

Gender and Wider Equal Opportunities Annual Reporting Template

1. Name of Activity: Early School Leavers – Youthreach and Senior Traveller Training Centres
No.: ESF 2.5

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

(a) Ongoing Actions:

All actions in the two programmes are informed by the following key principles;

- ACCESS – through the provision of programmes 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 programmes have 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.

Just over 15% (228/1500) of the young women participating in Youthreach in 2009 are in receipt of the One Parent Family allowance. This has led to the demand for specialised programmes within the Youthreach setting to cater for their needs and those of their children. 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, older adults, and participants in disadvantaged areas may have distinct needs and cultural patterns which must be respected and reflected in an educational context.

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
- Travellers 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 and STTCs continue to have access to Continuing Professional Development through their local VEC. Funding is provided to VECs directly from the Department of Education and Science.

(b) New Actions:

Child Protection Guidelines

Training in relation to the Child Protection Guidelines was provided to Youthreach and STTC staff in 2006. Work on developing Child Protection Guidelines specifically for these centres is ongoing at present.

3. Progress against Indicators (where established):

Indicator	Baseline Position	Latest Position
Progression of learners who complete the programme to employment, education or training	69%	Youthreach – 64%, STTC - 36%

Indicator	Baseline Position	Latest Position
Male:Female ratio of learners	2006; Youthreach – Male 49.8%:Female 50.2% STTC – Male 14.5%:Female 85.5%	Youthreach Male 57% : Female 43% STTC Male 13% : Female 87%

4. Taking account of the material presented under 2 and 3 above, what contribution is the measure making to the promotion of gender and wider equal opportunities?

Male and female participation in the Youthreach programme is approximately equal. 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.

Traditionally male participation in STTCs has been low. Efforts are being made to encourage male participants to attend these centres by providing programmes that male travellers are interested in attending.

5. Identify any issues arising that need to be drawn to the attention of the Managing Authority, the Equal Opportunities and Social Inclusion Representatives or other Departments.¹

Nil.

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.