

WESTPAC : McDERMOTT MILLER EMPLOYMENT CONFIDENCE INDEX DECEMBER 2014

BACKGROUND

The Westpac: McDermott Miller Employment Confidence Index is calculated from a specific section of the Westpac: McDermott Miller Consumer Confidence Survey. This survey is carried out under joint sponsorship by Westpac and consulting firm McDermott Miller on a quarterly basis. The questions on which the Employment Confidence Index is based were added initially to the Survey in June 2004.

EMPLOYMENT CONFIDENCE INDEX

The five Employment Confidence Index questions are:

1. *Do you think jobs are plentiful or hard to get?*
2. *Do you think job opportunities in New Zealand in a year's time compared to now will be more plentiful, harder to get or about the same?*
3. *Do you earn more, less, or the same in your paid work now compared to this time last year?*
4. *Do you expect to be earning more, less or the same in your paid work this time next year?*
5. *Would you say your job is likely to be more or less secure over the coming year than now?*

The first two questions are asked of all respondents (1557), the remainder to those declaring they are in paid work (843 or 54% of respondents).

The **Employment Confidence Index** is calculated by McDermott Miller from percentage responses to the five questions. It is 100 plus the unweighted average of the difference between positive/optimistic responses and negative/pessimistic responses. A score above 100 shows more optimism than pessimism and vice versa for a score below 100. The **Current Employment Conditions Index** is calculated similarly by McDermott Miller from the questions on perception of current job opportunities and change in personal earnings over the last year. The **Employment Expectations Index** is calculated from the questions on expectations of change over the coming year in: job opportunities, personal earnings and job security.

SURVEY SPECIFICATIONS OF DECEMBER 2014 EMPLOYMENT CONFIDENCE SURVEY

The **Sample Universe** is all households in permanent private dwellings in New Zealand. A **Sample Size** of 1557 interviews in December 2014 was obtained following a 61% response rate. Survey interviews were conducted during 1 – 11 December 2014, between the hours of 5.30 pm and 9.15 pm weekdays and 12.30 pm and 8.30 pm Saturday and Sunday.

The **Margin for error** for the questions used for the Employment Confidence survey is a maximum of plus or minus 2.5% at 95% confidence

The **Sampling Technique** employed is stratified by Regional Council region, with randomised quotas within regions based on local telephone directories. Respondent's towns of residence are recorded, allowing analysis by a three-way split: **Metropolitan Centres** (Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch) **Secondary Centres** (ranging in size from Timaru up to Hamilton and Dunedin), or **Rural** (the remainder).

The **Data Collection Methodology** is computer aided telephone interviews. The Survey is conducted by McDermott Miller. **Respondent Recruitment** selects the household member over 18 years whose birthday falls next. Up to three call-backs are mandatory where the target respondent is not available. No incentives are offered. **Quality Control** is assured by close management of field administrators and interviewers by a Senior Consultant. All telephone numbers and response codes are recorded by each interviewer and random auditing of respondents is carried out.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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