



LABOUR FORCE EXPERIENCE, AUSTRALIA, DURING THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 1985 (PRELIMINARY)

PHONE INQUIRIES *for more information about these statistics*—contact Mr Geoff Winter on Canberra (062) 52 6661 or any of our State offices.

other inquiries including copies of publications—contact Information Services on Canberra (062) 52 6627 or in any of our State offices.

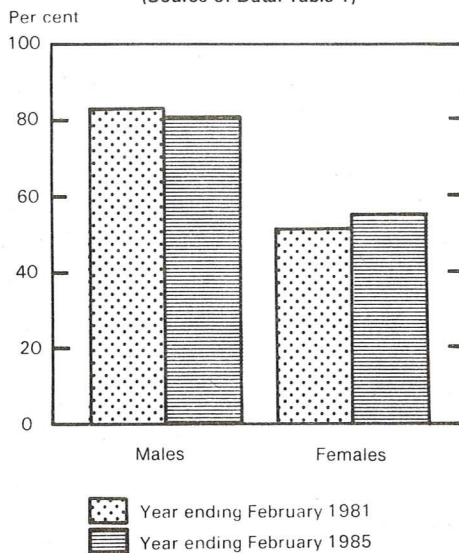
MAIL INQUIRIES *write to* Information Services, ABS, P.O. Box 10, Belconnen, A.C.T. 2616 or any of our State offices.

MAIN FEATURES

Note: Survey estimates are subject to sampling variability, as explained in paragraph 17 following.

DIAGRAM 1. CIVILIAN POPULATION: PERSONS WHO WERE IN THE LABOUR FORCE AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEARS ENDING FEBRUARY 1981 AND FEBRUARY 1985.

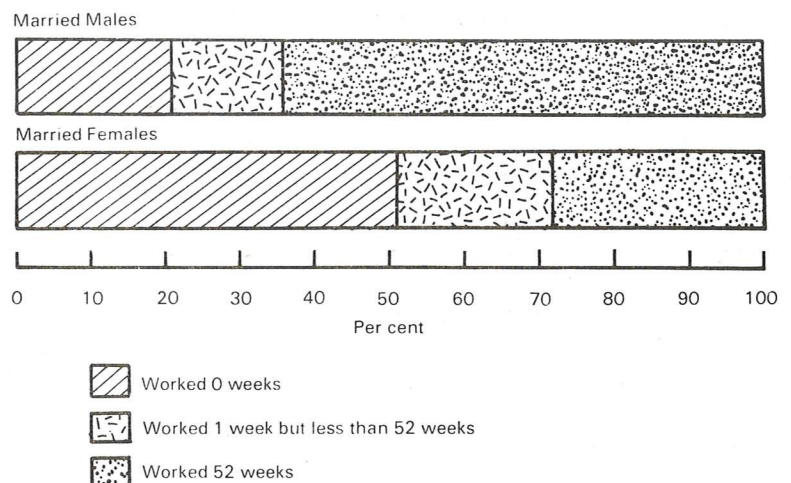
(Source of Data: Table 1)



The population of males who had been in the labour force at some time during the year ending February 1985 was 80.7 per cent. This proportion has been gradually declining since 1981 when it was 83.2 per cent. The corresponding proportion for females was 54.6 per cent for the year ending February 1985.

DIAGRAM 2. MARRIED PERSONS: TIME WORKED DURING THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 1985.

(Source of Data: Table 1)



79.3 per cent of all married males worked at some time during the year ending February 1985, including 64.2 per cent for the full year. On the other hand, while 49.1 per cent of all married females worked at some time, only 28.3 per cent worked for the full year.

Of those in the labour force at some time during the year, 18.3 per cent (1,447,000 persons) spent some time looking for work compared with 20.1 per cent in the year ending February 1984. The average time spent looking for work varied from 19.6 weeks for 15-19 year olds to 33.5 weeks for persons aged 55 years and over.

3,800,300 persons (32.5 per cent of the population) neither worked nor looked for work during the year. This proportion has been increasing gradually since 1982 when it was 31.6 per cent.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

The monthly Population Survey (which is described in *The Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0)) comprises the monthly labour force survey and supplementary topics. This publication contains some results of a supplementary survey run in association with the February 1985 labour force survey conducted throughout Australia.

2. Of the respondents to the labour force survey, those who fell within the scope of the supplementary were asked additional questions. This subset of respondents was asked the length of time they worked, looked for work or were not in the labour force, the number of spells during which they looked for work and other aspects of labour force experience.

Scope

3. The scope of this supplementary survey was the same as that used for the labour force survey (described in full in *The Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0)) except that it excluded students boarding at school, some patients in hospitals and sanatoria and inmates of jails, reformatories etc.

4. The estimates relate to persons covered by the survey in February 1985. 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

5. It is impractical to obtain information relating to a whole year which is strictly comparable with that obtained in the monthly labour force survey for which the reference period is one week. The definitions used in determining the labour force status of persons in the monthly survey depend on a detailed set of questions asked about a person's labour force activity during the reference period. For the survey of labour force experience, a person is assigned to a labour force category for each of the weeks in the year on the basis of a more limited set of questions. It is for this reason that the terms *worked* and *looked for work* are used in this survey rather than the rigidly defined terms *employed* and *unemployed* used in the monthly labour force survey.

6. Persons in the *labour force* are those persons who, *for those weeks*, reported having either worked or looked for work as defined in paragraphs 7 and 8.

7. Persons who *worked* are those persons who, *for those weeks*, reported having either worked or been on paid leave. Periods of one week or more on strike or time off without pay are excluded.

8. Persons who *looked for work* are those persons who, *for those weeks*, reported having been out of work and looking for a job.

9. Persons *out of the labour force* are those who, during any week, neither worked nor looked for work as defined in paragraphs 7 and 8.

10. 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.

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

12. Persons are classified as *married* if they are reported as being married (including de facto) and their spouse was a usual resident of the household at the time of the survey. The *not-married* category includes persons who have never married, or are separated, widowed or divorced, as well as those who, although reported as being married, did not have a spouse who usually lived in the household.

Results of the survey

13. This publication contains only a summary of the results of the survey. Estimates shown are preliminary and may be revised. A more detailed publication will be released as soon as possible and further information is available on request.

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

Discontinuities in the series

15. The estimates for February of the years 1983, 1984 and 1985 are not strictly comparable with those obtained from previous surveys. The reference period for the February 1980 and prior surveys was the previous calendar year (e.g. 1 January to 31 December 1979). The reference period for the February 1981 and 1982 surveys was from the beginning of the previous February to the end of the week prior to interview. As interviews were conducted over the second and third week of February, the reference period could extend to 54 weeks. For the February 1983, 1984 and 1985 surveys the reference period is the 52 weeks up to the end of the week prior to interview. Due to the change in the reference period timing, some estimates, particularly those for groups who enter the labour force during the earlier months of the year (e.g. 15 to 19 year olds) will also be affected from February 1981 survey onwards.

16. In the February 1981 survey persons who answered that they had been in their current job for a year or longer but who also reported having actually worked for less than the whole period were not counted as out of the labour force for the remainder of the period. In all other years these persons were counted as out of the labour force for that time. In consequence, the February 1981 estimate of persons out of the labour force during all or part of the period is 512,300 persons (249,100 males and 263,200 females) less than the figures which would have been obtained with the procedures used in other years.

Reliability of the estimates

17. 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 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

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

The Labour Force, Australia (6203.0)-issued monthly

Persons Not in the Labour Force, Australia (6220.0) issued March and September

Job Search Experience of Unemployed Persons (Excluding those who were Stood Down), Australia, July 1984 (6222.0)

Labour Mobility, Australia, During the Year Ending February 1985 (Preliminary) (6208.0)

19. 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 17 above.

20. 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	23.9	200,000	6,100	3.0
6,000	1,300	20.7	500,000	8,700	1.7
10,000	1,600	16.0	1,000,000	11,200	1.1
20,000	2,250	11.1	2,000,000	14,200	0.7
50,000	3,400	6.8	5,000,000	19,100	0.4
100,000	4,550	4.6	10,000,000	23,500	0.2
			12,000,000	24,700	0.2

TABLE 1. CIVILIAN POPULATION, FEBRUARY 1985: LABOUR FORCE EXPERIENCE DURING THE YEAR
ENDING FEBRUARY 1985
(' 000)

	<i>Married males</i>	<i>All males</i>	<i>Married females</i>	<i>All females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
Civilian population	3,642.2	5,772.4	3,628.5	5,923.7	11,696.1
<i>In the labour force at some time during the year</i>	<i>2,975.8</i>	<i>4,661.0</i>	<i>1,903.9</i>	<i>3,234.8</i>	<i>7,895.8</i>
For 1 and under 4 weeks	6.1	41.3	71.7	116.2	157.5
4 and under 13 weeks	20.3	134.7	122.0	239.1	373.8
13 and under 26 weeks	28.5	86.8	117.9	181.3	268.1
26 and under 39 weeks	55.7	117.8	162.0	229.6	347.3
39 and under 49 weeks	124.5	219.1	203.5	299.9	519.0
49 and under 52 weeks	150.4	224.7	105.0	169.5	394.2
52 weeks	2,590.3	3,836.6	1,121.8	1,999.3	5,835.9
Worked at some time during the year	2,888.9	4,412.0	1,780.7	2,956.7	7,368.7
Of weeks worked—					
All were full time	2,707.4	3,997.9	900.1	1,729.0	5,726.9
More full time than part time	76.6	138.4	67.8	126.3	264.7
More part time than full time	12.9	41.6	47.4	84.3	125.8
All were part time	91.9	234.1	765.4	1,017.1	1,251.2
Weeks worked—					
1 and under 4 weeks	9.8	52.7	46.6	90.5	143.2
4 and under 13 weeks	35.5	145.8	106.6	199.9	345.7
13 and under 26 weeks	55.9	140.1	119.3	197.2	337.3
26 and under 39 weeks	105.3	223.3	166.8	261.5	484.8
39 and under 49 weeks	187.8	338.9	210.1	329.1	668.0
49 and under 52 weeks	156.2	234.0	105.7	171.6	405.7
52 weeks	2,338.5	3,277.0	1,025.8	1,707.0	4,984.0
Looked for work at some time during the year	317.2	798.0	264.3	648.9	1,447.0
One spell of looking for work	254.7	658.6	216.3	537.0	1,195.5
Two spells	31.4	74.8	25.0	59.9	134.7
Three spells	8.8	23.5	7.3	21.4	44.9
Four or more spells	22.3	41.1	15.7	30.6	71.8
Out of the labour force at some time during the year	1,051.8	1,935.8	2,506.7	3,924.4	5,860.2
<i>Out of the labour force for the whole year</i>	<i>666.3</i>	<i>1,111.4</i>	<i>1,724.5</i>	<i>2,689.0</i>	<i>3,800.3</i>

TABLE 2. CIVILIAN POPULATION, FEBRUARY 1985: PROPORTION IN THE LABOUR FORCE AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 1985(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	*	98.6	98.6	97.8	94.3	84.0	54.9	12.9	81.7
All males	72.0	95.9	97.5	96.9	92.9	81.1	54.4	12.4	80.7
Married females	73.7	71.0	63.8	67.5	56.1	30.6	14.0	2.9	52.5
All females	71.6	82.6	68.4	68.6	57.3	33.5	15.8	2.6	54.6
Persons	71.8	89.2	83.0	82.7	75.5	58.0	34.2	6.9	67.5

(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 WHO WORKED AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 1985: NUMBER OF JOBS(a) HELD DURING THE YEAR
(' 000)

	<i>Number of jobs held during the year</i>				<i>Total</i>
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4 or more</i>	
Married males	2,506.1	283.1	56.9	42.8	2,888.9
All males	3,725.7	487.7	109.0	89.5	4,412.0
Married females	1,581.0	155.6	25.2	18.9	1,780.7
All females	2,511.5	335.8	64.0	45.5	2,956.7
Persons	6,237.2	823.5	173.0	135.0	7,368.7
<i>Age group (years)—</i>					
15-19	588.0	119.6	26.2	16.8	750.7
20-24	823.2	184.0	48.1	36.2	1,091.5
25-34	1,613.8	257.8	58.5	47.9	1,977.9
35-44	1,493.6	167.3	27.1	20.6	1,708.6
45-54	1,017.7	70.3	9.6	8.3	1,106.0
55-59	390.3	17.2	*	*	413.2
60-64	213.9	5.4	*	*	221.7
65 and over	96.7	*	*	*	99.1

(a) Excludes second jobs of multiple jobholders.

TABLE 4. PERSONS IN THE LABOUR FORCE AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 1985: PROPORTION WHO LOOKED FOR WORK AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR(a)
(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	*	45.8	44.5	40.9	43.4	42.1	40.9	43.5	42.2
20-24	21.7	19.4	20.4	29.4	28.2	28.9	27.7	25.1	26.5
25-34	13.6	17.4	15.2	23.3	18.8	21.5	16.7	17.8	17.1
35-44	8.8	12.6	10.4	18.5	22.2	20.2	10.2	14.3	11.9
45-54	8.6	8.9	8.7	18.3	17.1	17.7	9.9	10.5	10.1
55 and over	8.1	3.9	7.2	12.7	7.9	10.6	8.8	5.3	7.9
Total	10.7	13.9	11.9	28.5	28.9	28.7	17.1	20.1	18.3

(a) Persons in each group as a proportion of all persons in the labour force at some time during the year in the same group.

TABLE 5. PERSONS WHO LOOKED FOR WORK AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 1985: NUMBER OF SPELLS AND TIME SPENT LOOKING FOR WORK DURING THE YEAR

	Age group (years)						Total
	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55 and over	
	— '000—						
One spell—							
Males	165.1	142.9	161.6	86.7	59.0	43.2	658.6
Females	165.3	111.8	127.0	87.3	36.6	8.9	537.0
Persons	330.4	254.8	288.6	174.0	95.6	52.2	1,195.5
	—weeks—						
Average duration(a)	19.1	21.7	21.4	23.6	28.1	36.0	22.3
Median duration(a)	11.7	14.9	15.3	18.9	27.7	49.9	15.9
	— '000—						
Two spells—							
Males	15.3	18.4	22.1	8.9	6.5	*	74.8
Females	18.1	17.4	12.0	7.9	*	*	59.9
Persons	33.4	35.8	34.2	16.8	9.9	4.6	134.7
	—weeks—						
Average duration(a)	23.4	22.0	21.5	18.3	22.8	21.2	21.8
Median duration(a)	22.2	22.6	21.4	13.6	22.0	16.3	21.1
	— '000—						
Three or more spells—							
Males	9.1	13.7	21.0	10.9	6.1	*	64.6
Females	12.0	7.4	14.8	12.0	5.2	*	52.1
Persons	21.2	21.1	35.8	22.9	11.3	*	116.7
	—weeks—						
Average duration(a)	20.9	20.1	19.0	17.5	19.2	*	19.2
Median duration(a)	18.9	18.5	17.2	14.7	15.6	*	17.1
	— '000—						
Total—							
Males	189.5	175.0	204.8	106.5	71.7	50.6	798.0
Females	195.4	136.6	153.9	107.2	45.2	10.6	648.9
Persons	384.9	311.6	358.6	213.7	116.9	61.2	1,447.0
	—weeks—						
Average duration(a)	19.6	21.6	21.2	22.5	26.8	33.5	22.0
Median duration(a)	12.5	16.8	16.3	17.5	25.2	43.3	16.8

(a) Of total weeks spent looking for work during the year.

TABLE 6. PERSONS OUT OF THE LABOUR FORCE AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 1985: TIME OUT OF THE LABOUR FORCE ('000)

	Time out of the labour force (weeks)							Total
	1 and under 4	4 and under 13	13 and under 26	26 and under 39	39 and under 49	49 and under 52	52	
Males	224.7	207.6	101.7	101.4	147.8	41.3	1,111.4	1,935.8
Married	150.4	118.8	49.4	38.0	22.7	6.1	666.3	1,051.8
Not married	74.3	88.7	52.3	63.4	125.1	35.1	445.0	883.9
Females	169.5	275.7	192.3	219.6	262.2	116.2	2,689.0	3,924.4
Married	105.0	189.6	133.9	144.9	137.1	71.7	1,724.5	2,506.7
Not married	64.5	86.1	58.4	74.8	125.1	44.5	964.4	1,417.8
Persons	394.2	483.3	294.0	321.0	409.9	157.5	3,800.3	5,860.2
Age group (years)—								
15-19	33.1	53.3	48.9	77.1	180.2	58.3	357.8	808.7
20-24	58.5	73.6	42.8	43.7	55.1	15.6	141.6	431.0
25-34	111.6	129.4	81.3	84.1	76.7	39.7	429.9	952.7
35-44	108.9	107.7	53.8	53.5	49.9	23.5	374.7	772.0
45-54	49.3	67.9	34.8	26.2	24.9	11.8	375.2	590.2
55-59	17.2	21.9	13.5	12.5	10.3	*	315.3	394.2
60-64	11.7	17.5	10.9	14.6	8.1	*	453.2	519.0
65 and over	*	12.1	8.2	9.3	4.7	*	1,352.4	1,392.5