

Green Skills for Further Education and Training (FET) Roadmap 2021-2030

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 IRELAND

Timeline

2022 Implementation

2023 Implementation

2024 Completed

ID number 45129

Background

The National Strategy for Further Education and Training (FET) 2020-24 pointed out the importance of green skills in FET and called for increasing FET capability for energy, construction and the environment. It also noted that curricula across all relevant FET programmes, including apprenticeships, should be updated to embed the sustainable development focus. It emphasised that all FET provision should develop critical climate change and environmental knowledge and FET campuses should be based on a strong sustainability ethos.

In 2021, SOLAS (the national authority for FET) established the Construction and Green Skills Programme Office.

Currently, 16 Education and Training Boards (statutory FET providers – ETBs) deliver around 50 programmes with a focus on green skills.

Objectives

The policy roadmap set three main objectives.

- (a) Green skills for life: creating awareness of climate justice, sustainability and bioeconomic issues across VET learners and staff.
- (b) Green skills for construction: training and upskilling individuals in construction occupations in the latest green technologies.
- (c) Green skills for careers: creating career opportunities in the green economy for the employed, unemployed and those in vulnerable sectors.

Description

The policy roadmap 'Green Skills for FET 2021-30' sets a strategic direction for green skills initiatives throughout the Irish FET sector and points to key areas for the FET Sector in the transition to a green economy. The policy incorporates the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP), the Green skills action plan and responds to some other national policies and legislation, e.g. Skills for zero carbon (2021), Future Jobs Ireland (2019) and the Action plan for apprenticeships 2021-25. It also responds to the mandate set out on the EU directives, the European Green Deal (2019) and the Osnabrück Declaration on vocation

2022 Implementation

The policy roadmap 'Green skills for FET 2021-30' was launched at the Green Skills Summit that took place in March 2022.

The Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, FET sector leaders, managers, teachers, trainers and instructors, representatives from higher education, industry, employers, and employer groups took part. During the summit, the SOLAS Skills and Labour Market Research Unit presented an overview of national and international green skills research; industry leaders outlined future skill needs for green and sustainable business environment. The participants also discussed how FET can best meet the skill needs and support the green transition. Also the first ever cohort of FET teaching and instructing staff were presented with their qualification for training in Net Zero Energy Building (NZEB) standards.

Following the launch of the policy roadmap, some actions took place in 2022.

Increasing capacity to deliver courses in NZEB and retrofitting

In addition to the existing ones, the Limerick Clare ETB opened a new centre of excellence for FET training in NZEB and retrofitting skills. It is to offer training to approximately 1 500 learners annually. The number of workers benefitting from such training has increased, from 793 enrolments in 2021 to a record of 2 034 enrolments in 2022. These are learners looking for employment or employees looking to upskill.

New qualifications and FET courses

In 2022, eCollege, the national online learning service for the VET sector, launched a new online bite-sized course in energy reduction in the home or workplace. The course was developed in partnership with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI). The course is free and open to all VET learners aged over 18 who have a Personal Public Service Number (PPSN).

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) approved two new green skills micro qualifications on Ireland's National qualification's framework (NQF): Level 4 Environmental sustainability awareness at Level 4 and Environmental sustainability at Level 5.

2023 Implementation

In April 2023: The Chief Executive of SOLAS (the National Agency for the funding, planning and co-ordination of Further Education and Training - FET) outlined in a statement to the Joint Committee on Education, Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science of the Irish Parliament (Oireachtas) the commitment of the Further Education and Training Sector (FET) in relation to Green Skills, indicating that every FET course and every FET learner will have access to a module on sustainability awareness, with Level 4 and 5 micro qualifications and online open access eCollege course rolled out to facilitate this.

In May 2023, the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research Innovation and Science officially opened the new Near Zero Energy Building (NZEB) and Retrofitting Centre of Excellence in Cork Education and Training Board (CETB). The Centre will offer training to approximately 1,500 learners annually. Training will consist of NZEB Electrical, Plastering, Plumbing, Bricklaying, and Carpentry, Retrofit Skills and External Wall Insulation (EWI) complemented by training in NZEB fundamentals, Air Tightness, Ventilation and Insulation. This will be further enhanced via upskilling courses in Solar and Heat Pump Technologies. The 1,000 square metre training facility will provide skills training for individuals who are unemployed and for individuals currently working in construction wishing to upskill. The centre will contribute significantly to national policy priorities on *Housing for All* including housing construction, retrofitting of homes, and carbon reduction. This is in line with the Government target of retrofitting 500 000

homes in Ireland by 2030.

In August 2023 City of Dublin ETB launched its Centre of Excellence in Retrofit Skills training/NZEB. This additional provision includes NZEB Fundamental Awareness, NZEB Retrofit, NZEB Ventilation, NZEB Site Supervisor, and Retrofit Insulation Skills.

Also in August 2023, the Minister for DFHERIS announced an important milestone for NZEB and training in retrofit with a new Mobile NZEB Training Unit. The mobile unit will travel to construction sites and schools across the country to allow people participate in a training course, wherever they are. The Unit is powered by solar PV panels and includes a working heat pump and ventilation system, making it entirely self-sufficient and showcasing excellent technologies. The unit will also promote future careers in construction, introducing learners in upper secondary education to the Modern Methods of Construction (MMC).

In November 2023, the Minister for the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) announced the development of a national centre for electric vehicle skills. The centre will be based in Mullingar, in the centre of the county. When fully developed, the centre will train people to repair and maintain not only electric cars, but also electric bikes, scooters, trucks, buses, vans and heavy goods vehicles. The centre will allow the Further Education Training (FET) sector to remain a leader in the delivery of motor mechanic skills.

2024 Completed

This action is now completed - superseded by the First National Further Education & Training (FET) Strategy for the Green Transition: Green Skills 2030 (PD 48773).

Bodies responsible

- Further Education and Training Authority (SOLAS)
- Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS)
- Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications
- Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI)
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)
- City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETb)
- Cavan Monaghan Education and Training Board (CMETB)
- Cork Education and Training Board (CETB)
- Dublin Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB)
- Donegal Education and Training Board (DETb)
- Kildare Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB)
- Kilkenny Carlow Education and Training Board (KCETB)
- Laois Offaly Education and Training Board (LOETB)
- Longford Westmeath Education and Training Board (LWETB)
- Galway Roscommon Education and Training Board (GRETb)
- Mayo Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board (MSLETB)
- Kerry Education and Training Board (KETB)
- Limerick Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB)
- Tipperary Education and Training Board (TETb)
- Waterford Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB)

Target group

Learners

Young people (15-29 years old)

Adult learners

Unemployed and jobseekers

Persons in employment, including those at risk of unemployment

Education professionals

Teachers

Trainers

Entities providing VET

Companies

VET providers (all kinds)

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Coordinating VET and other policies

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Integrating green transition and sustainability in VET curricula and programmes

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Providing for individuals' re- and upskilling needs

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[VET Policy Roadmap 'Green Skills for FET 2021-30'](#)

[Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science opens VET Green Skills Summit](#)

[Recording of VET Green Skills Summit in March 2022](#)

[Joint Statement from Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science \(DFHERIS\) and Minister of Environment, Climate and Communication](#)

[SOLAS Green Skills Programme Office](#)

[Opening of NZEB Centre of Excellence in Limerick Clare ETB](#)

[Online, short courses offered by Ecollege](#)

[Opening Statement by Chief Executive. SOLAS to the Joint Committee on Education, Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science - April 2023](#)

[Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science opens the new Near Zero Energy Building \(NZEB\) and Retrofitting Centre of Excellence in Cork](#)

[City of Dublin ETB launches Centre of Excellence in Retrofit Skills Training](#)

[Minister announces the development of a dedicated national centre for electric vehicle skills](#)

[Minister announces advancement in NZEB and retrofit training with development of a Mobile NZEB Training Unit](#)

Related policy developments

2025 Implementation

New Prison Education Taskforce: Education, Training and Apprenticeship Opportunities to support Rehabilitation and Post-Release Access to Employment

The Prison Education Taskforce is co-chaired by the Minister for Law Reform and the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research Innovation and Science.

 IRELAND

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Completed

First National Further Education & Training (FET) Strategy for the Green Transition: Green Skills 2030

The strategy was developed by SOLAS, in partnership with consultants KPMG and in consultation with Ireland's sixteen (16) Education and Training Boards (ETBs), public bodies, government departments and key industry stakeholders.

 IRELAND

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Implementation

Further Education and Training (VET) Funding Model Review

The process of review started in 2019 with the agreement on the guiding principles and approach. An international expert panel was appointed, with an internal funding model review advisory group and data modelling working group established to support the panel's work.

 IRELAND

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Implementation

Tertiary Degrees in Further Education and Training, guaranteeing progression to Higher Education.

Creating a unified tertiary system is one of the strategic priorities of the National FET strategy 2020-24.

 IRELAND

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Implementation

Further Education and Training Colleges of the Future (CotF): Capital Call

The National FET Strategy defined that CotFs should have the following characteristics:

 IRELAND

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2021 Approved/Agreed

Transforming Learning 2020-24: Ireland's National Further Education and Training Strategy

The FET strategy 2020–24 was developed in consultation with the FET sector and other key stakeholders. Consultation was wide-ranging and included bilateral meetings, regional workshops and a public call for submissions.

 IRELAND

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2023 Completed

E-college = free online learning opportunities in the Further Education and Training (FET) sector in Ireland, including sustainability and micro qualifications

eCollege provides online courses, including computer programming, data science, office productivity and web and graphic design. In 2015, eCollege awarded two major four-year contracts worth EUR 7.5 million to Cenit college and Enovation solutions.

 IRELAND

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Completed

Strategic Performance Agreements for FET System National Targets 2022-2024

Each SPA set out plans for the development and innovation of the VET system and include each ETB's contribution to the national FET system targets agreed with the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS).

 IRELAND

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

“ ... ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). Green Skills for Further Education and Training (FET) Roadmap 2021-2030: Ireland. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2025 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/45129>