



Labour Market Conditions in the Gold Coast Region

Recent data indicate that, overall, labour market conditions in the Gold Coast region are improving. However, some challenges still remain.

- In the 12 months to September 2014, the unemployment rate for the Gold Coast¹ increased marginally by 0.1 percentage point to 5.8 per cent, which is lower than the estimate for Queensland (6.3 per cent) and Australia (6.1 per cent)².
- On the other hand, the youth unemployment rate¹ has increased by 2.6 percentage points to 14.4 per cent compared with the national rate of 13.2 per cent².
- Additionally, the participation rate for the Gold Coast¹ increased by 1.7 percentage points over the 12 months to September 2014 to stand at 66.5 per cent well above the rate for both Queensland and Australia (65.5 per cent and 64.5 per cent respectively).²
- In the 12 months to September 2014, employment has grown by 5 per cent, compared with 1 per cent for the State.¹
 - The region's two largest employing industries, Retail Trade (14 per cent of total employment) and Health Care and Social Assistance (12 per cent of total employment) experienced strong growth in the 12 months to August 2014 (up by 4 per cent and 12 per cent respectively).³
 - On the other hand, construction, which is also another large industry accounting for 12 per cent of total employment, experienced a fall in employment of 5 per cent.³



What employers are telling us

The survey results confirm the somewhat mixed labour market conditions across the region.⁴

- While there was a larger proportion of employers who recruited (76 per cent) when compared with all regions surveyed (60 per cent)^{5 6}, the demand for labour was moderate.
- Competition for vacancies was extremely high, with 27.4 applicants per vacancy compared with 10.6 applicants for all regions surveyed. On average, only 4 applicants per vacancy were interviewed.
 - The high competition for vacancies coincides with a more widespread use of the internet to advertise vacancies in the Gold Coast (56 per cent of employers in their most recent recruitment round, compared with 34 per cent for all regions surveyed).
- Additionally, the proportion of vacancies that remained unfilled (2.3 per cent) and the proportion of employers reporting recruitment difficulty (28 per cent) was low, suggesting that labour supply continues to outpace demand.
- Encouragingly, there is optimism about the future, with 43 per cent of employers expecting to recruit in the year following the survey (38 per cent for all regions) and 21 per cent expecting to increase staff.

Region	Recruited	Applicants (Average)	Applicants Interviewed (Average)	Will Recruit	Will Increase Staff
Gold Coast Region 2014	76%	27.4	4.0	43%	21%
All regions surveyed	60%	10.6	2.7	38%	19%

Where are the opportunities?

- Opportunities exist in growth industries such as Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade and Accommodation and Food Services with employers expecting to recruit for occupations at all skill levels such as Sales Assistants (General), Waiters, Bar Attendants and Baristas and Registered Nurses.
- Employers also reported difficulty filling vacancies for skilled occupations such as Chefs and Early Childhood (Pre-primary School) Teachers.

¹ ABS Labour Force, Australia, September 2014 (12 month average)

² ABS Labour Force, Australia, September 2014, (seasonally adjusted)

³ ABS Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly, August 2014 (4 quarter average)

⁴ This report is based on a Survey of Employers' Recruitment Experiences of 328 employers undertaken in July 2014

⁵ Survey of Employers' Recruitment Experiences, All Regions surveyed in the 12 months to March 2014

⁶ Over four fifths (82 per cent) of the Gold Coast sample comprised employers with 10 to 99 employees, considerably higher than for all regions surveyed, where only 52 per cent of employers had this number of employees. This discrepancy in business size may contribute slightly to the difference in the proportion of employers who recruited.