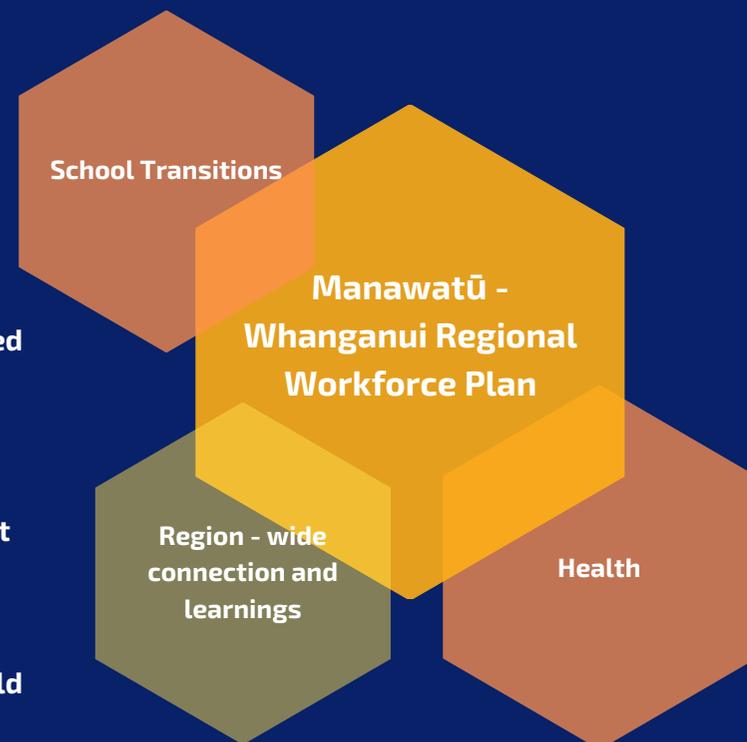


Manawatū - Whanganui Regional Skills Leadership Group

The Manawatū-Whanganui Regional Skills Leadership Group (RSLG) has been established to identify and support better ways of meeting future skills and workforce needs in the region. It is one of the 15 RSLGs in Aotearoa.

The Group is part of a joined up approach to labour market planning which will see our workforce, education and immigration systems working together to better meet the differing skills needs across the country. The group will provide independent advice that the region, employers and government agencies can act on.

As the Manawatū-Whanganui RSLG works towards producing their first Regional Workforce Plan by June 2022, their initial focus will be Health and School Transitions. The work of the Manawatū-Whanganui RSLG and their Regional Workforce Plan will build upon existing regional strategies, Accelerate-25 and Te Pae Tawhiti.



Labour Supply

- Youth NEET rate at 11.0%, a drop of 5.6 percentage points between 2020 and 2021*.
- Increase of 8,900 more women in employment between 2020 and 2021*.
- Unemployment rate at 2.7%, a drop of 2.0 percentage point between 2020 and 2021*.
- Migrants make up 5.7% of the region's workforce (as at May 2021)**
- 36% of the migrant workforce are on visa types that are eligible for consideration for the new 2021 Resident Visa pathway***.

Health Sector

- Health Care and Social Assistance is the largest workforce in the region.
- The health sector is made up of registered workers (e.g. doctors, nurses, midwives) and kaiāwhina/ unregistered professionals (e.g. health care assistants, aged care workers, disability support workers).
- In the short term the sector will be affected by the establishment of Health NZ and the Māori Health Authority, which is to take place by July 2022.
- In the long term the sector will be affected by changes in technology, the growing older population, and increases in co-existing conditions.
- The 65+ age range is projected to steadily rise within the region over the next 25-30 years, which will likely increase reliance on the health sector.

School Transitions

- School Transitions involves ensuring that school leavers are work ready and supported to transition from school into the world of work.
- This area includes (but is not limited to) work experience, skill training programmes, job search assistance, CV writing help, and careers guidance.
- The challenge is supporting school leavers into high demand careers that fill labour and skills shortages.
- A further challenge is accessing students and school leavers through the education system or alternative methods.
- Existing approaches connected to secondary schools, such as Gateway, involve NCEA credits to contribute towards students' high school qualifications.

*Household Labour Force Survey September 2021

**Integrated Data Infrastructure (managed by Stats NZ)

*** Immigration NZ | Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment

What we've heard

There are pressures or shortages across most skilled occupations in the region's health workforce. This is made worse by not enough people coming out of the training institutions to meet demand.

"The way services are delivered in the future, along with changing technology, will increasingly impact the skills demanded of the workforce".

School transitions are most successful when there is genuine partnership between industry and schools. COVID often this comes from alumni networks that can be tapped into. COVID has reduced opportunities for students to engage in school transitions programmes.

"Employers hide behind risk as a reason for not supporting work experience, but if health can with privacy issues and all sorts of risk then why can't other businesses/industries?"

Opportunities

Key coordinating groups such as Skills, Talent, Action Groups established in the Region will remain vital as links into communities and on-the-ground information and knowledge.

Highlighting programmes of success within the school transitions space where there are clear benefits for employers and rangatahi.

The Kaiāwhina Workforce Plan 2020-2025 provides a solid foundation for the RSLG. The importance of health as an essential service and enabler of workforce participation remains top of mind for the RSLG.

Where we're heading

As the RSLG works towards the first iteration of the Regional Workforce Plan, a human-centric approach will be at the heart of everything. Complementing the priorities of Health and School Transitions, the overarching priorities will be:

"...our kaimahi upskilling and achieving their goals and aspirations, our employers helping to achieve those goals and aspirations, and our whānau".

To maximise the RSLG's impact, the primary focus for Health will be the kaiāwhina workforce, while for School Transitions it will be on pathways to employment. The Secretariat will work with the region's stakeholders to highlight successful initiatives through case studies.

The RSLG will continue to align with Accelerate-25 and Te Pae Tawhiti, while working with stakeholders to identify current gaps, barriers and enablers to skill attainment. Representative voices from every district, small and large, will be included to ensure the nuances of Manawatū-Whanganui are captured.

"We are a unique... very different region in very different spaces."

