

SOLAS - The Further Education and Training Authority of Ireland

COFACE Dublin 2024

16th April

SOLAS
learning works

The Role of SOLAS

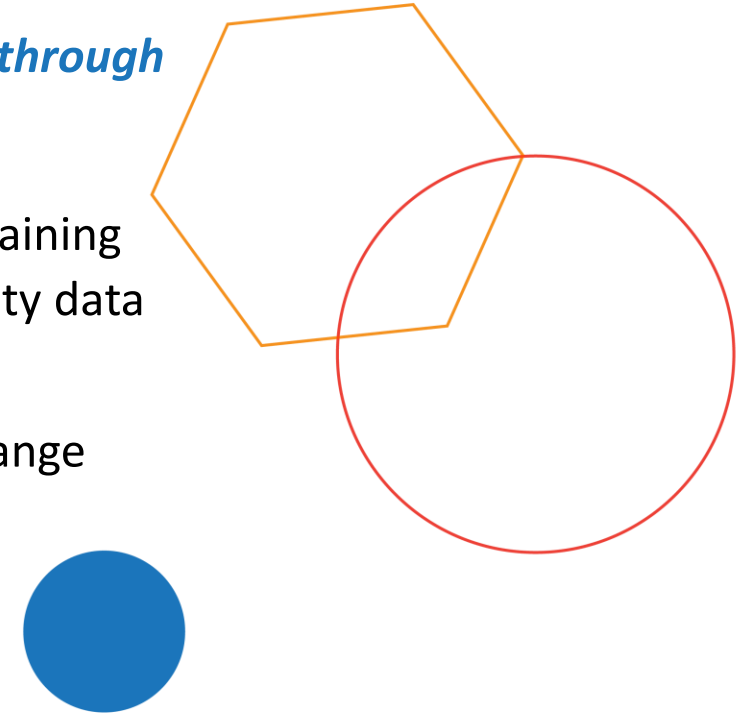
SOLAS is the state agency responsible for Further Education and Training (FET) in Ireland.

Our vision is to power the potential of individuals, communities and enterprise through lifelong learning and workforce transformation.

We manage, co-ordinate and support the delivery of FET by the Education and Training Boards (ETBs), monitoring its delivery and providing funding based on good quality data and positive outcomes.

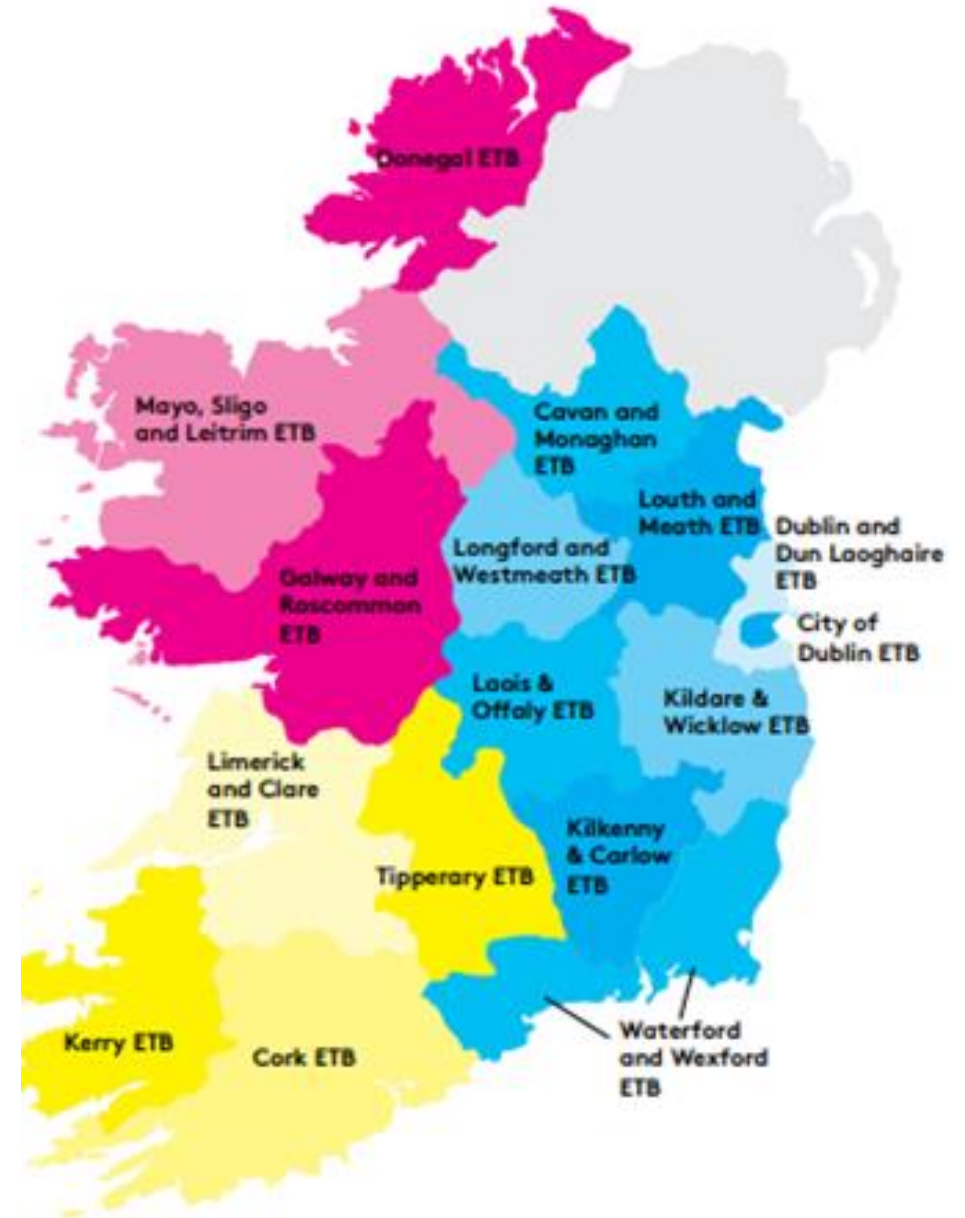
We are leading an ambitious **FET Strategy Transforming Learning** and driving change across the FET system:

- **providing easier access**
- **simplified pathways**
- **a consistent learner experience**
- **and a stronger identity**



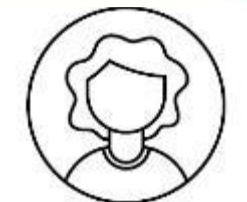
Education and Training Boards

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, the Dept of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and Dept of Education.

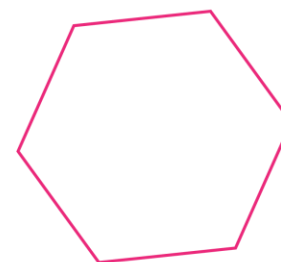
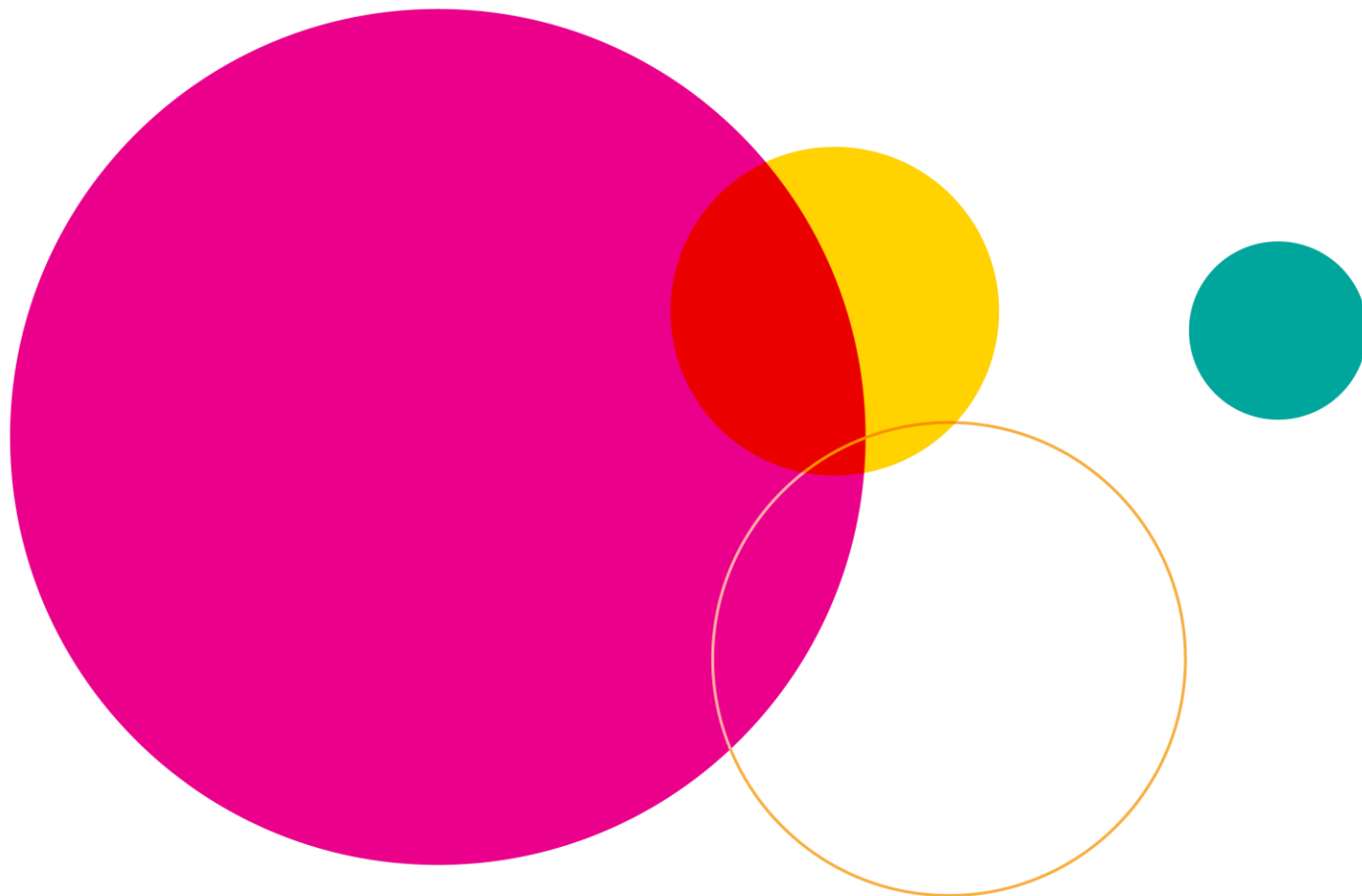


Vision for Future FET – FET Strategy 2020 - 2024

- 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



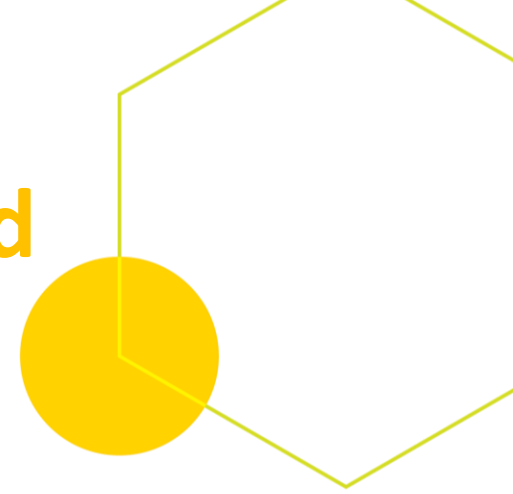
Further Education and Training (FET) - Statistics



In 2023, we experienced unprecedented growth and demand for Further Education and Training (FET) in Ireland:

- FET is attracting a **greater share of school leavers**, serving as a **resource for everyone to upskill and reskill** throughout lifetimes and careers, and become the **go-to place for the development of specialist skills** for some of Ireland's critical industries.
- The learner base growing by some **17% from 2022 to 2023**.
- **1 in 10 adults in Ireland** – around 423,000 people – were engaged in apprenticeships, our construction skills schemes or other Further Education and Training (FET) activity last year.
- Around **219,000 unique learners** taking other FET courses, with some **375,000 places taken** up during the year (many of our courses are short, and many FET learners take more than one in a year).
- **Trends in FET** underline its growing importance to everyone across our communities:
 - Post-Leaving Certificate course enrolments (a prime destination for school leavers) are up 11% year-on-year
 - the sector is supporting over 30,000 Ukrainians in English-language and other skills
 - and over 23,500 employees are upskilling via the Skills to Advance initiative, up over a quarter from 2022.

Growth and demand for Further Education and Training (FET) in Ireland



- Over **150,000** undertaking **construction safety training** via CSCS, QSCS and Safepass, with a new online renewal system introduced in January of this year, fuelling the workforce required for this critical industry and driving the delivery of Housing for All. Add to this approaching **5,000 people trained in essential Net Zero Energy Building and retrofitting skills** needed to retrofit 500,000 homes by 2030, and the construction of a new **Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) demonstration park** in the Midlands of Ireland.
- An apprenticeship **population of over 27,000**, with registrations on course to hit their highest annual number ever, and up 5% on 2022. There are now **73 different apprenticeship offerings**, and over 9,000 employers with apprentices working for them.
- Over 55,000 adults participating in Community Education.

New Strategy for Further Education and Training 2025-2029

- To be developed in 2024
- Build on current objectives – Skills, Pathways and Inclusion
- Detailed consultation process including public consultation

