

**County Laois
Vocational Education Committee**



A Provider of Educational Opportunities

ANNUAL REPORT 2010



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Mission Statement

‘The Mission of Co. Laois Vocational Education Committee is to provide, promote and support excellent education and training services which facilitate young people and adults in realising their full potential.’

Co. Laois Vocational Education Committee Members 2010



**Back Row: Mr. Gerry Quinn, Cllr. Brian Stanley, Cllr. John King,
Mr. Patrick Buggy, Cllr. Pat Bowe, Monsignor John Byrne, P.P.**

**Front Row: Cllr. Rotimi Adebari, Cllr. William Aird, Ms. Emma Dunne,
Cllr. Mary Sweeney (Chairperson), Ms. Anne O’Keeffe (Chief Executive Officer),
Ms. Winifred Champ-Cox, Ms. Irene Murray, Cllr. John Bonham**

**Missing from Photograph: Ms. Linda Bergin, Mr. Declan Moore,
Cllr. Kathleen O’Brien, Cllr. Paul Mitchell**

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Introduction



As Chairperson of County Laois Vocational Education Committee (VEC), I am very pleased to introduce our Annual Report for 2010. The five year Education Plan 2006-2010 identified the broad outline of the Committee's plans and those of each of its services. That plan identified the need to have a published Annual Report and this, the fifth such report, is in accordance with that Plan. There is a number of different services and activities, directly or indirectly, operating within the remit of Co. Laois VEC. The operation of these services and activities over the past year, is outlined in this report, together with a comprehensive summary of the income and expenditure which has arisen during the year.

As we are all too aware, there is a major deterioration in the public finances, and our challenge over the past year has been, and will continue to be, the protection of our services for the people of Co. Laois. Live register figures for the County have increased by 10,000 in the past year, primarily due to the collapse in the construction industry and the decline in retail sales. This year has been challenging with the impact of reduced exchequer receipts impacting so much on all services and in particular on education. Education and training provision is vital in order to get our young people and unemployed adults into the workforce. I believe the Vocational Education sector is well placed, with its commitment to lifelong learning, to provide excellent quality programmes to meet these needs.

I take this opportunity to congratulate all the students at every level who have completed courses during 2010, and especially the students who achieved success in the State Examinations. I also want to wish all the learners leaving our services continued success in their chosen careers.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the commitment of all staff employed in Co. Laois VEC under the guidance of the Chief Executive Officer, Ms Anne O'Keeffe. Finally, I wish to pay tribute to my colleagues and to the Sub-Committees and Boards of Management members for their contribution in the face of all the financial and educational challenges throughout the year.

Cllr. Mary Sweeney
Chairperson

Foreword



It gives me great pleasure to present this report, the Annual Report for Co. Laois Vocational Education Committee (VEC) for 2010 as per the provisions and requirements of the Vocational Education (Amendment) Act 2001. This report is an accurate account of the developments in, and the progress of, the services provided by Co. Laois VEC during the year.

Significant progress was made in 2010 in relation to capital projects including the commencement of an extension to St. Fergal's College, Rathdowney, with five additional classrooms and circulation space, toilets and offices; the three existing buildings linked by a covered walkway, a new car park with bays for buses, and a second entrance. Additional classrooms were also provided in Youthreach, Mountmellick and in Clonaslee Vocational School.

2010 was the final year of the Education Plan which was developed in 2006. A final review, which was useful and necessary to inform the new Plan, indicated that much was achieved despite the economic downturn. However, there is still a lot to do. An IT officer was appointed which was one of the IT objectives but the development of a Wide Area Network (WAN) was an area not developed. The WAN is included in the Plan for 2011-2015, subject to funding.

The education and training services provided by Co. Laois VEC, at both adult and post-primary level, are supported by the administrative structure in the VEC Head Office. This report outlines the important role played by the Education Support Services, Human Resources, and Finance sections of the VEC during 2010, and is acknowledged.

The success that has been achieved by Co. Laois VEC in 2010 is attributable to a team effort that involves many people. I take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the Chairperson and Committee members for their role in the governance process. Their interest in, and their commitment to, the educational needs of Co. Laois is demonstrated by their active participation at the Committee's monthly meetings, their membership of Boards of Management of Schools and Centres, and in their attendance at Exhibitions and Award Ceremonies.

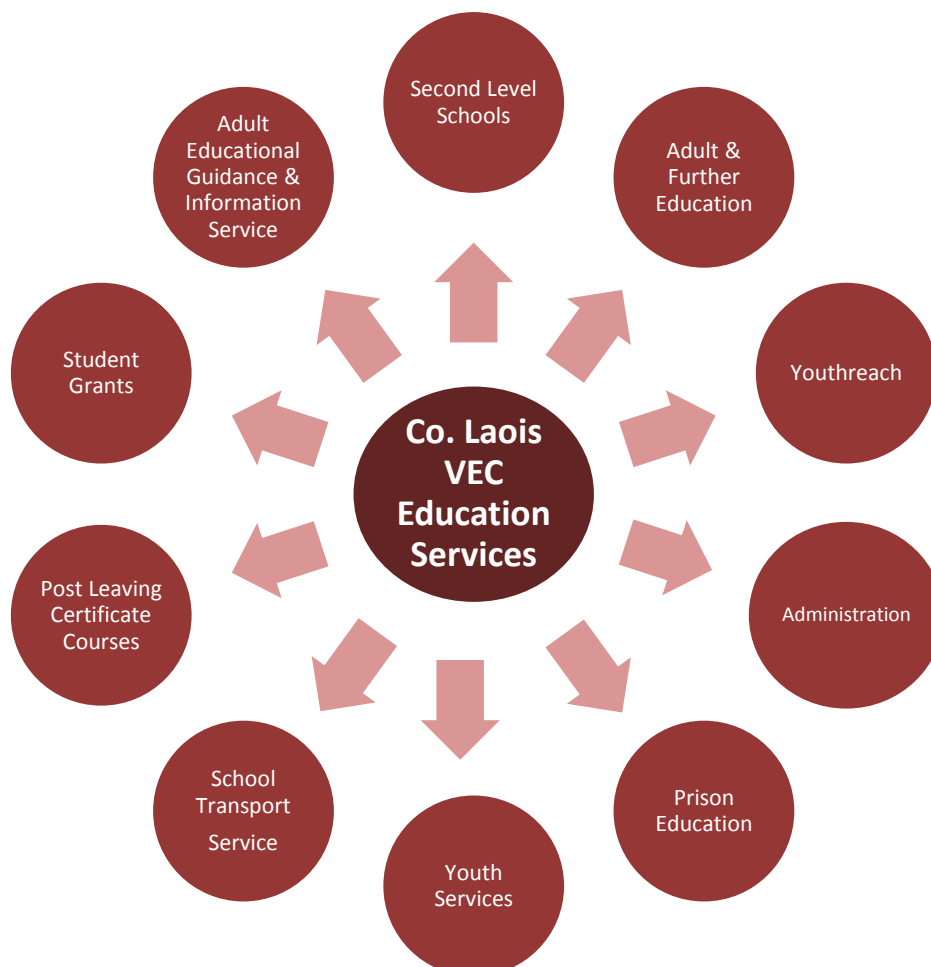
Appreciation is also expressed to the School Principals and staff, the Adult Education Officer, Centre Managers and the Adult Education staff and to all who carry out the many and varied roles and functions in our Schools, Centres and in Head Office.

Anne O'Keeffe
Chief Executive Officer

Context

Co. Laois Vocational Education Committee (VEC) was established following the enactment of the Vocational Education Act 1930. Section 29 of the VE (Amendment) Act 2001 requires VECs to prepare, adopt and submit to the Minister for Education and Skills an annual report which relates to the performance of functions each year. This report addresses this legal requirement and presents an overview of Co. Laois VEC's education provisions and other activities, its performance of objectives identified in the Education Plan 2006-2010 and a financial statement for 2010.

Co. Laois VEC provides a broad range of education services to meet the needs of the county. Co. Laois VEC provides second level education in three schools and provides a range of opportunities in adult learning including Post Leaving Certificate courses, Adult Literacy, Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS), Youthreach, Traveller Education, Prison Education, Back To Education Initiative (BTEI), Community Education, and an Adult Educational Guidance and Information Service (AEGIS) as well as a comprehensive range of evening courses. Co. Laois VEC administers three student grant schemes, the qualifying conditions for which are approved each year by the Department of Education and Skills. The School Transport service is administered by Co. Laois VEC on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills.



Highlights of 2010

Post-Primary Schools

Co. Laois VEC's three second level schools continued to provide a wide range of education programmes, both academic and extra-curricular, during 2010. Some highlights from our schools during this year are as follows:

Portlaoise College

- Two new subjects were added to the curriculum at Leaving Certificate level: Chemistry and Music, making a total of twenty two subjects on offer in the School.
- Portlaoise College hosted the Poetry Aloud Competition with students from seven Laois schools in attendance.
- One student received a national award for success in his Junior Certificate Technology project.
- Portlaoise College was one of twenty-one midland schools to participate in the 2010 Tipperary Institute / Sunday Business Post Business 2000 Table Quiz.
- The Cómhairle na nÓg forum was held in Portlaoise College. A large number of students from schools throughout the county came together to discuss local and national issues.
- John Paul II Awards given to 6th Year students for their contribution to the local parish.
- Heritage Award given to Portlaoise College for students' involvement in the Heritage Schools Project.
- A new school canteen was opened, the only post-primary school in Portlaoise with such facilities.
- Two students attended the Euro College in Galway to study French for three weeks.
- Five students attended the Gaeltacht where two students were presented with awards for their success there.
- A defibrillator was purchased for the school and staff members engaged in training in all aspects of Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and in the use of the device.

Clonaslee Vocational School

- Extensive building works took place during the year. Four new classrooms, an Art room, a Careers' office and a Deputy Principal's office have been added. All of these new rooms are equipped with Wi-Fi access.
- President Mary McAleese and Dr Martin McAleese visited the school in March. This was a great honour to have the President and her husband visit the school to celebrate the many developments over the years.
- A number of staff members retired during 2010, including the Principal Mr Fran Bates, who had worked with Co. Laois VEC for 40 years. The new Principal, Ms. Noreen Sweeney was appointed with effect from 1st January 2011.
- The Clonaslee School Bank was officially opened in November, in conjunction with the AIB Build A Bank Challenge.
- School outings during 2010 included trips to Birr Outdoor Education Centre, Spiddal in Galway, the Irish Aid Centre, the Helix in Dublin and the Dunamaise Theatre in Portlaoise.
- The Students' Council organised a Jersey Day to raise funds for Haiti.

St. Fergal's College, Rathdowney

- The school launched a health and fitness programme called 'The 30 40 50 Club', to raise awareness of the importance of health and fitness as part of a daily routine.
- The school held a talent show where gifted performers entertained students, parents and teachers.
- Transition Year (TY) students were involved in a programme called 'Log on Learn', a collaboration of Intel, Microsoft and An Post aimed at teaching basic computer skills to people over 65.
- A TY mini-company 'Pigs Do Fly Solutions' was awarded first place for overall presentation at the Laois Student Enterprise Awards.

Adult Education Centres

Co. Laois VEC's adult education centres continued to develop their education and service provision during the year. Some highlights from the centres in 2010 include:

Abbeyleix Further Education Centre

- The first graduates from the new FETAC Level 6 courses in Business Administration and Art & Business received their certificates in July 2010. Twenty six students received major awards, and four students received component awards.
- Seventy five students received major awards at FETAC Level 5, and nine students received major awards at Level 4. A number of students also received component awards.
- Students organised a series of fundraising events for Crumlin Hospital, raising a total of €1,450. €400 and six food hampers was also presented to St. Vincent De Paul at Christmas.
- Art students held their Design Graduation Show in the Dunamaise Arts Centre in May. This was the first time the exhibition combined work from students at Levels 5 and 6.
- The Art, Craft and Design students went on a four day trip to Rome in 2010.
- The Art students visited a number of art galleries and exhibitions in Dublin, Carlow and Galway during the year.
- New modules in Intellectual Disability Studies and Social Studies were introduced as part of the Community Care course. The centre also introduced new modules to the Art & Business Level 6 course - Arts Event Management and Sculpture.

St. Canice's Senior Traveller Training Centre

- In May 2010, twenty eight learners submitted 87 FETAC portfolios and were successful at Levels 3, 4 and 5.
- During 2010, all staff at St. Canice's completed a number of in-service training programmes. These included Drugs Awareness, Interculturalism, Special Needs Training and Drum Therapy.
- Learners took part in a Health & Fitness programme in Portlaoise Leisure Centre.
- Learners participated in the Operation Christmas Child project where fifty-five boxes were donated.
- Learners participated in a painting project for the 'Trick R Street' festival at Halloween.

Community Education Service

- One hundred and fourteen participants successfully completed FETAC modules in Computers, Childcare, English Language, Community Development, Personal Effectiveness, Self Advocacy and Communications.
- In conjunction with the OPW, FÁS, Laois Partnership and the Department of Social Protection (DSP), seventeen unemployed men participated in FETAC Level 5 Communications as part of their Major Level 5 Award in Organic Horticulture. This module will continue in 2011.
- The Community Education Service also provided a course in FETAC Level 3 Communications to a group of sixteen unemployed adults as part of a Start Your Own Business Course in Mountmellick.
- A Photography course was organised in Fisherstown by the service and resulted in a photographic exhibition held locally and the formation of a Photographic Society with over thirty members.
- Two FETAC Level 3 courses, 'Food & Nutrition', and 'Living in a Diverse Society', were delivered in partnership with the HSE to a group of Traveller Women who are working towards becoming Community Health Workers within their own community.
- The Community Education, in conjunction with the Adult Literacy Service, Laois Partnership, DSP and the HSE provided a fourteen week Family Support course from September to December in Birchgrove, Knockmay.
- Two FETAC Level 3 modules in Personal Development were delivered in Rathdowney and Mountmellick in conjunction with the ITABE (Intensive Tuition for Adult Basic Education) programmes.
- Twenty six people benefitted from the support offered through the SPIDAS grant scheme. The supports included tuition fees, books, travel and IT supports.

Laois Adult Learning Centre

- Two hundred and one learners were presented with FETAC Certificates - 16 at Level 2, 174 at Level 3 and 11 at Level 4.
- Twenty-nine learners completed Junior Certificate English and/or Mathematics exams, five students completed Leaving Certificate Mathematics and three students completed Leaving Certificate English.
- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) learners participated in a radio project entitled 'How to Learn English in Ireland.' The radio series received a Craol Achievement Award and Aontas STAR Award in the 'Once Off Initiatives Category' 2010.
- ESOL learners also participated in a project entitled 'Getting to Grips with the English Language.' This project received the European Language Label 2010, a European Award for Languages.
- The centre received an 'Embracing Diversity Award' from Voices Across Cultures in association with the Laois Ethnic Minority Support Group, in recognition of their invaluable efforts and commitments to a multicultural Ireland, where diversity is valued and celebrated.
- Two Intensive Tuition for Adult Basic Education (ITABE) programmes were delivered in partnership with Community Education. Both programmes offered participants the opportunity to focus on literacy and numeracy needs.
- Co. Laois VEC Adult Refugee Programme commenced in September 2010 with a beginner and elementary/pre-intermediate class. This programme supports learners from various ethnic backgrounds to improve their English language ability, assists students in accessing work or study places and increases their understanding of Irish culture.
- Through Delivering Equality of Opportunity In Schools (DEIS) funding in 2010, the Adult Learning Centre offered a number of Family learning courses; a total of 74 parents/guardians and 20 children took part in these programmes.

Mountmellick Further Education Centre

- A Woodwork Initiative Programme was established between the residents of St. Vincent's Nursing Hospital and the students of Youthreach. The initiative was put forward for an AONTAS STAR Award.
- During the year, a Library was established within the centre.
- A variety of fundraising and sports events took place, including Alzheimer's Tea Party, Beauty in Pink Week, Haiti Breakfast Morning Appeal, Pakistan Flood Appeal, Down Syndrome Pyjamas Party, Cheerio's Breakfast Morning.
- Thirteen students achieved the Silver An Gaisce Award in 2010.
- Numerous speakers visited the centre to speak to the students including: AEGIS Information Officer, Suicide Awareness Officer, Sexual Health Worker.
- A Junior Certificate student represented the school in Dáil na nÓg in Dublin Castle in December.
- Two Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) students were selected to represent Youthreach and participate in Comhairle na nÓg in Co. Laois.

Portarlington Adult Education Centre

- One hundred and eighty four learners presented their work for accreditation to FETAC in May, including forty six Major Awards at Level 5 in Business, Childcare, Community Care, Healthcare Support, Community and Health Services and Health Service Skills.
- Eighty five learners received component certification in Business Studies, Childcare, Healthcare and Community Health Care at Level 5 and over fifty students received component certification at Levels 3 and 4.
- A FETAC Awards night was held in November. Ms. Mary Kett, Further Education Development Unit, Department of Education and Skills, presented the awards on the night.
- In September a strong emphasis was placed on promoting a return to learning for students with less than upper secondary level education. The most successful event was an open morning held in the Centre. As a result of this campaign twenty part-time students enrolled to sit the Leaving Certificate in June 2011 in the following subjects: Irish, English, Mathematics, History, Geography, Biology and Business. The student age profile ranges from seventeen to thirty with the male gender being dominant.
- There are twenty three students on the VTOS programme. The current learner age ranges from twenty two to fifty eight.
- Thirteen VTOS learners sat Leaving Certificate examinations in June 2010. Two VTOS students were offered third level college places on completion of their courses.

Prison Education Centres

Co. Laois VEC plays a key role in providing educational opportunities and support to prisoners in both of the prisons in Portlaoise.

Midlands Prison Education Centre

- In 2010, eight students completed Junior Certificate Examinations and twenty students completed Leaving Certificate Examinations. One hundred and sixty one students completed 360 FETAC Modules. Full FETAC Level 5 awards were also introduced for the first time in the Education Centre.
- Six students received Bronze and five students received Silver medals in the Gaisce programme. The tasks included organising and participating in a Charity Triathlon and selling a range of greeting and gift cards through the prison shop and in the visitors' centre. A significant amount of money was raised for local charities.
- Accomplished artist Maeve Collins delivered a two-week workshop under the Artists in Prisons Scheme. Multimedia students also benefitted from a week of workshops with Jason Groarke.
- In the Physical Education area, students completed an FAI (Football Association of Ireland) five-a-side soccer workshop and participated in Health Information days and a Fit for Life course.
- A number of students entered the Listowel Writer's Competition. The very popular annual pantomime resulted in a very fine production of Alice in Wonderland. The end of year performance was a sketch show entitled 'A Day in the Life of the Midlands' which was a hilarious performance and was well received by students and staff.
- The Pre Release course was successfully attended and well received by students. It has developed considerably and is provided four times each year.
- A new programme was developed to provide FETAC certified programmes to non-regular school attendees. The focus of the programme was to prepare participants for employment upon release from prison.
- The Touch Type Read and Spell (TTRS) programme continues to be successful and has proved to be exceptionally valuable for literacy students of all levels. It is now a central component of our adult basic education programme.
- The School Newsletter involves students at all stages of its production and has been updated this year resulting in a very professional publication on a monthly basis. Students continue to work on filming promotional material which is broadcast on the prison's internal broadcasting channel and is designed to encourage school attendance.

Portlaoise Prison Education Centre

- A new Block opened in the prison in November 2009, leading to a significant increase in the number of students attending the Education Centre. The average total prison population during the year was 265 and the average enrolment in the school was 235.
- During the year, a significant number of students sat examinations - six at Junior Certificate level, seven at Leaving Certificate level, eight at Open University level, and over 35 students sat various Music exams. Thirty three students received certification from FETAC at Levels 3, 4 and 5.
- A number of students submitted entries and were successful in the Dunamaise Amateur Art competition. Artwork from some of the students was shown at the 2010 Art Exhibition at the Dunamaise Arts Centre.
- Students participated in a number of workshops facilitated by various different visitors to the Education Centre. Workshops were in the area of Creative Writing, Music and Song Writing, Soccer Coaching, Literacy and Art.
- The Pre Release programme is continuously developed in the Centre. The comprehensive programme includes guidance on goal setting, confidence building, alcohol awareness, anger management, job preparation, etc. Visitors from Citizens Information Centre, Linkage, FÁS, PACE and various Addiction Centres assist in the delivery of the course. In 2010, forty two students completed the programme.

Services

Adult Educational Guidance and Information Service (AEGIS)

- In 2010, 1154 clients availed themselves of the services of Laois AEGIS, which represented a 27.5% increase in the client numbers from 2009.
- During the year, the staff at AEGIS provided guidance and information outreach services to students at Abbeyleix Further Education Centre, Portarlington Adult Education Centre, Laois Adult Learning Centre, Portlaoise and Portarlington Job Clubs, Midlands Prison Pre-Release groups, and Laois Partnership Company.
- The Guidance Co-ordinator arranged for speakers from Institute of Technology Carlow, National University of Ireland Maynooth and Carlow College to visit students in Abbeyleix FEC and Portarlington Adult Education Centre. Visits to the colleges were also organised for the students.
- During the year, staff at AEGIS participated in a number of Community Education open information days and provided information on adult learning options to the general public.
- The Guidance Co-ordinator attended the 2010 Ploughing Championships as part of a National VEC stand to provide information on the range of services available through the VEC sector.

Youth Service

- The Youth Officer supported the setting up of a number of new and innovative projects in 2010, including Abbeyleix Youth Café, Stradbally Youth Centre, Mountmellick Youth Democracy Project, Portlaoise Headstrong Learning Network (a youth mental health planning group) and Portlaoise Youth Café Consortium.
- The highlight of 2010 was the confirmation that an application by the Portlaoise Youth Café Consortium, of which Laois VEC is the lead agency, was successful in securing funding from Pobal to set up a Youth Café in Portlaoise, that will provide a quality space where young people aged 12-18 can get involved in programmes or workshops and meet their peers in a safe, alcohol free environment.
- Thirty seven youth club/organisations received funding under the Local Youth Club Grant Scheme.
- The National Quality Standards Framework (NQS) for Youthwork was launched in 2010 as a support and development tool for the youth work sector. The main purpose of NQS is to support youth work organisations to improve the work they do. The Youth Officer will provide both a support function and an external assessment function. All Office of Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (OMCYA) funded services will participate in the process, as participation is a condition of funding.

Administrative Services

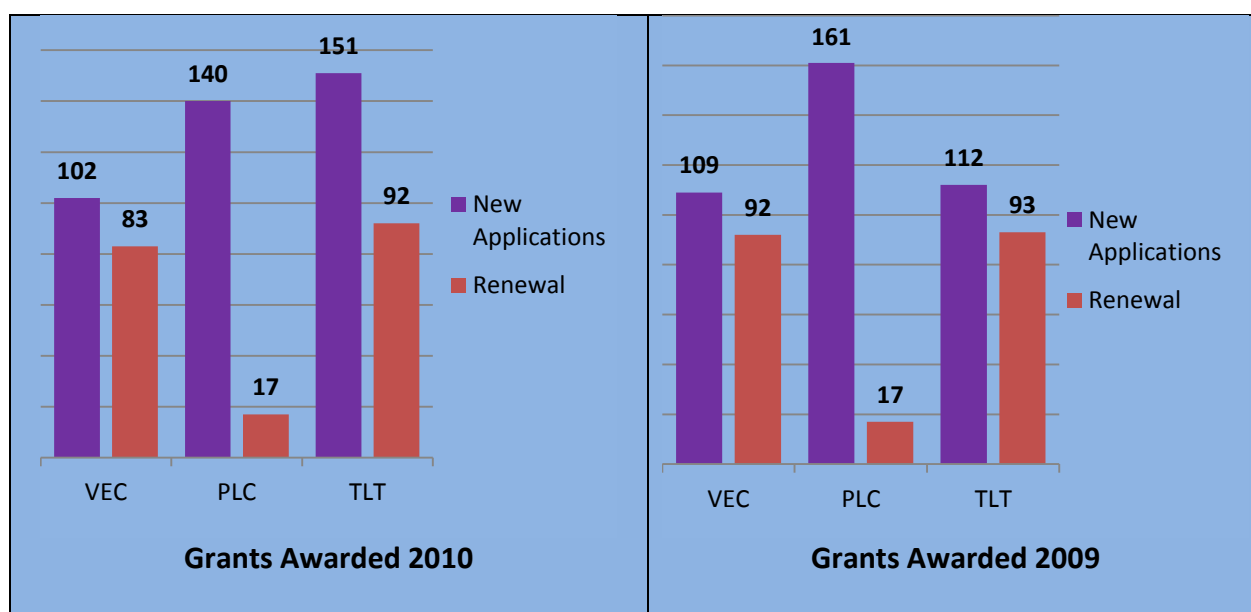
• Education Support Services Department

The Education Support Services Department of Co. Laois VEC is responsible for the following services:

- VEC Scholarship Scheme
- Third Level Maintenance Grant Scheme for Trainees
- Maintenance Grant Scheme for PLC Students
- School Transport
- Weekly payments to students in VTOS, Youthreach, STTC and BTEI Programmes
- Local Youth Club Grant Scheme
- Monitoring of Department of Education and Skills (DES) returns for VTOS, Youthreach and STTC programmes
- Capital Projects
- Insurance
- Adult Education Support – general night classes and fee reconciliations, advertising, correspondence, etc.

Scholarships and Student Grants

Co. Laois VEC processes grant and scholarship applications for three categories of awards: VEC scholarships, Post-Leaving Certificate (PLC) grants and Third Level Trainee grants. The tables below summarise the number of grants awarded by Co. Laois VEC in 2010. The figures for 2009 are provided for comparative purposes.



Of those who received either a new grant or a renewal grant, some were entitled to a further top-up grant based on their financial circumstances. The table below details the amount of grant receivers who also qualified for an additional top-up grant.

Year	VEC	PLC	TLT	Total
2009	44	88	58	190
2010	58	82	69	209

The applications which did not lead to the awarding of a grant were processed in the following manner:

Actions	2009/2010	2010/2011
Refusals	114	96
Applications forwarded to other awarding bodies	54	71
Students not proceeding with application	0	19
Incomplete applications / Outstanding Documentation	69	156

School Transport

Co. Laois VEC manages the Post Primary School Transport Service on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills. The CEO's role as Transport Liaison Officer (TLO) is to liaise with the DES and the schools to provide subsidised school transport for eligible students. The TLO decides on eligibility of pupils for transport in accordance with the terms of the scheme as issued by the DES.

The TLO also co-ordinates school opening and closing dates both at Primary and Post-Primary levels including special schools.

- **Human Resources Department**

The Human Resource function ensures that County Laois VEC has the appropriate allocation of staff to fulfil its aims and objectives, as outlined in the Education Plan 2006-2010. It is responsible for the recruitment and selection of employees, their subsequent training, development and welfare and related statistical returns to the Department of Education and Skills (DES), Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA) and Central Statistics Office (CSO).

Recruitment and Selection

County Laois VEC employed a total of 484 staff during 2010. This included full-time and part-time staff, some of whom were short term. Vacant posts were advertised in the national and local press, on our website and on other appropriate websites. Most application forms were downloaded by prospective candidates. There was difficulty in filling teaching posts of Irish, Mathematics, Career Guidance and qualified Resource.

Staffing

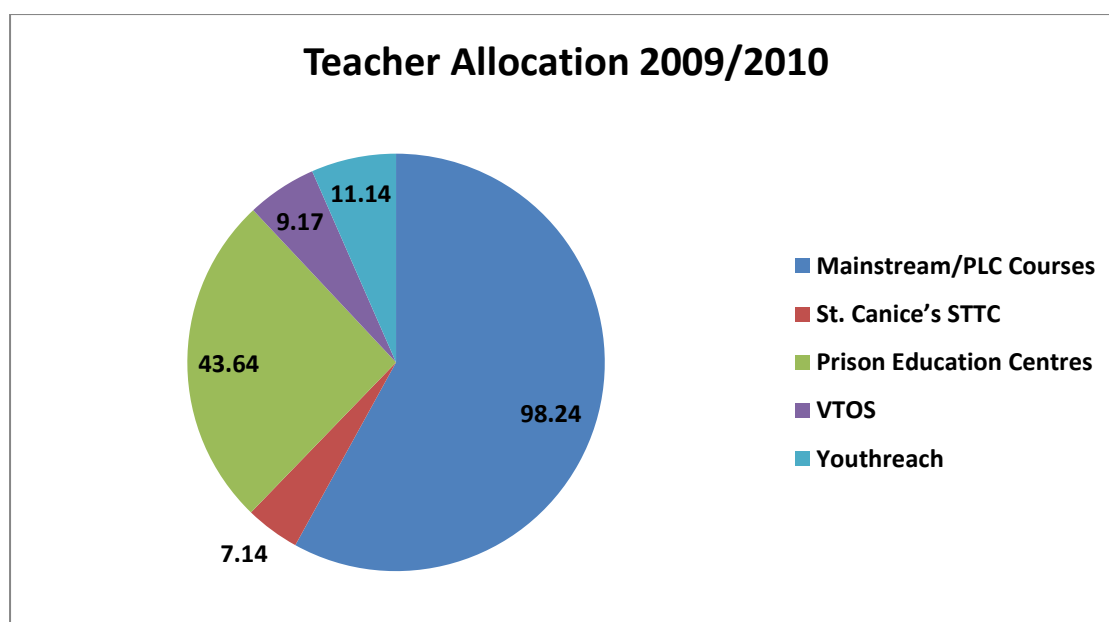
In 2009, 67 staff members joined County Laois V.E.C. while 41 resigned or retired. In recognition of staff loyalty, and long service totalling 161 years to the Scheme, a retirement function and presentation for those who retired during 2010, was held for six employees, their families and colleagues.

Garda Vetting

It is a requirement that all new staff with direct access to children/vulnerable adults must be cleared by the Garda Central Vetting Unit. PLC students of certain courses e.g. Childcare, Special Needs Assistant, Nursing Studies etc. are also required to apply for Garda Vetting, through the Authorised Signatory, prior to commencing work experience. During 2010, a total of 304 applications were processed for vetting.

Teacher Allocation

For the academic year 2009/2010, County Laois VEC was allocated the whole-time equivalent of 169 teachers. This does not include other programmes and external training contracts. The chart below illustrates the allocation of teachers (in whole-time equivalents):



Moratorium

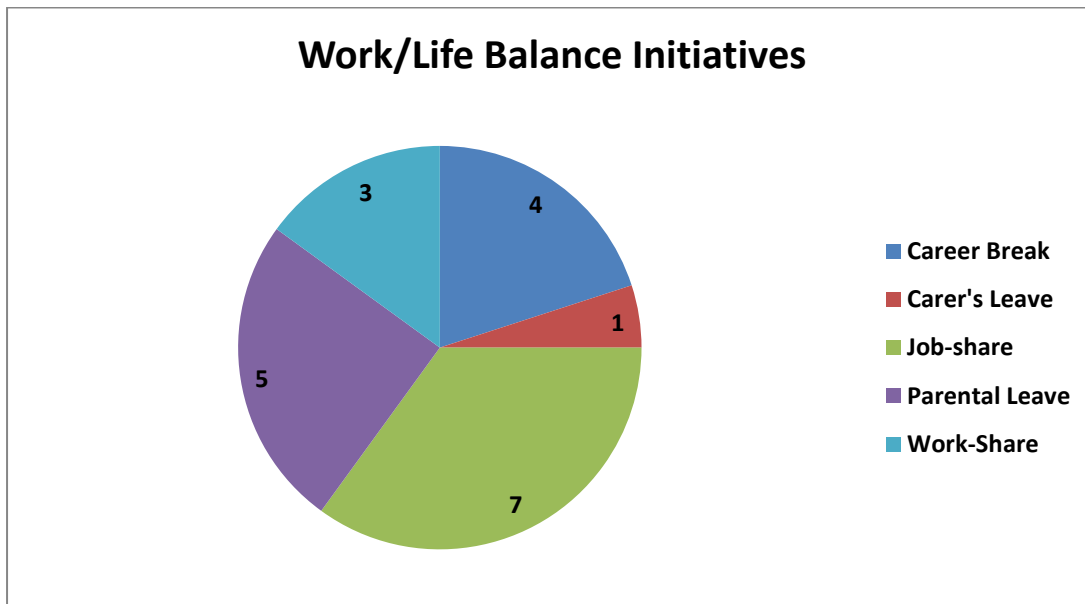
The Moratorium on staffing in the Public Service was introduced on 27th March 2009. Only the following recruitment is allowed: Principals, Deputy Principals, Teachers and Special Needs Assistants (SNAs). A threshold was introduced to allow for the filling of vacant Assistant Principal posts. No posts were filled as Co. Laois VEC was above the threshold. Detailed returns are made quarterly to the DES in respect of non-teaching staff numbers. Current staff must be complimented on continuing to provide a quality service.

Training and Development

All staff members are encouraged to up-skill. Leave of absence was approved and facilitated for staff, where possible. In total, the number of days approved for teaching staff training was 126, while 36 training days were approved for non-teaching staff.

Work/Life Balance Initiatives

County Laois VEC facilitates staff members who wish to engage in work/life balance initiatives. The chart below illustrates the number of staff members who engaged in same during 2010.



- **Finance Department**

Finance Strategy

The objective of the Finance function is to support the Committee in the achievement, within budget, of objectives set out in the service plan. Finance support includes decision making support, corporate control of public money, transaction processing and statutory accountability.

Statutory Accountability

Strict accountability requirements apply to the VEC. These requirements include the preparation of annual accounts in a format prescribed by the DES and the audit of these accounts by the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG). Financial control systems are in place to ensure compliance with these requirements and to ensure the effective achievement of objectives. The VEC complies with its obligations under taxation laws and ensures that all tax liabilities are paid on or before the relevant due dates, as set out under Section 9 of the Code of Practice for the Governance of Vocational Education Committees.

Board of Management Training

The table below shows details of Board of Management training held in 2010 and the expenditure related to same:

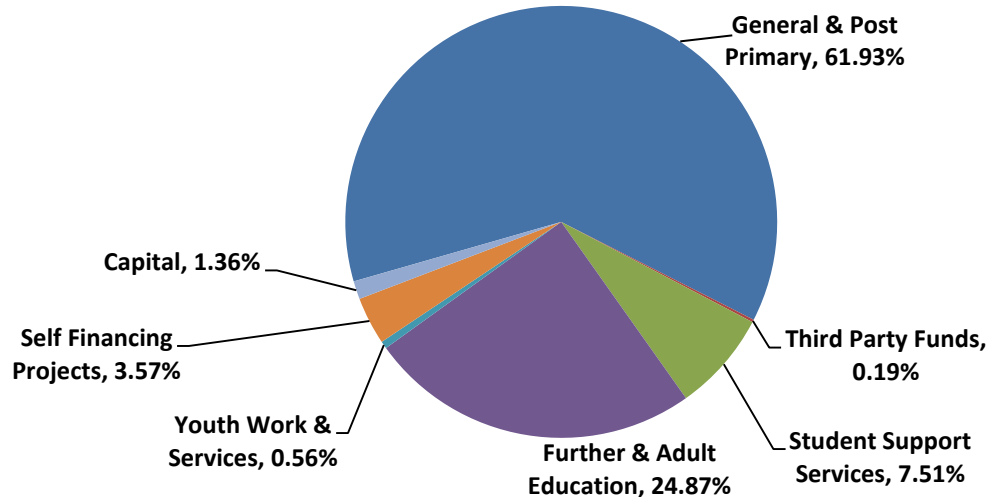
Date	Type of Training	Number Attending	Venue Cost	Lecturer Fees	Lecturer Travel & Subsistence Costs	Total Costs
23/03/2010	BOM Training	14	0	€400	€96.87	€496.87

Financial Information

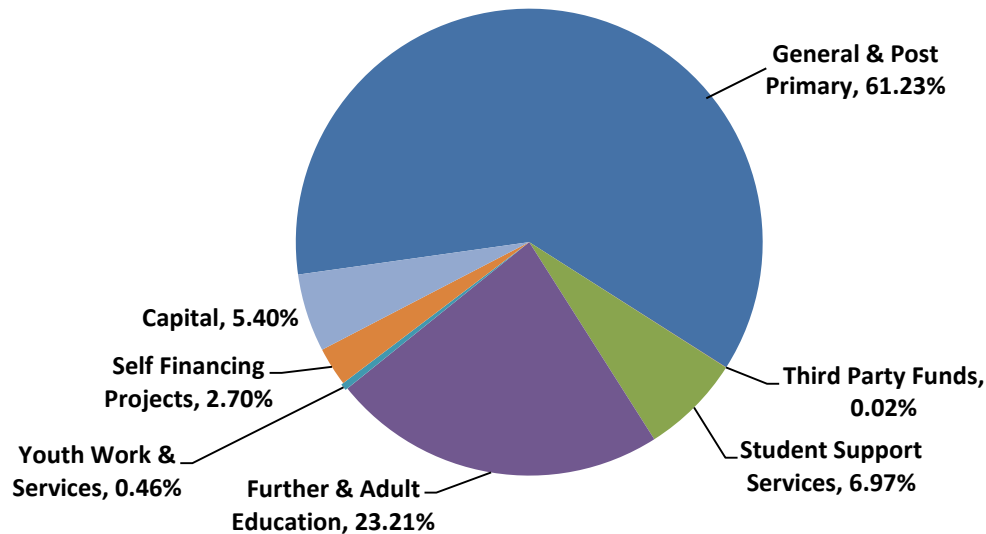
PROGRAMME	Expenditure 2010 €'000			Expenditure 2009 €'000		
	Pay	Non Pay	Total	Pay	Non Pay	Total
General & Post Primary	10,244	1,113	11,357	11,558	958	12,516
Further & Adult Education	2,484	2,077	4,561	2,561	2,184	4,745
Youth Work & Services	50	52	102	54	41	95
Student Support Services	0	1,378	1,378	0	1,425	1,425
Self-Financing Projects	295	360	655	375	176	551
Third Party Funds	25	10	35	0	4	4
Capital	0	249	249	0	1,104	1,104
TOTAL	13,098	5,239	18,337	14,548	5,892	20,440

The charts below show a comparison of expenditure categories as percentages of total expenditure for both 2009 and 2010.

Expenditure 2010



Expenditure 2009



Comments on Performance - Achievements/Developments

1. Pay costs in 2010 decreased by 10% due to pay cuts and non-replacement of staff due to moratorium.
2. The number of staff paid by County Laois VEC in 2010 was 484.
3. The cost of creditors' invoices (including capital projects) was €2,150,310. The cost of late payments amounted to €421, or .02%.
4. Student Support Services costs decreased by 3% due to a decrease in the maintenance rate paid to students.
5. The costs of Self Financing Projects increased by 19% in 2010.
6. Capital projects accounted for expenditure of €249,224 in 2010.

7. While County Laois VEC, at the 31st December 2010, had a surplus of €281,623 under non-pay, the overall surplus was €263,934. This was due to over expenditure on VTOS, Youthreach, Adult Literacy, Community Education and the STTC.
8. On-going enhancements to the VEC computer software package were undertaken in 2010.
9. County Laois VEC will implement the accrual accounting system (income/expenditure and balance sheet) when and as required.

Implementation of Co. Laois VEC Education Plan 2006-2010

This section examines the implementation of Co. Laois VEC's Education Plan 2006-2010. The last 12 months have seen a number of objectives being achieved. The following is a summary of the key targets reached in the final year of the five year plan.

- **Goal 1: Enhancement of Education Services**

Objective 1.3: Development of new Programmes

Co. Laois VEC continues to broaden its subject choice on offer to all students. Students from Abbeyleix FEC successfully completed FETAC Level 6 courses in Art & Business and Business Administration for the first time in 2010. Full FETAC Level 5 Awards in Social Studies, Graphic Design and Business were also offered for the first time in Midlands Prison Education Centre.

Objective 1.5: Continued innovation of Education Services

In 2010, Portlaoise College introduced Music and Chemistry as subject options for the first time.

Objective 1.6: The development of Irish Culture

In 2010, scholarships were awarded to a number of students from each school to enable them to attend an Irish College during their summer holidays. One student from Portlaoise College was awarded the Príomhoide Award. Seachtain na Gaeilge was celebrated in each of the schools, with some organising table quizzes and dramas.

- **Goal 2: Communication, Promotion and Accessibility of Educational Programmes**

Objective 2.1: Communication of opportunities in education and training in Co. Laois VEC

In 2010, a number of staff members represented Co. Laois VEC at the National Ploughing Championships in a joint venture with three other VECs in order to create awareness of the educational opportunities on offer to adults.

Objective 2.2: Co. Laois VEC will develop specific initiatives to support, recognise and reward excellence and will ensure that these initiatives are communicated externally.

All schools and centres within Co. Laois VEC's remit host an Annual Open Day and/or Open Evenings to promote the school/centre to potential future students and/or their parents.

Objective 2.3: Identification and development of initiatives to assist in the ongoing integration of foreign nationals into those aspects of the education system, which are within its remit

In 2010, learners and staff at the Adult Learning Centre were delighted to receive the news that they had won an AONTAS National STAR (Showcasing Teamwork, Awarding Recognition) award for a special radio project called 'How to Learn English in Ireland'. In addition to this success, another project from the Adult Learning Centre entitled "Getting to Grips with the English Language" received a European Award for Languages, the European Language Label 2010. The Language Label is a European wide award that recognises creative and innovative ways of teaching and learning languages.

- **Goal 3: Development of the Organisation**

Objective 3.1: Review of the working environment (physical and inter-personal) for all members of staff, to identify opportunities to improve that environment, by making it more supportive and flexible

Co. Laois VEC has continued its efforts to provide a supportive and flexible working environment for all staff. This has been achieved through training and development opportunities to all staff, the facilitation of career breaks, parental leave, job-sharing, and flexi-time working arrangements.

Objective 3.4: Co. Laois VEC will ensure that it provides premises for all Schools and Centres so that staff and participants can work in a safe, healthy and attractive environment

Staff and students at Portlaoise College were delighted to have a new canteen opened in the school in September 2010. Portlaoise College is the only post-primary school in Portlaoise with such facilities.

- **Goal 5: Achievement of Public Relations Objectives**

Objective 5.2: Development of IT to support Co. Laois VEC Public Relations

Co. Laois VEC continues to develop its use of ICT to communicate and promote its activities. The VEC website, www.laoisvec.ie was modernised and updated during the year. A courses database facility is now available on the website where potential students can access the range of courses available.

- **Goal 6: Creation of Strategies in Pursuit of Partnership**

Objective 6.1: Co. Laois VEC will seek to enhance existing partnerships to strengthen current, or to create new, initiatives

Co. Laois VEC has established strong links with a variety of local, public, private, and voluntary bodies. These partnerships are working very well and continue to deliver benefit to all stakeholders concerned. Some of the main partnerships to date include: The Laois School of Music, Laois County Council, Laois Partnership, Laois County Enterprise Board, Laois County Development Board, Portlaoise and Midlands Prisons, and other VECs.

Appendix 1 Committee Members 2010

Co. Laois VEC Members	
Cllr. Mary Sweeney	Cllr. John Bonham
Cllr. John King	Cllr. William Aird
Cllr. Paul Mitchell	Cllr. Kathleen O'Brien
Cllr. Pat Bowe	Cllr. Brian Stanley
Cllr. Rotimi Adebari	Rt. Rev. Monsignor John Byrne, PP
Ms. Irene Murray	Mr. Patrick Buggy
Ms. Winifred Champ-Cox	Mr. Gerry Quinn
Ms. Linda Bergin	Mr. Declan Moore
Ms. Emma Dunne	

Ad-Hoc Adult Education Committee	
Rt. Rev. Monsignor John Byrne, PP	Cllr William Aird
Mr. Michael Lynch	Mr. Finbar Heneghan
Mr. Jim Enright	Mr. Ken Farragher
Mr. Gerry Maher	Ms. Teresa McEvoy
Ms. Carmel Hoolan	Mr. Dominic Reddin
Ms Vivienne Graham	Ms. Anne Goodwin

Audit Sub-Committee	
Rt. Rev. Monsignor John Byrne, PP	Cllr. William Aird
Cllr. Brian Stanley	Cllr. Pat Bowe

Finance Sub-Committee	
Mr. Patrick Buggy	Cllr. Mary Sweeney
Ms. Winifred Champ Cox	Ms. Linda Bergin
Ms. Anne O'Keeffe	

Appendix 2

Board of Management Members 2010

Portlaoise College	
Cllr. William Aird	Cllr. Brian Stanley
Rev. Hilary Dungan	Cllr. Mary Sweeney
Ms. Colette Dunning (Secretary)	Rev. Fr. Kevin Walshe
Mr. William Flanagan	Ms. Sheila Whelan
Mr. John O'Brien	

St. Fergal's College, Rathdowney	
Ms. Breda Bergin	Ms. Olga Hyland
Cllr. John Bonham	Cllr. John King
Mr. Patrick Buggy	Ms. Brioda McCabe
Mr. John Casey	Rev. Archdeacon J. Murray
Very Rev. Fr. Eamon Foley, PP	Mr. Edmund Sheeran
Mr. Eamon Fortune	Ms. Aine O'Neill (Secretary)

Clonaslee Vocational School	
Mr. Fran Bates (Secretary)	Ms. Irene Murray
Cllr. Pat Bowe	Ms. Martina O'Donovan
Ms. Cathriona Callaly	Rev. Fr. Thomas O'Reilly
Mr. John Cusack	Ms. Noreen Sweeney
Ms. Emma Dunne	Ms. Anne Thompson
Mr. John Lee	

Appendix 3

Contact Details

Second Level Schools

Principal	Deputy Principal	Contact Details	Enrolment
Clonaslee Vocational School Clonaslee, Co. Laois.			
Mr. Fran Bates (retired 31/12/2010)	Ms. Noreen Sweeney (to 31/12/2010)	Telephone: (057) 8648044	225 students
Ms. Noreen Sweeney (from 01/01/2011)	Mr. John Lee (from 01/01/2011)	Email: clonvs.ias@tinet.ie	
St. Fergal's College Rathdowney, Co. Laois.			
Ms. Áine O'Neill	Mr. Seán Conroy	Telephone: (0505) 46357 Email: admin@stfergalscollege.com	320 students
Portlaoise College Mountrath Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.			
Ms. Colette Dunning	Mr. Noel Daly	Telephone: (057) 8621480 Email: info@portlaoisecollege.ie Website: www.portlaoisecollege.ie	577 students

Adult Education Centres

Director / Co-ordinator	Contact Details	Number of Students
Abbeyleix Further Education Centre Mountrath Road, Abbeyleix, Co. Laois.		
Ms. Helen Kavanagh	Telephone: (057) 87 31127 Email: info@abbeyleixfec.ie Website: www.abbeyleixfec.ie	VTOS: 82 PLC: 72 BTEI: 72 Evening Classes: 70
St. Canice's Senior Traveller Training Centre Kea-Lew Business Park, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.		
Ms. Bernie Moran Mr. Michael Brennan	Telephone: (057) 86 21413 Email: canices2@eircom.net	24 full-time and 12 part-time students to July 2010 18 full-time students from September 2010
Laois Adult Learning Centre Ridge Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.		
Ms. Kathleen Bennett (Adult Literacy Organiser)	Telephone: (057) 86 61338 Email: kbennett@laoisalc.ie	686 participants
Community Education Service Ridge Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.		
Ms. Teresa McEvoy (Community Education Facilitator)	Telephone: (057) 86 61890 Email: tmcevoy@laoiscommed.ie	497 participants
Mountmellick Further Education Centre Harbour Street, Mountmellick, Co. Laois.		
Ms. Mary Kavanagh	Telephone: (057) 86 24196 Email: yrlaois@eircom.net	Youthreach: 50 PLC: 54
Portarlington Adult Education Centre Bracklone Street, Portarlington, Co. Laois.		
Ms. Margaret Morrin	Telephone: (057) 86 23161 Email: mmorrin@portarlingtonaec.ie	BTEI: 184 VTOS: 20

Prison Education Centres

Supervising Teacher	Contact Details
Midlands Prison Education Centre Dublin Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.	
Ms. Linda Tynan	Telephone: (057) 8672171 Email: lmtynan@ipsedu.ie
Portlaoise Prison Education Centre Dublin Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.	
Mr. Mark Kavanagh	Telephone: (057) 86 21318 Email: makavanagh@ipsedu.ie

Services

Youth Service c/o Portlaoise College, Mountrath Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois	
Youth Officer: Ms. Patricia Cullen	Telephone: (057) 8666300 Email: pcullen@portlaoisecollege.ie
Laois Adult Educational Guidance & Information Service (AEGIS) 2 Meehan Court, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.	
Guidance Co-ordinator: Ms. Carmel Hoolan	Telephone: (057) 86 72963 Email: info@laoisaegis.ie

Appendix 4

Glossary of Terms

AEGIS	Adult Educational Guidance & Information Service
AEO	Adult Education Officer
BOM	Board of Management
BTEI	Back To Education Initiative
C&AG	Comptroller & Auditor General
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CPR	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DEIS	Delivering Equality of opportunity In Schools
DES	Department of Education and Skills
DSP	Department of Social Protection
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
FAI	Football Association of Ireland
FÁS	Foras Áiseanna Saothair
FEC	Further Education Centre
FETAC	Further Education and Training Awards Council
HSE	Health Service Executive
IT	Information Technology
ITABE	Intensive Tuition for Adult Basic Education
IVEA	Irish Vocational Education Association
LABEL	Laois Action for Business and E-Learning
LCA	Leaving Certificate Applied
NALA	National Adult Literacy Agency
NQSF	National Quality Standards Framework
OMCYA	Office of Minister for Children & Youth Affairs
OPW	Office of Public Works
PLC	Post Leaving Certificate
SNA	Special Needs Assistant
SPIDAS	Special Initiatives for Disadvantaged Adults
STTC	Senior Traveller Training Centre
TLO	Transport Liaison Officer
TLT	Third Level Training
TTRS	Touch Type Read & Spell
TY	Transition Year
VEC	Vocational Education Committee
VTOS	Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme
WAN	Wide Area Network