



Annual Report and Accounts

2021

SOLAS

An tSeirbhis Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna
Further Education and Training Authority

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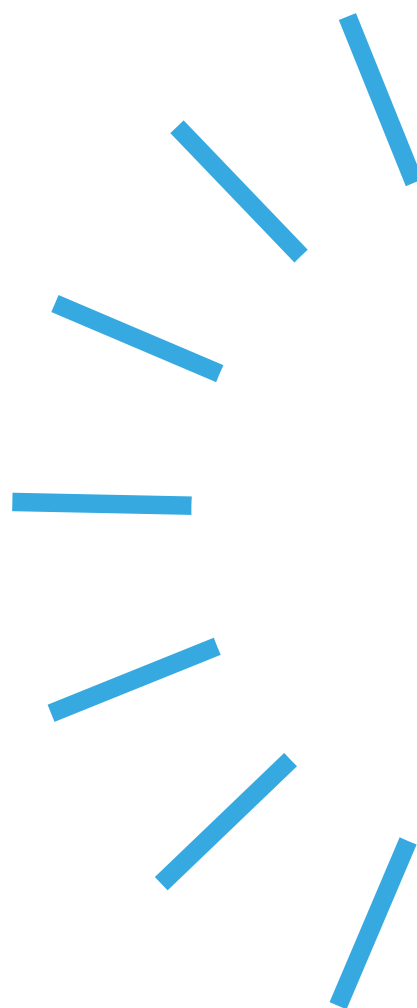
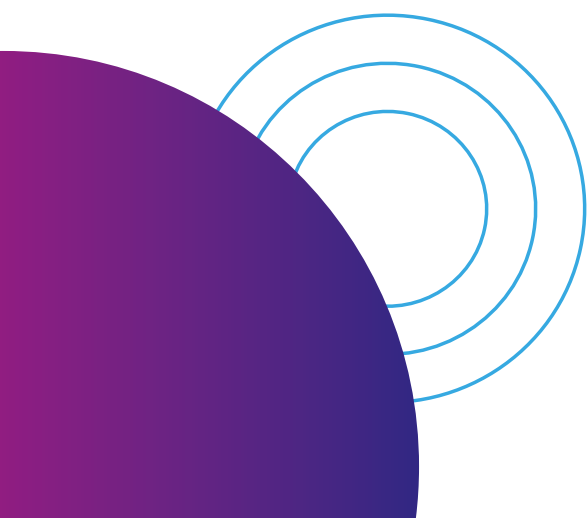
Pursuant to Section 32 (1) of the Further Education and Training Act 2013, An tSeirbhis Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna (SOLAS) herewith presents to the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, its Annual Report and Financial Statements for the 12-month period from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021.

Official Languages Act, 2003 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.



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Chairperson's Foreword

I am pleased to submit SOLAS' eighth Annual Report, covering the period from 1st January 2021 to 31st December 2021.

As we moved into the second year of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Further Education and Training (FET) sector faced similar significant challenges and barriers to learning that were first experienced in 2020. We remain extremely proud of the sectoral response to these considerable restrictions - SOLAS, the Education and Training Boards (ETBs), and wider stakeholders have continued to prioritise the outcomes and experience of learners, especially marginalised learners, in every way possible and this has again remained the shared focus.

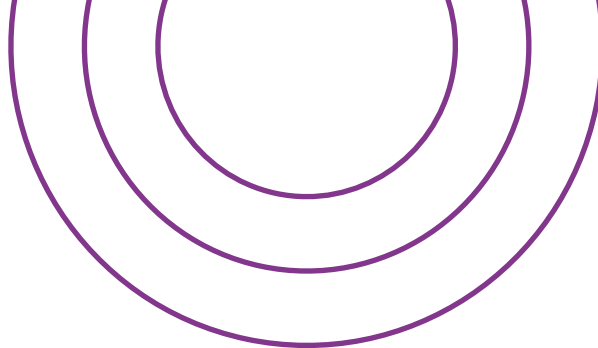
I would like to commend everyone involved in the sector but give special consideration to my fellow Board members, who continue to give their valued expertise and commit their time. In 2021, we continued to hold our Board meetings virtually, and I would like to thank the Board again for their flexibility and understanding of these arrangements. On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank Darragh Loftus whose term of office concluded in October 2021.

2021 followed on from the milestone launch of the second Further Education and Training strategy: Future FET: Transforming Learning 2020-2024 and marked its second year of implementation. It was also the second year working under the aegis of the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science. As a Board, we have very much enjoyed working with the SOLAS executive and the wider FET sector to implement this ambitious strategy over the past year, and I am proud to say that many

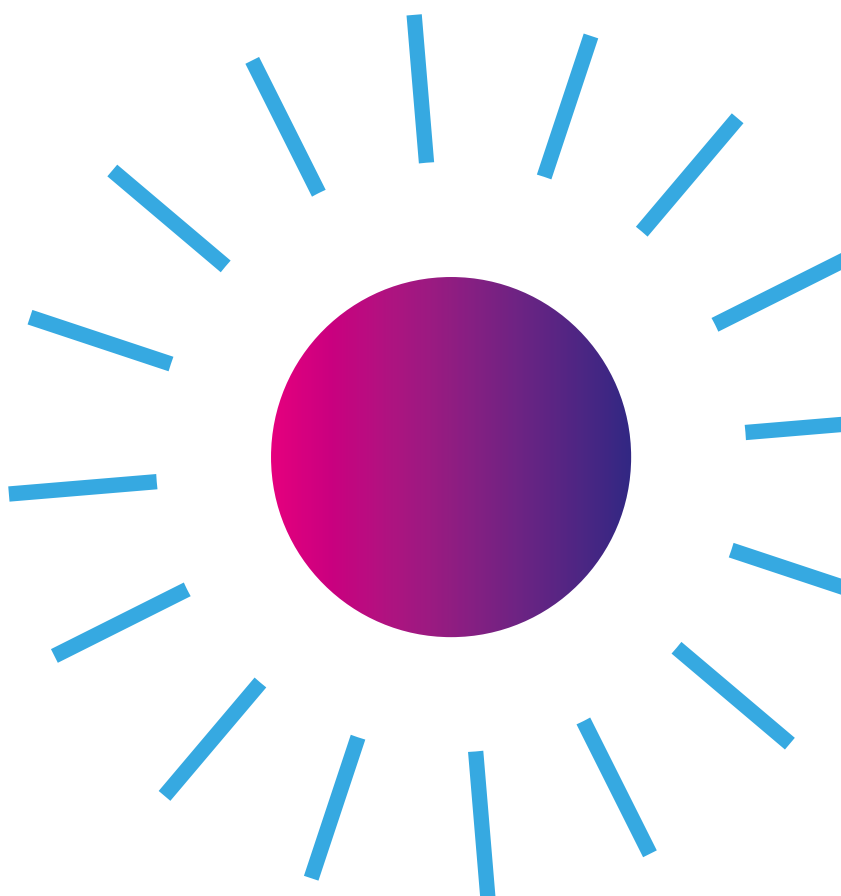
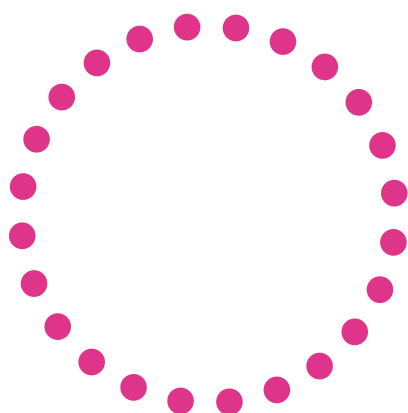
of its aims have been achieved in 2021. The launch of a 10-year literacy strategy, Adult Literacy for Life, in September, and FET and Apprenticeship information being available on the CAO platform in November are just two of these notable achievements. The year also saw the launching of the Government's new Apprenticeship Action Plan 2021 - 2025 with an ambition to increase apprenticeship registrations to 10,000 per annum and will see a new National Apprenticeship Office being set up. We look forward to working with the Higher Education Authority and all apprenticeship partners to bring this to fruition.

I would like to thank Minister Simon Harris TD and Minister of State, Niall Collins TD, as well as the officials from the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science for their ongoing direction and consistent support. 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 continued to rise to the challenges that Covid-19 presented in 2021 and are unwavering in their goal of providing top class education for all those in the FET system.

On behalf of the Board, we look forward to supporting SOLAS as we look to the future together. 2022 will see new three year Strategic Performance Agreements being developed with each of the sixteen ETBs. Our role in providing oversight and strategic vision to SOLAS throughout the development of these agreements and the ongoing implementation of the Future FET Strategy 2020-2024 will continue.



As the past few years have shown us, what lies ahead can be uncertain, and it is our collective duty to steer and bolster a robust sector that can in turn empower, enrich, and educate learners, industry, and communities across this country into 2022 and beyond.



Seán Aylward
Chairperson of the Board

CEO's Foreword

2021 was a milestone year for SOLAS, further education and training (FET) and apprenticeships. The launch of a link on the CAO website in November meant that, for the first time, all of the FET options were on the table alongside higher education choices when students were discussing and deciding their next steps after school. The class of 2021/22 were able to apply directly for over 650 further education courses within a few clicks. Information on 62 apprenticeship programmes was also directly available, including eligibility criteria, testimonials, job opportunities and a freephone helpline on how to take the next step in becoming an apprentice in your chosen area of interest. Thanks to this collaborative initiative between the CAO, ETBs, SOLAS, we already know that this has had a significant impact on raising awareness of the diverse pathways available across tertiary education.

This is another critical reform in support of our central premise that FET be for everyone, a driving ambition of the ***Transforming Learning***, the Future FET strategy launched in 2019. The strategy focuses on three core priorities: building skills; facilitating pathways; and fostering inclusion. Alongside the CAO linked development, there have been so many other highlights throughout the year in support of these priorities including:

Delivering on Ireland's Critical Skills Priorities:

Increasing acknowledgement of the critical role that FET will play in developing the skills and expertise required to deliver on Housing for All and the Climate Action national policy agenda. Housing for All commits to building 33,000 new houses each year, but a significant skills pipeline will have to be put in place to support delivery of this plan. SOLAS is working

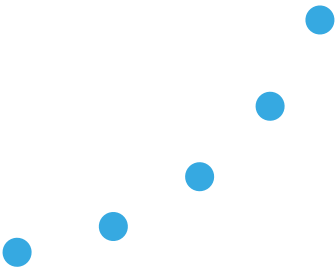
with partners across Government and industry to do this, with key areas of focus including apprenticeship catch-up and expansion; investment in non-apprenticeship FET provision; continued development of Safe Pass, with the establishment of an online delivery option from early 2022; and a major retrofitting upskilling programme. This focus on retrofitting is also a core part of a green skills action programme funded under the National Recovery and Resilience Programme.

An Exciting New Era for Apprenticeships:

The launch of the Apprenticeship Action Plan 2021-2025 signaled a move to a new single apprenticeship system, with an ambition to increase apprenticeship registrations to 10,000 per annum by 2025. A more consistent approach to governance, employer support, access and funding across all apprenticeship programmes is planned, with a new National Apprenticeship Office to be set up, jointly managed by SOLAS and the HEA. A move to a more devolved, consortia-led delivery model for craft apprenticeships has also been flagged over the lifetime of the plan. This will be introduced in tandem with the expansion of capacity in craft apprenticeship provision, a critical priority to both address waiting lists for training due to Covid-19 restrictions over the last two years and in order to meet the future skills needs flagged above.

Flexible and Online Upskilling Opportunities:

The continued expansion of eCollege as a free, open access source of online, eTutor supported, further education and training following its opening up at the onset of the pandemic. Over the last 24 months, there have been 77,391 beneficiaries of the online learning resource. 2021 saw a new focus on linking them to learning



pathways through FET with Education and Training Boards. Covid-19 has also had a lasting impact on the labour market, with a significant base of people no longer able to return to their jobs before restrictions. This prompted the launch of the Skills to Compete initiative to help them return to sustainable employment, with ETBs delivering flexible programmes to improve employability; develop the digital skills now required for virtually every job; and the specific skills required to target work in growth occupations and industries. To date this has helped 16,700 people make the journey back towards employment. Add to this the continued success of Skills to Advance, which provides free or heavily subsidised upskilling access to employers and their employees, with over 10,000 participants in 2021, and the FET system has shown remarkable agility and flexibility in responding to a transformed environment.

Adult Literacy for Life (ALL): A really important development was the launch of the ALL 10-year strategy in September 2021 to address literacy, numeracy and digital inclusion needs via a cross-Government and cross-society approach. A range of commitments and actions are in place across four pillars to: ensure people can UNDERSTAND their needs and where to go to meet them; that they can ACCESS all of the learning and support they need, that the learning and support available can EXPAND to meet this massive challenge, and that we EMPOWER people and communities to make a real difference to their lives. Allied to this, and the need to facilitate access, tailor learning and develop support for those furthest behind first, particularly in the context of Covid-19 restrictions, a second year of the Mitigating Against Educational Disadvantage Fund was

launched in 2021, with €10m available for community-based education. This is supporting activity around digital technologies; learner assistance; outreach, engagement and mentoring Fund and specific responses in the pandemic.

Of course, amidst all of these positive developments, the continuing prevalence of Covid-19 constrained and impacted FET's ability to operate effectively and fully support our learners. After a period of closure at the beginning of the year, and the operation of FET facilities at significantly reduced capacity after that, a full return to onsite provision was only finally possible from September. This has been important in beginning to address the significant backlog built up of apprentices waiting for off-the-job training referenced above. However, it is also critical in enabling a full learning experience, particularly in the technical and vocational areas that characterise so much of FET, where practical face-to-face education and demonstration, and often work-based components, are an integral part of the offering. It is key in supporting and re-engaging with those learners most at risk of exclusion for whom a wholly online learning experience has not been suitable.

I would like to thank all at SOLAS, all the ETBs, other FET providers and all our other partners and stakeholders for their incredible work and resilience in keeping the learning flowing and learners supported during another challenging year. I would also like to thank our Board for the guidance and strategic vision throughout the year. But most of all I would like to thank all of the learners and apprentices who came through FET in 2021, who showed incredible dedication and understanding in coping with restrictions

and changes to their learning experience, and who engaged with ETBs and ourselves throughout to ensure that we could tailor provision and support to adapt to the rapidly evolving circumstances in the best way possible.

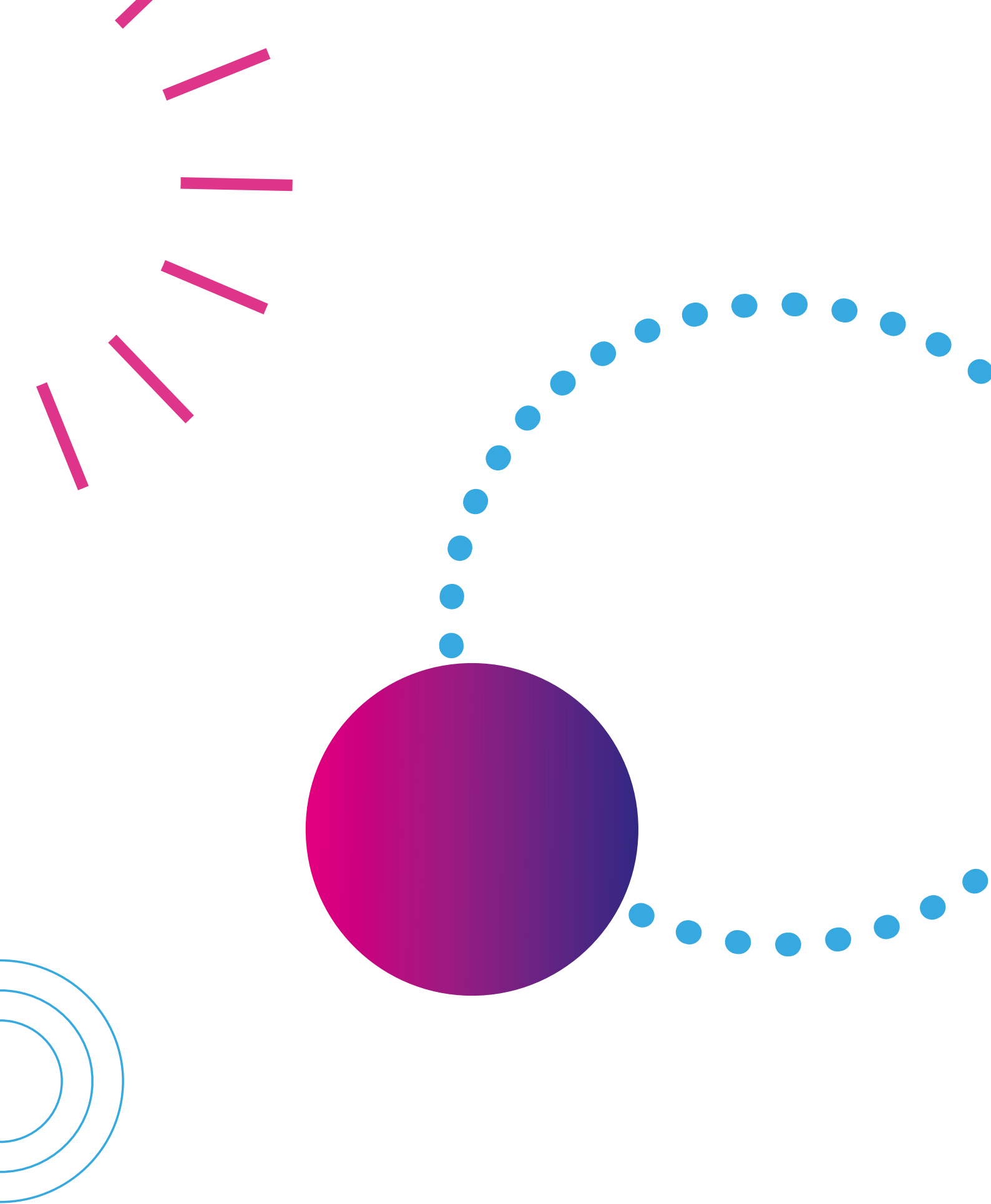
The platform is there for a really exciting year in 2022, where new three-year strategic performance agreements between SOLAS and the 16 ETBs will further embed the delivery of Transforming Learning, the development of the FET College of the Future vision will be underpinned by new approaches to capital and recurrent funding, and the commitment to a more integrated tertiary education system will be reflected in a reformed apprenticeship system and a major focus on pathways into and between FET and higher education. It is also finally seeing a removal of restrictions on FET capacity, and a return to onsite office working in SOLAS, albeit with a long-term commitment to hybrid working. The continued evolution of SOLAS in this regard is challenging and exciting, and we look forward to working in partnership with you all in growing the profile and impact of FET across Ireland.



Andrew Brownlee

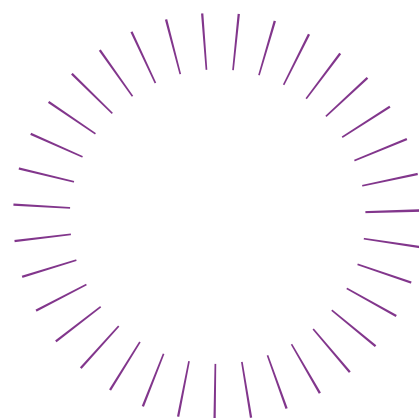
Andrew Brownlee
CEO







"It is our collective duty to steer and bolster a robust sector that can in turn empower, enrich, and educate learners, industry, and communities across this country into 2022 and beyond."





SOLAS in 2021

2021 saw the second year of long periods of public health restrictions due to the pandemic, as we adapted to 'the new normal'.

The challenges brought about by Covid-19 continued and the need for a strategic, agile and responsive FET system to meet greater societal needs was further highlighted. The Further Education and Training sector responded to these challenges and our commitment to ensuring that the needs of the FET learner remained.

Tailored, flexible and online course delivery ensured that learners could continue their learning and eCollege online learning courses remained free of charge. A second year of the Mitigating Against Educational Disadvantage Fund was launched in 2021 to support those furthest behind, particularly in the context of Covid-19 restrictions.

In addition to this, the launch of the Apprenticeship Action Plan 2021-2025, the Adult Literacy for Life Strategy, Government's Housing for All strategy, and the Climate Action Plan once again highlighted FET's role in delivering on Ireland's critical skills priorities.

Much progress was achieved in 2020 both in terms of responding to the pandemic and further enhancing the FET sector and 2021 was no different.

It was the second year of implementation of Transforming Learning: The National Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy, with many of the significant milestones laid out being reached.

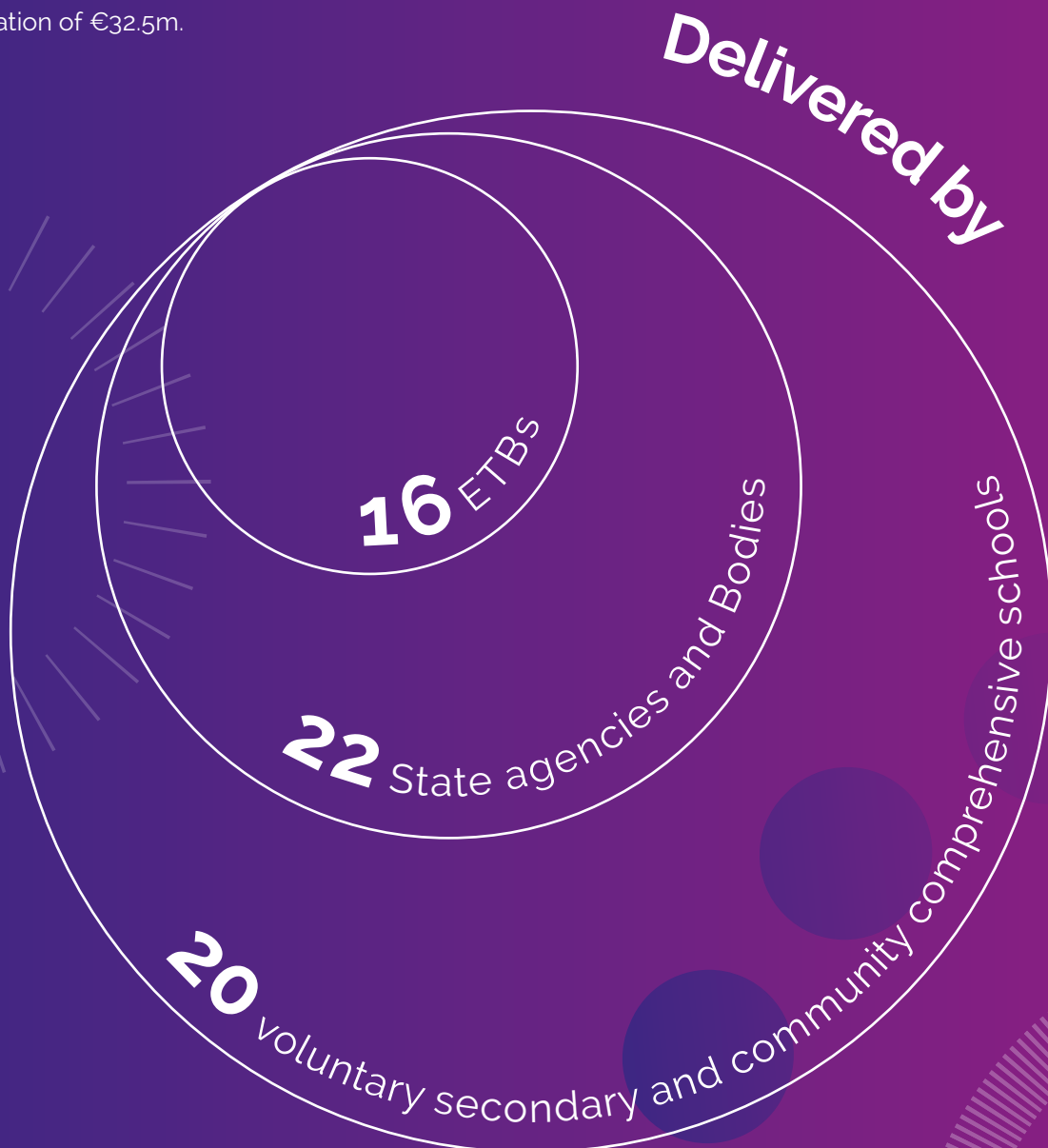
The Transformation Project Management Office was set up, the Adult Literacy for Life 10-year Strategy launched, FET and apprenticeship options became available to view on the CAO platform for the first time, the Mitigating Against Educational Disadvantage Fund saw a second successful year, Skills to Advance continued to expand, eCollege continued to be available free of charge to learners looking to upskill, and apprenticeship grew whilst also working to address Covid-related backlogs in training for craft apprenticeship.

While the world at large looks very different from how it did just a few short years ago, the ambition and drive to put the learner first across the FET sector has never wavered. Though the educational provision that SOLAS oversees is broad, the learner focus of FET always remains sharply in view.

FET in 2021

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 2021 FET Services Plan provided for a total budget allocation of €928.5m which was made available for SOLAS funded further education and training provision in 2021, including a capital allocation of €32.5m.

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 2021.



FET in 2021

98,212

full-time
beneficiaries

144,436

part-time
beneficiaries

279,253

beneficiaries

36,605

community education
beneficiaries

201,451

new
entrants

48,833

e-college
beneficiaries

33

skills
clusters

Research, Data and Strategic Engagement

> Skills and Labour Market Research

The SOLAS Skills and Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU) provides a data gathering, analytical and research resource to identify skills needs and support the work of both SOLAS and the National Skills Council. Its main annual publication, the National Skills Bulletin, analyses trends on the supply and demand of skills in Ireland and identifies where skills shortages are occurring. This research provides insights that underpin the strategic vision and ongoing work of SOLAS as an organisation, as well as providing critical context and a strong evidence base for the wider FET sector's work.

In 2021, alongside the National Skills Bulletin, the SLMRU produced several reports which examined education supply, lifelong learning, skills mismatches, working from home, employment implications of Brexit, difficult-to-fill vacancies, and regional labour market analyses. The Smart Choices website was also launched, which includes detailed occupational information derived from the National Skills Bulletin.

> Data Analytics

The SOLAS national Data Analytics team publish annual reports on the FET system which include additional analysis on priority learner cohorts and lifelong learning. They lead 'FET in Focus' studies research in partnership with other units across SOLAS on areas such as gender and diversity. With a central reach into the CSO, the Data Analytics team provide a vital and key component for the national data FET system

infrastructure which informs and supports SOLAS and the ETB Strategic Performance Agreements. The team also support the ETBs and SOLAS in analysis and evaluation of the FET learner system, as well as leading innovative reporting on learner outcomes and insights as a core component of the SOLAS Data Strategy.

> Strategic Engagement

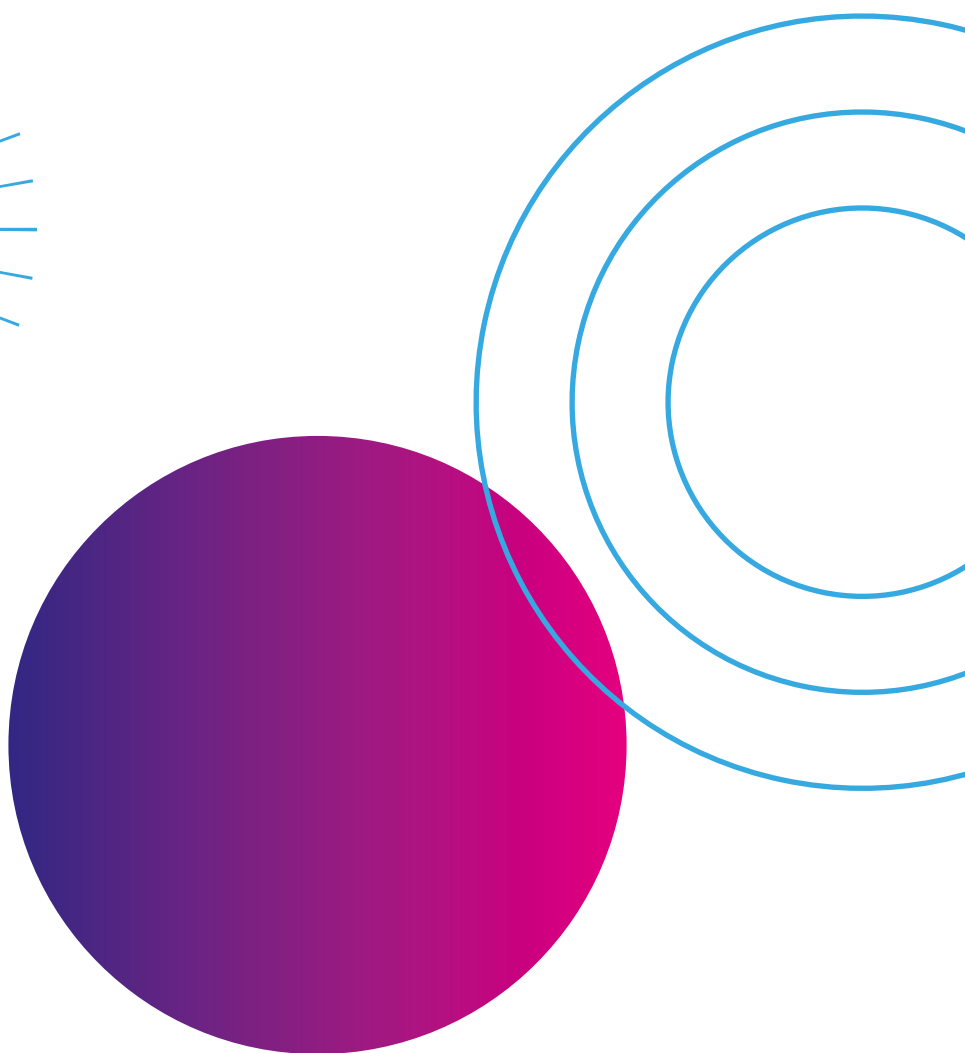
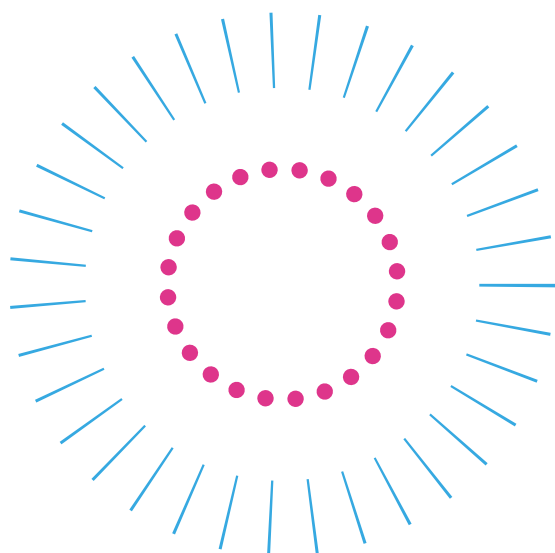
In 2018, all 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs) completed re-engagement with QQI. Following this process each ETB established its quality assurance (QA) policy and procedures. In 2021, QQI embarked on a process of QA review in ETBs, the purpose of which is to provide an independent external evaluation of the implementation and effectiveness of the QA procedures within each ETB. SOLAS has been working in partnership with QQI, providing contextual briefings for each ETB review team. A total of 10 ETBs were reviewed by QQI in 2021.

Other work undertaken by the Strategic engagement team in 2021 included:

- SOLAS published an independent evaluation of Specific Skills Training (SST), which was conducted by Indecon Economic Consultants. The counterfactual assessment undertaken as a component of the evaluation evidenced a positive outcome for learners from participation in SST for employment. In addition to this, the provision remains close to its intended purpose and is cost effective in relative comparison to other FET provision.
- ReferNet is a network of institutions created by Cedefop in 2002 to provide information on national vocational education and training (VET) systems and policies in the EU Member States. As a national partner SOLAS continued to provide information in 2021 on FET in Ireland – its role, purpose, governance

and structure, insights into developments and trends in FET policies.

- A project to review the two major award types at Level 6 in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), namely the Advanced Certificate (AC) and the Higher Certificate (HC), and their effectiveness in differentiating further education and training (FET) from higher education and training (HET) completed in 2021. SOLAS were steering group members and commissioned the research along with QQI and the HEA.



Branding, Communications and Strategy Implementation

> **Future FET: Transforming Learning Strategy Implementation**

2021 marked the first full year of implementation of the Future FET: Transforming Learning Strategy. The 2020 – 2024 FET strategy was developed following an intensive consultation process which included environmental and horizon scanning, determining priorities with stakeholders, and testing key theories and priorities. Future FET: Transforming Learning set out a vision for FET's development over five years, based around three key priorities: Skills, Pathways, and Inclusion. In tandem, enabling themes were articulated to underpin the vision of Future FET. The four enabling themes are: Staffing, Capabilities and Structures; Learner and Performance Centred; Digital Transformation of FET and Capital Infrastructure. A focused approach to implementation of these strategic priorities and enabling themes is key in implementing the Strategy.

The Transformational Project Management Office was established in July 2021 and its purpose is to ensure the delivery of the strategic priorities and the enabling themes of the FET Strategy. The implementation of the FET Strategy is centred on an outcomes focused approach aligned to the Future FET concept and the associated workstreams. Specific actions are identified in the FET Strategy to be progressed over its lifetime. The delivery and success of the implementation framework ultimately relies on delivery from a range of bodies and organisations across the FET sector.

The establishment of the Transforming Learning Steering Group took place in 2021, with the implementation plan agreed and formally approved by the SOLAS Board in July 2021. The purpose of this group is to oversee and advise on the development and delivery of the FET Strategy. The Steering Group is made up of senior representatives from the Department for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS), Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI), Education and Training Boards (ETBs) and SOLAS. The group is chaired by the Chief Executive of SOLAS.

> **Communications**

As we entered the second year of the Covid-19 pandemic, 2021 saw SOLAS and the wider Further Education and Training (FET) sector continue to operate in a mostly virtual environment. Throughout the year, the importance of reaching out and staying connected in a digital world was highlighted once again and using online communication to enable connection, both inside and outside SOLAS, was key.

Two key highlights of the year included:

FET via CAO

For the first time ever, information about apprenticeships and further education and training (FET) courses are available through the CAO's online platform with a single click, at the URL cao.ie/options. This significant milestone was a collaborative and innovative project brought to fruition as the CAO opened in November 2021 and was a result of ongoing engagement between SOLAS alongside the ETBI, ETBs around the country, CAO, and the HEA. It is a vital first step in overall reform of the CAO process.

This landmark development was accompanied by a broad ranging communications campaign to highlight this change to students, parents,

teachers, and guidance counsellors across the country. This contributes to a wider conversation on the overall balance between FET and HE as a school leaver destination in the future, with FET ready to take on a greater share.

Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) Strategy

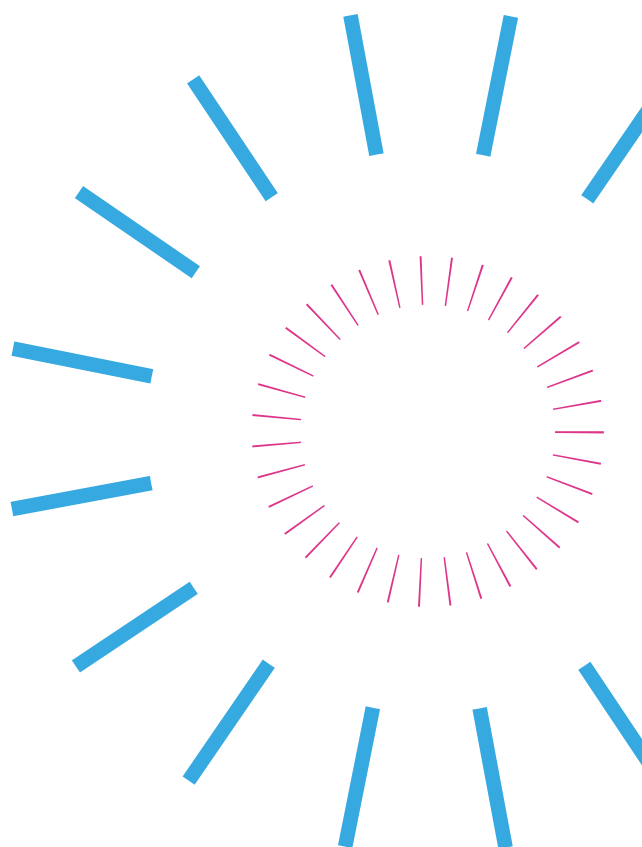
In September 2021, a 10-year adult literacy, numeracy, and digital literacy strategy, (Adult Literacy for Life), was launched. The Strategy, which was developed by SOLAS, aims to ensure that every adult in Ireland has the necessary literacy, numeracy, and digital literacy to fully engage in society and realise their potential. A number of key targets and commitments are outlined in detail in the Strategy, and cross-Government implementation of these is now underway. Following the launch of the Strategy, the first phase of a multi-faceted promotional campaign began which aimed to highlight the services available.

SOLAS communications kept stakeholders updated with a number of key reports published during the year including:

- National Skills Bulletin
- Spring Skills Bulletin, Summer Skills Bulletin, and Autumn Skills Bulletin
- Monitoring Irelands Skill Supply
- Difficult-to-fill vacancies survey October 2021
- An Examination of the Employment Exposures of Brexit
- Early Leavers Outcomes Report
- Non – Irish Nationals in FET
- FET in Numbers Reports
- FET Services Plan 2021
- Future FET – Transforming Learning Update.

The communications team 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 This is FET (targeted at CAO and Leaving Certificate), Skills to Advance, Generation Apprenticeship Competition, the Mitigating Against Educational Disadvantage Fund, Higher Options and College Awareness Week. Some significant announcements were also supported using social media and targeted advertisements, including the Apprentices Employer Incentivisation Scheme, the Generation Apprenticeship Employer Awards.

Finally, the communications team continued to support internal communication through a number of initiatives including the introduction of a new monthly SOLAS eNewsletter "Spotlight on SOLAS", 12@12s, and Brunch and Learns.



> Analytics

apprenticeship.ie

Unique users to apprenticeship.ie was 347,727 with over 1.1 million page views.



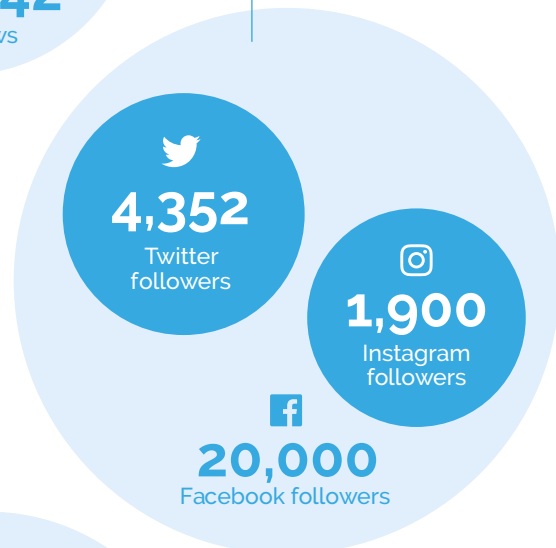
solas.ie

179,641 unique users and 369,942 page views

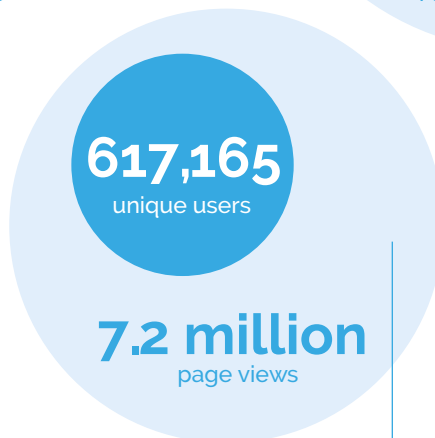


We also saw growth in the number of followers across social media accounts.

To the end of December 2021, apprenticeship social media accounts achieved 4,352 Twitter followers, with over 20,000 followers on Facebook and 1,900 followers on Instagram.



SOLAS' social media following saw a steady increase to 9,318 Twitter followers with the number of LinkedIn followers and YouTube subscribers also continuing to grow.



fetchcourses.ie

617,165 unique users and over 7.2 million page views.

Apprenticeship

Apprenticeships and work-based learning is at the heart of SOLAS in our role as the statutory authority for apprenticeship in Ireland. In 2021, Covid-19 highlighted the important role apprentices play in providing essential services across a range of sectors of the economy.

However, on and off the job training of apprentices was interrupted at various times during the pandemic. Despite these challenges, the number of apprentices registered continued to grow, new apprenticeships were launched, and a financial incentive for apprentice employers continued. In addition, the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science launched a new five-year Action Plan for Apprenticeship.

Despite the disruption of Covid-19, courses and programmes became more accessible to learners and new courses and programmes were introduced across sectors including Construction, Engineering and Healthcare. A total of three new apprenticeships were launched in 2021. This brought the number of operational apprenticeships in Ireland in 2021 to 62, including 25 in craft apprenticeships, which include popular occupations such as electrical, and carpentry and joinery.

Overall, the apprentice population grew significantly - the total apprentice population at the end of 2021 was 24,209, up from 19,630 in 2020.

In line with our objectives to ensure apprenticeships meet demands in the workplace and provide sustainable careers, we continued to work with Skills and Labour Market Research (SLMRU) colleagues. 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. Continuing periodic 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, SOLAS undertook significant engagement with apprenticeship consortia and other stakeholders, including at partners' meetings. 2021 also saw an increase in the number of employers listed on the national apprenticeship system, now at 8,401, and to-date through the Apprenticeship Incentivisation Scheme €14m has been allocated to employers in relation to 7,000 apprentices being hired.

From the apprentices' perspective, the 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.

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, 665 in 2019, 1,017 in 2020 and now 1535 in 2021.



> Apprenticeships 2021 in numbers

24,209

Apprenticeship population

20,956

Craft apprenticeships

8,607

New registrations in
apprenticeships

New Apprenticeships in 2021

Construction

Scaffolding	Level 5	2 Years
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Engineering

Equipment Systems Engineer	Level 9	2 Years
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Healthcare

Advanced Healthcare Assistant Practitioner	Level 6	2 Years
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Construction Quality and Green Skills

SOLAS' responsibility in managing the construction industry's statutory health and safety courses such as the Safe Pass course was challenged significantly with the continued Covid-19 restrictions imposed during 2021.

While many courses were halted in the early part of the year, in May 2021 SOLAS was granted approval to recommence Safe Pass courses with reduced ratios and remained active for the rest of the year.

During 2021 the SOLAS provider network delivered 2,613 CSCS and QSCS training and assessment events and disseminated 17,750 CSCS and QSCS cards, of which 7,675 were new cards, 8,903 were renewal cards while 1,172 were replacement cards.

SOLAS, through its provider network also delivered 7,071 Safe Pass courses in multiple languages and issued 83,049 Safe Pass cards, including 2,714 replacement cards.

To ensure adherence with SOLAS' Covid-19 pandemic containment guidelines, SOLAS increased its independent monitoring activity on Safe Pass and CSCS/QSCS courses.

Construction Services successfully deployed Microsoft Teams as a platform to support the implementation of robust quality improvement processes, and collaborative peer-to-peer learning, with benefits evident in enhanced internal audit report.

As part of its construction transition and transformation plan, SOLAS developed a new National Database for CSCS/QSCS and Safe Pass. This facilitates the registration of SOLAS Approved Training Organisations and Tutors, the issuing of SOLAS registration cards and the implementation and scheduling of monitoring activity.

In October 2021, the unit incorporated a Green Skills mandate. This area of the unit is tasked with developing and managing the SOLAS Green Skills Action Plan which is SOLAS' responsibility under Ireland's National Recovery & Resilience Plan, part of the EU's Covid-19 recovery response under Next Generation EU Funding.

From October 2021, the unit also began work on developing a Green Skills Strategy for the FET sector. This strategy pulls together a number of FET commitments across national plans/strategies and policies, (i.e., Housing for All 2021, Climate Action Plan, 2021, Skills for the Low Carbon Economy 2021 etc.), providing oversight on their implementation across the 16 ETBs and creating initiatives within SOLAS to deliver on these commitments.

Innovation

> Skills to Advance (STA)

Over the past three years, Skills to Advance has created and provided quality, flexible upskilling opportunities to over 25,000 employees in the Irish workforce, aimed at developing the skills of people in employment. It targets those have lower skills levels, in vulnerable sectors, those who need more opportunities to advance their careers, in order to sustain their employment, avoid displacement or avail of emerging job opportunities. It supports small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) who need assistance to develop their workforce and has been rolled out with ETBs around the country.

Over 10,000 employees were upskilled in 2021 with Skills to Advance expanding its reach to more employers by providing over 1,500 upskilling programmes. This policy draws on a vision of the workplace in Ireland where upskilling during one's working life is considered normal practice

and has a direct correlation with enhanced job security, higher earnings, and autonomy at work for employees. Firms of all sizes benefit from the resulting productivity and competitiveness of their employees, the economy and industry.

Skills to Advance was developed in response to evolving skill needs and remains central to assist those facing changes in their work due to technological advances, changing work practices and market diversification. Now more than ever, initiatives such as Skills to Advance are critical to address external challenges, including those arising from Brexit and ongoing restrictions and societal changes as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The structure of our workforce has changed dramatically over 2021 and will continue to change and evolve as a new business environment evolves, and the changes brought about by the pandemic are embedded into ways of working further. This new environment requires a workforce that is highly adaptable. To ensure that workers can achieve this flexibility, there is a need for continuous upskilling and reskilling, to not only perform their current tasks, but to take on new work challenges and opportunities to sustain jobs and grow business.

To ensure agile, relevant workforce upskilling opportunities are available through Skills to Advance, SOLAS leads collaboration with the Education and Training Boards, employer bodies and key stakeholders to design, develop and cascade targeted regional and sectoral initiatives. These initiatives include Leadership and Management, Developing Leaders for Hospitality and Tourism, a suite of Green Skills and Digital Skills for Business. To increase access to training, courses are provided in person and through blended learning formats.

> eCollege

eCollege is an online learning service, available through Skills to Advance, which provides a range of courses in areas of high demand such as project management, digital and business skills. eCollege courses are available on a continuous intake basis, with no waiting lists and flexible times for completion. eCollege continued to provide free online learning services to assist those impacted by Covid-19 in 2021, a move that had been first made in 2020.

eCollege courses operate on a continuous intake basis, are part-time, and lead to industry recognised qualifications. There were over 30,000 new entrants to the service over 2021, while due to the continuous intake basis of the courses, there were over 45,000 beneficiaries.

Key areas of interest were project management, digital upskilling, and business skills. 2021 continued the demand pattern experienced over 2020, with sustained demand from those in employment. These trends indicate recognition amongst learners of online learning as a viable medium for career development and lifelong learning.

> TEL

The Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) support unit provided ongoing support to ETBs in 2021 to integrate technology enhanced learning practices, in particular providing support to the FET Moodle infrastructure. As the sector continued to offer online and blended learning due to Covid-19, the focus was on ensuring the Moodle infrastructure used throughout FET was optimised to meet demand.

The 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.

> **Fostering Inclusion - Learner Support**

The SOLAS Learner Support team continuously promotes the development of inclusive learning environments and practices in the Further Education and Training (FET) sector.

The Learner Support team works with our partners in the FET sector, as well as with other stakeholders, to support learners as they develop a range of skills, with a particular emphasis on those most at risk of social exclusion. These can be skills for daily living, personal fulfilment, active citizenship, and community participation, as well as more specific work-focused skills.

Inclusive practices in FET were supported and promoted through a variety of activities and projects in 2021. The main achievements included the launch of several reports and sectoral resources developed by the Learner Support team in collaboration with sectoral partners, designed primarily to support FET practitioners. These included resources 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).

> **Adult Literacy for Life: A 10-year Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy for Ireland**

Following on from a commitment in the Programme for Government, 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 for Ireland. The Minister tasked SOLAS to work with stakeholders towards developing this Strategy, which came under the remit of the Learner Support team. The development of the Strategy was a key focus of the Learner Support team across 2021.

The Adult Literacy for Life Strategy was developed in close collaboration with key stakeholders and partners. At the outset, a comprehensive Consultation Paper was developed to inform the consultation process and assist the interested parties with providing their views on the development of the Strategy.

The Learner Support team undertook analysis of submissions received through multiple means of engagement with the consultation process, including online surveys, written submissions, bilateral meetings, and specific purpose focus groups. In addition, targeted outreach research captured the views of those hardest to reach, namely those individuals who may have literacy, numeracy or digital skills needs. The consultation process overall was fully inclusive, gathering the insights and harnessing the expertise of over 2,000 individuals and organisations who contributed to the Strategy development process. In addition, a number of relevant elements of international systems of literacy provision were considered.

This body of work was summarised and resulted in the publication of consultation reports that articulated and presented the issues and ideas put forward by respondents across all modes of the consultation exercise. These reports provided a solid foundation for the development of the thematic, conceptual framework through which the new Strategy would emerge.

The new 10-year Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) Strategy was launched on International Literacy Day 8th September 2021. The Strategy put forward a vision of "an Ireland where every adult has the necessary literacy, numeracy and digital literacy to fully engage in society and realise their potential" and outlined the way to achieve this vision. The Strategy identified four key pillars that would underpin this vision, within which a range of commitments are made in relation to supporting people with literacy, numeracy and digital literacy and skills needs. These key pillars are:

- that people can UNDERSTAND their needs and where to go to meet them.
- that people can ACCESS all of the learning and support they need.
- that the learning and support made available can EXPAND to meet the literacy and numeracy challenges.
- that people and communities are EMPOWERED to make a real difference to their lives.

These four pillars are reinforced by two foundational elements, namely:

- To implement suitable methods of measuring success.
- To adopt a Cross-Government, Cross-Society and Cross-Economy approach.

A new website www.AdultLiteracyforLife.ie has been launched to act as a central information and resource hub for literacy, numeracy and digital skills for learners and practitioners alike. The Learner Support team will continue to support the implementation phase of the ALL Strategy as it moves forward.

> Promotion of Adult Literacy

Developing, maintaining, promoting, and encouraging literacy, numeracy and digital literacy is central to FET. The SOLAS Learner Support team has supported and funded the national literacy and numeracy awareness raising campaign 'Take the First Step' (www.takethefirststep.ie) in recent years.

Efforts in 2021 centred on the new ALL Strategy awareness campaign, and consisted of a national, regional, and local media campaign involving radio advertisements (national and local radio stations), out-of-home (OOH) advertising (high footfall areas, shopping malls etc.) and digital and social video (Facebook, YouTube etc.).

> Standalone and Integrated Numeracy

The Learner Support team commissioned and oversaw a project relating to approaches to numeracy provision in FET, working collaboratively with our partners ETBI and NALA, which was completed in 2021. The project culminated with the launch of a background report, guidelines, and recommendations in relation to Standalone and Integrated Numeracy Provision at Levels 1-3. These resources will provide a useful guide for ETBs, as they continue to support learners to develop their skills and confidence in numeracy and engage in lifelong learning.

> Screening and Assessment

Supporting and developing top-quality assessment systems is central to achieving our active inclusion goals. In 2021, SOLAS, in collaboration with ETBI and Cavan & Monaghan ETB, published a Research Report, Guidelines and Toolkit for Initial and Ongoing Assessment of English Language Competency for Migrant Learners in FET. This publication comprises a suite of resources that will support FET practitioners, primarily tutors and co-ordinators, and facilitate continued good practice in the initial and ongoing assessment of the English language competency of migrant learners. This work will contribute to ever stronger and more responsive approaches to the language needs of migrant learners, enabling them to achieve their learning goals, maintain and further develop their skills, and grow in confidence.

> Universal Design for Learning in FET

The Learner Support team in SOLAS, in collaboration with AHEAD and supported by ETBI, completed the Universal Design for Learning in FET project in 2021. In early 2020, a scoping document, setting out a Conceptual Framework of Universal Design for Learning for FET, was published and launched. Following on from this groundwork, the project's final output was published in 2021 – "UDL for FET Practitioners: Guidance for Implementing Universal Design for Learning in Irish Further Education and Training."

> Inclusion of Learners with Disabilities

Future FET: 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 FET for learners with an intellectual disability.

Building on previously published guidelines on the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in adult literacy, in 2021, the Learner Support team in SOLAS, in partnership with NALA and ETBI, published a set of case studies and a background research report on the implementation of these guidelines in ETBs, with recommendations on how to further progress such inclusive practices.

> Human Capital Report

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.

Understanding the focus of Human Capital in SOLAS

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. The People Team are actualising the ambition to be one of the most innovative Strategic HR Departments, in the Public Service by investing in their people and focusing on delivery of actions set out in both the SOLAS People Strategy and the Business Action Plan for the People team in 2021.

SOLAS Cross Business Plan 2021

In 2020, SOLAS designed an organisational approach to delivering on the FET Strategy by developing a singular cross business plan with key objectives, deliverables and measurements for all divisions. The People team developed an action plan for 2021 and focused on key areas of delivery, which are highlighted below:

Top areas of focus for the people Team in 2021



SOLAS People Strategy 2020-2024 Year 2



2021 Areas of Delivery

SOLAS Workforce	Employee Engagement
HR Data and Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Streamlined process improvements - Completion of Core optimisation project (Insights Report, T&S, Annual Leave, Flexi) - Learning Management system (LMS) for policy and onboarding - Year 1 of new PDP (Performance & Development) Process - Salary administration and adjustments, following Departmental guidelines and circulars - Optimal recruitment, selection and retention procedures in place - Up to date accessible HR statistics including absences, leave, sickness - New Policy & process development and implementation - Pension administration and execution - Staff Development Process in place - Dispute resolution WorkForce Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Departmental sanction to adjust SOLAS headcount including: National Apprentice Office, Construction, Green Skills / Housing for All, EGF support (Debenhams). Capital restructure. 	Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Embedding of TRIBE SOLAS values - Delivery of high quality learning & development programmes - Action plans activated for Employee Experience L&D portal established and centralised funds process activated - Onboarding and Pension process improvements - SOLAS Internal Apprenticeship Programme - Walking the talk by implementing apprenticeship programme - Public Sector Duty - Assessed SOLAS against the Duty, carried out a civil society consultation and developed an Implementation Plan. Health & Well-being <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Execution of one 2 one telephone calls to all staff - Development of Well-being portal - Collaboration with other education bodies including HEA, ETB's, National College of Ireland, Concern, Trinity College, National Symphony Orchestra, Galway Chamber Choir.

Key Wins 2021

People HR operations	Authentic well-being	Internal apprenticeships
78 Campaigns <p>in 2021 making an increase of over 300% recruitment.</p>	100% <p>of staff having access to many strands of wellbeing.</p>	2 Apprentices <p>start in SOLAS in 2021.</p>

The operational statistics for 2021 in a climate of uncertainty and change are outstanding, 78 staff vacancies filled 17 Promotions, 34 Actings, 25 New Entrants 20 Leavers (7 resignations & 13 Retirements) 3 Career Breaks, 1 Leave of Absence, 23 Parental Leaves, 4 Parents Leaves, 7 Maternity Leaves, 2 Paternity Leaves 65 New Insights reports built to date, 115 medical certs received 2 Audits (OCAG & Payroll) 2 Pay Increases, 2 Higher Scales reviews, 129 Increments. Over 13,000 emails received in HR Admin in 2021.

Four pillars of well-being were actively addressed in 2021, Mental Health, Physical Health, Financial Health, and more recently Environmental Health. Evidence based research highlights the importance of this in the workplace and here is a small sample of 2021 activity:

- 88 EAP sessions up to end of Sept 2021: Monthly mindfulness and meditation sessions Financial wellness programmes (mortgage, savings, retirement, etc.)
- Perimenopause and the Menopause Journey, Laughter Yoga, 100k Running Challenge Recognition of National and International Days - International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, International Migrants Day, International Women's Day, World Social Justice Day.

SIAP is a brand-new project within SOLAS and began in earnest in June 2021.

In this, our first iteration, we worked closely with consortia partners and are delighted to welcome our first two apprentices. We have recruited a 'Recruitment Executive Apprentice' and a 'Cyber Security Apprentice'. Both are now in place and embarking on their apprenticeship journey at SOLAS.

People Strategy Progress 2021

Strategic Pillars - 2021 Progress		
Making Work Better	Talent to Thrive	Culture of Excellence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase focus on WIP and future resources - Future of work development in light of hybrid working practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Successful succession planning review - L&D practices fully embedded into SOLAS - Continuation of streamlined processes in HR operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Year 1 of work commenced in Public Sector Duty requirements - Implementation of organisational coaching model - Focus on SOLAS TRIBE values, included in overall SOLAS Business Plan

Achievement Summary 2021

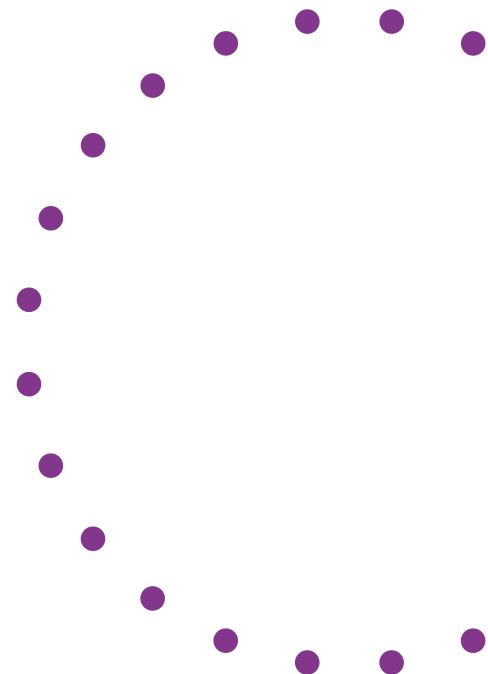
A strong coaching culture - Values Led Approach



Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

The results of a CSR survey in 2020 informed the direction of CSR activities into 2021. The year was started by continuing our sustainability theme set by the Sustainable Life School who ran two workshops into the lead up to 2021. Achievements in 2021 include:

- The facilitation of online 'Apprenticeship' presentations across the schools within the Northeast Inner City. SOLAS have developed a SOLAS Internal Apprenticeship Programme and currently have three apprenticeships in place with a fourth under consideration.
- The Workplace Choir continued through the year. This included one performance at Powerscourt Town House and the recording of three songs in collaboration with Google, Food Safety Authority Ireland, Higher Education Authority, 8 Education and Training Boards, National College of Ireland, Dublin Simon, and CONCERN.
- Gavin Harte delivered the webinar Let's Talk Climate Action: a general introduction to Climate Action and Sustainable Development to mark the Dublin Climate Action Week 2021. The workshop introduced climate science, its impacts, and possible solutions.
- SOLAS CSR committee engaged with the Climate Action Plan 2021 and began planning a Climate Action Awareness Raising Campaign for 2022.





"FET makes a difference to the lives we lead, helping us to develop personally, learn new things, shape our choices, and create and inspire."

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.

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 regarding 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 agreements concluded in 2021. New agreements will be developed in 2022.

> **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 organization. In response to the Covid-19 global pandemic SOLAS developed and implemented a comprehensive plan to put in place policies and procedures to protect staff and clients. This

included facilitating the ability to work remotely and relevant safety measures in the workplace. This followed best practice in line with the government Work Safety Policy and Procedures and Health and Safety Authority (HSA) guidelines.

> **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 takes 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 2021, there were no 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 50% in the Public Sector by 2030 in line with the Public Sector Energy Efficiency Strategy. 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 2020 on Public Sector Energy Efficiency Performance, SOLAS was noted to have achieved 48.3% Energy Savings since the SEAI baseline and an overall status of more efficient than baseline and on track for 2030 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 2021 will carry on into 2022 including 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

The Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty (the Duty) places a statutory obligation on public bodies to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and protect the human rights of those to whom they provide services and staff when carrying out their daily work. It puts equality and human rights in the mainstream of how public bodies execute their functions. To that end, it has the potential to positively transform how public bodies engage with members of the public, and their own staff.

There are three steps in the process of implementing the Duty – Assess, Address and Report on an annual basis.

In July 2021, SOLAS embarked on the beginning of the journey to implement its Public Sector Duty obligations. A PSD working group consisting of thirteen staff across eight different units was formed. By the end of 2021, it had assessed SOLAS against the Duty, carried out a civil society consultation and developed an implementation plan for 2022.

> **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 2021, SOLAS received 16 requests for information under the FOI Act.

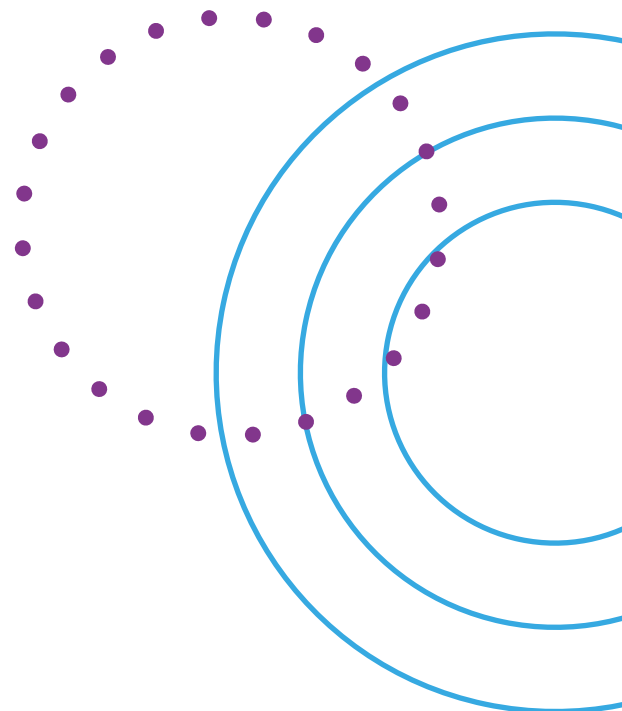
> **Official Languages Act, 2003**

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 2021, SOLAS complied with the provisions of the Act in all material respects. In total, a sum of €404.77 was paid in relation to late payment interest penalties.



> SOLAS Board

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

four new members. At the start of 2020, there was one vacancy on the Board and from 26th October a second vacancy arose following the end of term of office of Darragh J. Loftus, Board Member on 26th October 2021. The Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science has begun a process with the Public Appointment Service to fill the current vacancies.



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

Paul Cremmins

Suir Engineering

Orla Coughlan

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

Patrick J Dwyer

Head of Google Cloud SMB. Former Senior Vice President, Dell EMC EMEA

In 2020, a new Government Department was established by Simon Harris, TD., and 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).



Darragh J Loftus

Core Technology Manager,
Oracle EMEA Limited (to 26th
October 2021)



Yvonne McNulty

Managing Director,
Director, Human
Resources Consulting,
Mazars



Cecilia Munro

Principal, Ballyfermot College
of Further Education, City
of Dublin Education and
Training Board



Niamh O'Reilly

Chief Executive Officer,
AONTAS



Catrina Sheridan

Founder and CEO of Nafasi



Andrew Brownlee

Chief Executive Officer
(ex-officio)

Changes during 2021

Sinead McCluskey, Director - Commercial Innovation, PEI Surgical resigned from SOLAS Board on 7th February 2020 and the vacancy remains unfilled.

Darragh J. Loftus, Core Technology Manager, Oracle EMEA concluded his term of office (second term) on 26th October 2021.

> 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 a 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 2021 budget was approved by the Board at its meeting on 24th March 2021. A revision to the SOLAS 2021 budget was approved by the Board at its meeting on 7th December 2021.

The Further Education and Training Services Plan 2021 and associated budget was approved by the Board at its meeting on 29th April 2021 with further updates to the plan approved by the Board at its meeting on 13th July 2021. A review of the Services Plan and budget was carried out by the Board at its meeting on 14th September 2021. Final allocations were approved by the Board at its meeting on 7th December 2021.

At its 24th March 2021 meeting, the Board approved the Capital Plan 2021 with updates provided and approved by the Board at its 13th July 2021 and 7th December 2021 meetings.

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 on 31st December 2021.

> 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 and the conclusion of the term of office of Darragh J. Loftus on 26th October 2021, the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research Innovation and Science has begun a process with the Public Appointments Service to bring the Board complement back to 13 members. 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 eight occasions in 2021.

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 *(term of office ended 26/10/21)
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)

* There are two current vacancies on the Board of SOLAS following the resignation of Sinead McCluskey on 7th February 2020 and the conclusion of the term of office of Darragh J. Loftus on 26th October 2021.

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 2021 has been completed and was considered by the Board.

The Board has three Committees:

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. 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
- PJ Dwyer - Board Member
- Darragh J. Loftus - Board Member – (to 26th October 2021)
- Yvonne McNulty - Board Member – (to 31st May 2021)
- Peter Buckley - Independent Member.

Changes in 2021

Mr. Darragh J. Loftus concluded his term of office as a Board Member and as a member of the Audit and Risk Committee on 26th October 2021.

Ms. Yvonne McNulty resigned from the Audit and Risk Committee on 31st May 2021 but remained a member of the SOLAS Board.

There were four (4) meetings of the Audit and Risk Committee held in 2021.

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 Committee are:

- Niamh O'Reilly, Chairperson and Board Member
- Seán Burke, Board Member
- Patricia Carey, Board Member
- Paul Cremmins, Board Member.

There were five (5) ordinary meetings of the Strategic Planning Committee held in 2021 and one (1) extraordinary meeting to discuss the Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) Strategy.

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 areas 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. The members of the Workforce and Organisational Development Committee are:

- Orla Coughlan - Chairperson and Board Member
- Catrina Sheridan - Board Member.

There were three (3) meetings of the Workforce and Organisational Development Committee held in 2021.

Schedule of Attendance, Fees, and Expenses

A schedule of attendance at the Board and Committee meetings for 2021 is set out below 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 2021 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.

Number of meetings scheduled/ Meetings Attended	Board	Date on which Board Members were appointed	Audit & Risk Committee	Strategic Planning Committee	Workforce and Organisational Development Committee	Fees 2021 €	Expenses 2021 €
Number of meetings held in 2021	8		4	6*	3	0	0
AYLWARD, Sean	8/8	13/11/19	–	–	–	0	0
BURKE, Seán	8/8	27/10/17 (second term)	–	5/6	–	0	0
CAREY, Patricia	8/8	27/10/17 (second term)	–	5/5	–	0	0
COUGHLAN, Orla	8/8	25/03/19	–	–	3/3	0	0
CREMMINS, Paul	8/8	25/03/19		6/6	–	0	0
DWYER, Patrick J.	8/8	27/10/17	4/4	–		0	0
LOFTUS, Darragh J. – end of term	5/6	27/10/16 (second Term)	2/3 (to 26/10/21)	–	–	0	0
MCNULTY, Yvonne	8/8	11/07/19	2/2 (to 31/05/21)	–	–	0	0
MUNRO, Cecilia	7/8	27/10/17 (second term)	4/4	–	–	0	0
O'REILLY, Niamh	8/8	25/03/19	–	6/6	–	0	0
SHERIDAN, Catrina	8/8	27/10/17	–	–	3/3	0	0
BROWNLEE, Andrew	8/8	02/09/19	–	–	–	0	0
Total						0	0

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:

	2021 €	2020 €
Legal (general legal advice)	259,731	201,387
Financial/actuarial advice	12,020	22,069
Human Resources & Pension	25,511	161,438
Business improvement/ICT	181,936	57,480
Other	27,806	31,120
Total Consultancy Costs	507,004	473,494
<i>Consultancy costs charged to the Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves</i>	<i>507,004</i>	<i>473,494</i>

The following consultancy costs were charged to direct programme costs in 2021:

	2021 €	2020 €
Legal (general legal advice)	0	0
Financial/actuarial advice	0	0
Human Resources	0	0
Business improvement	4,400	0
Other	37,000	25,134
Total Consultancy Costs	41,400	25,134
<i>Consultancy costs charged to the Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves</i>	<i>41,400</i>	<i>25,134</i>

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.

	2021 €	2020 €
Legal fees of SOLAS – legal proceedings*#	(7,190)	38,250
Counterparty legal fees – legal proceedings	0	0
Conciliation and arbitration payments	0	0
Settlements	0	0
Total Consultancy Costs	(7,190)	38,250

* The negative figure for legal proceedings in 2021 relates to an accrual in 2020 which did not fully materialise in 2021.

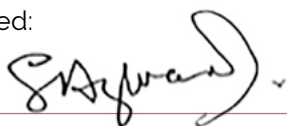
There is one ongoing case where SOLAS is seeking recovery of legal costs owed.

Travel and Subsistence Expenditure

Travel and subsistence expenditure is categorised as follows:

	2021 €	2020 €
Domestic		
- Board*	0	2,443
- Employees*	29,491	72,685
International		
- Board	0	0
- Employees◇	1,025	5,279
Total	30,516	80,407

Signed:



Seán Aylward
Chairperson, SOLAS
Date: 30th May, 2022

* Domestic travel and subsistence paid directly to Board members in 2020. No payments in 2021.

* Domestic travel and subsistence paid directly to staff members in 2021 and 2020.

◇ includes travel and subsistence of €773 paid directly to staff in 2021 (2020: €3,980) and the balance of €252 relates to expenditure paid by SOLAS on behalf of the staff (2020: €2,419). In 2020 €1,120 was reclaimed from the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) and the European Union. There was no reclaim in 2021.

Hospitality Expenditure

The Income and Expenditure Account includes the following hospitality expenditure:

	2021 €	2020 €
Staff Hospitality/ Wellbeing	26,234	7,993
Client Hospitality	1,746	370
Total	27,980	8,363

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.



Andrew Brownlee
Chief Executive Officer, SOLAS
Date: 30th May, 2022

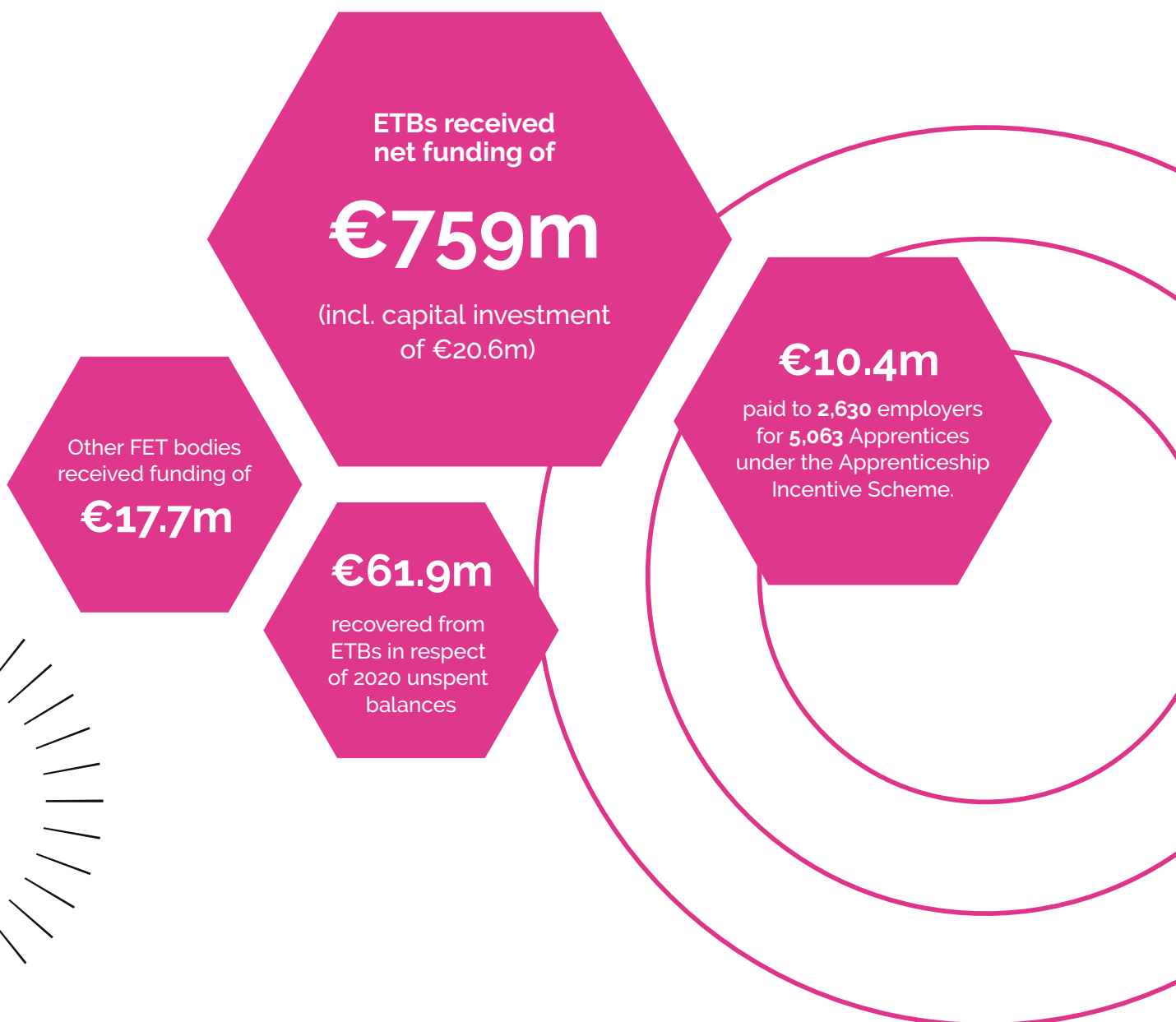
> SOLAS Finances 2021

Our Financial highlights in 2021 include grants totalling €759.2m disbursed to ETBs, €17.7m disbursed to other FET providers and €10.4m to employers under the Apprenticeship Incentive Scheme.

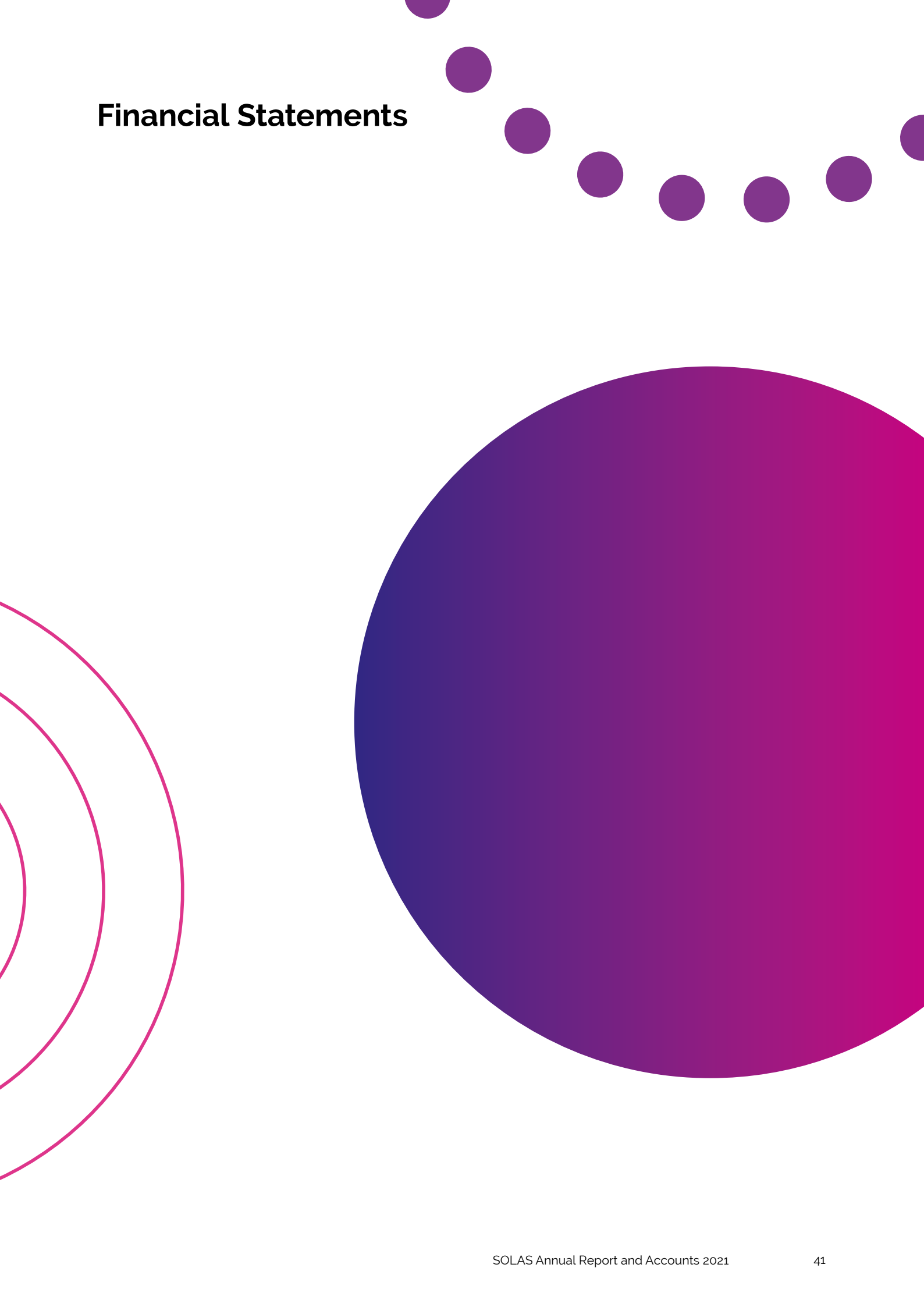
The Finance team continued to provide SOLAS with timely financial, management accounting and procurement services in line with legislation and best practice.

SOLAS is designated as an Intermediate Body for the European Social Fund (ESF) operational programmes. 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 €60m per annum over the previous 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 for 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.

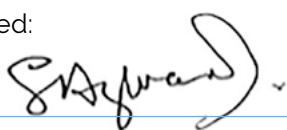
SOLAS is also responsible for keeping adequate

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 **28th April, 2022**.

Signed:



Seán Aylward
Chairperson, SOLAS
Date: 30th May, 2022



Andrew Brownlee
Chief Executive Officer, SOLAS
Date: 30th May, 2022

Comptroller and Auditor General Report for presentation to the Houses of 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 2021 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 2021 and of its income and expenditure for 2021 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

31 May 2022

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 annual 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.

I 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.

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.

Statement on Internal Control 2021

> 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 had an Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) which comprised of four Board members and one external expert at the beginning of 2021. From June 2021 the ARC consisted of three Board members and one external expert, following the resignation of a Board member. From October 2021 the ARC comprised of two Board members and one external expert due to the expiry of a Board member's term. The ARC met four times in 2021.

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 2021 Internal Audit Plan was approved by the ARC, on behalf of the Board. During 2021, 12 Internal Audit Reports were issued, covering the areas of data infrastructure and database controls, the Innovation unit, public sector duty, apprenticeship, strategic performance agreements, training for the unemployed (ESF review), FET programmes (ESF review), CSCS, QSCS and Safe Pass, IT general controls, succession planning and staff development, performance delivery agreements with the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (formerly the Department of Education and Skills), and records management and GDPR.

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 (IAU) of the ETBs on SOLAS' 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 regular reports 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 requests are 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 and a comprehensive business service plan that is reviewed twice a year
- SOLAS are developing new Strategic Performance Agreements with the Educational and Training Boards for the period of 2022-2024, which will include national system targets. These targets are reflected in the SOLAS Corporate Plan.
- Enhanced cyber security controls are in place with compulsory cyber-security training for all staff
- Increased MFA (Multi-Factor Authentication) digital sign offs are in place
- Enhanced controls are in place 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.

While the new Strategic Performance Agreements between SOLAS and the Educational and Training Boards (ETBs) had initially been planned to commence in 2021, this was delayed due to the impact of the pandemic. This process will now be completed in 2022, following engagement with the ETBs with the new agreements to be in place for the period of 2022-2024.

> Impact of Covid-19

Covid-19 and the impact of the pandemic prevailed throughout the year in 2021 and continued to bring challenges both nationally and internationally. SOLAS continued to work remotely during this time. In terms of its potential impact on the control environment and to mitigate risk, SOLAS responded as follows:

- All staff have the capability to work remotely with only 2% of staff (essential) being office based
- Staff have the infrastructure to allow remote working through Office 365 (OneDrive, TEAMS, SharePoint, phones), laptops and hardware

> 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.

> Review of Effectiveness

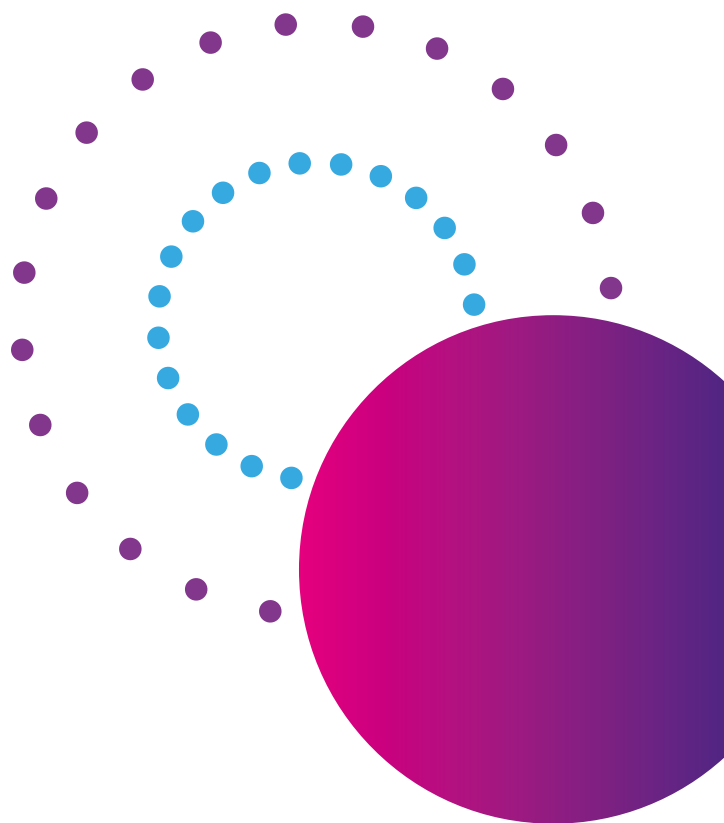
The Board's monitoring and review of the effectiveness of the System of Internal Control is informed by the work of:

- the Executive Directors/Directors/Managers 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 28th April, 2022. 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.



Signed:

Seán Aylward
Chairperson, SOLAS
Date: 30th May, 2022

SOLAS

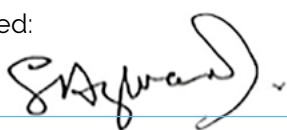
Statement of Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31 December 2021

	Note	2021	2020
		€'000	€'000
Income	2	833,698	837,284
Expenditure			
Payroll Costs	5	14,164	13,590
Overheads	5	6,168	6,824
SOLAS Operational Costs		20,332	20,414
Retirement Benefit Costs	5	6,690	9,650
Programme Costs	6	9,000	8,240
Grants to Education and Training Boards	7(a)	759,182	774,875
Grants to VSCCS*	7(b)	3,966	1,471
Grants to Organisations in the FET sector	7(c)	10,256	8,489
Apprenticeship Incentivisation Grants	7(d)	10,389	2,090
Grants to Consortia & Coordinating Bodies	7(e)	3,466	1,962
Total Grants		787,259	788,887
Total Expenditure		823,281	827,191
Surplus for the Year		10,417	10,093

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: 30th May, 2022



Andrew Brownlee
Chief Executive Officer, SOLAS
Date: 30th May, 2022

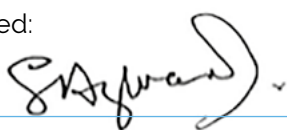
SOLAS

Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 31 December 2021

	Note	2021	2020
		€'000	€'000
Surplus for the Year		10,417	10,093
Experience Gain/(Loss) on Retirement Benefit obligations		2,316	13,728
Change in assumptions underlying the present value of Retirement Benefit liabilities		(10,574)	(28,431)
Actuarial Gain/(Loss) on Retirement Benefit Liabilities	12(a)(v)	(8,258)	(14,703)
Adjustment to Deferred Retirement Benefit Funding		8,258	14,703
Total Recognised Surplus for the Year		10,417	10,093

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

Signed:



Seán Aylward
Chairperson, SOLAS
Date: 30th May, 2022



Andrew Brownlee
Chief Executive Officer, SOLAS
Date: 30th May, 2022

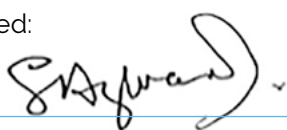
SOLAS

Statement of Financial Position as at 31 December 2021

	Note	2021		2020	
		As at 31 December 2021		As at 31 December 2020	
		€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Non Current Assets					
Property, Plant & Equipment	8		647		924
Current Assets					
Inventory		0		5	
Receivables	9	760		1,905	
Cash		11,632		10,122	
		12,392		12,032	
Liabilities falling due within one year					
Payables	10	(1,535)		(1,806)	
Net Current Assets			10,857		10,226
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities before Retirement Benefit Obligations			11,504		11,150
SOLAS Retirement Benefit Liabilities	12(a)(ii)	(685,750)		(701,859)	
Deferred Retirement Benefit Funding	12(a)(ii)	685,750	0	701,859	0
Total Assets			11,504		11,150
Capital and Reserves					
Capital Reserve		647		924	
Capital Account		418	1,065	111	1,035
Revenue Reserve			10,439		10,115
			11,504		11,150

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

Signed:



Seán Aylward
Chairperson, SOLAS
Date: 30th May, 2022



Andrew Brownlee
Chief Executive Officer, SOLAS
Date: 30th May, 2022

SOLAS

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31 December 2021

	Note	2021	2020
		€'000	€'000
Cash flow from Operating Activities			
Surplus for the Year		10,417	10,093
Interest Paid/(Received)		107	92
Refund to the Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Skills		(10,093)	(3,521)
Adjustment for non-cash items			
(Increase)/Decrease in Inventory		5	0
(Increase)/Decrease in Receivables	9	1,145	(787)
(Decrease)/Increase in Payables	10	(271)	(115)
Net Cash Inflow/(Outflow) from Operating Activities		1,310	5,762
Cash flow from Investing Activities			
Payments to Acquire Fixed Assets	8	(124)	(303)
Capital Grants Received	3	21,053	17,057
Capital Grants to ETBs	7(a)	(20,622)	(16,775)
Capital Grants to Other FET Providers		0	(93)
Cash flow from Financing Activities			
Interest (Paid)/Received		(107)	(92)
Net Cash inflow/(Outflow) from Investing/Financing Activities		200	(206)
Increase/(Decrease) in Cash in the Year			
		1,510	5,556
Cash at the beginning of the Year			
		10,122	4,566
Cash at the end of the year			
		11,632	10,122

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

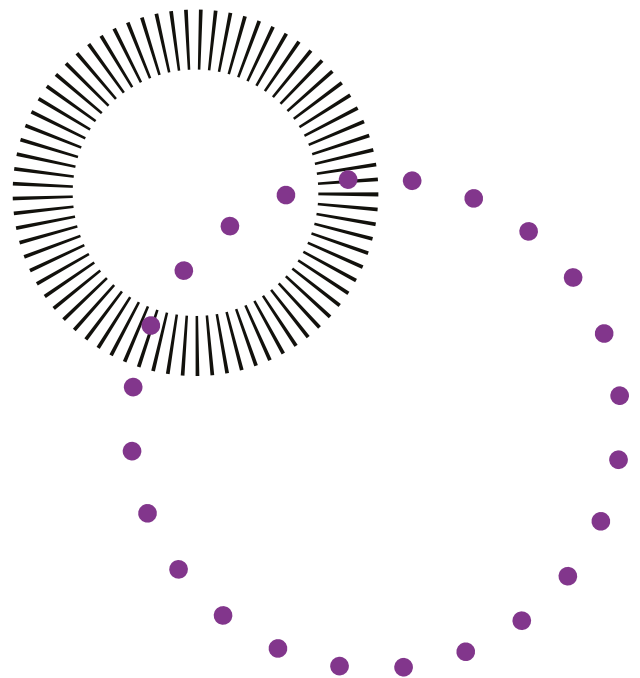
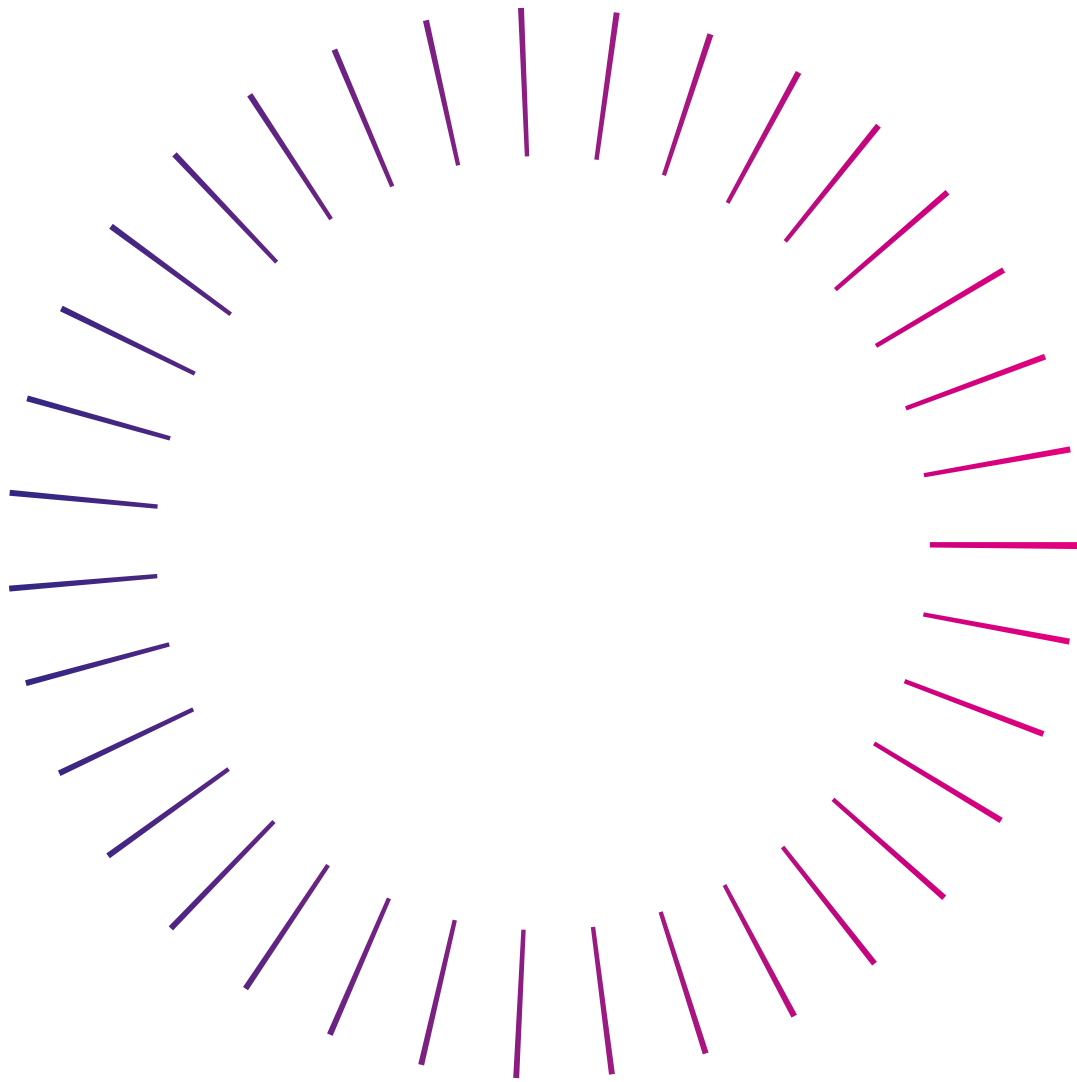
Notes 1 to 19 form an integral part of these Financial Statements.

SOLAS

Statement of Changes in Reserves and Capital Account for the year ended 31 December 2021

	Note	Revenue Reserves	Capital Account	Capital Reserves	Total
		€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
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, Innovation & 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
Surplus for the Year		10,417	0	0	10,417
Refund to the Department of Further & Higher Education, Research & Science #		(10,093)	0	0	(10,093)
Capital Grants Received	3	0	21,053	0	21,053
Capital Grants to ETBs	7(a)	0	(20,622)	0	(20,622)
Payments to Acquire Fixed Assets	8	0	(124)	124	0
Amortisation of Capital Grant - Depreciation	2 & 8	0	0	(401)	(401)
Retirement Benefits					
Actuarial Gain/(Loss) on Retirement Benefit Liabilities	12(a)(v)	(8,258)	0	0	(8,258)
Adjustment to Deferred Exchequer Retirement Benefit Funding		8,258	0	0	8,258
Balance as at 31 December 2021		10,439	418	647	11,504

With the permission of the Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science, refunds in respect of previous years due to the Department were retained by SOLAS. The retention of these refunds are accounted for in current year 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 2021 with comparatives for the period from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020.

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 2021 have been prepared in accordance with FRS 102, the financial reporting standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland issued by the Financial Reporting Council 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. 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 28th April, 2022.

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%); and
- Computers and other computer equipment – 3 or 5 years (33^{1/3}% 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 at the date of the transaction. Assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are translated into Euro at the rates of exchange 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 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.

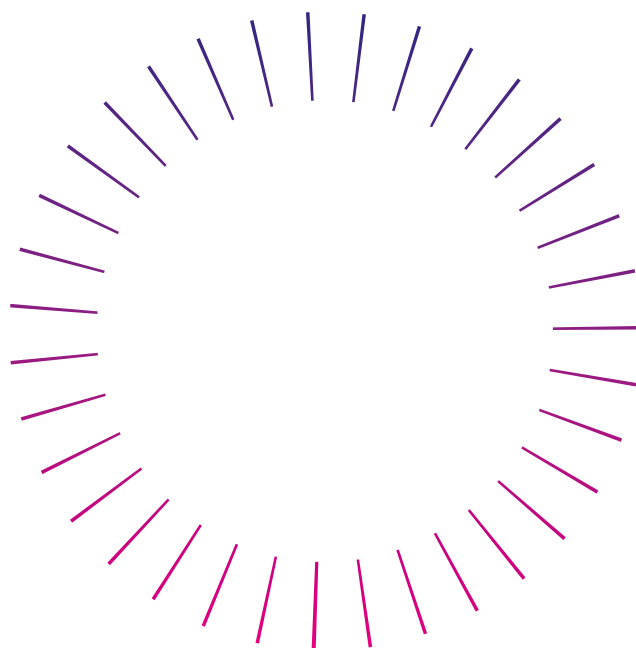
Assumptions

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; and
- (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.



> 2 Income

	Note	2021	2020
		€'000	€'000
State Funding - Non Capital	3	833,120	836,892
State Funding in respect of ETB Capital Grants	7(a)	20,622	16,775
State Funding in respect of Capital Grants for Other FET providers		0	93
Net Deferred Retirement Benefit Funding	12(a)(iii)	(24,367)	(20,453)
Other Income	4	3,922	3,581
Amortisation of Capital Grant - Depreciation	5 & 8	401	396
Total Income		833,698	837,284

> 3 State Funding

	2021	2020
	€'000	€'000
State funding was received under the following headings:		
Non Capital		
Vote 45 (Subheads B3, B5 & B7) - Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science		
Administration and General Expenses		
Staff Costs and Overheads (B3.1)	18,758	18,542
Less: Employee Retirement Benefit Contributions paid to the State	(733)	(739)
Less: Employer Retirement Benefit Contributions paid to the State	(102)	(116)
	17,923	17,687
SOLAS Training Programmes (B3.1)	5,558	5,558
Further Education & Training Pay Grants (B5.1.1)	262,463	242,764
Further Education & Training Non Pay Grants (B5.1.2)	257,490	274,804
Retirement Benefit Funding (B7.1.1)	32,000	31,500
Total Vote 45 - Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science	575,434	572,313

> 3 State Funding (continued)

	2021	2020
	€'000	€'000
Other Oireachtas		
National Training Fund †	257,686	264,579
Total State Funding - Non Capital #	833,120	836,892
Capital		
Vote 45 (Subhead B3.1 & B5.1) - Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science	21,053	17,057
Total State Funding - Capital	21,053	17,057
Total State Funding	854,173	853,949

† An amount of €257.686m (2020: €264.579m) 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 €61.856m relating to previous years. Excluding this recovery, Non Capital State funding for FET activities in 2021 would have been €894.976m and total income would have been €895.554m.

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 2020 surplus of €10.093m was retained and accounted for in the current year's income as part of the overall grant due to SOLAS in 2021. The grant of €833.120m from the Department for non-capital includes cash received of €823.027m in 2021 and the €10.093m surplus brought forward from 2020.

> 4 Other Income

	2021	2020
	€'000	€'000
Construction Activities	3,772	3,448
Miscellaneous Income	150	133
Total	3,922	3,581

> 5 Payroll Costs, Retirement Benefit Costs and Overheads

	Note	2021	2020
		€'000	€'000
Payroll Costs			
Office of the CEO		258	251
Transformation		3,201	3,014
Delivery		4,718	4,750
Construction		1,147	1,053
Support		4,840	4,521
Total Payroll Costs *		14,164	13,590
Total Retirement Benefit Costs	12(a)(i)	6,690	9,650
Overheads			
Travel & Subsistence †		30	78
Staff Training & Development		260	123
Depreciation	8	401	396
Establishment Costs		2,313	2,515
Programme Development Costs		78	112
Communications & Information Technology		1,929	2,352
Insurance & Accidents		239	205
Other Overheads ‡		918	1,043
Total Overheads		6,168	6,824
Total Payroll, Retirement Benefit and Overhead Costs		27,022	30,064
Comptroller & Auditor General Audit Fee ‡		46	43

* Total Payroll Costs comprises salaries and employers PRSI of €1,081k and allowances of €99k.

† Travel & Subsistence costs above are composed of national €29k and international €1k.

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

> 6 Programme Costs

	2021	2020
	€'000	€'000
eCollege	3,027	2,443
Technology Enhanced Learning	2,875	2,580
Training For Employment	5,902	5,023
Apprenticeship	790	910
Construction	1,475	1,633
Training In Employment	2,265	2,543
FET Sector Evaluations	0	137
Workforce Development/Innovation	360	476
Active Inclusion	206	61
Pathways/CAO Campaign	256	0
Internal Apprenticeship Programme	11	0
Other Programmes	833	674
Total Programme Costs	9,000	8,240

> Direct Provision of Funding

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

			2021	2020
Education & Training Board	FET Provision	Capital	Total	Total
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Cavan & Monaghan	25,993	551	26,544	28,527
City of Dublin	117,142	1,350	118,492	116,209
Cork	75,348	1,231	76,579	77,651
Donegal	23,542	650	24,192	24,414
Dublin & Dun Laoghaire	62,328	474	62,802	74,540
Galway & Roscommon	47,096	6,115	53,211	50,832
Kerry	37,272	1,424	38,696	33,755
Kildare & Wicklow	31,224	51	31,275	34,398
Kilkenny & Carlow	21,744	203	21,947	24,140
Laois & Offaly	33,516	645	34,161	29,977
Limerick & Clare	69,099	1,583	70,682	68,409
Longford & Westmeath	24,059	532	24,591	27,166
Louth & Meath	46,654	3,254	49,908	48,382
Mayo, Sligo & Leitrim	37,986	1,108	39,094	43,459
Tipperary	25,454	332	25,786	29,469
Waterford & Wexford	60,103	1,119	61,222	63,548
Total Grants to Education and Training Boards	738,560	20,622	759,182	774,875

Note: Grants allocated to ETBs in 2021 amounted to €821.038m – Grants amounting to €759.182m were disbursed in 2021 and the balance of €61.856m was funded by balances retained by ETBs from underspends in 2020.

> Direct Provision of Funding

7(b) Summary of Grants Paid to Voluntary Secondary, Community and Comprehensive Schools (VSCCS)

Schools operating the PLC Programme	2021	2021	2021	2021	2020
	PLC	Other Grants*	Covid Grant Refunds**	Total	Total
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Ballyhaunis Community School, Co. Mayo	0	0	0	0	1
Castlerea Community School, Co. Roscommon	0	0	0	0	4
Central College, Limerick	17	83	(104)	(4)	171
Clifden Community College, Co. Galway	1	0	0	1	1
Colaiste Chiarain, Summerhill, Athlone, Co. Roscommon	4	4	(5)	3	16
Colaiste Mhuire, Co. Galway	0	2	0	2	7
Donahies Community School, Donaghmede, Dublin 13	0	15	0	15	5
Glenamaddy Community School, Co. Roscommon	3	8	(19)	(8)	43
Gorey Community School, Co. Wexford	7	22	(20)	9	69
Jesus & Mary Secondary School, Co. Sligo	8	26	(8)	26	46
Kilrush Community School, Co. Clare	1	1	(32)	(30)	61
Mary Immaculate Secondary School, Lisdoonvarna, Co. Clare	0	50	(23)	27	39
Mercy College, Chapel Hill, Co. Sligo	1	2	(2)	1	13
Moate Business College, Co. Westmeath	26	68	(41)	53	398
Nagle Rice Secondary School, Doneraile, Co. Cork	0	0	0	0	10
North Presentation Secondary School, Co. Cork	0	10	(30)	(20)	42
Our Lady's Secondary School, Co. Mayo	0	0	0	0	2
Sancta Maria College, Co. Mayo	3	3	(1)	5	16
Scoil Mhuire, Ennistymon, Co. Clare	0	0	0	0	8
Scoil Phobail, Clifden Community School, Co. Galway	0	0	(2)	(2)	3
St Cuan's College, Co. Galway	3	18	0	21	19
St Josephs, Spanish Point, Co. Clare	0	4	(4)	0	11

SOLAS – Further Education & Training Authority

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

St Louis Community School, Kiltimagh, Co. Mayo	0	0	(7)	(7)	19
St Michael's School, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon	0	1	(6)	(5)	7
Tullow Community School, Co. Carlow	1	1	(22)	(20)	48
	75	318	(326)	67	1,059

* Other Grants in 2021 include Grants in response to Covid-19 of €80k

** Covid-19 Grant Refunds from 2020 of €326k in 2021

Includes Grants in response to Covid-19 in 2020 of €518k

> Direct Provision of Funding

7(b) Summary of Grants Paid to Voluntary Secondary, Community and Comprehensive Schools (VSCCS)

Schools operating the Back to Education Initiative Programme - (BTEI)	2021	2020
	€'000	€'000
Central College, Co. Limerick	28	(18)
Colaiste Mhuire	(2)	0
Donahies Community School, Donaghmede, Dublin 13	58	58
Gorey Community School, Gorey, Co. Wexford	120	24
Mary Immaculate Secondary School, Lisdoonvarna, Co. Clare	56	58
Moate Business College	30	0
Nagle Rice Secondary School, Doneraile, Co. Cork	16	20
North Presentation Secondary School, Co. Cork	76	76
Sancta Maria College, Co. Mayo	12	14
Scoil Mhuire, Ennistymon, Co. Clare	1	14
St Cuan's College, Co. Galway	(4)	0
St Louis Community School, Kiltimagh, Co. Mayo	(7)	0
St Joseph's Secondary School, Spanish Point, Co. Clare	44	45
St Michael's Castlerea, Co. Roscommon	25	31
	453	323
Reimbursements		
Department of Education (LDA reimbursement) ‡	69	89
Department of Education (PLC Costs in VSCCS)~	3,377	0
	3,446	89
Total Grants Voluntary Secondary, Community and Comprehensive Schools	3,966	1,470

‡ Locally Devised Assessments (LDA) payments to teachers in Voluntary Secondary, Community and Comprehensive Schools paid via the Department of Education.

~ PLC Costs for teacher pay in Voluntary Secondary, Community and Comprehensive Schools paid via the Department of Education. In 2020 these costs had been accounted for by way of a sub-head transfer between the Department of Further & Higher Education Research Innovation & Science and the Department of Education.

> Direct Provision of Funding

7(c) Summary of Grants paid to organisations in the Further Education and Training Sector

Further Education and Training - Support Organisations	2021	2020
	€'000	€'000
AHEAD - Association for Higher Education Access & Disability	197	136
AONTAS - The National Adult Learning Organisation	1,353	1,353
Association of Community & Comprehensive Schools (ACCS)	109	172
Construction Industry Federation	83	0
Down Syndrome Ireland	140	0
Dyslexia Association of Ireland	103	131
Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI)	1,608	491
National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA)	2,260	1,875
National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE)	277	278
	6,130	4,435
Further Education and Training - Staff Representative Organisations		
Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) ^	26	24
National Association of Adult & Community Education Directors (NACED)	21	21
	47	45
Further Education and Training - Lifelong Learning Opportunities		
Age Action Ireland	67	67
An Cosan - The Shanty Educational Project Ltd	660	450
Irish Countrywomen's Association	21	21
Peoples College	112	112
Third Age	215	148
	1,075	797
Further Education and Training - Continuing Professional Development		
Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT/NALA)	512	526

SOLAS - Further Education & Training Authority

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

European Union and Specific Projects		
Central Statistics Office (PIAAC)*	169	296
Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (PIAAC)*	200	102
Fasttrack Into Information Technology (FIT)	1,260	1,127
Irish Association of Community Training Organisations (IAC TO)	151	162
Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed (INOU)	20	20
	1,800	1,708
Further Education and Training - Other Providers		
Irish Deaf Society	362	452
Irish Deaf Society (FE Covid - Capital Grant)	0	27
National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) - Write On/Phone Tuition	170	330
Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities	160	160
Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities (FE Covid - Capital Grant)	0	9
	692	978
Total Grants to Organisations in the FET Sector	10,256	8,489

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

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

> 7(d) Grants paid to employers in respect of the Apprenticeship Incentivisation Scheme

	2021	2020
	€'000	€'000
Apprenticeship Incentivisation Scheme*	10,389	2,090
Total Grants to Employers	10,389	2,090

* In 2021, grants amounting to €10.126m were paid to 2,630 employers (5,063 apprentices) in relation to the registration of apprentices. A further €0.263m was paid to 194 employers (263 apprentices) in relation to the retention of apprentices. In 2020, grants amounting to €2.090m were paid to 672 employers (1,045 apprentices) in relation to the registration of apprentices.

> 7(e) Summary of Grants paid to Consortia and Coordinating Bodies

Further Education and Training - Grants to Consortia & Coordinating Bodies	2021	2021	2021	2020
	Operational Grants	Development Grants	Total	Total
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Accounting Technicians Ireland				
<i>Accounting Technician Apprenticeship</i>	1,418	0	1,418	481
City of Dublin ETB				
<i>Roofing & Cladding Technician</i>	0	0	0	27
<i>Auctioneering & Property Services</i>	0	2	2	0
Fasttrack into Information Technology (FIT)				
<i>ICT Associate - Software Developer/Network Engineer/Cybersecurity</i>	796	0	796	487
Institute of Technology Carlow				
<i>Geo-Driller Apprenticeship</i>	0	25	25	0
Galway Roscommon ETB				
<i>Arboriculture - refund</i>	0	(22)	(22)	0
Griffith College Dublin				
<i>Health Care Assistant</i>	0	62	62	0
Laois & Offaly ETB				
<i>Scaffolding</i>	0	45	45	0
Limerick & Clare ETB				
<i>Hairdressing</i>	0	54	54	0
Limerick Institute of Technology				
<i>Manufacturing Data Integration Engineering</i>	0	0	0	25
National College of Ireland				
<i>Recruitment Executive</i>	0	0	0	54
Restaurants Association of Ireland				
<i>Chef De Partie/Sous Chef</i>	0	15	15	0

SOLAS - Further Education & Training Authority

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

Retail Ireland Skillsnet Consortia				
Apprenticeship in Retail Supervision	809	0	809	865
University of Limerick				
Equipment Systems Engineer	0	48	48	24
Principal Engineer	0	49	49	0
Supply Chain Associate, Manager and Specialist	0	125	125	0
Lean Sigma Manager	0	40	40	0
Total	3,023	443	3,466	1,962

> 8 Property, Plant & Equipment

Note	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020
	Land & Buildings	Land & Buildings	Equipment & Furniture	Equipment & Furniture	Total	Total
Cost	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Opening Balance	599	599	3,733	3,665	4,332	4,264
Additions during the period	34	0	90	303	124	303
Disposals during the period	8(a) 0	0	(560)	(235)	(560)	(235)
Balance at the end of the period	633	599	3,263	3,733	3,896	4,332
Accumulated Depreciation						
Opening Balance	270	217	3,138	3,030	3,408	3,247
Depreciation on Disposals	8(b) 0	0	(560)	(235)	(560)	(235)
Charge for the period	57	53	344	343	401	396
Balance at the end of the period	327	270	2,922	3,138	3,249	3,408
Net Book Value at the end of the Year	306	329	341	595	647	924

8(a) The disposal of equipment and furniture in the period was €0.560m (2020: €0.235m) 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

	2021	2020
	As at 31 December 2021	As at 31 December 2020
	€'000	€'000
Trade and Other Receivables	47	129
General Prepayments	713	1,776
Total	760	1,905

> 10 Payables

	2021	2020
	As at 31 December 2021	As at 31 December 2020
	€'000	€'000
Trade Payables	663	871
Accruals	559	660
Holiday Pay Provision	134	206
Payroll Deductions	18	69
Income clearing/Deferred Income Account	161	0
Total	1,535	1,806

> 11 Remuneration

> 11(a) Aggregate Employee Benefits

	2021	2020
	€'000	€'000
Wages and Salaries	13,083	12,535
Employer PRSI Costs	1,081	1,055
Retirement benefit costs	6,690	9,650
Total	20,854	23,240

Employee benefits include salary and employer PRSI but exclude employer retirement benefit contributions. Total employer retirement benefit contributions for the organisation amounted to €102k in 2021 (2020: €116k).

A total of 213 staff (full time equivalents) were being paid by SOLAS at 31 December 2021 (2020: 211).

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; Executive Director (Grade 3) and above, subject to approval of the required business cases by the Department.

17 staff 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 (2020: 17 staff).

Standard employee pension contributions amounted to €733,317 in 2021 (2020: €739,313).

An amount of €442,884 was deducted from Wages and Salaries for the year 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021 in relation to Additional Superannuation Contributions (ASC) and paid to our parent department (2020: €451,605).

No severance/termination payments were made in 2021 or in 2020.

> 11(b) Table of Employee Benefits

Benefit Band €	Number of Employees in 2021	Number of Employees in 2020
20,001 - 60,000	134	143
60,001 - 70,000	40	35
70,001 - 80,000	21	27
80,001 - 90,000	14	13
90,001 - 100,000	6	3
100,001 - 110,000	2	5
110,001 - 120,000	3	0
120,001 - 130,000	0	0
130,001 - 140,000	0	1
140,001 - 150,000	0	0
150,001 - 160,000	0	2
160,001 - 170,000	2	0
170,001 - 180,000	0	0
180,001 - 190,000	0	1
190,001 - 200,000	1	0
Total	223	230

The above table reflects employees paid over €20k in the year, both full time and part time, employed by SOLAS in 2021 and 2020. 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

	2021	2020
	€'000	€'000
Basic Pay	12,850	12,241
Employer's PRSI	1,081	1,055
Untaken Annual Leave	134	206
Allowances	99	86
Overtime	0	2
Total	14,164	13,590

> 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 does 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:

	2021	2020
	€'000	€'000
Salaries	657,985	619,920
Allowances	0	23,224
Total	657,985	643,144

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:

	2021	2020
	€'000	€'000
CEO Salary	191,411	188,104
Total	191,411	188,104

The CEO is a member of SOLAS's pension scheme and his 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 was paid €1,675 for expenses in 2021 (2020: €3,404)

> **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 2020 are disclosed hereunder. There were no expenses paid in 2021.

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

	2021	2020
	€	€
	Expenses	Expenses
Seán Aylward (Chairperson)	0	0
Andrew Brownlee (Chief Executive Officer)	0	0
Seán Burke	0	0
Patricia Carey	0	8
Paul Cremmins	0	0
Patrick J. Dwyer	0	0
Yvonne McNulty	0	0
Niamh O'Reilly	0	0
Darragh J. Loftus	0	0
Sinead McCluskey	0	0
Cecilia Munro	0	0
Paul O'Sullivan	0	0
Catrina Sheridan	0	0
Orla Coughlan	0	2,435
Total	0	2,443

> 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 members' 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; and
- 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 hereunder:

	2021	2020
(i) Retirement Benefit Costs		
	€'000	€'000
Current Service Cost	3,880	3,980
Interest Expense	2,810	5,670
Contributions from Plan Members	733	739
Funding Recoverable in respect of current period Retirement Benefit Costs	7,423	10,389
Employee Retirement Benefit Contributions paid to the Department	(733)	(739)
Retirement Benefit Costs	6,690	9,650
(ii) Present Value of SOLAS Accrued Liability at beginning of year	701,859	707,609
Funding Recoverable in respect of current period Retirement Benefit Costs	7,423	10,389
Experience (Gain)/Loss on Retirement Benefit obligations	(2,316)	(13,728)
Changes in assumptions underlying the present value of Retirement Benefit Liabilities	10,574	28,431
Benefits Paid	(31,790)	(30,842)
Present Value of SOLAS Accrued Liability at end of year	685,750	701,859
(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	7,423	10,389
State Grant applied to pay Retirement Benefits	(31,790)	(30,842)
	(24,367)	(20,453)

SOLAS - Further Education & Training Authority

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

	2021	2020
(iv) Financial Assumptions		
The Financial Assumptions used for FRS102 purposes were:		
Discount Rate	1.00%	0.40%
Price Inflation	1.90%	1.20%
Salary Increases	2.40%	1.70%
State Pension Increases	1.90%	1.20%
Pension increases in payment*	2.40%	1.70%
Pension increases in deferment*	2.40%	1.70%
Ill-health retirement	5% loading	5% loading

*For members of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme, pension increases before and after retirement are in line with price inflation.

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)

	2021	2020
(iv) Financial Assumptions continued		
The average life expectancy, in years, of a pensioner retiring is as follows:		
	Retiring at 60	Retiring at 60
Males	26.7 years	26.6 years
Females	29.2 years	29.1 years
	Retiring at 65	Retiring at 65
Males	21.9 years	21.8 years
Females	24.3 years	24.2 years
	Retiring at 65 in 10 year's time	Retiring at 65 in 10 year's time
Males	23.1 years	23.0 years
Females	25.3 years	25.2 years
(v) Actuarial Gain/(Loss)		
	2021	2020
	€'000	€'000
Experience Gain/(Loss) on Retirement Benefit obligations	2,316	13,728
Changes in assumptions underlying the present value of Retirement Benefit Liabilities	(10,574)	(28,431)
Actuarial Gain/(Loss) Recognised in the SCI †	(8,258)	(14,703)
Cumulative Gains/(Losses) Recognised in the SCI	(52,312)	(44,054)

† Statement of Comprehensive Income

> 12(b) Retirement Benefit Liability

The retirement benefit liability of €685.750m includes an amount of €509.380m (74.3%) 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

SOLAS - Further Education & Training Authority

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

with current practice. The deferred funding asset for retirement benefits as at 31 December 2021 amounted to €685.750m (2020: €701.859m). The calculation of the deferred asset is solely for FRS102 reporting purposes.

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.

	2021	2020
	As at 31 December 2021	As at 31 December 2020
Operating Lease Commitments	€'000	€'000
Payable within one year	1,651	1,644
Payable within 2 to 5 years	2,476	4,127
Payable after 5 years	0	0
Total	4,127	5,771

The Operating Lease is in relation to Block 1, Castleforbes House. SOLAS has no other Operating Leases. The estimated lease commitment at 2021 year end was €4.127m. The lease commitment at 2020 year end was €5.771m. Operating lease payments recognised as an expense in 2021 were €1.7m (2020: €1.7m). The property was utilised in 2021. The Operating Lease is reviewed on an ongoing basis by SOLAS.

Finance Lease Commitments

There were no Finance Leases.

> 14 Funding

Most of SOLAS's income are grants from 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 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 2021, SOLAS had entered into total capital commitments amounting to €100k. Capital commitments at 31 December 2020 amounted to €45k.

> 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 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 €191,411 (2020: €190,547). 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.

There were no related party transactions for the year. SOLAS have two Board members that work for organisations that would be recipients of SOLAS funding. SOLAS have conflict of interest processes in place whereby members absent themselves from Board meetings when items relating to funding of their organisations are discussed. This is recorded in the Board minutes.

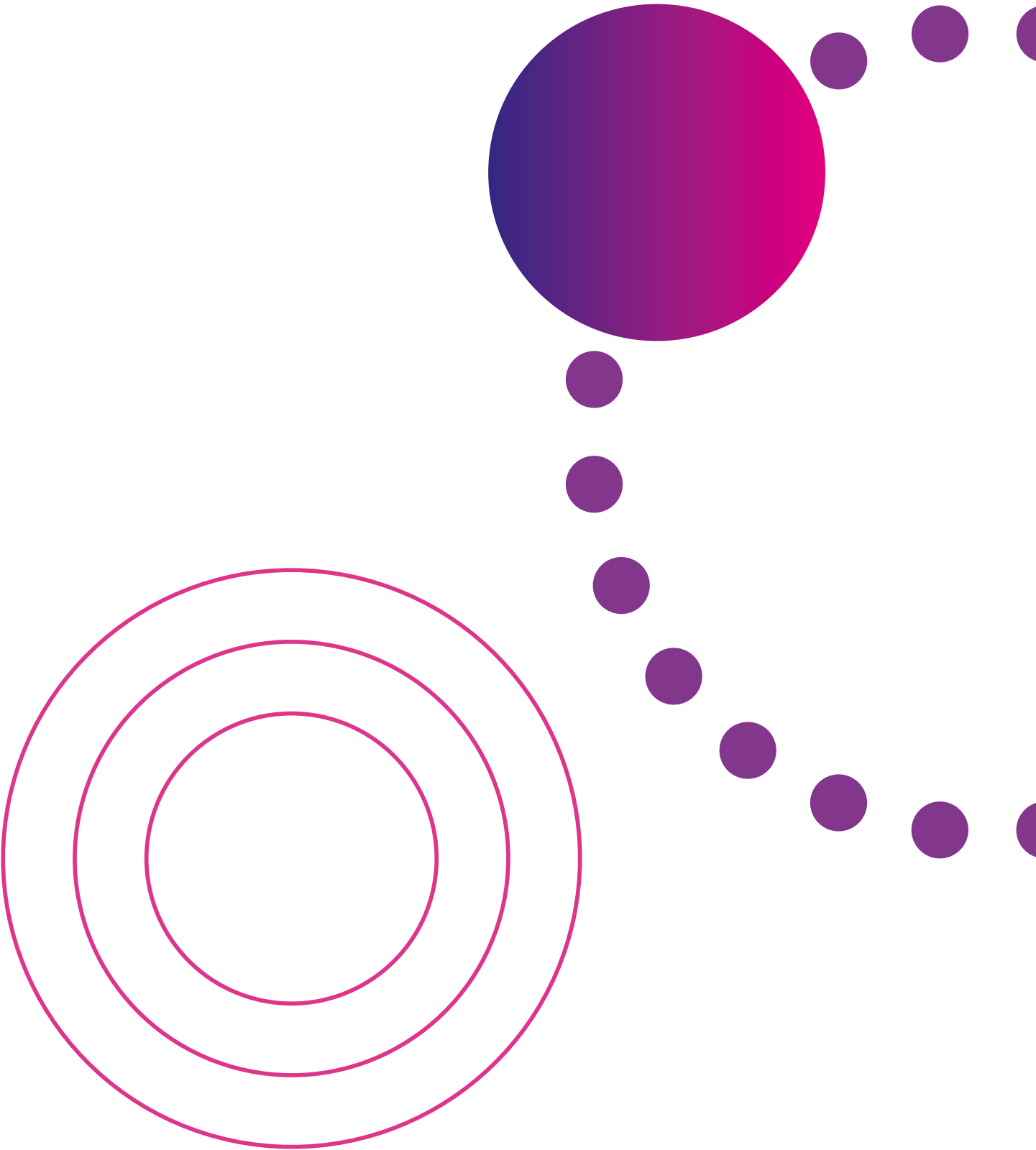
> 18 Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic

SOLAS has now been working remotely and successfully for nearly two years. A smooth transition to remote working was facilitated by the introduction of new ICT systems and equipment prior to the pandemic. The control measures introduced were enhanced during the year including the increase in MFA (Multi-Factor Authentication) digital sign-off and compulsory cyber security training for all staff. These, and other control measures mitigated the risk to the internal control environment.

The result of these measures introduced by SOLAS was that 98% of staff continued to work remotely and successfully. The other 2% of staff were deemed essential workers (IT & Digital, Construction and Facilities Management) and worked in the main on a rotational basis. There is no impact on the Financial Statements for 2021.

> 19 Board Approval

The Board approved the Financial Statements on 28th April, 2022.

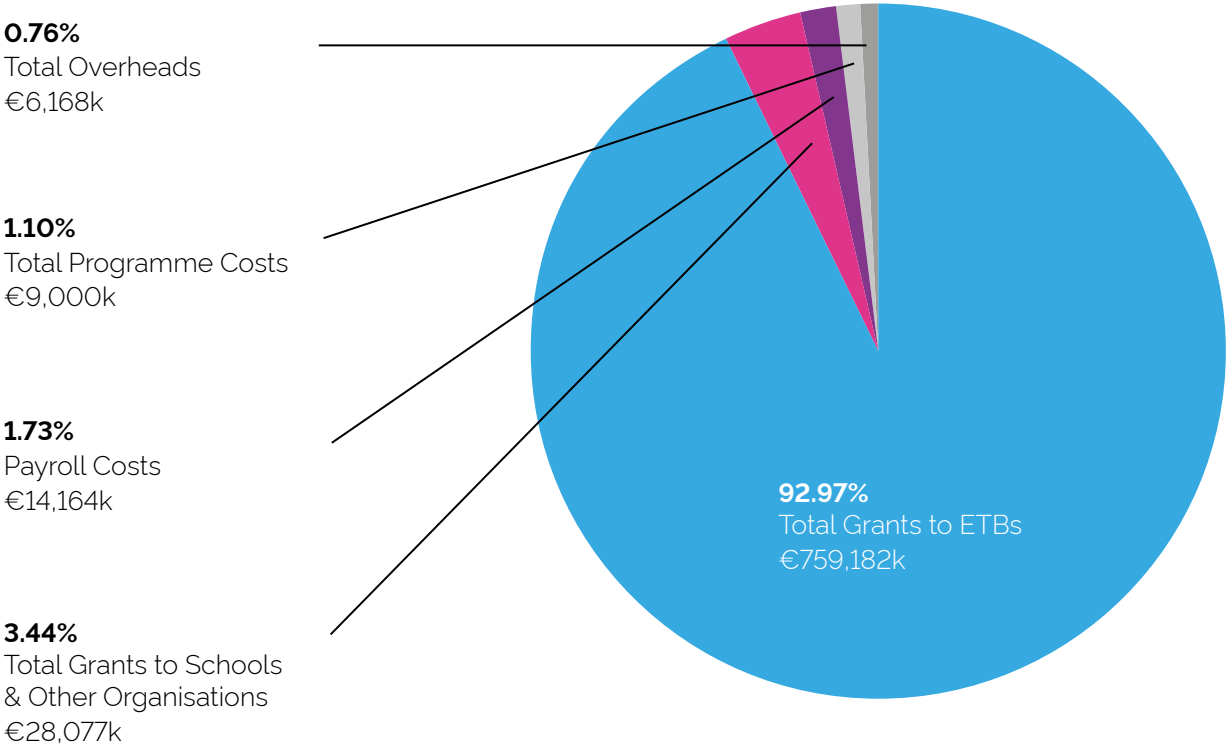




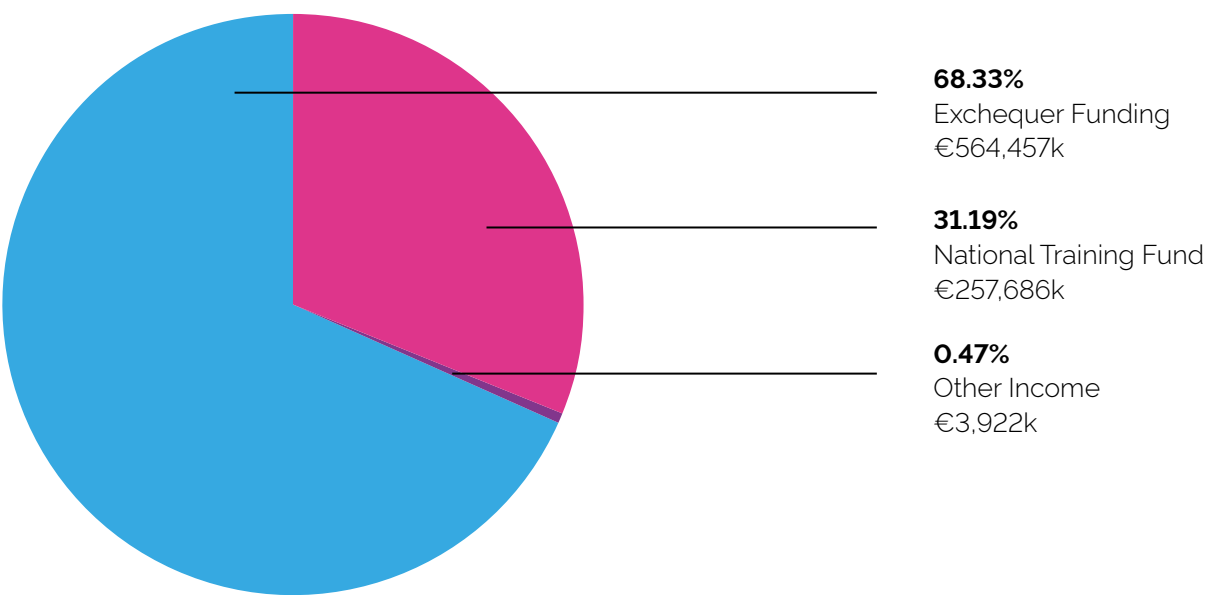
"Building skills,
fostering inclusion,
and facilitating
pathways."

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	314	539	415	280	786	431
Adult Literacy	996	4,922	2,312	784	2,072	2,745
Adult Refugee Programme	100	0	71	24	0	360
Advocacy	0	0	0	0	16	2
Back To Education Initiative	1,110	3,452	1,446	1,034	3,313	2,674
Blackspot Support	0	0	177	16	283	52
Breacadh	0	0	8	8	0	234
Community Education	483	3,103	1,206	202	1,544	331
Co-operation Hours	734	7,440	3,202	0	1,634	3,667
Core Skills	0	0	0	0	0	0
Delivering Equality of Opportunity	15	0	30	2	1	0
English for Speakers of Other Languages	224	697	211	164	(4)	0
Further Education Operational Costs	807	3,962	2,473	577	702	1,975
Innovation Projects	87	1,123	(169)	15	16	347
Intensive Tuition Adult Basic Education	26	441	153	(5)	214	78
MAEDF *	638	1,207	501	289	224	317
Funds for Students with Disabilities	62	1,062	782	5	429	105
FE Pathways from School	23	0	50	0	25	0
Post Leaving Certificate	8,139	32,999	23,148	754	13,406	6,743
Technology Enhanced Learning FE	(17)	0	0	0	0	(70)
Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme	510	7,776	2,791	1,698	3,776	4,299
Workplace Education Fund	159	92	108	101	357	(29)
Youthreach	3,336	9,250	6,834	3,124	7,169	4,844
Sub-Total	17,745	78,065	45,749	9,072	35,964	29,105
Capital Building (Further Ed.)	0	0	152	0	0	0
Capital Equipment (Further Ed.)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sub-Total	0	0	152	0	0	0
Total Further Education Grants	17,745	78,065	45,901	9,072	35,964	29,105

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
117	368	569	764	685	390	283	395	218	384	6,939
456	1,358	706	780	(96)	894	1,003	1,722	1,044	2,297	23,995
0	122	263	98	371	(2)	94	134	148	367	2,150
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18
643	982	885	1,653	746	829	1,212	2,102	1,064	1,308	24,454
0	0	23	0	357	0	157	(50)	(30)	477	1,463
0	0	0	0	0	0	4	8	0	0	261
148	473	326	213	1,020	326	451	496	498	593	11,413
73	1,041	282	4,031	1,660	256	595	107	(162)	46	24,605
0	0	0	0	3,169	0	0	0	0	0	3,169
(2)	0	56	(2)	0	28	25	4	0	0	157
71	183	0	94	460	261	248	197	168	781	3,755
2,325	571	1,490	2,161	2,530	164	373	639	979	1,629	23,357
315	330	1	146	150	0	2,814	(34)	0	(268)	4,873
10	84	78	29	0	100	25	17	28	0	1,278
42	159	219	226	415	199	636	428	90	564	6,154
113	70	(11)	0	63	14	785	65	61	40	3,646
0	0	0	0	197	0	0	0	0	95	390
209	5,130	5,451	1,984	6,468	952	13,298	5,757	2,749	6,100	133,288
0	25	0	(5)	0	4	20	1,128	0	507	1,592
1,866	6,294	2,306	2,712	5,923	839	1,595	3,309	2,130	5,510	53,335
1	97	(9)	(93)	1,447	75	(15)	163	27	37	2,517
1,938	4,336	1,131	2,189	5,892	1,947	4,823	3,554	1,638	5,414	67,422
8,327	21,624	13,769	16,979	31,456	7,275	28,427	20,141	10,650	25,885	400,233
445	0	0	0	391	0	0	0	0	0	988
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
445	0	0	0	391	0	0	0	0	0	988
8,772	21,624	13,769	16,979	31,847	7,275	28,427	20,141	10,650	25,885	401,221

➤ **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	882	7,471	8,537	2,881	4,663	3,726
Apprenticeship 2016+	485	1,971	913	(171)	593	458
Bridging Foundation	0	75	0	0	(14)	0
Community Training Centres	0	8,657	2,671	0	2,162	735
Employment Contracted	0	0	0	0	(100)	0
Employment Direct	0	0	0	0	0	0
Evening Courses	68	(252)	236	137	(26)	116
Justice Workshops	0	187	0	0	235	159
Libraries	0	0	0	0	(25)	0
Local Training Initiatives	655	914	1,552	0	1,063	1,090
On-Line Blended Learning	464	0	549	0	944	253
Progression Contracted	0	0	0	0	0	0
Progression Direct	0	0	0	0	0	0
Recognition of Prior Learning	(10)	0	0	(5)	(20)	0
Skills Training	594	348	1,288	2,600	(133)	2,375
Skills to Advance	138	287	134	804	1,829	483
Specialist Training Providers	584	6,992	3,572	894	3,071	1,770
Technology Enhanced Learning TR	(13)	22	1,086	48	10	558
Traineeship	409	2,062	341	2,112	808	1,659
Training Operational Costs	2,739	7,594	6,664	3,293	10,377	4,548
Sub-Total	6,993	36,328	27,544	12,594	25,436	17,931
Capital Building	39	15	431	172	235	5,323
Capital Equipment	83	383	26	122	20	22
Sub-Total	122	398	456	295	255	5,345
Total Training Grants	7,115	36,726	28,001	12,889	25,691	23,277

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
3,606	166	1,557	2,161	9,198	3,830	3,931	4,091	3,702	11,972	72,372
91	362	(102)	97	1,223	100	(259)	918	0	191	6,869
(1)	(52)	57	0	0	(28)	46	0	0	1	85
889	956	2,785	1,547	3,039	1,946	831	1,767	2,881	2,172	33,037
4,123	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,023
5,999	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,999
137	2	0	0	665	14	14	173	139	16	1,439
0	0	0	0	166	80	0	0	0	0	827
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(25)
0	(50)	687	273	500	588	1,869	1,544	1,325	1,830	13,843
0	(32)	0	0	0	100	(18)	0	0	175	2,436
190	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	190
3,486	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,486
0	(3)	(12)	0	52	0	0	0	0	0	2
136	449	70	1,027	3,613	1,185	2,130	(518)	2,088	998	18,251
(113)	572	387	1,116	1,403	299	(336)	243	353	1,573	9,170
1,886	2,473	446	2,445	3,044	3,483	2,820	3,282	821	2,023	39,608
0	15	299	(5)	303	(10)	20	(82)	(68)	10	2,191
73	2,616	(367)	2,307	4,118	265	(1,093)	1,710	839	3,235	21,094
3,151	1,258	1,092	3,179	7,764	4,336	5,445	3,584	1,844	5,853	72,723
23,653	8,732	6,899	14,148	35,089	16,189	15,402	16,712	13,924	30,048	307,622
432	0	0	135	500	118	1,799	32	0	312	9,542
0	0	0	75	0	0	948	374	0	183	2,237
432	0	0	210	500	118	2,747	406	0	495	11,779
24,085	8,732	6,899	14,358	35,589	16,307	18,148	17,118	13,924	30,544	319,401

> **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	89	55	477	197	53	325
Curriculum Development	32	0	(41)	46	(27)	34
External Psychological Support	(73)	0	(25)	10	0	60
Learner Information Grant	86	0	50	0	(10)	93
Learner Support Grants	132	606	68	106	(14)	(130)
Promotion/Advertising FET	(18)	100	158	102	45	0
Technology Enhanced Learning FT	83	195	126	61	(2)	243
Operational Costs	924	1,793	1,242	1,354	884	(565)
Sub-Total	1,254	2,749	2,055	1,876	928	60
Devolved Capital	429	952	623	355	219	770
Total Training Grants	1,684	3,701	2,677	2,232	1,147	830

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
637	88	176	63	456	159	165	165	105	553	3,763
63	0	0	0	133	(30)	56	0	(28)	33	271
0	(52)	0	0	0	0	29	0	0	23	(29)
0	0	0	0	0	0	112	84	0	186	600
150	71	0	0	396	(500)	134	(33)	(30)	94	1,050
169	25	0	96	0	100	(12)	(50)	0	23	737
43	28	(50)	0	127	59	27	172	67	102	1,280
4,229	707	951	2,231	1,443	807	2,315	796	766	3,156	23,033
5,292	868	1,077	2,390	2,554	596	2,825	1,133	880	4,170	30,705
547	51	203	435	692	414	507	702	332	624	7,855
5,838	919	1,280	2,825	3,246	1,009	3,333	1,835	1,212	4,793	38,560

> Five Year Summary - Operating Grants to ETBs

Education & Training Board	Operating Grant 2017	Operating Grant 2018	Operating Grant 2019	Operating Grant 2020	Operating Grant 2021
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Cavan & Monaghan	16,515	16,111	17,239	27,667	25,993
City of Dublin	76,580	78,424	77,666	114,897	117,142
Cork	48,665	48,616	53,606	76,781	75,348
Donegal	19,444	21,265	21,830	23,823	23,542
Dublin & Dun Laoghaire	63,471	58,776	60,215	73,379	62,328
Galway & Roscommon	33,616	34,804	37,121	49,356	47,096
Kerry	25,071	27,442	29,581	33,229	37,272
Kildare & Wicklow	29,259	29,077	31,263	33,783	31,224
Kilkenny & Carlow	16,686	18,446	19,073	23,875	21,744
Laois & Offaly	16,882	19,056	20,705	29,258	33,516
Limerick & Clare	51,948	52,687	57,147	67,103	69,099
Longford & Westmeath	22,411	24,275	24,769	25,865	24,059
Louth & Meath	28,286	29,227	29,741	46,364	46,654
Mayo, Sligo & Leitrim	31,728	31,709	33,276	42,451	37,986
Tipperary	16,599	22,181	22,287	28,402	25,454
Waterford & Wexford	48,567	51,098	58,034	61,866	60,103
Total	545,728	563,194	593,553	758,100	738,560

> Five Year Summary - Capital Grants to ETBs

Education & Training Board	Capital Grant 2017	Capital Grant 2018	Capital Grant 2019	Capital Grant 2020	Capital Grant 2021
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Cavan & Monaghan	41	69	1,395	859	551
City of Dublin	79	530	868	1,312	1,350
Cork	891	931	1,098	870	1,231
Donegal	265	293	588	591	650
Dublin & Dun Laoghaire	106	561	634	1,160	474
Galway & Roscommon	251	506	717	1,476	6,115
Kerry	263	305	746	527	1,424
Kildare & Wicklow	28	85	507	615	51
Kilkenny & Carlow	0	108	264	266	203
Laois & Offaly	(5)	50	1,000	719	645
Limerick & Clare	402	424	760	1,306	1,583
Longford & Westmeath	112	223	787	1,301	532
Louth & Meath	(25)	350	1,038	2,018	3,254
Mayo, Sligo & Leitrim	269	434	792	1,007	1,108
Tipperary	0	184	453	1,066	332
Waterford & Wexford	208	471	853	1,682	1,119
Total	2,885	5,524	12,500	16,775	20,622

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

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Statement of Income and Expenditure					
Total Income	603,131	620,700	661,311	837,284	833,698
Expenditure					
Payroll Costs SOLAS	11,397	12,596	13,424	13,590	14,164
Overheads SOLAS	7,304	6,822	7,309	6,824	6,168
SOLAS Operational Cost	18,701	19,418	20,733	20,414	20,332
Retirement Benefit Costs	15,210	14,320	13,930	9,650	6,690
Programme Costs	7,936	5,697	7,160	8,240	9,000
Grants to Education and Training Boards	548,613	568,718	606,053	774,875	759,182
Grants to VSCCS *	725	661	598	1,471	3,966
Grants to Organisations in the FET sector	6,731	6,364	7,543	8,489	10,256
Apprenticeship Incentivisation Grants				2,090	10,389
Grants to Consortia & Coordinating Bodies	275	2,378	1,773	1,962	3,466
Total Expenditure	598,191	617,556	657,790	827,191	823,281
Surplus	4,940	3,144	3,521	10,093	10,417
Statement of Financial Position					
Fixed Assets	739	911	1,017	924	647
Net Current Assets	5,156	3,396	3,768	10,226	10,857
	5,895	4,307	4,785	11,150	11,504
Financed by:					
Capital Account	194	230	225	111	418
Capital Reserves	739	911	1,017	924	647
Revenue Reserve	4,962	3,166	3,543	10,115	10,439
Total	5,895	4,307	4,785	11,150	11,504

*Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools



"FET is for everyone.
It offers the opportunity
to engage in learning
in virtually every
community in Ireland"

Appendices

> Appendix 1

SOLAS Board Committees 2021

Audit and Risk Committee	(4 meetings in 2021)
Cecilia Munro	Chairperson and SOLAS Board Member
P.J. Dwyer	Board Member
Darragh J. Loftus	Board Member (to 26/10/21)
Yvonne McNulty	Board Member (to 31/05/21)
Peter Buckley	External Appointee (from 24/11/20)

Changes in 2021

Ms. Y. McNulty resigned on 31st May 2021, following a change in work circumstances and to avoid a conflict of interest as an ARC Committee member. However, Ms. McNulty remained as a member of the Board of SOLAS.

Mr. D. J. Loftus departed the Committee on 26th October 2021 following the conclusion of his term of office (second term) as a SOLAS Board member.

Strategic Planning Committee	6 meetings in 2021 (5 ordinary and 1 extraordinary)
Niamh O'Reilly	Chairperson and SOLAS Board Member
Seán Burke	SOLAS Board Member
Paul Cremmins	SOLAS Board Member
Patricia Carey	SOLAS Board Member (from 15th April 2021)

Note: 1 extraordinary meeting held on 29th June 2021 to discuss the Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) Strategy.

Strategic Planning Committee	6 meetings in 2021 (5 ordinary and 1 extraordinary)
Niamh O'Reilly	Chairperson and SOLAS Board Member
Seán Burke	SOLAS Board Member
Paul Cremmins	SOLAS Board Member
Patricia Carey	SOLAS Board Member (from 15th April 2021)

Note: 1 extraordinary meeting held on 29th June 2021 to discuss the Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) Strategy.

Workforce and Organisational Development Committee	3 meetings in 2021
Orla Coughlan	SOLAS Board member and Chairperson
Catrina Sheridan	SOLAS Board member

Changes in 2021

There were no changes to the Committee in 2021.

Membership of Advisory Committees	4 meetings in 2021
Paul Cremmins	Chairperson of NAAC & SOLAS Board member
Sean Burke	SOLAS Board member
Alan McGrath	SOLAS Executive
Phil O'Flaherty - (to 8/6/21)	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
Sarah Miley - (from 8/9/21)	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research Innovation and Science (D/FHERIS)
Cathy Holohan - (to 3/9/21)	Enterprise Ireland
Eamon Devoy	Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU)
Brian Nolan	Connect Trade Union (CTU)
Dermot Carey	Construction Industry Federation (CIF)
John Kearney	Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI)
Michael Hannon	Institutes of Technology Apprenticeship Committee (ITAC)
Margaret O'Shea	Society of the Irish Motor Industry (SIMI)
Ruaidhri Neavyn	Higher Education Authority (HEA)
Colin Tyrrell - (to 20th April 2021)	Learner Representative

Membership Changes

- Mr. P. O'Flaherty DFHERIS departed on the 8th June 2021
- Ms. S. Miley succeeded Mr. P. O'Flaherty as the Department representative on the 8th September 2021.
- Ms. C. Holahan, Enterprise Ireland resigned on the 3rd September 2021 due to a change of work circumstances. A replacement EI nominee is awaited.
- Mr. C. Tyrrell Learner Representative resigned on the 20th April 2021. A replacement Learner Representative nominee is awaited.

National Apprenticeship Appeals and Recognition of Prior Learning Committee Membership (5 meetings in 2021)	
Patricia Cassells	Chairperson
Paddy Kavanagh	Technical Engineering & Electrical Trade Union (TEEU)
David Nicholson	Dun Laoghaire Further Education Institute
Tommy Flaherty	BAM Group
Trevor Sinnott	Waterford-Wexford Education and Training Board (W/WETB)
Bryan Redmond	Independent Representative (formerly SOLAS – Retired)
Owen O'Donnell	Kerry Education and Training Board (KETB)
Joe Roe - (to 31/12/21)	SOLAS
Julia Mannion - (to 2/4/21)	SOLAS
Joanne Morrissey	SOLAS (from March 2019)
Kim Mulcahy	SOLAS Secretariat (from 3rd November 2021)

Changes in 2021

- Ms. J. Mannion retired from SOLAS on 2nd April 2021
- Mr. J. Roe retired from SOLAS on 31st December 2021
- Ms. K. Mulcahy from 3rd November 2021.

> Appendix 2

Table 1

Apprenticeships available in Ireland at end 2021	
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	Scaffolding
11	Stonecutting and Stonemasonry
12	Wood Manufacturing and Finishing
Electrical	
13	Aircraft Mechanics
14	Electrical
15	Electrical Instrumentation
16	Electronic Security Systems
17	Industrial Electrical Engineer
18	Instrumentation
19	Refrigeration and Air Conditioning
Engineering	
20	Engineering Services Management
21	Equipment Systems Engineer
22	Farriery
23	Industrial Insulation
24	Manufacturing Engineering
25	Manufacturing Technology
26	Mechanical Automation and Maintenance Fitting

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

Motor	
54	Agricultural Mechanics
55	Construction Plant Fitting
56	Heavy Vehicle Mechanics
57	Motor Mechanics
58	Vehicle Body Repairs

Table 2

Apprentice Registrations 2021 Pre-2016 Apprenticeships	
	Dec-21
Trades	YTD
Construction	
Brick and Stonelaying	148
Carpentry and Joinery	847
Floor and Wall Tiling	0
Painting and Decorating	43
Plastering	38
Plumbing	875
Stonecutting and Stonemasonry	9
Wood Manufacturing and Finishing	155
Total	2,115
Electrical	
Aircraft Mechanics	55
Electrical	2,748
Electrical Instrumentation	103
Electronic Security Systems	61
Instrumentation	12
Refrigeration and Air Conditioning	142
Total	3,121
Engineering	
M.A.M.F.	221
Farriery	6
Industrial Insulation	22
Metal Fabrication	340
Pipefitting	98
Sheet Metalworking	63
Toolmaking	52
Total	802

Motor	
Agricultural Mechanics	90
Construction Plant Fitting	81
Heavy Vehicle Mechanics	194
Motor Mechanics	502
Vehicle Body Repairs	50
Total	917

Printing	
Print Media	0
Total	-
Grand Total	6,955

Table 3

Apprentice Registrations 2021 2016+ Apprenticeships	
Apprenticeships	Dec-21
Arboriculture	
Arboriculture	31
Total	31
Property Services	
Auctioneering and Property Services	138
Total	138
Biopharma	
Laboratory Analyst	18
Laboratory Technician	10
Total	28
Construction	
Geo Driller	7
Scaffolding	37
Total	44
Electrical	
Industrial Electrical Engineer	20
Total	20
Engineering	
Engineering Services Management	34
Equipment Systems Engineer	6
Manufacturing Engineer (Level 7)	53
Manufacturing Technology (Level 6)	42
Polymer Processing Technology	14
Principal Engineer	8
Total	157

Equipment Manufacturing	
OEM Engineer	14
Total	14

Finance	
Accounting Technician	163
Insurance Practitioner	75
International Financial Services Associate	16
International Financial Services Specialist	23
Total	277

Hair	
Hairdressing	182
Total	182

Healthcare	
Advanced Healthcare Assistant Practitioner	68
Total	68

Hospitality & Food	
Butcher	51
Chef De Partie	35
Commis Chef	75
Sous Chef	11
Total	172

ICT	
CGI Technical Artist	0
Cybersecurity	6
Network Engineer Associate	11
Software Developer Associate	53
Telecommunications and Data Network Engineering Technician	37
Total	107

Logistics	
Lean Sigma Manager	52
Logistics Associate	74
Supply Chain Associate	13
Supply Chain Manager	36
Supply Chain Specialist	22
Total	197

Recruitment	
Recruitment Executive	24
Total	24

Sales	
Retail Supervision	142
Sales	51
Total	193
Grand Total	1,652

Table 4
**Apprentice Registrations
Pre-2016 Apprenticeships 2012 – 2021**

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Construction										
Brick and Stonelaying	6	3	20	26	52	60	81	80	56	148
Cabinetmaking	1	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0
Carpentry and Joinery	91	99	185	291	399	443	591	597	563	847
Floor and Wall Tiling	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Painting and Decorating	11	8	11	19	27	44	30	31	24	43
Plastering	4	8	9	7	18	34	29	36	20	38
Plumbing	97	241	318	289	345	532	653	628	560	875
Stonecutting and Stonemasonry			16	13	2	8	7	3	3	9
Wood Manufacturing and Finishing	11	21	23	48	71	59	95	102	75	155
Total	222	380	582	693	914	1,180	1,486	1,477	1,301	2,155
Electrical										
Aircraft Mechanics	36	40	33	34	39	53	74	72	50	55
Electrical	397	522	845	956	1,343	1,705	1,841	1,949	1,740	2,748
Electrical Instrumentation	24	46	85	83	106	120	108	125	62	103
Electronic Security Systems	7	12	16	28	28	72	65	76	45	61
Instrumentation	8	6	10	8	10	20	17	16	11	12
Refrigeration and Air Conditioning	34	49	62	75	79	106	119	122	73	142
Total	506	675	1,051	1,184	1,605	2,076	2,224	2,360	1,981	3,121

Engineering										
M.A.M.F.	110	127	174	153	163	183	180	199	142	221
Farriery	5	5	4	7	5	6	9	5	0	6
Industrial Insulation	1	5	10	13	10	21	19	20	23	22
Metal Fabrication	103	145	176	198	186	224	234	266	198	340
Pipefitting				37	33	25	49	76	52	98
Sheet Metalworking	11	18	23	38	40	53	70	57	41	63
Toolmaking	57	81	66	62	66	65	79	61	48	52
Total	287	381	453	508	503	577	640	684	504	802

Motor										
Agricultural Mechanics	19	36	38	59	43	45	41	44	52	90
Construction Plant Fitting	45	54	56	77	59	86	71	73	63	81
Heavy Vehicle Mechanics	74	101	145	154	136	143	176	174	135	194
Motor Mechanics	253	267	325	423	420	353	380	408	310	502
Vehicle Body Repairs	23	27	40	47	58	46	40	51	31	50
Total	414	485	604	760	716	673	708	750	591	917

Printing										
Print Media	5	8	8	8	4	2	0	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	6,995

Table 5

Apprentice Registrations 2016+ Apprenticeships 2016 – 2021						
Apprenticeships	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Arboriculture						
Arboriculture					3	31
Total	-	-	-	-	3	31
Property Services						
Auctioneering and Property Services			53	92	75	138
Total	-	-	53	92	75	138
Biopharma						
Laboratory Analyst			2	21	18	18
Laboratory Technician			14	10	12	10
Total	-	-	16	31	30	28
Construction						
Geo Driller				2	18	7
Scaffolding						37
Total	-	-	-	2	18	44
Electrical						
Industrial Electrical Engineer	12	19	25	28	30	20
Total	12	19	25	28	30	20
Engineering						
Engineering Services Management				10	17	34
Equipment Systems Engineer						6
Manufacturing Engineer (Level 7)		36	20	27	20	53
Manufacturing Technology (Level 6)		40	34	29	30	42
Polymer Processing Technology		25	15	13	11	14
Principal Engineer				0	55	8
Total	-	101	69	79	83	157

Equipment Manufacturing						
OEM Engineer				11	16	14
Total	-	-	-	11	16	14

Finance						
Accounting Technician		71	88	124	96	163
Insurance Practitioner	67	86	80	70	49	75
International Financial Services Associate		15	11	9	17	16
International Financial Services Specialist		18	10	12	18	23
Total	67	190	189	215	180	277

Hair						
Hairdressing				14	84	182
Total	-	-	-	14	84	182

Healthcare						
Advance Healthcare Assistant Practitioner						68
Total	-	-	-	-	-	68

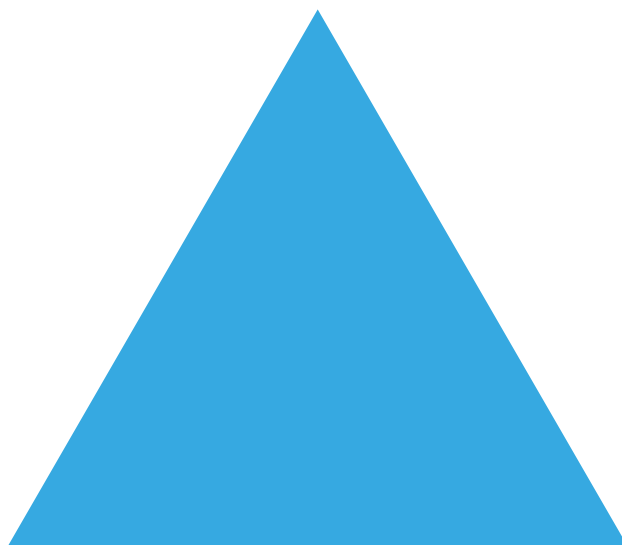
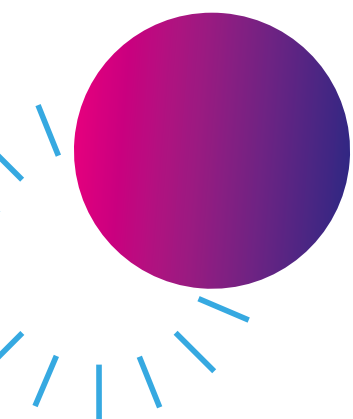
Hospitality & Food						
Butcher			7	37	10	51
Chef De Partie			31	40	5	35
Commis Chef		25	112	62	16	74
Sous Chef				5	3	11
Total	-	25	150	144	34	172

ICT						
CGI Technical Artist				7	0	0
Cybersecurity				13	30	6
Network Engineer Associate			22	44	22	11
Software Developer Associate			39	66	42	53
Telecommunications and Data Network Engineering Technician				50	31	37
Total	-	-	61	180	125	107

Logistics						
Logistics Associate			27	34	53	74
Lean Sigma Manager				0	39	52
Supply Chain Associate						13
Supply Chain Manager					11	36
Supply Chain Specialist					10	22
Total	-	-	27	34	113	197

Recruitment						
Recruitment Executive					27	24
Total	-	-	-	-	27	24

Sales						
Retail Supervision				76	101	142
Sales					30	51
Total	-	-	-	76	131	193
Grand Total	79	335	590	906	949	1,652



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