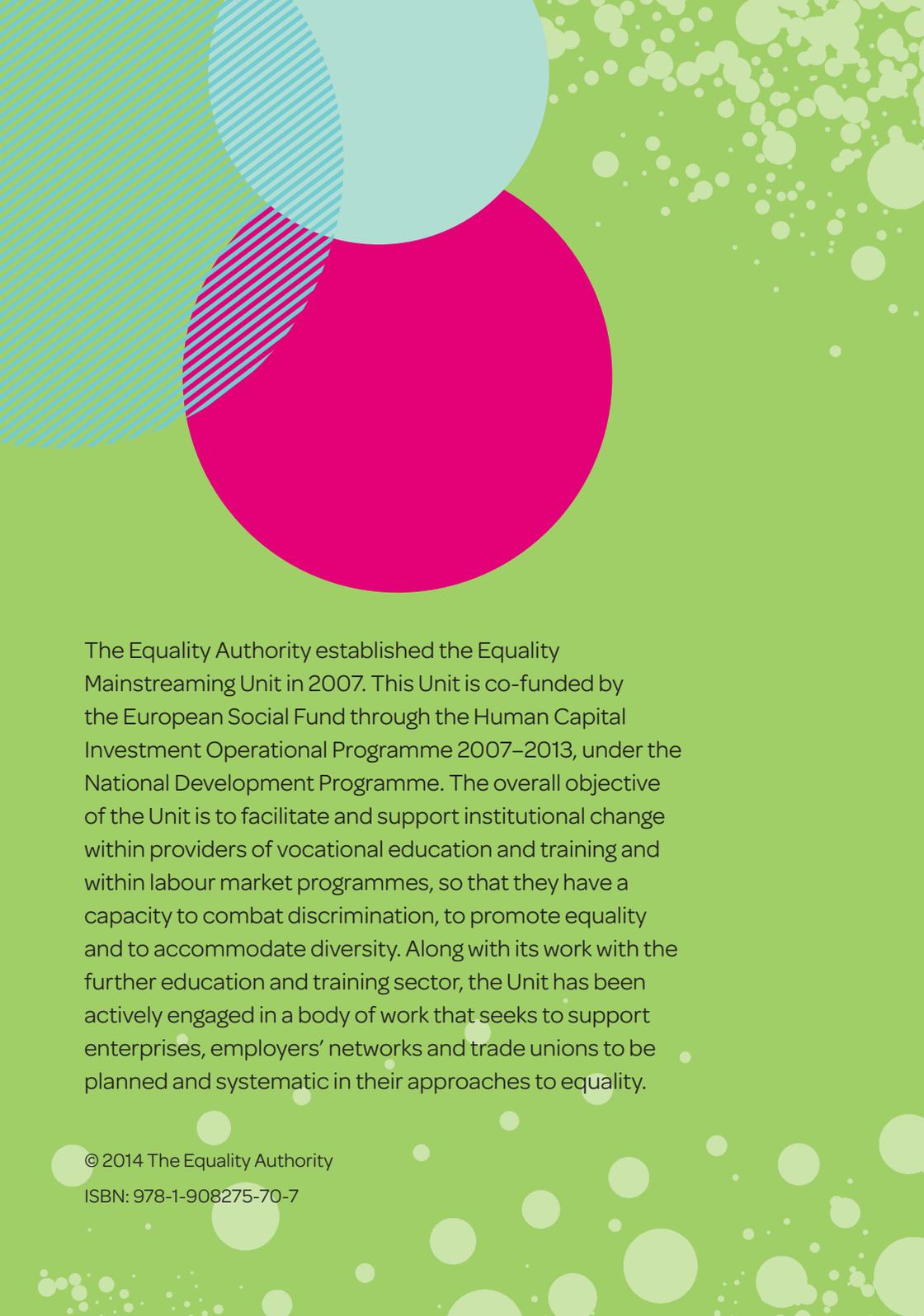




THE EQUALITY AUTHORITY
AN tÚDARÁS COMHIONANNAIS

EQUALITY IN ACTION

PROMOTING EQUALITY
MAINSTREAMING
IN THE FURTHER EDUCATION
AND TRAINING SECTOR

The background features a vibrant green color with a pattern of white and light green circles of various sizes, resembling bubbles. In the upper left, there are three overlapping circles: a light blue one with diagonal stripes, a solid light blue one, and a solid magenta one. The text is positioned in the lower half of the page.

The Equality Authority established the Equality Mainstreaming Unit in 2007. This Unit is co-funded by the European Social Fund through the Human Capital Investment Operational Programme 2007–2013, under the National Development Programme. The overall objective of the Unit is to facilitate and support institutional change within providers of vocational education and training and within labour market programmes, so that they have a capacity to combat discrimination, to promote equality and to accommodate diversity. Along with its work with the further education and training sector, the Unit has been actively engaged in a body of work that seeks to support enterprises, employers’ networks and trade unions to be planned and systematic in their approaches to equality.



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1 Equality and the FET Sector

The Equality Authority is responsible for promoting equality and combating discrimination in the areas covered by the Employment Equality Acts 1998–2011 and the Equal Status Acts 2000–2011. The Acts prohibits discrimination on nine grounds. These are: gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community. The Equality Authority focuses on the requirements that the equality legislation imposes on employers and service providers (including providers of vocational education and training).

The equality legislation also provides a useful framework from which to develop equality mainstreaming approaches, i.e. placing equality considerations at the heart of decision making. It involves the systematic integration of an equality perspective into everyday work in order to change organisational cultures so that an equality perspective becomes an integral part of what is planned and provided.

In 2007 the Equality Authority established an Equality Mainstreaming Unit (EMU) with support from the European Social Fund. It developed a programme of work which supported providers of further education and training to embed equality at an institutional level, assisting in compliance with the equality legislation and also the implementation of the equality processes related to the requirements of the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) Quality Assurance Process. The FETAC Quality Assurance in Further Education and Training Policy and Guidelines for Providers state that:

Programmes of education and training and related services should be delivered in a manner that accommodates diversity, combats discrimination and promotes equality of opportunity. Delivery agencies should have an institutional capacity and commitment to combat discrimination, to accommodate and make adjustments for diversity. This capacity needs to be planned and systematic rather than ad hoc, informal or reactive.

Along with the programme of direct equality supports to providers, EMU also engaged with other bodies to embed equality practices in the Further Education and Training sector most notably the Further Education Support Service (FESS) (see Section 6: Tools and Guidelines).

This aim of this booklet is to provide an overview of the equality supports delivered to the Further Education and Training (FET) sector between 2009 and 2013, reviewing the effects of such supports and providing examples of good practice. A list of equality mainstreaming projects for each year are contained in Figures 1-5 throughout.

**Figure 1:
FET Sector Equality Mainstreaming**

VEC/FE College/Other	Description of Actions/ Supports	No. of Trainees, Participants, etc.
Co. Dublin VEC	Development of a shared understanding of equality, development of an equality framework that could support strategic planning, up-skilling of staff and development of an equality support group and steering committee.	43+
Co. Waterford VEC	Equality Impact Assessments of five units, delivery of Equality Mainstreaming workshops on specific grounds, development of equality action plans for participating units, development of processes and systems to maintain equality standards and harness existing staff commitment and expertise to the equality mainstreaming agenda.	50+
Co. Wicklow VEC	Development of an equality action plan and organisation-wide equality and diversity guidelines. Development of inclusive services and programmes that meet the diverse educational needs of learners.	30+

2 Nature of Equality Supports Provided

The Equality Authority set up a panel of equality trainers and specialists to implement a programme of work with the FET sector. The equality experts appointed to the panel were required to have knowledge and skills to deliver equality mainstreaming training, to facilitate equality proofing of programmes and policies and to put in place equality action plans in a participative manner.

The overall objective of the equality supports provided to the FET sector was to provide guidance and facilitate FET providers in becoming equality competent organisations. Most of the funding provided was small in scale (not greater than €5k) and typically provided one to twelve days of consultancy support for organisational equality awareness raising, equality training and equality action planning.

Providers that already had good equality experience were expected to focus on strategic planning and capacity building for policy implementation, including equality action planning with defined responsibilities, timeframes and anticipated outcomes, equality screening and equality impact assessments. The purpose was to build on their growing capacity to embed equality into their education plans and/or into the delivery of their programmes of supports.

Equality experts delivered a programme of supports that incorporated one or more of the following elements:

1. Equality awareness training, which included:

- an introduction to the Equality Legislation and its application in an educational setting
- an understanding of the impact of inequalities on individuals and groups from across the nine grounds (covered by the equality legislation) with regard to their educational and labour market opportunities and outcomes

- staff awareness raising about equality across the nine grounds in an educational context
 - review of existing practices in relation to access and inclusion of different groups across the nine grounds and any improvements that could be made
 - ideas and good practice around equality proofing and mainstreaming
2. Equality action planning, which included:
 - equality mainstreaming training and guidance on using the FESS Equality Action Planning Framework
 - planning meetings with senior and middle management
 - consultations with adult education and guidance services
 - examination of the opportunities and challenges in relation to equality in educational access and practice
 - generation of ideas and tactics to be included in existing strategies or the development of a specific equality action plan (either multi-ground based or focused on one ground, e.g. Traveller learners or learners with disabilities)
 3. Equality proofing and equality impact assessments
 4. Equality policies and their implementation
 5. Review of policies in relation to reasonable accommodation and disability
 6. Consultations with staff and learners

Most of the FET providers concentrated on equality awareness raising and training of teaching and management staff (e.g. tutors, guidance staff, adult education officers, heads of department, management). A smaller number of the FET providers also directly included students and administrative and maintenance staff. Considerable efforts were made to involve senior management and other key staff in equality mainstreaming training and action planning.

**Figure 2:
FET Sector Equality Mainstreaming**

VEC/FE College/Other	Description of Actions/ Supports	No. of Trainees, Participants, etc.
South Tipperary VEC	Equality mainstreaming training including the application of the FESS Equality Action Planning Framework and development of an equality action plan.	16+
Mayo VEC	Equality mainstreaming training including the application of the FESS Equality Action Planning Framework and development of an equality action plan.	35+ (incl. CEO)
Co. Galway VEC	Equality mainstreaming training including the application of the FESS Equality Action Planning Framework and development of an equality action plan.	32
Co. Wicklow VEC	Equality mainstreaming training including the application of the FESS Equality Action Planning Framework and development of an equality action plan.	22+
Co. Louth VEC	Equality mainstreaming training including the application of the FESS Equality Action Planning Framework and development of an equality action plan.	8+
Co. Louth VEC	Action research on Traveller inclusion and equality action planning.	30+

**VEC sector +
IVEA – Dept.
of Education
+ FESS**

National seminar to disseminate the learning from the 2009 projects: 'Making your Education Plan Work Better for You: New Tools for Embedding Equality into Education Plans'. The seminar was organised in cooperation with the Department of Education and Science, the Further Education Support Service and the IVEA (28/10/2010).

60+

**Figure 3:
FET Sector Equality Mainstreaming**

VEC/FE College/Other	Description of Actions/ Supports	No. of Trainees, Participants, etc.
Laois VEC	Equality mainstreaming training, coaching and action planning; establishment of an equality working group; drafted equality mainstreaming policy for service provision.	60+
Co. Galway VEC	Equality mainstreaming training for students and staff, and equality action planning. Action plan to include: review of curriculum, admissions policy etc.; follow-up training on LGBT awareness, mental health.	60+
Mayo VEC	Equality mainstreaming training and action planning; training on reasonable accommodation; equality policy updated and incorporating reasonable accommodation.	42+
Monaghan VEC	Diversity and disability awareness workshops and equality actions identified to include improvement of physical access, enhance publications to reflect more diversity and develop better understanding and practice regarding reasonable accommodation.	25+

Co. Wexford VEC	Equality mainstreaming workshops and action planning; equality proofing of publications, adult literacy information, adult guidance information.	67+
Westmeath VEC	Equality awareness and action planning regarding equal status policy, accessibility and review of codes regarding dignity and respect.	30+
Co. Dublin VEC	Implementation of an equality consultation process, including senior management and staff from adult education services. Drafted equality proofed admissions policy.	40+
Cavan Institute of Further Education	Equality mainstreaming and action planning through consultation and engagement with learners across the college.	150
Carlow Institute of Further Education	Equality mainstreaming and action planning through college-wide engagement (staff and students), development of better equality communications and supports, equality proofing of courses initiated.	80+
Dun Laoghaire College of Further Education	Equality mainstreaming training and equality action planning in consultation with staff; review of existing policies, drafting of an equality policy.	30+

3 Examples of Good Practice: Case Studies

The following section focuses on three case studies from providers of Further Education and Training that gained significantly from their involvement in the FET programme of supports.

4.1 Co. Dublin VEC

The Co. Dublin VEC's Strategic Plan 2003–2008 identified developing and promoting equality as one of its strategic objectives. As a result, many organisational initiatives took place across the areas of policy development, organisational structures, research, training and curriculum development, including:

- the drafting of a mission statement and the development of service-wide quality assurance policies and procedures which have an integral equality strand;
- the establishment of an Equality Working Group, including two members of senior management, to design and advise on an Equal Status Review of Adult and Further Education in Co. Dublin VEC;
- the establishment of a Mental Health Working Group to draw up a policy and guidelines to support inclusion and successful participation of adult learners with mental health problems;
- a desk-based research and survey to identify what educators and learners saw as the most significant areas for improvement in terms of promoting equality. An analysis of results of this questionnaire highlighted the need for equality-based training;
- curriculum-based initiatives were also carried out, including the development of a curriculum for learners with literacy and numeracy difficulties through the provision of new programmes, the delivery of intensive staff development and the piloting of screening and learning support systems.

In order to drive forward and facilitate the culture change necessary to mainstream equality and inclusion in all policies and practices related to adult and further education, Co. Dublin VEC, in 2008, successfully applied for funding to conduct an equality project. The equality project at Co. Dublin VEC produced very positive results, i.e:

- **a set of principles underpinning a shared understanding of equality**
- **an equality statement**
- **Organisational Equality Proofing Points – the 7 Ps**
- **an Equality Framework**
- **establishment of an Equality Development Group**

Co. Dublin VEC has now merged with Dun Laoghaire VEC to become Dun Laoghaire and Dublin Educational and Training Board (DDELTB). It is now at a point where the full implementation of their very comprehensive and inclusive framework would help to maintain momentum in its equality work.

The Dun Laoghaire and Dublin ETB have been progressing work on equality-proofed admissions policies and codes of practice for implementation, initially for the Adult Education and Youthreach services, in order to ensure that courses are really targeting equality groups that may be under-represented and to ensure that transparent, client-led admission and enrolment procedures are put into practice (Equality Mainstreaming project 2013–2014).

4.2 Co. Louth VEC

The Co. Louth VEC project, conducted in 2010, was the first Traveller-specific project funded under the Further Education Equality Mainstreaming actions. Its aim was to identify and assess the most appropriate methodologies to enable the VEC to support Traveller integration and inclusion into mainstream adult and further education through a piece of action-research.

The action research included a review of relevant literature in relation to the integration of adult Travellers into mainstream education provision. It also collated the existing education provision for adult Travellers by Co. Louth VEC and ascertained the existing level of engagement by adult Travellers in programmes and services provided by Co. Louth VEC.

The project consulted with Travellers, Traveller representatives, VEC staff and other service providers about their views on how Co. Louth VEC could best support adult Travellers to access and participate in mainstream adult education programmes and services. There was significant consensus among adult Traveller learners, VEC staff, service providers, Traveller organisations and others who participated in the consultation about the issues in relation to the integration of adult Travellers into mainstream programmes and services in Co. Louth VEC. A number of dominant themes emerged including: the need for specific supports in relation to literacy and numeracy; financial incentives; cultural awareness training for staff in relation to Traveller culture and ethnicity; the need to challenge stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination against Travellers, etc.

It identified barriers to participation in mainstream adult education programmes and services in Co. Louth VEC from the perspective of Travellers and service providers. It also identified the specific needs of Travellers to access mainstream adult education provision in Co. Louth VEC with a focus on equal education outcomes.

Co. Louth VEC subsequently developed an action plan to support the integration of Travellers into mainstream adult education programmes and services in Co. Louth VEC based on the conclusions and recommendations outlined in the action research.

The following were some of the recommended actions:-

- **Employment of an integration officer, advocate or mentor in Co. Louth VEC to facilitate the integration of Travellers in to mainstream education programmes.**
- **Intercultural awareness training needs to be provided for all relevant staff and adult learners.**

- Present information about courses and programmes in an accessible format – in plain English with visuals and graphics and less text for learners with literacy difficulties.
- Provide a specific service for Travellers who are not participating in on-site mainstream education provision. This may need to be delivered off-site on an outreach basis via community education programmes.
- Provide extra supports in the areas of literacy and numeracy.
- Provide a bridging/transitional type programme which is developed in consultation with staff and adult Traveller learners in Tara Education Centre.
- Monitor the number of Travellers availing of mainstream programmes and services on an annual basis.

Many of the issues and barriers identified by the Co. Louth VEC were also identified by other FET providers and the equality action plan produced by Co. Louth VEC provided a useful template and guidance for future supports in the FET sector. In 2011, EMU funded seven Equality Mainstreaming projects with a focus on Traveller inclusion in the mainstream Further Education and Training sector (see Figure 4 below). These projects were encouraged to use the model and processes developed by Co. Louth VEC.

**Figure 4:
FET Sector Equality Mainstreaming
Activities with a Focus on Traveller Inclusion**

VEC/FE College/Other	Description of Actions/Supports
Roscommon VEC (READ centre)	Equality mainstreaming training and development of a Traveller integration plan. Implementation of supports including advocacy and bridging courses.
North Tipperary VEC	Equality mainstreaming training and development of a Traveller integration plan through consultation with Traveller learners. Identification of actions to include induction programmes, transfer workshops, audit of learning materials, etc.
Limerick College of Further Education	Equality mainstreaming training and development of a Traveller integration plan; actions identified included establishment of a mentoring programme, sampling activities, intercultural training for staff.
Co. Galway VEC	Equality mainstreaming training and development of an action plan and seminar; examination of best practice; publication produced.
Co. Cork VEC	Delivery of intercultural training, change management and assertiveness training, equality action plans. Strong involvement of CEO and senior management team; meetings with Traveller learners; appointment of a Traveller advocate and a Traveller Liaison person; provision of individual learning plans.
Co. Wicklow VEC	Diversity training in Traveller culture for tutors and managers delivered by Bray Travellers Group; equality action plan to include e.g. establishment of a working group to deliver a more integrated Back to Education Initiative (BTEI) programme, audit of Traveller participation, etc.
City of Galway VEC	Awareness-raising workshops on Traveller culture focus group with staff and senior managers with Galway Traveller Movement. Development a of Traveller integration action plan, to include e.g. more Traveller-friendly literacy training, adult education materials to be revised to become more Traveller inclusive, etc.

4.3 Cavan Institute

Cavan Institute was established in 1985 and has been at the forefront of developments in Further Education through innovative course development. A *whole college* approach was taken throughout the equality project that took place during the first term of the 2012/2013 academic year, the intention being to be fully inclusive of both staff and students, thereby embedding equality in all aspects of college activities.

The equality project at Cavan Institute produced very positive results, i.e. it:

- resulted in the **training and upskilling of 121 staff and 25 students**, all of whom received a half-day's tailored equality awareness training in small groups;
- generated a **renewed appreciation** of some of the supports provided by the college, e.g. the Open Learning Centre (OLC);
- established an **equality working group** consisting of 27 staff and students, which met twice during the project cycle. This acted as an effective platform through which previous initiatives could be evaluated and ideas for an equality action plan could be explored;
- culminated in the publication of an **Equality Statement**, which was jointly developed by the equality working group and circulated for consultation to representatives of all stakeholders at the Institute through a variety of means. It is now displayed in the reception area of the Institute and included in all relevant print and online materials;
- **encouraged the participation of students** by recognising those who were involved in the equality awareness training and who joined the equality working group by commending their involvement at a student awards ceremony which took place at the end of the academic year. Details of those who took part and their contribution were also included in the Institute's quarterly student magazine. Promoting and sharing information about such student activity contributes to raising the profile of 'Equality at Cavan Institute' throughout the student body and further afield;

- **laid the foundation for ongoing equality work** at the Institute, some of which was in the form of a follow-on six-month project carried out during the 2013/2014 academic year, again funded through the same source.

4 Equality Action Planning

All organisations were required to produce equality action plans in order to sustain and embed a culture and practice of equality at institutional level, so that providers would be clear of what priority actions should be taken, by whom and when. The equality action plans that were produced reflect a deep engagement with the issues and are permeated by strong awareness of equality values. Examples include:

- **Reviewing admissions policies in Adult Education and Youthreach in terms of any barriers that may have negative equality impacts and design procedures to implement the revised policies through a specific code of practice (Dublin and Dun Laoghaire VECs, DDELTB);**
- **Consulting and involving equality interest groups including members of the Traveller community in design of course content and delivery (Co. Cork VEC, Co. Wicklow VEC, Co. Galway VEC);**
- **Providing Traveller feeder courses for different levels of FETAC courses and monitoring Traveller participation levels in different courses (Co. Louth VEC);**
- **Promoting and utilising accessible publications and course advertising, reflecting the diverse groups of learners in the Further Education Sector (various);**
- **Identification of forms of institutional discrimination (either direct or indirect). These may include availability of SNAs (Special Needs Assistants) and disability grants at the level of Post Leaving**

Certificate (PLC) Colleges but not at Youthreach or VTOS levels;
lack of resources to facilitate universal accessibility for learners
with disabilities which may also require investment in physical
infrastructures;

- Prominent display and communication of equality statements and commitments (various);
- Reviewing and updating reasonable accommodation policies and procedures (Mayo VEC, Clare VEC);
- Designing transition programmes for learners moving from intensive support services to mainstream provision (South Tipperary VEC, North Tipperary VEC);
- Improving outreach and support of LGBT students through the Youth Officer (Mayo VEC);
- Outreach/liasing with community service providers including through primary health workers to improve communications and information flow with Traveller learners (Co. Galway, Roscommon and Co. Cork VECs);
- Better identification of access needs, e.g. for wheelchair users for external trips (South Tipperary VEC);
- Allocating/reserving places for Traveller participation in courses with educational entry requirements that may be more difficult to meet (Co. Galway VEC);
- Establishing working groups to develop and implement a part-time further education course aimed at integrating Traveller and settled students (Co. Wicklow VEC);
- Establishing a mentoring programme for Traveller learners (Limerick College of Further Education).

5 Review of Equality Supports: Findings/Observations

Analysis of the effects of the equality supports revealed some factors common to all. These are:

- **Stimulation of equality activities:** A substantial amount of equality activity was stimulated by the EMU's engagement with the FET sector. All of the FET providers participating promoted equality awareness raising, equality training and reflected in a consultative manner on their practices and the equality impacts of important areas such as admissions, educational plans, programme delivery, etc.
- **Building a shared understanding and knowledge of equality at institutional level:** For relatively small amounts of money, considerable progresses have been made by FET providers in developing their equality awareness and knowledge, and in building institutional commitment to address the educational inequalities that exist. Without exception, those consulted signalled the need to maintain and build equality mainstreaming processes to complete the implementation of the identified actions in their equality action plans. The facilitation/coaching style used by the equality experts was interactive, and encouraged reflective practice. It resulted in the development of enhanced equality awareness and a shared understanding of the equality challenges and the required remedies to improve educational access, participation and outcomes of those groups protected by the equality legislation.
- **Thorough analysis of equality issues:** A very thorough analysis of the equality issues, challenges and possible actions and solutions were undertaken across the participating institutions.
- **Increased appreciation of political and cultural dimensions of equality:** FET providers acknowledged the important role played by the equality experts and the skill, sensitivity and knowledge that they brought to the assignment. It was also widely acknowledged that there was a clear need for equality awareness raising and training in the education sector at introductory and more advanced levels. Many of those consulted

noted that the approach taken had helped staff develop an appreciation of the political and cultural dimensions of equality and the need to go beyond compliance or a legalistic understanding:

What really came home to us was the need to start thinking in terms of redress and corrective or positive action to level the playing pitch.
(Adult Education Officer)

There were varying levels of awareness at our college and we needed 'pre-development work' to increase awareness and develop 'buy in'. We are now working hard to develop an equality culture that goes beyond legislation – it is complex because the broader sector at second level may not have the resources to do the equality work required – equality needs to be progressed by knitting together an approach involving the different levels of the system.
(Adult Education Officer)

- **Building local commitment to furthering equality aims:** Working with FET providers individually was necessary to facilitate reflective practice and to build local commitment to furthering equality aims. In the longer term, there may be scope to develop more joint actions in relation to institutional issues in the sector, some of which were referenced in the reports, e.g. providing finance to improve physical access to buildings and educational facilities.
- **Reflecting on data collection:** The area of data collection for equality monitoring was also considered by FET providers in their equality initiatives. This area would also be better suited to a collective approach. If equality data was to be gathered consistently in the Further Education and Training sector, it would certainly improve good planning to ensure equal access and utilisation of services, as well as monitoring of the impact of recent changes in the sector.
- **Utilisation of different approaches:** Slightly different approaches were taken to managing the supports across different institutions. The most common approach was that of leadership and co-ordination by the Adult Education Officer together with the involvement of interested administrative, guidance and teaching staff.

Some institutions established a steering or advisory committee and some established an equality working group. A few drew strongly on representatives of the equality grounds in their areas to act as trainers, facilitators or champions. For example, Co. Galway and City of Galway VECs involved the childcare programmes in Loughrea and the Traveller Men's project while Dun Laoghaire College of Further Education consulted with the National Council of the Blind to ensure their website conformed to its accessibility standards, and targeted other representative groups to improve communications and contact levels. Wicklow VEC liaised with the Bray Travellers' Community Group to deliver diversity training to staff on Traveller culture, while the Galway Traveller Movement facilitated a number of workshops in Co. Galway VEC.

- **High satisfaction rate from participants in training:** Some of the experts gathered structured feedback from participants indicating high (over 80%) satisfaction levels with the content and nature of training provided.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** The project reports produced acknowledge that FET institutions will need to build their capacity to develop communication channels for actively consulting and engaging members of different communities across the nine grounds. As such, it will be important for colleges to consult and involve a diverse range of students and staff in the design and implementation of different equality activities.

Figure 5:
FET Sector Equality Mainstreaming Projects

VEC/FE College/Other	Description of Actions/ Supports	No. of Trainees, Participants, etc.
AONTAS Community Education Network (CEN)	Survey Monkey regarding equality issues and initiatives in adult community education. Training needs assessment, design and delivery of an equality training module to CEN Members, AONTAS staff and board. Review of the equality policy. Equality expert liaised with individual CEN members to develop equality action plans.	20+
Carlow Institute of Further Education	Equality audit through focus groups, interviews, students' feedback, survey on equality and review of policies (informed by the FESS Equality Action Planning Framework). Training design and delivery and identification of future equality actions.	15+
Cavan Monaghan Education and Training Board – Adult Education Services	Focus groups for equality action planning; training for tutors in relation to assistive technology and inclusive learning; review of equality policy.	90+

<p>Clare VEC (Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board)</p>	<p>Training on reasonable accommodation in assessment and assistive technology for tutors in Adult Education, Community Education and Youthreach; review of relevant policies and procedures on reasonable accommodation; identification of new actions for the already existing equality action plan.</p>	<p>98</p>
<p>Limerick VEC (Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board)</p>	<p>Steering group/ team worked on an agreed concept of equality in Adult education; equality proofing of VTOS, BTEI, Adult Literacy, Community Education and Youthreach programmes using the FESS Equality Action Planning Framework; equality training and action planning; review of skills and tools to ensure implementation of equality actions.</p>	<p>13+</p>
<p>Co. Dublin VEC (Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board)</p>	<p>The aim of the project was to develop an equality-based admissions framework for Youthreach and Adult and Community Education. The work included delivery of equality training for those not familiar with the concept and introduction to equality planning. This was followed by a number of facilitated consultations which culminated in the development of an admissions framework, which included an admission policy and draft codes of practice. Both policies were adopted by senior management and codes of practice will be piloted during the coming academic year.</p>	<p>35+</p>

<p>Dun Laoghaire VEC (Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board)</p>	<p>The aim of the project was to support the development of equality mainstreaming through the delivery of equality training and action planning for staff within Sportsreach and Adult and Community Education. This was followed by a number of facilitated consultations (in conjunction with staff from Co. Dublin VEC) which culminated in the development of an admissions framework, which included an admission policy and draft codes of practice. Both policies were adopted by senior management</p>	<p>40+</p>
<p>Further Education and Support Services (FESS)</p>	<p>The project focused on programme delivery and built on the already existing FESS Equality Action Planning Framework by adapting specific templates for the equality proofing of some programme modules. Guide and templates piloted with Wicklow VEC and Co. Cavan VEC Adult Education service; train-the-trainers session and dissemination plan devised.</p>	<p>20+</p>
<p>Longford Women's Link</p>	<p>Focus groups on equality; design and delivery of equality mainstreaming training, including equality action planning; allocation of responsibilities for the implementation of the equality action plan.</p>	<p>20+</p>

<p>St. Catherine's Community Services, Carlow</p>	<p>Equality training for tutors and coordinators; consultations with staff and learners; review of policies from an equality perspective with tutors and coordinators; drafting and dissemination of the equality action plan.</p>	<p>30+</p>
<p>Westmeath VEC (Longford Westmeath Education and Training Board)</p>	<p>Equality training for management; development of an Equal Status policy and Employment Equality Policy; revision of the dignity and respect policy; development of a work plan for the Access Officer; training on the FESS Equality Action Planning Framework and initial equality proofing of two key areas; design of a survey for equality monitoring and community mapping; identification of next steps.</p>	<p>40+</p>
<p>Cavan Institute</p>	<p>Equality awareness training for students' representatives and board of management; equality workshops for the equality working group; equality audit of facilities, programmes and policies by the expert, in consultation with staff and students; revision of the current equality action plan and identification of next steps.</p>	<p>50+</p>
<p>Coláiste Dhúlaigh College of Further Education</p>	<p>Equality mainstreaming training with staff and students with a specific focus on mental health. Feedback from training and from meetings with management to form the basis for the equality action plan.</p>	<p>60+</p>

6 Tools and Guidelines

The Equality Authority has developed or supported the production of a number of useful guides and equality tools that provide advice on how to take action on equality. Here is a non-exhaustive list, available for download on the Equality Authority's website, **www.equality.ie**:

- *Guidelines for Conducting Equality Impact Assessments on IVEA and VEC Plans, Policies and Programmes* (IVEA and Equality Authority)
- *A Toolkit for Equality Screening* (Public Sector Equality Learning Network [PSELN] and Equality Authority)
- *Equality Benefits Tool – Your Service User and You: Realising the Benefits for the Public Sector* (Equality Authority)
- *Equality Benefits Tool – Employment* (Equality Authority)
- *Embedding Equality in Public Services: What Works in Practice* (Equality Authority)
- *Working for Travellers' Equality: Equality Mainstreaming Toolkit for Enterprise and Employment Programmes* (Galway Traveller Movement)
- *Mainstreaming Equality in the VEC Sector: New Tools for Embedding Equality into Education Plans, Programmes and Policy-making* (Co. Dublin VEC; Co. Wicklow VEC; Co. Waterford VEC; Equality Authority)
- *Positive Action for Traveller Employment* (Equality Authority)
- *Equality Action Planning Framework* (Further Education Support Services)

Mainstreaming Equality Conferences and Related Publications

Year	Title	Publication
8 June 2005	Equality in VET? Promoting Equality and Accommodating Diversity in Vocational Education, Training and Labour Market Programmes	Equality in VET? Promoting Equality and Accommodating Diversity in Vocational Education, Training and Labour Market Programmes
23 November 2006	Mainstreaming Equality: Promoting Equality and Accommodating Diversity in Further Education, Training and Labour Market Programmes	Mainstreaming Equality: 2006 Conference Proceedings
27 November 2007	Mainstreaming Equality: Promoting Equality and Accommodating Diversity in Further Education, Training and Labour Market Programmes	Equality in a Time of Change: Conference Papers 2007–2009
10 November 2008	Mainstreaming Equality: Why Equality Matters	Equality in a Time of Change: Conference Papers 2007–2009
10 November 2009	Mainstreaming Equality: Equality in a Time of Change	Equality in a Time of Change: Conference Papers 2007–2009
9 November 2010	Mainstreaming Equality: Planning for Equality	N/A
25 October 2011	Mainstreaming Equality: Achievements and Challenges	N/A
24 October 2012	Positive Duty: An Opportunity for Equality Mainstreaming	Positive Duty: An Opportunity for Equality Mainstreaming
22 October 2013	Mainstreaming Equality: Making It Real	N/A





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