

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2011-2012**

Outcome 4 - Employment

DEEWR Question No. EW0952_12

Senator Bernardi provided in writing.

Question

Priority Employment Areas

Regarding Priority Employment Areas- how many jobs were created in these areas? What was the unemployment rate in each of these priority areas, in February 2008? What is the unemployment rate in each of these priority areas now? What is the youth unemployment rate in each of these areas (15-24 years old)?

Answer

The identification of the 20 priority employment areas was based on an in-depth analysis of around 70 labour market indicators, a combination of which highlights a region's likelihood of experiencing labour market disadvantage now or in the future. As part of the process used to identify priority employment areas, particular weight was given to a range of characteristics and/or criteria, including: a high unemployment rate; a pick-up in unemployment beneficiaries since the global financial crisis; the proportion of the population on income support; low levels of educational attainment; and a region's industry structure. These indicators are strong determinants of current and future labour market performance.

Population size and reasonable travelling distances for Local Employment Coordinators was also taken into account in identifying Priority Employment Areas. Local intelligence, where available, was also used to supplement the wide range of statistical data.

It is also important to note that there is a strong correlation between priority employment areas and the disadvantaged suburbs identified by the Australian Social Inclusion Board.

Table 1, below, provides information on the unemployment rate, the youth unemployment rate and the level of employment for each Priority Employment Area for February 2008 and February 2012 (latest available data).

Table 1: Selected labour market indicators ¹ by Priority Employment Area								
Priority Employment Area	Unemployment Rate (%) ²		Youth unemployment rate ³ (%)		Level of employment ('000) ²			
	Feb-08	Feb-12	Oct-08	Feb-12	Feb-08	Feb-12	Change ('000)	Change (%)
Canterbury-Bankstown and South Western Sydney	5.8	7.6	12.3	14.4	424.3	429.6	5.3	1.2
Illawarra	6.9	7.1	16.5	14.2	181.0	184.8	3.8	2.1
Richmond-Tweed and Clarence Valley	5.7	6.0	12.4	14.7	217.5	233.4	15.9	7.3
Mid-North Coast	5.7	6.0	12.4	14.7	217.5	233.4	15.9	7.3
South Eastern Melbourne	6.2	6.0	12.8	12.6	206.7	213.7	7.0	3.4
Ipswich-Logan	5.0	6.4	9.7	13.3	255.8	286.8	31.0	12.1
Northern and Western Adelaide	5.8	6.4	11.5	12.6	282.3	295.3	13.0	4.6
South West Perth	4.4	4.8	7.6	11.7	177.2	199.8	22.5	12.7
North West/Northern Tasmania	6.2	8.3	10.2	12.7	112.6	116.4	3.8	3.3
Port Augusta-Whyalla-Port Pirie	6.1	5.1	12.9	8.5	70.7	76.6	5.9	8.3
Southern Wide Bay-Burnett	5.9	7.1	14.5	14.8	123.2	127.4	4.2	3.4
Bundaberg-Hervey Bay	5.9	7.1	14.5	14.8	123.2	127.4	4.2	3.4
North Western Melbourne	6.0	7.4	11.1	13.1	473.3	499.2	25.9	5.5
Ballarat-Bendigo	6.8	4.9	12.6	13.2	225.3	245.5	20.2	9.0
Sydney West and Blue Mountains	6.1	5.7	12.1	10.5	445.3	480.5	35.2	7.9
Cairns	5.5	8.5	11.0	15.5	127.9	131.9	4.0	3.1
Caboorture-Sunshine Coast	3.2	6.0	7.0	12.2	320.5	333.7	13.2	4.1
Central Coast-Hunter	6.2	4.7	10.8	10.1	443.5	460.4	16.9	3.8
Townsville-Thuringowa	4.4	6.8	5.1	14.6	123.9	140.1	16.2	13.1
North Eastern Victoria	4.0	6.0	10.2	13.1	141.0	152.3	11.3	8.0
Australia	4.4	5.5*	8.9	11.3**	10768.2	11433.5***	665.3	6.2

¹ Labour market indicators (i.e. unemployment rate, participation rate, youth unemployment rate and the average duration of unemployment) are based on the ABS Labour Force Region (LFR), or combination of LFRs, that best approximate the Priority Employment Areas.

² Source: ABS Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery, February 2012 (Cat. no. 6291.0.55.001). Youth unemployment rates are 12-month averages of *original* data. Unemployment rate, participation rate and employment data are three-month averages of *original* data. Please note that as the calculations of change presented in the table are taken from more detailed data, results obtained by manually calculating change may not exactly match those in the table.

³ Youth unemployment rates are 12-month averages of *original* data. The earliest available data are for October 2008.

* Please note that the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for Australia stood at 5.2 per cent in February 2012. The national unemployment rate of 5.5 per cent provided above is in three-month average original terms to enable valid comparisons to be made with the data at the regional level.

** Please note that while the seasonally adjusted youth unemployment rate for Australia stood at 11.7 per cent in February 2012, the national figure provided above is in 12-month average original terms to enable valid comparisons to be made with the data at the regional level.

*** Please note that the seasonally adjusted level of employment for Australia stood at 11 444 000 in February 2012. The national level of employment of 11 433 500 provided above is in three-month average original terms to enable valid comparisons to be made with the data at the regional level.