

The National Skills Council (NSC)

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 IRELAND

Timeline

2017 Approved/Agreed 2018 Implementation 2019 Implementation
2020 Implementation 2021 Implementation 2022 Completed

ID number 28300

Description

As stipulated in the National skills strategy 2025, a National Skills Council (NSC) was launched in April 2017 and is chaired by the education minister. It oversees and advises on identified skills needs and how to ensure delivery of the corresponding skills. The NSC includes representatives from senior levels in the public and private sector. It is an advisory, non-statutory body under the remit of the Department of Education.

2017 Approved/Agreed

2018 Implementation

2019 Implementation

In 2019, the NSC, within its remit to advise on the prioritisation of identified skills needs and on how to secure delivery of identified needs, discussed the development of the human capital initiative (HCI) and the question of ensuring a continued regional focus in response to skills needs. The council recognises that the significant investment through the HCI will help to develop new undergraduate places, new conversion courses for graduates to meet identified areas of skills needs in our modern workforce and drive agility and innovation across higher education. The HCI is a higher education initiative that consists of three pillars: full-time graduate conversion courses, additional places on existing full-time undergraduate provision, and innovation and agility. The funding under each is awarded through a series of challenge-based competitive call models.

2020 Implementation

At its meeting in September 2020, the NSC, discussed how the July stimulus package (i.e. a funding initiative aiming to keep people in, and getting them back to, work; the total worth of the package is approximately EUR 7.4 billion) would enhance support for the further and higher education sector and its stakeholders, including learners, students, employees, employers and further and higher education providers. A total of EUR 100 million was allocated from the July stimulus package to the sector to fund over 35 000 additional places in the current year.

In 2020, the NSC approved the following reports for publication: *Lifelong learning*

amongst adults in Ireland, quarter 4 2019 (SOLAS/NSC); *National skills bulletin 2020* (SOLAS/NSC); *Monitoring Ireland's skills supply 2020* (SOLAS/NSC); *Building future skills* (Expert group on future skills needs (EGFSN)/NSC)); and *Together for design* (EGFSN/NSC).

2021 Implementation

The Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) leads Ireland's *National skills strategy 2025*, working across Government via a cross-departmental project team, and working through the primary skills infrastructures, the National Skills Council and nine regional skills forums. Ireland's current *National skills strategy* is to be reviewed as part of a joint project between the State, stakeholders in the skills sector and the OECD. The review, led by the OECD, focuses on how Ireland is equipped to meet current and future skills needs as well as examines how businesses and employees can be supported to engage in lifelong learning. The NSC plays a role in informing the OECD review, which is due in 2023.

2022 Completed

The NSC is now established and performs its core work. An annual statement of the work of the council is presented to the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.

Bodies responsible

- Department of Education and Skills (until 2020)
- Department of Education
- Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS)

Target group

Entities providing VET

VET providers (all kinds)

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

IVET CVET

Further reading

[Information about the National Skills Council \(NSC\)](#)

[National Skills Council Meetings](#)

Related policy developments

2025 Completed

The National Skills Council (NSC): new partnerships and first strategic advice to government, following OCED Report on Ireland's Skills Strategy

A review was conducted in partnership with the OECD. The review concentrated on four areas:

- balance in skills;
- lifelong learning;
- innovation;
- governance.

The report identified four priorities:

 IRELAND

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

“ ... ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). The National Skills Council (NSC): 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/28300>