



*Empowerment for a better world through  
Adult and Community Education.*

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# **Report on the 2nd Mapping of Global Citizenship Education in the Adult & Community Education Sector**

# Acknowledgements

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## List of abbreviations & acronyms

ACE: Adult & Community Education

ALE: Adult Education & Learning

AEO: Adult Education Organisers

BTEI: Back to Education Initiative

CEF: Community Education Facilitators

CEN: Community Education Network

CFE: Colleges of Further Education

CSO: Central Statistics Office

CTC: Community Training Centres

CWI: Community Work Ireland

DE: Development Education

DES: Department of Education and Science

DFHERIS: Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science

EAEA: European Association for the Education of Adults

EMSSGDE: European Multi-Stakeholder Steering Group on Development Education

ERSI: Economic and Social Research Institute

ETB: Education & Training Board

EU: European Union

FE: Further Education

FET: Further Education & Training

GCE: Global Citizenship Education

GENE: Global Education Network Europe

IA: Irish Aid

IDEA: Irish Development Education Association

LDC: Local Development Company

NFQ: National Framework of Qualifications

NI: Northern Ireland

PLC: Post Leaving Certificate

PPN: Public Partnership Network

QQI: Quality & Qualifications Ireland

RTC: Regional Training Centre

SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals

UN United Nations

UNESCO: The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

VTOS: Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme



## Preface to the report

In the preface to the initial mapping report (Report on the Initial Mapping of Development Education in the Adult & Community Education Sector, Saolta (2020), I stated that the mapping exercise “... is not only overdue, but it is an essential step to begin to have a clearer picture of the extent, the scope, and the impact of development education in our diverse, dynamic, and growing ACE sector.” (p.9.)

March 2022, and our world is now even more fractured and divided than in 2020. A global pandemic has washed over us and continues to infect; Conflicts and wars continue to rage in Yemen, Syria, Palestine, Afghanistan and most recently Ukraine, leading to suffering on an unimaginable scale; the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPPC) has just given us a “... dire warning about the consequences of inaction” on climate change and we, on our temperate island, are beginning to see the effects in our weather; climate change is further contributing to other global problems such as food insecurity, forced displacement of people, and gender-based violence. Just one of these could be depressing but education gives us options, options give us hope, and we in the wealthy part of the world have the luxury of options.

The global challenges above reflect themes which Global Citizenship Education (GCE)

attempts to address. Public Health, Climate Change, Conflict, Migration and Inequality more generally are all central and familiar to the practice and discourse for GCE practitioners. In this time of growing darkness, GCE offers light.

SAOLTA, or worldly wise, is a Global Citizenship Education strategic partnership programme for the Adult and Community Education (ACE) sector in Ireland. Development Perspectives is the lead partner in the consortium, with a programme steering committee of AONTAS, Concern Worldwide, Irish Rural Link and the Department of Adult and Community Education at Maynooth University. SAOLTA is an ACE response to Irish Aid's request to initiate a strategic partnership programme for our sector, similar to the DICE strategic programme for the primary education sector, and Worldwide Global School's' strategic programme for the post primary education sector, that are well established.

The SAOLTA project posits, or proposes, that the dynamic between the global and local is at the heart of Global Citizenship Education (GCE). Indeed, it is only by educating in the local and connecting with the global that we can challenge the dismal narrative and sow seeds for sustainable progress. 2021 saw the launch of the Irish Aid Global Citizenship Education Strategy 2021-2025, which the

SAOLTA programme consortium welcomes. This strategy clearly signposts Irish Aid's continuing commitment to GCE and the education sector. The SAOLTA consortium welcomes the continued contribution of the Department of Education to GCE and will welcome participation from the New Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science that is responsible for policy, funding and governance of the Higher and Further education sector in Ireland. This Department, DFHERIS, should note that Adult and Community Education (ACE) sector figures prominently in the Irish Aid Global Citizenship Education Strategy providing SAOLTA with a compass to navigate our strategy over the next few years.

Since SAOLTA's launch in January 2020 and the publication of the SAOLTA Initial Mapping of Development Education in the Adult & Community Education Sector Report in December 2020, significant progress has been made in building the foundation for GCE in the ACE sector. From a research perspective SAOLTA has worked on a number of valuable publications, from which I wish to highlight the framework for embedding GCE in Initial Tutor Education for Adult and Community Education practitioners. In terms of capacity building, SAOLTA, though limited by Covid19 restrictions, has engaged with almost 2,000 participants and a range of organisations including Education and Training Boards (ETBs), County based Public Participation Networks (PPNs), national organisations and local groups. The development and delivery

of two Level 8 modules have been facilitated and a new level 9 qualification, "Professional Certificate in Global Citizenship Education" will start in September 2022.

However, this report, "Mapping of Development Education provision in the Irish Adult and Community Education sector" (March 2022) is the map of who is taking the leadership in integrating the global in the local, and the local in the global. The educators' named in this mapping report are the ones who will graduate students who can read the world in an informed way, who will recognise the initiatives that must be taken for the sustenance of all, who will drive policy and practice at a range of levels, and who will offer informed service for an uncertain future.

In SAOLTA we recognise that to strengthen GCE in the ACE sector we need to work with more stakeholders. While partnerships have been initiated and strengthened during the foundational phase of SAOLTA, more needs to be done. There are more organisations to partner and new colleagues to work with. This report provides a "picture of the extent, the scope, and the impact of development education in our diverse, dynamic, and growing ACE sector" as stated in 2020. This report also shows that significant gaps in GCE provision remain and suggests a direction for forward travel. In partnership with ACE sector stakeholders, and with the support of Irish Aid, SAOLTA will fulfil the Global Citizenship Education (GCE) potential that the dynamic and strengthening Adult and Community Sector (ACE) in Ireland offers.

Lastly, I acknowledge and thank the authors and the SAOLTA support team who made this now recurrent report possible. I also appeal to ACE stakeholders across in Ireland to lead the way in education for global sustainability as noted in Future FET: Transforming Learning (The National Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy, pages 30 and 45).

**Michael Kenny, Department of Adult and Community Education, Maynooth University, Member of the SAOLTA Programme Steering Committee.**

# Part 1: Introduction

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## 1.1 Introduction; purpose of the report

This report builds on the earlier, initial mapping of Global Citizenship Education (henceforth: GCE) in the Irish Adult and Community Education (ACE) sector (Saolta, 2020) to provide a more comprehensive overview of providers and provision in this area. This in turn is based on data generated via online survey and other methods in the period October-December 2021. While the focus here is on GCE and GCE-related programmes and initiatives located in the Rep. of Ireland (RoI), the report also includes contributions from Northern Ireland (NI) where some providers act on a regional as well as on an all-Ireland basis.

The purpose of this report is three-fold:

- 1 To continue to capture, in a systematic way, GCE activity in the Irish ACE sector by (sub) sector, geographic location, provider profile, provision type, scale and reach;
- 2 Identify gaps in ACE-GCE provision across RoI by location, type of GCE activity and so forth;
- 3 To provide guidance for policymakers, NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations) as well as ACE providers for further embedding GCE in this sector, subsectors.

This is achieved, first, through description of GCE provision on a national, regional as well as local basis, including a profile of providers and their work, scale, reach and resources. Short profiles of individual providers are included along with a small number (n=4) of longer case studies that capture, in various ways, the range and type of GCE activity in RoI-ACE.

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## 1.2 Guiding Questions

The data generation and analysis for the report was guided by three main research questions, stated simply:

- 1 What GCE activity are ACE providers engaged in, in terms of: location, size, geographical reach and GCE focus?
  - 2 With whom are these providers working and how?
  - 3 What does the mapping exercise signpost in terms of the future direction of GCE in the RoI-ACE sector, strategy, resources and so forth?
- 

## 1.3. Methodology; Methods

Following the initial mapping and survey, a mixed methods approach was employed for data

generation for the report, including an online survey questionnaire distributed across the ACE sector (n=420). This was further supplemented by telephone and email contact and a review of web data concerning provider activity. A small number (n=4) of semi-structured interviews were employed to provide a more detailed description of a sample of GCE providers and their work.

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## 1.4 Executive Summary; Key findings

The report again highlights a broad range of GCE (n=47) providers and provision across RoI-ACE, including long established providers as well as a number of new entrants to the sector. This includes larger, statutory and non-statutory organisations and NGOs operating on regional, national or international basis as well as more locally based providers of GCE. Moreover, the provision recorded here can be seen to address a broad spectrum of GCE themes and topics delivered on a range of platforms incorporating accredited as well as non-accredited programmes, one-off workshops and public events. The emphasis on joint working and collaboration as well as more formal partnerships remains a hallmark of the sector and which provides a template for others working, or hoping to work, in this space.

This further emphasises the significant contribution of RoI-ACE to ensuring a lifelong and *lifewide* approach to GCE so that all learners of all backgrounds are exposed to the many issues which this seeks to address. At the same time, RoI-ACE is described here as a broad provision that presents unique challenges for those tasked with further embedding GCE in the sector. Unlike the formal school system, ACE is comprised of a number

of discrete subsectors, each of which demand a unique response and approach. Moreover, there is no set national curriculum, but rather a provision comprising a wide range of vocational and non-vocational, accredited and non-accredited programmes and courses that are often developed to meet local needs.

On the level of specifics, this second survey again highlights disparities in provision according to geographic location, reach and focus and while GCE activity is nominally recorded for all regions and counties, huge differences remain in local activity. Furthermore, the poor survey returns from some subsectors of ACE highlight, among other things, the sheer size and scale of the task involved in embedding GCE in this sector.

All of this means that significant work remains in terms of scaling of activity in this area, for 'educating the educators' and thus realising the potential of ACE to ensuring that all learners of all ages and backgrounds are exposed to GCE, GCE issues. For this purpose, a whole-sector approach is advocated involving key stakeholders and decision makers, but which also recognises the need for capacity building for ACE practitioners working in hundreds of education and training centres with many thousands of adult learners across Ireland. While much work has already been undertaken to achieving this, the report and findings nonetheless reemphasise the need for the development of a long-term, sustainable approach for embedding GCE in the ACE sector and that this is adequately funded and resourced.

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## **1.5 Report structure; contents**

The report is presented in four parts. Part one provides a general introduction to the report. By way of context, part two includes a short policy background, definitions and descriptions of GCE. This section also includes a brief overview of ACE provision in Ireland, including size, learner participation rates and so forth. In part three the methodology, methods are described and the bulk of statistical information is presented. Part four presents a summary of the findings along with key action points for further embedding GCE in the Irish ACE sector.

# Part 2: Global Citizenship Education & Adult Learning & Education Explored

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## 2.1 Introduction

By way of background to the report, the first part of this section provides a brief overview of key policy developments in the area of GCE and ACE. Definitions and descriptions of GCE are provided and the contribution of ACE to GCE is outlined. The second part attempts to describe, in detail, the diverse, wide-ranging RoI-ACE sector in terms of provision, providers and learner participation.

This emphasises, among other things, the significant contribution of ACE towards a lifelong learning as well as a *lifewide* approach to GCE and its objectives. This further emphasises the key role of ACE in realising the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as set out by the United Nations (UN) in their landmark 2015 framework as well as in other related policy documents (UN, 2015b; UNESCO 2016). While RoI-ACE has much to offer here, this nonetheless remains a highly diverse, wide-ranging sector that presents particular challenges for policymakers and others working in this space. This refers to the complex task of embedding GCE in formal, accredited programmes and curricula as well as in the multifarious non-formal and informal education settings where adult learning takes place. Moreover, adult learners represent a highly diverse group whose needs (learning, other) differ markedly from school-aged children. Broader concerns relate to a global lack of

investment in adult learning and education (ALE) and a skills focus that has increasingly dominated a lifelong learning agenda now far removed from its humanistic roots and emancipatory vision (UIL 2019; 2020).

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## 2.2 GCE: Definitions and Descriptions

In the latest Global Citizenship Education Strategy (2021 - 2025), Irish Aid (IA) define GCE as:

*...a lifelong educational process, which aims to increase public awareness and understanding of the rapidly changing, inter-dependent and unequal world in which we live. By challenging stereotypes and encouraging independent thinking, GCE helps people to critically explore how global justice issues interlink with their everyday lives and how they can act to build a better world. (2021, p.4)*

For IA, all of this is particularly important in an increasingly globalised world faced with significant challenges, including the (ongoing) impact of the COVID 19 pandemic, climate change, entrenched poverty and growing inequality. The definition provided by IA is similar to other descriptions such

as DE (Development Education), ESD (Education for Sustainable Development) and GCED, the latter definition being employed by UNESCO to describe a 'holistic framing paradigm...which encapsulates how education can develop the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes learners need for securing a world which is more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure and sustainable' (UNESCO, 2014a, p.15). While there may be differences in how these various concepts are articulated and defined as well as some methodological differences, GENE note that:

***There are strong indications among participating policymakers representing European ministries and agencies that they actively look for the common ground among these various concepts and traditions. They seek out that which brings them together, such as a global justice perspective, a focus on how the local relates to the global, and the aim to enable learners to take action to make the world more just, more sustainable, and more supportive of solidarity (2019, p.25).***

Meanwhile, UNESCO suggests that 'It is neither constructive nor useful to set global citizenship education and other educational approaches against each other, when they are differently labelled efforts targeting related goals and objectives' (2017, p.4). It is certainly the case that, notwithstanding some differences in emphasis and approach, these various definitions and descriptions nonetheless share common themes and a commitment to addressing, among other things, issues of: social justice and social inclusion; inequality and race; sustainability; and global interconnectedness. Moreover, all of these approaches remain integral in achieving the UN-SDGs, and specifically Target

4.7, which aims to:

***...by 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development (UN, 2015)***

Indeed, the realisation of the UN-SDGs is explicitly acknowledged by IA in their earlier *Development Education Strategy 2017 – 2023* and that:

***The Sustainable Development Goals create a context for Ireland to provide quality education on global citizenship. Development education is an essential component in delivering Ireland's commitment under Target 4.7 as well as raising awareness of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. (2017, p.11)***

The following section explores, in more detail, how GCE remains a priority for policymakers and the related implications. This also outlines the significant contribution of ACE to achieving the aims of GCE and the SDGs set out by the UN (2015) in their charter.

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## **2.3 The policy landscape for GCE and ACE**

The policy landscape for GCE in the RoI context has



been dealt with in various ways by other researchers and commentators (for example: Khoo, 2011; Fiedler, Bryan & Bracken 2011; Dillon, 2018; McBreen, 2020) and is therefore given brief consideration here. By way of orientation, some of the key documents that have helped shape domestic GCE policy over recent decades are listed and explained in Table 9, Appendix 1. This demonstrates how GCE sits within a strong, national policy framework guided by successive *National Strategy* documents (IA, 2007; 2016; 2021) and other key policy interventions (notably: DES, 2015). The publication of the recent *National Strategy* document (IA, 2021) further underlines the commitment of Irish policymakers to GCE across all sectors of the Irish education system, including the large and diverse ACE sector. Moreover, this year (2022) will see the publication of the long-awaited *Education for Sustainable Development Strategy* (DES Forthcoming) that will address GCE issues across all levels and sectors of the education system, including ACE. This further reflects an increasing readiness on the part of policymakers globally to see the concept of lifelong learning as providing the overarching framework for achieving the goals associated with GCE and that ACE represents an important arena for this given the potential this has for reaching a broad range of learners across the lifespan (EAEA, 2019; UN, 2015; UNESCO 2016; 2019).

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## 2.4 The contribution of ACE to GCE: problems and possibilities

To take one example of this, in their *Manifesto for Adult Learning* the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) suggest that in addition to making a significant contribution to social inclusion, active citizenship as well as personal

benefits, adult education is an important driver in the interconnections of the three dimensions of sustainable development - economic, social and environment. The EAEA further notes the significant role played by adult education in achieving the UN 2030 SDG Agenda.

***Adult education provides information, debating spaces and creativity to develop new lifestyles, new projects, and new approaches necessary for sustainable development. Looking at the global Agenda 2030...adult learning contributes to the achievement of all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by building the foundations of change in the social, political, economic, ecological and cultural spheres (EAEA, 2019. p.18).***

Meanwhile, UNESCO (2019) note how ACE professionals form the 'backbone' of efforts to integrate GCE and SDG 4.7 themes effectively in ACE settings, and that this includes facilitators, trainers, educators as well as managers working in this area.

Despite the significant potential for embedding GCE in ACE, there are concerns that much ACE activity has been driven by a skills agenda in recent decades, focusing primarily on upskilling or reskilling of workers and for maintaining economic competitiveness in an increasingly globalised world (UNESCO, 2016; UIL, 2020). To this end, UNESCO points to the need for more research to inform policies in the field of ACE 'so that they target not only income and productivity in the labour market, but also consider wider personal and social benefits'. (2016, p.32). The UNESCO document notes that while there is plenty of evidence supporting individual and government investment

in ACE for economic reasons, 'its potential to contribute to democracy and citizenship is less well understood' (ibid). In a later document, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) Director David Atchoarena notes that we are finally emerging from a period characterised by an excessive focus on the vocational and skills dimensions of lifelong learning and that recognizing the complexity and multi-dimensional nature of the challenges faced by humanity calls for the restoration of a holistic vision of learning throughout life (UIL, 2020). Atchoarena suggests that:

***As we anticipate further disruptions caused by the effects of climate change, demographic shifts and the substantial transformation in the labour market due to the fourth industrial revolution, lifelong learning will have to be moved further up the policy agenda, beyond the fields of education and labour market policies. (UIL, 2020, p.11).***

There are further concerns around the lack of progress in extending GCE beyond the formal school system and to ACE contexts (UNESCO, 2019; LLLP, 2020; ICAE, 2020). To this end, UNESCO notes that:

***While a strong focus has been placed on GCED in schools and formal education, and despite the progress made to date, further efforts are needed to raise awareness among all relevant stakeholders, policy-makers, researchers and practitioners of the role of GCED in lifelong learning approaches, including those that take place in non-formal settings and focus on ALE in a range of areas, including peace promotion, conflict prevention, inclusion and social cohesion. (2019, p.7)***

Given this lack of progress, the UNESCO report urged policymakers to put ACE at the centre of efforts in achieving the UN-SDGs as well as on expanding adult learning provision to include those groups whose participation in education remains marginal:

***This report has argued that a focus on participation in ALE is key to achieving the SDGs. This must mean reviewing policies in the light of the evidence on participation, and investing in sustainable provision that is accessible to learners from all backgrounds, as well as systematically supporting demand among those who have been the most excluded in the past. This will enable ALE to play its full, and wholly essential, part in achieving the SDGs (2019, p.171).***

In 2017, the 3rd Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (or GRALE 3) by UNESCO noted the poor position of ACE more generally and that this sector still receives only a small proportion of public funding across education systems worldwide. Elsewhere, ICAE (2020) note how progress towards achieving the aims of the UN-SDGs has been significantly impacted by the continuing marginalisation of adult education and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and networks within the education and development global network.

Succinctly, it would seem that a lack of emphasis and investment in adult learning and education worldwide remains a significant barrier to achieving the goals set out in the 2015 UN Framework document as well as for realising the broader aims of GCE set by governments and other International Organisations (IOs). Leaving aside the lack of investment and resources, it would also

seem that significant challenges remain in creating a space for embedding GCE in ACE programmes and curricula increasingly dominated by a skills focus and agenda<sup>1</sup>. This task is further complicated given that ACE-RoI is made up of a broad-range of provision and providers with vastly different remit, focus, resources and learner profiles.

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## 2.5 The RoI-ACE Sector: Developments; ACE provision described

The second part of this section of the report provides an overview of recent developments in the RoI-ACE sector. The sector is further described here in terms of: provision, providers and learner participation in ACE. By way of context, definitions and descriptions of ACE are provided.

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### 2.5.1 Recent developments in ROI-ACE

While the adult education sector has been variously described by commentators as the ‘Cinderella’ (Fleming, 2012) or ‘Poorer Princess’ (O’Sullivan, 2017) of the Irish education system, the last decade has nonetheless seen significant strides in putting the sector on a firmer footing, at least as far as Further Education and Training (FET) provision is concerned. This refers to the establishment of a statutory body (SOLAS) to oversee developments in this area, including the publication of successive *FET Strategy* documents (SOLAS, 2014; 2020a). Meanwhile the incorporation of further education into a new government department along with higher education can also be seen as a positive development. There has also been a systematic

effort to professionalise the sector via a *Continuous Professional Development* (CPD) framework for ACE practitioners (SOLAS, 2016; 2020c) and there are now eight Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) providing Teaching Council approved Initial Tutor Education (ITE) programmes for those working with adult learners across the sector.

As such, it will be increasingly the case that those entering the sector will have undertaken some form of formal teacher training or other CPD. And while ACE practitioners may not yet enjoy the same status and job security as their primary and second-level counterparts, the move towards professionalization is particularly welcome in a sector historically defined by part-time and casual work with little security of tenure, limited opportunities for career development and a lack of structured career paths (Murphy, 2017). Given the often tenuous funding streams that underlie much provision in the sector, to what extent this contributes towards fairer, more sustainable working practices for ACE practitioners remains a moot point (Magrath & Fitzsimons, 2019). This applies in particular to the community education sector that has seen significant de-investment over the past number of years and which has yet to recover to the levels of activity since the so-called ‘Celtic Tiger’ era (Bracken and Magrath, 2019; O’Brien, 2018). Likewise, the community-work-community development sector has undergone significant change in recent years with the replacement of long-established community partnerships with local development companies (LDCs). However, it does mean that an opportunity now presents itself to mirror developments in GCE in other parts of the Irish

<sup>1</sup>

For a detailed exploration of this point see: D. Shannon (2018). A Tale of a Discursive Shift: Analysing EU Policy Discourses in Irish Adult Education Policy – From the White Paper to the Further Education and Training Strategy. *Adult Learner: The Irish Journal of Adult and Community Education*, pp. 98-117.

education system and for potential scaling of activity in this area to reach a broader range of adult education provision and learners. This refers to longstanding initiatives aimed at embedding GCE in ITE for the primary and second levels via the DICE and UBUNTU initiatives, respectively. In specific terms, there is now a framework in place for embedding GCE in ITE for ACE practitioners in ITE programmes located in eight HEIs across RoI and which is set for implementation in 2022 (see: Saolta, 2021c).

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### 2.5.2 The Irish ACE sector: provision, providers & participation

This section of the report provides an overview of the Irish ACE sector in terms of provision, providers and learner participation. By way of context, definitions and descriptions of ACE are provided.

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### 2.5.3 Adult learning & education: definitions and descriptions

In their definition IDEA (2014) describe adult education as:

*...all learning undertaken by adults who are not attending mainstream second level or higher education, and development education within these sectors is taken to include any development education work which occurs after second level schooling, but outside the third level system (2014, p.12).*

Adult education is further described here as education for adults which takes place in both formal, non-formal and informal settings, often

with people who have had limited formal educational opportunities earlier in their lives, or whom are re-skilling themselves for new work and life situations. Elsewhere, UNESCO take a broader view, suggesting that adult learning and education provision

*...encompasses all formal, non-formal and informal or intentional learning and continuing education (both general and vocational, and both theoretical and practical) undertaken by adults (as this term is defined in any one country). ALE participants will typically have concluded their initial education and training and then returned to some form of learning. But in all countries there will be young people and adults who did not have the opportunity to enrol in or complete school education by the age foreseen, and who participate in ALE programmes, including those to equip them with literacy and basic skills or as a 'second chance' to gain recognized certificates. (2016, p.29).*

The key phrase here is 'intentional learning' and the recognition by UNESCO that learning activity that takes place in non-formal as well as formal and informal education settings, similar to the EU descriptions (see Box 1). This further suggests that, notwithstanding local definitions, ACE provision incorporates what is commonly referred as 'second-chance' education provision not just for adults, but also for young people who did not complete their formal schooling beyond the statutory age. This in turn questions the extent and scope of what might be considered adult learning and education and thus ACE provision, and which has implications for those targeting this area for GCE interventions in RoI-ACE.

### Box 1: Distinguishing between different types of learning and learning activities

Learning activities may be defined through a classification which provides operationalization and guidelines in particular for non-formal education and training-named classification of learning activities (CLA) - as follows:

- **Formal education and training** is defined as education that is institutionalised, intentional and planned through public organisations and recognised private bodies and - in their totality - constitute the formal education system of a country.
- **Non-formal; education and training** is defined as any organised and sustained learning activities outside the formal education system. The CLA further distinguishes the following broad categories of non-formal education: *non-formal programmes; courses* (which are further distinguished into classroom instruction, private lessons and combined theoretical-practical courses including workshops); *guided-on-the-job training*.
- **Informal learning** is less organised and less structured. It is defined as forms of learning that are intentional or deliberate, but are not institutionalised. It may include learning events that occur in the family, in the workplace, and in the daily life of every person, for example, coaching/informal tuition, guided visits, self-learning, learning groups or practice.
- **Lifelong learning** is used by the EU to describe learning for those aged 25-64 and can take place in a variety of environments, both inside and outside formal education and training systems.

Source: EU, 2021

#### 2.5.4 The ACE-RoI Sector: provision, size & scale

The first mapping exercise attempted to describe, tentatively and for the first time, the RoI-ACE sector in terms of provision, providers and coverage. Given the above discussion, what follows remains tentative and is thus not presented here as a definitive description of the ACE sector and its related sub-sectors. In addition, changes have been made to the classification of ACE provision

to reflect, more accurately, the scope and extent of ACE. With this in mind, the ACE sector can be described in broad terms as comprising a range of statutory as well as non-statutory education and training provision catering for many thousands of adult learners across all counties of Ireland. In line with the first Mapping Report, this can be further demarcated in terms of the different sub-sectors of ACE, each having its own distinctive remit and learner focus (Table 1).

**Table 1: RoI-ACE Sectors; Subsectors**

Provision	Description
<b>NGOs; Networking Organisations</b>	Providers with a Regional-Local Focus as well as those with a National and/or International Remit
<b>FET Provision</b>  <b>Adult Education</b>  <b>Community Education</b>  <b>Further Education Colleges (CFE)</b>  <b>Local &amp; Specialist Education Training Centres</b>	Administered by the 16 Education & Training Boards (ETBs) on a single or bi-county basis  Focus on back-to-work programmes and initiatives, including Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS), Back to Education & Training Initiative (BTEI) and Literacy Skills provision  Community-based programmes and initiatives incorporating a broad spectrum of education provision including accredited as well as unaccredited programmes  ETB administered Colleges providing post-Leaving Cert (PLC) programmes from NFQ Level 5+  CFEs may also host Adult Education and Community initiatives listed above  Provide vocational-related training and education as well as apprenticeships in regional as well as local-based Community Training Centres (CTCs), Regional Training Centres (RTCs) as well as specialist training centres. RTCs may also host adult and community education provision listed above
<b>Community Education (non-ETB)</b>	Non-ETB administered but may be funded or part-funded by an ETB Includes a broad range of accredited as well as non-accredited/locally accredited programmes focussed on addressing on specific local issues
<b>Community Development/ Community Work</b>	49 Local Development Companies (LDCs) focussing on community/rural development. Specific programmes include: SICAP and Leader
<b>Local Authorities/ Public Partnership Networks (PPNs)</b>	PPNS: Networks of Community Groups affiliated to the County Councils. Includes a broad range of activities and groups categorised as: Community, Environment or Social Inclusion initiatives  Local Authority run education events, projects and initiatives

**In more detail:**

- By far the largest provider of ACE in the sector is the ETB-administered statutory FET provision which in turn comprises adult education, community education as well as PLC programmes conducted in education and training centres and colleges located in towns and cities across Ireland. Working with an annual budget of c.€800m this includes a broad range of mostly vocational, skills-based education and training provision, including apprenticeships, back-to-work programmes, pre-university courses as well as specialist provision such as traveller-training centres, prison education and migrant education (SOLAS, 2021a).
- Outside of this statutory provision sit Community-based Education projects and initiatives, many of which have been established to address particular local community needs such as crime and drug addiction, intergenerational unemployment and inequality. Providers in this subsector often rely on multi-stream funding from government as well as non-government sources, including ETB funding.
- In contrast to Community Education, Community Development or Community Work has its own particular remit and focus, though some aims and objectives may overlap. This is a subsector of ACE that has undergone significant change in the last decade or so. Briefly, recent developments in this area have seen the establishment of not-for-profit Local Development Companies (LDCs) administered by POBAL and which replaced the previous area-based Partnership Companies. There are currently 49 such LDCs who are responsible for delivering a large number of programmes including the Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme (SICAP), LEADER, Rural Social Scheme, Tús, as well as a wide range of labour market activation supports and instruments (ILDN, 2021).
- Under the auspices of the Local Authorities (LA), the Public Partnership Networks (PPNs) also operate in the local community work space. In more detail, there are 30 PPNs nationally servicing 26 counties and whose function is to allow Local Authorities (LAs) to connect with community groups around the country. Many LAs are also involved in directly providing educational opportunities and events as well as supporting community education initiatives. To give one example, in conjunction with various Arts-based organisations, Dublin City Council (DCC) runs its annual Bealtaine Programme for older people in May of each year offering a broad range of popular, once-off arts and cultural events including taster workshops, screenings, readings, talks, exhibitions, concerts, etc.
- Finally, there are a broad range of NGOs, CSOs, networking and umbrella organisations that work directly as well as indirectly with adult education and training providers and/or adult learners, for example, trades unions. These can be further categorised in terms of organisations with a national and/or regional remit as well as those that operate on an international basis.

In terms of size, the highly diverse and disparate nature of the ACE sector renders it difficult to enumerate provision and provider numbers with any great confidence. More specifically, there exists no firm data set for the large ETB provision and which would require a comprehensive survey to establish, precisely, the number of education and training centres, colleges and other FET provision that falls within its remit. It is also difficult to allocate a definitive figure for community education although some benchmarks are extant or will shortly be available. For example, in their survey of community education provision across the country, Magrath and Fitzsimons (2019) cite 150 members of the umbrella Community Education Network (CEN) organisation while a more comprehensive attempt is underway to establish the size and extent of provision in the area (AONTAS 2022 Forthcoming). More reliable data exists for ACE and learner participation, though again this data needs to be treated with some caution given different methodologies, definitions and descriptions of adult learners and participation in ACE.

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### 2.5.5 ACE & learner participation

To begin, there exist different descriptions of ACE participation across national and international contexts as well as those provided by different agencies. This in turn serves to create certain anomalies in terms of estimating learners and learner participation in ACE provision. For example, EU-generated (Eurostat) data relies on a strict age-related definition (25-64) of adult or 'lifelong learners', thus excluding many of those who enter ETB-FET provision below this age range. Moreover, the term 'lifelong learning' as used here is somewhat confusing given that this has

historically been employed by policymakers and others to describe a 'cradle-to grave' approach to learning across the lifespan. The same age-related definition is provided by the Central Statistics Office CSO, (2016) in their reports and census of adult learner participation in RoI, though this does not reflect official policy statements on the matter.

More specifically, the seminal White Paper on Adult Education (DES, 2000) described adult learners as those who have returned to some form of 'systematic' learning having concluded their initial education, thus allowing for the inclusion of a wide and varied cohort of adult learners. This is broadly in keeping with UNESCO (2016) who describe adult learners as those who have concluded their initial education and training and who then return to some form of intentional learning activity. This also includes young people and adults who did not have the opportunity to complete their schooling or who have supplementary learning needs such as literacy and numeracy training. This last description thus allows for the inclusion of, for example, early school leavers as well as other young people aged eighteen and below and who participate in many FET programmes such as the ETB-run Youthreach provision, CFEs, LTCs, RTCs or Specialist Training Centres. With all of this in mind, the following provides an estimation of adult learner participation based on statistics provided by several relevant agencies.

#### ***Lifelong Learning***

- The latest results from the EU 2021 Labour Force Survey (Eurostat, 2021) show that since 2010, the participation rate of adults in lifelong learning (25-64) rose gradually until 2019, from 7.8 % to 10.8 %. However, in 2020, it dropped by



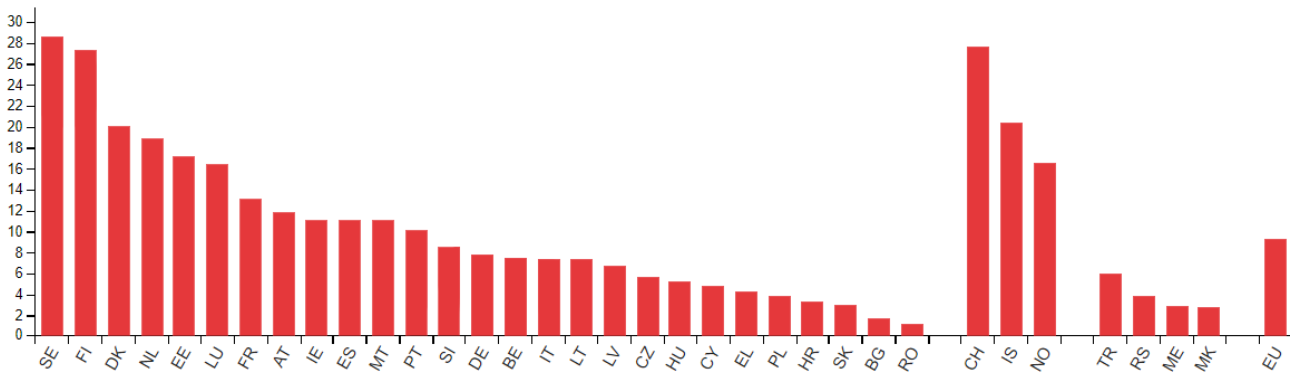
1.6 percentage points, reaching 9.2 %.

- Eurostat report that in 2020, the share of people aged 25 to 64 in the EU who had participated in education or training in the last 4 weeks was 9.2 %. For RoI this was 11% equating to c.279k adults. This compares favourably to participation rates in Italy (7.25%), Belgium (7.4%) and Germany (7.7%), but remains significantly lower than other EU countries such as Denmark (20%), Finland (27.3%) and Sweden (28.6%). This is also below the EU Commission benchmark for

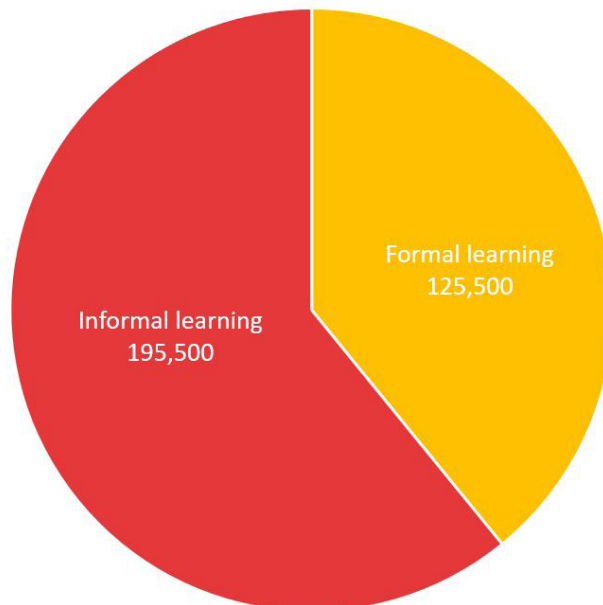
adult participation in learning of 15% by 2020.

- This is roughly in line with RoI generated data provided by SOLAS (2021) who report that in Q.4 2020, 302,300 or 12% of all adults aged between 25 and 64 took part in some form of (formal, non-formal) learning activity. Of these, 125,500 took part in formal learning activity while 195,300 participated in non-formal learning. The profile of the typical lifelong learner is most likely to be well educated, female and under the age of 45.

**Figure 1: Percentage of Adults (25-64) participating in ALE in EU in 2020 (Source: Eurostat, 2021)**



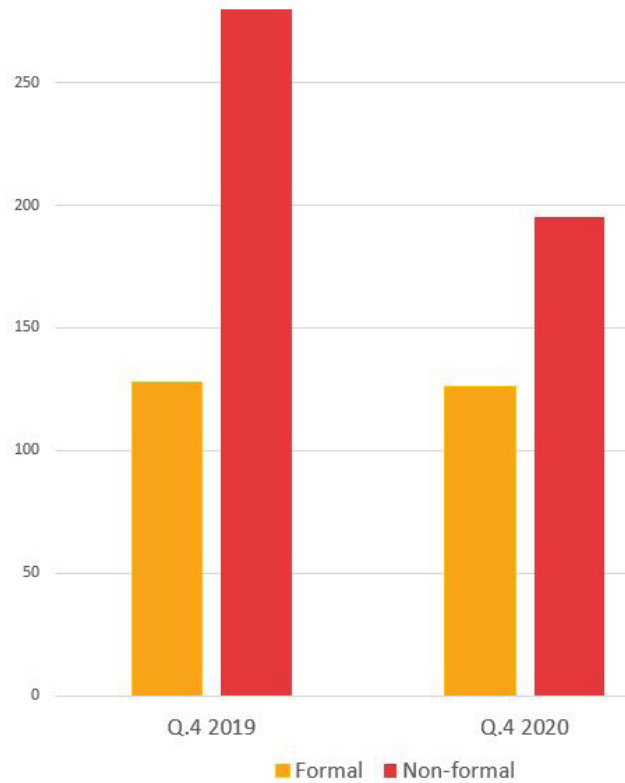
**Figure 2: Adult participation in learning by type in 2020 (Source: SOLAS, 2021b)**



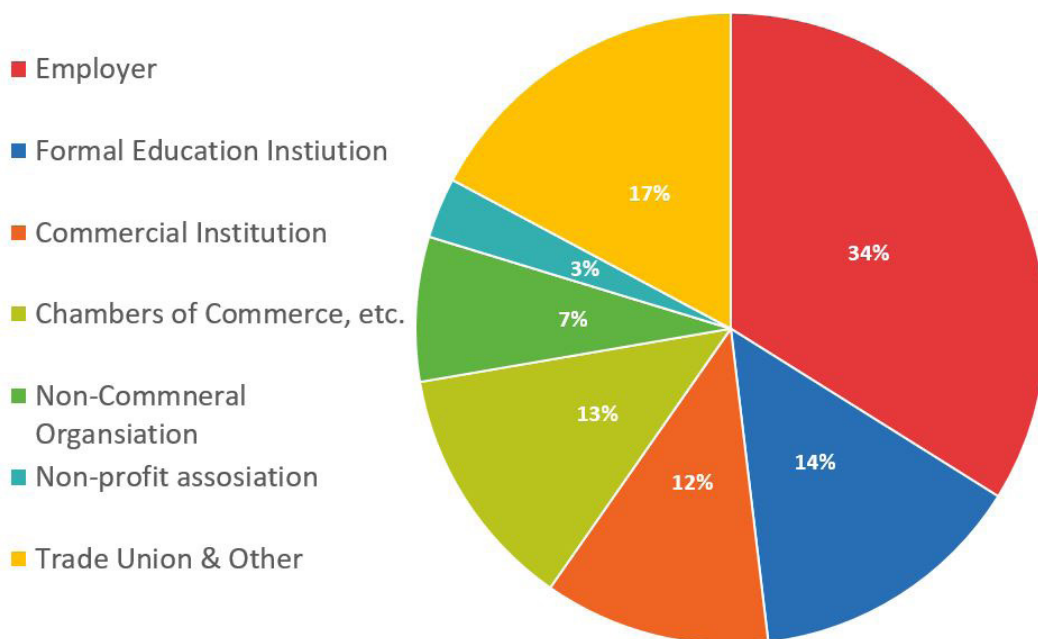
**In more detail:**

- Lifelong learning participants tended to be in the younger age cohorts, with one third (about 100,000 persons) aged 25-34 years.
- Most were well educated: more than 72% (211,000 workers) held third level qualifications.
- Females outnumbered males: at 171,600, the number of females who participated in lifelong learning was 31% higher than for males (130,600) in quarter 4, 2020.
- Figure 3 shows that overall lifelong learning activity is significantly lower for 2020 compared with 2019, thus highlighting the adverse impact of Covid 19 on adult learning activity in this period.
- Figure 4 demonstrates that in 2016, just over one-third of lifelong learning activity was provided by employers compared with 14% for formal education institutions.

**Figure 3. Lifelong Learning Activity  
Q.4 2019-Q.4 2020 (000's)**



**Figure 4: % participation rates in lifelong learning by provider (Source: EU, 2020)**



### FET & Skills Training

- DES (2021) report that total enrolments in FET and other government sponsored skills programmes (Skillsnet, Springboard) in 2019 was 241,994. Despite a +100% increase in apprenticeship participants this represents a modest increase of 4% over 2016 participation rates.
- For FET alone, SOLAS (2021a) recorded 151,630 unique learners enrolled in FET courses in 2020. This compares with 179,058 learners in the previous year.
- Figure 5 demonstrates that enrolments here were primarily concentrated among the under-25s, representing over one third of all enrolments in 2020. In line with lifelong learning activity, nearly two-thirds of FET enrolments are Females (61.1%) compared to Males (38.9%)

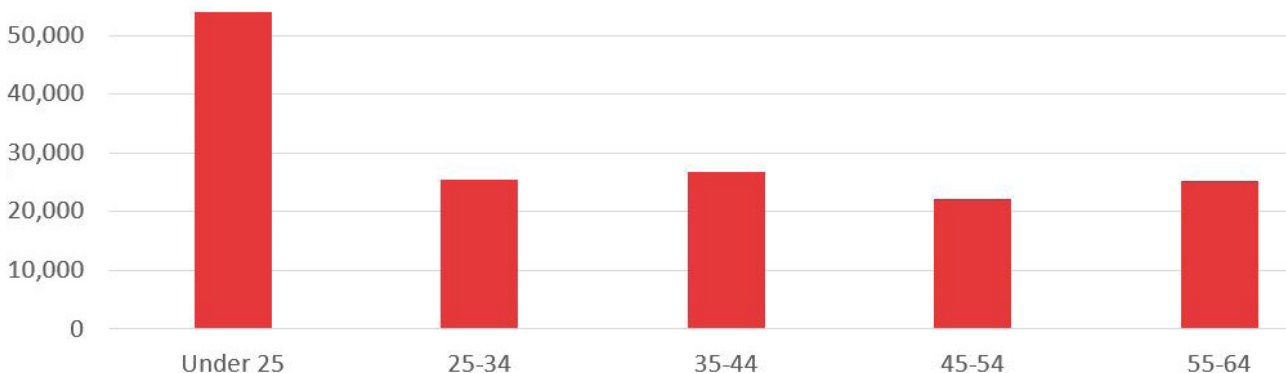
### Community Education; Community Development

No up-to-date data is available for either community education or community work. Previous statistics from DES and CEFA estimated that 55,415 adults participated in community education in 2012, with Females outnumbering Males by a ratio of 3:1. (CEFA, 2013). Whilst the majority of community education was non-accredited, non-formal and informal provision, approximately 2,600 accredited

awards were achieved in this year (2012). Given that there are many more Community Education providers throughout RoI who are not directly supported by the ETBs or part of any network, it is fair to assume that this participation figure will be significantly higher than reported here. For community development and community work, ERSI (2017) recorded 21,019 training programme participants in 2014, the majority of which were located in the areas of entrepreneurship/labour market activation, followed by IT, lifelong learning and personal development. In addition, an average of just 40% of training places are accredited and, of this, less than half are accredited through the national qualifications system (ERSI, 2017, p.8).

All of this renders it difficult to estimate a total figure for adult learner activity with any real precision, made especially difficult given the significant and ongoing impact of Covid-19 on activity in this area since 2020. Whatever the global figure might be, it nonetheless remains the case that ACE retains significant scope for GCE in reaching many different types of learners across a broad range of education provision. In line with broad education statistics and research, the data further suggests the particular challenges involved for targeting hard-to-reach groups for engagement in GCE, notably younger males and those with low education attainment.

**Figure 5: Learner participation in FET by age, 2020 (Source: Solas, 2021a)**



## 2.6 Summary

This section has served to underline, among other things, the continued commitment of Irish policymakers to GCE and for ensuring that all citizens in Ireland are exposed to GCE-related issues irrespective of age, gender, background or previous education attainment. In specific terms, the recent National Strategy (IA, 2021) and the impending ESD document (DES, Forthcoming) should go some way in ensuring that GCE remains a priority for educators and learners across all sectors of the Irish education system, including the ACE sector.

This section further underlines the significant scope that exists for the scaling of GCE activity in the ACE sector and for reaching a broad range of adult learners across the lifespan. In line with the approach adopted by UNESCO (2016, 2019), this further prompts a consideration of what constitutes ACE and adult learners and thus questions the narrow and limiting (25-64 yrs.) age-related definition currently used in official census and in other statistical reporting.

As with the previous Mapping Report (Saolta, 2020), consideration should also be given to how ACE activity and the ACE-sector is defined and described and that a more expansive understanding of this is deployed. Also in keeping with the approach of UNESCO, this would include all intentional learning activity undertaken by adults and young people in accredited as well as non-accredited programmes and courses across a range of formal and non-formal settings. This would then include, for example, the substantial education and training undertaken by sport's National Governing Bodies (NGBs) such as the Gaelic Athletic Association, the Irish Rugby

Football Union and the Football Association of Ireland as well as employer-sponsored training and initiatives.

At the same time, the disparate and diverse nature of ACE presents particular difficulties for those charged with embedding GCE in programmes and curricula. Unlike the formal school system, the ACE sector comprises a vast array of accredited and non-accredited provision incorporating vocational and non-vocational courses, skills-based training, personal development as well as GCE-related learning activity. Moreover, this demands a particular educational approach and pedagogy that is more suited to adults and adult learning contexts. In short, there are significant and complex challenges for those working in the GCE-ACE space that remain different to, say, embedding GCE in the primary, secondary or third-level contexts. Further challenges relate to reaching out to marginalised, hard-to-reach groups such as members of the travelling community and refugee groups.

Despite these challenges, this has also served to highlight the particular contribution of ACE to a lifelong learning approach to GCE and for realising the UN-SDGs, also on a lifelong, life-wide platform. And as posited here, GCE can be viewed as a counterpoint to the increasing skills agenda witnessed across all sectors of education and for revisiting some more humanistic goals once associated with lifelong learning, now seemingly defunct. This refers to democratic and emancipatory function of lifelong learning, for the building of an active, informed citizenry as well as for the attainment of skills and knowledge for

work (Biesta, 2006). Finally, these aims should not be seen as discrete, but rather as complementary and even synergistic aims as we seek to critically engage learners of all ages and all backgrounds in tackling the many issues facing humanity and taking action on those issues.

# Part 3: Methodology; key findings

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## 3.1 Introduction

This section outlines the methodology and research instruments employed for data generation purposes. A statistical analysis of the data and the key findings are presented. This second iteration of the mapping exercise demonstrates a small, but vibrant GCE activity across all sectors and sub sectors of the RoI-ACE provision. Moreover, the final (n=47) entries report activity in the social, economic and environmental aspects of GCE while the provider profiles (Appendix 2) illustrate the diversity of organisations and initiatives working creatively to engage a broad spectrum of adult learners in the many issues that GCE seeks to address. This includes a number of new contributors and whose submissions add greatly to our knowledge and understanding of GCE activity in this area.

However, some problems persist. In keeping with the findings from the first survey and report, significant gaps remain in terms of mapping GCE activity in some sectors and in some geographic regions. More specifically, there was a low response recorded for the community education-community work sector as well as for the large ETB provision. The illustrative map, below, further highlights disparities in activity by region, with the Midlands and South and mid-West regions being poorly represented. Also of concern is the high number of survey responses (n=24) that did not transfer to finished entries, again highlighting how significant work remains in raising awareness among decision-

makers, administrators and educators working in the ACE sector.

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## 3.2 Methodology and research instruments

The mixed-methods approach and research instruments employed for the first mapping exercise was again employed as follows:

- Online Survey Questionnaire
- Telephone & Email
- Web data, including institutional literature
- Semi-structured Interviews

The first three methods were deployed for the purposes of documenting and describing GCE activity while web data and interviews were used in the compilation of provider profiles and a small number (n=4) of case studies contained in Appendices 2 & 3, respectively.

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### 3.2.1 Data collection instruments; research output

The bulk of the data was generated via a survey (Google Forms) and distributed to a database of individuals and organisations across the RoI-ACE sector. As per the 2020 mapping, this database was

further updated and expanded through a number of methods, including web searches as well as requests for member details to network and umbrella organisations, including IDEA, Irish Rural Link and the Community Education Network via AONTAS. Other organisations that helped in distributing the survey include The Wheel representing community and voluntary organisations, charities and social enterprises and ILDN who are the representative body for the 49 Local Development Companies (LDCs) across Ireland.

### 3.2.2 Survey distribution & returns

The survey was distributed to 420 individuals and organisations across the ACE sector and sub sectors as seen in table 2.

Table 3 describes the survey returns. This demonstrates that from a total of 420 questionnaires, 71 completed forms or a response rate of c.17%.

**Table 2: Survey distribution by ACE subsector**

ACE subsector	Surveys Issued
NGO's	105
Comm. Ed	109
Adult & Comm. Ed. ETB	84
FET Other	30
Comm. Dev.	47
LA / PPN	34
Other	10
<b>Tot.</b>	<b>420</b>

**Table 3: Survey Returns & Completion Rate**

Sector	Responses (n=)	Incomplete (n=)	Final Entries (n=)
NGO's	32	4	28
Adult Education & Community Education (ETB)	8	6	2
FET including CFEs (ETB)	14	8	6
Community Education/ CEN/Other	8	3	5
Community Development/Work	7	2	5
LA/PPN Network	2	1	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>47</b>

In more detail, the bulk of responses were from the NGO sector (c.45%) with the remaining (55%) distributed over the other ACE subsectors, described. Of this last grouping, the combined ETB-administered provision accounted for 22 responses or c.31% of total returns. Table 3 further demonstrates that, of the 71 responses received, 24 or one-third of returns were deemed to contain insufficient data about their GCE activity and/or did not include adult learners and were thus omitted from the final report. As per the initial mapping exercise, these organisations were contacted for further information and may be included in future iterations.

The overall reported response rate of 17% is c.5 percentage points higher than the last survey, but this remains relatively low for this method. As with the last survey, difficulties in contacting the correct contact person for reporting purposes and a lack of understanding about matching existing provision to GCE activity were factors here. Also, the impact of Covid-19 on ACE activity can be factored here and especially the implications this has had for smaller organisations with comparatively fewer resources.<sup>1</sup>

### 3.2.3 Provider profiles & case studies

The provider profiles in Appendix 2 were derived from data supplied by survey respondents and supplemented by web information as well as via email. Following the online survey, a range of respondents from across the ACE sub sectors were canvassed to take part in semi-structured interviews in order to further explore their GCE activity. This resulted in n=4 participants taking part in semi-structured interviews via online platforms

and other methods (Appendix 3).

### 3.3.1 Statistical analysis

The following (sub) section provides a statistical analysis of the data from the (n=47) survey returns. This also includes qualitative data generated from the comments section that allowed respondents to give their perspective on the challenges as well as opportunities involved in embedding GCE in the ACE sector.

### 3.3.2 GCE activity by ACE sub sector, location and reach

Figure 6 presents the mapping of GCE activity in RoI by ACE sub sector, location and geographic reach. This demonstrates regional disparities in GCE activity with significant gaps in provision, particularly in the Midlands and South West regions. This contrasts with concentrations of providers in counties with major urban centres, including Galway and Cork and Dublin and the Eastern region more generally.

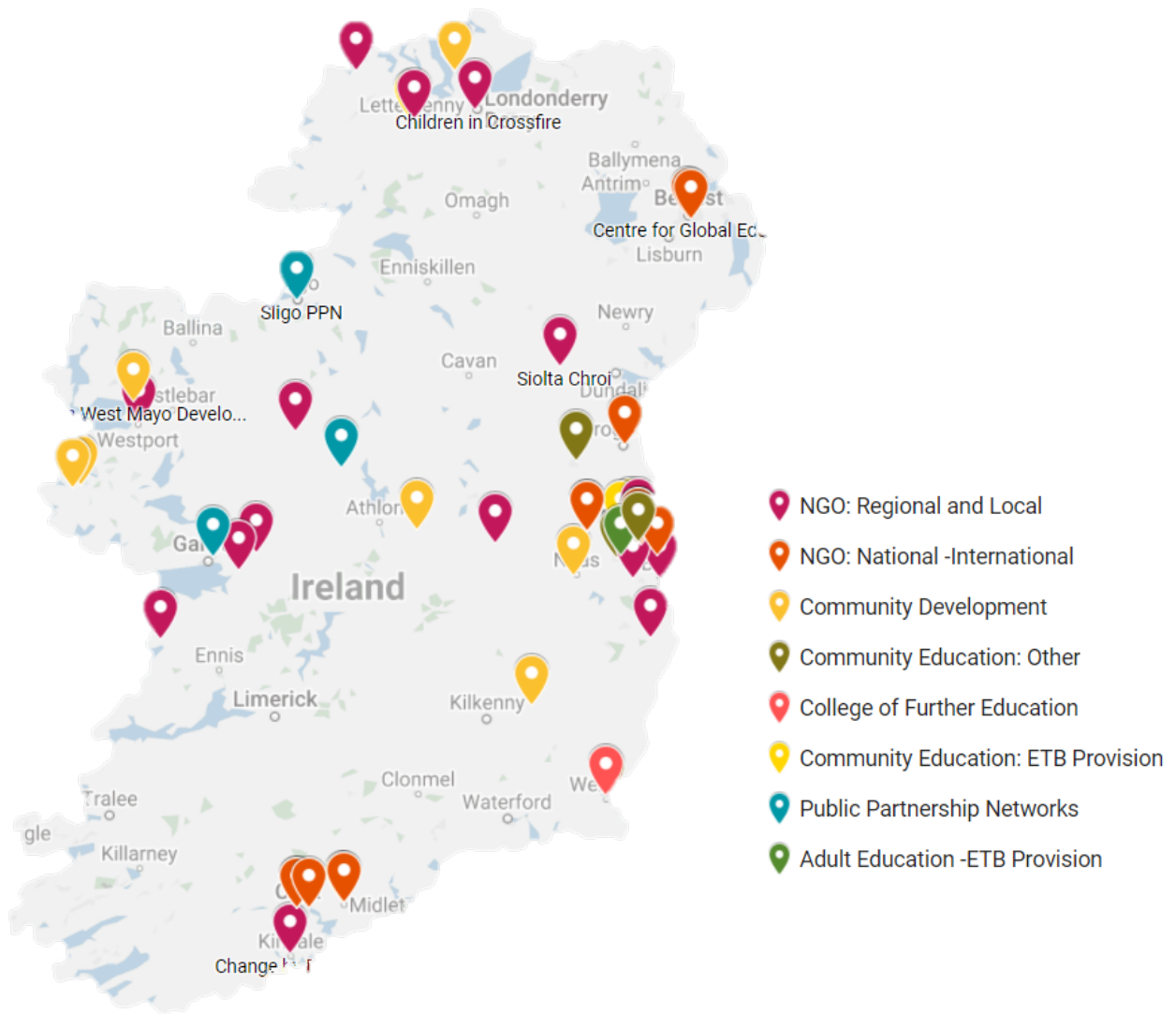
In more detail, Figure 7 demonstrates provider location across 15 counties, the majority of which were located in Dublin (40%) followed by Cork (13%) and Donegal (9%).

On a provincial basis, 55% (n=26) providers are based in Leinster, 17% (n=8) in Ulster, 15% (n=7) in Munster and 13% (n=6) in Connaught. The survey asked respondents 'What is the geographical reach of your GCE activities for adults?' In response, 47% (n=23) of organisations said that they facilitate GCE

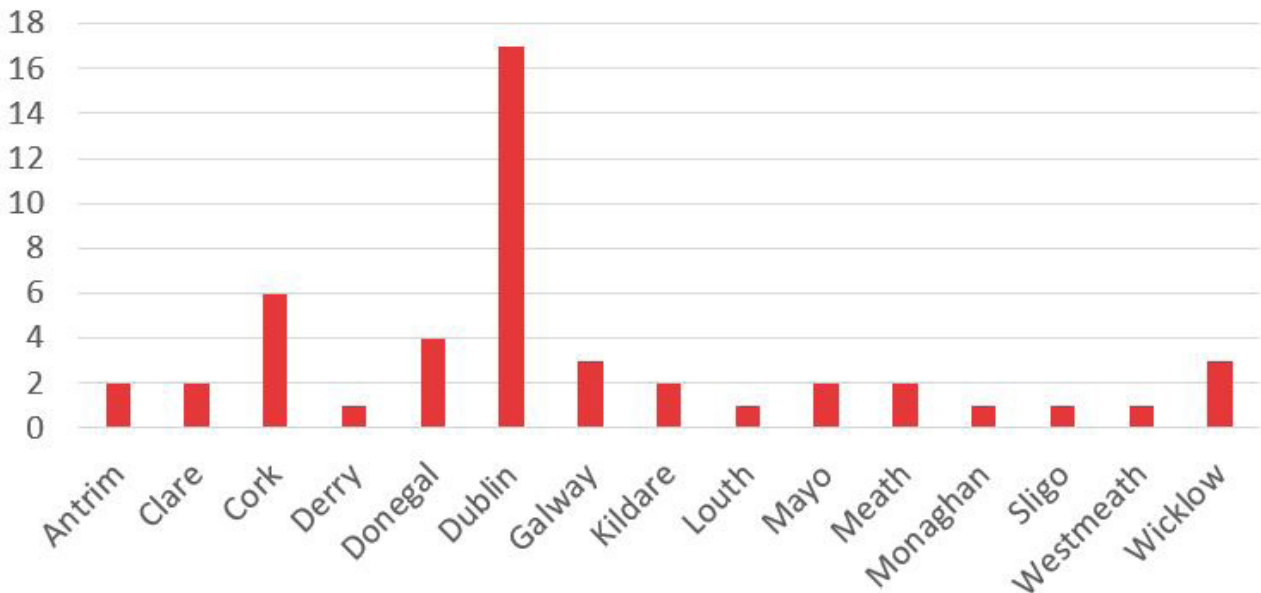
<sup>1</sup> See AONTAS (2020). Proposal for a COVID-19 Community Education Support Fund. Dublin: AONTAS.



**Figure 6: Mapping of GCE activity by subsector, location**



**Figure 7: Provider Location by County**



activities at local/county wide level, 40% (n=19) work at a National level. While there remain significant gaps in provision and providers, this demonstrates that GCE is happening in all counties on the island of Ireland. A further 26% (n=12) replied that they are engaged in GCE activities at a European level by way of Erasmus projects or participating in other European platforms.

### 3.3.3 GCE Activity by type & focus

Figure 8 amalgamates all the responses (n=47) on how organisations describe their work and GCE by type and focus. Removing words that only appeared once/twice the graphic provides a broad overview of the GCE activity happening in the RoI-ACE sector.

The type and range of GCE reported by respondents differed, with NGOs offering the broadest spectrum of GCE-related activity. GCE is further subdivided

here in terms of local/regional-based NGOs and those who work on a national and/or international basis. For regional and local-based NGOs, work and activities can be described in the following broad categories:

- **Social Orientated:** by promoting diversity and inclusion of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers through intercultural awareness and training on Human Rights issues such as trafficking and domestic violence.
- **Economic Orientated:** raising public awareness through workshops and events on the connection between the local and global effects of the financial system and linking the effects that this system has on exacerbating inequality in Ireland and in the Global South.
- **Environment Orientated:** engaging adult learners with sustainable environmental practices through hands on permaculture courses or/and local and national partnerships and outreach projects. Others engage with

Figure 8: Provider description of GCE activity: themes & topics



community groups, offices and the hospitality industry incorporating a 'full circle method' in food waste prevention or implementing management systems to reduce carbon emissions. All programmes incorporate studies on biodiversity, climate justice, collective climate action and the SDGs.

- **All of the above:** Other NGO's Regional and Local provide workshops, accredited courses and public outreach seminars engaging learners on the injustices of poverty and how the SDGs can address these.

This differed somewhat from GCE activity and focus for National and International NGOs. Respondents here described their GCE work as taking a holistic approach focusing on the three pillars of Sustainable Development within the SDG framework. Many respondents in this category report work with returned volunteers providing 'supports in their journey of working for a better world' through further training and engagement opportunities and/or participation in an awards programme. Others reported that they facilitated training to PPN's and Local Authorities on issues of, among other things, migration, interculturalism and integration.

#### **ETB-sponsored Adult & Community Education**

A common thread in respondents in this sub sector is the engagement of adult learners in GCE through courses such as horticulture and gardening, thereby encouraging awareness of the natural environment. This includes activities such as upcycling, and eco-friendly gardening, helping to develop adult learner's critical knowledge on the climate crisis and to become informed decision makers in their own communities. One respondent commented that their ETB has developed its first

Climate Justice Education Strategy that aims to adapt a two pronged approach by: 'a) *embedding climate topics into existing subjects*, b) *creating bespoke Climate Justice Courses*'.

**Community Education-Other:** Providers in this sub sector reported that their work is focused predominantly on environmental aspects and sustainable development issues. Projects and initiatives in this sub sector include activities such as sustainable gardening and sustainable crafts as an introduction to Climate Change. '*DE work is integrated, informally, across all our programmes*'. Others engage adult learners by educating, demonstrating and advocating for a circular economy and its impact on the SDGs. '*Social enterprises provide skills training for the circular economy while addressing unemployment through conserving resources including textiles, furniture, paint and bicycles*'. Further, all respondents provided that they aim to embed GCE throughout their courses by way of an organisational strategy or implementing new initiatives on Climate Justice which will in turn increase the number of GCE-related courses on offer.

**ETB:FET/Colleges of Further Education:** Feedback here demonstrated two different approaches to incorporating GCE in FE programmes, courses and curricula. Some provided standalone courses that were topic specific for example *Latin America Development Issues* and others provided courses on creative methodologies as a way of engaging learners on environment and education activities concerned with sustainable land, sea and air resources. Others commented that they '*embed development education into the existing curriculum and create activities and events with these themes for the students and local community*'.

**Community Development:** The remit of GCE activity occurring in community development projects varied significantly. Some organisations focus on the integration of new communities and other marginalised groups through active citizenship to promote sustainable communities. Activities include: community gardening programmes, sustainable food production and/or training and capacity building for groups to plan and manage individual projects. Some focus on local issues such as drugs, inequality and housing linking them to a global perspective to develop critical thinking in order to transform communities collectively. Others adopt an entire community approach by collaborating with multiple stakeholders and *‘providing SDG and global justice mentoring and training support and micro-grants to community activists and groups, and most recently, engaging social enterprises and businesses on Agenda 2030’*. Another community development project *‘support[s] the protection, management and wise use of Irelands wetlands for sustainable communities, by providing a network for community wetland groups to share knowledge, ideas, research, and best’*. Finally, a historical tourist attraction based

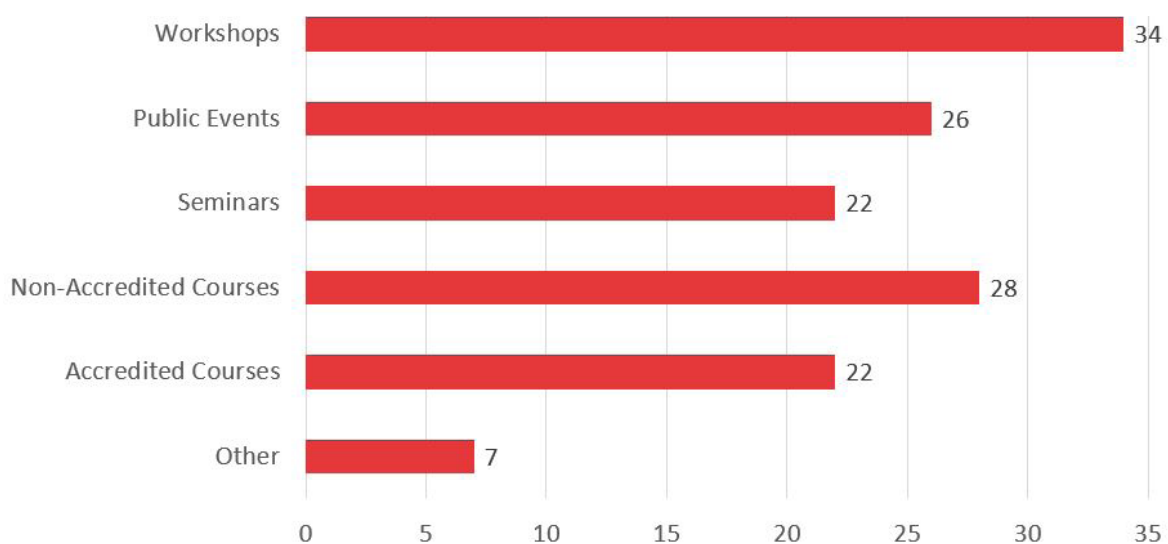
in the West of Ireland *‘are actively aiming for a sustainable tourism model to support sustainable employment and quality education especially around environmental issues through our tourism offering and staff initiatives and partnership with educational groups’*.

**LAs/Public Partnership Networks:** Like Community Development, the focus here was on local issues, and specifically issues of environment and sustainability. One of the PPNs had developed an Environmental Series through online presentations exploring a range of issues that would enhance representatives to make more informed decisions on priority concerns in the local area.

### 3.3.4 GCE Learning Activity by Category

The survey asked respondents to indicate their learning activities by category (Figure 9). Other types of learning include mentoring support programmes, development and sharing of resources, public consultations and corporate sponsored programmes. Table 4 demonstrates the type of GCE provision by category and sub sector.

**Figure 9: GCE Learning Activity by Category**



**Table 4: ACE GCE provision by category and subsector**

Sector	Workshops	Public Events	Seminars	Non-Accredited Courses	Accredited Courses	Other
NGO's	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Adult Education & Community Education (ETB)	✓		✓	✓	✓	
FE/CFEs - ETB	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Community Education/ CEN/Other	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Community Development/Work	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PPNS				✓		

### 3.3.5 Adult learner participation

Table 5 represents a breakdown for each GCE provision and the estimate for engagement was determined by respondent input, matching responses with similar provisions and categories and omitting figures that represented institutional engagement. Overall it is estimated that, based on the survey returns 14,549 adult learners engaged in some form of GCE activity in the period Jan-Dec 2021. Notwithstanding the increase in the number of survey entrants, this represents a significant increase the participation rate of 6,992 recorded in the last mapping report (Saolta, 2020).

Table 6 on the following page provides a further breakdown of adult learners engaging in GCE activity according to category and ACE subsector.

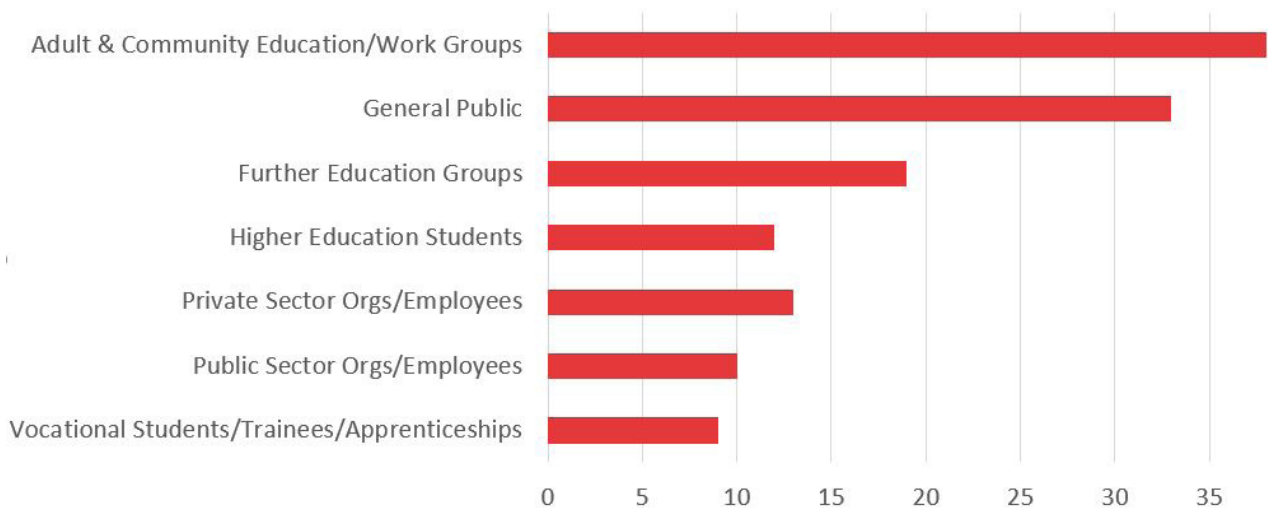
**Table 5: Estimated number of adult learners engaging in GCE activity by type: (January-December 2021)**

Type of GCE Provision	N=
Public Events	2700
Accredited courses	1256
Attendees Non-accredited Courses	2348
Workshops	6758
Seminars	1440
Attendees- Other	47

**Table 6: Adult learner participation in GCE activity by ACE subsector & category**

ACE Subsector	Public Events	Accredited Courses	Non-Accredited Courses	Workshops	Seminars	Other	Total
NGO's National International	1800	7	301	4184	330		6622
NGO'S Regional and Local		472	305	160		47	984
Adult Education (ETB)			150				150
Community Education (ETB)		30	40				70
Community Education - Other		618	213	2204			3035
FET/Colleges of Further Education	900	95	1055	80	80		2210
Community Development/Work		34	284	130	1030		1478
PPNS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	

**Figure 10: Target Groups for GCE providers (n=Number of organisations)**



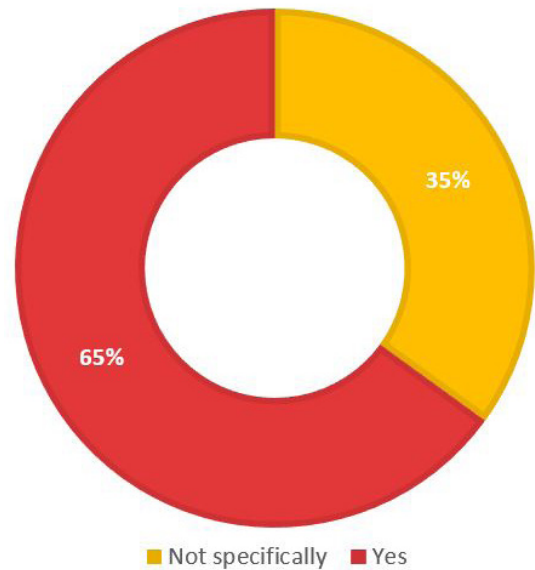
### 3.3.6 Adult Learners: Target Groups

The profile of learners in ACE is diverse in nature and capturing respondents target groups is problematic. In order to avoid too broad a range of responses, a pre-defined selection of target groups was included in the survey (Figure 10).

In addition, respondents were asked ‘Does your work engage in marginalised or ‘at-risk’ groups?’

These ‘at risk’ groups included learners from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds who may be unemployed, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers or people with disabilities.

**Figure 11: Organisations working with marginalised or ‘at risk’ groups**



### 3.3.7 Organisational capacity & staffing

Responses illustrate that a total of 110 staff have specific responsibility for GCE across all organisations. NGOs are further defined here in terms of National-International remit or regional focus (Table 7).

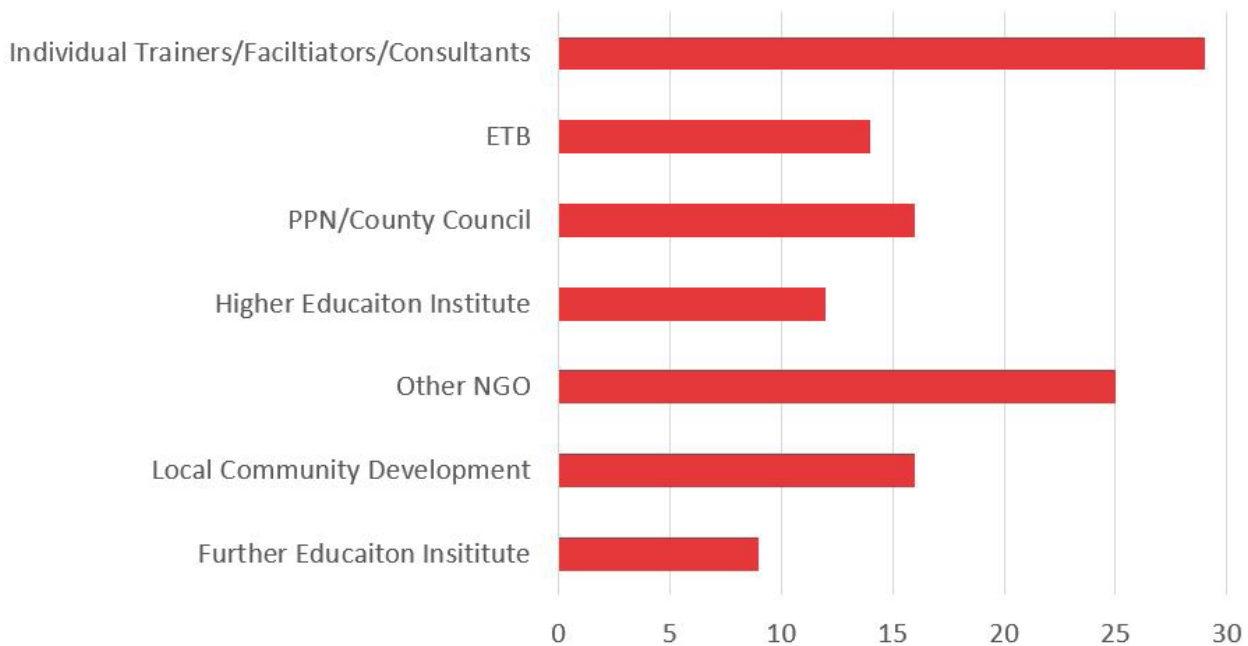
While this represents a small number of dedicated staff, many providers work in partnership with other organisations to deliver GCE workshops, courses and events.

**Table 7: Staff with specific responsibility for GCE- related activity per ACE subsector**

Subsector of ACE	N=
NGO's National International	16
NGO'S Regional and Local	39
Adult Education & Community Education- ETB	2
Community Education – Other	10
FET/Colleges of Further Education	9
Community Development	31
Public Partnership Networks	0

### 3.3.8 Working in partnership

The importance of partnership and collaboration is evident in facilitating and supporting the implementation of GCE. All respondents stated that they work with at least one other provider while 60% of respondents have engaged with Individual Trainers and Facilitators/ Consultants closely followed by collaboration with NGO's (53%).

**Figure 12: Partnership working by ACE sub sector (n=partnership organisations)**

### 3.3.9 Challenges and opportunities for ACE and GCE provision

The participants were asked about the challenges involved in embedding GCE in the ACE sector as well as the challenges facing their particular sub sector, organisation, project or initiative. This generated comments and suggestions from c.50% of respondents and is presented here thematically, identified here in bold text:

**Gaps in GCE provision** - In keeping with the statistical findings, gaps in geographical reach and focus were highlighted by participants and thus the need to consider regions where GCE provision is scarce: *'There are areas where many opportunities exist and others where there are less offerings. Saolta needs to address these geographical variances.'* Other respondents commented on the **lack of focus in the FET sector** generally and that *'DE is relatively underdeveloped in FE'*. Another participant highlighted the need to include all groups in GCE topics and issues: *'I do feel that*

*some marginalised groups are being left out of the "Green Conversation", which is something we hope to work on.'*

This last contribution highlights a particular emphasis on Climate and Climate Justice which is unsurprising given the profile of this issue allied to the Rol's poor record in this area. *'Climate Justice must play a greater significance in not just Adult Education, but also Life Long Learning going forward: This is now one of the single largest issues affecting the world today'*. Anticipating the forthcoming ESD strategy, this respondent suggested that, with regard to climate change and climate justice: *"A national education strategy together with a commitment to resourcing it must now be put in place."* There was some anticipation about what the new ESD strategy might deliver or offer by way of focus and resources: *"We hope the forthcoming National Education for Sustainable Development Strategy will support the further embedding of DE in the ACE sector and will be adequately resourced to meet its objectives in that*



respect.” The urgency of tackling this issue was emphasised: *“Global trends in relation to the issue (highlight that) is it still rampant. It is needed now more than ever as we approach the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030. Ten years to get it right if society is to meet the SDGs...”*

Participants were more positive about efforts at addressing **Global Justice Issues** but recognised that more needs to be done in this regard. *‘Communities around Ireland have shown themselves to be leaders in refugee solidarity, and global solidarity initiatives. There is great scope to think creatively about deepening that understanding and building stronger connections for global justice.’* This last entry highlights the **Creative and Innovative Approaches** on the part of providers to engage adult learners with GCE-related issues, but that greater **Resources** are needed if the sector is to make a real impact in this area. As the following entry highlights, the need for a **Partnership Approach** with other NGOs and GCE-resource providers is key to achieving this:

*Through our partnerships with Trócaire and Self-Help Africa we connect adults and communities in Donegal with groups and activists from the Global South. For example, last year we connected potential female political aspirants in Donegal (local elections) with a female local councillor from Uganda to discuss ‘women’s political empowerment’ and the common challenges they face, as well as food growers in Donegal with smallholder farmers in Uganda to discuss climate change and climate action. We manage to do a lot with limited resources.*

This emphasizes the need for further **Research** and

**Dissemination of Good Practice** that captures this and other initiatives and which might be replicated elsewhere as this respondent suggests: *‘City of Dublin ETB have developed an excellent Pilot project on Climate Justice. Perhaps reviewing this project and learning from it may be a positive step in the right direction.’*

**An Institution-wide focus** – Respondents suggested the need for embedding GCE on a sectoral as well as institutional-wide basis: *‘While development education is very much part of our courses and programmes we haven’t had a strategic approach as an organisation’.* In line with other research, it would seem that GCE activity can often depend on the particular interests and motivations of individual staff: *‘In my institution there is no formal structures around development education. It is something that some staff are interested in and passionate about so they (including me) embed it into their teaching, classroom.’* Another respondent commented that: *‘It is difficult to articulate the informal/non formal sector - we work with volunteer youth leaders or those who self-select in the main, rather than on formal programmes.’*

Given that we started 2021 with a lengthy period of lockdown, it is unsurprising that **Covid 19** continued to impact on provider capacity for ACE and thus GCE with one respondent stating simply that: *‘Activities were heavily curtailed in 2020 due the Covid-19 pandemic.’* While there is evidence of providers readily adapting to online and blended learning platforms and indeed extending their reach through these mechanisms, it is also the case that some organisations lacked the capacity, know-how or resources to achieve this. By way of example, two providers from the initial mapping

exercise stated that they could not take part in this latest iteration as their service had all but ceased to function.

Finally, the term 'Development Education' continued to be universally employed by the survey respondents despite this being a survey focussing on **Global Citizenship Education**. While this may be one and the same in terms of shared goals and approaches, this nonetheless suggests that some work is required in articulating how this new definition and understanding might provide an overarching framework for tackling the many issues that providers seek to address in their work with adult learners.

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### **3.4 Methodologies & approaches to GCE; facilitating GCE**

The above analysis indicates a range of methodologies and approaches for incorporating GCE into ACE programmes, courses and in other types of provision. As reported in the last mapping exercise, many of the respondents continue to work toward capacity development for trainers and multipliers and this is seen as an effective way to embed GCE into ACE provision. At the micro level, GCE and related themes and topics continue to be informally introduced through programmes such as sustainable horticulture, crafts, English conversation classes and creative writing skills. To summarise, it can be concluded that work in GCE in the ACE sector is highly creative and innovative and tends to utilise local needs or interests to engage adult learners through formal, non-formal as well as informal learning provision. Moreover, the utilising of the SDG framework allows providers with opportunities to promote critical thinking

skills to understand the social, economic and environmental influences on our lives that result from our growing interdependence with other countries and societies.

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### **3.5 Provider profiles; Spotlight on GCE practice**

The specific work, focus and approach of providers is captured in more detail in the Short Profiles section (Appendix 2) while a 'Spotlight on Practice' section highlights the specific work of four providers of different size, capacity and GCE focus (Appendix 3). These profiles and short case studies further demonstrate the diversity of provision and providers in the GCE in the ACE sector as well as underlining the collaborative nature of efforts of providers working in this space.

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### **3.6 Summary; Key findings**

Table 8 presents the key findings from the initial mapping exercise based on the research questions established for the project, as seen on the following page. The findings are teased out for further consideration and review in the final of section.

**Table 8: Key findings**

Research Questions	Summary of findings
<p><b>Q.1</b>  <b>What GCE activity are ACE providers engaged in terms of: Location, size, reach and GCE focus?</b></p>	<p>-The ACE sector needs to be understood as a very broad sector incorporating several sub sectors of varying scale, reach, provision type, size and focus. Moreover, there remains some misunderstanding as to what constitutes ACE and ALE and the multifarious provision and providers that make up the sector.</p> <p>- This in turn hampers efforts to embed GCE in the sector. More specifically, the short review of adult learning definitions in the second section of this report further underlines the need to consider how all (formal, non-formal, informal) learning activity and provision needs to be factored in terms of the potential this has for GCE reaching the maximum number of adult learners across the lifespan.</p> <p>-This latest mapping exercise records a further five providers working in the ACE-GCE space while learner participation has substantially increased since 2020. While Covid 19 has continued to present problems for the sector, it would seem that some providers have adapted successfully to online and blended learning platforms for engaging learners, but that this remains an issue for others.</p> <p>-The survey findings highlight how significant disparities remain for GCE in terms of geographic location, reach and focus and while GCE activity is nominally recorded for all regions, counties, there nonetheless remain significant differences in and between regions, local areas and communities.</p> <p>-While there are some examples of new and innovative initiatives recorded in this 2nd Mapping Report, there remain significant gaps in provision, notably in the ETB sector, as well as in community education-community work.</p> <p>-On the specific issue of ETBs provision, this is not a monolithic organisation, but rather comprises 16 separate entities, which in turn comprise many different types of ACE provision for a diverse range of adult learners. Likewise, community education-community work incorporates hundreds of organisations and initiatives of hugely varying size, scope, remit and learner focus.</p> <p>-There remains some misunderstanding among providers as regards GCE and its aims and how this might be incorporated into current ACE provision, programmes and courses.</p>

**Table 8: Key findings**

<p><b>Q.2</b>  <b>Who are these providers working with &amp; how?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The findings further underline the collaborative nature of work in this sector and the efficacy of a partnership or joined up approach to maximise efforts to bring GCE to a broad range of adult learners across ACE.</li>   <li>- As per the initial <b>Mapping Report</b>, there are examples of good or best practice, of partnership approaches between NGOs, community and statutory providers of ACE and ACE provision. There are also good examples of creative and innovative approaches that could help to inform others working with different learner groups in the sector.</li>   <li>- Working with ‘at-risk’ groups remains a strong focus for the sector, but it is clear that providers require further support in bringing GCE to those groups whose participation in education remains marginal.</li>   <li>- Following this last point, consideration needs to be given to the categorisation of ‘adult learners’ in ACE provision. Some of the work undertaken by providers in ACE incorporates those in the 18-24 age bracket. Also, there is a need to consider the position of younger ‘second chance’ learners below the age of 18, and whose participation in GCE may be overlooked.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Q.3</b>  <b>What does the mapping exercise signpost in terms of the future direction of GCE in the ACE sector, strategy, resources and so forth?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This mapping and report further underlines how significant scope remains for scaling of activity in this area and for extending the reach of GCE to a broad range of adult learners, including marginalised individuals, groups and communities.</li>   <li>- The combined first and second <b>Mapping Reports</b> along with other research (Saolta, 2021a) points to the need for a system-wide approach to achieving this and for effectively embedding GCE in the ACE sector. Notwithstanding current efforts, this points to a strategic focus and awareness-raising at a policy, executive, managerial and administrative level so that GCE is supported and facilitated on a sectoral as well as institution or organisation-wide basis.</li>   <li>- This also points to further capacity-building measures for ACE practitioners so that GCE can be effectively embedded in programmes and curricula across a broad range of formal, informal and non-formal education settings.</li>   <li>- Some of this knowledge and know-how exists, while further, more ‘fine-grained’ research is needed to capture the various creative efforts on the part of providers currently actively in this sector.</li>   <li>- Taking ACE &amp; GCE as a specific entity, and notwithstanding current networks, there is no one mechanism or national forum for sharing of research and best practice models, for collaboration and the building of networks.</li>   <li>- The size and scale of this task suggests that, in addition to current funding arrangements (and specifically: IA, 2021), there is a need to consider a broader range of funding models/funding streams to ensuring a comprehensive, long-term and sustainable approach to embedding GCE in the RoI-ACE sector.</li> </ul>



# Part 4: Report Summary; Conclusions and Action Points

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## 4.1 Introduction

While it is outside of the scope of the mapping exercise and report to consider, fully, the task of embedding GCE in the ACE sector, this nonetheless offers some guidance as to the direction of future efforts in this area. The following themes and topics to emerge from the data and participant responses are utilised for this purpose:

- The contribution of ACE to GCE
- Embedding GCE in ACE: Challenges and Opportunities
- A whole-system approach to GCE and the ACE Sector
- Resources and Funding
- Further Research

Key action points for each of these themes-topics are offered for consideration.

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## 4.2 The contribution of ACE to GCE

The diversity and variety of providers documented in this latest mapping exercise demonstrates how those working in this space endeavour to engage adults in GCE and GCE-related issues in many creative and innovative ways. The survey responses

and accompanying profiles further highlight how this is often achieved through a partnership approach or other form of collaborative working that draws on the strengths and expertise of the respective parties involved. These efforts need to be recognised, celebrated and shared so that all of those with an interest in this work may learn from these examples and adapt this to their own context and site of practice.

Following UNESCO (2016, 2020), this report further highlights how GCE can contribute to the broader goals of education and for countering a skills focus and agenda that has come to predominate conceptions of lifelong learning, lifelong learning policy and practice. The inclusion of, among others things, themes and topics of social justice, social equality, sustainability, and encouraging learners action on these issues, can go some way in rebalancing the focus, content and approach to lifelong learning. That is not to say that these goals are incompatible. As suggested earlier in this report, there is no dichotomy between a skills focus and an approach that seeks to engage adult learners in GCE themes across all disciplines, subject-areas and topics in a critical and informed way.

*Action Points:*

- The efforts of those currently working in the GCE-ACE space need to be further documented and described to provide a rich source of knowledge and know-how for engaging adults in GCE, GCE-related topics and issues.
- Examples of partnership working, co-working as well as other collaborative efforts are of particular value in informing new and existing models of good or best practice in this field.
- The role of GCE should be viewed in terms of the broader goals of education and what this offers ACE practitioners and learners by way of a critical pedagogy and approach to the particular subject or topic in which they are engaged.

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### **4.3 Embedding GCE in the ACE sector: challenges & opportunities**

Despite this contribution and this work, there remain significant challenges for those charged with embedding GCE in the ACE-RoI sector. First, this report invites a broad understanding of ACE and what constitutes adult learners and adult learning activity, and thus how the sector is described and defined. In keeping with EAEA, UNESCO-UN and others, this mapping and report emphasises the important contribution of ACE in realising a lifelong as well as a *lifewide* approach to GCE and the various issues which this seeks to address. This further embraces a comprehensive understanding and practice of learning, development, knowledge and knowing and which recognises that learning takes place across a broad spectrum of (formal, non-formal and informal) education contexts.

It is further suggested that ACE is not confined to a narrow age-related definition or understanding of who this is and how or where this learning is accommodated. This refers specifically to those aged 18-24 as well as younger adults below this age range who may fall outside of the formal school provision, but who are not accounted for in adult learning statistics and reports. To give one example, RoI has significant provision for (statutory, non-statutory) 'second chance' education through education and training initiatives funded through Justice and Probation Services and which are often co-funded by ETBs. Moreover, the potential contribution of employer-based training as well as learning activity in non-work or leisure-oriented related contexts is also worth noting.

Leaving aside the need for a broader understanding of ACE, ACE activity, the earlier attempt to describe the sector (Table 1) nonetheless highlights a broad range of GCE-related provision and providers of varying remit, scope and scale and reach. The small survey returns once again emphasises that there remains considerable work in embedding GCE in this sector and for engaging all the various ACE subsectors in a meaningful and sustainable way. Particular challenges relate to the large ETB-FET provision which in turn is comprised of hundreds of local-based education and training centres of varying size and scale. To restate, ETBs are not monolithic entities, but rather comprise 16 autonomously administered organisations of various scale, size as well as focus. Similar sentiments can be applied to LDCs and PPNS who operate independently and whose focus is on meeting local need. Finally, the low participation rates recorded for some regions

and some counties further highlight the need to address this issue and for extending the reach of ACE-GCE to all geographic areas and to all communities across RoI and indeed NI.

*Action Points:*

- ACE activity and thus RoI-ACE should be defined and described in broader terms to capture, fully, the scale and scope of adult learning and thus the potential contribution of this to GCE, GCE policy objectives.
- The various sub sectors of RoI-ACE should be treated as presenting with unique challenges as well as opportunities and thus require a tailored approach to GCE, embedding GCE in programmes, curricula and activity.
- The low rates of GCE recorded for ETB-FET suggest that a specific strategy and approach is needed for embedding this in this subsector of ACE. This also applies to the community-work, community education sectors as well as PPNS and which present with unique challenges as well as opportunities for GCE.
- In line with the *National Strategy* (IA, 2021) as well as IDEA (2021b), identify further opportunities for multi-partnership work and for scaling of activity in this area, including teacher education and other CPD opportunities for ACE professionals<sup>1</sup>.
- Specific consideration should be given to stand-alone initiatives that target employers in both the public and private sectors and industry more generally. Irish Aid could reflect on this point in more detail if a strategic partnership for the Private sector is considered.
- Consideration should also be given to identifying other areas for GCE activity outside of the formal ACE sector, for example in sporting and cultural organisations as well as other areas where adults engage intentionally in learning activities.
- The low rates of GCE activity in some geographic areas requires a specific response from the sector and for those charged with embedding GCE in RoI-ACE. The ETBs, LDCs as well PPNS offer scope for meeting this particular need.

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#### **4.4 A whole-system approach to GCE and the ACE Sector**

Notwithstanding previous as well as current efforts, this points to the need for a whole-system approach to the task of embedding GCE in RoI-ACE, including the engagement of key stakeholders, policymakers, decision-makers and administrators. While significant work has already been undertaken in this regard, including efforts at impacting policy, much practical work remains. In specific terms, key organisations and groups for fresh and continued targeting include: DFHRIS, Solas, ETBI, FET Directors, Higher Education Institutes, TCI, PPN administrators and CEOs of LDCs. In addition, networking organisations such ILDN, AONTAS, Irish Rural Link and the Wheel offer considerable opportunities for awareness-raising, for dissemination of information as well as trainings to respective memberships. The participant responses further indicate the need for targeting and informing key personnel at the operational level (for example: college principals and training

<sup>1</sup>

To give one example, there now exists a Framework for embedding GCE in ITE programmes for ACE Practitioners and which is set for implementation in the third quarter of 2022. See: A Framework for Embedding Global Citizenship Education in Initial Teacher Education Programmes for Adult & Community Education Practitioners. Drogheda: Saolta.



centre managers) as part of a whole-centre or whole-college approach to GCE. In this way, GCE is embedded, not just in programmes or specific modules by specific individuals, but rather as an institution-wide, sustainable response to GCE and GCE-related issues.

In keeping with the initial *Mapping Report* (Saolta, 2020) there also remains significant work for awareness raising among ACE practitioners as well as for building capacity for these practitioners to effectively incorporate GCE and GCE issues in their own teaching/facilitation and site of practice, regardless of discipline, subject, learning focus or provision. As other research undertaken by Saolta demonstrates (Saolta, 2021a), this requires a bespoke approach whereby GCE issues are explored by practitioners and learners via existing programmes, subjects and curricula. While there is scope for including GCE content in extant learning units, for example through current as well as new QQI modules<sup>1</sup>, the phrase 'teaching from a GCE perspective' applies here. Thus, rather than imposing GCE on ACE practitioners, this would require those involved to 'reimagine' or 'reinvent' GCE topics and issues in the context of their own ACE practice. The same sentiments apply to both accredited as well as non-accredited ACE (formal, non-formal and informal) provision. Here the task becomes primarily one of 'educating the educators' rather than changing, in any fundamental way, programme content or learning outcomes.

*Action Points:*

- Following the need for a system-wide approach

to embedding GCE in ACE, the systematic identification and targeting of key personnel in the organisations listed above. This list is not exhaustive, but rather should act as a starting point in developing a more comprehensive database of key organisations and executive personnel within these organisations

- Promote the idea of a whole-institution or whole-centre approach to GCE, GCE issues and develop guidelines and examples for achieving this.
- Taking Saolta's 'Train the Trainer' programme as one example, the further development of specific capacity building measures for ACE practitioners that focus on embedding GCE in existing provision, programmes and curricula.
- Further explore the potential for including GCE themes and topics in (QQI) accredited programmes as well as in the development of new programmes, modules or learning units.

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## 4.5 Resources & funding

This mapping report indicates a large and complex sector incorporating upwards of 300k+ learners participating in ACE across hundreds of sites of learning throughout ROI and indeed NI. While there remains a strong commitment to funding and resources as per the latest *National Strategy* document (IA, 2021), there is a need for exploring new funding approaches and for additional funding streams to be developed if the potential of ACE and GCE is to be realised. This follows IDEA (2021b) who call for a range of new funding modalities, strategic partnerships and multi-annual funding

<sup>1</sup>

A cursory audit of QQI modules identified a small number of (Level 4-5) modules with a direct GCE focus as well as other modules that address GCE. See: Saolta (2021b). Embedding Development Education-Global Citizenship Education in Accredited QQI Minor Awards. Drogheda: Saolta.

to create a stable sector configured for strategic thinking and long-term planning, including flexible funding arrangements tailored to meet the specific requirements of the ACE sector<sup>1</sup>.

On the level of specifics, this means a significant contribution from other key bodies towards achieving a systemic and sustainable approach to embedding GCE in ACE, including government departments, specifically the Dept. of Further & Higher Education as well as ETBs. In addition, there remains significant scope for further embedding GCE outside of what is understood as the ACE sector, for example the targeting of employers in the public and private sectors. Along with government and civil society, industry must also play its part too for ensuring a lifelong and lifewide approach to GCE.

#### Action Points:

- The funding and resourcing of the ambition laid out for the ACE sector in the IA Global Citizenship Education Strategy (2021 - 2025) needs to be realised.
- Encourage the Dept. of Further and Higher Education to support the embedding of GCE in the ACE sector. This could be done through the upcoming ESD strategy, which will be available in 2022.
- Seek further and deeper support from ETB-FET sector to address the embedding of GCE in the ACE sector in each of their respective defined areas. This is especially the case in areas where levels of accessing GCE opportunities are relatively low.

- Explore other models and (joint) funding streams with guidance from employer-representative organisations such as the Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC), Irish Hotels Federation (IHF) as well as trades unions.

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## 4.6 Building Research Capacity; Dissemination & Networking

As with the first iteration of this mapping exercise, there remains significant work in building research capacity in the sector, for capturing and disseminating examples of good practice in GCE, of collaborative and partnership work and the synergies that are created as a result. Also in keeping with the first *Mapping Report*, the need remains for investigating, with educators, trainers and facilitators, the complexities involved in embedding GCE as part of a capacity-building approach to this task. Action research or participatory action research (PAR) are appropriate research methodologies in this regard. Other specific research projects include the mapping of GCE onto existing programmes and curricula as well as examining new methodologies for the teaching and learning of GCE, GCE issues and which is especially geared to working with adult learners. In tandem with this comes the need for appropriate suitable platforms for the sharing of data and ideas as well as for networking and facilitating joint research efforts. This exists at the third level for practitioners in this space and a similar model is needed in the ACE-GCE sector.

<sup>1</sup>

In their 2025 Vision document IDEA (2021) specifically call for an increase in the overall Development Education budget from an estimated 0.6% in 2021 to 3.0% of ODA within a 5-year timeframe, thus highlighting the extent of investment required in this area.

*Action Points:*

- In line with Vision 2025 (IDEA, 2021b) work with the Irish Research Council to develop a research funding stream specifically for GCE and with ACE as a specific focus.
- Identify opportunities for joint research initiatives that further the task of embedding GCE in the RoI-ACE sector.
- Specific research projects include capturing good or best practice models and in particular partnership approaches that add to the scaling of GCE activity in RoI-ACE.
- Other 'how-to' research will help in the task of building capacity for ACE practitioners and for embedding GCE in existing programmes and curricula.
- In keeping with other areas, for example higher education, develop suitable platforms for the dissemination of research, for networking and the sharing of ideas and resources. This could be achieved, for example, via an annual conference platform as well as more ad-hoc interventions such as seminars, occasional lecture series and so forth.

backgrounds can be involved in GCE. At a local level, the work by various entities operating in the ACE space is beginning to bear fruit as evidenced in the work of GCE providers documented in this report and elsewhere<sup>1</sup>. The further scaling of activity in the sector is already underway, for example in the new *Framework* for embedding GCE in initial teacher education programmes for ACE practitioners that will see several hundred student teachers exposed to GCE on an annual basis (Saolta, 2021c). However, this final section highlights that more remains to be done for ensuring a long term, sustainable approach to embedding GCE in the sector. It is hoped that this mapping and report will go some way in guiding this task and for fully realising the potential of ACE in addressing the many issues that we face as global citizens and the need for action on these issues. Finally, we remain inspired by the contribution of French writer and lifelong pacifist Romain Rolland whose motto 'Pessimism of the Intellect, Optimism of the Will' remains an inspiration and a mantra for those striving for a better world in these difficult and turbulent times.

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## 4.7 Concluding remarks

The last number of years have seen significant work undertaken by various individuals, organisations and agencies to reflect on and amplify the key contribution of ACE to GCE. This is perhaps best illustrated in the latest IA GCE strategy for 2021 - 2025, which emphasises the pivotal role played by the sector in ensuring that all learners of all ages and

<sup>1</sup>

For example, the work of the Centre for Global Education and their Policy & Practice publication. See <https://www.centreforglobaleducation.com/publications>

**Appendix 1: Selected GCE policy & policy-related documents 2003-2021**

Document / Source	Summary of findings
<b>Global Citizenship Education Strategy 2021-2025 (IA, 2021)</b>	Sets out a five-year strategy for GCE across all sectors of Irish education, including an increase funding of €10 million per year over the lifetime of the strategy. Emphasises a lifelong as well as a lifewide approach to GGE and a renewed commitment to further embedding GCE in ACE provision
<b>The National Further Education and Training Strategy (SOLAS 2020)</b>	Focuses on 'the Green Campus' embedding sustainable development principles across all FET operations as well as ensuring students are equipped with the environmental awareness and 'green skills'.
<b>National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development Interim Review (DES 2018)</b>	Identifies actions for the next phase of the implementation for the National Strategy for ESD focussing on the period 2018-2020. Highlights the contribution of FET in terms of green issues and the provision of programmes and courses in sustainable and renewable energies
<b>Development Education Strategy 2017-2023 (IA 2016)</b>	Third National DE Strategy setting out a seven-year strategic plan for DE in RoI with Lifelong Learning positioned as the overarching concept for extending quality DE to all learners across the lifespan. Re-emphasises support for the provision of DE in ACE including a strategic partnership model to bring the in line with the formal school provision.
<b>SDG National Implementation Plan 2018-2020 (DES 2018)</b>	Establishes a framework for how RoI will implement the UN-SDGs from 2018-2020, including support for national policies which contribute to meeting the Goals as well as facilitating multi-stakeholder participation in this process. Education is identified as focus area for raising awareness of, and promoting engagement with, the Goals.
<b>The Global Island: Ireland's Foreign Policy for a Changing World (DFA 2015)</b>	Provides a framework for Ireland's foreign policy in five signature areas: combating poverty and hunger; advancing human rights; promoting disarmament; commitment to UN peacekeeping; sharing the experience of peace; and reconciliation on the island of Ireland.
<b>Global Education Peer Review Process: National Report on Ireland (GENE 2015)</b>	Recognises RoI's commitment to DE along with the diversity of strategy and approach in DE across the all sectors of ROI education. Recommended strengthening the aims of integrating DE in education with CSOs playing a key role in improving the quality and impact of provision in formal, non-formal and informal education at all levels.
<b>National Strategy on ESD 2014-2020 (DES 2014)</b>	Provides a framework for supporting the contribution of the education sector to sustainability issues at a number of levels: individual, community, local, national and international. FET included as one of the eight priority action areas is considered to be key leverage points to advance the ESD agenda in RoI
<b>DE in ACE settings: Guidelines for Good Practice (IDEA 2014)</b>	The first of its kind globally, the Code established (12) principles and indicators for good practice in all education contexts and settings, including Youth and ACE education settings

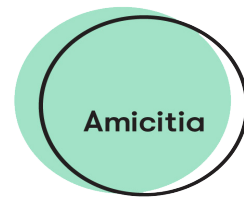
<p><b>Irish Aid 'Synthesis' Report (IA 2011)</b></p>	<p>The Report noted some of the specific difficulties facing the ACE sector in terms of DE, DE provision, including: low levels of funding, the absence of a formal curriculum as well as problems with categorization of providers and provision.</p>
<p><b>Development Education Strategy Plan 2007-2011 (IA 2006)</b></p>	<p>Second <b>National Strategy</b> document setting out plans for strengthening coherence between DE and wider education policy in both the formal/non-formal sectors.</p>
<p><b>Development Education Strategy Plan 2003-2005. (DCI 2003)</b></p>	<p>First Development Education Strategy for RoI Sets out six key objectives, including the integration of DE in the formal and non-formal RoI education sectors</p>

## Appendix 2: GCE Provider Profiles

### Amicitia

**F: 2015**

**Location: Athenry, Co. Galway**



Amicitia (Latin for friendship) is a framework promoting a shared-value social enterprise model for the provision of health and social care throughout Ireland. The organisation is based in Athenry, County Galway, where they are involved in place-based community development, covering social, economic and environmental challenges in rural areas. Amicitia offers workshops, seminars and public events that are open to all adults. Some of their Global Citizenship Education work brings them together with disability groups in the area.

<https://www.amicitia.org>

### An Cosán

**F: 1986**

**Location: Jobstown, Dublin 24**



An Cosán has over 35 years' experience of working in disadvantaged communities, responding to local issues and concerns, and running participatory education programmes. An Cosán learners are primarily from disadvantaged areas, members of the Traveller and Roma communities and, as a virtual college, the organisation services learners from remote areas across Ireland. In 2021/2022, they are running a GCE project for adult learners and community educators, with the goal to integrate GCE across their Adult Education Courses and organisational strategy. An Cosán is in a unique position to increase access to GCE in marginalised groups and the re-vitalization of GCE throughout the organisation.

<https://www.ancosan.ie>

### Ballsbridge College

**Location: Ballsbridge, Dublin 4**



Ballsbridge College of Further Education is situated in Ballsbridge, Dublin, and offers accredited courses for adult learners. Students can choose from six main course areas: Business, Social and Community Studies, Computing and Multimedia, Education and Training, English (EFL), and Property. Ballsbridge College is part of the An Taisce Green Campus programme, and as such provides opportunities for their staff and students to engage with topics around sustainability, biodiversity, and the environment.

<https://www.ballsbridgecollege.com>

**Carraig Dúlra****F: 2007****Location: Glenealy, Co. Wicklow**

Guided by an adult and transformative education approach, Carraig Dúlra's programmes deal with various GCE themes and topics, including: the root causes of poverty, climate change, bio-diversity loss and global perspectives particularly with regard to land access and food sovereignty. Carraig Dúlra also focuses on solutions based on regenerative practices and all of their tutors are chosen with some level of expertise or understanding of Global Citizenship Education or specific global issues. These subjects are shared through hands-on courses, local and national partnerships, and outreach projects in County Wicklow and beyond.

<https://www.dulra.org>

**CDET B Adult Education Service****Location: City of Dublin**

The Adult Education Service of City of Dublin ETB (CDET B) is the largest provider of adult education nationally. Adult education provided by CDET B includes a range of programmes, including Adult Literacy, Community Education, Prison Education, Back to Education Initiative and Skills for Work. Adults who experience social and/or economic disadvantage and those who left formal education early are prioritised. In common with Global Citizenship Education, CDET B adult education provision aims to empower learners and communities to address issues of social injustice, inequality and exclusion at local and global levels. CDET B Adult Education Service recently developed its first Climate Justice Education Strategy. The aim is to deliver high quality climate justice education programmes across a range of subjects to build critical literacy around the climate crisis and just transitions. A range of sustainable-themed courses were offered to learners across the five adult education services, including Fashion Upcycling, Craft Upcycling, Eco-Friendly Gardening and Sustainable Living. The courses facilitate learners to develop their critical knowledge on the climate crisis and become involved in climate justice initiatives in their communities. Learners develop their voice so they can take part in informed conversations about climate change and just transitions with decision-makers in their local communities.

<https://www.cityofdublin.etb.ie/fe>

**Centre for Global Education**  
**F: 1986**  
**Location: Belfast City**



The Centre for Global Education is a non-governmental development organisation that provides education services that enhance awareness of international development issues. Their central remit is to provide learning that will enable individuals and organisations to address the causes of poverty, inequality and injustice at local and global levels. The Centre aims to equip individuals and organisations with the critical thinking skills to understand the cultural, economic, social and political influences on our lives that result from our growing interdependence with other countries and societies. Through their activities they aim to provide learners with the skills, values, knowledge and understanding necessary to facilitate action that will contribute to poverty eradication both locally and globally. The Centre for Global Education delivers education programmes to refugee children in Gaza and Lebanon, while in Ireland their activities are open to a range of target groups. In 2021, they launched a new training programme for 16 community workers on climate change.

<https://www.centreforglobaleducation.com>

**Change by Degrees**  
**F: 2018**  
**Location: Kinsale, Co. Cork**



Change by Degrees is a team of corporate sustainability consultants advising on sustainability strategy and climate change communications. Their mission is to provide sustainability leadership and inspiration. Alongside their consultancy work, which included working with An Post and the Department of the Taoiseach, Change by Degrees has been involved in the design and delivery of SECAD, a sustainable community training programme for communities across Ireland.

<https://changebydegrees.com/>



**Children in Crossfire****F: 1996****Location: Derry City**

The work of Children in Crossfire (CIC) is situated within the Sustainable Development Goals, with a particular emphasis on SDG Goal 4: Quality Education. In partnership with Irish Aid, CIC aims to strengthen Ireland's contribution to a sustainable and just world through a Development Education approach which fosters 'compassionate global citizenship.' In specific terms, CIC's intervention approach to Development Education is to present a sector-wide innovative Development Education 'Educating the Heart' pedagogical framework, producing teaching resources and website tools for a holistic approach to nurturing the core competencies necessary for supporting young people on their journeys as active global citizens. To achieve this, CIC work alongside Teachers, Principals, Senior Leaders (including ITE Colleges) to support their alignment with this framework across curriculum policy and practice.

<https://www.childrenincrossfire.org>

**Co. Kildare LEADER Partnership****F: 2009****Location: Naas, Co. Kildare**

Co. Kildare LEADER Partnership is one of Ireland's local development companies. Their mission is to facilitate individuals and communities in Kildare to "participate fully in social, economic and cultural activity by supporting a vibrant and inclusive society". As part of the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP), Co. Kildare LEADER Partnership provide training opportunities based around active citizenship. The Partnership currently runs three Level 7 accredited certificates - in Community Development and Leadership, Youth Work Studies and Equality Studies.

<https://www.countykildarelp.ie/>

**Comhlámh****F: 1975****Location: Dublin 2**

Comhlámh is a member organisation that works to mobilise for an equitable and sustainable world. As the Irish association of development workers and volunteers and using a Global Citizenship Education approach, Comhlámh promotes responsible, responsive international volunteering and development work and, more generally, supports people in their journey of working for a better world. In terms of 'frame', their Global Citizenship Education approach is closest to ESD, as in that it is understood as a holistic approach to education, by learning and incorporating perspectives on and engaging with nature, society, economy and well-being. Comhlámh offer non-accredited training, workshops, seminars and public events.

<https://www.comhlamh.org>

**Community Wetlands Forum (CWF)****F: 2013****Location: Moate, Co. Westmeath**

Community  
Wetlands  
Forum

Community Wetlands Forum's mission is to support the protection, management and wise use of Ireland's wetlands for sustainable communities, by providing a network for community wetland groups to share knowledge, ideas, research, and best practice. The main aim of the CWF is to provide a representative platform for community-led wetland conservation groups, based on the principles of community development (empowerment; participation; inclusion; self-determination; and partnership). In support of the main objective, CWF has various subsidiary objectives, including facilitating the sharing of knowledge, ideas, and organisational methods between members, and letting the network grow by encouraging new community groups who are in the process of developing community wetlands or who wish to undertake such developments to join CWF.

<https://communitywetlandsforum.ie/about-us/>

**Concern Worldwide****F: 1968****Location: Dublin 2**

Concern is an international development and humanitarian organisation dedicated to ending poverty and hunger. In Ireland their Global Citizenship activities are geared largely toward students, teachers and youth and aim to raise awareness and critical analysis leading to effective action, with the aim of bringing about a fair and just world for all. Concern's Global Citizenship Education work includes workshops, seminars and public event that focus on the root causes that drive poverty and inequality in our world as well as providing learner centred opportunities for engagement and action using the SDG framework.

<https://www.concern.net>

**Cork ETB****F: 1932****Location: Cork City**

Cork Education and Training Board is the only statutory body in Cork with the responsibility to provide education and training across a broad range of services. While Cork ETB does not yet have a strategic approach to Global Citizenship Education as an organisation, themes related to GCE are an integral part of their courses and programmes, especially those that are social orientated. Active engagement with GCE related topics has so far mostly been through individual centres at a number of different levels in post leaving cert colleges, community FET centres and Youthreach. This has included projects such as Green Campus initiatives, sanctuary runners, and learning neighbourhoods. For a number of years, Cork ETB has also QQI 5/6 programme on Sustainable Horticulture and Permaculture.

<https://www.corketb.ie/>

**Creativity and Change**  
**F: 2009**  
**Location: Cork City**



Creativity and Change, based at Crawford College of Art and Design, are involved in both social-oriented activities, as well as environment and education activities concerned with sustainable land, sea and air resources. They facilitate a third level accredited course called "Creativity and Change", based on the belief that creative engagement can support transformative learning experiences that connect the head, hand and heart and nurture competences of global citizens that are important for the sustainable future of our world. Creativity and Change's training opportunities bring creative methodologies and energy to Global Citizenship Education. As well as the accredited course, they also offer workshops, masterclasses, and events that engage the public in the work of exploring and addressing Global justice issues through creative processes.

[www.creativityandchange.ie](http://www.creativityandchange.ie)

**Department of Adult & Community Education, Maynooth**  
**F: 1970s**  
**Location: Maynooth, Co. Kildare**



The Department of Adult and Community Education at Maynooth University provides opportunities for those aiming to work in the field of adult and community education, and adults who wish to continue their learning journey. The work is based on the belief that education is a human rights for everyone throughout their lives, and that education can foster people's capacities for agency and transformation, which in turn can help create a more just, equitable and sustainable society. In the field of Continuing Education, the Department offers non-accredited courses, workshops and seminars which are delivered part-time, both online and in person. These include a certificate in Community Development and Leadership, as well as courses in Equality and Disability Studies.

<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/adult-and-community-education/>

**Development Perspectives****F: 2009****Location: Drogheda, Co. Louth**

Development Perspectives (DP) specialises in Global Citizenship Education for adults and has been actively involved in this area since 2009. Currently, DP is the lead partner in the Saolta consortium, which is a strategic partnership with Irish Aid to embed GCE in the ACE sector in Ireland. DP works locally, nationally and internationally on the themes of poverty, inequality, climate change and migration. DP often uses the SDG framework as a way of gaining access to important spaces for dialogue and enquiry and has seen their project, the SDG challenge grow since its launch in 2016. The work of DP is held in high regard with DP winning the “Social Inclusion” category of the AONTAS STAR awards for their work in engaging migrants in a podcast series called “Amplifying Voices”. DP facilitates the Louth Meath Joint Migrant Integration forum and is currently chairing two community forums for EirGrid (Kildare Meath and North Connacht). DP also has an SDG challenge schools programme that has run for a number of years, and is active within the Erasmus+ arena. Transformative Education and active global citizenship is an area of work that DP has built significant experience in.

<https://www.developmentperspectives.ie>

**Diversion Green****F: 2018****Location: Bray, Co. Wicklow**

Diversion Green is a food waste prevention and education service. Their mission is to end existing confusion around waste separation and help people to stop/reduce food waste and make compost. The biggest part of that mission is to open the conversation with as many people as possible about “Food Waste”. The goal of reaching as many people as possible is achieved by offering Food Waste Prevention Workshops/Talks, Compost Awareness Workshops/Talks, and Food Waste Audits. Through these workshops, Diversion Green aims to provide everyday solutions to help schools, colleges, community groups, households, offices, the hospitality industry and food producers, to prevent food waste and become climate active in their relevant communities and workplaces.

<https://diversiongreen.ie/>

**Donegal ETB****F: 2013****Location: Donegal Town**

Donegal ETB is a partner with Inishowen Development Partnership, Self Help Africa and more recently Trocaire, in the delivery of a range of Development Education initiatives throughout Donegal. In conjunction with other providers, their Community Education service provides a range of accredited courses, unaccredited courses, once-off workshops and seminars as well as hosting public events around DE issues. The service also provides small grants for community organisations as well as a mentoring programme.

<https://www.donegaletb.ie>

**Donegal Intercultural Platform****F: 2009****Location: Letterkenny, Co. Donegal****Donegal Intercultural Platform**

C/O DTP, Port House, Port Road, Letterkenny,  
Co. Donegal



Donegal Intercultural Platform is an intercultural human rights NGO that provides training and awareness on issues of anti-racism, human rights, intercultural awareness and competence. Their work includes the provision of small group work as well as bespoke training on these issues to a range of groups, including: adult & community education groups and educators, FE tutors, public sector employees, private sector organizations or employees and the general public.

<https://www.interculturaldonegal.org>

**Dublin & Dun Laoghaire Education & Training Board****F: 2013****Location: Blanchardstown Village, Dublin 15**

DDLETB provides part time courses at QQI levels 2-4 and non-accredited basic education skills courses for adult learners. They run courses in Active Citizenship, Voter Education, Money Management, Horticulture and Gardening. DDETB particularly target the most marginalised and hard to reach in society by forming partnership with Community stakeholders ranging from independent community groups, DEIS schools, Charities, Housing Association and the Fingal County Council.

<http://www.adulteducationsoutheast.com>

**Dunboyne College of Further Education****F: 2003****Location: Dunboyne, Co. Meath**

Dunboyne College of Further Education (DCFE) has been serving the counties of Meath, Dublin and Kildare and the wider east Leinster area since 2003. Their fully QQI accredited programmes are developed and updated in consultation with prospective employers and third level institutes to ensure that they are relevant to students' educational needs and the skills required by prospective employers. DCFE is also involved in Europe-wide Erasmus projects and have recently engaged in DE workshops training with Development Perspectives for students and staff.

<https://www.dunboynecollege.ie>

**EIL Ireland, Global Citizen Award****F: 1964****Location: Cork City**

EIL Intercultural Learning is an Irish 'not for profit' organisation that provides opportunities. Their vision is to have people of different cultures working together to develop mutual understanding and create a fair, cooperative and tolerant world. The Global Citizen Award (GCA) Programme is an initiative of EIL Intercultural Learning and is supported by Irish Aid. The GCA encourages returned international volunteers to use their overseas experience to take action and raise awareness of global justice on their return to Ireland. The GCA is about promoting The United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); global justice; highlighting the interdependence of the Global North and the Global South; critically reflecting on global social justice issues; global solidarity; change making; and advocacy and awareness-raising. GCA workshops are often facilitated in partnership with other DE organisations for Award participants and the general public.

<https://www.eilireland.org/global-citizenship/#afs-nav-global-citizen-award>

**Fifty Shades Greener**  
**F: 2018**  
**Location: Liscannor, Co. Clare**



Fifty Shades Greener is an environmental education company that provides accredited and non-accredited training programmes for the hospitality sector and secondary schools. Their programme 'building a green future' is aimed at post-primary schools and teaches about climate change and climate action. 'Green Business', their other main programme, is delivered online, as an opportunity for hospitality businesses to learn about climate change, reduction of CO2, the circular economy, social sustainability, and green marketing. It is designed as an action-based training that explores implementable concrete steps hospitality businesses can take to understand, control, and reduce their use of energy and water and their production of waste, as well as improve their sustainability and green procurement.

<https://www.fiftyshadesgreener.ie/>

**Financial Justice Ireland**  
**F: 1993**  
**Location: Dublin City**



As an Irish-based organisation, Financial Justice Ireland focuses their work on Irish citizens and decision-makers, while continuing to work in solidarity and collaboration with global partners. They seek to raise public awareness of the connection between the local and global effects of the financial system through supporting Irish citizens to link the effects that this system has in exacerbating inequality in Ireland with its impacts in the global south. Financial Justice Ireland provide critical education to build engagement and understanding among Irish citizens, challenge existing policy using evidence-based research, and promote sustainable, people-centred alternatives.

<https://www.financialjustice.ie/>

**Galway One World Centre**  
**F: 1992**  
**Location: Clarinbridge, Co. Galway**



Galway One World Centre provides anti-racism and global justice training for community groups and for youth workers. The organisation also hosts public awareness raising events on Global Citizenship Education and global justice issues, for example the Occupied Territories Bill. Galway One World Centre regularly co-facilitate with people in, or previously living in Direct Provision and with Black and Traveller educators.

<https://galwayowc.wordpress.com>



**Glencree Centre for Peace & Reconciliation****F: 1974****Location: Enniskerry, Co. Wicklow**

The Glencree Centre for Peace & Reconciliation is an international hub for conflict resolution and promoting sustainable peace. They work with individuals and groups, with the mission to “prevent and transform violent conflict by engaging people in dialogue, trust- and relationship-building”. The Centre specialises in inclusive dialogue, mediation, negotiation and peace education; conflict is transformed by focusing on 6 key programme areas and sharing expertise internationally. Glencree’s work includes programmes focusing on the legacy of the Northern Ireland conflict, intercultural programmes, specific programmes for women interested in getting involved in politics, and peace education programmes.

<https://glencree.ie/>

**Global Action Plan Ireland (GAP)****F: 1995****Location: Ballymun, Co. Dublin**

Global Action Plan Ireland is an environmental education organisation with the mission to support people on their journey towards more sustainable lifestyles. It is part of the global network GAP International. GAP’s focus lies primarily on people and on the small, practical actions each one can take in their everyday lives, in order to achieve long-term attitudinal and behavioural change (e.g. through reflecting on and changing consumption habits). Through environmental education and professional training, Global Action Plan Ireland work mainly with schools, communities and businesses.

<https://globalactionplan.ie/>

**Immigrant Council of Ireland**  
**F: 2001**  
**Location: Dublin 7**



The Immigrant Council of Ireland is a human rights organisation and Independent Law Centre, promoting the rights of migrants and providing assistance to people from migrant backgrounds. The focus lies on the provision of practical information and advice on immigration issues, immigration reform and advocacy work, support for the most vulnerable, as well as the promotion of inclusion and participation of migrants in Irish life. In 2020, the Immigrant Council of Ireland provided over 45,000 migrants with free support, including immigration and legal advice, skills training, and one-to-one support. In total, 52 training workshops were held, involving 800 participants, and the immigration helpline received and dealt with 5,638 calls and emails. Some of the Immigrant Council's work reaches out specifically to migrant women victims of domestic violence and trafficking, migrant communities with needs for support regarding family reunification, and victims of racism.

<https://www.immigrantcouncil.ie/>

**Inishowen Development Partnership Change Makers IDP**  
**F: 1996**  
**Location: Inishowen, Co. Donegal**



Change Makers is an award-winning Global Citizenship Education project targeting the adult and community education sector across Donegal. The project has been running since 2012 and is a partnership between Inishowen Development Partnership, Donegal ETB, Self Help Africa, and Trócaire. Its core programme is funded by Irish Aid. Change Makers' vision is for adults in County Donegal and cross-border to be actively engaged in understanding and taking action on local and global issues for a fair and just world. Their work is framed using the Sustainable Development Goals, covering social, economic and environmental justice issues. To meet their aim, they deliver a range of flexible learning pathways within and between the formal (QQI Accredited Courses on Local and Global Development) and non-formal education (workshops, debates) sectors. For this, they adopt a "whole of community approach", collaborating with the arts sector and higher education institutes, and providing SDG and global justice mentoring and training support and micro-grants to community activists and groups, and most recently, engaging social enterprises and businesses on Agenda 2030.

<https://changemakers.ie/>

**Kylemore Abbey and Gardens Ltd.**

**F: 2010**

**Location: Kylemore, Co. Galway**



Kylemore Abbey and Gardens Ltd. are a historical tourist attraction based on a site which includes a Victorian Castle and neo Gothic Church, the largest mixed woodland in County Galway, an ecologically important network of lakes and rivers, a 6.5 acre Victorian Walled Garden, and is also home to the Benedictine community of nuns in Ireland. As the largest employer in North West Connemara, they are invested in incorporating the SDGs into all areas of the business from quality jobs, to life on land and under water to quality education. Through their tourism offering, staff initiatives and partnership with educational groups, Kylemore Abbey and Gardens Ltd. are actively aiming for a sustainable tourism model to support sustainable employment and quality education especially around environmental issues.

<https://www.kylemoreabbey.com/>

**Leave no Trace Ireland**

**F: 2008**

**Location: Westport, Co. Mayo**



Leave no Trace Ireland are an Environmental Education Charity, looking to promote responsible outdoor recreation across the island of Ireland. They provide research, education and outreach with the aim to provide their participants with knowledge and skills that enable them to protect and enjoy the outdoors responsibly. In partnership with stakeholders, Leave no Trace delivers a nationwide programme that includes the development of frameworks, a training programme for school children, cooperation with government departments and state agencies, and bespoke support for the community, voluntary, charitable, and corporate sector.

<https://www.leavenotraceireland.org/>

**Liberties College****F: 1932****Location: Dublin City****COLÁISTE NA SAOIRÍS****LIBERTIES COLLEGE**

Liberties College, based in Dublin, offers further education courses, both accredited and non-accredited, as well as workshops, seminars and professional development opportunities for tutors. The courses range from healthcare, to information technology, to social studies. While the courses are generally open to all adults, some of the Adult Education Services at Liberties College specifically target marginalised groups. Global Citizenship Education is integrated into a range of courses, through initiatives such as sustainable gardening or upcycling projects, and the college also offers courses specifically focusing on issues such as climate justice or social justice.

<https://libertiescollege.ie/>

**Lourdes Youth & Community Service****F: 1984****Location: Dublin 1**

Lourdes Youth & Community Services (LYCS) is an integrated community-based education, training, recreation and development project. Their aim is to provide their participants with opportunities to become involved in their own development, and also the development of their respective community. A strong focus lies on empowerment and participation, and the programmes and activities emphasise how everyone is capable of effecting change. Alongside their programmes for young people, LYCS also has a Community Training Centre, provides Adult Education programmes, and is involved in the promotion of Global Citizenship Education within the Community Development and Education sector.

<https://www.lycs.ie/>

## New Communities Partnership

**Location: Dublin 1**



As Ireland's largest independent migrant-led national network, New Communities Partnership aims to enable migrant communities to “engage with all aspects of Irish social, political and cultural life on an equal footing, thereby maximizing the leadership capacity within new communities in Ireland”. The organisation is led by community members, providing services for community members. These include the provision of communal spaces for immigrant-led groups to meet, the development and distribution of relevant information for members and wider communities, drop-in clinics, as well as training opportunities. The training aims at building confidence, promoting cultural understanding, and ensuring representation and participation of ethnic minorities at all levels.

<https://www.newcommunities.ie/>

## Nurture Africa

**F: 2003**

**Location: Dublin 4**



Nurture Africa is an NGO registered both internationally and in Uganda with a focus on providing access to healthcare, education and economic empowerment. This is achieved through business training and micro-finance projects as well as mainstreamed child rights and gender equality throughout its projects. In terms of education and training provision, Nurture Africa operates an established volunteer programme for approx.150 students and professionals per annum, including structured short-term placements in Uganda. This in turn enables participants to support the work of the organisation, learn about the successes and challenges of international development and work hand in hand with their Ugandan staff to serve the communities Nurture Africa exists to serve.

<https://www.nurtureafrica.ie>

**Pobail le Chéile CDP****F: 1999****Location: Falcarragh, Co. Donegal**

Pobail le Chéile is an independent community development project that is focussed on social inclusion and community development work within the geographic community of north west Donegal. While the organisation provides some accredited courses, most of its provision is centred on non-accredited community education work incorporating: craft skills, creative writing, SDGs and environmental themes, gardening, personal development, cultural projects and so forth. While Pobail le Chéile work with all ranges and groups, particular target groups for the project include: long-term unemployed persons, lone parents, people with mental health issues, addiction issues.

<https://www.pobail.org>

**Proudly Made in Africa****F: 2008****Location: Dublin 1**

Proudly Made in Africa is a social enterprise that promotes food and fashion producers from African countries globally. Alongside their support for African producers, and connecting international trade buyers, one key element of their work is promotion of the importance of value-added trade in poverty reduction. This is done through accredited and non-accredited courses as well as through workshops and seminars. The educational opportunities are aimed at secondary and third-level institutions as well as the general public.

<https://proudlymadeinafrica.org/>

**Rediscovery Centre****Location: Dublin 9**

Based in bespoke demonstration eco-facility in Ballymun, Dublin 9, the Rediscovery Centre is the National Centre for the Circular Economy in Ireland. The stated aim of the organization is to bring together the skills and expertise of various people, including artists, scientists, designers and craftspeople in a common purpose of sustainability. To this end, the Centre supports four separate social enterprises, including: Rediscover Furniture, Rediscover Fashion, Rediscover Paint and Rediscover Cycling. These businesses use unwanted materials for new product development and design demonstrating effective resource efficiency, reuse and low carbon living. The Centre has a focus, not just on demonstration, but also on education and research and informing different groups on, among other things, aspect of the circular economy, sustainability, the UN SDGs and so forth. For more details, see: Appendix 2: Spotlight on Practice, below.

<http://www.rediscoverycentre.ie/>

## Sallynoggin College of Further Education

**Location: Sallynoggin, Co. Dublin**



Sallynoggin College of Further Education is a constituent of Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board and as such provides a range of accredited courses for adult learners. These include creative courses, a tourism course, programmes on education, and social studies. While Global Citizenship Education is not yet delivered in accredited form, it is embedded into the existing curriculum, and activities and events for students and the local community often focus on GCE related themes.

<https://www.scfe.ie/>

## SECAD Partnership

**F: 1995**

**Location: Midleton, Co. Cork**



SECAD Partnership provides training to voluntary community groups and volunteers, with the aim of upskilling and empowering them to plan and manage their projects or activities to best effect. They assist communities to carry out community consultation programmes and research for the development of strategic plans to shape future sustainable development. SECAD offer both accredited and non-accredited courses, as well as workshops and seminars. Under SECAD's Sustainable Communities Training Programme, they offer people the opportunity to link with their community members to learn, share ideas and prioritise plans to develop a strong sustainable community integrating social, economic and environmental strands. SECAD works with new communities directly and through local service providers such as HSE, Family Resource Centres, etc. to provide information and training to new communities. Past integration projects have included celebrating cultural diversity through food.

<https://www.secad.ie/>

**SERVE****F: 2003****Location: Blackrock, Co. Cork**

SERVE is a development and volunteering organisation with the mission to tackle global poverty, through workshops and public events. In 2021, they ran two main projects: firstly, an online Global Citizenship Programme with workshops and guest speakers touching on a range of social justice issues; and secondly a European Solidarity Corps funded project which mainly focused on the SDGs and environmental protection. Over a 12 months' period a group of 8 volunteers turned the site of the SERVE offices in Blackrock into a SDG hub with a Global Goals trail and invited members of the local community to come learn about the SDGs and how they can be achieved.

<https://serve.ie/>

**Síolta Chroí****F: 2020****Location: Aghacloghan, Co. Monaghan**

Síolta Chroí is a recently formed Monaghan-based initiative offering a number of educational workshops and training on ecosystem restoration, regenerative agriculture systems and Permaculture. The organisation also runs workshops that focus on personal regeneration through meditation and yoga, nature based activities, developing self-awareness and other well-being supports. While these programmes are offered to the general public, Síolta Chroí aims in particular to work with people seeking asylum. Global Citizenship Education forms a core part of Síolta Chroí's mission and approach with the objective of bringing this focus the world-wide movement of Ecosystem restoration camps.

<https://www.sioltachroi.ie>

**Sligo Public Participation Network (PPN)****F: 2014****Location: Sligo Town**

Sligo PPN is a network of community and voluntary groups based in County Sligo, and the main link through which the Local Authority connects with Environmental, Social Inclusion, Community and Voluntary Organisations in the county. It was established with the mission to empower and assist groups to participate in local decision making. Sligo PPN offers non-accredited courses, workshops, seminars and public events, all of which are open to the entire community sector. In 2020, Sligo PPN launched an Environmental Series, with the purpose to raise awareness of environmental issues.

<https://www.sligoppn.com/>



**South West Mayo Development Company****F: 1991****Location: Newport, Co. Mayo**

South West Mayo Development Company (SWMDC) supports communities and individuals throughout the south and west Mayo region with a range of programmes and initiatives that address, among other things: social exclusion and equality issues; developing the capacity building for local community groups; as well as creating more sustainable communities. This development support is provided by the management and delivery of a range of accredited courses unaccredited courses, once-off workshops, seminars as well as public events. The Company works with a number of at-risk groups on these courses, including vulnerable migrants and members of the Traveller community.

<https://www.southmayo.com>

**Tearfund Ireland****F: 2008****Location: Dublin 1**

Tearfund Ireland provides global justice and GCE facilitation skills training for youth workers and influencers throughout Ireland. Most of their work is located in the non-formal faith based sector and includes contribution towards accreditation in this area. The organisation also provides GCE workshops and tools to explore the unintended harm of volunteering in, and support for, orphanages and institutional care for children, as well as workshops for young adults on the theme of climate justice.

<https://www.tearfund.ie>

**Tipperary Education and Training Board****F: 2013****Location: Nenagh, Co. Tipperary**

Tipperary Education and Training Board (TETB) is the statutory provider of education for the County Tipperary. It provides a range of education programmes for second level/post primary education, post leaving certificate programmes, and Further Education and Training services, with the mission to create diverse opportunities that enable learners and communities to unlock their potential. In the field of Further Education and Training, TETB offers both accredited and non-accredited courses. Their courses are open to all adults, including migrants, refugees, travellers, members of the Roma Community, those on a low wage, and other disadvantaged groups.

<https://tipperary.etb.ie/>

**TH Consulting and Training**  
**F: 2020**  
**Location: Navan, Co. Meath**

TH Consultancy and Training deliver workshops, lectures, presentations, training and education in the area of Sustainable Development in the Raw Materials sector. These focus particularly on the area of Social License to Operate (SLO). In addition, TH Consultancy and Training provide support for proposal development and drafting, and opportunities for Life Long Learning and Wider Society Learning regarding raw materials and their impact on the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

**Tools for Solidarity**  
**F: 1984**  
**Location: Belfast**



Tools for Solidarity is a not-for-profit organisation that collects tools and sewing machines which are repaired and then sent to African countries for use by local artisans. Alongside this work, which is primarily led by volunteers, Tools for Solidarity run an Education for Sustainable Development Programme in local schools, as well as non-accredited courses and workshop with adult groups in Northern Ireland. Tools for Solidarity is committed to working with all groups of people including those who may be marginalised. In the past, they have worked with women's groups as well as with people with learning difficulties.

<https://www.toolsforsolidarity.com/>

**Warrenmount Community Education Centre**  
**F: 1995**  
**Location: Dublin 8**



As a centre for adult education, Warrenmount Community Education Centre provides opportunities for adult learners to develop new skills for life and work, build confidence and get involved in the local community. Their QQI-accredited and non-accredited courses include English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), Skills for Work, and Skills for Life, and a variety of other Community Education classes, such as gardening and a course on cultural connections. In addition, the Centre runs environment and education activities focusing on the Sustainable Development Goals.

<https://warrenmountcentre.ie/>

**Waterford and Wexford ETB****Location: Ardcahan, Co. Wexford**

WWETB Community Education service employs 4 CEFs who are responsible for delivering a range of programmes dealing with, among other things: capacity building, transformative education, sustainable education and civic education. This includes once-off workshops and seminars as well as public events across the two counties. Specific target groups include: persons with a disability and family/advocates, older adults, unemployed or underemployed, individuals experience mental ill health, carers associations, men and women experiencing disadvantage and or isolation/rural isolation. WWETB Community Education also targets members of Roma and Traveller communities, refugee and asylum seekers and immigrants for inclusion in its programmes.

<https://www.waterfordwexford.etb.ie>

## Appendix 3: Spotlight on Practice

### Spotlight on Practice: Diversion Green

As a food waste prevention and education service, Diversion Green offers services that support people on their journey towards reducing their food waste. This includes not only educational programmes on food waste as such, but also projects focusing on composting. Michelle Phillips, owner and founder of Diversion Green, describes what prompted her to launch a food waste prevention and education service:

***In conversations I've had about food waste in Ireland, the biggest issue that came up for people was confusion around food waste and how to prevent it. Our mission is to end the confusion and help people to stop and reduce food waste and make compost.***

The main goal of Diversion Green's education work is to reach as many people as possible by offering food waste prevention workshops and talks, compost awareness workshops and talks, and food waste audits. Through these workshops and talks, Diversion Green aims to provide everyday solutions to help schools, colleges, community groups, households, offices, the hospitality industry and food producers, to prevent food waste and become climate active in their relevant communities and workplaces.

***At Diversion Green we find that working with people and opening the conversation about food waste prevention really becomes something that is actually tangible and attainable, as everybody eats, lots of people garden, and want to grow food or make their own compost. It is a topic that people can fully connect with and understand, as they can learn by doing and, in turn, can teach others.***

Diversion Green's workshops focus on participation and learning through the "Full Circle Method": participants explore how to prevent food waste, how to make compost with their unavoidable food waste resources, and where possible how to grow trees, food etc. An emphasis lies on participatory and active learning, and in the workshops learners experience the topic with all senses. As Michelle explains:

***This way, they are given the tools to create sustainable communities. It's all about giving people skills – they want to make changes, they just need to know how.***

An alumna of the Saolta SDG Advocate Programme herself, Michelle is aware of the importance and benefits of adult and community education:

***Often, as adults, we are ... in our own little world, the world we're living in. Learning together with other adults can be a great learning space where people can develop more. You can delve into a space for yourself, and at the same time make a whole host of connections. I think adults***

***should always continue to learn, education should never just finish. Lifelong learning is also great for personal development, and to keep in touch with what is going on in the world.***

Among the challenges Michelle identifies with regards to working in the adult and community education sector is that it isn't always easy to connect with potential groups or participants, but she is hoping to build on this in the future.

### **Spotlight on Practice: Tools for Solidarity**

Tools for Solidarity is a not-for-profit organisation based in Belfast. Their main focus lies on supporting artisans in poorer parts of the world, primarily on the African continent. This is done through collecting and refurbishing hand tools, sewing machines, machinery and accessories, which are then sent out to communities, women's groups, people with disabilities, and vocational training colleges in countries in sub Saharan Africa. In addition to the work in the two workshops (Belfast and Downpatrick), which is almost entirely led by local and international volunteers, Tools for Solidarity runs an Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) programme with local schools and youth groups.

In February 2021, Tools for Solidarity launched a Global Citizenship Education pilot project with a group of adults in and around Belfast. Over four sessions that were delivered via zoom, the 25 participants explored global issues, how their own personal experience can be linked to these, and what can be done to tackle them. The sessions focused on: food waste, how to reduce it, and how it is related to world hunger; clothing, especially how we can reduce the amount we buy, e.g. through mending; climate crisis and climate action; and cultural diversity, the experience of migrants in Northern Ireland, and how to welcome them as locals.

Education Officer Roisin Sloan briefly explains their motivation for expanding their work towards Global Citizenship Education in the Adult and Community Sector:

***We felt like there are a lot of adults throughout Ireland who probably missed out on any opportunity to talk about global issues as part of their education. There are so many issues compounding and affecting each other at the moment globally, and all adults should have opportunities to talk about these things and think what they can do differently. Our organisation is generally really interested in reaching all parts of society.***

Since the pilot phase, the GCE sessions with adults have been developed further, based on the experience and feedback. Sessions have now already been delivered in women's centres and men's sheds, which, according to Roisin, was very successful and is expected to lead to more work in similar settings, as well as other adult groups. While certain aspects of the programme have changed since the pilot, the general approach and the vision behind it haven't changed:

***All our GCE sessions for adults focus primarily on what individual actions we can take, and then move on to organisations and their work. We encourage our participants to start with themselves, and then work on wider global issues.***

Roisin and the team at Tools for Solidarity are hoping to be able to include a practical element to the GCE programme in the future, based on their expertise with tools, machinery, gardening etc. This is envisioned to be piloted in Summer 2022, with a Men's Shed.

### **Spotlight on Practice: The Rediscovery Centre**

The Rediscovery Centre is based in the repurposed *Boiler House* building in Ballymun, Dublin 9. The building was developed as a prototype '3D textbook', a new concept in experiential learning and the first of its kind in Europe. This type of build demonstrates, among other things: best practice in building design, construction and operation. Here, the building and environs are defined as an educational tool to effect positive behavioural change with respect to resource management and efficiency. The Centre is home to four separate social enterprises, all of which focus on the idea of the *Circular Economy*, including: Rediscover Furniture, Rediscover Fashion, Rediscover Paint and Rediscover Cycling. In practice, this involves a range of people, including artists, scientists, designers and craftspeople, coming together to reuse or repurpose unwanted materials for new product development and design, thus demonstrating effective resource efficiency, reuse and low carbon living.

Programme Director Roger Warburton suggests that, while the concept might be new to the layperson, the idea of the *Circular Economy* is becoming more prominent, for example in Local Authority policy as well as in EU policy. When asked to define the term, Roger invites comparison with the linear economy that involves:

***...taking a resource, digging it out of the ground, making something and then throwing it away either burying it away or burning it. While the Circular Economy is working more complimentary with nature: there is no waste in nature. So for example, an aluminium can, digging it out of the ground once and reusing it. The same with parts for cars, mobile phones, any technology where items can be repaired, remade - you don't buy them, you rent them. And then the natural side of it...using natural resources better, composting, managing toilet waste and so on.***

Roger explains how much of this is about changing the mind set and behaviours and how this

***... flies in the face of where consumerism is at the moment. Fast fashion for example: buying a tee-shirt for €1 wearing it once and throwing it away. People need to consider what materials they are buying how much they are paying for them: would it better to buy a €10 tee-shirt that will last five years for example? It's about our relationship with materials, how we use them and treat them and how we can make them last.***

Roger explains how the Centre is closely aligned with five of the SDGs but that: 'We are part of the SDG coalition and all of these are important (and) would be relevant to us'.

In terms of education, the Centre offers a range of workshops that are open to the general public at weekends while the education team focus midweek on work at the primary and secondary levels and occasionally third level. They also work collaboratively with a broad range of other organizations and projects:

***Then we would also reach out through our social enterprises, for example fashion: they would regularly do public courses that would be booked in during the week or at weekends. And we also work with specific groups, so the Men's Sheds, Tidy Towns Groups or Women's groups. Or we might have Dublin City Council wanting maintenance workshops for the staff to encourage the staff to recycle or reuse. So it's a full range of people and organisations that we provide education workshops and for all ages as well.***

The Rediscovery Centre also has an active research and policy base focusing specifically on the areas of sustainability, behavioural change, resource efficiency and waste management.

### **Spotlight on Practice: Fifty Shades Greener**

Fifty Shades Greener (FSG) aims to ensure that education contributes to sustainable development by equipping learners with the relevant knowledge (the 'what'), the key dispositions and skills (the 'how') and the values (the 'why') that will motivate and empower them throughout their lives to become informed active citizens who take action for a more sustainable future. CEO and founder Raquel Noboa explains that:

***FSG educates people on how to change their own behaviour around the use of energy & water and production of waste, so they can measure, manage, and reduce their use of utilities to achieve a lower carbon footprint lifestyle or workplace environment. We give people the knowledge and skills to manage their own carbon emissions in order to create a society that is more aware of their own environmental impact.***

The programmes delivered by FSG range in size and scope and incorporate provision at post primary, professional development for staff, CPD for teachers, further education as well as higher education staff and students. A particular focus for FSG is the hospitality sector focussing on education and training interventions for managers and staff. Raquel outlines how this is achieved through developing partnerships with funding bodies and ACE providers:

***In Ireland, our Hospitality programmes are fully funded by KWETB (Kildare Wicklow ETB) through SOLAS. All Irish hospitality businesses can apply to receive our Green Business programme online, or deliver to their team face to face by an ETB trainer. So far over 200 businesses have registered to the programme.***

FSG has also created the first qualification of its kind for Environmental Sustainability Management in Hospitality (QQI Level 6) which means that environmental sustainability now has a place in the curriculum for hospitality managers. More recent efforts include a new intervention which encourages adults to think about issues of sustainability and to take action on these issues in their everyday lives:

***We have just launched our brand new programme which is for adult education of all industries: it is named Green Skills for Life. This programme teaches individuals a basic level of knowledge on climate change, sustainability and personal responsibility that each individual has to do better. We teach them how to measure their home emissions and then how to reduce them. Finally, we teach them how they can apply the same methods to larger building like their workplace or community building so they can work as part of a larger team to reduce the impact of the built environment around them.***

Raquel explains how this programme is particularly suited to the FET sector and embedding this in to apprenticeships or training programmes that already exist to prepare the workforce of the future. This can also be applied in other areas, for example in the Corporate sector or for start-ups and entrepreneurs who are now being asked to have sustainability strategies within their organisations, but are unsure where to start.





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# Saolta

*Empowerment for a better world through  
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