

Job market booms in the regions while New Zealand's biggest centres wane

The number of jobs in New Zealand's non-metro regions boomed in the last quarter of 2017, as post-election uncertainty took a toll on Auckland, Wellington and Canterbury, according to an analysis of over 68,000 vacancies listed on Trade Me Jobs.

Head of Trade Me Jobs, Jeremy Wade, said the latest data indicated that employers and job hunters in the main centres had been "treading softly" as they waited for the the new political landscape to settle, but those in the regions were less concerned.

Mr Wade said Southland, Northland, Otago, Hawke's Bay, Waikato and Marlborough all had solid double-digit growth in new listings year-on-year, along with a small increase in average pay. It was a different story in the main centres with new listings in Auckland falling by 2.8 per cent, Wellington down 1.6 per cent and Canterbury up a modest 1 per cent on last year.

"Despite the benign growth of new listings in the main centres we'd still expect to see some wage growth given the skill shortage," he said. "However, at a national level the average pay was relatively flat in the final quarter of 2017, down 0.2 per cent on last year to \$60,441.

"Even after some encouraging wage growth in the previous two quarters, it's surprising to see such little movement in pay. We'd expect employers to be digging deeper into their pockets to secure the best candidates."

Job applications drop

Mr Wade said job hunters continue to be in the prime position with the average number of applications per role down 15 per cent on last year, and down 5.8 per cent on the previous quarter.

He said applications in Auckland, Wellington and Canterbury decreased by 17 per cent, 10 per cent and 14 per cent respectively. "This decline in applications is a clear indicator that the job landscape is favouring job hunters, especially anyone looking for a role in transport and logistics or manufacturing and operations where new listings are up more than 21 per cent.

"With less competition and high demand for skilled workers, January is a great time to dust off your CV if you're considering making your next career move."

Sectors a mixed bag

Mr Wade said that of the 26 sectors on Trade Me Jobs, 13 saw an increase in the number of new listings year-on-year with manufacturing and operations (up 28.5 per cent), transport and logistics (up 21.2 per cent), and agriculture (up 20.7 per cent) leading the way.

“Retail, hospitality and sales have all been performing strongly in 2017, but dipped sharply in the final quarter of 2017, with new listings down 12 per cent, 2.8 per cent and 12 per cent respectively.”

IT roles continue to dominate the highest paid roles on Trade Me Jobs, taking out the top four spots. Project managers topped the list with an average pay of \$142,143.

Wage growth flat in Auckland and Wellington

Mr Wade said Auckland City remained the highest earning area with an average pay of \$72,383 followed closely by Wellington at \$69,787, but wage growth in the biggest centres was flat.

The average pay was down 0.3 per cent in Auckland City year-on-year, and up just 0.3 per cent in the capital, he said.

“With a shortage of talent, flat wage growth and the increasing cost of living, employers in the main metros will be under more pressure in 2018 to secure talent and as a result we expect average pay to increase.”

Predictions for 2018

Mr Wade said employers will continue to face challenges securing skilled people in 2018.

“We expect to see the skill shortage worsen this year as the tightening on immigration will likely leave employers with little choice but to improve salary packages to lure talent. As a result, the ball is in the job hunter’s court and skilled workers can expect to see better offers dangled in front of them.”

Small businesses are likely to slow their hiring rates and Mr Wade said that while replacing core people will continue to be important, there will be cutbacks on discretionary hiring. “We know there will be a flow-on from the concerns around the increase to the minimum wage. Employment law changes to the 90-day trial period and the proposed Fair Pay Agreements are also set to have a significant impact on employers.”

ENDS

MORE INFORMATION:

- **Interviews and regional data:** Jeremy Wade is available for interviews. To lock in an interview with Jeremy or for regional data, please contact Millie Silvester by emailing mediaenquiries@trademe.co.nz or phoning (027) 601 7999.
- **National data:** The full Trade Me Jobs Q4 results are set out below. Please let us know if there’s any regional data we can look into for you.

Total listings growth by job category: Q4 2017

Category	Year-on-year % change Q4 2017 vs Q4 2016
Accounting	- 7.5%
Agriculture,fishing & forestry	20.7 %
Architecture	- 7.3%
Automotive	17.5 %
Banking, finance & insurance	- 2.9%
Construction & roading	8.7 %
Customer service	6.4 %
Education	5.9 %
Engineering	3.7 %
Executive & general management	- 15.9%
Government & council	15.8 %
Healthcare	6.0 %
Hospitality & tourism	- 2.8%
HR & recruitment	0.4 %
IT	- 20.8%
Legal	15.2 %
Manufacturing & operations	28.5 %
Marketing, media & communications	- 16.5%
Office & administration	- 1.8%
Property	- 5.3%
Retail	- 12.3%
Sales	- 12.0%
Science & technology	15.3 %
Trades & services	- 1.6%
Transport & logistics	21.2 %

Grand Total	2.6 %
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Average rates of pay by job sub-category: Q4 2017

	Highest Paid	Pay Rate (\$)
1	IT project managers	142,143
2	IT managers	141,449
3	Information architects	129,379
4	Business & systems analysts	121,090
5	Construction & roading project managers	115,992

	Lowest Paid	Pay Rate (\$)
1	Housekeepers	37,222
2	Kitchen staff	38,422
3	Retail assistants	39,708
4	Reception & front desk	39,805
5	Bar staff & baristas	41,039

Total listings growth by region: Q4 2017

Region	Year-on-year % change Q4 2017 vs Q4 2016
Auckland	- 2.8%
Bay Of Plenty	2.3 %
Canterbury	1.0 %
Gisborne	2.8 %
Hawke's Bay	11.7 %
Manawatu / Wanganui	9.6 %
Marlborough	47.0 %

Nelson / Tasman	16.8 %
Northland	15.5 %
Otago	16.8 %
Southland	37.2 %
Taranaki	0.2 %
Waikato	12.1 %
Wellington	- 1.6%
West Coast	32.4 %
Grand Total	2.6 %

Average rates of pay by sub-region: Q4 2017

	Highest Paid	Pay Rate (\$)
1	Auckland City	72,383
2	Wellington	69,787
3	Kaipara	63,528
4	South Waikato	61,783
5	Whakatane	60,068

	Lowest Paid	Pay Rate (\$)
1	Westland	47,405
2	Waitomo	47,565
3	Ruapehu	50,738
4	Porirua	50,740
5	Mackenzie	50,776