



Reference No. 6.32

THE LABOUR FORCE, FEBRUARY 1976 (PRELIMINARY)

MAIN FEATURES

- In February 1976, the number of employed civilians was 5,810,600, an increase of 11,500 over November 1975. Males increased by 34,900 while females decreased by 23,300.
- The estimated number of unemployed persons (including those looking for part-time work) was 283,900, or 4.7 per cent of the civilian labour force (3.8 per cent seasonally adjusted), an increase of 4,800 since November 1975.
- The estimated number of persons who did no work but would have taken a job during the survey week and who had been actively looking for work at some time in the four weeks before the interview week was 304,500.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

This statement contains preliminary estimates of the civilian labour force for February 1976 and estimates for the previous five quarters. The estimates are derived from the results of the population surveys conducted in February, May, August and November each year throughout Australia. The quarterly bulletin *The Labour Force* (Reference No. 6.20), which gives information in greater detail, will be published shortly.

2. Preliminary unemployment estimates are published several weeks in advance of this statement in *Unemployment, Preliminary Estimates* (Reference No. 6.35).

The population survey

3. The survey is based on a multi-stage area sample of private dwellings (about 30,000 houses, flats, etc.) and non-private dwellings (hotels, motels, etc.), and covers about two-thirds of one per cent of the population of Australia. The information is obtained each quarter from the occupants of selected dwellings by carefully chosen and specially trained interviewers. Interviews are carried out during a period of four weeks, so that in each of the months to which the survey relates, there are four survey weeks, chosen so as to fall within the limits of the calendar month or with minimum encroachment into the adjacent months.

Scope

4. The estimates relate to all persons aged fifteen years and over except members of the permanent armed forces and certain diplomatic personnel customarily excluded from census and estimated populations. For February 1975 the estimates also exclude about 17,000 persons aged 15 years and over who were in Darwin at the time of the survey.

5. The survey period for February 1976 was deferred by one week. As a result, the number of persons who had returned to schools, universities, etc., by the time of the survey was greater than if the survey had been held at the normal time. The estimates are also affected by other seasonal influences. The exact effect is not known, but it is estimated that the figures for unemployed persons and persons in the labour force were reduced by between 5,000 and 10,000 (both original and seasonally adjusted), and the number of persons not in the labour force was correspondingly increased. The number of employed persons is unlikely to have been affected significantly.

Classification of the labour force

6. The labour force category to which a person is assigned depends on his actual activity (i.e. whether working, looking for work, etc.) during a specified week known as 'survey week', which is the week immediately preceding that in which the interview takes place. Definitions of the principal categories appearing in this statement are given in the quarterly bulletins.

Estimation procedure

7. Estimates are obtained by using a complex ratio estimation procedure which ensures that survey estimates conform to independent population estimates by State, area, age and sex. These population estimates are based on very preliminary information and are subject to revision.

Reliability of the estimates

8. Since the estimates are based on a sample, they may differ from the figures that would have been obtained from a complete census using the same questionnaires and procedures. One measure of the likely difference is given by the *standard error*, which indicates the extent to which an estimate might have varied by chance because only a sample, and not the whole population, was enumerated. The smaller the estimate the higher is the relative standard error: for example, the relative standard error of an estimate of 2,000,000 is approximately 0.6 per cent (12,000) while that of an estimate of 20,000 is approximately 8 per cent (1,600). There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate will differ by less than one standard error from the figure that would have been obtained from a comparable complete enumeration, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two standard errors.

9. Limitations of space preclude publication of the standard errors of all estimates in this statement. More information on this topic, together with a table of estimated standard errors for States, Territories and Australia, is given in the quarterly bulletin *The Labour Force*.

NOTE. Any discrepancies between totals and sums of components in tables are due to rounding.

TABLE 1. - CIVILIAN POPULATION 15 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER (a), BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Month	Employed (b) (c)			Unemployed (b)				Total labour force (b)			Not in labour force (b) ('000)	Civilian population aged 15 and over (a) ('000)
	Agri- culture (d) ('000)	Other industries (d) ('000)	Total ('000)	Number		Per cent of labour force (e)		Number		Per cent of population (g)		
				Original ('000)	Seasonally adjusted (f) ('000)	Original	Seasonally adjusted	Original ('000)	Seasonally adjusted (f) ('000)			
MALES												
1974 – Nov.	299.5	3,476.7	3,776.2	111.4	106.9	2.9	2.7	3,887.6	3,890.6	81.4	890.1	4,777.6
1975 – Feb. (h)	295.2	3,477.9	3,773.0	143.8	122.3	3.7	3.1	3,916.8	3,892.3	81.6	881.0	4,797.8
May	297.6	3,474.3	3,771.9	124.5	139.5	3.2	3.6	3,896.3	3,897.3	81.1	910.7	4,807.0
Aug.	294.8	3,453.4	3,748.2	124.6	(i)151.0	3.2	3.9	3,872.7	3,893.6	80.4	941.3	4,814.0
Nov. (j)	294.3	3,475.0	3,769.3	149.6	(i)144.4	3.8	3.7	3,918.9	3,921.5	80.9	924.4	4,843.3
1976 – Feb. (k)	294.8	3,509.4	3,804.2	155.0	(i)131.6	3.9	3.3	3,959.2	3,934.3	81.3	912.9	4,872.1
MARRIED WOMEN												
1974 – Nov.	61.1	1,218.4	1,279.6	38.6	n.a.	2.9	n.a.	1,318.2	1,299.2	40.6	1,927.0	3,245.2
1975 – Feb. (h)	61.2	1,166.5	1,227.7	62.0	n.a.	4.8	n.a.	1,289.7	1,294.5	39.9	1,945.0	3,234.7
May	52.1	1,185.5	1,237.6	51.0	n.a.	4.0	n.a.	1,288.6	1,295.7	39.8	1,951.0	3,239.6
Aug.	54.8	1,191.7	1,246.5	46.6	n.a.	3.6	n.a.	1,293.0	1,299.7	40.0	1,940.6	3,233.7
Nov. (j)	62.7	1,241.9	1,304.6	51.9	n.a.	3.8	n.a.	1,356.4	1,337.3	41.9	1,881.6	3,238.1
1976 – Feb. (k)	60.1	1,226.9	1,287.0	58.2	n.a.	4.3	n.a.	1,345.2	1,349.9	41.2	1,922.8	3,268.0
ALL FEMALES												
1974 – Nov.	72.8	1,902.7	1,975.5	89.6	92.1	4.3	4.5	2,065.1	2,043.6	42.3	2,816.0	4,881.1
1975 – Feb. (h)	72.5	1,858.5	1,931.0	128.6	101.9	6.2	5.0	2,059.7	2,044.5	42.1	2,838.0	4,897.7
May	62.4	1,876.3	1,938.7	105.1	120.0	5.1	5.8	2,043.8	2,061.2	41.7	2,861.5	4,905.3
Aug.	67.3	1,872.7	1,939.9	108.9	(i)136.8	5.3	6.6	2,048.8	2,068.7	41.8	2,857.6	4,906.4
Nov. (j)	74.8	1,955.1	2,029.8	129.5	(i)131.6	6.0	6.2	2,159.3	2,136.8	43.7	2,782.6	4,942.0
1976 – Feb. (k)	71.7	1,934.8	2,006.5	128.9	(i)102.5	6.0	4.8	2,135.4	2,119.3	43.0	2,830.9	4,966.3
PERSONS												
1974 – Nov.	372.2	5,379.4	5,751.7	201.0	200.2	3.4	3.4	5,952.7	5,936.7	61.6	3,706.1	9,658.7
1975 – Feb. (h)	367.7	5,336.4	5,704.0	272.4	222.3	4.6	3.7	5,976.5	5,938.0	61.6	3,719.0	9,695.5
May	360.0	5,350.6	5,710.6	229.6	255.5	3.9	4.4	5,940.1	5,955.6	61.2	3,772.1	9,712.3
Aug.	362.1	5,326.0	5,688.1	233.5	(i)295.3	3.9	5.0	5,921.5	5,961.1	60.9	3,798.9	9,720.4
Nov. (j)	369.1	5,430.0	5,799.1	279.1	(i)277.2	4.6	4.6	6,078.2	6,061.5	62.1	3,707.1	9,785.3
1976 – Feb. (k)	366.5	5,444.2	5,810.6	283.9	(i)231.4	4.7	3.8	6,094.6	6,055.0	61.9	3,743.8	9,838.4

(a) For scope of estimates see page 1, paragraph 4. (b) For definitions see *The Labour Force*, (Reference No. 6.20) November 1975 pages 2 and 3, paragraphs 8 to 13. (c) Employed includes employers and self-employed in addition to wage and salary earners. For monthly statistics of wage and salary earners see *Employment and Unemployment* (Reference No. 6.4). (d) Classified according to ASIC. (e) The number of unemployed in each group as a percentage of the labour force in the same group. (f) For details of the methods used in seasonally adjusting these series see *Seasonally Adjusted Indicators*, 1975 (Reference No. 1.10). (g) The labour force (original) in each group as a percentage of the civilian population aged 15 years and over in the same group (labour force participation rate). (h) Excludes Darwin. See page 1, paragraph 4. (i) All adjustment methods which compute seasonal factors as some average of the seasonal pattern for previous years are subject to inherent limitations when the pattern changes. The method currently used assumes that seasonal variations (such as that which occurs in November when young people leave school and seek employment) are proportional to the level of the series. However, when the number of unemployed becomes exceptionally high this proportional relationship may change. If it does, the change cannot be accommodated quickly enough by the current method. Such a change has been occurring in recent quarters and as a result the seasonally adjusted estimates for August 1975 are overstated while those for subsequent periods are understated. It is difficult in these circumstances to draw any reliable conclusions from the movements in the seasonally adjusted estimates between August 1975 and later periods. (j) The sample size was reduced for the November 1975 survey. Consequently the standard errors for estimates from that survey are larger than usual. For details see the November 1975 issue of *The Labour Force* (Reference No. 6.20). (k) Survey deferred by one week. See page 1, paragraph 5.

n.a. Not available.

TABLE 2. – EMPLOYED PERSONS (a), FEBRUARY 1976

	<i>Males</i>	<i>Married women</i>	<i>Other females (b)</i>	<i>All females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
NUMBER EMPLOYED ('000)					
Full-time workers (a)	3,642.8	764.8	592.0	1,356.8	4,999.6
Part-time workers (a)	161.4	522.1	127.5	649.7	811.0
Total	3,804.2	1,287.0	719.5	2,006.5	5,810.6
AVERAGE HOURS WORKED (c)					
Agriculture	52.7	29.1	35.9	30.2	48.3
Manufacturing	39.4	34.0	37.0	34.7	38.1
Construction	39.3	19.7	32.8	22.0	38.0
Wholesale and retail trade	41.2	29.7	29.6	29.6	36.5
Community services (d)	38.7	28.7	36.1	31.5	34.3
All industries	40.4	29.2	33.6	30.8	37.1
Full-time workers (a)	41.5	38.0	37.9	37.9	40.5
Part-time workers (a)	16.0	16.4	13.6	15.9	15.9

(a) See footnotes (b) and (k) to Table 1. (b) Never married, widowed and divorced. (c) Averages have been calculated using actual hours worked during survey week, not hours paid for. All employed persons, including those who did not work during survey week, have been included in the calculations. When recording hours worked, fractions of an hour are disregarded. This procedure results in a slight lowering of the average hours figures. The figures may be affected by public holidays, leave, absenteeism; temporary absence from work due to sickness, accidents and industrial disputes; and work stoppages due to bad weather, plant breakdown, etc. (d) Comprises health, education, libraries, etc., welfare and religious institutions; and other community services. In May and August each year estimates of average hours are low because hours worked by school teachers are affected by school holidays.

TABLE 3. – UNEMPLOYED PERSONS (a), FEBRUARY 1976

	<i>Males</i>	<i>Married women</i>	<i>Other females (b)</i>	<i>All females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
NUMBER UNEMPLOYED ('000)					
Looking for full-time work (c)	144.6	29.2	60.4	89.6	234.2
Looking for part-time work (d)	10.4	29.1	10.3	39.4	49.8
Aged 15-19 years –					
Looking for first job	17.0	*	21.1	21.1	38.0
Other	32.8	*	27.6	30.9	63.7
Total aged 15-19 years	49.8	*	48.7	52.0	101.8
Aged 20 years and over	105.2	55.0	22.0	77.0	182.2
Unemployed for (e) –					
Under 2 weeks	9.7	9.1	4.7	13.8	23.5
2 weeks and under 4 weeks	22.3	15.9	10.3	26.2	48.5
4 weeks and under 8 weeks	30.1	10.9	14.2	25.0	55.1
8 weeks and under 13 weeks	37.4	7.1	17.0	24.1	61.5
13 weeks and under 26 weeks	28.4	6.6	10.6	17.2	45.5
26 weeks and over	27.2	8.7	14.0	22.6	49.9
All unemployed persons	155.0	58.2	70.7	128.9	283.9
AVERAGE DURATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT (f) (weeks)					
Aged 15-19 years	13.3	*	16.6	16.6	15.0
Aged 20 years and over	16.4	11.0	15.3	12.2	14.6
All unemployed persons	15.4	11.4	16.2	14.0	14.8
UNEMPLOYMENT RATES (g) (per cent)					
Looking for full-time work (c)	3.8	3.7	9.3	6.2	4.5
Looking for part-time work (d)	6.1	5.3	7.5	5.7	5.8
Aged 15-19 years	12.8	*	15.1	15.0	13.9
Aged 20 years and over	2.9	4.2	4.7	4.3	3.4
All unemployed persons	3.9	4.3	8.9	6.0	4.7

(a) See footnotes (b) and (k) to Table 1. (b) Never married, widowed and divorced. (c) Includes persons laid off for the whole week from full-time jobs. (d) Includes persons laid off for the whole week from part-time jobs. (e) Period from the time the person began looking for work, or was laid off, to the end of survey week. (f) Periods of unemployment are recorded only in complete weeks; the averages shown are affected accordingly. (g) The number of unemployed in each group as a percentage of the labour force in the same group.

* Less than or based on a figure less than 4,000. See *The Labour Force* November 1975 (Reference No. 6.20) page 17, paragraph 7.

TABLE 4. — CIVILIAN POPULATION 15 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER (a) (k), BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS
STATES AND TERRITORIES, FEBRUARY 1976

State or Territory	Employed (b)(c)			Unemployed (b)		Total labour force (b)		Not in labour force (b) ('000)	Civilian population aged 15 and over (a) ('000)
	Agri-culture (d) ('000)	Other indus-tries (d) ('000)	Total ('000)	Number ('000)	Per cent of labour force (e)	Number ('000)	Per cent of popula-tion (g)		
MALES									
New South Wales	87.5	1,265.9	1,353.4	64.0	4.5	1,417.4	81.4	324.2	1,741.6
Victoria	66.4	963.1	1,029.5	39.9	3.7	1,069.4	81.2	248.2	1,317.6
Queensland	59.9	482.1	542.0	24.0	4.2	566.0	79.3	147.7	713.7
South Australia	33.5	322.4	355.9	11.0	3.0	366.9	81.8	81.9	448.8
Western Australia	35.8	296.4	332.1	9.3	2.7	341.5	83.3	68.2	409.7
Tasmania	9.7	100.3	110.1	4.8	4.2	114.9	79.7	29.2	144.1
Northern Territory	1.5	26.0	27.6	*	*	28.2	83.8	5.4	33.6
Australian Capital Territory	*	53.1	53.5	*	*	54.9	87.1	8.1	63.0
Australia	294.8	3,509.4	3,804.2	155.0	3.9	3,959.2	81.3	912.9	4,872.1
FEMALES									
New South Wales	21.9	690.5	712.4	47.1	6.2	759.5	42.5	1,027.2	1,786.7
Victoria	18.8	544.5	563.2	35.5	5.9	598.7	44.1	758.0	1,356.7
Queensland	11.3	249.2	260.4	17.5	6.3	277.9	38.5	444.3	722.2
South Australia	8.2	187.3	195.5	10.2	4.9	205.6	44.6	255.6	461.2
Western Australia	8.3	162.8	171.1	11.7	6.4	182.8	45.8	216.1	398.9
Tasmania	2.4	52.5	55.0	5.1	8.6	60.1	40.8	87.2	147.3
Northern Territory	*	12.6	13.4	*	*	14.1	50.0	14.0	28.1
Australian Capital Territory	*	35.4	35.4	*	*	36.6	56.1	28.6	65.2
Australia	71.7	1,934.8	2,006.5	128.9	6.0	2,135.4	43.0	2,830.9	4,966.3
PERSONS									
New South Wales	109.4	1,956.3	2,065.8	111.2	5.1	2,177.0	61.7	1,351.3	3,528.3
Victoria	85.2	1,507.6	1,592.8	75.4	4.5	1,668.1	62.4	1,006.2	2,674.3
Queensland	71.1	731.3	802.4	41.5	4.9	844.0	58.8	591.9	1,435.9
South Australia	41.6	509.7	551.4	21.2	3.7	572.6	62.9	337.4	910.0
Western Australia	44.1	459.2	503.3	21.0	4.0	524.3	64.8	284.3	808.6
Tasmania	12.2	152.9	165.0	9.9	5.7	175.0	60.0	116.4	291.4
Northern Territory	2.4	38.6	41.0	*	*	42.2	68.4	19.5	61.7
Australian Capital Territory	*	88.5	89.0	2.5	2.7	91.5	71.4	36.7	128.2
Australia	366.5	5,444.2	5,810.6	283.9	4.7	6,094.6	61.9	3,743.8	9,838.4

For footnotes see Table 1.

* Subject to sampling variability too high for most practical uses.

NOTE. Standard errors of State estimates are available from the office of the Australian Bureau of Statistics in each State capital. See also paragraph 8, page 1.

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NOTE. Inquiries concerning these statistics may be made in Canberra by telephoning Mr John Tayler on 52 6512 or, in each State capital by telephoning the office of the Australian Bureau of Statistics.