



Australian Labour Market for Migrants

The Australian Labour Market for Migrants publication provides information on the Australian labour market. It is intended to inform recent migrants to Australia, people interested in working in Australia on a temporary or permanent basis, and organisations providing services to migrants and potential visa applicants.

The Australian labour market continues to perform well. However, some forward indicators suggest the Australian labour market is softening and may experience subdued conditions over the period ahead. See the [Jobs and Skills Australia](#) website for recent labour market data and analysis.

Unless otherwise stated, data in this publication are from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Labour Force Survey, February 2024.¹

Employment

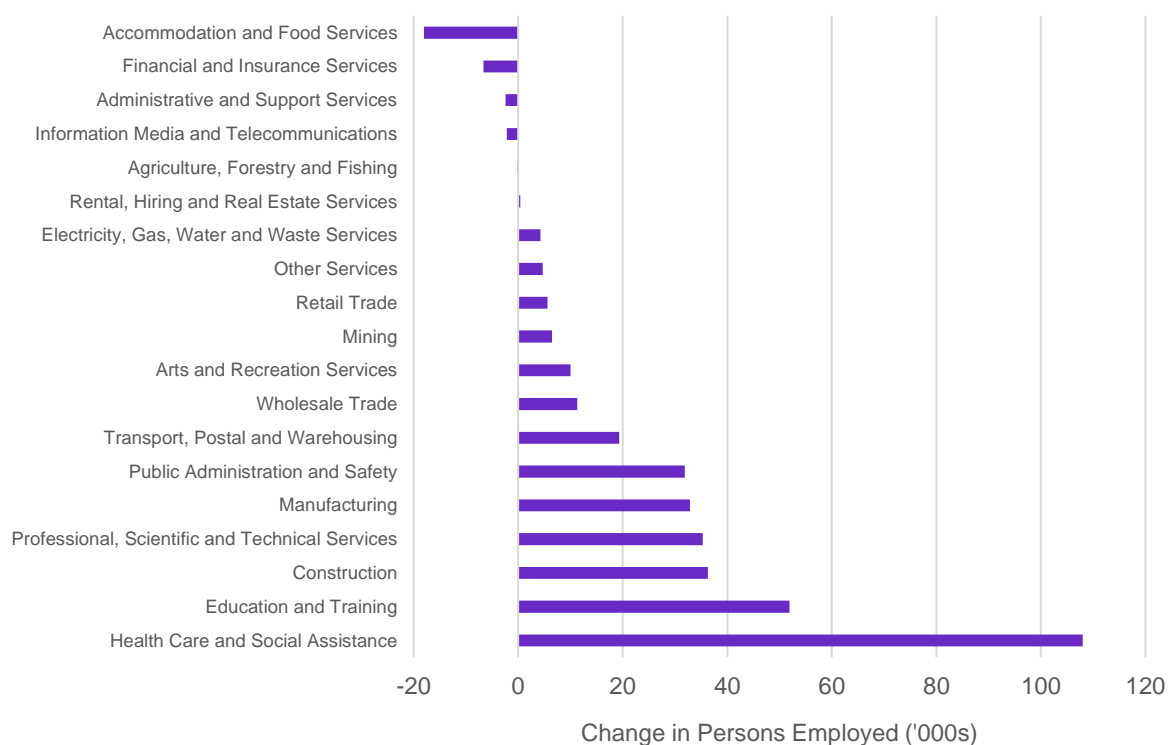
Over the 12 months to February 2024, employment opportunities and growth varied widely across industries. The largest increases in trend employment occurred in Health Care and Social Assistance (up by 108,000), Education and Training (up by 51,900) and Construction (up by 36,300). The largest decreases in employment occurred in Accommodation and Food Services (down by 18,000), Financial and Insurance Services (down by 6,600) and Administrative and Support Services (down by 2,400).²

Changes in employment by industry are shown in Figure 1. The strongest rates of employment growth were in Health Care and Social Assistance (up by 5.1%), Education and Training (up by 4.5%) and Arts and Recreation Services (up by 4.1%).

¹ The first paragraph of the Employment section and the Unemployment section use data trended by Jobs and Skills Australia for February 2024 from the ABS' Labour Force, Australia, March 2024 release. Previous editions of this publication used seasonally adjusted data due to a break in the trend time series.

² ABS, *Detailed Labour Force Survey*, February 2024 (Table 04). Data trended by Jobs and Skills Australia.

Figure 1: Employment growth by industry ('000s persons) — February 2023 to February 2024



Source: ABS, *Detailed Labour Force Survey, February 2024 (Table 04)*. Data trended by Jobs and Skills Australia.

Occupation by state/territory

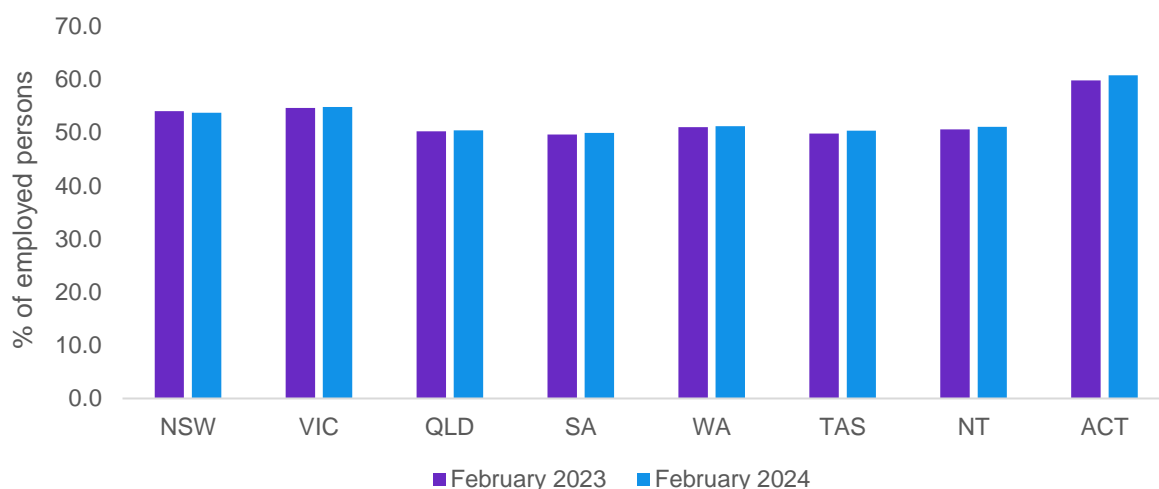
Figure 2 shows that in February 2024 (trend data³), the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) had the highest share (60.8%) of employed workers in selected occupation groups (i.e. Managers, Professionals, and Technicians and Trade Workers), followed by Victoria (54.8%) and New South Wales (NSW, 53.7%).

In the 12 months to February 2024, the share of workers employed in these selected occupation groups increased in all states and territories except for NSW (down by 0.3pp⁴). The largest increases were in the ACT (up by 1.0pp), Tasmania and the Northern Territory (NT, both up by 0.5pp). Increases were also estimated for the remaining states, South Australia (SA, up by 0.3pp), Queensland, Western Australia (WA) and Victoria (all up by 0.2pp).

³ ABS, *Detailed Labour Force Survey, February 2024 (Table EQ08)*. Data trended by Jobs and Skills Australia.

⁴ “pp” means percentage points.

Figure 2: Share of employment in selected occupation groups⁵ by state/territory, February 2023 to February 2024



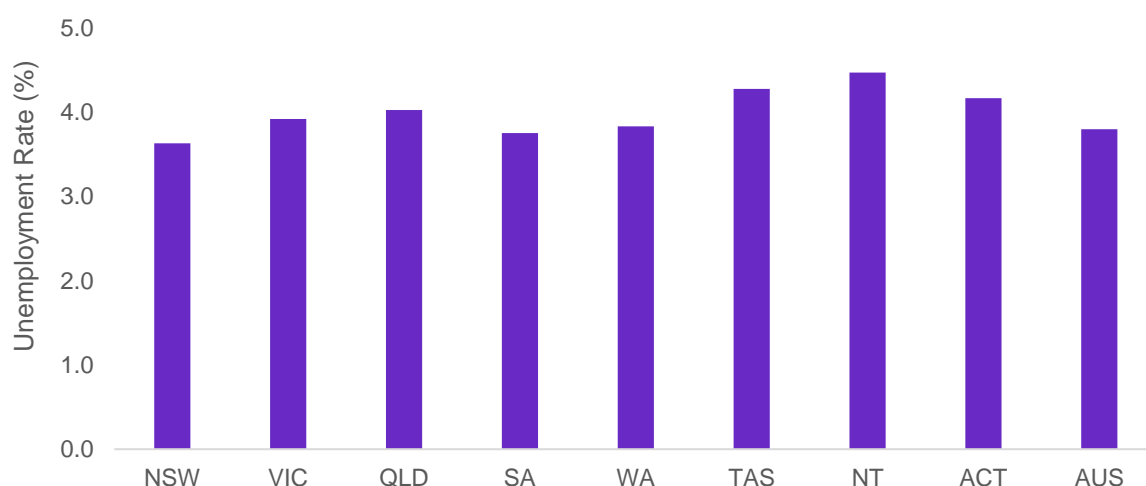
Source: ABS, *Detailed Labour Force Survey (Table EQ08)*, February 2024. Data trended by Jobs and Skills Australia

Unemployment

The trend unemployment rate in Australia was 3.8% in February 2024, compared with 3.5% in February 2023.

Over the 12 months to February 2024, the unemployment rate decreased in SA (4.0% to 3.8%). The unemployment rate rose in NSW (3.2% to 3.6%), Victoria (3.8% to 3.9%), Queensland (3.8% to 4.0%), WA (3.7% to 3.8%), Tasmania (4.0% to 4.3%), NT (4.3% to 4.5%) and the ACT (3.0% to 4.2%).

Figure 3: Unemployment rates (%) by state/territory — February 2024



Source: ABS Labour Force, Australia, February 2024. Table 12: trend unemployment rate. Retrieved 21 February 2024. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/feb-2024>

⁵ Selected occupation groups include ANZSCO Major Groups 1 to 3 (i.e. Managers, Professionals, Technicians and Trades Workers).

Migrant employment

Australian-born people represent the highest share of employed people in Tasmania (84.4%) and the lowest share in WA (58.6%). The share of employed people born in other than main English-speaking countries (OTMESC)⁶ is highest in Victoria, NSW and the ACT (29.8%, 28.4% and 27.4% respectively). See Figure 4.

Figure 4: Share of employment by state/territory and place of birth, February 2024



Source: ABS, Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, February 2024. Table LM7: Labour force status by elapsed years since arrival, main English-speaking countries, sex, state and territory. Retrieved 28 March 2024.

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/feb-2024>

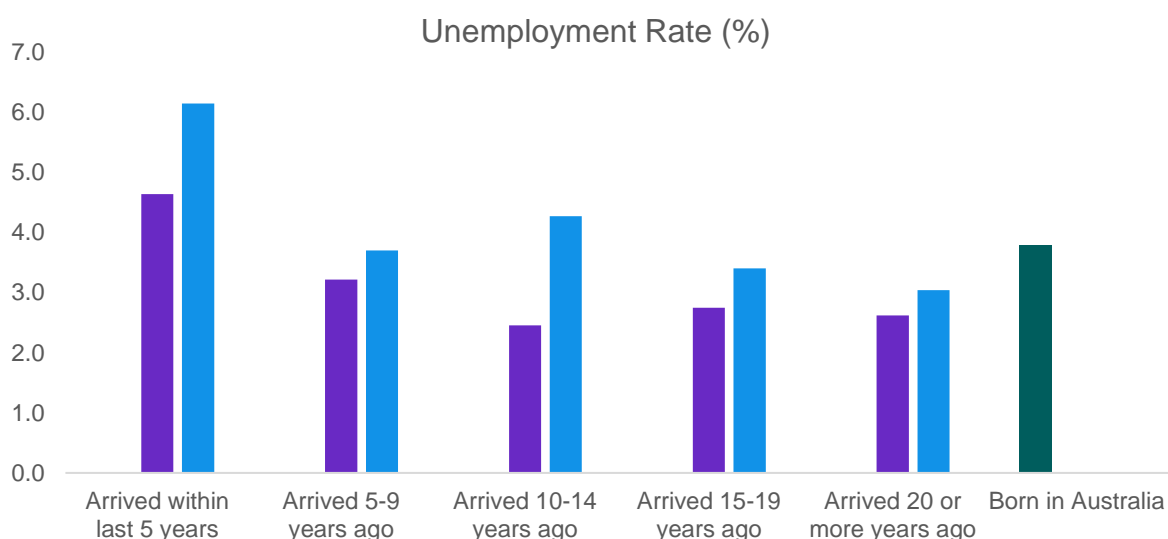
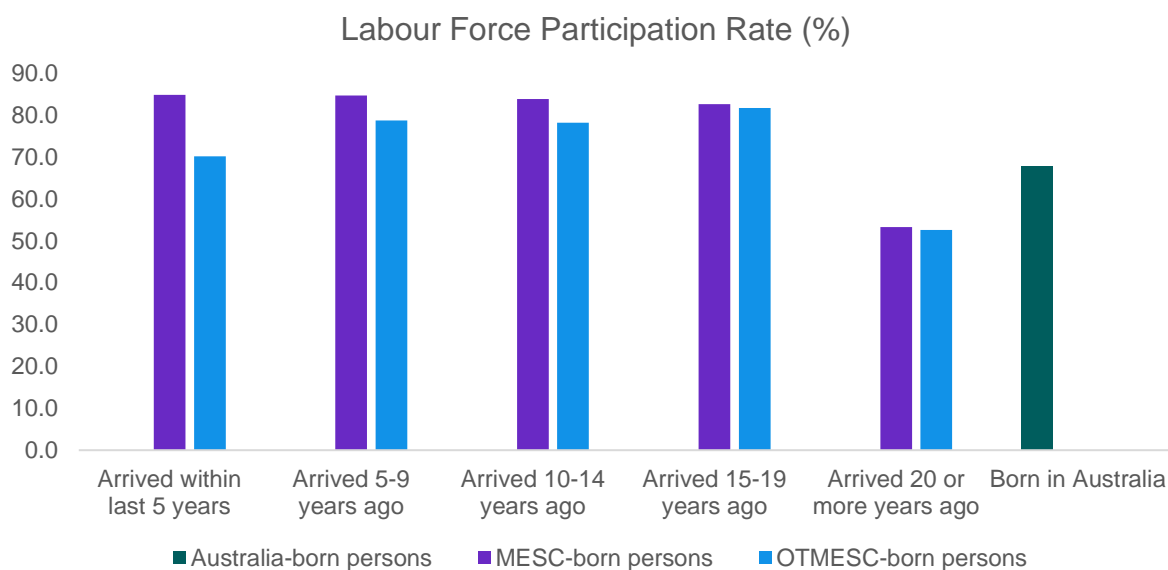
Migrant unemployment

The unemployment rates for people who migrate to Australia vary appreciably. Several factors influence migrant unemployment rates including skill level, age, English language proficiency, recent and relevant work experience and the period since arrival in Australia. Data consistently shows that recently arrived migrants have a higher unemployment rate on average than those who have lived in Australia for some years.

Figure 5 shows the participation and unemployment rates of the Australian-born and migrants by broad country of birth groups and period of residence in Australia (average of the last 12 months to February 2024).

⁶ Main English-speaking Countries (MESC) are the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, South Africa, Canada, the United States of America and New Zealand.

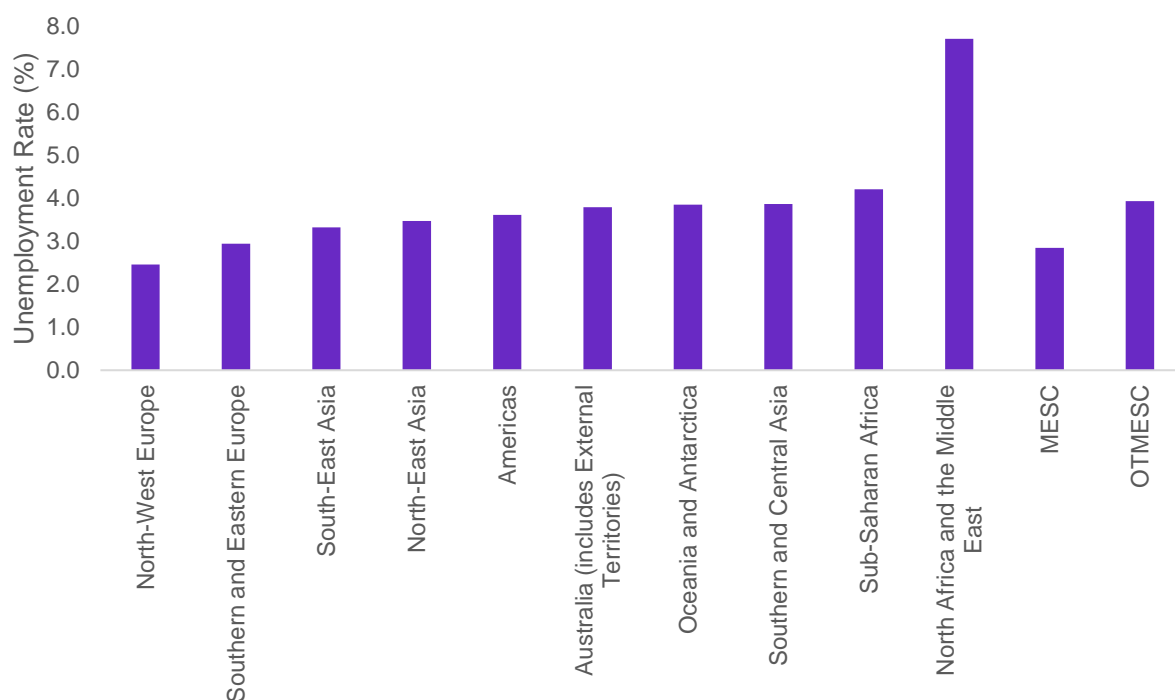
Figure 5: Labour force participation rate and unemployment rate, by years since arrival in Australia for broad country of birth groups — 12 months to February 2024 average



Source: ABS Labour Force, Australia, February 2024. Table LM7: Labour force status by elapsed years since arrival, main English-speaking countries, sex, state and territory. Retrieved 28 March 2024. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/feb-2024>

Figure 6 shows average unemployment rates for the 12 months to February 2024 for people resident in Australia by their major birth country groups (by subcontinent). People born in North-West Europe had the lowest unemployment rate (at 2.5%), while the unemployment rate for people born in North Africa and the Middle East (7.7%) was relatively high (possibly reflecting English language proficiency and period of residence in Australia).

Figure 6: Unemployment rate by broad country of birth groups — 12 months to February 2024 average⁷



Source: ABS Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, February 2024. Table LM5: Labour force status by age, major country group (subcontinent) of birth (SACC) and sex; and Table LM7: Labour force status by elapsed years since arrival, main English-speaking countries, sex, state and territory. Retrieved 28 March 2024.

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/feb-2024>

Employment by occupation

Over the 12 months to February 2024, the largest increases in employment (trend data⁸) occurred for Professionals (up by 152,500), Clerical and Administrative Workers (up by 86,600), and Community and Personal Service Workers (up by 84,100). The smallest increase occurred for Sales Workers (up by 400). Employment growth for the major occupation groups is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Trend employment growth by occupation — 12 months to February 2024⁹

Occupational Group	1 Year Change ('000 persons)	1 Year Change (%)
Managers	1.1	0.1
Professionals	152.5	4.2
Technicians and Trades Workers	26.2	1.4
Community and Personal Service Workers	84.1	5.5
Clerical and Administrative Workers	86.6	4.8
Sales Workers	0.4	0.0
Machinery Operators and Drivers	24.9	2.8
Labourers	2.3	0.2

⁷ In Figure 6, 'Australia (includes External Territories)' is within 'Oceania and Antarctica'.

⁸ Source: ABS, Detailed Labour Force Survey (Table EQ08), February 2024. Data trended by Jobs and Skills Australia.

Occupational Groups are based on the ABS Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO).

⁹ *ibid*

Additional information on occupational groups is provided in the following section on internet vacancy data.

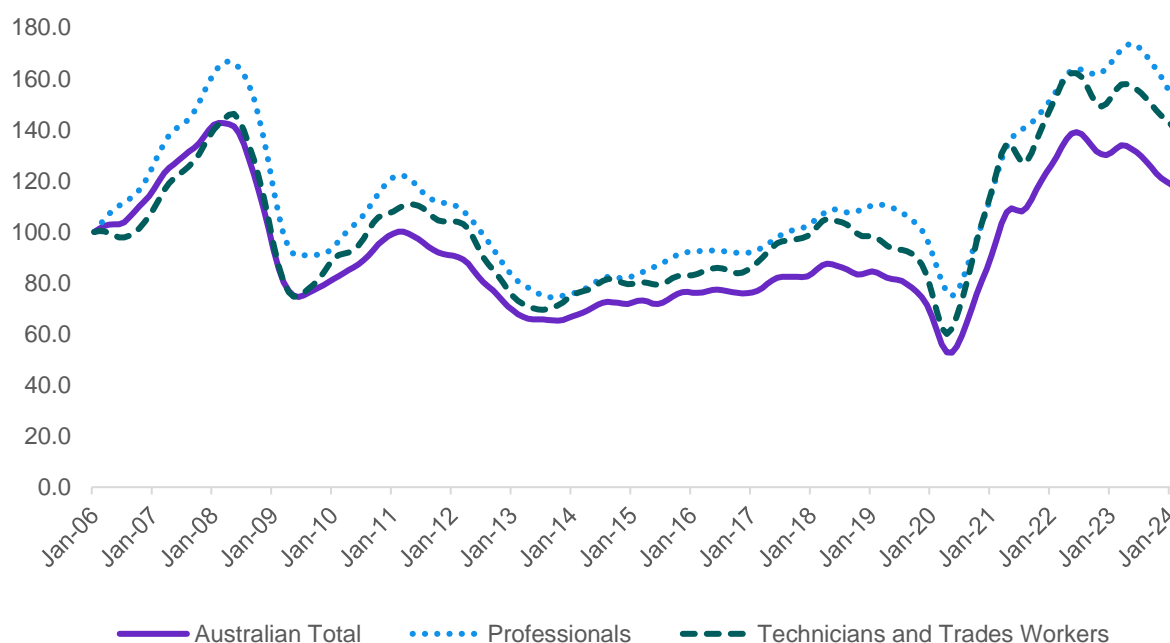
Internet Vacancy data¹⁰

Jobs and Skills Australia produces the monthly Vacancy Report which contains the Internet Vacancy Index (IVI). Over the year to February 2024, the trend IVI decreased for all occupation groups but remained high compared to pre-pandemic levels: Labourers (down by 23.7%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (down by 13.7%), Community and Personal Service Workers (down by 12.3%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (down by 12.2%), Technicians and Trades Workers (down by 10.8%), Professionals (down by 10.8%), Sales Workers (down by 9.9%) and Managers (down by 9.0%). See Figure 7.

At the more detailed occupation level, trend vacancies increased in 2 of the 48 occupation clusters over the year to February 2024 being Education Professionals (up by 3.4%) and Sales Representatives and Agents (up by 1.6%). The largest decreases were for Food Preparation Assistants (down by 32.2%), Protective Service Workers (down by 30.7%) and ICT Professionals (down by 29.1%).

Over the year to February 2024, trend vacancies increased in Tasmania (up by 13.7%) and the NT (up by 5.7%). Vacancies fell in Victoria (down by 18.6%), NSW (down by 15.7%), the ACT (down by 13.2%), Queensland (down by 6.3%), WA (down by 4.5%) and SA (down by 2.1%). and For a full list of occupations and their recent growth in vacancies, see the [Vacancy Report](#) and supporting datafiles.

Figure 7: Internet Vacancy Index, January 2006 to February 2024



¹⁰ See [Internet Vacancy Index \(IVI\) | Jobs and Skills Australia](#) (March 2024). The IVI is based on a count of online job advertisements newly lodged on SEEK, CareerOne and Workforce Australia during the month. Duplicate advertisements are removed before IVI vacancies are coded by Jobs and Skills Australia to occupations based on ANZSCO. The data are seasonally adjusted and trended, then indexed (January 2006=100).



Hot Topic: Australia – States and Territories

This Hot Topic provides an overview of the Australian population; its regional, state and territory distribution; and labour market. Unless otherwise stated, data are from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Labour Force Survey, February 2024.

In December 2023, the Australian Government released its fourth Population Statement¹¹ which explores the continued recovery of Australia’s population following the COVID-19 pandemic. The Statement notes that population growth is forecast to increase from 1.3% in 2021-22 to 2.4% in 2022-23 and 1.9% in 2023-24. Population growth in Australia is then projected to gradually ease, reaching 1.2% by 2033-34.

The Australian population

Australia’s population is concentrated in New South Wales (NSW) and Victoria (with 31.3% and 25.6% of the total population respectively). As of June 2023, just over two-thirds of Australians live in capital cities. Tasmania and Queensland had the highest share of their populations living outside their capital cities (55.7% and 50.4%, respectively).

Net Overseas Migration (NOM) was 528,421 in the 2022-23 financial year. This was the largest NOM estimate since records began. NOM was highest in NSW and Victoria (receiving 177,140 and 157,220 persons, respectively) and the lowest in Tasmania (4,408 persons) and the Northern Territory (NT, 3,391 persons).

Table A: Distribution of the Australian resident population as at June 2023*

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT	AUST
Population	8,342,285	6,815,441	5,460,420	1,852,284	2,881,227	573,156	252,529	466,566	26,648,878
Share of Australian Population (%)	31.3	25.6	20.5	7.0	10.8	2.2	0.9	1.8	100.0
Capital City (%)	65.3	76.4	49.6	78.1	80.2	44.3	59.7	100.0	67.5
Balance of State (%)	34.7	23.6	50.4	21.9	19.8	55.7	40.3	0.0	32.5
Net Overseas Migration**	177,140	157,220	85,002	28,435	64,255	4,408	3,391	8,541	528,421

*Source: ABS (2024). National, State and Territory Population. Regional Population 2022-23

** Source: Net overseas migration: Arrivals, departures and net, state/territory, age and sex – Financial years, 2004-05 onwards. Year to 30 June 2023. Retrieved 26 March 2024

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/overseas-migration/2022-23-financial-year>

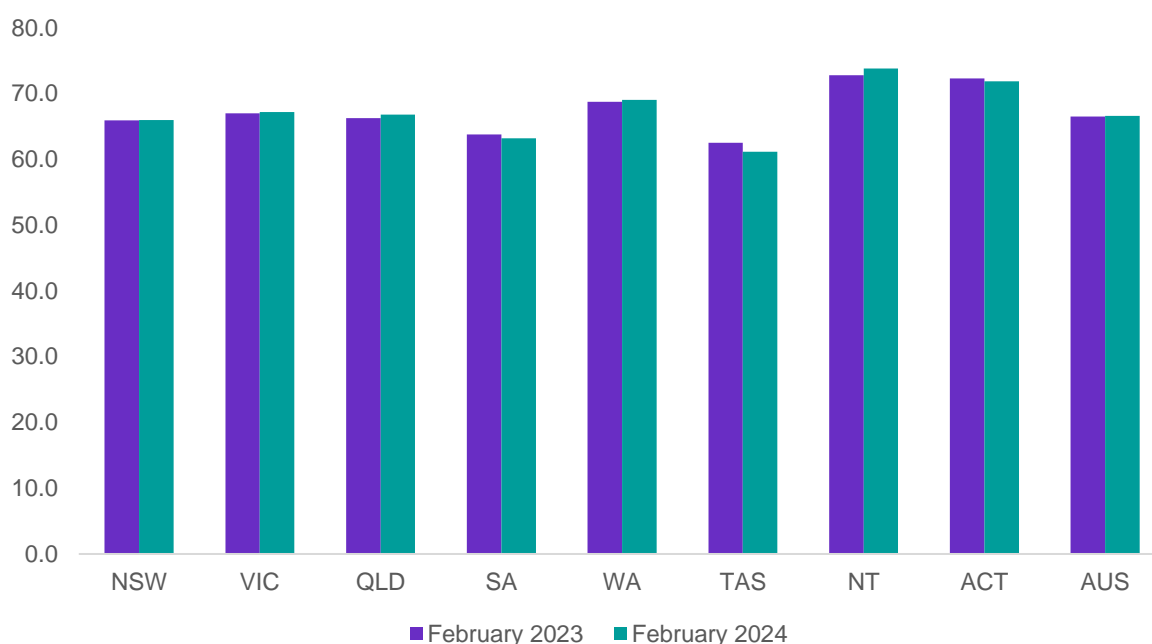
¹¹ [2023 Population Statement | Centre for Population](#)

State and territory labour force

The labour force participation rate is calculated by expressing the labour force as a percentage of the civilian population aged 15 and over. The labour force is based on employed persons plus unemployed persons.

Over the 12 months to February 2024, the labour force participation rate for Australia (trend data) increased by 0.1pp to 66.6% (see Figure A). The NT and Queensland recorded the largest increases in the participation rate (1.0pp and 0.6pp respectively), with Tasmania and South Australia (SA) recording decreases (down by 1.4pp and 0.6pp, respectively).

Figure A: Labour force participation rates (trend) by state (%) as at February 2024



Source: ABS Labour Force, Australia, February 2024. Table 12: trend participation rate. Retrieved 21 March 2024. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/feb-2024>

Unemployment and gender

Figure B shows unemployment rates for migrants who have arrived in Australia less than ten years ago (recent migrants) and more than ten years ago (established migrants) by gender. Generally, female migrants had higher unemployment rates than male migrants for most states and territories, except for the ACT. Female unemployment rates were lower for established migrants than for recent migrants.

In February 2024, recent female migrants had the highest unemployment rate in seven states and territories. The highest female recent migrant unemployment rate was in Tasmania at 8.9%. WA had the overall lowest unemployment rates for all groups, with female unemployment at 5.1% for recent migrants and 2.9% for established migrants.

In the ACT, male unemployment rates were higher than female unemployment rates, at 9.1% for recent migrants and 6.9% for established migrants.

Figure B: Unemployment rates, recent and established migrants by state and gender, February 2024 (%)



Source: ABS (2023). LM7 Labour force status by elapsed years since arrival, major country group (subcontinent) of birth (SACC), sex, state and territory, January 1991 onwards (pivot table). Labour Force, Australia, Detailed. Retrieved 28 March 2024. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/latest-release#all-data-downloads>

Industry by state and territory

Table B shows the industry share of total employment for each state and territory (trend data). It shows WA has a considerable proportion of employed persons in Mining (10.1%) compared to the ACT (0.04%); and the ACT (29.9%) has a considerable proportion of employed persons in Public Administration and Safety compared to Victoria (5.1%). The industries that employ the largest number of persons in Australia are Health Care and Social Assistance (15.6%) followed by Construction (9.4%), Retail Trade (9.4%) and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (9.3%).

Table B: Employment Distribution by Industry and state/territory at February 2024 (% of persons)

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT	AUS
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	1.7	2.1	2.4	4.0	2.0	5.1	2.4	0.3*	2.2
Mining	0.8	0.3	2.8	1.7	10.1	1.4	2.8	0.04*	2.2
Manufacturing	6.2	7.4	6.2	7.3	5.2	7.0	2.5	1.8	6.4
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	1.0	1.2	1.2	1.5	1.2	1.9	1.6	0.8	1.2
Construction	9.4	9.7	9.4	8.4	9.1	8.6	7.3	6.2	9.4
Wholesale Trade	2.7	2.9	2.4	2.9	2.6	1.9	1.6	0.9	2.7
Retail Trade	9.5	9.8	9.6	9.7	8.5	9.7	7.7	6.4	9.4
Accommodation and Food Services	6.6	6.2	6.8	6.3	6.1	7.3	7.1	6.0	6.4

Transport, Postal and Warehousing	5.2	4.9	5.6	4.3	5.1	4.4	4.3	2.1	5.1
Information Media and Telecommunications	1.5	1.6	1.0	1.0	0.8	1.0	0.9	1.4	1.3
Financial and Insurance Services	5.5	4.4	2.7	2.7	2.1	1.9	0.9	1.7	3.8
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	1.8	1.5	1.6	1.2	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.5
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	10.4	10.1	8.2	7.6	8.1	6.4	5.7	13.3	9.3
Administrative and Support Services	2.9	2.8	3.3	3.5	3.0	2.7	3.3	2.7	3.0
Public Administration and Safety	6.2	5.1	6.6	6.8	5.9	8.0	15.9	29.9	6.5
Education and Training	8.3	8.6	8.6	7.8	8.2	8.9	9.4	8.6	8.4
Health Care and Social Assistance	15.0	15.8	16.1	17.9	14.8	17.3	17.2	11.7	15.6
Arts and Recreation Services	1.7	2.1	1.6	1.4	1.9	1.5	3.5	2.1	1.8
Other Services	3.7	3.4	4.0	3.9	4.0	3.7	4.4	2.8	3.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: ABS (2023). EQ06 - Employed persons by Industry group of main job (ANZSIC), Sex, State and Territory. Labour Force, Australia, Detailed. Retrieved 16 April 2024, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/latest-release>. The state and national level data is trended by Jobs and Skills Australia.

* Note: Data for smaller industries in the ACT can be volatile and estimates should be interpreted with caution.

Further information

Queries on the Australian Labour Market for Migrants publication, including requests for inclusion on the distribution list and copies of Hot Topics attached to previous editions, should be emailed to migration@jobsandskills.gov.au.