Australian Government | Jobs and Skills Australia

Vacancy Report
August 2025

Released 17 September 2025

Job ads down 4.2% nationally in August

This month's results show the resumption of the downward trend in online job advertisements observed over much of the last 3 years. Despite this, advertisement numbers remain at elevated levels, with around 20% more advertisements in the labour market presently than compared with the monthly average for 2019.

- Online job advertisements at the national level decreased in August 2025 (down by 4.2% or 8,900) to stand at 202,500.
  - Over the year to August 2025, online job advertisements decreased by 12.2% (or 28,000). Online job advertisement numbers, though, are at high levels historically.
  - This downward trend is present in other demand indicators, with the Australian Bureau of Statistics' *Job Vacancies, Australia* series showing a 2.8% decrease in vacancies over the year to May 2025.[1]
- Recruitment activity decreased across all states and territories over the month. The strongest decreases were recorded in New South Wales (down by 7.6% or 4,900 job advertisements) followed by the Northern Territory (down by 6.4% or 190) and the Australian Capital Territory (down by 5.1% or 240).
- Over the month, advertisements decreased across all Skill Level groups. The strongest decreases were recorded for Skill Level 1 (commensurate with Bachelor degree or higher) occupations (down by 7.5% or 5,900 job advertisements) followed by Skill Level 3 (commensurate with Certificate IV or III) occupations (down by 4.4% or 1,500).
- Advertisements decreased across all Major Occupation groups over the month. The strongest decrease was for Professionals (down by 7.6% or 4,600 job advertisements) followed by Sales Workers (down by 6.6% or 1,100). The smallest decrease was recorded for Labourers (down by 1.4% or 200).
- Recruitment activity was concentrated in metropolitan Australia, with 70.6% of job advertisements in August 2025 found in Australia's capital cities. Over the last 12 months, job advertisements have decreased in regional areas (down by 2.3%); however, a larger decrease was recorded for capital cities (down by 8.6%).

Each month the Vacancy Report provides a more detailed analysis of a particular labour market segment. This month's report spotlights entry-level occupations.

202,500

Online Job Advertisements

(seasonally adjusted)

▼ **4.2%** Monthly change

▼ **12.2%** Annual change

Online job advertisements decreased by 4.2% (or 8,900 job advertisements) in August 2025 to stand at 202,500.

Over the year to August 2025, online job advertisements decreased by 12.2% (or 28,000 job advertisements).

[1] Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 'Job Vacancies, Australia', seasonally adjusted data, May 2025.

Behind the counter: early careers, underpayment and shifting demand for entry-level occupations.

In aggregate, labour market indicators suggest younger workers have experienced relatively favourable conditions during the robust recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this positive outlook is tempered by a noticeable decline in demand for workers in some high-volume entry-level occupations. Additionally, recent research highlights both ongoing and emerging challenges that could reshape labour demand for entry-level roles. On one hand, the complex issue of 'wage theft' disproportionately affects younger workers and the roles they typically occupy.[2] On the other hand, automation driven by artificial intelligence (AI) is expected to significantly impact entry-level jobs.[3] Deepening our understanding of these persistent and emerging challenges can help optimise the labour market experiences and contributions of younger Australians.

Younger Australians face numerous well-documented competitive barriers, as well as challenges transitioning from education, heightened vulnerability to economic volatility, and risks of disengagement from both work and study.[4] Despite these challenges, it is notable that labour market indicators suggest recent conditions have been more favourable than at any point in the past decade. The unemployment rate for 15- to 24-year-olds currently stands at 9.8%—higher than other age groups but 2.1 percentage points below the 2019 average.[5] Although youth unemployment has risen since its post-COVID-19 low of 7.1% in mid-2022, it remains at levels not seen since before the 2008 Global Financial Crisis. However, the benefits of recent strong labour market conditions have not been evenly distributed among younger workers. Between 2020 and July 2025, employment among 15- to 19-year-olds rose by 43.0%, and by 30.4% among 15- to 24-year-olds—compared to 18.0% growth across all age groups. This disparity may suggest employers may be increasingly turning to lower-cost workers in the youngest age group for specific roles.

Results from the Internet Vacancy Index show that labour demand for selected entry-level occupations, employing many younger Australians, has eased to varying degrees.[6] Online job advertisements for Cafe Workers, Waiters, Sales Assistants (General), and Kitchenhands have declined since the recruitment peak in late 2022, with percentage changes in the range of 40-80%. Compared to the 2019 average, job advertisements for Waiters and Kitchenhands have declined by 5.1% and 30.7%, respectively—while overall job advertisements have increased by around 20%. In contrast, advertisements for Cafe Workers and Sales Assistants (General) have risen by 44.0% and 37.1% compared to their 2019 averages. Employment trend data also show strong growth for Cafe Workers and Sales Assistants (General), up by 30.2% and 17.2% from 2019 averages, though growth has been weaker for Waiters and Kitchenhands.[7] These trends may reflect the impact of tightening household discretionary spending, constraining opportunities in the hospitality sector.[8] This signals a reduction in the type of labour market opportunities for younger workers.

Given the strong employment growth alongside signs of narrowing demand in youth-suitable occupations, close monitoring of younger workers' employment conditions is warranted. A recent large-scale survey of young Australian adults revealed concerning rates of underpayment in various forms.[9] Reported exploitation included 33% of respondents receiving wages at or below two-thirds of the minimum wage, as well as unpaid work, unpaid trials, unpaid superannuation, loss of break entitlements, compensation in food or products, and even returning wages to employers. Young workers are especially vulnerable to this persistent mistreatment due to limited knowledge of their entitlements, low union membership, and prevalence in precarious jobs—despite generally positive experiences when seeking help from regulators. As no simple solutions to non-compliance are evident, co-designed recommendations including support tools for younger workers may offer valuable additions to current strategies.

Emerging generative and agentic technologies are expected to have a disproportionate effect on entry-level occupations, in that these technologies will be most proficient in completing standardised and repetitive tasks.[10] Recent analysis suggests factors such as broader economic conditions currently have a greater influence on entry-level job demand than AI, given its early adoption stage in Australia. There are visible examples of AI-supported automation displacing younger workers, such as a 20.6% decline in Checkout Operator and Office Cashier employment over the past 5 years. However, analysis indicates that entry-level roles will evolve with AI augmentation, demanding new capabilities such as domain expertise and critical thinking, with industry-specific variation expected as adoption accelerates.

Younger workers face major barriers entering the labour market and are vulnerable to exploitation, partly due to limited agency among those lacking marketable skills or experience. Employers are generally open to hiring young workers for

[2] J Howe and T Dillion, 'Underpaid and overlooked: the wage crisis facing young workers in Australia', The University of Melbourne, July 2025.
[3] Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA), 'Our Gen AI Transition: Implications for Work and Skills, Final Overarching Report', 14 August 2025
[4] JSA, 'Employers' experiences of young job applicants: findings from the Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey', March 2025; C Ruiz, D Bartlett and E Moir, 'Welcome to your first job: expect to be underpaid, bullied, harassed or exploited in some way', *The Conversation*, 13 February 2019.
[5] ABS, 'Labour Force, Australia', seasonally adjusted data, July 2025; The low unemployment rate does not account for rates of *labour force underutilisation* particularly common among younger workers typically employed in part-time and precarious arrangements.
[6] JSA, 'Internet Vacancy Index', 3-month average data, August 2025.
[7] JSA, 'Labour Force Trending', May 2025.
[8] National Australia Bank, 'NAB Consumer Sentiment Survey Q2-2025', 2025.
[9] J Howe and T Dillion, 'Underpaid and overlooked: the wage crisis facing young workers in Australia'.
[10] Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA), 'Our Gen AI Transition: Implications for Work and Skills, Final Overarching Report'.

specific roles, often valuing attitude over other factors in recruitment decisions.[11] Nonetheless, persistent underpayment and emerging technologies may reshape how young Australians enter and engage with the labour market. In this context, ongoing monitoring of young workers' early career experiences is essential to support the effective use and development of their human capital.

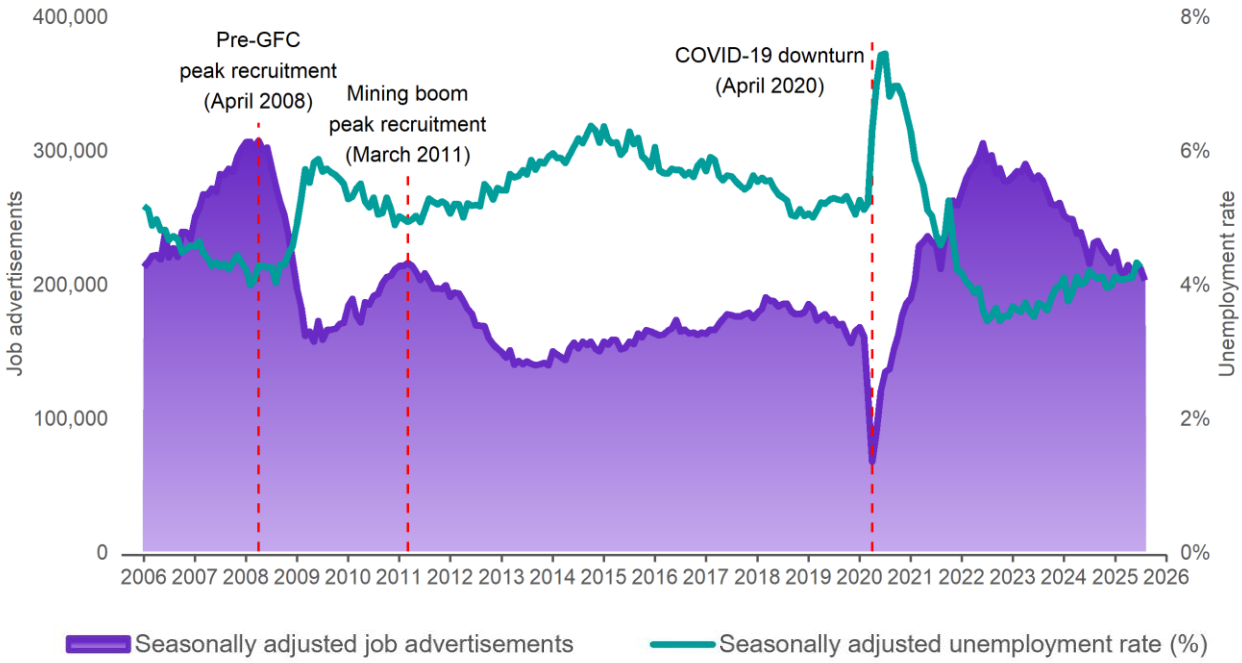
[11] JSA, 'Employers' experiences of young job applicants: findings from the Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey'.

Internet Vacancy Index Summary Sheet - August 2025

	Number of job ads (no.)	Monthly change (no.)	Monthly change (%)	Annual change (no.)	Annual change (%)
Australia	**202,500**	**-8,900**	▼ **-4.2%**	**-28,000**	▼ **-12.2%**
New South Wales	59,400	-4,900	▼ -7.6%	-8,400	▼ -12.4%
Victoria	45,300	-930	▼ -2.0%	-8,100	▼ -15.1%
Queensland	48,600	-2,200	▼ -4.4%	-6,100	▼ -11.2%
South Australia	13,400	-400	▼ -2.9%	-530	▼ -3.8%
Western Australia	25,100	-1,300	▼ -4.8%	-2,600	▼ -9.4%
Tasmania	3,200	-160	▼ -4.6%	-660	▼ -16.9%
Northern Territory	2,900	-190	▼ -6.4%	-280	▼ -8.9%
Australian Capital Territory	4,500	-240	▼ -5.1%	-1,600	▼ -26.8%
Managers	24,100	-1,200	▼ -4.9%	-3,600	▼ -13.0%
Professionals	56,400	-4,600	▼ -7.6%	-9,200	▼ -14.0%
Technicians and Trades Workers	28,900	-1,200	▼ -3.9%	-3,400	▼ -10.6%
Community and Personal Service Workers	20,100	-720	▼ -3.5%	-4,400	▼ -17.8%
Clerical and Administrative Workers	30,600	-1,100	▼ -3.5%	-4,600	▼ -13.1%
Sales Workers	15,800	-1,100	▼ -6.6%	-2,400	▼ -13.0%
Machinery Operators and Drivers	12,000	-300	▼ -2.4%	-200	▼ -1.6%
Labourers	13,900	-200	▼ -1.4%	-450	▼ -3.1%
Skill Level 1 - Bachelor degree or higher	72,300	-5,900	▼ -7.5%	-12,000	▼ -14.2%
Skill Level 2 - Advanced Diploma or Diploma	23,700	-900	▼ -3.7%	-2,300	▼ -8.8%
Skill Level 3 - Certificate IV or III* (Skilled VET)	32,000	-1,500	▼ -4.4%	-4,100	▼ -11.3%
Skill Level 4 - Certificate II or III	51,000	-2,200	▼ -4.2%	-7,700	▼ -13.1%
Skill Level 5 - Certificate I or secondary education	22,800	-960	▼ -4.0%	-2,100	▼ -8.5%

*Includes at least two years of on-the-job training.
Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, Internet Vacancy Index, seasonally adjusted data, August 2025.

Figure 1: Job advertisements and unemployment rate, January 2006 to August 2025



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force, Australia, seasonally adjusted data, July 2025; Jobs and Skills Australia, Internet Vacancy Index, seasonally adjusted data, August 2025.

The next IVI release is scheduled for 15 October 2025. The IVI is published on the JSA website at jobsandskills.gov.au/data/internet-vacancy-index.

The Internet Vacancy Index (IVI) is a monthly data series measuring online job advertisements, compiled by Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA). The IVI counts job advertisements newly lodged on the SEEK, CareerOne and Workforce Australia online job boards. Commencing in 2006, the IVI is the longest continuous time series for vacancy data in Australia. JSA research indicates the proportion of all vacancies covered by IVI has increased from 38% in 2016 to 57% in 2024. More detail on the IVI is available at jobsandskills.gov.au/data/internet-vacancy-index.