



**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: <http://www.jobsearch.gov.au/joboutlook>.

*Unless otherwise stated, data are from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) February 2005 Labour Force Survey.*

**OVERVIEW**

In the 12 months to February 2005, the Australian labour market experienced solid growth. In trend terms, total employment increased by an estimated 285 600 persons (3.0%). Advertised vacancies increased slightly for professional occupations, decreased slightly for trade occupations and decreased significantly 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.

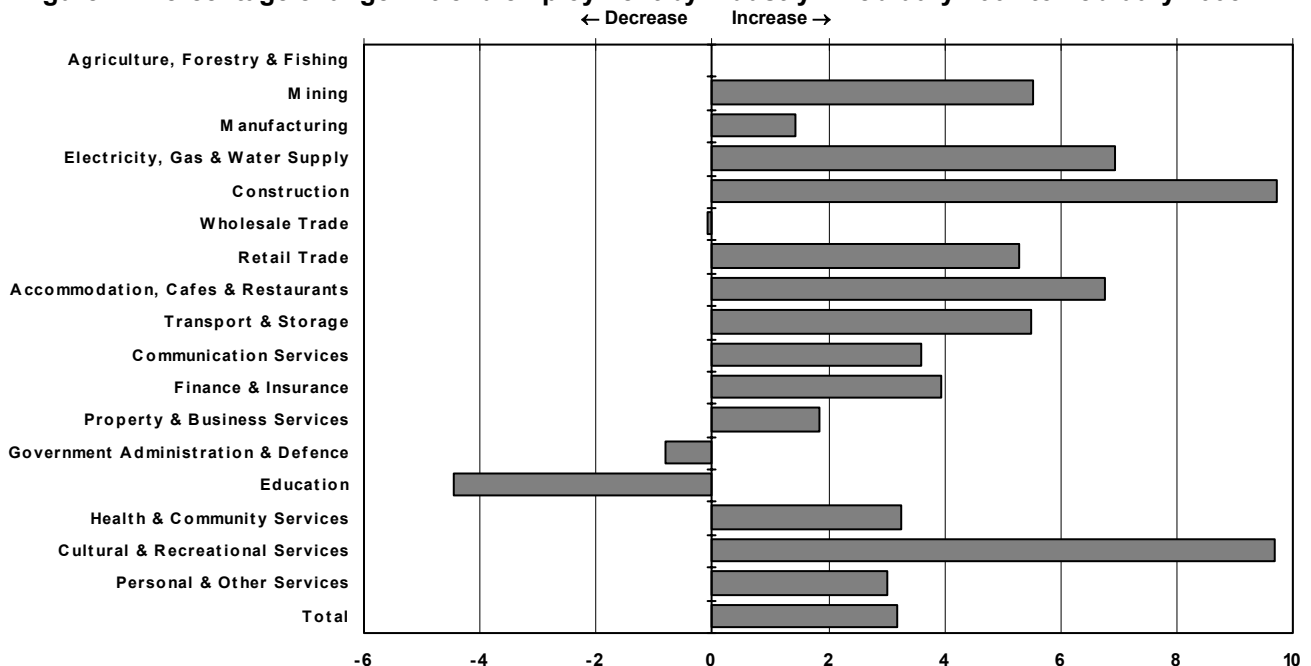
**EMPLOYMENT**

Over the 12 months to February 2005, trend employment in Australia grew by 3.0% after growth of 1.5% in the previous year.

Employment (in trend terms) increased in all States and in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) but decreased in the Northern Territory (NT). In percentage terms, employment growth was strongest in Queensland (5.6%) and Western Australia (4.2%).

Employment opportunities and growth varied across industries. Over the 12 months to February 2005, the largest increases in employment occurred in Retail Trade (up by 75 900), Construction (up by 75 600) and Accommodation, Cafes and Restaurants (up by 31 900) while the strongest rates of growth were in Construction, Cultural and Recreational Services, and Electricity, Gas and Water Supply. Employment growth rates by industry are shown below.

**Figure 1: Percentage change in trend employment by Industry – February 2004 to February 2005**



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## UNEMPLOYMENT

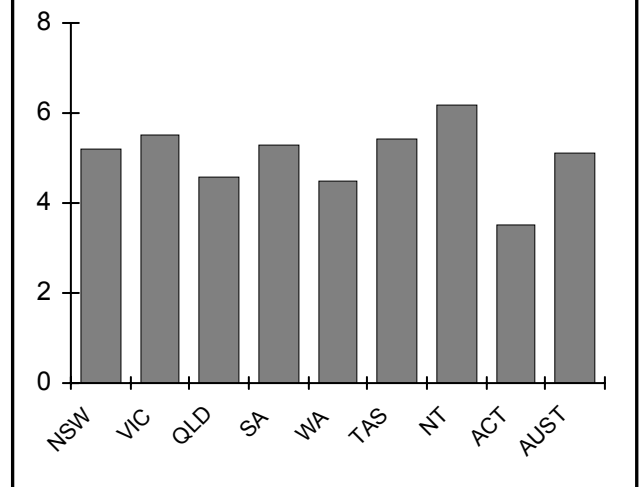
The trend rate of unemployment was 5.1% in February 2005, slightly lower than in February 2004 (5.7%). It is now at its lowest level in more than two decades.

Unemployment rates have remained fairly stable or decreased in the past year in all States and Territories, except for the NT.

In February 2005 the unemployment rate was highest in the NT (6.2%) and lowest in the ACT, where it was 3.5%. See Figure 2.

**Generally, people in the more highly skilled occupational groups are less likely to experience unemployment.** For example, in February 2005 the unemployment rate for those who were formerly employed as Labourers and Related Workers was over eight times that of former Managers and Administrators.

**Figure 2: Trend unemployment rates by State/Territory – February 2005 (%)**

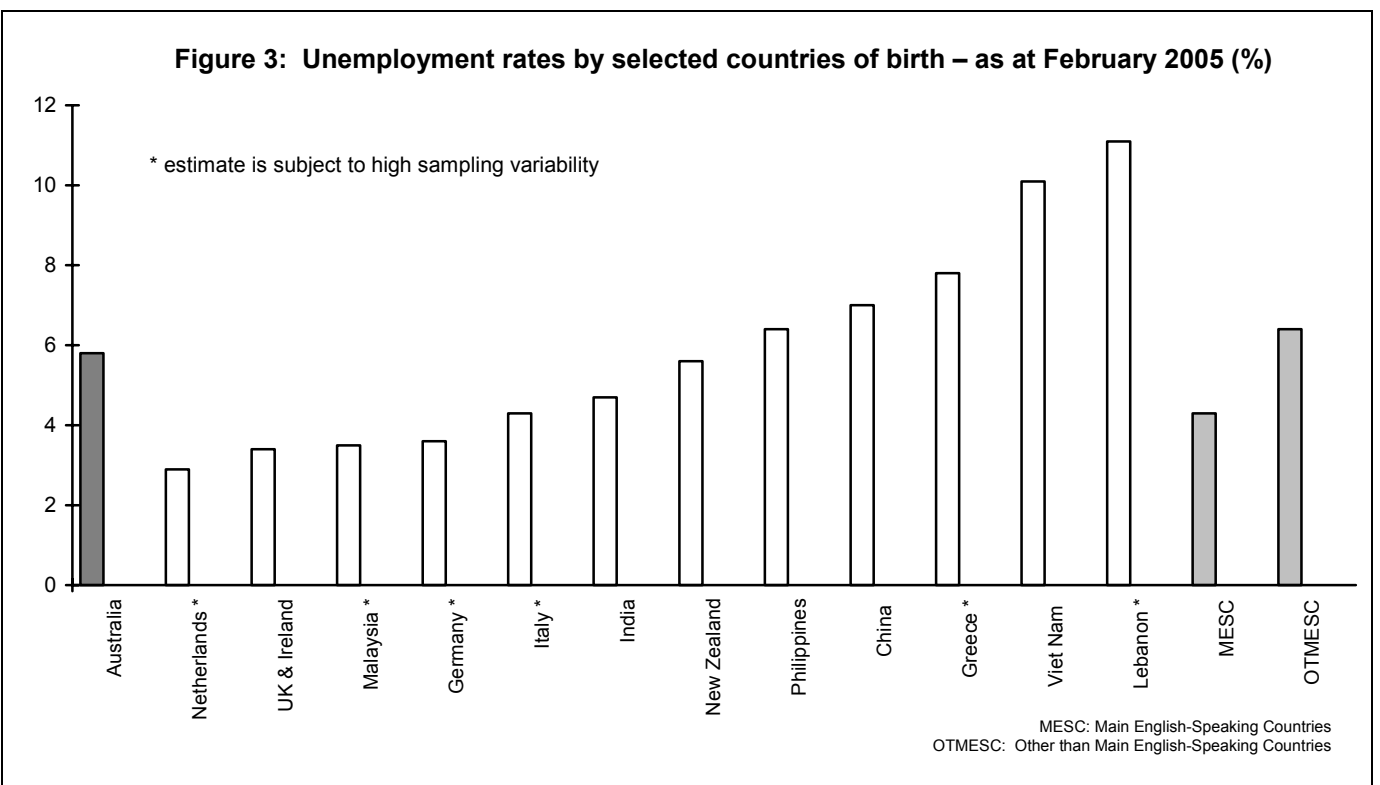


## MIGRANT UNEMPLOYMENT

The unemployment rates for people who migrate to Australia vary appreciably. Several factors influence migrant unemployment rates including 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 the Netherlands and the United Kingdom and Ireland have low unemployment rates (2.9% and 3.4% respectively), whereas unemployment rates for people born in Lebanon and Viet Nam are relatively high (11.1% and 10.1% respectively).

**Figure 3: Unemployment rates by selected countries of birth – as at February 2005 (%)**



## 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 2005, the largest increases in employment (*original data*) occurred in Managers and Administrators (up by 125 300), Associate Professionals (up by 90 000) and Elementary Clerical, Sales and Services Workers (up by 51 300). 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 February 2005		Unemployment Rate at February 2005	
Managers and Administrators	17.5%	Managers and Administrators	0.9%
Professionals	-0.1%	Professionals	2.1%
Associate Professionals	7.6%	Associate Professionals	2.3%
Tradespersons	1.2%	Tradespersons	3.5%
Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	-5.4%	Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	1.8%
Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service	1.4%	Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service	3.8%
Intermediate Production and Transport	2.7%	Intermediate Production and Transport	4.0%
Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service	5.4%	Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service	5.2%
Labourers and Related Workers	2.6%	Labourers and Related Workers	7.9%

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 NT. 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.

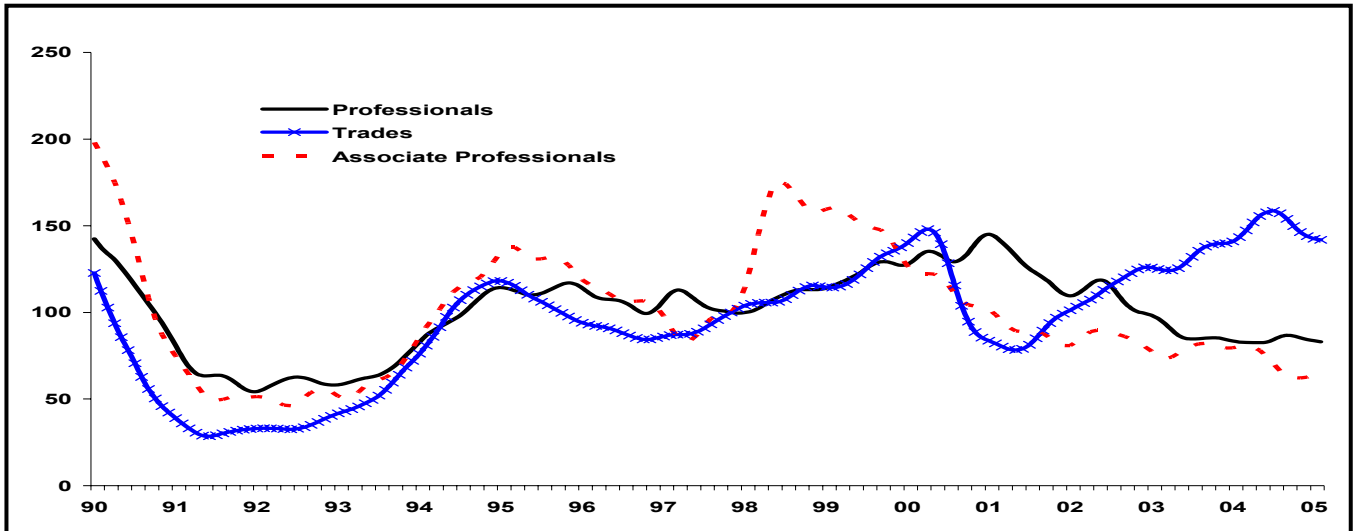
In February 2005, skilled vacancies were 1.1% lower than in February 2004. Over the 12 months, SVI increases were recorded in the NT (up by 76.0%), Tasmania (up by 55.6%) and Western Australia (up by 19.3%), while decreases were recorded in Victoria (down by 13.5%), Queensland (down by 10.7%), New South Wales (down by 7.7%) and South Australia (down by 4.4%).

Over the year to February 2005, advertised vacancies increased by 0.2% for Professional occupations (excluding Information and Communications Technology (computing) occupations), decreased by 1.1% for Trades occupations and decreased by 18.6% for Associate Professional occupations (see Figure 4 overleaf). Within these broad groups:

- The strongest annual increases were for Organisation and Information Professionals (up by 21.2%), Metal Trades (up by 19.5%) and Food Trades (up by 19.1%).
- The strongest declines were recorded for Building/Engineering Associates (down by 19.8%), Social Professionals (down by 18.3%) and Construction Trades (down by 15.8%).

Over the 12 months to February 2005, 7 groups recorded increases and 11 groups recorded decreases.

Figure 4: Skilled Vacancies Index, January 1990 to February 2005



### FUTURE JOB PROSPECTS

Future job prospects depend on many factors, some of which are difficult to predict. Prospects can change rapidly and even in an occupation with below average prospects, significant employment opportunities may arise. 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.

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

\* 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 Australian WorkPlace Website at <http://www.workplace.gov.au>. 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 <http://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 publication included in the April edition of the Australian Jobs Update.

### THE AUSTRALIAN POPULATION

Australia's population is concentrated in the major capital cities of Sydney, New South Wales (21.0% of the total population) and Melbourne, Victoria (17.9% of the total population). The States which experienced the strongest population growth over the last 12 months were Queensland (up by 2.1%) and Western Australia (up by 1.7%) while the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) experienced the weakest growth (0.2%).

	<b>NSW</b>	<b>VIC</b>	<b>QLD</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>WA</b>	<b>TAS</b>	<b>NT</b>	<b>ACT</b>	<b>AUST*</b>
<b>Population</b>	<b>6 731 295</b>	<b>4 972 779</b>	<b>3 882 037</b>	<b>1 534 250</b>	<b>1 982 204</b>	<b>482 128</b>	<b>199 913</b>	<b>324 021</b>	<b>20 111 297</b>
Capital City	4 232 078	3 600 080	1 774 890	1 124 315	1 457 639	202 138	109 478	323 645	12 824 263
Balance of State	2 499 217	1 372 699	2 107 147	409 935	524 565	279 990	90 435	376	7 287 034
<b>Share of Australian Population</b>	<b>33.5</b>	<b>24.7</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>9.9</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.6</b>	
Capital City	21.0	17.9	8.8	5.6	7.3	1.0	0.5	1.6	
Balance of State	12.4	6.8	10.5	2.0	2.6	1.4	0.5	0.00	
<b>Population growth (%)**</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>1.2</b>

\* Australia includes other territories not represented in this table.

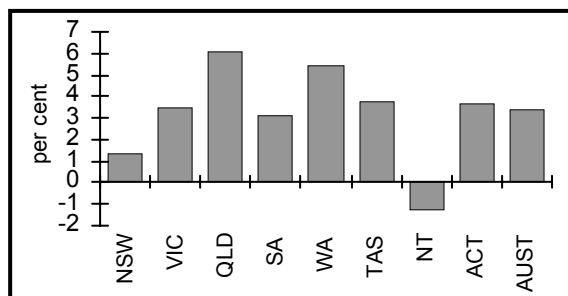
\*\* Percentage growth in the 12 months from 30 June 2003 to 30 June 2004.

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

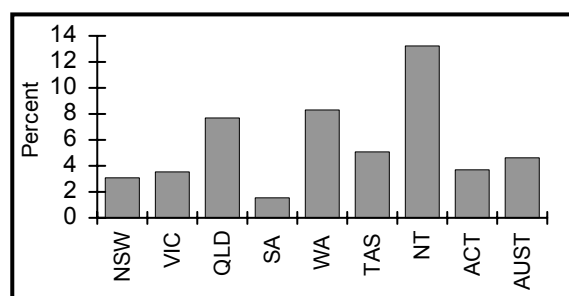
### REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

As Figure A below shows, employment increased in all States and Territories except the Northern Territory (NT) in the 12 months to February 2005 (original data). The NT also experienced the only negative employment growth in the 12 months to February 2004. The States with the highest employment growth rate in percentage terms in the 12 months to February 2005 were Queensland (6.1%) and Western Australia (5.4%).

Figure B shows that the NT (up by 13.2%) recorded the highest employment growth for the 12 months to February 2005 for 'skilled' occupations (Managers and Administrators, Professionals, Associate Professionals, Tradespersons and Related Workers).



**Figure A: Employment Growth (February 2005)**



**Figure B: Employment Growth for 'Skilled' Occupations by State (February 2005)**

## THE REGIONAL LABOUR FORCE

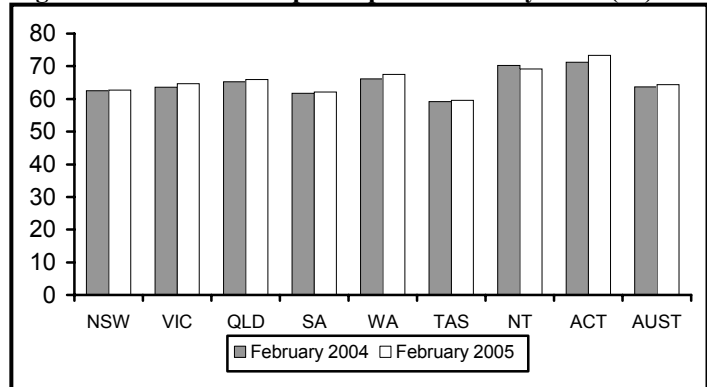
The labour force participation rate is calculated by expressing the labour force as a percentage of the civilian population aged 15 and over. (The labour force is employed persons plus unemployed persons.)

Over the 12 months to February 2005, the labour force participation rate for Australia (original data) increased slightly by 0.7 percentage points to 64.4% (see Figure C). It was highest in the ACT and WA, and lowest in Tasmania.

Full-time employment increased by 3.6% in the 12 months to February 2005, while part-time employment increased by 2.9%.

Male full-time employment was up by 2.5% and female full-time employment increased by 5.9%. Male part-time employment increased by 2.1% and female part-time employment increased by 3.2%.

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



## INDUSTRY BY REGION

Table B, below, provides estimates of the percentage of employment in each State that relates to each particular industry. As can be seen, the ACT and the NT had relatively high proportions of employed persons in Government Administration and Defence, WA in Mining, Victoria and South Australia (SA) in Manufacturing and NSW in Finance and Insurance. The most number of persons employed in Australia are in the Retail Trade, Property & Business Services and Manufacturing industries.

INDUSTRY	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT	AUST
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	3.0	3.4	4.3	5.8	4.6	7.6	2.3	0.4	<b>3.8</b>
Mining	0.6	0.3	1.3	0.9	4.2	1.1	2.3	*0.0	<b>1.1</b>
Manufacturing	10.4	14.1	10.4	13.1	9.5	10.7	2.9	2.8	<b>11.2</b>
Electricity, Gas & Water Supply	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.9	1.3	1.4	0.6	<b>0.8</b>
Construction	8.9	7.8	9.4	7.0	8.7	7.6	8.8	5.9	<b>8.5</b>
Wholesale Trade	4.8	4.7	4.3	4.6	4.9	3.3	2.7	1.9	<b>4.6</b>
Retail Trade	14.8	14.9	16.1	14.6	15.2	14.9	13.8	12.4	<b>15.1</b>
Accommodation, Cafes & Restaurants	5.5	4.7	5.4	4.4	4.2	5.7	4.2	5.1	<b>5.1</b>
Transport and Storage	4.8	4.4	5.1	4.3	4.3	4.4	6.6	2.4	<b>4.6</b>
Communication Services	1.9	2.2	1.6	1.7	1.4	1.5	1.0	1.4	<b>1.8</b>
Finance & Insurance	4.7	3.9	2.6	2.9	2.7	2.3	1.5	1.9	<b>3.6</b>
Property & Business Services	12.4	11.5	10.7	10.4	11.6	8.4	7.7	14.1	<b>11.5</b>
Government Administration & Defence	4.2	3.5	4.4	4.6	4.0	6.2	16.2	25.2	<b>4.6</b>
Education	6.8	7.0	7.4	6.5	7.1	7.7	9.1	8.7	<b>7.0</b>
Health & Community Services	9.9	10.5	9.7	11.9	9.7	10.9	10.9	9.4	<b>10.2</b>
Cultural & Recreational Services	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.2	2.1	2.5	3.6	3.5	<b>2.6</b>
Personal & Other Services	4.0	3.6	3.8	4.3	4.7	3.9	5.0	4.4	<b>4.0</b>
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 February 2005. Limited to reported industries.

Unless otherwise stated, data are from the Australian Bureau of Statistics February 2005 Labour Force Survey.