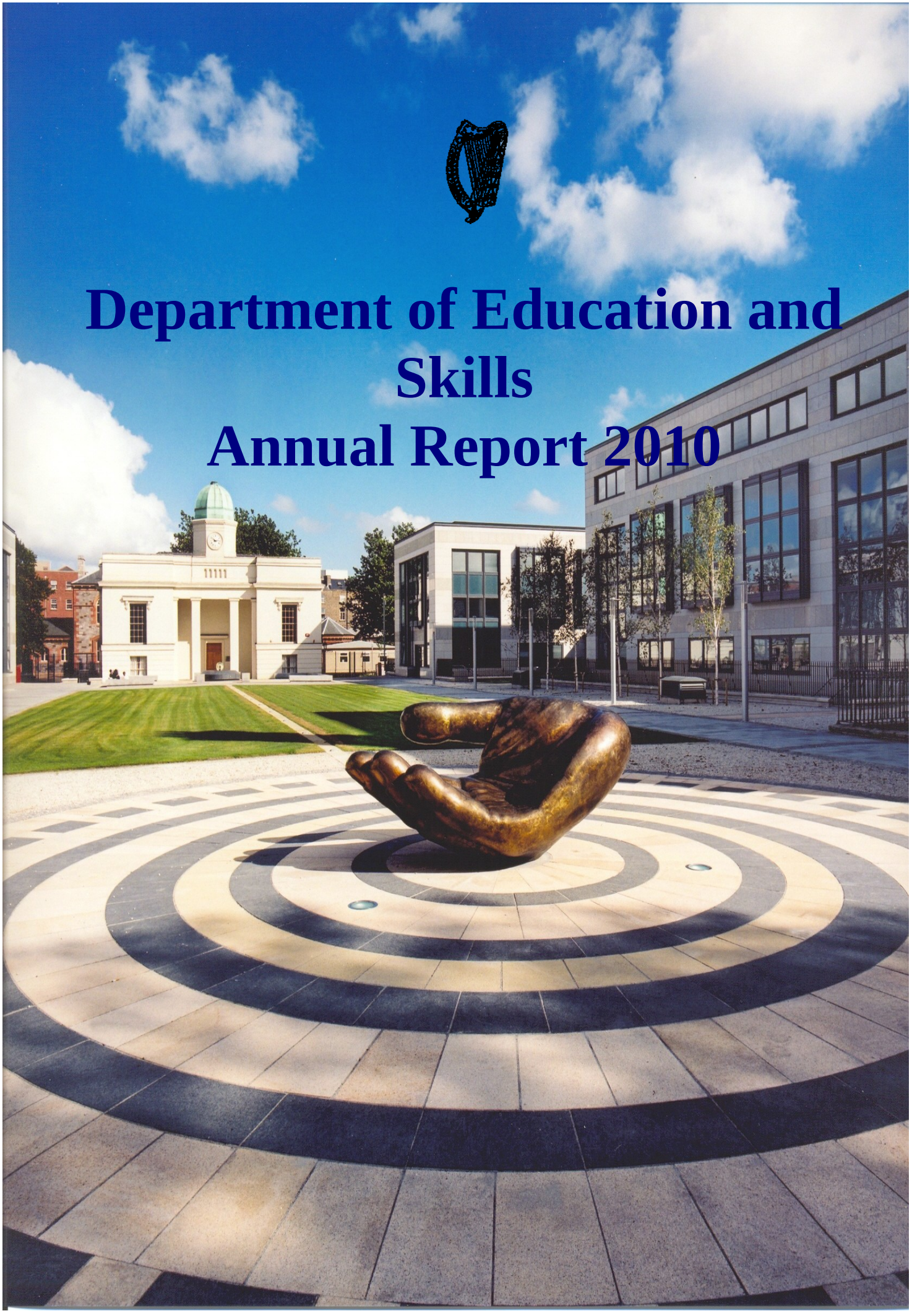

Department of Education and Skills
Annual Report 2010

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Our Mission and Goals

The mission of the Department of Education and Skills is to provide for high quality education, which will:

- Enable individuals to achieve their full potential and to participate fully as members of society, and
- Contribute to Ireland's social, cultural and economic development.

In pursuit of our mission, the Department has the following high-level goals:

1. Support and improve the quality, relevance and inclusiveness of education for every learner in our schools
2. Enhance opportunities in further education and youth services
3. Sustain and strengthen higher education and research
4. Support the delivery and development of education through policy formulation, high-quality planning and a strong customer focus

In support of these high-level goals, the Department is engaged in a wide range of activities at all levels of the education system, including:

- The provision of high-quality policy advice to the Minister and Government and as an aid to decision making and accountability to the Oireachtas;
- Conducting research, review, evaluation and development of policy relating to all areas of education;
- Ensuring high-quality education through the role of the Inspectorate at first and second level and through partnership with responsible authorities in higher and further education and the Youth sector;
- Discharging a wide range of operational, resourcing and support functions relating to the funding of the sector, the payment of teaching and non-teaching staff and grants to schools and other education bodies, the allocation of teaching resources and other supports, the provision of psychological and school transport services and performing a range of personnel and staff relations functions;
- Planning and provision of education infrastructure to support the delivery of high-quality education at all levels;
- Enhancing education through co-operation on a North-South basis and through active involvement in a variety of EU activities and with a number of other international agencies.

Chapter 1 – Supporting School Communities

High Level Goal One: Support and improve the quality, relevance and inclusiveness of education for every learner in our schools

Context

Attendance at full-time education is compulsory for all children between six and sixteen years of age. Although children in Ireland are not obliged to attend school until the age of six the practice is that the majority commence school in the September after their fourth birthday. Consequently, the vast majority of four-year-olds and nearly all five-year-olds are enrolled in the infant classes in primary schools.

First Level enrolment statistics for 2010/2011 school year

School Type	*Number Schools*	*Total Enrolment*
Primary Schools	3,165	509,652
Special Schools	140	

Children from about 12 to 18 years attend a second-level school. Second-level schools include secondary schools, vocational schools and community and comprehensive schools.

Second Level enrolment statistics for 2010/2011 school year[1]

School Type	*Number Schools*	*Enrolment*
Secondary	383	186,622
Vocational	254	114,761
Community & Comprehensive	92	54,724

Objective 1.1: Develop appropriate policy initiatives and responses to underpin the effective day to day management and operation of schools including the provision of a range of financial, staffing and administrative supports.

Financial Supports

At primary level the two main sources of funding provided by the Department to schools are the Capitation and Ancillary Services grants. The standard rate for both grants remained unchanged for 2010 at €200 per pupil (Capitation) and €155 per pupil (Ancillary Services). In addition, special enhanced capitation rates, ranging from €512 to €986 per pupil depending on category, were payable in respect of

[1] These enrolment figures include PLC but exclude Core VTOS places. PLC Courses are provided predominantly in the VEC sector, but some Community & Comprehensive and Secondary schools also offer courses.

children with special needs who attend special schools or special classes dedicated to children with particular special needs.

Ancillary Services funding is provided to primary schools to provide for secretarial and caretaking services. The grant is intended to assist those schools that have not been provided with secretarial or caretaking assistance under the 1978/1979 schemes, under which certain schools receive the benefit of a full-time secretary or caretaker whose salary is fully funded by the Department. The amount of the grant paid to an individual school is determined by the enrolment figures. Schools with an enrolment of up to 60 pupils receive a minimum grant while schools with an enrolment of 500 pupils or more receive the maximum grant. As a result the minimum grant to a school that applied in 2010 was €9,300 while the maximum grant was €77,500. Where a school has either caretaking or clerical assistance but not both under the Department's schemes it receives a grant of €79.25 per pupil subject to a minimum of €4,755 or maximum of €39,625 per annum.

In 2010 the Department provided total funding of €193 million to primary schools.

At second level the combined capitation and school services support fund (SSSF) grant was unchanged for 2010 at €557 per pupil. In 2010 the Department provided funding of €107 million to secondary schools.

Community and comprehensive schools, unlike voluntary secondary schools, do not receive capitation grants. Instead each school is given a budget, following a negotiation process on the basis of estimates received from the schools. The budget is based mainly on pupil numbers, but also takes into account factors which vary from school to school. SSSF funding for Community & Comprehensive schools is allocated as part of this budget. In 2010 the Department provided funding of €48.7 million to for non-teaching pay and non-pay costs in Community and Comprehensive schools.

The allocations made to VEC schools are determined by the CEO of the relevant VEC and are paid from non-pay funding provided by the Department. In 2010 the total non-pay funding, which also covers other VEC activities and expenses, made available to the 33 VECs was €67m.

Teachers

Through the provision of over 58,674 teacher posts (32,489 at first level and 26,185 at second level) the Department catered for a combined enrolment of approximately 866,000 students across the two levels for the 2010/2011 school year.

Payroll and Pension Services

The Department coordinates and administers a range of payroll services to:

- Teachers, special needs assistants and certain categories of clerical and caretaking staff employed in primary, secondary, community and comprehensive schools; and
- Retired teaching and non teaching staff formerly employed in primary, secondary, community and comprehensive schools.

A major function of the Payroll Division is the monitoring of payroll expenditure on an ongoing basis and the preparation of accurate estimates for all the payrolls.

The Pension Section of the Department has both an administrative and regulatory role. Administrative services are provided to teachers, Special Needs Assistants and certain non teaching staff in primary,

secondary, community and comprehensive schools. The services cover a range of pension matters and include:

- Processing pension benefits on retirement or death of scheme members
- Issuing quotations for the purchase of notional service for pension purposes
- Arranging transfer of service to and from other pension schemes
- Providing information for scheme members on their entitlements

The regulatory role includes:

- Amending relevant superannuation schemes
- Contributing to the development of pensions policy initiatives
- Providing pension related guidance and information to education sector bodies

In 2010:

- 1,528 teachers retired
- The Department's payroll system was expanded to incorporate the payment of part-time resource and language support teachers employed in primary schools
- Expenditure on the payrolls operated by the Payroll Division of the Department amounted to €4.2bn with 93,000 payments issuing every fortnight

School Transport

Bus Éireann operates this scheme on behalf of the Department. At second level, Chief Executive Officers of VECs assist by acting as Transport Liaison Officers.

In 2010 the School Transport Service, which covers approximately 6,000 routes nationwide, carried in the region of 125,000 pupils each day. 65,000 of these were post-primary pupils and 60,000 primary pupils including almost 8,000 children with special needs.

The School Transport Appeals Board, which is independent, examines appeals against decisions made by or on behalf of the Department regarding the provision of transport services and/or grant assistance under the terms of the school transport schemes. In 2010, 76 appeals were considered by the School Transport Appeals Board.

Approximately 33% of the expenditure for school transport is being expended on transport, including taxis and grants (mainly escorts) for children with special needs. The number of taxis engaged in the past years has increased from about 250 in 2004 to over 700 in the 2009/10 school year. In addition grants were paid to over 440 families who use their private vehicles to transport children with special needs to an educational centre.

The cost of employing escorts to cater for children with special needs, whose care requirements are such as to necessitate continuous support, has increased significantly in line with the growth in that service. For the 2009/10 school year there were approximately 1,300 escorts employed at an annual cost of about €15 million.

Objective 1.2: Promote the quality of teaching and learning

Evaluations in schools

The Inspectorate Division of the Department has statutory responsibility for evaluating the quality of educational provision in schools and centres for education.

During 2010, the Inspectorate focused on large-scale revision and development of the inspection models it uses to evaluate schools. This development will provide a suite of inspection types, ranging from unannounced inspections to more intensive and specialised evaluations at both primary and post-primary level. In 2010, the Inspectorate placed increased emphasis on incidental (unannounced) inspections of primary schools to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of aspects of the education provided in schools under the normal conditions of a regular school day. These inspections look at the quality of the education experienced by the learner - the quality of teaching, the quality of pupils' learning, and the quality of the supports that schools provide for pupils.

Incidental Inspection Findings 2010: A Report on the Teaching and Learning of English and Mathematics in Primary Schools (published in November 2010) is based on the outcomes of incidental inspections completed in over 450 primary schools throughout all parts of the country between October 2009 and October 2010. During these visits, inspectors observed over 800 English lessons and over 500 lessons in Mathematics. It is planned to extend this form of inspection, following the issuing of guidelines by the Minister, to post-primary schools and centres for education in 2011.

Whole-School Evaluation (WSE): Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE-MLL) is a new development of the WSE inspection model at post-primary level and aims to facilitate shorter, more focused evaluation reports on the work of schools. The main focus is on the quality of management and leadership and on the quality of teaching and learning – the key elements in the work of the school. The inspectorate conducted WSE-MLL evaluations on a trial/developmental basis in 2010. Consultation with the education partners on the finalisation of the model, as required by section 13(8) of the Education Act 1998, has now been concluded and the *Guide to Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning in Post-primary Schools* has been approved for publication. The formal implementation of WSE-MLL as a standard model of evaluation will commence with inspections planned for March 2011.

The table below provides an overview of inspection activity conducted in 2010.

Type of inspection	2010
Whole-school evaluation (WSE) Primary	259
Whole-school evaluation (WSE) Post-primary	35
Whole-school evaluation - (WSE-MLL) Post-primary	24
Subject inspections–stand-alone	460
Subject inspections–within WSE	123
Programme evaluations	42
Probation of teachers (Primary) for school year 2009/2010	1,734
Incidental Inspection (Primary)	459
DEIS (50/50 P/PP)	36
Evaluation reports on Irish Colleges *(Coláistí Gaeilge)*	40
Centres for education (Youthreach, Senior Traveller Training Centre,)	7
Other	54
Total inspections	3,273

During 2010 a total of 883 school inspection reports, were published on the Department's website (www.education.ie). The publication of reports ensures that schools, parents and the general public have access to meaningful information on quality and standards in the education system. The publication and dissemination of inspection findings also supports the provision of relevant policy advice for the education system.

Reports published in 2010	
WSE Primary	231
WSE Post-primary	40
Centres for Education	11
Subject/Programme inspection within WSE	144
Stand-alone Subject/Programme inspections	457
Total	**883**

In addition to the publication of school inspection reports, the following reports were published by the Inspectorate in 2010 *Incidental Inspection Findings 2010: A Report on the Teaching and Learning of English and Mathematics in Primary Schools;* and *Oideas 55 Journal of the Department of Education and Skills.*

Teacher Training & Development

The Department is responsible for three inter-related aspects of teacher education and development, namely:

- Initial teacher education;
- Induction of newly qualified teachers; and
- In-career development/continuing professional development programmes.

Initial Teacher Training

The Department is responsible for devising and implementing effective policies and measures to ensure the adequate supply of suitably qualified and trained primary school teachers in the short, medium and long term. This involves a high-level of communication and interaction with, inter alia, the Colleges of Education and the Teaching Council. The Department is also responsible for implementing policies in relation to initial teacher education for post primary teachers, provided by the education departments of participating Universities.

In addition to funding provided through the Higher Education Authority (see Section 4) the Department provided €9.9 million for the non Higher Education Authority (HEA) Colleges of Education in 2010. The table below provides a breakdown of graduates in 2010:

Colleges	Graduates B.ED 2010	Graduates Post Grad 2010
Non HEA Colleges:		
Froebel College	80	61
Coláiste Mhuire, Marino	105	106
Church of Ireland, College of Education	30	-

HEA Colleges:		
St Patrick's College	388	189
Mary Immaculate College	440	149
Total	**1,043**	**505**

Induction of newly qualified teachers

The National Induction Programme for Teachers was established in September 2010. The induction programme evolved from a national pilot project at primary and at post-primary levels, which was initiated in 2002. The implementation of a comprehensive induction programme for all newly qualified teachers is a major step forward in building the continuum of teacher education in Ireland. The pilot project was originally set up as a partnership initiative between the then Department of Education and Science, the three teacher Unions, the Colleges of Education/Universities and the schools participating in the project. From September 2010 the management of the induction programme continued in accordance with the model which operated during the pilot phase: the primary programme continuing to operate from St Patrick's College, Drumcondra, while the post-primary programme continuing to be administered by the School of Education and Lifelong Learning, UCD. In 2010, €1.02 million was provided in funding to the National Induction Programme.

The general aim of the National Induction Programme for Teachers (NIPT) is to support newly qualified teachers (NQTs) in their first year of teaching by building on their learning at initial teacher education (ITE) stage and providing a high quality effective programme of induction. The induction programme will continue to be carefully tailored to the professional needs of the NQTs and is continuously reviewed, refined and improved based on research findings and the feedback from all the parties involved, particularly the NQTs. In the context of maximising the use of existing resources, appropriate account will be taken of any system priority needs arising, and specifically the key targets set out in *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life: The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011-2020*.

Continuing Professional Development

The Education Centre network, which consists of 21 full time education centres and 9 part time centres nationally, operates under the aegis of the Teacher Education Section in the Department and serves as a regional infrastructure for the provision of continuing professional development services and other support services for teachers at both primary and second level. These centres host national programmes of curriculum reform and offer support services and courses covering a large range of subjects relating to teaching and learning. Funding of €4.64m was provided to the centres in 2010.

Through its Teacher Education Section (TES) the Department re-conceptualised its provision for school support and teacher professional development in the context of current constraints. This re-conceptualisation has seen a move to a new generic and integrated cross-sectoral support service with the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) established in September 2010. The PDST is a Continuous Professional Development service for teachers, combining teachers from Primary and Post-Primary schools in a single integrated support team working regionally under a National Director. The following support services now come under the banner of the PDST:

- The Primary Professional Development Service;
- The Leadership Development for Schools;
- The Second Level Support Service;

- The Child Abuse Prevention Programme;
- The Junior Cycle Physical Education Programme;
- The Junior Cycle Schools Project;
- The Substance Misuse Prevention Programme;
- The Maths Recovery Programme; and
- The Reading Recovery Programme

The PDST works in close co-operation with the Education Centre Network, to respond to professional development needs identified by schools, the needs identified as part of WSE and to national system priorities.

Since September 2010, the Gaeilge Support Service, which was part of the SLSS, has operated as a stand alone service hosted by the Athlone Education Centre.

As part of the roll out of Project Maths, teacher professional development is being provided by the Project Maths Development Team (PMDT) working in collaboration with the officers of the National Council for Curriculum Assessment. The National roll-out of the project began in September 2009 when PMDT commenced provision of in-service in advance of implementation of the revised mathematics syllabuses at both Junior and Senior Cycle. This initiative commenced in all second level schools from September 2010.

The Summer Course Programme continued in 2010. The principal objective of this programme is the advancement of teachers pedagogic (strategies of instruction, or a style of instruction) and management skills in the context of the work of the primary school. 753 courses were held in 2010 with a total of 26,949 teachers participating.
The purpose of the Teacher Refund Scheme is to provide funds towards the cost of course and examination fees on successful completion of in-career development courses approved by the Department and school authorities. In 2010, over €530k in funding was provided by the Department to a total of 450 successful applicants under this Scheme.

ICT in Schools Programme

Since its inception in 1998, this programme has pursued the integration of ICT into teaching and learning in first and second level schools and the development of students' computer literacy. The programme addresses the following four broad areas:

- The provision of essential ICT infrastructure within schools
- The provision of access to broadband connectivity to schools
- Continuous professional development (CPD) for teachers in ICT
- Integrating ICT within the curriculum and providing curriculum relevant digital content and software.

Strategies are pursued through the work of the ICT Policy Unit and the National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE), in collaboration with other agencies, support services and representative bodies as appropriate. The NCTE in particular manages some key programme elements directly, including the national CPD programme, the national digital content portal (Scoilnet) and the schools broadband helpdesk.

Building on the initial investment of €22m in November 2009, the **ICT Infrastructure Grant** scheme was expanded in 2010. A further €24m was allocated at primary level, in tandem with the distribution of €46m across post-primary level by the end of the year. In spending their devolved grant funds, schools

were asked to prioritise the deployment of a digital projector and a teaching computer in each classroom, with second-level schools in particular being asked to prioritise the equipping of classrooms used to teach maths.

In 2010 over €5.7 million was invested under Phase II of the **Schools Broadband Programme**. As of end December 2010 the new service providers have 97% of school connections on the new service and as a result aggregate bandwidth has increased and savings have been realized.

The National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE) continued to manage the ICT CPD sub-programme throughout 2010, arranging the development and delivery more than 12,000 teacher training places across a broad range of free-of-charge courses and e-learning seminars for teachers and school leaders. The NCTE also manages a national internet safety programme and its associated website (www.webwise.ie), this programme being majority-funded by the European Commission. Additionally, it continues to manage the collaborative development, procurement and dissemination of curriculum-relevant digital content, delivered primarily through the Scoilnet website (www.scoilnet.ie), the national portal for ICT in Education, which received some 1.66m visits during 2010 to almost 12,000 reviewed teaching resources. The NCTE also manages a range of innovative pilot projects in a number of schools, including the *Digital Schools Award Scheme* for which 232 schools had registered as at the end of 2010. In support of the NCTE the Department provided funding of over €5.1 million in 2010.

The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)

All Primary and Post Primary schools have access to psychological assessments either directly through an assigned NEPS psychologist or through the Scheme for Commissioning Psychological Assessments (SCPA). NEPS also provides, upon request, assistance to all schools and school communities that experience critical incidents and processes applications for Reasonable Accommodation in Certificate Examinations (RACE) and responds to queries in relation to individual children from other sections of the Department and from specialist agencies.

During the 2009/10 school year NEPS psychologists were involved with referrals (casework) in relation to some 8,052 named students, it is also estimated that they made interventions and provided advice on a further 7,750 un-named students. Some 2,635 assessments were funded under the SCPA at a cost of approx €0.8m.

For the 2010/11 school year NEPS psychologists were assigned to 77% of primary schools (representing 84% of pupils) and 92% of post-primary schools (and pupils) which was a marginal increase on previous year.

In addition they made recommendations on some 4,100 additional pupils under the Reasonable Accommodation in Certificate Examinations scheme (RACE) on behalf of the State Examinations Commission and attended at some 93 critical incidents in schools at the request of the school authorities.

The overall expenditure on the NEPS service in 2010 amounted to €16.66m.

Supporting the work of both the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) and the State Examinations Commission (SEC)

Established on a statutory basis in 2001, the brief of the NCCA as outlined in the Education Act, 1998 is to advise the Minister on matters relating to the curriculum for early childhood education, primary and post-primary schools and the assessment procedures employed in schools and examinations on subjects

which are part of the curriculum. In 2010 the Department provided funding of €3.837 million to the NCCA.

The SEC, which was established in 2003 (under Section 54 of the Education Act, 1998), is responsible for the development, assessment, accreditation and certification of the second-level examinations of the Irish state: the Junior Certificate and the Leaving Certificate. The SEC prepared and examined approximately 1.76 million component items for 114,000 candidates who sat these examinations in 2010. In 2010 the Department provided funding of €54.286 million[2] to the SEC.

Objective 1.3: Provide targeted resources to promote social inclusion in our schools

DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) – An Action Plan for Educational Inclusion

Under this specific initiative which was launched by the Department in 2005, the measures outlined below have already been implemented.

- Reduced pupil teacher ratio in primary schools in urban areas with most disadvantage
- Allocation of administrative principals in urban areas on lower enrolment and staffing figures than apply in primary schools generally
- Additional capitation funding based on level of disadvantage
- Additional funding for school books
- Access to School Meals Programme
- Access to numeracy/literacy supports and measures at primary level
- Access to Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) services
- Access to School Completion Programme (SCP)
- Enhanced guidance counselling provision at post primary level
- Access to planning supports
- Provision for school library and librarian support at second level
- Access to Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP) and Leaving Certificate Applied
- Access to a range of professional development supports

The Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) is responsible for the implementation and co-ordination of literacy and numeracy strategies. These include:

- ***The Reading Recovery*** programme which is a school-based intervention designed to reduce literacy problems within the education system. It is an early intervention, giving children who have particular difficulties in reading and writing after one year in primary school, a period of intensive, individual teaching.
- ***The First Steps*** programme which addresses literacy needs in primary schools. It includes professional development courses and support materials for primary teachers. It offers teachers an accurate means of assessing and monitoring children's competencies and progress in reading, writing, spelling and oral language.
- ***The Maths Recovery*** programme which has been developed as a systematic response to the problem of chronic failure in school mathematics. It provides a programme of intensive,

[2] This figure for the SEC is net of income from fees

individualised teaching to students, in order to advance them to a level at which they are likely to learn successfully in a regular class.

- ***The Ready Set Go Maths*** programme is an intervention programme which contains a practical handbook of guidance for teachers in the use of a wide range of activities and materials to enable them to improve the quality and effectiveness of early learning in numeracy for children.

The following statistics highlight the impact of DEIS nationwide in 2010:

- 101,307 children at primary level attended schools that benefited from additional measures to combat educational disadvantage
- 62,286 students at post-primary level attended schools that benefited from additional measures to combat educational disadvantage
- 573 extra classroom teachers at primary level
- 136 extra classroom teachers at post-primary level
- 47 primary schools availing of the services of 43 Support Teachers
- 39 additional Administrative Principals have been appointed, on lower enrolment and staffing figures than apply in primary schools generally, to DEIS urban primary schools
- 163,593 children in 876 DEIS schools with the services of 450 Home School Community Liaison/ Rural Coordinators
- 180,000 children and young people attending 697 schools (224 post-primary and 473 primary) with access to the SCP
- Under the SCP approximately 35,000 children and young people at risk of early school leaving specifically targeted for intensive interventions, with other interventions targeted on a whole school basis
- Under the SCP approximately 800 young people who have opted out of school were targeted for interventions with a view to re-engaging them with the education system
- 676 primary schools shared payments in the order of almost €10.77 million in additional grant assistance to address educational disadvantage. The number of eligible pupils in these schools was 38,880 which equated to 38.4% of total enrolment for these schools
- 200 post-primary schools shared payments in the order of almost €3.3 million in additional grant assistance to address educational disadvantage. The number of eligible pupils in these schools was 21,000 which equated to 34% of total enrolment for these schools
- 676 DEIS primary and 200 DEIS post-primary schools shared payments in the order of €4.6 million to support vulnerable children by ensuring that the continuity of availability of school books for disadvantaged children
- The number of DEIS primary schools actively implementing the Reading Recovery programme was 237.
- There are a number of strands to the First Steps (FS) programme and the three still being introduced to Urban DEIS schools are First Steps Writing, First Steps Reading and First Steps Speaking and Listening. To date there are 337 schools with teachers trained in FS Writing, 216 schools with teachers trained in FS Reading and 44 schools with teachers trained in FS Speaking and Listening.
- All schools are implementing at least one strand of the First Steps programme.
- A total of 301 DEIS schools are now actively implementing the Maths Recovery programme
- JCSP being implemented in 184 DEIS schools
- 29 DEIS schools are currently engaged in the JCSP Demonstration Library project

The Department has commissioned the Educational Research Centre (ERC) to conduct an independent evaluation of the DEIS initiative over the period of the DEIS action plan to 2010. The first stage of the evaluation involved initial tests in some 480 selected DEIS primary schools in May 2007 to establish baseline data against which outcomes of later tests could be compared. Testing was repeated in the same schools and with many of the same pupils in the spring of 2010. The evaluation also involved a range of

surveys and questionnaires over the evaluation period. The Department's Inspectorate completed a complementary evaluation of the implementation of DEIS planning and improvement initiatives in schools. The evaluation reports from the ERC and the Inspectorate are is expected by the end of 2011.

National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB)

The NEWB was established in 2002 under the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000. In 2010 the various strands of the Board, namely the Home School Community Liaison Service (HSCL), the School Completion Programme (SCP), the Visiting Teacher Service for Travellers (VTST) and the National Educational Welfare Service (EWS) worked together collaboratively and cohesively to secure better educational outcomes for children and young people. Further information relating to the work of the Board is available from its website www.newb.ie.

In 2010 the Department provided funding of €8.695 million to the NEWB.

Appeals relating to Expulsions and Enrolment Refusals

Section 29 of the 1998 Education Act allows an appeal to be made to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills in respect of a decision by a Board of Management to permanently exclude a student from the school, to suspend a student from the school for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days in any one school year, or to refuse to enrol a student.

In 2010, a total of 369 Section 29 appeals were processed. Of these 294 related to Post Primary schools and 75 related to Primary schools. Prior to hearing 144 appeals were resolved, through facilitation or withdrawal of the appeal. Of the remaining 225 appeals which went to full hearing, 35 were upheld, 170 were not upheld and 20 were referred back to the Board of Management for their consideration.

Limerick Regeneration

The Department, through its Limerick Office, ensures that the resources for education are applied coherently and effectively to the task of giving all children and young people, in the regeneration areas, the capacity to build better lives from a sound educational base. This is achieved by the Department contributing to the long-term physical and social regeneration agenda as set out in the Limerick Regeneration Masterplan.

Objective 1.4: Provide appropriate accommodation and facilities for the delivery of quality education

A total of almost €526m was expended on the school building and modernisation programme in 2010. This investment was delivered through a number of dedicated sub-programmes such as large scale projects providing new schools and extensions/refurbishments, the acquisition of sites, the additional accommodation scheme, the Summer Works Scheme, emergency works, the provision of physical education equipment, furniture and equipment provision, the energy efficiency scheme and a minor works grant to primary schools

Large Scale Projects

In 2010, 18 large scale projects in primary schools reached substantial completion, and these projects provided a total of 3,752 permanent school places in new schools (including 3,192 additional permanent places in new schools) and permanent school places and enhanced facilities in existing schools for a further 1,484 pupils.
In 2010, 3 large scale projects reached substantial completion in the post-primary sector, and these projects provided a total of 950 permanent school places in new schools and enhanced facilities in an existing school for a further 600 pupils.

Smaller Scale Projects

Over 2,650 smaller scale projects (Additional accommodation, summer works and emergency works) were devolved to the Primary and Post-Primary sectors for delivery in 2010.

203 additional accommodation projects were completed in the primary sector and provided 4,424 permanent school places and 1,624 school places in temporary accommodation.

49 additional accommodation projects were completed in the post-primary sector and provided 1,368 permanent school places and 665 school places in temporary accommodation.

Public Private Partnership (PPP) Programme

As part of this Government initiative announced in 2005 a total of 23 new Post Primary schools and 4 new Primary schools in 22 locations were identified as projects to be delivered. In September 2010 4 PPP schools became operational while, as of December 2010, a further 14 schools were at procurement stage.

Objective 1.5: Provide a range of resources and supports for learners with special needs

Educational Supports

The Department provides for a range of educational supports and services for children with special educational needs, including teachers, special needs assistants, assistive technology, specialist equipment, enhanced equipment and special transport arrangements[3].

The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) is responsible for processing applications from primary and post primary schools for special educational needs supports. Its services are delivered through a national network of Special Educational Needs Organisers (SENOs) who interact with parents and schools and liaise with the Health Service Executive in providing resources to support children with special educational needs. The cost to the Department of funding the NCSE in 2010 was €8.2m.

As of 31/12/10, there were 9,594 whole time equivalent learning support/resource teachers in mainstream primary and post-primary schools. In addition, a further 1,159 teachers provide education to children attending special schools.

Children with special care needs are also supported by special needs assistants (SNAs). At the end of 2010, there were 10,543 SNA in primary, post-primary and special schools.

[3] See School Transport Scheme under objective 1.1

The ***Home Tuition Scheme***[4] provides funding to parents to provide education at home for children who, for a number of reasons such as chronic illness, are unable to attend school. Approximately 830 pupils availed of the Special Education Home Tuition scheme during the school year ending June 2010. The cost of running this programme in 2010 was in the region of €7.96 million.

The ***July Education Programme*** is available to all special schools and mainstream primary schools with special classes catering for children with autism who choose to extend their education services through the month of July. The Department also provides for a July Programme for pupils with a severe/profound general learning disability. Where school based provision is not feasible, home based provision may be grant aided through the home tuition scheme. 9 additional schools participated in the school based programme in 2010 bringing the total number of schools to 130 while approximately 1,600 children availed of July Education home based tuition in 2010. The total cost of this service in 2010 was in the region of €10.7 million.

Continuing Professional Development for teachers of children with Special Educational Needs

In 2010 a total of 22,840 places (324 accredited post-graduate) were provided for Continuing Professional Development in Special Educational Needs by the by the Special Education Support Service (SESS) and Department sponsored courses in third level institutions. A core element of this support was the provision of access to intensive training for teachers from approximately 300 autism units with regard to Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASDs) in 2010 covering a range of ASD-specific approaches to learning and teaching. In 2010 the Department provided €2.9m towards provision of training for teachers of children with Special Educational Needs by the SESS and the accredited post-graduate programmes.

The provision of the accredited post-graduate programmes continues to develop, through the working relationship between the Department and the following institutions-

- St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra
- St Angela's College, Sligo
- Church of Ireland College of Education, Rathmines
- Mary Immaculate College, Limerick
- University College Dublin
- University College Cork
- National University of Ireland, Galway

These institutions provide a Combined Post-Graduate Diploma Programme of Continuing Professional Development for Teachers involved in Learning Support and Special Education.

Advanced training in the education of students with autistic spectrum disorders (ASDs) is also provided via the following accredited post-graduate programme:

- A Post-Graduate Certificate in the Education of Pupils with ASDs has been available at St. Patrick's College Drumcondra since 2001
- A Post-Graduate Certificate/Diploma Programme of CPD in SEN (ASD) for Teachers being provided by St. Angela's College, Sligo, in collaboration with the SESS, which has been available since 2008.

[4] The scheme was extended in recent years to facilitate tuition for children awaiting a suitable educational placement and to provide early intervention for pre-school children with autism.

Children with Autism

All centres participating in the Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA) pilot scheme funded by the Department applied for and were granted recognition as special schools for children with autism.

In 2010 an additional 29 classes for children with autism attached to mainstream and special schools were approved, bringing the total number of special classes at the end of 2010 to 364. Eleven additional early intervention classes for children on the autistic spectrum were also approved during the year, bringing the total number of early intervention classes at the end of 2010 to 56.

Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (EPSEN) 2004

A commitment was given in the renewed Programme announced in October 2009 to develop, in consultation with stakeholders, a costed multi-annual plan to implement some priority aspects of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act, focussing on measurable, practical progress in education and health services for children with special needs. Discussions commenced in 2010 between this Department, the Health Service Executive and the Department of Health and Children to further the implementation of this commitment.

Objective 1.6: Provide targeted resources and supports for newcomer children

The resources allocated to schools to meet the needs of pupils learning English as an Additional Language (EAL) are additional to the other supports and funding provided to schools. All pupils including immigrant pupils (irrespective of their English language proficiency) are counted for the regular pupil teacher ratios in schools.

In collaboration with parents and mainstream class teachers, EAL support teachers identify pupils requiring additional language support, assess pupils' proficiency in English using the assessment materials, devise appropriate language programmes, deliver the programmes and record and monitor pupils' progress. They share their expertise with mainstream class teachers and assist in developing and disseminating good practice to support the development of students' English language proficiency.

Schools, at both primary and second level, with between 14 and 30 pupils requiring EAL support qualify for one additional EAL support teacher. Schools with between 31 and 90 pupils qualify for a second EAL support teacher. As an additional alleviation measure, schools with substantial numbers of pupils requiring EAL may qualify for up to two additional EAL support teachers. A total of 1,380 EAL support teachers were allocated for the 2010/11 school year.

Where schools have fewer than 14 pupils requiring EAL support, grant aid is allocated at primary level to facilitate the Board of Management in funding the provision of part-time EAL support whilst post-primary level EAL support is allocated on the basis of part-time teaching hours.

The Department in collaboration with the Office of the Minister for Integration published its Intercultural Education Strategy in 2010 to assist education establishments at all levels create inclusive, integrated and intercultural learning environments for all their students[5].

[5] See page 41 for more information.

Objective 1.7: Support the development and provision of high-quality early childhood education

Ireland operates a split system of governance with this Department having responsibility for early childhood education provision in targeted initiatives for 'at risk of educational disadvantage' children aged 3-4 (e.g. Early Start and Traveller Preschools) and the Infant Classes in primary schools catering for children aged 4-6 years. While childcare Provision for children aged from birth onwards is governed by the Department of Children & Youth Affairs which regulates and inspects a diverse range of private, community and voluntary service provision.

Introduction of Universal Pre-School Provision

This Scheme which was introduced in January 2010, caters for children aged between 3 years 2 months and 4 years 7 months in September of the relevant year, provides for free pre-school for 3 hours a day for 38 weeks of the year or for 2 hours and 15 minutes a day for 50 weeks of the year. While the administration of the Scheme is the responsibility of the Childcare Directorate in the Department for Children & Youth Affairs, this Department, through its Early Years Education Policy Unit (EYEPU), provides policy advice and direction in relation to the contractual criteria for the Scheme, with particular emphasis on issues relating to the qualification profile of staff in pre-school settings and programme quality.

In 2010 the Department continued to fund the following two practice frameworks to support the development of quality provision in participating services.

- Síolta the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education is a comprehensive set of practice guidelines for all settings where children aged birth to six years are present. It is concerned with all areas of quality that impact on children's care and education. It includes early learning and development but also other standards such as Health and Welfare, Environments, Planning and Evaluation and Organisation.
- Aistear, which was developed by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment in 2009, is a curriculum framework which focuses specifically on supporting children's early learning and development from birth to six years.

The two frameworks complement each other and Aistear can help practitioners work towards a number of the standards in Síolta such as curriculum, environments, identity and belonging, partnership with parents, interactions and play.

Phasing out of segregated Traveller pre-schools

The introduction of free pre-school provision facilitated the acceleration of the phasing out of these pre-schools, which is an objective of the 2006 Traveller Education Strategy. Where there were sufficient places available in mainstream community or private pre-schools, Traveller pre-schools were encouraged to either close their segregated provision or apply for inclusion in the free pre-school year scheme. Consequently by the end of 2010, only 6 segregated Traveller pre-schools were being funded by the Department.

Workforce Development Plan for the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Sector

The generation of a Workforce Development Plan for the ECCE Sector is a key element of the Government's commitment to quality early childhood care and education. Following an extensive programme of research and public consultation the Plan "Developing the Workforce in the Early

Childhood Care and Education Sector" was launched in December 2010 and is available from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs' website www.dcya.ie.

Research Programme in Early Childhood Education

The Early Years Education Policy Unit (EYEPU) funded a series of research projects between 2008 – 2010 targeted at children from birth to six years on the nature of pedagogy and practice in diverse early childhood education settings in Ireland:

In November 2010 final reports were presented on the following research projects

- Development of a Framework for Action for the Inclusion of Children with Special Needs in Early Childhood Education Settings
- Examining Pedagogy in Early Childhood
- Targeted Early Childhood Educational Provision within a Cluster of DEIS Settings

The key messages and output of these projects were disseminated to relevant stakeholders in the ECCE sector at a seminar in November 2010 and the reports are also available from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs' website www.dcya.ie.

Chapter 2 – Skills, Training and Further Education

Context

As per the Department's Strategy Statement for 2008-2010 the second high level goal was to **"Enhance opportunities in further education and youth services**". In this regard objectives were set out as follows to:

- Promote the quality of education provision (objective 2.1);
- Promote access and participation in further education (objective 2.2); and
- Support the development of youth services (objective 2.3)

However, on foot of a government decision responsibility for Youth Affairs was transferred to the Office of the Minister for Children with effect from 1st January 2009. Consequently from that date objective 2.3 above was no longer applicable to this Department.

From 1 May 2010, responsibility for skills policy and for FÁS agency's operations transferred from the then Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation (D/ETI). The key objectives identified by the D/ETI for this programme area were as follows:

- To strive to meet the objectives of the National Skills Strategy by continuing to provide active labour market programmes such as job search support, specific skills training for employment, and work placement programmes to assist those who are unemployed to develop new skills and competencies to enable them to secure employment as soon as possible. ***(now referred to as objective 2.4)***
- To continue to provide training and upskilling opportunities to those in employment so they, too, will continue to develop their skills in line with the National Skills Strategy. ***(now referred to as objective 2.5)***
- To increase participation through the National Employment Action Plan referral process and through other appropriate training and employment supports. ***(now referred to as objective 2.6)***
- To increase labour market participation by people with disabilities in line with our commitments in our Sectoral Plan under the Disability Act, by enhancing the available training and employment programmes, enhancing supports (both financial and other supports) to open labour market employment, developing initiatives to assist those who acquire a disability during their working lives to remain in or re-enter employment, and collaborating with other Government Departments and Agencies to remove perceived barriers to open labour market entry. ***(now referred to as objective 2.7)***

The Department is taking the opportunity of the integration of Skills and Training into its remit to review the respective roles of the training and further education bodies in meeting the objective of the National Skills Strategy that 330,000 individuals who do not have a Leaving Cert or equivalent qualification move up one level on the National Framework of Qualifications. The training bodies include FAS, Skillnets Ltd and privately contracted training while the VECs are the key stakeholders in the further education sector. The FÁS Board, the Irish Vocational Education Association, the National Adult Literacy Association and Aontas have all recently made submissions with recommendations regarding strategic objectives and roles in the area of Further Education and Training. These submissions will be reviewed in the context of the Government Programme for National Recovery.

Further Education (FE)

The Department promotes, co-ordinates, funds and monitors the development of FE programmes for young people and adults who have either left school early or who need further education and training to enhance their employment prospects and to enable them to progress their education up the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). The main providers of FE programmes are the VECs. Programmes are usually certified by the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC).

While addressing the need for significant provision in this area was a significant challenge at a time of constrained financial and staffing resources in 2010 overall expenditure on Further Education has grown from over €176 million in 2000 to just over €434 million in 2010[6].

Objective 2.1: Promote the quality of education provision

Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)

Ireland is participating in the OECD Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). This involves surveying adults (between the ages of 16-64) in their homes on a range of skills covering the interest, attitude and capacity of individual adults to access, manage, understand, integrate and evaluate various types of information (principally text and numerical) as well as to respond and communicate with others in the information age. The Department of Education and Skills is funding the project in Ireland and the Central Statistics Office will be undertaking the survey work. In 2010, a field test was undertaken to assist with the development of the design of the main survey which is due to commence in 2011. The field test was completed in August 2010. The results of the survey are scheduled to be available in 2012/2013. In 2010 the cost to the Department for PIAAC was €726,000.

National Skills Strategy

The National Skills Strategy was launched in March 2007 jointly by the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment and the Minister for Education and Science. The Strategy, prepared by the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN), identified Ireland's current skills profile, provided a strategic vision and specific objectives for Ireland's future skills requirements, and set out a road map for how the vision and objectives can be achieved.

In March 2010, the Department published a progress update which concluded that significant progress had been made towards meeting the strategy's objectives:

- The percentage of those in the labour force with Higher Education qualifications (NFQ Levels 6-10) has increased from 33% in 2005 to 39% in 2009, compared with the target of 48% by 2020.
- The percentage of the labour force with NFQ educational Levels 4 and 5 (Upper Secondary including Leaving Certificate), between 2005 and 2009 remained at 40%, compared to a target by 2020 of 45%.
- The percentage of the labour force at NFQ Levels 1-3 (Junior Certificate and below) fell from 27% to 20%, compared to a target by 2020 of 7%.

[6] These figures include expenditure on staff costs in all programmes, non-pay grants to VECs and student support grants to Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) learners.

The most significant challenge for the period to 2020 is upskilling those at Levels 1-3 to Levels 4 and 5.

Evaluations of Centres of Education

The Inspectorate published 11 evaluation reports on Youthreach and Senior Traveller Training Centres on the Department's website (www.educaiton.ie) in 2010 and published the composite report on Youthreach evaluations entitled 'An Evaluation of Youthreach'.

Intercultural Guidelines

In 2010, the Department provided funding of over €100k to facilitate continuing professional development in 22 VECs in implementing the intercultural guidelines in Further Education.

Further Education Support Service

The Further Education Support Service (FESS) supports Department of Education and Skills funded centres registered with the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC). It is a full-time, year-round service managed by City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee with four Support Officers nationwide with a broad range of expertise in the FE sector, including Post Leaving Certificate, Youthreach, VTOS, Community, Further and Prison Education. In 2010 the Department provided funding of over €630k for this service.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

The Department provides grants to VECs to fund CPD for Youthreach, STTC and VTOS staff in order to:

- Standardise the approach to the provision of CPD in FE at national and local levels
- Maximise the effectiveness, coherence and reach of CPD activities in the FE sector and increase efficiency in the management and delivery of CPD in VECs
- Facilitate decision-making at the point of delivery of CPD activities and enable VECs to respond more flexibly to diverse local CPD needs
- Encourage provision of generic CPD programmes which cross programme divides

This grant is administered locally by the VECs and expenditure in 2010 was approximately €186k.

FÁS-IVEA National Co-operation Agreement

The National Co-Operation Agreement between FÁS and the Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA) was established in June 2009. In its implementation, the over-riding emphasis is on the achievement of practical and measurable improvements, in terms of both value for money and improved learner outcomes. Improvements will be catalogued and evaluated by the National Steering Group, via a specifically developed standardised national template to be completed three times per year. This captures collaborative initiatives under the agreement at local, regional and national levels. The Agreement involves no additional resources commitment.

The agreement is being implemented through a National Steering Group (NSG), which identifies strategic goals, and Regional Consultative Committees (RCCs) that translate those goals into specific actions

and/or projects. The NSG is comprised of four representatives each from FÁS and the IVEA, and representatives from the Department of Education and Skills, all at senior management level. There are 8 RCCs, based on the 8 FÁS regions and comprised of senior management from FÁS and the relevant Vocational Education Committees (VEC), which will progress work on joint agreed regional objectives and priorities with potential application on a national basis. The NSG and RCCs met on a number of occasions in 2010 and the feedback has been universally positive.

OECD Learning for Jobs

The OECD Review of Vocational Education and Training in 14 countries commenced in 2007 and seeks to help countries increase the responsiveness of VET systems to labour market requirements. It aims to improve the evidence base, identify a set of policy options, and develop tools to appraise VET policy initiatives.

The country policy review of Ireland entitled 'Learning for Jobs' and facilitated by the Department and various stakeholders was published in February 2010. A comparative report of all participating countries was published in June 2010.

Supporting the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA)

NALA is an independent charity committed to ensuring that people with literacy and numeracy difficulties can fully take part in society and have access to learning opportunities that meet their needs. In 2010 the Department provided a grant of €2.115 million to NALA. This included a contribution of €550,000 towards the tutor support element of their TV programme "Stuck for Words", which attracted a weekly audience in excess 200,000 and NALA put in place a parallel Distance Learning Service (DLS) to engage and enrol viewers interested by the TV series and other learners into basic literacy and numeracy tutoring.

Supporting AONTAS (the National Adult Learning Organisation)

AONTAS is a voluntary membership organisation which promotes the development of a learning society through the provision of a quality and comprehensive system of adult learning and education which is accessible to and inclusive to all. AONTAS also collects data on developments in the sector, undertakes research and works in partnership with other relevant stakeholders. In 2010 the Department provided funding of €920k for AONTAS.

Objective 2.2: Promote access and participation in further education

Further and adult education provision offers access, transfer and progression opportunities to learners. Courses, both full-time and part-time, are open to all but the main purpose is to provide a range of supports which will:

- Meet the needs of young early school-leavers
- Provide second-chance education to enable learners to progress their education up to a standard equivalent to upper secondary level
- Provide vocational preparation and training for labour market entrants and re-entrants.

FE courses are provided at Levels 1 – 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Full-Time Programmes available

- ***Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)*** is targeted at unemployed persons over 21 years of age. Its primary target groups are the longer-term unemployed, the low-skilled and disadvantaged. VTOS participants are paid a training allowance and can avail of guidance and childcare supports. 2010 provision on VTOS was maintained at 2009 levels.
- The ***Youthreach*** programme, which was first introduced in 1989, is an integrated programme of education, training and work experience for young people aged between 15 and 20 who have left school early without any qualifications or vocational training. There are almost 6,000 places available nationwide of which 3,700 are provided by VECs in just over 100 Youthreach centres. The majority of the remainder of places are provided by FÁS in 39 Community Training Centres. The 2009 level of provision was maintained in 2010.
- ***Senior Traveller Training Centres (STTCs)*** for Travellers over 18 years of age provide an integrated education, training and work experience programme with a specific emphasis on catering for the cultural needs of the travelling community. Participants are paid a training allowance and are also entitled to childcare support. In line with Traveller Education Strategy and the 2008 value for money review of Youthreach and STTCs, it was announced in Budget 2011 that an integrated further education provision for Travellers will be implemented through the phasing out of STTCs by June 2012 and replacement places, prioritised for Travellers, being provided under the Back to Education Initiative (BTEI).
- ***Post Leaving Certificate programmes (PLC***) are in place for learners over 16 years of age who have completed their Leaving Certificate and for adults returning to education. PLC courses are provided predominantly in the VEC sector, but some Community and Comprehensive schools and Secondary schools also offer courses. The PLC programme provides successful participants with specific vocational skills to enhance their prospects of securing lasting, full-time employment, or progression to other studies. There are currently 31,688 PLC places available nationwide enabling over 38,600 learners to enrol in PLC courses. The number of approved places was maintained at existing levels for the 2010/2011 academic year.

Part-Time Programmes available

- ***Adult Literacy programmes*** (EU co-funded under the European Social Fund) involve the provision of basic education, including reading, writing, spelling and numeracy skills, to adults whose skills are inadequate for functional participation in everyday life. Programmes also covered include personal development, learning to learn and IT skills. Funding is also been provided for specially targeted literacy programmes, such as intensive literacy, literacy for deaf people, family literacy, literacy for people with dyslexia, and workplace literacy. English language tuition (ESOL) for adult migrants is also provided through the adult literacy budget. 2010 participation rates of approximately 47,000 adult literacy participants (including 10,000 ESOL participants) were in line with 2009 rates.
- ***Community Education*** refers to education and learning, generally outside the formal education sector, with the aims of enhancing learning, empowerment and contributing to civic society. It is firmly community-based, with local groups taking responsibility for, and playing a key role in, organising courses and deciding on programme-content. There were approximately 50,000 participants in 2010, in line with 2009 rates.
- The ***Back to Education Initiative (BTEI)*** (EU co-funded under the European Social Fund) aims to increase the participation of young people and adults with less than upper second level education in a range of learning opportunities. It is free for all adults with less than upper second level education. BTEI participants can also avail of guidance and childcare supports. 2010 provision was maintained at 2009 levels enabling approximately 28,000 to avail of part-time further education opportunities.
- Under the ***Adult Refugee Programme (ARP)*** which is co-ordinated by County Dublin VEC refugees receive a full-time, one year programme of English Language tuition and socialisation skills. In 2010 funding of €2.6 million was provided for the programme which attracted 550 participants.

Programme	2010 Expenditure €m	Approved Places
Full-time		
VTOS	78.9	5,000
Youthreach	68.3	3,692
STTCs	23.8	684*
PLC	8.9**	31,688
Part-Time		
	2010 Expenditure €m	**Participants (estimated)**
BTEI	17	28,000
Literacy	32	47,000
Community Education	10.1	50,000
With effect from 1 September 2010; 984 up to 31 August 2010.* * Expenditure on enhanced capitation and LDA payments only. Overall expenditure on PLC in 2010 was €186m, including pay, student support and capitation.*		

Programme Supports

- The ***Adult Education Guidance Initiative (AEGI)*** is delivered through 40 projects nationwide, with all but one managed by the local VEC. The measure is designed to support access to Adult Literacy, VTOS, BTEI and other adult and community education programmes in the Further Education Sector. The service is also available to survivors of residential abuse and their families. AEGI provision for 2010 was €6.85 million and the service dealt with more than 37,000 clients.

- The ***Youthreach Guidance Counselling and Psychological Service (GCP)*** is available to participants in Youthreach, STTCs and FÁS Community Training Centres. It is administered by way of grants to VECs and is used to deliver prioritised services from a spectrum of needs ranging from initial orientation and guidance to vocational information as well as psychological services. Total expenditure on the GCP in 2010 was €1.15 million.
- The ***Youthreach Special Educational Needs Initiative*** (SENI) was introduced in 20 Youthreach centres in 2007. This initiative provided for additional staffing to deal with the special educational needs of learners, staff training, case supervision and professional support for staff. Total expenditure on the SENI in 2010 was €1.5 million

In September 2010, the Childcare Education Training Scheme (CETS) was introduced, as part of Budget 2010, in which it was announced that the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (OMCYA) would explore, with the Department of Education and Skills, Enterprise Trade and Initiative and FÁS, the potential to rationalise childcare support schemes, with the objective of delivering improved supports in a more efficient, transparent and equitable way. Under the CETS (which is administered by the OMCYA) 1,500 full-time equivalent childcare places are provided for VTOS, Youthreach, STTC and BTEI participants. The CETS scheme standardises childcare practices across the VECs in a fair and consistent manner and enhances the supports available to the disadvantaged and low-skilled.

Objective 2.4: To strive to meet the objectives of the National Skills Strategy by continuing to provide active labour market programmes

Foras Áiseanna Saothair (FÁS)

In May 2010 responsibility for FÁS as an Agency and its funding related to training and skills transferred from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation to the Department of Education and Skills. Responsibility for the employment service and community service activities of FÁS and its related funding also transferred to the Department on an interim basis with the Department of Social Protection to assume overall responsibility for the policy and funding of FÁS employment programmes and employment services from 1st January 2011.

Following the commencement of the Labour Services (Amendment) Act 2009 in January 2010, a new Board was appointed to FÁS in January 2010. Members were selected from the public and private sector on the basis of relevant experience and competencies in areas such as the functions of FÁS, finance, corporate governance and public administration, as provided for in the Act.

The total budget for FÁS in 2010 amounted to just over €1 billion with a staff of 1,936 at the end of 2010. Further information relating to the work of FÁS are available from its website www.fas.ie.

Skillnets Ltd

Also in May 2010 responsibility for Skillnets Ltd, which is an enterprise-led body set up to provide companies with new opportunities to develop relevant, effective answers to their training and development needs, transferred from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation to the Department of Education and Skills. Some 37,237 trainees availed of 178,701 training days under Skillnets Training Networks Programme (TNP) in 2010.

In 2010, the TNP included for the first time an element of training for the unemployed. Over 2010 it was anticipated that up to 10,000 unemployed persons would be trained/upskilled at a cost of circa. €2m.

Under the revised mandate of the TNP, a minimum of 10% of participants in the activities of TNP member networks must be unemployed and a maximum of 30% in order to preserve the enterprise-led focus and established strengths of the TNP model. Further details, including financial information, is available from Skillnets Ltd's website www.skillnets.ie.

Training for the Unemployed

In 2010 the Department funded the provision of over 190,000 training and work experience places as follows:

- During 2010 over 165,000 individuals benefited from FÁS Training and Employment places which included work experience places under the Work Placement Programme and Community Employment and on-the-job training measures for redundant apprentices.
- With a view to enhancing training and education for the unemployed, the Government established the Labour Market Activation Fund during 2010 with the objective of providing 12,000 education and training places over its lifetime. While 59 projects were offered funding in total, 55 projects proceeded to implementation. As of December 2010 some 9,650 (80%) training places were filled with further places expected. The outturn expenditure for 2010 on funded projects was €16.754 million.
- Skillnets Ltd provided almost 4,800 training places for the unemployed or those on short time working in 2010.

European Social Fund

In 2010, the Department continued to support inter alia the delivery of mainly education and training services by ensuring the maximum possible drawdown of assistance from the European Social Fund (ESF). This included the ongoing management of the 2007-2013 Human Capital Investment Operational Programme (HCIOP) and the submission of final claims for the 2000-2006 ESF co-financed Programmes to the European Commission for payment.

Claims for the drawdown of financial assistance from the ESF were lodged by the relevant EU deadlines in 2010. Almost €50 million in ESF aid receipts was received by the Department in 2010.

Internship Development Programme[7]

In November 2010 the Government approved the creation of a new temporary Internship Development Programme, to be managed by FÁS Employment Services, aimed at those who are at least 3 months unemployed.

The programme will consist of a training/education element and a placement in an organisation (excluding the public sector) for a period of up to twelve (12) months. The maximum duration for participants on the programme will be 15 months, which is comprised of the 12 month placement and the potential for a further 3 months to facilitate education and training. Participants will not be allowed to extend their participation on the programme beyond the 15 month limit.

[7] This Programme has since been replaced by the JobBridge Internship Programme which is under the remit of the Department of Social Protection

Under the programme the State will provide support for up to 5,000 places to be created, however, take-up on the programme will be entirely dependent on the interests of potential participants and host organisations participating in the programme.

European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF)

The EGF, which has a budget of up to €500 million a year and covers the period 2007 – 2013, was launched in 2007 to assist EU Member States to provide retraining supports to workers made redundant as a result of globalisation and changing global trade patterns. The EGF generally only funds active labour market interventions such as occupational guidance, training and re-training, outplacement assistance and entrepreneurship promotion/aid for self-employment, where there have been 500 plus redundancies within a certain time period.

In 2009, Ireland submitted EGF applications targeted at former workers at Dell Computers, Limerick (2,400 redundancies), Waterford Crystal (598 redundancies) and SR Technics (838 redundancies).

In 2010, delivery of services under the EGF programme of customized supports continued apace, with a total of 4,260 interventions for the Dell cohort alone in the period to end 2010. Expenditure paid to service providers upon claims made on the three EGF applications in 2010 was as follows:

Application	Total allocation 2009-2011	Total spend 2010 –
Dell	€22.82m	€1.9m
Waterford Crystal	€3.95m	€0.5m
SR Technics	€7.45m	€0.13m

In June 2010, a provisional application for EGF support for former workers across 3 NACE[8] construction sub-sectors was submitted. Final applications for NACE sub-sectors 41, 43 and 71 for a combined total of approximately €55 million were submitted on 22 February 2011.

Objective 2.5: To continue to provide training and upskilling opportunities to those in employment so they, too, will continue to develop their skills in line with the National Skills Strategy

Workplace Basic Education Fund (WBEF)

The central aim of this Fund (Skills for Work) which was established in 2004 is to provide training to help employees deal with the basic skills demands of the workplace. All programmes are aimed at employees with basic education needs including literacy and numeracy, in particular employees with, or less than, junior cycle qualifications. The WBEF is funded via the National Training Fund and administered by County Dublin VEC supported 230 national adult literacy and numeracy programmes for 1,599 workers with low basic skills in 2010. The WBEF's 2010 funding allocation was €2.8 million.

[8] NACE Code is a pan-European classification system which groups organisations according to their business activities.

Objective 2.6: To increase participation through the National Employment Action Plan referral process and through other appropriate training and employment supports

Labour market participation

Increased labour market participation is supported through appropriate training and employment supports and, for long-term unemployed, through the National Employment Action Plan (NEAP) Department of Social Protection/FÁS (DSP/FÁS) referral process. The focus is on early intervention with persons referred to FÁS by the Department of Social Protection for the purpose of assisting their integration into the labour market.

FÁS provides a series of services for those seeking employment. The main employment schemes are Community Employment and Job Initiative, which provide opportunities for work and training within local communities. In 2010 there were over 24,000 places on these schemes.

The number of client referrals by the Department of Social Protection for interview in 2010 increased by 15% on 2009. With attendance rates down slightly, the number of initial NEAP interviews, at 78,300, increased by 11% over 2009.

Objective 2.7: To increase labour market participation by people with disabilities

The operation of the FÁS-funded ***Wage Subsidy (WS)*** continued in 2010 to provide on-going incentives for employers and persons with disabilities to take up employment in the open labour market. The ***Employment Support Scheme (ESS)*** for persons with disabilities also continued in 2010. In total, over 1,000 persons participated in employment as a result of these schemes in 2010.

Discussions on the further advancement of an outline for a Comprehensive Employment Strategy for people with disabilities continued in 2010 with other Government Departments and state agencies. The aim of this strategy is to address the diversity of circumstances, needs and abilities of people with disabilities, and to enhance the operation and effectiveness of the range of FÁS supports and services that are aimed at facilitating their increased participation in the open labour market. The strategy is being further advanced in a Cross Sectoral Group led by the by the Departments of Education and Skills and Health and Children, and including representatives of the Department of Social Protection, FÁS and the HSE.

Chapter 3 – Higher Education and Research

High Level Goal Three: Sustain and strengthen higher education and research

Context

Irish higher education has seen extraordinary expansion in the past decade with the number of third level students in full-time education[9] rising from under 112,000 to almost 158,000 (an increase of 41%). The level of investment in research has expanded considerably and the quality and reputation of Irish research is now achieving impact internationally. These developments have all had an enormously positive impact across all social groups, to the benefit of individuals, society and the wider economy.

The Department is responsible for the overall development and implementation of policy relating to, and the provision of funding for, the higher education sector, including the Universities and Institutes of Technology. This includes developing policy and supporting programmes to ensure equity of access to higher education, specifically focusing on the participation of those groups which are traditionally underrepresented in the sector.

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) is the statutory planning and development body for higher education and research in Ireland. Recurrent funding is allocated by the Department to the HEA, which in turn deals with the individual budgets of the seven Universities, fourteen Institutes of Technology and a number of designated higher education institutions. Further information relating to the work of the HEA is available from its website www.hea.ie.

In addition, the Department also has direct responsibility for the resourcing of a small number of higher education institutions. The Department also funds the provision of infrastructure required for the delivery of higher education including research infrastructure.

In its Strategy Statement 2008-2010 the Department identified the following priorities for higher education and research:

- To widen and increase participation
- To modernise programme delivery
- To achieve world-class quality at all levels from undergraduate education to advanced fourth level research

Objective 3.1: Enhance the quality of higher education and its capacity to respond to changing needs

National Strategy for the Development and Delivery of Higher Education

A twenty year strategy was completed and submitted to Government in December 2010. The development of the strategy was lead over an eighteen month period by a high level steering group and provided for a comprehensive examination of the challenges facing the sector with a wide range of inputs from different stakeholders as well as national and international expertise. The Strategy was published in January 2011.

[9] Source – Education Statistics 2009/2010

The Strategy set out directions for change that are aimed at providing for:

- A more flexible system with a greater choice of provision and modes of learning for an increasingly diverse cohort of students;
- Improvements in the quality of the student experience, the quality of teaching and learning and the relevance of learning outcomes; and
- Ensuring that higher education connects more effectively with wider social, economic and enterprise needs through its staff, the quality of its graduates, the relevance of its programmes, the quality of its research and its ability to translate that into high value jobs and real benefits for society

The Strategy recommends a number of system changes that are aimed at supporting these objectives, including:

- A smaller number of higher education institutions of significant strength; critical mass; and governed according to best modern practice.
- A sustainable system of funding to allow for further growth and development with public funding more aligned to national priorities and needs;
- A more performance oriented system, with much more transparent data flows; assessment of wider outcomes and impacts and strengthened accountability for institutions according to agreed performance contracts.

Recurrent Funding

In 2010, almost €1.194bn in recurrent funding was provided to the University and Institute of Technology (IOT) sectors. Recurrent funding to the third level sector includes grant in lieu of the cost of tuition fees which amounted to some €400million in the 2009/2010 school year.

Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF)

The SIF was introduced in 2006 to drive modernisation, change and reform in core higher education activities. A key success of the Programme has been the level of inter-institutional collaboration it has generated throughout the sector. In 2010 recurrent expenditure under this fund amounted to €27 million.

Further details with regard to this fund are available from the HEA website (www.hea.ie).

Higher Education Infrastructure Investment

In 2010 the Department continued its programme of investment in mainstream higher education infrastructure with over €162 million - an increase of €25 million on the previous year. Eight major projects were fully completed delivering 37,676m² of new and improved facilities for over 8,500 students. In addition, as of end December 2010 a further twelve projects targeted to deliver approximately 56,049 m² were on site while eleven projects were in design with the capacity to deliver 31,227m² of new and approved accommodation while

The Devolved Grant Scheme, which had been expanded in 2009 to include the 7 Universities in addition to the Institutes of Technology had a total cost of €42m in 2010. Under the Scheme minor works projects, relating to the upkeep of facilities, were carried out.

The Government's Public Private Partnership Programme announced in 2005 identified 7 new Third Level projects in 9 locations to be delivered via Public Private Partnership.

In July 2009, the 1st bundle of third level PPP projects consisting of six buildings in 4 Third Level Institutions were handed over to the National Development Finance Agency (NDFA) for procurement and tenders were received in August 2010. The 2nd Bundle of third level projects was handed over to the NDFA in September 2010 and the tendering process is ongoing. Pre-procurement work on the 3rd Bundle Third Level Projects commenced in November 2009 and is nearing completion.

Grangegorman Site

The Grangegorman Development Agency was established in May 2006. In 2009, the Agency completed its Strategic Plan and Budget for the proposed development of the site. The Strategic Plan includes the options and the associated costs of moving the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) campus to the site as well as making recommendations on site provision for the relevant health facilities. Government approval to proceed with the 1st Phase of the development of the Strategic Plan for the development of the Grangegorman site was announced in September 2010.

Objective 3.2: Significantly increase PhD numbers and research activity

Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation (SSTI)

This Strategy constitutes one of the principal pillars of the National Development Plan 2007-2013, and is the Government's blueprint for developing Ireland's research and innovation capacity. The SSTI provides for a range of programmes of support across a number of Government Departments and aims to improve the scale and quality of research and technology transfer arrangements carried out in Ireland in the higher education, public and enterprise sectors.

The Department is a major partner in the delivery of SSTI and had direct funding responsibility in 2010 for a number of funding programmes under the SSTI, all of which are primarily aimed at developing research capacity in the higher education system through the provision of physical infrastructure and the development of high quality fourth level education. These programmes include the award schemes of the two Irish Research Councils.

As part of efforts to consolidate and streamline research funding delivery structures, the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTLI) and a number of smaller research funding programmes transferred from the Department to the then Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation in May 2010.

Further information, including funding details, with regard to this Strategy is available from the HEA website (www.hea.ie).

Irish Research Council for Science, Engineering and Technology (IRCSET)

The IRCSET was established in 2001 and is an independent research funding and monitoring body which promotes science and engineering research in Ireland. It operates research funding initiatives, which support talented researchers in their early stage career formation across Masters, Doctoral and Postdoctoral levels, in the sciences, engineering and technology. These initiatives are designed to ensure

that Ireland will become an internationally attractive location for high-level research. The Council awarded 192 Postgraduate Scholarships and 90 Postdoctoral Fellowships in 2010.

Further information is available from the Council's website (www.ircset.ie).

Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS)

The IRCHSS was established in 2000 in response to the need to develop Ireland's research capacity and skills base in a rapidly-changing global environment where knowledge is key to economic and social growth. IRCHSS funds cutting-edge research in the humanities, social sciences, business and law with the objective of creating new knowledge and expertise beneficial to Ireland's economic, social and cultural development. The Council awarded 91 Postgraduate Scholarships and 25 Postdoctoral Fellowships in 2010.

Further information is available from the Council's website (www.irchss.ie).

Objective 3.3: Promote access to higher education particularly for under represented groups and provide flexible learning opportunities

The Department is responsible for leading the development of national policy on equity of access to higher education for all students particularly among those groups which are currently underrepresented in the sector. To that end, it supports a range of dedicated measures, which facilitate greater levels of participation by disadvantaged students, mature students and students with disabilities.

Financial Supports

The principal support, in financial terms, is provided under four student grant schemes, which make available means-tested financial assistance to students in further and higher education. These schemes are the Higher Education Grants Scheme, the Vocational Education Committees' Scholarship Scheme, the Third Level Maintenance Grants Scheme for Trainees and the Maintenance Grant Scheme for Students attending Post Leaving Certificate Courses. The schemes are administered by the local authorities and the VECs.

The maximum standard rate of maintenance grant for 2010 was €3,250. Students qualifying for the non-adjacent ordinary grant, plus the special rate of maintenance grant, received €6,355. In 2010**,** 69,486 students received grants under the ***Student Grant Schemes*** at a combined cost of €362m[10]**.**

The ***Student Assistance Fund*** provides financial assistance for full-time higher education students who are experiencing financial difficulties whilst attending college. Students can apply directly to their college for Student Assistance to help them with either temporary or ongoing financial difficulties. The Student Assistance Fund provides a further source of funding for higher education students in addition to other schemes. For the 2010/2011 the fund had a value of €5m. Over 7,600 students benefited from this fund for the 2009/2010 academic year.

The ***Fund for Students with Disabilities*** allocates funding to further and higher education colleges for the provision of services and supports to full-time students with disabilities. The Fund aims to ensure that students can participate fully in their academic programmes and are not disadvantaged by reason of a

[10] Provisional figure – Andrew Diggins 26/08

disability. Eligible students can receive assistance from the Fund from PLC level right up to doctoral level. They do not have to be in first year of a course to be eligible to apply for the Fund. In 2010 a total allocation of €12.2m was approved for support for students under this fund. In the 2009/10 academic year a total of 4,964 students benefited from this Fund which was an increase of over 1,000 students on the previous academic year.

The Department also provides for a number of third-level scholarship opportunities, including scholarships targeting disadvantaged areas. In the school year 2009/10, there were 274 scholarship holders. Total expenditure in 2010 was €2.1m.

New Online Grant Application Facility

A new system providing students with an online student grant application facility for the 2010/2011 academic year went live in September 2010. Once students register with the system they receive instructions that are tailored to their individual needs. Prior to this up to 60% of applications received by awarding authorities were incomplete and had to be returned to students. The online system accepts the application only when it is complete. It gives students clear instructions about the documentary evidence required that is specific to them. The system also provides the awarding authority with a means to communicate back and forth with the student through the Internet. Eleven grant-awarding authorities collaborated with and are currently supporting the online system. The system will be rolled out to other awarding authorities for the 2011/2012 academic year.

The 11 grant-awarding authorities initially taking part in the online system are:

- City of Cork VEC
- County Cork VEC
- County Donegal VEC
- County Dublin VEC
- City of Dublin VEC
- County Kildare VEC
- Dun Laoghaire VEC
- County Louth VEC
- City of Limerick VEC
- City of Waterford VEC
- Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council

Payment of student grants by Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT)

In 2009 the Department worked closely with a number of local authorities and VECs to advance the planned payment of student grants by EFT directly into a student's bank account. While the migration of student grant payment from payment by cheque to payment by electronic funds transfer offers numerous benefits to the student, the institution and the grant awarding bodies, the timing and accurate provision of verification is critical to the administration of EFT by the grant awarding bodies. A review of the initial test phase was carried out by the Department in 2010. The responses to the EFT system from the participating grant awarding bodies and institutions were unanimously positive and the overall review findings enabled an expansion of this payment system to additional grant awarding bodies and institutions in 2010.

Other Service enhancements introduced in 2010

The student grant schemes were published three months earlier than the previous year and indications are that this development contributed to faster outcomes to grant applications.

A complete overhaul of the student grant application form and guidance notes was undertaken to make these as simple as possible and to reduce the number of applications needing to be returned by grant awarding bodies to students because they are incomplete or inaccurate.

National Office for Equity of Access to Third Level Education

In 2003 he Department established this Office in the Higher Education Authority to facilitate educational access and opportunity for under-represented groups in higher education. The groups prioritised are:

- Socio-economic groups under-represented in higher education;
- Mature students;
- Students with a disability.

In 2010, the Department continued to provide funding to this office which administers a number of access measures on behalf of the Department.

The Student Support Bill

This, Bill which will provide for a fundamental and radical restructuring of the whole student grants administration function and provide for a single unified scheme, completed Report stage in Dáil Éireann in December 2010.

Chapter 4 – Improving and Developing Services

High Level Goal Four: Support the delivery and development of education through policy formulation, high-quality planning and a strong customer focus.

Context

In these challenging economic times the Department is keenly aware of the necessity to strengthen capacity in order to maximise our contribution to national recovery and societal harmony. The Department is committed to an ongoing programme of continuous improvement to enable us to work better, provide an improved customer service and maximise the capabilities of our staff. In 2010 the Department's priority continued to be the delivery of optimum outcomes to all learners from within existing, and in many cases, diminishing resources. Learners, their parents, educators and others expect high standards of service, more accountability and quality planning to meet future education needs of society. The Department remains committed to the continued implementation of the Government's programme for modernisation across the public sector.

The specific priorities of the Department identified in the 2008-2010 Statement of Strategy are:

- To improve and develop the service we deliver
- To develop and review policies for the education system
- To continue implementation of the modernisation agenda
- To implement the Government's decentralisation programme

Objective 4.1: Deliver effective policies to address existing needs and emerging challenges in the education sector

Policy planning and review

Policy development is an integral part of the Department's services. The Department supports research, evaluation and planning to ensure an effective policy framework through its Central Policy Division.

Data Collection

In 2010 there was enhanced dissemination of data through an online interactive Education Statistics database website which is hosted by the Central Statistics Office on behalf of the Department to enable users of statistics to search for and download data they need. The database contains detailed time series information on a range of education topics including primary, secondary and third level enrolment, teachers, pupil-teacher ratio, schools, expenditure on education, school transport and other education information. Users can search this facility, which is accessible via the Department's website www.education.gov.ie, to find data of interest or to generate customised statistical tables in a user-friendly manner.

The Department moved from a paper-based Census of Primary Schools to an electronic transfer of information which saw a faster completion of the Primary Census with early indications of enrolment. Among the advantage to the spreadsheet approach is that it is more efficient for both the principal to fill in and for the Department to process. Totals are calculated automatically and errors and crosschecks are being built in to the form. This means that errors will be caught and fixed at the time of filling in the forms eliminating the need for the Department to contact the school again later in the year in order to

resolve errors or inconsistencies. Also, because some of the work is done automatically in the spreadsheet, the overall time required for principals to fill in the form will be reduced. In addition a suggestions/comment area was added to the form for the year 2010/2011, comments/suggestions made will be taken into consideration when preparing the 2011/2012 forms. Special schools were also given the option to return the 2010/2011 census forms by uploading them to Esinet if they wished to do so.

Annual Statistical Reports dating back to 1924/1925 were uploaded to the Department's website for the information of researchers and students.

The Department published the following publications in 2010:

- Education Statistics pamphlet 2008/09.
- Projections of full time enrolment at Primary, Second and Third Level 2009-2030
- Class Size information at individual school level 2009/2010

At post primary level the Department amalgamated the collection of information on applicants for additional Traveller support hours and English language support into the annual October returns data collection eliminating the need for separate data collections on these topics, thus reducing burden on schools. In compliance with Data Protection requirements schools have been advised by the Department to inform parents that these data are being collected and returned to the Department for the purpose of allocating additional resources.

Arising from the Data Strategy the Department launched a comprehensive inventory of all data collections from schools. The objective of the Inventory exercise is to examine the data collections from schools with a view to eliminating duplication and reducing the overall administrative burden on schools, as well as to examine how the overall amount of Department resources devoted to data collection from schools could be reduced, in light of continuing reduction of staffing numbers, and from the point of view of making the most efficient use of the resources available to the Department. This work is ongoing.

Value for Money (VFM) Reviews

The objectives of the programme of reviews are to (a) analyse Exchequer spending in a systematic manner and (b) provide a basis on which more informed decisions can be made.

Through its Central Policy Unit the Department also monitors and reports on the recommendations of reviews which have been completed. In addition to co-ordinating the programme of Value for Money Reviews, this Unit also co-ordinates reporting on other dedicated formal policy reviews/reports, prepared with a view to publication, which impact on value for money issues. These include reports prepared by the Evaluation Support and Research Unit (ESRU) of the Inspectorate.

Six VFM Reviews were underway as of 31st December 2010, with scheduled completion dates before the end of 2011:

- Review of the Summer Works Scheme
- Review of Insurance Arrangements for Schools
- Review of Special Needs Assistants
- Review of expenditure on language support for migrant students at primary and post-primary schools who do not speak English (or Irish) as a first language
- Review of School Transport
- Review of Small Primary School Provision

Community National Schools (CNS)

Implementation of the CNS model of primary school under VEC patronage approved by Government in 2007 continued during 2010. The CNS model is a response to the increasing demand for parental choice in the patronage of primary schools.

The aim of the model is to cater for the diversity present within the community in a single school setting. The schools have an ethos of inclusion, equality and harmony where each child and member of the school community is valued and treated with respect. The schools are multi-belief and welcome and respect children of all faiths and none and a key objective of the model is to provide religious education and faith formation during the school day in accordance with the wishes of parents. The pilot commenced in September 2008 with two schools located in the Dublin 15 area and three further schools located in Balbriggan, Naas and Navan opened in the autumn of 2010.

The implementation of the pilot model is being overseen by a joint DES-VEC Steering Committee. Evaluation of the pilot is being undertaken by a sub-committee of the Steering Group. The Education (Amendment) Bill 2010 which was published in September 2010 provided for a legislative framework to facilitate the involvement of VECs in the provision of primary education.

Qualifications Policy

Through its support of the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) and the Further and Higher Education and Training Awards Councils (FETAC and HETAC) the Department promotes the development and implementation of the National Framework of Qualifications, the quality assuring of a wide range of further and higher education and training provision and the making of awards to learners.

FETAC, which was established in 2001 under the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999, is the statutory awarding body for further education and training in Ireland. FETAC makes quality assured awards that are part of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) from levels 1-6. Meeting learner need is central to the work of FETAC. FETAC made an estimated 195,000 awards in 2010 across Levels 1-6 of the Framework. In 2010 the Department provided approximately €5.2 million to support the work of the Council.

HETAC was established in June 2001 under the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999. HETAC awards qualifications at all levels of higher education and training up to PhD level. Its main functions include setting standards for higher education and training awards, validation of higher education and training programmes, monitoring of institutional quality assurance procedures, delegation of awarding powers to recognised institutions, ensuring that student assessment procedures are fair and consistent and ensuring that arrangements are in place in commercial education and training institutions to protect learners where programmes validated by HETAC cease to be provided. HETAC made approximately 22,600 Major Awards and 2,600 Minor and Special Purpose Awards across Levels 6-10. In 2010 the Department provided approximately €1.3 million to support the work of the Council.

The NQAI which was set up in February 2001 has responsibility for developing and maintaining the National Framework of Qualifications. It has three principal objects which are set out in the Qualifications (Education & Training) Act 1999 as follows:

- The establishment and maintenance of a framework of qualifications for the development, recognition and award of qualifications based on standards of knowledge, skill or competence to be acquired by learners;

- The establishment and promotion of the maintenance and improvement of the standards of awards of the further and higher education and training sector, other than in the existing universities; and
- The promotion and facilitation of access, transfer and progression throughout the span of education and training provision.

In 2010 the Department provided approximately €2.44 million to support the work of the Authority.

In 2010 the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Policy section of the Department began drafting the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Bill, to provide for the amalgamation of the NQAI, FETAC and HETAC into a single agency. The new agency will also take on responsibility for the external quality assurance review of universities, a function which is currently performed by the Irish Universities Quality Board and the Higher Education Authority. The Interim Board of the amalgamated agency was appointed by the Minister in January and a CEO Designate of the new agency, who will assist the Interim Board in progressing the administrative preparations for the amalgamation, was appointed in October.

Draft National Plan on Improving Literacy and Numeracy in Schools

This draft plan which was published in November 2010 sets out national targets covering early childhood, primary education and post-primary education. The targets seek to foster a better culture of reading and more positive attitudes towards mathematics among young people. As of end December 2010 consultations were ongoing, with a deadline for responses of end February 2011. It is anticipated that consultation meetings with key stakeholders will take place in March and April 2011.

EU Directive 2005/36/EC on Recognition of Professional Qualifications

This Directive, which came in effect in October 2007, sets out procedures for the recognition of a wide range of professional qualifications. In support of the European Commission's evaluation of this Directive, an experience report on the general system of recognition was prepared in co-operation with the competent authorities and provided to the Commission in October 210.

Intercultural Education Strategy 2010 -2015

The Department, in conjunction with the Office of the Minister for Integration, published this strategy in September 2010. The aims of the strategy are to ensure that:

- all students experience an education that *"respects the diversity of values, beliefs, languages and traditions in Irish society and is conducted in a spirit of partnership"* (*Education Act, 1998*); and
- all education providers are assisted with ensuring that inclusion and integration within an intercultural learning environment become the norm.

Objective 4.2: Support the modernisation of the education sector through a partnership process that promotes good industrial relations practice

In 2010, through its External Staff Relations Unit (ESRU), the Department continued to provide and operate an industrial relations framework and service at national level to manage the processing of industrial relations issues relating to the education sector outside of the Department of Education and Skills. The functions of the ESRU include the promotion of compliance with Government pay policy throughout the wider education sector, the full implementation of the Public Service Agreement 2010-2014 (Croke Park Agreement) with regard to the education sector and provision of advice to line sections within the Department (and the educational institutions) on the application of employment law.

In 2010 funding for Partnership arrangements in the Educational Sector amounted to €90,000.

Objective 4.3: Support and develop staff and seek continuous improvement in the effectiveness, value and quality of our services

ICT Supports

The Department continues to rely on a number of ICT systems to support key business functions. During 2010 a number of significant enhancements to key systems were completed including enhancements to both the Teacher Payroll and the On-Line Claims Systems.

Both the Pupil Entity Implementation (PEIP) and the Inventory of School Accommodation (ISAP) projects went live in 2010. The PEIP streamlines the internal Departmental processes and reduces the administrative burden associated with the collection and recording of pupil data while the ISAP facilitates the efficient collection of key data from schools.

In addition tenders were sought for a major bandwidth upgrade for the Department's three HQ buildings and 31 regional and local offices.

Personal Development

Through its Staff Training and Development Unit the Department engages with staff and management in identifying training needs and organises and supports a wide range of training and development programmes for staff.

In excess of 2,500 days of training was provided in 2010. This training was targeted at the Department's priority business needs and in line with reducing the overall training costs was mainly delivered in house. Training was presented in areas that included, Corporate Governance, Financial Management, induction training for new staff, Irish language training, Executive Officer Development, Public Procurement, IT (end-user) and IT technical training.

In addition to training and development for administrative grades tailored training support is provided for the Inspectorate, the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), the Planning and Building Unit (PBU) and the IT Unit to meet their specific professional and technical training requirements.

Separate to the organised training and development outlined above, the Department continued to foster a learning culture by providing support for staff attending further education courses in their own time that are relevant to the Department and the broader Civil and Public Service.

European Structural and European Regional Development Funds

In 2010 the Department continued to support the delivery of education services by ensuring maximum drawdown of assistance from the European Structural Funds (ESF) under the Human Capital Investment Operational Programme (HCIOP) and the BMW[11] and S&E[12] Regional Operational Programmes, and by monitoring and reporting progress on education measures.

Claims for the drawdown of financial assistance from the ESF were lodged by the relevant EU deadlines in 2010. Site visits were conducted in accordance with EU Regulations to verify the veracity of returns being made. Almost €50 million in ESF aid receipts was received by the Department in 2010 on the basis of verified expenditure returns submitted by Final Beneficiaries, i.e. VECs, Institutes Of Technology, Universities and the Higher Education Authority. The total amount of ESF aid to be claimed by the Department during the period 2007-2013 is €130 million.)

The Department is involved in ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) aid drawdown as well as ESF aid drawdown. However ERDF monies go directly to the Department of Finance (Exchequer). Documentation in relation to closure of the previous Productive Sector Operational Programme 2000-2006 was submitted to the Managing Authority within the agreed timeframe and all issues relating to closure audits were finalised.

All documentation in relation to the closure of the Employment and Human Resources Development OP 2000-2006 was submitted to the Managing Authority within the agreed timeframe. There is a balance of approx €20 million outstanding in respect of claims submitted under this round that is due to the Department which we expect to receive in 2011 when the EU Commission process final payments on closure.

In 2010 the Department monitored and reported on progress in relation to educational measures in the HCIOP, the BMW and S&E Regional Operational Programmes. Comprehensive progress and financial reports on all measures were provided for the Spring Monitoring Committee Meetings.

In addition the Department promoted compliance with NDP/EU requirements – issued circulars and guidelines on ESF Regulations for the 2007-2013 round of funding to all public beneficiaries; facilitated audits/control visits and followed up on issues raised at audit.

Preliminary discussions between the ESF Managing Authority and the EU Commission on the priorities, measures, funding/aid arrangements and possible configuration of the next round of structural funds (most likely from 2014-2020) commenced in 2010 and these will continue over the next three years preparatory to publication of the ESF operational programme for the EU and Ireland. The overall objective of these negotiations will be to maximise the drawdown of EU aid for Ireland and for education related programmes. At this stage the principal policy framework likely to inform decision-making in relation to selection of education measures for EU-funding is the 2020 Strategy.

The EU's five headline targets for its 2020 Strategy, endorsed by the European Council in 2010, are:

- Raising the employment rate of the population aged 20-64 from the current 69% to 75%.
- Raising the investment in Research and Development (R&D) to 3% of the EU's GDP

[11] BMW refers to Border, Midlands and Western Regional Operational Programme
[12] S&E refers to Southern & Eastern Regional Operational Programme

- Meeting the EU's '20/20/20' objectives on greenhouse gas emission reduction and renewable energies.
- Reducing the share of early school leavers from the current 15% to under 10%, and increasing those in the 30-34 year old age cohort having a third level qualification to at least 40% .
- Reducing the number of Europeans living below the poverty line by 25%, lifting 20 million out of poverty from the current 80 million.

These targets are interrelated and critical to our overall success of the EU. To ensure that each Member State tailors the Europe 2020 strategy to its particular situation, the EU Commission will require that EU goals are translated into national targets and trajectories.

Objective 4.4: Manage the Department's response to the initiatives for the redress of child abuse in residential institutions

The Commission to Inquire Into Child Abuse (CICA)

Since the publication of the Report of the Commission in 2009, the Department has pursued the relevant actions in the Implementation Plan to progress the Report's recommendations particularly in relation to education, family tracing, provision of information to former residents and the designing of a Memorial.

During 2010, the Commission continued to settle its third party legal representation costs and make arrangements for the custody or disposal of its documents, in a accordance with the legislative provisions.

During 2010, expenditure of €2.26 million was incurred by the Department in respect of the Commission, bringing the total expenditure on the Commission to the end of 2010 to €65.194 million.

Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB)

The Department provides funding and support to the RIRB, which was established in December 2002, to provide financial awards to victims of child abuse in residential institutions. The RIRB processed 607 applications during 2010 resulting in 522 awards. The total number of applications processed to end 2010 was 14,388.

Where a person is not satisfied with an award made by the RIRB following a hearing they may apply to the Residential Institutions Redress Review Committee for a review of the Board's award. The Review Committee may uphold the Board's award, or increase or decrease the amount of the award. 17 awards were made following Review during 2010.

The Department paid approximately €46.5 million in redress awards and associated costs during 2010. Cumulative expenditure to the end of 2010 was some €1.05 billion

Education Finance Board (EFB)

The Department continued to support the role of the EFB which was established in February 2006 to provide education grants to former residents of institutions and their families.

1,901 grants were approved by the EFB in respect of former residents and their families during the year. Approximately €1.51 million was expended on education grants by the Board leaving it with an available

balance of approximately €3.65 million at the end of 2010 to provide education grants to former residents and their families into the future.

FOI requests relating to former residents

During 2010, the Department processed 475 Freedom of Information applications for records from former residents of industrial schools and other institutions bringing the total number of such applications processed up to 12,652 by the end of 2010.

Family tracing, advice and support

The Department provided funding of approximately €0.95 million towards family tracing services and advice and support services for former residents of institutions in 2010.

Statutory Fund to Support Needs of Survivors

In the light of the congregations' individual responses to the call for additional contributions and the report of the Panel on the adequacy of the congregations' financial statements as a basis for assessing their resources, the Government announced its view that the costs of responding to residential institutional abuse should be shared on a 50:50 basis between the taxpayer and those responsible for the residential institutions. At the same time in April 2010, the Government announced its intention to use €110m of the expected contributions to establish a Statutory Fund to support the needs of survivors of institutional abuse.

Objective 4.5: Contributing to the development of

- North/South cooperation through the exchange of information and learning and joint action in agreed areas of common interest
- Education through cooperation and decision making at EU and international level

North South Cooperation

The Department is responsible for the development of cooperation in the area of education between both parts of the island of Ireland, in the context of the Good Friday agreement. Its principal function, in this respect, is to take forward this cooperation through the North/South Ministerial Council and to develop common policies in the designated areas of special education needs, educational underachievement, teacher mobility and school, youth and teacher exchanges.

In January 2010, the Departments of Education North/South formally commenced a joint North South study of cooperation in the education sector. This study covers current cooperation in the education sector between the two Departments, the potential for further collaboration and a recommended programme of action. Part 1 of the study, comprising a scoping exercise of current and recent North South cooperative activity in the education and youth sectors, was completed in draft format in 2010. The two Departments continued to liaise in 2010 with regard to agreeing the arrangements for Part 2 of the study.

Both Departments jointly organised, in the context of joint work on tackling educational underachievement, a successful 2 day post-primary numeracy conference in February 2010. The conference explored the case for change in mathematics curriculum and pedagogy, with participants sharing their experiences and ideas on best practice and exploring areas for future joint working in relation to mathematics.

In autumn 2010, the school inspectorates in both jurisdictions commenced an evaluation of the *Dissolving Boundaries* programme. The purpose of this evaluation is to asses the educational outcomes and wider benefits of the programme.

The Department continues to co-fund, with its Northern Ireland counterpart, a range of North South cooperation initiatives including the *European Schools*, *Dissolving Boundaries* and *Civic Link* programmes. The total expenditure by this Department in supporting these activities in 2010 amounted to €1.22 million. The table below[13] provides a breakdown of participants in North South projects and programmes that received funding support in 2010.

Total Number Schools	**1891**
Total Number of Youth Groups	**17**
Total Number of Teachers/Trainers	**1,042**
Total Number of Students	**101,220**
Total Number of Young People	**856**

In 2010 the Department contributed approximately €870,000 in revenue and capital expenditure to the Middleton Centre for Autism (Armagh).

The George Mitchell Scholarship Programme

In 2007, it was decided to increase the Irish Government's contribution to this Scholarship Programme by €20 million, conditional on matching funding being raised. Such matching funding must not include funding from public funds in Ireland (North or South). The George Mitchell Scholarship Fund (Amendment) Act 2010 was brought into operation in June 2010 and amends 1998 legislation to provide a legal basis for the implementation of the 2007 decision. The main provisions of the amending Act include that the Department shall, conditional on matching funding being raised by the fund manager, make annual payments of up to €4 million per annum into the Fund until such time as the overall limit of €20 million is reached. The 2010 legislation also provides for a detailed new funding and management agreement between the Department and the fund manager – a new agreement was executed on 1st June 2010. An initial payment of approximately €1,494,000 was made by the Department to Scholarship Fund on 30 July 2010 under the new agreement.

EU Education Policy

The Department contributes to the promotion of Ireland as a centre for international education through policy development and co-ordination; by supporting Departmental agencies which regulate and support international education in Ireland; by awarding scholarships to international graduate students who wish to undertake research in Ireland and by facilitating inward and outward visits by educational leaders and decision-makers.

[13] The significant increase in the number of schools and students participating in North/South projects in 2010 is due to the fact that 401 schools and 75,606 students in this jurisdiction participated in the annual Maths Week Ireland project in October 2010

Under the Treaties governing the European Union, Member States have full responsibility for the organisation of their education and vocational training systems, the content of teaching and their cultural and linguistic diversity, while the EU's role is to encourage and facilitate cooperation and support and to supplement the actions of the Member States. In practice, the European Commission and Member States work together on a range of education and training policy areas according to Member States' mutual priorities, and with the objective of sharing best practice between national experts under the so-called "open method of coordination".

EU Education Ministers meet at the Education Council in Brussels. The Education Council is supported by the Education Committee, which is attended by staff from the Department. This Committee, which is the primary forum where Ireland can influence the drafting of agreed documents to reflect national priorities, met thirteen times in 2010.

2010 was a significant year for EU cooperation on education and training, as education and training were centrally placed within *'Europe 2020 – the EU's strategy for jobs and growth up to 2020'*. Two specific EU headline targets for education and training were agreed by Member States. These targets, aimed at improving education levels, were later adopted as policy by the Heads of State and Government under Europe 2020, namely, aiming to reduce school drop-out rates to less than 10% and increase the share of 30-34 year olds who have completed tertiary or equivalent education to at least 40%. Ireland's national targets are based on related targets already in place under our National Skills Strategy (NSS) and these national headline targets in education were adopted and communicated to the Commission in December 2010.

The NSS targets were translated into proposed EU targets as follows:

- Ireland's proposed 2020 target for 18-24 year olds with at most lower secondary education and not in further education and training is 8%.
- Ireland's proposed 2020 target figure for tertiary attainment by 30-34 year olds is 60%.

Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) 2007-2013

This Programme enables individuals at all stages of their lives to pursue learning opportunities across Europe. It consists of four sub-programmes: Erasmus, Comenius, Leonardo DaVinci and Grundtvig, as well as transversal programmes covering inter-sectoral themes such as ICT and languages. The Programme is administered in Ireland by the HEA (Erasmus) and Léargas (all other sub-programmes).

Between 2007 and 2013, Ireland will receive over €80 million from the Programme, which will allow some 18,500 Irish third-level students and lecturing staff to participate in Erasmus educational exchanges. This EU funding will also provide opportunities for some 2,500 Irish trainees to benefit from European work placements, for some 800 workers to up-skill during placements in European companies, for some 500 vocational education and training professionals to exchange best practice and around 550 schools and 150 adult education organisations to participate in various European partnerships. In addition to these, some 300 adult educators will participate in the Grundtvig Programme, and over 1,100 teachers and future teachers will be given the opportunity to participate in the Comenius programme. The total funding allocated to Ireland under the Programme in 2010 was nearly €11.2m.

This Department, and the Department of Health and Youth Affairs are the national authorities, or guarantors, that oversee the administration of the programme by the agencies. Both Departments are represented on the Board of Directors of Léargas. Léargas is a client agency of this Department in such matters as the appointment of the board and grant and reporting arrangements. The Department interfaced with Léargas on the various initiatives and directives drawn up in 2010 for non-commercial State agencies generally, as well as on the Lifelong Learning Programme.

In addition to its general responsibilities with regard to the Lifelong Learning programme, the Department arranged, in accordance with EU requirements, for a mid-term review of the operation of the LLP to be carried out and submitted to the European Commission in 2010.

Council of Europe

The Department continued to be represented on the Steering Committee for Education (CDED) of the Council of Europe.

UNESCO

The Department acts as the Irish national commission for United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

International Education

The Department established and chaired a new High Level Group on International Education, drawing together representatives from the education sector and relevant Government departments and agencies. The Group is charged with providing national-level co-ordination in the promotion of Ireland as a centre for international education.

The Group also developed a ten- point strategy to promote international education, which the Department published as *Investing in Global Relationships: Ireland's International Education Strategy 2010-2015.* The High Level Group is charged with implementing the recommendations of the report, which are intended to meet the Government's target of doubling the number of international students in Ireland by 2016.

Chapter 5 – Supporting Delivery & Focusing on the Needs of our Customers

Organisation Capacity

From a human resources perspective during the lifetime of the Department's Strategy Statement 2008-2010 there have been significant losses of staff due to retirements, the Incentivised Career Break Scheme, outward transfer of staff and the ongoing moratorium on recruitment and promotion. Accordingly it has been necessary to prioritise work according to risk and to the resources available to us and to focus on filling vacancies in these critical areas to ensure the least possible impact on service delivery in the education sector.

As a result of the transfer of certain functions between Government Departments announced by the Government in March 2010, responsibility for skills and training policy was assigned with effect from 1 May 2010 to this Department. The transfer also resulted in the reassignment from this Department to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation of responsibility for the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions.

Staffing in the Department as of end December 2010 was 1,270 whole time equivalents (WTE) which includes 132 school inspectors and 165 WTE psychologists (NEPS).

Customer Services

The Department is committed to delivering quality services that meet the needs of all our customers, particularly learners. This commitment is reflected in the Department's Strategy Statement 2008-2010 and is underpinned in the performance management processes in the Department, where customer service is identified as a core competency for our staff. This commitment is reinforced in our Customer Charter and Customer Action Plan. The Department is also committed to communicating with and delivering services to customers through the medium of Irish, where that is their preference.

The Department has put in place appropriate procedures to (a) deal with formal complaints from customers relating to customer services and in (b) coordinates the Department's response to the queries from the following bodies:

- From the Office of the Ombudsman
- From the Ombudsman for Children's Office
- An Coimisinéir Teanga

These procedures are monitored on an ongoing basis.

During the course of 2010 the Department's website, www.education.ie, had nearly 1.4 million hits by over 660,000 unique visitors from over 208 countries.

Supporting the Parliamentary process

In 2010 the Department replied to 3,370 Parliamentary Questions asked by Deputies in Dáil Éireann, 3,158 of these were written replies and 212 were responded to orally by the Minister during Question Time. The questions and answers are published and are available on the Oireachtas website

www.oireachtas.ie. 211 requests for observations in relation to Draft Memoranda for the Government were also received.

In addition the Minister's Office received in excess of 7,500 representations and 10,000 emails during 2010.

Freedom of Information (FOI)

The Department received 796 new requests during 2010 of which 663 were personal, 128 were non-personal and 5 were mixed. These figures include requests from former residents of the residential institutions mentioned elsewhere in the report.

The Department granted 127 FOI requests in full, part-granted 254 requests and refused 167 requests during 2010. In addition 15 requests were withdrawn, 79 requests were dealt with outside of FOI and 2 were transferred out of the Department.

Financial Management

Appropriate internal audit and risk management procedures are in place to ensure compliance with public financial procedure guidelines, prompt payment legislation and to meet statutory requirements. Internal Audit Division[14] undertakes its work in accordance with an annual work programme which is overseen by the Department's Audit Committee. The Committee has a membership of five (including three external members, one of whom is Chairperson) and provides advice in relation to internal control, the risk management environment and audit matters. During 2010 a total of twenty three audit reports were presented to the Committee, including one which was a commitment under the National Audit Plan agreed with the European Commission in relation to programmes supported by the European Regional Development Fund. In addition, the Division reviewed the adequacy of the follow up action from previous audit reports.

In addition to the audits of the EU funds by the Internal Audit Division and in accordance with the requirements of the EU Regulations, the Department carried out management control checks on all European Social Fund (ESF) claims received in 2010 before being submitted to the European Commission for payment to Ireland. This allowed for a total of €52 million in ESF aid to be received by Ireland during 2010, €50 million of which was in respect of activities run by or on behalf of this Department and its Agencies.

During 2010 the Finance Unit introduced a new suite of expenditure reports to assist management in monitoring expenditure for their areas

Contributing to cross-departmental cooperation

The Department's Strategy Statement for 2008-2010 notes the role of education in supporting wider Government policy objectives is very significant and spans the full range of the agenda for economic development, social inclusion, quality of life and active citizenship. This is reflected in the key cross-cutting responsibilities of each of the Ministers of State assigned to this Department. Each of their roles involves oversight and leadership of arrangements for co-ordinating with other Departments to achieve major Government policy objectives for:

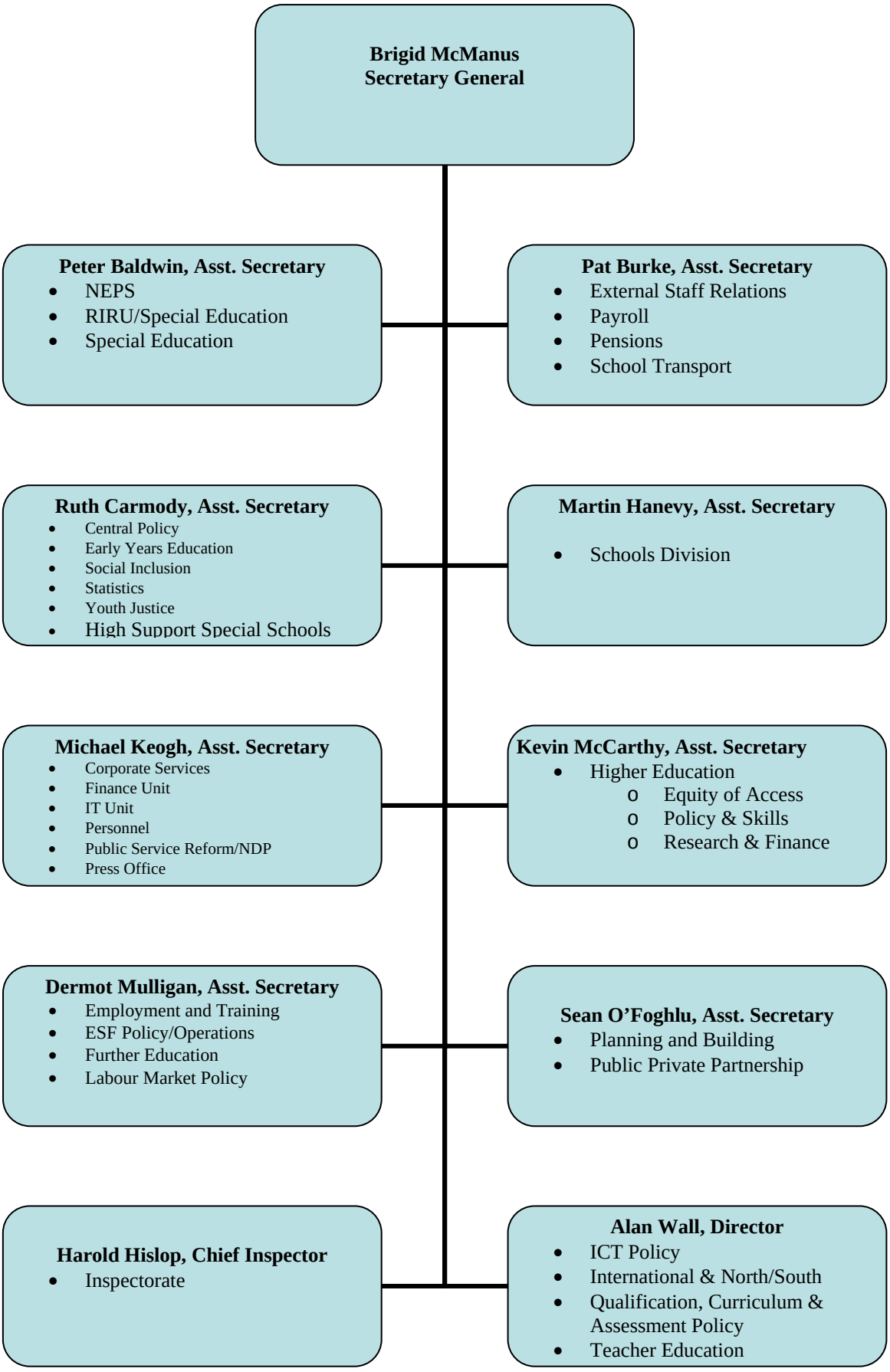
[14] Internal Audit Division consists of both the Internal Audit and ESF Financial Control (European Social Fund Audit Authority) Units

- lifelong learning
- the integration of newcomers in Ireland
- developing Early Childhood Education
- promoting innovation in the economy;
- promotion of co-ordinated delivery of services in the health and education sectors to people with disabilities and special educational needs, and those aspects of the implementation of the EPSEN and Disability Acts relating to education that require co-ordination in the health sector and oversight of the cross-sectoral implementation group established in the context of the implementation of the Acts

Other notable cross-cutting issues include interaction with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and local authorities in planning for the provision of new schools to meet the needs of emerging communities, implementing Government strategy for future skills supply and developing our research and development capacity (with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and others), advancing the broad social inclusion agenda, including the implementation of the National Anti-Poverty Strategy, (with Department of the Taoiseach and others), the development of policies to promote the Irish language, the implementation of the National Drugs Strategy, the RAPID programme (with the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs), the promotion of equality measures across the education system (in liaison with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and the Equality Authority) and the implementation of Reach Out: The National Strategy for Suicide Prevention (in collaboration with the Department of Health and Children and the Health Service Executive).

On these and on a range of other policy issues, Department officials continued to be involved in regular contacts with other Departments and agencies on both a bilateral basis and through formal co-ordinating structures such as inter departmental committees, senior officials groups and cabinet subcommittees during 2010.

Appendix A: Organisation Chart – January 2011[15]



[15] The Internal Audit Unit of the Department reports directly to the Secretary General.

Appendix B: Non-commercial bodies under the Aegis of the Department in 2010

An Chomhairle um Oideachais Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta	(COGG)
Commission into Child Abuse	(CICA)
Education Finance Board	(EFB)
[16]Foras Áiseanna Saothair	(FAS)
Further Education & Training Awards Council	(FETAC)
Grangegorman Development Agency	(GGDA)
Higher Education and Training Awards Council	(HETAC)
Higher Education Authority	(HEA)
Léargas - The Exchange Bureau	
National Centre for Technology in Ireland	(NCTE)
National Centre for Guidance in Education	(NCGE)
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment	(NCCA)
National Council for Special Education	(NCSE)
National Education Welfare Board	(NEWB)
National Qualifications Authority of Ireland	(NQAI)
Residential Institutions Redress Board	(RIRB)
Residential Institutions Review Committee	(RIRC)
Skillnets Ltd	
State Examinations Commission	(SEC)
[17]The Teaching Council	

[16] Both FAS and Skillnets Ltd came under the aegis of the Department of Education and Skills from May 2010
[17] The Teaching Council has been self financing since March 2008

Appendix C – Prompt Payments Summary January to December 2010

Government Department – Department of Education & Skills

Details	Number	Value (€)	Percentage (%) of total payments made (Number)
Number of payments made within 15 days	10,066	427,584,692.06	71.17%
Number of payments made within 16 days to 30 days	3,331	24,596,251.90	23.55%
Number of payments made in excess of 30 days	747	2,945,074.70	5.28%
Total payments made in 2010	14,144	455,126,018.66	100.00%
Total Disputed Invoices in 2010	71	1,413,958.42	

Source: Summary of Quarterly reports for the Department pursuant to Government Decision No.S29296 of 19th May 2009