Connecting businesses in Provincial Victoria with skills from around the world...
This report is prepared on behalf of 11 Victorian Regional Areas that actively work to attract skilled professionals to their Region.

Consultants for this report: Tim Nott and Matters More. May 2011
Regional Victoria has historically experienced difficulty in accessing the full range of skills required to grow the local economy.

In the future, access to skilled workers will become more difficult for a number of reasons, including:

- the labourforce is ageing,
- the nature of work has become more skilled resulting in increased demand for skilled workers, and
- the labourforce has become more mobile.

In the suite of programs to address existing and future skills shortages, the attraction of skilled overseas professionals is a complementary activity that allows employers to access a ready pool of skilled labour for positions they cannot fill locally. Global Skills for Provincial Victoria (GSPV) is a Victorian State Government sponsored program that aims to assist employers across regional Victoria fill critical skilled positions. The program forms part of the Global Skills for Victoria Strategy. It operates across 11 regions and represents 34 local Councils.

The Program has:

- Assisted regional employers to source and attract 744 skilled overseas professionals into regional Victoria to fill vacancies that could not be filled locally. In turn, this has created a further 1,079 direct and indirect jobs across regional Victoria as a result of the flow on industrial effects.
- Increased annual economic output by $353 million across regional Victoria from the direct increase in output and indirect flow on effects from the creation of these jobs.
- Welcomed 3,000 new residents into regional Victoria being the total number of skilled overseas professionals and their family members.
- Facilitated employers in regional Victoria to fill critical skill shortages across 225 diverse occupations.

The range of businesses that have benefited from employing skilled migrants through the Program is diverse. Large employers, particularly in the Health Care and Social Assistance Sector, have successfully accessed skilled professionals through the program: over one third of the difficult to fill vacancies have been in this sector. Other industries that have benefited is the Manufacturing sector (16%) and the Agricultural sector (15%). Furthermore, many of these employers have been able to improve service delivery levels and expand their product range due to the access to overseas professionals.

Community and cultural benefits of the Programs is one of its positive spin-offs. The attraction to rural and regional Victoria of a wide range individuals from all over the world is invaluable – they bring a global perspective which can be very educational for both employers and co-workers, and also contribute to the rich social fabric within each local community.

“This type of skilled labour does not exist in Australia”
- Gary Matuschka, Treloar Roses

“This is enriching the culture of our communities”
- Janet Heard, Wimmera Skilled Migration Coordinator

“It can take a fair bit of time and energy to go through the process, but having the consistent support of the Program helped us every step of the way…”
- Max Vallance, Business Partner, Braebrook Pastoral Company

“The direct impact of skilled migration is significant. Filling an identified skill gap can increase productivity…”
- Jo Bourke, Executive Director, Wimmera Development Association
Regional Victoria has historically experienced difficulty in accessing the full range of skills required to grow the local economy. Access to skilled workers will become more difficult in the future for a number of reasons. The labour-force is ageing, the nature of work has become more skilled and skilled workers have become more mobile.

Ageing labour force
Over the last 20 years, the profile of the Australian labour force has changed. The 55+ age group has almost doubled in size, from 9.1% to 16.5%. Between 2010 and 2050, Australia’s median age is expected to grow from 37 to 45. In comparison to Australia as a whole, regional Victoria already has a labour-force that is older than the national trend (see chart below).

As the generation of “Baby Boomers” (those now aged over 50) retire over the next 15 years, it will create a shortage of workers, particularly those with higher skills.

Consider the following indicators:
- Average age of nurses in 2008 was 44.1 years up from 43.3 years in 2004.
- The proportion of nurses aged 50+ increased from 29.1% in 2004 to 34.9% 2008.
- In 2003, 51% of teachers in Government primary schools across Australia were aged over 45.
- In 2010, 39% of GPs in regional Victoria were over 50.

Growing demand for skilled workers
Skilled occupations have grown in Victoria compared with the less skilled occupations over the ten years to 2010. Growth in the number of jobs for skilled professionals and managers was more than the growth in all the other occupations combined.

These trends are expected to continue.

A more mobile labour force
Today’s labour force is highly mobile according to the Australian Government’s Report: The Mobile Skilled Workforce.

The report highlights data that shows today’s 18-40 year olds have held an average of 10.5 jobs and that many rural communities with ageing populations and limited opportunities for young people have a flow of skilled people through their community such as locums, seasonal workers or contractors.

According to the report:
- GPs no longer spend their working lives in one town.
- Locum doctors who work in one place for 2-3 years are becoming the norm.
- Teachers are highly mobile.
- Sea/reef change and downskilling is resulting in people moving to rural areas often only to move on again after a few years.
- The natural resource boom is drawing skilled workers away from some regional areas to mining towns.

Skills solutions for the Future
Addressing the skill challenges for the future will require a range of solutions. Whilst training and education to up-skill the existing labour force in regional Victoria remains the priority, the attraction of skilled overseas professionals is a complementary activity that allows employers to access a ready pool of skilled labour for positions they cannot fill locally.
The Program operates across 11 regions and represents 34 local Councils.

The program
Global Skills for Provincial Victoria (GSPV) is a Victorian State Government sponsored program that aims to assist employers across regional Victoria fill critical skills shortages that they are unable to fill locally.

The program forms part of the Global Skills for Victoria Strategy. GSPV commenced in January 2008 and is funded to the 30 June 2011.

The Program operates across 11 regions and represents 34 local Councils.

The GSPV program aims to:
- Assist employers in regional areas identify the range of skills that cannot be met locally;
- Work closely with employers and communities to develop and implement services to attract skilled overseas professionals to their region;
- Provide locally developed solutions to assist skilled overseas professionals into employment;
- Deliver a range of strategies to assist overseas skilled professionals and their families settle into local life; and
- Coordinate the broader marketing and post-arrival services delivered under the Global Skills for Victoria Strategy to maximise benefits to regional communities.

Implementation
The GSPV program is delivered across 11 Victorian Regions. Each Region has a dedicated Coordinator with a locally developed work plan to guide activities.

GSPV Coordinators have established local employer and stakeholder networks to encourage engagement in the program. GSPV Coordinators have developed solid relationships within State and Federal Government to ensure they can navigate within the bureaucracy involved in sourcing and attracting overseas skilled professionals into Australia. GSPV Coordinators also have a strong and valuable network between themselves to share experiences, tackle issues collectively and disseminate information on the skill sets of overseas professionals with an interest in regional Victoria. Successful delivery of the program without this level of cooperation would not be possible.

Coordinators deliver a range of services:
- Work with local employers to identify the range of skills shortages that are unable to be met locally.
- Provide assistance and referrals to employers to enable them to source and attract skilled overseas professionals into their workplace in the most efficient manner.
- Deliver a range of retention activities to welcome new overseas skilled professionals and their family members into the local community and ensure they remain in the Region in the long term.
- Contribute to a range of promotional activities, such as the Live in Victoria website, local and overseas expos and a range of marketing campaigns to showcase the many opportunities on offer in regional Victoria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Participating local Council</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ballarat Skilled Migration Project</td>
<td>Ballarat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bendigo Skilled Migration Project</td>
<td>Greater Bendigo, Loddon, Mount Alexander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geelong Region Skilled Migration Project</td>
<td>Greater Geelong, Golden Plains, Queenscliffe, Surf Coast, Colac-Otway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goulburn Murray Global Skills for Provincial Victoria Program</td>
<td>Campaspe, Greater Shepparton, Moira</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grampians Pyrenees Skilled Migration Program</td>
<td>Ararat, Northern Grampians, Pyrenees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wimmera-Southern Mallee Skilled Migration Program</td>
<td>Buloke, Hindmarsh, Horsham, West Wimmera, Yarriambiack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Skills for Mildura</td>
<td>Mildura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East Victoria Global Skills Project</td>
<td>Alpine, Benalla, Mansfield, Wangaratta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swan Hill Region Global Skills Program</td>
<td>Swan Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great South Coast: Growth through Skilled Migration</td>
<td>Colac-Otway, Corangamite, Glenelg, Moyne, Southern Grampians, Warrnambool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wodonga Skilled Migration</td>
<td>Wodonga, Towong, Indigo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GLOBAL SKILLS FOR PROVINCIAL VICTORIA (continued)

Key results of GSPV Program

Between January 2008 and December 2010, GSPV has:

- Assisted regional employers to source and attract 744 skilled overseas professionals into regional Victoria to fill vacancies that could not be filled locally.
- Welcomed 3,000 new residents into regional Victoria being the total number of skilled overseas professionals and their family members.
- Facilitated employers in regional Victoria to fill critical skill shortages across 225 diverse occupations. Over one third of the difficult to fill vacancies have been in the Health Care and Social Assistance Sector, 16% have been in the manufacturing sector and a further 15% have been in the Agriculture sector.
- Difficult to fill occupations facilitated by GSPV include registered nurses and nurse practitioners, cooks and chefs, farmers and farm managers and general management roles.

Program contribution to local economy

REPLAN is an economic modelling and analysis tool designed for use in local areas to detail economic scenarios. Combined results from undertaking a REMPLAN analysis show the benefit of GSPV over the period 2008 to 2010 as:

- A direct increase in annual economic output of $204 million corresponding from the direct creation of 744 jobs.
- A direct increase in demand for intermediate goods and services of $85 million.
- The creation of a further 1,079 direct and indirect jobs across regional Victoria as a result of the flow on industrial effects in terms of increased demand for local purchases of goods and services.
- An increase in annual economic output of $333 million from the direct increase in output and indirect flow on effects from the creation of additional jobs.

Community Benefits of GSPV

The GSPV program works to assist local employers to meet their critical skill shortage needs. Many of the employers assisted by GSPV have been able to improve service delivery levels and in some instances allowed the business to continue to operate. Skilled overseas professionals have also been invaluable in the ongoing upskilling of the local labour force. One of the spin offs of the program is the attraction of a wide range individuals from all over the world who return contribute to the rich social fabric within each local community.

Skilled migration manager Janet Heard said many of the migrants working in the Wimmera had established their families in the region.

“This is enriching the culture of our communities,” she said.

“Business owners and their staff learn about the beliefs, customs and values of another country, and gain an appreciation of the lifestyle and workplace opportunities in Australia.

“The Wimmera is much more multicultural now than ever – we really do live in a global market and our community reflects that.”
FOCUS IS ON QUALITY HEALTHCARE IN MILDURA

Mildura in North West Victoria is a thriving provincial centre in a region where the economy is driven by agriculture, tourism and regional services such as retailing, health and education.

The Rural City of Mildura and surrounding townships of Red Cliffs, Merbein, Irymple and Ouyen has a resident population of 60,000 people.

Retail trade provides the greatest number of jobs (15%), followed by agriculture (13%), health care and social assistance (11%) and manufacturing (11%).

Availability of quality health care maintained with the help of skilled migrants

In common with many regions, skills in the health service in the Mildura region are in short supply and this affects the capacity of the area to attract skilled workers in other areas.

From a recent skills shortage survey, gaps were identified in the supply of:
- Division 1 Nurses
- Midwives
- General Practitioners
- Physiotherapists Grade 1
- Social Workers
- Occupational Therapists – Grade 1

To assist with closing these skills gaps, the Skilled Migration Coordinator in Mildura is working with the Northern Mallee Primary Care Partnership health industry cluster. Together they are developing an employment vacancies register to attract suitable skilled migrants to Mildura. Already vacancies targeting health professionals in the United Kingdom are posted on Ramsay Health Care’s website which is accessed through the Live and Work in Mildura website.

Key results of GSVP in Mildura, 2008 to 2010
- 62 skilled professionals attracted to fill critical vacancies
- Direct impact on regional output of $15.2 million
- Direct and indirect impact on regional output of $27.1m

The new migrants are predominantly from India (30%) and the Philippines (28%).

From a social and community perspective, the new skilled migrants and their families have contributed to the cultural mix in the Mildura region.

For further information: skilledmigration@mildura.vic.gov.au

As well as helping navigate the sometimes tricky bureaucratic and visa requirements the Skilled Migration Coordinator is able to link employers and employees.

Tracy Kemp, Podiatrist, Sunraysia Community Health Services

Podiatrist Tracy Kemp relocated to Mildura from her native England to work at Sunraysia Community Health Services.

In describing how she came about arriving in Victoria’s weather hotspot, Tracy said “I was informed of the podiatrist job being advertised and researched the area, as I’d never heard of it before. Generally the English imagine Australia to be beaches, Uluru or like Crocodile Dundee, so I was attracted by what I learnt about the inland city and I wanted to know more.”

Like many other migrants who have taken up work in Mildura, Tracy was supported throughout the process by the Skilled Migration Coordinator, who also works closely with employers seeking to recruit and hire skilled professionals from overseas. As well as helping navigate the sometimes tricky bureaucratic and visa requirements, the Skilled Migration Coordinator is able to link employers and employees up with other local service providers and community networks to help new migrants settle in.

With this assistance and support many qualified professionals have moved from all over the world providing much needed professional skills in roles that could not be filled by locals.
Swan Hill on the Murray River is a thriving regional centre with a population of 22,000 in the Rural City of Swan Hill and 5,000 in Wakool Shire in NSW. Agriculture is the main industry providing 23% of jobs, followed by retail (11%), health care (9%) and manufacturing (9%).

New chefs, new choice...
The Swan Hill region is well known for the variety of food that is grown there as well as its many wineries. Thanks to the Skilled Migration Program, there are now new ways this produce is being prepared and served in restaurants in Swan Hill. The Yutaka Sawa Japanese Restaurant in Swan Hill was successful in employing a skilled Japanese cook recently, enabling them to continue to provide the region with authentic high quality Japanese and Asian cooking.

Owner and manager of Yutaka Sawa Japanese Restaurant, Tom Liang said “without the RSMS visa and the services provided by the Swan Hill Council Skilled Migration Program we would not have been able to acquire a cook with the appropriate experience and qualifications, which is obviously essential to the success of my business.” Their employee, Wayne Wang, is a highly experienced Japanese chef who is fitting nicely into the Swan Hill lifestyle and the customers are delighted according to Mr Liang.

Another success story in the hospitality industry is Rehman Aziz. Mr Aziz obtained his permanent residency working at the Carriages Restaurant in Swan Hill. He has now opened his own successful restaurant called Sabroso (meaning “tasty” in Spanish).

Key results of GSVP in Swan Hill, 2008 to 2010
• 93 skilled professionals attracted to fill critical vacancies
• Direct impact on regional output of $27.2 million
• Direct and indirect impact on regional output of $44.9 million

For further information: nkeighran@swanhill.vic.gov.au

Rehman Aziz, started in Swan Hill working at the Carriages Restaurant and now has his own successful restaurant
The Wimmera-Southern Mallee region in North West Victoria is an extensive agriculturally-based region. It is relatively sparsely populated – 46,000 residents settled on farms and in Horsham and a number of smaller towns spread through the region. Agribusiness is the main economic driver in the region, with regional services provided in Horsham.

**Economic impact of Skilled Migrants**

The economic benefits of skilled migration made front page news at The Advertiser in November 2010. The impact is measured using REMPLAN, a regional input-output model which is used to assess the direct and flow on benefits to the regional industry based on employment, wages and salaries, output and Gross Regional Product.

“The direct impact of the skilled migration program on the participating businesses is significant. Filling an identified skill gap can increase productivity, enable the business to address previously unmet demand, provide new services, improve quality of delivery and have more certainty around planning” says executive director of Wimmera Development Association, Jo Bourke.

Skilled migrants are employed across a broad range of industries, although the health and community services industry benefits the most from their skills as 41% are employed in this industry. 12% are employed in manufacturing, 8% in property, business, accommodation and hospitality, and 7% in transport, storage and agriculture.

**Key results of GSVP in Wimmera-Southern Mallee, 2008 to 2010**

- 65 skilled professionals attracted to fill critical vacancies
- Direct increase in regional output of $22.9 million
- Direct and indirect impact on regional output of $39.1m

**Appreciation of Skilled Migrants – a new category of Business Awards**

The PowerCor Wimmera Business Awards are a hotly contested event in the Southern Mallee region. To recognise the importance of the contribution of skilled migrants in this agricultural region, this year a new category of award was introduced: Contribution through Skilled Migration sponsored by Global Skills for Provincial Victoria.

Seven businesses nominated their enterprises in the category, which was won by Johnson Asahi.

For further information: jheard@wda.org.au

**PowerCor-Wimmera Business Awards: Contribution through Skilled Migration**

Winner: Johnson Asahi

For the contribution of three Pilipino mechanics, Jason Agustin, Alex Susuman, and Gerard Atividad who are employed as skilled migrants to maintain critical machinery on the production line of Johnson Asahi.

This specialist work has enable increased efficiencies in the production of oaten hay for the export market and hay and straw for horses and cattle in the domestic market.
The Grampians Pyrenees boasts spectacular scenery, and a series of strong regional centres and historic small towns. The region has a population of 31,000 residents within the municipalities of Northern Grampians Shire, Rural City of Ararat, and Pyrenees Shire.

The regional economy is driven by agribusiness, including wine-making, tourism, manufacturing and mining. Regional services are provided in the main towns of Ararat and Stawell.

**Linking to local services**

Retention of skilled professionals is an issue faced in many regional locations. In the Grampians Pyrenees region, welcome programs and groups have been established to ensure skilled migrants are linked up with local services and their families are assisted with settling in.

**Welcome Programs in Northern Grampians & Ararat Rural City are:**

The main objective is to welcome and assist migrants with settling into their new communities. Newcomers are linked with a volunteer “buddy” who can assist with English conversation, social networking and offer practical information. Cultural diversity and awareness is promoted in the community and is mutually beneficial to the migrants and the local community.

Mumtana is one of the volunteer coordinators of the “Welcome Group” in Ararat that welcomes and assists newcomers into the community.

**Road Safety Information Sessions**

Mumtana was also one of 20 people who participated in the Road Safety information sessions specifically for migrants. The sessions were conducted to assist new residents in obtaining a Victorian drivers licence which can improve their employment prospects in rural parts of our region. This initiative is a partnership between the GSPV, TCP, VicRoads, Victoria Police, RACV, Private providers and local government.

“...the consistent support of the Program helped us every step of the way”

Max Vallance

**Key results of GSPV in Grampians Pyrenees, 2008 to 2010**

- 52 skilled professionals attracted to fill critical vacancies
- Direct impact on regional output of $9.6 million
- Direct and indirect impact on regional output of $25.3m

**Piggery values migrant expertise**

Wadih Saab, from the Philippines, has been applying his expertise in animal husbandry at the Braebrook Pastoral Company piggery which has 4,500 pigs.

Business partner Max Vallance said Wadih had the right qualifications and industry experience, but most importantly he had an admirable work ethic.

“We had a lot of trouble filling positions at the piggery locally, so we were pleased to find Wadih who made the move here from the Philippines with his wife Annieve,” Mr Vallance said. “Wadih is a great team leader and has thrown himself into the job”

Mr Vallance said the piggery employed two other men from the Philippines and one from China. He said the Regional Skilled Migration Program had been invaluable with helping him through the visa and application process.

“It can take a fair bit of time and energy to go through the process, but having the consistent support of the Program helped us every step of the way,” he said. “Not only with the recruitment side of things, but helping to organise staff accommodation and linking them to essential services and social opportunities, particularly with other migrant families.”

Mr Vallance said that making the effort to find the right staff was paying off, with productivity and sales at the piggery on the increase and the business experiencing better staff retention rates.

For further information: KPeters@ararat.vic.gov.au

Photos: (from left to right) Mumtana Waseem and her daughter Una; Max and Wadih
The Great South Coast region in south western Victoria has a population of 128,000 and a diverse range of economic drivers including agribusiness, forestry, manufacturing and tourism as well as regional services in the main towns of Warrnambool, Colac, Hamilton and Portland.

The clean and green agricultural produce of the region is exported around the world as well as supplying local and national markets.

**Having trouble finding a rose budder?**

Well so did Treloar Roses! As the nation’s largest rose dealer, for years Treloars has counted on the skills of a team of mostly British specialists to attach new cuttings to established rootstock and remove unwanted buds.

For each of the 700 varieties that Treloar handle, the method is potentially different. And then there is the identification of dozens of rose diseases.

No wonder that Treloars were having difficulty with finding the skilled staff to work accurately and quickly with the approximately 700,000 roses that they grow every year.

“This type of skilled labour does not exist in Australia” explains Gary Matouschka of Treloar Roses.

**Key results of GSPV in Great South Coast Region, 2008 to 2010**

- 84 skilled professionals attracted to fill critical vacancies
- Direct increase in regional output of $25.9 million
- Direct and indirect impact on regional output of $43.3m

Every year Treloar Roses invite 5 – 6 rosebudders from overseas to assist, and Carl Davies from Liverpool, England has been coming to their Portland property, Bolwarra, for over 17 years.

Issues with his children’s schooling, the continued travel and an urge to settle meant that Carl Davies decided to settle in Australia. The business is now sufficiently advanced to be able to employ staff with his skills year round, and his presence means that they can start new projects which otherwise would not go ahead.

Carl Davies is now working with three young apprentices and passing on his accumulated skills obtained from an apprenticeship in Germany, further training in Denmark, the UK and France and years of working in the industry.

“Hopefully, this reliance on non-residents will be reduced over time if we are able to successfully train and retain staff” says Mr Matouschka.

For further information: phoggan@warrnambool.vic.gov.au

“This type of skilled labour does not exist in Australia”

Gary Matuschka, Treloar Roses”

Photo: (below) • Treloar Roses
Geelong is Victoria’s largest provincial city. The City and surrounding region has a population of 285,000 residents within the municipalities of Geelong, Surf Coast Shire, Golden Plains, Colac-Otway and the Borough of Queenscliffe.

In Geelong, the population is growing and ageing. This has increased the demand for all healthcare services and health care professionals. The Geelong Region Skilled Migration Project is assisting employers in health care and across all industry sectors to fill vacancies that cannot be filled locally. The Project has assisted Barwon Health, Victoria’s largest regional health care organisation to attract a Nurse Unit Manager Andrea Russell to Geelong.

Therese Cotter, Director of Nursing, Geelong Hospital is more than pleased with her new staff member. “Andrea had broad experience, but also had specific experience in best practice ward management, which the hospital was just about to implement: “We desperately needed a change on that specific ward, with an emphasis on positive people management, and Andrea seemed to posses all the necessary skills. We would have been back to square one treading water, if not sinking, if we had not recruited Andrea. We may have found an interim solution to manage day to day, but we desperately needed leadership.” Andrea Russell was recruited from the UK and is now very much enjoying working for Barwon Health, “They are an excellent employer. The health care system in Geelong is equal, if not better, to any in the UK. Geelong hospital is better resourced, in terms of nursing ratios, than other hospitals that i have worked in and this makes a huge difference.” Andrea’s husband Paul obtained work in the Victorian Public Service.

“We would have been back to square one treading water, if not sinking, if we had not recruited Andrea”...
Therese Cotter, Geelong Hospital

Key results of GSPV in Geelong, 2008 to 2010
• 120 skilled professionals attracted to Geelong to assist fill critical vacancies registered by employers
• Direct increase in regional economic output of $30.7 million
• Direct and indirect impact on regional economic output of $58.9 million
• Skilled occupations facilitated by program: sonographer, radiographers, public health dentist, specialist medical and nursing practitioners, social workers, automotive and diesel mechanics, engineers and project managers

Connecting New Arrivals into the Community
The Geelong Skilled Migration Project places great importance on assisting skilled overseas professionals and their families settle into the community.

“We want to ensure that the families we attract to Geelong stay in Geelong in the long term. Ensuring people feel welcomed in those first few months can make all the difference” says Anne O’Brien, Geelong’s Skilled Migration Coordinator.

Retention activities used by the Project include:
• Connecting with skilled professionals prior to arrival.
• A “Welcome Session” that includes a Welcome Pack and Guides on Living and Finding Work in Geelong.
• A Buddy Program to assist settlement.
• Regular social networking events.
• Assisting spouses to find employment.

For further information: skilledmigration@geelongcity.vic.gov.au
Ballarat is serious about meeting the skills shortages of employers

As one of the Nations fastest growing inland cities, Ballarat’s population is planned to surge over the next 25 years. Indeed Ballarat is growing faster than the Victorian average.

Planning growth on this scale is a significant task, but one which the City of Ballarat is progressing, in combination with government, business and the community. But, in order to deliver sustainable growth, which strengthens communities, some new approaches – and new initiatives – are required. The GSPV program is an example of these required initiatives.

Ballarat is embracing multiculturalism as a means of attracting high quality workers from overseas. This is undertaken through an extensive marketing, advertising and business awareness campaign of the GSPV program. This is a means of sourcing, attracting and retaining skilled migrants to the region and beyond.

The GSPV program is complemented by the City of Ballarat’s Multicultural Ambassador Program - aimed to enhance community awareness and foster social acceptance of migrants in Ballarat through sharing their stories and implementing community development projects.

**New residents program**

To assist in the transition to Ballarat, the City of Ballarat invites all new residents to participate in the New Residents program to help settle into city’s lifestyle quickly and easily.

The program initiatives include:

- Welcome function – informal way to meet new people.
- Welcome Booklet provides information about council and non council community services.
- The booklet includes thousands of dollars worth of vouchers at local businesses.

**Key results of GSPV in Ballarat, 2008 to 2010**

- 30 skilled professionals attracted to fill critical vacancies
- Direct increase in regional output of $9.69 million
- Direct and indirect impact on regional output of $17.1 million

**Multicultural Ambassador’s Program**

- Involves the appointment of 10 Ballarat residents from various cultural backgrounds who provide leadership and assist Council, migrants and the wider community to ensure that multiculturalism in Ballarat is a productive and positive experience for all citizens.
- Managed and resourced by City of Ballarat.
- Winner of the prestigious Victorian Multicultural Award for Local Government as part of the 2010 Victorian Multicultural Commission Awards for Excellence.
- First launched in 2006 as part of Council’s Migrant Attraction and Retention Population Strategy. Following positive evaluation, a second program commenced in 2009.
- The results of the program are evident in the growing multiculturalism of our community, as more and more migrants are choosing Ballarat as a place to start a new life (Judy Verlin, Mayor).

For further information: skilledmigration@ballarat.vic.gov.au

“This Award is recognition of our combined efforts to embrace diversity,”

Ballarat Mayor, Judy Verlin

**Case Study**

Maria comes from Iran, with a Doctorate of Medicine and 4 years of experience working as doctor in Iran.

She came to Australia for further studies and eventually met Mel Razmjoo an Iranian, a GSPV participant and City of Ballarat Multicultural Ambassador. It is a beautiful love story that was highlighted with a Ballarat and Iran wedding in December 2010.

Through the Multicultural Ambassador Program, Maria was assisted by one of the Multicultural Ambassadors to gain experience through an observation program in the Psychiatry Division at the Ballarat Health Service (BHS). Maria’s experience at BHS has been proven to be invaluable whilst she was studying to pass the Australian Medical Board exams. Maria has since successfully completed her exams and has commenced work as a doctor with the Ballarat Health Service in April 2011. Certainly, her position is much needed and valued by the Ballarat Community.
Bendigo continues to go from strength to strength with more employers engaging skilled overseas professionals. Historic Bendigo is the key provincial centre in central Victoria with a population of 129,000 residents within the municipalities of Greater Bendigo, Loddon Shire, and Mt Alexander Shire.

Manufacturing delivers the largest contribution to the Bendigo economy, followed by: construction; property & business services, retail & whole trade; finance & insurance and Health & community services.

Since 2008, the key sectors utilising the Bendigo Skilled Migration Program have included: Health, Manufacturing, Agriculture, IT and Professional Services.

Bendigo has developed a web based tool to promote opportunities for skilled migrants. The GSPV Program has enabled Bendigo to promote internationally, including a South African Campaign in 2008 and research on best practices on international migration.

The research was undertaken by Professor John Tomaney, from University of Newcastle (UK) and Monash University, Melbourne together with Dr Stuart Dawley from University of Newcastle. The research demonstrated that the Bendigo Program performed well against international cities and validated comparative high level benefits for local industry.

Key results of GSPV in Bendigo, 2008 to 2010

• 65 skilled professionals attracted to fill critical vacancies
• Direct increase in regional output of $16.8 million
• Direct and indirect impact on regional output of $31.1 million

Karl Lawson
Karl comes from the midlands of Kwazulu Natal South Africa, and has 18 years experience in the Poultry Industry. He holds the position of General Manager for Hazeldene’s Chicken Farm Pty Ltd, an integrated poultry business and the largest employer in Bendigo. Karl moved to Bendigo in December 2006. “I love Bendigo, I cannot find one negative.”

John Loughlin
John, a Poultry Technician Officer with Broiler Breeders Australia, originated from UK and has lived in South Africa for over 2 decades working professionally within the poultry industry. John and his family are now permanent residents “We are very happy as Australia is a safe place for us and the countryside is very similar to South Africa”. John is pictured with visiting UK Journalist to Bendigo, Rupert Steiner Chief City Correspondent, from the Daily Mail.

Gordon Hardcastle
Gordon comes from the UK and holds the position of General Manager with Motherson Elastomers. Gordon and his family have enjoyed living and working in the Bendigo region for over 3 years. Gordon is pictured with Linda Holmes, representing Invest Victoria, Department of Business and Innovation, State Government of Victoria.

For further information: skilledmigration@bendigo.vic.gov.au
SUCCESSFULLY ASSISTING GOULBURN MURRAY EMPLOYERS

Known as the food bowl of Victoria, many of the Goulburn Murray region’s businesses are involved in horticultural production or a variety of food processing and supporting industries.

The region has a population of 130,000 residents across Greater Shepparton, Moira Shire and Campaspe Shire Councils. In recent years, from 2005 to 2009, the population has increased by 1.4% per annum.

Assisting Employers in the Goulburn Murray Region

There is a long tradition in the Goulburn Murray region of assisting employers with sourcing skilled workers, and since January 2008 this assistance has been provided via the skilled migration coordinator, through the Global Skills for Provincial Victoria Program.

The ways in which the skilled migration coordinator assists employers include:

• Conducting one-on-one meetings with employers to inform about the program, targeting employers in health and engineering industries (severe skills shortages)
• Providing information about sourcing skilled migrants on the Goulburn Murray Region website (Skilled Migration tab) via letters, info sessions and fact sheets
• Speaking at industry specific meetings about skilled migration as part of a broader agenda
• Providing information to peak bodies and industry association to assist in a strategic approach to meeting skills shortages
• Distributing a bi-monthly newsletter to employers with a list of available skilled migrants residing in the Goulburn Valley, along with new and up to date information about what the skilled migration program has to offer.
• Sending out press releases and preparing case studies

Key results of GSVP in Goulburn Murray Region, 2008 to 2010

• 101 skilled professionals attracted to fill critical vacancies
• Direct impact on regional output of $19.3 million
• Direct and indirect impact on regional output of $34.6 million

For further information: skilledmigration@shepparton.vic.gov.au

Case Study:

Riverland Oilseed Processors, Numurkah

Riverland Oilseeds Processors crush locally grown oilseeds to produce oil and feed meal products for domestic and international markets.

Riverland is proud to implement best practices in their production; they won the award for Environmental Excellence in the 2010 Business Excellence Awards in Moira Shire. Riverland relies heavily on highly skilled staff to maintain an automated production process and have sourced skilled staff through the Global Skills for Provincial Victoria Program.

Joe, Refinery Technologist, from India

Dave, General Manager, from Trinidad
THE ULTIMATE IN LIVEABILITY

The North East Region is a prosperous region with a regional population of approximately 65,000 residents in the municipalities of Wangaratta, Benalla, Alpine and Mansfield.

Tourism is a strong industry in the region, with the Victorian Alpine areas attracting winter visitors and the fertile valleys and vineyards attracting tourist year round.

Residents remain in the region through retirement and there is in demand for healthcare and in particular for aged care professionals. The skilled migration program is assisting with meeting these shortages in the Region.

Skilled Migration Coordinators provide applicants with assistance with settlement and linking into the local community to assist them with the transition to a new life and job.

Key results of GSVP in North East Region, 2008 to 2010

- 23 skilled professionals attracted to fill critical vacancies
- Direct increase in regional output of $25.9 million
- Direct and indirect impact on regional output of $43.7 million

For further information: migration@wangaratta.vic.gov.au

Olivia Stuart, General Practitioner, Ovens and King Community Health Service

Olivia Stuart had her pick of general practitioner (GP) jobs when she moved to Victoria in 2008. ‘I applied for 10 jobs and was offered them all — and that was just in one part of the state,’ she laughed.

I could have had my pick of jobs anywhere in regional Victoria. There’s a shortage here of GPs and other health professionals.’ The Scottish-born doctor and her Australian-born husband, Andrew, moved to Victoria with their three young sons in 2008 after 13 years in Edinburgh, Scotland. They have settled near Andrew’s family in Wangaratta.

The move has transformed Olivia’s working and family life. She left her private practice career behind in the UK and now works in community health. ‘It’s given me a great quality of life that you don’t get in private practice,’ she said. ‘I enjoy my work, I’m very well paid and our family life is much better.’ Olivia works at the Ovens and King Community Health Service in Wangaratta which has a bulk-billing medical clinic. A multi-disciplinary team delivers a broad range of primary health services.

‘Clinically the work is the same as everywhere but I work standard business hours in community health,’ Olivia said.

‘I’m home for dinner in the evenings and I’m around all weekend. I get family leave, study leave and other professional development opportunities.’

Olivia works full-time supported by a part-time GP and the centre plans to expand.

“There’s a shortage here of GPs and other health professionals.”

Olivia Stuart, GP

Wangaratta’s population is growing which means opportunities for migrants with particular professional and trade skills. Victorian Government offers a range of support services to help migrants settle.

It didn’t take long for their three boys aged eight, five and three to settle into Australian life. There’s swimming in summer when the average maximum temperature is 30ºC and in winter the average high is 12ºC which means outdoors play all year ‘round.

‘The lifestyle here is very sports and outdoors-based and there’s lots for them to do,’ Olivia said.
GOING THE EXTRA MILE IN WODONGA TO MEET SKILLS SHORTAGES

Wodonga is North East Victoria’s largest and fastest growing city and combines the convenience of a metropolitan lifestyle with the appeal of provincial city living. The city is home to approximately 37,000 residents and services a region of 170,000 people.

Wodonga’s proximity between Australia’s two largest cities - Melbourne and Sydney - provides key strategic advantages. The extensive transport network allows access to the northern, southern and western corridors of the eastern seaboard. More than 75 per cent of Australia’s population can be reached by next day transport haul.

Manufacturing is Wodonga’s primary industry sector employing over 18% of the workforce closely followed by the public administration & safety sector employing 12%.

Key results of GSPV in Wodonga Region, 2008 to 2010
- 34 skilled professionals attracted to fill critical vacancies posted by employers in Wodonga.
- A direct increase in annual regional economic output of $10.265 million
- An increase in annual economic output of $16.8 million from the direct increase in output and indirect flow on effects from the creation of 23 additional jobs in Wodonga

For further information: skilled@wodonga.vic.gov.au

When the Elmwood Medical Centre opened in April, 2007, it made a valuable contribution to the community by helping to alleviate the doctor shortage in Wodonga.

The City of Wodonga’s Skilled Migration Program first met Dr Ramesh Singh, from India, at a Skilled migrant expo in Melbourne, and introduced him to us. He became the first doctor we employed. Since then two other doctors have arrived from overseas, Dr Vijay Bhaskar from England and Dr Alfeen Varghese from Scotland. The doctors have extensive general practice experience and post-graduate medical qualifications.

Wilson Transformer Company was struggling to find enough competent trade’s people due to a large number of them heading to the mines.

“We see the skill shortage as just one the many challenges that manufacturing faces in this country, but also see the Skilled Migration Program as one of the alternatives that allow us to continue to compete not just with local business, but also overseas imports.” Wilson Transformer Company employed two welders from China which has proved to be a successful partnership.

Westmont Aged Services moved out of their comfort zone to source qualified staff from overseas and it has paid off.

Clinical services manager, Gary Martin had no idea he would gain such hard working nurses when the service was matched with two nurses from the United Kingdom – Joemon Jose and Angela McInnes.

Eight months later, Mr Martin says “it is clear the two have made a huge difference, boosting staff morale and giving Westmont the ability to provide a registered nurse during each shift.”

For further information: skilled@wodonga.vic.gov.au

Global Skills for Provincial Victoria Program - Key Results
The Global Skill For Provincial Victoria (GSPV) is delivered across 11 Victorian Regions.

2 Geelong Region
Skilled Migration Project

3 Bendigo
Skilled Migration Project

4 Wodonga
Skilled Migration

5 Goulburn Murray
Global Skills for Provincial Victoria Program

6 Mildura
Global Skills

7 Great South Coast:
Growth through Skilled Migration

8 Wimmera-Southern Mallee
Skilled Migration Program

9 Swan Hill Region
Global Skills Program

10 North East Victoria
Global Skills Project

11 Grampians Pyrenees
Skilled Pyrenees

12 Ballarat
Skilled Migration Project
GLOBAL SKILLS FOR PROVINCIAL VICTORIA

May 2011