

Social Inclusion Annual Reporting Template

1. Name of Activity: Adult Literacy

No.: ESF 2.3

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

(a) Ongoing Actions:

The literacy programme is provided free of charge to adults with low levels of literacy. The level of participation in literacy tuition by adults has increased annually from 5,000 in 1997 to 49,000 in 2008.

A number of specific initiatives have been 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 IVEA. The initiative, in which six hours of tuition is provided per week instead of the usual two hours, is delivered by the VECs throughout the country.

A family literacy initiative under DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) - An Action Plan in Educational Inclusion, has been developed. It commenced with a pilot initiative in 2007 that funded seven projects. The project was again funded in 2008 and 2009 with 12 and 13 projects funded respectively under the initiative. In 2009, approximately 1,300 parents engaged in activities under the family literacy initiative.

There are workplace literacy schemes in operation around the country. A workplace literacy programme, called Return to Learning Scheme, has been introduced in all Local Authority areas for outdoor workers. Under the FÁS/VEC Return to Education Scheme, participants on the Community Employment Scheme operated by FÁS can be released from their work experience programmes to avail themselves of intensive literacy tuition provided by the Vocational Education Committees.

The expansion of provision across the VEC sector includes family literacy, themed literacy, literacy for homeless families (CDVEC), and provision for people with special needs.

(b) New Actions:

No new actions.

3. Progress against Indicators (where established):

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

Indicator	Baseline Position	Latest Position
No of participants in Adult Literacy	35,000	49,000

4. Taking account of the material presented under 2 and 3 above, what contribution is the Activity making to the promotion of social inclusion

The numbers of men availing of tuition has increased at a faster rate than that of women between 2000 and 2008. However the overall rate of participation between men and women continues at a ratio of 40:60.

Targeted provision at certain client groups such as men only, women only, family learning, workplace, travellers, deaf people 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.

5. 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.¹

ESOL provision has comprised over 25% of literacy client numbers, and there is some concern that nationals with literacy difficulties may have been displaced. This situation is under review, with an independent report into the provision of ESOL underway. The most recent data for 2009 currently being collected indicates a reduction in the level of demand for ESOL. The extent of the change will not become known until all returns are received from VECs.

Collection of data is always problematic. Despite follow-up contact some VECs have not submitted their adult literacy statistics returns to date resulting in figures for 2008 being used in this progress report. It is expected that all returns will be received shortly. The Further Education Section will continue to pursue outstanding returns.

6. Please feel free to attach any relevant additional material to this reporting template.

Nil.

¹ 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.