



Australian Government



Australian
**Small Business and
Family Enterprise**
Ombudsman

Location of Australia's small businesses – regional and metropolitan areas

February 2023

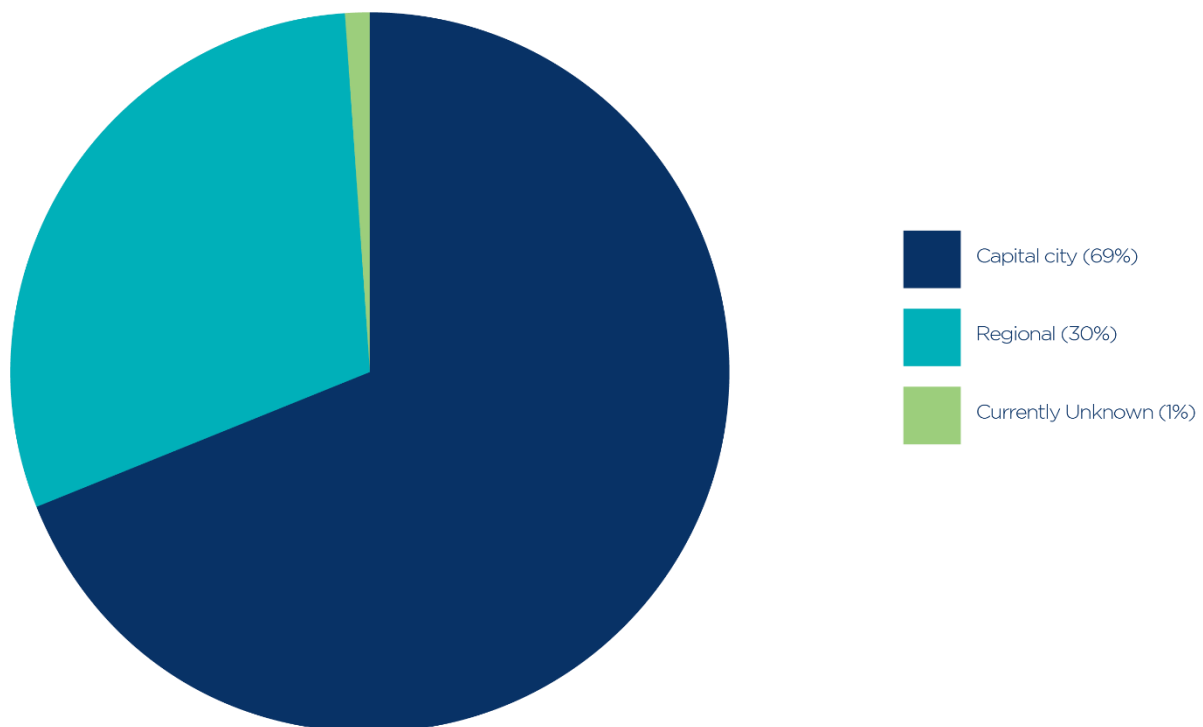
Location of Australia’s small businesses – regional and metropolitan areas

This data presents small businesses in Australia according to their regional or metropolitan area classification, focusing on numbers, location and size.

Key findings

- Of the 2.5 million small businesses in Australia, 69% (1.7 million) were in a greater capital city area and 30% in a regional area. This is consistent with the distribution of the Australian population, with 67% of all Australians living in the greater capital city areas.
- Queensland and Tasmania had the highest proportion of small businesses located in regional areas.
- The number of small businesses increased in all states and territories in the year to 30 June 2022. This increase was spread across capital city and regional areas.
- Nationally, the number of small businesses increased by 7% in 2021-22. A rise in business entries from 16% to 20% was the main driver. Small business entry rates increased in all states and territories from 2021-22.

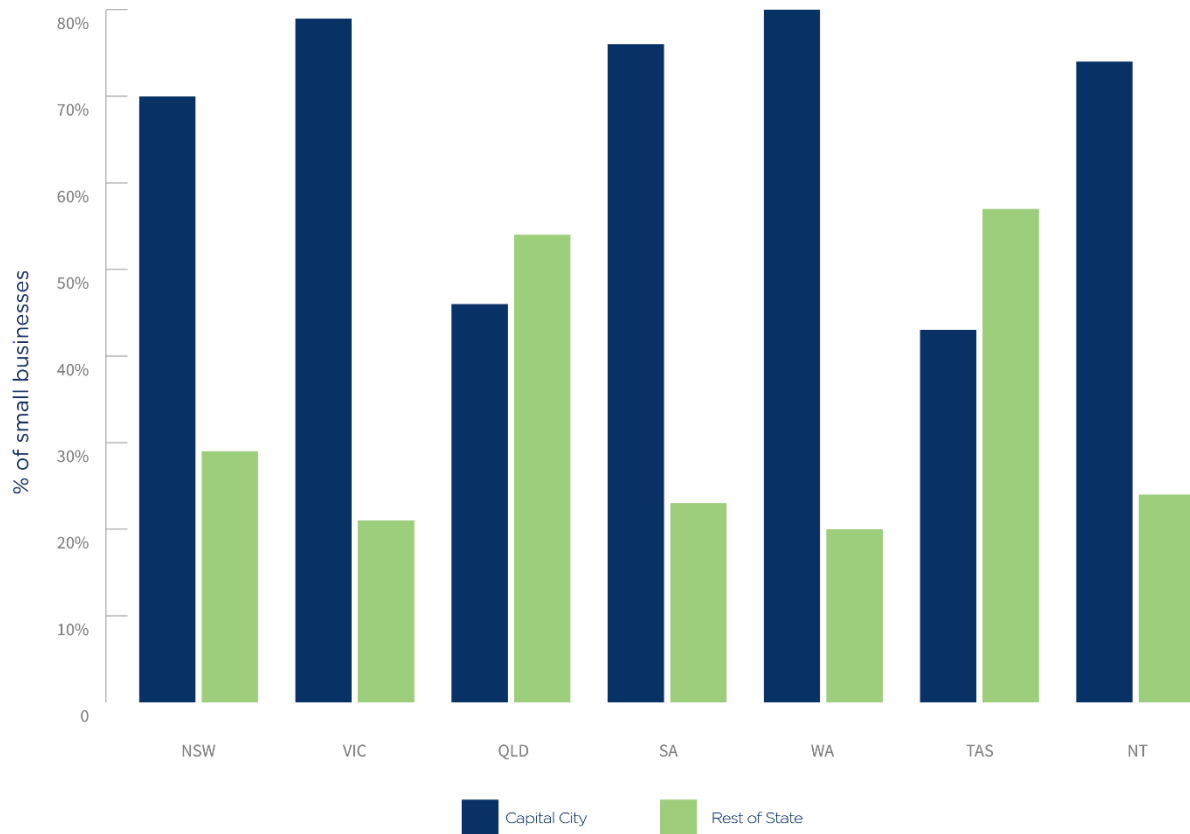
Chart 1: Small business by location, 30 June 2022



“Currently Unknown” is comprised of a small number of businesses where information is only available at the state/territory level.

Source: Based on *Australian Bureau of Statistics*, customised data, 2022.

Chart 2: Proportion of small businesses in capital cities and regional areas, 30 June 2022.



Note: This graph does not include the ACT because the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) only has one Greater Capital City Area for the entire Territory. Further information on the ASGS is available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Information on regions in the ACT is available on the [Location of Australia’s small businesses by states and territory page](#).

Source: Based on *Australian Bureau of Statistics*, customised data, 2022.

As shown in the chart above, Queensland and Tasmania were the only states with a higher proportion of small businesses in regional areas than capital cities on 30 June 2022.

Table 1: Number of small businesses in greater capital city areas, 30 June 2022

Number of employees	Sydney	Melbourne	Brisbane	Adelaide	Perth	Hobart	Darwin	Australian Capital Territory ¹
Non-employing	346,629	368,103	131,959	78,309	121,231	10,717	6,824	18,561
1-4 employees ²	196,354	149,776	64,370	28,072	48,403	4,943	3,006	10,865
5-19 employees	48,291	42,588	20,808	10,782	17,812	2,080	1,352	3,440
Small businesses (0-19 employees) ³	591,274	560,467	217,137	117,163	187,446	17,740	11,182	32,866
20-99 employees	11,649	10,649	5,202	2,704	4,719	478	369	910
100-199 employees	1,141	972	456	207	389	31	18	79
200+ employees	596	548	227	127	229	18	9	52
Total	604,660	572,636	223,022	120,201	192,783	18,267	11,578	33,918

¹There is only one Greater Capital City Area for the entire Territory. Further information on the ASGS is available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Information on regions in the ACT is available on the [Australia's small businesses by region - states and territories page](#).

²This includes a small number of businesses which have income tax withholding roles for purposes other than withholding amounts from wages and salaries (and as such have zero employment).

³Calculated by ASBFEO based on the ABS definition of small business of 0-19 employees.

Source: Based on *Australian Bureau of Statistics*, customised data, 2022.

As shown in the table above, there were over 1.7 million small businesses in greater capital city areas on 30 June 2022.

Table 2: Number of small businesses in regional areas, 30 June 2022

	Regional NSW	Regional Vic	Regional Qld	Regional SA	Regional WA	Regional Tas	Regional NT	Other Territories ¹
Non-Employing	143,693	91,121	156,020	22,457	28,445	14,197	2,088	1,841
1-4 employees ²	75,384	41,753	72,719	9,583	12,985	6,397	956	199
5-19 employees	26,036	14,558	25,161	4,024	5,365	2,879	598	18
<i>Small businesses (0-19 employees)³</i>	<i>245,113</i>	<i>147,432</i>	<i>253,900</i>	<i>36,064</i>	<i>46,795</i>	<i>23,473</i>	<i>3,642</i>	<i>2,058</i>
20-99 employees	5,127	2,853	5,827	682	1,252	623	160	7
100-199 employees	288	196	403	37	55	42	8	3
200+ employees	130	100	192	10	33	26	4	0
Total	250,658	150,581	260,322	36,793	48,135	24,164	3,814	2,041

¹ Businesses in Christmas Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Jervis Bay, Norfolk Island.

² This includes a small number of businesses which have income tax withholding roles for purposes other than withholding amounts from wages and salaries (and as such have zero employment).

³ Calculated by ASBFEO based on the ABS definition of small business of 0-19 employees.

Source: Based on *Australian Bureau of Statistics*, customised data.

Data notes:

This data excludes businesses not registered for GST. The Australian Bureau of Statistics adjust cells to avoid the release of confidential information, so cells may not add up to totals. Exercise care when analysing small numbers. For further information see *Australian Bureau of Statistics, Counts of Australian Businesses, Including Entries and Exits methodology*.

Regional areas are locations outside the Greater Capital City Area. Further information on the ASGS is available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), [Regional Population](#), accessed 10 January 2023.