

SUCCESS THROUGH SKILLS

SKILLS STRATEGY FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

ISSUE 1 – SEPT 07

Labour Market Information:

- [Economic Overview](#)
- [Economic Bulletin](#)
- [Labour Market Bulletin](#)
- [NI Labour Force Survey](#)

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Welcome to the first Department for Employment and Learning's skills update. Our people, and the skills they have, are the key to our economy reaching its full potential. With the increasing international competition from emerging markets in Asia, as well as the newer members of the EU, Northern Ireland can no longer compete as a low wage, low skilled economy. To succeed in a future global market, Northern Ireland will have to transform itself into an economy based on high value added jobs. We can only achieve this with a highly skilled workforce.



Qualifications are an accepted measure of the skills of the workforce. In 1999, only 58% of the Northern Ireland population were qualified to at least a Level 2, equivalent to 5 good GCSEs. By the end of 2006, this had risen to over 66%. However there is still much work to be done if we are to achieve the vision of an internationally competitive Northern Ireland.

So how can we achieve this vision? There are three key elements to success. Firstly, we must ensure that the supply of skilled people into the workforce meets the needs of our economy, building on the success of our Further Education Colleges, Universities and professional and technical training provision. Secondly, we must upskill our current workforce – some 75% of the 2020 working age population have already reached school leaving age. Thirdly, we must expand our current workforce to a size that can fuel our economy. In doing so we must work hard to offer the support to allow those who are currently economically inactive the opportunity to enter the workforce. Not only will this benefit our economy but it will also, just as importantly, help break down the barriers to social inclusion.

Success through Skills, Northern Ireland's first comprehensive strategy for the development of skills aims to do just this. Through these regular emails, and the [Department for Employment and Learning website](#), we hope to keep you informed of the developments in this area. I would encourage you to forward this email to your colleagues, who can easily subscribe to receive further updates. The challenge that faces us is great - only by working together can we hope to achieve it. I am confident that we have the ability and the will to succeed.

SIR REG EMPEY MLA – Minister for Employment and Learning

[Success through Skills Progress Report](#)



WorldSkills 2011

In 2011, the UK will be hosting the [WorldSkills](#) competition. To find out more, we interviewed Andrew Blair, the UK's gold medal winner.

[Read more](#)

Training for Success

This new provision aimed at 16-24 year olds went live in early September. To find out more, check out the [Training for Success Website](#).

National Training Awards – 16th October

The National Training Awards are the UK's number one accolade for businesses, organisations and individuals who have achieved lasting excellence and success through training and learning.

[Read More](#)

Feedback from the 2nd Annual NI Skills Conference

Over 260 people attended this conference in May. Due to timing constraints and the volume of questions submitted to the panel, it was not possible for all the questions to be answered on the day. However, we have sourced answers to all the questions and these can be found [here](#).

Leitch Review of Skills

The [Leitch Review](#) was commissioned, to identify the UK's optimal skills mix for the year 2020. It seeks to specify what needs to be done in order to maximise economic growth, productivity and social justice, and to consider the policy implications of achieving the level of change required. Leitch has undoubtedly made a strong case for the skills agenda and his compelling vision for the UK to be a world leader in skills by 2020. Whilst the main report recommendations are largely for England only, they have been commended to Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales for their consideration. Northern Ireland is already some way down the road of demand led skills acquisition thanks to [Success through Skills](#).

How can DEL help employers?

- [Essential Skills Training](#)
- [Intro Management Development Programme](#)
- [Management Analysis and Planning \(MAP\)](#)
- [Training for Success](#)
- [Management & Leadership Development Programme](#)
- [Investors in People](#)
- [New Deal](#)
- [Bridge to Employment](#)
- [Disablement Advisory Service](#)
- [Employment Rights](#)
- [Employment Service](#)

If you are not an employer, [click here](#) to find out other ways DEL can help you