

NALA Factsheet: Participation in the VEC Adult Literacy Service 2011

Did you know

The total number of learners in the Vocational Education Committee's (VEC's) adult literacy service (ALS) in 2011 was 56,797.

The number includes learners in the adult literacy service, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Intensive Adult Basic Education (ITABE).

This represents an 4% increase on participation rates from 2010 (54,741).

Where do we get this information?

The Department of Education and Skills (DES) provide the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) with this information. The information comes from the annual adult literacy returns (ALR's) that are provided to the DES by the 33 local VEC's.

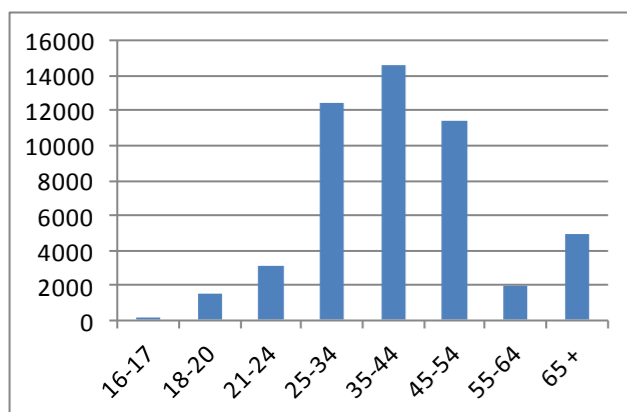
Gender Profile



58% (33,177) of literacy learners were women. This shows a decrease of 2% from 2010 however, male participation rates are up by 2% for the same period.

Age Profile

Almost 50% (27,030) of all learners in the adult literacy service were aged between 25 and 44 years. The youngest age group (16-20 years) was only 3% and the oldest (65+ years) age group was 9% of the overall adult literacy population.



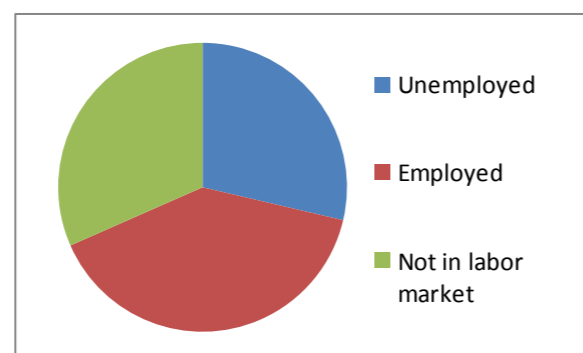
Educational attainment

Educational attainment	Number	%
No formal education	1977	3.4
Primary	17,256	30.3
Lower secondary	19,987	35.1
Upper secondary	12,156	21.4

Almost 70% (39,220) of I learners presented with less than a Leaving Certificate or FETAC level 4 qualification. This is a significant number when compared to the latest figures from the CSO which reported that 28% of the population have less than a FETAC level 4 qualification (CSO, Q2, 2011)

Employment status

Over 27% (15,396) of learners were in employment. A further 38% (21,346) reported their employment status as unemployed. This is in contrast to the national picture where the unemployment rate stood at 14.3% (437,441) (CSO, 2011).



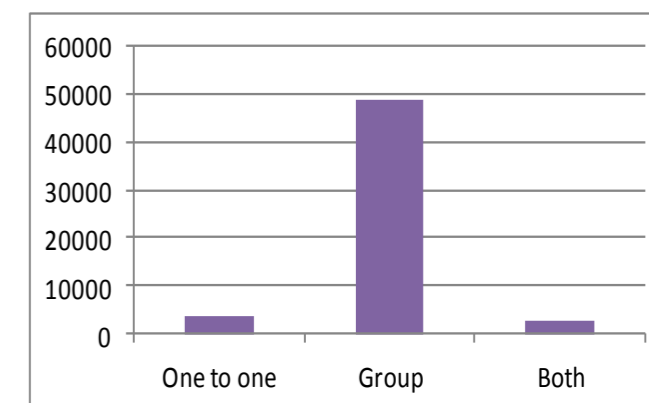
Numbers of learners on different literacy programmes

The majority of learners take part in mainstream literacy programmes. Mainstream programmes consist of either one-to-one or group tuition for typically two to four hours per week during the academic year

Course	Number of learners	%
Mainstream	38,984	68.6
ESOL	11,238	19.7
Family Literacy	3,277	5.6
Skills for Work – workplace programmes for the private sector	2,618	4.6
Intensive Tuition for Adult Basic Education (ITABE) – 6 hours per week	2,054	3.6
Return to Education – for Community Employment participants	954	1.6
Other workplace literacy programmes	930	31.6
Return to Learning – for Local Authority workers	418	0.7
Intensive literacy	287	0.5
Junior Certificate	392	0.6
Literacy for Irish students	64	0.1

Tuition type

The majority of learners 86.2% (48,974) take part in group tuition. This reflects the large number of learners engaged in mainstream adult literacy programmes.



Time spent in adult literacy service

36% (20,272) spent less than one year in the adult literacy service with a minority 12% spending five years or more in the service.

Staffing levels

The adult literacy service is staffed by both paid and volunteer tutors. There are twice the number of volunteer tutors in the service (2,579) as there are paid tutors (1,288).

What is NALA?

The National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) is an independent membership organisation, concerned with developing policy, advocacy, research and offering advisory services in adult literacy work in Ireland.

National Adult Literacy Agency

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