Victorian Employer Skills Survey 2021 Northern Metropolitan Region

The Victorian Skills Authority (VSA) asked businesses about their skills, recruitment and training needs for the Victorian Employer Skills Survey 2021.

Findings from the survey will help the Victorian government identify areas of skills demand, drive innovation across the VET sector and better plan for Victoria’s future training needs.

The VSA conducted the survey between August and December 2021. It approached 70,000 businesses and achieved a response rate of 20.5%, with coverage across all industries, business sizes and regions in the state.

*The statistics below reflect the experience of employers across the five key survey domains:*

#### Business climate | Skills | Recruitment | Training | Apprentices, trainees and work placements

## Business climate

#### **Despite the global pandemic, many Northern Metropolitan employers adapted to maintain or grow their workforce. Employers had a mostly positive outlook for the year ahead.**

#### Workforce

Fewer employers in the Northern Metropolitan region reported growing their workforce over the past 12 months (compared to the Victorian average).

**Grew**

Northern Metropolitan Region 17%

Vic Avg 19%

**Contracted**

Northern Metropolitan Region 22%

Vic Avg 19%

**Remained the same**

Northern Metropolitan Region 61%

Vic Avg 61%

#### Outlook

Employers in the Northern metropolitan region are optimistic about their future growth. Predicted growth in the region was higher than the state average.

**Predict growth**

Northern Metropolitan Region 35%

Vic Avg 33%

**Remain about the same**

Northern Metropolitan Region 53%

Vic Avg 56%

**Predict contraction**

Northern Metropolitan Region 4%

Vic Avg 5%

#### Impacts of COVID-19

COVID-19 skills-related challenges experienced by employers in the Northern Metropolitan region were slightly higher than the state average.

**Skills-related challenges**

Northern Metropolitan Region 59%

Vic Avg 57%

**Adopted new ways of working related to COVID-19**

Northern Metropolitan Region 48%

Vic Avg 45%

**Staff retention challenges**

Northern Metropolitan Region 25%

Vic Avg 26%

## Skills

COVID-19 presented the most common skills challenge in the past year. More employers are expecting skills shortages in 2022 than in 2021.

#### Skills shortages

Employers in the Northern Metropolitan region reported the highest levels of expected skills shortages in 2022 of all metropolitan areas.

**Last 12 months**

Northern Metropolitan Region 17%

Vic Avg 16%

**Next 12 months**

Northern Metropolitan Region 23%

Vic Avg 21%

#### Skills challenges

The top skills challenges reported by employers were the same across all regions. They were:

**Finding candidates with the right skills**

Northern Metropolitan Region 44%

Vic Avg 47%

**Adapting to the new ways of working due to COVID-19**

Northern Metropolitan Region 48%

Vic Avg 45%

**Finding job-ready candidates**

Northern Metropolitan Region 35%

Vic Avg 37%

#### Skills needs

More employers in the region reported needing workers with the right mindset and fewer needed job-ready skills compared to the state average.

**Technical/job-specific skills**

Northern Metropolitan Region 73%

Vic Avg 73%

**The right attitude/mindset**

Northern Metropolitan Region 54%

Vic Avg 50%

**Job-ready skills**

Northern Metropolitan Region 43%

Vic Avg 47%

## Recruitment

Most Northern Metropolitan employers had undertaken some recruitment activity over the past year and the majority reported experiencing challenges.

Recruitment need

Fewer employers undertook some form of recruitment over the past 12 months, compared to the state average.

Northern Metropolitan Region 59%

Vic Avg 62%

Recruitment challenges

Fewer employers reported difficulties recruiting for particular roles compared to the state average.

Northern Metropolitan Region 74%

Vic Avg 76%

Type of challenge

The most common challenges faced by employers were related to the number, experience and job-specific skills of candidates.

**Few applicants**

Northern Metropolitan Region 65%

Vic Avg 63%

**Candidates lacked relevant experience**

Northern Metropolitan Region 51%

Vic Avg 50%

**Candidates lacked relevant technical/job-specific skills**

Northern Metropolitan Region 49%

Vic Avg 47%

## Training

More than half of Northern Metropolitan employers engaged in some form of training.

**Engagement in training**

More employers in the region used external training and fewer used both internal and external training (35% compared to Vic average of 37%).  
 **Internal training**

Northern Metropolitan Region 18%

Vic Avg 17%

**External training**

Northern Metropolitan Region 47%

Vic Avg 45%

**Satisfaction with training**

Levels of satisfaction with training were high overall, but slightly lower than the state average.

**Helped staff do their job better**

Northern Metropolitan Region 80%

Vic Avg 81%

**Trainers had good industry knowledge**

Northern Metropolitan Region 77%

Vic Avg 80%

**Training was high quality**

Northern Metropolitan Region 74%

Vic Avg 76%

**Training was reasonably priced**

Northern Metropolitan Region 67%

Vic Avg 71%

**Skillsets**

Over half of employers said they would consider a skillset (micro credential or part qualification) rather than a full qualification to upskill their staff.

Northern Metropolitan Region 63%

Vic Avg 61%

## Apprentices, trainees and work placements

Northern Metropolitan employers continue to make use of apprentices, trainees, and work placements to assist them in filling the skills pipeline.

**Apprentices and trainees**

Uptake of apprentices and trainees over the past 12 months was similar to the state average.

**Apprenticeship**

Northern Metropolitan Region 23%

Vic Avg 24%

**Traineeship**

Northern Metropolitan Region 18%

Vic Avg 18%

**Challenges**

Higher proportions of employers in the Northern Metropolitan region cited cost of taking on apprentices and trainees as a barrier.

**Lack of suitable applicants/people**

Northern Metropolitan Region 20%

Vic Avg 20%

**There are no barriers/challenges**

Northern Metropolitan Region 16%

Vic Avg 17%

**Cost of taking on apprentice(s)/trainee(s)**

Northern Metropolitan Region 17%

Vic Avg 14%

**Work placement students**

One in five (19%) of employers in the region took on work placement students. The most common type of work placement students were:

**University student**

Northern Metropolitan Region 53%

Vic Avg 49%

**Secondary school student as part of work experience**

Northern Metropolitan Region 39%

Vic Avg 41%

**Secondary school student as part of a VET qualification**

Northern Metropolitan Region 11%

Vic Avg 22%

**A VET student**

Northern Metropolitan Region 13%

Vic Avg 19%

**View the complete report here or visit** [Victorian employer skills survey | Victorian Government (www.vic.gov.au)](https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-employer-skills-survey)