

Education & Training Boards Ireland

Boird Oideachais & Oiliúna Éireann

Annual Report **20-21**



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Education and Training
Boards Ireland
*Boird Oideachais agus
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The ETBI Annual Report provides an overview of initiatives and achievements over the course of the last 12 months and the collective ETB Sector response to the challenges and opportunities posed by ongoing and frequently changing COVID-19 restrictions.

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FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIRPERSON



Patrick Murphy

Cllr. Patrick Murphy
Chairperson and President
of the ETBI Board
September 2021

Collaboration and partnership are the watchwords of the approach taken by Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) over the past year and the work outlined in this annual report. As President, I have witnessed the strength of the sector as we continued to face the serious, ongoing, and rapidly evolving challenges posed by COVID-19. While our communities went in and out of lockdown, staff in our schools, youth services, further education and training colleges and centres, as well as in our administrative offices pivoted and adapted rapidly. Moreover, they did so with compassion and good humour. As a proud Corkonian, I am deeply honoured to have been President and to have been able to support not only this work but also the significant cross-sectoral initiatives that have taken place. From the ETB Patron's Framework to the FET College of the Future and the delivery of Youth Services, ETBs are establishing a best practice approach across the lifelong breadth of services they provide to learners, ably supported by their organisational support and development teams. Teamwork and connection, whether that is online or in person, is essential to the delivery of excellence in all our teaching and learning environments.

I would also like to pay tribute to all of our students, learners and trainees across the country who give us the motivation to keep doing our important work and acknowledge the great resilience shown by them in these challenging times.

ETBI is committed to representing the sector and continues to work in partnership with government Departments and SOLAS. I would like to thank both former and present members and staff who have worked diligently in ETBI on behalf of the sector. I would like to commend all the members of ETBI, members of the Board and Forums, the General Secretary, Mr Paddy Lavelle and the ETBI team for their hard work and dedication particularly in responding to the ongoing challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.



Paddy Lavelle

Paddy Lavelle
General Secretary
September 2021

I am delighted to present the ETBI Annual Report 2020-2021 to our AGM 2021. It provides an overview of the key achievements over the course of the year and reflects the challenges in responding to COVID-19. We hope you find that the report is relevant and provides you with a picture of what has been achieved. This year we have engaged with the 16 ETBs through the forums and working groups to develop the new strategy for ETBI and hope to present it to the ETBI Board in October. External stakeholders were invited to suggest from their viewpoint what ETBI's strategy should include. We were delighted that so many participated in the consultations. Our new strategy will guide the work for the next three years.

ETBI was active in responding to the many challenges facing the sector. COVID-19 was uppermost in the considerations of all groups. The sixteen ETBs collaborated across each of the Directors Forums and working groups. The creativity, innovation and professionalism of each was exemplary. I am grateful for the work of the staff in ETBI in facilitating this collaboration.

INTRODUCTION FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

ETBs continued to work effectively with ETBI in the online environment. It was a revelation to see how efficient all staff were and what they achieved working remotely. There was continued support for ETB continuing professional development throughout the year. Relationships with external stakeholders across primary, post-primary, youth services, further and higher education and advocacy groups remained central to the work.

Together ETBs have over 270 schools and 500 centres of Further Education and Training (FET) with more than 117,000 students and 148,000 FET learners. They employ over 32,000 people and have a combined spend of over 2 billion euro. We are excellent at harnessing that collective strength at national level. We really value the inextricable link ETBs have with their communities and our daily challenge is to improve outcomes for every learner we serve.



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EDUCATION & TRAINING BOARDS IRELAND



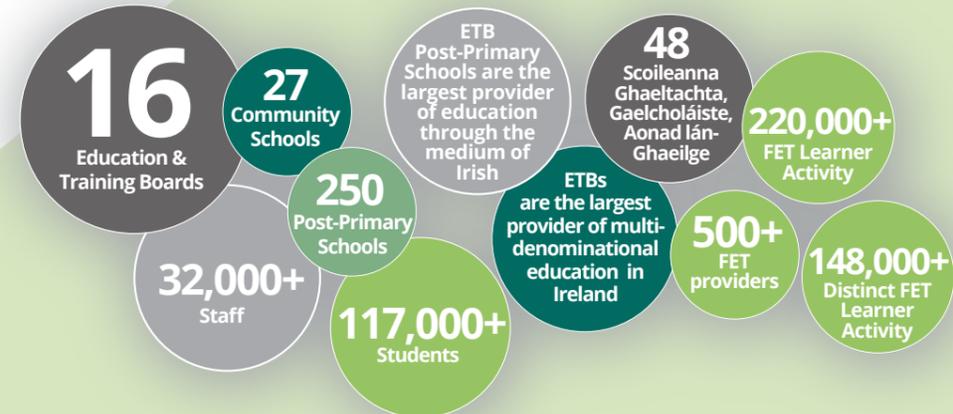
Education & Training Boards are Ireland's leading statutory providers of Education and Training and are unique in providing **whole of life education and training to all**. Collectively, the sixteen Education and Training Boards have responsibility for 27 Community National Schools and 250 Post-Primary Schools with over 117,000 students. ETB Post-Primary Schools are the largest provider of education through the medium of Irish with 48 schools. ETBs are also the largest provider of multi-denominational education in Ireland. ETBs deliver Further Education and Training to 148,000 unique FET learners each year across over 500 FET providers colleges and Training Centres and play a central role in the delivery of apprenticeships and traineeships in partnership with employers. ETBs also support, monitor, and deliver youth services. The ETB Sector employs over 32,000 people and has a combined annual spend in excess of €2bn.

Education & Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) is the national representative body for our member Education & Training Boards (ETB) and negotiates on behalf of the ETB sector at various forums within the education sector, the wider public service and at EU level. Our mission is to harness the collective strength of Education and Training Boards to advance the development of education, training, and youth work in Ireland. Our vision is for a lifelong learning society, where people have access to the education and training required to fulfil their potential and to meet their personal, social, cultural, economic, and civic needs. ETBI is guided by the principles of **people, partnership, and potential** in all its activities.

[Click To View Video About ETBs](#)

ABOUT ETBI

Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) is an association established to collectively represent the sixteen Education and Training Boards (ETBs) and promote their interests, which is recognised by the Minister for the purposes of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013.



ETBI is the voice of the Education and Training Boards sector at primary, post-primary and further education and training advocating on behalf of and supporting members. ETBI consults and negotiates at national level on behalf of ETB members with Government Departments, Trade Unions and with a range of other relevant bodies and authorities. ETBI promotes the development and implementation of appropriate education and training policies, procedures and guidance for member ETBs and conducts research, devises, and delivers education and training programmes targeted at the general ETB membership.

Our core values are:

- To seek at all times to promote the ethos of learning, education and training through quality and innovation.
- To operate in an environment of trust, integrity and respect, which will guide and inform all aspects of the Association's work.
- To build relationships with staff, Member Boards and stakeholders, based on transparency and professionalism.
- To respond in a fair and inclusive way to the needs of staff, Member Boards and stakeholders.
- To provide services and information which are both flexible and balanced, ensuring collaboration at all times.

Our core strengths are:

- Education and professional development:** Providing a wide range of high-quality education and professional development programmes, conferences and training opportunities to meet the needs of Education and Training Boards (ETBs).
 - Professional networking:** Providing opportunities for ETB management and staff to build professional connections to support sharing of information and best practices across the various forums established and supported by ETBI.
 - Resource materials:** Developing high-quality professional resource materials (e.g. toolkits, manuals, advice notes and briefs) to meet the needs of the ETB community.
 - Services for members:** Providing services to support ETB members and address their professional needs.
 - Representation:** Representation of the ETB sector at national negotiations, external bodies and all other representation as required.
- As the representative association for the sixteen Education and Training Boards, ETBI interacts on behalf of Education and Training Boards with key national and international stakeholders, agencies and bodies including the Department of Education, the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, SOLAS and other external bodies.

[Click To View Video About ETBI](#)

ETBI STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2020 – 2021



01

Develop.

Continue to develop effective work practices to support the functions of ETBI

03

Build.

Build the profile of ETBI in leading and representing the sector

05

Grow.

Support the strategic growth of the sector

02

Lead.

Provide responsive and proactive leadership to the Sector

04

Tell.

Communicate the work of ETBI to the sector

In planning the programme of work for 2020-2021, ETBI considered current sectoral needs, projects and future initiatives required. These were mapped under the five ETBI strategic priorities set out in ETBI's Strategic Vision:

The identification of this work under these strategic priorities enabled each Directorate to map out plans in advance, on a quarterly basis and to also report on progress made on the strategic priorities identified and many of the specific projects are referenced throughout this report.

ETBI is currently finalising its Strategic Vision (2021-2024) in consultation with all stakeholders, and it is anticipated this will set out new strategic objectives for the coming years.

GOVERNANCE & CORPORATE STRUCTURE OF ETBI



The governance structure of ETBI comprises three main groups, as set out in the ETBI Constitution consisting of the:

- ETBI Board
- Reserve Members Forum and the
- Chief Executives Forum

The affairs of the Association are overseen by the ETBI Board in accordance with the ETBI constitution.



MEMBERSHIP OF ETBI BOARD 2020-2021

| ETBI Board 2020-2021 | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|-----|
| Chairperson & President of ETBI | | Patrick Gerard Murphy | | | | | | |
| Vice Chairperson & Vice President of ETBI | | David Leahy | | | | | | |
| Name | ETB | 2020 | | | | 2021 | | |
| | | Jul | Aug | Sept | Nov | Jan | Feb | Apr |
| Mary Bohan | Mayo, Sligo & Leitrim ETB | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | X |
| Joe Cunningham | Laois & Offaly ETB | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Eileen Curtis | Kilkenny & Carlow ETB | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Gary Doherty | Donegal ETB | ✓ | ✓ | X | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Jim Finucane | Kerry ETB | ✓ | ✓ | X | X | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Gerard Frisby | Kilkenny & Carlow ETB | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | X | ✓ |
| Tom Grady | Mayo, Sligo & Leitrim ETB | ✓ | ✓ | X | ✓ | X | ✓ | ✓ |
| Wayne Harding | Louth & Meath ETB | ✓ | ✓ | X | X | X | X | X |
| John Kearney | Cavan & Monaghan ETB | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | X | ✓ | ✓ |
| Gabriel Keating | Limerick & Clare ETB | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Clifford Kelly | Cavan & Monaghan ETB | ✓ | ✓ | X | X | ✓ | ✓ | X |
| David Leahy | Galway & Roscommon ETB | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | X |
| Denis Leamy | Cork ETB | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Colm McEvoy | Kerry ETB | ✓ | ✓ | X | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Gerry McGuire | Dublin & Dún Laoghaire ETB | n/a | n/a | n/a | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | X |
| Anne McHugh | Donegal ETB | n/a | n/a | n/a | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | X |
| Patrick Gerard Murphy | Cork ETB | ✓ | ✓ | X | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| George O'Callaghan | Limerick & Clare ETB | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

Under the ETBI Constitution, the ETBI Board is convened six times per year or more frequently as necessary. The 2019-2020 ETBI Board met during this reporting period on 2 July 2020, 20 August 2020 and 29 September 2020. The 2020-2021 ETBI Board met on the following occasions; 25 November 2020, 27 January 2021, 24 February 2021 and 20 April 2021.

ETBI RESERVE MEMBERS FORUM

The Reserve Members Forum is a national forum and implementation group for issues concerning the reserve function of member boards. The Reserve Members Forum nominated eight of its members to the ETBI Board and nominated the chairperson of the ETBI Board and President of ETBI. The ETBI Reserve Members Forum (RMF) is constituted of 16 members, representing the views of each of the 16 ETBs and reporting back from the forum meetings.

Once the Forum was established and a chairperson appointed, work on planning the presentations and agenda items for the forum began. There was significant collaboration between the Chairperson and the General Secretary in developing a plan which would provide oversight on a number of key strategic areas that required consideration and input by the members of the forum. This engagement also allowed for the Forum members to represent the views of their respective ETBs.

The areas outlined below were covered in the plan:

- COVID-19 updates
- Travel expenses and fees paid to members for sitting on interview boards

- ETB representation on Technological University Governing Bodies
- TAKE 1 Programme (project on sustainable goals in the ETB sector)
- Apprenticeships
- ETBI Digital Library
- Research
- Communications
- Active inclusion
- ETB Community National Schools
- ETBI strategy consultation
- Overview of how ETBI supports Irish-medium education in the ETB sector



What's cooking? ETBs provide life long learning

MEMBERSHIP OF RESERVE MEMBERS FORUM 2020-2021

| ETBI Reserve Members Forum 2020-2021 | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|------|-----|-----|-----------|------|-----|-----|-----|
| Chairperson | Kathleen Codd-Nolan | | | | | | | | |
| Vice Chairperson | Roger Kennedy | | | | | | | | |
| ETB | Nominee | 2020 | | | | 2021 | | | |
| | | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec | Feb | Mar | Apr | May |
| Cavan & Monaghan ETB | Clifford Kelly | X | X | X | No quorum | X | ✓ | X | X |
| City of Dublin ETB | Keith Connolly | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Cork ETB | Patrick Gerard Murphy | X | X | X | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Donegal ETB | Gary Doherty | X | n/a | n/a | | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Donegal ETB | Rena Donaghey | n/a | X | ✓ | | X | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Dublin & Dún Laoghaire ETB | Gerry McGuire | ✓ | X | X | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | X |
| Galway & Roscommon ETB | Michael Maher | ✓ | ✓ | X | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Kerry ETB | Jim Finucane | X | ✓ | X | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Kildare & Wicklow ETB | Daragh Fitzpatrick | ✓ | X | ✓ | | X | ✓ | X | X |
| Kilkenny & Carlow ETB | Gerard Frisby | X | ✓ | ✓ | | X | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Laois & Offaly ETB | Mary Sweeney | X | X | X | | X | X | ✓ | X |
| Limerick & Clare ETB | Gabriel Keating | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Longford & Westmeath ETB | Frankie Keena | ✓ | X | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Louth & Meath ETB | Wayne Harding | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X |
| Mayo, Sligo & Leitrim ETB | Mary Bohan | ✓ | ✓ | X | | ✓ | ✓ | X | X |
| Tipperary ETB | Roger Kennedy | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Waterford & Wexford ETB | Kathleen Codd-Nolan | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

As per the ETBI Constitution, eight meetings of the Reserve Members Forum are scheduled each year. Meetings of the 2020-2021 Reserve Members Forum were scheduled for 21 October 2020, 18 November 2020, 16 December 2020 (no quorum), 9 February 2021, 24 March 2021, 28 April 2021 and 19 May 2021.

FINANCIAL AUDIT RISK COMMITTEE (FAR) 2020-2021

The Finance Audit Risk Committee is a sub-committee of the ETBI Board under Section 9.7 of the ETBI Constitution and Standing Orders. Its function is to examine and report to the ETBI Board on financial matters relating to the Association, to assist the ETBI Board in discharging its internal audit functions, and to examine and report to the ETBI Board on risk matters relating to the ETBI Board and the Association.

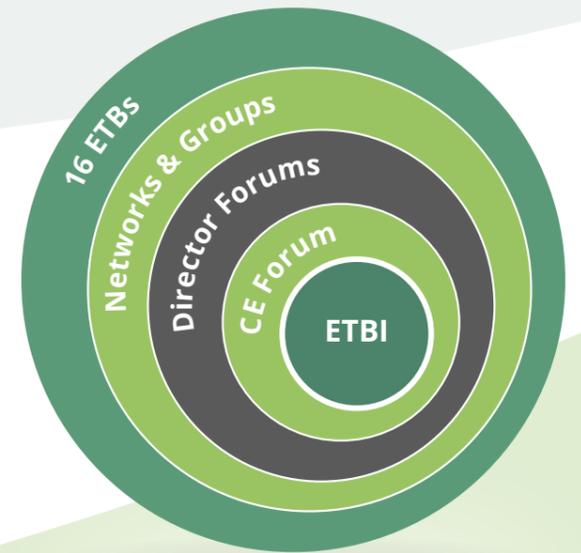
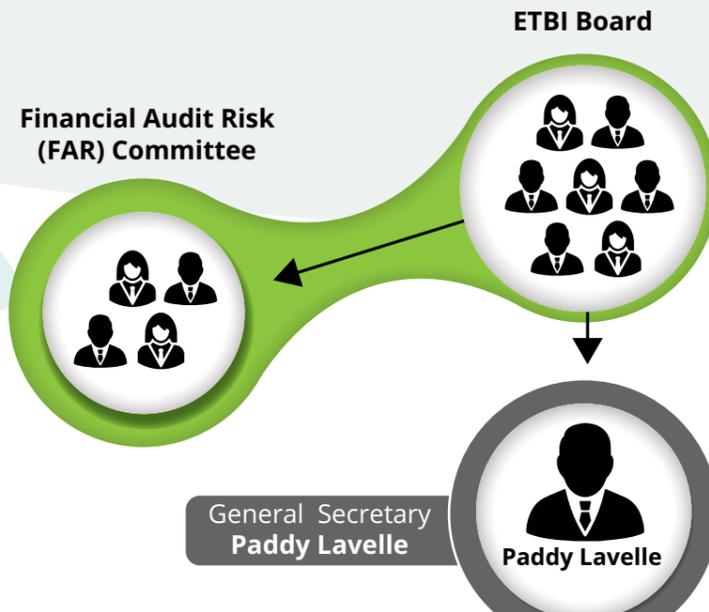
The membership of the FAR committee is shown below.

| ETB | Nominee |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Cavan & Monaghan ETB | Clifford Kelly |
| Laois & Offaly ETB | Joe Cunningham |
| Limerick & Clare ETB | Gabriel Keating |
| Mayo Sligo & Leitrim ETB | Mary Bohan Tom Grady |

The FAR committee reviewed the ETBI Financial accounts for 2020 and recommended the Audited accounts to the ETBI Board for approval.



ETBI ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE 2020-2021



Director of Schools
CNS & Patronage
Seamus Conboy

Community National
Schools

Primary & Post-Primary
Patronage

Goodness Me,
Goodness You!

Director of Organisation
Support & Development
Martin Clohessy

Shared Services
ETB Governance
ETB HR/IR Support
ETB Procurement,
Buildings & ICT Support
ETB Legal Services
Support

Director of Organisation
Support & Development
James Eustace

Finance & Procurement
ICT & Facilities
Communications

Director of Schools
Post-Primary Schools
Paul Fields

Education Strategy
Boards of Management
Teaching, Learning and
Assessment

Director of Further
Education & Training
Fiona Maloney

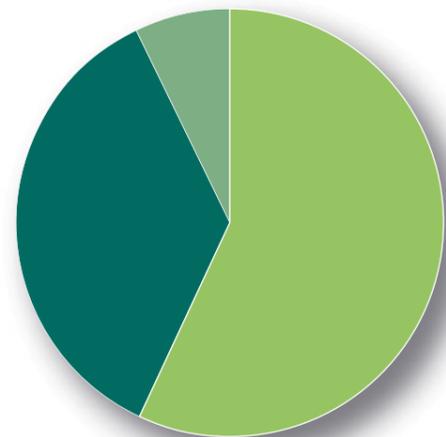
Work Based Learning
Quality
Active Inclusion
Strategy & Policy
Planning, Resources
& Reporting

Change Programme
Manager
Des Murphy

Change Programme
Youth Support Services

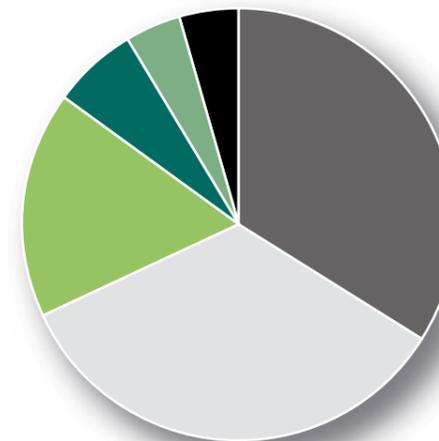
Education Research
Officer
Joan Russell

Instructional
Leadership Programme
Educational
Research



Total funding 2020: €2.51M

- Restricted funding (e.g.: DE/SOLAS funded projects): 57%
- Unrestricted funding (e.g., Member subscriptions): 36%
- Service Provision (e.g., Instructional Leadership /Conferences): 7%

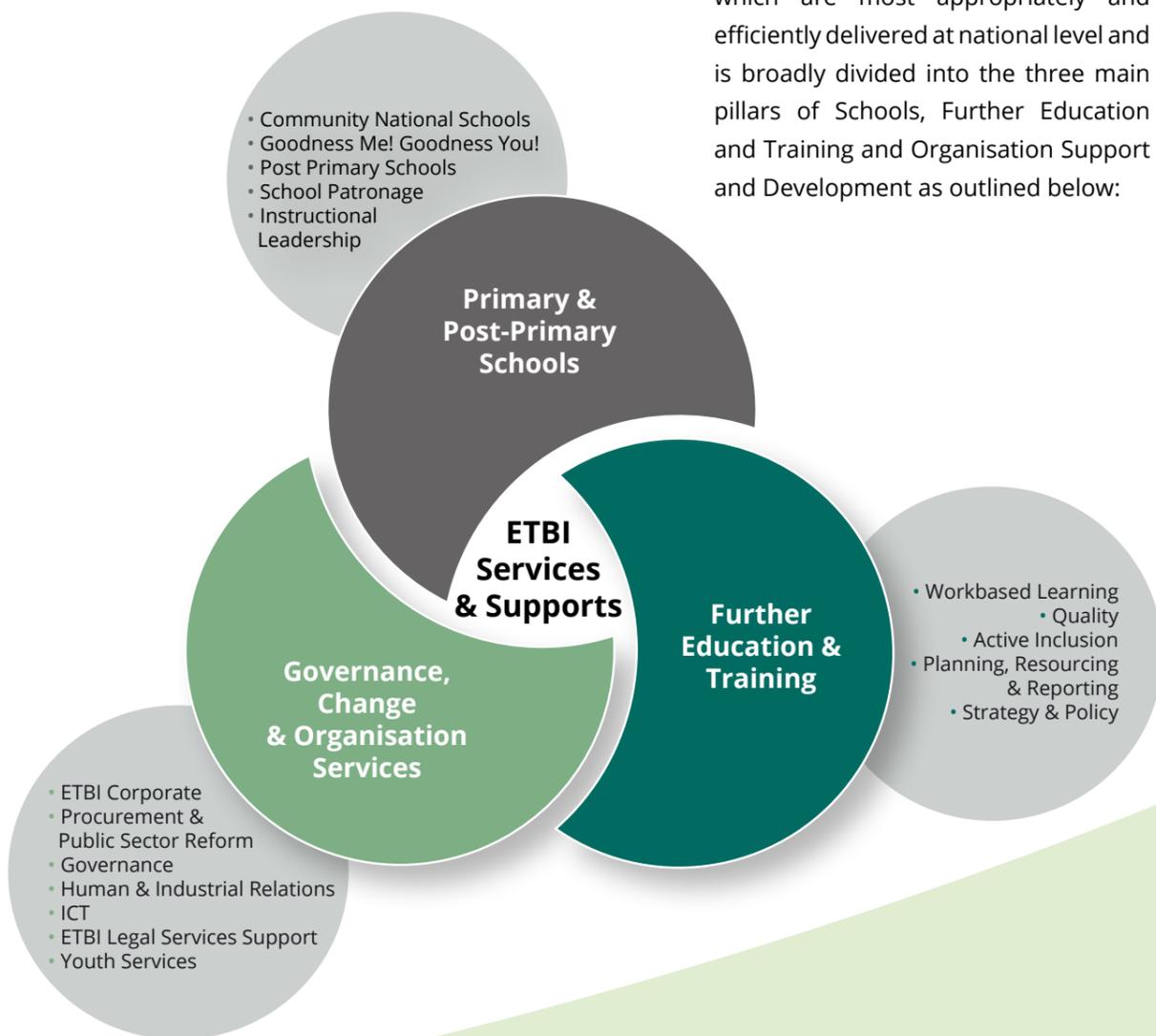


Total ETBI staff (Feb 2021): 47

- FET: 16
- OSD: 16 (8 internal, 8 sectoral)
- Schools: 8 (4 Post-primary, 4 CNS and Patronage)
- Change Management & Youth Support: 3
- Corporate: 2
- Research Office (Instructional Leadership): 2

ETBI SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

ETBI is a central resource for our ETB members, providing, procuring, and coordinating a range of support services which are most appropriately and efficiently delivered at national level and is broadly divided into the three main pillars of Schools, Further Education and Training and Organisation Support and Development as outlined below:



 [Click To View Video About OSD](#)

 [Click To View Video About FET](#)

 [Click To View Video About Schools](#)

“You’re on mute”: how communications and compassion came to the fore as ETB’s faced ongoing COVID-19 restrictions.



*Like many initiatives, ETBI's Bliain Na Gaeilge (Oct 2020) moved on-line.
Photo: Jim Coughlan*

Following the rapid adjustment required by the initial lockdown announced on the 12th of March 2020, ETBI with our member ETBs developed a more holistic and sophisticated response to restrictions over the past year. Within ETBI, this involved a redesign of the [ETBI](#) and [Instructional Leadership](#) websites so that they would be more user-friendly information hubs for ETBs and ETBI also hosted its first on-line AGM. The [ETBI digital library](#) provided resources in ‘one-stop shop’ for FET learners and practitioners, including return to work/learning programmes. MS Teams continued to be a key channel for updating members on the rapidly changing requirements and arrangements during the pandemic, especially regarding schools.

The **FET Stakeholders Working Group** established in August 2020, comprising CEs and Directors of FET and representatives from SOLAS, the Department and trade unions, delivered effective channels of communication and ensured a unified response to the COVID-19 crisis. It’s also worth noting that the *FET Learner Support study* found that 92% of learners were satisfied with access to the platforms, resources and the support and accessibility of their ETB tutors and trainers during this period. The bulk purchase of over 5,000 devices assisted in providing ICT devices rapidly to disadvantaged FET learners.

Creative communications enabled connections as the country, and our ETB schools and centres, went in and out of lockdown. From the **evening fireside chats** of the Instructional leadership programme through the **pop-up meetings and events** of the Directors of Schools and ETBI’s Youth work support service to the on-line **town hall** shared services meetings, the Sector rose to the considerable challenge of connecting with and supporting ETB staff and learners. A novel approach to the **Principals and Deputy Principals Conference** involving three webinars spread over January, February & April 2021 was highly successful with an average of over 400 attendees at each session. Indeed, it’s worth noting that while all of us missed in-person interaction, online events did facilitate a greater than normal reach for sectoral events. [The ETBI Schools ICT conference](#) boasted over 500 attendees. ETBI also responded to new and emerging issues through the provision of online seminars on **Implications of Brexit for ETBs** and **ICT Security**.

Collectively we became more aware of the mental health and wellbeing challenges posed by ongoing Covid-19 restrictions. Within ETBI the **Health and Well-Being Committee** introduced online tea breaks, yoga and resilience workshops and a book club as well as weekly sessions where staff shared about life and interests beyond ‘the day job’ from beekeeping to hot-air ballooning.

AT A GLANCE: KEY EVENTS & ACTIVITIES 2020-2021

NATIONAL

- July 2020**
- August**: Ireland moves to full opening. Plan and package to reopen all schools in Ireland at the end of August. Covid Tracker app launched.
- September**: 3-week regional lockdown announced. Face coverings become mandatory indoors.
- October**: Schools open. Students receive LC results.
- November**: Following 2nd wave, nationwide lockdown announced (excluding schools).
- December**: Following easing of restrictions state-wide lockdown imposed on Christmas Eve to respond to 3rd wave including closure of schools.
- January 2021**: Vaccinations commence. Schools closed.
- February**: Quarantine and testing of incoming travellers. Lockdown extended till April. Special schools and classes open @50% capacity. 2020 LC exam results issue.
- March**: Schools re-open on phased basis. St Patrick's day parade cancelled for second year.
- April**: 26,000 people register for a COVID-19 vaccination after the online portal for 69-year-olds goes live.
- May**: Gradual lifting of restrictions commences. HSE cyber-attack takes place.
- June 2021**: Deaths from Covid since pandemic began reach 5000. 67% of eligible persons receive first dose of vaccine.

SECTORAL

- August**: FET Stakeholders Working Group established to deal with COVID-19 reopening plans.
- September**: ETBI's first virtual AGM. Governance Training for ETB Board Members commences.
- October**: 1st of 42 Lectures in Colleges of Education on CNS & Goodness Me, Goodness You! Launch of Bliain na Gaeilge.
- November**: 'Implications of Brexit' cross directorate ETBI seminar.
- December**: Patrons' Framework sectorally agreed. 16 ETBs submit completed corporate procurement plans.
- January 2021**: €1 million towards the establishment of new youth services under the UBU scheme announced. 1st of 3 sessions in new style Principals and Deputy Principals Conference commence.
- February**: 'Wellbeing for Apprentices and Trainees' published and circulated to help deal with the strain of COVID-19 on education and training. Framework for Project Management Services launched.
- March**: Work on new ETBI website completed.
- April**: Inaugural Shared Service 'townhall' meeting.
- May**: ETBI staff resilience workshop. 245 attend Online IL fireside chat. ETBI statement & submission to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education: "School Bullying and The Impact on Mental Health".
- June 2021**: FET College of the Future Virtual Event. Dedicated ETB session at SEAI Public Sector Energy conference. Legal Services Framework launched. 500 attend Schools ICT conference.

Develop.

Continue to develop effective work practices to support the functions of ETBI



Spotlight on

Instructional Leadership
Youth Services
Legal & Procurement

Lead.

Provide responsive and proactive leadership to the Sector



Spotlight on

COVID-19 response
Further Education & Training

Build.

Build the profile of ETBI in leading and representing the sector



Spotlight on

Bliain na Gaeilge
Patron's Framework

Tell.

Communicate the work of ETBI to the sector



Spotlight on

Communications
ICT

Grow.

Support the strategic growth of the sector



Spotlight on

Buildings
SEN & Inclusion



Climate Change: when “doing nothing” is no longer an option.

ETBs build sectoral decarbonisation response



Electric car maintenance in Dublin & Dun Laoghaire ETB

The urgent call to action contained in the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report and The Status of Ireland’s Climate 2020 highlights the need for all public bodies, including ETBs to focus on their responses, collective and individual, to ensure Ireland meets the ambitious targets set out in the 2021 Climate Action Bill. In it, Ireland commits to cutting its emissions by 51% (and all public buildings to be B-rated) by 2030 and to net zero by 2050. At a dedicated ETB session at **Public Sector Energy Conference** held by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) in June 2021, ETB personnel explored the leadership and drive required to achieve these energy efficiency and carbon reduction targets. A number of energy management case studies were presented (CMETB, CDETB, LWETB) and delegates discussed how ETBs can prepare for 2030 by installing energy meters, energy management programmes and energy projects. These include programmes such as SEAI’s Energy Mapping programme with which all 16 ETBs have now engaged.

Attendees at the online conference also heard about the Schools Energy Retrofit [Pathfinder Programme](#) which is funded by the Department of Education and the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications. The programme is administered by the Department’s Planning and Building Unit, SEAI with delivery partner Limerick & Clare ETB. Over 39 schools have been retrofitted to date as part of the programme. This highly collaborative approach and research arising from it is helping to shape the future direction and upscaling of energy

efficiency in schools. ETBI is also in discussions with SOLAS and the Department of Further and Higher Education on a pathfinder programme specific to the Sector’s FET estate.

ETBI’s **Take 1 Programme** which supports ETB school leaders, teachers, and students to engage with Education for Sustainable Development, delivered three online workshops to teachers, deputy principals and principals in November 2020. This was followed by Take 1 Week (November 23rd – 30th) which provided opportunities for schools to showcase their learning and active engagement with the programme.

In February 2021, Tipperary ETB Principals and Deputy Principals engaged in a bespoke training aimed at demonstrating a collective response to Sustainable Development education. Learning from this workshop was seen in action on May 11th, when all eleven schools participated in May Day for Sustainability. To date 224 participants from 78 schools, across 16 ETBs have participated in Take 1 Programme Training.

In May 2021, agreement was reached on a pilot project to be launched later in the year between the Campus des métiers et des qualifications d’excellence international normand des énergies (CEINE) and ETBs that will build on shared expertise in the field of **green technologies**. ETB Further Education & Training will have a key role to play in ensuring Ireland’s workforce has the required skills to meet its ambitious energy targets.



Bridgetown College TY students join Shielbaggan Outdoor Education and Training Centre for the delivery of the very first Kayak lesson on Carrigfoyle Lake, Forth Mountain, Wexford (May '21)
Photo: Padraig Grant



Tipperary ETB Hospitality Operations Trainee Francis Morrissey, prepares the winning cocktail in the Mixologist competition (July 2021).
Photo: Emma Wing



Donegal ETB Enterprise Engagement staff and FET Managers meeting with the management of Hanna Hats of Donegal at the close of a Design and Make a Fashion Accessory training course in May 2021.
Photo Clive Wasson



On May 11th 2021, during ETBI’s May Day for Sustainability #ETB SDGs held the position of longest trend on twitter.



At the FET CPD event in January 2020 (l-r) Paddy Lavelle, GS ETBI, Fiona Maloney, ETBI Director of FET, Andrew Brownlee, CEO SOLAS and Mary Lyons, Director, Enterprise, Employees and Skills, SOLAS.
Photo: SOLAS



Music Generation Waterford - Uke Rocks Class of Feb 2021

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Covid-19 response

- ETBI Health & Safety Committee initiatives and appointment of H&S Representative with regular meetings to monitor H&S during COVID-19.
- ETBI Wellbeing Committee hosts virtual tea-breaks, yoga and book club, themed staff talks and resilience workshop for all ETBI staff.
- Support provided to remote working staff with cloud-based solution for on-site and off-site data implemented, equipment and services provided to support remote working and HR portal developed.
- Learner Mental Health and Well-Being resources developed and available on the ETBI Digital Library.
- An online return to training safely course for ETBs (Apprentices) was also developed.

Communications

- Broad stakeholder engagement in preparation for new ETBI Strategy (2021-2024).
- Establishment of the communications steering group and network structures to support and development of a strategic plan for sectoral communications, speaking with one voice and promoting the ETB brand.
- ETBI website redeveloped
- ETBI's digital library, a 'one-stop shop' for resources for ETB learners and practitioners, increasing the quantity, quality, comprehensiveness and accessibility of online educational resources

Services

- Tender support for Specialist Education Services, project management services for construction projects, school management system, legal services, Training Centre catering, Occupational Health Services, School Books, Bus hire, communications services.



Standardisation

- Standardisation of sectoral policies and procedures in HR, Procurement, ICT and Finance e.g. Blended Working Guidelines for return to work in the post-Covid environment, SOP for pension abatement, competency guide for recruitment of Principals and Deputy Principals, Data Protection, corporate procurement planning.
- Standardisation of rules for learner attendance across all FET centres and programmes.
- Development of UBU Financial Forms, Templates and Guidance
- ETBI Support to Apprenticeship Group (SAG) developed tailored initial assessments, support workbooks, guides and notes, revision paper templates and information/support handbooks.

Structures & Groups

- Establishment of sectoral user groups for ESBS systems, with representation from each of the ETBs to ensure that systems and work practices develop and evolve in a consistent and coherent way sector-wide.
- Two Advisory Committees established to oversee the development and implementation of ETB Patrons' Curricula (primary and post-primary) comprising ETB representatives and external experts.
- Development of a communication channel between ETBs and DCEDIY
- ETBI SOLAS FET liaison group established to support collaboration, continually improve practice and, inform draft proposals, policies, procedures, information, and resources in all areas of FET.



INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP



Lighting the fire of teaching and learning

Taking an innovative and quality assured approach to the delivery of ETBI's Instructional Leadership (IL) programme were among the highlights of the professional development programme during this period. An online **Fireside Chat** with Professor Barrie Bennett entitled Facilitating Learner Voice in the classroom to positively affect teaching and learning was hosted on the evening of the 10th of May 2021. The Webinar was open to all participants of the IL Programme, the IL/NCCA Learner Voice Programme and invited guests universities, government departments and teaching bodies and. 245 participants attended the Webinar and an audio recording of the webinar was posted on the [IL website](#).

ETBI's IL programme is now endorsed by The Centre for School Leadership



Following application and an interview process, ETBI was successful in securing the endorsement of **Centre for School Leadership (CSL)** for the Instructional Leadership Programme, as an effective programme of professional learning for school and teacher leaders.

Following discussion with the IL Steering Committee, the team also published its **Instructional Leadership Strategic Plan 2021 – 2023**. The strategic aims include developing and implementing structures to support the ongoing delivery of the programme, support to graduates, and establish partnerships in pursuit of excellence in teaching and learning.



YOUTH SERVICES

Members of UBU
Greenfield Sites project
working group,
established
May 2021

Supporting a best practice UBU model from green field to service delivery

UBU – *Your Place Your Space* provides funding to youth services that support young people to develop the personal and social skills required to improve their life chances. In Budget 2021 an allocation of €1 million towards the establishment of **new youth services** under the UBU scheme was announced. Six ETBs were pre-approved for new 'greenfield' sites under the scheme. The Youth Work Network agreed that the 6 ETBs would work on a collaborative basis facilitated by ETBI to achieve the ambitious goal of establishing new services in 2021. ETBI facilitated the initial meeting between the 6 ETBs and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to commence the process. ETBI's Youth Support Services (YSS) developed initiatives to support the delivery of a robust service including briefing memos, knowledge exchange seminar, document repository and a framework for site selection as well as facilitating weekly collaboration meetings. This cooperation resulted in the production of the key documentation needed for the UBU Greenfield Site process. This work will ensure that when monies become available for the establishment of new sites under the scheme that templates, frameworks, and guidance are available at the ETB level to ensure that this can be undertaken in the most effective and efficient manner. ETBI YSS also provided one to one support to the ETBs undertaking this process.

A project to develop the key **financial documentation and guidance** for the scheme was also commenced at ETB level on a cross directorate basis. The OSD Directorate through



its forums and subgroups provided assistance to the youth work function during this process. ETB input culminated in the development of guidance, templates and signposting and the facility to run quarterly reports financials for the DCEDIY. An IT proof of concept solution for this was adopted by the Department and Financial templates and guidance issued to the youth work sector on the UBU website in December 2020 for use from 1st January 2021, supported by ETBI YSS webinars.

Continuous improvement is an essential element of the reformed scheme and ETBs were key in the development of the UBU continuous improvement model. DCEDIY requested that ETBI review the UBU Your Place Your Space application process at both ETB level *and* Funding Organisation level to ensure that key learnings were captured, and an opportunity was provided for stakeholders to make suggestions to improve the application process. Following an in-depth review with the 16 ETBs the *ETB Level Review of UBU Implementation January-June 2020* was submitted to the DCEDIY in October 2020. Funded Organisations in receipt of grant aid under the scheme were also surveyed as part of the process with 166 organisations participating in the ETBI review. The final report *Funded Organisation Level Review of UBU Implementation January-June 2020* was submitted to the DCEDIY in November 2020. A wealth of issues, learnings, suggestions for improvement and recommendations were highlighted through both reviews and continue to inform the improvement of the scheme.

LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT

Aiming high for ETB-friendly legal and procurement services

ETBI's Legal Services Support Unit (LSSU) worked with the Office of Government Procurement to devise a new, more efficient **framework for external legal services** for use by ETBs. After two years of preparation, including RFT drafting and publications and competition evaluations, contracts were available for implementation from June 2021. This new Framework delivers a number of key improvements: a cascade model which simplifies and speeds up the draw-down process for ETBs, additional specialist legal areas and multidisciplinary option for those ETBs wishing to reduce the number of service contracts and/ or who require advice that straddles a number of areas of law.

The LSSU prepared ETB schools for the full commencement of the **Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018** through multiple training sessions of new and existing Principals and Directors of Schools, the drafting of new template application and acceptance forms and crucially, a new ETB-specific template policy for use by all ETB schools. In the year since implementation, the LSSU is informed that schools have been 100% successful in defending any section 29 applications which arose in relation to admissions and in a number of those cases, the Department of Education Section 29 Appeal Committee noted the robustness of the school's policy. This therefore limits the number of judicial review cases arising out of a school refusal and so is reducing the legal spend of the ETB and offers a possible model for other key areas such as employment matters and property law requirements.

The 2020-2021 period saw the maturation of procurement structures and processes in the ETB Sector. 2020 was the second successful year in the implementation of an agreed whole of sector approach to **Corporate Procurement Planning** in ETBs which included the development and submission of Corporate Procurement Plans and the ETB spend data that informs them. The MAPP,



or Multi Annual Procurement Plan provides a forecast of ETB spend and requirements across all major categories, excluding capital builds, for the next 3 years. All 16 ETBs returned their Corporate Procurement Plans and MAPP forecasts on schedule for collation and analysis, which provided the sectoral picture of a forecast spend in excess of €633M. Combining this data with information yielded by 2020 ETB Statements of Internal Control provides a strong picture of improving sectoral procurement compliance and usage of centralised frameworks. Gaps in current provision by Central Purchasing bodies (OGP etc.) will need to be filled by an integrated, customer-focused approach to procurement across all agencies and bodies engaged in providing centralised arrangements. ETBI and member ETBs also played a key role in the development and evolution of sectoral and national procurement structures. The **ETB Procurement Network**, established 10 years ago, is now chaired by ETB Directors of OSD who also provide senior sponsorship to procurement working groups tasked with the development of sector-specific projects and initiatives as well as engaging with cross functional groups. 2021 also saw the establishment of the **Education Procurement Programme Board**, chaired by DE Assistant Secretary Deirdre McDonnell, which will oversee the development and implementation of public procurement services for the education and training sector, whose membership includes all education bodies (Schools Sector, ETBs, Higher Education) and providers (OGP, EPS, Heanet etc). ETBI's Director of OSD ensures that the voice of ETBs is heard at this new Forum.

LEAD

Training & Events

- Implemented Governance Training for ETB Boards, Chairs of Audit & Risk Committees and Chairs of Finance Committees
- Delivered specialist training in pensions, dignity at work, data protection and finance
- Training and information session on running online Parent Teacher Meetings implemented
- Provided online training sessions for schools on Education for Sustainable Development
- Webinar on facilitating Learner Voice in the classroom attended by schools across all sectors and members of the Teaching Council, Inspectorate, HEIs, CSL, post-primary management teacher unions.
- Designed and facilitated 15 CPD sessions for RE Teachers to support the implementation of the RE specification in line with the Ethos of the sector.

Networks

- Youth Consultative Forum established
- Develop agreed modus operandi for the operation of the Consultative Group with partners in the trade unions.
- Developed and supported Professional Learning Network of 16 Ethos Coordinators who will oversee the implementation of the Patrons' Framework in each ETB.

Best Practice

- Obtained sectoral agreement on a Patrons' Framework and Implementation Plan on the ethos of all ETB Schools
- Commenced GMGY Implementation Plan
- Development of the Patrons' Short Course commenced in line with the Junior Cycle Framework (2015)
- Facilitated review of Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs
- Development of strategic assessment design including differential validation.
- Promoted and increased awareness and supports available to staff to engage in Validation of Prior Learning.

02

Lead.

Provide responsive and proactive leadership to the Sector

- Through blended learning series, facilitated bi-weekly discussions with ETBs, issuing communications and best practice for remote learning, blended learning framework and policy models, professional development and learner support needs.
- Supported ETB's in the development of work-based learning training programmes.
- Achieved CSL endorsement for the IL Programme and now feature on the CSL website
- Engaged with the Inspectorate to provide Child Protection Guidelines and National Council for Special Education on relevant supports for our students
- Designed and distributed a series of information sheets for students and parents on engaging with online learning.

Systems

- Supported the sector in the development of a performance management and development system, job specifications, probationary system and continuing professional development plan for the development of staff across the sector.
- Supporting ETBs with GDPR tool on ETBI website, with approx. 14,059 users registered with migration to Moodle courses for GDPR with LSSU supported.
- External Authentication Directory Enhancement established providing robust mechanism for EA panel resourcing, maintenance, including panel of advising/mentoring EAs/lead Externs
- ETBI Led the implementation of the ICT strategic initiatives including ICT procurement, response to IAU internal audit findings, migration to online platforms etc.



PATRON'S FRAMEWORK

Patrons Framework, Network & Curriculum bring ETB values to life

The period 2020-2021 marked a real step-up in terms of developing a shared understanding of what ETB schools stand for, their characteristic spirit and ethos, despite the challenges presented by COVID-19. In September 2020, for the first time in the history of the sector, all ETB schools (primary and post-primary) were able to insert a shared overarching ethos statement in their Admissions Policies. This statement clearly defines what it means to be a state, multi-denominational school and gives clarity to prospective parents and students on what it means to be enrolled in an ETB school.

Building on this, Dr Shivaun O'Brien from the Centre for Evaluation, Quality and Inspection in DCU was commissioned to develop a **Patrons' Framework on Ethos**. This Framework was informed by years of ETBI and sectoral consultation, research, policy and the journey of the CNS model to date.

The Framework provides **Statements of Effective Practice** which have been developed for schools under each of the core values underpinning our ethos i.e., equality, respect, community, and care. Although excellence in education is another key core value underpinning the ethos, ETB schools will continue to use the Inspectorate's *Looking at Our Schools Framework* document to guide them in their work in this area.

To support the implementation of the Patrons' Framework, a **Professional Learning Network (PLN)** was established comprising an Ethos Coordinators from each ETB. ETBI worked intensively with this Network to prepare the roll out of Phase 1 of the Implementation Plan in 2021/2022. In addition, 20 pilot schools (3 CNS and 17 post-primary) will work

with Dr O'Brien to pilot a **quality assurance** process that will be delivered across all schools in the coming years.

All ETB Principals and Deputy Principals were introduced to the Framework through a series of half day workshops in each ETB and the response has been overwhelmingly positive response. The CNS & ETB Patronage Directorate will continue to support CEs, Directors of Schools, Ethos Coordinators and Ethos Leadership Teams (ELTs) in each school as they implement the Patrons' Framework. Through this work ETBI aims to ensure that ETB schools become known as the lead provider of multi-denominational education in Ireland at both primary and post-primary level.

Work commenced on the development of a Patrons' Curriculum in line with the Junior Cycle Framework in October 2020 and an expert Advisory Committee was established in January 2021 to develop a **Patrons' Short Course**. Following consultation with the sector a clear aim and rationale was developed and work is well underway to develop an innovative and exciting course specification that will bring the ETB ethos to life in post-primary classrooms. An accompanying set of Assessment Guidelines will support teaching, learning and assessment providing opportunities for the short course to feature on the *Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement*.



Click To View Video About Benefits of having an ETB as patron- CNS



Click To View Video About Benefits of having an ETB as patron- PP





ETBI BLIAIN NA GAEILGE 2020/21

Celebrity ambassadors launch inclusive celebration of Irish language and culture



JCETBI BliainNaGaeilge launch
Photo: Jim Coughlan

On the 13th of October 2020, Mícheál Ó Muircheartaigh, Bláthnaid Ní Chofaigh, Bláthnaid Treacy and ETB past-pupil, TG4's Séamus Ó Scanláin helped launch ETBI's [Bliain na Gaeilge 2020/21](#) across 250 ETB post-primary Schools, including 48 schools who provide education through the medium of Irish. The theme of the yearlong festival to celebrate Irish language was 'Ag tabhairt na Gaeilge linn' – 'Bringing Irish with us'. Speaking about the initiative, Minister of State for Gaeltacht Affairs and Sport, Jack Chambers TD said: "It is wonderful that over 100,000 students will be celebrating our language and our Irish culture during the school year 2020/21. Irish is very important for us as a community and as a nation." In a video address to ETB students the Minister added: "The future of the language is depending on young people like you, participating in initiatives like this and promoting Irish within your own communities." Creativity and inclusiveness for the entire school community were at the heart of the programme, from song-writing to rapping, filmmaking to radio production, storytelling to sports commentary.

The initiative, designed not just for students who are fluent in Irish but also for those with just a 'cúpla focal', was a celebration of Irish language and culture for all students.

The programme ran for the duration of the school year with a new competition/initiative featured every month and prizes awarded. In the interest of fairness, English-medium schools did not compete against Irish-medium schools. Each monthly competition awarded a prize (including €500) for the best entry from an English- medium and an Irish-medium school. Commenting on the initiative, Séamus Ó Scanláin, RTE RnaG and TG4 and past pupil of an ETB school, Coláiste Cholmcille, Invern, Co. Galway, a school that encouraged me to pursue a profession through Irish, a profession that has opened so many opportunities and brought me to when I am today as a successful broadcaster. It is a privilege to support the students of this generation to develop and nurture an interest in the Irish language". The initiative was sponsored by Foras Na Gaeilge along with Conradh na Gaeilge, ASTI, TG4, TUI, Instructional Leadership Programme, ETBI TAKE 1 Programme and the 16 Education & Training Boards across the country.

Bliain na Gaeilge poster

BUILD

Events & Training

- Submission and presentation made to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education, Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science on the topic of Bullying and Its Impact on Mental Health.
- Facilitated a webinar on facilitating Learner Voice in the classroom which was attended by schools across all sectors and members of the Teaching Council, Inspectorate, HEIs, CSL, post-primary management teacher unions etc.
- Governance Workshop for DE Personnel
- Supported ETBs with GDPR tool on ETBI website with approx. 14,059 users registered with migration to Moodle courses for GDPR.
- Training seminars and development of ETB specific materials across a range of activities including schools admissions, data protection, HR, procurement etc
- Cross-functional BREXIT seminar specifically targeted to the ETB sector
- Led the European and International mobilities programmes for ETBI/ ETB FET senior management.

Best practice

- Contributed articles to Education Matters – Ireland's Education Yearbook
- Achieved Centre for School Leadership endorsement for the IL and Take 1 Programmes ETBI Framework for Developing a Plan for Enhancing Staff Digital Competency.
- Submissions and inputs on behalf of the sector in respect of the National Development Plan, tax compliance, resourcing requirements etc.
- Consulting with the various government departments and agencies around circulars and information notes
- Led the review, development and implementation, on behalf of the sector, of the new Framework for Contracted Training.
- ETBI provided expertise on Vocational Education and Training and the Labour Market to the Department of Social Protection.

03

Build.

Build the profile of ETBI in leading and representing the sector

Representation

- FET Stakeholder Working Group established to ensure a unified COVID-19 response.
- Represented the sector through external engagement with contractors and internal ETB meetings to establish a new framework for Electrical Upskilling.
- Worked intensively with the Department of Education (DE) and stakeholders on the sustainable reopening of schools
- Worked with DE to develop the PDA and Oversight Agreement
- Delivery of 42 Lectures in Colleges of Education on Community National Schools and Goodness Me, Goodness You!
- Represented CNS sector at all primary stakeholder consultation events with the Department of Education, NCCA, INTO and IPPN
- Represented sector in negotiations with other patron bodies
- Ongoing engagement with third parties including the NSSO on an SLA with the ETBs, engaged with staff representatives and industrial relations forums for Organisation Design Phase II, national pay agreements, circulars etc.
- Led engagement with funding agencies in respect of Covid related matters to ensure consistency of application including health and safety, budgetary deficits, industrial relations etc.
- Establishment of ETBI Youth Work Function Consultative Forum



COVID RESPONSE



Student Sophie Stewart holds the Joe McDonagh Award.

An Taoiseach Micheál Martin, T.D., joined staff and students at Terence MacSwiney Community College in Cork on 8th of June 2021 to honour 12 second year students who were announced as winners of the prestigious Joe McDonagh award for Irish culture, heritage and language promotion in 2020. Also pictured are ETBI President Patrick Murphy and CE of Cork ETB Denis Leamy. Photographs: JMRL Photography

From emergency pivot to new opportunities: Schools and FET respond to Covid-19

Creativity and consultation ensured that ETB Schools and Further Education & Training met the challenge of responding to the 'new normal' of Ireland's fluctuating restrictions over the past year. From a new meeting vocabulary for the post primary directorate to the high satisfaction levels with online professional development for CNS teachers and bringing everyone to the table to deal with Covid-19 in FET, ETBI and its member ETBs have shown themselves to be flexible and resilient.

The Post Primary Schools directorate ended the school year with a whole new vocabulary that became part and parcel of their work during 2020/21. Remote learning, pop up meetings, dialogue Days, managing a covid outbreak, all became a regular feature of the work to support ETBs, fellow school Directors and our schools. Sand moved under the feet of schools on many occasions as they prepared for a re-opening last August and a swathe of changes were implemented in schools, ranging from social distancing in classrooms, to additional supervision, PPE equipment and minor works.

The introduction of pop-up meetings for Directors of Schools proved an important communication tool to address the rapidly changing educational landscape including teaching in a remote environment, running an online parent-teacher meeting, child protection during remote learning, and managing a covid outbreak in a school.

ETBI engaged directly with our schools through a revised version of the **Annual Principal and Deputy Principal Conference**. An event that normally attracts about 250 attendees in person had an average of 440 attendees at each of the new 3 online mini conferences spread over January, February and April 2021. The Programmes included speakers from NCSE, ESRI, topics such as wellbeing and sessions on accredited grades and on curriculum planning and timetabling. An additional Conference with a specific focus on [Schools ICT](#) was organised in June 2021, with over 500 participants taking part.

The CNS and ETB Patronage team met the considerable challenge of implementing the **Goodness Me, Goodness You! (GMGY) Patrons' Curriculum** during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The purpose is to ensure that CNS teachers possess the competence and confidence to bring the curriculum to life for children attending community national schools across the country.

As was the case with many developmental initiatives in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic drastically altered the roll-out of this multi-belief and values education curriculum. Professional learning opportunities due to take place in schools across the country were instead facilitated virtually. Interactive dialogue and reflection on pedagogy and practice was facilitated in Zoom break-out rooms instead of around staff room tables. Yet despite a long list of draw backs and a delayed commencement date, the GMGY Curriculum has started to become embedded in the practices of well-established, newly opened and reconfigured community national schools across the sector and enabled CNSs to teach about their multi-denominational ethos through a curriculum which responds to their individual contexts.

In comparison to the original baseline survey conducted in June 2020 which indicated that 71.6% of CNS teachers had low confidence teaching GMGY, a recent survey indicates that despite the context in which the GMGY curriculum was implemented over the last year, 73% of respondents experienced an increase in confidence and competence through the various professional learning opportunities facilitated by ETBI between September 2020 and June 2021. Furthermore, 77% of teachers have had either an extremely positive or positive experience of the process.

The **FET Stakeholders Working Group** played a key role in the sector during the pandemic. It was established in August 2020 to meet the need for a unified response to COVID-19 from the Further Education & Training Sector. Led and supported by ETBI, the group comprised members from SOLAS, DHERFIS, TUI, SIPTU, CE Forum and DFET Forum and its output included ETBI FET COVID Procedures Document, "What Level 5 means for FET", and all reopening resources for Apprentices and all FET Learners.



 [Click To View Video About CNS through Irish](#)

FET initiatives that moved online included briefing sessions for perspective **External Authenticators**. To address the extensive waiting list of potential EAs waiting to be trained, an online version of the two-day training programme was designed and developed in conjunction with FESS colleagues. This was successfully piloted in April 2021 with up to 140 External Authenticators trained to date.

The FET Directorate worked to assist and support the sector in the **safe return of learners to centres** through the creation of working groups, advisory committees and consistent engagement with stakeholders and the ETB sector. To get learners back into the classroom the overarching priority was the health and safety learners, instructors, and staff. Clear guidelines were established and enforced throughout ETBs. In addition to this the FET Directorate created a mandatory, **Return to Training module** that was available to learners via the ETBI Digital Library. This module consisted of information relating to COVID and its spread, how to stay safe in centre and protective themselves from COVID. Once the module was completed, the learners would take a test and be issued with a certification of completion if they passed. This project facilitated the safe return of learners to in-centre training.



Building world class ETB Further Education and Training

Ensuring robust, best practice and learner centred models are utilised in Further Education & Training (FET) informed the work of ETBI FET during the 2019-2020 period.

The **FET College of the Future** paper showcased the views of the ETB Further Education & Training sector on an integrated FET College. The sector agreed that the new, integrated FET College will be an over-arching 'FET College' entity, organised centrally within an ETB, which delivers FET provision and services through an integrated network of Campuses, Centres, Hubs, and local FET Resources, supported by a centralised network of support services.

Following the approval of the FET College of the Future paper by ETBI Directors of FET (DFET) and CE Forums, the paper was officially published at the ETBI FET Online launch event in June 2021, which which also focused on the DFET **Vision for Tertiary Education** position paper.

The **FET College of the Future** literature review was completed by ETBI and demonstrated models of best practice in empirical literature with specific relevance to Irish FET. Conclusions drawn from models in the UK, Netherlands, New Zealand, Finland, Germany and the U.S. framed the lessons to be learned in practical, tangible ways within Irish FET. The review also showed approaches to

Minister Harris announces 10-year adult literacy, numeracy & digital literacy strategy (September 2020). Also pictured (r-l) Paddy Lavelle (ETBI), Clare McNally (NALA) & Andrew Brownlee (SOLAS) Photographer: Julien Behal

achieve an integrated, collaborative FET system with coherent dissemination and governance structures.

In terms of Outdoor Education Strategy, a **Sectoral Review of ETB Outdoor Education and Training Provision** was completed outlining the move to FET, effective approaches to learning and consistency of management and governance. Findings from the review of ETBI Outdoor Education and Training the policy were published including context, teaching and learning. Strategic pillars and enabling themes were also presented outlining the benefits already achieved for the learner, practitioner and sector.

Other learner-centred best practice initiatives included a Framework and Implementation guide for the Universal Design in Learning (UDL) in FET and Implementation guide of recommendations from Assessment of ESOL at levels 1-3.

TELL

Branding & Promotion

- Redesign of the ETBI website to reflect the services to members and as a central hub for the public to find information on ETBs and sectoral initiatives
- Published two editions of the ETBI Journal of Education
- Instructional Leadership published two newsletters and redesigned IL website
- Provision of report on Teaching Professional Learning Opportunities by ETBs and ETBI for academic years 2018/19 & 2019/20
- Promoted ETBI and FET using social media channels, e.g. Hospitality & Tourism Expo 2021 and Generation Apprenticeship.
- Developed the Professional Learning and Development Calendar.
- Participated and promoted FET during European Vocational Skills Week.
- Participated in TUI Apprenticeship Group to promote Apprenticeship.
- Promoted and increased awareness and supports available to staff to engage in Validation of Prior Learning.

Events & Training

- Planned and coordinated the 2020 ETBI Virtual AGM and Annual Report which demonstrated responsiveness of ETBI and the ETB sector to the challenges on the pandemic.
- *Introduction to Media Relations and Developing a digital strategy* CPD delivered to ETBI Communications Network
- Facilitated workshops on the Patrons' Framework with Principals and Deputy Principals in 14 ETBs
- Monthly and quarterly meetings of forums and groups provided updates on the works ongoing across the sector.
- Facilitated third party meetings ESBS, DSP, SOLAS to update the sector on various activities and ensure coherence across stakeholder groupings.
- Induction process developed for incoming Directors of OSD
- Engaging increasing numbers of ETB stakeholders from different disciplines with shared interest to address communication gaps via cross-cutting multi-stakeholder engagement e.g., townhall meetings.
- Consultation event on the overarching aim of the Patrons' Curriculum with CE, DoS, Principals Network & Ethos Coordinators. Introductory brief on the role of ETBI support DES in the provision of ETB Code of Governance training given to all ETB board members.





COMMUNICATIONS



ICT



Framing the ETB picture: Strategy offers new model for sectoral communications

ETB FET Video production

Surveys, structures and strategy all combined to provide a new framework for improved ETBI and sectoral communications in 2020-2021. Following a sector-wide survey in early 2020 that identified our communications strengths weaknesses and priorities, ETBI held a sectoral workshop in July 2020 to develop a communications road map. This included the development of agreed sectoral communications structures: a **communications steering group** comprising nominated ETB CEs and Directors and a **communications network** of the 16 ETB Communications Officers. Terms of Reference were agreed, and first meetings started in Winter 2020 respectively and these groups continue to develop and provide the leadership and connectivity the sector requires in this area of strategic importance.

In February 2021, ETBI hosted a **communications webinar** with speakers from associations with similar national/local structures including the GAA and the Local Government Management Association. These case studies provided useful background information for the development of ETBI's **Communications Strategy**.

While there is a clear mandate for ETBI to build and promote the ETB brand and to harness the power of 'one voice' to champion education and training in Ireland, it was important that the strategy also address our unique communications challenges as a sector: how do we harness our collective strength and develop consistency without detracting from the excellent work of ETBs locally? How can we encompass the breadth and diversity of ETB services in one coherent brand identifying 'who we are' and 'what we do' with clear messaging? The strategy was agreed in principle in June 2021.

The ETBI website was redesigned over 2020-2021 period to provide a more user-friendly and comprehensive hub providing information for our ETB members and the public. In order to ensure that ETBI has the appropriate systems to meet the needs of our members in the transformed communications landscape post-pandemic, work commenced on procuring a suitable events, social media, and customer relationship management platform.

ETBI co-ordinates user friendly and best practice ICT supports

ICT devices, skills and resources to facilitate ETB remote and blended learning and working has never been more important.

ETBI's Further Education & Training (FET) and Organisation Support & Development (OSD) Directorates continued to provide essential forums, platforms and supports to facilitate ETB collaboration in the critical area of ICT. Following the identification by ETBI's ICT Group of deficits regarding sectoral ICT procurement, ETBI and ICT Steering engaged with the Department of Education and other national stakeholders. This resulted in a reconstituted and centrally funded **ETB Sector membership of HEAnet** who provide IT shared services across the Irish education sector and resulted in several benefits. ETBs gained immediate access 40+ ICT related procurement frameworks, many of which are available through direct drawdown. 11 ETBs availed of the bulk purchase of over 5,000 ICT Devices from the HEAnet Dell Framework as part of a Covid-19 response plan to provide **ICT devices rapidly to disadvantaged FET learners**. HEAnet Security Services provided online training on the topic of "Good ICT Security Hygiene" to over 300 ETB employees and HEAnet with ETBI support renegotiated the Microsoft Campus Agreement to yield a higher discount for ETBs. ETBs now also have a 'seat at the table' to influence future procurement so that it meets ETB sectoral needs.

Full membership of Gartner Technical Professional (GTP) Service for ICT staff and data analysts now provides each ETB with their own Account Manager for access to best practice

technical advice in areas from green field planning to ICT Governance structures and upskilling. A thematic paper on Ransomware, concentrating on the prepare and prevent phases of a best practice approach, mapped all currently available and relevant frameworks available and presentations were provided by authorised vendors under the Microsoft Campus Agreement Framework. ETBI also developed a centralised and easy to access portal for sectoral ICT staff to identify upcoming training events / workshops / conferences as pertains to their specialism.

The **Digital Library of ETBI** continues to provide a user-focused service to assist in the fulfilment of ETBI's support of learning and teaching in the ETB FET sector. Live since April 2020, it has around 170 public pages and 40 sections, 600+ links to useful sites and resources and private sections for staff-only content and is helping to foster a scholarly publishing culture among FET teaching staff. Resources for learners and practitioners include COVID-19 Reopening Resources, created through the FET Stakeholders Working Group.

The Digital Library FET Working Group delivered projects to provide support and shared resources for best practice. Blog content and other materials have been developed by the group's ETBI & ETB Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) professionals and coordinators and they continue to support blended learning initiatives.

Building capacity

- Supporting ETBs to implement reformed funding scheme (UBU) across 16 ETBs Greenfield Sites Process
- Six key priority groups established to address significant areas for action at post primary level
- Consultation process undertaken with a view to developing ETB capacity in terms of governance and responsibility of Education Support Centres
- ETBs supported in primary and post-primary patronage competitions
- Refocus of OSD Forum and Groups, building greater cross-sectoral collaboration, cohesion and strategic focus. Identified strategic priority areas to support the sector and seek innovative ways to deliver them.
- Development of business case for additional resources in ETBI and the ETBs that is aligned with the strategy statements e.g. FET building resources, LSSU etc.
- Enhanced the working of the ETBI Directorate of FET and the Directors Forum through the review of the DFET Forum, Forum Networks and Steering groups.

Best practice

- Supported the Directors Forum with the development of a sectoral position paper on the concept of the FET College of the Future.
- Board of Management materials reviewed and updated.
- Partner with ESBS in identification and mapping of pensions and procurement issues, leading to the development of coherent plans in both areas, with the appropriate governance structure to oversee the work.
- Continued coordination of the COVID-19 response sectoral approach through the FET Stakeholders Working Group. ETBI undertook the research into FET Learner experience during COVID-19.

05 | **Grow.**
Support the strategic growth of the sector

Stakeholder engagement

- Developed sectoral position on strategic alliances with other patron bodies
- ETBI 2021-2024 strategic planning process commenced including steering group, bi-lateral meetings and stakeholder survey
- Continued to support the design and delivery of Shared Services in association with ESBS, together with stabilisation and consolidation of system platforms across the sector.
- Promoted and represented the work of ETBI and ETBs at DE discussions and planning regarding teacher education.
- Engaged with sector representatives on the development and submission of the following position papers: Review of the SUSI grant, Consultation for the National Access Plan, Consultation on Digital Strategy for Schools, Consultation on Education for Sustainable development, Submission to Joint Committee of Education, Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science on the Reopening of FET sector.



INCLUSION



Frameworks support Special Education and Inclusion

Schools and Further Education & Training are working to support best practice approaches to Special Education Needs (SEN) and Inclusion in the ETB Sector.

In 2021, ETBI in collaboration with Dr Johanna Fitzgerald from Mary Immaculate College commenced work on an initiative to support the future growth and stability of provision mapping for **Special Education Needs** within the ETB sector. The initiative integrates existing policy frameworks for school improvement to embed collaborative processes of school self-evaluation with the *Continuum of Support* (NEPS 2010) through the *Looking At Our Schools Framework and Continuing Implementation of School Self-Evaluation 2016-2020*.

Planning for a *Train the Trainer* model has commenced, which will acknowledge existing good practice in relation to inclusive and special education, while also supporting schools to develop systemic, collaborative, and collective approaches. The training process will guide schools in their implementation of school self-evaluation (SSE) to develop a school provision map, reflecting current provision for learners with additional and special education needs, across the continuum of support.

30 pilot schools and inclusion coaches are ready to commence their first engagement with the process in the coming academic year, building a situated approach to professional learning and capacity building within and between our schools. The Inclusion Coaches will support an ETB wide implementation strategy through sustained, multi-modal approaches to project implementation including school visits, cluster meetings, the creation of resources, and online and telephone support across all ETB schools as the initiative develops.

This Provision Mapping pilot initiative has been built on a collaborative approach, which will support the entire school community to engage with, and progress, the process. Data from this initial phase will be analysed and used to develop a map and action plan for each school, which will be presented to the Board of Management for ratification.

ETBI developed focussed supports for **ETB Further Education & Training learners with diverse needs** including a *Framework and Implementation guide for the Universal Design in Learning (UDL) in FET*, an *Implementation guide of recommendations from Assessment of ESOL at levels 1-3 and Guidelines on Inclusion of Learners with Intellectual Disabilities in FET*

BUILDINGS



New extension at St. Colman's Community College, Midleton, Co Cork opened March 2021

New ETBI Group builds strong foundation for future

The **ETBI Buildings and Property Group** was established in the summer of 2020 in response to a call from the Department of Education for ETBs to further assist them with the delivery of Devolved Capital Projects for both ETB and non-ETB Schools. Other objectives were to assist and represent the 16 ETBs, their Buildings Officers, and their Directors of OSD on Technical and Procurement matters and to draft policy, procedures and standards. For decades ETBs, and VECs before them, have been working individually in this area so a platform to share knowledge and expertise across the sector for the collective good was a welcome development.

The Buildings and Property Group, as an integral part of the Organisational Support and Development Directorate in ETBI, assists both Schools and the FET directorates. The estate currently totals 250 Secondary Schools, 27 Community National Schools and over 500 FET Centres. Following the appointment of an ETBI Buildings Officer in July 2020, ETBI in collaboration with the Sector, procured a **Framework for Project Management Services**, which went live in Q1 2021. Delivery of these services to ETBs has been steady and by the end of July 2021 PM Services have been delivered to 11 of the 16 ETBs, involving 17

competitions, covering a total of 28 building projects. This equates to the appointment of over 6 fulltime Project Managers for the next 3 years to the sector, amounting to a support of €2.7m. from the Department of Education.

The Buildings and Property Group also have a seat on the **OGP's Category Council** for Facilities Management and have played a key role in the creation of Public Sector Frameworks for Lift Maintenance, and Fire Alarm, Emergency Lighting and Security Systems, both of which have been launched in recent months. In addition, ETBI also represents the sector and works with **the Local Government Operational Procurement Centre (LGOPC)** on new Public Sector Frameworks e.g., Plumbers and Electricians.

Further Education and Training have seen a very significant increase in their Capital Budget in recent years and ETBI represents the sector on a working group to plan the delivery of their capital budgets across devolved Projects as well as emergency health & safety projects and the purchase of Apprenticeship Equipment. Discussions have also commenced on plans to roll out a strategic infrastructure upgrade programme and large-scale capital projects in the coming year.

GLOSSARY



| | ACRONYM | FULL NAME/TERM |
|---|-----------------|---|
| C | CE | Chief Executive |
| | CNS | Community National School |
| | CPD | Continuous Professional Development |
| D | DCYA | Department of Children and Youth Affairs |
| | DE | Department of Education |
| | DFHERIS | Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science |
| E | EA | External Authentication |
| | ESBS | Education Shared Business Services |
| | ETB | Education and Training Board |
| | ETBI | Education and Training Boards Ireland |
| F | FAR | Finance, Audit and Risk (Committee) |
| | FESS | Further Education Support Service |
| | FET FETCH | Further Education and Training Further Education and Training Course Hub |
| G | GMGY | Goodness Me, Goodness You! |
| H | HR | Human Resources |
| | HR & IR (HR/IR) | Human Resources and Industrial Relations |
| I | ICT | Information and Communications Technology (or Technologies) |
| | IL | Instructional Leadership Programme |
| L | LSSU | ETB Legal Services Support Unit |
| M | MAPP | Multi-Annual Procurement Plan |
| | OSD | Organisation Support and Development |
| P | PSR | Public Sector Reform |
| | SOLAS | An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna, lit 'Further Education and Skills Service' |
| Q | QQI | Quality and Qualifications Ireland |
| S | SEN | Special Education Needs |
| U | UBU | 'You be You' |



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