

Minister Cannon launches first EGFSN Regional Labour Markets Bulletin 2012

New report to inform regional education and training provision, labour market policies, immigration and career guidance

Minister for Training and Skills, Ciarán Cannon, TD today launched the first in an annual series of publications examining the regional labour markets in Ireland. *Regional Labour Markets Bulletin 2012* - published by the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) - provides an understanding of the labour market at regional level for each of Ireland's eight regions: Border, Dublin, Mid East, Midland, Mid West, South East, South West and West.

Commenting, Minister Cannon said: "Regional labour market information is of vital importance in meeting the challenges of a changing economic environment, and adopting a stronger, data-driven approach to decision making at regional level requires an understanding of both the labour market and the business composition of each region's employment base. I welcome the publication of this first report and the continuing series as its annual findings will provide critical data for a range of stakeholders at regional level in the areas of education and training provision, labour market policies, immigration and career guidance. I have made the point in the past that our new Education and Training Boards will be well placed to respond to regional variations in the labour market and this kind of regional information focus will be invaluable in that context. The information will also be useful in the development of regional clusters of higher education institutions as provided for in the higher education strategy."

Una Halligan, Chairperson of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs said: "On behalf of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs, I am very pleased to introduce the *Regional Labour Markets Bulletin 2012* prepared by the Skills and Labour Market Research Unit in FÁS. Over the last number of years, there has been an increasing emphasis on the value of evidence-based decisions relating to skills supply and demand in the labour market. This report was compiled in recognition of the fact there has been a demand for more regional market data to assist in the planning for education and training provision to support more targeted demand and supply matching."

Data examined in the report includes:

- labour market indicators e.g. labour force, employment composition by occupation, sector, etc.
- a profile of key businesses and industries, potential job opportunities (advertised job vacancies, recent job announcements)
- current skills supply (job seeker data) and potential skills supply (current enrolments in further and higher education and training).

Key findings from the report include:

- In quarter 1 2012, in each region, the wholesale and retail sector accounted for approximately 15% of regional employment. Dublin has a high proportion of the ICT, professional and financial services sector.

- In all regions, approximately 90% of enterprises are micro enterprises, employing fewer than 10 persons.
- Almost one in five persons working in manufacturing in 2012 was employed in the South West region.
- In quarter 1 2012, the share of white collar workers in regional employment was highest in Dublin (60%) and lowest in the Border, Midland and South East (less than 45%)
- The distribution of Public Employment Service vacancies (vacancies advertised through FAS and the Department of Social Protection) in 2012 did not vary significantly across regions, with most vacancies advertised for associate professionals (mostly sales), labourers and service workers.
- Between quarter 1 2008 and quarter 1 2012, employment declined in each region. In absolute terms, the greatest decline was in construction (decline was greater than the gain during the preceding four years (quarter 1 2004 to quarter 1 2008).
- Between quarter 1 2011 and quarter 1 2012, employment continued to decline (albeit at a lower rate than previously observed) in Dublin, the Border, Mid West and South East. It remained relatively stable in the Midlands, South West and West, while it increased in the Mid East and South West.
- In each region, Live Register levels have stabilised (at high levels) since mid 2010. The age and gender distributions of persons on the Live Register do not vary significantly across regions (less than 20% are aged under 25 and over 60% are male).
- In quarter 1 2012, unemployed persons previously employed in the construction sector accounted for the highest share of unemployment in each region.
- In quarter 1 2012, the share of skilled tradespersons amongst the unemployed was highest in the South East and South West (27%) and lowest in the Mid West (18%) and Dublin (19%).
- In quarter 1 2012, in each region, the highest share of job seekers registered on Public Employment Services had previously worked as skilled tradespersons or labourers (between one fifth and one quarter each).

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

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Notes to Editors:

The Regional Labour Markets Bulletin 2012 describes regional labour markets in Ireland in 2012. Its objective is to support the decision making process at regional level in the areas of education and training provision, labour market policies, immigration and career guidance by providing data on the demand and supply of skills for the eight NUTS 3 regions in Ireland. The analysis is based on the NUTS 3 regional classification, which is also used in the official Central Statistics Office (CSO) reporting nationally and internationally (e.g. Eurostat). NUTS 3 regions are: Border, Dublin, Mid East, Mid West, Midland, South East, South West, and West.