

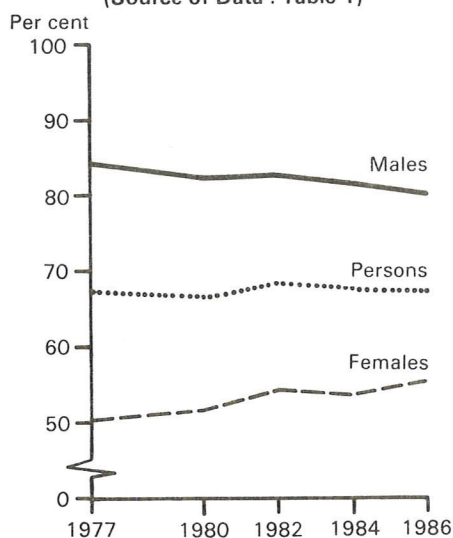


### LABOUR FORCE EXPERIENCE, AUSTRALIA, DURING THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 1986 (PRELIMINARY)

- PHONE INQUIRIES • *about these statistics*—contact Ms Joan ten Brummelaar on Canberra (062) 52 6661 or any ABS State office.  
 • *about other statistics and ABS services*,—contact Information Services on Canberra (062) 52 6627, or any ABS State office.
- MAIL INQUIRIES • *write to Information Services*, ABS, P.O. Box 10, Belconnen, A.C.T. 2616 or any ABS State office.
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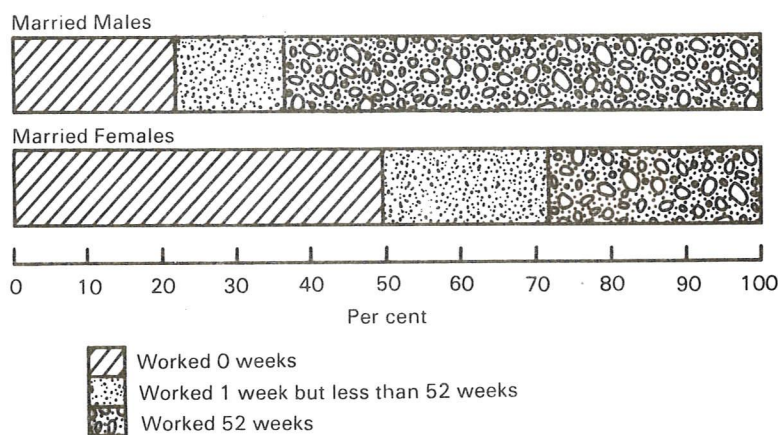
#### MAIN FEATURES

DIAGRAM 1. CIVILIAN POPULATION : PERSONS WHO WERE IN THE LABOUR FORCE AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEARS ENDING FEBRUARY 1977 TO FEBRUARY 1986.  
(Source of Data : Table 1)



There has been no significant change in the proportion of persons in the labour force at some time during the reference year between the 1977 survey (67.1 per cent) and the 1986 survey (67.4 per cent). However, the proportion of males has dropped (84.2 per cent to 80.0 per cent) while for females the proportion has risen (50.3 per cent to 55.1 per cent).

DIAGRAM 2. MARRIED PERSONS : TIME WORKED DURING THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 1986.  
(Source of Data : Table 2)



63.4 per cent of married males worked for the whole year ending February 1986. A further 14.8 per cent worked for part of the year. The proportion of married females who worked for the whole period was 23.6 per cent, and a further 28.2 per cent worked for only part of the year.

Of the 8,151,200 persons in the labour force at some time during the year ending February 1986, 1,423,700 (17.5 per cent) spent some time looking for work. This proportion has fallen since 1985 when it was 18.3 per cent. The average time spent looking for work has fallen from 22.1 weeks in the year ending February 1985 to 20.9 weeks in the year ending February 1986.

3,949,900 persons (32.6 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.

*Note: Survey estimates are subject to sampling variability, as explained in paragraph 18 following.*

## 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 1986 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. Visitors to private dwellings were also excluded.

4. The estimates relate to persons covered by the survey in February 1986. 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 impracticable 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 not classified as work.

8. Persons who *looked for work* are those persons who, *for those weeks*, reported having been out of work and looking for a job. *Time spent looking for work during the year* is the total number of weeks persons reported having been out of work and looking for a job, including the weeks in the current period.

9. The *number of spells of looking for work* during the year is the number of different periods, including the current period, during which persons reported having been out of work and looking for a job.

10. 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.

11. 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 location; or
- (b) self-employment (with or without employees) in a particular location.

12. *Location*. In capital cities and major towns each suburb is considered to be a different location.

13. 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

14. 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.

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

### Discontinuities in the series

16. The estimates for surveys held from February 1983 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 have extended to 54 weeks. From the February 1983 survey onwards the reference period has been 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 the February 1981 survey onwards.

17. 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

18. 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; and
- (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

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

*The Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0) — issued monthly (\$1.20, \$2.10 incl. postage)

*Persons Not in the Labour Force, Australia* (6220.0) — issued semi-annually

*Job Search Experience of Unemployed Persons, Australia, July 1985* (6222.0) — issued annually

*Labour Mobility, Australia, During the Year Ending February 1985* (6209.0) — issued annually

*Persons who had Re-entered the Labour Force, Australia, May 1985* (6264.0) — issued irregularly

20. 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 18 above.

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

IAN CASTLES  
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	1,050	23.9	200,000	6,100	3.0
6,000	1,250	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: LABOUR FORCE EXPERIENCE, FEBRUARY 1976 TO FEBRUARY 1986**  
(Per cent)

	Survey conducted in February(a)—									
	1976	1977	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986
<i>Out of the labour force for the whole of the period</i>	32.8	32.9	33.6	33.3	31.8	31.7	31.8	32.3	32.5	32.6
<i>In the labour force at some time during the period</i>	67.2	67.1	66.4	66.7	68.2	68.3	68.2	67.7	67.5	67.4
For 52 weeks	51.5	52.3	50.6	51.3	51.0	50.8	51.5	50.4	50.0	48.6
For 1 and under 52 weeks	15.6	14.7	15.8	15.4	17.3	17.5	16.7	17.3	17.5	18.8
Worked at some time during the period	65.6	65.4	63.7	64.1	65.4	65.4	64.1	62.5	63.0	63.1
Of weeks worked—										
All were full-time	55.2	54.1	51.7	52.0	52.4	52.1	50.1	48.5	49.0	48.7
More full-time than part-time	1.2	1.3	2.2	2.0	2.2	2.3	2.6	2.3	2.3	2.4
More part-time than full-time	0.7	0.8	0.9	0.9	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.2
All were part-time	8.5	9.2	9.0	9.1	9.7	9.8	10.3	10.6	10.7	10.9
Number of jobs held during the period(b)-										
One	54.4	54.1	53.3	54.0	54.7	54.2	54.6	53.9	53.3	52.5
Two	8.4	8.1	7.3	7.1	8.0	8.2	6.8	6.4	7.0	7.8
Three	1.7	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.3	1.5	1.7
Four or more	1.2	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.1	1.4	1.2	0.9	1.1	1.2
Looked for work at some time during the period	8.4	8.2	10.8	10.1	10.9	11.7	13.1	13.6	12.4	11.8
One spell of looking for work	6.5	6.5	8.8	8.3	9.0	9.5	10.2	10.7	10.2	9.7
Two spells	0.9	0.9	1.2	1.0	1.3	1.4	1.9	1.7	1.2	1.1
Three spells	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4
Four or more spells	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.6
Out of the labour force at some time during the period	48.5	47.7	49.4	48.7	49.0	49.2	48.5	49.6	50.0	51.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) See Explanatory Notes, paragraph 16, regarding comparability of the reference period surveyed. (b) Excludes second jobs of multiple jobholders.

**TABLE 2. CIVILIAN POPULATION, FEBRUARY 1986: LABOUR FORCE EXPERIENCE DURING THE YEAR**  
ENDING FEBRUARY 1986  
( ' 000)

	Married males	All males	Married females	All females	Persons
<i>Out of the labour force for the whole year</i>	726.4	1,192.1	1,695.3	2,757.8	3,949.9
<i>In the labour force at some time during the year</i>	2,977.3	4,765.5	1,987.4	3,385.6	8,151.2
For 1 and under 4 weeks	7.5	53.9	73.9	120.8	174.7
4 and under 13 weeks	18.8	152.7	127.2	253.1	405.8
13 and under 26 weeks	25.8	88.8	132.1	220.4	309.3
26 and under 39 weeks	49.3	122.1	142.5	227.6	349.7
39 and under 49 weeks	140.5	245.4	225.8	335.2	580.5
49 and under 52 weeks	158.9	242.7	141.8	207.1	449.8
52 weeks	2,576.5	3,859.9	1,144.2	2,021.5	5,881.4
Worked at some time during the year	2,894.2	4,520.0	1,861.6	3,119.1	7,639.0
Of weeks worked—					
All were full-time	2,714.8	4,088.4	948.4	1,801.9	5,890.3
More full-time than part-time	85.1	150.3	79.0	136.0	286.3
More part-time than full-time	11.4	41.5	58.8	103.7	145.2
All were part-time	82.9	239.8	775.5	1,077.5	1,317.3
Time worked -					
1 and under 4 weeks	9.7	56.5	46.1	89.5	146.1
4 and under 13 weeks	33.2	161.1	109.8	213.5	374.6
13 and under 26 weeks	51.4	139.9	137.2	238.5	378.5
26 and under 39 weeks	91.1	203.7	147.4	264.3	468.0
39 and under 49 weeks	195.7	347.6	238.0	372.8	720.3
49 and under 52 weeks	166.2	258.3	144.1	211.4	469.8
52 weeks	2,347.1	3,352.8	1,038.9	1,729.1	5,081.8
Looked for work at some time during the year	286.5	757.1	275.3	666.6	1,423.7
One spell of looking for work	239.2	625.4	230.8	553.1	1,178.5
Two spells	24.0	70.5	22.3	61.7	132.1
Three spells	8.3	24.2	6.2	18.8	42.9
Four or more spells	14.9	37.1	15.9	33.1	70.1
Out of the labour force at some time during the year	1,127.2	2,097.8	2,538.6	4,121.9	6,219.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,703.6</b>	<b>5,957.7</b>	<b>3,682.8</b>	<b>6,143.4</b>	<b>12,101.1</b>

**TABLE 3. CIVILIAN POPULATION, FEBRUARY 1986: PROPORTION IN THE LABOUR FORCE AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 1986(a)**  
(Per cent)

	Age group								Total
	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-59	60-64	65 and over	
Married males	*	98.7	98.3	97.6	93.9	84.8	51.2	12.0	80.4
All males	73.8	96.6	97.2	96.6	92.2	82.3	50.7	10.7	80.0
Married females	71.6	72.7	66.6	71.6	56.9	33.5	14.6	3.8	54.0
All females	72.6	84.1	70.9	71.6	58.3	36.1	15.8	3.0	55.1
<b>Persons</b>	<b>73.2</b>	<b>90.3</b>	<b>84.0</b>	<b>84.3</b>	<b>75.6</b>	<b>59.4</b>	<b>32.8</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>67.4</b>

(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 4. PERSONS WHO WORKED AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 1986: NUMBER OF JOBS(a) HELD DURING THE YEAR**  
( ' 000)

	Number of jobs held during the year				Total
	1	2	3	4 or more	
Married males	2,493.8	306.9	58.6	34.9	2,894.2
All males	3,754.8	558.2	120.0	87.0	4,520.0
Married females	1,631.4	179.1	32.4	18.8	1,861.6
All females	2,597.9	383.3	83.9	53.9	3,119.1
<b>Persons</b>	<b>6,352.7</b>	<b>941.5</b>	<b>203.9</b>	<b>140.9</b>	<b>7,639.0</b>
Age group—					
15-19	597.9	155.1	36.6	25.4	815.0
20-24	812.8	203.0	54.2	41.1	1,111.2
25-34	1,651.7	285.3	64.2	42.6	2,043.8
35-44	1,548.3	192.6	32.7	22.3	1,795.9
45-54	1,033.2	75.6	12.2	6.2	1,127.3
55-59	396.9	21.4	*	*	422.1
60-64	214.2	6.4	*	*	222.7
65 and over	97.9	*	*	*	101.1

(a) Excludes second jobs of multiple jobholders.

**TABLE 5. PERSONS IN THE LABOUR FORCE AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 1986: PROPORTION WHO LOOKED FOR WORK AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR(a)**  
(Per cent)

Age group	Married			Not married			Total		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
15-19	*	49.7	49.8	39.6	41.6	40.6	39.7	41.9	40.7
20-24	23.7	22.6	23.1	26.8	25.9	26.4	26.3	24.9	25.6
25-34	11.4	15.9	13.4	19.6	21.8	20.5	14.1	17.6	15.6
35-44	8.4	13.3	10.5	16.4	20.3	18.1	9.7	14.5	11.7
45-54	7.9	8.8	8.2	13.7	14.4	14.1	8.7	10.0	9.2
55-59	8.8	6.6	8.2	15.6	*	12.6	9.8	7.3	9.1
60 and over	5.7	*	4.9	*	*	8.3	6.4	*	5.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>13.9</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>26.3</b>	<b>28.0</b>	<b>27.1</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>19.7</b>	<b>17.5</b>

(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 6. PERSONS WHO LOOKED FOR WORK AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 1986 : NUMBER OF SPELLS AND TIME SPENT LOOKING FOR WORK DURING THE YEAR**

	Age group						Total
	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55 and over	
	— '000—						
One spell—							
Males	168.7	130.7	144.8	84.3	56.0	40.9	625.4
Females	163.7	111.9	136.1	93.0	37.1	11.3	553.1
Persons	332.4	242.6	280.9	177.3	93.1	52.3	1,178.5
	—weeks—						
Average duration(a)	17.7	20.7	20.1	21.8	29.2	31.3	21.0
Median duration(a)	9	13	12	13	31	39	12
	— '000—						
Two spells—							
Males	18.0	19.8	18.3	8.9	*	*	70.5
Females	20.7	15.9	12.1	8.3	*	*	61.7
Persons	38.7	35.8	30.4	17.2	7.3	*	132.1
	—weeks—						
Average duration(a)	21.5	21.7	22.0	21.6	22.2	*	21.7
Median duration(a)	20	22	21	21	20	*	21
	— '000—						
Three or more spells—							
Males	11.6	16.4	12.8	12.2	4.7	*	61.2
Females	13.6	9.0	12.1	13.0	*	*	51.8
Persons	25.2	25.4	25.0	25.2	8.0	*	113.1
	—weeks—						
Average duration(a)	19.3	19.1	18.0	19.3	15.1	*	18.8
Median duration(a)	15	18	15	16	10	*	15
	— '000—						
Total—							
Males	198.4	166.9	176.0	105.4	64.0	46.4	757.1
Females	198.0	136.8	160.3	114.3	44.4	12.9	666.6
Persons	396.3	303.7	336.2	219.7	108.4	59.3	1,423.7
	—weeks—						
Average duration(a)	18.2	20.7	20.1	21.5	27.7	30.3	20.9
Median duration(a)	10	14	13	13	26	32	13

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

**TABLE 7. PERSONS OUT OF THE LABOUR FORCE AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 1986 : 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	
<b>Males</b>	242.7	233.5	108.4	98.6	168.5	53.9	1,192.1	2,097.8
Married	158.9	135.0	45.0	32.1	22.3	7.5	726.4	1,127.2
Not married	83.9	98.4	63.4	66.5	146.2	46.4	465.8	970.6
<b>Females</b>	207.1	310.7	198.1	242.7	284.8	120.8	2,757.8	4,121.9
Married	141.8	210.9	120.8	149.4	146.6	73.9	1,695.3	2,538.6
Not married	65.3	99.9	77.3	93.4	138.1	47.0	1,062.4	1,583.4
<b>Persons</b>	449.8	544.2	306.5	341.4	453.3	174.7	3,949.9	6,219.7
<b>Age group—</b>								
15-19	34.3	56.0	62.9	88.2	203.8	65.9	355.8	867.0
20-24	67.1	80.7	43.5	46.1	59.7	14.4	126.8	438.4
25-34	131.8	145.8	80.9	86.0	83.6	43.8	409.2	981.1
35-44	117.6	134.8	53.4	61.0	56.5	27.8	351.0	802.1
45-54	62.2	78.3	28.5	27.0	26.4	12.1	379.9	614.3
55-59	20.0	21.4	13.5	15.6	9.3	4.6	305.7	390.1
60-64	12.5	14.8	13.8	10.9	9.0	*	473.5	538.2
65 and over	*	12.4	9.9	6.6	4.9	*	1,548.0	1,588.6