



## 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 help people who may be interested in working in Australia on a temporary or permanent basis.

Further information on job prospects, earnings and related information is available online at **Australian Jobs 2007**, available through <http://www.workplace.gov.au>.

*Unless otherwise stated, data are from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Labour Force Survey, February 2008.*

## OVERVIEW

**In the 12 months to February 2008, the Australian labour market continued to experience solid growth. In trend terms, total employment increased by an estimated 278 400 persons (2.7%). Advertised vacancies decreased for Professionals and for Trade Occupations. Migrants with the best employment prospects are those who are highly skilled with recognised post-secondary qualifications and strong proficiency in the English language.**

## EMPLOYMENT

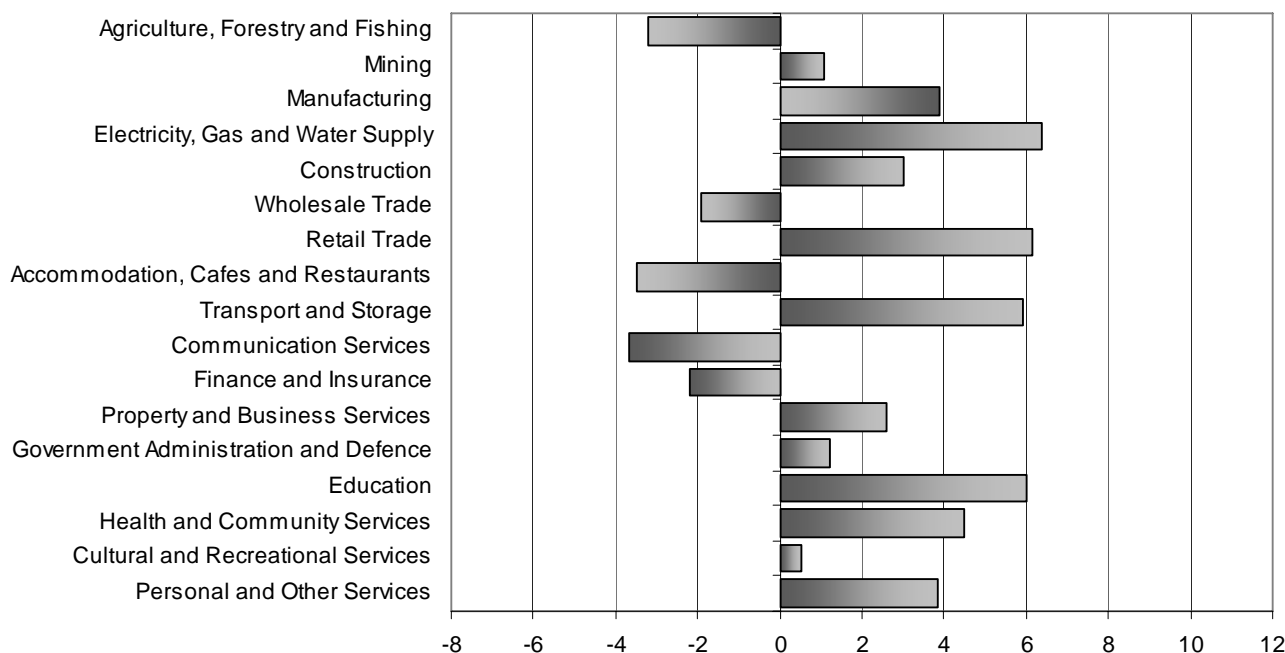
Over the 12 months to February 2008, trend employment in Australia grew by 2.7% after growth of 3.0% in the previous year.

Employment (in trend terms) increased in all States and Territories. In percentage terms, employment growth was strongest in the Northern Territory (5.3%) and Western Australia (3.8%).

Employment opportunities and growth varied across industries. Over the 12 months to February 2008, the largest increases in trend employment occurred in Retail Trade (up by 91 800), Health and Community Services (up by 48 100), Education (up by 43 800) and Manufacturing (up by 41 600). The strongest rates of employment growth were in Electricity, Gas and Water Supply (6.4%), Retail Trade (6.2%), Education (6.0%) and Transport and Storage (5.9%). Employment growth rates by industry are shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Percentage change in trend employment by industry – February 2007 to February 2008**

← Decrease Increase →



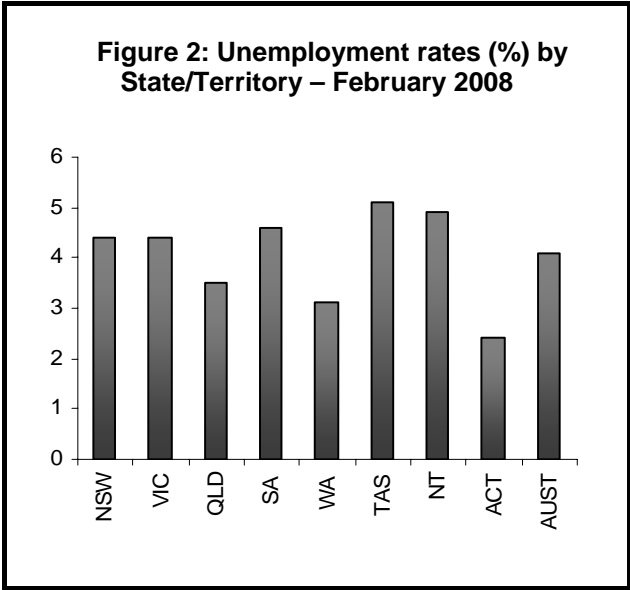
## UNEMPLOYMENT

The trend rate of unemployment was 4.1% in February 2008, compared with 4.5% in February 2007.

In the past year, trend unemployment rates have decreased in most States and Territories except for the Northern Territory (up by 1.4%), Western Australia (up by 0.1%) and New South Wales where it remained unchanged.

In February 2008, the trend unemployment rate was highest in Tasmania (5.1%) and lowest in the Australian Capital Territory (2.4%). See Figure 2.

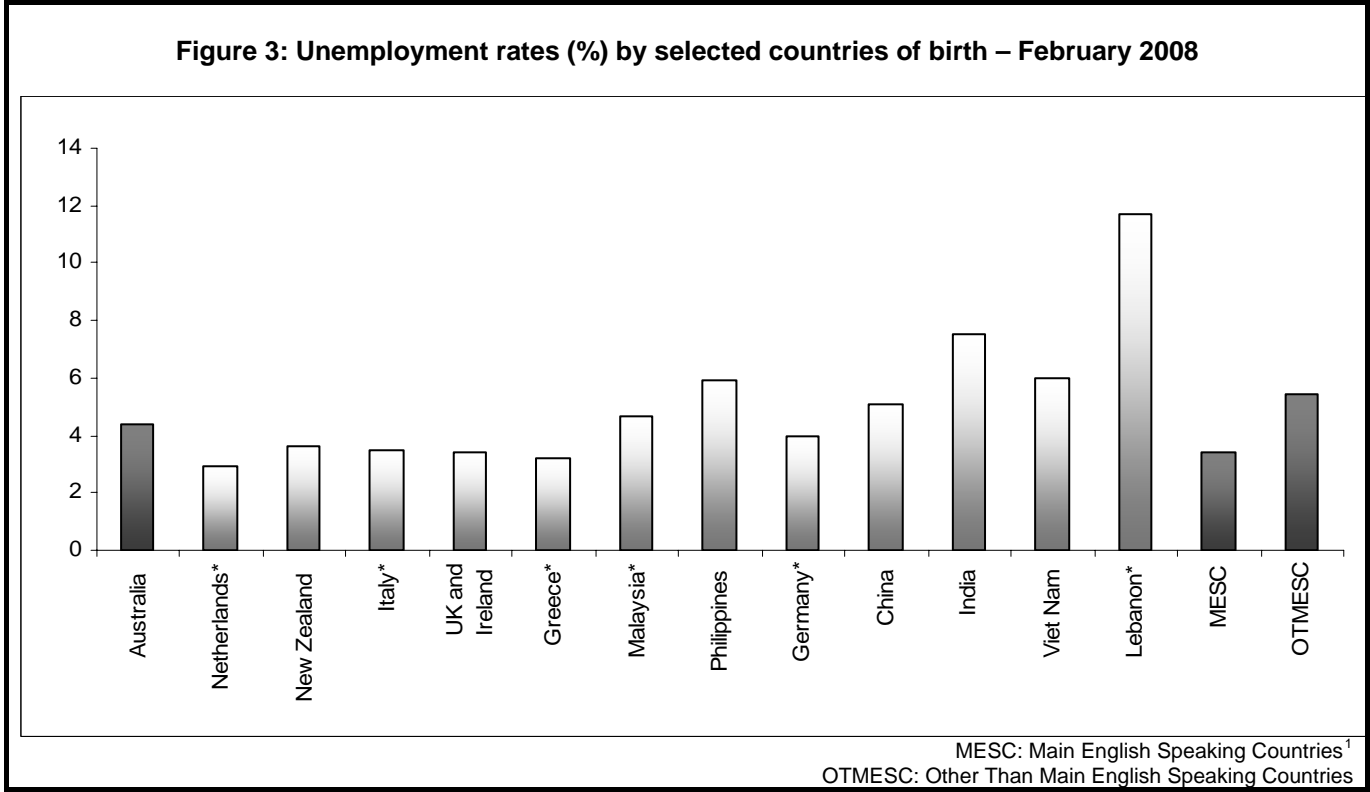
Generally, people in the more highly-skilled occupational groups are less likely to experience unemployment. For example, in February 2008 the unemployment rate for those who were formerly employed as Labourers and Related Workers was 4.1 times that of former Professionals.



## 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 (data consistently shows that recently-arrived migrants generally have a higher unemployment rate than those who have lived in Australia for some years), skill level, age, English proficiency and recent and relevant work experience.

Figure 3 below shows unemployment rates (original data) for people now resident in Australia who were born in selected overseas countries. For example, people born in the UK and Ireland and New Zealand have low unemployment rates (3.4% and 3.6% respectively), whereas unemployment rates for people born in India and Viet Nam are relatively high (7.5% and 6.0% respectively).



\* Estimate is subject to high sampling variability.

<sup>1</sup> MESC are the United Kingdom, Ireland, South Africa, Canada, the United States of America and New Zealand.

## 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 2008, the largest increases in employment (original data) occurred for Professionals (up by 151 600), Tradespersons and Related Workers (up by 66 300) and Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service Workers (up by 50 700). 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 unemployment rates (for those who had worked for two weeks or more in the past two years) by occupational group are presented in descending skill order below.

Percentage Growth Rates in Employment in the 12 months to February 2008		Unemployment Rate at February 2008	
Managers and Administrators	3.1%	Managers and Administrators	1.2%
Professionals	7.7%	Professionals	1.6%
Associate Professionals	0.0%	Associate Professionals	1.8%
Tradespersons and Related Workers	5.1%	Tradespersons and Related Workers	2.2%
Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	-1.9%	Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	1.3%
Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service	3.0%	Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service	2.8%
Intermediate Production and Transport	0.9%	Intermediate Production and Transport	2.9%
Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service	2.6%	Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service	4.7%
Labourers and Related Workers	-2.3%	Labourers and Related Workers	6.6%

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

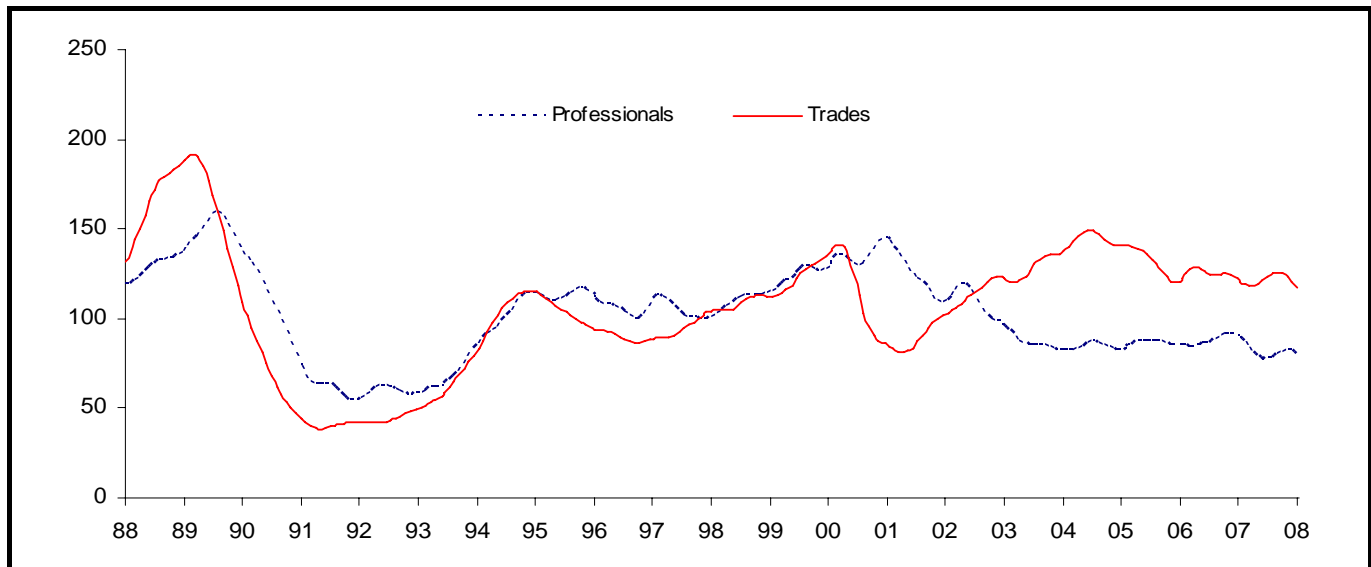
## SKILLED VACANCY TRENDS<sup>2</sup>

The Department of Education, 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 Professional, Associate Professional and Trade groups (see Figure 4 overleaf). The SVI indicates where the best employment opportunities may be in the Australian labour market.

In February 2008, skilled vacancies were 6.4% lower than in February 2007. Over the 12 months, SVI decreases were recorded in Western Australia (down by 15.9%), New South Wales (down by 13.5%) and Queensland (down by 11.4%). The most significant SVI increases were recorded in the Northern Territory (up by 33.1%) and Victoria (up by 14.7%).

In the 12 months to February 2008, advertised vacancies decreased for Professional occupations (down by 10.2%) and for Trade Occupations (down by 2.3%). The most significant decreases were for Marketing and Advertising Professionals (down by 55.7%), Building and Engineering Associates (down by 26.1%) and Accountants and Auditors (down by 21.8%). The most significant increases were for Medical and Science Technical Officers (up by 49.1%), Construction Tradespersons (up by 13.3%) and Metal Tradespersons (up by 8.8%).

<sup>2</sup> Historical series of trend figures are revised monthly.

**Figure 4: Skilled Vacancies Index, May 1988 to February 2008**


## FUTURE JOB PROSPECTS

Future job prospects depend on many factors, some of which are difficult to predict. Prospects differ between and within States and Territories and can change rapidly. Even in occupations 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 2012-13. The ratings are based on employment trends and projected growth, unemployment rates, SVI trends (where available), and other data.

In the following table G stands 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 Cat. No. 1120.0)*.

Occupational Group	Prospects to 2012-13	Occupational Group	Prospects to 2012-13
<b>Managers and Administrators</b>		<b>Associate Professionals</b>	
Child Care Co-ordinators*	<b>G</b>	Building, Architectural and Surveying Associates	<b>G</b>
Finance Managers	<b>G</b>	Dental Therapists, Technicians and Hygienists	<b>G</b>
Information Technology Managers	<b>G</b>	Enrolled Nurses	<b>G</b>
<b>Professionals</b>		Financial Dealers and Brokers	<b>G</b>
Accountants*	<b>G</b>	Medical Technical Officers	<b>G</b>
Chemical Engineers*	<b>G</b>	Metallurgical Technicians and Mine Deputies	<b>G</b>
Computing Professionals* (part)	<b>G</b>	Trade Qualified Chefs* (part)	<b>G</b>
General Medical Practitioners*	<b>G</b>	<b>Tradespersons</b>	
Medical Imaging Professionals* (part)	<b>G</b>	Bakers and Pastrycooks*	<b>G</b>
Mining and Materials Engineers* (part)	<b>G</b>	Bricklayers*	<b>G</b>
Occupational Therapists*	<b>G</b>	Cabinetmakers*	<b>G</b>
Pharmacists* (part)	<b>G</b>	Carpenters and Joiners*	<b>G</b>
Physiotherapists*	<b>G</b>	Electricians*	<b>G</b>
Primary School Teachers	<b>G</b>	Hairdressers*	<b>G</b>
Registered Nurses*	<b>G</b>	General Mechanical Engineering Tradespersons	<b>G</b>
Registered Mental Health Nurses*	<b>G</b>	Motor Mechanics*	<b>G</b>
Registered Midwives*	<b>G</b>	Plumbers*	<b>G</b>
Secondary School Teachers	<b>G</b>	Printing Machinists	<b>A</b>
Social Workers	<b>G</b>	Refrigeration and Airconditioning Mechanics*	<b>G</b>
Specialist Medical Practitioners*	<b>G</b>	Textile and Footwear Machine Operators	<b>BA</b>

\* denotes occupations that are listed in part or in full on the Migration Occupations in Demand List (MODL) announced on 30 July 2007.

The Australian Labour Market 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 making a decision to lodge a visa application. Queries relating to this publication should be emailed to [migration@deewr.gov.au](mailto:migration@deewr.gov.au).



# 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 Labour Market Update.

## THE AUSTRALIAN POPULATION

Australia's population is concentrated in the states of New South Wales (32.8% of the total population) and Victoria (24.8% of the total population). The States which experienced the strongest population growth over the 12 months to 30 June 2007 were Western Australia (up by 2.3%) and Queensland (up by 2.2%), while Tasmania experienced the weakest growth (at 0.9%).

	<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>
Population	6 889 072	5 205 216	4 182 062	1 584 513	2 105 783	493 341	214 975	339 865	21 017 222
Share of Australian Population (%)	32.8	24.8	19.9	7.5	10.0	2.3	1.0	1.6	<b>100.0</b>
Aged 15 years and over (%)	26.4	20.1	15.9	6.2	8.0	1.9	0.8	1.3	80.6
Aged 65 years and over (%)	4.5	3.3	2.4	1.1	1.2	0.3	0.1	0.2	13.1
Population growth (%)***	1.1	1.5	2.2	1.0	2.3	0.7	2.0	1.7	1.5

\* Estimated resident population at 30 June 2007 is preliminary.

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

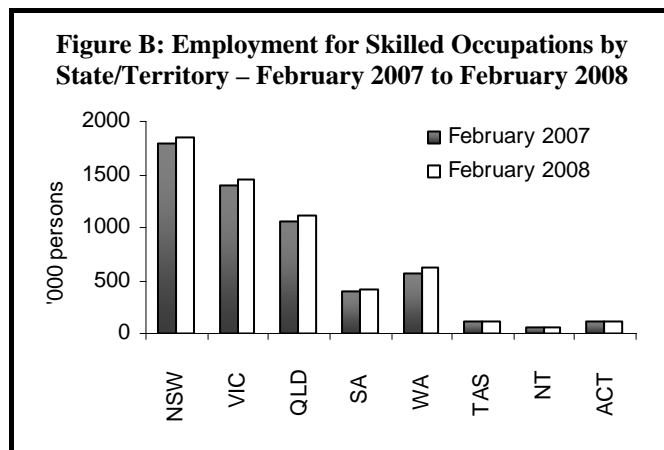
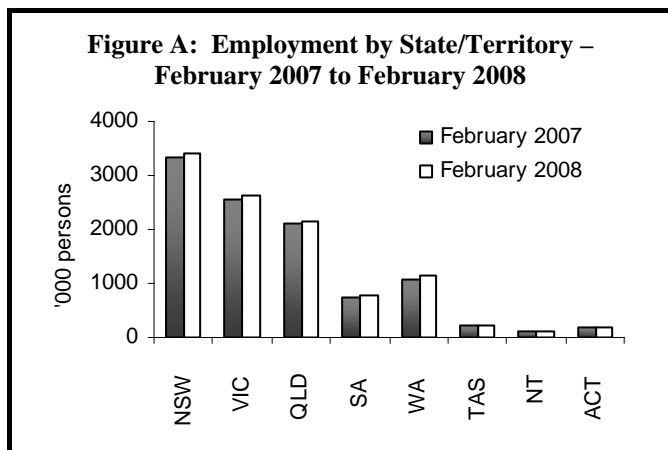
\*\*\* Percentage growth in the 12 months from 30 June 2006 to 30 June 2007.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2008, *Australian Demographic Statistics, September Quarter 2007*, ABS Cat. No. 3101.0.

## STATE AND TERRITORY EMPLOYMENT

Trend employment increased in all States and Territories over the 12 months to February 2008. Figure A shows that New South Wales (3.4 million), Victoria (2.6 million) and Queensland (2.2 million) had the highest employment levels. Of the States and Territories, the Northern Territory had the highest employment growth in percentage terms (up by 5.3%) over the 12 months to February 2008.

Figure B shows that New South Wales (1.8 million), Victoria (1.4 million) and Queensland (1.1 million) employ the largest number of workers in skilled occupations (Managers and Administrators, Professionals, Associate Professionals, Tradespersons and Related Workers) (original data). Of these States, Queensland recorded the highest employment growth (up by 5.9%) over the 12 months to February 2008.



## STATE AND TERRITORY LABOUR FORCE

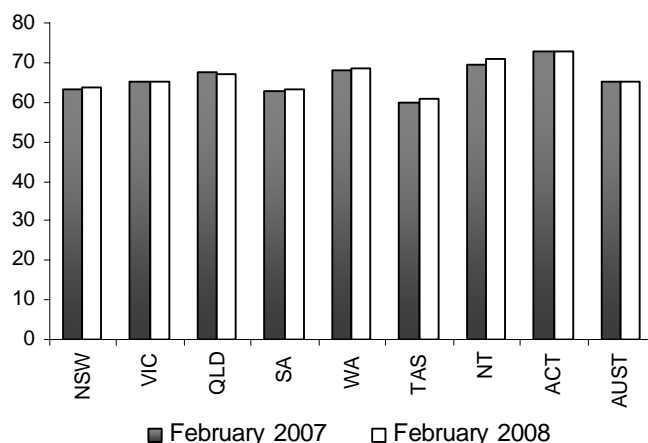
The labour force participation rate is calculated by expressing the labour force as a percentage of the civilian population aged 15 and over. (The labour force is employed persons plus unemployed persons.)

Over the 12 months to February 2008, the labour force participation rate for Australia (original data) increased slightly by 0.2 percentage points to 65.3% (see Figure C). The Northern Territory and Tasmania recorded the largest increase in the participation rate over this period, while Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory recorded a decrease.

Full-time employment (original data) increased by 2.9% in the 12 months to February 2008, while part-time employment increased by 2.8%.

Male full-time employment increased by 2.5% and female full-time employment increased by 3.7%. Male part-time employment increased by 4.5% and female part-time employment increased by 2.2%.

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



## INDUSTRY BY STATE AND TERRITORY

Table B below provides estimates of the percentage of employment in each State that relates to each particular industry (original data). As can be seen, the Australian Capital Territory has a relatively high proportion of employed persons in Government Administration and Defence, Western Australia in Mining, South Australia and Victoria in Manufacturing, South Australia in Health and Community Services and New South Wales in Finance and Insurance. The industries that employ the largest number of persons in Australia are Retail Trade, Property and Business Services, Health and Community Services, and Manufacturing.

Table B Employment Distribution by Industry, States and Territories  
Average of 4 quarters to February 2008 (% of total)

INDUSTRY	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT	AUST
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	2.9	3.1	3.5	5.1	3.9	6.5	3.0	0.2	3.4
Mining	0.7	0.4	1.8	1.3	4.7	1.1	2.5	*0.0	1.3
Manufacturing	9.9	12.9	9.2	12.2	8.9	10.7	3.8	2.1	10.4
Electricity, Gas & Water Supply	0.7	0.8	0.8	1.0	1.0	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.8
Construction	8.6	8.4	10.8	7.3	10.4	7.5	8.4	7.3	9.1
Wholesale Trade	4.4	5.1	3.8	4.3	4.1	3.6	2.0	1.7	4.3
Retail Trade	14.7	14.5	15.7	15.3	13.8	14.8	11.7	9.9	14.7
Accommodation, Cafes & Restaurants	5.3	4.4	5.1	4.3	4.0	5.9	8.2	5.3	4.9
Transport & Storage	5.2	4.0	5.3	3.8	4.4	4.3	6.3	2.1	4.7
Communication Services	2.0	2.0	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.1	1.7	1.3	1.8
Finance & Insurance	5.0	4.1	2.5	3.1	2.8	2.8	2.1	2.2	3.8
Property & Business Services	12.6	12.3	11.8	10.0	12.3	7.6	7.8	13.8	12.0
Government Administration & Defence	3.9	3.3	4.6	5.2	4.3	5.8	12.9	28.4	4.6
Education	6.7	7.6	7.2	6.8	7.2	8.3	7.6	8.2	7.2
Health & Community Services	10.6	10.3	10.1	12.5	10.1	12.2	9.8	8.5	10.5
Cultural & Recreational Services	2.6	3.1	2.8	2.1	2.6	3.0	3.7	3.7	2.8
Personal & Other Services	3.9	3.7	3.5	4.2	4.0	3.9	7.4	4.5	3.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: ABS Labour Force Survey original data for the 4 quarters to February 2008.

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

Unless otherwise stated, data are from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Labour Force Survey, February (2008).