



LABOUR FORCE EXPERIENCE, AUSTRALIA, FEBRUARY 1982 (PRELIMINARY)

PHONE INQUIRIES *for more information about these statistics*—contact Ms Susan Purcell on Canberra (062) 52 6503 or any of our State offices.
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MAIN FEATURES

Note: Survey estimates are subject to sampling variability, as explained in paragraph 15 below.

Of the 11,028,000 civilians aged 15 years and over at February 1982, 68.4 per cent (7,538,000 persons) were in the labour force at some time during the period February 1981 to February 1982. This participation in the labour force is 82.8 per cent for males and 54.2 per cent for females.

4,767,300 persons (43.2 per cent of the population) were employed for the whole period.

Of those in the labour force at some time during the period 1,288,800 persons (17.1 per cent) spent some time looking for work. The average time varied from 15.4 weeks for 15 to 19 year olds to 28.5 weeks for persons aged 55 years and over.

5,633,900 persons (51.1 per cent of the population) spent some time neither employed nor looking for work, including 3,490,000 persons (31.6 per cent) who were out of the labour force for the whole of the period.

2,482,100 (70.4 per cent) of married females were out of the labour force at some time in the period.

1,060,400 (29.9 per cent) of married males were out of the labour force at some time in the period and of these 586,800 (16.5 per cent) were out of the labour force for the whole period.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

In association with the February 1982 labour force survey conducted throughout Australia, persons aged fifteen years and over were asked about their labour force experience during the period February 1981 to February 1982. Information sought includes the length of time they were employed, looking for work or not in the labour force, the number of spells during which they were looking for work and other aspects of labour force experience.

2. During the two weeks beginning Monday 8 February, 1982, specially trained interviewers asked the questions of a sub-sample of 50,000 of the 69,000 respondents in the February labour force survey.

3. Results of similar surveys, the first conducted in February 1969, have been published in *Labour Force Experience, Australia* (6206.0).

4. This publication contains only a summary of the results of the survey. Estimates shown are preliminary and may be revised. Further information which will be published as soon as possible is available on request.

Scope

5. The survey includes all civilians aged fifteen years and over except:

- (a) certain diplomatic personnel of overseas governments, customarily excluded from census and estimated populations;
- (b) overseas visitors holidaying in Australia;
- (c) dependants of non-Australian defence forces personnel stationed in Australia;
- (d) students boarding at school, some patients in hospitals and sanatoria and inmates of jails, reformatories etc.

6. The estimates relate to persons covered by the survey in February 1982. Because of emigration, deaths and other exits not all persons with labour force experience during the period were covered. Labour force experience may relate to experience outside Australia.

Definitions

7. For this survey, each person was assigned to a labour force category for each week during the period February 1981 to February 1982 on the basis of his *reported activity* (i.e. whether working, looking for work, etc.) during that week.

8. The *labour force* comprises all persons who, during any week, are employed or looking for work as defined in paragraphs 9 and 10.

9. *Employed persons.* Persons are classified as employed for those weeks they reported having either worked or being on paid leave. Periods of one week or more on strike or time off without pay are excluded.

10. Persons are classified as *looking for work* for those weeks they reported as being out of work and looking for a job. Taking active steps to find work and availability to start work are conditions which usually apply when defining such persons in labour force surveys. These conditions are not practicable, however, for a survey with a reference period of twelve months.

11. Persons not in the labour force are those who, during any week, are not employed or looking for work as defined in paragraphs 9 and 10.

12. For the purposes of the survey, a *job* is defined as:

- (a) employment as a wage or salary earner (or unpaid family helper) by a particular employer, in a particular locality; or
- (b) self-employment (with or without employees) in a particular locality.

13. *Locality.* In capital cities and major towns each suburb is considered to be a different locality.

Discontinuity in the series

14. The estimates in this publication are not strictly comparable with those obtained from previous labour force experience surveys. The reference period for the February 1981 and 1982 surveys was from the beginning of the previous February to the end of the survey week. For this reason the reference period could extend to 54 weeks. In the three surveys February 1976, 1979 and 1980 the reference period was the previous calendar year.

Reliability of the estimates

15. Estimates in this publication are subject to two sources of error:

- (a) *sampling error:* since the estimates are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of dwellings they are subject to sampling variability; that is they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey. One measure of the likely difference is given by the *standard error*. More information about this topic will be found in *The Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0).

A table of estimated standard errors for this survey follows these notes. Estimates with a standard error of more than about 25 per cent have not been shown in this publication, as the degree of sampling variability would seriously detract from their value for most reasonable uses. Although figures for these small components can, in some cases, be derived by subtraction they should not be regarded as reliable.

- (b) *Non-sampling error:* inaccuracies may occur because of imperfections in reporting by interviewers and respondents and errors made in the coding and processing of data. These inaccuracies may occur in any enumeration, whether it be a full count or only a sample. Every effort is made to reduce the non-sampling error to a minimum by careful design of questionnaires, intensive training and supervision of interviewers and efficient operating procedures.

Related publications

16. Other ABS publications which may be of interest include:

The Labour Force, Australia (6203.0)—issued monthly

Labour Force Experience, Australia, February 1981 (6206.0)

Persons Not in the Labour Force, Australia, March 1982 (6220.0)

Persons Looking for Work, Australia, June 1981 (6222.0)

Labour Mobility, Australia, February 1981 (6209.0)

17. Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications, Australia* (1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Publications Advice* (1105.0) which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Publications Advice are available from any ABS office.

Symbols and other usages

- * subject to sampling variability too high for most practical uses. See paragraph 15 above.

18. Because figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

R.J. CAMERON
Australian Statistician

STANDARD ERRORS OF ESTIMATES

| Size of estimate (Persons) | Approximate standard error of estimates | | Size of estimate (Persons) | Approximate standard error of estimates | |
|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| | Persons | Per cent of estimate | | Persons | Per cent of estimate |
| 4,500 | 1,100 | 24.9 | 200,000 | 5,900 | 2.9 |
| 6,000 | 1,300 | 21.5 | 500,000 | 8,250 | 1.6 |
| 10,000 | 1,650 | 16.5 | 1,000,000 | 10,400 | 1.0 |
| 20,000 | 2,250 | 11.3 | 2,000,000 | 13,000 | 0.7 |
| 50,000 | 3,400 | 6.8 | 5,000,000 | 17,050 | 0.4 |
| 100,000 | 4,500 | 4.5 | | | |

TABLE 1. CIVILIAN POPULATION(a), FEBRUARY 1982: LABOUR FORCE EXPERIENCE DURING THE PERIOD
FEBRUARY 1981 TO FEBRUARY 1982
(' 000)

| Employment status | Married males | All males | Married females | All females | Persons |
|---|------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Civilian population | 3,551.1 | 5,462.8 | 3,525.8 | 5,565.2 | 11,028.0 |
| <i>In the labour force at some time during the period</i> | <i>2,964.3</i> | <i>4,523.8</i> | <i>1,827.7</i> | <i>3,014.2</i> | <i>7,538.0</i> |
| For 1 and under 4 weeks | 6.7 | 41.7 | 64.0 | 101.2 | 142.9 |
| 4 and under 13 weeks | 21.1 | 133.2 | 111.9 | 218.9 | 352.1 |
| 13 and under 26 weeks | 31.3 | 91.0 | 118.0 | 178.0 | 269.0 |
| 26 and under 39 weeks | 49.8 | 106.0 | 139.6 | 202.4 | 308.4 |
| 39 and under 49 weeks | 119.7 | 206.6 | 182.2 | 259.2 | 465.7 |
| 49 weeks but not whole period | 245.0 | 359.8 | 168.3 | 246.1 | 605.9 |
| The whole period | 2,490.7 | 3,585.6 | 1,043.7 | 1,808.5 | 5,394.1 |
| Employed at some time during the period | 2,926.1 | 4,398.5 | 1,728.3 | 2,813.0 | 7,211.4 |
| Of weeks employed— | | | | | |
| All were full time | 2,778.9 | 4,055.6 | 916.7 | 1,695.7 | 5,751.4 |
| More full time than part time | 73.9 | 130.3 | 62.2 | 119.1 | 249.4 |
| All were part time | 62.5 | 174.5 | 696.5 | 910.6 | 1,085.2 |
| More part time than full time | 10.8 | 38.0 | 52.8 | 87.4 | 125.5 |
| Number of weeks employed— | | | | | |
| 1 and under 4 weeks | 9.7 | 57.5 | 46.7 | 84.8 | 142.3 |
| 4 and under 13 weeks | 28.1 | 133.7 | 107.1 | 194.9 | 328.6 |
| 13 and under 26 weeks | 51.3 | 128.7 | 125.4 | 202.8 | 331.5 |
| 26 and under 39 weeks | 78.7 | 177.3 | 148.9 | 240.2 | 417.5 |
| 39 and under 49 weeks | 164.7 | 298.4 | 180.9 | 289.3 | 587.8 |
| 49 weeks but not whole period | 263.3 | 385.4 | 169.2 | 251.2 | 636.5 |
| The whole period | 2,330.2 | 3,217.5 | 950.1 | 1,549.8 | 4,767.3 |
| Looked for work at some time during the period | 240.7 | 653.5 | 274.1 | 635.2 | 1,288.8 |
| One spell of looking for work | 190.3 | 513.6 | 234.9 | 532.4 | 1,046.0 |
| Two spells | 31.4 | 83.3 | 25.6 | 68.0 | 151.3 |
| Three spells | 5.3 | 22.9 | 5.4 | 14.7 | 37.6 |
| Four or more spells | 13.7 | 33.8 | 8.1 | 20.1 | 53.9 |
| <i>Out of the labour force for the whole period</i> | <i>586.8</i> | <i>939.0</i> | <i>1,698.0</i> | <i>2,551.0</i> | <i>3,490.0</i> |

(a) Non-institutional population aged 15 years and over.

**TABLE 2. PERSONS IN THE LABOUR FORCE AT SOME TIME DURING THE PERIOD FEBRUARY 1981 TO FEBRUARY 1982:
PROPORTION OF POPULATION(a)
(per cent)**

| | <i>Age group (years)</i> | | | | | | | | <i>Total</i> |
|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|
| | <i>15-19</i> | <i>20-24</i> | <i>25-34</i> | <i>35-44</i> | <i>45-54</i> | <i>55-59</i> | <i>60-64</i> | <i>65 and over</i> | |
| Married males | * | 99.5 | 99.2 | 98.1 | 94.8 | 89.0 | 56.8 | 14.6 | 83.5 |
| All males | 76.9 | 98.0 | 98.2 | 97.5 | 93.2 | 87.9 | 56.7 | 13.6 | 82.8 |
| Married females | 68.8 | 70.2 | 61.1 | 66.9 | 57.3 | 32.0 | 12.4 | 4.0 | 51.8 |
| All females | 73.7 | 81.8 | 65.5 | 67.9 | 58.1 | 34.8 | 14.8 | 3.6 | 54.2 |
| Persons | 75.3 | 89.9 | 81.7 | 83.0 | 76.1 | 61.4 | 35.2 | 7.9 | 68.4 |

(a) Persons in each group as a proportion of the total non-institutional civilian population in the same group at the time of the survey.

**TABLE 3. PERSONS EMPLOYED AT SOME TIME DURING THE PERIOD FEBRUARY 1981 TO FEBRUARY 1982:
NUMBER OF JOBS(a) HELD DURING THE PERIOD
(' 000)**

| | <i>Number of jobs held during the period</i> | | | | | | <i>Total</i> |
|---------------------------|--|--------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|----------------|
| | <i>1</i> | <i>2</i> | <i>3</i> | <i>4</i> | <i>5</i> | <i>6 or more</i> | |
| Married males | 2,480.1 | 342.5 | 60.4 | 21.3 | 9.1 | 12.7 | 2,926.1 |
| All males | 3,608.8 | 574.3 | 115.2 | 51.3 | 21.3 | 27.6 | 4,398.5 |
| Married females | 1,515.0 | 171.2 | 28.6 | 6.6 | * | * | 1,728.3 |
| All females | 2,370.5 | 334.1 | 63.4 | 23.6 | 9.0 | 12.3 | 2,813.0 |
| Persons | 5,979.3 | 908.5 | 178.7 | 74.8 | 30.3 | 39.9 | 7,211.4 |
| <i>Age group (years)—</i> | | | | | | | |
| 15-19 | 653.9 | 128.0 | 31.1 | 16.0 | * | 5.6 | 838.4 |
| 20-24 | 782.8 | 217.0 | 49.2 | 26.5 | 12.9 | 13.6 | 1,102.1 |
| 25-34 | 1,489.8 | 279.3 | 60.0 | 21.2 | 8.6 | 12.3 | 1,871.2 |
| 35-44 | 1,304.5 | 176.4 | 23.5 | 6.8 | * | 5.6 | 1,521.1 |
| 45-54 | 1,026.9 | 76.3 | 10.2 | * | * | * | 1,119.2 |
| 55-59 | 418.7 | 20.8 | * | * | * | * | 443.6 |
| 60-64 | 202.5 | 6.4 | * | * | * | * | 210.4 |
| 65 and over | 100.4 | 5.1 | * | * | * | * | 105.5 |

(a) Excludes second jobs of multiple jobholders.

**TABLE 4. PERSONS WHO LOOKED FOR WORK AT SOME TIME DURING THE PERIOD
FEBRUARY 1981 TO FEBRUARY 1982 AS A PROPORTION OF PERSONS IN THE LABOUR FORCE
AT SOME TIME DURING THE PERIOD
(Per cent)**

| <i>Age group (years)</i> | <i>Married</i> | | | <i>Not married</i> | | | <i>Total</i> | | |
|--------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| | <i>Males</i> | <i>Females</i> | <i>Persons</i> | <i>Males</i> | <i>Females</i> | <i>Persons</i> | <i>Males</i> | <i>Females</i> | <i>Persons</i> |
| 15-19 | * | 46.2 | 46.6 | 37.1 | 44.1 | 40.4 | 37.1 | 44.2 | 40.5 |
| 20-24 | 19.0 | 23.7 | 21.7 | 26.6 | 30.4 | 28.1 | 24.9 | 27.8 | 26.2 |
| 25-34 | 9.8 | 18.8 | 13.5 | 22.0 | 23.2 | 22.4 | 13.1 | 19.9 | 15.8 |
| 35-44 | 7.5 | 13.0 | 9.6 | 17.2 | 13.4 | 15.4 | 8.6 | 13.1 | 10.4 |
| 45-54 | 5.7 | 9.0 | 6.9 | 10.6 | 12.5 | 11.5 | 6.3 | 9.6 | 7.5 |
| 55 and over | 5.9 | 5.3 | 5.8 | 6.7 | 6.9 | 6.8 | 6.0 | 5.8 | 6.0 |
| Total | 8.1 | 15.0 | 10.7 | 26.5 | 30.4 | 28.2 | 14.4 | 21.1 | 17.1 |

TABLE 5. PERSONS WHO LOOKED FOR WORK AT SOME TIME DURING THE PERIOD FEBRUARY 1981 TO FEBRUARY 1982 : NUMBER OF SPELLS AND WEEKS SPENT LOOKING FOR WORK DURING THE PERIOD

| | Age group (years) | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|---------|
| | 15-19 | 20-24 | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55 and over | Total |
| —(' 000)— | | | | | | | |
| One spell— | | | | | | | |
| Males | 152.1 | 114.6 | 116.0 | 65.3 | 35.7 | 29.8 | 513.6 |
| Females | 165.9 | 117.5 | 134.8 | 69.7 | 34.9 | 9.7 | 532.4 |
| Persons | 317.9 | 232.1 | 250.8 | 135.0 | 70.6 | 39.6 | 1,046.0 |
| —weeks— | | | | | | | |
| Average duration | 13.9 | 15.5 | 16.5 | 17.7 | 21.9 | 29.3 | 16.5 |
| Median duration | 8.6 | 9.2 | 8.3 | 9.0 | 14.7 | 28.1 | 9.2 |
| —(' 000)— | | | | | | | |
| Two spells— | | | | | | | |
| Males | 19.8 | 24.6 | 22.7 | 7.9 | 5.3 | * | 83.3 |
| Females | 22.6 | 18.8 | 13.6 | 8.6 | * | * | 68.0 |
| Persons | 42.4 | 43.4 | 36.2 | 16.5 | 8.5 | * | 151.3 |
| —weeks— | | | | | | | |
| Average duration | 23.7 | 16.4 | 18.9 | 18.0 | 23.5 | * | 19.7 |
| Median duration | 22.2 | 12.3 | 15.9 | 15.0 | 20.2 | * | 16.7 |
| —(' 000)— | | | | | | | |
| Three or more spells— | | | | | | | |
| Males | 12.3 | 17.5 | 13.5 | 7.3 | * | * | 56.7 |
| Females | 11.4 | 8.6 | 7.3 | * | * | * | 34.8 |
| Persons | 23.8 | 26.0 | 20.8 | 11.0 | 7.1 | * | 91.5 |
| —weeks— | | | | | | | |
| Average duration | 19.6 | 18.8 | 19.5 | 18.4 | 20.1 | * | 19.5 |
| Median duration | 17.7 | 16.3 | 16.8 | 17.7 | 20.1 | * | 17.7 |
| —(' 000)— | | | | | | | |
| Total— | | | | | | | |
| Males | 184.2 | 156.7 | 152.2 | 80.6 | 45.1 | 34.8 | 653.6 |
| Females | 199.9 | 144.8 | 155.6 | 81.9 | 41.1 | 11.9 | 635.2 |
| Persons | 384.1 | 301.6 | 307.9 | 162.5 | 86.1 | 46.6 | 1,288.8 |
| —weeks— | | | | | | | |
| Average duration | 15.4 | 15.9 | 17.0 | 17.7 | 21.9 | 28.5 | 17.1 |
| Median duration | 9.9 | 10.3 | 9.7 | 10.4 | 16.4 | 26.2 | 10.5 |

TABLE 6. PERSONS NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE DURING ALL OR PART OF THE PERIOD FEBRUARY 1981 TO FEBRUARY 1982 : LENGTH OF TIME OUT OF THE LABOUR FORCE (' 000)

| | <i>Length of time out of the labour force (weeks)</i> | | | | | | | <i>Total</i> |
|---------------------------|---|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| | <i>1 and under 4</i> | <i>4 and under 13</i> | <i>13 and under 26</i> | <i>26 and under 39</i> | <i>39 and under 49</i> | <i>49 and under 53</i> | <i>Whole period</i> | |
| <i>Males</i> | 306.6 | 228.4 | 115.3 | 94.3 | 132.2 | 61.5 | 939.0 | 1,877.2 |
| Married | 210.4 | 136.6 | 58.2 | 36.7 | 21.7 | 9.9 | 586.8 | 1,060.4 |
| Not married | 96.1 | 91.8 | 57.1 | 57.5 | 110.5 | 51.6 | 352.2 | 816.8 |
| <i>Females</i> | 197.7 | 256.1 | 206.2 | 188.5 | 218.3 | 138.9 | 2,551.0 | 3,756.7 |
| Married | 134.0 | 178.7 | 141.7 | 129.7 | 113.5 | 86.4 | 1,698.0 | 2,482.1 |
| Not married | 63.7 | 77.4 | 64.5 | 58.8 | 104.7 | 52.5 | 853.0 | 1,274.6 |
| Persons | 504.3 | 484.5 | 321.5 | 282.8 | 350.4 | 200.5 | 3,490.0 | 5,633.9 |
| <i>Age group (years)—</i> | | | | | | | | |
| 15-19 | 47.7 | 56.5 | 52.4 | 61.7 | 158.1 | 78.4 | 310.8 | 765.5 |
| 20-24 | 87.1 | 77.8 | 50.6 | 45.8 | 50.2 | 24.7 | 128.8 | 465.1 |
| 25-34 | 144.1 | 127.3 | 92.8 | 68.5 | 59.9 | 45.4 | 434.6 | 972.6 |
| 35-44 | 107.2 | 105.0 | 54.6 | 43.7 | 35.7 | 23.2 | 320.3 | 689.7 |
| 45-54 | 73.7 | 70.7 | 37.4 | 29.5 | 23.7 | 15.4 | 360.8 | 611.2 |
| 55-59 | 27.5 | 24.5 | 15.4 | 13.2 | 8.0 | * | 286.1 | 377.9 |
| 60-64 | 11.6 | 12.6 | 11.7 | 12.1 | 9.6 | 5.3 | 402.5 | 465.5 |
| 65 and over | 5.4 | 10.2 | 6.6 | 8.3 | 5.2 | 4.8 | 1,246.0 | 1,286.4 |

