

REGIONAL INSIGHTS



Some employers are choosing not to mandate their staff to be vaccinated due to the workforce implications. One large business reported that only 40 percent of their workforce are vaccinated, and they could not continue to operate if such a large section of their workforce was forced to leave due to not being vaccinated. However, they are planning for the scenario that they may have to close for a period of time if unsafe levels of sick leave become an issue. This would have financial effects for all staff and the wider community.

Canterbury University is experiencing higher than usual hardship applications from Māori and Pacifica students. It is understood this could be resulting from a loss of part-time work for the students from industries like hospitality, and also loss/reduction in parental income from the affects of COVID-19.

A forum with key stakeholders from the Chatham Islands and government agencies was held in November in Wellington. It proved to be a great opportunity for engagement and provided an update of current challenges and opportunities. These fora will continue to be held on a regular basis and the RSLG will liaise with Kānoa (Regional Economic Development and Investment Unit) and the Regional Public Service Commissioner to ensure ongoing alignment of support for the Island.

North Canterbury businesses are currently facing a number of headwinds as a result of COVID-19. Many of the issues that were able to be deferred last year are now starting to have a noticeable affect on the business community. Thirty three percent of these businesses surveyed reported COVID-19 restrictions as the single largest factor limiting their ability to grow.

TRENDS AT A GLANCE



Manufacturing: There are approximately 39,000 people employed in the manufacturing industry in Canterbury (the region's second largest industry). Of this workforce over 36% of these workers are aged 50 years or above.
Source Stats NZ census 2018



Healthcare and Social Assistance: There are approximately 34,000 people employed in the Healthcare and Social Assistance industry in Canterbury (the region's fourth largest industry). Currently for every five women working in this industry, there is only one male employed (16.5% vs 3.1% as percentage of total workforce).
Source: Stats NZ census 2018



Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing: There are approximately 23,000 people employed in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing industry in Canterbury (the region's eighth largest industry). This industry is significant outside of Christchurch City and is the biggest employer by industry in sub-regions such as Mackenzie, Waimate, Ashburton and Selwyn Districts.
(Source: MBIE Detailed Regional Employment Estimates (DREE))

LABOUR MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

1. Ara Institute of Canterbury is currently conducting an environmental scan to explore future industry, workforce and education/training needs. The scan will be used to support their future business decisions, support collaboration, and ensure alignment of provision with industry and economic development needs. The four RSLGs in the Ngai Tahu takiwā are supporting Ara with evidence and data collected through their work plan activities.

2. Christchurch NZ are holding an industry/employer workshop on 9 December to share economic data and insights. Following the information sharing, approximately 80 stakeholders will move into a session to explore regional challenges/opportunities and potential solutions. The ideas gathered will feed into strategic documents and work plans of Christchurch NZ, the Ministry of Social Development and the RSLG.

3. The youth of Canterbury are taking a more active role in informing the Youth at Risk of Limited Employment Strategy (YARLES). Following a workshop in Canterbury in November, there was interest from the youth sector to have more of a voice and influence in the strategy. This was led by the Canterbury University Youth Liaison Officer, Katie Mills. A diverse range of stakeholders were identified using the University's regional youth mapping, and a workshop was held with youth leading and facilitating the sessions. The content of the workshop will inform the strategy.

4. Three Waters is a new area of exploration for labour market opportunities for RSLGs. Deloitte's May report showed an estimated growth of 970 FTEs for the related sectors in Canterbury, which is an increase of about 34 percent. The RSLG will continue to explore the opportunities as the future consultation and framework shapes up.

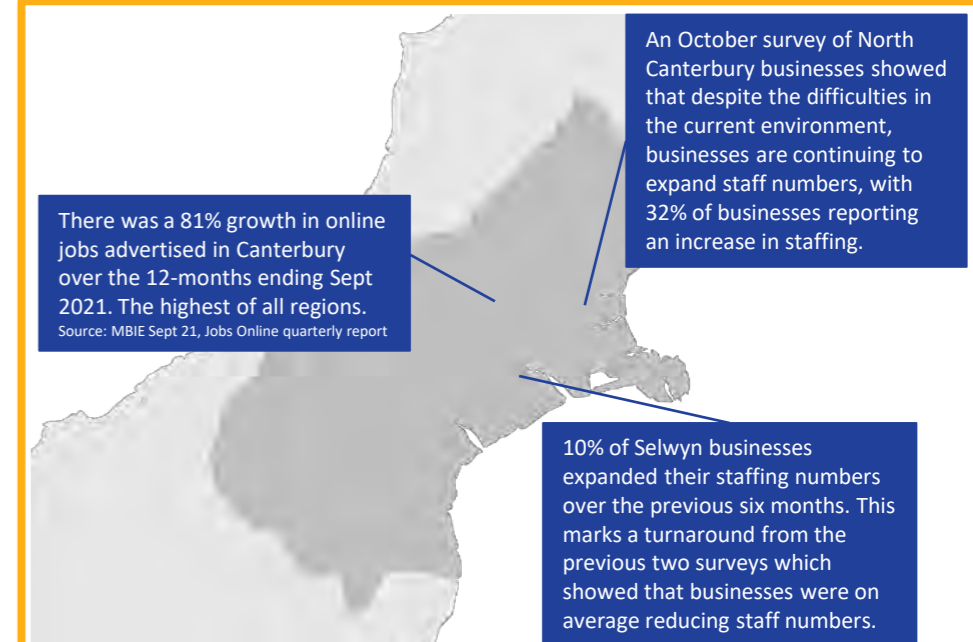
LABOUR MARKET CHALLENGES

1. The effects of mandatory vaccinations on the labour market are not yet fully clear. Whilst Canterbury as a region has a high vaccination rate, the RSLG are expecting further constraints on an already tight labour market. It is acknowledged that there is likely to be a mismatch between the skills and experience of those who have left their employment due to their vaccination status, and the jobs that are available for unvaccinated people. More data and information is needed to understand this landscape.

2. Constraints on the supply of material and equipment continues to inhibit productivity levels in some sectors. Employers are continuing to find ways to mitigate the limited availability of supplies by pushing out/delaying particular jobs; over-ordering to try to address future need; or reducing hours of staff if their other strategies are unsuccessful. The uncertainty and expected longevity of the issues also continues to present issues for quoting for jobs.

3. Like other Canterbury TLAs, employment demand is growing in Selwyn while labour shortages continue. While border closures have disrupted access to migrant workers and labour shortages have become very acute nationally, Selwyn District reports 59 percent of businesses are finding it harder to source skilled staff over the past six months and 51 percent are struggling to find semi-skilled staff. Both of these measures have deteriorated significantly over the past year.

THE CANTERBURY REGION



OUR FOCUS FOR THE NEXT 3 MONTHS:

- Consulting across the region on the draft workforce and labour market aspirations for Canterbury
- Commencing the analysis phase, that will then start to identify and frame potential actions
- Exploring existing workforce planning that is underway or previously completed by various sector groups, within large businesses and other government agencies