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 inform people interested in working in Australia on a temporary or permanent basis.

Further information on job prospects, earnings and related information is at the Job Outlook website.

Unless otherwise stated, data are from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Labour Force Survey, November 2016.¹

Employment

Over the 12 months to November 2016, the strongest employment growth (in trend terms) occurred in Victoria (3.7%), followed by the Northern Territory (NT, 2.6%), the Australian Capital Territory (ACT, 2.1%) and South Australia (SA, 1.2%). Employment declined in Western Australia (WA, down 1.3%), Queensland (down 1.3%) and Tasmania (down 0.7%).

Employment opportunities and growth varied across industries. Over the 12 months to November 2016, the largest increases in trend employment occurred in Manufacturing (up 60 900), Education and Training (up 46 100), Accommodation and Food Services (up 37 200) and Public Administration and Safety (up 31 400). The largest decrease in trend employment occurred in Retail Trade (down 51 200). The strongest rates of employment growth were in Manufacturing (up 7.0%) and Education and Training (up 5.0%). Increases in trend employment by industry are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Trend employment growth by industry ('000s persons)—November 2015 to November 2016


¹ The first paragraph of the Employment section and the Unemployment section use trended data from the ABS’ Labour Force, Australia, December 2016 (ABS Cat. No. 6202.0) time series spreadsheets.
Unemployment

The trend rate of unemployment in Australia was 5.7% in November 2016, compared with 5.9% in November 2015.

In the past year, the trend unemployment rate increased in WA (6.2% to 6.6%).

Over the same period, the trend unemployment rate decreased in the ACT (5.0% to 3.7%), the NT (4.3% to 3.6%), SA (7.3% to 6.7%), New South Wales (5.4% to 5.0%), Victoria (6.0% to 5.9%), Tasmania (6.5% to 6.4%) and Queensland (6.1% to 6.0%).

In November 2016, the trend unemployment rate was highest in SA (6.7%) and lowest in the NT (3.6%). See Figure 2.

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 on average than those who have lived in Australia for some years.

Figure 3 below shows unemployment rates (average of the last 12 months to November 2016) for people resident in Australia born in major country groups (subcontinent). People born in North-West Europe and Southern and Eastern Europe have relatively low unemployment rates (3.8% and 4.8% respectively), while unemployment rates for people born in North Africa and the Middle East (11.3%) and Sub-Saharan Africa (7.8%) are relatively high.

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2 From October 2015, Figure 3 of the Australian Labour Market Update uses major country groups (subcontinent) of birth data from the Standard Australian Classification of Countries (SACC), 2011 (ABS Cat. No. 1269.0). In SACC, ‘Australia (includes External Territories)’ is included within ‘Oceania and Antarctica’.

3 MESC are the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, South Africa, Canada, the United States of America and New Zealand.
Employment by Occupation

Employment growth is not the only factor influencing job prospects and it may be 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 November 2016, the largest increases in trend employment occurred for Professionals (up 53 800), Labourers (up 51 600) and Machinery Operators and Drivers (up 41 000). Trend employment growth rates in descending skill order are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Trend employment growth by occupation—12 months to November 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Group</th>
<th>1 Year Change ('000 persons)</th>
<th>1 Year Change (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managers</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technicians and Trades Workers</td>
<td>-53.9</td>
<td>-3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community and Personal Service Workers</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical and Administrative Workers</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Workers</td>
<td>-41.6</td>
<td>-3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinery Operators and Drivers</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourers</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Internet Vacancy Trends

The Department of Employment produces the monthly Vacancy Report which contains the Internet Vacancy Index (IVI) (see Figure 4). Over the year to November 2016, the IVI (trend) decreased by 0.5%, and decreases were recorded in four of the eight occupational groups.

The largest occupational group decreases were for Managers (down 3.8%) and Sales Workers (down 2.9%). The largest occupational group increases were for Machinery Operators and Drivers (up 6.8%) and Labourers (up 3.8%).

At the more detailed occupation level, vacancies increased in 27 of the 48 occupation clusters over the year to November 2016, with the strongest increases for Engineers (up 25.0%), Protective Service Workers (up 17.6%) and Automotive and Engineering Trades Workers (up 16.0%). The strongest decrease over this period was for Hairdressers, Printing, Clothing and Wood Trades Workers (down 12.5%).

Over the year to November 2016, vacancies rose in three states and the ACT. The strongest rises were in SA (up 8.9%) and the ACT (up 7.9%). The largest falls were in the NT (down 16.4%) and WA (down 14.9%).
Figure 4: Internet Vacancy Index, January 2006 to November 2016

Source: Department of Employment, Vacancy Report (December 2016), Trend Index data.

Future Employment Change

The Labour Market Information Portal contains information on projected future employment change over the five years to November 2020 for different occupations and industries. As there may be significant variation between and within states, information on future employment change should be used with caution.

Future employment change estimates are indicative only and are intended to provide a guide to opportunities likely to be available over the five years to November 2020. It is important to note that these estimates do not provide any guidance about the number of people looking for opportunities in each occupation. As the Australian labour market can change quickly, information should be re-assessed prior to making a decision to lodge a visa application.

Queries on the Australian Labour Market Update publication should be emailed to migration@employment.gov.au.
Counsellors

Counsellors provide information on vocational, relationship, social and educational difficulties and issues, and work with people to help them to identify and define their emotional issues through therapies such as cognitive behaviour therapy, interpersonal therapy and other talking therapies. The Counsellors occupation group includes careers counsellor, drug and alcohol counsellor, family and marriage counsellor, rehabilitation counsellor and student counsellor.ii

In the Australian labour market, employers of Counsellors often seek applicants with a Bachelor degree in a highly relevant field of study. While the Counselling professions are self-regulated and registration is not necessary to practice, other certification (such as working with children and/or comprehensive criminal record checks) may be required. Requirements vary between occupations and workplaces, and according to state/territory rules and regulations. For example, to be employed as a student counsellor in the public school system in New South Wales (NSW), both a teaching and a psychology qualification are required.

Labour Market Profile

Employment growth projections by the Australian Department of Employment indicate that the occupation group of Counsellors is expected to grow very strongly to November 2020. The number of job openings over the five years to November 2019 is, however, expected to be below average (between 5001 and 10 000). The majority of Counsellors are employed in the Health Care and Social Assistance (56.9%), Education and Training (31.7%) and Public Administration and Safety (6.4%) industries. Table A provides a labour market profile for Counsellors from the Job Outlook website.

Table A: Counsellors—Key Labour Market Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Indicator</th>
<th>Counsellors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occupation size (November 2015)</td>
<td>20 700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most common level of educational attainment</td>
<td>Advanced Diploma or Diploma (28.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median age</td>
<td>47 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time share of employment</td>
<td>48.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average weekly hours (full-time)</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median weekly earnings (full-time and before tax)</td>
<td>$1 153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment rate</td>
<td>average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment growth over past five years (to November 2015)</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projected (to November 2020) occupation size</td>
<td>25 500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regional Employment

Counsellors are employed in all states and territories in Australia.

For the four quarters to November 2016,iii the average share of employment of Counsellors was highest in NSW (37.8%), Victoria (22.7%) and Queensland (21.0%). Western Australia, South Australia, the Australian Capital Territory, the Northern Territory and Tasmania employed the smallest average share of Counsellors (at fewer than 10.0% each). See Figure A (original data).
Skills Assessment
Overseas-trained Counsellors wishing to apply for permanent migration to Australia need to first obtain a skills assessment from VETASSESS. VETASSESS skills assessment criteria for Counsellors includes a qualification at the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Bachelor degree level in a highly relevant field of study and at least one year of post-qualification employment that is highly relevant to the nominated occupation. For more information click here.

Employer-Sponsored Migration
The Australian Government has several employer-sponsored migration programmes including the Temporary Work Skilled, the Employer Nomination Scheme and the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme. Information on these programmes is on the Department of Immigration and Border Protection website.

Seeking Employment in Australia
Counsellors should note that acceptance of qualifications for a migration (visa) purpose does not assure employment in this occupation or related occupations in Australia. Employment will depend on other factors such as the number of vacancies, skill needs in the Australian labour market, and suitability of an applicant for employment in a particular job in Australia.

The Department of Employment is not an employment agency and is not able to assist visa applicants or potential migrants to obtain employment in Australia. Australian employers are increasingly using the internet to advertise vacancies, and websites of relevant Australian professional bodies (which may recognise membership of affiliated overseas bodies) and industry bodies may include information on vacancies.

1 The Counsellors occupation group also includes counsellors not elsewhere classified (nec) which includes gambling counsellor, grief counsellor, life coach, rape crisis counsellor and trauma counsellor.
3 ABS Labour Force Survey (original data), Cat. No. 6291.0.55.003.