

# Skillnet

n/a

POLICY INSTRUMENT

 Ireland

## Description

Country

 Ireland

**Description of the initiative**

Skillnet Ireland is a business support agency of the Government of Ireland. Its mandate is to advance the competitiveness, productivity and innovation of Irish businesses through enterprise-led workforce development.

**Focus area**

### KEY TRAINING POLICY MEASURE

*It currently supports over 18,000 businesses nationwide and provides a wide range of valuable learning experiences to over 70,000 trainees. Its mission is to facilitate increased participation in enterprise training and workforce learning in Ireland. Through 70 Skillnet Business Networks, Skillnet Ireland allocates funding to groups of businesses in the same industry sector (or region) and with similar training needs, so they can deliver subsidised training for their teams. Skillnet Ireland also plays a key role in supporting and enabling Skillnet funded groups to reach their full potential.*

**Link**

<https://www.skillnetireland.ie/about/>

**Implementation level**

NATIONAL

**Legal base**

Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.

**Starting period**

Established in 1999

**Perspective**

n/a

**Policy area**

EDUCATION

TRAINING

EMPLOYMENT

INNOVATION

DIGITAL ECONOMY

## Funding

FUNDED BY NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

*Skillnet Ireland is funded from the National Training Fund through the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.*

OTHER

*Part funded by enterprises*

## Skill mismatch

### Skill mismatch target

UNDERQUALIFICATION (INDIVIDUALS' QUALIFICATIONS/CREDENTIALS ARE BELOW THEIR JOB'S NEEDS)

SKILL UNDERUTILISATION (INDIVIDUALS' SKILLS ARE NOT WELL USED IN THEIR JOBS)

SKILL SHORTAGES (EMPLOYERS CANNOT FILL THEIR VACANCIES DUE TO A LACK OF SKILLS IN THE LABOUR MARKET)

SKILL GAPS (WORKER'S SKILLS ARE BELOW THE LEVEL OF PROFICIENCY REQUIRED BY THEIR EMPLOYERS AND JOBS)

SKILLS OBSOLESCENCE (SOME OR ALL OF AN INDIVIDUAL'S SKILLS ARE NO LONGER RELEVANT TO THE CURRENT EMPLOYER OR IN THE LABOUR MARKET GENERALLY)

### Skills matching focus

The aim is to work with businesses (or groups of businesses in the same sector) to identify their current and future skill needs and support them to deliver training appropriate to their needs. There are a range of information sources that can be used to identify skill needs including statistics published by SOLAS and the report of the Expert Group on Future Skill Needs (which draws on various sources of skills anticipation).

UPSKILL OR RESKILL EMPLOYED ADULTS

UPSKILL OR RESKILL NON-EMPLOYED ADULTS

*As above*

ADDRESS SECTORAL OR OCCUPATIONAL SKILL SHORTAGES

*As above*

## Skills delivered

BASIC LITERACY AND NUMERACY SKILLS

BASIC DIGITAL SKILLS

MORE ADVANCED DIGITAL SKILLS

GENERAL EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS (TEAM WORKING, COMMUNICATION, ETC.)

CAREER MANAGEMENT SKILLS

## Methods

### Methods

EMPLOYER SURVEYS

*Skillnet encourages enterprises to lead the process for training, this helps ensure that programmes delivered through Skillnet Ireland and our nationwide Business Networks are highly relevant to industry needs.*

### Use of skills intelligence

INFORMING DECISIONS ON COURSE FUNDING/PROVISION

ENABLING STRATEGIC BUSINESS DECISIONS AT SECTOR/ENTERPRISE LEVEL

*Companies enter industry skills networks through the scheme to ensure that their organisation's workforce is as skilled as possible to meet industry needs*

## Stakeholders

### Main responsible body

NATIONAL MINISTRY

*Skillnet Ireland is governed by a Board representing key stakeholders from employer and employee representative bodies and the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science. Skillnet Ireland was established in 1999 and is funded from the National Training*

*Fund through the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science*

## Other involved organisations

### NATIONAL AGENCY

*Funding and skills forecasting*

### SOCIAL PARTNER: EMPLOYER ORGANISATION

*Funding and skills insight*

## Beneficiaries

### ADULTS IN EMPLOYMENT WITH UPSKILLING POTENTIAL

*Companies enter industry skills networks through the scheme to ensure that their organisation's workforce is as skilled as possible to meet industry needs*

### ADULTS IN EMPLOYMENT WITH RESKILLING POTENTIAL

*Some companies may require employees to be reskilled*

### EMPLOYED ADULTS AT RISK OF JOB DISPLACEMENT

*Technological change may put some jobs at risk requiring new skills development*

## Sustainability

### Success factors

Enterprise led nature of the programme ensures skills demand is accurately met.

### Barriers

Funding is a barrier, with potential resolution through EU funds. Another barrier is reach amongst SMEs which for now remains small at 5.2% of all such businesses.

### Monitoring and evaluation

Yearly annual reports, evaluation reports, as well as in house research and publications are available on the Skillnet website. The yearly evaluation reports are detailed pieces of work conducted by independent consultants.

### Updates

NO

### Effectiveness

During 2018, Skillnet Ireland delivered a total of 441,846 training days to 56,182 learners, exceeding the overall annual targets set by the Department of Education and Skills. Skillnet Ireland also

surpassed the training days targets for both in-employment and jobseeker training, by 26% and 46% respectively, during 2018. Skillnet Ireland worked with a total of 16,462 enterprises during 2018, representing a growth of 9.7% on the number of enterprises in 2017, and a 28% increase compared to the organisation's base in 2015. Businesses involved in the network have overwhelmingly positive reviews of the scheme in particular under the measure of future-proofing their organisation.

### **Sustainability**

There has been an upward movement in overall unit costs of Skillnet Ireland's training programme on a per trainee basis. Indecon's research found that 16% of Skillnet Ireland participating firms indicated that if Skillnet Ireland did not exist, they would have not arranged training at all; 12.8% would have organised training but at a later date; whilst 40.5% indicated that they would have arranged alternative training but to a lesser degree. The 2018 evaluation found continued positive feedback from both enterprises and learners on a range of aspects, including the impact on business productivity, turnover and long-term performance, as well as career and personal development benefits for Skillnet Ireland-supported learners.

## **Other instruments in Ireland**

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- [Skills To Advance.](#)  
n/a
- [Skills to Compete](#)  
n/a
- [The Springboard+](#)  
n/a