Victorian Employer Skills Survey 2021 Wimmera Southern Mallee 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 Wimmera Southern Mallee employers adapted to maintain or grow their workforce. Employers had a mostly positive outlook for the year ahead.** Workforce

Fewer employers reported growing their workforce over the past 12 months (compared to the state average).  
  
**Grew**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 16%

Vic Avg 19%

**Contracted**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 18%

Vic Avg 19%

**Remained the same**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 66%

Vic Avg 61%

#### Outlook

Employers in Wimmera Southern Mallee are optimistic about their future growth. More expected their workforce to remain the same size (compared to state average.).  
  
**Predict growth**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 27%

Vic Avg 33%

**Remain about the same**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 64%

Vic Avg 56%

**Predict contraction**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 6%

Vic Avg 5%

#### Impacts of COVID-19

COVID-19 skills-related challenges experienced by employers in Wimmera was the lowest reported across all regions.  
  
**Skills-related challenges**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 46%

Vic Avg 57%

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

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 34%

Vic Avg 45%

**Staff retention challenges**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 21%

Vic Avg 26%

## Skills

#### **Finding candidates with the right skills presented the most common skills challenge in the past year. More employers are expecting skill shortages in 2022 than in 2021.** Skills shortages

Almost three in ten of employers in Wimmera Southern Mallee are expecting to face skills shortages in 2022. This was the highest across the state.  
  
**Last 12 months**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 21%

Vic Avg 16%

**Next 12 months**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 28%

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**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 49%

Vic Avg 47%

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

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 34%

Vic Avg 45%

**Finding job-ready candidates**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 46%

Vic Avg 37%

#### Skills needs

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

**Technical/job-specific skills**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 81%

Vic Avg 73%

**The right attitude/mindset**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 41%

Vic Avg 50%

**Job-ready skills**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 45%

Vic Avg 47%

## Recruitment

Most Wimmera Southern Mallee employers had undertaken some recruitment activity over the past year and the majority reported experiencing challenges.

Recruitment need

Fewer employers in the region undertook some form of recruitment over the past 12 months, compared to the state average.  
  
Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 61%

Vic Avg 62%

Recruitment challenges

Five out of six employers reported having difficulties recruiting for particular roles. This was the highest rate across the state.   
  
Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 83%

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**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 80%

Vic Avg 63%

**Candidates lacked relevant experience**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 46%

Vic Avg 50%

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

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 50%

Vic Avg 47%

## Training

More than half of Wimmera Southern Mallee employers engaged in some form of training.  
  
**Engagement in training**

More employers in the region used both internal and external training (48% compared to 37% state average). Fewer used external or internal training only.  
 **Internal training**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 14%

Vic Avg 17%

**External training**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 38%

Vic Avg 45%

**Satisfaction with training**

Levels of satisfaction with training were higher than the state average.  
  
**Helped staff do their job better**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 86%

Vic Avg 81%

**Trainers had good industry knowledge**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 86%

Vic Avg 80%

**Training was high quality**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 85%

Vic Avg 76%

**Training was reasonably priced**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 74%

Vic Avg 71%

**Skillsets**

Almost three in five employers said they would consider a skillset (microcredential or part qualification) rather than a full qualification to upskill their staff.

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 59%

Vic Avg 61%

## Apprentices, trainees and work placements

Wimmera Southern Mallee employers continue to make use of apprentices, trainees, and work placements to assist them in filling the skills pipeline.  
  
**Apprentices & Trainees**

Uptake of apprentices and trainees over the past 12 months was higher than the state average.  
 **Apprenticeship**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 28%

Vic Avg 24%

**Traineeship**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 21%

Vic Avg 18%

**Challenges**

Employers cited lack of suitable applicants, cost and need for apprentices and trainees as the most common barriers.  
  
**Lack of suitable applicants/people**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 34%

Vic Avg 20%

**There are no barriers/challenges**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 16%

Vic Avg 17%

**Does not need more apprentice(s)/trainee(s)**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 14%

Vic Avg 13%

**Work placement students**

More employers in the region took on work placement students (24% compared to the state average 21%). The most common type of work placement students were:  
  
**University student**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 31%

Vic Avg 49%

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

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 36%

Vic Avg 41%

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

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 26%

Vic Avg 22%

**A VET student**

Wimmera Southern Mallee Region 33%

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)