

Development of the Wellington Regional Labour Market Strategy

The development of the Wellington Regional Labour Market Strategy (WRLMS) was a project jointly led by the Regional Strategy labour market project team, the Wellington Regional Work Direction unit of the Department of Labour and the Wellington Regional office of the Ministry of Social Development. Input and liaison with the WRS project was provided via WRS Project Executive Group members (council officers) and the WRS Project Director.

The WRLMS reflects the regional labour market issues, opportunities and solutions as expressed by the broad range of stakeholder organisations engaged in the development of this strategy. There are six strategic areas:

Strategic Responses

1. **Promotion and Leadership** – key agencies and organisations work collaboratively and individually to help advance the labour market strategy.

GOAL - Wellington Region is perceived nationally and overseas as the premier work destination in New Zealand.

- Three collaborative projects, as identified in the strategy, are activated annually.

2. **Productivity** – address regional constraints to raising labour market productivity levels across all sectors.

GOAL - Genuine Progress Indicators (GPI) trend upwards and the GDP/capita rate in the Wellington region grows annually at twice the OECD average.

3. **Participation** – support the movement of those sectors of the community with lower labour market participation rates into productive employment opportunities and higher skill levels.

GOAL - Labour force participation rates are similar across all sectors of the community and sub-regions by 2010.

4. **Skills Development** – match and develop current and future work place skills needs with educational, training and careers programmes.

GOAL - Skill shortage vacancies as a percentage of all job vacancies is less than 5% by 2015.

- All labour and skilled migrants attracted to the region are employed within their areas of expertise and qualifications
- The percentage of employers engaging in training to address skill shortages increases annually by 10% to 2012.

5. **Business and Regional Capability** – encourage private sector employment growth through the provision of support services for SMEs.

GOAL - The percentage share of employment in SMEs throughout the region grows at the highest rate in New Zealand.

- Employer satisfaction levels with employment and training services exceed 90%.
6. **Sector Diversification** – attract and promote a greater diversity and higher value of business activity and employment opportunities to increase export growth and reduce the regional reliance on service sectors and increase the provision of a wider and deeper range of skills.

GOAL - By 2015, employment opportunities in the region mirrors the diversity of skills and qualifications within the population.

Key Themes and Priorities

Whilst the WRLMS identifies six strategic response areas, there are common underlying themes throughout the strategy. These relate to improved co-ordination of planning and activities, better access to relevant information, an improved understanding and promotion of labour market dynamics, and greater clarity of roles. Such themes are evident in the priority actions identified at the second workshop exercise, namely:

1. Establish a regional forum and place to co-ordinate labour market activities with all key organisations. (**Co-ordination**)
2. Promote the concept of productivity and benefits to enterprises and individuals, and conduct a productivity study. (**Promotion and Understanding**)
3. Tracking, transition and pathway services. Better access to information by community organisations. The business is sector more involved in careers advice. (**Access to Information**)
4. A Regionally integrated clearing-house and collective intelligence sharing. (**Co-ordination**)
5. Clarify and agree on what implementation, services and delivery agencies are required at a regional versus sub-regional level. (**Role Clarity**)

In recommending priority WRLMS activities, consideration has also been given to where regional entities can make a measurable impact, as opposed to the market place and other fora more logically addressing the labour market issues raised during the development of the WRLMS.