



# **The Hon. Natalie Suleyman MP**

## Minister for Employment

**Public Accounts and Estimates Committee  
Inquiry into the 2026/27 Budget Estimates**

25 May 2026



Jobs, Skills,  
Industry  
and Regions

# State of the Portfolio

## Victoria's labour market remains healthy

- A high share of working-age Victorians are in employment (63.7% in April 2026), enabled by strong rates of participation.
- Unemployment rate was 4.8% in April 2026, below its long-term average.
- Victoria's regional unemployment rate was 3.8% in April, the second lowest of the states.





## Our Achievements

- ➔ Established the **Western Pathways Program** which is delivering employment services in Melton, Sunshine and St Albans, for multicultural communities and young people.
- ➔ Thrive Hubs continue to deliver tailored employment supports to disadvantaged job seekers in **Frankston** and **Broadmeadows**, backed by a joint \$2 million Commonwealth and Victorian Government investment.
- ➔ Supporting more local job seekers through two new Thrive Hubs in **Seymour** and **Fitzroy**.
- ➔ **Parkville College Employment program** has supported nearly 100 young people from justice settings into employment since 2022.
- ➔ The **Youth Employment Scheme (YES)** is on track to place more than 100 young trainees into the Victorian Public service across this financial year.

# Our Achievements

- ➔ Provided employment and training through the **Aboriginal Employment Pathways Program**, including mentoring and tailored support delivered by Dardi Munwurro and Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place.
- ➔ Launched the **Self-Determined Aboriginal Employment Initiative** enabling Traditional Owner Corporations to co-design and deliver local employment projects that deliver on the unique objectives and aspirations of their community.
- ➔ Supported the Kinaway Chamber of Commerce to deliver:
  - the **2025 World Indigenous Business Forum** in Naarm / Melbourne, drawing more than 500 delegates from 14 countries.
  - the **2025 Victorian Aboriginal Business Awards**, celebrating the achievements of First Peoples businesses across Victoria.
- ➔ Delivered the **Aboriginal Business Capital Investment Program** to increase capital access and business growth.

