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## Central Coast labour force trends

by Daniel Montoya

### 1. Introduction

This e-brief, which is part of a series relating to all NSW regions, sets out key labour force trends for the residents of the Central Coast region. Data has been sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) monthly [Labour Force Survey](#). The ABS divides NSW into 28 regions; 15 in Greater Sydney and 13 in Regional NSW.

Covered are four key labour force indicators:

- Employment (full-time and part-time);
- The participation rate;
- The unemployment rate; and
- The youth unemployment rate.

A map of the Central Coast region is included at the end of the e-brief. The map also shows the NSW electorates located wholly or partly within the region. The e-brief finishes with a short section on labour force definitions and methodological notes.

### 2. Labour force trends

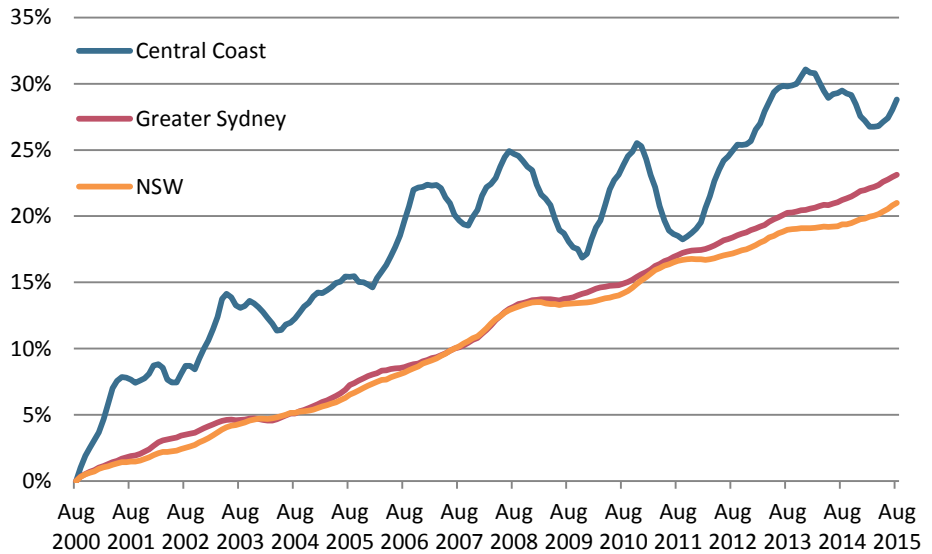
In August 2015, Central Coast figures for all four labour force indicators were worse than NSW and Greater Sydney figures: annual employment growth and the participation rate were lower; and the total and youth unemployment rates were higher. The youth unemployment rate was the second highest in Greater Sydney.

#### Headline figures (August 2015)

Indicators	Central Coast	Greater Sydney	NSW
Employment	148,100	2,466,900	3,664,200
2014-15 employment growth	-0.7%	1.9%	1.6%
Participation rate	57.5%	65.7%	63.3%
Unemployment rate	6.1%	5.2%	5.9%
Youth unemployment rate	15.2%	11.4%	12.8%

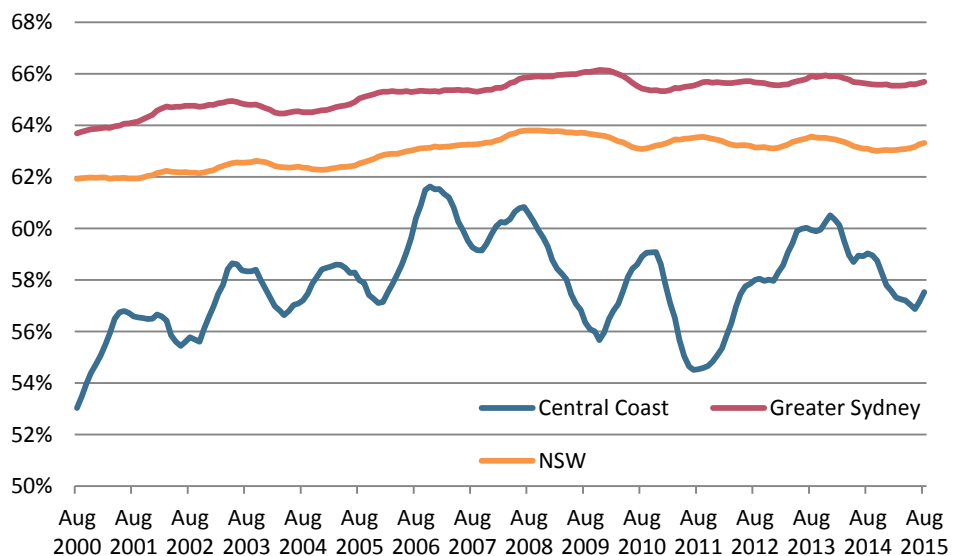
Between August 2000 and August 2015, employment in the Central Coast increased by 28.8%, from 111,400 to 148,100; Greater Sydney grew by 23.1% and NSW grew by 21.0%. Total employment reached a high of 151,600 in December 2013. Since then, full-time employment declined from 103,500 to 94,800 in February 2015 before rising to 99,600. Part-time employment rose from 48,100 to 51,200 in November 2014 before falling to 48,500. Year on year, total employment in the Central Coast is down by 0.7% while it is up by 1.9% in Greater Sydney and 1.6% in NSW.

**Cumulative employment growth (August 2000 to August 2015)**



Over the last 15 years, the Central Coast participation rate has fluctuated between a low of 53.0% in August 2000 and a high of 61.6% in November 2006. In August 2015, the participation rate stood at 57.5%, below both the NSW (63.3%) and Greater Sydney (65.7%) rates. The 2-year average participation rates were 59.6% (Central Coast), 65.7% (Greater Sydney) and 63.2% (NSW).

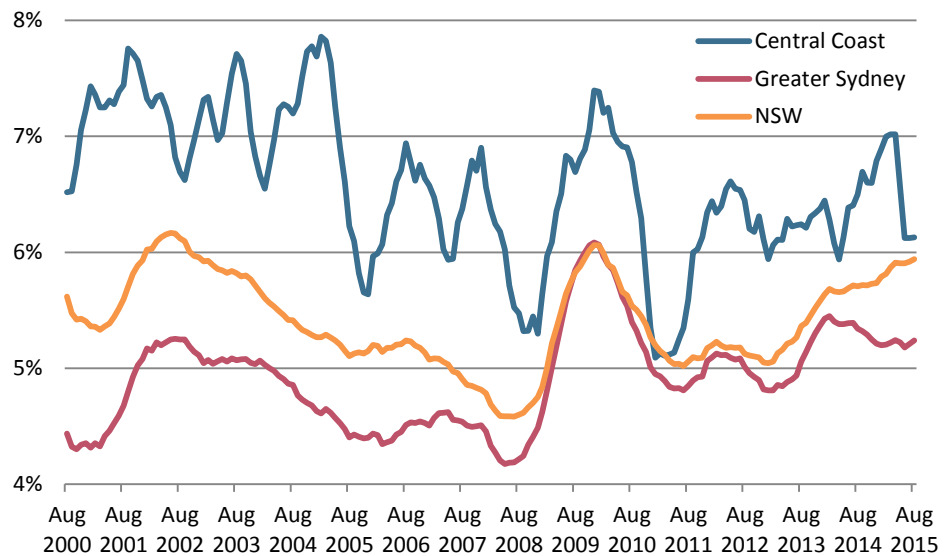
**Participation rate (August 2000 to August 2015)**



## Central Coast labour force trends

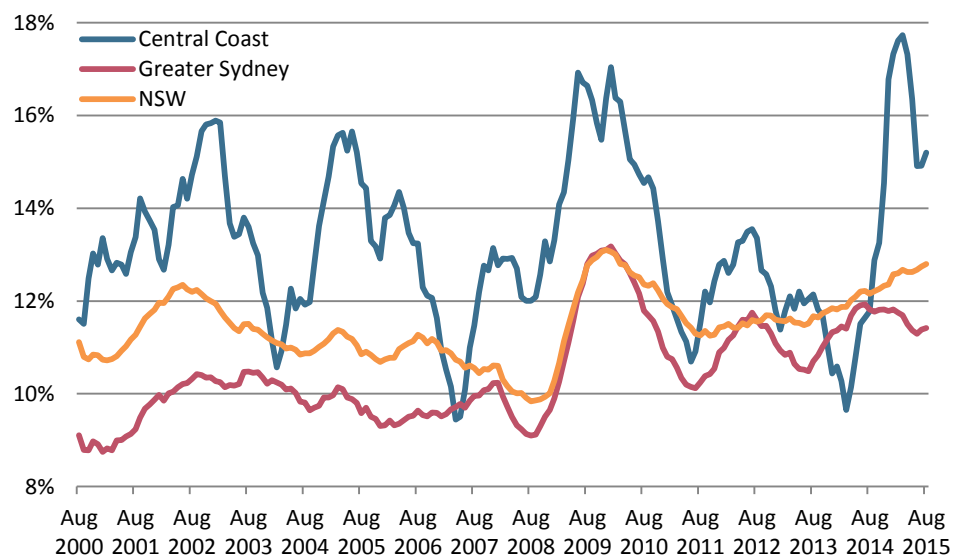
Since August 2000, the unemployment rate in the Central Coast has fluctuated between a low of 5.1% in January 2011 and a high of 7.9% in February 2005. In August 2015 the rate was 6.1%, higher than both the NSW (5.9%) and Greater Sydney (5.2%) rates. The 2-year average unemployment rate for the Central Coast was 6.5%; it was 5.3% for Greater Sydney and 5.7% for NSW.

### Unemployment rate (August 2000 to August 2015)



In March 2014, the youth unemployment rate reached 9.7%, just above the 15-year low of 9.4% reached in April 2007. However, since then the rate peaked at a 15-year high of 17.7% in March 2015 before falling to 15.2% in August 2015, the second highest rate in Greater Sydney. At this time, the Greater Sydney rate was 11.4% and the NSW rate was 12.8%. The Central Coast had a 2-year average youth unemployment rate of 13.3%, which is higher than Greater Sydney (11.5%) and NSW (12.2%).

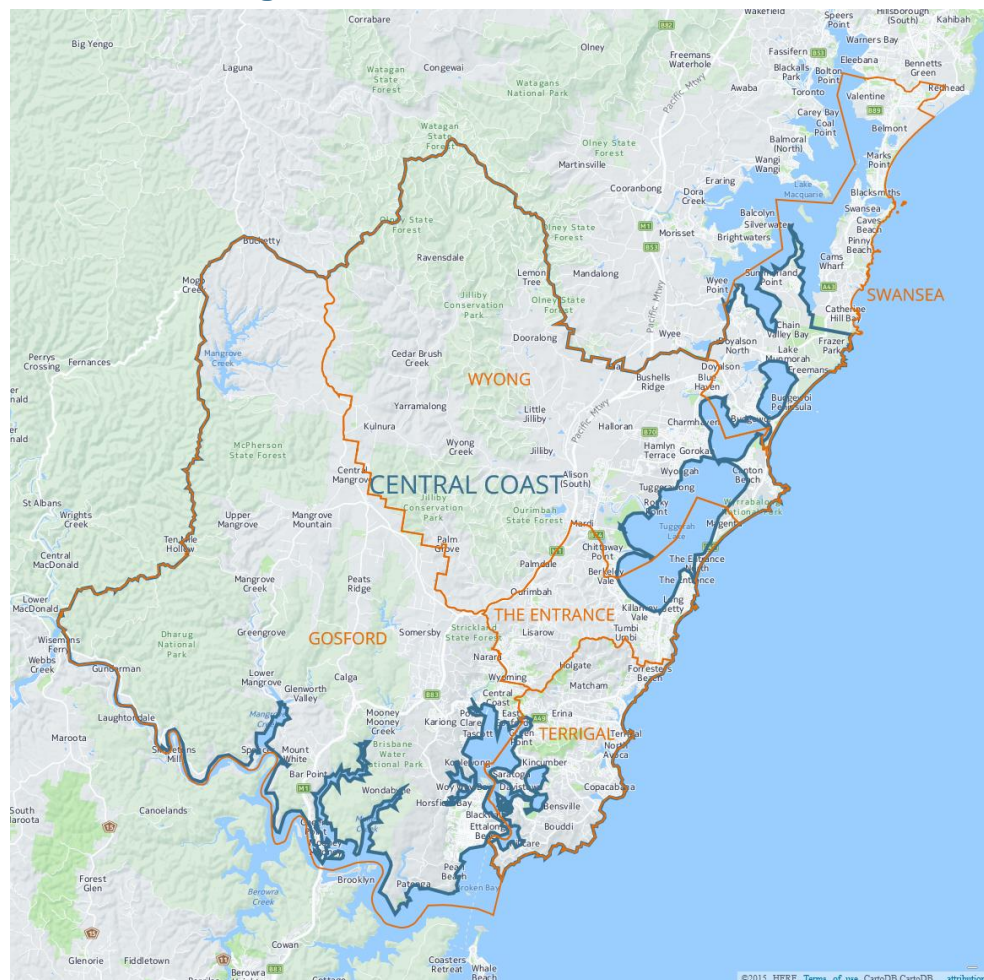
### Youth unemployment rate (August 2000 to August 2015)



### 3. The Central Coast region and NSW electorates

Five electorates are located either wholly or partly within the Central Coast region, based on their population at the 2011 Census<sup>1</sup>: Gosford (100%); Swansea (42%); Terrigal (100%); The Entrance (100%); and Wyong (100%).

#### Central Coast region and NSW electorates



### 4. Definitions and methodological notes

A number of methodological notes merit mention. These notes are set out in more detail at the beginning of the 2014 Research Service publication, [NSW regional labour force trends by labour force indicator](#).

- The data presented in this e-brief applies to an area's *resident labour force* (i.e. those persons who reside in an area) as opposed to its *workforce* i.e. those persons who work in an area.
- The ABS [Labour Force Survey](#) covers about 0.32% of the Australian population aged 15 years or over. Its primary purpose is to provide labour force estimates for the nation and, secondarily, for each State and Territory. Due to the small sample size involved, regional data should therefore be interpreted with caution.

## Central Coast labour force trends

- While labour force data is normally subject to seasonal adjustment, this only applies to National and State level data. The regional data in this publication is original, non-seasonally adjusted data; for comparative purposes, the State level data in this publication is also original, non-seasonally adjusted data.<sup>2</sup>
- Using the [recommended](#) ABS methodology for regional labour force indicators, all the data presented are 12-month averages.
- Youth unemployment is a complex issue. It is worth noting therefore that the youth unemployment rate only paints part of the picture, generally being held to represent an overestimate of youth unemployment.

### Definitions

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<b>Full-time employed</b>	Employed persons who usually worked 35 hours or more a week (in all jobs) and those who, although usually working fewer than 35 hours a week, worked 35 hours or more during the Labour Force Survey week.
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<b>Labour force</b>	The total number of employed and unemployed persons.
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<b>Participation rate</b>	The labour force expressed as a percentage of the civilian population in the same age group.
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<b>Part-time employed</b>	Employed persons who usually worked fewer than 35 hours a week (in all jobs) and either did so during the Labour Force Survey week or were not at work during the reference week.
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<b>Unemployed</b>	Persons aged 15 years and over who were not employed during the week of the Labour Force Survey, and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• had actively looked for full time or part time work at any time in the four weeks up to the end of the reference week and were available for work in the reference week; or</li><li>• were waiting to start a new job within four weeks from the end of the reference week and could have started in the reference week if the job had been available then.</li></ul>
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<b>Unemployment rate</b>	The number of unemployed persons expressed as a percentage of the labour force.
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<b>Youth population</b>	Persons aged 15 to 24
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Related Research Service publications:

- [Western Sydney: an economic profile](#) (2015)
- [NSW Economic Update Winter 2015](#) (2015)
- [Labour force trends in Greater Sydney](#) (2014)
- [NSW regional labour force trends by labour force indicator](#) (2014)
- [The Central Coast Region: an economic profile](#) (2012)

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<sup>1</sup> The electoral boundaries as included in this map are the official boundaries from the [Electoral Commission NSW](#). The only way to calculate what proportion of an electorate's population is contained within an ABS region is to use an approximation of the electoral boundary based on the ABS statistical geography. This is the only methodology by which Census data can be generated for a NSW electorate.

<sup>2</sup> Seasonally adjusted employment figures, participation rates and unemployment rates for NSW can be found in the Research Service publication, [NSW Economic Update Winter 2015](#)

Information about Research Publications can be found on the Internet at the:  
[NSW Parliament's Website](#)

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