



**etbi**

Education and Training  
Boards Ireland

*Boird Oideachais agus  
Oiliúna Éireann*

# Meeting **21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills**

## Needs in FET

Improving transition from education  
to labour market?

**NAPD Conference 2014**

# FURTHER EDUCATION & TRAINING (FET)

- **FE** provision grew like **topsy** (from '80s on) – **no** FE **sector** – an **amalgam** of programmes **initiatives**.
- **2013/14** **VECs & FÁS Training Services** amalgamated to form **16** Education and Training Boards (**ETBs**)
- **2013** A national Further Education & Training Authority (**SOLAS**) established.
- SOLAS **responsibility** for funding, planning and co-ordinating FET provision that is **responsive** to the **needs of learners** and **skills needs** of **economy**.

# Further Education Provision in Nos

- Adult Literacy (AL) – **56,797 (including ESOL)**
- Back to Education Initiative (BTEI) **30,000**
- Community Education (CE) – **55,000**
- Voc. Ed. Training Opport. Scheme (VTOS) **5,637**
- Skills for Work (SfW) - **1,500**
- Labour Market Activation (LMA) - **3,000**
- Youthreach (ESL) - **3,313**
- Prisoner Education – **1,700**
- Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) **33,748**
- Wide range of self financing programmes **55,000**

**246,000**

# CURRENT ISSUES IN FET

- **Image** – parents want **3rd level** education – Yet studies show that by 2020 **65% of jobs will be in mid to low skills**.
- **Poor permeability** between FET & 3<sup>rd</sup> level.
- **Narrow apprenticeship** system – **construction & mechanical** mainly – recent [Review of Apprenticeship](#) recommends a major expansion of apprenticeship in Ireland.
- **Further Education courses** involve **insufficient** real **workplace learning** – see [recent review of further education](#) (PLC courses).

# CURRENT ISSUES IN FET (Contd. 1)

- FET – vast array of **different**, separately **funded**, separately **managed** programmes – each with its **own** eligibility and **access rules** – **Difficult** for **learners** to **understand**
- **Concerns** about the **extent** to which FET provides the **knowledge, skills, competences & dispositions** required in workforce.

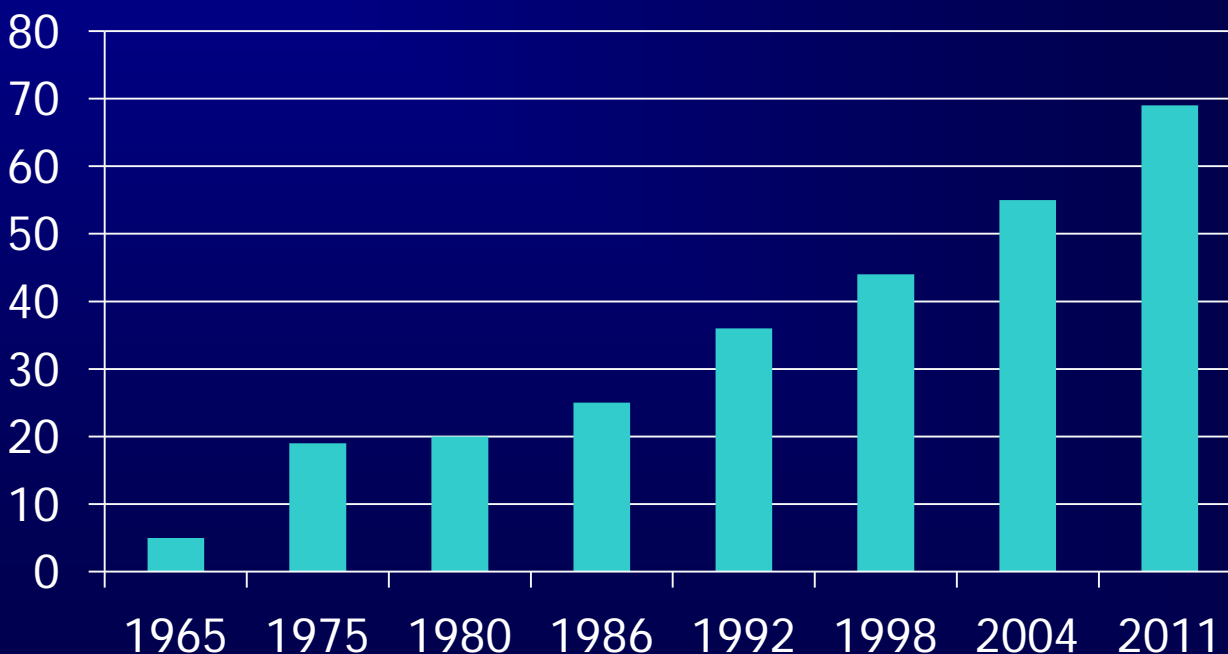
# CURRENT ISSUES IN FET (Contd. 2)

- **Buildings, facilities & teaching resources** for FET can be of poor quality
- The principal FET Programme (**PLC courses**) **part of 2<sup>nd</sup> level system** – using school buildings **and school models of delivery – full time courses, 9.00am to 4.00pm each day, for 33 week year**
- **No clear connection between national economic policy & the FET provision**
- **Lack of data regarding FET outcomes, progression, etc.**
- **No national approach to qualifying and continuously professionally developing** teachers/tutors – see Cedefop - [Competence Framework for Vet Professions](#)

# Ireland Besotted with 3<sup>rd</sup> Level

- Irish Parents convinced 'going to college' is key to 'good life'.

% of School Leavers Transferring to 3rd Level



**By contrast apprenticeship route to work for 66% of young Germans**

# Wrong road!!

- **Many graduates** unemployed
- HEA report: **1 in 6 drop out of 3<sup>rd</sup> level** before commencing 2<sup>nd</sup> year
- Need to reconsider the **suitability of 3<sup>rd</sup> level for significant minority** of school leavers



# Wrong road!!

- Ireland **highest** % **(51.1)** of **30-34s tertiary qualifications** compared with **36 %** across **EU**
- **EU 2020 target 40 %** for age group
- **Studies:** even in **high tech economies**, **50% workforce require medium level skills** & **15 %** require **low level skills**.

# Wrong road!!

- **Ireland's skills' challenge** in Low - Medium skills – in FET
- NESCS: **23 % Irish households jobless** in 2010
- **Next-highest** UK and Belgium (13 %), with EU average of 11 %
- Yet: **Jobs unfilled**
- **NESCS: disconnect** between **competences** of **jobless & those required** in **workplace**

# Apprenticeship!!

- Apprenticeship widely recognised as education/training model suited to giving employability at levels 4 to 6 on NQF.
- Lack of progression routes from apprenticeship to HE means significant proportion of school leavers, unsuited to 3rd-level on leaving school, choose to 'go to college'

# Understanding of Skills!!

- Policymakers **have defined skills in terms of academic qualifications** – a strong **bias** against career-focused education
- **Careers guidance** has reflected this bias.  
**BUT**
- Growing realisation that **discussion of skills must involve occupational skills. AND THAT**
- **Many skills cannot be acquired within the classroom** – acquisition must **involve real workplace experience**

# Why the Apprenticeship model?

- **Overwhelming support across the EU and beyond for apprenticeship**
- Delivers workforce **required competences** -
- Accommodate **males & females** with range of **abilities / aptitudes across sectors** - child-care, health-care, construction, engineering, hospitality, administration/office work ....
- **Strong EU economies** has support of **unions**, public and private **enterprise** and **government**
- **Pilot 'apprenticeship** commencing in **ICT** – preserve of 3<sup>rd</sup> level graduate.

# EU, support virtually unanimous?

- **Reduces skills mismatch - eases transition** from **education** to **work** - **greater mismatch** in countries with **underdeveloped apprenticeship**
- Where **well-developed, youth unemployment much lower than EU** average.
- **+ relationship between growth in % of labour force with VET qualifications and jobs growth in SME** sector.
- Facilitates **smooth transition** from **learning** to **work** - opportunity to acquire work experience while enhancing skills in demand in workplace

# Other support for apprenticeship?

- **Worldwide concern** about **capacity** of **21<sup>st</sup> century education** to **equip young people** with **competences** required for both work and living
- **Apprenticeship initiatives** launched across the **world** - UK, Australia, India and China
- Apprenticeship **promotes employment in manufacturing** - 22% (Germany) 16 % (Switzerland) only 10 % (US) & 11% (Ireland)

# Irish Apprenticeship

- **No** and **range** of apprenticeships much **lower in Ireland** than in the **strong economies** of northern Europe
- **Germany** has some **340 apprenticeships** compared to **26** in **Ireland.**



# 2014 Review Apprenticeship in Ireland

## Key Recommendations

- Apprenticeship **should involve alternating on-the-job employer-based training (>50%) and off-the-job training** - prepares for **specific occupation** with qualification from **Level 5 (NFQ)** up
- **Move from all apprenticeships at level 6** NFQ - level to **reflect** amount of learning involved
- Apprenticeships to involve **integration** of **transversal skills**
- Apprenticeships **open to all persons** above school leaving age.

# 2014 Review Apprenticeship in Ireland

## Key Recommendations

- **Duration** for each apprenticeship to **reflect time needed** to **achieve** the **learning outcomes** - level 5 completed in 2 years ... higher levels longer
- Clear **opportunities** for **progression** to 3<sup>rd</sup>-level
- **Establish fund** for **development** of **apprenticeships** in **new occupational areas**
- Apprenticeship Council to **invite proposals** from consortia of industries/education/training providers

# 2014 Apprenticeship Implementation Plan

**Signals** State **commitment** to reforming apprenticeship in the context of the wider reform of FET and **commits to the following**

- **Apprenticeship Council** by **Q3 2014**
- Council calls **proposals new** apprenticeships - **Q 4 2014**
- Report identifying viable proposals to Minister **Q 2 of 2015**
- Minister approves resources for new apprenticeships **Q 2 2015**

# Where to from here?

- **More young people** (NEETS) involved in **FET** – pre-apprenticeships
- **Nos in PLC & F/T** education in **IOTs** (lower levels) **contract** – **apprenticeships expand**
- However, **FET provision** to **increase** – **off-the-job** FET for **more apprentices**.
- **Facilities/staff** currently delivering PLC/IoT courses **released** to deliver/support **off-the-job** training for apprentices.

# Implications for FET Provision

- Expansion of apprenticeships - **huge implications** for **FET & PLCs**.
- **Apprenticeship** in **ascendant** - influenced by experience in Germany, Switzerland & Austria.
- Ireland likely (10+ yrs) to **significantly expand** its range of apprenticeships.
- Will inevitably **involve the ETBs AS** most **new** apprenticeships **will be FE** apprenticeships
- Possibly **all off-job training** in ETBs – pilots commencing
- **Pre-apprenticeship** programmes will also develop to address NEET rate – **24% V 16%** EU

# A New Era Dawns

'If apprenticeship is reformed along the lines proposed in the Review of Apprenticeship Training report, **many more young people** will be given the **opportunity to progress seamlessly from school to the acquisition of competences and qualifications that provide employability and progression routes to third-level** education for those wishing to pursue such studies.

The current system **deprives many young** people of such opportunities, at a **huge cost** to those **young people** and the **wider economy'**

# A New Era Dawns

## HOWEVER:

'The total apprenticeship package needs to be reformed to provide a seamless progression route from pre-apprenticeship right up to tertiary studies – a route that allows participants to exit the route with worthwhile competences and qualifications (and access to other education and training pathways without having to return to where they commenced their journey) at the end of each stage on the route.

If apprenticeship is reformed in this way, it will intuitively be attractive to young people, their parents and those who guide them because they will clearly see its limitless possibilities. '