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People, skills and education

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This section provides information on:

- average salaries/total remuneration by occupation
- availability of competent senior managers and skilled labour
- population and ethnic diversity
- language skills
- education levels and quality
- business R&D expenditure
- employment levels by industry and occupation

New South Wales is Australia's most populous state, with 7.0 million residents, 4.4 million of whom live in Sydney. The State has a large, skilled and multi-lingual workforce.

The ethnic and linguistic diversity of New South Wales is a valuable resource that provides distinct business advantages. The availability of non-English language speakers in the State, many with university qualifications, is a key advantage for global firms looking to establish regional operations hubs or customer service centres in the Asia Pacific.

Sydney is Australia's global city and its business and financial capital. It is one of the world's most multicultural cities, with more than 1.3 million or 30% of Australia's overseas-born residents living in Sydney. Sydney also has the highest proportion of non-English language speakers with a bachelor degree or higher of any Australian capital city.

In 2008, 56% of New South Wales' working age population held tertiary qualifications – the highest proportion of any State. This includes over 1.4 million people with vocational qualifications.

New South Wales is home to the largest concentration of managers, professionals, associate professionals and skilled clerical and service workers of all Australian states, who support the State's dominant services sector.

The State accounts for a significant share of national employment across all the major industry sectors. New South Wales' particular strengths are in the finance and insurance, business and property services, information media and communications, wholesale and retail trade, transport and storage, and tourism industries.

The Government is dedicated to supporting innovation in key sectors, investing in the development of high-level skills and making the intellectual property from institutions it supports available to businesses.

Australia is a leader in cutting edge research across a variety of fields. Australia was ranked first in the Asia-Pacific for the quality of its research institutions in 2008. New South Wales is home to advanced research centres involved in many areas of study including silicon photovoltaics and photonics, quantum computing, environmental biotechnology, and fraud detection in capital market systems.

New South Wales leads all other Australian States and Territories in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) research capabilities. The State is the headquarters of the National ICT Centre of Excellence (NICTA), as well as five national centres of excellence in ICT-related research fields, two Cooperative Research Centres, five R&D facilities under the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS), and the Australian Centre for Advanced Computing and Communications.

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