



Labour market conditions in the Goulburn Valley region

Labour market conditions in the Goulburn Valley region continue to ease.

- The unemployment rate for the region (7.6 per cent)¹ is well above the rate for Victoria (6.0 per cent).²
 - The youth unemployment rate (17.9 per cent) is also higher than for Victoria (15.0 per cent).¹
- The total level of employment remained relatively flat over the two years to February 2015.¹

The proportion of 25-34 year olds in the Goulburn Valley who had completed year 12 in 2011 (60 per cent) had increased since 2006 (54 per cent). However, this was still significantly lower when compared with Victoria (79 per cent).³



	Unemployment Rate	Youth Unemployment Rate	Year 12 Completion (Census, 25-34 years)
Goulburn Valley	7.6%	17.9%	60%
Victoria	6.0%	15.0%	79%

What employers are telling us⁴

The survey results show that recruitment conditions in the region are steady. Many employers also expect to recruit in the coming year so there will be a range of opportunities for job seekers.

- Some 61 per cent of surveyed employers recruited in the 12 months preceding the survey. Employers most commonly recruited in the Accommodation and Food Services (77 per cent), Health Care and Social Assistance (75 per cent), and Retail Trade (70 per cent) industries.
- Only 3.0 per cent of recent vacancies remained unfilled, however, many employers reported that it was difficult to recruit Technicians and Trades Workers (56 per cent of employers) and Professionals (45 per cent).
- On average, there were 6.2 applicants per vacancy, of whom an average of 2.3 applicants were interviewed. The major reasons applicants did not qualify for an interview were a lack of relevant experience, poor job application, or the applicants' location.
- Employers in the region were highly reliant on informal methods of recruitment, such as word of mouth, with 49 per cent using only informal methods of recruitment in their most recent recruitment round. This result suggests that job seekers who establish broader networks and approach employers directly will improve their job prospects.
- Future recruitment expectations in the Goulburn Valley were reasonably positive with many employers expecting to recruit staff in the 12 months following the survey. However, expectations were tempered by a range of concerns, the most common being demand or the state of the economy (46 per cent of employers surveyed). Skill shortages/recruitment or retention difficulty (13 per cent) was also a common concern, suggesting that some employers would consider future recruitment if they had access to suitable applicants.

Where are the opportunities?

Employers commonly reported difficulty recruiting for a range of Professional and Trades occupations including Cabinetmakers, Early Childhood Teachers, Registered Nurses, Chefs and Motor Mechanics, indicating that there may be opportunities for job seekers in the region willing to take up apprenticeships or further education or training. Employers also expect to recruit for a range of lower skilled occupations in the next year, including Sales Assistants, Waiters, General Clerks, and Bar Attendants and Baristas.

¹ ABS, *Labour Force* (12 month average of original data), February 2015.

² ABS, *Labour Force* (Seasonally adjusted), February 2015.

³ ABS, *Census of Population and Housing*, 2006 and 2011.

⁴ This report is based on a *Survey of Employers' Recruitment Experiences* of 279 employers undertaken in October 2014.