



Australian Government

**Workforce
Australia**
Local Jobs

Local Jobs Plan

Ballarat Employment Region

Victoria

October 2022



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The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations acknowledges the Wadawurrung peoples as the traditional owners and custodians of this region and acknowledges their continuing connection to land, water, education, and community. We pay our respects to the people, the cultures, and the elders past, present, and emerging.

The Local Jobs Program

As part of supporting Australia's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Australian Government's Local Jobs Program (LJP) brings together expertise, resources, and access to funding at the local level to accelerate reskilling, upskilling and employment pathways in 51 Employment Regions.

Recognising the importance of local knowledge in getting people back into jobs quickly, the LJP includes the following key elements in each region:

- a local Employment Facilitator
- a Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce
- a Local Jobs Plan
- a Local Recovery Fund to support small scale activities
- access to the National Priority Funding Pool.

The Taskforces, each chaired by the respective region's Employment Facilitator, develop, and update a Local Jobs Plan for their region that identifies key employment and training priorities and provides a framework for driving employment outcomes in the context of the local labour market.

This Local Jobs Plan for the Ballarat Employment Region identifies the key LJP priorities with a focus on creating employment opportunities, actively upskilling, or reskilling local participants and meeting local employer demands.

Key employment and training priorities

1. Maximise the benefits of existing Australian, Victorian, and local government programs, to create pathways into major industries.
2. Maximise the extent to which local participants are skilled to meet the needs of major projects, including large infrastructure projects and redevelopment works to generate opportunities for skill development aligned to local employer and industry needs.
3. Broker opportunities for youth skill development and employment, including apprenticeships and traineeships, across all sectors such as hospitality/tourism, business, trades in the construction/manufacturing sectors.
4. Engage with, support, and skill disadvantaged Mature Aged, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Female participants. Boost employment and training in priority areas in collaboration with existing local organisations to support ongoing Closing the Gap targets.

A description to address some of the key priorities, the strategies and a list of key stakeholders can be found at **Attachment A**.

Ballarat Employment Region overview

The Ballarat Employment Region (ER) includes six local government authorities; the two main population centres are Ballarat and Maryborough.

The **City of Ballarat** is the third largest regional city in Victoria, located in the Central Highlands region, approximately 110 kilometres west of Melbourne. **Ballarat** is predominantly a residential area but also has substantial industrial, commercial, and rural areas. Our fastest growing jobs sector is health care and social assistance at 14.7% followed by construction at 12.6%, retail at 12.1%.

Ballarat is also fast transitioning to a centralised service centre role for the wider region, with other population-driven service increases (such as a noticeable 13% increase in employment levels in construction).

The proximity of Ballarat to Melbourne, and the improved reliability of the public transport systems, has increased the number of people commuting to accept employment. More recently, we have seen a noticeable change in the numbers of people moving to Ballarat from Melbourne for lifestyle reasons, bringing skills, experience, and business ideas with them. It has also given rise to Ballarat as a centralised hub for transport industries and corporate services. Ballarat is in a key strategic position at the centre of some of Victoria's most important freight, tourist, and transport

routes. Four major highways radiate from Ballarat connecting it to industrial centres such as Melbourne, Adelaide, Geelong, and Portland. As the major commercial centre in Western Victoria and being close to metropolitan Melbourne, Ballarat is ideally positioned to support business and industry growth.

The Central Goldfields Shire is located at the geographical centre of Victoria, the Shire is within a one-hour drive from the regional cities of **Ballarat** and **Bendigo** and just two hours' drive from Melbourne.

Maryborough is the Shire's major business centre and is a health and retail centre for surrounding towns including Castlemaine, St Arnaud, Avoca, Talbot, Carisbrook, and Dunolly.

Maryborough specialises in food manufacturing and has significant land available which presents an opportunity for the sector to grow further. The 2021 Industrial Land Strategy identified over 150 hectares on land (zoned Industrial 1) available for development, however there is a distinct lack of serviced small scale industrial land ready for new investment. Agriculture is also an important industry in supporting business and contributing to the supply-chain networks for food manufacturing, transport, and distribution.

The Hepburn Shire is located just over an hours' drive from Melbourne. The Shire's economic base is in agriculture, forestry, manufacturing, and tourism.

Daylesford-Hepburn mineral Springs. Tourism, the arts, service industries, retail, education, and health and community services are growing rapidly in this region.

The Pyrenees Shire is located approximately 130km northwest of Melbourne, is heavily dependent on primary industry and is renowned for its wool, viticulture, and forestry activity. Key areas of production include wool, cereal, hay crops and meat. Grape and wine production has expanded significantly in recent decades. (Mining represents only 0.2% of output and 1% of jobs so is a minor rather than major contributor).

The Moorabool Shire is a semi-rural municipality between **Melbourne** and **Ballarat**. The main towns in the Shire include **Bacchus Marsh** and **Ballan**. Approximately 40 per cent of residents work in Melbourne, and a considerable number also work in Ballarat. The main industries include agriculture, dairy product manufacturing, construction material mining, beverage, and malt manufacturing.

The Golden Plains Shire is predominately rural, with many small townships servicing local communities between **Ballarat** and **Geelong**. The Shire is the fifth fastest growing municipality in regional Victoria, and many residents work in Ballarat or Geelong. The Shire's economic base is provided through agriculture, retailing, construction, and manufacturing. Agriculture is responsible for \$144 million worth of output annually and employs 25.6% of the Shire's workforce. The main industries include agriculture (wool and grain growing, intensive poultry and pig farming), construction and wine manufacturing.

The Ballarat Employment Region Map



Key challenges in the Ballarat Employment Region

As of September 2022, Ballarat had a population of 100,000 with 80,600 employed and an unemployment rate of 4.6%, 53,400 people were employed full-time and 27,400 part-time. 3,900 were unemployed and 53,500 are not in the workforce. The total caseload is 6,190, mature aged caseload is 2,025, and the youth caseload 861.

The six LGAs in the region have their own distinct demographics and challenges. Given this, local solutions will vary and will be considered at the individual LGA level.

Public transport is not always available for participants, in the smaller LGAs of Golden Plains, Hepburn, Moorabool and Pyrenees. The accessibility of public transport should be considered when connecting people to jobs and training.

Mature Age

For business, a work culture that supports older workers can lead to improved productivity, competitiveness, and client satisfaction. Employees who are 50 years and over contribute skills and experience, reliability, strong work ethic and communication skills. Appropriate training programs provided in a supportive environment will be tailored to assist older workers to learn and adapt to recent technology and systems.

Youth

The hospitality, retail, beauty, and fitness sectors has had significant increases in employment opportunities but continues to be impacted by post pandemic labour shortages in the region. A proportion of young people that are most likely to work in the impacted sectors above, have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic.

This cohort are now disengaged from the workforce with little or no personal expectations for their future, and a percentage have issues with mental health, confidence, and resilience. The region has a high level of trade and vocational education certification; this is reflective of industry needs. Intergenerational unemployment and low expectations have affected educational attainment levels for young people and lower rates of participation in the workforce.

The Employment Facilitator (EF) has used the Taskforce (TF) and stakeholders to broker employment opportunities for young people to be engaged or re-engaged in these sectors as the economy has recovered. Connecting youth (and keeping them connected) to services and employers, such as retail and Tourism, will

play a significant role in continuing to drive down youth unemployment and youth disengagement in the Ballarat Employment Region. This could also be obtained through focusing on jobs and skills in demand and brokering apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities for this cohort.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

The LGA of Ballarat is home to the largest population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants in the ER. This area currently has strong Indigenous and Multicultural networks and collaborating with local Indigenous and Multicultural organisations will be key in further developing strategies that increase engagement in training and employment aligned to local employment opportunities.

People with Disability (PwD)

A high proportion of participants registered in Australian Government employment services (Workforce Australia, Transition to Work and ParentsNext) in the ER, approximately 29.4 percent, identify as PwD. The PwD cohort in the ER has increased significantly, suggesting a growing need for support, including utilising the assistance of community support organisations and maximising government programs in education, training, and engagement activities to upskill or reskill these participants.

Female

Industries in which women are heavily represented that have been severely impacted highlight the predominance of women in vulnerable jobs and industries, such as tourism, hospitality, and retail. Employers have experienced increased demand for workers in these industries. Targeted training and development opportunities have been designed to assist individuals to develop and deepen skills to make them more employable, increasing women's work choices and addressing barriers to women working in the paid workplace.

National Employment Outlook

National Industry and occupation trends over the five years to November 2026

The latest National Skills Commission report, which shows occupation shortages doubled in 2022 as the labour market tightened. The number of occupations struggling to fill positions has jumped from 153 to 286 over the year, meaning nearly a third of all Australian sectors are confronting serious worker shortfalls.

The Skills Priority List shows registered nurses, software engineers, and care workers are in most demand, with construction managers, childcare workers, and motor mechanics also near the top.

Job vacancies have grown more than 40 per cent in the year to August 2022, reaching 309,000 jobs, according to the report. Of the 20 largest employing occupations, more than half face serious labour shortages.

Occupations with the largest number of vacancies included technicians, professionals, machinery operators and labourers, as well as community and personal service workers. The National Skills Commission Skills Priority list can be found here: [Skills Priority List | National Skills Commission](#)

Workforce Australia

There are two Workforce Australia Employment Service Providers in the Employment Region delivering employment services; **Asuria** and **Sureway**.

Other programs include:

- [Transition to Work \(TtW\)](#) delivering intensive employment services to youth
- [ParentsNext](#) supports parents and carers who receive Parenting Payment to plan and prepare for work by the time their youngest child starts school.
- [Self-Employment Assistance Program](#) Self-Employment Assistance can help you with your business idea or existing business through its flexible services.

- [Entrepreneurship Facilitators](#) help people start a new business and create their own job.
- [Career Transition Assistance](#) is designed to help mature-age participants, aged 45 years and over, to build their confidence and skills to become more competitive in the local labour market.
- [Employability Skills Training](#) to provide intensive pre-employment training and help young people become job ready

Other Australian Government programs include [Disability Employment Services](#) (DES), Australian Apprenticeship Support Networks (AASN) and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Local stakeholders and opportunities

Large Employers

The primary employment industries across the employment region are Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade and Personal Services, Manufacturing, Education and Training as well as Construction. The ABS Labour Force Survey, suggests Retail Trade has experienced substantial growth for the period from February 2020 to February 2021. Other sectors important to the region include Business and ICT.

Opportunities for employment openings for unemployed as well as skilled workers recently displaced by COVID-19 include, but are not limited to:

- **Health** - Ballarat Health Services, Aged Care providers and NDIS service providers
- **Retail Trade/Personal Services** - Hospitality and Tourism, Hair, Beauty, and Spas.
- **Manufacturing/Construction** - MaxiTrans Australia Pty Ltd, FMP Group, McCains Foods, Mars Chocolate and Master Foods, Haymes Paints and Alstom
- **Education and Training** - Federation University, Australian Catholic University
- **Business and ICT**- Call Centers - IBM Australia, Concentrix, Serco, and Ernst Young

Other major industry contributors across the region come from a range of employers including McPherson's Printing, True Foods, Edlyn Foods, Capilano Honey, Barker Trailers, Sutton Tools, Alstom, Central Highlands Water and associated councils across the relevant LGAs.

Selected Major Projects

Vital infrastructure and transport upgrades are underway in Ballarat and surrounding areas to position the region for future population growth and investment opportunities. These projects will provide essential infrastructure, connections and services to support the city's growing population as well as deliver on the City of Ballarat's Making Ballarat Central

This Local Jobs Plan intends to leverage and build on the existing regional plans and programs to help move participants into sustainable and appropriate work or training efficiently and quickly. These include:

- Ballarat Health Services – Big Build- Construction/Manufacturing
- Ernst Young, Concentrix, IBM, and Serco-Information Computer Technology (ICT)
- Alstom, Maxi Trans-Construction/Manufacturing
- [Ballarat Strategy 2040 | City of Ballarat](#)
- [Ballarat Traveller Experience Plan, Events Strategy and Visitor Economy Strategy](#)
- [Central Goldfields Shire Council 2020/2025 Economic Development Strategy](#)
- [Central Goldfields Shire Council Tourism & Events Strategy](#)
- [Strategic Plans – Pyrenees Shire Council](#)
- [Hepburn Together | Participate Hepburn](#)
- [Economic Development Information | Moorabool Shire Council](#)
- [Regional Development Australia – Regional Development Victoria \(rdv.vic.gov.au\)](#)

- Victorian Government Regional Economic Development Strategy
- Report to Infrastructure Victoria
- Australian Government [Regional Recovery Partnerships Fund](#)
- Australian Government [Building Better Regions Fund](#)

Attachment A – Key employment and training priorities: strategies and stakeholders

1. Maximise the benefits of existing Australian, Victorian, and local government programs, to create pathways into major industries.

Strategy

- Maximise the extent to which local positions are filled by local participants, to meet the needs of major infrastructure projects.
- Promote existing programs to enhance local employment and training opportunities.
- Collaborate with Workforce Australia Employment Service Providers to connect to suitable services to better prepare them for employment
- Engage with organisations to identify and link participants to suitable local vacancies to promote sustainable employment outcomes.

Stakeholders

- Workforce Australia Employment Service Providers
- Ballarat Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce members
- Local, State, and Australian Government Programs
- Registered Training Organisations,
- Peak industry bodies (Ballarat Regional Tourism, Commerce Ballarat)
- Federation TAFE
- Community Organisations (Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council, Learn Local Providers)
- Group Training Organisations, Australian Apprenticeships Services Network
- Employers

2. Maximise the extent to which local participants are skilled to meet the needs of local employers and industry needs.

Strategy

- Codesign programs in partnership with Workforce Australia Employment Service Providers and employers to promote sustainable Employment outcomes for participants
- Engage with organisations to identify and link participants to suitable local vacancies to promote sustainable employment outcomes for participants
- Engage with local Indigenous organisations to develop strategies to improve engagement in training and employment opportunities
- Target opportunities aligned to Strategic and Economic Development Plans such as capital work projects with local Councils
- Promote skill transferability across all industry, with a particular focus on sectors with critical workforce shortages
- Develop new and innovative ways for business and participants to connect that remove barriers to employment

Stakeholders

- Workforce Australia Employment Service Providers
- Ballarat Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce members
- Local, State, and Australian Government Programs
- Registered Training Organisations
- Peak industry bodies (Ballarat Regional Tourism, Commerce Ballarat)
- Federation TAFE
- Community Organisations
- Group Training Organisations, Australian Apprenticeships Services Network
- Employers

3. Broker opportunities for youth skill development and employment, including apprenticeships and traineeships, across all sectors such as hospitality/tourism, business, trades in the construction/manufacturing sectors.

Strategy

- Collaborate with Workforce Australia Employment Service providers, Transition to Work providers and Australian Apprenticeships Service Network providers to promote Apprenticeship and Traineeship pathways as sustainable employment outcomes for participants
- Maximise the extent to which local entry level positions are filled by youth participants
- Engage with large scale infrastructure and developments to identify and link participants to suitable local vacancies to promote sustainable employment outcomes

Stakeholders

- Workforce Australia Employment Service Providers
- Ballarat Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce members
- Local, State, and Australian Government Programs
- Registered Training Organisations
- Peak industry bodies (Ballarat Regional Tourism, Commerce Ballarat)
- Federation TAFE
- Community organisations
- Group Training Organisations, Australian Apprenticeships Services Network
- Employers

4. Engage with, support, and skill disadvantaged Mature Aged, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Female participants. Boost employment and training in priority areas in collaboration with existing local organisations to support ongoing Closing the Gap targets.

Strategy

- Collaborate with Workforce Australia Employment Service Providers to address barriers to better prepare them for employment
- Maximise the extent to which local positions are filled by local participants, to meet the needs of major infrastructure projects
- Engage with local Indigenous organisations to develop strategies to improve engagement in training and employment opportunities
- Promote existing programs to enhance local employment and training opportunities
- Engage with organisations to identify and link participants to suitable local vacancies to promote sustainable employment outcomes

Stakeholders

- Workforce Australia Employment Service Providers
- Ballarat Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce members
- Specialist Indigenous support agencies
- Local, State, and Australian Government Programs
- Registered Training Organisations
- Peak industry bodies (Ballarat Regional Tourism, Commerce Ballarat)
- Federation TAFE
- Community Organisations
- Group Training Organisations, Australian Apprenticeships Services Network
- Employers

Attachment B – Labour Market Data Dashboard (September 2022)



**Ballarat
Employment Region
Victoria**

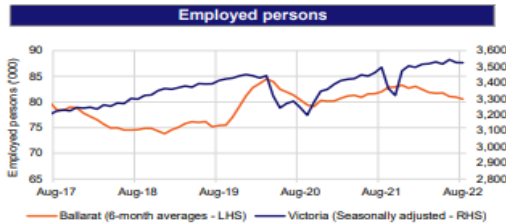
Labour Market Data Dashboard

Data current as at 21 September 2022
Refer to source notes for data reference periods

	Employment			Unemployment			Unemployment rate		Participation rate		Youth unemployment rate	
	Aug-22 ('000)	Mar-20 ('000)	Change (%)	Aug-22 ('000)	Mar-20 ('000)	Change (%)	Aug-22 (%)	Mar-20 (%)	Aug-22 (%)	Mar-20 (%)	Aug-22 (%)	Mar-20 (%)
Ballarat	80.6	84.5	-4.6	3.9	2.8	36.7	4.6	3.3	61.0	63.3	7.9	10.1
Victoria	3,525.2	3,443.5	2.4	134.0	187.5	-28.5	3.7	5.2	67.0	66.4	9.9	10.7
Australia	13,592.1	13,002.2	4.5	487.7	719.4	-32.2	3.5	5.2	66.6	65.9	8.4	11.6

Source: ABS, Labour Force Survey, Aug-22. Employment Region data are 6-month averages of original estimates, except for the youth unemployment rate, which is a 12-month average of original estimates. State youth unemployment rates are 12-month averages of original estimates. Remaining data are seasonally adjusted.

This Labour Market Data Dashboard provides key indicators for the labour market by Employment Region and is updated monthly.



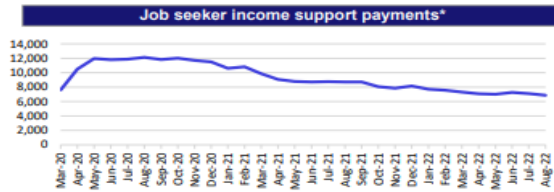
Source: ABS, Labour Force Survey, Aug-22



Source: ABS, Labour Force Survey, Detailed, four quarter averages, Aug-22 quarter



Source: ABS, Labour Force Survey, Aug-22



	Ballarat	Victoria
Payments - Mar 2020	7,624	193,586
Payments - August 2022	6,873	186,502
Change from Mar 2020 to August 2022	-751	-7,084
	-10%	-4%

	total persons on job seeker income support	% of 15-64 year olds on job seeker income support
Ballarat	6,873	6.5%
Victoria	186,502	4.4%
Australia	853,036	5.1%

Source: Department of Social Services, JobSeeker and Youth Allowance (other) payment recipients, data.gov.au, Aug-22; ABS, Estimated Resident Population (ERP), Jun-21

Local Government Area (LGA)	Mar-22	Mar-20
Central Goldfields	6.6	6.2
Moorabool	4.1	5.0
Pyrenees	3.8	3.9
Ballarat	3.5	3.2
Ararat	3.3	4.7

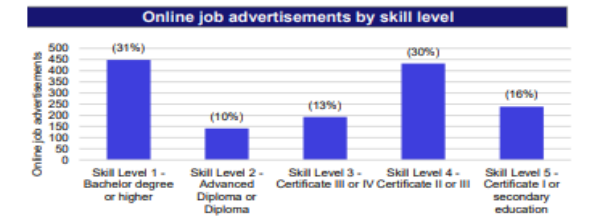
For more insights, access SALM data via lmp.gov.au. Source: National Skills Commission, Small Area Labour Markets, smoothed data, Mar-22 quarter



Source: National Skills Commission, Internet Vacancy Index, seasonally adjusted, Aug-22



Source: National Skills Commission, Internet Vacancy Index, 3 month average of original data, Aug-22



Source: National Skills Commission, Internet Vacancy Index, seasonally adjusted, Aug-22