

THE LABOUR FORCE, JULY 1978 (PRELIMINARY)

INQUIRIES

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MAIN FEATURES

NOTE. The survey estimates are subject to sampling variability, as explained in paragraphs 16 to 20. Standard errors are shown in Table 1 and on page 4.

- In July 1978 the estimated number of persons in the civilian labour force was 6,376,100 (4,059,300 males, 2,316,800 females), comprising 5,998,100 employed persons (3,848,200 males, 2,149,800 females) and 378,000 unemployed persons (211,100 males, 166,900 females).
- The total labour force is at about the same level as a year ago.
- In July 325,400 unemployed persons were looking for full-time work, and 41,000 persons employed part-time were also actively seeking full-time jobs.
- The unemployment rate for persons looking for full-time work was 6.0 per cent. For those aged 25 years and over it was 3.8 per cent.

information obtained relates to the week prior to the interview (i.e. the survey week). Before February 1978 the interviews were spread over four weeks, chosen so that the survey weeks generally fell within the limits of the calendar month.

Scope

4. The survey includes all persons aged fifteen years and over except : members of the permanent defence forces; certain diplomatic personnel of overseas governments, customarily excluded from census and estimated populations; non-Australians on tour or holidaying in Australia; and members of non-Australian defence forces (and their dependants) stationed in Australia.

Definitions

5. The labour force category to which a person is assigned depends on his *actual activity* (i.e. whether working, looking for work, etc.) during the survey week. The definitions conform closely to the international standard definitions recommended by the ILO.

6. *Employed persons* comprise all those aged 15 years and over who, during the survey week :

- (a) worked for one hour or more for pay, profit, commission or payment in kind in a job or business, or on a farm (including employees, employers and self-employed persons); or
- (b) worked for 15 hours or more without pay in a family business or on a farm (i.e. unpaid family helper); or
- (c) were employees who had a job but were not at work and were: on paid leave; on leave without pay for less than four weeks up to the end of the survey week; stood down without pay because of bad weather or plant breakdown at their place of employment for less than four weeks up to the end of the survey week; on strike or locked out; on workers' compensation and expected to be returning to their job; or receiving wages or salary while undertaking full-time study; or
- (d) were employers or self-employed persons who had a job, business or farm, but were not at work.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

This bulletin contains preliminary estimates of the civilian labour force derived from the monthly population survey. Until February 1978, surveys were conducted in February, May, August and November each year. More detailed estimates will be published in *The Labour Force* (6203.0).

2. Preliminary unemployment estimates have been issued in advance of this publication in *Unemployment, Preliminary Estimates* (6201.0).

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 from the occupants of selected dwellings by carefully chosen and specially trained interviewers, the interviews being conducted during the two weeks beginning on the Monday between the 6th and 12th of each month. The

7. *Unemployed persons* are those aged 15 years and over who were not employed during the survey week, and

- (a) had actively looked for full-time or part-time work at any time in the four weeks up to the end of the survey week and :
 - (i) were available for work in the survey week, or would have been available except for temporary illness (i.e. lasting for less than four weeks to the end of the survey week); or
 - (ii) were waiting to start a new job within four weeks from the end of the survey week and would have started in the survey week if the job had been available then;

or (b) were waiting to be called back to a full-time or part-time job from which they had been stood down without pay for less than four weeks up to the end of the survey week (including the whole of the survey week) for reasons other than bad weather or plant breakdown.

8. *Unemployed persons looking for first job* are those who had never worked for two weeks or more in a full-time job.

9. The *unemployment rate* for any group is the number unemployed expressed as a percentage of the labour force (i.e. employed plus unemployed) in the same group.

10. The *labour force* comprises all persons who, during the survey week, were employed or unemployed, as defined in paragraphs 6 and 7.

11. The *labour force participation rate* for any group is the labour force expressed as a percentage of the civilian population aged 15 years and over in the same group.

12. *Full-time workers* are those who usually work 35 hours a week or more and others who, although usually part-time workers, worked 35 hours or more during the survey week. *Part-time workers* are those who usually work less than 35 hours a week and who did so during the survey week. When recording hours of work, fractions of an hour are disregarded.

13. *Persons not in the labour force* are those who, during the survey week, were not in the categories 'employed' or 'unemployed'.

Revision of series

14. The survey estimates for February 1978 and subsequent months are based on population estimates derived from the 1976 Population Census, adjusted for under-enumeration, and were obtained by using a new sample and revised questionnaire. Estimates from August 1976 have been revised to the new basis and are not comparable with those in issues of this publication prior to February 1978.

Comparability of series

15. Interviews are now conducted during a two-week period, whereas formerly the period was four weeks. (See paragraph 3.) This change of timing may affect the level of the figures for any month, but particularly for months during which unemployment may be changing rapidly.

Reliability of the estimates

16. Since the estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of dwellings they, and the movements derived from them, 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 surveys. 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 of dwellings was included in the surveys. 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 if all dwellings had been included in the survey, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two standard errors.

17. Standard errors of estimates for the latest month and of estimates of movements since the previous month are shown in Table 1. Standard errors of other estimates and other *monthly* movements should be determined by using Tables A and B on page 4. Movements between corresponding months of consecutive years, or between two other non-consecutive months will generally be subject to somewhat greater sampling variability than is indicated in Table B.

18. *The smaller the estimate the higher is the relative standard error.* Very small estimates are subject to such high relative standard errors as to detract seriously from their value for most reasonable uses. Estimates below the levels shown in Table A have not been included in this bulletin. Although figures for these small components can in some cases be derived by subtraction, they should not be regarded as reliable.

19. Examples of the calculation and use of standard errors are given below :

- (a) From Table A it will be seen that the estimate of 2,149,800 employed females in July 1978 has a standard error of about 11,400 and therefore there are about two chances in three that the value that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey will fall within the range 2,138,400 to 2,161,200 and about nineteen chances in twenty that the value will fall within the range 2,127,000 to 2,172,600.
- (b) The estimate of movement in the number of employed females from June to July 1978 is an increase of 17,900. Table B relates the standard error of the monthly movement to the larger of the two estimates from which the movement is

derived. In this case the July 1978 estimate (2,149,800) is the larger. From Table B it will be seen that the standard error of the monthly movement is about 8,300. Therefore there are about two chances in three that if all dwellings had been included in the surveys the movement would have been within the range 9,600 to 26,200 and about nineteen chances in twenty that it would have been within the range 1,300 to 34,500.

20. Further details on sampling variability can be obtained from the Technical Note in *The Labour Force* (6203.0).

Seasonally adjusted estimates

21. The move to the higher level of unemployment since 1974 appears to have been accompanied by shifts in the pattern of seasonal variation. For this reason the publication of seasonally adjusted quarterly figures of unemployment was suspended as from November 1977. The matter will be kept under review.

22. Seasonally adjusted quarterly estimates of the labour force are shown in Table 1. Seasonally adjusted figures for employed persons, the labour force and

labour force participation rates are published at quarterly intervals in *The Labour Force* (6203.0). Calculation of seasonally adjusted monthly figures will not be possible until results of monthly surveys for two or three years are available.

Related publications

23. Users may also wish to refer to the following publications which are available on request :

Unemployment (Preliminary estimates) (6201.0)

The Labour Force (6203.0)

Information Paper : Questionnaires used in the Labour Force Survey (6232.0)

All publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications* (1101.0), which is available free of charge from any ABS office.

Symbols and other usages

- * Subject to sampling variability too high for most practical uses. See paragraph 18, page 2.
- n.a. Figures not available.
- .. not applicable.

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

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Australian Statistician

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

Month	Unemployed										
	Employed	Looking for full-time work				Labour force			Civilian population aged 15 years and over	Unemployment rate	Participation rate
		Aged 15-19 years looking for first job	Total	Looking for part-time work	Total	Seasonally adjusted(b)		Not in labour force			
						Original	adjusted(b)				
- '000 -											
- per cent -											
MALES											
1977 -											
May	3,891.5	13.4	163.0	21.7	184.7	4,076.2	4,075.3	985.8	5,062.0	4.5	80.5
August	3,866.8	12.6	168.5	21.6	190.1	4,056.9	4,074.5	1,024.9	5,081.8	4.7	79.8
1978 -											
April (c)	3,867.7	21.9	196.2	14.6	210.9	4,078.5	n.a.	1,073.9	5,152.4	5.2	79.2
May	3,863.5	18.0	194.8	14.4	209.1	4,072.6	4,071.7	1,087.2	5,159.8	5.1	78.9
June	3,860.0	16.7	205.4	11.3	216.7	4,076.7	n.a.	1,091.0	5,167.7	5.3	78.9
July	3,848.2	14.1	202.4	8.7	211.1	4,059.3	n.a.	1,114.8	5,174.1	5.2	78.5
Standard error (d) of -											
July estimates	13.5	1.7	5.2	1.3	5.2	13.8	..	9.3	..	0.1	0.3
June to July movement	9.6	1.8	4.3	1.6	4.4	9.7	..	7.0	..	0.1	0.2
MARRIED WOMEN											
1977 -											
May	1,382.0	*	42.7	31.9	74.6	1,456.6	1,461.6	1,950.4	3,407.0	5.1	42.8
August	1,374.5	*	42.0	34.7	76.8	1,451.2	1,463.9	1,953.5	3,404.7	5.3	42.6
1978 -											
April (c)	1,354.0	*	47.5	35.4	82.9	1,437.0	n.a.	1,956.2	3,393.2	5.8	42.4
May	1,356.5	*	49.8	34.1	83.9	1,440.4	1,445.3	1,958.7	3,399.1	5.8	42.4
June	1,345.4	*	46.0	34.5	80.5	1,425.9	n.a.	1,977.6	3,403.5	5.6	41.9
July	1,368.7	*	44.1	28.2	72.4	1,441.1	n.a.	1,967.8	3,408.9	5.0	42.3
Standard error (d) of -											
July estimates	9.8	..	2.8	2.3	3.5	10.0	..	11.1	..	0.2	0.3
June to July movement	7.4	..	2.6	2.3	3.2	7.4	..	8.1	..	0.2	0.2
ALL FEMALES											
1977 -											
May	2,132.7	16.1	112.8	56.3	169.1	2,301.8	2,315.5	2,878.4	5,180.2	7.3	44.4
August	2,128.6	17.5	114.8	54.4	169.2	2,297.8	2,325.9	2,904.3	5,202.1	7.4	44.2
1978 -											
April (c)	2,136.1	24.5	137.3	53.0	190.3	2,326.4	n.a.	2,951.7	5,278.0	8.2	44.1
May	2,135.3	23.9	136.8	49.3	186.2	2,321.4	2,335.2	2,964.5	5,285.9	8.0	43.9
June	2,131.9	18.0	125.2	50.5	175.6	2,307.5	n.a.	2,987.6	5,295.1	7.6	43.6
July	2,149.8	17.8	123.0	43.9	166.9	2,316.8	n.a.	2,984.8	5,301.6	7.2	43.7
Standard error (d) of -											
July estimates	11.4	1.9	4.2	2.8	4.7	11.7	..	12.5	..	0.2	0.2
June to July movement	8.3	1.9	3.7	2.7	4.1	8.4	..	9.0	..	0.2	0.2
PERSONS											
1977 -											
May	6,024.2	29.5	275.8	78.0	353.8	6,378.0	6,389.8	3,864.2	10,242.2	5.5	62.3
August	5,995.4	30.1	283.3	76.0	359.3	6,354.7	6,400.7	3,929.2	10,283.9	5.7	61.8
1978 -											
April (c)	6,003.8	46.5	333.5	67.6	401.1	6,404.9	n.a.	4,025.6	10,430.5	6.3	61.4
May	5,998.7	41.8	331.6	63.7	395.3	6,394.0	6,405.6	4,051.7	10,445.7	6.2	61.2
June	5,991.9	34.6	330.5	61.8	392.3	6,384.2	n.a.	4,078.6	10,462.8	6.1	61.0
July	5,998.1	31.9	325.4	52.6	378.0	6,376.1	n.a.	4,099.6	10,475.7	5.9	60.9
Standard error (d) of -											
July estimates	15.5	2.4	6.0	3.0	6.4	15.8	..	13.9	..	0.1	0.2
June to July movement	10.7	2.4	5.0	2.9	5.3	10.9	..	10.2	..	0.1	0.1

(a) For scope of estimates see paragraph 4. For definitions see paragraphs 5 to 13. (b) Seasonally adjusted figures are available only at quarterly intervals. See paragraphs 21 and 22. (c) See paragraph 3 for details of change in timing of survey. (d) For information on standard errors see paragraphs 16 to 20.

* Less than 4,500. See paragraph 18.

TABLE 2. CIVILIAN POPULATION 15 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER, BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS (a)
STATES AND TERRITORIES, JULY 1978

State or Territory	Employed	Unemployed		Total	Labour force	Not in labour force	Civilian population aged 15 years and over	Unemployment rate	Participation rate
		Looking for full-time work	Looking for part-time work						
				- '000 -					
MALES									
N.S.W.	1,341.7	70.5	*	72.4	1,414.1	412.0	1,826.1	5.1	77.4
Vic.	1,045.1	41.2	*	43.3	1,088.4	288.4	1,376.8	4.0	79.1
Qld	570.9	37.3	*	38.2	609.1	177.5	786.7	6.3	77.4
S.A.	353.1	23.6	*	24.7	377.8	96.9	474.7	6.5	79.6
W.A.	336.2	19.6	*	21.2	357.4	91.4	448.8	5.9	79.6
Tas.	111.0	6.8	*	7.0	118.0	31.2	149.2	5.9	79.1
N.T.	32.7	*	*	*	33.8	7.3	41.1	*	82.2
A.C.T.	57.4	2.4	*	3.2	60.6	10.1	70.7	5.3	85.7
<i>Australia</i>	<i>3,848.2</i>	<i>202.4</i>	<i>8.7</i>	<i>211.1</i>	<i>4,059.3</i>	<i>1,114.8</i>	<i>5,174.1</i>	<i>5.2</i>	<i>78.5</i>
FEMALES									
N.S.W.	755.8	45.1	13.5	58.6	814.3	1,076.1	1,890.4	7.2	43.1
Vic.	593.7	32.2	14.2	46.4	640.1	785.0	1,425.1	7.2	44.9
Qld	296.7	17.3	6.1	23.5	320.2	479.6	799.8	7.3	40.0
S.A.	206.5	11.7	3.3	15.0	221.5	268.2	489.7	6.8	45.2
W.A.	187.7	11.5	3.8	15.3	203.0	236.8	439.8	7.5	46.2
Tas.	54.8	3.4	*	4.5	59.3	92.3	151.6	7.5	39.1
N.T.	14.2	*	*	*	15.0	16.7	31.6	*	47.3
A.C.T.	40.4	*	*	2.9	43.4	30.1	73.5	6.8	59.0
<i>Australia</i>	<i>2,149.8</i>	<i>123.0</i>	<i>43.9</i>	<i>166.9</i>	<i>2,316.8</i>	<i>2,984.8</i>	<i>5,301.6</i>	<i>7.2</i>	<i>43.7</i>
PERSONS									
N.S.W.	2,097.5	115.5	15.5	131.0	2,228.5	1,488.1	3,716.5	5.9	60.0
Vic.	1,638.8	73.3	16.3	89.7	1,728.5	1,073.4	2,801.9	5.2	61.7
Qld	867.7	54.6	7.1	61.7	929.3	657.1	1,586.4	6.6	58.6
S.A.	559.6	35.2	4.5	39.7	599.3	365.1	964.4	6.6	62.1
W.A.	523.9	31.2	5.3	36.5	560.4	328.2	888.6	6.5	63.1
Tas.	165.8	10.2	*	11.4	177.3	123.5	300.8	6.5	58.9
N.T.	46.9	*	*	*	48.8	24.0	72.8	*	67.0
A.C.T.	97.9	3.5	2.7	6.2	104.0	40.2	144.2	5.9	72.1
<i>Australia</i>	<i>5,998.1</i>	<i>325.4</i>	<i>52.6</i>	<i>378.0</i>	<i>6,376.1</i>	<i>4,099.6</i>	<i>10,475.7</i>	<i>5.9</i>	<i>60.9</i>

For footnotes see Table 1.

* Subject to sampling variability too high for most practical uses. See paragraph 18.

TABLE 3. EMPLOYED PERSONS (a), JULY 1978

	Males	Married women	Other females (b)	All females	Persons
NUMBER ('000)					
All employed persons	3,848.2	1,368.7	781.1	2,149.8	5,998.1
Full-time workers	3,648.5	784.1	628.9	1,413.0	5,061.5
Part-time workers	199.7	584.6	152.3	736.9	936.5
Preferred not to work more hours	161.8	528.2	125.5	653.7	815.5
Preferred to work more hours	37.9	56.4	26.8	83.2	121.1
Were actively looking for full-time work	16.8	10.6	13.7	24.3	41.0
AVERAGE WEEKLY HOURS WORKED (c)					
All employed persons	39.8	28.8	32.8	30.3	36.4
Full-time workers	41.0	38.3	37.5	37.9	40.2
Part-time workers	16.3	16.1	13.2	15.5	15.7

(a) For definitions see paragraphs 5 to 13. (b) Comprises never married, widowed and divorced. (c) Averages have been calculated by using actual hours worked during the survey week, not hours paid for. All employed persons, including those who did not work during the 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.

TABLE 4. UNEMPLOYED PERSONS (a), JULY 1978

	Number ('000)			Unemployment rate (per cent)		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
LOOKING FOR FULL-TIME WORK						
Total	202.4	123.0	325.4	5.3	8.0	6.0
Married	77.2	44.1	121.4	2.8	5.3	3.4
Not married (b)	125.2	78.9	204.0	11.0	11.1	11.1
Aged 15-19 years	52.8	49.3	102.1	15.9	17.5	16.6
Attending school	*	*	6.7
Aged 20-24 years	42.5	30.6	73.0	8.4	8.8	8.6
Aged 25 years and over	107.1	43.2	150.2	3.6	4.8	3.8
Born in Australia	142.7	89.2	232.0	5.1	8.0	5.9
Born outside Australia	59.6	33.8	93.4	5.6	8.1	6.3
Arrived before 1971	41.8	19.7	61.5	4.9	6.4	5.3
1971 to 1976	11.8	8.6	20.4	6.9	9.7	7.9
1977 and 1978	6.0	5.5	11.6	13.3	21.6	16.3
LOOKING FOR PART-TIME WORK						
Total	8.7	43.9	52.6	4.2	5.6	5.3
Aged 15-19 years	5.3	10.4	15.7	9.0	12.3	11.0
Attending school	*	7.3	11.1
Aged 20-24 years	*	5.8	6.5	*	9.3	7.1
Aged 25 years and over	*	27.7	30.4	*	4.4	4.0

For footnotes see Table 3.

* Less than or based on a figure less than 4,500. See paragraph 18.

TABLE 5. UNEMPLOYED PERSONS : DURATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT (a), JULY 1978

					Persons		
	Males	Married women	Other females (b)	All females	Looking for -		Total
					Full-time work	Part-time work	
NUMBER ('000)							
Duration of unemployment (weeks) -							
Under 2	13.3	10.5	7.4	17.9	22.6	8.7	31.3
2 and under 4	22.7	9.2	9.6	18.8	30.8	10.6	41.5
4 and under 8	33.1	11.4	15.9	27.3	51.3	9.1	60.4
8 and under 13	27.6	9.0	8.4	17.4	39.9	5.1	45.0
13 and under 26	40.6	11.1	17.6	28.7	61.1	8.2	69.2
26 and under 39	31.8	9.4	15.3	24.7	51.2	5.3	56.5
39 and under 52	9.1	*	*	5.6	13.6	5.5	14.8
52 and over	32.8	9.4	17.1	26.6	55.0		
Total	211.1	72.4	94.5	166.9	325.4	52.6	378.0
AVERAGE DURATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT (weeks)							
All unemployed persons	25.4	21.1	31.7	27.1	27.5	17.9	26.1
Aged 15-19 years	20.0	*	26.4	25.9	23.9	17.0	23.0
Aged 20 years and over	27.4	21.3	39.5	27.8	29.1	18.3	27.6

For footnotes see Table 3.

* Less than or based on a figure less than 4,500. See paragraph 18.

TABLE 6. UNEMPLOYED PERSONS (a) : STATE CAPITAL CITIES, JULY 1978

Capital city	Number ('000)			Unemployment rate (per cent)		
	Looking for full-time work	Looking for part-time work	Total	Looking for full-time work	Looking for part-time work	Total
Sydney	65.0	10.0	75.0	5.3	4.5	5.2
Melbourne	53.9	12.6	66.4	5.0	6.6	5.3
Brisbane	24.6	3.8	28.5	6.6	5.8	6.4
Adelaide	26.5	3.1	29.7	7.4	4.2	6.8
Perth	23.9	4.0	27.8	7.4	5.5	7.1
Hobart	3.3	*	3.6	5.2	*	4.9
Total	197.2	33.8	231.0	5.8	5.3	5.7

For footnotes see Table 3.

* Subject to sampling variability too high for most practical uses. See paragraph 18.