

Donegal ETB Annual Report

2022



etb

Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Dhún na nGall
Donegal Education and
Training Board

Contents

Our Vision	p5
Our Mission Statement	p5
Our Values	p6
Foreword, Donegal ETB Chairperson Cllr Barry Sweeny	p8
Introduction, Donegal ETB Chief Executive Anne McHugh	p10

01. Donegal Education and Training Board Statement	p12
1.1 Functions of the Board	
1.2 Responsibilities of the Board	
1.3 Donegal ETB Membership and Chairpersons 2022	
1.4 Board Composition	
1.5 Board Members Meeting Attendance Record 2022	
02. Committees	p18
2.1 Audit and Risk Committee	
2.2 Finance Committee	
2.3 Youth Work Committee	
03. Risk Management	p22
3.1 Systems of internal control	
3.2 Procurement policy and procedures	
3.3 Taxation	
3.4 Financial Statement for the year ending 31 December 2022	
04. What we do, where we are	p28
4.1 Schools and Music	
4.2 FET Centres	
05 Making an impact - student numbers	p34
06. Transforming learning - changing lives	p38
6.1 Key Theme 1 - Teaching and Learning	
6.2 Key Theme 2 - A Progressive, Accountable Organisation	
6.3 Key Theme 3 - Working with Partners	
Abbreviations	p104



Our Vision

--

Donegal ETB – transforming learning, changing lives

By 2026, we will have improved the life chances of people in Donegal, by helping them to achieve successes in education and training.

Our Mission Statement

Donegal ETB offers education and training opportunities that help students to achieve their full potential and to contribute to the social, cultural and economic life of their communities.

Our Values

We are a learning organisation.
We place students at the centre of our work. Everything we do to serve the best interests of our students is based on our core values: excellence, equality, care, community, and respect.



Excellence

We strive for excellence in all aspects of our work. We are committed to achieving the highest quality standards of teaching, learning and assessment in all our programmes. We value innovation and seek to achieve continuous improvement, supporting our staff to engage in professional development opportunities.

Equality

We strive to ensure that all students are afforded equal opportunity to participate in our education and training programmes that are based on respect for human rights and diversity. Our learning and work communities are inclusive of race, gender, religion or belief, age, family status, civil status, membership of the Traveller community, sexual orientation, ability and socioeconomic status. As an employer, we value diversity, and we aim to be fully inclusive in our staff teams.

Care

We care for the well-being of our students and our staff by creating safe and welcoming environments for learning and working. We have a culture that recognises and celebrates the achievements of students and staff. At the same time, we support people who are experiencing challenges in their lives.

Community

Our Donegal ETB community includes our staff, our students and our partners, working together to achieve our collective goals. We are closely linked to communities throughout Donegal. We value the partnerships that we have developed with other groups and organisations to bring social, cultural and economic benefits to the county.

Respect

We treat every person with respect. Our relationships with students, staff and communities are based on openness and trust. We respect the laws and rules that govern all aspects of our work: we operate within a culture of accountability, fairness, honesty and inclusion.

Foreword

Donegal ETB Chairperson
Cllr Barry Sweeny

A chara

I am honoured to have served as Chairperson of Donegal Education and Training Board in 2022.

The year of 2022 will be remembered as an extraordinary year of highs and lows. A year when our school communities saw an emergence from COVID-19 restrictions, a restoration of confidence and a return to many normalities across Donegal. Staff and management of our schools must be commended for their extra effort in meeting the challenges in adapting to “new ways” throughout the worst days of the pandemic, and these new ways and teaching methods will prove useful for future learning methods.

As one global challenge subsided, another began suddenly with the invasion of Ukraine. Amongst the many massive consequences, was the arrival of thousands of Ukrainian nationals to Donegal, many of school going age. Donegal ETB met the challenge of facilitating those seeking refuge and providing for their education for an unknown period. Donegal ETB continues to play a key role with the Regional Education and Language Team (REALT) building on existing education support structures in the county, with a focus on supporting the education needs of children from Ukraine arriving in Co Donegal and helping families to find a school place.

The formal establishment of the Atlantic Technological University (ATU) on 1 April was a very positive and historic moment in time. Donegal ETB's close working relationship with the ATU along with Ulster University, North West Regional College (NWRC) and South West Regional College will continue to bear fruit, collaborating and transforming the educational provision in the northwest region.

The tragic events that unfolded in Creeslough on 7 October 2022 brought a dark cloud upon the region and a profound effect particularly on the ETB school community of Mulroy College, Milford with the loss of life of students and parents. The response by the College and the wider community was, and continues to be, something special. In the face of adversity, the learning from loss, from sharing, from helping each other, has brought a new strength and resilience to the community of Creeslough and far beyond. May their souls rest in peace and the community continue to grow stronger.

I was happy to attend several events in person throughout the year, including the staff retirement function which had not occurred for two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

I took great delight in visiting the Weaving traineeship at Ballymoon, Kilcar to see the fantastic work ongoing to revive this heritage craft skill. We worked hard with various stakeholders in relation to the Thatching School in Portnoo and hope that Donegal ETB will play an important role in this project in the future. I was also happy to attend the annual ETBI Conference in Tullow, Co Carlow where the focus was on Equality, Inclusion, and Diversity in Education.

I would like to convey my sincere thanks to our Chief Executive, Anne McHugh, along with all the senior management team, administrative support, and fellow Board Members for their help and support to me as Chairperson throughout the year and I would like to wish the incoming Chairperson best wishes for the coming year.

Go raibh míle maith agaibh uilig.

Cllr Barry Sweeny, Chairperson



Introduction

Donegal ETB Chief Executive
Anne McHugh

2022 started on a positive note not only for Donegal ETB, but for the whole country as the pandemic restrictions were mostly lifted. Finally, we were able to again enjoy the gatherings and events which had not happened face to face since 2020. These included awards events, the performances of our wonderful Donegal Music Education Partnership, our Further Education and Training (FET) Fair, our new teacher induction days and our ever popular retirement lunch.

2022 was also the first year of our new Strategy Statement, which has Transforming learning - changing lives as its vision.

This is a vision in which we strive to live out each day within each part of our organisation and which serves to remind us why we do what we do for our communities and our county.

On 24 February 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine and launched us into an unprecedented time as thousands of displaced Ukrainian nationals sought refuge and support in our county. Donegal ETB responded in a hugely positive way by leading out on the REALT team and by providing English language classes to our Ukrainian population. Indeed, we have also provided school places and language support to increased numbers of refugees and asylum seekers from other countries under the International Protection Accommodation Services programme.

I was honoured to be a member of the first Governing Body of the new Atlantic Technological University which came into being on 1 April 2022. The new University for this region will bring enormous benefits to the county, which will include retaining our young people, a vital part of growing our economy in the region.

We said goodbye to our Director of FET, Cróna Gallagher and welcomed our new Director, Ciaran O'Brien in June. Cróna had been instrumental in ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion matters were front and centre in our organisation and so we have had a series of meetings during 2022 to progress our work in the [Public Sector Duty](#). This work ties in very neatly with our work on the ethos and core values of our schools, which are also the core values of our organisation and, working with ETBI, we have made significant and lasting progress in this area.

The signing of a [Memorandum of Understanding with Údarás na Gaeltachta](#) in April cemented our long standing and fruitful relationship with our colleagues and highlighted the important emphasis within our organisation on our partnerships and on an Ghaeilge.

Our work with our tertiary cluster partners, ATU, Ulster University and NWRC hit a high note on 7 October with a very successful conference at ATU but the lowest note possible rang out just hours later when the Creeslough tragedy put all that we do in stark perspective. The following week was indeed a dark one for our county and our school, Mulroy College but with the wonderful support from around the world which took so many different forms, we have been able to move on to some degree. Of course, we will never forget those who lost their lives and were injured on that awful day and we keep them all, including family, friends and community in our thoughts.

I would like to sincerely thank the members of the Annual Report Committee for their excellent, detailed and exacting work during the production of this document. Andy McGovern, Ciaran O'Brien, Dr Martin Gormley, Brenda Boyle, Sandra Doherty, Dr Sandra Buchanan, Martin McGinley, Eileen Dennison and Liz Potter.

Finally, I extend my thanks to our Chairperson, Cllr Barry Sweeny and the members of the Board of Donegal ETB for their continued support and interest in all that we undertake in order to serve the communities of Co Donegal.

Anne McHugh, Chief Executive



01

Donegal Education and Training Board Statement

- 1.1 Functions of the Board
- 1.2 Responsibilities of the Board
- 1.3 Donegal ETB Membership and Chairpersons 2022
- 1.4 Board Composition
- 1.5 Board Members Meeting Attendance Record 2022

Donegal Education and Training Board was established under the Education and Training Boards Act, 2013 and is responsible and accountable for the proper direction and control of its functions in the Donegal local authority area.

Donegal Education and Training Board complies with the Code of Practice for Governance of Education and Training Boards, Department of Education and Skills circular 0002/2019. The purpose of the code is to ensure that the principles of good governance and management are applied by Donegal Education and Training Board.

1.1 Functions of the Board

Decisions taken by the Board are reserved functions and are set out in Section 12 (2) of the Education and Training Board Act 2013 and in Circular 0002/2019 Code of Practice for the Governance of Education and Training Boards, with a full schedule set out in Appendix A of the Code. Decisions not specified in the Code are deemed to be Executive Functions for the Chief Executive. The Board is satisfied that the Chief Executive delegates functions where appropriate and in accordance with the Education and Training Board Act 2013.

1.2 Responsibilities of the Board

The Board is responsible for keeping proper books of account which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Board and which enable it to ensure that the Financial Statements comply with section 51 of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013. The Board is also responsible for safeguarding its assets and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. The Board considers that the Annual Financial Statements properly present the income and expenditure of the Board and the state of affairs of the Board.

In preparing those accounts, the Board is required to:

- (a) apply the standard accounting policies for the preparation of ETB financial statements
- (b) make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- (c) disclose and explain any material departures from the standard accounting policies

During 2022 the Board approved the following documentation:

- Adoption of the Annual Report
- Financial Statements
- Adoption of the Annual Service Plan
- Authorised attendance of members at conferences
- Approved the acquisition, holding and disposal of land or interest in accordance with Department of Education (DE) regulations
- Ensured accurate records were kept of meetings and decisions

1.3 Donegal ETB Membership and Chairpersons 2022

Chief Executive: Ms Anne McHugh

Donegal Education and Training Board		
Name	Designation	Nominating Body
Cllr Barry Sweeny	Chairperson	Donegal County Council
Cllr Martin Harley	Deputy Chairperson	Donegal County Council
Audit and Risk Committee		
Name	Designation	Nominating Body
Mr Gabriel O'Donnell	Chairperson	External Member
Finance Committee		
Name	Designation	Nominating Body
Mr Patsy McVicar	Chairperson	National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (NAPD)

Representation and Meetings

- The term of office of Donegal ETB is five years (2019-2024).
- The Board meets regularly - around once every six weeks. In 2022, the Board met seven times.
- The Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson are usually elected annually.
- Donegal ETB appoints four of its Board Members or representatives to each Board of Management of Donegal ETB schools and colleges for the five-year term of office of the Board.
- Members also sit on various committees of the Board, mainly the Youth, Audit and Risk, and Finance Committees.

1.4 Board Composition

The Board is comprised of 21 members elected under the provisions of Section 30 of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013 as follows:

Main ETB Board					
12 Members elected by Local Authority Elections under Donegal County Council					
Section 30 (I) (a) Donegal Education and Training Boards, Act 2013					
	Title	Name	Surname	Category	Nominating Body
1	Cllr	Albert	Doherty		Donegal County Council
2	Cllr	Barry	Sweeny		Donegal County Council
3	Cllr	Donal	Coyle		Donegal County Council
4	Cllr	Gary	Doherty		Donegal County Council
5	Cllr	John	O'Donnell		Donegal County Council
6	Cllr	John Sheamais	O'Fearraigh		Donegal County Council
7	Cllr	Martin	Harley		Donegal County Council
8	Cllr	Martin	Farren		Donegal County Council
9	Cllr	Michael	McBride		Donegal County Council
10	Cllr	Noel	Jordan		Donegal County Council
11	Cllr	Noreen	McGarvey		Donegal County Council
12	Cllr	Rena	Donaghey		Donegal County Council
2 Members who are members of staff. Section 30 (I) (b) Members of Staff elected					
13	Ms	Joanne	Donaghy	Staff Representative	Elected by Staff
14	Mr	Barry	Molloy	Staff Representative	Elected by Staff
2 Members of Parent Representatives. Section 30 (I) (c) nominated by Parents Association					
15	Mr	Geoffrey	Browne	Parent Representative	Nominated by Parent Body
16	Ms	Lorraine	Doherty	Parent Representative	Nominated by Parent Body
5 Members appointed in accordance with Section 30 (I) (d) subsection (11) From Nominated Bodies with specialist interests/areas as specified by the Minister					
17	Ms	Lorraine	Thompson	Youth Work Ireland	Nominating bodies/Special Interest
18	Mr	Patsy	McVicar	NAPD	Nominating bodies/Special Interest
19	Mr	Gerard	Grant	IBEC	Nominating bodies/Special Interest
20	Ms	Regina	Grant	Disability Federation of Ireland	Nominating bodies/Special Interest
21	Mr	Brian	McDermott	Irish Hospitality Institute	Nominating bodies/Special Interest

1.5 Board Members Meeting Attendance Record 2022

During the year the Board met on seven occasions, with details of attendance outlined in the table below.

Board Members Meeting Attendance Record 2022								
Date of meetings:	28/02/22	31/03/22	16/05/22	20/06/22	19/09/22	Oireachtas 07/11/22	12/12/22	Total by Member
Name of Member								
Cllr Albert Doherty	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7
Cllr Gary Doherty	✓	✓		✓	✓			4
Cllr Rena Donaghey	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		6
Cllr Martin Farren	✓		✓		✓		✓	4
Cllr Noreen McGarvey	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	6
Cllr Martin Harley	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7
Cllr Donal Coyle	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7
Cllr Michael McBride	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	6
Cllr Noel Jordan	✓		✓				✓	3
Ms Joanne Donaghy		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6
Mr Barry Molloy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7
Cllr John Seamus Ó Fearraigh	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7
Cllr John O'Donnell		✓				✓		2
Cllr Barry Sweeny	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6
Mr Geoffrey Browne		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		5
Ms Lorraine Doherty				✓	✓			2
Mr Patsy McVicar	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	6
Ms Lorraine Thompson	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	6
Mr Gerard Grant	✓			✓	✓		✓	4
Mr Brian McDermott					✓			1
Ms Regina Grant	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		5

- 2.1 Audit and Risk Committee
- 2.2 Finance Committee
- 2.3 Youth Work Committee

02

Committees

2.1 Audit and Risk Committee

Audit and Risk Committee Membership 2022

-
- 1. Mr. Gabriel O'Donnell, Chairperson (external member)
 - 2. Ms. Kathleen Bonner (external member)
 - 3. Mr Kevin Huston (external member)
 - 4. Mr Eunan Cunningham (external member)
 - 5. Cllr Michael McBride
 - 6. Ms Lorraine Thompson
 - 7. Mr Gerard Grant
 - 8. Mr Francis Coyle (external member)

During the year the Audit and Risk Committee met on four occasions, with details of attendance outlined in the table below.

Member		24 Feb 2022	29 Mar 2022	18 Oct 2022	14 Dec 2022	Total Meetings Attended
Mr Gabriel O Donnell (Chairperson)	External Member	✓	✓	✓	✓	4/4
Ms Kathleen Bonner	External Member	✓	✓	✓	✓	4/4
Mr Kevin Huston	External Member	✓	✓	✓	✓	4/4
Mr Francis Coyle	External Member	✓	✓	✓	✓	4/4
Mr Eunan Cunningham	External Member	✓			✓	2/4
Cllr Michael McBride	Board Member	✓		✓	✓	3/4
Ms Lorraine Thompson	Board Member	✓	✓		✓	3/4
Mr Gerard Grant	Board Member	✓			✓	2/4

2.2 Finance Committee

Finance Committee Membership 2022

--

- 1. Mr Patsy McVicar, Chairperson
- 2. Mr Conall Dunne (external member)
- 3. Ms Mary Doogan (external member)
- 4. Mr Seamus Bradley (external member)
- 5. Ms Regina Grant
- 6. Cllr Gary Doherty
- 7. Cllr Martin Harley

During the year the Finance Committee met on four occasions, with details of attendance outlined in the table below.

Member		23 February 2022	29 March 2022 (joint meeting)	28 October 2022	14 December 2022	Total Meetings Attended
Mr Patsy McVicar (Chairperson)	Board Member	✓	✓	✓	✓	4/4
Mr Conall Dunne	External Member	✓	✓	✓	✓	4/4
Ms Mary Doogan	External Member		✓	✓	✓	3/4
Mr Seamus Bradley	External Member	✓	✓	✓		3/4
Ms Regina Grant	Board Member		✓	✓		2/4
Cllr Gary Doherty	Board Member	✓				1/4
Cllr Martin Harley	Board Member	✓	✓	✓	✓	4/4

2.3 Youth Work Committee

In 2022 there was one meeting of the Youth Work Committee which took place on 19 December 2022. Membership and details of attendance is outlined in the table below.

Name	Organisation	Attended
Geoffrey Browne	Chairperson, Donegal ETB Youth Work Committee	✓
Lorraine Thompson	Donegal Youth Service	✓
Claire Gavigan	Foróige	✓
Maura Gallagher	Foróige	✓
Kevin Ferguson	Scouting Ireland	✓
Martin Keeney	TUSLA	✓
Inspector Seamus McGonigle	An Garda Síochána	✓
Kyle Quill	Donegal Travellers Project	✓
Dr Martin Gormley	Director of Schools, Donegal ETB	✓
Paddy Muldoon	Youth Development Officer, Donegal ETB	✓
Jacquie Knox	Youth Work Administrator, Donegal ETB	✓

- 3.1 Systems of internal control
- 3.2 Procurement policy and procedures
- 3.3 Taxation
- 3.4 Financial Statement for the year ending 31 December 2022

03

Risk Management

The Board maintains active oversight of Risk Management and confirms that it has carried out an assessment of the principal risks, associated mitigation measures and reviewed the effectiveness of these measures in 2022. The Board manages risk for the organisation through a structured risk management programme. The Board is assisted in its risk management function by the Audit and Risk Committee.

The Board also relies on the Internal Audit Unit (IAU) and its reports, on the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) annual audit and any external audits such as a European Social Fund (ESF) Audit and / or Revenue Audit. In addition, there is a review of internal controls performed on an annual basis.

Risk management is considered at Board meetings and this consideration includes:

- Annual review of the Corporate Risk Register
- Risk reports from senior management including the Chief Risk Officer (CRO)
- Reports of the Audit and Risk Committee
- Changes in risk ratings

An outline of the risk management process has been included in the Statement on Internal Control as part of the audited financial statements which will be published within one month of receipt from the Office of the C&AG and as an appendix to the Chairperson’s Comprehensive Report.

3.1 System of internal control

The Board confirms that there has been a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control and that the Statement on Internal Control, which is subject to change until the external audit is completed, has been included in the Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2022. This will be published within one month of receipt from the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General and as an appendix to the Chairperson’s Comprehensive Report that has been submitted to the Minister.

The impact of COVID-19 resulted in ongoing changes to established work practices, including a significant amount of remote working. It was important to assess the impact that this may have had on the operation of the system of internal controls in place during the year. Compliance with existing policies, procedures and workflows continued in the remote working environment. Remote working is now embedded as a regular practice within the organisation, and Donegal ETB continues to ensure full compliance with existing operational and legislative requirements. Risk registers were updated to include an identification and assessment of the impact on risk associated with COVID-19.



3.2 Procurement policy and procedures

The Board confirms that the organisation is adhering to the relevant aspects of the Public Spending Code and affirm adherence to the relevant procurement policy and procedures and the development and implementation of the Corporate Procurement Plan.

3.3 Taxation

The Board confirms that the ETB has complied with its obligations under tax law.

3.4 Financial Statements for the year ending 31 December 2022

Donegal ETB’s Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2022 are subject to audit by the C&AG at the time of publication of Donegal ETB’s 2022 Annual Report. Donegal ETB will publish the audited financial statements within one month of receipt from the Office of the C&AG.

- Financial data in relation to the following are included in the Annual Financial Statements:**
- Details of non-salary related fees paid in respect of Board Members analysed by category of fees;
 - Aggregate details of compensation of key management analysed by the following categories including management compensation in total;
 - Salaries and short term employee benefits
 - Termination benefits
 - Key management compensation;
 - The number of employees whose total employee benefits were between €0 to €59,999;
 - Details of the number of employees whose total employee benefits (excluding employer pension cost) for the reporting period fell between €0 and €59,999 and within each pay band of €10,000 and €60,000 upwards.



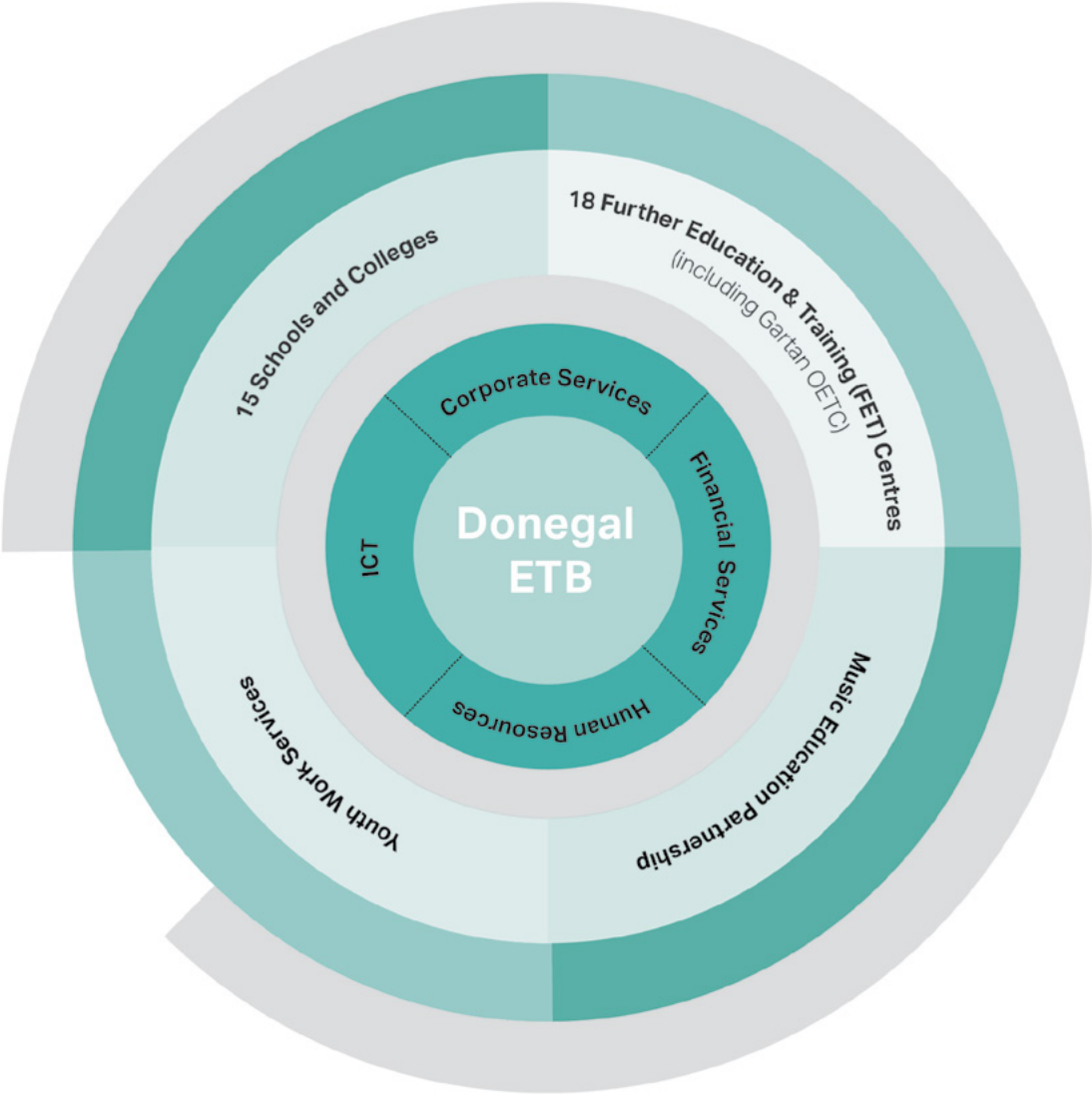
Signed: _____
Cllr Barry Sweeny, Chairperson, Donegal ETB

Date: _____

- 4.1 Schools and Music
- 4.2 FET Centres

04

What we do, where we are



Donegal ETB manages fifteen post-primary schools, including two Gaelcholáistí and four Gaeltacht schools, two of which are island schools, on Árainn Mhór and Toraigh.

The Further Education and Training (FET) Service has nineteen FET centres and also works collaboratively with 140+ community, voluntary, statutory and private bodies to deliver its programmes across the County.

From 2022, Gartan OETC became a FET Centre and funding that had previously been provided via the DE has now transferred to being provided by SOLAS/Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS), though there is still a substantial element of self-financing required in relation to this activity.

Donegal ETB supports a Youth Work services programme within the county under the direction of the Youth Development Officer.

4.1 Schools and Music



School Map - Clockwise from Moville		
1	Moville Community College	Moville
2	Crana College	Buncrana
3	Coláiste Chineál Eoghain	Buncrana
4	Coláiste Ailigh	Letterkenny
5	Errigal College	Letterkenny
6	Deele College	Raphoe
7	Finn Valley College	Stranorlar
8	Gairmscoil Chú Uladh	Béal anÁtha Móir
9	Abbey Vocational School	Donegal Town
10	Magh Éne College	Bundoran
11	St. Catherine's Vocational School	Killybegs
12	Coláiste na Carraige	An Charraig
13	Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada	Oileán Árann Mhóir
14	Coláiste Phobail Cholmcille	Oileán Thoraí
15	Mulroy College	Milford

Music Education	
16	Donegal Music Education Partnership

4.2 FET Centres



FET Centres - Clockwise from Glengad		
1	Youthreach Centre	Glengad
2	FET Centre Buncrana	Buncrana
3	Youthreach Centre	Buncrana
4	FET Centre Letterkenny	Letterkenny
5	Errigal College (PLCs)	Letterkenny
6	Training Centre Letterkenny	Letterkenny
7	Youthreach Centre	Letterkenny
8	Youthreach Centre	Lifford
9	FET Centre Stranorlar	Stranorlar
10	Finn Valley College (PLCs)	Stranorlar
11	FET Centre Donegal Town (Drumcliff)	Donegal Town
12	FET Centre Donegal Town (Ard Scoil na gCeithre Máistir)	Donegal Town
13	FET Centre Ballyshannon	Ballyshannon
14	St Catherine's Vocational School (PLCs)	Killybegs
15	Training Centre Gaoth Dobhair	Gaoth Dobhair
16	FET Centre Gort an Choire	Gort an Choire
17	FET Centre Milford	Milford
18	Gartan Outdoor Education and Training Centre	Churchill

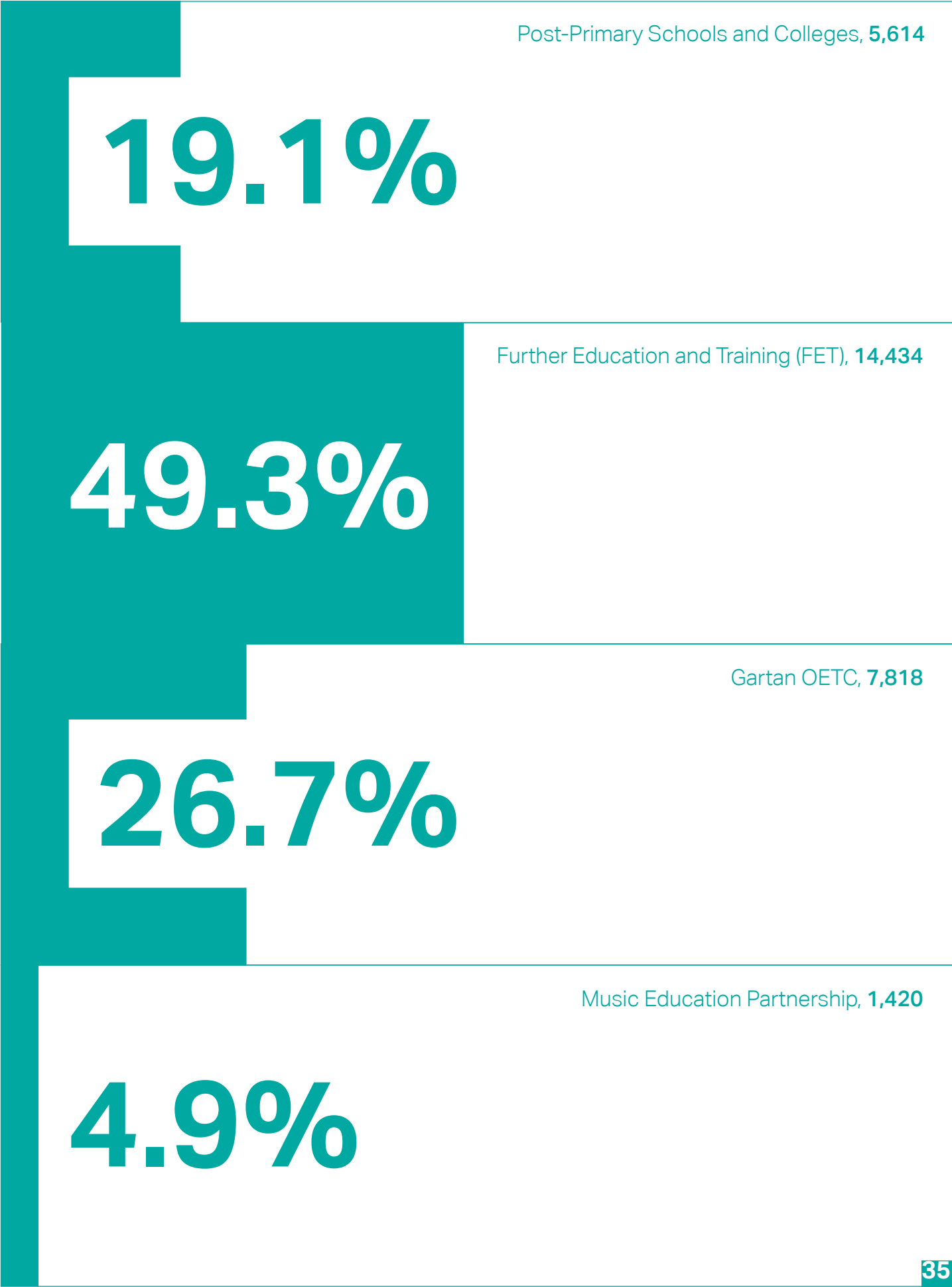




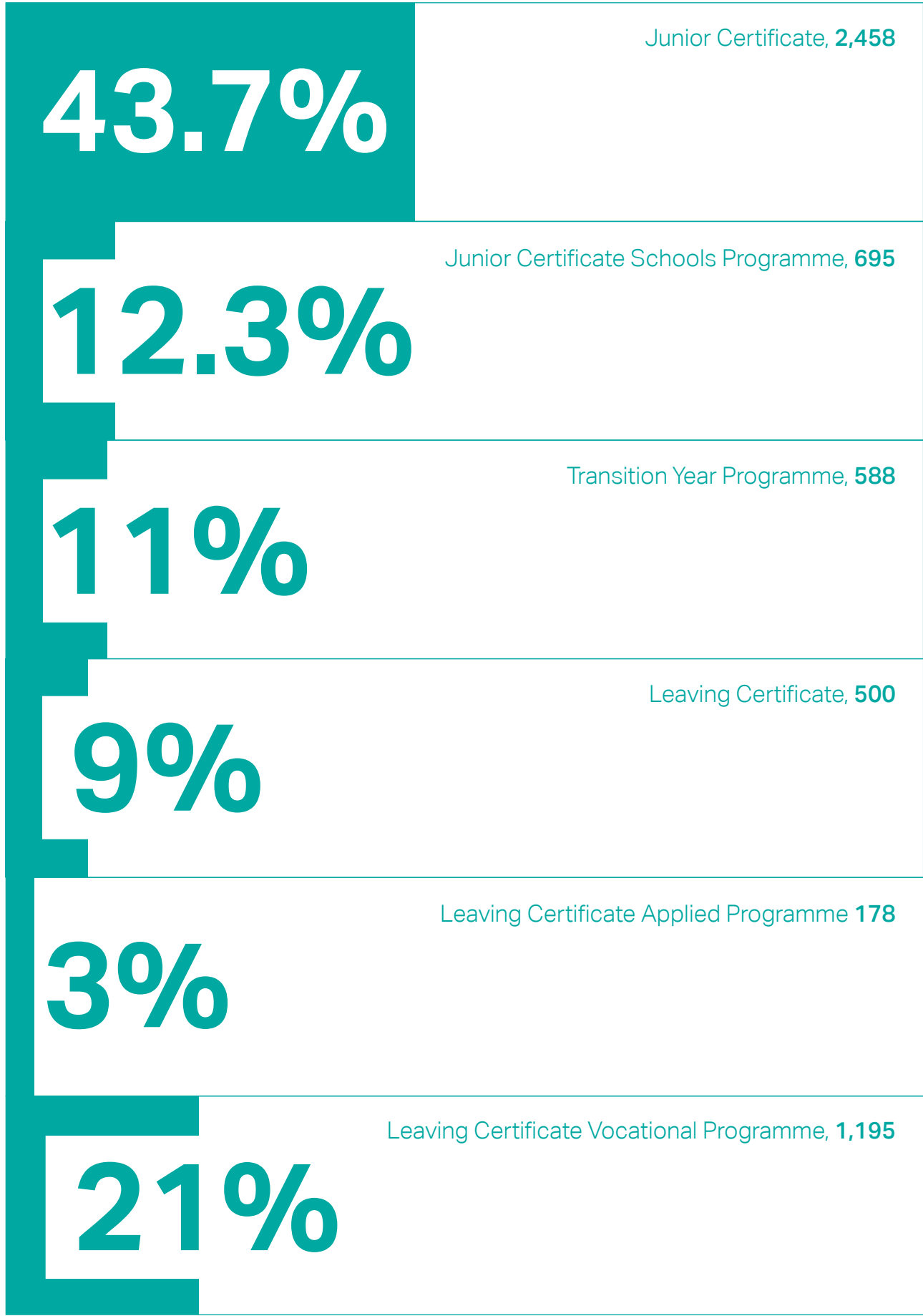
05

Making an impact
— students in numbers

Total student numbers in 2022 by sector

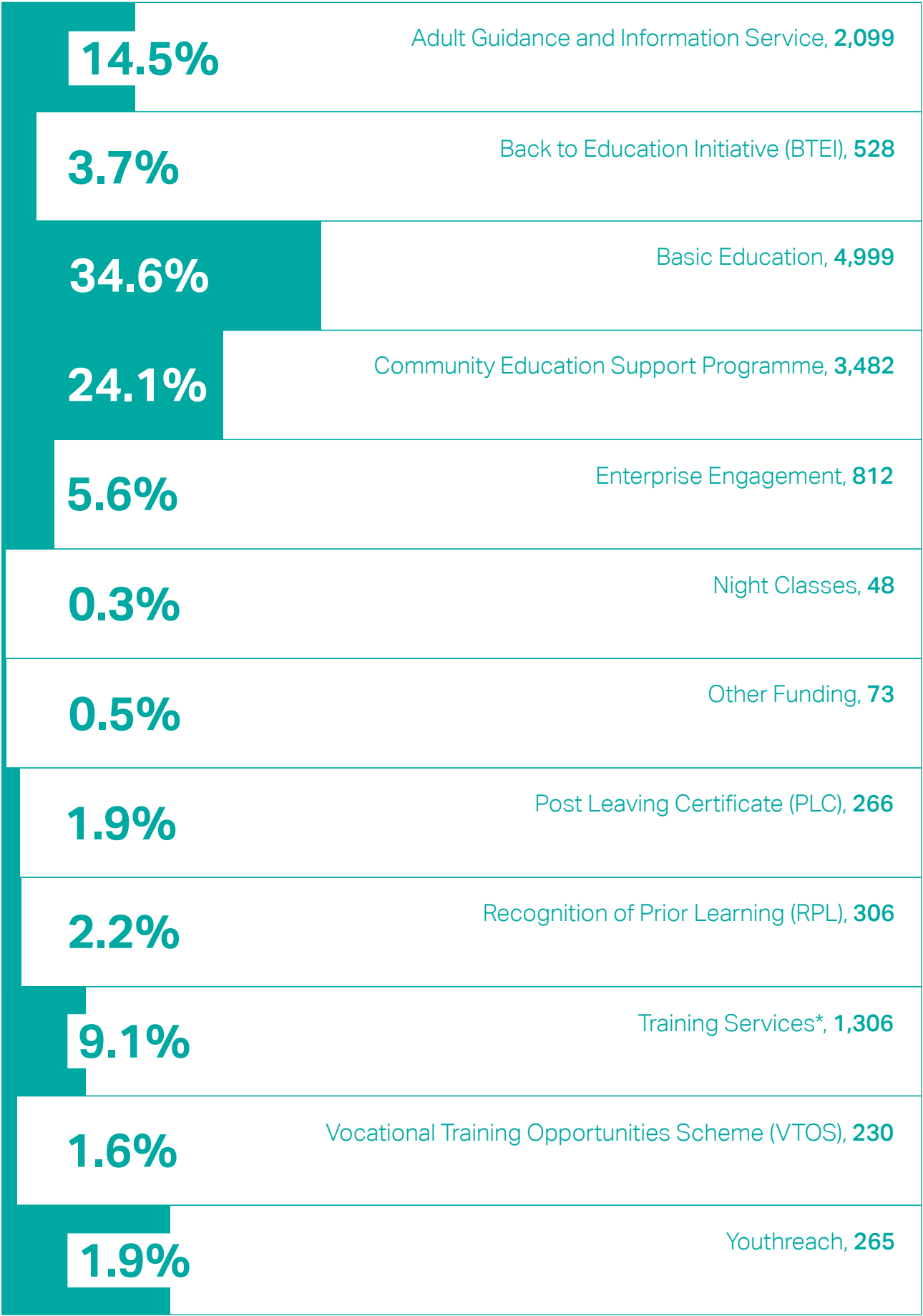


Student numbers in post-primary schools and colleges 2022



Student numbers in further education and training 2022

* Apprenticeships, evening classes, specific skills training, traineeships



- 6.1 Key Theme 1 - Teaching and Learning
- 6.2 Key Theme 2 - A Progressive, Accountable Organisation
- 6.2 Key Theme 3 - Working with Partners

06

Transforming learning
— changing lives

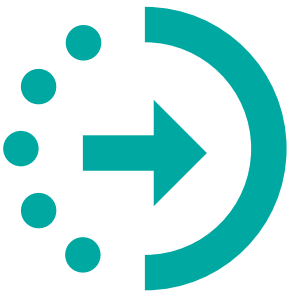
Donegal ETB was guided throughout 2022 by the key themes of its five year Strategy Statement, 2022–2026, containing three key themes:

Key Themes:

Key Theme 1 Teaching and Learning



Key Theme 2 A Progressive, Accountable Organisation



Key Theme 3 Working with Partners



6.1 Key Theme 1

Teaching and Learning



Priority 1

Achieve the highest quality standards of teaching, learning and assessment across all our education and training programmes.

Priority 2

Offer education and training programmes and support services that meet the needs of students, society and the economy.

Priority 1

Achieve the highest quality standards of teaching, learning and assessment across all our education and training programmes.

Continuous Professional Development:

There were regular and relevant professional development opportunities for teachers available through the Donegal Education Centre. Many of the programmes helped to enhance teachers’ pedagogical skills, subject knowledge, and use of the various technologies. Many courses were online which were time efficient and convenient for many teachers.

Student-Centred Approaches:

There was an increased emphasis on fostering student-centred learning that promoted active engagement, critical thinking, problem-solving and collaboration. Following the COVID-19 pandemic many classrooms had limited opportunities for active learning. School management encouraged teachers to employ a variety of instructional strategies that catered for diverse learning needs and promoted student ownership of their learning.

Effective Assessment Practices:

Teachers worked to promote a balanced approach to assessment that included formative, summative, and authentic assessment methods. Teachers were encouraged to provide timely and constructive feedback to students in supporting their progress and growth. Teachers ensured that their assessment techniques were aligned with the curriculum objectives and promoted higher-order thinking skills.

Technology Integration:

Teachers were encouraged to use educational technologies to enhance the teaching and learning experiences. Some training and resources were provided to help teachers integrate technology tools that could support the learning and teaching environment, student engagement, and personalised learning.

Priority 1

Continued

Collaborative Learning Communities:

Donegal ETB helped to foster a culture of collaboration and professional learning communities among teachers. Schools were encouraged to provide opportunities for peer observation, feedback, and sharing of best practices. Some platforms and sessions were arranged for teachers in order that they could collaborate and share resources, ideas, and experiences

Strong Leadership and Support:

School management helped to provide effective leadership and administrative support to ensure the implementation of quality teaching, learning, and assessment practices. The Board of Management in many schools helped to develop and implement school-wide policies and procedures that prioritised high-quality education.

Parent and Community Engagement:

Schools encouraged parent involvement in their child's education and provided opportunities for community members to contribute their expertise and resources to enrich the learning experience at various events.



Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) and FET

Donegal ETB's FET Service developed a strategic approach to the use of blended learning by developing a Blended Learning Framework. The framework supports and guides the ETB's strategic approach to blended learning and anticipates that the majority of FET courses and programmes will be supported by the use of blended learning approaches.

The implementation of the FET TEL Action Plan 2022 by the TEL Co-ordinator and TEL Working Group enabled the development and mentoring of staff in using technology in the classroom to ensure the successful implementation of TEL initiatives within the FET Service.

A successful TEL seminar (a week-long series of interactive webinars), delivered by Donegal ETB staff and external experts and leaders in the field of technology in the classroom, was attended by 254 FET practitioners over five days. As part of the 2022 FET TEL plan, a €15,000 prize fund for innovative approaches to utilising technology within the FET Service was made available for FET programmes to enter. The purpose of the project was to encourage staff to re-imagine their course or an aspect of the FET Service through the use of technology. Two FET programmes received funding through the TEL Innovative Project. The project ranked first in the competition was from the BTEI programme and received €10,000 for a 'Photography and Editing Studio'. The project ranked second in the competition was a PLC programme and received €5,000 for 'The Power of Visuals' project. In 2022 the number of Digital Hubs increased to seven across Donegal offering support and access to devices and connectivity to staff, students, and the general public. A Digital Hub evaluation survey by past and present users reported 93% of users rating them as excellent.

Professional Learning and Development (PLD)

Forty-four Professional Learning and Development (PLD) events were offered to staff throughout 2022 with 955 FET staff availing of a wide range of PLD opportunities to enhance teaching, learning and assessment.

PLD themes in 2022 included but were not limited to:

- Well-being
- Quality assurance
- Teaching and learning practices and pedagogy
- Accessibility tools and Universal Design for Learning
- Inclusion
- Supporting teaching and learning practices



Reach Fund

The FET Service supported forty Community Education providers to avail of financial support from the Reach Fund in 2022.

The fund focused on increasing the capacity of community education providers to address the decline in participation of disadvantaged learners, particularly those on literacy and basic skills programmes at National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) Levels 1-3. There was a strong focus on community education as a mechanism to continue to support and engage with disadvantaged learners and a recognition that online/blended learning is an essential support to meet complex needs.

Donegal Adult Guidance & Information Service

The Adult Guidance and Information Service continued to support students and clients through in person, phone and online guidance provision.

An online digital student support programme called MyFuture+, designed to assist students and clients to explore interests, personality, interpersonal skills and values to develop better self-understanding and explore the world of education, work and employment, was used consistently as an additional student support resource with groups and students to support their education progression and career development. Students continue to have access to this programme on completion of their course to support their future transfer and progression decisions. Continued use of Tick that Box, a resource developed by Donegal ETB guidance practitioners, ensured consistency of support across the service and provided a resource which students can use even after they had progressed from their course.

Quality Assurance Support Service

The biggest change in Quality Assurance Support Service in 2022 was the appointment of an Assistant Training Centre Manager with responsibility for Quality Assurance (QA), representing a tangible development in the creation of a single suite of QA policies and procedures for the FET Service as a whole.

Throughout 2022 the Early Learning and Care Community of Practice (CoP) became well established. It engaged in the review of the first iteration of the programme, which led to subsequent changes and enhancements, developed excellent resources and met regularly to review programme delivery. Following this success, an Inclusive Education and Practice CoP was established to review and update assessments, rethink and enhance delivery and develop programme resources.

Integrated QA in FET

As part of the development of the new Integrated QA system, a working group of twenty-seven staff members from across the FET Service, was established in 2022 to progress the Fair and Consistent Assessment of Learners Policy and associated procedures. A framework for the development of the policy and its associated procedures for the assessment of students on all Donegal ETB FET programmes was agreed, ensuring that they adhere to the policies, criteria and guidelines outlined in two QQI documents - Assessments and Standards (Revised 2013) and Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers (V.2 Revised 2018). The policy and related procedures recognise the need to have adequate and appropriate processes for the assessment and authentication of student achievement and for the approval of assessment results.

Donegal ETB's FET Service Quality Council approved a Programme Development and Approval policy in March 2022 to ensure that programme development is conducted systematically, and that all programmes undergo a robust design, development and approval process in line with 'Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training' (QQI 2017) and with the approval requirements of other awarding bodies.

The Quality Assurance Portal has been designed to enable the sharing of best practice, teaching and learning resources and QA news for all staff across the FET Service. This portal is live and is continually updated with relevant information, documentation and resources. FET staff are consulted regularly to ensure the portal remains fit for purpose and any suggestions of enhancements are made. The QA portal also contains a 'Get involved in QA' button where staff can provide QA feedback or register interest in future QA policy development.

A QA newsletter was developed in 2022, containing relevant QA news items and is issued regularly to all FET staff. Throughout 2022 a subject matter expert delivered twelve webinars addressing Quality Standards in Facilitating Assessment to support collaborative opportunities for FET staff to optimise practice. The sessions supported educators in taking ownership of their teaching, learning and assessing practice for the benefit of their students. In order to make the sessions accessible to all staff, the webinars were recorded and available to view on the QA Portal.

In 2022 a Data Management Working Group was set up to include Programme Learner Support System (PLSS) users across FET with aims to standardise work practices and ensure use of the PLSS system is consistent and effective to meet overall FET targets and objectives, thus contributing to the overall integrated QA system. Tableau Software is utilised to provide faster insights to data reports.

A QA Operational Action Plan was developed and implemented to monitor the progress of QA actions arising from the 2021 QQI Inaugural Review Report and including actions/plans that support the development of the new QA system and operational day-to-day activities. The areas for action have been grouped in line with the QQI eleven Core Guidelines. One-year plans are developed from the operational plan and reviewed to ensure priorities are current and progress is being made. A Quality Assurance steering group has been established to inform and agree priorities for the development of the QA system in line with the strategic direction of Donegal ETB's FET Service and national policy imperatives.

In 2022, a review of current QA governance membership was undertaken, leading to the addition of both internal and external members to the different groups, including further external representation from industry and community on the Quality Council.

FET Student Supports from Quality Assurance Support Service

In response to student feedback, a student handbook was developed in 2022 to support students throughout their programme of study and to prepare them for assessment. It informs students of what is expected of them as a Donegal ETB FET student and what they can expect from Donegal ETB. It also provides general information and study tips.

Feedback from students requesting an online resource where they could access all relevant information in one place led to the launch of the FET Student Hub in September 2022. A one-stop shop containing all the information a prospective or current FET student might need before or during their course, the Hub is designed to simplify and enhance the way that students access guidance and support services, making them more accessible and consistent for all. Initial feedback from students suggests that they find the Hub an excellent tool for academic support and for more general information. Teaching staff have also found it an invaluable resource in the classroom for supporting learning.

Donegal ETB continues to actively seek ways to develop mechanisms through which FET students can systematically and periodically contribute to QA developments and enhancements. A number of mechanisms for the collection of the student voice were established and implemented in 2022 such as the establishment of the Governance and Management Student Forum in May. The development of this forum is a key element of Donegal ETB's Strategy Statement 2022-2026, which states "We place students at the centre of our work. Everything we do to serve the best interests of our students is based on our core values: excellence; equality; care; community, and respect." The forum is held three times each year with students from across the FET Service invited to attend to represent their programme areas.

The agenda items reflect those of the governance and management groups relating to new programmes, programme development and delivery, new policies and procedures and other aspects related to the development of the integrated QA system. Feedback is gathered and presented to the Governance and Management groups for review and response.

As part of a national initiative to record the impacts of community education and the benefits of community learning, the FET community provision has piloted a community student survey which aims to capture the wider outcomes that may occur because of participation in ETB adult literacy and community education provision. The results enable the FET Service to move beyond anecdotal evidence and present student feedback from participation in courses in a structured and systematic manner as well as finding out what students want from courses and set learning outcomes. Strategically, it enables the recording of vital data, which helps with reporting and future planning. Feedback from the initial pilot has been very positive and a wider roll-out of the survey planned.

Programme Development

In 2022 Programme Development, in conjunction with Dr Oran Doherty (Ibec), successfully validated its first micro-credential for a Level 6 Special Purpose Award in Work-Based Learning Practices. The first group of twenty-eight employees completed the certification in October 2022, with great feedback from the employer and participants. This is the first programme developed by Donegal ETB for validation by QQI within the new governance structures and in line with QQI's new validation processes for qualification development and validation. It was also developed using the Professional Award-type Descriptors, which are more suited for programmes in the world of work.

Donegal ETB achieved Centre Approval with the Institute of Motor Industry in May 2022 to deliver Levels 1 to 3 in Electrical Hybrid Vehicle qualifications. The programme was piloted by the Motor Vehicle Instructors in September 2022 with ten Level 6 apprentices completing the certification as an enhancement to their apprenticeship course content.

A Marine Engineering traineeship was also approved in September 2022 and planned for delivery in 2023, with the engineering sector in Killybegs providing placement opportunities. Killybegs Marine Cluster engagement was key in providing occupational requirements for practical, digital and human skills that make up this programme, with a particular focus on welding skills.

The Green Suite of Special Purpose Awards (Level 5 5S21793 Environmental Sustainability in the Workplace and Level 4 4S21809 Environmental Sustainability Awareness) were approved in July 2022. Both these qualifications are part of the SOLAS strategic performance agreement targets going forward and will be included in any new traineeships. Delivery of the Level 4 award within a Level 5 e-Business major award run in Donegal Town began in September 2022.

Engagement with the Industrial Development Agency (IDA) resulted in the development of a programme to support staff upskilling for inward bound financial services company FinTru, through the provision of core digital skills and Chartered Institute for Securities and Investment certification.

Changes in City & Guilds certification prompted a review and update of the Communications Cabling traineeship. This resulted in the second iteration of the course commencing in September 2022 offering a higher level of certification and introducing training in newer areas of fibre optic technologies, alongside the industry specific vendor certification.

In response to the increased demand for English language skills at Level 4 and above, work began on the development of resources to support the delivery of English for Speakers of Other Language (ESOL) classes at Levels 4 and 5.

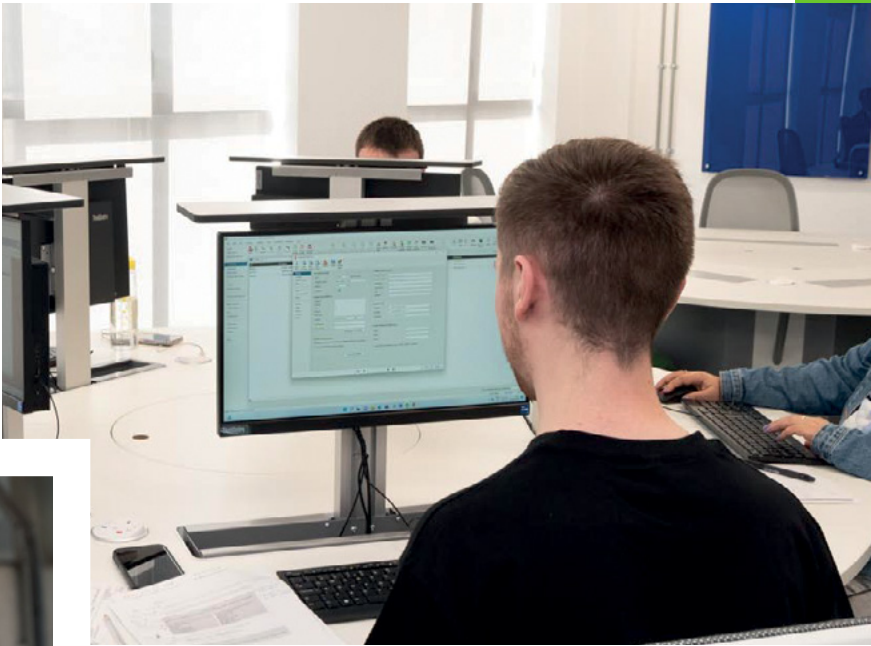
2022 also saw the validation of a standalone module at Level 4 in Local and Global Awareness to support Community Education providers, that, due to the onerous task of maintaining QQI centre approval and validation processes, have stepped away from being QQI approved centres. This module is used in the ChangeMakers programme, where Donegal ETB is a key partner in the training and certification aspects of the programme.



Programme Development cont

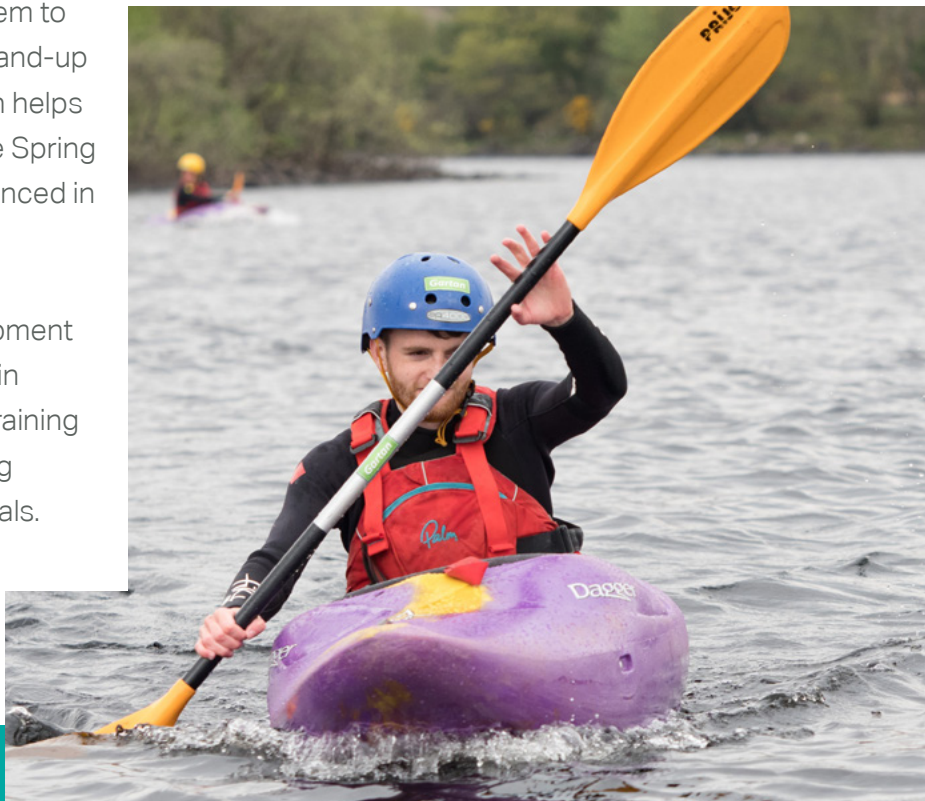
To provide entry level access courses for accounting, the ACCA Foundation Diploma in Financial Management (Levels 2 and 3) was approved for delivery in conjunction with QQI Level 5 awards in Bookkeeping, Payroll and Start Your Own Business. Within the business area, Donegal ETB also received validation for the SOLAS developed QQI Level 5 Building Business Digital Skills 5N21872 Special Purpose Award via differential validation. This is the first in a range of micro-credentials that SOLAS have developed, and Donegal ETB was represented in three of the working groups involved in the development of this qualification.

Certification Scheme for Personnel (CSWIP) Visual Welding Inspector was approved through internal governance in September 2022. This industry specific certification is provided by The Welding Institute and supports the rapidly expanding engineering sector. Uncertified Robotic Welding Upskilling was also approved in November 2022, pending differential validation of the Special Purpose Award in development by Louth and Meath ETB with SOLAS via micro-credentials.



Gartan Outdoor Education and Training Centre developed an upskilling programme in Paddlesports with Trail Cycle Leader to upskill entry level instructors during their seasonal down-time, to enable them to achieve more advanced levels in Kayaking, Stand-up Paddleboarding and Trail Cycle Leading, which helps extend employment opportunities beyond the Spring and Summer seasons. The first group commenced in November 2022.

In May 2022 the RPL and Programme Development Officer completed a Postgraduate Certificate in Programme Design and Validation in FE and Training at Maynooth University to support the ongoing development and validation of micro-credentials.



The Public Works Operations and Maintenance traineeship was approved through the internal governance processes in March 2022 and the first course commenced in September 2022.

The programme integrates qualifications in digital skills, horticulture, leadership and management and industry certification and placements are provided by Donegal County Council within their Roads, Water Services, Parks, Piers and Harbours sections.



Priority 2

Offer education and training programmes and support services that meet the needs of students, society and the economy.

During the past year, there has been a significant emphasis on improving standards in teaching and learning in our post-primary schools. A big effort was made to try to normalise schools again after a challenging period during the global pandemic. Various initiatives and reforms have been implemented to enhance the quality of education and ensure positive student outcomes.

One notable improvement is the emphasis on professional development for teachers, with increased opportunities for continuous training and upskilling, including online options. Additionally, there has been a greater focus on student-centred approaches, promoting active learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. The introduction of innovative teaching methods and technologies has also played a role in enriching the learning experience.

Furthermore, increased collaboration among teachers, as well as the implementation of robust assessment and evaluation systems, has contributed to more effective teaching practices and improved student achievement. These efforts collectively aim to provide a high-quality education that prepares our students for the challenges and opportunities of the modern world.



In 2022 Donegal ETB welcomed the addition of three more of our post-primary schools into the Delivering Equality in Our Schools (DEIS) programme. The schools were Coláiste na Carraige, St Catherine's Vocational School in Killybegs and Coláiste Pobail Cholmcille on Oileán Thoraí.

This expansion was a significant step towards promoting equity, inclusivity, and educational opportunities for all students in these school communities. The DEIS programme has proven to be instrumental in addressing educational disadvantages and ensuring that every student has access to high-quality education, regardless of their background or circumstances. By incorporating these additional schools into the DEIS initiative, we are reinforcing our commitment to providing an equitable learning environment that supports the holistic development of our students.

The induction day for new teachers offered numerous benefits that contributed to their successful integration into the various school communities. Firstly, it provided an opportunity for new teachers to familiarise themselves with the various policies, procedures, and organisational structure, enabling them to navigate their roles and responsibilities effectively. The programme also facilitated networking and relationship-building among new teachers and existing staff, fostering a sense of camaraderie and support within the Donegal ETB community. It served as a platform for sharing best practices, discussing challenges, and receiving guidance, ultimately improving the quality of learning and teaching.



The REALT in Donegal has played a pivotal role in facilitating the successful placement of Ukrainian students in local schools. With their dedicated efforts and expertise, the REALT has been instrumental in creating a smooth and supportive transition for these students into the education system. They have worked closely with schools, families, and the Ukrainian community to ensure that appropriate language support and cultural integration are provided. The work of the REALT has helped in fostering inclusivity and embracing diversity and has created a nurturing environment where Ukrainian students can thrive academically and socially. The REALT's invaluable contributions made a significant difference in the lives of these students, promoting their educational opportunities and integration into the local community. School management has shown a real willingness to facilitate the Ukrainian students.

The Creeslough tragedy on 7 October had a profound impact on the Mulroy College school community. The sudden loss of two students and two parents in the tragic event, along with injuries to a number of other students, caused deep shock, grief, and sadness within the school community. Students, teachers, and support staff were left grappling with a range of intense emotions as they mourned the loss of their friends and classmates. The tragedy brought the school community together in solidarity, fostering a sense of unity and support as they navigated the challenging process of grieving and healing. The school implemented various measures to provide emotional support and counselling services to students and staff, recognising the need for both individual and collective healing.

Supporting the Safe Provision of Schooling (SSPS)

Supporting the Safe Provision of Schooling (SSPS) Inspections were carried out in six Donegal ETB schools in 2022. Inspections focused on how schools were implementing the Department's COVID-19 Response Plan for the safe and sustainable operation of schools. This Plan provided key messages to minimise the risk of COVID–19 for staff, students, families and the wider community while recognising the importance of the safe and sustainable provision of schooling for the health and well-being of students and of society as a whole.

A verbal and written Inspection Report was provided to each school and published on the Department's website. The SSPS inspection process was designed to provide an assurance to the public that the Department's guidelines were being implemented and to provide support to the schools in implementing them.

27 January 2022	Coláiste Ailigh, Leitir Ceanainn
27 January 2022	Mulroy College, Milford
1 February 2022	Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada, Oileán Árainn Mhór
18 February 2022	Coláiste Chineál Eoghain, Bun Chranncha
5 April 2022	Deele College, Raphoe
16 May 2022	St Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs

FET Provision

2022 saw face-to-face and in-person classes return across FET programmes, following the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions. Recruitment of students onto full and part-time FET programmes steadily increased throughout 2022. Full and part-time course programmes now offer synchronous remote learning with the allocation of devices to our students. The new three-year Strategic Performance Agreement with SOLAS was implemented in 2022.

Part-time courses were delivered in Healthcare, Childcare, ICDL, Bookkeeping and Payroll, Horticulture and Digital Photography with Design Skills, catering for a broad range of provision with an increase in the demand for healthcare and students progressing directly to employment in this field.

Awards in a range of subjects were successfully completed by 114 full-time VTOS programme students including E-Business, Early Learning and Care, ICDL and Microsoft Awards, Leaving Certificate, Information Processing and Essential Healthcare Skills. With a progression focus, many students were able to progress to further studies.

Twelve full-time PLC course programmes were offered in three locations across the county including, St Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs; Errigal College, Letterkenny and Finn Valley College, Stranorlar. The programmes were successfully completed by 137 students, with 89 students recorded as successfully progressing to a FET, higher education course, or progressing to employment.

An open day was held in May 2022 of the new state-of-the-art FET Centre, Port Road, Letterkenny. Located over two floors, the Centre offers a broad range of full and part-time courses with seven spacious classrooms, two IT suites, a bright and spacious reception area and a canteen for students.



Apprenticeships

Emerging from the pandemic, Donegal ETB responded to a call from SOLAS to increase Phase 2 capacity across several critical trades where the national backlog was causing serious concern, namely in the trades of Electrical, Plumbing, Carpentry and Joinery along with Motor. During 2022 Donegal ETB continued to expand delivery and was acknowledged by SOLAS as being to the forefront of innovative ideas in trying to address the national backlog.

On the back of this, approval has been granted for the provision of an additional Electrical Workshop in the Gaoth Dobhair Training Centre, which will allow for the provision of a second Electrical course, again helping to address the national backlog, particularly in the Electrical trade, whilst also securing additional apprenticeship throughput in the centre.

Following a visit by SOLAS representatives in 2022, two further applications were submitted to SOLAS for upgrade works to allow for the development of additional electrical works in the Letterkenny Centre and the redevelopment of an existing welding workshop to become a Phase 2 Metal Fabrication workshop. The need and demand for the Metal Fabrication workshop has been a long-time request from employers within this sector in the North West and this development will undoubtedly increase registrations of Metal Fabrication apprentices in Donegal.



Donegal ETB continues to work closely with colleagues in the ATU as they strive to increase apprenticeship provision at Phase 4 and 6 across a number of trades; Electrical Phase 4 provision has increased in the ATU from two to three classes per semester and will also expand into Phase 6.

Discussions also took place around other trades where ATU could deliver Phase 4 and 6. This collaboration is going a long way to increase the profile and standing of apprenticeships in Donegal.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

The ESOL teams across the county FET Service were incredibly fast to respond to the needs of those who fled to Donegal because of the war in Ukraine in 2022. The staff teams in this vital service went above and beyond the call of duty to ensure they met, assessed and created class places for almost 1,500 adults who needed to improve their English language skills and adjust to their new communities in Donegal.

Basic Education

Donegal ETB’s Basic Education Service, known throughout the county as Learning for Living, encompasses Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Skills, all of which are included in the Adult Literacy For Life (ALL) Strategy.

The demand for digital skills classes including computers, tablets and phones, continued in 2022 as students embraced the need for basic technology skills that gave them the confidence for online communications and interactions with over 1,500 students completing courses in 2022.

Youthreach

Throughout 2022, Youthreach continued to deliver the core skills needed for further learning and prepared young people to progress to further education/training or to employment. Donegal ETB’s Youthreach programmes are delivered in six centres in Ballyshannon, Buncrana, Glengad, Gort an Chiorce, Letterkenny and Lifford.

Students and staff were delighted to bring back their annual Christmas Craft Fairs in 2022 after a two-year absence. The Fairs are the colourful culmination of much hard work throughout the year in Youthreach Centres, providing the opportunity for students in a range of subjects including art, textiles, crafts and wood to showcase their work and raise funds for local charities.

Gartan Outdoor Education and Training Centre (OETC)

From 2022, Gartan OETC became a FET Centre and funding that had previously been provided via the Department of Education has now transferred to being provided by SOLAS/Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS), though there is still a substantial element of self-financing required in relation to this activity.



There were 424 group visits to Gartan during 2022 from a broad range of service users, including, primary and post-primary schools, Further Education and Training (FET), youth services and clubs, community groups, National Governing Bodies (NGB), government departments and groups from the corporate sector.

Service provision ranged from outdoor education adventure, environmental education, specialist skills training, and conference and workshop facilities.

Programmes were delivered during day visits, residential experiences, evening sessions and at weekends. In addition, Gartan OETC provided a 47-week Instructor Training course as well as piloting a 25-week Instructor 'Upskilling' course, specifically targeting individuals working seasonally within the outdoor education, adventure tourism and adventure sports sectors.

Highlights and User Days 2022

- 119 young people from three organisations representing people with disabilities attended Gartan OETC.
- 481 FET students and staff attended the Centre from Youthreach and FET Training Centres.
- 1,068 adults attended the Centre from sports clubs, religious and cultural groups, and other organisations during 2022.
- 7 trainee instructors completed a 47-week full-time traineeship, gaining qualification from the respective national NGB in kayaking, windsurfing, sailing and attaining proficiency qualifications in mountaineering, powerboating and first aid. Eight students began the 2022-2023 course in October 2022 with a further 7 beginning the Upskilling Instructor course in November 2022.
- 2,203 post-primary students attended Gartan OETC during 2022, of which 718 were from Donegal ETB schools.
- 1,242 primary students attended Gartan OETC.
- 284 people took part in week-long Sailing, Windsurfing and Beach Camps at Downings during the Summer of 2022.
- 410 young people took part in a week-long Adventure Camps during 2022.



6.2 Key Theme 2

A progressive,
accountable
organisation



Priority 1

Create and maintain a culture of achievement, innovation, accountability and public service.

Priority 2

Support all our staff to achieve their full potential and to perform their roles to the highest professional standards.

Priority 1

Create and maintain a culture of achievement, innovation, accountability and public service.

Organisational Structure

The three Directors Forums hosted under ETBI - Organisation Support and Development (OSD); Schools; and Further Education and Training, which report to the Chief Executive's (CE) Forum, continued to meet regularly throughout the year and worked on several initiatives with a view to continuing to develop best practice throughout the organisation and the sector. The Forums sought to develop a consensus regarding the optimal organisation structures required to deliver the services which ETBs throughout the country are providing. Initial engagements took place between the CE Forum and the Departments of Education and Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, with a view to progressing agreement on a future organisational structure for ETBs.

Within Donegal ETB, regular meetings of several in-house committees are held throughout the year including: the Chief Executive and Directors Group; the Executive Forum under the Director of OSD, the groups for Principals and Deputy Principals under the Director of Schools; the FET senior managers and coordinators teams under the FET Director; the FET Funding and Planning group, which is comprised of senior management from OSD and FET to address cross-functional issues relating to SOLAS funding and other matters, and the FET Buildings group which also comprises representatives from both OSD and FET to address matters relating to building and accommodation needs within FET. In 2022 a new group was formed to address the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty and made up of representatives from all strands of the organisation, including Schools, FET and OSD.

A central body, Education Shared Business Services (ESBS) has been set up by the DE to provide high quality shared business services to the Education and Training sector. The transition to ESBS has been underway for several years now; in 2020 ESBS took over responsibility for payments to apprentices under phase one of the transfer of student payments and in February 2022 ESBS took over responsibility for VTOS and Youthreach students under the second and final phase of the student payments transition. The next phase of the transition to shared services will be staff payroll. Preparations for this phase were made during 2022 and will continue into 2023. Preparations also began during 2022 for the transition to Finance Shared Services under ESBS, whereby elements of the overall finance function will transition to the shared service model.

Ethos

Donegal ETB has begun the process of rolling out ETB Ethos across its fifteen post-primary schools and colleges. This is part of a broader national initiative involving all ETBs. The work in embedding our five core values continued in 2022. The Ethos Leadership Teams were established in each school and the Professional Learning Network across Donegal ETB continued to share good practice and discuss how to best progress the continued development.

What is Ethos?

--

Put simply, ethos is how we live, work and relate to each other in our school community. While it encompasses the curriculum and how it is taught, ethos is broader than this. It also relates to shared core values, to the hidden curriculum, to decision making processes and to the relationships that underpin the daily life of school. The process of identifying core values and ethos has been evolving over the past decade. All ETB schools are State, Co-educational and Multi-denominational. ETB ethos is underpinned by the core values of Excellence in Education, Care, Respect, Equality and Community.

Embedding ETB ethos across all our schools

--

A Professional Learning Network for Ethos has been established comprising one representative from each Donegal ETB school. Additionally, each school has appointed an Ethos Leadership Team to manage the rollout locally. The focus in 2021 was on raising awareness and understanding of ETB ethos with all members of the school community. Over the coming years the focus will move towards embedding ETB ethos and core values into all aspects of school life. ETBI has consulted widely across the sector and produced a Framework for Ethos. This document outlines ETB ethos and specifies the standards that all ETB schools should strive for. This will continue to be an important point of reference for the school-based Ethos Leadership Teams.

Compliance

Donegal Donegal ETB continued to be mindful of its obligations in terms of legislation and governance in 2022. Further steps were taken during 2022 to enhance compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (CL 0002/2019). All required actions were implemented at Board meetings and at meetings of its Audit and Risk committee, Finance committee, School Boards of Management, and Youth Work committee. The ETB also ensured that it complied with the Education and Training Boards Act, 2013, and other legislation, as well as with the requirements of the Revenue Commissioners.

Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC), with its composition of three Board members and five appointed external members, met four times during 2022.

The ARC is responsible for monitoring the Executive in how it carries out its functions. It operates under Terms of Reference that have been approved by the Board. During the year, the ARC provided reassurances to the Board about the effectiveness of the internal control processes. The ARC had access to reports from management, an external audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General and internal audits by the Internal Audit Unit – ETBs. In turn, the Board received reports of the meetings of the ARC. The Board took the ARC's findings and recommendations into account when approving the Annual Financial Statements and adopting the Statement on Internal Control.

The ARC also carried out a self-assessment review during 2022 and the results of this review were presented to the Board.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is composed of three Board members and four appointed external members and met four times during 2022. The Committee continued to have responsibility for reviewing the income and expenditure of the Board, performance against budget, and the financial aspects of both the Education plan and the Training Service Plan. The Board received the minutes of the Finance Committee meetings for consideration and to help assure Board members that these plans were being implemented.

The Committee also reviews annually the financial aspects of the Annual Service Plan and recommends them to the Board for inclusion as part of the overall Annual Service Plan which is required to be submitted to the DE by 1 March each year. A joint meeting with the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) is also held annually in March to review and recommend approval of the Annual Financial Statements by the Board in advance of the deadline for submission of the draft Annual Financial Statements to the DE by 1 April.

The Committee carried out a self-assessment review during 2022 and the results of this review were presented to the Board.

Risk Management

Donegal ETB's approach to risk management is guided by the principles set out in Section 7 of the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (CL 0002/2019). In 2022 Donegal ETB developed its first Corporate Risk Register which focused on the major risks facing the organisation. The Corporate Risk Register is underpinned by Operational Risk Registers for ETB areas including Finance, Procurement, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Human Resources (HR), Corporate Services, Building Services and Estates Management, Health and Safety, Schools and FET. The Corporate Risk Register was presented to and considered by the Audit and Risk Committee in March 2022. This work continues to heighten awareness around the area of risk management. Risk registers continued to assess the impact of COVID-19 on risk management during 2022.

Internal Control

Under Section 7.4 of the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs, the Board has responsibility for ensuring that effective systems of internal control are instituted and implemented. In 2022 Board members, with the assistance of the Finance Committee, reviewed how Donegal ETB’s programmes performed in relation to targets and budgets. The Board also carried out its annual review of internal controls and considered a report from the Audit and Risk Committee in relation to the effectiveness of the internal controls during 2021. The Board approved the annual Statement on Internal Control which was included in the Annual Financial Statements for 2021.

In 2021 Donegal ETB developed an internal audit tracker to improve its ability to monitor progress towards the implementation of the findings and recommendations of the Internal Audit Unit. During 2022 the audit tracker proved to be an effective tool in ensuring that internal audit recommendations were prioritised and implemented as soon as possible.

In 2022 Donegal ETB continued to take account of the potential impact on the system of internal control of changes to work practices arising from the impact of COVID-19.

The following audits were dealt with during 2022:

- (C&AG) ETBs: Audit of accounts for the year ended 31 December 2021
- (IAU) ETBs: Audit of Youth Services
- (IAU) ETBs: Audit of Leases, Travel and Subsistence, Gifts and Hospitality
- (IAU) ETBs: Follow up review of previous audit of Procurement
- (IAU) ETBs: Review of Certain Human Resources Processes (Commenced 2021)
- (IAU) ETBs: Review of previous audit of Contracted Training (Commenced 2021)
- (IAU) ETBs: Follow up review of previous audit findings (Commenced 2020)
- ESF Verification Audit: Training for the Unemployed 2019
- Department of Social Protection: School Meals Inspection Audit (St Catherine's Vocational School)

Training for members of the Board, ARC and Finance Committees

Members of the Board, ARC and Finance Committees attended an online webinar delivered by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General in November 2022. The session focused on topics including governance, internal controls, financial and risk management, and value for money.



ICT

In an increasingly digital world, cyber threats continue to pose significant challenges to organisations across the globe, including educational institutions. Donegal ETB acknowledges the growing prevalence and sophistication of cyber threats and is committed to addressing these challenges head-on and bolstering our cyber defences to ensure the security and integrity of our systems and data.

Ireland has witnessed a substantial increase in cyber threats, affecting organisations of all sizes and sectors. These threats encompass a wide range of activities, such as phishing attacks, ransomware incidents, data breaches, invoice redirect attempts and social engineering scams. We recognise the gravity of these threats and acknowledge the need for proactive measures to protect our digital infrastructure.

In our Corporate Risk Register, Donegal ETB has identified business interruption as a result of a cybersecurity attack as the highest rated risk facing the organisation. We understand that a robust cybersecurity framework is vital to maintaining the trust of our stakeholders and ensuring uninterrupted service delivery. As part of our commitment, we have implemented several measures to mitigate cyber risks and enhance our cyber defences.

Among the measures Donegal ETB has taken to strengthen our cyber defences are:

- Building and securing all networks using advanced Antivirus and Security Operations Centre / Security Incident Event Management (SOC)/(SEIM) to create a safe working environment for all staff and students.
- Review and renew ongoing Phishing awareness among all staff with dedicated advanced cyber security training for key staff.
- Rollout of advanced endpoint security to all ETB mobile devices.
- The ongoing development of a Digital Content Hub to provide quick, easy use instructional videos for staff and students is available to staff, students and parents in Schools and FET.
- Continued rollout of Windows 11 to ensure the most advanced and secure working environment.

Child Protection

Donegal ETB confirms it has a Child Protection Policy in place for the organisation, which has been developed in accordance with Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 (Child Protection Procedures) as published by the Department of Education.

Climate Action, Energy Management and Sustainability

The Government published the national Climate Action Plan during 2021. Among other objectives, the Plan sets out targets for public bodies to:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 51% in 2030.
- Increase the improvement in energy efficiency in the public sector from the 33% target in 2020 to 50% by 2030.

Donegal ETB recognises the urgent need to address climate change and promote sustainable practices. As an organisation committed to providing quality education and training, we understand the crucial role we play in shaping the future generation and fostering a sustainable society.

In 2022, Donegal ETB established a working group comprising the Director of OSD, Head of Corporate Services and members of the Estates Management section to begin scoping out the work ahead of us, as well as gathering available data to assist in prioritising the initiatives required to address the commitments set out in the national plan. The group identified several categories of initiatives to begin working towards including:

- Energy Efficiency Measures
- Waste Reduction and Recycling
- Sustainable Procurement

We acknowledge that our journey towards climate action, energy management, and sustainability is an ongoing one. In the coming years, we will continue to prioritise these areas, setting new goals and implementing innovative strategies to further reduce our environmental impact and contribute to a sustainable future for all.

Procurement

Donegal ETB is committed to operating its procurement under the national procurement model agreed by the government, and the principles of corporate governance outlined in the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (CL 0002/2019). It is essential that government funds are spent in a way that achieves maximum value for money, adheres to government policy, national guidelines, and EU Directives, while providing a sustainable delivery of services. As per the requirements of our Corporate Procurement Plan, the Multi-Annual Procurement Plan was completed in 2022 and was submitted to ETBI to facilitate strategic planning of future national procurement solutions for the sector.

In instances where the national procurement model does not have an appropriate mechanism in place for a particular purchase (framework/drawdown), it is the intention of Donegal ETB to comply with the relevant public procurement guidelines available from the Office of Government Procurement website and sectoral agreed policies and procedures.

In line with Circular 10/14: Initiatives to assist Small and medium-sized enterprises in public procurement, Donegal ETB seeks to encourage participation on a fair and equal basis by small and medium sized enterprises, by implementing a 'lotting' structure where possible, engagement with the Local Enterprise Office Donegal, and hosting 'Bidders Briefings' to inform the market about the requirements.

A range of organisational procurement projects were delivered in 2022 including the Implementation of a Tender and Contract Management System, where we became one of four ETBs to have this system live in 2022. We successfully established frameworks for the provision of classroom equipment and loose furniture to enable timely and efficient access to necessary items for our schools and centres.

Procurement cont

Multi-language translation services were acquired to meet the needs of new students to Donegal as a result of the war in Ukraine. General goods and services were also procured including Engineering Consumables, IT Equipment, Health and Safety training services and Project Management Services. Donegal ETB is committed to implementing Green Public Procurement and following Environmental Protection Agency guidance, Green Criteria were included in all relevant tenders in 2022.

Procurement at Donegal ETB has been working towards increasing compliance levels while simultaneously achieving value for money. Our procurement section aims to engage with all stakeholders with a view to adding value to Donegal ETB through procurement.

Communications

Donegal ETB continued to promote and highlight its work to its many publics through a wide range of channels in 2022, including print, broadcast, online and through social media.

Some key performance indicators for 2022 were:

- 1,844 media items across traditional print, online and the broadcast media during 2022, representing an increase in media coverage of 42% from 2021.
- The top key topic for Donegal ETB was Community Education followed by several employer service areas.
- The largest source of this coverage was the print media with regional newspapers making up the largest source type.
- This cumulative coverage had an estimated potential media reach of 92.53 million people and a media score well above the passing benchmark of 50/100.

The Creeslough tragedy, which involved students and parents from our Milford school, contributed to these increased outputs.

It is worth highlighting several broadcast items in 2022:

- The launch of the first certified weaving course in the county resulted in a lot of positive publicity for the course and for Donegal ETB, including a report on RTE's Six One news on Tuesday 26 April which has an estimated viewership of over 433,000. This report also had 147,000 views on RTE's Facebook page from across the world. The launch of the new course was also picked up by BBC Alba in Scotland.
- More locally, on 16 March Highland Radio's Business Matters podcast (Episode 83) featured Gairmscoil Chú Uladh, discussing their partnership with Optum to support them to become the first Irish language school in the country to participate in the 'Saothar an tSaoil' (World of Work) programme through the medium of Irish, run by Business in the Community Ireland (BITC).
- Following the success of Errigal College in winning the national Bank of Ireland Money Smarts Challenge, teacher Evan Gorrell and Principal Danny McFadden and students were interviewed on the podcast on 1 June (Episode 94), while on 14 December (Episode 122), Errigal College teacher David McHale also spoke on this podcast about the new STEM and Coding Lab in the school which was funded by Optum.
- FET Recruitment Officer Tara McGuire also spoke on the podcast on 8 June (Episode 95) about FET courses.

Several interviews with the broadcast media were also arranged in 2022. As a result of the Creeslough tragedy on Friday 7 October, Donegal ETB's Director of Schools spoke on Morning Ireland (RTÉ Radio 1) on Monday 10 October about the supports the school was receiving, while the Chief Executive also spoke on TG4's Nuacht about it. She also spoke on TG4's Nuacht on 6 December about school meals and the cost-of-living crisis at an ETBI Briefing for Oireachtas members in Dublin. Highland Radio interviewed the Director of Schools on its flagship 'Nine 'til Noon' show on 07 December about teacher recruitment.

Twenty-nine press releases were issued in 2022 by the Communications Office to print, radio and online media as appropriate and posted on Donegal ETB's website (English and Irish) and shared across its various social media platforms, covering all aspects of the organisation – Corporate (8) Schools (5) and Further Education and Training (FET) Services (16). A number of Donegal ETB schools received extensive coverage of a range of activities throughout the school year in local print and online media.

In 2022 Donegal ETB's website had 286,739 users, of which 283,269 were new users, along with 676,136 page views. This represented an 83.44% increase of users, 88.18% increase of new users and 18.53% increase of page views on 2021.

Analytics were applied to Donegal ETB's blog, <https://donegaletb.ie/blog/> (which began in January 2021), from November 2022 showing 12.4k impressions in November and December.

Donegal ETB continued to work strategically with local online media outlet Donegal Daily to promote the standing of Further Education and Training (FET) which also consequently promotes the visibility and standing of Donegal ETB. Twelve advertorials focusing on a particular field of learning within the FET Service through its former students were published in 2022, along with four additional student stories to promote the FET Fair. Together these generated almost three quarters of a million views and a Facebook engagement rate of 44.97% (0.27% is the average engagement rate for Facebook).



Communications cont

Considerable public relations work was carried out on three campaigns in particular in 2022:

- the launch of Donegal ETB’s new Strategy Statement on 31 March including the creation of a promotional video in English and Irish and the Chief Executive wrote a blog, all of which was accompanied by publicity in the local media.
- the opening of a new FET Centre on 11 May on the Port Road in Letterkenny, which included an outside broadcast by Highland Radio show ‘Around the North West’.
- the return of the annual FET Information and Guidance Fair in person for the first time in three years with considerable promotion of the event across local print, broadcast and online media.

Donegal ETB, its schools, FET Service, Gartan Outdoor Education and Training Centre and Music service, were very active across several social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn.

Gender Pay Gap Report

The Gender Pay Gap Information Act 2021 introduced the legislative basis for gender pay gap reporting. The regulations required organisations with over 250 employees to report on their gender pay gap in 2022. Donegal ETB’s first Gender Pay Gap Report was based on a snapshot of employees on 29 June 2022, and covers the reporting period from 30 June 2021 to 29 June 2022. The gender pay gap is the difference between the average hourly wages of men and women in an organisation, regardless of their seniority.

Overall, the gender breakdown is:

- Male 28% Female 72%
- Part-time Male 25% Female 75%
- Full-time Male 30% Female 70%

The report shows a Mean Gender Pay Gap of 10.53% and a Median Gender Pay Gap of 15.91%.

The reason for the gender differences is that Donegal ETB has more women than men employed at almost all the grades, so the question could be asked as to why there is a gender pay gap. Our analysis shows that it is mostly women in our ETB who are availing of family friendly schemes. Where employees choose to avail of job/work-sharing, shorter working year etc. their annualised base pay is reduced and as it is mostly women in our ETB who avail of family friendly schemes, a gender pay gap arises. Donegal ETB will continue to analyse and address insights from our annual Gender Pay gap reports and develop actions and initiatives as necessary over the coming years to address any issues arising, in consultation, where appropriate with the Department of Education/ DFHERIS. The full report is available on Donegal ETB’s website and can be accessed via the following link: <https://www.donegaletb.ie/donegal-etb/publications-resources/>.

European Union (Accessibility of Websites and Mobile Applications of Public Sector Bodies) Regulations 2020

In 2022 Donegal ETB carried out a large piece of work to meet its legal obligations under the European Union (Accessibility of Websites and Mobile Applications of Public Sector Bodies) Regulations 2020 which came into force in Ireland on 23 September 2020. The EU Website Accessibility Directive as it is known, requires all public sector bodies to ensure their websites and mobile applications are accessible to everybody, including people with disabilities. The National Disability Authority (NDA) is named as the National Monitoring Body for Ireland in the 2020 Regulations and submits its monitoring reports to the European Commission.

Two types of review are specified in Commission Implementing Decision 2018/1054 - In-depth and Simplified Reviews. In April 2022 the NDA notified Donegal ETB that it had carried out a Simplified Review of its website which had achieved a very low Accessibility Score of just over 9%. Over the following seven months Donegal ETB’s Communications Officer and Head of IT, acting as Liaison and Deputy Liaison Persons respectively with the NDA, along with an AEO, the website developer and graphic designer, worked on increasing this accessibility score. This included the legal requirement to include a website Accessibility Statement on the website addressing its compliance status.

This huge amount of work was completed by this core team with no additional staff resources provided and saw the website Accessibility Score increase to over 72% by November 2022.

A follow up monitoring report submitted by the NDA to the European Commission ([Ireland’s Monitoring Report for the EU Web Accessibility Directive - 2021 supplemental, November 2022](#)) noted the following about Donegal ETB’s website out of the 185 public sector websites subjected to a Simplified Review between January and October 2022:

- [Accessibility scores \(p.49\)](#): “Only 7.5% of websites attained an Accessibility Score of 90% or higher. In contrast, 28% of websites had an Accessibility Score of 10% or less. A number of websites significantly improved their score over the monitoring period. ... Donegal Education and Training Board showed the strongest improvement, going from a score of 10% in May 2022 to 73% in November 2022.”
- [Errors and Accessibility Score per site – Further education and training institutions \(p.62\)](#): “As with other sectors analysed in this section of report, there was a large variance in the Accessibility Score of websites reviewed. It is noteworthy that Donegal ETB, with the highest scoring websites in this sector, has progressively reduced its number of errors, and made particular progress in addressing the accessibility of priority PDFs across the monitoring period.”

Corporate Services

The Corporate Services Department in Donegal ETB provides support to the organisation in various areas. These include:

- Operations of the Board: assists in managing and coordinating the overall operations of the Board within Donegal ETB.
- Corporate Governance: Ensuring compliance with corporate governance principles and practices, promoting transparency and accountability.
- Risk Management: Identifying, assessing, and managing risks to the organisation, ensuring appropriate risk mitigation strategies are in place.
- Climate action, energy management and sustainability: Overseeing initiatives related to climate action, energy management and sustainability, working towards reducing environmental impact.
- Estates Management: Managing and maintaining the organisation's schools and centres.
- Insurance: All insurance matters are managed within the Corporate Services Department.
- Health, Safety, and Welfare at Work: Responsibility for promoting and maintaining a safe and healthy working environment for employees, students and contractors.
- Data Management: Oversight of data management practices, including data protection, freedom of information requests, parliamentary question responses, and compliance with relevant regulations.
- Communications: Handling internal and external communications, ensuring effective communication channels within the organisation and with stakeholders.
- Scéim na dTeangacha Gaeilge Oificiúla: This refers to the Official Languages Act, 2003 and amended 2021, which promotes the use of the Irish language for the organisation.

Irish Language Developments

The Official Languages Act of 2003 is to promote the Irish language for official purposes in the state, in communicating with and providing services to the public. Every public body named under the Act has a duty to prepare a language scheme when requested to do so by the Minister for Culture, Heritage and Gaeltacht under section 11 of the Act.

Donegal ETB updated its Irish language scheme 2021-2023, with a view to enhancing the use of Irish within the organisation.

The annual Induction Day for newly appointed teachers delivered a module on teaching through Irish for teachers teaching in our Gaelcholáistí and Scoileanna Gaeltachta.

Priority 2

Human Resources

The Human Resources team provides support services to employees and line managers on a range of HR areas including staff allocations, recruitment and retention, contracts of employment, HR operations, HR policies and procedures, staff well-being, employee assistance programme and pensions.

Staff well-being

Donegal Education and Training Board supports the well-being of all staff via the school and centre nominated Staff Well-being Champion whose role it is to promote staff well-being related information and events such as, Healthy Ireland Initiatives and HSE Health Information and Awareness. The 2022 Strategic Workplace well-being annual meeting was held in February to plan events for the year, including a training day in November 2022 for the Well-being Champions at Gartan Outdoor Education Centre. The training included themes such as ‘Understanding Well-being Concepts’ and ‘Defining the Role of a Well-being Champion’. The Employee Welfare Officer also provided information in respect of the role of that post.

Support all our staff to achieve their full potential and to perform their roles to the highest professional standards.

Examples of well-being events held in 2022:

- Cooking, walking, book clubs
- Spring gardening talk
- Squeeze in a Read
- Reconnect Ards walk
- National Workplace Well-being Day
- Breast cancer talk
- Men's health
- Menopause information session
- Tech life balance webinar



Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Donegal ETB provides opportunities for all staff to apply for Continuous Professional Development courses/training relevant to their role as part of their continuous professional development throughout their career while employed by Donegal ETB. Staff can initiate an application to attend specific CPD training to their line manager or respond to expressions of interest to attend CPD as circulated by the HR Department and/or the FET Technology Enhanced and Professional Development Coordinator.

Teachers and tutors are supported financially to help students reach their full potential. Other staff undertake CPD provided by Donegal ETB.

Some examples of CPD completed in 2022 include:

- Visual enhancement of PowerPoint
- Pitching and presentation skills
- Advanced Excel
- Employment law
- Project management
- Leadership and management
- An afternoon with horticulturalist Gareth Austin in the Letterkenny Training Centre
- Enhancing teachers’ pedagogical skills, subject knowledge, and use of the various technologies
- Intercultural awareness training
- Customer service training

Induction

Donegal ETB line managers provide local induction for all new employees. In 2022 the HR Department, in consultation with the Head of IT commenced working on developing an on-line induction process for all staff for implementation in 2023.

Teacher induction takes place during the month of August each year. Among the themes delivered by Senior Management to newly appointed teachers in 2022 were Context and Overview of Donegal ETB, HR related information, Child Safeguarding, Social Media in Schools, ICT, Curricular Planning and Content Creation, Core Values of ETB Schools, Learning Intentions, Ethos in ETB Schools and Oifigeach Tacaíochta Gaeilge.

Flexible Working Arrangements

The annual closing date for receipt of applications to HR from staff to apply for flexible working arrangements (also referred to as Work Life Balance arrangements) for the upcoming academic school year is generally 1 February. The arrangements include Career Break, Job Share, Work Share, Transfer and Secondment for relevant staff. All approvals are subject to meeting the needs of Donegal ETB and in consultation with the line manager. Information and application forms on the various working arrangements are posted to the website.

Hybrid Working Policy

Donegal ETB promotes flexible working arrangements and approves applications with respect to meeting the needs of the service. Work commenced in 2022 on a draft Hybrid Working Policy to provide a framework within which Donegal ETB can initiate and operate hybrid working arrangements including blended working arrangements i.e. between the office and remotely. The policy, developed based on providing interim arrangements on a trial basis, may be subject to change pending national legislation and / or Department of Education / Department of Public Expenditure and Reform guidelines. Documented research on the benefits of hybrid working has highlighted the many benefits of this provision.

Public Sector Duty - Equality and Human Rights (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion/ EDI)

Donegal Education and Training Board, as a public body, has responsibility to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of its employees, customers, service users and everyone affected by their policies and plans under the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Act, 2014.

Donegal ETB is required to assess, address and report on its Public Sector Duty which includes an assessment of the human rights and equality issues relevant to its functions and purpose; addressing the policies, plans and actions in place, or proposed, to address those issues and reporting annually on developments and achievements.

An Equality Diversity and Inclusion Focus Group was established in 2022 with membership from Senior Managers across the organisation. Values Lab was engaged to assist with a number of workshops which aimed to strengthen our capacity to devise and support an effective approach to the implementation of the Duty.

Administrative Support

Donegal ETB recruited to establish a Grade III Clerical Officer Panel for a period of one year for permanent, fixed term and/or specified purpose approved vacancies. Recruitment appointments are subject to the approval of the Department of Education, DFHERIS or SOLAS or the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth as appropriate, or in the case of Project Work, the approval to appoint staff to meet project deadlines where funding has been specifically provided e.g. ESBS Payroll Shared Services Project which commenced in 2022 and is scheduled to go live from Quarter 1 2024.

Retired Staff Association

Donegal ETB launched a Retired Staff Association in November 2022. A formation committee comprising several retired staff, with support provided from the OSD directorate within Donegal ETB, met on several occasions in 2022, with an inaugural AGM scheduled to take place in early 2023.

6.3 Key Theme 3

Working with partners



Priority 1

We will play a leading role in forming local and regional partnerships that will improve educational, social and economic outcomes for Donegal.

Priority 2

We will further develop links with national and international partners to help make Donegal a great place to learn, live and work.

Priority 1

We will play a leading role in forming local and regional partnerships that will improve educational, social and economic outcomes for Donegal.

Donegal ETB works with partners such as Donegal Sports Partnership, Donegal County Council, Údarás na Gaeltachta, ATU, the Donegal Children and Young People’s Services Committee and the Donegal Local Community Development Committee to help devise and assist in the implementation of strategies for the county.

Donegal ETB has representation on the Boards of ATU, Inishowen Development Partnership and Donegal Local Development Company CLG and works closely with a range of community groups to assist with funding opportunities and the provision of relevant service.

Donegal ETB is a member of the North West Tertiary Education Cluster which also includes ATU, Ulster University and NWRC. The cluster has been working to address cross-border education and training by making information available and seeking to smooth entry paths and thereby retain as many people as possible in the North West City Region.

Community Partnerships

As communities emerged and regrouped after the negative impact of the pandemic over the previous two years on the delivery of community education. This resulted in 511 courses delivered in 2022, up from 295 in 2021. FET support for sustainable development continued through its collaboration with Inishowen Development Partnership’s ChangeMakers project, which celebrated its tenth year in 2022. A celebratory event was held in An Grianán Hotel, Burt, to mark the occasion and the achievements made since 2012.

Community Partnerships cont

The Community Education Support Service and Basic Education Service worked together with their colleagues and partners in communities across the county in welcoming those who fled the war in Ukraine. They worked collaboratively and collectively to meet the varying needs of communities that opened their doors to others in a time of crisis.

Collaboration and partnership with the community and voluntary sector continued to play an important role in the work of the FET Service in 2022.



Enterprise Engagement

--

In 2022, Enterprise Engagement (Further Education and Training Service - Skills to Advance, Skills for Work and Recognition of Prior Learning) had a coordinated approach to provide training interventions from Levels 1-6 while also facilitating access to various learning pathways for students.



Throughout 2022, Donegal ETB collaborated with local business networks as well as developing good relationships with Donegal County Council by feeding into the Economic Development Group as well as the Local Enterprise Office (LEO). We also tapped into wider networks through the Regional Skills Forum, the IDA, Fintech Working Groups, ATU and Ulster University in collaborative efforts to strengthen the economic position of our County.

1. Skills to Advance

Attraction and retention of talent is a major challenge across businesses in Donegal. Donegal ETB helps to ease this challenge through the creation of traineeships and the upskilling of staff. In 2022 a Public Works Operations and Maintenance traineeship was developed in collaboration with Donegal County Council to support the development of a skilled workforce for entry level positions in the local authority and construction sectors. A Marine Engineering traineeship was also devised in 2022 in partnership with the Killybegs Marine Cluster Group to provide entry level talent to local blue economy industries or to act as a progression pathway to apprenticeships.

Collaboration with LEO and the Profit Net Engineering Group was a key activity in 2022, focusing on the reskilling and recertification of welders with 149 employees upskilled in welding across sixteen companies. The flexibility of the delivery and professionalism of the instructors has widened our access into other areas of training and solidified our networks. We continued working with the Donegal Women in Business Network in 2022 by rolling out training in Barista, Wine Spirit and Education Trust, Digital Skills and the Principles of Social Media to network members, organised as 'lunch and learn sessions', a format that allowed for greater participation.

This allowed us to widen our reach to microbusinesses and to promote greater equality by supporting women to grow their businesses. We also worked with the Donegal County Childcare Committee to deliver a Level 3 Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) award course to eighteen childcare providers.

In 2022, we piloted our first Special Purpose Award at Level 6 in Work Based Learning with ten companies across sectors and our own staff, allowing for great sharing between industry and education.

We continued our provision of Upskilling in Technology in Python, Excel and Prince Foundation to support the progression of employees in the Fintech industry. This included the creation of a three-week FinTru Academy programme, for a new Fintech company in Letterkenny, demonstrating a quick turnaround and response to the IDA's request for training support for new companies.

In addition, we also continued a two-year certified training course (during the low season) in Supervisory Management in Hospitality (City & Guilds). Links were also established with the Donegal Vintners Association to support their training needs through the provision of Wine Spirit Education Trust (WSET) Level 1 and Level 2 training.



2. Skills for Work

Skills for Work provided training to farming groups, retailers, micro businesses, engineering businesses and the hospitality sector in 2022, upskilling staff in over fifty businesses to ensure that no one gets left behind within the fast-changing world of work.

The hospitality sector sought assistance with non-certified training to upgrade the skills of new and existing staff after returning to the workplace from lockdown. Post-pandemic, the sector outlined the difficulties they were experiencing in recruiting and retaining staff. Bespoke training in Front of House and Customer Service was created with a total of thirty-two students from nine businesses participating in the five-week blended learning course.

An additional training need that was successfully addressed was the provision of Barista training, completed by twenty-three participants from eight businesses. Many companies commented on the value of bespoke training onsite.

2022 saw an increased request from all sectors for training in Microsoft Office, particularly Excel, delivered to over one hundred people from numerous sectors such as retail, food, marine, sales, service providers, engineering, ESB Networks, and HSE staff.

In conjunction with the North West Skills Forum, two Explore Programmes to promote digital skills were provided for nine participants from three companies, while the Digi Eco programme, promoting sustainability practices and digital skills within the workplace, was also provided for six participants from five businesses.

3. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Following the successful completion of the Validating Competencies of Care Sector Employees (VCCSE) aimed at the Healthcare sector in June 2022, RPL was fully integrated into Donegal ETB's FET Service and became part of our Enterprise Engagement provision as it has a key role in tapping into and nurturing potential in the workplace. Throughout 2022, the project flourished, offering a wide array of opportunities for employers and employees to have their workplace learning and experience acknowledged and validated. The RPL process not only demonstrated an opportunity for achievement of formal qualifications and enhanced confidence, but also facilitated the progress of a previously hard-to-reach cohort into taught programmes, effectively engaging them in lifelong learning.

One notable achievement of the VCCSE project was the development and publication of the [Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\) toolkit](#), which is available on Donegal ETB's website. This comprehensive toolkit provides guidelines, information, and practical tools to support ETB FET Services nationally in understanding and implementing RPL. Moreover, our staff conducted nationwide training sessions on RPL policies and procedures for various ETBs and higher education institutions throughout 2022.

In 2022 255 beneficiaries across a range of Major and Minor awards in Healthcare, Business, Management, Administration, and Community Development attained NFQ Level 5 and 6 qualifications. Towards the end of 2022, our RPL provision extended its reach to the Childcare sector, providing validation for those already employed, thereby assisting in the transition of the core funding structure and preparing for the pending deactivation of the current QQI Early Childhood Care and Education Programme in December 2023.

Youth Work Development Service

Through professional relationships and partnerships with local youth organisations, community groups, state agencies and local authorities, Donegal ETB fulfils its core youth work function by supporting the provision, coordination, administration and assessment of youth work services in its functional area as required under the ETB Act 2013. Donegal ETB's Youth Development Service welcomes and appreciates the support and assistance of the Youth Affairs Section in the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY).

Donegal ETB provided grant funding to support youth organisations to respond to young peoples' needs under the following funding schemes in 2022:

- 1. **UBU Your Place Your Space** - the Scheme aims to provide support for vulnerable and disadvantaged young people, based in their local communities, to enable them to achieve their full potential by improving their personal and social development outcomes. In 2022 new UBU Youth Projects were set up in Inishowen and West Donegal (and the Islands), funded by the DCEDIY, through Donegal Education and Training Board.

Youth organisations funded under the UBU Scheme are:

- Foróige Donegal
 - Foróige West Donegal
 - Donegal Youth Service Inishowen
 - Donegal Youth Service
 - Involve Donegal
- 2. **Local Youth Club Grant** - to assist local volunteer-led youth clubs/groups provide a programme of youth work activities for young people.
 - 3. **Youth Organisation / Youth Club Minor Grant Scheme** - to support youth organisations and volunteer-led youth clubs to meet costs associated with providing additional support to young people following the tragedy in Creeslough.

- 4. **Youth Club Equipment/Minor Works Grant Scheme 2022** - small capital equipment grant for youth clubs or similar organisations (capital/ ICT in nature for purchase of equipment deemed beneficial to the club).
- 5. **Youth Information Centre** - offers free and confidential information on issues that matter to young people and those acting on their behalf.
- 6. **Targeted Youth Employability and Support Initiative** - engaged and supported harder to reach young people, aged 15-24 years, not currently in employment, education, or training.
- 7. **Capital Grant for Staff-led Youth Services** - funding scheme for small to medium capital grants for youth projects, for the purchase of equipment and to fund small scale capital refurbishment projects.
- 8. **Drugs Task Force Prevention and Education** - focused on preventing and/or reducing the harm associated with drug misuse. Education focuses on providing information and increasing knowledge, exploring attitudes and opinions, and developing self-esteem and social skills.
- 9. **Resilience and Effectiveness Initiative** - provided to address ongoing financial challenges and increase service provision to young people.
- 10. **Creeslough Response** – Foróige and Donegal Youth Service UBU Project Workers have provided a programme of interventions and activities focussing on well-being, building resilience, and coping strategies.

Sessions were delivered in areas of interest such as:

- Personal development
- Coping skills
- Animation
- Podcasting
- Team-building Games
- Arts and Crafts
- Recreation

Youth Work Development Service cont

Communication was maintained between Donegal ETB, Foróige, Donegal Youth Service, Mulroy College and Tusla, with regular updates provided. Donegal ETB also provided reports to the DCEDIY.

FET Fair

The FET Adult Guidance and Information Service organised an in-person FET Fair from 23-24 November after an absence of three years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The FET Fair promoted Donegal ETB’s FET provision for all programmes. The first day was an evening event with a focus on FET options for school leavers, with a high attendance from school leavers and their parents and guardians. The second day of the event showcased the range of opportunities in FET to the wider community, prospective and current students.

UBU Scheme Governance

Implementation of Donegal ETB’s mid-level governance role monitors the delivery of the services as outlined in the UBU Service Requirement and Application Form including how the funding is used. The Performance Oversight and Engagement Framework has been developed with a view to collecting information consistently across the Youth Sector and developing an evidence base demonstrating the positive impacts on young people’s lives. This includes Planning and Progress Review meetings with funded organisations to discuss progress, issues arising and future planning requirements. Funded organisations are required to complete annual progress reports for the UBU Your Place Your Space and Youth Information Centre schemes.

The progress report is focused on what was approved in the application process and what has happened over the course of the funding year, relating to the personal and social development outcomes. Other areas such as financial information and governance arrangements are also required to be addressed.

Youth Work Development Support - Partnership and Collaboration

- Donegal Children and Young Person’s Services Committee (CYPSC) - Donegal ETB, along with partner state agencies and community groups, is represented on this Committee which works on a collaborative basis to respond to the needs of young people.
- ETBI Youth Support Service - Support is offered to Donegal ETB’s Youth Work Development Service and the Coordination/ Management Group on the roll-out of all responsibilities and associated processes.
- ETBI Youth Work Network - Co-Chaired by ETB Directors of Schools and FET collectively representing Education and Training Boards (ETBs) in respect of youth work functions as set out under the Education and Training Boards, Act 2013, e.g. longer-term focus in support for volunteer-led Youth Club provision.
- Donegal ETB Youth Work Committee - stakeholders work collaboratively, through communication and cooperation to achieve more effective services and support for young people throughout the county.

Drugs and Alcohol Education

The Alcohol and other Drugs Training and Education North West Region, is an established partnership project that works principally with the North West Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force as well as other stakeholders such as ATU, CYPSC, HSE, Tusla, Alcohol Forum Ireland and National Addiction training programme.

The programme provided the development, design and delivery of training and education in the field of alcohol and other drugs for a wide range of professionals from various disciplines that meet drug and alcohol issues as part of their work. Disciplines that availed of training came from medical services, mental health services, psychological interventions services, addiction services, child and family services, social and health care, criminal justice services, education services and the community and voluntary sector. The programme offers certified training, short half day and full day training and upskilling sessions open to all, as well as bespoke training for disciplines on request. A high proportion of training offered is free of charge and accessible online to ensure inclusivity. The training sessions delivered also included adults in recovery from addiction, adults from the live register and adults from minority communities. As part of the programme information sessions were also delivered to young people with the focus of the prevention of use, de-escalations of use and the associated harms from substance use. These sessions were underpinned with a harm reduction approach and presented key facts to increase knowledge and awareness and dispel drug myths, thus illuminating choices and consequences of the use of drugs.

Priority 2

We will further develop links with national and international partners to help make Donegal a great place to learn, live and work.

The North West Tertiary Education Cluster (NWTEC) is the result of years of successful collaborative working amongst the four education sector providers in the region, Donegal ETB, ATU, Ulster University (Magee campus) and the NWRC.



Cross-Border Partnerships

The aim of the cross-border collaboration is to improve access to higher and further education and training to students living in Donegal and in the North West Region and also to achieve better educational and economic development opportunities for all who live in the region.

The cluster continued to meet during 2022 and benefitted from the addition of Project Officers from all four partners who worked together to further the aims and objectives of the cluster. Key elements of the work included developing funding applications, meetings of the Smart Industry Board and a Smart North West Conference in ATU Letterkenny on 7 October 2022 with a theme of A Region of Opportunities. DFHRIS Minister Simon Harris addressed the attendees and several panels, which included our CE Anne McHugh, discussed the potential of the region. The keynote speaker was David McWilliams, economist, author and broadcaster with Tommie Gorman, formerly from RTÉ acting as moderator.

The Irish Central Border Area Network (ICBAN) is a cross-border group with similar aims and objectives as the NWTEC. Donegal ETB is a member and, along with other partners, had several meetings during 2022 under a number of key regional developmental themes which are leading to PeacePlus and Shared Island applications. The partners in ICBAN are: Mayo Sligo Leitrim ETB, Cavan Monaghan ETB, ATU Sligo, Southern Regional College, South West College and the relevant Councils north and south of the border.

Atlantic Technological University

On April 1, Galway Mayo Institute of Technology, Letterkenny Institute of Technology and Institute of Technology Sligo were dissolved and became ATU. This was a historic occasion creating a university in Donegal for the first time. CE Anne McHugh was appointed by Minister Harris to be on the inaugural Governing Body and attended the first meeting of the Governing Body at ATU Letterkenny on 1 April 2022.

Donegal Music Education Partnership

Donegal ETB's music service, Donegal Music Education Partnership (DMEP) had a successful year in 2022 across its main programme areas. It was a year of rebuilding in terms of its performing groups, with five ensembles active.

1. Tuition Programme

On the tuition programme there were:

- 29 part-time music tutors
- 59 timetables
- 440 students
- 12 centres across Donegal

The music classes were held five nights a week and also on Saturdays, from Ballyshannon to Moville to Gaoth Dobhair.

2. Performing Groups

Five DMEP performing groups were active during the year:

- Donegal Youth Orchestra
- Donegal Chamber Orchestra
- Donegal Junior Strings
- Donegal Cello Ensemble
- Donegal Youth Choir

3. Events

After COVID-19 restrictions ended in the springtime of 2022, DMEP re-established its usual busy programme of events. Highlights included:

- The world premiere of Vincent Kennedy's 'Colmcille, Dove of Peace', a commission from Donegal County Council in association with DMEP, supported by Creative Ireland. After postponements in 2021, the premiere was held in An Grianán Theatre in Letterkenny on 15 March and received a standing ovation from an audience of several hundred.
- The Donegal Youth Orchestra, Donegal Youth Choir and guest soloists were back in An Grianán Theatre for a second performance of 'Colmcille, Dove of Peace' in July. It was the closing concert of the Earagail Arts Festival and again got a rousing reception from a large audience.

Other events in 2022 included:

- A DMEP student concert performed to a capacity crowd to the Regional Cultural Centre in Letterkenny in May.
- A busy school tour for the Donegal Junior Strings in June.
- Donegal Chamber Orchestra and the Donagh Choir were in concert at Carndonagh in a fund-raiser for the victims of the Creeslough tragedy in October.
- Donegal Junior Strings played with a soloist from the Irish National Opera before the INO's performance of 'Don Pasquale' in An Grianán Theatre in Letterkenny in November.

- Well-supported 'Concerts in Conwal' series on Sundays at Conwal Church in Letterkenny featuring the Donegal Chamber Orchestra and Donegal Junior Strings.
- Befriending Performance Anxiety' workshops with pianist Xenia Pestova Bennett for music students in schools in Letterkenny and Milford (in association with Music Network).

Donegal Music Education Partnership cont

A busy 2022 Christmas programme included the DMEP Christmas concert at An Grianán Theatre, Letterkenny; a sold-out Donegal Chamber Orchestra concert in Rockhill House, Letterkenny; Donegal Youth Choir in concert with the Ulster University choir at Kilclooney and two Christmas student concerts.

4. Ukulele Programme

This continued to be a major success. As 2022 ended, there were over twenty schools involved from Ballyshannon to Dunfanaghy, with more than eight hundred young people playing their own ukuleles.

5. Working with Partners

In 2022 DMEP continued to do significant work with partner organisations in Donegal and elsewhere. Some examples include:

- Donegal County Council - DMEP worked with Donegal County Council and Creative Ireland on the Vincent Kennedy commission to mark the Colmcille 1500 celebrations.
- Irish Association of Youth Orchestras DMEP Manager Martin McGinley continued his term as a member of the Board and the Governance Committee.
- Donegal Summer School of Music – DMEP sponsored ten places in July.
- Donegal Chamber Music Society – DMEP helped with concerts and promotion.
- Earagail Arts Festival – DMEP organised the closing concert at An Grianán Theatre in July.

- Cairdeas na bhFidiléirí (Donegal fiddle organisation) – DMEP began with Cairdeas on a fiddle programme in schools in east Donegal. In December a tuition programme began at the first school, St Baithin's National School, St Johnston, with other schools scheduled to join in early 2023.
- Music Generation – DMEP Manager Martin McGinley attended Music Generation meetings.



Memorandum of Understanding with Údarás na Gaeltachta

In 2022 Donegal Education and Training Board and Údarás na Gaeltachta signed a five-year [Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MoU) to develop a relationship whereby the two parties recognise each other as partner organisations which will be of benefit to both organisations and to County Donegal and the North-West region.

It builds upon a history of collaboration and an established partnership between the two organisations which has been beneficial to both and is consistent with Government policy in respect of regional development and the promotion and preservation of the Irish language.



Abbreviations

Parent – refers to parent or guardian
Student – refers to student/learner

Term	Definition
AEO	Adult Education Officer
ALL	Adult Literacy for Life
ARC	Audit and Risk Committee
ATU	Atlantic Technological University
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BITC	Business in the Community Ireland
BTEI	Back to Education Initiative
C&AG	Comptroller and Auditor General
CE	Chief Executive
CL	Circular Letter
CLLR	Councillor
CoP	Community of Practice
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CSWIP	Certification Scheme for Personnel
CYPSC	Children and Young People’s Services Committee
DCEDIY	Department. of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
DE	Department of Education
DEIS	Delivering Equality of Opportunity In Schools
DFHERIS	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
DMEP	Donegal Music Education Partnership
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
ESBS	Education Shared Business Services
ESF	European Social Fund

Term	Definition
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
ETB	Education and Training Board
ETBI	Education and Training Boards Ireland
FET	Further Education and Training
HR	Human Resources
HSE	Health Service Executive
IAU	Internal Audit Unit
ILM	Institute of Leadership and Management
IBEC	Irish Business and Employers Confederation
ICDL	International Computer Driving License
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDA	Industrial Development Authority
ILM	Institute of Leadership and Management
ICBAN	Irish Central Border Area Network
IT	Information technology
LEO	Local Enterprise Office
NAPD	National Association for Principals and Deputy Principals
NESE	National Council for Special Education
NDA	National Disability Authority
NFQ	National Framework of Qualifications
NGB	National Governing Bodies
NWTEC	North West Tertiary Education Cluster
NWRC	North West Regional College

Term	Definition
OETC	Outdoor Education and Training Centre
OSD	Organisation Support and Development
PLC	Post Leaving Certificate
PLD	Professional Learning and Development
PLSS	Programme Learner Support System
QA	Quality Assurance
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
REALT	Regional Education and Language Teams
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RTE	Raidió Teilifís Éireann
SOC/SIEM	Security Operations Centre / Security Incident Event Management
SSPS	Supporting the Safe Provision of Schooling
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
TEL	Technology Enhanced Learning
TG4	Teilifís na Gaeilge
VCCSE	Validating Competencies of Care Sector Employees
VTOS	Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme
WSET	Wine Spirit Education Trust

Contact us

Design © Donegal ETB 2023

Donegal ETB

--

Administrative Offices

Ard O'Donnell
Letterkenny
Co. Donegal, F92 DP98

Tel: 074 9161600

Email: info@donegaletb.ie

www.donegaletb.ie



#GoFurtherWith**DonegalETB**



etb

Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Dhún na nGall
*Donegal Education and
Training Board*