



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.¹

The Australian economy and labour market remains resilient, although there are signs of further softening in labour market conditions. 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, November 2025.^{2,3,4}

Employment

Over the 12 months to November 2025, employment opportunities and growth varied widely across industries.

Figure 1 shows the largest increases in trend employment occurred in Health Care and Social Assistance (up by 103,800), Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (up by 64,200) and Education and Training (up by 49,700). The largest decreases in employment occurred in Wholesale Trade (down by 17,000), Manufacturing (down by 15,500) and Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (down by 13,500).

The strongest rates of employment growth were in Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services (up by 9.5%), Other Services (5.1%) and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (4.9%).

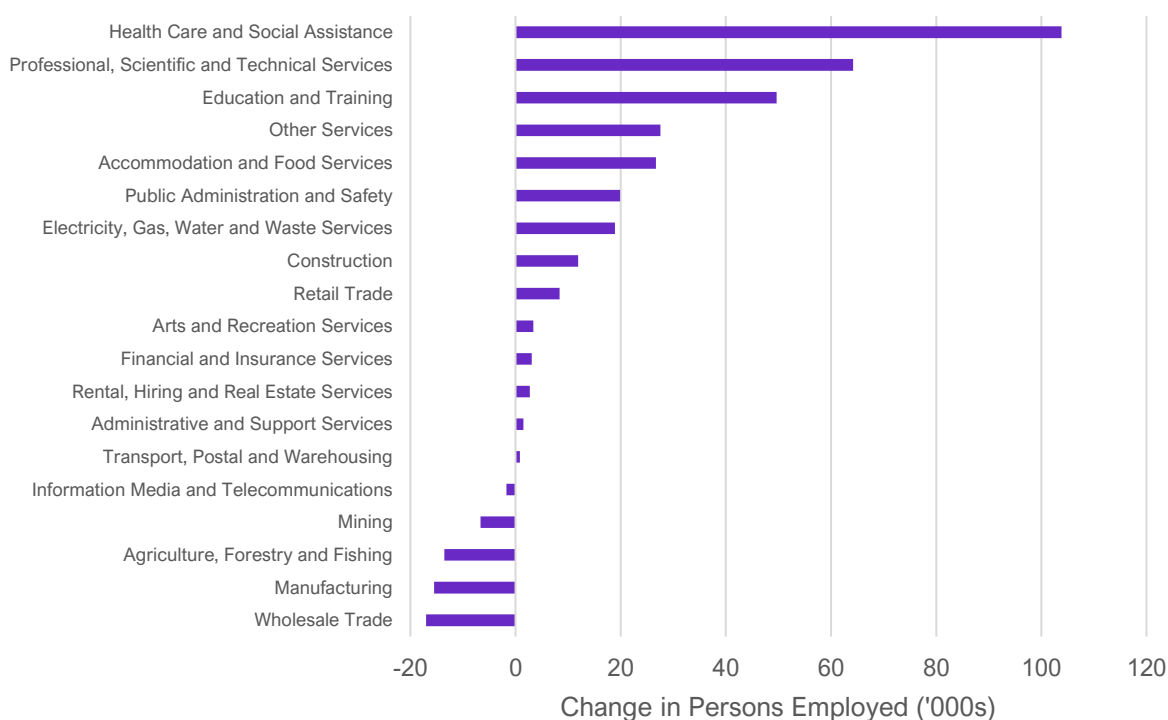
¹ The labour market analysis in this report is relevant to all migrants and potential visa applicants in provisional and permanent visa programs and temporary visa programs with a full or partial work right, administered by the Department of Home Affairs.

² Statistics on employment by industry and occupation in this publication are based on data trended by Jobs and Skills Australia using ABS [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed](#) data for November 2025, released 18 December 2025.

³ The analysis in this publication uses the [Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations \(ANZSCO\)](#). The timeframe for use of the [Occupation Standard Classification for Australia \(OSCA\)](#) for this publication will be determined by the release of official statistics using this new classification.

⁴ Editions of this publication released from January 2026 use different ABS Labour Force Survey tables and/or different country classifications to those used in previous editions.

Figure 1: Employment growth by industry ('000s persons) – November 2024 to November 2025



Source: ABS, [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed](#), November 2025 (Table 04: Employed persons by Industry division of main job (ANZSIC)), released 18 December 2025. Data trended by Jobs and Skills Australia.

Occupation by state/territory

Figure 2 shows that in November 2025 (trend data), the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) had the highest share (59.5%) of employment as Managers, Professionals, and Technicians and Trade Workers)⁵, followed by Victoria (55.2%) and New South Wales (NSW, 54.8%).

In the 12 months to November 2025, the share of workers employed in these occupation groups increased in all states and territories except for Tasmania (down by 0.2pp).⁶ The largest increases were in Queensland (up by 1.0pp), NSW (up by 0.5pp) and Victoria (up by 0.4pp). Increases were also apparent for South Australia (SA, up by 0.2pp) and Western Australia (WA, up by 0.3pp). The Northern Territory and the ACT remained about the same.

⁵ In November 2025, the Public Administration and Safety industry (where Australian citizenship and security clearances may be a condition of appointment), accounted for 26.9% of employment in the ACT. Source: ABS Labour Force Survey November 2025 (trended by JSA).

⁶ "pp" means percentage points.

Figure 2: Share of employment in selected occupation groups# by state/territory – November 2024 to November 2025



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

Source: ABS, [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed](#) (Table EQ08: Employed persons by Occupation unit group of main job (ANZSCO, Sex, State and Territory), November 2025, released 18 December 2025. Data trended by Jobs and Skills Australia.

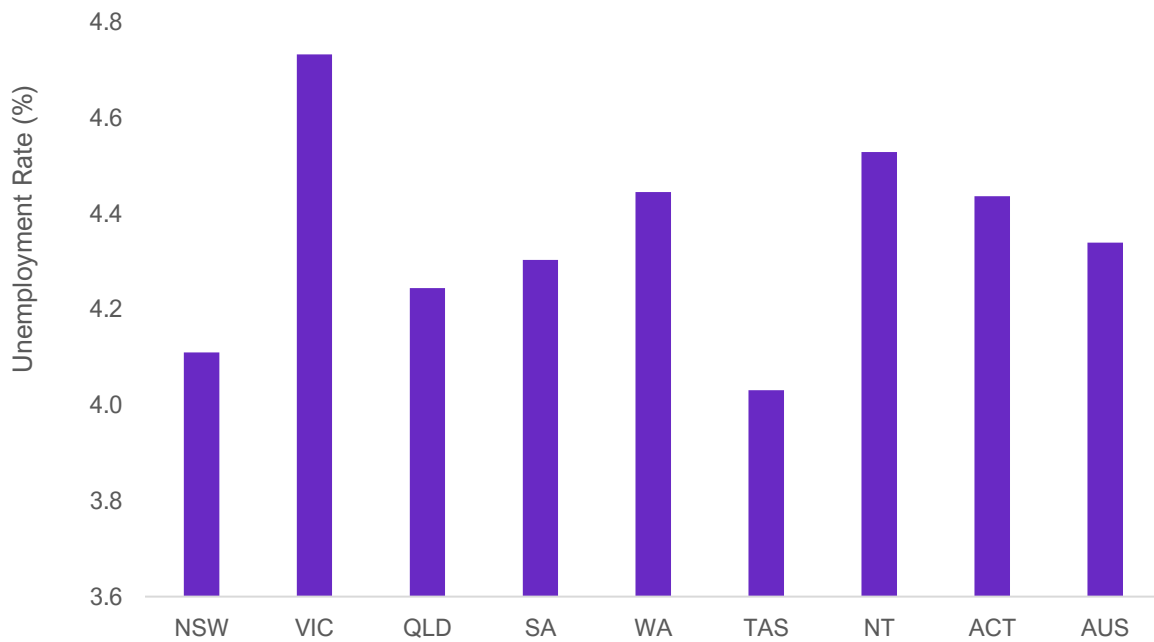
Unemployment

The trend unemployment rate in Australia was 4.3% in November 2025, up from 4.0% in November 2024.

Over the 12 months to November 2025, the unemployment rate decreased in Tasmania (4.1% to 4.0%). The unemployment rate rose in the ACT (3.1% to 4.4%), WA (3.6% to 4.4%), NT (4.1% to 4.5%), Queensland (3.9% to 4.2%), SA (4.0% to 4.3%), Victoria (4.5% to 4.7%) and NSW (3.9% to 4.1%).

Figure 3 shows that Tasmania recorded the lowest unemployment rate at 4.0%, while Victoria recorded the highest rate at 4.7%.

Figure 3: Unemployment rates (%) by state/territory – November 2025

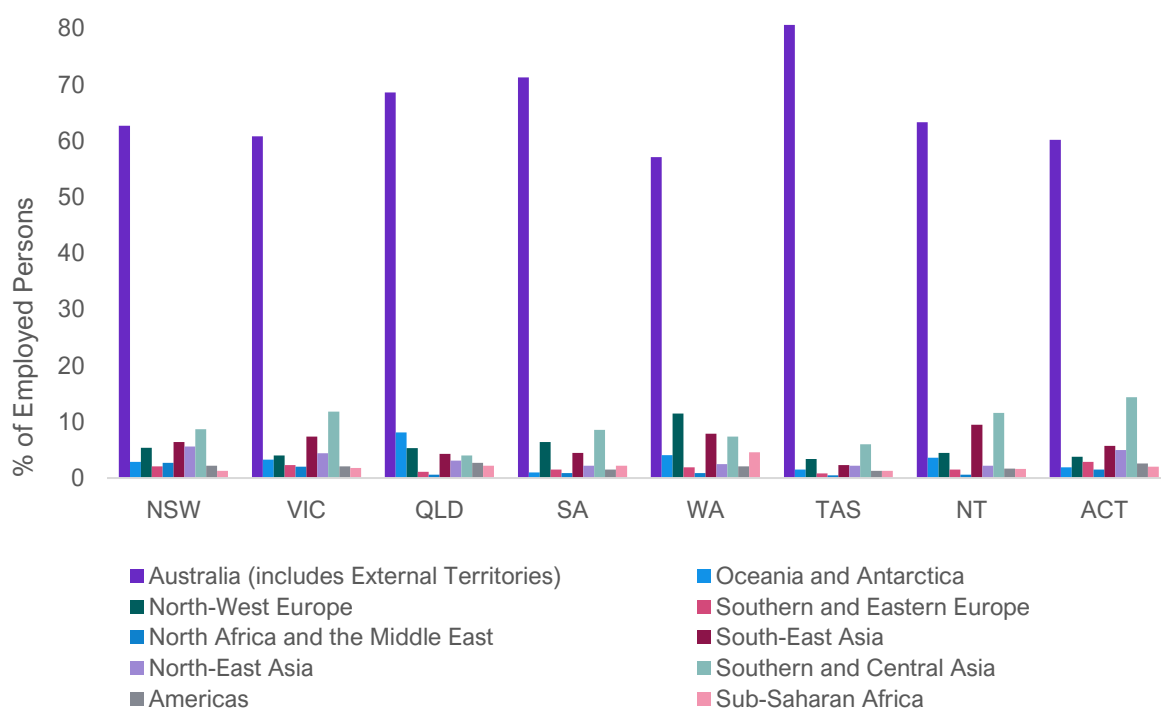


Source: ABS [Labour Force, Australia](#), November 2025 (Table 12: Labour force status by Sex, State and Territory - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original), released 11 December 2025.

Migrant employment

Australian-born people represent the highest share of people employed in Tasmania (80.6%) and the lowest share in WA (57.1%). The share of employed people born in other subcontinents is highest in WA, the ACT and Victoria (42.9%, 39.8%, and 39.1% respectively). See Figure 4.

Figure 4: Share of employment by state/territory and subcontinent of birth – November 2025



Source: ABS, *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed*, November 2025, (Table LM4: Labour force status by elapsed years since arrival, major country group (subcontinent) of birth (SACC), sex, state and territory, July 1996 onwards (pivot table)), released 18 December 2025.

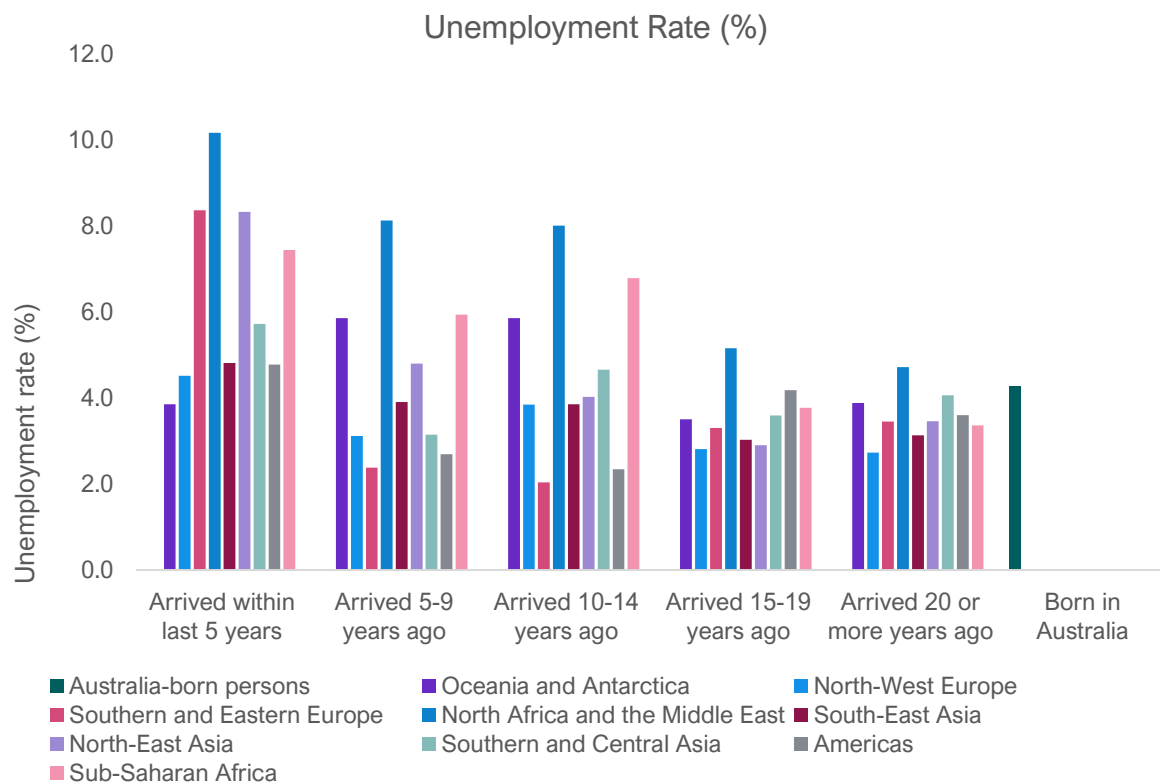
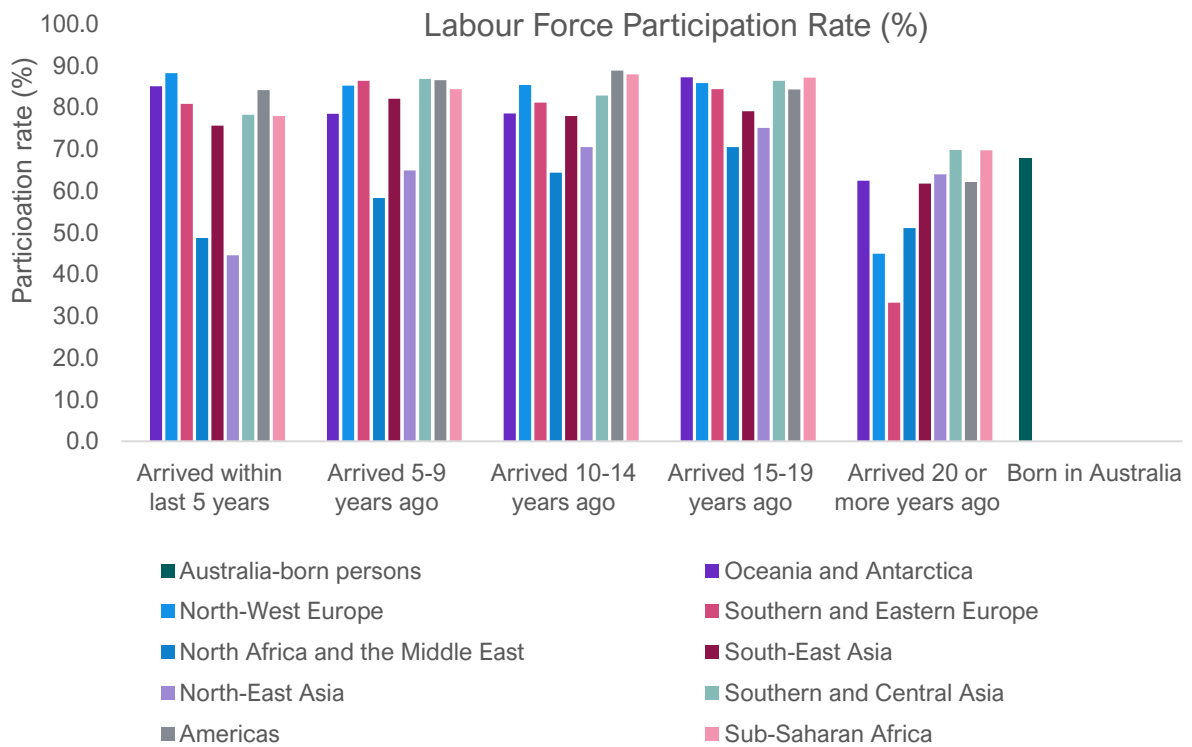
Migrant unemployment

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 Australian-born and migrants by subcontinent of birth⁷ and period of residence in Australia (average of the last 12 months to November 2025).

⁷ The [Standard Australian Classification of Countries \(SACC\)](#) was developed by the ABS for the collection, storage and dissemination of Australian statistical data. The SACC Major Groups for country of birth are used for analysis in this publication.

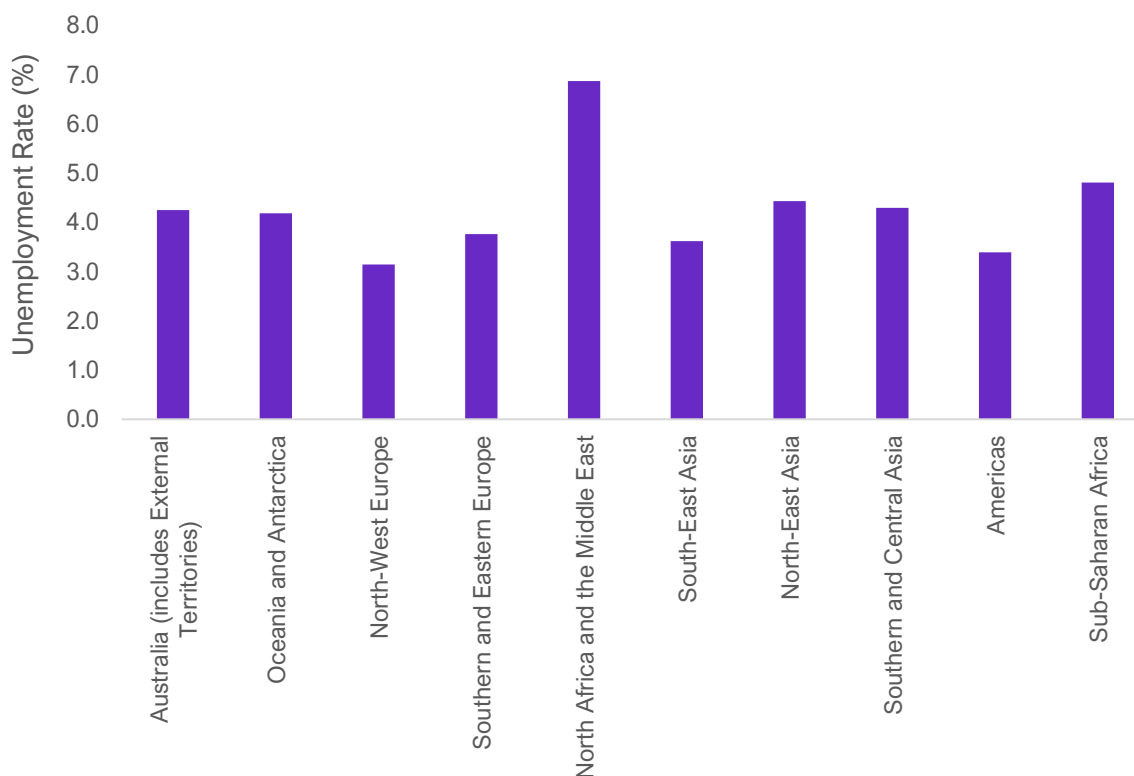
Figure 5: Labour force participation rate and unemployment rate, by years since arrival in Australia for subcontinents of birth groups – 12 months to November 2025 average



Source: ABS [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed](#), November 2025 (Table LM4: Labour force status by elapsed years since arrival, major country group (subcontinent) of birth (SACC), sex, state and territory, July 1996 onwards (pivot table)), released 18 December 2025.

Figure 6 shows average unemployment rates for the 12 months to November 2025 for people resident in Australia by their subcontinents of birth.⁸ People born in North West Europe had the lowest unemployment rate (3.1%), while the unemployment rate for people born in North Africa and the Middle East (6.9%) was relatively high⁹.

Figure 6: Unemployment rate by subcontinents of birth - 12 months to November 2025 average



Source: ABS [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed](#), November 2025, (Table LM5: Labour force status by age, major country group (subcontinent) of birth (SACC) and sex), released 18 December 2025.

Employment by occupation

Over the 12 months to November 2025, the largest increases in employment (trend data) occurred for Professionals (up by 198,100), Community and Personal Service Workers (up by 82,000), Technicians and Trades Workers (up by 11,900) and Labourers (up by 2,500). Declines in employment growth occurred for Clerical and Administrative Workers (down by 29,700) and Machinery Operators and Drivers (down by 23,400). Employment growth for the major occupation groups is shown in Table 1.

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

⁸ Analysis of ABS Labour Force data is major birth country groups by subcontinent, and the cohort covers people resident in or who entered Australia under all temporary and permanent visa programs.

⁹ The variation in unemployment rates between major birth country groups (by subcontinent) may reflect English language proficiency and period of residence in Australia, noting prescribed minimum English language proficiency standards mainly apply to primary applicants in the temporary, provisional and permanent skill related visa programs.

Table 1: Trend employment growth by occupation – 12 months to November 2025

Occupational Group	1 Year Change (‘000 persons)	1 Year Change (%)
Managers	-1.8	-0.1
Professionals	198.1	5.1
Technicians and Trades Workers	11.9	0.6
Community and Personal Service Workers	82.0	4.9
Clerical and Administrative Workers	-29.7	-1.6
Sales Workers	-21.5	-1.9
Machinery Operators and Drivers	-23.4	-2.6
Labourers	2.5	0.2

Source: ABS, [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed](#) (Table EQ08: Employed persons by Occupation unit group of main job (ANZSCO, Sex, State and Territory), November 2025, released 18 December 2025. Data trended by Jobs and Skills Australia.

Internet Vacancy data¹⁰

Jobs and Skills Australia produces the monthly Vacancy Report which contains the Internet Vacancy Index (IVI). See Figure 7.

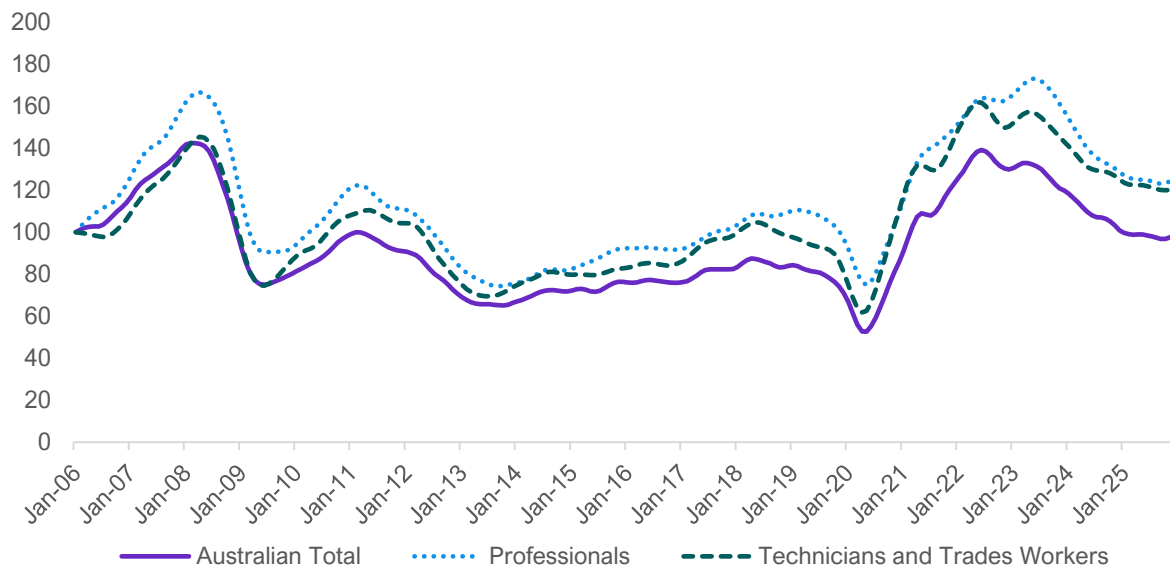
Over the year to November 2025, trend vacancies decreased for most occupation groups: Community and Personal Service Workers (down by 10.1%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (down by 6.7%), Technicians and Trades Workers (down by 5.2%), Managers, Professionals and Sales Workers (all down by 4.7%) and Labourers (down by 1.7%). For Machinery Operators and Drivers, trend vacancies went up by 5.8%.

At the more detailed occupation level, trend vacancies decreased in 34 of 48 occupation clusters over the year to November 2025. The largest decreases were for Food Preparation Assistants (down by 35.9%), Hospitality Workers (down by 33.0%) and Sales Support Workers (down by 16.5%). The largest increases were for Medical Practitioners and Nurses (up by 7.8%) and Drivers and Storepersons (up by 6.3%).

Over the year to November 2025, trend vacancies fell in most states and territories, decreasing in the ACT (down by 21.8%), NT (down by 11.7%), Tasmania (down by 9.6%), Victoria (down by 8.9%), Queensland (down by 4.9%), NSW (down by 3.8%), WA (down by 2.4%) and increasing in SA (up by 0.5%). For a full list of occupations and their recent growth in vacancies, see the [Vacancy Report](#) and supporting datafiles.

¹⁰ See Jobs and Skills Australia, [Internet Vacancy Index](#) (December 2025, released 21 January 2026). 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).

Figure 7: Internet Vacancy Index – January 2006 to December 2025



Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, [Internet Vacancy Index](#), (ANZSCO2 Occupations, States and Territories, Trend), December 2025, released 21 January 2026.



Hot Topic: Contribution of Temporary Work Visas to the Construction Industry¹¹

Construction Industry

This Hot Topic provides an overview of the contribution of temporary work visa holders to the Construction industry in Australia, using Department of Home Affairs' administrative data and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Australian Census and Temporary Entrants Integrated Dataset (ACTEID).

For the analysis in this Hot Topic, the Construction industry is benchmarked to Division E in the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC)¹² unless otherwise stated and to the 2021 Skills Priority List (SPL) to align to the ACTEID dataset.¹³

Labour Market

The Construction industry in Australia had an estimated workforce of 1.348 million in May 2025 and modelling commissioned by Jobs and Skills Australia's shows the workforce for this industry is projected to grow to 1.508 million by May 2035.¹⁴

Department of Home Affairs' data shows that in 2024-25, there were 5,485 temporary skilled visas granted for positions in the Construction industry.¹⁵ At 30 September 2025, there was a total 11,316 primary temporary skilled visa holders employed in Construction¹⁶ which represented about 0.84% of the Construction industry workforce in Australia.

Analysis of the ACTEID dataset shows that temporary work visa holders (i.e. temporary visa holders with a full or partial work right) accounted for 5.4% of the Construction industry workforce in 2021,¹⁷ which was a 0.1 percentage points (pp) decrease from 2016.¹⁸

¹¹ The analysis in this Hot Topic does not represent the view of the data custodians (i.e. the Department of Home Affairs and Australian Bureau of Statistics). The author is responsible for any errors or omissions.

¹² ABS - [Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification \(ANZSIC\), 2006 \(Revision 2.0\)](#) - Published 26 June 2013

¹³ National Skills Commission - [Skills Priority List](#) - Published June 2021

¹⁴ JSA - [Employment Projections, May 2025 to May 2035](#) - Published August 2025

¹⁵ Department of Home Affairs - [Temporary Work \(skilled\) visas granted report at 2025-09-30 \(2016-17 to September 2025\)](#) - Accessed on 19 November 2025, excluding visas granted under the not applicable/not specified categories.

¹⁶ Department of Home Affairs - [Temporary Work \(skilled\) visa holders report as at 2025-09-30 \(September 2025\)](#) - Accessed on 5 December 2025, excluding visa holders under the not applicable/not specified categories.

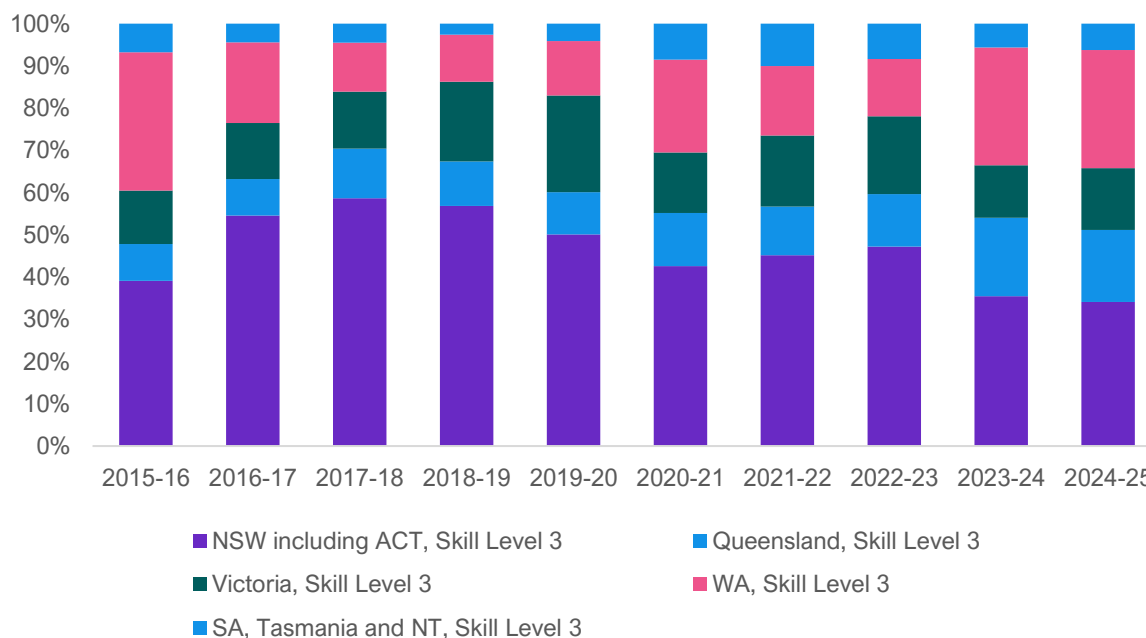
¹⁷ ABS - 2021 Census: counting persons, place of usual residence [Census TableBuilder Pro] - Accessed 26 November 2025.

¹⁸ ACTEID analysis temporary visa holders in scope of this analysis include Working Holiday Maker/Work and Holiday (Subclass 417 and 462), New Zealanders (Subclass 444 and 461), Temporary Skilled (Subclass 457 and 482), Student and Temporary Graduate (Subclasses 500, 572, 402/, 407, 476 and 485).

Geographic distribution

Department of Home Affairs data showed that of the 5,485 primary temporary skilled visas granted in 2024-25 for positions in the Construction industry,¹⁹ the majority (of 56.4%) were for Skill Level 3²⁰ occupations, mainly for positions in New South Wales (NSW), Western Australia (WA), Queensland and Victoria (Chart 1).

Chart 1. Primary temporary skilled visas granted for Skill Level 3 occupations in the Construction industry



Source. Home Affairs, Department of Home Affairs - Temporary Work (skilled) visas granted report at 2025-09-30 (2016-17 to September 2025).

Analysis of the ACTEID dataset identified 32,647 temporary work visa holders employed in the Construction industry in 2021,²¹ including some occupations that were rated as being in national shortage in the 2021 SPL.²² This analysis also showed a geographic variation to the employment of primary temporary visa holders in the residential construction sector. In non-metropolitan²³ areas, 47.7% were located across Queensland, 32.3% across the Northern Territory and 27.5% across Tasmania. For metropolitan areas, 90.3% were located across greater Adelaide, 87.8% across greater Melbourne and 87.1% across greater Perth.

Main sectors employing temporary visa holders

Department of Home Affairs data also showed that 27.1% of temporary skilled visa granted for positions in the Construction industry in 2024-25 were for offshore applicants (a reduction of 14.0pp from 2023-24). Visas granted for offshore applicants were an addition to the workforce supply for the industry.

¹⁹ Department of Home Affairs - [Temporary Work \(skilled\) visas granted report at 2025-09-30 \(2016-17 to September 2025\)](#) - Accessed on 19 November 2025.

²⁰ Skill Level 1 is commensurate with a bachelor degree or higher qualification, Skill Level 2 with an Associate Degree, Advanced Diploma or Diploma, Skill Level 3 with Certificate IV or III, Skill Level 4 with Certificate II or III and Skill Level 5 with Certificate I or compulsory secondary education. See [Conceptual basis of ANZSCO](#)

²¹ Scope of occupations in Construction industry reflects definition used by the Department of Home Affairs for reporting purposes and using 2022 ANZSCO.

²² National Skills Commission - [Skills Priority List](#) – Published June 2021

²³ ACTEID geographical analysis was based on [Australian Bureau of Statistics Greater Capital City Statistical Areas](#), which refers to Greater Capital City and Rest of State. For example, "Greater Sydney" and "Rest of NSW".

Analysis of the ACTEID dataset for 2021 showed that of the temporary work visa holders employed in the Construction industry, most were in Construction Services (61.2%) and Building Construction (27.9%). This dataset also showed that 66.3% of temporary visa holders were New Zealanders,²⁴ which was a decrease of 5.1pp compared to 2016. Over the period 2016 to 2021, analysis of ACTEID data shows that Student/Temporary Graduate visa holders who were employed in the Construction industry increased by 13.7pp to 20.1%.

Occupations of Temporary Work Visa Holders in the Construction Industry

Department of Home Affairs data showed that the top 10 occupations for primary temporary skilled visas granted in 2024-25 were Carpenters, Painting Trades Workers, Civil Engineer, Wall and Floor Tilers, Construction Project Managers, Drainers, Roof Plumbers, Contract Administrators, Welders (First Class) and Fitters (General), in order of proportion.

Analysis of the ACTEID dataset showed between 2016 and 2021, the percentage of Student/Temporary Graduate visa holders employed across the Construction industry increased by 7.6pp for Managers to 39.4pp for Professionals (Table 1).²⁵

Table 2: All job types for those working in the Construction industry by difference in proportion of visa type from 2016-2021 (primary applicant only, aged 15 years and over)

Visa Type	Change in Managers	Change in Professionals	Change in Trades Workers	Change in Technicians
Working Holiday ²⁶	-2.5pp	-7.5pp	-5.0pp	-1.1pp
New Zealanders	-1.5pp	-18.1pp	-5.9pp	3.8pp
Skilled	-3.6pp	-13.8pp	-3.4pp	-13.5pp
Student/Graduate	7.6pp	39.4pp	14.3pp	10.8pp

Note. People aged 15 years and over who were temporary primary visa holders employed in the Construction industry. Temporary humanitarian visas were not issued in 2016.

Source. ACTEID 2016, 2021.

For 2021, the ACTEID dataset showed that the proportion of Construction Project Managers among temporary skilled visa holders²⁷ in the Construction industry was 10.8%, an increase of 1.7pp compared to 2016. Construction Project Managers were rated as in national shortage on the 2021 SPL.²⁸

The ACTEID 2021 data showed that across temporary visa holders working in a Professional job group in the Construction industry, Student/Temporary Graduate visa holders had the highest proportion of Architects (71.5%), Structural Engineers (56.5%), Quantity Surveyors (52.1%) and Landscape Architects (40.1%). Quantity Surveyors and Structural Engineers were both rated as in national shortage on the 2021 SPL.

²⁴ New Zealanders (ACTEID data analysis) refers to the combined group of Special Category (subclass 444) and New Zealand Citizen Family Relationship visa (subclass 461).

²⁵ Manager (Major Group 1) occupations plan, organise, direct, control, coordinate and review the operations of government, commercial, agricultural, industrial, non-profit and other organisations, and departments. Professional (Major Group 2) occupations perform analytical, conceptual and creative tasks through the application of theoretical knowledge and experience in the fields of the arts, media, business, design, engineering, the physical and life sciences, transport, education, health, information and communication technology, the law, social sciences and social welfare. See [ABS ANZSCO Classification](#).

²⁶ Working Holiday (ACTEID data analysis) refers to the combined group of Working Holiday Maker (Subclass 417) and Work and Holiday (Subclass 462).

²⁷ Temporary skilled visa holders refers to entrants under the Temporary Work Skilled (Subclass 457) and Temporary Skill Shortage (Subclass 482) visa programs. Future analysis on this cohort would include the Skills in Demand (Subclass 482) visa.

²⁸ National Skills Commission - [Skills Priority List](#) – Published June 2021

Temporary visa holders working in Residential Building Construction 2016-2021

For 2021, the ACTEID dataset showed that temporary visa holders were more likely to work in residential compared to non-residential construction sectors, with 80.2% of visa holders who held Student/Temporary Graduate visas employed in residential construction.

Analysis of the ACTEID dataset also showed that for 2021, Student/Temporary Graduate visa holders working in residential construction were employed as Carpenters (21.9%), Builder's Labourers (17.7%) and Construction Project Managers (7.6%).

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.