

PRESS RELEASE

Expert Group report shows further improvements in the Irish labour market and an intensifying of skills shortages in certain areas

(17th July 2015) Today, the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) published the National Skills Bulletin 2015, which provides an overview of employment trends at occupational level.

Welcoming the publication, Minister for Skills, Research and Innovation, Damien English, T.D. said: "The Irish labour market is recovering, with most indicators improving during 2014. The report shows an increase in employment and a decrease in the number of unemployed, long-term unemployed and underemployed persons. I am delighted to see that more jobs are being created and in particular that construction jobs are finally increasing, this is great news for job seekers. I am delighted in particular in the growth in opportunities for skilled tradespeople. My job, as a Minister is to bring together industry and education in key areas to ensure that we equip people with the practical skills to match industry's current and future needs in order to create sustainable jobs. As part of that effort I would urge young people to look seriously at an apprenticeship as a way of learning key skills and building their careers. We intend to develop a range of new apprenticeships with employers to provide increased opportunities for our young people".

The analysis presented in the report indicates the flexibility of the Irish labour market; however it points to high turnover in relation to certain occupations, including care workers, sales workers, general clerks, elementary occupations (e.g. waiters, cleaners, catering assistants, security workers), as well as some highly skilled occupations (e.g. IT professionals).

Commenting, Una Halligan, Chairperson of the EGFSN said: "The report shows that, with the economic recovery strengthening, shortages are intensifying in the previously identified areas such as ICT, engineering, sales/customer care, logistic, health, business and finance, and emerging in new areas such as hospitality and construction. With improved job prospects across all sectors of the economy, issues with attracting and retaining staff are emerging in some areas (e.g. hospitality, care and meat processing)".

Commenting further, Una Halligan added: "Looking forward, we need to continue efforts across all relevant policy areas to ensure shortages outlined in the report, which have been intensifying in some areas, such as ICT, and emerging in other areas, such as hospitality, are addressed adequately."

Key Findings:

- Skills shortages
 - Professionals/associate professionals
 - ICT (software developers, cloud, databases/big data, testing, security, technical support, networking and infrastructure)
 - Engineering (production, process, quality, validation, product design/development, electronic, electrical, mechanical and chemical)

- Science (biochemistry, biotechnology, pharma co-vigilance, product development)
- Business & finance (risk, compliance, accounting, business intelligence, data analytics)
- Health (doctors, nurses, radiographers, niche area specialists (e.g. prosthetists, radiation therapists), managers)
- Construction (surveyors)
- Clerical (multilingual credit control/debt control and supply chain)
- Skilled trades (chefs, tool making, welding (TIG, MIG), butchers/de-boners, steel-erector)
- Sales (technical sales, multilingual customer support, online sales and marketing)
- Operatives (CNC, drivers (fork lift and special vehicle))
- Retention issues (care, chefs, butchers/de-boners, elementary (e.g. waiters))

National Skills Bulletin 2015 is available on the EGFSN website, [www.skillsireland.ie/Expert-Group-on-Future-Skill-Group/Publications/2015/National Skills Bulletin 2015.html](http://www.skillsireland.ie/Expert-Group-on-Future-Skill-Group/Publications/2015/National_Skills_Bulletin_2015.html)

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About the EGFSN

The Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) advises the Irish Government on current and future skills needs of the economy and on other labour market issues that impact on Ireland's enterprise and employment growth. It has a central role in ensuring that labour market needs for skilled workers are anticipated and met and provides guidance to Springboard and Momentum, labour market activation calls in areas of future skills needs and conversion programmes. The work of the EGFSN is managed by DJEI and DES. The research and analysis conducted for the EGFSN is undertaken by the Skills and Labour Market Research Unit of SOLAS and DJEI.

Notes to Editors

The National Skills Bulletin 2015 is the latest in an annual series of reports, which has been produced by the Skills and Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU) in SOLAS on behalf of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) since 2005. The Bulletin provides an overview of the Irish labour market at occupational level, drawing on a variety of data sets, which have been systematically gathered in the National Skills Database (NSD) since 2003. The data used in the analysis includes data on employment, vacancies (including difficult to fill), job announcements, job seekers, immigration, supply from education and training, unemployment and other qualitative information held by the Unit for the purpose of identifying imbalances in the Irish labour market at occupational level.

Copies of the *National Skills Bulletin 2015* can be downloaded from the EGFSN website [www.skillsireland.ie/Expert-Group-on-Future-Skill-Group/Publications/2015/National Skills Bulletin 2015.html](http://www.skillsireland.ie/Expert-Group-on-Future-Skill-Group/Publications/2015/National_Skills_Bulletin_2015.html)