

Youth unemployment statistics for small geographic areas: a quick guide

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This guide provides a brief overview of the youth unemployment data available for small geographic areas. This is one in a series of Quick Guides related to labour statistics, designed to provide a basic understanding of Australian labour market data. Other guides include [labour force](#), [unemployment](#), [youth unemployment](#) and [employment](#), which are available from the [Parliamentary Library](#) website.

Labour force data for small geographic areas

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) recently moved to a new geographic standard for the dissemination of regional data from the [Labour Force Survey](#). The survey is a key source of information on employment, unemployment, the labour force and associated rates and ratios. The change was designed to provide more robust data for smaller geographic areas, with a focus on regional labour markets.

While the focus of this paper is on data available on youth unemployment at the smallest geographical level, data is also available for states and territories, and by greater capital city and balance of state. For more information, summaries and fact sheets on the new ABS geographical framework, see [Australian Statistical Geography Standard \(ASGS\)](#).

Youth unemployment

The ABS produces labour force estimates through the monthly [Labour Force Survey](#). This household survey is designed to produce key estimates of unemployment (and employment) from a sample of approximately 56,000 people across Australia. Unemployed people are defined by the ABS as persons aged 15 years and over who were not employed during the survey reference week and:

- had actively looked for work and were available to work (in the reference week), or
- were waiting to start a new job.

Young unemployed people are those who have been classified as unemployed and are aged 15 to 24 years. See the separate release, [Labour Stats 101 youth unemployment: a quick guide](#) for more detailed information.

Regional labour force data

There is limited data available on young unemployed persons (aged 15 to 24 years) for small areas such as Commonwealth Electoral Divisions (CEDs). This is due to the volatile nature of estimates based on small numbers of people (i.e. young unemployed people are a sub-set of all unemployed people). The exception to this is Census data, however it only relates to a small time frame every five years (the most recent data is at August 2011). The ABS does however, release unemployment rates by age group for regional areas using Statistical Areas Level 4.

Statistical Areas Level 4 (SA4)

The Statistical Areas Level 4 classification is used to produce labour force estimates for 87 spatial areas across Australia. These spatial areas form part of the new geographic standard through which labour force estimates are now disseminated. These areas replace the formerly used labour force statistical regions.

SA4s are the largest sub-State regions in the new geographic structure. They are designed for the output of labour force data and to reflect labour markets within each State and Territory. More information is available from:

- ABS, [Information paper: Regional labour force statistics, 2014](#), Cat. no. 6262.0 and
- ABS, [Australian Statistical Geography Standard \(ASGS\): Volume 1 – Main structure and Greater capital city statistical areas, July 2011](#), Cat. No. 1270.0.55.001 (see Main Structure > Statistical Area Level 4 (SA4)).

SA4 data is from the original (unadjusted) series. Due to the small sample size involved, the sampling errors with some estimates may be quite high.

From January 2014, labour force estimates are compiled using population benchmarks from the 2011 Census. Therefore, the estimates may vary to data previously published. Past estimates (prior to December 2013) have also been adjusted using the revised population benchmarks. For more information see the 'Summary' tab information with the ABS release, [Labour force, detailed – electronic delivery, Dec 2013](#) (Cat. no. 6291.0.55.001).

Estimates by SA4s are available from October 1998 however, caution should be used when analysing estimates prior to April 2001, as a new survey questionnaire was introduced at this time and only core labour force estimates were revised.

Available data

Each month the ABS releases regional labour force data in their publication, [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed – Electronic delivery](#) (Cat. No. 6291.0.55.001), see:

- Table 16. Labour force status by Regions (SA4) and sex
- RM1. Labour force status by Regions (SA4), Sex and Age, October 1998 onwards

There are also two associated data cubes, relating specifically to unemployed people:

- RM2. Unemployed persons by Regions (SA4) and Duration of unemployment since last full-time job, October 1998 onwards
- RM3. Unemployed persons by Regions (SA4) and Duration of job search, April 2001 onwards

Available data (cont.)

The data released by regions and age group (RM1) can be used to assess the youth labour market (e.g. employment, unemployment, and participation rates). It can also be used to look at the older labour market (e.g. people aged 55 years and over). SA4s are the smallest statistical area for which labour force estimates by age group are available.

The Statistics and Mapping Section of the Parliamentary Library has published 2013 annual average unemployment rates for each SA4, as well as comparable state/territory (or part thereof) estimates in [FlagPost](#). The annual averages are calculated using 12 months of original data from January to December, with youth unemployment rates ranging from 5.7% to 20.2%.

Which Statistical Area (SA4) is relevant?

Local Government Areas (LGAs, 2011 boundaries) can be used to approximate Commonwealth Electoral Divisions (2012 boundaries) and to then assess the most appropriate Statistical Area(s) from which to select labour force data. While generally not an exact match, LGAs serve as a guide to selecting the best available regional data for an electorate.

Based on the largest proportion(s) of people who lived in LGAs that fell either partly or wholly within an electorate a suggestion for up to two SA4s can be provided. The Statistics and Mapping Section of the Parliamentary Library is currently providing this assessment for individual clients, but in the coming months this process will be automated and then become available on the [Statistics](#) webpage – Small area labour market

data. In the interim, the following table provides a list of electorates (2012 boundaries) and their suggested SA4s.

Suggested Statistical Areas (SA4) by Commonwealth Electoral Division

Electoral Division(a)	SA4: Suggestion 1	SA4: Suggestion 2
Adelaide	Adelaide - Central and Hills	Adelaide - North
Aston	Melbourne - Outer East	
Ballarat	Ballarat	
Banks	Sydney - Inner South West	
Barker	South Australia - South East	
Barton	Sydney - Inner South West	
Bass	Launceston and North East	
Batman	Melbourne - North East	Melbourne - Inner
Bendigo	Bendigo	
Bennelong	Sydney - Ryde	Sydney - Parramatta
Berowra	Sydney - Baulkham Hills and Hawkesbury	Sydney - North Sydney and Hornsby
Blair	Ipswich	
Blaxland	Sydney - Parramatta	Sydney - Inner South West
Bonner	Brisbane - East	Brisbane - South
Boothby	Adelaide - South	
Bowman	Brisbane - East	
Braddon	West and North West	
Bradfield	Sydney - North Sydney and Hornsby	
Brand	Perth - South West	Mandurah
Brisbane	Brisbane Inner City	
Bruce	Melbourne - South East	
Calare	Central West	
Calwell	Melbourne - North West	Melbourne West
Canberra	Australian Capital Territory	
Canning	Perth - South East	Mandurah
Capricornia	Fitzroy	Mackay
Casey	Melbourne - Outer East	
Charlton	Newcastle and Lake Macquarie	
Chifley	Sydney - Blacktown	
Chisholm	Melbourne - South East	Melbourne - Inner East
Cook	Sydney - Sutherland	
Corangamite	Geelong	Warrnambool and South West
Corio	Geelong	
Cowan	Perth - North West	Perth - North East
Cowper	Coffs Harbour - Grafton	Mid North Coast
Cunningham	Illawarra	
Curtin	Perth - Inner	Perth - North West
Dawson	Mackay	Townsville
Deakin	Melbourne - Outer East	Melbourne - Inner East
Denison	Hobart	
Dickson	Moreton Bay - South	
Dobell	Central Coast	
Dunkley	Mornington Peninsula	
Durack	Western Australia - Outback	Western Australia - Wheat Belt
Eden-Monaro	Capital Region	

Electoral Division(a)	SA4: Suggestion 1	SA4: Suggestion 2
Fadden	Gold Coast	
Fairfax	Sunshine Coast	
Farrer	Murray	Far West and Orana
Fisher	Sunshine Coast	
Flinders	Mornington Peninsula	Melbourne - South East
Flynn	Fitzroy	Wide Bay
Forde	Logan - Beaudesert	Gold Coast
Forrest	Bunbury	
Fowler	Sydney - South West	
Franklin	Hobart	South East
Fraser	Australian Capital Territory	
Fremantle	Perth - South West	
Gellibrand	Melbourne - West	
Gilmore	Southern Highlands and Shoalhaven	Illawarra
Gippsland	Latrobe - Gippsland	
Goldstein	Melbourne - Inner South	
Gorton	Melbourne - West	
Grayndler	Sydney - Inner West	Sydney - City and Inner South
Greenway	Sydney - Blacktown	Sydney - Parramatta
Grey	South Australia - Outback	Barossa - Yorke - Mid North
Griffith	Brisbane - South	Brisbane Inner City
Groom	Toowoomba	Darling Downs - Maranoa
Hasluck	Perth - South East	Perth - North East
Herbert	Townsville	
Higgins	Melbourne - Inner South	Melbourne - Inner
Hindmarsh	Adelaide - West	Adelaide - South
Hinkler	Wide Bay	
Holt	Melbourne - South East	
Hotham	Melbourne - South East	Melbourne - Inner South
Hughes	Sydney - Sutherland	Sydney - South West
Hume	Capital Region	Sydney - Outer South West
Hunter	Hunter Valley exc Newcastle	
Indi	Hume	
Isaacs	Melbourne - Inner South	Melbourne - South East
Jagajaga	Melbourne - North East	
Kennedy	Cairns	Queensland - Outback
Kingsford Smith	Sydney - Eastern Suburbs	Sydney - City and Inner South
Kingston	Adelaide - South	
Kooyong	Melbourne - Inner East	
La Trobe	Melbourne - South East	Melbourne - Outer East
Lalor	Melbourne - West	
Leichhardt	Cairns	Queensland - Outback
Lilley	Brisbane - North	
Lindsay	Sydney - Outer West and Blue Mountains	
Lingiari	Northern Territory - Outback	Darwin
Longman	Moreton Bay - North	
Lyne	Mid North Coast	
Lyons	Launceston and North East	Hobart
Macarthur	Sydney - Outer South West	

Electoral Division(a)	SA4: Suggestion 1	SA4: Suggestion 2
Mackellar	Sydney - Northern Beaches	
Macquarie	Sydney - Outer West and Blue Mountains	Sydney - Baulkham Hills and Hawkesbury
Makin	Adelaide - North	
Mallee	North West	
Maranoa	Darling Downs - Maranoa	Wide Bay
Maribyrnong	Melbourne - West	Melbourne - North West
Mayo	Adelaide - Central and Hills	South Australia - South East
McEwen	Melbourne - North West	Melbourne - North East
McMahon	Sydney - South West	Sydney - Parramatta
Mcmillan	Latrobe - Gippsland	Melbourne - South East
Mcperson	Gold Coast	
Melbourne	Melbourne - Inner	
Melbourne Ports	Melbourne - Inner	Melbourne - Inner South
Menzies	Melbourne - Inner East	Melbourne - Outer East
Mitchell	Sydney - Baulkham Hills and Hawkesbury	Sydney - Parramatta
Moncrieff	Gold Coast	
Moore	Perth - North West	
Moreton	Brisbane - South	Brisbane - West
Murray	Shepparton	
New England	New England and North West	
Newcastle	Newcastle and Lake Macquarie	
North Sydney	Sydney - North Sydney and Hornsby	
O'Connor	Western Australia - Wheat Belt	Western Australia - Outback
Oxley	Ipswich	Brisbane - West
Page	Richmond - Tweed	Coffs Harbour - Grafton
Parkes	Far West and Orana	New England and North West
Parramatta	Sydney - Parramatta	
Paterson	Hunter Valley exc Newcastle	Mid North Coast
Pearce	Perth - North East	Perth - North West
Perth	Perth - North East	Perth - Inner
Petrie	Moreton Bay - North	Brisbane - North
Port Adelaide	Adelaide - West	Adelaide - North
Rankin	Logan - Beaudesert	Brisbane - South
Reid	Sydney - Inner West	Sydney - Parramatta
Richmond	Richmond - Tweed	
Riverina	Riverina	
Robertson	Central Coast	
Ryan	Brisbane - West	Brisbane Inner City
Scullin	Melbourne - North East	
Shortland	Newcastle and Lake Macquarie	Central Coast
Solomon	Darwin	
Stirling	Perth - North West	
Sturt	Adelaide - Central and Hills	Adelaide - North
Swan	Perth - South East	
Sydney	Sydney - City and Inner South	Sydney - Inner West
Tangney	Perth - South West	Perth - South East
Throsby	Illawarra	Southern Highlands and Shoalhaven
Wakefield	Adelaide - North	Barossa - Yorke - Mid North
Wannon	Warrnambool and South West	Ballarat

Electoral Division(a)	SA4: Suggestion 1	SA4: Suggestion 2
Warringah	Sydney - Northern Beaches	Sydney - North Sydney and Hornsby
Watson	Sydney - Inner South West	Sydney - Inner West
Wentworth	Sydney - Eastern Suburbs	Sydney - City and Inner South
Werriwa	Sydney - Outer South West	Sydney - South West
Wide Bay	Wide Bay	Sunshine Coast
Wills	Melbourne - Inner	Melbourne - North West
Wright	Logan - Beaudesert	Gold Coast

(a) 2012 boundaries.

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