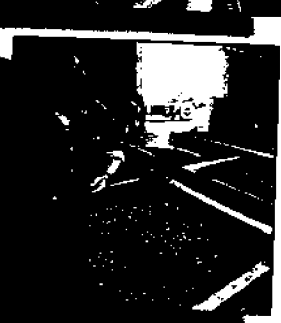


Australians' Employment and Unemployment Patterns Jobseekers

1994

1995



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AUSTRALIANS' EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT PATTERNS, JOBSEEKERS

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AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

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PREFACE

The Survey of Employment and Unemployment Patterns is designed to measure labour market dynamics and information will be collected from the same panel of respondents over a number of years. The survey panel comprises a sample of Jobseekers, persons known to have been participants in various labour market programs, and a reference group of the general population aged 15–59 years. This publication presents initial results from the first year of the survey about Jobseekers and their labour market activities in the period September 1994 to September 1995.

The statistics in this publication represent only a small selection of the data that is available from the survey. A full list of the data items that are available for each respondent is at Appendix B. An information paper outlining the dissemination strategy for the survey was released in 1996. Both the information paper and more extensive data are available on request.

This publication draws extensively on information provided by individuals. Their cooperation is very much appreciated.

T J Skinner
Acting Australian Statistician

Australian Bureau of Statistics
February 1997

INTRODUCTION

SURVEY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Survey of Employment and Unemployment Patterns (SEUP) are to provide information on the dynamics of the labour market to assist in the assessment of the impact of labour market assistance initiatives in alleviating the extent of joblessness in Australian society.

PUBLICATION CONTENT

This publication provides an introduction to the survey concepts and data. In particular, it describes the characteristics and labour market activities of Jobseekers to set the scene for more detailed longitudinal analysis based on data from future survey waves. Data are presented in two ways. First, the characteristics of Jobseekers are described in a 'snapshot' manner based on information collected at the time of panel establishment. Second, information is presented relating to labour market activities during the reference period for the first wave of the survey, the 12 months from September 1994 to September 1995.

The publication is structured in the following way:

- An overview of selected findings;
- Chapter 1 describes the Jobseeker population in terms of their socio-demographic, educational and employment characteristics;
- Chapter 2 examines the labour market activities undertaken by Jobseekers, that is, periods of working, looking for work and labour market absence; and
- Chapter 3 examines Jobseekers' labour market transitions during the 12-month period ending September 1995.

SURVEY FEATURES

The SEUP is a longitudinal survey in that information will be collected from the same individuals (referred to as a panel) over a number of years.

The panel of approximately 8,600 persons living in private dwellings, and located in both urban and rural areas, was established in the period 24 April to 7 July 1995 (for simplicity referred to as 'May 1995'). At this time, a wide range of information was collected about respondents' socio-demographic characteristics, about their broad employment history since leaving full-time education, and, in more detail, about their episodes of labour market activity since September 1994. A further interview later in 1995 collected some additional background variables, and extended the time frame for which detailed labour market activity information was available to a full 12 months — September 1994 to September 1995. This set of data is referred to as the first wave.

The second and third waves will provide data for the cumulative periods from September 1994 to September 1996 and 1997 respectively.

Data collected directly from the respondent will be supplemented with information from administrative systems maintained by the Department of Employment, Education, Training, and Youth Affairs (DEETYA) and the Department of Social Security (DSS). However, this will only occur with the respondent's consent. This data will be included in a publication to be released in 1997.

Due to the relatively small sample size little reliable information can be provided for individual States and Territories or for finely disaggregated data.

PANEL COMPOSITION

Jobseekers

The survey panel comprises three subgroups: Jobseekers, a Population Reference Group (PRG), and persons known to have been Labour Market Program (LMP) participants.

This is the main component of the SEUP panel, and is also the focus for this publication. The Jobseeker subgroup comprises those people considered most likely to be eligible to participate in a labour market program or likely to become eligible for such assistance in the near future.

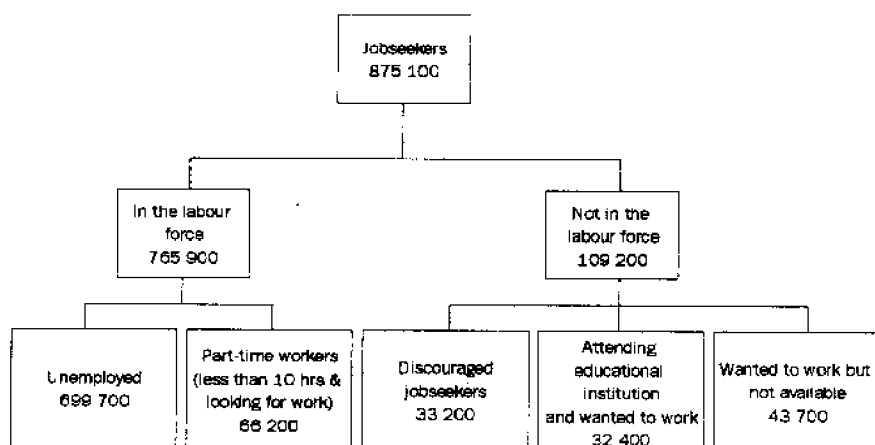
Broadly speaking, Jobseekers are persons who, at May 1995, were in one of the following categories:

- unemployed;
- marginally attached to the labour force (such as discouraged jobseekers); and
- underemployed.

A full description of the Jobseeker population is at Appendix A.

The following diagram summarises the composition of the Jobseeker population.

THE JOBSEEKER POPULATION, MAY 1995



Population Reference Group (PRG)

The PRG is a random sample of the population aged 15–59 years. It was included in the panel so that the labour market experience of Jobseekers can be assessed in the context of the experience of the general population. Some comparisons of Jobseekers' characteristics with those of employed persons (derived from the PRG) are included in this publication.

Labour Market Program (LMP) participants

The LMP subgroup is a sample of persons who had commenced a subsidised employment placement and/or commenced a labour market training program between July 1994 and February 1995. This component of the panel complements the Jobseeker subgroup, and was included to ensure that the survey had a sufficient number of LMP participants to support analysis of their characteristics in the first year.

LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITIES

Two measures of respondents' labour market activities are available from the SEUP and are referred to in this publication.

Labour Force Status (employed, unemployed, and not in the labour force) is a point in time measure and is only available for the time of panel establishment and at each subsequent interview. This measure uses the full rigour of the concept used in the monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS), in particular, the application of job search and availability criteria to determine whether a person is 'unemployed' or 'not in the labour force', and a mutually exclusive approach to the three labour force states of 'employed', 'unemployed' and 'not in the labour force'.

Episodal status is a categorisation by the respondent of each episode of labour market activity as either 'working', 'looking for work', or 'absent from the labour market'. The respondent's judgement is relied on as it is not feasible to apply the rigour of the LFS questioning to labour market activities which extend over possibly considerable periods of time, nor to situations that prevailed up to 12 months previously (the SEUP having annual interviews). Unlike the former measure, this approach provides for a person to be categorised as both 'working' and 'looking for work' if these activities are undertaken concurrently; however, no overlap is allowed between either of these two states and that of 'absent from the labour market'.

INQUIRIES

For further information about statistics in this publication and the availability of other statistics from the survey, contact Client Services on Canberra (06) 252 6627 or Nicky Adams on Canberra (06) 252 7401.

For information about other ABS statistics and services, please refer to the back of this publication.

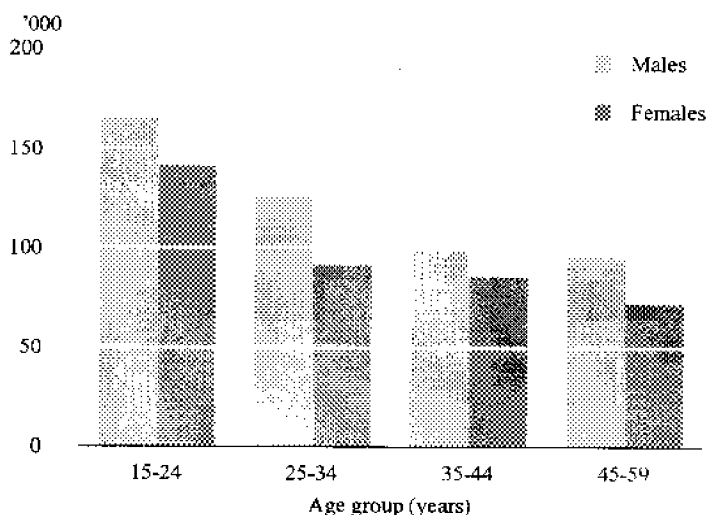
OVERVIEW

PROFILE OF JOBSEEKERS

In May 1995 there were 875,100 Jobseekers in Australia.

More Jobseekers were male than were female (55% compared to 45%) and a third (32%) were aged between 15 and 24 years. More than a quarter of Jobseekers (28%) were born outside Australia, the majority in a non-English speaking country.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995: AGE BY SEX



A large proportion of Jobseekers (79%) were a member of a family, with more than half of these being the husband or wife; the other 21% were either members of a group household or lived on their own.

Compared to employed persons, Jobseekers had lower levels of education — only half (52%) had attended the highest level of secondary school available, and a third (34%) had obtained a post-school qualification.

LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITIES

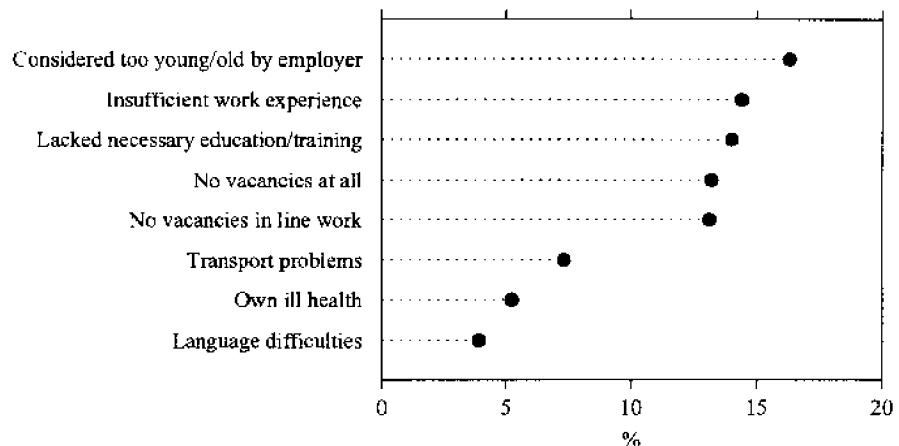
The survey collected information about Jobseekers' labour market activities over the 12-month period to September 1995; that is, about episodes of working, looking for work, and absence from the labour market. Close to three quarters (71%) had more than one episode of labour market activity, with a fifth (22%) having four or more episodes. Younger Jobseekers experienced more changes in labour market activity than older Jobseekers. For example, 26% of those aged 15–34 years had four or more distinct episodes compared to 16% of those aged 35–59 years.

Almost all Jobseekers (93%) had looked for work at some time in the 12-month period. For these persons the average time spent looking was 37.5 weeks, close to three-quarters of the entire period. Jobseekers took active steps to find work in almost all cases — in 83% of episodes of looking for work they were registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service, and in 87% they had contacted prospective employers directly.

The main difficulties in finding work as perceived by Jobseekers were:

- considered too young or too old by employers (16%);
- insufficient work experience (14%); and
- lacked the necessary education, training or skills (14%).

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995 — EPISODES OF LOOKING FOR WORK:
MAIN DIFFICULTY IN FINDING WORK, 12 MONTHS ENDING SEPTEMBER 1995



Over half of Jobseekers (58%) had worked at some time in the year, and for these people the average total duration of work was 20.9 weeks, with almost half (46%) having more than one job, and 19% having four or more jobs. Two-thirds of Jobseekers' jobs were casual, contrasting markedly with the equivalent figure of 34% for the general population. Most commonly, employment was found in the private sector (89%) and as Labourers and Related Workers, this occupation accounting for one-third of all Jobseekers' episodes of work.

Overall, 40% of Jobseekers spent one or more periods out of the labour market, with the average total labour market absence during the 12-month period ended September 1995 being 20.2 weeks. 'Personal reasons' was the most common reason that Jobseekers gave for not looking for work (60% of all cases) — this includes:

- study (29%);
- moved house/holidays (14%); and
- ill health or disability (12%).

A significantly higher percentage of females had a period out of the labour market than did males — 52% compared to 30%.

Almost 30% of Jobseekers had a labour market activity that lasted the entire period, with the vast majority spending the whole year only looking for work.

LABOUR MARKET DYNAMICS

Of the 434,200 Jobseekers who were looking for work at the start of the year, two-thirds were looking for work at the end, 23% were working and 11% were absent from the labour market. More of the younger Jobseekers ended the period working than did the older — 28% of those aged 15–24 years were working at the end of the year compared to 14% of those aged 45–59 years. Of Jobseekers who ended the period absent from the labour market, most were females.

Of the 262,200 Jobseekers who were working at the start of the year, about half (52%) were working at the end. Of the balance, the vast majority (82%, or 103,300) had lost or left a job and were looking for work.

Of the 178,700 Jobseekers who were absent from the labour market at the start of the reference period, by the end of the period:

- 42% were looking for work;
- 28% were working; and
- 30% were absent from the labour market.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995: TRANSITION RATES OF LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITY FROM SEPTEMBER 1994 TO SEPTEMBER 1995

Type of activity, September 1994	Type of activity, September 1995			
	Working	Looking	Absent	Total
	%	%	%	%
Working	52.2	39.4	8.5	100.0
Looking	22.5	66.6	10.9	100.0
Absent	28.0	42.2	29.8	100.0

Movements into the labour market by those Jobseekers absent from it at the start were more frequent in younger age groups than they were in the older — 81% of those aged 15–24 years compared to 14% of those aged 45–59 years. They were also more common among males — 81% compared to 64% of females.

1 PROFILE OF JOBSEEKERS

This chapter provides a profile of Jobseekers, described in terms of the following characteristics:

- age and sex;
- birthplace;
- geographic location;
- household and family structure;
- educational attainment; and
- employment history.

Comparisons have also been made between Jobseekers and employed persons.

AGE AND SEX

There were 875,100 Jobseekers in Australia in May 1995. A higher percentage of these were male (55%) than were female (45%). This pattern was common across all age groups.

Jobseekers, on average, were younger than employed persons. The mean age of Jobseekers was 32.6 years compared to 36.1 years for employed persons.

JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYED PERSONS: AGE BY SEX, MAY 1995

Age group (years)	Jobseekers				Employed persons	
	Males	Females	Persons			
	'000	'000	'000	%	'000	%
15-24	165.0	141.2	306.2	35.0	1 529.0	19.4
25-34	125.6	91.2	216.7	24.8	2 043.7	26.0
35-44	98.8	85.7	184.5	21.1	2 203.5	28.0
45-59	95.4	72.2	167.6	19.2	2 093.9	26.6
Total	484.9	390.2	875.1	100.0	7 870.2	100.0

BIRTHPLACE

Overall, 72% of Jobseekers were born in Australia, 9% were born overseas in a main English-speaking country (the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, South Africa, the United States of America and New Zealand), and 19% were born overseas in other countries.

In comparison with employed persons, a higher proportion of Jobseekers were born overseas in a country which is not a main English-speaking country — 19% of Jobseekers compared with 13% of employed persons.

A greater proportion of Jobseekers born in Australia were in younger age groups. Some 42% of Australian-born Jobseekers were aged 15–24 years, compared to 19% of those born in a main English-speaking country, and 14% of those born overseas in other countries.

JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYED PERSONS: BIRTHPLACE BY AGE (YEARS), MAY 1995

Birthplace	Jobseekers						Employed persons	
	15–24	25–34	35–44	45–59	Persons			
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	%	'000	%
Born in Australia	267.4	151.4	117.6	94.0	630.5	72.0	5 999.8	76.2
Born outside Australia	38.8	65.3	66.9	73.6	244.6	28.0	1 870.4	23.8
MESC(a)	14.5	16.7	19.7	25.2	76.0	8.7	833.1	10.6
Other	24.3	48.6	47.2	48.4	168.6	19.3	1 037.3	13.2
Total	306.2	216.7	184.5	167.6	875.1	100.0	7 870.2	100.0

(a) Born in a main English-speaking country.

Across the three broad birthplace categories, there were only marginal differences between the proportion of Jobseekers who were male and the proportion who were female.

JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYED PERSONS: BIRTHPLACE BY SEX, MAY 1995

Birthplace	Jobseekers				Employed persons	
	Males	Females	Persons			
	'000	'000	'000	%	'000	%
Born in Australia	345.6	284.9	630.5	72.0	5 999.8	76.2
Born outside Australia	139.3	105.4	244.6	28.0	1 870.4	23.8
MESC(a)	44.2	31.9	76.0	8.7	833.1	10.6
Other	95.1	73.5	168.6	19.3	1 037.3	13.2
Total	484.9	390.2	875.1	100.0	7 870.2	100.0

(a) Born in a main English-speaking country.

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Just over half (54%) of Jobseekers lived in a Capital city, a quarter (26%) lived in an Other urban area and 14% lived in a Rural area.

Compared with employed persons, a higher percentage of Jobseekers lived in an Other urban area (26% compared to 18%), and a lower percentage lived in a Capital city (54% compared to 60%).

A higher proportion of Jobseekers in Rural areas were male (60%) than in all other areas (around 55%).

JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYED PERSONS: GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION, MAY 1995

Geographic location	Jobseekers				Employed persons	
	Males	Females	Persons			
	'000	'000	'000		'000	%
Capital city	257.1	213.4	470.5	53.8	4 690.3	59.6
Balance of major urban	30.5	24.4	54.9	6.3	533.1	6.8
Other urban	123.5	102.8	226.3	25.9	1 449.0	18.4
Rural	73.8	49.5	123.3	14.1	1 197.8	15.2
Total	484.9	390.2	875.1	100.0	7 870.2	100.0

HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY STRUCTURE

Some 79% of Jobseekers were living with their family, with the remainder being lone persons (10%) or members of a group household (11%).

Most commonly, Jobseekers were either a husband or wife (43%), or a non-dependent child (21%). However, among employed persons, the corresponding percentages were 63% and 13% respectively. About 21% of Jobseekers were non-family members contrasting with 14% of employed persons.

JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYED PERSONS: RELATIONSHIP IN HOUSEHOLD, MAY 1995

Relationship in household	Jobseekers				Employed persons			
	Males Females		Persons		Males Females		Persons	
	'000	'000	'000	%	'000	'000	'000	%
Family member	374.4	319.1	693.5	79.2	3 801.0	2 958.9	6 759.8	85.9
Husband/wife	209.0	167.0	376.0	43.0	2 847.4	2 131.3	4 978.8	63.3
With dependants	143.1	112.5	255.6	29.2	1 843.1	1 315.1	3 158.2	40.1
Without dependants	65.9	54.5	120.4	13.8	1 004.3	816.2	1 820.5	23.1
Lone parent	8.2	69.6	77.8	8.9	*22.4	233.1	255.5	3.2
With dependants	6.9	58.5	65.5	7.5	*14.8	190.1	204.9	2.6
Without dependants	*1.2	11.1	12.3	1.4	*7.6	*43.0	*50.6	*0.6
Dependent student	11.1	8.6	19.7	2.3	123.7	203.3	327.0	4.2
Non-dependant child	126.4	59.7	186.1	21.3	680.6	310.4	991.0	12.6
Other family person	19.7	14.1	33.8	3.9	126.8	*80.6	207.5	2.6
Non-family member	110.5	71.1	181.6	20.8	664.0	446.4	1 110.4	14.1
Lone person	54.3	32.1	86.4	9.9	347.6	229.1	576.7	7.3
Not living alone	56.2	39.0	95.2	10.9	316.4	217.3	533.7	6.8
Total	484.9	390.2	875.1	100.0	4 464.9	3 405.3	7 870.2	100.0

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Jobseekers had a lower level of educational attainment than employed persons — 34% of Jobseekers had obtained a post-school qualification compared to 54% of employed persons. Also 48% of Jobseekers did not attend the highest level of secondary school available compared to 29% of employed persons.

The proportion of Jobseekers that had attained a post-school qualification tended to increase with age:

- age 15–24 — 23%;
- age 25–34 — 37%;
- age 35–44 — 41%; and
- age 45–59 — 41%.

JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYED PERSONS WHO HAVE LEFT SCHOOL: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BY AGE (YEARS), MAY 1995

Highest level of educational attainment	Jobseekers				Employed persons			
	15–24	25–34	35–44	45–59	Persons		Persons	
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	%	'000	%
<i>With post-school qualification</i>	67.5	80.9	76.5	68.8	293.7	33.9	4 099.1	53.5
Bachelor degree or higher	14.7	21.9	20.6	12.8	70.1	8.1	1 279.5	16.7
Diploma under-graduate or associate	9.0	12.4	12.0	12.4	45.8	5.3	740.9	9.7
Vocational skilled or basic	43.7	46.6	43.9	43.6	177.9	20.5	2 078.7	27.2
<i>Without post-school qualification</i>	230.4	135.7	107.8	97.8	571.7	66.0	3 555.9	46.5
Attended highest level of secondary school available	83.5	33.8	25.1	17.3	159.7	18.4	1 307.4	17.1
Did not attend highest level of secondary school available	146.9	102.0	82.7	80.5	412.0	47.5	2 248.5	29.4
Left at 17 years and over	43.3	20.4	10.0	5.1	78.8	9.1	352.6	4.6
Left at 16 years	51.6	36.0	23.5	12.6	123.6	14.3	790.6	10.3
Left at 15 years	39.0	29.6	31.5	26.3	126.4	14.6	693.7	9.1
Left at 14 years and under	13.0	16.0	17.7	36.6	83.3	9.6	411.6	5.4
Total(a)	297.9	216.7	184.5	167.6	866.7	100.0	7 654.9	100.0

(a) Includes a small number of people who never attended school.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Overall, 87% of Jobseekers had worked at some time in their lives. Of these, 50% had only worked full time, 36% had worked both full time and part time, and the remaining 14% had only worked part time.

A higher proportion of males than females had worked full time at some stage (79% compared to 69%) and a smaller proportion had worked part time (36% compared to 52%).

Of the 115,100 Jobseekers who had never worked, three-quarters (74%) were aged 15–24 years.

JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYED PERSONS AT MAY 1995: EMPLOYMENT HISTORY BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1994 BY SEX

Employment history	Jobseekers					
	Males		Females		Persons	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
Never worked	57.0		58.0		115.1	13.1
Worked full time only	253.4		127.6		381.0	43.5
Worked part time only	43.8		63.6		107.5	12.3
Worked full time and part time	130.1		141.0		271.1	31.0
Total(b)	484.9		390.2		875.1	100.0

(a) Persons employed at May 1995 who had not worked before September 1994.

(b) Includes some persons for whom employment history was not available.

Some 98% of Jobseekers born in main English-speaking countries had worked at some stage compared to 86% of Jobseekers born in Australia and 84% of Jobseekers born in other countries.

Some 92% of those born in a main English-speaking country had worked full time, the highest proportion of the three broad birthplace categories.

JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYED PERSONS AT MAY 1995: EMPLOYMENT HISTORY BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1994 BY BIRTHPLACE

Employment history	Jobseekers						
	Born in Australia	Born outside Australia		Persons		Employed	
		MESC(a)	Other				
	'000	'000	'000	'000	%	'000	%
Never worked	85.8	*1.6	27.7	115.1	13.1	(b)173.8	2.2
Worked full time only	243.2	37.8	100.0	381.0	43.5	3 887.0	49.4
Worked part time only	86.4	5.7	15.3	107.5	12.3	751.4	9.5
Worked full time and part time	214.6	30.8	25.6	271.1	31.0	3 042.9	38.7
Total(c)	630.5	76.0	168.6	875.1	100.0	7 870.2	100.0

(a) Born in a main English-speaking country.

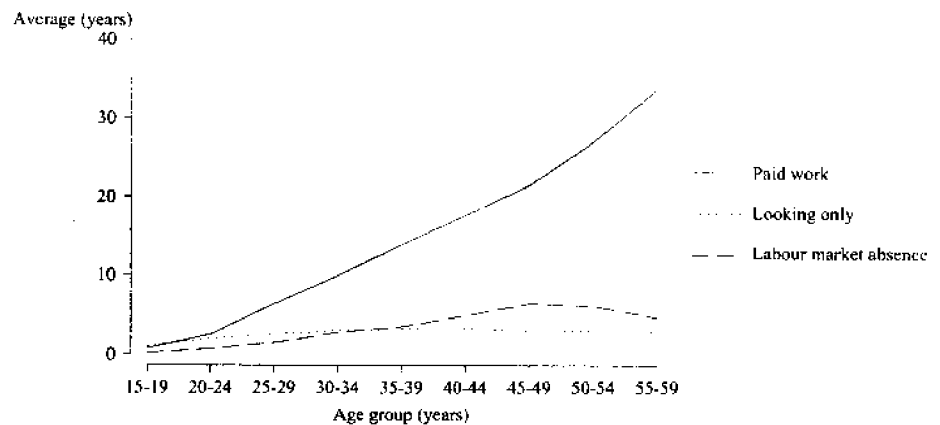
(b) Persons employed at May 1995 who had not worked before September 1994.

(c) Includes some persons for whom employment history was not available.

Overall, Jobseekers had been in paid work for two-thirds of the time since leaving full-time education, with the remaining third being approximately equally divided between looking for work (only) and labour market absence.

In contrast to the pattern for paid work, there is relatively minor variation with age in the number of years spent looking for work (only) and absent from the labour market.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995: AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN LABOUR MARKET EXPERIENCE SINCE FIRST LEAVING FULL-TIME EDUCATION



2 JOBSEEKERS' LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITIES

This chapter describes the labour market activities of Jobseekers (as at May 1995) during the 12 months ending September 1995. Labour market activities refer to episodes of:

- working;
- looking for work; and
- labour market absence.

It should be noted that episodes of working and looking for work may overlap.

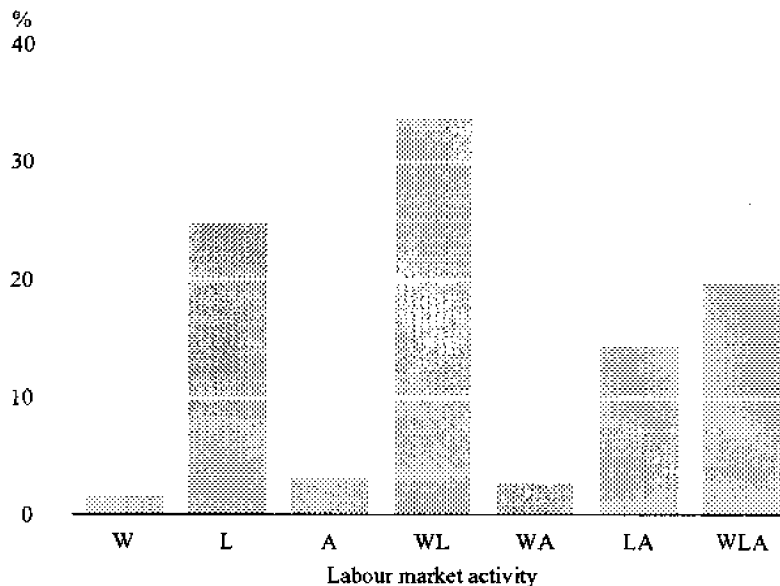
OVERVIEW

In all, 71% of Jobseekers had more than one episode of labour market activity during the year. Some 22% of Jobseekers had four or more episodes. The average number of episodes of labour market activity was 2.5.

Many Jobseekers had a combination of labour market activities during the reference period, the most common being:

- working and looking for work (34%);
- working, looking for work, and labour market absence (20%); and
- looking for work and labour market absence (14%).

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995: TYPE OF LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITY, 12 MONTHS ENDING SEPTEMBER 1995



W - Worked, L - Looked for work, A - Absent from the labour market.

Over half (58%) of Jobseekers worked at some time during the reference period, 93% had looked for work and 40% had a period of labour market absence.

A higher percentage of males than females had looked for work at some time (96% compared to 88%) and worked at some time (60% compared to 54%). Conversely, a significantly higher percentage of females had a period during which they were absent from the labour market (52% compared to 30%).

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995: LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITIES BY SEX, 12 MONTHS ENDING SEPTEMBER 1995

<i>Labour market activity</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>	
	'000	'000	'000	%
Worked at some time	292.9	210.7	503.6	57.5
Looked for work at some time	464.6	345.0	809.7	92.5
Absent from the labour market at some time	147.3	203.1	350.4	40.0

On average, younger Jobseekers had more episodes of labour market activity in the reference period than did older persons. Some 26% of Jobseekers aged 15–34 years had four or more episodes compared to 16% of those aged 35–59 years.

This is reflected in a decrease in the average number of episodes of labour market activity as age increased. For Jobseekers aged:

- 15–24 years the average was 2.8;
- 25–34 years the average was 2.6;
- 35–44 years the average was 2.3; and
- 45–59 years the average was 2.1.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995: NUMBER OF EPISODES OF LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITY BY AGE, 12 MONTHS ENDING SEPTEMBER 1995

	<i>Age group (years)</i>				<i>Persons</i>	
	15–24	25–34	35–44	45–59		
<i>Number of episodes of labour market activity</i>	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	%
One	61.3	56.7	63.2	70.4	251.6	28.7
Two	83.4	62.0	48.3	45.7	239.4	27.4
Three	79.7	46.4	38.1	28.8	193.0	22.1
Four	44.4	27.7	18.4	12.2	102.7	11.7
Five or more	37.4	24.0	16.6	10.5	88.5	10.1
Total	306.2	216.7	184.5	167.6	875.1	100.0
Average number of episodes	2.8	2.6	2.3	2.1	2.5	..

WORKING

In all, 58% (503,600) of Jobseekers had at least one episode of work in the reference period.

Of Jobseekers who had worked, 46% had more than one working episode, with the average number being 1.6. On average they worked a total of 20.9 weeks within the reference period.

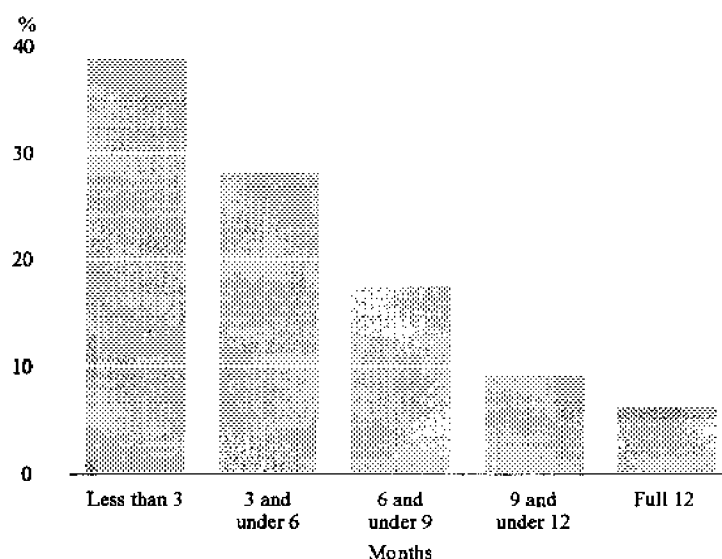
The average number of working episodes for Jobseekers with a working episode did not vary markedly with age, neither did the average number of weeks worked.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995: NUMBER OF WORKING EPISODES BY AGE, 12 MONTHS ENDING SEPTEMBER 1995

	Age group (years)				Persons	
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-59		
Number of working episodes	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	%
None	105.7	83.6	86.8	95.3	371.5	42.5
One	103.5	74.8	52.9	41.8	273.0	31.2
Two	65.5	39.9	31.2	21.1	157.7	18.0
Three	24.2	13.2	9.9	6.4	53.7	6.1
Four or more	7.3	5.2	3.8	*2.9	19.2	2.2
Total	306.2	216.7	184.5	167.6	875.1	100.0
For Jobseekers with a working episode						
Average number of working episodes	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	..
Average number of weeks worked	20.2	21.0	21.7	21.5	20.9	..
Median number of weeks worked	16.3	18.6	17.5	17.1	17.2	..

The median number of weeks worked was consistently less than the average (mean) because a relatively high proportion of Jobseekers worked for short durations.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995 WHO WORKED DURING THE 12 MONTHS ENDING SEPTEMBER 1995: TOTAL DURATION OF WORKING



Two-thirds of Jobseekers' working episodes were in casual employment. This contrasts with 34% of working episodes for the general population.

On average, Jobseekers in casual jobs worked less hours than those in permanent jobs. In 48% of casual jobs the number of hours worked per week was less than 25, whereas 82% of permanent jobs involved 35 hours or more per week.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995 — WORKING EPISODES FOR WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS: WEEKLY HOURS WORKED, 12 MONTHS ENDING SEPTEMBER 1995

	<i>Working episodes</i>			
	<i>Permanent</i>	<i>Casual</i>	<i>Total(a)</i>	
<i>Hours worked</i>	'000	'000	'000	%
1-15	15.1	169.6	185.3	24.7
16-24	13.3	70.1	84.6	11.3
25-34	14.7	58.1	73.9	9.8
35-39	74.7	71.8	148.0	19.7
40	61.6	66.6	130.4	17.3
41-48	31.5	24.8	56.8	7.5
49 or more	36.0	34.0	70.7	9.4
Persons(b)	247.8	496.3	751.8	100.0

(a) Components do not add to total as the total includes some jobs for which the status was not known.

(b) Includes some jobs for which the hours worked was not stated.

Industry Five of the 17 broad industry groups provided the majority (58%) of the jobs for Jobseekers. These industries were Retail Trade (16% of all working episodes), Manufacturing (14%), Property and Business Services (10%), Construction (9%), and Accommodation, Cafes and Restaurants (9%).

Overall, the average number of hours worked each week was 30.5. In 44% of all jobs the average hours worked per week was between 30 and 39. The Mining industry was the only industry where the average exceeded 40 hours per week at 54.0 hours. The lowest averages were found in Education (22.0 hours), Health and Community Services (22.7 hours), Accommodation, Cafes and Restaurants (24.3 hours), and Personal and Other Services (24.4 hours).

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995 — WORKING EPISODES: INDUSTRY AND AVERAGE WEEKLY HOURS WORKED, 12 MONTHS ENDING SEPTEMBER 1995

Industry	Working episodes		
	'000	%	Average hours
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	55.4	6.7	37.5
Mining	8.5	1.0	54.0
Manufacturing	116.7	14.0	36.4
Electricity, Gas and Water Supply	*2.9	*0.3	*34.0
Construction	77.5	9.3	36.2
Wholesale Trade	38.9	4.7	35.3
Retail Trade	136.7	16.4	26.9
Accommodation, Cafes and Restaurants	72.9	8.8	24.3
Transport and Storage	27.7	3.3	36.4
Communication Services	8.3	1.0	33.0
Finance and Insurance	13.5	1.6	31.9
Property and Business Services	80.3	9.7	28.2
Government Administration and Defence	28.8	3.5	35.0
Education	44.3	5.3	22.0
Health and Community Services	50.3	6.1	22.7
Cultural and Recreational Services	29.5	3.5	25.6
Personal and Other Services	39.7	4.8	24.4
Total(a)	832.2	100.0	30.5

(a) Includes some jobs for which industry was not stated.

Occupation Four of the eight broad occupation groups provided more than three-quarters (79%) of the jobs for Jobseekers. Most were in the occupations of Labourers and Related Workers (32%), Salespersons and Personal Service Workers (20%), Tradespersons (14%), and Clerks (12%). Jobseekers working as Managers and Administrators worked the most hours (50.2 hours), followed by Plant and Machine Operators, and Drivers (38.7 hours), and Tradespersons (36.7 hours). The lowest average was for Salespersons and Personal Service Workers (23.8 hours).

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995 — WORKING EPISODES: OCCUPATION AND AVERAGE HOURS WORKED, 12 MONTHS ENDING SEPTEMBER 1995

<i>Occupation</i>		<i>Working episodes</i>	
			<i>Average hours</i>
	'000	%	
Managers and Administrators	21.1	2.5	50.2
Professionals	61.1	7.3	27.7
Para-professionals	23.8	2.9	28.5
Tradespersons	119.2	14.3	36.7
Clerks	100.9	12.1	27.6
Salespersons and Personal Service Workers	169.8	20.4	23.8
Plant and Machine Operators, and Drivers	70.5	8.5	38.7
Labourers and Related Workers	264.1	31.7	30.0
Total(a)	832.2	100.0	30.5

(a) Includes some jobs for which the occupation was not stated.

Sector of employment Some 88% of Jobseekers' working episodes were in the private sector. This compares with 83% for the general population. Working episodes in the private sector averaged 30.2 hours per week compared to 28.2 hours in the public sector.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995 — WORKING EPISODES: SECTOR OF EMPLOYMENT AND AVERAGE HOURS WORKED, 12 MONTHS ENDING SEPTEMBER 1995

<i>Sector of employment</i>		<i>Working episodes</i>	
			<i>Average hours</i>
	'000	%	
Public sector	95.9	11.5	28.2
Private sector	736.2	88.5	30.8
Total	832.2	100.0	30.5

LOOKING FOR WORK

In all, 809,700 (93%) Jobseekers looked for work at least once in the reference period. Of these, 17% had more than one such episode.

For Jobseekers who had looked for work, the average number of episodes of looking for work was 1.2, and the average time spent looking for work in the reference period was 37.5 weeks.

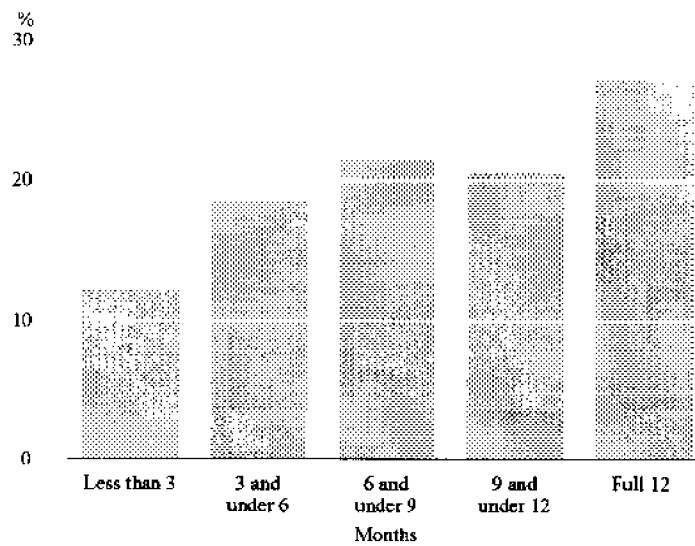
The average number of episodes of looking for work varied only slightly with age. However, the average number of weeks spent looking did differ between age groups — for example 35.1 weeks for persons aged 15–24 years and 41.5 weeks for those aged 45–59 years.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995: NUMBER OF LOOKING FOR WORK EPISODES, 12 MONTHS ENDING SEPTEMBER 1995

	Age group (years)				Persons	
	15–24	25–34	35–44	45–59		
<i>Number of episodes of looking for work</i>	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	%
None	18.9	18.3	15.0	13.3	65.4	7.5
One	231.1	162.1	142.3	135.6	671.1	76.7
Two	48.9	32.3	22.8	15.3	119.3	13.6
Three or more	7.3	4.1	4.6	3.4	19.4	2.2
Total	306.2	216.7	184.5	167.6	875.1	100.0
For Jobseekers with an episode of looking for work						
Average number of episodes of looking for work	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.2	..
Average number of weeks looked for work	35.1	36.1	39.5	41.5	37.5	..
Median number of weeks looked for work	37.0	40.1	46.1	50.1	41.3	..

The median number of weeks spent looking for work was consistently higher than the average (mean) because of the relatively high number of Jobseekers who looked for work for long periods.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995 WHO LOOKED FOR WORK(a) DURING THE 12 MONTHS
ENDING SEPTEMBER 1995: TOTAL DURATION OF LOOKING FOR WORK



(a) Excludes periods of looking for work during which the Jobseeker was also working.

Jobseekers took active steps to find work in almost all episodes. In 83% of episodes Jobseekers had registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES), the majority having also contacted prospective employers. There was a higher incidence of CES registration for those episodes of looking for work lasting one year or more — 89% compared to 78% of those lasting less than one year. However, apart from this there are no other marked differences in job search activity between the two groups.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995 — EPISODES OF LOOKING FOR WORK: ACTIVE STEPS
TAKEN TO FIND WORK BY DURATION, 12 MONTHS ENDING SEPTEMBER 1995

	Duration			
	Less than 52 weeks	52 weeks and over(a)	Total	
Active steps	'000	'000	'000	%
Registered with CES and	457.1	345.4	802.6	82.7
Contacted prospective employers	403.8	306.9	710.7	73.2
Took other active steps	26.6	22.6	49.2	5.1
Did not take other active steps	26.7	15.9	42.7	4.4
Not registered with CES and	125.8	42.1	167.9	17.3
Contacted prospective employers	104.1	31.7	135.8	14.0
Took other active steps	14.7	7.0	21.7	2.2
Did not take active steps	7.0	*3.4	10.4	1.1
Total	583.0	387.5	970.5	100.0

(a) Episodes which started before the reference period.

The main difficulties in finding work, as perceived by Jobseekers, were:

- considered too young or too old by employers (16% of all episodes of looking for work);
- insufficient work experience (14%);
- lacked necessary education, training or skills (14%);
- no vacancies at all (13%); and
- no vacancies in line of work (13%).

In total, these reasons were reported as the main difficulty in 71% of episodes of looking for work.

Jobseekers, who had been looking for work for less than a year most commonly reported 'no vacancies in line of work' as the main difficulty (15%). However, for those who had been looking for work for a year or more, the main difficulty most commonly reported was that employers considered them too young or too old.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995 — EPISODES OF LOOKING FOR WORK: MAIN DIFFICULTY IN FINDING WORK, 12 MONTHS ENDING SEPTEMBER 1995

Main difficulty	Duration			
	Less than 52 weeks	52 weeks and over(a)	Total	
	'000	'000	'000	%
Own ill health or disability	25.4	24.9	50.3	5.2
Considered too young or too old by employers	72.5	86.2	158.6	16.3
Unsuitable hours	16.3	*3.9	20.2	2.1
Too far to travel or transport problems	42.2	28.5	70.6	7.3
Lacked necessary education, training or skills	79.4	56.6	136.0	14.0
Language difficulties	16.2	21.6	37.8	3.9
Insufficient work experience	89.5	50.0	139.4	14.4
No vacancies in line of work	87.5	40.1	127.6	13.1
No vacancies at all	78.4	49.6	128.0	13.2
Difficulties with ethnic background	*1.3	*2.4	*3.7	*0.4
Child-care or family reasons	10.6	5.8	16.3	1.7
Other difficulties	23.5	13.6	37.1	3.8
No difficulties	40.3	4.5	44.8	4.6
Total	583.0	387.5	970.5	100.0

(a) Episodes which started before the reference period.

ABSENCES FROM THE LABOUR MARKET

In all, 40% (350,400) of Jobseekers had at least one episode in the reference period during which they were absent from the labour market (i.e. neither working nor looking for work).

Of Jobseekers who had at least one such episode, the average number of episodes was 1.2 and 19% had more than one episode. The average total time absent from the labour market was 20.2 weeks.

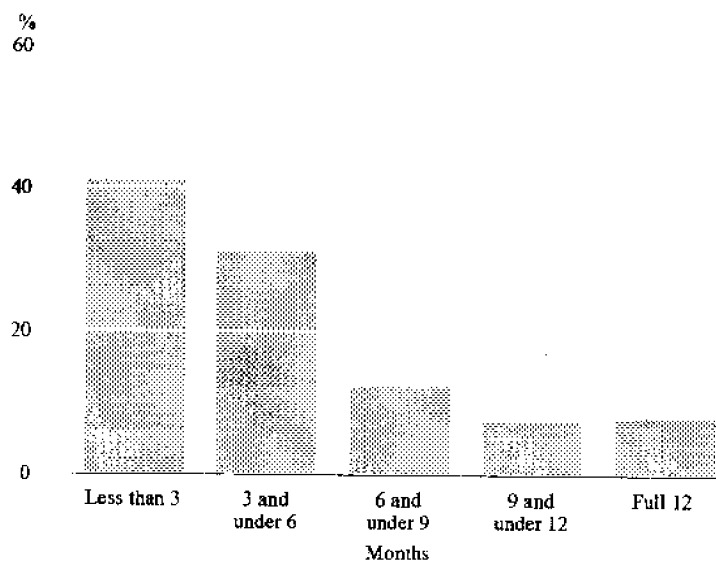
The average number of absences from the labour market did not vary significantly with age but the average time spent absent from the labour market does show some fluctuation with age.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995: NUMBER OF EPISODES OF ABSENCE FROM THE
LABOUR MARKET BY AGE, 12 MONTHS ENDING SEPTEMBER 1995

	Age group (years)				Persons	
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-59		
Number of absence episodes	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	%
None	163.7	130.7	119.5	110.8	524.7	60.0
One	118.3	65.6	52.8	48.6	285.2	32.6
Two	21.7	17.1	10.6	7.2	56.6	6.5
Three or more	*2.5	*3.4	*1.7	*1.0	8.6	1.0
Total	306.2	216.7	184.6	167.6	875.1	100.0
For Jobseekers with an absence episode						
Average number of absence episodes	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.2	..
Average number of weeks absent from the labour market	18.7	21.7	20.2	21.8	20.2	..
Median number of weeks absent from the labour market	16.0	17.5	16.9	16.4	16.5	..

The median total time absent from the labour market was consistently lower than the average (mean) time because of the relatively high proportion of Jobseekers who were absent from the labour market for short durations.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995 WHO WERE ABSENT FROM THE LABOUR MARKET DURING THE 12 MONTHS ENDING SEPTEMBER 1995: TOTAL DURATION OF LABOUR MARKET ABSENCE



Jobseekers reported personal reasons as the main reason for not looking for work in 64% of labour market absences lasting less than a year and in 47% of those lasting one year or more. Personal reasons included studying, having moved house or taken holidays, and ill health or physical disability. Child-care or family reasons were reported as the main reason in 34% of episodes lasting one year or more, compared to only 15% of those lasting less than a year.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995 — EPISODES OF LABOUR MARKET ABSENCE: MAIN REASON NOT LOOKING FOR WORK, 12 MONTHS ENDING SEPTEMBER 1995

Main reason	Duration			
	Less than 52 weeks	52 weeks and over(a)	Total	
	'000	'000	'000	%
Had a job to go to	16.3	*0.3	16.7	3.9
Personal reasons	214.2	41.8	256.0	60.2
Own ill health or physical disability	44.6	6.5	51.1	12.0
Studying	101.3	22.7	124.0	29.1
Moved house/holidays	53.6	4.7	58.3	13.7
Other personal reasons	14.7	7.9	22.6	5.3
Child-care reasons	25.6	21.7	47.3	11.1
Family reasons	25.9	8.3	34.2	8.0
Training program	11.0	*0.5	11.5	2.7
Discouragement	18.1	10.9	29.0	6.8
Other reasons	23.4	5.3	28.8	6.8
Total(b)	335.9	89.5	425.4	100.0

(a) Episodes that started before the reference period.

(b) Includes Jobseekers for whom the reason was not known.

3 JOBSEEKERS' LABOUR MARKET DYNAMICS

OVERVIEW

This chapter analyses Jobseekers' labour market activities at the beginning of the reference period (5 September 1994) and at the end of the period (3 September 1995). In the case of Jobseekers who were both working and looking for work at either of these dates, precedence has been given to the working episode.

More than half of Jobseekers (54%) were in the same type of labour market activity at the end of the reference period as they were at the start.

Overall, 251,600 Jobseekers had one episode of labour market activity that lasted the whole year. That is, they worked, looked for work, or were absent from the labour market continuously. The vast majority of these (85%) spent the entire period only looking for work.

Of those who were in the labour market at the start (that is they were working or looking for work), only 10% had left the labour market at the end.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995: TYPE OF LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITY AT SEPTEMBER 1994 AND SEPTEMBER 1995

Type of activity, September 1994	Type of activity, September 1995						Persons '000
	Working			Looking	Absent	Total	
	Full time	Part time	Total				
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
PERSONS WITH MORE THAN ONE EPISODE							
Working	26.7	24.1	50.8	40.6	8.7	100.0	254.4
Full time	33.7	13.0	46.7	45.6	7.8	100.0	154.2
Part time	15.4	41.6	56.9	32.9	10.2	100.0	99.4
Looking	25.0	19.8	44.8	33.6	21.6	100.0	218.8
Absent	13.7	19.5	33.2	50.2	16.6	100.0	150.3
Total	22.9	21.5	44.4	40.5	15.1	100.0	623.5
TOTAL PERSONS							
Working	26.6	25.6	52.2	39.4	8.5	100.0	262.2
Full time	34.4	12.9	47.3	45.1	7.7	100.0	156.1
Part time	14.5	44.8	59.3	31.1	9.6	100.0	105.3
Looking	12.6	10.0	22.5	66.6	10.9	100.0	434.2
Absent	11.5	16.4	28.0	42.2	29.8	100.0	178.7
Total	16.5	16.0	32.5	53.5	14.0	100.0	875.1

WORKING AT THE START

Some 262,200 Jobseekers were working at the start of the reference period. About half (52%) of these Jobseekers were working at the end.

Some 45% of Jobseekers in a part-time job at the start of the reference period were in a part-time job at the end, while of those in a full-time job at the start 34% ended the period in a full-time job.

Overall, 48% of Jobseekers who were working at the start lost or left a job in the year, and were not working at the end. Of these, the majority (82%) were looking for work.

More of the Jobseekers in a full-time job at the start ended the reference period looking for work than did those working in a part-time job, 45% compared to 31%.

Sex Of Jobseekers who were working at the start of the reference period, a higher proportion of females ended the year working than did males — 58% compared to 48%. Conversely, 30% of females ended the year looking for work, compared to 46% of males. The proportion of females that ended the year absent from the labour market was double that of males.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995: TYPE OF LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITY AT SEPTEMBER 1994 AND SEPTEMBER 1995 BY SEX

		Sex		
Type of labour market activity		Males	Females	Persons
September 1994	September 1995	%	%	%
Working	Working	48.1	57.7	52.2
Working	Looking	46.1	30.4	39.4
Working	Absent	5.9	11.9	8.5
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0
Persons ('000)		149.9	112.3	262.2

Age Of Jobseekers who were working at the start of the reference period, the proportion that ended the period working was consistently higher across all the four age groups than the proportion that ended the reference period looking for work.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995: TYPE OF LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITY AT SEPTEMBER 1994 AND SEPTEMBER 1995 BY AGE

		Age group (years)				
Type of labour market activity		15-24	25-34	35-44	45-59	Persons
September 1994	September 1995	%	%	%	%	%
Working	Working	52.8	50.6	56.5	48.2	52.2
Working	Looking	38.2	42.1	36.2	41.6	39.4
Working	Absent	9.1	7.3	7.4	10.2	8.5
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Persons ('000)		98.1	70.1	51.7	42.3	262.2

Birthplace Of Jobseekers who were working at the start of the reference period, 61% of those born outside Australia in a main English-speaking country ended the period working, while of those born outside Australia in other than a main English-speaking country the equivalent figure was 44%.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995: TYPE OF LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITY AT SEPTEMBER 1994 AND SEPTEMBER 1995 BY BIRTHPLACE

Type of labour market activity		Birthplace			Persons
		Born in Australia	Born outside Australia		
			MESC(a)	Other	
September 1994	September 1995	%	%	%	%
Working	Working	52.3	60.8	44.1	52.2
Working	Looking	39.1	34.0	45.6	39.4
Working	Absent	8.6	*5.2	10.3	8.5
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Persons ('000)		201.0	27.6	33.6	262.2

(a) Born in a main English-speaking country.

(a) Born in a main English-speaking country.

Geographic location End of year labour market outcomes did not vary markedly with geographic location.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995: TYPE OF LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITY AT SEPTEMBER 1994 AND SEPTEMBER 1995 BY GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Type of labour market activity		Geographic location				
		Capital city	Balance major urban	Other urban	Rural	Persons
September 1994	September 1995	%	%	%	%	%
Working	Working	50.5	55.5	54.4	52.6	52.2
Working	Looking	40.6	37.2	36.8	40.4	39.4
Working	Absent	8.8	*7.4	8.8	*7.0	8.5
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Persons ('000)		136.6	15.2	69.8	40.6	262.2

LOOKING FOR WORK AT THE START

Some 434,200 Jobseekers were looking for work at the start of the reference period. Of these, two-thirds were looking for work at the end, 23% were working, and 11% were absent from the labour market.

Sex Approximately equal proportions (about a fifth) of male and female Jobseekers started the period looking for work, found a job, and were still in a job at the end.

Of Jobseekers looking for work at the start, a somewhat higher proportion of males than females ended the period looking for work — 69% compared to 63%. Conversely, the proportion of females that ended the period absent from the labour market was double that of males — 16% compared to 8%.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995: TYPE OF LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITY AT SEPTEMBER 1994 AND SEPTEMBER 1995 BY SEX

		Sex		
<i>Type of labour market activity</i>		<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
<i>September 1994</i>	<i>September 1995</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
Looking	Working	22.9	21.9	22.5
Looking	Looking	69.0	62.6	66.6
Looking	Absent	8.1	15.6	10.9
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0
Persons ('000)		271.5	162.7	434.2

Age Of Jobseekers aged 15–24 years who were looking for work at the start, 28% were working at the end. The equivalent percentage decreased steadily as age increased, to 14% for those aged 45–59 years.

Of Jobseekers who started the reference period looking for work, the proportion that ended the period looking for work increased with age:

- aged 15–24 — 61%;
- aged 25–34 — 65%;
- aged 35–44 — 69%; and
- aged 45–59 — 73%.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995: TYPE OF LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITY AT SEPTEMBER 1994 AND SEPTEMBER 1995 BY AGE

		Age group (years)				
<i>Type of labour market activity</i>		<i>15–24</i>	<i>25–34</i>	<i>35–44</i>	<i>45–59</i>	<i>Persons</i>
<i>September 1994</i>	<i>September 1995</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
Looking	Working	27.7	25.6	21.5	13.9	22.5
Looking	Looking	60.6	65.1	68.9	73.5	66.6
Looking	Absent	11.8	9.3	9.6	12.7	10.9
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Persons ('000)		127.6	103.6	102.3	100.8	434.2

Birthplace Of Jobseekers who were looking for work at the start of the reference period, those born outside Australia in other than a main English-speaking country had the lowest rate of transition into employment (19%).

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995: TYPE OF LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITY AT SEPTEMBER 1994 AND SEPTEMBER 1995 BY BIRTHPLACE

<i>Type of labour market activity</i>		<i>Birthplace</i>			
		<i>Born in Australia</i>	<i>Born outside Australia</i>		<i>Persons</i>
			<i>MESC(a)</i>	<i>Other</i>	
<i>September 1994</i>	<i>September 1995</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
Looking	Working	23.6	25.2	18.7	22.5
Looking	Looking	65.6	64.5	70.1	66.6
Looking	Absent	10.9	10.3	11.2	10.9
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Persons ('000)		297.7	32.8	103.7	434.2

(a) Born in a main English-speaking country.

Geographic location Jobseekers in the Balance of major urban areas appeared to have less success in finding work than those in all other areas. Of Jobseekers looking for work at the start of the reference period, 16% of those in the Balance of major urban areas were working at the end; in all other areas the figure was greater than 20%.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995: TYPE OF LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITY AT SEPTEMBER 1994 AND SEPTEMBER 1995 BY GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

<i>Type of labour market activity</i>		<i>Geographic location</i>			
		<i>Capital city</i>	<i>Balance major urban</i>	<i>Other urban</i>	<i>Persons</i>
			<i>Rural</i>	<i>%</i>	
<i>September 1994</i>	<i>September 1995</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
Looking	Working	23.1	15.9	23.6	22.5
Looking	Looking	65.9	74.2	64.4	66.6
Looking	Absent	11.0	9.9	11.9	10.9
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Persons ('000)		228.4	30.9	115.7	434.2

ABSENT FROM THE LABOUR MARKET AT THE START

Overall 178,700 Jobseekers were absent from the labour market at the start of the reference period. The most common pattern was for them to enter the labour market and end the period looking for work. Some 42% of Jobseekers absent from the labour market at the start of the period were looking for work at the end, with 28% working and 30% being absent from the labour market.

Sex Of Jobseekers who started the period absent from the labour market, a higher proportion of males than females ended the period working — 37% compared to 23%.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995: TYPE OF LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITY AT SEPTEMBER 1994 AND SEPTEMBER 1995 BY SEX

		Sex		
Type of labour market activity		Males	Females	Persons
September 1994	September 1995	%	%	%
Absent	Working	36.9	23.0	28.0
Absent	Looking	44.2	41.1	42.2
Absent	Absent	18.9	35.9	29.8
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0
Persons ('000)		63.5	115.2	178.7

Age As age increased, smaller proportions of those absent from the labour market at the beginning of the period ended the period working — some 34% of 15–24 year olds ended the period working compared to 14% of those aged 45–59 years.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995: TYPE OF LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITY AT SEPTEMBER 1994 AND SEPTEMBER 1995 BY AGE

		Age group (years)				
Type of labour market activity		15–24	25–34	35–44	45–59	Persons
September 1994	September 1995	%	%	%	%	%
Absent	Working	34.3	28.5	22.0	13.7	28.0
Absent	Looking	46.5	34.4	42.7	41.2	42.2
Absent	Absent	19.3	37.1	35.3	45.1	29.8
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Persons ('000)		80.6	43.0	30.5	24.5	178.7

Birthplace The transition rate into work (between the start and end of the reference period) was highest for Jobseekers born in main English-speaking countries (35%), followed by Jobseekers born in Australia (30%) and other Jobseekers born outside Australia (18%).

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995: TYPE OF LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITY AT SEPTEMBER 1994 AND SEPTEMBER 1995 BY BIRTHPLACE

Type of labour market activity		Birthplace			
		Born in Australia	Born outside Australia		Persons
			MESC(a)	Other	
September 1994	September 1995	%	%	%	%
Absent	Working	29.6	35.1	17.6	28.0
Absent	Looking	41.3	38.9	47.6	42.2
Absent	Absent	29.1	26.0	34.8	29.8
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Persons ('000)		131.8	15.6	31.3	178.7

(a) Born in a main English-speaking country.

Geographic location Of Jobseekers who started the reference period absent from the labour market, a lower proportion of those in other urban areas (compared to all other areas) ended the year working.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995: TYPE OF LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITY AT SEPTEMBER 1994 AND SEPTEMBER 1995 BY GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Type of labour market activity		Geographic location				
		Capital city	Balance major urban	Other urban	Rural	Persons
		%	%	%	%	%
September 1994	September 1995					
Absent	Working	29.4	28.7	22.9	30.0	28.0
Absent	Looking	41.2	44.3	42.8	45.1	42.2
Absent	Absent	29.4	*27.1	34.3	24.9	29.8
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Persons ('000)		105.5	8.8	40.8	23.6	178.7

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1 This publication presents initial results from the Survey of Employment and Unemployment Patterns (SEUP). The survey is longitudinal, that is, information will be collected from the same panel of respondents over a number of years. The first collection wave of the survey was conducted throughout Australia in 1995. Information was obtained on the labour market activities of persons during the 12 months ending September 1995.

2 Information was collected about socio-demographic characteristics, employment history, episodes of labour market activity and training, employment offers, and supplementary information about other persons living in the household. A summary of topics is given in paragraphs 22–35 and a full listing of topics is at Appendix B.

3 The survey panel comprises three subgroups — Jobseekers, persons known to have been a Labour Market Program (LMP) participant and a Population Reference Group (PRG). For further explanation of these subgroups see paragraphs 9–14.

SCOPE

- Geographic areas** **4** The survey was conducted in both urban and rural areas in all States and Territories.
- Dwellings** **5** The survey included only persons in private dwellings, comprising houses, flats, home units and any other structures used as private places of residence.
- Persons** **6** The scope of the survey was all persons aged 15–59 years except:
- overseas residents in Australia;
 - certain diplomatic personnel of overseas governments, customarily excluded from the Census and estimated resident population figures;
 - members of non-Australian defence forces (and their dependants) stationed in Australia; and
 - certain remote areas in the Northern Territory and Queensland which were difficult or costly to enumerate.

COVERAGE

7 For the Jobseeker and PRG subgroups, coverage rules were applied to ensure each person in scope was associated with only one dwelling and hence had only one chance of selection. Coverage rules were not needed for the LMP subgroup as specific people had already been identified as members of this subgroup.

SAMPLE DESIGN

8 The sample was segmented into three subgroups to provide a sound, flexible base for analyses of labour market dynamics.

Jobseekers **9** The Jobseeker subgroup is a sample of those people who at the time of recruitment were considered most likely to be eligible to participate in a labour market program or likely to become eligible for such assistance in the near future. Its composition was determined in consultation with the Department of Employment, Education, Training, and Youth Affairs (DEETYA), the Department of Social Security (DSS), the Department of Treasury and other potential users. This subgroup comprises unemployed persons, as well as discouraged jobseekers, part-time workers looking for a job with more hours, and other persons not in the labour force who were identified as likely to join the labour force in the near future (see Appendix A for a full description). The sample methodology for this subgroup was an area-based probability sample of dwellings referred to as the SEUP dwelling sample.

Labour Market Program
(LMP) participants

10 The LMP subgroup is a sample of persons who had commenced a subsidised employment placement and/or commenced a labour market training program between July 1994 and February 1995. This component of the sample was included to ensure that the survey had a sufficient number of LMP participants to support analysis of their characteristics in the first wave.

11 The sample methodology for this subgroup was a list-based probability sample. With consent of relevant clients DEETYA provided the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) with a list of eligible persons from which a random sample was selected. The methodology used ensured there was no overlap possible with the other subgroups.

Population Reference Group
(PRG)

12 The PRG subgroup is a random sample of the population aged 15–59. It was included so that outcomes of labour market programs could be assessed in the context of general labour market conditions and movements. It will also be a source of longitudinal information for the general population on other topics covered by the survey, such as housing and income.

13 The sample methodology for this subgroup was an area-based probability sample. A subsample of the SEUP dwelling sample was chosen to provide the PRG dwelling sample, one person then being selected from each PRG dwelling.

14 Note that using this sampling methodology, it was possible for a person to be selected both in the Jobseeker subgroup and the PRG.

DATA COLLECTION
METHODOLOGY

Collection waves

15 The first wave of data was collected in 1995 and the second wave was collected in September 1996. The third wave will be collected in September 1997. The data collected in each wave relates to the following

- wave 1 — 5 September 1994 to 3 September 1995;
- wave 2 — 4 September 1995 to 1 September 1996; and
- wave 3 — 2 September 1996 to 31 August 1997.

Panel establishment and data
collection

16 Selected dwellings or particular respondents (in the case of the LMP subgroup) were initially approached by mail, informing them of their selection for the survey and advising that an interviewer would call to arrange a suitable time to conduct the interview. A brochure providing background information about the survey and the interview process was included.

17 The first wave was collected in two phases. In the first phase the panel establishment interview identified people within the scope of the survey and collected the first part of wave 1 data. The second phase, which collected the remainder of the wave 1 data, was conducted approximately six months later.

18 Fieldwork for phase 1 was conducted between 24 April and 7 July 1995. The same respondents were revisited for phase 2 between 18 September and 3 November 1995 to complete the collection of data for wave 1.

COMPOSITION AND SIZE OF THE WAVE 1 PANEL (AS AT SEPTEMBER 1995)

Subgroup	Persons
Jobseekers(a)	5 488
Labour Market Program participants	1 019
Population Reference Group	2 311
Total panel	8 591

(a) Includes 227 Jobseekers who are also part of the PRG.

19 The survey was conducted by trained interviewers with previous experience in conducting ABS household surveys. In order to ensure that a standardised approach was employed by all interviewers, they received comprehensive training in survey concepts, definitions and procedures.

20 Interviewers asked a screening questionnaire at approximately 69,000 households in order to identify respondents falling into the Jobseeker subgroup, and to establish the PRG. Screening interviews were conducted on an *any responsible adult* basis; that is, a responsible adult was asked to respond on behalf of all persons in the household who were in scope. Following the identification of potential respondents, the interviewer then arranged to speak face to face with those persons. The LMP subgroup were not asked a screening questionnaire, as specific people had already been identified as members of this subgroup.

Panel maintenance

21 The ability to maintain contact with a relatively high proportion of the panel will be critical to the usefulness of the survey data. A number of strategies have been put in place to help the ABS stay in contact with respondents between interviews. These include:

- 'change of details' cards for respondents to advise a new address etc.;
- a toll-free telephone number for the respondent to call;
- asking the respondent for contact details of up to three persons who are likely to know the respondent's whereabouts; and
- regular mail contact throughout the survey.

SURVEY CONTENT

22 The survey collected a wide range of labour market related data. Variables were grouped into four categories — fixed, dynamic, episodal and summary. For a full list of data items, see Appendix B.

Fixed variable

23 A fixed variable is a data item not inherently subject to change. Fixed variables were collected in wave 1 and will not be collected in later waves. Fixed variables include:

- date of birth;
- sex;
- birthplace; and
- language first spoken.

Dynamic variable

24 Dynamic variables are subject to change over time and will be updated each year at the time of interview. Dynamic variables include:

- marital status;
- labour force status;
- educational attainment;
- proficiency in English;
- housing details; and
- geographic location.

Episodal variable	25 This type of variable is collected in respect of a particular episode. An episode is defined as a particular activity or occurrence within a reference period or spanning more than one reference period. Five types of episodes were identified: episodes of labour market activity, episodes of labour market program participation, episodes of income support, training activities, and employment offers.
<i>Episodes of labour market activity</i>	<p>26 This type of episode comprises periods of working, looking for work, or absence from the labour market (i.e. neither working or looking). If a respondent had two or more jobs concurrently, each would be classified as a separate episode. A change in employer constitutes a new episode. An episode of working may be concurrent with an episode of looking for work. Episodal variables include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ start and finish dates; ▪ occupation and industry while working; ▪ active steps to find work; and ▪ main activity while absent from the labour market.
<i>Episodes of Labour Market Program participation</i>	<p>27 This type of episode comprises periods during which the respondent had undertaken some training, or subsidised employment placement, as part of a labour market program. Episodal variables include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ start and finish dates; and ▪ type of program.
<i>Episodes of income support</i>	<p>28 This type of episode comprises periods during which the respondent received income support. Episodal variables include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ start and finish dates; and ▪ type of income support.
<i>Training activities</i>	<p>29 This type of episode encompasses periods of in-house and external training undertaken. Episodal variables include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ field of training; and ▪ start date.
<i>Employment offers</i>	<p>30 This type of episode consists of employment offers received or declined. Episodal variables include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ when offer was made; and ▪ reason for declining an offer.
Summary variable	<p>31 A summary variable is a data item that summarises one or more episodal variables. Summary variables include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ number of episodes of working; ▪ total duration of looking for work; ▪ number of training courses attended; and ▪ number of employment offers received. <p>32 Such variables may be specific to one reference period, or may span more than one reference period, for example, the number of episodes of working since September 1994.</p>

Multiple episodes **33** Although basic information was collected for each episode of labour market activity, detailed information was not collected for all episodes. While it would have been desirable to collect full details about all episodes, many constraints prevented this. These included the interview situation, and the ability of respondents to recall with accuracy the detail of previous events, particularly for those respondents with numerous episodes. It was therefore decided that detailed labour market activity data would only be collected about the following episodes:

- the episode at the beginning of the reference period:
 - ♦ if the respondent was working and looking for work at the start then information was collected about the working episode. If the respondent had more than one job at the start, then detailed information was collected about the job which had been held for the longest time. Any other episodes existing at the beginning of the reference period were grouped with intervening episodes (see below) for the purpose of determining whether full details would be collected.
- the episode at the end of the reference period:
 - ♦ multiple episodes at the end of the reference period are treated in the same way as multiple episodes at the beginning of the reference period (see above).
- intervening episodes as follows:
 - ♦ if the respondent had more than five intervening episodes of working, then information was collected for the five longest;
 - ♦ if the respondent had more than three intervening episodes of looking for work, then information was collected for the three longest; and
 - ♦ if the respondent had more than three intervening episodes during which they were absent from the labour market, then information was collected for the three longest.

34 Examination of survey data showed that few respondents reported large numbers of episodes. As a consequence a full range of data is available for 97% of respondents and tables in this publication refer only to episodes for which full details are available.

Linkage with administrative systems **35** With respondents' consent, data collected directly from them during the interview was supplemented with data about labour market program participation (from DEETYA) and data about income support (from DSS). This minimised the interview time for respondents and ensured that accurate information was available about their involvement with labour market assistance programs and about their receipt of income support.

DATA QUALITY **36** When interpreting results of the survey it is important to take into account that certain factors may affect the reliability of the results to some extent. These are known as sampling error and non-sampling error.

Sampling error **37** Estimates calculated from the SEUP data were based on information collected from a sample. As a result they are subject to sampling error (or sampling variability). For further information on the sampling errors associated with the SEUP, refer to the Technical Notes.

Non-sampling error **38** Apart from the variability associated with sampling error, data is also subject to other types of error referred to as non-sampling error. Non-sampling errors may occur because of non-response bias, incorrect responses, interviewer errors, and processing errors.

39 Testing of the survey procedures was carried out to investigate respondent reaction and to ensure the effectiveness of survey instruments, interviewing procedures and processing systems. These tests allowed early detection of some non-sampling errors to reduce error in the survey as far as possible.

Non-response errors

40 Non-response occurs when people cannot or will not co-operate, or cannot be contacted. Non-response can affect the reliability of results and can introduce bias. The magnitude of any bias depends upon the extent of the difference between non-respondents' characteristics and labour market activity patterns compared with those of persons who responded in the survey. Weighting can partially correct these biases to the extent that weighting variables capture the characteristics of non-respondents.

41 The following methods were adopted to reduce the level of non-response and minimise bias:

- face-to-face interviews with the respondent;
- the use of foreign language interviewers where necessary;
- follow up of respondents if there was initially no contact;
- respondent tracing strategies such as asking respondents to provide names and addresses of other people who would be likely to know the respondent's whereabouts; and
- weighting to population benchmarks to reduce non-response bias.

Response rates

42 Overall, 89% of the panel established in the first phase responded in the second phase.

RESPONSE RATES

<i>Subgroup</i>	<i>Response rate</i>
	%
Jobseekers	87.3
Labour Market Program participants	88.0
Population Reference Group	92.8
Total panel	88.7

Response errors

43 Potential sources of response errors in the SEUP include deficiencies in questionnaire design and methodology; deficiencies in interviewing technique; and inaccurate reporting by respondents.

44 The SEUP questionnaires were thoroughly tested to minimise the potential for errors caused by ambiguous or misleading questions, by inadequate or inconsistent definitions or terminology, or by poor questionnaire sequence guides (causing some questions to be missed).

45 Methods employed to achieve and maintain uniform interviewing practices and a high level of accuracy in recording answers on the survey questionnaires included:

- a thorough training program for interviewers;
- a detailed interviewer's instruction manual;
- the use of experienced interviewers; and
- checking of interviewers' work.

46 In a longitudinal survey, errors associated with recall can affect the compilation of a consistent and accurate picture of respondents' activities over an extended period of time. In particular, overseas experience with longitudinal surveys suggests that a respondent may report different labour market activity around the *seam* of two reference periods. That is, they report one type of activity at the end of a reference period and a different type of activity at the start of the next reference period when no change actually occurred; this is known as the *seam effect*. For example, a seam effect would exist if a respondent reported looking for work at 3 September 1995 and working at 4 September 1995, when the respondent had only been looking for work.

47 The survey will endeavour to minimise this seam effect by the use of dependent interviewing. This is a technique whereby the interviewer reminds the respondent of their labour market activity recorded at the end of the previous reference period thereby refreshing the respondent's memory. The interviewer will then determine whether this activity continued into the current reference period. To further assist respondents in recalling particular events, they were supplied with a diary, and a calendar divided into months and weeks which was used to record their labour market activity during the reference period.

Processing errors

48 Processing errors may occur at any stage between initial collection of the data and final compilation of statistics. Steps were taken to minimise errors at all stages of processing, including:

- training of staff, detailed coding instructions and regular checking;
- computer edits designed to detect reporting or recording errors;
- the use of standard question modules; and
- the use of Optical Mark Recognition to reduce data entry error.

Comparability of data

49 To facilitate comparison of the SEUP data with that from other collections, wherever possible, the SEUP used standard question modules from other ABS surveys, such as the Survey of Training and Education, and surveys conducted as supplements to the monthly LFS. However, caution should be used when comparing data across collections due to differences in scope, sample size and design, definitions and estimation methodology. In particular, in the SEUP the classification of respondents' labour market activity (i.e. working, looking, or absent from the labour market) is not comparable with the definition of labour force status as used in the LFS.

Benchmarking

50 Estimates obtained from the survey were derived using complex ratio estimation procedures with some benchmarking to independently estimated distributions of the total population. For further information refer to the Technical Notes.

DATA DISSEMINATION

SEUP information papers

51 To date, four information papers about the survey have been issued:

Information Paper 1/95: Background and general overview

Information Paper 2/95: Preliminary list of variables to be available after the first wave

Information Paper 3/95: Sample design, outcome of panel initialization and weighting

Information Paper 1/96: Dissemination strategy

Copies of these are available on request and are available on the Internet at <http://www.abs.gov.au>.

- Special tabulations** **52** As well as releasing information in publications, the ABS can make available special tabulations to suit individual user requirements. Subject to confidentiality and sampling variability constraints, tabulations can be produced from the survey incorporating data items, populations and geographic areas selected to meet individual requirements. These can be provided in printed form or on disk. Inquiries should be made to the contact officer listed at the front of this publication.
- Access to microdata** **53** The ABS offers a range of options for users who wish to undertake analysis based on the SEUP microdata (unit records). A public use microdata file, containing an extensive set of variables, is expected to be available from the first wave in early 1997. In the future, a cumulative file will be released each year from successive waves of the survey. An attractive pricing structure has been developed for this product. Inquiries should be made to the contact officer listed at the front of this publication.
- Other ABS publications** **54** Users may also wish to refer to the following publications which are available from the ABS:
- Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0)
 - Labour Force Experience, Australia* (6206.0)
 - Persons Not in the Labour Force, Australia* (6220.0)
 - Job Search Experience of Unemployed Persons, Australia* (6222.0)
 - Successful and Unsuccessful Job Search Experience, Australia* (6245.0)
 - Australia's Long-term Unemployed: A Statistical Profile* (6255.0)
 - Training and Education Experience, Australia* (6278.0)
 - Measuring Employment and Unemployment* (6279.0)
 - Australian Labour Market* (6284.0)
 - Working Arrangements, Australia* (6342.0)
- Non-ABS sources** **55** The Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs also has available a range of data which may complement the SEUP data set. Contact Philip Gatenby on Canberra (06) 240 8745 for further details.

APPENDIX A JOBSEEKERS — A FULL DESCRIPTION

	<p>The Jobseeker component of the SEUP sample consists of persons aged 15–59 who met the following criteria at the time of recruitment to the survey panel (24 April 1995 to 7 July 1995).</p>
<p>UNEMPLOYED PERSONS</p>	<p>Including persons who were not employed in the previous week, and had actively looked for full-time or part-time work at any time in the last four weeks up to the end of the previous week, and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ were available for work in the previous week, or would have been available except for temporary illness (i.e. lasting for less than four weeks); or ▪ were waiting to start a new job within four weeks from the end of the previous week and would have started in the previous week if the job had been available then. <p>But excluding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ persons currently unemployed who were stood down without pay for less than four weeks, i.e. they 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 previous week (including the whole of the previous week) for reasons other than bad weather or plant breakdown; and ▪ full-time students aged 15–24 who were currently looking for part-time work.
<p>PERSONS NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE WHO WERE DISCOURAGED JOBSEEKERS</p>	<p>Including persons not in the labour force who wanted to work and were available to start work within the next four weeks but whose main reason for not taking active steps to find work was that they believed they would not find a job for any of the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ considered to be too young or too old by employers; ▪ difficulties with language or ethnic background; ▪ lacked the necessary schooling, training, skills or experience; ▪ no job in their locality or line of work; or ▪ no job available at all. <p>But excluding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ full-time students aged 15–24 who although not currently looking for work, wanted to work and preferred a part-time job.
<p>PERSONS NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE WHO WERE ATTENDING AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION</p>	<p>Including persons who wanted to work and were available to start work within four weeks, but whose main reason for not taking active steps to find work was that they were attending an educational institution or were on a job-related training program.</p> <p>But excluding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ full-time students, aged 15–24, who although not currently looking for work, wanted to work and preferred a part-time job.
<p>PERSONS NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE WHO WANTED TO WORK BUT WERE NOT AVAILABLE TO START WORK</p>	<p>Including persons who in the four weeks up to the end of the previous week had taken active steps to look for work, but did not meet the criteria to be classified as unemployed as they were not available to start work in the previous week.</p> <p>But excluding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ full-time students aged 15–24 who were currently looking for part-time work.

PART-TIME WORKERS

Including persons who usually worked less than 10 hours per week, who had been actively looking for work for more hours and were available to start work within four weeks.

But excluding:

- full-time students aged 15–24 who were currently looking for part-time work with more hours.

APPENDIX B FULL LIST OF DATA ITEMS AVAILABLE FROM THE SEUP

DEMOGRAPHIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ sex▪ age▪ marital status▪ birthplace▪ year of arrival in Australia▪ Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin
HOUSEHOLD/FAMILY STRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ household type▪ relationship in household▪ family type▪ family size (number of persons)▪ number of dependent children in family▪ number of dependent students in family▪ age of youngest child in family▪ age of all dependent children present in family
LANGUAGE USE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ language first spoken▪ language usually spoken at home▪ level of English proficiency
DISABILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ disability status▪ severity of handicap▪ whether disability impedes employment
GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION/MOBILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ State▪ section of State▪ socioeconomic index of area of residence▪ year commenced living at usual residence at time of recruitment▪ number of times changed usual residence during reference period▪ whether changed State or area of usual residence▪ main reason for moving from last usual residence
HOUSING	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ dwelling structure▪ number of bedrooms▪ tenure type▪ landlord type▪ total weekly housing costs
JOBSEEKER AND LABOUR FORCE STATUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Jobseeker status▪ labour force status▪ duration of unemployment

WORKING

- number of episodes of working during the reference period
- total number of episodes of working since 5 September 1994
- total duration of working during the reference period
- total duration of working since 5 September 1994
- start and finish date of each episode of working
- duration of each episode of working
- status in employment
- hours worked
- full-time/part-time status
- permanent/casual
- sector of employment
- industry
- occupation
- whether job was in preferred occupation
- whether required an educational qualification to obtain job
- size of location (number of employees)
- enterprise employment size
- whether usually works overtime and method of payment
- usual weekly earnings
- method of job attainment
- role of CES in job attainment
- reason for ceasing job
- whether a multiple job holder during reference period
- total duration of multiple job holding during the reference period
- total duration of multiple job holding since 5 September 1994
- whether used childcare while working
- whether used formal childcare and type of formal care
- main reason for not using formal childcare
- whether used informal childcare and type of formal care

Working part time

- whether wants to work more hours and preferred total number of hours
- whether wants to work more hours if suitable childcare was available
- main reason for working part time

LOOKING FOR WORK

- number of episodes of looking for work during the reference period
- total number of episodes of looking for work since 5 September 1994
- total duration of looking for work during the reference period
- total duration of looking for work since 5 September 1994
- start and finish date of each episode of looking for work
- duration of each episode of looking for work
- whether looking for full-time or part-time work
- all active steps taken to find work
- active steps taken to find work
- all difficulties in finding work
- main difficulty in finding work
- whether would move interstate if offered a suitable job
- whether would move intrastate if offered a suitable job
- reservation wage (lowest wage a person is prepared to accept)
- hours prepared to work for reservation wage

ABSENCES FROM THE LABOUR MARKET

- number of episodes of absence from the labour market during the reference period
- total number of episodes of absence from the labour market since 5 September 1994
- total duration of absence from the labour market during the reference period
- total duration of absence from the labour market since 5 September 1994
- start and finish date of each episode of absence from the labour market
- duration of each episode of absence from the labour market
- whether wanted to work and available to start
- main reason not available to start work at that time
- main activity
- all reasons for not looking for work
- main reasons for not looking for work

EMPLOYMENT OFFERS

- number of offers of employment during reference period
- number of offers of employment since 5 September 1994
- when offer of employment was made
- whether employment offer accepted
- reasons for not taking up offer

SUMMARY OF EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

- number of years in paid work since first left full-time education
- number of years spent looking for work since first left full-time education
- number of years of labour market absence since first left full-time education
- year first left full-time education
- main activity

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Details collected for both last full-time and part-time job

- whether person has worked full time or part time
- start and finish date of last full-time or part-time job
- status of employment of last full-time or part-time job
- hours worked in last full-time or part-time job
- duration of employment of last full-time or part-time job
- permanent/casual for last full-time or part-time job
- sector of employment of last full-time or part-time job
- industry of last full-time or part-time job
- occupation of last full-time or part-time job
- size of location (number of employees) for last full-time or part-time job
- enterprise employment size for last full-time or part-time job
- usual weekly earnings for last full-time or part-time job
- method of job attainment of last full-time or part-time job
- role of CES in job attainment of last full-time or part-time job
- time since finished last full-time or part-time job
- reason for ceasing last full-time or part-time job
- number of part-time jobs held in last five years

TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP

- whether a member of a trade union

TRAINING

In-house training courses

- number of in-house training courses attended during reference period
- number of in-house training courses attended since 5 September 1994
- start date of in-house training courses
- time spent on in-house training courses
- total time spent on in-house training courses
- field of in-house training courses
- whether skills gained through in-house training courses were transferable to another employer
- whether in-house training course helped obtain a pay rise, promotion, or better job

- External training courses
- number of external training courses attended during reference period
 - number of external training courses attended since 5 September 1994
 - start date of external training courses
 - time spent on external training courses
 - total time spent on external training courses
 - provider of external training courses
 - field of external training courses
 - whether external training course was government sponsored
 - whether working at the time attended training course
 - employer support for external training course attended while working
 - non-employer support for external training course
 - whether external training course helped obtain a pay rise, promotion, or better job
 - whether attended external training course to help obtain a job
 - whether external training course helped obtain a job and whether it was a better job

CURRENT STUDY

- school attendance
- whether currently studying
- full-time/part-time study status
- type of educational institution attending
- level of qualification currently studying
- main field of qualification currently studying

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

- age left school
- level of educational attainment
- main field of highest qualification obtained
- year obtained highest post-school qualification
- country obtained highest post-school qualification

INCOME

- annual income
- sources of annual income
- main source of annual income
- current weekly income
- sources of current weekly income
- main source of current weekly income
- current weekly income from wages and salaries
- current weekly business and property income
- current weekly income from government cash pensions, benefits, and allowances
- annual income of income unit (income for spouse and respondent)
- current weekly income of income unit

OTHER PERSONS

- Demographic
 - spouse's age last birthday
 - birthplace of parent(s) and spouse
 - year of arrival in Australia of parent(s) and spouse
- Educational attainment
 - educational attainment of parent(s) and spouse
- Labour force details
 - labour force status of spouse or parent(s)
 - number of employed usual resident family members
 - number of unemployed usual resident family members
 - number of usual resident family members unemployed for 12 months or more
 - number of usual resident family members not in the labour force
 - occupation of spouse or parent(s)
 - status in employment of spouse
 - time since last job of spouse
 - duration of unemployment of spouse
 - all reasons for spouse not actively looking for work
 - occupation of parent(s) when respondent was 15 years old
- Spouse's income
 - annual income
 - sources of annual income
 - main source of annual income
 - current weekly income
 - sources of current weekly income
 - main source of current weekly income
 - current weekly income from wages and salaries
 - current weekly business and property income
 - current weekly income from government cash pensions, benefits, and allowances

LABOUR MARKET PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

- Active CES registration
 - start and finish date of CES registration
 - reason ceased CES registration
- Labour market program
 - start and finish date of labour market program
 - name of labour market program
 - labour market program completion status
 - post-program employment outcome at three months
 - post-program education outcome at three months
- Case management
 - start and finish date of case management
 - case management outcome

- English skills
 - reading proficiency
 - speaking proficiency
 - writing proficiency

- INCOME SUPPORT
 - start and finish date of income support
 - type of income support
 - total payment of income support

TECHNICAL NOTES

ESTIMATION PROCEDURE

Estimates from the SEUP were calculated by the use of a complex ratio estimation procedure, which ensures that the survey estimates relating to the Jobseeker population and to the Population Reference Group conform to independently estimated distributions (benchmarks) of these populations by age and sex, rather than to the age and sex distribution within the sample itself.

RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES

Two types of error are possible in an estimate based on a sample survey; sampling error and non-sampling error. The *sampling error* is a measure of the variability that occurs by chance because a sample, rather than the entire population, is surveyed. Since estimates from the SEUP data are based on information obtained from a sample of persons, they are subject to sampling variability; that is, they may differ from the estimates that would have been produced if all in-scope persons had been included in the survey. 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 persons was included. There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate will differ by less than one standard error from the estimate that would have been obtained if all persons had been included, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two standard errors. Another measure of sampling variability is the *relative standard error* which is obtained by expressing the standard error as a percentage of the estimate to which it refers. The relative standard error is a useful measure in that it provides an immediate indication of the percentage errors likely to have occurred due to sampling, and thus avoids the need to refer also to the size of the estimate.

The imprecision due to sampling variability, which is measured by the standard error, should not be confused with inaccuracies that may occur because of imperfections in reporting by respondents, errors made in collection such as in recording and coding data, and errors made in processing the data. Inaccuracies of this kind are referred to as the *non-sampling error* and they may occur in any enumeration, whether it be a full count or a sample. It is not possible to quantify non-sampling error, but every effort is made to reduce it to a minimum, as discussed under *Data quality* in the Explanatory Notes. For the example on the next page of this note, it is assumed to be zero. In practice, the potential for non-sampling error adds to the uncertainty of the estimates caused by sampling variability.

Standard errors for person estimates in this publication can be calculated using table A (for Jobseekers), and table B (for the Population Reference Group). For standard errors for episodal estimates, and for methods used to calculate the standard error for non-person estimates, such as average hours worked, average earnings, and number of episodes, users should contact the ABS (refer page vii for details).

The size of the standard error increases with the level of the estimate, so that the larger the estimate, the larger is the standard error. However, it should be noted that the larger the sample estimate the smaller the standard error will be in percentage terms (that is the relative standard error). Thus, larger estimates will be relatively more reliable than smaller estimates.

As the standard errors in tables A and B show, the smaller the estimate, the higher is the relative standard error. Very small estimates are subject to such high standard errors (relative to the size of the estimate) as to detract seriously from their value for most reasonable uses. In the tables in this publication only estimates with relative standard errors of 25% or less, and percentages based on such estimates, are considered sufficiently reliable for most purposes. However, estimates and percentages with larger relative standard errors have been included and are preceded by an asterisk (e.g. *3.4) to indicate that they are subject to high standard errors and should be used with caution.

An example of the calculation and use of standard errors is as follows.

Consider an estimate of 200,000 Jobseekers who looked for work only, during the reference period. By referring to table A, in the row for an estimate of 200,000 Jobseekers, a standard error of 4,700 is obtained. Therefore, there are about two chances in three that the true value (the number that would have been obtained if the whole population had been included in the survey) is within the range 195,300 to 204,700. There are about nineteen chances in twenty that the true value is within the range 190,600 to 209,400.

Proportions and percentages (e.g. proportion of Jobseekers who looked for work during the reference period) formed from the ratio of two estimates are also subject to sampling error. The size of the error depends on the accuracy of both the numerator and denominator. The formula for the relative standard error (RSE) of a proportion or percentage is given below:

$$RSE (x/y) = \sqrt{[RSE(x)]^2 + [RSE(y)]^2}$$

Standard errors contained in tables A and B are designed to provide an average standard error applicable to most SEUP person estimates. However, the standard errors are not exactly equal for different estimates, and tables A and B may be quite inaccurate for some unusual estimates.

A STANDARD ERRORS OF JOBSEEKER PERSON ESTIMATES

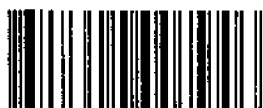
<i>Size of estimate</i>	<i>Standard error</i>	<i>Relative standard error</i>
100	170	169.9
200	230	115.0
300	270	91.5
500	340	68.7
700	400	56.8
1 000	460	46.5
1 500	550	37.0
2 000	630	31.5
2 500	700	27.8
3 000	750	25.0
3 500	800	23.0
4 000	850	21.3
5 000	950	18.8
7 000	1 100	15.5
10 000	1 250	12.7
15 000	1 500	10.1
20 000	1 700	8.6
30 000	2 050	6.9
40 000	2 350	5.8
50 000	2 550	5.1
100 000	3 500	3.5
150 000	4 150	2.8
200 000	4 700	2.4
300 000	5 650	1.9
500 000	7 050	1.4
700 000	8 150	1.2

B STANDARD ERRORS OF PRG PERSON ESTIMATES

<i>Size of estimate</i>	<i>Standard error</i>	<i>Relative standard error</i>
100	90	87.0
200	180	91.1
300	280	91.8
500	450	90.8
700	620	89.1
1 000	860	86.4
1 500	1 230	82.3
2 000	1 580	78.9
2 500	1 900	75.9
3 000	2 200	73.3
3 500	2 500	71.1
4 000	2 750	69.1
5 000	3 300	65.6
7 000	4 200	60.2
10 000	5 450	54.4
15 000	7 200	47.9
20 000	8 650	43.3
30 000	11 150	37.2
40 000	13 250	33.1
50 000	15 050	30.1
100 000	21 750	21.8
150 000	26 500	17.7
200 000	30 250	15.1
300 000	35 950	12.0
500 000	43 800	8.8
1 000 000	55 250	5.5
2 000 000	66 950	3.3
5 000 000	80 950	1.6
10 000 000	89 050	0.9

GLOSSARY

Absent from the labour market	Neither working nor looking for work.
Discouraged jobseekers	See <i>Appendix A</i> for details.
Episode	A period of time during which a particular activity is undertaken (such as working, looking for work or absence from the labour market). An episode can occur wholly within a reference period or can span more than one reference period. For more information, see paragraph 25 of the <i>Explanatory Notes</i> section.
Full-time work	Work involving 35 hours or more a week.
Industry	All occurrences of industry refer to Industry Division as defined by the <i>Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) 1993 (1292.0)</i> .
Jobseekers	See <i>Appendix A</i> for details.
Labour market activities	Periods of working, looking for work, and absence from the labour market.
Main English speaking countries	Comprises the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, South Africa, the United States of America and New Zealand.
Occupation	All occurrences of occupation refer to Major Group as defined by the <i>Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO) 1986 (1222.0)</i> .
Other definitions	For definitions of labour force and demographic classifications used in this publication, readers are referred to <i>Labour Force, Australia (6203.0)</i> .
Part-time work	Work involving less than 35 hours a week.
Unemployed persons	See <i>Appendix A</i> for details.
Wave	Describes the reference period for the data collection. The reference periods are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ wave 1 — 5 September 1994 to 3 September 1995;▪ wave 2 — 4 September 1995 to 1 September 1996; and▪ wave 3 — 2 September 1996 to 31 August 1997.



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