

Up-skilling enterprise, driving competitiveness

STATEMENT OF STRATEGY 2016-2019



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Chairman's Message

Brendan McGinty



I am pleased to present Skillnets' *Statement of Strategy 2016-2019*. This sets out the strategic goals that will guide our organisation over the coming years. We will focus on helping enterprises in Ireland to flourish by providing the vital workforce development necessary for sustained economic development.

Over the next four years, Skillnets will be driven by three strategic goals that take into consideration our funding, national policy concerning the importance of developing skills and talent, the needs of enterprise and the economic context. Firstly, training effectiveness, impact and relevance will be core to our activities. Skillnets will promote continuous improvement in the learning experiences provided to enterprise through our networks, and be a model for training excellence in an enterprise context. Secondly, Skillnets will play a pivotal role in maintaining a supply of the specific skills and future skills that impact the growth potential and competitiveness of Irish enterprise. Thirdly, we will promote increased participation of employers in the Skillnets proposition. In doing so, Skillnets will be a key enabler in sustaining national competitiveness through the up-skilling of those in employment.

These goals reflect the essential needs of enterprise as articulated by stakeholders during the broad consultation process that underpinned this strategy. These goals are also closely aligned with national policy and will contribute to the implementation of national workforce development aims highlighted in *Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025*, and other relevant policies.

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) will remain the key focus for all Skillnets programmes. Skillnets will ensure that the leaders of these enterprises have the capacity to maximise the potential of both their business and their workforce. It was evident from the consultation that as more SMEs shift into 'prosper' mode they are willing to invest in the development of their employees. This represents a strategic challenge for Skillnets to engage yet more SMEs in our learning networks.

Whilst recognising the risks to the Irish economy from Brexit, an increased level of investment in our skills and talent strategies at enterprise level is necessary to support enterprises in remaining competitive. This will assist companies in sustaining existing employment and create new employment opportunities, including those which Brexit may bring.

In addition to supporting a wide range of sectors across the economy, Skillnets plays an important role in regional skills development, facilitating dialogue between employers, and education and training providers at local level, to meet enterprise needs. We intend to further raise the visibility of Skillnets at a regional level and to continue supporting regional development overall.

Time and again the Skillnets enterprise-led model has proven itself to be innovative, resilient and adaptable to the ever-changing needs of enterprise. We are proud of our core competence in enterprise-led training and the reputation we have established with businesses across Ireland. Over the next four years we look forward to engaging yet more employers in our unique proposition.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Brendan McGinty". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

CEO Introduction Paul Healy



Our organisation model, with its deep roots in enterprise, has enabled Skillnets to make a substantial and enduring contribution to the national skills agenda and to the competitiveness of Irish enterprise. However, advances in technology, shifts in market forces, changing demographics and a competitive necessity for up-skilling are combining to disrupt workplace learning. In this context a key challenge for Skillnets is to remain firmly focused on the effectiveness of our programmes and to be a champion for innovation in enterprise learning and development.

Up-skilling those in employment and creating a vigorous talent base enhances productivity and innovation at enterprise level. It also underpins our national competitiveness and the strategies that build on our successful track record in attracting foreign direct investment. A key challenge confronting Ireland now is to increase participation by enterprises in workforce development and to embed a culture of lifelong learning both at enterprise and national level. Skillnets can play a major role in this.

Skillnets has a strong track record in up-skilling low, medium and high-skilled workers, and we will ensure our future activities continue to focus on people at all levels in the workforce. We will also continue our successful involvement in employment activation initiatives. We will focus these activities specifically in areas that are closely aligned with the Skillnets mandate and where skills deficits have been highlighted.

A critical challenge is to supply the quantity and quality of skills required for 220,000 new jobs targeted by the Government over the next five years¹, whilst simultaneously meeting the demand for an estimated 400,000 job replacements by 2020.² As the economy grows, an increasing number of sectors and occupations are likely to experience skills shortages. In fact, skills shortages are already a challenge faced by several high-growth sectors such as ICT, life sciences and international financial services. As an enterprise-led agency, Skillnets is strategically positioned to fulfill many of these skill demands over the coming years.

As noted by the Chairman, Brexit will undoubtedly present challenges to enterprise but its impact can be moderated by specific training interventions that enhance productivity, that build the capacity to enter new markets and that boost management competence overall.

We are confident about the contribution we can make in addressing these challenges. I look forward to working closely with all our stakeholders in the successful implementation of this strategy over the next four years.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul Healy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Outputs in 2015



Our Mandate

Skillnets' mission is set out in a mandate with the Department of Education and Skills (DES). Importantly, the mandate provides scope to adapt to changing enterprise needs and outlines the role played by Skillnets as follows:

- 1** Skillnets' role is to act as an enterprise-led support body dedicated to the promotion and facilitation of enterprise training and workforce learning, as a key element in sustaining national competitiveness.
- 2** The primary aim of Skillnets should be to increase participation in enterprise training by companies to improve competitiveness and provide improved access for workers to skills development.
- 3** Skillnets will continue to foster and support an enterprise-led, networked and partnership approach to the provision of enterprise training and expand and develop that approach by supporting innovation and enhanced workplace and workforce retention/activation-related training.
- 4** Skillnets' broadly-based approach will encompass support for higher growth as well as vulnerable sectors ensuring, insofar as possible, that training is available to employees at all levels in participating private enterprises.
- 5** Clear focus is given at all times to value for money, efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of training and up-skilling.

Skillnets Stakeholder Environment



About Skillnets

Established in 1999, Skillnets supports and works with businesses in Ireland, and their employees, to address their current and future skills needs. Skillnets provides high-quality training through 63 learning networks in a range of regions and sectors. Our organisation is actively supported and guided by national employer and employee bodies such as Ibec, Small Firms Association (SFA), Construction Industry Federation (CIF), Chambers Ireland and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU). Skillnets receives funding from the National Training Fund (NTF) through the Department of Education and Skills (DES).



Members of the Skillnets leadership team - Carl Blake, Executive Director, Dr. Lorcán Ó hÓbáin, Executive Director, Tracey Donnery, Executive Director, Paul Healy, CEO, and Ian Quinn, Chief Operating Officer.

Our Programmes

Training Networks Programme (TNP):

Enterprise-led learning networks in over 60 sectors and regions.

Finuas Networks Programme:

Dedicated programme for the international financial services (IFS) sector.

Future Skills Needs Programme (FSNP):

Design of innovative training to address future skills needs.

Job-seekers Support Programme (JSSP):

Workplace activation initiative to assist job-seekers to gain employment.

Management Development:

A management development offering to support SME owner-managers.

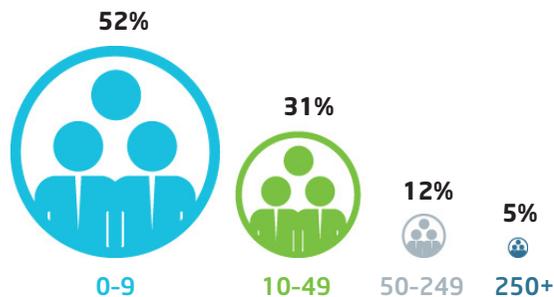
Our Networks

Every learning network funded by Skillnets is a cluster of companies from the same sector, geographical location, or a combination of both. Participating companies provide up to 50% in match funding to the grants approved by Skillnets. This approach allows companies to achieve economies of scale and significant efficiencies in the provision of training to their staff. Networks have a number of stakeholders:

- An industry steering group oversees and directs the learning network and is made up of representatives of member companies.
- A network manager oversees the learning network on a day-to-day basis.
- Network member companies that span the full range of industry sectors. 85% of our member companies are SMEs and 52% of our member company base have less than 10 employees.

Networks also interact regularly with a wide range of other bodies on behalf of their members, including training providers, higher education institutions and awarding bodies. Many of our networks are mature, having been established between eight to ten years ago, and are deeply embedded within the relevant sectors or regions.

Breakdown of Member Companies 2015 by Size



Our Proposition



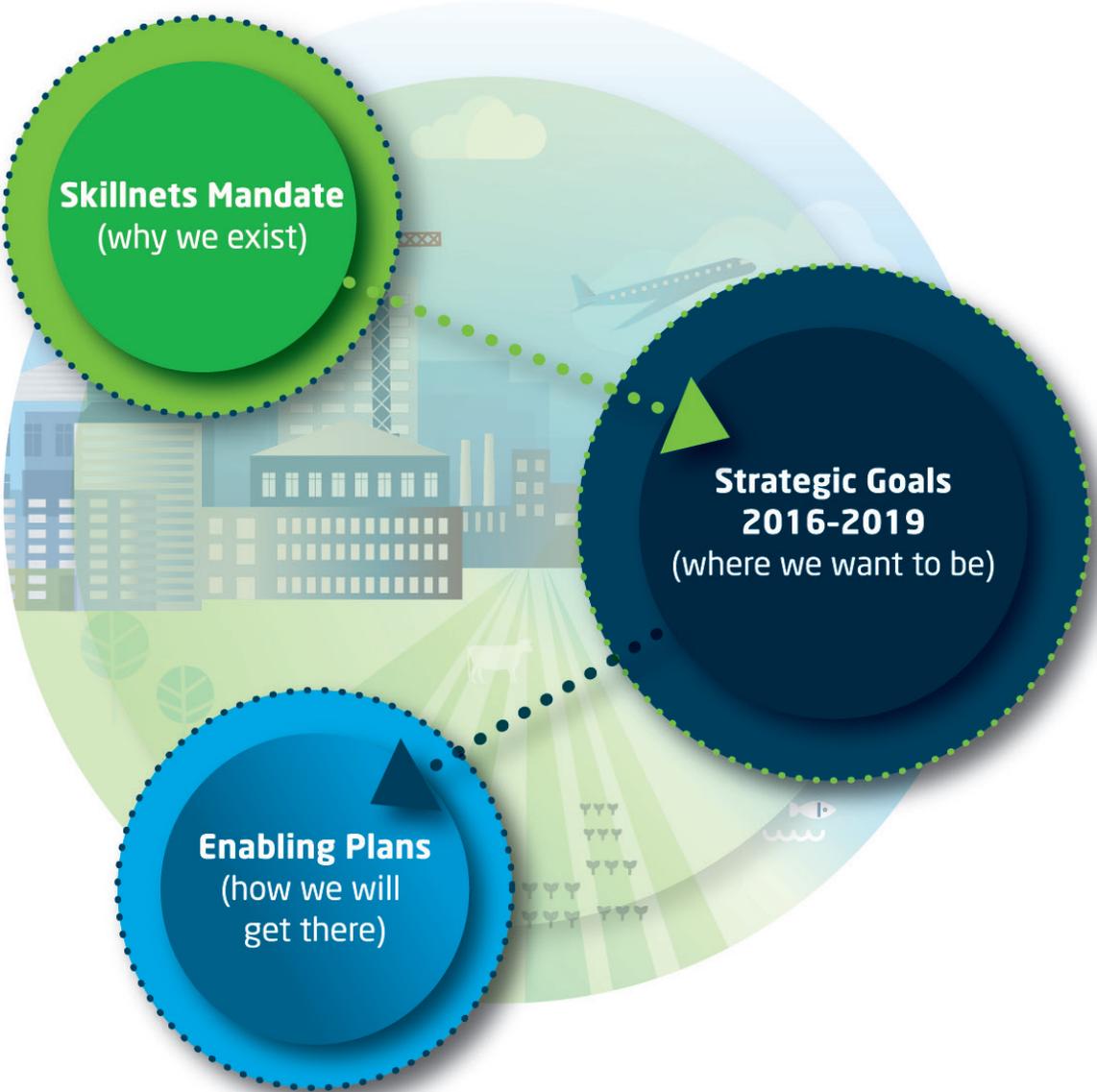
Skillnets is an enterprise-led agency. We facilitate the active participation of companies in determining their own training needs and how, when and where training will be delivered. Programmes are optimised to suit the needs of employed learners, through both formal and informal learning that spans further education and higher education provision. Our model fosters cohesive and collaborative enterprise networking, and provides a flexibility and nimbleness to respond to ever-changing skill demands.



"The Innovation & Lean Sigma Skillnet has supported our on-going training needs through identifying and providing high quality, subsidised training programmes. Furthermore, their network forums, best practice visits and business conferences have provided us with a benchmark to grow and transform our organisation and to help ensure our long-term success."

Seán Kelly PhD, Business Excellence Manager, Abbott Diagnostic Longford.

Developing Our Strategy



Developing Our Strategy

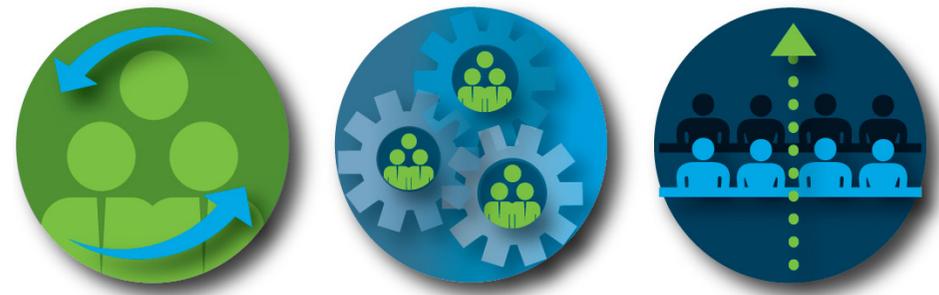
Given the breadth of the Skillnets mandate the Board of Skillnets approved an extensive consultation process, designed to gather feedback and recommendations from a wide range of stakeholders. Consultations were undertaken over a three-month period commencing in May 2016 and comprised:

- The promotion of a public consultation campaign, facilitating individuals and organisations to make formal submissions to Skillnets for our Statement of Strategy.
- The development of a strategy consultation position paper, which utilised thematic headings and questions to enable stakeholders to input their feedback.
- Focus groups with Governmental departments and other key stakeholder agencies.
- Focus groups with executives from network contracting organisations (industry promoters and representative bodies associated with Skillnets-funded learning networks).
- Focus groups with the Skillnets network manager community who lead our learning networks.
- Bilateral consultations with employer and employee representative groups.

The development of the Skillnets *Statement of Strategy 2016-2019* is also influenced by:

- Ireland's economy, labour market, business environment and enterprise base.
- Ireland's standing with regard to competitiveness, entrepreneurship, innovation and talent.
- Provision within the higher education, and the further education and training sectors.
- Human resource development (HRD) and learning and development best practice.
- The *National Skills Strategy 2025* and other policies.

More detailed information and research on the development of the strategy is presented in *Skillnets Statement of Strategy 2016-2019 Strategic Review*, which is available at www.skillnets.ie/publications.



Skillnets Strategy: Contextual Factors

"I can say without hesitation that I could not have gotten to where we are now, without the course that Taste 4 Success Skillnet ran through the Institute of Brewing and Distilling (IBD). We are in the process of setting up our new farm brewery and hope to create several local rural jobs in the near future."

Paddy McDonald, 12 Acres Brewing Company, Co Laois.

Economic and Competitive Context

The Irish economy has emerged from a financial crisis and deep recession. In 2016, it is envisaged that the economy will expand by as much as 4%, maintaining Ireland's position as the fastest-growing OECD economy for the third year running. The Irish economy is projected to continue its expansion: it is envisaged that both exports and private investment will remain solid and that employment will grow steadily.³ However, the National Competitiveness Council has highlighted a number of key challenges for Ireland in maintaining competitiveness. These include enhancing productivity growth, broadening the export base and improving talent.⁴ Market conditions have remained favourable to Ireland, yet several risks remain. Despite significant reductions in unemployment levels, both long-term and youth unemployment remain high. A deceleration in demand from our trading partners or significant currency fluctuations also have the potential to expose an open economy like Ireland's.⁵

Brexit will undoubtedly create uncertainty and challenges for enterprise in Ireland, but it may also present opportunities for specific sectors. In order to moderate the impact of Brexit, it is likely that businesses within a range of sectors will require specific training interventions to enhance their productivity, their capacity to enter new markets, and to boost their competitiveness overall.

As labour market conditions improve, attracting and retaining skilled employees has become an issue for many employers. While enterprise participation in Skillnets training grew by 18% to ca.13,000 businesses in 2015, this figure only represents 5% of the total number of active enterprises in Ireland. Engaging more employers in workforce development is vital, particularly amongst SMEs, which account for 69% of total employment in private sector enterprise.



Skillnets Strategy: Contextual Factors

National Skills Strategy

Maintaining a well-skilled and educated workforce has been a key pillar of economic development and investment in Ireland. The *National Skills Strategy 2025*, published by the Department of Education and Skills (DES), aims to underpin Ireland's growth as an economy and society over the coming years. The strategy places a significant emphasis on the need for up-skilling of those who are already in employment, and a requirement for employers to participate in the skills development agenda through active collaboration with education and training providers. Skillnets is closely aligned to the goals of the National Skills Strategy and we are well placed to make a significant contribution to its delivery. The six objectives of the National Skills Strategy are:

- 1 Education and training providers will place a stronger focus on providing skills development opportunities that are relevant to the needs of learners, society and the economy.
- 2 Employers will participate actively in the development of skills and make effective use of skills in their organisations to improve productivity and competitiveness.
- 3 The quality of teaching and learning at all stages of education and training will be continually enhanced and evaluated.
- 4 People across Ireland will engage more in lifelong learning.
- 5 There will be a specific focus on active inclusion to support participation in education and training, and the labour market.
- 6 Increase the supply of skills to the labour market.



"Through the Skillnets enterprise-led model and training needs analysis process we have been able to identify skills gaps and work with Galway Executive Skillnet to up-skill staff in a flexible manner. The benefit of access to high quality, cost efficient training delivered locally allows us to continually invest in staff development. The return on investment in training and membership of a diverse regional network has increased our competitiveness and contributed to growth and development of the company."

Evelyn O'Toole, CEO, Complete Laboratory Solutions, Co. Galway.

Skillnets Strategy: Contextual Factors

“Engineering skills shortages in the Sligo region have in the past had an impact on our business, so we were delighted to be one of six local companies involved in the development of an IMDA Skillnet training programme to address engineering skills gaps in the region. The training programme has created business benefits for our company as it has given us access to a potential pipeline of skilled candidates in the region, where previously there has been a shortage.”

Andrew Hodson, Managing Director, Verus Precision, Co Sligo.

Enterprise Clusters and Regional Development

Ireland’s international standing in relation to national cluster development exceeds the EU average⁶ with well-established regional clusters in bio-pharma, medical devices, ICT and financial services. Skillnets already supports learning networks within each of these clusters at a national and regional level. The National Competitiveness Council also notes that regions successful in facilitating industry clusters “have been found to achieve higher levels of productivity, innovation, employment and prosperity.”⁷ Through the National Clustering Initiative, further advances in regional clustering to enhance co-operation between industry, research institutions, education providers and other stakeholders offer opportunities to leverage the Skillnets model to match skills provision with identified enterprise needs. New clustering initiatives can be strengthened by their connection with Skillnets’ cohesive learning networks.

Skillnets also plays an important role in regional skills development through our 20 regionally-based, mixed-sector Skillnet learning networks. The Regional Skills Fora established by DES in 2015 also facilitates dialogue between employers and education and training providers at local level, in order to match provision with identified enterprise needs. Since their inception, Skillnets has been a stakeholder in the development of the Regional Skills Fora.



Developing Ireland's Workforce

The Changing World of Work

Due mainly to effects of globalisation and technology, many traditional intermediate-level jobs are now in decline, which has obvious implications for employability and career mobility. This phenomenon coincides with changes in the standard employment model,⁹ with increasing levels of part-time, contract and contingent working. There also has been a marked shift from job security and lifelong employment to lifelong learning, employability, and career management.⁹

It is vital that the calibre of training undertaken within enterprise keeps pace with these developments and learners are engaged in new ways. Employees are taking more ownership of their learning, gaining greater autonomy and flexibility in identifying career development pathways. Enabled by technology, learning itself is becoming increasingly asynchronous, individualised, self-paced, granular and deeply embedded within the workflow. Good practice in enterprise learning and development is now focused on:

- Diagnostics and definition: processes that target the specific skills required and the particular 'problem' that training interventions are designed to solve.
- Programme design and delivery that is highly integrated with work and career paths.
- Design that embraces technology and reflects how adults actually learn.
- Modular and bite-sized chunked learning.
- Learning delivered via a multi-media approach to suit the learners' preferences and needs.
- Evaluation methodologies that focus on the impact of training and what was delivered versus the original learning outcomes defined.

"Our employees are our greatest asset and my goal is to ensure we do everything possible to grow and develop this valuable asset. Summit Finuas Network and their training partners have the knowledge and skillset to deliver training to the highest standard."

Susan Dargan, Head of State Street Global Services.



"The Animation Skillnet Traineeship programme has afforded me the chance to work with very skilled people in the industry and contribute to professional projects, equipping me with on-the-job skills that I'll need throughout my career."

Mark Shaw, Piranha Bar, Co Dublin.

Developing Ireland's Workforce

Attracting and Retaining Talent

Skills have been described as the “global currency in the 21st Century.”¹⁰ This comparison is apt because skills and currencies share some common characteristics. They are the basis of national and international trade, they are becoming less and less tied to particular jurisdictions, both fluctuate, both are prone to external shocks, and correctly estimating their future value is fraught with complexity.

The *2016 Action Plan for Jobs* recognises that a high-quality talent pool is “becoming the defining feature of modern competitive economies” and the “attraction of talent, including the provision of attractive places to live and work, are key to building on current levels of FDI job-creation.”¹¹ As Ireland competes with other jurisdictions, it will be vital to retain our existing talent within Ireland and to encourage our emigrants to return home. As more options open up for skilled workers in Ireland’s growing economy, companies compete in the so-called ‘war for talent’. As employment levels grow, more and more enterprises must be supported to develop and implement effective re-training, up-skilling, talent management, and career progression strategies.¹²



Encouraging Lifelong Learning

While understanding the profile of required skills is critically important, so too is the need to increase in-employment engagement in lifelong learning, another consistent theme emerging from our consultations. Skillnets is making a discernible impact in attracting people who may have traditionally shied away from lifelong learning, or were given less opportunity, including lower-skilled workers. Skillnets networks are also making significant progress in developing a culture of lifelong learning, particularly within SMEs.

Relevant and Flexible Provision

An objective of the National Skills Strategy is to ensure that education and training providers place a stronger focus on providing skills development opportunities that are relevant to the needs of learners, society, enterprise and the economy. Responding to the needs of employers and adult learners, a significant proportion of training facilitated by Skillnets networks is delivered part-time or on a modular basis, offered all year round and scheduled outside of normal working hours. The Skillnets model fits comfortably within this context, with its focus on collaborative approaches, ‘networked’ delivery, and informal as well as formal learning.

“Training is vital in retail. Retail Ireland Skillnet provide on-the-floor training in the job they are expected to perform on a day-to-day basis and the bonus for the staff member is that the training is accredited.”

Michelle O’Gorman, Area Manager, Kilkenny Group.

Developing Ireland's Workforce

Workforce Development: Challenges for SMEs

We understand the training challenges faced by SMEs. Scale is an issue because smaller organisations typically don't have human resource functions to identify skills needs and deliver appropriate responses. SMEs also find it harder to release people for training due to operational demands. Skillnets network managers have been successful in working with SMEs to overcome these co-ordination challenges. The provision of subsidised, relevant and flexible training through our networks supports SMEs in addressing their skills requirements. Often SME owner-managers may not recognise the need for an objective skills gap analysis for their employees or indeed themselves. This points to the pivotal importance of supporting SME owner-managers to identify and address not only their business needs but their workforce development needs. Training support to SME owner-managers also creates a powerful multiplier effect because leaders who undergo development are more likely to invest in the development of their own staff.

Management Development

Enhancing SME management capacity is a national policy imperative and a major priority for Skillnets. Whether it is strategy, sales, process improvement or scaling a business, there is a clear requirement for Skillnets to ensure the ongoing provision of effective management development that is straightforward for SME owner-managers to access. As noted in the Enterprise 2025 strategy: "Strong leadership is critical to drive the growth, innovation and adaptability required of the successful enterprise over the coming decade. Strong leaders are essential to drive our scaling agenda."¹³



"Our working group was established to design innovative professional UX Design programmes for the software sector. Without the collaborative partnership and combined effort of the involved companies and the Institute of Art, Design and Technology in examining our future skills needs, these new ISA Software Skillnet courses would not have the same impact or add such excellent value as they now do."

Fred Raguillat, IBM,
Head of Dublin Studio,
IBM Master Inventor.

Our organisation model, with its deep roots in enterprise has enabled Skillnets to make a substantial and enduring contribution to the national skills agenda, and to the competitiveness of Irish enterprise.



Strategic Goals 2016-2019



Strategic Goals 2016–2019

Goal One

We will make training effectiveness, impact and relevance core to Skillnets activities.

We will promote continuous improvement in the learning experiences provided to enterprise through our networks, and be a model for training excellence in an enterprise context.

“We came to the Business Growth Programme after many years of dealing with the effects of the recession on a business that is very exposed to both the retail and construction sectors. The programme gave us the ability to think clearly and strategically about our business as opposed to dealing with short-term problems, which had been the norm for the previous 15 years. As a result of our investment in management development, we are on target to achieve 50% growth this year in a sustainable planned manner.”

Luke Sweeney, Director, Italian Tile and Stone.



Strategic Goals 2016–2019

Goal One Enabling Plans

WE WILL...

- Facilitate programme design that is:
 - 1 Optimised for maximum transfer of learning.
 - 2 Flexible, and straightforward for employed learners to access.
 - 3 Highly integrated with work, and enabling increased mobility and employability for the learner.
- Support the further development of skills assessment resources to help enterprise to accurately identify and address their skills needs.
- Support the development of strategies and systems that enable enterprises, and SMEs in particular, to nurture and retain talented employees.
- Exploit the great potential that learning technologies offer, specifically in a workplace context.
- Promote greater collaboration across our organisation and leverage the combined strength of our networks. We will encourage delivery of a greater number of networking events across our networks, given their value to enterprises and SMEs in particular as a source of informal learning.
- Establish resource hubs and first class talent programmes for our network manager community to assist in the growth of their human resource development competence.
- Review our key performance indicators and blend them appropriately between training 'efficiency' and training 'effectiveness'.
- Develop evaluation methodologies that test if predefined learning outcomes have been achieved and that programmes have resulted in improved job performance and enterprise competitiveness. We will address unnecessarily bureaucratic processes that impede training effectiveness.
- Where appropriate, we will continue to collaborate with awarding bodies (QQI and industry/professional accreditation bodies) to encourage formal accreditation of programmes.

Strategic Goals 2016–2019

Goal Two

We will play a pivotal role in maintaining a supply of the specific skills and future skills that impact the growth potential of Irish enterprise.

“The ISA Software Skillnet MSc in Product Management gave me the skills to effectively balance product management effort between discovery, design and delivery, as well as influencing my colleagues to the right outcomes in an inclusive and collaborative way. The DIT lecturers included some of the world’s leading authorities in product management. The immediate application of learning from the programme to live challenges in the workplace delivered immediate benefits for me and my employer. I now have the knowledge and the frameworks to back up whatever approach I am recommending.”

Aoife McGivern, Senior Product Manager, Guidewire Software, Co. Dublin.



Strategic Goals 2016–2019

Goal Two Enabling Plans

WE WILL...

- Ensure that our activities are focused on the delivery of skills to the critical labour market sectors and to training that meets defined skills shortages vital for economic growth and competitiveness.
 - Increase the resources provided to enterprise for innovative new programme development.
 - Promote the value and importance of lifelong learning (both formal and informal learning) to national competitiveness, and continue to provide quality up-skilling and re-skilling opportunities for those in employment. We will promote greater adoption of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).
 - Ensure the significant provision of programmes that address transversal skills (or generic competencies), which are the cornerstone of career development and enterprise effectiveness.
 - Increase our contribution to the development of labour market policy in the area of skills development, based on analysis and research drawn from our broad access to enterprise. We will support the important work of the EGFSN and other agencies involved in skills policy formulation.
- Continue our successful involvement in employment activation initiatives in proportion to employment trends. We will focus our activities specifically in areas that are closely aligned with the Skillnets mandate and where skills deficits have been highlighted.
 - Promote the criticality of management development to enterprise and to national competitiveness. We will recruit yet more owner-managers into the Skillnets management development offerings to increase the management capacity of the SME sector, and provide owner-managers with the skills needed to scale their business.
 - Continue to align with national policy and deliver on key responsibilities assigned to Skillnets as part of the *National Skills Strategy 2025*, and other relevant strategies such as the *ICT Skills Action Plan 2014-2018* and *IFS2020*.

Strategic Goals 2016–2019

Goal Three

We will drive increased participation of employers in our proposition. In doing so, we will be a key enabler in sustaining national competitiveness through the up-skilling of those in employment.

“The XLVets Skillnet Dairy Mentoring Programme has changed the way we deal with disease risks on the farm. Instead of hoping to be lucky, we now make our own luck by measuring and monitoring what is happening on the farm and talking on a regular basis about what needs to be done. I have more control over how the herd is performing and production losses are considerably less than would otherwise be the case.”

John Murphy, Dairy Farmer, Co. Cork.



Strategic Goals 2016–2019

Goal Three Enabling Plans

WE WILL...

- Deepen our roots with employers by generating focused engagement and promotion around our distinct and unique value proposition. We will restructure the communications and marketing activities of Skillnets so that they are directed at the needs of enterprise.
- Facilitate increased performance and growth in sectors of strategic importance via the Training Networks Programme (TNP) and Finuas. We will continue to fund new learning networks that have strong enterprise support and demonstrate compelling training requirements.
- Promote greater engagement with employers and business owners around the management development imperative and encourage further participation in the Skillnets management development offering.
- Re-enforce positive perceptions of entrepreneurship by showcasing owner-managers who have undertaken Skillnets-funded management development training, with a particular focus on under-represented groups in Ireland, such as female and young entrepreneurs.
- Maintain the appropriate balance between low-skilled, middle-skilled and high-skilled programme offerings to support career planning and the development of career pathways to encourage increased employee retention and to maintain the wide appeal of Skillnets to enterprise.
- Support the recently established Regional Skills Fora, which are mandated to provide a systematic way for employers and the education and training system to work together. Through our work with Regional Skills Fora and our other activities in the regions, we will further raise the visibility of Skillnets at a regional level and support regional development overall.
- Coordinate closely with other relevant State agencies with the core objectives of ensuring the skill demands of enterprise are best served and value for public monies.

Skillnets Networks 2016

Our 2016 learning networks are supporting businesses in a wide range of sectors and regions across Ireland.

Training Networks Programme

Network Name

Sector/Region

A

ACIST Skillnet	Mid-West
Animal Health Ireland Skillnet	Animal health sector
Animation Skillnet	Animation / VFX sectors
Aviation & Aerospace Skillnet	Aviation / Aerospace sectors

B

BiznetCork Skillnet	South-West
Business Excellence Skillnet	Mid-West

C

Carlow Kilkenny Skillnet	South-East
CILT Skillnet	Freight / Logistics sectors
CITA Skillnet	Construction / ICT sectors
Construction SME Skillnet	Construction sector
County Tipperary Skillnet	South-East / Mid-West
CPA Ireland Skillnet	Accountancy / Financial sectors

D

Design, Print & Packaging Skillnet	Design / Print / Packaging sectors
Duhallow Skillnet	South-West

F

Farm Business Skillnet	Agricultural sector
FDII Skillnet	Food / Drink sectors
First Polymer Training Skillnet	Engineering / Manufacturing sectors

G

Galway Executive Skillnet	West
Gaming and Leisure Skillnet	Gaming / Leisure / Tourism sectors
Gréasán na Meán Skillnet	Media / Audio-visual sectors

H

HPSU Skillnet	West
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I

ICOS Skillnet	Agricultural sector
ICT Ireland Skillnet	ICT sector
IMDA Skillnet	Life sciences sector
Innovation and Lean Sigma Skillnet	Mixed sector
Irish Franchising Skillnet	Mixed sector
ISA Software Skillnet	Software / ICT sectors
ISME Skillnet	Mixed sector
it@cork Skillnet	ICT sector
ITAG Skillnet	ICT sector

L

Law Society Skillnet	Legal sector
Leading Healthcare Providers Skillnet	Healthcare sector
Lean Water & Energy Skillnet	Energy / Engineering sectors
Learning Waves Skillnet	Radio sector
Limerick Chamber Skillnet	Mid-West

M

Macra na Feirme Young Farmer Skillnet	Agricultural sector
MBE Skillnet	Midlands / Border / East

N

National Organic Training Skillnet	Agricultural sector
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Skillnets Networks 2016

P

PharmaChem Skillnet Pharmaceutical sector

Postive2Work Skillnet Mixed sector

R

Retail Ireland Skillnet Retail sector

Role Skillnet West / North-West

Rural Enterprise Skillnet Agriculture sector

Rural Food Skillnet Food sector

S

Shannon Chamber Skillnet Mid-West

SIMI Skillnet Motor industry

Sligo Chamber Skillnet North-West

South Kerry Skillnet South-West

South West Gnó Skillnet South-West

Space Industry Skillnet Space sector

Sustainability Skillnet Sustainability / Cleantech sectors

T

Taste 4 Success Skillnet Food / Drink sectors

Tech Northwest Skillnet North-West

Trade Union Skillnet Mixed sector

Trainers Learning Skillnet Training sector

U

ULearning Skillnet Mixed sector

W

Waterford Chamber Skillnet South-East

Wexford Chamber Skillnet South-East

Wind Skillnet Wind energy sector

X

XLVets Skillnet Veterinary sector

Finuas Networks Programme

Aviation Finance Finuas Network International Financial Services (IFS) sector

Law Society Finuas Network International Financial Services (IFS) sector

Summit Finuas Network International Financial Services (IFS) sector

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- ³ Developments in Individual OECD and Selected Non-Member Economies, OECD, 2016, p.158.
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Other Skillnets Publications:

Skillnets Statement of Strategy 2016–2019 Position Paper for Consultation
Skillnets Statement of Strategy 2016–2019 Strategic Review





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