



EMPLOYMENT ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION GROUP  
DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS

# AUSTRALIAN JOBS REVIEW

APRIL 2003

## INTRODUCTION

*The Australian Jobs Review is a quarterly publication intended to aid understanding of the labour market environment for those seeking jobs in Australia, particularly migrants.*

*Unless otherwise stated, data are from the Australian Bureau of Statistics Labour Force Survey, February 2003.*

## OVERVIEW

**In the 12 months to February 2003, employment growth in the Australian labour market has shown some improvement. In trend terms, employment increased by an estimated 298 000 persons (3.2%).**

**In the most recent 12 month period for which information is available advertised vacancies increased for trade occupations but decreased for professional and associate professional occupations.**

**Groups experiencing greater difficulty in finding employment in the Australian labour market include recent migrants without strong proficiency in the English language and also those with lower educational and skill levels.**

Job Outlook: information on prospects, earnings and other characteristics for some 400 occupations in Australia is available online in Job Outlook, which is a feature of the Australian Job Search site:

[www.jobsearch.gov.au/joboutlook](http://www.jobsearch.gov.au/joboutlook)

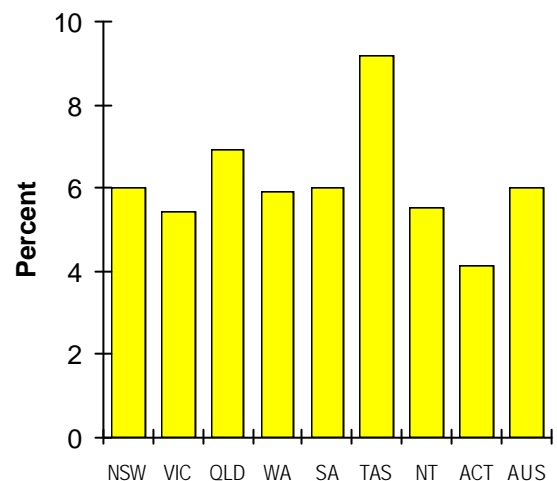
## UNEMPLOYMENT

The trend rate of unemployment was 6.0% in February 2003 - the unemployment rate varied marginally over the 12 months to February 2003 and was as high as 6.6%.

2002 - 2003 unemployment trends indicate that the labour market has shown some improvement in all States and Territories except for Tasmania.

In February 2003 the trend unemployment rate was highest in Tasmania and lowest in the Australian Capital Territory (see Figure 1 immediately below).

**Figure 1: Unemployment rates by State/Territory – February 2003**



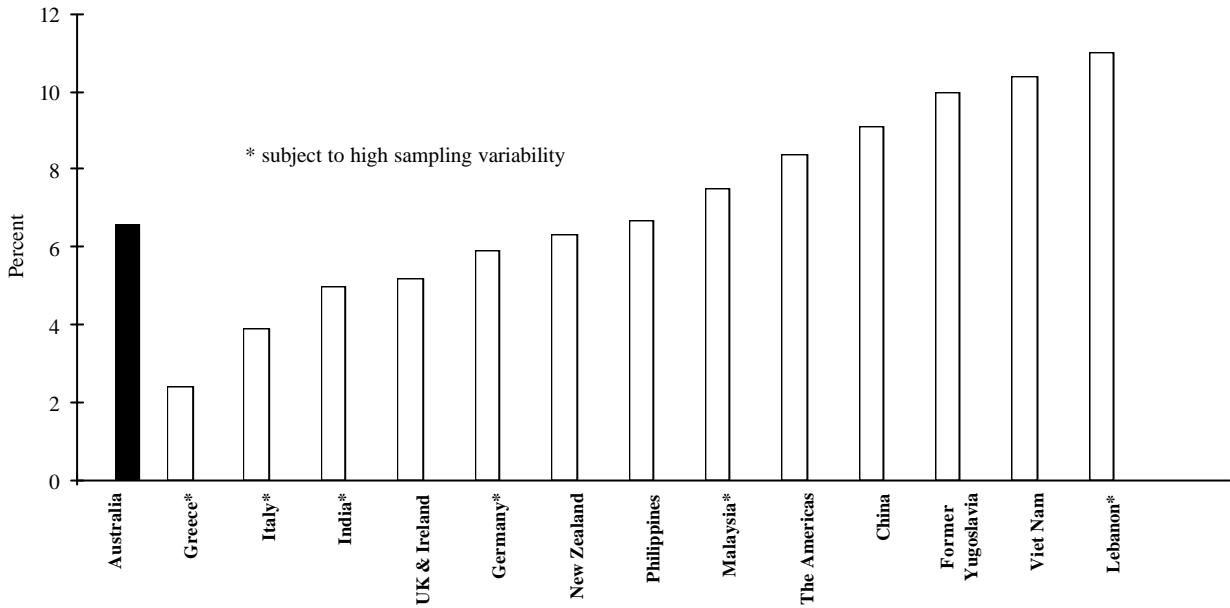
**Generally those in more highly skilled occupational groups are less likely to experience unemployment.** For example, in February 2003 the unemployment rate for those who were formerly employed as Labourers was more than seven times that of former Managers and Administrators.

## MIGRANT UNEMPLOYMENT

The unemployment rates for people who migrate to Australia vary appreciably. Several factors influence migrant unemployment rates. These include period since arrival in Australia (in general, recent arrivals have a higher unemployment rate than those who have lived in Australia for some years), skill levels, and English language proficiency. In February 2003, the unemployment rate for those born in the main English speaking countries was 5.6%, while the unemployment rate for those born in other countries (combined) was 7.6%.

Unemployment rates for migrants from a range of countries are provided in Figure 2 overleaf.

Figure 2: Unemployment rates by country of birth - as at February 2003



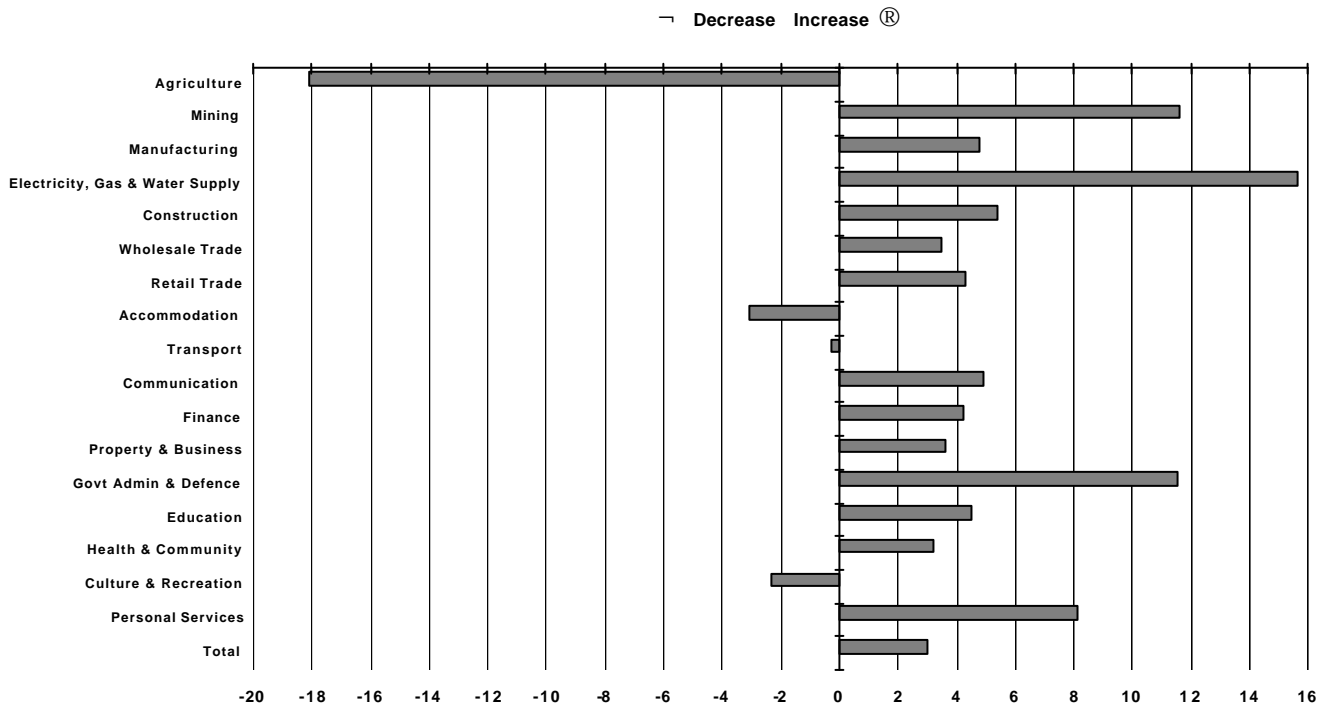
## EMPLOYMENT

Over the year to February 2003 the trend number of people employed in Australia grew by 3.2% which is a higher rate of growth than for the previous year (1.6%).

Employment increased in all States and Territories – employment growth in percentage terms was strongest in Queensland, the Australian Capital Territory and Victoria.

Employment opportunities and growth varied across industries. Over the year to February 2003, the strongest numerical rises in employment occurred in the Retail industry (which grew by 59 800) and the Manufacturing industry (up 53 100). Employment growth rates by industry are shown in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Percentage change in employment by Industry – February 2002 to February 2003



## EMPLOYMENT 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 year to February 2003, the strongest numerical increases in employment occurred in Professional and Intermediate clerical and sales worker occupations (both up 74 800). Employment growth rates, in declining skill order, are shown immediately below.

Occupational Group	% Growth in Employment in the year to February 2003
Managers and Administrators	-7.5
Professionals	4.4
Associate Professionals	6.3
Tradespersons	3.2
Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	-2.8
Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	4.7
Intermediate Production and Transport Workers	2.3
Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	6.4
Labourers	2.0

The unemployment rate for occupational groups generally reflects skill levels. Highly-skilled occupational groups experience lower rates of unemployment, while higher unemployment rates are associated with lesser 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:

Occupational Group	Unemployment Rate at February 2003
Managers and Administrators	1.4%
Professionals	2.6%
Associate Professionals	1.9%
Tradespersons	3.2%
Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	2.5%
Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	4.6%
Intermediate Production and Transport Workers	4.0%
Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	6.1%
Labourers	9.9%

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

## SKILLED VACANCY TRENDS

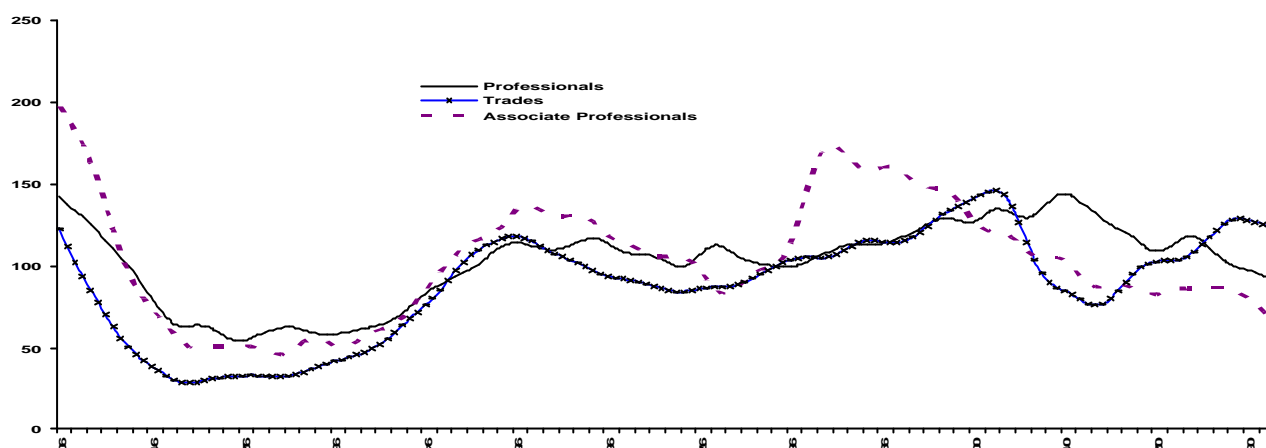
From job advertisements in the major metropolitan newspaper of each State and the Northern Territory, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations produces the Skilled Vacancy Index (SVI – previously the Skilled Vacancy Survey), for 18 skilled occupational groups. These are aggregated into the Professional, Associate Professional and Trades groups.

The March 2003 figure was 1.1% higher than that of the previous March. For the 12 months to March 2003, SVI increases were recorded in all States other than New South Wales (down 15.2%) and Victoria (down 6.8%).

Advertised vacancies over the year to March 2003 increased by 23.5% for Trade occupations. Advertised vacancies decreased by 16.3% for Professional occupations and by 14.9% for Associate Professional Occupations (see Figure 4 overleaf).

- Within these broad groups, the strongest increases were for Metal tradespersons (up 50.9%) and Electrical and Electronic tradespersons (up 49.6%).
- Greatest declines were recorded for Marketing and Advertising professionals (down 47.9%), Organisation and Information and Communication Technology professionals (down 29.7%) and Accountants and Auditors (down 26.6%).
- Over the year, nine groups recorded increases and nine groups recorded decreases.

Figure 4: Skilled Vacancy Survey Index, May 1988 to March 2003



### 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 assessment of job prospects is 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. Prospects are presented according to ASCO, Second Edition.

Occupational Group	Prospects to 2007-08
<b>Managers and Administrators</b>	
General Managers	A
Sales & Marketing Managers	VG
<b>Professionals</b>	
Life Scientists	G
Accountants	VG
Marketing/Advertising Professionals	VG
Computing Professionals	VG
General Medical Practitioners	VG
Registered Nurses	VG
Primary School Teachers	G
Secondary School Teachers	VG
Social Workers	VG
Painters, Potters and Sculptors	G
<b>Associate Professionals</b>	
Medical Technical Officers	VG
Building/Architectural Assoc Professionals	G
Shop Managers	A
Hotel/Motel Managers	A
Enrolled Nurses	A

Occupational Group	Prospects to 2007-08
<b>Tradespersons and Related Workers</b>	
Mechanical Engineering Tradespersons	A
Motor Mechanics	G
Electricians	G
Bricklayers	G
Plumbers	A
Bakers and Pastrycooks	G
General and Landscape Gardeners	G
Printing Machinists	BA
Cabinetmakers	G
Hairdressers	G
Clothing Tradespersons	L
<b>Advanced Clerical &amp; Service Workers</b>	
Secretaries & Personal Assistants	A
Bookkeepers	G
<b>Intermediate Clerical, Sales/Service</b>	
General Clerks	G
Keyboard & Data Entry Operators	BA
Receptionists	G
Child Care Workers	VG
<b>Intermediate Production/Transport</b>	
Construction Plant Operators	G
General Stationary Plant Operators	BA
Truck Drivers	A
<b>Elementary Clerical, Sales/Service</b>	
Registry & Filing Clerks	L
Sales Assistants	G
<b>Labourers &amp; Related Workers</b>	
Cleaners	A
Product Assemblers	A
Hand Packers	BA

Australian Jobs Review 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 Review is available in electronic form on the Internet at the DEWR Web-site: [www.dewr.gov.au/](http://www.dewr.gov.au/) and more information on job prospects can be found in DEWR Job Futures on this site as well as in Job Outlook on the Australian Job Search site: [www.jobsearch.gov.au/joboutlook](http://www.jobsearch.gov.au/joboutlook) DEWR contact officer: Jane Press (02) 6121 6703