

Skills for growth

POLICY DEVELOPMENT	PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE	 IRELAND
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Timeline

2017 Implementation	2018 Implementation	2019 Implementation
2020 Implementation	2021 Implementation	2022 Completed

ID number 28301

Description

The Skills for growth initiative was launched by Enterprise Ireland and the Department of Education and Skills to all regions. The inclusion of other government agencies ensures that a comprehensive and coherent picture of skills needs can be gained at the government level. The initiative guides small and medium enterprise (SME) representatives to think strategically about their current and future skills needs. It also introduces them to tools and questionnaires, which help them identify skills needs, skills shortages and reasons for the skills needs arising. Once skills needs have been identified, regional skills forums link companies with the education and training providers best suited to responding to their skills needs. All data collected in this capacity is collated by the Skills and Labour Market Research unit in SOLAS and used in the identification of skills shortages in Ireland.

The Skills for growth project is overseen by the Department of Further and Higher Education Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS), with members comprising the Skills planning and enterprise engagement unit (SPEE) in DFHERIS, the Skills and Labour Market Research Unit in SOLAS, Enterprise Ireland and the DEASP.

2017 Implementation

The Skills for growth initiative is launched in December 2017.

2018 Implementation

In 2018, additional partners were brought on board. These partners include employer engagement officers working for other government agencies, e.g. Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP) and Údarás na Gaeltachta, the regional authority responsible for the economic, social and cultural development of Ireland's Irish-speaking regions.

2019 Implementation

The Skills for growth initiative continued to expand during 2019, in terms of partners and the amount of data gathered. Additional partners came on board, employment engagement officers in DEASP and Údarás na Gaeltachta, and received training in gathering data relevant to the identification of skills needs and gaps in Ireland.

Enterprise Ireland continued as a partner, rolling out workshops that led to further engagement between indigenous Irish businesses at regional level, and the managers of the regional skills forums (RSFs).

Data on difficult to fill jobs and upskilling/reskilling requirements were collected on a quarterly basis and used to inform the 2019 National skills bulletin, published by SOLAS, on behalf of the National Skills Council (NSC).

2020 Implementation

The activities of the Skills for growth project continued during 2020, although the impact of COVID-19 and the related economic restrictions was reflected in a slightly reduced number of employers surveyed. Training on the identification of difficult-to-fill vacancies was moved online in the second half of 2020 and was delivered to staff engaging directly with employers, most notably to the employer engagement officers in DEASP. Despite the pandemic, difficult-to-fill vacancies continued to arise (albeit at a slightly lower level than the previous year) and the Skills for growth data were used to inform the 2020 National skills bulletin.

2021 Implementation

Skills for growth continued, where possible, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2022 Completed

This initiative has been mainstreamed within the services and provision of the regional skills forums (RSFs), and the delivery of skills audit to employers in each of the local regions.

Bodies responsible

- Department of Social Protection
- Enterprise Ireland
- Further Education and Training Authority (SOLAS)
- Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS)
- Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP) (until 2020)
- Department of Education and Skills (until 2020)

Target group

Entities providing VET

Companies

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)

Other stakeholders

Social partners (employer organisations and trade unions)

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET

Establishing and developing skills intelligence systems

Subsystem

Further reading

[Skills for growth details regional skills forums](#)

[Regional skills forums](#)

Related policy developments

2022 Completed

The network of regional skills forums

To take on board skills needs at regional level, the Department of Education and Skills set up and funded nine regional skills forums in May 2016. The forums are part of the National skills strategy.

 IRELAND

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

“ ... ” **Cite as**

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<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28301>