



Human Capital Investment Operational Programme 2007 - 2013

Summary Progress Report

January to December 2013

15th July 2014

Monitoring Committee meeting



Ireland's EU Structural Funds
Programmes 2007 - 2013

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Ciste Sóisialta na hEirice
European Social Fund

***“Ag infheistiú i do dhán”
“Investing in your Future”***

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Overview of the Labour Market in the period Jan - Dec 2013

Labour Force Growth

The labour force increased by 19,600 in the 12 months to the end of Q4 2013, resulting in **2,163,100** persons in the labour force, (compared to 2,143,500 in Q4, 2012). The increases in employment were in the 35-44 (29,100) and 45-54 (20,600) age groups. However, there were decreases in employment in the 25-34 (-12,200) and the 15-19 (-1,700) age groups.

Indicator	4th Qtr 2012	% of Total (2012)	4th Qtr 2013	% of Total (2013)	Change	% change
In Employment	1,848,900	51.41%	1,909,800	53.09%	61,000	3.30%
Unemployed	294,600	8.19%	253,200	7.04%	-41,400	-14.05%
Labour Force	2,143,500	59.60%	2,163,100	60.13%	19,600	0.91%
Not in Labour Force	1,453,000	40.40%	1,434,300	39.87%	-19,000	-1.31%
Total age 15 and over	3,596,500	100%	3,597,400	100%	900	0.03%

CSO's Annual Average Standardised Unemployment Rates (SUR)

The SUR (Standardised Unemployment Rate) for January 2014 was 12.0%, down from 13.9% in January 2013.

SUR	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Annual average	6.4%	12.0%	13.8%	14.6%	14.7%	13.1%

Migration

Migration has again become an important factor when looking at the Irish economic situation. The CSO figures (estimates) for April 2012 and April 2013 show that 87,100 and 89,000 people emigrated from Ireland (**the highest since pre 1987**). During 2012 and 2013, 52,700 and 55,900 people respectively immigrated to Ireland.

Table on Migration

	Apr-12	Irish	Non-Irish	Apr-13	Irish	Non-Irish
Emigration	87,100	46,500	40,600	89,000	50,900	38,100
Immigration	52,700	20,600	32,100	55,900	15,700	40,200
Net migration	-34,400	-25,900	-8,500	-33,100	-35,200	2,100

Source: CSO (Population and Migrant Estimates) August 2013.

Employment

- There were 1,909,800 persons in employment at the end of Q4 of 2013, an increase of 61,000 (3.3%) in the twelve- month period from Q4 of 2012.
- In the 12 months to end of Q4 of 2013, the numbers of males in employment increased by 50,200 (+5.1%) while the number of females increased by 17,600 (+2.1%).
- The overall employment rate increased from 63.2% to 66.5% during the year.
- The overall participation rate increased from 59.6% to 60.1% in the 12 months period to the end of Q4 for 2013.

- The male participation rate increased slightly from 67.2% to 67.8% and the female participation rate increased from 52.3% to 52.8%.

Unemployment

- There were 253,200 persons unemployed at the end of Q4 for 2013, a decrease of -41,400 (-16.4%) in the year (294,600 at Q4 of 2012).
- The total number of males unemployed at the end of Q4, 2013 was 158,900, a decrease of 37,300 (-23.5%).
- The total number of females unemployed was 94,300, a decrease of 4,200 (-4.5%)
- The unadjusted unemployment rate decreased from 13.7% to 11.7% during the period.

Full-Time and Part-Time Employment

- At the end of Q4 for 2013, the numbers engaged in full-time employment **increased** by 54,300 (3.9%) to 1,453,000; up from 1,398,700 at the end of Q4 in 2012.
- The increase in part-time employment was 6,600 (1.5%) giving a total of 456,800.

Long-term unemployment

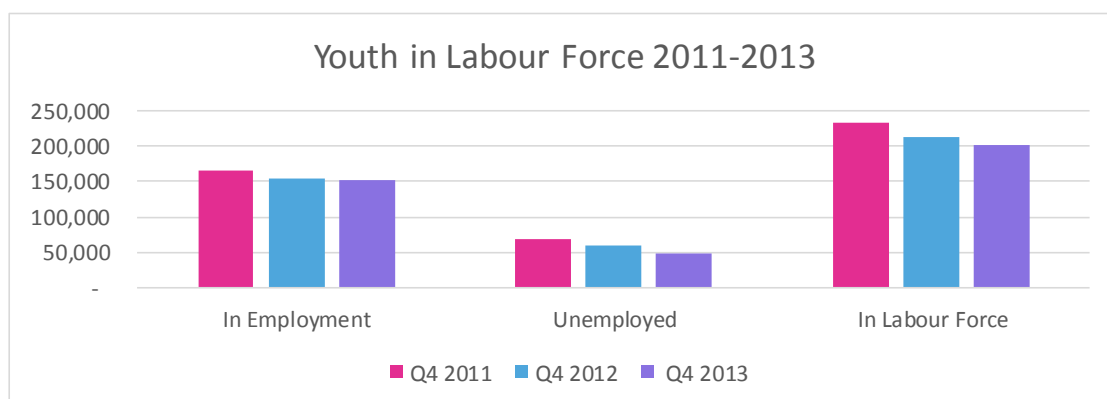
- The long-term unemployment figure decreased by 20,900 (-11.9%) to 155,500 in the 12 month period to Q4 of 2013, down from 176,400 Q4 of 2012.
- The long-term unemployment rate at the end of Q4 for 2013 had fallen to 7.2% compared to 8.2% at the end of Q4 for 2012.
- The percentage of long-term unemployed was **61.4%** out of the total unemployed at the end of Q4 for 2013, up from 59.5% a year earlier.

Youth Unemployment (15-24 years)

Indicator	Q4 2011	% of Total (2011)	Q4 2012	% of Total (2012)	Q4 2013	% of Total (2013)	Changes: 2011 and 2013
In Employment	165,000	70.9%	154,400	72.35%	152,800	75.83%	-12,200
Unemployed	67,700	29.1%	59,000	27.65%	48,800	24.22%	-18,900
In Labour Force	32,700	41.1%	213,400	39.0%	201,500	38.0%	-31,200
Not in Labour Force	333,480	58.90%	333,779	61.00%	328,763	62.00%	-4,717
Total age 15 to 24 years	566,180		547,179		530,263		-35,917
Employment rate %		29.2%		28.2%		28.8%	
Unemployment rate %		29.1%		27.7%		24.2%	
Participation rate %		41.1%		39.0%		38.0%	

- There were 152,800 persons in the 15 to 24 age category in employment at the end of Q4 for 2013, down by 1,600 since the same point in 2012 (a decrease of 12,200 since Q4 in 2011).
- The total number unemployed at the end of Q4 for 2013 was 48,800, a decrease of 1,800 in the 12 month period since Q4 in 2012 (a decrease of 18,900 since Q4 in 2011).
- The total number of persons in the labour force at the end of Q4 of 2013 was 201,500, a decrease of 11,900 (-5.6%), (a decrease of 31,200 since Q4 of 2011).
- The unemployment rate for 15-24 year old decreased from 27.1% in Q4 of 2012 to **24.2%** in Q4 of 2013 (down from 29.1% at the end of 2011).

- The participation rate for 15-24 year olds decreased from 39% in Q4 2012 to 38% at Q4 2013 (down from 41.1% in Q4 of 2011).



Sectoral Employment

Sectors showing an **increase** in employment were:

- agriculture, forestry and fishing (+26,800);
- accommodation and food service (+17,400);
- professional, scientific and technical activities (+13,000);
- industry (+6,400);
- human health and social work activities (+3,900);
- administrative and support services (+1,300);
- construction (+400).

Sectoral employment showed **decreases** in the following areas:

- financial, insurance and real estate (-4,700).
- Wholesale and retail trade; (-3,000);
- public administration and defence (-1,000);
- information & communication (-700).

Regional Comparisons

The current labour market position for the BMW and the S&E Regions are shown on the table here below for Quarter 4 of 2013.

Q4 of 2013	BMW (^{'000})		S&E (^{'000})		State (^{'000})
Population (15 and over)	944.6	26.3%	2650.8	73.7%	3595.4
Labour Force	554.6	25.6%	1608.5	74.4%	2163.1
In Employment	482.9	25.3%	1427	74.7%	1909.9
Unemployed	71.7	28.3%	181.5	71.7%	253.2
Inactive (not in Labour Force)	392	27.3%	1042.3	72.7%	1434.3

Employment increased by 24,800 (+5.4%) in the BMW region, and increased by 36,200 (+15.1%) in the SAE region at the end of Q4 for 2013 (compared to the same time a year earlier).

Unemployment decreased in the BMW Region by -14,700 (-16.8%) in Q4 of 2013 and in the SAE Region the decrease was -27,400 (-15.1%).

The unemployment rate in the BMW Region at the end of Q4 for 2013 was 12.9% (15.8% in Q4 of 2012) and in the SAE Region it was 11.3% at the end of Q4 for 2013 (13.1% in Q4 of 2012).

The participation rate at Q4 of 2013 in the BMW Region was 58.6% (56.8% in Q4 2012) and in the S&E Region, it was 60.7% (60.6% in Q4 of 2012).

Main Conclusions

Below are the forecasts for the current year and the following year taken from the Department of Finance Monthly Bulletin for June 2014. While the forecasts for the current year predict more than 1.5% growth for GDP, the forecasts for 2015 are more optimistic.

	GDP 2013	GDP 2014	GDP 2015	GDP 2016
Dept of Finance	1.3%	2.1%	2.7%	3.0%
ESRI	1.8%	2.6%	3.5%	N/A
Central Bank	1.2%	2.0%	3.2%	N/A
EU	1.1%	1.7%	3.0%	N/A
IMF	1.1%	1.7%	2.5%	2.5%
OECD	1.0%	1.9%	2.2%	N/A

[Source: Dept of Finance Monthly Economic Bulletin June 2014]

Progress by Priority

1. INCREASING ACTIVATION OF THE LABOUR FORCE PRIORITY

ESF 1.1 - Skills Training for the unemployed and job-seekers

ESF 1.3 - Back to Education Initiative

ESF 1.4 - Undergraduate Skills

ESF 1.6 – Labour Market Activation Fund

The following objective has been set out in the Operational Programme for this Priority-

- *To contribute to increased skill levels in the workforce and to enhancing the productivity of the workforce*

ESF 1.1 - Skills Training for the unemployed and job-seekers

Significant Changes in the Operating Environment

The recent economic downturn presented a particular challenge for both Vocational Education Committees (VECs) and FÁS in a context of on-going diminishing resources, to respond effectively, with programmes and services to meet the needs of an increasing number of individuals who had lost their jobs. The response of Government was to streamline the former 33 existing VECs into 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs) and to transfer the training function of FÁS into the ETBs with the aim of bringing local and regional coherence to Further Education and Training. The Government also decided to create a new authority, SOLAS, The Further Education and Training Authority, to replace FÁS under the aegis of the Department of Education and Skills, with responsibility for the strategic co-ordination and funding of the further education and training sector.

The VECs and FÁS were statutory bodies; therefore two pieces of legislation were enacted in 2013 to provide the statutory basis for the dissolution of the VECs, the dissolution of FÁS, the establishment of SOLAS and the establishment of 16 ETBs. The new Act provided for the dissolution of the VECs and through a process involving a merger of some of the existing 33 VECs, for the establishment of 16 ETBs. Seven FÁS Training Centres transferred to ETBs in December 2013 with the remainder due to transfer in June 2014. The functions of the Education and Training Boards were published in the Education and Training Board Act 2013 and can be downloaded at

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2013/en/act/pub/0011/>

The Further Education and Training Act 2013 was signed into law in July 2013. It provided for the dissolution of FÁS and the establishment of SOLAS and the phased transfer of the existing FÁS training centre network and associated staff and training provision to the relevant ETBs. The functions of SOLAS, including funding, were published in the Further Education and Training Act and can be downloaded at

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2013/en/act/pub/0025/>

A number of other reforms impacting on Further Education and Training to date include:

- Launch of 'Intreo', (2012)
- Planned launch of 'Jobpath', (2014)
- The establishment of Quality and Qualifications Ireland, (2012)
- The Government's 'Pathways to Work' Initiative, (2012), (2013)

- The Government's 'Action Plan for Jobs', (2012), (2013), (2014)
- The Government's Action Plan for SOLAS, (2012)
- Introduction of the Government's 'Youth Guarantee', (2014)
- Publication of a five year Strategy for the FET sector, (2014 - 2019)
- Publication of a three year Corporate Plan for SOLAS (2014 – 2016)

Commentary on Activity-related progress

In 2013, prior to the transfer of any of the FÁS Training Centres to ETBs, approximately 21,704 persons completed training under this activity at a cost of €173.7 million (excluding central costs, canteen costs, Justice Workshops and Sponsored Training).

Training Activity in 2013

While actively planning for the future and undergoing the first of a series of major structural changes, FÁS successfully maintained business continuity during 2013. FÁS delivered on the key targets for the year as determined by the government and addressed the needs of priority cohorts including persons who are long-term unemployed, those who are disadvantaged or have low standards of education or qualification and also those who have suffered job losses in sectors most impacted by the economic downturn. In 2013, FÁS provided a range of training opportunities within this activity for:

- 12,746 people who completed Specific Skills Training Programmes
- 2,621 individuals who completed Traineeships
- 2,053 participants who completed Bridging-Foundation Programmes
- 2,685 individuals who completed Local Training Initiatives
- 1,484 early school leavers who completed Foundation progression in Community Training Centres
- 115 people who completed Return to Work courses.

Developments in Specific Skills Training and Traineeships

In 2013 FÁS launched a range of new and updated courses across various industry sectors of which 35 new courses were developed to meet the FETAC Common Award requirements with the remainder leading to industry recognised certification and upgrades to existing courses.

The courses introduced during the year include:

- Logistics and Distribution
- Contact Centre Operations
- Supply Chain Logistics
- MySQL Associate
- Hairdressing
- Business Management
- Aircraft Maintenance - Basic Training
- Interior Design
- Warehousing Operations
- Industrial Automation
- Legal Studies
- Signwriting
- CAD – 3D Parametric Modelling
- Healthcare Support
- Financial Services Administration.

Specific Skills Training (Long) courses take 6 months or more to complete and are designed to meet the needs of industry across a range of sectors and are fully certified leading to either a FETAC award (now QQI) on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) or are

certified by a recognised accreditation body. Examples of courses now include - Industrial Automation, Healthcare Support, Legal Studies and Interior Design.

Specific Skills Training (Short) courses (approx. 9 months) were introduced to allow individuals to quickly upgrade their skills. The majority of the programmes on offer are FETAC (QQI) or externally certified. Examples of courses now include Cleanroom and Packaging Operations, Pneumatic Fluid Power Systems, Electric and Electronic Control Systems and Programmable Automation.

Developments in Community Based Training

Community Based Training is designed for unemployed early school leavers; people with disabilities; and unemployed people who are unable to access FÁS mainstream training. Community Based Training is accessed through FÁS funded Community Training Centres (CTCs) and Local Training Initiatives (LTIs). Learners are given the opportunity to take part in education and training ranging from FETAC Level 3 to Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). All training programmes delivered through these interventions address both the generic and vocational skills requirements of participating learners.

In 2013, the development of training programmes for learners in community training continued with particular emphasis on extending the range of modules available at FETAC Levels 3, 4 and 5. A wider range of vocational modules were developed to match the individual aptitude, interest and employment aspirations identified in Individual Learning Plans (ILPs).

An Innovation Strategy initiated with CTCs at both national and local level continued in 2013 with a strategic focus on Value for money, Board Governance, Training relevant to both the labour market and further educational training opportunities for early school leavers and Retention management/Improved progression outcomes.

The Local Training Initiative programme is designed to provide opportunities for marginalised clients who are unable to access other FÁS training interventions for personal, social or geographical reasons. Some projects are targeted at specific groups experiencing disadvantage such as homeless people, recovering addicts, prisoners and travellers. Target clients are primarily people under 35 years of age, with no formal qualifications or incomplete secondary level qualifications. The LTI supports many organisations engaged in a wide variety of activities including genealogy, environment, heritage, tourism, theatre, and sports and coaching. In 2013, circa 150 LTIs provided vocational training opportunities through project-based learning to assist participants achieve awards on the NFQ and to develop the capacity to progress to further training, education and work. The on-going relevance and effectiveness of LTIs was further supported in 2013 by the development of a project review process.

ESF 1.3 - Back to Education Initiative

Many providers continue to report that demand for part-time provision greatly outstrips supply. Anecdotal evidence also suggests that unemployed participants may prioritize part-time provision in order to access or retain part-time temporary employment when it becomes available. There was **an increase in the participation of unemployed people from 43% of participants in 2012 to 44% in 2013 (40% were reported as unemployed in 2011)**. An increased amount of provision is taking place on an inter-agency basis, initiated in

conjunction with statutory agencies such as the Department of Social Protection and FÁS, as well as local community interests.

In 2011 providers were requested to promote access, participation and progression opportunities for unemployed people, to take account of the Government's activation agenda. In line with the National Skills Strategy, providers were requested to prioritize older, low-skilled workers, younger age cohorts (those under 25, particularly those with low educational attainment) and those in the 25-34 year old age cohort with PLC/upper secondary educational attainment or below and this was continued for 2013. Many providers continue to emphasize that short-term educational interventions are counterproductive if more substantial progression opportunities are not subsequently available. Providers also continue to stress the complexity of work with highly marginalised people who may now be further isolated because of new demand for provision from those who have recently become unemployed.

Under the National Partnership Agreement, *Towards 2016* published in June 2006, priority was given to expanding the Back to Education Initiative (Part Time) by 2,000 places by 2009 (from a base of 8000 places in 2006). It was also intended to adopt measures to monitor and evaluate progress within the Initiative. The national budget allocation for 2013 was €22,965,000 which provided for the approval of 12,000 places.

Commentary on Activity-related progress

The guidelines developed to provide practical support for practitioners are listed below:

- **Certification Matters:** *Guidelines to Support Certification Outcomes through Back to Education Initiative Funded Programmes.*
- **Delivering Accredited Programmes to Learners with Disabilities:** *Guidelines for Facilitating the Successful Delivery of Back to Education Initiative Funded Programmes to Learners with Disabilities.*
- **Widening Participation in Adult Learning:** *Guidelines for Effective Planning and Delivery of Back to Education Initiative Outreach Provision.*
- **Promoting Access and Progression in Adult Learning:** *Guidelines to Enhance Cooperation between Back to Education Initiative and Adult Literacy Service Programmes.*
- **Increasing Men's Participation in Adult Learning:** *Guidelines to Enhance Men's Engagement with Back to Education Initiative Funded Programmes.*

At an overall level, these reports have helped to focus attention on the key objectives of BTEI (Part-time). In particular, it is of note that the guidelines on men's engagement have contributed to **an increase in the overall male participation rate to 33% in 2013**. The guidelines on delivering accredited programmes to learners with disabilities have helped to promote the need to match learners to appropriate programmes in order to optimize positive outcomes. Copies of the guidelines may be accessed under the Back to Education Initiative at www.education.ie

ESF 1.4 - Undergraduate Skills

Socioeconomic Trends

Ireland continued to face many challenges in 2014 in bringing about a return to economic prosperity. Encouragingly, the unemployment rate for 2014, while still remaining high, has begun to fall from levels seen in the past two years. The following table, from data available from the Central Statistics Office, shows seasonally total adjusted standardised unemployment rates in 2006-2014:

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Jul 2014
Annual Average	4.4	4.6	6.3	11.8	13.3	14.2	14.1	13.1	11.3

Higher Education Enrolments, New Entrants and Graduates

The relevant academic year for this progress report 2014 is the 2013/14 academic year, as the students reported on were in place at 1 March 2014.

The HEA Report, Higher Education Key Facts and Figures 2013/14 gives detailed information on student numbers – both overall and new entrant enrolments. This report is available on the website www.heai.ie. A number of tables and charts are taken from this report and can be seen at Appendix 1.

Enrolment Figures

There were 208,812 students on higher education programmes in HEA institutions in 2013-14. This represents an increase of 4.6% over 2012/13 academic year (199,679).

In relation to **Universities**, overall enrolments numbering 111,339 students (full and part time) represent an increase of 4,164 or 3.9% over the figure of 107,175 for 2012/13.

In relation to **Institutes of Technology**, overall enrolments numbering 85,480 students (full and part-time) increased by 5.7% over the figure of 80,905 the previous academic year.

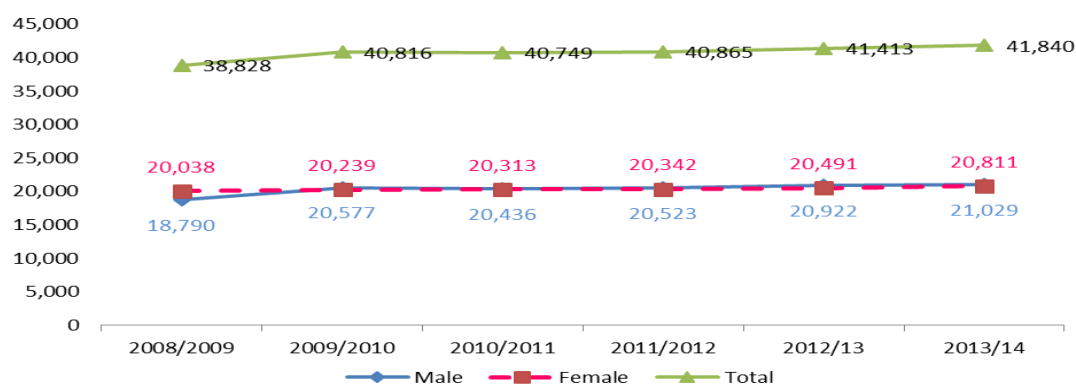
Overall full time undergraduate enrolments have increased by 10.1% in the 5 year period 2009-10 to 2013/14.

New Entrant Figures

New entrants are defined as students entering third level for the first time. Generally only new entrants to full-time undergraduate courses are included. New entrants continued to increase in 2013/14, following on from significant increases in previous years.

The following table shows the full time undergraduate new entrant enrolments (by gender) for all HEA funded institutions in 2013/14. There was an increase of 8% in full time undergraduate enrolments in the last five years.

Full Time Undergraduate New Entrants Gender Trends 2008/2009 – 2013/14 for all HEA Funded Institutions



HEA Report on Progression

As previously reported, a HEA study on the issue of early college leaving found that 85% of students' progress from first year to second year and that the Irish higher education system compares favourably with other countries in terms of student progression and course completion. The report, "A Study of Progression in Higher Education" analyses rates of progression of undergraduate higher education students between the academic years 2007/08 and 2008/09.

Prior educational attainment is closely associated with successful progression through higher education. In terms of individual subjects, Leaving Certificate Mathematics appears to be most strongly linked to successful progression. Attainment in Leaving Certificate English is also a strong indicator. Prior educational attainment outweighs all other factors, including social class, gender and choice of education institution, when determining how likely it is that a student will complete their certificate or degree.

The report is available on the HEA website, www.heai.ie.

CAO Course Applications

In 2014 the HEA published a report on its website entitled "*An Analysis of CAO First Preference Applications 2014*". There was an increase (+2.7%) in applicants in 2014, following a slight decline in 2013. This represents 1,940 more CAO applications. This is the first significant increase in applications since 2010. Detailed tables on applicant numbers is provided at Appendix 3.

- First preference applications to Technology courses continue to show an increase in total proportion of discipline choices. These have increased from 19.8% in 2012 to 20.5% in 2013 and 21.8% in 2014. In numerical terms, the number of students studying Technology courses increased from 12,440 in 2013 to 13,608 in 2014, an increase of 9.4%.
- First preference applications to Science courses in 2014 increased by 7.6% from 4,570 in 2013 to 4,916 in 2014, now comprising 7.9% of all first preference level 8 applications.
- Engineering increased again in 2014 to 3,215 from 2,926 in 2013. These now make up 5.1% of all first preference level 8 applications.
- First preference applications to Computing courses increased in 2014 with 4,311 applications. They now constitute 6.9% of all level 8 first preference applications.
- Construction increased their first preference applications in 2014. This is the first increase since the recession. First preference applications now make up 1.9% of all level 8 applications.
- Business and Law applications show an increase in 2014 with 15% of all applications compared to 14% in 2013.
- Overall first preference applications to Healthcare professions (Medicine, Dentistry and Nursing) are down in 2013 with Other Healthcare applications remaining static in terms of the proportion of all applications.
- While Arts and Humanities applications remain strong, with the highest proportion of first preferences at 23.5% its share did show a very slight decline in 2014.
- Disciplines with the largest increase in first preference applications since 2010 are: Computing, Agriculture and Vet, Other Healthcare and Engineering.
- Disciplines with the greatest decrease in first preference applications since 2010 are: Construction, Dentistry, Education and Social Services.

EGFSN Report on ICT Skills

The EGFSN report on Future Requirement for High-Level ICT Skills in the ICT Sector (summary Appendix A) was launched in June 2008 and remains the main report and background for setting the ICT graduate shortage in context.

The vacation computing camps for school students continued to be active in 2014. In 2014 the HEA provided total funding of €80,000 to 16 institutions to support vacation computing camps. The camps were attended by approximately 1,000 students and in some cases were oversubscribed. While the main purpose of them is to promote courses in computing, they fulfil the equally important function of allowing the students to assess whether they have the interest and ability to enjoy a computing career.

ICT Action Plan

A second national ICT Skills Action Plan for 2014 - 2018 was published in March 2014. The plan includes twenty-two actions which, combined, aim to make Ireland a global leader in ICT talent through a suite of measures which will continue to increase the output of high-level graduates. The Plan recognises that both the public and private higher education sectors continue to contribute to the development of high level ICT skills in Ireland through mainstream undergraduate and post-graduate courses and, since 2011, through the targeted Springboard and ICT skills conversion initiatives. The Plan sets a target where the output of ICT graduates should reach 74% of forecasted industry demand by 2018. However, the Plan also notes that existing responses will not be enough by themselves and that a rise in the number of full-time undergraduate places on core ICT courses at Level 8 would be required to achieve the 74% target. The 22 actions listed in the Plan therefore include a call for the provision, from September 2014, of an additional 1,250 incentivised undergraduate places on core ICT courses. For the purposes of this initiative 'core ICT courses' are full-time Level 8 degree courses in the areas of Computer Science (ISCED 481); Computer Use (482) and Electronics and Automation (523).

The HEA issued a 'Call for Proposals to provide additional ICT undergraduate places in 2014' on 14 April. The Call invited proposals from publicly-funded higher education institutions to increase the number of places on courses leading to a Level 8 award in core ICT areas. The additional places are to be incentivised via a top-up amount of €1,000 per annum, in addition to the usual HEA core grant payment. This core grant resourced top-up is to be provided to providers for each additional student for the duration of his/her course. In response to the call an additional 661 places were provided by the sector.

ESF 1.6 - Labour Market Activation Fund (LMAF)

No expenditure in respect of the LMAF was included in claims submitted in 2013.

ESF 1.7 - Labour Market Education and Training Fund (LMETF)

Objective: The fund is targeted to benefit the long-term unemployed and those under 25 years of age. It is focused on funding up-skilling and reskilling programmes delivering qualifications up to Level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications, or equivalent that will enhance their chances of employment or progression. No significant changes in the operating environment during Momentum 2013, the economy remained in recession and placing participants in jobs has been a major challenge. The number of persons trained under the Momentum Programme was 6,179.

2. INCREASING PARTICIPATION AND REDUCING INEQUALITY IN THE LABOUR FORCE PRIORITY

2.2 – Disability Activation Project

2.3 - Adult Literacy

2.4 - Third Level Access

2.5 - YouthReach & Travellers

2.6 – Garda Youth Diversion - IT Skills/Personal Development

2.7 - Garda Youth Diversion – Additional Workers

2.8 - Positive Actions to Promote Gender Equality

2.9 – Equality Mainstreaming Approach

2.10 – Social and Employment Integration of Migrants

The objective of this Priority as set out in the Operational Programme is-

- *To contribute to addressing labour market gaps for specific groups that are experiencing barriers to participation and employment, including those created by gender inequality and wider inequalities*

ESF 2.2 Disability Activation Project

Following on the introduction in 2012 of a call for proposals on a thematic basis - representing a significant re-orientteering of the measure – no other significant changes occurred in the operating environment.

Programme activity to date has been good. During the 2014 calendar year the number of 'New' participants engaged by the Projects was 983 while 347 participants left the projects. During this period some 700 participants moved into education, training or employment.

Under Strand 4 (Innovative Employer Initiatives) significant progress was made in the last 6 months of 2014 on engaging employers to provide jobs for persons with disabilities with an increase of (741) on the previous six month period from 1,480 to 2,221 employers engaged.

A plenary review event in May 2014 provided an opportunity to capture feedback from projects on barriers and enablers to transitions to employment. A common theme presented was that whilst a high level of enthusiastic and sincere corporate social responsibility driven engagement on the part of employers with the programme, this is not sufficient in its own right and there are learning and resourcing implications for employers.

ESF 2.3 - Adult Literacy

A re-organisation of the Further Education and Training sector took place in 2013 which saw the establishment of Education and Training Boards in July and SOLAS, the new further education and training body in October. The Adult Literacy service is now being delivered by 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs) nationwide. These ETBs are an amalgamation of the 33 former Vocational Education Committees (VECs). SOLAS will have responsibility for all further education and training provision, including adult literacy delivered by the 16 Local Education and Training Boards (LETBs). The education and training programmes to be provided through SOLAS will be modernised over the whole sector to become more relevant, accessible, and more effective.

Programme for International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)

Ireland participated in PIAAC, a programme organised by the OECD. It involved surveying adults (between the ages of 16-64) in their homes on a range of skills covering the interest, attitude and capacity of individual adults to access, manage, understand, integrate and evaluate various types of information (principally text and numerical) as well as to respond and communicate with others in the information age. Following a field trial in the summer of 2010, the main PIAAC survey was administered in Ireland between August 2011 and March 2012 by the Central Statistics Office on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills. Almost 6,000 adults (5,963) aged between 16 and 65 responded to the survey in Ireland. The overall response rate for Ireland was 72% which was the third highest achieved by participating countries (24). The cost (just over €3 million over the period 2008 – 2013) was met by the Department.

The results of PIAAC programme, published in October 2013, showed an improvement in basic literacy skills in Ireland since the previous International Adult literacy Survey (IALS) results were published in 1997. Irish participants scored below the survey average in numeracy and performed at the survey average in terms of its proportion of participants scoring at the lower levels in problem solving.

Review of Adult Literacy

A review of adult literacy provision was undertaken at the request of the Department with the aim of informing and developing future policy and practice. The aim of the review was to evaluate the services delivered and to make corresponding recommendations. The Review was published in 2013 and contained 32 recommendations to improve adult literacy provision. Many of the recommendations were incorporated into 2013 revised operational guidelines for adult literacy. Amongst the recommendations, the report addressed the level and nature of provision recommending more intensive options, group tuition, numeracy tuition, family literacy, distance and blended learning options. The report recommendations were used in part to inform the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy as part of the Further Education and Training Strategy 2014 – 2019.

Adult Literacy Operational Guidelines

In 2012, the Department issued new operational guidelines for adult literacy provision which highlight the importance of integrating literacy into Further Education and training programmes. The Guidelines were devised in conjunction with stakeholders to assist in the administration and management of the Adult Literacy programme. The guidelines were revised in 2013 following the publication of the review of the Adult Literacy programme which had commenced in late 2012. The revised Adult Literacy Operational Guidelines incorporate many of the recommendations of the review.

Expansion of the Literacy Service

The adult literacy service has expanded significantly over the last decade resulting in learner numbers increasing steadily from year to year and are now well ahead of the target of 42,000 per annum by 2009. In 2013, over 60,000 participants availed of the literacy service. There has also been a continuous increase in the number and variety of programmes on offer.

Family Literacy and Intensive Literacy Initiatives

The family literacy initiative under DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) - An Action Plan in Educational Inclusion and the Intensive Tuition in Adult Basic Education (ITABE) programme both continued in 2013.

The aim of the family literacy Initiative is to address parents' literacy skills to enable them to participate in their children's education. 24 projects were approved funding of €271,900 in 2012 and funding of €335,500 has been provided for projects in all 16 ETB's in 2013/14.

ITABE

ITABE is a 14 week programme provided nationwide through the ETB sector providing six hours of tuition per week rather than the two provided normally over a longer period. Funding of almost €2 million was provided for the Initiative in 2011, 2012 and in 2013. The initiative is targeted at the most socially and economically disadvantaged groups in society. Over 2,000 learners attended intensive tuition under the initiative in 2012 and 2013.

Multi Media

The National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) is funded by the Department of Education and Skills. In the past it has successfully commissioned a number of TV series ‘Written Off’ in 2008/2009 and “Stuck for Words” in 2010. ‘A Story with Me in it’ was produced and broadcast during 2011, six episodes were aired which showed six well known Irish authors being teamed up with six adults who have struggled with writing throughout their lives and encouraged them to write a story. Viewing figures of approximately 200,000 per episode were achieved, approximately one in five of the viewing public. A second series of this very successful programme was produced and broadcast in 2012. The Family Project was NALA’s 13th TV series and was broadcast during May/June of 2013. This was a six-part TV series that followed six families from around Ireland working together to overcome educational issues that affect their lives.

NALA also developed an interactive website www.writeon.ie that allows adults the freedom to study in their own time to improve their reading, writing and number skills and which offers accreditation at FETAC Levels 2 and 3.

The Department continued its support of the use of multi-media to highlight and promote the literacy services available during 2013. €150,000 in funding was provided by the Department towards National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) multi-media projects. NALA has also worked with An Post to create a number of advertisements to raise awareness about adult literacy.

Literacy and Numeracy Learning for Life Strategy

The Literacy and Numeracy Learning for Life, the National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy Among Children and Young People contains a number of recommendations in relation to adult literacy, specifically in relation to the promotion of the importance of family literacy and the role parents play in their children’s education. The Department is engaged in the implementation of those recommendations in conjunction with other stakeholders such as NALA, who has devised the www.helpmykidlearn.ie website as part of the Strategy to provide fun activities that parents can engage with their children to develop their literacy and numeracy skills.

ESF 2.4 Third Level Access

Ireland’s second *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013* has concluded. Following a consultation process in 2013-14¹, a new plan for 2015-2019 is being finalised by the HEA in conjunction with the Department and key stakeholders. The plan will set out the overall objectives, actions and targets needed to achieve further increases in participation to higher education by under-represented groups. Among the actions in the plan will be reviews of funding for access

¹[Towards the Development of a new National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education \(HEA, 2014\)](#)

The plan is advised by the objectives and performance indicators for access and lifelong learning that have been agreed by higher education institutions with the HEA as part of a strategic dialogue process. This new process is steering the implementation of the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 and the specific priorities for higher education set out in the Department's Higher Education System Performance Framework for 2014-2016². A first report on the performance of the higher education system has been published³.

Fund for Students with Disabilities performance: The total allocation for this funding programme in 2014-15 was €10.3m. (Provisional figures). This funding supported 10,011 students with disabilities in the further and higher education sector (most up-to-date figures). The number of approvals in 2014-15 represents an increase of +12% over the previous year when 8,809 students were approved for support. Support under this fund can be categorised under three broad headings; assistive technology, academic/personal support and transport. Supporting the participation of students with disabilities in higher education is a priority for the Department of Education and Skills and the Higher Education Authority (HEA).

A review of the Fund for Students with a Disability will be progressed as part of the next National Access Plan. This will include consideration and updating of consultations and analysis conducted as part of a previous review process on the Fund.

Student Assistance Fund performance: The total allocation for the SAF was €6.6 m in academic year 2014-15. A total of €8.35m was allocated in academic year 2013-14. The €8.35m provided 15,004 low income students with financial support (provisional total). The SAF provides assistance under a range of headings including financial support for the cost of childcare, rent and general living expenses. The fund positively impacts on the participation and retention of low income students in higher education. It should be noted that this fund is not exclusively targeted at under-represented socio-economic groups in HE. Students facing temporary financial difficulties can also be supported by the Fund. Each HEI has its own application process and the fund is open to all students who meet the institution's selection criteria. A review of the Student Assistance Fund will be progressed as part of the next National Access Plan.

Equal Access Data Initiative: 2014 is the 8th year of the HEA's equal access data initiative. Information is gathered as part of registration on students' social, economic and cultural background. This data is informing work on the development of a new funding model for higher education. The equal access data collected for 2013-14 was published in February 2015 in the HEA's *Higher Education Key Facts and Figures 11/1*. The full report can be accessed here http://www.heai.ie/sites/default/files/final_key_facts_figures_2013_14.pdf

ESF 2.5 YouthReach & Travellers

i) Evaluations of Centres of Education

The Department's Inspectorate undertook 3 evaluations of Youthreach centres in 2013 and these were published in 2014.

Copies of the evaluation reports are available on the Department of Education and Skills website www.education.ie

The Department's Inspectorate began work on developing new Inspection Guidelines for Youthreach Centres in 2012 and these were finalised in 2013.

² [HEA-Higher-Education-System-performance-Framework-2014-2016.pdf](#)

³ [Higher-Education-System-Performance-First-report-2014-2016.pdf](#)

ii) Guidance, Counselling and Psychological Services

In 2013, just over €1 million was allocated for guidance, counselling and psychological services. Services are made available in Youthreach (VEC Youthreach centres and FÁS Community Training Centres). Centres use their allocations to prioritise from a spectrum of needs ranging from initial orientation and guidance and vocational information to psychological services.

New guidelines on the use of guidance, counselling and psychological services funding were being developed in 2012 and these were finalised in 2013.

iii) Special Educational Needs Initiative (SENI) in Youthreach

In 2013, just over €1.5 million was allocated to VECs for the SENI in Youthreach. This support was introduced in 2007 and is available in 20 Youthreach centres.

iv) Quality Framework

During 2013, Youthreach centres continued to engage in the Quality Framework Initiative (QFI). The QFI involves centre development planning and internal centre evaluations.

v) Literacy Guidelines

Work was undertaken by The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) on developing new Literacy guidelines for Youthreach in 2012 and these were finalised in 2013.

ESF 2.6 Garda Youth Diversion – IT Skills/Personal Development

In February 2014 the “*Tackling Youth Crime, a Youth Justice Action Plan 2014-2018*” was launched by the Minister for Justice and Equality and by the Minister for Children & Youth Affairs. It builds on the work done under the first National Youth Justice Strategy 2008-2010. The Action Plan has a particular focus on performance through the implementation of evidence-based policies. The Plan sits within the recently launched National Policy Framework for children and young people and it will also form part of the *National Anti-Crime Strategy* being developed under the proposed White Paper on Crime. Implementation of the action plan is overseen by a multi-agency steering group.

The Community Programmes Unit continued to build on the capacity-building change management programme of the 100 Garda Youth Diversion Projects (GYDPs) to enable them to focus on local youth crime problems. This current phase of the change programme commenced in January 2014 under the Trial Site Initiative 2014 and trialled four components with 15 trial sites: 1) Introduction and use of full YLS/CMI 2.0 risk assessment tool which measures the risk factors for offending behaviour. 2) introduction of measurement tools to measure 3 outcomes (impulsiveness, empathy and pro-social behaviour). 3) Intervention training and guidance and 4) Additional participant youth crime analysis.

In late 2013 the 15 trial site projects received training in the YLSCMI 2 risk assessment tool which is an evidence based licensed risk assessment tool provided through Multi Health Systems (MHS) in Canada and started to use in the 2014 trial site initiative. Following 2 evaluations of its use in April and in July 2014, IYJS took the decision to roll out the assessment tool to all 100 projects. In October 2014 IYJS arranged for "train the trainer" training of 15 youth justice workers from the trial site initiative through the training unit of

the MHS. These trainers will train youth justice workers in the other 85 projects in the use of the tool during 2015.

Continue to align resource allocation models to address local youth crime need. There is a pilot underway with the projects located in Kerry in cooperation with An Garda Síochána and Kerry Diocesan Youth Service. The pilot seeks to deliver the Garda Youth Diversion Project service across the whole of the county as opposed to the localised catchment areas the projects were located in. This pilot was evaluated towards the end of 2014 and the new service delivery type has been approved for future use in Co. Kerry. Plans are underway to replicate the service delivery type in other locations across the country.

Commentary on Activity-related progress

During 2014, a total number of 80 courses were run under this Sub Measure with 70 personal development and 10 IT courses. 761 participants benefited from the grant under this Sub Measure with 563 receiving personal development courses and 198 receiving IT courses. An extensive range of courses were provided.

The funding under this measure was made available to projects upon receipt and approval of a proposal detailing the following:

- Referral source of participants.
- Course details and rationale of how the course will enhance the employability of participants.
- Expected outcomes.
- Breakdown of costs including quotes and rationale for selecting course provider.

An amount of approximately €106,214.16 was spent during 2014 to provide these courses.

Projects select the courses based on the individual needs of the project participants and which address the issues the young people face so that they are in a position to develop core competencies that are required to continue in education and/or obtain employment in the future.

ESF 2.7 Garda Youth Diversion – Additional Workers

See above

Commentary on Activity-related progress

At the end of 2014, 109 youth justice workers (including some part-time workers) in 98 projects were in place to enhance the capacity of the Garda Youth Diversion Projects and to improve the support services available to the participants. The work of the youth justice worker supports the achievement of short term and long term objectives of the projects and participants. 698 programmes were delivered in 2014 to 3454* young people.

(*based on returns for 80 of the Garda Youth Diversion Projects)

ESF 2.8 - Positive Actions to Promote Gender Equality

The EWM has remained a very important initiative in the context of the National Women's Strategy, which include commitments to enabling the full participation of women in society, including in employment. Moreover, it also links with the EU's Europe 2020 economic policy Strategy, in particular the need to encourage the economic engagement of women through increasing their labour market participation and thereby boosting economic growth.

Commentary on Activity-related progress

A total of 23 organisations were funded under the Equality for Women Measure (EWM) in 2014, all of which come under Strand 1 – Access to Employment. Projects received Letters of Offer at the end of May 2013 with a Grant Agreement issued in July 2013; contracts covered the period up to 30th April 2014.

Following the end of this round of funding, organisations previously successful under EWM were invited to apply for funds up to a maximum of €32,000 under a new call.

Of the 23 projects awarded funding under the 2013/2014 funding call (one of these projects never entered into contract - SECTEC), two organisations merged (South Dublin County Partnership) bringing the total number eligible to apply under the 2014/2015 call to 21. This resulted in 18 projects being awarded funding under the latest funding call for 2014/2015.

In relation to the 4 projects who did not receive funding under the current phase (2014-2015) this was because:

- Three projects did not submit an application for funding;
 1. OPEN ERT (Open Education Research and Training)
 2. Ballyhoura Development Ltd.
 3. Merchants Quay Project Ltd.
- One organisation awarded funding under the 2013/2014 round (SECTEC), did not enter into contract due to issues outside of Pobal's control and were therefore excluded from the process of applying for funding under the 2014/2015 round.

EWM Projects

EWM projects are developing innovative work to engage women in education, training, employment and enterprise. The feedback from EWM projects highlights the importance of a women-centred and targeted support programme. A women-only environment has proved crucial in developing the confidence of many women and bringing them to a place where they can access mainstream training / education initiatives; start or grow a business and advance their careers. The projects across each of the strands have benefitted a diverse target group of women across all ages and include women who have experienced domestic abuse, migrants, lone parents, Travellers, women who are long-term unemployed, offenders, ex-prisoners, women experiencing addiction issues, women in business, aspiring entrepreneurs, women in employment and professional women. Most supports aim to provide a range of 'soft skills' in combination with accredited or skills-based courses, mentoring and placements in order to remove barriers to participation or progression in employment or enterprise.

Actions undertaken by EWM projects include: accredited and non-accredited skills-based training, personal development supports and individual / group mentoring. Other supports provided by projects are tailored to the needs of the particular target group. For **Strand 1** (under which all of the 2014 projects were funded) this can include CV and interview skills preparation, work placements, career guidance, life coaching and awareness raising in relation to the labour market. In previous years, projects were also funded under two additional strands. Under **Strand 2**, the focus was on specific skill-based training inputs and networking events for women at various stages of entrepreneurship development, which include business development, marketing, idea generation, financial management, social media, financial planning, how to manage staff effectively, developing feasibility studies and business plans. For **Strand 3** projects, the focus has been on strategies to dismantle the "glass ceiling" by providing supports and mentoring to improve the promotion prospects in academic and research careers for individual women. At a macro level, organisational strategies to tackle gender inequalities, including horizontal and vertical segregation, were developed through positive actions drawing on best practice internationally. A network of universities will progress key recommendations across the sector thus extending the impact of EWM funding.

Some of the key activities undertaken across Strand 1 include:

- In 2014, **1,000 women** participated in initiatives that were funded under the 23 projects that constitute **Strand 1 (Access to Employment)**, bringing the cumulative total to 10,739. The regional breakdown for participants in 2014 is 32.0% from BMW and 68.0% from S&E. A total of 495 women achieved accreditation through certified training.
- Figures reported on the number of women who availed of training in 2014 shows an increase of (26%: 205) when compared with 2013, which reported a total of **795 women** who availed of training under **Strand 1 (Access to Employment)**, of which 230 achieved accreditation through certified training.
- It is reported that 240 (of the 795 women who availed of training under Strand 1 in 2013) were still engaged in employment or further education one year later.

ESF 2.9 - Equality Mainstreaming Approach

The Equality Authority merged with the Irish Human Rights Commission. The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission was established on 1 November 2014. A new Chief Commissioner - Emily Logan was appointed and took up office on 1 October 2014.

Equality Mainstreaming Projects

During 2013, the Equality Mainstreaming Unit issued a call for proposals to develop equality mainstreaming projects focused on access to employment or workplace equality. The funding was intended for targeted projects which would set out to foster equality across the nine grounds covered by the equality legislation through the implementation of equality mainstreaming strategies. A maximum of € 20,000 was made available to successful projects. All projects were required to engage with more than one project partner in order to ensure maximum equality outcomes.

The projects were required either to focus on improving access to the labour market (equal access and participation to employment, further education and training, employability programmes) for groups across the nine grounds, or on promoting equality in the workplace through a whole organisational approach or an approach across a sector or a region. Six projects were initiated during July 2013 and will be finalised in July 2014.

The Immigrant Council of Ireland (ICI)

The ICI is currently leading a project on the delivery of diversity and anti-racism training to staff in the public transport sector. Transport providers will also develop ant-racism/diversity strategies for their organisations. The project has been developed in partnership with the main Dublin transport stakeholders such as Dublin Bus, Irish Rail, Bus Éireann and Veolia (LUAS). An advisory committee to the project was set up with representation of management, staff and the trade unions from the three public transport companies, the Immigrant Council of Ireland and a representative of the Equality Authority.

Cavan County Council and Cavan Community Forum

These two organisations applied for a project on equality mainstreaming through communication and training in the context of strengthening and promoting the Cavan Diversity Initiative and the Cavan County Council equality action plan. The project has produced a DVD on Equality in the Workplace training which includes the voices of local people from across the nine grounds. The DVD will be promoted as a training tool through a communication strategy and a number of training events for Cavan County Council Staff and the Cavan Community Forum.

BelongTo and ICTU

BelongTo and ICTU joined forces to design, launch and promote a workplace campaign similar to the one promoted by BelongTo in secondary schools. The campaign will be branded as “Stand-Up. Don’t stand for Homophobia or Transphobia in the Workplace”. BelongTo have initiated the project by carrying out a needs assessment among their stakeholders and by procuring a multimedia company to develop their online campaign. BelongTo and ICTU have also established an Advisory Committee which comprises of youth representatives, trade union officials and a representative of the Equality Authority. A strategy will be put in place to promote the campaign in workplaces.

See Change - The National Stigma Reduction Partnership

See Change is a partnership of nearly 80 Irish organisations working together to challenge the stigma and discrimination associated with mental health problems. This project aims at challenging discrimination experienced by people with personal experience of a mental health issues in a workplace setting. The advisory committee set up for this project includes the Equality Authority and some of See Change partners such as IBEC (Irish Business and Employers Confederation), Business in the Community Ireland (BITCI), Suicide or Survive (SOS), Sigmar Recruitment and EHA Occupational Health. See Change have run consultations with partners and HR managers. This consultation will be followed by a legal case law review on disability, mental health and reasonable accommodation, by the provision of policy and guidance tools as well as a number of pilot training sessions within a number of companies.

Irish University Association (IUA) Equality Network

The IUA aims to develop a model of inclusive workplace practices to ensure a workplace which is positively engaged in supporting people with disabilities applying to, or working in the Third Level sector. The IUA Equality network project will audit and enhance current policies and procedures in relation to staff with disabilities. It will also pilot a training awareness programme for managers on supporting people with disabilities, and keeping them engaged in the workforce. The content of the training will also be embedded in existing training provision to enhance diversity competence at institutional and sectoral levels. The project will also develop a publicity strategy to increase staff awareness of supports available to individuals with disabilities.

Galway Traveller Movement

The Galway Traveller Movement will carry out an initiative which builds on their 2012 equality mainstreaming project, by further promoting the usage and application of their equality impact assessment toolkit "Working for Travellers' Equality" with the Galway Education and Training Board and the Department of Social Protection. The project will also see the involvement of three Traveller Ambassadors in delivering interactive workshops to project partners' staff and in raising awareness and knowledge about Traveller culture and the barriers faced by Travellers in relation to participation in the labour market and further education programmes.

Equality Supports to Providers of Further Education and Training programmes

During 2013, EMU its programme of work with the Further Education and Training Sector, through the provision of equality supports. A call for proposals to the Further Education and Training sector was issued and equality supports were offered to facilitate the mainstreaming of equality into the planning, design and delivery of further education and training. The successful applicants selected an expert from the FET Equality Experts panel set up by the Equality Mainstreaming Unit in 2012.

Thirteen organisations have availed or are currently availing of these supports (projects are due to end in April – May 2014). The full list is contained in the Progress Report for 2013.

Equality Mainstreaming Annual Conference: Making It Real

The Equality Authority's annual conference on equality mainstreaming was held in Dublin Castle on 22 October 2013. It was officially opened by Mr Alan Shatter T.D. Minister for Justice & Equality. The theme was ***Making it Real*** and the conference showcased and shared good practice in equality mainstreaming approaches that have been applied in the further education and training sector and within organisations responsible for delivering active labour market programmes. The conference also showcased projects that have been funded to stimulate workplaces to take action on equality and to encourage employers to be planned and systematic in their approaches to workplace equality.

Publication: "Positive Duty: An Opportunity for Equality Mainstreaming"

During the Equality Mainstreaming conference, Minister Alan Shatter T.D. launched a new Equality Mainstreaming Unit publication: **"Positive Duty: An Opportunity for Equality Mainstreaming"**. This publication brings together papers delivered at the 2012 Equality Mainstreaming Conference on different positive duty models in the UK, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

Public Sector Equality Learning Network

The Equality Mainstreaming Unit coordinated a meeting of the Public Sector Equality Learning Network and organised two PSELN learning events, the first on identifying and addressing incidents of discrimination and the second on providing reasonable accommodation in the workplace (June and September 2013)

Supports to Promote Workplace Equality

The Equality Mainstreaming Unit participated in the "Taking Care of Business - One Stop Shop" on October 22nd in the Printworks Conference Centre, Dublin Castle. This initiative is led by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation. The event was a great success with over 500 SMEs attending. Follow-up events are planned for 2014 in Limerick, Cork, Galway and Dublin.

ESF 2.10-Social & Employment Integration of Migrants

Although the unemployment rate in Ireland improved slightly in 2013 falling to under 13%, it continues to be high. As per the ESRI & Equality Authority report in 2012, migrants face higher unemployment rates than the average. Therefore in 2013 the EPIC programme is operating in a broadly similar environment to 2012 with a large demand from immigrants seeking support to find employment. Rising referral rates to the EPIC programme year on year demonstrate the ongoing need.

The EPIC Programme structure has remained broadly similar since 2009, with ongoing review and modifications and improvements to meet our clients changing needs. It combines classroom training, individual support, work experience opportunities and business involvement to assist our clients to find employment, or further training/education leading to employment.

Training

In 2013, the Pre-employment & Interview skills modules (Weeks 1 – 4 of the training) continued to focus on Pre-employment preparation with an emphasis on English for employment. A cross-cultural approach to content delivery and frequent team building exercises are followed which acknowledge the previous experiences and knowledge of participants and facilitate interaction and bonding between them.

The Living and Working in Ireland module (Weeks 5 and 6 of the training) provides up-to-date information on a variety of services and themes which help our clients understand important aspects of Irish life. In 2013 a total of 98 presentations were made in cooperation with 7 NGOs and 1 statutory body. The objective of the presentations is to increase understanding of and integration into Irish society and to facilitate networking.

All elements of EPIC training and support have a strong focus on Motivation, as this is one of the key factors in successfully accessing employment. In 2013 we increased our emphasis on helping clients to manage stress and build resilience in response to an increasing level of presentation of issues of anxiety, depression and other problems.

Promotions

Promotional activity keeps immigrants informed of the EPIC programme to ensure they know of our service and that we are meeting their needs. In 2013 we had 648 referrals. Of these referrals, 520 attended for assessment. 43% of those assessed were sent by former EPIC clients and 19% were referred by Intreo and Social Welfare offices. Blanchardstown, D'Olier Street and Parnell offices had the highest rates of referrals. The balance of referrals came from the organisations contacted throughout the year and internet searches.

In 2013, the promotion of the programme focused on increasing the number of Non-EU nationals joining the services. The following actions were implemented throughout the year:

- Staff members attended 12 events and provided information and materials about the programme
- EPIC participated in 5 job fairs working in alliance with the ILAC Library, the Dublin City Council, TD and the Dublin Inner City Network.
- A workshop for unemployed immigrants was organised by EPIC staff and delivered during the second quarter of the year.
- Information was provided to 8 organisations specialising in services of refugees.
- A total of 18 African organisations were given comprehensive information about EPIC services.
- 10 colleges and 11 social welfare offices were contacted and given information about the programme.
- 10 organisations added links to the EPIC webpage within their own websites
- EPIC's Facebook page was used actively to post information about events and activities to promote social integration (an average of 5 posts per week). At end 2013, there were 845 EPIC Facebook friends.

NB: ESF funding is acknowledged in all our promotional materials and activities.

Work placements

A total of 13 trainees were recruited, trained and supervised in the Work Placement Scheme within the EPIC Programme during 2013. The participants have reported on the usefulness of the experience in terms of boosting their confidence (89%), increasing their understanding of the Irish working environment (78%) and the specifically the familiarity with the Non-profit sector (56%). Overall 51 work placements have been offered since the scheme started in 2009 and of those, 41 participants have engaged in employment or training after finishing the experience. 4 additional work placements were provided in other departments of Business in the Community (BITC).

Outside BITC, 18 trainees were supported into work experience placements in external companies.

Business support

- BT continues to deliver I.T. training to our EPIC clients through the BT Connected Communities Initiative. With EPIC as centre partner, BT provided 15 IT trainings to 107 EPIC clients bringing the total from commencement of the partnership to 721 clients.
- CPL continues to provide Mock Interviews for EPIC clients in each training group. This is invaluable experience and an opportunity to gain feedback. 116 mock interviews were provided in 2013, an increase of 14 on the previous year.
- Ericsson provided Social Media Training focused in the use of LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter). In 2013, 81 EPIC clients attended and completed the training.
- KPMG provided mentoring during 2013 for 4 EPIC clients interested in working in the financial area, and increase of 1 on 2012.
- Other companies who provided support to EPIC during 2013 include Bank of Ireland, Oracle, Matheson, Veolia Transdev, Mercury Engineering and eBay. Supports include client training, peer talks, site visits, work placements, staff training etc.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PRIORITY

3.0 Technical Assistance

The Technical Assistance Priority covers certain costs in relation to certain areas of activity including the costs of the Audit Authority (ESF Financial Control Unit, DES); Monitoring Committee meetings; management, monitoring, implementation and control of the OP; evaluations (including Mid-Term Evaluation) and activity level/thematic evaluations; seminars; the computer-based integrated data management system; Information and publicity, document printing and other costs; Transnational activities; capacity building for organisations involved in administering ESF programmes; retention and storage of records for the current and previous OPs as necessary; and participation in ESF-related activities nationally and at EU level.

Expenditure under the *HCI OP Technical Assistance* in 2013 related, principally, to the monitoring committee meetings held in July and (January 2014; to information and publicity material, including the ESF Calendar and the ESF Newsletter; and to the continued operating costs of the ESF Financial Control Unit (Audit Authority).

Horizontal Principles

1. Gender and Wider Equal Opportunities

ESF 1.1 - Skills Training

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of gender and wider equal opportunities into the Activity?

The equality objectives that were embedded in FÁS are as follows:

- To seek formal equality; which requires action to remove any institutional barriers to entry to and participation in any FÁS programmes or service;
- To seek equality of participation; which requires action to ensure that people are given the means and ability to exercise their rights and participate equally;
- To seek equality of outcome; which requires action to achieve equality between marginalised and non-marginalised groups by addressing the needs and aspirations specific to particular groups and monitoring outcomes; and
- To seek equality of situation; which requires action to accommodate the diversity of needs that exist because of differences between people's situation, experiences and identity.

These objectives have been maintained in the activities which remained under the FÁS remit in 2013. FÁS also continued to focus on developing and encouraging an equality culture and attitude for its own staff within the organisation.

New Actions:

In 2013, the development of the Further Education and Training Strategy 2014 - 2019 will include specific actions relating to active inclusion and, in particular, a strategy for the promotion of literacy and numeracy in further education and training. The publication of the National Economic and Social Council "Strategic Review of Further Education and Training and the Unemployed" in 2013 outlined recommendations with regard to equality for unemployed participants across all FET programmes.

This report, along with other research and evidence, will be taken into account in the development of the FET Strategy 2014-2019.

Of the 21,704 people who completed training in the relevant programmes in 2013, a total of 8,206 (38%) were female. Over the period to date 2007-2013 to 2013, of the 161,741 persons who completed training, the gender breakdown is more evenly distributed with 90,030 (55%) of participants male and 71,711 (45%) female.

Examples of wider equal opportunities are outlined in the **Social Inclusion Horizontal Principle Reporting Template** and include further information relating to the Bridging/Foundation, SST, Traineeship, Return to work, CTC and LTI programmes i.e.:

Lone Parents

- In the twelve month period January to December 2013, 1,114 people in receipt of the One-Parent Family Allowance and the One-Parent Family Payment completed training programmes.
- Of those, over 60% were between the ages of 25 and 44.

People with a disability

- In 2013, 101 people who were in receipt of a disability payment completed FÁS programmes with an additional 1,025 people completing Specialist Training Programmes.

Age Profile

- The number of young people under the age of 20 completing training programmes in 2013 was 3,814 of which 39% were female.
- A further 4,925 young people aged between the ages of 20-24 completed training programmes in 2013 of which 40% were female
- 2,259 people over the age of 50 completed training programmes in 2013, of which 40% were female.

Progress against Indicators (where established):

(This should be presented if possible in the tabular form laid out below)

Indicator	Baseline Position (2012)	Latest Position (2013)
% of women in Activity	38%	38%

What contribution is the measure making to the promotion of gender and wider equal opportunities?

As indicated above, the proportion of females who completed training under this activity remained the same as 2012; the gender breakdown over the cumulative period is more evenly balanced.

ESF 1.3 - Back to Education Initiative

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of gender and wider equal opportunities into the Activity?

A. Gender

The BTEI (Part-time) provides opportunities to a wide range of adults to gain general qualifications and specific skills that enable progression to further education and training and increase participation and mobility within the labour market. The Guidelines for the BTEI (Part-time) advocate strategies to promote innovation, learner centredness, equality, accessibility and inclusiveness, the recognition and accommodation of diversity, quality assurance, local consultation and an area based approach.

The design and delivery of programmes (content, format, timing, location, duration, methodologies and learner supports) are adapted to meet the needs of a wide range of learners.

In the context of gender a number of actions are of note:

- Specific strategies continue to be developed by providers to encourage a higher level of male participation. These include **outreach and pre-development work** and the provision of courses that have an outdoor or craft orientation e.g. woodcraft, horticulture but which also include general basic education elements such as Communications and ICT.
- **Inter-agency work** with other statutory and voluntary organizations aims to increase the participation of long-term unemployed men.
- **Childcare support** is provided to enable participation by those with childcare needs and courses are often organised at times when children are at school.

- BTEI eligibility criteria allows for **free tuition for any adult with less than upper second level education**. This encompasses those persons with a social welfare entitlement or medical card, those not in the labour market and those in employment who have less than upper second level education. The eligibility criteria includes access to free tuition for women in the home and for persons in low paid employment who have less than upper second level education.
- The payment of a **training allowance** (including meal and travel allowances) is important to encourage the participation of some learners e.g. Young learners aged 16-20 years of age who would be eligible for such an allowance if on a full-time programme.

B. Wider Equal Opportunities (excluding gender)

With reference to the groups named under the wider equality grounds i.e. Travellers, older people, people with a disability and people within minority ethnic groups, the BTEI (Part-time) Guidelines notes these as high priority target groups. A number of specific actions include:

- Outreach and predevelopment work are common strategies when working with these four groups.
- Inter-agency work with other statutory and voluntary organizations is also a feature to address the participation of these groups.
- Programmes are provided for people with disabilities in collaboration with their support agencies. On-going integration into mainstream provision for those for whom this is appropriate is also a feature of provision.
- In some cases specialist equipment and individual support is provided for persons with a disability e.g. individual laptops, extra tuition, and transport.
- ESOL provision in outreach settings including accommodation centres was provided in 2010 as well as programmes for ethnic minority status participants.

(b) New Actions:

The reports from five development projects were disseminated during 2009 and reflected guidelines on issues concerning gender and wider equal opportunities as follows:

- ***Certification Matters: Guidelines to Support Certification Outcomes through Back to Education Initiative Funded Programmes.***
- ***Delivering Accredited Programmes to Learners with Disabilities: Guidelines for Facilitating the Successful Delivery of Back to Education Initiative Funded Programmes to Learners with Disabilities.***
- ***Widening Participation in Adult Learning: Guidelines for Effective Planning and Delivery of Back to Education Initiative Outreach Provision.***
- ***Promoting Access and Progression in Adult Learning: Guidelines to Enhance Cooperation between Back to Education Initiative and Adult Literacy Service Programmes.***
- ***Increasing Men's Participation in Adult Learning: Guidelines to Enhance Men's Engagement with Back to Education Initiative Funded Programmes.***

Copies of the guidelines may be accessed under the Back to Education Initiative at www.education.ie

The guidelines reflect Irish national policy priorities as well as current EU policy, as articulated in the Commission's Communication on Adult Learning, which emphasises the need for measures to bring provision closer to adult learners in their communities and workplaces.

Curriculum **guidelines to support providers to implement a foundation programme at NFQ Level 3, leading to a full award at this level were completed and disseminated in 2010.** Supports to providers focused on the development of Level 3 integrated programmes, with particular reference to the core skills of Communications and Mathematics, as part of integrated programme development.

At an overall level, these reports and guidelines have helped to focus attention on the key objectives of BTEI (Part-time) and have **supported providers in the planning and delivery of programmes leading to accredited outcomes for groups named under the wider equality grounds.**

The guidelines on delivering accredited programmes to learners with disabilities have helped to promote the need to match learners to appropriate programmes in order to optimize positive outcomes.

Progress against Indicators (where established):

Data collected on BTEI (Part-time) **target groups** is based on participant self-selection.

- Rates of participation by early school leavers (8%) are high when compared to other target groups as the general focus of the BTEI (Part-time) is on those with low education levels.
- The participation rate of persons with a disability (8%) remains high relative to other target groups.
- 11% of all participants in 2013 reported under Ethnic Minorities (Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrant Workers)
- There was a decrease in the participation rate of those aged over 55 from 16% in 2012 to 12% in 2013 but this had correlated with an increased level of participation in those aged under 35, which was a result of the priority on provision for the newly unemployed seeking to upskill.
- Data on the **participation of unemployed people showed an increase from 43% of participants in 2012 to 44% in 2013.**

The following presents a profile of participants classified by gender and BTEI target groups for 2013:

Target Group	Participants		Total
	Male	Female	
Person with Disability:	1253	1388	2641
Substance Misuser:	263	95	358
Ex-offender:	145	24	169
Early School Leaver:	4881	7655	12536
One-Parent Family:	172	3530	3702
Traveller:	156	305	461
Homeless:	86	35	121
ESOL Student:	527	952	1479
Refugee:	123	207	330
Asylum Seeker:	140	233	373
Migrant Worker:	425	722	1147
Other:	4339	10273	14612

Target Groups presented as a % of Total Participants National xx

The following presents data for 2013 in relation to the 2007 baseline position of the progress indicators:

(1) Indicator – Number of Males		% of participants
Baseline Position 2007	6016	23%
2008	6457	24%
2009	8085	29%
2010	8591	31%
2011	10269	32%
2012	10561	33%
2013	10458	33%

(2) Indicator – Number of Female		% of participants
Baseline Position 2007	19844	77%
2008	20647	76%
2009	20109	71%
2010	19368	69%
2011	21761	68%
2012	21505	67%
2013	21029	67%

(3) Indicator – Number of Persons with a Disability		% of participants
Baseline Position 2007	3745	14.5%
2008	3932	14.5%
2009	4018	14.3%
2010	3639	13%
2011	3367	10.5%
2012	2764	9%
2013	2641	8%

(4) Indicator – Number of Travellers		% of participants
Baseline Position 2007	844	3.3%
2008	1171	4.3%
2009	857	3%
2010	703	2.5%
2011	733	2.3%
2012	672	2.1%
2013	461	1.5%

(4) Indicator – Number from Ethnic Minorities (ESOL, Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrant Workers)		% of participants
Baseline Position 2007	2635	10%
2008	2785	10%
2009	3354	12%
2010	2839	10%
2011	3115	10%
2012	1707	5.3%
2013	3329	10.6%

(4) Indicator – Number of Older People (aged over 55)		% of participants
Baseline Position 2007	5,336	21%
2008	5305	20%
2009	4778	17%
2010	4863	17%
2011	5321	17%
2012	5056	16%
2013	3767	12%

What contribution is the measure making to the promotion of gender and wider equal opportunities?

In total there were 31487 participants in courses under the BTEI (Part-time) in 2013, of which 67% were women and 33% were men. **This reflects an increase in the participation rate of men from 32% in 2011, 31% in 2010, 29% in 2009 and 24% in 2008.**

This higher proportion of male participants may reflect the increasing demand for further education and training provision by newly unemployed men. It is also likely that it reflects providers' specific efforts to address the previously low rate of male participation, drawing on the guidelines published in 2009, ***Increasing Men's Participation in Adult Learning: Guidelines to Enhance Men's Engagement with Back to Education Initiative Funded Programmes***

As part of the annual application process providers indicate that they consult widely at local level when determining priorities for provision. These include organisations such as the National Training Development Institute, Rehab Care, Headway Ireland, Special Schools, and the Brothers of Charity all of which provide services to persons with a disability, Local Traveller Support Groups, organisations providing support and services to ethnic minorities and Age Action Ireland.

The guidelines outlined in section 2.b have particular relevance to gender and wider equal opportunities. The report ***Widening Participation in Adult Learning*** highlights key issues in outreach work, the primary purpose of which is to widen access for new and non-traditional adult learners, particularly those who do not usually avail of educational provision. The report ***Delivering Accredited Programmes to Learners with Disabilities*** identifies key elements of planning and provision of relevance to work with this target group.

ESF 1.4 - Undergraduate Skills

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of gender and wider equal opportunities into the Activity?

A. Gender

All undergraduate skills programmes are open to both male and female applicants. The courses provided under this measure include ICT, engineering and other sciences. Traditionally more males than females choose engineering and ICT related courses over other science courses. The gender balance on other science courses in the technological sector would normally be equally balanced. The Institutes of Technology, through their Steps Programme, continues to encourage more females onto their engineering courses.

Most institutes also offer Taster Programmes and Summer Courses on an ongoing basis in the area of technology. These courses are geared towards attracting both males and females at an early stage and continued to operate in 2013.

In universities the number of additional places on the courses provided under this measure in 2013 was 4,217 – 2,979 male and 1,238 female. This indicates 70% male and 30% female participation. In institutes of technology the number of additional places on the courses provided under this measure in 2012 was 6,067 – 5,073 male and 994 female. This indicates 84% male and 16% female participation. The difference between the sectors reflects different gender intake as a whole.

Women in Science and Technology (WITS), an organisation founded, among other things, to promote the participation of young women in science and technology, has a “role model” project aimed at female second level students. Institutions are also aware of the need to properly “brand” programmes to attract female participants. DCU, for example, renamed the BEng in “Telecommunications Engineering” to “Information and Communications Engineering”. Higher education institutions continue to run ‘computer camps’ for younger males and females to initiate and maintain interest in the area of computing.

New Actions:

Attracting more students to ICT

In January 2012, the Minister for Education and Skills published the Joint Government-Industry ICT Action Plan: Meeting the High Level ICT Skills Needs of Enterprise in Ireland. The Plan is a collaborative system-wide response, across Departments, agencies and the education and enterprise sectors, aimed at increasing the domestic supply of high-level ICT graduates. It details short, medium and long-term actions with specific time-bound targets to meet the ICT skills gap in the short-term, while in tandem building the longer-term supply of high-quality graduates from undergraduate courses.

The overarching target included in the Plan is to double the output of Level 8 graduates from mainstream undergraduate ICT disciplines between 2011 and 2018. Since publication, significant progress in meeting the targets of the Plan has been achieved. Level 8 graduate output in 2013 including capacity supported by the undergraduate skills programme is forecast to be more than 25% higher than in the baseline year 2011, and the Action Plan target of doubling Level 8 graduate output by 2018 is now expected to be reached by 2015.

Recognising that increased undergraduate ICT enrolments would take time to feed through to increased output, the Plan also provided for the immediate rollout of targeted reskilling and conversion courses through Springboard and the ICT skills conversion programme. Approximately 1,500 students have enrolled under the two phases of the ICT skills conversion programme since 2012. In addition, roughly 5,600 people have enrolled on ICT courses under the three rounds of Springboard that have issued since 2011.

The ongoing implementation of the ICT Action Plan, including the rollout of Springboard and the ICT skills conversion programme, has also been incorporated into one of the seven Disruptive Reform proposals in the 2013 Action Plan for Jobs. The Disruptive Reform on ICT Skills aims to build Ireland’s ICT skills capability through a mix of mainstream and targeted provision to the point that it acts as a beacon for mobile ICT investment and entrepreneurs to set up and grow ICT businesses in Ireland.

B. Wider Equal Opportunities

The Higher Education Authority’s National Access Office manages two funding programmes, the Student Assistance Fund and the Fund for Students with Disabilities, which address needs that are experienced by both men and women.

These programmes support the participation in third level education of people who are traditionally under-represented at this level. Under Third Level Access, funding is administered by further and higher education institutions (through the Student Assistance Fund and Fund for Students with Disabilities) to support the retention of certain target groups, namely students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, mature students, students with disabilities and those from ethnic minorities. It is managed on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills by the National Access Office and is a major contributor to the achievement of the high level goals for Education and Training.

Access to Higher Education by Irish Travellers 2012-13

Levels of transition to higher education by members of the Irish Traveller community can be estimated based on the 'Equal Access' survey of the ethnic and cultural backgrounds of entrants to higher education in 2012/13. This occurs on a voluntary and confidential basis as part of the annual, student registration process of twenty-eight higher education institutions. The survey includes a question on ethnic/cultural background based on that presented in the 2006 census.

Of the undergraduate new entrants who responded to this question at registration in 2012/13, 26 (or 0.1% of respondents) indicated that they were from an Irish Traveller background. These students entered 13 institutions (DCU, NUIG, St. Angela's College, NUIM, UCC, UCD, AIT, CIT, DKIT, GMIT, IT Tallaght, IT Tralee, and Letterkenny IT). 62% of Irish Traveller respondents were female and 38% were male. The majority (88%) were aged 17-19. 8% were mature students (aged 23 or older).

Consistent with previous surveys participation by Travellers it is estimated that approximately 3% of young Travellers aged 17-19 years of age participate in higher education, compared to 51% among the wider population of young people in this specific age group (estimates published elsewhere of 70% participation include other age groups).

Equal Access Survey: First year, undergraduate new entrant respondents indicating Irish Traveller background

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Number	33	24	27	31	29	26
% (respondents)	0.17%	0.08%	0.08%	0.11%	0.08%	0.11%

It is planned that the next national access plan (for 2014 on) will include the first national target for participation in higher education by students from the Traveller community.

Progress against Indicators (where established):

Indicator	Baseline Position			Latest Position		
		Male	Female		Male	Female
Number of additional students enrolled on key courses (Universities)	BMW S&E	438 747	117 198	BMW S&E	751 2,228	289 949
Number of additional students enrolled on key courses (IOTs)	BMW S&E	322 380	85 101	BMW S&E	1,599 3,474	256 738

What contribution is the measure making to the promotion of gender and wider equal opportunities?

The cohort of students participating on these programmes arrives following a process of personal selection of courses through the CAO system having achieved the required entry standard. Greater male participation reflects subject choices made at school level and the fact that Science and Technology subjects are traditionally more attractive to male students than female students.

HEA funding for access has underpinned baseline infrastructure and programmes of action which support equity of access for under-represented groups to all undergraduate programmes. Funding is not course specific but it has allowed for providing core services to

students. Many HEA institutions have developed links and outreach programmes with schools as well as with the adult community education sector through organising pre-entry activities which can encourage under-represented students' participation in higher education. This work involves a range of activities including guidance, familiarisation and learning support which can contribute to increased enrolments in engineering and ICT along with other disciplines in higher education. Many access offices of higher education institutions also coordinate post-entry supports for students which would include supporting students on designated courses under the undergraduate skills programme.

While the fundamental criterion governing the allocation of funds to the access programmes is one of need/merit rather than being gender-based, it contributes to gender mainstreaming, as defined by the European Commission, by helping ensuring that the implementation process takes adequate account of the effects on the respective situations of men and women. This is reflected in the goals and proposed action points in the *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013* which was published in 2008. In this context, regard will be had to the impact of the funds in promoting the equality of opportunity and participation of men and women in further and higher education.

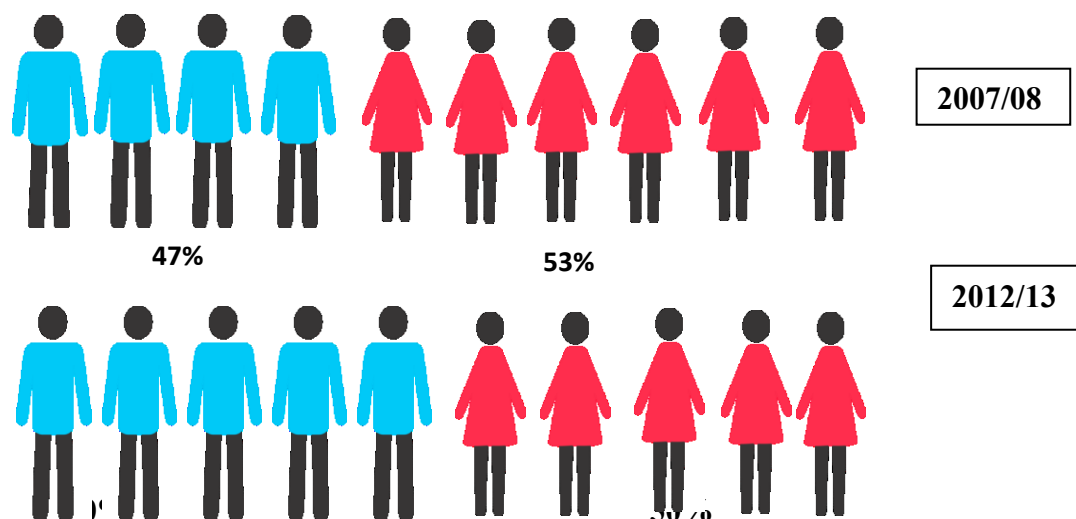
In respect of wider equal opportunities, it is a national policy goal that all citizens have equality of access to education to ensure that people from all backgrounds can participate in higher education and enter the labour market with qualifications.

Ireland's second *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013* has concluded. Work on a new plan for 2014 on is being progressed by the HEA in conjunction with the Department and key stakeholders. The plan will set out the overall goals, actions and targets needed to achieve further increases in participation to higher education by under-represented groups. The plan is advised by the objectives and targets for access and lifelong learning that have been agreed by twenty-six higher education institutions with the HEA as part of the strategic dialogue process. This new process is steering the implementation of the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 and the specific priorities for higher education set out in the Department's Higher Education System Performance Framework for 2014-2016.

The following table provides a summary of progress on targets in the 2008-13 plan:

	2006 (Base)	2013 Target	2013 Outcome
National Participation Rate (includes mature student entrants)	55%	65%	70%
National Participation Rate (17-to-19-year-olds only)	44%	-	51%
Participation of the age cohort from non-manual socio-economic backgrounds	27%	42%	31%
Participation of the age cohort from semi & unskilled socio-economic backgrounds	33%	45%	34%
Full-time mature student entrants	12.8%	20%	13%
Full and part-time mature student entrants	18%	27%	20%
Enrolments on flexible/part-time courses	7%	17%	16%
Non-standard entry routes (estimate)	24%	30%	27%
Target for lifelong learning	7.3%	17%	7.1%
Students with sensory, physical and multiple disabilities (combined)	466	932	1,302

Full Time Undergraduate New Entrant Gender trends 2007/08 – 2012/2013 for all HEA institutions



The HEA’s “Higher Education: Key Facts and Figures 2012-13” gives data regarding participants in under-represented groups. This data will enhance the quality and transparency of information systems on the sector and strengthen capacity to evaluate the impact of policies aiming to increase access by under-represented groups such as mature students, people with disabilities and those from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Since 2011, the Equal Access data has been used to fully implement the access element of the annual HEA recurrent grant allocation model for the Universities as well as the first phase of access funding for the Institutes of Technology. This funding supports the provision of access and lifelong learning initiatives by higher education institutions, including programmes of outreach work with schools and communities in disadvantaged areas and post-support services for mature students, students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds and those with disabilities.

Equal Access Data for the Universities and Institutes of Technology

Of all new entrants, those new entrants indicating a disability are given in the table below by type of disability:

Type of disability	% of respondents	% of new entrants
Blindness, deafness, severe vision or hearing impairment	7.8%	0.5%
Physical Condition	9.4%	0.6%
Specific Learning Difficulty	46.9%	3.0%
Psychological/Emotional Condition	21.5%	1.4%
Other, including Chronic Illness	23.8%	1.5%

Proportions of New Entrants & Survey Respondents with a Disability:

	%
% of total New Entrants with a disability	6.4%
% of total respondents with a disability	7.0%
% of New Entrants requiring support	2.4%
% of respondents with a disability requiring support	37.3%

The ethnic/cultural background of new entrants is given in the table below:

	Universities	Institutes of Technology & National College of Ireland	All Institutions
Irish	92.0%	88.0%	90.5%
Irish Traveller	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Any Other White Background	4.0%	7.0%	5.0%
African	0.9%	2.2%	1.3%
Any Other Black Background	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Chinese	0.5%	0.3%	0.4%
Any Other Asian Background	1.4%	1.3%	1.4%
Other	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Socio-Economic background of respondents for full time undergraduate new entrants for 2012/13 and 2011/12 is given in the table below:

Socio-economic group	% of new entrant respondents socio-economic group 2012/2013	% of new entrant respondents socio-economic group 2011/2012
Employers and Managers	18.0%	18.9%
Higher Professional	11.3%	11.0%
Lower Professional	8.7%	9.3%
Non-manual	9.3%	9.3%
Manual skilled	11.3%	11.9%
Semi-skilled	5.4%	5.5%
Unskilled	2.5%	2.4%
Own account workers	8.0%	8.4%
Farmers	7.6%	7.6%
Agricultural workers	0.8%	0.8%
All others gainfully occupied, and unknown	17.1%	15.0

ESF 2.2 – Disability Activation Project

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of gender and wider equal opportunities into the Activity?

A. Gender

The 14 projects supported under the Disability Activation project (DACT) focus on the identification of effective progression routes for people with disabilities across four strands: Improving Access to Employment; Developing Progression Programmes for Young People; supporting the Progression and Retention of People with an Acquired Disability and Innovative Employer Initiatives.

The principle of equal opportunities is embedded in the DACT target group, comprising recipients of illness or disability –related income support payments.

Of the 872 people who engaged with the various projects in 2013, 473 (54 %) were male and 399 (46 %) female.

Project sponsors are encouraged to ensure equal levels of access from men and women and where there is a particular imbalance, this is followed up on by Pobal, who are responsible for the day-to-day oversight of the projects.

B. Wider Equal Opportunities (excluding gender)

The DACT is specifically focussed on those who are of working age and in receipt of an illness or disability-related income support payment. As such, it is directly addressing the needs of a particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged group.

Progress against Indicators (where established):

(This should be presented if possible in the tabular form laid out below)

Indicator	Baseline Position	Latest Position

N/A

What contribution is the measure making to the promotion of gender and wider equal opportunities?

The function of the DACT project is to develop effective routes to promote and support the progression of DSP illness/disability payment recipients, who will be at risk of exclusion by virtue of their underlying disability or illness.

ESF 2.3 - Adult Literacy

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of gender and wider equal opportunities into the Activity?

A Gender

The adult literacy programme provides basic education, including reading, writing and numeracy skills, and ICT for adults who wish to improve their literacy and numeracy competencies to enhance their participation in personal, social and economic life. The priority target cohort for adult literacy programmes are those adults with primary education or less and whose literacy and numeracy skills do not match Level 3 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

The gender split for learners attending literacy classes within the ETB sector has been in the ratio of 60% women and 40% men for a number of years. This ratio saw an improvement in the participation rates of men since 2010 to 43%. The participation rate of men was maintained in 2013 at almost 44%. Separate Men's and Women's literacy groups have been developed and supported to reduce specific barriers that the two genders may experience.

Family literacy activities have been encouraged through the family literacy initiative. There is a higher level of female parents engaging in family literacy projects than men. In 2011/12, approximately 2,000 parents engaged in activities under the family literacy initiative. Participant numbers in 2012/13 were in excess of 2800. These groups are aimed at educationally disadvantaged parents in an attempt to break the cycle of educational disadvantage and to enhance their involvement in their children's education.

New Actions:

Section 9 of the Further Education and Training Act 2013 provides that SOLAS, once established, will prepare and submit to the Minister for Education and Skills, a strategy in respect of further education and training with Subsection 6 requiring a strategy for the provision of further education and training programmes in the State aimed at promoting, developing and encouraging literacy and numeracy. This Strategy was launched on 12 May 2014 by the Minister for Education and Skills and identifies literacy and numeracy as one of five high level strategic goals and which provides a specific implementation strategy over the period 2015 to 2019 including ensuring increased participation with regard to priority target groups and broadening access routes and the range of provision.

Outreach programmes will be made available to engage those learners for whom the primary barrier to access is the location of provision which includes specific target groups such as disadvantaged women and men living in rural isolation.

B. Wider Equal Opportunities (excluding gender)

Adult Literacy programmes are targeted at those adults whose literacy and numeracy do not match those at level 3 on the National Framework of Qualifications. Amongst this cohort of adults are individuals and groups that experience particular and acute barriers to participation and which have been identified in the National Action Plan on Social Inclusion (2007 – 2016):

- Adults with low or no formal qualifications or low literacy levels, especially those with less than upper second level education or NFQ Levels 1-3, or equivalent
- The unemployed and in particular, the long term unemployed
- Lone Parents
- Travellers
- Migrants
- Older people
- People with a disability
- Disadvantaged women and men, particularly those living in rural isolation
- The homeless
- Ex-offenders
- Substance misusers

Adult Literacy Operational Guidelines (2012) were devised in conjunction with stakeholders to assist in the administration and management of the Adult Literacy programme. These guidelines identify those groups at whom adult literacy programmes are targeted, in particular those individuals and groups that experience particular and acute barriers to participation as outlined in the National Action Plan on Social Inclusion.

New Actions:

A review of the Adult Literacy programme was carried out in 2013 which resulted in revised Adult Literacy Operational Guidelines issuing to ETB's in December 2013. The priority target cohort for adult literacy programmes are those adults with primary education or less and whose

literacy and numeracy skills do not match Level 3 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). The establishment of referral protocols with key agencies will complement the existing referral systems in place in order to reach the priority target groups.

Outreach programmes will be made available to engage those learners for whom the primary barrier to access is the location of provision. Integration of basic skills support into the wider available further education and training programmes in order to target a wider cohort of adults.

Progress against Indicators (where established):

(This should be presented if possible in the tabular form laid out below)

Indicator	Baseline Position	Latest Position
Participants in Adult Literacy	35,0000	60,000

What contribution is the measure making to the promotion of gender and wider equal opportunities?

In total there were 60,822 participants availing of Adult Literacy provision in 2013, of which 56% were women and 44% were men.

The numbers of men availing of literacy tuition has increased at a higher rate than women in recent years. In the period 2000 to 2013, the numbers of men has almost quadrupled whereas the increase in the number of female participants has almost trebled. In 2013, the gender breakdown on the ITABE programme was 53% men and 47% women.

Despite efforts to encourage increased male participation and address men's specific needs, there continues to be a higher level of females amongst Adult Literacy clients with the ratio of female learners to male learners continuing to be in the region of 60:40 for a number of years. In 2010, there was a slight improvement in the female to male ratio of 57% to 43% and in 2013 the ratio is 56% to 44%.

ESF 2.4 - Third Level Access

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of gender and wider equal opportunities into the Activity?

A. Gender

The activity co-finances two funding programmes, the Student Assistance Fund and the Fund for Students with Disabilities, which address needs that are experienced by both men and women.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE FUND

The Fund offers support to students who find themselves in financial hardship during their course of study. Categories of assistance under the Student Assistance Fund include rent, childcare costs, books/course materials, and living expenses. The fund is targeted equally at male and female students.

The provisional number of students in receipt of funding under the Student Assistance Fund grant in 2012-13 was 17,835 of whom 10,391 or 58% were female.

FUND FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Fund offers support to students with a serious sensory, physical or learning disabilities in order to participate in and complete their course of study. Categories of expenditure under the Fund for Students with Disabilities include transport, personal assistance, and assistive technology.

The Fund is equally targeted to male and female students. The number of students in receipt of funding under the Fund for Students with Disabilities in 2013-14 was 9,020 of whom 4,446 or 49% were female.

B. Wider Equal Opportunities (excluding gender)

Ireland's second *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013* has concluded. Work on a new plan for 2014 on is being progressed by the HEA in conjunction with the Department and key stakeholders. The plan will set out the overall goals, actions and targets needed to achieve further increases in participation to higher education by under-represented groups. The plan is advised by the objectives and targets for access and lifelong learning that have been agreed by twenty-six higher education institutions with the HEA as part of the strategic dialogue process. This new process is steering the implementation of the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 and the specific priorities for higher education set out in the Department's Higher Education System Performance Framework for 2014-2016.

The following table provides a summary of progress on targets in the 2008-13 plan:

	2006 (Base)	2013 Target	2013 Outcome
National Participation Rate (includes mature student entrants)	55%	65%	70%
National Participation Rate (17-to-19-year-olds only)	44%	-	51%
Participation of the age cohort from non-manual socio-economic backgrounds	27%	42%	31%
Participation of the age cohort from semi & unskilled socio-economic backgrounds	33%	45%	34%
Full-time mature student entrants	12.8%	20%	13%
Full and part-time mature student entrants	18%	27%	20%
Enrolments on flexible/part-time courses	7%	17%	16%
Non-standard entry routes (estimate)	24%	30%	27%
Target for lifelong learning	7.3%	17%	7.1%
Students with sensory, physical and multiple disabilities (combined)	466	932	1,302

Progress against Indicators (where established):

Indicator	Baseline Position	Latest Position
Number of students benefitting from the Student Assistance Fund	1,828 male, 2,281 female (2000/2001 figures)	7,444 male, 10,391 Female (2012/2013 figures)
Number of students benefitting from the Fund for Students with Disabilities	250 male, 261 female (2001/2001 figures)	4,574 Male, 4,446 Female (2013/2014 figures)

What contribution is the measure making to the promotion of gender and wider equal opportunities?

While the fundamental criterion governing the allocation of funds under the third level access sub-priority is one of need/merit rather than being gender-based, the measure contributes to gender mainstreaming, as defined by the European Commission, by helping ensuring that the implementation process takes adequate account of the effects on the respective situations of men and women. This is reflected in the goals and proposed action points in the *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013* which was published in 2008. In this context, regard will be taken to the impact of the funds in promoting the equality of opportunity and participation of men and women in further and higher education.

In respect of wider equal opportunities, it is a national policy goal that all citizens have equality of access to education to ensure that people from all backgrounds can participate in higher education and enter the labour market with qualifications.

The Student Assistance Fund and Fund for Students with Disabilities contribute to this goal through the provision of essential financial and academic supports to a large number of students who are either socially or economically disadvantaged or who have a disability. A provisional total of 25,732 students were supported by the two programmes in the 2012-13 academic year compared to 20,196 in 2011/12 academic year.

The number of students supported by the Student Assistance Fund who successfully completed the academic year was 14,268 of which 59% were female. 7,214 students successfully completed the academic year with support from the Fund for Students with Disabilities, of which 49% were female.

Through this support the two funding programmes promote wider equality by allowing students to gain an educational qualification which facilitates their full participation in the economy and in society in general.

Age profile of participants for the Fund for Students with Disabilities only

	Male:	Female:	Total:
Young people (15-24)	3,735	3,671	7,406
Older workers (55-64)	33	51	84

Breakdown of participants by vulnerable groups, in accordance with National Rules for the Fund for Students with Disabilities only

	Male:	Female:	Total:
Minorities:			
Migrants:			
Disabled:	4,574	4,446	9,020
Other disadvantaged people:			

ESF 2.5 - Youthreach and Travellers

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of gender and wider equal opportunities into the Activity?

A. Gender

All actions in the Youthreach programme are informed by the following key principles;

- ACCESS – through the provision of a programme at a variety of levels to meet the needs of early school leavers presenting on the programmes;

- RECOGNITION – through the provision of national certification
- PROGRESSION – to further levels of education and training
- SUPPORTS – to help sustain participants in the programme in order that they may derive maximum benefit from them

Since its inception the training programme has promoted a policy of equal opportunity for learners. It is recognised that educational disadvantage results from a variety of factors and programmes are tailored to accommodate the individual needs of participants. Support services including childcare and counselling is provided.

In 2013, there were 1,855 (57%) male and 1,375 (43%) female learners enrolled in Youthreach.

B. Wider Equal Opportunities (excluding gender)

(a) Ongoing Actions:

All actions in the Youthreach programme are informed by the following key principles;

- ACCESS – through the provision of a programme at a variety of levels to meet the needs of early school leavers presenting on the programmes;
- RECOGNITION – through the provision of national certification
- PROGRESSION – to further levels of education and training
- SUPPORTS – to help sustain participants in the programme in order that they may derive maximum benefit from them

Since its inception the training programme has promoted a policy of equal opportunity for learners. It is recognised that educational disadvantage results from a variety of factors and programmes are tailored to accommodate the individual needs of participants. Support services including childcare and counselling is provided.

3% of the young women participating in Youthreach in 2013 are lone parents. This has led to the demand for specialised programmes within the Youthreach setting to cater for their needs. Parenting programmes for both males and females and programmes addressing gender roles in personal development classes have also been developed in Youthreach.

The programme runs for between six and nine months depending on the needs of the group. On completion, the participants are reintegrated back into the Youthreach programme where they are supported and encouraged to go on and achieve certification at a variety of different levels including Junior Certificate, Leaving Certificate Applied and FETAC Levels 1 to 5.

In the measure there is a recognition that groups such as Travellers, people with disabilities and participants in disadvantaged areas may have distinct needs which must be respected and reflected in an educational context.

In 2013, 497 or 15% of all learners in Youthreach are Travellers.

Note also that Youthreach age and qualification criteria for admission to the programme may be widened in the case of the following groups –

- lone parents
- referrals from the National Rehabilitation Board
- learners who have been released from detention
- learners whose personal circumstances are such that a Foundation education and training programme is the most appropriate option for them to pursue qualifications and
- Drug Court participants

In addition, support services are provided in recognition of the practical, emotional and social problems that many of the participants have. The aim is to increase the capacity of the centres to cater for the needs of participants and to provide links with community based health and social services.

Continuing Professional Development

Staff in Youthreach continue to have access to Continuing Professional Development through their VEC. Funding is provided to VECs directly from the Department of Education and Skills.

New Actions:

Progress against Indicators (where established):

(This should be presented if possible in the tabular form laid out below)

Indicator	Baseline Position	Latest Position
Progression of learners who complete the programme to employment, education or training	69%	Youthreach 2013 – 65%

Indicator	Baseline Position	Latest Position
Male : Female ration of learners	2006 – Youthreach (Male 49.8% : Female 50.2%)	Youthreach 2013 (Male 57% : Female 43%)

What contribution is the measure making to the promotion of gender and wider equal opportunities?

Male and female participation in the Youthreach programme has generally been approximately equal, although in recent years the number of male learners has been increasing. This may be due to a reduction in the apprenticeship programme which traditionally attracted males. The measure ensures that both males and females who have left school with no qualifications have a second chance to gain access, participate in and benefit from education of sufficient quality to allow them to find employment or to progress to further education and training.

Education plays a key role in the provision of equality of opportunity and determines to a large extent the life chances of people. Youthreach is designed as part of an integrated strategy to address education disadvantage in the context of a continuum of provision.

ESF 2.6 Garda Youth Diversion – IT Skills/Personal Development

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of gender and wider equal opportunities into the Activity?

A. Gender

Access to projects / participation in projects:

The purpose of GYDPs is to engage referred young people who have offended, or are at risk of offending. Therefore, the gender of those referred cannot be predetermined.

Research informs us that placing young people in the criminal justice system can be counterproductive. Therefore, using statistical evidence from An Garda Síochána we are conscious of the negative effect of girls being admitted into the system given the high ratio of boys to girls committing offences.

It is important to note that the youth justice worker is in a position to tailor the programmes to meet the needs of the individual male or female participants. In some instances this involves working with single sex participant groups as participants may feel more comfortable discussing certain topics in such settings. It has been noted that some projects have run single sex programmes, such as beauty and hairdressing or build a bike because only that gender showed an interest in attending.

In 2013 669 participants attended Sub Measure 2.6 courses, of which 165 (25%) were female.

B. Wider Equal Opportunities (excluding gender)

Statistics from 2013 relating to Wider Equal Opportunities (excluding gender):

Age

13 years and under	66 (9.5%)
14 to 15 year olds	219 (31.5%)
16 year olds	145 (21%)
17 and over	260 (37.5%) *

*total adds to 690, discrepancy being clarified.

Progress against Indicators (where established):

(This should be presented if possible in the tabular form laid out below)

Indicator	Baseline Position	Latest Position
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Inclusion of females in Sub Measure 1 coursesInclusion of minority groups in Sub Measure 1 courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">33% of participants on courses were female in 2008*14% of participants on courses were from minority groups in 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none">25% of participants on courses were female in 201315.7 % of participants on courses were from minority groups in 2013 and of this minority group 30 % were female

What contribution is the measure making to the promotion of gender and wider equal opportunities?

Referral to participate in a GYDP is defined in the Operational Requirements for Garda Youth Diversion Projects. It is the role of the Referral Committee to consider who is suitable for inclusion in a GYDP having regard to the project's Annual Plan and optimising the impact of the work of the project. The majority of referrals to a project will come from local Garda information sources and priority will be given to those considered suitable and admitted on to the Garda Juvenile Diversion Programme. The committee may also consider referrals made from other sources e.g. social workers, schools, residents, the Project Committee and self-referral. All project participants must be nominated through the Referral Committee. Participants are categorised on the basis of primary referrals – those who have committed a crime, have been cautioned by the Gardaí and are on the statutory Diversion Programme and, secondary referrals – those young people deemed at risk of being involved in anti-social or criminal behaviour. From early in 2011 Gardaí and youth justice workers were trained in the use of a risk assessment tool -Youth Level of Service – Case Management Inventory - Screening Version (YLS-CMI-Sv). The tool risk assesses those referrals in terms of their likelihood to be involved in criminogenic need factors. This tool was rolled out across projects during 2011 and complements the decision making process in accepting referrals into projects.

Referral committees cannot therefore alter or influence the gender of participants on GYDPs. In 2013, 25% of participants were female, as shown above.

Once referred to a GYDP access to programmes is equally available to all participants regardless of gender or minority background.

Whilst the gender of the participants cannot be influenced by IYJS, it is the aim of the Garda Youth Diversion Projects to demonstrate to participants that it is of more benefit to them in the long term to be a positive contributor to society both socially and economically. Participants, both male and female, are actively encouraged to complete their education and to gain employment so that they may widen their levels of experience beyond participating in criminal and/or anti-social behaviour.

ESF 2.7 Garda Youth Diversion – Additional Workers

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of gender and wider equal opportunities into the Activity?

A. Gender

Employment:

In 2013, Garda Youth Diversion Projects (GYDPs) continued to employ additional workers. At the end of 2013 there was 96 projects with full time equivalent youth justice worker posts filled under this measure, consisting of 121 staff (includes part-time workers and some workers leave posts and others are hired). Of this, 85 were female and 36 were male. There are 38 individual Community Based Organisations (CBOs) managing GYDPs. They continue to be advised of their obligations under equal opportunities legislation in the recruitment of suitably qualified persons.

Access to projects / participation in projects:

Research informs us that placing young people in the criminal justice system and/or in proximity to higher risk offenders can be counterproductive. Therefore, using statistical

evidence from An Garda Síochána we are conscious of the negative effect of girls being admitted into the system given the high ratio of boys to girls committing offences.

The purpose of GYDPs is to engage referred young people who have offended or are at risk of offending, therefore the gender of those referred cannot be pre-determined and boys and young men have higher rates of offending. However, the youth justice worker is in a position to tailor the programmes to meet the needs of the individual male or female participants. In some instances this involves working with single sex participant groups as participants may feel more comfortable discussing certain topics in such settings.

B. Wider Equal Opportunities (excluding gender)

The purpose of GYDPs is to engage referred young people who have offended, or are at risk of offending. Therefore, specific target groups of those referred cannot be predetermined. The age of those participating is predetermined i.e. those in the 12 to 17 year old age group.

More broadly, some projects run courses to address racism and equal opportunities. The employment of the ESF worker gives more time to the projects to address such issues. For example, FAN GYDP reported that the employment of the ESF worker allowed them to run an 'Identity, Stereotyping and Inequality' course on issues such as discrimination, homophobia, racism and sexism. "We have had to challenge most participants on a regular basis in regards to the discriminatory and offensive language that they use. Although this process has been quite difficult and at time caused high tensions between participants and youth justice workers, it has led to a reduction of offensive language by participants in the youth centre and has also resulted in some participants becoming more considerate towards other people's opinions and emotions. The process of challenging discriminatory and offensive behaviour focused on dispelling myths about migrants and asylum seekers, showing respect to women, understanding and respecting different sexualities, not using homophobic or racist terms and understanding the effects of bullying. Although we have noticed some improvements, we recognise that challenging opinions and behaviours in a youth work context is a continual process".

Progress against Indicators (where established):

(This should be presented if possible in the tabular form laid out below)

Indicator	Baseline Position	Latest Position
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equal Opportunity Employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 77% of youth justice workers in employment through ESF were female in 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 70% of youth justice workers in employment through ESF were female in 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referral of females to GYDPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20% of participants were female in 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 26% of participants were female in 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referral of minority groups to GYDPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8% of participants were minority groups in 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16% of participants were minority groups in 2013 of which 23% were female

What contribution is the measure making to the promotion of gender and wider equal opportunities?

Please note responses above in relation to participation. It is true to say that different needs identified are being addressed across the genders. The planning process undertaken by projects undergoes a needs analysis for their target groups with the objectives of a specific outcome for that target audience.

Employment:

The Community Based Organisations which run the projects are required to follow appropriate recruitment procedures to ensure suitably qualified persons (male or female) are employed. Community Based Organisations cannot therefore alter or influence the gender of those employed. The majority of ESF workers in situ in 2013 were female, as shown above.

Access to projects / participation in projects:

Referral to participate in a GYDP is defined in the Operational Requirements for Garda Youth Diversion Projects. It is the role of the Referral Committee to consider who is suitable for inclusion in a GYDP having regard to the projects Annual Plan and optimising the impact of the work of the project. The majority of referrals to a project will come from local Garda information sources and priority will be given to those considered suitable and admitted on to the Garda Juvenile Diversion Programme. The committee may also consider referrals made from other sources e.g. social workers, schools, residents, the Project Committee and self-referral. All project participants must be nominated through the Referral Committee.

Participants are categorised on the basis of primary referrals – those who have committed a crime, have been cautioned by the Gardai and are on the statutory Diversion Programme and, secondary referrals – those young people deemed at risk of being involved in anti-social or criminal behaviour. Referral committees cannot therefore alter or influence the gender of participants on GYDPs. In 2013, 26% of participants were female, as shown above. Once referred to a GYDP, access to programmes is equally available to all participants regardless of gender or ethnic background.

ESF 2.8 - Equality for Women

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of social inclusion into the Activity?

The Equality for Women Measure (EWM) is a positive action programme for women, which aims to foster gender equality in accordance with the National Women's Strategy 2007-2016. During 2013 due to the economic downturn, Strand 1 – Access to employment – projects were supported during the year.

The objective of the Access to Employment Strand is to provide women who are currently outside the labour market with the social skills, and/or education, and/or training to enable them to enter or return to the labour market. This strand has made funding available to organisations to provide supports to women who have not previously worked, newly unemployed women, or women who may have left the workplace and are now preparing to return to employment. Projects are structured to complement a range of existing services (including Vocational Educational Committees, Third-level Institutions and community-based training organisations) that are provided to women. The projects submitted under Access to Employment strand were also intended to fill gaps in service provision, offer new gender-focused supports and deliver new innovative methods of targeting and retaining women in the workforce. The objectives of the strand include to:

- Support women to access appropriate education, training and development opportunities to enhance their access to employment;
- Support the development and the delivery of customised education, training and/or wider support programmes to enable progression to the labour market;

Provide opportunities for up-skilling and skills renewal to enable newly unemployed women to enhance their skills and employability.

Activities provided by projects under Strand 1(access to employment) include accredited and non-accredited skills-based training and one to one mentoring, together with a range of other support interventions relevant to the target client base. This may include personal development, CV and interview skills preparation, work placements, career guidance, and life coaching for labour market activities.

The following table shows the number of participants in the 2013 EWM programme:

Strand	Numbers of 2013 participants
1	795
Total	795

The EWM in 2013 also supported an initiative on women's entrepreneurship. Over 300 women delegates attended a two day conference on National Women's Enterprise Day (NWED), a development event for women entrepreneurs organised by Limerick City Enterprise Board, with the support of the Department of Justice and Equality. NWED aims to inspire, activate and assist women across Ireland in running their own business. The conference presented opportunities for women to hear from leading entrepreneurs, as well as avail of mentoring sessions.

Progress against Indicators (where established):

A recent evaluation study undertaken by the Department of Justice and Equality on the impact of the EWM programme made the following findings:

- A total of 8,944 participants took part in Strand 1 projects of the EWM (2009-2012) and immediately after leaving the projects, 25.4% of these participants entered employment or further education and 11.7% achieved certification or accreditation;
- 67% reported that they would most likely not have obtained the job they were in, if they had not participated in the EWM;
- 30% of those who entered training/education stated that would most likely not have happened if they had not participated in the EWM;
- Strand 1 has also fulfilled the objective to build the social skills of participants. Of the respondents who are currently still unemployed, 40 % feel confident about being able to enter employment in the future due to the training;
- Survey respondents also noted that the programme has helped them significantly increase their skills (e.g. IT and interview skills) as well as increasing their self-confidence and motivation;
- Overall, the target number of participants for the EWM programme was 4,981 for the 2009-2012 period. The actual number of participants (11,350) was 6,369 participants higher than the number targeted;
- The average cost per participant for the whole programme was €540.55. This represented good value for money compared to other similar programmes in other jurisdictions. For example, Bridging the Gap Programme (Bristol, UK) had a total cost per participant of €1,359, while in Northern Ireland, the Gateway to Progression Project reports a cost of €1,750 per participant; and
- Overall, the analysis shows that the EWM programme is generally efficient and effective, when compared to benchmark programmes.

In 2013, the diversity of women who have benefitted under the Measure included (Note - these data are not mutually exclusive):

- 405 unemployed women
- 236 early school leavers
- 272 who have completed secondary education and have no further qualifications
- 77 young people
- 98 older people
- 5 Minorities
- 124 Migrants
- 37 Women with disabilities
- 321 Others⁴

What contribution is the measure making to the promotion of gender and wider equal opportunities?

The main focus of EWM projects is to enhance and bolster specific skills development of women for progression to employment, career advancement, enterprise development, education or training. Additionally there is also an emphasis on addressing the lack of confidence, low self-esteem and fear of failure with participants.

As can be seen from 3 above the projects have benefitted a diverse target group of women across all ages and include women who have experienced domestic abuse, migrants, lone parents, Travellers, women who are long-term unemployed, offenders, ex-prisoners and women experiencing addiction issues. The provision of opportunities for these women to take the first steps towards the labour market through engagement with local EWM projects is considered crucial, as these are opportunities that many of the participants otherwise would not have had.

In 2013, a total of 122 Strand 1 participants moved to employment or advanced to another educational/training programme at the end of EWM projects. The further improvement of the socio-economic status of this group of heretofore marginalised and disadvantaged women, enhances the quality of their lives and moreover the well-being of their families.

ESF 2.9 - Equality Mainstreaming Approach

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of gender and wider equal opportunities into the Activity?

A. Gender

During 2013, EMU its programme of work with the Further Education and Training Sector, through the provision of equality supports. A call for proposals to the Further Education and Training sector was issued and equality supports were offered to facilitate the mainstreaming of equality into the planning, design and delivery of further education and training. Gender is considered as part of the nine ground equality mainstreaming and also considered as a cross cutting issue during project implementation. The successful applicants selected an expert from the FET Equality Experts panel set up by the Equality Mainstreaming Unit in 2012.

⁴ Disadvantaged women including lone parents, women with substance misuse, domestic violence, mental health difficulties, LGBT community, offenders and ex-offenders

Thirteen organisations have availed or are currently availing of these supports (projects are due to end in April – May 2014): The full list of the organisations are contained in the Gender and Wider Equal Opportunities Report for the Activity.

B. Wider Equal Opportunities (excluding gender)

Equality Mainstreaming Projects

During 2013, the Equality Mainstreaming Unit issued a call for proposals to develop equality mainstreaming projects focused on access to employment or workplace equality. The funding was intended for targeted projects which would set out to foster equality across the nine grounds covered by the equality legislation through the implementation of equality mainstreaming strategies. A maximum of € 20,000 was made available to successful projects. All projects were required to engage with more than one project partner in order to ensure maximum equality outcomes.

The projects were required either to focus on improving access to the labour market (equal access and participation to employment, further education and training, employability programmes) for groups across the nine grounds, or on promoting equality in the workplace through a whole organisational approach or an approach across a sector or a region. Six projects were initiated during July 2013 and will be finalised in July 2014.

The Immigrant Council of Ireland (ICI)

The ICI is currently leading a project on the delivery of diversity and anti-racism training to staff in the public transport sector. Transport providers will also develop ant-racism/diversity strategies for their organisations. The project has been developed in partnership with the main Dublin transport stakeholders such as Dublin Bus, Irish Rail, Bus Éireann and Veolia (LUAS). An advisory committee to the project was set up with representation of management, staff and the trade unions from the three public transport companies, the Immigrant Council of Ireland and a representative of the Equality Authority.

Cavan County Council and Cavan Community Forum

These two organisations applied for a project on equality mainstreaming through communication and training in the context of strengthening and promoting the Cavan Diversity Initiative and the Cavan County Council equality action plan. The project has produced a DVD on Equality in the Workplace training which includes the voices of local people from across the nine grounds. The DVD will be promoted as a training tool through a communication strategy and a number of training events for Cavan County Council Staff and the Cavan Community Forum.

BelongTo and ICTU

BelongTo and ICTU joined forces to design, launch and promote a workplace campaign similar to the one promoted by BelongTo in secondary schools. The campaign will be branded as “Stand-Up. Don’t stand for Homophobia or Transphobia in the Workplace”. BelongTo have initiated the project by carrying out a needs assessment among their stakeholders and by procuring a multimedia company to develop their online campaign. BelongTo and ICTU have also established an Advisory Committee which comprises of youth representatives, trade union officials and a representative of the Equality Authority. A strategy will be put in place to promote the campaign in workplaces.

See Change - The National Stigma Reduction Partnership

See Change is a partnership of nearly 80 Irish organisations working together to challenge the stigma and discrimination associated with mental health problems. This project aims at challenging discrimination experienced by people with personal experience of a mental health

issues in a workplace setting. The advisory committee set up for this project includes the Equality Authority and some of See Change partners such as IBEC (Irish Business and Employers' Confederation), Business in the Community Ireland (BITCI), Suicide or Survive (SOS), Sigmar Recruitment and EHA Occupational Health. See Change have run consultations with partners and HR managers. This consultation will be followed by a legal case law review on disability, mental health and reasonable accommodation, by the provision of policy and guidance tools as well as a number of pilot training sessions within a number of companies.

Irish University Association (IUA) Equality Network

The IUA aims to develop a model of inclusive workplace practices to ensure a workplace which is positively engaged in supporting people with disabilities applying to, or working in the Third Level sector. The IUA Equality network project will audit and enhance current policies and procedures in relation to staff with disabilities. It will also pilot a training awareness programme for managers on supporting people with disabilities, and keeping them engaged in the workforce. The content of the training will also be embedded in existing training provision to enhance diversity competence at institutional and sectoral levels. The project will also develop a publicity strategy to increase staff awareness of supports available to individuals with disabilities.

Galway Traveller Movement

The Galway Traveller Movement will carry out an initiative which builds on their 2012 equality mainstreaming project, by further promoting the usage and application of their equality impact assessment toolkit "Working for Travellers' Equality" with the Galway Education and Training Board and the Department of Social Protection. The project will also see the involvement of three Traveller Ambassadors in delivering interactive workshops to project partners' staff and in raising awareness and knowledge about Traveller culture and the barriers faced by Travellers in relation to participation in the labour market and further education programmes.

Progress against Indicators (where established):

(This should be presented if possible in the tabular form laid out below)

Indicator	Baseline Position	Latest Position
Number of enterprise-level Equality Supports delivered to enable employers to develop equality policies and strategies	0	282

ESF 2.10 - Integration of Migrants

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of gender and wider equal opportunities into the Activity?

A gender sensitive approach is undertaken by the Programme with particular regard given to those with primary responsibility for childcare, the vast majority of whom are women.

- Due to budget constraints, provision of a childcare subsidy ceased in 2012, our Psychosocial support officer assists single parents to access affordable childcare and in instances of particular hardship, to access small grants from other organisations.
- Overall flexibility of the Programme. Its part-time structure takes into account the need of women to care for their children
- Flexibility of the Training and Employment Officers in meeting their clients which takes into account the client's childcare responsibilities.

(b) New Actions:

During 2013, the EPIC team staff received training on domestic violence issues to help us respond appropriately as we see a significant number of clients affected by this problem.

B. Wider Equal Opportunities (excluding gender)

The EPIC programme provides equal access to all migrants who are legally entitled to work in Ireland and is specifically designed to support them to have equal access to employment, work placement, training and education opportunities. The programme provides clients with knowledge and information about Irish society to help increase integration.

New Actions:

Our Promotions activities during 2013 were specifically targeted to increase the participation of non-EU migrants, who face higher barriers to employment and other opportunities than those from EU states. However, we continue to support all EU migrants who are referred to the programme.

Progress against Indicators (where established):

(This should be presented if possible in the tabular form laid out below)

Indicator	Baseline Position (2011)	Latest Position (2013)
Male / Female ratio of clients participating in EPIC programme	Female – 157 (62%) Male – 98 (38%)	Female – 181 (58%) Male – 130 (42%)
Male / Female ratio of clients placed in employment or training/education by EPIC	Female – 119 (64%) Male – 68 (36%)	Female – 115 (61%) Male – 73 (39%)

What contribution is the measure making to the promotion of gender and wider equal opportunities?

All EPIC data on clients and the outcomes of the programme includes information on gender breakdown.

The EPIC Programme feeds directly into the goals of the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016 – Building an inclusive Society. All metrics are tracked along gender lines to monitor outcomes and levels of participation. During 2013, 58% of those who engaged with EPIC were women. The EPIC Programme considers gender sensitivities in dealing with the client group. Although EPIC no longer provide a childcare subsidy to lone parents, the programme supports lone parents to access low cost childcare, and in hardship cases helps them to access small grants from other organisations. The part time nature of the EPIC programme and flexibility in scheduling meetings goes some way to supporting the needs of women to care for their children. EPIC is age inclusive of all eligible adults. The Programme is flexible in its approach to dealing with the unique situations individuals can find themselves in. This is particularly true in relation to women who are experiencing domestic difficulties or have been the victims of human trafficking. During 2013, EPIC continued to work with a number of clients referred by agencies working with the victims of human trafficking. Additionally the programme provides extra support to clients coming through long term residence in Direct Provision centres which have a significant impact on their employability.

2. Social Inclusion

ESF 1.1 - Skills Training

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of social inclusion into the Activity?

(a) Ongoing Actions:

FÁS had a responsibility to ensure its policies and services reflect social inclusion and equality best practice and hence increase participation and progression of disadvantaged groups into the labour market. A key aspect of social inclusion is achieving and maintaining a focus on providing services to disadvantaged people in mainstream FÁS programmes. These objectives were maintained in the activities which remained under the FÁS remit in 2013.

(b) New Actions:

Lone Parents

- In the twelve month period January to December 2013, 1,114 people in receipt of the One-Parent Family Allowance and the One-Parent Family Payment completed training programmes.
- Of those, over 60% were between the ages of 25 and 44.

People with a disability

- In 2013, 101 people who were in receipt of a disability payment completed FÁS programmes with an additional 1,025 people completing Specialist Training Programmes.

Age Profile

- The number of young people under the age of 20 completing training programmes in 2013 was 3,814 of which 39% were female.
- A further 4,925 young people aged between the ages of 20-24 completed training programmes in 2013 of which 40% were female
- 2,259 people over the age of 50 completed training programmes in 2013, of which 40% were female.

The transfer of training programmes from FÁS to the Education and Training Boards (which is scheduled for completion in June 2014) includes the transfer of the Community Training Centres, Local Training Initiatives and all other programmes which are part of the former FÁS Training Centre network. A number of innovations took place in 2013 in Community Training Centre and Local Training Initiatives; some examples are outlined below.

Community Training Centres (CTCs) are the vocational arm of the national Youthreach programme for early school leavers. They are independent, community-based organisations catering for the training and employment needs of early school leavers, primarily aged between 16 –21. The training is certified leading to recognised awards on the NFQ.

An Innovation Strategy initiated with CTCs at both national and local level continued in 2013 with a strategic focus on:

- o Value for money
- o Board Governance
- o Training relevant to both the labour market and further educational training opportunities for early school leavers.

- o Retention management/Improved progression outcomes.

The development of the capacity of CTC boards with regard to excellence in CTC corporate governance was implemented through IACTO in 2013 to ensure CTCs meet additional company, contractual, training standards and child protection requirements in a cost effective manner.

FÁS as part of its on-going strategy to develop a whole centre approach to the integration of literacy and numeracy development identified a need for a training course for CTC managers. The training, which was designed in partnership with NUI Maynooth and NALA, commenced in 2013 with a total of 31 participants taking part and will continue in 2014.

With regard to value for money, the Business Planning and Budget Bidding model for CTCs continued to be implemented by SOLAS in 2013. Budgets applied to CTCs are based on:

- o Staff costs (in line with staffing per Productivity Agreement)
- o A maximum operational cost per day was applied to calculating running costs (exclusive of rent costs) based on in-centre activity
- o Training allowances

This process has resulted in a significant reduction in CTC training costs.

The Local Training Initiative programme is designed to provide opportunities for marginalised clients who are unable to access other FÁS training interventions for personal, social or geographical reasons. Some projects are targeted at specific groups experiencing disadvantage such as homeless people, recovering addicts, prisoners and travellers. The LTI supports many organisations engaged in a wide variety of activities including genealogy, environment, heritage, tourism, theatre, and sports and coaching.

In 2013, circa 150 LTIs provided vocational training opportunities through project-based learning to assist participants achieve awards on the NFQ and to develop the capacity to progress to further training, education and work. The on-going relevance and effectiveness of LTIs was further supported in 2013 by the development of a project review process.

In order to facilitate a smooth transition of responsibility from FÁS to ETBs for the approval, and monitoring of LTIs, revised Operating Guidelines for LTIs were developed and published on a web based portal. All associated documents and forms were reviewed with a view to improving efficiencies in the operation, administration and management of these projects.

What contribution is the Activity making to the promotion of social inclusion?

In 2013, the development of the Further Education and Training Strategy 2014 - 2019 will include specific actions relating to active inclusion and, in particular, a strategy for the promotion of literacy and numeracy in further education and training. The publication of the National Economic and Social Council “Strategic Review of Further Education and Training and the Unemployed” in 2013 outlined recommendations with regard to equality for unemployed participants across all FET programmes. This report, along with other research and evidence, will be taken into account in the development of the FET Strategy 2014-2019.

ESF 1.3 - Back to Education Initiative

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of social inclusion into the Activity?

(a) Ongoing Actions:

The overall aim of the Back to Education Initiative (Part-time) is to increase the participation of young people and adults with less than upper second level education in range of flexible learning options. A high priority is to target individuals and groups that experience particular and acute barriers to participation and the Guidelines for the BTEI (Part-time) identify a number of specific target groups including disadvantaged men and women, lone parents, homeless people, substance misusers, ex-offenders. The Guidelines also set out principles to underpin planning and provision at local level which include innovation, learner centredness, equality, accessibility and inclusiveness, the recognition and accommodation of diversity, quality assurance, local consultation and an area based approach. Provision and delivery (e.g. timing, location, duration, methodologies and learner supports) are adapted to meet a wide range of learner needs.

With regard to social inclusion a number of actions are particularly of note:

- Providers engage in a wide local consultation process on an annual basis to identify priorities for course provision. This consultation process involves the target groups of the BTEI (Part-time), the local community, groups and organisations representative of particular interest groups.
- Outreach and predevelopment strategies are used to recruit and encourage participation by those least likely to take part in educational programmes.
- Guidance and mentoring are integrated into programmes to support completion and progression.
- The payment of a **training allowance** (including meal and travel allowances) is important to encourage the participation of some learners e.g. young learners aged 16-20 years of age who would be eligible for such an allowance if on a full-time programme.
- Childcare support is provided to enable participation by those with childcare needs and courses are often organised at times when children are at school.
- Flexible budget management enables providers to consider specific strategies to meet special needs e.g. building in extra tuition, use of artistic and other creative elements to encourage and support participation.
- BTEI eligibility criteria allows for **free tuition for any adult with less than upper second level education**. This encompasses those persons with a social welfare entitlement or medical card, those not in the labour market and those in employment who have less than upper second level education. The eligibility criteria includes access to free tuition for women in the home and for persons in low paid employment who have less than upper second level education.

New Actions:

The reports from five development projects were disseminated during 2009 and reflected guidelines on social inclusion issues to support providers working with learners from a broad range of target groups as follows:

- ***Certification Matters:*** *Guidelines to Support Certification Outcomes through Back to Education Initiative Funded Programmes.*
- ***Delivering Accredited Programmes to Learners with Disabilities:*** *Guidelines for Facilitating the Successful Delivery of Back to Education Initiative Funded Programmes to Learners with Disabilities.*
- ***Widening Participation in Adult Learning:*** *Guidelines for Effective Planning and Delivery of Back to Education Initiative Outreach Provision.*
- ***Promoting Access and Progression in Adult Learning:*** *Guidelines to Enhance Cooperation between Back to Education Initiative and Adult Literacy Service Programmes.*
- ***Increasing Men's Participation in Adult Learning:*** *Guidelines to Enhance Men's Engagement with Back to Education Initiative Funded Programmes.*

The guidelines on outreach have particular relevance to social inclusion. They highlight key issues in outreach work, the primary purpose of which is to widen access for new and non-traditional adult learners, particularly those who do not usually avail of educational provision. The guidelines reflect Irish national policy priorities as well as current EU policy, as articulated in the Commission's Communication on Adult Learning, which emphasises the need for measures to bring provision closer to adult learners in their communities and workplaces.

Curriculum **guidelines to support providers to implement a foundation programme at NFQ Level 3, leading to a full award at this level were completed and disseminated in 2010.** Supports to providers focused on the development of Level 3 integrated programmes, with particular reference to the core skills of Communications and Mathematics, as part of integrated programme development.

The new awards at Levels 1 and 2 on the National Framework of Qualifications have particular relevance for a key target group within BTEI, **people with disabilities.**

Progress against Indicators (where established):

(This should be presented if possible in the tabular form laid out below)

In total there were 31487 participants in courses under the BTEI (Part-time) in 2013, of which **67% were women and 33% were men.**

Indicator: Number participating with less than upper second level education and dependent on social welfare support	Male	Female	Total	% of participants
Baseline Position 2007			15054	58%
2008	4115	10784	14899	55%
2009	4764	9540	14304	51%
2010	5307	9261	14568	52%
2011	6232	10116	16348	51%
2012	6216	9606	15822	49%
2013	6202	9234	15435	49%

In 2013, a further 3069 participants were reported as having less than upper second level education but not dependent on social welfare support. Therefore, **59% (18504) of all participants in BTEI programmes in 2013 had less than upper second level education in entry.**

The table below shows the **education level and social welfare/economic status** of participants in 2013 as expressed through the BTEI (Part-time) funding categories:

BTEI (Part-time) Funding Category	Participants		Total
	Male	Female	
Category 2A: Persons in receipt of jobseeker payments or means tested social welfare payments and holders of medical cards and their dependents with less than upper second level education	6202	9234	15436
Category 2B: Persons in receipt of jobseeker payments or means tested social welfare payments and holders of medical cards and their dependents with upper second level education	3190	8599	11789
Category 3: Persons in employment or not in the labour market with less than upper second level education	837	2232	3069
Category 4: All others with upper second level education	229	964	1193
Total	10458	21029	31487

Approximately **86% (27225) of all participants in 2013 were reported as dependent on social welfare support** of whom **15436** has less than upper second level education on entry to BTEI which maintains the 2012 position.

What contribution is the Activity making to the promotion of social inclusion?

A significant contribution is the provision of opportunities to learn through part-time mode in a wide range of locations and settings and at a variety of times. This accommodates provision for those who find full-time programmes inaccessible and are least likely to take part in courses in formal education settings. A high priority is to target individuals and groups that experience particular and acute barriers to participation and the Guidelines for the BTEI (Part-time) identify a number of specific target groups. The following presents a profile of participants classified by gender and the BTEI (Part-time) target groups for 2013:

Target Group	Participants		Total
	Male	Female	
Person with Disability:	1253	1388	2641
Substance Misuser:	263	95	358
Ex-offender:	145	24	169
Early School Leaver:	4881	7655	12536
One-Parent Family:	172	3530	3702
Traveller:	156	305	461
Homeless:	86	35	121
ESOL Student:	527	952	1479
Refugee:	123	207	330
Asylum Seeker:	140	233	373
Migrant Worker:	425	722	1147
Other:	4339	10273	14612

The table below shows the **education level and social welfare/economic status** of the designated target groups as expressed through the BTEI (part-time) funding categories:

Target Group	BTEI (Part-time) Funding Category			
	C2a	C2b	C3	C4
Person with Disability	5.67%	2.55%	0.12%	0.07%
Substance Misuser	0.80%	0.29%	0.04%	0.00%
Ex-offender	0.40%	0.10%	0.04%	0.00%
Early School Leaver	30.61%	2.06%	6.90%	0.22%
One-Parent Family	5.29%	6.20%	0.20%	0.07%

Traveller	1.26%	0.11%	0.08%	0.01%
Homeless	0.25%	0.12%	0.00%	0.00%
ESOL Participant	2.23%	1.60%	0.67%	0.17%
Refugee	0.60%	0.37%	0.06%	0.02%
Asylum Seeker	0.71%	0.40%	0.06%	0.02%
Migrant Worker	1.21%	1.80%	0.44%	0.19%
Other	11.62%	28.11%	3.18%	3.56%

The data identifies that 1.34% of Traveller participants and 5.79% of those reported under Person with a Disability have less than upper second level education (funding categories 2A and 3).

The data for 2013 demonstrates that a high priority is the provision of courses for those who are unemployed (44%) or not in the labour market (37%). The table hereunder shows the economic/employment status classified by gender of BTEI (Part-time) participants in 2013.

Economic / Employment Status	Participants		
	Male	Female	Total
Unemployed Job Seekers Benefit / Allowance	5996	7715	13844
Employed Fulltime	411	1006	1422
Employed Part-time	847	3514	4386
Not in the Labour Market	3171	8580	11773
Total	10425	20815	31425

This data shows an increase in the participation of those who are unemployed from 43% in 2012 to 44% in 2013.

The decrease in the participation of those classified as not in the labour market, from 38% in 2012 to 37% in 2013 reflects providers' response to increasing demand for further education and training from the newly unemployed.

ESF 1.4 - Undergraduate Skills

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of social inclusion into the Activity?

(a) Ongoing Actions:

Entry to undergraduate skills programmes is through the CAO process. Inclusion and access issues within these ICT courses are supported *under the complementary but separate third level access measure*.

Ireland's second *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013* has concluded. Work on a new plan for 2014 on is being progressed by the HEA in conjunction with the Department and key stakeholders. The plan will set out the overall goals, actions and targets needed to achieve further increases in participation to higher education by under-

represented groups. The plan is advised by the objectives and targets for access and lifelong learning that have been agreed by twenty-six higher education institutions with the HEA as part of the strategic dialogue process. This new process is steering the implementation of the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 and the specific priorities for higher education set out in the Department's Higher Education System Performance Framework for 2014-2016.

(b) New Actions:

- The next National Access Plan for 2014 onwards, is being developed.
- A review of the Fund for Students with a Disability is near completion and the recommendations of this review will be incorporated to the next National Access Plan

Springboard Funding

- The HEA has been involved in Labour Market Activation since 2009. Since, 2011, the HEA has managed the €20 million+ multi- annual fund called Springboard which is designed to support a return to employment for people who have lost their jobs as a result of the recession. Springboard offers free, part-time higher education at certificate, degree and post-graduate levels in areas where there are job opportunities, such as information and communications technology, international financial services, the biopharma-pharmachem industry and business start-ups. In 2013, over 6,000 places were approved in over 220 Springboard courses in 38 higher education colleges all around the country. The website www.springboardcourses.ie provides comprehensive information on all Springboard programmes as well as a user-friendly system to make applications and receive course offers.

Progress against Indicators (where established):

Indicator	Baseline Position			Latest Position		
		Male	Female		Male	Female
Number of additional students enrolled on key courses (Universities)	BMW S&E	438 747	117 198	BMW S&E	751 2,228	289 949
Number of additional students enrolled on key courses (IOTs)	BMW S&E	322 380	85 101	BMW S&E	1,599 3,474	256 738

What contribution is the Activity making to the promotion of social inclusion?

The National Office provides a detailed report on social inclusion and data provided in this report encompasses the undergraduate skills programme.

Inclusion and the creation of a more inclusive society are identified as one of the major challenges facing Ireland. Of particular importance is the need for equality of access to educational opportunities, having regard to the fact that the lack of educational experience and related qualifications militates against one's ability to participate fully in the economy, in

employment and in society. The National Access Office, on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills, carries out four principal functions in this regard: to develop and implement a national action plan to achieve equity of access to higher education; to provide advice to the Department of Education and Skills on national policy for equality of access to higher education; to manage a range of funding programmes on behalf of the Department; and to monitor and report on progress in implementing the plan and achieving set targets and outcomes.

The National Access Office is responsible for the administration of two funding programmes to support equity of access to higher education: Student Assistance Fund and the Fund for Students with Disabilities

- The Student Assistance Fund is intended to tackle disadvantage by providing financial support to disadvantaged students who require additional financial support to enable them to fully benefit from their third-level studies. A gross allocation of € 11 million was approved in 2012-13 and a total of 16,721 students benefited from the Fund.
- The Fund for Students with Disabilities provides students with supports and services to enable them to access, to participate and to complete their course of study. A gross allocation of approximately €10.3 million was approved in 2013-14, for 9,020 students.

The Higher Education Authority, in its administration of these funding programmes, continues to provide financial support to students from underrepresented groups studying in further and higher education, thereby promoting and enhancing social inclusion.

ESF 2.2 – Disability Activation Project

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of social inclusion into the Activity?

(a) Ongoing Actions:

The principle of social inclusion is embedded in the DACT target group. Participants are drawn from the population of DSP illness/disability claimants. It is not possible to determine different socio economic groupings by reference to payment type but since the great majority of project participants will be in receipt of a means-tested payment (typically Disability allowance), there is clearly a strong social inclusion dimension involved.

Progress against Indicators (where established):

(This should be presented if possible in the tabular form laid out below)

Indicator	Baseline Position	Latest Position

N/A

What contribution is the Activity making to the promotion of social inclusion?

The function of the DACT project is to develop effective routes to promote and support the progression of DSP illness/disability payment recipients, who will be at risk of exclusion by virtue of their underlying disability or illness.

ESF 2.3 - Adult Literacy

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of social inclusion into the Activity?

Literacy is fundamental to personal fulfilment, active citizenship, social cohesion and employability. The Adult Literacy programme provides basic education, including reading, writing and numeracy skills, and ICT for adults who wish to improve their literacy and numeracy competencies to enhance their participation in personal, social and economic life.

The literacy programme is provided free of charge to disadvantaged adults with low levels of literacy. The level of participation in literacy tuition by adults has increased annually from 5,000 in 1997 to 60,822 in 2013.

Specific initiatives were introduced to provide a broad range of literacy tuition options for learners. A 14 week intensive literacy and basic education programme, targeted at the most disadvantaged groups, was developed in 2006 in conjunction with NALA and the ETBI. The initiative, in which six hours of tuition is provided per week instead of the usual two hours, is delivered by ETBs throughout the country. Over 2,000 learners availed of the programme in 2013.

A family literacy initiative under DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) - An Action Plan in Educational Inclusion, was introduced in 2007. Funding has continued annually for this programme. In 2012/13, funding of €271,900 was provided for 24 projects. Funding of €335,500 was provided for projects being organised in all 16 ETB's in 2013/14.

In 2012/13, approximately 2,800 parents engaged in activities under the family literacy initiative. Funding is also provided for specially targeted literacy programmes, such as literacy for deaf people, literacy for people with dyslexia, literacy for Irish speakers and workplace literacy.

New Actions:

Section 9 of the Further Education and Training Act 2013 provides that SOLAS, once established, will prepare and submit to the Minister for Education and Skills, a strategy in respect of further education and training with Subsection 6 requiring a strategy for the provision of further education and training programmes in the State aimed at promoting, developing and encouraging literacy and numeracy. This Strategy was launched on 12 May 2014 by the Minister for Education and Skills and it identifies literacy and numeracy as one of five high level strategic goals and which provides a specific implementation strategy over the period 2015 to 2019 including ensuring increased participation with regard to priority target groups and broadening access routes and the range of provision

Progress against Indicators (where established):

(This should be presented if possible in the tabular form laid out below)

Indicator	Baseline Position	Latest Position
Participants in Adult Literacy	35,000	60,000

What contribution is the Activity making to the promotion of social inclusion?

The revised Operational Guidelines for Adult Literacy has placed a renewed emphasis on adults whose literacy and numeracy skills do not match Level 3 on the NFQ. Within this target group, priority is being given to unemployed adults and those with only a primary

education or less and includes those individuals and groups that experience particular and acute barriers to participation.

The participation levels of men has increased at a faster rate than that of women between the years 2000 and 2013. The overall rate of participation between men and women continues to be at a ratio in the region of 40% to 60%. Since 2010 the male participation rate has increased from 40% to 44%.

Targeted provision of certain client groups such as men only, women only, family learning, workplace, travellers, deaf people, Irish speakers and people with dyslexia is also provided. Outreach activities are also undertaken to address specific groups that would not generally avail of tuition. An expanded range of provision and development of linkages with other agencies dealing with social disadvantage has also taken place to improve the quality of the service provided.

ESF 2.4 - Third Level Access

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of social inclusion into the Activity?

(i) The HEA's continues to administer www.studentfinance.ie which provides comprehensive information on the range of funding schemes that are available to (full-time) students attending further and higher education.

(ii) Ireland's second *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013* has concluded. Work on a new plan for 2014 on is being progressed by the HEA in conjunction with the Department and key stakeholders. The plan will set out the overall goals, actions and targets needed to achieve further increases in participation to higher education by under-represented groups. The plan is advised by the objectives and targets for access and lifelong learning that have been agreed by twenty-six higher education institutions with the HEA as part of the strategic dialogue process. This new process is steering the implementation of the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 and the specific priorities for higher education set out in the Department's Higher Education System Performance Framework for 2014-2016.

New Actions:

- The next National Access Plan for 2014 onwards, is being developed.
- A review of the Fund for Students with a Disability is near completion and the recommendations of this review will be incorporated to the next National Access Plan

Springboard Funding

- The HEA has been involved in Labour Market Activation since 2009. Since, 2011, the HEA has managed the €20 million+ multi- annual fund called Springboard which is designed to support a return to employment for people who have lost their jobs as a result of the recession. Springboard offers free, part-time higher education at certificate, degree and post-graduate levels in areas where there are job opportunities, such as information and communications technology, international financial services, the biopharma-pharmachem industry and business start-ups. In 2013, over 6,000 places were approved in over 220 Springboard courses in 38 higher education colleges all around the country. The website www.springboardcourses.ie provides

comprehensive information on all Springboard programmes as well as a user-friendly system to make applications and receive course offers.

Progress against Indicators (where established):

Indicator	Baseline Position	Latest Position
Number of students benefitting from the Student Assistance Fund	1,828 male, 2,281 female (2000/2001 figures)	7,444 male, 10,391 Female (2012/2013 figures)
Number of students benefitting from the Fund for Students with Disabilities	250 male, 261 female (2001/2001 figures)	4,574 Male, 4,446 Female (2013/2014 figures)

What contribution is the Activity making to the promotion of social inclusion?

Inclusion and the creation of a more inclusive society are identified as one of the major challenges facing Ireland. Of particular importance is the need for equality of access to educational opportunities, having regard to the fact that the lack of educational experience and related qualifications militates against one's ability to participate fully in the economy, in employment and in society. The National Access Office, on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills, carries out four principal functions in this regard: to develop and implement a national action plan to achieve equity of access to higher education; to provide advice to the Department of Education and Skills on national policy for equality of access to higher education; to manage a range of funding programmes on behalf of the Department; and to monitor and report on progress in implementing the plan and achieving set targets and outcomes.

The Third-Level Access Sub-Priority Programme supports the above objectives in promoting and facilitating social inclusion through its support for students with disabilities and students from disadvantaged backgrounds as well as mature students in further and higher education.

The National Access Office is responsible for the administration of two funding programmes to support equity of access to higher education: Student Assistance Fund and the Fund for Students with Disabilities

- The Student Assistance Fund is intended to tackle disadvantage by providing financial support to disadvantaged students who require additional financial support to enable them to fully benefit from their third-level studies. A gross allocation of € 11 million was approved in 2012-13 and a total of 16,721 students benefited from the Fund.
- The Fund for Students with Disabilities provides students with supports and services to enable them to access, to participate and to complete their course of study. A gross allocation of approximately €10.3 million was approved in 2013-14, for 9,020 students.

The Higher Education Authority, in its administration of these funding programmes, continues to provide financial support to students from underrepresented groups studying in further and higher education, thereby promoting and enhancing social inclusion.

ESF 2.5 - Youthreach and Travellers

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of social inclusion into the Activity?

Ongoing actions to incorporate the principle in the measure include:

1. Training allowances
2. Travel and meal allowances
3. Accommodation allowances
4. Eligibility for free childcare under the Childcare in Education and Training Scheme (CETS), operated by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA).
5. Guidance, counselling and psychological services
6. Access for staff to continuing professional development
7. Availability of National Co-ordinator.
8. Flexibility in the management and curriculum of the centres
9. A learning environment which is safe, structured and challenging
10. A process which is both participant centred and participant led, where the programme followed reflects learners identified interests and needs.
11. Methodology/pedagogy which begins with the young person
12. An emphasis on recognising and rewarding achievement rather than reinforcing failure
13. Programmes organised on the basis of a curricular matrix in which each teacher or trainer is implementing a range of trans-disciplinary curricular objectives (such as communication skills development, health and safety).

New Actions:

i) Phasing out of the STTC programme

The 2006 *Report and Recommendation for a Traveller Education Strategy* recommended that STTC provision be reviewed. The Department conducted a Value for Money Review of the Youthreach and STTC programmes. The Review was published in 2008 and recommended the phasing out of segregated STTC provision over the medium to long term and the mainstreaming of Traveller specific provision.

As part of Budget 2009, STTC provision was reduced by 100 places to 984 places from September 2009 and as part of Budget 2010, there was a further reduction of 300 places in September 2010.

As part of Budget 2011 it was announced that in line with the Traveller Education Strategy and the 2008 Value for Money Review of Youthreach and STTCs, integrated further education provision for Travellers will be implemented through the phasing out of STTCs by June 2012.

Some STTCs closed in 2011 and the remainder closed in June 2012. Travellers are free to access the full range of part time and full time Further Education programmes such as – Adult Literacy, Community Education, Back To Education Initiative (BTEI), Youthreach, VTOS and PLC. For example in 2013, 497 Travellers participated in the Youthreach programme and 461 Travellers participated in BTEI courses.

Progress against Indicators (where established):

(This should be presented if possible in the tabular form laid out below)

Indicator	Baseline Position	Latest Position
Progression of learners who complete the programme to employment, education or training	69%	Youthreach 2013 – 65%

What contribution is the Activity making to the promotion of social inclusion?

Education plays a key role in the promotion of equality of opportunity and determines to a large extent the life chances of people. Youthreach is designed as part of an integrated strategy to address educational disadvantage in the context of a continuum of provision. The measure ensures that young people who have left school with no qualifications have a second chance to gain access, participate in and benefit from education of sufficient quality to allow them to find employment or to progress to further education and training. Support services are provided in recognition of the practical, emotional and social problems that many of the participants have. Their aim is to increase the capacity of the centres to cater for the needs of their participants and to provide links with community based health and social services.

ESF 2.6 Garda Youth Diversion – IT Skills/Personal Development

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of social inclusion into the Activity?

Projects continue to work with the same goals outlined in the progress report. All the activities of the Garda Youth Diversion Projects (GYDPs) have an impact on social inclusion. In general, projects operate in disadvantaged areas and where there are higher crime patterns. Across the range of locations served by Garda Youth Diversion Projects there is a high degree of diversity in relation to the breadth and intensity of risks faced by young people. As an example, one project worker identified the following needs in their targeted group of young people: “offending behaviour, anti-social attitude/value system, education and/or employment difficulties, poor cognitive/social skills, poor empathy, literacy and poor numerical skills, anti-social peer network, alcohol and drug use, leisure/recreational issues, personality/behaviour problems, difficult family circumstances for example low family income and poor housing, poor parenting skills, criminal and anti-social parents and siblings, parental conflict and disrupted families”. These are all factors in social exclusion and young people referred to the GYDPs will all experience at least one, and more frequently, multiples of these risk factors.

The participants of the IT/personal development courses in 2013 are therefore predominantly from areas that would be classified as being socially excluded where there are significant numbers of early school leavers, anti-social behaviour and underage drinking and/or drug abuse. The personal development element of the funding tackles the development needs of project participants.

As set out in the Progress Report the courses approved are designed to provide the participant with the opportunity to assess their own behaviour and to think beyond short term gratification and to aim for long term goals in education and employment. Along with developing employable competencies such as team work, self-accountability, responsibility and creative thinking, the courses also enhance the youth’s ability to be considerate of others, see the rewards of acting within the law and to move beyond collective/group thinking to making considered decisions.

Progress against Indicators (where established):

(This should be presented if possible in the tabular form laid out below)

Indicator	Baseline Position	Latest Position
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unwillingness to reflect on own offending behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unwillingness to reflect on own offending behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants given opportunity to change behaviour patterns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance at school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 86% of total participants attending 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 95% of total participants attending

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection on effect of offending behaviour on peers and neighbourhood • Certified qualification to enable entry or further progression into the workforce • Participation of minority groups in Sub Measure 1 courses 	<p>formal education at primary and second level in 2008</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social acceptance of offending behaviour on peers and neighbourhood • Participants are often early school leavers or have limited engagement with the education system • 14% of participants on courses were from minority groups in 2008 	<p>formal education at primary and second level in 2013 with 3% in employment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heightened awareness of civic responsibility • Participants have gained a qualification and/or are more willing to return to school and gain qualifications ○ 16% of participants on courses were from minority groups in 2013
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What contribution is the Activity making to the promotion of social inclusion?

Access to projects / participation in projects:

Referral to participate in a GYDP is defined in the Operational Requirements for Garda Youth Diversion Projects. It is the role of the Referral Committee to consider who is suitable for inclusion in a GYDP having regard to the project's Annual Plan and optimising the impact of the work of the project. The majority of referrals to a project will come from local Garda information sources and priority will be given to those considered suitable and admitted on to the Garda Juvenile Diversion Programme. The committee may also consider referrals made from other sources e.g. social workers, schools, residents, the Project Committee and self-referral. All project participants must be nominated through the Referral Committee.

Participants are categorised on the basis of primary referrals – those who have committed a crime, have been cautioned by the Gardaí and are on the statutory Diversion Programme and, secondary referrals – those young people deemed at risk of being involved in anti-social or criminal behaviour. From early in 2011 Gardaí and youth justice workers were trained in the use of a risk assessment tool -Youth Level of Service – Case Management Inventory - Screening Version (YLS-CMI-Sv). The tool risk assesses those referrals in terms of their likelihood to be involved in criminogenic need factors. This tool was rolled out across projects during 2011 and compliments the decision making process in accepting referrals into projects.

Referral committees cannot therefore alter or influence the social or ethnic composition of participants on GYDPs. In 2013m, 16% of participants on Sub Measure 2.6 courses were from ethnic minorities, as shown above. The statistics gathered for youth crime in 2012 through the projects demonstrate the following:

Of the 669 participants under this measure in 2013, the majority were from socially disadvantaged areas, with 47% from RAPID areas. (The Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development (RAPID) programme is aimed at improving the quality of life and the opportunity available to residents of the most disadvantaged communities in Irish cities and towns. It aims, in a focused and practical way, to reduce the deprivations faced by

residents of disadvantaged communities. It attempts to do this through targeting significant State resources at the needs of disadvantaged areas).

Once referred to a GYDP, access to programmes is equally available to all participants regardless of gender or ethnic background. Whilst the background of the participants cannot be influenced by IYJS, it is the aim of the projects to demonstrate to participants that it is of more benefit to them in the long term to be a positive contributor to society both socially and economically. It continues to be reported that a number of participants of the projects are returning to the project as volunteers to help other disadvantaged youths in the area.

ESF 2.7 Garda Youth Diversion – Additional Workers

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of social inclusion into the Activity?

As outlined in the Progress Report for 2.7, IYJS, in consultation with its stakeholders, designed a capacity measurement form for projects to capture the added value arising from the employment of the additional worker. The data captured provides a project by project picture of the service delivery pre ESF worker and post ESF worker. It also provides case study examples of the impact of the additional worker.

The youth justice workers design and deliver programmes that will encourage the young person to reengage with schools and State services, develop long term achievable goals, become more informed of the effects of drugs and alcohol and, in general, become proactive members of society. In order to achieve this, the youth justice worker engages with the young people in one-to-one sessions, group work, drug awareness programmes, personal development and/or IT courses, educational/employment support and strengthening families programmes.

Progress against Indicators (where established):

(This should be presented if possible in the tabular form laid out below)

Indicator	Baseline Position	Latest Position
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unwillingness to reflect on own offending behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 908 participants referred in 2008 were in programmes delivered by the additional youth justice worker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 840 programmes were delivered in 2013 to 4,102 young people by the additional youth justice worker
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of individual support to participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 40 youth justice workers recruited in 2008 to improve support to participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were 121 separate employments of youth justice workers across 96 projects to improve support to participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance at school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 284 participants attaining second level education in 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2,136 participants in primary or lower secondary education and 1708 participants engaged in upper

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certified qualification to enable entry or further progression into the workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants are often early school leavers or have limited engagement with the education system 	<p>second level education in 2013</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants have gained a qualification and/or are more willing to return to school and gain qualifications
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What contribution is the Activity making to the promotion of social inclusion?

All the activities of the Garda Youth Diversion Projects (GYDPs) have an impact on social inclusion. In general, projects operate in disadvantaged areas and where there are higher crime patterns. Across the range of locations served by Garda Youth Diversion Projects there is a high degree of diversity in relation to the breadth and intensity of risks faced by young people. As an example, one project worker identified the following needs in their targeted group of young people: “offending behaviour, anti-social attitude/value system, education and/or employment difficulties, poor cognitive/social skills, poor empathy, literacy and poor numerical skills, anti-social peer network, alcohol and drug use, leisure/recreational issues, personality/behaviour problems, difficult family circumstances for example low family income and poor housing, poor parenting skills, criminal and anti-social parents and siblings, parental conflict and disrupted families”. These are all factors in social exclusion and young people referred to the GYDPs will all experience at least one, and more frequently, multiples of these risk factors.

Access to projects / participation in projects:

Referral to participate in a GYDP is defined in the Operational Requirements for Garda Youth Diversion Projects.

Needs / Outcomes:

As outlined above, the work undertaken by the additional youth justice worker promotes social inclusion to a large extent. Often the work involves one to one sessions that not only allow the youth to reflect on their offending behaviour, but to also develop a sense of their own ambitions and long term goals.

The youth justice worker may also work directly with the families of the participants to provide them with the tools and knowledge to become positive influences in their child’s life. The Strengthening Families Programme, in particular, continues to be successful in helping the families to understand how their behaviour/actions impact the family and also future generations. The capacity measurement tool assists IYJS in assessing the outcomes of projects, including aspects of social inclusion such as improved engagement in education / training / employment; enhanced personal development; reduced offending and enhanced civic responsibility.

ESF 2.8 - Equality for Women

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of social inclusion into the Activity?

By supporting women to access appropriate education, training and development opportunities to enhance their access to employment, the Equality for Women Measure has

remained a very important initiative in the context of the National Women's Strategy, which includes commitments to enabling the full participation of women in society.

The reviewed policy documents and labour market statistics show that there was, and currently is, a clear need for the EWM Programme. The policy documents show that there is gender inequality in the labour market, with women being underrepresented. The number of women in employment had fallen between 2007 and 2010, with an increase in the numbers who are unemployed. Current labour market statistics show that while the number of women in employment has increased in the past 20 years, the figure has fallen from 2010-2012. Unemployment rates have also seen a sharp increase in the past four years.

It is important that women with low skill levels can access training and education in order to increase their chances of employment. As the labour market conditions worsen, training and education will only become more vital, as women with low skills will find it increasingly difficult to obtain employment. Women are also disproportionately concentrated in low-pay occupations, with fewer options for advancement. This evidence shows that the EWM has a clear rationale for continuation in order to bridge inequality gaps and increase the labour market representation of women. The EWM provides opportunities to women who are experiencing social exclusion.

The following table illustrates the number and type of EWM project activity for 2013.

Strand	No. Of Projects
Access to Employment	22

The projects across the strand has benefitted a diverse target group of women across all ages and include women who have experienced domestic abuse, migrants, lone parents, Traveller women, women who are long-term unemployed, offenders, ex-prisoners and women experiencing addiction issues,

Actions undertaken by EWM projects include: accredited and non-accredited skills-based training, personal development supports and individual/group mentoring. Other supports provided by projects are tailored to the needs of the particular group. For Access to Employment projects this can include CV and interview skills preparation, work placements, career guidance, life coaching and awareness raising in relation to the labour market. A total of 795 women participated in initiatives that were funded under the 22 projects of this strand.

Progress against Indicators (where established):

Positive actions, undertaken under the individual strands of the Equality for Women Measure, are targeted at a broad range of women in Irish society. In 2013 the total number of women who have benefitted under the Measure included (Note – these data are not mutually exclusive):

- 405 unemployed women
- 236 early school leavers
- 272 who have completed secondary education and have no further qualifications
- 77 young people
- 98 older people

- 5 Minorities
- 124 Migrants
- 37 Women with disabilities
- 321 Others⁵

A recent evaluation study undertaken by the Department of Justice and Equality on the impact of the EWM programme made the following findings:

- A total of 8,944 participants took part in Strand 1 projects of the EWM (2009-2012) and immediately after leaving the projects, 25.4% of these participants entered employment or further education and 11.7% achieved certification or accreditation;
- 67% reported that they would most likely not have obtained the job they were in, if they had not participated in the EWM;
- 30% of those who entered training/education stated that would most likely not have happened if they had not participated in the EWM;
- Strand 1 has also fulfilled the objective to build the social skills of participants. Of the respondents who are currently still unemployed, 40 % feel confident about being able to enter employment in the future due to the training;

The above results indicate that the EWM is achieving its objectives and targets.

What contribution is the Activity making to the promotion of social inclusion?

The Equality for Women Measure in 2013 supported the delivery of initiatives by a range of different types of organisations and community groups and in doing so has ensured that the needs of women on the ground are fully taken into account within programme and project development. All of these organisations and groups have gained a greater awareness and understanding of the needs of women experiencing multiple forms of disadvantage and of the value of delivering local initiatives in response to these needs.

Throughout 2013 EWM projects focussed on improving women's access to and participation in employment, education and training. This work is based on the need to break down the many barriers facing women, including structural barriers that prevent women from participating fully in society. EWM project activity equip women with targeted skills, knowledge and enhanced confidence to access employment and in doing so, to positively influence their quality of life and economic and social wellbeing.

Identify any issues arising that need to be drawn to the attention of the Managing Authority, the Equal Opportunities and Social Inclusion Co-ordinating Committee or other Departments.⁶

The Europe 2020 Agenda is the European Union's economic policy for the period to end 2020 which seeks to make the European Union more competitive globally. It includes a number of key goals including an employment objective to achieve an employment rate of 75 per cent for men and women aged 20 to 64 years by 2020. (Ireland has been granted a lower target because of the economic downturn).

⁵ Disadvantaged women including lone parents, women with substance misuse, domestic violence, mental health difficulties, LGBT community, offenders and ex-offenders

⁶ The issues could relate to specific implementation concerns e.g. collection of data, or could relate to more general findings concerning the principle in question e.g. a particular policy in another department is obstructing your Activity from promoting the principle.

The Integrated Guidelines on Europe 2020 include guidelines which call on Member States to increase labour market participation through activation. Subsequent Commission papers prepared as part of the European semester call on Member States to remove barriers to female employment such as tax disincentives to second earners, while the Commission continues to call on Member States to increase the availability of flexible working arrangements and childcare to support the economic engagement of women. EWM contributes to the aims of the EU 2020 Agenda via its targets of promoting gender equality and increasing female participation in the labour market.

The Europe 2020 Agenda also sets a target for each Member State in relation to the incidence of poverty and again this can be addressed through the EWM.

ESF 2.9 - Equality Mainstreaming Approach

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of social inclusion into the Activity?

(a) Ongoing Actions:

The objective of this activity is to contribute to addressing labour market gaps for specific groups that are experiencing barriers to participation and employment, including those created by gender inequality and wider inequalities. The programme aims to put in place measures to improve labour market access and participation of groups experiencing inequality across the nine grounds covered by the equality legislation.

It is targeted at providers of vocational education, training and labour market programmes and small to medium enterprises and will leverage trade union and employer networks. It supports the development of equality mainstreaming approaches within institutions responsible for the delivery of further education and training and labour market programmes. It supports the development of planned and systematic approaches to equality within the SME sector.

Equality Mainstreaming Projects

During 2013, the Equality Mainstreaming Unit issued a call for proposals to develop equality mainstreaming projects focused on access to employment or workplace equality. The funding was intended for targeted projects which would set out to foster equality across the nine grounds covered by the equality legislation through the implementation of equality mainstreaming strategies. A maximum of € 20,000 was made available to successful projects. All projects were required to engage with more than one project partner in order to ensure maximum equality outcomes.

The projects were required either to focus on improving access to the labour market (equal access and participation to employment, further education and training, employability programmes) for groups across the nine grounds, or on promoting equality in the workplace through a whole organisational approach or an approach across a sector or a region. Six projects were initiated during July 2013 and will be finalised in July 2014.

The Immigrant Council of Ireland (ICI)

The ICI is currently leading a project on the delivery of diversity and anti-racism training to staff in the public transport sector. Transport providers will also develop ant-racism/diversity strategies for their organisations. The project has been developed in partnership with the main Dublin transport stakeholders such as Dublin Bus, Irish Rail, Bus Éireann and Veolia (LUAS). An advisory committee to the project was set up with representation of management, staff and the trade unions from the three public transport companies, the Immigrant Council of Ireland and a representative of the Equality Authority.

Cavan County Council and Cavan Community Forum

These two organisations applied for a project on equality mainstreaming through communication and training in the context of strengthening and promoting the Cavan Diversity Initiative and the Cavan County Council equality action plan. The project has produced a DVD on Equality in the Workplace training which includes the voices of local people from across the nine grounds. The DVD will be promoted as a training tool through a communication strategy and a number of training events for Cavan County Council Staff and the Cavan Community Forum.

BelongTo and ICTU

BelongTo and ICTU joined forces to design, launch and promote a workplace campaign similar to the one promoted by BelongTo in secondary schools. The campaign will be branded as “Stand-Up. Don’t stand for Homophobia or Transphobia in the Workplace”. BelongTo have initiated the project by carrying out a needs assessment among their stakeholders and by procuring a multimedia company to develop their online campaign. BelongTo and ICTU have also established an Advisory Committee which comprises of youth representatives, trade union officials and a representative of the Equality Authority. A strategy will be put in place to promote the campaign in workplaces.

See Change - The National Stigma Reduction Partnership

See Change is a partnership of nearly 80 Irish organisations working together to challenge the stigma and discrimination associated with mental health problems. This project aims at challenging discrimination experienced by people with personal experience of a mental health issues in a workplace setting. The advisory committee set up for this project includes the Equality Authority and some of See Change partners such as IBEC (Irish Business and Employers Confederation), Business in the Community Ireland (BITCI), Suicide or Survive (SOS), Sigmar Recruitment and EHA Occupational Health. See Change have run consultations with partners and HR managers. This consultation will be followed by a legal case law review on disability, mental health and reasonable accommodation, by the provision of policy and guidance tools as well as a number of pilot training sessions within a number of companies.

Irish University Association (IUA) Equality Network

The IUA aims to develop a model of inclusive workplace practices to ensure a workplace which is positively engaged in supporting people with disabilities applying to, or working in the Third Level sector. The IUA Equality network project will audit and enhance current policies and procedures in relation to staff with disabilities. It will also pilot a training awareness programme for managers on supporting people with disabilities, and keeping them engaged in the workforce. The content of the training will also be embedded in existing training provision to enhance diversity competence at institutional and sectoral levels. The project will also develop a publicity strategy to increase staff awareness of supports available to individuals with disabilities.

Galway Traveller Movement

The Galway Traveller Movement will carry out an initiative which builds on their 2012 equality mainstreaming project, by further promoting the usage and application of their equality impact assessment toolkit "Working for Travellers' Equality" with the Galway

Education and Training Board and the Department of Social Protection. The project will also see the involvement of three Traveller Ambassadors in delivering interactive workshops to project partners' staff and in raising awareness and knowledge about Traveller culture and the barriers faced by Travellers in relation to participation in the labour market and further education programmes.

Equality Supports to Providers of Further Education and Training programmes

During 2013, EMU its programme of work with the Further Education and Training Sector, through the provision of equality supports. A call for proposals to the Further Education and Training sector was issued and equality supports were offered to facilitate the mainstreaming of equality into the planning, design and delivery of further education and training. The successful applicants selected an expert from the FET Equality Experts panel set up by the Equality Mainstreaming Unit in 2012.

Thirteen organisations have availed or are currently availing of these supports (projects are due to end in April – May 2014).

Progress against Indicators (where established):

(This should be presented if possible in the tabular form laid out below)

Indicator	Baseline Position	Latest Position
Number of enterprise-level Equality Supports delivered to enable employers to develop equality policies and strategies	0	282

ESF 2.10 - Integration of Migrants

What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of social inclusion into the Activity?

The EPIC Programme works to support eligible adults from both outside the EU and from within the EU to empower and motivate them to seek employment and/or training/education, (one of the key indicators relating to integration) thus facilitating them in their journey towards enhanced integration within Irish society. Participation in the programme is free and there is no cost to the EPIC participants, the only other eligibility criterion is a level of English which facilitates participation in the programme. Where potential participants do not pass the English language assessment, we use our English Language Referral Service to support applicants to improve their English to an acceptable level, allowing them to reapply to participate in the EPIC programme.

EPIC participants come from a variety of cultural, social and educational backgrounds. During the 6 weeks of Classroom training, (15 Training sessions per calendar year) the participants are facilitated in both individual and group working, thus respecting each other's cultural, social and educational backgrounds, whilst learning together and working towards an individual but common goal of employment or training/education in Ireland. The under-noted barriers to employment (and consequently social inclusion) have impacted on participants coming to the EPIC training programme:

Qualifications not recognised by Irish employers : Skills/experience not recognised by Irish employers : Difficulties with English language : Lack of understanding of the Irish labour market & society : Cultural differences leading to interpersonal difficulties : Lack of suitable, affordable childcare : Lack of Irish work experience : Unsuitable or

poor interview skills and CVs : Gaps in CVs : Fear of losing social welfare benefit : Lack of confidence : Racism or perceived racism

The EPIC programme actively targets organisations working in Ireland with disadvantaged immigrants who face many of the above barriers, identifying and providing information to African, Asian, Middle Eastern, Caribbean, Latin-American and European organisations. We ensure that our information dispersal has a significant reach, using inter-alia, editorials and articles in specialised media including native language newspapers and promotions in libraries, colleges and appropriate events.

EPIC's "Living and Working in Ireland" module runs over a two week period providing valuable information on services in Ireland, including but not limited to the under-noted:

Social Welfare to Work: Intercultural awareness in the workplace: Access to health: Access to Education, Professional Qualifications and Transferable Skills: Motivation: Wellbeing and managing stress.

During 2013 98 Living and Working in Ireland presentations took place within the EPIC Programme training.

EPIC structure incorporates support from a dedicated Psychosocial Support Officer. In 2013 the EPIC psychosocial support officer met with approximately 260 EPIC clients for a one off introductory meeting at the start of their pre-employment course. Of those 260 clients, 151 needed additional ongoing support. The main issues presenting related to Social Welfare (18%) followed closely by mental health (16%) and each of Family issues and Physical health coming in at 9%. As part of this service, the support officer links in with many additional support organisations including St. Vincent de Paul, Free legal Aid, Focus Ireland, Crosscare and Citizens Information.

EPIC has 4 Training and Employment Officers, each of whom provide:

One-on-one career guidance and career path development sessions : Assistance with access to employment or further training or education placement : Individual needs assessments : Individual job ready assessment : Motivation training for clients to regain confidence and energy lost during period of unemployment : One to one coaching for interviews : Suite of profiling tools including Psychometric assessment : Development of a network of employers and advocating on behalf of the target group to ensure employment is secured and appropriate for each individual person.

The EPIC Programme is cognisant of gender proofing in its approach as follows:

Overall flexibility of the Programme, the part time nature of which takes into account the need of women to care for their children : Flexibility of the Training and Employment Officers and the Social Support Officer in scheduling meetings with the EPIC participants which takes into account the participant's childcare needs : support to access low cost childcare and in hardship cases, to access small grants from other organisations as unfortunately the provision of a childcare subsidy to single parents or those whose spouse/partner does not have a job was suspended in 2012 due to budget constraints.

(b) New Actions:

- Ongoing development of English Language Referral Service to facilitate EPIC applicants in sourcing English Language training to get them to a level whereby they can be re-assessed for inclusion in the EPIC programme
- Enhanced focus on providing 'work experience placements' to proactively challenge the barrier of lack of Irish work experience on a migrant's CV, thus facilitating the client on his/her journey towards employment. Expansion of number of work placements to EPIC participants within companies who are members of Business In The Community Ireland (BITCI), within Business In The Community Ireland (BITCI) and also in other companies.
- Active use of EPIC Facebook page during 2013 to post information about events and activities that promote social integration. The number of friends in Facebook at end 2013 was over 800.
- Development of an EPIC group on Linked In to facilitate sharing of information on companies, job opportunities and information to increase employability skills.
- The EPIC training was revised on an ongoing basis during 2013 to meet our clients' needs
- Continuing the KPMG Financial Services Mentoring programme for EPIC clients. This was taken up by 4 EPIC clients and continues at the end of 2013
- Continued development and maintenance of links with businesses who support the EPIC programme through skills sharing, work placements and other activities etc – BT, CPL, Ericsson, Mercury, Accenture, KPMG, eBay, Bank of Ireland, Veolia Transdev and others.
- Introduction of 'Well being and managing stress' presentations into the EPIC training programme
- Focus on promoting EPIC to organisations and individuals working with non-EU migrants to increase participation

Progress against Indicators (where established):

(This should be presented if possible in the tabular form laid out below)

Indicator	Baseline Position (2013 Targets)	Latest Position (31 st Dec 2013)
Referrals	300	648
Engaged	270	311
Employment Placements	105	108
Training/Education Placements	105	80
Total Placements	210	188

Definitions:-

Referrals	Immigrants who contacted the programme for assessment
Engaged	Clients who participated in the EPIC programme
Employment Placements	EPIC clients who were placed in employment
Training/Education Placements	EPIC clients who were placed in training or education

What contribution is the Activity making to the promotion of social inclusion?

The EPIC Programme feeds directly into the goals of the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016 – Building an inclusive Society. All metrics are tracked along gender lines to monitor outcomes and levels of participation. During 2013 58% of those who engaged with EPIC were women, 42% were men. The part time nature of the EPIC programme and flexibility in scheduling meetings goes some way to supporting the needs of women to care for their children. EPIC is age inclusive of all eligible adults. Where needed, EPIC supports parents to access low cost childcare and external grants to help childcare costs in hardship cases.