

THE LABOUR FORCE, AUGUST 1978 (PRELIMINARY)

INQUIRIES

If you want to know more about these statistics ring Mr Godfrey Laurie on Canberra 526565 or our State office, or write to Information Services, ABS, P.O. Box 10, Belconnen, A.C.T. 2616

For copies of this publication contact Information Services, Canberra 526627 or State offices.

MAIN FEATURES

NOTE. The survey estimates are subject to sampling variability, as explained in paragraphs 15 to 18. Standard errors are shown in Table 1 and on page 3.

- In August 1978 the estimated number of persons in the civilian labour force was 6,364,400 (4,053,800 males, 2,310,600 females) comprising 5,969,400 employed persons (3,832,600 males, 2,136,800 females) and 395,000 unemployed persons (221,200 males, 173,800 females).
- Between July and August 1978, the number of persons in full-time employment decreased by 44,400, while those in part-time employment increased by 15,800.
- In the year ended August 1978 the labour force increased by 9,700. The number not in the labour force increased by 193,000 (100,100 males, 92,900 females).
- The unemployment rate in August 1978 was highest in the construction industry (8.1 per cent). (See Table 5.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

This bulletin contains preliminary estimates of the civilian labour force derived from the monthly population survey. More detailed estimates will be published in *The Labour Force* (6203.0). Preliminary unemployment estimates have been issued in advance of this publication in *Unemployment, Preliminary Estimates* (6201.0).

The population survey

2. 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

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

3. 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

4. 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.

5. *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.

6. *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.

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

8. The *unemployment rate* for any group is the number unemployed expressed as a percentage of the labour force in the same group.

9. The *labour force* comprises all persons who, during the survey week, were employed or unemployed, as defined in paragraphs 5 and 6.

10. 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.

11. *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.

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

Revision of series

13. 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 1974 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

14. The change of timing of the survey 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

15. Since the survey estimates 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 by chance 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*. 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.

16. 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 3.

17. *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. Although figures for these small components can in some cases be derived by subtraction, they should not be regarded as reliable.

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

(a) From Table A it will be seen that the estimate of 2,136,800 employed females in August 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 2,125,400 to 2,148,200 and about nineteen chances in twenty that the value will fall within the range 2,114,000 to 2,159,600.

(b) The estimate of movement in the number of employed females from July to August 1978 is a decrease of 13,000. 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 -4,700 to -21,300 and about nineteen chances

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

Month	Unemployed										
	Employed	Looking for full-time work		Looking for part-time work	Total	Labour force		Not in labour force	Civilian population aged 15 years and over	Unemployment rate	Participation rate
		Aged 15-19 years looking for first job	Total			Original	Seasonally 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 -											
May (c)	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
August	3,832.6	18.1	206.9	14.2	221.2	4,053.8	4,071.3	1,125.0	5,178.8	5.5	78.3
Standard error (d) of -											
August estimates	13.5	1.9	5.2	1.7	5.3	13.8	..	9.4	..	0.1	0.3
July to August movement	9.6	1.9	4.3	1.7	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 -											
May (c)	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
August	1,359.4	*	46.9	30.3	77.2	1,436.6	1,449.1	1,978.2	3,414.8	5.4	42.1
Standard error (d) of -											
August estimates	9.8	..	2.8	2.3	3.5	10.0	..	11.1	..	0.2	0.3
July to August movement	7.4	..	2.6	2.3	3.1	7.4	..	8.2	..	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 -											
May (c)	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
August	2,136.8	20.8	125.1	48.7	173.8	2,310.6	2,338.6	2,997.2	5,307.8	7.5	43.5
Standard error (d) of -											
August estimates	11.4	2.0	4.2	2.9	4.8	11.7	..	12.5	..	0.2	0.2
July to August movement	8.3	2.0	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 -											
May (c)	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
August	5,969.4	38.9	332.1	62.9	395.0	6,364.4	6,410.2	4,122.2	10,486.6	6.2	60.7
Standard error (d) of -											
August estimates	15.5	2.6	6.1	3.2	6.5	15.8	..	13.9	..	0.1	0.2
July to August movement	10.7	2.5	5.0	2.9	5.3	10.9	..	9.7	..	0.1	0.1

(a) For scope of estimates see paragraph 3. For definitions see paragraphs 4 to 12. (b) Seasonally adjusted figures are available only at quarterly intervals. See paragraph 19. (c) See paragraph 2 for details of change in timing of survey. (d) For information on standard errors see paragraphs 15 to 18.

* Less than 4,500. See paragraph 17.

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

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 -					
- per cent -									
MALES									
N.S.W.	1,333.0	67.3	5.6	72.8	1,405.9	421.9	1,827.8	5.2	76.9
Vic.	1,035.8	47.6	*	51.6	1,087.4	290.7	1,378.1	4.7	78.9
Qld	574.2	35.9	*	37.6	611.8	176.0	787.8	6.2	77.7
S.A.	350.2	27.5	*	28.4	378.7	96.7	457.3	7.5	79.7
W.A.	335.8	19.7	*	20.8	356.6	93.1	449.7	5.8	79.3
Tas.	111.2	6.0	*	6.3	117.5	31.8	149.3	5.3	78.7
N.T.	34.3	*	*	*	35.3	6.1	41.5	*	85.2
A.C.T.	58.0	*	*	2.6	60.6	8.7	69.3	4.3	87.5
<i>Australia</i>	<i>3,832.6</i>	<i>206.9</i>	<i>14.2</i>	<i>221.2</i>	<i>4,053.8</i>	<i>1,125.0</i>	<i>5,178.8</i>	<i>5.5</i>	<i>78.3</i>
FEMALES									
N.S.W.	749.8	42.7	17.5	60.2	810.0	1,082.3	1,892.3	7.4	42.8
Vic.	588.0	33.7	14.7	48.4	636.4	790.4	1,426.8	7.6	44.6
Qld	305.5	18.7	6.2	24.9	330.4	470.6	801.0	7.5	41.3
S.A.	203.2	12.4	3.4	15.8	219.0	271.5	490.4	7.2	44.6
W.A.	182.5	12.3	4.0	16.3	198.8	241.8	440.6	8.2	45.1
Tas.	54.7	3.6	*	4.7	59.4	92.4	151.8	7.9	39.1
N.T.	14.4	*	*	*	14.9	17.8	32.6	*	45.5
A.C.T.	38.7	*	*	3.1	41.8	30.5	72.3	7.5	57.9
<i>Australia</i>	<i>2,136.8</i>	<i>125.1</i>	<i>48.7</i>	<i>173.8</i>	<i>2,310.6</i>	<i>2,997.2</i>	<i>5,307.8</i>	<i>7.5</i>	<i>43.5</i>
PERSONS									
N.S.W.	2,082.8	110.0	23.0	133.0	2,215.8	1,504.2	3,720.0	6.0	59.6
Vic.	1,623.8	81.3	18.7	100.0	1,723.8	1,081.1	2,804.9	5.8	61.5
Qld	879.8	54.6	7.9	62.5	942.3	646.6	1,588.9	6.6	59.3
S.A.	553.4	39.8	4.4	44.2	597.6	368.1	965.8	7.4	61.9
W.A.	518.3	32.0	5.1	37.1	555.4	334.9	890.3	6.7	62.4
Tas.	165.9	9.6	*	10.9	176.8	124.3	301.1	6.2	58.7
N.T.	48.7	*	*	*	50.2	23.9	74.1	*	67.7
A.C.T.	96.7	3.2	2.5	5.7	102.4	39.1	141.6	5.6	72.3
<i>Australia</i>	<i>5,969.4</i>	<i>332.1</i>	<i>62.9</i>	<i>395.0</i>	<i>6,364.4</i>	<i>4,122.2</i>	<i>10,486.6</i>	<i>6.2</i>	<i>60.7</i>

For footnotes see Table 1.

* Subject to sampling variability too high for most practical uses. See paragraph 17.

TABLE 3. EMPLOYED PERSONS (a), AUGUST 1978

	Males	Married women	Other females (b)	All females	Persons
NUMBER ('000)					
All employed persons	3,832.6	1,359.4	777.3	2,136.8	5,969.4
Full-time workers	3,626.7	768.5	621.8	1,390.3	5,017.1
Part-time workers	205.9	590.9	155.5	746.5	952.3
Preferred not to work more hours	169.5	536.0	126.8	662.8	832.2
Preferred to work more hours	36.4	54.9	28.8	83.7	120.1
Were actively looking for full-time work	16.3	8.6	10.9	19.5	35.8
AVERAGE WEEKLY HOURS WORKED (c)					
All employed persons	40.1	28.7	32.7	30.2	36.6
Full-time workers	41.4	38.4	37.4	37.9	40.5
Part-time workers	16.9	16.2	13.9	15.8	16.0

(a) For definitions see paragraphs 4 to 12. (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 AUGUST 1978 (a)

	Number ('000)			Unemployment rate (per cent)		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
LOOKING FOR FULL-TIME WORK						
Total	206.9	125.1	332.1	5.4	8.3	6.2
Married	72.7	46.9	119.6	2.7	5.7	3.4
Not married (b)	134.2	78.3	212.5	11.9	11.2	11.6
Aged 15-19 years	57.5	49.5	107.0	17.3	17.9	17.6
Attending school	5.2	*	9.6
Aged 20-24 years	44.6	32.2	76.8	9.0	9.8	9.3
Aged 25 years and over	104.8	43.4	148.2	3.5	4.8	3.8
Born in Australia	148.0	89.2	237.1	5.3	8.0	6.1
Born outside Australia	59.0	35.9	94.9	5.6	8.8	6.5
Arrived before 1971	42.5	20.1	62.6	5.1	6.8	5.5
1971 to 1976	9.9	8.0	17.9	5.8	9.3	7.0
1977 and 1978	6.6	7.8	14.4	13.8	30.5	19.6
LOOKING FOR PART-TIME WORK						
Total	14.2	48.7	62.9	6.5	6.1	6.2
Aged 15-19 years	8.1	12.5	20.6	12.3	15.2	13.9
Attending school	5.5	9.2	14.7
Aged 20-24 years	*	5.5	7.6	*	8.7	8.0
Aged 25 years and over	*	30.6	34.7	*	4.7	4.5

For footnotes see Table 3.

* Less than or based on a figure less than 4,500. See paragraph 17.

TABLE 5. UNEMPLOYED PERSONS, BY INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATION OF LAST FULL-TIME JOB, AUGUST 1978 (a)

Industry division or sub-division	Number ('000)	Unemployment rate (per cent)	Occupation group	Number ('000)	Unemployment rate (per cent)
Agriculture and services to agriculture	14.7	4.0	Professional, technical, etc.	12.0	1.4
Manufacturing	64.8	5.2	Administrative, executive and managerial	*	*
Food, beverages and tobacco	15.5	7.5	Clerical	30.5	2.9
Metal products, machinery and equipment	9.1	4.4	Sales	28.5	5.1
Other manufacturing	40.1	4.8	Farmers, fishermen, timber-getters, etc.	20.0	4.6
Construction	42.5	8.1	Miners, quarrymen, etc.	*	*
Wholesale and retail trade	63.4	4.9	Transport and communication	14.9	4.3
Transport and storage	10.5	3.1	Tradesmen, production-process workers and labourers, n.e.c.	128.7	6.5
Finance, insurance, real estate and business services	12.2	2.6	Service, sport and recreation	29.2	4.9
Community services	18.9	2.0			
Entertainment, recreation, restaurants, hotels and personal services	24.1	6.2			
Other industries	17.9	2.8			
Other (b)	125.9	..			
Total	395.0	6.2			

(a) For scope of estimates see paragraph 3. For definitions see paragraphs 4 to 12. (b) Had never worked for two weeks or more in a full-time job or had not done so in the last two years. Industry and occupation were not obtained for these persons.

* Less than or based on a figure less than 4,500. See paragraph 17.

TABLE 6. UNEMPLOYED PERSONS : DURATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT, AUGUST 1978 (a)

	Persons						
	Looking for -						Total
	Males	Married women	Other females (b)	All females	Full-time work	Part-time work	
NUMBER ('000)							
Duration of unemployment (weeks) -							
Under 2	17.8	11.8	9.5	21.3	27.7	11.4	39.2
2 and under 4	23.3	12.0	9.4	21.3	32.8	11.8	44.6
4 and under 8	30.2	9.8	15.2	25.0	45.8	9.3	55.1
8 and under 13	30.3	8.5	8.4	16.9	41.5	5.7	47.3
13 and under 26	41.1	11.3	16.7	28.0	60.9	8.2	69.1
26 and under 39	35.6	11.4	16.0	27.5	53.8	9.3	63.1
39 and under 52	8.9	*	*	6.3	14.0	*	15.2
52 and over	33.9	10.3	17.3	27.6	55.6	5.9	61.5
Total	221.2	77.2	96.6	173.8	332.1	62.9	395.0
AVERAGE DURATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT (weeks)							
All unemployed persons	25.5	21.1	32.1	27.2	27.6	19.2	26.2
Aged 15-19 years	19.9	*	27.7	27.2	25.0	15.3	23.5
Aged 20 years and over	27.8	21.2	38.9	27.2	28.8	21.1	27.6

(a) For scope of estimates see paragraph 3. For definitions see paragraphs 4 to 12. (b) Never married, widowed and divorced.

* Less than or based on a figure less than 4,500. See paragraph 17.

TABLE 7. UNEMPLOYED PERSONS : STATE CAPITAL CITIES, AUGUST 1978 (a)

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	61.7	15.6	77.3	5.0	7.0	5.3
Melbourne	56.5	14.8	71.3	5.4	7.3	5.7
Brisbane	26.6	4.3	30.9	7.0	6.4	6.9
Adelaide	30.3	3.6	33.9	8.5	4.9	7.9
Perth	25.5	3.5	29.0	7.9	5.2	7.4
Hobart	3.2	*	3.9	5.2	*	5.3
Total	203.8	42.5	246.2	6.0	6.6	6.1

(a) See note (a) to Table 6.

* Subject to sampling variability too high for most practical uses. See paragraph 17.