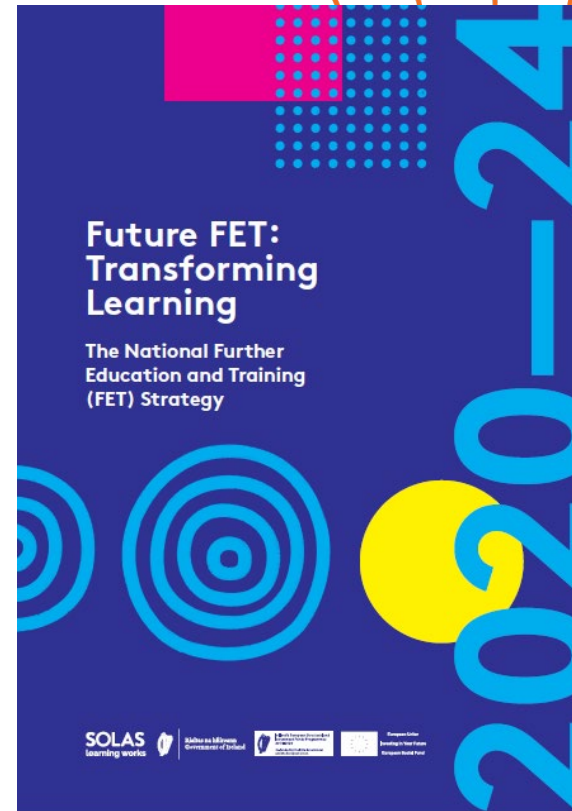


National perspective of Education and Training provision in Ireland

*Presentation to PRALINE Final
Conference – Rotterdam, Netherlands
30th Nov 2023*

*Roisin Doherty,
Director – Learner Support
SOLAS*

SOLAS
learning works



SOLAS

Who we are:

SOLAS is the State agency that oversees the building of a world class **Further Education & Training (FET)** sector in Ireland, developing skills to fuel Ireland's future.

SOLAS is charged with overseeing the planning, funding and co-ordination of publicly funded FET.

FET Strategy 2020-2024

Future FET:
Transforming
Learning
The National Further
Education and Training
(FET) Strategy

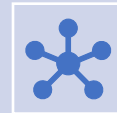
Based around three
strategic pillars:



Building skills



Inclusion



Facilitating pathways

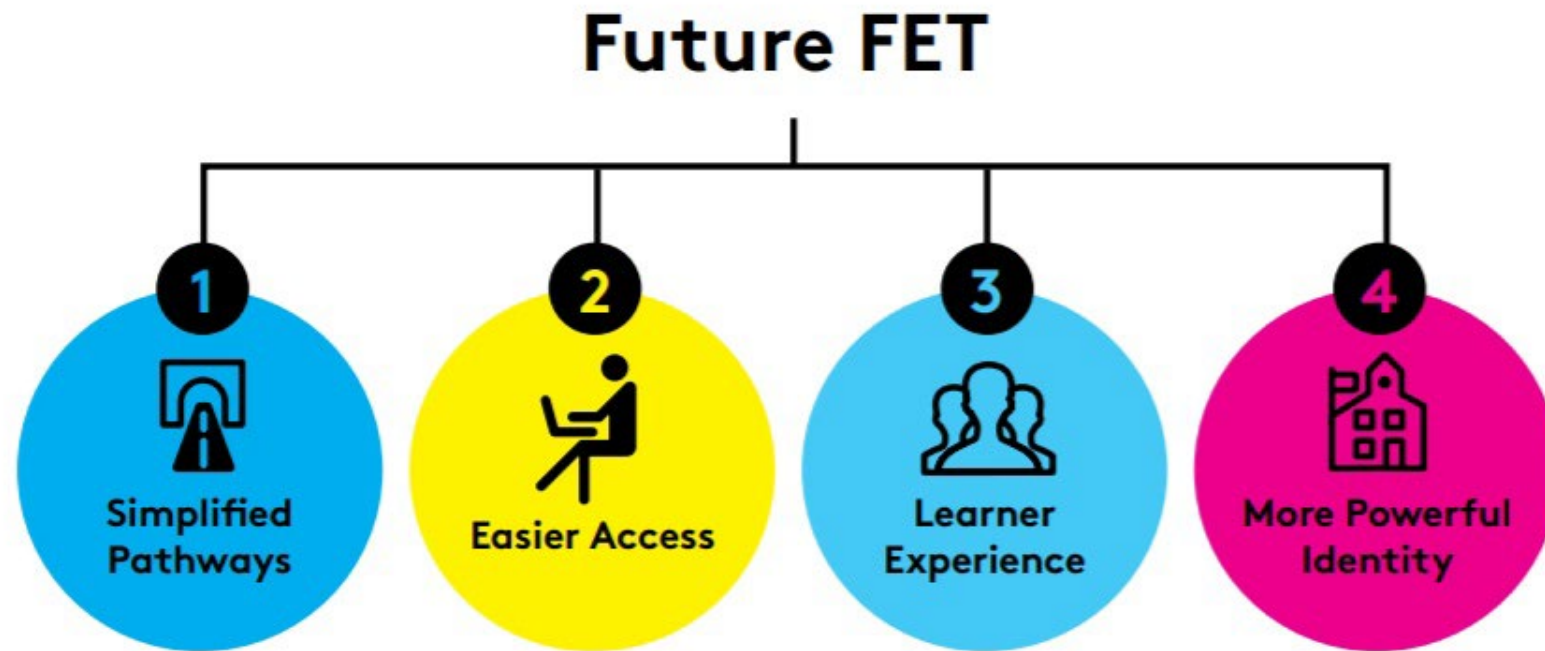


Vision for Future FET

FET is unique. FET is for **everyone**. It is available in every community in Ireland, and offers every individual, regardless of any previous level of education, a **pathway** to take them as far as they want to go. It can offer personal development and fulfilment, a link to **community** and social networks, and a range of supports that reflect the diverse base of its learners. It also offers great opportunities to move into exciting and interesting vocations and **careers**, or a platform to develop the **skills** that will allow someone to **flourish** if they go on to further study in higher education.



The FET Strategy Implementation Structures are outcomes focused, with outcomes aligned to Future FET ...





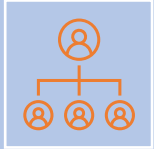
FET Outcomes 2020-2024

The ambition set out in the Strategy, what could we achieve by 2024?

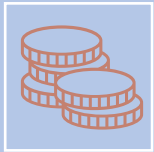
- FET is available in every community in Ireland, and offers a clear pathway to learners that can take them as far as they want to go (*Simplified pathways*)
- FET is transformed in its delivery and expands the portfolio of opportunities for learners at any level to further their education (*Easier access*)
- FET is for everyone and inspires people to believe in themselves to reach their potential (*Learner experience*)
- There is a greater awareness of FET, and it is valued by learners, employers, Government and communities (*Powerful identity*)
- The economic and social impact of further education and training is strongly evidenced by producing a stream of graduates with the necessary skills required for the labour market (*Skills for local needs*)



Responsibility for Adult Learning and Education in Ireland



Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science - DFHERIS



SOLAS - The statutory authority for Further Education and Training in Ireland (FET)



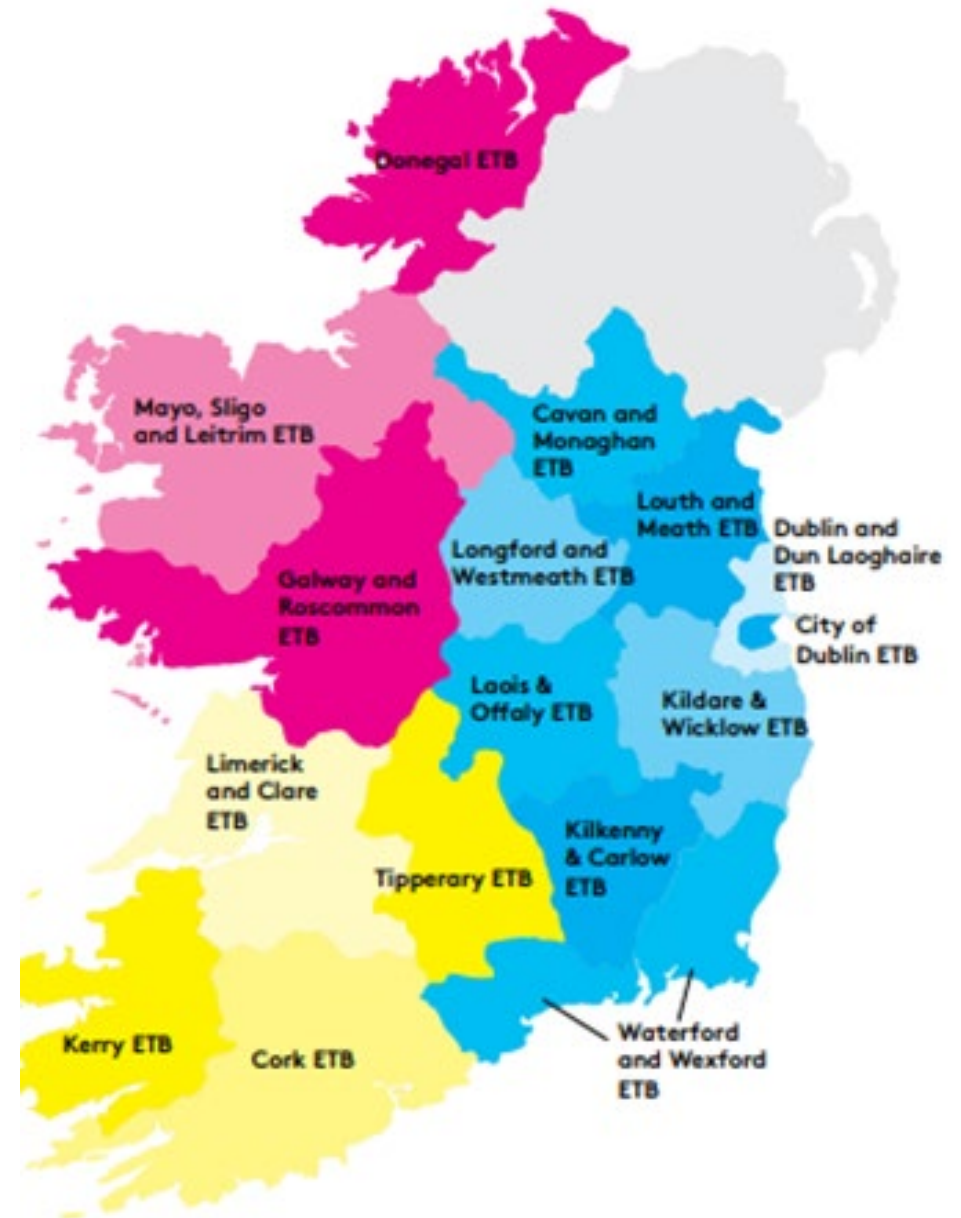
Education and Training Boards (ETBs) & Voluntary Sector

Education and Training Boards

Education and Training Boards (ETBs) are statutory education authorities with responsibility for education and training, youth work and a range of other statutory functions.

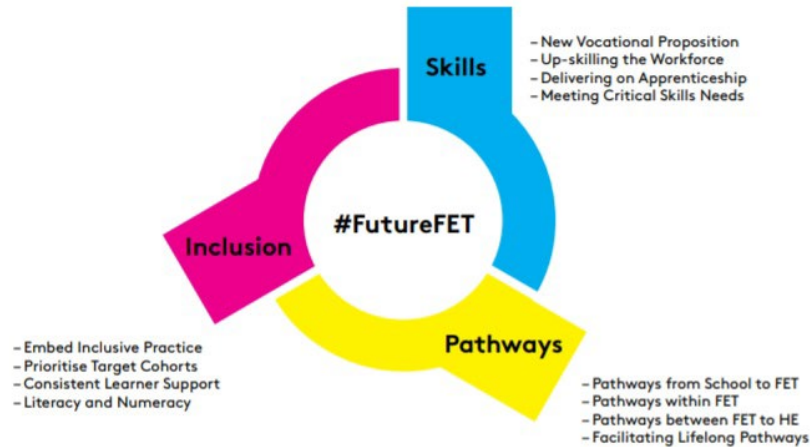
ETBs manage and operate Community National Schools, Post-Primary Schools, Further Education (FE) colleges, and a range of adult and further education centres delivering education and training programmes.

ETBs are funded by SOLAS and the Dept of Education & DFHERIS.



Priorities & Enabling Themes

Strategic Priorities



Enabling Themes

Staffing, Capabilities and Structures

- Future Staffing Framework
- Quality Cross-FET Provision
- Cross-FET Funding/Guidelines
- Professional Development

Learner and Performance Centred

- Performance Framework
- Distance Travelled
- Learner Engagement

Digital Transformation

- Learner Access and Delivery
- Data Driven
- Management Systems

Capital Infrastructure

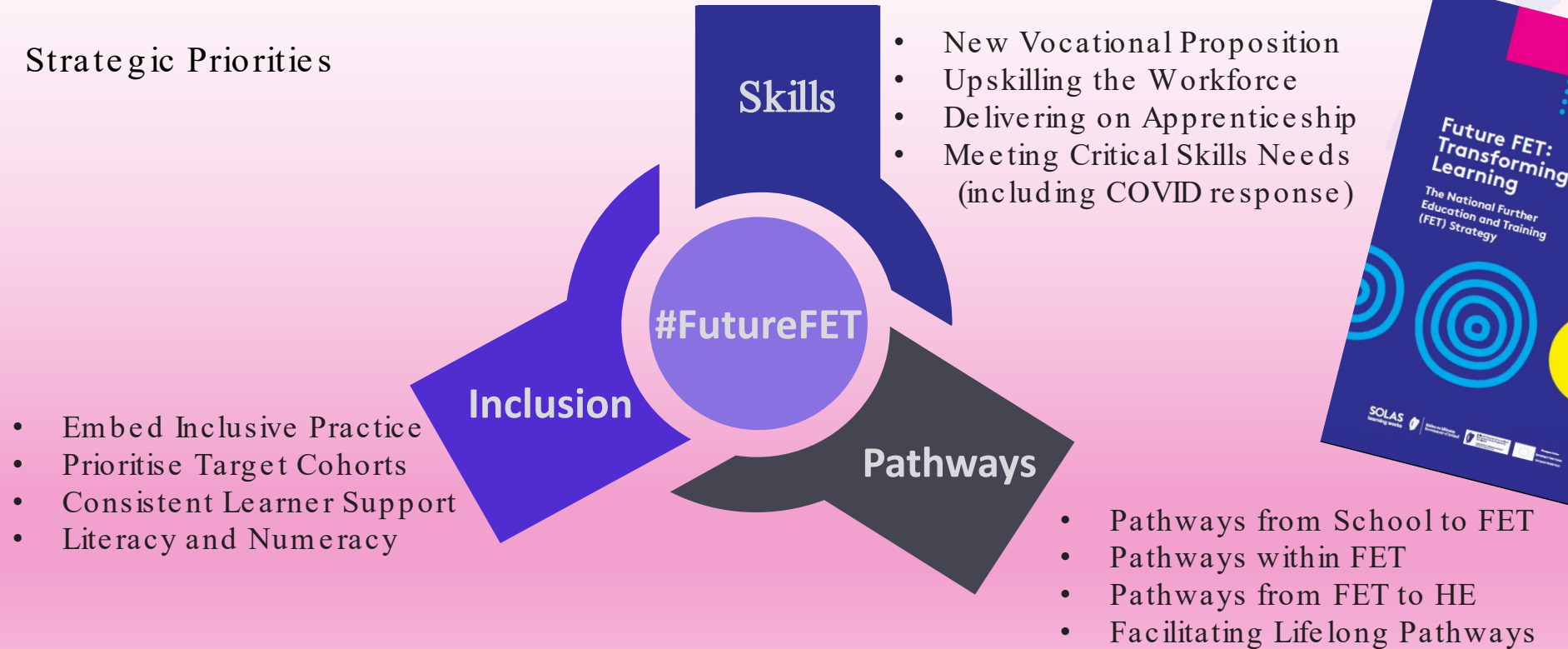
- Address Deficits
- Consolidate Provision
- Flagship Developments

- ✓ Skills
- ✓ Inclusion
- ✓ Pathways
- ✓ Staffing, Capabilities and Structures
- ✓ Learner and Performance Centred
- ✓ Digital Transformation
- ✓ Capital Infrastructure

Action
Plan Areas

FET Strategy 2020-2024

Strategic Priorities



Enabling Themes

Staffing & Structures

- Future Staffing Framework
- Quality Cross-FET Provision
- Cross-FET Funding/ Guidelines

Learner/ Performance Centred

- Performance Framework
- Distance Travelled
- Learner Engagement

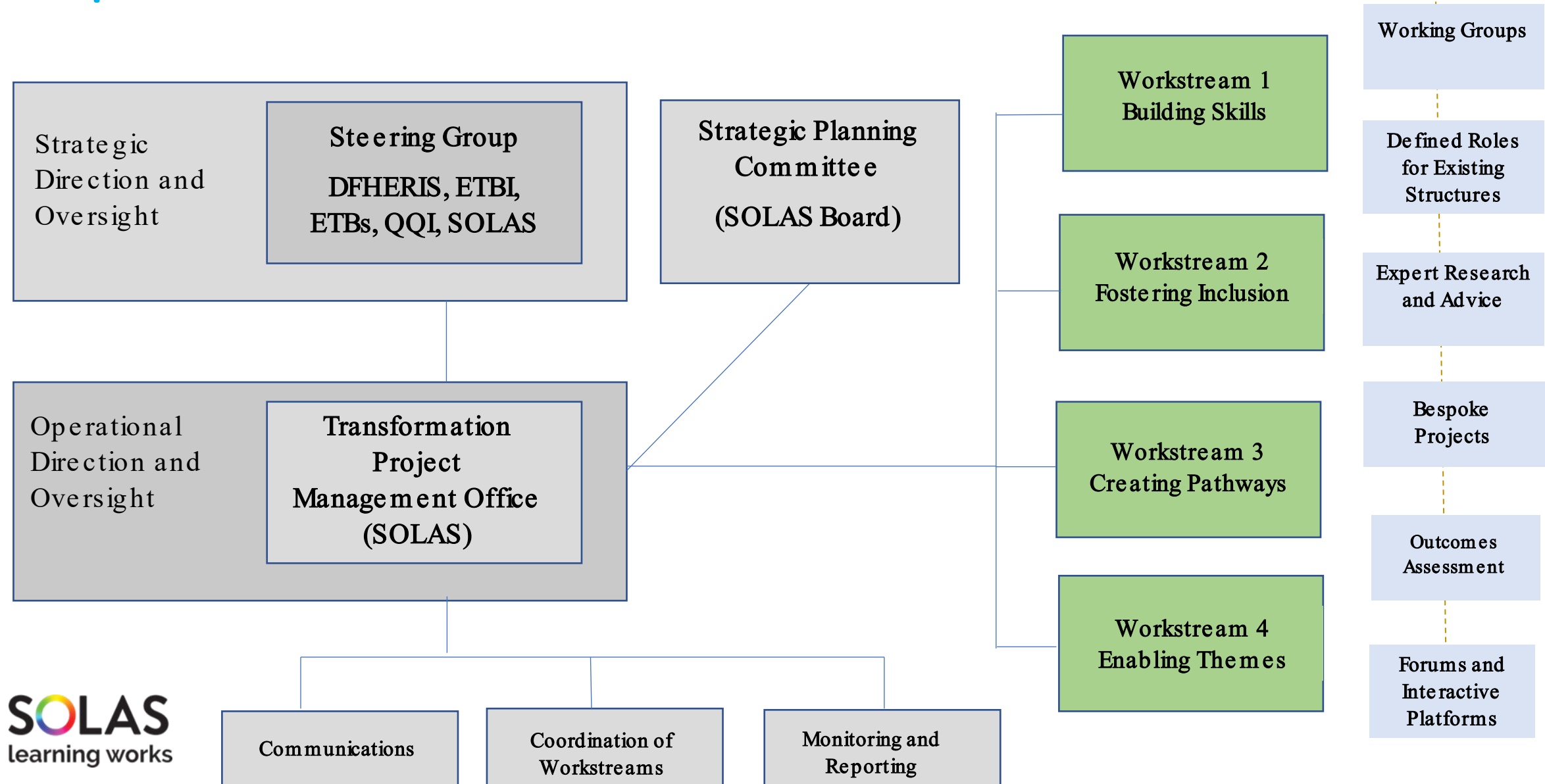
Digital Transformation

- Learner Access & Delivery
- Data Driven
- Management Systems

Capital Infrastructure

- Address Deficits
- Consolidate Provision
- Flagship Developments

Implementation Framework



Transforming Learning Strategic Performance Agreements

The Strategic Performance Agreements 2022-2024 mark the most significant advances to date in delivering an outcomes focused framework for the Further Education and Training (FET) system.

Building on the initial outcomes focused approach set out in the Strategic Performance Agreements 2018-2020, the vision for Future FET is now fully realised through the establishment of the 12 national system targets in the agreements, alongside the accompanying narrative and commitments to deliver on the Transforming Learning agenda in the FET Strategy.



Strategic Performance Agreements Targets 2022 - 2024



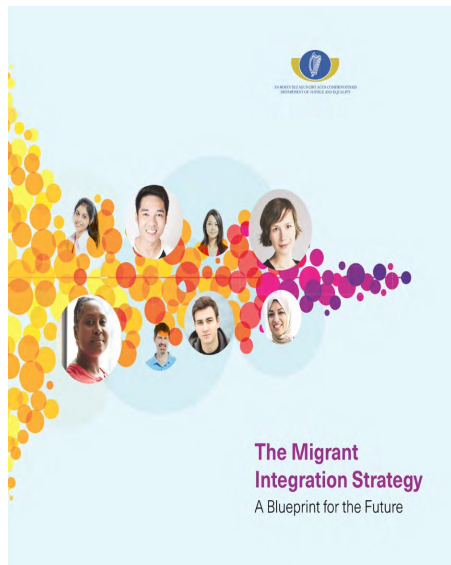
Fostering Inclusion: Widening participation figure for “key target groups” includes migrants

TARGET	2022	2023	2024
Supporting Jobs			
Jobs: Return employment outcomes to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024	27,410	28,830	30,172
Skills to Compete: Deliver 50,000 places to support those who lost their job to find a pathway back to sustainable work	20,065	21,637	22,956
Creating Pathways			
Progression within FET: Return progression movements within FET to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024	30,219	33,419	35,958
Progression from FET-HE: Grow levels of progression by 10% by 2024	5,859	6,238	6,672
Fostering Inclusion			
Transversal Skills: Return certification at NFQ levels 1-3 to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024	25,378	29,639	32,398
Widening Participation: Return participation levels by key target groups to 2019 levels and resume growth	16,788	18,266	19,474
Adult Literacy for Life (ALL): Increase provision for literacy and numeracy	59,316	64,987	70,095
Upskilling Through Lifetimes & Careers			
Lifelong Learning: Return engagement in lifelong learning to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024	97,325	106,176	113,605
Skills to Advance: Continue to grow workforce upskilling enrolments	14,854	18,501	22,290
Targeting Key Skill Needs			
Key Skills Needs: Grow the number of places addressing key skills needs	29,667	32,502	35,008
Retrofitting Skills: Expansion of reskilling provision to meet retrofitting needs	3,006	5,270	7,150
Green Skills for All: Embedding of core green skills module across FET courses	18,428	41,000	64,000

Ireland's Migrant Integration Strategy

Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

It envisaged a whole-of-government approach to enhance diversity, inclusion and equity for migrants across all aspects of Irish society through increased focus on social inclusion measures



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Access to
Citizenship / Long
Term Residency

Access to Public
Services and
Social Inclusion

Political
Participation

Education

FET / SOLAS Key
Objective:
The provision of
ESOL classes to cater
for the language
needs of migrants
and adults from
ethnic minorities.

Health

Integration in the
Community

Employment and
Pathways to Work

Promoting
Intercultural
Awareness

Volunteering

Sport

The Irish Government is
currently developing the next
Migrant Integration Strategy

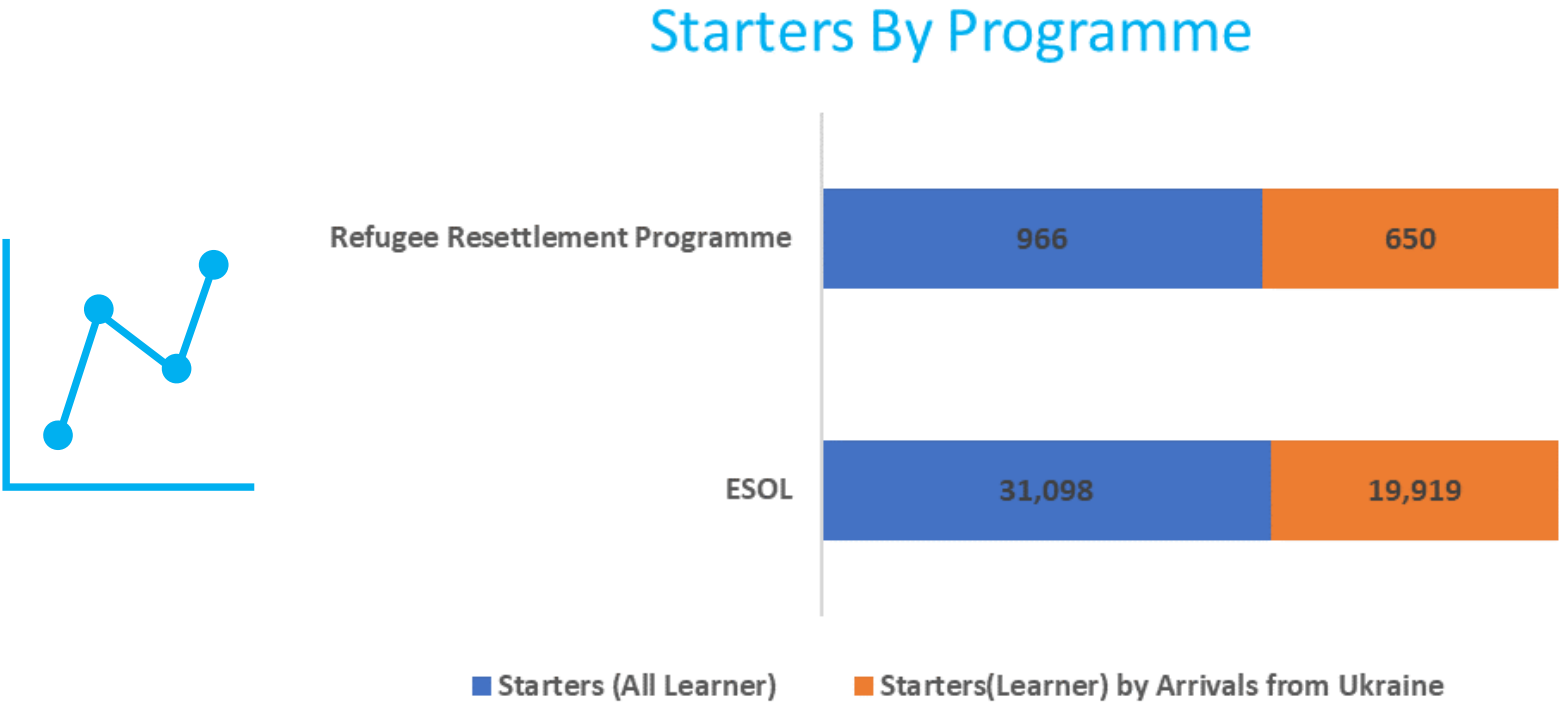
ESOL - English for Speakers of Other Languages

Background

- ESOL may be simply defined as ‘English language provision for adult speakers of other languages’ (NIACE, 2006).
- ESOL, was initially established in Ireland to respond to the need for language provision for asylum seekers.
- Quickly expanded to address the dramatic changes that have taken place in the structure of Irish society, with large numbers of immigrant communities, especially those fleeing the war in Ukraine.
- Refugee Resettlement Programme (RRP) under the auspices of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) involves the selection and transfer of refugees from a State in which they have sought protection to a third State that has agreed to admit them - as refugees - with permanent residence status.



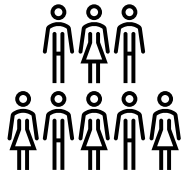
ESOL / RRP Numbers in FET



Note: Please note that learners are unique within each programme category. E.g. if a learner was enrolled on two courses within two different programme categories, the learner will be counted once in each

ESOL

Benefits for Ireland



- Those who have come to Ireland and chosen to make their home here have made a huge contribution to our society. Not only do they contribute to our economy they have enriched our culture and provided vibrancy and diversity into Irish life. Competence in the English language, together with strong literacy and numeracy skills, is a necessary foundation for development and success in life, work and learning in Ireland.



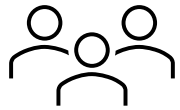
- Basic knowledge of the language and institutions is indispensable to integration; enabling new communities to acquire this basic knowledge is essential to successful integration. Our Further Education and Training sector aims to drive not only Ireland's economic success, but also to advance social cohesion and inclusion. Every individual must have a path to the place and future that they want, through the means that best suits them.

ESOL

Social inclusion and well-being for the Learner



- **Supports** available throughout the FET sector are **critical to preparing migrants**, and their families, to **fully realise their ambitions** and become more **active participants in society**.



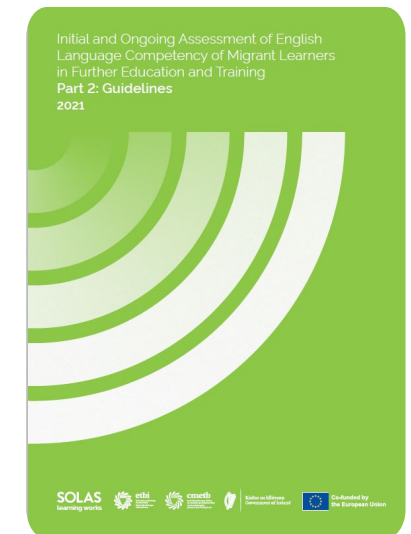
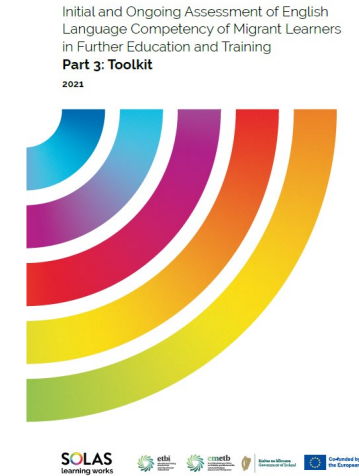
- As the **rich diversity of Irish Society** increases, **supporting migrants with English language skills** is ever more vital in **enabling non-English speaking migrants and their families to fully participate** in all spheres of Irish life.



- The importance of the English language for successful integration has been documented – thus the OECD in the Economic Survey of Ireland (2008) noted that “**knowing the language is crucial for successful integration... key to social cohesion, active participation in society and key to understanding and accepting national culture.**”

ESOL Publications

- In 2021, SOLAS published a research project, **Initial and Ongoing Assessment of English Language Competency of Migrant Learners in Further Education and Training**.
- The aim of the project was to explore the current baseline and to develop **Good Practice Guidelines** and a **Toolkit** to support the **initial and ongoing assessment** of the **English language competency** of **migrant learners** and to provide a **universal definition** of **ESOL literacy** for application within the **Further Education and Training (FET)** sector.



Community Education

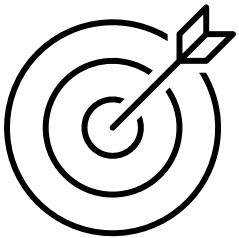
What is Community Education?

Community Education is about creating opportunities for people to identify their learning needs and learn in their own community.

Who are they for?



Groups who organise community education programmes for people who face acute barriers to taking part in education: Older people, people experiencing disadvantage, people with disabilities, ethnic minority groups, unemployed, carers and groups providing community education in areas where adults do not have easy access to education opportunities.



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A Community Education programme aims to:

- Build community participation
- Address social isolation
- Engage vulnerable adults
- Develop active citizenship
- Address educational needs



REACH Fund

The Reach Fund delivers funding to improve access and supports for educationally disadvantaged learners who participate in community education programmes across Ireland.

Fáilte Isteach

Welcoming Migrants through Conversational English Classes



IMPACT & VALUE

- Combines emotional and practical support for migrants - this is particularly helpful to those who have escaped frightening and traumatic circumstances in their own countries.
- Trains new volunteers, giving them the confidence and skills to tutor and ensuring that each group has the required resources to run successful conversation classes.
- Groups are a welcoming space for those in need. Classes allow Irish co-ordinators and tutors to support new arrivals often in their time of greatest need, and in the most human interactive way – talking and listening.
- This informal, relaxed approach allows the most marginalised and vulnerable in our society to engage with host communities and citizens, to integrate into life in Ireland, and share their own culture and lived experiences.
- Class discussion informs migrants about their entitlements and employment rights, Irish political and cultural life, plus resources to assist towards active citizenship, form filling and CV creation.
- The programme also benefits the families, employers and communities in which migrant and refugee participants live.

Looking ahead to 2024

- Final year of Future FET: Transforming Learning, The National Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy
- The development successor strategy to Future FET will be a key focus, taking account of the Future of Work and Economic and Societal Challenges.
- The Evolution in Learning and in Learner needs will drive the next critical phase of social and economic development in Ireland.

Thank You

Questions?