



## Are you looking for a job in Australia?

The Australian Labour Market Update provides information on the Australian labour market on a quarterly basis. It is intended to help people interested in working in Australia on a temporary or permanent basis.

Further information on job prospects, earnings and related information is available at [www.joboutlook.gov.au](http://www.joboutlook.gov.au).

Unless otherwise stated, data are from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Labour Force Survey, February 2012.

## EMPLOYMENT

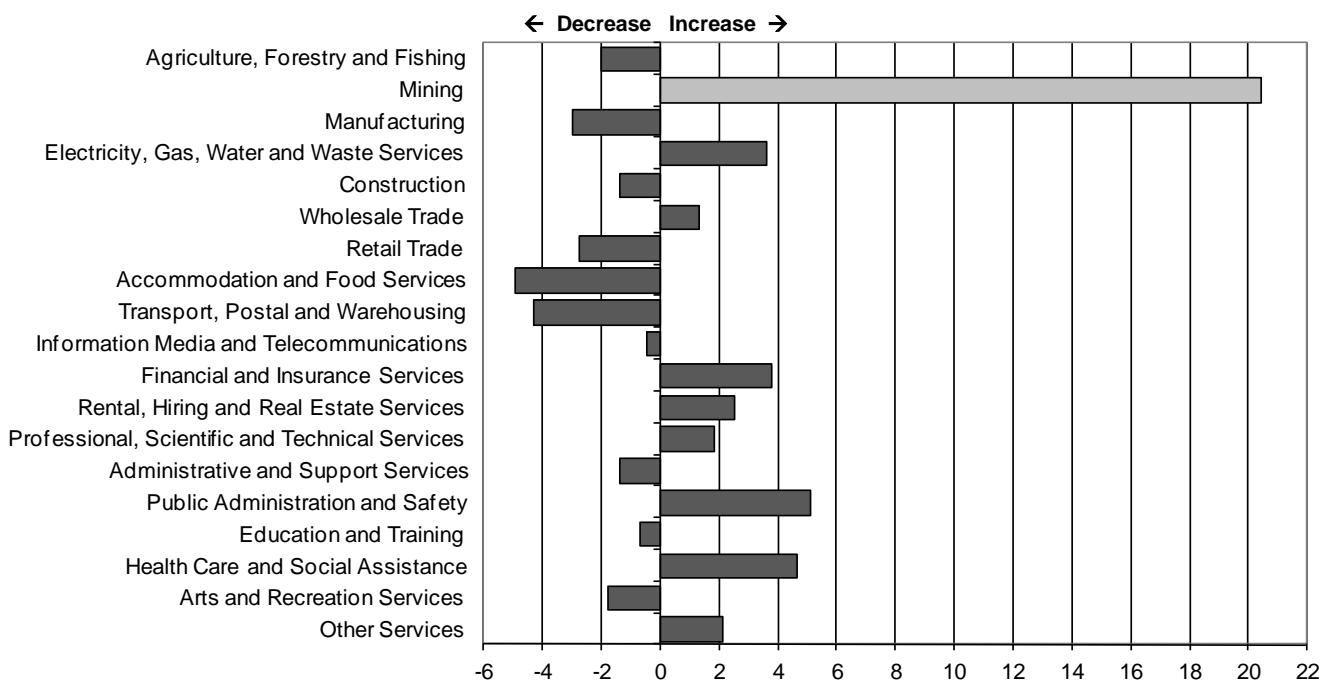
Labour market conditions in Australia have softened over the year to February 2012, with trend employment increasing by just 25 000 (or 0.2%) compared with an increase of 322 500 (or 2.9%) over the previous year. Indeed, the pace of trend employment growth has slowed considerably, from a peak of 38 000 jobs per month in August 2010, to just 7000 jobs per month in February 2012.

Going forward, the labour market is likely to remain reasonably soft in the near term, although there are tentative signs emerging that some improvement in labour market conditions may be in prospect in the short to medium-term, supported by record investment in the mining sector.

Over the 12 months to February 2012, employment (in trend terms) increased in Western Australia (WA, 3.0%), the Northern Territory (NT, 1.5%), Queensland (0.7%), the Australian Capital Territory (ACT, 0.7%) and South Australia (SA, 0.5%).

Employment opportunities and growth varied across industries. Over the 12 months to February 2012, the largest increases in trend employment occurred in Health Care and Social Assistance (up 59 800), Mining (up 42 300) and Public Administration and Safety (up 36 100). The strongest rates of employment growth were in Mining (20.4%), Public Administration and Safety (5.1%), Health Care and Social Assistance (4.6%), Financial and Insurance Services (3.8%) and Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services (3.6%). Employment growth rates by industry are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Percentage change in trend employment by industry – Feb 2011 to Feb 2012



Source: ABS, Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly, February 2012, ABS Cat. No. 6291.0.55.003.

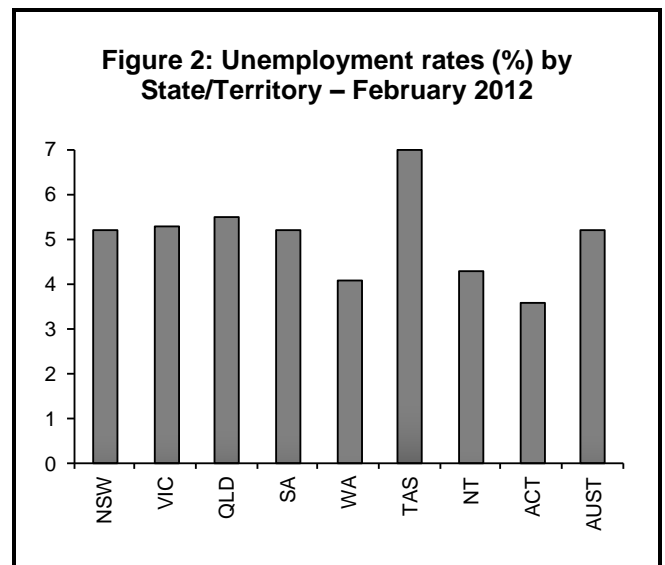
## UNEMPLOYMENT

The trend rate of unemployment was 5.2% in February 2012, compared with 5.0% in February 2011.

In the past year, trend unemployment rates decreased in SA (from 5.5% to 5.2%) and WA (from 4.3% to 4.1%). In Queensland the unemployment rate remained unchanged at 5.5%.

In February 2012, the trend unemployment rate was highest in Tasmania (7.0%) and lowest in the ACT (3.6%), WA (4.1%) and the NT (4.3%).

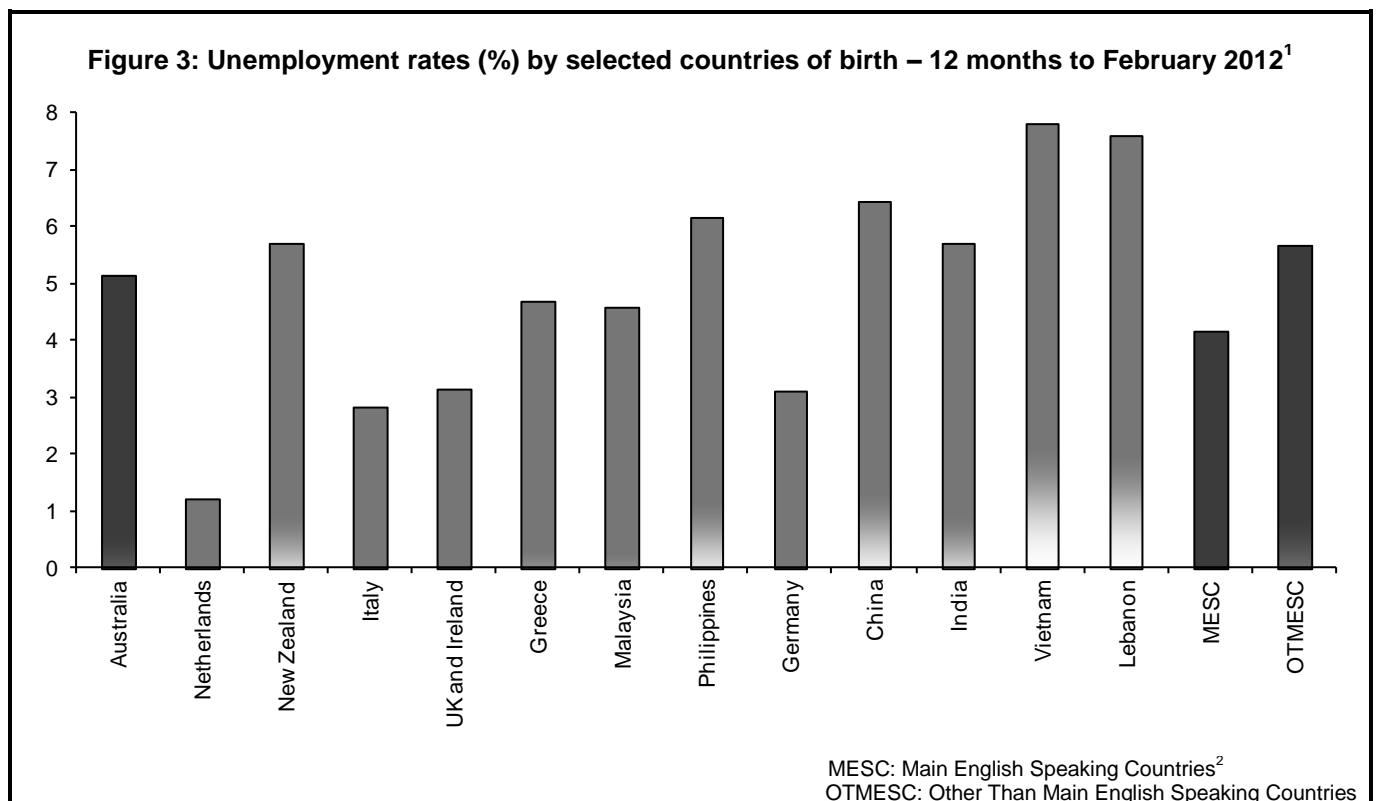
Generally, people in more highly-skilled occupational groups are less likely to experience unemployment. For the four quarters to February 2012, the unemployment rate for those formerly employed as Labourers was more than three times that of former Professionals.



## MIGRANT UNEMPLOYMENT

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

Figure 3 below shows unemployment rates (original data – average of the last 12 months to February 2012) for people resident in Australia who were born in selected overseas countries. In the data below, people born in the Netherlands and Italy have low unemployment rates (1.2% and 2.8% respectively), while unemployment rates for people born in Vietnam and Lebanon are relatively high (7.8% and 7.6% respectively).



<sup>1</sup> The estimates for individual countries in Figure 3 may be subject to high sampling variability.

<sup>2</sup> MESC are the United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, South Africa, Canada, the United States of America and New Zealand.

## EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION

While employment growth is not the only factor influencing job prospects, it is often easier to obtain a job in an occupation which is experiencing strong employment growth than one growing only slowly or declining. Over the 12 months to February 2012 (original data – average of the last four quarters), the largest increases in employment occurred for Clerical and Administrative Workers (up 51 200), Professionals (up 45 200) and Machinery Operators and Drivers (up 43 400). Employment growth rates, in descending skill order, are shown below.

Employment Growth Rates for the 12 months to February 2012		Unemployment Rates for the 12 months to February 2012	
Managers	0.3%	Managers	1.6%
Professionals	1.9%	Professionals	1.9%
Technicians and Trades Workers	-0.5%	Technicians and Trades Workers	3.1%
Community and Personal Service Workers	3.7%	Community and Personal Service Workers	3.5%
Clerical and Administrative Workers	3.1%	Clerical and Administrative Workers	2.6%
Sales Workers	-3.7%	Sales Workers	4.5%
Machinery Operators and Drivers	6.0%	Machinery Operators and Drivers	4.0%
Labourers	-1.7%	Labourers	6.2%

The unemployment rate for occupational groups generally reflects skill levels. Highly skilled occupational groups experience lower rates of unemployment, while higher unemployment rates are generally associated with less-skilled occupations. The unemployment rates (for those who worked for two weeks or more in the past two years) by occupational group are presented in descending skill order (original data – average of the last four quarters).

Additional information on Professional and Trade occupations is provided in the following section on internet vacancy trends.

## INTERNET VACANCY TRENDS

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) produces the monthly Vacancy Report<sup>3</sup>, containing the Internet Vacancy Index (IVI)<sup>4</sup> (see Figure 4). Over the year to February 2012, the IVI (trend) decreased by 8.6%, with decreases for all eight occupational groups.

Over the year to February 2012, vacancies increased in the NT (up 15.7%), WA (up 11.8%) and Queensland (up 1.0%). The most significant IVI decreases were in Tasmania (down 21.2%), the ACT (down 20.9%) and Victoria (down 17.0%).

Vacancies decreased for all eight occupational groups over the year. The largest decreases were for Sales Workers (down 12.3%), Managers (down 10.7%) and Clerical and Administrative Workers (down 10.6%).

Over the year to February 2012, vacancies decreased in 39 of the 48 occupational clusters, with the largest decreases being for Farmers and Farm Managers (down 38.7%), Construction Trades (down 26.8%), Transport and Design Professionals, and Architects (down 22.2%), Skilled Animal and Horticultural Workers (down 22.1%) and ICT Professionals (down 21.3%). The largest increases over the same period were for Science Professionals and Veterinarians (up 24.0%), Chief Executives, Managing Directors & Legislators (up 11.9%) and Automotive and Engineering Trades (up 11.8%).

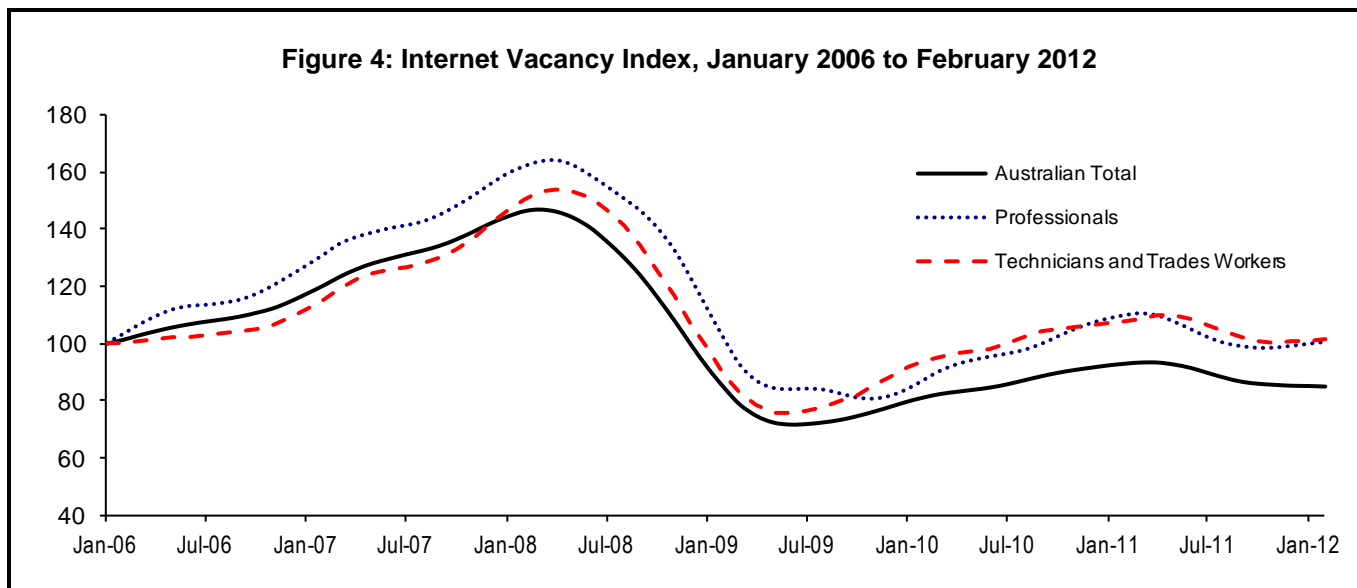
With the decrease in the IVI over the year to February 2012, vacancies are 42.1% below the March 2008 peak.

<sup>3</sup> Available from [www.deewr.gov.au/lmip/default.aspx?LMIP/VacancyReport](http://www.deewr.gov.au/lmip/default.aspx?LMIP/VacancyReport).

<sup>4</sup> The Internet Vacancy Index (IVI) is based on a count of online vacancies newly lodged on SEEK, MyCareer, CareerOne and Australian JobSearch during the month. The data are seasonally adjusted and trended, and then indexed (January 2006 = 100). IVI vacancies have been coded by DEEWR to occupations based on the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO), First Edition (ABS Cat. No. 1220.0). In view of the trending procedure, figures for the six months prior to the current month are subject to revision.



Figure 4: Internet Vacancy Index, January 2006 to February 2012



Source: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Internet Vacancy Index (February 2012), [www.deewr.gov.au/lmp/default.aspx?LMIP/VacancyReport](http://www.deewr.gov.au/lmp/default.aspx?LMIP/VacancyReport).

## FUTURE JOB PROSPECTS

Future job prospects depend on many factors, some of which are difficult to predict. As there may be significant variation between and within States, information on job prospects should be used with caution.

The table below contains selected occupations with good job prospects over the medium term (to 2015-16). The prospects<sup>5</sup> are based on employment trends, projected employment growth, unemployment rates, vacancy trends, and other data. For prospects on other occupations, visit Job Outlook ([www.joboutlook.gov.au](http://www.joboutlook.gov.au)).

Selected Occupational Groups with Good Job Prospects to 2015-16 <sup>6</sup>	
<b>Managers</b> Child Care Centre Managers	Physiotherapists Psychiatrists
<b>Professionals</b> Architects and Landscape Architects Chemical and Materials Engineers Civil Engineering Professionals Dental Practitioners Early Childhood (Pre-primary School) Teachers Generalist Medical Practitioners Industrial, Mechanical and Production Engineers Medical Imaging Professionals Medical Laboratory Scientists Metallurgist Midwives Optometrist	<b>Technicians and Trades Workers</b> Airconditioning and Refrigeration Mechanics Automotive Electricians Carpenters and Joiners Civil Engineering Draftspersons and Technicians Electricians Motor Mechanics Plasterers Plumbers Sheetmetal Trades Workers Structural Steel and Welding Trades Workers <b>Community and Personal Service Workers</b> Dental Hygienists, Technicians and Therapists

The Australian Labour Market Update uses the latest available detailed and consistent data at time of production. However, the labour market can change quickly and should be re-assessed prior to making a decision to lodge a visa application. Queries relating to this publication should be emailed to [migration@deewr.gov.au](mailto:migration@deewr.gov.au).

<sup>5</sup> Job prospect ratings are based on ANZSCO, First Edition (ABS Cat. No. 1220.0).

<sup>6</sup> This table does not identify all skilled occupations eligible for temporary or permanent migration to Australia. The list of skilled occupations may include occupations with average or below average future job prospects.



## Australian Labour Market Update

# Australia – its States and Territories

This Hot Topic focuses on the Australian States and Territories (the States), and provides an overview of the Australian population, its regional distribution and relative economic performance. It is an annual publication included in the April edition of the Australian Labour Market Update.

Unless otherwise stated, data are from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Labour Force Survey, February 2012.

## THE AUSTRALIAN POPULATION

Australia's population is concentrated in New South Wales (NSW) and Victoria (with 32.3% and 24.9% of the total population respectively). The States which experienced the strongest population growth over the 12 months to 30 June 2011 were Western Australia (WA, up 2.4%) and Queensland (up 1.7%), while the Northern Territory (NT) experienced the weakest growth (0.4%).

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT	AUST
Population	7 302 174	5 621 210	4 580 282	1 656 299	2 349 325	510 519	230 369	365 621	22 618 294
Share of Australian Population (%)	32.3	24.9	20.3	7.3	10.4	2.3	1.0	1.6	100.0
Capital City	20.5	18.3	9.2	5.4	7.7	1.0	0.6	1.6	64.1
Balance of State	11.8	6.6	11.1	2.0	2.7	1.3	0.5	0.0	35.9
Share of State population aged 15-64 (%)	67.0	67.8	67.3	66.4	68.5	64.9	71.2	70.9	67.4
Population growth (%)**	1.1	1.5	1.7	0.8	2.4	0.6	0.4	1.9	1.4

\* Estimated resident population at 30 June 2011 is preliminary.

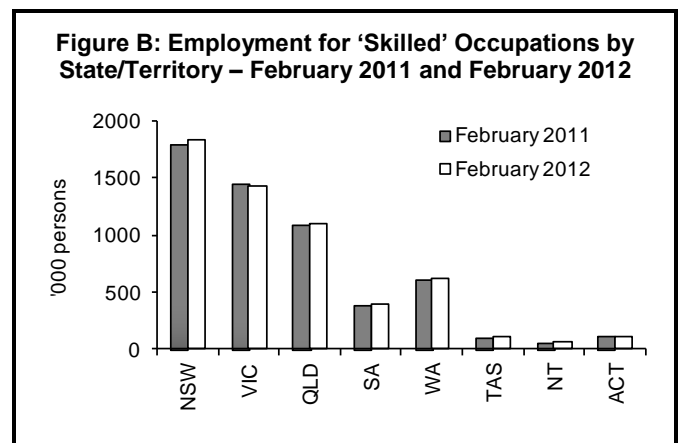
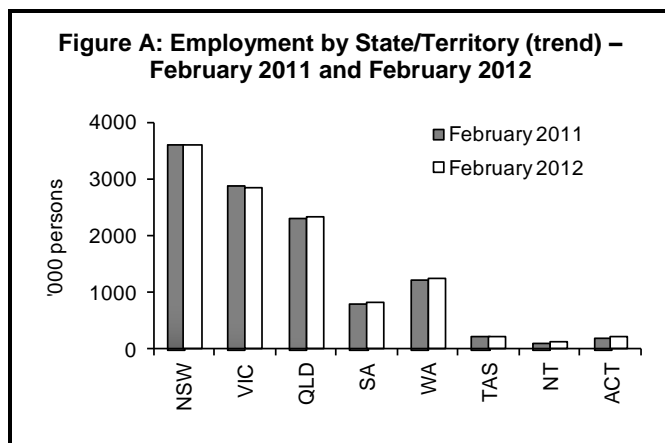
\*\* Percentage growth in the 12 months from 30 June 2010 to 30 June 2011. Estimated resident population at 30 June 2010 is revised.

Source: ABS (2012), Australian Demographic Statistics, September Quarter 2011, ABS Cat. No. 3101.0; and ABS (2012), Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2010-11, ABS Cat. No. 3218.0.

## STATE AND TERRITORY EMPLOYMENT

Trend employment increased in WA (up 3.0%), the NT (up 1.5%), Queensland (up 0.7%), the Australian Capital Territory (ACT, up 0.7%) and South Australia (SA, up 0.5%) over the 12 months to February 2012. Trend employment fell in Tasmania (down 1.2%), Victoria (down 0.9%) and NSW (down 0.5%).

Figure B shows NSW (1.8 million), Victoria (1.4 million) and Queensland (1.1 million) employ the largest number of workers in 'skilled' occupations<sup>7</sup> (Managers, Professionals, and Technicians and Trades Workers) (original data). The NT recorded the highest employment growth (up 7.2%) over the 12 months to February 2012.



<sup>7</sup> ANZSCO Major Groups 1 to 3 includes most but not all skilled occupations where the entry level requirement for employment in the Australian labour market is an Australian Qualifications Framework Certificate III or higher qualification.

## STATE AND TERRITORY LABOUR FORCE<sup>8</sup>

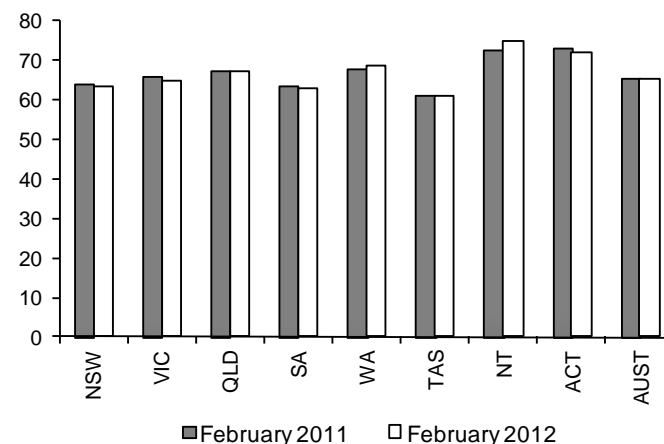
The labour force participation rate is calculated by expressing the labour force as a percentage of the civilian population aged 15 and over. The labour force is based on employed persons plus unemployed persons.

Over the 12 months to February 2012, the labour force participation rate for Australia (trend data) decreased slightly by 0.6 percentage points to 65.2% (see Figure C). The NT and WA recorded the largest increases in the participation rate over this period (2.2 and 0.5 percentage points respectively), with Victoria, the ACT and NSW recording the largest decreases (1.1, 0.8 and 0.7 percentage points respectively).

Full-time employment (trend data) remained steady in the 12 months to February 2012, while part-time employment increased by 0.2%.

Male full-time employment decreased by 0.2% while female full-time employment increased by 0.5%. Male part-time employment decreased by 0.2% while female part-time employment increased by 0.4%.

Figure C: Labour force participation rates by State (%)



## INDUSTRY BY STATE AND TERRITORY

Table B below provides estimates of the percentage of employment in each State for each industry (original data). It shows the ACT had a relatively high proportion of employed persons in Public Administration and Safety, WA in Mining, Victoria in Manufacturing, Tasmania and SA in Health Care and Social Assistance, and NSW in Financial and Insurance Services. The industries that employ the largest number of persons in Australia are Health Care and Social Assistance followed by Retail Trade, Construction and Manufacturing.

INDUSTRY	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT	AUST
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	2.4	2.7	3.2	4.9	2.9	5.8	2.9	0.2*	2.9
Mining	1.2	0.4	2.7	1.2	7.8	1.7	3.5	0.1*	2.1
Manufacturing	7.9	10.6	7.8	9.6	7.2	7.5	2.8	1.5	8.4
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	1.1	1.3	1.7	1.3	1.3	1.8	1.8	1.0	1.3
Construction	8.3	9.0	10.0	8.4	10.5	8.9	10.2	7.4	9.1
Wholesale Trade	3.8	4.0	3.2	3.7	3.4	3.1	2.4	1.4	3.6
Retail Trade	10.8	10.7	10.9	11.4	10.4	11.3	8.9	7.1	10.7
Accommodation and Food Services	7.2	6.2	7.1	6.9	5.8	8.0	6.7	6.6	6.8
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	5.3	4.8	5.6	4.2	4.7	4.1	5.8	2.3	5.0
Information Media and Telecommunications	2.4	2.1	1.4	1.5	1.1	1.7	1.3	2.2	1.9
Financial and Insurance Services	5.0	4.1	2.6	3.5	2.2	2.6	1.7	1.6	3.7
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	1.7	1.6	2.3	1.3	1.9	1.2	1.7	1.2	1.8
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	8.5	8.2	6.5	6.0	7.4	4.5	5.2	9.5	7.6
Administrative and Support Services	3.5	3.7	3.5	3.5	3.3	2.7	3.1	3.1	3.5
Public Administration and Safety	6.0	4.8	6.5	6.4	5.9	7.8	15.1	30.9	6.4
Education and Training	7.2	7.7	7.6	7.9	7.4	8.5	9.0	9.0	7.6
Health Care and Social Assistance	11.6	11.8	11.9	12.4	10.8	13.2	10.8	9.1	11.7
Arts and Recreation Services	1.6	2.1	1.8	1.9	1.7	2.0	3.1	2.2	1.8
Other Services	4.3	4.0	3.8	3.8	4.2	3.4	4.2	3.5	4.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: ABS Labour Force Survey original data for the 4 quarters to February 2012.

\* This estimate may be subject to high sampling variability.

<sup>8</sup> From April 2011, this section is based on ABS trended data, instead of ABS original data (which was used for previous editions).