

Ireland's Adult Literacy for Life Strategy: Adapting to the changing context of adult literacy

Colleen Dube

Chief Executive Officer, National Adult Literacy Agency

Yvonne McKenna

Director, ALL National Programme Office



Overview

- ▶ About us and our organisations
- ▶ Background to the Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) Strategy
- ▶ Development process
- ▶ Key elements
- ▶ Progress to date
- ▶ Current challenges
- ▶ Your insights and ideas

About us



Background to the Strategy

PIAAC 2012



18% of adults surveyed are at level 1 or below in literacy
(PIAAC 2012)



25% of adults surveyed are at level 1 or below in numeracy
(PIAAC 2012)



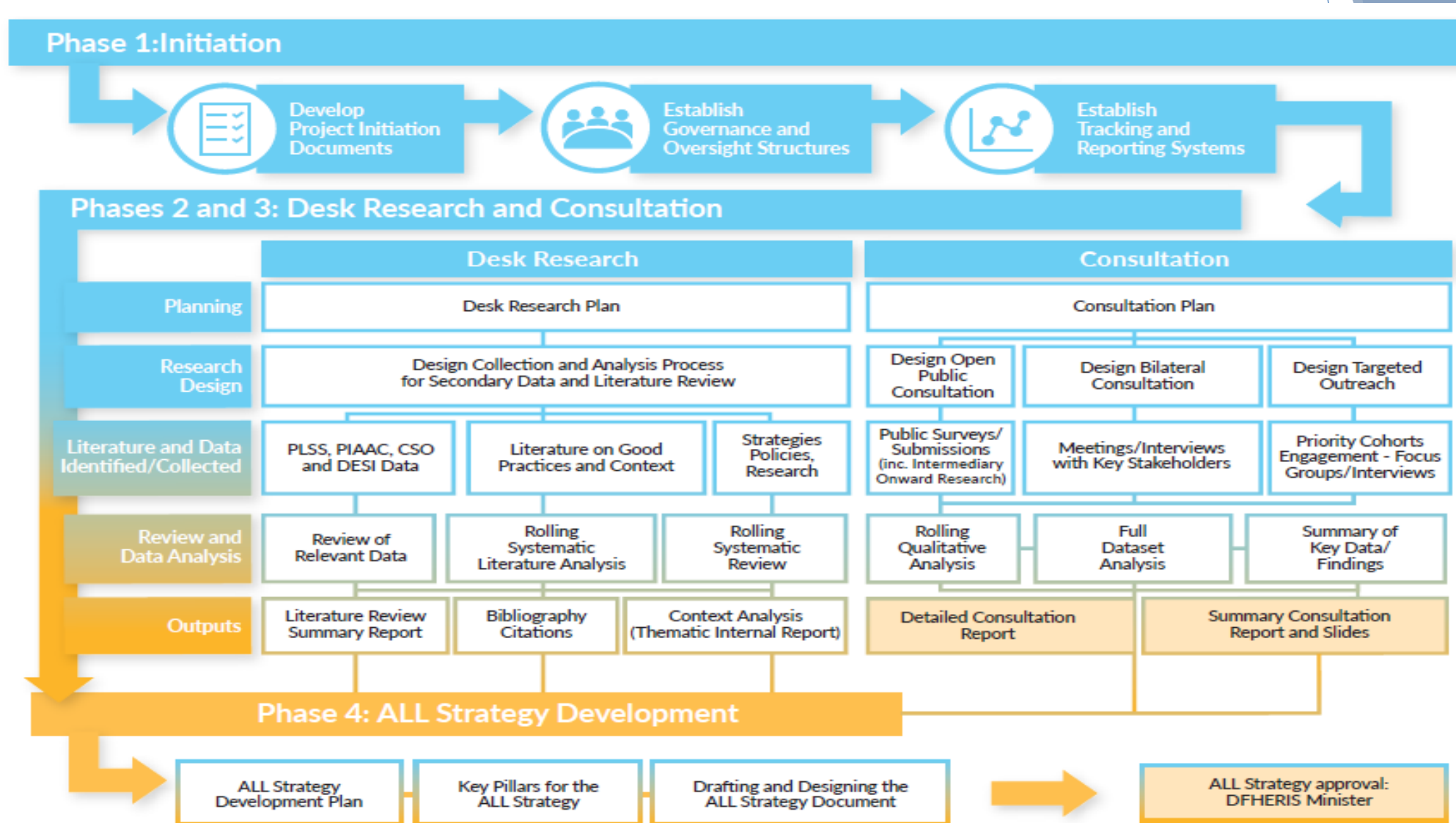
42% of adults surveyed are at level 1 or below in problem solving in technology rich environments
(PIAAC 2012)

Programme for Government

Our Shared Future



Development Process



Key elements



Key elements

Literacy

Decrease share of adults in Ireland with unmet literacy needs, that is PIAAC Level 1 or below, from 18% to 7%.

Numeracy

Decrease share of adults in Ireland with unmet numeracy needs, that is PIAAC Level 1 or below, from 25% to 12%.

Digital Literacy

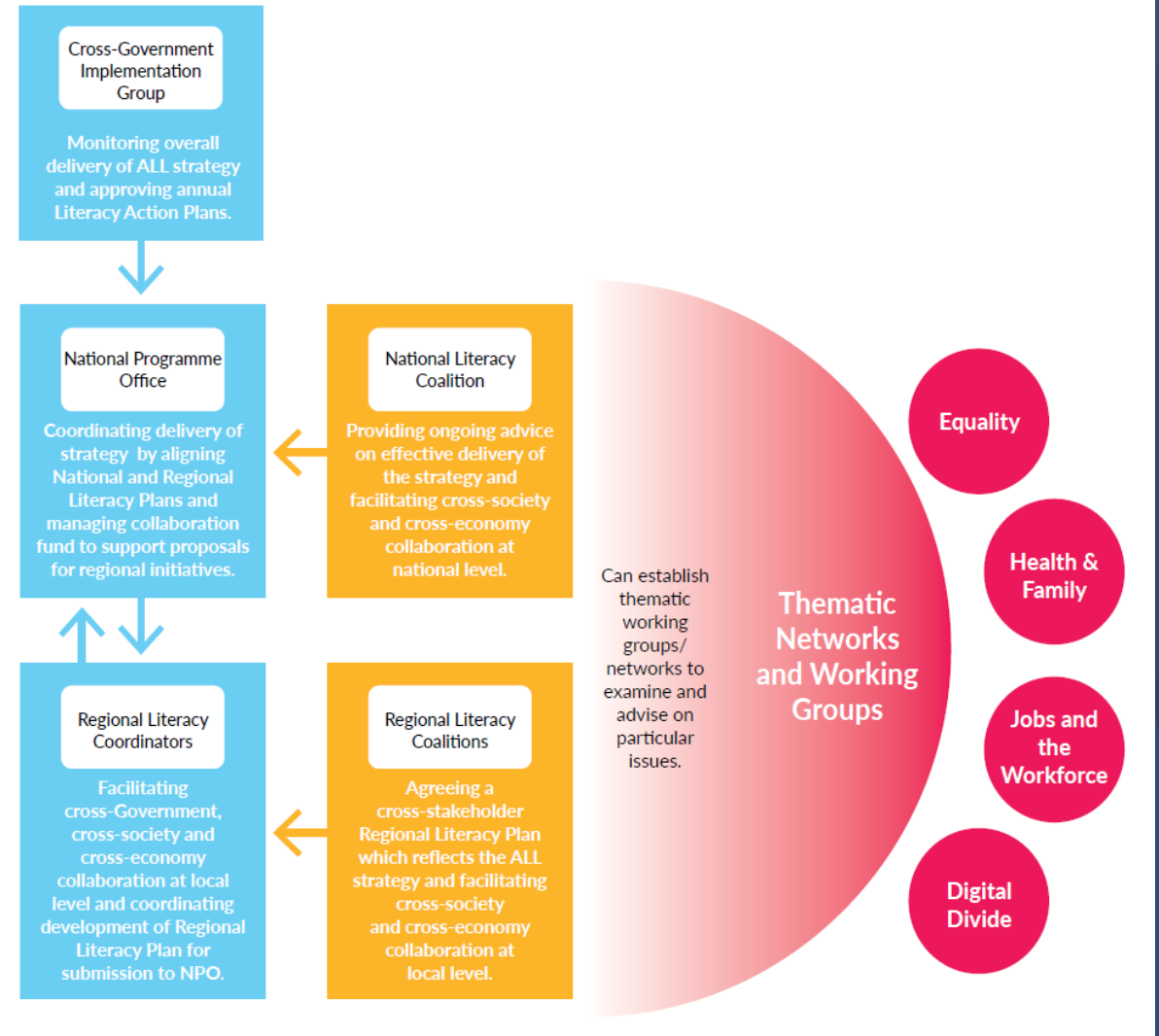
Decrease share of adults in Ireland without basic digital skills from 47% to 20% (as measured by DESI).

Key elements

Older Adults (55+)	Members of the Traveller Community	Persons with Disabilities
Low-paid Workers	Carers	One-parent Households
Incarcerated Persons and Ex-Offenders	Persons Recovering from Addiction	Long-term Unemployed
Migrants	International Protection Applicants	People with Language Needs

Progress to date

- ▶ National structures, programme office and staff
- ▶ Regional literacy coalitions, co-ordinators and plans
- ▶ Collaboration and Innovation fund
- ▶ eLearning courses

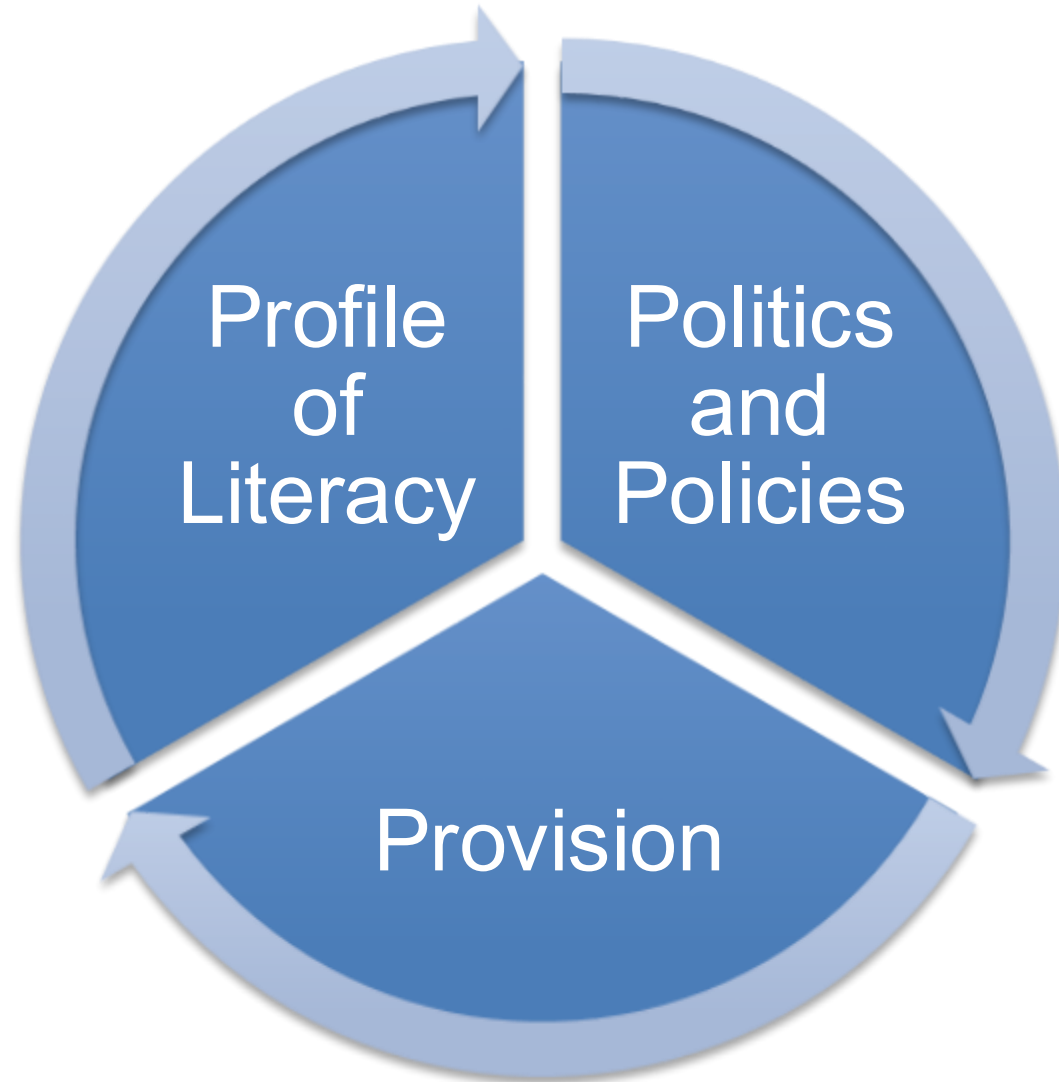


Progress to date

- ▶ Awareness campaigns and newsletters
- ▶ Family literacy working group and community of practice
- ▶ Plain Language training and community of practice
- ▶ Strategic review of literacy provision and professional development



Current challenges



Profile of literacy

PIAAC 2023



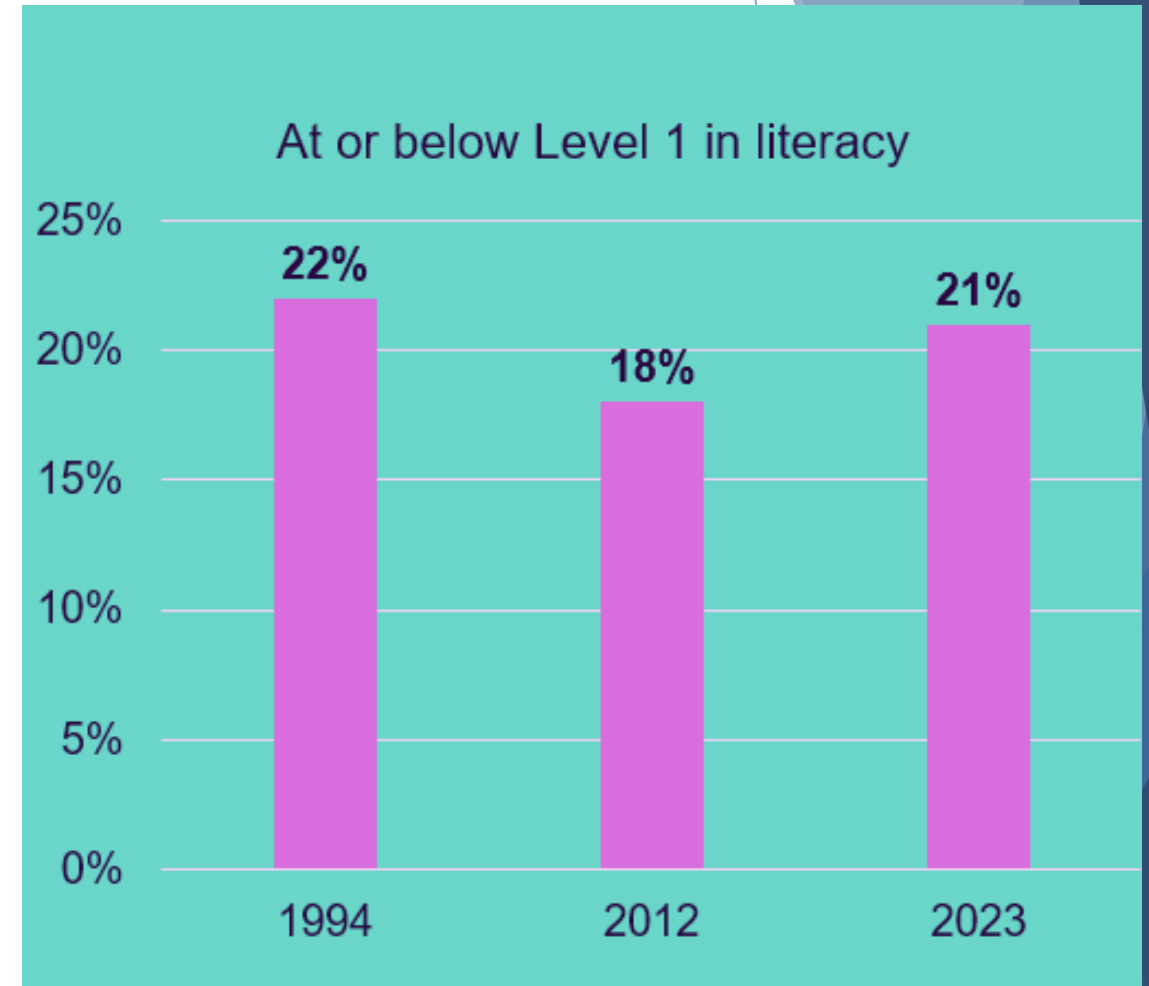
21% of adults surveyed are at level 1 or below in literacy
(PIAAC 2023)



25% of adults surveyed are at level 1 or below in numeracy
(PIAAC 2023)



28% of adults surveyed are at level 1 or below in adaptive problem solving
(PIAAC 2023)



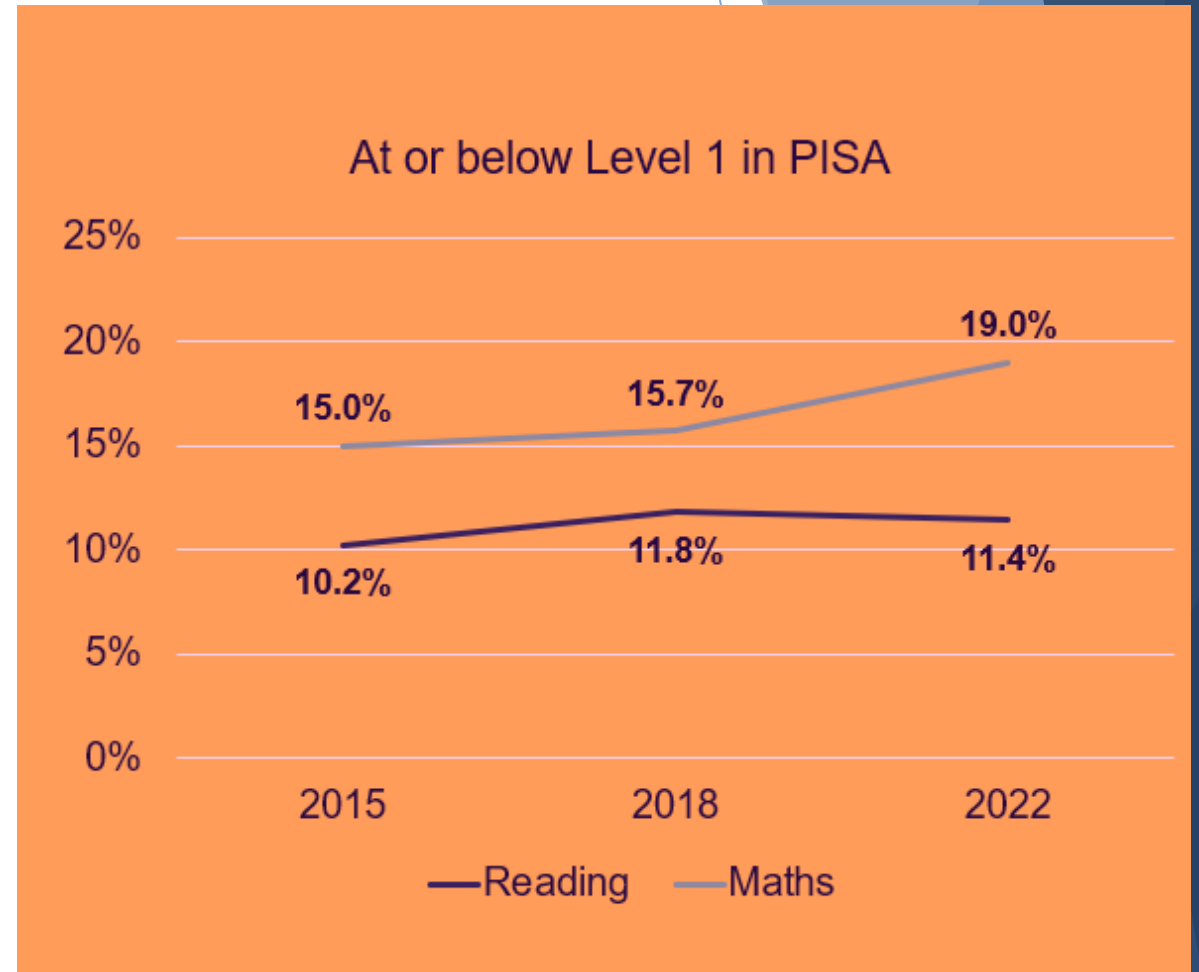
Profile of literacy



Over 1 in 4 (27%) of adults in Ireland have unmet digital literacy needs (DESI 2023)

Ireland's Talent Landscape 2024

found that “65% of businesses felt that their staff will require some form of upskilling to facilitate their digital transition, with over 30% indicating that over half of employees would need digital upskilling.



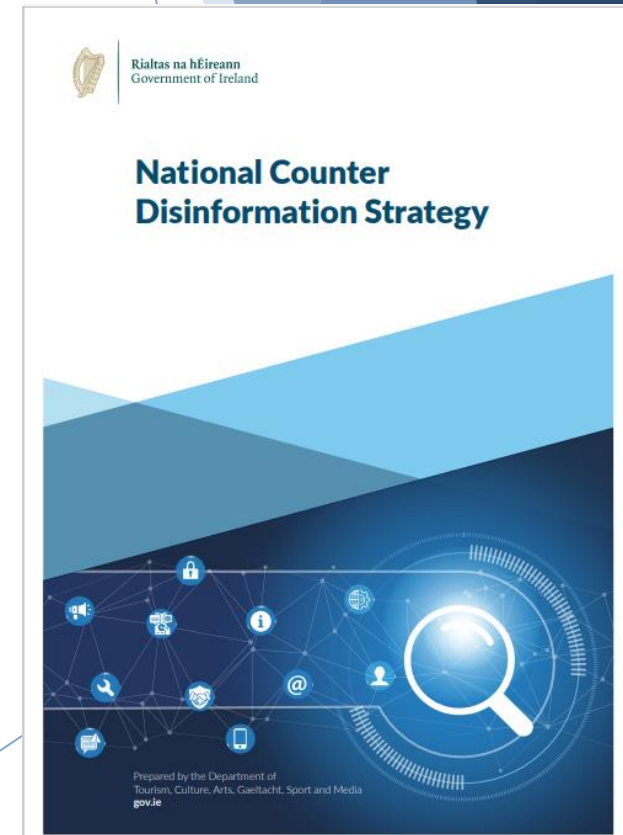
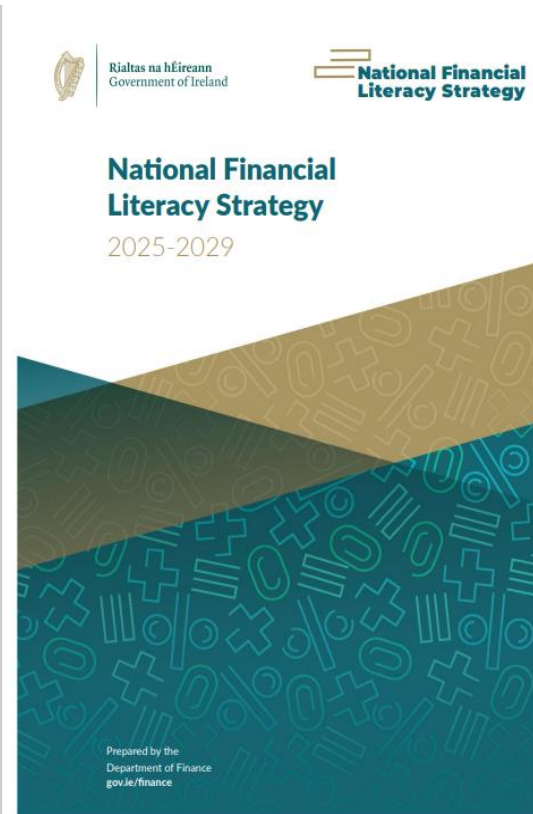
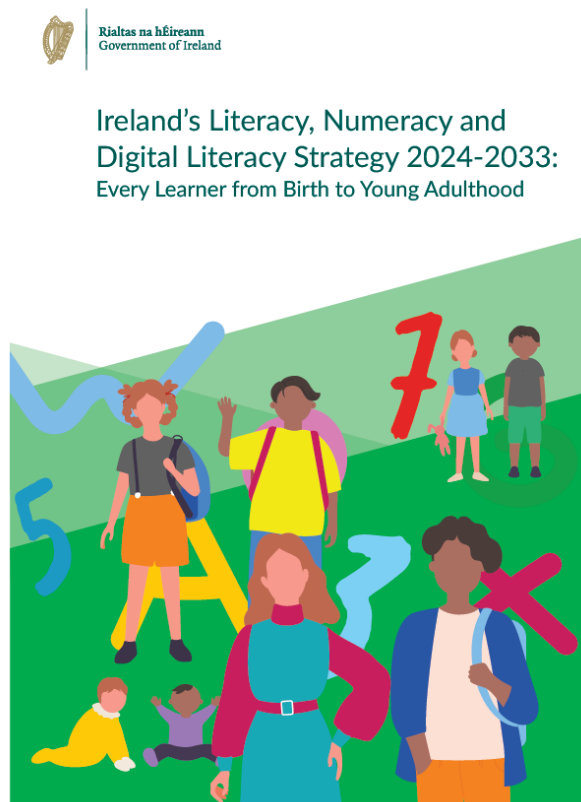
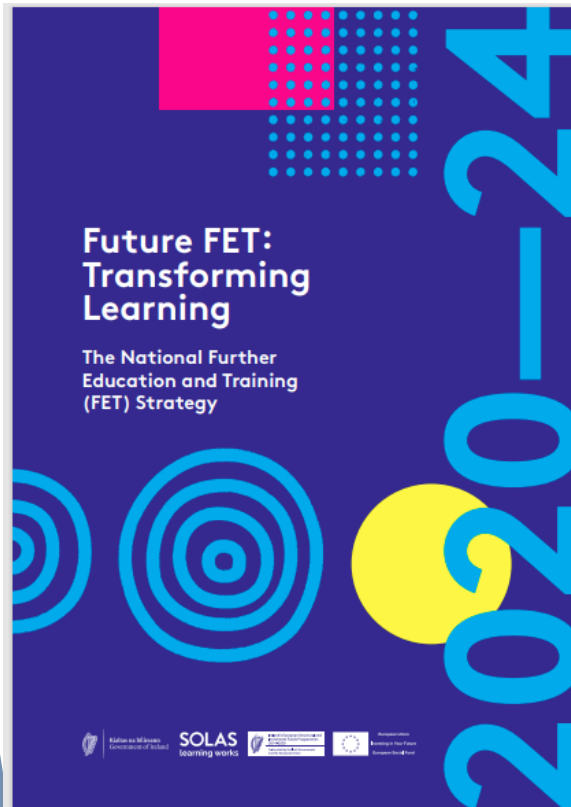
Profile of literacy – evolving definition



- Artificial Intelligence (AI) literacy
- Climate literacy
- **English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)**
- Family literacy
- Financial literacy
- Health literacy
- Media literacy
- ???

Politics and policies

- Since 2021: 3 Ministers and additional strategies



Provision

- Lack of baseline data and standardised delivery, professional development and assessment
- Need for more flexible offerings
- Clearly differentiating core literacy from ESOL

Your insights and ideas

- ▶ How do we collectively keep basic skills on the agenda given the perma-crises and competing priorities?
- ▶ How have you managed and differentiated 2nd language and basis skills acquisition?

Our contact details

- ▶ Colleen Dube
cdube@nala.ie
nala.ie | learnwithnala.ie

- ▶ Yvonne McKenna
Yvonne.mckenna@solas.ie
adulthoodliteracyforlife.ie

Thank you / Go raibh maith agaibh.