



**Local Jobs
Program**

Local Jobs Plan

Western Melbourne Victoria

October 2020

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The Department of Education, Skills and Employment acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of the lands where we work and travel through. We pay our respects to their people, cultures and their Elders past, present and emerging.

Preface

The Local Jobs Program (LJP) brings together expertise, resources and access to funding at the local level to focus on the reskilling, upskilling and employment pathways for job seekers in 25 Employment Regions, as part of supporting Australia's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

This interim plan identifies the key priorities for the Western Melbourne Employment Region, with a focus on **creating employment opportunities**, meeting local **employer demands** and **better skilling** local job seekers. The plan identifies the direction, strategies and actions of the Employment Facilitator.

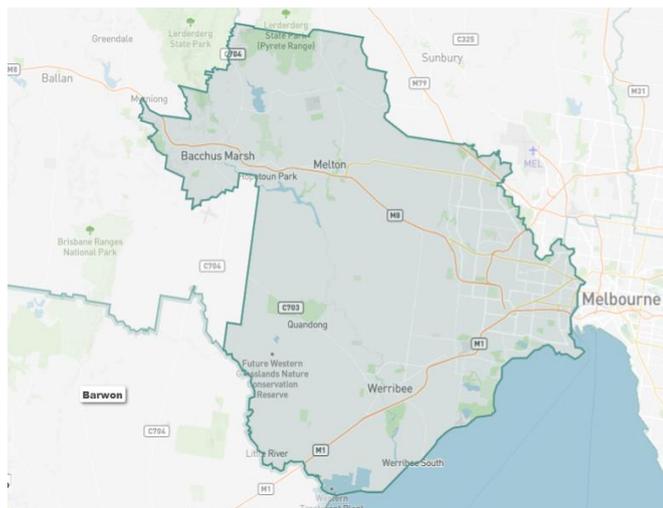
This plan will be reviewed when the Western Melbourne Employment Region Local Jobs and Skills **Taskforce** is in place, and whenever the priorities change (or every six months).

Local Jobs Program Key Priorities: Western Melbourne Employment Region

1. Maximising the benefits of existing Australian, Victorian and Local Government programs to create **pathways into major industries**, particularly the Transport and Logistics, Health Care and Social Assistance, Manufacturing and Construction sectors.
2. Maximising the extent to which local job seekers **are skilled to meet the needs of major projects** in the region, including infrastructure and other large-scale construction projects.
3. Brokering opportunities for **youth skill development and employment** across all sectors, including **apprenticeships and traineeships**.
4. Addressing **barriers to employment for CALD and Refugee** job seekers by targeting supported employment pathways to jobs opportunities in priority sectors.
5. Engaging with and supporting **female job seekers** to access employment opportunities aligned with local skill needs, including in traditionally male dominated industry sectors.
6. Reducing the labour market disadvantage of **Indigenous Australians** in the region.

Western Melbourne Employment Region overview

The Western Melbourne Employment Region is made up of six local government areas (LGAs) that comprises the Cities of Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melton and Wyndham as well as the Shire of Moorabool. The Region ranges from densely populated inner suburbs to semi-rural areas in Moorabool Shire.



Western Melbourne is one of the fastest growing areas in Australia with the LGAs of Wyndham and Melton in the top five LGAs nationally for growth over 2017-19. Both of these LGAs are located on the outer fringes of Western Melbourne where there is relatively less access to community infrastructure such as public transport and other services when compared to middle and inner suburbs.

The Western Melbourne region has a diverse industry profile. The largest employing industries are Transport, Postal and Warehousing, Health Care and Social Assistance and Retail Trade. Manufacturing and Construction are also large employing industries. Other key industries include Accommodation and Food Services, Travel and Tourism, and Agriculture and Horticulture.

Key challenges in the Western Melbourne Employment Region

While Western Melbourne has a diverse labour market profile presenting strong job opportunities in growth industries and skills-in-demand sectors, the region has a history of **labour market and social disadvantage**.

The proportion of the **working age population on income support** in Western Melbourne is higher than the Victorian average (16.7 per cent compared to 15.2 per cent), while the **unemployment rate** has averaged 7.8 per cent over the last five years compared with 5.5 per cent for Victoria.

Pre-COVID-19 figures from March 2020 show that of the 47 Statistical Area 2 (SA2) level locations within Western Melbourne, just over 40 per cent recorded an unemployment rate of more than 8 per cent. SEIFA Index results also at the SA2 level shows the **lowest decile scores for education and occupation status** were recorded in the locations of Kings Park, St Albans - North, St Albans - South, Sunshine North, Sunshine West, Melton, Rockbank - Mount Cottrell, and Werribee East.¹

Youth job seekers represent 16 per cent of the total jobactive caseload in the Western Melbourne region. Although the regional youth unemployment rate is lower than the Victorian rate, young

¹ ABS. Cat. 2033.0.55.001 Socio-Economic Indexes for Australia (SEIFA), 2016

people in Western Melbourne have a higher rate of **youth disengagement** with 14.2 per cent not currently studying or working, compared with 11.2 per cent for Victoria.

The jobactive caseload in the region also has **substantially higher proportions of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) and Refugee job seekers** compared with Victoria. CALD job seekers represent 47 per cent of the caseload (compared to 29 per cent for Victoria) while Refugee job seekers represent 9 per cent (compared to 5 per cent for Victoria).

CALD and Refugee cohorts face multiple barriers in applying their skills and experience within the Australian labour market. Commonly reported barriers to employment include limited language, literacy and numeracy skills, lack of Australian work experience, limited access to transport and affordable housing close to employment, lack of knowledge of Australian workplace culture and systems, and difficulties with recognition of prior skills, qualifications and experience.²

Access to **public transport across the region can be fragmented**, particularly for those living between main train routes or in the outer suburbs. For job seekers without a driver’s licence or their own reliable transport - typically highly represented by the Youth, CALD and Refugee cohorts - this can present challenges in accessing job opportunities. A key transport challenge in the region includes a **lack of public transport options that align with the start and end times for roles involving shift work** in the manufacturing, food production and agricultural sectors.

Impacts of COVID-19

The Western Melbourne region has experienced significant negative impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic. High COVID-19 case numbers within the region coupled with health restrictions heavily limiting activity across all metropolitan Melbourne areas have resulted in lost business revenue and a loss of or reduction in employment.

The **jobactive caseload by Local Government Area (LGA)** in Table 1 shows the growth in job seeker numbers since March 2020. While the largest increases have been recorded in the Wyndham, Melton and Brimbank LGAs, all LGAs in Western Melbourne have recorded large caseload increases.

Table 1: jobactive caseload by LGA (where known)

LGA	1 March 2020 Caseload	30 September 2020 Caseload	Count Change	Percentage Change
Brimbank City	6,971	17,744	+10,773	+154.5%
Hobsons Bay City	1,918	5,400	+3,482	+181.5%
Maribyrnong City	2,482	6,882	+4,400	+177.3%
Melton City	4,117	11,864	+7,747	+188.2%
Moorabool Shire	555	1,378	+823	+148.3%
Wyndham City	5,833	19,408	+13,575	+232.7%
TOTAL	21,876	62,676	+40,800	+186.5%

² Australian Bureau of Statistics, Understanding Migrant Outcomes – Insights from the Australian Census and Migrants Integrated Dataset, Australia, 2016

Similarly, the **Transition to Work youth caseload** for the Western Melbourne region increased by 101.3 per cent between 1 March 2020 and 30 September 2020.

ABS weekly payroll data shows that, between 14 March and 5 September 2020, the number of employee jobs in Western Melbourne fell by 8.7 per cent. Some of the biggest impacts to job numbers in the region have been felt by the **Retail** and the **Accommodation and Food Service sectors** (including Hospitality Services).³ These industries are typically high employing sectors for Youth, Female, CALD and Refugee job seekers, many of whom have had their hours reduced, or have been stood down or made redundant as a result of COVID-19.

The **youth unemployment rate** for the Western Melbourne region has increased by 2.7 percentage points since March 2020. Many of the entry-level jobs this cohort would typically access have been the most heavily impacted by COVID-19. **The Year 11 and 12 study year has also been significantly interrupted** for young people in 2020. This has limited their ability to participate in vocational related activities such as Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) and Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) placements, which may impact access to job opportunities for school leavers.

Similar to young people, many of the typical **entry-level jobs in the region for CALD and Refugee job seekers have been the hardest hit by COVID-19**. The number of CALD and Refugee job seekers on the Western Melbourne jobactive caseload has seen a 208 per cent increase from 1 March to 30 September 2020, up from 9,560 job seekers to 29,472. The impacts of COVID-19 have been coupled with pre-existing transport challenges and other standing barriers to employment commonly experienced by these cohorts.

Many female dominated industries have also been among the hardest hit by job losses during the pandemic. As above, these industries include the Retail and Accommodation and Food Services sectors with the addition of the Arts and Recreation sector. Females are also **more likely to have casual or insecure work** than male counterparts, which can act to amplify the financial impact of job losses by limiting access to retrenchment entitlements that are accessible by permanent employees.

Although **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander** job seekers represent a small proportion of the total jobactive caseload for the region at 1.5 per cent, job seeker numbers increased by 90.2 per cent from 1 March to 30 September 2020. Census data shows Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Western Melbourne experienced higher rates of unemployment and lower levels of higher education attainment than non-Indigenous people in the region.

Local modelling suggests that **key industries offering strong growth in the Western Melbourne region** in a COVID-19 recovery environment include the Transport and Warehousing, Manufacturing, and Health Care and Social Assistance sectors. Due to reduced travel outside local areas under COVID-19 conditions which are likely to remain for some time even when restrictions ease, residents are more likely to spend time and money locally which could increase retail demand for nearby shopping centres.⁴

³ ABS, Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages, Week ending 19 September 2020

⁴ Maddock, R, WoMEDA Paper: COVID and the West, 27 July 2020

Demand in the Construction sector is also likely to increase with the ramping up of infrastructure and other major projects, together with the ongoing high demand for greenfield housing development across the region.

Large employers

Large employers in the Western Melbourne region are represented by the Manufacturing, Retail, Transport and Warehousing, Health and Social Assistance and Construction sectors. A sample of major employers in the region include:

- Western Health and Mercy Health
- Toll Logistics
- Highpoint Shopping centre
- Pacific Werribee Shopping centre
- ARC Steel
- Bluescope Steel
- City West Water
- John Holland
- Lend Lease
- Scalzo Foods
- Frasers Property
- Cedar Woods Property development in St Albans
- Victoria University (including Victoria University Polytechnic TAFE)
- Cedar Meats, JBS and SRS abattoirs.

Numerous Labour hire and private recruitment companies also operate in the region and are major employers across a range of sectors.

Selected Major Projects

The \$1.8 billion Western roads project of upgrading and widening of the Princes Highway and other arterial roads is currently underway and will continue into late 2021. This includes the 50 km Federation trail for cyclists and pedestrians that will require general maintenance and create ongoing employment opportunities. Further to this, the Wyndham City Council has committed \$11.75 million as part of its local roads program to accommodate the current and future expected housing growth in the region.

The construction of a new \$1.5 billion Footscray hospital is due to commence construction in early 2021 and will be one of the largest health infrastructure projects in Victoria offering a further 504 beds. This will replace the current ageing hospital and will create around 2,000 jobs for construction and health care workers.

The Werribee City Centre Redevelopment project in Wyndham includes the planned development of multiple assets such as a nine-storey office development and a multi storey car park. Construction is nearing commencement with completion expected in 2022 and an estimated creation of 1,600 construction jobs.

Other construction projects in the pipeline include the development of Grazeland next to the Scienceworks Museum that will accommodate 50 vendors and numerous licensed bars and

entertainment areas. The \$55 million replacement of the St Albans Leisure Centre is also due to commence shortly with an expected timeframe of completion in 2022.

The removal of several level crossings is in the planning phase and are due to commence in 2021 with expected completions in 2023:

- Ardeer at Fitzgerald Road
- Deer Park at Robinsons Road and Mt Derrimut Road
- Hoppers Crossing
- Ferguson Street in Williamstown.

Proposals under the North and West Melbourne City Deal plan announced in late 2019 includes a focus on employment and economic development opportunities centred on key precincts located at Cobblebank, Footscray, Sunshine and Werribee. Selected short and long-term projects proposed under the City Deals plan include:

- East Werribee Employment precinct
- Melbourne Airport Rail link and Sunshine Super Hub
- Footscray University Town
- Melton Hospital
- Western Intermodal Freight Precinct
- Western Rail Plan
- Westlink and Ison Road Bridge
- Scienceworks upgrade and expansion.

Local Stakeholders and Opportunities

There are six local government areas (LGAs) in the Western Melbourne region comprising the Cities of Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melton and Wyndham as well as the Shire of Moorabool.

Key stakeholder groups in the region that also have a focus on generating employment opportunities include LeadWest, an advisory committee comprised of five out of six councils in the region (excluding Moorabool Shire), as well as the Western Projects state government advisory body. The West of Melbourne Economic Development Alliance (WoMEDA) has a primary focus on new economic development opportunities and jobs creation in the region, including planning proposals under the North and West City Deal. Chaired by former Victorian Premier Steve Bracks, the WoMEDA Board includes representatives from Victoria University, local government and business.

There are seven Australian Government employment programs within the Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) portfolio that are delivered in the Western Melbourne region. jobactive services are delivered from 35 sites covering all LGAs within the region by the following service providers: AMES Australia, Job Prospects, Matchworks, MAX Employment, Sarina Russo Job Access and The Salvation Army Employment Plus.

Other DESE employment services in the region include ParentsNext, Transition to Work (TtW), New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS), Career Transition Assistance (CTA), Employability Skills Training (EST) and Australian Apprenticeship Support Network (AASN) services. With regard to the latter, expansion of Australian Government wage subsidies for apprenticeships and traineeships is likely to create opportunities for youth who have been heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the disrupted labour market.

Additional Australian Government employment programs delivered by other Commonwealth agencies include Vocational Training and Employment Centre (VTEC), DES - Disability Management Service (DES DMS), DES - Employment Support Service (DES ESS) and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

The Victoria Government's Jobs Victoria Employment Network (JVEN) program provides specialist employment services across the region to assist jobseekers from priority cohorts who are disadvantaged in the labour market. The program engages with employers to identify job opportunities and assist in meeting industry workforce needs, further to the Victoria Government's online Working for Victoria registry which is also an ongoing source of job opportunities for displaced workers and job seekers entering the labour market.

Higher Education and TAFE institutions in the region are represented by Victoria University (including Victoria University Polytechnic TAFE and Skills and Jobs Centres) and the Gordon Institute. Numerous private RTOS also operate in the region, as well as Learn Local services located at Braybrook, Footscray, Laverton, Maidstone, Spotswood, St Albans, Sunshine, Werribee, Williamstown, Yarraville and Bacchus Marsh. Learn Local services offer courses comprised of short introductory courses (including industry "taster" components) together with longer certificate courses that are designed to get people back into employment or assist people looking for a career change.

These vocational training and education providers are likely to play a pivotal role in reskilling and upskilling job seekers in coming months and forwards over the longer term past the easing of COVID-19 conditions.

Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLEN) services are also well represented across the region, with a primary focus on training and education supports for secondary school age participants.

Western Melbourne Employment Region Jobs Plan: labour market update October 2020 ⁵

The Western Melbourne region has a history of labour market and social disadvantage, with its unemployment rate averaging 7.8 per cent over the last five years (compared with 5.5 per cent for Victoria).

ABS Labour Force Survey regional estimates also show that labour market conditions have deteriorated further in the Western Melbourne region since March 2020, when Australia recorded its 100th case of COVID-19. This is not surprising, given the outbreak of COVID-19 cases and the subsequent implementation of restrictions in the state.

Selected ABS Labour Force Survey indicators, August 2020

	Employment			Unemployment			Unemployment rate		Participation rate	
	Aug-20 (’000)	Change since Mar-20 (’000)	(%)	Aug-20 (’000)	Change since Mar-20 (’000)	(%)	Aug-20 (%)	Change since Mar-20 (% pts)	Aug-20 (%)	Change since Mar-20 (% pts)
Western Melbourne	383.4	-23.2	-5.7	40.5	5.7	16.5	9.5	1.7	62.1	-3.0
Victoria	3255.1	-188.4	-5.5	249.9	62.3	33.2	7.1	2.0	63.9	-2.5
Australia	12,583.4	-413.6	-3.2	921.8	206.0	28.8	6.8	1.6	64.8	-1.1

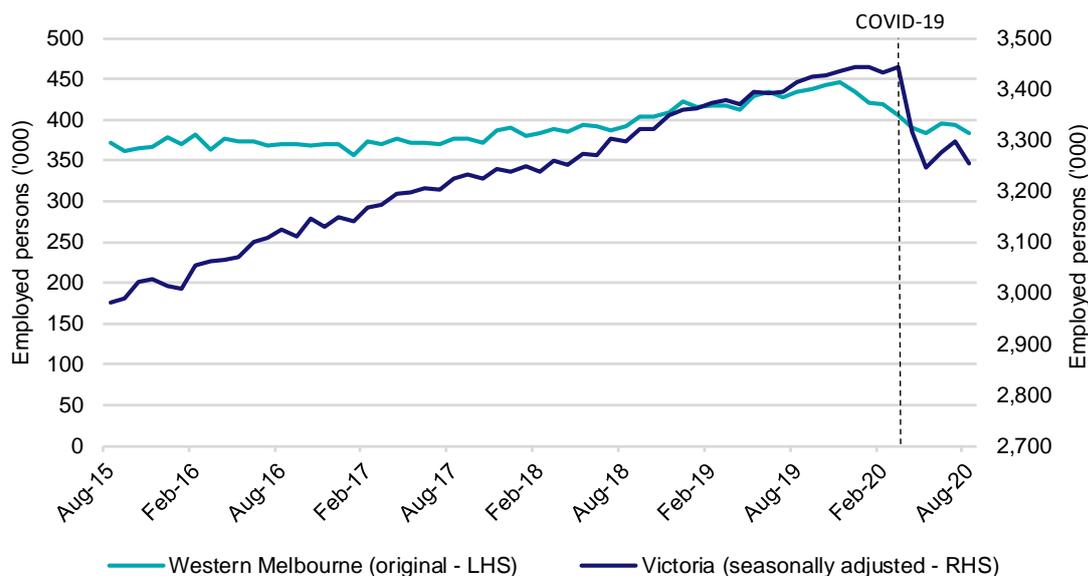
Source: Data for the Western Melbourne region are from ABS, Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, August 2020, original estimates. Data for Victoria and Australia are from ABS, Labour Force, Australia, August 2020, seasonally adjusted estimates.

Employment

- There were 383,400 employed people in the Western Melbourne region in August 2020
- The number of employed people has decreased by 23,200 (or 5.7 per cent) between March and August 2020. This decrease is larger than the falls recorded in both Victoria (5.5 per cent) and Australia (3.2 per cent).

⁵ Throughout this labour market update, unless otherwise stated, data are for the Melbourne - West SA4. Data are the latest available at the time of writing. Note that regional monthly ABS Labour Force Survey (LFS) estimates are highly volatile and should be viewed with extreme caution.

Employed persons aged 15 and over (five years to August 2020)



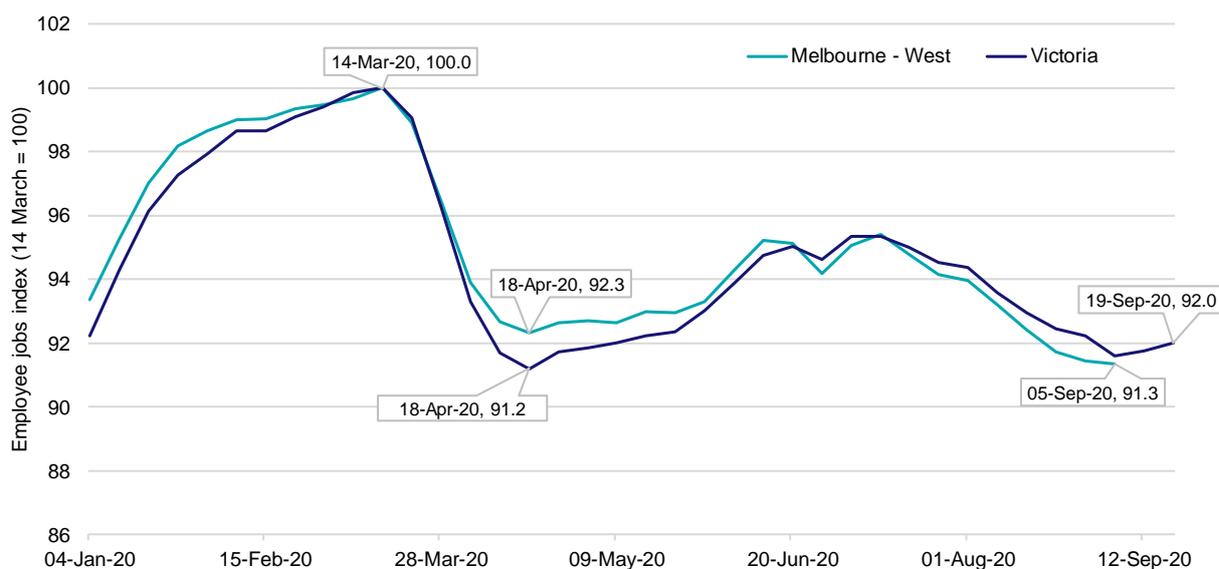
Source: ABS, Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, August 2020

ABS weekly payroll data

The ABS weekly payroll data show that

- Between 14 March 2020 and 5 September 2020, the number of employee jobs in the Melbourne - West SA4 fell by 8.7 per cent. In the period 14 March to 19 September, payroll jobs declined by 8.4 per cent in Victoria.
- Over the four weeks to 5 September, employee jobs in the Melbourne – West SA4 have fallen 1.9 per cent. In Victoria, in the four weeks to 19 September there has been a 0.4 per cent decrease in payroll jobs.

Employee jobs 4 January to 19 September (14 March 2020 = 100)



Source: ABS, Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages, Week ending 19 September 2020. Data for Melbourne – West SA4 is up to 5 September, which is the latest available.

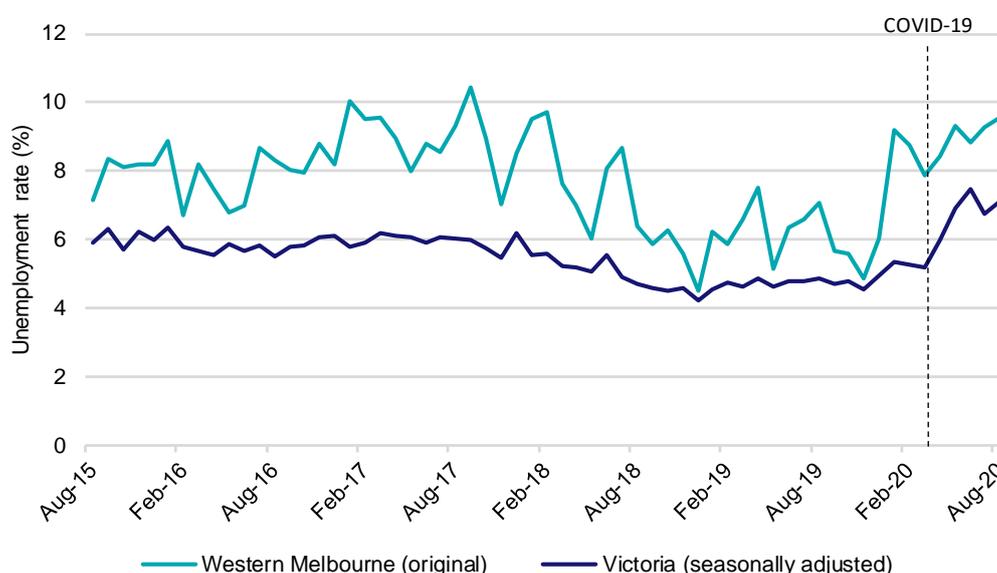
Participation rate

- The Western Melbourne participation rate fell by 3.0 percentage points between March and August 2020, to stand at 62.1 per cent, below Victoria (63.9 per cent) and Australia (64.8 per cent)
- The population in the region is comparatively younger: 26.4 per cent of the population are aged 55 and over, the lowest share in the state and well below the 32.7 per cent and 34.4 per cent recorded at the state and national level respectively.

Unemployment

- The Western Melbourne unemployment rate stood at 9.5 per cent in August 2020, up by 1.7 percentage points since March 2020, and is well above the 7.1 per cent recorded for Victoria

Unemployment rate time series (five years to August 2020)



Source: ABS, Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, August 2020

Considerable labour market disparity exists within the Western Melbourne Employment Region. Latest available *Small Area Labour Markets* data show that, in the March quarter 2020 (latest available data), the unemployment rate in the Western Melbourne region ranged from just 2.6 per cent in the Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2) of Point Cook - South, to 13.2 per cent in the SA2 of St Albans - North.⁶ Of the 47 SA2's within Western Melbourne, just over 40 per cent recorded an unemployment rate of more than 8 per cent.

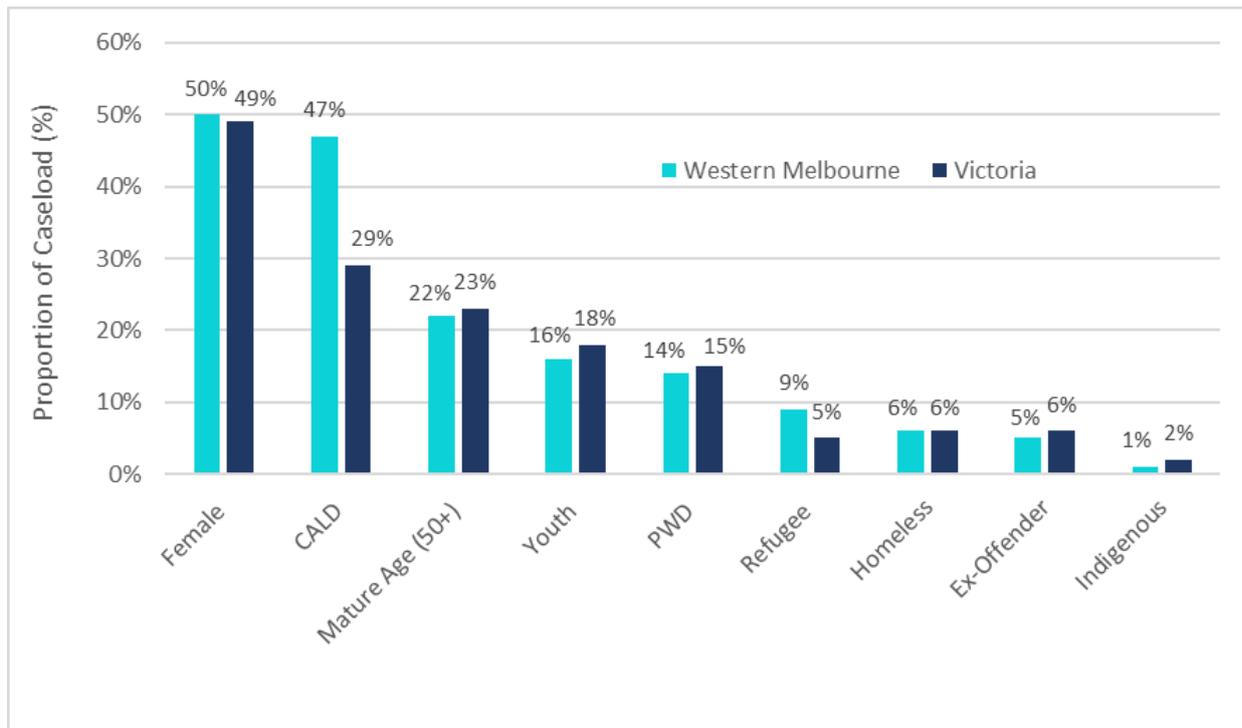
⁶ Data for SA2s are sourced from the National Skills Commission, *Small Area Labour Markets*, March quarter 2020, smoothed estimates. Labour market data at the regional level can display significant variability and should be viewed with caution.

Employment services caseload characteristics

As at 30 September 2020:

- The caseload in the Western Melbourne Employment Region increased from 21,769 people in March 2020 to 62,347 in September 2020, a rise of 186 per cent
- This compares with an increase of 179 per cent for Victoria and 97 per cent for Australia
- The caseload in the region has substantially higher proportions of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) people and refugees, compared with Victoria.

Employment services caseload for selected cohorts (September 2020)



Source: Department of Education, Skills and Employment, administrative data, September 2020.

CALD = Culturally and Linguistically Diverse; PWD = Persons with disability

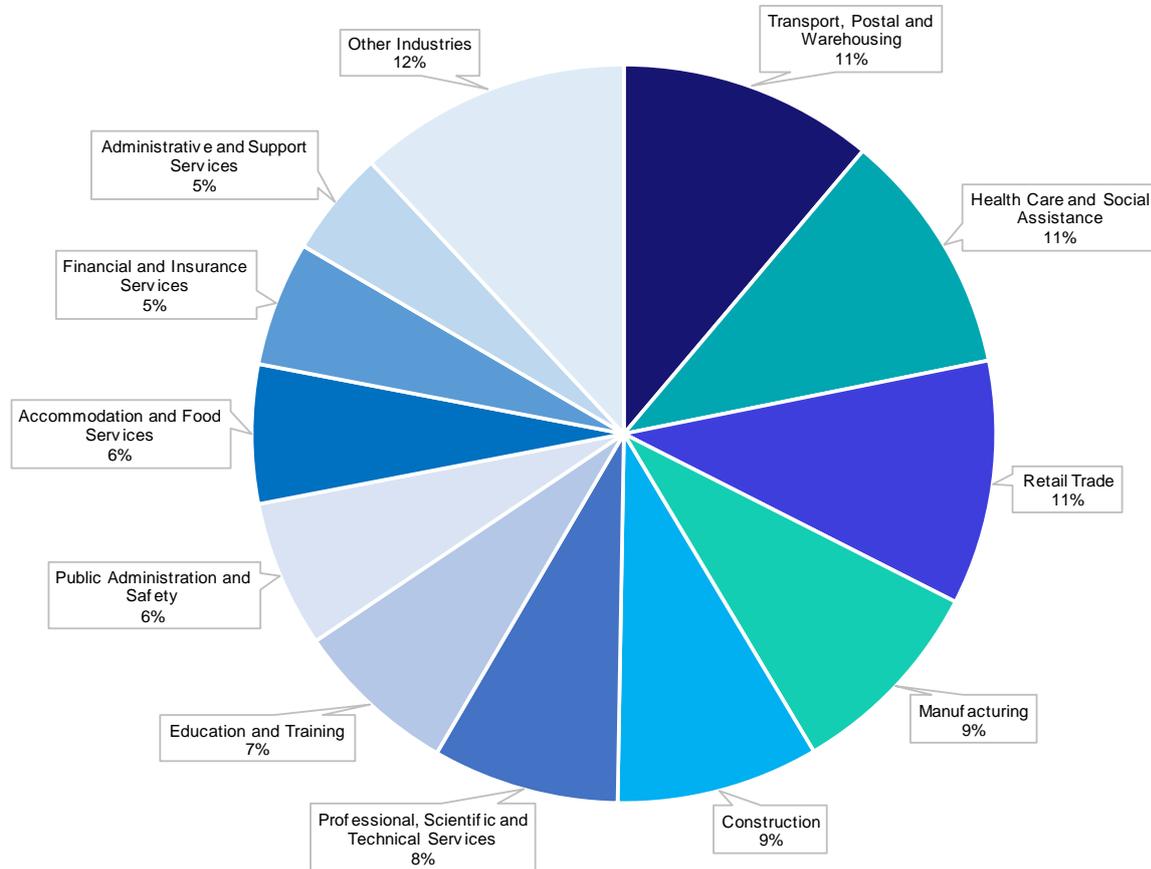
Income Support

In August 2020, the proportion of the working age (15-64 years) population on income support in Western Melbourne stood at 16.7 per cent, above the 15.2 per cent recorded in Victoria and the 16.3 per cent recorded nationally.

Industry profile⁷

As at August 2020, the largest employing industries in Western Melbourne were Transport, Postal and Warehousing, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Retail Trade. Manufacturing and Construction were also large industries, each with an employment share of 9 per cent.

Share of employment by industry in Western Melbourne, August quarter 2020



Source: ABS Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, August 2020. "Other industries" includes: Wholesale Trade; Other Services; Information Media and Telecommunications; Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services; Arts and Recreation Services; Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services; Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing; and Mining.

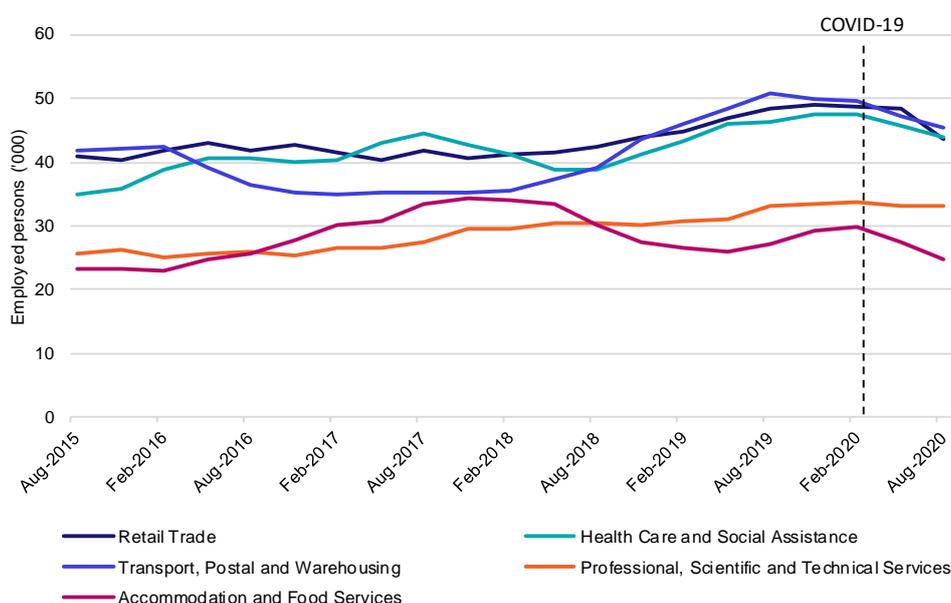
⁷ Regional industry employment data is in four quarter averaged terms, which means it is not responsive enough to pick up the impact of COVID-19. This section is intended to present the more medium-term trends in industry employment for the region.

Employment trends (for selected industries)

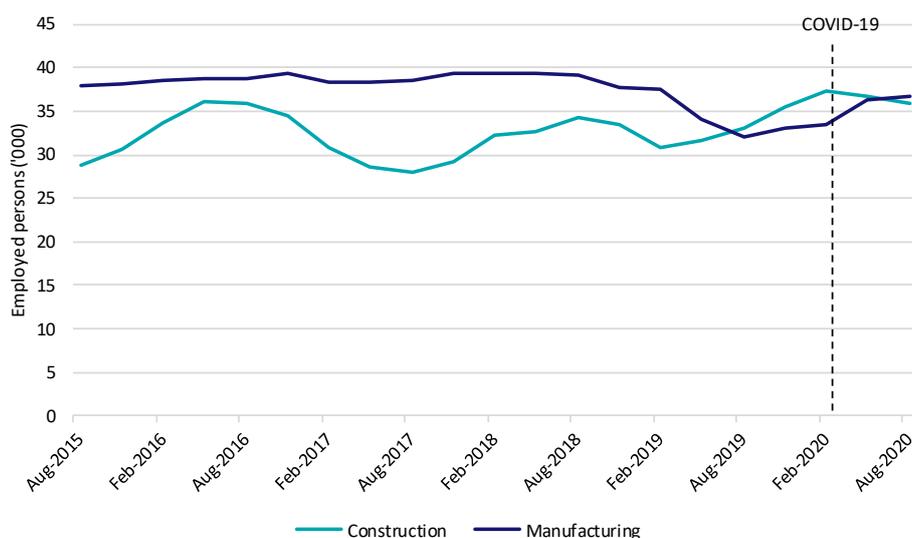
Although COVID-19 has affected some industries more than others, it is important to consider longer term employment trends to understand where current and emerging opportunities may be in this region. In recent years, employment in Western Melbourne has

- increased in all of the largest employing 'services' industries: Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade, Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, and Transport, and Postal and Warehousing industries
- increased marginally in Accommodation and Food Services despite falls over the last six months
- increased in Construction but recorded a slight fall in Manufacturing.

Employed persons in select 'services' industries, five years to August 2020 ('000)



Employed persons in select 'producing' industries, five years to August 2020 ('000)



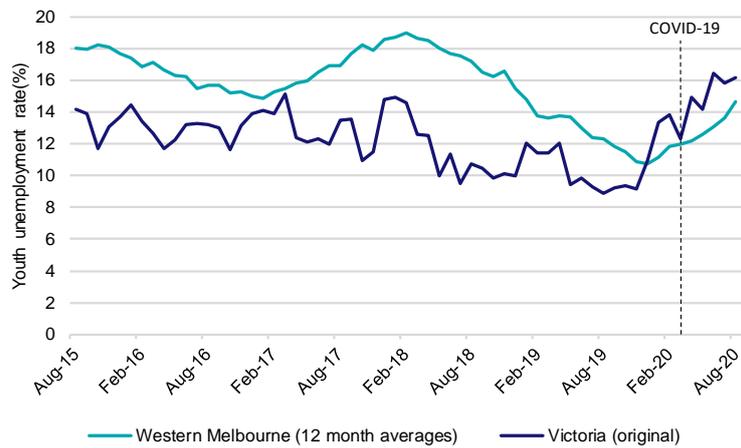
Source: ABS Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, August 2020

Youth aged 15-24

Youth unemployment

- The youth unemployment rate in the Western Melbourne region was 14.7 per cent in August 2020, below the 16.2 per cent recorded for Victoria
- The youth unemployment rate has increased by 2.7 percentage points since March 2020.

Youth unemployment (five years to August 2020)



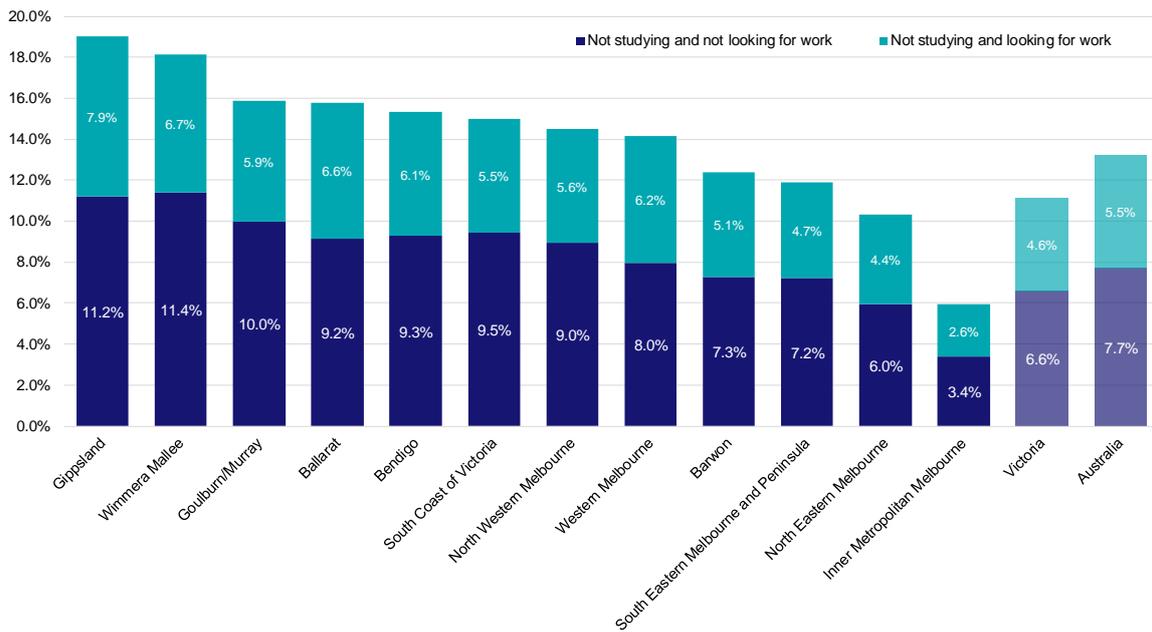
Source: ABS, Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, August 2020

Youth disengagement

Data below are based on 2016 Census for Employment Regions, which is the latest available source for this information.

- 14.2 per cent of young people aged 18-24 in Western Melbourne were disengaged, compared with 11.2 per cent for Victoria and 13.2 per cent for Australia.

Young people not studying nor working (18-24 years old)

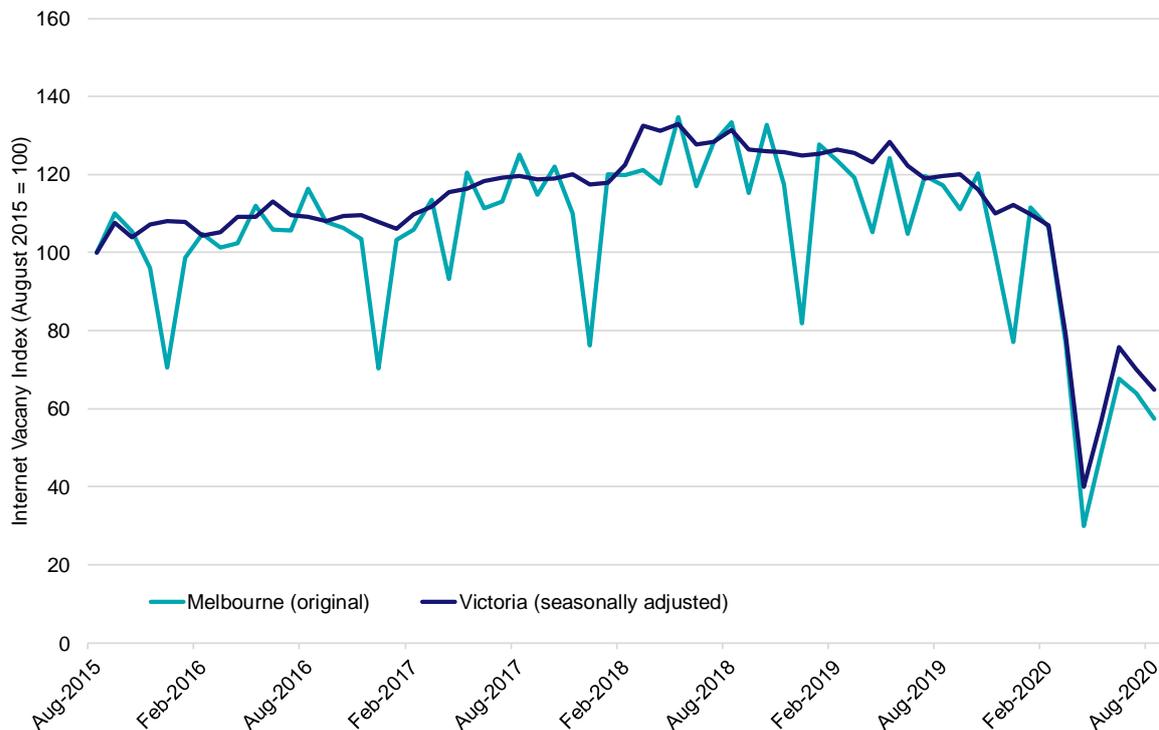


Source: ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2016

Vacancies and job advertisements

The level of vacancies in the Internet Vacancy Index Melbourne region declined by 72 per cent over the two months to April 2020, before increasing again to June 2020. However, the number of job advertisements fell by 15 per cent between June and August 2020. With this recent decline, vacancies in the region are 46 per cent below pre-COVID levels (February 2020).

Online job advertisement time series (five years to August 2020)



Source: National Skills Commission, Internet Vacancy Index, August 2020. Data for Melbourne is original data, instead of a 3 month moving average, which does display more seasonal variability but more accurately reflects very recent changes; data for Victoria is seasonally adjusted; both have been indexed to August 2015.

Top 10 advertised occupations (August 2020)

ANZSCO Occupation
Software and Application Programmers
Registered Nurses
General Clerks
Advertising and Sales Managers
Sales Assistants (General)
Aged and Disabled Careers
Primary School Teachers
Construction Managers
Accountants
Education Aides

Source: National Skills Commission, Internet Vacancy Index (IVI), August 2020. Raw data are used for analysis. Note: The Melbourne IVI region, covering metropolitan Melbourne, is the most disaggregated and best fit from the regions available from the contributing job boards and does not precisely correspond to the Western Melbourne Employment Region.

A note on comparing data

It is important to note that unemployment statistics collected as part of the Labour Force Survey can vary considerably from income support statistics and jobactive caseload numbers.

A person is considered employed by the ABS if they are aged 15 years and over and work for an hour or more during the Labour Force Survey reference week. The ABS also classify someone as employed if they have taken any kind of leave, or were paid for some or all of the previous four weeks (including via the JobKeeper Payment). In addition, employees who were away from their jobs for less than four weeks without pay but still believed they had a job (i.e. were temporarily stood down) would also be classified as employed.

A person is considered unemployed by the ABS if they are not employed, have actively looked for work at some time in the last four weeks and are currently available for work.