RLMI Results – September 2025

Key Findings

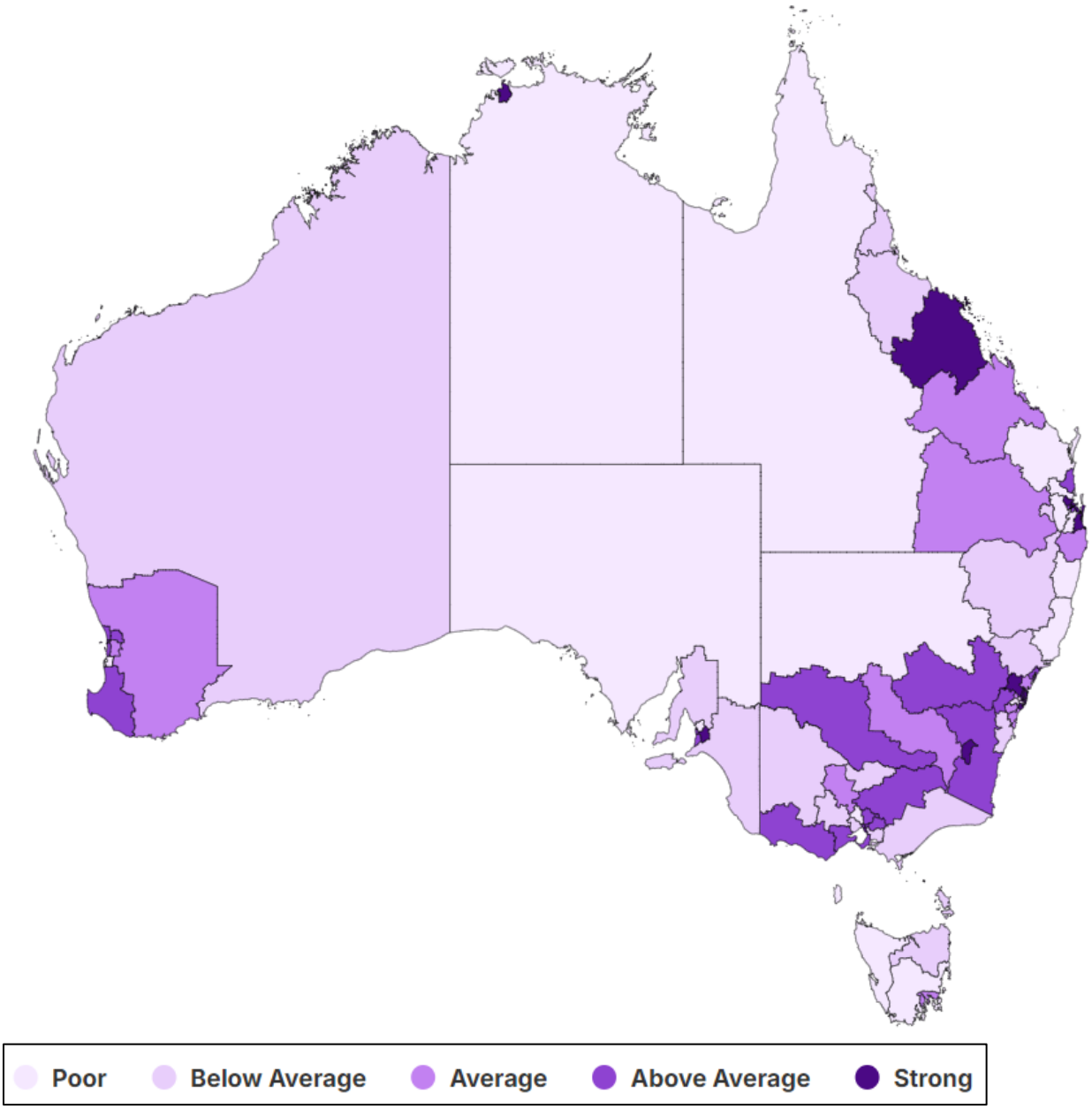
1. Regional and remote areas continue to be more likely to experience relatively weaker labour market conditions than their major city counterparts.
2. Highlighting the strength of many metropolitan regions are current strong conditions in Greater Adelaide, where overall conditions are strong despite persistent challenges in parts of the region.
3. Analysis of JSA's landmark Generative AI Capacity Study alongside RLMI data shows that exposure to Gen AI is highest in stronger performing labour markets in major cities.

Labour market challenges are more pronounced in many regional areas

The September 2025 RLMI results continue to show that regional and remote areas are more likely to experience weaker labour market conditions than their major city counterparts, highlighting the additional challenges faced in many regional areas by both employers and jobseekers (see Chart 1, below).

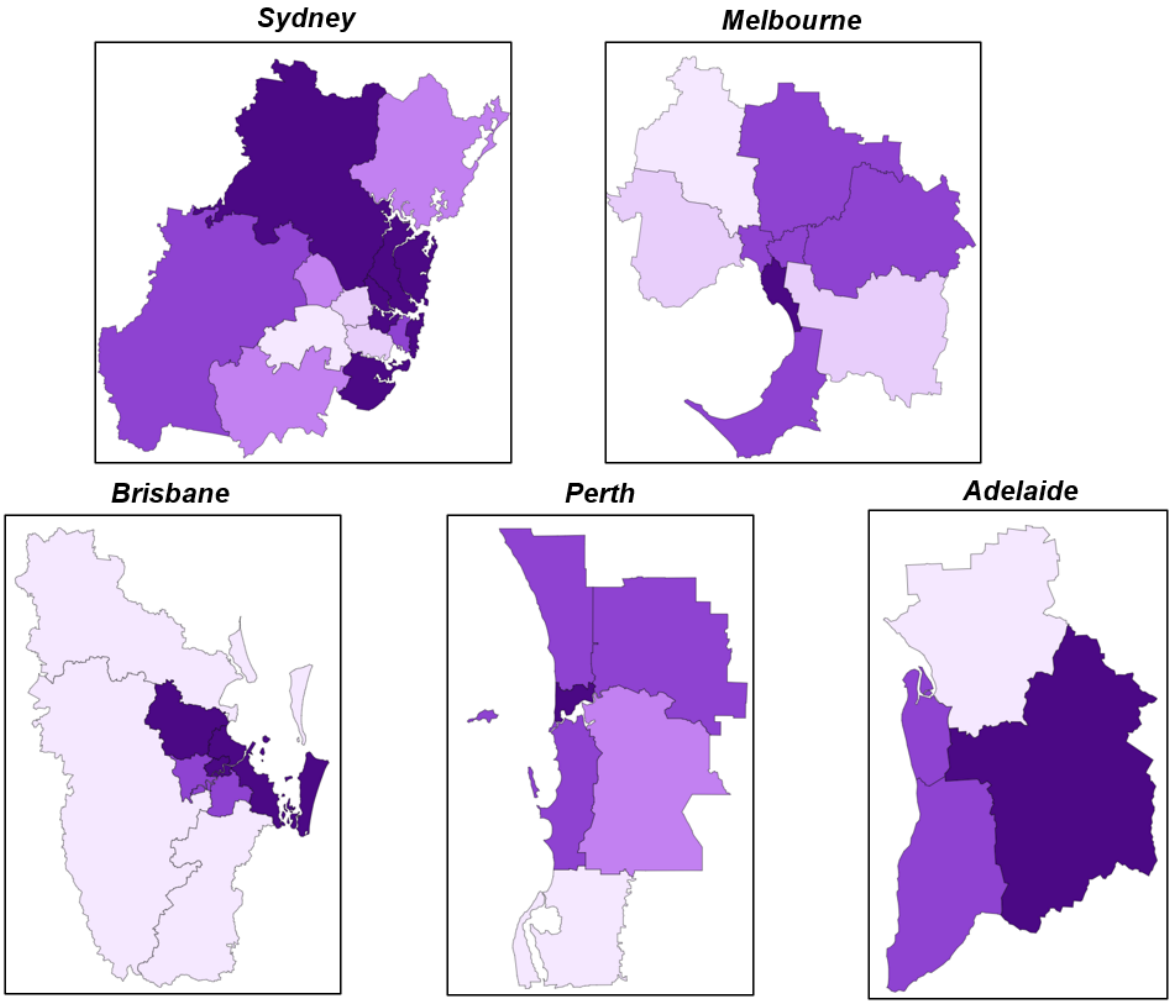
- Almost half of the SA4's (17 out of 37) located in regional areas were rated either 'below average' or 'poor' in September 2025, while all six (or 100%) remote areas were rated either 'below average' or 'poor'.
- Two-thirds of the SA4's (29 out of 44) located in major city areas were rated either 'strong' or 'above average' in September 2025.

Chart 1: RLMI ratings of relative labour market performance, September 2025



Source: JSA, *Regional Labour Market Indicator (RLMI)*, September 2025

Chart 2: RLMI ratings of relative labour market performance, by selected Capital Cities, September 2025



Source: JSA, *Regional Labour Market Indicator (RLMI)*, September 2025

Recent trends in regional labour market performance

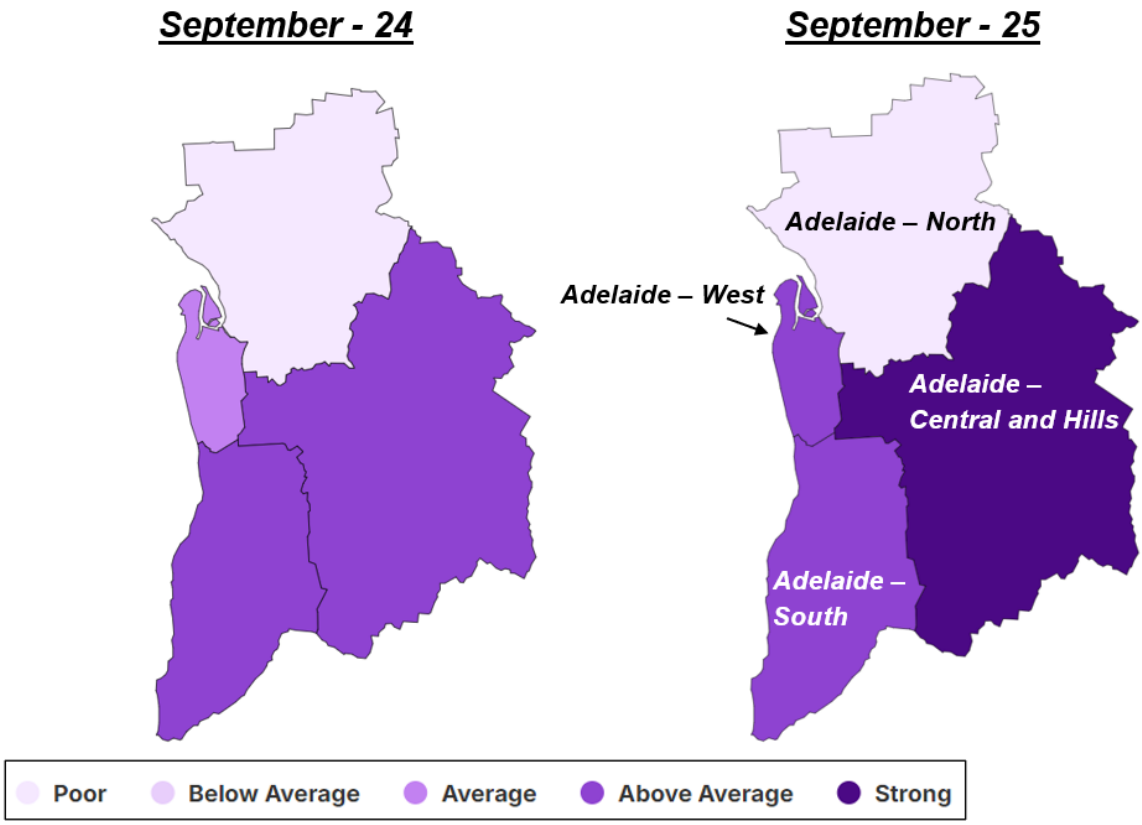
The latest RLMI results highlight areas of relative labour market strength and weakness across Australia's regions, including Greater Adelaide, where overall conditions are strong despite persistent challenges in parts of the region.

In focus: Gather Round for Strong Labour Market Performance

A diverse economy, with strengths in health and medical research, education and training and retail trade, the latest RLMI results help to highlight strong overall labour market conditions in Greater Adelaide.

For instance, labour market conditions have been persistently strong in the Adelaide – South and Adelaide – Central and Hills (SA4) regions, having been regularly rated 'above average' and 'strong' over the last decade.

Chart 3: RLMI ratings of relative labour market performance for Greater Adelaide



Source: JSA, *Regional Labour Market Indicator (RLMI)*, September 2025

Additionally, the relative strength of the labour market in the Adelaide – West (SA4) region has improved from its long-term trend with several key indicators of spare labour market capacity having recently strengthened (see Table 1, below). As such, labour market conditions in the region were rated 'above average' in September 2025, up from its rating of 'below average' as recently as December 2019, indicating that conditions are reasonably tight when compared to the national average.

Table 1: Key labour market indicators for Adelaide – West (SA4)

	Sep-24	Sep-25	Change in conditions
Employment Rate (15-64 years) (%)	77.0	78.3	**Improved**
JobSeeker Income Support Rate (%)	5.9	5.9	**Stable**
Unemployment Rate (%)	3.6	3.9	**Softened**
Vacancy Fill Rate (%)[1]	63.4	72.6	**Improved**
Underemployment Rate (%)	7.2	6.1	**Improved**

Source: JSA, *Regional Labour Market Indicator (RLMI)*, September 2025

In contrast to the strength seen elsewhere in Greater Adelaide, the Adelaide – North (SA4) region has a long history of labour market disadvantage, with conditions having been regularly rated as 'poor' over the last decade, relative to the national average.

- Contributing to persistently poor conditions in the region is a low rate of employment, a high proportion of the working age population on JobSeeker Income Support, and a high unemployment rate.

[1] June 2025 (latest available data).

Taken together, these key measures of labour market performance indicate considerable spare capacity in the region's labour market and highlight the pronounced difficulty for jobseekers.

Spotlight: Our (regional) Gen AI Transition

Generative AI[2] (Gen AI) is one of the most significant shifts shaping Australia's labour market. It can change how work is done—helping people work smarter, boosting productivity, and creating new opportunities across industries. Jobs and Skills Australia's landmark *Generative AI Capacity Study* provides the first comprehensive view of Gen AI's potential, its impact so far, and what's needed to support the digital and AI transition.

Analysis of this study alongside RLMI data shows that exposure to Gen AI—through **automation**[3] (AI doing tasks previously done by people) and **augmentation**[4] (AI helping people do tasks better)—is highest in stronger performing labour markets in major cities (see Table 2, below[5]). Regional and remote areas, however, have lower exposure, meaning less immediate disruption but also fewer short-term productivity gains or opportunities to develop experience with the new technology.

Table 2: AI Exposure (weighted occupations)

	Automation exposure	Augmentation exposure
Major City average	0.38	0.63
Regional average	0.35	0.62
Remote average	0.33	0.61

Source: JSA, *Our Gen AI Transition: Generative AI Capacity Study*, 2025
Note: See Appendix A for AI Exposure (weighted occupations) by SA4

Differences in AI exposure across regions reflect the types of jobs and industries that are common in local economies. Major city areas have more roles that involve tasks Gen AI can easily augment or automate. In contrast, regional and remote areas rely more on hands-on sectors like agriculture, trades, and tourism, where tasks are less suited to automation or augmentation. This occupational mix means cities face higher exposure to AI-driven change – both opportunities and challenges - while regional areas experience lower exposure and may see a slower pace of adoption.

This has important implications. Regions with higher augmentation exposure—typically major cities with stronger labour markets—may be better placed to use AI to drive innovation and growth. However, for regional and remote areas, lower AI exposure may offer valuable time to plan and invest in skills, ensuring workers are ready for gradual adoption. This transition offers a chance to shape AI adoption on regional terms—including focusing on sectors like health care, education, and construction. By building digital capability now, regions can unlock AI's broad potential benefits while supporting inclusive growth across Australia.

[2] Artificial intelligence that creates new content—such as text, images, or code—based on patterns learned from large datasets, enabling tasks that mimic human creativity and reasoning.
[3] **Automation** occurs when artificial intelligence fully takes over a task previously performed by humans, eliminating the need for human involvement. In the context of generative AI, automation risk is relatively low and typically applies to routine, repetitive tasks.
[4] **Augmentation** occurs when artificial intelligence enhances or supports human work rather than replacing it—improving productivity, creativity, and decision-making while keeping humans in the loop. Most jobs are expected to be augmented rather than automated.
[5] See Appendix A for AI Exposure (weighted occupations) by SA4.

Appendix A: AI exposure (weighted occupations) by SA4

Statistical Area Level 4 (SA4)	RLMI Rating	Automation exposure	Augmentation exposure
Major City average		***0.38***	***0.63***
Sydney - City and Inner South	Above average	0.45	0.68
Melbourne - Inner	Above average	0.43	0.67
Brisbane Inner City	Strong	0.43	0.67
Sydney - North Sydney and Hornsby	Strong	0.42	0.67
Sydney - Ryde	Strong	0.42	0.67
Perth - Inner	Strong	0.42	0.67
Adelaide - Central and Hills	Strong	0.41	0.65
Australian Capital Territory	Strong	0.41	0.66
Sydney - Inner West	Strong	0.40	0.65
Sydney - Parramatta	Below average	0.40	0.65
Melbourne - Inner East	Above average	0.40	0.65
Sydney - Baulkham Hills and Hawkesbury	Strong	0.39	0.64
Sydney - Eastern Suburbs	Strong	0.38	0.65
Sydney - Inner South West	Below average	0.38	0.63
Sydney - Northern Beaches	Strong	0.38	0.64
Melbourne - Inner South	Strong	0.38	0.64
Brisbane - South	Above average	0.38	0.63
Sydney - Blacktown	Average	0.37	0.63
Sydney - South West	Poor	0.37	0.63
Sydney - Sutherland	Strong	0.37	0.63
Melbourne - Outer East	Above average	0.37	0.63
Melbourne - South East	Below average	0.37	0.63
Brisbane - North	Strong	0.37	0.63
Brisbane - West	Above average	0.37	0.63
Adelaide - West	Above average	0.37	0.62
Perth - North West	Above average	0.37	0.63
Central Coast	Average	0.36	0.62
Sydney - Outer South West	Average	0.36	0.62
Sydney - Outer West and Blue Mountains	Above average	0.36	0.62
Melbourne - North East	Above average	0.36	0.63
Melbourne - North West	Poor	0.36	0.62
Melbourne - West	Below average	0.36	0.62
Brisbane - East	Strong	0.36	0.62
Logan - Beaudesert	Poor	0.36	0.62
Moreton Bay - South	Strong	0.36	0.62
Adelaide - South	Above average	0.36	0.62
Perth - South East	Average	0.36	0.62
Perth - South West	Above average	0.36	0.62
Mornington Peninsula	Above average	0.35	0.62
Ipswich	Poor	0.35	0.61
Adelaide - North	Poor	0.35	0.61
Mandurah	Poor	0.35	0.61
Perth - North East	Above average	0.35	0.62
Moreton Bay - North	Poor	0.34	0.61

Statistical Area Level 4 (SA4)	RLMI Rating	Automation exposure	Augmentation exposure
Regional average		***0.35***	***0.62***
Newcastle and Lake Macquarie	Above average	0.37	0.63
Gold Coast	Strong	0.37	0.63
Hobart	Average	0.37	0.63
Darwin	Strong	0.37	0.63
Illawarra	Average	0.36	0.63
Ballarat	Below average	0.36	0.62
Geelong	Above average	0.36	0.62
Sunshine Coast	Above average	0.36	0.62
Toowoomba	Below average	0.36	0.62
New South Wales - Central West	Above average	0.35	0.62
Coffs Harbour - Grafton	Poor	0.35	0.62
Mid North Coast	Poor	0.35	0.61
Murray	Above average	0.35	0.62
New England and North West	Below average	0.35	0.61
Richmond - Tweed	Average	0.35	0.62
Southern Highlands and Shoalhaven	Below average	0.35	0.62
Bendigo	Average	0.35	0.62
Latrobe - Gippsland	Below average	0.35	0.62
Cairns	Below average	0.35	0.62
Townsville	Below average	0.35	0.62
Launceston and North East	Below average	0.35	0.62
Capital Region	Above average	0.34	0.61
Hunter Valley exc Newcastle	Below average	0.34	0.61
Riverina	Average	0.34	0.61
Hume	Above average	0.34	0.61
Victoria - North West	Below average	0.34	0.61
Shepparton	Below average	0.34	0.62
Warrnambool and South West	Above average	0.34	0.61
Central Queensland	Average	0.34	0.61
Wide Bay	Poor	0.34	0.61
Barossa - Yorke - Mid North	Below average	0.34	0.61
South Australia - South East	Below average	0.34	0.61
Bunbury	Above average	0.34	0.61
Western Australia - Wheat Belt	Average	0.34	0.61
Darling Downs - Maranoa	Average	0.33	0.61
Mackay - Isaac - Whitsunday	Strong	0.33	0.60
Tasmania - South East	Poor	0.32	0.60
Remote average		***0.33***	***0.61***
Far West and Orana	Poor	0.34	0.61
Tasmania - West and North West	Poor	0.34	0.61
Northern Territory - Outback	Poor	0.34	0.62
South Australia - Outback	Poor	0.33	0.61
Queensland - Outback	Poor	0.32	0.61
Western Australia - Outback (North and South)	Below average	0.32	0.61

Appendix B: Labour Market Rating by SA4, September 2025

Statistical Area Level 4 (SA4)	Remoteness	Sep-24	Sep-25	Direction
Central Coast	Major City	Average	Average	Stable
Sydney - Baulkham Hills and Hawkesbury	Major City	Strong	Strong	Stable
Sydney - Blacktown	Major City	Average	Average	Stable
Sydney - City and Inner South	Major City	Above average	Above average	Stable
Sydney - Eastern Suburbs	Major City	Strong	Strong	Stable
Sydney - Inner South West	Major City	Average	Below average	Declined
Sydney - Inner West	Major City	Strong	Strong	Stable
Sydney - North Sydney and Hornsby	Major City	Strong	Strong	Stable
Sydney - Northern Beaches	Major City	Strong	Strong	Stable
Sydney - Outer South West	Major City	Average	Average	Stable
Sydney - Outer West and Blue Mountains	Major City	Above average	Above average	Stable
Sydney - Parramatta	Major City	Below average	Below average	Stable
Sydney - Ryde	Major City	Strong	Strong	Stable
Sydney - South West	Major City	Poor	Poor	Stable
Sydney - Sutherland	Major City	Strong	Strong	Stable
Capital Region	Regional	Above average	Above average	Stable
New South Wales - Central West	Regional	Above average	Above average	Stable
Coffs Harbour - Grafton	Regional	Poor	Poor	Stable
Far West and Orana	Remote	Poor	Poor	Stable
Hunter Valley exc Newcastle	Regional	Below average	Below average	Stable
Illawarra	Cities of Regional Australia	Average	Average	Stable
Mid North Coast	Regional	Poor	Poor	Stable
Murray	Regional	Above average	Above average	Stable
New England and North West	Regional	Below average	Below average	Stable
Newcastle and Lake Macquarie	Cities of Regional Australia	Above average	Above average	Stable
Richmond - Tweed	Regional	Average	Average	Stable
Riverina	Regional	Average	Average	Stable
Southern Highlands and Shoalhaven	Regional	Below average	Below average	Stable
Melbourne - Inner	Major City	Above average	Above average	Stable
Melbourne - Inner East	Major City	Above average	Above average	Stable
Melbourne - Inner South	Major City	Strong	Strong	Stable
Melbourne - North East	Major City	Above average	Above average	Stable
Melbourne - North West	Major City	Below average	Poor	Declined
Melbourne - Outer East	Major City	Strong	Above average	Declined
Melbourne - South East	Major City	Below average	Below average	Stable
Melbourne - West	Major City	Below average	Below average	Stable
Mornington Peninsula	Major City	Above average	Above average	Stable
Ballarat	Regional	Below average	Below average	Stable
Bendigo	Regional	Average	Average	Stable
Geelong	Cities of Regional Australia	Above average	Above average	Stable
Hume	Regional	Above average	Above average	Stable
Latrobe - Gippsland	Regional	Below average	Below average	Stable
Victoria - North West	Regional	Average	Below average	Declined
Shepparton	Regional	Below average	Below average	Stable
Warrnambool and South West	Regional	Above average	Above average	Stable

Statistical Area Level 4 (SA4)	Remoteness	Sep-24	Sep-25	Direction
Brisbane - East	Major City	Strong	Strong	Stable
Brisbane - North	Major City	Strong	Strong	Stable
Brisbane - South	Major City	Above average	Above average	Stable
Brisbane - West	Major City	Above average	Above average	Stable
Brisbane Inner City	Major City	Strong	Strong	Stable
Ipswich	Major City	Poor	Poor	Stable
Logan - Beaudesert	Major City	Poor	Poor	Stable
Moreton Bay - North	Major City	Poor	Poor	Stable
Moreton Bay - South	Major City	Strong	Strong	Stable
Cairns	Cities of Regional Australia	Below average	Below average	Stable
Darling Downs - Maranoa	Regional	Average	Average	Stable
Central Queensland	Regional	Average	Average	Stable
Gold Coast	Cities of Regional Australia	Strong	Strong	Stable
Mackay - Isaac - Whitsunday	Regional	Strong	Strong	Stable
Queensland - Outback	Remote	Poor	Poor	Stable
Sunshine Coast	Cities of Regional Australia	Above average	Above average	Stable
Toowoomba	Cities of Regional Australia	Below average	Below average	Stable
Townsville	Cities of Regional Australia	Below average	Below average	Stable
Wide Bay	Regional	Poor	Poor	Stable
Adelaide - Central and Hills	Major City	Above average	Strong	Improved
Adelaide - North	Major City	Poor	Poor	Stable
Adelaide - South	Major City	Above average	Above average	Stable
Adelaide - West	Major City	Average	Above average	Improved
Barossa - Yorke - Mid North	Regional	Poor	Below average	Improved
South Australia - Outback	Remote	Poor	Poor	Stable
South Australia - South East	Regional	Below average	Below average	Stable
Mandurah	Major City	Poor	Poor	Stable
Perth - Inner	Major City	Strong	Strong	Stable
Perth - North East	Major City	Above average	Above average	Stable
Perth - North West	Major City	Strong	Above average	Declined
Perth - South East	Major City	Average	Average	Stable
Perth - South West	Major City	Above average	Above average	Stable
Bunbury	Regional	Above average	Above average	Stable
Western Australia - Outback (North and South)	Remote	Below average	Below average	Stable
Western Australia - Wheat Belt	Regional	Average	Average	Stable
Hobart	Cities of Regional Australia	Below average	Average	Improved
Launceston and North East	Regional	Below average	Below average	Stable
Tasmania - South East	Regional	Poor	Poor	Stable
Tasmania - West and North West	Remote	Poor	Poor	Stable
Darwin	Cities of Regional Australia	Strong	Strong	Stable
Northern Territory - Outback	Remote	Poor	Poor	Stable
Australian Capital Territory	Major City	Strong	Strong	Stable

Source: JSA, Regional Labour Market Indicator (RLMI), September 2025

RLMI Explanatory Notes

Overview

The Regional Labour Market Indicator (RLMI) combines key indicators of spare labour market capacity, from both an employee and employer perspective, into a single, and easy to interpret, summary measure.

Regions are grouped into distinct categories of overall labour market performance, ranging from 'poor' to 'strong', which provides an accurate and reliable view of labour market performance, relative to the national average.

A strong labour market, that is characterised by a high rate of employment, where employment opportunities are extended to all who want them, is central to a strong economy and prosperous and inclusive society.

Factors used to assess labour market performance

The **working age (15-64 years) employment rate**[6] is one of the most commonly used indicators for understanding conditions in the labour market and is a key measure of performance. It provides an insight into the extent to which available labour (some individual's personal circumstances may prevent them from participating in the labour market) is being used and is unaffected by voluntary changes in labour force participation.

Along with the employment rate, the **unemployment rate** is one of the most commonly used indicators for understanding conditions in the labour market and is a key measure of spare capacity. It provides insights into the availability of unused labour that is willing and available for work.

The **JobSeeker income support rate** is a reliable measure of spare capacity in the labour market and is an important complement to other measures of spare capacity. It is a combination of the JobSeeker payment and Youth Allowance (other) payment, measured as a proportion of the working age population. These payments are designed to provide financial assistance to support those looking for working, including those who may be working part-time.

The **underemployment rate**[7] takes a broad view of underutilisation by measuring the share of the labour force that is employed, but not fully utilised in terms of the amount of work people would like. It is an important complement to the unemployment rate in assessing how much spare capacity could be called upon in adapting to labour market strength and weakness.

The **vacancy fill rate**[5] is a key measure of unmet demand for labour. A low fill rate indicates that the demand for labour is not matched by the supply of labour from workers. This may be due to a lack of suitable applicants or high search costs that reduce labour market matching efficiency. Poorer-performing regions experience more difficulty filling vacant positions, despite having a higher availability of unused labour willing and available to work.

Methodology

Please refer to the RLMI Methodology Paper for more information on the RLMI, including its purpose and factor selection.

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[7] Measured at the Greater Capital City Statistical Area (GCCSA) level due to data quality issues with this factor at the SA4 level.

Referencing this report

Data in this release should be referenced as: Jobs and Skills Australia, RLMI, September 2025

Contact us

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