



## ACT NEWS

### ACT jobless rate a record low 3 per cent

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The ACT's unemployment rate has hit a record low of just 3 percent - the best result since 1978, when the Australian Bureau of Statistics started collecting labour force figures.

Yet an Australian National University economist warned that continuing "good news" regarding unemployment and economic conditions in the territory had masked pockets of low-skilled unemployed Canberrans who were raising children in a jobless environment - a problem just as critical as the current skills shortage, but one not being addressed by policy-makers.

Dr Andrew Leigh, an economist within the Research School of Social Sciences, has issued a call to the ACT Government to consider offering wage subsidies to low-skilled workers to counter a prevailing trend of under-employment in this group, as well as the potential impact of the Commonwealth's new welfare changes.

"Policy-makers need to recognise that workers who stop searching for a job, or move on to the Disability Support Pension, don't show up in the unemployment statistics," Dr Leigh said.

According to the ABS's latest report, Australia's unemployment rate stayed steady at 5 percent in August, despite a surge in jobs.

Another 32,600 jobs were added to the workplace, with total employment reaching 10.067million people, but despite the increase in total employment, the number of people out of work actually increased by 5100 to 530,000.



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