

### TOP REGIONAL INSIGHTS IN RESPONSE TO THE 2022 REGIONAL WORKFORCE PLAN



2022 RSLG  
**Te Mahere Ohumahi ā-Rohe**  
**o Te Taihū o Te Waka-a-Māui**  
Nelson Tasman Regional Workforce Plan

On 19 July we launched our inaugural Regional Workforce Plan <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/assets/te-mahere-ohumahi-a-rohe-o-te-taihu-o-te-waka-a-maui-nelson-tasman-regional-workforce-plan.pdf>

The launch has generated significant regional conversation and media coverage. This includes the full front page of the Nelson Mail the following day, as well as comments via social media and emails. Comments on the content describing the regions labour market opportunities and challenges have focused on the low productivity rate (with the region sitting \$1.67 billion below the rest of the country); the low 'sunshine' wages (second lowest average wage in NZ); and the high cost of housing (ranked third to last in affordability nationally). There has been strong interest from across a wide range of stakeholders to find and implement solutions. People have been wanting to engage, providing constructive feedback, and offering to contribute to the ongoing work of the Regional Skills Leadership Group.

We have had a positive response to the focus on two demographic groups – older workers and rangatahi. The need to encourage rangatahi to train and work in the region by providing solid pathways from education into employment was acknowledged. This includes the need to have attractive study options locally for our young people. There is also strong agreement on the need to support businesses to rethink their practices to keep older workers in jobs, to retain and maximise their skills and experience. The region not only has an ageing workforce, it also has a declining workforce, with the number of available workers aged 15-64 years forecast to drop to 51-54 percent of the population by 2048. Together this means rangatahi and older workers are crucial to our future regional workforce.

The construction sector is both a significant employer and a significant contributor to the Nelson-Tasman economy. However, there is a significant and growing gap between workforce supply and construction demand. As a region we have been looking at ways to enable the sector to keep growing to meet our region's demands, such as the skills hub discussed below.

Aquaculture really matters to Te Taihū (Nelson-Tasman and Marlborough) and has potential for huge growth. However, critical workforce shortages (both current and future) are hindering productivity and growth. To help address this challenge, the RSLG worked with industry and government agencies to develop a national aquaculture workforce plan, which is now approved and available on <https://www.aquaculture.org.nz/careers>



### 'Transformative change often starts small, but is strategic and enduring' Te Taihū Intergenerational Strategy

This first plan covered two demographic groups (older workers and rangatahi) and two of our industry sectors (construction and aquaculture). In future plans in 2023 and 2024, in addition to reporting on the delivery of regional actions set out in the 2022 plan, we have flagged that we will work to progressively add four more sectors and two more demographic groups. These contribute significantly to Nelson-Tasman's economy, community and workforce.

The four sectors are:

-  primary industry: horticulture, forestry
-  visitor sector: tourism, hospitality
-  health care and social assistance
-  Māori business and entrepreneurs.

The two demographic groups are:

-  disabled people
-  former refugees, recent migrants, and ethnic communities.

### THE OPPORTUNITY FOR A SKILLS HUB TO SUPPORT CONSTRUCTION

The Nelson Tasman RSLG is a key supporter of the establishment of a Te Taihū construction skills hub. The RSLG partnered with the Regional Public Service Commissioner and Nelson Regional Development Agency (NRDA), in a funding bid to central government (via Ministry of Social Development).

There are serious skills and labour shortages currently within construction and related sectors. However, we have also confirmed there are significant additional future workforce requirements to enable an estimated \$3.5 bn of planned publicly funded construction and infrastructure development across Te Taihū over the next 2-10 years. These approved capital projects include the Nelson Hospital rebuild; the Te Awhina Papakāinga Redevelopment in Motueka; the Science and Technology Precinct at Port Nelson; the Nelson City Library; and the Riverside Precinct development. We also have a significant number of consented privately funded commercial and residential construction projects.

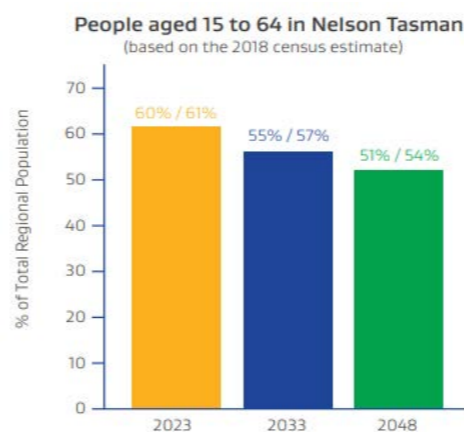
The Nelson-Tasman RSLG see establishing a Skills Hub as a beginning in ensuring a co-ordinated response to this long-term demand for a skilled construction workforce across Te Taihū. We also see it as an opportunity to ensure the approach taken is in line with the Te Taihū Intergenerational Strategy. ie it meets the skills and labour needs of these significant capital projects in a way that makes a positive intergenerational difference in the wellbeing, economy and prosperity of our regions people and businesses.

Our shared vision is to develop ongoing skills and labour capacity across Te Taihū through a Jobs and Skills Hub that is owned by the community in partnership with key stakeholders. This was announced at the Regional Workforce Plan launch, and we have since had numerous people wanting to know how they could support us to support the bid.

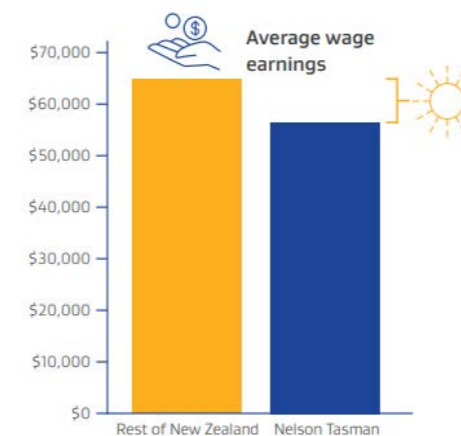
We will keep you posted on progress...

### REGIONAL TRENDS AT A GLANCE

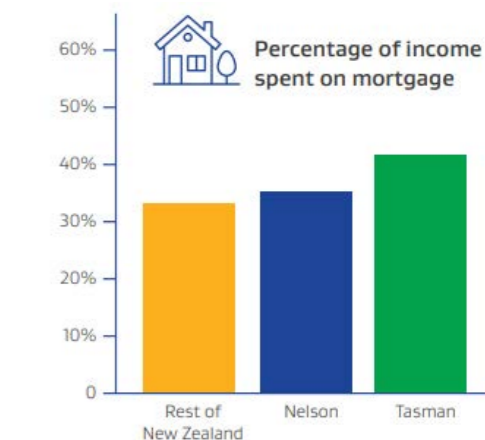
The proportion of primary working age population is expected to continue decreasing . . .



. . . as those workers receive less than the Rest of New Zealand average wage earnings . . .



. . . and the proportion of income they spend on their mortgage remains higher than the Rest of New Zealand average.



### OUR FOCUS FOR THE NEXT 2 MONTHS:

- Collaborating with key stakeholders as we confirm the implementation plan for the regional actions in the 2022 Regional Workforce Plan
- Agree on a forward workplan for the 2022/23 year, initially focusing on the regions forestry and visitor sector workforce needs