

**Draft Minutes of Meeting No. 89
of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs
8 December 2021 – MS Teams**

Present:	Tony Donohoe	Chair	
	David Hegarty	DETE	
	Jonathan McMillan	EI	
	Breda O'Toole	IDA	
	Aisling Soden	IDA	
	William Beausang	DFHERIS	
	Vivienne Patterson	HEA	
	Joan McNaboe	SOLAS	
	Laura Bambrick	ICTU	
Apologies:	Shauna Dunlop	SOLAS	
In attendance:	Stephanie O'Brien	DFHERIS	
	Emma Kinsella	DFHERIS	
	Prof Barry O'Sullivan	UCC	(Item 2)
Secretariat:	Marcus Breathnach	DETE	
	Ruth Morrissy	DETE	
	Don O'Connor	DETE	
	Alan Power	DETE	
	Rhodri Lloyd	DETE	
	Harry Williamson	DETE	
	Jesse Carley	DETE	

1. Introductions, Minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

2. AI Skills Report

Prof Barry O'Sullivan of UCC, chair of the project steering group, was introduced and made some introductory remarks. The secretariat provided a detailed breakdown of the report and its implications. Some of the information shared included:

- The project responds to a recommendation in the National AI Strategy, *AI Here for Good*, to review the skills implication of AI over the next 5 to 10 years.
- AI skills is a relatively new area of research, it is not possible to quantify skill gaps in the way that EGFSN studies normally do for existing sectors.
- The study takes a broad focus, considering the skills needed for the deployment, management, and regulation of AI across all sectors, not just the high-level AI specialists.
- Information and oversight were provided through literature review and an expert steering group, while public consultation was achieved through a workshop and survey.
- Recommendations focused on making AI and digital skills integral across the entire education system, fostering engagement between industry and schools, and generating interaction between industry, FET and HE sectors.
- Further research was recommended into how transversal skills are learned and how they could be assessed. It is also suggested that how the AI talent pipeline may be quantified should be examined.

The chair opened the topic for discussion. The importance of differentiating between AI skills and digital skills was raised. It was suggested that a tighter link to the overall AI strategy was needed.

Further comments were asked to be submitted in writing, to be reviewed and added to the report. A revised version of the report is to be presented at the next EGFSN meeting.

3. Work Programme 2022

The Chair introduced the item for discussion. Following on from discussions at the September meeting, scoping work on a number of proposals was undertaken and presented to the group. Following deliberations, three projects were approved for 2022 (in addition to ongoing work to monitor implementation of recommendations from previous EGFSN studies):

- High Frequency Indicators of ICT Skills Demand;
- Biopharma Skills;
- International Financial Services (deferred from 2021).

4. OECD Country Review- National Skills Strategy

Emma Kinsella gave a presentation on the goals of the project.

- Securing balance in skills through a responsive and diversified supply of skills.
- Fostering greater participation in lifelong learning in and outside of the workplace.
- Strengthening governance across a joined-up skills ecosystem.
- Leveraging skills to drive innovation and strengthen the performance of firms.

The project will take place across 2022, with scoping, assessment and recommendation phases capped by extraordinary meetings of the NSC, before launch in 2023.

The project will be further discussed at the next meeting of the EGFSN in February 2022.

5.a Design Skills Implementation Progress Report

- Second last meeting of the Group has taken place with the final meeting due in Q1 2022.

- To date very good progress has been made towards achieving the actions.
- The Group expects to continue on after the end of EGFSN secretarial support in 2022

5.b Skills for Zero Carbon

- The report has received good traction following publication.
- Strong engagement with the report on social media.
- Next steps will involve formation of an implementation group to be led by DFHERIS.

5.c SME Management Skills

- Immediate focus on two related actions (online tool and information resource).
- Implementation to continue in 2022 with change of chair of implementation group.

6. AOB

The chair thanked the attendees and ended the meeting.

The Secretariat will contact members with details of the next meeting in 2022.

EGFSN Secretariat

December 2021