



Follow Up Survey of Childcare Trainees 2008.

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Contents

Summary.....	2
1. Introduction.....	6
2. Survey methodology.....	6
3. Who we spoke to.....	8
4. Before the programme.....	9
5. Reviewing the programme and its impact on the individual.....	11
6. After the programme.....	18
7. Details of first childcare job.....	22
8. Current working situation.....	29

Follow Up Survey of Childcare Trainees:

Summary:

FÁS offers a range of programmes for persons wishing to pursue a career in childcare. FÁS undertook this research to get an accurate assessment of the number of job placements in childcare from childcare training and employment programmes as well as the profile of the participants.

It is important to emphasise that the report does not aim to compare the value of the programmes. It is a follow-up survey to find out what happens to participants.

The FÁS Community Services childcare provision for participants is very flexible and can vary from providing one short childcare module in a project, to providing major FETAC childcare qualifications to all participants in a project. In this survey, FÁS Community Services childcare participants who had participated in dedicated Community Services childcare projects i.e. had 7 or more childcare participants, were interviewed. Each of the participants who was interviewed participated fully in childcare during their time on the project. There were 1200 participants in Community Services childcare dedicated projects in 2006.

The FÁS Training Services childcare provision is more uniform. Most FÁS Training Services childcare participants attend a Childcare Practitioner traineeship programme and are expected on completion to obtain a level 5 FETAC qualification. There were 740 participants in Training Services childcare programmes in 2006.

This follow up survey was based on a sample (404) of people who participated in childcare programmes in 2006. Within our sample 206 (51%) undertook a FÁS Training Service childcare programme (the majority were Childcare Traineeship Participants) and 198 (49%) undertook a FÁS Community Service childcare programme (189 were Community Employment participants and 9 were Local Training Initiative participants).

Contact details relating to those who were invited to participate in this follow up survey were provided by FÁS to RedC who carried out the survey using CATI (Computer Aided Telephone Interviews). The survey was conducted during April / May 2008. As with all surveys based on representative samples the error margin must be taken into account when interpreting small figures.

Before the childcare programme

- Just over a third were unemployed before enrolling in the FÁS childcare programme. A third claimed to be working with a further 17% engaged in home activities.

- Among those working almost 3 in 10 claimed they didn't give up work to undertake the childcare programme. For others who were working previously, 1 in 6 left work for the childcare programme as they wanted to do childcare.

Reviewing the childcare programme & its impact on the individual

- There were high completion rates for the childcare programmes – 88% claimed to have finished the childcare training programme. Reasons for not completing were health reasons and leaving to take up a job.
- Satisfaction levels with the childcare programme content (85% fairly or very satisfied), for the opportunities for training which arose during work (77% fairly or very satisfied) and for the instructor/trainer (89% fairly or very satisfied) were high overall.
- When asked to rate the impact of the childcare programme, over 9 in 10 believed the programme improved their confidence. Other benefits for the programme centred around furthering knowledge, new job skills and the ability to identify new job opportunities suitable to their needs.
- Thirty-six percent said there was no improvement necessary to the programme, they were satisfied, and a further 25% had no suggestions for improvement. Of the suggested improvements for the programme most mentioned was more focus on specific modules and review programme content (7%).

After the Programme

- 88% of participants who completed the childcare programme received a certificate – rising to 97% for those on a FÁS Training Services childcare programme. The main reasons given for not receiving a certificate were that one wasn't posted out or that there was no certificate awarded on the programme.
- Of those who received the certificate, just under three quarters (72%) claimed it was useful when applying for jobs – dropping to 65% for those on a FÁS Community Services childcare programme.
- Sixty-one percent of the participants who have not yet worked in childcare since the programme claimed not to have looked for work in childcare. Fifty-nine percent of the participants who have not yet worked in childcare since the programme claimed not to have looked for work in another area.

Details of First Childcare Job

- The majority (54%) of those working in childcare were doing so as childcare workers/assistants. One in three claimed to be full time permanent, and a further 9% full time temporary.
- Main duties included taking care of children, games/activities, and feeding/changing/toilet training.

- 84% of those who had worked in childcare did not believe they would have been able to get their job without the FÁS childcare programme.
- Skills learned on the childcare training programme were frequently used – 66% claimed they used them all the time and a further 22% a lot of the time.
- Salaries appear to vary but 11% of those who worked full time in childcare exceeded €20,000 annual gross salary.

Current Working Situation

The table below outlines the participants' working situation at the time of the survey. Forty-five percent were working (62% of Training Services) and another 31% were in a further FÁS programme, mainly Community Employment. In total, three quarters of participants had achieved a positive outcome.

	Total	T.S.	C.S.
TOTAL	404	206	198
Working in Childcare	123(30%)	93(45%)	30(15%)
Working - Non Childcare	59(15%)	35(17%)	24(12%)
Total working	182(45%)	128(62%)	54(27%)
FÁS/Education/Training/CE	127(31%)	24(12%)	103(52%)
Positive outcome *	309(76%)	152(74%)	157(79%)
*working/FÁS/education/training/CE			

- There was a marked difference in the employment situation of programme participants before and after the programme. A quarter claimed to be now working full time while the unemployment level had halved.
- The programmes were effective in terms of helping people move into a childcare job. Thirty percent of all were working in childcare, 45% of Training Services participants and 15% of Community Services participants.
- A comparison between the results of this survey and the general follow up survey showed that a greater proportion of childcare participants used the skills they gained in their subsequent job. A greater proportion also stated that they would not have got their job without the childcare programme.

Conclusions

FÁS childcare programmes are in general successful. Approximately half (45%) of the Training Services participants were working in childcare at the time of the survey. Unemployment levels amongst participants declined as a result of the programmes.

FÁS Community Services childcare programme participants were less likely to look for work in childcare. There is a need to review the entry process for FÁS Community Services childcare programmes to determine the level and understanding of what the programme will deliver.

Using FÁS computer records it is not easy to identify childcare programme participants in Community Services projects. Consideration should be given to including programme content identifiers on FÁS Community Services childcare participants records.

It is important that FÁS develops a system which records all FETAC certification gained through FÁS funded programmes. At present, FETAC records some FÁS funded Community Services projects through the FETAC/NCVA (National Council of Vocational Awards) certification system. As a result the number of major childcare awards attributed to FÁS is underestimated.

1. Introduction

This survey examined the views and opinions of FÁS childcare participants. The report looks at participant placement, use of skills and satisfaction ratings.

The Office of the Minister for Children through the Department of Finance estimated that FÁS spent €3m on childcare training in 2005 and requested that FÁS continues to commit at least this level of funding to childcare training. Concurrent with this request, it allocated FÁS an additional €2m for additional childcare training and development activities. This overall sum of €5m was ring-fenced for childcare training activity in 2006 and 2007, and will continue to be ring-fenced in future years.

In this context, it was important for FÁS to get an accurate assessment of the number of job placements in childcare from childcare training and employment programmes and the profile of participants. FÁS also needed to receive feedback from participants about their views of the childcare training they received.

FÁS' range of programmes provides flexible, comprehensive training and education for persons wishing to pursue a career in childcare. It includes full-time programmes for unemployed persons, and part-time for those in employment, who wish to gain FETAC childcare certification. FÁS also funds employment projects that provide childcare support and training under Community Employment (CE). FÁS is also involved in a number of initiatives to support existing childcare networks e.g. the FÁS County Childcare Committee Grant Scheme, and in supporting the development of the National Quality Framework for Childcare.

2. Survey Methodology

The follow-up survey was quantitative in nature. The survey was based on a sample (400) of people who participated in childcare training programmes in 2006. Contact details relating to those who were invited to participate in this follow-up survey were provided by FÁS to RedC who carried out the survey using CATI (Computer Aided Telephone Interviews). The survey questions were based on the biannual Follow Up Survey of FÁS Participants.

Three thousand people participated in FÁS childcare training in 2006, 740 run by FÁS training services and 2240 run by FÁS Community Services (of these 1200 were in dedicated programs i.e. had 7 or more childcare participants, the remainder were run as part of other programs). Participants in non-dedicated childcare schemes were not surveyed.

The research was conducted from 28th April to 7th May 2008.

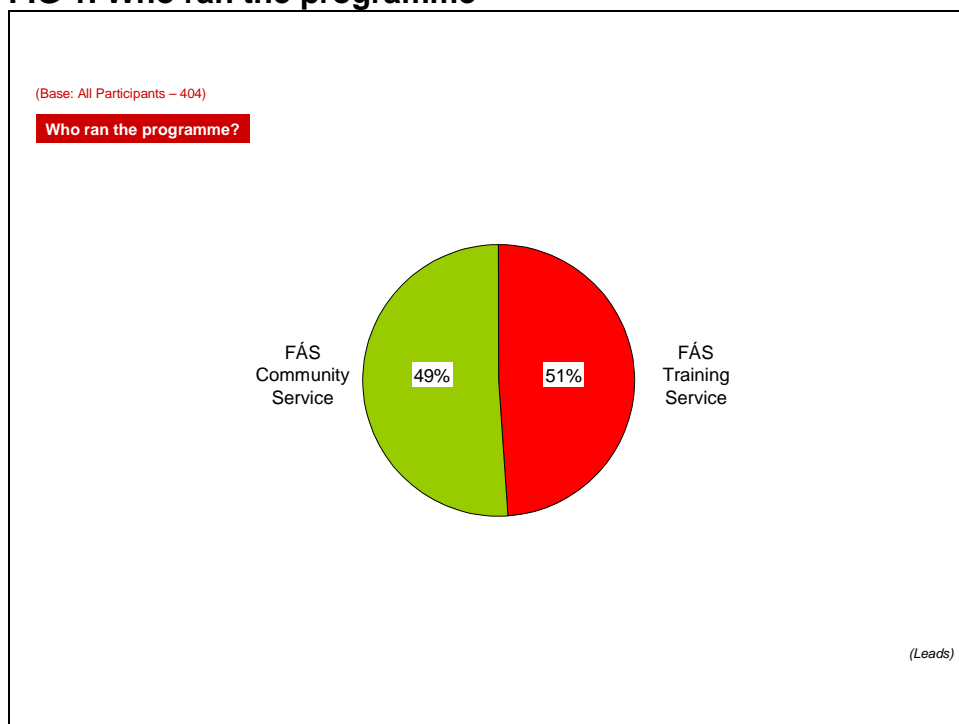
Information sought included:

- details of the FÁS programme the participant was on;
- participants' circumstances before the FÁS programme;
- participants' circumstances after the FÁS programme;

- participants' qualification outcome, if any, having participated on the programme;
- participants' first job after completing the FÁS programme;
- participants' present job, if it was different from their first job after completing the FÁS programme;
- progression within employment.

Within our sample, there was an even split between participants attending programmes run by FÁS Training Services and FÁS Community Services (fig 1). This allowed us to look separately in detail at FÁS' Training Services and Community Services childcare provision.

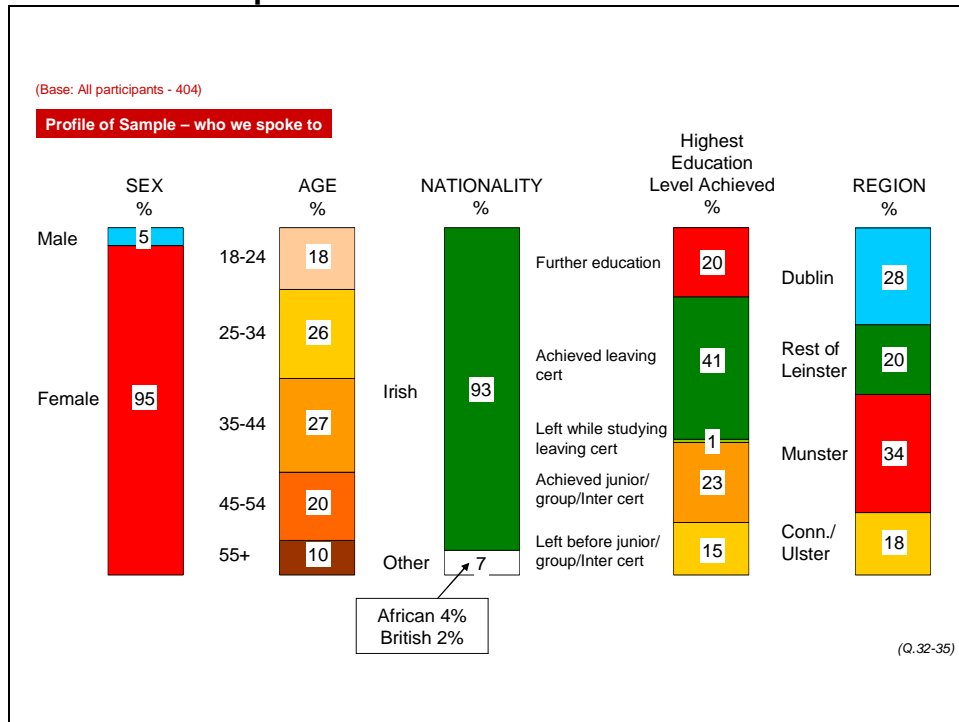
FIG 1. Who ran the programme



3. Who we spoke to

Females dominated the sample (95%). 93% of the sample were Irish. Only 1 in 5 had education beyond leaving certificate level, 61% had the leaving cert or higher. Only 10% of the sample were over 55 years old, one fifth were between 45 and 54, the remainder were between 18 and 44 (fig 2).

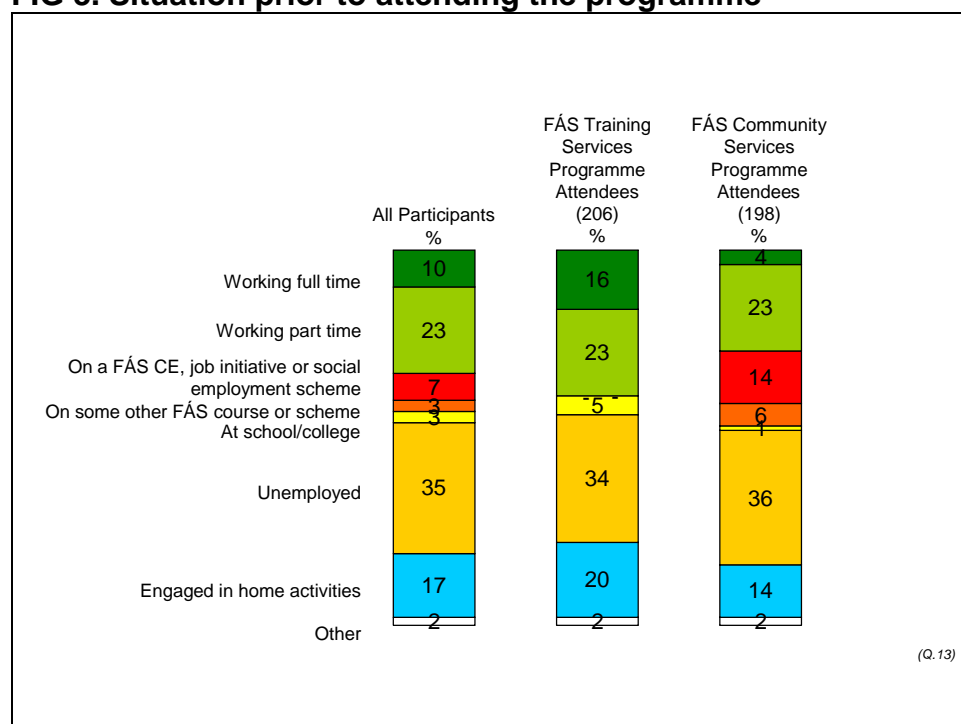
FIG 2. Who we spoke to



4. Before The Programme

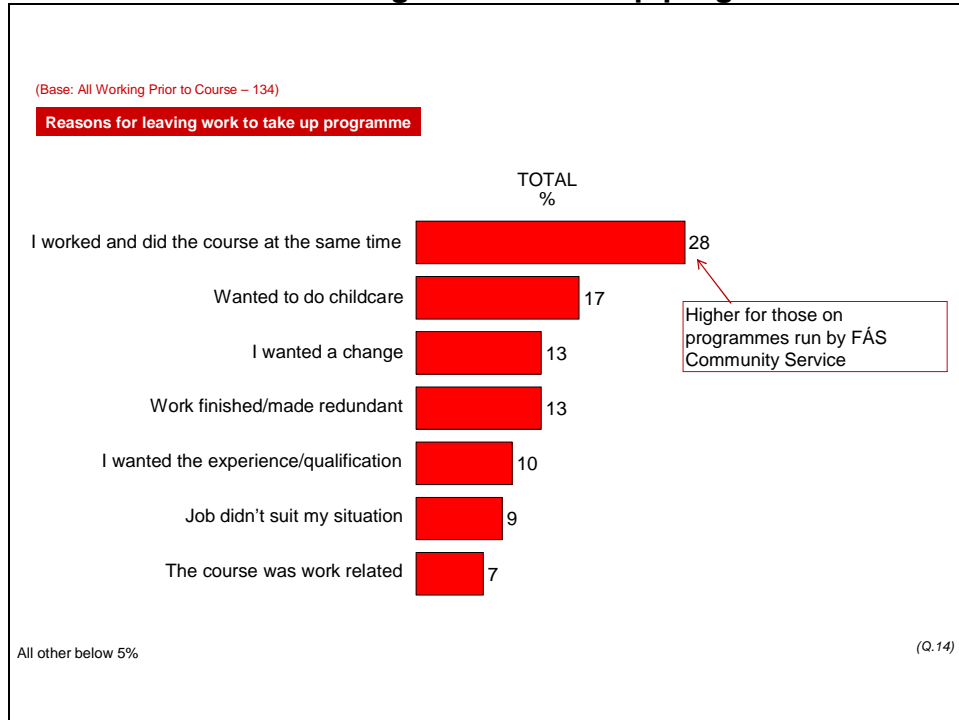
Just over a third were unemployed before enrolling on the programme, with a further third in the workforce. The remainder were either on a FÁS programme or were engaged in home duties (fig 3). Four percent of the FÁS Community services sample were in full time employment prior to the scheme and 16% of the FÁS Training Services sample were in full time employment prior to the programme.

FIG 3. Situation prior to attending the programme



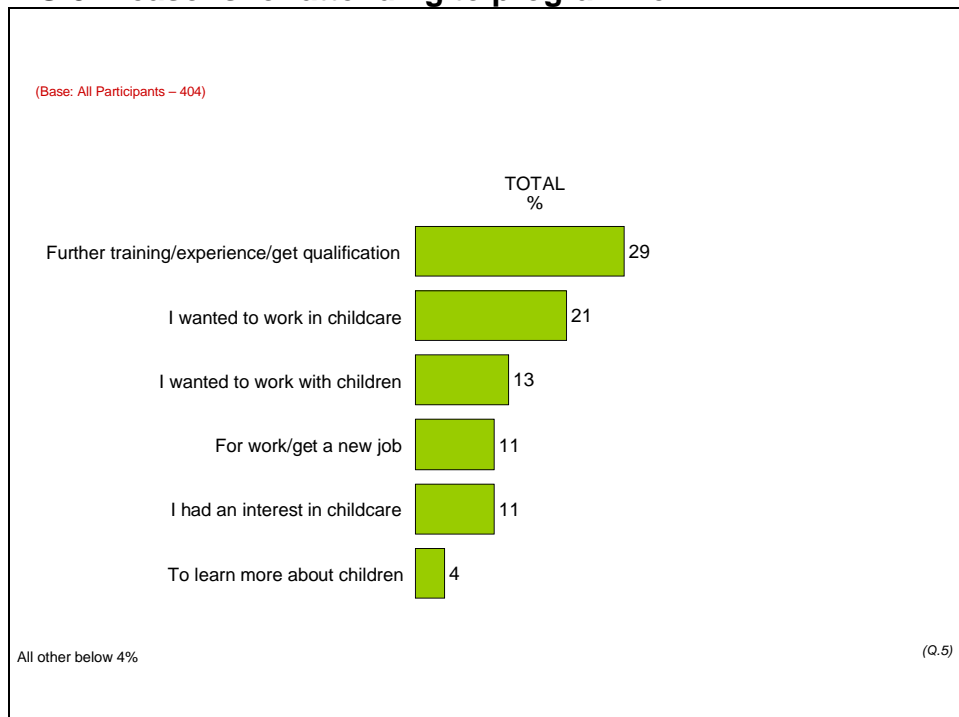
Three in ten didn't actually give up work during the programme (fig 4). A sixth claimed their motivation was the desire to work in childcare. One seventh wanted a change and one seventh were made redundant.

FIG 4. Reasons for leaving work to take up programme



“To gain experience/qualifications” was cited as the main reason for attending the programme (fig 5). One in 5 stated they wanted to work in childcare as their main motivation. One in seven wanted to work with children.

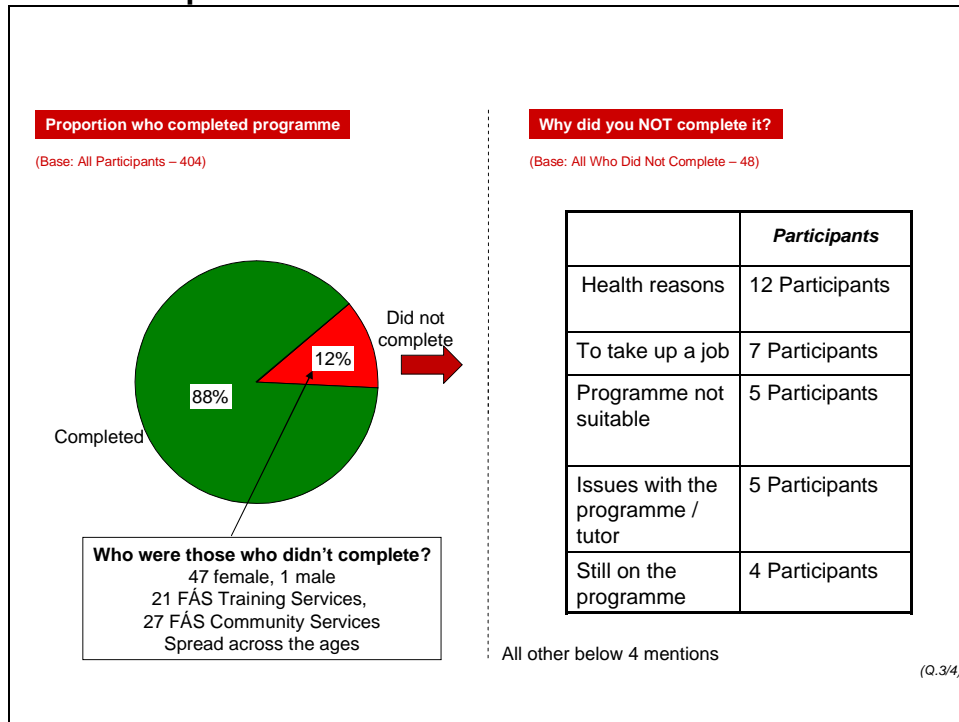
FIG 5. Reasons for attending to programme



5. Reviewing The Programme & Its Impact on The Individual

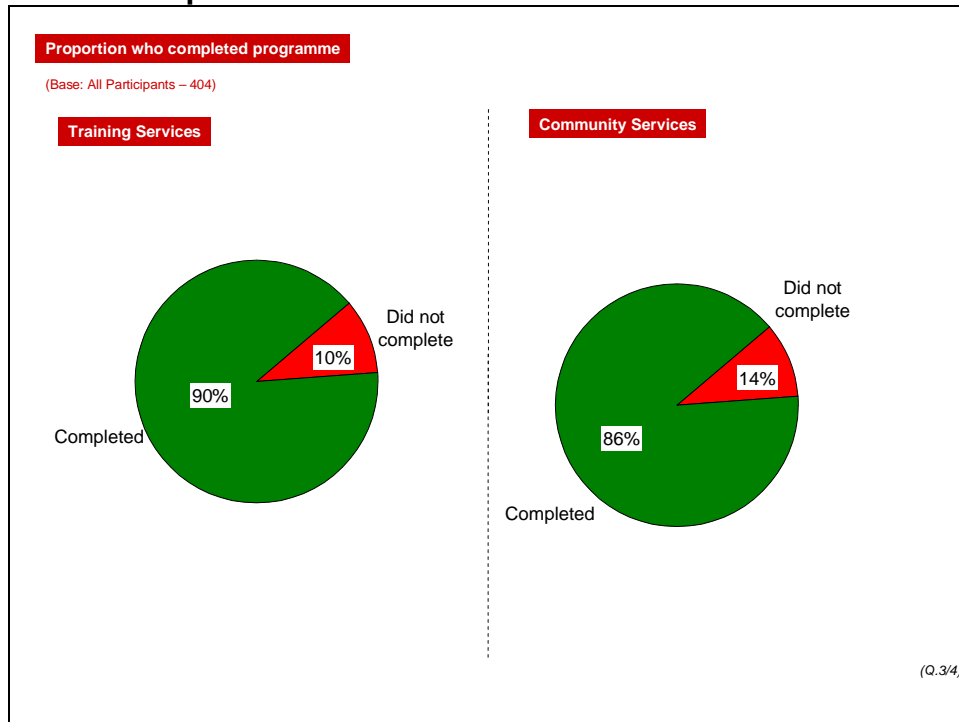
Almost 9 in 10 claimed to have completed the programme (fig 6). The completion rate was higher in FÁS Training Services. Health reasons were the main reason for non-completion, leaving to take up employment was also a factor.

FIG 6. Completion



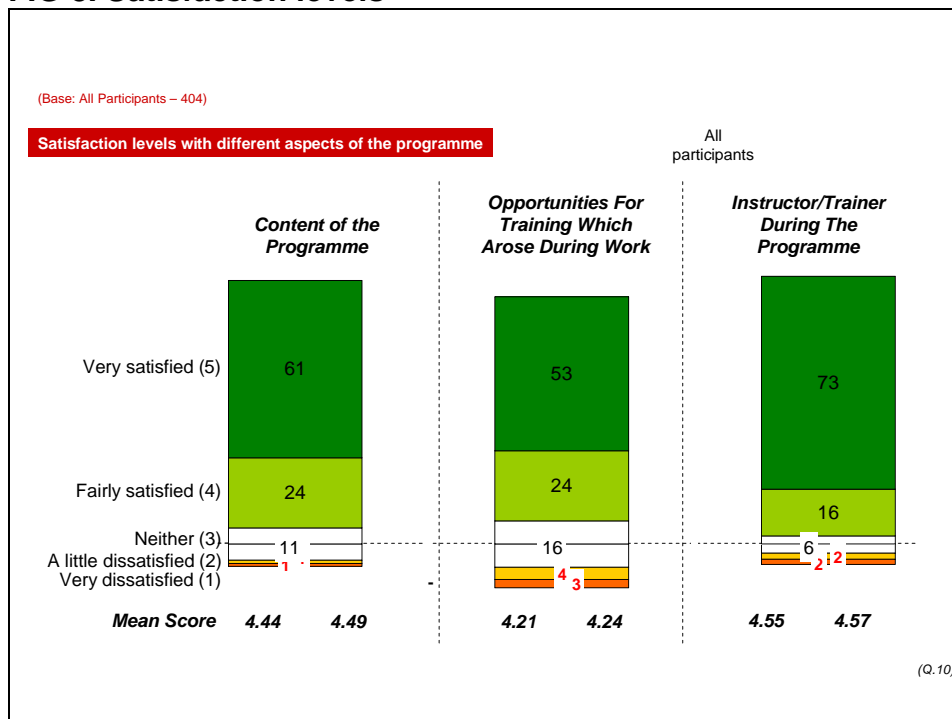
There was a slightly higher completion rate among Training Services (90%) participants, the completion rate for Community Services was 86%.

FIG 7. Completion



There were high satisfaction levels across the three aspects of the programme asked about – with the instructor/trainer receiving the highest satisfaction (fig 8).

FIG 8. Satisfaction levels



Satisfaction levels among childcare Community Services participants were higher than those of Training Services – though both were very positive.

Satisfaction levels among childcare course and scheme participants compare favourably to Traineeship and Community Employment in general (R. Sen 2006/2007 Follow-Up Survey of FÁS Participants, Table 5a, page 12).

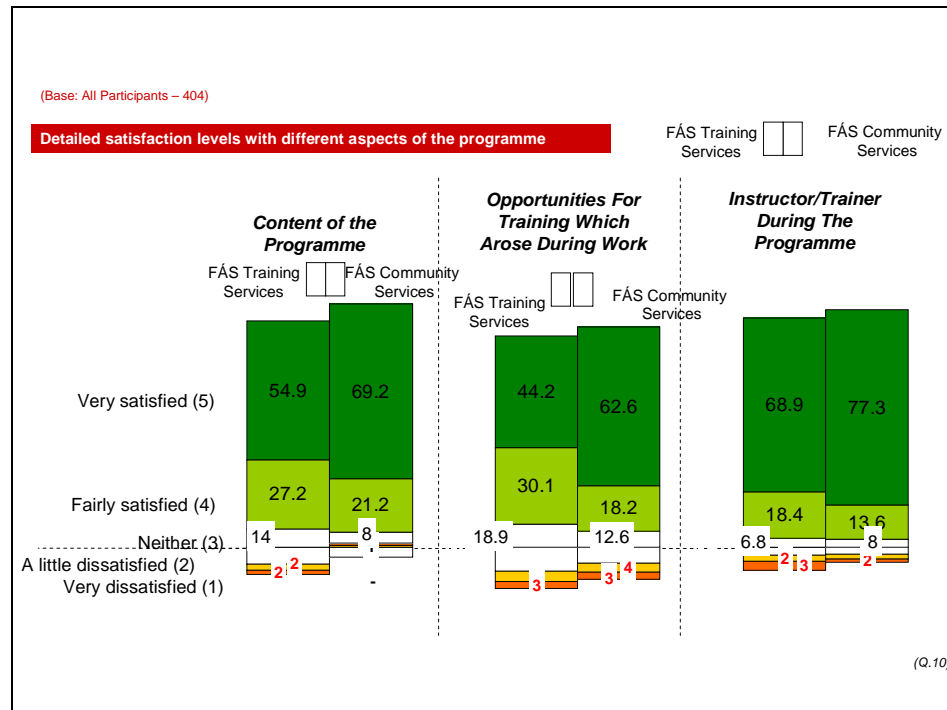
Table 1 Comparison of Satisfaction between Childcare Survey Results and Overall Follow-Up Survey Results

	Childcare Participants	All Participants
Community Services		
- Content of Course	90%	82%
- Instructor	90%	82%
Traineeship		
- Content of Course	87%	85%
- Instructor	82%	90%

Note: Percentages are those who stated they were Very or Fairly Satisfied.

Detailed satisfaction levels with different aspects of FÁS Training Services and FÁS Community Services are presented below (fig 8a). There was a very high level of satisfaction among participants about the programmes. Ninety-one percent of Community Services participants and 82% of Training Services participants were satisfied with the content of the course. Eighty percent of Community Services participants and 74% of Training Services participants were satisfied with the opportunities for training which arose during the programme. Most participants were either satisfied or very satisfied with the instructor/trainer during the programme (91% of Community Services participants and 87% of Training Services).

FIG 8a. Detailed Satisfaction levels



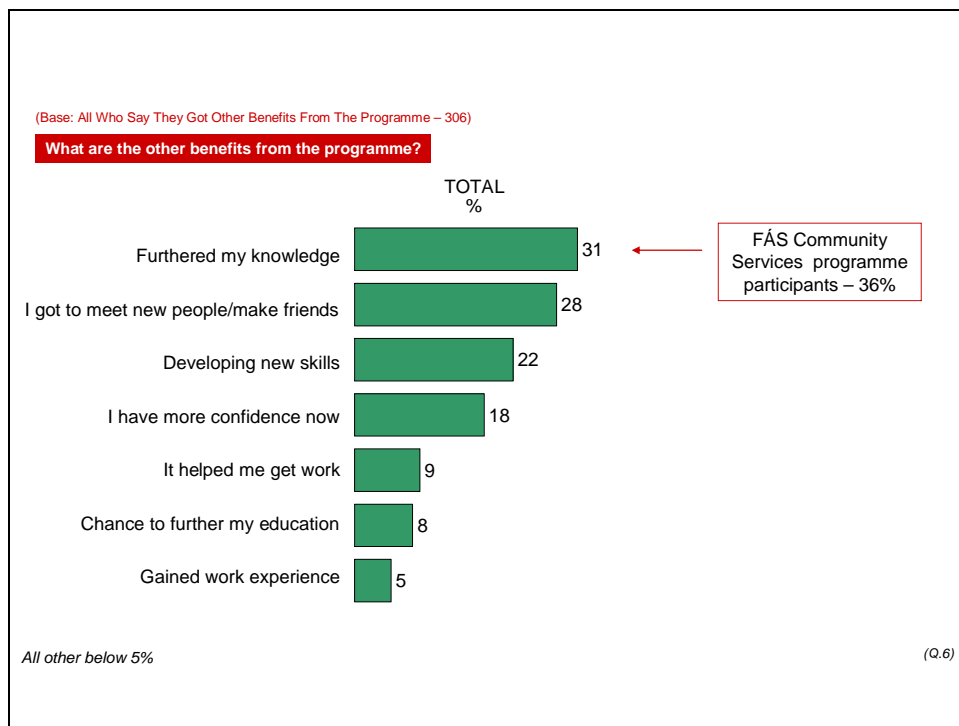
Over 9 in 10 mentioned an improvement in confidence levels having participated in the programme (fig 9). Just over 1 in 4 felt it helped them establish their own business.

FIG 9. Impact of the programme on individuals



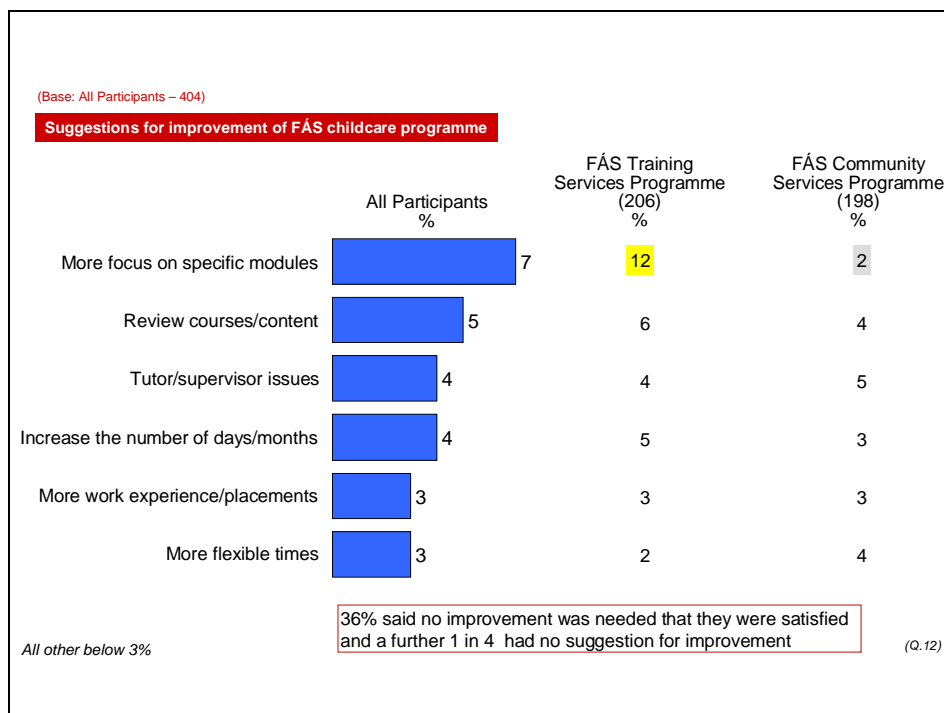
Furthering knowledge, particularly for those on FÁS Community Services programmes, and meeting new people/friends were cited as other benefits from the programme (fig 10).

FIG 10. Other benefits of the programme



36% said no improvement was needed that they were satisfied and a further 1 in 4 had no suggestion for improvement. The majority of suggestions for improvements where made, came from participants who were either satisfied or very satisfied with the programme content and instructor/trainer. Suggested improvements were to increase focus on specific modules and review programme content (fig 11).

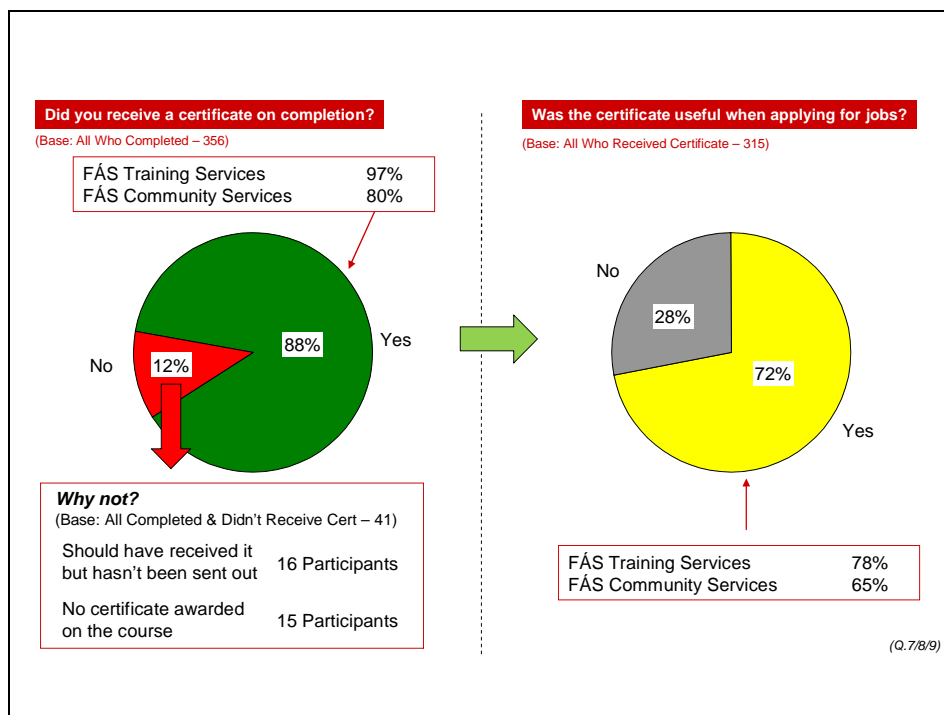
FIG 11. Improvement suggestions



6. After The Programme

Almost 9 in 10 who completed the programme received a certificate (fig 12). Just under three quarters of those who received a certificate claimed it was useful in applying for jobs.

FIG 12. Certificate



The survey did not ask respondents what kind of certificate they received. However, information on childcare certification is available from FETAC (table 2 and 3).

Table 2. FETAC Major Childcare Awards 2006

TYPE	Level	Code	AWARD TITLE	Number
Major	Level 6	930306	Childcare Supervision	36
Major	Level 6	954065	Childcare Supervisor	5
Major	Level 6	DCXXX	Supervision in Childcare	100
Major	Level 5	954043	Child Care	416
Major	Level 5	920505	Childcare	149
Major	Level 5	DCHSC	Childcare	2155
Major	Level 5	956020	Childcare Practitioner	317
Major	Level 4	954042	Childcare Assistant	6
total				3184

FÁS is a major childcare training provider, FÁS participants accounted for 929 (30%) of FETAC major childcare awards in 2006.

Please note that FETAC records some FÁS funded Community Services projects through the FETAC/NCVA (National Council of Vocational Awards) certification system. As a result the number of major childcare awards attributed to FÁS is underestimated.

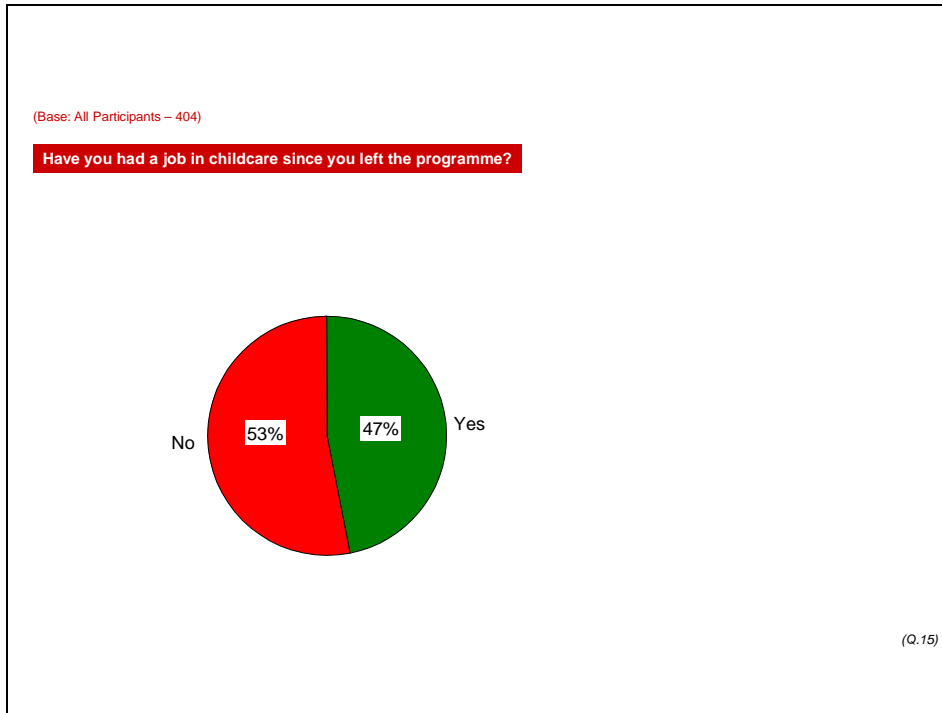
Table 3. FETAC Major Childcare Awards to FÁS participants

2006

	Type	Level	Code	AWARDTITLE	Learners
FAS	Major	Level 4	954042	Childcare Assistant	6
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FAS	Major	Level 5	956020	Childcare Practitioner	317
FAS	Major	Level 6	930306	Childcare Supervision	36
FAS	Major	Level 6	954065	Childcare Supervisor	5
				Total	929

Just under half claimed to have had a job in the childcare sector since leaving the programme, with those who participated in FÁS Training Services programmes showing higher incidence of employment in childcare since the programme.

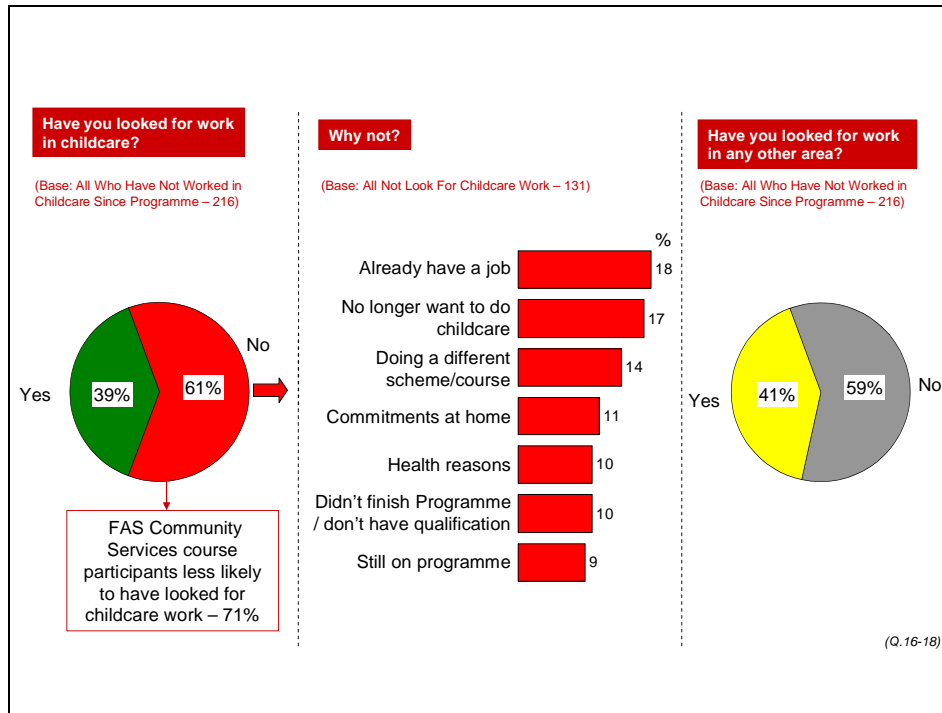
FIG 13. Jobs in the childcare sector



Job search in the past

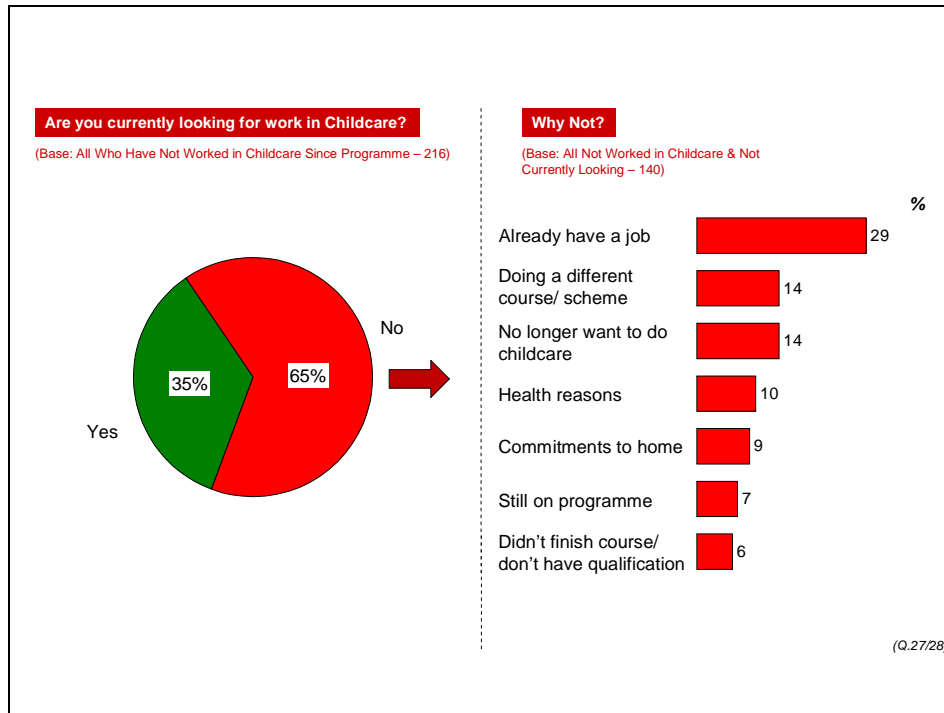
6 in 10 who have not worked in childcare claimed not to have looked for work in this area in the past (fig 14).

FIG 14. Looked for childcare jobs ?



Among those who have not worked in childcare since the programme, two thirds were not currently looking for work in the childcare area (fig 15).

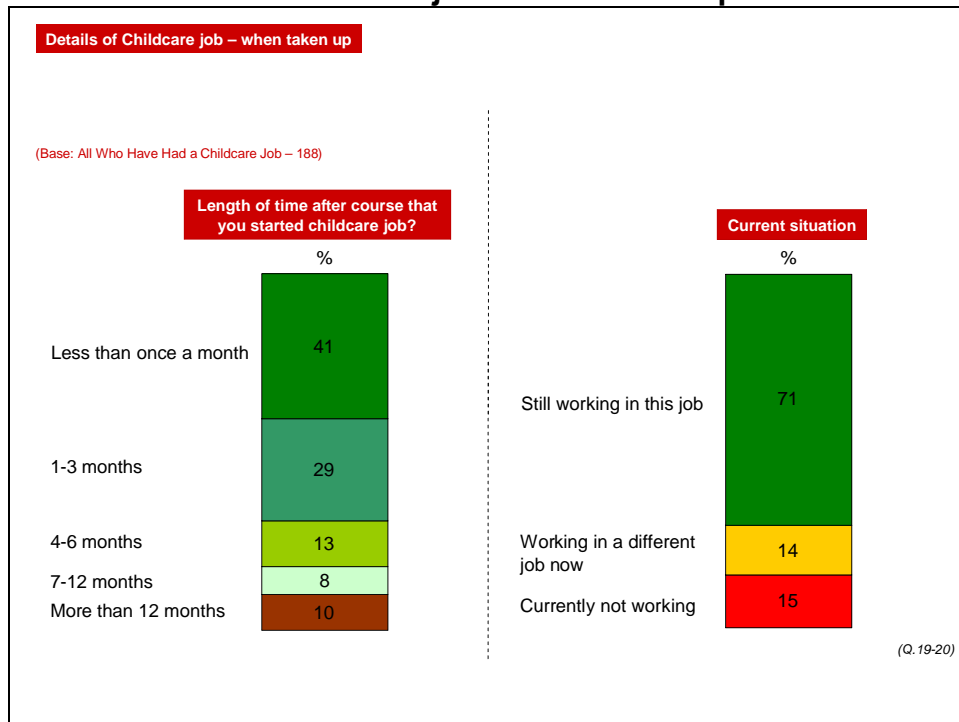
FIG 15. Current Job Search



7. Details of First Childcare Job

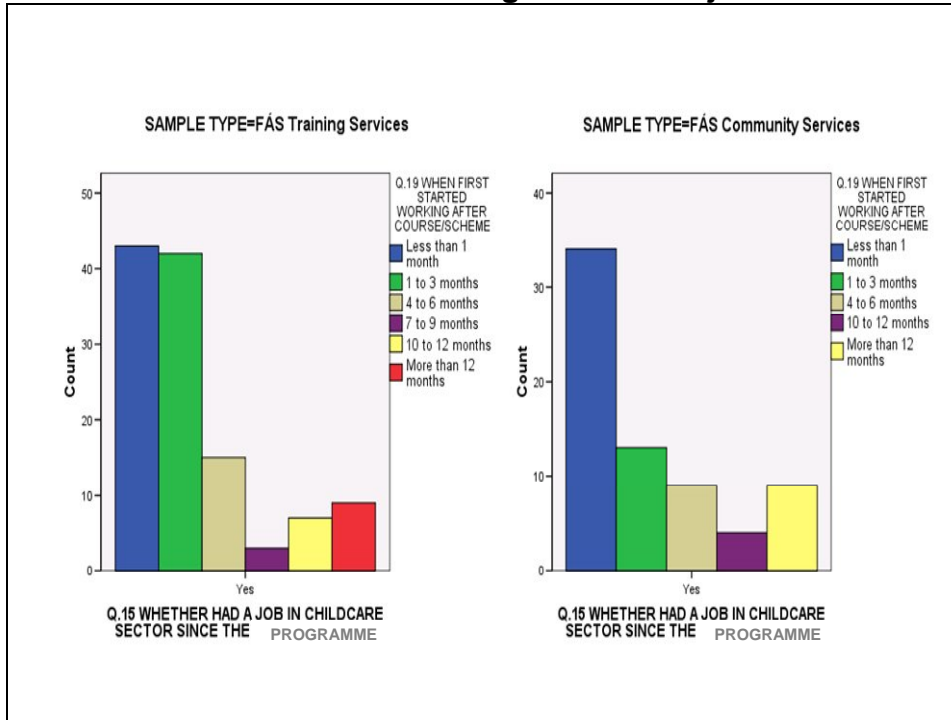
Of the 47% who worked in childcare since the programme, 4 in 10 were working in the area within a month of completion, with a further 3 in 10 within 3 months. Seven out of 10 of these individuals were in the same job at the time of the survey (fig 16).

FIG 16. Details of Childcare job – when taken up



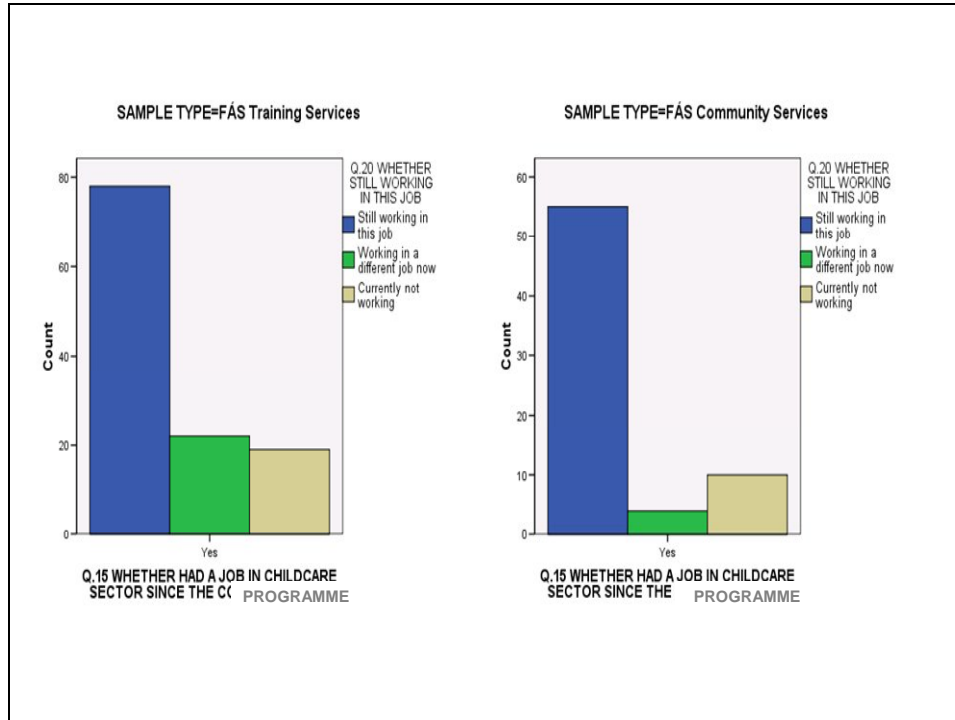
While there was no difference between the proportions of Training Services and Community Services participants getting work within one month, more than twice as many Training Services participants got work over the following two months than Community Services participants.

FIG 17 and FIG 18 Time taken to get childcare job.



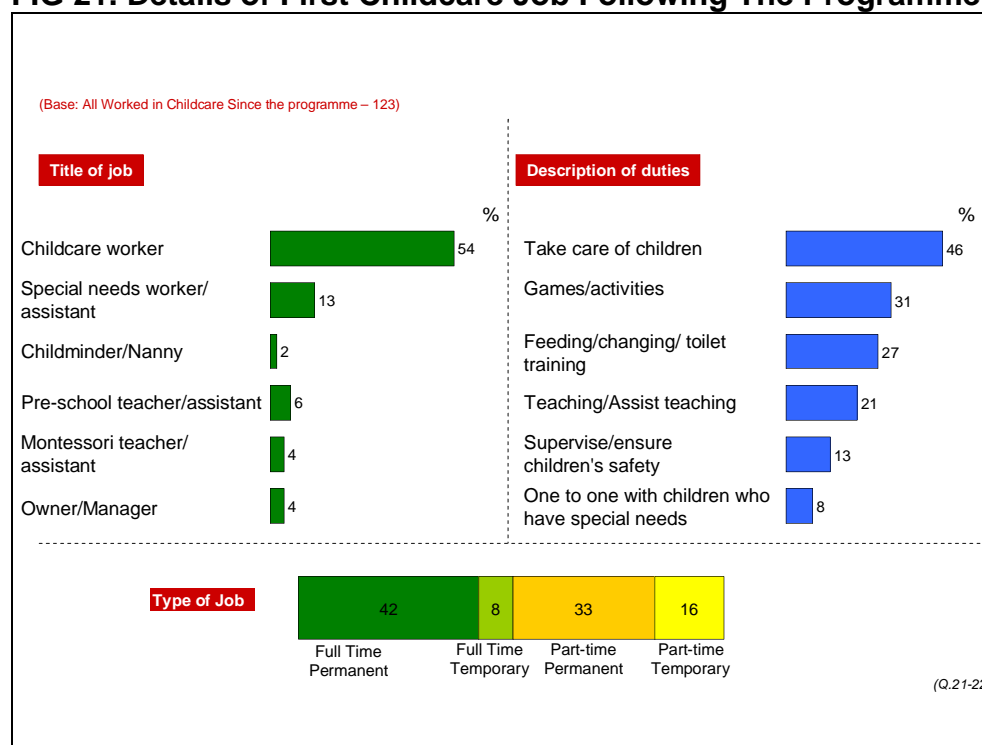
Over twice as many Training Services participants changed childcare job since finishing with FÁS than Community Services Participants.

FIG 19 and FIG 20 Details of Childcare job – present status



Almost two thirds were working as childcare workers/assistants. A third had full time permanent roles (fig 21).

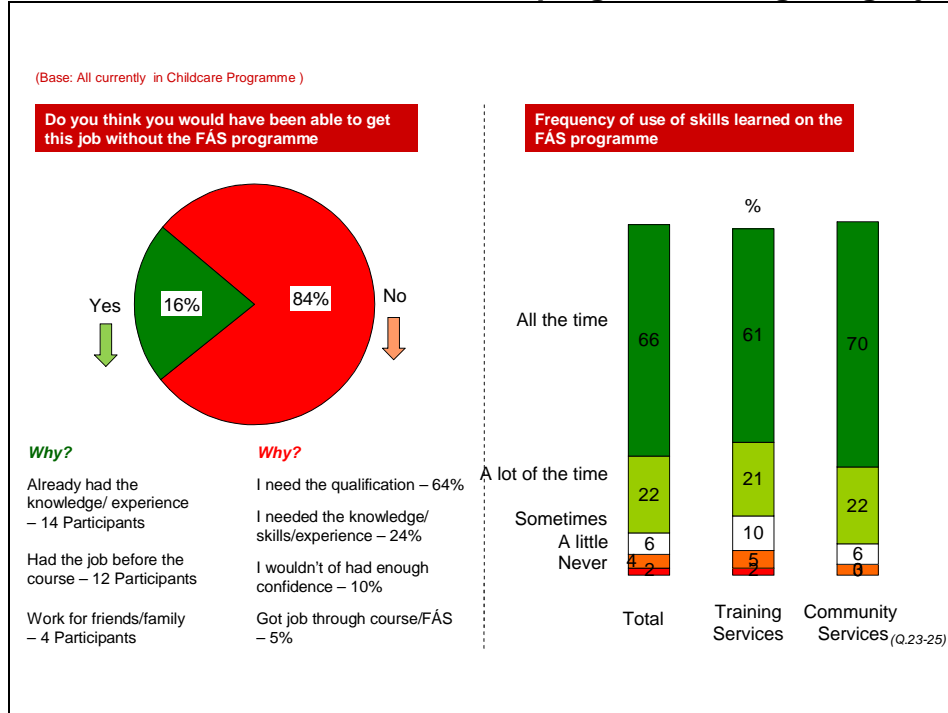
FIG 21. Details of First Childcare Job Following The Programme



Almost 8 in 10 of those who worked in childcare deemed the programme necessary for them to get their job (fig 22). Among childcare Community Services participants 79% of participants thought that they would not have been able to get their job without the FÁS scheme, this compares favourably with Community Employment in general where 62% thought that they needed the FÁS scheme (R. Sen 2006/2007 Follow-Up Survey of FÁS Participants). Similarly, in childcare training in Training Services, 77% thought they needed the programme compared to Traineeship in general where 63% thought they needed the programme.

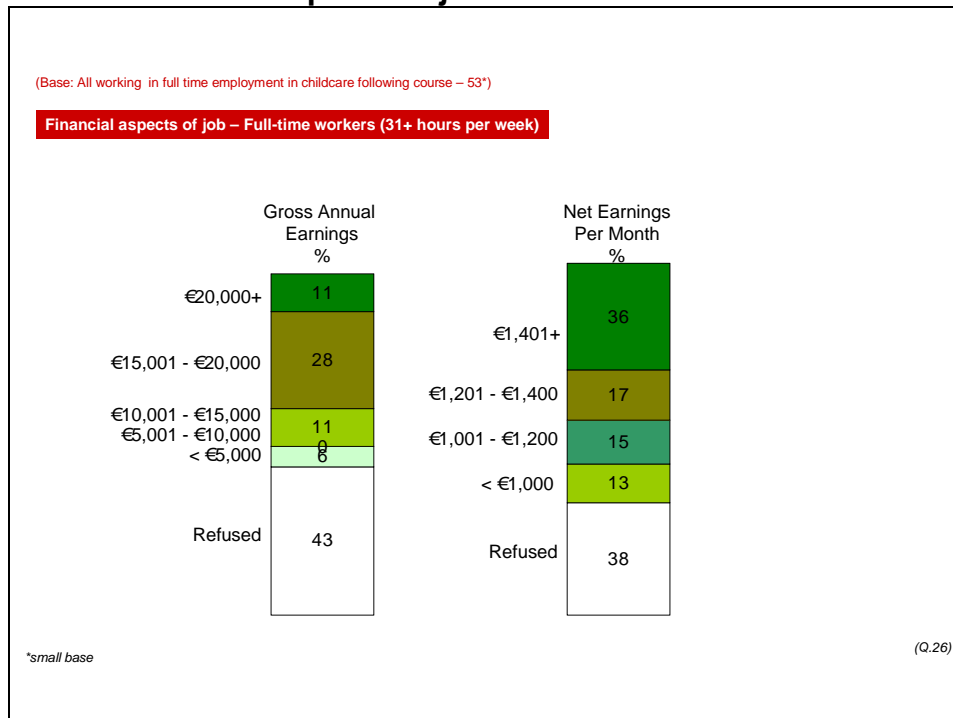
Just under two thirds of those who worked in childcare claimed to use the skills they learned all the time. Among childcare Community Services participants 70% of participants claimed to use the skills learned all the time, this compares favourably with Community Employment in general where 43% use the skills acquired all the time (R. Sen 2006/2007 Follow-Up Survey of FÁS Participants). Similarly, in childcare training in Trainee Services 61% used the skills all the time compared to Traineeship in general where 38% used the acquired skills all the time.

FIG 22. Relevance of the childcare programme for getting a job



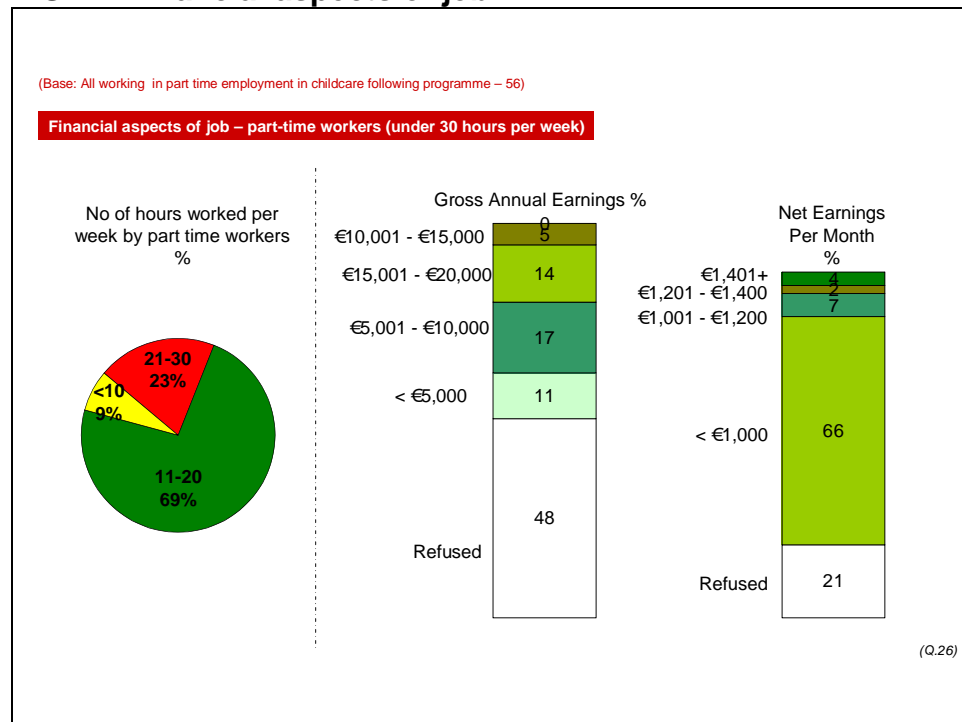
Among full time workers who specified annual earnings, over 1 in 4 exceeded €20,000 gross earnings (fig 23). Forty-three percent of respondents refused to answer the question on gross earnings.

FIG 23. Financial aspects of job



For part-time workers 2 in 3 claimed to take home less than €1,000 per month (fig 24).

FIG 24. Financial aspects of job



8. Current Working Situation

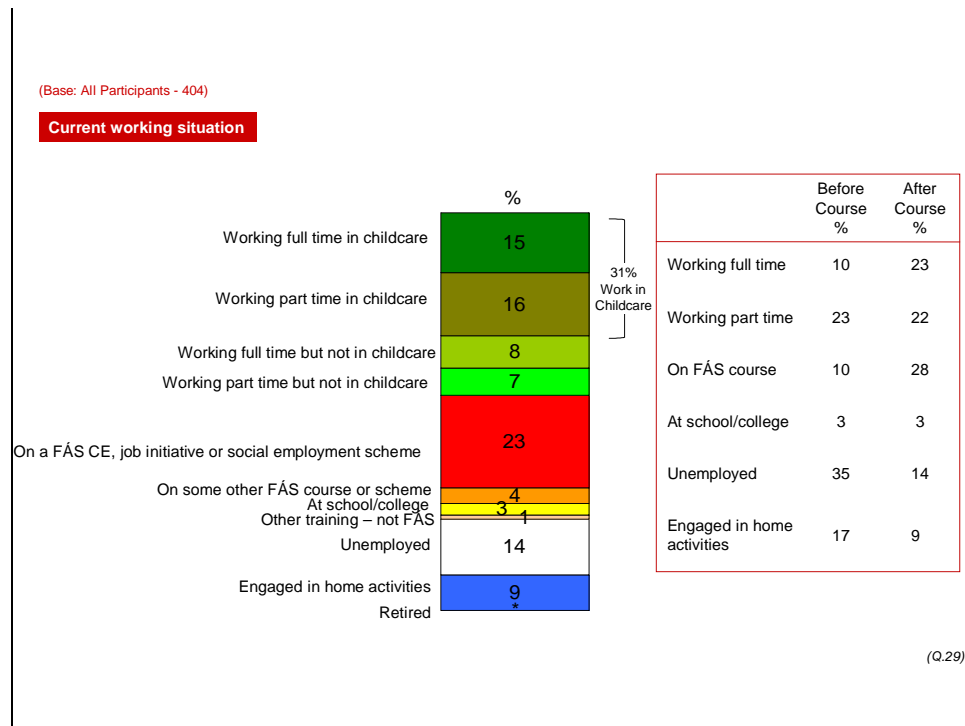
The table below outlines the participant's working situation at the time of the survey. Forty-five percent were working (62% of Training Services) and another 31% were in a further FÁS programme mainly Community Employment. In total, three quarters of participants had achieved a positive outcome.

Table 4

	Total	T.S.	C.S.
TOTAL	404	206	198
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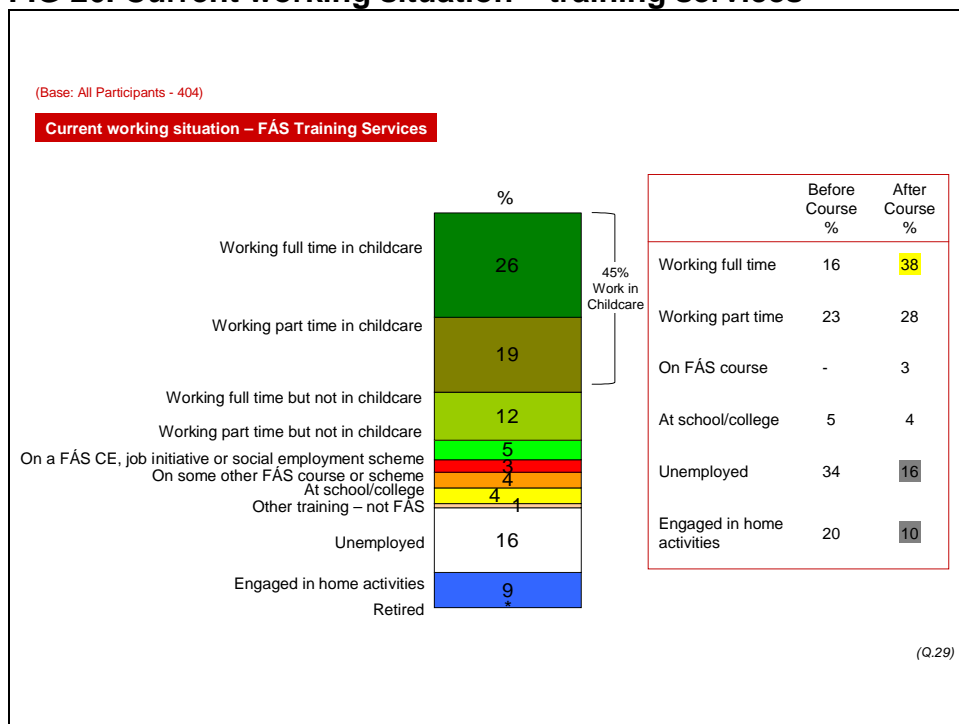
There was a marked difference in the employment situation before and after the programme (fig 25). A quarter claimed to be working full time while the unemployment level halved after finishing with FÁS.

FIG 25. Current working situation



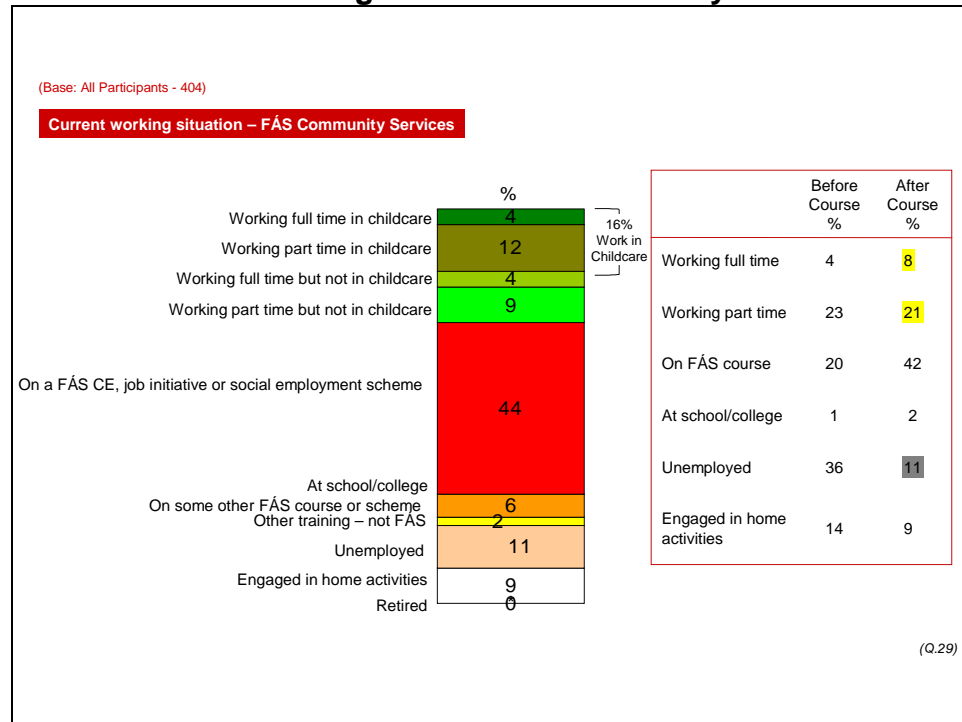
Nearly two thirds of those who undertook the FÁS Training Services programme claimed to be in some kind of employment (fig 26).

FIG 26. Current working situation – training services



In respect of Community Services the number working full time had doubled with the number claiming to be unemployed dropping by 70% (fig 27).

FIG 27. Current working situation – Community Services



A fifth claimed to have completed further education/training since the programme, with a further fifth currently undertaking further training/education (fig 28). FÁS Community Services programme participants were more likely to have gone on for further training.

FIG 28. Further education training

