

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

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN

 IRELAND

Timeline

2024 **Completed**

ID number 48773

Background

The requirement to provide workforce with green skills is recognised in Ireland by a wide range of policies and reports. The need for green skills is emphasised in skills reports such as in the National Skills Strategy 2025, Skills for Zero Carbon, Building Future Skills 2020, and Future Jobs Ireland 2019. National policy and strategies recognise and respond to green skills demand, as shown by the Climate Action Plan 2024, the Action Plan for Apprenticeship 2021-25, and the National Further Education and Training Strategy 2020-24. Green skills have also been considered at a sectoral level in Housing for All 2021, Powering Prosperity: Ireland's Offshore Wind Industrial Strategy 2024, the National Retrofit Plan 2021, and the Report on the Analysis of Skills for Residential Construction and Retrofitting 2023-30.

This policy development builds on the *Green Skills for FET 2021-30* roadmap published in 2022, creating high-level actions for embedding green skills initiatives throughout Ireland's Further Education and Training sector as the policy response to the actions and recommendations required by EU and national directives.

This Strategy is also an indication of the commitment of the FET sector to Ireland's Second National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development: ESD to 2030.

Objectives

This is the first national Further Education & Training (FET) Strategy for the Green Transition and aims to shape the response and contribution of the sector towards meeting Ireland's climate action targets to halve Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

Description

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. The strategy examines crucial sectors including construction, agriculture, transport, energy, hospitality, and finance, identifies critical skills gaps, and presents strategic and sector specific

recommendations. The strategy also outlines ways in which FET can equip the learners with the skills required to build a workforce that supports the transition to a green economy and a society that is just and inclusive for all.

In relation to policy alignment, the report details how the assessment of legislation and policy was conducted to provide an understanding of the sources of green skills demand in Ireland. The definitions of green skills and transversal skills align with those used at national and European levels. The list of occupations provided to industry stakeholders to report skills needs was also based on the standard occupational classification used by the Central Statistics Office (CSO). Furthermore, the recommendations align with EU efforts to integrate GreenComp, the European sustainability competence framework.

The strategic priorities constitute cross-sectoral actions to promote and develop green skills:

- (a) Strategic Priority 1: Increasing awareness of FET programmes and green skills provision.
- (b) Strategic Priority 2: Promoting career opportunities arising from the green transition.
- (c) Strategic Priority 3: Integrating green skills and transversal competences content into all FET programmes.
- (d) Strategic Priority 4: Developing cross-sectoral green compliance, disclosure and reporting skills.
- (e) Strategic Priority 5: Supporting FET green skills programmes design and delivery.

Green Skills 2030 also includes Sectoral Recommendations for each economic sector considered across three themes:

- (a) FET Programmes Development;
- (b) Opportunities for Specialist Skills Centres;
- (c) Pathways between Further and Higher Education.

Specific recommendations for industry sectors included:

- (a) Construction & Built Environment;
- (b) Construction & Built Environment Recommendations;
- (c) Transport & Logistics;
- (d) Agriculture, Forestry & Marine;
- (e) Biodiversity & Environment;
- (f) Tourism & Hospitality;
- (g) Accounting & Business.

The Strategy also outlines the next steps for the implementation through the next national FET Strategy 2025-2029 and the national system performance targets known as the Strategic Performance Agreements between SOLAS and the ETBs.

The delivery of Green Skills 2030 will be overseen by the 'Green Skills 2030 Implementation Group'. It is envisioned that membership of the group will include representatives from: SOLAS, ETBs, ETBI and DHFERIS.

2024 Completed

In October 2024, the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science launched the Green Skills 2030, the first National Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy for the Green Transition. The Strategy marks an important milestone in setting out the direction for the Irish FET sector's response to emerging green skills needs, and identifies key skills gaps impacting Ireland's ability to transition to a climate neutral society across critical sectors such as construction, agriculture, transport, energy, hospitality and finance.

In collaboration with the 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs), public bodies, government departments, and key industry stakeholders, the strategy outlines the opportunities available for the FET sector to respond to these skills gaps and build an inclusive workforce at the forefront of the green transition.

Bodies responsible

- Further Education and Training Authority (SOLAS)
- Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS)

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices
Young people (15-29 years old)
Young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs)
Learners with migrant background, including refugees
Learners at risk of early leaving or/and early leavers
Learners with disabilities
Adult learners
Older workers and employees (55 - 64 years old)
Unemployed and jobseekers
Persons in employment, including those at risk of unemployment
Low-skilled/qualified persons
Learners from other groups at risk of exclusion (minorities, people with fewer opportunities due to geographical location or social-economic disadvantaged position)

Education professionals

Teachers
Trainers
School leaders
Adult educators
Guidance practitioners

Entities providing VET

Companies
Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)
VET providers (all kinds)

Other stakeholders

Social partners (employer organisations and trade unions)
National, regional and local authorities

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Coordinating VET and other policies
Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET
Establishing and developing skills intelligence systems

Modernising VET infrastructure

Making VET institutions sustainable and green

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses
Developing and updating learning resources and materials
Acquiring key competences

Integrating green transition and sustainability in VET curricula and programmes
Supporting Centres of vocational excellence (CoVEs)

Transparency and portability of VET skills and qualifications

Developing and applying qualifications smaller/shorter than full

Teachers, trainers and school leaders competences

Supporting teachers and trainers for green transition and sustainability

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Promotion strategies and campaigns for VET and lifelong learning

Permeability between IVET and CVET and general and vocational pathways, academic and professional higher education

Financial and non-financial incentives to learners, providers and companies

Providing for individuals' re- and upskilling needs

European and international dimensions of VET

VET internationalisation strategies

European vocational core profiles

Transnational VET initiatives, including joint VET programmes

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[Green skills 2030: The 1st National Further Education & Training \(FET\) Strategy for the Green Transition](#)

[Minister launches first National Further Education and Training Strategy for the Green Transition](#)

[FET Green Skills](#)

[ReferNet Ireland, & Cedefop \(2025, January 22\). Ireland: Green 2030 - First national further education and training \(FET\) strategy for the green transition. National news on VET.](#)

Related policy developments

2024 Implementation

New Green Devolved Capital Grant to Improve Energy Efficiency and Decarbonisation across VET Estate for 2024

The Green Devolved Capital Grant is to be distributed to the 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs) who deliver VET to assist them to hit their targets for 2030 as set out in the Public Sector Climate Action Mandate.

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation**Further Education and Training Colleges of the Future (CotF):
Capital Call**

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

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Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Completed**Green Skills for Further Education and Training (FET) Roadmap
2021-2030**

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.

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Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

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.

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Type of development

“ … ” **Cite as**

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). First National Further Education & Training (FET) Strategy for the Green Transition: Green Skills 2030: Ireland. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2024 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/48773>