



WELCOME PACK

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

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AONTAS – the National Adult Learning Organisation

AONTAS is the National Adult Learning Organisation, a non-governmental, voluntary membership organisation established in 1969. The name AONTAS is an acronym in the Irish language, Aos Oideachais Náisiúnta Tri Aontú Saorálach meaning ‘national adult education through voluntary unification’. The word AONTAS itself is also the Irish word for ‘unity’ or ‘union’, so the intention of the founders of AONTAS was that it would be identified by its inclusiveness. It is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. It is core funded by the Department of Education and Skills through SOLAS, the Further Education and Training Authority, and receives project funding from other sources from time to time.

With over 550 members from the formal and non-formal adult and community education sector as well as across the lifelong learning spectrum AONTAS regards its membership as a key resource which provides the organisation with a grassroots, authentic understanding of adult and community education practice from both a practitioner and learner perspective. The membership profile comprises a rich mix of statutory, voluntary and community organisations as well as individuals who are deeply involved in and committed to the concept of lifelong learning. AONTAS affords statutory and voluntary members alike a unique space to meet and reflect on how provision for learners can be improved. Through our long track record of support for community education leading to the development of the AONTAS Community Education Network in recent years, AONTAS has acquired a deep and historic knowledge of community education practice and a strong link to learners. Our individual members, including adult learners, tutors, facilitators, organisers and advocates of adult learning have a direct means to obtain information from AONTAS and the opportunity to link with other organisations. Ultimately we offer our collective members the unique opportunity to shape, promote and develop lifelong learning.

Why we exist: The mission of AONTAS is to advocate for the right of all adults in Ireland to quality learning throughout their lives, and to promote the value and benefits of lifelong learning. We have a specific focus on the most educationally disadvantaged and our work seeks to ensure that all adults have the right to participate to adult learning that exhibits the following elements: Inclusion, Learner Supports, Progression, positive learning outcomes, is learner focussed, offers learner choice, a positive learning experience and is transformative. See the AONTAS Strategic Plan for more details.

Our purpose: The work of AONTAS centres on: Advocating and lobbying for the development of a quality service for adult learners; promoting the value and benefits of adult learning and building organisational capacity.

With particular emphasis on those who did not benefit from education initially or who are under-represented in learning, AONTAS' work is aimed at:

- Widening participation in lifelong learning
- Ensuring community education is supported to offer quality learning opportunities to the most educationally disadvantaged
- Ensuring adult learners are central to local, regional, national, European and International adult learning policy
- Promoting quality adult learning.

Advocacy: AONTAS, as an advocacy NGO for adult learning has the capacity and experience to act as a link between national policy actions and what happens in practice on the ground. Through occupying this position AONTAS can critically assess the relationship between policy and practice and facilitate valuable dialogue between policy makers, practitioners and learners, thereby strengthening the voice, visibility and value of adult learning in the wider context of lifelong learning. In our role as advocate AONTAS has identified three key objectives accompanied by key actions.

AONTAS has acted as a strong advocate for adult and community education. We actively and proactively respond to policy developments and develop effective relationships with key policy makers in striving for a more equitable lifelong learning field. AONTAS is active in representing adult learners on a variety of advisory and steering groups in particular relating to SOLAS, Department of Education. We are also active at European level through the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) and the International Council of Adult Education (ICAE). As National Coordinator for the European Agenda for Adult Learning (EAAL) we promote lifelong learning policy implementation at national level and actively engage with our European counterparts. We have a long and historic commitment to community education through the AONTAS Community Education Network (est. 2007) and have been successful in ensuring community education is recognised and supported as a key part of the future further education and training policy agenda. We pioneered the engagement of adult learners in policy development and are now leading out on a part of the SOLAS FET Strategy which has resulted in a National Adult Learner Forum.

Promotion: AONTAS has a unique position as the national voice of adult learning. We will capitalise on our existing body of knowledge and with our members, and other stakeholders to promote a broad understanding of the benefits and value of lifelong learning particularly in the current change context. As an overarching umbrella body we are in a position to explain how the public can avail of learning opportunities in the new

restructured system. In our role as promoter AONTAS has identified two key objectives accompanied by key actions.

AONTAS believes that building the profile and status of adult and community education is a priority and has developed a communications strategy to support this work in order to ensure our message is clear and reaches the widest possible audience. Part of this work includes the AONTAS Adult Learners' Festival, the Information Referral Service. We have built strong relationships with public representatives, public servants and other key stakeholders with a view to ensuring that they are fully informed about the importance of supporting adult and community education. We have focused our work on: widening the lifelong learning participation rate, the value of community education and the wider benefits of learning to the individual, families and communities.

Building organisational capacity: The objectives and actions of the organisation are ambitious and far reaching. In order to deliver on them successfully we are committed to build our organisational capacity to the highest standards. We engaged in an extensive organisational review in 2016 and have implemented a new organisational structure and updated our policies and procedures in line with good practice and as part of our obligations as a charity, to our funders and our members.

Strategic Plan 2015 – 2018: The AONTAS Strategic Plan 2015-2018, Learning - A Lifetime's Work focuses on two key goals:

1. Advocating and lobbying for the development of a quality service for adult learners.
2. Promoting the value and benefits of adult learning.

These two goals are underpinned by a third goal: Building Organisational Capacity.

Executive Committee Structure: The AONTAS Executive Committee comprises of four officers, ten organisational members and two individual members. The Executive Committee constitutes the Board of Directors of the Organisation. The Officer Board is made up of the President of AONTAS, the Vice-President, the Honorary Secretary, and the Honorary Treasurer.

The Executive Committee meets 5/6 times each year, and is responsible for:

- The overall maintenance and well-being of the Organisation
- Human resources, financial policy, and accountability
- Taking a lead role in the development of the Strategic Plan
- Supporting the staff team in implementing the Strategic Plan
- Representing the views and issues of members
- Contributing knowledge and experience on local issues
- Initiating working groups to deal with issues, as appropriate

Who we are

Niamh O' Reilly, CEO

✉ noreilly@aontas.com

Niamh O'Reilly is the Chief Executive Officer of AONTAS. She is responsible for the overall management of the organisation, the implementation of the Strategic Plan, and the organisation and development of the staff team. Niamh has over 15 years' experience in adult education of which 11 years in AONTAS. In 2007, she established and co-ordinated the first national network for community education practitioners who aspire to a social action model of provision (Community Education Network); she leads out on national advocacy initiatives on behalf practitioners and learners and represents AONTAS on a number of national advisory groups. Niamh is involved in European lifelong learning policy and advocacy work and acts as the designated national link for the European Agenda for Adult Learning and is an elected board member of the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) since 2011. Niamh is currently undertaking a PhD at NUI Maynooth, exploring the value of non-formal adult education for increasing diversity in higher-level education.

Advocacy Team

Brid Greenan, Information Officer

✉ bgreenan@aontas.com

Brid provides information via our Freephone Helpline and www.OneStepUp.ie as well as Erasmus + mobilities.

Suzanne Kyle, Community Education Network Coordinator

✉ skyle@aontas.com

Suzanne is responsible for coordinating the CEN which includes over 150 members.

Saorlaith Ni Bhroin, European Projects Officer

✉ snibhroin@aontas.com

Saorlaith is responsible for the EU Projects including the European Agenda for Adult Learning.

Communications Team

Katie O' Rourke, team lead

✉ korourke@aontas.com

As Communications Lead Katie is responsible for implementing and optimising the reach of the AONTAS Communications Strategy and leading a complimentary team under the areas of events and learner support.

Karen Williams, Learner Voice Officer

✉ kwilliams@aontas.com

The Learner Supports Officer is responsible for developing a learner support and engagement strategy designed to ensure that the voice and issues of all adult learners is heard by policy makers and other relevant audiences.

Finance Team

Jasmin Clancy, Financial Administration Officer

✉ jclancy@aontas.com

Jasmin is responsible for all membership responsibilities, financial support and administrative duties to all teams.

Mairead Tynan, Office Manager

✉ mtynan@aontas.com

Mairead is responsible for the overall maintenance of all office systems. She also provides PA support to the CEO, Oversees the administrative support requirements of all teams with Finance Administration Officer, Oversees operational HR activities and supports the Finance Lead with financial administration.

Highlights from 2016

Advocacy:

In 2016 AONTAS has produced, in collaboration with our membership base, a number of documents relating to government policy including:

- Pre-election manifesto which focussed on the main issues facing our membership
- General Election postcard as a tool for members
- Response to the Programme for Government
- Submission to the Department of Education and Skills (DES) Statement of Strategy 2016-2018
- Pre-Budget Submission: In preparation for Budget 2017, AONTAS produced a Pre-Budget submission titled: 'Investing in community education as an effective mechanism for widening lifelong learning participation' that was distributed to relevant policy makers
- Pre-Budget Response

Profiling Learner Stories – Learner Story Campaign

AONTAS is passionate about promoting the learner voice and we believe that sharing inspiring learner stories best demonstrates how adult learning can transform lives. Our Learner Story Campaign aims to share the experiences of those who have returned to learning. These stories resonate with diverse audiences and can encourage others to consider their own education and training options.



In December 2016, AONTAS hosted a celebratory event to launch our new publication: "[I'm an Adult Learner 2016: Inspiring learner stories from across Ireland](#)". The aim of the book was to highlight a wide variety of learner experiences whilst also demonstrating the role of adult learning in transforming peoples' lives. The book documents inspiring learner stories which AONTAS has shared every Monday in 2016 to coincide with #MondayMotivation. In August 2016 we also ran an information campaign entitled #ImAnAdultLearner. The Minister for Education and Skills, Richard Bruton TD presented the learners with the book and a number of adult learners also shared their thoughts on the day.

On the Frontline – Information Referral Service One Step Up (www.onestepup.ie) and Freephone Helpline)

Key to the work of AONTAS is our Information Referral Service. This service allows us to collate and analyse data on the evolving needs of learners and identify new trends and areas of concern. One Step Up

(www.onestepup.ie) allows learners and prospective learners to find their education and training options in sixty seconds. Since its launch, One Step Up (www.onestepup.ie) which hosts a calendar of events and Freephone Helpline number 1800 303 669, has engaged with thousands of learners and prospective learners with a total 55,745 people accessing the website and 22,230 profiles gathered since the project began in November 2013.



Find your education and training options

www.onestepup.ie

We study the profile of those who complete the four steps on the website to identify their education and training options. Some of the prevalent figures are:

- 45% of users were between 35-65 years
- 27% of users were from Dublin
- 29% of users were Employed
- 54% of users were looking for Courses

Up-skilling - 'Harnessing the Power of a Story'



The Irish adult learning sector has experienced unprecedented financial cuts over the past decade. AONTAS supports members to up-skill through our European projects, with a particular emphasis on our Community Education Network (CEN). In November 2016, AONTAS, in collaboration with EPAL Ireland, hosted a 1-day training event 'Harnessing the Power of a Story'. The training demonstrated the power of story-telling, its impact across media outlets and how to

reach to potential and present learners as well as funders. The training was attended by almost 100 participants from across Ireland and included high profile keynote speakers, as well as a series of practical workshops.

'Community Education for a Better Tomorrow'

'Community Education for a Better Tomorrow' was an innovative blended learning programme for community education practitioners. This new programme offered community educators opportunities to up-skill, enhance their capacity to engage with quality assurance structures and systems, and participate in the creation of quality assurance standards and processes specific to community education.

Designed and delivered by An Cosán Virtual Community College in partnership with the AONTAS Community Education Network, this programme is part of the 'Learning Today for a Better Tomorrow' project, funded by the European Commission Erasmus + Programme and the Department of Education and Skills via SOLAS.

This eight week blended learning programme which involved six online sessions, self-directed learning, and two face to face workshops. Valuing the experience and expertise of CEN members, a flipped classroom approach underpinned teaching and learning strategies allowing participants to co-create knowledge about quality assurance in the community education sector.

In line with the theories and practice of transformative community education, this programme enabled participants to critically reflect on community education and analyse the application of Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines to community education provision. Recognising the centrality of organisations to community education, learners critiqued governance and organisational development strategies and evaluated approaches most appropriate for community education.

Hand in hand with practice, policy and theoretical considerations, learners built on the Quality Assurance Framework and applied their skills to the creation and implementation of quality assurance policies and processes relevant to their organisations, collectively enhancing the capacity of the community education sector.

Influencing Policy and Practice – National Adult Learner Forum



Ireland is leading the way in making a commitment to learner representation at both a national and regional level. The Government committed to the establishment of a forum for adult learners in the Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy, published by [SOLAS](#), the Further Education and Training Authority in 2014. SOLAS operates under the guidance of the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and is, in conjunction with the 16 Education and

Training Boards (ETBs), responsible for the integration, coordination and funding of a wide range of FET programmes.

For the first time, a formal structure now exists where adult learners are given the unique opportunity to influence the policy decisions that affect them. AONTAS is leading out on this exciting new development which means that learners are now placed at the heart of the FET service. The first National Adult Learner Forum took

place in February 2016. 70 learners from across Ireland gathered at the forum to discuss what's working and not working in the FET Service, and how it can be improved. The learners in attendance were nominated to join the forum by their local adult education groups, and included representatives from community education, the Youthreach programme, the Back to Education Initiative and the Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme. Participants came from a spread of urban and rural backgrounds to capture the broad spectrum of learner experiences. Learners had their say on the FET service through group discussions, sharing their stories, creative workshops and feedback forms. AONTAS, in partnership with SOLAS are in the final stages of completing qualitative reports from the event. The 2017 forum is presently in the early planning stages.

Adults returning to education must be consulted about the type of provision they need, as well as the supports they require to complete the courses on offer. AONTAS will continue to engage with adult learners through a variety of ways to ensure that their voice is heard at local, national and European level in order to develop and improve services and policies.

Community Education Network

AONTAS has a Community Education Network (CEN) with a membership of over 150 organisations. Community education is a different model of education to that offered by the formal State sector; it has been particularly successful in targeting those hardest to reach to engage in education. Community education offers a safe first step back into education, catering to the needs of a diverse range of adult learners. Community education is local, accessible and holistic and is grounded on principles of justice, equality, social inclusion and citizenship where the learner is fully supported on their lifelong learning journey.



Community education organisations are vital grass root providers of accredited and non-accredited learning opportunities for marginalised adults who are least likely to engage in formal learning opportunities.

Barriers for Adult Learners

In a context of demographic change and increasingly complex needs of society, adult education is a crucial instrument for promoting social cohesion. However, often non-formal adult learning is underfunded compared to other sectors of the education system.

The barriers facing adult learners are multi-faced and complex. Barriers include:

1. **Funding:** AONTAS believes that the most educationally disadvantaged groups deserve and require more sustainable investment in their futures. Since the establishment of the CEN in 2007 the context for community education has changed dramatically, with significant funding cuts to the community and voluntary sector, resulting in a reduction in the provision of services and, in some instances, the closure of organisations.
2. **Childcare:** In many instances, women are the primary carers for minor children. Lack of affordable childcare has been cited by learners as one of their greatest barriers to returning to learning.
3. **Transport:** Rural centres are not always accessible by public transport. The cost of transport is hence, a significant barrier to returning to learning for those most marginalised.
4. **Social Inclusion:** Learners from disadvantaged communities oftentimes lack social recognition or a sense of self-worth and value due to discrimination. Community education can provide the tools to learners to empower them to challenge inequality. Many lifelong learners have cited personal wellbeing, confidence and development, increased social inclusion and integration and improved mental health among the wider benefits of lifelong learning. Lifelong learning can address inequality, boost local economies and create stronger communities.

Migration trends, as identified by Census 2011, indicate that a significant population of migrants resident in Ireland come from non-English speaking countries of origin. Over 500,000 people speak a language other than English or Irish at home. 145,000 of these are Irish nationals. Coupled with the recent Migrant Crisis, Ireland has undergone an unparalleled demographic transformation. The diversity of female adult learners and the complexity of their needs must be addressed. English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision is not always for those seeking to learn English, hampering integration and the ability to find sustainable employment.

5. **Access:** One of the greatest barriers to access is course fees, in particular for higher education. Many learners are also prevented from engaging in FET due to the entry eligibility criteria. Increase supports and an expansion of pre-existing programmes will be necessary in order to facilitate learners who have returned to learning.

Adult Learners Festival 2017

2017 Adult Learners' Festival will take place from the 6th - 10th March 2017. The theme for the week is 'The Power and Joy of Learning'.

The Adult Learners' Festival is a nationwide celebration of adult learning coordinated by AONTAS, the National Adult Learning Organisation. Over the past decade, the Festival has become a firm fixture on the adult learning calendar with events taking place nationwide, including information sessions, taster workshops, sample lectures to small gatherings of people who love to learn.

AONTAS believes that all adults in Ireland should have equal access to learning opportunities. We believe that adult learning has a hugely important role to play in the economic and social future of Ireland. We know that adult learners and adult learning centres do vital work on a daily basis.



The Adult Learners' Festival is all about:

- Celebrating adult learning and the achievements of adult learners
- Showcasing the work of adult education providers
- Promoting the work of AONTAS and the adult education sector
- Ensuring that the adult learner is at the centre of adult and further education policy

Star Awards

The STAR Awards (Showcasing Teamwork, Awarding Recognition) are an awards initiative coordinated by AONTAS as part of the annual Adult Learners' Festival to acknowledge the fantastic work undertaken by adult learning initiatives throughout Ireland. The awards celebrate the positive contribution that these initiatives make to individual adult learners, local communities and wider society.

Adult and community education is about more than receiving a qualification. From improved confidence to better health, the wider benefits are far-reaching and can have a hugely positive impact on a person's life, family and wider community. That's why AONTAS have overhauled our award categories this year to focus on promoting wellbeing; social inclusion; digital inclusion; and ensuring that the learner's voice is heard.

The awards recognise the use of innovative approaches in adult and community education. For 2017, nominations are invited under four new categories:

- Adult Learning Initiatives that Promote Wellbeing

- Adult Learning Initiatives that Promote Digital Inclusion
- Adult Learning Initiatives that Promote Social Inclusion
- Adult Learning Initiatives that Promote The Learner Voice

The winning initiatives will receive:

- Recognition: A hand-crafted award that symbolises the high level of recognition for your work
- Developing your practice: An opportunity to participate in continuous professional development in a European country through the ERASMUS+ mobility programme
- Promoting your work: a professional photography and video session that you can use to promote your organization.

FAQ

1. What is the Adult Learners' Festival?

The Adult Learners' Festival is a nationwide celebration of adult learning coordinated by AONTAS, the National Adult Learning Organisation. Over the past decade, the Festival has become a firm fixture on the adult learning calendar with events taking place nationwide. The 2017 Adult Learners' Festival will take place from the 6th - 10th March 2017. The theme for the week is 'The Power and Joy of Learning'.

2. What are the STAR Awards?

The STAR Awards are an awards initiative coordinated by AONTAS as part of the annual Adult Learners' Festival to acknowledge the fantastic work undertaken by adult learning initiatives throughout Ireland. The awards celebrate the positive contribution that these initiatives make to our society, our economy and our local communities.

3. Who can nominate a project?

Nominated Initiatives are welcome from all groups, throughout Ireland, as long as they focus on adult and community education and demonstrate innovative approaches to adult learning within their relevant category.

4. What are we looking for?

The following bullet points are examples of what can make a winning initiative. It is recommended that nominated initiatives try to demonstrate a variety of these:

- Learner-centred approach – the learner should be at the core of the initiative
- Collaboration/Partnership - evidence of teamwork, partnership and cooperation between diverse groups
- Inclusion - learning opportunities should reach all learners, especially those furthest from the education and training system

- Learner supports - which facilitate access and retention of learners such as financial, mentoring and caring supports
- Positive learning experience - such as how the initiative's curriculum was built around the learners' needs or interests
- Progression – demonstrate learner's movement onto further education training, community involvement or employment
- Learner choice - Learners should be supported to make informed choices regarding what, and how, they learn
- Transformative learning - show how being involved in learning has helped the participants to make a change to their lives and that of their community.

5. What are the categories?

A STAR Award will be given for innovative approaches in adult learning. Categories are:

- Adult Learning Initiatives that Promote Wellbeing
- Adult Learning Initiatives that Promote Digital Inclusion
- Adult Learning Initiatives that Promote Social Inclusion
- Adult Learning Initiatives that Promote The Learner Voice

6. How do I nominate a project?

To nominate an adult learning initiative, please visit: www.adultlearnersfestival.awardsplatform.com

7. What is the deadline for nominations?

The deadline for receipt of nominations is Wednesday 14th December at 5pm.

8. Who judges the STAR Awards?

The independent STAR Awards Judging Panel includes representation from a number of key stakeholders in the adult and community education sector in Ireland.

9. The Judging Process

If your nomination is shortlisted, representative(s) from your project must be available to meet with members of the judging panel during the week of the 6th – 10th February 2017. The project delegation should include learners and tutors/coordinators who will be given the opportunity to explain why their project should win an award.

10. When will the winners be announced & are there any prizes?

The winners will be announced at the STAR Awards Ceremony on Monday 6th March during the Adult Learners' Festival.

11. Why should I nominate an initiative for a STAR Award?

It's important that we continue to showcase the value of adult and community education in responding to the needs of individuals, communities, society and the economy. The work of the adult learning sector is often invisible, and the STAR Awards are the perfect opportunity to highlight the value of adult learning to a variety of audiences - politicians, media and the wider public and to help spread the voice and visibility of adult learning.

Terms and conditions:

- The closing date for receipt of nominations is Wednesday 14th December 2016 at 5pm
- You will receive official notification once your nomination form has been received.
- All nominations forms and details will be verified
- A representative(s) from your project must be available to meet with members of the judging panel during 6th – 10th February 2017. The judges' decisions are final and no correspondence will be entered into before or after the judging
- Award-winners will not be notified in advance of the ceremony
- The different participants in this project collectively agree to be nominated for a STAR Award.
- Highlighting winners' achievements is a key part of promoting adult education and encouraging people to engage in adult learning. We may edit the information you send us and use it for publicity purposes in advance of the Awards Ceremony on the AONTAS website and in AONTAS publications.

STAR Awards Shortlist 2017

Adult Learning Initiatives that Promote Wellbeing – Large Organisations

- Health and Wellbeing for Life
- CDI's Restorative Practices Training Programme
- Mentor Support for Cancer Patients and their Families
- Certificate in Mental Health in the Community, UCC

Adult Learning Initiatives that Promote Wellbeing – Small/Medium Organisations

- OURganic Gardens
- Horticulture LTI
- The Transformative College
- The Lantern Community Project

Adult Learning Initiatives that Promote Social Inclusion – Large Organisations

- The EPIC Programme
- Parents Learning Together Programme: Renovating Homes, Remaking Gardens, Renewing Targeted communities
- Youngballymun
- My Opinion My Vote

Adult Learning Initiatives that Promote Social Inclusion – Small/Medium Organisations

- Intercultural Drop-in Centre
- Irish Men's Shed Association
- East Clare Learning in Action
- KCAT Art & Study centre

Adult Learning Initiatives that Promote the Learner Voice

- ALBA Programme
- National Learning Network, Waterford
- SAOL Fashion Show

Adult Learning Initiatives that Promote Digital Inclusion

- An Cosán's Digital Army
- Supporting Communities Digital Inclusion Project
- Online Today Northern Ireland

Map of Ireland



Introduction to Ireland



The Republic of Ireland was founded in 1949.

Politically, Ireland is divided between the Republic of Ireland (officially named Ireland), which covers five-sixths of the island, and Northern Ireland, which is part of the United Kingdom, in the northeast of the island.

The Republic of Ireland is a parliamentary democracy based on the British model, with a written constitution and a popularly elected president who has mostly ceremonial powers. The government is headed by a prime minister, the Taoiseach, who is appointed by the President on the nomination of the lower house of parliament, the Dáil. Members of the government are chosen from both the Dáil and the upper house of

parliament, the Seanad. Its capital is Dublin.


4.76 million
POPULATION
2016


7.1 %
MONTHLY UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
January 2017


▼ 0.7%
RETAIL SALES INDEX
December 2016

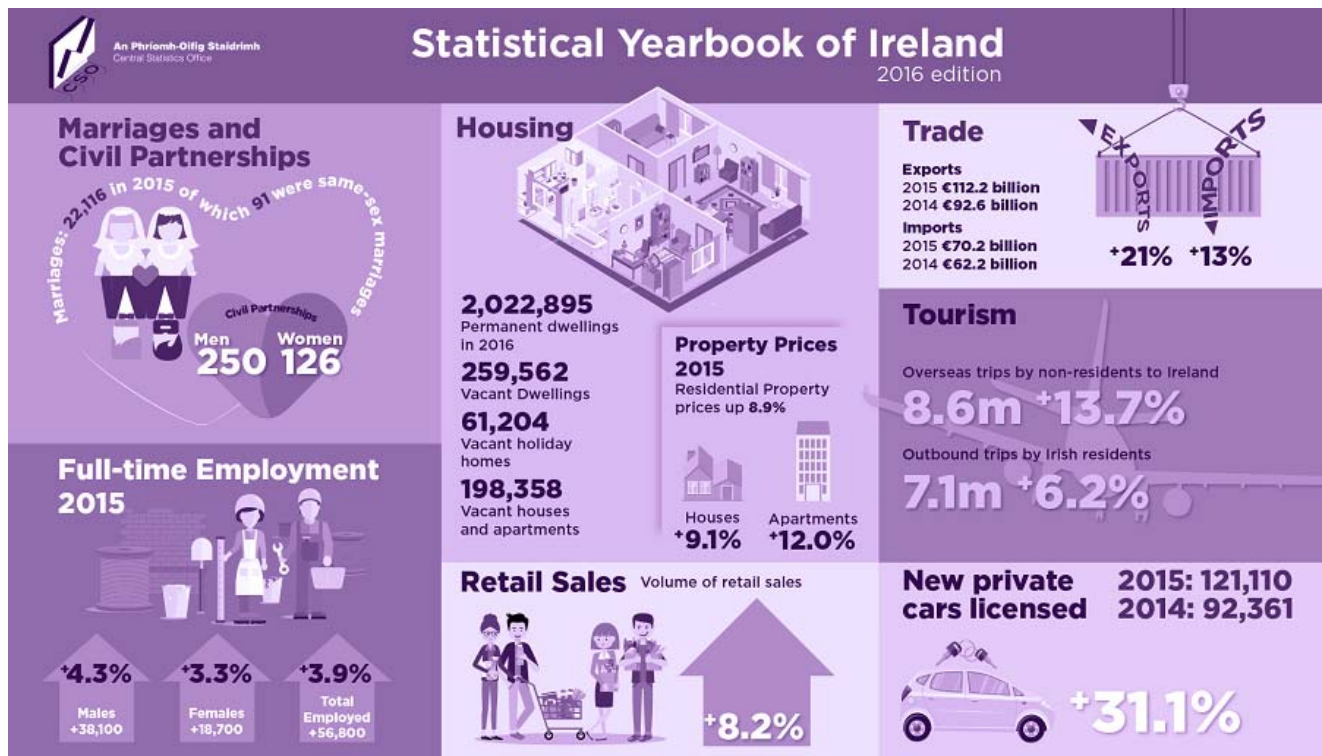

◀▶ 0.0%
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX
December 2016


▲ 8.6%
RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY PRICE
INDEX
November 2016

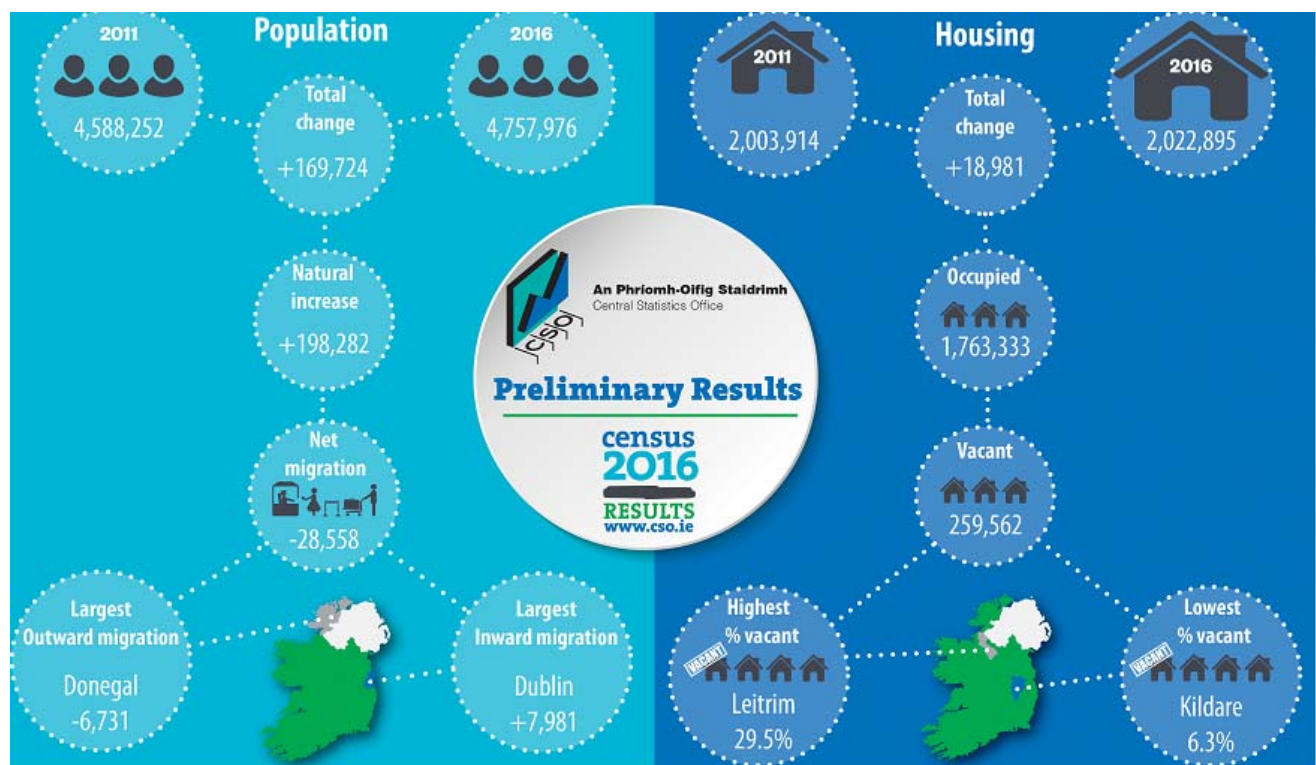
Quick Facts!

- **Name of State:** Ireland (Éire in Irish)
- **Capital:** Dublin
- **Population:** 4,581,269 (2011)
- **Total area:** 70,282 km²
- **Language:** Irish is the first official language but English is used by the majority of people.
- **Head of government:** An Taoiseach Enda Kenny
- **Head of state:** President Michael D Higgins
- **Climate:** Temperate climate. Rainfall between 800mm -1200mm
- **Currency:** Euro
- **Flag:** Tricolour of green, white and orange.
- **Emblem:** Harp
- **National Day:** Saint Patrick's Day, 17 March

21st Century Ireland - Society



Census 2016 Overview - Some preliminary figures have been released regarding Census 2016



Family Life in Ireland

Family sizes have declined significantly in a quarter century. In 1991 the average family had two children. In 1996 this had fallen to 1.8 children; in the 2011 census the average number per family was 1.4. The family remains a potent influence on Irish people. In an Irish attitudes and values survey in 2012, 62 per cent of people identified family and home as the biggest influences on their thinking and opinions, almost double the number influenced by the media (33 per cent).

Divorce was introduced in Ireland following Referendum in 1995.

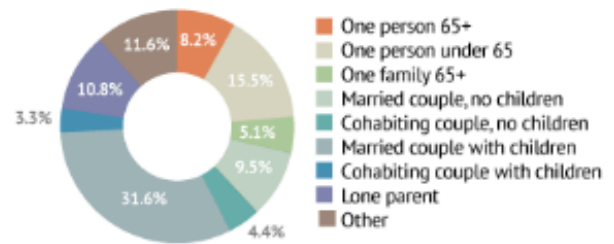
Following the defeat of the first divorce referendum in 1986, the then government designed an amendment for the second one that would reassure voters that divorce would not be entered into lightly. Thus the Constitution states the dissolution of a marriage may be granted only when the couple have lived apart for four out of the preceding five years, there

is no reasonable prospect of reconciliation and “proper provision” has been made for the spouses and any children, or any other person prescribed by law.

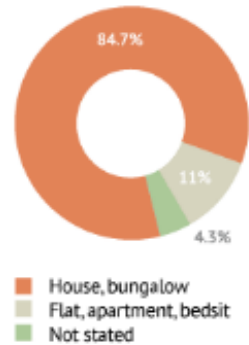
Abortion is not permitted in Ireland. Women seeking abortion must travel to another jurisdiction at their own financial cost.

MODERN IRISH FAMILY

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD

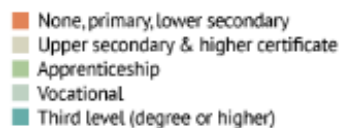
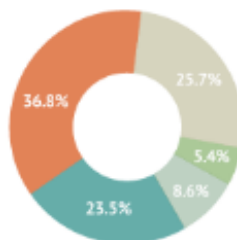


HOUSING

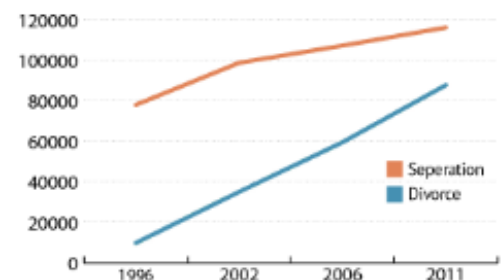


EDUCATION

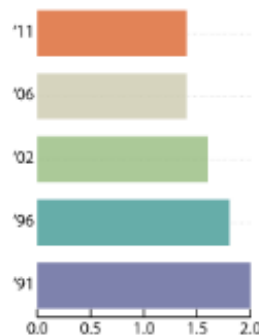
Highest level of education of usual residents aged 16 and over



SEPERATION & DIVORCE



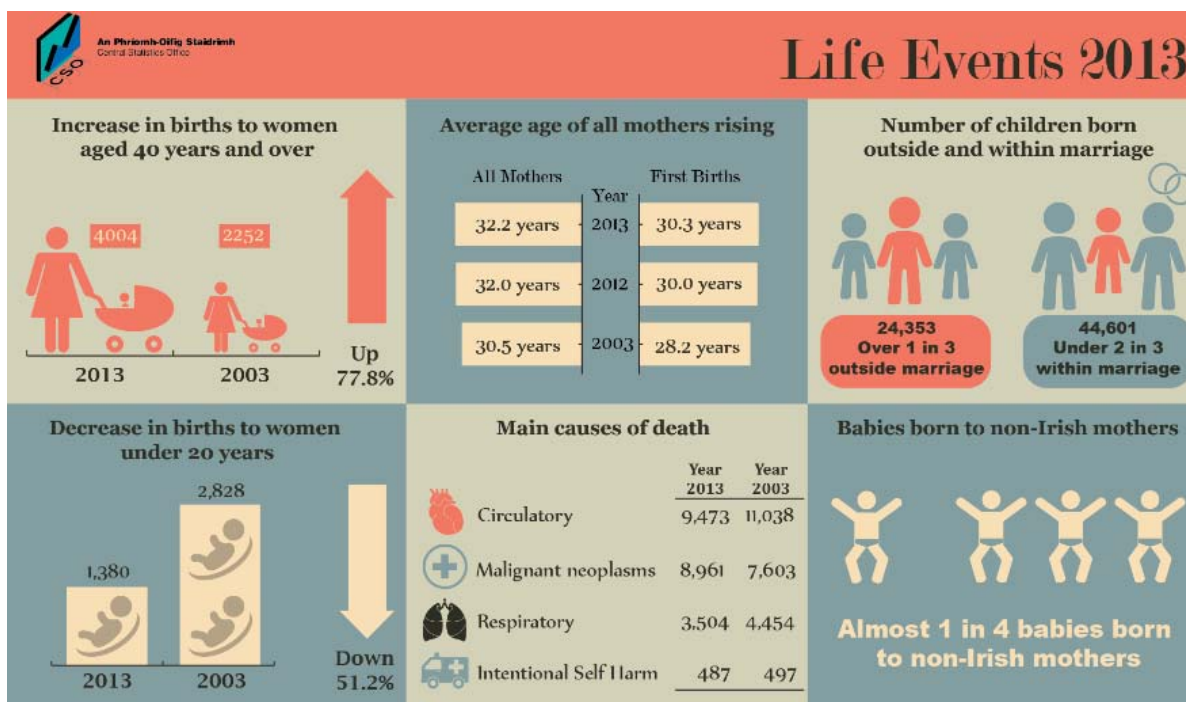
AVERAGE NUMBER OF CHILDREN



OCCUPATIONS



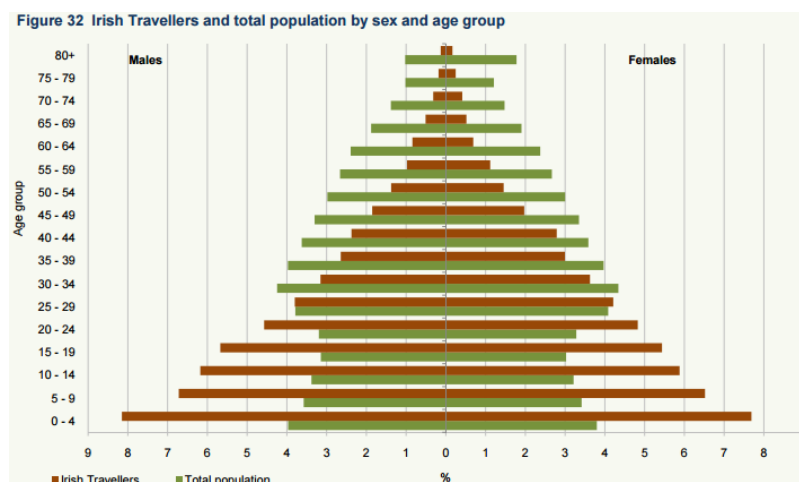
SOURCE: CSO Census 2011



Travellers

Irish Travellers have been documented as being part of Irish society for centuries. Travellers have a long shared history, traditions, language, culture, customs and tradition. The distinctive Traveller lifestyle and culture, based on a nomadic tradition, sets Travellers apart from the sedentary population or 'settled people'.

- In Census 2011, 55% of Travellers leave school by the age of 15
- 90% of Travellers have finished their education by the age of 17
- In 2011, just 115 Travellers had attained a third level qualification, just 1% of the population
- Census 2011 reveals that out of a total labour force of 4,144 Traveller women, 81.2% were without work
- Irish Travellers are one of the most marginalized and excluded groups in Irish society, facing an 84% unemployment rate
- The Traveller suicide rate is six times the national average for men and women



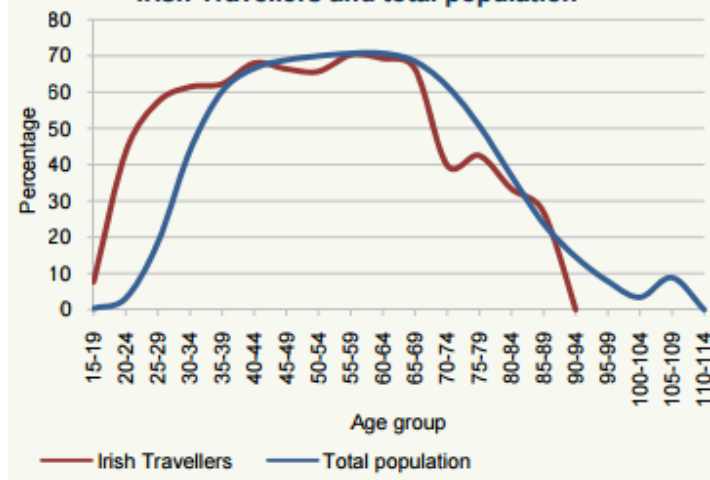
Comparison of Irish Traveller population to general population

The total number of Irish Travellers enumerated in April 2011 was 29,573 accounting for just over half of one per cent (0.6%) of the total population. The figure represents a 32 per cent increase on 2006 (22,435).

The overall structure of the Irish Traveller population is very different to that of the general population, with a broad base tapering off sharply at the top, as illustrated in the population pyramid above. The average age of Irish Travellers was 22.4 compared with 36.1 for the general population, and over half of all Irish Travellers (52.2%) were aged under 20. Irish Traveller males of retirement age and above (65+) numbered only 337 accounting for 2.3 per cent of the total Irish Traveller male population, in stark contrast to the general population where males of retirement age and above accounted for 10.7 per cent of all males. The majority (98.8%) of Irish Travellers were Irish by nationality, with most of the remainder being UK nationals (1.1%).

- 29.1% The percentage of Irish Travellers who were aged 9 or under in 2011. The equivalent rate for the general population was 14.8%
- 2.5% The percentage of Irish Travellers who were aged 65 or over in 2011. The equivalent rate for the general population was 11.7%

Figure 34 Percentage married of those aged 15 and over, Irish Travellers and total population



Irish Traveller marital status

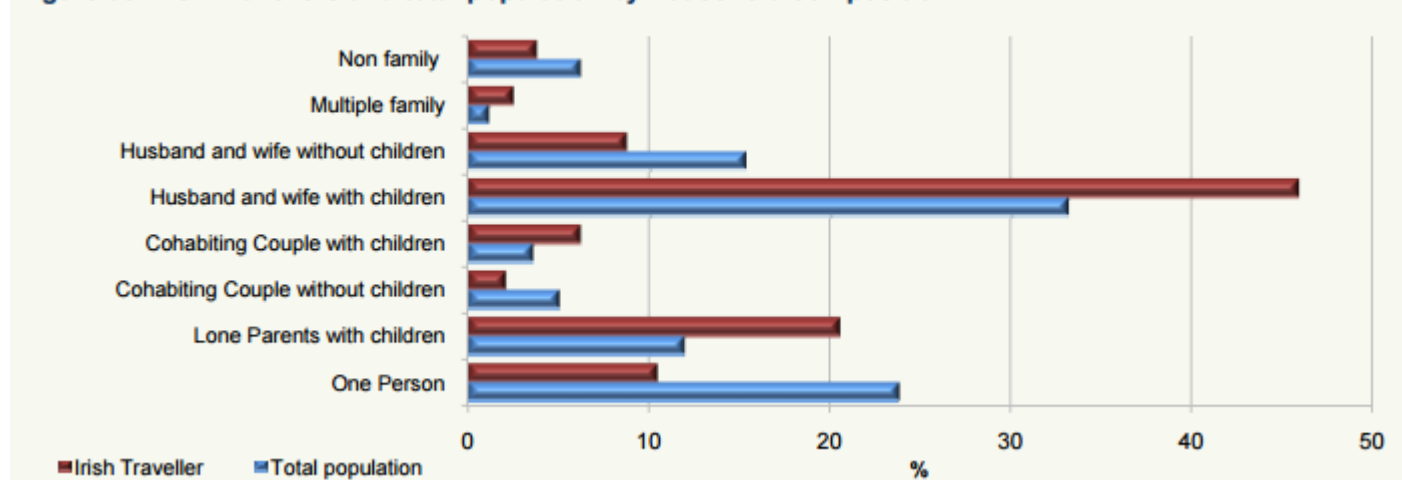
The tendency of Irish Travellers to marry younger is clearly illustrated in the graph opposite. Among 15 – 29 year olds, 33.4 per cent of Irish Travellers were married compared with just 8.2 per cent of the general population. There were 252 married 15-19 year olds of which 91 were males and 161 were females. A higher proportion of Irish Travellers were separated, with 11.4 per cent of people in this category compared with 5.5 per cent of the general population. Divorce on the other hand was rare with only 188 divorced Irish Travellers accounting for 1.8 per cent of ever married persons compared with 4.2 per cent of the general population.

Irish Traveller households

Of the total 7,765 Irish Traveller households (defined as households containing at least one Irish Traveller) in 2011 6,667 were classified as family households making this type of household more prevalent (85.9%) than among the general population (70%). In general the make up of Irish Traveller households was different to those of the general population. There were proportionally more lone parent households (20.5% compared with 11.9%), fewer cohabiting couples without children (2.1% compared with 5%) and more households with

more than one family (2.5% compared with 1.1%). While almost 1 in 4 (23.8%) households generally were comprised of one person, among Irish Traveller households these accounted for only 1 in 10 (10.4%) households

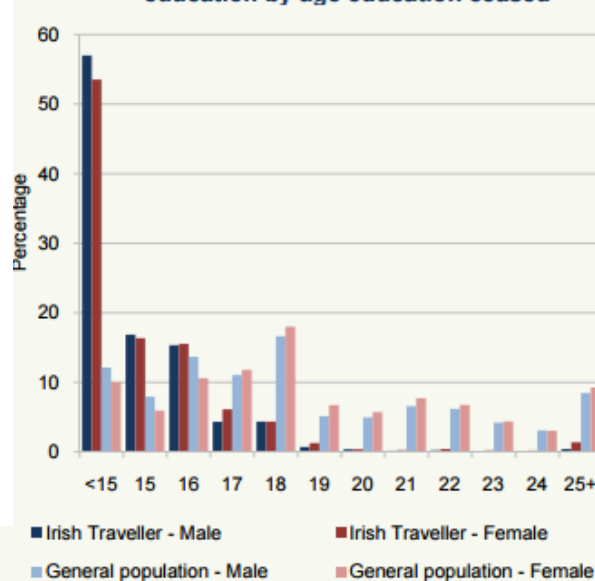
Figure 35 Irish Travellers and total population by household composition



Early school leavers

Of the 12,442 Irish Travellers who had completed their full time education, 7,319 provided information on the age at which their education ceased. The results show that 4,041 of these had completed their education before the age of 15 accounting for 55 per cent of the total. This compares with only 11 per cent for the general population. Only 3.1 per cent continued their education past the age of 18 compared with 41.2 per cent for the general population. Irish Traveller females stayed longer

Figure 38 Percentage who ceased their education by age education ceased



in school than their male counterparts with 15 per cent of females ceasing their education at age 17 or over compared with just 11 per cent of males.

Travellers increase their level of education

In 2011, 21.8 per cent of Irish Travellers whose education had ceased were educated to lower secondary level, compared with 15.2 per cent in 2002. The percentage of Irish Travellers who completed upper secondary education more than

Figure 39 Persons who completed their full time education by highest level of education completed, 2011



doubled from 3.6 per cent to 8.2 per cent over the same period. Seven out of ten Irish Travellers (69.0%) were educated to primary level or lower, including 507 persons aged between 15 and 19. The number of Irish Travellers who completed third level in 2011 was 115 or 1 per cent. This compares with 30.7 per cent of the general population excluding Irish Travellers. The percentage of Irish Travellers with no formal education in 2011 was 17.7 per cent compared with 1.4 per cent in the general population.

Third level subjects

A new question 'field of study of the highest qualification completed to date (excluding secondary school qualification)' was asked in 2011. The number of Irish Travellers who responded to this question was 615 of whom 378 were female. The top three fields of study undertaken by Irish Travellers males were, Engineering manufacturing and construction (85 males), Education and teacher training (20), Social sciences, business and law (19) and Health and Welfare (19). The top three fields of study for Irish Traveller females were Health and welfare (156 females), Personal services (65) and Social sciences (54).

Census 2011 - Diversity

Table A Population by nationality, 2002, 2006 and 2011

| Nationality | 2002 | 2006 | 2011 | Change 2002-2011 | % change |
|------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------|
| Poland | 2,124 | 63,276 | 122,585 | 120,461 | 5,671.4 |
| UK | 103,476 | 112,548 | 112,259 | 8,783 | 8.5 |
| Lithuania | 2,104 | 24,628 | 36,683 | 34,579 | 1,643.5 |
| Latvia | 1,797 | 13,319 | 20,593 | 18,796 | 1,046.0 |
| Nigeria | 8,969 | 16,300 | 17,642 | 8,673 | 96.7 |
| Romania | 4,978 | 7,696 | 17,304 | 12,326 | 247.6 |
| India | 2,534 | 8,460 | 16,986 | 14,452 | 570.3 |
| Philippines | 3,900 | 9,548 | 12,791 | 8,891 | 228.0 |
| Germany | 7,216 | 10,289 | 11,305 | 4,089 | 56.7 |
| USA | 11,384 | 12,475 | 11,015 | -369 | -3.2 |
| China | 5,842 | 11,161 | 10,896 | 5,054 | 86.5 |
| Slovakia | 297 | 8,111 | 10,801 | 10,504 | 3,536.7 |
| France | 6,363 | 9,046 | 9,749 | 3,386 | 53.2 |
| Brazil | 1,087 | 4,388 | 8,704 | 7,617 | 700.7 |
| Hungary | 409 | 3,440 | 8,034 | 7,625 | 1,864.3 |
| Italy | 3,770 | 6,190 | 7,656 | 3,886 | 103.1 |
| Pakistan | 2,939 | 4,998 | 6,847 | 3,908 | 133.0 |
| Spain | 4,436 | 6,052 | 6,794 | 2,358 | 53.2 |
| Czech Republic | 1,103 | 5,159 | 5,451 | 4,348 | 394.2 |
| South Africa | 4,185 | 5,432 | 4,872 | 687 | 16.4 |
| Other non-Irish | 45,348 | 77,217 | 85,390 | 40,042 | 88.3 |
| Total non-Irish | 224,261 | 419,733 | 544,357 | 320,096 | 142.7 |



There were a total of 544,357 non-Irish nationals living in Ireland in April 2011, representing 199 different nations. A question on nationality was asked for the first time in Census 2002 revealing information about the nationality make-up of the Irish population. In the subsequent censuses of 2006 and 2011 the same question was asked therefore providing a data

series on nationality over the period 2002 to 2011.

The number of non-Irish nationals in 2002 was recorded at 224,261 persons. By 2006 this had increased to 419,733 representing an increase of 87 per cent. The growth in the number of non-Irish nationals has continued, albeit at a slower pace and their number stood at 544,357 at the time of the 2011 Census.

Other developments

Ireland introduced same-sex marriage by way of Referendum.

On May 22nd 2015, Ireland became the first country in the world to introduce same-sex marriage by popular vote with 62 per cent voting in its favour.



21st Century Ireland - Politics

Ireland is a parliamentary democracy. The National Parliament (Oireachtas) consists of the President and two Houses: Dáil Éireann (House of Representatives) and Seanad Éireann (the Senate) whose functions and powers come from the Constitution of Ireland. The Houses of the Oireachtas are situated at Leinster House, Dublin.



Information about the Oireachtas is available in detail at: www.oireachtas.ie/parliament/

The Government is headed by a prime minister called the Taoiseach, and a deputy prime minister called the Tánaiste.

Elections

The method of election to each House is different. The Seanad is largely an advisory body. It consists of sixty members: 11 nominated by the Taoiseach (Prime Minister), six elected by 3 national universities and 43 elected from vocational panels. The Seanad has the power to delay legislative proposals and is allowed 90 days to consider and amend bills sent to it by the Dáil.

The Members of Dáil Éireann (called Teachta Dála or TDs) are directly elected by the people at least once every five years. It currently has 166 members. Since 1922, it has met in Leinster House, on Kildare Street in Dublin. While, in principle, Dáil Éireann is only one of three components of the Oireachtas, in practice, the powers the constitution grants to the Dáil make it by far the dominant branch, meaning that most proposals passed by Dáil Éireann will ultimately become law.

The President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins

The President (Uachtarán na hÉireann) exercises his/her powers on the advice of the government. The President also has absolute discretion in certain matters, for example, referring a Bill to the Supreme



Court for a judgment on its constitutionality. The President is elected directly by the people every 7 years. The current president is Michael D. Higgins. For more details about the presidency go to www.president.ie



Taoiseach Enda Kenny, T.D

Enda Kenny was re-elected Taoiseach on 6 May 2016 for a 2nd term. Enda was first elected Taoiseach in March 2011. He has represented the people of Mayo as a Fine Gael member of Dáil Éireann since 1975, making him the longest serving TD in the house. He was elected Leader of Fine Gael in June 2002. He served as Minister for Tourism and Trade from 1994 – 1997. He was Minister for State at the Department of Education, Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, Western Development, Youth Affairs and Sport in the 1980s.

Tánaiste and Minister for Justice and Equality, Frances Fitzgerald, T.D.

She was appointed as Tánaiste and Minister for Justice and Equality on the 6th May 2016. She served as Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and Minister for Justice and Equality in the last Government. As an experienced national politician, Frances has both the knowledge and experience to best represent the people of Dublin Mid-West at national level.



Minister for Education and Skills, Richard Bruton, T.D.

Richard Bruton TD was appointed Minister of Education and Skills on 06 May 2016. Richard was Minister for Enterprise and Employment from 1994 to 1997 when 1,000 jobs a week were being created in Ireland. He served as Minister of State at the Department of Industry and Commerce, from 1986 to 1987. Richard was first elected to Dáil Éireann for Dublin North Central in 1982, having previously been a member of the Senate and a Local Authority. He has had wide experience in the Fine Gael Front Bench, holding eight different portfolios including Finance, Education and Science, Employment, Economic Planning and Public Sector Reform. He also held the post of Director of Policy. Richard is a research economist by profession, and worked as an economist before entering politics in the private sector and with the ESRI.

Minister of State for Training, Skills and Innovation, John Halligan T.D.

John Halligan is an Irish independent politician. He was elected as a Teachta Dála (TD) for the Waterford constituency at the 2011 general election. He was appointed as Minister of State for Training and Skills in May 2016.



21st Century Ireland – Economy

As a small open economy Ireland's financial fortunes are dependent on international trade and influenced by global markets. That means it's important for the country to build overseas partnerships and being part of the European Union enables us to do just that in solidarity with other nations.

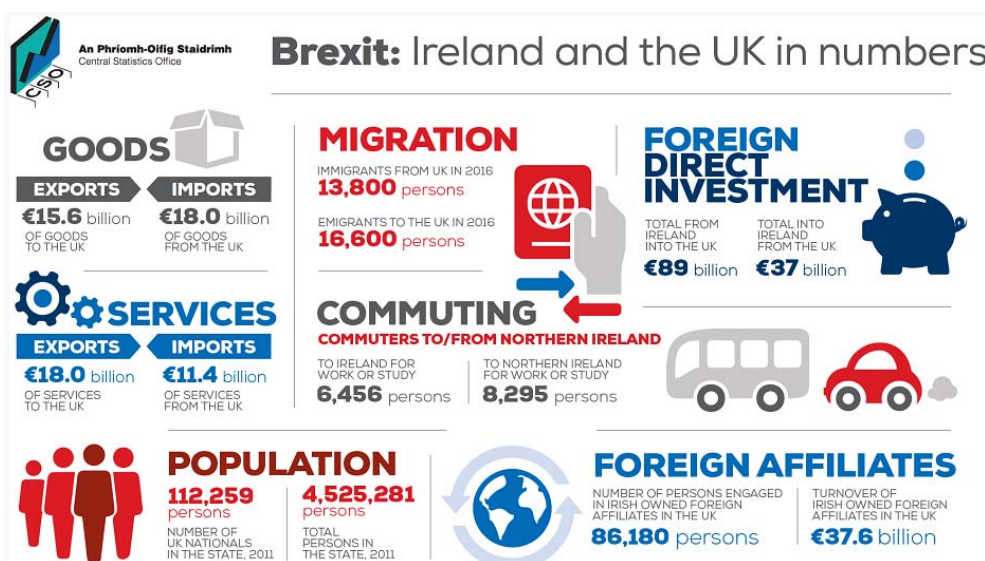
Before joining the EU in 1973, Ireland's largely agricultural based economy was choked by its dependence on the UK market. At that time, industrial trade and international co-operation were becoming the norm and EU membership helped Ireland move towards a modern, free market economy.

The EU's Single Market environment, together with decisions to introduce low corporate taxes and develop an Industrial Development Agency (IDA Ireland) to promote Ireland abroad, eventually enabled the new Irish economy to flourish.

One of the difficulties with small open economies like Ireland's is that they can be vulnerable to global factors and Ireland's strongest period of economic growth, from the mid '90s to the mid '00s, was followed by a spectacular crash sparked off by a worldwide financial meltdown. This led to the Irish Government requesting financial assistance from the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), collectively called the troika.

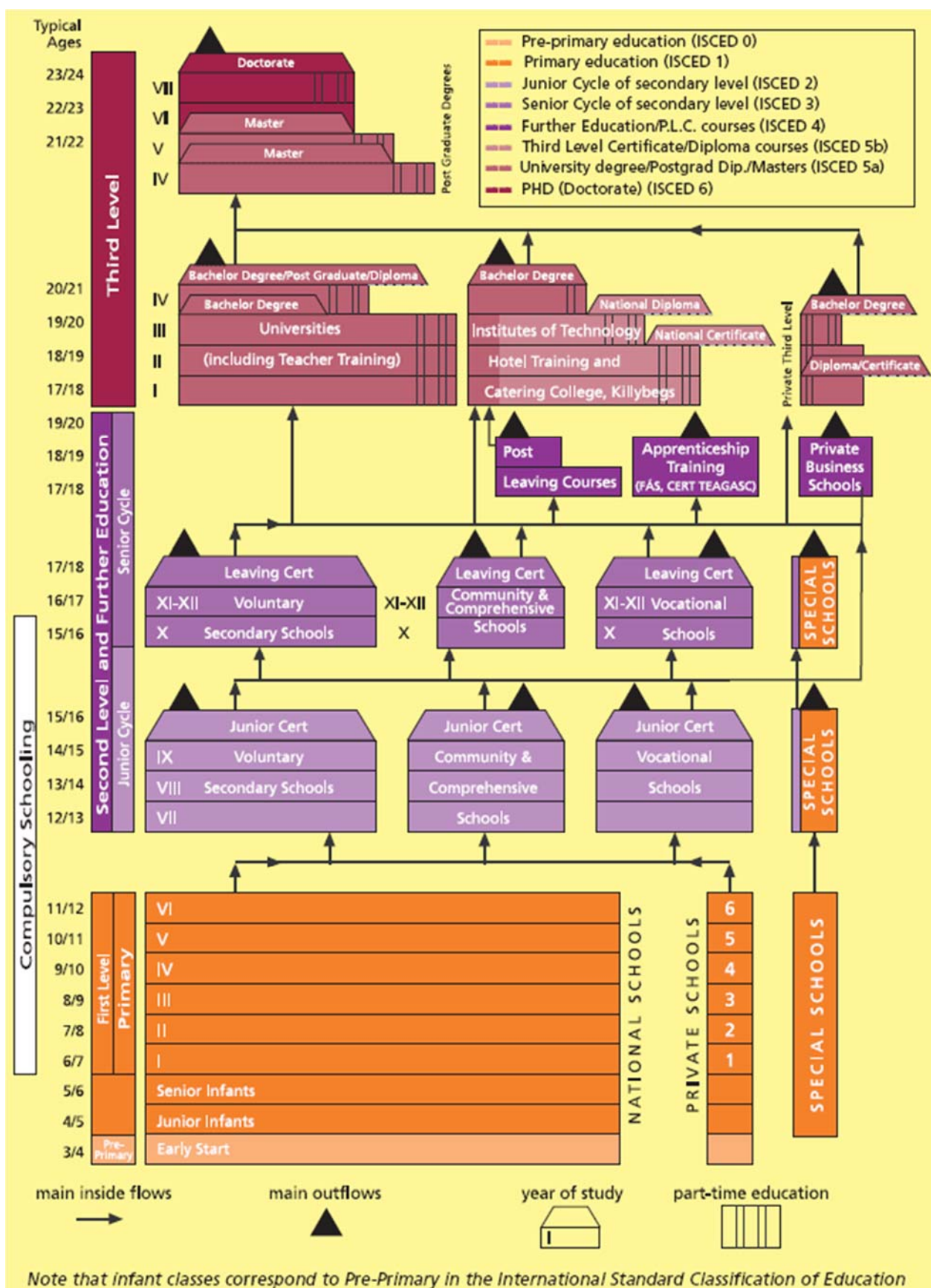
After several difficult years, Ireland's economy is now growing again and the European Union has introduced several new, powerful measures to better protect the economies of Ireland and all Member States in the future.

Consequences of Brexit?



Lifelong Learning in Ireland

Education System in Ireland



Data from the Central Statistics Office's Quarterly National Household Survey shows that in Quarter 4 of 2015, Ireland's participation in Lifelong Learning was 7.2%.

In 2016, the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) published a report on Lifelong Learning. Some key findings include:

- of the population of almost 2.5 million adults aged 25-64 in Ireland, 177,300 people participated in Lifelong Learning activities in Quarter 4 2015
- the majority of these (amounting to 116,700 persons) participated in formal learning activities (i.e. education and training in the regular system of schools, universities, colleges and other formal educational institutions)
- the remainder participated in non-formal learning activities (i.e. other organised and sustained educational activities which may or may not take place in educational institutions)
- with a participation rate of 8%, females were more likely than males (at 6.3%) to participate in Lifelong Learning, particularly in non-formal learning activities
- lifelong learning participation rates tend to decline with age, but participation is greater amongst those with higher educational attainment levels
- participation rates were above the national average for the economically inactive and the unemployed, while the rate was below the national average for those in employment
- Ireland's participation rate in non-formal learning is particularly low, although its rate of formal learning is amongst one of the highest in the EU

Education and Training Monitor 2016

The Education and Training Monitor is an annual publication that captures the evolution of education and training in the EU. It contributes to the objectives of the EU strategic framework for cooperation in education and training, the overall Commission's strategy for growth and employment and the European Semester cycle of economic policy co-ordination.

The Education and Training Monitor relies on a broad range of quantitative and qualitative sources, including Eurostat data, OECD studies and surveys, analysis of education systems undertaken by the Eurydice network, quantitative analysis of survey datasets, and academic networks.

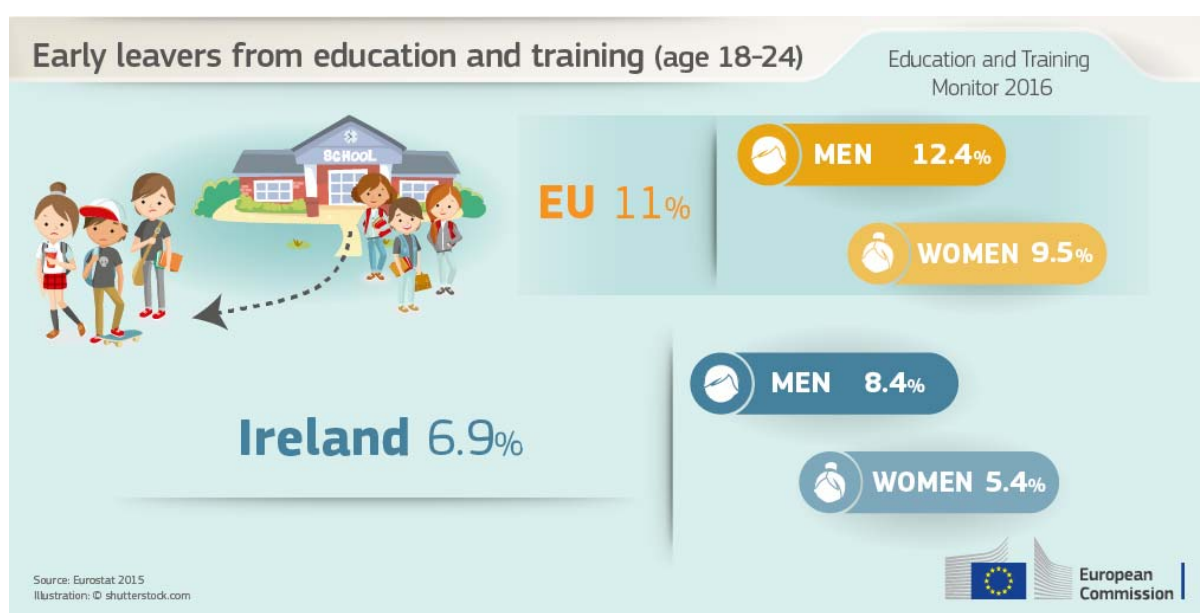
Highlights

- Ireland performs very well on early school leaving and tertiary educational attainment and has made significant progress in improving the provision of basic skills

- The growing fiscal space created by the recent and rapid economic recovery lessens pressure on public expenditure on education and allows for substantially increased capital investment, i.e. in developing educational infrastructure
- The affordability and full-time provision of quality early childhood education and care remain a challenge
- Equity and access to higher education for disadvantaged groups are still issues
- There are emerging skills shortages in certain sectors of the economy (e.g. ICT) and a need to further up-skill and reskill the adult population, in particular by increasing participation in further education and training

Key indicators

| | | Ireland | | EU average | |
|---|---------|---------|-------|------------|-------|
| | | 2012 | 2015 | 2012 | 2015 |
| ET 2020 benchmarks | | | | | |
| Early leavers from education and training (age 18-24) | | 9,7% | 6,9% | 12,7% | 11,0% |
| Tertiary education attainment (age 30-34) | | 51,1% | 52,3% | 36,0% | 38,7% |
| Early childhood education and care (ECEC) (from age 4 to starting age of compulsory education) <i>Data refer to 2011 and 2014</i> | | 98,6% | 96,0% | 93,2% | 94,3% |
| Proportion of 15 year-olds with underachievement in: | Reading | 9,6% | 10,2% | 17,8% | 19,7% |
| | Maths | 16,9% | 15,0% | 22,1% | 22,2% |
| | Science | 11,1% | 15,3% | 16,6% | 20,6% |
| Employment rate of recent graduates by education attainment (age 20-34 having left education 1-3 years before reference year) | | 69,3% | 75,3% | 75,9% | 76,9% |
| Adult participation in lifelong learning (age 25-64) | | 7,4% | 6,5% | 9,2% | 10,7% |



Early leavers from education and training (age 18-24)

Education and Training
Monitor 2016



EU 11%

FOREIGN BORN 19%

NATIVE BORN 10.1%

Ireland 6.9%

FOREIGN BORN 6.8%

NATIVE BORN 7%

Source: Eurostat 2015
Illustration: © shutterstock.com



Participation in early childhood education (age 4+)

Education and Training
Monitor 2016



Source: Eurostat 2014
Illustration: © shutterstock.com



Employment rates of recent graduates

Education and Training
Monitor 2016

Ireland 75.3%

EU 76.9%

Secondary vocational
education and training

59.4%

Secondary education
general

61.7%

Higher education

83.4%



Source: Eurostat 2015
Illustration: © shutterstock.com



Tertiary education attainment (age 30-34)

Education and Training
Monitor 2016

Ireland
52.3%

EU
38.7%



45.1%

Men

58.6%

Women



Source: Eurostat 2015
Illustration: © shutterstock.com



European
Commission

Tertiary education attainment (age 30-34)

Education and Training
Monitor 2016

Ireland
52.3%

EU
38.7%



55.2%

Foreign
born

50.9%

Native
born



Source: Eurostat 2015
Illustration: © shutterstock.com



European
Commission

Underachievement in basic skills

Education and Training
Monitor 2016



Reading

Ireland
9.6%

EU 17.8%



Maths

Ireland
16.9%

EU 22.1%



Science

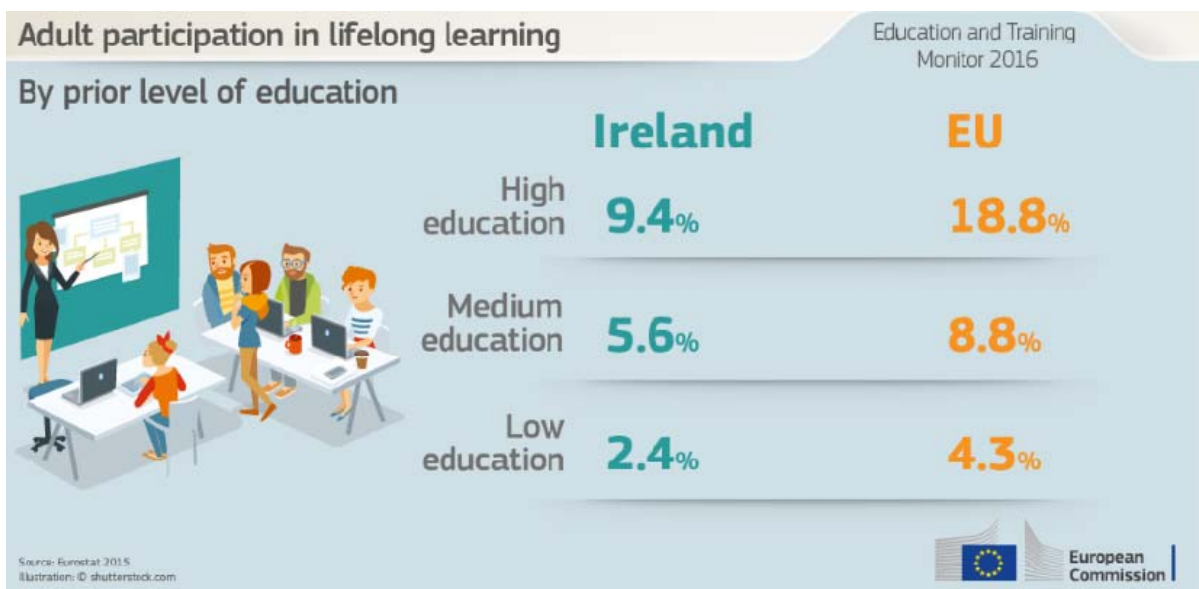
Ireland
11.1%

EU 16.6%

Source: OECD (PISA) 2012
Illustration: © shutterstock.com



European
Commission



Further Education and Training Strategy 2014 - 2019

The first ever strategy for the Further Education and Training (FET) sector aims to develop a world-class integrated system of further education and training in Ireland, which will promote economic development and meet the needs of all citizens.

The new strategy was developed by SOLAS with assistance from the ESRI which was commissioned to carry out evidence based research and assist in the development of the Strategy.

Five high level strategic goals have been identified:

1. **Skills for the Economy:** to address the current and future needs of learners, jobseekers, employers and employees and to contribute to national economic development
2. **Active Inclusion:** to support the active inclusion of people of all abilities in society with special reference to literacy and numeracy
3. **Quality Provision:** to provide high quality education and training programmes and to meet the appropriate national and international quality standards
4. **Integrated Planning and Funding:** FET provision will be planned and funded on the basis of objective analysis of needs and evidence of social and economic impact
5. **Standing of FET:** to ensure a valued learning path leading to agreed employment, career, developmental, personal and social options.

The Strategy follows a radical overhaul of the structure of the sector by the Government which includes the streamlining of 33 existing VECs into 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs), the abolition of FÁS and creation of SOLAS, the Further Education and Training Authority.

Overarching Strategy Implementation Plan

Dissemination of detailed Implementation Plan providing specifics around:

- Tasks required
- Key indicators
- Responsible Lead Agency
- Partner Agencies
- Timelines

Linked support/complementary activity

1. Implementation is supported by the published national FET Services Plan managed by SOLAS,
2. Regular progress reports by SOLAS on FET strategy implementation to Government, to DES and the SOLAS Board.
3. The SOLAS Three-Year Corporate Plan

You can read the entire Strategy [here](#)

FET Vision

A world class integrated FET system, highly valued by learners and employers, where a higher proportion of those who engage in FET including those with barriers to participation, such as persons with a disability as well as current priority cohorts identified by DSP such as long term unemployed persons, stay engaged, complete qualifications, transition successfully into employment or, where appropriate move into higher level qualifications in FET or HET

FET MISSION

Enable individuals and communities to achieve their developmental, personal, social, career and employment aspirations

CORE PRINCIPLES

- Learner and employer centred
- Evidence-based FET policy and practice
- Employment focussed and actively inclusive
- Responsive, flexible, innovative and high quality provision
- Consultative and collaborative
- Transparent and accountable
- Value for money

BENEFITS OF FET

- Consistently high quality education and training
- Learner and employer centred
- High job placement, good progression options
- Flexible and cost effective
- Barrier free access
- Person centred supports

How will we get there?

Strategic Goal 1

Skills for the Economy

Strategic Goal 2

Active Inclusion,
Literacy and Numeracy
Strategy

Strategic Goal 3

Quality Provision

Strategic Goal 4

Integrated Planning
and Funding

Strategic Goal 5

Standing of FET

Implementation Plan

Logistics

Tourism

There are three World Heritage Sites on the island: the Brú na Bóinne, Skellig Michael and the Giant's Causeway

For information on tourism please see: <https://www.tourismireland.com/>

Weather

Ireland has a mild but changeable oceanic climate with few extremes. The west tends to be wetter on average and prone to Atlantic storms, especially in the late autumn and winter months. These occasionally bring destructive winds and higher total rainfall to these areas, as well as sometimes snow and hail. Inland areas are warmer in summer and colder in winter.

It is recommended you bring an umbrella!

Dublin City Centre Accommodation

Buswells Hotel <http://www.buswells.ie>

The Dawson Hotel <http://www.thedawson.ie>

Nearby Hotels

Ashling Hotel (short tram to city centre) <http://www.ashlinghotel.ie>

Clayton Ballsbridge (short bus to city centre) <http://www.claytonhotelballsbridge.com/>

Mespil Hotel (short tram/walk to city centre) <http://www.mespilhotel.com>

Herbert Park Hotel (short bus to city centre) <http://www.herbertparkhotel.ie>

Ballsbridge Hotel (short bus to city centre) <http://www.ballsbridgehotel.com>

Restaurants & Pubs

There is a large selection of restaurants and pubs along Baggot Street and Stephen's Green.

There is also an Italian Quarter and Temple Bar is a popular destination for tourists!

Emergencies

In the case of an emergency and you need to contact an ambulance, fire brigade or the police, dial 999 or 112

Hospitals:

You can expect to pay a minimum of EUR 100 for admissions to the Accident and Emergency Department in hospital.

- St. James' Hospital, James's Street, Dublin 8, Ireland. ☎ +353 1 410 3000
- St. Vincents' Hospital, Elm Park, Merrion Rd, Dublin 4 ☎ +353 1 221 4000
- Mater Misericordiae University Hospital, Eccles St, Dublin 7. ☎ +353 1 803 2000

Doctor:

You can expect to pay EUR 60 – 65 for a consultation with a doctor

Suffolk Street Surgery, 107 Grafton Street, Dublin 2

☎ +353 1 679 8181

<https://suffolkstreetsurgery.ie/>

Opening Hours : Monday-Friday: 8.30am – 6.00pm
 Thursday: 8.30am – 7.30pm

Albany Clinic GP, Clifton Court, Lower Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin 2

☎ +353 1 661 2222

<http://www.albanyclinic.ie/>

Opening Hours: Monday – Friday **08:00 to 19:00**

Dentist

Donnybrook Dental, 114 Morehampton Road, Donnybrook, Dublin 4

☎ +353 1 6676938

<http://www.donnybrookdental.ie/>

Transport



As with any city, you've got options for getting around Dublin. You can hop aboard a Dublin Bus with an extensive network reaching across the county. There's a coastal train line, the DART, which stops at seaside towns from Greystones in the south to Malahide and Howth in the north. There's a light rail system, the LUAS, with the Green Line heading south from the city to Bride's Glen (work on an upgrade is in progress) and the Red Line heading west to Saggart. Dublinbikes, the most successful citywide bike hire scheme in Europe, is loved by the locals. Beyond that there's plenty of taxis, or you can hire a car.

Plan your route on: <https://www.transportforireland.ie>

Dublin Bus www.dublinbus.ie

Dublin Bus operates 11 routes across Dublin. The service runs from 06.30 – 23.30 during the week with late buses from the city on the weekend. Full route, real time and ticket information is available at www.dublinbus.ie There is also a Dublin Bus app for smartphones. Ask the bus driver for your fair when you get on the bus. You must have the exact change!

Dart <http://www.irishrail.ie/about-us/dart-commuter>

The Dart is a coastal rail service with 31 stations including fishing villages Dalkey and Howth. The service runs every 15 minutes from 06.30 - 23.00.

Dublin Bikes <http://www.dublinbikes.ie/>

This is a public bike scheme with 1500 bikes across 102 stations in the city. A 3-day ticket is EUR 5.00. The first 30 minutes of use is free on every bike.

LUAS www.luas.ie

LUAS light rail operates two lines, the Red Line running south from the city to Bride's Glen (22 stops) and the Green Line west to Saggart (32 stops). During peak times trams operate every 4-5 minutes with off peak every 10-15 minutes.

Taxi

You can hail a taxi on the street or you can download an app – Halo- and find a taxi this way also.