

Youth Worker		Australia
ANZSCO Code: 4117-16	August 2008	
Labour market rating	No Shortage	
Comment		

Occupational Demand

Demand for youth workers is increasing. ABS Census data show a 30 per cent increase in employment over the five years to 2006, to approximately 8000. This is supported by employer comments which indicated more than 10 per cent of the vacancies surveyed were created to address growing demand. Census data also suggest that nearly two thirds of youth workers are aged younger than 40 years old.

The majority of youth workers are employed in Health and Community Services (almost 60 per cent), although there is also significant employment in Government Administration and Defence (accounting for the employment of one in every five youth workers). They are employed by not for profit community organisations and local, state and territory governments providing services and assistance to youth experiencing family breakdown, homelessness, education disengagement and legal difficulties. About three quarters of the vacancies surveyed were advertised by not for profit organisations.

Occupational Supply

Entry to this occupation is primarily through post school education or training. 2006 Census data show almost 30 per cent of youth workers hold a bachelor degree or higher qualification and 40 per cent hold a Certificate III/IV or Diploma/Advanced Diploma level qualification.

Most surveyed vacancies required a minimum Certificate IV and/or relevant experience and applicants are also required to satisfy a mandatory Police and Working with Children check.

Department of Immigration and Citizenship net migration data show there is not a significant contribution from migration to this occupation.

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

A survey of employers who recently advertised for youth workers found almost 80 per cent of surveyed vacancies were filled within six weeks of advertising, slightly less than the 85 per cent fill rate recorded in 2007. A small number of employers advertised more than once before attracting suitable applicants. More than one third of the vacancies surveyed were part time or short term positions. A number of vacancies were the result of youth workers moving from the not for profit sector to local and state government because of the better salaries and conditions offered.

Nationally, employers received an average of more than eight applications per vacancy, with approximately three applicants per vacancy considered by employers to be suitable. Lack of qualifications and experience were the main reasons employers considered applicants to be unsuitable and many employers commented on their dissatisfaction with the presentation and standard of applications, suggesting candidates frequently failed to address the selection criteria.

Employers in New South Wales and the Northern Territory experienced greater difficulty recruiting than employers in other states, with New South Wales employers filling half of their surveyed vacancies and employers in Northern Territory failing to fill any of their vacancies within six weeks of advertising. Regional employers also experienced more difficulty than metropolitan employers, filling 50 per cent of their advertised vacancies and attracting, on average, about half the number of applicants of metropolitan employers.

Labour market outlook

There is no evidence to suggest the labour market for youth workers will change significantly over the next six months.