



Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board Strategy Statement 2022 – 2026



kcetb

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Chill Chainnigh agus Cheatharlach
Kilkenny and Carlow
Education and Training Board



The image features a close-up of a fossilized bone on the left, characterized by a series of circular holes. To its right is a blurred background of an ancient tapestry or rug with a central medallion and a decorative border. The text "Flourish through learning with KCETB" is overlaid in the center-right area. Teal triangular graphic elements are present in the top-left and bottom-right corners.

Flourish through
learning with KCETB



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Foreword

It is a great privilege to present Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board's (KCETB) Strategy Statement 2022 – 2026, which outlines the vision, mission and values of our organisation and sets out the strategic themes and objectives which will guide our work over the next five years.

KCETB was established under the *Education and Training Boards Act 2013* to provide education, training and youth work services across Kilkenny and Carlow. Since its inception, KCETB has grown and developed, providing a diverse range of services across second-level education, further education and training, and youth work, as well as a broad range of support services for learners and communities. At KCETB, we promote a culture of learning for all and recognise the importance of our role within our local communities. The student is at the heart of everything we do as we strive for excellence in education, training and service delivery.

The preparation of this Strategy Statement has provided an opportunity for consultation within and beyond our organisation. It has afforded us the opportunity to reflect on our successes to date, think about the opportunities ahead and plot a direction for the next five years. During 2021, an extensive consultation process was undertaken to reflect on our vision and mission and to identify themes and goals to chart the direction of KCETB over the next five years.

The themes, goals and objectives outlined in this Strategy Statement establish a clear framework through which KCETB can evaluate its future success. As a learning organisation, we are committed to achieving high-quality learning outcomes for our students and recognise that learning has the power to change lives and build communities.

We are grateful to all who contributed to the development of this Strategy Statement. The feedback from within and beyond our organisation serves as a timely reminder of the importance of the work that we do and of the need for us, as a learning organisation, to be ambitious in our aspirations for the future so that we can deliver the best outcomes for our students and our communities throughout Kilkenny and Carlow.



Peter Cleere
Chairperson



Eileen Curtis
Chief Executive

A photograph of two women in a modern office setting, working together at a computer. The woman on the left, with blonde hair and glasses, is pointing at a screen displaying a technical diagram. The woman on the right, with dark hair, is looking at the screen. The office has multiple computer monitors and a clean, professional environment. The image is overlaid with a teal gradient and the word 'Introduction' in white text.

Introduction

The Consultation Process

Under Section 27 of the *Education and Training Boards Act 2013*, an education and training board (ETB) is required to prepare a strategy statement every five-year period that sets out its objectives for the next five years, the priorities of said objectives and the strategies for achieving same.

KCETB developed its Strategy Statement for 2022-2026 during 2021.

From February to May 2021, the executive engaged in a wide-ranging consultation process to glean a cross-section of perspectives from within the organisation. An extensive consultation process also took place with external stakeholders across Kilkenny and Carlow to gain the perspectives of statutory, voluntary and community organisations. A series of facilitated sessions took place with representatives from:

- school/centre boards of management
- KCETB staff (administrative, teaching and support staff)
- school leadership teams

- FET fora (representatives from FET centres and services)
- mixed focus groups (representatives from administration, teaching and support teams)
- student councils and learner fora
- bodies representing business, industry and employers
- others who are affected by or interested in the implementation of KCETB's strategy

In May 2021, the Board engaged in a facilitated session to consider the strategic goals and objectives for the Strategy Statement.

Following the consultation process, a draft strategy document that identified key themes, goals and objectives was circulated for feedback during September and October, with the final draft presented to KCETB in November 2021.

The Board approved the Strategy Statement 2022 - 2026 at its meeting of 16 November, 2021.



Our Organisation

What We Do

KCETB was established on 1 July 2013 under the *Education and Training Boards Act 2013*. In March 2016, training services transferred to KCETB under the *Further Education and Training Act 2013*.



KCETB serves the counties of Kilkenny and Carlow, which have a combined population of 156,164 (Census, 2016). Its reach extends from Hacketstown in north-east Carlow to Ferrybank in south Kilkenny, and from Graignamanagh across to Johnstown.

KCETB provides a diverse range of services which encompass second-level education, further education and training, youth work and a broad range of support services for learners and communities. KCETB services are focused on local communities with a range of schools/colleges and further education and training centres providing a diverse range of programmes. We support learners in reaching their potential and participating fully in their communities. KCETB promotes a culture of learning for all and recognises the importance of its role within communities across its two counties. The student is at the heart of everything we do as we strive for excellence in education, training and service delivery.

We are committed to high-quality outcomes for our learners and, as a learning organisation, believe that learning has the power to change lives and build communities. We strive to make that a reality for our students at all times, supporting their endeavours and celebrating their successes.

KCETB delivers a range of administrative supports which underpin its education and training services across finance, human resources, corporate services and ICT. This is led, on a day-to-day basis, by the executive management team and the administrative and support staff.

“We promote a culture of learning for all”





Schools

KCETB's remit includes the management and operation of 15 schools and colleges. Of these, two are Gaelcholáistí and two are dedicated further education and training colleges that provide post-leaving certificate programmes.

Our schools are multi-denominational and co-educational, and are underpinned by the core values of:

- Excellence in Education
- Care
- Equality
- Community
- Respect

Our schools offer a comprehensive range of curricular provision, including:

- Junior Cycle
- Junior Cycle Schools Programme
- Transition Year Programme
- Leaving Certificate
- Leaving Certificate Applied
- Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

Seven KCETB schools are part of the DEIS programme and are supported by the School Completion Programme.



Further Education and Training (FET)

The needs of learners are met through KCETB's broad range of full-time and part-time programmes which operate under its Further Education and Training Services (FET). Courses are provided from levels 1-6 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and offer learners the opportunity to meet their personal learning needs and to upskill and reskill in order to meet the current and emerging needs of industry.

Full-time provision includes:

- Apprenticeships
- Bridging and Foundation Training
- Community Training Centres
- Post Leaving Certificate Courses
- Specific Skills Training
- Specialist Skill Training
- Specialist Training Providers
- Traineeships
- Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)
- Youthreach

Part-time provision includes:

- Adult Literacy
- Back to Education Initiative
- Community Education
- ESOL
- Evening Training Courses
- FET Co-operation
- Skills to Advance
- Skills for Work

These programmes provide learning pathways for students with a range of guidance and counselling supports available to assist them on their lifelong learning journey.

Organisation Support and Development (OSD)

KCETB's education and training services are supported by an executive and administrative team whose work underpins the delivery of education and training throughout our schools and centres. The head office is located in Carlow, with a further office in Kilkenny. The OSD team supports the chief executive in the delivery of corporate governance and the management of services in the following areas:

- Strategy Development
- Governance & Compliance
- Co-ordination of Organisation Services
- Change Management
- Human Resources and Workforce Planning
- Financial Management
- Capital Projects
- Procurement
- Building and Estate Management
- Information and Communications Technologies (ICT)
- Health and Safety

KCETB's aim over the next five years is to continue to build a strong, robust organisation with the capacity and potential to support its education, training and support services as it continues to extend its reach and influence.



Youth Work

Under the *Education and Training Boards Act 2013* ETBs are required to “support the provision, coordination, administration and assessment of youth work services in its functional area”.

KCETB co-ordinates and administers the delivery of youth services to young people across Kilkenny and Carlow under a variety of youth-funded programmes supported by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY).

The funding allocation for KCETB youth service provision is over €1 million annually and is supported and administered by our youth officers who engage extensively with local youth organisations and DCEDIY.

“The funding allocation for KCETB youth service provision is over €1million annually”



4774
Students



13
Post-Primary
Schools



9074
Learners



€70.6
million
Annual Budget



kcetb

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
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Kilkenny and Carlow
Education and Training Board



24
FET
Locations



1377
Staff



€4.4
million
Capital Projects



2
Colleges of
Further Education

A young boy with light hair and blue eyes is looking upwards with an expression of wonder. A large, textured green ceramic vase is balanced on his nose. A long, thin wooden stick is inserted into the opening of the vase, extending upwards. The background is a bright window with a yellow frame, showing green foliage outside. The image has a soft, slightly desaturated green tint. There are decorative geometric shapes in the corners: a purple triangle in the top-left and a green triangle in the bottom-right.

Vision, Mission and Values

Our Vision

To lead the development of high-quality education and training opportunities across Kilkenny and Carlow, engaging with students and communities through all stages of lifelong learning.

Our Mission

To enable students to reach their potential through education and to participate in the life of our area and of the country.

Our Values

KCETB is the largest provider of education, training and youth work opportunities in Kilkenny and Carlow. We recognise the importance of our role in our community and are aware of our responsibility to deliver high-quality services. Our work is underpinned by our core values:

Value Learning

We value learning and place the student at the centre of our work. We believe that learning has the power to change lives and build communities.

Aim for Excellence

We aim for excellence in all of our services. We promote a culture of continuous improvement in our schools, centres and across our services.

Build Relationships

We build relationships with others that are collaborative and respectful. We recognise that working together is key to our success.

Promote Openness

We are accountable to others and promote openness and transparency. We know that, as a public body, we must maintain high standards.

Enhance Community

We recognise our role as a provider of services within our community. We are a learning organisation and work to enhance our community through our education, training and support services.

“We believe that learning has the power to change lives and build communities”

A photograph of three young people (two men and one woman) looking at a JVC video camera mounted on a tripod. The man on the right is smiling and holding the camera. The woman in the middle is looking intently at the camera. The man on the left is also looking at the camera. The camera has a JVC logo and 'PanaHD' text. The tripod has a 'MAG' logo. The image has a teal overlay and a white geometric shape in the top left corner.

Strategic Themes

Strategic Themes

Following the consultation process, a series of strategic themes emerged which provided a framework through which the goals, objectives and actions have been prioritised.

Teaching, Learning and Quality Standards

Promote high-quality teaching, learning and service delivery standards embracing new methodologies and innovative approaches.

The promotion of high-quality teaching, learning and service delivery standards is at the core of our work. We aim for excellence and seek to enhance what we do through a process of continued evaluation and improvement. We recognise the richness of different forms of learning and advocate an inclusive approach where all students are supported in their efforts to flourish and grow. We celebrate diversity and achievement and recognise that, as learning is constantly evolving, we need to shape its future by embracing new methodologies and innovative approaches in order to enhance the learner experience.

Building Influence, Driving Impact

Build our influence, promote our services and extend our reach, making KCETB the quality option.

KCETB is a large organisation that caters for the learning needs of young people and adults alike in Kilkenny and Carlow. We champion learning for all and believe education has the capacity to change lives. Through our work, we have the opportunity to positively engage with students, communities and businesses and have a responsibility to promote the development of learning in all its facets through creativity and innovation. Quality matters to us and we strive to continually find better ways to meet the learning needs of our community through best practice.

Our People and our Team

Build the capacity, performance and leadership of our people and team by promoting a learning-for-all culture in KCETB.

KCETB has a strong team of leaders, teachers, administrators and support staff who assist our efforts in championing learning for all. As a learning organisation, we will continue to build our leadership capability, and the capacity of our people and teams, to promote learning for all - within our organisation and our learning communities. We will continue to promote our objective of excellence in teaching and learning, and service delivery.

Our Organisation

Build a strong, robust organisation with capacity and potential.

Our work in education must be underpinned by a strong fit-for-purpose organisation. By developing a robust governance framework and organisational capacity, we will create new opportunities to enhance our facilities and our services. We will continue to build capacity within our organisation to ensure it delivers its services effectively and enhances good governance practices.

Partnership and Innovation

Collaborate with our partners, building evidence and insights for future learning and new models of service delivery.

We will collaborate with stakeholders, both within and beyond our organisation, and build strategic alliances to further our work. We will continue to encourage feedback, from within our organisation and from across our communities, to build insights for future opportunities and direction. We will continue to build sustainable practices, use technology effectively, and find better ways to do things. We will use our data and experiences to build insights and evidence to assist us in establishing future pathways for learners and to develop new models of service and delivery.



Goals, Objectives and Actions



Strategic Goals:

- 1** Promote high-quality teaching, learning and service delivery standards, embracing new methodologies and innovative approaches.
- 2** Build our influence, promote our services and extend our reach, making KCETB the quality option.
- 3** Build the leadership capacity of our team by promoting a learning-for-all culture in KCETB.
- 4** Build a strong, robust organisation with capacity and potential.
- 5** Collaborate with our partners, building evidence and insights for future direction and new models of service delivery.

1. Teaching, Learning and Quality Standards

Promote high-quality teaching, learning and service delivery standards, embracing new methodologies and innovative approaches.

Objectives

- Promote high-quality teaching and learning across all education and training programmes.
- Support a diverse range of students with specific needs to participate in education and training across our schools and centres.
- Promote the use of ICT to enhance quality and innovation in teaching, learning and assessment.
- Promote a culture of self-evaluation and quality assurance to support the delivery of excellence in education, training, youth and other services.
- Promote the well-being of our learning communities through creativity, innovation and extra-curricular activities.



Strategic Actions

- Provide a programme that supports high-quality teaching and learning, enhancing skills and promoting innovative approaches.
- Build the capacity of schools and centres to support students with specific needs through best practice.
- Develop a KCETB-wide strategy to support digital and technology-enhanced learning, promoting innovative approaches to teaching, learning and curriculum delivery.
- Continue to build the capacity of schools and centres to engage in planning and self-evaluation and to reach quality benchmarks.
- Further develop the Quality Assurance Framework for KCETB to support quality provision.
- Continue to build the student support structures across schools, centres and services.
- Deliver a series of themed initiatives to promote education modules on sustainability and practices throughout our organisation.
- Provide opportunities annually for activities which support creativity, innovation and the wider benefits of learning across the organisation.

“We aim to build the capacity of schools and centres to support students with specific needs through best practice”

2. Building Influence, Driving impact

Build our influence, promote our services and extend our reach, making KCETB the quality option.

Objectives

- Adopt a strong leadership role in identifying current trends and future opportunities for growth and development.
- Invest in the KCETB brand and profile to promote our identity, position and reputation.
- Develop KCETB as a learning organisation, promoting one voice and one team focused on future learning.
- Position KCETB as the 'quality option' aligned with the learning, community and business needs of our area.

Strategic Actions

- Optimise the use of our analytics and data to determine our performance and identify opportunities to enhance existing provision, as well as developing new areas.
- Develop a Communications Strategy to enhance the profile of KCETB and its students.
- Develop a schools and FET promotional programme.
- Identify an annual schedule of events which showcase student achievements and promote participation.
- Enhance our internal structures to support effective communication.
- Undertake a range of initiatives to build stronger links with employers, higher education institutions and communities.

3. Our People and Our Team

Build the leadership capacity and performance of our people and team by promoting a learning-for-all culture in KCETB.

Objectives

- Develop an effective workforce plan to meet the needs of KCETB.
- Support leadership development throughout the organisation.
- Promote a culture of high performance and growth through learning for all within KCETB.

“We strive to promote a culture of high performance and growth through learning for all within KCETB”

Strategic Actions

- Develop a workforce plan to identify and plan for the future skill needs of the organisation.
- Provide induction, mentoring and leadership support for staff across the organisation.
- Continue to build networks and communities of practice to support capacity building and the sharing of good practice.
- Develop an integrated annual CPD plan that promotes learning for all.
- Support the well-being of staff through a range of initiatives annually.

4. Our Organisation

Build a strong, robust organisation with capacity and potential.

Objectives

- Develop a fit-for-purpose organisation to support the delivery of education and training.
- Develop a governance framework that supports the current needs and future potential of the organisation.
- Build our ICT capability to support service delivery throughout the organisation.
- Enhance our infrastructure and facilities to support our delivery of services.

Strategic Actions

- Set out an organisational framework to support the delivery of services.
- Plan an appropriate organisational structure for the FET service.
- Develop an action plan to assess, address and report on the implementation of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty of KCETB.
- Continue to build the governance and risk management framework of the organisation in the key areas of finance, human resources and corporate services.
- Develop a strategic framework to enhance the digital capability of the organisation to support service delivery.
- Progress the delivery of strategic infrastructural projects and plan for the refurbishment of facilities to support sustainability, energy management and access initiatives.
- Develop a new headquarters facility in Carlow.
- Develop a whole-of-organisation approach to sustainability and climate action to meet our energy reduction target of 50% by 2030, as outlined in the Climate Action Plan 2021.



5. Partnership and Innovation

Collaborate with our partners, building evidence and insights for future learning and new models of service delivery.

Objectives

- Develop new strategic alliances and partnerships to extend our core services and develop new areas of provision.
- Strengthen our existing alliances with education partners to enhance and promote our services.
- Focus on innovation and explore new models of service delivery.

Strategic Actions

- Provide opportunities to strengthen links with students and parents through student and parent councils and learner fora.
- Continue the roll-out of the Youth Work Plan to co-ordinate and deliver on national priorities.
- Work with a range of partners to further develop Music Generation provision.
- Plan for the development of community national school provision in KCETB.
- Plan and deliver the FET College of the Future model with increased capacity to deliver apprenticeships, traineeships and meet future skills needs.
- Develop a simplified learning pathways structure for FET learners.
- Pilot new models of delivery with the higher education sector in the south-east region.
- Pilot approaches to enhance curricular delivery through blended learning, eCollege and other new models of delivery.

A photograph of a young woman with long brown hair and black-rimmed glasses, resting her chin on her right hand. She is wearing a white, textured knit sweater. In the background, another person is visible but out of focus. The image has a warm, yellowish tint and is framed by a thin black border with small white squares at the corners. A yellow triangle is in the top-left corner, and a white triangle is in the bottom-right corner.

Implementation

Implementation

This Strategy Statement sets out the direction of the work of KCETB over the next five years. The broad themes identified will give our work focus as the goals, objectives and actions are incorporated into day-to-day development and planning within KCETB. Each year the Annual Service Plan and the work of our schools, FET and OSD directorates will reflect the strategic intent set out in the Strategy Statement.

We will report on implementation and progress through our Service Plan and our Annual Report.

As an organisation, we are fully committed to the delivery of our strategy and to focusing our work on its strategic intent. We recognise that some aspects of its implementation may be influenced by external factors beyond KCETB. Nevertheless, our objective is to continue to deliver better education, training and support services for our students and our communities across Kilkenny and Carlow over the next five years.

“As an organisation, we are fully committed to the delivery of our strategy and to focusing our work on its strategic intent”

A photograph of a man and a woman in a kitchen, both wearing aprons, pouring a thick batter from a large bowl into a rectangular pan. The man is on the left, looking down at the pan, and the woman is on the right, holding the bowl. The kitchen has wooden cabinets and a stainless steel countertop. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter. The word "Appendix" is written in white text across the middle of the image.

Appendix

Our Strategic Context

KCETB's Strategy Statement is being prepared as we are emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic and adjusting to a 'new normal'.

New work patterns, increased digitalisation, climate action and sustainability, as well as the economic upheavals of BREXIT and COVID-19, are impacting on the economic life of the country and on the shape of education, training and support services. KCETB continues to grow with increased enrolments and demand for services. Over the lifetime of our Strategy Statement, we anticipate further changes in learning methodologies and patterns as we respond to emerging demands.

Broader Strategic Factors

- The challenges ensuing from the COVID-19 pandemic as it impacts on the economy, employment levels and the future of work.
- The need for us to ensure we play our part in meeting the targets set on climate action and the sustainability agenda.
- The changing nature of the labour market and the significant demand for upskilling and reskilling in preparation for the emerging jobs of the future.
- The demographic pressures which are impacting on school enrolments.
- The demand for greater diversity regarding school provision at primary and post-primary level.
- The need to ensure equality of opportunity in learning, supported by initiatives that mitigate against educational disadvantage and promote inclusion.
- Recognition that the world of work is changing due to globalisation, digitalisation and new patterns of work.
- The accelerated transition to a digital economy and its impact on specific cohorts of the population.
- The need to promote new methodologies and learning approaches to meet the emerging demands of students and industry.
- The need for efficient and effective governance to ensure strong performance and accountability.
- The need to ensure that we promote a just society where no one is left behind.

"We endeavour to provide equality of opportunity in learning, supported by initiatives that mitigate against educational disadvantage and promote inclusion"

SOLAS
learning works



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearthú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann



**An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna**
Department of
Education and Skills



**An Roinn Breisoideachais agus Ardoideachais,
Taighde, Nuálaíochta agus Eolaíochta**
Department of Further and Higher Education,
Research, Innovation and Science

Legislation

The *Education and Training Boards Act 2013*, under which KCETB was established, sets out the general functions of an education and training board in respect of schools, centres of education and education or training facilities in its area and identifies its role in supporting the provision, and coordination of youth work services. The preparation and submission of a five-year strategy is required under Section 27 of the Act. In addition, the Strategy Statement must be aligned with the *Code of Practice for the Governance of Education and Training Boards (2019)* and other departmental requirements.

Central to the work of KCETB is the provision of Further Education and Training (FET). The enactment of the *Further Education and Training Act 2013*, the establishment of SOLAS and the subsequent transfer of training to the ETBs saw a new service configuration emerge throughout the country. Since then, each ETB has engaged with SOLAS regarding the funding and delivery of its FET services. In 2018, Strategic Performance Agreements were introduced to benchmark progress.

Over the past two years, KCETB has engaged with Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), which provides certification for learners within the sector. KCETB had its first statutory review with QQI in 2021; its outcome will set policy direction for quality assurance in the years ahead.

Other legislation relevant to KCETB's strategy includes: *The Education Act 1998*; *EPSEN Act 2004*; *Children First Act 2015*; *Official Languages Act 2003*; *Irish Human Rights and Equality Committee Act 2014*; *Youth Work Act 2001*.

KCETB will deliver its services in accordance with these key legislative requirements.



Policy

The Department of Education Statement of Strategy 2021-2023 sets out the direction and high-level work it will deliver up to 2023.

The ETB sector will be central to the achievement of the Department's strategic goals to support the provision of high-quality education, equality of opportunity, and strategic leadership and support for the delivery of the right systems and infrastructure for the education sector.

The Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science Statement of Strategy 2021-2023 sets out an ambitious vision for the development of Ireland's further education sector to create opportunities and to support people in pursuing education and training at every stage of their lives. The plan focuses on developing talent and skill, promoting knowledge and innovation and supporting inclusion for all, as well as driving quality and excellence in performance.

Similarly, *Future FET: Transforming Learning - The National Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy 2020-2024* sets out a vision for the development of FET as a dynamic, integrated further education sector based around the three pillars of building skills, creating pathways and fostering inclusion. It sets out a vision for FET as "the smart

choice of school leavers, employees seeking to upskill and learners at all stages of their lives, with future FET colleges recognised as dynamic modern and high-quality learning environments" (FET Strategy, 2020-2024 p. 36).

A number of key national education and training strategies are driving the change and reform agenda across a range of areas in education and in further education and training. These include:

- Action Plan for Apprenticeships 2021-2025
- Adult Literacy for Life -10 Year Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy
- DEIS Plan 2017
- Digital Strategy for Schools 2021
- Education for Sustainable Development - The National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development in Ireland 2014-2020
- Languages Connect: Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026
- Looking at our Schools 2016
- National Skills Strategy 2025
- National Strategy for Higher Education
- 20-year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2020
- Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022
- Steam Education Policy Statement 2017-2026
- Wellbeing Policy Statement





Kilkenny and Carlow Socio-Economic Profile

Kilkenny and Carlow have a combined population of 156,164. Kilkenny City and Carlow town are the main urban centres of population, followed by a number of smaller district towns in Callan, Castlecomer, Graignamanagh, Tullow and Bagenalstown (Census, 2016).

63% of the population live in county Kilkenny and 31% reside in county Carlow. Kilkenny city accounts for 17% of the county's population and Carlow town represents 16% of the county's population. The next tier of towns is significantly smaller and, accordingly, much of KCETB's hinterland is classified as rural.

The KCETB catchment area is projected to grow by 25% between 2016 and 2036. Specifically, Carlow's population is expected to grow by 27.2% and Kilkenny's by 23.9%, representing one of the highest planned growth rates in the state (Census, 2016). The shift in households migrating to more rural locations and recent policy initiatives may have a big impact on future demographics in Kilkenny and Carlow.

The Kilkenny and Carlow ETB area has a slightly younger population profile than the rest of the state with the number of students at pre-school, primary school and secondary school proportionally larger than the national average. The areas with the highest proportions of persons aged 0-18 years are to the north and east of Kilkenny, the suburbs of Carlow town and Ferrybank.

*“The KCETB
catchment area is
projected to grow by
25% between 2016
and 2036”*



Almost a quarter of the KCETB catchment area has a resident population aged 45-64 years. There are areas of disadvantage identified across both counties. Almost one-in-five families is headed by a lone parent, with this rate slightly higher in Carlow.

The youth dependency rate is above the regional and state values with those in Tullow, Hacketstown, and Callan in excess of 37%. Areas of notable disadvantage in Kilkenny include Johnstown and Urlingford, rural parts of Castlecomer, and the environs of Ballyragget and Gaignamanagh. Carlow's areas of disadvantage include north county Carlow - particularly Carlow town - and the towns of Tullow, Bagenalstown and Hacketstown.

Over the next 10 years, the population of Kilkenny and Carlow is projected to grow more rapidly than the rest of the state with an anticipated increase of 25% by 2036. The area's population is ageing and the demographic profile points to a growing demand for further education and training services. KCETB is at the forefront of an increased demand for lifelong learning and skills development, the need for which will become more acute in the coming decades. Interventions with young people require collaboration and enhanced integration to promote a whole-of-household approach to progression in education and training.

“Over the next 10 years, the population of Kilkenny and Carlow is projected to grow more rapidly than the rest of the state with an anticipated increase of 25% by 2036.”

Employment

The labour force participation rate in Kilkenny and Carlow is 60.7% and 61.4% respectively, with 86% of the labour force classified as being “at work”. The data in respect of unemployment exceeds the state level of 12.9%; the county Carlow rate is 17%, and the rate in Kilkenny is 12.7%. There has been a steady decline in the number of people on the live register in the seven years up to June 2019. The medium household income data available for the 31 local authority areas places county Kilkenny and county Carlow in 11th and 18th place, respectively.

The number of employees in Kilkenny and Carlow is approximately 64,348, working for 7,487 employers (CSO, 2018). The south-east region has seen increased job creation and a year-on-year fall in unemployment since 2012. The COVID-19 pandemic led to a significant rise in unemployment, with the adjusted rate standing at approximately 20%.

The main employment sectors in the Kilkenny and Carlow area are industry, wholesale and retail, education, ICT, agriculture, accommodation and food, and construction. Traditionally, the economy of the two counties has been characterised by public service, education, engineering, project and food manufacturing. Both have a rural base and, at 8.1%, have almost twice the national rate (4.4%) working in agriculture and forestry.

KCETB has aligned its service provision with the industrial base with a particular focus on hospitality, engineering, health and financial services.

In order to inform and support the development of its strategy, KCETB commissioned a detailed socio-economic area profile of Kilkenny and Carlow as part of its vision planning for the future.

This area profile enables KCETB to identify the issues affecting the people of Kilkenny and Carlow and to set out the strategies and actions to address them. The profile provides a refined analysis of local area data and patterns.

The profile will inform the strategic direction of KCETB and provide indicators for the work that needs to be undertaken in the delivery of service in education, training, youth work and related services. It does so within the context of the demographic, employment, educational and industrial profile across the two counties.



Glossary

KCETB	Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DCEDIY	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
DE	Department of Education
DEIS	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools
DFHERIS	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
ESOL	English for Speakers of other Languages
ETB	Education and Training Board
FET	Further Education and Training
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
OSD	Organisation, Support and Development
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
SOLAS	National Further Education and Training Authority





