



## Labour Market Conditions in Patterson, NSW

Overall, labour market conditions in the Patterson Employment Service Area (ESA) are mixed, but generally there are signs of weakness in the region.

- There were considerable structural changes from 2006 to 2011.<sup>1</sup>
  - Employment in Manufacturing has decreased by 12 per cent over this period and further redundancies are expected in the industry over the coming years.<sup>2</sup>
- The proportion of unemployed people who are long-term unemployed is significantly higher than the State average (44 per cent compared with 24 per cent).<sup>3</sup>
- Educational attainment is low, with only 40 per cent of the working age population (32 per cent of Manufacturing workers) having completed Year 12.<sup>4</sup>
- Recruitment activity in the region is soft with 56 per cent of employers recruiting in the 12 months preceding the employer survey.<sup>5</sup>
  - Despite the low average number of applicants per vacancy (6.8), only a very small proportion of vacancies remained unfilled (0.4 per cent).



Region	Unemployment rate (ABS)	% long term unemployed (ABS)	5 year employment growth (Census, working age population)	Year 12 completion (Census, working age population)
Patterson ESA	6.3%	44%	4%	40%
New South Wales	5.9% <sup>6</sup>	24%	7%	57%

### Where are the opportunities?

- While employment in Manufacturing decreased between 2006 and 2011, total employment in the region increased by 4 per cent over the same period.
  - Health Care and Social Assistance is the largest industry (accounting for 14 per cent of employment), with employment growth of 19 per cent in the five years to 2011.
  - While still a relatively small industry, employment in Mining increased from 3 per cent to 5 per cent of employment between 2006 and 2011.
- Employers had difficulty filling vacancies for occupations such as Truck Drivers, Checkout Operators and Office Cashiers and Motor Mechanics.
  - In addition, competition for Technician and Trade Worker and Machinery Operator and Driver vacancies was low (with an average of 2.5 and 2.6 applicants per vacancy respectively).

### How to access opportunities

- While formal recruitment methods (internet/newspapers) are valuable job search tools, 47 per cent of recruiting employers did not formally advertise vacancies, with word of mouth or being directly approached by a job seeker being the most common methods of filling vacancies.
  - Informal recruitment methods are more common for employers recruiting for lower skilled vacancies, which suggests that people can improve their chances of employment by approaching employers directly.
  - When vacancies are not formally advertised, competition for these vacancies is low, with an average of 2.6 applicants per vacancy (compared with 11.9 applicants when a formal recruitment method is used).
- Almost two thirds (65 per cent) of applicants did not receive an interview, with the most common reasons cited being a lack of relevant experience (50 per cent), lack of soft skills (14 per cent) and poorly written applications (14 per cent).
  - Given the strong emphasis employers place on experience, job seekers looking to enter the labour market need to consider work experience or undertaking volunteer work.

<sup>1</sup> ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2011 & 2006.

<sup>2</sup> In particular, the planned closure in late 2015 of the Electrolux plant in Orange is expected to result in 540 redundancies.

<sup>3</sup> ABS Labour Force Survey, July 2014 (12 month average), Central West SA4. Long-term unemployed are those who have been unemployed for 12 months or more.

<sup>4</sup> ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2011 & 2006.

<sup>5</sup> This report is based on a Survey of Employers' Recruitment Experiences of 340 employers undertaken in June 2014.

<sup>6</sup> ABS Labour Force Survey, July 2014 (Seasonally adjusted).