

PRESS RELEASE

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Growth in Construction and IT Jobs Market

A continued recovery in the construction sector in 2014 was evident with a jump in the number of vacancies notified through Jobs Ireland, the government's jobs portal, according to a report published today by the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs. Growth was particularly evident for electricians, plumbers and carpenters after years of low activity. This increase was in line with an overall growth of 8% in the number of vacancies being notified to Jobs Ireland and 12% to IrishJobs.ie in 2014.

For some jobs, such as care workers and sales assistants/ reps, vacancies are occurring regularly as employers struggle to retain staff, whether due to low pay, poor working conditions, rural locations or other factors. For the construction sector, however, employment figures produced by the CSO, show above average growth occurring for the skilled trades, which is being reflected in today's publication.

Demand for people with IT skills is continuing unabated, with an increasing number of employment permits being issued each year to alleviate the shortfall experienced by employers in recruiting experienced and qualified IT staff. This is also reflected in the rise in the number of vacancies occurring in this field and the continued difficulty experienced by recruitment agencies to fill some of these positions (such as designers and developers).

Commenting on the report released today, Damien English TD, Minister for Skills, Research and Innovation said *" the trends shown in today's report strongly mirror the economic recovery that we are experiencing. It is essential that we continue to monitor where vacancies are arising, so that these valuable insights can inform jobseekers, our guidance and education and training sectors on where the jobs of today and the future arise. The demand for IT skills is something I note in particular. I am keen to see all levels of our education system respond proactively to address this evident skills need"*

Una Halligan, Chairperson, Expert Group on Future Skills Needs said that *" language skills continue to be in demand, particularly German, especially for jobs associated with sales and customer service. Sales jobs were also the least likely to require a minimum level of education or experience whereas experience was key for a high share of managerial roles and a third level*

degree was often required for professional roles (such as IT programmers, accountants, business analysts)”.

The *Vacancy Overview 2014* report, produced by the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs, is the fifth in an annual series and outlines the areas where job vacancies arose during 2014. This report examined vacancy notifications for two sources, namely, Jobs Ireland, the government’s jobs portal, and IrishJobs.ie, a private recruitment agency. The growth in the number of vacancies notified to these sources since 2013, in combination with an increasing number of mentions of difficult to fill vacancies and job creation announcements in the media, points to a continued strengthening of demand in the jobs market.

An examination of vacancy data provides an insight into which occupations have vacancies occurring most frequently in the labour market. These findings should not be treated in isolation, but instead examined alongside other labour market data sources in order to assess if these vacancies are occurring due to expansion or simply to a high level of turnover due to poor working conditions. If interpreted in this way, the trends highlighted from this analysis can provide significant insights for stakeholders in areas where education and training should be focused, where sourcing from abroad through employment permits is required, or where the attractiveness of some jobs is a factor and could be improved.

Notes to Editors

Vacancy Overview

Produced by the Skills and Labour Market Unit (SLMRU) in SOLAS on behalf of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN), the Vacancy Overview 2014 findings draw on a number of data sources held in the National Skills Database to provide an overview and analysis of the demand for labour as measured by trends in newly advertised job vacancies through both a public and private source: DSP Jobs Ireland and IrishJobs.ie.

National Skills Database

The National Skills Database (NSD) was developed in 2003 by the SLMRU in SOLAS on behalf of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs. It has been designed to collate all available information about the supply and demand of skills in Ireland. It provides a platform for the timely analysis and forecasting of the labour market at occupational level.

Recruitment Agency Survey

Since January 2008, the Skills and Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU) in SOLAS (formally FÁS) has conducted a biannual recruitment agency survey designed to gather the views of recruitment agencies in respect of the occupations for which vacancies, in their experience, are proving difficult to fill. The findings of the most recent survey which was conducted in October 2014 are presented for each occupational group.

For further information

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About the EGFSN

The Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) advises the Irish Government on current and future skills needs of the economy and on other labour market issues that impact on Ireland's enterprise and employment growth. It has a central role in ensuring that labour market needs for skilled workers are anticipated and met.

The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, in conjunction with the Skills and Labour Market Research Unit of SOLAS, provides the EGFSN with research and secretariat support.

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