




December 2025

Information Booklet for CEOs in Ireland's International Financial Services Sector

Progress made on implementing the EGFSN's recommendations to
future-proof Ireland's talent pipeline for the sector.





Introduction from Chair Kevin Gallen

In May 2024 the [Expert Group on Future Skills Needs](#) published a report titled Skills for International Financial Services: An Assessment of Future Skills Requirements in High-Potential Sub-Sectors of Ireland's International Financial Services Sector to 2027.

The report forecasts that the sector will need to recruit between 6,000 and 9,000 people in the period to 2027, which would result in an estimated skills gap of more than 4,000 if the stronger growth scenario outlined in the report is realised. Highlighting the potential skills, competency and occupation gaps, the report provides a detailed analysis of the skills required by each of the seven high potential sub-sectors identified.

The report makes nine recommendations (see page 11). Supported by a secretariat from the Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment, a National Oversight and Implementation Group was established to coordinate implementation of these recommendations.

This booklet has been developed for CEOs to inform you of the progress in implementing certain key recommendations. It also highlights opportunities for you and your company to consider. We hope it will serve as a valuable resource for you as we work to ensure Ireland's International Financial Services (IFS) sector stays globally competitive based on the excellence of its talent and human capital.

Kevin Gallen

*Chair of the National Oversight &
Implementation Group, EGFSN
Formally IOB*



Futureproofing IFS sector in Ireland by upskilling and reskilling the workforce

This report was commissioned for the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) to assess Ireland's readiness for the evolving demands of the international financial services (IFS) sector through to 2027, in response to actions agreed under the Ireland for Finance Action Plans.

The objectives of the report were to:



1. **Identify high-growth sub-sectors** within IFS that will drive employment and innovation.



2. **Forecast future skills demand** and potential gaps in education and training supply.



3. **Support strategic workforce planning** by government, industry, and education providers.



4. **Recommend actionable steps** to address skills shortages and improve talent development.

The report covers seven high-potential sub-sectors, including fintech and payments, asset management, investment funds and securities services, insurance and reinsurance, international banking, wholesale capital markets, and aircraft leasing and finance.

Looking at both current skills supply and future demand scenarios, the report evaluates education outputs, migration trends, and upskilling/reskilling potential. It includes qualitative and quantitative analysis, stakeholder interviews, and labour market modelling.

The report is a roadmap for ensuring Ireland's IFS sector remains globally competitive by cultivating the right skills at the right time.

World-first standards-based Skills Framework

Led by IOB, the development of an Irish Financial Services Skills Framework is now well advanced. The first phase for the retail banking sector was launched by the Minister for Finance in June 2025. The second phase for the funds sub-sector was launched in November 2025, and phases for insurance and other IFS sub-sectors will be completed in 2026.

The Irish Financial Services Skills Framework is a world-first standards-based model designed to equip Ireland's financial services workforce with the critical knowledge about skills needed for the future and the education and training supports available to develop them. It enables the workforce to apply skill sets to a range of different and emerging roles. The building of a more flexible talent pool will support Ireland in sustaining a highly competitive and agile financial services workforce.



**Irish Financial Services
Skills Framework**

Opportunity for you

This is an exciting new tool that supports the development of your existing talent pool and attracting new talent. For example, the Skills Framework identifies AI, Data and Digital skills critical to the sector and provides a mechanism for companies to upskill and reskill to validated standards as part of their workforce planning.

Find out more:

[Irish Financial Services Skills Framework](#)

Upskilling and reskilling opportunities in the IFS sector

Subsidised Courses

Highly subsidised upskilling opportunities relevant to the IFS sector are offered by [Higher Education Institutions](#) and [Education and Training Boards](#) in areas such as cybersecurity, virtual reality, health innovation, logistics, data analytics and accounting, as well as climate, sustainability, and energy, aligning with Ireland's strategic priorities. Up to 90% of the course fee is funded by the government. In 2024 over 1,200 highly subsidised upskilling opportunities were provided to the IFS by Education and Training Boards.

SME Support

Through Budget 2025, €8m has been allocated to support SMEs to overcome barriers to learning opportunities for their workforce. SMEs in the financial sector (e.g., FinTech) may be eligible for the training opportunities offered through Skillnet Ireland.

IFS Talent Development

[IFS Skillnet](#) is a business network for companies of all sizes in the international financial services sector. IFS Skillnet supports all related industries including international banking, cross-border insurance, fintech, asset management, treasury, securitisation and the funds industry. Other [Skillnet Ireland](#) supports within finance and technology include [Technology Ireland ICT Skillnet](#), [Technology Ireland Digital Skillnet](#), [ITAG Skillnet](#) and [Tech Industry Alliance Skillnet](#).

Opportunity for you

Upskilling in digital skills is so important and there are many free and subsidised options available – worth exploring!

Find out more:

[Springboard](#)

[IFS Skillnet](#)



Supporting Diversity & Inclusion within IFS sector

Advancing Women in Financial Services

IFS Skillnet supports the delivery of an [Advancing Women in Financial Services](#) Programme. Over 500 individuals have successfully engaged in this programme between 2023-2025. Ireland's [Women in Finance Charter](#) signatories now represent over half of all employees in the financial services sector, with positive change recorded in female representation each year since initial introduction in 2022.

IFS Skillnet Returner Programme

Funded by Skillnet Ireland under the Skills Connect strand, the IFS Skillnet ['Reactivate'](#) programme provides rapid reskilling of learners seeking re-entry into the IFS workforce.

This commenced in 2024 with the first cohort of 15 successfully completing the programme, resulting in high employment progression rates. A second cohort of 19 learners have commenced in October 2025.

Promotion and Marketing

Promotion and marketing/branding initiatives using social media have been expanding to showcase IFS as a great place to work for younger people and individuals with diverse qualifications in other sectors. Examples include Irish Funds ['Career clips'](#), and [Career Portal focus](#).

Opportunity for you

Avail of quality, relevant, subsidised training programmes with IFS Skillnet

Find out more:

[IFS Skillnet](#)

[Diversity and Inclusion initiatives](#)

[Irish Funds 'Career clips'](#)

[Career Portal focus](#)

Enhanced Apprenticeship Programme Pathways

Continued growth and positive feedback

Currently there are 342 Apprenticeships working in the IFS sector – 253 Insurance Practitioners, 59 IFS Associates and 30 IFS Specialists.

The Insurance Apprenticeship Programme has shown consistent growth over the past 10 years. 98% of apprentice graduates recommend the programme, 91% continue to work in the professional field and 68% remain with their original employer, demonstrating a positive employer experience.

The Central Bank of Ireland is participating on the IFS Apprenticeships, showcasing important support and validation of the apprenticeships and their value to the financial services sector. The launch of an Apprenticeship in Banking is anticipated in January 2026.

State supports

There is a substantial level of state support available for companies who may be interested in running an apprenticeship programme. Early engagement on what this may look like for each company is encouraged to ensure that the opportunity is fully realised.

Opportunity for you

Consider Apprenticeships programmes in your talent development plan.

Find out more:

[Generation Apprenticeship](#)

[Accounting Technician](#)

[Accounting Technologist](#)

[IFS Apprenticeships](#)

[Insurance Practitioner](#)



**GENERATION
APPRENTICESHIP**
www.apprenticeship.ie



Accredited Short Courses: MicroQuals (SOLAS)

Further Education and Training (FET) micro-qualifications are a new FET offering to future-proof businesses, with programmes comprising of short, stackable accredited qualifications tailored to fit employees' work schedules and provided at little or no cost to employers. Created in partnership with industry, FET micro-qualifications are provided at local level by the Education and Training Boards network under the Skills to Advance initiative.

Current IFS related MicroQuals available are:

- Introduction to AI
- Enhancing Productivity with AI
- AI: Legal and Ethical Considerations
- Strategic Planning for AI
- Sustainable Finance
- Sustainability Leadership
- Corporate Sustainability Reporting
- Business Innovation & Market Development

Future MicroQuals in development:

- Fundamentals of Data Analytics
- Data Analysis
- Data Visualisation
- Skills Planning
- Skills Solutions
- Skills Strategy for Business

Opportunity for you

MicroQuals provide you with accredited, agile, upskilling, opportunities, in critical upskilling areas for your business. You can avail of flexible, local delivery at little or no cost

Find out more:

[Solas](#)

[Skills to Advance](#)

[Education and Training Boards](#)

Accredited Short Courses

Micro-credentials

Micro-credentials are short, university accredited courses designed to meet the upskilling demands of learners, enterprise and organisations. Micro-credentials provide highly flexible and approachable learning opportunities to upskill and reskill in a way that fits arounds learners' personal and professional commitments.

Ireland's micro-credentials are accredited by leading Irish universities offering quality assurance to the programmes and their learning outcomes. MicroCreds partner universities are; Dublin City University, Maynooth University, Technological University Dublin, Trinity College Dublin, University College Cork, University College Dublin, University of Galway and University of Limerick.

Micro-credentials are standalone courses, with some available to stack over time into larger awards through identified pathways.

Current IFS related MicroCreds available are:

- ESG Investing and Reporting (Maynooth University)
- Capital Markets, Investments and Funds (UCD)
- Climate Leadership Development (TCD)
- Blockchain Scalability (DCU)
- Introduction to AI (University of Galway)
- Enabling Enterprise Growth through
- Entrepreneurial Practice (UCC)
- Integrated Risk Management (UL)
- Applied Data Science & Analytics (TU Dublin)



MICRO
CREDs

Opportunity for you

Micro-credentials are a great way to address critical skills gaps in your organisation and to address upskilling needs in a flexible, accredited way.

Find out more:

[Microcreds](#)

Summary of Recommendations

1. A National Oversight and Implementation Group to be established to implement the recommendations and actions.
2. Develop a world class Skills Framework for the Irish financial services industry
3. Develop a single National Portal for Careers and Skills Development to support delivery of the Framework.
4. Enhance access to upskilling and reskilling opportunities for the IFS sector.
5. Promote and achieve broader diversity and inclusion with IFS sector workplaces and enhance the attractiveness of the sector for women and minority groups.
6. Continue to develop and strengthen promotion of Apprenticeship programmes as a career pathway in the IFS sector.
7. IFS industry to collaborate with education providers to ensure that relevant courses are put in place.
8. In addition to increasing domestic skills supply, measures to access skilled individuals from outside Ireland should be enhanced.
9. CSO and other State agencies to collaborate on enhancement of Labour Market Information at sub-sectoral level in IFS sector.

[Access the full report](#)



Members of the IFS Skills Implementation Group

Aircraft Leasing Ireland

Banking and Payments Federation of Ireland

Central Statistics Office

Department of Education and Youth

**Department of Enterprise, Tourism and
Employment**

Department of Finance

Department of Further Higher Education

Research Innovation and Science

Enterprise Ireland

Financial Services Ireland

Financial Services Union

Higher Education Authority

IDA Ireland

IFS Skillnet

Institute of Bankers (IOB)

Insurance Institute of Ireland

Insurance Ireland

**International Sustainable Finance Centre of
Excellence**

Irish Association of Investment Managers

Irish Funds

Irish Universities Association (IUA)

LIA Centre of Excellence

Regional Skills Fora

Skillnet Ireland

SOLAS

**The Technological Higher Education
Association (THEA)**