



# Armidale Regional Council Local Government Area



**Armidale**  
Regional Council



**Regional  
Development**  
*Australia*  
NORTHERN INLAND NSW



# Armidale Regional Council Local Government Area

## At a Glance

Investing or living in the Armidale Region is easy to imagine. Imagine the beautiful home that you would buy for a fraction of the cost of a home in Sydney. Imagine getting to work in 5 minutes, with no traffic jams to contend with. Think about your children walking to school, just around the corner from your home and not feeling worried. Imagine not having to worry about water restrictions and think how your garden will blossom. Living in the Armidale Region is not a figment of your imagination, it is an everyday reality for thousands of people.

The city of Armidale differs from most inland regional centres because it has a long established university, transforming it from a rural town to a sophisticated and cosmopolitan city. Through the University, TAFE, fine independent and public schools the city has become a significant education centre, creating a wider range of jobs and business opportunities than usually found in the country.

To the north of the Armidale, Guyra is a vibrant community centred amidst wild and wonderful natural attractions with a friendly, village atmosphere. A town of 2,200 people, Guyra is located in the heart of the New England Tablelands midway between Sydney and Brisbane on the New England Highway. The Guyra District is unique because it is situated on the uppermost plateau of the Great Dividing Range; from which land falls away to both east and west.

In the Guyra District you will find a diverse blend of recreational activities and facilities from trout fishing, farm stays, bird watching, fossicking, bush walking, national parks, waterfalls and scenic picnic areas.



Land area (sq. km)  
**8,624**



Population  
**29,632**



Gross Regional Product (\$M)  
**1,753**

### Major industries of employment



Average annual wage & salary income  
**\$38,908**



Average weekly rents (3 bedroom)  
**\$310**



Average monthly mortgage  
**\$1,435**



Median house price (3 bedroom)  
**\$273,000**



Average value of private sector building development  
**\$390,000**

**Contact information for Economic Development** Harold Ritch, Project Manager - Economic Development  
Ph: (02) 6770 3809 | Website: [www.armidaleregional.nsw.gov.au](http://www.armidaleregional.nsw.gov.au)



# Investment Opportunities

## Current Projects

Recent and potential projects in the Armidale Region include:

- Costa's Tomatoes Glasshouse expansion (\$65m+). One of Australia's and the Southern Hemisphere's largest and most advanced glasshouse facilities producing up to 20 million kilograms of tomatoes per year.
- New Aged Care facility, Guyra (\$7m+)
- Redevelopment of Armidale Hospital (\$60m+)
- Tablelands Clinical Education Centre (\$7m+) a teaching facility providing closer ties between the medical profession and future health professionals
- New College at the University of New England (\$20m)
- UNE Kirby Farm – SMART Farm Innovation Centre (\$2m)
- Development of the Armidale Regional Airport precinct Stage 1
  - o Industrial Park land release
  - o Airside / Aviation industrial sites land release
  - o Business Park land release
  - o Terminal expansion and upgrade (\$7m+)
  - o Apron expansion and upgrade (\$3m)
  - o Roads and Infrastructure (\$10m+)
  - o Highway Service Centre (\$10m+)
  - o Motel and Tavern (\$4m+)
- Potential for a abattoir adjacent to the Armidale Regional Airport with access to the New England Highway, and possibility of airfreight to Asia in time.
- Mining – there is significant upside potential in this sector. The region has a rich mining heritage and during the latest mining boom there was much exploration and discovery locally.
  - o Halls Peak – Zinc, Lead, Copper, Silver and Gold
  - o Guyra District – Bauxite, Tin, Gold, Diamonds and gemstones
  - o Hillgrove – Antimony, Gold
- Potential Data Centre Development (\$15m+) based upon favourable climate (ambient air temperature and temperature range) for maintaining IT storage equipment and Armidale being fully fibred (NBN) to the premises.

# Investment Opportunities

Education (UNE, private schools) and agriculture (largely grazing enterprises) have been, and will continue to play an important role in the Armidale Regional economy. However there is considerable scope for mitigating the risks associated with a heavy dependence on a small number of sectors by diversifying the regional economy. It is important to recognise that logistics pathways are changing in the digital era, and regional economies must take advantage of this change. The objective is to provide a more stable income base for regional economies to boost their resilience, and where possible to compete, to engage in more processing/value adding to capture a greater share of the value chain.

There are a range of investment opportunities which arise for the Armidale region:



**Improved air transport** – there is significant scope for freighting fresh agricultural products (meat, horticultural goods) direct to Asia and other markets with the proposed upgrade of the Armidale airport;



**Agricultural R&D investment** – our region has a big advantage in this area, and Armidale is particularly well-placed with the presence of the University of New England and the UNE SmartFarm. Smart production is required in the technology/digital age to increase regional employment;



**Protected horticulture** – Guyra provides the perfect climate in terms of temperatures and sunlight hours for some key horticultural crops, providing investment opportunities for protected horticulture and associated services. Access to a skilled local workforce for greenhouse operations is an advantage;



**Sustainable firewood** – a significant proportion of energy use in Guyra comes from burning firewood for heating. The sustainability of much of this firewood source is questionable, and presents opportunities for businesses who wish to become certified sustainable suppliers. There are also opportunities for alternative heating sources (e.g. wood pellet heaters, utilising forestry and sawmill residues);



**Meat Processing** – Guyra once boasted a large regional abattoir (some of the infrastructure still exists) which closed in 1996, meaning most of the livestock produced in the region goes to the NSW coast or Qld for processing. This raises the opportunity of re-establishing a meat processing facility in Guyra. Excellent access to the New England Highway which runs right through the town would be an advantage;



**Agriculture accessing North Asia** – food safety is becoming a critical unique selling point as Asian affluence grows. There are significant price premiums to be gained by becoming a trusted supplier. This is all about brand recognition – not just 'branding'. There are opportunities to develop the technology which makes agricultural products traceable for North Asian/Chinese consumers;



**Transport** – A strategic location on the New England Highway mid-way between Sydney and Brisbane provides investment advantages for businesses, such as the development of a distribution centre for goods. Continued investment in road infrastructure will assist with this advantage.



**Aviation** – the facilities at Armidale airport with the intended upgrades are conducive to further investment in aviation related service businesses and pilot training;



**Tourism** – Armidale is located adjacent to magnificent gorge country. At present this tourism asset is very much under-utilised, with just one key operator (fleet helicopters) conducting flights over the gorges, and fishing tours to the Macleay River. There is considerable scope to expand activities to include mountain bike tours, additional fishing tours (taking in the excellent fishing to be found to the west of Armidale and on the Tablelands itself), bushwalking tours, canoeing/rafting tours. Armidale is recognised as the regional hub of New England High Country a destination which includes six local government areas and an extraordinary array of tourism assets such as National Parks, gorges, wilderness areas and many cultural and heritage experiences.



**IT and technology** – Armidale is already becoming known as a location for 'knowledge economy' businesses, with several IT and technology companies with international links located here. Being one of the first National Broadband Network rollout sites with fibre to the premises internet generates a unique opportunity for expansion of investment in these types of businesses. Armidale was identified as a Smart21 Community in 2016 selected in the top 21 Smart Cities in the world. The Intelligent Community Forum, an International Think-Tank, makes the evaluation based on six indicators – Broadband, Knowledge Workforce, Innovation, Digital Equality, Sustainability and Advocacy. This is high praise on the world stage for a small regional centre in Australia but nonetheless acknowledgement of a sophisticated, innovative and educated community.



**Education** – businesses in the region are struggling to find skilled employees, particularly in agriculture. There are opportunities for investment in practical skills training across a range of sectors. Educating students from overseas – particularly north Asia is also a key opportunity, which may have the spillover benefit of attracting new residents, businesses and investment opportunities to the area;



**Light Industry** – Armidale requires investment in light industrial and manufacturing businesses to help diversity the economy. The local economy can no longer rely so heavily on education and agriculture which are subject to the vagaries of climate and international markets. Ideal road access via the New England Highway to Sydney and Brisbane, as well as the relatively low cost of industrial land assists with this opportunity;



**Aged care** – There is potential for further expansion of housing for the aged by private developers, such as Seniors Living and the provision of aged care services;



**Capitalising on lifestyle** – Armidale provides all the advantages of a well-serviced regional city without the negative aspects of large-city living. This is a feature which can be exploited to attract to business relocation and new residents;

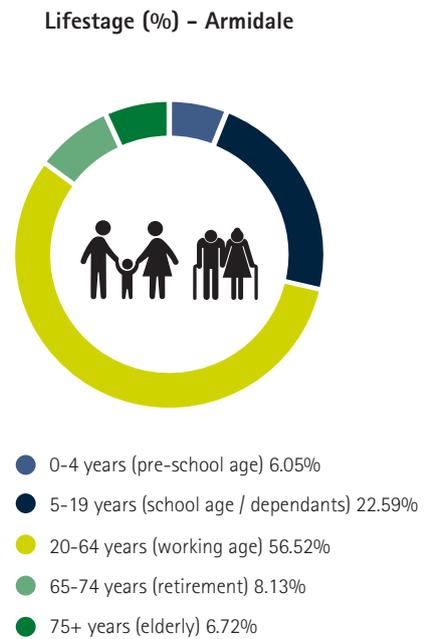
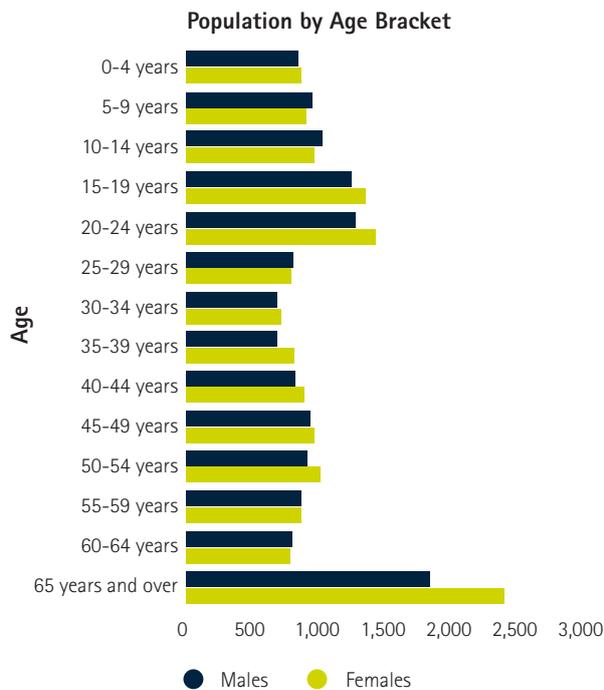


**Secure water supply** – the water supply for Armidale at Malpas Dam would cater for a population of 100,000, four times the existing population. This opens up opportunities for investments in water-intensive businesses such as some manufacturing plants.

# Community Profile

## Population

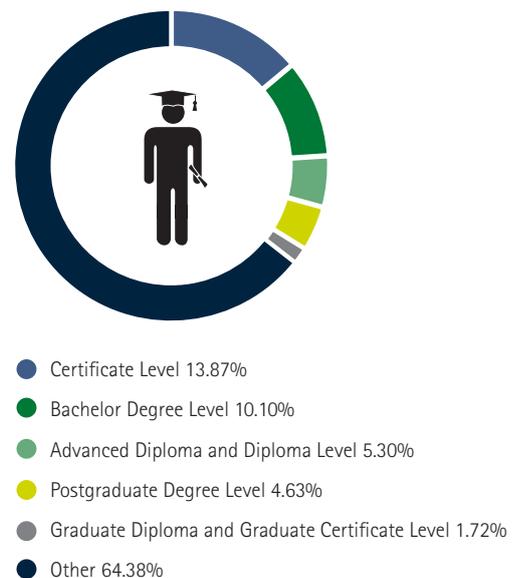
- Armidale Region LGA has a significant proportion of its population in the working-age category, which is a benefit to business investors in the region.



## Education

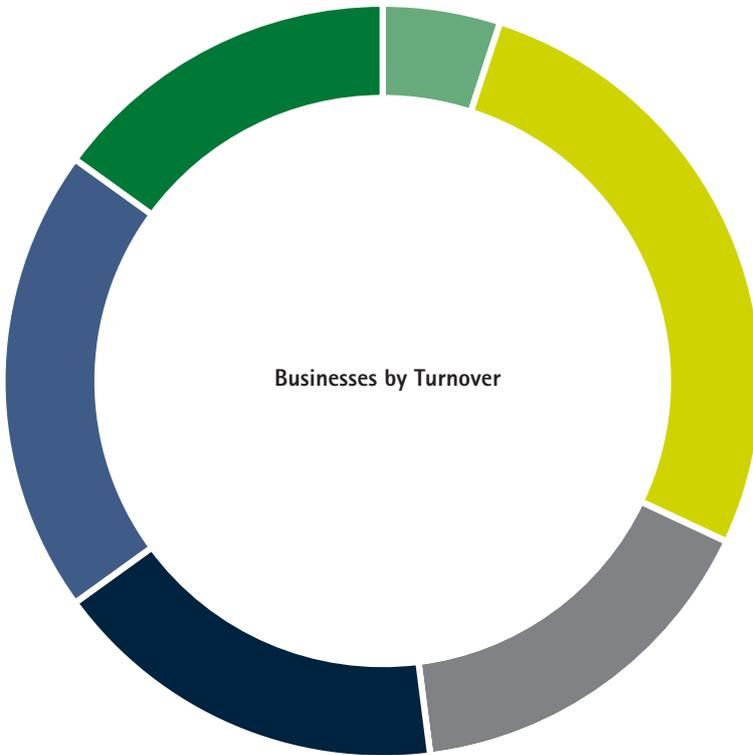
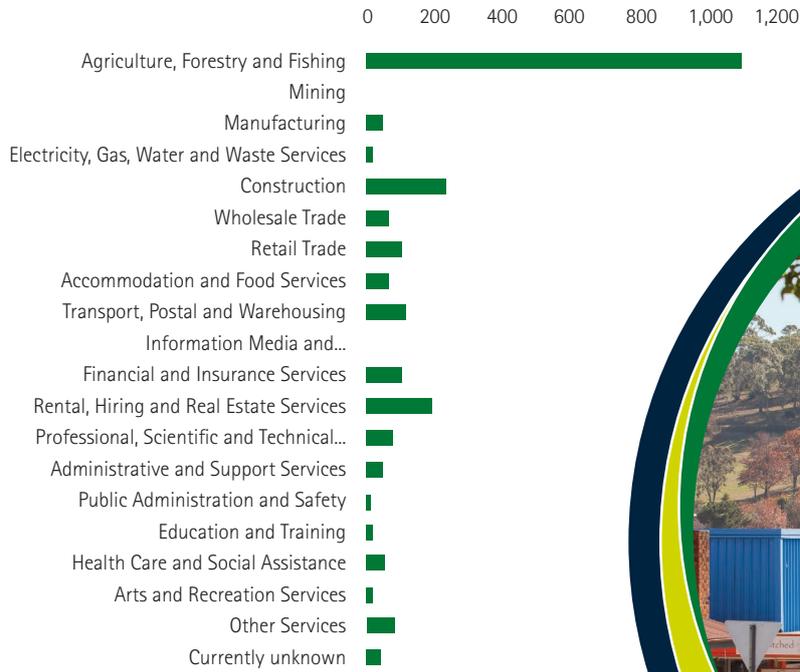
- The Armidale Region has a highly-skilled workforce
- 13.9 % had 'Certificate Level' qualification
- 10.1 % had 'Bachelor Degree Level'
- 5.3 % were 'Advanced Diploma and Diploma Level' qualified

**Highest Qualification (%) - Armidale**



# Business Activity

Businesses by Industry

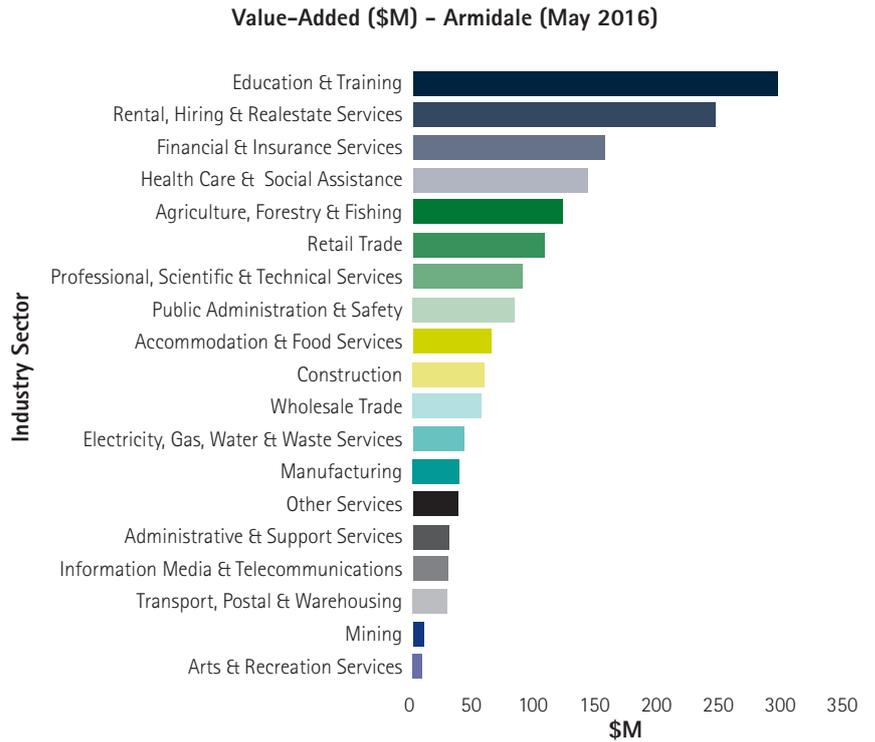


Businesses by Turnover

- Over \$2 million 5%
- \$0 - \$50,000 27%
- \$50,000 - \$99,000 16%
- \$100,000 - \$199,999 17%
- \$200,000 - \$499,000 20%
- \$500,000 - \$1,999,999 15%

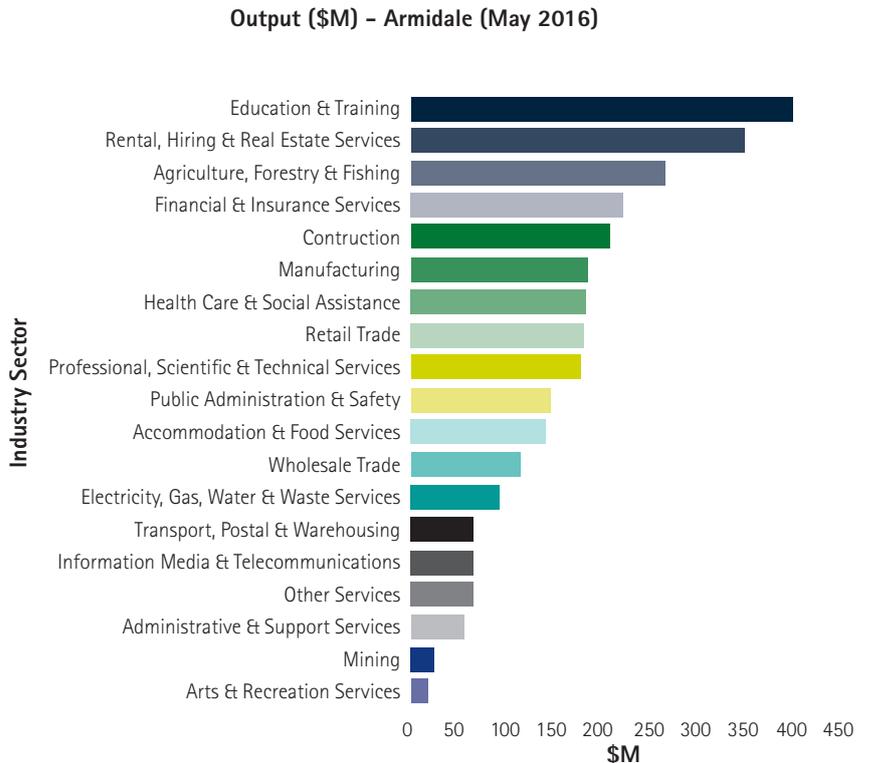
## Value-Added by sector

This graph shows the value that is added by industry sectors in the Armidale Region to intermediate inputs. The total value-added estimate for the Armidale Region is \$1,628.980 million. Value-added is a reflection of the returns to capital and labour generated by each sector and hence the potential profits which can be re-invested.



## Gross Regional Product

- Per Capita Gross Regional Product \$62,000
- Per Worker Gross Regional Product \$153,000
- The graph to the right shows the gross revenue generated by businesses and organisations in the Armidale Region. The total output estimate for the Armidale Region is \$2,950.996 million.
- Education and training dominate industry output, driven by the significant presence of the University of New England.



# Housing and Construction

## Building Approvals and Construction (February 2016)

New houses	New other residential building	Total dwellings no.	Value of new houses	Value of new other residential building	Value of alterations & additions including conversions residential building	Value of total residential buildings	Value of non-residential building	Value of total building
no.	no.	52	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
41	11		12,173	2,445	4,242	18,860	27,328	46,187

## Property and Land (April 2016)

### House Prices (realestate.com.au)

The median sales price for houses in Armidale in the last year was \$321,000. Compared to the same period five years ago, the median house sales price for houses increased 15% which equates to a compound annual growth rate of 2.8%.

The median sales price for houses in Guyra in the last year was \$225,000. Compared to the same period five years ago, the median house sales price for houses increased 3.6% which equates to a compound annual growth rate of 0.7%.

### Rental Yields (realestate.com.au)

The rental yield for houses in Armidale was 5.2% over the preceding 12 months.

The rental yield for houses in Guyra was 5.0% over the preceding 12 months.

### Land Values (NSW Land & Property Information)

The average land value for a single residential dwelling site in 2014 was \$119,000, representing an annual change of 4%.

# Employment

This report shows the number of employees whose place of work is located within the Armidale Regional LGA. The total employment estimate for the Armidale Region is 11,549 jobs.

## Workforce Breakdown (jobs) – Work in Armidale (May 2016)



### Labour Force Status

Not in the labour force	8,401	29.48%
Employed, worked full-time	7,257	25.46%
Employed, worked part-time	4,177	14.66%
Employed, away from work	764	2.68%
Unemployed, looking for part-time work	496	1.74%
Unemployed, looking for full-time work	455	1.60%
Not stated	1,387	4.87%
Not applicable	5,565	19.52%
<b>Total</b>	<b>28,502</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

### Armidale (2011) zones

Persons	%
8,401	29.48%
7,257	25.46%
4,177	14.66%
764	2.68%
496	1.74%
455	1.60%
1,387	4.87%
5,565	19.52%
<b>28,502</b>	<b>100.00%</b>



# Tourism

## Key Measures

Visitors (000's)	444
Nights (000's)	659
Average Length of Stay (nights)	2.3
Expenditure (\$ Million)	103
Spend per visitor (\$)	303
Spend per night (\$)	129

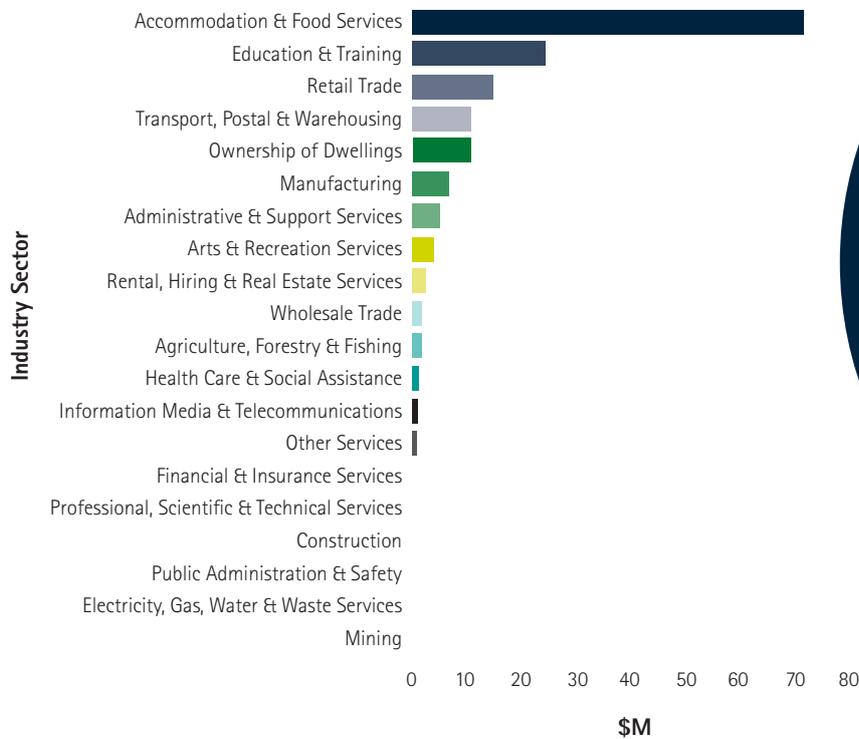


## Key Attractions:

- Waterfalls, gorges, world-heritage national parks
- Bushwalking
- Galleries and museums
- Culture / heritage
- Boutique Shopping & cafes
- Trout fishing/fishing tours
- Fine food, wine / local produce

This graph shows the gross revenue generated by businesses and organisations in the Armidale Region to service demand generated by tourists to the area. The total value of tourism related output for the Armidale Region is estimated at \$153.706 million.

## Output attributable to Tourism (\$M) – Armidale (R) (May 2016)

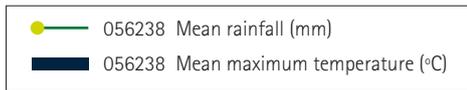


# Climate

## ARMIDALE

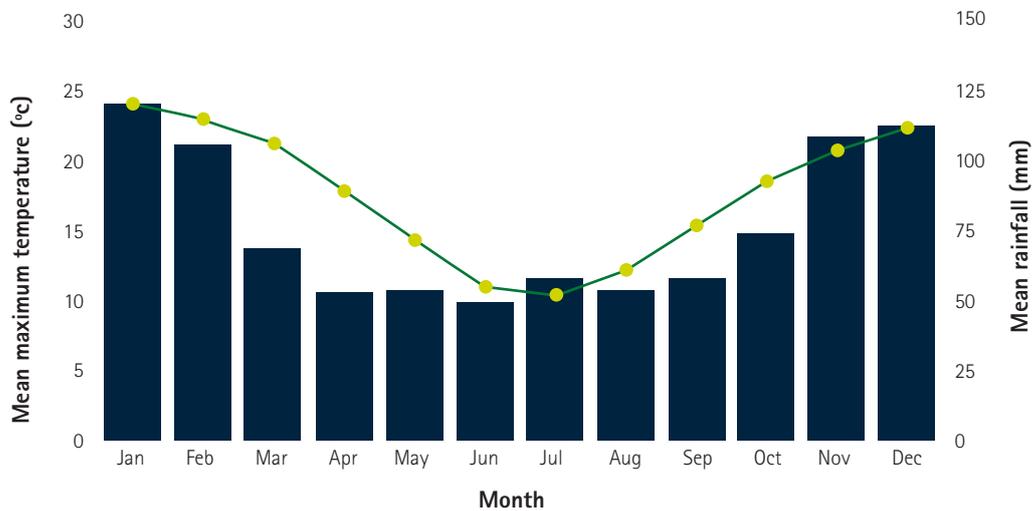


Australian Government  
Bureau of Meteorology

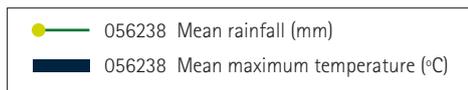


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## GUYRA



Australian Government  
Bureau of Meteorology



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# For More Information

Please contact Harold Ritch, Project Manager – Economic Development  
Ph: (02) 6770 3809

## Data sourced from

- Australian Bureau of Statistics
- REMPLAN 2016
- NSW Land and Property Information Service
- Realestate.com.au
- Destination NSW
- Bureau of Meteorology





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