



Australia's Financial Services Workforce

Totalling more than 400,000, Australia's financial services workforce is internationally experienced, multilingual and relatively cost competitive. Excellent education and training facilities, a strong regulatory environment, sophisticated business infrastructure and a large skilled immigration enhance these workforce characteristics. Taken together, they provide a powerful competitive advantage for multi-national companies and financial institutions looking to service burgeoning markets in the Asia-Pacific.

- Over the last decade, as the financial sector has expanded in scale, depth and sophistication the skilled level and value-add of this workforce has increased. In mid 2008, employment levels in Australia's financial services sector exceeded 400,000. Sydney and Melbourne together employed 242,000 people in financial services, significantly more than Hong Kong (209,000) and Singapore (157,000).
- For Sydney alone, the number of people employed in financial services is now more than 40 per cent of the size of those employed in global financial markets – New York or London. The difference between the centres diminishes further when financial services employment is measured relative to the total size of the workforce. Sydney's financial services workforce now accounts for 6.4 per cent of the city's total employment.
- Australian universities have many more students than other centres in the region. Sydney and Melbourne together had around two and half times more students enrolled than in Hong Kong and Singapore combined (see table below). Both Sydney and Melbourne had an average of 5.1 per cent of their population enrolled as tertiary students. This ratio is comparable to New York City (5.4 per cent), and Greater London (5.2), and well above Hong Kong (1.5) and Singapore (1.1). This pipeline of talent underpins Australia's capacity to continue to build a strong, diversified skill base for the financial services labour force.
- Further highlighting the strength of Australia's financial services is the high level of education held by those in the workforce. In May 2008, around 65 per cent of people employed in financial services had post-school qualifications¹, acquired through an education system which provides a range of qualifications from vocationally focused certificate-level accreditation through to postgraduate degree-level qualifications. In the World Competitiveness Year Book 2009, the Institute for Management Development rated the availability of Australia's workforce finance skills the fifth highest, ahead of Singapore (7th), Hong Kong (9th), the USA (11th) and UK (23rd).
- Australia's capacity to continue to build a strong, diversified skill base in the labour force is also evidenced by its high ranking in high literacy rates released by OECD². Among 30 countries, Australian students are ranked 5th for science, 6th for reading and 9th for mathematics.

SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC COMPARISONS⁽¹⁾ – MID YEAR 2008

('000)	Melbourne	Sydney	New York City	London	Hong Kong	Singapore
Population	3,892	4,400	8,275	7,557	6,978	4,839
Labour Force	2,081	2,343	3,937	4,036	3,668	2,940
Employed Persons – All Industries	1,991	2,245	3,735	3,760	3,538	2,858
Finance and Insurance	99	143	338	326	209	157
% of Total Employed Persons	5.0	6.4	9.1	8.7	5.9	5.5
Universities – Total Enrolled Students	177	244	446	394	102	52
% of Total Population	4.5	5.5	5.4	5.2	1.5	1.1

(1) For New York City and Greater London, the closest available figure for population, mid-2007 is used. The latest data available for students is from 2007. State-wide public and private institution student (studying in Australia) data used for Sydney (New South Wales) and Melbourne (Victoria). For Singapore, data represents 2007 full-time enrolment. For Hong Kong, data represents 2008-09 academic year.

Sources: Australia: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) cat. no. 3101.0, *Australian Demographic Statistics, Dec 2008*; ABS cat. no. 6291.0.55.001 *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed – Electronic Delivery, Table 02*; ABS cat. no. 6291.0.55.003 *E03_aug 94 – Employed Persons by Sex, Industry, Capital City-Balance of State, Hours Worked, August 1994 onwards*; Department of Education, Science and Training; Austrade. USA: US Census Bureau, Population Division, *Table 1: Annual Estimates of the Population for Incorporated Places over 100,000*; State of New York and U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics, *Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages*; U.S. Department of Labour, Bureau of Labour Statistics, *Status of the Civilian Labour Force*. UK: Office of National Statistics (ONS), *Social Trends 39: 2009 edition, Table 1.5 Population by region, 2007*; ONS *Time series Labour Market Statistics 18A Regional Labour Market*; London Development Agency, *Mayor of London, Rising to Challenge, May 2009, Exhibit 2 – Employees by Sector in London, 2007*; London Higher, *Profile of Students in London 2006/07*. Hong Kong: Census and Statistics Department, *Hong Kong in Figures 2009 Edition, February 2009*; Education Bureau. Singapore: Ministry of Manpower (MOM), *online Statistics, Labour Force, Updated 30 Jan 2009*; MOM Research and Statistical Department, *Labour Market, Second Quarter 2008 Table 1.1, Released Sep 2008*; Ministry of Education, *Education Factsheet 2008*.

1 ABS cat. no. 6227.0, *Education and Work, May 2008, Table 12 Employed Persons, Level of highest non-school qualification – Selected characteristics*.

2 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, PISA 2006: Science Competencies for Tomorrow's World.