



UNEMPLOYMENT, AUSTRALIA, DECEMBER 1981 PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES

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MAIN FEATURES

Note: Survey estimates are subject to sampling variability, as explained in paragraphs 8 to 10 below. Standard errors of estimates and of movements are shown in the tables.

In December 1981 the estimated number of unemployed persons looking for full-time work was 356,100, representing 6.1 per cent of the full-time labour force.

The number aged 15-19 years looking for their first full-time job was 74,700.

An estimated 74,900 persons were looking for part-time work, representing 6.6 per cent of the part-time labour force.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

This publication contains preliminary unemployment estimates derived from the monthly population survey. It is generally released in the third week following completion of the interviews. (See paragraph 2.) More detailed estimates are published in *The Labour Force, Australia (Preliminary)* (6202.0) and *The Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0).

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 are generally conducted during the two weeks beginning on the Monday between the 6th and 12th of each month. Because of operational problems arising from the Christmas and New Year holidays the December 1978 and 1979 surveys commenced a week earlier than usual (with most interviews being conducted during the second week) and the January 1979 and 1980 surveys commenced a week later than usual. The information obtained relates to the week before the interview (i.e. the survey week).

Definitions

3. For the purposes of the survey, *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.

This definition of unemployed persons conforms closely to that recommended by the Eighth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (1954).

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

5. 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.

Earlier estimates

6. Estimates back to August 1966 on a basis comparable with those in this publication are published in *The Labour Force, Australia* (6204.0) beginning with the 1978 issue.

Comparability of series

7. Since the introduction of monthly surveys in February 1978 the interviews have been conducted during a two-week period, whereas formerly the period was four weeks. 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

8. 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 survey. 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.

9. Detailed information on standard errors of the estimates and of movements in the estimates is published in current issues of *The Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0).

10. Standard errors of unemployment estimates for the latest month and of estimates of movements since the previous month are contained in the tables. Examples of the use of these two sets of standard errors are given below.

- (a) The estimate of 356,100 unemployed persons looking for full-time work in December 1981 has a standard error of about 6,300 and therefore there are about two chances in three that the number that would have been obtained if all dwellings had been included in the survey will be within the range 349,800 to 362,400 and about nineteen chances in twenty that the number will be within the range 343,500 to 368,700.
- (b) The estimate of movement in the number of unemployed persons looking for full-time work from November to December 1981 is an increase of 45,400. The standard error of this estimate of movement is about 5,100 and therefore there are about two chances in three that if all dwellings had been included in the survey the movement would have been within the range +40,300 to +50,500 and about nineteen chances in twenty that it would have been within the range +35,200 to +55,600.

Seasonal adjustment

11. 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 has been suspended. The matter will be kept under review. Calculation of seasonally adjusted monthly figures is not yet possible.

Related publications

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

The Labour Force, Australia (Preliminary) (6202.0)—*issued monthly*

The Labour Force, Australia (6203.0)—*issued monthly*

The Labour Force, Australia, 1980 (6204.0)

Job Vacancies, Australia (6231.0)—*issued quarterly*

Unemployment, Underemployment and Related Statistics, Australia, February 1978 to February 1980 (6236.0)

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

13. 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

- . . not applicable
- * subject to sampling variability too high for most practical uses. See paragraphs 8 to 10 for details.
- p preliminary—figures subject to revision

14. Figures have been rounded and discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

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TABLE 1. UNEMPLOYED PERSONS(a)

Month	Number ('000)						Unemployment rate (per cent)				
	Looking for full-time work					Looking for full-time work					
	Aged 15-19 years			Aged 20 years and over		Aged 15-19 years			Aged 20 years and over		Looking for part-time work
	Looking for first job	Total	Aged 20 years and over	Total	Looking for part-time work	Total	Aged 15-19 years	Aged 20 years and over	Total	Looking for part-time work	Total
MALES											
1980—											
October	21.7	53.5	126.6	180.1	14.7	194.8	16.0	3.5	4.5	6.4	4.6
November	22.4	50.5	120.9	171.4	11.5	182.8	15.3	3.3	4.3	4.8	4.4
December	43.2	74.8	131.4	206.1	20.1	226.2	19.0	3.6	5.1	8.4	5.3
1981—											
January	34.4	71.6	146.6	218.2	15.7	233.9	18.4	4.0	5.4	7.5	5.5
February	29.8	60.2	143.4	203.6	16.4	220.0	15.6	3.9	5.0	7.7	5.2
March	19.7	46.7	139.1	185.8	17.5	203.2	12.5	3.8	4.6	7.5	4.8
April	15.6	40.6	131.1	171.7	16.2	187.9	11.2	3.6	4.3	7.0	4.4
May	15.0	44.2	131.3	175.5	17.3	192.9	12.1	3.6	4.4	7.3	4.5
June	12.4	40.3	128.9	169.2	12.3	181.5	11.5	3.5	4.2	5.3	4.3
July	12.5	42.4	139.8	182.1	14.7	196.8	12.0	3.8	4.5	6.5	4.6
August	12.5	40.7	146.4	187.0	12.7	199.7	12.2	4.0	4.7	5.4	4.7
September	15.1	43.5	150.7	194.2	15.3	209.5	12.5	4.1	4.8	6.6	4.9
October	18.0	44.9	140.5	185.4	14.3	199.7	13.4	3.8	4.6	6.1	4.7
November	18.5	46.7	138.9	185.6	14.8	200.4	14.4	3.8	4.6	6.5	4.7
December p	37.0	69.0	136.2	205.1	26.5	231.6	18.2	3.7	5.0	11.1	5.3
Standard error of—											
December 1981 estimates	2.6	3.4	4.4	5.2	2.2	5.4	0.9	0.1	0.1	0.9	0.1
November to December 1981 movement	2.5	3.0	3.8	4.3	2.2	4.5	0.8	0.1	0.1	0.9	0.1
FEMALES											
1980—											
October	24.1	53.3	73.7	127.0	53.9	180.9	19.3	5.6	7.9	6.2	7.3
November	21.1	51.5	79.9	131.3	42.8	174.1	18.7	6.0	8.2	4.9	7.0
December	39.2	72.3	79.0	151.2	54.5	205.8	23.3	5.9	9.1	6.4	8.2
1981—											
January	43.0	75.0	83.8	158.7	37.7	196.5	23.9	6.3	9.6	5.0	8.2
February	33.4	66.9	87.8	154.7	49.4	204.1	22.4	6.5	9.4	5.9	8.3
March	28.4	59.4	85.5	144.9	61.7	206.6	20.7	6.4	8.9	6.9	8.2
April	25.6	55.9	78.9	134.8	53.3	188.1	19.6	5.8	8.2	6.1	7.5
May	23.9	51.8	80.3	132.1	50.5	182.6	18.6	6.0	8.1	5.8	7.3
June	20.6	46.6	73.8	120.5	48.3	168.7	16.9	5.5	7.4	5.6	6.8
July	23.3	52.7	80.0	132.8	45.2	178.0	19.1	5.9	8.1	5.2	7.1
August	17.9	50.3	83.5	133.8	43.5	177.4	19.1	6.2	8.3	5.0	7.1
September	21.2	48.6	85.3	133.9	47.7	181.6	18.7	6.1	8.0	5.4	7.1
October	19.5	44.1	74.5	118.7	52.0	170.6	17.7	5.4	7.2	5.9	6.8
November	19.6	45.8	79.3	125.1	46.4	171.5	18.4	5.7	7.6	5.2	6.8
December p	37.7	68.0	83.0	151.0	48.4	199.4	23.6	5.9	8.9	5.4	7.7
Standard error of—											
December 1981 estimates	2.6	3.3	3.6	4.6	2.9	5.1	1.1	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2
November to December 1981 movement	2.5	3.0	3.2	3.9	2.7	4.3	1.0	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2
PERSONS											
1980—											
October	45.9	106.8	200.3	307.1	68.6	375.7	17.5	4.0	5.5	6.3	5.6
November	43.5	102.0	200.7	302.7	54.3	357.0	16.8	4.1	5.4	4.9	5.4
December	82.3	147.0	210.3	357.4	74.6	432.0	20.9	4.2	6.2	6.8	6.3
1981—											
January	77.4	146.5	230.4	377.0	53.4	430.4	20.8	4.6	6.6	5.6	6.5
February	63.2	127.2	231.2	358.4	65.8	424.1	18.6	4.6	6.3	6.3	6.3
March	48.1	106.1	224.6	330.7	79.2	409.9	16.0	4.5	5.8	7.0	6.0
April	41.2	96.5	210.0	306.5	69.5	376.0	14.9	4.2	5.4	6.3	5.6
May	38.8	96.0	211.6	307.7	67.8	375.5	14.9	4.2	5.4	6.1	5.6
June	33.0	86.9	202.7	289.7	60.6	350.2	13.9	4.1	5.1	5.5	5.2
July	35.8	95.1	219.8	314.9	59.9	374.8	15.1	4.4	5.6	5.5	5.5
August	30.4	91.0	229.9	320.9	56.2	377.1	15.2	4.6	5.7	5.1	5.6
September	36.3	92.1	236.0	328.1	63.0	391.1	15.2	4.6	5.7	5.6	5.7
October	37.4	89.0	215.1	304.1	66.3	370.4	15.2	4.2	5.4	5.9	5.5
November	38.1	92.5	218.2	310.7	61.2	371.9	16.1	4.3	5.5	5.5	5.5
December p	74.7	137.0	219.2	356.1	74.9	431.0	20.5	4.3	6.1	6.6	6.2
Standard error of—											
December 1981 estimates	3.5	4.4	5.3	6.3	3.5	6.8	0.7	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.1
November to December 1981 movement	3.1	3.8	4.4	5.1	3.1	5.4	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.1

(a) For definitions see page 1. For information on standard errors see paragraphs 8 to 10

TABLE 2. UNEMPLOYED PERSONS(a), STATES AND TERRITORIES

State or Territory	Number ('000)					Unemployment rate (per cent)				
	Looking for full-time work					Looking for full-time work				
	Aged 15-19 years	Aged 20 years and over	Total	Looking for part-time work	Total	Aged 15-19 years	Aged 20 years and over	Total	Looking for part-time work	Total
New South Wales—										
1980—December	46.6	64.4	111.0	24.7	135.7	19.4	3.6	5.5	6.7	5.7
1981—November	29.3	73.6	102.9	22.8	125.8	15.3	4.1	5.2	6.1	5.3
December p	42.2	69.3	111.5	24.2	135.7	18.8	3.8	5.5	6.5	5.6
Standard error of—										
December 1981 estimates	2.8	3.4	4.1	2.2	4.4	1.2	0.2	0.2	0.6	0.2
November to December 1981 movement	2.4	2.9	3.3	2.0	3.5	1.1	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.1
Victoria—										
1980—December	36.1	62.4	98.5	21.1	119.6	21.0	4.5	6.3	7.2	6.5
1981—November	26.1	51.7	77.8	12.7	90.6	18.3	3.8	5.1	4.5	5.0
December p	33.8	53.2	87.0	20.9	108.0	20.8	3.8	5.6	7.2	5.9
Standard error of—										
December 1981 estimates	2.3	2.8	3.3	1.9	3.6	1.4	0.2	0.2	0.7	0.2
November to December 1981 movement	2.0	2.3	2.7	1.7	2.8	1.2	0.2	0.2	0.6	0.2
Queensland—										
1980—December	24.3	31.6	55.9	11.3	67.2	20.1	4.3	6.5	7.2	6.6
1981—November	10.6	31.2	41.7	10.5	52.3	10.9	4.1	4.9	5.9	5.1
December p	22.3	34.4	56.8	10.4	67.2	19.2	4.5	6.5	5.9	6.4
Standard error of—										
December 1981 estimates	1.6	1.9	2.3	1.2	2.4	1.4	0.2	0.3	0.7	0.2
November to December 1981 movement	1.3	1.5	1.8	1.1	1.9	1.1	0.2	0.2	0.6	0.2
South Australia—										
1980—December	16.6	23.5	40.1	6.1	46.2	25.8	5.3	8.0	5.6	7.6
1981—November	11.1	28.8	39.9	5.9	45.8	19.9	6.5	8.0	5.3	7.5
December p	15.3	26.8	42.0	7.6	49.6	24.8	6.0	8.3	6.7	8.0
Standard error of—										
December 1981 estimates	1.1	1.3	1.5	0.8	1.6	1.8	0.3	0.3	0.7	0.3
November to December 1981 movement	0.9	1.0	1.1	0.7	1.2	1.5	0.2	0.2	0.6	0.2
Western Australia—										
1980—December	13.8	18.6	32.5	7.6	40.1	20.1	4.3	6.4	7.0	6.5
1981—November	9.7	21.6	31.3	4.9	36.2	17.1	4.9	6.3	4.5	6.0
December p	13.8	22.7	36.4	7.9	44.3	20.7	5.2	7.2	7.0	7.1
Standard error of—										
December 1981 estimates	1.0	1.3	1.5	0.8	1.6	1.5	0.3	0.3	0.7	0.3
November to December 1981 movement	0.9	1.0	1.2	0.7	1.2	1.3	0.2	0.2	0.6	0.2
Tasmania—										
1980—December	6.6	6.3	12.9	1.6	14.5	25.2	4.6	7.9	5.2	7.5
1981—November	3.8	6.6	10.4	1.9	12.3	20.5	4.8	6.7	6.3	6.6
December p	7.4	7.8	15.2	1.8	17.0	30.6	5.6	9.4	6.0	8.8
Standard error of—										
December 1981 estimates	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.3	0.8	2.5	0.4	0.4	1.0	0.4
November to December 1981 movement	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.5	1.7	0.3	0.3	0.9	0.3
Northern Territory—										
1980—December	*	*	*	*	2.5	*	*	*	*	4.4
1981—November	*	2.1	3.1	*	3.9	*	4.3	5.8	*	6.4
December p	*	*	2.1	*	2.1	*	*	4.0	*	3.6
Standard error of—										
December 1981 estimates	..	..	0.5	..	0.5	..	..	1.0	..	0.9
November to December 1981 movement	..	..	0.5	..	0.5	..	..	0.6	..	0.5
Australian Capital Territory—										
1980—December	2.0	2.9	4.9	*	6.3	25.7	3.4	5.4	*	5.7
1981—November	*	2.7	3.5	*	5.1	*	3.1	3.8	*	4.4
December p	*	3.3	5.1	2.0	7.2	*	3.8	5.4	9.3	6.2
Standard error of—										
December 1981 estimates	..	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.7	..	0.6	0.6	1.9	0.6
November to December 1981 movement	..	0.4	0.5	..	0.5	..	0.5	0.5	..	0.4

(a) See note (a) to Table 1.