

Australian Labour Market Update—October 2020

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 inform people interested in working in Australia on a temporary or permanent basis.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a devastating impact on economic growth and labour market activity in Australia. In the period March to August 2020, employment fell by 413,600 and 185,200 people left the labour force. There are more than 920 000 unemployed people and Australia’s unemployment rate for August 2020 was 6.8%.

The economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic is expected to continue for some time. As the Australian labour market is changing quickly, more up-to-date information should be obtained before lodging a visa application or considering migration options.¹ Further information on job prospects, earnings and related information is on the [JobOutlook](#) website.

Unless otherwise stated, data in this publication are from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Labour Force Survey, August 2020.²

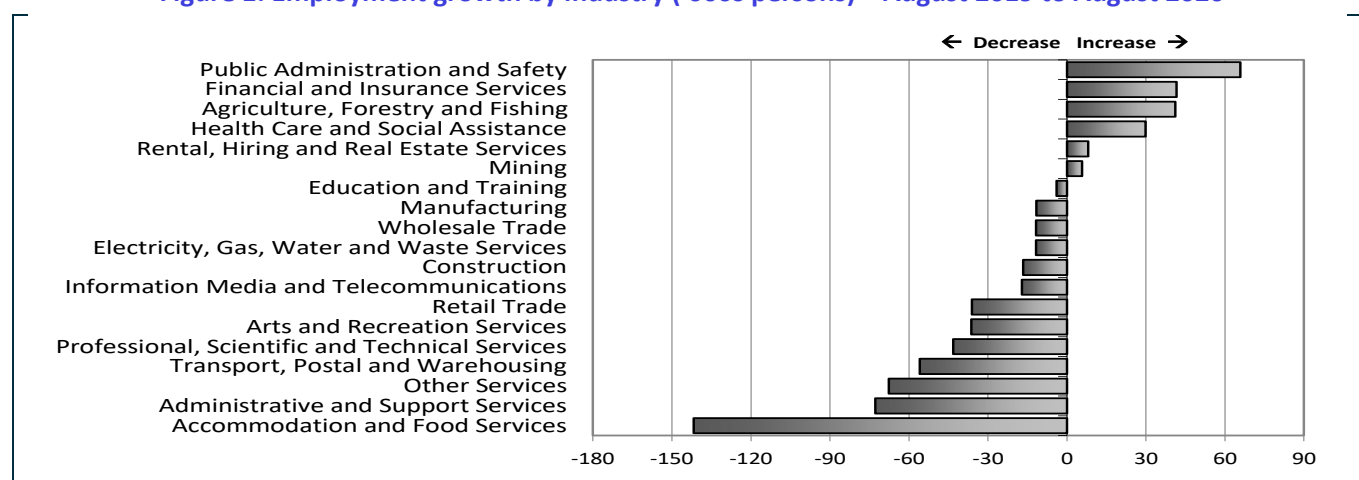
Employment

Over the 12 months to August 2020, the strongest employment growth (in seasonally adjusted terms) occurred in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT, 3.1%).

Employment opportunities and growth varied across industries. Over the 12 months to August 2020, the largest increases in employment occurred in Public Administration and Safety (up by 65,900), Financial and Insurance Services (up by 41,600), Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (up by 41,100) and Health Care and Social Assistance (up by 29,900). The largest decrease in employment occurred in industries that have been significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic including Accommodation and Food Services (down by 141,700), Administrative and Support Services (down by 72,800) and Other Services (down by 67,700).

The strongest rates of employment growth were in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (up by 12.8%), Financial and Insurance Services (up by 9.3%), and Public Administration and Safety (up by 8.1%). Changes in employment by industry are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Employment growth by industry ('000s persons)—August 2019 to August 2020



Source: ABS (2020). Table 04. Employed persons by Industry division of main job (ANZSIC). *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed*. Retrieved September 24, 2020. www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/sep-2020.

¹ See the [COVID-19 LMIP](#) for information on the COVID-19 labour market impacts in Australia.

² The first paragraph of the Employment section and the Unemployment section use seasonally adjusted data for August 2020 from the ABS’ Labour Force, Australia, August 2020 time series spreadsheets. Previous ALMU publications used trend data which is not currently available due to a break in time series.

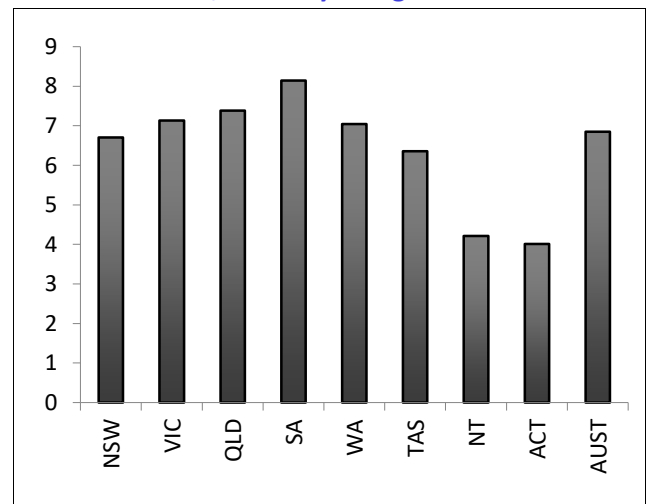
Unemployment

The seasonally adjusted rate of unemployment in Australia was 6.8% in August 2020, compared with 5.2% in August 2019.

Over the 12 months to August 2020, the unemployment rate increased in New South Wales (NSW, 4.3% to 6.7%), Victoria (4.9% to 7.1%), Western Australia (WA, 5.8% to 7.0%), Queensland (6.3% to 7.4%), South Australia (SA, 7.3% to 8.1%) and the ACT (3.6% to 4.0%).

Over the same period, the unemployment rate remained steady in Tasmania (at 6.4%) and decreased in the Northern Territory (NT, 5.1% to 4.2%). See Figure 2.

Figure 2: Unemployment rates (%) by State/Territory—August 2020

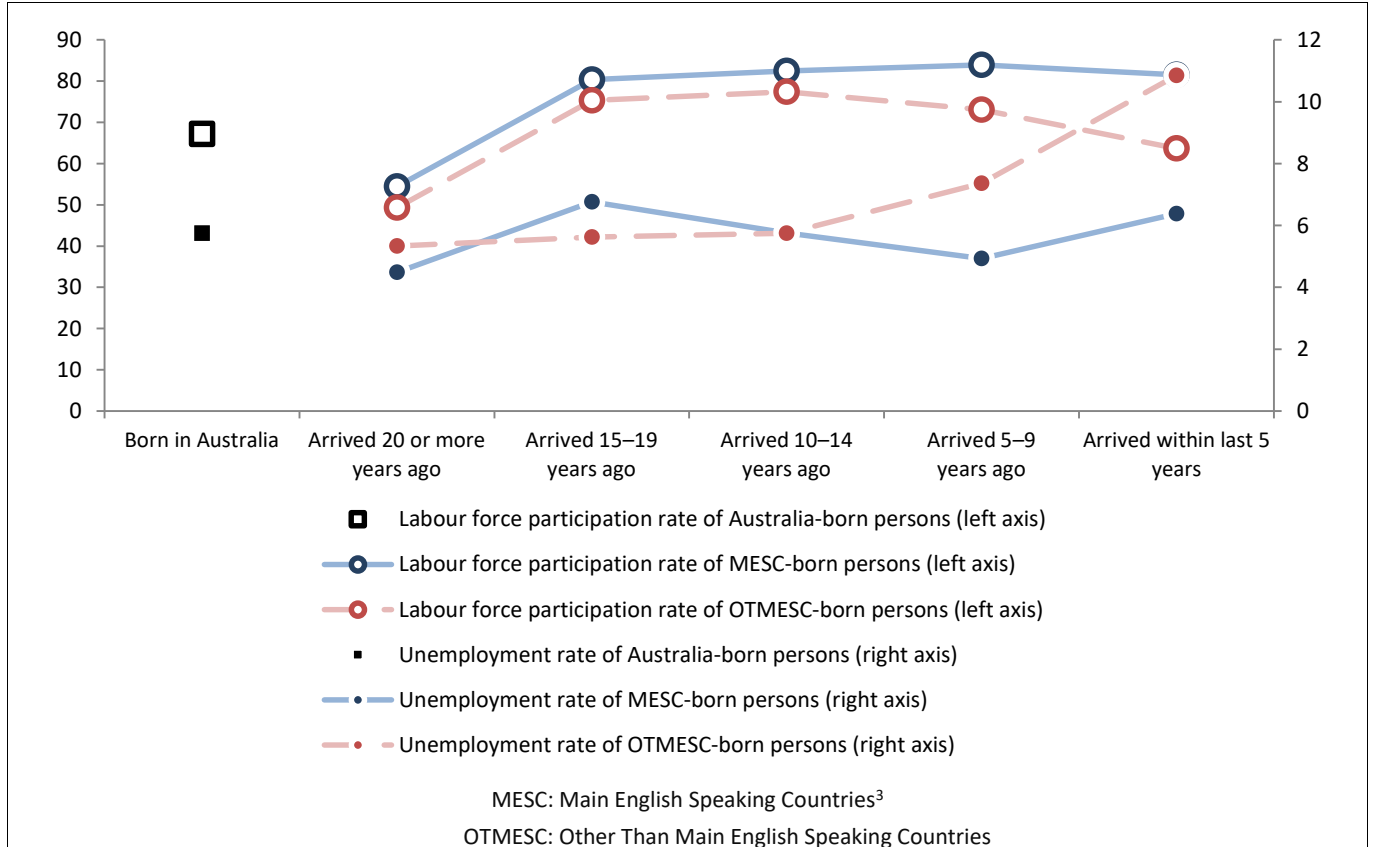


Migrant Unemployment

The unemployment rates for people who migrate to Australia vary appreciably. Several factors influence migrant unemployment rates including skill level, age, English proficiency, recent and relevant work experience, and the period since arrival in Australia. Data consistently show recently-arrived migrants have a higher unemployment rate on average than those who have lived in Australia for some years.

Figure 3 below shows the participation and unemployment rates of the Australian-born and migrants by broad country of birth groups and period of residence in Australia (average of the last 12 months to August 2020).

Figure 3: Years since arrival in Australia by labour force participation rates (%) and unemployment rates (%) for broad country of birth groups—12 months to August 2020

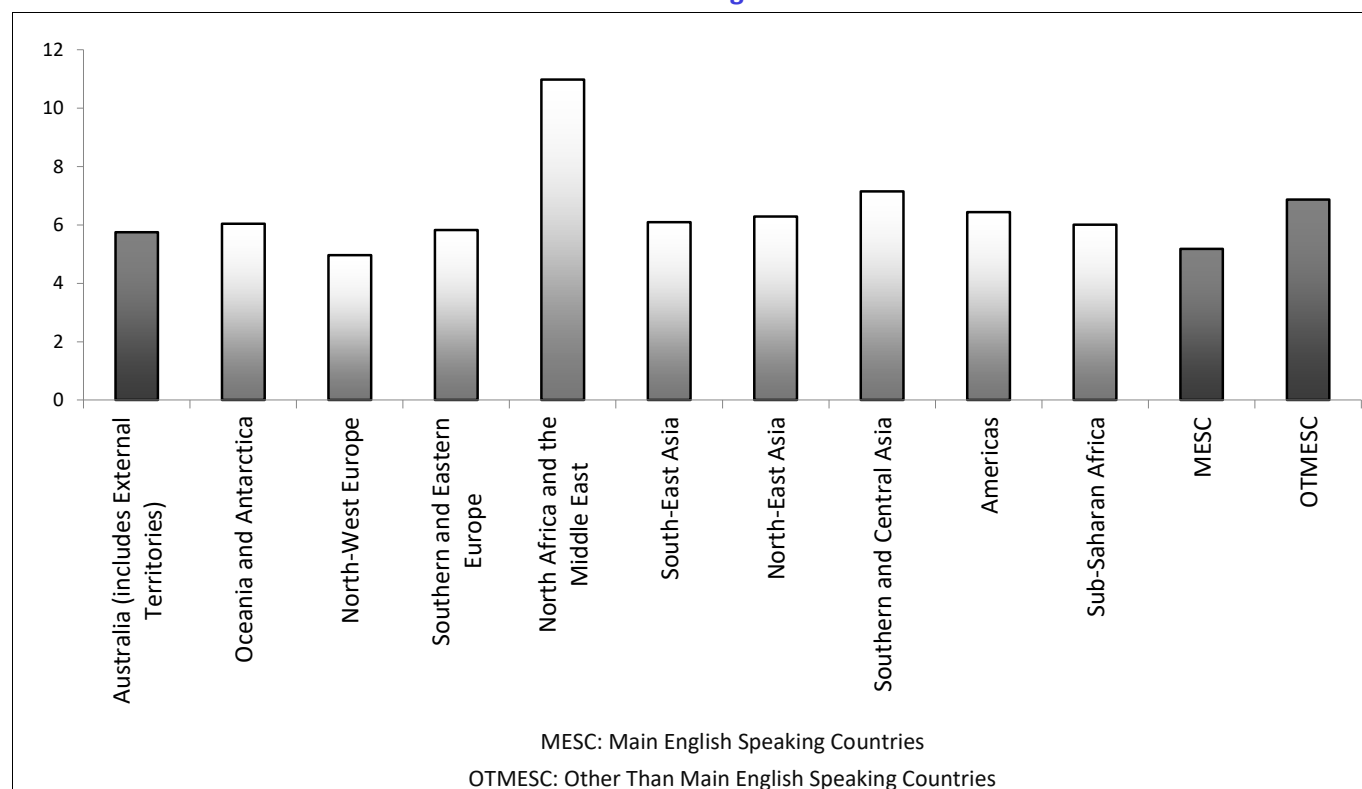


Source: ABS (2020). LM7 – Labour force status by elapsed years since arrival, main English-speaking countries, sex, state and territory. *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed*. Retrieved September 24, 2020. www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/sep-2020.

³ MESC are the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, South Africa, Canada, the United States of America and New Zealand.

Figure 4 below shows unemployment rates (average of the last 12 months to August 2020) for people resident in Australia born in major country groups (by subcontinent). People born in North-West Europe, and Southern and Eastern Europe have relatively low unemployment rates (5.0%, and 5.8% respectively), while unemployment rates for people born in North Africa and the Middle East (11.0%) and Southern and Central Asia (7.1%) are relatively high (possibly reflecting English proficiency and period of residence in Australia).

Figure 4: Unemployment rates (%) by major country groups (subcontinent) of birth—12 months to August 2020⁴



Source: ABS (2020). LM5 - Labour force status by age, major country group (subcontinent) of birth (SACC), and sex & LM7 - Labour force status by elapsed years since arrival, main English-speaking countries, sex, state and territory. *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed*. Retrieved September 24, 2020. www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/sep-2020.

Employment by Occupation⁵

Over the 12 months to August 2020, the largest increases in employment (in seasonally adjusted terms) occurred for Managers (up by 129,100), and Professionals (up by 47,800). The largest decrease occurred for Community and Personal Service Workers (down by 140,300). Employment growth rates in descending skill order are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Seasonally adjusted employment growth by occupation—12 months to August 2020

Occupational Group	1 Year Change ('000 persons)	1 Year Change (%)
Managers	129.1	8.5
Professionals	47.8	1.5
Technicians and Trades Workers	-86.6	-4.8
Community and Personal Service Workers	-140.3	-10.0
Clerical and Administrative Workers	-9.9	-0.6
Sales Workers	-100.1	-9.0
Machinery Operators and Drivers	-91.9	-10.5
Labourers	-88.5	-7.1

Additional information on occupational groups is provided in the following section on internet vacancy data.

⁴ In Figure 4, 'Australia (includes External Territories)' is within 'Oceania and Antarctica'.

⁵ This section is based on August 2020 National Skills Commission seasonally adjusted data derived from ABS Labour Force Survey data. Occupational Groups are from the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) (ABS Cat. No. 1220.0).

Internet Vacancy Data

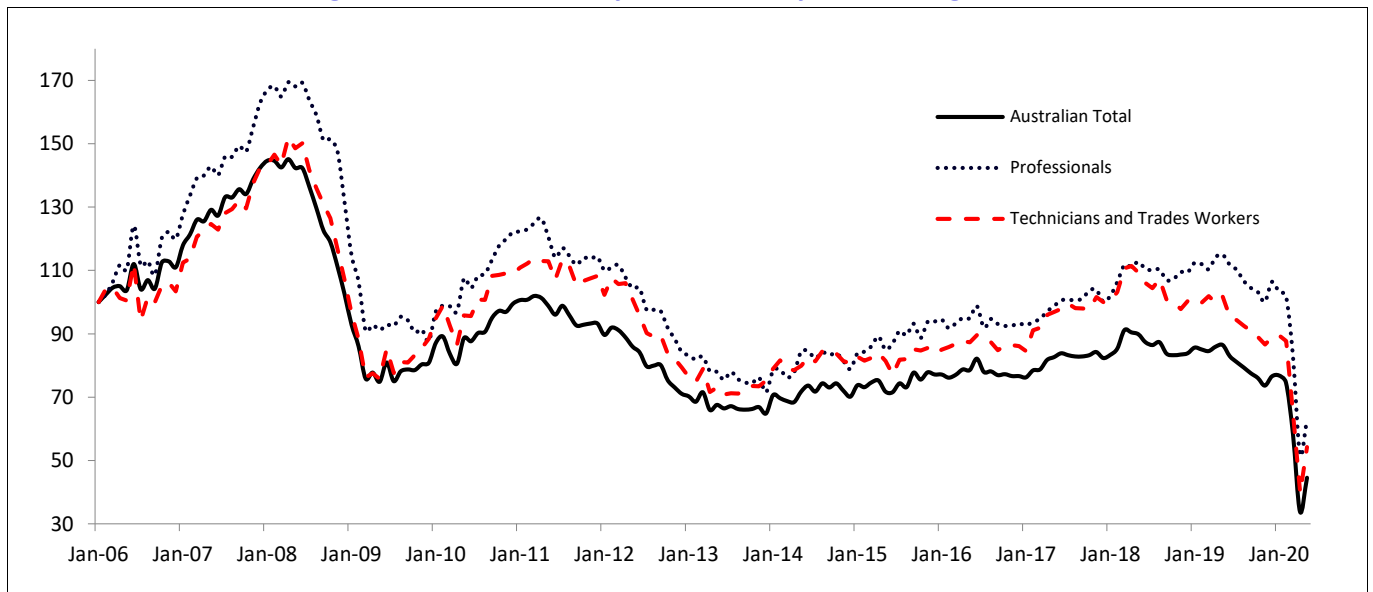
The National Skills Commission produces the monthly [Vacancy Report](#) which contains the Internet Vacancy Index (IVI)⁶ (see Figure 5). Over the year to August 2020, the seasonally adjusted IVI decreased by 19.2% with increases recorded for Machinery Operators and Drivers (up by 6.4%) and Labourers (up by 2.2%).

The largest occupational group decreases were for Managers (down by 34.1%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (down by 31.3%), and Sales Workers (down by 19.9%).

At the more detailed occupation level, seasonally adjusted vacancies decreased in 30 out of the 48 occupation clusters over the year to August 2020, with the strongest decreases for Office Managers, Administrators and Secretaries (down by 44.1%), Hospitality Workers (down by 42.6%) and Corporate Managers (down by 40.7%). The strongest rises were for Education Professionals (up by 37.6%), Farm Forestry and Garden Workers (up by 28.2%) and Cleaners and Laundry Workers (up by 18.8%).

Over the year to August 2020, seasonally adjusted vacancies fell in Victoria (down by 45.2%), NSW (down by 19.7%), the ACT (down by 14.0%), Queensland (down by 6.6%) and the NT (down by 1.4%). Seasonally adjusted vacancies rose in WA (up by 10.7%), SA (up by 10.2%) and Tasmania (up by 1.9%) in the year to August 2020.

Figure 5: Internet Vacancy Index, January 2006 to August 2020



Source: National Skills Commission, [Vacancy Report](#) (September 2020), Seasonally Adjusted Index data.

Future Employment Change⁷

The [Labour Market Information Portal](#) contains information on projected future employment change over the five years to May 2024 for different occupations and industries. As there may be significant variation between and within states, information on future employment change should be used with caution. These estimates do not take into account the labour market impact caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Future employment change estimates are indicative only and are intended to provide a guide to opportunities likely to be available over the five years to May 2024. It is important to note that these estimates do not provide any guidance about the number of people looking for opportunities in each occupation. As the Australian labour market can change quickly, information should be re-assessed prior to making a decision to lodge a visa application.

Queries on the quarterly Australian Labour Market Update publication should be emailed to migration@skillscommission.gov.au.

⁶ See National Skills Commission, [Vacancy Report](#) (September 2020). The IVI is based on a count of online job advertisements newly lodged on SEEK, CareerOne and Australian JobSearch during the month. Duplicate advertisements are removed before IVI vacancies are coded by the National Skills Commission to occupations based on ANZSCO. The data are seasonally adjusted and trended, then indexed (January 2006=100).

⁷ The 2019 projected employment changes over the five years to May 2024 do not take account of any impact caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and are therefore no longer reflective of current labour market conditions. As such, they should be used, and interpreted, with extreme caution.



Hot Topic

Aged and Disabled Carers

In the Australian labour market, Aged and Disabled Carers assist and care for aged or disabled persons by offering a range of support services in the community, in residential aged care facilities, and in residential dwellings.¹

Labour Market Profile

The Australian Bureau of Statistics' Labour Force Survey indicates that the occupation group of Aged and Disabled Carers grew by 34.9% between May 2015 and May 2020. Most Aged and Disabled Carers are employed in the Health Care and Social Assistance industry (88.1%), with the remainder in Public Administration and Safety (6.4%) and Administrative and Support Services (2.5%). Table A provides a labour market profile for Aged and Disabled Carers from the [Job Outlook](#) and [Australian Bureau of Statistics](#) websites.

Table A: Aged and Disabled Carers Key Labour Market Indicators

Key Indicator	Aged and Disabled Carers
Occupation size (May 2020)	214 100
Most common level of educational attainment	Certificate III/IV
Average age	47 years
Full-time share of employment	33%
Average weekly hours (full-time)	43
Median weekly earnings (full-time and before tax)	\$1 265
Employment growth over past five years (to May 2020)	65.4%

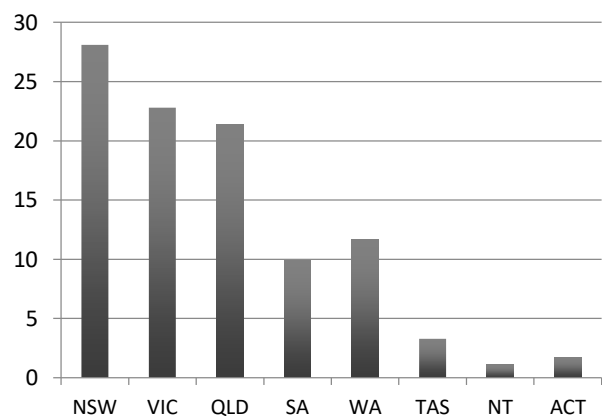
Regional Employment

Aged and Disabled Carers are employed in all states and territories in Australia.

At August 2020, New South Wales accounted for 28.1% of total employment of Aged and Disabled Carers, followed by Victoria (22.8%).

Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory employed the smallest average share of Aged and Disabled Carers (at less than 4.0% each). See Figure A.

Figure A: Employment Distribution of Aged and Disabled Carers by State/Territory (seasonally adjusted)—August 2020 (%)



Source: ABS (2020). EQ08 - Employed persons by Occupation unit group of main job (ANZSCO), Sex, State and Territory. *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed*. Retrieved September 24, 2020. www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/sep-2020.

Related Occupations

Occupations related to Aged and Disabled Carers include Nursing Support Worker, Personal Care Assistant, and Registered Nurse (Aged Care).

Nursing Support Workers care for patients, directed by nursing staff. Personal Care Assistants provide personal care such as assistance with dressing, and eating, as well as observing changes in patients' condition at home or in healthcare facilities. For these occupations, the entry requirement is usually an Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) Certificate III/IV in a relevant field of study.

Registered Nurses (Aged Care) provide nursing care to the elderly in various settings, including in residential aged care facilities. For this occupation, the entry requirement is usually an AQF Bachelor degree in a relevant field of study. Persons with overseas qualifications seeking to work as a Registered Nurse (Aged Care) in Australia will need to obtain a skills assessment from the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC). Registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) is also necessary for employment in this occupation in Australia. Further information is available at [ANMAC Skills Assessment](#).

Table B provides a labour market profile for these occupations from the [Job Outlook](#) website.

Table B: Related Occupations—Key Labour Market Indicators

Key Indicator	Nursing Support Worker	Personal Care Assistant	Registered Nurse (Aged Care)
Occupation size (August 2016) ⁱ	36,200	28,900	39,300
Most common level of educational attainment (AQF)	Certificate III/IV (42.0 %)	Certificate III/IV (43.9%)	Bachelor Degree (44.9%)
Average age	39 years	45 years	47 years
Full-time share of employment	35%	31%	44%
Average weekly hours (full-time)	43	43	42
Employment growth over past five years (to 2016)	75.7%	3.2%	30.1%

Employer-Sponsored Migration

The Australian Government has several employer-sponsored migration programs including the Temporary Skill Shortage, the Skilled Employer Sponsored Regional Provisional, the Employer Nomination Scheme, and the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (Transition Stream). Information on these programs is on the [Department of Home Affairs](#) website.

Seeking Employment in Australia

Aged and Disabled Carers and Related Occupations (see above) should note that acceptance of qualifications for a migration (visa) purpose, does not assure employment in this or related occupations in Australia. Employment will depend on other factors such as the number of vacancies, skill needs in the Australian labour market, and suitability of an applicant for employment in a particular job in Australia.

The National Skills Commission is not an employment agency and is not able to assist visa applicants or potential migrants to obtain employment in Australia. Australian employers are increasingly using the internet to advertise vacancies, and websites of relevant Australian professional bodies (which may recognise membership of affiliated overseas bodies) and industry bodies may include information on vacancies.

Queries on the Australian Labour Market Update should be emailed to migration@skillscommission.gov.au.

ⁱ [JobOutlook](#); and [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare](#).
ⁱⁱ ABS Census 2016 data.