

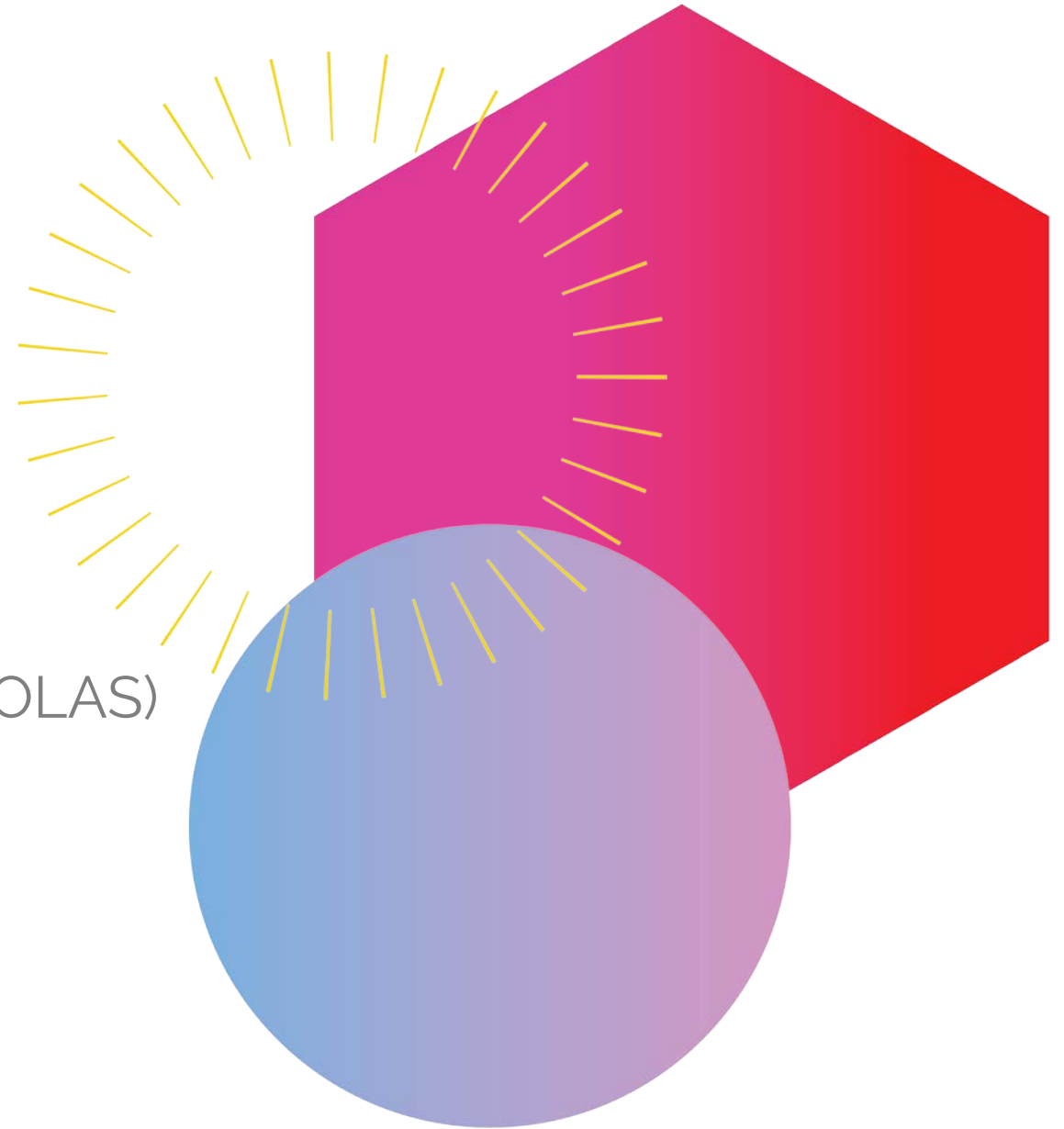
Transforming Learning in Ireland in the European Year of Skills

Brian Gallagher & Aedin O'Toole (SOLAS)

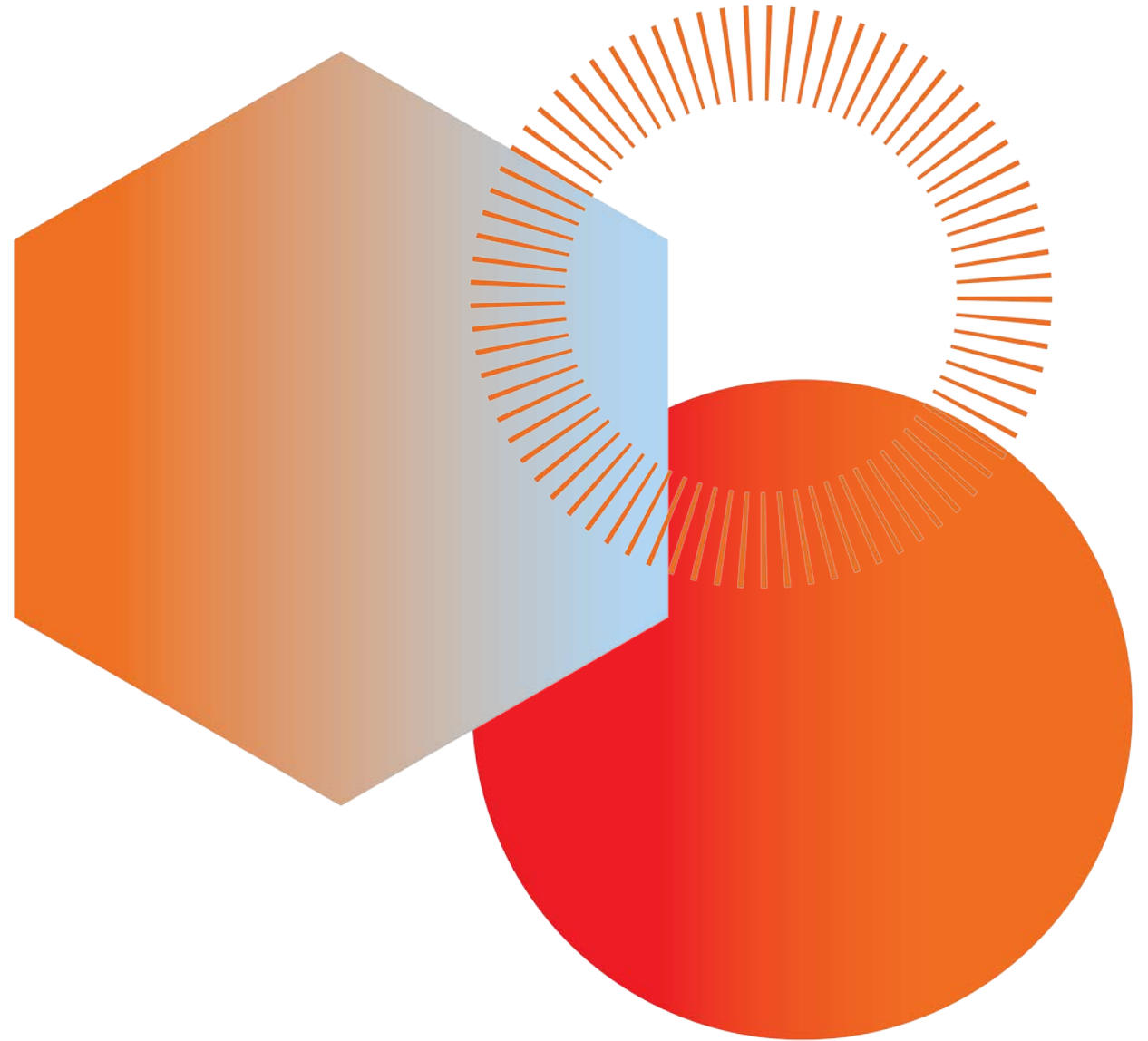
ReferNet Partnership Forum

25 May 2023

SOLAS
learning works



SOLAS – the
national agency to
fund, co-ordinate
and monitor
Further Education
and Training (FET)
provision in Ireland





Facts and figures from SOLAS Annual Report 2021

FET in 2021

98,212

full-time
beneficiaries

144,436

part-time
beneficiaries

279,253

beneficiaries

36,605

community education
beneficiaries

201,451

new
entrants

48,833

e-college
beneficiaries

33

skills
clusters

Delivered by

16 ETBs

22 State agencies and Bodies

20 voluntary secondary and community comprehensive schools



2021 Funding to FET Providers and Programmes

Grants	€M
Grants to Education and Training Boards	759,182
Grants to VSCCS	3,966
Grants to Organisations in the FET sector	10,256
Apprenticeship Incentivisation Grants	10,389
Grants to Consortia and Co-ordinating Bodies	3,466
Total Grants	787,259





The National FET
Strategy
Future FET:
Transforming
Learning 2020-24



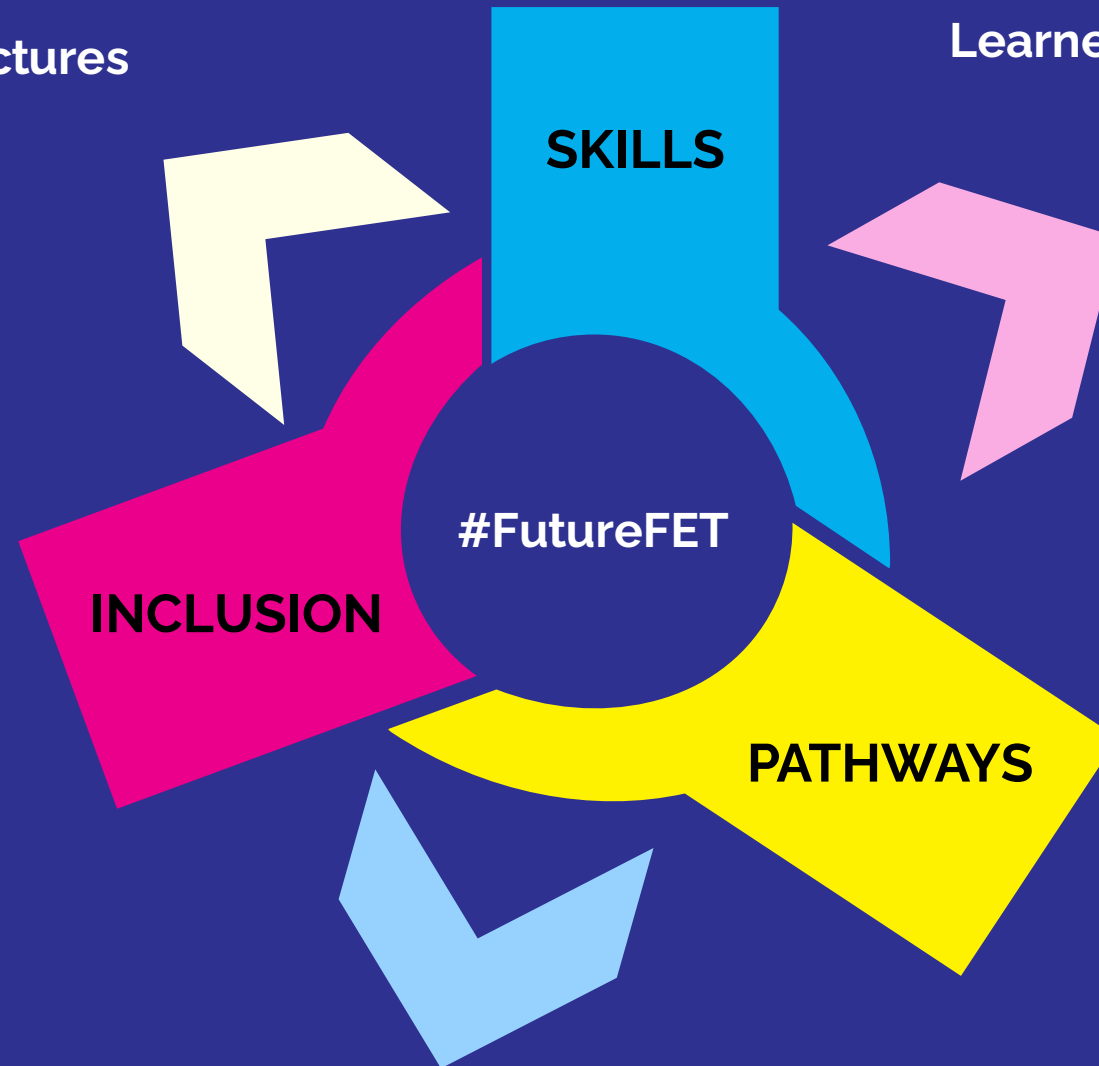
National FET Strategy 2020-2024: Future FET Transforming Learning

Staffing Capabilities & Structures

Learner & Performance Centred

Capital Infrastructure

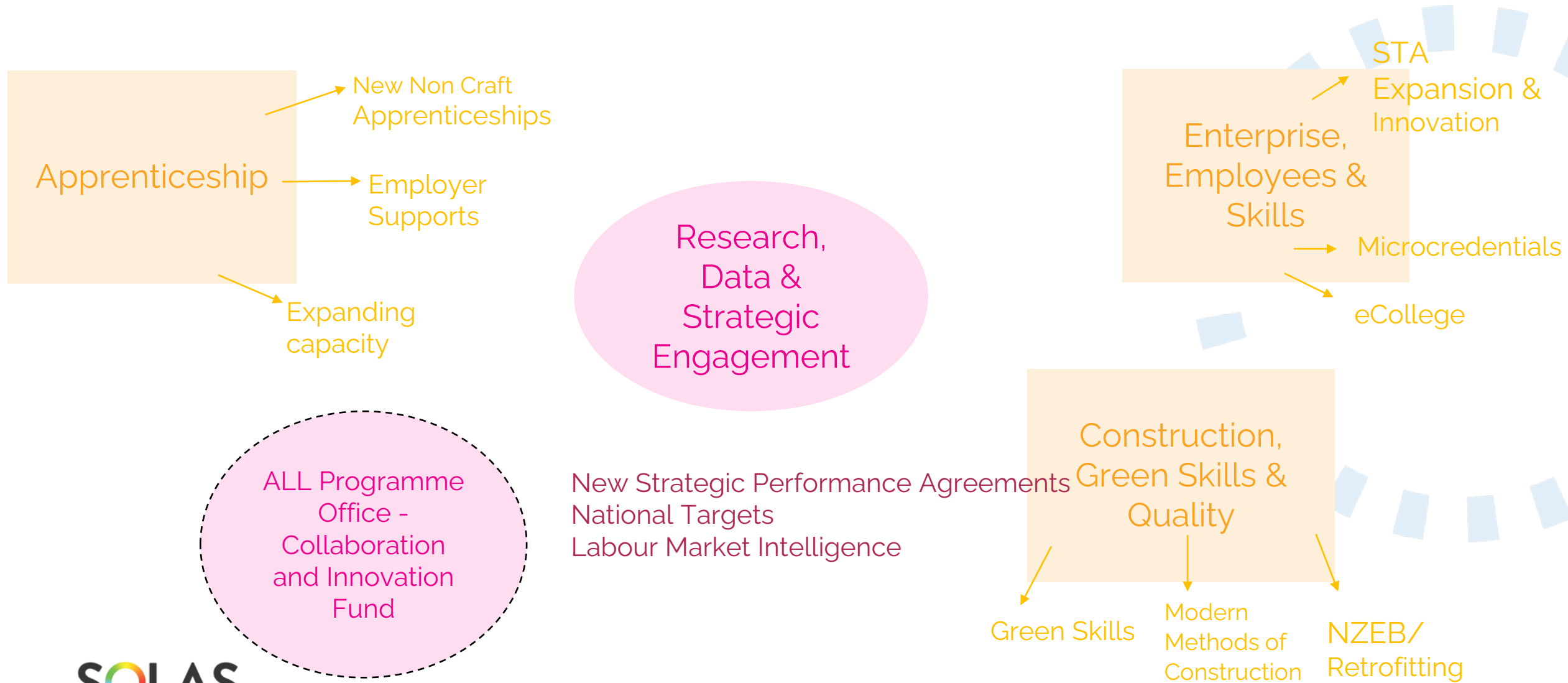
Digital Transformation



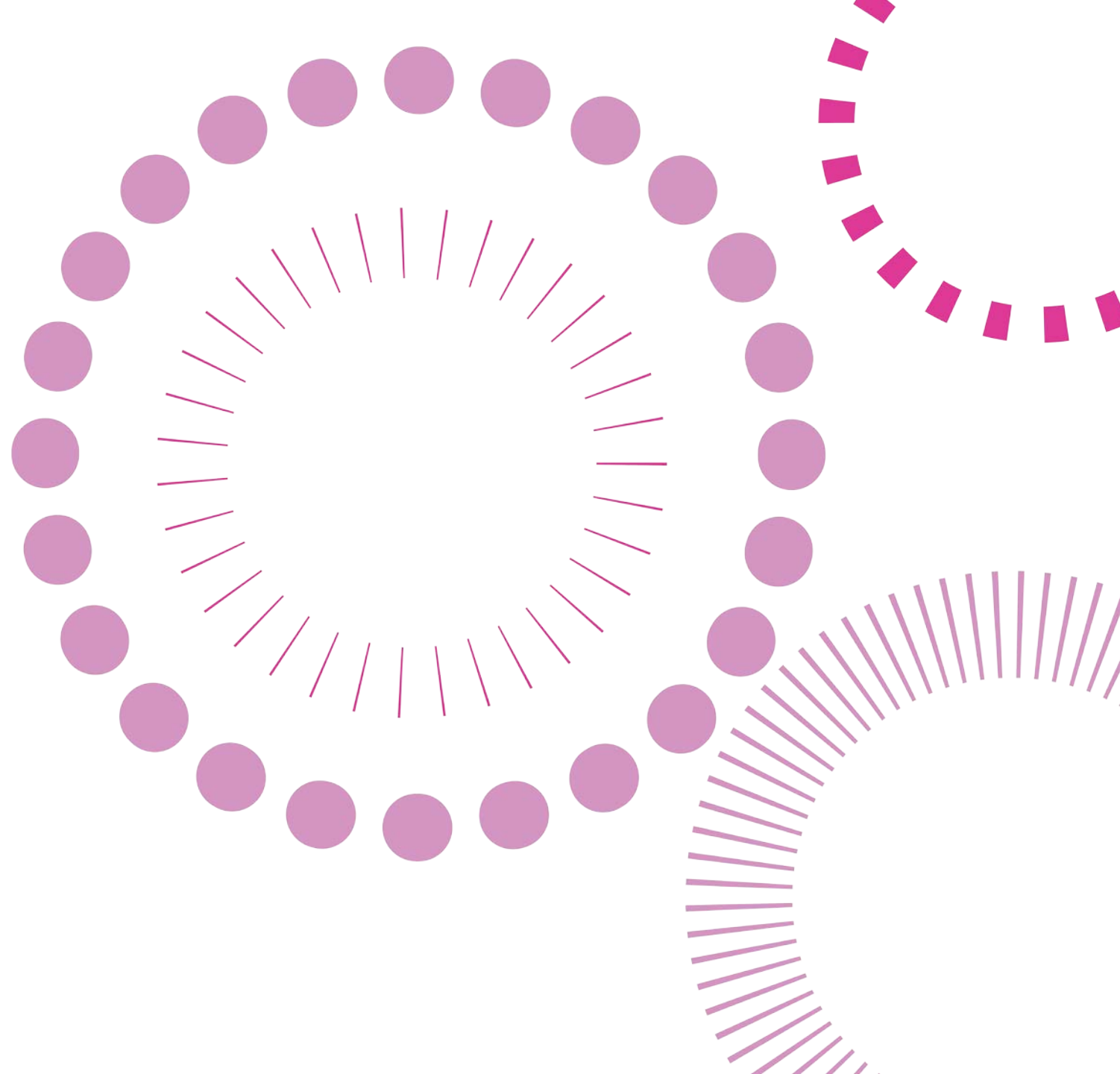
There are four (4) core areas in the “Building Skills” strategic priority

- FET as a resource for employers and employees.
- Delivering on apprenticeships.
- A new proposition at NQF Levels 5 & 6 (EQF 4 & 5).
- Meeting critical skills needs.

Transforming Education – Building Skills



Ireland in the European Year of Skills 2023



OCED Report for Ireland Launched 9th May



Four (4) Main Recommendations

- Securing a balance in skills through a responsive and diversified supply of skills
- Fostering greater participation in lifelong learning in and outside the workplace.
- Leveraging skills to drive innovation and strengthen company/firm performance
- Strengthening skills governance to build a joined up skills ecosystem

From the FET Strategy, a key enabling theme is the Digital Transformation of FET

- *...” improving educational systems through better data and analysis..”*

The OCED Report outlines the opportunity to

“Strengthen the collection, exchange and use of skills information”



Skills & Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU)

- Gathers & collates data to **monitor skills supply & demand in labour market; identify imbalances**
- Data analysis contributes to **evidence-informed policy making**

Online Job Vacancy Advert Data (OJVAD)



- **OVATE - Online Vacancy Analysis Tool for Europe**
 - CEDEFOP collect and process data from millions of job adverts posted online (inc. deduplication processes, validation, etc)
 - Detailed data accessed via CEDEFOP **DataLAB**, deployed in the EC Data Platform
 - Data explored using R (but Python & Jupyter also available)
- **Jobsireland.ie** – PES employment portal

Using OJVAD, in 2022 the SLMRU published

Shifting Sands

Navigating the patterns emerging
in the Irish labour market post-COVID-19

SOLAS Data Analytics Unit

The Data Analytics Unit supports SOLAS, the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and Education and Training Boards to inform change and to ensure that planning and provision of FET is economic, efficient and effective.



FET Strategic Performance Agreements 2022-24

National Strategic Synergy



Target Theme	Target Measure
Supporting Jobs	Jobs: Return employment outcomes to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024
	Skills to Compete: Deliver 50,000 places to support those who lost their job to find a pathway back to sustainable work
Creating Pathways	Progression within FET: Return progression movements within FET to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024
	Progression from FET-HE: Grow levels of progression by 10% by 2024
Fostering Inclusion	Transversal Skills: Return certification at NFQ levels 1-3 to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024
	Widening Participation: Return participation levels by key target groups to 2019 levels and resume growth
Upskilling through Lifetimes and Careers	Adult Literacy for Life (ALL): Increase provision for literacy and numeracy
	Lifelong Learning: Return engagement in lifelong learning to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024
Targeting Key Skills Needs	Skills to Advance: Continue to grow workforce upskilling enrolments
	Key Skills Needs: Grow the number of places addressing key skills needs
	Retrofitting Skills: Expansion of reskilling provision to meet retrofitting needs
	Green Skills for All: Embedding of core green skills

National Targets 2022-24

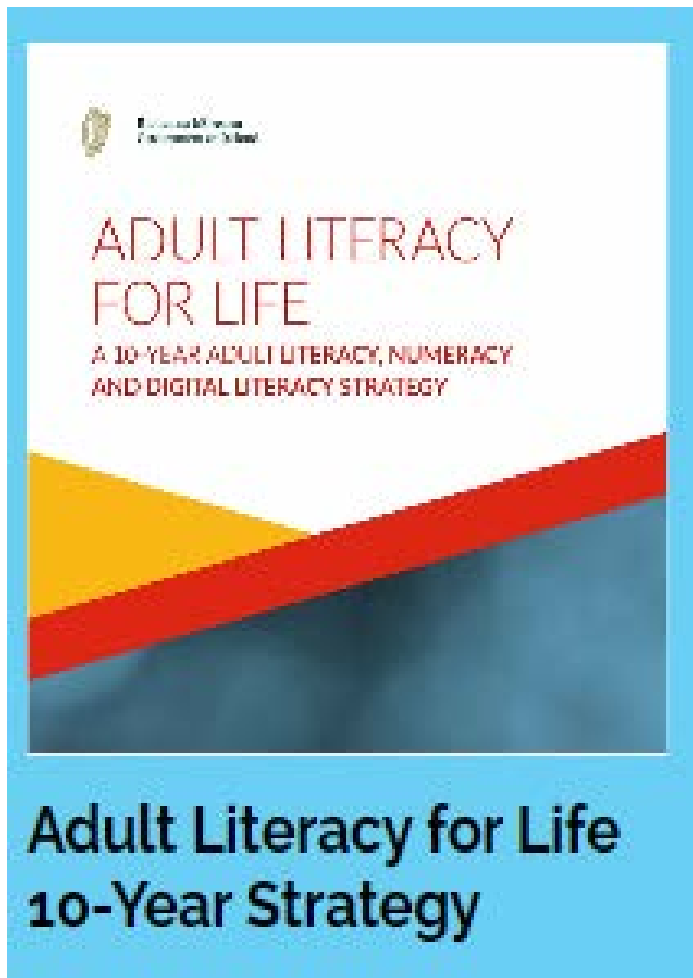
5 Target Themes
12 Target Measures

Evidenced Outcomes Performance of the FET System 2022

Target Theme	Target Measure	National % Achieved in 2022
Supporting Jobs	Jobs: Return employment outcomes to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024	Not yet available as waiting data update CSO
	Skills to Compete: Deliver 50,000 places to support those who lost their job to find a pathway back to sustainable work	107%
Creating Pathways	Progression within FET: Return progression movements within FET to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024	109%
	Progression from FET-HE: Grow levels of progression by 10% by 2024	Not yet available as waiting data update CSO
Fostering Inclusion	Transversal Skills: Return certification at NFQ levels 1-3 to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024	116%
	Widening Participation: Return participation levels by key target groups to 2019 levels and resume growth	112%
Upskilling through Lifetimes and Careers	Adult Literacy for Life (ALL): Increase provision for literacy and numeracy	117%
	Lifelong Learning: Return engagement in lifelong learning to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024	117%
Targeting Key Skills Needs	Skills to Advance: Continue to grow workforce upskilling enrolments	107%
	Key Skills Needs: Grow the number of places addressing key skills needs	100%
	Retrofitting Skills: Expansion of reskilling provision to meet retrofitting needs	69%
	Green Skills for All: Embedding of core green skills module across FET courses	Not available in 2022



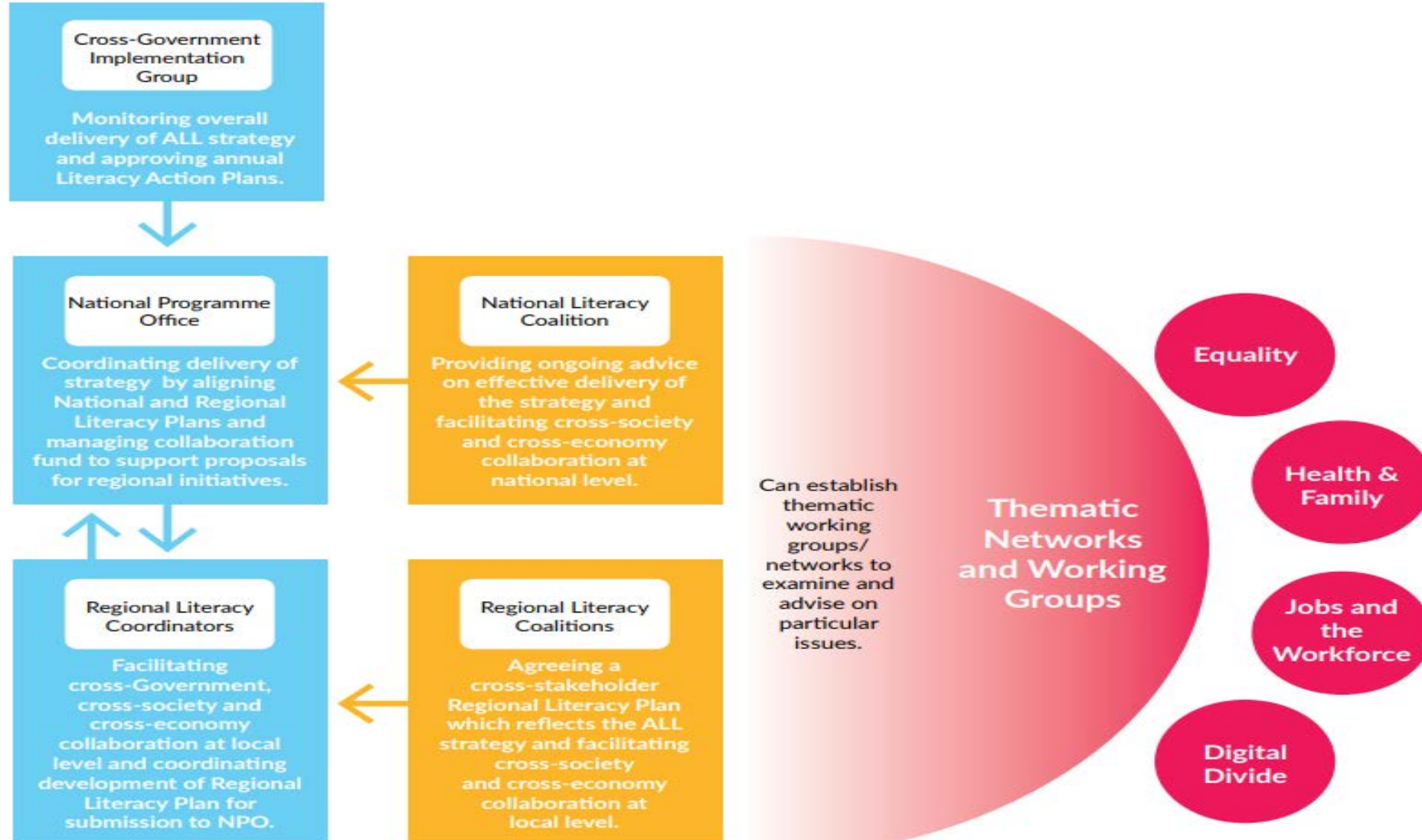
Adult Literacy for Life Strategy



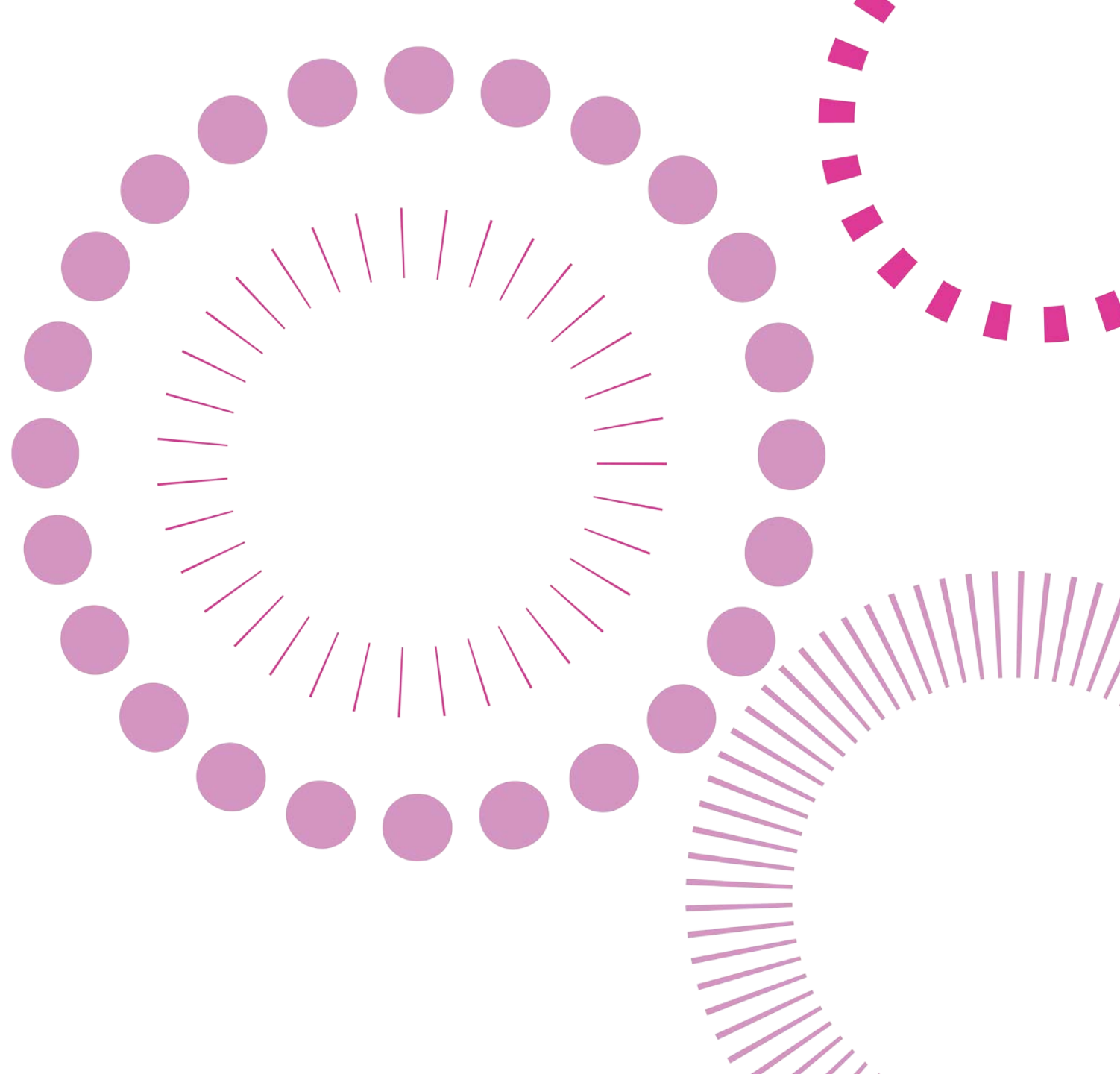
The ALL Strategy includes a number of commitments on:

- Increasing the number of learners engaging with literacy and language support by 20,000 by expanding the range of courses available over the first half of the strategy's lifetime;
- Reducing the number of people adults in Ireland with unmet literacy needs, from 18% to 7%;
- Reducing the number of adults in Ireland with unmet numeracy needs from 25% to 12%;
- Reducing the share of adults in Ireland without basic digital skills from 47% to 20%.

ALL Strategy Structures



Community Education Framework







In 2019, there were 33,046 learner enrolments in SOLAS funded Community Education. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Community Education was substantial, with a 36% decrease in learner enrolments in 2020 and a gradual recovery of learner enrolments in 2021. Therefore, this Community Education report uses 2019 as the base year for this learner profile analysis.

The Report also noted that the majority of community education learners were enrolled in an uncertified course (94.2%)



An Roinn Breisoidreachais agus Ardoideachais,
Taighde, Nuálaitochta agus Eolaíochta
Department of Further and Higher Education,
Research, Innovation and Science



Year of Skills

gov.ie/skills

#YearOfSkills

#LearnANewSkill

SOLAS
learning works

