformation of the national FET system learner database and PLSS.
- The publication and promotion of the Department for Education and Skills paper, *Further Education and Training (FET) Progression to Higher Education (HE) Transitions Reform Working Paper*, alongside accompanying resources and information.

We published the FET Fact Systems Reports for 2019, which included a number of papers with a specific focus on different groups of learners.

How do we know what skills gaps there are in Ireland, or how automation is impacting on employment?

SOLAS Skills and Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU) researches, collates data and analyses ongoing trends on the supply and demand of skills in Ireland on behalf of both SOLAS and the National Skills Council.

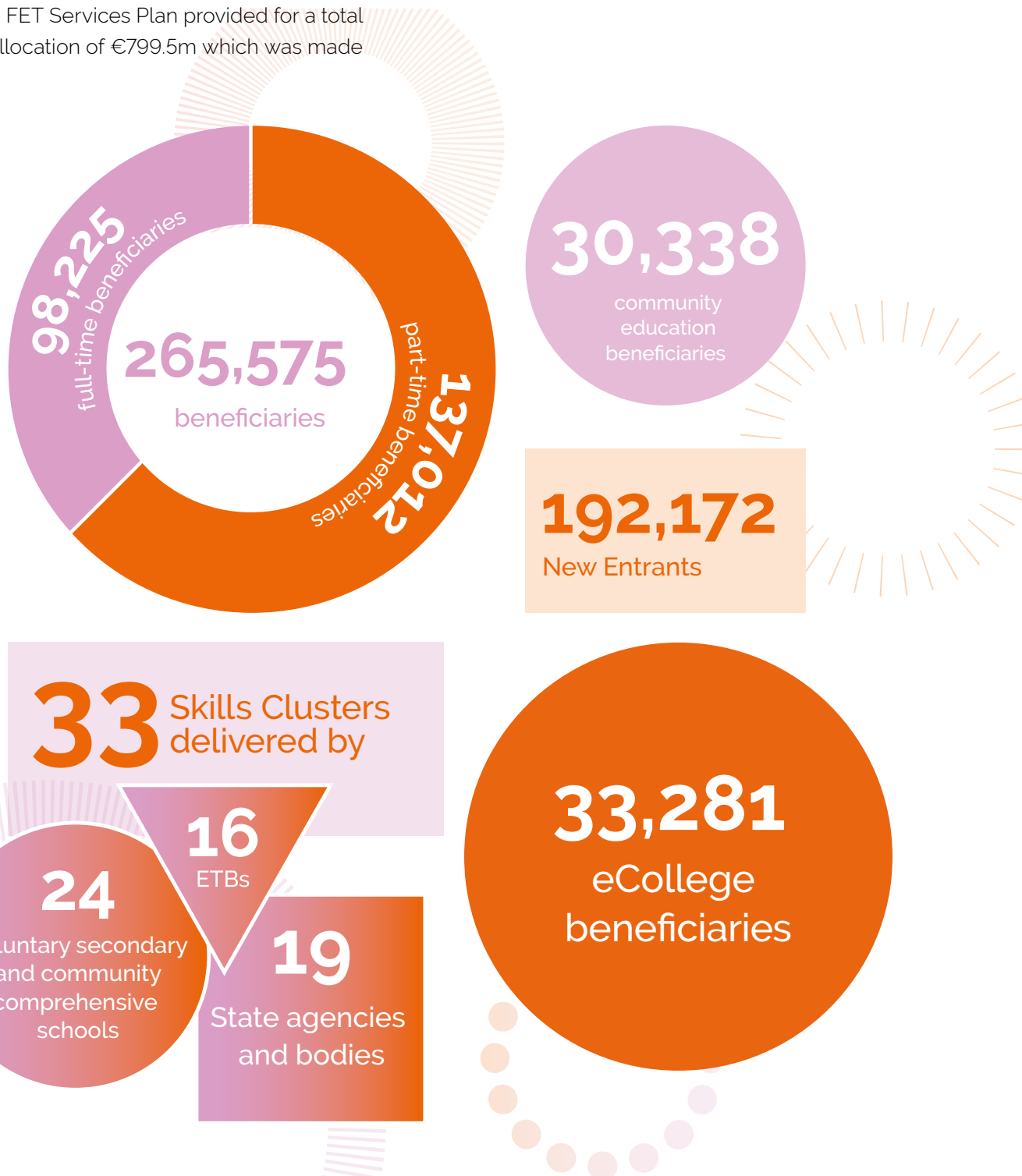
In 2020, the SLMRU provided insights on the impact of Covid-19 on the labour market as detailed in the annual National Skills Bulletin. Their work and publications also included Monitoring Ireland's Skill Supply, a Quarterly Skills Bulletin series which examined employment profiles for non-Irish nationals, post-secondary qualification holders and part-time workers, and an examination of the risk of automation in Ireland.

FET in 2020

SOLAS' System Funding and Performance Unit supports the planning, funding and grant assurance processes attached to the FET sector. Among these, is the annual Funding Allocations Requests (FAR) process which facilitates the submission, by FET providers, of qualitative, quantitative and financial data in support of their funding applications. As a result of this process, the 2020 FET Services Plan provided for a total budget allocation of €799.5m which was made

available for SOLAS funded further education and training provision in 2020, including a capital allocation of €17.5m.

The System Funding and Performance Unit also collects and collates quantitative data, reported by ETBs, primarily through the PLSS and FARR systems, to provide reports on FET provision. Below is an illustration containing information on the FET activity that was reported by ETBs through these mechanisms in 2020.



Skills Development

> Apprenticeship

Apprenticeships and work-based learning is at the heart of SOLAS in our role as the statutory authority for apprenticeship in Ireland.

In 2020, Covid-19 highlighted the important role apprentices play in providing essential services but also disrupted both on and off the job training for a significant number of apprentices. Despite these challenges, the number of apprentices registered continued to grow, new apprenticeships were launched, and a financial incentive for apprentice employers was rolled out. In addition, the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science launched a consultation for a new five year Action Plan for Apprenticeship.

Response to Covid-19

Since March 2020, Covid-19 has significantly impacted on apprenticeship training, particularly craft programmes which are practical-based. In response, providers of many programmes switched to blended learning in response and innovative assessment solutions were introduced across all 59 programmes. Providers responded positively to new challenges in monitoring and managing issues, while employers demonstrated resilience in supporting existing apprentices and addressing the challenges of recruiting new apprentices in a remote environment.

Despite the disruption of Covid-19, courses and programmes became more accessible to learners and new courses and programmes were introduced across sectors including Arboriculture, Engineering, Logistics, Recruitment, and Sales. A total of five new apprenticeships were launched in 2020. This brings the number of operational apprenticeships in Ireland to 59, including 25 in craft apprenticeships which include popular occupations such as electrical, and carpentry and joinery.

Building on the success of 2019, an important milestone was reached in December when the 1000th woman apprentice was registered in Ireland. The number of women participating in apprenticeship has grown substantially year-on-year from just 60 in 2016, to 151 in 2017, 341 in 2018 and 665 in 2019.

Overall, the apprenticeship population continued to grow with the total apprenticeship population at the end of 2020 at 19,630, up from 17,829 in 2019.

In line with our objective to ensure apprenticeships meet the demands of the labour market and provide sustainable careers, we continued to work with our Skills and Labour Market Research team to examine current and future labour market trends.

In response to emerging needs such as green skills, new training modules in electric vehicles and near zero energy buildings are being included in craft programmes. Minor reviews of five craft apprenticeships – Electrical, Plumbing, Carpentry & Joinery, Heavy Vehicle Mechanic (HVM) and Metal Fabrication were also completed.

As secretariat to the Apprenticeship Council, we undertook significant engagement with apprenticeship consortia and other stakeholders, including at partners' meetings.

2020 also saw an increase in the number of employers listed on the national apprenticeship system – now at over 7,000, and in August Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science Simon Harris TD launched a €3,000 financial incentive for employers to take on apprentices.

From the apprentices' perspective, our third successful "Generation Apprenticeship" campaign and competition continued to boost awareness among school leavers.

**For information on all available apprenticeship courses and related data, see Appendices.*

> Apprenticeships 2020 in numbers



New Apprenticeships in 2020		
Arboriculture		
Arboriculture	Level 6	2 Years
Engineering		
Principle Engineer	Level 10	4 Years
Logistics		
Supply Chain Associate	Level 7	3 Years
Recruitment		
Recruitment Executive	Level 8	3 Years
Sales		
Sales	Level 6	2 Years

> Traineeship

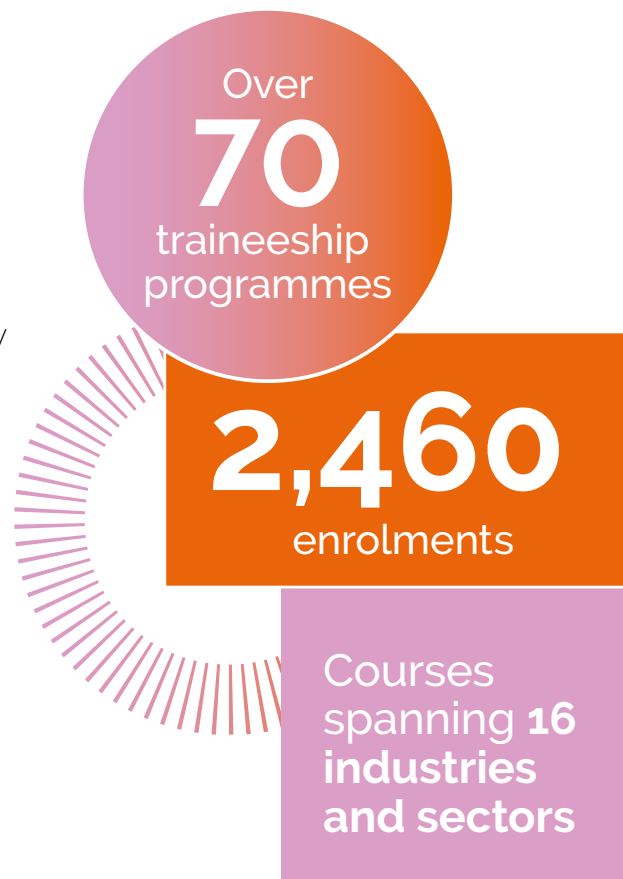
Our commitment to fund and support traineeships continued throughout 2020, with over 70 programmes covering 16 sectors rolled out by Education and Training Boards across the country – including sectors such as Hospitality, Finance, Media, Logistics, Fashion and Beauty.

Education and Training Boards identified industry skills needs and responded accordingly, such as introducing the new Dental Nursing traineeship.

The Action Plan to Expand Apprenticeship and Traineeship 2016-2020 set specific targets regarding enrolments on traineeship programmes (19,000) and the development of new programmes (30).

A total of 2,460 trainees enrolled on traineeship programmes in 2020.

**Information on all traineeships in 2020 available in the Appendices.*



> Construction and Quality Assurance Services

SOLAS's responsibility in managing the construction industry's statutory health and safety courses such as the Safe Pass course was challenged significantly with the outbreak of Covid-19 and changing restrictions and regulations imposed during 2020.

While many courses were halted in the early part of the year, in June 2020 SOLAS was granted approval to recommence Safe Pass courses with reduced ratios and remained active for the rest of the year.

During 2020 the SOLAS provider network delivered 2,366 CSCS and QSCS training and assessment events and disseminated 18,784 CSCS and QSCS cards, of which 7,565 were new cards, 9,986 were renewal cards while 870 were replacement cards. The number of CSCS and QSCS cards issued in 2020 was down 30 per cent on 2019, with this reduction primarily attributed to the impact of Covid-19.

To ensure the adherence with SOLAS's pandemic containment guidelines, SOLAS conducted independent monitoring of 91 Safe Pass courses delivered by 138 tutors. SOLAS issued 73,892 Safe Pass cards, including 3,112 replacement cards, a 34 per cent reduction on the number of Safe Pass cards issued in 2019. This reduction is attributed directly to Covid-19 restrictions and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment providing a legal derogation for Safe Pass cards that expired after March 2020.

> Innovation

Skills to Advance

Building on the success of 2019, we achieved great progress in relation to our Skills to Advance initiative. This new policy, developed in 2018 by SOLAS and the Department of Education and Skills (DES), has been successfully rolled out across ETBs and enables targeted skills development for vulnerable groups in the Irish workforce. There is an emphasis on helping those

who have lower skills levels and who would benefit greatly from opportunities to upskill. The policy also supports small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) who need assistance to invest in and develop their workforce.

The number of employees trained via Skills to Advance was approximately 9,000 at the end of December 2020.

Over 1,000 programmes were rolled out by the ETBs despite the challenges presented by Covid-19 and the need to move to online provision.

SOLAS launched a number of national and regional media campaigns to promote and raise awareness of Skills to Advance and support the roll out of targeted initiatives such as the Leadership and Management initiative aimed to equip businesses with the right skills for their front-line management teams.

Due to Covid-19, Brexit and other external challenges the demand for effective leadership in teams was crucial to maximising a company's ability to deal with the emerging challenges and opportunities. Working with strategic enterprise partners, SOLAS and the ETBs developed this new programme to provide critical skills to include managing change, motivating staff, digital and remote working.

Micheál Briody, CEO of Silver Hill Foods, commented

“ I would encourage any company to place its staff on this course in Leadership & Management. We've done them down through the years here in Silver Hill and time and time again, I see that they have been a huge catalyst to our success. We will continue to invest in training and in our employees. ”

eCollege

In March 2020, access to eCollege was expanded to provide free online learning service to assist those impacted by Covid-19. The popularity of the online training grew among learners looking to upskill and reskill in key areas such as project management, digital and business skills resulting in over 30,000 learners availing of the service.

While IT-related courses still form the bulk of the demand-led provision, there continues to be increased demand for generic and transversal skills courses. In 2020, there was sustained demand for courses, with an increase in demand from those in employment. The trend in those undertaking eCollege courses increased, indicating growing recognition of online learning as a viable medium for career development and lifelong learning.

> FET Professional Learning and Development (PL&D) Statement of Strategy 2020-2024

The FET Professional Learning and Development (PL&D) Statement of Strategy 2020-2024 was developed in consultation with the sector. It will shape the evolution of professional learning and development to deliver on the future FET goals as set out in the Further Education and Training Strategy 2020-2024. It sets new directions for investment in the professional learning and development of all those who work in the sector. FET learners will be the ultimate beneficiaries.

The new strategy will build on the achievements of the previous FET Professional Development Strategy 2017-2019. It creates a compelling vision of how professional learning and development empowers those working in the sector to transform the experience of learners. FET staff will learn the skills to anticipate, respond to and meet the evolving needs of learners in a constantly changing environment.

TEL

The Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) support unit provided ongoing support to ETBs in 2020 to integrate technology enhanced learning practices. As the sector pivoted to online learning due to Covid-19, the focus was on ensuring the Moodle infrastructure used throughout FET was optimised to meet demand. We rolled out service improvements to the Moodle infrastructure, which will continue to improve the learning platform in 2021.

The TEL support unit also provides frameworks for digital learning supports which are procured and managed centrally by SOLAS, without any cost to the FET provider using the supports. Support provided included Adobe Creative Cloud licenses, similarity detection software, and access to Certiport certifications for FET learners, all of which grew in significance following the outbreak of Covid-19.

> Learner Support

Fostering Inclusion - Learner Support

The SOLAS Learner Support Team is responsible for ensuring active inclusion principles are central to all our activities, ensuring that the principle of 'Inclusion for All' is at the core of the Further Education and Training (FET) sector.

The Learner Support Team works with our partners in the Further Education and Training sector to support learners, often the most disadvantaged, as they develop a range of skills. These can be skills for daily living, personal fulfilment, active citizenship and community participation, as well as more work-focussed skills.

Inclusive practices in FET were supported and promoted through a variety of projects in 2020 – among these were projects on Universal Design for Learning, Inclusion of Learners with Intellectual Disabilities, and Good Practice Guidelines and Fit for Purpose Assessment Systems for Literacy, Numeracy and Language (ESOL).

A significant development in achieving our objectives was the Government's announcement to progress a new 10-year Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy (ALND) Strategy.

(ALND) Strategy

Following on from a commitment in the Programme for Government, 'Our Shared Future', in November 2020 the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science set out plans for the development of the 10-year Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy. The Minister tasked SOLAS to work with stakeholders towards developing the strategy, coming under the remit of the Learner Support Team. The Learner Support Team is undertaking this important task on behalf of SOLAS.

It is envisaged that the 10-year strategy will adopt a whole-of-Government approach and provide a framework for collaboration between

Government departments, agencies, service providers and other key stakeholders so to support individuals to improve and maintain their literacy, numeracy and digital literacy. Its aim will be to ensure that everyone has the necessary literacy, numeracy and digital literacy to meet their needs and to enable all to participate fully in society. It will inform and guide relevant provisions within the Further Education and Training (FET) system to deliver on this aim.

Promotion

Developing, promoting and encouraging literacy, numeracy and digital literacy is central to further education and training. The SOLAS Learner Support Team has supported and funded the national literacy and numeracy awareness raising campaign 'Take the First Step' (www.takethefirststep.ie) for the past four years. The campaign, managed on behalf of SOLAS by National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) and a broad-based National Steering Group, helps people who have difficulties with reading, writing, maths, or technology. The 2020 campaign encouraged people to seek assistance and support if they experienced literacy difficulties. Of those who engaged with the campaign, approximately 9 in 10 believed it was effective at encouraging people to consider seeking help for literacy, numeracy and basic technology difficulties. Building on from 2019, the campaign again secured pro bono support from RTÉ to broadcast learner stories across a range of RTÉ platforms.

Good Practice Guidelines

Our Learner Support Team also funded a number of projects aimed at facilitating access and participation for diverse groups of individuals in 2020. Much of this body of work was conducted during 2020 and the remainder is due for publication in early 2021.

Family Literacy

Family literacy continues to be a key focus for SOLAS and its partners across FET. The supporting role of parents in the education of their children has long been acknowledged as a crucial step to addressing different types of disadvantage. During 2020, many parents found it challenging to support their children's learning, particularly during the Covid-19 lockdown. In April, SOLAS published two reports, *Enabling Intergenerational Learning*, and *Family Literacy Practice in ETBs*, that focused on the needs of parents who themselves struggle with literacy and numeracy. The reports also outlined how parents can help both themselves and their children to develop good literacy and numeracy skills. Managed by NALA and overseen by the ETBI Literacy and Numeracy Advisory Committee, the research project resulted in detailed background study on intergenerational learning, practical guidelines and recommendations for the FET sector and illustrative case studies for FET practitioners.

Universal Design for Learning in FET

SOLAS, in collaboration with AHEAD and supported by ETBI, finalised the development of inclusive learning environments using a Universal Design for Learning Framework project. In early 2020, a scoping document, setting out a Conceptual Framework of Universal Design for Learning for FET, was published and launched by SOLAS CEO Andrew Brownlee at the AHEAD Annual Conference. During 2020 AHEAD engaged in significant further consultation, enabled and supported by SOLAS, to produce the project's final output – UDL for FET Practitioners: Guidance for Implementing Universal Design for Learning in Irish Further Education and Training. It is planned that this guidance document will be published and made available as a resource to FET practitioners around the country in the first half of 2021.

Screening and Assessment

Supporting and developing top-quality assessment systems is central to achieving our

active inclusion goals. In 2020, SOLAS funded research project on Screening and Assessment of Literacy and Numeracy at NFQ levels 4-6 in ETBs. The SOLAS Learner Support Team has also funded the development of Good Practice Guidelines for Initial Assessment of English Language Competency for Migrant Learners. These reports are due for publication in early 2021. This important work on screening and assessment of literacy, numeracy and English language competency will complement previously published Good Practice Guidelines for initial and ongoing assessment of literacy and numeracy at levels 1-3.

Inclusion of Learners with Disabilities

The Further Education and Training Strategy 2020-2024 emphasises inclusion, skills, and pathways for all learners. Not only does adult literacy support, enable and provide access to richer educational experiences for all, it also opens many other opportunities in further education and training for learners with an intellectual disability.

Building on previously published guidelines on the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in adult literacy, SOLAS in partnership with NALA and ETBI, have progressed the development of case studies and a background research report on the use of these guidelines in ETBs, with recommendations on how to further progress such inclusive practices. The current project (Implementation of Guidelines on the Inclusion of Learners with Intellectual Disabilities in Adult Literacy Services: Background Report and Implementation of Guidelines on the Inclusion of Learners with Intellectual Disabilities in Adult Literacy Services: Case Studies) serves to support the Adult Literacy Services in using the Guidelines, to provide a contemporary picture of inclusive practices with reference to the Guidelines and to capture the learning involved to inform relevant developments across the Further Education and Training sector and to further enhance the Guidelines as necessary.

> Branding, Communications and Strategy Implementation

2020 was a year like no other, though a year when communication became even more vital to everybody. During 2020, the Branding, Communications and Strategy Implementation (BCSI) team had to adapt quickly to the changed environment and move everything online. While there were some difficulties with reaching out and staying connected in a solely digital world, in many ways this virtual communication allowed even greater connection, both inside and outside SOLAS. The highlight of the year was the successful launch of the new #FutureFET Strategy: Transforming Learning held in a socially distanced way in July 2020. The previous month, the BCSI team also managed to host SOLAS's first ever virtual All Staff Event, while later in October 2020, SOLAS were awarded a Sustainable Business Impact Award from Chambers Ireland for the work of the SOLAS Choir and the TEDxMountjoyPrison event in 2019. Events proved difficult in 2020, being either socially distanced and therefore small, or else fully online. Nevertheless, the BCSI team managed to host 5 external events throughout the year:

- The #FutureFET Strategy launch event (July)
- National Skills Bulletin - Webinar Chambers Ireland (October)
- Pfizer Apprenticeship Ministerial visit: "Good for Students, Good for Business" (October)
- TU Dublin Apprentice Employer Incentivisation Scheme (October)
- D8 Community Education Centre Ministerial visit (December)

Additionally, SOLAS held a successful All Staff Event in June 2020, a full day of staff engagement on New Ways of Working at SOLAS and the launch of the "LIFT our TRIBE" initiative with the rollout of the LIFT leadership

roundtables and SOLAS TRIBE Values. BCSI also devised and led on the "LIFT our TRIBE" internal communications campaign in the run-up to the All Staff Event in partnership with the People team and the Values Committee.

Connecting with FET Learners through social media was a key mechanism for keeping the sector up-to-date as the Covid-19 crisis evolved, and for staying connected during the pandemic.

In 2020, Twitter followers for SOLAS accounts increased by 168 followers per month on average, with an overall increase of almost 2k followers, up 29% since 2019. Moreover, BCSI kept stakeholders updated with a number of key reports published during the year:

- FET Strategy 2020-2024
- FET Learner Outcomes Report (PLC)
- FET Facts and Figures 2019
- FET in Numbers x5 – Roma, Traveller, Lifelong Learner, eCollege, Disability
- National Skills Bulletin
- Spring Skills Bulletin, Summer Skills Bulletin, and Autumn Skills Bulletin
- Monitoring Irelands Skill Supply
- Future Jobs in Ireland: Automation Risk
- FET Services Plan 2020
- Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Skills Consultation Paper
- SOLAS Corporate Social Responsibility Statement
- Transitions Reform Working Paper (joint with DES)
- Screening & Assessment Toolkit Level 4-6
- Good Practice Guidelines for Numeracy Provision for Adults Level 1-3
- Inclusion of Learners with Intellectual Disabilities

- ESOL Report Level 1-3
- PD Statement of Strategy

Additionally, a number of significant internal strategy documents were published in 2020:

- Corporate Plan 2020
- Annual Report 2019
- People Strategy
- Performance Management suite
- CSR Statement

BCSI also supported a number of campaigns throughout the year, including the FET Covid-19 Response campaign. Additionally, there were several virtual campaigns launched across our social media platforms for Family Literacy, This is FET (targeted at CAO and Leaving Certificate), Skills to Advance, Generation Apprenticeship Competition, the Mitigating Against Educational Disadvantage Fund, VET Week and College Awareness Week. Some significant announcements were also supported using social media and targeted advertisements, including:

- Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy 10 year Strategy and launch of Consultation Process
- Apprenticeship Incentivisation Scheme
- Generation Apprenticeship Competition
- Generation Apprenticeship Competition Winners
- Apprenticeship Employer of the Year Awards

Finally, BCSI continued to support internal communication through a number of initiatives including the introduction of a new monthly SOLAS eNewsletter "Spotlight on SOLAS", 12@12s, Brunch and Learns, one-to-one check in with every staff member, and a virtual SOLAS Christmas Party.

> People

Human Capital Report 2020

SOLAS People Team Annual Report 2020

What is Human Capital?

Human capital is the sum of knowledge, skills, experience and social qualities that contribute to a person's ability to perform work in a manner that produces economic value. Research has shown that when you invest in peoples' human capital, organisations benefit and exponentially grow. Human capital is now seen as an extension of Human Resource Management HRM.

Why is SOLAS Reporting this way?

SOLAS has an ambition to lead the way in further education and training in Ireland. In achieving this, the People Team also have an ambition to be one of the most innovative Strategic HR Departments in the Public Service. To actualise these ambitions, SOLAS believes that an investment in their people is vital in being a model organisation and leader in its field.

With the creation of a clear roadmap in the SOLAS People Strategy, this Human Capital Report (HCR) focuses on the areas where the People Team will have the most impact over the coming years.

Top 3 Areas of Focus for the People Team in 2020

- 1 **Employee**
- 2 **HR Stats & Analytics**
- 3 **Organisational Workforce**

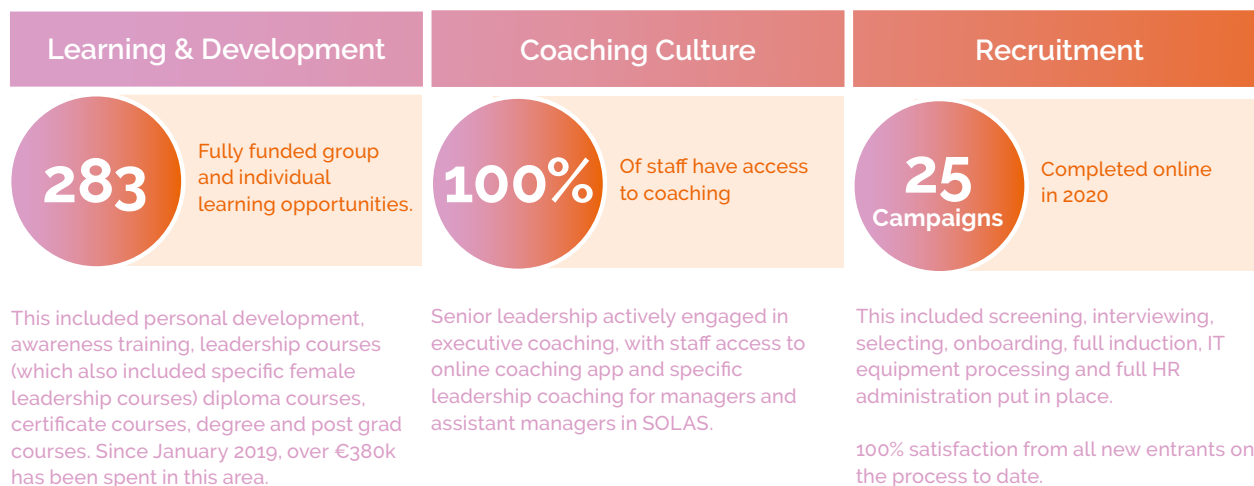
Our Roadmap for the Future - Guiding Our Future Work



2020 Areas of Delivery

Employee (Individual)	HR Stats & Analytics	Organisational WorkForce
Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employee Experience - SOLAS Values - Learning & Development - Centralised educational funds - Life Cycle Changes - Virtual Onboarding - Working from Home Supports Health & Well-being <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Virtual well-being initiatives - Mental Health policy - Staff one-2-ones - Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) - Gender Pay Gap Data provision. 	HR Data & Stats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Salary Administration - Recruitment & Selection - Sickness & Absences - Pension administration - Staff Development Process - Departmental HR Statistics - Policy Development & Review - Dispute resolution HR Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CoreHR Upgrade 2020 - CoreHR Optimisation incl. flexi leave, annual leave, travel & subsistence - Learning Management Sys (LMS) - Performance & Development Process (PDP). 	WorkForce Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Structural Refresh - Divisional changes & internal communication process - Organisational wide coaching practice - Values led approach - Restructure of the People Team aligned to org requirements - SOLAS headcount agreed at Department level 2020 onwards. People Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation plan Public Sector Duty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PSD Audit request and completion

Key Wins 2020

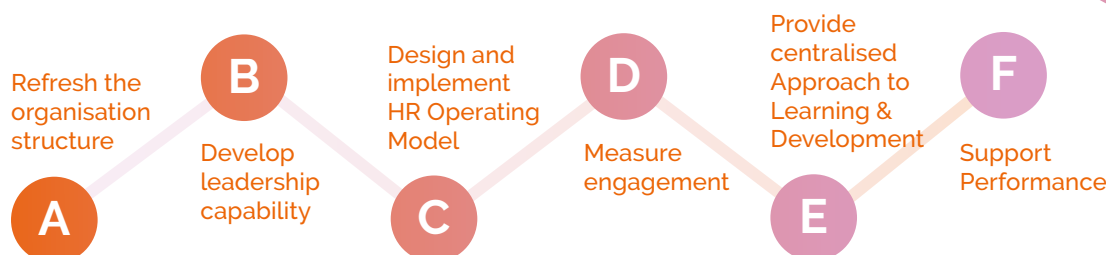


People Strategy Progress 2020

Strategic Pillars - 2020 Progress		
Making Work Better	Talent to Thrive	Culture of Excellence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved Recruitment & Selection practices - Increased focus on well-being in SOLAS - Increase in survey participation for 2020 by SOLAS staff - Development of policies related to changing nature of work - Pace of change to meet Covid needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhanced Performance & Development Process - Implementation of the SOLAS Learning Academy Phase 1 of L&D strategy - Introduction of the SOLAS Learning Management System (LMS) MetaCompliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organisational focus on Public Sector Duty requirements. - Development of People balanced scorecard (BSC) - Year on Year improvement in survey engagement results. - Creation of SOLAS round tables on Values culture

Achievement Summary 2020

A strong coaching culture - Values Led Approach



"Implement the SOLAS People Strategy 2020 to 2024"

➤ Corporate Social Responsibility

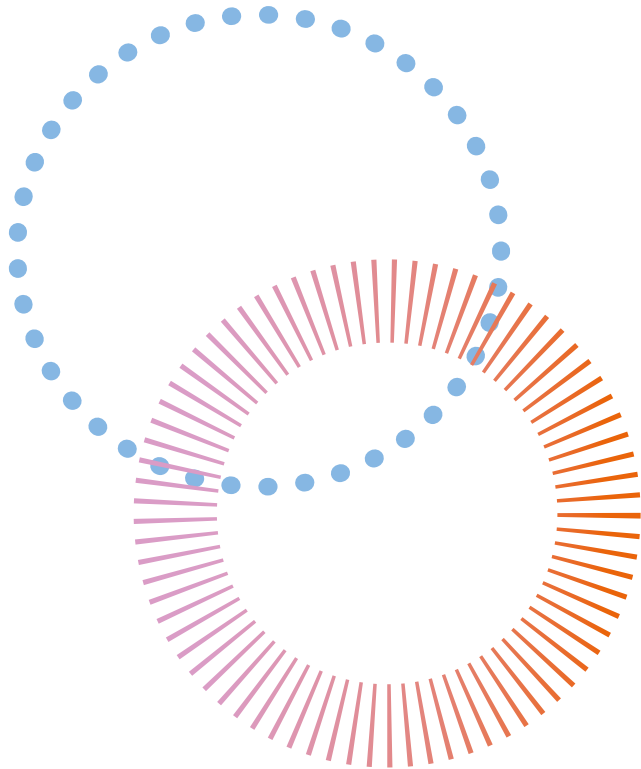
A key achievement in 2021 was the success enjoyed by our Workplace Choir in winning the Chambers Ireland Sustainable Business Impact Workplace Award 2020, for its work with the Mountjoy Prison Men's Choir and Dublin Simon.

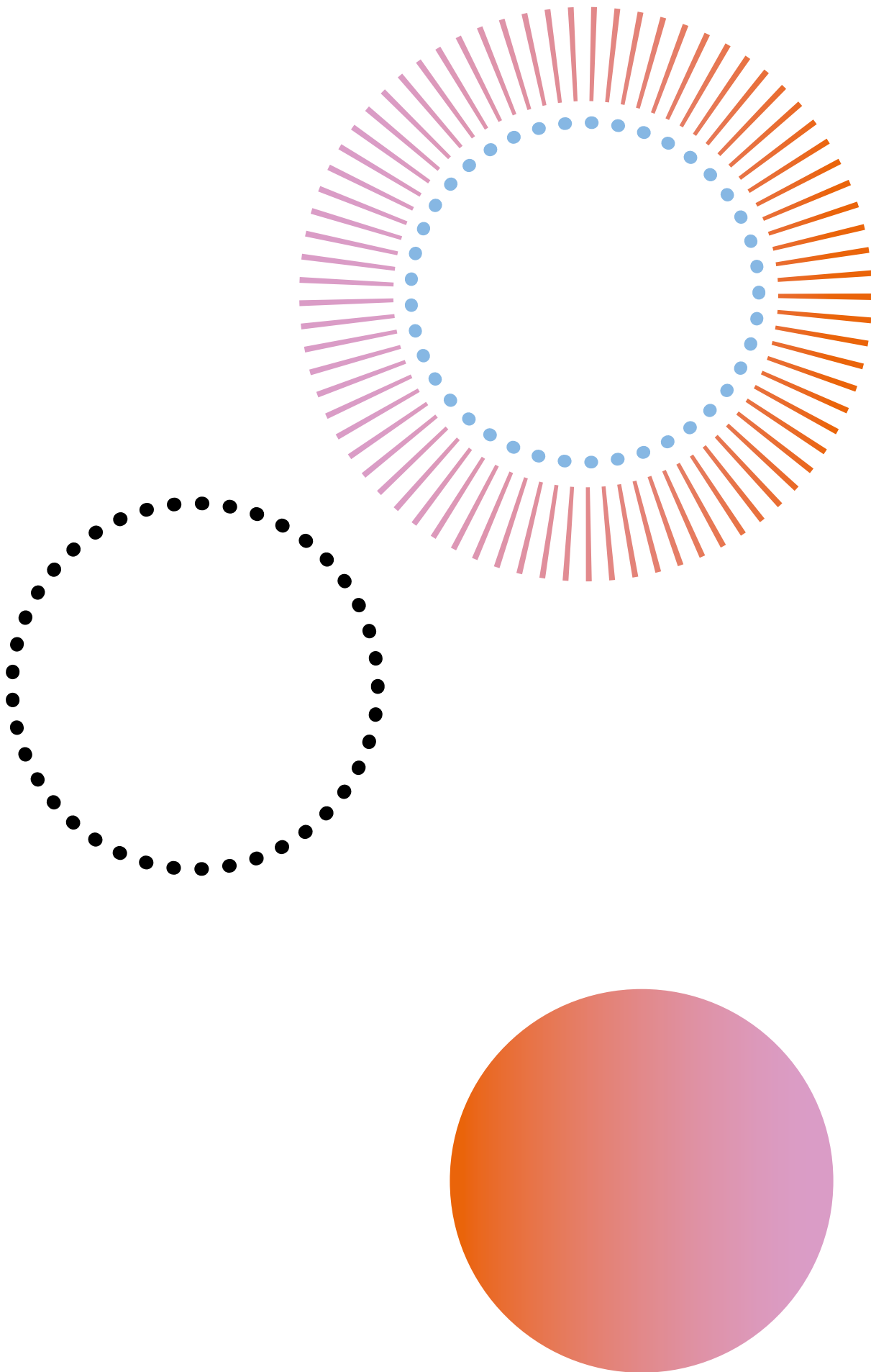
SOLAS also officially launched its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Statement in June 2020.

In reaction to the Covid-19 Pandemic, we re-engaged with staff to identify if there were more pertinent areas requiring focus in the Covid-19 climate.

There were 25 activities implemented across our three CSR strands; 'Our Workplace', 'Our Community' and 'Our Planet'.

Under the strands of "Our Community" and "Our Planet" We continued in 2020 to recycle old IT equipment and distribute to the Camara Ireland initiative to improve education opportunities in disadvantaged communities.





Analytics 2020

@thisisfet

1 st Jan 2020	31 st Dec 2020	New Followers	% Increase
486 Twitter	1,311 Twitter	825 Twitter	169 Twitter
83 Facebook	700 Facebook	617 Facebook	743 Facebook
380 Instagram	1,050 Instagram	670 Instagram	172 Instagram

Thisisfet.ie

62,000
unique users

87,000
page views

1.3m
page views

solas.ie

244,000
unique users

fetchcourses.ie

538,975

unique users

over

6.5m

page views

SOLAS' social media following saw a steady increase to **8,190** Twitter followers with the number of LinkedIn followers and YouTube subscribers also continuing to grow.

over

1.5m

page views

apprenticeship.ie

318,000

unique users

We also saw growth in the number of followers across social media accounts. To the end of December 2020, apprenticeship social media accounts achieved

3,850

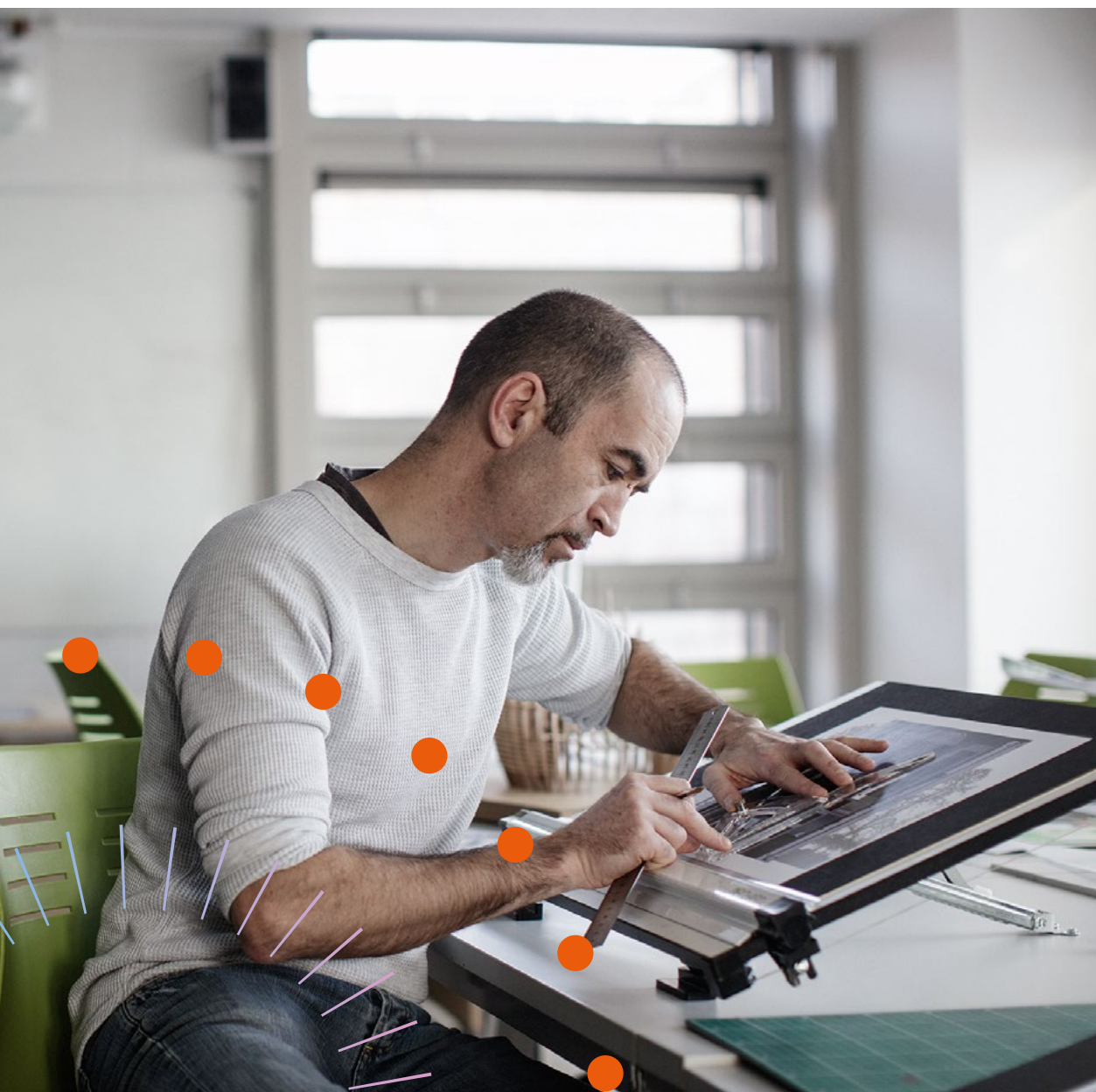
Twitter followers

19,000

Facebook followers

1,500

Instagram followers



We're committed to ensuring that the needs of the FET learner remains at the heart of everything SOLAS does.

Corporate Governance

> Legislative Mandate

SOLAS (An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna) – Further Education and Training Authority was established on 27th October 2013 under the Further Education and Training Act 2013.

Under the Further Education and Training Act 2013, the general functions of SOLAS are defined as:

- (a) prepare and submit to the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science a strategy in respect of the provision of FET;
- (b) promote an appreciation of the value of FET;
- (c) consult with the Minister for Social Protection, the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and employers from time to time for the purpose of determining which, or which classes of, FET programmes should be the subject of advances by An tSeirbhís;
- (d) advance moneys to Education and Training Boards and other bodies engaged in the provision of FET programmes;
- (e) provide or arrange for the provision of training and retraining for employment and to assist in and co-ordinate the provision of such training by persons other than An tSeirbhís;
- (f) assess whether or not Education and Training Boards, and other bodies engaged in the provision of FET programmes, to whom moneys have been advanced perform their functions in an economic, efficient and effective manner;
- (g) promote, encourage and facilitate the placement of persons belonging to such class or classes of person as may be specified by the Minister for Social Protection after consultation with the

Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science in FET programmes that are funded, in whole or in part, out of public moneys;

- (h) promote co-operation between Education and Training Boards and other bodies involved in the provision of FET and programmes;
- (i) promote equality of opportunity in relation to the provision of FET;
- (j) develop and facilitate the development of new and existing FET programmes including the establishment of systems designed to monitor the quality of the education and training concerned for the purpose of ensuring that those programmes serve their purpose;
- (k) provide or assist in the provision of training to persons charged with the delivery of FET programmes in respect of which moneys have been advanced by An tSeirbhís under *section 21*;
- (l) conduct, or arrange for the conduct of, research as respects any matters relating to the functions of An tSeirbhís; and
- (m) advise the Minister in relation to any matter connected with the functions of An tSeirbhís.
- (n) on-going assistance is provided by SOLAS to the ETBs on a range of transition and other supports.

In addition to its core functions as defined under the FET Act 2013, SOLAS also retains responsibility for Apprenticeship and construction-related programmes, i.e. Safe Pass, CSCS and QSCS and e-College.

Code of Practice for Governance of State Bodies

The Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016, which superseded the 2009 code came into effect in September 2016. It has been adopted by SOLAS and processes have been

put in place to ensure that all aspects of SOLAS operations comply with the requirements of the Code.

Performance Delivery Agreement

SOLAS have an annual performance delivery agreement in place with the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science which sets out: the respective roles and functions of DFHERIS and SOLAS with regard to further education and training; service commitments; corporate governance and financial accountability framework; and monitoring and reporting arrangements.

In 2018, SOLAS agreed a three year Strategic Performance Agreement with each of the 16 Education and Training Boards. These Strategic Performance Agreements were reviewed mid cycle and will be subject to a final review in April 2021.

Corporate Health and Safety

SOLAS complies with its statutory responsibilities under the Health, Safety and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and all regulations under this Act. SOLAS' objective is to provide a safe and healthy work environment for all staff and clients and to meet its responsibilities to other persons, including members of the public who may be affected by its operations. SOLAS management co-ordinates and ensures compliance with its Safety Policy Statement through the implementation of the Safety Management System across the organisation.

Risk

SOLAS, through its Risk Management Policy, is committed to the implementation of a coherent, effective, and efficient framework for managing risk throughout the organisation. It also provides a proactive and structured approach to identifying, managing and reporting the risks faced by the organisation. The Board of SOLAS is ultimately responsible for risk management under the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. The Board has delegated authority to

the Audit & Risk Committee (ARC) regarding the monitoring, review, challenging and oversight of the Risk Management Framework and Process. Identified significant risks to the organisation are documented in the SOLAS Corporate Risk Register and as part of the Risk Management Process the Corporate Risk Register is reviewed by the ARC three times yearly and presented to the Board for review at least once a year. As required by procedure, the Risk Management Policy was reviewed and updated by senior management and the Audit & Risk Committee. The Policy, including the risk appetite statement was approved by the Board and circulated to all staff.

Data Protection Acts, 1988, 2003 and 2018/ General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The Data Protection Acts are designed to protect the privacy of individuals' personal data. The Acts provide individuals with the right to obtain a copy of all personal data relating to them which is held by the Data Controller. SOLAS is a designated Data Controller and complies fully with the legislation. SOLAS is committed to ensuring the Lawful, Fair and Transparent processing of Data Subjects Personal Data using appropriate technical and organisational measures. SOLAS will take all reasonable steps to secure and protect Data Subjects personal Data while complying with Data Protection Law. Some of the steps taken to secure Data Subjects personal data include the appointment of a Data Protection Officer; provision of staff training re data protection; the preparation of privacy notices; third party processing contracts and non-disclosure agreements in respect of SOLAS activities; the preparation of GDPR policies and procedures including a Data Protection Notice; a Data Protection Policy; a Public Privacy Notice; Data Subject Data Protection procedures and the development and implementation of a GDPR compliance programme.

Protected Disclosure Act 2014

In 2020, there were no new matters raised under the Protected Disclosures Act.

Energy Efficiency and Environmental Policy Statements

In June 2001, the Government issued a Memorandum requiring all State Agencies to outline, in their Annual Report, measures being taken to reduce energy usage, where they have responsibility for new premises or major refurbishment of buildings and/or in buildings occupied by them. Under Statutory Instrument (SI) 542 European Communities (Energy End-Use Efficiency and Energy Services) Regulations 2009, the public sector has specific energy reporting obligations.

SOLAS is committed to contributing to the achievement of verifiable energy efficiency savings of 33% in the Public Sector by 2020 in line with the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2009-2020. In partnership with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), SOLAS actively reports and monitors its energy usage, and puts in place strategies and actions to achieve and exceed, where possible, targeted savings. In the Annual Report 2018 on Public Sector Energy Efficiency Performance, SOLAS was noted to have achieved 40.8% Energy Savings since SEAI baseline and an overall status of more efficient than baseline and on track for 2020 target.

SOLAS recognises its duty to ensure that its operations and activities have minimal impact on the local and wider environment. Through the Waste Management System, and in conjunction with the Waste Management Contractor, SOLAS has implemented actions that ensure a high level of recycling waste material, minimising waste to landfill. SOLAS is committed to good practice in terms of environmental awareness and green procurement practices, where possible.

The priorities in 2019 carried into 2020 and included the monitoring and control of energy costs, energy auditing, a focus on energy efficiencies and savings when procuring equipment and implementation of Energy Efficiency Design for any relevant projects that may arise.

Public Sector Duty - Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act, 2014

All public bodies in Ireland have a responsibility to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of their employees, customers, service users and everyone affected by their policies and plans. This is a legal obligation, called the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty and it originated in Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014.

The Public Sector Duty places a legal obligation on all public bodies, in their daily work, to have regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination,
- promote equality of opportunity and treatment for staff and persons to whom it provides services; and
- protect the human rights of staff and service users.

SOLAS formally flagged their commitment to improving the Human Rights and Equality for all its employees and stakeholder groups by commissioning an external audit in late 2020 in order to establish its level of compliance under its Public Sector Human Rights and Equality Duty, and meet its obligations under the Act. The results of this audit will inform the development of the Public Sector Duty process in SOLAS – following the three requirements to 'Assess, Address and Report'.

Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995 and Standards in Public Office Act, 2001

SOLAS became subject to the Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995 and Standards in Public Office Act, 2001 with effect from 29th January 2015.

Freedom of Information (FOI) Act, 2014

The provisions of the Freedom of Information Act apply to SOLAS. The Act establishes three statutory rights:

- A legal right for each person to access information held by public bodies,

- A legal right for each person to have official information relating to him/herself amended where it is incomplete, incorrect or misleading, and
- A legal right to obtain reasons for decisions affecting oneself.

In 2020, SOLAS received 26 requests for information under the FOI Act.

Official Languages Act, 2003

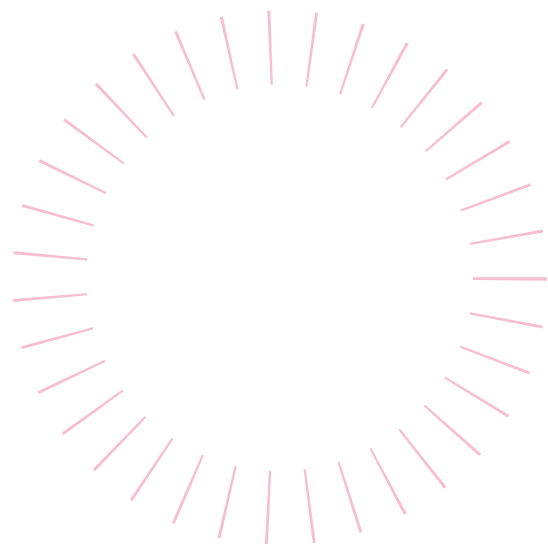
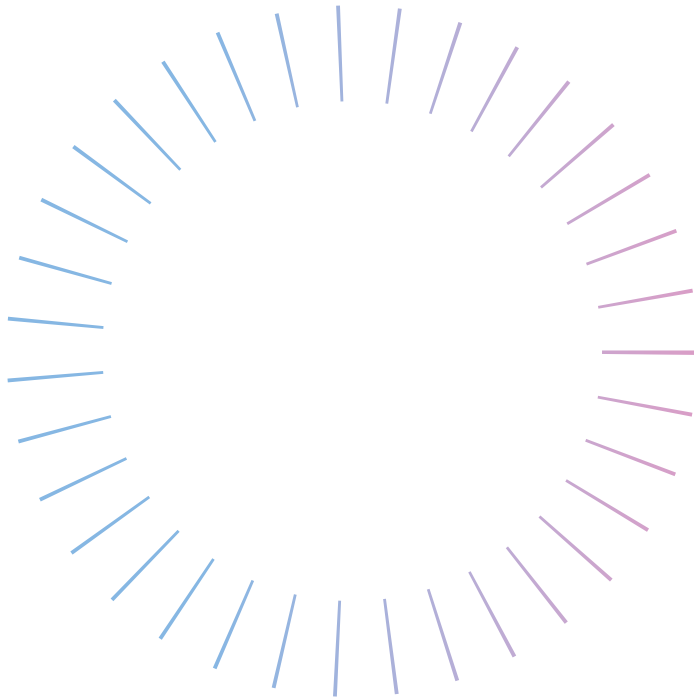
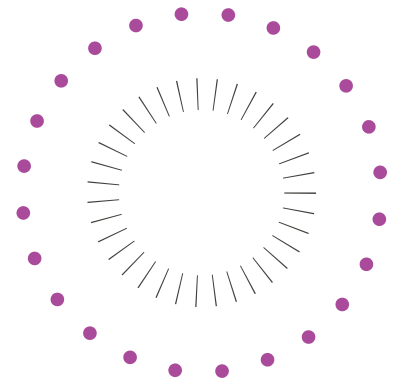
SOLAS engaged with the *Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media* to develop an Official Languages Scheme in 2015 and is currently awaiting confirmation of the scheme. In the meantime, SOLAS' Annual Reports, its Financial Statements and other relevant documents are published simultaneously in both official languages, in compliance with the general provisions of the Act.

Prompt Payment of Accounts Act, 1997

The Board of SOLAS has overall responsibility for the organisation's compliance with the Prompt Payment of Accounts Act, 1997. The European Communities (Late Payment in Commercial Transactions Regulations, 2012) introduced significant amendments to the Prompt Payment requirement as contained in the Act.

The Board has delegated this responsibility to SOLAS management. The system of internal financial control incorporates such controls and procedures that are considered necessary to ensure compliance with the Act. The organisation's system of internal control includes accounting and computer controls designed to ensure the identification of invoices and contracts for payment within the prescribed payment dates. These controls are designed to provide reasonable, though not absolute, assurance against non-compliance with the Act. The Board is satisfied that in 2020, SOLAS complied with the provisions of the Act in all material respects. In total, a sum of €1,133.87 was paid in relation to late payment interest penalties.





SOLAS Board

The Board of SOLAS was appointed on 27 October 2013 by the Minister for Education and Skills. In 2019, the then Minister for Education and Skills, Mr. Joe McHugh, TD, appointed a new Chairperson and four new members. The Board comprises a Chairperson and 11 ordinary members, including the Chief Executive Officer – SOLAS (ex-officio).

In 2020, a new Government Department was established headed by Minister Simon Harris, TD., who was appointed Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science. SOLAS moved from the former Department of Education and Skills to the newly established Department with responsibility for Further Education and Training (FET).



Sean Aylward

Former Secretary-General at the Department of Justice and Former Chief Executive Officer at the Bar of Ireland



Seán Burke

Former Chief Executive Officer, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board.



Patricia Carey

Former President, Skerry's Business College, Cork



Orla Coughlan

Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder, The Riasc Partnership, Dingle, Co. Kerry



Paul Cremmins

Technical Director, Suir Engineering



Patrick J Dwyer

Executive Director, Google Cloud, EMEA, Former Senior Vice President, Dell EMC EMEA



Darragh J Loftus
Core Technology Manager,
Oracle EMEA



Yvonne McNulty
Managing Director, McNulty
HR Limited



Cecilia Munro
Principal, Ballyfermot
College of Further
Education



Niamh O'Reilly
Chief Executive Officer,
AONTAS



Catrina Sheridan
Founder and CEO of Nafasi



Andrew Brownlee
Chief Executive Officer
(*ex-officio*)

Changes during 2020

Sinead McCluskey, Director - Commercial Innovation, PEI Surgical. Resigned from SOLAS Board on 7th February, 2020

> Governance Statement and Board Members' Report

The Governance Statement and Board Members' report is presented in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016 and with guidelines issued in November 2017.

> Governance

The Board of SOLAS was established under the Further Education and Training Act, 2013. The functions of SOLAS are set out in sections 7, 8 and 9 of this Act. The functions of the Board are set out in the Schedule of Matters reserved for the Board. The Board is accountable to the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and is responsible for ensuring good governance. It performs this task by setting strategic objectives and targets and taking strategic decisions on all key business issues. The regular day-to-day management, control and direction of SOLAS are the responsibility of the CEO and the SOLAS senior leadership team. The CEO and SOLAS senior leadership team follow the broad strategic direction set by the Board and ensure that all Board members have a clear understanding of the key activities and decisions related to the entity and of any significant risks likely to arise. The CEO acts as a direct liaison between the Board and management of SOLAS.

> Board Responsibilities

The work and responsibilities of the Board are set out in the Schedule of Matters Reserved for the Board. Standing items considered by the Board include:

- declaration of interests,
- reports from committees,

- financial reports/management accounts,
- performance reports, and
- reserved matters.

Section 31(1) of the Further Education and Training Act, 2013 requires the Board of SOLAS to keep, in such form as may be approved by the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, with consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, all proper and usual accounts of money received and expended by it. In preparing these financial statements, the Board of SOLAS is required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently,
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent,
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that it will continue in operation, and
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.

The Board is responsible for keeping adequate accounting records which disclose, with reasonable accuracy at any time, its financial position and enables it to ensure that the financial statements comply with section 31(2) of the Further Education and Training Act, 2013.

The Board is responsible for approving the annual Further Education and Training (FET) Services Plan and budget.

The SOLAS 2020 budget was approved by the Board at its meeting on 25th April 2020. Two revisions to the SOLAS 2020 budget were approved at Board meetings on 24th September 2020 and 4th November 2020.

A review of the Services Plan and budget was carried out by the Board at its meeting on 24th

September, 2020 - "Further Education and Training (FET) Services Plan – mid-year provision and funding review for 2020". At its 10th December, 2020 meeting the Board discussed the 'Further Education and Training (FET) Update 2020 Funding Allocations'.

At its 4th November, 2020 meeting, the Board considered '2020 Capital Allocations for Further Education and Training'. The Board discussed and agreed a further update on Capital at its 10th December, 2020 meeting.

The Board is also responsible for safeguarding its assets and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Board considers that the financial statements of SOLAS give a true and fair view of the financial performance and the financial position of SOLAS at 31st December, 2020.

> Board Structure

The Board consists of a Chairperson and 12 ordinary members, appointed by the then Minister for Education and Skills. Following the resignation of Ms. S. McCluskey on 7th February, 2020, a successor to bring the Board complement to 13 members is being progressed by the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research Innovation and Skills. The SOLAS Chief Executive Officer is an ex-officio member of the Board. The duration of each Board member's tenure is determined by the appointing Minister.

The Board met on seven (out of eight*) occasions in 2020.

** Note: A SOLAS Board meeting scheduled in March, 2020 was cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions.*

The table below details Board members and their date of appointment:

Board Member	Role	Date Appointed
Seán Aylward	Chairperson	13.11.19
Seán Burke	Ordinary Member	27.10.17 (second term)
Patricia Carey	Ordinary Member	27.10.17 (second term)
Orla Coughlan	Ordinary Member	25.03.19
Paul Cremmins	Ordinary Member	25.03.19
Patrick J. Dwyer	Ordinary Member	27.10.17
Darragh J. Loftus	Ordinary Member	27.10.17 (second term)
Yvonne McNulty	Ordinary Member	11.07.19
Cecilia Munro	Ordinary Member	27.10.17 (second term)
Niamh O'Reilly	Ordinary Member	25.03.19
Catrina Sheridan	Ordinary Member	27.10.17
Andrew Brownlee	CEO Ex-officio Member	02.09.19
Sinead McCluskey	Ordinary Member	27.10.17 *(resigned 7/2/20)
Vacancy	Ordinary Member	

*Sinead McCluskey – Ordinary Board member appointed 27.10.17 and resigned on 07.02.20.

Section 4.6 of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, 2016 obliges the Board to undertake an Annual Review of its performance and to undertake an external evaluation at least every three years. The Annual Review of 2020 has been completed and was considered by the Board.

The Board has three Committees:

- 1. Audit and Risk Committee:** the Committee consists of four Board members and one independent member. The role of the Audit and Risk Committee is to support the Board in relation to its responsibilities for issues of risk, control and governance and associated assurance. The Committee is independent from the financial management of the organisation. In particular, it ensures that the internal control systems, including audit activities, are monitored actively and independently. The Committee reports to the Board after each meeting and formally in writing annually. The members of Committee are: Cecilia Munro, Chairperson and Board member, Darragh J. Loftus, Board member, PJ Dwyer, Board member, Yvonne McNulty, Board member and Peter Buckley, Independent member.

For this period, the members of the Audit and Risk Committee were:

- Cecilia Munro, Board member - ARC member from 9th April, 2020 and appointed ARC Chair on 23rd April 2020.
- Darragh J. Loftus, Board member - ARC member from 25th July, 2019
- PJ Dwyer, Board member - ARC member from 9th April, 2020
- Yvonne McNulty, Board member - ARC member from 9th April, 2020

- Peter Buckley, external member - ARC member from 24th November, 2020
- Sean Burke, Board member - ARC Chairperson to 9th April, 2020
- Orla Coughlan*, Board member - ARC member to 9th April, 2020
- Robert Chestnutt, external member - retired 24th August, 2020

There were five meetings of the Audit and Risk Committee held in 2020.

*Moved in April to chair the Workforce & Organisational Development Committee.

- 2. Strategic Planning Committee:** the Committee consists of four Board members. The role of the Strategic Planning Committee is to maintain a strategic focus on both the SOLAS Further Education and Training Strategy and the SOLAS Corporate Plan in the exercise of the organisation's functions and the conduct of its business. The Committee provides oversight on the implementation and evolution of the SOLAS Corporate Plan in the context of the Further Education and Training Strategy and other SOLAS responsibilities.

The members of the Committee are: Niamh O'Reilly, Chairperson and Board member, Seán Burke, Board member, Patricia Carey, Board member and Paul Cremmins, Board member (from October 2020). There were three ordinary meetings of the Strategic Planning Committee held in 2020 and one Extraordinary meeting to discuss the Corporate Plan.

3. Workforce and Organisational

Development Committee: the Committee consists of two Board members. The role of the Committee is to provide advice and assurance to the Board on all matters relating to workforce and organisational development including issues relating to:

- Human resources including remuneration, workforce monitoring and planning and development of staff;
- Organisational development;
- Equality and diversity including strategy, policy and monitoring within the organisation.

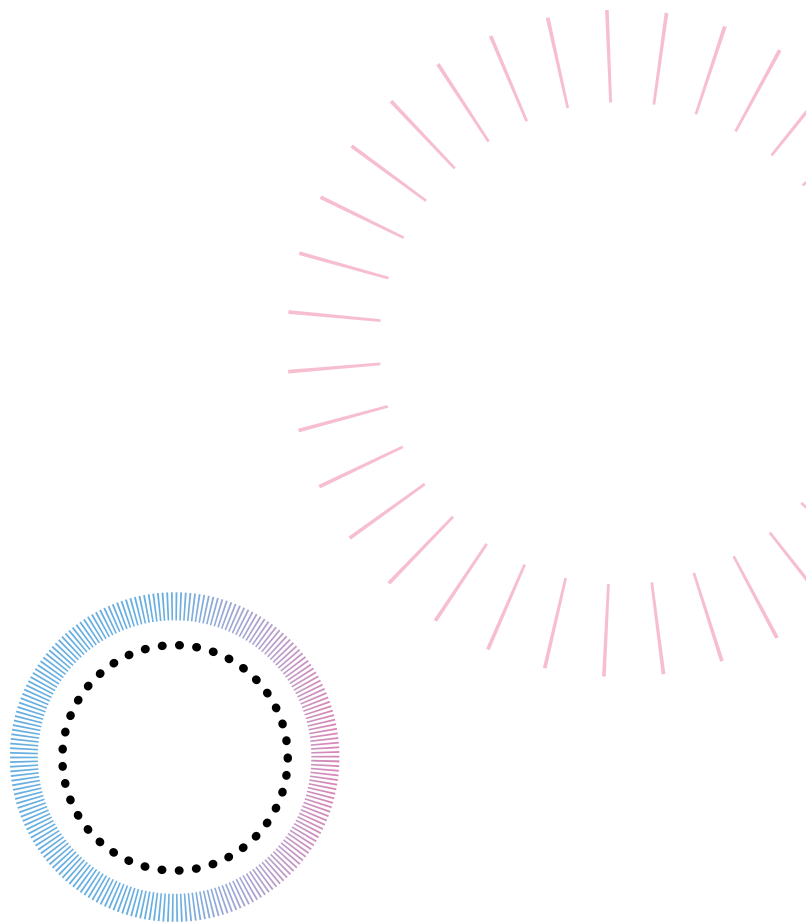
During this period the members of the Workforce and Organisational Development Committee were Orla Coughlan (Chairperson) and Catrina Sheridan, Board Member. There were four Committee meetings held in 2020.

➤ Schedule of Attendance, Fees and Expenses

A schedule of attendance at the Board and Committee meetings for 2020 is set out overleaf including expenses received by each member.

In accordance with the requirements of Paragraph 1.4(iv) of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies – Business and Financial Reporting Requirements 2016, expenses paid to the Board in the year ended 31 December, 2020 are disclosed hereunder.

As SOLAS Board members do not receive any fees, the disclosure relates only to expenses paid in respect of attendance at Board meetings.



	Board	Date on which Board Members were appointed	Audit & Risk Committee	Workforce and Organisational Development Committee	Strategic Planning Committee	Fees 2020 €	Expenses 2020 €
Number of meetings scheduled /Meetings Attended	7 *		5	4	4		
AYLWARD, Sean	7/7	13/11/19	-	-	-	0	0
BURKE, Seán	7/7	27/10/17 (second term)	3/3	-	4/4	0	0
CAREY, Patricia	7/7	27/10/17 (second term)	-	-	-	0	8
COUGHLAN, Orla	7/7	25/03/19	3/3	4/4	-	0	2,435
CREMMINS, Paul	7/7	25/03/19			2/2	0	0
DWYER, Patrick J.	7/7	27/10/17	2/3	-		0	0
LOFTUS, Darragh J.	5/7	27/10/17 (second term)	5/5	-	-	0	0
MCCLUSKEY, Sinead	0/0	27/10/17 Resigned 07/02/20	-	-	-	0	0
MCNULTY, Yvonne	6/7	11/07/19	2/3	-	-	0	0
MUNRO, Cecilia	7/7	27/10/17 (second term)	4/4	-		0	0
O'REILLY, Niamh	7/7	25/03/19	-	-	4/4	0	0
SHERIDAN, Catrina	7/7	27/10/17	-	4/4	-	0	0
BROWNLEE, Andrew	7/7	02/09/19	-	-	-	0	0
Total							€2,443

Key Personnel Changes

The full Board complement consists of a Chairperson and 12 ordinary Board members. Currently there is a Chairperson and 11 ordinary members on the SOLAS Board following the resignation of Ms. S. McCluskey on 7th February, 2020.

Disclosures Required by Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016)

The Board is responsible for ensuring that SOLAS – Further Education and Training Authority has complied with the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies ("the Code"), as published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in August 2016. The following disclosures are required by the Code:

Consultancy Costs

Consultancy costs include the cost of external advice to management and exclude outsourced 'business-as-usual' functions. The following consultancy costs were charged to overheads:

	2020 €	2019 €
Legal (general legal advice)	201,387	282,737
Financial/actuarial advice	22,069	6,089
Human Resources & Pension	161,438	59,367
Business improvement/ICT	57,480	120,332
Other	31,120	8,709
Total Consultancy Costs	473,494	477,234
<i>Consultancy costs charged to the Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves</i>	473,494	477,234

The following consultancy costs were charged to direct programme costs in 2020:

	2020 €	2019 €
Legal (general legal advice)	0	0
Financial/actuarial advice	0	0
Human Resources	0	0
Business improvement	0	0
Other	25,134	27,163
Total Consultancy Costs	25,134	27,163
<i>Consultancy costs charged to the Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves</i>	25,134	27,163

Legal Costs and Settlements

The table below provides a breakdown of amounts recognised as expenditure in the reporting period in relation to legal costs, conciliation and arbitration proceedings, and settlements relating to contracts with third parties. This does not include expenditure incurred in relation to general legal advice received by SOLAS which is disclosed in Consultancy costs above.

	2020 €	2019 €
Legal fees of SOLAS – legal proceedings	38,250	150,028
Counterparty legal fees – legal proceedings	0	7,500
Conciliation and arbitration payments	0	0
Settlements*	0	(29,315)
Total#	38,250	128,213

* The negative figure for settlements in 2019 relates to an accrual in 2018 which did not fully materialise in 2019

There is one ongoing legal case and no case settlements in 2020.

Travel and Subsistence Expenditure

Travel and subsistence expenditure is categorised as follows:

	2020 €	2019 €
Domestic		
– Board*	2,443	7,769
– Employees▪	72,685	326,099
International		
– Board	0	0
– Employees◊	5,279	17,718
Total	80,407	351,586

* all domestic travel and subsistence paid directly to Board members in 2020 and 2019.

▪ all domestic travel and subsistence paid directly to staff members in 2020 and 2019.

◊ includes travel and subsistence of €3,980 paid directly to staff in 2020 (2019: €10,530) and €2,419 relates to expenditure paid by SOLAS on behalf of the staff (2019: €13,230), with €1,120 being reclaimed from the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) and the European Union (2019: €6,043).

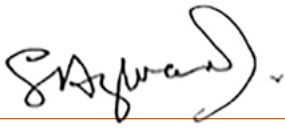
Hospitality Expenditure

The Income and Expenditure Account includes the following hospitality expenditure:

	2020 €	2019 €
Staff Hospitality /Wellbeing	7,993	1,197
Client Hospitality	370	13,500
Total	8,363	14,697

Statement of Compliance

SOLAS is in full compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, as published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in August 2016.



Seán Aylward

Chairperson, SOLAS

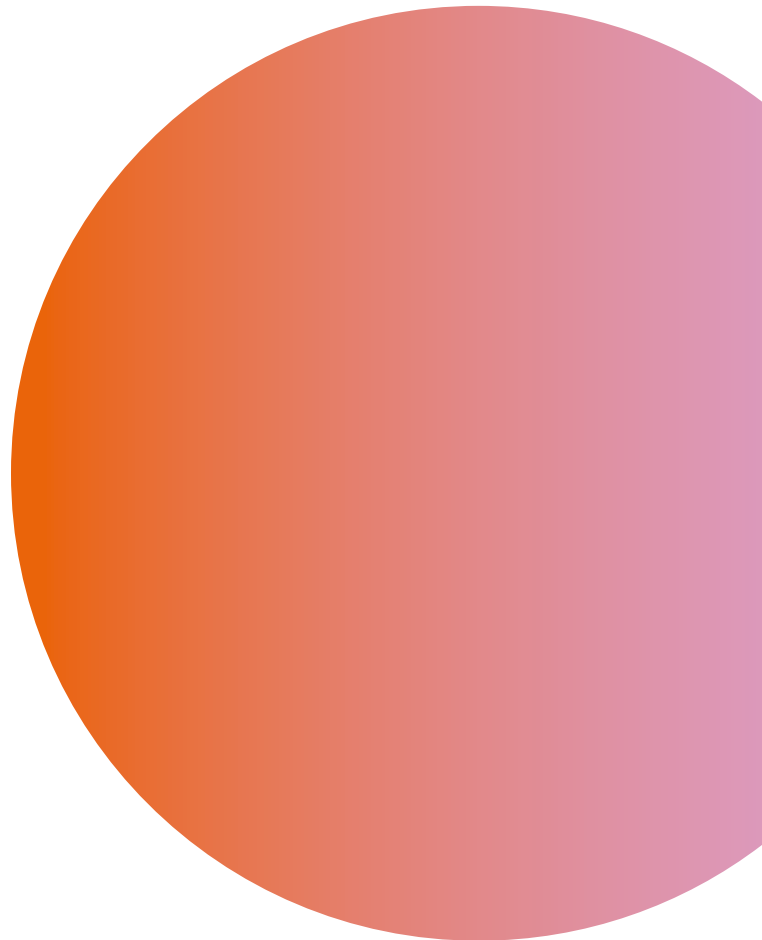
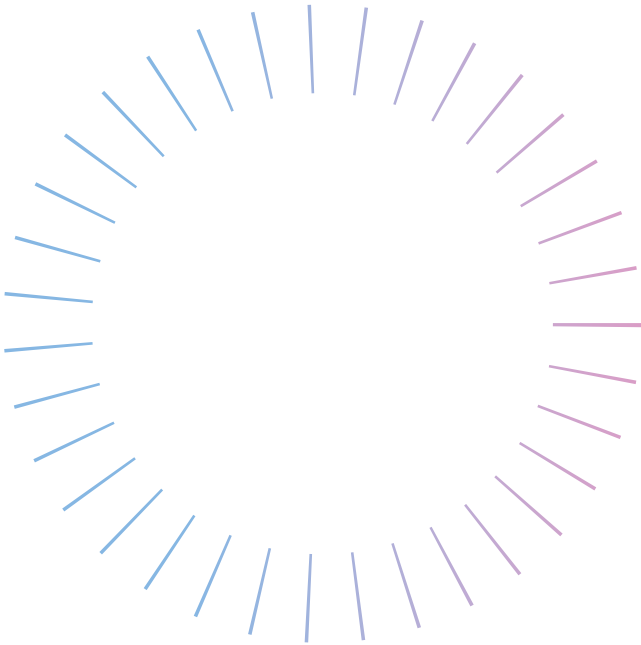
Date: 18 May, 2021



Andrew Brownlee

Chief Executive Officer, SOLAS

Date: 18 May, 2021



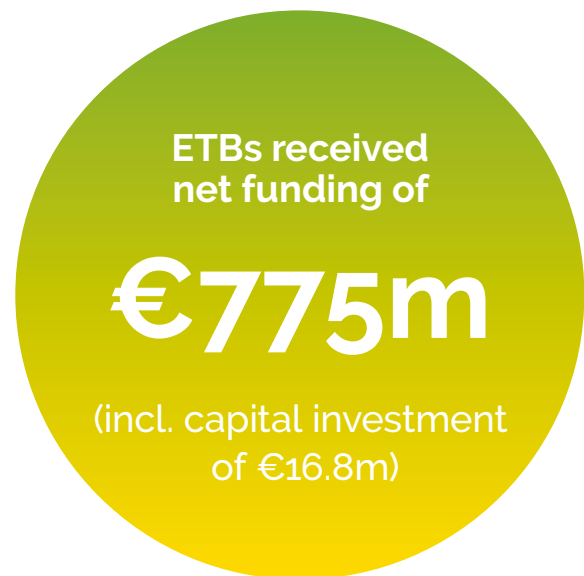
SOLAS Finances 2020

Our financial highlights in 2020 include grants totalling €775m disbursed to Further Education and Training providers.

The Finance team facilitated internal audits which were conducted on the work of the unit in 2020, all of which had positive outcomes, with no substantive issues arising.

SOLAS is designated as an Intermediate Body for the current European Social Fund (ESF) operational programme - the Programme for Employability Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020. The European Social Fund provides funding for a range of Further Education and Training programmes such as Adult Literacy, Back to Education Initiatives, Specific Skills Training, Bridging, and Traineeship programmes. Community Training Centres and Youthreach programmes receive funding from the European Social Fund and the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI).

The European Social Fund (ESF) and the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) are making a very significant contribution to the above mentioned FET programmes in Ireland with an average of €61m per annum over the current seven year ESF Programme for the Employability Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020.



Financial Statements



Statement of Responsibilities of SOLAS

Under the Further Education and Training Act 2013, An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna (SOLAS) was established with effect from 27 October, 2013.

Under the Further Education and Training Act 2013, the general functions of SOLAS are defined as:

- (a) prepare and submit to the Minister a strategy in respect of the provision of further education and training;
- (b) promote an appreciation of the value of further education and training;
- (c) consult with the Minister for Social Protection, the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and employers from time to time for the purpose of determining which, or which classes of, further education and training programmes should be the subject of advances by An tSeirbhís;
- (d) advance moneys to Education and Training Boards and other bodies engaged in the provision of further education and training programmes;
- (e) provide, or arrange for the provision of, training and retraining for employment and to assist in and coordinate the provision of such training by persons other than An tSeirbhís;
- (f) assess whether or not Education and Training Boards and other bodies engaged in the provision of further education and training programmes, to whom moneys have been advanced, perform their functions in an economic, efficient and effective manner;
- (g) promote, encourage and facilitate the placement of persons belonging to such class or classes of person as may be specified by the Minister for Social Protection after consultation with the Minister of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Skills in further education and training programmes that are funded, in whole or in part, out of public moneys;
- (h) promote cooperation between Education and Training Boards and other bodies involved in the provision of further education and training programmes;
- (i) promote equality of opportunity in relation to the provision of further education and training;
- (j) develop and facilitate the development of, new and existing further education and training programmes including the establishment of systems designed to monitor the quality of the education and training concerned for the purpose of ensuring that those programmes serve their purpose;
- (k) provide, or assist in the provision of, training to persons charged with the delivery of further education and training programmes in respect of which moneys have been advanced by An tSeirbhís;
- (l) conduct, or arrange for the conduct of, research as respects any matters relating to the functions of An tSeirbhís; and
- (m) advise the Minister in relation to any matter connected with the functions of An tSeirbhís.

SOLAS is required under section 31(1) of the Further Education and Training Act 2013, to prepare annual accounts, as may be approved by the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.

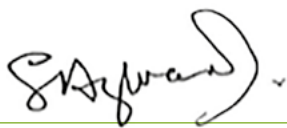
In preparing those financial statements, SOLAS is required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that SOLAS will continue in operation; and
- disclose and explain any material departures from applicable accounting standards.

SOLAS is also responsible for keeping adequate accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time its financial position and which enable it to ensure that the financial statements comply with paragraph 31(1) of the Act. SOLAS is also responsible for safeguarding its assets and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

SOLAS has complied with the above requirements in preparing the financial statements.

SOLAS approved the financial statements on **29 April, 2021**.



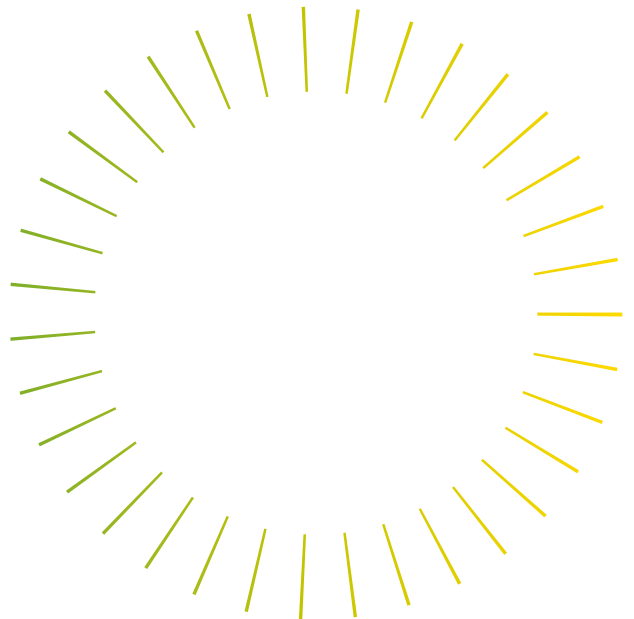
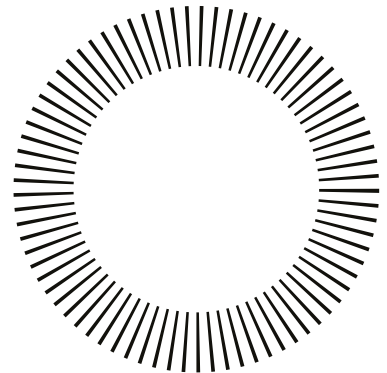
Seán Aylward

Chairperson, SOLAS
Date: 18 May, 2021



Andrew Brownlee

Chief Executive Officer, SOLAS
Date: 18 May, 2021



Comptroller and Auditor General Report for presentation to the Houses of the Oireachtas



Ard Reachtaire Cuntas agus Ciste Comptroller and Auditor General

Report for presentation to the Houses of the Oireachtas

An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna (SOLAS)

Opinion on the financial statements

I have audited the financial statements of SOLAS for the year ended 31 December 2020 as required under the provisions of section 31 of the Further Education and Training Act 2013. The financial statements comprise

- the statement of income and expenditure
- the statement of comprehensive income
- the statement of financial position
- the statement of cash flows
- the statement of changes in reserves and capital account, and
- the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In my opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of SOLAS at 31 December 2020 and of its income and expenditure for 2020 in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 102 — *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland*.

Basis of opinion

I conducted my audit of the financial statements in accordance with the International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) as promulgated by the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions. My responsibilities under those standards are described in the appendix to this report. I am independent of SOLAS and have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the standards.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Report on information other than the financial statements, and on other matters

SOLAS has presented certain other information together with the financial statements. This comprises the annual report including the governance statement and Board members' report, and the statement on internal control. My responsibilities to report in relation to such information, and on certain other matters upon which I report by exception, are described in the appendix to this report.

I have nothing to report in that regard.

Seamus McCarthy
Comptroller and Auditor General

21 May 2021

Appendix to the report

Responsibilities of the Board members

The governance statement and Board members' report sets out the Board members' responsibilities, which include

- the preparation of financial statements in the form prescribed under section 31 of the Further Education and Training Act 2013
- ensuring that the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with FRS102
- ensuring the regularity of transactions
- assessing whether the use of the going concern basis of accounting is appropriate, and
- such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Responsibilities of the Comptroller and Auditor General

I am required under section 31 of the Further Education and Training Act 2013 to audit the financial statements and to report thereon to the Houses of the Oireachtas.

My objective in carrying out the audit is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement due to fraud or error. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with the ISAs, I exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. In doing so,

- I identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements whether due to fraud or error; design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks; and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- I obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the internal controls.
- I evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures.

- I conclude on the appropriateness of the use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, on whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of SOLAS to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my report. However, future events or conditions may cause SOLAS to cease as a going concern.
- I evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

Information other than the financial statements

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information presented with those statements, and I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with my audit of the financial statements, I am required under the ISAs to read the other information presented and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or with knowledge obtained during the audit, or if it otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

Reporting on other matters

My audit is conducted by reference to the special considerations which attach to State bodies in relation to their management and operation. I report if there are material matters relating to the manner in which public business has been conducted.

I seek to obtain evidence about the regularity of financial transactions in the course of audit. I report if there is any material instance where public money has not been applied for the purposes intended or where transactions did not conform to the authorities governing them.

I also report by exception if, in my opinion,

- I have not received all the information and explanations I required for my audit, or
- the accounting records were not sufficient to permit the financial statements to be readily and properly audited, or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records.

Statement on Internal Control

➤ Scope of Responsibility

On behalf of the Board of An tSEIRBHÍS OIDEACHAIS LEANÚNAIGH AGUS SCILEANNA (SOLAS), I acknowledge our responsibility for good governance, in line with the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016 and for ensuring that an effective system of internal control is maintained and operated. In discharging its functions, the Board has delegated clearly defined authority levels to the SOLAS executive and staff while reserving certain matters for its own decision.

➤ Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to an acceptable level rather than to eliminate it and therefore can only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions are authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected in a timely period. The system requires that line management, the Executive and the finance, procurement and HR functions exercise stringent control and report any significant control failures to the Board.

➤ Capacity to Handle Risk

SOLAS has an Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) which comprised of four Board Members and one external expert. The ARC met five times in 2020.

The Internal Audit function in SOLAS operates in accordance with the Internal Audit Principles set out in the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016. The work of Internal Audit is informed by a risk analysis profile of expenditure and activity; strategic objectives; cyclical audit

coverage; and the outcomes of previous audits. The focus of this work is generally on the areas of significant potential risk to the organisation. The 2020 Internal Audit Plan was approved by the ARC, on behalf of the Board. During 2020, seven Internal Audit Reports were issued covering areas of business continuity & disaster recovery, capital grants, active inclusion, internal and external communications, compliance with the Code of Governance, travel & subsistence and a follow-up on previous audit recommendations.

The ARC meets the Head of Internal Audit on a regular basis to review the work of Internal Audit, which includes a report of internal audit activity. On an annual basis, the ARC provides the Board with a report on the internal audit activity for the year.

Agreement is in place between the ARC and the Internal Audit Unit of the ETBs (IAU) on SOLAS's input to the Audit Plan of the IAU. SOLAS also receives audit opinion reports and sectoral reports from the IAU for reviews carried out on Further Education and Training expenditure.

➤ Risk and Control Framework

SOLAS' Executive Risk Management Committee, whose membership includes all Executive Directors and which is chaired by the Chief Executive Officer, promotes, directs and monitors risk management processes within SOLAS. To assist this process, SOLAS has appointed a Director as Risk Co-ordinator. The Risk Co-ordinator is responsible for supporting the work of the Risk Management Committee and for compiling and preparing reports for the ARC. The Board and the Audit and Risk Committee provide independent oversight and review of the effectiveness of SOLAS' risk management.

A formal process for the identification, evaluation, mitigation and management of business risks has been established and includes:

- the identification and nature of risks;
- the likelihood of occurrence;
- the financial or other implications;

- the mitigating controls and factors;
- the maintenance of a corporate risk register;
- plans to manage the identified risks;
- monitoring and reporting on the process;
- risks are reviewed on an ongoing basis by management and on a formal basis by the ARC at least twice a year;
- key risks by business units are aligned to the annual business plans.

> Ongoing Monitoring and Review

The Board has taken steps to ensure an appropriate control environment is in place by:

- clearly defining and documenting management responsibilities and authority;
- ensuring clear lines of accountability for management;
- establishing formal procedures through various committee functions to monitor the activities and safeguard the assets of the organisation;
- establishing procedures for reporting significant control failures and ensuring appropriate corrective action is taken;
- developing a strong culture of accountability across all levels of the organisation;
- adopting and adhering to the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies;
- reviewing the effectiveness of the Board;
- ensuring the control environment includes: an active Audit and Risk Committee, an Internal Audit function, the Chief Executive Officer's monthly report to the Board and the presentation to the Board of activity and financial results - current month and year to-date at each meeting.

The system of internal control is based on a framework of regular management information, policies and procedures including segregation of duties, and a system of delegation and accountability. In particular it includes:

- the identification of key risks and implementation of related controls and ongoing monitoring of the operation where any identified deficiencies are reported to SOLAS' Executive Risk Management Committee and the ARC;
- a comprehensive budgeting system with an annual budget, which is reviewed and agreed by the Board. This incorporates a very detailed business planning process;
- setting targets to measure financial and other performance;
- reviews by the Board of monthly and annual Financial Reports which indicate activity and financial performance against budgets;
- established procurement procedures under which goods and services are procured in accordance with EU and national procurement requirements;
- that any foreign travel request is subject to approval by the Chief Executive Officer;
- procedures for the control of capital investment that are in accordance with Guidelines for the Appraisal and Management of Capital Expenditure Proposals, issued by the Department of Finance in February 2005;
- Terms and Conditions of funding in place for each Education and Training Board, a parameters document that outlines the business planning process including objectives for each year, a comprehensive business service plan that is reviewed twice a year;
- SOLAS has agreed Strategic Performance Agreements with all ETBs covering a three-year period 2018 to 2020 including national based targets.

> Impact of Covid-19

Covid-19 and the impact of the pandemic in 2020 brought challenges both nationally and internationally. In terms of its potential impact on the control environment, SOLAS responded as follows:

- All staff were given the capability to work remotely with only 2% of staff (essential) being office based;
- Staff were provided with the infrastructure to allow remote working through Office 365 (OneDrive, TEAMS, Sharepoint, phones), laptops and hardware;
- Enhanced cyber security controls were introduced with ongoing compulsory staff training;
- Enhanced controls introduced in procurement and HR processes;
- Segregation of duties and all financial controls were maintained and changed where necessary;
- The Board was updated on a regular basis in relation to Covid-19 protocols;
- There was no impact on the Financial Statements.

> Procurement

We confirm that we have procedures in place to ensure compliance with current procurement rules and guidelines as set out by the Office of Government Procurement. SOLAS is fully compliant with regard to Procurement.

Signed:



Seán Aylward

Chairperson, SOLAS

Date: 18 May, 2021

> Review of Effectiveness

The Board's monitoring and review of the effectiveness of the System of Internal Control is informed by the work of:

- the Executive Directors and the Manager within SOLAS, who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the financial control framework;
- the Head of Internal Audit;
- the ARC, which oversees the work of Internal Audit and reviews the Statement on the System of Internal Controls;
- the comments made by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General in his management letter or other reports; and
- a review of the effectiveness of control was considered under the Internal Control Framework by the Board on 29 April, 2021. This review focused on Internal Audit findings, the Corporate Governance Register and disposals of fixed assets.

> Internal Control Issues

No material breaches in internal control, material losses or frauds were identified during the course of the year.

SOLAS

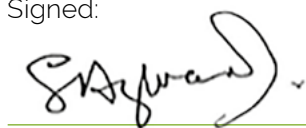
Statement of Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31 December 2020

	Note	2020	2019
		€'000	€'000
Income	2	837,284	661,311
Expenditure			
Payroll Costs	5	13,590	13,424
Overheads	5	6,824	7,309
SOLAS Operational Costs		20,414	20,733
Retirement Benefit Costs	5	9,650	13,930
Programme Costs	6	8,240	7,160
Grants to Education and Training Boards	7(a)	774,875	606,053
Grants to VSCCS*	7(b)	1,471	598
Grants to Organisations in the FET sector	7(c)	10,451	9,316
Apprenticeship Incentivisation Grants	7(d)	2,090	0
Total Grants		788,887	615,967
Total Expenditure		827,191	657,790
Surplus for the Year		10,093	3,521

Notes 1 to 19 form an integral part of these Financial Statements.

* Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools

Signed:



Seán Aylward

Chairperson, SOLAS
Date: 18 May, 2021



Andrew Brownlee

Chief Executive Officer, SOLAS
Date: 18 May, 2021

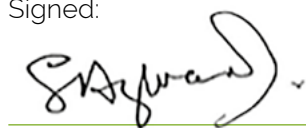
SOLAS

Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 31 December 2020

	Note	2020	2019
		€'000	€'000
Surplus for the Year		10,093	3,521
Experience Gain/(Loss) on Retirement Benefit obligations		13,728	9,787
Change in assumptions underlying the present value of Retirement Benefit liabilities		(28,431)	(62,023)
Actuarial Gain/(Loss) on Retirement Benefit Liabilities		(14,703)	(52,236)
Adjustment to Deferred Retirement Benefit Funding		14,703	52,236
Total Recognised Surplus for the Year		10,093	3,521

Notes 1 to 19 form an integral part of these Financial Statements.

Signed:



Seán Aylward

Chairperson, SOLAS
Date: 18 May, 2021



Andrew Brownlee

Chief Executive Officer, SOLAS
Date: 18 May, 2021

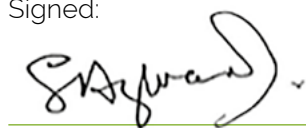
SOLAS

Statement of Financial Position as at 31 December 2020

	Note	2020		2019	
		As at 31 December 2020		As at 31 December 2019	
		€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Non Current Assets					
Property, Plant & Equipment	8		924		1,017
Current Assets					
Inventory		5		5	
Receivables	9	1,905		1,118	
Cash		10,122		4,566	
		12,032		5,689	
Liabilities falling due within one year					
Payables	10	(1,806)		(1,921)	
Net Current Assets			10,226		3,768
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities before Retirement Benefit Obligations			11,150		4,785
SOLAS Retirement Benefit Liabilities	12 (a)(ii)	(701,859)		(707,609)	
Deferred Retirement Benefit Funding	12 (a)(ii)	701,859	0	707,609	0
Total Assets			11,150		4,785
Capital and Reserves					
Capital Reserve		924		1,017	
Capital Account		111	1,035	225	1,242
Revenue Reserve			10,115		3,543
			11,150		4,785

Notes 1 to 19 form an integral part of these Financial Statements.

Signed:



Seán Aylward

Chairperson, SOLAS
Date: 18 May, 2021



Andrew Brownlee

Chief Executive Officer, SOLAS
Date: 18 May, 2021

SOLAS

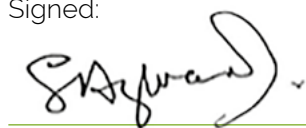
Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31 December 2020

	Note	2020	2019
		€'000	€'000
Cash flow from Operating Activities			
Surplus for the Year		10,093	3,521
Interest Paid/(Received)		92	41
Refund to the Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Skills		(3,521)	(3,144)
Adjustment for non-cash items			
(Increase)/Decrease in Inventory		0	2
(Increase)/Decrease in Receivables	9	(787)	153
Increase/(Decrease) in Payables	10	(115)	714
Net Cash Inflow/(Outflow) from Operating Activities		5,762	1,287
Cash flow from Investing Activities			
Payments to Acquire Fixed Assets	8	(303)	(505)
Capital Grants Received	3	17,057	13,000
Capital Grants to ETBs	7(a)	(16,775)	(12,500)
Capital Grants to Other FET Providers		(93)	0
Cash flow from Financing Activities			
Interest (Paid)/Received		(92)	(41)
Net Cash inflow/(Outflow) from Investing/Financing Activities		(206)	(46)
Increase/(Decrease) in Cash in the Year		5,556	1,241
Cash at the beginning of the Year		4,566	3,325
Cash at the end of the year		10,122	4,566

The Surplus is stated after taking account of Depreciation and Amortisation of Capital Grant.

Notes 1 to 19 form an integral part of these Financial Statements.

Signed:



Seán Aylward

Chairperson, SOLAS

Date: 18 May, 2021



Andrew Brownlee

Chief Executive Officer, SOLAS

Date: 18 May, 2021

SOLAS

Statement of Changes in Reserves and Capital Account for the year ended 31 December 2020

	Note	Revenue Reserves	Capital Account	Capital Reserves	Total
		€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Balance as at 31 December 2018		3,166	230	911	4,307
Surplus for the Year		3,521	0	0	3,521
Refund to the Department of Education		(3,144)	0	0	(3,144)
Capital Grants Received	3	0	13,000	0	13,000
Capital Grants to ETBs		0	(12,500)	0	(12,500)
Payments to Acquire Fixed Assets	8	0	(505)	505	0
Amortisation of Capital Grant - Depreciation	2 & 8	0	0	(399)	(399)
Retirement Benefits					
Actuarial Gain/(Loss) on Retirement Benefit Liabilities	12(a) (v)	(52,236)	0	0	(52,236)
Adjustment to Deferred Exchequer Retirement Benefit Funding		52,236	0	0	52,236
Balance as at 31 December 2019		3,543	225	1,017	4,785
Surplus for the Year		10,093	0	0	10,093
Refund to the Department of Further & Higher Education, Research & Science #		(3,521)	0	0	(3,521)
Capital Grants Received	3	0	17,057	0	17,057
Capital Grants to ETBs	7(a)	0	(16,775)	0	(16,775)
Capital Grants to Other FET Providers		0	(93)	0	(93)
Payments to Acquire Fixed Assets	8	0	(303)	303	0
Amortisation of Capital Grant - Depreciation	2 & 8	0	0	(396)	(396)
Retirement Benefits					
Actuarial Gain/(Loss) on Retirement Benefit Liabilities	12(a) (v)	(14,703)	0	0	(14,703)
Adjustment to Deferred Exchequer Retirement Benefit Funding		14,703	0	0	14,703
Balance as at 31 December 2020		10,115	111	924	11,150

Notes 1 to 19 form an integral part of these Financial Statements.

With the permission of the Department of Education, Department of Further & Higher Education, Research & Science, refunds in respect of previous years due to the Departments were retained by SOLAS. The retention of these funds are accounted for in the current year's income..

Notes to the Financial Statements

> 1 Accounting Policies

The basis of accounting and significant accounting policies adopted by SOLAS are as follows:

Establishment of SOLAS

SOLAS was established on 27 October 2013 in accordance with the Further Education and Training Act 2013.

These financial statements set out the results of SOLAS for the year ending 31 December, 2020 with comparatives for the period from 1 January, 2019 to 31 December, 2019.

The functions of SOLAS are set out in sections 7 to 9 of the Further Education and Training Act 2013.

General Information

Statement of Compliance

The individual financial statements of SOLAS for the year ended 31 December 2020 have been prepared in accordance with FRS 102, the financial reporting standard applicable in the UK and Ireland issued by the Financial Reporting Council (FRC) in the UK.

Currency

The financial statements are prepared in EURO and are rounded to the nearest €'000. The functional currency of SOLAS is also the Euro.

Legal Form

SOLAS is a Public Benefit Entity in the Republic of Ireland with a registered office in Block 1, Castleforbes House, Castleforbes Road, Dublin 1, Ireland.

A Public Benefit Entity provides goods or services for the general public, community or social benefit and where any equity is provided, it is to support the entity's primary objectives rather than with a view to providing a financial return to equity providers, shareholders or members.

SOLAS did not receive resources from non-exchange transactions in the current year.

Significant Accounting Policies

The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the financial statements of SOLAS.

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the modified historical cost convention and with Financial Reporting Standard FRS 102 in a form approved by the Minister for Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform under the Further Education and Training Act 2013.

The financial statements have been prepared using the accruals method of accounting except as stated below and in accordance with accounting practice generally accepted in Ireland. Accounting standards generally accepted in Ireland in preparing the financial statements giving a true and fair view are those published by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland and issued by the Financial Reporting Council.

In accordance with DPER Circular 21/2015 relating to FRS 102, these financial statements comprise the Statement of Income and Expenditure, Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Financial Position, Statement of Cash Flows and Statement of Changes in Reserves and Capital Account. In addition notes 1 to 19 form an integral part of the financial statements.

The financial statements of SOLAS are prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards and were authorised for issue by the Board of SOLAS on 29 April, 2021.

Property, Plant & Equipment

Capitalisation

Property, Plant and Equipment are stated at historic cost less accumulated depreciation. Land is stated at revalued amount.

The cost of an asset is made up of the purchase price of the asset plus any costs directly attributable to bringing the asset into working condition for its intended use.

Fixtures and fittings below the capitalisation threshold are charged to the Statement of Income and Expenditure in the year of purchase. The capitalisation threshold amount is €1,000 inclusive of VAT. All computer equipment is capitalised regardless of value.

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated to write off the original cost of the asset or the revalued amount less the estimated residual value on a straight-line basis over its estimated useful economic life as follows:

- Land - Nil
- Leasehold Improvements (over the term of the lease)
- Equipment and Furniture – 5 years (20%)
- Computers and other computer equipment – 3 or 5 years (33⅓% or 20%)

No provision for depreciation is made in respect of freehold land. Depreciation on capital assets is matched by a transfer from the Capital Reserve.

The carrying value of tangible fixed assets is reviewed for impairment if events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying amount value may not be recoverable.

Capital Reserve

The capital reserve represents the net amount expended on tangible assets, funded by Exchequer Grants. These grants are amortised to revenue over the expected life of the assets in line with the depreciation, tangible asset impairments and tangible asset write-offs.

Inventory

Inventory is stated at cost less appropriate write-downs for diminution in value. Cost comprises invoice price of the goods.

Cash

Cash, for the purpose of the cash flow statements, comprises cash in hand and deposits repayable on demand.

Receivables

Trade and other Receivables are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in the income statement in administrative expenses.

Payables

Trade and other Payables are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in the income statement in administrative expenses.

Revenue Reserve

The Revenue Reserve represents the retained surplus of SOLAS.

Provision

A provision is recognised in the Statement of Financial Position when SOLAS has a present legal or constructive obligation and it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits would be required to settle the obligation.

Revenue

State Funding

Current grants are recognised on a cash received basis. However, surpluses arising in prior years are retained by SOLAS with the permission of the Department. As a result, the amount recognised in the statement of income and expenditure takes account of cash actually received and the prior year's retained surplus which is offset against reserves in the statement of changes in reserves.

Capital grants are accounted for on a cash received basis and recognised in the income

statement over the expected life of the assets in line with depreciation and tangible asset write-offs.

Other Income

In general, other income is accounted for on a cash received basis except where invoices are issued. In this case, income is accounted for as invoiced.

Foreign Currency and Functional Currency

Items included in the financial statements are presented in "Euro", the currency of the primary economic environment in which SOLAS operates (the "functional currency").

Transactions denominated in foreign currency during the period have been translated at the rate of exchange ruling at the date of the transaction. Assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are translated into Euro at the rates of exchange ruling at the Statement of Financial Position date. The resulting profits or losses are dealt with in the Statement of Income and Expenditure.

Grants

Current and capital grants paid to Education and Training Boards, Voluntary, Community and Secondary Schools, various other agencies and bodies, for the purposes of Further Education and Training are accounted for on a cash basis. This is consistent with the manner in which State funding is accounted for by SOLAS.

Capital Grants to Education and Training Boards

Capital Grants disbursed to Education and Training Boards are accounted for in the Statement of Income and Expenditure. Income is released from the Capital Account to finance such grants.

Bad Debts

Debtors are disclosed at original invoice amount less an allowance for potentially uncollectible debts. Provision is made where there is objective

evidence that SOLAS will not be in a position to collect the associated debts. Bad debts are written off to the Statement of Income and Expenditure on identification.

Leasing

Rentals in respect of operating leases are charged to the Statement of Income and Expenditure on a straight-line basis over the lease term. There are no financial leases in place. Operating leases relate to buildings occupied by SOLAS.

Legal Cases

Legal costs including those in relation to legacy cases involving FÁS are recognised in the financial statements as they are incurred. Provision is made for the Board's best estimate of the cost of any settlement when judged probable that a settlement will occur in the case and the cost of settlement can be measured reliably.

Retirement Benefits

SOLAS operates the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (Single Scheme) which is the defined benefit pension scheme for pensionable public servants appointed on or after 1 January 2013. Single Scheme member's contributions are paid over to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

SOLAS also operates two legacy retirement benefit schemes as follows:

- A defined benefit scheme which provides retirement benefits to former AnCO staff. This scheme was closed to new members on 1 January 1988. On 31 December 2009 the assets of the scheme were transferred to the National Pension Reserve Fund in accordance with the Financial Measures (Miscellaneous Provision) Act 2009. Contributions from SOLAS and staff in this scheme are paid over to our parent Department.
- An unfunded defined benefit scheme whose benefits are paid out of the funding provided annually by our parent

Department. Contributions from staff in this scheme are paid over to our parent Department each year.

Retirement benefit costs reflect retirement benefits earned by employees in the period.

Actuarial gains or losses arising on scheme liabilities are reflected in the Statement of Comprehensive Income and a corresponding adjustment is recognised in the amount recoverable from our parent Department.

Retirement benefit liabilities represent the present value of future retirement benefit payments earned by staff to date. Deferred retirement benefit funding represents the corresponding asset to be recovered in future periods from the Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.

Critical Accounting Estimates and Judgements

The preparation of financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of policies and reported amounts of assets, liabilities, income and expenses. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances, the results of which form the basis of making judgements about carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an on-going basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision only affects that period or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods. The areas involving a high degree of judgement or complexity or areas where assumptions or estimates are significant to the financial statements include:

Impairment of Property, Plant and Equipment

The carrying values of items of land and buildings, equipment and furniture are reviewed for indicators of impairment at each reporting date and are subject to impairment testing when events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying value may not be recoverable.

Retirement Benefits

The liabilities and costs associated with the legacy defined benefit retirement benefit schemes (both funded and unfunded) are assessed on the basis of the projected unit method by professionally qualified actuaries and are arrived at using actuarial assumptions based on market expectations at the financial reporting date. The discount rates employed in determining the present values of the schemes' liabilities are determined by reference to market yields at the financial reporting date on high-quality corporate bonds of a currency and term consistent with the currency and term of the associated post-employment benefit obligations.

The net surplus or deficit arising on the defined benefit retirement benefit schemes, together with the liabilities associated with the unfunded schemes, are shown either within non-current assets or non-current liabilities in the Statement of Financial Position.

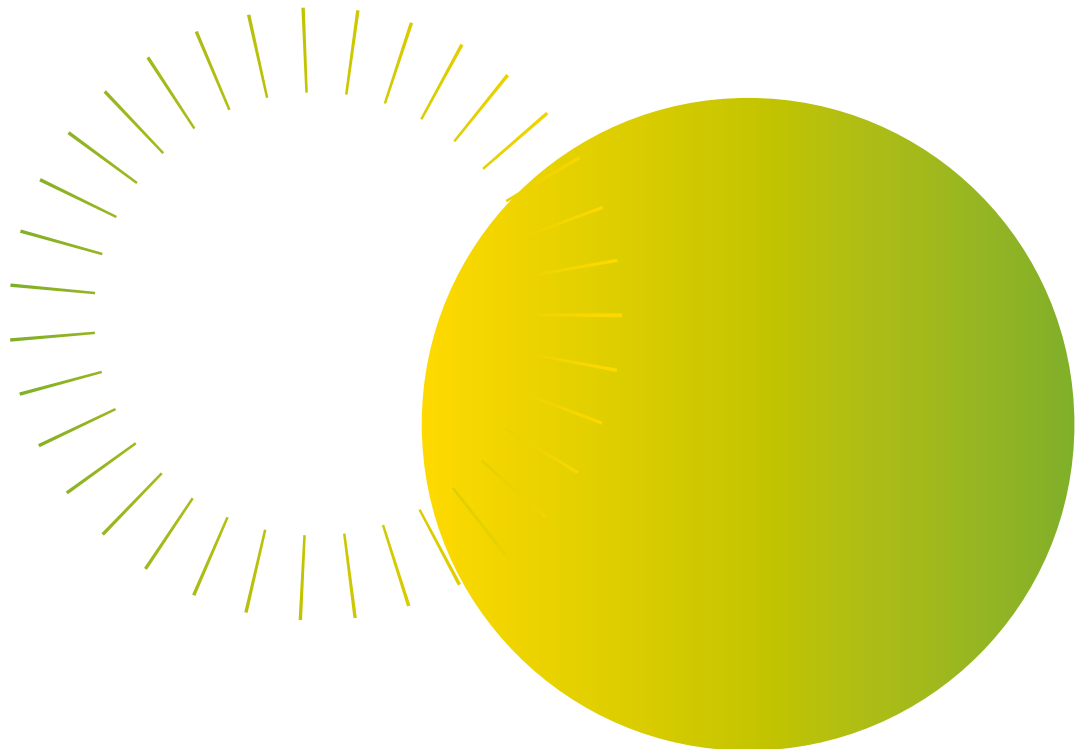
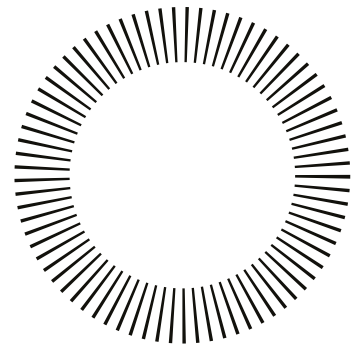
Assumptions

The assumptions underlying the actuarial valuations from which the amounts recognised in the financial statements are determined (including discount rates, rates of increase in future compensation levels, mortality rates and healthcare cost trend rates) are updated annually based on current economic conditions and for any relevant changes to the terms and conditions of the retirement benefit and post-retirement plans.

These assumptions can be affected by:

- i. For the discount rate, changes in the rate of return on high-quality corporate bonds.
- ii. For future compensation levels, future labour market conditions.
- iii. For healthcare cost trend rates, the rate of medical cost inflation in the relevant regions.

The weighted average actuarial assumptions applied in the determination of retirement benefit and other post-retirement liabilities are contained in Note 12. While management believes that the assumptions used are appropriate, differences in actual experience or changes in assumptions may affect the obligations and expenses recognised in future accounting periods. The assets and liabilities of defined benefit retirement benefit schemes may exhibit significant period-on-period volatility attributable primarily to changes in bond yields and longevity. In addition to future service contributions, significant cash contributions may be required by the Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science to remediate past service deficits.



SOLAS – Further Education & Training Authority

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

> 2 Income

	Note	2020	2019
		€'000	€'000
State Funding - Non Capital	3	836,892	660,821
State Funding in respect of ETB Capital Grants		16,775	12,500
State Funding in respect of Capital Grants for Other FET providers		93	0
Net Deferred Retirement Benefit Funding	12(a)(iii)	(20,453)	(17,287)
Other Income	4	3,581	4,878
Amortisation of Capital Grant - Depreciation	5 & 8	396	399
Total Income		837,284	661,311

> 3 State Funding

	2020	2019
	€'000	€'000
State funding was received under the following headings:		
Non Capital		
Vote 26 (Subheads B3, B5 & B7) - Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science		
Administration and General Expenses		
Staff Costs and Overheads (B3)	18,542	18,260
Less: Employee Retirement Benefit Contributions paid to the State	(739)	(648)
Less: Employer Retirement Benefit Contributions paid to the State	(116)	(124)
	17,687	17,488
SOLAS Training Programmes (B3)	5,558	5,558
Further Education & Training Pay Grants (B5)	242,764	105,246
Further Education & Training Non Pay Grants (B5)	274,804	249,800
Retirement Benefit Funding (B7)	31,500	32,000
Total Vote 26 - Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science	572,313	410,092

> 3 State Funding (continued)

	2020	2019
	€'000	€'000
Other Oireachtas		
National Training Fund †	264,579	250,729
Total State Funding - Non Capital #	836,892	660,821
Capital		
Vote 26 (Subhead B3.1 & B5.3) - Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science	17,057	13,000
Total State Funding - Capital	17,057	13,000
Total State Funding	853,949	673,821

† An amount of €264.579m (2019: €250.729m) was received during the year from the National Training Fund. These funds were used to part-finance a range of Further Education & Training Programmes for both the employed and the unemployed including Apprenticeship, Employee Development, Specific Skills Training, Traineeship, the Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme and the Skills Analysis Unit.

Non Capital State funding is reported net of surpluses recovered from ETBs amounting to €15.512m relating to previous years. Excluding this recovery Non Capital State funding for FET activities in 2020 would have been €852.404m and total income would have been €852.796m.

State funding includes an advance of European Social Fund (ESF) funding.

In line with DPER circular 13/14 and with the permission of the Department, the 2019 surplus of €3.521m was retained and accounted for in the current year's income as part of the overall grant due to SOLAS in 2020. The grant of €836.892m from the Department for non-capital includes cash received of €833.371m in 2020 and €3.521m surplus brought forward from 2019.

> 4 Other Income

	2020	2019
	€'000	€'000
Construction Activities	3,448	4,701
Miscellaneous Income	133	177
Total	3,581	4,878

> 5 Payroll Costs, Retirement Benefit Costs and Overheads

	Note	2020	2019
		€'000	€'000
Payroll Costs			
Office of the CEO		251	578
Transformation		3,014	3,417
Delivery		4,750	3,688
Construction		1,053	1,148
Support		4,521	4,593
Total Payroll Costs *		13,590	13,424
Total Retirement Benefit Costs	12(a)(i)	9,650	13,930
Overheads			
Travel & Subsistence †		78	344
Staff Training & Development		123	205
Depreciation	8	396	399
Establishment Costs		2,515	2,479
Programme Development Costs		112	152
Communications & Information Technology		2,352	1,974
Insurance & Accidents		205	282
Other Overheads ‡		1,043	1,474
Total Overheads		6,824	7,309
Total Payroll, Retirement Benefit and Overhead Costs		30,064	34,663
Comptroller & Auditor General Audit Fee ‡		43	43

* Total Payroll Costs comprises salaries and employers PRSI of €1,055k, allowances of €86k and overtime of €2k.

† Travel & Subsistence costs above are composed of national €73k and international €5k.

‡ Comptroller & Auditor General Audit Fee stated is included in Other Overheads.

> 6 Programme Costs

	2020	2019
	€'000	€'000
eCollege	2,443	1,782
Technology Enhanced Learning	2,580	1,926
Training For Employment	5,023	3,708
Apprenticeship	910	832
Construction	1,633	1,830
Training In Employment	2,543	2,662
FET Sector Evaluations	137	228
Skills Development/Traineeship	0	11
Workforce Development/Innovation	476	422
Active Inclusion	61	129
Other Programmes	674	790
Total Programme Costs	8,240	7,160

➤ Direct Provision of Funding

7(a) Summary of Grants Paid to Education and Training Boards

	2020		2019	
Education & Training Board	FET Provision	Capital	Total	Total
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Cavan & Monaghan	27,667	859	28,527	18,634
City of Dublin	114,897	1,312	116,209	78,534
Cork	76,781	870	77,651	54,704
Donegal	23,823	591	24,414	22,418
Dublin & Dun Laoghaire	73,379	1,160	74,540	60,849
Galway & Roscommon	49,356	1,476	50,832	37,838
Kerry	33,229	526	33,755	30,327
Kildare & Wicklow	33,783	615	34,398	31,770
Kilkenny & Carlow	23,875	266	24,140	19,337
Laois & Offaly	29,258	719	29,977	21,705
Limerick & Clare	67,103	1,306	68,409	57,907
Longford & Westmeath	25,865	1,301	27,166	25,556
Louth & Meath	46,364	2,018	48,382	30,779
Mayo, Sligo & Leitrim	42,451	1,007	43,459	34,068
Tipperary	28,402	1,066	29,469	22,740
Waterford & Wexford	61,866	1,682	63,548	58,887
Total Grants to Education and Training Boards	758,100	16,775	774,875	606,053

Note: Grants allocated to ETBs in 2020 amounted to €790.386m – Grants amounting to €774.875m were disbursed in 2020 and the balance of €15.512m was funded by balances retained by ETBs from underspends in 2019.

➤ Direct Provision of Funding

7(b) Summary of Grants Paid to Schools and Miscellaneous Grant Payments

FET Voluntary Secondary, Community and Comprehensive Schools (PLC)	2020	2020	2020	2020	2019
	PLC	Other Grant	Capital Grant ICT Devices	Total	Total (PLC)
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Ballyhaunis Community School, Co. Mayo	1	0	0	1	2
Castlerea Community School, Co. Roscommon	1	3	0	4	1
Central College, Limerick	20	145	6	171	23
Clifden Community College, Co. Galway	1	0	0	1	2
Colaiste Chiarain, Summerhill, Athlone	3	11	2	16	3
Colaiste Mhuire, Co. Galway	1	5	1	7	1
Donahies Community School, Donaghmede, Dublin 13	1	3	1	5	0
Dunmore Community School, Co. Galway	0	0	0	0	1
Glenamaddy Community School, Co. Roscommon	3	39	1	43	3
Gorey Community School, Co Wexford	7	56	6	69	9
Jesus & Mary Secondary School, Co. Sligo	8	36	2	46	12
Kilrush Community School, Co. Clare	1	59	1	61	2
Mary Immaculate Secondary School, Lisdoonvarna, Co. Clare	3	33	3	39	5
Mercy College, Chapel Hill, Co. Sligo	3	9	1	13	3
Moate Business College, Co Westmeath	36	345	17	398	39
Nagle Rice Secondary School, Doneraile, Co. Cork	0	9	1	10	0
North Presentation Secondary School, Co. Cork	0	37	5	42	0
Our Lady's Secondary School, Co. Mayo	1	0	1	2	1
Ramsgrange Community School, Co.Wexford	0	0	0	0	2
Sancta Maria College, Co. Mayo	1	13	2	16	1
Scoil Mhuire, Ennistymon, Co. Clare	0	7	1	8	0
Scoil Phobail, Clifden Community School, Co. Galway	0	3	0	3	0
St Cuan's College, Co. Galway	6	11	2	19	6
St Josephs, Spanish Point, Co. Clare	0	10	1	11	0
St Louis Community School, Kiltimagh, Co. Mayo	0	17	2	19	0
St Michael's School, Castlrea, Co. Roscommon	0	6	1	7	0
Tullow Community School, Co. Carlow	1	46	1	48	3
	98	903	58	1,059	119

SOLAS – Further Education & Training Authority

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

* Other Grants in 2020 include:

- Funds for students with disabilities €385k
- Grants in response to Covid-19 €518k

> Direct Provision of Funding

7(b) Summary of Grants Paid to Schools and Miscellaneous Grant Payments

FET Voluntary Secondary, Community and Comprehensive Schools (Programme - Back to Education Initiative)	2020	2019
	€'000	€'000
Central College, Co. Limerick	(18)	59
Donahies Community School, Donaghmede, Dublin 13	58	58
Gorey Community School, Gorey, Co. Wexford	24	0
Mary Immaculate Secondary School, Lisdoonvarna, Co. Clare	58	58
Nagle Rice Secondary School, Doneraile, Co. Cork	20	19
North Presentation Secondary School, Co. Cork	76	75
Sancta Maria College, Co. Mayo	14	14
Scoil Mhuire, Ennistymon, Co. Clare	14	14
St Joseph's Secondary School, Spanish Point, Co. Clare	45	45
St Michael's Castlerea, Co. Roscommon	31	31
	323	373
Miscellaneous Grant Payments		
Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Skills (Local Devised Assessments reimbursement)	89	106
	89	106
Total Grants Voluntary Secondary, Community and Comprehensive Schools	1,470	598

> Direct Provision of Funding

7(c) Summary of Grants paid to the Further Education Sector, European Union and Specific Projects

	2020	2019
	€'000	€'000
Further Education and Training - Support Organisations		
AHEAD - Association for Higher Education Access & Disability	136	58
AONTAS - The National Adult Learning Organisation	1,353	1,172
Association of Community & Comprehensive Schools (ACCS)	172	153
Dyslexia Association of Ireland	130	131
Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI)	491	956
National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA)	1,875	1,681
National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE)	278	278
	4,435	4,429
Further Education and Training - Staff Representative Organisations		
Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) ^	24	60
National Association of Adult & Community Education Directors (NACED)	21	21
	45	81
Further Education and Training - Lifelong Learning Opportunities		
Age Action Ireland	66	67
An Cosan - The Shanty Educational Project Ltd	450	0
Irish Countrywomen's Association	21	21
Peoples College	112	112
Third Age	148	0
	797	200
Further Education and Training - Continuing Professional Development		
Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT/NALA)	526	508
European Union and Specific Projects		
Central Statistics Office (PIAAC)*	296	146
Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (PIAAC)*	102	172
Fasttrack into Information Technology (FIT)	1,127	1,127
Irish Association of Community Training Organisations (IACTO)	162	155
Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed (INOU)	20	20
Leargas	0	39
	1,708	1,659
Further Education and Training - Other Providers		
Irish Deaf Society	452	317
Irish Deaf Society (FE Covid - Capital Grant)	27	0
National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) - Write On/Phone Tuition	330	269
Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities	160	0
Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities (FE Covid - Capital Grant)	9	0
	978	586

> Direct Provision of Funding

7(c) Summary of Grants paid to the Further Education Sector, European Union and Specific Projects

	Operational Grants	Development Grants	Total	Total
	2020	2020	2020	2019
Further Education and Training - Grants to Consortia & Coordinating Bodies	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Accounting Technicians Ireland				
Accounting Technician Apprenticeship	481	0	481	578
City of Dublin ETB				
Roofing & Cladding Technician	0	27	27	0
Construction Industry Federation (CIF)				
Engineering Services Management Apprenticeship	0	0	0	13
Fasttrack into Information Technology (FIT)				
ICT Associate - Software Developer/Network Engineer/Cybersecurity	487	0	487	627
Combilift				
Original Equipment Manufacturing	0	0	0	8
Institute of Technology Carlow				
Geo-Driller Apprenticeship	0	0	0	25
Irish Film Board				
CGI Technical Artist Apprenticeship	0	0	0	53
Galway Roscommon ETB				
Arboriculture	0	0	0	22
Griffith College Dublin				
Bar Manager	0	0	0	25
Health Care Assistant	0	0	0	31
Kerry ETB				
Commis Chef Apprenticeship	0	0	0	(115)
Limerick Institute of Technology				
Manufacturing Data Integration Engineering	0	25	25	0
Senior Quantity Surveyor	0	0	0	26
National College of Ireland				
Recruitment Executive	0	54	54	0
Recruitment Practitioner	0	0	0	26
Retail Ireland Skillsnet Consortia				
Apprenticeship in Retail Supervision	865	0	865	328

➤ Direct Provision of Funding

7(c) Summary of Grants paid to the Further Education Sector, European Union and Specific Projects (cont'd)

	Operational Grants	Development Grants	Total	Total
	2020	2020	2020	2019
Further Education and Training - Grants to Consortia & Coordinating Bodies	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
University of Limerick				
<i>Equipment Systems Engineer</i>	0	24	24	0
<i>Principal Engineer</i>	0	0	0	24
<i>Supply Chain Manager</i>	0	0	0	20
<i>Software Solutions Manager</i>	0	0	0	20
<i>Lean Sigma Manager</i>	0	0	0	20
<i>Supply Chain Specialist</i>	0	0	0	21
<i>Supply Chain Associate</i>	0	0	0	21
Total	1,833	129	1,962	1,773

➤ Direct Provision of Funding

7(c) Summary of Grants paid to the Further Education Sector Specific Projects

	2020	2019
	€'000	€'000
ICT Associate Professional Initiative		
Fasttrack into Information Technology (FIT)	0	80
Total Grants to Organisations in the FET Sector	10,451	9,316

> 7(d) Apprenticeship Incentivisation Grant Scheme

	2020	2019
	€'000	€'000
Grants totalling €2.090m were paid to 672 employers (1,045 Apprentices) in relation to the Apprenticeship Incentivisation Scheme	2,090	0
Total	2,090	0

* Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)

^ This grant is distributed by Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) to various staff associations in the ETB sector

> 8 Property, Plant & Equipment

	Note	2020	2020	2020	2019
		Land & Buildings	Equipment & Furniture	Total	Total
Cost		€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Opening Balance		599	3,665	4,264	3,853
Additions during the period		0	303	303	505
Disposals during the period	8 (a)	0	(235)	(235)	(94)
Balance at the end of the period		599	3,733	4,332	4,264
Accumulated Depreciation					
Opening Balance		217	3,030	3,247	2,942
Depreciation on Disposals	8 (b)	0	(235)	(235)	(94)
Balance at the end of the period		53	343	396	399
		270	3,138	3,408	3,247
Net Book Value at the end of the Year		329	595	924	1,017

8 (a) The disposal of equipment and furniture in the period was €0.235m (2019 €0.094m) and related to fully depreciated legacy and obsolete equipment.

8 (b) All depreciation, asset disposal and asset write-offs are financed by a corresponding transfer from the Capital Reserve. There were no impairment write-offs in the period.

> 9 Receivables

	2020	2019
	As at 31 December 2020	As at 31 December 2019
	€'000	€'000
Trade and Other Receivables	129	63
General Prepayments	1,776	1,055
Total	1,905	1,118

> 10 Payables

	2020	2019
	As at 31 December 2020	As at 31 December 2019
	€'000	€'000
Trade Payables	871	424
Accruals	660	1,288
Holiday Pay Provision	206	169
Payroll Deductions	69	40
Total	1,806	1,921

> 11 Remuneration

> 11(a) Aggregate Employee Benefits

	2020	2019
	€'000	€'000
Wages and Salaries	12,535	12,448
Employer PRSI Costs	1,055	976
Retirement benefit costs	9,650	13,930
Total	23,240	27,354

Employee benefits include salary and employer PRSI and but exclude employer retirement benefit contributions. Total employer retirement benefit contributions for the organisation amounted to €116k in 2020 (2019: €124k).

A total of 211 staff (full time equivalents) were being paid by SOLAS at 31 December 2020 (2019: 215).

In July 2015 the moratorium on Public Service recruitment was lifted and a new Staffing Resource Management Framework (SRMF) replaced the Employment Control Framework approach to staffing. The new approach gave delegated authority to the Department to approve the recruitment and promotion of staff without reference to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER), subject to compliance with a binding pay ceiling and other related conditions. The SRMF enables SOLAS to fill vacancies up to and including Director (Grade 4) and equivalent, as per the SOLAS' agreed Workforce Plan 2017 – 2020, and Executive Director (Grade 3) and above, subject to approval of the required business cases by the Department.

A further 17 staff (2019: 19) were unpaid being on leave of absence, on career breaks, in receipt of Permanent Health Insurance, on nil pay due to sick leave or on pension rate of pay.

Standard employee pension contributions amounted to €739,313 in 2020 (2019: €647,851).

An amount of €451,605 was deducted from Wages and Salaries for the year 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020 in relation to Additional Superannuation Contributions (ASC) and paid to our parent Department (2019: €491,662).

No severance/termination payments were made in 2020 or 2019.

> 11(b) Table of Employee Benefits

Benefit Band €	Number of Employees in 2020	Number of Employees in 2019
20,001 - 60,000	143	131
60,001 - 70,000	35	39
70,001 - 80,000	27	20
80,001 - 90,000	13	13
90,001 - 100,000	3	2
100,001 - 110,000	5	5
110,001 - 120,000	0	1
120,001 - 130,000	0	1
130,001 - 140,000	1	0
140,001 - 150,000	0	0
150,001 - 160,000	2	2
160,001 - 170,000	0	0
170,001 - 180,000	0	1
180,001 - 190,000	1	0
Total	230	215

The above table reflects employees paid over €20k in the year, both full time and part time, employed by SOLAS in 2020 and 2019. Employees who left or retired within the year are also included.

Note: For the purposes of this disclosure, short-term employee benefits in relation to services rendered during the reporting period include salary, overtime, allowances and other payments made on behalf of the employee, but exclude employer's PRSI.

> 11(c) Staff Short-Term Benefits

	2020	2019
	€'000	€'000
Basic Pay	12,241	12,114
Employer's PRSI	1,055	976
Untaken Annual Leave	206	168
Allowances	86	160
Overtime	2	6
Total	13,590	13,424

> 11(d) Key Management Personnel

Key management personnel in SOLAS consists of the members of the Board, the Chief Executive Officer and three Executive Directors. The Board of SOLAS do not receive fees, Board expenses are set out in note 11(f). The total value of employee benefits for key management personnel is set out below:

	2020	2019
	€'000	€'000
Salaries	619,920	513,646
Allowances	23,224	40,333
Total	643,144	553,979

This does not include the value of retirement benefits earned in the period. The key executive management personnel are members of SOLAS's pension scheme and their entitlements in that regard do not extend beyond the terms of the model public service pension scheme. The Board are not members of any SOLAS pension scheme.

> 11(e) Chief Executive Officer and Benefits

The CEO remuneration package for the financial period was as follows:

	2020	2019
	€'000	€'000
CEO Salary	188,104	58,250
Acting CEO Salary	0	107,474
Allowance	0	18,443
Total	188,104	184,167

The CEO and former acting CEO are members of SOLAS's pension scheme and their entitlements in that regard do not extend beyond the terms of the model public service pension scheme. The value of retirement benefits earned in the period is not included above. The CEO had expenses of €3,404 in 2020.

➤ 11(f) Fees and Expenses paid to Board members

In accordance with the requirements of Paragraph 1.4 (iv) of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies-Business and Financial Reporting Requirements 2016, expenses paid to the Board in the year ended 31 December 2020 are disclosed hereunder.

SOLAS Board members do not receive any fees. The disclosure relates only to expenses paid to Board members.

	2020	2019
	€	€
	Expenses	Expenses
Seán Aylward (Chairperson)	0	0
Andrew Brownlee (Chief Executive Officer)	0	0
Conor J. Dunne (Acting Chief Executive Officer)	0	0
Seán Burke	0	0
Patricia Carey	8	1,159
Paul Cremmins	0	0
Patrick J. Dwyer	0	0
Yvonne McNulty	0	0
Niamh O'Reilly	0	0
Darragh J. Loftus	0	210
Sinead McCluskey	0	0
Cecilia Munro	0	0
Paul O'Sullivan	0	0
Catrina Sheridan	0	0
Orla Coughlan	2,435	6,400
Total	2,443	7,769

> 12 Superannuation Schemes

Under Section 8 of the Labour Services Act, 1987, An Foras Áiseanna Saothair was required to prepare and administer retirement benefit schemes for the granting of retirement benefit entitlements to its staff. The superannuation schemes were approved in 1998 by the then Ministers for Finance and Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

SOLAS operates the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (Single Scheme) which is the defined benefit pension scheme for pensionable public servants appointed on or after 1 January 2013. Single Scheme member's contributions are paid over to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

There are two legacy retirement benefit schemes as follows:

- A defined benefit scheme which provides retirement benefits to former AnCO staff. This scheme closed to new members on 1 January 1988. On 31 December 2009 the assets of the scheme of €364.6m were transferred to the National Pension Reserve Fund (NPRF) in accordance with the Financial Measures (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009. In line with the provisions of the Act, the obligation to pay benefits in accordance with the approved benefit rules of the transferred retirement benefit fund has effect after the date of the relevant transfer. Benefits are paid out of the funding provided annually by the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.
- An unfunded defined benefit scheme whose benefits are paid out of the funding provided annually by the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.

Contributions from staff in the schemes are paid over to the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science each year.

In accordance with Section 46 of the Further Education and Training Act 2013 the retirement benefit payments and other superannuation liabilities of staff transferred to Education and Training Boards (ETBs) on 1 January and 1 July 2014 became the liability of the ETBs.

> 12(a) Results of the Actuarial Valuation

SOLAS commissioned an actuarial valuation on the above schemes of accrued liabilities at the financial reporting date and the cost of benefits (service cost) accrued during the year. The results of this valuation and assumptions used based on the projected unit method are listed hereunde:

	2020	2019
(i) Retirement Benefit Costs		
	€'000	€'000
Current Service Cost	3,980	3,170
Interest Expense	5,670	10,760
Contributions from Plan Members	739	648
Funding Recoverable in respect of current period Retirement Benefit Costs	10,389	14,578
Employee Retirement Benefit Contributions paid to the Department	(739)	(648)
Retirement Benefit Costs	9,650	13,930
(ii) Present Value of SOLAS Accrued Liability at beginning of year	707,609	672,660
Funding Recoverable in respect of current period Retirement Benefit Costs	10,389	14,578
Experience (Gain)/Loss on Retirement Benefit obligations	(13,728)	(9,787)
Changes in assumptions underlying the present value of Retirement Benefit Liabilities	28,431	62,023
Benefits Paid	(30,842)	(31,865)
Present Value of SOLAS Accrued Liability at end of year	701,859	707,609
(iii) Net Deferred Funding for Retirement Benefits in the Year		
The net deferred funding for retirement benefits recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure is as follows:		
Funding Recoverable in respect of current period Retirement Benefit Costs	10,389	14,578
State Grant applied to pay Retirement Benefits	(30,842)	(31,865)
	(20,453)	(17,287)

SOLAS – Further Education & Training Authority

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

	2020	2019
(iv) Financial Assumptions		
The Financial Assumptions used for FRS102 purposes were:		
Discount Rate	0.40%	0.80%
Price Inflation	1.20%	1.30%
Salary Increases	1.70%	1.80%
State Pension Increases	1.20%	1.30%
Pension increases in payment	1.70%	1.80%
Pension increases in deferment	1.70%	1.80%
Ill-health retirement	5% loading	5% loading

The assumptions are set by reference to yield curves at the relevant accounting dates and reflect the Scheme's duration. The above assumptions are the single assumptions that give the same value of liabilities as if the figures were calculated using the yield curves described below.

The discount rate is set by reference to yields available at the accounting date on high quality corporate bonds, which we take to be AA rated for FRS102 purposes, having regard to the duration of the Scheme's liabilities.

The assumption for future price inflation is based on the difference in yields on fixed-interest and index-linked bonds as at the accounting date and reflects the duration of the pension liabilities.

The salary increase assumption is consistent with the price inflation assumption. The general rate of salary increase has been set at 0.5% p.a. above the rate of price inflation. Note that pension increases in payment and deferment are linked to general salary increases. A separate promotional salary increase table was used for active members.

The assumption for life expectancy post-retirement is important and there is considerable uncertainty, particularly when considering the projection of future changes in mortality rates. The assumptions used for our results are set out below, in terms of life expectancies from normal retirement age. The mortality tables that we have used are the 58.0% of ILT15 and 62.0% of ILT15 tables. Improvements in annuity rates of 0.30% p.a. for males and 0.25% p.a. for females from 2014 have been assumed.

SOLAS – Further Education & Training Authority

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

	2020	2019
(iv) Financial Assumptions continued		
The average life expectancy, in years, of a pensioner retiring is as follows:		
	Retiring at 60	Retiring at 60
Males	26.6 years	26.4 years
Females	29.1 years	29.0 years
	Retiring at 65	Retiring at 65
Males	21.8 years	21.7 years
Females	24.2 years	24.1 years
	Retiring at 65 in 10 year's time	Retiring at 65 in 10 year's time
Males	23.0 years	22.9 years
Females	25.2 years	25.1 years
(v) Actuarial Gain/(Loss)		
	2020	2019
	€'000	€'000
Experience Gain/(Loss) on Retirement Benefit obligations	13,728	9,787
Changes in assumptions underlying the present value of Retirement Benefit Liabilities	(28,431)	(62,023)
Actuarial Gain/(Loss) Recognised in the SCI †	(14,703)	(52,236)
Cumulative Gains/(Losses) Recognised in the SCI	(44,054)	(29,351)

† Statement of Comprehensive Income

> 12(b) Retirement Benefit Liability

The retirement benefit liability of €701.859m includes an amount of €517.850m (73.8%) related to the retirement benefit liabilities of legacy organisations currently being administered by SOLAS. These retirement benefits are being paid by the Payroll Shared Service Centre (PSSC).

> 12(c) Deferred Retirement Benefit Funding

SOLAS recognises as an asset, amounts owing from the State for the unfunded deferred liability for retirement benefits on the basis of a number of past events. These events include the statutory backing for the superannuation scheme and the policy and practice in relation to funding public service retirement benefits including the annual estimates process. SOLAS has no evidence that the funding policy will not continue to progressively meet this amount in funding in accordance with current practice. The deferred funding asset for retirement benefits as at 31 December 2020 amounted to €701.859m. The calculation of the deferred asset is solely for FRS102 reporting purposes.

SOLAS – Further Education & Training Authority

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

From 2010 onwards, in accordance with the provisions of the Financial Measures (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009, future retirement benefits of the transferred retirement benefit fund will be met on a "pay as you go basis" out of the funding provided annually by the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science. Contributions from staff and employer in this scheme are paid over to the Department on a monthly basis.

> 13 Lease Commitments

SOLAS had the following future minimum lease payments under a non-cancellable operating lease (up to lease break clauses where these apply). This operating lease is an arrangement in which, substantially all of the risks and rewards of ownership of the asset, are not transferred to SOLAS by the lessor.

	2020	2019
	As at 31 December 2020	As at 31 December 2019
	€'000	€'000
Operating Lease Commitments		
Payable within one year	1,644	1,512
Payable within 2 to 5 years	4,127	5,291
Payable after 5 years	0	0
Total	5,771	6,803

The Operating Lease is in relation to Block 1, Castleforbes House. SOLAS has no other Operating Leases.

The estimated lease commitment at 2020 year end was €5.771m.

The lease commitment at 2019 year end was €6.803m.

The 2019 figure provided for the five year rent review effective from mid 2019.

Rent review due in mid-2019 was finalised in 2020.

Operating lease payments recognised as an expense in 2020 were €1.7m (2019: €1.6m).

The property was utilised in 2020. The Operating Lease is reviewed on an ongoing basis by SOLAS.

Finance Lease Commitments

There were no Finance Leases.

> 14 Funding

Most of SOLAS' income are grants from the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science which are provided to meet liabilities maturing during the year, as opposed to expenditure incurred during the year. SOLAS recognises its income from the Department of Education and Skills and Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science on a cash basis, whereas expenditure is recognised as incurred. As a result, the annual surplus or deficit on the Statement of Income and Expenditure and the accumulated surplus or deficit do not represent normal operating surpluses or deficits and are largely attributable to the difference between accruals expenditure and cash-based funding.

> 15 Capital Commitments

At 31 December 2020, SOLAS had entered into total capital commitments amounting to €45k. Capital commitments at 31 December 2019 amounted to €1k.

> 16 Contingent Liability

In the normal course of business SOLAS is involved in various legal actions including the finalisation of legacy cases. After careful assessment of each case, the Board is confident that there are no actions, including the legacy actions, which, when settled, are likely to have a material impact on the financial statements.

> 17 Related Party Disclosures

Related party personnel in SOLAS consist of the CEO and members of the Board of Directors. Total compensation paid to related party personnel, including Board members' fees and expenses and total CEO remuneration, amounted to €190,547 (2019: €191,936). A breakdown of remuneration and benefits paid to related party personnel is provided in notes 11(e) and 11(f).

SOLAS adopts procedures in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform covering the personal interests of Board members. In the normal course of business, SOLAS may approve grants or enter into other contractual arrangements with entities in which SOLAS Board members are employed or are otherwise interested.

In cases of potential conflict of interest, Board members do not receive Board documentation on the proposed transactions nor do the members participate in or attend Board discussions relating to the matters. All such instances are recorded in the Board minutes. There was one occasion during the year when a Board member did not participate in or attend Board discussions relating to matters that represented a conflict of their interests.

> 18 Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic

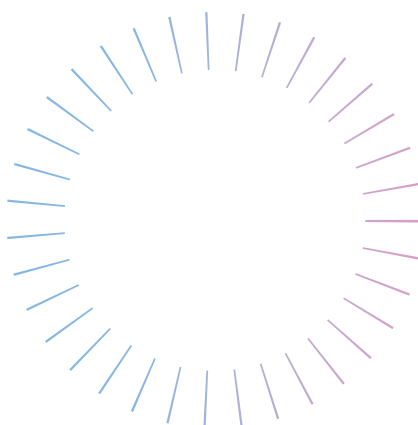
The outbreak of Covid-19 and the fall out of this pandemic in 2020 presented significant challenges both nationally and internationally. Within SOLAS the affect was both internal to SOLAS and external to the FET Sector. However, SOLAS introduced new control measures that mitigated the risk to the internal control environment and the wider functioning of SOLAS and FET.

SOLAS adapted well to working in this pandemic environment and rose to the many challenges presented. Enhanced cyber security protocols were put in place as 98% of the SOLAS staff were working remotely. New measures in relation to procurement approvals and processing were introduced. There is no impact on the Financial Statements for 2020.

During the year specific funding was provided by SOLAS to ETBs, Schools and Other FET providers to minimise the impact of the pandemic on learners. This included €20.0m for Skills to Compete, €2.090m for the Apprenticeship Incentivisation Scheme, €5.837m for the Educational Disadvantage Fund, €5.0m for Covid-19 Support Costs, €5.0m for ICT devices for disadvantaged learners and €0.5m for the National Retrofitting Programme.

> 19 Board Approval

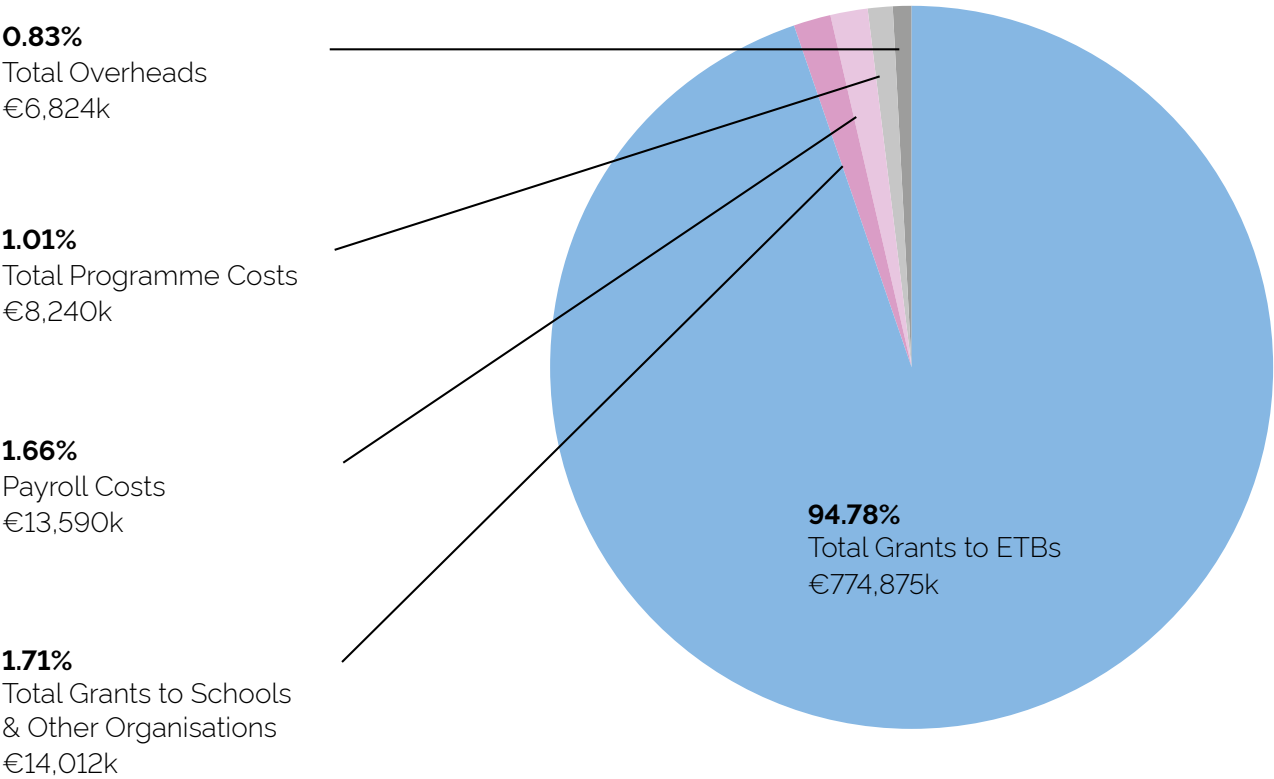
The Board approved the Financial Statements on **29 April, 2021**.



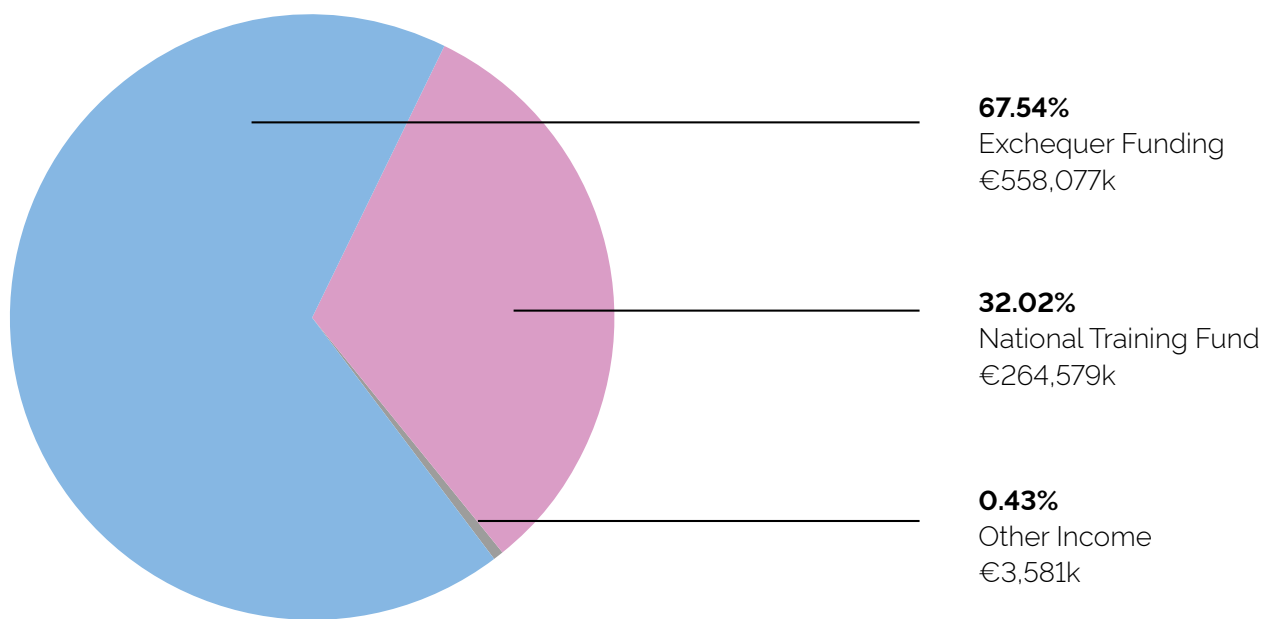


Additional Information

> Breakdown of Expenditure Excluding Pensions



> Sources of Income Excluding Pensions



➤ **Direct Provision of Funding (Further Education Grants)** **Breakdown of Grants by Programme as Reported by** **the Education and Training Boards**

Education & Training Board	Cavan & Monaghan	City of Dublin	Cork	Donegal	Dublin & Dun Laoghaire	Galway & Roscommon
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Adult Guidance	400	595	457	340	675	510
Adult Literacy	1,247	4,646	2,449	973	2,099	3,085
Back To Education Initiative	1,094	3,372	1,536	1,142	2,984	1,794
Community Education	464	2,525	1,378	335	1,717	524
Co-operation Hours	749	7,245	2,749	0	1,409	3,232
Core Skills	0	0	0	0	0	0
English for Speakers of Other Languages	226	491	222	118	16	0
Further Education Operational Costs	523	1,848	1,509	878	761	1,034
Innovation Projects	321	1,247	542	20	(15)	337
Intensive Tuition Adult Basic Education	73	(2)	223	32	221	61
MAEDF *	521	925	947	283	135	221
Other Programmes	328	175	350	184	644	888
Post Leaving Certificate	8,106	30,961	22,466	651	12,067	6,483
Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme	637	9,859	3,484	2,629	4,198	5,125
Workplace Education Fund	217	118	156	83	(287)	116
Youthreach	3,405	9,478	6,480	3,207	6,696	5,864
Sub-Total	18,310	73,482	44,947	10,874	33,320	29,274
Capital Building (Further Ed.)	32	47	773	(0)	(8)	327
Capital Equipment (Further Ed.)	214	(2)	(185)	84	(8)	92
Sub-Total	246	45	588	84	(16)	419
Total Further Education Grants	18,556	73,527	45,535	10,959	33,304	29,692

Notes:

The negative balances reported by some ETBs on some programmes are the result of surpluses carried forward from prior years.

* MAEDF = Mitigating Against Educational Disadvantage Fund

Kerry	Kildare & Wicklow	Kilkenny & Carlow	Laois & Offaly	Limerick & Clare	Longford & Westmeath	Louth & Meath	Mayo, Sligo & Leitrim	Tipperary	Waterford & Wexford	Total
€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
188	596	645	258	718	356	345	499	245	402	7,229
347	1,675	631	713	(144)	1,069	979	1,859	1,390	1,999	25,018
661	1,182	1,144	1,360	513	1,305	1,098	2,340	1,768	1,716	25,010
185	497	218	103	1,017	175	412	665	764	807	11,783
79	1,098	275	3,250	1,838	340	662	100	162	54	23,243
0	0	0	0	3,128	0	0	0	0	0	3,128
90	170	0	45	430	403	429	397	288	549	3,873
2,399	525	817	1,448	1,640	(0)	66	357	562	1,184	15,550
211	0	50	0	60	0	1,102	24	(16)	552	4,436
7	42	80	61	0	89	52	92	88	0	1,119
37	15	27	448	506	174	386	275	150	789	5,837
7	53	341	146	795	291	1,037	950	94	1,139	7,422
3,590	5,305	4,781	1,677	5,860	1,061	11,410	5,365	3,725	7,357	130,864
2,082	7,390	2,819	2,353	7,266	1,590	1,821	4,426	2,693	7,604	65,977
10	126	77	79	1,909	23	34	453	171	59	3,342
2,417	3,930	1,023	2,062	5,519	2,095	4,831	3,381	2,136	5,554	68,079
12,311	22,605	12,928	14,003	31,056	8,972	24,664	21,182	14,219	29,765	401,912
15	141	119	246	304	3	356	180	0	0	2,536
0	162	5	328	164	190	(1)	230	562	(9)	1,827
15	303	124	574	468	193	355	410	562	(9)	4,362
12,326	22,907	13,052	14,577	31,524	9,165	25,019	21,592	14,781	29,757	406,274

➤ **Direct Provision of Funding (Training Grants)**
Breakdown of Grants by Programme as Reported by
the Education and Training Boards

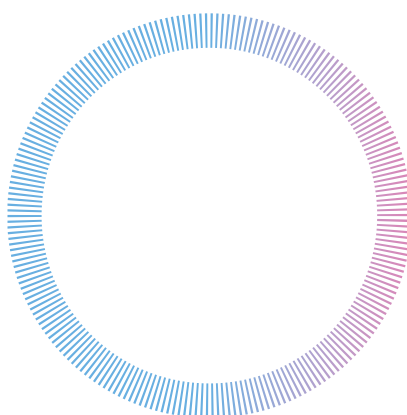
Education & Training Board	Cavan & Monaghan	City of Dublin	Cork	Donegal	Dublin & Dun Laoghaire	Galway & Roscommon
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Apprenticeship	612	7,703	6,977	1,540	5,919	2,703
Apprenticeship 2016+	525	1,270	1,012	171	646	444
Bridging Foundation	0	73	0	4	13	0
Community Training Centres	0	7,638	2,159	0	2,387	822
Employment Contracted	0	0	0	0	100	0
Evening Courses	75	660	624	583	719	329
Justice Workshops	0	132	0	0	158	214
Libraries	0	0	8	0	28	0
Local Training Initiatives	779	1,396	3,501	0	1,623	1,081
On-Line Blended Learning	0	0	212	0	299	24
Recognition of Prior Learning	10	0	(5)	16	20	0
Skills Training	1,967	1,360	1,729	1,956	7,294	2,411
Skills to Advance	63	171	(96)	453	636	1,771
Specialist Training Providers	759	9,026	4,423	851	4,819	1,992
Technology Enhanced Learning TR	34	25	593	74	(1)	160
Traineeship	814	1,472	1,204	2,026	3,400	1,719
Training Operational Costs	2,290	8,045	7,109	2,880	10,489	3,970
Sub-Total	7,928	38,971	29,449	10,554	38,549	17,640
Capital Building	14	(6)	(287)	17	120	536
Capital Equipment	599	1,274	569	490	1,056	521
Sub-Total	613	1,267	281	507	1,176	1,057
Total Training Grants	8,541	40,239	29,730	11,060	39,725	18,697

Kerry	Kildare & Wicklow	Kilkenny & Carlow	Laois & Offaly	Limerick & Clare	Longford & Westmeath	Louth & Meath	Mayo, Sligo & Leitrim	Tipperary	Waterford & Wexford	Total
€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
3,262	66	2,999	2,113	8,706	2,832	5,627	3,460	3,710	8,941	67,170
270	82	365	0	1,028	0	379	910	0	204	7,306
65	87	152	0	0	28	0	0	0	415	837
959	792	2,367	1,320	2,791	2,123	792	1,773	2,315	2,411	30,650
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
306	64	0	(31)	788	267	119	182	126	755	5,565
0	0	0	0	139	80	0	0	0	0	723
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	35
0	755	1,319	531	542	656	2,018	1,550	924	2,734	19,410
0	61	0	0	0	(20)	50	0	0	79	705
0	(9)	19	0	28	0	0	(10)	0	0	69
2,122	1,222	959	523	2,736	2,844	1,997	2,792	1,362	2,204	35,478
209	381	135	621	686	65	1,435	324	159	1,223	8,236
2,732	2,161	325	2,315	3,026	2,653	2,052	2,830	1,008	1,816	42,788
0	35	110	4	214	20	(17)	(47)	53	(5)	1,250
3,006	2,714	284	2,949	4,351	864	1,851	2,273	1,829	2,010	32,767
3,645	1,458	1,203	1,813	8,002	3,806	3,833	3,537	1,792	5,611	69,483
16,577	9,869	10,238	12,158	33,036	16,217	20,137	19,574	13,278	28,399	322,572
(0)	26	(184)	0	12	427	226	173	13	221	1,308
511	286	325	145	826	681	1,437	424	491	1,470	11,105
511	312	142	145	838	1,108	1,663	597	504	1,690	12,413
17,088	10,181	10,380	12,303	33,874	17,326	21,800	20,171	13,782	30,089	334,985

> Direct Provision of Funding (Further Education & Training Grants - Other) Breakdown of Grants by Programme as Reported by the Education and Training Boards

Education & Training Board	Cavan & Monaghan	City of Dublin	Cork	Donegal	Dublin & Dun Laoghaire	Galway & Roscommon
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Cert. Authentication Quality	(15)	0	274	132	143	155
Curriculum Development	3	0	47	9	42	(34)
External Psychological Support	83	0	25	20	20	0
Learner Information Grant	47	0	25	5	6	17
Learner Support Grants	242	150	115	90	116	121
Promotion/Advertising FET	88	0	128	196	24	0
Technology Enhanced Learning FT	67	98	30	50	4	35
Operational Costs	915	2,195	1,741	1,894	1,156	2,148
Total FET Grants - Other	1,430	2,443	2,385	2,395	1,510	2,443

The negative balances reported by some ETBs on some programmes are the result of surpluses carried forward from prior years.



Kerry	Kildare & Wicklow	Kilkenny & Carlow	Laois & Offaly	Limerick & Clare	Longford & Westmeath	Louth & Meath	Mayo, Sligo & Leitrim	Tipperary	Waterford & Wexford	Total
€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
501	204	48	33	565	78	138	186	16	455	2,912
66	0	0	0	95	30	89	(70)	30	111	417
0	61	0	0	0	0	120	0	0	0	329
0	90	0	0	0	0	24	90	(6)	48	346
130	128	0	16	495	495	158	50	39	347	2,692
209	0	0	109	0	0	22	40	0	31	847
139	34	10	0	71	31	45	177	43	72	905
3,297	792	651	2,938	1,786	42	967	1,223	784	2,638	25,168
4,342	1,310	709	3,096	3,011	676	1,563	1,696	905	3,702	33,616

> Five Year Summary - Operating Grants to ETBs

Education & Training Board	Operating Grant 2016	Operating Grant 2017	Operating Grant 2018	Operating Grant 2019	Operating Grant 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Cavan & Monaghan	14,630	16,515	16,111	17,239	27,667
City of Dublin	79,651	76,580	78,424	77,666	114,897
Cork	50,211	48,665	48,616	53,606	76,781
Donegal	20,348	19,444	21,265	21,830	23,823
Dublin & Dun Laoghaire	65,387	63,471	58,776	60,215	73,379
Galway & Roscommon	31,984	33,616	34,804	37,121	49,356
Kerry	24,227	25,071	27,442	29,581	33,229
Kildare & Wicklow	26,667	29,259	29,077	31,263	33,783
Kilkenny & Carlow	14,230	16,686	18,446	19,073	23,875
Laois & Offaly	14,631	16,882	19,056	20,705	29,258
Limerick & Clare	49,839	51,948	52,687	57,147	67,103
Longford & Westmeath	22,444	22,411	24,275	24,769	25,865
Louth & Meath	29,665	28,286	29,227	29,741	46,364
Mayo, Sligo & Leitrim	30,131	31,728	31,709	33,276	42,451
Tipperary	13,567	16,599	22,181	22,287	28,402
Waterford & Wexford	48,143	48,567	51,098	58,034	61,866
Total	535,755	545,728	563,194	593,553	758,100

> Five Year Summary - Capital Grants to ETBs

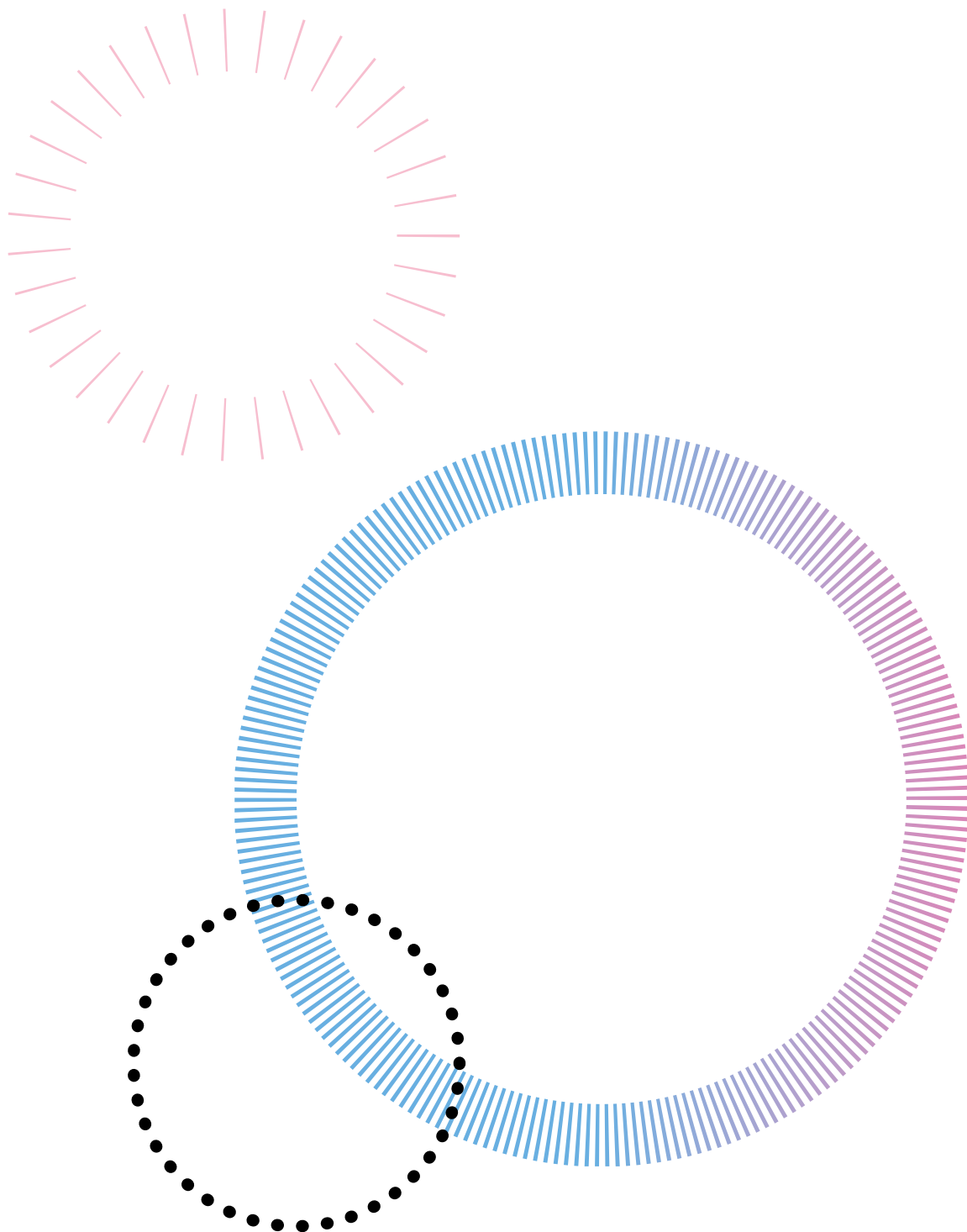
Education & Training Board	Capital Grant 2016	Capital Grant 2017	Capital Grant 2018	Capital Grant 2019	Capital Grant 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Cavan & Monaghan	2	41	69	1,395	859
City of Dublin	101	79	530	868	1,312
Cork	381	891	931	1,098	870
Donegal	87	265	293	588	591
Dublin & Dun Laoghaire	294	106	561	634	1,160
Galway & Roscommon	246	251	506	717	1,476
Kerry	212	263	305	746	527
Kildare & Wicklow	0	28	85	507	615
Kilkenny & Carlow	0	0	108	264	266
Laois & Offaly	15	(5)	50	1,000	719
Limerick & Clare	95	402	424	760	1,306
Longford & Westmeath	211	112	223	787	1,301
Louth & Meath	19	(25)	350	1,038	2,018
Mayo, Sligo & Leitrim	454	269	434	792	1,007
Tipperary	0	0	184	453	1,066
Waterford & Wexford	360	208	471	853	1,682
Total	2,477	2,885	5,524	12,500	16,775

The negative balances reported by some ETBs on some programmes are the result of surpluses carried forward from prior years.

> Five Year SOLAS Financial Summary

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Statement of Income and Expenditure					
Total Income	605,341	603,131	620,700	661,311	837,284
Statement of Income and Expenditure					
Payroll Costs SOLAS	11,734	11,397	12,596	13,424	13,590
Overheads SOLAS	6,874	7,304	6,822	7,309	6,824
SOLAS Operational Cost	18,608	18,701	19,418	20,733	20,414
Retirement Benefit Costs	19,200	15,210	14,320	13,930	9,650
Programme Costs	11,978	7,936	5,697	7,160	8,240
Grants to Education and Training Boards	538,232	548,613	568,718	606,053	774,875
Grants to VSCCS *	726	725	661	598	1,471
Grants to Organisations in the FET sector	7,147	7,006	8,742	9,316	10,451
Apprenticeship Incentivisation Grants					2,090
Total Expenditure	595,891	598,191	617,556	657,790	827,191
Surplus	9,450	4,940	3,144	3,521	10,093
Statement of Financial Position					
Fixed Assets	1,005	739	911	1,017	924
Net Current Assets	9,640	5,156	3,396	3,768	10,226
	10,645	5,895	4,307	4,785	11,150
Financed by:					
Capital Account	168	194	230	225	111
Capital Reserves	1,005	739	911	1,017	924
Revenue Reserve	9,472	4,962	3,166	3,543	10,115
Total	10,645	5,895	4,307	4,785	11,150

* Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools





Appendices

> Appendix 1

SOLAS Board Committees 2020

Audit and Risk Committee	(5 meetings in 2020)
Cecilia Munro	SOLAS Board member and ARC Chairperson from 23rd April 2020
Seán Burke	Former Chairperson and SOLAS and Board member, former ARC Chairperson to 9th April 2020
Orla Coughlan	SOLAS Board member and ARC member to 9th April 2020
P.J. Dwyer	SOLAS Board member and ARC member from 9th April 2020
Darragh J. Loftus	SOLAS Board member and ARC member
Yvonne McNulty	SOLAS Board member and ARC member from 9th April 2020
Robert Chestnutt	External appointee to ARC. Retired 24th August 2020
Peter Buckley	External appointee to ARC from 24th November 2020

Notes:

- i. **Ms. Cecilia Munro's** appointment as ARC Chairperson on 9th April, 2020 was noted by the Board at its 23rd April, 2020 Board meeting.
- ii. **Mr. Seán Burke** – was former Chairperson from 1st January to March, 2020. His term as an ordinary member of the ARC was extended to 9th April, 2020. He later moved to the Strategic Planning Committee.
- iii. **Ms. Orla Coughlan's** term was due to conclude in March 2020 but was extended to 9th April, 2020. Ms. Coughlan later moved to the Workforce and Organisational Development Committee as Chairperson.
- iv. **Mr. Robert Chestnutt**, External appointee was due to conclude his term in March 2020 but was extended to September 2020. Mr Chestnutt later retired on 24th August, 2020.
- v. **Mr. Peter Buckley** External representative was appointed from 24th November, 2020.

Strategic Planning Committee	*(3 ordinary meetings/*1 extraordinary meeting)
Niamh O'Reilly	SOLAS Board member and SPC Chairperson from 11th February 2020
Seán Burke	SOLAS Board member from 11th February, 2020
Paul Cremmins	SOLAS Board member from October 2020

* Note 1: *One additional Extraordinary meeting was held in March 2020 to discuss the SOLAS Corporate Plan 2017-2019.

Note 2: The Strategic Planning Committee was re-constituted on 24th April 2020 and Ms. Niamh O'Reilly was appointed Chairperson of the Committee.

Changes in 2020

Cecilia Munro - Former Chairperson of previous Strategic Planning Committee later appointed Chairperson of Audit and Risk Committee

Seán Burke - Former Chairperson of Audit and Risk Committee. Moved to Strategic Planning Committee on 11th February 2020

Patrick J Dwyer - SOLAS Board Member and member of previous Strategic Planning Committee (2019) and moved to Audit and Risk Committee on 11th February 2020

Darragh J Loftus - SOLAS Board Member on previous Committee (2019) and moved to Audit and Risk Committee on 11th February 2020

Sinead McCluskey - SOLAS Board Member retired from the Board on 7th February, 2020. Sinead was a member of the former Strategic Planning Committee (2019) but not a member in 2020 prior to the Committee being reconstituted on 24th April 2020.

Workforce and Organisational Development Committee	(3 ordinary meetings)
Orla Coughlan	SOLAS Board member and Chairperson
Catrina Sheridan	SOLAS Board member

> Membership of Advisory Committees

(for the period 1 January to 31 December 2020)

National Apprenticeship Advisory Committee (NAAC) (5 meetings)	
NAAC Membership	
The membership of the existing NAAC is as follows:	
Paul Cremmins	Chairperson of NAAC & SOLAS Board member
Sean Burke	SOLAS Board member
Alan McGrath	SOLAS Executive
Phil O'Flaherty	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
Cathy Holahan	Enterprise Ireland
Eamon Devoy	ICTU
Brian Nolan	Connect Trade Union (ICTU)
Margaret O'Shea	Society of the Irish Motor Industry (SIMI)
Dermot Carey	Construction Industry Federation (CIF)
Ruaidhri Neavyn	Higher Education Authority (HEA)
Michael Hannon	Institutes of Technology Apprenticeship Committee (ITAC)
John Kearney	Education & Training Boards Ireland (ETBI)
Colin Tyrrell	Learner Representative
Alan McGrath	Secretariat (SOLAS)

Changes during 2020

- Ms. Cecilia Munro stepped down as Chairperson at meeting on 10th March 2020.
- Mr. Paul Cremmins, SOLAS Board member, succeeded Ms. Cecilia Munro as Chairperson and chaired his first meeting on the 13th May 2020.

National Apprenticeship Appeals & Recognition Of Prior Learning Committee Membership (4 Meetings)	
Patricia Cassells	Chairperson
Paddy Kavanagh	TEEU
David Nicholson	Dun Laoghaire Further Education Institute
Tommy Flaherty	BAM Group
Trevor Sinnott	Waterford-Wexford ETB
Bryan Redmond	Independent Representative (retired SOLAS)
Owen O'Donnell	Kerry ETB
Joe Roe	SOLAS
Julia Mannion	SOLAS
Joanne Morrissey	SOLAS – Secretariat (from March, 2019)

Changes in 2020

- There was no change to the Committee membership in 2020.

Note: The NAAC Appeals Terms of Reference are up for review in 2020.

Appendix 2

> Table 1

Apprenticeships available in Ireland at end 2020	
Arboriculture	
1	Arboriculture
Biopharma	
2	Laboratory Analyst
3	Laboratory Technician
Construction	
4	Brick and Stonelaying
5	Carpentry and Joinery
6	Geo-Driller
7	Painting and Decorating
8	Plastering
9	Plumbing
10	Stonecutting and Stonemasonry
11	Wood Manufacturing and Finishing
Electrical	
12	Aircraft Mechanics
13	Electrical
14	Electrical Instrumentation
15	Electronic Security Systems
16	Industrial Electrical Engineer
17	Instrumentation
18	Refrigeration and Air Conditioning
Engineering	
19	Engineering Services Management
20	Farriery
21	Industrial Insulation
22	Manufacturing Engineering
23	Manufacturing Technology
24	Mechanical Automation and Maintenance Fitting
25	Metal Fabrication
26	OEM Engineer

27	Pipefitting
28	Principle Engineer
29	Polymer Processing Technology
30	Sheet Metalworking
31	Toolmaking
Finance	
32	Accounting Technician
33	Insurance Practitioner
34	International Financial Services Associate
35	International Financial Services Specialist
Hair	
36	Hairdressing
Hospitality & Food	
37	Butcher
38	Chef de Partie
39	Commis Chef
40	Sous Chef
ICT	
41	CGI Technical Artist (Animation, Games, VFX)
42	Cybersecurity
43	Network Engineer Associate
44	Software Developer Associate
45	Telecommunications and Data Network Engineering Technician
Logistics	
46	Lean Sigma Manager
47	Logistics Associate
48	Supply Chain Associate
49	Supply Chain Manager
50	Supply Chain Specialist
Motor	
51	Agricultural Mechanics
52	Construction Plant Fitting
53	Heavy Vehicle Mechanics
54	Motor Mechanics
55	Vehicle Body Repairs

Property Services

56 Auctioneering and Property Services

Recruitment

57 Recruitment Executive

Sales

58 Retail Supervision

59 Sales

> Table 2

Apprentice Registrations 2020 Pre-2016 Apprenticeships

Trades **Dec-20**

Construction

Brick and Stonelaying	56
Carpentry and Joinery	563
Floor and Wall Tiling	0
Painting and Decorating	24
Plastering	20
Plumbing	560
Stonecutting and Stonemasonry	3
Wood Manufacturing and Finishing	75
Total	1,301

Electrical

Aircraft Mechanics	50
Electrical	1,740
Electrical Instrumentation	62
Electronic Security Systems	45
Instrumentation	11
Refrigeration and Air Conditioning	73
Total	1,981

Engineering

M.A.M.F.	142
Farriery	0
Industrial Insulation	23
Metal Fabrication	198
Pipefitting	52
Sheet Metalworking	41
Toolmaking	48
Total	504

Motor	
Agricultural Mechanics	52
Construction Plant Fitting	63
Heavy Vehicle Mechanics	135
Motor Mechanics	310
Vehicle Body Repairs	31
Total	591
Printing	
Print Media	0
Total	-
Grand Total	
	4,377

> Table 3

Apprentice Registrations 2020 2016+ Apprenticeships	
Apprenticeships	Dec-20
Arboriculture	
Auctioneering and Property Services	3
Total	3
Property Services	
Auctioneering and Property Services	75
Total	75
Biopharma	
Laboratory Analyst	18
Laboratory Technician	12
Total	30
Construction	
Geo Driller	18
Total	18
Electrical	
Industrial Electrical Engineer	30
Total	30
Engineering	
Engineering Services Management	17
Manufacturing Engineer (Level 7)	20
Manufacturing Technology (Level 6)	30
Polymer Processing Technology	11
Principal Engineer	5
Total	83
Equipment Manufacturing	
OEM Engineer	16
Total	16

Finance	
Accounting Technician	96
Insurance Practitioner	49
International Financial Services Associate	17
International Financial Services Specialist	18
Total	180

Hair	
Hairdressing	84
Total	84

Hospitality & Food	
Butcher	10
Chef De Partie	5
Commis Chef	16
Sous Chef	3
Total	34

ICT	
CGI Technical Artist	0
Cybersecurity	30
Network Engineer Associate	22
Software Developer Associate	42
Telecommunications and Data Network Engineering Technician	31
Total	125

Logistics	
Lean Sigma Manager	39
Logistics Associate	53
Supply Chain Manager	11
Supply Chain Specialist	10
Total	113

Recruitment	
Recruitment Executive	27
Total	27

Sales	
Retail Supervision	101
Sales	30
Total	131
Grand Total	949

► Table 4

Apprentice Registrations

Pre-2016 Apprenticeships 2012 – 2020

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Construction									
Brick and Stonelaying	6	3	20	26	52	60	81	80	56
Cabinetmaking	1	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Carpentry and Joinery	91	99	185	291	399	443	591	597	563
Floor and Wall Tiling	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Painting and Decorating	11	8	11	19	27	44	30	31	24
Plastering	4	8	9	7	18	34	29	36	20
Plumbing	97	241	318	289	345	532	653	628	560
Stonecutting and Stonemasonry			16	13	2	8	7	3	3
Wood Manufacturing and Finishing	11	21	23	48	71	59	95	102	75
Total	222	380	582	693	914	1,180	1,486	1,477	1,301
Electrical									
Aircraft Mechanics	36	40	33	34	39	53	74	72	50
Electrical	397	522	845	956	1,343	1,705	1,841	1,949	1,740
Electrical Instrumentation	24	46	85	83	106	120	108	125	62
Electronic Security Systems	7	12	16	28	28	72	65	76	45
Instrumentation	8	6	10	8	10	20	17	16	11
Refrigeration and Air Conditioning	34	49	62	75	79	106	119	122	73
Total	506	675	1,051	1,184	1,605	2,076	2,224	2,360	1,981
Engineering									
M.A.M.F.	110	127	174	153	163	183	180	199	142
Farriery	5	5	4	7	5	6	9	5	0
Industrial Insulation	1	5	10	13	10	21	19	20	23
Metal Fabrication	103	145	176	198	186	224	234	266	198
Pipefitting				37	33	25	49	76	52

Sheet Metalworking	11	18	23	38	40	53	70	57	41
Toolmaking	57	81	66	62	66	65	79	61	48
Total	287	381	453	508	503	577	640	684	504

Motor									
Agricultural Mechanics	19	36	38	59	43	45	41	44	52
Construction Plant Fitting	45	54	56	77	59	86	71	73	63
Heavy Vehicle Mechanics	74	101	145	154	136	143	176	174	135
Motor Mechanics	253	267	325	423	420	353	380	408	310
Vehicle Body Repairs	23	27	40	47	58	46	40	51	31
Total	414	485	604	760	716	673	708	750	591

Printing									
Print Media	5	8	8	8	4	2	0	0	0
Total	5	8	8	8	4	2	-	-	-

Grand Total	1,434	1,929	2,698	3,153	3,742	4,508	5,058	5,271	4,377
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> Table 5

Apprentice Registrations 2016+ Apprenticeships 2016 – 2020					
Apprenticeships	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Arboriculture					
Arboriculture					3
Total	-	-	-	-	3
Property Services					
Auctioneering and Property Services			53	92	75
Total	-	-	53	92	75
Biopharma					
Laboratory Analyst			2	21	18
Laboratory Technician			14	10	12
Total	-	-	16	31	30
Construction					
Geo Driller				2	18
Total	-	-	-	2	18
Electrical					
Industrial Electrical Engineer	12	19	25	28	30
Total	12	19	25	28	30
Engineering					
Engineering Services Management				10	17
Manufacturing Engineer (Level 7)		36	20	27	20
Manufacturing Technology (Level 6)		40	34	29	30
Polymer Processing Technology		25	15	13	11
Principal Engineer				0	55
Total	-	101	69	79	83
Equipment Manufacturing					
OEM Engineer				11	16
Total	-	-	-	11	16

Finance					
Accounting Technician		71	88	124	96
Insurance Practitioner	67	86	80	70	49
International Financial Services Associate		15	11	9	17
International Financial Services Specialist		18	10	12	18
Total	67	190	189	215	180

Hair					
Hairdressing				14	84
Total	-	-	-	14	84

Hospitality & Food					
Butcher			7	37	10
Chef De Partie			31	40	5
Commis Chef		25	112	62	16
Sous Chef				5	3
Total	-	25	150	144	34

ICT					
CGI Technical Artist				7	0
Cybersecurity				13	30
Network Engineer Associate			22	44	22
Software Developer Associate			39	66	42
Telecommunications and Data Network Engineering Technician				50	31
Total	-	-	61	180	125

Logistics					
Logistics Associate			27	34	53
Lean Sigma Manager				0	39
Supply Chain Manager					11
Supply Chain Specialist					10
Total	-	-	27	34	113

Recruitment					
Recruitment Executive					27
Total	-	-	-	-	27
Sales					
Retail Supervision				76	101
Sales					30
Total	-	-	-	76	131
Grand Total					
	79	335	590	906	949

> Table 6

List of Main Traineeships (end December 2020)		
Agriculture, Horticulture and Mariculture	Animal Science	Business
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenkeeping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal Care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Administration • Business Systems Service Technician • Legal Administration • Medical Administration • Office Administration • Supervisory Management and Leadership* • Supervisory Management for Hospitality*
Care	Construction	Engineering
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dental Nursing • Early Childhood Care and Education • Health Service Skills • Healthcare Support • Social and Community Care • Special Needs with Intellectual Studies • Youth Work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction Skills for Employment • Interior Systems • Overhead Lines Operative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aircraft Maintenance Technician • Aircraft Structures Technician • Architectural Technology and Computer-Aided Design • Computer-Aided Design (Revit, Inventor etc) • Engineering and Motor Technology Skills • Engineering OEM • Engineering Operations • Engineering Precision Manufacturing • Engineering Technology* • Laboratory Assistant • Welding/Fabrication • Wind Turbine Maintenance

Fashion and Beauty	Finance	Hospitality
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Beauty Therapist• Beauty with Make-Up Artistry (Fashion, Theatre and Media Make-Up)• Hairdressing**	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accounts Executive• Certified Accountancy Pathway• Financial Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Barista*• Barista and Bartending Skills• Food and Beverage Service• Hospitality L4• Hospitality L5• Patisserie and Confectionery
ICT	Transport, Distribution and Logistics	Manufacturing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Automated Software Testing• Digital Sales and Marketing• ICT Systems and Principles For IT Professionals• IT Network Security• IT Support Specialist• Software Developer• Tech Support Engineer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bus and Coach Driving (Pilot)• HGV Driving (Pilot)• Logistics and Distribution• Manufacturing Supply Chain and Customer Service Logistics• Supply Chain Logistics• Van Delivery Driver	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aircraft Spray Painting• Cleanroom and Packaging Operations• CNC Operator• Life Sciences Manufacturing Operations• Machine Tool Operations• Manufacturing Technician – Maintenance Technology Skills• Pharmaceutical Manufacturing• Quality Management (Quality Assurance)
Media	Retail	Sports and Leisure
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Animation• Broadcast Production Skills• Digital Media Production Skills• Radio Production and Digital Journalism• Sports Broadcasting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Builders Merchants Sales• Pharmacy Sales Assistant• Retail Associate• Retail Skills Health and Beauty	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Equestrian International Instructor (BHSAI)• Outdoor Activity Instructor• Sports, Recreation and Exercise• Surf Instructor and Beach Lifeguard
Tourism		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local and National Tour Guiding		

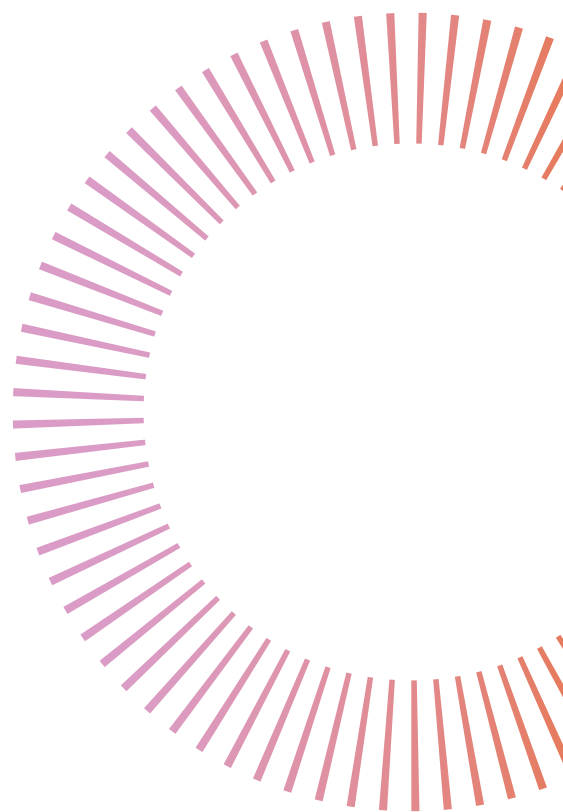
* Traineeship for people in employment.

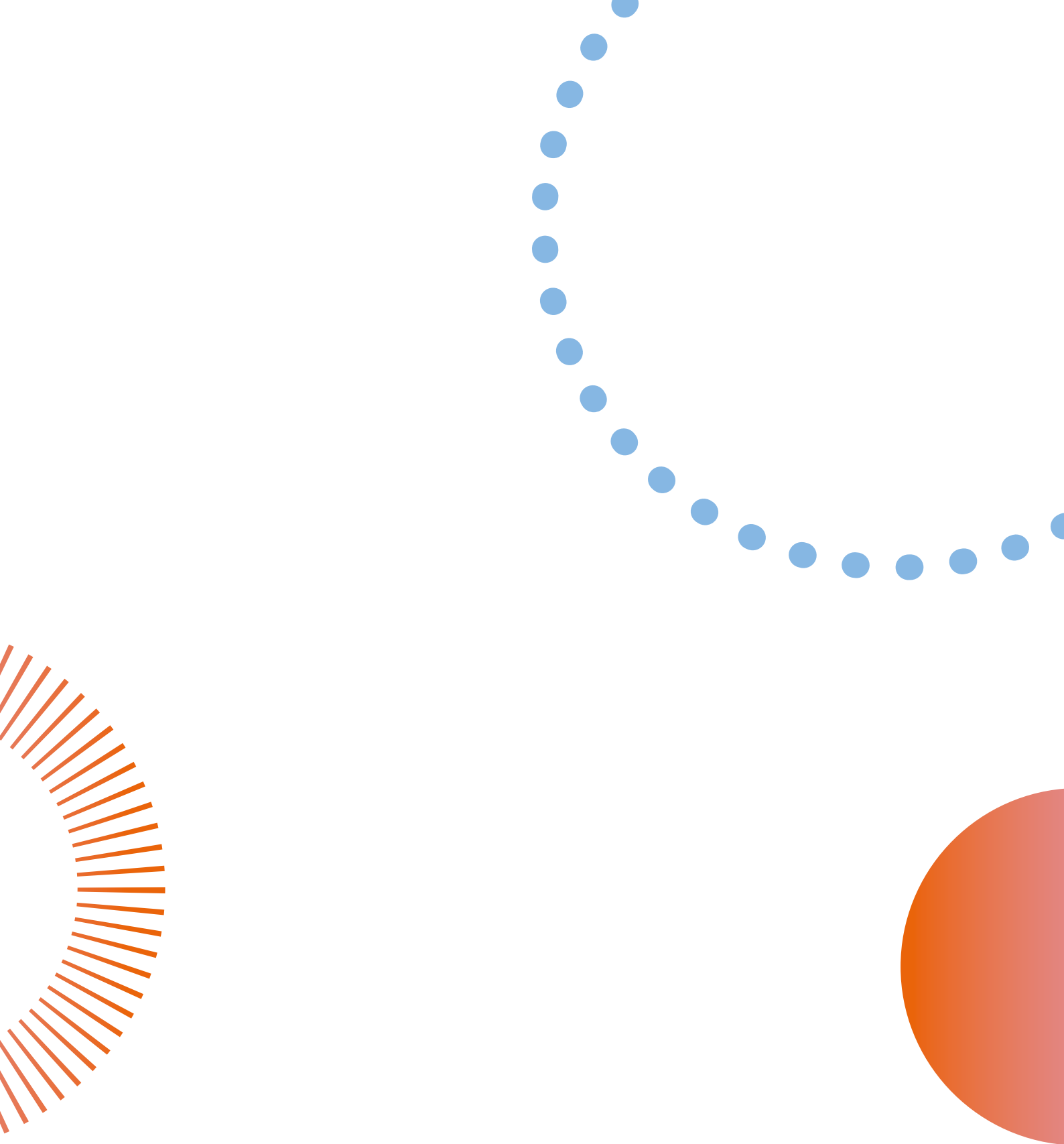
** Includes traineeships for people seeking employment and people in employment.

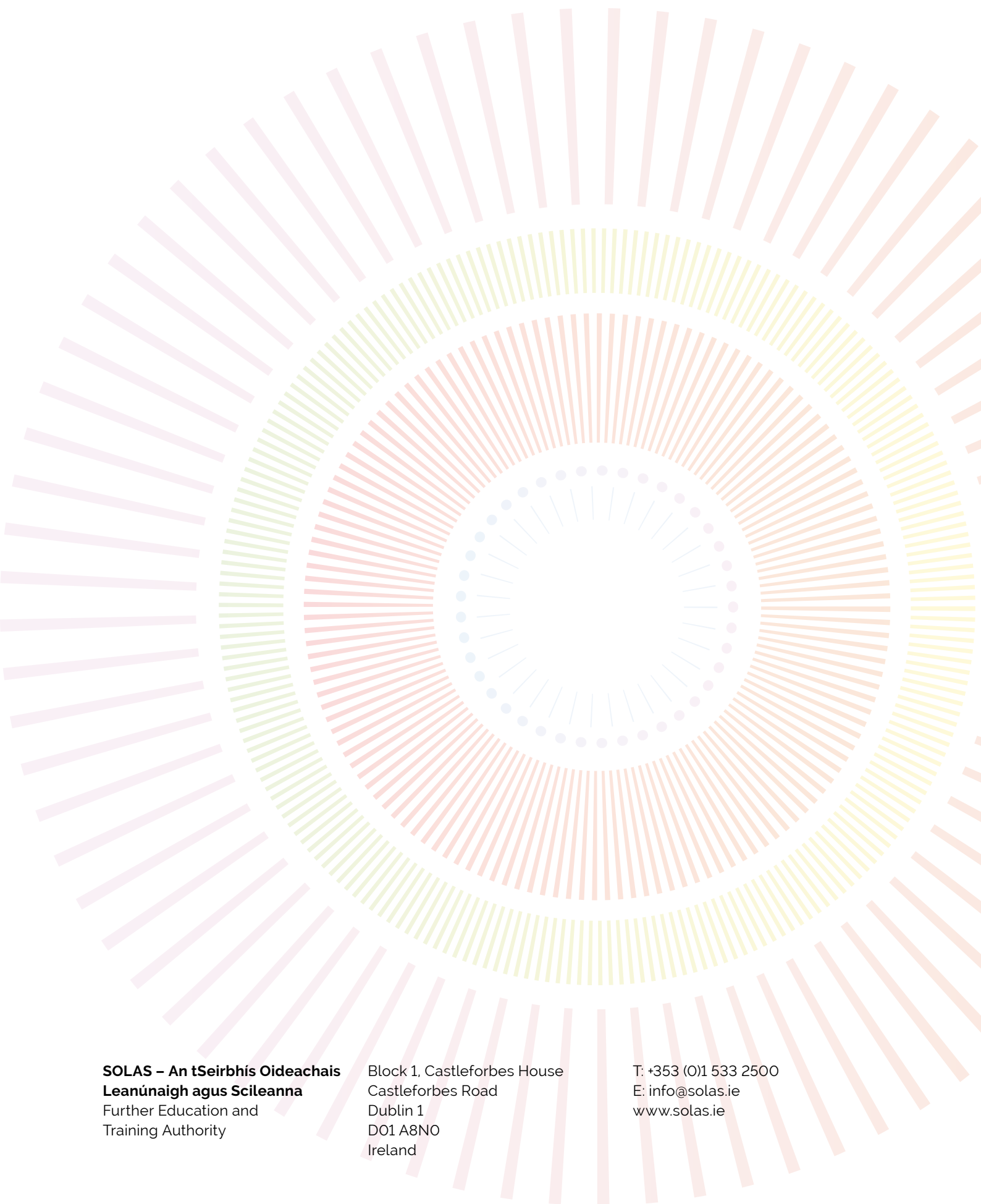
Some of these programmes may not be open for registration at a particular time; details of Traineeship Programmes currently open for registration are available on www.fetchcourses.ie

Further information on traineeship programmes may also be obtained from your local Education & Training Board (ETB). www.etbi.ie/Etbs/Directory-Of-Etbs/

New Traineeships are developed on an ongoing basis across a range of industries and sectors in response to identified skill needs.







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