



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 2006**, available through <http://www.workplace.gov.au>.

Unless otherwise stated, data are from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Labour Force Survey, August 2006.

OVERVIEW

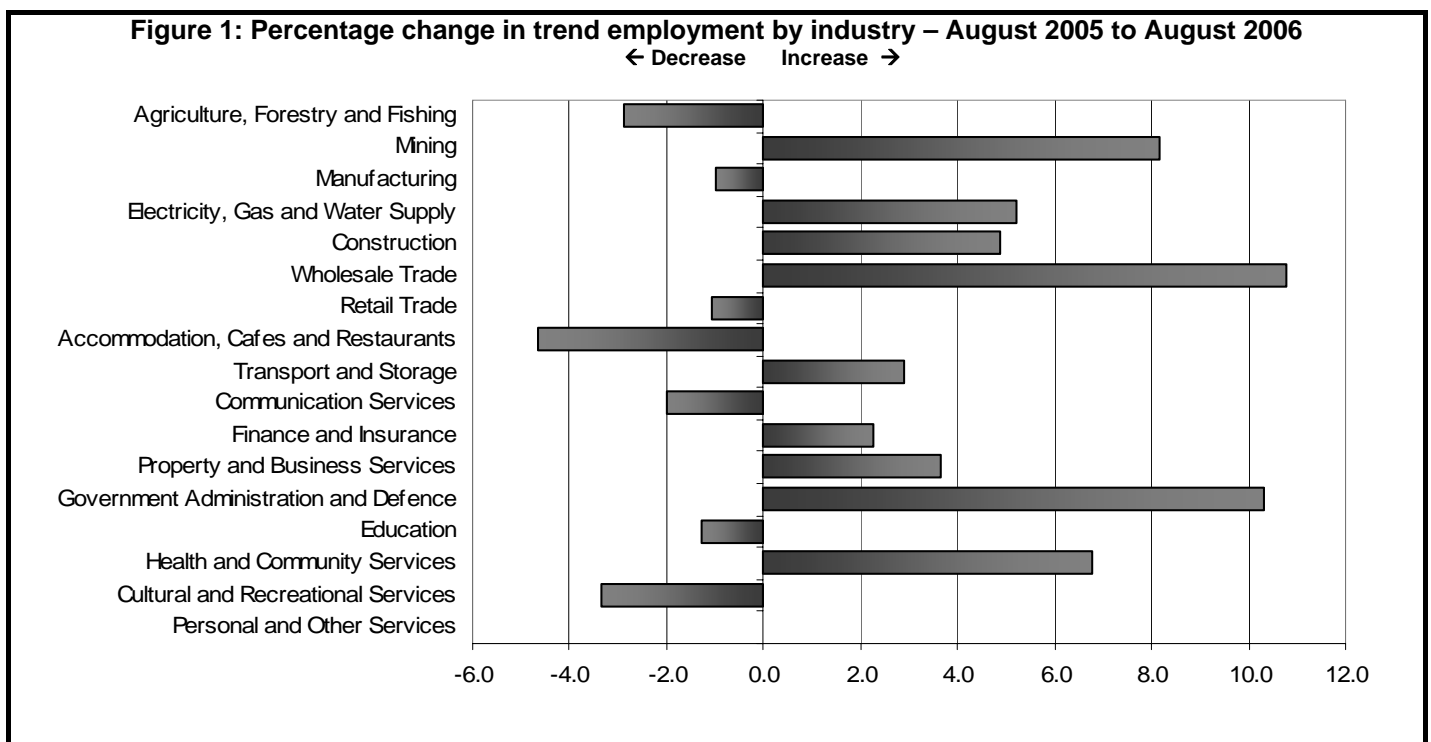
In the 12 months to August 2006, the Australian labour market continued to experience solid growth. In trend terms, total employment increased by an estimated 223 200 persons (2.2%). Advertised vacancies decreased for both Professional and Trade occupations. Migrants with the best prospects for finding employment in the Australian labour market include those with strong proficiency in the English language, recognised post-secondary qualifications and high skill levels.

EMPLOYMENT

Over the 12 months to August 2006, trend employment in Australia grew by 2.2% after growth of 3.4% 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 (7.2%) and the Australian Capital Territory (4.8%).

Employment opportunities and growth varied across industries. Over the 12 months to August 2006, the largest increases in trend employment occurred in Health and Community Services (up by 68 900), Government Administration and Defence (up by 47 200) and Wholesale Trade (up by 46 200). The strongest rates of employment growth were in Wholesale Trade (10.8%), Government Administration and Defence (10.3%) and Mining (8.2%). Employment growth rates by industry are shown in Figure 1.



Source: ABS *Australian Labour Market Statistics*, October 2006, ABS Cat. No. 6105.0.

UNEMPLOYMENT

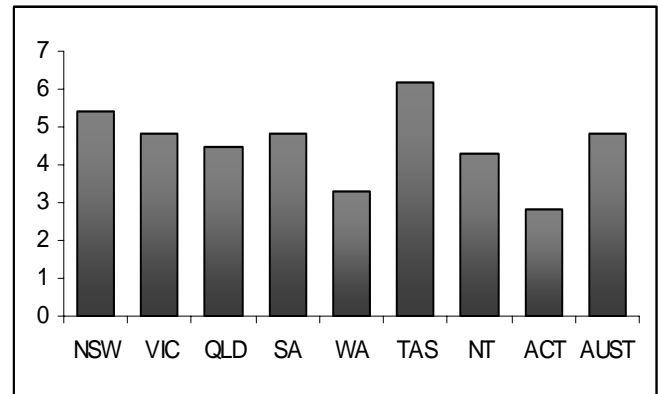
The trend rate of unemployment was 4.8% in August 2006, lower than in August 2005 (5.1%).

In the past year, trend unemployment rates have decreased in all States and Territories except for New South Wales, where it increased by 0.3%, and Tasmania where it remained unchanged.

In August 2006, the unemployment rate was highest in Tasmania at 6.2% and New South Wales at 5.4% and lowest in the Australian Capital Territory at 2.8%. See Figure 2.

Generally, people in the more highly-skilled occupational groups are less likely to experience unemployment. For example, in August 2006 the unemployment rate for those who were formerly employed as Labourers and Related Workers was almost seven times that of former Professionals.

Figure 2: Unemployment rates (%) by State/Territory – August 2006

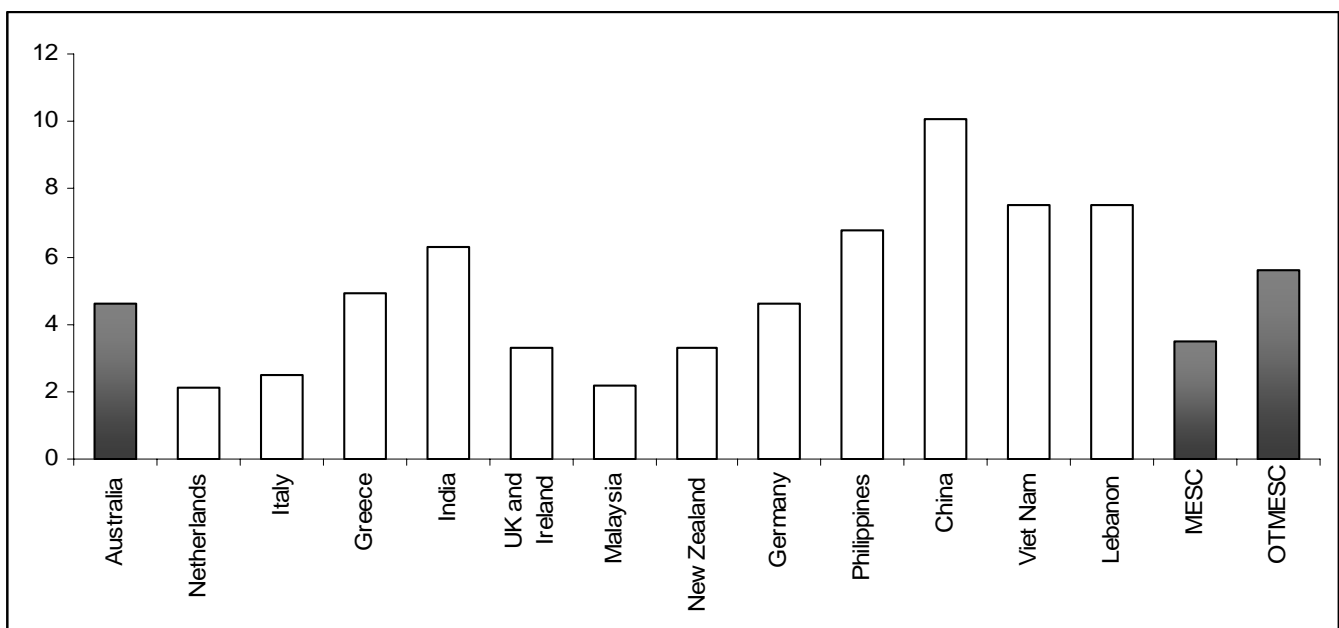


MIGRANT UNEMPLOYMENT

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 Netherlands and Malaysia have low unemployment rates (2.1% and 2.2% respectively), whereas unemployment rates for people born in China (10.1%) and Viet Nam and Lebanon (both 7.5%) are relatively high.

Figure 3: Unemployment rates (%) by selected countries of birth – August 2006



MESC: Main English Speaking Countries¹
 OTMESC: Other Than Main English Speaking Countries

¹ 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 August 2006, the largest increases in employment (original data) occurred in Intermediate Production and Transport Workers (up by 45 300), Professionals (up by 40 800) and Tradespersons and Related Workers (up by 40 500). 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 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 August 2006		Unemployment Rate at August 2006	
Managers and Administrators	1.0%	Managers and Administrators	1.4%
Professionals	2.1%	Professionals	1.1%
Associate Professionals	2.8%	Associate Professionals	2.3%
Tradespersons	3.2%	Tradespersons	2.4%
Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	-1.7%	Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	1.3%
Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service	1.8%	Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service	2.7%
Intermediate Production and Transport	5.6%	Intermediate Production and Transport	3.6%
Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service	-2.3%	Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service	4.3%
Labourers and Related Workers	3.0%	Labourers and Related Workers	7.6%

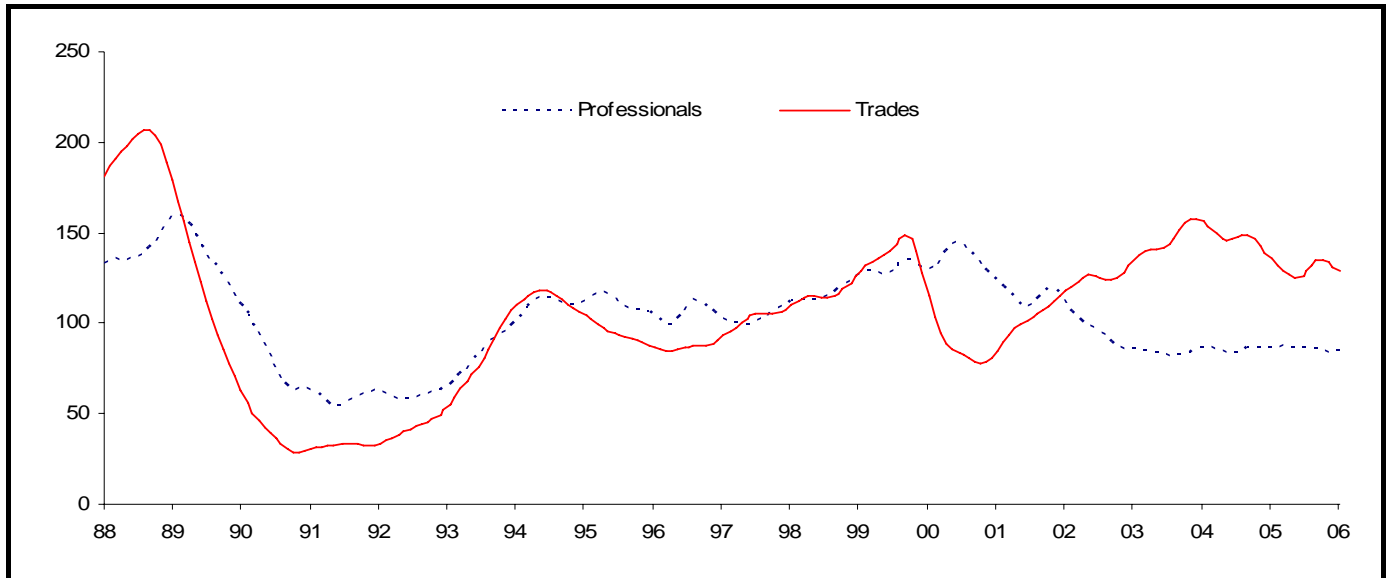
Additional information on Professional and Trade occupations is provided in the following section on skilled vacancies. Time series of vacancy data are not readily available for less-skilled occupations.

SKILLED VACANCY TRENDS

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 (NT). These are aggregated into the Professional, Associate Professional and Trade groups. The SVI indicates where the best employment opportunities may be in the Australian labour market.

In August 2006, skilled vacancies were 6.8% lower than in August 2005. Over the 12 months, SVI increases were recorded in the Northern Territory (up by 13.7%) and Western Australia (up by 3.6%). The most significant SVI decreases were in Tasmania (down by 31.8%) and New South Wales (down by 19.8%).

In the 12 months to August 2006, advertised vacancies decreased for both Professional and Trade occupations (down by 8.3% and 6.4% respectively) (see Figure 4 overleaf). While the majority of occupations within these broad groups recorded decreases in skilled vacancies, notable increases occurred for Science Professionals (up by 32.5%) and Food Workers (up by 19.5%).

Figure 4: Skilled Vacancies Index, August 1988 to August 2006


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

* denotes occupations that are listed in part or in full on the Migration Occupations in Demand List (MODL) announced on 20 September 2006. 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@dewr.gov.au.