



Are you looking for a job in Australia?

The Australian Jobs Update provides information on the Australian labour market on a quarterly basis. It is intended to help people who may be looking at working in Australia on a temporary or permanent basis.

Further information on job prospects, earnings and related information is available online at **Job Outlook**, a feature of the Australian JobSearch site: www.jobsearch.gov.au/joboutlook.

Unless otherwise stated, data are from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) August 2004 Labour Force Survey.

OVERVIEW

In the 12 months to August 2004, the Australian labour market has experienced solid growth. In trend terms, total employment increased by an estimated 196 400 persons (2.1%). Advertised vacancies increased for trade occupations, marginally decreased for professional occupations and decreased for associate professional occupations. Migrants with the best prospects for finding employment in the Australian labour market include those with strong proficiency in the English language, tertiary level education and high skill levels.

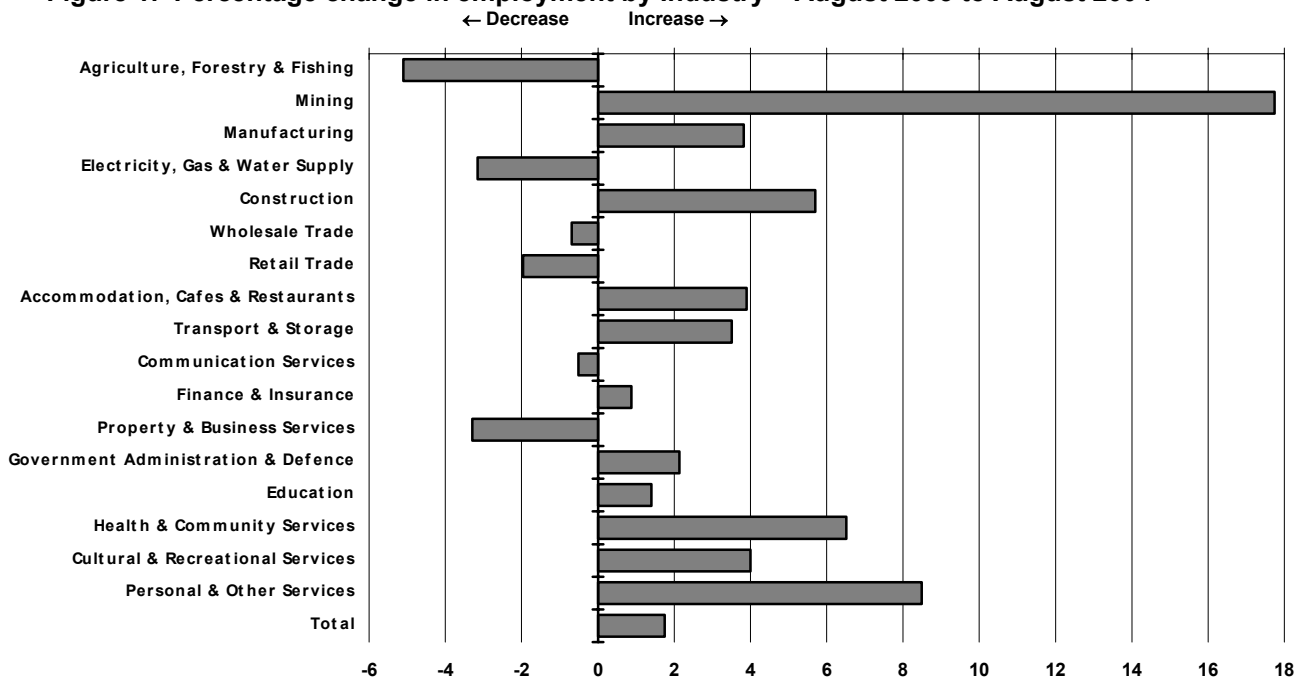
EMPLOYMENT

Over the 12 months to August 2004, trend employment in Australia grew by 2.1% after growth of 2.0% in the previous year.

Employment (in trend terms) increased in all States and Territories although only slightly in South Australia (SA) and the Northern Territory (NT) – growth in percentage terms was strongest in Queensland and Tasmania.

Employment opportunities and growth varied across industries. Over the 12 months to August 2004, the strongest numerical rises in employment occurred in Health and Community Services (up 60 600), Construction (up 43 400) and Manufacturing (up 40 900) while the strongest rates of growth were in Mining, Personal and Other Services, and Health and Community Services. Employment growth rates by industry are shown below.

Figure 1: Percentage change in employment by Industry – August 2003 to August 2004



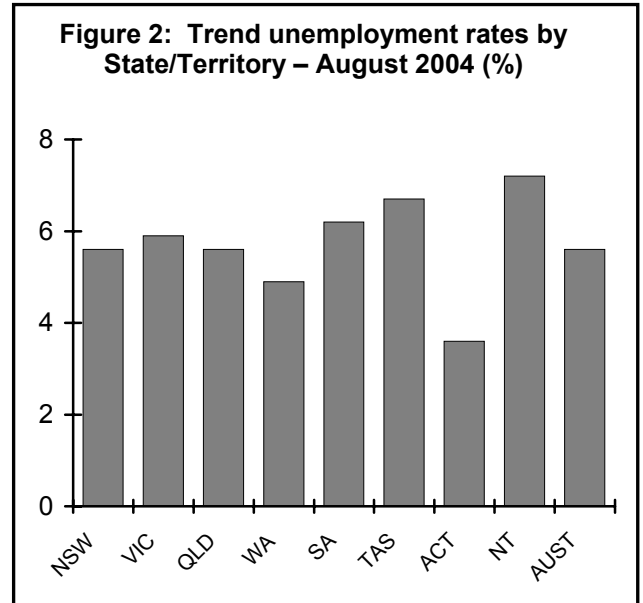
UNEMPLOYMENT

The trend rate of unemployment was 5.6% in August 2004, somewhat lower than in August 2003 (6.0%) and at its lowest level in more than two decades.

Unemployment rates have remained fairly stable or improved in the past year in all States and Territories, except for the Northern Territory.

In August 2004 the unemployment rate was highest in the Northern Territory (7.2%) and lowest in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), where it was 3.6%. See Figure 2.

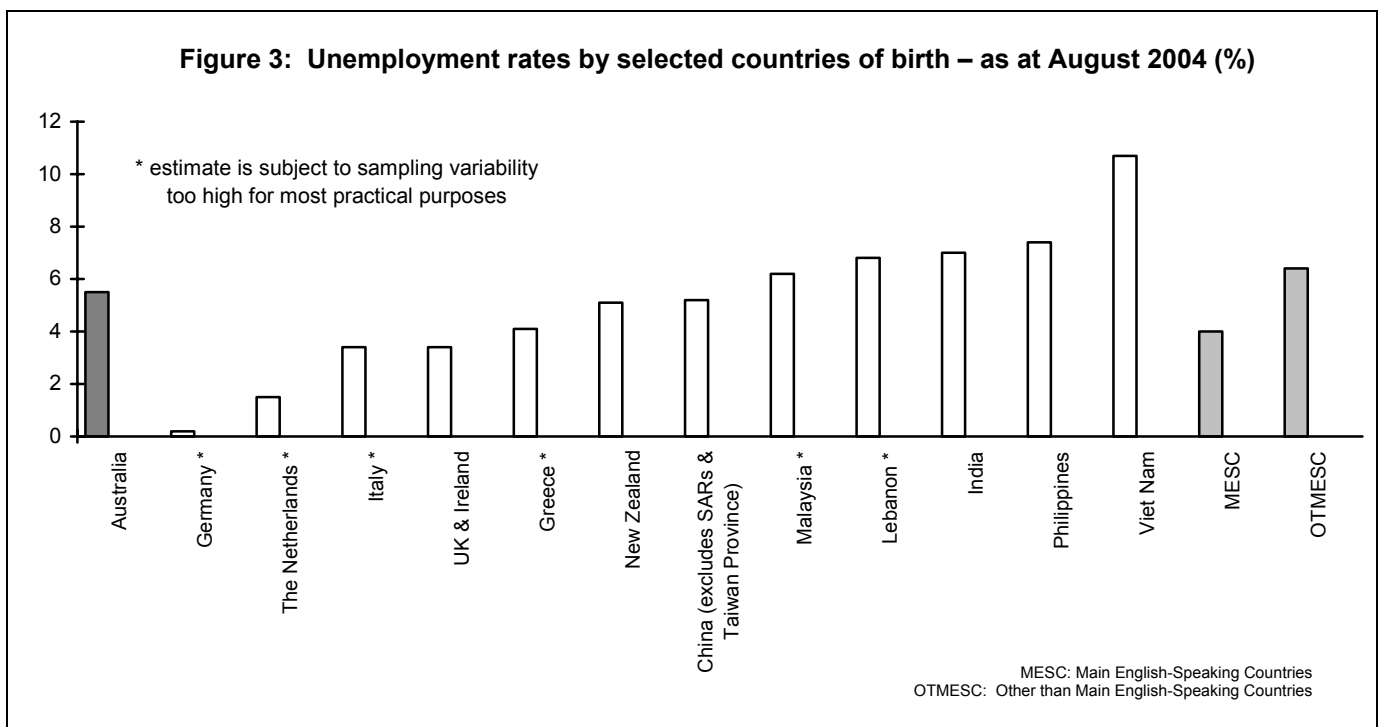
Generally those in more highly skilled occupational groups are less likely to experience unemployment. For example, in August 2004 the unemployment rate for those who were formerly employed as Managers and Administrators was about one fifth that of former Labourers and Related Workers.



MIGRANT UNEMPLOYMENT

The unemployment rates for people who migrate to Australia vary appreciably. Several factors influence migrant unemployment rates. These factors include the period since arrival in Australia (in general, recently-arrived migrants have a higher unemployment rate than those who have lived in Australia for some years), skill levels and English language proficiency.

Figure 3, below, shows unemployment rates (original data) for people now in Australia who were born in selected countries. For example, people born in Germany and the Netherlands have low unemployment rates (0.2% and 1.5% respectively), whereas unemployment rates for people born in the Philippines and Vietnam are relatively high (7.4% and 10.7% respectively).



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 August 2004, the strongest numerical increases in employment (*original data*) occurred in Managers and Administrators (up 113 200), Professionals (up 45 800), and Associate Professionals (up 17 500). Employment growth rates, in declining skill order, are shown below.

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 rates of unemployment (for those who had worked for two weeks or more in the past two years) for occupational groups are presented in descending skill order below.

Percentage Growth Rates in Employment in the 12 months to August 2004		Unemployment Rate at August 2004	
Managers and Administrators	16.7%	Managers and Administrators	1.6%
Professionals	2.6%	Professionals	1.4%
Associate Professionals	1.5%	Associate Professionals	2.2%
Tradespersons	-2.1%	Tradespersons	2.8%
Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	-5.4%	Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	2.0%
Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service	-1.8%	Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service	3.2%
Intermediate Production and Transport	2.1%	Intermediate Production and Transport	3.6%
Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service	-2.2%	Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service	5.4%
Labourers and Related Workers	0.9%	Labourers and Related Workers	8.5%

Additional information on Professional, Associate Professional and Trades occupations is provided in the following section on skilled vacancies. Time series of vacancy data are not readily available for less skilled occupations.

SKILLED VACANCY TRENDS

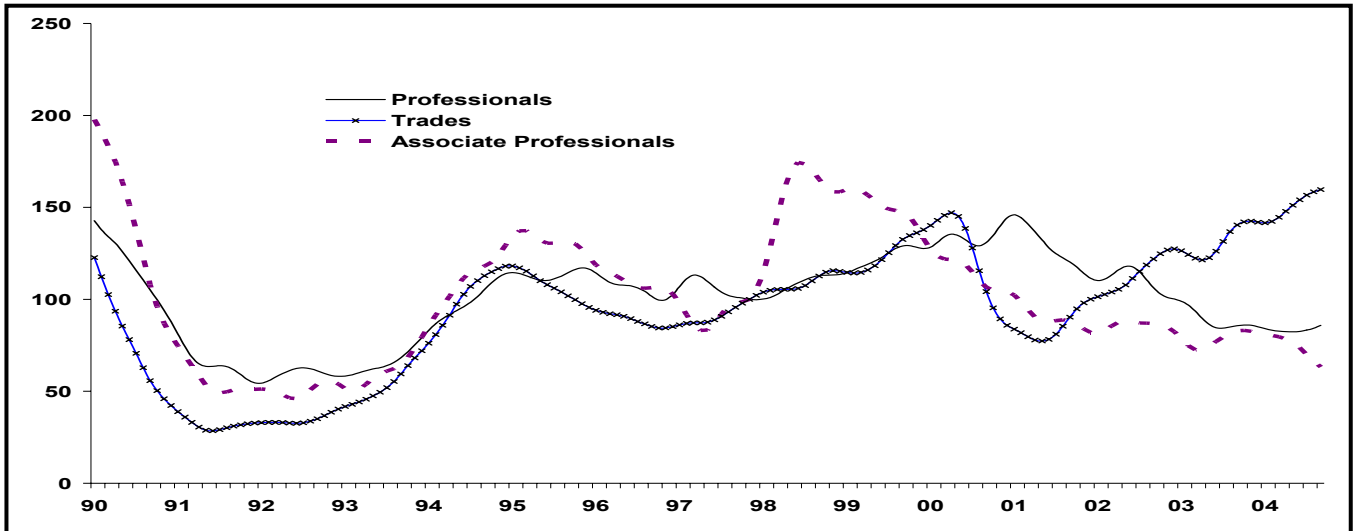
The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations produces the Skilled Vacancies Index (SVI) for 18 skilled occupational groups for each State and the Northern Territory. These are aggregated into the Professionals, Associate Professionals and Trades groups. The SVI indicates where the best employment opportunities may be in the Australian labour market.

In August 2004, skilled vacancies were 7.0% higher than the previous August. Over that 12 months, SVI increases were recorded in Tasmania (up 39.9%), the Northern Territory (up 20.7%), Western Australia (up 17.5%) and Queensland (up 16.5%), while a decrease was recorded in South Australia (down 16.3%), and only minor changes were recorded in New South Wales (up 2.6%) and Victoria (up 0.8%).

Over the year to August 2004 advertised vacancies increased by 17.6% for Trades occupations, marginally decreased by 3.6% for Professional occupations and decreased by 17.5% for Associate Professional occupations (see Figure 4 overleaf).

- Within these broad groups, the strongest annual increases were for Marketing and Advertising Professionals (up 131.4%), Hairdressers (up 35.4%) and Electrical and Electronics Trades (up 28.9%) with 4 other groups increasing by over 20%.
- The strongest declines were recorded for Building/Engineering Associates (down 20.5%), Social Professionals (down 18.5%) and Health Professionals (down 7.4%).
- Over the 12 months to August 2004, 12 groups recorded increases and 6 groups recorded decreases.

Figure 4: Skilled Vacancies Index, January 1990 to September 2004



FUTURE JOB PROSPECTS

Future job prospects depend on many factors, some of which are difficult to predict. This information should, therefore, be used with caution. The following future job prospect ratings are for the period to 2010-11. The ratings are based on employment trends and projected growth, unemployment rates, SVI trends (where available), and other data. Prospects can, however, change rapidly and even in an occupation with below average prospects, significant employment opportunities may arise.

In the following table **VG** stands for very good prospects, **G** for good prospects, **A** for average prospects, **BA** for below average prospects and **L** for limited prospects. These are examples from the skilled classifications categories; refer to the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO), Second Edition (ABS 1220.0).

Occupational Group	Prospects to 2010-11	Occupational Group	Prospects to 2010-11
Managers and Administrators		Associate Professionals	
Finance Managers	G	Medical Technical Officers	VG
Information Technology Managers	G	Building/Architectural Associate Professionals	G
Sales and Marketing Managers	G	Financial Dealers and Brokers	VG
Professionals		Shop Managers	A
Mining and Materials Engineers	A	Trade Qualified Chefs*	VG
Accountants*	VG	Hotel and Motel Managers	G
Marketing and Advertising Professionals	VG	Enrolled Nurses	G
Computing Professionals	G	Tradespersons	
General Medical Practitioners*	VG	Mechanical Engineering Tradespersons	A
Specialist Medical Practitioners*	VG	Motor Mechanics*	G
Registered Nurses*	VG	Electricians	G
Registered Midwives*	VG	Refrigeration and Airconditioning Mechanics*	G
Registered Mental Health Nurses*	G	Bricklayers	A
Pharmacists*	VG	Plumbers	G
Occupational Therapists*	G	Bakers and Pastrycooks*	G
Physiotherapists*	VG	Gardeners	G
Medical Imaging Professionals*	VG	Printing Machinists	BA
Primary School Teachers	G	Cabinetmakers	A
Secondary School Teachers	VG	Hairdressers*	VG
Social Workers	G	Clothing Tradespersons	BA

* denotes occupations that are listed in part or in full on the Migration Occupations in Demand List (MODL).

Australian Jobs 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 decision making. Australian Jobs Update is available in electronic form on the Internet at the Australian WorkPlace Web-site at www.workplace.gov.au and more information on job prospects can be found in a printable format called 'DEWR Job Outlook' on this site, as well as in a more comprehensive online version, called Job Outlook, on the Australian Job Search site at www.jobsearch.gov.au/joboutlook.

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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 update of the Hot Topic first introduced in the October 2003 edition of the Australian Jobs Update (AJU) publication – future annual updates of this Hot Topic are to be released in AJU’s April editions.

THE AUSTRALIAN POPULATION

Australia’s population is concentrated in the major capital cities of Sydney, New South Wales (21.1% of the total population) and Melbourne, Victoria (17.9% of the total population). States experiencing the strongest population growth are Queensland (up 2.43%), Western Australia (up 1.32%) and Victoria (up 1.12%).

	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	NT	ACT	AUST*
Population	6 682 053	4 911 425	3 801 039	1 949 948	1 526 301	477 305	198 544	323 363	19 872 646
Capital City	4 201 571	3 559 585	1 732 978	1 433 181	1 119 718	199 878	107 917	322 472	12 677 300
Balance of State	2 480 482	1 351 840	2 068 061	516 767	406 583	277 427	90 627	891	7 195 346
Share of Australian Population	33.6	24.7	19.1	9.8	7.7	2.4	1.0	1.6	
Capital City	21.1	17.9	8.7	7.2	5.6	1.0	0.5	1.6	
Balance of State	12.5	6.8	10.4	2.6	2.0	1.4	0.5	0.00	
Population growth (%)**	0.72	1.12	2.43	1.32	0.50	0.99	-0.06	0.58	1.18

* Australia includes other territories not represented in this table.

** Percentage growth in the 12 months from 30 June 2002 to 30 June 2003.

Source: ABS 2004, *Australian Demographic Statistics, March Quarter 2004*, ABS catalogue no. 3101.0, ABS, Canberra.

REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

As Figure A below shows, all States and territories experienced employment growth for the 12 months to August 2004 (original data). This compares with the 12 months to August 2003, when the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and the Northern Territory (NT) experienced negative employment growth. The States with the highest employment growth rate in percentage terms in the 12 months to August 2004 are Queensland (4.7%) and Victoria (2.9%).

Figure B shows that Queensland (up 9.7%) was the State with the highest employment growth for the 12 months to August 2004 for ‘skilled’ occupations (Managers and Administrators, Professionals, Associate Professionals, Tradespersons and Related Workers).

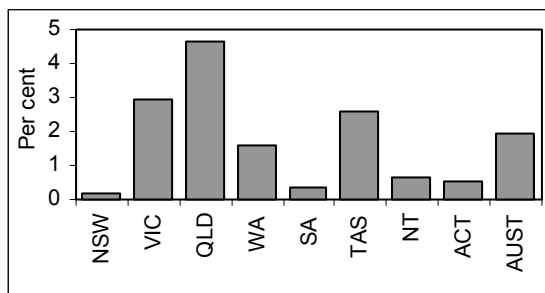


Figure A: Employment Growth (August 2004)

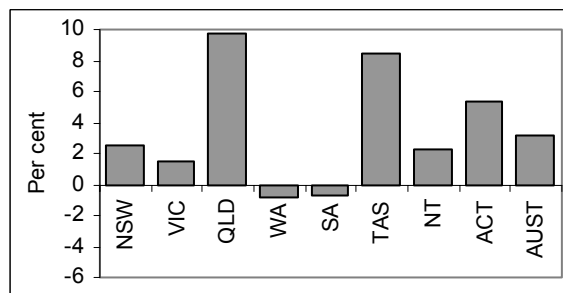


Figure B: Employment Growth for ‘Skilled’ Occupations by State (August 2004)

INDUSTRY BY REGION

Table B, below, provides estimates of the percentage of employment in each State that relates to each particular industry. From Table B, Victoria and South Australia (SA) had relatively high proportions of employed persons in Manufacturing, while NSW had a relatively high proportion of employed persons in 'Finance and Insurance' and to a lesser extent 'Property and Business Services'. The ACT and the NT had much higher than average proportions of employed persons in 'Government Administration and Defence', while WA had a relatively high proportion of employed persons in Mining.

INDUSTRY	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	NT	ACT	AUST
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	3.0	3.5	4.5	4.8	6.1	7.8	2.1	0.3	3.9
Mining	0.6	0.3	1.2	4.1	0.9	1.0	2.3	*0.1	1.0
Manufacturing	10.5	14.0	10.2	9.4	13.9	10.8	3.3	3.2	11.3
Electricity, Gas & Water Supply	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.2	1.1	0.7	0.8
Construction	8.7	7.8	8.9	8.5	6.7	6.6	7.9	5.6	8.2
Wholesale Trade	4.9	4.7	4.6	5.1	4.7	3.5	2.2	1.6	4.7
Retail Trade	14.7	14.9	16.1	15.5	14.2	15.5	13.9	12.4	15.0
Accommodation, Cafes & Restaurants	5.5	4.6	5.3	4.0	4.3	5.6	4.6	5.4	5.0
Transport and Storage	4.9	4.2	5.0	4.5	3.7	4.6	6.1	2.6	4.6
Communication Services	1.8	2.3	1.6	1.4	1.8	1.3	0.7	1.4	1.8
Finance & Insurance	4.9	3.7	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.3	1.5	1.5	3.6
Property & Business Services	12.5	11.8	10.7	11.7	10.4	8.4	7.6	14.1	11.6
Government Administration & Defence	4.0	3.7	4.7	3.8	4.3	5.9	20.7	25.6	4.7
Education	7.1	7.5	7.2	7.5	6.8	7.6	8.0	9.0	7.3
Health & Community Services	10.0	10.2	9.9	9.7	11.9	11.1	9.7	8.5	10.2
Cultural & Recreational Services	2.4	2.7	2.6	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.9	3.7	2.5
Personal & Other Services	4.0	3.5	3.9	4.4	4.5	4.4	5.5	4.4	4.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

* Indicates an estimate that is subject to sampling variability too high for most practical purposes.

Sources: ABS Labour Force Survey original data for the 4 quarters to August 2004. Limited to reported industries.

THE REGIONAL LABOUR FORCE

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 employed persons plus unemployed persons.)

Over the 12 months to August 2004, the labour force participation rate for Australia as a whole (original data) remained stable at 62.7% (see Figure C). It was highest in the ACT and the NT, and lowest in Tasmania.

Full-time employment increased by 2.6% in the 12 months to August 2004, while part-time employment increased by 0.2%.

Male full-time employment was up by 1.7% and female full-time employment increased by 4.5%. Male part-time employment increased by 1.1%, while female part-time employment decreased by less than 0.1%.

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

