

Expert Group on Future Skills Needs launches analysis of regional skills supply and demand

The Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) today launched the second in its annual series of publications examining the labour market at regional level for each of Ireland's eight regions. *The Regional Labour Markets Bulletin 2013*, produced by the Skills and Labour Market Research Unit, SOLAS on behalf of the EGFSN, identifies variations in skills supply and demand by region, providing important data for the areas of education and training provision, career guidance and services for jobseekers.

Minister for Training and Skills, Ciarán Cannon, TD said, "Unemployment has fallen from 15.1% to 12% and we now have 1.91 million people in work, that is 61,000 more people in work last year than the previous year. But there is still a great deal more that needs to be done and it is critically important that we ensure that the investments that are made in skills and training are meeting the needs of businesses and jobseekers. There are major ongoing reforms in the public employment services and the further and higher education systems and the information in this latest EGFSN report will enable decision making across the eight regions, providing valuable insights into both the labour market and the business at local level. Through informed action at both the local and the national levels we will be better able to tackle the issue of skills provision and ultimately job creation"

Una Halligan, Chairperson, Expert Group on Future Skills Needs commented, "This second *Regional Labour Markets Bulletin* meets a growing demand for labour market intelligence that goes beyond national level. While similarities exist across regions in terms of certain labour market indicators (such as job seekers and vacancies advertised through the public employment services), there is also evidence of difference across regions in areas such as employment and unemployment rates and the typical industries in each region. While the supply emerging from education and training in a region is not confined to that region, the variations and similarities in the composition of Ireland's workforce and in the regional business profiles are important considerations in relation to the provision of education and training, labour market policies and the provision of career guidance."

Key Findings

- The data shows that there are many similarities across regions; e.g. occupational distribution of jobs advertised through the Public Employment Services (PES), age and gender profile of the Live Register and contribution of the decline in the construction sector to labour market difficulties.
- There are also many differences across regional labour markets; e.g. unemployment rate, share of high skilled employment (managers, professionals, associate professionals) and recent employment growth rates.
- Employment: in quarter 1 2013:
 - Dublin and the West region had the highest employment rates at 62%, compared to 59% nationally and 53% in the Border region.
 - At least 30% of persons in each region were employed in high skilled occupations (managers, professionals and associate professionals); the share in Dublin was even higher at 48%.

- When compared to quarter 1 2012, the West and South West region had the highest rate of employment growth at 4% each, compared to a 4% decline for the Mid East region.
- For some regions, where a person lives and where they work can vary. This is most evident in the Mid East region where only 55% of those who live in the Mid-East region work in that region (Census 2011).
- In each region, the vast majority of enterprises employ fewer than 10 persons accounting for over 90% of enterprises in all but the Dublin region (88.9%).
- Combined Dublin, the South West and Mid East regions accounted for two thirds of all high tech manufacturing employment in Ireland.
- Unemployment: in quarter 1 2013,
 - The highest rates were in the South East (18.4%) and the Midland region (17.1%), while the lowest rates were in the South West (11.1%) and Dublin (11.3%)
 - Unemployed persons had been mostly employed in skilled trades and elementary occupations across all regions
- Live Register: when compared with August 2012, the South-West region experienced the greatest decline at 7%.
- Public Employment Service (PES) vacancies: although the highest number of PES vacancies was advertised for the Dublin region, the distributions of vacancies by occupational group varied little across regions; most vacancies advertised were for elementary (primarily security guards, cleaners and services occupations), personal service and associate professional (mainly sales) occupations, and comparatively few for managers, professionals, admin/secretarial and operatives.
- Job seekers with the Public Employment Service (PES): the occupational distributions of job seekers were similar across regions; the highest share of job seekers in each region had previously been employed in skilled trades or elementary (primarily process plant and construction) occupations.

The full report is available on the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs website www.skillsireland.ie

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